



Taiwan Public Opinion Foundation

October 2023 Public Opinion Poll – English Excerpt

Released:

October 24, 2023

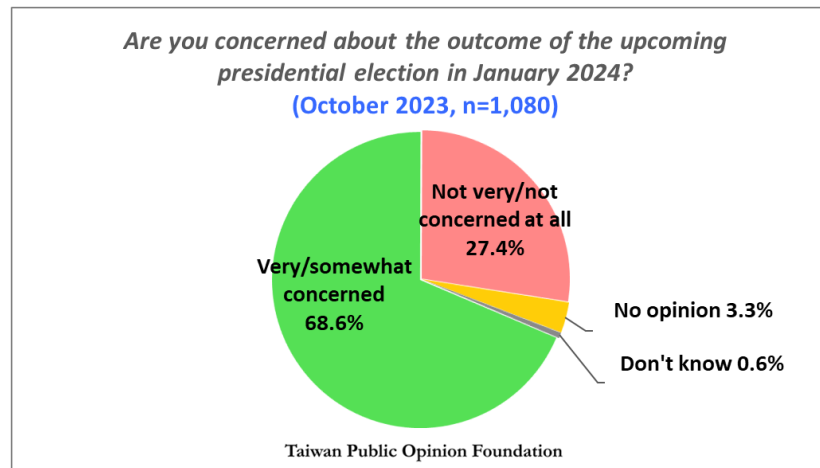
Taiwan Public Opinion Foundation (TPOF) today released the result of its October 2023 nation-wide poll. This marks the 86th monthly survey conducted by the TPOF aimed at tracking the development and changes in Taiwan's public opinion. The full release in Chinese language is available on our official website.

How the Survey was Conducted

This survey was conducted on October 15-17, 2023, with a sample size of 1,080. Adults 20 years of age and older residing in Taiwan were interviewed by telephone using live interviewers. Landline and cellphone numbers were drawn through dual-frame random sampling with a proportion of 70% from landlines and 30% from cellphones. 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 ± 2.98 percentage points with 95% level of confidence.

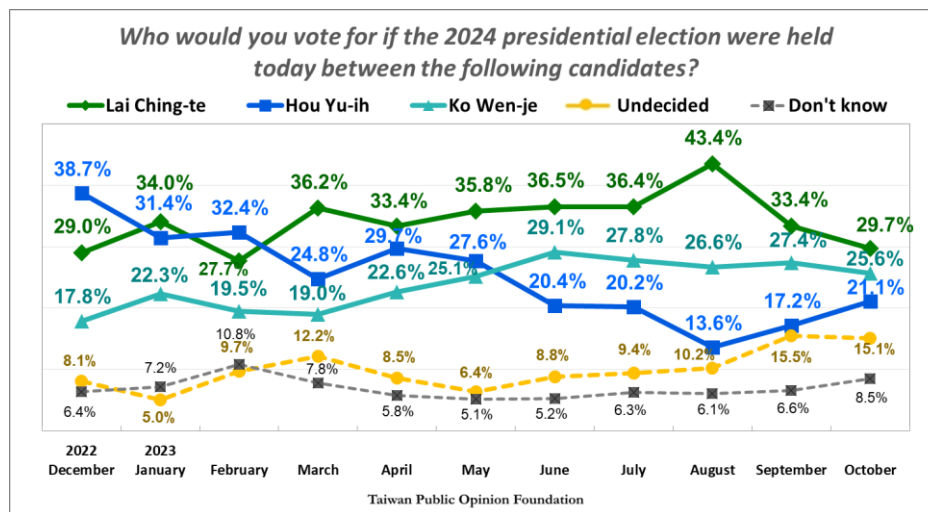
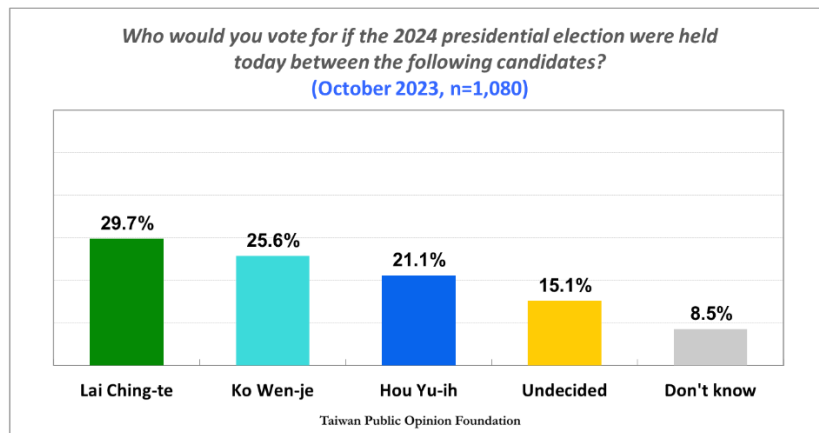
Main Findings:

1. Taiwan is scheduled to hold the next presidential election on January 13, 2024. The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 68.6% said they are concerned about the outcome of the election, while 27.4% are not concerned. Compared to results from September, the number of people who are concerned increased by 6%, which shows that public attention on the election has been growing as the voting day approaches.

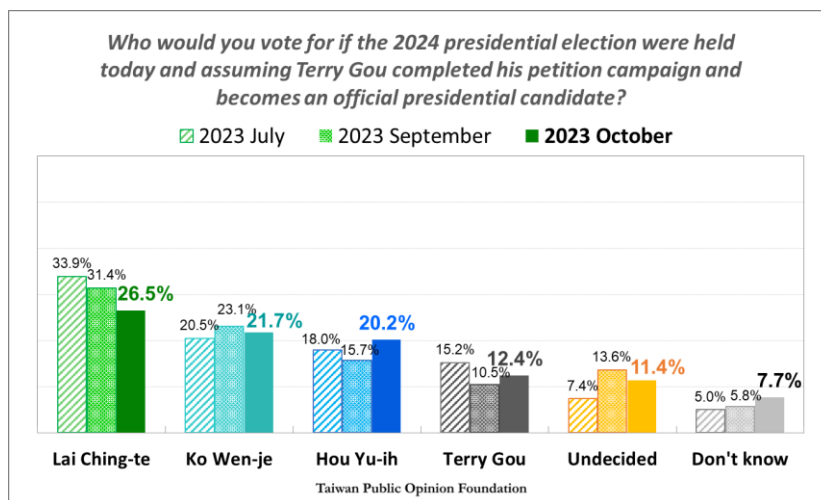
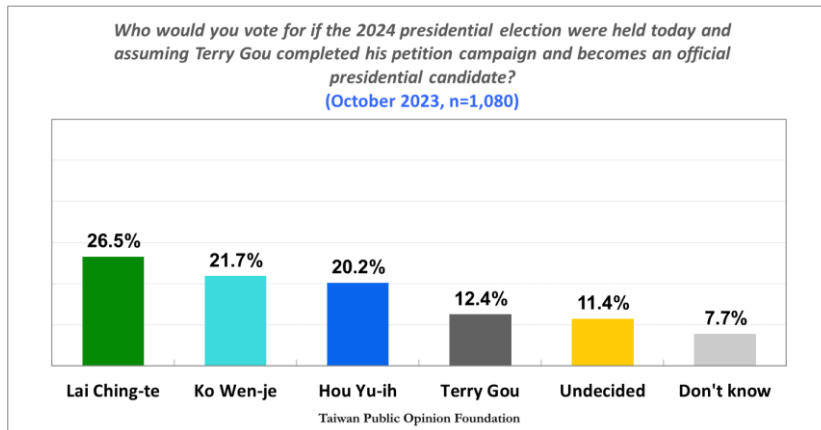


2. On the 2024 presidential election, the poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, Vice President Lai Ching-te of the ruling DPP leads at 29.7%, former Taipei City Mayor Ko Wen-je of the TPP came second at 25.6%, and New Taipei City Mayor Hou Yu-ih of the KMT came third at 21.1%. Compared to September, we see a further decrease in the DPP candidate and frontrunner Lai's support, as he is now holding only a razor thin lead over the second place Ko.

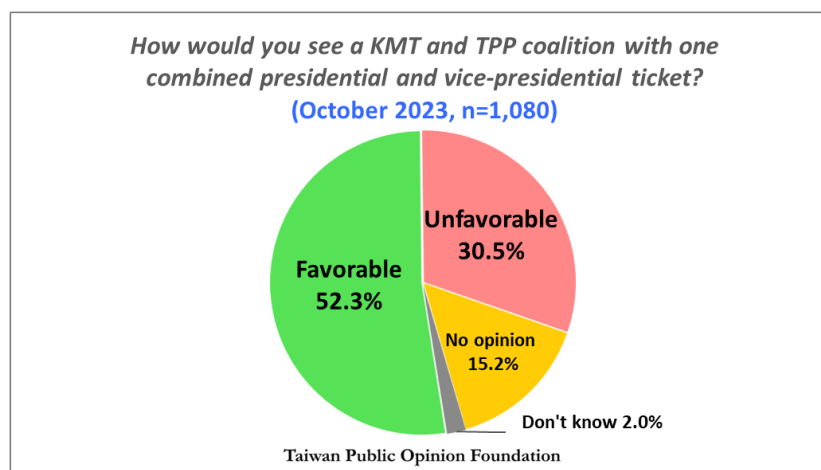
While Ko has not been able to break his 25-30% ceiling over the past year, he has nevertheless maintained a consistent level of support and is now within striking distance to closing the gap with Lai and winning the presidency. On the other hand, KMT's Hou has recovered somewhat from the dreadful summer "slump" but is still struggling at third place with time rapidly running out. Will Hou be able to rally KMT supporters in time to reclaim second place or even first place lead? Only time will tell.



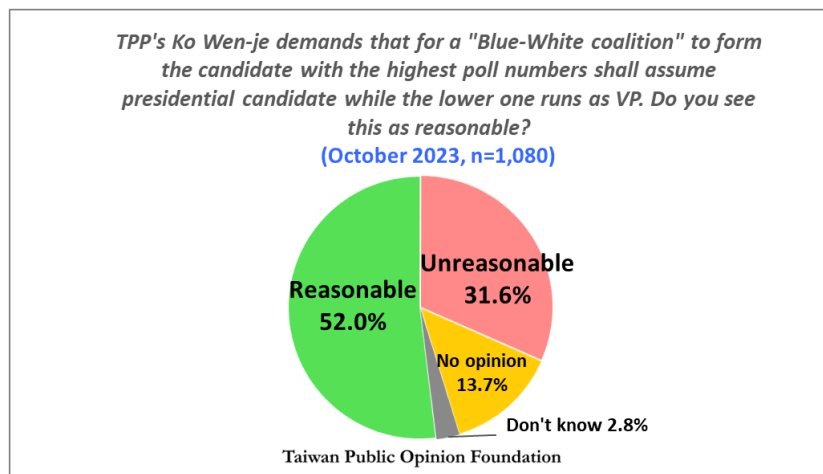
- Foxconn tycoon Terry Gou was a contender for KMT's presidential nomination but lost out to Hou Yu-ih in May. Gou has since [launched an independent presidential campaign](#), though as an independent candidate he is legally obligated to collect significant number of petition signatures before he could become an official candidate on the ballot – a requirement to which it is far from certain he could complete successfully before the official November deadline. The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, 12.4% said they would support Gou in a four-way race, a slight increase from September. This means that Gou could theoretically take away slightly more votes from other candidates in the race – should he succeed in becoming a candidate himself.



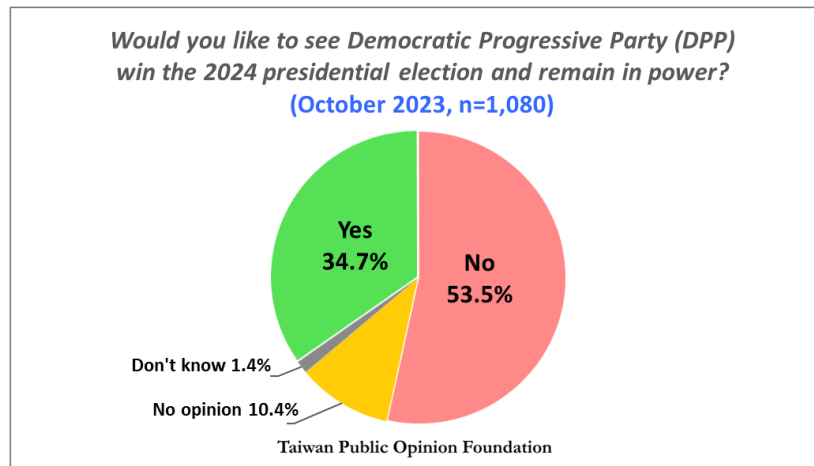
- The two opposition parties KMT and TPP have been negotiating on a possible coalition deal to combine their presidential (and vice presidential) candidates into a single ticket. The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, 52.3% said they are favorable to seeing such a ticket, while 30.5% are unfavorable. This means that a “Blue-White coalition” could indeed attract support among a major part of the Taiwanese public.



5. Ko Wen-je has argued that as a rule for a “Blue-White coalition” presidential ticket, poll numbers should be used to determine whichever side gets the presidential candidate spot while the loser would run as VP. The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 52% thought this is a reasonable demand. Noticeably, even among KMT supporters a majority of 56% support this, while only 36% oppose. Given that KMT’s candidate Hou has been consistently polled at third place lagging behind Ko, this indicates a significant number of KMT supporters are open to the possibility of having Ko as their presidential candidate in a combined KMT-TPP ticket.



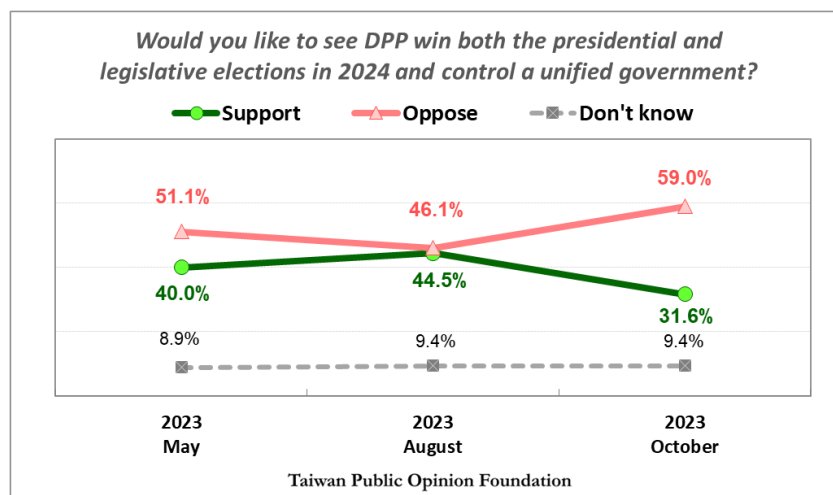
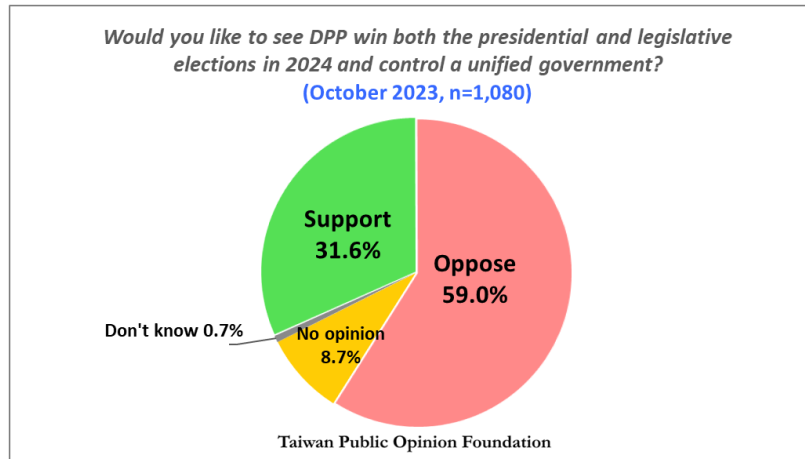
6. The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 53.5% said they do not wish to see the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) win another term in power, versus a minority of 34.7% who are willing to see another DPP government. Comparing to the last time this question was asked in May, even more people (only 47% in May) are now against another DPP term, while those supporting DPP in power saw further decrease (was 41% in May). With just two months to go until election day, this could mean serious trouble for the ruling DPP and its candidate Lai.



7. We asked respondents whether they like to see the ruling DPP win another term of unified government, that is, winning both the presidential and legislative elections in January 2024. The poll found among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 59.1% do not support having another four years of unified DPP executive branch and parliamentary majority, while only 31.6% support it. This means there is currently a strong consensus among Taiwanese public that DPP should *not* be allowed to control the entire government again. When compared to past polls we observed that public opposition to a DPP total victory has increased over the last several months and is now at its strongest just two months before voting day. Several additional observations are:

- All age groups now have majority against DPP unified government. For those 20-24, there are 69% oppose while 22% support. Among 25-34, 64% oppose while 27% support. In other words, Taiwan's youngest electorates firmly oppose seeing another four years of DPP total control of the government.
- Voters of all education attainments, except those with just elementary school education or less, saw majority against another DPP unified government.
- All occupational groups except farmers are opposed to another DPP unified government. Interestingly, industrial workers, students, housewives, and retirees were supportive of the DPP unified government just five months ago, but not anymore.
- Supporters of DPP and TSP are in favor of DPP unified government, while supporters of all other parties and independents are against it.

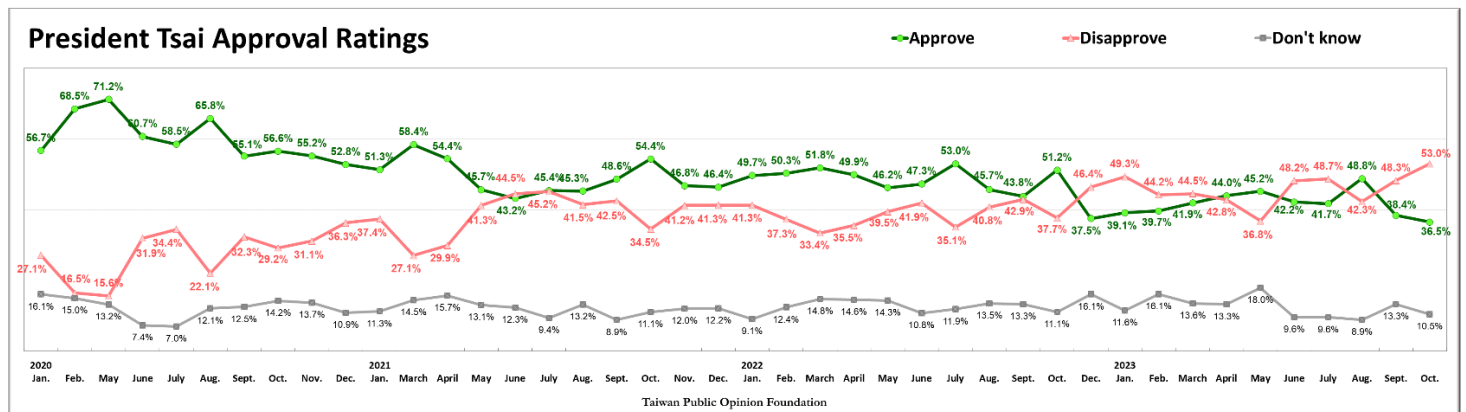
- Geographically, all six cities and sixteen counties saw a majority against another DPP unified government, even in DPP's traditional strongholds of Tainan City and Kaohsiung City. In other words, the DPP's quest for another total presidential and legislative electoral victory is facing strong headwind in public opinion.



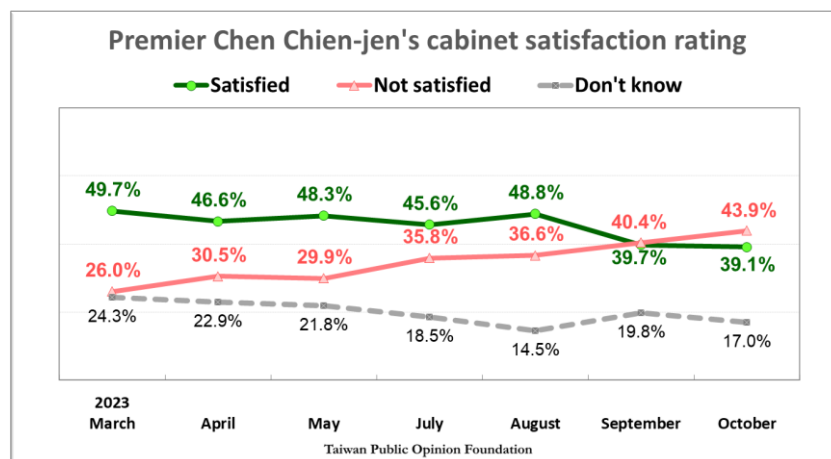
- On Presidential job approval rating, the poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 53% disapproved of the way Tsai Ing-wen is handling her job as the President, while a minority of 36.5% approved of her. Comparing to past month's poll, Tsai's approval continues to slide, and the disapproval is now the highest since April 2019. This means that with just two months to go until January 2024 election, Tsai has never been such unpopular in the entire past three years.

Why is Tsai's approval rating still relevant to the election next year? For one, Tsai will remain president until May 2024, and she controls the entire executive branch of the government and is the commander in chief of Taiwan's military and security

forces. Public support, or discontent for her leadership would certainly have a direct impact on the ruling DPP's electoral prospect. The fact that Tsai's approval hit a new low this month shows Taiwan's 2024 election has entered a new phase in which DPP's victory is no longer guaranteed.

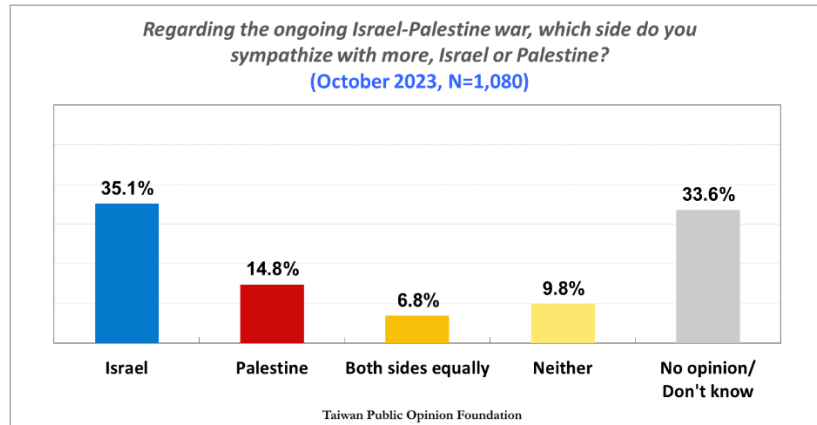


- Premier Chen Chien-jen has been in office for eight months since President Tsai appointed him to the position. The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, 43.9% were not satisfied with Chen cabinet's performance, while 39.1% were satisfied. Consistent with President Tsai's approval hitting a new low, Premier Chen's latest rating is also now firmly in the red.



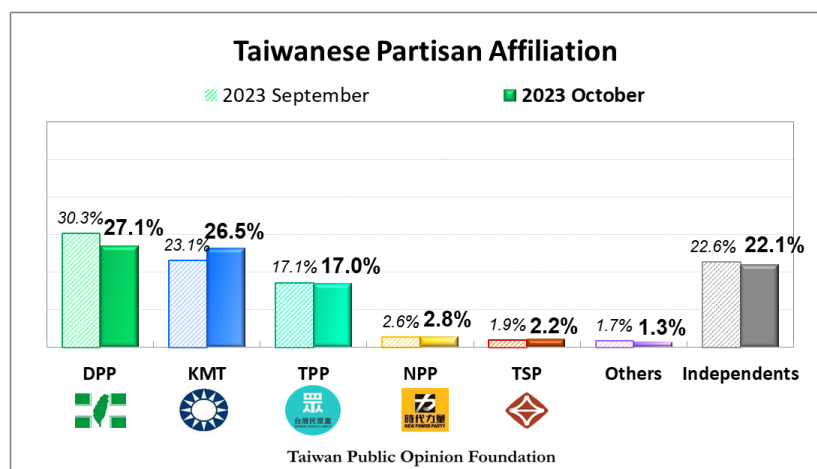
- What do Taiwanese public think about the ongoing Israel-Palestine War in Gaza Strip, which started in early October and has already cost thousands of lives on both sides? The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, 35.1% said they sympathize with Israel more, while 14.8% sympathize with Palestine, and 33.6% said they have no opinion or don't know. This means that Taiwanese public so far have not yet formed a consensus on the right and wrong of Israel-Palestine conflict, though the *mode trend* is favoring the Israel side. What contributed to this? Taiwanese public's affinity toward the United States might

have something to do with this, which indirectly contributed to more people sympathizing with Israel.



11. On political party affiliation, the poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, 27.1% said they support the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), 26.5% support the Kuomintang (KMT), 17% support the Taiwan People's Party (TPP), 2.8% support the New Power Party (NPP), 2.2% support the Taiwan State-building Party (TSP), and 22.1% respondents identified themselves as independents. Compared to our September poll, the KMT again made some gain in support and has now fully reasserted itself as the second most popular party

With just two months to go until the election, the DPP and KMT are now almost toe-to-toe in partisan support, could this mean the election will end up being a very close one? On the other hand, TPP's support has stayed at around 17% in the past four months despite the up and down in DPP and KMT's support, which could indicate that TPP's "baseline" support is exactly where it is now – at 17%, and might not change much anymore from this point on.



Taiwanese Partisan Affiliation 2019 - 2023

DPP KMT TPP Independents

