



# Harris On Demand

## The Harris Poll

U.S. Attitudes toward U.S. Relationships  
with North Korea and China

Prepared For:



**American  
Friends  
Service  
Committee**

January 31, 2024



## INTRODUCTION

The aim in conducting the *Attitudes toward U.S. Relationships with North Korea and China* study was to understand Americans' knowledge about the Korean War as well as understand their feelings about working with countries like North Korea to change the climate of their relationship with the United States.

## FULL METHODOLOGY

The 2024 survey was conducted online within the United States between January 23 - 25, 2024, among 2,078 adults (aged 18 and over) by The Harris Poll on behalf of AFSC via its Harris On Demand omnibus product.

Data were weighted where necessary by age, gender, race/ethnicity, region, education, marital status, household size, household income, and political party affiliation to bring them in line with their actual proportions in the population.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in our surveys. The sampling precision of Harris online polls is measured by using a Bayesian credible interval. For this study, the sample data is accurate to within +/- 2.5 percentage points using a 95% confidence level. This credible interval will be wider among subsets of the surveyed population of interest.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to other multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including, but not limited to coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments.

The 2023 survey was conducted online within the United States between January 17-19, 2023, among 2,063 adults (aged 18 and over) by The Harris Poll on behalf of AFSC via its Harris On Demand omnibus product.

Results were weighted for age within gender, region, race/ethnicity, income, education, and size of household where necessary to align them with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

Data were weighted where necessary by age, gender, race/ethnicity, region, education, marital status, household size, household income, and propensity to be online, to bring them in line with their actual proportions in the population.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in our surveys. The sampling precision of Harris online polls is measured by



using a Bayesian credible interval. For this study, the sample data is accurate to within +/- 2.8 percentage points using a 95% confidence level. This credible interval will be wider among subsets of the surveyed population of interest.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to other multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including, but not limited to coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments.

The 2021 survey was conducted between September 24-27, 2021, on behalf of American Friends Service Committee by Ipsos. For the survey, a sample of 1,004 adults age 18+ from the continental U.S., Alaska, and Hawaii was interviewed online in English. The poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points for all respondents.

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### **About The Harris Poll**

The Harris Poll is a global consulting and market research firm that strives to reveal the authentic values of modern society to inspire leaders to create a better tomorrow. It works with clients in three primary areas: building twenty-first-century corporate reputation, crafting brand strategy and performance tracking, and earning organic media through public relations research. One of the longest-running surveys in the U.S., The Harris Poll has tracked public opinion, motivations and social sentiment since 1963, and is now part of Stagwell, the challenger holding company built to transform marketing. To learn more, please visit [www.theharrispoll.com](http://www.theharrispoll.com)



## TOPLINE FINDINGS

Similar to last year's Harris Poll/American Friends Service Committee survey and a 2021 American Friends Service Committee/IPSOS poll, Americans continue to believe the U.S. government should work with other countries to strengthen our relationships and reduce tensions. Additionally, majorities of Americans are, once again, in favor of lifting U.S. imposed sanctions for various reasons.

### Detailed Findings

- **Americans continue to be willing to work with North Korea on various matters.**
  - About three-quarters of Americans believe the U.S. government should work with North Korea to repatriate the remains of U.S. service members that were left in North Korea after The Korean War (73% vs. 76% in 2023 and 70% who felt this way in 2021).
  - Over two-thirds of Americans continue to believe the U.S. president should offer to hold meetings with the North Korean leader (69% in 2024, 68% in 2023).
  - Two-thirds of Americans say the U.S. government should work with North Korea to reunite Korean Americans and their North Korean family members (67% in 2024, 66% in 2023 vs. 62% in 2021).
  - About half of Americans (48% in 2024, a significant difference from 52% in 2023) believe the U.S. government should end the Korean War by signing a peace agreement, compared to 2021 when 41% held this view.
- **Since 2021, more Americans continue to generally agree that the U.S. should lift sanctions when they are in violation of international law, interfere with humanitarian aid and global health, and damage the livelihoods of ordinary citizens.**
  - At least half of Americans continue to be in favor of lifting sanctions if they hinder cooperation on climate change (50% in both 2024 and 2023), while over half believe sanctions should be lifted if they damage economic activity and the livelihoods of ordinary citizens (55% in 2024, 58% in 2023 vs. 49% in 2021).
  - Three in five Americans believe the U.S. should lift sanctions if they violate international legal principles (59% in 2024, 60% in 2023 vs. 48% in 2021) or interfere with humanitarian aid and global public health (61% in 2024, 62% in 2023 vs. 53% in 2021<sup>1</sup>).
  - Male Americans continue to be significantly more likely to be in favor of the U.S. government continuing to impose sanctions even if they are illegal under international law and can hurt access to food and medicine (48% in 2024, 51% in 2023) than females (33% in 2024, 35% in 2023).
  - In 2024, younger Americans aged 18-34 (44%) are significantly more likely to think that the U.S. should continue to impose sanctions even if they are illegal under

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<sup>1</sup> The 2021 statement referenced "COVID-19" instead of "global public health"



international law and can hurt access to food and medicine than their older counterparts aged 65+ (37%).

**3. Most Americans continue to be in favor of the U.S government engaging in talks with China, although agreement has returned to 2021 levels.**

- About two-thirds of Americans say the U.S. should engage in dialogue as much as possible to reduce tensions (62% in 2024, 67% in 2023 vs. 62% who felt this way in 2021).



## KEY FINDINGS BY QUESTION

**Q10: The United States and North Korea have remained in a state of war for over 70 years because the active fighting of the Korean War was stopped with a temporary ceasefire (or armistice) and not a peace treaty in 1953; South Korea promised to observe the cease-fire, but it did not sign because it held out hopes of unifying the Korean Peninsula. The ceasefire was intended to be a temporary measure until a final agreement could be made at a conference in Geneva held the following year, however, at the end of the conference no agreement had been reached; talks between the U.S. and North Korea to end the war were never restarted.**

**Over the past 70 years, both sides have committed violations to the armistice. The U.S. first violated the agreement by stationing nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula in 1957 and, later, North Korea unilaterally announced it no longer abided by the ceasefire beginning in 1994. A state of war between the U.S. and North Korea continues to this day.**

Which of the following actions do you think the U.S. government should take with respect to the Korean War? Please select the statement that most closely represents your views, even if neither is exactly right.

	2024	2023	2021
<i>n=</i>	<b>2,078</b>	<b>2,063</b>	<b>502<sup>2</sup></b>
<b>The U.S. government should end the Korean War by signing a peace agreement</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>The U.S. government should continue a state of war and a military presence on the Korean peninsula</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>24%</b>
<b>Don't know</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>35%</b>

<sup>2</sup> The 2021 Ipsos research asked this question in two ways. Half the sample received this wording while the other half received a variation that was not included in this year's research.



**Q15: The United States spends billions of dollars annually to maintain a military presence in South Korea and has maintained this presence for over 70 years because of the unended Korean War. Do you think the U.S. should cut funding or should not cut funding for this military presence?**

	2024	2023
<i>n=</i>	2,078	2,063
Should cut funding	36%	38%
Should not cut funding	44%	44%
Don't know	20%	18%

**Q25: Do you agree or disagree that humanitarian aid workers from privately-funded charities should be able to travel to North Korea without restrictions from the U.S. government?**

	2024	2023
<i>n=</i>	2,078	2,063
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Agree (NET)</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>54%</b>
Strongly agree	20%	20%
Somewhat agree	32%	35%
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Disagree (NET)</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>33%</b>
Somewhat disagree	18%	18%
Strongly disagree	12%	15%
Don't know	18%	13%



**Q30: Here is a list of possible steps that the U.S. government can take to engage with North Korea diplomatically. How much do you agree or disagree that the U.S. government should take the following diplomatic actions with respect to North Korea?**

*Summary of Strongly/Somewhat Agree*

	2024	2023	2021
<i>n=</i>	2,078	2,063	1,004
<b>The U.S. government should work with North Korea to repatriate the remains of U.S. service members that were left in North Korea after the Korean War</b>	73%	76%	70%
<b>The U.S. president should offer to hold meetings with the North Korean leader</b>	69%	68%	-
<b>The U.S. government should work with North Korea to reunite Korean Americans and their North Korean family members</b>	67%	66%	62%
<b>The U.S. government should allow privately-funded charities to deliver humanitarian assistance to the people of North Korea</b>	63%	63%	56%
<b>The U.S. government should establish a diplomatic presence in North Korea, such as a liaison office</b>	60%	59%	52%
<b>The U.S. government should offer diplomatic and economic incentives to North Korea in exchange for steps toward denuclearization</b>	59%	58%	-
<b>The U.S. government should allow U.S. and North Korean faith and religious communities to conduct people-to-people exchanges between leaders and members of these communities</b>	57%	56%	50%
<b>The U.S. government should allow colleges, universities, and privately-funded educational organizations to conduct people-to-people exchange programs between students and scientists</b>	50%	52%	50%





The U.S. government should establish a diplomatic presence in North Korea, such as a liaison office

	2024	2023	2021
<i>n=</i>	2,078	2,063	1,004
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Agree (NET)</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>52%</b>
Strongly agree	22%	22%	14%
Somewhat agree	38%	37%	38%
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Disagree (NET)</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>24%</b>
Somewhat disagree	14%	15%	15%
Strongly disagree	8%	9%	9%
Don't know	18%	17%	24%

The U.S. government should work with North Korea to reunite Korean Americans and their North Korean family members

	2024	2023	2021
<i>n=</i>	2,078	2,063	1,004
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Agree (NET)</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>62%</b>
Strongly agree	29%	29%	23%
Somewhat agree	38%	37%	38%
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Disagree (NET)</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>19%</b>
Somewhat disagree	10%	12%	14%
Strongly disagree	7%	7%	6%
Don't know	16%	15%	19%



*The U.S. government should work with North Korea to repatriate the remains of U.S. service members that were left in North Korea after the Korean War*

	2024	2023	2021
<i>n=</i>	2,078	2,063	1,004
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Agree (NET)</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>70%</b>
Strongly agree	44%	42%	40%
Somewhat agree	30%	34%	30%
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Disagree (NET)</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>13%</b>
Somewhat disagree	7%	7%	9%
Strongly disagree	6%	5%	4%
Don't know	14%	12%	17%

*The U.S. government should allow privately-funded charities to deliver humanitarian assistance to the people of North Korea*

	2024	2023	2021
<i>n=</i>	2,078	2,063	1,004
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Agree (NET)</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>56%</b>
Strongly agree	26%	25%	19%
Somewhat agree	37%	38%	36%
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Disagree (NET)</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>24%</b>
Somewhat disagree	14%	15%	16%
Strongly disagree	9%	10%	9%
Don't know	15%	13%	20%



*The U.S. government should allow colleges, universities, and privately-funded educational organizations to conduct people-to-people exchange programs between students and scientists*

	2024	2023	2021
<i>n=</i>	2,078	2,063	1,004
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Agree (NET)</b>	50%	52%	50%
Strongly agree	20%	20%	17%
Somewhat agree	31%	32%	33%
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Disagree (NET)</b>	32%	33%	29%
Somewhat disagree	18%	19%	18%
Strongly disagree	14%	14%	11%
Don't know	17%	15%	21%

*The U.S. government should allow U.S. and North Korean faith and religious communities to conduct people-to-people exchanges between leaders and members of these communities*

	2024	2023	2021
<i>n=</i>	2,078	2,063	1,004
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Agree (NET)</b>	57%	56%	50%
Strongly agree	21%	21%	14%
Somewhat agree	36%	36%	36%
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Disagree (NET)</b>	22%	24%	25%
Somewhat disagree	13%	15%	17%
Strongly disagree	10%	10%	8%
Don't know	20%	19%	24%



*The U.S. president should offer to hold meetings with the North Korean leader*

	2024	2023
<i>n=</i>	<b>2,078</b>	<b>2,063</b>
<b><i>Strongly/Somewhat Agree (NET)</i></b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>68%</b>
Strongly agree	30%	29%
Somewhat agree	39%	39%
<b><i>Strongly/Somewhat Disagree (NET)</i></b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>19%</b>
Somewhat disagree	10%	13%
Strongly disagree	6%	6%
Don't know	15%	13%

*The U.S. government should offer diplomatic and economic incentives to North Korea in exchange for steps toward denuclearization*

	2024	2023
<i>n=</i>	<b>2,078</b>	<b>2,063</b>
<b><i>Strongly/Somewhat Agree (NET)</i></b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>58%</b>
Strongly agree	24%	23%
Somewhat agree	35%	35%
<b><i>Strongly/Somewhat Disagree (NET)</i></b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>27%</b>
Somewhat disagree	15%	17%
Strongly disagree	10%	10%
Don't know	17%	15%



**Q40<sup>3</sup>: Which of the following actions do you think the U.S. military should take with respect to U.S. military exercises with South Korea?**

	2024	2023
<i>n=</i>	2,078	1028
The U.S. military should halt military exercises with South Korea to ensure the safety of South Koreans and protect the environment.	41%	43%
The U.S. military should continue to conduct military exercises with South Korea even if it endangers individual Koreans and the environment.	36%	37%
Don't know	23%	21%

**Q50: How much do you agree or disagree that economic sanctions are effective at bringing targeted countries to the negotiating table?**

	2024	2023	2021
<i>n=</i>	2,078	2,063	1,004
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Agree (NET)</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>52%</b>
Strongly agree	20%	19%	13%
Somewhat agree	43%	43%	39%
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Disagree (NET)</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>22%</b>
Somewhat disagree	16%	18%	16%
Strongly disagree	5%	4%	6%
Don't know	16%	15%	26%

<sup>3</sup> This question was asked as a split sample in the 2023 research



**Q55 How much do you agree or disagree that economic sanctions help stop targeted countries from producing weapons of mass destruction?**

	2024	2023	2021
<i>n=</i>	<b>2,078</b>	<b>2,063</b>	<b>1,004</b>
<b><i>Strongly/Somewhat Agree (NET)</i></b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>42%</b>
Strongly agree	19%	20%	13%
Somewhat agree	32%	33%	28%
<b><i>Strongly/Somewhat Disagree (NET)</i></b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>35%</b>
Somewhat disagree	23%	23%	21%
Strongly disagree	10%	9%	14%
Don't know	16%	15%	24%

**Q60 How much do you agree or disagree that economic sanctions reduce human rights violations in targeted countries?**

	2024	2023	2021
<i>n=</i>	<b>2,078</b>	<b>2,063</b>	<b>1,004</b>
<b><i>Strongly/Somewhat Agree (NET)</i></b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>35%</b>
Strongly agree	16%	17%	11%
Somewhat agree	27%	29%	24%
<b><i>Strongly/Somewhat Disagree (NET)</i></b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>37%</b>
Somewhat disagree	25%	25%	23%
Strongly disagree	12%	10%	14%
Don't know	20%	19%	28%



**Q65** How much do you agree or disagree that economic sanctions help stop or avoid military conflict between the country that imposes sanctions and the countries that are the targets of sanctions?

	2024	2023	2021
<i>n=</i>	<b>2,078</b>	<b>2,063</b>	<b>1,004</b>
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Agree (NET)</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>39%</b>
Strongly agree	16%	16%	12%
Somewhat agree	34%	38%	27%
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Disagree (NET)</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>31%</b>
Somewhat disagree	21%	23%	22%
Strongly disagree	9%	7%	9%
Don't know	21%	17%	30%



**Q70: Many United Nations officials have pointed out that broad unilateral sanctions imposed by the U.S. are considered illegal under international law, violate human rights principles, and are contrary to international norms. These measures may violate the UN Charter, the U.N.’s Declaration on the Principles of International Law, Article 22 of the Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions, and other international legal instruments.**

**How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**

*Summary of Strongly/Somewhat Agree*

	2024	2023	2021
<i>n=</i>	2,078	2,063	1,004
<b>The U.S. should lift sanctions if they violate international legal principles</b>	59%	60%	48%
<b>The U.S. should lift sanctions if they interfere with humanitarian aid and global public health<sup>4</sup></b>	61%	62%	53%
<b>The U.S. should lift sanctions if they damage economic activity and livelihoods of ordinary citizens</b>	55%	58%	49%
<b>The U.S. should lift sanctions if they hinder cooperation on climate change</b>	50%	50%	-
<b>The U.S. should continue to impose sanctions even if they are illegal under international law and can hurt access to food and medicine</b>	40%	42%	32%

*The U.S. should lift sanctions if they violate international legal principles*

	2024	2023	2021
<i>n=</i>	2,078	2,063	1,004
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Agree (NET)</b>	59%	60%	48%
Strongly agree	24%	25%	15%
Somewhat agree	35%	35%	33%
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Disagree (NET)</b>	23%	24%	30%
Somewhat disagree	15%	14%	18%
Strongly disagree	9%	10%	12%
Don’t know	17%	16%	22%

<sup>4</sup> The 2021 statement referenced “COVID-19” instead of “global public health”





*The U.S. should lift sanctions if they interfere with humanitarian aid and global public health*

	2024	2023
<i>n=</i>	<b>2,078</b>	<b>2,063</b>
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Agree (NET)</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>62%</b>
Strongly agree	27%	25%
Somewhat agree	34%	37%
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Disagree (NET)</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>23%</b>
Somewhat disagree	15%	16%
Strongly disagree	9%	7%
Don't know	15%	15%

*The U.S. should lift sanctions if they damage economic activity and livelihoods of ordinary citizens*

	2024	2023	2021
<i>n=</i>	<b>2,078</b>	<b>2,063</b>	<b>1,004</b>
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Agree (NET)</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>49%</b>
Strongly agree	23%	23%	16%
Somewhat agree	33%	35%	33%
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Disagree (NET)</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>28%</b>
Somewhat disagree	18%	18%	19%
Strongly disagree	10%	10%	10%
Don't know	16%	14%	23%



*The U.S. should continue to impose sanctions even if they are illegal under international law and can hurt access to food and medicine*

	2024	2023	2021
<i>n=</i>	2,078	2,063	1,004
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Agree (NET)</b>	40%	42%	32%
Strongly agree	19%	18%	11%
Somewhat agree	21%	24%	21%
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Disagree (NET)</b>	44%	41%	46%
Somewhat disagree	26%	25%	27%
Strongly disagree	18%	16%	19%
Don't know	16%	17%	22%

*The U.S. should lift sanctions if they hinder cooperation on climate change*

	2024	2023
<i>n=</i>	2,078	2,063
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Agree (NET)</b>	50%	50%
Strongly agree	21%	20%
Somewhat agree	29%	31%
<b>Strongly/Somewhat Disagree (NET)</b>	32%	32%
Somewhat disagree	16%	19%
Strongly disagree	16%	13%
Don't know	18%	17%



**Q80: Prior to 2017 the U.S. government and China had a number of official dialogue processes that improved global economic stability, public health, pandemic management, climate change mitigation, and cooperation on law enforcement. Which of the following actions do you think the Biden Administration should take with respect to U.S.-China dialogue?**

		2024
		<i>n=</i> 2,078
<b>The U.S. government should engage in dialogue as much as possible to reduce tensions</b>		<b>62%</b>
<b>The U.S. government should not restart official dialogue to keep pressure for change on China</b>		<b>22%</b>
<b>Don't know</b>		<b>16%</b>