

Public Opinion Poll

The Government of H.E. Nader Al-Dhahabi 100 Days after its Formation

Public Opinion Polling Unit

Center for Strategic Studies

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Preliminary Results

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Introduction

Category	Completed	Refused	Total
Senior Economists	72	28	100
Political Party Leaders	97	3	100
Professionals	90	10	100
Writers, Journalists and Artists	86	14	100
Union Leaders	93	7	100
High Ranking State Officials	73	27	100
University Professors	94	6	100
Total	605	95	700

The Center for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan conducted a public opinion poll on the government of His Excellency Nader Al-Dhahabi 100 days after its formation between March 4, 2008 and March 10, 2008. The complete national sample included 959 respondents out of an original 1000, as 41 individuals refused to participate in the poll (a participation rate of 96%). The size of the complete public opinion leaders' sample was 605 respondents from an original 700, with 95 individuals refusing to participate, a participation rate of 86%. The opinion leader respondents were distributed among 7 categories, as shown in Table 1.

This poll aims to identify Jordanian citizens' and public opinion leaders' evaluations of the performance of H.E. Nader Al-Dhahabi's government 100

days after its formation, as well as their evaluations of the government's performance in addressing the issues it was entrusted with. In addition, viewpoints of the public and public opinion leaders were identified regarding the most important problems Jordan currently faces, which "the government must address immediately." The margin of error for this poll was +/- 3%.

Section I: Evaluation of the Performance of the Government, the Prime Minister and the Ministerial Team

This section presents the evaluations of the Jordanian public (the national sample) and the viewpoints of public opinion leaders regarding the ability of the government, the prime minister and the ministerial team (excluding the prime minister) to carry out their duties during the 100-day period since the government's formation.

A- The National Sample: The Prime Minister, the Government and the Ministerial Team

The poll results show that 62% of individuals included in the national sample think that the government was able, to varying degrees, to carry out the responsibilities of the current term 100 days after its formation (62% is the arithmetic mean of the responses expressed as a percentage). The same percentage of respondents expected that the government would be able to carry out its responsibilities in the government poll formation.

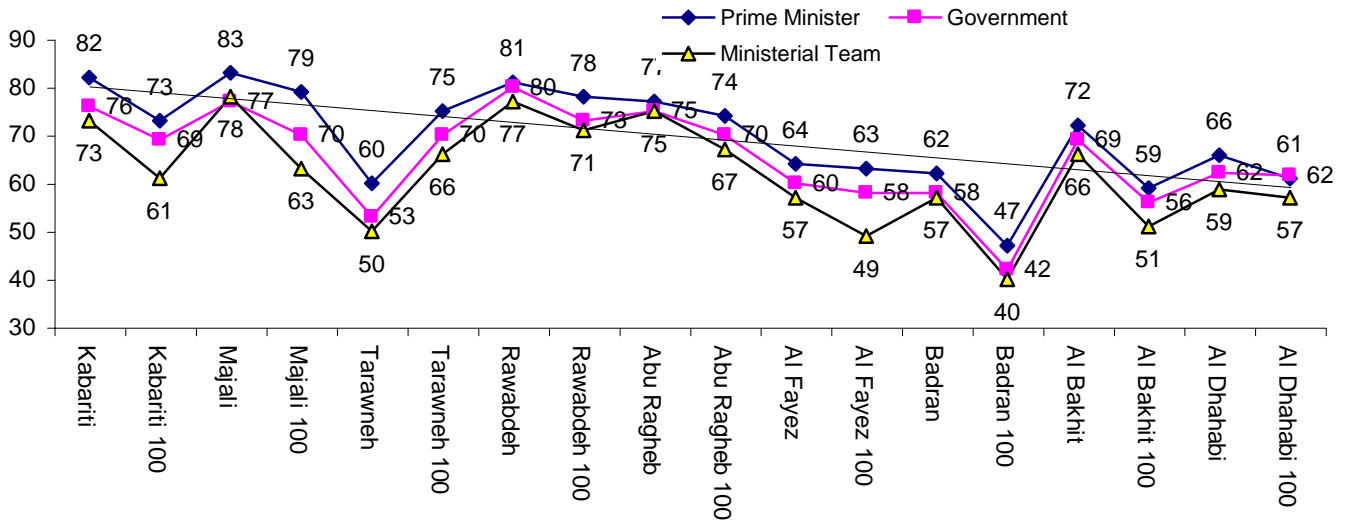
61% of respondents said that the prime minister was able to carry out his responsibilities during the first 100 days of the government's formation, compared with 66% of respondents in the poll on the government's formation who expected that the prime minister "will be able to carry out his responsibilities in the coming term". 57% of respondents stated that the ministerial team (excluding the prime minister) was able to carry out the responsibilities of the current term 100 days after the government's formation, compared with 59% of respondents who expected that the ministerial team "will be able to carry out the responsibilities of the coming term" in the government formation poll.

The results indicate that the public's evaluation of the extent of the ability of the government, the prime minister and the ministerial team to carry out the responsibilities of the current term 100 days after the government's formation **almost matches respondents' expectations as expressed in the government formation poll.**

A comparison of the results of the polls on the 100-day periods after the formations of successive governments since 1996 with the polls on the formations of the same governments shows that the respondents' evaluations of the extent of the government's, prime minister's and ministerial team's ability to carry out the responsibilities of the term in question 100 days after the formation of that government is usually lower than respondents' expectations for the success of that government in the government formation polls. In other words, respondents' expectations expressed in government formation polls are usually more optimistic compared with the results of polls conducted 100 days after those formations. It is noteworthy that the percentage decrease in the performance evaluations of the government, prime minister and ministerial team of Al-Dhahabi's government is smaller than those experienced by former governments.

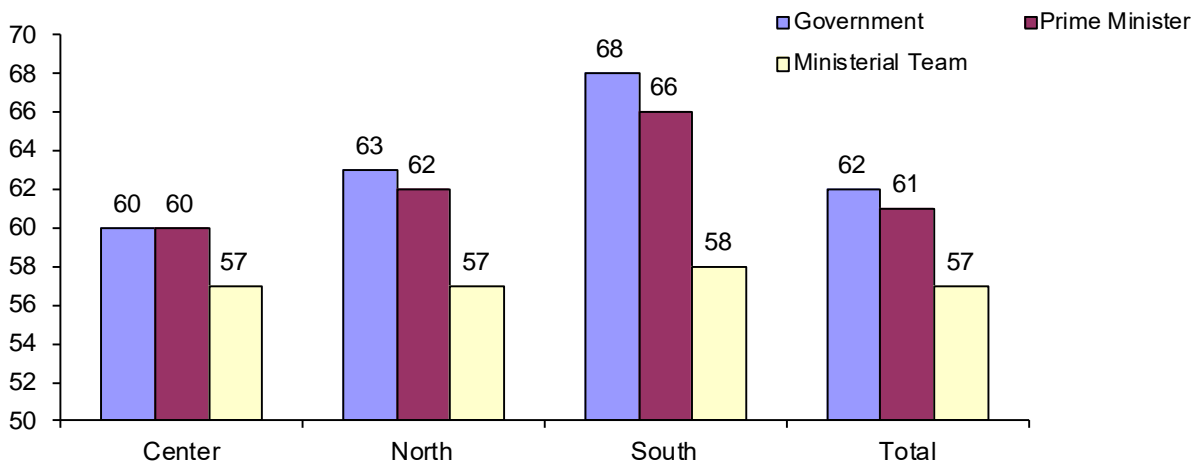
Based on comparisons between opinion polls on the governments from 1996 until the present, citizens' confidence in the abilities of successive governments to carry out the responsibilities of the term in question is decreasing steadily, as shown in the line graph (**bold black**) in Figure 1 below. This decrease is obvious when comparing the public's performance evaluations of the Kabariti and Majali governments with those of subsequent governments.

Figure 1: National sample respondents who said that the government, prime minister and ministerial team were able to carry out their responsibilities (the arithmetic mean expressed as a percentage).



The results showed no significant difference between respondents' evaluations of the government, prime minister and ministerial team based on gender or age group, nor between respondents' evaluations of government performance based on region (north, central, south). However, respondents from the southern region provided a more positive evaluation of the performance of the prime minister and the government than the evaluations of respondents from the northern and central regions, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: National sample respondents who said that the government, prime minister and ministerial team were able to carry out their responsibilities according to region

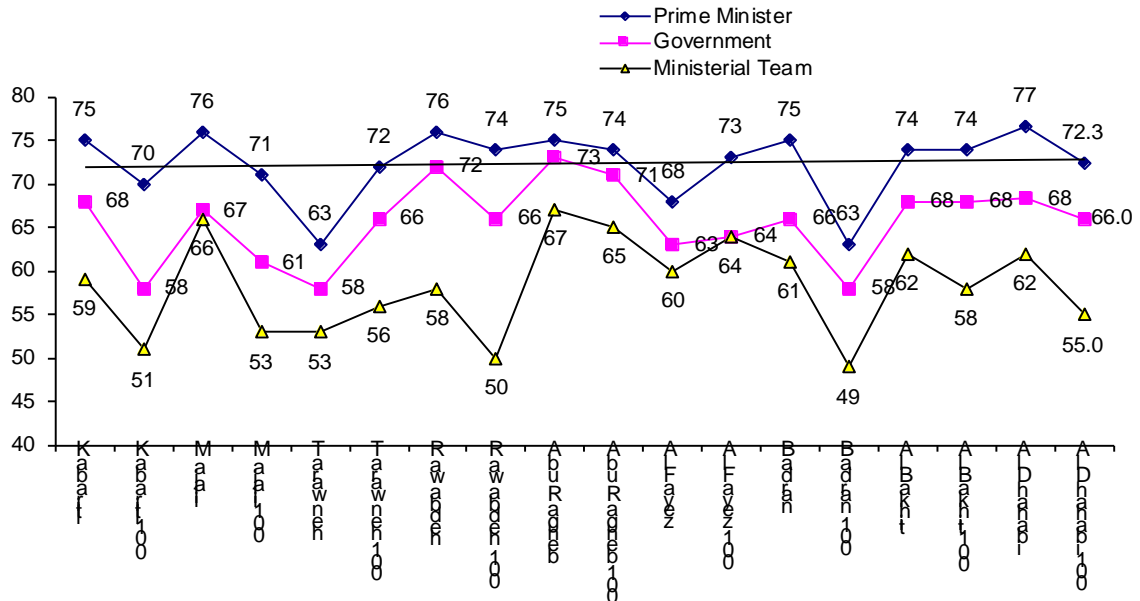


B –The Public Opinion Leaders Sample: The Prime Minister, the Government and the Ministerial Team

As for the opinions expressed by the public opinion leaders sample, 66% of sample respondents said that the government was able (to varying degrees) to carry out the responsibilities of the term during the first 100 days of its formation, compared with 68% of opinion leader respondents from the formation poll who expected that the government would be able to carry out its responsibilities. 72% of respondents stated that the prime minister was able to carry out the responsibilities of his position in the 100-day poll, compared with 77% of respondents who expected as such in the formation poll. Regarding the performance evaluation of the ministerial team (excluding the prime minister), 55% of respondents said that it was able to carry out its responsibilities in this poll compared with 62% of respondents who expected this in the formation poll. Although the public opinion leaders' evaluation after 100 days decreased slightly in comparison with its evaluation at the time of the government formation, the evaluation of the public opinion leaders sample of the ability of the government, prime minister and ministerial team to perform their duties remains more positive (very slightly) than that of the Jordanian public (the national sample).

It is important to note that the public opinion leaders sample's evaluation of the performance of the government, prime minister and ministerial team (excluding the prime minister) regarding carrying out their responsibilities, in spite of fluctuations between governments, has been almost constant since 1996 (the date the first of this type of opinion poll was conducted).

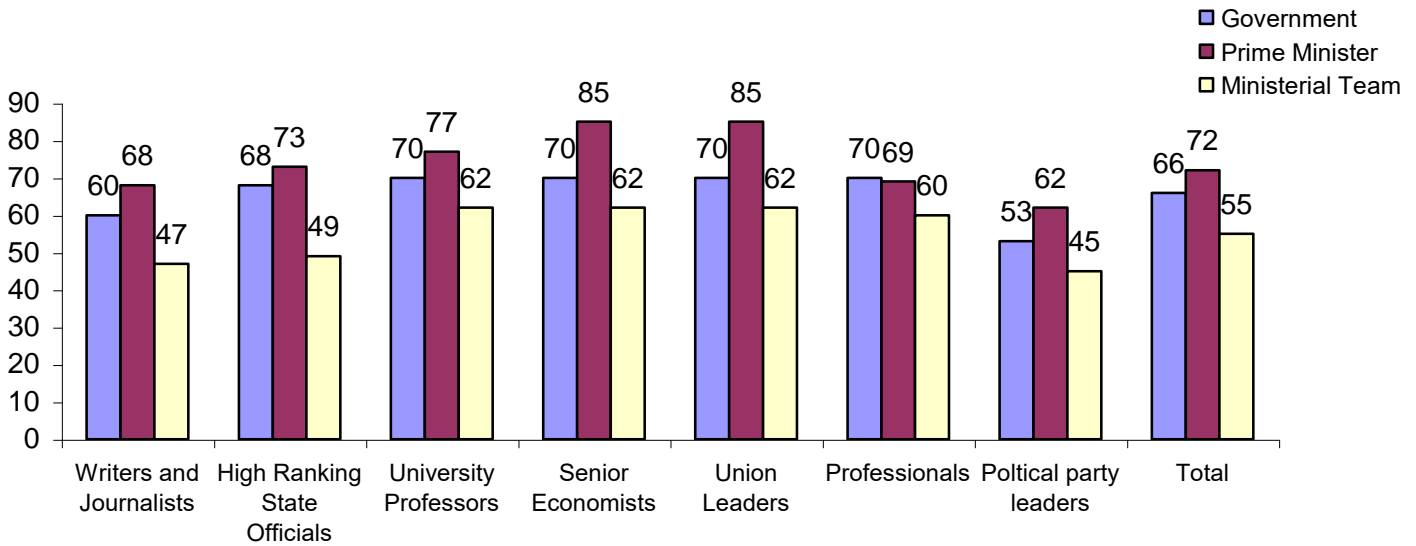
Figure 3: Public opinion leader sample respondents who stated that the government, prime minister and ministerial team were able to carry out their responsibilities (the arithmetic mean expressed as a percentage)



A comparison of the performance evaluations of the prime minister, government and ministerial team (excluding the prime minister) according to the categories within the public opinion leader sample shows that the groups of senior economists, union leaders, high ranking state officials and university professors evaluated the government’s performance more positively than respondents from other categories. The percentage of respondents from these categories who evaluated the government as successful was higher than the overall percentage of public opinion leaders sample respondents who said that the government was successful. The categories of senior economists and union and civil society leaders provided significantly higher evaluations of the prime minister (85%) than those provided by other groups, while the category of political party leaders gave the prime minister, the government and the ministerial team the lowest evaluations of their success in carrying out their duties.

The results indicate that less than 50% of respondents from the categories of writers and journalists, high ranking state officials and political party leaders said that the ministerial team was able to carry out its responsibilities.

Figure 4: Public opinion leader sample respondents who said that the government, the prime minister and the ministerial team were able to carry out their responsibilities according to sample category



Section II: Evaluation of the Government's Performance with regard to Specific Issues

This section presents the evaluations of the public and public opinion leaders of the government's success in addressing the issues with which it was entrusted.

A -The National Sample

The results of the 100-day poll indicate that there was a decrease in respondents' evaluations of the government's performance in addressing the issues it was entrusted with compared with the expectations for its success at the time of its formation. At the time of the government's formation, the national sample respondents expected that it would succeed, to varying degrees, at addressing all of the 15 issues that appeared in the designation letter. The criterion for success in this context is that 50% or more sample respondents must think that the government succeeded or expected that it would succeed in addressing the issue in question. 100 days after the government's formation its performance evaluation was **under 50% for 6 issues** out of 15: accelerating the progress of the nuclear energy program for peaceful purposes, working to protect the limited and low income populations, linking salaries to inflation rates, providing employment opportunities to citizens and achieving the principle of equal opportunity among citizens.

On the other hand, respondents stated that **the government succeeded in working to address the following issues**: developing education and higher education, developing official media, assisting the Palestinian people in establishing their independent state,

supporting the independence of the judiciary, strengthening political participation and developing political party life, and carrying out current housing projects.

It is notable that the evaluations of the government’s success in addressing each of the specific issues included in the designation letter after 100 days were lower than expectations at the time of the government’s formation. Evaluations expressed in this poll were significantly lower than expectations expressed in the formation poll with regard to accelerating the progress of the nuclear energy program for peaceful purposes, working to protect the limited and low income populations, fighting all forms of corruption, achieving the principle of equal opportunity among citizens, providing employment opportunities to citizens and linking salaries to inflation rates.

Table 2: The percentages of national sample respondents who said that the government succeeded in addressing the main issues that appeared in the designation letter compared with the percentages of respondents who expected its success in the formation poll

National Sample		
	Percentage of respondents who said that the government would succeed in the formation poll	Percentage of respondents who said the government had succeeded in the 100 days poll
Developing education and higher education	76	70
Assisting the Palestinian people in establishing their independent state	69	70
Developing official media	70	64
Supporting the independence of the judiciary	69	63
Carrying out current housing projects	69	62
Improving the salaries of workers and employees in the public sector and the armed forces	65	58
Expanding health insurance to cover all citizens	65	56
Working to solve the water problem	61	51
Strengthening political participation and developing political party life	60	50
Fighting all forms of corruption	59	47
Achieving the principle of equal opportunity among citizens	57	45
Accelerating the progress of the nuclear energy for peaceful purposes program	59	44
Providing employment opportunities to citizens (Reducing unemployment)	59	39
Working to protect the limited and low income populations (alleviating poverty)	55	38
Linking salaries to inflation rates (price hikes)	56	36

B : The Public Opinion Leaders Sample

The evaluations of the public opinion leaders sample respondents of the government's performance in addressing the issues it was entrusted with decreased in comparison with expectations for the government's success expressed in the formation poll. When the government was formed, the respondents from the public opinion leaders sample expected that it would succeed in addressing nine out of 15 topics. However, in the 100 days poll the respondents said that the government succeeded in addressing seven issues including: assisting the Palestinian people in establishing their independent state, carrying out current housing projects, supporting the independence of the judiciary, developing education and higher education, developing official media, expanding health care coverage, and improving the salaries of workers and employees in the public sector and the armed forces.

As for the issues that respondents said that the government did not succeed in addressing: linking salaries to inflation rates, strengthening political participation and developing political party life, providing employment opportunities to citizens, working to protect the limited and low income populations, fighting all forms of corruption, achieving the principle of equal opportunity among citizens, accelerating the progress of the nuclear energy for peaceful purposes program and working to solve the water problem.

It is important to note that the public opinion leaders sample's evaluations of the government's success in addressing the development of education and higher education, the development of official media, acceleration of the progress of the nuclear energy for peaceful purposes program, working to solve the water problem, and linking salaries to inflation rates were significantly lower than the expectations for the government's success expressed in the formation poll.

In general, the results indicate that the public opinion leaders sample was less positive than the national sample in its evaluation of the government's success in addressing the specific issues it was entrusted with.

Table 3: The percentages of public opinion leaders sample respondents who said that the government succeeded in addressing the main issues mentioned in the designation letter compared with the percentages of respondents who expected the government would succeed taken from the formation poll

Opinion Leaders Sample		
	Percentage of respondents who said that the government would succeed in the formation poll	Percentage of respondents who said the government had succeeded in the 100 days poll
Assisting the Palestinian people in establishing their independent state	78	76
Carrying out current housing projects	74	67
Supporting the independence of the judiciary	70	63
Improving the salaries of workers and employees in the public sector and the armed forces	59	55
Developing education and higher education	66	52
Developing official media	64	51
Expanding health insurance to cover all citizens	60	50
Achieving the principle of equal opportunity among citizens	44	46
Fighting all forms of corruption	46	44
Accelerating the progress of the nuclear energy for peaceful purposes program	55	42
Strengthening political participation and developing political party life	47	42
Providing employment opportunities to citizens (Reducing unemployment)	47	41
Working to solve the water problem	53	40
Working to protect the limited and low income populations (alleviating poverty)	46	38
Linking salaries to inflation rates (price hikes)	47	33

Section III: Priorities of the public and the public opinion leaders samples

This section addresses the most important issues facing Jordan from the perspective of respondents from the national and public opinion leaders samples. This section will also present respondents' evaluations of their families' economic situations compared to three years ago.

The results showed that citizens' priorities are economic, as the problem of "rising prices and the high cost of living" was expressed as the most important issue facing the country that the government must address, with 48.8% of all responses. Following this problem were unemployment, 21.8%, poverty, 14.4%, and the weakness of public services particularly in the fields of education and health (6.8%)

Table 4: National sample respondents' perspectives regarding the most important domestic issues facing the country that the government must start addressing

	Number	Percentage
Rising prices and the high cost of living	908	48.8
Unemployment	406	21.8
Poverty	267	14.4
Poor public services, particularly in the fields of education, health and transportation	127	6.8
Financial and administrative corruption	55	2.9
Economic problems in general	35	1.9
Political and democratic reform	11	0.6
Security and stability	9	0.5
Other	30	1.6
Don't know/None	15	0.8
Total responses	1862	100

Regarding the public opinion leaders sample respondents' perspectives on the most important problem facing the country that the government must address, "rising prices and the high cost of living" was also identified as the most important problem, with 36.5% of all responses. Following were the unemployment problem, 20.9%, poverty, 12.5%, and the economic situation in general, 8.0%.

Table 5: Public opinion leaders sample respondents' perspectives regarding the most important domestic issues facing the country that the government must start addressing

	Number	Percentage
Rising prices and the high cost of living	444	36.5
Unemployment	254	20.9
Poverty	152	12.5
Economic problems in general	98	8
Political and democratic reform	76	6.2
Financial and administrative corruption	72	5.9
Poor public services in the areas of education and health	38	3.1
Traffic accidents and transportation	26	2.1
Security and stability	16	1.3
Water-related problems	11	0.9
Foreign relations	8	0.7
Other	18	1.5
Don't know	5	0.4
Total	1218	100

As for the economic situations of respondents' families, 12.9% of respondents from the national sample said that their families' economic situations had improved compared to their state three years ago, and 21.9% of respondents said that their families' economic situations remained the same. Meanwhile, the majority of national sample respondents, 54.7%, stated that their families' economic situations had worsened compared with three years ago.

As for the public opinion leaders sample, 22.3% of respondents (almost twice the percentage from the national sample) said that their families' economic situations had improved in comparison to their situations three years ago. 28.1% of respondents said that their families' economic situations had remained the same, and about half of public opinion leaders sample respondents, 49.6%, said that their families' economic situations had worsened compared with three years ago.

Table 6: National and public opinion leaders sample respondents' evaluations of the economic situations of their families compared with that of three years ago

	National Sample	Opinion Leaders Sample
Improved	12.9	22.3
Remained the same	31.9	28.1
Worsened	54.7	49.6
Don't know	0.4	-
Total	100	100

Conclusion

- The data derived from the poll of national sample respondents indicate that the Jordanian public's evaluation of the ability of the government, the prime minister and the ministerial team to carry out their responsibilities virtually matched the expectations of respondents from the formation poll, as the percentage of respondents who said that the government was successful after 100 days was the same percentage that expected its success from the formation poll. Although there was a slight (insignificant) decrease in the evaluation of the prime minister and the ministerial team (excluding the prime minister) between the formation poll and the current poll, this decrease was still lower than the decreases indicated by 100-day poll results for previous governments.
- As for the issues the government was entrusted with addressing, the national sample respondents gave the government an evaluation of success with regard to addressing nine out of 15 issues with which it was entrusted. The opinion leader sample respondents' evaluation of the government's success in addressing such issues was less positive; the results indicate that this sample gave the government a successful evaluation for seven out of 15 issues.
- Respondents' evaluations of the government's performance decreased significantly compared with those of the formation poll with respect to the government's success in addressing some issues it was entrusted with, such as: working to protect the limited and low-income populations, fighting all forms of corruption, achieving the principle of equal opportunity among citizens, providing employment opportunities for citizens and linking salaries to inflation rates.
- The problem of "rising prices and the high cost of living" was highlighted in an unprecedented manner by respondents in this poll.
- Despite the significant decrease in citizens' evaluations of government performance with regard to addressing the economic issues it was entrusted with compared with their expectations for its success expressed in the formation poll, this decrease did not affect their general evaluations of the success of the government, the prime minister and the ministerial team. A partial explanation for this could be that the public still has hope that the government may implement procedures that would lead to improvements in citizens' standard of living.
- Citizens' confidence in this government is poised to increase or diminish depending on what the government is able to accomplish in areas to which citizens assign priority (rising prices, unemployment and poverty), which also constitute a portion of the tasks the government was entrusted to achieve.

