



Taiwan Public Opinion Foundation

September 2022 Public Opinion Poll – English Excerpt

Released:

September 20, 2022

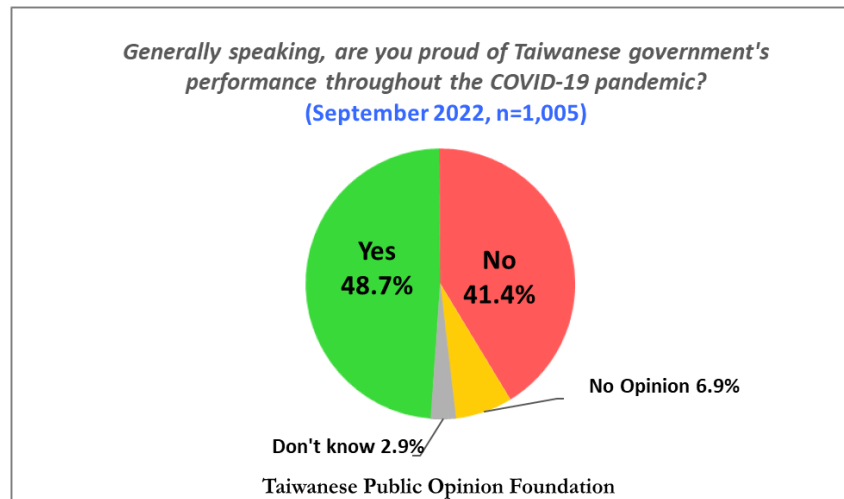
Taiwan Public Opinion Foundation (TPOF) today released the result of its September 2022 nation-wide poll. This marks the 73rd monthly survey conducted by the TPOF aimed at tracking the development and changes in Taiwan’s public opinion. The [full release in Chinese language](#) is available on our [official website](#).

How the Survey was Conducted

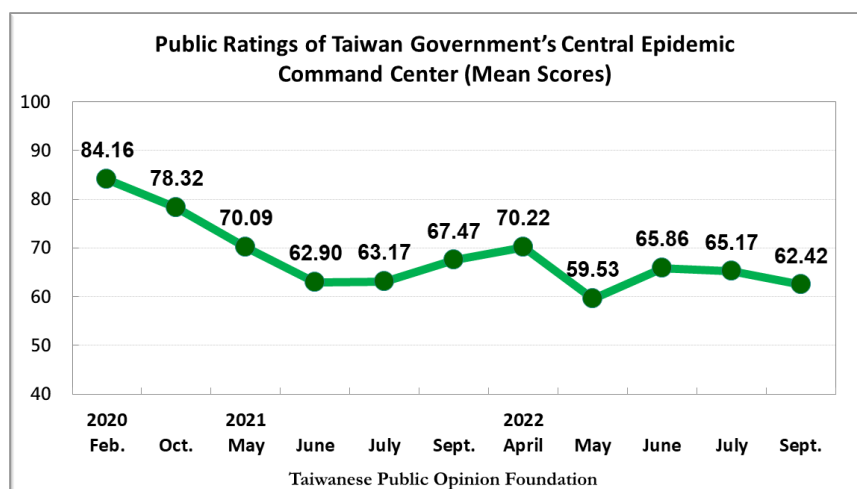
This survey was conducted on September 12-13, 2022, with a sample size of 1,005. Adults 20 years of age and older residing in Taiwan were interviewed by telephone using live interviewers. Landline numbers were drawn through random digit dialing system. The samples were demographically weighted to adjust for gender, age, education and the district of residency based on the latest statistics published by the Ministry of the Interior. Sampling error is around ± 3.09 percentage points with 95% level of confidence.

Main Findings:

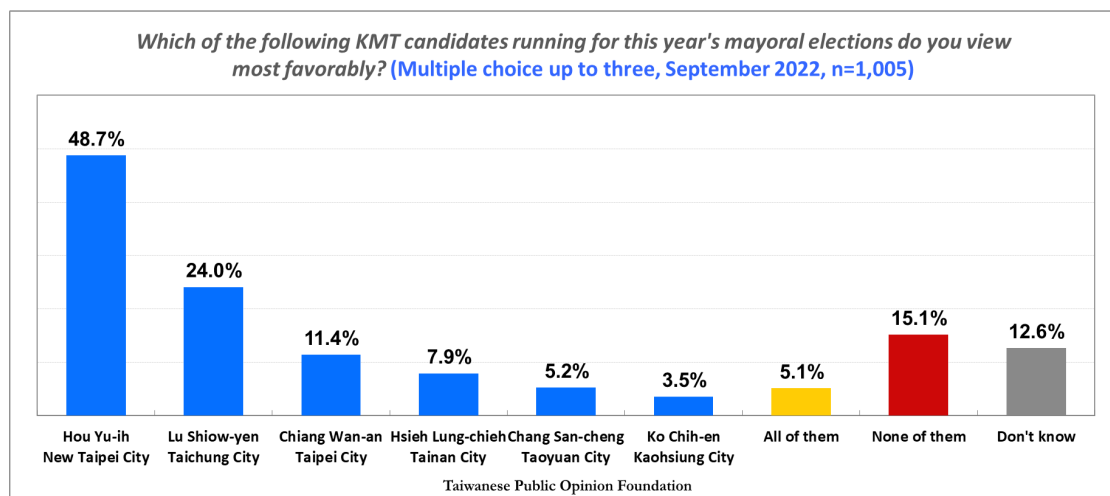
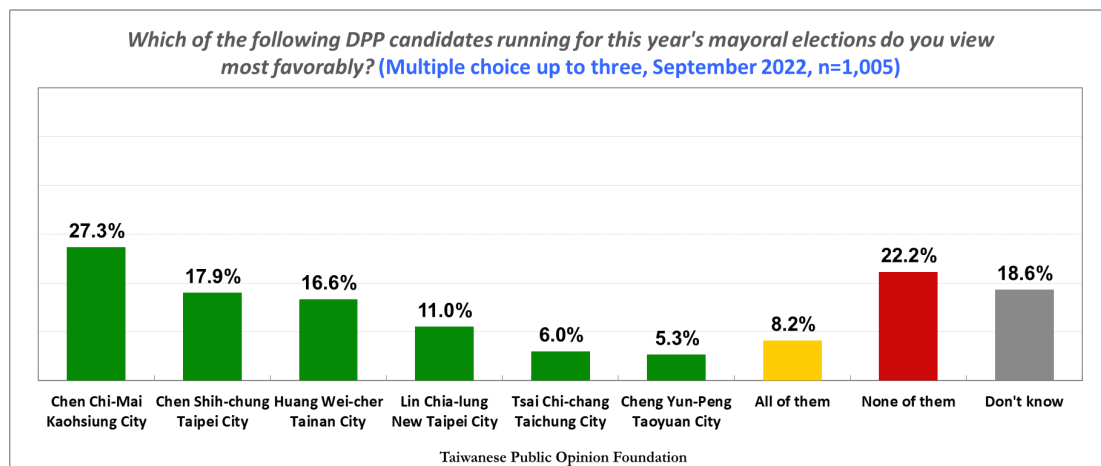
1. How do Taiwanese assess the government's overall performance in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic? The poll finds that among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 48.7% said they are proud of the government's performance, while 41.4% answered negatively. This is a slight decrease from our June poll when 51% said they were proud versus 38% who were not.



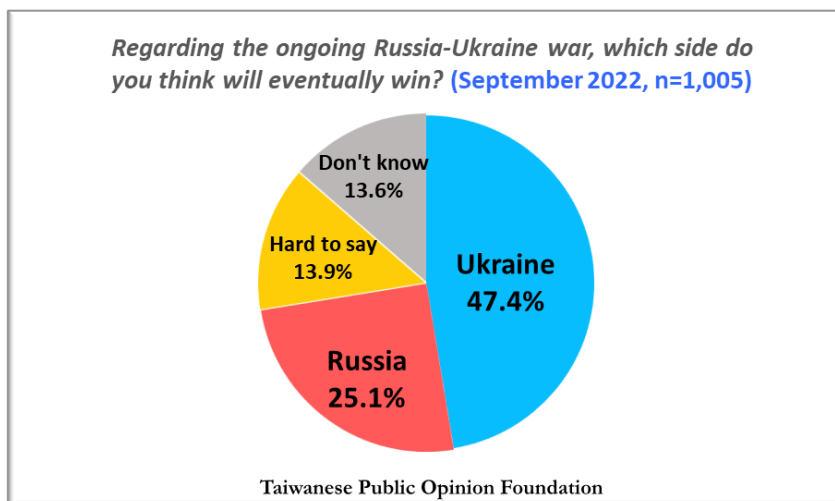
2. How do Taiwanese rate the COVID-19 pandemic handling performance of the government's Central Epidemic Command Center (CECC), which is now under the new leadership of Director Wang Pi-sheng? The poll finds on a scale of 0-100, 37.8% of those surveyed rated CECC a score of above 60, 30.7% rated a passing score of 6, while 22.3% rated failing scores. The mean score is 62.42, which although mediocre comparing to past scores is nevertheless not a bad one considering Taiwan has been seeing [soaring COVID cases](#) in recent months.



3. Taiwan is scheduled to hold local elections in November this year that will elect city mayors, county magistrates, city councilors, and other positions. For mayoral elections, we asked respondents separately which of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) and Kuomintang (KMT) candidates they view most favorably. Note the following are results from national poll and hence they reflect the views of not just local electorates but nation-wide public favorability of these candidates.



4. How do Taiwanese people see the likely outcome of the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war? The poll finds that among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 47.4% believe Ukraine will eventually prevail in this war. This result is useful given that since the start of this conflict numerous commentaries, both within and outside of Taiwan, have repeatedly compared Ukraine's plight to Taiwan's own security challenges facing China's military threats.

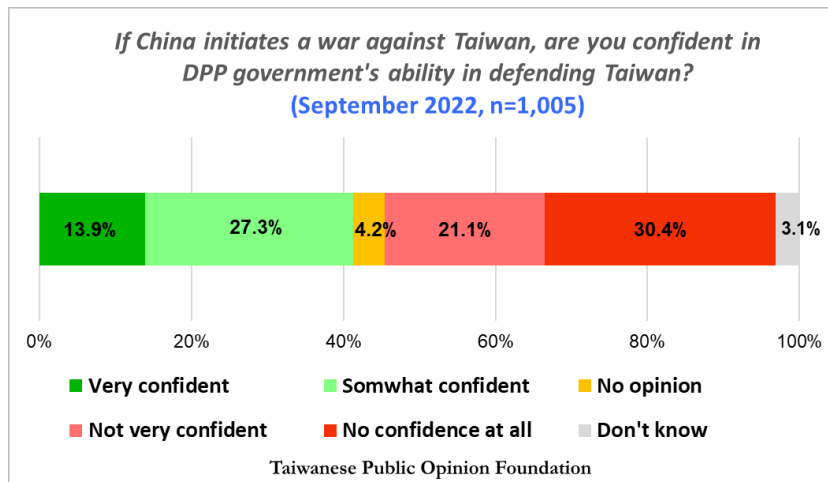
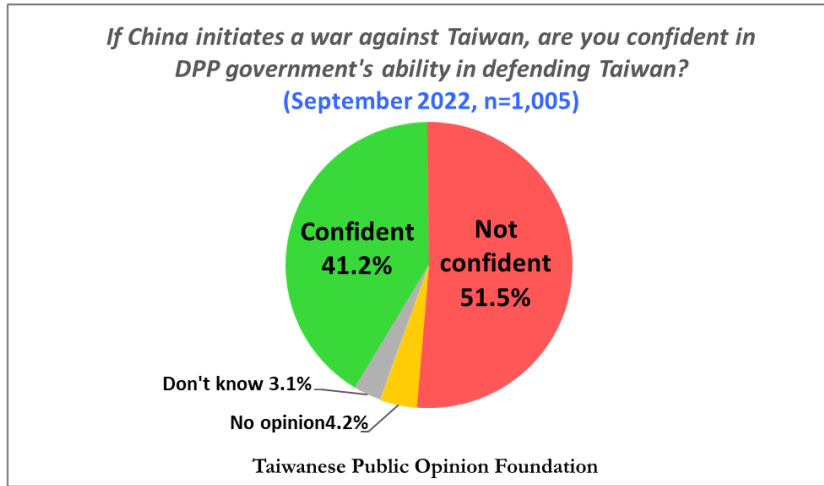


5. Do Taiwanese have confidence in their eventual victory in a war against China? The poll finds that among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 51.2% said they believe China will win if it initiates a war against Taiwan tomorrow, and a minority of just 29.6% said they believe Taiwan will prevail.

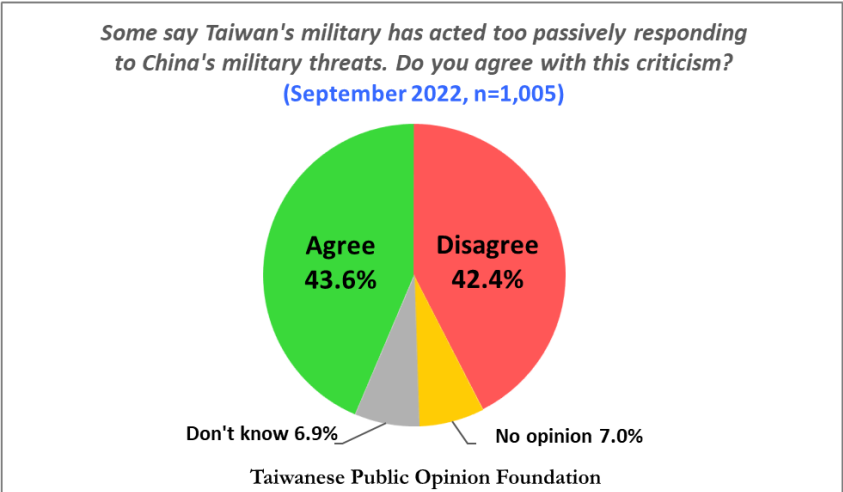


6. We also asked respondents their level of confidence in the ruling DPP government's ability to defend Taiwan in a war with China. The poll finds that among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 51.5% said they are not confident while 41% said they are confident. Noticeably:
- A whopping 30.4% said they have “no confidence at all” in DPP government’s defense of Taiwan, only 13.9% are “very confident”.
 - Male respondents are evenly split on the question, while female respondents are 55% vs. 35% leaning toward non-confidence.

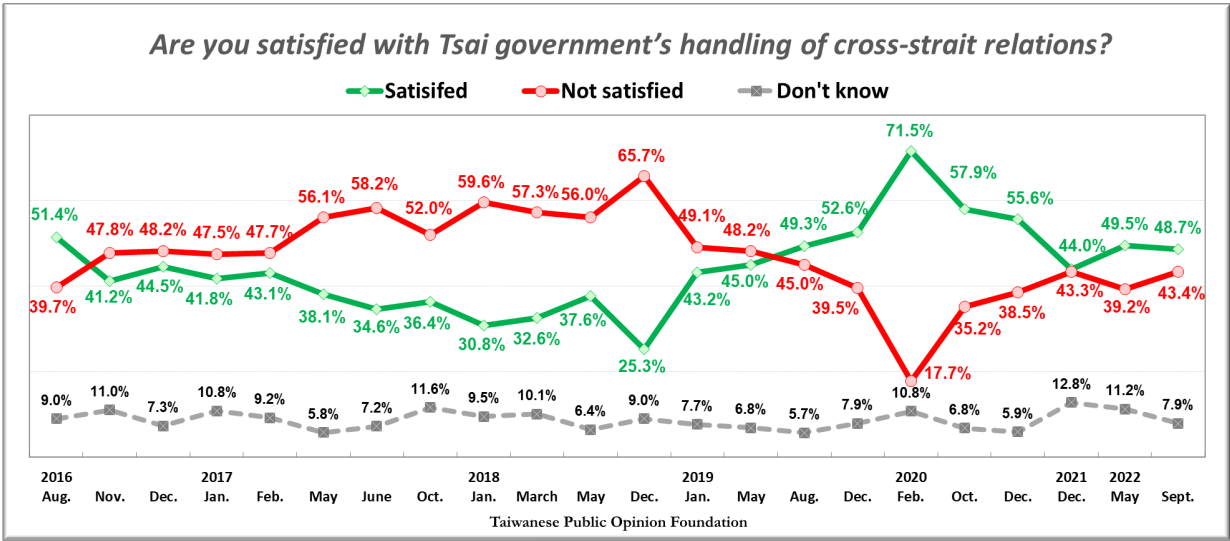
- Respondents with higher education attainments have less confidence in the DPP government. While a majority among those with just elementary school or lower attainments are confident in it.



7. We asked respondents whether they think Taiwan's military has acted too passively responding to the waves of [military drills and maneuvers since August](#). The poll finds that among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, 43.6% agreed with the criticism that Taiwan's military acted too passively while 42.4% disagreed with it.



8. On the ruling Tsai government’s handling of the cross-strait relations with China, the poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 18 years and older, 48.7% said they are satisfied while 43.4% said they are not satisfied. This shows that despite the rapidly escalating tension and confrontation with China, culminated in Nancy Pelosi’s visit and the resulting Chinese military drills in August, a slim majority of Taiwanese still support Tsai government’s handling of cross-strait relations.

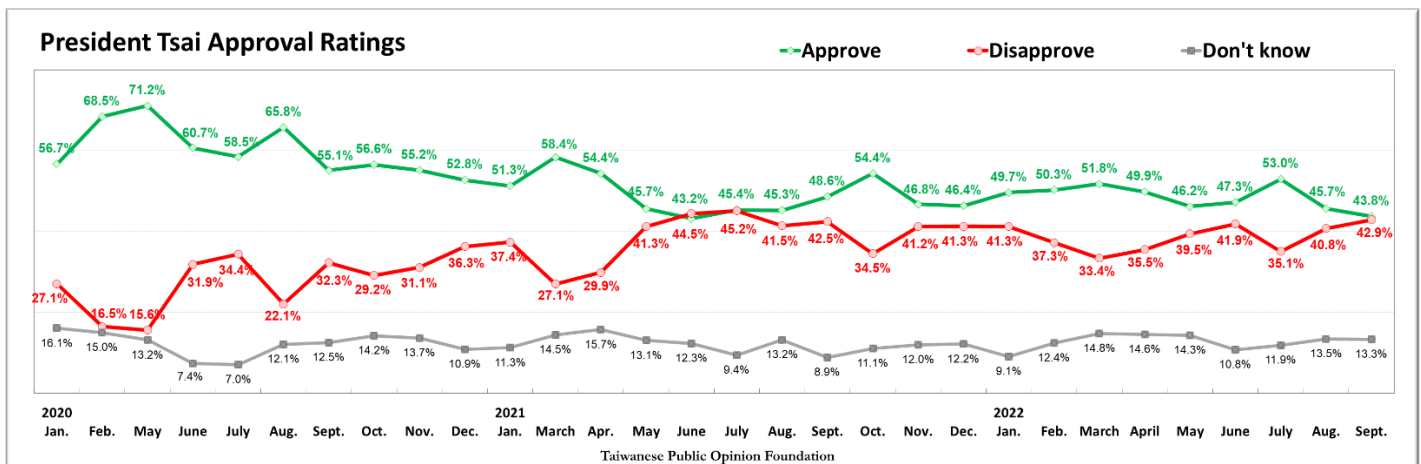


9. On the Presidential job approval rating, the poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a slim majority of 43.8% approved of the way Tsai Ing-wen is handling her job as the President, while a minority of 42.9% expressed disapproval. It appears President Tsai’s approval rating continues the decline that began in July which could be explained by several possible causes:

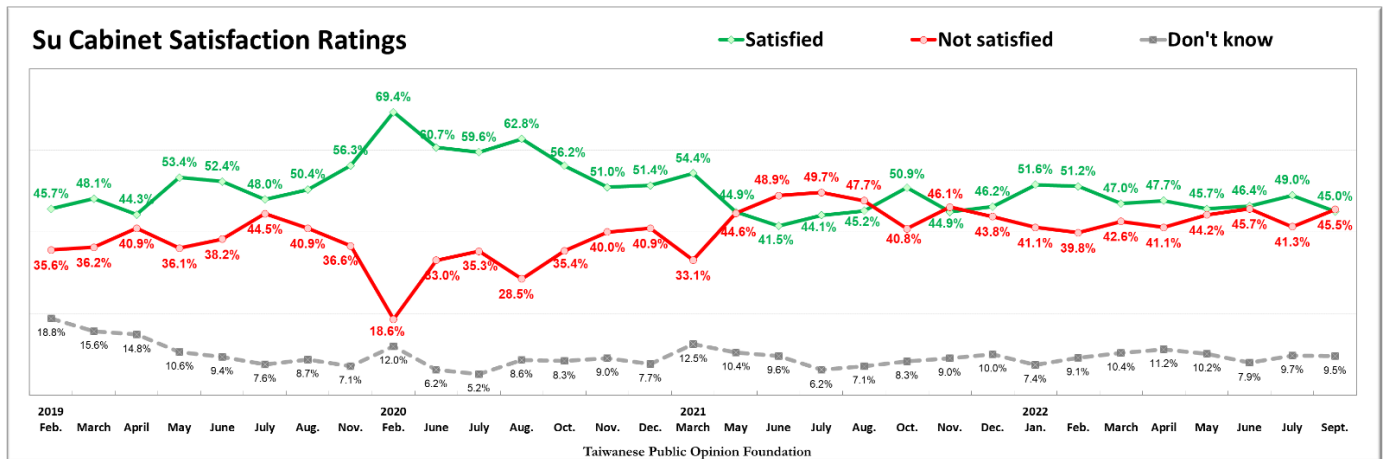
- For several weeks throughout July and August Tsai insisted on publicly supporting Lin Chih-Chien, then DPP’s candidate for Taoyuan City mayor

election. Lin was exposed in a scandal concerning academic plagiarism and was forced to [drop out of mayoral race](#) when his degrees were revoked by two separate universities.

- Despite the expected rally around the flag effect, China’s unprecedented military drills and incursions around Taiwan in August following Pelosi’s visit might have significantly diminished Taiwanese public’s confidence in Tsai’s leadership and competence on military and national security matters.
- Cross-strait relations with China continues to worsen with no end in sight.
- As the chairwoman of the ruling Democratic Progressive Party, Tsai and her faction(s) unilaterally “decided” on *all* the DPP nominated candidates for the upcoming mayor, city magistrate, and county magistrate elections across Taiwan and did not hold a single primary election within the party.
- The ruling government attempted but ultimately failed to introduce a “digital intermediary service act” which became very controversial and was widely criticized as a pretext for imposing censorship on the freedom of speech.
- Tsai and her government under Premier Su Tseng-chang faced a string of negative news events over the past two months, including the [killing of Tainan policemen](#), reports of [Taiwanese human trafficking victims in Cambodia](#), controversies over COVID-19 vaccine policies, and others.



10. On the performance of Premier Su Tseng-chang cabinet, the poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, 45% were satisfied of the way Su cabinet is handling the government, while the other 45.5% were not satisfied.



11. On political party affiliation, the poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, 22.4% said they support the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), 15.4% support the Kuomintang (KMT), 20.9% support the Taiwan People's Party (TPP), 6.4% support the New Power Party (NPP), 5.9% support the Taiwan State-building Party (TSP), and 25.5% respondents identified themselves as independents. Notably:

- The ruling DPP’s support plummeted by 11.8% in just two months. It is now even lower than its level of support back in September 2018 (24.7%). As Taiwan is heading into another local elections in November, DPP’s faltering partisan support could hurt its local candidates’ performances.
- KMT’s support still remains flat despite the growing unpopularity of the DPP. Its candidates in local election might be compelled to downplay association with the party to seek support from independent voters instead.
- Taiwan People’s Party (TPP) is now Taiwan’s second most popular political party at least based on partisan affiliation alone. It remains to be seen how much down-ballot effect could help its local candidates.
- Smaller parties like NPP and TSP also saw considerable gains likely at the expense of DPP. This will certainly be helpful for their local candidates.
- Overall, Taiwanese public’s dissatisfaction with *both* DPP and KMT has created a need for a “meaningful third choice” and enabled parties like TPP to gain increasing supports.

