



## **Ukraine war opinion synopsis**

**TORONTO, March 4, 2022**—It is a rare moment in history when it seems almost the entire world is in lockstep. The Putin invasion of Ukraine has stunned and affected so many as it plays out in real time for all to witness.

Maru Public Opinion has been surveying the impact on public opinion over the past week, posting the results of findings from Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom, to our polling release site.

The following is a synopsis of how Canadians have reacted. It combines the results from two waves into a narrative where the numbers simply speak for themselves.

### **Shoulder-to-shoulder with Ukraine**

Canadians stand with the people of Ukraine in full opposition to Russia's Vladimir Putin (92%)—with a majority (74%) who believe Canada should allow at least 200,000 Ukrainians fleeing the Russian invasion to be immediately accepted as refugees to Canada. Eight-in-ten (81%) wish they and Canada could do more to support and defend the people of Ukraine—and even one-in-five (19%, the equivalent of 6,500,000 adults) say that if they could, they'd join the official Ukraine foreign legion and travel there to fight.

Even the comrades-in-arms bravado has a grim bridle: two-thirds (62%) say that President Putin's early warning that interfering countries in the war will face 'consequences you have never seen' was a real threat to use nuclear weapons not just a bluff to give him a tactical advantage. Based on everything else they're witnessing, a majority (67%) of Canadians believe we're now staring down the barrel of World War III.

### **What Canadians want done**

That grim realization of a potential nuclear conflict now governs how Canadians believe Canada should be responding to the crisis. A combined majority (73%) believe we should stay out of direct military contact altogether—Canada and its NATO allies should send as many weapons and as much funding as possible to fight the Russians without directly entering the country with troops and armaments (48%) or only use other means like imposing financial/economic sanctions (25%).

The remainder (27%) are split between those (13%) who say Canada and its NATO allies should cross the Ukraine border or enter its airspace and commence fighting with the Russian forces, most likely triggering a broader war with potential nuclear consequences, and an equal group (14%) at the other end of the table who say we should stay out of everything altogether.



## **NATO, Trump, and the United Nations**

A majority (77%) believe if the NATO allies can't deter Russia's takeover of Ukraine, then it will embolden Vladimir Putin to take over other countries because he'll see them as weak. Against this backdrop, it shouldn't be surprising that a large majority (78%) hold the view that Canada needs to better fund and equip its own military forces right now.

Whatever occurs (or is salvaged) will no-doubt leave some lasting reputational damage: three-quarters (73%) of Canadians say Putin's invasion demonstrates a complete failure by Western governments like Canada's to stand up to him effectively. For what it's worth, an even bigger majority (77%) also reject any notion that if former President Donald Trump were leading the United States right now the Russian invasion would never have happened.

Two-thirds (63%) of Canadians believe the United Nations (which grew some uncharacteristic spine and unity this week) is a useful forum to stop this kind of aggression by Russia —with half (49%) agreeing that even if all the United Nations does is talk without having any teeth, that's ok in itself because at least it's another place for global dialogue.

## **Canadian politics and the PM**

Noting most (74%) Canadians are following the events closely, a vast majority (89%) believe their political parties need to show a common front right now against President Putin, even if they don't agree with each other. And as if to set the bar for the parties, almost as many (81%) say they stand with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in solidarity to reject Russia's Vladimir Putin and all he stands for.

It has been often said that a week in politics can also be a lifetime (or also a lifeline): just a week ago, the PM's personal political numbers were at record lows over his handling of the protesting truck drivers. Today, two-thirds (65%) support the prime minister in how he is responding to this international event, and majorities believe he's doing a good job in handling the situation (58%) and is being an assertive leader for Canada right now (53%).

## **Et tu, Putin?**

A majority (67%) believe that if the economic sanctions work it may cause the Russian people to finally and successfully revolt against Vladimir Putin, and even more (89%) say he should be charged with war crimes against humanity for what he has done in Ukraine.

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The polling results used for this synopsis can be found here, complete with their reports and detailed tables: [Canadian Public Opinion Polls | Maru Group](#)



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