



Taiwan Public Opinion Foundation

March 2024 Public Opinion Poll – English Excerpt

Released:

March 19, 2024

Taiwan Public Opinion Foundation (TPOF) today released the result of its March 2024 nation-wide poll. This marks the 91st 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.

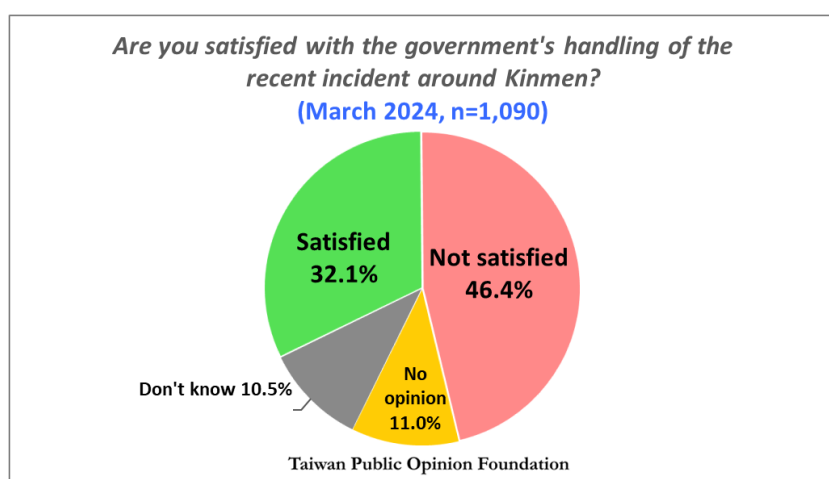
How the Survey was Conducted

This survey was conducted on March 11-13, 2024, with a sample size of 1,090. 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 ± 2.97 percentage points with 95% level of confidence.

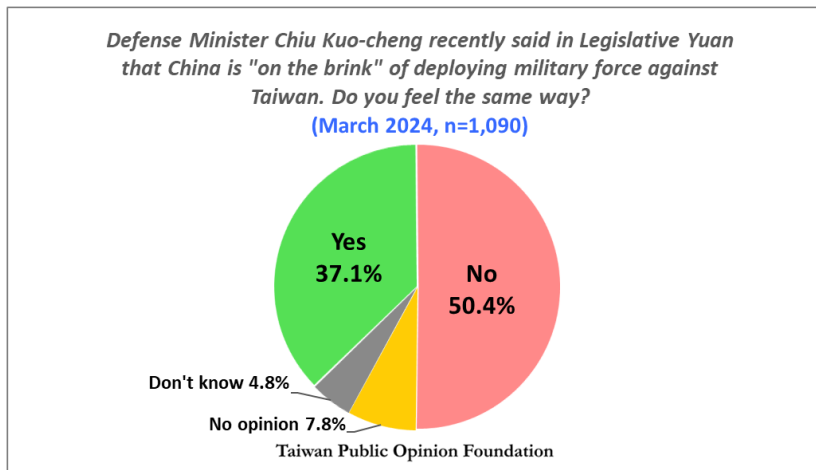
Main Findings:

1. On February 14, 2024, a Chinese fishing boat [capsized](#) after run-in with Taiwan Coast Guard patrol boat just off the coast of Kinmen, a Taiwan-controlled island just kilometers next to mainland China. Two of the four Chinese fishermen drown, and the incident was met with strong Chinese public reaction against Taiwan. In the weeks since the incident, Chinese Coast Guard vessels [repeatedly entered and challenged](#) Taiwan's restricted waters around Kinmen, which increasingly escalated the tension and confrontation across the Taiwan Strait to an extent this has been described by many as a crisis in the making.

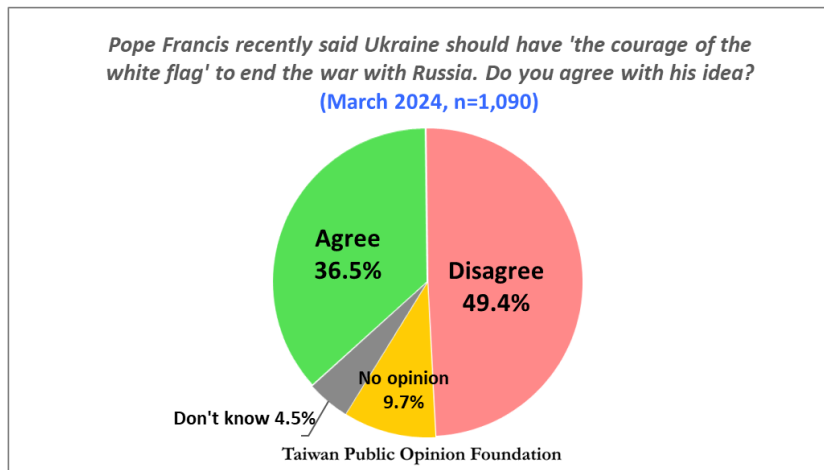
The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 46.4% said they were not satisfied with the Taiwan government's handling of the incident, and only 32.1% were satisfied. Clearly the government's responses have not been satisfactory to the public, and the lack of clear and transparent information from the Taiwan government agencies involved only made it worse.



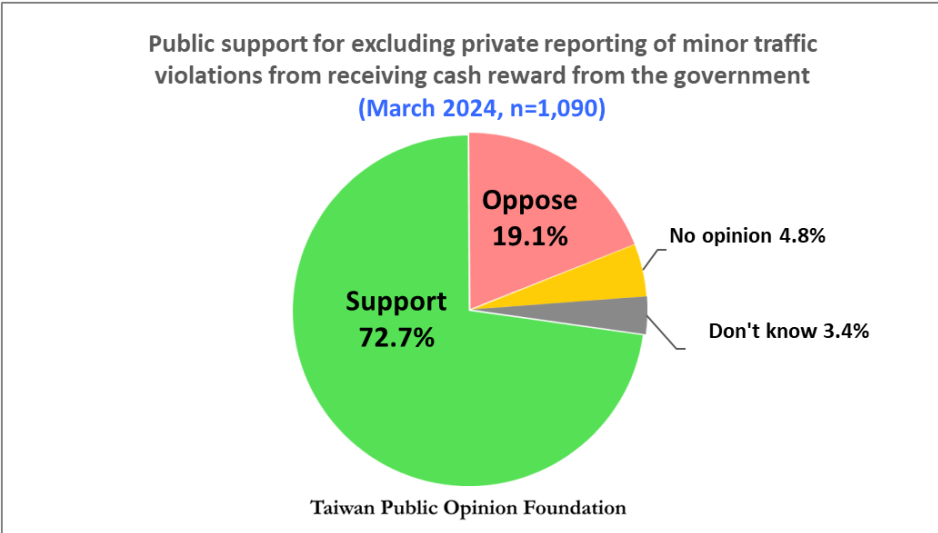
2. Taiwan's Minister of National Defense Chiu Kuo-cheng made a statement to the Legislative Yuan on March 7, 2024, that China is "[on the brink](#)" of deploying military force against Taiwan. The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 50.4% said they do not feel the same way about the prospect of war as defense minister Chiu does, only 37.1% said they feel the same. What does this mean? Either that the majority of Taiwanese public vastly underestimated the danger of cross-strait war at their doorstep, or that Minister Chu has exaggerated the threat. What can be understood from the poll is that there is a disconnect between the threat of war as assessed or asserted by Taiwan's top defense official versus the prevailing public sentiments.



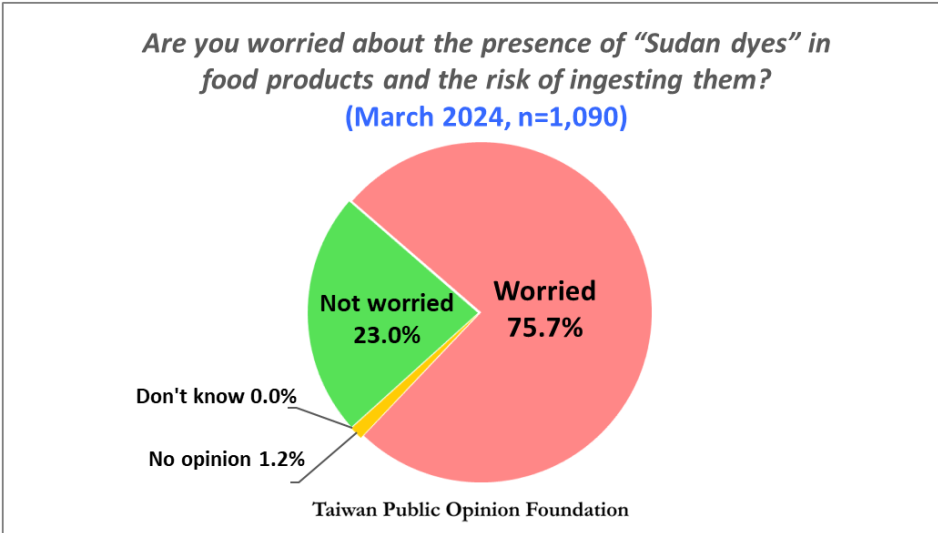
3. Pope Francis of the Roman Catholic Church [recently said](#) that Ukraine should have what he called the “courage of the white flag” and negotiate an end to the war with Russia. The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 49.4% disagree with Pope Francis’ comment, while a minority of 36.5% agree with him. This shows that by and large Taiwanese public do not see surrender by Ukraine as a desirable outcome to the two years long war against Russian invasion, and such majority public endorsement of Ukraine’s continuing fight is like the sentiments recorded by other polls across Western countries.



4. Taiwan’s Executive Yuan recently [amended the traffic enforcement rules](#) that will exclude “minor traffic violations” from the list of violations that members of the public could receive cash rewards for reporting them to the authority. The cash reward system for reporting traffic violations was introduced by the President Tsai’s administration and has since been widely controversial. The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, an overwhelming majority of 72.7% support the changes across demographic and partisan lines.



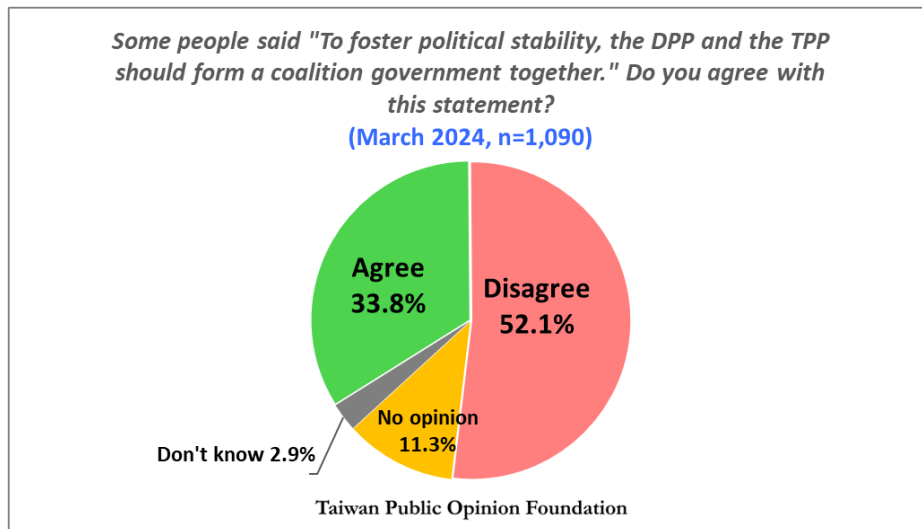
5. Taiwan is facing a [food safety scandal](#) involving the presence of “Sudan dyes” – red synthetic chemical dyes banned in Taiwan – in food products such as chili powder imported from abroad. The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, 75.7% said they are worried about this food safety issue.



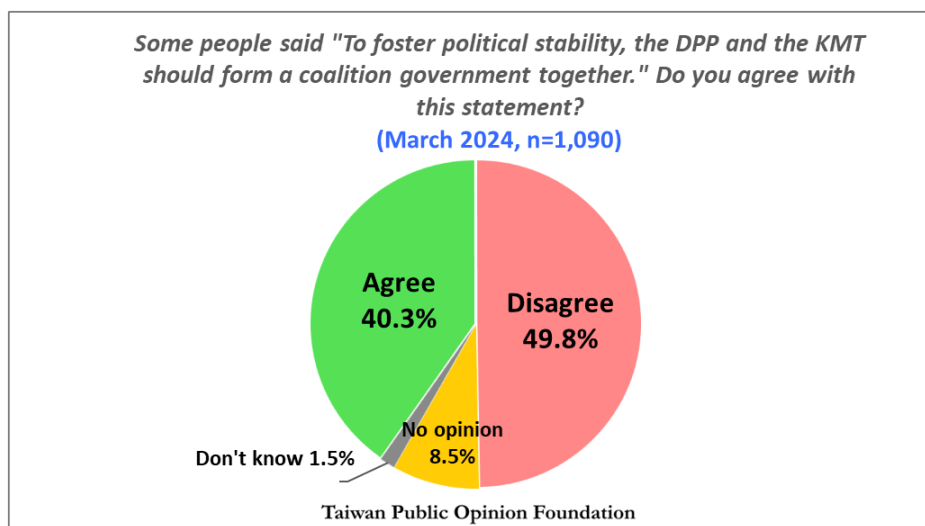
6. Taiwan’s Legislative Yuan election in January saw none of the three major parties received absolute majority seats. Under Taiwan’s semi-presidential political system, the power to appoint cabinet officials belongs to the premier, who is in turn appointed by the president without needing the approval of the Legislative Yuan. Still, there have been calls from some that Taiwan’s Legislative Yuan should attempt to form a “coalition government”.

Concerning DPP and TPP coalition: The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 52.1% do not support the idea of a coalition

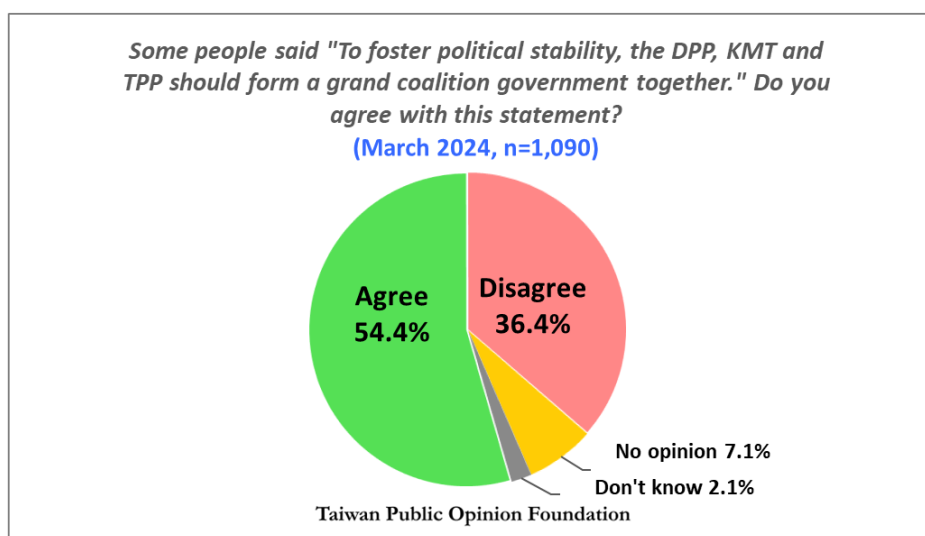
between the ruling DPP and TPP. This is interesting since the DPP and TPP together have 59 seats in the Legislative Yuan that is just enough to cross the absolute majority threshold, which would make it the minimal winning coalition in theory. Why would this be the least popular coalition combination in Taiwanese public's views? Perhaps it has something to do with the partisanship between the supporters of the two parties because of their competition in the January presidential and legislative elections.



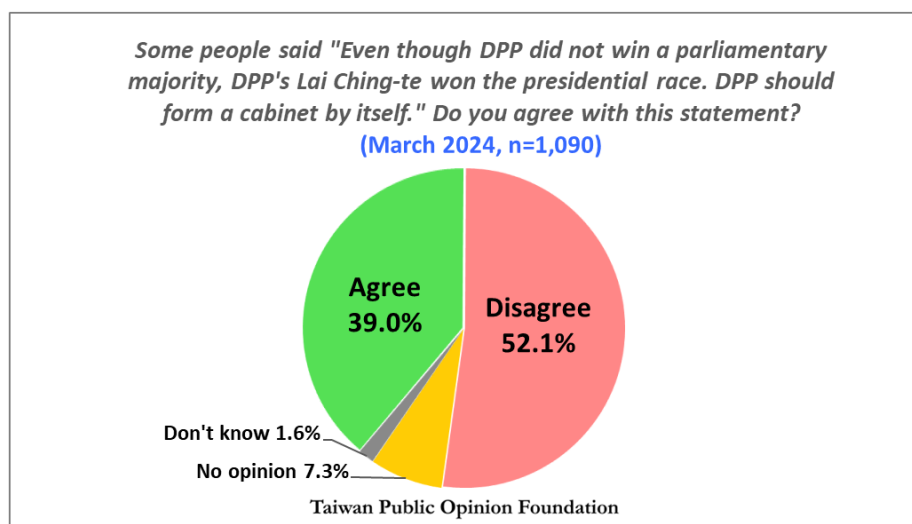
Concerning DPP and KMT coalition: The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 49.8% do not support the idea of a coalition between the ruling DPP and the KMT, while 40.3% support it. Since the two largest major parties have been opposing each other for decades both in electoral and ideological terms, it is understandable that the majority of Taiwanese are not in favor of such alliance.



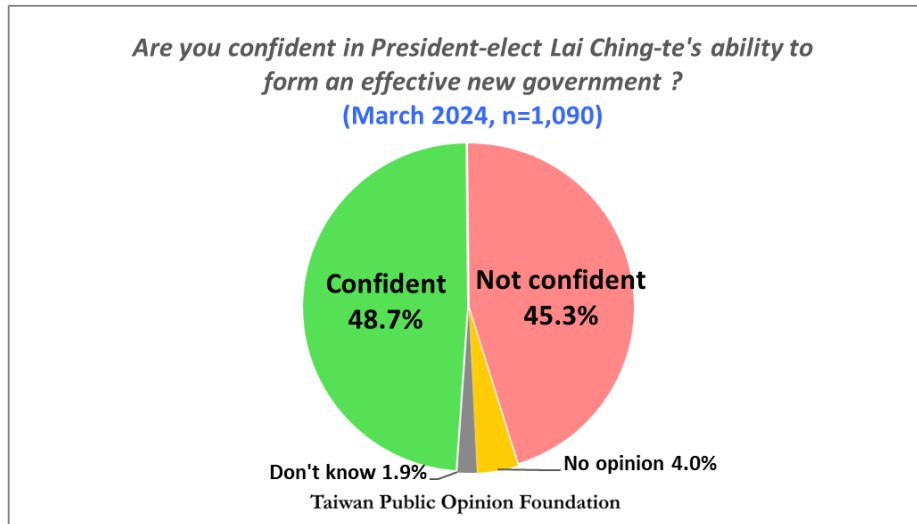
Concerning a grand coalition across DPP, KMT, and TPP: The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 54.4% support a coalition across all partisan lines. Although Taiwanese public are not in favor of either DPP-TPP or DPP-KMT coalition, they would prefer a grand coalition of all three parties. While politically unlikely, this finding indicates Taiwanese public do have some sort of aspiration for living under a grand coalition government.



7. The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 52.1% disagree with the statement that just because DPP's Lai Ching-te won the presidential race, the DPP should form a government cabinet without coalition support in the Legislative Yuan. Despite Taiwan's current political system being a semi-presidential one where the president dictates cabinet without parliament's approval, Taiwanese majority nevertheless desire something of a more coalition-like government.

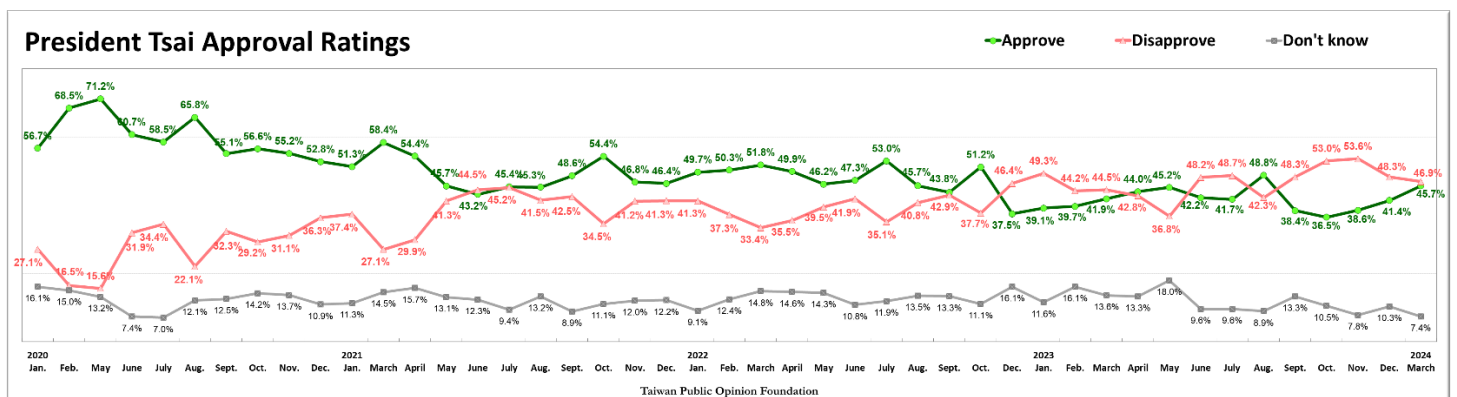


8. President-elect Lai Ching-te will be inaugurated as the next president of the Republic of China on May 20, 2024. The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, 48.7% said they are confident in Lai's ability to form an effective new government once he is in office, however, 45.3% are not confident. This is a worrying sign for Lai, since he now only has the confidence of a slim majority of the Taiwanese public.

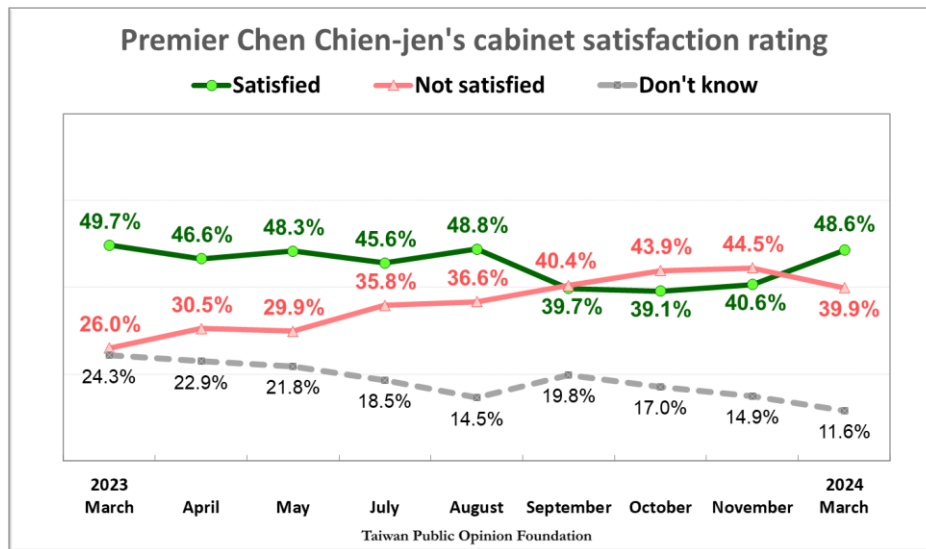


9. On Presidential job approval rating, the poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 46.9% disapproved of the way Tsai Ing-wen is handling her job as the outgoing President, while a minority of 45.7% approved of her. Compared to last November, Tsai's approval has improved slightly by 4.3%, while disapproval decreased by about 1.4%. Overall, President Tsai's approval rating is still in the red as she's about to wrap up her eight years of presidency.

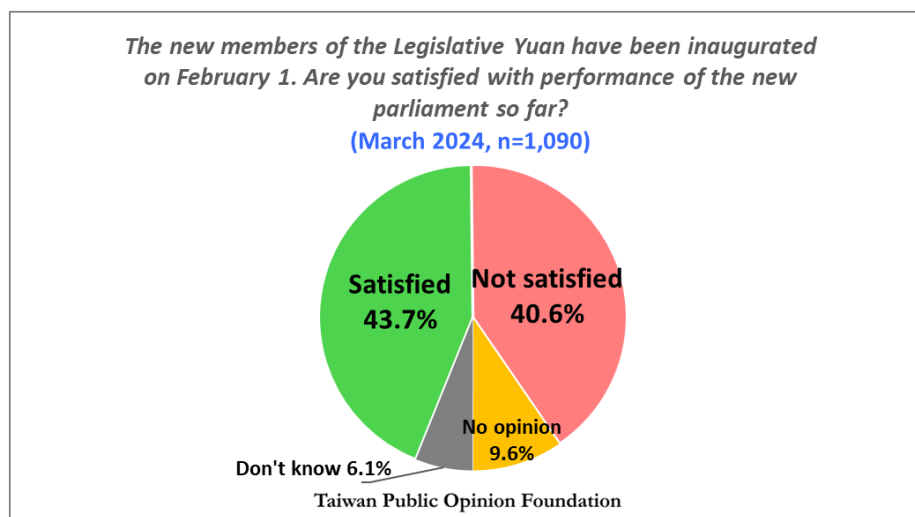
In the recent elections, DPP was able to win another four years presidential term but lost its majority in the Legislative Yuan. Tsai's relative unpopularity in the months before the January elections was certainly a contributing factor to DPP's lackluster results.



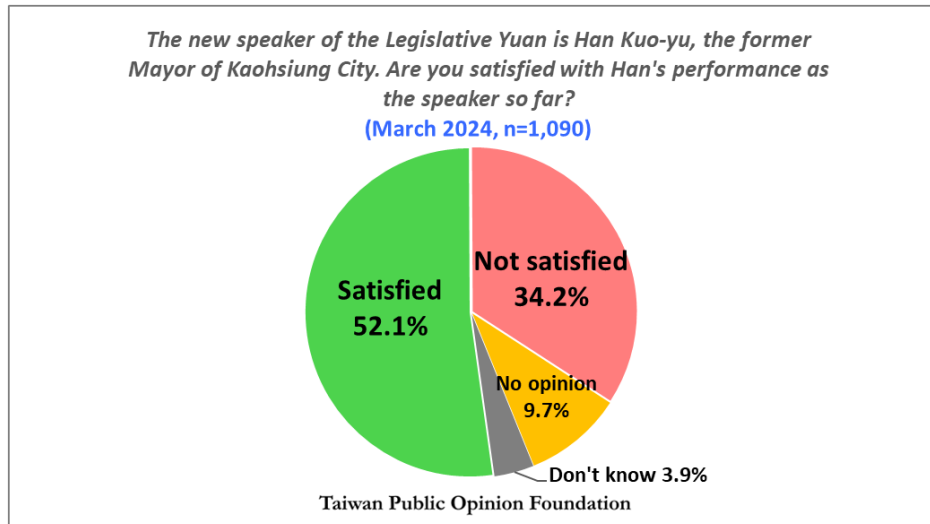
10. Premier Chen Chien-jen has been in office for one year since President Tsai appointed him to the position. The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 48.6% were satisfied with Chen cabinet's performance, while a minority of 39.9% were not. Noticeably, Premier Chen's rating is now in green even though President Tsai's rating is still in the red. This means that the Taiwanese public currently are generally satisfied with the way Chen is managing the government as it prepares to transit to a new administration.



11. The new session of the Legislative Yuan began on February 1 together with many newly elected legislators taking their seats. The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 43.7% are satisfied with the performance of the new parliament, while a minority of 40.6% are not satisfied. Even though the new parliament is now majority controlled by a coalition of the opposition KMT and TPP, the majority public so far seems to find it acceptable.



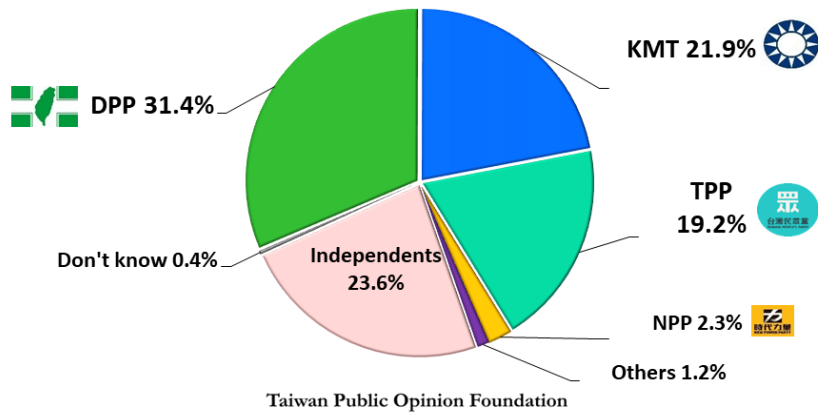
12. The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 52.1% are satisfied with the performance of Han Kuo-yu, the new speaker of the Legislative Yuan and a new KMT legislator. Han was the former Mayor of Kaohsiung City from December 2018 until he was recalled by popular votes in 2020. Despite Han's public image during his short mayoral term as a polarizing and sometimes controversial figure, he is now finding a good footing in public perception as the speaker of the new parliament.



13. On political party affiliation, the poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, 31.4% support the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), 21.9% support the Kuomintang (KMT), 19.2% support the Taiwan People's Party (TPP), 2.3% support the New Power Party (NPP), and 23.6% respondents identified themselves as independents.

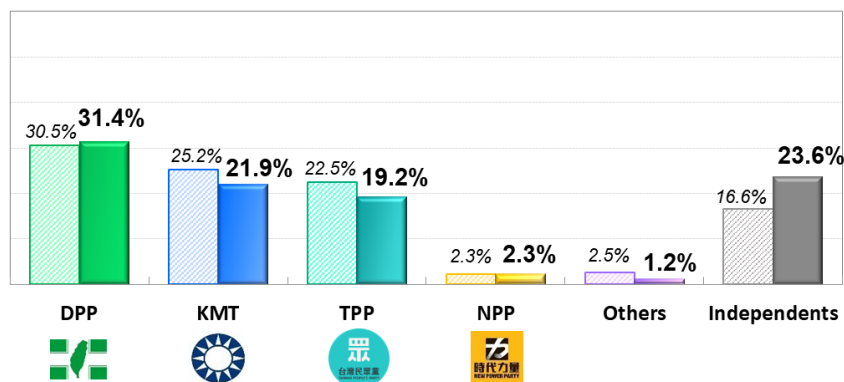
Overall, there has not been much partisan shift since January. Taiwanese public are still divided between the three major parties although the ruling DPP made a tiny gain in popularity. While falling well short of absolute majority, the DPP nevertheless still has relative plurality support with comfortable leads over the other two parties.

Taiwanese Partisan Affiliation (March 2024, n=1,090)



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2024 January 2024 March



Taiwanese Partisan Affiliation 2019 - 2024

