

# WORLDPUBLICOPINION.ORG

## Iranian Public on Current Issues

September 19, 2009

### Questionnaire

Dates of Survey: August 27-September 10, 2009  
Sample Size: 1003

Margin of Error: +/- 3.1 %

Q1. Please tell me whether you think each of the following things have in general gotten better, gotten worse, or are about the same as compared to four years ago:

a. First about the economic situation of your family. Would you say your and your family's economic situation have in general gotten better, gotten worse, or are about the same as compared to four years ago?

	<b>WPO</b>	<b>TFT*</b>
	<b>9/09</b>	<b>5/09</b>
Have gotten better .....	27%	29%
Have gotten worse.....	31	24
Have remained about the same .....	42	47
Don't know .....	*	DK/R 1
Refused .....	*	

b. How about the economic situation of the country as a whole?

Have gotten better .....	29%
Have gotten worse.....	45
Have remained about the same .....	14
Don't know .....	10
Refused .....	2

c. How about the degree of economic equality across the country?

Have gotten better .....	30%
Have gotten worse.....	35
Have remained about the same .....	18
Don't know .....	14

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\* The Terror Free Tomorrow question read: "In terms of your own personal economic situation, do you think your financial situation today is better, the same, or worse than it was when President Ahmadinejad took office in August 2005?"

Refused .....3

d. How about Iran's ability to resist foreign pressures?

Have gotten better ..... 57%  
Have gotten worse.....14  
Have remained about the same .....13  
  
Don't know .....15  
Refused .....2

e. How about the degree of civil liberties in Iran's society?

Have gotten better ..... 48%  
Have gotten worse.....23  
Have remained about the same .....22  
  
Don't know .....6  
Refused .....1

f. How about Iran's relations with western countries?

Have gotten better ..... 33%  
Have gotten worse.....30  
Have remained about the same .....16  
  
Don't know .....18  
Refused .....2

Q2. Now, I am going to read you a list of institutions in our country. Please tell me whether you have a lot of confidence, some confidence, not much confidence, or no confidence at all in each of them:

a. First about the Majlis. Please tell whether you have a lot of confidence, some confidence, not much confidence, or no confidence at all in Majlis.

A lot of confidence..... 40%  
Some confidence .....39  
Not much confidence .....7  
No confidence at all .....8  
  
Don't know .....5  
Refused .....2

b. How about the Ministry of Interior?

A lot of confidence.....	38%
Some confidence.....	34
Not much confidence.....	6
No confidence at all.....	6
Don't know.....	14
Refused.....	3

c. How about the President?

A lot of confidence.....	64%
Some confidence.....	21
Not much confidence.....	5
No confidence at all.....	6
Don't know.....	2
Refused.....	2

d. How about the Judiciary Branch?

A lot of confidence.....	43%
Some confidence.....	30
Not much confidence.....	7
No confidence at all.....	7
Don't know.....	11
Refused.....	2

e. How about the Guardian Council?

A lot of confidence.....	42%
Some confidence.....	29
Not much confidence.....	6
No confidence at all.....	6
Don't know.....	15
Refused.....	2

f. How about the police?

A lot of confidence.....	52%
Some confidence.....	31
Not much confidence.....	6
No confidence at all.....	7

Don't know .....3  
 Refused .....1

READ STATEMENT: Now I have a few questions about the United States

Q3. How much confidence do you have in US President Barack Obama to do the right thing regarding world affairs? Is that:

A lot of confidence..... 2%  
 Some confidence .....14  
 Not much confidence .....14  
 No confidence at all .....57

Don't know .....11  
 Refused .....2

US President George W. Bush:

**2/08**

A lot of confidence..... 2%  
 Some confidence .....4  
 Not too much confidence .....8  
 No confidence at all .....72  
 Depends (vol.).....0

Don't know/Refused .....14

Q4. In general do you think US President Barack Obama does or does not respect Islam?

Does respect Islam ..... 25%  
 Does not respect Islam .....59

Don't know .....14  
 Refused .....3

Q5. To what degree do you favor or oppose full, unconditional negotiations between the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the government of the United States?

	<b>WPO 9/09</b>	<b>TFT 5/09</b>	<b>TFT 2/08</b>
Favor strongly .....	20%	40%	39%
Favor somewhat .....	40	20	22
Oppose somewhat .....	7	7	11
Oppose strongly .....	23	23	18

Don't know .....	7	DK/R 10	DK/R 11
Refused .....	3		

Q6. To what degree do you favor or oppose Iran and the United States restoring diplomatic relations?

Favor strongly .....	18%
Favor somewhat .....	45
Oppose somewhat .....	9
Oppose strongly .....	18
Don't know .....	8
Refused .....	3

Q7. To what degree do you favor or oppose Iran cooperating with the US to combat the Taliban operating in Afghanistan near Iran's border?

Favor strongly .....	22%
Favor somewhat .....	21
Oppose somewhat .....	9
Oppose strongly .....	32
Don't know .....	12
Refused .....	3

Q8. Thinking now about US actions around the world, please tell me if you think each of the following is or is not a US goal.

a. To impose American culture on Muslim society. Please tell me whether you think this is definitely a US goal, probably a US goal, probably not a US goal, or definitely not a US goal?

	<b>WPO</b>
	<b>9/09</b>
Definitely a US goal.....	57%
Probably a US goal .....	18
Probably not a US goal .....	7
Definitely not a US goal .....	9
Don't know .....	7
Refused .....	2

b. How about to maintain control over the oil resources of the Middle East?

	<b>WPO 9/09</b>	<b>WPO 2/08</b>
Definitely a US goal.....	62%	71%
Probably a US goal .....	16	13
Probably not a US goal .....	2	3
Definitely not a US goal .....	6	3
Don't know .....	12	DK/R 11
Refused .....	1	

c. How about to see the creation of an independent and economically viable Palestinian state?

	<b>WPO 9/09</b>	<b>WPO 2/08</b>	<b>WPO 12/06</b>
Definitely a US goal.....	13%	3%	2%
Probably a US goal .....	12	9	9
Probably not a US goal .....	9	16	13
Definitely not a US goal .....	46	62	62
Don't know .....	18	DK/R 10	DK/R 14
Refused .....	2		

d. How about to weaken and divide the Islamic world?

	<b>WPO 9/09</b>	<b>WPO 2/08</b>
Definitely a US goal.....	68%	69%
Probably a US goal .....	13	15
Probably not a US goal .....	5	4
Definitely not a goal of the US .....	7	3
Don't know .....	6	DK/R 10
Refused .....	*	

Q9. In the way US behaves toward our government, do you think the US more often treats our government fairly, OR abuses its greater power to make our government do what the US wants?

Treats us fairly .....	7%
Abuses its greater power.....	85
Don't know .....	5
Refused .....	3

Q10. Please tell me whether you approve or disapprove of attacks on US military troops in Afghanistan? Do you:

Strongly approve.....	16%
Somewhat approve.....	10
Have mixed feelings .....	18
Somewhat oppose .....	8
Strongly oppose .....	41
Don't know .....	6
Refused .....	2

Q11. How about attacks on US military troops based in the Persian Gulf states? Do you:

Strongly approve.....	21%
Somewhat approve.....	11
Have mixed feelings .....	13
Somewhat oppose .....	8
Strongly oppose .....	33
Don't know .....	10
Refused .....	4

*Q12-Q16 will be released separately.*

READ STATEMENT: Now turning to another issue:

Q17. Do you think that when there are concerns about the fairness of elections countries should or should not be willing to have international observers from the United Nations monitor their elections?

Should be willing .....	37%
Should not be willing .....	55
Don't know .....	6
Refused .....	2

Q18. In general how satisfied are you with the process by which the authorities are elected in this country?

	<b>WPO</b>	<b>WPO</b>
	<b>9/09</b>	<b>2/08</b>
Very satisfied .....	40%	18%
Somewhat satisfied .....	41	44

Not very satisfied .....	10	21
Not at all satisfied .....	6	7
Don't know .....	2	DK/R 10
Refused .....	1	

Q19. Did you vote in the recent presidential election?

Yes .....	87%
No.....	12
Don't know .....	*
Refused .....	*

[ASK ONLY IF RESPONDENT ANSWERES YES (01) ON Q18 ABOVE ]

STATEMENT: As you know, a great many people voted in the last election and each candidate was able to attract many voters. Talking to people, we have come across many who voted for Mousavi or Ahmadinejad, or for Rezayi or Karoubi, and some who wrote in names of people who were not official candidates. Regardless of how you think about all these candidates now, please tell me:

Q20: Who did you vote for in that election?

Mir Hussein Mousavi.....	14%*
Ahmadinejad.....	55
Rezayi .....	3
Karoubi .....	1
Other (vol.).....	*
Don't know .....	3
Refused .....	24

Q21. How free and fair do you think this election was? Would you say this election was:

Completely free and fair .....	66%
Somewhat free and fair .....	17
Not very free and fair .....	5
Not free and fair at all .....	5
Don't know .....	5
Refused .....	2

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\* Percent of total.

Q22. How much confidence do you have in the declared election results? Would you say you have:

A lot of confidence.....	62%
Some confidence.....	21
Not much confidence .....	6
No confidence at all .....	7
Don't know .....	3
Refused .....	2

Q23. If the same election were to be repeated again tomorrow, who would you vote for?

Mir Hussein Mousavi.....	8%
Ahmadinejad .....	49
Rezayi .....	2
Karoubi .....	1
I will not vote (vol.) .....	13
Other (vol.).....	1
Don't know .....	7
Refused .....	19

Q24. Considering everything that has occurred before, during, and after the elections, do you consider Ahmadinejad to be the legitimate President of Iran?

Yes .....	81%
No.....	10
Don't know .....	3
Refused .....	5

Q25. How honest do you think Ahmadinejad is when he speaks to the people? Do you think he is:

Very honest .....	48%
Somewhat honest .....	33
Not very honest .....	6
Not honest at all .....	5
Don't know .....	5
Refused .....	3

Q26: Do you think the Supreme Leader should or should not have given his support to Ahmadinejad after the election?

Should have.....	76%
Should not have.....	13
Don't know .....	6
Refused .....	5

Q27: Please tell me which view is closer to yours? Do you think:

	<b>WPO 9/09</b>	<b>WPO 2/08</b>
The press should have the right to publish news and ideas without any government control. ....	36%	31%
The government should have the right to prevent the media from publishing things that it thinks will be destabilizing .....	58	45
Don't know .....	4	DK/R 24
Refused .....	2	

Q28. In Iran how free do you think people are to express controversial political views, without fear of being harassed or punished? Would you say people are:

Completely free.....	27%
Somewhat free .....	44
Not very free .....	12
Not at all free .....	11
Don't know .....	4
Refused .....	2

Q29. How much of the time do you think you can trust the national government in Tehran to do what is right?

	<b>WPO 9/09</b>	<b>WPO 2/08</b>
Most of the time .....	54%	48%
Some of the time .....	31	26
Rarely .....	9	11
Never.....	2	2

Don't know .....2      DK/R 12  
 Refused .....1

STATEMENT: Now here are a few more questions about the United States.

Q30. Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable opinion of the following:

a. First the current US Government. Would you say you have a very favorable opinion, somewhat favorable opinion, somewhat unfavorable opinion, or a very unfavorable opinion of the current US government?

	<b>WPO 9/09</b>	<b>WPO 2/08</b>	<b>WPO 12/06</b>
Very favorable .....	3%	2%	2%
Somewhat favorable.....	14	6	3
Somewhat unfavorable.....	8	10	9
Very unfavorable .....	69	75	84
Don't know .....	4	DK/R 8	DK/R 3
Refused .....	2		

b. How about the American people?

	<b>WPO 9/09</b>	<b>WPO 2/08</b>	<b>WPO 12/06</b>
Very favorable .....	13%	15%	9%
Somewhat favorable.....	38	36	36
Somewhat unfavorable.....	7	17	16
Very unfavorable .....	31	20	33
Don't know .....	8	DK/R 12	DK/R 6
Refused .....	3		

Q31. Please tell me which of these three positions is closest to yours?

The US opposes democracy in  
 Muslim countries ..... 19%

The US favors democracy in Muslim countries,  
 but only if the government is cooperative  
 with the US .....51

The US favors democracy in Muslim countries,  
 whether or not the government is cooperative  
 with the US .....16

Don't know .....10  
Refused .....4

Q32. In general, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Iran's system of government?  
Would you say you are:

Very satisfied ..... 41%  
Somewhat satisfied .....46  
Not very satisfied .....7  
Not at all satisfied .....3  
  
Don't know .....1  
Refused .....1

Q33. Do you think the way the Supreme Leader is selected is or is not consistent with the principles of democracy?

Is consistent with the principles of democracy ..... 55%  
  
Is not consistent with the principles of  
democracy .....14  
  
Depends (vol.).....5  
  
Don't know .....19  
Refused .....7

Q34. Please tell me which of these two views is closer to yours? Do you think:

A council of senior religious scholars should  
have the power to overturn laws when it  
believes they are contrary to the Quran. .... 62%  
  
If laws are passed by elected representatives  
of the people they should not be subject to a  
veto by senior religious scholars.....24  
  
Don't know .....11  
Refused .....3

Q35. Do you think it is appropriate for members of the Guardian Council to support a candidate in an election, or do you think they should always remain neutral?

Is appropriate .....	16%
Should always remain neutral.....	75
Depends (vol.).....	2
Don't know .....	5
Refused .....	2

Q36. Do you think the constitution of our country gives the Supreme Leader:

More power than it is necessary.....	17%
Less power than it is necessary.....	6
Necessary amount of power.....	61
Don't know .....	12
Refused .....	4

## DEMOGRAPHICS

D1. How is the economic situation of your family as compared to most other people living in your city/village? Would you say the economic situation of your family is:

A lot better .....	1%
Somewhat better.....	16
Roughly the same.....	63
Somewhat worse .....	12
A lot worse.....	5
Don't know .....	1
Refused .....	1

D2. Do you follow the radio or satellite programs of VOA or BBC?

Yes .....	20%
No.....	80
Don't know .....	*
Refused .....	*

D3. Gender

Male .....	49%
Female.....	51

D4. Age

18-24 .....	26%
25-34 .....	27
35-44 .....	19
45-54 .....	14
60+ .....	15

D5. What is the level of your education?

Illiterate .....	3%
Primary.....	11
Some middle school / middle school diploma .....	10
Some high school / high school student.....	4
High school diploma .....	36
Some tertiary / tertiary student * .....	5
Associate's degree .....	10
Bachelor's degree .....	17
Master's/PhD .....	3

D6. What is your employment status? Are you....

Working full-time (40+ hours) .....	28%
Working part-time (less than 40 hours) .....	7
Unemployed, looking for work.....	6
Unemployed, not looking for work.....	3
Housewife (not working outside the home).....	32
Student/apprentice.....	14
Retired/disabled .....	9

D7. What is your household's total average monthly income? Is it....

100,000 Tomans or less .....	4%
100,001 to 150,000 Tomans .....	2
150,001 to 200,000 Tomans .....	8
200,001 to 400,000 Tomans .....	38
400,001 to 600,000 Tomans .....	26
600,001 to 800,000 Tomans, .....	10
800,001 Tomans or greater .....	7

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\* According to the Iranian educational system this category is equivalent to some college

Don't know/Refused .....6

D8. Would you describe your household as upper class, middle class, working class or poor?

Upper (A/B) ..... 1%  
Middle (C1, C2).....43  
Working (D).....37  
Poor (E).....18  
  
Don't know/Refused .....1

D9: How many days a week do you access the Internet?

Not at all..... 65%  
Every day or almost every day.....6  
Three or four days a week.....4  
One or two days a week .....12  
Less than once a week.....13

D10. Is there more than one telephone line connected to your home?

Yes ..... 15%  
No.....85

D11. What is your religion?

Shia ..... 93%  
Sunni .....4  
Other .....2  
  
Don't know/Refused .....2

D12. What is your ethnicity?

Persian..... 53%  
Turk or Azeri.....23  
Kurd .....6  
Arab.....2  
Baluch .....1  
Lor.....5  
Gilak or Mazandarani .....6  
Turkmen .....\*  
Other .....2  
  
Don't know/Refused .....1

D13. Do you live in an urban area or a rural area?

Urban.....	69%
Rural.....	31

D14. Finally, we would like to know, in general, how easy or difficult it was for you to answer these questions. Did you find answering these questions:

Very easy to do .....	41%
Somewhat easy to do .....	41
Somewhat difficult to do.....	15
Very difficult to do.....	2
Other (vol.).....	*
Don't know/Refused .....	1

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Overview**

This study was designed, managed, and analyzed by WorldPublicOpinion.org, a project managed by the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) at the University of Maryland. Staff from this organization have carried previous studies in Iran using face-to-face interviewing and have also conducted focus groups in Iran. This organization is responsible for all of the survey questions and the interpretation of the findings.

The survey was executed by means of computer-assisted-telephone interviewing by a professional research agency outside Iran. All interviewers were native Farsi speakers. Telephone interviewing and an outside agency were chosen for this study so that there would be no political constraints on questions asked or speculation about the influence of Iranian authorities on the data collection process. In the past, when we have examined clearly documented studies of the Iranian public, such as those by Terror-Free-Tomorrow and WorldPublicOpinion.org, we have found that telephone methods and face-to-face methods have produced very similar findings with comparable questions.

### **Telephone Sample**

Interviewing was conducted August 27-September 10, 2009 among a national sample of 1,003 Iranian adults aged 18 and older. The margin of error for a sample of this size is no larger than +/- 3.1 percentage points.

The sample was stratified by Iranian provinces using area codes and telephone exchanges for landline telephones in Iran. Numbers were randomly selected and the last four digits of actual telephone numbers were randomly varied. Academic and commercial research organizations in Iran use very similar telephone methods for surveys. When a residence

was reached, an adult was selected randomly using the next birthday technique. An initial attempt and three callbacks were made in an effort to complete an interview. A total of 1,003 interviews were completed; the interview refusal rate was 52 percent.

The household penetration of telephone landlines in Iran is reported to be over 80 percent by Iran's telecommunication company. WorldPublicOpinion.org conducted an in home survey with a national probability sample of Iranians in January-February, 2008 and found that 84 percent of Iranians reported having a landline telephone in their household.

All thirty Iranian provinces were represented in the completed sample in proportions similar to their actual populations, as were rural and urban areas and females and males. A post-weighting procedure was employed using gender, age, province, and urban-rural residence as factors. Demographic targets were based upon 2005 data from the Statistical Center of Iran. In general, the weighting effect was quite small; however, respondents 55 years and older had to be up-weighted and those 35-44 down-weighted somewhat.