

Understanding Geographic Distinctions in West Bank Public Opinion

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Respondents to an extensive new poll shared remarkably independent views on issues ranging from Hamas's success in the Gaza war to the likelihood of Israel's collapse.

Public opinion surveys have typically treated the West Bank as an indivisible unit, often setting results there against those in Gaza. But an extensive new poll, fielded during the Hamas-Israel war, takes a different approach focused on the territory's northern, central, and southern regions, along with formerly Jordan-held East Jerusalem. Separated out by region, respondents shared remarkably independent views on issues ranging from the future leadership of the Palestinian Authority to perceptions of Hamas's success in the war, the likelihood of Israel's collapse, and the desirability of an armed uprising in the West Bank.

In this amply illustrated Policy Note, Catherine Cleveland makes a compelling case for a region-based approach to assessing West Bank public opinion. The ability to differentiate Palestinian views so finely could have dramatic implications for U.S. policy, from how Washington crafts development programs to where it focuses anti-corruption reforms. ❖

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