



## TRIP Snap Poll 14 Report

Teaching, Research & International Policy (TRIP) Project  
Global Research Institute (GRI)  
<https://trip.wm.edu/home>

Susan Peterson  
William & Mary

Ryan Powers  
School of Public and International Affairs  
University of Georgia

Michael J. Tierney  
William & Mary

October 2020

### **Introduction**

We are pleased to share the results of the 14th Teaching, Research and International Policy (TRIP) Snap Poll, fielded with the support of the Carnegie Corporation of New York. Our polls provide real-time data in the wake of significant policy proposals, during international crises, and on emerging foreign policy debates. In this survey, we asked questions about a variety of contemporary foreign policy issues including: the policy differences between Donald Trump and Joe Biden; the COVID-19 pandemic; the use of military force; political instability in Eastern Europe; and foreign interference in the 2020 U.S. elections.

### **Methodology**

We attempted to contact all international relations (IR) scholars in the United States. We define IR scholars as individuals who are employed at a college or university in a political science department or professional school and who teach or conduct research on issues that cross international borders. Of the 4,983 scholars across the United States that we contacted, 706 responded to at least one question. The resulting response rate is approximately 14.2 percent. The poll was open from September 17 to September 24 of 2020. Our sample is roughly similar to the broader population of International Relations scholars in terms of gender, academic rank and university type.

Data contacts: Irene Entringer Garcia Blanes and Alexandra Murphy. Email: [irsurvey@wm.edu](mailto:irsurvey@wm.edu)

# Sample vs. Population Comparison

Table 1: Sample vs. Population Comparison: Gender

Gender	Respondents Count	Respondents Percentage	Population Count	Population Percentage
Female	148	28.41	1466	30.7
Male	373	71.59	3309	69.3

Chi-squared test results: X-squared=0.30, p-value=0.59

Table 2: Sample vs. Population Comparison: Academic Rank

Academic Rank	Respondents Count	Respondents Percentage	Population Count	Population Percentage
Adjunct	13	2.40	333	6.57
Assistant Professor	137	25.28	953	18.80
Associate Professor	152	28.04	1194	23.55
Emeritus	22	4.06	311	6.13
Full Professor	183	33.76	1636	32.27
Instructor	20	3.69	327	6.45
Visiting Instructor/Visiting Assistant Professor	9	1.66	179	3.53
Other	6	1.11	137	2.70

Chi-squared test results: X-squared=62.64, p-value<0.000

Table 3: Sample vs. Population Comparison: University Type

University Type	Respondents Count	Respondents Percentage	Population Count	Population Percentage
National Liberal Arts College	83	15.99	687	14.50
National Research University	301	58.00	2678	56.51
Regional Liberal Arts College	19	3.66	184	3.88
Regional Research University	116	22.35	1190	25.11

Chi-squared test results: X-squared=1.84, p-value=0.99

## Results

Respondents were asked to put their personal political views aside and use their expert knowledge of politics, foreign policy, or international relations as they reflected on these questions.

Table 4: Which of the following presidential candidates do you think would most effectively manage foreign policy issues facing the United States today?

Response option	Count	Percentage
Joe Biden	663	94.71%
Donald Trump	37	5.29%
Total	700	100.00%

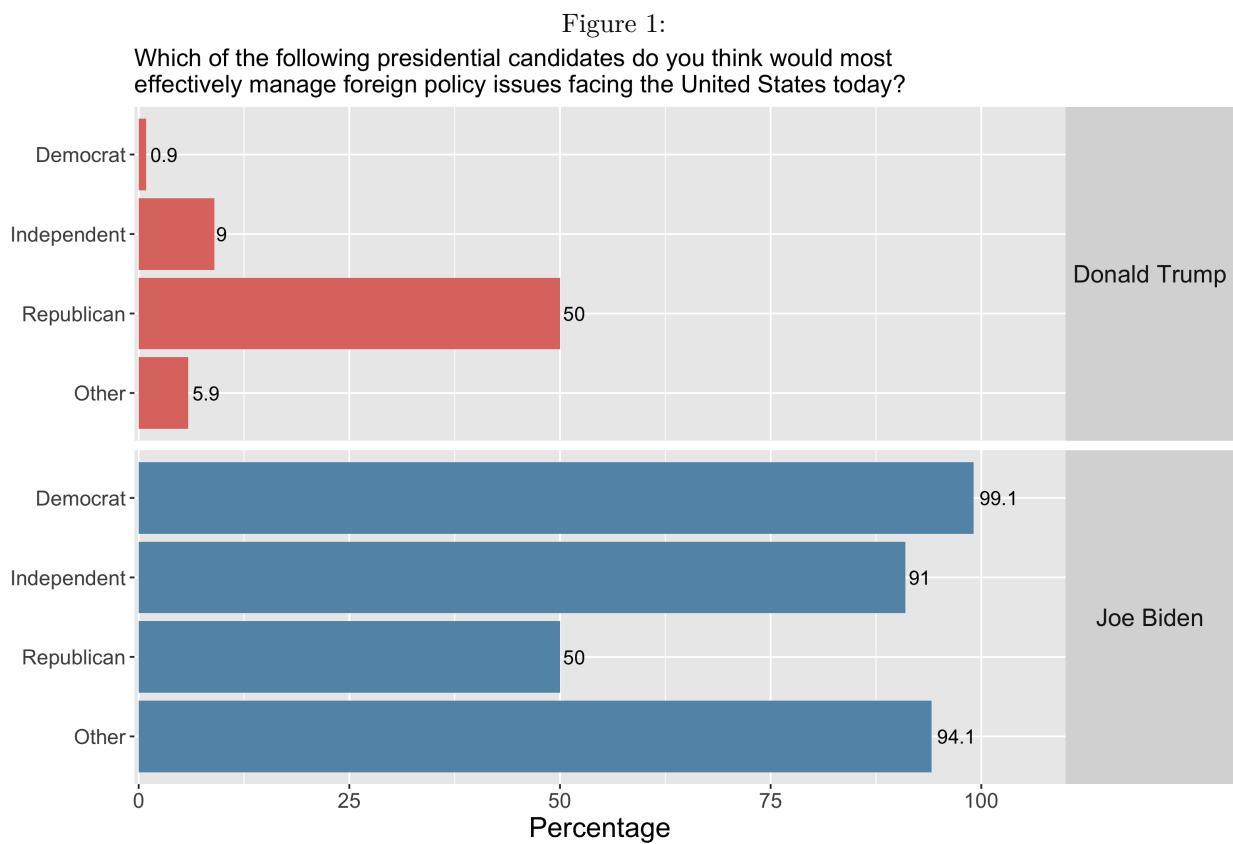


Table 5: Which presidential candidate, if elected, would use military force abroad more often?

Response option	Count	Percentage
Joe Biden	112	15.91%
Donald Trump	121	17.19%
The outcome of the election will not affect the frequency with which the United States uses military force abroad	321	45.60%
I do not know	150	21.31%
Total	704	100.00%

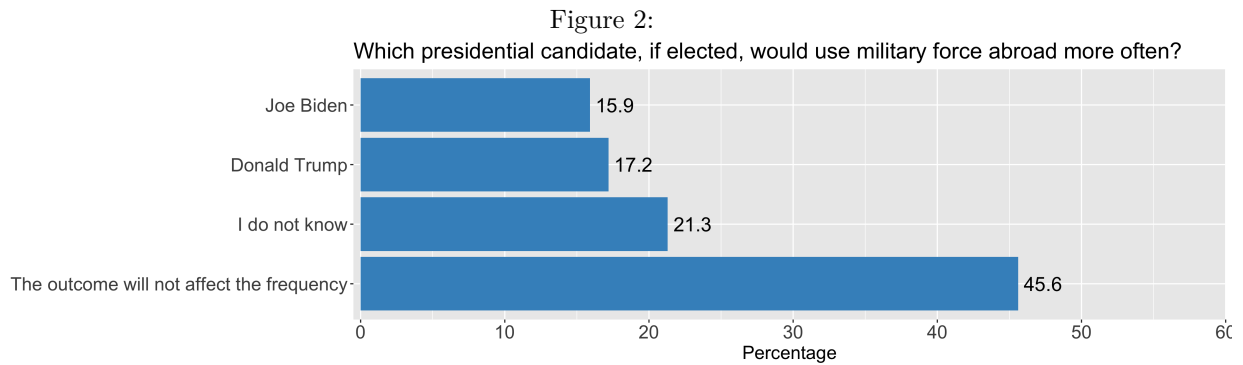
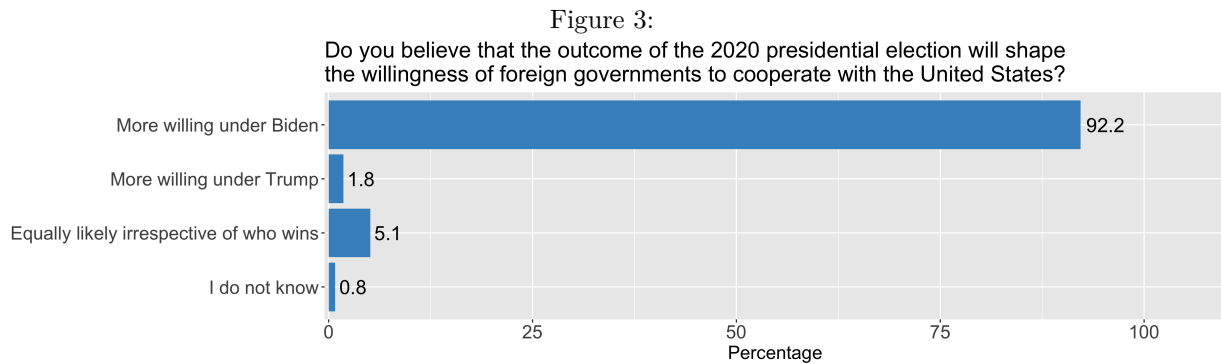


Table 6: Do you believe that the outcome of the 2020 presidential election will shape the willingness of foreign governments to cooperate with the United States?

Response Option	Count	Percentage
Foreign governments would be more willing to cooperate with the United States under a Trump Administration	13	1.84%
Foreign governments would be more willing to cooperate with the United States under a Biden Administration	651	92.21%
Foreign governments would be equally likely to cooperate with the United States irrespective of who wins the November election	36	5.10%
I do not know	6	0.85%
Total	706	100.00%



## Threats

Table 7: Do you think that global climate change poses a major threat, a minor threat, or no threat to the United States?

Response option	Count	Percentage
Major threat	621	88.21%
Minor threat	69	9.80%
No threat	12	1.70%
I don't know	2	0.28%
Total	704	100.00%

Table 8: Do you think that cyberattacks from other countries poses a major threat, a minor threat, or no threat to the United States?

Response Option	Count	Percentage
Major threat	461	65.30%
Minor threat	243	34.42%
No threat	1	0.14%
I don't know	1	0.14%
Total	706	100.00%

Table 9: Do you think that terrorism poses a major threat, a minor threat, or no threat to the United States?

Response option	Count	Percentage
Major threat	97	13.76%
Minor threat	570	80.85%
No threat	31	4.40%
I don't know	7	0.99%
Total	705	100.00%

Table 10: Do you think that the spread of infectious diseases poses a major threat, a minor threat, or no threat to the United States?

Response Option	Count	Percentage
Major threat	534	75.64%
Minor threat	168	23.80%
No threat	2	0.28%
I don't know	2	0.28%
Total	706	100.00%

Table 11: Do you think that the spread of nuclear weapons poses a major threat, a minor threat, or no threat to the United States?

Response Option	Count	Percentage
Major threat	247	34.99%
Minor threat	409	57.93%
No threat	41	5.81%
I don't know	9	1.27%
Total	706	100.00%

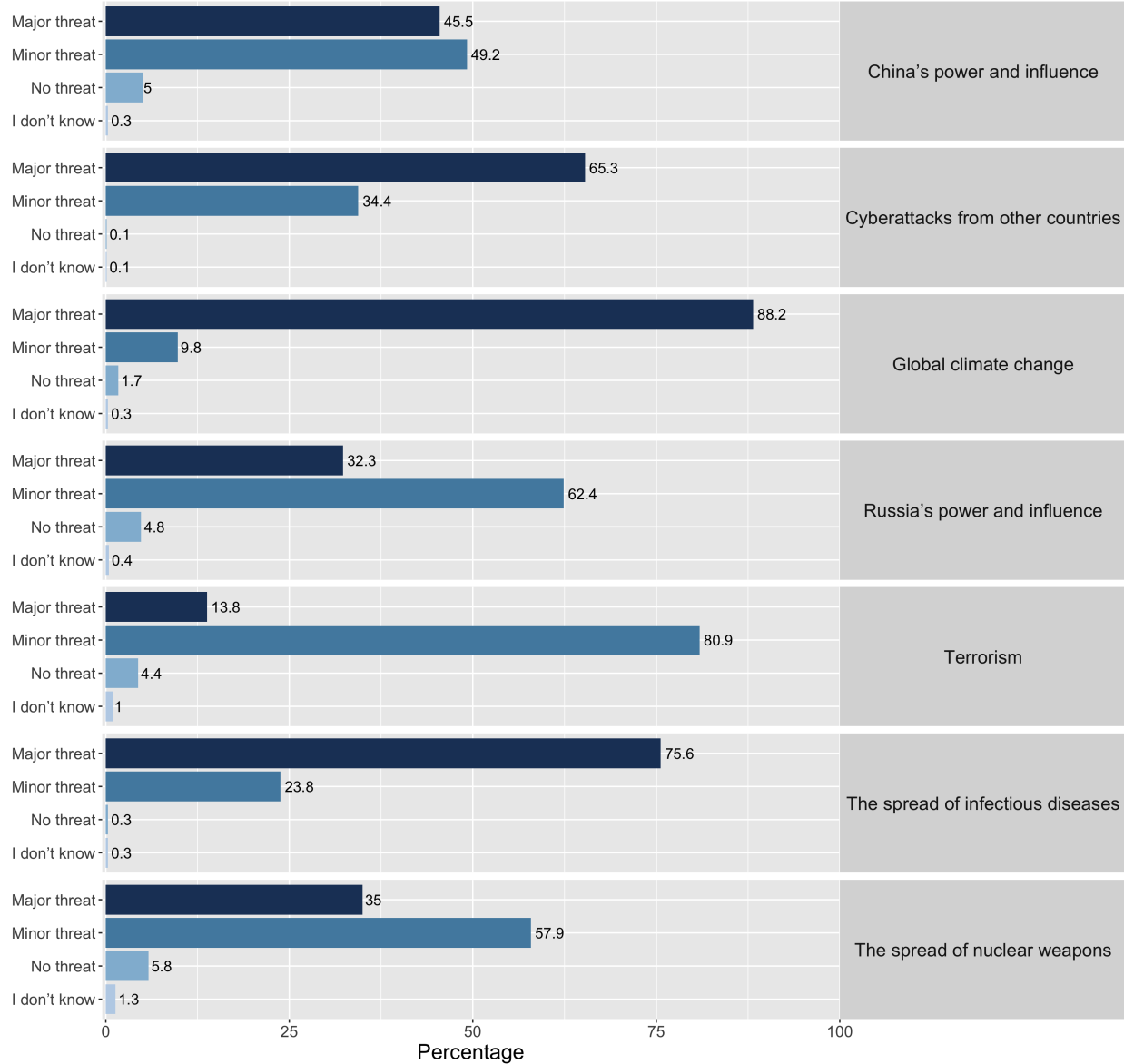
Table 12: Do you think that China's power and influence poses a major threat, a minor threat, or no threat to the United States?

Response option	Count	Percentage
Major threat	321	45.53%
Minor threat	347	49.22%
No threat	35	4.96%
I don't know	2	0.28%
Total	705	100.00%

Table 13: Do you think that Russia's power and influence poses a major threat, a minor threat, or no threat to the United States?

Response option	Count	Percentage
Major threat	227	32.29%
Minor threat	439	62.45%
No threat	34	4.84%
I don't know	3	0.43%
Total	703	100.00%

Figure 4:  
Do you think that each of the following issues or problems pose a major threat, a minor threat, or no threat to the U.S.?



## Predictions on U.S. foreign policy similarities and differences

Consider what U.S. foreign policy would look like over the next four years under Joe Biden and Donald Trump respectively. To what extent would U.S. foreign policy differ between the two in the following areas? *If you think the policies pursued by these two administrations are likely to be identical, please select a value of “0.” If you think they will be very different, then select “100.”*

Table 14: Use of military force

Response option	Count	Percentage
0-19	88	14.67%
20-39	173	28.83%
40-59	180	30.00%
60-79	116	19.33%
80-100	43	7.17%
Total	600	100.00%

Table 15: Climate change

Response option	Count	Percentage
0-19	6	0.85%
20-39	11	1.56%
40-59	25	3.55%
60-79	95	13.48%
80-100	568	80.57%
Total	705	100.00%

Table 16: Management of military alliances

Response option	Count	Percentage
0-19	6	0.86%
20-39	17	2.45%
40-59	61	8.79%
60-79	139	20.03%
80-100	471	67.87%
Total	694	100.00%

Table 17: Engagement with multilateral organizations

Response option	Count	Percentage
0-19	2	0.28%
20-39	7	0.99%
40-59	24	3.41%
60-79	97	13.78%
80-100	574	81.53%
Total	704	100.00%



Table 18: Global public health

Response option	Count	Percentage
0-19	12	1.73%
20-39	16	2.31%
40-59	61	8.79%
60-79	102	14.70%
80-100	503	72.48%
Total	694	100.00%

Table 19: Trade

Response option	Count	Percentage
0-19	9	1.30%
20-39	72	10.43%
40-59	167	24.20%
60-79	235	34.06%
80-100	207	30.00%
Total	690	100.00%

Table 20: Exchange rates

Response option	Count	Percentage
0-19	122	27.92%
20-39	96	21.97%
40-59	120	27.46%
60-79	51	11.67%
80-100	48	10.98%
Total	437	100.00%

Table 21: Development/Foreign aid

Response option	Count	Percentage
0-19	18	2.65%
20-39	44	6.47%
40-59	125	18.38%
60-79	201	29.56%
80-100	292	42.94%
Total	680	100.00%

Table 22: Immigration

Response option	Count	Percentage
0-19	7	1.00%
20-39	23	3.29%
40-59	69	9.87%
60-79	167	23.89%
80-100	433	61.95%
Total	699	100.00%

Table 23: Counterterrorism

Response option	Count	Percentage
0-19	102	16.11%
20-39	165	26.07%
40-59	180	28.44%
60-79	117	18.48%
80-100	69	10.90%
Total	633	100.00%

Table 24: Cybersecurity

Response option	Count	Percentage
0-19	77	12.56%
20-39	87	14.19%
40-59	133	21.70%
60-79	151	24.63%
80-100	165	26.92%
Total	613	100.00%

Table 25: International human rights

Response option	Count	Percentage
0-19	20	2.87%
20-39	38	5.44%
40-59	75	10.74%
60-79	169	24.21%
80-100	396	56.73%
Total	698	100.00%

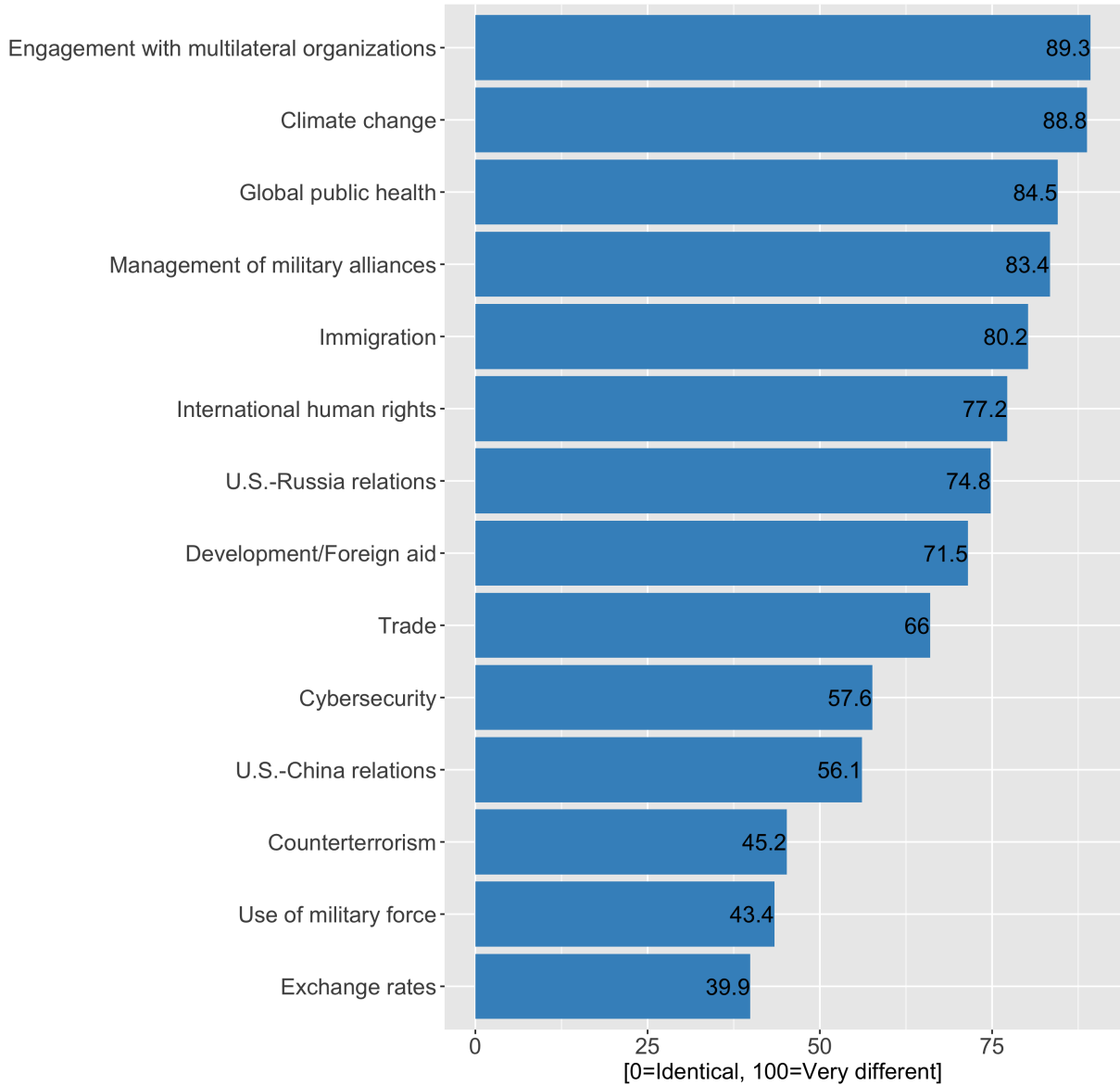
Table 26: U.S.-China relations

Response option	Count	Percentage
0-19	32	4.66%
20-39	137	19.97%
40-59	207	30.17%
60-79	186	27.11%
80-100	124	18.08%
Total	686	100.00%

Table 27: U.S.-Russia relations

Response option	Count	Percentage
0-19	11	1.58%
20-39	43	6.18%
40-59	106	15.23%
60-79	179	25.72%
80-100	357	51.29%
Total	696	100.00%

Figure 5:  
To what extent would U.S. foreign policy differ between  
Trump and Biden in the following areas?



Regardless of the substance of their foreign policy agendas, how effectively you believe each candidate would be in achieving his respective foreign policy goals over the next four years. *If you think the candidate would not be effective in achieving his respective foreign goals, please select a value of “0.” If you think the candidate would be very effective, then select “100.”*

Table 28: Biden

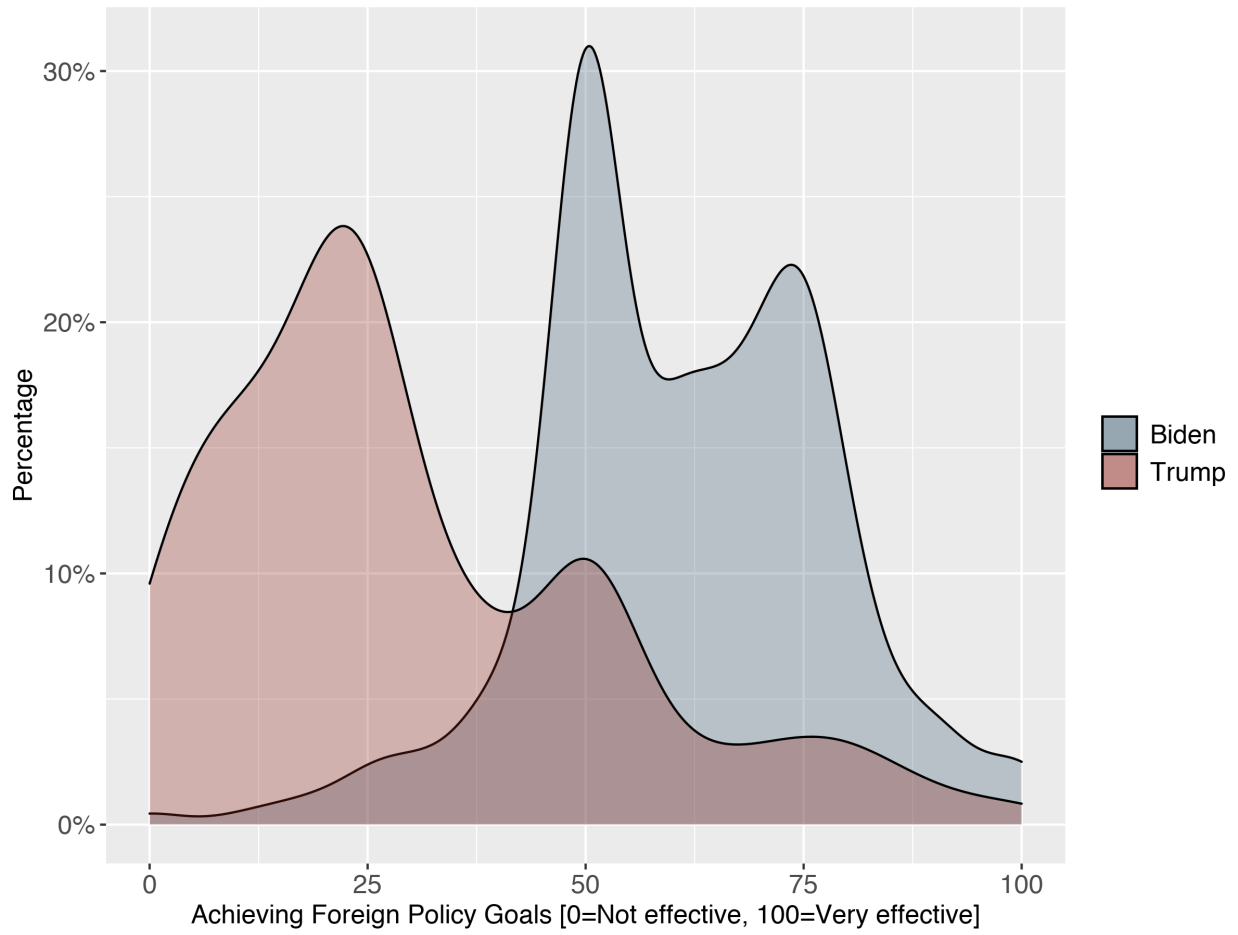
Response option	Count	Percentage
0-19	9	1.31%
20-39	34	4.93%
40-59	268	38.90%
60-79	289	41.94%
80-100	89	12.92%
Total	689	100.00%

Table 29: Trump

Response option	Count	Percentage
0-19	196	31.16%
20-39	244	38.79%
40-59	118	18.76%
60-79	42	6.68%
80-100	29	4.61%
Total	629	100.00%

Figure 6:

How effectively you believe each candidate would be in achieving his respective foreign policy goals over the next four years.

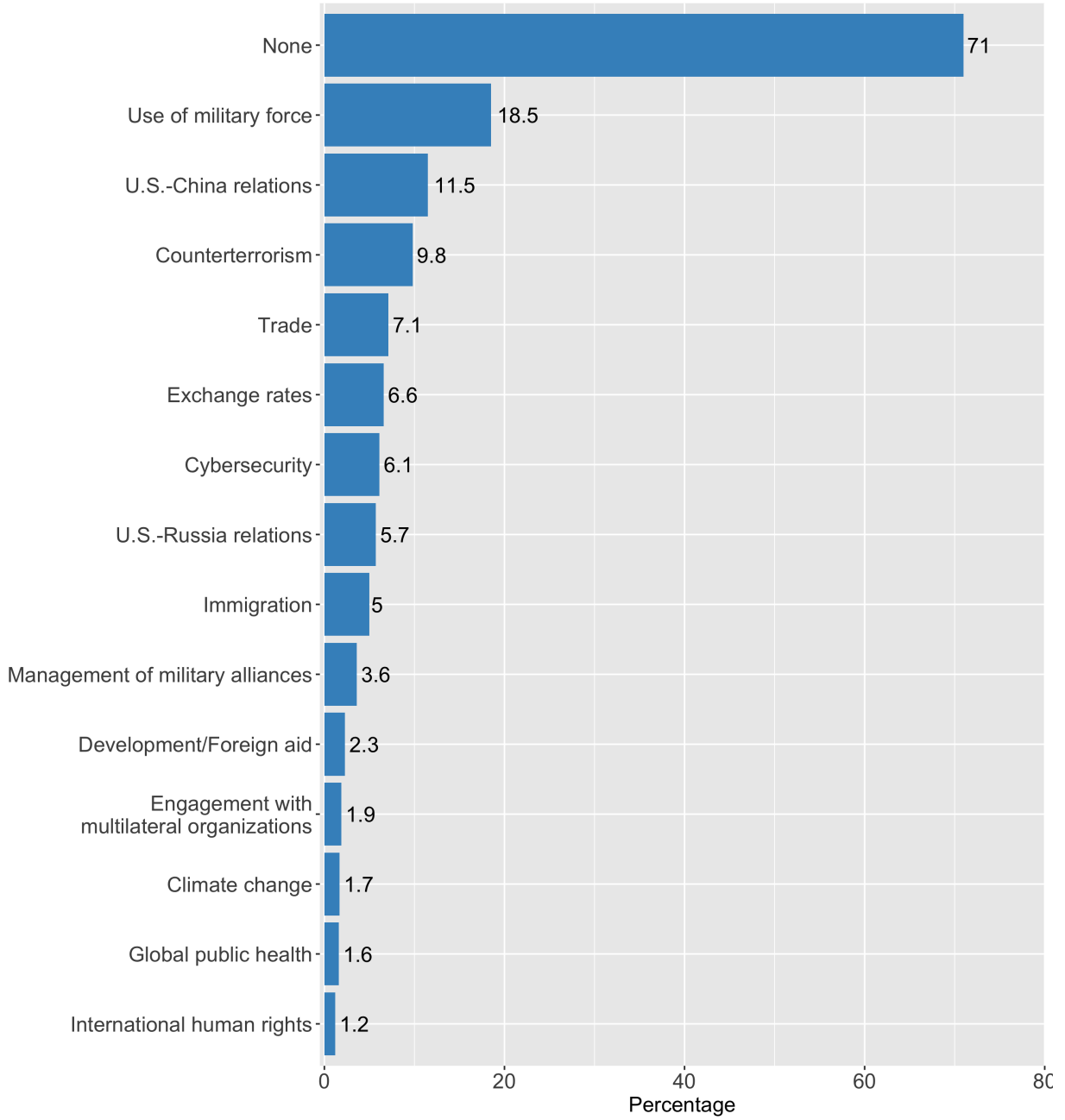


## Trumps performance

Table 30: In which of the following areas has President Trump performed as well or better than President Obama?

Issue area	Count	Percentage
Use of military force	127	18.51
Climate change	12	1.75
Management of military alliances	25	3.64
Engagement with multilateral organizations	13	1.9
Global public health	11	1.6
Trade	49	7.14
Exchange rates	45	6.56
Development/Foreign aid	16	2.33
Immigration	34	4.96
Counterterrorism	67	9.77
Cybersecurity	42	6.12
International human rights	8	1.17
U.S.-China relations	79	11.52
U.S.-Russia relations	39	5.69
None	487	70.99
Total	1054	-

Figure 7:  
In which of the following areas has President Trump performed as well or better than President Obama?





## Election Interference

### Election Interference Distribution

33.57% of respondents answered two election interference questions about China, 33.43% answered two questions about Iran, and 33% answered two questions about Russia.

Table 31: Respondents by Country Treatment

Country	Count	Percentage (%)
China	237	33.57
Iran	236	33.43
Russia	233	33.00
Total	706	100.00

## Election Interference

### China

Table 32: To what extent will Chinese meddling in the 2020 U.S. elections undermine public confidence in the outcome of the presidential election?

Issue area	Count	Valid percentage
Very likely to undermine public confidence	5	2.11%
Somewhat likely to undermine public confidence	57	24.05%
Not very likely to undermine public confidence	135	56.96%
Not likely at all to undermine public confidence	40	16.88%
Total	237	100.00%

Table 33: To what extent will China be successful in affecting the outcome of the 2020 U.S. presidential election?

Response option	Count	Percentage
Very successful	1	0.43%
Somewhat successful	20	8.51%
Not too successful	123	52.34%
Not at all successful	91	38.72%
Total	235	100.00%

## Iran

Table 34: To what extent will Iranian meddling in the 2020 U.S. elections undermine public confidence in the outcome of the presidential election?

Response option	Count	Percentage
Very likely to undermine public confidence	2	0.86%
Somewhat likely to undermine public confidence	43	18.53%
Not very likely to undermine public confidence	118	50.86%
Not likely at all to undermine public confidence	69	29.74%
Total	232	100.00%

Table 35: To what extent will Iran be successful in affecting the outcome of the 2020 U.S. presidential election?

Response option	Count	Percentage
Very successful	0	0.00%
Somewhat successful	8	3.43%
Not too successful	102	43.78%
Not at all successful	123	52.79%
Total	233	100.00%

## Russia

Table 36: To what extent will Russian meddling in the 2020 U.S. elections undermine public confidence in the outcome of the presidential election?

Response option	Count	Percentage
Very likely to undermine public confidence	35	15.09%
Somewhat likely to undermine public confidence	155	66.81%
Not very likely to undermine public confidence	38	16.38%
Not likely at all to undermine public confidence	4	1.72%
Total	232	100.00%

Table 37: To what extent will Russia be successful in affecting the outcome of the 2020 U.S. presidential election?

Response option	Count	Percentage
Very successful	9	3.90%
Somewhat successful	94	40.69%
Not too successful	110	47.62%
Not at all successful	18	7.79%
Total	231	100.00%

Figure 8:

To what extent will [Chinese/Iranian/Russian] meddling in the 2020 U.S. elections undermine public confidence in the outcome of the presidential election?

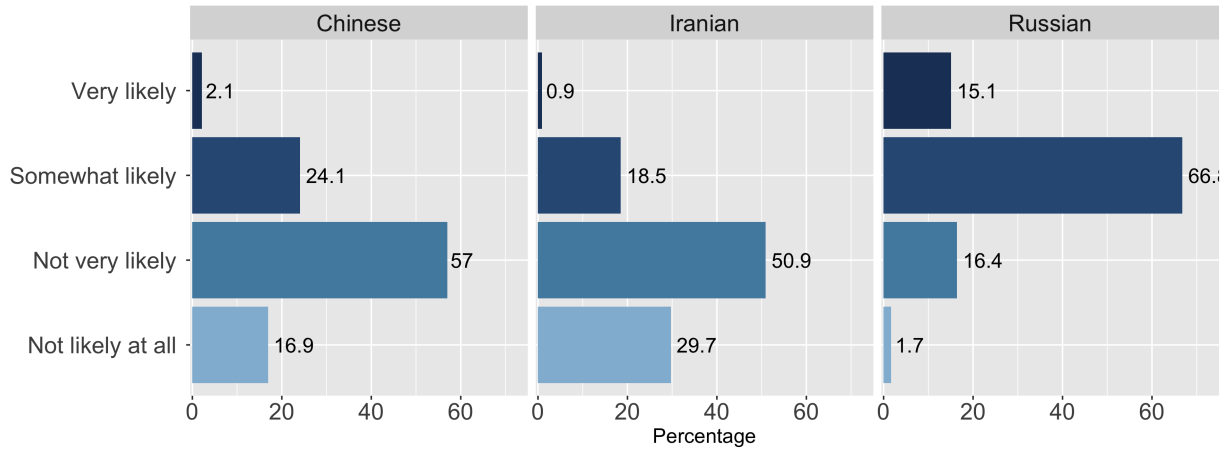
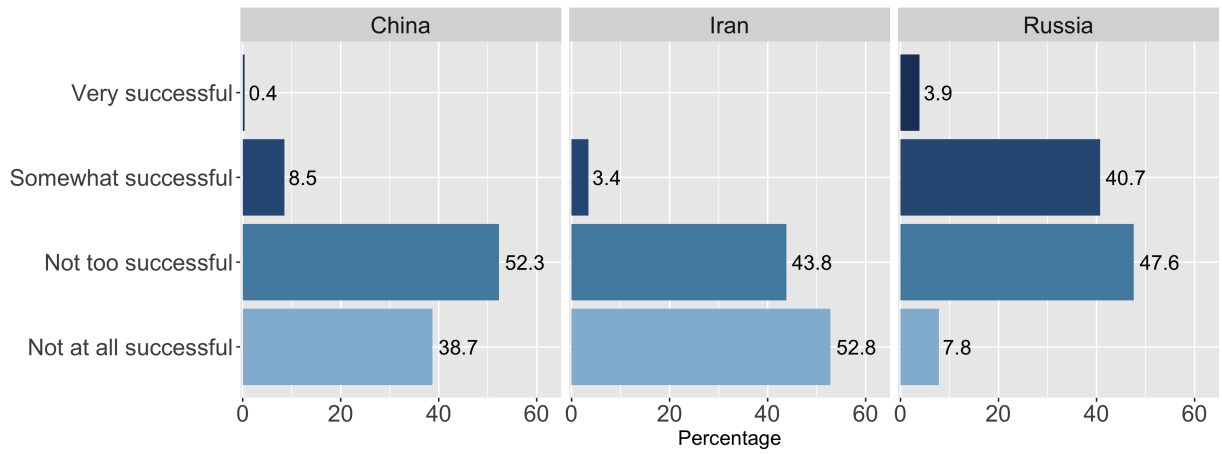


Figure 9:

To what extent will [China/Iran/Russia] be successful in affecting the outcome of the 2020 U.S. presidential election?



## Election Interference Policies

How would the following U.S. policies affect the probability of interference by foreign governments in future U.S. elections?

Table 38: Deterrent threats of retaliatory military force

Response option	Count	Percentage
Increase probability of interference	100	14.81%
No effect	413	61.19%
Decrease probability of interference	162	24.00%
Total	675	100.00%

Table 39: Deterrent threats of retaliatory cyberattacks

Response option	Count	Percentage
Increase probability of interference	67	9.87%
No effect	236	34.76%
Decrease probability of interference	376	55.38%
Total	679	100.00%

Table 40: Deterrent threats of retaliatory economic sanctions

Response option	Count	Percentage
Increase probability of interference	61	8.97%
No effect	320	47.06%
Decrease probability of interference	299	43.97%
Total	680	100.00%

Table 41: Deterrent threats of diplomatic isolation

Response option	Count	Percentage
Increase probability of interference	46	6.76%
No effect	461	67.79%
Decrease probability of interference	173	25.44%
Total	680	100.00%

Table 42: Enhanced counterintelligence efforts

Response option	Count	Percentage
Increase probability of interference	39	5.71%
No effect	104	15.23%
Decrease probability of interference	540	79.06%
Total	683	100.00%

Table 43: Enhanced cybersecurity measures for election infrastructure

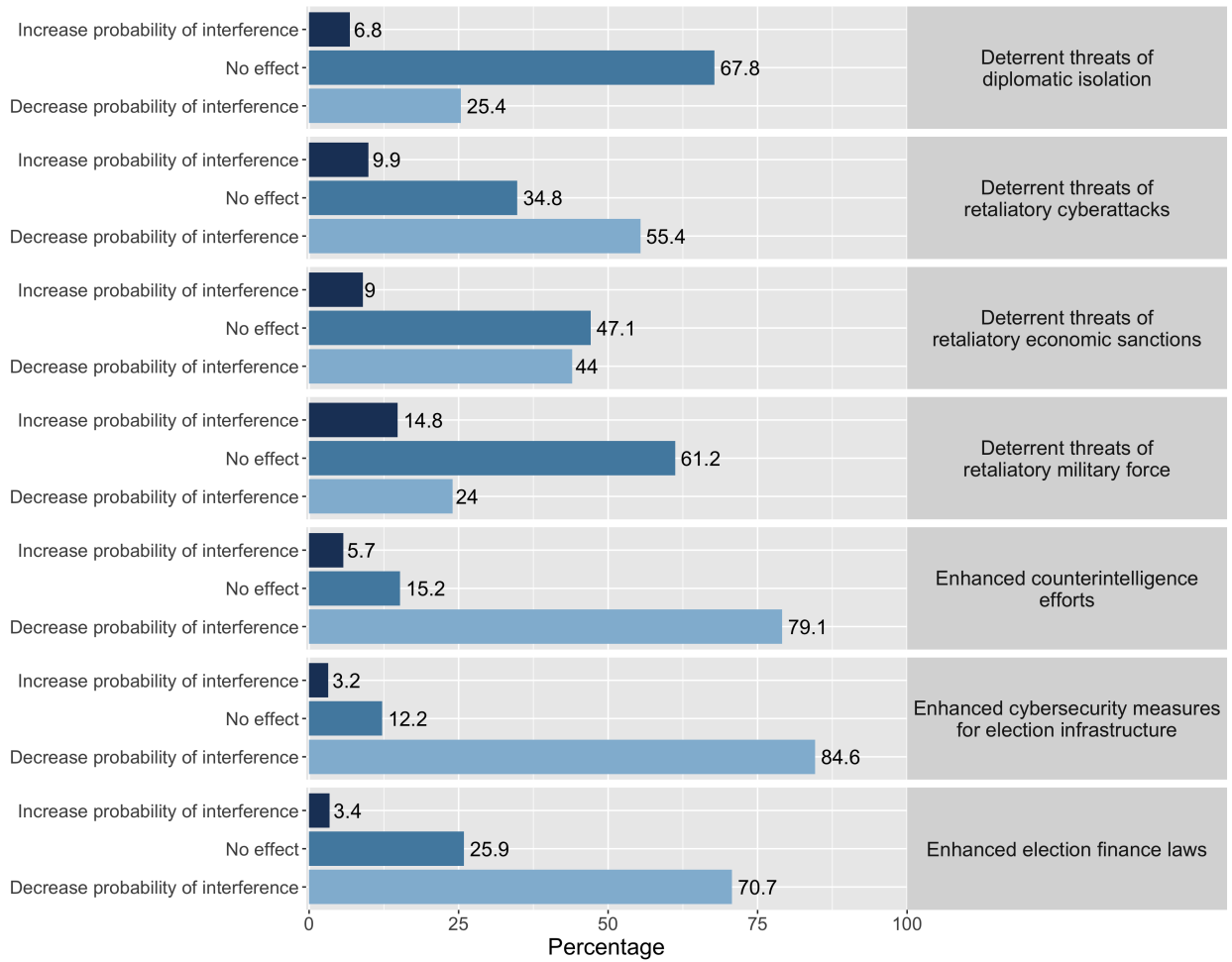
Response option	Count	Percentage
Increase probability of interference	39	5.71%
No effect	104	15.23%
Decrease probability of interference	540	79.06%
Total	683	100.00%

Table 44: Enhanced election finance laws that make it more difficult for foreign actors to provide direct financial support to candidates, campaigns, or third-party groups

Response option	Count	Percentage
Increase probability of interference	23	3.37%
No effect	177	25.92%
Decrease probability of interference	483	70.72%
Total	683	100.00%

Figure 10:

How would the following U.S. policies affect the probability of interference by foreign governments in future U.S. elections?



## Belarus

### Belarus - Trump/Biden Distribution

49.01% of respondents answered one question on U.S. support to Belarus under a Biden administration, and 50.99% answered one question on U.S. support to Belarus under a Trump administration.

Table 45: Respondents by Trump/Biden Treatment

Administration	Count	Percentage(%)
Biden	346	49.01
Trump	360	50.99
Total	706	100.00

## Biden

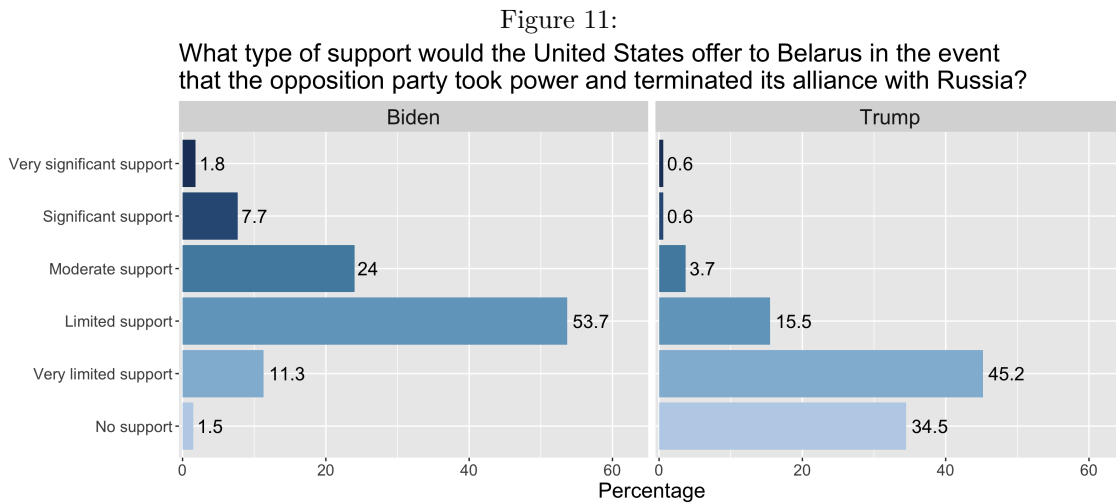
Table 46: Assume that Joe Biden wins the 2020 U.S. Presidential election. In that scenario, what type of support would the United States offer to Belarus in the event that the opposition party took power and terminated its alliance with Russia?

Response option	Count	Percentage
No support	5	1.48%
Very limited support (e.g., diplomatic recognition of the new government)	38	11.28%
Limited support (e.g., economic assistance to Belarus)	181	53.71%
Moderate support (e.g., sending military arms and equipment to Belarus)	81	24.04%
Significant support (e.g., bilateral security guarantee)	26	7.72%
Very significant support (e.g., push for Belarussian membership in NATO)	6	1.78%
Total	337	100.00%

## Trump

Table 47: Assume that Donald Trump wins the 2020 U.S. Presidential election. In that scenario, what type of support would the United States offer to Belarus in the event that the opposition party took power and terminated its alliance with Russia?

Response option	Count	Percentage
No support	122	34.46%
Very limited support (e.g., diplomatic recognition of the new government)	160	45.20%
Limited support (e.g., economic assistance to Belarus)	55	15.54%
Moderate support (e.g., sending military arms and equipment to Belarus)	13	3.67%
Significant support (e.g., bilateral security guarantee)	2	0.56%
Very significant support (e.g., push for Belarussian membership in NATO)	2	0.56%
Total	354	100.00%





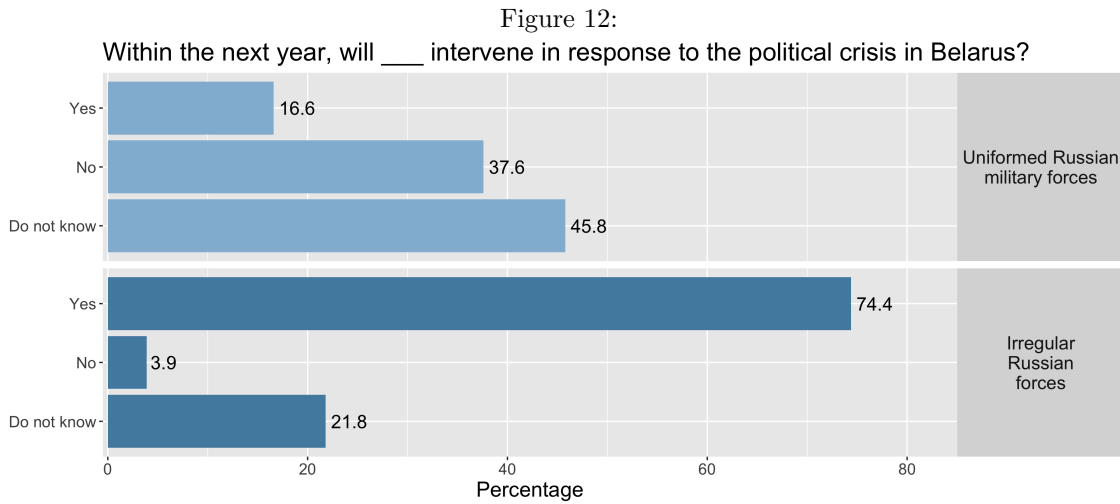
## Russia intervention

Table 48: Within the next year, will uniformed Russian military forces intervene in response to the political crisis in Belarus?

Response option	Count	Percentage
Yes	116	16.64%
No	262	37.59%
Do not know	319	45.77%
Total	697	100.00%

Table 49: Within the next year, will irregular Russian forces intervene in response to the political crisis in Belarus?

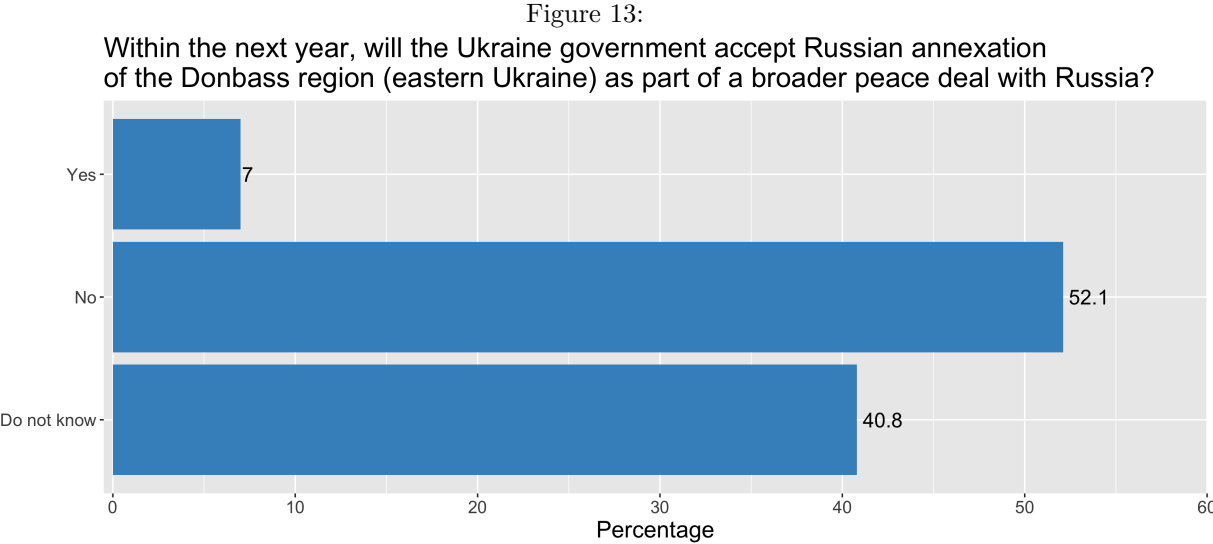
Response option	Count	Percentage
Yes	516	74.35%
No	27	3.89%
Do not know	151	21.76%
Total	694	100.00%



# Ukraine

Table 50: Within the next year, will the Ukrainian government accept Russian annexation of the Donbass region (eastern Ukraine) as part of a broader peace deal with Russia?

Response option	Count	Percentage
Yes	49	7.02%
No	364	52.15%
Do not know	285	40.83%
Total	698	100.00%



## Coronavirus Outbreak

Would you say that each of the following has done a very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad, or very bad job dealing with the Coronavirus outbreak?

Table 51: The United States

Response option	Count	Percentage
Very good	4	0.57%
Somewhat good	20	2.84%
Somewhat bad	67	9.53%
Very bad	611	86.91%
I do not know	1	0.14%
Total	703	100.00%

Table 52: China

Response option	Count	Percentage
Very good	81	11.52%
Somewhat good	347	49.36%
Somewhat bad	185	26.32%
Very bad	70	9.96%
I do not know	20	2.84%
Total	703	100.00%

Table 53: The European Union

Response option	Count	Percentage
Very good	42	5.98%
Somewhat good	462	65.81%
Somewhat bad	178	25.36%
Very bad	9	1.28%
I do not know	11	1.57%
Total	702	100.00%

Table 54: The World Health Organization

Response option	Count	Percentage
Very good	26	3.70%
Somewhat good	368	52.42%
Somewhat bad	224	31.91%
Very bad	54	7.69%
I do not know	30	4.27%
Total	702	100.00%

Figure 14:

Would you say that each of the following has done a very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad, or very bad job dealing with the Coronavirus outbreak?

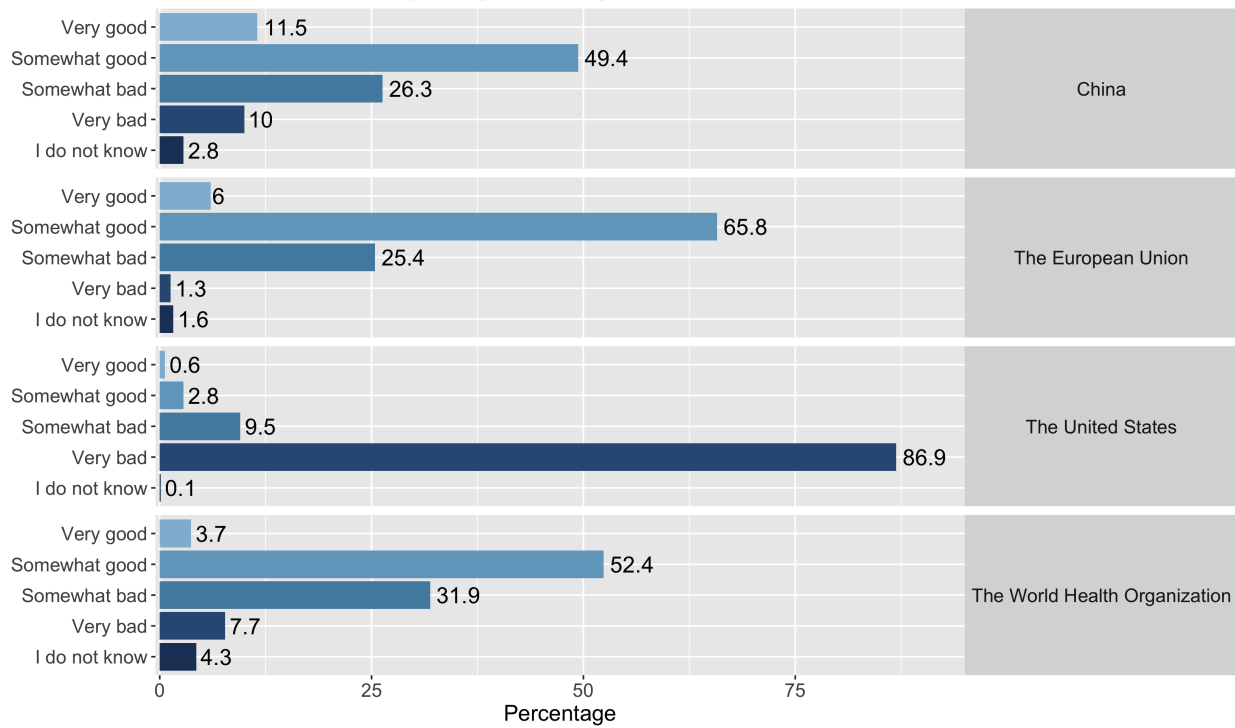
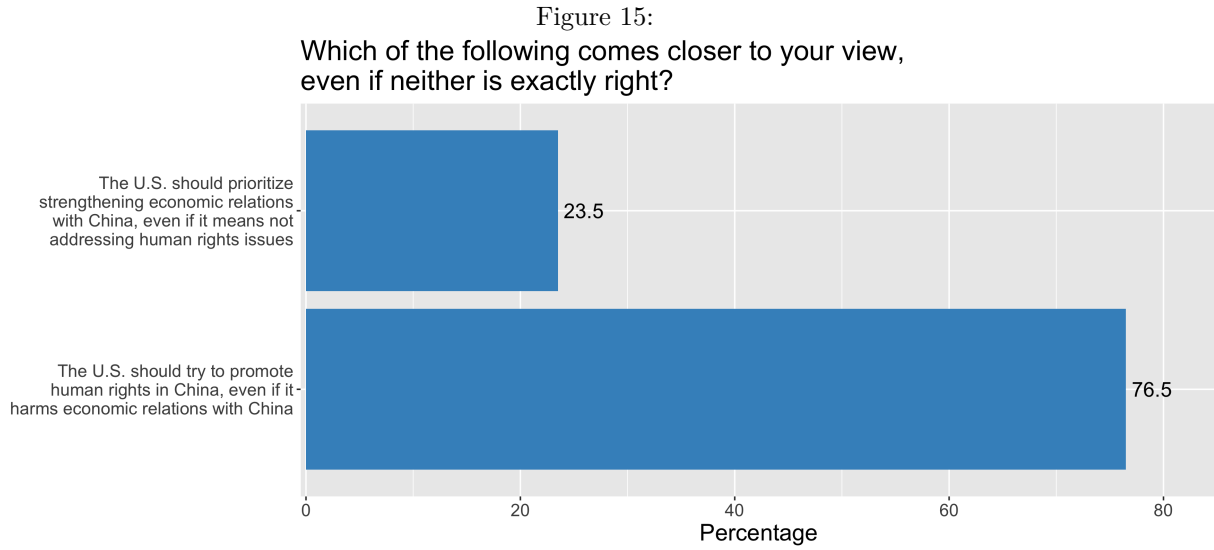


Table 55: Which of the following comes closer to your view, even if neither is exactly right?

Response option	Count	Percentage
The U.S. should try to promote human rights in China, even if it harms economic relations with China	530	76.48%
The U.S. should prioritize strengthening economic relations with China, even if it means not addressing human rights issues	163	23.52%
Total	693	100.00%



Now, we would like to ask a couple questions about you.

Table 56: Which of the two major presidential candidates' foreign policy views most closely reflect your own?

Response option	Count	Percentage
Donald Trump	42	6.07%
Joe Biden	650	93.93%
Total	692	100.00%

Figure 16:

Which of the two major presidential candidates' foreign policy views most closely reflect your own?

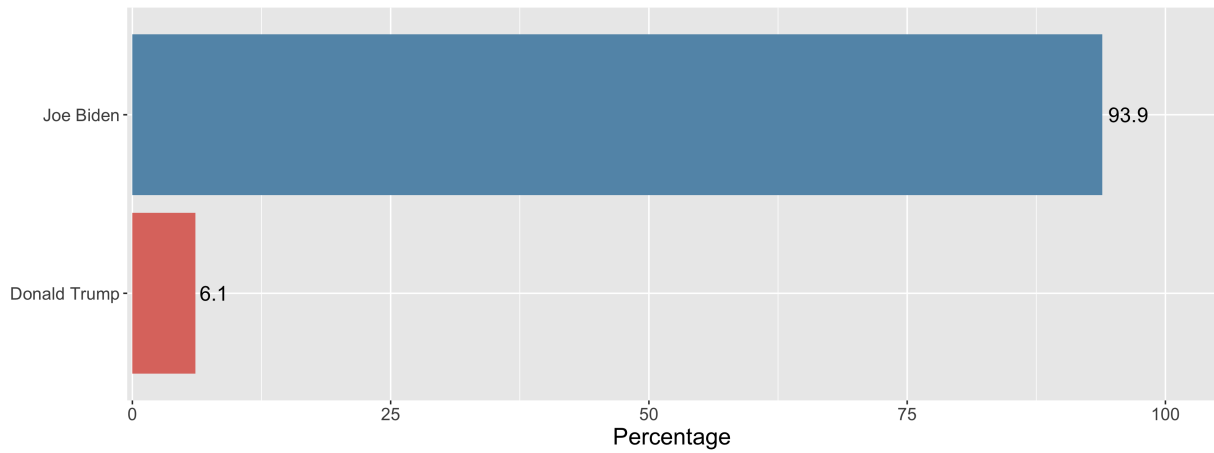


Table 57: If the 2020 presidential election were held today, for whom would you vote?

Response option	Count	Percentage
Donald Trump	30	4.29%
Joe Biden	603	86.14%
Other	13	1.86%
I am not eligible to vote in the U.S. Presidential Election	38	5.43%
I am eligible but would choose not to vote	16	2.29%
Total	700	100.00%

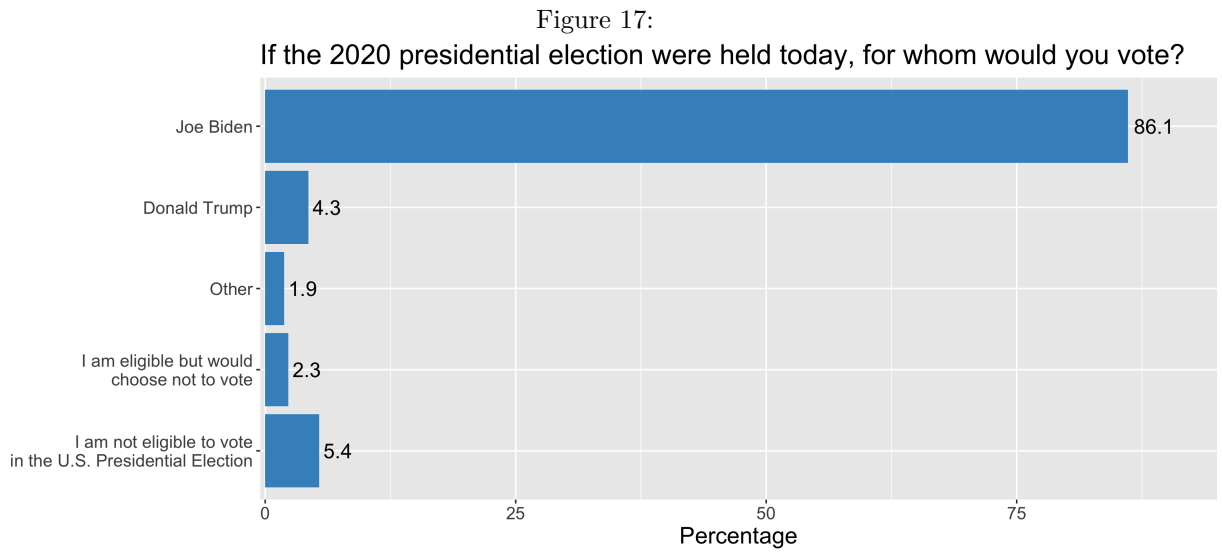


Table 58: Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or something else?

Response option	Count	Percentage
Republican	31	4.68%
Democrat	438	66.06%
Independent	159	23.98%
Other	35	5.28%
Total	663	100.00%

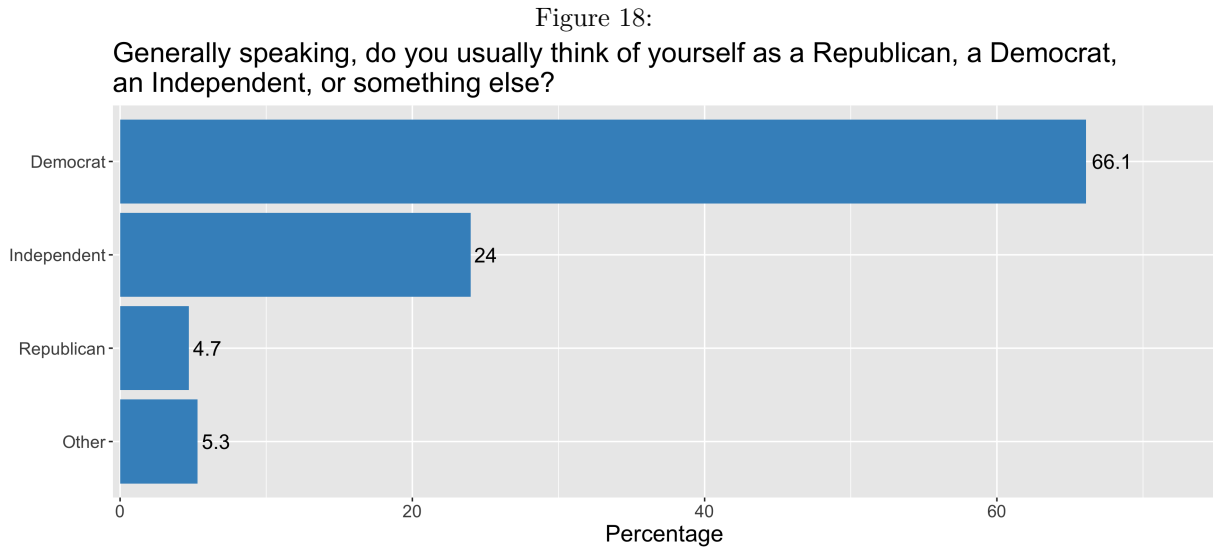




Figure 19 illustrates hypothetical support for Joe Biden in the upcoming election disaggregated by political affiliation and expert and public opinion. Public opinion data was exported from the Quinnipiac University Poll. Respondents from the public sample were asked “If the election for president were being held today, and the candidates were Joe Biden the Democrat and Donald Trump the Republican, for whom would you vote? (If undecided) As of today, do you lean more toward Joe Biden the Democrat or Donald Trump the Republican?” Expert support derives from the question in this snap poll: “If the 2020 presidential election were held today, for whom would you vote?” Data on vote intentions for the expert sample only includes responses from those who are eligible to vote in the US.

Figure 19:

