



PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

Survey on Nuclear Weapons Policy Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty

Fielded by: Nielsen Scarborough **Fielding Dates:** January 7 – February 1, 2019
Total Sample: 2264 registered voters; **Sample size:** Sample A: 1133; Sample B: 1131
Margin of Error: Full Sample: +/- 2.1%; Sample A/B: +/- 2.9%

Today we are going to do a survey on what policies the U.S. should have in regard to nuclear weapons. This survey will take about 25 to 30 minutes to answer. Since you have taken a survey with us before, you know that we will make no effort to sell anything to you and your answers will remain confidential. If at any time you find that you do not want to answer a question feel free to skip it and move on to the next one.

***Note: Text in brackets was not shown to the respondents.**

[SAMPLE DRAWN AND DIVIDED INTO 2 HALF SAMPLES A,B]

[Q1-25: Questions held for future release.]

[HALF SAMPLE B]

[INF Treaty]

We are now going to explore some debates surrounding arms control treaties that limit the number and types of nuclear weapons that countries can have.

Currently, there is a debate about the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces treaty, also known as the INF treaty. This treaty was signed by former President Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev in 1987. It prohibits the U.S. and Russia (then the Soviet Union) from having land-based missiles with flight ranges between 310 to 3,420 miles. It was the first treaty to ban a whole class of weapons and included unprecedented on-site inspections.

The U.S. has accused Russia of violating the treaty, but Russia has denied it. Similarly, Russia has accused the U.S. of violating the treaty, but the U.S. has also denied it.

There is a debate now about whether the United States should withdraw from the treaty in response to what it sees as Russian violations. If the U.S. were to formally withdraw, it must make an announcement and then there is a six month period before it becomes final.

Here is an argument in favor of the U.S. initiating the process of withdrawing from the INF Treaty:

Q26. Russia has violated the INF treaty for years. In dialog with the Russians about this problem—over two presidential administrations--the Russians have refused to admit their violations. We cannot let Russia cheat without consequences. We cannot let them have this new type of weapon while we are constrained. It is time for the U.S. to take strong action and start the process of withdrawing from the Treaty. During the six months that the process takes, the Russians might finally be willing to admit that they've cheated and make the necessary changes. If not, we need to follow through and withdraw. After all, the Treaty has not been very good for the U.S., since it has restrained us from building missiles of the same range that we could deploy in Asia, while China has been free to develop them and has in fact been building a lot of them. So, freeing the U.S. up to develop intermediate range forces may have advantages for us.

	Total convincing	Very Convincing	Somewhat Convincing	Somewhat Unconvincing	Strongly Unconvincing	Total Unconvincing	Ref. / Dk
National	64.6%	19.6%	45.0%	25.5%	8.8%	34.3%	1.2%
GOP	79.9%	28.6%	51.3%	15.4%	4.0%	19.4%	0.7%
Dems	52.8%	14.3%	38.5%	32.6%	13.9%	46.5%	0.8%
Indep.	62.7%	13.7%	49.0%	28.5%	5.0%	33.5%	3.8%

Here is a counter argument:

Q27. The INF Treaty has played a very important role in European security for more than thirty years. These weapons were especially dangerous because they were very accurate and powerful, and could destroy leadership and military targets in minutes. Our NATO allies still support the agreement and do not want the United States to make it legal again for Russia to deploy weapons that could destroy European capitals with almost no warning. We should make a more concerted effort to negotiate with the Russians. There are viable ways to address both sides concerns. Russia has said that it will work with the United States to do this. Being free to put new intermediate range land-based missiles in Asia would not provide an important benefit. We have plenty of other nuclear and non-nuclear weapons there that can do what we need. Finally, most of our European and Asian allies do not want us to put intermediate-range missiles on their territory, so it is not clear that we would gain anything from withdrawing from the INF Treaty.

	Total convincing	Very Convincing	Somewhat Convincing	Somewhat Unconvincing	Strongly Unconvincing	Total Unconvincing	Ref. / Dk
National	67.8%	21.3%	46.5%	25.3%	6.3%	31.6%	0.6%
GOP	58.3%	13.8%	44.5%	31.4%	9.8%	41.2%	0.6%
Dems	77.2%	30.2%	47.0%	19.0%	3.5%	22.5%	0.3%
Indep.	62.9%	12.8%	50.1%	29.3%	6.6%	35.9%	1.2%

Q28. So now, do you think the U.S. should:

1. start the six month process of withdrawing from the INF Treaty, and if the Russians do not make the changes the U.S. seeks, withdraw from the Treaty.
2. stay within the INF Treaty and redouble efforts to work with the Russians to address concerns of both sides.

	Start 6-month process of withdrawing from INF Treaty; if Russians do not make changes U.S. seek, withdraw from Treaty.	Stay within INF Treaty; redouble efforts to work with Russians to address concerns of both sides	Ref/Dk
National	30.0%	66.4%	3.6%
GOP	42.8%	54.7%	2.5%
Dems	19.5%	76.9%	3.7%
Indep.	30.9%	63.2%	6.0%

[Q29-40: Questions held for future release.]

Thank you so much for completing the survey! Your response is very valuable to us.