



Paris, March 28th, 2008

## Is NATO known / recognised? What's threatening the big western nations? What's an acceptable defense strategy?

On the eve of the NATO summit in Bucharest, a **Harris Interactive** exclusive poll, in partnership with the channel of international information France 24 and the *International Herald Tribune*

The latest **Harris Interactive / France 24 / International Herald Tribune** poll shows that the public lacks knowledge of NATO, but is in favour of its preservation.

The idea of a military force for the common defence of the European Union gathers far more favourable opinions than the plan of the United States to install an anti-missile defence system in Eastern Europe.

Iran appears as the most threatening country for the citizens of the 6 countries participating in this poll, followed closely by China for Americans.

Results to be released on Friday, March 28<sup>th</sup> 2008 on France 24's "The Talk of Paris" and published in the *International Herald Tribune* of March 28<sup>th</sup> 2008.

### **Methodology**

*The latest poll was conducted online by Harris Interactive, in partnership with France 24 and The International Herald Tribune, among a total of 6,478 adults (aged 16-64) within France, Germany, Great Britain, Spain and the United-States; and adults (aged 18-64) in Italy, from 27<sup>th</sup> February to 6<sup>th</sup> March 2008. The data were weighted, where necessary, by age, gender, education, region and Internet usage to make it representative of the general population profile for each country. Propensity score weighting was applied to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.*

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The poll explores a variety of issues, including:

- Public knowledge of Nato and views on its usefulness
- The potential threats:
  - o Where could a military threat come from?
  - o Against which threats should countries be protected?
- The adherence to the idea of a European military defence
- The adherence to the idea of an American anti-missile defence project in Eastern Europe

*Please note that any communication of these results has to be made with technical elements such as: survey methodology, fieldwork dates, name of the agency, sample size.*

## KNOWLEDGE OF AND USEFULNESS OF NATO

Germans and Italians seem to have a better understanding of NATO's role, but the large majority of adults from other countries claim to have little knowledge at all of the organisation's role.

### How knowledgeable are you about NATO's role?

Base : All respondents

						
<i>Unweighted base</i>	1,122	1,125	1,109	1,011	1,054	1,057
Extremely knowledgeable (5)	1%	2%	2%	6%	2%	3%
Very knowledgeable (4)	4%	21%	10%	13%	7%	10%
Somewhat knowledgeable (3)	32%	52%	28%	38%	27%	32%
Slightly knowledgeable (2)	49%	19%	27%	35%	48%	26%
Not at all (1)	14%	6%	33%	7%	16%	29%
<b>Mean</b>	<b>2,3</b>	<b>2,9</b>	<b>2,2</b>	<b>2,8</b>	<b>2,3</b>	<b>2,3</b>

Despite this lack of knowledge, there is widespread agreement that the NATO alliance should be preserved; particularly in Germany. It's worth noting however that a significant number express no particular opinion on the question.

### Do you think the NATO alliance should be maintained or is this alliance no longer necessary today?

Base : All respondents

						
<i>Unweighted base</i>	1,122	1,125	1,109	1,011	1,054	1,057
Yes, the alliance should be maintained	55%	67%	55%	60%	51%	54%
No, the alliance is no longer necessary today	14%	15%	9%	22%	21%	13%
Not sure	31%	19%	35%	18%	29%	33%

In Europe and in the United-States, a return of France within the NATO military structure would be well received... but in France, opinions are more divided on this point: with a third favourable, a third opposed, and a third without any opinion on the matter.

### France is not part of the NATO military structure today.

#### How much do you support or oppose France joining the NATO military structure?

Base : All respondents

						
<i>Unweighted base</i>	1,122	1,125	1,109	1,011	1,054	1,057
<b>Support (Net)</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>49%</b>
Completely support (4)	6%	18%	16%	25%	22%	15%
Support more than oppose (3)	32%	43%	31%	36%	31%	34%
<b>Oppose (Net)</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>16%</b>
Oppose more than support (2)	22%	10%	9%	9%	7%	12%
Completely oppose (1)	12%	6%	8%	5%	7%	4%
Not sure	28%	24%	37%	24%	33%	35%
<b>Mean (excl. Not sure)</b>	<b>2,4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2,9</b>	<b>3,1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2,9</b>

\* : less than 0,5%

## POTENTIAL THREATS -- THREATENING COUNTRIES

When respondents were asked about a potential military threat, they mentioned on average 2 countries where this threat could come from.

**Iran** is unanimously perceived as the most threatening country, especially for Americans and French. Amongst the other countries considered a military threat, Iraq, Pakistan and Afghanistan were also ranked highly.

Russia and China are also perceived as potential threats but countries have different opinions on the extent of this threat. Spanish adults are less concerned about the military threat from these countries, whilst British (29%) and especially Americans show a strong fear of China (48%). 31% and 32% of British and Americans are concerned about Russia.

Indeed, America and Britain identify the highest average number of countries representing a threat.

In addition, between 10% and 14% of Europeans consider the United States as a potential military threat for their county.

### Which of the following countries do you think could be a military threat for your country in the future?

Base : All respondents

						
<i>Unweighted base</i>	1,122	1,125	1,109	1,011	1,054	1,057
Iran	45%	38%	42%	39%	29%	53%
Iraq	30%	34%	35%	29%	30%	37%
Pakistan	27%	22%	32%	15%	18%	31%
Afghanistan	26%	26%	31%	25%	26%	29%
Russia	20%	24%	31%	16%	6%	32%
China	16%	19%	29%	22%	8%	48%
United States	11%	14%	14%	10%	13%	
Other	3%	3%	7%	3%	22%	12%
<b>Avg number of countries selected</b>	<b>1,8</b>	<b>1,8</b>	<b>2,2</b>	<b>1,6</b>	<b>1,5</b>	<b>2,4</b>
No country can be a military threat for my country in the future	18%	15%	8%	19%	23%	5%
Not sure	12%	17%	19%	16%	16%	13%

*Item not asked to Americans*

\* : less than 0,5%

## POTENTIAL THREATS -- TYPES OF THREATS

Faced with different types of threats (terrorist, economic, ecological, health, military,...), the expectations concerning which 2 main threats countries should protect against vary a lot from one country to another:

Spanish (73%), British (65%) and American adults (61%) are the most sensitive to terrorist threats, feelings certainly influenced by experiences of attacks in recent years.

The economic crisis is of particular concern to the French (46%), Spanish (42%), Americans (39%) and Germans (35%).

A large proportion of French adults are also concerned about ecological threats (42%), in stark contrast to Americans (13%).

Health threats also appear in the areas for concern, ranking particularly highly in Italy, but are much less of a concern in Spain (14%).

**Among the following potential threats, which are the 2 main threats that you would like your country to most protect against?**

*Base : All respondents*

						
<i>Unweighted base</i>	1 122	1 125	1 109	1 011	1 054	1 057
Terrorist threats	48%	54%	65%	52%	73%	61%
Economic threats	46%	35%	26%	32%	42%	39%
Ecologic threats	42%	25%	15%	27%	31%	13%
Health threats (virus, epidemics)	30%	33%	37%	43%	14%	38%
Climatic/geological threats (seism, hurricane, tsunami...)	16%	25%	17%	16%	19%	11%
Military threats	4%	12%	15%	8%	6%	23%
<b>Avg number of threats selected</b>	<b>1,9</b>	<b>1,8</b>	<b>1,8</b>	<b>1,8</b>	<b>1,9</b>	<b>1,9</b>
None	*	*	*	*	1%	*
Not sure	5%	6%	11%	6%	4%	6%

\* : less than 0,5%

## ADHERENCE TO A EUROPEAN MILITARY DEFENCE

Generally, European and Americans are **favourable to the idea of a common military defence for the EU**.

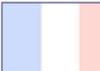
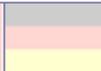
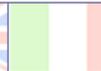
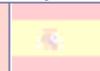
This is especially the case for French (73%) and Italians (61%); among whom 1 out 3 "completely support" the project.

Germans and British are a little more divided on this subject (with respectively 44% and 41% being favourable).

Fewer Americans gave a definitive opinion to this question; indicating it a subject about which they are less concerned.

### How much do you support or oppose a military force for the common defence of the European Union?

Base : All respondents

						
<i>Unweighted base</i>	1,122	1,125	1,109	1,011	1,054	1,057
<b>Support (Net)</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>39%</b>
Completely support (4)	30%	11%	11%	25%	19%	9%
Support more than oppose (3)	44%	33%	30%	36%	33%	30%
<b>Oppose (Net)</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>24%</b>
Oppose more than support (2)	8%	28%	16%	18%	20%	17%
Completely suppose (1)	6%	16%	17%	12%	17%	7%
Not sure	13%	12%	26%	8%	10%	37%
<b>Mean (excl. Not sure)</b>	<b>3,1</b>	<b>2,4</b>	<b>2,5</b>	<b>2,8</b>	<b>2,6</b>	<b>2,7</b>

\* : less than 0,5%

## ADHERENCE TO AN AMERICAN ANTI-MISSILE DEFENCE PROJECT IN EASTERN EUROPE

Europeans are clearly opposed to the plan of the United-States installing an anti-missile defence system in Eastern Europe. This trend is particularly marked amongst Germans (71%), Spanish (61%) and French adults (58%).

In contrast Americans demonstrate greater support for the project with 49% in complete support.

### How much do you support or oppose the plan by the United States to install an anti-missile defence system in the Eastern Europe?

Base : All respondents

						
<i>Unweighted base</i>	1,122	1,125	1,109	1,011	1,054	1,057
<b>Support (Net)</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>49%</b>
Completely support (4)	6%	5%	8%	14%	7%	19%
Support more than oppose (3)	16%	14%	22%	21%	12%	30%
<b>Oppose (Net)</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>25%</b>
Oppose more than support (2)	28%	29%	26%	24%	22%	17%
Completely oppose (1)	30%	41%	18%	25%	39%	8%
Not sure	20%	11%	26%	16%	20%	26%
<b>Mean (excl. Not sure)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1,8</b>	<b>2,3</b>	<b>2,3</b>	<b>1,8</b>	<b>2,8</b>

Globally, respondents are more favourable to a common anti-missile protection scheme between NATO and Russia; possibly influenced by concerns related to the Russian reaction to Europe if the American anti-missile plan in Eastern Europe went ahead.

Italians (59%), Britons (49%) and German (48%) particularly support a NATO-Russia anti-missile protection scheme alliance.

### Moscow would like Washington to renounce the anti-missile protection project they have in the Central Europe and instead work with Russia to create a common defence policy.

What do you think about a common anti-missile protection scheme with NATO and Russia?

Base : All respondents

						
<i>Unweighted base</i>	1 122	1 125	1 109	1 011	1 054	1 057
<b>Support (Net)</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>39%</b>
Completely support (4)	6%	17%	14%	22%	15%	5%
Support more than oppose (3)	30%	31%	35%	37%	28%	33%
<b>Oppose (Net)</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>25%</b>
Oppose more than support (2)	19%	16%	8%	11%	15%	15%
Completely oppose (1)	14%	17%	5%	10%	14%	11%
Not sure	31%	19%	37%	20%	29%	36%
<b>Moyenne (excl. Sans opinion)</b>	<b>2,4</b>	<b>2,6</b>	<b>2,9</b>	<b>2,9</b>	<b>2,6</b>	<b>2,5</b>

\* : less than 0,5%

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## Summary

Overall, the populations surveyed are favourable to a common military defence in Europe. In spite of a common lack of knowledge on the role of NATO, the NATO alliance is not compromised. Indeed, the majority of respondents thinks that France should join the NATO military structure; except in France where opinion is more divided.

The presence of NATO does not allay all fears of a military threat which are perceived to come from Iran but also Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan and, for some, from Russia and China. Europeans are clearly opposed to the plan of the United-States installing an anti-missile defence system in Eastern Europe

Does a climate of general worry exist within the various populations?

The concerns are actually diversified and the main worry remains the terrorist threat across all of the 6 countries.

The populations seem to feel rather well protected against military threats, and expect more protection against economic, ecological or health threats.

## About Harris Interactive

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To become a member of the Harris Poll Online and be invited to participate in online surveys, register at [www.harrispollonline.com](http://www.harrispollonline.com).

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\* : less than 0,5%