

WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

Opposition to Afghanistan Mission Reaches Record High in Canada

Almost half of respondents believe the federal government made a mistake in committing troops to the conflict in the first place.

[VANCOUVER – Jun. 17, 2010] – The views of Canadians on the country’s military mission in Afghanistan are hardening, with three-in-five respondents voicing opposition to the mission and almost half regretting the decision to deploy troops in the first place, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

The online survey of a representative national sample of 1,007 Canadian adults also shows that more respondents are criticizing the federal government for not providing enough information about the conflict, and that fewer are expressing confidence in the way the U.S. government will ultimately deal with the war.

The Mission

This month, 37 per cent of respondents (down two points since April) say they support the military operation involving Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan, while 59 per cent oppose it (up three points).

This is the highest level of opposition to the conflict ever recorded since this particular question was first asked (in July 2009).

At the national level, “strong opposition” to the mission has increased from 23 per cent in February to 33 per cent this month, while “strong support” has dropped from 19 per cent four months ago to 13 per cent

KEY FINDINGS

- **37% (-2 since April) support the military operation involving Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan, 59% (+3) oppose it**
- **48% (+6) think Canada made a mistake in sending troops to Afghanistan**
- **57% (+4) think the federal government has not provided enough information about Afghanistan**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From June 11 to June 12, 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%, 19 times out of 20. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure a sample representative of the entire adult population of Canada. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

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today. Alberta (56%) is the only area of the country where at least half of respondents support the mission, while opposition is highest in Quebec (72%).

Almost half of Canadians (48%, +6) believe Canada made a mistake in sending military forces to Afghanistan, while 34 per cent (-2) think this was the correct decision. Overall, 56 per cent of respondents say they have a clear idea of what the war in Afghanistan is about, a proportion that has remained stable throughout the year.

When The War is Over

When asked about what they think will be the most likely outcome of the war in Afghanistan, six per cent of Canadians (-2) expect a clear victory by U.S. and NATO forces over the Taliban, 30 per cent (-1) 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, 13 per cent of respondents (-2) believe the Taliban will play a significant role in Afghanistan after the war is over, and 16 per cent (+3) believe U.S. and NATO forces will ultimately be defeated by the Taliban.

Obama's Plan

Canadians have grown more doubtful about the plan for Afghanistan outlined by U.S. President Barack Obama. This month, only three-in-ten respondents (31%, - 5 since February) are "very confident" or "moderately confident" that the Obama Administration will be able to "finish the job" in Afghanistan. Conversely, three-in-five Canadians (61%, +7) are "not too confident" or "not confident at all."

The Media and the Government

Canadians hold differing views on the way their media and their government have dealt with the conflict. Half of respondents (51%, =) think the country's media outlets have provided the right amount of attention to Afghanistan, while 25 per cent (+3) say it has been too little, and 12 per cent (-3) think it has been too much.

A majority of respondents (57%, +4) think the federal government has provided too little information about the war in Afghanistan, 29 per cent (+2) think it has been about right, and just two per cent (-4) claim it has been too much.

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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	13%	13%	31%	11%	15%	5%	14%
Moderately support	24%	25%	25%	22%	26%	18%	27%
Moderately oppose	26%	23%	32%	35%	27%	22%	20%
Strongly oppose	33%	36%	10%	28%	27%	50%	36%
Not sure	4%	3%	2%	4%	4%	5%	3%

War in Afghanistan - TREND

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

	Jun. 2010	Apr. 2010	Feb. 2010
Strongly support	13%	14%	19%
Moderately support	24%	25%	28%
Moderately oppose	26%	26%	26%
Strongly oppose	33%	30%	23%
Not sure	4%	6%	4%

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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	48%	41%	40%	49%	43%	61%	52%
Did the right thing	34%	39%	48%	33%	40%	21%	27%
Not sure	17%	20%	12%	18%	17%	18%	21%

War in Afghanistan - TREND

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

	Jun. 2010	Apr. 2010	Feb. 2010
Made a mistake	48%	42%	39%
Did the right thing	34%	36%	37%
Not sure	17%	21%	24%

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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	56%	68%	68%	53%	53%	50%	56%
No	44%	32%	32%	47%	47%	50%	44%

War in Afghanistan - TREND

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

	Jun. 2010	Apr. 2010	Feb. 2010
Yes	56%	57%	57%
No	44%	43%	43%

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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	6%	4%	7%	12%	8%	3%	3%
A negotiated settlement from a position of U.S. and NATO strength that gives the Taliban a small role in the Afghan government	30%	35%	38%	27%	29%	28%	36%
A negotiated settlement from a position of U.S. and NATO weakness that gives the Taliban a significant role in the Afghan government	13%	17%	18%	8%	13%	10%	12%
Military defeat of U.S. and NATO forces by the Taliban	16%	10%	11%	10%	11%	32%	9%
Not sure	35%	35%	27%	43%	39%	27%	40%

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War in Afghanistan

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

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Very confident	4%	1%	1%	0%	5%	8%	1%
Moderately confident	27%	24%	19%	41%	25%	32%	16%
Not too confident	38%	48%	46%	39%	34%	35%	40%
Not confident at all	23%	22%	28%	14%	28%	16%	29%
Not sure	9%	6%	6%	6%	10%	9%	14%

War in Afghanistan - TREND

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

	Jun. 2010	Apr. 2010	Feb. 2010
Very confident	4%	7%	4%
Moderately confident	27%	29%	32%
Not too confident	38%	35%	37%
Not confident at all	23%	19%	16%
Not sure	9%	10%	11%

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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	12%	6%	12%	19%	10%	15%	11%
The right amount	51%	56%	53%	53%	48%	57%	40%
Too little	25%	25%	28%	15%	29%	18%	32%
Not sure	12%	14%	7%	12%	13%	10%	17%

War in Afghanistan - TREND

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?

	Jun. 2010	Apr. 2010	Feb. 2010
Too much	12%	15%	13%
The right amount	51%	51%	56%
Too little	25%	22%	20%
Not sure	12%	12%	12%

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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	2%	1%	1%	10%	2%	3%	2%
The right amount	29%	29%	40%	35%	30%	24%	19%
Too little	57%	60%	49%	41%	57%	64%	60%
Not sure	12%	10%	10%	14%	12%	9%	19%

War in Afghanistan - TREND

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?

	Jun. 2010	Apr. 2010	Feb. 2010
Too much	2%	6%	4%
The right amount	29%	27%	29%
Too little	57%	53%	53%
Not sure	12%	13%	14%

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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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