



POLL

Global Poll Shows Public Support for Taliban Negotiations

June 22, 2011

Negotiating with the Taliban is the public's preferred strategy for NATO to adopt in Afghanistan, rather than trying to defeat the Taliban or withdrawing troops immediately, according to the results of a BBC World Service 24-nation poll released today.

The results of the GlobeScan/PIPA poll of more than 24,000 people indicate that more would prefer to see NATO negotiate with the Taliban on a peace agreement that would include them in the government (40%) than favour either a continued effort to defeat the Taliban militarily (16%) or an immediate military withdrawal (29%). The most common view in 18 countries is that NATO should negotiate, in 3 that NATO should withdraw and in just one that NATO should seek a military victory. In two other countries opinion is divided.

The poll was conducted between December 2, 2010 and February 4, 2011, which was before the killing of Osama Bin Laden by US forces.

The poll suggests that support for continued military action is low among the countries contributing to the current NATO war effort in Afghanistan. Across the ten countries surveyed who have contributed troops to the operation, only 23 per cent of those asked think the alliance should persist with its military strategy, while 30 per cent favour an immediate pullout and 37 per cent would rather see a negotiated settlement. NATO member Germany and Afghanistan's neighbour Pakistan emerge as the countries most likely to want an immediate withdrawal of forces—nearly half (47%) of those polled favour this option in both countries.

The results suggest that even Americans are ambivalent about a continuation of the Afghan conflict—while a higher proportion in the USA than in other countries (42%) support a continued effort to defeat the Taliban militarily, a majority of Americans favour either an immediate troop withdrawal (23%) or a negotiated peace settlement with the Taliban (29%).

Those surveyed in countries with an Islamic majority are heavily opposed to a continuation of the military effort against the Taliban, with nine per cent of respondents in those countries supporting it. But less than half favour immediate withdrawal of forces (39%), while nearly as many would prefer to see a negotiated settlement involving talks with the Taliban (32%).

Results are based on 24,284 in-home or telephone interviews conducted across a total of 24 countries by the international polling firm GlobeScan, together with the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) at the University of Maryland. The findings about attitudes towards the Afghan conflict are the latest results to be released from the BBC World Service/GlobeScan/PIPA 2011 global poll - a wide-ranging study fielded between December and February that also looked this year at perceptions of China, and ratings of different countries' influence in the world. Other findings from the poll can be seen [here](#).

Steven Kull, director of PIPA comments, "Neither simply withdrawing nor fighting to the end hold much appeal to people around the world. The centre of gravity of world opinion seems to be to negotiate an end to the conflict, even if it means the Taliban will be part of the government."

Doug Miller, Chairman of GlobeScan, said: "Most people across the world, including in America, do not support the current NATO emphasis on defeating the Taliban militarily."



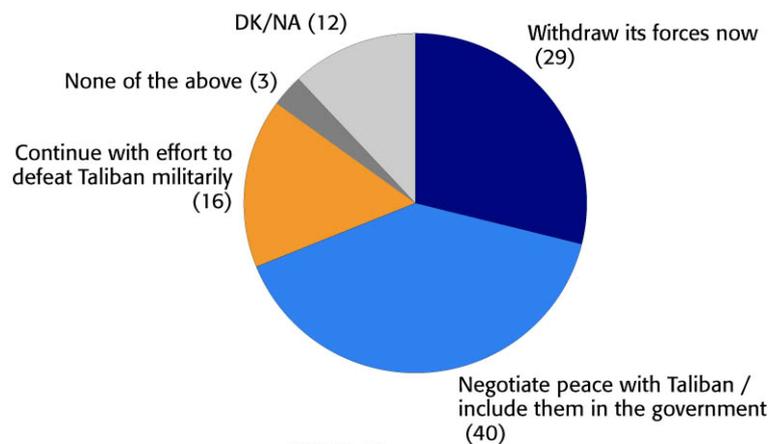
Participating Countries



In Brazil, China, Egypt, Indonesia, Mexico, the Philippines, Portugal, and Turkey urban samples were used.

Preferred Strategy for NATO to Follow in Afghanistan

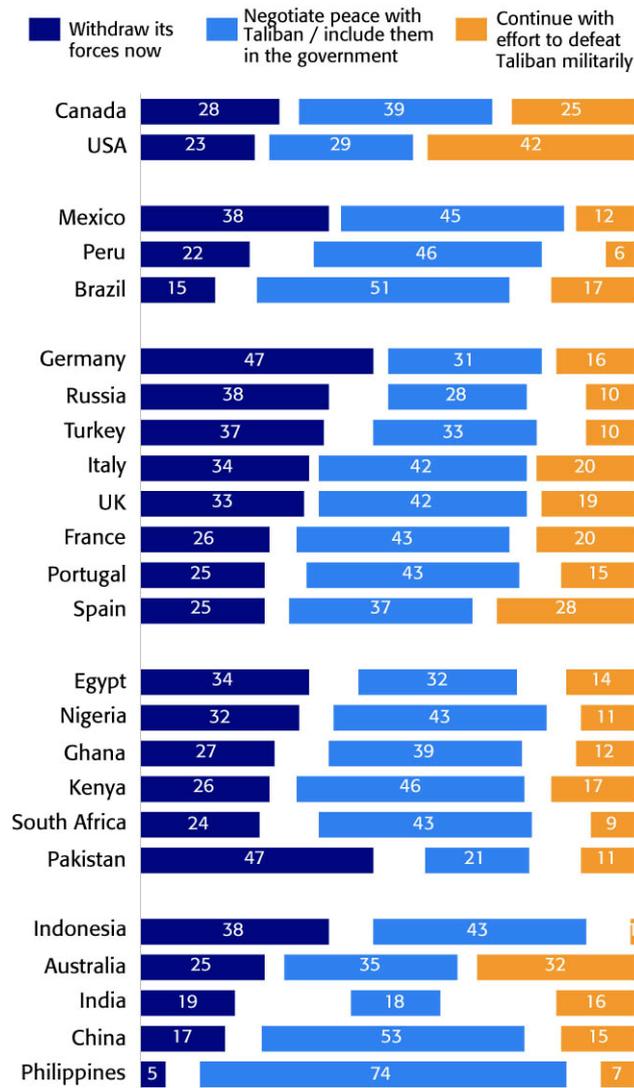
Average of 24 Countries, 2011



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Preferred Strategy for NATO to Follow in Afghanistan

By Country, 2011



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In total 24,284 citizens in 24 countries, were interviewed face-to-face, or by telephone December 2, 2010 and February 4, 2011. Polling was conducted for BBC World Service by the international polling firm GlobeScan and its research partners in each country, together with the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) at the University of Maryland. In eight of the 24 countries, the sample was limited to major urban areas. The margin of error per country ranges from +/- 2.0 to 4.9 per cent, 19 times out of 20.

For more details, please visit www.GlobeScan.com or www.WorldPublicOpinion.org as well as the GlobeScan Insights blog at <http://globescaninsights.blogspot.com>.

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The Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) of the Center for International and Security Studies at the University of Maryland, undertakes research on attitudes in publics around the world on a variety of international issues and manages the international research project WorldPublicOpinion.org.

BBC World Service is an international multimedia broadcaster, delivering a wide range of language and regional services on radio, TV, online and via wireless handheld devices. It uses multiple platforms to reach its weekly audience of 180 million globally (2010), including shortwave, AM, FM, digital satellite and cable channels. Its news sites include audio and video content and offer opportunities to join the global debate. BBC World Service offers its multilingual radio content to partner FM stations around the world and has numerous partnerships supplying content to news websites, mobile phones and other wireless handheld devices as well as TV channels. For more information, visit bbcworldservice.com.

Detailed Findings: Region-By-Region

North America

American and Canadian respondents' views on the strategy that NATO should adopt in Afghanistan are contrasting. While a plurality of Americans surveyed favours the option of continuing the fighting to defeat the Taliban militarily—42%, the highest percentage in the survey and well above the 16% global average, only one Canadian in four polled agrees with this strategy. Canadians prefer the solution of a negotiated peace that could include the Taliban in the Afghan government. This is favoured by 39 per cent of them—in line with the global average (40%)—while only 29 per cent of Americans lean this way. Almost one in three Canadians surveyed (28%) favours an immediate withdrawal of NATO's troops, somewhat more than the proportion in the US (23%).

Latin America

Respondents from all Latin American countries surveyed strongly think the best strategy for NATO to adopt in Afghanistan is to negotiate with the Taliban. A majority of Brazilians polled think this (51%), and strong pluralities in Peru (46%) and Mexico (45%) also favour this option. The strategy of an immediate withdrawal is also more popular in Mexico than in most countries surveyed (38%, above the global average). Latin Americans in general are not keen for NATO to pursue its military operation to defeat the Taliban. This strategy is supported by only 6 per cent of Peruvians polled (second lowest percentage in the survey) and 12 per cent in Mexico. Seventeen per cent of Brazilians in the survey agree with this option, in line with the global average (16%).

Europe

In Europe, the strategy of continuing the military effort is supported by relatively small proportions of respondents, except in Spain. This is even more striking as all European countries surveyed except Russia are part of NATO. Germans, Russians, and Turks favour the option of an immediate withdrawal of NATO's troops. This is particularly acute in Germany, where close to a majority of those polled agrees military withdrawal is the best option for NATO (47%, tied with Pakistan for the highest percentage in the survey). The rest of the European countries surveyed would prefer a strategy involving negotiations with the Taliban that could include them in an Afghan government. More than 40 per cent of respondents lean this way in France, Portugal, Italy, and the UK, but only 37 per cent do so in Spain, where a higher proportion of those polled still supports the military effort as a strategy to follow (28%, compared to 16% globally—the third highest percentage in the survey).

Africa

Most of the African countries surveyed prefer the solution of negotiations with the Taliban as the best strategy for NATO to follow in Afghanistan. The proportions of respondents leaning this way vary from 39 per cent in Ghana to 43 per cent in South Africa and Nigeria, to 46 per cent in Kenya. Egyptians are divided between the options of immediately withdrawing (34%, higher than the global average of 29%) and negotiating with the Taliban (32%, below the global average). Very few Africans support the strategy of continuing the military efforts to defeat the Taliban, with proportions below or in line with the 16% global average in each country.

Asia

In Asia, views regarding the best option to follow for NATO in Afghanistan are contrasting. Pakistani respondents, in closest proximity to the Afghan conflict, favour immediate withdrawal of NATO's troops, in the same proportion as do the Germans (47%). Indonesian respondents also support the option of a withdrawal in quite large numbers (38%, above the 29% global average) but are somewhat more in favour of starting negotiations with the Taliban (43%). So are the Filipinos and the Chinese, who have the strongest proportions leaning this way (74% and 53%, respectively). Australia is the only country to be divided between negotiating a peace agreement with the Taliban that could include them in a government (35%) and continuing the military effort to defeat the Taliban (32%). This makes Australia the closest country in attitudinal terms to the Americans. Indian respondents do not have any clear preference on the topic. They are the only respondents to be evenly split between the three options and with very high proportions without any opinion (47%).

Questionnaire

Thinking now about the situation in Afghanistan where US-led NATO forces are fighting the Taliban...

M8. Do you think that NATO should...?

01 - Withdraw its forces now

02 - Negotiate with the Taliban on a peace agreement that would also include them in the government

03 - Continue with the effort to defeat the Taliban militarily

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04 - None of the above

99 - DK/NA

Methodology

In total 24,284 citizens in Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Egypt, France, Germany, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Italy, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, the Philippines, Portugal, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the USA were interviewed face-to-face or by telephone between December 2, 2010 and February 4, 2011. Polling was conducted for BBC World Service by GlobeScan and its research partners in each country.

In Brazil, China, Egypt, Indonesia, Mexico, the Philippines, Portugal, and Turkey urban samples were used. The margin of error per country ranges from +/- 2.0 to 4.9 per cent, 19 times out of 20.

Country	Sample Size (unweighted)	Field dates	Sample frame	Survey methodology	Type of sample
Australia	800	December 4, 2010 – January 14, 2011	18+	Telephone	National
Brazil	401	December 2, 2010 – January 5, 2011	18–69	Face-to-face	Urban ¹
Canada	902	December 20, 2010 – January 18, 2011	18+	Telephone	National
China	1000	December 18–31, 2010	18+	Telephone	Urban ²
Egypt	1011	December 5–12, 2010	18+	Face-to-face	Urban ³
France	807	December 13–17, 2010	15+	Telephone	National
Germany	1017	December 12, 2010 – January 3, 2011	16–70	Telephone	National
Ghana	1000	December 14–29, 2010	18+	Face-to-face	National
India	1168	December 22, 2010 – January 8, 2011	18+	Face-to-face	National
Indonesia	1000	December 6, 2010 – January 11, 2011	18+	Face-to-face	Urban ⁴
Italy	1004	January 17–28, 2011	18+	Telephone	National
Kenya	1000	January 3 – February 4, 2011	18+	Face-to-face	National
Mexico	1000	December 15, 2010 – January 14, 2011	18+	Telephone	Urban ⁵
Nigeria	1000	December 16–24, 2010	18+	Face-to-face	National
Pakistan	2452	December 12–26, 2010	18+	Face-to-face	National
Peru	1107	January 4–11, 2011	18–69	Face-to-face	National
Philippines	800	December 14, 2010 – January 9, 2011	18+	Face-to-face	Urban ⁶
Portugal	1002	December 9, 2010 – January 17, 2011	18–75	Telephone	Urban ⁷
Russia	1010	December 23, 2010 – January 18, 2011	18+	Face-to-face	National
South Africa	1000	December 3, 2010 – January 27, 2011	18+	Face-to-face	National
Spain	802	December 20, 2010 – January 3, 2011	18+	Telephone	National

Turkey	1000	December 8–20, 2011	15+	Face-to-face	Urban ⁸
United Kingdom	1001	December 3–16, 2010	18+	Telephone	National
USA	1000	December 4, 2010 – January 13, 2011	18+	Telephone	National

¹ In Brazil the survey was conducted in Belo Horizonte, Brasilia, Curitiba, Goiânia, Porto Alegre, Recife, Rio de Janeiro, Salvador, and São Paulo, representing 18 per cent of the national population.

² In China the survey was conducted in Beijing, Beiliu, Chengdu, Dujiangyan, Fenyang, Fuyang, Guangzhou, Hangzhou, Manzhouli, Quanzhou, Qijing, Shanghai, Shenyang, Shuangcheng, Wuhan, Xi'an, Xining, and Zhengzhou, representing 45 per cent of the national adult population.

³ In Egypt the survey was conducted in Alexandria, Cairo, Giza, and Shubra El-Kheima, representing 24 per cent of the national population.

⁴ In Indonesia the survey was conducted in Bandung, Jakarta, Makassar, Medan, and Surabaya, representing 27 per cent of the national adult population.

⁵ In Mexico the survey was conducted in Baja California, Chihuahua, Guanajuato, Guerrero, Hidalgo, Jalisco, Mexico City, Michoacán, Morelos, Nuevo León, Oaxaca, Puebla, Sonora, Tamaulipas, Veracruz, and Yucatán, representing 40 per cent of the national adult population and 80 per cent of the residential telephone landlines.

⁶ In the Philippines the survey was conducted in the National Capital Region, representing 27 per cent of the urban adult population.

⁷ In Portugal the survey was conducted in Almada, Amadora, Beja, Braga, Castelo Branco, Évora, Faro, Guarda, Leiria, Lisbon, Loures, Porto, Santarém, Setúbal, Vila Nova de Famalicão, Vila Nova de Gaia, and Viseu, representing 25 per cent of the national adult population.

⁸ In Turkey the survey was conducted in Adana, Ankara, Antalya, Bursa, Diyarbakir, Erzurum, Istanbul, Izmir, Konya, Samsun, and Zonguldak, representing 56 per cent of the national adult population.

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