

ISIS Mission: Canadians tilt slightly towards extending involvement against Islamic State

People opposed to mission more likely to say it will be a deciding factor for them in fall election

March 23, 2015 – As the federal government prepares to present a motion before the House of Commons next week proposing [to extend Canada's mission against ISIS](#), Canadian opinion tilts slightly in favour of lengthening this country's involvement against the Islamic State.

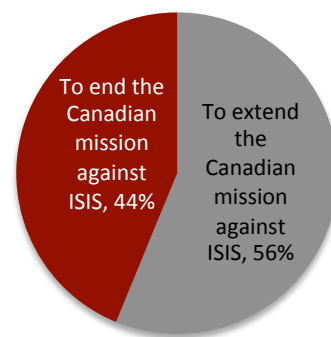
Just over half (56%) say Parliament should vote to extend the mission, while more than two-in-five (44%) say Members of Parliament (MP) should vote to end it.

These findings emerged from an Angus Reid Institute online survey of 1500 Canadians.

Key findings:

- Canadians are overall supportive of the mission against ISIS by a margin of two-to-one (54% versus 28%).
- Most want to see Parliament extend the mandate, though by a narrower margin (56% to 44%).
- Canadians are not at all convinced the US-led efforts will “ultimately succeed”: only one-in-ten (10%) chose this most optimistic outcome
- Canadians are twice as likely to say participation in the efforts against ISIS leave Canada more dangerous rather than safer (38% versus 19%).
- One-in-six (16%) Canadians say the ISIS mission will be a major vote decision factor for them this fall, while almost twice as many (28%) say it will not be a factor in their decision.

In your opinion, do you think the Canadian Parliament should vote:



METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey among 1500 randomly selected Canadian adults who are Angus Reid Forum panel members from March 11-12, 2015. For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 2.5%, times out of 20.

This survey was self-commissioned and paid for by ARI. Detailed charts, tables and regional results are found at the end of this release.

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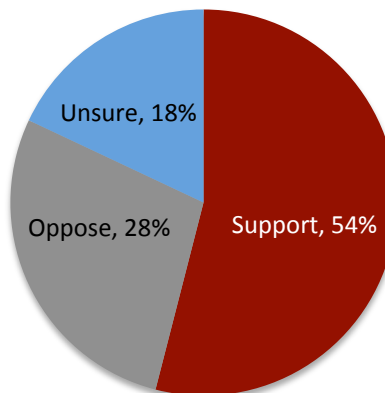
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Overall support for mission:

In October 2014, the House of Commons voted in favour of sending aircraft and military personnel to join a coalition led by the United States in airstrikes against ISIS. The federal government has pegged the cost of the mission at \$122 million, although this figure is in dispute with the [Parliamentary Budget Office](#).

Asked for their overall opinion of Canada's military mission against ISIS, Canadians voiced support by a margin of two-to-one. Just over half (54%) supported the mission (24% "strong support", 30% "support") while less than one-third (28%) were opposed (14% "strongly opposed", 14% "opposed"). Of note, almost one-in-five (18%) said they were unsure.

Do you support or oppose Canada's military mission against ISIS?



Who's more supportive?

The highest levels of support are noted:

- In Alberta (62%) and Saskatchewan and Manitoba (60%)
- Among men (64%)
- Among those aged 55+ (63%)
- Among people who say they voted for the Conservative party of Canada in the last federal election (76%)

Who's more opposed?

Public opposition to Canada's ISIS mission is highest in Quebec (37%) and among past NDP and Liberal Party supporters (39% NDP, 37% LPC).

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Should Parliament extend the mission?

The six-month mission, which expires at the end of this month, has also seen the death of one Canadian soldier, Sgt. Andrew Doiron, on March 6, 2015, in a [“friendly fire” incident](#).

Canadians are slightly more in favour of extending, rather than ending, the mission. Just over half – 56 per cent – say the House of Commons should vote to extend it, while the rest (44%) say parliamentarians should vote to end it.

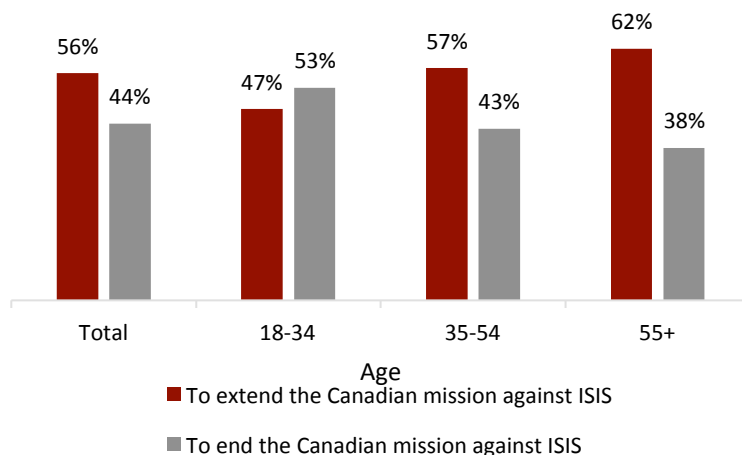
These findings are related to overall support for the mission: those who are generally supportive are almost unanimous in wanting Parliament to vote to extend the mission, while those generally opposed are just as adamantly hoping the vote will favour ending the mission. Importantly, the one-in-five unsure on the initial overall support/oppose question tilt in favour of ending the mission (by a margin of 59% to 41%), narrowing the overall public opinion verdict.

Quebecers are most inclined to say Parliament should end rather than extend the mission by a margin of 60 to 40 per cent.

The rest of Canada takes the opposite view with 62 per cent in favor of extending. There is also a gender and generation gap with men and older Canadians voicing support for extending the mission (65% and 62% respectively), while women and younger Canadians are split.

Politically, the poll results show strong support for extending the mission among previous CPC voters (78%), while most past New Democratic Party (NDP) voters would end the mission (56%). Those who voted for the Liberal Party of Canada (LPC) in the 2011 election are exactly evenly split on this question. See detailed tables at the end of this release.

In your opinion, do you think the Canadian Parliament should vote:



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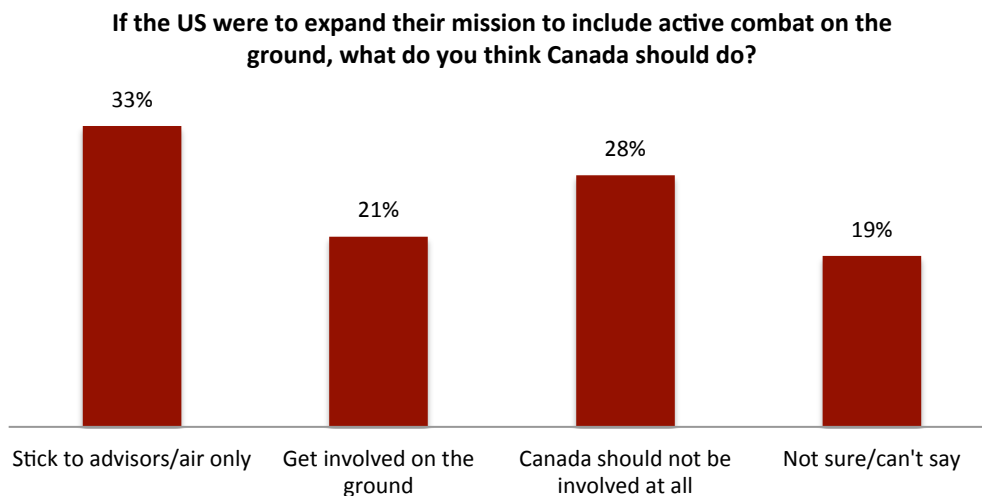
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No consensus on extent of involvement:

The motion going before the House of Commons will be to both extend and expand the Canadian mission against ISIS. The Angus Reid Institute survey went into field prior to Prime Minister Stephen Harper's announcement of intention to seek parliamentary support for the mission, but it did ask respondents their views on how deeply this country should involve itself militarily. The question, drawn from our [September 2014 survey](#), once again asks Canadians about what this country should do in the event the Americans, currently leading the coalition, were to expand the mission. On this, there appears to be little public consensus.

Those surveyed were asked to contemplate expanding the mission to include active combat on the ground. In response to this scenario:

- One-in-three (33%) say they think Canada should stick to either providing military advisors or air strike involvement only
- One-in-five (21%) say Canada should get involved on the ground
- One-in-four (28%) say this country should have no involvement at all
- The remaining one-in-five (19%) were unsure



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Impact on election intentions:

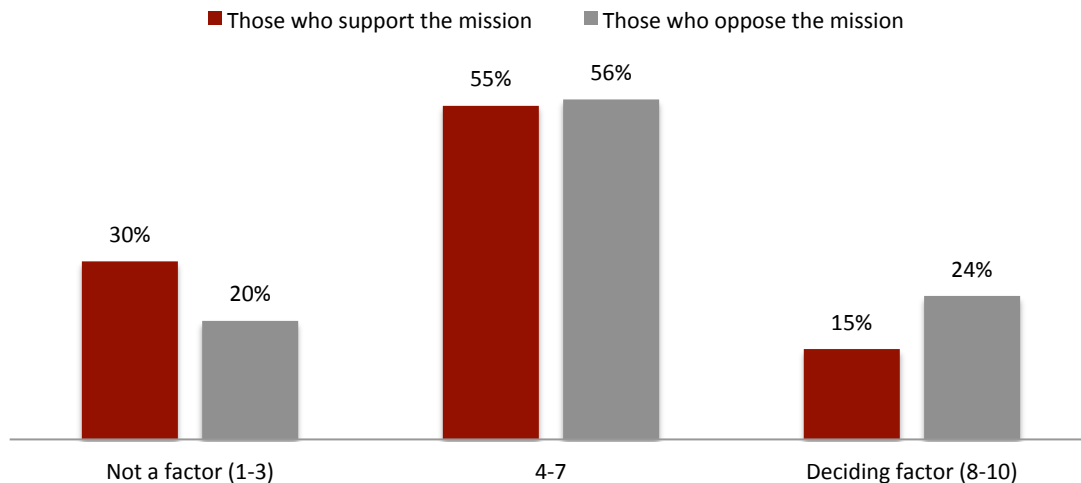
As MPs prepare to debate and vote on the proposal to extend and expand the mission, much of the political chattering class is focusing on the mission's potential impact on what is widely expected to be a fall general election. Bearing in mind that the events over the next several months may well change public opinion, the mission is not expected to shift much momentum one way or another.

Those surveyed were asked to describe how much of a voting factor this issue will likely be for them using a 10-point scale where one represented "not a factor at all" and ten represented "it's the deciding factor".

Overall, one-in-six (16%) Canadians surveyed chose an 8, 9 or 10 compared to 28 per cent who indicated it would be, at best, a minor issue in their vote formation process. This overall ratio was observed across the main segments of the Canadian electorate.

The survey results suggest this is somewhat more of a voting decision factor for those who are opposed to the Canadian mission: one-quarter (24%) gave it an 8, 9 or 10 compared to one-in-six (15%) who are generally supportive.

On a scale of 1-10, how much will the Canadian mission against ISIS be a factor for you in this year's federal election? [By support]

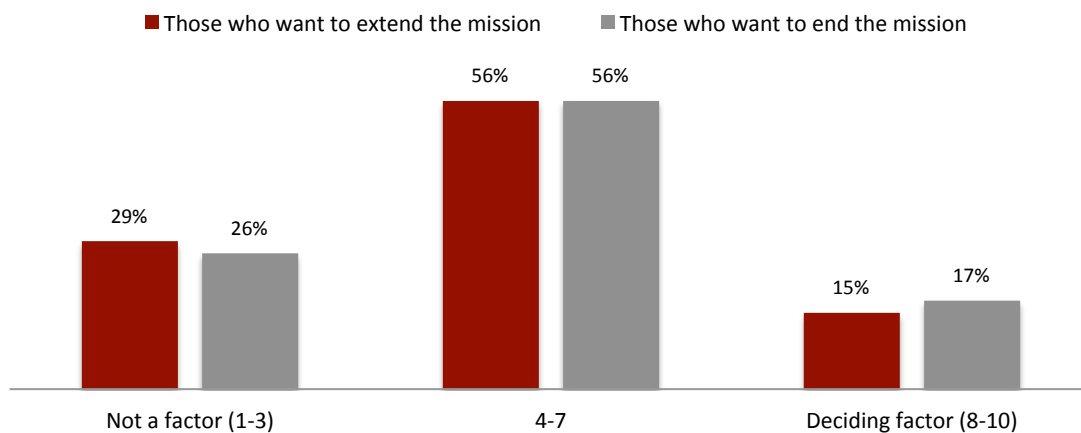


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There is no significant difference in the vote factor responses by Canadians' desire to see Parliament end or extend the Canadian mission:

On a scale of 1-10, how much will the Canadian mission against ISIS be a factor for you in this year's federal election? [By extension]



And while much attention is focused on how individual party leaders and caucuses will ultimately vote on the motion, past voting patterns also do not greatly influence the extent to which the ISIS mission may impact future voting choice.

Of those who voted for the CPC in the 2011 election, one-third (32%) say the issue is “not a factor” – a ratio of two-to-one over past Conservative voters who say it is the “deciding factor” (16%). The rest (52%) are in the middle.

Past NDP and Liberal voters are also more inclined to say the issue is not a factor than say it is, albeit by narrower margins. One-quarter (26%) of those who chose the New Democrats in 2011 say it's not a factor while fewer than one-in-five (17%) say it is the deciding factor. The findings are similar among past Liberal voters (26% not a factor versus 16% deciding factor)

Canadians not convinced of success or enhanced safety:

Notwithstanding the Canadian public's overall support for the mission against ISIS in Iraq, Canadians are not convinced that the effort will be successful:

- One-in-ten (10%) polled say they're optimistic the effort "will ultimately succeed"
- Almost three-in-ten (28%) expect the efforts will not entirely succeed "but still be worthwhile"
- One-in-three (31%) Canadians take the view that "the Islamic State will be hurt but will still be dangerous"
- One-in-ten (13%) anticipate "these efforts will fail, the Islamic State will remain a serious threat"
- One-in-five (18%) were not sure

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The public's assessment on this question was very similar when an [Angus Reid poll](#) asked the same question when Canada made its first six-month commitment last fall. Further, Canadians are unconvinced that their country's participation in the military efforts against ISIS will produce a safer Canada:

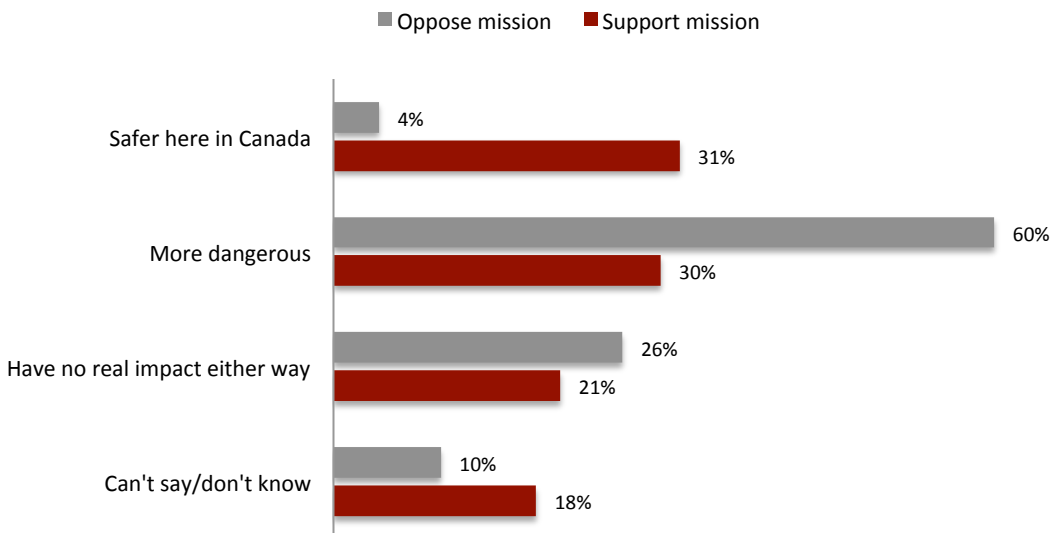
- Only one in five (19%) chose this option
- Twice as many (38%) think Canada's involvement will make it "more dangerous"
- One-in-five (21%) anticipated no impact either way
- One-in-five (22%) were unable to say.

Expectations are, of course, strongly associated with overall support for the mission. But even supporters are far from convinced the result will be a safer Canada.

One-third (31%) of those who support the mission think Canada's involvement will make it safer here, while nearly the same number (30%) say it will make the situation in this country more dangerous.

Of those who oppose the mission only four per cent believe Canada's involvement will make things safer in Canada and 60 per cent say more dangerous.

Do you think Canada being involved in the military efforts against the Islamic State make it: [By Support or opposition to the mission]



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The Angus Reid Institute (ARI) was founded in October 2014 by pollster and sociologist, Dr. Angus Reid. ARI is a national, not-for-profit, non-partisan public opinion polling organization established to advance education by commissioning, conducting and disseminating publicly accessible and impartial polls, research and analysis on economics, political science, philanthropy, public administration, domestic and international affairs and other socio-economic issues of importance to Canada and its world.

Based on what you've heard and seen, what best describes your opinion of Canada's military mission against ISIS in Iraq?

	Total (1500)	Region					
		BC (204)	AB (144)	SK/MB (115)	ON (626)	QC (316)	ATL (93)
Strongly support	24%	27%	31%	35%	25%	16%	20%
Support	30%	26%	30%	25%	32%	29%	35%
Oppose	14%	14%	15%	9%	12%	19%	15%
Strongly oppose	14%	17%	8%	8%	13%	18%	12%
Not sure	18%	17%	15%	23%	18%	19%	18%

Based on what you've heard and seen, what best describes your opinion of Canada's military mission against ISIS in Iraq?

	Total (1500)	Gender		Age		
		Men (745)	Women (755)	18 – 34 (477)	35 – 54 (591)	55+ (432)
Strongly support	24%	31%	17%	14%	27%	29%
Support	30%	33%	27%	28%	28%	34%
Oppose	14%	12%	17%	19%	12%	13%
Strongly oppose	14%	13%	14%	15%	13%	14%
Not sure	18%	10%	26%	23%	20%	11%

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Based on what you've heard and seen, what best describes your opinion of Canada's military mission against ISIS in Iraq?

	Total (1500)	Federal vote last		
		CPC (429)	Liberal (267)	NDP (359)
Strongly support	24%	45%	15%	16%
Support	30%	30%	31%	30%
Oppose	14%	8%	19%	17%
Strongly oppose	14%	5%	18%	21%
Not sure	18%	11%	16%	16%

This coming week the federal government will put a motion before Parliament to extend Canada's mission for another six months. In your opinion, do you think the Canadian Parliament should vote:

	Total (1500)	Region					
		BC (204)	AB (144)	SK/MB (115)	ON (626)	QC (316)	ATL (93)
To extend the Canadian mission against ISIS	56%	55%	69%	66%	62%	40%	58%
To end the Canadian mission against ISIS	44%	45%	31%	34%	38%	60%	42%

This coming week the federal government will put a motion before Parliament to extend Canada's mission for another six months. In your opinion, do you think the Canadian Parliament should vote:

	Total (1500)	Gender		Age		
		Men (745)	Women (755)	18 – 34 (477)	35 – 54 (591)	55+ (432)
To extend the Canadian mission against ISIS	56%	65%	48%	47%	57%	62%
To end the Canadian mission against ISIS	44%	35%	52%	53%	43%	38%

This coming week the federal government will put a motion before Parliament to extend Canada's mission for another six months. In your opinion, do you think the Canadian Parliament should vote:

	Total (1500)	Federal Vote Last		
		Conservative Party of Canada (429)	Liberal Party of Canada (267)	New Democratic Party of Canada (359)
To extend the Canadian mission against ISIS	56%	78%	50%	44%
To end the Canadian mission against ISIS	44%	22%	50%	56%

If the US were to expand their mission to include active combat on the ground, what do you think Canada should do:

	Total (1500)	Region					
		BC (204)	AB (144)	SK/MB (115)	ON (626)	QC (316)	ATL (93)
Stick to advisors/air only	33%	27%	38%	33%	37%	28%	29%
Get involved on the ground	21%	23%	23%	23%	19%	19%	26%
Canada should not be involved at all	28%	32%	21%	19%	25%	35%	25%
Not sure/can't say	19%	18%	19%	25%	18%	18%	19%

If the US were to expand their mission to include active combat on the ground, what do you think Canada should do:

	Total (1500)	Gender		Age		
		Men (745)	Women (755)	18 – 34 (477)	35 – 54 (591)	55+ (432)
Stick to advisors/air only	33%	37%	29%	27%	33%	39%
Get involved on the ground	21%	28%	14%	16%	21%	24%
Canada should not be involved at all	28%	23%	32%	35%	24%	25%
Not sure/can't say	19%	11%	26%	23%	22%	12%

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And ultimately, do you think Canada being involved in the military efforts against the Islamic State make it:

	Total (1500)	Region					
		BC (204)	AB (144)	SK/MB (115)	ON (626)	QC (316)	ATL (93)
Safer here in Canada	19%	19%	26%	31%	17%	17%	20%
More dangerous	38%	40%	30%	32%	41%	36%	38%
Have no real impact either way	21%	20%	23%	13%	21%	24%	23%
Can't say/don't know	22%	21%	21%	24%	22%	22%	19%

And ultimately, do you think Canada being involved in the military efforts against the Islamic State make it:

	Total (1500)	Gender		Age		
		Men (745)	Women (755)	18 – 34 (477)	35 – 54 (591)	55+ (432)
Safer here in Canada	19%	23%	15%	18%	18%	21%
More dangerous	38%	39%	37%	34%	39%	39%
Have no real impact either way	21%	24%	19%	22%	21%	21%
Can't say/don't know	22%	14%	29%	26%	21%	18%

And ultimately, do you think Canada being involved in the military efforts against the Islamic State make it:

	Total (1500)	Region		
		Support (807)	Oppose (433)	Not sure (273)
Safer here in Canada	19%	31%	4%	6%
More dangerous	38%	30%	60%	27%
Have no real impact either way	21%	21%	26%	16%
Can't say/don't know	22%	18%	10%	50%

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How much will the Canadian mission against ISIS be a factor for you in this year's federal election?							
	Total (1500)	Region					
		BC (204)	AB (144)	SK/MB (115)	ON (626)	QC (316)	ATL (93)
Not a factor (1-3)	28%	30%	32%	27%	29%	24%	28%
4-7	56%	54%	53%	65%	56%	57%	58%
Deciding factor (8-10)	16%	17%	16%	8%	15%	19%	14%

How much will the Canadian mission against ISIS be a factor for you in this year's federal election?						
	Total (1500)	Gender		Age		
		Men (745)	Women (755)	18 – 34 (477)	35 – 54 (591)	55+ (432)
Not a factor (1-3)	28%	30%	25%	25%	30%	28%
4-7	56%	54%	58%	62%	54%	54%
Deciding factor (8-10)	16%	16%	16%	13%	16%	18%

How much will the Canadian mission against ISIS be a factor for you in this year's federal election?				
	Total (1500)	Federal vote last		
		CPC (429)	Liberal (267)	NDP (359)
Not a factor (1-3)	28%	32%	26%	26%
4-7	56%	52%	58%	57%
Deciding factor (8-10)	16%	16%	16%	17%

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Ultimately, do you think the US-led efforts against the Islamic State will be successful at defeating them?							
	Total (1500)	Region					
		BC (204)	AB (144)	SK/MB (115)	ON (626)	QC (316)	ATL (93)
Yes, it will ultimately succeed	10%	12%	9%	11%	10%	10%	9%
Not entirely, but it is still worthwhile	28%	27%	41%	33%	28%	21%	26%
The Islamic State will be hurt, but will still be dangerous	31%	31%	25%	29%	28%	36%	34%
Efforts will fail, the Islamic State will remain a serious threat	13%	12%	8%	9%	14%	15%	16%
Can't say/don't know	18%	18%	16%	18%	20%	17%	14%

Ultimately, do you think the US-led efforts against the Islamic State will be successful at defeating them?						
	Total (1500)	Gender		Age		
		Men (745)	Women (755)	18 – 34 (477)	35 – 54 (591)	55+ (432)
Yes, it will ultimately succeed	10%	14%	7%	12%	9%	11%
Not entirely, but it is still worthwhile	28%	34%	22%	24%	30%	28%
The Islamic State will be hurt, but will still be dangerous	31%	30%	31%	30%	28%	34%
Efforts will fail, the Islamic State will remain a serious threat	13%	12%	14%	11%	13%	16%
Can't say/don't know	18%	10%	26%	24%	20%	10%

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