

Canadians would offer support to Ukraine in conflict with Russia, but few say they want troops involved

Canadians and Americans would both welcome Ukraine into NATO

February 17, 2022 – Concern over escalating tensions along the Russia-Ukraine border has several NATO countries – including Canada – advising their nationals to [immediately leave Ukraine](#).

Amid the uncertainty, new public opinion data from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute finds Canadians expressing a desire to support Ukraine in the conflict – but at arms length.

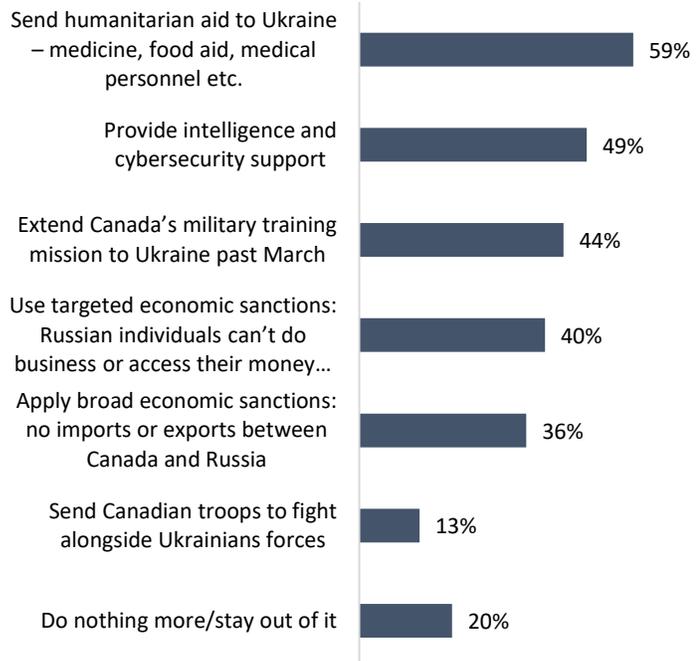
Indeed, the only form of aid or support a majority of people in this country (59%) back is sending humanitarian aid such as medicine and food.

Other possible options, including intelligence support, extending Canada's military training mission to the country past March ([already announced at the end of January](#)) or using targeted or broad economic sanctions received less than majority support. Few (13%) Canadians would commit to putting their country's troops on the front line.

Russia has [issued a set of demands](#) to scale back its aggression, including barring Ukraine from joining NATO. [The U.S. has refused to adhere to that demand](#), despite being [reluctant to accede](#) to Ukraine's formal membership. Ukraine itself may drop the request to join to avoid conflict, [according to the country's ambassador to Britain](#).

There is significant support in both the U.S. and Canada for Ukraine to join the alliance: three-in-five (61%) Americans and two-thirds (68%) of Canadians believe the country should be allowed to join if it wants to. That belief rises for

There are a number of things Canada could do next. Please select all, if any, you think Canada should do: (Canadian respondents, n=1,620)



METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey from Jan. 27-31, 2022 among a representative randomized sample of 1,620 Canadian adults who are members of [Angus Reid Forum](#). For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 2.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

ARI conducted a second online survey from Jan. 27-31, 2022 among a representative randomized sample of 1,007 American adults who are members of [Angus Reid Forum USA](#). For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 3 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding. The survey was self-commissioned and paid for by ARI. Detailed tables are found at the end of this release.

CONTACT:

Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 shachi.kurl@angusreid.org @shachikurl
Dave Korzinski, Research Director: 250.899.0821 dave.korzinski@angusreid.org

Canadians who have been following the situation more closely: four-in-five (78%) say Ukraine should be allowed to join NATO.

More Key Findings:

- Canadians are more likely than Americans to say their respective country should step in to provide humanitarian aid, intelligence support, and defensive gear to Ukraine. Three-in-ten (30%) of Americans believe the U.S. should wash their hands of the situation compared to the one-in-five (20%) Canadians who want Canada to do the same.
- Past CPC (23%) and Bloc Québécois (20%) voters are twice as likely as past NDP (11%) and Liberal (9%) voters to want their country to do nothing to help Ukraine.
- Concern that the situation in Ukraine will lead to major conflict between Russia and NATO is highest among older Canadians: nearly all of men (86%) and women (93%) aged 55 and older say they worry of escalation. Men and women 18- to 34-years-old are less concerned, but still two-thirds fear a confrontation.

About ARI

*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 research foundation established to advance education by commissioning, conducting and disseminating to the public accessible and impartial statistical data, research and policy analysis on economics, political science, philanthropy, public administration, domestic and international affairs and other socio-economic issues of importance to Canada and its world.*

INDEX:

Part One: Half following conflict, three-quarters concerned about escalation

- **Concern about conflict**

Part Two: The North American response

- **Aid and sanctions, but not troops**
- **Majority say engagement should be done in concert with NATO allies**
- **Seven-in-ten Canadians say Ukraine should be allowed to join NATO**

Part One: Half following conflict, three-quarters concerned about escalation

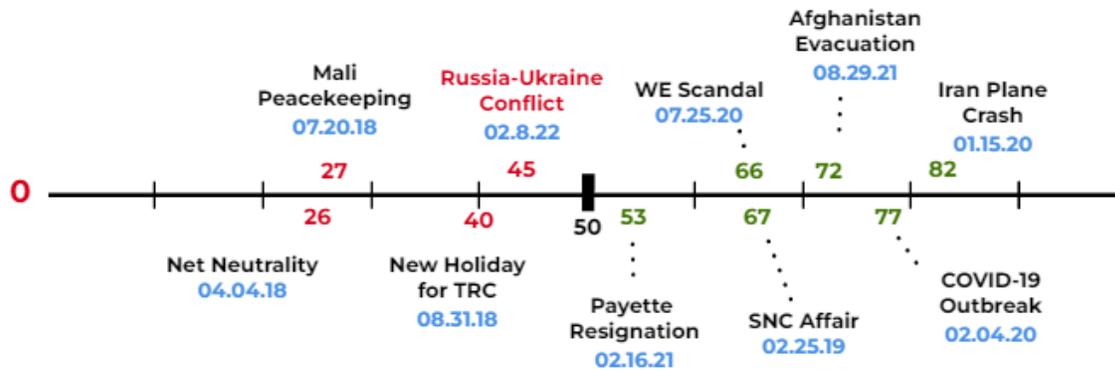
The conflict simmering on the Ukrainian-Russian border reached a [near-boiling point over the weekend](#), as Russian troops continue to amass and threaten an invasion of its western neighbour. Multiple countries – [including Canada](#) – have told their citizens to leave Ukraine as quickly as possible as tensions mount. Despite this potential escalation, this issue has not been resonating significantly with the Canadian public – likely [obscured by domestic issues](#) drawing attention from this global conflict. Men say they are paying more attention to the Russian build-up than women, and past CPC and Liberal voters more than other partisans ([see detailed tables](#)).

CONTACT:

Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 shachi.kurl@angusreid.org @shachikurl
Dave Korzinski, Research Director: 250.899.0821 dave.korzinski@angusreid.org

The issue scores a below average level of attention on the ARI engagement index:

Scores on Angus Reid Institute Engagement Index



50 = generating an average level of engagement

Concern about conflict

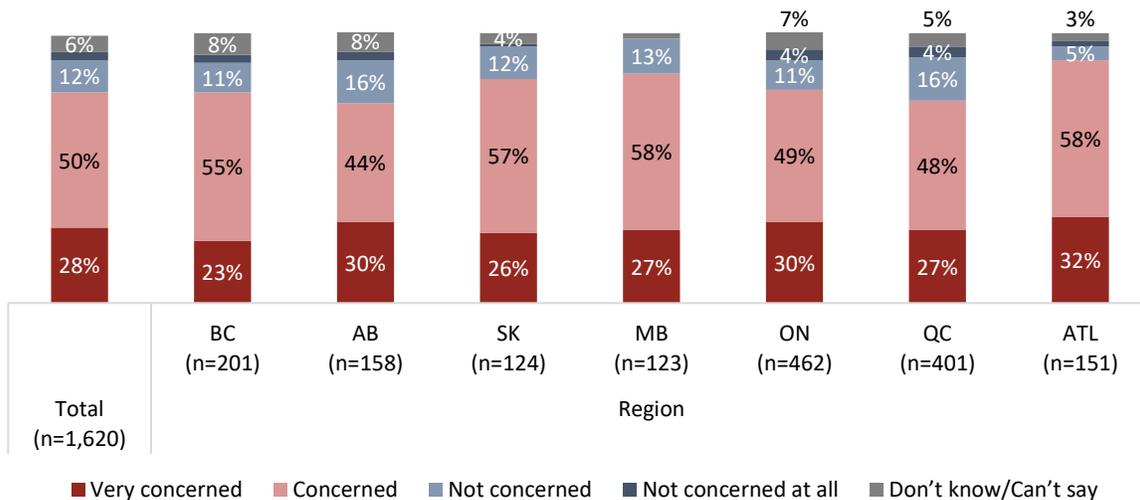
Despite the lower levels of awareness, Canadians express concern once given basic knowledge of the situation. Asked if they worry about the conflict escalating and drawing in western allies, 78 per cent say this is a concern. Anxiety is consistent across the country:

CONTACT:

Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 shachi.kurl@angusreid.org @shachikurl
 Dave Korzinski, Research Director: 250.899.0821 dave.korzinski@angusreid.org

And regardless of how closely you're following the issue, how concerned are you, if at all, that the situation could lead to a major conflict between Russia and western allies?

(Canadian respondents)



Younger Canadians are less concerned about what may develop from the ongoing tension. That said, still a majority among all age and gender combinations say they have at least some level of anxiety ([see detailed tables](#)).

Part Two: The North American response

Both Canada and the U.S. increased their presence in eastern Europe and support to Ukraine as tensions escalated in the region in recent months.

The U.S. has provided \$650 million in defence equipment and services to Ukraine in the last year, including [an additional \\$200 million of "lethal aid"](#) – ammunition, [missiles, artillery and other weapons](#) – approved in January to bolster Ukraine's front-line defenders. The U.S. also [has 7,000 troops](#) stationed in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) nations surrounding Ukraine and Belarus.

Canada so far has expanded its annual military training mission in Ukraine for an additional three years, adding 60 troops to the 200 already on the ground who [teach Ukrainian forces](#) tactics, combat engineering, sniper reconnaissance, and medical skills. There are [another 900 Canadian troops](#) stationed in central and eastern Europe. Canada has also provided [non-lethal military equipment](#), including body armour, metal detectors, thermal binoculars, and surveillance technology. It also sent nearly [\\$8 million of arms](#) including machine guns, hand pistols, carbines, and ammo.

Aid and sanctions, but not troops

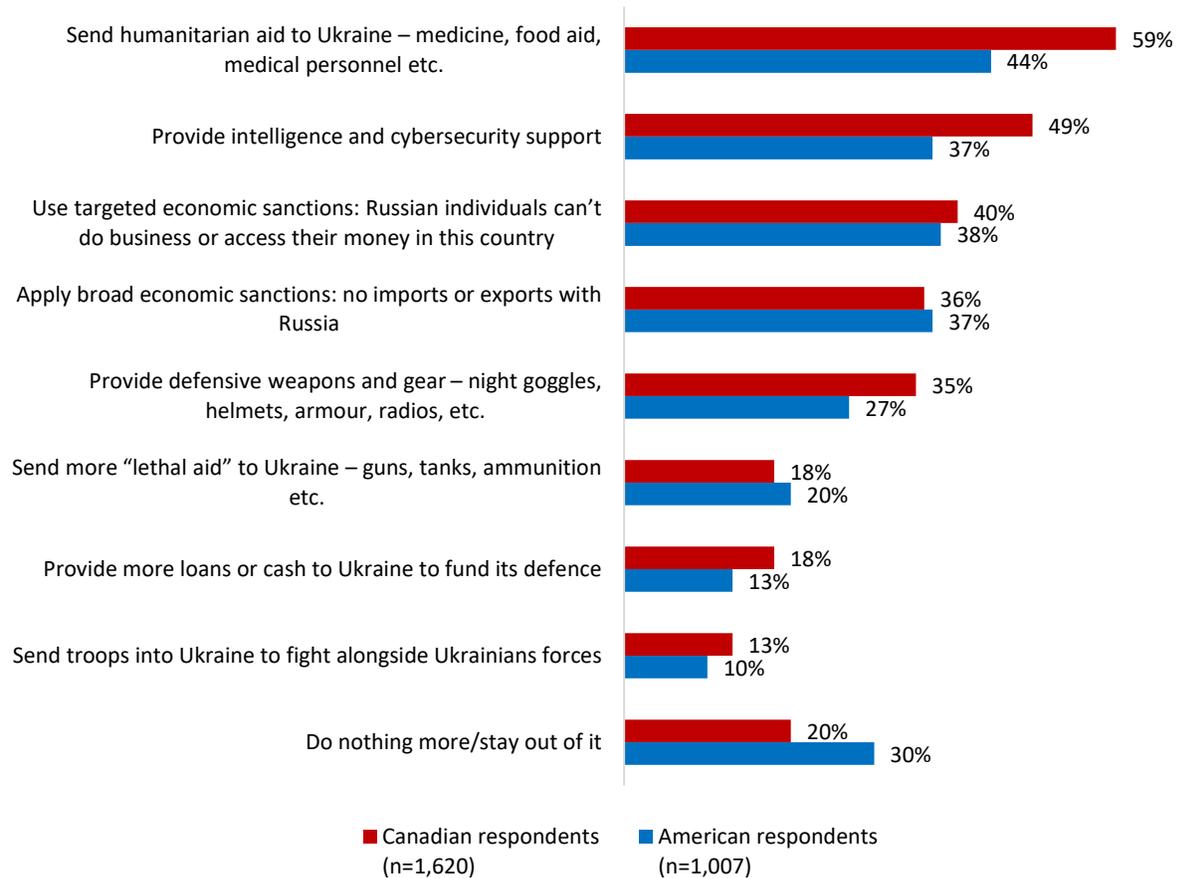
Canadians are most willing to send humanitarian support to Ukraine over all other options, while half (49%) say Canada should provide intelligence and cybersecurity support – [something Canada already is doing](#). Canadians next preferred method to influence the situation is sanctions. More say Canada should stay out of it (20%) than want their country to get more involved militarily.

CONTACT:

Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 shachi.kurl@angusreid.org @shachikurl
 Dave Korzinski, Research Director: 250.899.0821 dave.korzinski@angusreid.org

Overall, Americans are more likely than Canadians to want their country to stay out of the matter completely:

Please select all, if any, you think Canada/US should do:



Those who voted for the Conservative Party or Bloc Québécois in last September's general election are less willing to involve Canada in the situation than past Liberal and NDP voters. One in five among the former want Canada to stay out of it, double the rate of the latter. One notable exception is that past Conservative voters are slightly more likely to endorse sending troops, but that is still a minority view among that cohort:

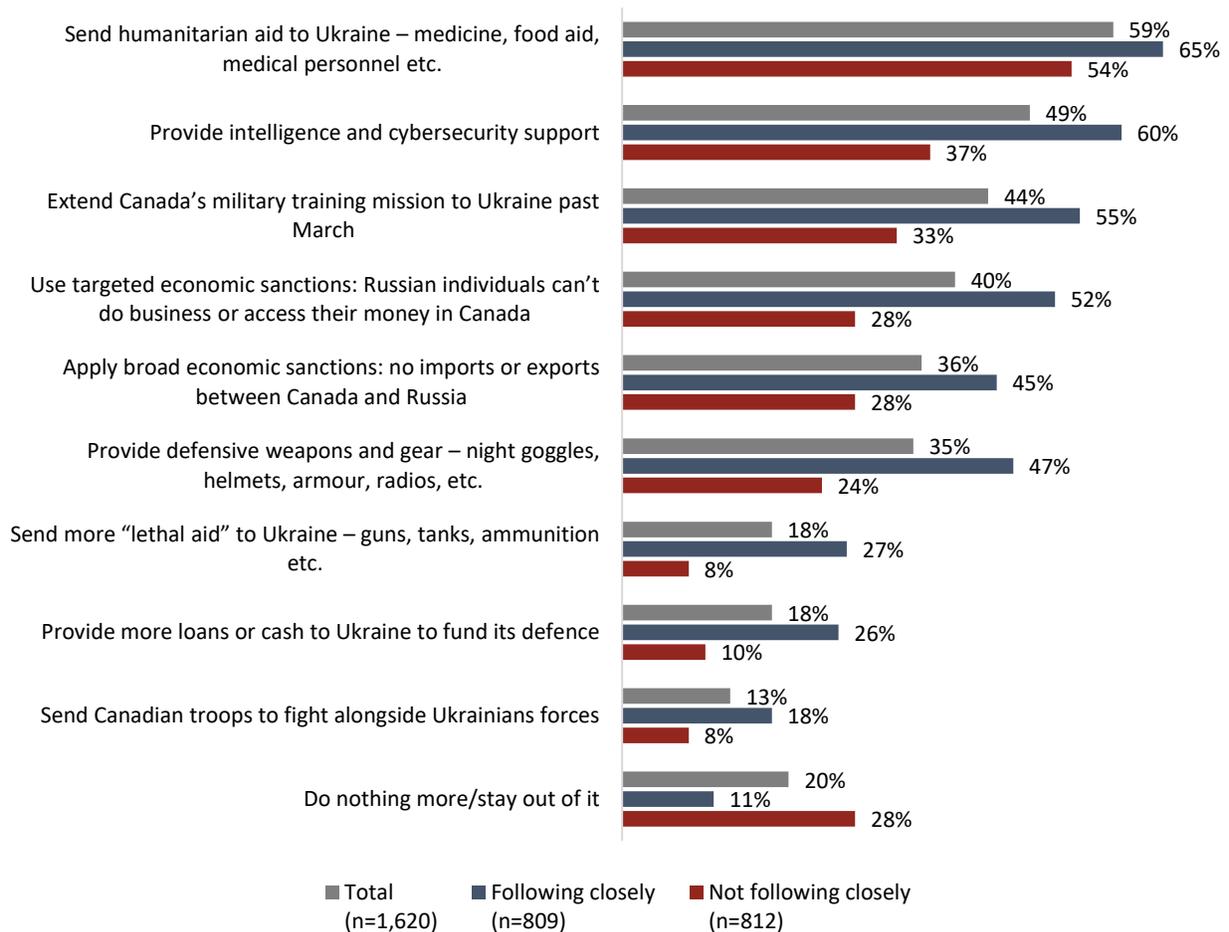
There are a number of things Canada could do next. Please select all, if any, you think Canada should do:					
	Total (n=1,620)	2021 Federal Vote			
		CPC (n=460)	Liberal (n=452)	NDP (n=242)	BQ (n=103)
Send humanitarian aid to Ukraine – medicine, food aid, medical personnel etc.	59%	53%	68%	76%	56%
Provide intelligence and cybersecurity support	49%	49%	58%	59%	35%
Extend Canada's military training mission to Ukraine past March	44%	43%	52%	47%	41%
Use targeted economic sanctions: Russian individuals can't do business or access their money in Canada	40%	38%	50%	48%	33%
Apply broad economic sanctions: no imports or exports between Canada and Russia	36%	33%	46%	40%	41%
Provide defensive weapons and gear – night goggles, helmets, armour, radios, etc.	35%	39%	36%	48%	20%
Provide more loans or cash to Ukraine to fund its defence	18%	15%	25%	19%	15%
Send more "lethal aid" to Ukraine – guns, tanks, ammunition etc.	18%	26%	16%	15%	15%
Send Canadian troops to fight alongside Ukrainians forces	13%	16%	12%	11%	10%
Do nothing more/stay out of it	20%	23%	9%	11%	20%

Those who are following the conflict closely are far more likely to see an urgency in lending a hand. Indeed, among those who are paying close attention, a majority say that Canada should send humanitarian aid, provide intelligence support, extend Canada's training mission in Ukraine, and use targeted economic sanctions against Russian individuals where possible:

CONTACT:

Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 shachi.kurl@angusreid.org @shachikurl
 Dave Korzinski, Research Director: 250.899.0821 dave.korzinski@angusreid.org

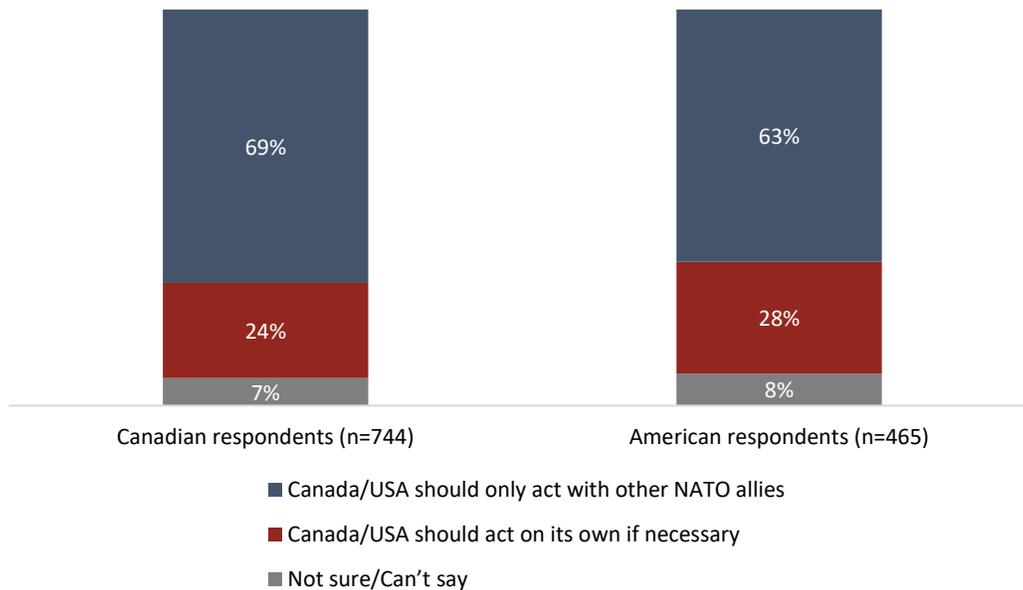
**There are a number of things Canada could do next. Please select all, if any, you think Canada should do:
(Canadian respondents)**



Majority say engagement should be done in concert with NATO allies

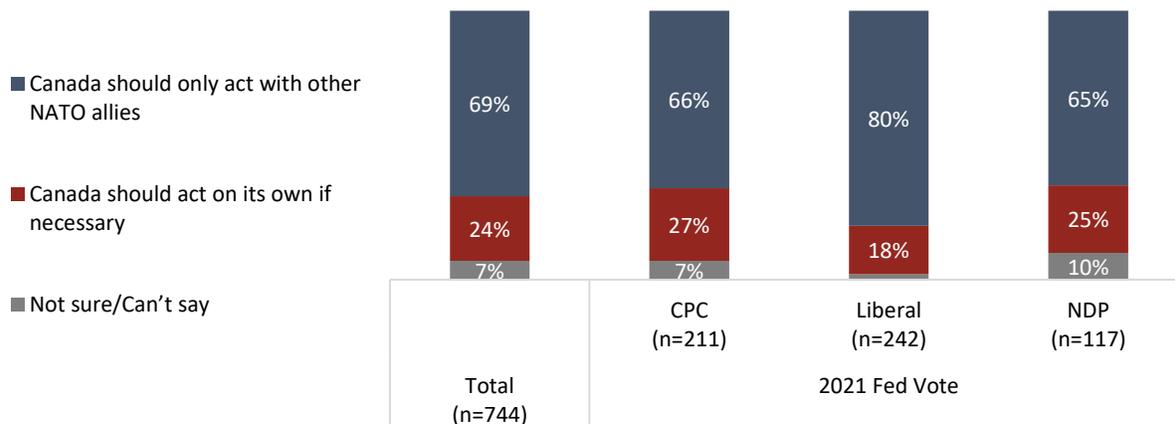
Respondents in both countries who said that their government should enact broad sanctions, send military personnel, or offer lethal military hardware, were asked if they think this should be in concert with other NATO allies or if it should be done unilaterally. Notably, few support unilateral action, while more than three-in-five in each case would prefer their country work with NATO allies:

**Among those who support broad sanctions/ troops/ lethal aid -
Should that happen unilaterally or only if all other NATO allies agree
to do the same?**



While Canadians tend to agree on the principle of multilateralism, past Liberal voters are most assertive on the idea – four-in-five say this should be a condition of Canada’s action.

**Among those who support broad sanctions/troops/lethal aid -
Should that happen unilaterally – that is, Canada acts on its own, or only if all
other NATO allies agree to do the same?
(Canadian respondents)**



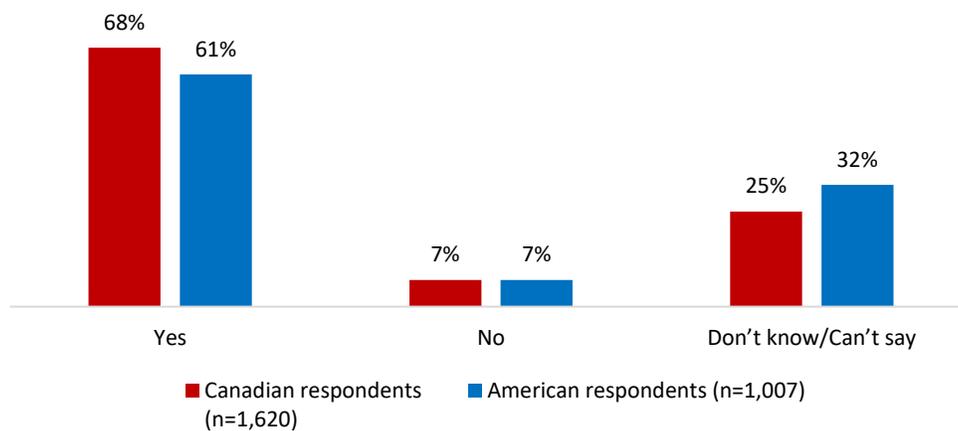
**Responses from past BQ voters not shown due to too small sample size*

Seven-in-ten Canadians say Ukraine should be allowed to join NATO

In order to join the NATO, Ukraine would need to be unanimously confirmed by current members – something which has been [previously rejected](#) and has caused considerable debate. NATO allies have an [obligation](#) to militarily defend member states from acts of aggression, which some suggest is a reason the United States has been hesitant to support Ukraine in joining the alliance. Ukraine, itself, may drop the request to join NATO [to avoid war with Russia](#).

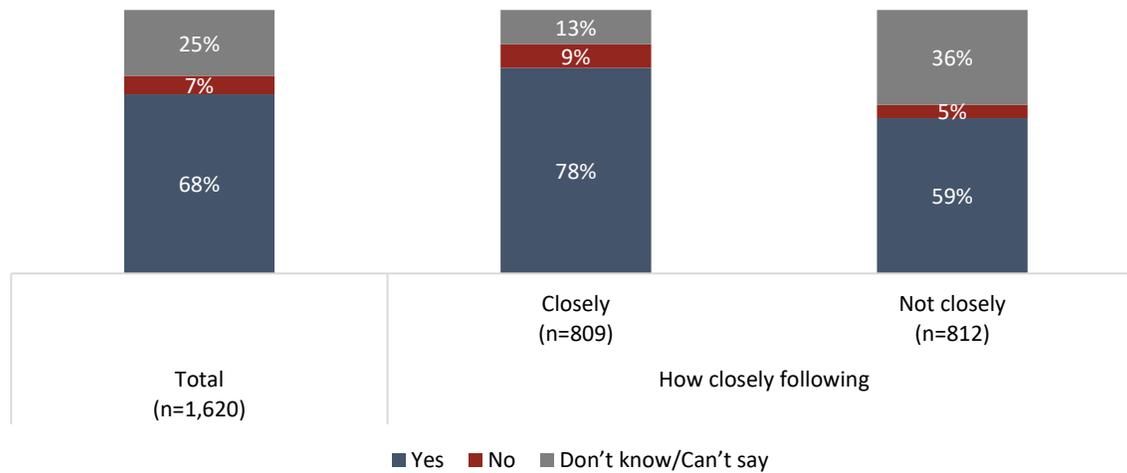
Canadians and Americans themselves would both extend membership to Ukraine if it were their decision to make. In each country, at least three-in-five say yes to this prospect while just seven per cent disagree. Many remain uncertain of whether or not this should be allowed:

Should Ukraine be allowed to join NATO?



Regional opinions on this issue are consistent, with support vastly outpacing opposition everywhere in the country ([see detailed tables](#)). While opinions are also consistent across the political spectrum and among other demographic groups ([see detailed tables](#)), awareness of the conflict is a considerable driver of opinion. Those who are following the issue closely are far more likely to say that they would have Ukraine join NATO and receive the benefits that other nations enjoy:

**In your opinion, should Ukraine be allowed to join NATO, if it wants to?
(Canadian respondents)**



For detailed results for Canadian respondents by age, gender, region, education, and other demographics, [click here](#).

For detailed results for Canadians respondents by how closely they've been following the situation, [click here](#).

For detailed results for American respondents by age, gender, region, education, and other demographics, [click here](#).

CONTACT:

Shachi Kurl, President: 604.908.1693 shachi.kurl@angusreid.org @shachikurl
 Dave Korzinski, Research Director: 250.899.0821 dave.korzinski@angusreid.org