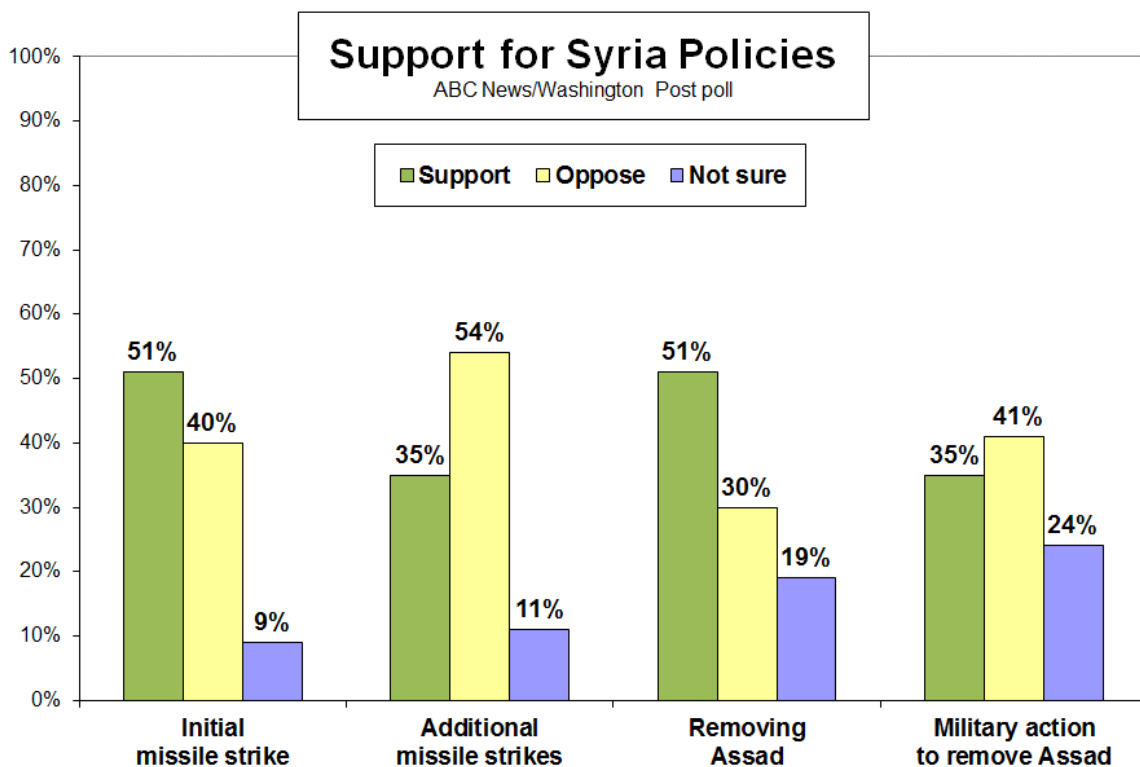


## **Slim Majority Backs U.S. Strike on Syria, But with Concern about Russian Relations**

The slimmest majority of Americans in a new ABC News/Washington Post poll supports the Trump administration’s missile strike on Syria, with strongly partisan opinions, muted appetite for further action, little confidence it’ll achieve the desired effect – and majority concerns about the impact on U.S. relations with Russia.

Fifty-one percent in the national survey support the air strikes – 86 percent of Republicans, but 46 percent of independents and 37 percent of Democrats. Four in 10 overall are opposed, with the rest undecided.

The same number, 51 percent, also support an explicit U.S. policy to remove Syrian President Bashar al-Assad from power, a point on which administration policy has seemed inconsistent.

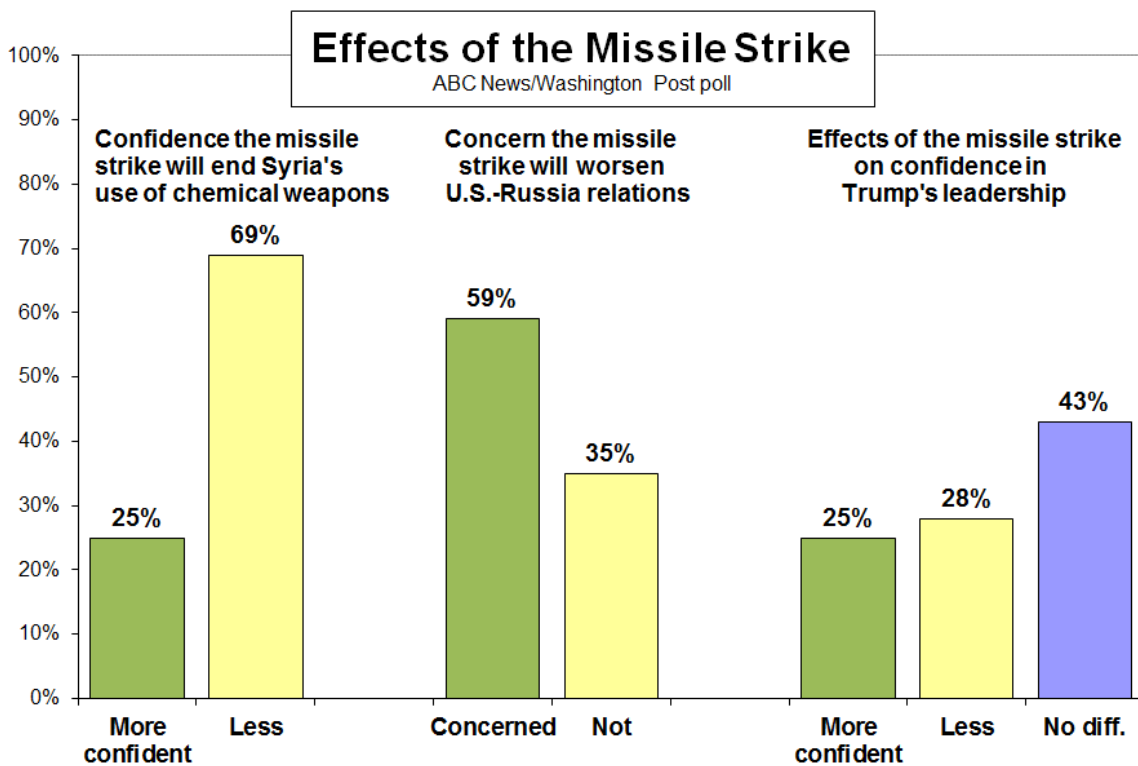


That said, just 25 percent overall think the attack will successfully dissuade Syria from using chemical weapons in the future. (Six percent are very confident in this; 41 percent, not confident at all.) Barely more than a third, 35 percent, support additional U.S. strikes on Syria. And the

same number, 35 percent, support military action specifically to remove Assad from power if diplomatic efforts fail. All are much lower than support for the initial strike.

Further, the survey finds that 59 percent of Americans are concerned about Friday’s missile strike worsening U.S. relations with Russia, a Syrian ally. Again, there’s a partisan split, albeit less lopsided: Three-quarters of Democrats express concern about Russian relations, as do 57 percent of independents and 44 percent of Republicans.

The poll was produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#). Its results, in sum, reflect the troubling nature of the Mideast situation, with revulsion at the use of chemical weapons mixed with desire to avoid a military entanglement, doubts about the effectiveness of U.S. efforts and concerns about broader international relations.



As for the president personally, 51 percent approval for the strike is substantially higher than Trump’s overall job approval rating in recent polls. But broader impacts on his approval remain to be seen. Essentially, for everyone in this poll who says the action made them more confident in Trump’s leadership, someone else says it made them less confident – 25 and 28 percent, respectively. A plurality, 43 percent, says it made no difference.

Support for the strike (post-facto) is higher than when action against Syria after the use of chemical weapons there was under discussion during the Obama administration. In three ABC/Post surveys in September 2013, 30 to 36 percent supported U.S. military action against Syria; 59 to 64 percent were opposed.

Other results in this survey show the divided nature of attitudes on the issue. While 31 percent of Americans strongly support the strike, nearly as many, 27 percent, strongly oppose it. Support for additional strikes slips among Republicans to 65 percent, and among independents and Democrats to 32 and 19 percent, respectively. Even among Republicans, just fewer than half, 48 percent, are confident the strikes will prevent further use of chemical weapons in Syria; this drops to 20 percent of independents and just 17 percent of Democrats.

There's far more cross-partisan agreement on a U.S. policy to remove Assad: Two-thirds of Republicans support this, as do 52 percent of Democrats and 47 percent of independents.

Among other groups, the survey finds support for the military action higher among men than among women, a typical result. It's also higher among older adults, whites and conservatives, three groups that fit the profile of Trump supporters.

**METHODOLOGY** – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by landline and cellular telephone April 7-9, 2017, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 900 adults. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 4.0 points, including the design effect. Partisan divisions are 32-23-40 percent, Democrats-Republicans-independents.

The survey was produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#) of New York, N.Y., with sampling, data collection and tabulation by SSRS of Media, Pa. See details on the survey's methodology [here](#).

Analysis by Gary Langer.

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

Media contacts: [Heather Riley](#) or [Julie Townsend](#).

Full results follow.

\*= less than 0.5 percent

1. Do you support or oppose President Trump's decision to launch a missile strike on a Syrian air base in retaliation for the Syrian government using chemical weapons against civilians? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

|        | ----- Support ----- |          |          | ----- Oppose ----- |          |          | No      |
|--------|---------------------|----------|----------|--------------------|----------|----------|---------|
|        | NET                 | Strongly | Somewhat | NET                | Somewhat | Strongly | opinion |
| 4/9/17 | 51                  | 31       | 20       | 40                 | 13       | 27       | 9       |

2. Would you support or oppose additional U.S. air strikes against the Syrian government at this time?

|        | Support | Oppose | No opinion |
|--------|---------|--------|------------|
| 4/9/17 | 35      | 54     | 11         |

3. How confident are you that the U.S. missile strike will end the Syrian government's use of chemical weapons - are you very confident of this, somewhat confident, not so confident, or not confident at all?

|        | --- More confident -- |      |          | ----- Less confident ---- |        |            | No      |
|--------|-----------------------|------|----------|---------------------------|--------|------------|---------|
|        | NET                   | Very | Somewhat | NET                       | Not so | Not at all | opinion |
| 4/9/17 | 25                    | 6    | 20       | 69                        | 28     | 41         | 6       |

4. Are you concerned or not concerned about the missile strike worsening U.S.-Russian relations?

|        | Concerned | Not concerned | No opinion |
|--------|-----------|---------------|------------|
| 4/9/17 | 59        | 35            | 6          |

5. Does this missile strike make you more confident in Trump's leadership, less confident, or does it make no difference?

|        | More confident | Less confident | No difference | No opinion |
|--------|----------------|----------------|---------------|------------|
| 4/9/17 | 25             | 28             | 43            | 4          |

6. Would you support or oppose a U.S. policy of trying to remove the Syrian President, Bashar al-Assad, from power?

|        | Support | Oppose | No opinion |
|--------|---------|--------|------------|
| 4/9/17 | 51      | 30     | 19         |

7. (IF SUPPORT REMOVING ASSAD) If diplomatic efforts are unsuccessful, would you support or oppose additional U.S. military action to remove Assad from power?

|        | Support | Oppose | No opinion |
|--------|---------|--------|------------|
| 4/9/17 | 68      | 22     | 10         |

6/7 NET:

|        | ----- Support removal policy ----- |                     |                    |        |        |        |
|--------|------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------|--------|--------|
|        | NET                                | Support mil. action | Oppose mil. action | No op. | Oppose | No op. |
| 4/9/17 | 51                                 | 35                  | 12                 | 5      | 30     | 19     |

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