

WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

Support for Afghanistan Mission Gradually Increasing in Canada

Half of respondents believe the federal government has not provided enough information about the war.

[TORONTO – Feb. 22, 2010] – People in Canada are now more supportive of the country's military commitment in Afghanistan, but are critical of the way their federal government has dispersed information related to the conflict, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

The online survey of a representative national sample of 1,007 Canadian adults also reveals that a majority of respondents believe media outlets in Canada have provided the right amount of attention to Afghanistan.

The Mission

This month, 47 per cent of respondents (up five points since December) say they support the military operation involving Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan, while 49 per cent oppose it (down four points).

Since October, support for the military mission has increased by 10 points.

Western Canadians are particularly supportive of the mission (57% in British Columbia, Alberta, and Manitoba and Saskatchewan), while two-thirds of Quebecers (67%) oppose the operation.

KEY FINDINGS

- **47% (+5 since December) support the military operation involving Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan, 49% (-4) oppose it**
- **56% think the media has provided the right amount of attention to Afghanistan**
- **53% think the federal government has not provided enough information about Afghanistan**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From February 16 to February 17, 2010, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 1,007 randomly selected Canadian adults who are Angus Reid Forum 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 Canada. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

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Canadians remain divided on whether the country was right to send military forces to Afghanistan, with 37 per cent believing this was the correct decision, and 39 per cent stating that the operation was a mistake. Overall, 57 per cent of Canadians say they have a clear idea of what the war in Afghanistan is about.

When The War is Over

When asked about what they think will be the most likely outcome of the war in Afghanistan, nine per cent of Canadians expect a clear victory by U.S. and NATO forces over the Taliban, 27 per cent foresee a negotiated settlement from a position of U.S. and NATO strength that gives the Taliban a small role in the Afghan government.

In addition, 14 per cent of respondents believe the Taliban will play a significant role in Afghanistan after the war is over, and a further 10 per cent believe U.S. and NATO forces will ultimately be defeated by the Taliban.

Obama's Plan

Canadians remain skeptical about the plan for Afghanistan outlined by U.S. President Barack Obama. Just over a third of respondents (36%) are very or moderately confident that the Obama Administration will be able "finish the job" in Afghanistan, while a majority (53%) are not too confident or not confident at all. These numbers show little fluctuation since December.

The Media and the Government

Canadians appear satisfied with the way the country's media outlets have covered the ongoing conflict. A majority of respondents (56%) claim that the media has provided the right amount of attention to Afghanistan, while 20 per cent think it has been too little, and 13 per cent say it has been too much.

Only three-in-ten Canadians (29%) think the federal government has provided the right amount of information about the war in Afghanistan, while more than half (53%) think it has been too little.

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War in Afghanistan

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

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Strongly support	19%	21%	25%	24%	23%	7%	23%
Moderately support	28%	36%	32%	33%	26%	23%	33%
Moderately oppose	26%	22%	24%	21%	27%	30%	19%
Strongly oppose	23%	19%	16%	14%	18%	37%	22%
Not sure	4%	3%	3%	8%	6%	3%	3%

War in Afghanistan - TREND

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

	Feb. 2010	Dec. 2009	Oct. 2009
Strongly support	19%	17%	10%
Moderately support	28%	26%	27%
Moderately oppose	26%	23%	23%
Strongly oppose	23%	30%	33%
Not sure	4%	5%	6%

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War in Afghanistan

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

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Made a mistake	39%	36%	32%	25%	32%	56%	42%
Did the right thing	37%	42%	44%	51%	41%	22%	42%
Not sure	24%	22%	24%	24%	27%	22%	16%

War in Afghanistan - TREND

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

	Feb. 2010	Dec. 2009	Oct. 2009
Made a mistake	39%	40%	45%
Did the right thing	37%	40%	34%
Not sure	24%	20%	20%

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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	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Yes	57%	62%	60%	50%	60%	52%	60%
No	43%	38%	40%	50%	40%	48%	40%

War in Afghanistan - TREND

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

	Feb. 2010	Dec. 2009	Oct. 2009
Yes	57%	61%	59%
No	43%	39%	41%

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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	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Clear military victory by U.S. and NATO forces over the Taliban	9%	12%	4%	12%	10%	7%	3%
A negotiated settlement from a position of U.S. and NATO strength that gives the Taliban a small role in the Afghan government	27%	30%	37%	27%	29%	19%	31%
A negotiated settlement from a position of U.S. and NATO weakness that gives the Taliban a significant role in the Afghan government	14%	12%	9%	13%	16%	17%	11%
Military defeat of U.S. and NATO forces by the Taliban	10%	6%	9%	3%	6%	22%	4%
Not sure	40%	40%	41%	44%	40%	36%	51%

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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	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Very confident	4%	3%	1%	2%	3%	6%	1%
Moderately confident	32%	38%	23%	28%	27%	43%	28%
Not too confident	37%	38%	44%	35%	38%	33%	34%
Not confident at all	16%	14%	16%	30%	17%	11%	21%
Not sure	11%	8%	15%	4%	15%	8%	15%

War in Afghanistan

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

	Feb. 2010	Dec. 2009
Very confident	4%	6%
Moderately confident	32%	31%
Not too confident	37%	35%
Not confident at all	16%	21%
Not sure	11%	7%

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War in Afghanistan

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

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Too much	13%	9%	7%	15%	9%	20%	14%
The right amount	56%	54%	56%	44%	57%	57%	62%
Too little	20%	23%	23%	32%	20%	15%	11%
Not sure	12%	14%	14%	9%	14%	8%	13%

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	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Too much	4%	5%	4%	2%	3%	6%	2%
The right amount	29%	24%	42%	29%	31%	21%	40%
Too little	53%	59%	32%	58%	50%	65%	44%
Not sure	14%	12%	23%	10%	17%	8%	13%

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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.visioncritical.com/record-of-accuracy>

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

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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.visioncritical.com/category/global-opinions-and-trends>

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