# The Brookings Institution

# A VIEW FROM THE ARAB WORLD: A SURVEY IN FIVE COUNTRIES

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## Overview

Under the sponsorship of the Sadat Chair for Peace and Development at the University of Maryland, Shibley Telhami prepared a public opinion survey for Zogby International, which interviewed 2,620 men and women in Egypt, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon and Jordan. The survey was conducted between February 19 and March 11. It focuses on perceptions of the United States in specific political scenarios and on views of United States policy abroad. Previous polls done by Shibley Telhami and by Zogby International in the Middle East showed that neither United States policy nor the United States was viewed favorably.

## Summary of Findings

### *On attitudes toward the U.S.*
Very few people in the survey countries have a favorable opinion of the United States: Only 4% in Saudi Arabia, 6% in Morocco and Jordan, 13% in Egypt, and 32% in Lebanon.

Most people say that their attitudes toward the U.S. are based on American policies, not on American values.

### *On possible war with Iraq*
Despite the U.S. claim that it intends to spread democratic values and ideals throughout the world, **war with Iraq will bring less democracy** in the view of 95% of Saudis, 66% of Moroccans, 60% of Egyptians, 58% of Jordanians, and 74% of Lebanese.

More than three-fourths of Egyptians, Lebanese, and an overwhelming majority (90%) of Moroccans think **that war with Iraq will bring less peace in the Middle East.** More than half of Jordanians (60%) think that war with Iraq will bring less peace in the Middle East.

More than three fourths of Lebanese, Moroccans, and Jordanians, as well as nearly two-thirds of Egyptians, think **that war with Iraq will worsen prospects for settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute.**

Some striking results were prompted by the question of whether or not a war in Iraq will bring more or less terrorism against the U.S. In the view of 97% of Saudis, 87% of Moroccans, 81% of Lebanese, 74% of Egyptians and 78% of Jordanians, **war in Iraq will bring more terrorism against the United States.**

### *On U.S. policy abroad*
On the issue of **U.S. policy in Iraq**, an overwhelming percentage feel that American policy is motivated mainly by oil and secondarily by U.S. support for Israel. Specifically, 97% of Saudis, 91% of Lebanese, 87% of Jordanians, 93% of Moroccans and 77% of Egyptians feel that oil is an extremely important issue in motivating U.S. policy toward

Iraq.  More than three-quarters of Saudis and Jordanians say Israel is an extremely important issue in determining U.S. policy in Iraq, followed by 72% of Moroccans and over 50% of Egyptians and Lebanese.

On the issue of **U.S. policy toward the Arab-Israeli dispute,** the majority feel that U.S. policy is motivated by support for Israel and oil. Nearly three-fourths of all respondents feel that both Israel and oil are extremely important factors in U.S. policy.

*On leaders*
Outside leaders admired most:
**Jacques Chirac** was often mentioned as one of the most admired leaders.

Figures (past/present) admired most:
**Gamal Abdel-Nasser of Egypt**, who died in 1970, ranked first in all five countries.
**Nelson Mandela** ranked second in most countries.

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*Generally speaking, is your attitude toward the United States very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, very unfavorable, or are you not familiar enough to make a judgment?*

| Country | Favorable | | | Unfavorable | | | Not familiar |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Overall | Very | Somewhat | Overall | Very | Somewhat | |
| Lebanon | 32 | 10 | 22 | 59 | 40 | 19 | 6 |
| Egypt | 13 | 2 | 10 | 79 | 58 | 20 | 4 |
| Morocco | 6 | 1 | 4 | 91 | 67 | 24 | 3 |
| Jordan | 6 | 1 | 5 | 80 | 63 | 17 | 10 |
| Saudi Arabia | 4 | -- | 4 | 95 | 68 | 27 | 1 |

The Lebanese are the best disposed toward the United States, with one in three (32%) saying they have a favorable attitude. They are followed distantly by Egypt, where more than one in ten (13%) say they are favorable toward the U.S.

Saudi citizens are least friendly, with just 4% saying they have a somewhat favorable opinion of the United States.

More than nine in ten citizens in Morocco (91%) and in Saudi Arabia (95%) say their attitude toward the United States is negative.

*Would you say that your attitudes toward the United States are based more on your values as an Arab or on American policy in the Middle East?* **(Sorted based on American Policy)**

| Country | Based on my values | Based on American policy | Not sure |
|---|---|---|---|
| Saudi Arabia | 33 | 67 | 0 |
| Morocco | 37 | 59 | 4 |
| Lebanon | 29 | 58 | 14 |
| Jordan | 36 | 58 | 6 |
| Egypt | 43 | 46 | 11 |

A majority or plurality of citizens in all countries say their attitudes toward the United States are based on American foreign policy. Saudi citizens are most likely (67%) to form their attitudes based on U.S. policy, while the Egyptians are more evenly divided: 46% say their opinion is based on American policy and 43% say their opinion is based on their own values.

### More peace or less peace to the Middle East?

| Country | More peace | Less peace | Neither | Not sure |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Lebanon | 9 | 79 | 10 | 3 |
| Egypt | 5 | 79 | 13 | 2 |
| Saudi Arabia | 5 | 91 | 3 | 0 |
| Jordan | 4 | 60 | 30 | 7 |
| Morocco | 1 | 89 | 8 | 2 |

Overwhelmingly, respondents think that war with Iraq will bring less peace to the Middle East. Most pessimistic was Saudi Arabia, where more than nine in ten respondents (91%) believe that a war between the U.S. and Iraq will bring less peace.

In Lebanon and Egypt, 79% of respondents believe war with Iraq will bring less peace. Just under one in ten Lebanese believe a war with Iraq will bring more peace in the Middle East—and they are the most optimistic on this question.

Nearly one in three (30%) Jordanians do not expect a war between the U.S. and Iraq to affect the situation either way.

### More terrorism or less terrorism toward the U.S.?

| Country | More terrorism | Less terrorism | Neither | Not sure |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Saudi Arabia | 96 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Morocco | 87 | 1 | 8 | 4 |
| Lebanon | 81 | 9 | 7 | 4 |
| Jordan | 78 | 3 | 11 | 8 |
| Egypt | 75 | 7 | 15 | 3 |

More than three in four respondents in every country believe a war between the United States and Iraq will prompt more terrorism toward the U.S., including nearly all (96%) Saudi respondents.

Less than one in ten (9%) Lebanese believes there will be less terrorism and 15% of Egyptians do not think a war between Iraq and America will affect the amount of terrorism either way.

*More democracy or less democracy?*

| Country | More democracy | Less democracy | Neither | Not sure |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Jordan | 7 | 58 | 26 | 9 |
| Lebanon | 7 | 73 | 16 | 4 |
| Egypt | 6 | 63 | 18 | 13 |
| Saudi Arabia | 3 | 95 | 2 | 0 |
| Morocco | 2 | 66 | 21 | 11 |

Respondents in the five countries are not optimistic about the prospects for more democracy in the region if the US goes to war with Iraq.

Nearly all respondents in Saudi Arabia (95%) believe that a war will bring less democracy to the region.

Most optimistic are the Jordanians and the Lebanese; 7% of respondents in both countries believe a war against Iraq will bring more democracy.

Just over one in four (26%) Jordanians do not expect a change in the amount of democracy if there is a war between Iraq and the U.S. This sentiment is echoed by about one in five Moroccans (21%) and Egyptians (18%).

*Better prospects or worse prospects for a settlement on the Arab-Israeli dispute?*

| Country | Better prospects | Worse prospects | Neither | Not sure |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Egypt | 16 | 67 | 7 | 10 |
| Jordan | 6 | 79 | 10 | 6 |
| Lebanon | 5 | 82 | 9 | 5 |
| Morocco | 1 | 85 | 5 | 8 |
| Saudi Arabia | 1 | 97 | 1 | 0 |

Few respondents hold out much hope for a settlement on the Arab-Israeli dispute if the U.S. goes to war with Iraq. Nearly all Saudi citizens (97%) say the prospects for settlement would be worse. More than four in five Lebanese (82%) and Moroccans (85%) share this feeling.

Most optimistic are the Egyptians, where 16% say a war between the United States and Iraq would bring better prospects for a settlement.

One in ten (10%) Jordanians do not expect the prospects for settlement on the
Arab-Israeli dispute to change in the event of a war between the United States and Iraq.

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## METHODOLOGY

### Egypt

The total sample size was specified to be 700 interviews with questionnaires to be filled in the capital Cairo, with the two main localities (i.e. religions) Muslim (96%) and Coptic Christians (4%). The gender composition of the sample is based on that of the Egyptian population (above 15 years of age). Moreover, interviews will be conducted with those above 18 years of age.

Consequently, and due to the lack of a population census, the sample will be selected based on a Systematic Random Sampling Scheme within the three different strata of economic social class, whereby certain starting points inside each stratum will be specified and 10 random household interviews around each starting point will be conducted.

Therefore, one can say that a stratified random sample selection will be adopted with probability proportional to the size (PPS) of the population in case of selection of Muslim and Coptic Christian and males and females.  Margin of error is +/- 3.8%.

## Distribution of Egypt Sample

| Sample: 700 Questionnaires | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Low Social Class | | | | Middle Social Class | | | | High Social Class | | | |
| 274 | | | | 147 | | | | 279 | | | |
| Muslim | | CopticChristian | | Muslim | | CopticChristian | | Muslim | | CopticChristian | |
| 254 | | 20 | | 141 | | 6 | | 262 | | 17 | |
| Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females |
| 145 | 109 | 9 | 11 | 61 | 80 | 3 | 3 | 135 | 127 | 9 | 8 |

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### KSA

The total sample size was specified to be 700 interviews with questionnaires to be filled in both Riyadh and Jeddah, with a sample distributed as 60% and 40% respectively, which is based on Information International's experience in Saudi Arabia and the population size of both cities. The main religion in KSA is Muslim and consequently all the 700 interviewees will be Muslims. The gender composition of the sample is based on that of the Saudi population (above 15 years of age) with 58% males and 42% females. Moreover, interviews will be conducted with those above 18 years of age.

Consequently, and due to the lack of a population census, the sample will be selected based on a Systematic Random Sampling Scheme within the three different strata of economic social class, whereby certain starting points inside each stratum will be specified and 10 random household interviews around each starting point will be conducted.

Therefore, one can say that a stratified random sample selection will be adopted with probability proportional to the size (PPS) of the population in case of selection of males and females. Margin of error is +/- 3.8%.

# Distribution of Riyyad and Jeddah Samples

| Sample KSA | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sample Riyyad: 420 Questionnaires (60%) | | | | | |
| Low Social Class (Muslim) | | Middle Social Class (Muslim) | | High Social Class (Muslim) | |
| 143 | | 140 | | 141 | |
| Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females |
| 84 | 60 | 80 | 60 | 80 | 61 |
| Sample Jeddah: 280 Questionnaires (40%) | | | | | |
| Low Social Class (Muslim) | | Middle Social Class (Muslim) | | High Social Class (Muslim) | |
| 94 | | 93 | | 89 | |
| Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females |
| 55 | 39 | 54 | 39 | 54 | 35 |

**Jordan**

The total sample size was specified to be 400 interviews with questionnaires to be filled in the capital Amman, with the two main localities (i.e. religions) Sunni Muslim (94%) and Christians (6%). The gender composition was based on that of the Jordanian population (above 15 years of age) with 53% males and 47% females that was applied to each locality. Moreover, interviews will be conducted with those above 18 years of age.

Interviewers will resort to public places such as coffee shops chosen form different social neighborhoods, which may result in a "selection bias". The choice of interviewees in each coffee shop will be random with not more than one person from each table. As for the religion and gender, it will be controlled when choosing the interviewees to reflect the religious and gender composition of Jordan's population.

It may be worth noting there is a comparison limitation to this methodology since comparisons can only be applied to other countries middle class population, as it is a common behavior for the middle class people to go to coffee shops. Generally, the upper and lower social class people do not visit these public coffee shops.  Margin of error is +/- 5%.

# Distribution of Jordan Sample

| Sample: 400 Questionnaires | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Low Social Class | | | | Middle Social Class | | | | High Social Class | | | |
| 134 | | | | 133 | | | | 133 | | | |
| Sunni Muslim | | Christians | | Sunni Muslim | | Christians | | Sunni Muslim | | Christians | |
| 126 | | 8 | | 125 | | 8 | | 125 | | 8 | |
| Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females |
| 67 | 59 | 4 | 4 | 66 | 59 | 4 | 4 | 66 | 59 | 4 | 4 |

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## UAE

The total sample size was specified to be 400 interviews with questionnaires to be filled in the Dubai. Interviews will be distributed between locals and foreigners according to their composition in the UAE population. Interviews with foreigners will be done regardless of their religion, nationality or social class.

As for the locals, the two main localities (i.e. religions) are Muslims (96%) and other religions (4%). The gender composition is based on that of the UAE population (above 15 years of age) with 63% males and 37% females that were applied to each locality. Moreover, interviews will be conducted with those above 18 years of age.

Interviewers will resort to public places such as coffee shops chosen from different social neighborhoods, which may result in a "selection bias". The choice of interviewees in each coffee shop will be random with not more than one person from each table. As for the religion and gender distribution, it will be controlled when choosing the interviewees to reflect UAE's population composition.

It may be worth noting there is a comparison limitation to this methodology since comparisons can only be applied to other countries middle class population, as it is a common behavior for the middle class people to go to coffee shops. Generally, the upper and lower social class people do not visit these public coffee shops.  Margin of error is +/- 5%.

# Distribution of UAE Sample

| Sample for Locals (104 Questionnaires) | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Muslim | | Others | | Muslim | | Others | | Muslim | | Others | |
| 33 | | 1 | | 34 | | 1 | | 34 | | 1 | |
| Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females |
| *21* | *12* | *1* | *0* | *21* | *13* | *1* | *0* | *21* | *13* | *1* | *0* |

| Sample for Non-Locals (296 Questionnaires) | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Non Arabs-Foreigners** <br> **122** | **Arabs (Non Emitari)** <br> **174** | |

## Morocco

The total sample size was specified to be 700 interviews with questionnaires to be filled in the capital Rabat. The main religion in Morocco is Muslim and consequently all the 700 interviewees will be Muslims. The gender composition of the sample is based on that of the Moroccan population (above 15 years of age) with 49% males and 51% females. Moreover, interviews will be conducted with those above 18 years of age.

Consequently, and due to the lack of a population census, the sample will be selected based on a Systematic Random Sampling Scheme within the three different strata of economic social class, whereby certain starting points inside each stratum will be specified and 10 random household interviews around each starting point will be conducted.

Therefore, one can say that a stratified random sample selection will be adopted with probability proportional to the size (PPS) of the population in case of selection of males and females. Margin of error is +/- 3.8%.

# Distribution of Morocco Sample

| Sample: 700 Questionnaires | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Low Social Class (Muslim)** | | **Middle Social Class (Muslim)** | | **High Social Class (Muslim)** | |
| 233 | | 234 | | 233 | |
| **Males** | **Females** | **Males** | **Females** | **Males** | **Females** |
| *117* | *116* | *112* | *122* | *114* | *119* |

## Lebanon

The total sample size was specified to be 400 interviews with questionnaires to be filled in Greater Beirut according to a representative distribution based on the number of voters in each district. The main localities (i.e. religions) were also chosen proportionally to represent the Lebanese religious mosaique. The gender composition was based on that of the Lebanese population (above 15 years of age). Moreover, interviews will be conducted with those above 18 years of age.

Interviewers will resort to public places such as coffee shops chosen form different social neighborhoods, which may result in a "selection bias". The choice of interviewees in each coffee shop will be random with not more than one person from each table. As for the religion and gender, it will be controlled when choosing the interviewees to reflect the religious and gender composition of Lebanon's population.

It may be worth noting there is a comparison limitation to this methodology since comparisons can only be applied to other countries middle class population, as it is a common behavior for the middle class people to go to coffee shops. Generally, the upper and lower social class people do not visit these public coffee shops. Margin of error is +/- 5%.

## Distribution of Lebanon

| Sample400Questionnaires | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Maronite | | Orthodox | | Catholics | | Armenian Orthodox | | Armenian Catholics | | Minorities | | Sunni | | Shiite | | Druze | |
| 51 | | 44 | | 19 | | 49 | | 11 | | 31 | | 131 | | 55 | | 9 | |
| Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females |
| 24 | 27 | 28 | 16 | 8 | 11 | 23 | 26 | 8 | 3 | 15 | 16 | 72 | 59 | 28 | 27 | 5 | 4 |

All fieldwork was conducted between February 19, 2003 and March 11, 2003.  Exact dates will be verified on March 13, 2003.