

Poll No. 204

March 24, 2020

THE CORONAVIRUS: A VAST SCARED MAJORITY AROUND THE WORLD

The latest poll on the Palestinian public opinion focusing on the spread of the coronavirus prepared by Dr. Nabil Kukali in cooperation with Gallup International Association, revealed the following key results:

- (84.6%) of the Palestinians are worried about the spread of the corona-virus in the Palestinian Territories.
- (68.3%) support at various extents the cooperation between Palestinians and Israelis on preventing the spread of the epidemic.
- (80.0%) express different approval of the efforts of the Palestinian government in combating the virus spread.

Beit Sahour –Public Relations’ Section:

The latest poll prepared by **Dr. Nabil Kukali** and conducted by the Palestinian Center for Public Opinion (www.pcpo.org), during the period from March 12-15, 2020 covered a random sample of (583) Palestinian respondents representing the various demographic specimens of Palestinians (18 years and above) living in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip. It revealed that (84.6%) of the Palestinian public are worried about the spread of the corona-virus.



Dr. Kukali

Dr. Nabil Kukali, President and founder of the Palestinian Center for Public Opinion, said the most significant results of the poll are as follows:

Dr. N. Kukali

Worry about the spread of the coronavirus

Responding to the question: *“At what extent are you worried about the spread of the coronavirus at present in the Palestinian Territories ?”*, (41.7%) said “very much worried”, (42.9%) “worried”, (13.9%) “not so much worried”, and (1.4%) “not worried at all”.

And to the question: *“How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I believe the threat from Coronavirus is exaggerated?”*, (18%) said “strongly agree”, (25%) “agree”, (33%) “disagree”, (22%) “strongly disagree” and (2%) “don’t know”.

And to the question: *“ How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I’m willing to sacrifice some of my human rights if it helps prevent the spread of the virus ”*, (26%) said “strongly agree”, (45%) “agree”, (16%) “disagree”, (7%) “strongly disagree” and (6%) “don’t know”.

And to the question: "When thinking about the Corona-virus here in Palestine, which of the following scenarios do you think is most likely to happen over the next month?", (43%) said "the worse is yet to come", (34%) "the situation will remain largely the same as it is now" and (23%) said "we are over the worst of it, things will begin to improve"

And to the question: "Which of the following precautionary measures, if any, have you adopted to protect yourself from this virus?", the responses came as follows:

- Using medical masks: (24%)
- Wearing hand gloves: (26%)
- Using hand sanitizers: (66%)
- Washing hands more frequently: (72%)
- Staying at home / less social interaction (42%)
- Self-quarantining: (20%)
- Have not taken any precautionary procedure: (0)

And to the question: "Do you believe that a foreign power/ other force is deliberately causing the spread of Coronavirus, or do you think that it is a natural mutation?", (51%) answered "No, nobody is behind it, it's a natural mutation", whilst a considerable rate (47) said also "Yes, it's deliberately spread" and (1%) "don't know".

Performance of the Palestinian health authorities

With regard to the question: "How would you generally evaluate the performance of the Palestinian health authorities on preventing the spread of the coronavirus in the Palestinian Territories?"

(24.2%) said: "very good", (43.1%) said: "good", (22%) "neither good nor bad", (6.7%) "bad", (3.3%) "very bad", and (0.7%) answered: "I don't know".

Performance of the security services

Regarding the question: "How would you evaluate the performance of the security services in controlling matters and not causing panic and fear among the Palestinian public at present?"

(22.8%) said: "very good", (39.5%) "good", (23.2%) "neither good nor bad", (8.7%) "bad", (3.6%) "very bad" and (2.2%) said "I don't know".

Cooperation between the Palestinian Authority and Israel

Responding to the question: "In the light of the prevailing situation, do you support or oppose the cooperation between Israel and the Palestinians as to prevent the spread of the coronavirus?",

(21.1%) said: "I strongly support", (47.2%) said "I somehow support", (19.6%) "somehow oppose", (9.6%) "I strongly oppose" and (2.5%) answered "I don't know".

Impact on the Economic Situation

With respect to the question: "Up to which extent has the economic situation of your household been impacted by the spread of the coronavirus?", (30.6%) said: "to a great extent", (40.1%) said "to a fair extent", (20.5%) "to a minor extent" and (8.8%) said "has not been impacted".

E-Teaching

Regarding the question: "What is your impression on the electronic teaching/learning that is applied by schools and universities under the prevailing conditions?", (14.6%) said: "a very cool alternative", (43.1%) "a good alternative", (35%) said: "It doesn't somehow meet the purpose required", and (7.3%): "it doesn't meet the purpose at all".

The Social Media

Responding to the question: "Do you think that the social media such as Facebook, Twitter... play a positive or a negative role in combating the spread of coronavirus?", (37%) said "they play a positive role", (53.1%) said "a negative role" and (9.9%) have no opinion.

Methodology of the Survey Study in the Palestinian Territories

Dr. Nabil Kukali, said that all interviews of this survey were conducted inside the respondents' homes, i.e. face-to-face. The choices were randomly taken in accordance with a long experienced methodology applied by PCPO from a total of (112) sites, (75) are from the West Bank and (37) from Gaza Strip.

Dr. Kukali has further indicated that the margin of error was ($\pm 4.05\%$) at a significance level of (95.0%). He added that the rate of the female respondents in this survey was (49.6%) against (50.4%) male respondents. The sample allotment with respect to the residential areas was as follows: (64.0%) in the West Bank, incl. Eastern Jerusalem and (36.0%) in Gaza Strip. The average age of the respondents was (33.4) years.

About Gallup International

Gallup International Association (GIA) is the leading global independent association in market research and polling.

For over 70 years Gallup International Members have demonstrated their expert ability to conduct multi-country surveys on a comparable basis and deliver the highest quality. Our more than 100 Members and partners are leading national institutes with a profound local knowledge own country and carefully selected by the Association Board. With only one Member agency per country, Members work together on a daily basis to share knowledge, new research techniques and tools, as well as to provide the most appropriate solutions to international research projects and service our clients to the best of our abilities. **The State of Palestine is represented in GIA by the Palestinian Center for Public Opinion, presided and run by Dr. Nabil Kukali.**

Dr. Kukali hereunder presents the whole global survey findings as published by GALLUP INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION:

About two-thirds express worries for themselves and their loved ones in relation to the Coronavirus. Three-quarters say they are even ready to sacrifice some of their human rights if that helps. Most nations stand behind their governments in this battle. At the same time, however, more than half of the respondents agree that the coronavirus threat may be exaggerated. People around the world do not know what to expect in the weeks to come - bad or good. They do not know either if the spread of this virus is a deliberate affair, but they rather believe it is not. Meanwhile, they take action.

This is the result of the unique snap poll held by the world's leading Gallup International Association in the context of Covid-19 situation, which involved more than 20,000 people in 22 countries around the world. These included the United States, Russia and India, some of the most affected countries - Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Switzerland, etc., as well as many other countries on different continents. Polling in the countries mentioned was completed just a couple of days ago. The GIA snap poll on the COVID-19 continues in a dozen more countries, so there is going to be an updated press-release within a few days. As the situation is rapidly changing, we immediately release all finished poll results.

A total of 62% say they are afraid that either they or people in their families may catch the virus: 35% say they are afraid, and 27% say they fear a lot. 22% say they are not afraid, and 13% - not afraid at all. Thus, a total of 35% remain calm facing the infection. The rest are not ready to answer.

People of India (with 60% majority of more or less calm population) stay in contrast against the background of overall results. The Germans and the Swiss, as well as the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, remain relatively cold-blooded as well, with rather equal proportions of fear and courage. Peak values, as expected, turn out to be in Italy - a total of 90% more or less afraid of the infection.

20% of the survey participants strongly agree with the statement that their government has been handling the Coronavirus well so far, 40% rather agree, 20% - rather disagree and 13% - strongly disagree. Thus, shares of positive assessments for governments throughout the countries surveyed are 60% while negative ones are 33%. The other 7% cannot answer.

People of Austria seem to be the most satisfied with the reaction of their state authorities - with 88% expressing different approval of their government measures, India (84%), Palestine (80%), the Netherlands (79%), Italy (72%), Philippines (70%), etc.

The least satisfied with their government are in Thailand - 76% there rather or completely disagree with the statement that their authorities are doing well in the current situation. The United States occupy the second place, with 42% satisfied with state measures and 46% dissatisfied. Germany is near - where 47% of the respondents believe that state measures are adequate, but 44% express of the opposite opinion.

Satisfaction with government measures seems to have less to do with the number of people infected, but with the prospects in each particular society. Italian society, for example, is among the most satisfied with the government, the Austrian one seems even more pleased, and so on. Apparently, the more affected or threatened a country is, the most instinctive solidarity with government efforts is to be found.

The Balkan peoples are the ones which predominantly find the danger is exaggerated - a total of 73% think so in Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Bulgaria - with 56% average of all 22 countries examined. As one could easily expect, the French, Dutch, Austrians, Italians, etc. share the opposite stance - with over a 70% majority that do not find any exaggeration.

The number of officially declared infected per capita in a specific country clearly plays a significant role in this regard.

Believing in the threat or not, the majority of people express clear willingness to even temporarily sacrifice some of their rights if this helps preventing the spread of the infection. 35% completely agree with such prospects, 41% rather agree, 12% rather disagree, and 6% completely reject this possibility. The other 5% cannot say. So, a total of over three quarters (76%) of the population of the surveyed countries worldwide are more likely to be deprived of their liberties until the threat of Covid-19 is gone.

The highest levels of readiness in this regard are reported in Austria (95%), N. Macedonia (94%) and the Netherlands (91%).

This indicator reveals a virtual unanimity among the countries surveyed with some exceptions for Americans (45% ready versus 38% not ready and the rest hesitating). Continuing deep political division of American society, and perhaps the strong democratic traditions in this country could be part of the explanation.

There is no clear image of what is to be expected over the month to come. 36% think the worst is yet to come, just 36% believe the worst is already gone, and 27% believe that the situation will remain as it is. 1% cannot answer.

UK residents are the greatest pessimists (82% think the worst is ahead), accompanied by people of the Netherlands (77%), France (70%) and Austria (68%).

The residents of Kazakhstan (73% of them believe the worst is over), Turkey (63%), Armenia (61%), India (61%), etc. are much more optimistic.

Probably, official data on infection spread for most of these countries also play some role - showing a relatively low number of COVID cases per capita. Apparently, influence by specific cultural background could be a plausible predictor as well.

The most popular measures to limit the infection worldwide include more frequent hand washing (mentioned by 75% of the respondents), limiting direct social contacts (45%) and use of hand sanitizer (49%). 14% has not taken any action so far. Percentages exceed one hundred as respondents gave more than one response.

However, majority of respondents are still not determined to stay home (declared in 55% of the answers). This share is most serious in Turkey (89%), Pakistan (80%) and Afghanistan (66%).

Medical masks and gloves prove to be less popular as precaution measures. 24% said they use masks and 14% said they use gloves. Difficulties to implement, lack of masks and gloves on the markets or distrust in their efficacy could be the reason for rather rare usage. Residents of countries where the threat is considered to be exaggerated tend to use masks and gloves to a lesser extent.

The belief prevails that the virus has emerged naturally - still with only a slight advantage: 46% of the respondents share this opinion. However, 36% think that a foreign power or country is deliberately causing the infection to spread. 22% cannot judge.

Among the supporters of deliberate contagion theory are, for example, Bulgaria (58%), Armenia (56%), Macedonia (53%) and Ecuador (52%).

Residents of Pakistan (majority of 72% think the infection is a natural process), Germany (59%), Afghanistan (58%), United Kingdom (58%), Thailand (58%), USA (56%), etc. are more likely to believe in the natural origin of the virus.

In general, perhaps, older Western democracies share less trust when it comes to the theory that someone created and spread the virus intentionally.

Kancho Stoychev, President of GIA:

“Generally disgraced political elites are gaining new credit of confidence at what is seen as a beginning of a global crisis without recent precedent. “Alone” starts to be replaced by “together”, “close” is substituted by “remote”, “global” is dissolved to “national” again and the miracles of the almighty market evaporates gradually while at the same time the big government is coming back behind the corner. The big question for all democratic societies is the faith of libertarian dogma of human rights. It seems that the sacrifices people across the world undertook in the last hundreds of years in their fight to get these human rights guaranteed are now scarified - a vast scared majority is ready to loose personal freedom in exchange to safety which might be illusionary.

Although the end of the crisis is not yet clearly visible and the overall damages are not yet calculable, the end of the “golden consumerist pandemic” seems to be close and the free choice utopia over. “No more party” seems to be the short term massage but the meaning of “party” and the meaning of “short” are not yet defined.”

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Methodology:

The Gallup International snap poll was conducted in 22 countries around the world. In each country a representative sample of men and women was interviewed over the last two weeks either face to face, via telephone or online. The margin of error for the survey is between +3-5% at 95% confidence level.

Coverage:

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GERMANY

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