



Security situation will improve if US troops leave: Iraq poll

About 90 percent of Iraqis feel that the situation in the country was better ahead of the US-led invasion than it is today, according to a poll conducted by the Iraq Centre for Research and Strategic Studies (ICRSS).

The poll results, which were shared with the Gulf Research Center, has a margin error of + or - 3.1 percent. The findings emerged after house-to-house interviews conducted by the ICRSS during the third week of November. About 2,000 people from Baghdad (82 percent), Anbar and Najaf (nine percent each) were randomly asked to express their opinion. Twenty-four percent of the respondents were women.

Only five percent of those questioned said Iraq is better today than in 2003. While 89 percent of the people said the political situation had deteriorated, 79 percent saw a decline in the economic situation; 12 percent felt things had improved and nine percent said there was no change. Predictably, 95 percent felt the security situation was worse than before.

The ICRSS is an independent institution "which attempts to spread the conscious necessity of realizing basic freedoms, consolidating democratic values and foundations of civil society."

The poll reveals that nearly half of them favor an immediate withdrawal of US-led troops; 11 percent want them to respond when the Iraqi government requests, 14 percent feel they should depart when the violence stops, and 20 percent favor a phased withdrawal, but starting now. Surprisingly, as a follow-up, 66 percent felt the security situation would improve in Iraq if the multinational troops left.

Nearly 50 percent of the respondents identified themselves only as "Muslims"; 34 percent were Shiites and 14 percent, Sunnis.

In a bleak scenario, between 84 and 91 percent regarded the new government's performance as "very poor" in the implementation of promises, reconstruction efforts, dealing with sectarian strife, providing jobs and basic necessities. Only about 1.5-3 percent of them rated the government's work as "good".

Asked how they would vote if there were new elections, nearly 50 percent said they would not vote for the same individuals or parties. Only 25 percent responded by saying they would follow the same voting pattern. About 67 percent were not confident about the situation improving under the present set of parliamentarians, and less than 30 percent expressed confidence in the capability of the top leaders to do any better.

[For details, click here](#)