



## **Financial Times/Harris Poll Monthly Opinions of Adults from Five European Countries and the United States**

**September 2008** - Below are the most recent data from the Financial Times/Harris Poll, a monthly poll of adults from five countries in Europe and the U.S. The European countries include France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and Spain.

For more information about the polls and to view the articles by the Financial Times that are based on these data, visit [www.ft.com](http://www.ft.com). For inquiries, contact Tracey McNerney at 585-214-7756 or [press@harrisinteractive.net](mailto:press@harrisinteractive.net).

### **Source**

This FT/Harris Poll was conducted online by Harris Interactive among a total of 6,313 adults (aged 16-64) within France (1,064), Germany (1,042), Great Britain (1,052), Spain (1,009), and the United States (1,005), and adults (aged 18-64) in Italy (1,141) between 3 and 15 September 2008.

### **Complete survey methodology**

This **FT/Harris Poll** was conducted online by Harris Interactive among a total of 6,313 adults (aged 16-64) within France, Germany, Great Britain, Spain, and the United States and adults (aged 18-64) in Italy between 3 and 15 September 2008. Figures for age, sex, education, region and Internet usage were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

**Unweighted bases** for the survey are: Total (6,313); France (1,064); Germany (1,042); Great Britain (1,052); Italy (1,141); Spain (1,009); and the United States (1,005).

Weighted bases for the survey are: Total (6,313); France (1,064); Germany (1,042); Great Britain (1,052); Italy (1,141); Spain (1,009); and the United States (1,005).

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words "margin of error" as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult populations within those countries that were surveyed. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

*These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls and the British Polling Council.*

**TABLE 1**  
**RUSSIA'S ACTIONS AS THREATENING TO EUROPEAN SECURITY**

"As you may have seen or heard, Russia recently sent troops for military action into Georgia. How threatening do you see this to European security?"

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1052	1064	1141	1009	1042	1005
Extremely threatening	13	7	12	6	11	13
Very threatening	20	32	37	28	27	31
Somewhat threatening	41	44	25	42	44	38
Not at all threatening	11	10	17	12	11	8
Not sure	15	7	9	11	7	11

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**At least one-third of adults in all six countries say Russia's recent actions regarding Georgia were extremely or very threatening, with almost half of Italian adults saying this. Conversely, Italians are also more likely than the other countries to say it is not at all threatening.**

**TABLE 2**  
**CHANGING ECONOMIC AND DIPLOMATIC COOPERATION WITH RUSSIA**

"In light of this crisis in Georgia, what should the European Union do with regard to economic and diplomatic co-operation with Russia?"

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1052	1064	1141	1009	1042	1005
INCREASE ECONOMIC AND DIPLOMATIC COOPERATION (NET)	16	14	29	19	21	16
Increase economic and diplomatic cooperation a lot	7	6	17	9	10	6
Increase economic and diplomatic cooperation a little	9	8	12	10	11	10
Neither increase nor decrease economic and diplomatic cooperation	43	37	36	37	45	35
DECREASE ECONOMIC AND DIPLOMATIC COOPERATION (NET)	41	50	34	44	34	49
Decrease economic and diplomatic cooperation a little	24	30	16	20	19	25
Decrease economic and diplomatic cooperation a lot	17	20	19	24	15	24

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**One-third of Italians and Germans, just over two in five Britons and Spaniards and half of French and US adults believe the EU should decrease economic and diplomatic co-operation with Russia over Georgia. Three in ten Italians, the largest number of the six countries, say the co-operation should be increased.**

**TABLE 3  
NATO WINNING OVER WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES**

“Do you think that the European Union and NATO went too far to win over states that used to be in Russia’s sphere of influence?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1052	1064	1141	1009	1042	1005
Yes	26	23	34	32	37	15
No	25	40	40	27	38	38
Not sure	49	37	26	40	25	47

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**Spaniards are more likely to believe the EU and NATO went too far to win over states that used to be in Russia’s sphere of influence, while French, Italian and US adults all say they did not. British adults and Germans are divided over this issue. But there is a great deal of uncertainty as one-quarter of Germans and Italians, two in five French and Spanish adults and almost half of Britons and Americans are ‘not sure’.**

**TABLE 4  
EXPANDING NATO MEMBERSHIP**

“To what extent do you support or oppose NATO membership for Georgia and Ukraine?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1052	1064	1141	1009	1042	1005
SUPPORT (NET)	26	26	38	28	19	41
Strongly support	7	6	11	13	7	20
Somewhat support	19	21	27	15	13	21
Neither support nor oppose	61	55	39	52	46	51
OPPOSE (NET)	13	18	23	20	35	9
Somewhat oppose	7	14	13	11	15	5
Strongly oppose	6	5	10	9	19	4

Note: Multiple responses accepted

**The consensus across all six countries is that people neither support nor oppose NATO membership for Georgia and Ukraine. Among those who do have an opinion, one-third of Germans would oppose membership while at least one-quarter in the other five countries would support it.**

**TABLE 5**  
**SIZE OF CHALLENGE OF RUSSIA TO THE EU**

“In terms of foreign policy, how big is the challenge that Russia poses for the European Union?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1052	1064	1141	1009	1042	1005
Extremely big	10	10	12	7	12	13
Very big	25	42	20	22	39	27
Somewhat big	52	39	43	59	42	54
Not big at all	13	10	25	11	7	6

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**Three in five Spaniards, just over half of US and British adults and a plurality of Italians and Germans all believe that the challenge Russia poses for the EU is somewhat big while a plurality of French say the challenge is very big.**

**TABLE 6**  
**IMPORTANCE OF FOREIGN POLICY EXPERIENCE FOR NEXT US PRESIDENT**

“To what extent, if at all, have the recent events in Russia and Georgia changed your view on the importance of foreign policy experience for the next president of the US? Please select the statement that best represents your view.

Given these events, I believe that foreign policy experience is...”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1052	1064	1141	1009	1042	1005
MORE IMPORTANT THAN BEFORE (NET)	32	26	39	38	42	37
Substantially more important than before	10	6	18	20	18	19
Somewhat more important than before	23	20	21	18	24	18
As important as before	63	69	53	55	51	60
LESS IMPORTANT THAN BEFORE (NET)	4	5	8	8	7	3
Somewhat less important than before	3	3	4	4	5	2
Substantially less important than before	2	3	4	3	2	1

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**Looking at the US election, between one-quarter of adults (in France) and two in five adults (in Germany) believe that recent events in Russia and Georgia makes foreign policy experience more important than it was before while majorities maintain it is just as important as it was.**

**TABLE 7**  
**US PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE BEST ABLE TO PROTECT EU FROM RUSSIA**

“Which US presidential candidate do you think would be better able to protect Europe’s interests with regard to Russia?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1052	1064	1141	1009	1042	1005
Barack Obama	41	64	48	59	57	37
John McCain	15	7	19	13	10	41
Not sure	44	29	33	28	33	22

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**There is a split as to which US presidential candidate would be best able to protect Europe’s interests with regard to Russia. Strong majorities in France, Spain and Germany, just under half of adults in Italy and two in five adults in Great Britain all say it is Barack Obama. In the United States, it’s a little closer, but just over two in five Americans say it is John McCain who would be able to do a better job protecting Europe from Russia and just under say Barack Obama.**

**TABLE 8**  
**FACTORING IN OIL SUPPLIES IN DEALING WITH RUSSIA**

“Many European Union states rely on Russia for oil and gas supplies. How much of a factor should this be in determining how the EU responds to Russia and its military action into Georgia?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1052	1064	1141	1009	1042	1005
An extremely important factor	11	5	12	7	9	9
A very important factor	25	20	23	21	25	33
A somewhat important factor	40	51	38	46	37	40
Not a factor at all	24	24	28	27	28	18

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**One thing that needs to be kept in mind in dealing with Russia is how the EU markets rely on Russia for oil and gas. At least one-quarter of adults in all six countries say this is an extremely or very important fact in determining how the EU responds to Russia. But, one-quarter of adults in the five European countries, and just under one in five Americans, also say it is not a factor at all.**

**TABLE 9**

**SPENDING MORE ON DEFENSE/LESS ON HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY FOR RUSSIA**

“As a result of the events occurring with Russia, how much would you support or oppose the European Union states spending more on defense and less on health and social security to improve the situation in Russia?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1052	1064	1141	1009	1042	1005
SUPPORT (NET)	9	8	11	7	7	21
Strongly support	3	2	4	2	2	8
Somewhat support	6	6	6	5	5	13
Neither support nor oppose	41	31	21	18	21	42
OPPOSE (NET)	49	62	68	75	73	37
Somewhat oppose	24	24	25	22	17	19
Strongly oppose	25	37	43	53	55	18

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**When it comes to choosing between defense spending versus health and social security spending to help improve the situation in Russia, three-quarters in Spain and Germany, two thirds in Italy, three in five French adults and half of British adults would all oppose the European Union spending more on defense and less on health and social security. In the US, a plurality would neither support not oppose, one in five would support and just over one third would oppose the EU spending more on defense and less on social security.**

**TABLE 10**

**SUPPORTING MILITARY ACTION IF RUSSIA GOES INTO BALTIC STATES**

“If Russia were to take similar military action into the Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia (which are NATO members) as it did into Georgia, how much would you support or oppose troops from your country defending these states from attack ?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1052	1064	1141	1009	1042	1005
SUPPORT (NET)	35	41	37	37	26	37
Strongly support	13	8	13	15	12	16
Somewhat support	22	32	24	22	15	20
Neither support nor oppose	34	27	24	23	24	30
OPPOSE (NET)	31	32	39	40	50	34
Somewhat oppose	15	19	19	17	15	17
Strongly oppose	16	14	20	23	35	16

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**People are split as to whether troops should go into the Baltic states if Russia took actions similar to what it did in Georgia. Half of Germans and two in five Italians and Spaniards would oppose their country sending troops. Two in five French adults and just over one-third of Americans and Britons would support their country sending troops.**

**TABLE 15**  
**GREATEST THREATS TO GLOBAL STABILITY**

“Which one, if any, of the following countries do you think is the greatest threat to global stability?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and in the U.S.

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1052	1064	1141	1009	1042	1005
US	26	19	20	41	23	14
Russia	22	21	13	8	20	13
China	17	25	29	13	19	19
Iran	11	17	19	12	12	20
Iraq	9	8	7	9	14	11
North Korea	6	3	2	3	4	15
Afghanistan	*	1	*	*	*	*
UK	-	-	-	-	-	*
India	*	*	*	*	-	-
Pakistan	*	*	*	-	1	*
Israel	*	*	*	-	*	*
Saudi Arabia	-	-	*	-	-	*
Palestine	-	-	-	*	-	-
Muslim (country not specified)	-	-	*	-	-	-
Middle East (country not specified)	-	-	*	-	-	-
No one country – all are a threat	-	-	*	*	-	*
Africa (country not specified)	-	-	-	*	-	*
Other	*	*	*	1	*	*
None	9	6	9	13	8	7
Not sure/Not stated/Refused	*	*	-	*	*	*

Note: \* indicates less than 0.5%; “-” indicates no response

**About Harris Interactive**

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