

35 Nation Poll on U.S. Presidential Election

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Finds 30 Prefer Kerry, 3 Bush

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In 30 out of 35 countries polled, from all regions of the world, a majority or plurality would prefer to see John Kerry win the US presidential election—especially traditional US allies. The only countries where President Bush was preferred were the Philippines, Nigeria, and Poland. India and Thailand were divided. On average, Kerry was favored by more than a two-to-one margin—46% to 20% (weighted for variations in population, the ratio was not significantly different). Overall, one-third did not give an answer.

The poll of 34,330 people was conducted mainly during July and August 2004, with some countries being polled as early as May. Polling was conducted by GlobeScan and its worldwide network of research institutes, in conjunction with the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) of the University of Maryland. Due to the difficulties of polling in developing countries, in eleven countries, polling was limited to metropolitan areas. The margin of error ranged from +/- 2.3-5%.

Steven Kull, director of PIPA, comments, “Only one in five want to see Bush reelected. Though he is not as well known, Kerry would win handily if the people of the world were to elect the US president.” Support for Kerry was greater among those with higher education and income levels.

Asked how the foreign policy of President Bush has affected their feelings toward the US, in 30 countries a majority or plurality said it made them feel “worse” about America, while in 3 countries, more of the respondents said that it had made them feel “better” towards America. On average, 53% of respondents said Bush’s foreign policy made them feel worse about the US, while 19% said it made them feel better.

GlobeScan President Doug Miller says, “Perhaps most sobering for Americans is the strength of the view that US foreign policy is on the wrong track, even in countries contributing troops in Iraq.”

Kerry was strongly preferred among all of America’s traditional allies. These included Norway (74% for Kerry to 7% for Bush), Germany (74% to 10%), France (64% to 5%), the Netherlands (63% to 6%), Italy (58% to 14%), and Spain (45% to 7%). Even in the UK, Kerry was preferred by more than 30 percentage points (47% to 16%).

Among Canadians, Kerry was preferred by 61% to 16% and among the Japanese by 43% to 23%.

The exception for Bush in Europe was a new ally, Poland, where he was preferred by a narrow plurality of 31% against 26% for Kerry. Another new ally, however, the Czech Republic, went for Kerry (42% to 18%), as did Sweden (58% to 10%).

Asia was the most mixed region, though Kerry still did better. He was preferred by clear majorities in China (52% to 12%) and Indonesia (57% to 34%), as well as by a large margin in Japan (43% to 23%). But publics were divided in India (Kerry 34%, Bush 33%) and Thailand (Kerry 30%, Bush 33%).

Asia was also the sole region in which Bush garnered more than 50 percent support from a country, with 57% of Filipinos favoring him (Kerry 32%). Bush's post-9/11 aid to the Filipino government's efforts against the terrorist group Abu Sayyaf may have engendered significant goodwill.

Latin Americans went for Kerry in all nine countries polled. In only two cases did Kerry win a majority—Brazil (57% to 14%) and the Dominican Republic (51% to 38%)—but in most cases the spread was quite wide. These included Venezuela (48% to 22%), Colombia (47% to 26%), Argentina (43% to 6%), Mexico (38% to 18%), Uruguay (37% to 5%), Peru (37% to 26%), and Bolivia (25% to 16%).

Bush was preferred in Nigeria with 33%, as compared to 27% for Kerry. However, Kerry was preferred in the five other African states polled, including Kenya (58% to 25%), Ghana (48% to 24%), Tanzania (44% to 30%), South Africa (43% to 29%), and Zimbabwe (28% to 6%).

In Eurasian states, Kerry led, though a significant number did not express a preference. In Russia, Kerry was preferred 20% to 10%, Turkey 40% to 25%, and in Kazakhstan 40% to 12%.

Interestingly, among countries that have contributed troops to the operation in Iraq, most favored Kerry and said that their view of the US has gotten worse with Bush's foreign policy. These include the UK, the Czech Republic, Italy, the Netherlands, the Dominican Republic, Kazakhstan, Japan, Norway, and Spain. Thailand was divided on Kerry and Bush (33% Bush—30% Kerry). But slightly more Thais said their view of the US has gotten better (35% to 30% worse).

However, this group also included the two countries most favorable to Bush—the Philippines and Poland. Among Filipinos, 57% said they prefer Bush over Kerry, and 58% say that their view of US foreign policy has gotten better. But among Poles, though a modest plurality favored Bush (31% to 26%), a plurality of 41% said that their view of US foreign policy has gotten worse, while only 15% say it has gotten better.

Strongest negative views of US foreign policy were held in Germany (83% say “worse”), France (81%), Mexico (78%), China (72%), Canada (71%), Netherlands (71%), Spain (67%), Brazil (66%), Italy (66%), Argentina (65%), and the UK (64%). The only countries in which more said that the Bush foreign policy made them feel better toward the US were: the Philippines, (58% better-27% worse), India (38% better—33% worse) and Thailand (35% better and 30% worse). Nigeria was divided (36% better—34% worse) as was Venezuela (33% better-34% worse).

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