Iraqi Public Opinion on the 2018 Parliamentary Elections

Featuring:

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March 28, 2018
Stability in Iraq:
Why the Elections are So Important

Anthony H. Cordesman

March 29, 2018
Key Issues in Stability

- Viable and lasting political compromise; effective leadership
- Kurdish-Arab Tensions
- Sunni-Shi’ite Tensions
- Structure of military and security forces
- Security of Western border
- Level of U.S. and outside Arab support
- Role of Iran and Turkey
- Post “Caliphate” Extremist Threat
- Youth bulge and population pressure
- Recovery and development
- Failed or low economic development since at least 1980
- Excessive State and SEO sectors with high cost/low productivity
- Need for agricultural reform; water, climate issues
The Impact of War on Development: Iraq
(Total accumulated losses in GDP because of terrorism, Iraq, 2005–2014)

180,000-203,000 dead as of 2.17
280,000 refugees
685,000 in need inside
2.1 million internally displaced
2.98 million in displaced, hard to reach areas.
Key medical, education, food security issues


Governance and Corruption Challenges

Violence

12,875 terrorist incidents in 2013-2016. Only 3,649 credited to ISIL and ISI (START data base)

Transparency International ranks as 11th most corrupt in the world

Iraq’s Limited Wealth

GDP Per Capita Estimates: MENA Region
(PPP in $US using Multiple Indicators)

$17,000 in Iraq vs.
- $124,900 Qatar
- $55,300 Saudi Arabia
- $45,000 Oman
- $20,000 Iran

CIA World Factbook 2017
Population Pressure

IRAQ POPULATION

- 5.1 million in 1950
- 11.1 million in 1975
- 27.6 million in 2005
- 37.1 million in 2015
- 47.7 million in 2025
- 76.5 million in 2050

39.2 million in mid-2017: 7.7 times 1950

Over 30% youth real unemployment
Ages 15-24 = 19.3% of total
Ages 0-14 = 34.7%

SOURCE: TRADINGECONOMICS.COM | WORLD BANK

U.S. Census Bureau, IDB
Iraq May 2018 Elections

Expected Scenarios and Political Outcomes

Dr. Munqith M. Dagher
Special thanks to:

• Al Mustakilla (IIACSS) field teams and staff. Ten teams captured in different provinces by Iraqi security forces and detained for few hours at least. Four teams detained or treated improperly by different militias.

• My clients who agree to share these data which they own.

• The CSIS team and specially Professor Anthony Cordesman for providing the space and the opportunity to present in such an important and prestigious think tank.
Methodology

• Four nationwide surveys
  • A total of over 7000 HH’s Face-to-Face interviews between 22\textsuperscript{nd} of February and 22\textsuperscript{nd} of March 2018.
  • All interviews conducted via computer assisted personal interviews (CAPI) system.
  • Probability random sampling (PPS) based on most updated population census data.
  • Margin of error is ± 2\% with 95\% confidence rate.
  • Most advanced and up to date QC processes.
  • Over 250 field workers and staff participated in it.

• 16 Focus Groups in different areas in Iraq.

• 2014 Exit Poll
General Background

(2014 election)

*Source: 2014 exit poll, IIACSS
Parties voted for by Age

- **Secular**
  - 25 Years old or less: 28%
  - More than 25 years old: 72%

- **Islamic**
  - 25 Years old or less: 30%
  - More than 25 years old: 70%

- **Mix**
  - 25 Years old or less: 21%
  - More than 25 years old: 79%
Votes for Islamic Parties

Shia Muslim: 93%
Sunni Muslim: 6%
2018 National Elections

Expected Turnout
Do you intend to vote in the upcoming parliamentary elections?

- Mixed: 48%
- Sunnis: 60%
- Shia's: 51%
- Kurds: 60%
- Total: 55%
Reasons for election boycott

- **Sunni**: 66% No point in doing elections, 28% Candidates mind their own interests only, 4.4% Elections result are known in advance
- **Shia**: 58% No point in doing elections, 30% Candidates mind their own interests only, 6.1% Elections result are known in advance
- **Kurd**: 56% No point in doing elections, 21% Candidates mind their own interests only, 6.3% Elections result are known in advance
- **Total**: 60% No point in doing elections, 28% Candidates mind their own interests only, 5.6% Elections result are known in advance
What is the most important factor you will consider when choosing the candidate / list you will vote for?

INTEGRITY OF CANDIDATES  Who seeks to find jobs for us  Defending the rights of citizens

Mixed  Sunni  Shia  Kurd  Total

- Mixed: 39% INTEGRITY OF CANDIDATES, 17% Who seeks to find jobs for us, 10% Defending the rights of citizens
- Sunni: 40% INTEGRITY OF CANDIDATES, 21% Who seeks to find jobs for us, 9% Defending the rights of citizens
- Shia: 35% INTEGRITY OF CANDIDATES, 17% Who seeks to find jobs for us, 12% Defending the rights of citizens
- Kurd: 0% INTEGRITY OF CANDIDATES, 16% Who seeks to find jobs for us, 10% Defending the rights of citizens
- Total: 32% INTEGRITY OF CANDIDATES, 18% Who seeks to find jobs for us, 11% Defending the rights of citizens
Two Scenarios

1. General perceptions regardless of voting intentions

2. Almost certain or certain to vote
Predicted # of Parliament Seats (All Eligible Voters)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party/Coalition</th>
<th>Mixed Areas</th>
<th>Sunni Areas</th>
<th>Shia Areas</th>
<th>Kurds</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WATANIYA (ALLAWI)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FATH (AL AMERI)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>41</td>
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<tr>
<td>AL HIKMA</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>NASR (ABADI)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>72</td>
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<tr>
<td>SA’EROON (AL SADR)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATE OF LAW (AL MALIKI)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL KARAR (NUJAIFI)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARAB COALITION</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL SALAM KURDISTAN (PUK &amp; KDP)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>NISHTIMAN (GORMA, BARHAM AND KIG)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>NEW GENERATION (SASHWAR)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>KIU</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Mixed Areas**
- **Sunni Areas**
- **Shia Areas**
- **Kurds**
- **TOTAL**
Two Scenarios

1. General perceptions regardless of voting intentions

2. Almost certain or certain to vote
Predicted # of Parliament Seats (Vote certain)
Small parties can make a big difference

MIXED AREAS: 8%
SUNNI AREAS: 27%
SHIA'A AREAS: 4%
KURDISH AREAS: 4%
Eligible Vote vs. Certain Vote

Main PARTY Blocks

- **General**
- **Most certain**
Main Changes in the Iraqi political landscape

Still evolving but moving in a pragmatic direction

• From ethno-sectarian polarization to new and different alignments.
• From ideology to pragmatism.
• Leaving religious sectarian identifications.
• From sub-identities to a national identity.
• From ethno-sectarian groupings to prospective and retrospective evaluations.
• Increased responsiveness to domestic voter concerns as opposed to outside influences.

• Here is some evidence:
Sectarian voting is changing in Sunni areas

- Percentage
  - Sunni Areas Abadi Coalition: 36%
  - Sunni Areas PMU parties: 5%
- Seats
  - Sunni Areas Abadi Coalition: 24 seats
  - Sunni Areas PMU parties: 3 seats
Political orientation over the years

- Islamic Coalitions
- Secular Movements
- Mix
- Minorities
Islamic parties are declining in Shia areas

Actual Results of 2014 elections

- Islamic Parties: 89%
- Non-Islamic Parties: 11%

Poll Results for 2018 elections

- Islamic Parties: 65%
- Non-Islamic Parties: 35%

"Undecided, Blank Ballot, Refused to vote" respondents have been excluded from the results
Kurdistan: Old Guard Vs. New Comers

Actual Results of 2014 elections
- Old Guards: 82%
- New Comers: 18%
- Others: 0%

Poll Results for 2018 elections
- Old Guards: 70%
- New Comers: 26%
- Others: 4%

Others include minority parties and other Arab parties
"Undecided, Blank Ballot, Refused to vote" respondents have been excluded from the results
Who will be the next PM?

Can regional powers still play the same old role in nominating the next PM?
Iranian influence in the new parliament

Basic assumptions:
1) Election happens now,
2) Parties act according to stated positions toward Iran and
3) No serious fraud happens.

Pro Iranian parties:
- Al Fatih, State of Law (Al Maliki) (around 56 seats)
- Al Hikma (Al Hakeem), small part of Al Nasir, Al Salam (Kurd’s traditional alliance: PUK and KDP) (around 30 seats)

Con Iranian parties:
- Majority of Al Nasir (Al Abadi), Sadrist, Nishtiman, New generation (around 115 seats)
- AL Wataniya (Allawi), Al Qarar (Nujaifi), Arab Coalition (AL Khanjar), others (around 20 seats)
**Expected power map**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Iranian favorites</th>
<th>Independent and/or supported by other regional and international powers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- 60-65 seats guaranteed.</td>
<td>- 130-150 seats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 20-30 seats possible.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Great importance for swing parties, opportunists, and minorities** 10-20 seats
Possible Coalition Scenarios?

Two Third of seats needed for a PM position

**Coalition 1:**
- AL Nasr (Abadi), AL Wataniya (Allawi), Al Qarar (Nujaifi), Sa’erron (AL Sadr), AL Hikma (AL Hakim), Nishtiman (Barham, Goran & KIG), New Generation (Sashwar), Arab Coalition (AL Khanjar)

**Coalition 2:**
- ALFath (Amiri), State of Law (AL Maliki), AL Salam Kurdistan (KDP & PUK)

Total Expected Seats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coalition 1</th>
<th>Coalition 2</th>
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<tr>
<td>77</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Possible Coalition Scenarios?

**Coalition 1:**
AL Nasr (Abadi), AL Wataniya (Allawi), Al Qarar (Nujaifi), Sa’erron (AL Sadr), AL Hikma (AL Hakim), Nishtiman (Barham, Goran & KIG), New Generation (Sashwar), Arab Coalition (AL Khanjar)

**Coalition 2:**
ALFath (Amiri), State of Law (AL Maliki), AL Salam Kurdistan (KDP & PUK)

Who is the next PM?
Possible Coalition Scenarios (2)

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**Total Expected Seats**

- **Coalition 1:** 77
- **Coalition 2:** 141
Other scenarios are still possible
Thank you
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