

WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

Mission in Afghanistan Still Divides Views in the United States

Almost half of respondents mistakenly believe that more than 2,000 American soldiers have died in the military operation.

[NEW YORK – Dec. 6, 2010] – Americans remain divided on their country's military deployment in Afghanistan, and almost half erroneously assume that more than 2,000 U.S. soldiers have lost their lives in the conflict, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 1,000 American adults, 45 per cent of respondents express support for the military operation (-2 since October), while 45 per cent (-1) oppose it.

The Mission

The proportion of people in the United States who think that engaging the military in Afghanistan was a mistake stands at 38 per cent, six points higher than in April and June. Two-in-five Americans (40%, +3) believe that that the U.S. did the right thing in sending soldiers to Afghanistan.

More than half of respondents (54%, +3) claim that they do not know what war in Afghanistan is all about, whereas 46 per cent (-3) say they do.

When the War is Over

The level of undecided respondents in this question has risen to 39 per cent—and only 16 per cent of Americans (-3) expect the U.S. and allied forces to deliver a clear military victory over the Taliban. One-in-four (24%, -4) predict a negotiated settlement from a position of U.S. and allied strength that gives the

KEY FINDINGS

- **45% (-2) support the military operation involving American soldiers in Afghanistan; 44% (-1) are opposed**
- **37% think engaging in Afghanistan was a mistake; 37% say it was the right thing to do**
- **47% think that more than 2,000 American soldiers have died in Afghanistan—actual figure is 1,413**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From December 3 to December 5, 2010, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 1,000 randomly selected American adults who are Springboard USA panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 3.1%. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure samples representative of the entire adult population of the United States. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

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Taliban a small role in the Afghan government. Fewer respondents foresee either a negotiated settlement from a position of U.S. and allied weakness that gives the Taliban a significant role in the Afghan government (14%, +2) or a military defeat of U.S. and allied forces by the Taliban (7%, +1).

Obama's Plan

Three-in-five Americans (60%) express little confidence in the administration of President Barack Obama to "finish the job" in Afghanistan. Only three-in-ten Americans (30%) have confidence in Obama on this particular file.

The Media and the Government

One third of Americans (33%) believe the country's media has not provided enough information about the war in Afghanistan, while a similar proportion (32%) say it has presented the right amount of information. Only 17 per cent of respondents think the media has focused too much on Afghanistan.

Half of Americans (49%) believe the federal government has supplied too little information about the war in Afghanistan. Considerably fewer respondents think the administration has provided the right amount of information (26%) or too much (8%).

Casualties

At the time this survey was conducted, 1,413 American soldiers had died in Afghanistan. Respondents to this survey were asked to enter a numeric response to articulate how many soldiers they thought had perished in Afghanistan since 2001.

Only six per cent of Americans provided a response between 1,334 and 1,666 soldiers. More than a third of respondents (35%) believe that fewer than 1,000 soldiers have died in Afghanistan, while almost half (47%) estimated that more than 2,000 soldiers have died in the conflict.

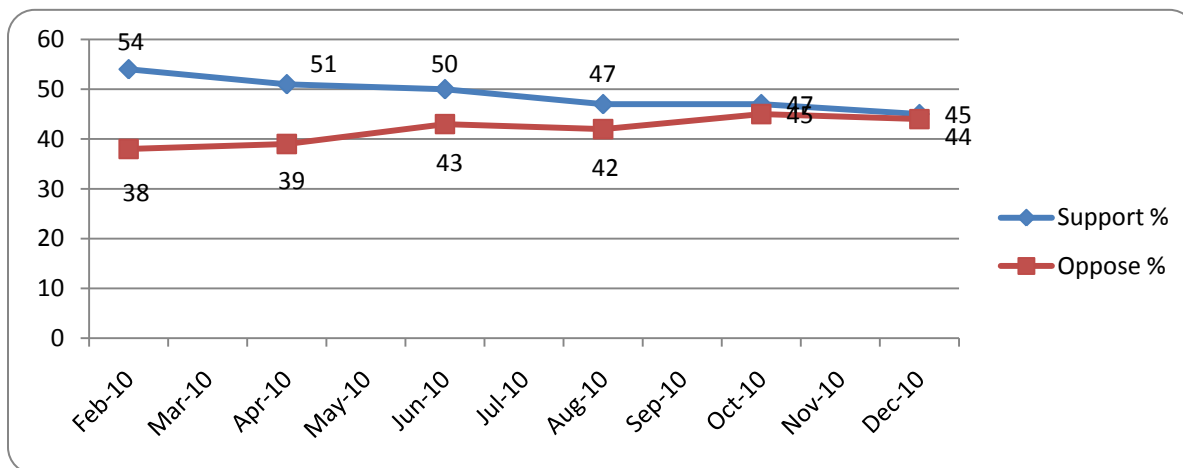
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War in Afghanistan

Overall, do you support or oppose the military operation involving American soldiers in Afghanistan? – Total U.S.



War in Afghanistan

Overall, do you support or oppose the military operation involving American soldiers in Afghanistan?

	Region				
	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
Strongly support	19%	16%	17%	22%	19%
Moderately support	26%	27%	24%	28%	24%
Moderately oppose	22%	19%	21%	20%	26%
Strongly oppose	22%	22%	29%	18%	22%
Not sure	11%	16%	9%	12%	9%

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War in Afghanistan

Do you think the United States made a mistake or did the right thing in sending military forces to Afghanistan?

	Region				
	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
Made a mistake	38%	33%	47%	34%	38%
Did the right thing	40%	42%	33%	45%	38%
Not sure	22%	25%	20%	21%	24%

War in Afghanistan - TREND

Do you think the United States made a mistake or did the right thing in sending military forces to Afghanistan?

	Dec. 2010	Oct. 2010	Aug. 2010	Jun. 2010	Apr. 2010
Made a mistake	38%	37%	37%	32%	32%
Did the right thing	40%	37%	39%	40%	40%
Not sure	22%	26%	24%	28%	28%

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War in Afghanistan

Do you feel that you have a clear idea of what the war in Afghanistan is all about?

Region					
	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
Yes	46%	43%	45%	49%	45%
No	54%	57%	55%	51%	55%

War in Afghanistan - TREND

Do you feel that you have a clear idea of what the war in Afghanistan is all about?

	Dec. 2010	Oct. 2010	Aug. 2010	Jun. 2010	Apr. 2010
Yes	46%	49%	48%	49%	52%
No	54%	51%	52%	51%	48%

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War in Afghanistan

Now, thinking about the war in Afghanistan, what do you think is the most likely outcome?

	Region				
	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
Clear military victory by U.S. and allied forces over the Taliban	16%	15%	18%	16%	15%
A negotiated settlement from a position of U.S. and allied strength that gives the Taliban a small role in the Afghan government	24%	28%	23%	24%	22%
A negotiated settlement from a position of U.S. and allied weakness that gives the Taliban a significant role in the Afghan government	14%	9%	15%	16%	13%
Military defeat of U.S. and allied forces by the Taliban	7%	7%	7%	7%	8%
Not sure	39%	42%	38%	37%	42%

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War in Afghanistan

How confident are you that the Obama Administration will be able “finish the job” in Afghanistan?

	Region				
	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
Very confident	7%	6%	9%	6%	6%
Moderately confident	23%	20%	23%	23%	25%
Not too confident	30%	37%	30%	27%	28%
Not confident at all	30%	23%	28%	35%	30%
Not sure	11%	14%	9%	9%	12%

War in Afghanistan - TREND

How confident are you that the Obama Administration will be able “finish the job” in Afghanistan?

	Dec. 2010	Oct. 2010	Aug. 2010	Jun. 2010	Apr. 2010
Very confident	7%	10%	6%	8%	8%
Moderately confident	23%	18%	19%	22%	25%
Not too confident	30%	29%	33%	33%	27%
Not confident at all	30%	30%	32%	27%	26%
Not sure	11%	10%	10%	10%	13%

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War in Afghanistan

Thinking about the media in the United States, do you think it has provided too much attention, too little attention, or the right amount of attention to Afghanistan?

Region					
	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
Too much	17%	15%	20%	16%	16%
The right amount	32%	32%	35%	34%	28%
Too little	33%	33%	29%	29%	42%
Not sure	18%	20%	16%	21%	14%

War in Afghanistan

Thinking about the federal government, do you think it has provided too much information, too little information, or the right amount of information about the war in Afghanistan?

Region					
	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
Too much	8%	7%	6%	9%	9%
The right amount	26%	24%	20%	33%	22%
Too little	49%	51%	57%	40%	55%
Not sure	17%	18%	17%	19%	14%

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American soldiers have active in Afghanistan since 2001. How many American soldiers do you think have died in Afghanistan? Please enter your response

	Region				
	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
Less than 1,000	35%	38%	36%	36%	28%
From 1,001 to 1,333	4%	6%	4%	3%	5%
From 1,334 to 1,666 ✓	6%	3%	6%	7%	5%
From 1,667 to 2,000	8%	7%	7%	9%	10%
More than 2,000.	47%	46%	47%	44%	53%

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Angus Reid Public Opinion is a practice of Vision Critical—a global research and technology company specializing in custom online panels, private communities, and innovative online methods. Vision Critical is a leader in the use of the Internet and rich media technology to collect high-quality, in-depth insights for a wide array of clients. Dr. Angus Reid and the Angus Reid Public Opinion team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995

Vision Critical is now one of the largest market research enterprises in the world. In addition to its five offices in Canada—located in Vancouver, Calgary, Regina, Toronto, and Montreal—the firm also has offices in San Francisco, Chicago, New York, London, Paris and Sydney. Its team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research, and currently serves over 200 international clients.

Angus Reid Public Opinion polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum (www.angusreidforum.com), Springboard America (www.springboardamerica.com) and Springboard UK (www.springboarduk.com) online panels, which are carefully recruited to ensure representation across all demographic and psychographic segments of these populations. Panel members pass through rigorous screening and a double opt-in process ensuring highly motivated and responsive members. These premier online survey platforms present respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses. Each survey is actively sampled and weighted to model that characteristics of the universe required and employs the latest in quality control techniques to ensure data validity.

Since 2006, Angus Reid has covered eight provincial elections in Canada—more than any other pollster in the country—and the results have accurately predicted the outcome of each of these democratic processes.

Angus Reid, the only public opinion firm to exclusively use online methods to follow the views of the electorate during the 2008 federal campaign, offered the most accurate prediction of the results of Canada's 40th election. More information on our electoral record can be found at:
<http://www.angus-reid.com/services/record-of-accuracy/>

More information on the way Angus Reid conducts public opinion research can be found at
<http://www.angus-reid.com/about/>

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**For more information, please contact
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

Copies of this poll are available on our website:
<http://www.angus-reid.com>

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