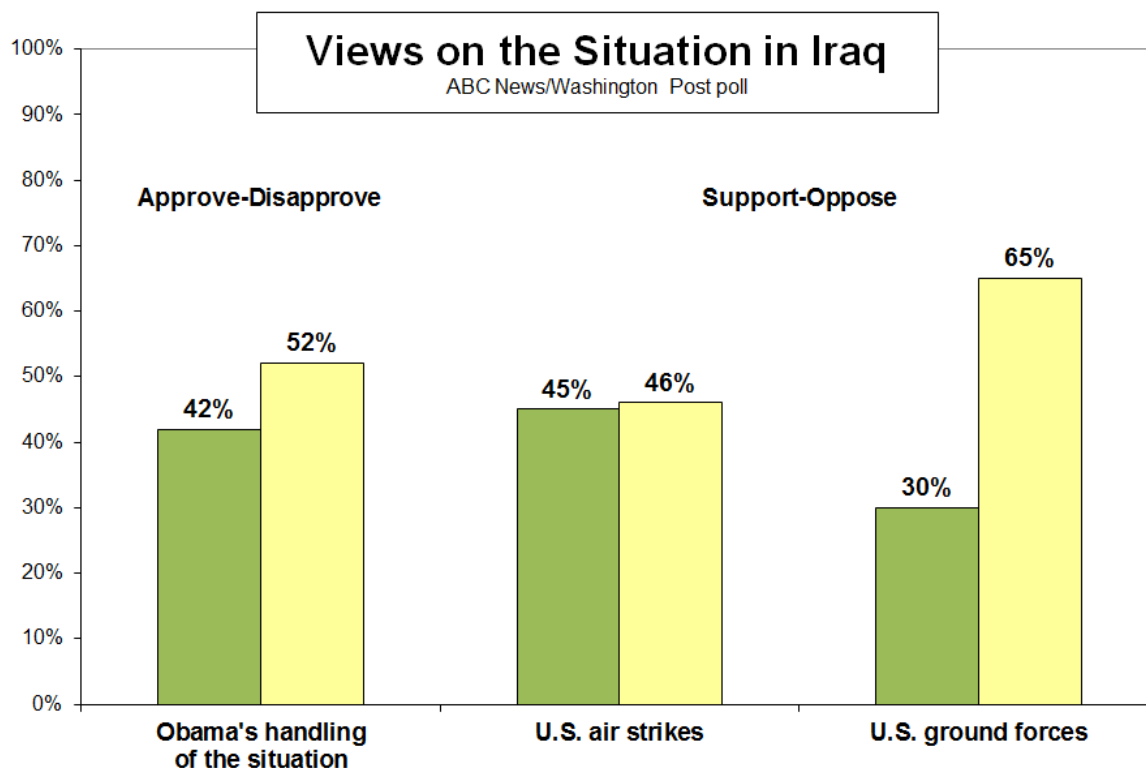


## **Poll Finds Criticism of Obama on Iraq Despite Agreement on Ground Forces**

More Americans disapprove than approve of Barack Obama's response to the situation in Iraq, even while the public broadly agrees with his decision not to send U.S. combat forces there.

The latest ABC News/Washington Post poll marks the difficulties Obama faces in crafting a popular response to the deepening crisis. Two-thirds oppose sending ground troops to fight the Sunni insurgents in Iraq, a step the president himself ruled out last week. Regardless, just 42 percent approve of the way he's handling the situation, while 52 percent disapprove.

The public divides evenly on another potential option, the use of air strikes.



Highlighting a disconnect between policy preferences and presidential approval, "strong" disapprovers of the way Obama is handling the situation outnumber strong approvers by a 2-1 margin, yet strong opposition to sending troops exceeds strong support by 3-1.

A variety of related views may inform these attitudes. Steadily since late 2004, majorities of Americans have said that, given its costs vs. its benefits, the war in Iraq was not worth fighting.

And when Obama moved to withdraw all U.S. forces in 2011, he enjoyed 78 percent support. Clearly it's a conflict the public is reluctant to revisit.

Another factor is the high level of partisanship in Obama's ratings. Seventy-three percent of Democrats approve of his handling of the crisis, while 84 percent of Republicans and 54 percent of independents disapprove. Partisanship remains, but much less starkly, in terms of air strikes (more popular among Republicans), and fades further on sending ground troops. Indeed, there's no relationship at all between views on sending troops and approval of Obama's work on the issue.

Ideology plays a similar role to partisanship in this poll, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#). Conservatives are much more apt than moderates or liberals to criticize Obama's handling of the situation, and somewhat more likely to favor air strikes, but with very little ideological difference in views on sending combat troops.

Among other groups, women and young adults are less apt than men and those 30 and up to support air strikes; those gaps essentially disappear when it comes to sending combat troops. For their part, views of Obama's handling of the situation reflect some customary differences in his ratings, with disapproval higher among men, whites and older adults.

	Approve-Disapprove Obama's handling of Iraq	---- Support-Oppose ---- U.S. air strikes	----- Sending ground forces
All	42-52%	45-46%	30-65%
Democrats	73-21	44-48	27-66
Republicans	13-84	58-38	37-60
Independents	40-54	41-50	27-68
Liberals	62-33	42-51	26-70
Moderates	45-47	42-49	31-65
Conservatives NET	27-69	51-42	32-62
Somewhat cons.	31-64	53-40	32-62
Very cons.	20-76	49-45	32-63
Men	40-56	54-40	30-66
Women	43-48	38-52	29-63
18-29	43-46	35-53	32-60
30-plus	41-54	49-44	29-66

**METHODOLOGY** – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by landline and cell phone June 18-22, 2014, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 1,009 adults. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 3.5 points. The survey was produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#) of New York, N.Y.

Analysis by Gary Langer and Gregory Holyk.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>.

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Full results follow.

1. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling the situation in Iraq? Do you feel that way strongly, or somewhat?

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
6/22/14	42	17	25	52	18	34	6

2. Overall, do you support or oppose U.S. air strikes against the Sunni insurgents in Iraq? Do you feel that way strongly, or somewhat?

	----- Support -----			----- Oppose -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
6/22/14	45	20	25	46	19	27	8

3. Overall, do you support or oppose sending U.S. ground forces to combat the Sunni insurgents in Iraq? Do you feel that way strongly, or somewhat?

	----- Support -----			----- Oppose -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
6/22/14	30	14	16	65	22	42	6

\*\*\* END \*\*\*