



NEC's monthly monitor of Palestinian perceptions Towards politics and religion

Bulletin Vol. V nos. 2 and 3

March 2010

NEC's Bulletin and the surveys associated with it are conducted independently with the private resources of the NEC company, and are not supported or funded by any local or international organization

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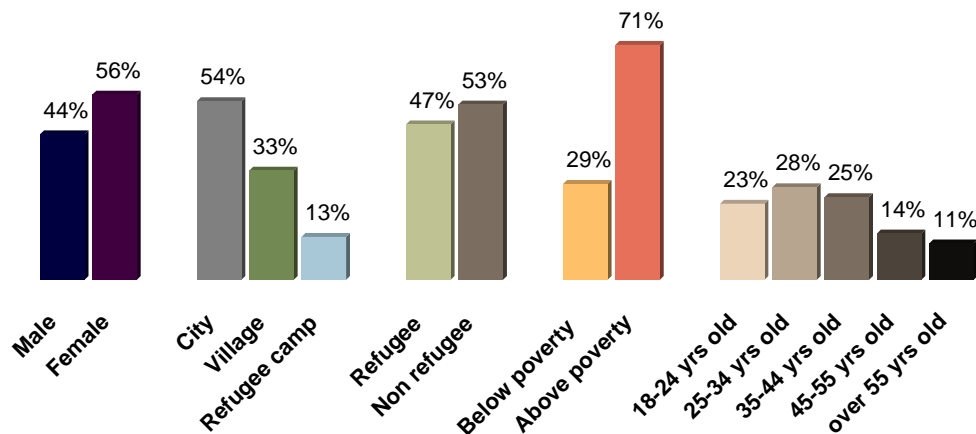
I. Introduction and Methodology

NEC's March survey was conducted during the last week of March 2010 and it covered a number of questions that are regularly asked to the Palestinians of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. More than 1000 Palestinians over the age of 18 were interviewed by phone. The phone numbers were selected through an equal probability randomization process from the phone lists with the prefix assigned by the telephone company. The survey included all the oPt governorates, including cities, villages and refugee camps. The margin of error for the sample is +/-3% and the confidence level is 95%.

Upon completion of the interviews, the data were checked and cleaned. As it is done regularly, the analysis in this report is based on cross-referencing the questions by five main independent or explanatory variables. These variables are: factional trust, governorate (The West Bank and Gaza Strip), gender, age, and poverty level.

As overviewed in figure 1 below, 44% of the respondents were males and 56% were females. Also, about half of the respondents were refugees, and 13% lives in a refugee camp, 54% in a city and 33% in a village.

Figure 1: Demographics (March 2010)



In addition, the results show that 29% lives in poverty and the majority has a higher education. As for the age distribution, 23% of the respondents were between 18-24 years old, 28% were between 25-34 years old, 25 % were between 35-44 years old, 14% were between 45-54 years old, and 11% were over the age of 55.

This report also covers a set of questions pertaining to the upcoming elections. NEC will monitor Palestinian perceptions towards the local and national elections in its monthly surveys through adding specific questions to try to underpin Palestinian voting behavior.



II. Main findings

- 86% of the Palestinians are concerned about the situation in general. The level of concern is higher among the Fateh supporters and the Gaza Strip respondents;
- The main reason for concern is the political situation. In the Gaza Strip, the internal power struggle is regarded as the most serious issue of concern;
- Gazans and Fateh supporters feel more insecure than the supporters of Hamas and from the Westbankers;
- Half of the Palestinian public identified themselves as primarily Muslims while 21% identified themselves as Palestinians first. Fateh supporters are more likely to identify with Palestine than do the supporters of Hamas;
- 46% of the respondents do not have trust in any of the two main leaders of the Palestinians: Abbas and Hanieh, although trust in Abbas is significantly higher than for Hanieh;
- While the majority of the respondents trust Fateh, 43% of the respondents said that they do not trust any of the political or religious leaders;
- More Palestinians believe that the best strategy for maximizing the Palestinian national interest is that of Fateh. In absolute terms, however, almost one third of the Palestinian people believe that neither strategy is appropriate;
- The majority of the Palestinians find the Fayyad government to be the legitimate one, even in the Gaza Strip;
- 61% of the respondents support reaching a peace agreement with Israel. This percentage is 10% lower than that of February 2010;
- Two thirds of the Palestinians believe that Hamas should alter its position towards the existence of Israel;
- 57% of West Bank respondents said that they registered for the elections while 31% said that they will not;
- A significant percentage of Westbankers believe that local elections will face obstacles;
- 71% of the respondents that do not trust any faction said that they will not participate in the elections;
- The economic situation of the Palestinian population is steadily improving. The March results showed that the poverty rate in the oPt is 29%;
- In March 2010, the percentage of the Palestinians that were not employed was 18%, as opposed to 24% in January 2010.



III. General situation

A. Level of concern

Despite the apparent improvement in the living conditions of the Palestinian people both in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip*, the majority of the Palestinian public is concerned and almost half of them are extremely concerned as noted in figure 2, below. Extreme concern is more obvious among Palestinians that trust Fateh most (55%), Gaza Strip respondents (60%), and males (57%), as indicated in tables 1 and 2, below.

Figure 2: Level of concern

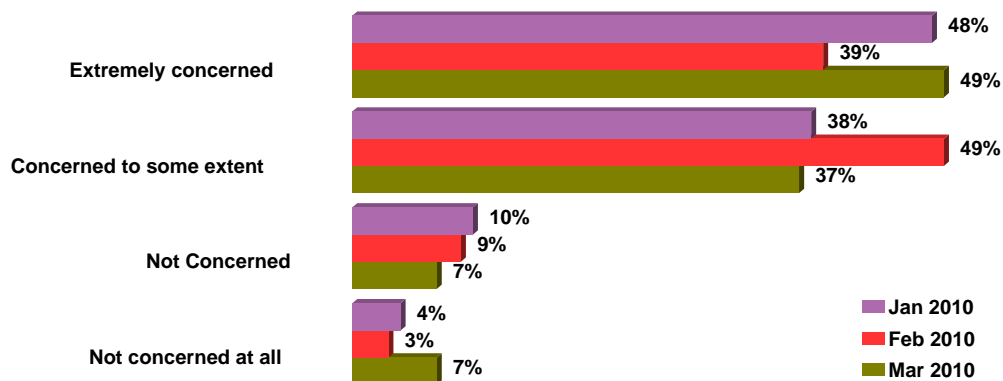


Table 1: Level of concern about the current situation according to faction and region

	Factional trust				Region	
	Fateh	Hamas	Others	None	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Extremely concerned	55%	48%	65%	44%	42%	60%
Concerned to some extent	35%	33%	30%	38%	43%	29%
Not very concerned	6%	13%	0%	8%	6%	8%
Not concerned at all	5%	5%	4%	10%	9%	4%

Table 2: Level of concern about the current situation according to gender, age and poverty level

	Gender		Age					Poverty level	
	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Below poverty	Above poverty
Extremely concerned	57%	43%	39%	46%	51%	61%	58%	52%	49%
Concerned to some extent	28%	44%	41%	43%	36%	27%	28%	37%	36%
Not very concerned	9%	5%	10%	6%	6%	6%	6%	5%	7%
Not concerned at all	6%	8%	10%	5%	7%	6%	8%	6%	8%

* See the economic section in this report for the economic condition of the respondents.



Although the main *individual* source of concern remained to be the economic condition of the household, as illustrated in figure 3, below, the general political situation is the Palestinians' main source of anxiety. About 54% of the respondents mentioned the Israeli occupation (22%), the internal power struggle (20%) and the absence of security (12%).

Concern over the economy is more notable among the respondents trusting Fateh and the West Bankers. As indicated in table 3, 33% of the respondents in the West Bank pointed to the economy as their main concern, In the Gaza Strip, the respondent's main apprehension is the internal power struggle. Whereas only 16% of the Westbankers mentioned the internal power struggle as their main concern, the percentage in the Gaza Strip is 26%.

Figure 3: The main reason for feeling concerned

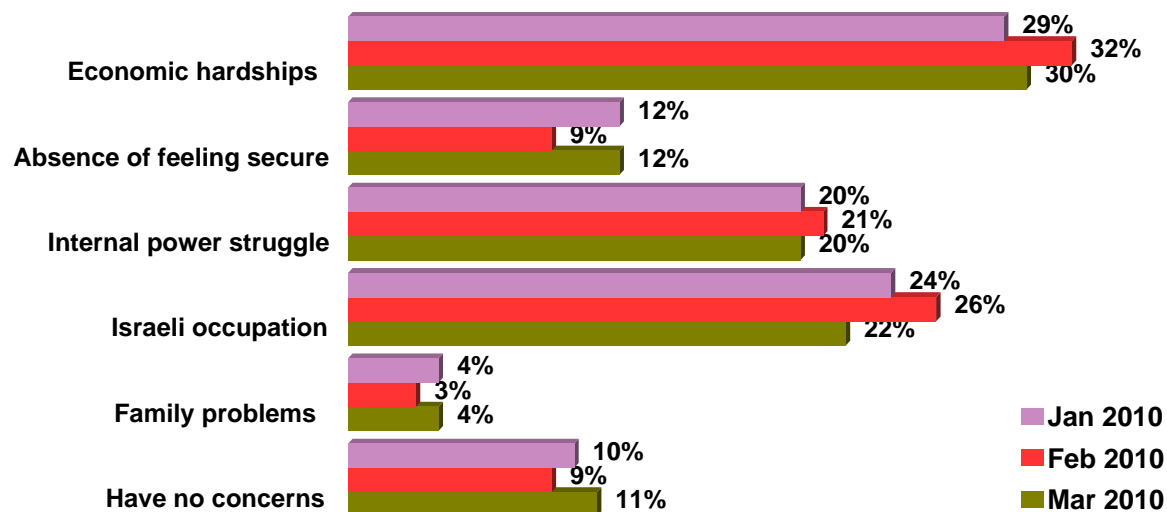


Table 3: Main issue that makes you feel concerned according to faction and region

	Factional trust				Region	
	Fateh	Hamas	Others	None	West Bank	Gaza Strip
The economic hardship	30%	23%	30%	28%	33%	26%
The absence of security	14%	8%	9%	12%	12%	13%
The internal power struggle	23%	22%	22%	17%	16%	26%
The Israeli occupation	20%	26%	35%	25%	20%	25%
Family problems	4%	5%	0%	4%	5%	2%
I have no concerns	9%	16%	4%	14%	14%	8%



Table 4: Main issue that makes you feel concerned according to gender, age and poverty level

	Gender		Age					Poverty level	
	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Below poverty	Above poverty
The economic hardship	30%	31%	24%	28%	36%	30%	35%	30%	27%
The absence of security	11%	14%	12%	16%	12%	10%	8%	13%	13%
Internal power struggle	25%	16%	19%	23%	21%	18%	16%	20%	21%
The Israeli occupation	20%	23%	26%	20%	17%	28%	23%	26%	20%
Family problems	3%	5%	6%	3%	2%	4%	5%	2%	5%
I have no concerns	11%	12%	14%	10%	11%	10%	13%	9%	13%

B. Feeling of security

The results of the March survey showed a 9% increase in the feeling of insecurity over the month of February. The feeling of insecurity is significantly higher among the Fateh respondents and the respondents that come from the Gaza Strip. Whereas 48% of the respondents that trust Hamas said that they feel insecure, the percentage among the respondents that trust Fateh reaches 60% and it reaches 64% among the respondents that do not trust any political or religious faction.

Figure 4: Feeling secure towards yourself, your family and your property.

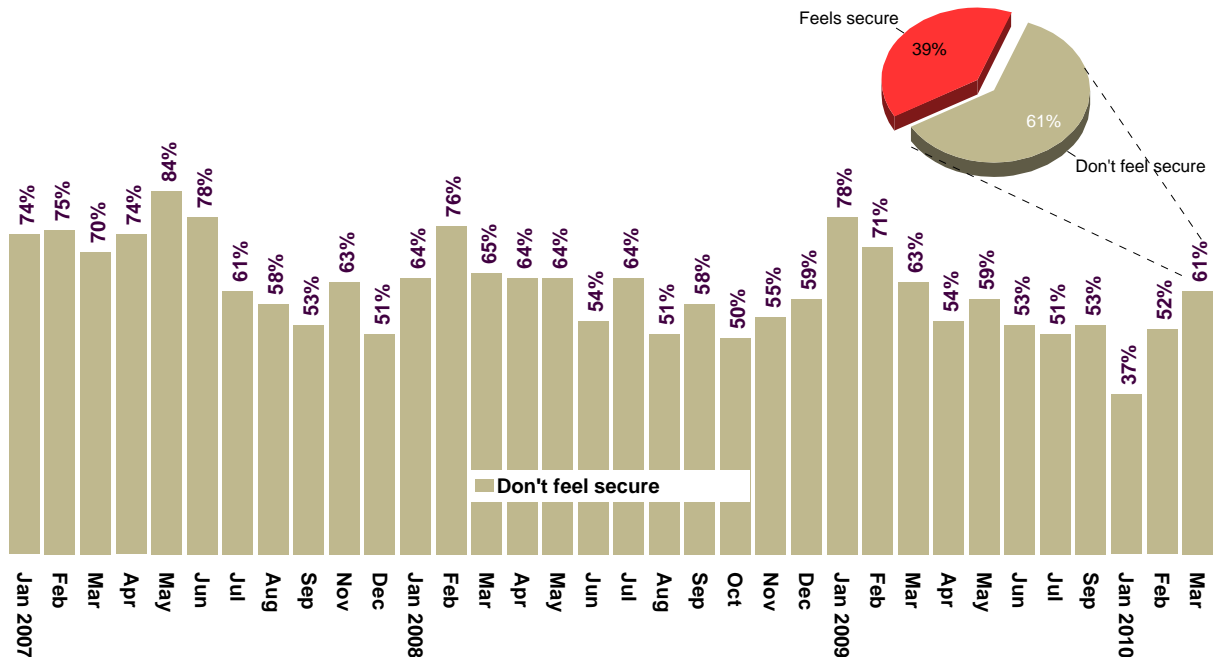




Table 5: Feeling of security with respect to yourself, family property according to faction and region

	Factional trust				Region	
	Fateh	Hamas	Others	None	West Bank	Gaza Strip
I feel secure	40%	52%	30%	36%	43%	32%
I do not feel secure	60%	48%	70%	64%	57%	68%

Table 6: Feeling of security with respect to yourself, family property according to gender, age and poverty level

	Gender		Age					Poverty level	
	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Below poverty	Above poverty
I feel secure	42%	36%	39%	34%	41%	36%	46%	37%	40%
I do not feel secure	58%	64%	61%	66%	59%	64%	54%	63%	60%

C. Identity

It is been said that the notion of identity is highly related to “sameness and continuity of some shared world image[♦]”. If this is the case then why do the majority of the Palestinians identify themselves with Islam not with Palestine? As indicated in figure 5, below, more than half of the Palestinian public identify themselves as primarily Muslims. Only 21% identified themselves as Palestinians first.

Is Identification with Islam a sign of losing the sense of Palestinian identity or is it simply an indication of the lack of trust in the Palestinian national movement? The importance of identity in shaping political and social attitudes is recognized by many scholars. As such, NEC will start monitoring the notion of identity regularly for the hope of shedding more light on the way Palestinians think about their lives in general and about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in particular.

As noted in tables 7 and 8, below, identification with Islam is prominent among all sectors of the Palestinian society, including those that are perceived to be less religious, such as those who support left parties. Although 68% of the respondents that trust Hamas identify with Islam, first, 48% of the respondents of Fateh also identify with Islam first. Respondents that do not trust any faction are somewhat closer to the position of Fateh in this regard.

53% of the respondents that trust Fateh first identify themselves as Palestinians, Arabs, and human beings first while the percentage among the Hamas supporters is 35%

[♦] Erikson, E.H. (1970). Reflections on the dissent of contemporary youth., International Journal of Psychoanalysis, 51, 11-22



Figure 5: Self identification

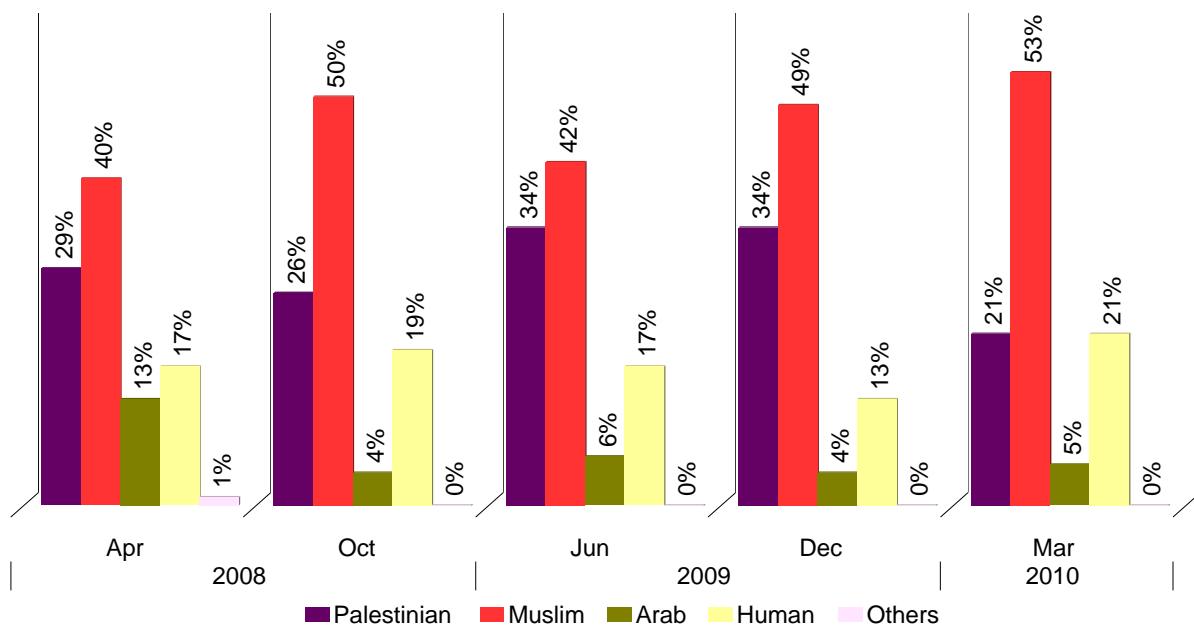


Table 7: Self identification according to faction and region

	Factional trust				Region	
	Fateh	Hamas	Others	None	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Muslim First	48%	65%	39%	54%	51%	56%
Palestinian First	25%	19%	22%	19%	20%	22%
Arab First	6%	3%	4%	4%	5%	4%
Human being first	22%	13%	35%	23%	23%	18%
Other	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Table 8: How do you identify yourself according to gender, age and poverty level

	Gender		Age					Poverty level	
	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Below poverty	Above poverty
Muslim First	53%	52%	50%	52%	52%	59%	54%	58%	51%
Palestinian First	21%	21%	29%	18%	19%	15%	25%	16%	21%
Arab First	7%	4%	3%	6%	5%	4%	7%	5%	5%
Human being first	19%	23%	18%	23%	24%	22%	15%	21%	23%
Other	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%



II. Palestinian politics

A. Leadership

The loss of Palestinian identity among the Palestinians is probably a reason why a significant proportion of the public is not affiliated to any party or not supportive of any leader. Some may argue that this is the case in most countries in the world. However, the very fact that the Palestinians are occupied and their freedom is curtailed may be a reason why this should not be the case. All Palestinians want an end to occupation and, as such, they have ideas and expectations about the future. The identification with Islam and not to Palestine, thus, may be a result of loss of hope among a significant proportion of Palestinians in any leader and in any institution, especially the youth.

As illustrated in figure 6, below, about 46% of the respondents do not have trust in any of the two main leaders of the Palestinians: Abbas and Hanieh, even though trust in Abbas seems to be much more evident than it is the case for Hanieh. Of those who do not trust any faction, 82% do not trust either leader.

Figure 6: Trust Abu Mazen vs. Hanieh

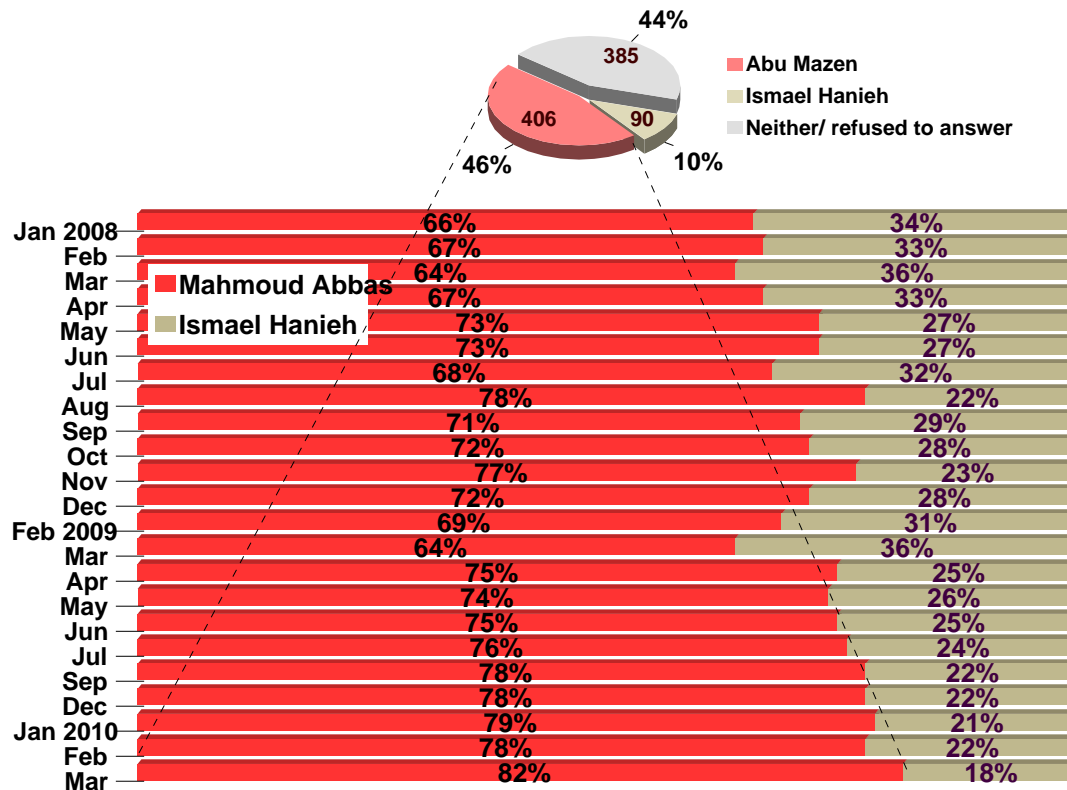




Table 9: Trust in Abu Mazen vs. trust in Ismael Hanieh according to faction and region

	Factional trust				Region	
	Fateh	Hamas	Others	None	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Abu Mazen	87%	3%	26%	12%	47%	45%
Ismael Hanieh	0%	86%	4%	6%	7%	15%
Neither	13%	11%	70%	82%	46%	40%

Table 10: Trust in Abu Mazen vs. trust in Ismael Hanieh according to gender, age and poverty level

	Gender		Age					Poverty level	
	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Below poverty	Above poverty
Abu Mazen	56%	38%	42%	48%	49%	46%	43%	46%	46%
Ismael Hanieh	10%	10%	15%	7%	7%	15%	9%	14%	9%
Neither	34%	52%	43%	44%	44%	39%	48%	40%	45%

B. Factional support

The same is also true for factional trust. Although the majority of the respondents trust Fateh, 43% of the respondents said that they do not trust any of the political or religious leaders.

The level of support for Fateh is slightly more significant among the West Bank respondents. Whereas, for example, 48% of the West Bank respondents indicated their trust in Fateh, the percentage in the Gaza Strip was only 42%. On the other hand, whereas the level of support for Hamas in the West Bank did not exceed 5%, the percentage in the Gaza Strip was 14%, as noted in table 11.

The relatively strong trust in Fateh is due to its pluralistic nature. Fateh absorbs many ideologies and accommodates diverse views on such issues, as the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the role of religion...etc. Accordingly, while identification with Fateh is strong, it is not certain that in elections Fateh will be equally strong as the number of those who will represent it will not necessarily reflect the viewpoints of the very many constituencies of Fateh.

As usual, support for Fateh is stronger among males than among females. While 55% of the male respondents said that they trust Fateh most, the percentage of women who shared their view was 38%. As noted in table 12, the lack of trust in any faction is higher among females (51%) than among males (34%).



Figure 7: Factional trust

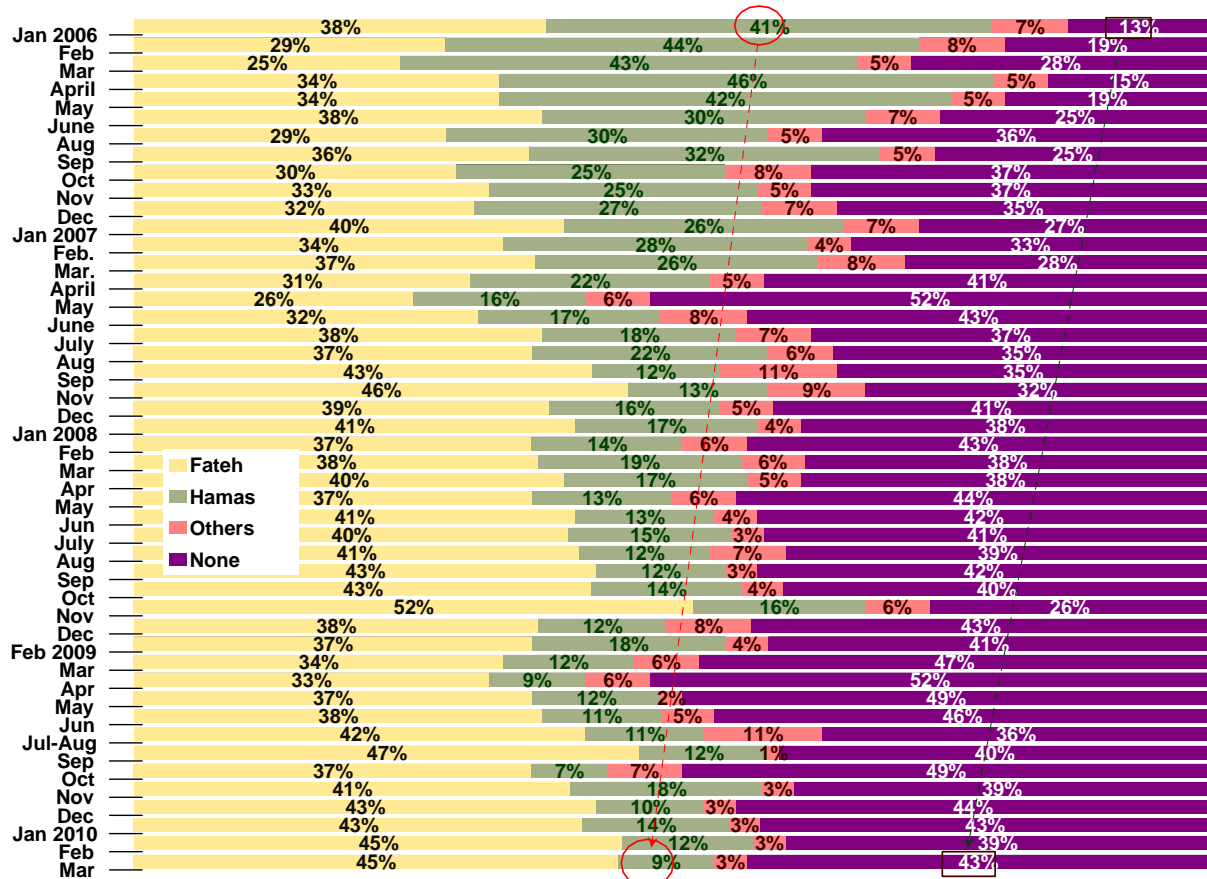


Table 11: Factional trust according to region of residence

	Region	
	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Fateh	48%	42%
Hamas	5%	14%
Others	3%	3%
None	45%	42%

Table 12: Factional trust according to gender, age and poverty

	Gender		Age					Poverty level	
	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Below poverty	Above poverty
Fateh	55%	38%	44%	45%	47%	45%	42%	46%	46%
Hamas	9%	9%	12%	7%	6%	12%	8%	11%	8%
Others	3%	2%	5%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%
None	34%	51%	39%	46%	45%	41%	47%	41%	43%



C. The Gaza vs. Ramallah governments

The results of the monthly surveys of NEC and the ensuing analysis directs to the conclusions that support for Fateh is primarily based on the perception that the Fateh vision is more pragmatic while support for Hamas is related mainly to the religiosity of Palestinians and to the belief that Fateh is politically inept and corrupt.

In measuring the extent to which Fateh and Hamas are perceived politically by the Palestinians, a number of questions have been asked regularly to the Palestinians. The first is related to the type of strategy the Palestinians find to be more appropriate for the materialization of the Palestinian national interest and the other is related to the perception about the legality of the Ramallah vs. the Gaza governments.

1. Attitude about the best strategy

In relative terms, more Palestinians believe that the best strategy for maximizing the Palestinian national interest is that of Fateh. In absolute terms, however, almost one third of the Palestinian people believe that neither strategy is appropriate, as illustrated in figure 8, below.

Distrust in both the Hamas and Fateh policies is strong among the respondents that do not trust any faction (72%), among female respondents (41%), and among the Westbankers (41%). These and other results are overviewed in tables 14 and 15, below.

Gaza respondents have more confidence in the strategy of Fateh than the West Bank respondents do.

Figure 8: The best strategy to achieve the national supreme interests

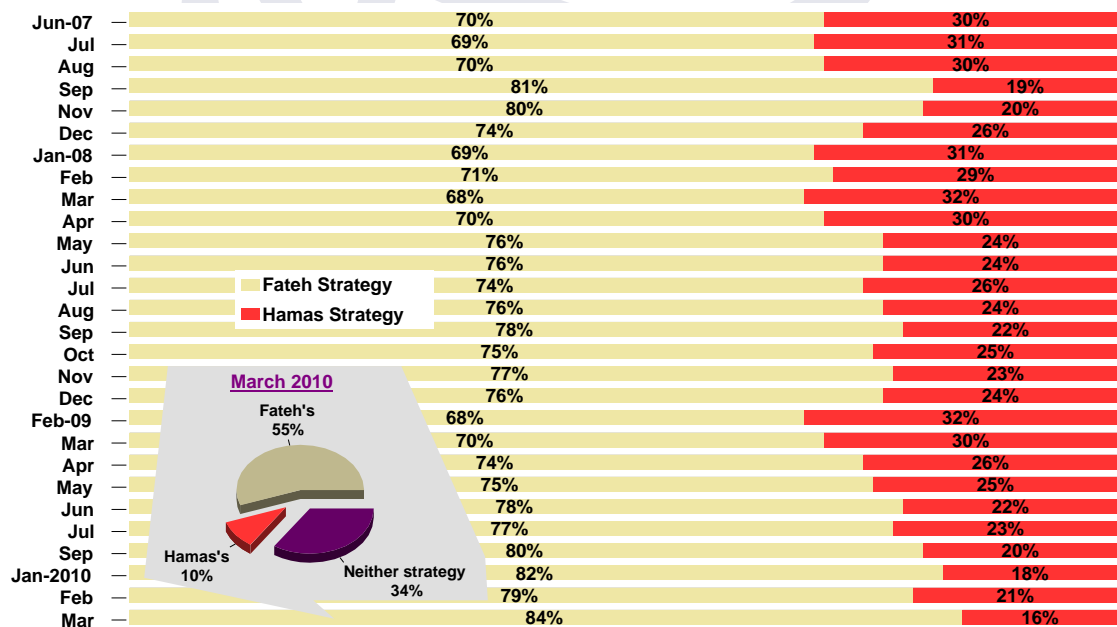




Table 13: The best strategy to achieve national interest according to faction and region

	Factional trust				Region	
	Fateh	Hamas	Others	None	West Bank	Gaza Strip
The strategy of Fateh	94%	7%	45%	21%	53%	60%
The strategy of Hamas	1%	76%	5%	6%	7%	16%
Neither	5%	17%	50%	72%	41%	24%

Table 14: The best strategy to achieve national interest according to gender, age and poverty

	Gender		Age					Poverty level	
	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Below poverty	Above poverty
The strategy of Fateh	62%	50%	56%	57%	57%	52%	50%	56%	55%
The strategy of Hamas	11%	9%	15%	9%	8%	12%	8%	14%	9%
Neither	27%	41%	29%	34%	36%	36%	42%	31%	36%

2. Attitude about the legitimate government in the oPt

The association of the Fayyad’s government with the Ramallah “regime” and the factional independence of the prime minister from Fateh were not negative factors as far as the Palestinian public is concerned. On the contrary, when asked about the government they find to be more legitimate, 57% of the respondents answered the Fayyad government. When examined according to the explanatory variables, it is found that Fateh supporters strongly favor with the Fayyad government while Hamas supporters go for the Hanieh government. About 64% of the respondents that do not trust any faction find neither government is legitimate. This and other results are overviewed in tables 15 and 16 below.

Figure 9: The legitimate government in the oPt

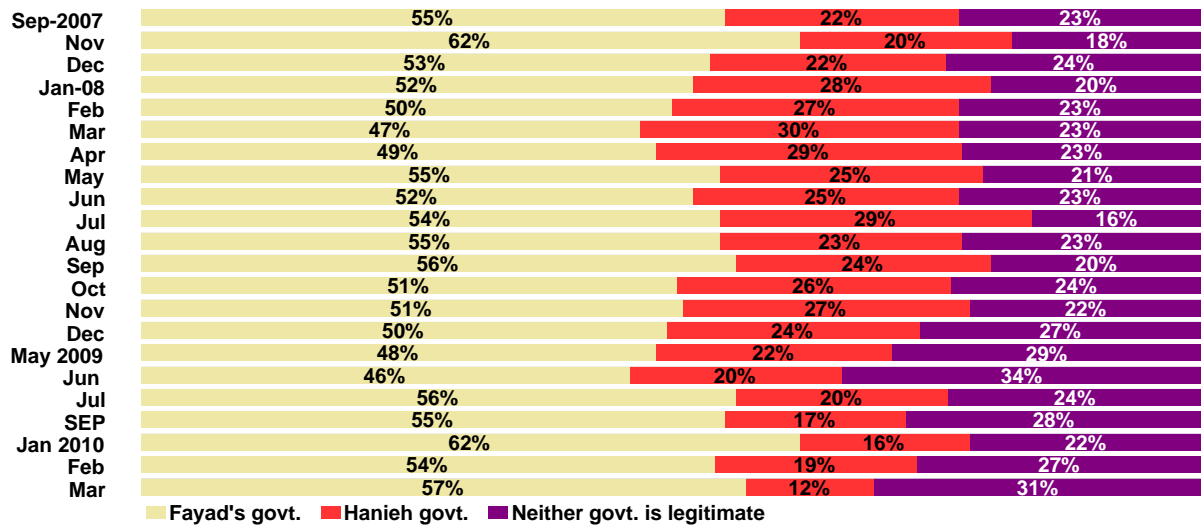




Table 15: The legitimate government in the oPt according to factional trust and region

	Factional trust				Region	
	Fateh	Hamas	Others	None	West Bank	Gaza Strip
The Fayyad government	93%	7%	35%	28%	58%	55%
The Hanieh government	1%	84%	4%	8%	8%	18%
No one is legitimate	6%	9%	61%	64%	34%	27%

Table 16: The legitimate government in the oPt according to gender, age category and poverty level

	Gender		Age					Poverty level	
	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Below poverty	Above poverty
The Fayyad government.	63%	51%	51%	59%	61%	59%	52%	56%	57%
The Hanieh government.	13%	11%	17%	8%	10%	17%	10%	18%	10%
No one is legitimate	23%	38%	31%	33%	29%	24%	38%	26%	33%

IV. Palestinian Israeli relations

A. The peace settlement

Approximately 61% of the respondents said that they support reaching a peace agreement with Israel. As illustrated in figure 10, below, this percentage is 10% lower than that of February 2010. The drop in support for a peace settlement may be explained by the declarations by Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister to intensify settlement activities in Jerusalem.

The strongest level of support for a peace settlement is among the West Bank respondents (65%), Fateh supporters (79%) and among the middle aged respondents. The position of the respondents that do not trust any faction falls in the middle of the positions of both Hamas and Fateh on the peace agreement with Israel. As pointed out in table 17, 52% of the non-partisans support reaching a peace settlement.



Figure 10: Support or oppose a peace settlement with Israel

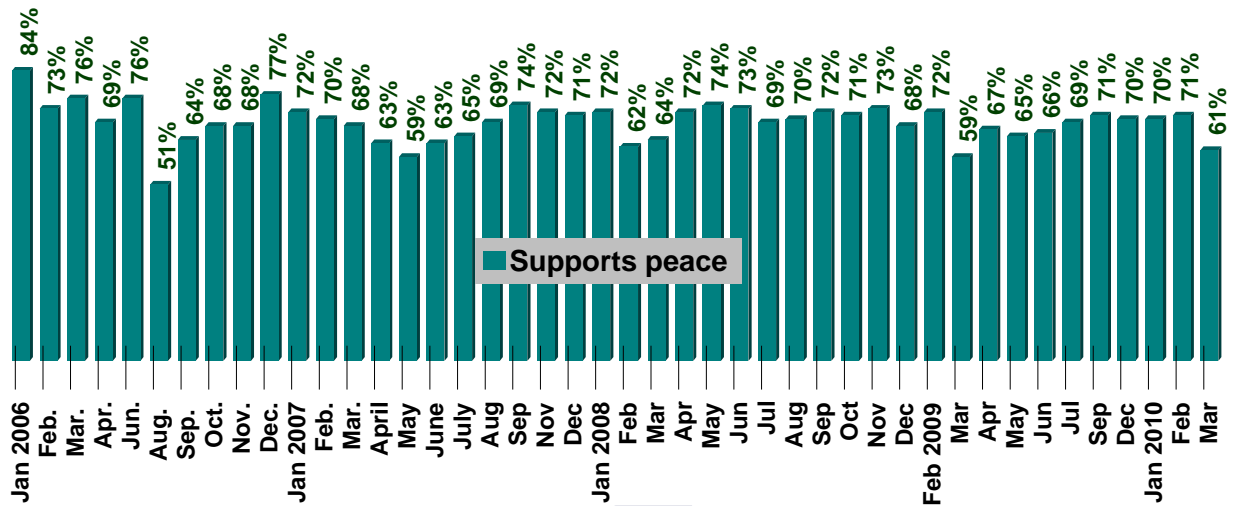


Table 17: Support or opposition to a peace settlement with Israel according to faction and region

	Factional trust				Region	
	Fateh	Hamas	Others	None	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Support	79%	27%	43%	52%	65%	55%
Oppose	21%	73%	57%	48%	35%	45%

Table 18: Support or opposition to a peace settlement with Israel according to gender, age and poverty level

	Gender		Age					Poverty level	
	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Below poverty	Above poverty
Support	64%	59%	52%	64%	68%	59%	58%	56%	63%
Oppose	36%	41%	48%	36%	32%	41%	42%	44%	37%

B. Hamas and Israel

Ever since NEC has conducted its first monthly survey more than four years ago, a question was asked about the position of the Palestinian people towards the position of Hamas regarding the state of Israel. In many respects, this question provides an



indication of the extent to which the Palestinian people are genuine about reaching a peace agreement with Israel.

Time and again, the results have been in opposition to the Hamas' position. As illustrated in figure 11, below, 66% of the Palestinians believe that Hamas should alter its position towards the existence of Israel.

The rejection of the position of Hamas is strong among the supporters of Fateh (82%) as opposed to the position of the supporters of Hamas (14%), among males (75%) as opposed to females (58%), and among the older generations than among the younger generations. Moreover, the economic situation of the respondents is unquestionably a factor in this regard, while the percentage of the respondents who reject the position of Hamas from within the well-to-do Palestinians is 68%, the percentage is 58% among the respondents who are economically less advantaged, as indicated in table 20, below. This and other results are overviewed in tables 19 and 20, below.

Figure 11: Support or oppose Hamas' position towards the elimination of Israel

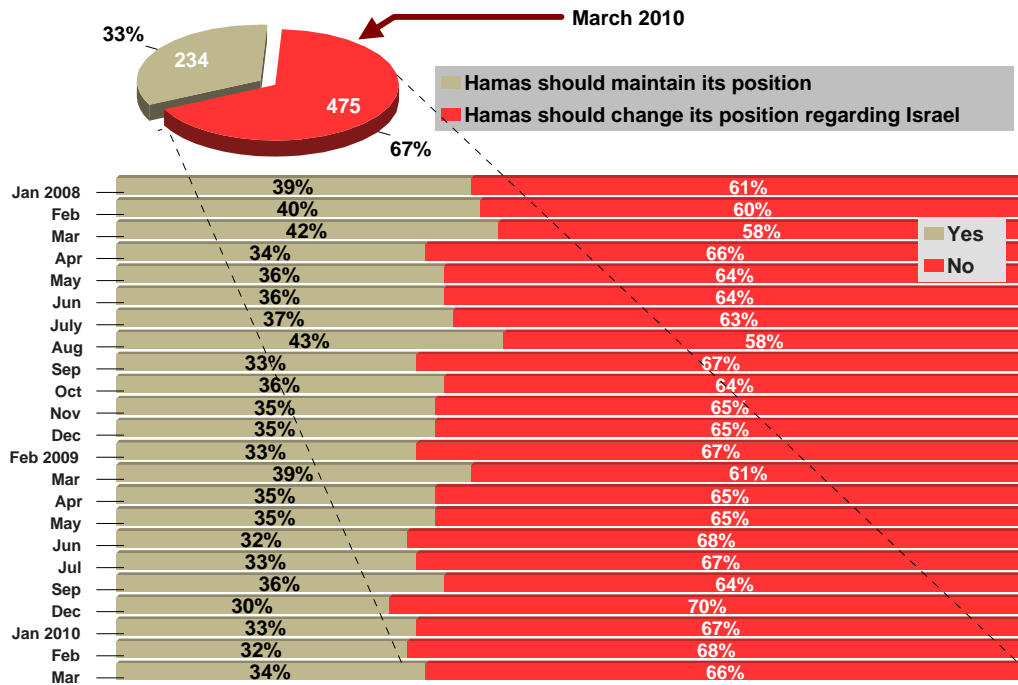


Table 19: Support or oppose Hamas' position towards the elimination of Israel according to faction and region of residence

	Factional trust				Region	
	Fateh	Hamas	Others	None	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Hamas should maintain its position	18%	86%	33%	40%	32%	38%
Hamas should change its position	82%	14%	67%	60%	68%	62%



Table 20: Support or oppose Hamas' position towards the elimination of Israel according to gender, age category and poverty level

	Gender		Age					Poverty level	
	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Below poverty	Above poverty
Hamis should maintain its position on Israel	25%	42%	47%	35%	25%	36%	22%	42%	32%
Hamis should change its position regarding Israel	75%	58%	53%	65%	75%	64%	78%	58%	68%

V. NEC's Elections Monitor

It is more than four years since the last Palestinian elections took place. The elections which have split the Palestinians and provided Israel with ample justifications to stall and obstruct any progress aimed at ending the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Ironically, many argue these days that new elections in Palestine will prove to be the salvation for the many obstacles confronting the Palestinians both internally and externally. Despite the significant hurdles that confront these elections, the Ramallah government has decided to proceed with elections on the local government level; in an attempt to end the current impasse, at least to some extent.

In order to gauge public opinion regarding the elections, NEC will add a series of questions every month aiming to develop a sense of the value of these elections and the extent to which they will have a positive impact in as far as the Palestinian-Palestinian conflict is concerned.

A. Registration for elections

When the respondents (from the West Bank only[♦]) were asked about whether they registered for the elections, 31% said that they did not and that they do not intend to do so and 12% said that they will register later. About 57% said that they did register indeed.

As noted in table 21, below, the proportion of Hamas supporters who said that they did register for elections is 50%, as opposed to 75% from among the supporters of Fateh. As for the respondents that do not trust any faction, the level of registration for elections reached 44%. Surprisingly, only 48% of the female respondents said that they did register while the percentage among the male registration reached 72%.

[♦] Because Hamas opposes to carry out the elections in the Gaza Strip

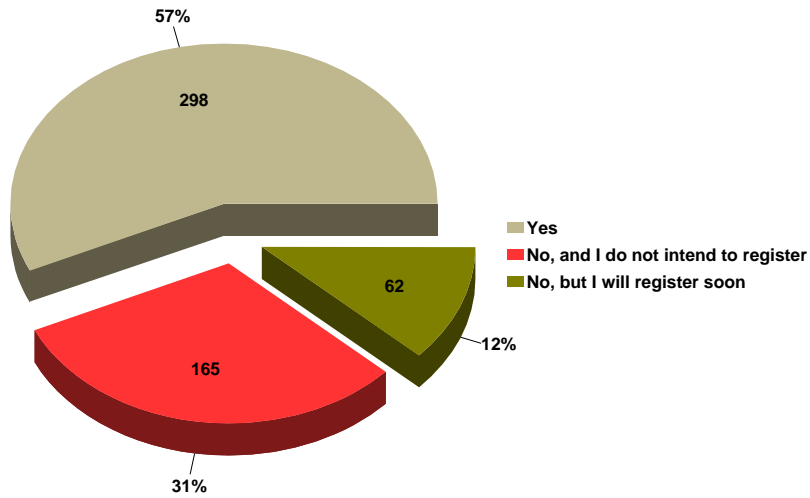


Table 21: Did you register for elections according to faction and region

	Factional trust				Region	
	Fateh	Hamas	Others	None	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Yes	72%	50%	64%	44%	57%	0%
I do not intend to register	15%	33%	27%	47%	31%	0%
I will register soon	13%	17%	9%	9%	12%	0%

Table 22: Did you register for elections according to gender, age and poverty level

	Gender		Age					Poverty level	
	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Below poverty	Above poverty
Yes	72%	48%	56%	57%	58%	57%	56%	56%	55%
I do not intend to register	22%	37%	31%	31%	34%	33%	28%	28%	35%
I will register soon	6%	15%	13%	12%	9%	10%	16%	16%	10%

B. Attitude towards local elections

To a large minority of the Palestinians, local elections will face obstacles. About 46% of the respondents said that the local elections in the West Bank will confront hurdles. This view is held by even 34% of the respondents supporting Fateh and by 62% of those supporting Hamas. As noted in tables 23 and 24, below, concern about the smoothness of elections in the West Bank is visible more among females than males and among the younger generation more so than among the older generations. Ironically, concern over the elections in the West Bank is higher among the respondents living in the West Bank than among those who reside in the Gaza Strip.



Figure 12: Attitude towards the smoothness of local elections

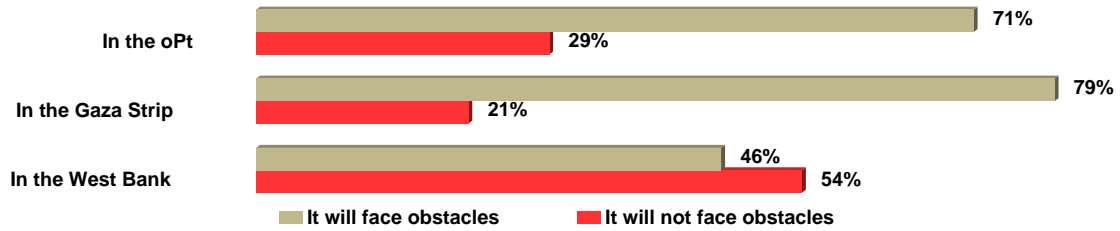


Table 23: Attitude towards the smoothness of local elections according to faction and region

		Factional trust				Region	
		Fateh	Hamas	Others	None	West Bank	Gaza Strip
In the oPt	It will face obstacles	71%	68%	83%	70%	64%	81%
	It will not	29%	32%	17%	30%	36%	19%
In the Gaza Strip	It will face obstacles	86%	61%	95%	76%	76%	86%
	It will not	14%	39%	5%	24%	24%	14%
In the West Bank	It will face obstacles	34%	62%	65%	56%	47%	44%
	It will not	66%	38%	35%	44%	53%	56%

Table 24: Attitude towards the smoothness of local elections according to gender, age and poverty level

		Gender		Age					Poverty level	
		Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Below poverty	Above poverty
In the oPt	It will face obstacles	68%	72%	76%	69%	70%	68%	68%	70%	72%
	It will not	32%	28%	24%	31%	30%	32%	32%	30%	28%
In the Gaza Strip	It will face obstacles	80%	80%	80%	82%	81%	75%	75%	80%	80%
	It will not	20%	20%	20%	18%	19%	25%	25%	20%	20%
In the West Bank	It will face obstacles	40%	51%	51%	44%	46%	46%	42%	48%	48%
	It will not	60%	49%	49%	56%	54%	54%	58%	52%	52%

C. Preference for the affiliation of the presidential candidate

Respondents were also asked to give their preference about the affiliation of the presidential candidate that they prefer, as illustrated in figure 13, 45% stated that their preference is the candidate of Fateh while only 7% gave their preference to the Hamas candidate. Still, 36% said that they will not vote for either and 12% mentioned some other candidate.

71% of the respondents, that do not trust any faction, said that they will not participate in the elections while the percentage is 16% among the respondents trusting Hamas and 6% among Fateh supporters.



Clearly, the strongest support for the Fateh candidate is from within the supporters of Fateh and from among the male respondents. A large proportion of females said that they will not participate, as noted in table 26.

Figure 13: The affiliation of the presidential candidate that the respondents would vote for in case elections were held next week (comparison between Jan 2010 and Mar 2010)

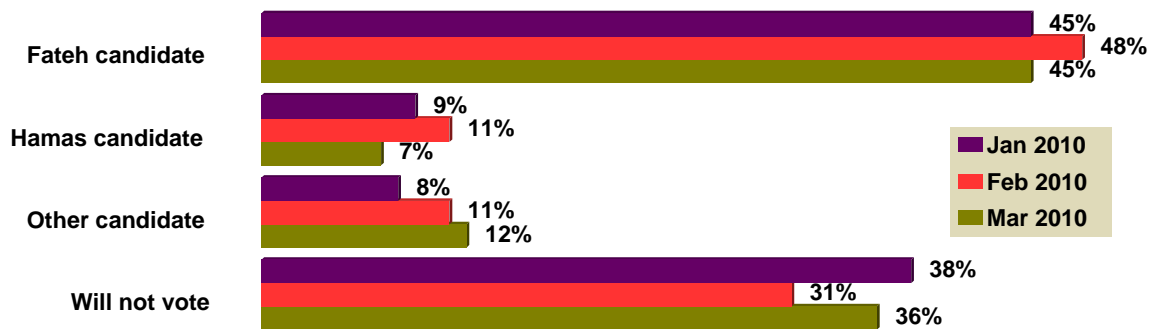


Table 25: The affiliation of the presidential candidate that the respondents would vote for in case elections were held next week according to faction and region

	Factional trust				Region	
	Fateh	Hamas	Others	None	West Bank	Gaza Strip
A Fateh candidate	89%	3%	32%	12%	46%	44%
A Hamas candidate	0%	73%	0%	1%	3%	11%
Other candidate	5%	8%	59%	16%	14%	11%
I Will not vote or refrain	6%	16%	9%	71%	37%	34%

Table 26: The affiliation of the presidential candidate that the respondents would vote for in case elections were held next week according to gender, age and poverty level

	Gender		Age					Poverty level	
	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Below poverty	Above poverty
A Fateh candidate	54%	38%	44%	49%	45%	44%	41%	46%	45%
A Hamas candidate	7%	6%	9%	3%	5%	10%	8%	10%	5%
Other candidate	14%	12%	12%	13%	13%	14%	11%	12%	13%
I Will not vote or refrain	24%	45%	34%	36%	37%	33%	41%	32%	36%

D. Preference for the affiliation of the candidates for the legislative body

Similar to the presidential elections, preference for the legislative elections favored Fateh. About 45% of the respondents said that they will vote for Fateh while only 7% said Hamas. Of the respondents who do not trust any faction, 70% said that they will boycott the elections, as outlined in table 28.



Once again, a significant percentage of women respondents said that they will boycott the elections while the percentage was only 24% among males who seem to be more inclined for the Fateh candidates.

Figure 14: The party that the respondents would vote for in case the legislative elections were held next week (comparison between Jan 2010 till Mar 2010)

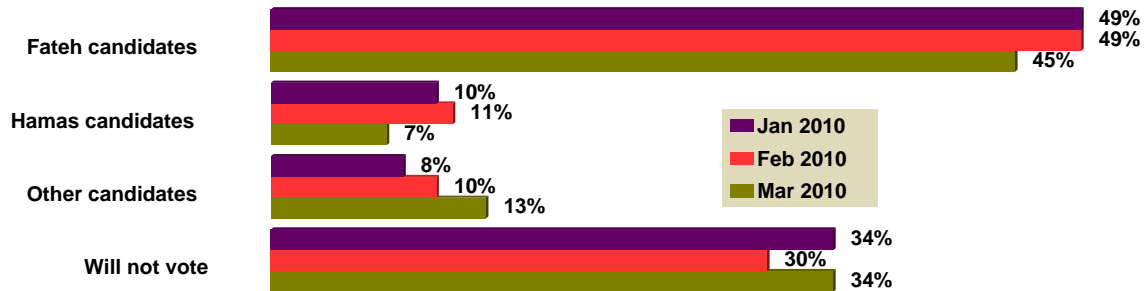


Table 27: The party that the respondents would vote for in case the legislative elections were held next week according to faction and region

	Factional trust				Region	
	Fateh	Hamas	Others	None	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Fateh list	90%	3%	27%	12%	46%	44%
Hamas list	0%	74%	0%	1%	4%	11%
Others	5%	8%	64%	17%	14%	12%
Will not vote or refrain	5%	15%	9%	70%	36%	33%

Table 28: The party that the respondents would vote for in case the legislative elections were held next week according to gender, age category and poverty level

	Gender		Age					Poverty level	
	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Below poverty	Above poverty
Fateh list	54%	38%	46%	46%	46%	43%	42%	49%	44%
Hamas list	7%	6%	9%	5%	4%	11%	8%	9%	6%
Others	15%	13%	14%	14%	13%	14%	10%	13%	14%
Will not vote or refrain	24%	43%	31%	35%	36%	33%	40%	29%	36%

While the results are without a doubt favorable to Fateh, it is important to note that the plurality of Fateh, or as some may argue its fragmentation, will be detrimental to its success especially if the movement fails from delivering a list of candidates that can provide a sense of unity among the diverse interest of Fateh and who are also known for their decency, honesty, and patriotism. The inability of Fateh to cater for its diverse constituencies will lead to results not dissimilar from those of January 2006 when Fateh lost the legislative branch to Hamas. The fact that over 40% of the respondents are not in favor of any political or religious faction will prove to be beneficial to Hamas if Fateh failed from providing that sense of unity and integrity to its supporters, many of whom are distrustful of any organizations.



III. The economy

A. Evolution of poverty

The results of NEC's monthly surveys indicate that the economic condition of the Palestinian population is steadily improving. As can be observed from figure 15, below, the poverty rate in the oPt is 29%. This is also true for the Gaza Strip where 32% of the population there are below poverty, a figure that may be regarded by many as wide of the mark.

The tunnels, international assistance and the continuous injection of funds in the Gaza Strip by the Ramallah government in the form of salaries to the public sector have without any doubt helped improve the economic situation of the strip.

Price of fuel in the Gaza Strip is three times lower than that in the West Bank so are other commodities that are transported to the Strip by the way of the tunnels.

Figure 15: Evolution of the poverty levels in the oPt

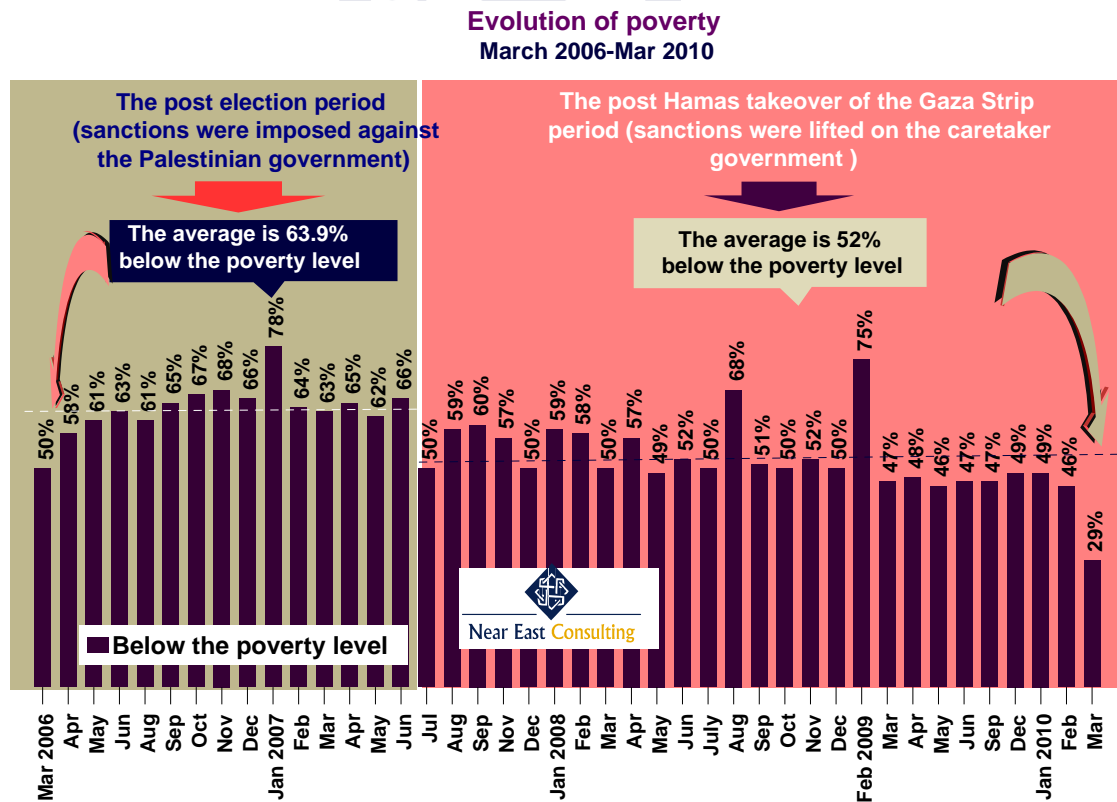


Table 29: Poverty according to factional trust and governorate

	Factional trust				Governorate	
	Fateh	Hamas	Others	None	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Below poverty	28%	35%	23%	27%	27%	32%
Above poverty	72%	65%	77%	73%	73%	68%



Table 30: Poverty according to gender and age category

	Gender		Age category				
	Male	Female	18-24 yrs.	25-34 yrs.	35-44 yrs.	45-54 yrs.	Over 55 yrs.
Below poverty	27%	31%	36%	23%	29%	36%	22%
Above poverty	73%	69%	64%	77%	71%	64%	78%

B. Employment

Improvement in the economic situation is also noticed in the employment condition of the labor force. In March 2010, the percentage of the Palestinians that were not employed was 18%, as opposed to 24% in January 2010.

In terms of the Palestinians who are most likely to be unemployed, the results show that about 37% of the respondents supporting Hamas are unemployed. In the Gaza Strip, the unemployment rate for March 2010 was 22%, as opposed to 16% in the West Bank. These and other results are overviewed in tables 31 and 32, below.

Figure 16: Labor force

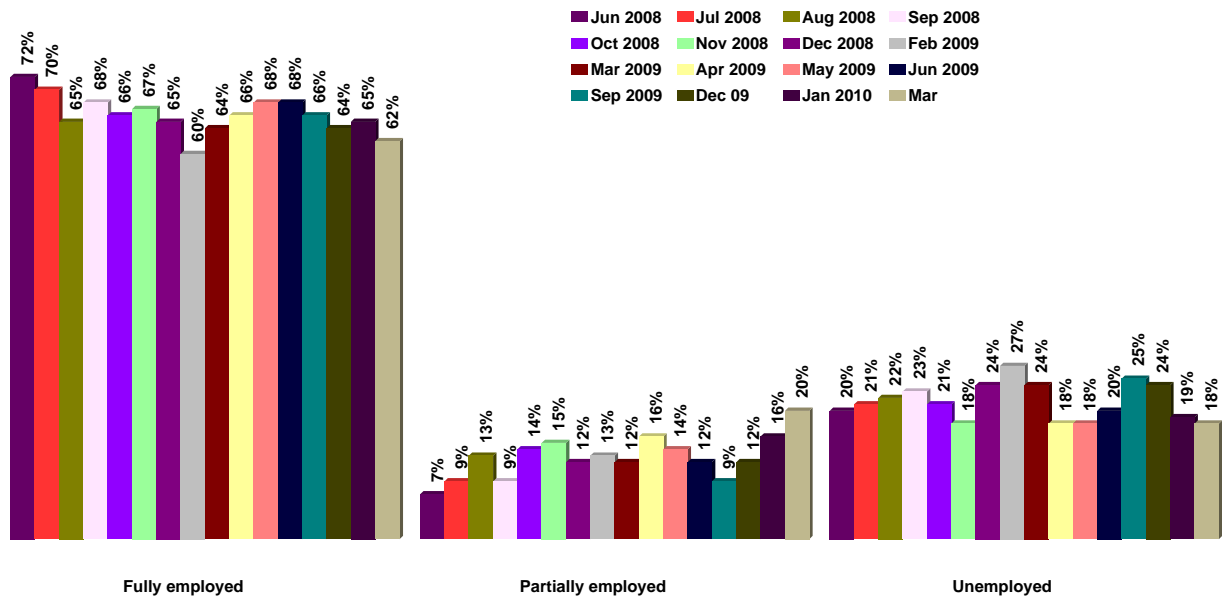




Table 31: Labor force according to factional trust and governorate

	Factional trust				Governorate	
	Fateh	Hamas	Others	None	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Employed full-time	65%	52%	54%	57%	63%	60%
Employed part-time	20%	11%	31%	20%	21%	18%
Not employed	15%	37%	15%	22%	16%	22%

Table 32: Labor force according to gender, age category and poverty level

	Gender		Age category					Poverty all	
	Male	Female	18-24 yrs.	25-34 yrs.	35-44 yrs.	45-54 yrs.	Over 55 yrs.	Below poverty	Above poverty
Full-time	63%	59%	44%	63%	72%	65%	48%	48%	67%
Part-time	19%	19%	22%	23%	20%	17%	11%	32%	16%
Not employed	17%	22%	34%	14%	9%	18%	41%	21%	17%
