Ipsos Poll Conducted for Reuters
Syrian Intervention 9.10.13

These are findings from an Ipsos poll conducted for Thomson Reuters from August 30 -September 2, 2013; September 5-9, 2013; and September 6-10, 2013. For the surveys, samples of 1,448; 1,450 ; and 1,412 Americans 18+ were interviewed online, respectively. The precision of the Reuters/Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the first two polls both have credibility intervals of plus or minus 2.9 percentage points; the third has a credibility interval of plus or minus 3.0 percentage points For more information about credibility intervals, please see the appendix.

The data were weighted to the U.S. current population data by gender, age, education, and ethnicity. Statistical margins of error are not applicable to online polls. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error and measurement error. Figures marked by an asterisk (*) indicate a percentage value of greater than zero but less than one half of one per cent. Where figures do not sum to 100, this is due to the effects of rounding.

SYRIAN INTERVENTION

Q1. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way President Obama and his government is handling the crisis in Syria?

	Aug.30-Sept .2, 2013	Sept.5-9, 2013	Sept. 6-10, 2013
Satisfied	41%	33%	35%
Dissatisfied	59%	67%	65%

Q2. Would you support or oppose the United States taking part in any military action against Syria…

With UN approval?	Aug.30-Sept .2, 2013	Sept.5-9, 2013	Sept. 6-10, 2013	**Without UN approval?**	Aug.30-Sept .2, 2013	Sept.5-9, 2013	Sept. 6-10, 2013
Support	40%	40%	41%	Support	15%	12%	14%
Oppose	34%	32%	31%	Oppose	56%	62%	60%
Don't know	25%	28%	28%	Don't know	29%	27%	26%

Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

August 30-September 2	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	*TOTAL AGREE*	*TOTAL DISAGREE*
The problems of Syria are none of our business and we should not interfere	30%	35%	26%	9%	*65%*	*35%*
Given the current economic climate, the United States cannot afford to be taking military action in Syria	43%	38%	15%	4%	*81%*	*19%*
Doing nothing in Syria would be worse than taking military action	15%	32%	34%	19%	*47%*	*53%*
Doing nothing in Syria will encourage other countries to use chemical weapons in the future	18%	36%	30%	17%	*54%*	*46%*
Taking military action in Syria will encourage attacks on the United States and the West	28%	46%	21%	6%	*73%*	*27%*

September 5-9	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	*TOTAL AGREE*	*TOTAL DISAGREE*
The problems of Syria are none of our business and we should not interfere	30%	37%	24%	10%	*67%*	*33%*
Given the current economic climate, the United States cannot afford to be taking military action in Syria	44%	36%	16%	5%	*80%*	*20%*
Doing nothing in Syria would be worse than taking military action	10%	29%	37%	24%	*39%*	*61%*
Doing nothing in Syria will encourage other countries to use chemical weapons in the future	17%	30%	36%	17%	*47%*	*53%*
Taking military action in Syria will encourage attacks on the United States and the West	30%	43%	21%	6%	*72%*	*28%*

Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

September 6-10	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	*TOTAL AGREE*	*TOTAL DISAGREE*
The problems of Syria are none of our business and we should not interfere	29%	37%	24%	11%	*65%*	*35%*
Given the current economic climate, the United States cannot afford to be taking military action in Syria	42%	36%	16%	5%	*78%*	*22%*
Doing nothing in Syria would be worse than taking military action	12%	29%	37%	22%	*41%*	*59%*
Doing nothing in Syria will encourage other countries to use chemical weapons in the future	19%	30%	35%	16%	*49%*	*51%*
Taking military action in Syria will encourage attacks on the United States and the West	29%	45%	21%	6%	*73%*	*27%*

Q4. For each of the following, do you think taking military action in Syria would make it better, worse, or will it make no difference?

August 30-September 2	Better	Worse	Made no difference	Don't know
Life for ordinary Syrians	24%	24%	30%	22%
The United States' reputation in the world	14%	38%	31%	18%

September 5-9	Better	Worse	Made no difference	Don't know
Life for ordinary Syrians	19%	28%	27%	27%
The United States' reputation in the world	10%	39%	30%	21%

September 6-10	Better	Worse	Made no difference	Don't know
Life for ordinary Syrians	20%	27%	28%	25%
The United States' reputation in the world	11%	38%	31%	19%

How to Calculate Bayesian Credibility Intervals

The calculation of credibility intervals assumes that Y has a binomial distribution conditioned on the parameter $\theta\backslash$, i.e., $Y|\theta \sim Bin(n,\theta)$, where n is the size of our sample. In this setting, Y counts the number of "yes", or "1", observed in the sample, so that the sample mean ($\bar{y}$) is a natural estimate of the true population proportion θ. This model is often called the likelihood function, and it is a standard concept in both the Bayesian and the Classical framework. The Bayesian [1] statistics combines both the prior distribution and the likelihood function to create a posterior distribution. The posterior distribution represents our opinion about which are the plausible values for θ adjusted after observing the sample data. In reality, the posterior distribution is one's knowledge base updated using the latest survey information. For the prior and likelihood functions specified here, the posterior distribution is also a beta distribution ($\pi(\theta/y) \sim \beta(y+a,n-y+b)$), but with updated hyper-parameters.

Our credibility interval for ϑ is based on this posterior distribution. As mentioned above, these intervals represent our belief about which are the most plausible values for ϑ given our updated knowledge base. There are different ways to calculate these intervals based on . Since we want only one measure of precision for all variables in the survey, analogous to what is done within the Classical framework, we will compute the largest possible credibility interval for any observed sample. The worst case occurs when we assume that $a=1$ and $b=1$ and . Using a simple approximation of the posterior by the normal distribution, the 95% credibility interval is given by, approximately:

$$\bar{y} \mp \frac{1}{\sqrt{n}}$$

For this poll, the Bayesian Credibility Interval was adjusted using standard weighting design effect 1+L=1.3 to account for complex weighting[2]

Examples of credibility intervals for different base sizes are below. Ipsos does not publish data for base sizes (sample sizes) below 100.

Sample size	Credibility intervals
2,000	2.5
1,500	2.9
1,000	3.5
750	4.1
500	5.0
350	6.0
200	7.9
100	11.2

[1] *Bayesian Data Analysis, Second Edition, Andrew Gelman, John B. Carlin, Hal S. Stern, Donald B. Rubin, Chapman & Hall/CRC | ISBN: 158488388X | 2003*
[2] *Kish, L. (1992). Weighting for unequal Pi . Journal of Official, Statistics, 8, 2, 183200.*