2026 CHICAGO COUNCIL SURVEY

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs
US Partisan Topline Report: China

Items from “As Fears of China Wane, Americans Favor Greater Engagement with Beijing”
(September 2026)

Fielded July 10-21, 2026
Total sample n=2,156

Prepared November 18, 2026

DETAILED FINDINGS

Note: Numbers may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Question 5

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.

Q5/45. China's territorial ambitions (% critical threat)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
2022	52	62	50	48	12
2024	48	61	49	36	12
2026	41	49	35	37	14
Q5/45B. Economic competition from China (% critical threat)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
2024	33	45	25	30	20
2026	32	42	26	28	16

Summary of Q5 – 2026 data only

Q5. Potential Threats to the United States (% critical threat)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
Q5/45. China's territorial ambitions	41	49	35	37	14
Q5/45B. Economic competition from China	32	42	26	28	16

Question 144

Q144. Do you think that the following countries are respected more in the

world today than they were ten years ago, are respected less, or are respected about as much now as ten years ago?

Q144/1. China (respected more %)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
2018	43	40	47	40	-7
2021	15	10	21	13	-11
2026	33	23	38	38	-15
Q144/1. China (respected less %)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
2018	22	26	22	18	4
2021	60	71	47	64	24
2026	31	41	23	28	18
Q144/1. China (respected about the same as ten years ago %)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
2018	34	33	30	41	3
2021	22	18	30	19	-12
2026	35	35	38	32	-3

Q144/8. United States (respected more %)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
1974	12	13	14	9	-1
1978	18	18	20	15	-2
1982	14	18	14	10	4
2014	11	6	18	8	-12
2018	21	38	11	17	27
2021	12	22	5	10	17
2026	20	40	9	13	31
Q144/8. United States (respected less%)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
1974	62	61	61	66	0
1978	56	59	55	60	4
1982	65	60	66	67	-6
2014	61	76	45	67	31
2018	59	34	77	59	-43
2021	67	56	78	67	-22
2026	62	39	80	68	-41
Q144/8. United States (respected about the same as ten years ago %)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
1974	18	22	17	18	5
1978	22	21	23	21	-2
1982	18	19	16	21	3

2014	20	15	26	18	-11
2018	19	27	11	23	16
2021	19	21	16	20	5
2026	16	20	10	18	10

Summary of Q144– 2026 data only

Q144. Respected more (%)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
Q144/1. China	33	23	38	38	-15
Q144/8. United States	20	40	9	13	31

Q144. Respected less (%)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
Q144/1. China	31	41	23	28	18
Q144/8. United States	62	39	80	68	-41

Q144. Respected about as much as ten years ago (%)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
Q144/1. China	35	35	38	32	-3
Q144/8. United States	16	20	10	18	10

Question 30

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:

Q30/2. If China invaded Taiwan (% favor)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
1982	19	25	17	17	8
1986	19	22	18	18	4
1998	27	30	24	30	6
2002	31	39	24	32	15
2004	33	40	30	31	10
2006	33	39	31	29	8
2008	32	36	27	34	9
2010	25	34	21	21	13
2012	28	35	26	23	9
2013	23	26	19	25	7
2014	26	25	24	29	1
2015	28	28	29	28	-1
2018	35	39	36	33	3
2019	38	42	38	35	4
2020	41	43	40	40	3
March 2021	42	47	37	42	10
July 2021	52	60	50	49	10
2022	44	44	46	42	-2
2024	43	45	44	40	1
2025	41	47	39	38	8
2026	38	41	37	38	4

Summary of Q30 – 2026 data only

Q30. Use of US troops (% favor)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
Q30/2. If China invaded Taiwan	38	41	37	38	4

Q30. Use of US troops (% oppose)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
Q30/2. If China invaded Taiwan	58	57	60	59	-3

Question 45

Q45. Please rate your feelings toward some countries and peoples, 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 or those people.

Q45/6. China (mean)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
1978	44	44	44	44	0
1982	48	51	46	49	5
1986	53	53	51	55	2
1990	45	47	42	46	5
1994	46	na	na	na	na
1998	47	44	50	47	-6
2002	48	46	47	49	-1
2004	44	40	47	44	-7
2006	40	39	41	42	-2
2008	41	38	44	40	-6
2010	45	41	48	45	-7
April 2013	40	35	44	39	-9
2014	44	40	47	45	-7
2016	44	40	46	43	-6
December 2016	41	35	45	40	-10
December 2017	40	38	43	40	-5
February 2018	45	43	46	46	-3
2020	32	25	37	33	-12
2022	32	24	36	33	-12
August 2024	26	20	29	27	-9
October 2025	35	26	42	38	-16
2026	39	31	45	42	-14

Question 350A

Q350A. In dealing with the rise of China's power, do you think the US should:

Q350A. Undertake friendly cooperation and engagement with China (%)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
2006	66	66	65	67	1
2008	64	61	67	65	-6
2010	68	67	68	69	-1
2012	69	65	72	71	-7
2014	67	63	72	66	-9
2016	63	55	67	67	-12
2019	68	58	74	69	-16
2020	47	33	60	47	-27
2021	47	28	51	53	-23
2024	40	28	47	44	-19
2025	53	33	66	56	-33
2026	57	43	68	61	-25

Q350A. Actively work to limit the growth of China's power (%)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
2006	29	29	31	27	-2
2008	33	36	32	31	4
2010	29	30	29	27	1
2012	28	32	24	28	8
2014	29	34	25	31	9
2016	33	43	30	30	13
2019	31	40	25	29	15
2020	49	64	36	49	28
2021	51	71	49	42	22
2024	55	67	49	50	18
2025	44	63	32	41	31
2026	40	55	29	36	26

Summary of Q350A – 2026 data only

Q350A. In dealing with the rise of China's power, do you think the US should: (%)					
	Overall	Republican	Democrat	Independent	R-D Gap
Undertake friendly cooperation and engagement with China	57	43	68	61	-25
Actively work to limit the growth of China's power	40	55	29	36	26