

Public Opinion Poll #21
Elections, Redeployment, Peace Process after Assassination of Rabin
December 7-10, 1995

B. Voting Behavior and Partisanship

The largest percentage of Palestinians (43%) announced that their selection will rest primarily on the candidates themselves. Another 23% said that they will vote for a political party, while 24% will vote for candidates from

different lists. There is no difference between West Bank and the Gaza Strip regarding this question. A majority of the residents of Jerusalem (53.8%) will vote for candidates from one party, while the largest percentage of Hebron residents (37.1). Will vote for candidates from various parties (see Table 4).

**Table 4
Partisanship by Place of Interview**

	From One Party	From Various Parties	Depends on Candidate
Nablus	26.0	18.3	48.9
Tulkarm	18.3	21.1	54.1
Jenin	25.0	20.0	47.5
Ramallah	10.2	20.3	54.7
Hebron	21.6	37.1	28.4
Bethlehem	22.9	21.4	44.3
Jerusalem	53.8	22.5	13.8
Gaza N.	27.7	33.8	27.7
Gaza City	23.0	28.6	42.9
Gaza M.	16.4	21.6	47.0
Gaza S.	20.0	18.6	52.9

Readiness to elect candidates can be correlated to level of education. More Bachelor degree holders will choose from various parties and based on the candidates themselves than will illiterate voters, while intention to vote for candidates from one party decreases among the educated (see Table 5).

**Table 5
Partisanship by Education**

	From One Party	From Various Parties	Depends on Candidate
Illiterate	28.9	20.8	28.3

Elementary	27.7	22.5	39.3
Preparatory	21.0	20.6	53.3
Secondary	23.4	25.8	44.4
2 yr. College	14.7	26.5	49.0
Bachelor	16.5	30.3	42.2

C. Criteria in selecting candidates

A candidate's participation in the struggle is the most important factor for 27 % of Palestinians in their choice of a candidate. A candidate's academic attainment is of primary importance for 22 % of respondents, while 20 % value religiosity. About 19% intend to make their choices based on political affiliation and 3.4% will rely on their family relationship to the candidate. The residents of Hebron and Jericho are most concerned with candidates' religiosity, while those of Jerusalem, and North and Middle Gaza place a higher value on the candidates' participation in the struggle (see Table 6).

Table 6
Most Important Factor in Candidate Selection by Place of Interview

	Political Affiliation	Family Ties	Academic Attainment	Religiosity	Particip. in Struggle	Others
Nablus	19.6	02.7	15.2	28.6	25.0	08.9
Tulkarm	21.8	05.5	20.0	16.4	27.3	09.1
Jenin	24.1	08.9	25.3	25.3	12.7	03.8
Ramallah	20.6	04.0	24.6	11.9	20.6	18.3
Hebron	06.8	03.4	25.6	40.2	20.5	03.4
Bethlehem	21.1	05.6	18.3	12.7	28.2	14.1
Jerusalem	19.2	---	17.9	19.2	39.7	03.8
Gaza N.	12.3	03.1	35.4	09.2	32.3	07.7
Gaza City	27.3	01.2	20.5	13.7	27.3	09.9
Gaza M.	15.8	03.0	22.6	18.8	35.3	04.5
Gaza S.	15.7	02.9	22.9	22.9	27.1	08.6



II. Knowledge of the Electoral Law

It was obvious from the results of the poll that Palestinians lack a good knowledge of the Electoral Law. A majority of Palestinians (55%) mistakenly think that the electoral law permits only a relative to accompany an illiterate person to the voting booth. Another 34% mistakenly think that the law permits voters to select persons from only one party. Ignorance of the details of the law is more widespread in the West Bank than in the Gaza Strip as well as among women and the elderly. There is a direct relationship between level of education and knowledge of the law's provisions, where respondents with more education were better informed about the law.

III. Role of Elected Council

About 70% of those polled believe that the elected council will play an important role in guiding the country in the right direction, while 22% declared that they are "not sure". A majority of 58% of Jerusalem residents doubt that the council will play an important role. Belief in the council's role is a noticeable influence on Palestinians' intentions to participate in the elections. Respondents who believe that the council will play an important role are more likely to participate in the elections, while those who doubt its importance are less interested in voting (see Table 7).

Table 7
Participation in Elections by views of Council's Role

	Will Boycott	Will Participate
Will Have Important Role	08.6	80.7
Will Not Have Important Role	47.2	33.7

*rows do not add up to 100% because there were other choices in the question

IV. Trust in Electoral Process

A total of 68% of Palestinians trust that the election process will be free, fair, and beneficial to Palestinian autonomy. Doubt was expressed by 13 %, and 19% declared that they are not sure of the fairness of the election process. Confidence in the elections' fairness is lowest in Jerusalem (55%) and highest in Tulkarm (82.7%). Refugee camp residents are the most doubtful (see Table 8).

Table 8
Trust in Electoral Process by Place of Residence

	Trust	Doubt	Don t Know
City	72.0	05.6	19.4
Town	69.2	14.2	16.7
Village	67.6	16.0	16.4
Refugee Camp	61.6	17.3	21.1

Skepticism was also high among students, employees, professors, and bachelors. Trust in the elections, like belief in the council's role, affects Palestinians' intentions to participate in the elections. About 37% of those polled do not trust the electoral process and consequently will not participate, while over 80% have confidence in the process and intend to vote (see Table 9).

Table 9
Participation in Elections by Trust of Electoral Process

	Boycott	Participate	Not Sure
Trust	08.7	80.9	10.4

Doubt	37.3	41.3	21.3
Don t Know	15.3	57.9	26.9



Participation in Elections

A majority of 71 % of the respondents said they would participate in the elections even if the opposition calls for a boycott, while 14% said they would not vote, and 15% said they are not sure.

VI. Readiness to Elect a Woman

A majority of 67% of those polled declared that they are ready to elect at least one woman candidate. It was noticed that there is no significant difference between the West Bank and Gaza concerning the readiness to elect a woman candidate. Nonetheless, the most difficult places for women candidates are expected to be the Middle and the South of Gaza. Specialists and retired Palestinians expressed the most readiness to elect women. In contrast, the readiness of students and farmers is below the average.

VII. Political Affiliation

About 55% of those polled said they will vote for Fateh and 10% support Hamas. About 25 % of Palestinians will vote for an independent candidate or no one. Gaza City residents expressed the most support (68%) for Fateh, while Harnas received the most support from Nablus residents (17.7%) (see Table 10).

Table 10
Political Affiliation by Place of Interviews

	Hamas	PFLP	Fateh	Islamic Jihad	Islamic Ind.	National Ind.	Other	No One
Nablus	17.7	03.1	50.0	---	01.5	04.6	03.1	13.1
Tulkarm	08.2	01.8	51.5	05.0	03.0	05.0	05.9	14.9
Jenin	07.5	01.3	62.5	02.5	03.8	---	01.3	20.0
Ramallah	05.0	04.2	58.3	00.8	05.0	01.7	16.7	07.5
Hebron	16.5	03.5	39.1	02.6	10.4	10.4	00.9	08.7
Bethlehem	04.5	06.0	61.2	---	04.5	04.5	01.5	11.9
Jerusalem	08.1	04.1	45.9	05.4	02.7	02.7	04.1	23.0
Gaza N.	09.2	07.7	63.1	---	01.5	03.1	03.1	09.2
Gaza City	11.1	03.9	68.0	01.3	00.7	01.3	01.3	11.1
Gaza M.	06.0	05.3	54.9	03.8	01.5	03.8	06.0	16.5
Gaza S.	07.2	02.9	58.0	05.8	02.9	01.4	01.4	17.4

*N- north, M- middle, S- south.

*DFLP, Feda, and PPP are not included in this table because of small sample size resulting in tow totals less than 100% in some cases. Results for Jericho were not included for the same reason.

*Margin of error is more than 3 % because of small sample size.

VIII. New Parties

There was very little support for the newly established parties. About 97% of those polled said they were not supportive of the new groups because they knew nothing about the parties.

IX. Election of PNA

President A majority of 68.5% said that they will vote for Arafat, while 7.4% declared support for Hayder Abdul Shafi; 24% declared they would vote for another candidate or no one (options for this question have been amended; Ahmed Yassin and George Habash were omitted because their candidacy is unlikely to continue).

X. Problems Facing Society

According to 47% of Palestinians, the most important problem facing Palestinian society today is unemployment. The abandonment of religion is the next serious problem, as voiced by 24%, followed by poverty (10%) and the oppression of freedom (8%). Suppression of freedom is especially a concern among Bethlehem and Jerusalem residents, while the abandonment of religion is of most concern to respondents from Hebron. Apprehension of the problem of crime is felt most acutely by older Palestinians.

XI. Peace Process

A majority of 52% of Palestinians believe that the peace process will move forward despite the assassination of Rabin. A smaller percentage (34%) believe that the peace process won't be affected; only 4.2% anticipate the process will worsen.

XII. Feelings Given the Extension of Palestinian Authority

With the redeployment of Israeli troops from some towns and the extension of PNA jurisdiction, 60% of those polled said that they feel secure. In comparison, 12% declared that they feel worried, while 24.2% feel in between. Anxiety about the new situation is highest among Hebron and Jerusalem residents (see Table 11).

Table 11
Feelings after Redeployment by Place of Interview

	Secure	Worried	So/So	Don t Know
Nablus	61.5	10.0	24.6	03.8
Tulkarm	60.9	12.7	22.7	03.6
Jenin	63.8	03.8	31.3	01.3

Ramallah	51.2	15.0	28.3	05.5
Hebron	44.4	22.2	31.6	01.7
Bethlehem	45.7	11.4	34.3	08.6
Jerusalem	45.0	21.3	20.0	13.8
Gaza N.	72.3	09.2	16.9	01.5
Gaza City	74.5	08.1	15.5	01.9
Gaza M.	60.0	11.9	25.9	02.2
Gaza S.	70.0	05.7	20.0	04.3

N- north, M- midde, S-south

In addition, more anxiety was expressed by younger respondents than by older respondents (see Table 12).

Table 12
Feelings after Redeployment by Age

	Secure	Worried	So/So	Don t Know
18-22	51.6	17.9	25.0	05.4
23-26	51.0	15.0	29.4	04.6
27-30	49.7	15.2	32.5	02.6
31-35	58.2	12.0	24.7	05.1
36-42	61.7	11.5	23.0	03.8
43-50	73.1	03.8	19.2	03.8
51 and over	70.9	08.3	17.5	03.4



II. Unemployment

Over all, unemployment remained the same at 29% although it increased 8 % in refugee camps (see Table 13)

Table 13
Unemployment Demographics

	Dec. 1994	Feb. 1995	Mar. 1995	May 1995	July 1995	Dec. 1995
Total	30.0	51.0	38.0	36.0	29.0	29.0
Region						
West Bank	22.0	48.0	35.0	27.0	27.0	25.0
Gaza Strip	44.0	51.0	28.8	33.0	25.0	37.0
Place						
City	20.0	43.0	25.0	27.0	23.0	26.0

Village/Town	36.0	56.0	44.1	30.0	35.0	25.0
Camp	39.0	58.0	49.7	40.0	32.0	40.0
Gender						
Male	29.0	49.0	36.1	30.0	27.0	23.0
Female	37.0	60.0	50.8	42.0	37.0	49.0
Refugee Status						
Refugee	37.0	56.0	43.4	37.0	29.0	33.0
Non-Refugee	25.0	47.0	35.2	27.0	37.0	26.0
Education						
Up to Primary	37.0	60.0	45.2	33.0	31.0	27.0
Secondary	34.0	53.0	42.9	36.0	36.0	34.0
2 yr. College	24.0	43.0	34.6	12.0	24.0	35.0
Univ. Degrees	22.0	32.0	23.9	27.0	18.0	15.0
Marital Status						
Single		45.0	30.8	38.0	40.0	29.0
Married		53.0	35.6	39.0	26.0	29.0
Age						
18-30	42.0	54.0	46.7	41.0	38.0	31.7
31-43	25.0	54.0	35.9	24.0	25.0	30.5
44-64	20.0	58.0	26.1	25.0	20.0	24.0



Appendix

Total West Bank Gaza

In the election, will you:

A. Vote for qualified candidates supporting the current peace process?

a) Yes	84.7%	83.1%	87.4%
b) No	10.9%	12.4%	08.4%
c) Don't Know	04.4%	04.5%	04.2%

B. Vote for qualified candidates opposed to the current peace process?

a) Yes	18.8%	18.9%	18.6%
b) No	75.5%	75.1%	76.1%
c) Don't Know	05.8%	06.0%	05.3%

C. Vote for qualified candidates regardless of political positions?

a) Yes	56.8%	55.4%	59.2%
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b)No	35.4%	36.1%	34.1%
c)Don't Know	07.8%	08.4%	06.7%

D. Vote for candidates for other considerations?

a)Yes	27.1%	31.6%	19.8%
b)No	64.8%	59.9%	72.8%
c)Don't Know	08.1%	08.5%	07.4%

2. According to your information, the Palestinian Electoral Law:

A. Allows a voter to authorize someone to vote in his/her place.

a)Yes	14.8%	17.0%	11.1%
b)No*	65.6%	62.8%	70.3%
c)Don't Know	19.6%	20.2%	18.6%

B. Allows the election of candidates from various party lists.

a)Yes*	49.2%	48.8%	49.8%
b)No	31.8%	31.4%	32.3%
c)Don't Know	19.1%	19.7%	17.9%

C. Allows the election of candidates from one party list only.

a)Yes	18.8%	18.9%	18.6%
b)No*	75.5%	75.1%	76.1%
c)Don't Know	05.8%	06.0%	05.3%

D. Permits only a relative to accompany an illiterate voter.

a)Yes	54.5%	58.8%	47.2%
b)No*	30.0%	26.8%	35.6%
c)Don't Know	15.5%	14.4%	17.2%

E. Allows a voter for only one person from among all the candidates.

a)Yes	44.4%	46.3%	41.2%
b)No*	33.7%	31.7%	37.2%
c)Don't Know	21.9%	22.0%	21.6%

* correct answer as stipulated by the Electoral Law.

3. I will vote for candidates from:

a)One party list only	22.7%	23.6%	21.2%
b)Various party lists	23.9%	22.9%	25.6%

c) Depends on individual candidates.	43.4%	43.3%	43.5%
d) Others, specify	04.1%	04.8%	03.3%
e) Don't Know	05.9%	05.4%	06.7%

4. If the opposition calls for a boycott of the elections, I will:

a) Boycott the elections	13.8%	17.3%	07.9%
b) Participate in the elections	71.3%	69.0%	75.2%
c) Not sure	14.9%	13.7%	16.9%

5. Will you vote for at least one woman?

a) Yes	67.2%	69.3%	63.6%
b) No	25.4%	25.0%	26.0%
c) Not sure	07.5%	05.7%	10.4%

6. After Rabin's assassination, I feel the peace process will:

a) Move forward	51.5%	51.2%	52.1%
b) Go backward	04.2%	05.6%	01.9%
c) Not be affected	34.0%	33.6%	34.8%
d) Don't Know	10.2%	09.7%	11.2%

7. With the redeployment of Israeli forces, and return of the PA I feel:

a) Secure	59.6%	54.1%	68.9%
b) Worried	12.1%	13.9%	09.0%
c) "So-So"*	24.2%	26.8%	19.7%
d) Don't Know	04.1%	05.2%	02.3%

* somewhere between a and b.

8. If the following nominate themselves for the position of president of the executive authority, I will vote for:

a) Haider Abdel Shafi	07.4%	08.1%	06.3%
b) Yassir Arafat	68.5%	63.2%	77.4%
c) Others	10.3%	13.0%	05.6%
d) No One	13.8%	15.6%	10.7%

9. If general elections were held today, and you decided to vote, you would vote for candidates affiliated with:

a) Hamas	09.7%	10.3%	08.6%
b) PPP	01.8%	02.1%	01.4%
c) PFLP	03.8%	03.2%	04.8%
d) Fateh	55.3%	51.7%	61.4%
e) Fida	00.4%	00.7%	-----
f) Islamic Jihad	02.0%	01.7%	02.6%
g) DFLP	01.5%	02.0%	00.7%
h) Islamic Independents	03.6%	04.9%	01.4%
i) National Independents	03.2%	03.2%	03.6%
j) Others	04.8%	05.9%	03.1%
k) No One	13.8%	14.0%	13.6%

10. Do you support any of the newly established parties?

a) Yes	03.5%	02.7%	04.7%
b) No	54.7%	50.7%	61.5%
c) Don't Know	41.8%	46.6%	33.8%

11. Which of the following factors is the most important in selecting

your candidate (one only)?

a) Political Affiliation	18.9%	18.5%	19.6%
b) Family relationship (to candidate)	03.4%	04.1%	02.3%
c) Academic Attainment	22.1%	21.0%	23.8%
d) Religiosity	20.4%	23.0%	16.1%
e) Participation in struggle	26.6%	24.3%	30.5%
f) Others	08.6%	09.1%	07.7%

12. Do you think that the elected council will have an important role in

guiding the country in the right direction?

a) Yes	70.4%	69.5%	71.9%
b) No	07.8%	08.9%	06.0%
c) Not sure	21.8%	21.6%	22.1%

13. In your opinion, the most important problem facing Palestinian society

today is (one only):

a) Unemployment	46.7%	38.6%	60.2%
b) Crime	03.5%	04.9%	01.2%
c) Poverty	09.9%	07.8%	13.3%
d) Abandoning religion	24.4%	29.4%	16.0%
e) Political violence	04.5%	06.1%	01.9%
f) Suppression of free speech	07.6%	08.8%	05.6%
g) Others	03.4%	04.3%	01.9%

14. Do you trust that the election process will be free, fair, and

beneficial to society?

a) Yes	68.0%	68.7%	66.8%
b) No	13.2%	15.0%	10.2%
c) Don't Know	18.8%	16.3%	23.0%