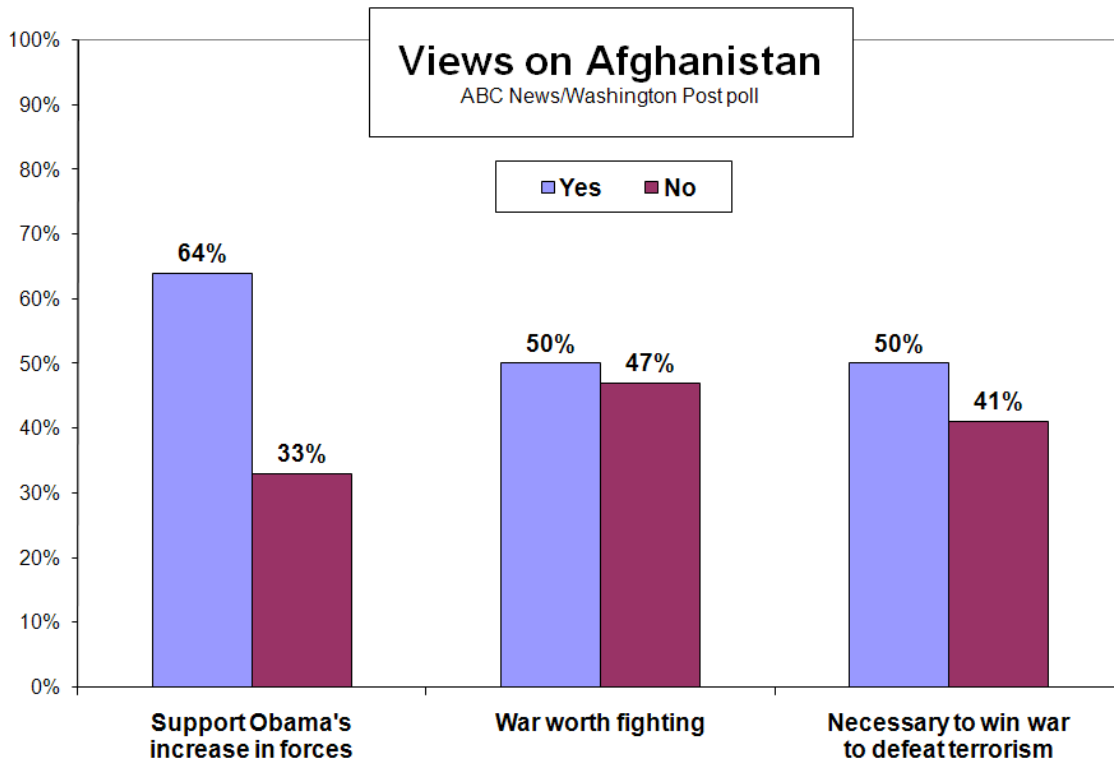


Obama Gathers Two-Thirds Support For Additional Troops to Afghanistan

Nearly two-thirds of Americans support Barack Obama's decision to send 17,000 more U.S. military forces to Afghanistan – despite substantial skepticism on whether the war there's been worth fighting.

Sixty-four percent in this ABC News/Washington Post poll support the deployment, even though just half say the war in Afghanistan's been worth it, and half, likewise, are convinced that victory there is required for the broader war on terrorism to succeed.

There's considerable bipartisanship for the deployment; it's favored by 60 percent of independents, 63 percent of Democrats and 77 percent of Republicans. That seems to reflect a convergence of two forces: Republicans' support for the war, and Democrats' support for Obama.

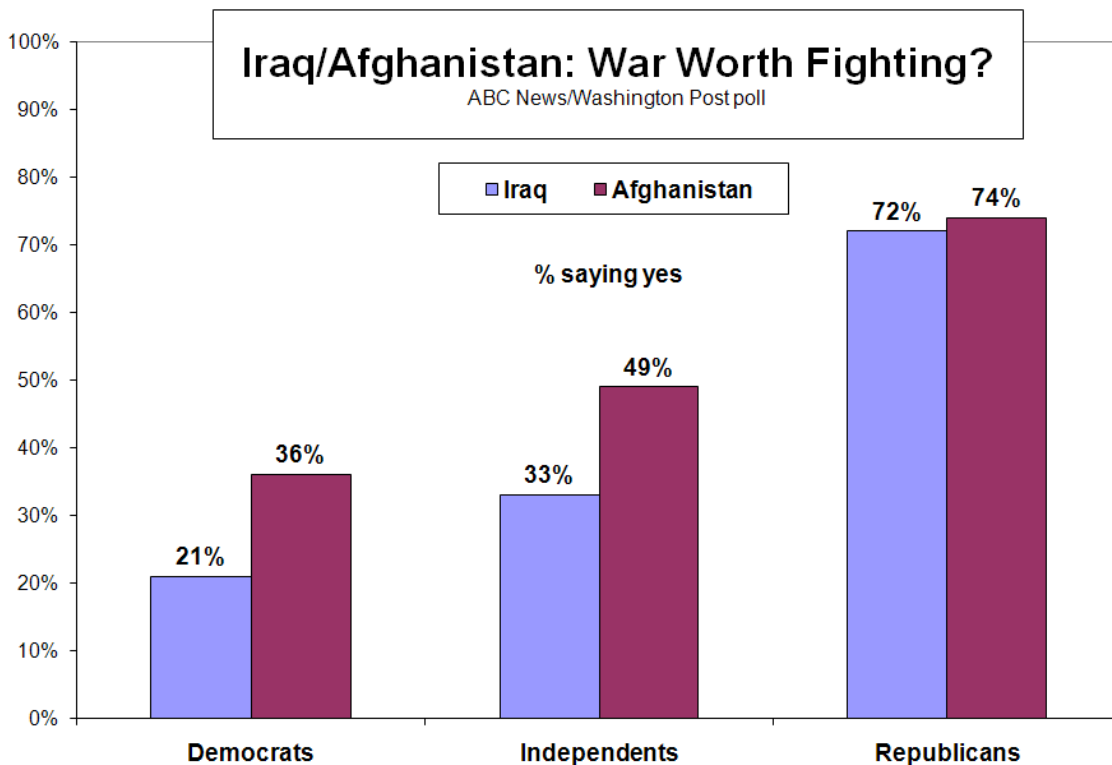


Indeed, notably, "strong" support for the deployment is substantially higher among Republicans (52 percent strongly in favor) than among Democrats or independents (35 and 38 percent, respectively). Among liberal Democrats it's just 29 percent.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and special envoy Richard Holbrooke hold trilateral talks in Washington today with foreign ministers from Afghanistan and Pakistan, part of the new administration's review of U.S. policy in the region. An ABC/BBC/ARD poll in Afghanistan last month found sharply lower ratings for the performance of the United States and NATO there, amid worsening security and struggling development efforts.

WORTH IT? – In this ABC/Post poll, Americans divide by 50-47 percent on whether the conflict in Afghanistan was worth fighting, with the negative view at a new high in ABC/Post polls. Support for the war doubles among Republicans, 74 percent, compared with Democrats, 36 percent.

There's also a 50-41 percent division on whether winning in Afghanistan is necessary for the broader war on terrorism to be a success, with a similar broad partisan gap – 75 percent of Republicans say yes; four in 10 Democrats agree.



Support for the additional deployment contrasts with an ABC/Post poll in January, just before Obama took office, in which just 34 percent favored boosting U.S. forces, given the options of increasing, decreasing or holding the troop level steady.

Views also contrast with the more unpopular war in Iraq: In April 2007, reflecting weariness with the war and George W. Bush's own low approval, only 35 percent supported his decision to send a "surge" of 28,000 more U.S. forces there. At that time 66

percent of Republicans were in favor, but just a third of independents and 11 percent of Democrats agreed.

IRAQ – Views on Iraq remain broadly negative. Despite progress after the surge, allegiances with Sunni leaders and the recent provincial elections, 60 percent of Americans still say that given its costs vs. benefits the Iraq war was not worth fighting. That's hovered between 58 and 66 percent steadily for more than two years.

Forty-four percent say winning the Iraq war is necessary to defeat terrorism more broadly; while still below half that's up from a low of 31 percent last April.

Again there are sharp partisan divisions, with Republicans more than three times as likely as Democrats to say the Iraq war was worth fighting, and twice as apt to say victory there is necessary to succeed against terrorism.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone Feb. 19-22, 2009, among a random national sample of 1,001 adults including both landline and cell phone-only respondents. Results for the full sample have a 3-point error margin; click [here](#) for a detailed description of sampling error. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by TNS of Horsham, PA.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>

Media contact: Cathie Levine, (212) 456-4934.

Full results follow (*= less than 0.5 percent).

1-36 previously released.

37. (ASKED OF HALF SAMPLE) On another subject, all in all, considering the costs to the United States versus the benefits to the United States, do you think the war with Iraq was worth fighting, or not? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	----- Worth fighting -----			--- Not worth fighting ---			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
2/22/09	38	24	14	60	13	48	2
1/16/09	39	21	17	61	12	49	1
12/14/08	34	21	13	64	14	50	2
9/7/08	36	24	13	61	13	48	3
8/22/08	35	22	13	63	13	50	2
7/13/08	36	22	13	63	13	50	1
6/15/08	34	21	13	63	9	54	3
4/13/08	34	24	11	64	11	52	2
3/2/08	34	24	11	63	12	51	2
2/1/08	34	23	11	65	11	53	1
1/12/08	35	21	13	64	13	51	2
12/9/07	37	25	12	61	11	50	2
11/1/07	35	23	12	63	12	51	2
9/30/07	38	25	14	59	12	47	3
9/7/07	36	23	13	62	11	51	2

7/21/07	36	25	12	63	10	53	1
6/1/07	37	24	12	61	12	50	2
4/15/07	33	22	11	66	12	54	1
2/25/07	34	22	12	64	13	51	2
1/10/07	40	28	12	58	11	47	2
12/11/06	36	25	11	61	12	50	2
11/4/06	RV 44	33	12	53	10	44	2
10/22/06	40	28	12	57	11	47	2
10/8/06	35	25	10	63	13	50	2
9/7/06	42	29	13	56	11	45	2
8/6/06	39	29	10	59	12	47	1
6/25/06	40	25	15	58	13	45	2
5/15/06	37	24	14	62	12	50	1
4/9/06	41	30	11	58	10	48	1
3/5/06	42	29	14	57	11	46	1
1/26/06	44	32	12	55	13	42	1
1/8/06	43	30	13	55	12	43	2
12/18/05	46	33	14	52	11	42	1
11/2/05	39	25	13	60	12	48	1
8/28/05	46	33	12	53	9	44	1
6/26/05	46	33	13	53	10	43	1
6/5/05	41	29	12	58	12	46	1
4/24/05	44	31	13	54	12	42	2
3/13/05	45	34	11	53	11	42	2
1/16/05	44	32	12	55	10	45	1
12/19/04	42	31	11	56	10	47	2
10/3/04	LV 49	34	15	48	11	37	3
9/26/04	RV 46	35	12	51	8	42	3
9/8/04	RV 51	38	13	45	10	34	4
8/29/04	RV 48	34	14	50	11	39	2
7/25/04	49	36	13	48	11	37	3
7/11/04	45	34	10	53	12	42	2
6/20/04	47	32	14	52	13	39	2
5/23/04	48	35	13	50	13	37	1
5/6/04	49	NA	NA	47	NA	NA	5
4/18/04	51	"	"	47	"	"	2
3/7/04	52			44			3
2/11/04	48			50			2
1/18/04	56			41			3
12/21/03	59			39			2
12/14/03	53			42			5
11/16/03	52			44			4
10/29/03	54			44			2
10/13/03	54			44			2
9/13/03	61			37			2
9/7/03	54			42			4
8/24/03	57			37			5
8/11/03	61			35			4
7/10/03	57			40			3
6/22/03	64			33			3
4/30/03	70			27			4
2/2/92*	66			32			2
7/28/91	67			30			3
6/2/91	70			26			3
3/4/91	86			13			1
*2/2/92 and previous: "the Persian Gulf war"; 3/4/91: "this war"							

38. (ASKED OF HALF SAMPLE) Do you think (the United States must win the war in Iraq in order for the broader war on terrorism to be a success), or do you think (the war on terrorism can be a success without the United States winning the war in Iraq)?

	US must win war in Iraq for success	Can be a success without US winning war in Iraq	No opinion
2/22/09	44	50	6
12/14/08	42	51	7
7/13/08	34	60	6
4/13/08	31	61	8
9/7/07	37	54	9
6/1/07	37	56	7
4/15/07	37	57	6
1/10/07	45	47	8

39. (ASKED OF HALF SAMPLE) On another subject, all in all, considering the costs to the United States versus the benefits to the United States, do you think the war in Afghanistan was worth fighting, or not? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	----- Worth fighting -----			--- Not worth fighting ---			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
2/22/09	50	34	17	47	9	37	3
12/14/08	55	NA	NA	39	NA	NA	5
7/13/08	51	NA	NA	45	NA	NA	4
2/25/07	56	NA	NA	41	NA	NA	3

40. (ASKED OF HALF SAMPLE) Do you think (the United States must win the war in Afghanistan in order for the broader war on terrorism to be a success), or do you think (the war on terrorism can be a success without the United States winning the war in Afghanistan)?

	US must win war in Afghanistan for success	Can be a success without US winning war in Afghanistan	No opinion
2/22/09	50	41	9
12/14/08	51	40	9
7/13/08	51	42	7

41. Do you support or oppose Obama's decision to send approximately 17,000 additional U.S. military forces to Afghanistan? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	----- Support -----			----- Oppose -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
2/22/09	64	40	25	33	11	22	3

Compare to:

Do you support or oppose Bush's decision to send approximately 28,000 additional U.S. military forces to Iraq? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	----- Support -----			----- Oppose -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
4/15/07*	35	24	11	65	9	56	*
2/25/07	32	20	12	67	11	56	1
1/19/07	34	21	13	65	10	56	1
1/10/07	36	25	11	61	9	52	2

* Changed from "proposal to send approximately 22,000"

42 previously released.

END