

Middle East Scholar Barometer

**Co-directed by Shibley Telhami and Marc Lynch
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**A Joint Initiative of the University of Maryland Critical Issues Poll
and the Project on Middle East Political Science
at George Washington University**

Survey Methodology

This survey was carried out March 27 – April 11, 2023, online using the University of Maryland's Qualtrics platform. The poll was distributed to 1,513 recipients resulting in 449 responses. Recipients included those who are members of the Middle East and North Africa section of the American Political Science Association (APSA), the Middle East Studies Association (MESA), as well as members of the American Historical Association (AHA) who specialized in the Middle East, and other relevant contacts of the Project on Middle East Political Science (POMEPS) at George Washington University. The poll was conducted using an anonymous link sent out via email, which did not collect any identifiable information about the respondents. The poll was designed using the University of Maryland's Qualtrics platform, which generated the anonymous link that was sent out, and the data from the responses were also collected on this platform. The questions, some of which were repeat questions from previous polls, were prepared by the two principal investigators in consultation with the academic advisory committee of the Middle East Scholar Barometer.

Note: Percentages may not always add to one hundred due to rounding

Dear Colleague,

We would like to invite you to take this brief scholars' survey on Middle East politics (Middle East Scholar Barometer). In this fifth survey since February 2021, we repeat some of the same questions from previous rounds so we can track shifts over time, as well as ask some new, timely questions. We kept it short so that the survey should take 5-7 minutes to complete. Please note that we will make no effort to sell anything to you, your answers will remain confidential, and you will remain anonymous. We will also share the final aggregate results with you. If at any time you find that you do not want to answer a question, feel free to skip it and move on to the next one. We value all feedback on this project, and due to feedback from previous surveys, we have now added a “do not know” option to all questions.

Thank you in advance!

Best,

Marc Lynch

Professor of Political Science and International
Affairs Director
Director, Project on Middle East Political
Science (POMEPS)

Shibley Telhami

Anwar Sadat Professor for Peace and
Development
Director, University of Maryland Critical Issues
Poll

Questions:

This research is being conducted by Dr. Shibley Telhami at the University of Maryland, College Park and Dr. Marc Lynch at George Washington University. We are inviting you to participate in this research project because you are a scholar focusing on the Middle East and North Africa. The purpose of this research project is to gauge expert opinions on Middle East politics.

Below you will find a series of questions related to Middle East scholarship, followed by demographic questions, that should only take you five minutes to complete. As this survey is being conducted using an anonymous link, no identifiable information about you will be collected.

Any potential loss of confidentiality will be minimized by not collecting your email address (through the use of anonymous links) or any other information that can allow you to be identified. The data from this survey will be securely stored in the principal investigator's password protected accounts.

If we write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible. Should you need to reach us for any reason regarding this survey, please contact us at sadatoffice@umd.edu.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the University of Maryland Institutional Review Board at irb@umd.edu.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. By consenting below, you indicate that you are at least 18 years of age.

I acknowledge that I have read the information about the survey above and I give my consent in order to participate: **[PN: FORCE RESPONSE]**

	Total
1. I consent	99%
2. I do not consent (if you selected this option, please exit the survey now)	1%

[Basket on Iran]

Q1. Would the U.S. returning to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) as it currently stands: **[PN: RANDOMIZE]**

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. Make it more likely Iran gets a nuclear weapon in the next ten years?	1%	3%	2%
2. Make it less likely Iran gets a nuclear weapon in the next ten years?	68	54	61
3. Make no real difference to the likelihood of Iran getting a nuclear weapon in the next ten years?	22	24	23
4. I don't know	8	19	14

Q2. In comparison to six months ago, is a return to the JCPOA now more or less likely? **[PN: RANDOMIZE]**

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. More	15%	12%	14%
2. Less	50	44	47
3. Same likelihood	21	24	22
4. I don't know	14	20	17

Q3. How would you rate the likelihood of an open armed conflict between Israel and Iran in the next two years? **[PN: RANDOMIZE]**

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. Very likely	4%	5%	5%
2. Somewhat likely	22	25	24
3. Somewhat unlikely	45	44	45
4. Very unlikely	26	22	24
5. I don't know	3	4	3

Q4. In your opinion, how likely is it that the protests in Iran will succeed in overthrowing the government in the next two years? **[PN: RANDOMIZE]**

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. Very likely	1%	1%	1%

2. Somewhat likely	3	10	7
3. Somewhat unlikely	39	44	42
4. Very unlikely	54	42	47
5. I don't know	3	4	3

Q5. Recently, Saudi Arabia and Iran have agreed to re-establish diplomatic ties and reopen their respective embassies. How do you assess the likelihood of the following outcomes: **[PN: RANDOMIZE ROWS]**

Q5A. The prospects of an international agreement to return to the Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA)

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. Much less likely	4%	2%	3%
2. Somewhat less likely	10	11	11
3. No effect	42	43	43
4. Somewhat more likely	34	32	33
5. Much more likely	3	2	3
6. I don't know	6	10	8

Q5B. The prospect of armed conflict between Israel and Iran

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. Much less likely	7%	6%	6%
2. Somewhat less likely	41	39	40
3. No effect	40	37	38
4. Somewhat more likely	6	9	7
5. Much more likely	2	1	2
6. I don't know	4	8	6

Q5C. The prospects of maintaining stringent international sanctions on Iran

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. Much less likely	7%	7%	7%
2. Somewhat less likely	36	45	41
3. No effect	48	35	41
4. Somewhat more likely	4	7	5
5. Much more likely	2	1	2
6. I don't know	4	6	5

Q5D. The prospect of reducing Iranian-Saudi proxy battles in the Middle East

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
Much less likely	3%	2%	3%
Somewhat less likely	16	19	18
No effect	12	9	10
Somewhat more likely	56	51	54
Much more likely	11	14	12
I don't know	3	5	4

[Basket on Israel/Palestine]

Q6. The stated aim of international diplomacy toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been to achieve two states, the state of Israel next to a sovereign state of Palestine established within the territories that Israel occupied in the 1967 war. Which of the following is closer to your view about the likelihood of this outcome? [PN: RANDOMIZE]

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. It's no longer possible	57%	67%	63%
2. It's possible and probable within the next ten years	38	29	33
3. It's possible, but improbable within the next ten years	2	2	2
4. I don't know	3	2	3

Q7. In your opinion, which of the following comes closest to describing the current reality in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza: [PN: RANDOMIZE]

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. The state of Israel with temporary occupation of the West Bank and Gaza	2%	1%	1%
2. The state of Israel with semi-permanent occupation of the West Bank and Gaza	20	23	22
3. Two unequal states	2	1	1
4. A one-state reality with inequality, but not akin to Apartheid	9	6	8
5. A one-state reality akin to Apartheid	66	70	68
6. I don't know	2	0	1

Q8. If a two-state outcome is, or becomes, no longer possible, which of the following is most likely in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza in the next ten years? [PN: RANDOMIZE]

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. A single state with equality between Israelis and Palestinians	1%	1%	1%
2. A one-state reality with increasing inequality, but not akin to Apartheid	14	12	13
3. A one-state reality akin to Apartheid	79	81	80
4. A confederation	3	2	2
5. I don't know	3	4	4

Q9. What is your position on the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement aimed at Israel? [PN: RANDOMIZE]

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. I support it unconditionally	25%	35%	31%
2. I support it under certain conditions	54	47	50
3. I oppose it unconditionally	13	10	11
4. I don't know	8	8	8

Q10. Regardless of your position on BDS, do you support or oppose boycotts of Israel? [PN: RANDOMIZE]

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. I support all boycotts of Israel	24%	29%	27%
2. I support some boycotts of Israel	59	57	58
3. I oppose all boycotts of Israel	9	7	8
4. I don't know	8	7	8

Q11. Regardless of whether you personally support or oppose the boycott of Israel, which of the following is closer to your view? [PN: RANDOMIZE]

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. We should SUPPORT laws that penalize people who boycott Israel	3%	2%	2%
2. We should OPPOSE laws that penalize people who boycott Israel	91	94	92
3. I don't know	6	5	5

Q12. In your view, is it possible to have full democracy for all Israeli citizens while maintaining a military rule over Palestinians in the occupied territories? [PN: RANDOMIZE]

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. Yes	13%	7%	10%
2. No	83	91	87
3. I don't know	4	2	3

Q13. As you know, Israel recently formed a government that included far-right members. Which of the following is closer to your view about the direction the government is taking (even as choices may overlap) [PN: RANDOMIZE]

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. It's totally new	8%	10%	9%
2. It's new only in intensity	79	78	78
3. It's not new at all	11	11	11
4. I don't know	3	1	2

Q14. The current Israeli government's plan to change the judicial system has generated sustained large-scale protests in Israel. How do you believe the government will act in response to these protests?

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. The government falls and new elections are called	5%	6%	6%
2. The government withdraws the planned changes	2	6	4
3. The government modifies the planned changes	54	43	48
4. The government implements the planned changes	26	35	31
5. I don't know	14	10	12

Q15. How do you view the current Israeli government's policy direction on the following: [PN: RANDOMIZE ROWS]

Q15A. Israel's judicial system and the Supreme Court

Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
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1. Very positive	1%	1%	1%
2. Somewhat positive	1	2	1
3. Neither negative nor positive	2	4	3
4. Somewhat negative	11	11	11
5. Very negative	78	79	78
6. I don't know	9	4	6

Q15B. The situation in the occupied territories

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. Very positive	0%	1%	<1%
2. Somewhat positive	0	0	0
3. Neither negative nor positive	0	0	0
4. Somewhat negative	3	6	4
5. Very negative	93	93	93
6. I don't know	4	1	2

Q15C. Relations between Jewish and non-Jewish citizens of Israel

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. Very positive	0%	0%	0%
2. Somewhat positive	1	1	1
3. Neither negative nor positive	2	2	2
4. Somewhat negative	15	12	13
5. Very negative	77	82	80
6. I don't know	6	2	4

[Basket on Abraham Accords]

Q16. The Biden administration has adopted the Abraham Accords of the previous administration and has pursued the expansion of relations between Israel and Arab states independently of relations between Israel and the Palestinians. What is your assessment of the likely impact of this policy on the following issues: [PN: RANDOMIZE ROWS]

Q16A. The prospects of Israeli-Palestinian peace

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. Very positive	1%	0%	<1%
2. Somewhat positive	4	6	5

3. Neither negative nor positive	17	17	17
4. Somewhat negative	30	22	25
5. Very negative	45	53	49
6. I don't know	4	3	3

Q16B. Advancing democracy / human rights in the Middle East

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. Very positive	0%	1%	<1%
2. Somewhat positive	5	8	7
3. Neither negative nor positive	27	24	25
4. Somewhat negative	31	27	29
5. Very negative	35	39	37
6. I don't know	2	3	2

Q16C. Advancing regional security

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. Very positive	3%	3%	3%
2. Somewhat positive	26	28	27
3. Neither negative nor positive	39	25	31
4. Somewhat negative	20	22	21
5. Very negative	9	17	13
6. I don't know	3	6	4

Q16D. Avoiding U.S. military confrontation with Iran

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. Very positive	1%	2%	2%
2. Somewhat positive	14	17	16
3. Neither negative nor positive	58	48	53
4. Somewhat negative	17	12	15
5. Very negative	5	9	7
6. I don't know	5	12	9

Q16E. Preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons

Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
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1. Very positive	0%	1%	<1%
2. Somewhat positive	12	12	12
3. Neither negative nor positive	55	48	51
4. Somewhat negative	19	15	17
5. Very negative	8	14	11
6. I don't know	6	11	8

Q17. Is the Biden administration likely to be successful in its efforts to expand the Abraham Accords beyond the original signatories? [PN: RANDOMIZE]

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. Yes	32%	23%	27%
2. No	45	42	43
3. I don't know	23	36	30

[Basket on Ukraine and Impact on Middle East]

Q18. How has the war in Ukraine affected the influence of the following parties in the Middle East? [PN: RANDOMIZE ROWS]

Q18A. Russia

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. Increase	24%	32%	28%
2. Decrease	50	42	46
3. No impact	19	14	16
4. I don't know	8	12	10

Q18B. China

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. Increase	77%	75%	76%
2. Decrease	2	1	2
3. No impact	15	12	14
4. I don't know	6	11	9

Q18C. The U.S.

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. Increase	7%	6%	7%
2. Decrease	48	45	46
3. No impact	38	38	38
4. I don't know	10	12	10

Q18D. The E.U.

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. Increase	6%	8%	7%
2. Decrease	39	36	37
3. No impact	44	41	42
4. I don't know	11	16	14

Q19. The Biden administration has made the defense of Ukraine a top priority in its foreign policy since Russia invaded the country in February 2022. While Biden has greatly succeeded in mobilizing European support, he has had a mixed reaction from US allies in the Middle East, especially Israel, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, and the UAE. Why do you think the administration has been less successful? [PN: RANDOMIZE]

Q19A. Other self-interest of those states

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. Very likely	61%	68%	65%
2. Somewhat likely	34	24	29
3. Neither likely nor unlikely	2	2	2
4. Somewhat unlikely	0	0	0
5. Very unlikely	0	1	<1
6. I don't know	4	5	5

Q19B. Perceived American hypocrisy on Israel/Palestine

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. Very likely	20%	32%	27%
2. Somewhat likely	26	31	29
3. Neither likely nor unlikely	21	15	18
4. Somewhat unlikely	11	9	10
5. Very unlikely	19	8	13

6. I don't know	3	6	5
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Q19C. Perceived decline of U.S. power

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. Very likely	23%	20%	21%
2. Somewhat likely	47	50	48
3. Neither likely nor unlikely	20	13	16
4. Somewhat unlikely	6	9	8
5. Very unlikely	2	5	4
6. I don't know	3	3	3

[Basket on Syrian Earthquake]

Q20. The U.S. has imposed sanctions on the Syrian regime as punishment for war crimes committed during the Syrian civil war. Many believe the sanctions are interfering with humanitarian relief efforts following the earthquake on February 6, 2023, while others disagree. Should the U.S.: **[PN: RANDOMIZE]**

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. Lift sanctions to prioritize humanitarian relief	21%	29%	25%
2. Alter sanctions to prioritize humanitarian relief	62	57	59
3. Keep sanctions as they are	9	9	9
4. I don't know	8	6	7

Q21. Which one of the following is closer to your view on the impact of the earthquake on relations between the Syrian regime and its former opponents among Middle East and other governments: **[PN: RANDOMIZE]**

	Political Scientist	Non-Political Scientist	Total
1. It has led governments to make a strategic shift in normalizing relations with the Syrian regime	4%	5%	5%
2. It has provided a cover for governments to implement a strategic shift they had already	70	62	65
3. It has led to no notable change in relations	14	16	15
4. I don't know	12	18	15