

Canada's Mission against ISIL: What comes next?

By Bruce Anderson & David Coletto

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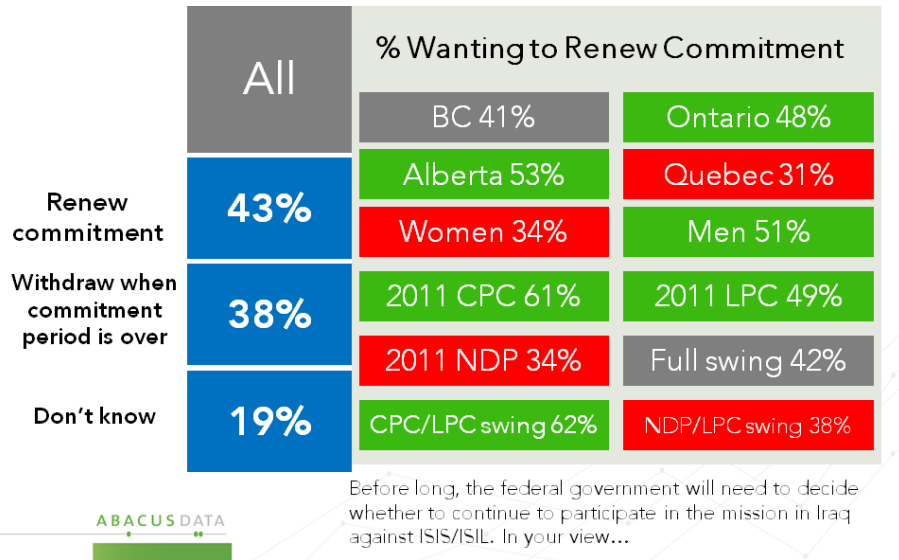
In our latest nationwide poll, we asked some questions about Canada's mission against ISIS/ISIL. Here are the results:

When informed that the Government of Canada must soon decide whether to continue or end our participation in the mission, 43% felt that Canada should continue, while 38% said that Canada should withdraw when the period of time we committed to is over. Another 19% said they didn't know.

Support for continuing was higher in Alberta (53%) and Ontario (48%) and lower than average in Quebec (31%). Most men favour continuing (51%) while the plurality of women would prefer to see the mission end (40%). There is a significant generational skew to these results, with younger people favouring an end, and older voters taking the opposite position.

By a margin of 61%-27% Conservative voters would rather see the mission be extended. That is the plurality view of Liberal voters too (49%-35%). NDP voters lean in the opposite direction (48% withdraw – 34% continue).

Fight against ISIS: Renew or Withdraw?

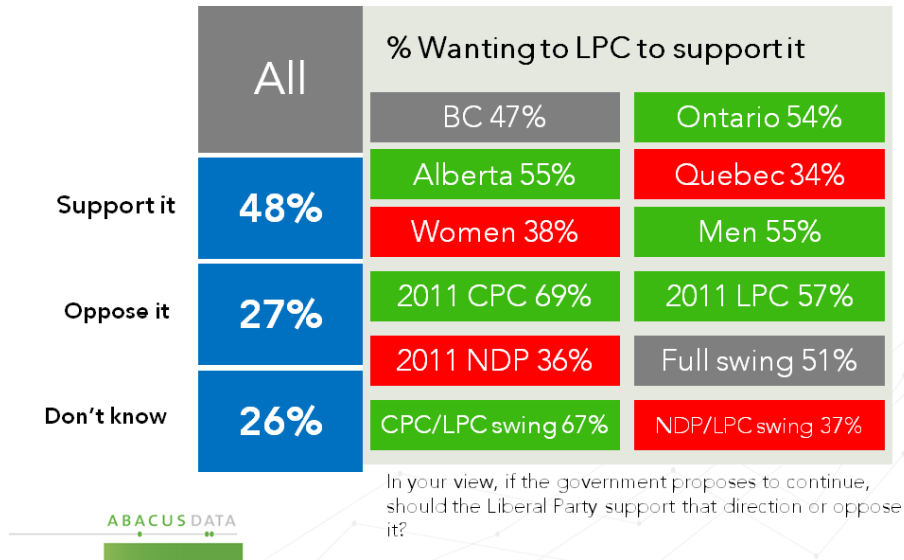


We asked what the opposition parties should do if the government decided to extend the mission. Across the country, 48% said the Liberals should support that decision, while only 27% said the Liberals should vote against such a decision.

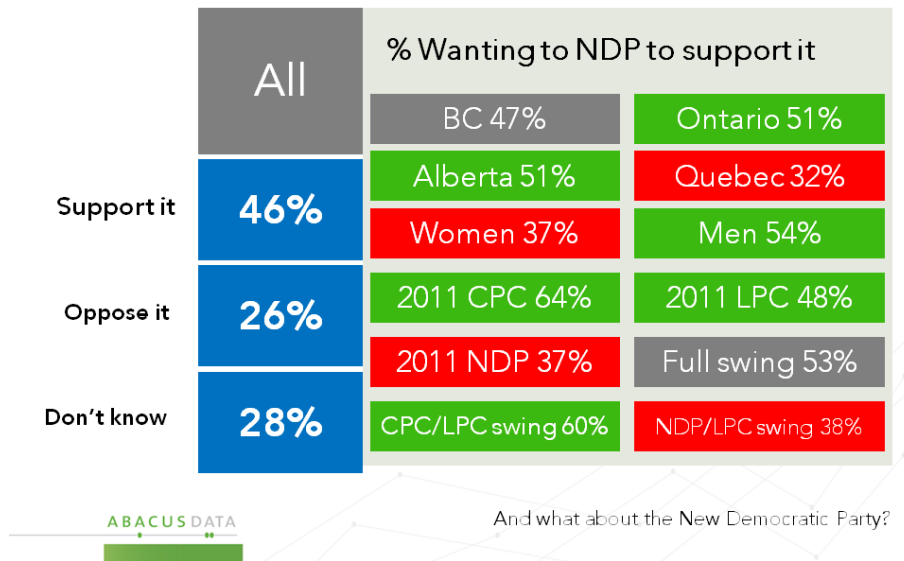
Among Liberal Party voters, 57% said the Liberals should support a government decision to continue. In the critical battleground of Ontario, 54% said the Liberals should vote to support a motion to continue, while 24% said the Liberals should oppose.

When asked what the NDP should do in the event of a government decision to continue, the results are highly similar: 46% said the NDP should support, and 26% oppose. Among NDP voters, there was an even split with 37% saying the NDP should vote with the government, 36% against.

What should the Liberals do?



What should the NDP do?



Worth noting is that about one in five people who personally would rather see Canada withdraw think the opposition parties should support a decision to continue, if that is the position taken by the government. Among those who aren't sure what Canada should do, the

tendency is to want to see opposition parties support rather than oppose the government, if it decides to continue.

View on Mission and What the Opposition Parties Should Do

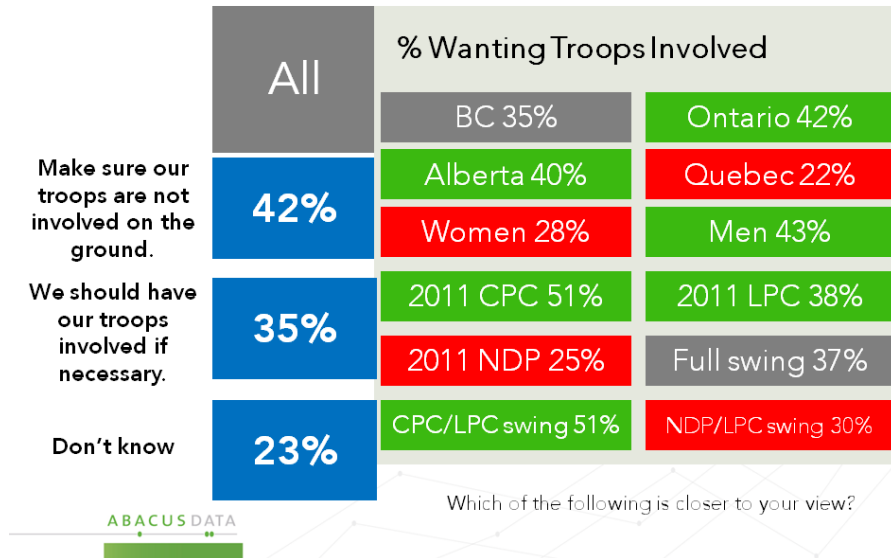
| | View on Withdrawing or Renewing Canada's Commitment to Fight Against ISIS | | |
|----------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|------------|
| | Renew Commitment | Withdraw after commitment is complete | Don't know |
| Liberals should support it | 87% | 17% | 21% |
| Liberals should oppose it | 5% | 62% | 6% |
| NDP should support it | 82% | 20% | 17% |
| NDP should oppose it | 6% | 58% | 8% |

Canadians may hesitate to support a combat role (boots on the ground) but seem reluctant to rule it out as well. 35% say if we participate “we should have our troops be involved in any and all combat roles that are necessary” while 42% say “If we participate we should make sure our troops are not involved in on the ground combat roles” and 23% are unsure.

In Quebec (52%) and BC (42%) , more prefer to avoid combat roles, while in Ontario, the Prairies and Alberta pluralities say we should play whatever role is needed. Opinion is split in Atlantic Canada.

Views on this question are also divided by gender and generation, and political leaning. Worth noting for the Liberals is that voters who will consider only the Liberals and NDP there is a preference for avoiding combat (49%) whereas among those voters who would consider either the Liberals or the Conservatives, the opposite tendency exists.

The Role Canada Should Play to Fight ISIS



Finally, when asked what effect they thought our participation was having on the threat of terror activities against Canada, 37% said they thought the risk was increasing, 23% reducing and 20% having no effect. Another 20% said they did not know.

The Coalition Mission and Terrorism Threats in Canada



Based on what you have read or heard, do you think the coalition mission in Iraq is working to reduce the threat of terrorism against Canada in the future, is having no effect on the risks to Canada or is increasing the risk of terrorist activities aimed at Canada?

Among those who think that participating in the mission is resulting in a heightened risk to Canada, 31% support taking on combat roles, while 53% prefer to see Canadian troops avoid combat roles. The opposite is true among those who think the mission is reducing the threat of terror attacks in Canada: 57% support a combat role while 33% do not.

Canada's Role and Impact of Mission on Terror Threat

| | Impact of mission on terror threat to Canada | | | |
|---|--|---------------------|-------------------|------------|
| | Reducing threat | No impact on threat | Increasing threat | Don't know |
| If we participate as a country, we should have our troops be involved in any and all combat roles that are necessary, alongside our allies. | 57% | 34% | 31% | 19% |
| If we participate as a country, we should make sure our troops are not involved in on the ground combat roles. | 33% | 47% | 53% | 24% |
| Don't know | 10% | 19% | 15% | 57% |

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The upshot?

Canadians reveal a degree of uncertainty about the mission, but nothing that could be described as widespread resistance to the idea of continuing. This seems to be a situation where people believe that government leadership should make the decision it feels is best, given the information at their disposal, and if that decision is to continue, then it would be best not to have this be opposed by the other parties.

On the question of combat participation, the results suggest that people might prefer to see Canada avoid such risks, but are also open to the argument that pulling our share means taking on riskier assignments too.

Willingness to go along with the mission, despite feeling that it may be increasing the risks of terrorism against Canada suggests that many Canadians have decided that this is a fight we are obliged to support, and that degrading the risk will take time.

Opposition parties may read these results as a signal that Canadians expect scrutiny and thoughtful debate about our role, but that unless they offer a persuasive argument about what alternative approach would be better, they will be expected by many voters to avoid the temptation to make this a routine exercise in partisan disagreement.

Methodology

Our survey was conducted online with 1,460 Canadians aged 18 and over from February 12 to February 16, 2015. A random sample of panelists was invited to complete the survey from a large representative panel of Canadians, recruited and managed by Research Now, one of the world's leading provider of online research samples.

The Marketing Research and Intelligence Association policy limits statements about margins of sampling error for most online surveys. The margin of error for a comparable probability-based random sample of the same size is +/- 2.6%, 19 times out of 20. The data were weighted according to census data to ensure that the sample matched Canada's population according to age, gender, educational attainment, and region. Totals may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

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Before long, the federal government will need to decide whether to continue to participate in the mission in Iraq against ISIS/ISIL.

In your view, should Canada withdraw when the period of time we committed to is over, or should we renew our commitment to participate in this coalition effort?

Sample size: 1,460

Comparable MoE: ± 2.6%, 19 times out of 20

Fields dates: Feb 12 to 16, 2015

| | | Canada withdraw when the period of time we committed to is over. | We renew our commitment to participate in this coalition effort. | Don't know | Raw | Weighted |
|---------------------------|------------------------|---|---|------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Canada | 38% | 43% | 19% | 1460 | 1437 |
| Region | BC | 43% | 41% | 17% | 355 | 200 |
| | AB | 34% | 53% | 13% | 115 | 151 |
| | SK/MB | 30% | 49% | 21% | 118 | 97 |
| | ON | 34% | 48% | 18% | 403 | 555 |
| | QC | 46% | 31% | 24% | 336 | 337 |
| | ATL | 37% | 36% | 28% | 133 | 96 |
| Gender | Male | 36% | 51% | 13% | 693 | 693 |
| | Female | 40% | 34% | 25% | 767 | 744 |
| Age group | 18 - 29 | 47% | 27% | 26% | 227 | 286 |
| | 30 - 44 | 45% | 39% | 16% | 451 | 351 |
| | 45 - 59 | 36% | 42% | 22% | 448 | 428 |
| | 60 and over | 27% | 59% | 14% | 334 | 371 |
| Education | HS or less | 35% | 40% | 25% | 350 | 505 |
| | College | 40% | 42% | 18% | 533 | 526 |
| | University | 40% | 47% | 14% | 577 | 406 |
| 2011 vote | Conservative Party | 27% | 61% | 12% | 387 | 390 |
| | Liberal Party | 35% | 49% | 16% | 237 | 211 |
| | NDP | 48% | 34% | 17% | 275 | 260 |
| Swing voter Groups | Consider CPC, LPC, NDP | 40% | 42% | 18% | 199 | 188 |
| | Consider CPC & LPC | 32% | 62% | 7% | 212 | 200 |
| | Consider LPC & NDP | 44% | 38% | 18% | 288 | 256 |

In your view, if the government proposes to continue, should the Liberal Party support that direction or oppose it?

Sample size: 1,460

Comparable MoE: ± 2.6%, 19 times out of 20

Fields dates: Feb 12 to 16, 2015

| | | Support it | Oppose it | Don't know | Raw | Weighted |
|--------------------|------------------------|------------|-----------|------------|------|----------|
| Region | Canada | 48% | 27% | 26% | 1460 | 1437 |
| | BC | 47% | 29% | 24% | 355 | 200 |
| | AB | 55% | 18% | 27% | 115 | 151 |
| | SK/MB | 52% | 20% | 28% | 118 | 97 |
| | ON | 54% | 24% | 22% | 403 | 555 |
| | QC | 34% | 36% | 29% | 336 | 337 |
| | ATL | 44% | 22% | 33% | 133 | 96 |
| Gender | Male | 58% | 27% | 16% | 693 | 693 |
| | Female | 38% | 27% | 35% | 767 | 744 |
| Age group | 18 - 29 | 29% | 32% | 39% | 227 | 286 |
| | 30 - 44 | 41% | 32% | 27% | 451 | 351 |
| | 45 - 59 | 49% | 25% | 26% | 448 | 428 |
| | 60 and over | 67% | 19% | 14% | 334 | 371 |
| Education | HS or less | 43% | 25% | 32% | 350 | 505 |
| | College | 49% | 27% | 24% | 533 | 526 |
| | University | 51% | 29% | 20% | 577 | 406 |
| 2011 vote | Conservative Party | 69% | 16% | 15% | 387 | 390 |
| | Liberal Party | 57% | 25% | 19% | 237 | 211 |
| | NDP | 36% | 40% | 25% | 275 | 260 |
| Swing voter Groups | Consider CPC, LPC, NDP | 51% | 21% | 28% | 199 | 188 |
| | Consider CPC & LPC | 67% | 18% | 15% | 212 | 200 |
| | Consider LPC & NDP | 37% | 39% | 23% | 288 | 256 |

And what about the New Democratic Party?

Sample size: 1,460

Comparable MoE: $\pm 2.6\%$, 19 times out of 20

Fields dates: Feb 12 to 16, 2015

| | | Support it | Oppose it | Don't know | Raw | Weighted |
|--------------------|------------------------|------------|-----------|------------|------|----------|
| Region | Canada | 46% | 26% | 28% | 1460 | 1437 |
| | BC | 47% | 28% | 26% | 355 | 200 |
| | AB | 51% | 21% | 29% | 115 | 151 |
| | SK/MB | 49% | 21% | 29% | 118 | 97 |
| | ON | 51% | 24% | 25% | 403 | 555 |
| | QC | 32% | 35% | 33% | 336 | 337 |
| | ATL | 45% | 20% | 35% | 133 | 96 |
| Gender | Male | 54% | 26% | 19% | 693 | 693 |
| | Female | 37% | 26% | 37% | 767 | 744 |
| Age group | 18 - 29 | 29% | 33% | 38% | 227 | 286 |
| | 30 - 44 | 40% | 31% | 29% | 451 | 351 |
| | 45 - 59 | 46% | 22% | 32% | 448 | 428 |
| | 60 and over | 64% | 20% | 16% | 334 | 371 |
| Education | HS or less | 43% | 22% | 35% | 350 | 505 |
| | College | 46% | 27% | 26% | 533 | 526 |
| | University | 49% | 29% | 23% | 577 | 406 |
| 2011 vote | Conservative Party | 64% | 17% | 18% | 387 | 390 |
| | Liberal Party | 48% | 27% | 25% | 237 | 211 |
| | NDP | 37% | 38% | 25% | 275 | 260 |
| Swing voter Groups | Consider CPC, LPC, NDP | 53% | 17% | 30% | 199 | 188 |
| | Consider CPC & LPC | 60% | 20% | 20% | 212 | 200 |
| | Consider LPC & NDP | 38% | 38% | 25% | 288 | 256 |

Which of the following is closer to your view:

Sample size: 1,460
 Comparable MoE: ± 2.6%, 19 times out of 20
 Fields dates: Feb 12 to 16, 2015

| | | If we participate as a country, we should have our troops be involved in any and all combat roles that are necessary... | If we participate as a country, we should make sure our troops are not involved in on the ground combat roles. | Don't know | Raw | Weighted |
|--------------------|------------------------|---|--|------------|------|----------|
| Region | Canada | 35% | 42% | 23% | 1460 | 1437 |
| | BC | 33% | 43% | 24% | 355 | 200 |
| | AB | 40% | 36% | 24% | 115 | 151 |
| | SK/MB | 44% | 38% | 18% | 118 | 97 |
| | ON | 42% | 38% | 21% | 403 | 555 |
| | QC | 22% | 52% | 26% | 336 | 337 |
| | ATL | 35% | 37% | 28% | 133 | 96 |
| Gender | Male | 43% | 41% | 16% | 693 | 693 |
| | Female | 28% | 42% | 30% | 767 | 744 |
| Age group | 18 - 29 | 26% | 43% | 30% | 227 | 286 |
| | 30 - 44 | 30% | 43% | 27% | 451 | 351 |
| | 45 - 59 | 37% | 41% | 22% | 448 | 428 |
| | 60 and over | 45% | 39% | 15% | 334 | 371 |
| Education | HS or less | 34% | 40% | 26% | 350 | 505 |
| | College | 35% | 43% | 22% | 533 | 526 |
| | University | 38% | 42% | 20% | 577 | 406 |
| 2011 vote | Conservative Party | 51% | 32% | 17% | 387 | 390 |
| | Liberal Party | 38% | 42% | 21% | 237 | 211 |
| | NDP | 25% | 58% | 17% | 275 | 260 |
| Swing voter Groups | Consider CPC, LPC, NDP | 37% | 39% | 24% | 199 | 188 |
| | Consider CPC & LPC | 51% | 36% | 12% | 212 | 200 |
| | Consider LPC & NDP | 30% | 49% | 21% | 288 | 256 |

Based on what you have read or heard, do you think the coalition mission in Iraq is working to reduce the threat of terrorism against Canada in the future, is having no effect on the risks to Canada or is increasing the risk of terrorist activities aimed at Canada?

Sample size: 1,460
 Comparable MoE: ± 2.6%, 19 times out of 20
 Fields dates: Feb 12 to 16, 2015

| | | It is working to reduce the threat of terrorism against Canada in the future. | It is having no effect on the risks to Canada. | It is increasing the risk of terrorist activities aimed at Canada. | Don't know | Raw | Weighted |
|--------------------|------------------------|---|--|--|------------|------|----------|
| Region | Canada | 23% | 20% | 37% | 20% | 1460 | 1437 |
| | BC | 21% | 18% | 41% | 20% | 355 | 200 |
| | AB | 29% | 23% | 31% | 17% | 115 | 151 |
| | SK/MB | 22% | 20% | 38% | 20% | 118 | 97 |
| | ON | 27% | 19% | 36% | 18% | 403 | 555 |
| | QC | 14% | 24% | 40% | 23% | 336 | 337 |
| | ATL | 24% | 17% | 32% | 26% | 133 | 96 |
| Gender | Male | 29% | 20% | 38% | 13% | 693 | 693 |
| | Female | 17% | 20% | 36% | 26% | 767 | 744 |
| Age group | 18 - 29 | 14% | 23% | 34% | 29% | 227 | 286 |
| | 30 - 44 | 20% | 24% | 35% | 22% | 451 | 351 |
| | 45 - 59 | 24% | 15% | 41% | 20% | 448 | 428 |
| | 60 and over | 32% | 21% | 36% | 11% | 334 | 371 |
| Education | HS or less | 22% | 18% | 36% | 24% | 350 | 505 |
| | College | 24% | 20% | 37% | 20% | 533 | 526 |
| | University | 23% | 24% | 38% | 15% | 577 | 406 |
| 2011 vote | Conservative Party | 36% | 20% | 35% | 10% | 387 | 390 |
| | Liberal Party | 27% | 17% | 40% | 16% | 237 | 211 |
| | NDP | 17% | 21% | 42% | 20% | 275 | 260 |
| Swing voter Groups | Consider CPC, LPC, NDP | 27% | 19% | 34% | 20% | 199 | 188 |
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| | Consider LPC & NDP | 11% | 25% | 48% | 16% | 288 | 256 |