



# **Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics**

**Survey on the Perception of Palestinian Population  
Towards the Socioeconomic Conditions, July 2004**

**The press conference of the survey results**

**August, 2004**

© August, 2004  
**All rights reserved.**

**Suggested Citation:**

**Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2004.** *Survey on the Perception of Palestinian Population Towards the Socioeconomic Conditions, July 2004*  
*Ramallah- Palestine*

All correspondence should be directed to:  
Dissemination and Documentation Department\Division of user services  
**Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.**  
**P.O. Box 1647, Ramallah - Palestine.**

Tel: (972/970) 2 240 6340  
E-mail: diwan@pcbs.pna.org

Fax: (972/970) 2 240 6343  
Web-site: <http://www.pcbs.org>



# **Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics**

## **Survey on the Perception of Palestinian Population Towards the Socioeconomic Conditions, July 2004**

### **Contents**

1. The press release
2. The tables

**Press Release**  
**On the Main Findings of the Survey on the Perception of Palestinian  
Population Towards the Socioeconomic Conditions, July 2004**

**“The overall well-being of 48.7% of Palestinian households became worse compared with June 2004, and closure was an obstacle faced 44.5% of the Palestinian households during past six months”**

PCBS conducted the 8<sup>th</sup> round of the survey on the perception of the Palestinian people about the socioeconomic conditions. Data collection took place during the period 1/7/2004-22/7/2004 on a sample composed of 3,097 households, (1,960 in the West Bank and 1,137 in Gaza Strip).

**Current Situation**

48.7% of interviewed persons reported that the overall well-being of their households is worse in July compared with a month ago (44.7% in the West Bank and 56.4% in Gaza Strip), while 11.4% reported that it is better (13.6% in the West Bank and 7.2% in Gaza Strip).

4.4% of households reported that the ability of households members to move around is significantly harder this week compared with a week ago (3.9% in the West Bank and 5.4% in Gaza Strip), while 4.7% reported that it is significantly easier (6.5% in the West Bank and 1.2% in Gaza Strip).

**Short-Term Expectations:**

About 10.6% of the respondents expected that overall well being of households will be much worse in a month time (8.5% in the West Bank and 14.4% in Gaza Strip), against 2.1% expected that it will be much better (2.5% in the West Bank and 1.5% in Gaza Strip).

20.9% of interviewed persons expected that the ability of households' members to move around will be harder next month compared with interviewing week (23.5% in the West Bank and 15.9% in Gaza Strip), while 24.9% expected that it will be easier.

15.2% of interviewed persons reported that they are very pessimistic to find a job next month, while 2.9% were very optimistic.

**Mid-Term Expectations:**

About 17.2% of the respondents expected that overall well-being of households will be much worse in six months time (15.0% in the West Bank and 21.3% in Gaza Strip), against 4.4% expected that life will be much better (4.1% in the West Bank and 5.1% in Gaza Strip).

9.3% of interviewed persons reported that the ability of household members to move around will be significantly harder in six months time compared with interviewing week (10.7% in the West Bank and 6.7% in Gaza Strip), while 5.7% reported that it is significantly easier.

**Priorities of households:**

Data reveal that 38.4% of the households reported the need for food as a first priority, 19.9% the need for work, 18.9% the need for financial assistance, and 9.0% reported the need for educational services, while 6.4% reported the need for health services as a first priority.

**Priority Needs of Communities:**

About 50.3% of households reported the need for job creation opportunities, and 20.1% reported the need for developing infrastructure services, and 7.6% for providing health services.

Table 1: Main Changes on the Indicators of Attitudes of Palestinians in the Palestinian Territory

Indicator	تموز 2004 *July		أيار 2004 *May (%)		نيسان 2004 *April (%)		آذار 2004 *March (%)		شباط 2004 *February (%)		كانون ثاني 2004 *January (%)		كانون أول 2003 *December (%)		
	خلال الستة شهور القادمة Next six Months	خلال الشهر القادم Next Month	خلال الستة شهور القادمة Next six Months	خلال الشهر القادم Next Month	خلال الستة شهور القادمة Next six Months	خلال الشهر القادم Next Month	خلال الستة شهور القادمة Next six Months	خلال الشهر القادم Next Month	خلال الستة شهور القادمة Next six Months	خلال الشهر القادم Next Month	خلال الستة شهور القادمة Next six Months	خلال الشهر القادم Next Month	خلال الستة شهور القادمة Next six Months	خلال الشهر القادم Next Month	
Percentage of households who expect better life	32.8	31.0	20.4	18.4	31.3	27.8	28.0	26.2	28.1	25.7	32.0	29.6	33.5	32.2	نسبة الأسر المتفائلة بتحسين الوضع العام للأسرة
Percentage of households who expect better mobility (less mobility restrictions)	26.9	24.9	13.1	11.1	21.3	16.7	20.7	18.3	20.0	18.1	22.9	21.8	26.1	25.3	نسبة الأسر المتفائلة بتحسين إمكانية الحركة والتنقل
Percentage of unemployed persons who are optimistic to find a job	41.1	35.5	35.3	33.0	32.5	23.6	38.8	33.2	13.8	13.0	46.0	48.0	41.9	35.8	نسبة المتعطلين المتفائلين بإيجاد فرصة عمل
Percentage of persons who are optimistic to meet household basic needs	58.7	55.9	51.5	49.3	56.6	55.0	60.9	58.7	57.2	54.4	56.4	54.7	62.2	60.1	نسبة المتفائلين بتلبية احتياجات الأسرة
Percentage of persons who are optimistic to meet the community basic needs	53.2	48.6	42.7	40.3	47.5	43.8	53.8	47.6	47.4	42.8	50.8	47.3	42.5	38.9	نسبة المتفائلين بتلبية احتياجات التجمع السكاني

\* Data Collection for December took place during 1/12-10/12/2003.

.2003/12/10-12/1

\*

\* Data Collection for January took place during 3/1-26/1/2004.

.2004/1/26-1/3

\*

\* Data Collection for February took place during 8/2-20/2/2004.

.2004/2/20-2/8

\*

\* Data Collection for March took place during 1/3-28/3/2004.

.2004/3/28-3/1

\*

\* Data Collection for April took place during 6/4-20/4/2004.

2004/4/20-4/6

\*

\* Data Collection for May took place during 6/5-20/5/2004.

2004/5/20-5/6

\*

\* Data Collection for July took place during 2/7-22/7/2004.

2004/7/22-7/2

\*

Table 2: Main Changes on the Indicators of Attitudes of Palestinians in the West Bank

Indicator	تموز 2004 *July		أيار 2004 *May (%)		نيسان 2004 *April (%)		آذار 2004 *March (%)		شباط 2004 *February (%)		كانون ثاني 2004 *January (%)		كانون أول 2003 *December (%)		
	خلال السنة شهور القادمة Next six Months	خلال الشهر القادم Next Month	خلال السنة شهور القادمة Next six Months	خلال الشهر القادم Next Month	خلال السنة شهور القادمة Next six Months	خلال الشهر القادم Next Month	خلال السنة شهور القادمة Next six Months	خلال الشهر القادم Next Month	خلال السنة شهور القادمة Next six Months	خلال الشهر القادم Next Month	خلال السنة شهور القادمة Next six Months	خلال الشهر القادم Next Month	خلال السنة شهور القادمة Next six Months	خلال الشهر القادم Next Month	
Percentage of households who expect better life	31.2	32.5	18.2	16.7	28.3	27.2	24.5	24.2	24.3	24.0	28.1	28.0	30.2	29.9	نسبة الأسر المتفائلة بتحسين الوضع العام للأسرة
Percentage of households who expect better mobility (less mobility restrictions)	30.4	31.7	13.5	13.1	22.9	21.6	23.0	24.2	20.6	21.8	25.7	25.2	27.2	28.4	نسبة الأسر المتفائلة بتحسين إمكانية الحركة والتنقل
Percentage of unemployed persons who are optimistic to find a job	37.5	32.4	29.9	28.0	32.4	25.8	34.6	32.8	12.1	11.8	43.9	41.9	32.8	30.8	نسبة المتعطلين المتفائلين بإيجاد فرصة عمل
Percentage of persons who are optimistic to meet household basic needs	54.5	54.0	48.5	45.0	52.0	51.6	60.3	60.4	53.1	52.4	55.8	56.4	60.1	60.5	نسبة المتفائلين بتلبية احتياجات الأسرة
Percentage of persons who are optimistic to meet the community basic needs	47.7	45.1	38.0	38.1	40.9	39.7	49.8	47.6	40.9	39.0	46.8	45.7	38.3	36.9	نسبة المتفائلين بتلبية احتياجات التجمع السكاني

\* Data Collection for December took place during 1/12-10/12/2003.

.2003/12/10-12/1

\*

\* Data Collection for January took place during 3/1-26/1/2004.

.2004/1/26-1/3

\*

\* Data Collection for February took place during 8/2-20/2/2004.

.2004/2/20-2/8

\*

\* Data Collection for March took place during 1/3-28/3/2004.

.2004/3/28-3/1

\*

\* Data Collection for April took place during 6/4-20/4/2004.

2004/4/20-4/6

\*

\* Data Collection for May took place during 6/5-20/5/2004.

2004/5/20-5/6

\*

\* Data Collection for July took place during 2/7-22/7/2004.

2004/7/22-7/2

\*

Table 3: Main Changes on the Indicators of Attitudes of Palestinians in Gaza Strip

Indicator	تموز 2004 *July		أيار 2004 *May (%)		نيسان 2004 *April (%)		آذار 2004 *March (%)		شباط 2004 *February (%)		كانون ثاني 2004 *January (%)		كانون أول 2003 *December (%)		
	خلال الستة شهور القادمة Next six Months	خلال الشهر القادم Next Month	خلال الستة شهور القادمة Next six Months	خلال الشهر القادم Next Month	خلال الستة شهور القادمة Next six Months	خلال الشهر القادم Next Month	خلال الستة شهور القادمة Next six Months	خلال الشهر القادم Next Month	خلال الستة شهور القادمة Next six Months	خلال الشهر القادم Next Month	خلال الستة شهور القادمة Next six Months	خلال الشهر القادم Next Month	خلال الستة شهور القادمة Next six Months	خلال الشهر القادم Next Month	
Percentage of households who expect better life	35.8	28.2	24.3	21.3	36.8	29.0	34.6	30.1	35.8	29.1	38.3	33.0	39.7	36.6	نسبة الأسر المتفائلة بتحسين الوضع العام للأسرة
Percentage of households who expect better mobility (less mobility restrictions)	20.5	12.3	12.6	7.3	18.4	7.4	16.1	7.3	18.6	10.7	17.5	15.4	24.1	19.4	نسبة الأسر المتفائلة بتحسين إمكانية الحركة والتنقل
Percentage of unemployed persons who are optimistic to find a job	46.2	39.9	44.2	41.4	33.0	17.9	47.1	33.9	17.3	15.0	50.4	60.6	58.5	45.0	نسبة المتعطلين المتفائلين بإيجاد فرصة عمل
Percentage of persons who are optimistic to meet household basic needs	66.4	59.3	57.0	50.7	65.4	61.2	61.7	55.4	65.5	58.2	57.4	51.7	66.3	59.4	نسبة المتفائلين بتلبية احتياجات الأسرة
Percentage of persons who are optimistic to meet the community basic needs	62.8	54.5	50.7	44.1	59.2	51.1	60.6	47.6	59.1	49.4	58.0	50.1	50.4	42.8	نسبة المتفائلين بتلبية احتياجات التجمع السكاني

\* Data Collection for December took place during 1/12-10/12/2003.

.2003/12/10-12/1

\*

\* Data Collection for January took place during 3/1-26/1/2004.

.2004/1/26-1/3

\*

\* Data Collection for February took place during 8/2-20/2/2004.

.2004/2/20-2/8

\*

\* Data Collection for March took place during 1/3-28/3/2004.

.2004/3/28-3/1

\*

\* Data Collection for April took place during 6/4-20/4/2004.

2004/4/20-4/6

\*

\* Data Collection for May took place during 6/5-20/5/2004.

2004/5/20-5/6

\*

\* Data Collection for July took place during 2/7-22/7/2004.

2004/7/22-7/2

\*



(2004 )

:4

**Table 4: The Attitude of Palestinians Toward the Overall “Quality of Life” Enjoyed by the Households Today Compared with One Month Ago by Region (July, 2004)**

Attitude	Gaza Strip	West Bank	Palestinian Territory	
	%	%	%	
A lot better today	1.3	1.9	1.7	/
Somewhat better today	5.9	11.7	9.7	
About the same/ Unchanged	35.9	39.3	38.2	
Somewhat worse today	35.6	29.1	31.3	
A lot worse today	20.8	15.6	17.4	
Don't know	0.5	2.4	1.7	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	

(2004 )

:5

**Table 5: The Attitude of Palestinians Toward the Overall “Quality of Life” Enjoyed by the Households in the Future Compared with Today and Region, (July, 2004)**

Attitude	Region and Time Period						
	Gaza Strip		West Bank		Palestinian Territory		
	Next Six Months %	Next Month %	Next Six Months %	Next Month %	Next Six Months %	Next Month %	
A lot better from now	5.1	1.5	4.1	2.5	4.4	2.1	/
Somewhat better from now	30.7	26.7	27.1	30.0	28.4	28.9	
About the same /unchanged	25.3	34.3	23.9	27.5	24.4	29.9	
Somewhat worse from now	14.2	20.5	19.7	24.4	17.8	23.0	
A lot worse from now	21.3	14.4	15.0	8.5	17.2	10.6	
Don't know	3.4	2.6	10.2	7.1	7.8	5.5	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	

(2004 )

:6

**Table 6: The Attitude of Palestinians Toward the Overall "Quality of Life" Enjoyed by the Households in the Future by Selected Characteristics (July, 2004)**

Characteristics	Time Period				السمات
	Next Six Months %		Next Month %		
	Worse %	Better %	Worse %	Better %	
<b>Age Group</b>					
15-24	34.9	32.4	32.8	30.9	24-15
25-44	34.8	34.4	33.9	31.8	44-25
45+	35.2	30.7	15.1	30.0	+45
<b>Refugee status</b>					
Registered refugee	33.9	31.9	33.9	27.8	
Non - Refugee	35.8	33.4	33.4	33.3	
<b>Education</b>					
Less than Preparatory	37.6	32.0	36.5	30.5	
Preparatory - secondary	34.4	33.8	33.3	31.6	-
Diploma and above	30.2	30.3	26.7	29.4	

(2004 )

:7

**Table 7: Distribution of Palestinian Households by the Level of Disturbance Caused by Restrictions on Mobility Imposed by Israeli Military Forces and Region, (July, 2004)**

Level of Disturbance	Region and Time Period						
	Gaza Strip		West Bank		Palestinian Territory		
	Past Six Months %	Past Month %	Past Six Months %	Past Month %	Past Six Months %	Past Month %	
A lot	38.3	38.1	47.8	36.3	44.5	36.9	
A little	17.3	15.6	22.1	27.5	20.4	23.3	
Not at all	43.3	45.3	26.5	33.0	32.3	37.3	
Don't know	1.1	1.0	3.6	3.2	2.8	2.5	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	

(2004 )

:8

**Table 8: Distribution of Palestinian Households by the Need of Medical Care for Households and Region, (July, 2004)**

Need for medical care	Region and Period						
	Gaza Strip		West Bank		Palestinian Territory		
	Past Six Months %	Past Month %	Past Six Months %	Past Month %	Past Six Months %	Past Month %	
Yes	75.8	72.1	61.1	54.2	66.2	60.4	
No	23.7	27.4	37.2	44.1	32.5	38.3	
Don't know	0.5	0.5	1.7	1.7	1.3	1.3	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	

(2004 )

:9

**Table 9: Distribution of Palestinian Households by Ability for Household Member to Access Necessary Medical Care and Region, (July, 2004)**

Ability to access medical care	Region and Time Period						
	Gaza Strip		West Bank		Palestinian Territory		
	Past Six Months %	Past Month %	Past Six Months %	Past Month %	Past Six Months %	Past Month %	
Impossible	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	
Very difficult	5.2	5.5	8.7	8.0	7.2	6.9	
Difficult	21.0	21.8	22.9	21.1	22.1	21.4	
Few problems	26.5	27.8	28.3	26.0	27.6	26.8	
No problem at all	46.8	44.5	39.5	44.2	42.4	44.4	
Don't know	0.2	-	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	

(2004 )

:10

**Table 10: Distribution of Palestinian Households by Ability of Household Member to Reach Work Place and Region (July, 2004)**

Ability to reach place of work	Region and Period					
	Gaza Strip		West Bank		Palestinian Territory	
	Past Six Months %	Past Month %	Past Six Months %	Past Month %	Past Six Months %	Past Month %
Impossible	3.1	3.7	1.1	0.8	1.8	1.7
Very difficult	10.5	8.6	11.7	8.3	11.3	8.4
Difficult	9.7	8.0	22.5	19.4	18.4	15.7
Few problems	10.7	11.8	21.6	23.6	18.1	19.9
No problem at all	65.1	67.2	40.5	45.3	48.4	52.3
Don't know	0.9	0.7	2.6	2.6	2.0	2.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

(2004 )

:11

**Table 11: Distribution of Palestinian Households by Ability to Cultivate Land and Region (July, 2004)**

Ability to cultivate land	Region and Time Period					
	Gaza Strip		West Bank		Palestinian Territory	
	Past Six Months %	Past Month %	Past Six Months %	Past Month %	Past Six Months %	Past Month %
Impossible	25.8	26.2	4.1	3.7	8.0	7.8
Very difficult	5.8	3.8	4.5	3.6	4.7	3.6
Difficult	11.8	11.7	10.2	10.3	10.4	10.5
Few problems	9.1	10.8	11.7	12.7	11.2	12.4
No problem at all	43.4	43.4	63.9	63.9	60.3	60.2
Don't know	4.1	4.1	5.6	5.8	5.4	5.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

:12

(2004 )

**Table 12: The Attitude of Palestinians Toward the Ability of Household Members to Move Around this Week Compared to the Last Week by Region (July, 2004)**

Ability for household members to move	Gaza Strip %	West Bank %	Palestinian Territory %
Significantly easier this week	1.2	6.5	4.7
Somewhat easier this week	6.5	17.9	13.9
About the same/ Unchanged	76.7	57.4	64.1
Somewhat harder this week	9.0	10.9	10.3
Significantly harder this week	5.4	3.9	4.4
Don't know	1.2	3.4	2.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

:13

(2004 )

**Table 13: The Attitude of Palestinians Toward the Ability of Household Members to Move Around Next Month, Next Six Months Compared to this Week and Region, (July, 2004)**

The ability of household members to move	Region and Time Period					
	Gaza Strip		West Bank		Palestinian Territory	
	Next Six Months %	Next Month %	Next Six Months %	Next Month %	Next Six Months %	Next Month %
Significantly easier	3.5	1.2	6.9	4.5	5.7	3.3
Somewhat easier	17.0	11.1	23.5	27.2	21.2	21.6
About the same	58.3	67.8	31.7	34.5	40.9	46.1
Somewhat harder	9.2	12.8	14.9	18.3	12.9	16.4
Significantly harder	6.7	3.1	10.7	5.2	9.3	4.5
Don't know	5.3	4.0	12.3	10.3	10.0	8.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

(2004 )

( )

:14

**Table 14: The Attitude of Palestinians Toward the Ability to Find a Job by Region, (July, 2004)**

The Ability to find a job	Region and Time Period						( )
	Gaza Strip		West Bank		Palestinian Territory		
	Next Six Months %	Next Month %	Next Six Months %	Next Month %	Next Six Months %	Next Month %	
Very optimistic/ very likely	2.4	0.7	8.2	4.4	5.9	2.9	( )
Somewhat optimistic/ likely	43.8	39.2	29.3	28.0	35.2	32.6	( )
Neither optimistic/ nor pessimistic	25.7	28.4	25.4	30.9	25.5	29.9	( )
Somewhat pessimistic/ unlikely	8.6	10.5	20.1	24.0	15.3	18.4	)
Very pessimistic/ very unlikely	17.5	20.0	14.6	11.9	15.8	15.2	)
Don't know	2.0	1.2	2.4	0.8	2.3	1.0	(
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	

(2004 )

:15

**Table 15: Distribution of Palestinian Households by the Most Important Need for Household and Region, (July, 2004)**

Most important need	Gaza Strip %		West Bank %		Palestinian Territory %		( )
	Second Need	First Need	Second Need	First Need	Second Need	First Need	
	Food	15.2	30.6	18.2	42.6	17.1	
Clothes	13.8	0.8	10.0	0.8	11.3	0.8	
Education	11.7	5.2	13.4	11.0	12.8	9.0	
Employment	16.0	30.2	17.6	14.3	17.0	19.9	
Financial assistance	28.8	20.1	21.9	18.3	24.3	18.9	
Health	10.1	3.6	12.8	7.9	11.9	6.4	
Housing	2.5	6.4	5.2	4.4	4.3	5.1	
Entertainment activities	1.7	1.9	0.9	0.6	1.2	1.0	
Other	0.2	1.2	-	0.1	0.1	0.5	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	

(تموز، 2004)

:16

**Table 16: Distribution of Palestinian Households by the Most Important Need of Locality and Region, (July, 2004)**

The Most Important Needs	Gaza Strip %	West Bank %	Palestinian Territory %
Create jobs	70.1	39.7	50.3
Health Services	3.1	9.9	7.6
Food assistances	4.6	8.0	6.8
Education Services	1.6	5.1	3.9
Infrastructure Project	13.3	23.7	20.1
No Need	6.6	10.2	8.9
Don't know	0.7	3.4	2.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

:17

(2004 )

**Table 17: Distribution of Palestinians by their Knowledge about Development Projects Conducted in the Community by Donors and Region, (July, 2004)**

Knowledge	Gaza Strip %	West Bank %	Palestinian Territory %
Yes	9.8	17.5	14.8
No	84.5	71.2	75.8
Don't know	5.7	11.3	9.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

(2004 )

:18

**Table 18: The Attitude of Palestinians Toward the Satisfaction on the Development Projects Conducted in the Community and Region, (July, 2004)**

Stratification level	Gaza Strip %	West Bank %	Palestinian Territory %
Very satisfied	45.9	37.1	39.1
Somewhat satisfied	37.0	39.8	39.2
Somewhat unsatisfied	6.5	13.8	12.2
Very unsatisfied	6.9	8.8	8.3
Don't know	3.7	0.5	1.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

(2004 )

**Table 19: Distribution of Palestinians by the Most Important Infrastructure Needs in the Community and Region, (July, 2004)**

The most important needs	Gaza Strip %	West Bank %	Palestinian Territory %
Electricity	11.7	6.5	8.3
Roads	16.6	17.9	17.4
Sewage disposal	20.3	14.8	16.7
Water supply	17.9	12.8	14.6
Schools	4.6	9.0	7.5
Health clinics / hospitals	7.1	12.5	10.6
No Need	21.3	22.7	22.2
Don't know	0.5	3.8	2.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>