

Most Americans Favor Increasing Sanctions on Russia

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In a move to lower energy costs for American consumers ahead of the midterm elections—in which [cost-of-living concerns top the list](#) of voting factors—US President Donald Trump recently announced a deal to import 300,000 tons of Russian diesel into the US market. He also paused a set of additional sanctions against Russia just days before they were due to take effect. The stunning policy reversal has [drawn bipartisan backlash](#) at home and [condemnation from European allies](#), who argue that importing Russian diesel won't meaningfully improve the global economy and only empowers Russian President Vladimir Putin to continue Russia's war in Ukraine.

Data from the July 2026 Chicago Council Survey finds Americans support increasing diplomatic and economic sanctions on Russia, as they have since the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. And despite feeling less threatened by Russia's territorial ambitions, majorities—and a growing share of Republicans—remain supportive of sending economic and military aid to support Kyiv.

Key Findings

- To address Russia's war in Ukraine, majorities of Americans would support increasing sanctions on Russia (69%) and sending economic (59%) or military (59%) aid to Kyiv.
- While 70 percent of Republicans support raising sanctions against Russia, they are more divided when it comes to sending additional economic aid (45%, up from 32% in March 2025) and military aid (48%, up from 30%) to Ukraine, though support for such assistance has increased over the past year. Americans across the partisan spectrum

oppose sending US troops to help the Ukrainian government defend itself against Russia (66%), but majorities would support the deployment of troops to defend against a Russian invasion of a NATO ally like Poland (60%) or the Baltic states (54%).

- While Americans' general feelings toward Russia are still at Cold War lows, fewer than half think Russia's territorial ambitions pose a critical threat to the United States (42%, down from 50% in June 2024).

Majorities of Democrats, Independents Support Continuing Aid to Ukraine

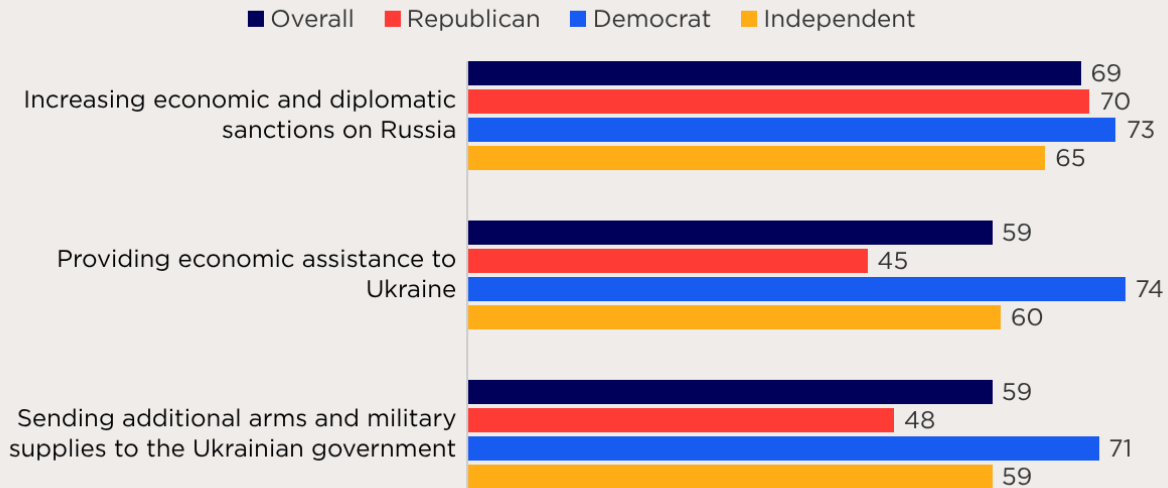
Just last month, Trump signed the bipartisan [Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act](#), which codified and expanded existing US sanctions against Russia, into law. The sanctions targeted Russian financial institutions, high-level officials and oligarchs, and purchasers of Russian energy, with the aim of bringing Putin to the negotiating table. Following Trump's recent decision to temporarily waive the sanctions, lawmakers across the partisan aisle have condemned the pause and moved to counter the administration's actions.

For their part, Americans are most supportive of increasing economic and diplomatic sanctions on Russia (69%) in response to Russia's war in Ukraine, with two-thirds or more across partisan lines in agreement.

There are greater partisan divides when it comes to providing material support for Ukraine. While most Americans—including Democrats and Independents—support providing economic assistance to Kyiv (59% overall, 74% Democrat, 60% Independent) and sending additional arms and military supplies to the Ukrainian government (59% overall, 71% Democrat, 59% Independent), just around half of Republicans agree (48% military aid, 45% economic aid). However, Republicans are no more favorable of Russia than other partisans, so their lower support for sending aid to Ukraine likely reflects a reluctance to commit additional Americans resources to the war (see figure on page 11).

US Policy on Russia-Ukraine War

In response to the situation involving Russia and Ukraine, would you support or oppose the United States: (% support)



July 10-21, 2026 | n=2,156

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Across the MAGA and non-MAGA camps, Republicans express similar levels of support for increasing sanctions on Russia and reservations about sending military aid to Ukraine. However, MAGA Republicans are significantly less supportive of sending economic assistance to Kyiv (40% vs. 53%).¹

And although majorities of Democrats across ideologies favor the full range of policies toward Ukraine, liberal Democrats express much stronger support for supporting Ukraine economically, militarily, and diplomatically than moderate or conservative Democrats.

¹ Respondents in Chicago Council Surveys are asked to self-identify as supporters of the Democratic or Republican Parties, or as Independents. However, to better understand the different movements within each party, partisans are divided into subgroups. Democrats are divided according to their self-described ideological leanings toward liberal versus a combination of moderate or conservative Democrats. In the 2026 Chicago Council Survey, 62 percent of Democrats identify as liberal to some degree (13% extremely liberal, 33% liberal, 17% slightly liberal), while 37 percent identify as moderate (30%) or conservative to some degree (7%). For analytical purposes, we combine moderate and conservative Democrats into one group for intraparty analyses. Republicans are divided into MAGA Republicans (the 61% of self-identified Republicans who also say they are part of the Make America Great Again movement) and non-MAGA Republicans (the 37% who say they are not part of the MAGA movement).

Intra-Partisan Views on US-Ukraine Policy

In response to the situation involving Russia and Ukraine, would you support or oppose the United States: (% support)

	Liberal Democrat	Moderate/Conservative Democrat	MAGA Republican	Non-MAGA Republican
Providing economic assistance to Ukraine	84	60	40	53
Increasing economic and diplomatic sanctions on Russia	83	58	71	69
Sending additional arms and military supplies to the Ukrainian government	81	56	47	49

July 10-21, 2026 | n=1,333

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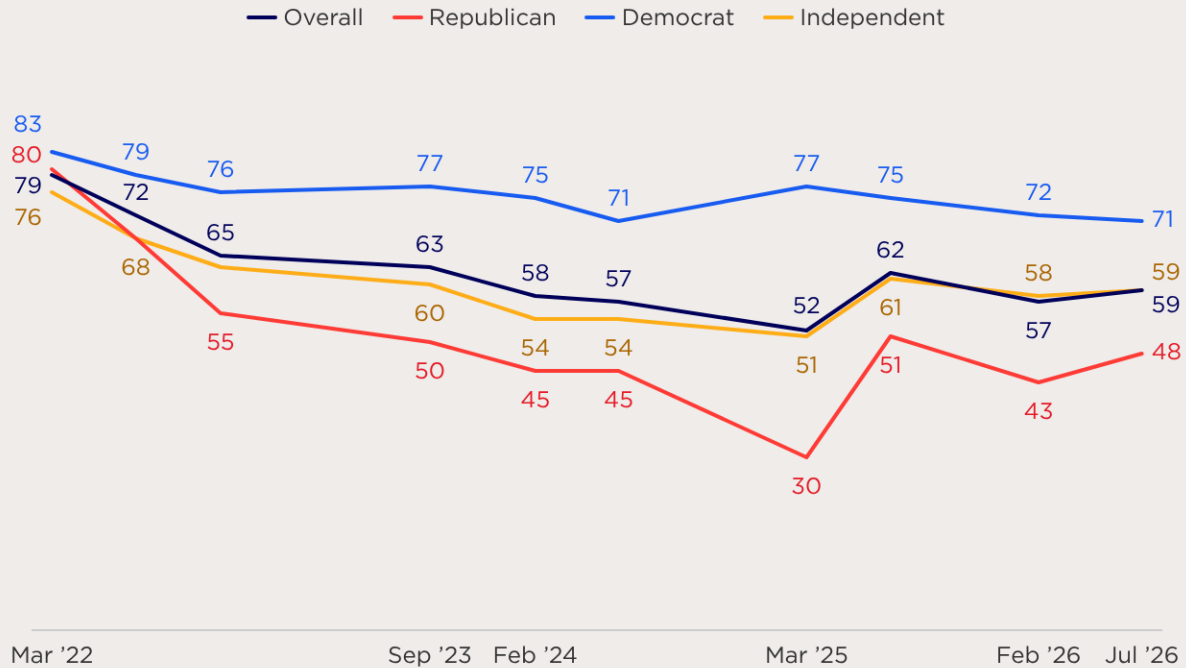
Rise in Republican Support for Sending Aid to Ukraine

In the immediate aftermath of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in early 2022, support for sending economic and military aid sharply rose to its highest level among all partisans (much higher than it did following the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014, at which point less than half of Americans overall supported economic and military aid). As the war dragged on, however, support for sending continued aid to Kyiv declined across all partisans, though most sharply among Republicans—reaching a record low of just 30 percent (military aid) and 32 percent (economic aid) in March 2025, following [Trump's contentious meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky](#).

Since then, Democratic support has declined marginally, though at least seven in 10 continue to favor increased military assistance (71%) and economic aid (74%). For their part, Republicans and Independents have grown significantly more supportive of aiding Ukraine since March 2025, with six in 10 Independents (59% military aid, 60% economic aid) and half of Republicans (48% military, 45% economic) currently supporting increasing assistance.

Support For Sending Additional Arms to Ukraine

In response to the situation involving Russia and Ukraine, would you support or oppose the United States: **Sending additional arms and military supplies to the Ukrainian government** (% support)



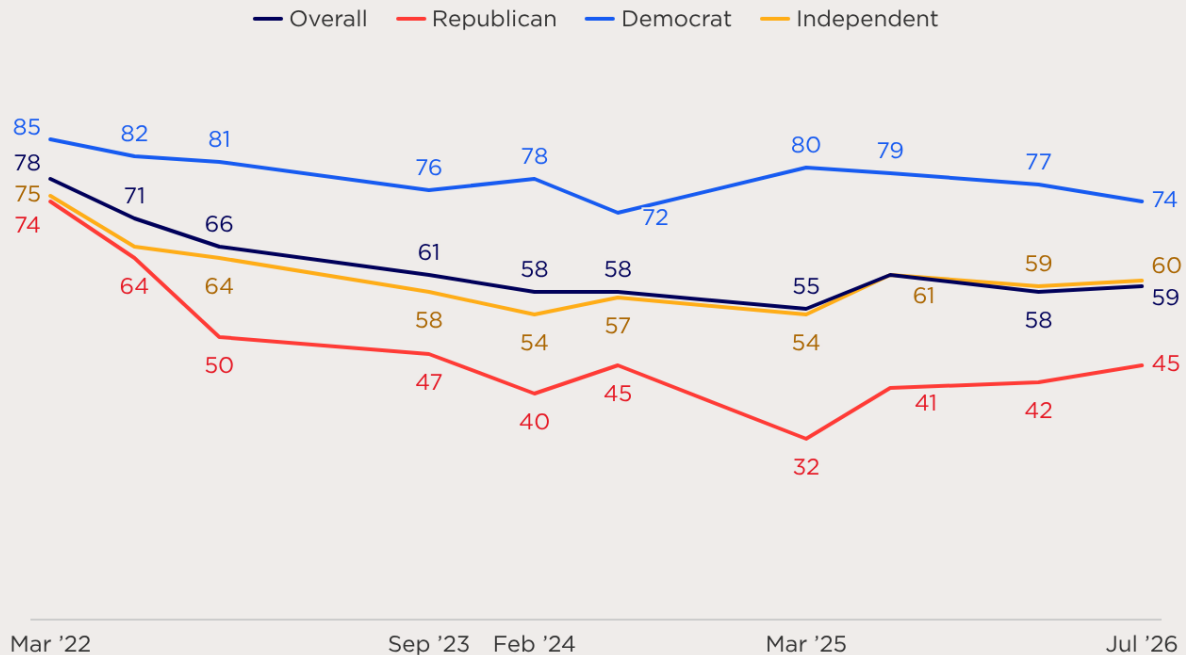
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Support For Providing Economic Assistance to Ukraine

In response to the situation involving Russia and Ukraine, would you support or oppose the United States: **Providing economic assistance to Ukraine** (% support)



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Increased support for sending economic and military aid to Ukraine could reflect more positive cues from Republican policymakers and popular conservative political commentators, who have [reconsidered their views of the ongoing war](#) and are now more supportive of Kyiv. The return of Republican attitudes to previous levels could also be related to [Ukraine's tactical successes on the battlefield](#), as reports suggest [innovations in Ukraine's military operations](#) have reversed a year's worth of Russian territorial gains in Donetsk.

Sending Troops to Ukraine Remains Unpopular

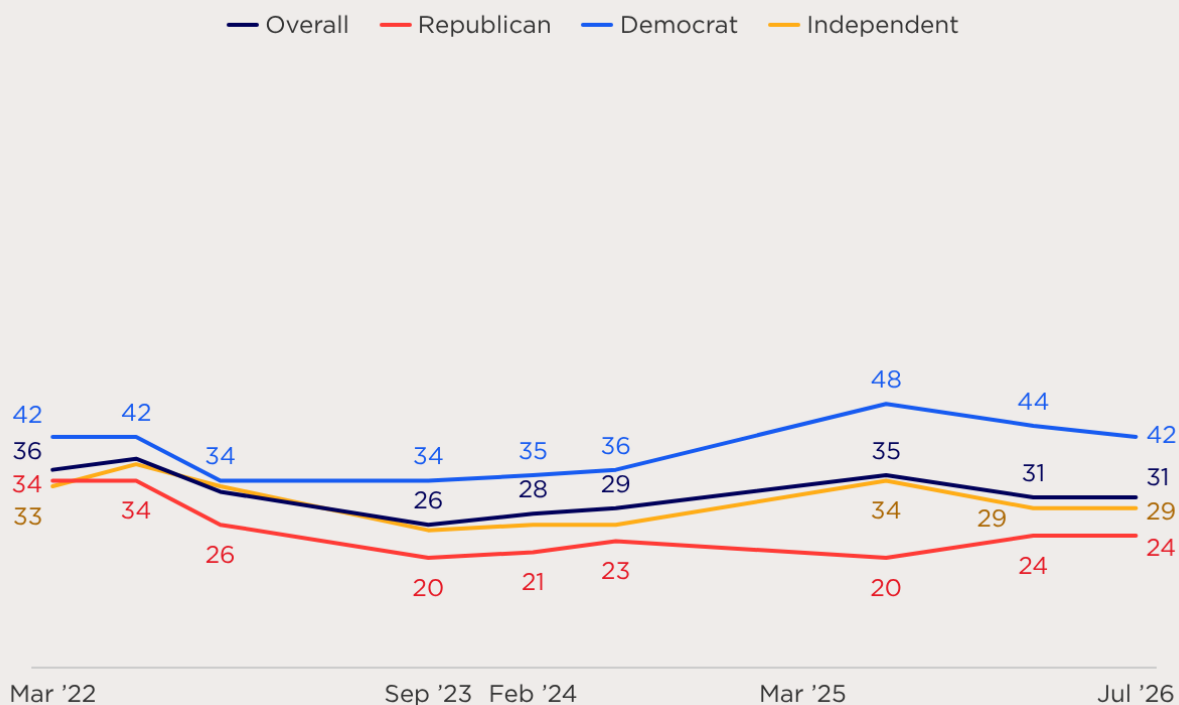
Today, overall public support for committing American troops to Ukraine remains low (31%), with Democrats most in favor (42%; 45% liberal Democrats vs. 38% moderate or conservative). Just a quarter of Republicans (24%; 23% MAGA Republicans vs. 24% non-MAGA) and three in 10 Independents (29%) favor sending US troops to help the Ukrainian government defend itself

against Russia. Overall, Americans across the board concur against putting boots on the ground (66% overall, 74% Republicans, 68% Independents, and 56% Democrats).

From the start of Russia's war in Ukraine, Americans have consistently opposed sending American forces to help the Ukrainian government defend itself and instead preferred to use diplomatic and economic tools to support Kyiv. In July 2022, support for deploying troops reached a height of just 38 percent before falling to a low of 26 percent in September 2023 and rebounding in mid-2025 (35% in July). At this point, support for sending troops among Democrats neared a majority (48%), stretching the partisan divide with Republicans (20%) to its highest level (a 28-percentage-point difference).

Support For Sending US Troops to Ukraine

*In response to the situation involving Russia and Ukraine, would you support or oppose the United States: **Sending US troops to Ukraine to help the Ukrainian government defend itself against Russia** (% support)*



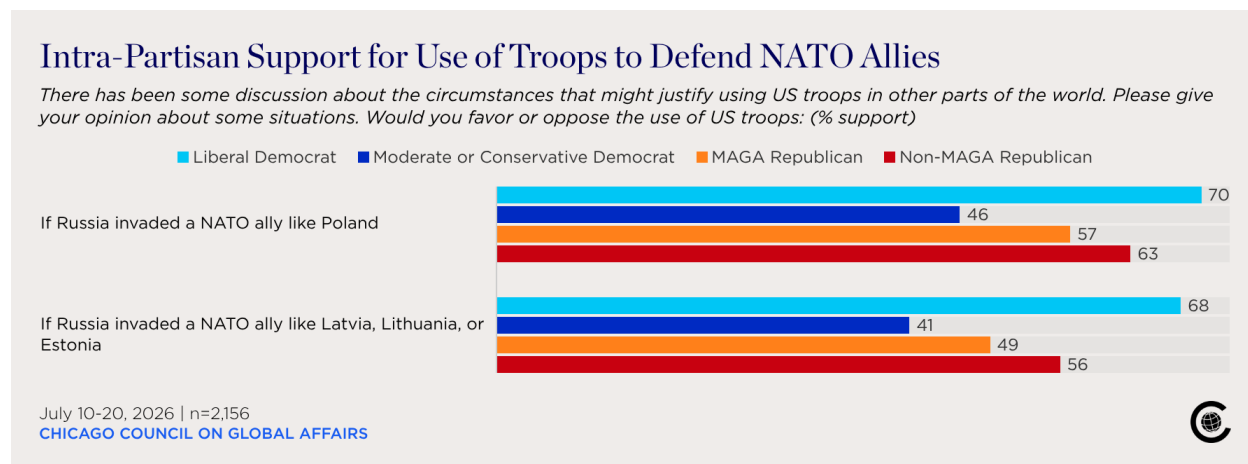
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However, Americans seem to recognize the United States' role in the collective defense of NATO member nations. Majorities across partisan affiliations support the use of force if Russia invades a NATO ally like Poland (60% overall) or Baltic states like Latvia, Lithuania, or Estonia (54%). In fact, a Russian attack against a NATO ally is one of the few circumstances in which the general public would support deploying US troops (see appendix table 1). Support for using troops to defend NATO allies has remained consistent since 2022, with marginal fluctuation above 60 percent (for a NATO ally like Poland and Germany) and above 50 percent (for a Baltic NATO ally).

Liberal Democrats express the most willingness to commit American troops to defend NATO allies against a potential Russian invasion (70% Poland and 68% Baltic allies), compared to less than half of moderate or conservative Democrats (46% Poland and 41% Baltics). Non-MAGA Republicans are more likely to favor sending US troops to defend NATO allies against Russian attacks (63% and 56%) than their MAGA counterparts (57% and 49%)—but differences across Republican factions are smaller than those among Democrats.

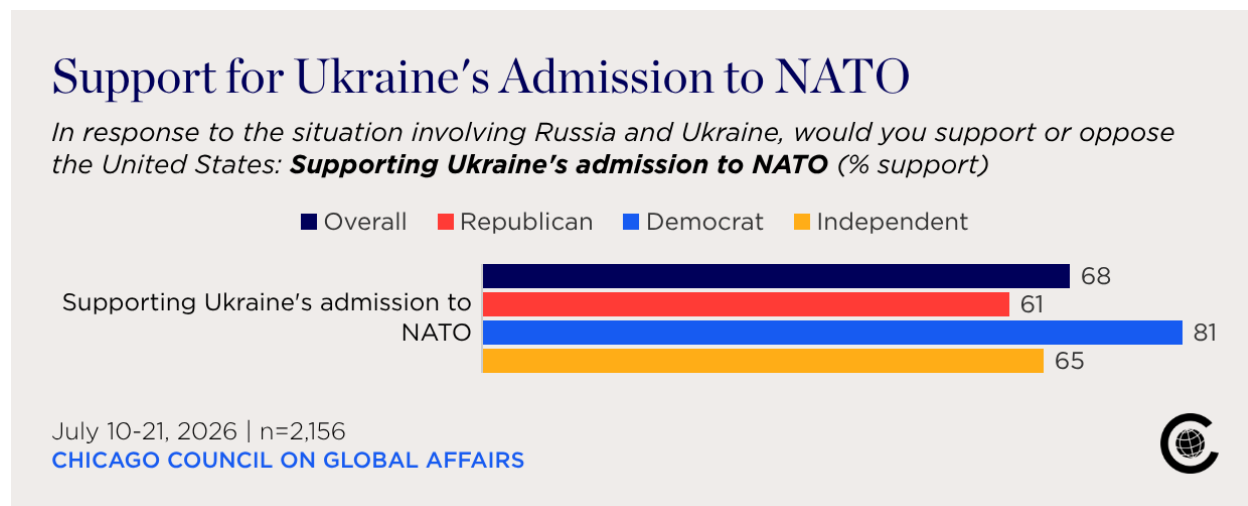


Americans Back Ukraine's Admission to NATO

Despite being off the table for now, solid majorities across partisan affiliations back Ukraine's admission to NATO. However, there is a wide divide between Republicans and Democrats (21 percentage points) on the issue, as well as some intraparty divides.

Nearly all liberal Democrats favor supporting Ukraine's admission to NATO (90%), compared to 67 percent among moderate or conservative Democrats.

Among Republicans, about six in 10 across the MAGA (59%) and non-MAGA camps (64%) back NATO membership for Ukraine. Republicans' greater skepticism of Ukraine's admission to the transatlantic alliance may reflect the Trump administration's [opposition to its inclusion in a peace deal](#) or a belief that pushing for its membership [contributed to Russia's invasion in 2022](#).



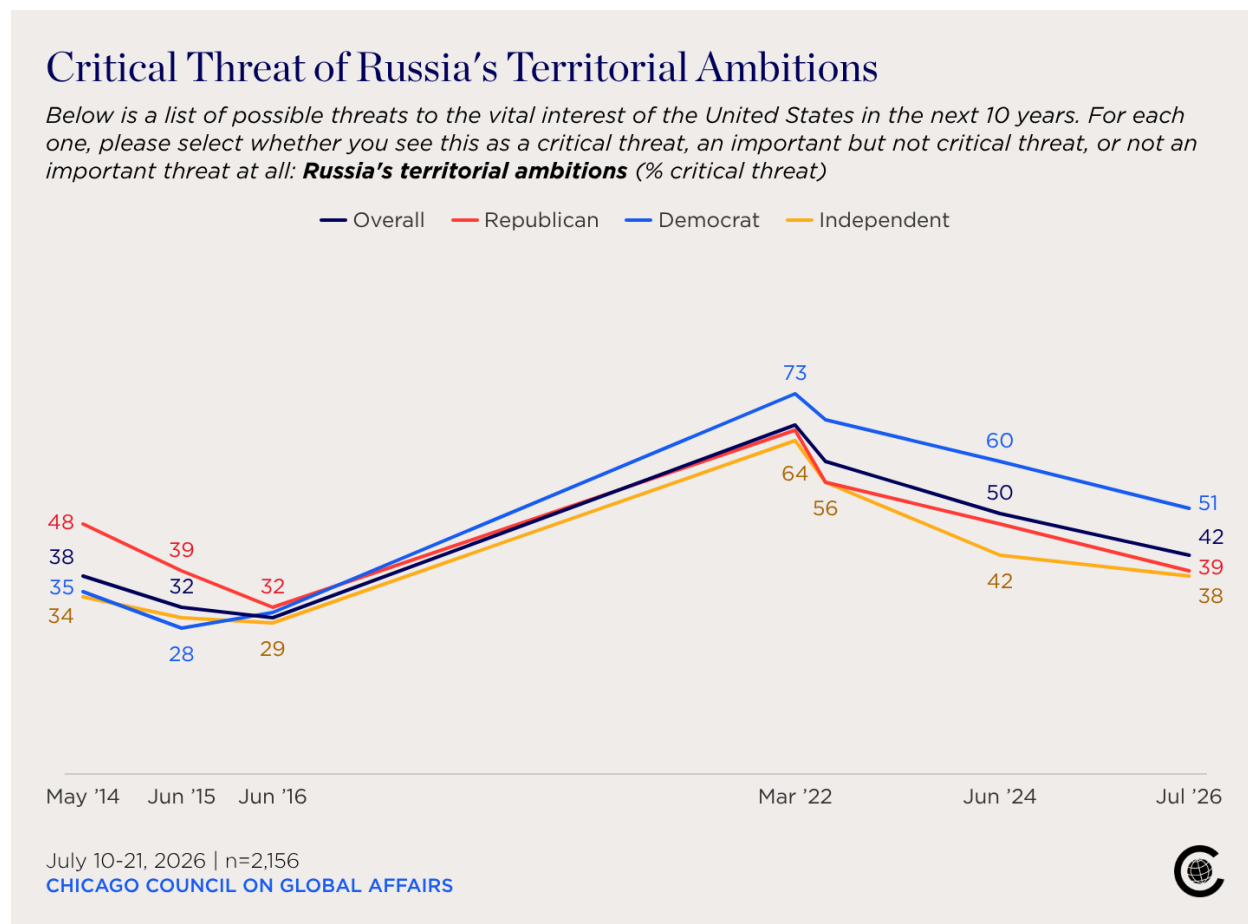
At the same time, the overall public's support for Ukraine's admission to the alliance may reflect a lack of understanding of NATO's Article 5, which states that an armed attack against one or more members is considered an attack against all. If Ukraine were to be admitted to NATO, its war with Russia would extend to all member states, including the United States. Given that few Americans would support sending troops to help Kyiv defend itself against Moscow, there is a clear disconnect in public opinion favoring Ukraine's NATO membership.

Fewer Americans See Russia as Threat to US Interests

Today, just four in 10 Americans—and Republicans and Independents—are concerned about Russia's territorial ambitions, reflecting [the declining salience of Russia's war in Ukraine among the public](#) at the time this survey was fielded. Americans have grown less threatened by Russia's territorial ambitions since March 2022, at which point more than two-thirds across all partisan affiliations felt they posed a critical threat to the vital interests of the United States (see appendix table 2). Still, Americans remain more threatened by Russia than they were in the aftermath of its annexation of Crimea in 2014.

Democrats stand apart from other partisans, sensing a greater threat from Russia (51%). Moderate or conservative Democrats tend to see Russia posing a greater threat (56%) than liberal Democrats (49%), while equal shares of

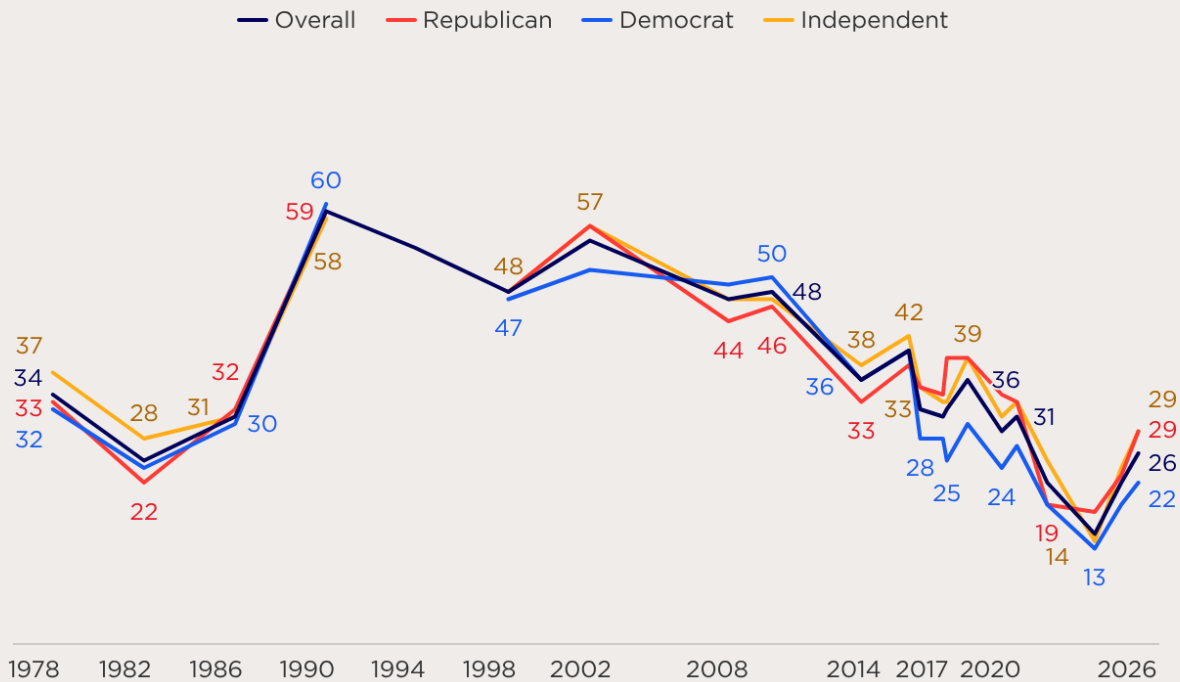
Republicans across factions agree in their perception of the threat posed by Russia's territorial ambitions (39% MAGA vs. 38% non-MAGA).



On a scale from 0-100, where 0 represents very cold, unfavorable feelings, and 100 represents very warm, favorable feelings, Americans' feelings toward Russia remain low (but higher than their lowest rating of an average of 15 in 2024). Today, Americans give Russia an average rating of 26 (up from 22 in 2025), though Democrats express slightly colder feelings than other partisans (22 vs. 29 among Republicans and Independents). These levels represent a return to Russia's favorability among the American public between 2017-2026 and reminiscent of sentiment during the Cold War.

Feelings Toward Russia

Please rate your feelings toward some countries, with one hundred meaning a very warm, favorable feeling, zero meaning a very cold, unfavorable feeling, and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold. You can use any number from zero to one hundred, the higher the number the more favorable your feelings are toward that country. **Russia** (mean)



July 10-21, 2026 | n=2,156

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Conclusion

Data from the 2026 Chicago Council Survey show majorities of Americans across political affiliations support increasing, not waiving, sanctions against Russia. Majorities of Democrats and Independents and half of Republicans also continue to favor assisting Ukraine. At a time when Americans are very concerned about their cost of living, their enduring support for Kyiv shows a lasting commitment to helping Ukraine defend itself against Russian aggression.

Appendix

Appendix Table 1. Q30. There has been some discussion about the circumstances that might justify using US troops in other parts of the world. Please give your opinion about some situations. Would you favor or oppose the use of US troops: (% favor)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
Q30/1. If North Korea invaded South Korea	49	50	48	48	2
Q30/2. If China invaded Taiwan	38	41	37	38	4
Q30/13. If Russia invades a NATO ally like Latvia, Lithuania, or Estonia	54	51	58	55	-7
Q30/13G. If Russia invades a NATO ally like Poland	60	59	61	61	-7
Q30/21. To stop immigrants from coming into the US from Mexico	44	76	17	38	59
Q30/27A. To invade Greenland and make it part of the United States	10	18	4	7	14
Q30/28. To overthrow the Cuban government	22	40	11	14	29
Q30/26. To combat drug cartels in Mexico	53	71	40	48	31
Q30/31. To overthrow the	32	56	14	26	42

Iranian government					
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Appendix Table 2. Q5. Below is a list of possible threats to the vital interests of the United States in the next 10 years. For each one, please select whether you see this as a critical threat, an important but not critical threat, or not an important threat at all. [Russia's territorial ambitions] (% critical threat)

	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
2014	38	48	35	34	13
2015	32	39	28	30	11
2016	30	32	31	29	1
March 2022	67	66	73	64	-7
2022	60	56	68	56	-12
2024	50	48	60	42	-12
2026	42	39	51	38	-12

Methodology

This analysis is based on data from the 2026 Chicago Council Survey of the American public on foreign policy, a project of the Lester Crown Center on US Foreign Policy.

The 2026 Chicago Council Survey was conducted July 10-21, 2026, by Ipsos using its large-scale, nationwide, online research panel (KnowledgePanel) in English and Spanish among a weighted national sample of 2,156 adults 18 or older living in all 50 US states and the District of Columbia. The margin of sampling error for the full sample is ± 2.2 percentage points, including a design effect of 1.04.

The data were weighted to adjust for gender by age, race and ethnicity, education, census region by metropolitan status, household income, and language dominance. The demographic benchmarks came from the 2025 March supplement of the US Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (CPS). Additionally, language dominance benchmark was obtained from the 2024 American Community Survey (ACS).

- Gender (Male, Female) by Age (18-29, 30-44, 45-59, and 60+)
- Race/Hispanic Ethnicity (White Non-Hispanic, Black Non-Hispanic, Other Non-Hispanic, Hispanic, 2+ Races Non-Hispanic)
- Education (Less than High School, High School, Some College, Bachelor's degree or higher)
- Census Region (Northeast, Midwest, South, West) by Metropolitan status (Metro, non-Metro)
- Household Income (Under \$25,000, \$25,000-\$49,999, \$50,000-\$74,999, \$75,000-\$99,999, \$100,000-\$149,999, \$150,000+)
- Language Dominance (English Dominant Hispanic, Bilingual Hispanic, Spanish Dominant Hispanic, Non-Hispanic)

Partisan identification is based on how respondents answered a standard partisan self-identification question: "Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?"

To examine differences within the Republican and Democratic parties, we further divide Republicans and Democrats into subgroups.

Republicans are divided into MAGA Republicans (the 61% of Republicans who also say they are part of the Make America Great Again, or MAGA, movement) and non-MAGA Republicans (the 39% of Republicans who say they are not part of the MAGA movement).

Democrats are divided into ideological groups: 63 percent of Democrats identify as liberal to some degree (12% extremely liberal, 33% liberal, 17% slightly liberal), while another 37 percent of Democrats identify as moderate (30%) or conservative to some degree (6%).

The 2026 Chicago Council Survey is made possible by the generous support of the Crown family, the Dr. Scholl Foundation, and Observer Research Foundation America.

About the Chicago Council on Global Affairs

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs is an independent, nonpartisan membership organization that provides insight—and influences the public discourse—on critical global issues. We convene leading global voices, conduct independent research, and engage the public to explore ideas that will shape our global future. The Council is committed to bringing clarity and offering solutions to issues that transcend borders and transform how people, business, and governments engage the world. Learn more at globalaffairs.org.

About the Lester Crown Center on US Foreign Policy

Established in 2018 with a transformative gift from the Crown Family, the Lester Crown Center on US Foreign Policy is driven by the belief that the public plays a critical role in determining the direction of US foreign policy and that an informed and engaged public is critical for effective policymaking. The centerpiece of the Lester Crown Center is its annual survey of American public opinion and US foreign policy, the Chicago Council Survey, which has been conducted since 1974.