

AFGHANISTAN

Only a Third of Britons Support Military Mission in Afghanistan

Three-in-five respondents express little or no confidence in U.S. President Barack Obama to “finish the job” in Afghanistan.

[LONDON – 17 August 2010] – Fewer adults in Britain support the country's military mission in Afghanistan, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

The online survey of a representative national sample of 2,003 British adults also shows that a large majority of respondents hold negative views on whether United States President Barack Obama can effectively bring the war to a successful conclusion.

The Mission

This month, 33 per cent of respondents (down five points since June) support the military operation involving UK soldiers in Afghanistan, while 57 per cent are opposed (up two points).

A majority of Britons (54%, -2) believe the country made a mistake in sending military forces to Afghanistan. Less than half of respondents (46%, -4) claim to 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 conflict in Afghanistan, only seven per cent of Britons predict a clear victory by U.S. and allied forces over the Taliban, and 31 per

KEY FINDINGS

- **33% (-5 since June) support the military operation involving UK soldiers in Afghanistan, 57% (+2) oppose it**
- **63% have little or no confidence in Barack Obama to “finish the job” in Afghanistan**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From August 4 to August 6, 2010, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 2,009 randomly selected British adults who are Springboard UK panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/-2.2%. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region data to ensure samples representative of the entire adult population of Great Britain. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

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cent foresee a negotiated settlement from a position of U.S. and allied strength that gives the Taliban a small role in the Afghan government.

In addition, 19 per cent of respondents expect a negotiated settlement from a position of U.S. and allied weakness that gives the Taliban a significant role in the Afghan government, and 10 per cent believe the Taliban will defeat the U.S. and allied forces.

Obama's Plan

Only a quarter of Britons (27%, -5) are very or moderately confident that the Obama Administration will be able to "finish the job" in Afghanistan, while a clear majority (63%, +7) are not too confident or not confident at all.

The Media and the Government

More than half of respondents (52%, +2) claim that the media in the UK has provided the right amount of attention to Afghanistan, while 19 per cent believe it has been too little, and 17 per cent think it has been too much.

Only three-in-ten Britons (29%, =) think that the UK Government has provided the right amount of information about the war in Afghanistan, while more than half (52%, +3) say it has been too little.

Analysis

Britons are starting to become more wary of the American President and his plan to end the conflict in Afghanistan. While there was no significant change on the questions related to the UK Government and the media, fewer people are expressing confidence in Barack Obama's ability to "finish the job" in Afghanistan. In fact, the proportion of respondents who are "not confident at all" on the way the president will act increased by five points since June.

The negative views on Obama are accompanied by a noticeable shift on the question about the outcome of the war. Since June, the proportion of Britons who predict a clear military victory by the U.S. and allied forces has dropped by four points and is now in single digits.

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War in Afghanistan - TREND

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

	Aug. 2010	Jun. 2010	Apr. 2010
Strongly support	10%	11%	10%
Moderately support	24%	27%	22%
Moderately oppose	28%	24%	24%
Strongly oppose	29%	31%	35%
Not sure	10%	7%	9%

War in Afghanistan - TREND

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

	Aug. 2010	Jun. 2010	Apr. 2010
Made a mistake	54%	56%	60%
Did the right thing	23%	26%	24%
Not sure	22%	18%	16%

War in Afghanistan - TREND

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

	Aug. 2010	Jun. 2010	Apr. 2010
Yes	46%	50%	50%
No	54%	50%	50%

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War in Afghanistan - TREND

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

	Aug. 2010	Jun. 2010	Apr. 2010
Clear military victory by U.S. and allied forces over the Taliban	7%	11%	12%
A negotiated settlement from a position of U.S. and allied strength that gives the Taliban a small role in the Afghan government	31%	34%	32%
A negotiated settlement from a position of U.S. and allied weakness that gives the Taliban a significant role in the Afghan government	19%	15%	16%
Military defeat of U.S. and NATO forces by the Taliban	10%	10%	9%
Not sure	33%	31%	32%

War in Afghanistan - TREND

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

	Aug. 2010	Jun. 2010	Apr. 2010
Very confident	4%	5%	5%
Moderately confident	23%	27%	24%
Not too confident	37%	35%	36%
Not confident at all	26%	21%	21%
Not sure	10%	12%	14%

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War in Afghanistan

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

	Aug. 2010	Jun. 2010	Apr. 2010
Too much	6%	6%	7%
The right amount	29%	29%	28%
Too little	52%	49%	50%
Not sure	13%	15%	15%

War in Afghanistan

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

	Aug. 2010	Jun. 2010	Apr. 2010
Too much	17%	16%	17%
The right amount	52%	50%	52%
Too little	19%	20%	15%
Not sure	13%	14%	15%

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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 recruited via an industry-leading process that incorporates a high-quality, multi-streamed approach and an in-depth screening procedure.

The panels are highly engaged communities with industry leading response rates and are researched with state-of-the-art sampling techniques, combined with deep profiling on demographic, behavioural and attitudinal characteristics. 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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