



Badger Poll™ #26, Release #5
University of Wisconsin Survey Center
University of Wisconsin Madison
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NOTE: When using material from this release please cite the Badger Poll™ conducted by the University of Wisconsin Survey Center. Poll results compiled by Chad J. Kniss, Project Director, UW Survey Center. ckniss@ssc.wisc.edu (office phone: 608.262.4157)

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OPINIONS ON THE IRAQ CONFLICT AFTER FIVE YEARS

According to the latest Badger Poll, a majority of Wisconsinites continue to say that the decision to take military action against Iraq was wrong (54%). The proportion of Wisconsinites that feel that way has remained largely unchanged over the past year – with between 52% and 56% saying it was wrong and between 37% and 42% saying it was the right decision.

- Overall, 63% of Wisconsinites said that they favor a timetable for withdrawal of American troops from Iraq.
- 55% of state residents want to decrease the number of U.S. military forces in Iraq, while 37% think the level of forces should stay about the same as it is now.
- Among those respondents who want to see the level of U.S. military forces decreased, just under three-quarters want to withdraw all U.S. troops, but not all immediately. Only 15% of Wisconsinites want immediate withdrawal of all U.S. forces.

When it comes to which party would do a better job handling the situation in Iraq, 45% of Badger State residents said the Democrats would do better, while 25% said the Republicans would and 19% said that neither of the major political parties will do a better job.

The tables on the following pages show the findings of the latest Badger Poll on the public opinion of Wisconsinites on the situation in Iraq. Results on the same questions asked about in previous Badger Polls in 2006 and 2007 are included where applicable. See the appendix for exact wording of the questions.

Table 1. The Decision to Take Military Action Against Iraq

	Right	Wrong	Don't Know	Refused	(N)
April '08	42%	54%	3%	1%	(521)
Dec. '07	37%	52%	2%	9%	(507)
June '07	40%	56%	3%	1%	(502)

Table 2. Trend for Favor or Oppose a Timetable for Withdrawal from Iraq

	Favor	Oppose	Don't Know	Refused	(N)
April '08	63%	35%	1%	1%	(521)
Dec. '07*	60%	29%	2%	8%	(507)
June '07*	57%	41%	2%	<1%	(502)
Oct. '06**	58%	40%	2%	--	(508)
June '06**	53%	43%	4%	<1%	(508)

* The question about favoring or opposing a timetable for withdrawal for Badger Polls in December and June 2007 had different introductions than in 2008 or 2006.

** The question about favoring or opposing a timetable for withdrawal for Badger Polls in October and June 2006 had different introductions than in 2008 or 2007. See the appendix for the exacting wording of each of the three questions used to gauge support for a withdrawal timetable.

Table 3. Trend for Number of U.S. Military Forces in Iraq

	About the			Don't Know	Refused	(N)
	Increase	same	Decrease			
April '08	6%	36%	55%	2%	1%	(521)
Dec. '07	6%	30%	52%	3%	8%	(507)
June '07	14%	30%	52%	2%	<1%	(502)
Oct. '06	17%	24%	51%	7%	1%	(508)
June '06	9%	31%	52%	6%	2%	(508)

Table 4. Trend for When to Decrease the Number of U.S. Military Forces in Iraq [as a percentage of all respondents]

	Withdrawal Immediately	Not All Immediately	Don't Know	Refused	(N)
April '08	15%	40%	--	<1%	(521)
Dec. '07	11%	41%	--	--	(507)
June '07	15%	37%	<1%	<1%	(502)
Oct. '06	13%	38%	--	--	(508)
June '06	10%	42%	<1%	--	(508)

Table 5. Which party would do a better job handling...the situation in Iraq?

	Democrats	Both (vol.)	Republicans	Neither (vol.)	Don't Know	Refused	(N)
April '08	45%	3%	25%	19%	7%	1%	(521)
Oct. '06	43%	1%	35%	12%	9%	<1%	(508)
June '06	38%	2%	37%	12%	11%	<1%	(508)

APPENDIX:

SURVEY QUESTION WORDING

P20_intro	For each of the following issues please tell me, whether you trust the [Democrats / Republicans] or the [Democrats / Republicans] to do a better job handling each. [#NOTE: The two political parties' names presented in random order]
P20_1	The situation in Iraq?
IRAQ01X	Looking back, do you think the United States made the right decision or the wrong decision in taking military action against Iraq?
IRAQ25X_08	[Note: Question Wording for Badger Polls #26 in April 2008] In April of 2007, the U.S. Congress passed legislation that would establish a timetable to begin withdrawing U.S. troops from Iraq. The timetable included certain benchmarks that the Iraqi government must meet and a period of 6 to 8 months for withdrawal of all U.S. troops. Do you favor or oppose having a timetable for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq like the one that the U.S. Congress passed last year?
IRAQ25X	[Note: Question Wording for Badger Polls #24 and #25 in 2007] Do you favor or oppose having a timetable for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq like the one that the U.S. Congress passed this past April?
IRAQ25	[Note: Question Wording for Badger Polls #22 and #23 in 2006] Senator Feingold has called for a flexible timetable for the withdrawal of troops from Iraq. Do you favor or oppose having a timetable for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq?
IRAQ23	Do you think the number of U.S. military forces in Iraq should be increased, decreased, or kept about the same?
IRAQ24	[#NOTE: only asked if 'IRAQ23' is decreased] Should all U.S. forces in Iraq be withdrawn immediately, or should they be decreased but not all withdrawn immediately?

HOW THE POLL WAS DONE

This BADGER POLL™ was conducted by the University of Wisconsin Survey Center as part of its ongoing program of research designed to benefit the research community and the people of Wisconsin. The Director of the poll operations is Chad J. Kniss, UW Survey Center. The Faculty Director of the Poll content is Professor Katherine Cramer Walsh, Department of Political Science, UW-Madison. The BADGER POLL™ is intended to be a "poll of record" for the state, investigating matters of concern to Wisconsinites including politics, culture, and their daily lives, adhering to the highest standards of polling methodology and rigorous independence.

Results shown here are based on 521 persons who were randomly chosen within households with working landline telephone numbers and interviewed between April 15 and April 24, 2008, inclusive. During this time period, the UWSC made just under 12,900 phone calls to 2,860 telephone numbers. Calls were made between 9AM and 9PM Monday through Friday and between 10AM and 5PM on Saturday and from 12 noon to 9PM on Sunday. All telephone numbers were randomly generated by computer. The UWSC made up to 10 attempts on each number in order to confirm if it was a residential number, select an eligible respondent and/or to convert first time refusals. Approximately 66% of the 521 interviews were completed in the first five days of calling.

Theoretically, results from this survey have a "margin of error" of a little over +/- 4%. This means that, had we asked every resident in Wisconsin, exactly these questions at the time the survey was conducted, there is only a one in twenty chance that the answers would differ by more than that in either direction from what we report here. There could be differences because of changes in question wording, events occurring in the meantime, or any of the practical difficulties involved in taking a scientific survey. Results based on subgroups are subject to a larger "margin of error". Results reported here are based on weighted data (weighted to reflect statewide gender and age groups).