Ipsos Poll Conducted for Reuters

Iraq 8.25.2014

These are findings from an Ipsos poll conducted for Thomson Reuters from August 12-25, 2014. For the survey, a sample of 4,685 Americans, including 1,806 Democrats, 1,563 Republicans, and 696 Independents ages 18+ were interviewed online. The precision of the Reuters/Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 1.6 percentage points for all adults, 2.6 percentage points for Democrats, 2.8 percentage points for Republicans, and 4.2 percentage points for Independents. 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.

IRAQ

Q1. From the list below, please choose the topics or issues you have heard or read anything about in the past few days. You can choose as many or few as needed.

	All adults	Democrats	Republicans	Independents
The recent conflict in Iraq involving the organization ISIS/ISIL (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria/the Levant)	53%	54%	66%	53%
The recent conflict in Iraq involving the organization ISIS/ISIL/the Islamic State and the Kurdish Regional Government forces (known as the Pesh merga)	47%	46%	58%	49%
The recent friction between semi-autonomous Kurdish authorities and the Maliki led Iraqi government	26%	27%	34%	23%

	Non-Veterans/ Active Duty & Families *n=3,417*	Veterans/Active Duty & Families *n=1,268*
The recent conflict in Iraq involving the organization ISIS/ISIL (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria/the Levant)	50%	62%
The recent conflict in Iraq involving the organization ISIS/ISIL/the Islamic State and the Kurdish Regional Government forces (known as the Pesh merga)	43%	58%
The recent friction between semi-autonomous Kurdish authorities and the Maliki led Iraqi government	23%	35%

Q2. In your opinion, what is the best response to the current situation in Iraq? (Select all that apply)

	All adults	Democrats	Republicans	Independents
The United States should not intervene	29%	30%	25%	36%
The United States should provide humanitarian aid to refugees from the conflict areas	31%	35%	35%	29%
The United States should launch air strikes in support of government forces	21%	20%	33%	18%
The United States should fund and support a multi-national intervention in Iraq	12%	13%	16%	13%
The United States should send American Special Forces soldiers to support the Iraqi government	11%	10%	18%	11%
The United States should provide weapons to government troops	10%	10%	16%	8%
The United States should send American troops to support the Iraqi government	7%	6%	10%	6%
Don't know	22%	17%	16%	20%

Q2. In your opinion, what is the best response to the current situation in Iraq? (Select all that apply) *(cont.)*

	Non-Veterans/ Active Duty & Families *n=3,417*	Veterans/Active Duty & Families *n=1,268*
The United States should not intervene	30%	26%
The United States should provide humanitarian aid to refugees from the conflict areas	30%	34%
The United States should launch air strikes in support of government forces	18%	29%
The United States should fund and support a multi-national intervention in Iraq	11%	15%
The United States should send American Special Forces soldiers to support the Iraqi government	11%	14%
The United States should provide weapons to government troops	9%	15%
The United States should send American troops to support the Iraqi government	6%	9%
Don't know	25%	16%

Q3. President Obama recently announced that the United States will use limited airstrikes against ISIS/the Islamic State in Iraq and provide humanitarian assistance to some refugees. However, the U.S. would not do more until the Shia dominated Iraqi government is ready to make reforms including power sharing with other groups in Iraq including Sunnis and Kurds. Do you personally think...

	All adults	Democrats	Republicans	Independents
The U.S. needs to do more to keep extremists from taking power.	30%	19%	49%	31%
President Obama is setting appropriate conditions for U.S. Involvement.	36%	54%	19%	28%
The U.S. should not get involved in the current conflict in Iraq no matter what.	34%	27%	32%	41%

	Non-Veterans/ Active Duty & Families *n=3,417*	Veterans/Active Duty & Families *n=1,268*
The U.S. needs to do more to keep extremists from taking power.	28%	35%
President Obama is setting appropriate conditions for U.S. Involvement.	36%	34%
The U.S. should not get involved in the current conflict in Iraq no matter what.	36%	30%

Q4. As you may have heard, ISIS (the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria/the Islamic State) recently beheaded James Foley, an American journalist held captive by ISIS for nearly two years.

It was recently revealed that ISIS demanded a multimillion dollar ransom from the United States in exchange for James Foley, which the United States refused to pay. Some European nations have typically paid terrorist groups for the return of hostages. The United States and United Kingdom governments have typically refused.

How much do you agree or disagree with the United States' and United Kingdom's position not to pay ransoms? *(Asked 8/22-25)*

	All adults *n=915*	Democrats *n=348*	Republicans *n=283*	Independents *n=142*
Strongly agree	38%	43%	45%	29%
Somewhat agree	24%	26%	25%	27%
Somewhat disagree	13%	10%	14%	17%
Strongly disagree	8%	7%	4%	11%
Don't know	17%	13%	12%	15%
TOTAL AGREE	*62%*	*69%*	*70%*	*57%*
TOTAL DISAGREE	*21%*	*17%*	*18%*	*28%*

	Non-Veterans/ Active Duty & Families *n=670*	Veterans/ Active Duty & Families *n=245*
Strongly agree	35%	44%
Somewhat agree	24%	24%
Somewhat disagree	14%	11%
Strongly disagree	7%	10%
Don't know	20%	10%
TOTAL AGREE	*59%*	*69%*
TOTAL DISAGREE	*21%*	*21%*

How to Calculate Bayesian Credibility Intervals

The calculation of credibility intervals assumes that Y has a binomial distribution conditioned on the parameter θ\, i.e., Y|θ~Bin(n,θ), 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 (π(θ/y)~β(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 π(θ/y). 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 y=*n/2*. 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.*