



Lebanon Public Opinion Survey Report Draft

The findings reported below are a brief summary of the main findings extracted from the opinion poll carried out by Information International for the benefit of ACRLI during the period between 5/05/06 and 19/05/06. The report contains the following: methodology of the survey, demographics, as well as reports on the judiciary, media, and parliament pillars.

I- Methodology:

Four hundred participants from the greater Beirut area participated in this survey. The survey used a stratified sampling procedure accounting for the religious/sectarian distribution within the Lebanese population.

II- Missing Data Analysis:

5% of the participants approached for this survey refused to take part. Furthermore, the overall pattern of missing responses did not exceed 5%. This indicates that the questionnaire, on the whole, did not create unexpected complications for participants, and may provide a good approximation of the attitudes of the population of greater Beirut. Missing data analyses indicate the need to be cautious with the results of two items only:

- 1- **Item 2** “Judges who give wrongful rulings are penalized” had the highest rate of missing data with 20.5% of participants reporting their inability to assess this item. Either participants felt the item to be too sensitive or they did not feel confident enough to provide an assessment on that question.
- 2- **Item 28** “28. To what extent do journalists accept favors/bribes” had the second highest rate of missing data, with 19.3% of participants reporting their inability to assess the item.

These two items seemed to be the most problematic for our samples. Other items with lower values of missing data may be of interest to authors, and are provided in appendix C, p. 3 & 4.

III- Demographics

The following information is presented in percentages.

Gender	Male	50
	Female	50
Marital status	Married	48
	Single	47.5
	Other (divorced/widowed)	1.3
Religion	Muslim	59.4%
	Christian	40.6%

IV- Reports per pillar: Judiciary

a- General findings:



An important finding is that the state of the judiciary in Lebanon tends to be negatively evaluated by members of the general public. Out of the 18 specific questions asked, 15 were negatively evaluated (see section c below).

Furthermore, the two tables below indicate that only 16.3% of participants have dealt with the courts in Lebanon, while the overwhelming majority (83.8%) have never been to court. Interestingly, of the 16.3% who have had an experience with the court system in Lebanon, 38.5% of participants reported having paid or having been asked to pay bribes or honoraries to court staff, while a quarter of participants (23.1%) have reported being asked to bribe the judge presiding the case. Participants seem to be relatively satisfied with their lawyers' performance, but seem to be less so with the judges' performance.

Have you ever dealt with the courts in your country?	Yes	16.3
	No	83.8
If yes, in which context?	As a plaintiff	26.2
	As a defendant	29.2
	As an accused	12.3
	As an victim	4.6
	As an witness	27.7
Have you paid or been asked to pay bribes or honoraries to the court staff?	Yes	38.5
	No	61.5
Has anyone asked you to give gifts or pay money to the judge who is presiding your case?	Yes	23.1
	No	76.9

	large extent	N.	small extent
60. To what extent was your lawyer discreet and honest?	60.9	15.6	23.4
61. To what extent was your lawyer competent in dealing with your case	60.9	20.3	18.8
62. To what extent are you satisfied with the way that the Judge handled your case?	34.9	30.2	34.9
63. To what extent was the judge who was handling your case competent	41.4	31	27.6

b- Positive Evaluation: Item analysis

Only two items and one general evaluation question received a favourable evaluation. Judges are perceived to have an acceptable level of personal integrity and have relevant professional skills. These evaluations are reflected in the overall evaluation of the competence of judges in Lebanon.

		X
Main dimensions	9. Judges have the relevant professional skills	1.88
	7. Judges are generally perceived as having a high degree of personal integrity	2.55
General	16. The judges in your country are competent	2.34

**evaluation**

Note: Scores represent the average (mean) for each item on a scale from 1 to 5. Scores below 3 reflect a positive evaluation of the item, while scores above 3 reflect a negative evaluation”.

c- Negative Evaluation: Item analysis

Table 3 below presents the negatively rated items in rank order of importance. The mean numbers (X) refer to the mean of discontent associated with each item (means higher than 3 indicate a negative evaluation. Scale range: 1 to 5).

		Dim	X
Main dimensions	1. Interference and pressure are exerted on judges to influence their decision making	Ind	3.65
	12. Litigations are conducted in a professional and timely manner (without any delays)	Com	3.58
	8. Citizens have easy access to judicial rulings	Int	3.54
	13. Judgments are enforced in a consistent and effective manner and without external interference	Com	3.44
	10. The cost of litigation in your country is affordable for everybody	Com	3.38
	2. Judges who give wrongful rulings are penalized	Ind	3.28
	4. The judiciary fights corruption wherever it exists	Int	3.21
	11. The court proceedings are managed in a transparent manner	Com	3.14
	3. The laws that enhance the integrity of society are implemented accurately and effectively	Int	3.14
	5. Court decisions are made in total impartiality (equal treatment and no discrimination)	Int	3.11
6. The principle of equality before the law is strictly enforced	Int	3.08	

The overall evaluation by participants of the four main dimensions of the state of the judiciary are presented below: generally, participants rated all dimension negatively, although the personal integrity of judges and their impartiality was perceived less negatively than law enforcement and the independence of judges in making their judgement. Only one overall dimension was rated positively, and was discussed in section b above (competence of judges).

		Dim	X
General evaluat.	14. The judges in your country are independent and no one influences them	Gen	3.23
	18. Generally, the judiciary in your country enforces justice	Gen	3.16
	15. The judges in your country are honest and are not corrupt	Gen	3.06
	17. The judges in your country are impartial when reviewing cases	Gen	3.05

d- Reform Questions:

The questionnaire included a series of “reform” questions to which participants were asked to rate the importance of the need to reform specific dimensions within the judiciary. Participants ranked the reform in the following order:



	X
19. Reforms are needed to enhance the independence of the judiciary	1.38
20. Reforms are needed to enhance the judiciary integrity	1.50
21. Reforms are needed to enhance the efficiency of the judiciary	1.56
22. Reforms are needed to enhance the competence of the judges	1.64

V- Reports per pillar: Media

a- General findings:

Overall, participants rated the state of the media in a relatively favourable way; analyses are presented in section b below.

Participants seem to report an extensive use of all types of information outlets. Participants indicated that they have access to most sources of media (TV, Newspapers, Radio, Internet), with TV sources being the most relied upon for information. Interestingly, informal networks of information such as religious and social groups are not relied upon for information.

	large extent	N.	small extent
64. To what extent do you use the Newspapers and Magazines to obtain the information you need	72.1	11.3	16.7
65. To what extent do you use the TV to obtain the information you need	87.3	4.3	8.4
66. To what extent do you use the Radio to obtain the information you need	40.7	28.4	30.9
67. To what extent do you use the Internet to obtain the information you need	44.8	18.5	36.7
68. To what extent do you use the Social and Religious groups to obtain the information you need	23.3	14.2	62.5
69. To what extent do you use other means to obtain the information you need	No other means were mentioned		

b- Frequencies of specific items

Assessment of individual item responses indicates a mixed response to the state of the media in Lebanon. Participants rated 5 items negatively and 4 positively. Specifically, participants reported grievances in the following areas: pressures on the media by both governmental and non-governmental forces, non balanced and biased reporting, unequal employment opportunities, and propensity of some journalists to receive favors/bribes. On the positive end, participants indicated that journalists do enjoy freedom of expression, with media reports providing a plurality of views and reflecting the diversity within the Lebanese society.

However, when asked about the general evaluation of the three main dimensions assessing the state of the media in Lebanon, participants had an overall favourable evaluation.



	X
30. Generally, journalists have sufficient qualifications to perform their duties competently	2.13
25. The media is able to report openly on all types of issues (political, religious, social)	2.16
24. Sanctions against journalists and media organizations are arbitrarily imposed (e.g. denial or suspension of credentials, closure., seizure) (R)	2.72

	large extent	N.	small extent
23. To what extent do journalists enjoy freedom of expression without fear of reprisal +	77.7	5.6	16.7
26. To which degree is the media influenced/ pressured by government -	47.8	11.5	40.7
27. To which degree is the media influenced/ pressured by non-governmental parties (exp: private corporations, political groups, other social groups) -	53.1	26	20.9
28. To what extent do journalists accept favors/bribes -	38.6	32.6	28.8
29. To what extent does the content of the media reflect the diversity in society +	82.3	8.5	9.3
31. In your opinion, to what extent does the media provide you with impartial and balanced views -	25.8	29.2	45
32. In your opinion, to what extent does the media provide you with the diverse political, economic and social views that you need. +	60.7	11.7	27.6
33. To what extent does the media hire its employees without discrimination (racial, gender, political) -	34.6	14.7	50.8
34. To what extent can you receive the various types of media that interest you (TV, Radio, printed press, internet) +	81.5	8.4	10.1

b- Reform Questions:

The questionnaire included a series of “reform” questions in which participants were asked to rate the importance of reform. Reforms were ranked as follow:

	X
35. Reforms are needed to enhance the independence of the media	1.49
36. Reforms are needed to enhance the integrity of the media	1.51
37. Reforms are needed to enhance the efficiency of the media	1.65

VI-Reports per pillar: Participation

a- Negative Evaluation: Item analysis

The overall evaluation of the parliament and participation pillar was negative. Participants rated 13 of the 14 items assessing the state of parliament in a negative fashion. Interestingly though, 51.3% of surveyed participants indicated that they did participate in the last general



parliamentary elections. 39% of participants stated they did not participate in the last elections, while 9.8% refrained from answering the question.

b- Item analysis:

The state of the parliament in Lebanon tends to be negatively evaluated by the participants regardless of whether questions related to corruption, abuse of position and power, competence, function, and free elections. Out of the 14 specific items, 13 were negatively evaluated and are presented in rank order in the table below:

	X
39. A limit for campaign spending is set	4.04
45. Parliamentarians fight corruption	4.00
48. Parliamentarians do not misuse their posts for illegal benefits	3.96
41. The parliament truly represents the social and political forces in the society	3.85
44. Parliamentarians monitor all the actions of the ministers	3.84
38. Candidates for Parliamentary seats enjoy equal competition chances	3.78
42. The parliamentarians in my district interact with their constituents	3.57
49. The elections in my country are conducted in a free and honest way	3.53
47. Parliamentarians care about issues pertaining to the public	3.51
50. Parliamentarians are competent	3.47
46. Parliament legislates effectively	3.35
40. The authority that oversees elections is trusted and impartial	3.33
43. The parliamentarians endure illegal pressures	3.07

c- Positive Evaluation

Only one item was positively evaluated: “All citizens who meet the legal requirements are able to run for parliament” (x = 2.55).

d- Reform Questions:

Participants highlighted the need for reforms in all dimensions of parliament participation and are ranked order in the table below.

	X
52. Reforms are needed to enhance representation and participation in parliamentary elections	1.33
53. Reforms are needed to enhance the independence of the parliament	1.35
54. Reforms are needed to enhance the integrity of the parliament	1.36
55. Reforms are needed to enhance the performance of the parliament	1.38