



New California Media (NCM)

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**MULTILINGUAL POLL OF CHINESE AND TAIWANESE
AMERICANS ON TAIWAN-CHINA RELATIONS, TAIWAN'S
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, U.S. POLICY TOWARDS CHINA AND
TAIWAN AND U.S. POLITICS**

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Executive Summary

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Overview

A large majority (77 percent) of Chinese-Americans in the United States feel that Taiwan belongs to China, according to the first national poll of the group. A slight majority of Chinese Americans polled said that if Taiwan moved towards independence China has the right to intervene militarily. A majority felt that the United States should not get involved in a military campaign on behalf of Taiwan.

The poll was conducted between March 9 and March 15 while tensions between China and Taiwan rose because of the presidential elections in Taiwan. One sensitive issue is current Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian, whom the communist government in Beijing regards as a threat because he has challenged the position that there is only one China and that Taiwan belongs to it. Taiwan and China have been ruled separately since 1949 when a Civil War divided the country, but China still considers democratic Taiwan its territory.

Another prominent issue causing tension in the region is a referendum that Chen spearheaded, which asks Taiwanese to vote on whether the island of 23 million people should strengthen its defense systems to guard against the missiles that China has pointed at Taiwan. Beijing regards the defense referendum as a cloaked effort to promote Taiwanese independence and as a snub to its one-China policy. Lien Chan, Chen's challenger in the presidential race, favors the eventual reunification of Taiwan and China. Chen is also criticized for an economic downturn that has coincided with his four-year term in office.

Although they are the largest Asian community in the United States and influential in U.S. politics, the Chinese American community is seldom polled as a group. This poll taps into their opinions at a time when Taiwan-China relations are in a state of flux and tensions in the Taiwan Strait are coinciding with a U.S. presidential election year.

This multilingual poll was conducted for New California Media (NCM) by Bendixen & Associates and has a margin of error of four (4) percentage points. Respondents could answer in Cantonese, Mandarin or English.

The majority (92 percent) of those polled identified as Chinese or Chinese Americans. The rest (8 percent) of those polled said they were Taiwanese or Taiwanese American.

Taiwanese Americans make up about 5 percent of the nation's 2.7 million Chinese Americans, according to the latest U.S. Census figures.

Major Findings: Taiwan-China Relations

A clear majority of those polled (77 percent) said that Taiwan belongs to China, while 10 percent said that it should be an independent state. When asked if

China and Taiwan should be unified, a similar number of respondents (76 percent) answered yes, while 9 percent answered no.

Among the Taiwan-born individuals polled, however, feelings were more mixed: a large number (41 percent) said that Taiwan should be an independent state, but a significant proportion (32 percent) said Taiwan belongs to China.

Q10. Do you think that Taiwan belongs to China or that Taiwan should be an Independent state?	All Respondents	Taiwanese Only
Taiwan belongs to China	77%	32%
Taiwan should be an independent state	10%	44%
Don't know/No answer	13%	27%

When asked if China and Taiwan should be unified, a larger number (42 percent) of Taiwanese said yes, but a significant minority (35 percent) thought China and Taiwan should remain separate. The rest did not answer or said they did not know.

A small majority (53 percent) of all respondents felt China has the right to take up arms against Taiwan should the island move toward independence, but a significant minority (24 percent) disapproved of that course of action.

Among the Taiwanese polled, the numbers were very different. A two-thirds majority (64 percent) of Taiwanese respondents were not in favor of a military response from China but a minority (23 percent) approved of it.

Q19. If Taiwan decides to move toward independence, do you believe China has the right to intervene militarily?	All Respondents	Taiwanese Only
Yes	53.5%	23%
No	24%	64%
Don't know/No answer	22.5%	14%

If China were to invade Taiwan, a majority (62 percent) of all respondents felt the United States should not intervene on behalf of Taiwan. Only a small minority (16 percent) said the U.S. should intervene to protect Taiwan. Among Taiwanese respondents the results were reversed: a majority (61 percent) favored U.S. intervention on the side of Taiwan in this context, whereas one-third (29 percent) were not in favor of U.S. involvement.

Major Findings: Taiwan Elections

Over half of all the respondents (58 percent) were not happy with the current Taiwanese government and gave Chen either mediocre or poor job ratings.

Among Taiwanese respondents, that number was even higher: a clear majority (66 percent) disapproved of Chen's job as president.

Regardless of their origin, all of the poll's respondents were asked for their opinions on the key issues in the March 20 Taiwan election.

When asked who they think would do a better job running Taiwan, current President Chen or his challenger Lien Chan who supports unification with Mainland China, the largest number of respondents (43 percent) chose Lien. Only a small number (4 percent) backed Chen. An even larger number (53 percent) had no opinion or didn't answer.

Among Taiwanese, a small majority (53 percent) supported the challenger Lien. Only one-fifth (18 percent) backed Chen.

In contrast to the lack of enthusiasm for Chen, a clear majority of respondents (62 percent) approved of the job current Chinese Premier Wen Jiaobao is doing.

More Chinese Americans disapproved of the missile defense referendum. Nearly half (45 percent) of the respondents said they would not vote for increasing Taiwan's defenses in the referendum. However, an almost equal number (42 percent) had no response. A small minority (13 percent) said they were in favor of the referendum.

Taiwanese respondents were divided on the referendum. Roughly one-third (36 percent) supported increasing Taiwan's anti-missile defenses against China. But an almost equal number (35 percent) were opposed and a similar number (29 percent) were undecided.

Nearly all respondents (93 percent) favor direct travel, trade and communications between Taiwan and China.

Major Findings: U.S.-China Relations and U.S. Politics

A majority of all those polled (61 percent) said current U.S.-China relations are positive, though the number drops (52 percent) for respondents who said that U.S.-Taiwan relations are positive.

Respondents who were registered to vote in the United States favored John Kerry over George W. Bush by a margin of 4 to 1 if the presidential election were to be held today.

Nearly two-thirds (60 percent) of registered voters said they favored Kerry while a small percentage (15 percent) said that they would vote for President Bush and one-quarter (25 percent) remained undecided.

One-third of all respondents said they are eligible to vote and of that number a majority (64 percent) are registered to vote.

Among all respondents, the weak economy was seen as the most important issue affecting the Chinese community in the U.S. (43 percent), followed by discrimination against Chinese people and lack of access to health care (both at 14 percent), poor education and unfair immigration policies (both at 10 percent.)

Details on Chinese Americans Polled

The survey involved a scientifically selected, nationally representative sample of 603 Chinese and Taiwanese American adults who could choose to be interviewed in Mandarin, Cantonese, or English.

Respondents were questioned in 37 different states. The largest samples polled were in California and New York where the largest Chinese populations reside. Of those interviewed, 67 percent chose to be interviewed in Mandarin, 29 percent in Cantonese and the remaining 3 percent in English.

This sample population was relatively well educated, with half (48 percent) holding a college or post-graduate degree, and quite young, with more than two-thirds (67 percent) of respondents younger than 50.

Respondents were questioned between March 9 and March 15. The poll has a margin of error of +/- four percentage points.

The Chinese American Voter Education Committee (CAVEC) was a partner in this poll

About New California Media

New California Media is a nationwide association of over 700 print, broadcast, and online ethnic media organizations founded in 1996 by the non-profit Pacific News Service. NCM's goal is to build a more inclusive public forum by raising the visibility of ethnic media and their audiences. NCM is supported by grants from the Ford Foundation, the James Irvine Foundation, the Community Technology Foundation, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation, the San Francisco Foundation, the Overbrook Foundation and the American Association of Advertising Agencies among others. Multilingual polling partners include the USC Annenberg's Institute for Justice and Journalism, the Center for Integration and Improvement of Journalism at San Francisco State, and the Chinese American Voter Education Committee. For more information, visit www.ncmonline.com. □