



SURVEY ON THE NEED TO CHANGE LAWS PREJUDICIAL TO WOMEN

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*Special thanks to, everyone who
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INTRODUCTION

Laws and legal statutes are some of the most important social regulators; without them, no type of social order is possible, for they protect the interests, values, and freedoms that individuals agree to respect. Since social relations, the social structure, and society's institutions are in a constant state of flux, it is natural that legislation be flexible and open to revision in order to keep pace with changes and meet ever-changing needs.

The Mobadara ['Initiative'] Social Association seeks to use a methodology based on academic research through public opinion surveys in order to explore the attitudes of various segments of society regarding the introduction of changes to laws related to Syrian women and to gain a close understanding of the views of all of society. The research team thus conducted a survey about the need to change laws prejudicial to women. The survey was built around the legal statutes addressed by the Sharikuna Campaign, which covered the following issues: marriage, arbitrary divorce, polygamy, custody, guardianship and tutelage, issues of testimony and paternity, honor crimes, and the citizenship law.

The women's issue continues to be a pivotal issue that poses itself anew at each stage of social change, and women's status in society is a measure of that society's development and advancement.

Although we are convinced that women cannot be divorced from their social context, we believe that they face particular forms of injustice attributable to the many coercions and constraints rooted in the cultural legacy and most clearly manifested in laws and statutes, which are the benchmark of actual practice. Women's social, political, and economic achievements in our country are not sufficiently matched by women's status in legislation, particularly the personal status law. The personal status law regulates women's relations with those closest to them and impacts their status and condition in many fields in both public and private life.

Significantly, women do not take part in writing or applying the law that governs their lives from birth to death. In addition, the majority of women are unaware of the intricacies of the law and only become familiar with it when it touches them personally. This ignorance is not limited to a particular segment of women, but includes the educated as well as the uneducated. As such, awareness-raising campaigns must be organized to familiarize women with their rights and encourage them to take part in changing the laws. These laws have become ossified; they have not kept pace with the evolution of reality and allow for no changes. If the law is one of the most important indicators of any society's march towards justice and equality, this makes it imperative for legislative authorities, civil society, and women's activists to strive to draft laws that are fair to both women and men.

WOMEN IN THE CONSTITUTION AND LEGISLATION

Constitutional rights are the standard and basis upon which citizens' status and rights are determined. Thus, we believe it necessary to amend those laws and legal statutes passed before the constitution was declared that violate the principles of the constitution. The laws passed before the declaration of the Syrian constitution in 1971 include the personal status law of 1953, which is based on Ottoman family law. A reading of the law's articles reveals that most of them are inconsistent with the constitution and violate the following articles:

1. Article 25 of the constitution states that "Syrian citizens are equal before the law and have equal rights and duties." The article upholds freedom, liberty, and the principle of equal opportunity. In contrast, we find blatant discrimination and inequality when it comes to

women's rights in the family and their subordination to male guardianship.

2. Article 44 deals with the protection of the family, the removal of all social and material obstacles to marriage, and the protection of motherhood and childhood.
3. Article 45 states, "The state guarantees to women all opportunities that will allow them to contribute fully and effectively to political, social, cultural, and economic life, and will work to lift all constraints on their development and their participation in building society." The personal status law was rendered incompatible with these constitutional principles when it:
 - Deprived women of personal sovereignty and the ability to conclude a marriage, gave their guardians the right to annul a marriage contract if the husband was deemed unsuitable, withdrew their guardianship over their children during the period of custody, and deprived them of the right to self-determination and travel;
 - Gave men the unilateral right of arbitrary divorce while making compensation for women in such cases conditional on want and need: if a woman demands a divorce, she must renounce alimony and the divorce settlement, like a prisoner ransoming herself; often men resort to socially sanctioned methods to coerce women into renouncing their rights; and
 - Gave women the right to custody while neglecting their right to housing for the custodial period. This forces many women to abandon custodial rights because they cannot provide housing and their families refuse to accept their children. In addition, the level of child support provided is not commensurate with the current standard of living. Thus, we believe that changing the age of custody will not provide a comprehensive solution without the right of the custodian to housing. Moreover, the law deprives a woman of the right to custody if she marries a man unrelated to the child.
4. Women's share of private estates is half that of men, while their share of usufruct property is equal to men, based on an Ottoman law that gave the sultan ownership of the land while granting farmers usage rights. Although women constitute the majority of the work force on the land, they are often deprived of their rightful inheritance in the countryside due to the power of custom and tradition.
5. The law allows polygamy, which has a destructive impact on the family and can traumatize women. Although the legislator introduced conditions to limit polygamy, such as the need for a legitimate reason and the ability to provide, these have proved difficult to implement in reality. The law is circumvented outside the court, and judges often have no choice but to approve the second marriage.

The personal status law in its current form is also a cause of domestic violence; it leaves women at the mercy of men, who can threaten to abandon them and take their children.

In the penal code

Women face excessive penalties in honor crimes: they are criminals before the law and can be tried in a criminal court. In contrast, men can appeal to countervailing circumstances and are considered defenders of honor.

Citizenship law

This legislation deprived women of the right to pass on their citizenship to their children if they marry a foreign national. This is an infringement of citizenship rights, and as a result, children from

these marriages face difficulties in education and employment.

Given the foregoing, it is imperative to put the issue of legislation up to scrutiny and understand the public's view of these laws and the means to change them, in order to come up with proposals to alleviate the injustice to women and enable them to exercise their rights.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To become familiar with people's opinion of changing legislation related to women;
2. To determine the degree and type of change required in society's opinion;
3. To determine priorities of change by identifying the legal areas that most need to be changed and most affect broad segments of society;
4. To highlight the negative impact of certain legal statutes on women and the family;
5. To create mechanisms to pressure those with a real vested interest by making women aware of their legal rights and the means to exercise them, and striving to include them in the process of change;
6. To enable the Mobadara Social Association to launch a campaign by drafting a systematic plan based on the findings of the poll and those statutes that society believes must be changed.

METHODOLOGY

Survey questions

- What is the public's attitude towards changing laws related to women?
- What do they believe are the laws most in need of change?
- What are the proposed alternatives to current laws?

Survey tools

- Design a survey form composed of 24 questions.
- Conduct a specialist evaluation of the survey and test it on a small sample.
- Use the method of face-to-face interviews.

Field of survey

The provinces of Damascus, Damascus Rural, Aleppo, Tartous, Hama, Deir Elzour, and Swida.

Makeup of sample

A cluster sample of 2,855 citizens, both male and female was canvassed by means of a district poll covering various provinces in the Syrian Arab Republic. A representative sample was chosen from the following provinces in keeping with geographic distribution:

Population size according to 2005 data

Sample					
Province	Population	Size of sample (0.025%)		Male	Female
Damascus	1,552,000	388		194	194
Aleppo	4,037,000	1009		505	504
Tartous	713,000	178		89	89
Hams	1,534,000	383		191	192
Deir Elzour	1,015,000	254		127	127
Swieda	314,000	78		39	39
Damascus Rural	2,259,000	565		282	283
Syrian Arab Republic	17,193,000	Totals:	2,855	1,427	1,428

REVIEW OF EXISTING STUDIES

“Syrian Women between the Constitution and the Penal Code,” a theoretical study written by attorney Amal Youssef and published by the Syrian Agency for Family Affairs, addressed the status of Syrian women in the constitution and compared it to their status in the penal code, which contains articles that discriminate against women. Given the legal system’s role in protecting liberties and the dignity of citizens, the study concluded that existing legislation must be changed to uphold the rights of women and the family, in order to make them consistent with the Syrian constitution’s duty to remove obstacles before women and the family and in keeping with Syria’s international obligations. The penal code also lacks special articles addressing violence against women that would secure real protection for them. The study thus recommended reviewing existing legislation with the objective of arriving at fair, non-discriminatory social conditions.

The research and legal offices of the General Women’s Union conducted a study in 2000 on violence against women. The study addressed 240 cases that were chosen from 1,700 forms distributed to women facing violence and discrimination. The findings were as follows:

- 40% of women suffering from violence and humiliation were aged 16–30;
- 85% complained of mistreatment by their husbands;
- 55% of families where violence is prevalent are large families of 4–7 people;
- 26.6% of wives who had been assaulted married before they were 20 years old;
- 20% of the cases involved beatings and assault;
- 15% cases of violence involved husbands who drank or took drugs.

A new study, titled “A Field Study of Violence against Women in the Syrian Arab Republic 2005,” conducted by the General Women’s Union, the Central Bureau of Statistics, and the Syrian Agency for Family Affairs, in conjunction with UNIFEM, offered a set of findings and proposals, most importantly:

- In 56% of cases in which women were punished, mistreatment and verbal abuse was used;
- Beatings were used in 49% of cases, followed by reprimands (38%) and silence (8.4%);
- 67% of the punishments women received took place before all members of the family, including 52% of all reprimands, 56% of allowance cut-offs, and 87% of beatings;
- 17.6% of women in the sample received none of their legal inheritance rights (14.7% in urban areas and 20.2% in rural areas); 24% of families gave women part of their inheritance rights to mollify them;
- 14% of families choose their daughter’s spouse, while 7.5% forced their daughters to marry

- unwillingly;
- 43% of husbands disagreed with their wives about childrearing methods;
- 73% of assaulted women were physically assaulted by a member of the family, while 24.3% were assaulted by an acquaintance.

The study concluded that a campaign must be mounted to increase awareness among both women and men about the importance of respecting women’s dignity and status and treating them well, as well as the negative impact of abuse. The study recommended stiffer penalties for those who abuse women and further research and field studies to monitor changes in all forms of violence against women.

ANALYSIS OF SURVEY FINDINGS

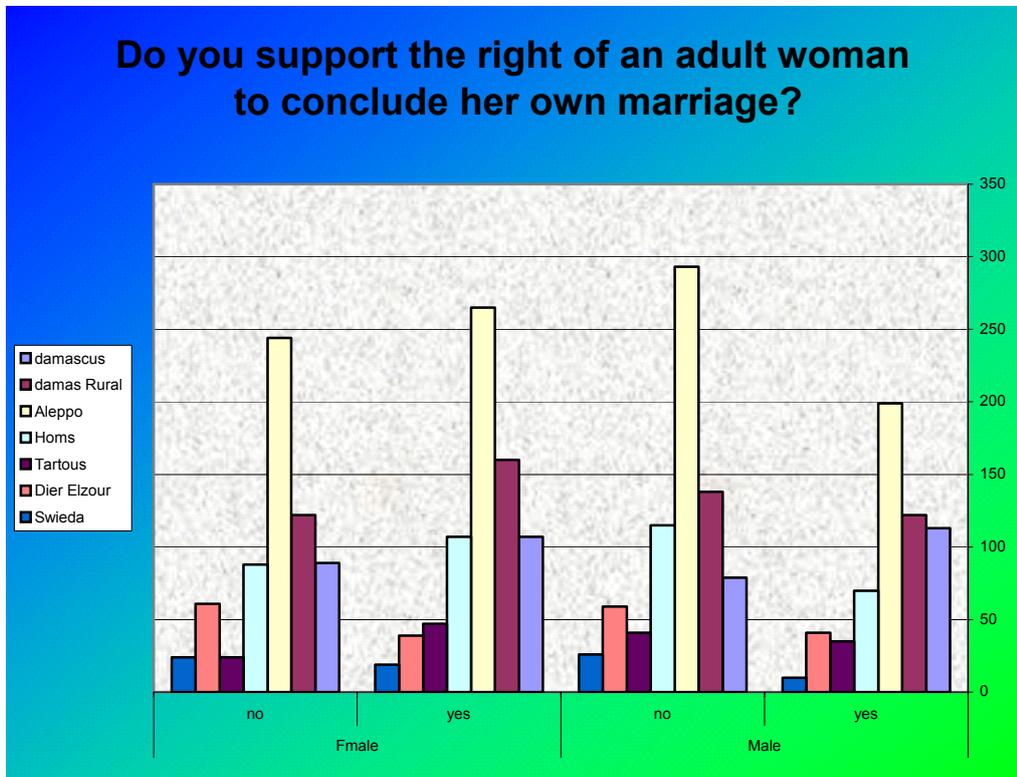
1. The right of adult women to conclude a marriage

Responses were divided to the question about the right of adult women to conclude their own marriages: 590 men (44%) said they supported this right while 751 men (56%) opposed it. A total of 744 women (52%) across all provinces supported the right of adult women to conclude their own marriages while 670 women (47%) opposed it. It is natural that more women than men would favor this right because of their sympathy for other women and their understanding of the legitimacy of this right.

Province	Do you support the right of an adult woman to conclude her own marriage? (by region)					
	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
	M	M		F	F	
Damascus	113	79	192	107	89	196
	59%	41%	100%	55%	45%	100%
Damascus Rural	122	138	260	160	122	282
	47%	53%	100%	57%	43%	100%
Aleppo	199	293	492	265	244	509
	40%	60%	100%	52%	48%	100%
Homs	70	115	185	107	88	195
	38%	62%	100%	55%	45%	100%
Tartous	35	41	76	47	42	89
	46%	54%	100%	53%	47%	100%
Dier Elzour	41	59	100	39	61	100
	41%	59%	100%	39%	61%	100%
Swieda	10	26	36	19	24	43
	28%	72%	100%	44%	56%	100%

Age	Those who said “no” when asked, “Do you support an adult woman’s right to conclude her own marriage?” (by age)	Educational status	Those who said “no” when asked, “Do you support an adult woman’s right to conclude her own marriage?” (by educational status)
	No. / %		No. / %
18–25	295	Illiterate	68
	21%		5%
26–35	410	Primary	447
	29%		31%
36–45	361	Secondary	411

	25%		29%
46–55	218	University	439
	15%		31%
>55	137	Diploma	56
	10%		4%
TOTAL	1421	TOTAL	1421
	100%		100%
NO ANSWER	9	Q7	



The highest levels of support were found among women from the province of Damascus Rural (57%), Damascus and Homs (55%), and Aleppo and Tartous (52%). The lowest levels of support were in the province of Dier Elzour (39%). Among men, the highest levels of support were in the province of Damascus (59%), Damascus Rural (47%), and Tartous (46%). The lowest levels of support were in Dier Elzour and Swieda (38% and 28% respectively).

Notably, the highest levels of opposition to this right were concentrated among women in Dier Elzour (61%) and Swieda (56%), and among men in Swieda (72%), Homs (62%), and Aleppo (59%). This is attributable to the strength of tradition and custom in these areas, as well as the survival of a conservative culture and a patriarchal attitude.

Those rejecting this right were concentrated in the 35–45 age group (57%); the highest levels of support were found in the 18–25 age group (52%), which indicates that age is not a decisive factor in determining an individual's opinion.

Turning to the distribution of findings according to educational status, 1,421 individuals (48%) in the sample of all educational levels opposed the right of adult women to conclude their own marriage. The lowest levels of opposition were found among those with higher education degrees (4%) and illiterate women (5%), while the highest levels of opposition came from those with high-school and university degrees (31%). This indicates that education does not decisively affect an individual's opinion of this issue.

2. Impact of arbitrary divorce on women

Most respondents agreed that arbitrary divorce has a negative impact on women. Some 84% of men from the Damascus Rural province answered yes to the question, followed by 83% of men from Swieda, 81% of men from Aleppo, 78% of men from Damascus, and 73% of men from Dier Elzour. The lowest percentage of those who said yes to the question was in Tartous (66%).

In contrast, 94% of women from the Damascus Rural province said that arbitrary divorce negatively affects women, followed by 88% of women from Aleppo, and 86% of women from Tartous, Dier Elzour, and Swieda. The lowest percentage of those said yes to the question was in Damascus and Homs (85%). These consistently high percentages indicate that Syrian women from all provinces understand the damage and pain that arbitrary divorce inflicts on divorced women, which also explains why more women than men answered yes to the question.

Province	Does arbitrary divorce have a negative impact on women? (by region)							
	Yes	Somewhat	No	Total	Yes	Somewhat	No	Total
	M	M	M		F	F	F	
Damascus	150 79%	31 16%	9 5%	190 100%	167 85%	21 11%	8 4%	196 100%
Damascus Rural	221 85%	31 12%	9 3%	261 100%	265 94%	14 5%	3 1%	282 100%
Aleppo	398 81%	75 15%	18 4%	491 100%	453 88%	48 9%	11 2%	512 100%
Homs	140 75%	33 18%	13 7%	186 100%	167 85%	18 9%	11 6%	196 100%
Tartous	50 66%	24 32%	2 3%	76 100%	77 86%	13 14%	0 0%	90 100%
Dier Elzour	73 73%	25 25%	2 2%	100 100%	86 86%	12 12%	2 2%	100 100%
Swieda	30 83%	4 11%	2 6%	36 100%	37 86%	5 12%	1 2%	43 100%

Age	Does arbitrary divorce have a negative impact on women? (by age)		
	Yes	Somewhat	No
	18-25	500 22%	90 25%
26-35	708 31%	103 29%	25 27%
36-45	567 25%	81 23%	13 14%
46-55	317 14%	45 13%	19 21%
>55	222 10%	35 10%	10 11%
TOTAL	2314 100%	354 100%	91 100%

NO ANSWER 5

Q8

Regarding the distribution of responses by age, the highest percentage of those who said, yes, arbitrary divorce has a negative impact on women was in the 35–45 age group (86%), followed by the 25–35 age group (84%). The lowest percentage was concentrated in the 0–18 age group (81%). Perhaps the reason is the paucity of cases of divorce at this young age, a lack of interest among youth in issues of divorce, and a lack of experience with matters related to the issue.

3. The right of divorced women to compensation

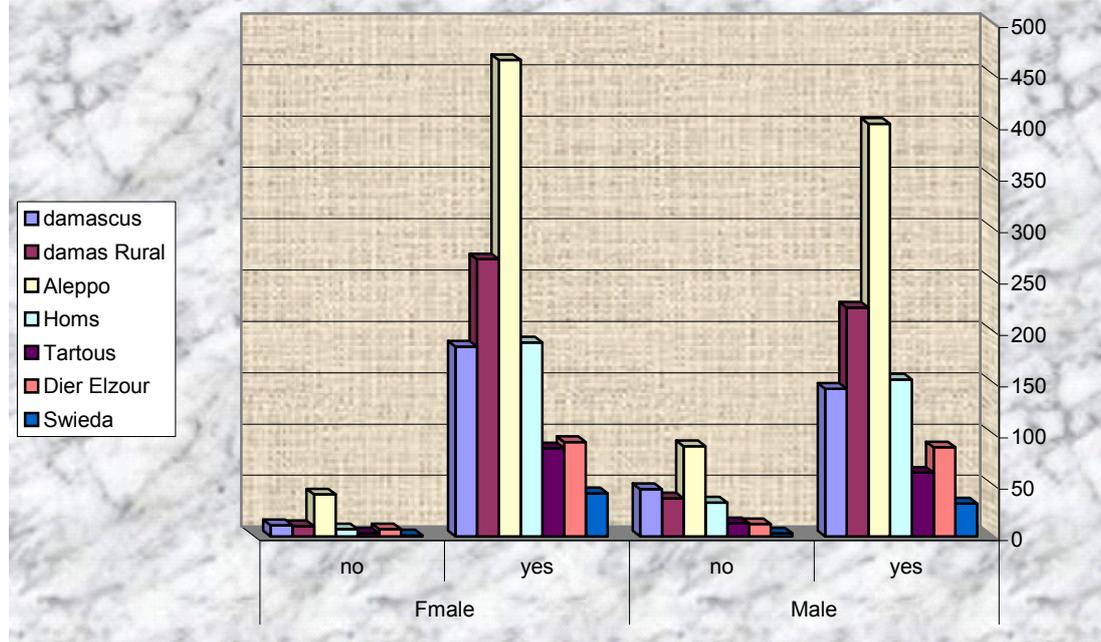
Asked about the right of a divorced woman to compensation commensurate with what the couple produced in their years of marriage, 82% of men said they support women's right to compensation. The highest levels of support were found in Swieda (89%) and the lowest levels in Damascus (75%); in Dier Elzour, support was at 87%, in Aleppo, Homs, and Tartous at 82%, and in Damascus Rural at 85%. On average, 94% of women support a divorced woman's right to compensation; the highest levels of support were in Swieda (98%), Homs and Tartous (96%), and Dier Elzour (92%). Support in Aleppo came in at 91%.

Province	Do you support a divorced woman's right to compensation? (by region)					
	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
	M	M		F	F	
Damascus	144	46	190	185	11	196
	76%	24%	100%	94%	6%	100%
Damascus Rural	223	37	260	270	10	280
	86%	14%	100%	96%	4%	100%
Aleppo	402	88	490	464	41	505
	82%	18%	100%	92%	8%	100%
Homs	153	33	186	189	7	196
	82%	18%	100%	96%	4%	100%
Tartous	62	13	75	86	3	89
	83%	17%	100%	97%	3%	100%
Dier Elzour	87	12	99	92	7	99
	88%	12%	100%	93%	7%	100%
Swieda	32	3	35	42	1	43
	91%	9%	100%	98%	2%	100%

Age	Do you support a divorced woman's right to compensation? (by age)		Employment status	Do you support a divorced woman's right to compensation? (by employment status, female only)	
	Yes	No		Yes	No
18-25	541	71	Unemployed	622	47%
	22%	23%			
26-35	721	111	Public sector	401	30%
	30%	36%			
36-45	592	62	Private sector	275	21%
	24%	20%			
46-55	350	31	Agriculture	30	2%
	14%	10%			
>55	227	37	TOTAL	1328	100%
	9%	12%			
TOTAL	2431	312			
	100%	100%			

NO ANSWER 21 Q9

Do you support a divorced woman's right to compensation?



Comparing men's and women's support, we notice a large discrepancy—82% of men and 94% of women. This indicates a deeper realization among women of a divorced woman's need for compensation and their sympathy with the plight of divorced women. It is also indicative of women's ability to sense the injustice done to divorced women and the attendant social, psychological, and material harm.

4. Right of a divorced woman without income to permanent compensation

On average, 70% of men supported this right. The highest levels of support among men were in Tartous (84%), Damascus Rural (76%), Aleppo (69%), and Damascus and Dier Elzour (67%). The lowest levels of support were in Swieda (47%), which means that 53% of men in Swieda are against a divorced woman's right to permanent compensation.

Province	Do you support a divorced woman's right to permanent compensation? (by region)					
	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
	M	M		F	F	
Damascus	128 67%	62 33%	190 100%	175 90%	20 10%	195 100%
Damascus Rural	198 76%	62 24%	260 100%	233 84%	46 16%	279 100%
Aleppo	341 69%	151 31%	492 100%	457 90%	53 10%	510 100%
Homs	130 70%	55 30%	185 100%	175 90%	20 10%	195 100%
Tartous	64 84%	12 16%	76 100%	83 93%	6 7%	89 100%
Dier Elzour	67 67%	33 33%	100 100%	82 82%	18 18%	100 100%
Swieda	17 47%	19 53%	36 100%	36 86%	6 14%	42 100%

Employment status	Do you support a divorced woman's right to permanent compensation? (by employment status)						Age	Do you support a divorced woman's right to permanent compensation? (by age)	
	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total		Yes	No
	M	M		F	F				
							18-25	487	126
Unemployed	84	49	133	579	83	662		22%	22%
	63%	37%	100%	87%	13%	100%	26-35	660	174
Public sector	304	123	427	370	54	424		30%	31%
	71%	29%	100%	87%	13%	100%	36-45	534	124
Private sector	527	205	732	265	26	291		24%	22%
	72%	28%	100%	91%	9%	100%	46-55	291	89
Agriculture	30	17	47	27	6	33		13%	16%
	64%	36%	100%	82%	18%	100%	>55	214	50
								10%	9%
							TOTAL	2186	563
								100%	100%

NO ANSWER 15

Q10

On average, 87% of women supported this right. The highest levels of support among women were found in Tartous (93%), followed by Aleppo, Homs, and Damascus (90%), Swieda (86%), and Damascus Rural (84%). Women from Dier Elzour were the least supportive of this right (82%).

For the same reasons as above, we find that more women than men sympathize with women's rights. In addition, the countryside, which depends on agriculture, does not feel the same pressure of material need as do urban areas.

Broken down by employment status, 70% of the total sample supported a divorced woman's right to permanent compensation. The lowest levels of support were among the unemployed and agricultural workers (63% and 64% respectively); levels of support are similar among public- and private-sector workers (71% and 72% respectively). That is, wage workers are more understanding of a divorced woman's need for compensation, while the unemployed and agricultural workers are less appreciative because material needs are less urgent in rural areas.

5. Women's right to divorce without spousal consent (*al-mukhala'a*)

A large group of men (61%) opposed this right, while on average 39% of men supported it. Support ranged from a high of 49% in Damascus to a low of 24% in Dier Elzour. This indicates that in the prevailing male mentality matters of divorce and marriage are still men's rights, and it is difficult for them to imagine a woman initiating divorce without her husband's consent.

Even women in the sample did not come out decisively in support. On average, 60% of women supported this right; the highest level of support was 73% in Damascus and the lowest 47% in Dier Elzour. These findings are consistent with those among men, despite the differences in percentages. That is, society unifies men's and women's opinions through customs, traditions, and the prevailing culture, rendering age or gender differences secondary.

Nothing is more indicative of this than the distribution of responses across age brackets, with 50% in favor and 50% opposed. The highest level of support was among the oldest age group (55 years or older) at 52% while the lowest level was for the 35–45 age bracket at 45%. That is, society remains sharply divided on the issue and it still has not become a priority. The existing male culture still considers divorce to be solely a male right, which means that not only must laws be amended, but the traditional male culture must be changed as well.

Province	Do you support a woman's right to initiate divorce? (by region)					
	Yes	No	TOTAL	Yes	No	TOTAL
	M	M		F	F	
Damascus	94 49%	97 51%	191 100%	144 73%	52 27%	196 100%
Damascus Rural	116 44%	145 56%	261 100%	192 69%	86 31%	278 100%
Aleppo	181 37%	311 63%	492 100%	283 56%	223 44%	506 100%
Homs	58 31%	127 69%	185 100%	117 60%	79 40%	196 100%
Tartous	35 47%	40 53%	75 100%	42 47%	48 53%	90 100%
Dier Elzour	24 24%	74 76%	98 100%	50 51%	48 49%	98 100%
Swieda	14 39%	22 61%	36 100%	25 58%	18 42%	43 100%

Age	Do you support a woman's right to initiate divorce? (by age)	
	Yes	No
18-25	304 22%	307 22%
26-35	443 32%	391 29%
36-45	319 23%	339 25%
46-55	171 12%	207 15%
>55	138 10%	126 9%
TOTAL	1375 100%	1370 100%

NO ANSWER 19

Q11

6. Negative impact of polygamy on the family

On average 72% of men from all provinces said that polygamy has a negative impact on the family. The highest level of recognition was in Swieda (78%), followed by Damascus Rural, Damascus, and Tartous (74%), Aleppo and Homs (73%), and Dier Elzour with the lowest level (56%). A total of 21% of the male respondents in the sample said that polygamy has a somewhat negative effect on the family.

Among women, on average 86% said that polygamy has a negative impact on the family. The highest level of recognition was in Homs (89%), followed by Damascus Rural and Swieda (88%), Damascus (87%), Aleppo (86%), Tartous (84%), and Dier Elzour (76%). Despite the high percentage of women who believed that polygamy has a negative impact on the family, fewer women in Dier Elzour believed this. Comparing this with the preceding paragraph, we find that the men of Dier Elzour were also less cognizant of the negative impact of polygamy. This indicates that the view of a community, with its women and men, is determined more by customs, traditions, and the prevailing culture than by gender difference.

Some 61% of women believed that polygamy had a somewhat negative impact on the family, while only 2% believed that it had no negative impact. This is a positive indication that women are particularly aware of the dangers and negative aspects of polygamy.

Divided by age, on average 79% of the sample believe that polygamy has a negative impact. The 18–25 age group believed this less, while 82% of the 35–45 age group believe this and 83% of the 55 and older age bracket. That is, experience and age fostered a greater realization of the negative aspects of polygamy among the sample, through by a relatively small margin.

A total of 16% said that polygamy has a somewhat negative impact, while only 4% said that polygamy had no negative impact on the family.

Province	Does polygamy have a negative impact on the family? (by region)							
	Yes	Somewhat	No	TOTAL	Yes	Somewhat	No	TOTAL
	M	M	M		F	F	F	
Damascus	143	39	10	192	171	19	6	196
	74%	20%	5%	100%	87%	10%	3%	100%
Damascus Rural	195	42	24	261	248	25	9	282
	75%	16%	9%	100%	88%	9%	3%	100%
Aleppo	362	103	27	492	438	67	7	512
	74%	21%	5%	100%	86%	13%	1%	100%
Homs	135	40	11	186	175	18	3	196
	73%	22%	6%	100%	89%	9%	2%	100%
Tartous	56	15	5	76	76	12	2	90
	74%	20%	7%	100%	84%	13%	2%	100%
Dier Elzour	56	31	13	100	76	18	6	100
	56%	31%	13%	100%	76%	18%	6%	100%
Swieda	28	8	0	36	38	4	1	43
	78%	22%	0%	100%	88%	9%	2%	100%

Age	Does polygamy have a negative impact on the family? (by age)		
	Yes	Somewhat	No
18-25	486	99	29
	22%	22%	23%
26-35	648	150	40
	29%	34%	32%
36-45	527	99	36
	24%	22%	29%
46-55	314	59	8
	14%	13%	6%
>55	222	34	11
	10%	8%	9%
TOTAL	2197	441	124
	100%	100%	100%

NO ANSWER 2

Q12

7. Multiple choice

On average, 28% of men in all provinces chose to maintain polygamy. The lowest percentages were in Swieda (3%), Tartous (14%), Damascus Rural (22%), and Homs (27%). the highest percentages were in Aleppo (29%) and Damascus (31%). In Dier Elzour it reached 46%, which is indicative of the links between the survival of polygamy and a community's traditionalism and ties to custom and tradition.

A total of 36% of male respondents made the survival of polygamy conditional on the wife's consent; discrepancies between provinces were not significant.

The same percentage (36%) of male respondents said that polygamy should be abolished. The highest support for this alternative was found in Swieda (69%), followed by Damascus Rural

(41%), Homs (40%), Tartous (37%), Aleppo (33%), and Damascus (30%). The lowest level of support for this choice was in Dier Elzour (27%) for the same reasons noted above.

Only 11% of female respondents favored maintaining polygamy while 35% said it should be conditional on the wife's consent. Significantly, however, on average 53% of women favored abolishing polygamy. The highest support for this option was in Homs (58%), followed by Tartous and Aleppo (57%), Damascus Rural (55%), Swieda (47%), and Dier Elzour (43%). The lowest level of support for this option was Damascus (40%), since more women in Damascus favored making polygamous marriages conditional on the wife's consent.

Women and men were in close agreement on the option to maintain polygamy while making it conditional on the wife's consent: 49% of men and 51% of women favored this, indicating that gender has no impact on this choice. This contrasts with answers regarding the option of abolishing polygamy altogether, which was supported by 39% of men and 61% of women. That is, about two-thirds of women support abolishing polygamy.

Province	Choose one of the following (by region):							
	Maintain polygamy	Make it conditional on wife's consent	Abolish it	TOTAL	Maintain polygamy	Make it conditional on wife's consent	Abolish it	TOTAL
	M	M	M		F	F	F	
Damascus	59 31%	75 39%	57 30%	191 100%	24 12%	94 48%	78 40%	196 100%
Damascus Rural	58 22%	96 37%	108 41%	262 100%	22 8%	104 37%	156 55%	282 100%
Aleppo	145 30%	180 37%	164 34%	489 100%	59 12%	157 31%	294 58%	510 100%
Homs	51 28%	60 32%	74 40%	185 100%	25 13%	57 29%	113 58%	195 100%
Tartous	11 14%	37 49%	28 37%	76 100%	3 3%	35 39%	51 57%	89 100%
Dier Elzour	46 47%	27 28%	25 26%	98 100%	17 18%	35 37%	43 45%	95 100%
Swieda	1 3%	10 28%	25 69%	36 100%	1 2%	21 50%	20 48%	42 100%

Age	Choose one of the following (by age):			Marital Status	Choose one of the following (by marital status):					
	Maintain polygamy	Make it conditional on wife's consent	Abolish it		Maintain polygamy	Abolish it	TOTAL	Maintain polygamy	Abolish it	TOTAL
	M	M	M		M	M		F	F	
18-25	102 20%	227 23%	281 23%	Single	114 40%	169 60%	283 100%	59 20%	237 80%	296 100%
26-35	182 35%	309 31%	345 28%		Married	245 45%	303 55%	548 100%	73 14%	451 86%
36-45	120 23%	237 24%	298 24%	Divorced		8 67%	4 33%	12 100%	15 26%	42 74%
46-55	70 13%	118 12%	190 15%		Widowed	4 44%	5 56%	9 100%	4 14%	25 86%
>55	48 9%	97 10%	122 10%	Employment status		Choose one of the following (by employment status)				
TOTAL	522 100%	988 100%	### ###		Maintain polygamy		M	F	Unemployed	Public sector
	36 10%	70 46%	126 34%		51 34%					

Private sector	200	27
	54%	18%
Agriculture	9	3
	2%	2%
TOTAL	371	151
	100%	100%

NO ANSWER

18

Q13

8. Right of custodian to marital home

On average the majority of men (74%) supported the right of the child custodian to the marital home. The highest level of support was in Damascus Rural (84%), followed by Damascus (75%), Aleppo (74%), Homs (71%), Tartous (66%), and Dier Elzour (57%); the lowest level of support was 56% in Swieda. The common denominator between Dier Elzour and Swieda, which might explain the fact that 42% of men oppose the right of the child custodian to the marital home, is the existing patriarchal culture and deep-rooted Bedouin customs and traditions.

Damascus	144	46	190	183	12	195
	76%	24%	100%	94%	6%	100%
Damascus Rural	220	41	261	271	10	281
	84%	16%	100%	96%	4%	100%
Aleppo	366	122	488	478	31	509
	75%	25%	100%	94%	6%	100%
Homs	132	50	182	179	16	195
	73%	27%	100%	92%	8%	100%
Tartous	50	23	73	67	21	88
	68%	32%	100%	76%	24%	100%
Dier Elzour	57	42	99	77	19	96
	58%	42%	100%	80%	20%	100%
Swieda	20	15	35	34	8	42
	57%	43%	100%	81%	19%	100%

Marital Status	Do you support the right of the child custodian to the marital home? (by marital status)						Age	Do you support the right of the child custodian to the marital home? (by age)	
	Yes	No	TOTAL	Yes	No	TOTAL		Yes	No
	M	M		F	F			Yes	No
Single	324	112	436	431	55	486	18-25	506	105
	74%	26%	100%	89%	11%	100%	26-35	687	143
Married	646	213	859	753	54	807	36-45	542	109
	75%	25%	100%	93%	7%	100%	46-55	319	59
Divorced	8	8	16	61	6	67	>55	224	40
	50%	50%	100%	91%	9%	100%		10%	9%
Widowed	11	6	17	44	2	46	TOTAL	2278	456
	65%	35%	100%	96%	4%	100%		100%	100%
Employment status	Do you support the right of the child custodian to the marital home? (by employment status)						TOTAL		
	Yes	No	TOTAL	Yes	No	TOTAL			
	M	M		F	F				
Unemployed	90	41	131	613	49	662			
	69%	31%	100%	93%	7%	100%			
Public sector	305	116	421	379	43	422			
	72%	28%	100%	90%	10%	100%			
Private sector	557	173	730	267	22	289			

Q14

	76%	24%	100%	92%	8%	100%
Agriculture	37	9	46	30	3	33
	80%	20%	100%	91%	9%	100%
NO ANSWER	30					

But women’s support for the right of the child custodian to the marital home was markedly higher—reaching 91% on average. The highest levels of support among women were seen in Damascus Rural (96%), Damascus and Aleppo (93%), Homs (91%), Swieda (79%), and Dier Elzour (77%); the lowest level of support among women was in Tartous (74%).

Viewed according to marital status among men, 74% of both single and married men support this right, followed by widowers (65%) and divorced men (50%). That is, half of men who have divorced their wives oppose the right of the child custodian to the marital home because of their marital status or direct interest, regardless of the children’s interest.

Perhaps women’s responses to the same question divided across marital status can shed more light on different opinions due to marital status or direct harm. On average, a high percentage of women supported this right (91%). A total of 93% of married women supported the right of the child custodian to live in the marital home, followed by 88% of single women and 91% of divorced women; 96% of widows supported the right. That is, regardless of marital status, an overwhelming majority of women support giving women this right.

Viewed through age, the highest levels of support were seen in the 45–55 and 55 and over age brackets (84%); support dropped to 82% for other age brackets, which indicates that experience and maturity can have a positive impact on individual views.

Divided according to employment status, 92% of women who do not work supported the child custodian’s right to the marital home, followed by 91% of women working in agriculture and the private sector. Support among unemployed men dropped to 68%, but reached 71% among male public-sector workers, 76% among private-sector workers, and 79% among agricultural workers.

9. Joint guardianship over minor children

Often children, especially minor children, are the most prominent victims of divorce and family disputes. Articles 170–172 of Syrian personal status law give the father full guardianship over his children, followed by his male relatives, to the exclusion of the children’s mother. Given the sensitivity of this issue, the survey devoted close attention to it.

On average 79% of men said that they support joint parental guardianship over minor children. This includes 75% of men in Aleppo, 76% from Damascus, 81% from Homs, 83% from Tartous and Swieda, and 84% from Dier Elzour. The highest level of support for joint parental guardianship was seen in Damascus Rural, at 85%.

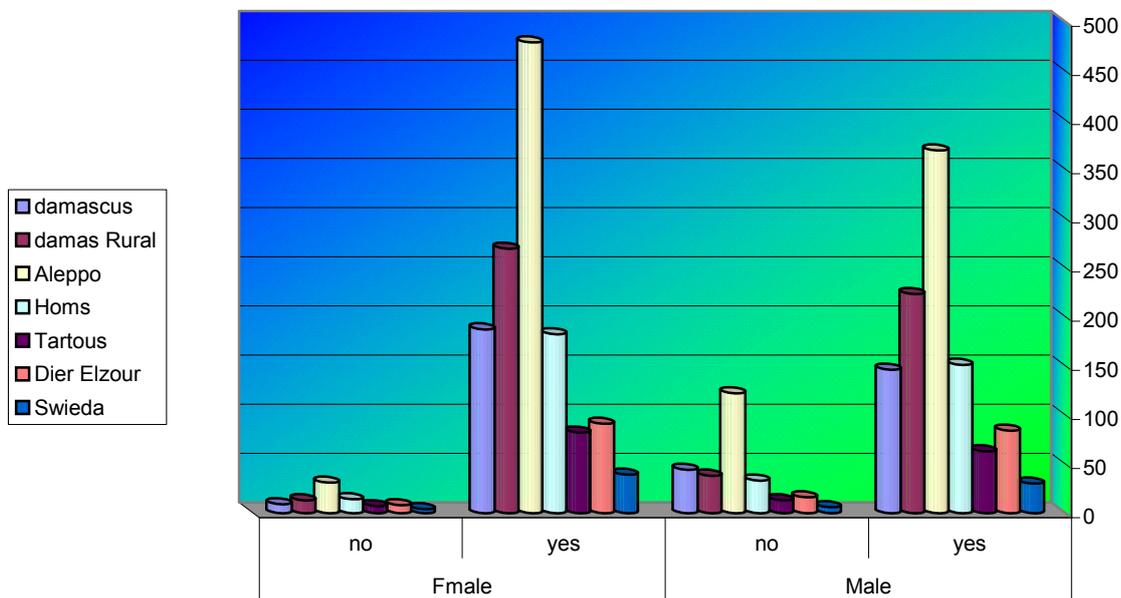
Province	Do you support joint guardianship? (by region)					
	Yes	No	TOTAL	Yes	No	TOTAL
	M	M		F	F	
Damascus	146	44	190	187	9	196
	77%	23%	100%	95%	5%	100%
Damascus Rural	223	38	261	269	13	282
	85%	15%	100%	95%	5%	100%
Aleppo	369	122	491	479	31	510
	75%	25%	100%	94%	6%	100%
Homs	151	33	184	182	14	196
	82%	18%	100%	93%	7%	100%

Tartous		63	13	76	82	7	89		
		83%	17%	100%	92%	8%	100%		
Dier Elzour		84	16	100	91	8	99		
		84%	16%	100%	92%	8%	100%		
Swieda		30	6	36	39	4	43		
		83%	17%	100%	91%	9%	100%		
Age	Do you support joint guardianship? (by age)		Educational status	Do you support joint guardianship? (by educational status)					
	Yes	No		Yes	No	TOTAL	Yes	No	TOTAL
18-25	532	80	Illiterate	M	M	TOTAL	F	F	TOTAL
	22%	22%		33	14		47	77	
26-35	735	102	Primary	70%	30%	100%	93%	7%	100%
	31%	28%		298	93	391	381	29	410
36-45	573	86	Secondary	76%	24%	100%	93%	7%	100%
	24%	24%		306	60	366	380	22	402
46-55	324	55	University	84%	16%	100%	95%	5%	100%
	14%	15%		361	95	456	443	27	470
>55	231	35	Diploma	79%	21%	100%	94%	6%	100%
	10%	10%		68	10	78	48	2	50
TOTAL	2395	358		87%	13%	100%	96%	4%	100%
	100%	100%							

NO ANSWER 11

Q15

Do you support joint guardianship?



Support was higher among women in the sample, averaging 94%. A total of 91% of women in Swieda, Dier Elzour, and Tartous supported the idea, as well as 93% of women from Homs, 94% from Aleppo, and 95% from Damascus and Damascus Rural.

Viewed from the perspective of age, on average 87% of the sample supported the idea, ranging from 85% in the 45–55 age group and 87% for the 18–25 age group, as well as the 25–35 and 55 and older age brackets. This indicates that age has little impact on individual opinion.

The impact of educational level was clearer. Some 79% of men of all educational backgrounds supported the idea, while men with no education were the least supportive of joint parental guardianship over minor children (70%). This number rose to 87% among those with higher degrees and was spread ranged between these two numbers for other educational levels. This indicates that education has a clear impact on an individual's view of this issue.

There were fewer gaps among women, with an average of 94% supporting the idea. Remarkably, 92% of illiterate women in the sample supported the right and slightly more women with higher degrees (94%) supported it. This indicates that education was not as decisive a factor among women, most of whom support this right.

10. Joint parental supervision of property of minor children

Responses to this question were virtually identical to the previous one, and there were no significant discrepancies between answers to the two questions. Indeed, some figures were identical. On average 92% of women and 75% of men supported this right. A review of the following table and a comparison between the two questions reveals that the second question was unnecessary and revealed no significant differences of opinion among individuals in the sample.

Province	Do you support joint parental supervision of minor property? (by region)					
	Yes	No	TOTAL	Yes	No	TOTAL
	M	M		F	F	
Damascus	148 77%	43 23%	191 100%	187 95%	9 5%	196 100%
Damascus Rural	194 76%	62 24%	256 100%	261 94%	17 6%	278 100%
Aleppo	345 70%	146 30%	491 100%	467 92%	41 8%	508 100%
Homs	154 84%	30 16%	184 100%	184 94%	12 6%	196 100%
Tartous	58 76%	18 24%	76 100%	78 87%	12 13%	90 100%
Dier Elzour	81 81%	19 19%	100 100%	93 94%	6 6%	99 100%
Swieda	28 78%	8 22%	36 100%	40 93%	3 7%	43 100%

Age	Do you support joint parental supervision of minor property? (by age)	
	Yes	No
18-25	520 22%	94 22%
26-35	694 30%	140 33%
36-45	557 24%	100 23%
46-55	324 14%	52 12%
>55	223 10%	40 9%
TOTAL	2318 100%	426 100%

NO ANSWER 20

Q16

11. Direct transfer of guardianship to mother in the event of father's death

Male respondents approval for the automatic transfer of guardianship to the mother in the event of the father's death increases in tandem with their educational level. Among illiterate men 72%

approve, while 81% of those with basic education approve, followed by 83% of those with a high-school diploma, 85% of university graduates, and 87% of those with higher educational degrees. This is logical and understandable, since education is one factor influencing an individual's opinions on and understanding of public issues.

Province	Do you support the direct transfer of child guardianship to the mother in the event of the father's death? (by region)					
	Yes	No	TOTAL	Yes	No	TOTAL
	M	M		F	F	
Damascus	157	33	190	187	9	196
	83%	17%	100%	95%	5%	100%
Damascus Rural	219	43	262	269	12	281
	84%	16%	100%	96%	4%	100%
Aleppo	386	103	489	477	32	509
	79%	21%	100%	94%	6%	100%
Homs	163	23	186	190	6	196
	88%	12%	100%	97%	3%	100%
Tartous	69	7	76	88	2	90
	91%	9%	100%	98%	2%	100%
Dier Elzour	87	12	99	89	9	98
	88%	12%	100%	91%	9%	100%
Swieda	35	1	36	40	3	43
	97%	3%	100%	93%	7%	100%

Marital Status	Do you support the direct transfer of child guardianship to the mother in the event of the father's death? (by marital status)		Age	Do you support the direct transfer of child guardianship to the mother in the event of the father's death? (by age)	
	Yes	Yes		Yes	No
	M	F			
Single	379	460	18-25	547	61
	34%	34%		22%	21%
Married	715	773	26-35	752	87
	64%	69%		31%	29%
Divorced	8	64	36-45	582	78
	1%	6%		24%	26%
Widowed	14	43	46-55	341	38
	1%	4%		14%	13%
TOTAL	1116	1340	>55	234	31
	100%	113%		10%	11%
			TOTAL	2456	295
				100%	100%

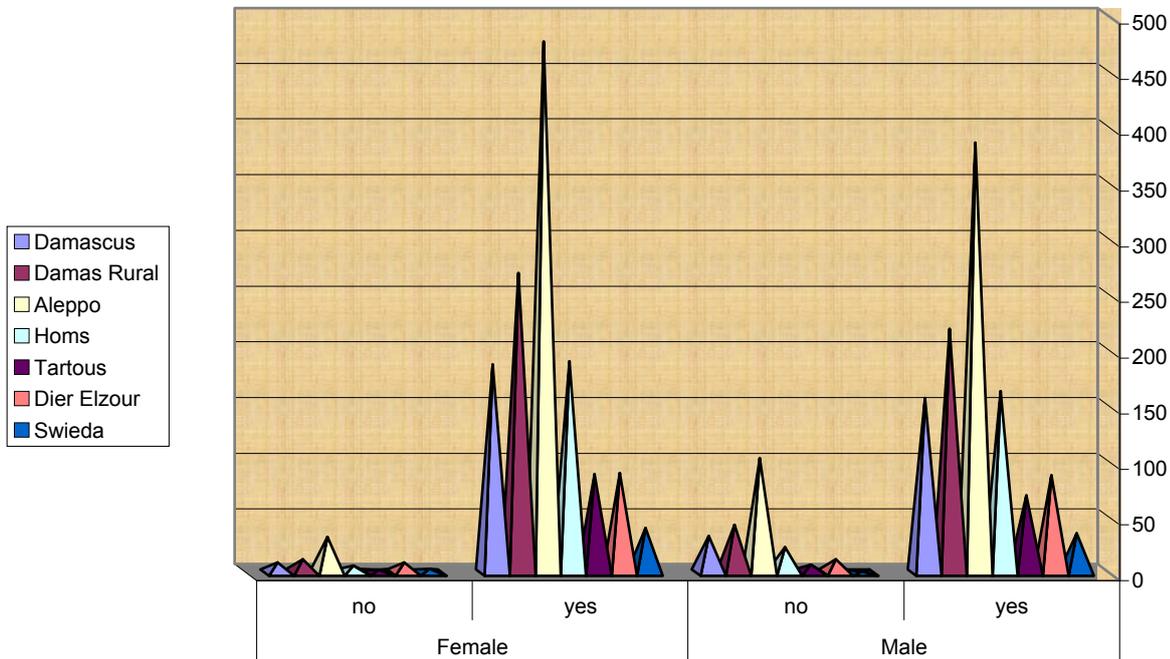
Educational status	Do you support the direct transfer of child guardianship to the mother in the event of the father's death? (by education)					
	Yes	No	TOTAL	Yes	No	TOTAL
	M	M		F	F	
Illiterate	34	13	47	79	4	83
	72%	28%	100%	95%	5%	100%
Primary	317	72	389	379	28	407
	81%	19%	100%	93%	7%	100%
Secondary	305	60	365	383	21	404
	84%	16%	100%	95%	5%	100%
University	392	67	459	450	18	468
	85%	15%	100%	96%	4%	100%
Diploma	68	10	78	49	2	51
	87%	13%	100%	96%	4%	100%

NO ANSWER

13

Q17

Do you support the direct transfer of child guardianship to the mother in the event of the father's death?



But this factor did not have the same impact among women of the sample. Indeed most women (94%) approved the transfer of guardianship to the mother across all educational levels. Some 94% of illiterate women approved, as well as 92% of those with basic education, 95% of those with high-school diplomas, and 96% of university graduates and those with higher degrees.

Divided by age, 89% of the sample approved the transfer of guardianship to the mother upon the father's death. Among the 18–25 age bracket, 81% approved, in addition to 90% among the 25–35 age bracket, 88% among the 35–45 age bracket, 90% of the 45–55 age bracket and 88% of the 55 and older age bracket. This indicates that age-related experiences do not make for significant differences of opinion on the issue.

Perhaps a more significant factor among both men and women is place of residence. On average 83% of men and 94% of women from all provinces supported the automatic transfer of guardianship to the mother. There were no significant differences between provinces with the exception of Dier Elzour, where support among women dropped to 89%; it reached a high of 97% in Homs. Among men support dipped to 78% in Aleppo while it reached its highest levels in Tartous and Swieda, with 91% and 97% respectively.

Looking at the findings according to women's marital status, we find that 70.4% of single women supported the transfer of guardianship to the mother upon the father's death; support rose to 79% among married women and divorced women and dipped to 69.85% among widows. This indicates that marital status has some impact on women's opinion of the transfer of guardianship.

12. Equal value for men's and women's testimony

There are still stark divisions between men and women on the issue of equality in testimony: 42% of men approve compared to 61% of women. This is largely attributable to cultural and religious

factors and less to the respondents' social environment. Some 70% of women from Damascus support equality in men's and women's testimony, compared to 63% in Damascus Rural, 58% in Aleppo, 51% in Tartous, and 46% in Dier Elzour. The highest level of support was seen in Swieda, 91%, which can be explained primarily by cultural and religious factors.

Men's support for equal testimony dropped to 43% in Damascus, 41% in Damascus Rural, and 39% in Aleppo, the lowest level in the sample. It rose to 43% in Homs, 49% in Tartous, 40% in Dier Elzour, and 58% in Swieda. For both sexes, the highest levels of support were seen in Swieda and lowest in Aleppo and Dier Elzour. This reinforces the aforementioned conclusion about the impact of cultural and communal factors on individuals' views of the issue.

Province	Do you support making men's and women's testimony of equal value? (by region)					
	Yes	No	TOTAL	Yes	No	TOTAL
	M	M		F	F	
Damascus	83 44%	107 56%	190 100%	138 70%	58 30%	196 100%
Damascus Rural	107 41%	154 59%	261 100%	177 63%	103 37%	280 100%
Aleppo	193 39%	299 61%	492 100%	297 58%	212 42%	509 100%
Homs	80 43%	106 57%	186 100%	128 65%	68 35%	196 100%
Tartous	37 49%	39 51%	76 100%	46 52%	43 48%	89 100%
Dier Elzour	40 40%	60 60%	100 100%	46 46%	53 54%	99 100%
Swieda	21 58%	15 42%	36 100%	39 91%	4 9%	43 100%

Age	Do you support making men's and women's testimony of equal value? (by age)	
	Yes	No
18-25	317 22%	295 22%
26-35	433 30%	404 31%
36-45	350 24%	310 23%
46-55	200 14%	178 13%
>55	132 9%	134 10%
TOTAL	1432 100%	1321 100%

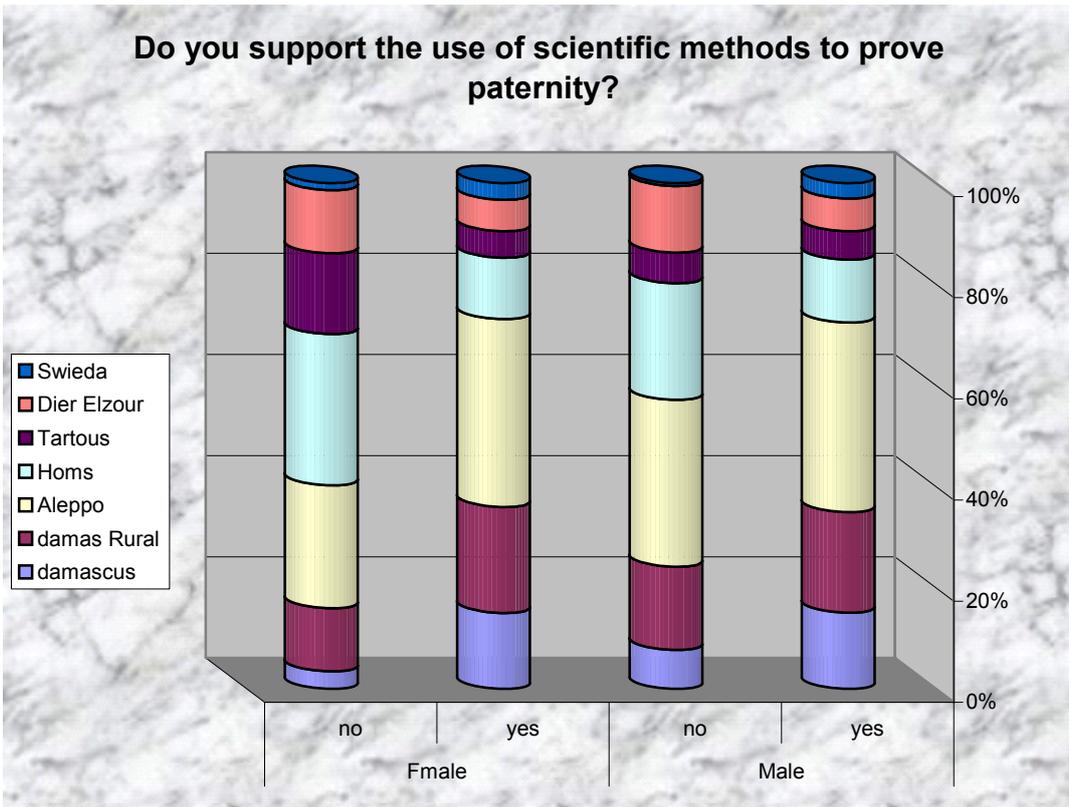
NO ANSWER 11 **Q18**

Analyzing respondents' opinions according to age, we find that on average 52% support treating men's and women's testimony equally while 48% oppose it. There were slight differences between various age groups: 52% of the 18–25 age bracket and 53% of the 25–35 age bracket supported it; support declined slightly in the 55 and older age group. This indicates that age is not a decisive influence on individuals' attitudes.

13. Use of scientific methods to prove paternity

This question is especially significant because of the problems that have arisen from fathers' refusal to recognize their children based on Article 129 of the personal status law, which has grave domestic, moral, and social repercussions.

Province	Do you support the use of scientific methods to prove paternity? (by region)								
	Yes	No	TOTAL	Yes	No	TOTAL			
	M	M		F	F				
Damascus	175 93%	14 7%	189 100%	190 97%	5 3%	195 100%			
Damascus Rural	230 88%	30 12%	260 100%	264 94%	18 6%	282 100%			
Aleppo	433 88%	60 12%	493 100%	468 93%	35 7%	503 100%			
Homs	144 77%	42 23%	186 100%	153 78%	43 22%	196 100%			
Tartous	65 86%	11 14%	76 100%	66 74%	23 26%	89 100%			
Dier Elzour	75 76%	24 24%	99 100%	79 81%	18 19%	97 100%			
Swieda	35 97%	1 3%	36 100%	41 95%	2 5%	43 100%			
Age	Do you support the use of scientific methods to prove paternity? (by age)		Educational status	Do you support the use of scientific methods to prove paternity? (by educational status)					
	Yes	No		Yes	No	TOTAL	Yes	No	TOTAL
18-25	547	61	Illiterate	M	M	47	F	F	82
	23%	19%		37	10		76	6	
26-35	725	111	Primary	79%	21%	391	93%	7%	406
	30%	34%		332	59		358	48	
36-45	570	85	Secondary	85%	15%	364	88%	12%	399
	24%	26%		315	49		357	42	
46-55	333	46	University	87%	13%	459	89%	11%	467
	14%	14%		401	58		422	45	
>55	243	23	Diploma	87%	13%	78	90%	10%	51
	10%	7%		72	6		48	3	
TOTAL	2418	326		92%	8%	100%	94%	6%	100%
				NO ANSWER 20			Q19		



On average, 89% of women support the use of scientific methods to determine paternity, and this high degree of support is evidence of the sample’s awareness of the sensitivity of the issue. Among women in Damascus, 97% support the idea, followed by 94% of women in Damascus Rural, 91% in Aleppo, 87% in Homs, 79% in Dier Elzour, and 73% in Tartous; 95% of women in Swieda supported it.

Support among men was close, with 86% of men on average supporting the scientific method: 91% in Damascus, 88% in Damascus Rural and Aleppo, 77% in Aleppo, 86% in Tartous, and 97% in Swieda. Support dropped to its lowest levels in Dier Elzour, at 75%. Despite the differences between the provinces, the majority of men and women in the sample support the use of scientific methods to prove paternity, which indicates that the individuals in the sample are aware of the issue and its ramifications.

Regarding age, 87% on average support the use of scientific methods. The highest levels of support were seen among the youngest and oldest age brackets: 89% of 18-year olds support it as do 91% of the 55 and older age group. A total of 86% of the 18–25 and 35–45 age brackets support it while 87% of the 45–55 age group do. This indicates that age has little impact, with the exception of the 55 and older group, most likely due to the life experience they have acquired.

14. Equal inheritance for men and women

There is a clear divide in people’s view of equal inheritance; indeed, slightly more people oppose this right (54%) than support it (46%). This might be attributable to the strong influence of custom and tradition in the value system. The significance of these percentages can be further elucidated by examining the responses of men and women: nearly twice as many men oppose equal inheritance laws as support it—37% in favor compared to 63% opposed. This is consistent with the value system prevalent in our societies, which sees women as socially and economically dependent on men and thus gives women half a man’s share of inheritance on the grounds that they will be cared for by the male members of their families. In addition, men fear being deprived of the economic privileges guaranteed them by custom, tradition, and law.

A reading of women's responses paints a different picture. Support for equal inheritance reaches 58% among women, with 41% opposed. This indicates a growing consciousness among women of the importance of their rights, particularly their economic rights, and the significance of having independent decision-making power rather than being dependent on men. In short, gender has a clear impact on attitudes to inheritance.

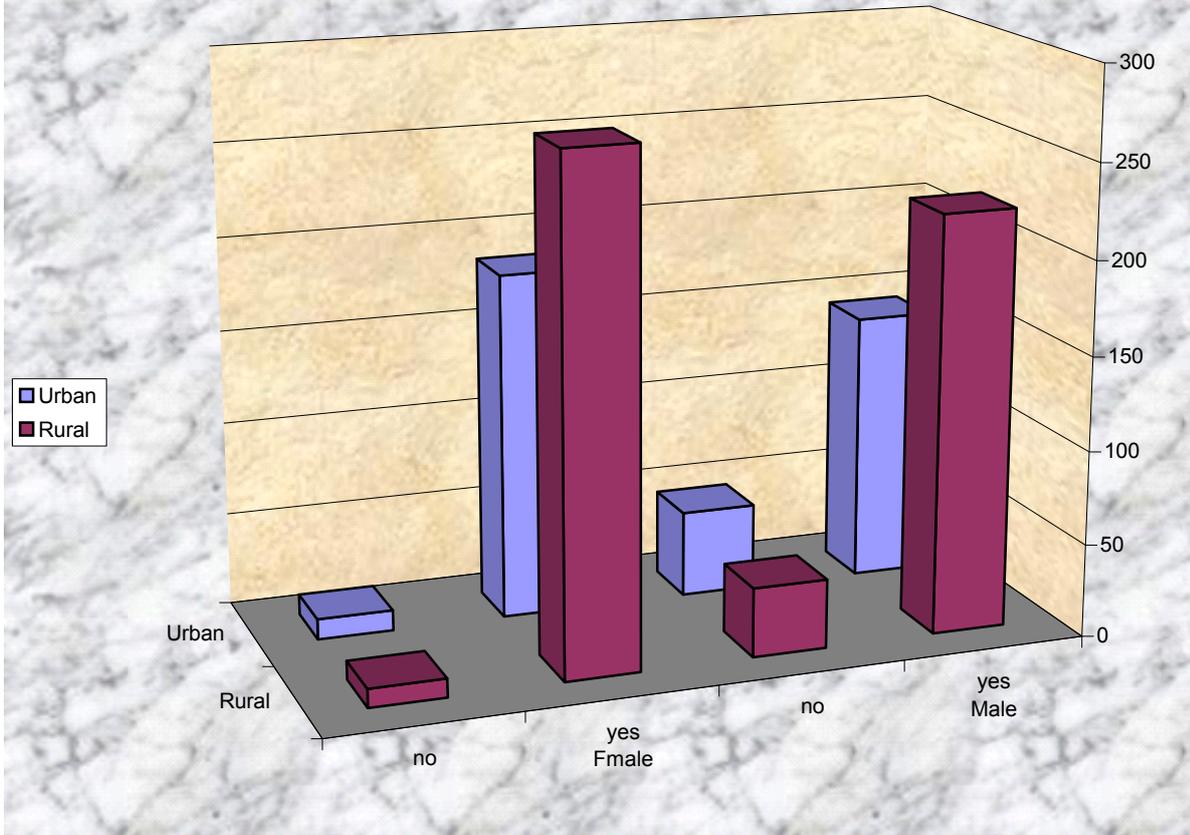
Province		Do you support equal inheritance rights for men and women? (by region)					
		Yes M	No M	TOTAL	Yes F	No F	TOTAL
Urban		267 32%	558 68%	825 100%	506 56%	392 44%	898 100%
Rural		225 44%	291 56%	516 100%	321 62%	196 38%	517 100%

Age	Do you support equal inheritance rights for men and women? (by age)		Employment status	Do you support equal inheritance rights for men and women? (by employment status)					
	Yes	No		Yes M	No M	TOTAL	Yes F	No F	TOTAL
18-25	289 22%	323 22%	Unemployed	43 33%	88 67%	131 100%	353 53%	309 47%	662 100%
26-35	380 29%	458 32%		Public sector	166 39%	263 61%	429 100%	258 61%	168 39%
36-45	333 25%	326 23%	Private sector		266 36%	468 64%	734 100%	197 67%	97 33%
46-55	190 14%	190 13%		Agriculture	17 36%	30 64%	47 100%	19 58%	14 42%
>55	127 10%	140 10%							
TOTAL	1319 100%	1437 100%							

NO ANSWER	8
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Q20

Do you support equal inheritance rights for men and women?



A closer look at the distribution of responses across urban and rural areas reveals differences. In rural areas, 44% of men and 62% of women support equal inheritance, while support declines in urban areas to 32% of men and 56% of women.

Examining responses according to employment status (agricultural work, private or public sector, or unemployed), we find similarities, which raises questions about the impact employment has on views and attitudes towards inheritance. This factor has little influence as is clear from the table.

15. Honor crimes

The issue of honor crimes stokes debate and interests public opinion. When respondents were asked whether they support making honor crimes criminal offenses in which the perpetrators would be liable to punishment, they answered as follows:

A total of 60% of men and 63% of women in urban areas supported making penalties for honor crimes more severe, while support declined in rural areas to 40% of men and 37% of women.

There are clear differences between urban and rural areas, which may be attributable to the strong sway that traditions and custom still exercise in the countryside.

Turning to gender differences, the following tables show that more women than men support stiffer penalties for honor crimes:

Damascus	Damascus Rural	Aleppo	Homs	Tartous	Dier Elzour	Swieda
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M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
64%	85%	80%	85%	65%	70%	63%	67%	68%	58%	67%	60%	68%	86%

There are stark differences in Damascus (64% of men compared to 85% of women) and Swieda (68% of men compared to 86% of women); this stands in contrast to Tartous and Dier Elzour, where more men than women support stiffer penalties.

Province	REGION											
	URBAN						RURAL					
	YES	NO	Total	YES	NO	Total	YES	NO	Total	YES	NO	Total
	M	M		F	F		M	M		F	F	
Damascus	123	68	191	166	30	196	0%			0%		
	64%	36%	100%	85%	15%	100%	115	26	141	106	34	140
Damascus Rural	94	24	118	119	21	140	82%	18%	100%	76%	24%	100%
Aleppo	208	113	321	231	99	330	112	57	169	135	35	170
	65%	35%	100%	70%	30%	100%	66%	34%	100%	79%	21%	100%
Homs	57	34	91	67	33	100	65	27	92	71	25	96
	63%	37%	100%	67%	33%	100%	71%	29%	100%	74%	26%	100%
Tartous	21	10	31	25	18	43	35	8	43	31	13	44
	68%	32%	100%	58%	42%	100%	81%	19%	100%	70%	30%	100%
Dier Elzour	33	16	49	33	22	55	37	12	49	28	14	42
	67%	33%	100%	60%	40%	100%	76%	24%	100%	67%	33%	100%
Swieda	13	6	19	18	3	21	8	9	17	16	4	20
	68%	32%	100%	86%	14%	100%	47%	53%	100%	80%	20%	100%
Province	AGE											
	18-25						26-35					
	YES	NO	Total	YES	NO	Total	YES	NO	Total	YES	NO	Total
	M	M		F	F		M	M		F	F	
Damascus	38	28	66	52	17	69	37	22	59	55	3	58
	58%	42%	100%	75%	25%	100%	63%	37%	100%	95%	5%	100%
Damascus Rural	35	11	46	46	12	58	59	15	74	71	24	95
	76%	24%	100%	79%	21%	100%	80%	20%	100%	75%	25%	100%
Aleppo	58	29	87	78	45	123	105	58	163	107	33	140
	67%	33%	100%	63%	37%	100%	64%	36%	100%	76%	24%	100%
Homs	19	5	24	37	10	47	26	20	46	35	21	56
	79%	21%	100%	79%	21%	100%	57%	43%	100%	63%	38%	100%
Tartous	11	3	14	13	6	19	14	5	19	16	12	28
	79%	21%	100%	68%	32%	100%	74%	26%	100%	57%	43%	100%
Dier Elzour	5	5	10	23	12	35	28	10	38	19	7	26
	50%	50%	100%	66%	34%	100%	74%	26%	100%	73%	27%	100%
Swieda	0	2	2	7	0	7	9	2	11	14	3	17
	0%	###	100%	100%	0%	100%	82%	18%	100%	82%	18%	100%
Province	AGE											
	36-45						46-55					
	YES	NO	Total	YES	NO	Total	YES	NO	Total	YES	NO	Total
	M	M		F	F		M	M		F	F	
Damascus	23	6	29	33	3	36	10	6	16	18	6	24
	79%	21%	100%	92%	8%	100%	63%	38%	100%	75%	25%	100%
Damascus Rural	58	8	66	51	9	60	26	8	34	30	7	37
	88%	12%	100%	85%	15%	100%	76%	24%	100%	81%	19%	100%
Aleppo	71	24	95	89	20	109	51	24	75	59	23	82
	75%	25%	100%	82%	18%	100%	68%	32%	100%	72%	28%	100%
Homs	39	10	49	36	16	52	18	10	28	17	8	25
	80%	20%	100%	69%	31%	100%	64%	36%	100%	68%	32%	100%
Tartous	23	4	27	19	9	28	3	4	7	5	3	8
	85%	15%	100%	68%	32%	100%	43%	57%	100%	63%	38%	100%
Dier Elzour	13	6	19	16	7	23	16	6	22	3	6	9
	68%	32%	100%	70%	30%	100%	73%	27%	100%	33%	67%	100%

Swieda	3	5	8	8	3	11	5	5	10	0	1	1
	38%	63%	100%	73%	27%	100%	50%	50%	100%	0%	###	100%

Province	AGE					
	>55					
	YES	NO	Total	YES	NO	Total
M	M	F		F		
Damascus	15	5	20	8	1	9
	75%	25%	100%	89%	11%	100%
Damascus Rural	31	6	37	27	3	30
	84%	16%	100%	90%	10%	100%
Aleppo	35	14	49	33	13	46
	71%	29%	100%	72%	28%	100%
Homs	20	3	23	13	3	16
	87%	13%	100%	81%	19%	100%
Tartous	5	2	7	3	1	4
	71%	29%	100%	75%	25%	100%
Dier Elzour	8	3	11	0	4	4
	73%	27%	100%	0%	###	100%
Swieda	4	1	5	3	0	3
	80%	20%	100%	100%	0%	100%

Province	EDUCATIONAL LEVEL											
	Illiterate						Primary					
	YES	NO	Total	YES	NO	Total	YES	NO	Total	YES	NO	Total
	M	M		F	F		M	M		F	F	
Damascus	3	1	4	2	2	4	26	26	52	45	10	55
	75%	25%	100%	50%	50%	100%	50%	50%	100%	82%	18%	100%
Damascus Rural	7	1	8	25	3	28	90	20	110	84	29	113
	88%	13%	100%	89%	11%	100%	82%	18%	100%	74%	26%	100%
Aleppo	16	11	27	30	6	36	90	67	157	112	40	152
	59%	41%	100%	83%	17%	100%	57%	43%	100%	74%	26%	100%
Homs	2	2	4	5	5	10	28	14	42	34	13	47
	50%	50%	100%	50%	50%	100%	67%	33%	100%	72%	28%	100%
Tartous	3	0	3	1	0	1	10	3	13	9	6	15
	100%	0%	100%	100%	0%	100%	77%	23%	100%	60%	40%	100%
Dier Elzour	1	0	1	2	0	2	7	4	11	9	5	14
	100%	0%	100%	100%	0%	100%	64%	36%	100%	64%	36%	100%
Swieda	0%			1	0	1	2	1	3	8	1	9
	0%			100%	0%	100%	67%	33%	100%	89%	11%	100%

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL																	
Secondary						University						Diploma					
YES	NO	Total	YES	NO	Total	YES	NO	Total	YES	NO	Total	YES	NO	Total	YES	NO	Total
M	M		F	F		M	M		F	F		M	M		F	F	
38	16	54	36	7	43	43	19	62	76	10	86	13	6	19	7	1	8
70%	30%	####	84%	16%	####	69%	31%	####	88%	12%	100%	68%	32%	####	88%	13%	####
54	15	69	64	9	73	47	12	59	49	13	62	11	2	13	3	1	4
78%	22%	####	88%	12%	####	80%	20%	####	79%	21%	100%	85%	15%	####	75%	25%	####
76	39	115	97	34	131	118	45	163	110	44	154	20	8	28	17	10	27
66%	34%	####	74%	26%	####	72%	28%	####	71%	29%	100%	71%	29%	####	63%	37%	####
35	20	55	45	23	68	48	22	70	48	16	64	9	3	12	6	1	7
64%	36%	####	66%	34%	####	69%	31%	####	75%	25%	100%	75%	25%	####	86%	14%	####
21	6	27	19	14	33	21	9	30	25	11	36	1	0	1	2	0	2
78%	22%	####	58%	42%	####	70%	30%	####	69%	31%	100%	100%	0%	####	100%	0%	####
24	12	36	20	17	37	35	11	46	30	13	43	3	1	4	0	1	1
67%	33%	####	54%	46%	####	76%	24%	####	70%	30%	100%	75%	25%	####	0%	100%	####
4	3	7	9	3	12	14	11	25	15	3	18	1	0	1	1	0	1
57%	43%	####	75%	25%	####	56%	44%	####	83%	17%	100%	100%	0%	####	100%	0%	####

Q21

A reading of the responses across provinces reveals that the highest levels of female support (85%) are found in Damascus and Damascus Rural. Support declines in Tartous and Dier Elzour to 58% and 90% respectively.

Examining male responses across provinces reveals that the highest level of support is in Damascus Rural (80%); support in other provinces is similar, ranging between 64% in Damascus and 63% in Homs.

Looking at age, women supporting the abolition of honor crimes are concentrated in the 18–25 and 36–45 age brackets, while support declines markedly among respondents aged 46 and older. This may be due to generational and cultural gaps.

Among men, supporters of stiffer penalties for honor crimes are concentrated in the 18–25 and 36–45 age brackets, while support declines among respondents aged 46 and older.

We find high support among women for stiffer penalties for honor crimes regardless of educational status, with 80% of illiterate women and 74% of women with higher degrees supporting stiffer penalties. This reveals the weak impact that education has on women's stances in this regard; most of them support stiffer penalties for honor crimes because they have a vested interest in the issue. This is also evidence of increasing awareness among women.

Among men, support for stiffer penalties increases in tandem with their educational attainment: 68% of illiterate men support stiffer penalties, compared to 74% with higher degrees. Here education is seen to have a positive impact on men's awareness and attitudes.

16. Mother's right to pass on her citizenship to her children

A majority of respondents supported a mother's right to give her citizenship to her children. A total

of 76% of men and 87% of women support this right while 23% of men and 12% of women oppose it.

We can read in these findings broad support in society for a mother's right to give her citizenship to her children. Syrian society is an open society that witnesses mixed marriages, and depriving a woman of the right to pass on her citizenship can create domestic and social problems for no legitimate or logical reason.

Province	Do you support women's right to pass on their citizenship to their children? (by region)					
	Yes	No	TOTAL	Yes	No	TOTAL
	M	M		F	F	
Damascus	149 78%	42 22%	191 100%	177 90%	19 10%	196 100%
Damascus Rural	215 82%	47 18%	262 100%	252 90%	27 10%	279 100%
Aleppo	382 78%	109 22%	491 100%	455 90%	53 10%	508 100%
Homs	133 72%	51 28%	184 100%	165 84%	31 16%	196 100%
Tartous	62 84%	12 16%	74 100%	81 90%	9 10%	90 100%
Dier Elzour	59 60%	39 40%	98 100%	66 69%	30 31%	96 100%
Swieda	25 69%	11 31%	36 100%	35 83%	7 17%	42 100%

Age	Do you support women's right to pass on their citizenship to their children? (by age)	
	Yes	No
18-25	490 22%	121 25%
26-35	682 30%	152 31%
36-45	552 24%	102 21%
46-55	306 14%	73 15%
>55	226 10%	39 8%
TOTAL	2256 100%	487 100%

NO ANSWER 21

Q22

Responses to the question in the various Syrian provinces were somewhat similar. Support among men dropped in Swieda and Dier Elzour to 59% and 69% respectively, while it dropped only in Dier Elzour among women.

This may be attributable to the particularity of both provinces: Swieda had a distinct religious character while Dier Elzour is characterized by the influence of social and tribal ties since it is a peripheral province.

Examining the responses of men and women, we find slightly higher support for citizenship rights among women, which is quite understandable since this is a matter with direct bearing on women and their children. As such, we can say that gender has some influence, though not great, on

attitudes to the right of citizenship.

The situation differs for age: responses among all age groups are similar as shown by the tables. The highest level of support was seen in the 55 and older age bracket (85%) while the highest level of opposition was in the 18–24 age bracket (20%), which may be attributable to this age group's lack of experience.

17. Most prominent issues that require changes to legislation

When respondents were asked to rate the issues that they believe must be changed in legislation, arbitrary divorce came in at the top of the list: 1,555 individuals in the sample (56%) said that arbitrary divorce should be abolished because of its injustice and its negative impact on the family, children and women first and foremost.

The second most important issue was the right of the child custodian to housing, with 1,128 individuals in the sample (41%) saying that they support the right of the custodian to the marital home. Although Law 18/2003 raised the age of custodianship, which is a positive step, it deprived the maternal custodian of the marital home in which to raise the child. The issue requires further legal changes to be resolved.

Regarding polygamy, Article 17 of the personal status law gives a husband the right to marry other women without the knowledge of his wife in the event of a legitimate excuse, without defining what such an excuse would be and linking it to the husband's ability to provide. Respondents ranked this issue number three: 994 respondents (36% of overall sample) said that they supported changes to the polygamy law. This number is deceptively low; it is primarily the aggregate of women's responses and so is indicative of fairly high support among women and expressive primarily of their point of view.

The issue of joint parental guardianship over the family came in at number four. A total of 828 respondents (30%) said they supported joint parental guardianship. Articles 170 and 172 of the personal status law give the father full guardianship over his children and, after him, his male relatives, to the exclusion of the mother. A male relative rather than the mother assumes guardianship even in cases in which he has a criminal record or has lost his moral competency. This would explain why some in the sample approve of changing the two articles to be fairer to mothers.

The fifth most cited issue was an adult woman's ability to conclude her own marriage, with 623 people in the sample (23%) supporting the cause. Articles 20, 21, and 23 of the personal status law make a woman's marriage conditional on the approval of her guardian. In normal cases, there is no problem with family consent, since it does no harm and is even sought after; the problem appears when a woman's family tries to force their will on her and marry her to a suitor they have chosen or when a woman chooses a partner who does not meet with her family's approval. In these two cases, women are deprived of one of their most personal, important rights: the right to choose a life partner. Since the point of the law is justice and fairness, it must side with the more vulnerable party to protect it from injustice.

The issue of a woman having guardianship of her children and/or their property while their father is still living was ranked at number six (21% support), followed by the abolition of the honor crimes law (18%), a woman's right to pass on her citizenship to her children (16%), equality in inheritance (12%), and equality in testimony (11%). Support for abolishing the paternity article came in last, with 10% of respondents in favor.

It must be noted that all respondents, both male and female, were asked to rank the issues in order of importance. However, the percentage of women supporting these changes is much higher. That

is, women are more concerned with these issues since they have a direct impact on their lives and their status in the family and society.

18. Amending laws related to women

Reading the table of data from all provinces reveals that the overwhelming majority of women (92% to 98%) support amending legislation related to women's status. These figures illustrate women's deep-seated desire to change laws related to their status.

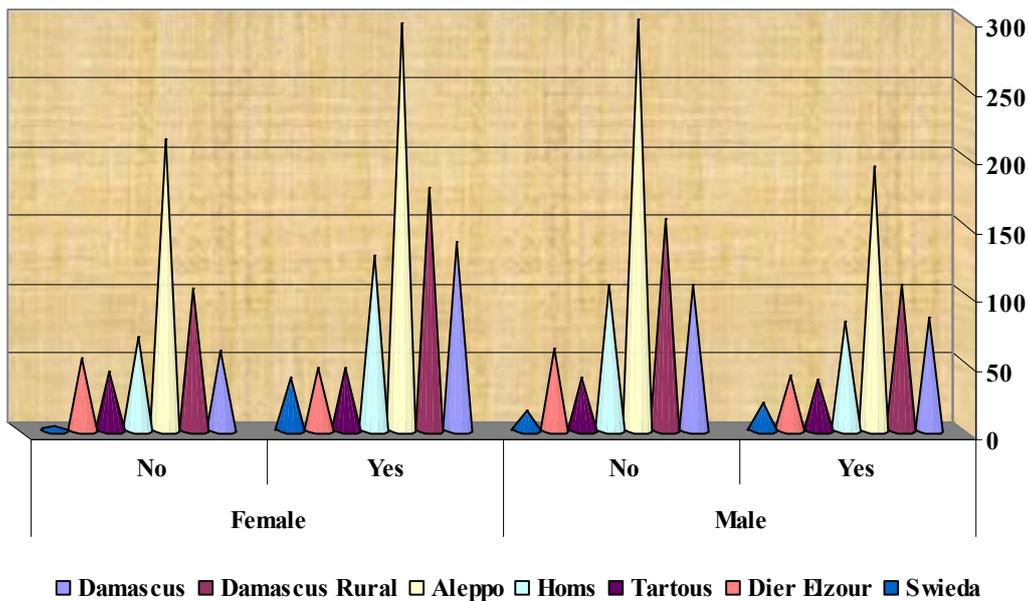
Examining the impact of education on women's opinions reveals that education is an insignificant factor in women's support. The vast majority (89% to 96%) support changes to legislation. This shows that women support changes as the party most invested in them.

Province	Do you support changes to legislation related to women's status? (by region)					
	Yes	No	TOTAL	Yes	No	TOTAL
	M	M		F	F	
Damascus	158	34	192	184	7	191
	82%	18%	100%	96%	4%	100%
Damascus Rural	208	45	253	266	10	276
	82%	18%	100%	96%	4%	100%
Aleppo	381	90	471	469	22	491
	81%	19%	100%	96%	4%	100%
Homs	155	22	177	186	9	195
	88%	12%	100%	95%	5%	100%
Tartous	63	12	75	88	0	88
	84%	16%	100%	100%	0%	100%
Dier Elzour	73	20	93	87	10	97
	78%	22%	100%	90%	10%	100%
Swieda	34	2	36	41	0	41
	94%	6%	100%	100%	0%	100%

Educational status	Do you support changes to legislation related to women's status? (by educational status)					
	Yes	No	TOTAL	Yes	No	TOTAL
	M	M		F	F	
Illiterate	35	11	46	75	5	80
	76%	24%	100%	94%	6%	100%
Primary	303	74	377	378	16	394
	80%	20%	100%	96%	4%	100%
Secondary	290	64	354	374	18	392
	82%	18%	100%	95%	5%	100%
University	375	68	443	445	18	463
	85%	15%	100%	96%	4%	100%
Diploma	69	8	77	49	1	50
	90%	10%	100%	98%	2%	100%

NO ANSWER	88
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Q24



Looking at male respondents in various provinces, we find that there is also heavy support for changes to legislation, ranging from 73% in Dier Elzour to 94% in Swida. Overall however, it was lower than women's support, as illustrated by the following figures:

- Damascus: 94% of women, 82% of men;
- Damascus Rural: 94% of women, 79% of men;
- Dier Elzour: 87% of women, 73% of men.

Analyzing the findings by educational status, we find that education has a clear impact among men. Male support for legislative changes increased in tandem with educational attainment. Education thus has a positive impact on changing men's views of legislation. Support among illiterate men stood at 74%, compared to 88% among men with higher education.

19. Significant legal problems affecting the family not mentioned by the survey

Since this was an open question, there were various answers. A total of 84 issues or problems were cited, all of them related to family issues. Some of them were related to issues raised by the survey, particularly divorce and child custody. The responses can be divided into four main categories, arranged here in descending order according to the percentage of respondents who cited them.

First set

A total of 22% of respondents (116) cited violence against women, men, or children (domestic violence). (It should be noted that many survey forms contained no response at all to the open question.)

This issue received the most attention due to the growing problem of domestic violence in Syrian society, particularly against women, as documented in field studies. The issue is linked to social traditions that allow a man to discipline his wife and consider physical punishment an acceptable form of discipline and childrearing.

Second set

A total of 3% to 4% of respondents cited the following problems and issues:

- Drafting a paternity law;
- Addressing unemployment and providing unemployment benefits;
- Punishing fathers who do not educate their children;

- Creating state-run legal institutions to train young people who are starting to build a family;
- Abolishing the legal statute that requires a wife to obtain her husband's permission to travel;
- Addressing early marriage among girls.

Third set

A total of 2% of respondents cited the following issues:

- Drafting a family social security law;
- Applying Islamic penal codes in cases of adultery;
- Calculating a woman's divorce settlement in current prices at the time of the divorce;
- Creating laws that protect minor children from the husband in cases of divorce;
- Guaranteeing the financial rights of divorced women whatever the cause of divorce;
- Considering the children's opinions in custody decisions;
- Calculating alimony in accordance with the current economic reality;
- Addressing the problem of girls/daughters not receiving their inheritance;
- Improving the conditions and locations for parental visitation rights over their children;
- Increasing the penalty for early marriage;
- Raising the child custody age to adulthood;
- Enforcing inheritance laws in the countryside.

Fourth set

A total of 1% or less of respondents cited the following problems or suggestions:

- Passing a civil marriage law;
- Separating religion from the personal status law;
- Imposing penalties on families who interfere with their children's lives;
- Improving health care and providing free treatment;
- Ensuring that a husband's family does not exercise undue control over the wife;
- Providing financial compensation for widows;
- Resolving the problems of marriage through the legal wedding contract and guaranteeing protection to women;
- Issuing a law to deprive women of inheritance;
- Stressing to mosque preachers that they should not discuss women and their relationships with their husbands;
- Providing psychological counseling to families in cases of divorce, to protect children from an insensitive father;
- Speeding up divorce cases in court, which currently may take years;
- Creating a family court to deal with family problems;
- Banning child labor;
- Allowing abortion;
- Allowing the adoption of illegitimate children.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The survey found that most respondents (80% of men and 91% of women) believe that arbitrary divorce has a negative impact on women and the family. This requires a reconsideration of Article 117 of the personal status law, which gives a husband the unilateral right of divorce, without his wife's consent and for personal reasons. The article allows the divorced woman to demand financial compensation if she falls into want after the divorce.

The law must be amended in view of the fact that arbitrary divorce is an injustice to women and has negative repercussions on the family and society.

The study illustrates that women have a better understanding of women's issues, particularly issues such as polygamy, the right of divorced women to compensation, the right of the maternal custodian to a home, and the abolition of the honor crimes law.

Findings on these issues showed clearly greater support among female respondents than male respondents.

The findings show that the most important issues to respondents are:

- Abolishing arbitrary divorce;
- Ensuring the maternal custodian's right to the marital home; and
- Amending the polygamy law.

Polygamy's harmful psychological and social effects are difficult to ignore, and several Arab and foreign countries have regulated polygamy to protect women and the family, particularly children. A total of 86% of women and 72% of men in the sample said that polygamy has a negative impact on the family and a majority of respondents support changing the current form of the polygamy law.

Domestic violence and violence against women was also the primary issue of concern to respondents when asked about the most significant legal problems that were not addressed by the survey. This indicates the increasing urgency of domestic violence in Syrian society and illustrates the importance of conducting further research to understand it and find ways to address it.

Although honor crimes are a serious phenomenon that receives public attention, only 60% of men and 63% of women support stiffer penalties in honor crimes; in the countryside, support drops to 40% of men and 37% of women. This indicates that custom and traditional culture in rural areas still have a strong impact on people's opinions of the issue.

There are still significant gaps between rural and urban areas, and social environment still has an impact on individual opinion. This necessitates greater interest in the development of rural areas and the provision of educational and health services to these areas, which will have a positive impact on local rural communities and their inhabitants.

The majority of men (61%) still oppose a woman's right to claim divorce without her husband's consent. This indicates that the prevailing patriarchal mentality still views issues of marriage and divorce as solely male rights. Here, it is not only laws that must be changed; the prevailing culture of negative values must be steered towards a culture based on a respect for rational values, equality, and a recognition of difference.

There are still clear gaps between men and women regarding the value of women's testimony: 42% of men support making women's testimony equal to men, compared to 61% of women. These are generally low levels of support when compared to other issues addressed by the survey. This is the product of cultural and religious factors that influence individuals' opinions, and, to a lesser degree, social environment.

The survey found that more than half of respondents opposed equal inheritance for men and women (54% opposed and 46% in favor). Support among men drops to merely 37%, compared to 58% among women. This is attributable to deep-seated traditional social values that are resistant to change. It also indicates the importance of taking action in the cultural field to disseminate a new social consciousness in which values of rationalism, justice, and freedom will triumph over widespread negative values.

Based on the findings of the survey, the research group has several recommendations:

- Continue action with all parties concerned with women's issues—on the level of public opinion, in the parliament, and among women themselves—with the objective of changing laws that are prejudicial to women.
- Conduct further field studies and social research to understand women's needs and how to empower them. Despite its importance, the legal field is only one aspect of the issue. It will be difficult to achieve the desired outcomes without addressing violence against women and changing stereotypes of women in the prevailing consciousness.
- Domestic violence was cited as the most significant problem facing women that was not addressed by the survey. It is usually women and children who are the victims of domestic violence, which illustrates the urgency of the problem. Action must be taken to limit the phenomenon and alleviate its consequences through the establishment of shelters for abused women, the provision of legal and psychological aid to women victims of violence, the creation of shelters for children, and the establishment of a hotline for women victims of violence.
- Focusing on curricula in schools and universities and including information and subjects that reinforce the values of justice and fairness, sideline discriminatory policies, and replace them with social roles based on gender, introducing a developmental perspective that considers the interest of the family, women, and the entire society.
- Coordinating with agencies, NGOs, and organizations, both civic and governmental, that are concerned with women's issues to foster an exchange of information and experience, to promote the most desirable outcomes, and to prevent a dispersal of efforts.

SURVEY FORM

The Mobadara Social Association invites you to participate in its campaign to promote a reconsideration of laws that undermine the competency and citizenship of Syrian women, in order to abolish all forms of discrimination against them in all fields.

In addition to the petition drive launched by the association under the slogan “Join us: an open invitation from the Mobadara Social Association,” the association today is turning to all Syrian citizens to survey their views about a reconsideration of legislation related to women, since their views are of the utmost importance and play a major role in change, for the benefit of fairer laws that treat women justly and help protect the family.

Please read the survey closely and answer the questions honestly and openly.

Put a mark in the space that represents your opinion.

Personal information

1. Place of residence: City
 Countryside

2. Sex: Male
 Female

3. Age: _____

4. Educational status: Illiterate
 Basic education
 Secondary school
 University

5. Marital status: Single
 Married
 Divorced
 Widowed

6. Employment status: Unemployed
 Public sector
 Private sector
 Agriculture

Questions

Articles 20, 21, and 23 of the personal status law make a woman’s marriage conditional on the consent and presence of her guardian.

7. Do you support an adult woman’s right to conclude her own marriage?
 Yes No

Article 117 of the personal status law gives the husband the right to unilateral divorce without his wife’s consent and for personal reasons. The article allows the divorced woman to claim

compensation if she falls into want after the divorce.

8. Does arbitrary divorce have a negative impact on women?
Yes Somewhat No
9. Do you support a divorced woman's right to compensation commensurate with what the couple produced during their years of marriage?
Yes No
10. Do you support the right of a divorced woman with no income to permanent compensation?
Yes No

In the section on divorce by agreement, Articles 95–104 of the personal status law allows a couple to divorce with both parties' approval. Pursuant to the law, the marriage contract is dissolved in exchange for a sum of money paid by the wife.

11. Do you support a woman's right to divorce without her husband's consent?
Yes No

Article 17 of the personal status law gives the husband the right to marry other women without the knowledge of his wife, as long as he has a legitimate reason but without specifying the nature of the reason and linking it to his capacity for financial support.

12. Does polygamy have a negative impact on the family?
Yes Somewhat No
13. Choose one of the following responses:
Maintain polygamy
Make polygamy conditional on the wife's consent
Abolish polygamy

Law 18/2003 raised the age of child custody, but it deprives the maternal custodian of the marital home in which to raise the child.

14. Do you support the custodian's right to the marital home?
Yes No

Article 170–172 gives the father and his male relatives full guardianship over his children, to the exclusion of the mother. The male guardian maintains his right even if he has a criminal record or has lost his moral competency.

15. Do you support joint spousal guardianship over the family?
Yes No
16. Do you support joint spousal supervision of the property of minor children?
Yes No
17. Do you support the automatic transfer of guardianship to the mother in the event of the father's death?
Yes No

Article 12 of the personal status law makes the testimony of a man equivalent to the testimony of

two women, although they are equal before the law in civil cases.

18. Do you support equal value for men's and women's testimony?

Yes No

Article 129 of the personal status law allows a husband to disavow paternity of his children up to six months of pregnancy in a legal marriage and after proof of spousal compatibility.

19. Do you support the use of scientific methods to prove paternity?

Yes No

20. Do you support equality in inheritance for men and women?

Yes No

Article 548 of the penal code makes a woman criminally responsible in honor crimes and liable to prosecution in a criminal court; in contrast, men can claim mitigating circumstances and are considered defenders of honor.

21. Do you support making an honor crime a criminal, punishable offense?

Yes No

The law denies Syrian women the right to pass on their citizenship to their spouses and children if they marry a foreign national.

22. Do you support the right of Syrian women to pass on their citizenship to their children?

Yes No

23. Rank the following issues in order of the urgency with which they must be changed:

- An adult woman's guardianship over herself in marriage
- Abolition of arbitrary marriage
- Amendment to the polygamy law
- The right of the maternal custodian to the marital home
- Joint spousal guardianship of the family
- Equality in testimony
- Abolition of the paternity code
- Equality in inheritance
- Abolition of the honor crimes law
- The right of women to pass on their citizenship to their children

24. Do you support calls to change legislation related to women?

Yes No

25. Cite a legal problem that affects the family that was not addressed by this survey.

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