

The Saudis Polled

80% see themselves as “better-off” and 67.3% as “middle class”

“Muslim” Identity ranks First

Women to work but only for financial necessity

Information International surveyed the Saudis on various issues pertaining to their financial situation, identity and gender equality.

Financial Situation

When asked about their financial situation, 80% of respondents say their financial situation is better than it was four years ago compared to 62.2% who said so in an opinion poll conducted in September 2007. On the other hand, 6.1% say they are worse-off compared to 9.3% in September 2007. 11.5% say their financial situation is the same compared to 25.5%, and 2.4% of respondents have “no answer” (Graph no.1).

Moreover, 69.1% of respondents believe they will be better-off in four years; 14.1% say their situation will be the same as it is today; only 2.4% believe it will be worse-off and 14.4% are “not sure”.

Based on the results of the poll, 23.1% of respondents say they belong to the “upper class”, 67.3% to the “middle class” and 5.3% to the “poor class”. 4.3% did not answer (Graph no.2).

Saudi Identity

More than half of respondents (52.3%) identify themselves as “Muslim”; 23.8% as “Saudi” and 19.3% as “Arab”. 2.6% identify themselves as “citizen” and 2% have no answer.

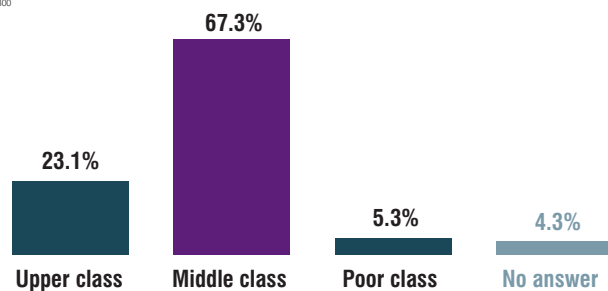
Respondents’ answers by age category are shown in Table no.1.

Table no.1 shows that the youth category (18-34 years-old) is the most proud of its “Muslim” identity, which tops the list among all respondents.

When asked about their second identity, “Arab” ranked first (39.5%), followed by “Saudi” (22.4%), “Islam” (17.3%), “Citizen” (5%) and 8.9% did not answer.

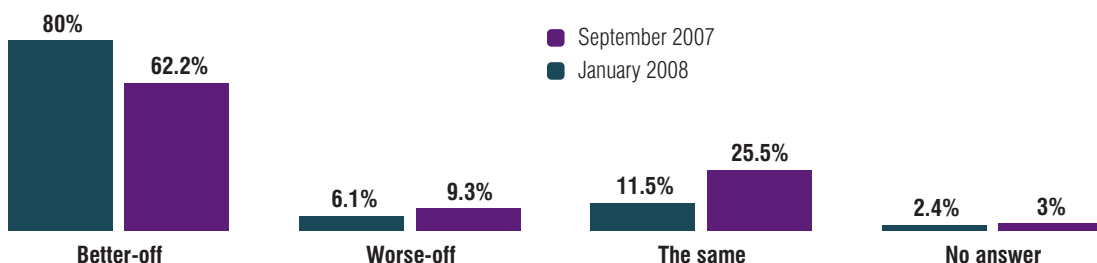
[Graph 2]
January 2008
Base: 600

Which of the following describes your social class?



[Graph 1]
January 2008
Base: 600

Are you better or worse-off than you were four years ago?



Gender Equality

The majority of Saudis (62%) say that they believe in gender equality, compared to 36.1% who say they do not and 1.9% who did not answer. In the previous poll (September 20-28 2007), 60.1% of respondents believed in gender equality compared to 39.9% who did not. However, the majority (58.1%) of those who believed in gender equality believed that it was a partial equality, compared to 32.7% who said it was an absolute equality and 9.3% did not answer.

The majority of female respondents (79.8%) believe in gender equality, compared to 47% of male respondents.

It is noteworthy that a high percentage of respondents who believe in equality is among the youth category (75.5%). This percentage decreases with increasing age (i.e. it is inversely related to age).

Table no.2 shows respondents' answers on gender equality by age category.

Women and Right to Work

The Saudi society has some reservations on women entering the job market, considering that 58.5% support it solely for economic reasons, 19% support it totally, 17.1% are totally opposed to it and 5.4% "don't know".

The US and Terrorism

Since September 11th 2001, the United States is raising the slogan of "war against terrorism". 65.6% of respondents do not believe in this slogan, arguing that it hides US ambitions to control the region, 17.3% say it contradicts the US plans of spreading democracy in the region and 17.1% say "don't know."

Saudis and Change

44.4% of Saudis seem to be satisfied with their lives and do not seek to make any change. The remaining 55.6% are distributed as follows: 12.4% are with change to stop the increase of

Identity	Age					Table 1
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 and above
Saudi	17.4%	24%	27.3%	24.6%	29%	20%
Arab	24.5%	18.1%	17.6%	18.9%	12.9%	40%
Muslim	56.1%	52%	50.4%	51.6%	45.2%	40%
Citizen	0.6%	3.2%	2.7%	3.3%	6.5%	-
No answer	1.4%	2.7%	2%	1.6%	6.4%	-

Source: Information International poll- January 2008

Do you believe in gender equality?	Age					Table 2
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 and above
Yes	75.5%	61.5%	63.7%	43.4%	54.8%	40%
No	23.2%	36.7%	34%	54.9%	41.9%	60%
No answer	1.3%	1.8%	2.3%	1.7%	3.3%	-

Source: Information International poll- January 2008

prices, 7.5% to increase salaries, 7.4% to allow women to drive and the remaining percentages (28.3%) are distributed among 24 other responses ranging between the bail system (5.4%), education (2.9%) and the real estate system (0.1%).

“44.4% of Saudis seem to be satisfied with their lives and do not seek to make any change”

Sample

The opinion poll was conducted between January 10-21 2008, covering a sample of 800 citizens (75.1% Saudis and 24.9% non-Saudis). Respondents were distributed by city as follows: 53.4% in Riyadh, 36.6% in Jeddah and 10% in Dammam. 54.3% were males and 45.7% were females. Respondents were distributed among the various age and social categories. The margin of error reached +1.3%.

Summary

- Saudi citizens have trust in the future. They also categorize themselves in the middle-class. Only 5% consider themselves poor.
- As far as the identity, Saudis describe themselves as “Muslims” in the first place and “Saudis” in the second place and “Arabs” in the third place. The percentage of respondents who describe themselves as Muslims is high among the youth category.
- The majority of Saudis do not believe in the US “war against terrorism.”
- Saudis still have reservations on women entering the job market.
- Saudis seem to be concerned about potential change.