



HIGH POINT UNIVERSITY

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HPU POLL: NORTH CAROLINIANS DON'T SEE SYRIA AS A U.S. RESPONSIBILITY

HIGH POINT, N.C., Sept. 17, 2013 – The situation in Syria has made headlines in recent weeks as the United States has considered a range of options for intervening in the country's conflict. A new HPU Poll finds that many North Carolinians are aware of the news coming from the Middle East, but they say that the U.S. does not have the responsibility to do something to stop the conflict.

The HPU Poll finds that 63 percent of North Carolinians have heard or seen “a lot” about the current political violence in Syria. But a similar 62 percent say the U.S. does not have a responsibility to do something about the fighting.

In March 2012, the HPU Poll found that although a smaller fraction of North Carolinian's – 43 percent – had heard or seen a lot about the conflict, 62 percent also said then that they saw no U.S. responsibility to do something.

This lack of motivation to intervene comes at a time when large majorities of North Carolinians see the world as an increasingly dangerous place for the U.S, yet there is stark division about whether the U.S. should be actively involved in world affairs or stay out.

The new HPU Poll finds that 83 percent of North Carolinian's see the world as increasingly dangerous while only 44 percent say that the U.S. should take an active part in world affairs and an equal 44 percent say the U.S. should stay out.

“North Carolinians are saying through these findings that they are wary at this time of costly intervention in Syria whether military or otherwise,” says Dr. Martin Kifer, director of the HPU Poll and assistant professor of political science. “But policymakers must often undertake the tasks of listening to the people and weighing any public concern against the importance they see

in taking action. This is an evolving situation, and elected officials are no doubt aware that they face a relatively skeptical public concerning U.S. involvement in Syria.”

All Adults – Read or Heard about Conflict in Syria (September 2013)

How much, if anything, have you read or heard about recent political violence in Syria? Have you heard...a lot, a little, or nothing at all?

A lot – 63 percent
A little – 36 percent
Nothing at all – 1 percent
(Don't know/Refuse) – 1 percent

(All adult (North Carolina resident) sample surveyed Sept. 8 - 12, 2013, n = 408 and margin of sampling error approximately = +/- 5 percent)

All Adults – Read or Heard about Conflict in Syria (March 2012)

How much, if anything, have you read or heard about recent political violence in Syria? Have you heard...a lot, a little, or nothing at all?

A lot – 43 percent
A little – 41 percent
Nothing at all – 15 percent
(Don't know/Refuse) – 1 percent

(All adult (North Carolina resident) sample surveyed March 19-22 and March 24-29, 2012, n = 507 and margin of sampling error approximately = +/- 4.4 percent)

All Adults – U.S. Responsibility to Act (September 2013)

Do you think the United States has a responsibility to do something about the fighting in Syria between government forces and anti-government groups, or doesn't the United States have this responsibility?

US has responsibility – 29 percent
US does not have responsibility – 62 percent
(Don't know/Refuse) – 9 percent

(All adult (North Carolina resident) sample surveyed Sept. 8 - 12, 2013, n = 408 and margin of sampling error approximately = +/- 5 percent)

All Adults – U.S. Responsibility to Act (March 2012)

Do you think the United States has a responsibility to do something about the fighting in Syria between government forces and anti-government groups, or doesn't the United States have this responsibility?

US has responsibility – 22 percent
US does not have responsibility – 62 percent
(Don't know/Refuse) – 16 percent

(All adult (North Carolina resident) sample surveyed March 19-22 and March 24-29, 2012, n = 507 and margin of sampling error approximately = +/- 4.4 percent)

All Adults – U.S. Role in the World (September 2013)

Generally speaking, do you believe that the United States should take an active part in world affairs or should it stay out of world affairs?

Active part – 44 percent
Stay out – 44 percent
(Don't know/Refuse) – 13 percent

(All adult (North Carolina resident) sample surveyed Sept. 8 - 12, 2013, n = 408 and margin of sampling error approximately = +/- 5 percent)

All Adults – World Becoming Safer or More Dangerous (September 2013)

Thinking about current U.S. relations with the rest of the world, would you say that the world is becoming safer or more dangerous for the U.S. and the American people?

Safer – 11 percent
More dangerous – 83 percent
(Don't know/Refuse) – 6 percent

(All adult (North Carolina resident) sample surveyed Sept. 8 - 12, 2013, n = 408 and margin of sampling error approximately = +/- 5 percent)

The most recent survey was fielded by live interviewers at the High Point University Survey Research Center calling on Sept. 8 – 12. The responses from a sample of all North Carolina counties came from 408 adults with landline or cellular telephones. This release is based on data from those respondents. The Survey Research Center contracted with Survey Sampling International to acquire this sample. The survey has an estimated margin of sampling error of approximately 5 percentage points for these respondents. The data are weighted when appropriate toward population estimates for cellular and landline telephone use, age, gender and race. In addition to sampling error, factors such as question wording and other methodological choices in conducting survey research can introduce additional error into the findings of opinion polls.

The High Point University Survey Research Center fielded the earlier survey from March 19-22 and March 24-29. The responses came from 507 adults with landline and cellular telephones in North Carolina selected by a Random Digit Dial (RDD) method giving the survey a margin of sampling error of approximately 4.4 percentage points. For more information about this poll, please see the memo at: <http://acme.highpoint.edu/~mkifer/src/14memoE.pdf>

Further results and methodological details from the most recent survey and past studies can be found at the Survey Research Center website at <http://src.highpoint.edu/>

Dr. Martin Kifer, assistant professor of political science, serves as the director of the HPU Poll, and Dr. Sadie Leder Elder, assistant professor of psychology, serves as the associate director of the HPU Poll.

At High Point University, every student receives an extraordinary education in an inspiring environment with caring people.SM HPU, located in the Piedmont Triad region of North Carolina, is a liberal arts institution with over 4,300 undergraduate and graduate students. It is ranked No.1 by U.S. News and World Report in three categories: No. 1 Best Regional College in the South; No. 1 Up and Coming School in Regional Colleges in the South; and No. 1 for Best Undergraduate Teaching in Regional Colleges in the South. HPU was named this year the No. 4 private school in NC for the best return on investment, and it is a 2013-14 College of Distinction. The university offers 44 undergraduate majors, 43 undergraduate minors and 11 graduate degree programs. It is a member of the NCAA, Division I and the Big South Conference. Visit High Point University on the Web at highpoint.edu.

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