

Zogby Research Services
September 2013



TUNISIA:

Divided & Dissatisfied
with Ennahda





From August 4 through August 31, 2013, Zogby Research Services surveyed 3,031 Tunisian adults to determine their attitudes toward the developments that have unfolded in Tunisia since their revolution of two and a half years ago.

What we found was a deeply dissatisfied electorate and an extremely polarized society. In some ways the divisions in Tunisia are similar to those we found in Egypt, in the poll we conducted in May of 2013, just prior to the June 30th Tamarrod demonstrations that culminated in the military's deposing the elected government of President Mohamed Morsi on July 3rd.

As was the case in Egypt, a majority of Tunisians have lost the hope they had two and a half years ago. As in Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood-led government, headed in Tunisia by Ennahda, has diminished support and is currently distrusted by almost three-quarters of the electorate. Just as Egyptians were upset that the ruling Freedom and Justice Party (Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood party) had monopolized power, Tunisians are concerned that Ennahda (the Tunisian Muslim Brotherhood group) is also dominating the government. And as in Egypt, the governing party, Ennahda, now has the confidence of only 28% of Tunisians—and this 28% is almost exclusively comprised of Ennahda supporters. While more than 90% of Ennahda supporters show some degree of support for the government, more than 95% of the rest of Tunisians (72% of the population) do not support the government.

Also similar to the situation that existed in Egypt is the fact that the 72% of the rest of the electorate is divided amongst a number of relatively weak parties with no one party able to muster the confidence of more than one-quarter of the adult population.

There are, however, some real differences between Egypt and Tunisia. Unlike Egypt, Tunisians are not looking to the military to make change. In fact, a majority of Tunisians (53%) say that they believe that the action by

the Egyptian military was “incorrect.” The organized Tunisian opposition, to date, is comprised of a coalition of secular parties and the country's trade union movement. And while Tunisians are deeply concerned that Ennahda tolerated, for too long, the activities of extremist Salafi groups – which they blame for the recent assassinations of two popular leftist political leaders—it appears from the poll that the fear of “Islamization” of the country is not a major factor in the public's discontent with the government. Rather, the poll makes clear that the majority of Tunisians are disturbed by the government's ineffectiveness and its failure to deliver on the political and economic promises of their revolution.

Our poll also shows:

- two-thirds of Tunisians feel their country is moving in the wrong direction;
- less than one-third of Tunisians say that the government has been effective in addressing priority concerns like: expanding employment opportunities, dealing with the high cost of living, and protecting personal and civil rights;
- on none of the 11 political concerns identified in the poll does a majority of Tunisians agree that the government has been effective; and
- almost three-quarters of all Tunisians say that the current government is “dominated by Ennahda” and is not “a balanced coalition that insures moderation,” with the same number saying they believe that Ennahda is not committed to “fulfilling the goals of the revolution.”

Almost two-thirds of Tunisians find fault with the failure of the government to produce a constitution in a timely manner. And almost three-quarters say that the National Constituent Assembly, that was elected to amend and approve a draft constitution and set up the next election for a more permanent body, should not have extended its term in office and is now illegitimate. Additionally, three-quarters say that they do not know enough about

the draft constitution, with the same number saying that what they do know about this document causes them to disapprove of it.

Finally, it is important to note, that there is a dearth of credible leadership in the country. In fact, the only leader who enjoys 50% support is Hamadi Jebali, the current secretary general of Ennahda. He had been prime minister,

but resigned in February after the assassination of Chokri Belaid, a popular leftist leader. This act may account for Jebali's popularity. The other Tunisian whose support is near 50% is retired General Rachid Ammar whose popularity rose when he refused to use force against demonstrators calling for the government of then President Ben Ali to resign.

A note on support for Tunisia's political parties:

We did not ask respondents to identify their membership in any of the political parties. Instead we asked them to express the degree of confidence they had in each of the parties we identified.

Here's what we found:

Level of confidence...		
	Overall	
	Confident	Not confident
Ennahda	28	72
Al Mottamer (CRP)	23	75
Nidaa Tounes	22	78
Al Jabha al Shaabiya	21	78
Ettakatol	20	80
The Salafi movements	20	80
Eljournhour	11	88
El Moubadara	8	89

On closer examination, however, we found that a substantial overlap existed between those who had some degree of confidence in Ennahda and those who also said that they had confidence in Ennahda's coalition partners: Al Mottamer and Ettakatol; and also in those who said they had confidence in the Salafi movements. In fact, almost one-half of those who said they had confidence in these three smaller groups were supporters of Ennahda. This, in effect, greatly inflated the appearance of support for these groups. Diving deeper we found that the reverse wasn't true. For example, while almost one-half of those who have confidence in Al Mottamer are, in fact, overlapping supporters of Ennahda, the remaining one-half of Al Mottamer supporters have no confidence in Ennahda – a further indication of that party's isolation even from supporters of one of its coalition partners.

There is virtually no support for Ennahda from amongst those Tunisians who express confidence in Nidaa Tounes, Al Jabha al Shaabiya, El JournHour, and El Moubadara. There is, however, some overlap in confidence demonstrated by supporters of these groups for each other.

Given these overlaps the measure we have chosen to use for comparisons in the presentation of data in this report is between those who have "confidence" in Ennahda (841 respondents, or 28% of the total) and those who have "no confidence" in Ennahda (2,190 respondents, or 72% of the total).

Since Ennahda is, for all intents and purposes, the governing party of Tunisia, we considered this to be the most relevant metric to use in our analysis.



When the Tunisian Revolution began 2 1/2 years ago, how hopeful were you that it would bring about positive change in Tunisia?					
			Overall	Confident in Ennahda	Not Confident in Ennahda
Very Hopeful	83	Hopeful	94	98	93
Somewhat Hopeful	11				
Somewhat Unhopeful	3	Unhopeful	6	2	7
Very Unhopeful	3				

What best describes your attitude today when you see how the Tunisian revolution is playing out?			
	Overall	Confident in Ennahda	Not Confident in Ennahda
I am still hopeful	39	90	19
Neither hopeful nor disappointed	6	7	6
I am disappointed	55	3	75

There has been a significant decline in the Tunisian public's attitude toward their revolution. Ninety-four percent (94%) say that in 2010 they were hopeful that the revolution "would bring about positive change." Now only 39% retain that hope, while 55% say they are disappointed. The overwhelming majority of those who have retained their sense of hope are Ennahda supporters. Seventy-five percent (75%) of those who have no confidence in Ennahda are disappointed in "how the Tunisian revolution is playing out."

What was your reaction to the fact that Ennahda won elections in 2011?			
	Overall	Confident in Ennahda	Not Confident in Ennahda
It was a positive development	19	62	2
It was a democratic election, and I respected the results	31	30	31
I was concerned that it was a setback for Tunisia	33	5	44
It made no difference, because little will change in Tunisia	16	3	21

At this point, how do you feel about Ennahda's victory?			
	Overall	Confident in Ennahda	Not Confident in Ennahda
It is still a positive development	17	52	3
It was a democratic election, and I respect the results	24	33	20
I am concerned that it is a setback for Tunisia	43	6	57
It makes no difference, because little will change in Tunisia	16	7	20

Attitudes toward Ennahda's 2011 electoral victory have somewhat soured. There is a 10 point increase in those who say Ennahda's win was a "setback for Tunisia."

Do you feel that Tunisia is moving in the right direction or the wrong direction?			
	Overall	Confident in Ennahda	Not Confident in Ennahda
Right direction	27	88	4
Wrong direction	64	11	85

As further evidence of the public's souring mood, almost two-thirds of Tunisians say that the country is moving in the wrong direction. There is a deep divide on this matter with 88% of Ennahda supporters saying the country is "moving in the right direction," while 85% of those who have no confidence in Ennahda say that Tunisia is "moving in the wrong direction."

Level of importance....						
	Overall		Confident in Ennahda		Not Confident in Ennahda	
	Important	Not Important	Important	Not Important	Important	Not Important
Insuring safety and security of all citizens	96	4	98	2	95	4
The high cost of living	94	1	95	0	94	1
Expanding employment opportunities	92	0	89	0	93	1
Finalizing the constitution	92	7	93	7	92	7
Ending corruption in government	90	4	93	4	89	4
Combating extremism and terrorism	90	6	93	3	89	8
Setting a date for next election	88	5	92	5	86	4
Establishing an independent election body	86	7	86	11	86	6
Protecting personal and civil rights	86	3	91	1	85	4
Protecting freedom of the press	51	32	54	35	50	31
Protecting rights for women	51	31	56	30	49	31

Extent of Effectiveness...						
	Overall		Confident in Ennahda		Not Confident in Ennahda	
	Effective	Not effective	Effective	Not effective	Effective	Not effective
Insuring safety and security of all citizens	46	54	53	47	44	56
Protecting rights for women	40	60	51	49	36	64
Ending corruption in government	39	61	33	67	42	58
Finalizing the constitution	37	63	39	61	36	64
Protecting freedom of the press	37	63	39	61	37	63
Setting a date for next election	36	62	40	52	34	66
Combating extremism and terrorism	33	67	28	72	35	65
Expanding employment opportunities	32	68	34	66	32	68
Protecting personal and civil rights	32	68	41	59	28	71
The high cost of living	25	75	21	79	26	74
Establishing an independent election body	21	78	24	76	20	79

a) The public has a long list of important priorities, with economic, security, and governance issues dominating the top of the list. There is no division between Ennahda supporters and the rest of Tunisia on the ratings given to these issues.

b) The public gives the current government very low grades for its effectiveness in addressing most of their priorities. The highest rating is the 46% of Tunisians who say that the government has been effective “in insuring the safety and security of all citizens.” On most issues by a two-to-one ratio Tunisians rate their government “ineffective.” It is especially noteworthy that two of the areas where the government performance is deemed worst are related to economic concerns.

Extent of Credibility...						
	Overall		Confident in Ennahda		Not Confident in Ennahda	
	Credible	Not credible	Credible	Not credible	Credible	Not credible
Hamadi Jebali	50	50	74	26	40	59
General Rachid Ammar	48	49	51	49	47	49
Mustapha Ben Jafer	37	62	56	44	30	68
Moncef Marzouki	35	65	66	34	23	77
Beji Caied Essebsi	27	70	22	77	29	67
Rached Ghannouchi	27	73	90	10	3	96
Taieb Baccouche	19	76	19	80	19	75
Ahmed Nejib Echebbi	11	88	8	92	12	86

According to the Tunisian public, there is a dearth of credible leadership in the country. Only two leaders – former Prime Minister Hamadi Jabali and former head of the military, General Rachid Ammar – can claim even modest support from the Tunisian public. All of the other leaders covered in the survey are seen as “not credible” by more than 62% of all Tunisians.

Level of confidence...		
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No single political party has the support of a majority Tunisians. In this regard, Ennahda, which appears to have the strongest support base, still can only claim some degree of confidence of 28% of the public. Five other parties each have the confidence of around 20% of the public. (See “A Note on the Parties” in the Executive Summary to this report for a more complete discussion of the poll’s findings with regard to the political parties.)

What in your opinion best describes the way the current coalition government is operating?			
	Overall	Confident in Ennahda	Not Confident in Ennahda
It is a balanced coalition that insures moderation	27	90	3
It is dominated by Ennahda	72	10	96

How committed do you believe Ennahda is to ...						
	Overall		Confident in Ennahda		Not Confident in Ennahda	
	Committed	Not committed	Committed	Not committed	Committed	Not committed
A pluralistic and open society in Tunisia	28	72	91	9	3	96
To fulfilling the goals of the revolution	27	72	90	10	3	96

There is very little public support for the Ennahda-led government. More than 70% of Tunisians believe that the “coalition” is a fiction and that Ennahda dominates the government. The same percentage also do not believe that Ennahda is committed to “fulfilling the goals of the revolution” and is committed to “establishing a pluralistic and open society in Tunisia.” In each instance, these contrarian views are held by 95% of Tunisians who have no confidence in Ennahda.

The bottom line here is that the public's dissatisfaction with the Ennahda government appears to have less to do with the party's ideology and more to do with its heavy-handed approach to governance, its lack of effectiveness in meeting basic needs, and its failure to achieve the goals of the Tunisian revolution.

In your opinion, what poses the greatest threat to the achievements of the Tunisian revolution?			
	Overall	Confident in Ennahda	Not Confident in Ennahda
The former leaders of the RCD	48	65	42
The Islamic parties and movements	23	3	30
The Tunisian army	1	0	1
The police	1	3	0
The divided opposition	10	11	9
Interference by other countries	15	19	14

Almost one-half of all Tunisians view former leaders of the Constitutional Democratic Rally (the party removed from power following the 2010 revolution) as “the greatest threat to ... the revolution”. The Islamic parties rank next, seen as the greatest threat by almost one-quarter of the public.

What is your view of the Egyptian Tamarod movement and the action of the military to depose Mohamed Morsi?			
	Overall	Confident in Ennahda	Not Confident in Ennahda
It was a correct and needed step that continued the Egyptian revolution	32	2	44
It was incorrect action that deposed a legitimate government	53	96	37
Not sure	14	1	19

What impact do you believe the events in Egypt will have on Tunisia?			
	Overall	Confident in Ennahda	Not Confident in Ennahda
They will harden the resolve of the Islamic parties	28	11	35
They will create the impetus for a national consensus	31	48	25
No impact	38	41	37

Slightly over one-half of Tunisians believe that the decision by the Egyptian military to depose elected President Mohamed Morsi was “an incorrect action,” a view most strongly held by Ennahda supporters. But the public is split as to whether the events in Egypt will have any impact on Tunisia – with about three in ten saying that what happened in Egypt “will harden the resolve of the Islamic parties” and the same number saying it “will create the impetus for a national consensus.” Almost four in ten, however, believe that the events in Egypt will have no “impact” on Tunisia.

How much do you know about the content of the draft constitution that is currently being debated in parliament?			
	Overall	Confident in Ennahda	Not Confident in Ennahda
A great deal	2	2	3
Enough to have an opinion	25	27	25
Not very much	72	72	73

From what you know of the new constitution, how different is it from the constitution of 1959?			
	Overall	Confident in Ennahda	Not Confident in Ennahda
Very different	22	15	25
Slightly different	34	36	34
Not different	25	39	19
Not sure	19	9	22

Approval of Draft constitution			
	Overall	Confident in Ennahda	Not Confident in Ennahda
Approve	20	63	4
Disapprove	73	37	86

While only 28% of Tunisians say they know enough about the “draft constitution” to have an opinion, that doesn’t stop the public from having definitive views about the document. Twenty-two percent (22%) say it is “very different” from the constitution of 1959. Twenty-five percent (25%) say it is “not different at all.” And 73% of all Tunisians say they disapprove of the draft constitution. Only Ennahda supporters (63%) approve of the draft constitution. Among the rest of the public, 86% say they disapprove of the draft document.

Was it legitimate for the ANC have extended their term?			
	Overall	Confident in Ennahda	Not Confident in Ennahda
Yes	27	94	1
No	72	5	98

Almost three-quarters of all Tunisians believe that it was illegitimate for the National Constituent Assembly to have extended its term. Once again there is a huge divide between Ennahda supporters and the rest of the electorate.

Methodology

The approach used for conducting the poll involved face to face, in-home personal interviews of 3,031, adults in Tunisia. The survey was conducted between July 13 and August 3, 2013. A multi-stage sampling methodology was employed for the selection of respondents. The sample obtained was nationally representative and comprised adult males and females, who were 18+ years of age. Geographically, locations covered included: Tunis, Sfax, Sousse, Bizerte, Ariane, Kairouan, Gaafsa, Megrine, Carthage, Sidi Thabet, Ghraiba, Hergla, and Belkhir.

Demographics

Under30	29
30-49	41
50+	30
Male	49
Female	51
Live in city	67
Live outside city	33
Elementary or below	37
Intermediate	14
Secondary	26
University	11
Graduate studies	2
Technical Studies	10



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