

# Arab Barometer VIII

## Palestine Report - Report 4 Palestinian Perception of Migration



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## Executive Summary

On the eve of October 7, about a third of Gazans and about a fifth of West Bankers said they were considering emigrating from Palestine. The main drivers seem economic, political, educational, security and concerns about corruption. The most preferred destination for immigration is Turkey, followed by Germany, Canada, the United States and Qatar. The vast majority of Palestinians reported receiving no remittances from relatives in the diaspora. The vast majority supports the right of foreign domestic workers in Palestine to always have their passports, to a day off a week, and to a bank account in which they receive their salaries.

These are the results of the latest wave of the Arab Barometer (AB) poll in Palestine, the 8th to be conducted since the start of these polls in the Arab World. This report is restricted to findings related to Palestinian perception of migration. The poll was conducted by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PSR) in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip essentially during the period immediately before the start of the October the 7th war in the Gaza Strip and its envelop on the Israeli side.

The period leading up to the poll witnessed a number of important developments, including the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Oslo Accords. The period saw a rise in the number of Israeli incursions into Palestinian cities and refugee camps, particularly in the northern parts of the West Bank. During this period, Palestinian factional leaders met in City of El Alamein in Egypt in the presence of President Abbas but failed to agree on a joint statement. During this period, settler terrorist acts in Palestinian areas of the West Bank increased, as did armed attacks by Palestinians against settlers and Israelis. Finally, there have been press reports that there are US-Saudi negotiations to reach an agreement to normalize Saudi-Israeli relations and that Palestinian-Saudi and Palestinian-American meetings have been held to set Palestinian conditions for this normalization agreement.

This report is the fourth in a series covering the results of the current eighth wave of the Arab Barometer in Palestine (AB8). The first report reviewed the findings regarding the internal balance of power and Palestinian-Israeli relations before and after October 7. The second report reviewed Palestinian perceptions and beliefs regarding various international and regional actors and other international issues. The Third report addressed Palestinian perception of governance. The current report is focus on perception of emigration. While the focus is placed on the findings of AB8 regarding this topic, the report sets to compare these findings with those obtained by PSR in AB7, conducted two years earlier.

The Arab Barometer interviews were conducted face-to-face during the period between 28 September and 8 October 2023 with a random sample of 1,189 adults in 120 residential locations in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem. The interviews in the Gaza Strip were completed on October 6, one day before the start of Hamas's offensive on the Gaza periphery, which Hamas called the "Al-Aqsa

Flood." The sample size in the Gaza Strip is 399 people and in the West Bank 790, and the margin of error is +/-3%.

The other survey cited in this report for comparative purposes is AB7, which was conducted in November 2021. Palestine report on AB7 can be accessed here: [https://www.arabbarometer.org/wp-content/uploads/Arab-Barometer-VII\\_Palestine-Report-2021-2022.pdf](https://www.arabbarometer.org/wp-content/uploads/Arab-Barometer-VII_Palestine-Report-2021-2022.pdf)

## Main Findings:

This fourth report of the eighth round of the Arab Barometer in Palestine, which was conducted in the last few days of September 2023 and the first week of October 2023 and was completed in the Gaza Strip just one day before October 7, addresses five issues, all related to migration:

**Demand for emigration:** On the eve of October 7, 2023, a quarter of Palestinians, 31% in the Gaza Strip and 21% in the West Bank, said they were considering emigrating from Palestine. Among those considering emigrating, 30% say they would do so even if they don't have the required papers.

**Reasons driving emigration:** When asked about the reasons for migration, the largest percentage said that they were economic reasons, while the second and third reasons are "political" reasons or educational opportunities. The fourth reason is security, and the fifth is corruption.

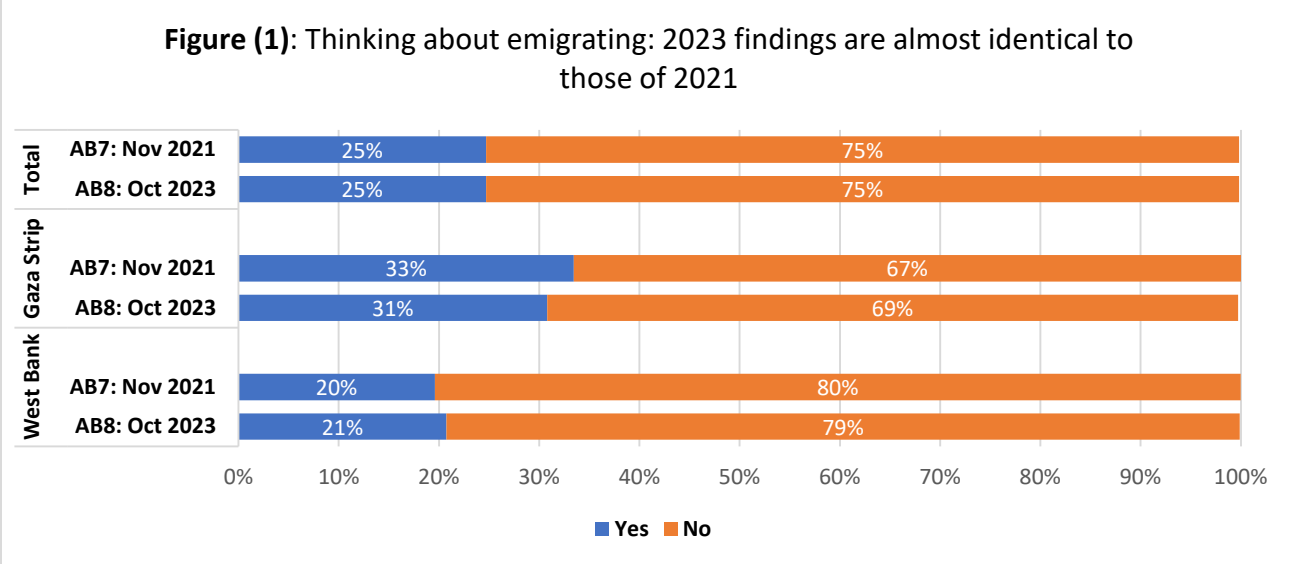
**Top five destinations for emigration:** The most preferred destination for immigration is Turkey, followed by Germany, Canada, the United States and Qatar

**Remittances from family members living abroad:** The vast majority of Palestinians reported receiving no remittances from relatives in the diaspora, while a small percentage said they received remittances monthly or annually.

**Support for the rights of foreign domestic workers in Palestine:** The poll found that more than three quarters of Palestinians strongly support or somewhat support a law that guarantees the right of foreign domestic workers in Palestine to always have their passports, and an even larger percentage supports the right of foreign domestic workers in Palestine to a day off a week, and the right of these workers to a bank account in which they receive their salaries.

### 1) Thinking about emigration from Palestine:

A quarter of Palestinians say they have thought about emigrating. For obvious reasons related to economic and political conditions, demand for emigration is higher in the Gaza Strip than in the West Bank, 31% and 21% respectively. The total findings are identical to those recorded in AB7 in 2021 despite minor differences when looking at the West Bank and the Gaza Strip separately, as shown in the figure below.



As we found in previous waves, demand for emigration is highest among men and the youth. It is worth noting that while the gap between the totals in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip stands at 10 percentage points, it grows considerably when looking at specific groups in the two areas

*Gender:* As the table below illustrates, males in the Gaza Strip are much more likely than males in the West Bank to seek emigration, 38% and 21% respectively, a 17-point gap.

*Age:* Similarly, the youth in the Gaza Strip are much more likely than the youth in the West Bank to seek emigration, 44% to 28% respectively, a gap of 16 points.

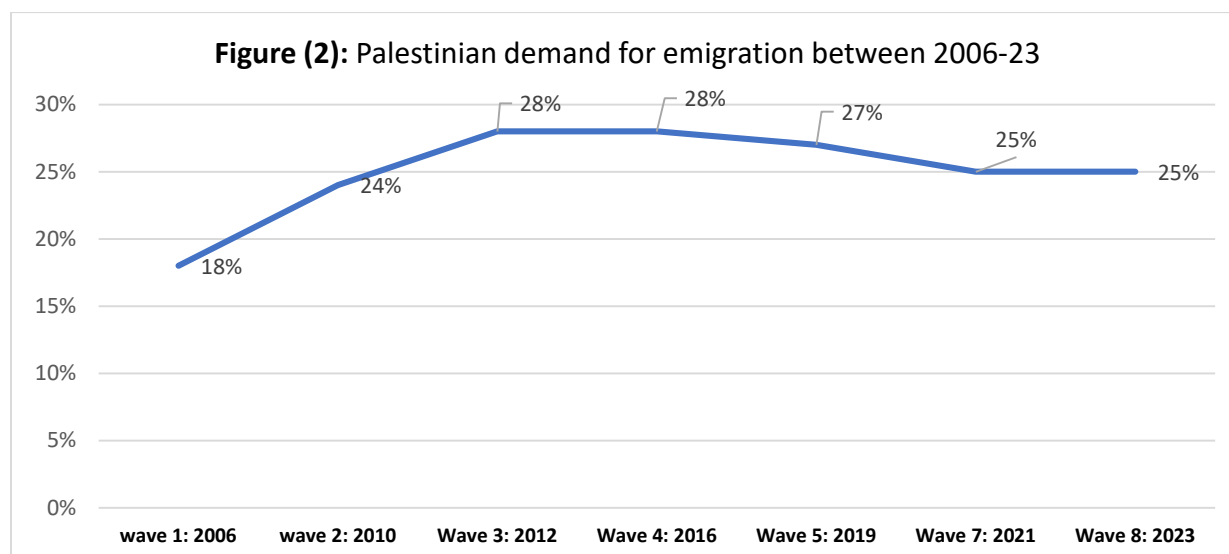
*Education:* Surprisingly, while education matters in the West Bank, it is much less important in the Gaza Strip. Among West Bankers, the higher the education, the higher the demand for emigration, 29% among those with a high level of education beyond high school and 17% among those with a high school education or less. In the Gaza Strip, by contrast, the less educated are more interested in emigrating than the more educated, 33% and 28% respectively.

*Vote in elections:* It is also worth noting that those who intend to vote for third parties are more likely than others to seek to emigrate. Moreover, in the West Bank, those intending to vote for Hamas are slightly more likely than those who intend to vote for Fatah to seek emigration. The opposite is true in the Gaza Strip, as those who intend to vote for Fatah are a lot more likely to seek emigration compared to those who intend to vote for Hamas, 31% and 14% respectively. Finally, Gazans who say they will not vote for any electoral list and those who say they will not take part in the elections, are much more likely to seek emigration than those who intend to vote for Hamas or Fatah.

**Table (1):** Demand for emigration in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip based on selected indicators

	Age		Gender		Education		Vote intentions				
	18-29 years	30 years and over	Male	Female	Tawjih i (high school) or less	Above Tawjih i	Fata h	Hama s	Third parties	Non e	Will not participate in elections
<b>West Bank</b>	28%	17%	21%	20%	17%	29%	16%	19%	48%	22%	20%
<b>Gaza Strip</b>	44%	23%	38%	24%	33%	28%	31%	14%	45%	43%	34%

As shown in the following figure, the current finding indicates a slight decline compared to the period between 2012 and 2019 but it is higher than the demand for emigration in the first and second waves of the Arab Barometer in 2006 and 2010 respectively.

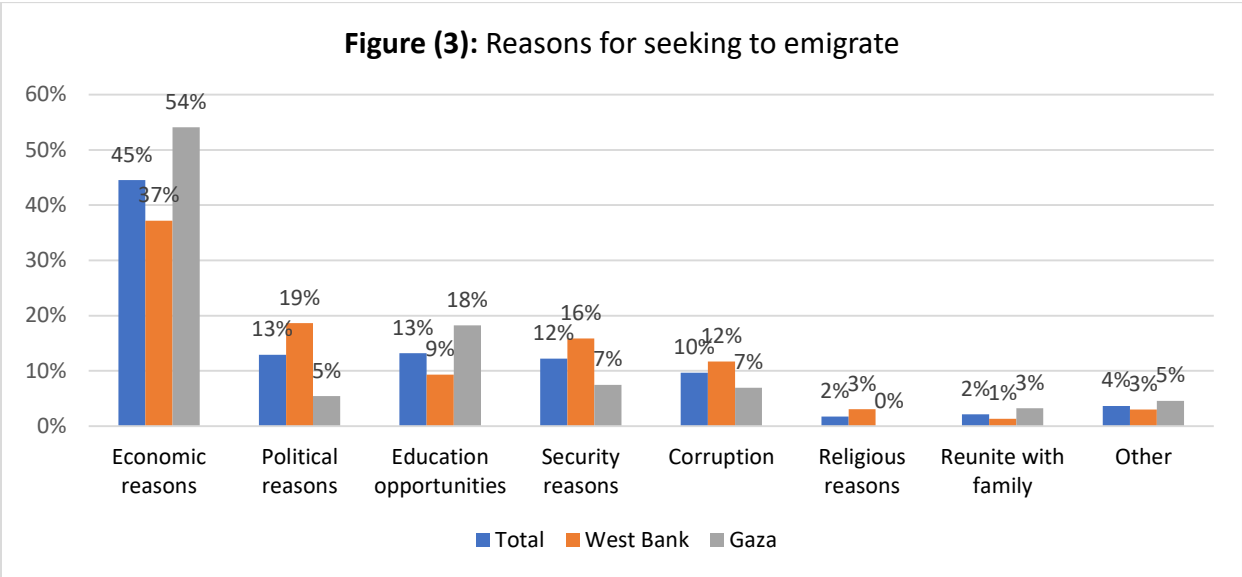


Among those who have considered emigrating, 30% say they would do so even if they did not have the required papers. Here too, the percentage is much higher in the Gaza Strip than in the West Bank, 43% and 16% respectively. The current total figure is identical to the one we found two years ago in AB7.

## 2) Reasons for emigration:

When asked about the reasons for wanting to emigrate, the largest percentage (45%) indicated economic reasons, with a majority of Gazans (54%) compared to only 37% of West Bankers providing that answer. The second and third responses received the same percentage (13% each) mentioned “political” reasons or education opportunities. The second reason for West Bankers were political, indicated by 19%. But only 5% of Gazans

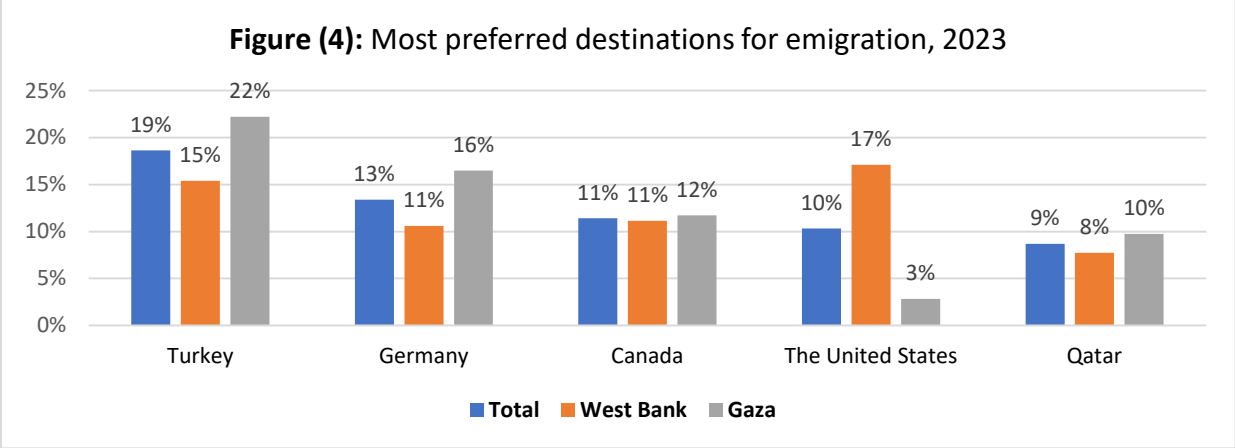
indicated the same reason. The education opportunities was stated by Gazans more than West Bankers, 18% and 9% respectively. The fourth reason stated is security, indicated by 12% of all Palestinians, but with a higher percentage in the West Bank compared to the Gaza Strip, 16% and 7% respectively. The West Bankers at the time of the survey were suffering from Israeli settler violence that gained significant momentum in 2023 after the formation of one of Israel's most extreme and nationalist religious governments in its entire history. The fifth reason indicated by 10% of people was corruption, with West Bankers stating it more often than Gazans, 12% and 7% respectively.



It is worth noting that in AB7, in November 2021, a majority of 56% stated that they were thinking about emigration for economic reasons followed by 14% stating “political” reasons. Only 9% gave educational reasons, 8% gave security reasons, and 4% referred to concerns about corruption.

**3) Top five destinations for emigration:**

When asked about the most preferred destination for emigration, the top country selected was Turkey, as was the case in AB7, followed by Germany, Canada, the US, and Qatar. Two years earlier, the US came second followed by Canada, the UAE, and Qatar. Other countries selected in the current wave included the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Australia, and several West European countries. It is worth noting, as indicated in the figure below, that Gazans were more likely than West Bankers to select Turkey and Germany while West Bankers were more likely to select the US.



**4) Remittance from family member living abroad:**

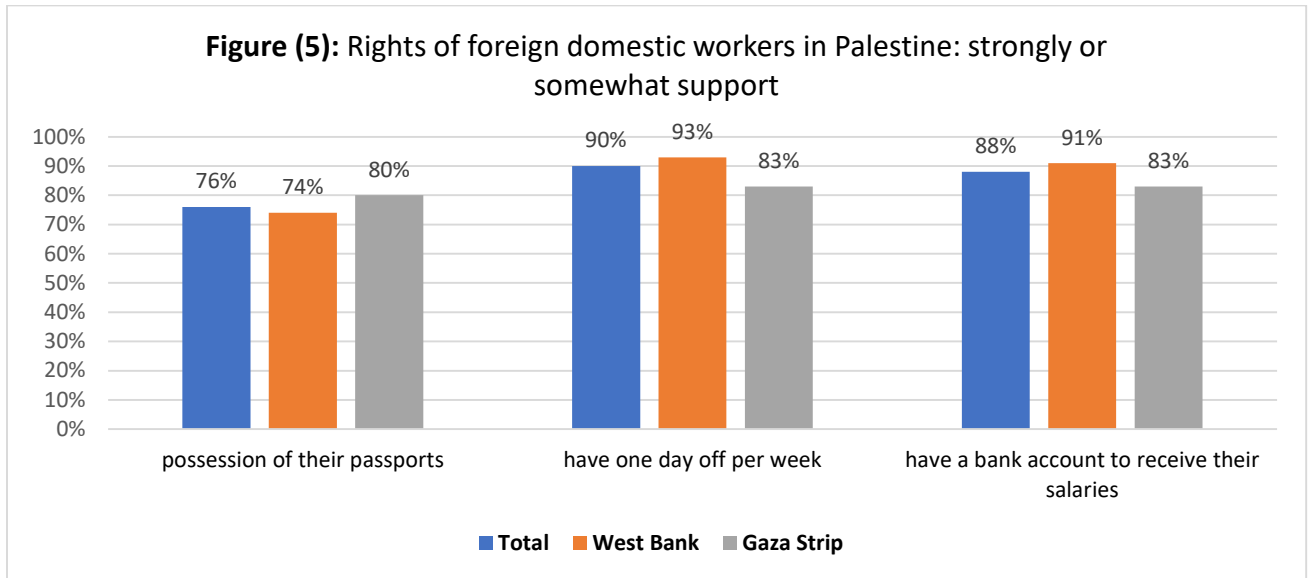
When asked if their family receive remittances from any immediate or extended family member living abroad, the vast majority of Palestinians, 88%, exactly as the case was in 2021, reported that they receive none. All other 2023 findings are almost identical to those reported in 2021: 3% reported receiving remittances on monthly basis, 5% few times a year, and 4% once a year. Findings show that in total, Gazans are more likely to receive remittances than West Bankers, 20% and 6% respectively.

**5) Support for rights of foreign domestic workers in Palestine:**

We asked the respondents about the rights of foreign domestic workers in Palestine. More than three quarters of Palestinians strongly support or somewhat support a law that would guarantee the right of foreign domestic workers in Palestine to always have possession of their passports; 20% somewhat oppose or strongly oppose that. Support for such law is a little higher in the Gaza Strip than in the West Bank, 80% to 74% respectively.

Similarly, 90% of the public somewhat support or strongly support a law that would guarantee the right of foreign domestic workers in Palestine to have one day off per week; 8% are opposed. West Bankers are more likely than Gazans to strongly support such a law, 64% and 45% respectively.

A similar percentage (88%) somewhat or strongly support a law that would guarantee the right of these workers to have a bank account where they can receive their salaries; 9% are opposed. Here too, West Bankers are more likely than Gazans to strongly support this law, 61% and 47% respectively.





## Emigration

Table of findings of relevant questions from the ARAB BAROMETER 8 in Palestine

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
<b>Q104. Some people decide to leave their countries to live somewhere else. Have you ever thought about emigrating from [your country]?</b>			
1. Yes	25%	21%	31%
2. No	75%	79%	69%
3. Maybe	0%	0%	0%
4. Don't know	0%	0%	0%
5. Refused to answer	0%	0%	0%
<b>Q104C. Would you consider leaving [YOUR COUNTRY] even if you didn't have the required papers?</b>			
1. Yes	30%	16%	43%
2. No	70%	83%	56%
3. Maybe	0%	0%	0%
4. Don't know	1%	1%	1%
5. Refused to answer	0%	0%	0%
6. The respondent does not wish to continue	0%	0%	0%
<b>Q1017. Does your family receive remittances from any immediate or extended family member living abroad?</b>			
1. Yes, monthly	3%	2%	3%
2. Yes, a few times a year	5%	2%	9%
3. Yes, once a year	4%	2%	8%
4. We do not receive anything	88%	94%	80%
5. Don't know	0%	0%	0%
6. Refused to answer	0%	0%	0%
<b>Q916 To what extent would you support or oppose each of the following laws that would guarantee the right of foreign domestic workers in Palestine</b>			
<b>Q916_1. To always have possession of their passports?</b>			
1. Strongly support	41%	42%	40%
2. Somewhat support	35%	32%	40%
3. Somewhat oppose	10%	10%	10%
4. Strongly oppose	10%	12%	7%
5. Don't know	3%	4%	3%
6. Refused to answer	1%	1%	0%
<b>Q916_2. To have one day off per week guaranteed?</b>			
1. Strongly support	57%	64%	45%
2. Somewhat support	33%	29%	38%
3. Somewhat oppose	6%	1%	12%

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
4. Strongly oppose	2%	2%	2%
5. Don't know	2%	2%	2%
6. Refused to answer	1%	1%	0%
<b>Q916_3. To have a bank account where they can receive their salaries?</b>			
1. Strongly support	56%	61%	47%
2. Somewhat support	32%	30%	36%
3. Somewhat oppose	6%	3%	11%
4. Strongly oppose	3%	3%	4%
5. Don't know	2%	2%	2%
6. Refused to answer	1%	1%	1%
<b>People want to emigrate for different reasons. Why have you thought about emigrating?</b>			
1. Economic reasons	45%	37%	54%
2. Political reasons	13%	19%	5%
3. Religious reasons	2%	3%	0%
4. Security reasons	12%	16%	7%
5. Education opportunities	13%	9%	18%
6. Reunite with family	2%	1%	3%
7. Corruption	10%	12%	7%
8. Other	4%	3%	5%
<b>Which country are you thinking of emigrating to</b>			
Saudi Arabia	3%	5%	0%
1. The United Arab Emirates	5%	5%	6%
2. Qatar	9%	8%	10%
3. Bahrain	1%	1%	1%
4. Kuwait	1%	1%	1%
5. Egypt	2%	1%	4%
6. Jordan	2%	3%	2%
7. Lebanon	1%	1%	1%
8. Morocco	2%	0%	3%
9. Algeria	2%	1%	3%
10. Tunisia	0%	1%	0%
11. Turkey	19%	15%	22%
12. The United States	10%	17%	3%
13. Canada	11%	11%	12%
14. The United Kingdom	1%	1%	0%
15. Eastern Europe	2%	1%	3%
16. France	1%	1%	1%
17. Germany	13%	11%	16%
18. Spain	2%	4%	0%
19. Italy	2%	3%	2%

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
20. Western Europe - Other	3%	1%	5%
21. China	0%	0%	0%
22. Australia	1%	1%	1%
23. Other	5%	5%	5%



## ABOUT ARAB BAROMETER

Arab Barometer is a nonpartisan research network that provides insight into the social, political, and economic attitudes and values of ordinary citizens across the Arab world.

We have been conducting rigorous, and nationally representative public opinion surveys on probability samples of the adult populations across the Arab world since 2006 across 15 countries.

We are the longest-standing and the largest repository of publicly available data on the views of men and women in the MENA region. Our findings give a voice to the needs and concerns of Arab publics.



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