



## Taiwan Public Opinion Foundation

### May 2023 Public Opinion Poll – English Excerpt

Released:

**May 16, 2023**

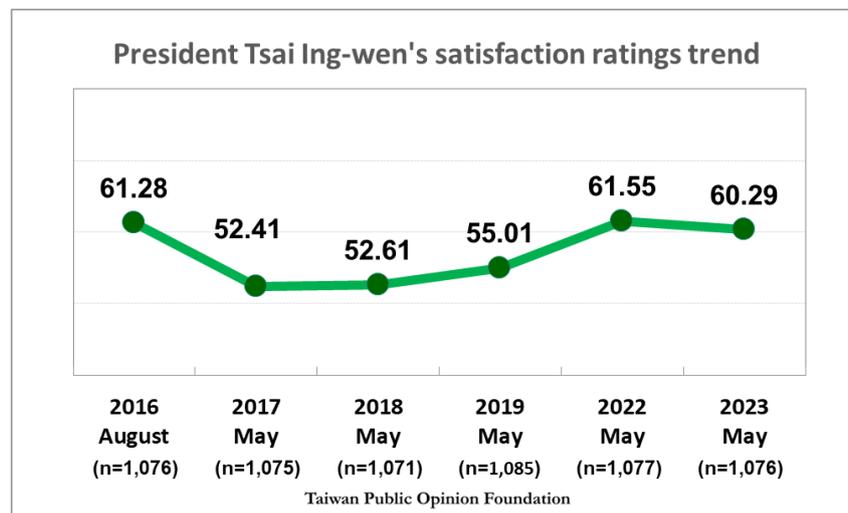
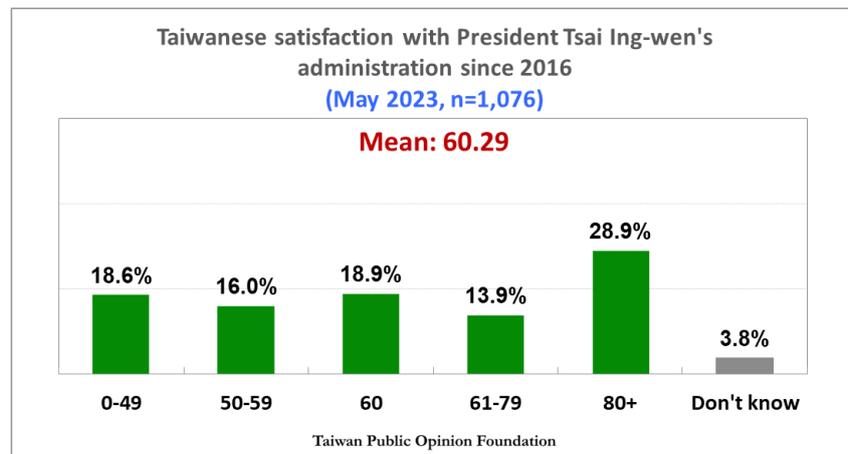
**Taiwan Public Opinion Foundation** (TPOF) today released the result of its May 2023 nation-wide poll. This marks the 82nd monthly survey conducted by the TPOF aimed at tracking the development and changes in Taiwan’s public opinion. The full release in Chinese language is available on our [official website](#).

#### **How the Survey was Conducted**

This survey was conducted on May 8-9, 2023, with a sample size of 1,076. 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  $\pm 2.99$  percentage points with 95% level of confidence.

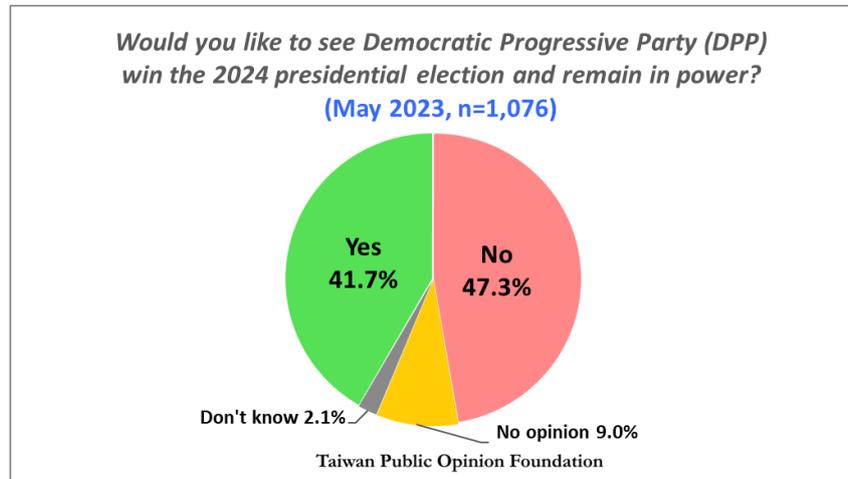
## Main Findings:

1. President Tsai Ing-wen has now served almost seven years as the head of state. We asked respondents to rate from a score of 0 to 100 what they think of Tsai's administration so far. The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a minority of 35% rated a score below 60, while a majority of 43% rated a score at or above 60. This means that seven years into Tsai's presidency, Taiwanese public gave her administration a barely passing mark. Looking back at past polls however, there were also several years during Tsai's first term when Taiwanese public gave Tsai's presidency a failing mark.

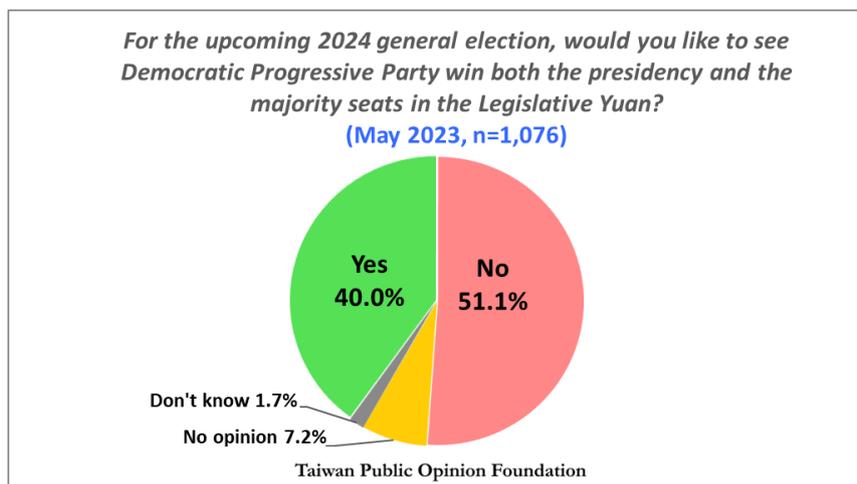


2. Taiwan's next presidential election is scheduled to be held on January 13, 2024. While major political parties not yet been formally decided on their candidates, the poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older a slight majority of 47% said they do not wish to see the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) win and have another term in power, versus a minority of 41% who are willing to see another DPP government. This means that, as an indication of general voter

sentiment, the majority of Taiwanese public do indeed desire a change of party in power, and this could have significant impact on the campaign down the road.



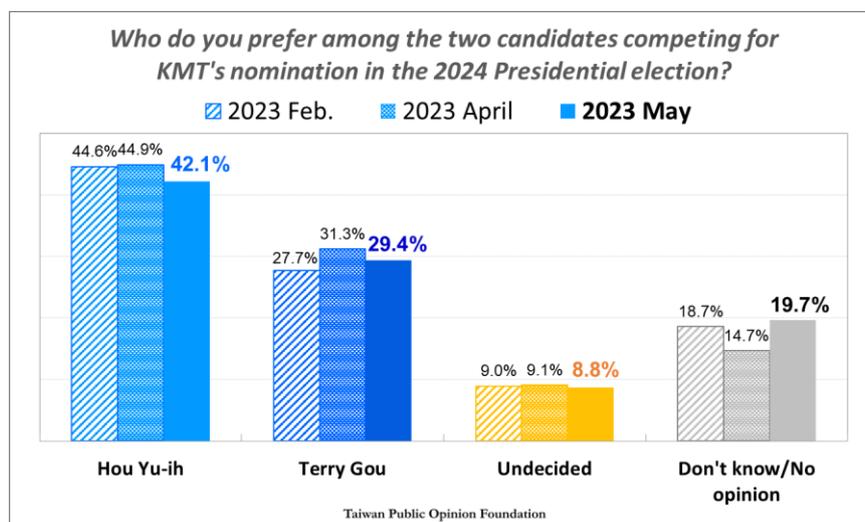
3. Similarly, the poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 51% said they do not wish to see DPP win *both* the presidential and Legislative Yuan elections of 2024. As DPP had won and maintained control of both executive and legislative branches of the government over the previous two general elections, this poll indicates there is a sentiment among majority Taiwanese public that DPP should not continue to dominate elections and have total control of the national level government in the upcoming elections.



4. The main opposition party Kuomintang (KMT) is set to nominate its presidential candidate for 2024 on May 17. The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 42% prefer New Taipei City Mayor Ho Yi-ih to be the KMT candidate, while a minority of 29% prefer Foxconn business tycoon Terry Gou. While Hou's support decreased slightly in this latest poll, he still

maintains a considerable edge over Gou. Demographically speaking:

- Hou leads Gou in all age groups except those between 45-54.
- Among supporters of KMT, 49% prefer Hou while 38% prefer Gou. Among supporters of TPP, 48% prefer Gou while 39% prefer Hou. Among supporters of DPP, 42% prefer Hou while 24% prefer Gou. Among independents, 31% prefer Hou while 18% prefer Gou.
- Geographically, Gou leads in Taipei City, and northern counties but lags significantly behind Hou in New Taipei City (of which Hou is the incumbent Mayor) and southern counties of Taiwan.

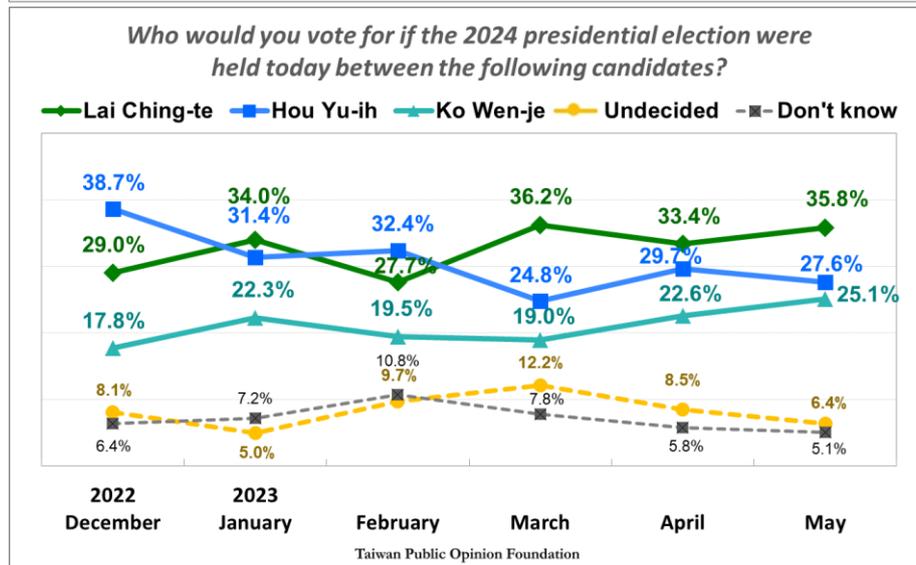
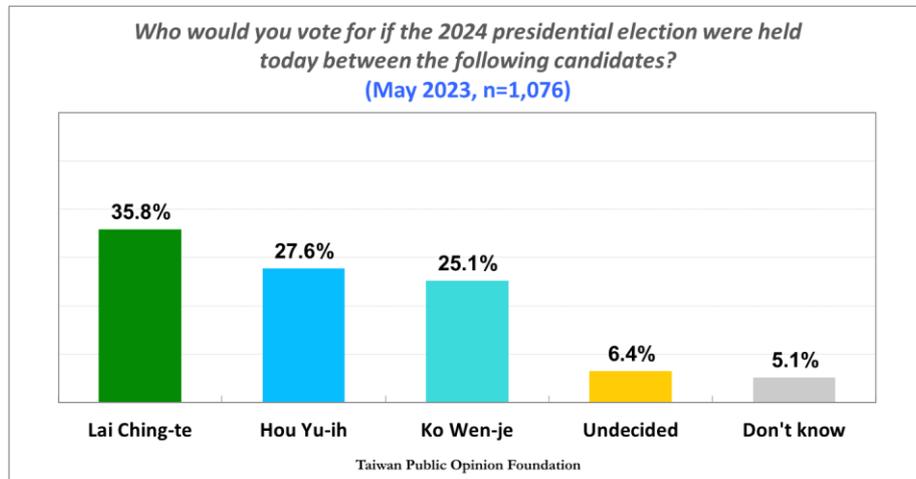


5. In terms of presidential election, the poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, Vice President Lai Ching-te leads at 35.8%, New Taipei City Mayor Hou Yu-ih came second at 27.6%, former Taipei City Mayor Ko Wen-je came third at 25.1%. Compared to past polls, Hou continues to struggle against Lai, while both Lai and Ko saw noticeable gains. At 25%, Ko is now almost as popular as Hou which is certainly not a great sign for KMT. Demographically speaking:

- Ko leads the youngest age group of 20-34. In 35-44, Ko is toe to toe with Lai. Hou leads the middle age group of 45-54, but Lai is also toe to toe with Hou in age group 55-64. Lai dominates the elder population of those at or above 65 among whom 53% support Lai, 27% support Hou, and only 5.4% support Ko.
- DPP supporters overwhelmingly support Lai at 83%, while only 68% KMT supporters at this point support Hou. Among TPP supporters,

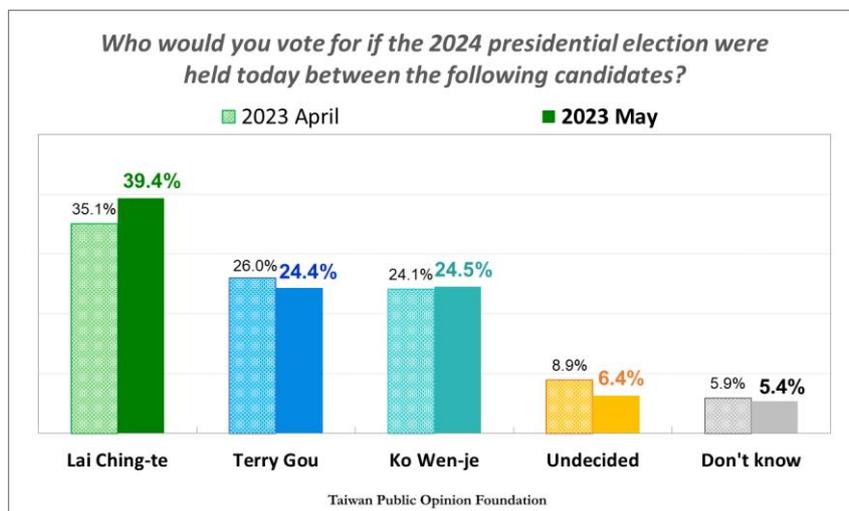
78% support Ko but 13% support Hou and 6.4% support Lai. Among independents, 33% support Lai, 21% support Ko, and 20% support Hou. This result could be due to the fact that KMT supporters are still divided between Hou and Terry Gou. Whether supporters of Gou would coalesce to support Hou once he is nominated, that remains to be seen.

- Geographically Lai leads in almost every Taiwan city and county except Taichung City, where he is lagging Ko by 10%. In Hou’s native New Taipei City, he is lagging Lai by 9%. Surprisingly however, Hou is only lagging Lai by 1.3% in Tainan City, where Lai used to be a mayor. Overall, Ko has support across Taiwan at 20% or above.

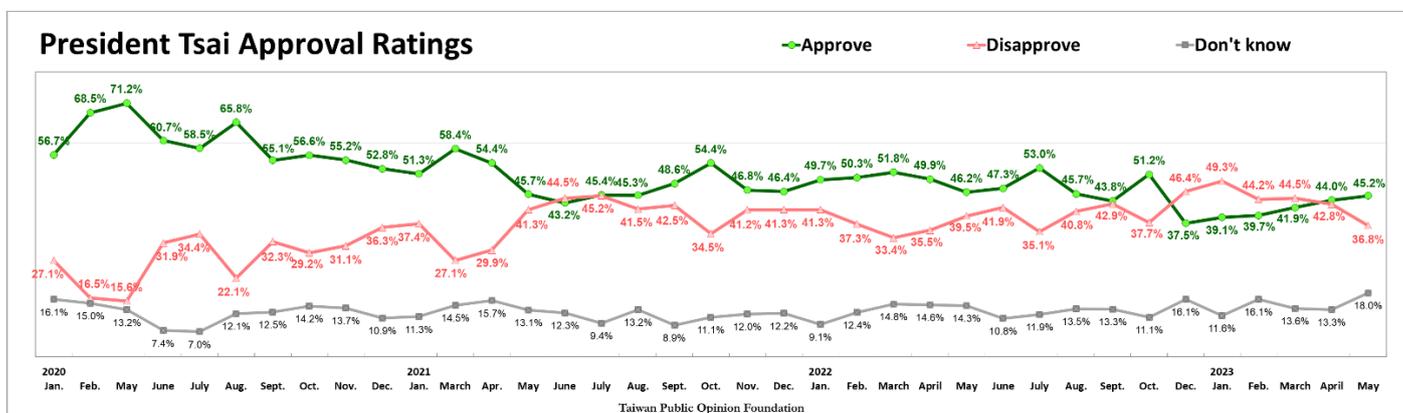


6. What if instead of Mayor Ho KMT nominate Terry Gou to be the presidential candidate? Among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, Lai leads the poll at a greater margin of 39.4%, Ko came second at 24%, while Terry Gou only came

third at 24.4%. Comparing to result from the Lai-Hou-Ko lineup, Gou is lagging slightly behind Ho in terms of popular support on the presidential ticket, and this latest poll even finds him trailing behind Ko. It is therefore safe to conclude that, at the time of this poll, Ho Yu-ih is still a slightly more competitive and more viable candidate for the KMT to challenge the 2024 presidential seat than Terry Gou.

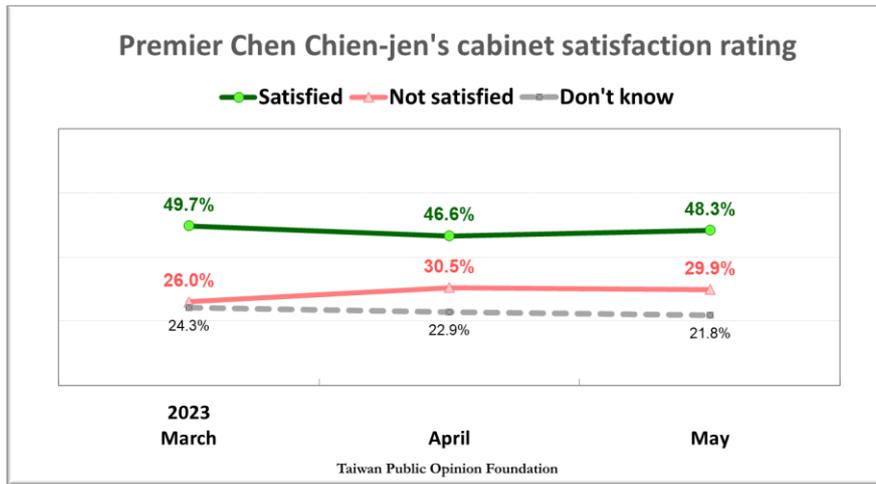


7. On Presidential job approval rating, the poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 45.2% approved of the way Tsai Ing-wen is handling her job as the President, while a minority of 36.8% expressed disapproval. Comparing to result from April, President Tsai’s approval rate continues to improve while disapproval decreased by a significant 6%. President Tsai has now recovered most of the popularity losses from last year’s local elections but has yet to reach the previous high marks she maintained during COVID years.



8. Premier Chen Chien-je has been in office for three months since President Tsai appointed him to the position. The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20

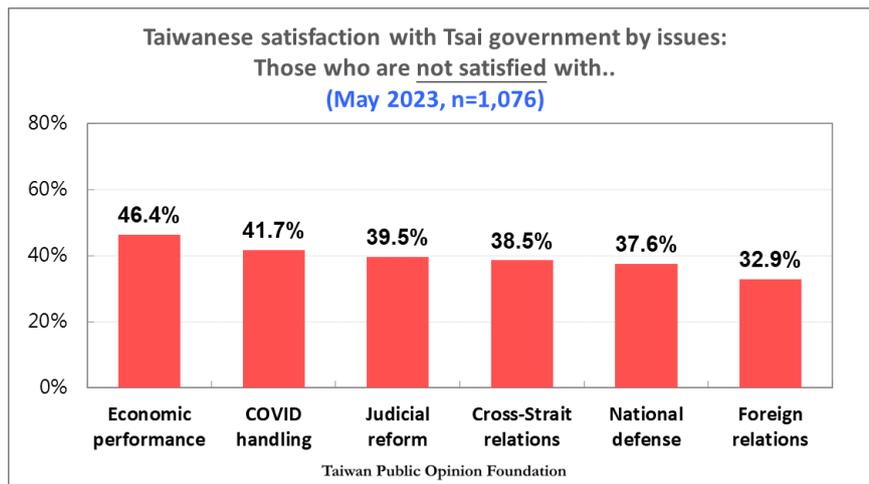
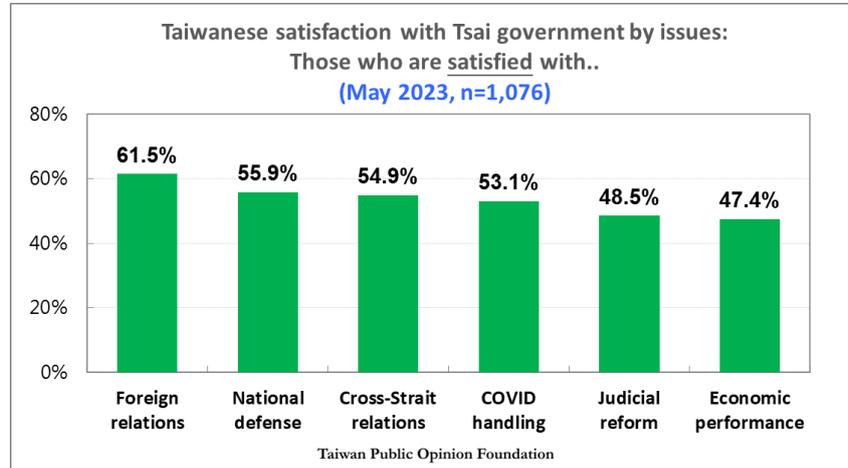
years and older, 48.3% were satisfied with this Chen cabinet's performance so far, while 29.9% were not satisfied. Overall, there has not been much change in satisfaction ratings since he took office in March.



9. In terms of satisfaction with government by issues, the poll asked respondents their views on several different areas of Tsai government's performance and found that:

- Foreign relations received the highest satisfaction rating from the majority of Taiwanese public. As the United States and other Western countries continue to heap lavish praises on Taiwan and offer gestures or rhetoric of support, Taiwanese confidence in their government's diplomacy seem higher than ever. This is even though there has not been any substantive change to Taiwan's diplomatic isolation and exclusion from international organizations of importance, and the fact that Taiwan lost a major portion of its remaining diplomatic allies during Tsai's terms.
- Likewise, Tsai government received relatively high mark on national defense as the public seem to have perceived the various announcements of U.S. arms sales, the extension of compulsory military service, and other gestures as tangible improvement in Taiwan's security situation.
- Economic performance has always been the part that Tsai government received the lowest mark, even though still slightly more (47%) people were satisfied versus those who are not satisfied (46%).

- Tsai government's handling of COVID pandemic, which was once the highlight of its supposed achievement during the early phase of the pandemic in 2020 is now only approved by a small majority of people while a significant minority of 41% are not satisfied with it.



10. On political party affiliation, the poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, 31.1% said they support the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), 26.2% support the Kuomintang (KMT), 15.6% support the Taiwan People's Party (TPP), 2% support the Taiwan State-building Party (TSP), 3% support the New Power Party (NPP), and 20.3% respondents identified themselves as independents. Compared to our April poll, changes have been minor though DPP made some small gain.

