



Taiwan Public Opinion Foundation

June 2023 Public Opinion Poll – English Excerpt

Released:

June 20, 2023

Taiwan Public Opinion Foundation (TPOF) today released the result of its June 2023 nation-wide poll. This marks the 83rd 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](#).

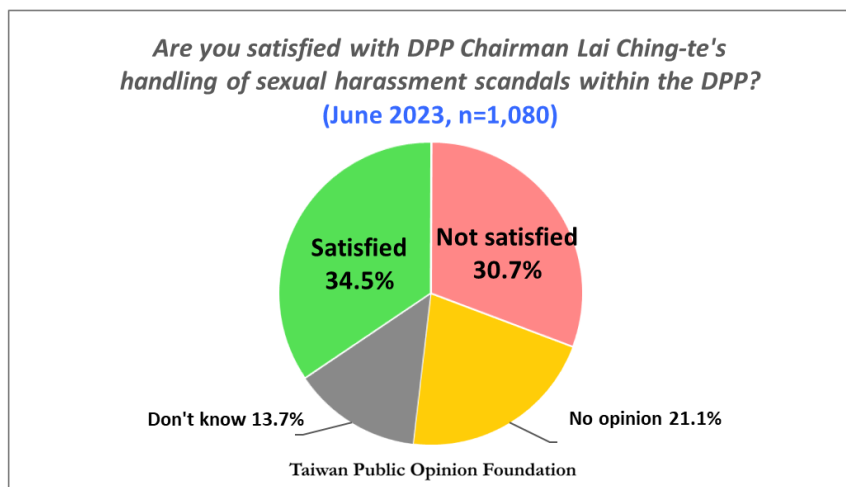
How the Survey was Conducted

This survey was conducted on June 12-13, 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 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 ± 2.98 percentage points with 95% level of confidence.

Main Findings:

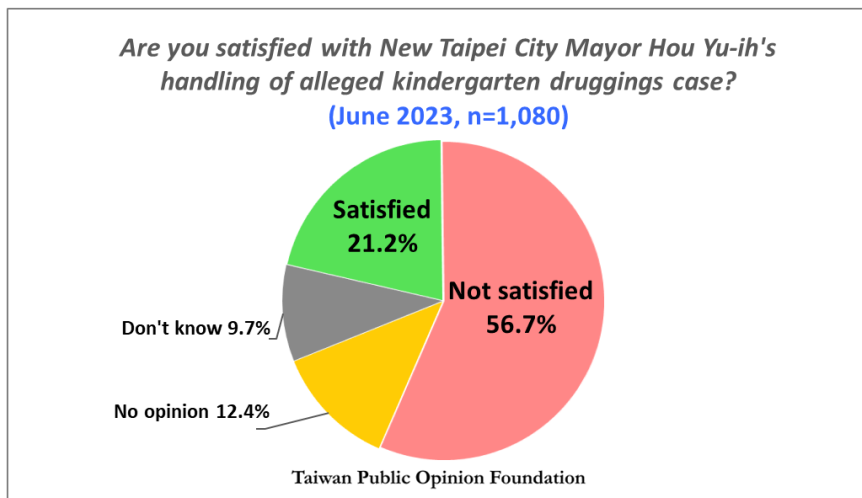
1. Since early June Taiwan's ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) has been engulfed in [a wave of sexual harassment scandals](#). While this Taiwanese "MeToo" movement has now proliferated and saw other public figures among opposition parties and entertainment industry being accused, the bulk of allegations have so far been centered around politicians and staff of the DPP party itself. In response, DPP chairman Lai Ching-te (and DPP presidential candidate for 2024) initiated a wide range of measures to "reform" the party and suspended those who were accused.

The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older a slight majority of 34.5% said they were satisfied with the way Lai handled the scandals, while a minority of 30.7% were not satisfied. Despite the gravity of the scandals and negative publicity for the DPP, Lai's performance as a new chairman (who has only been in office since January 2023) and his handling of the scandals were seen as acceptable by the majority public.

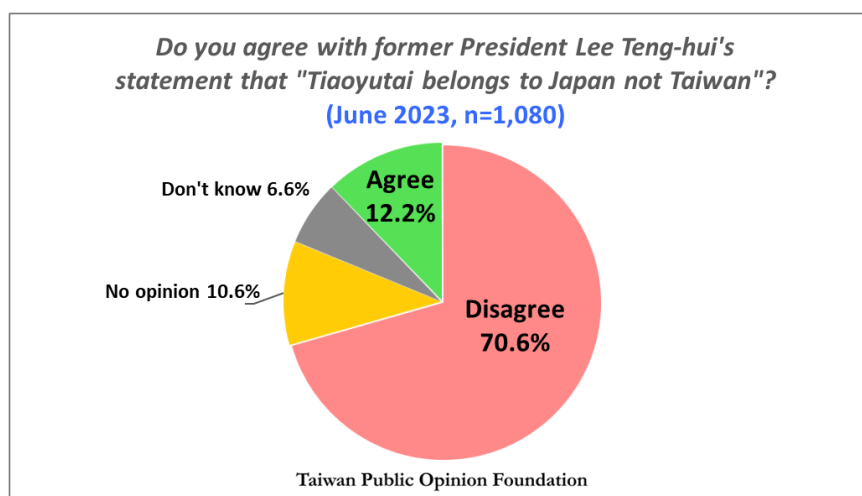


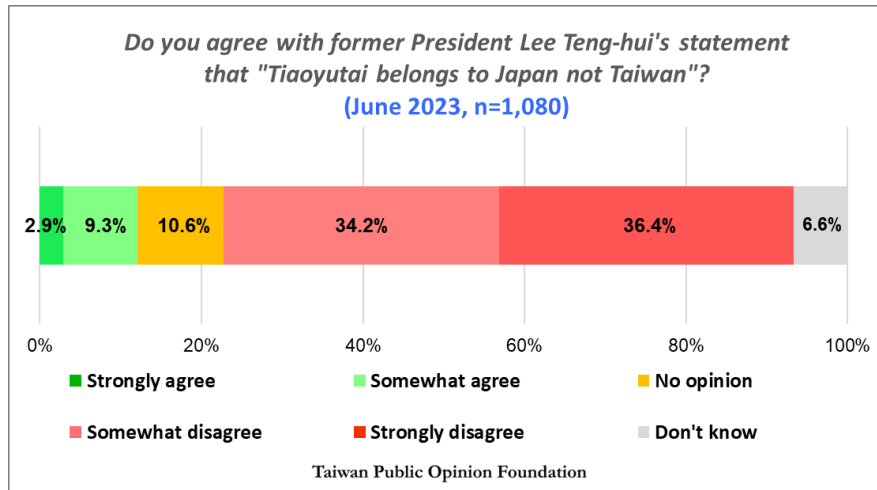
2. Teachers at a kindergarten in New Taipei City have been [accused of sedating pupils with sedative drugs](#) like benzodiazepines. Over the past weeks the case has been widely reported as a scandal on national media (though criminal investigation is still ongoing and no charge has been filed so far), while the ruling DPP has used this case to attack the incumbent New Taipei City Mayor Hou Yu-ih, who is running as KMT's presidential candidate for 2024. The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 56.7% said they were not satisfied with the way Mayor Hou handled the case, and only 21.2% were satisfied. This means that despite the case is still under investigation, it has damaged much of the public's confidence in Mayor Hou's ability as a government

administrator and as a result negatively impacted Hou's support in the presidential campaign.

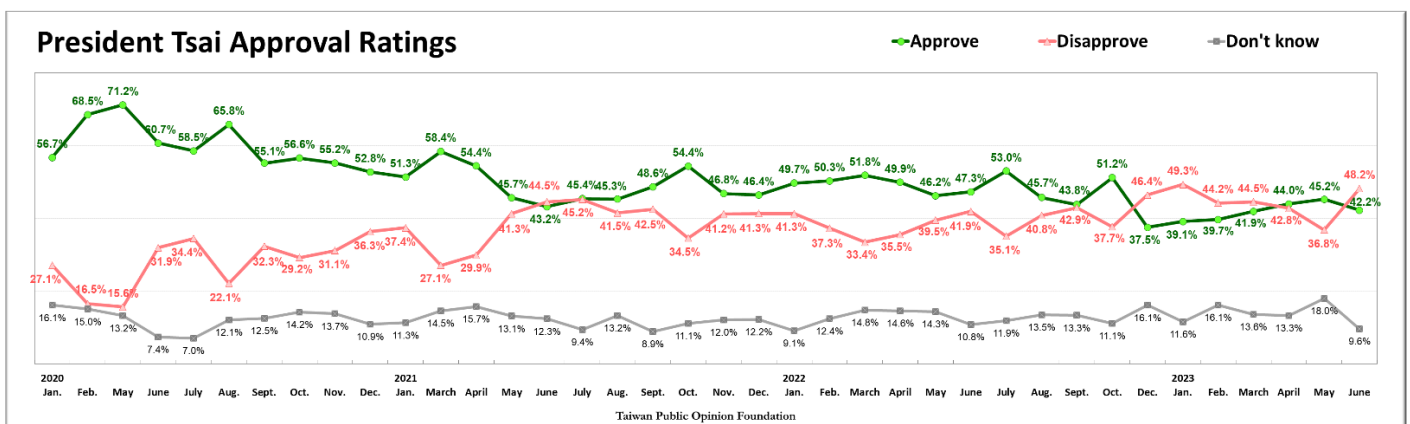


- During an overseas visit to Japan, former Taipei City Mayor Ko Wen-je and a presidential candidate for 2024 election generated a controversy when he told Japanese media NHK that Taiwanese fishermen care more about fishing access to the seas surrounding Tiaoyutai (Senkaku Islands) than the sovereignty of the islands itself. The remark is similar in tone to the late former President Lee Teng-hui's controversial statement made in 2015 (long after he left presidential office) that "Tiaoyutai belongs to Japan not Taiwan." The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a strong majority of 70.6% disagreed with the statement, while only 12.2% agreed with it. This means that a clear majority of Taiwanese do see the sovereignty of Tiaoyutai as belongs to Taiwan, and it is no surprise that the official positions of both Taiwan's ruling DPP and opposition party KMT are that Tiaoyutai is a part of Taiwan (Republic of China).



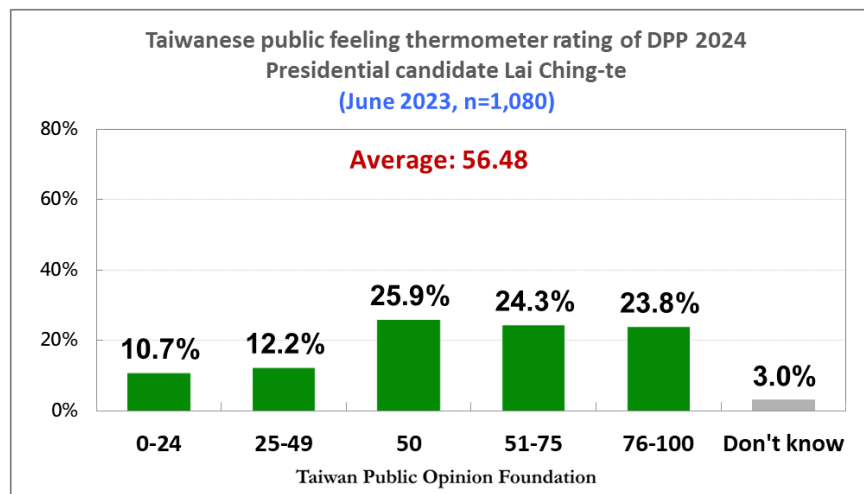


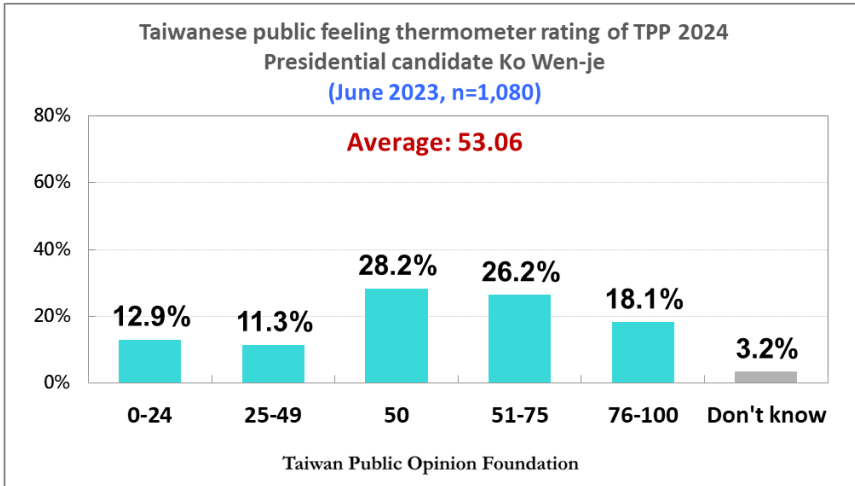
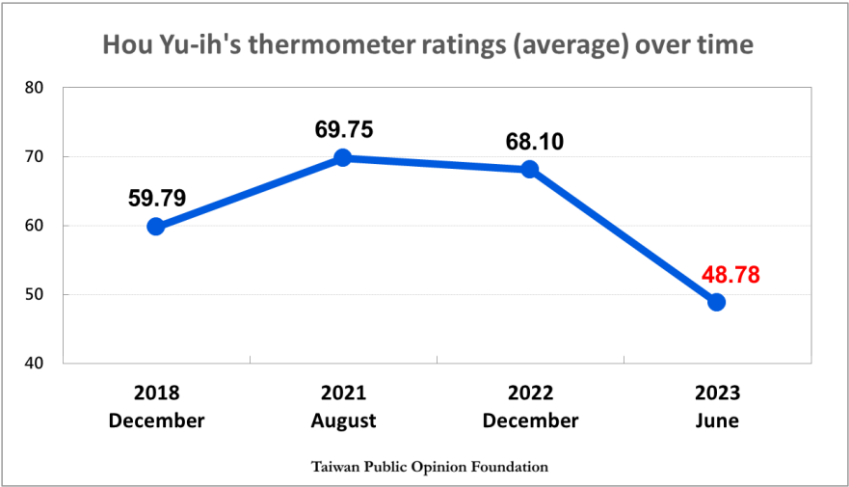
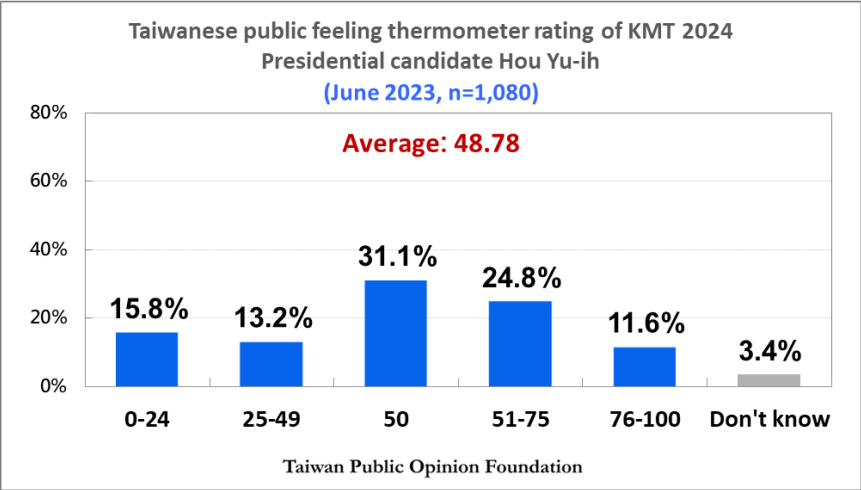
- On Presidential job approval rating, the poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 48.2% disapproved of the way Tsai Ing-wen is handling her job as the President, while a minority of 42.3% approved of her. Comparing to result from May, President Tsai's approval rate took a major hit as disapproval increased by more than double digits in a month's time. This could have been caused by a variety of factors, such as Tsai's role in DPP's sexual harassment scandals since most if not all the alleged cases concerning DPP party members took place during Tsai's terms as party chairwoman. Another possible cause is the controversy surrounding Tsai's recent appointment of four new Supreme Court justices, all four of which were criticized by oppositions as pro-DPP cronies which raises question regarding Taiwan's judicial independence.

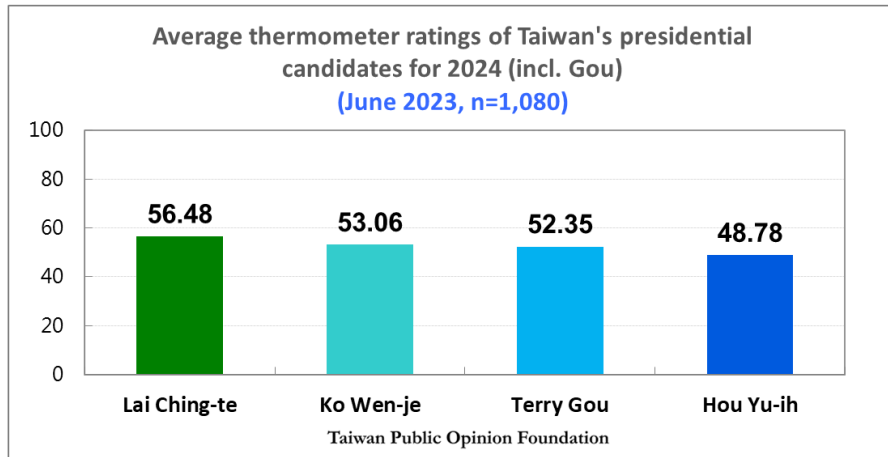


- The poll asked respondents to rate three major presidential candidates on a *feeling thermometer* between 0 and 100 – whereas 0 is the most negative and 100 is the most positive. In addition, the poll's comparison also included Foxconn tycoon Terry Gou who was a contender for KMT's presidential nomination but lost out to Hou Yu-ih in May.

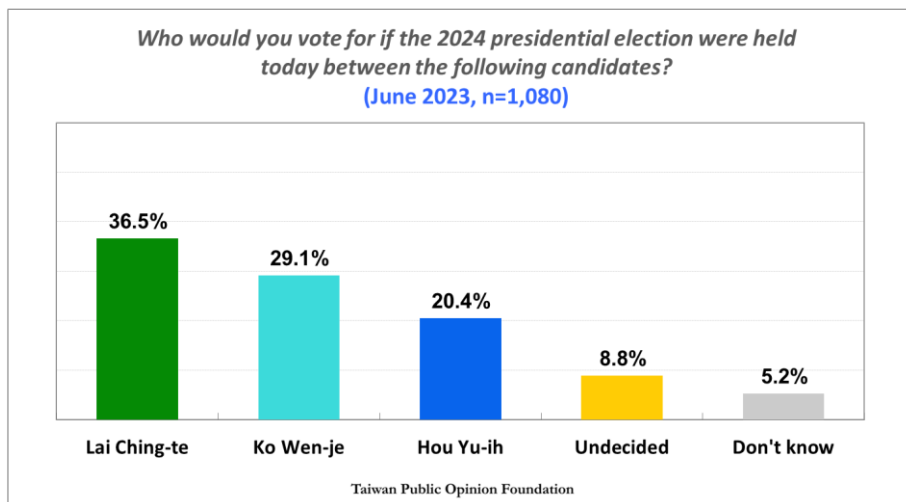
- Lai Ching-te received an average rating of 56 – the highest among all three presidential candidates. However, Lai’s average thermometer ratings saw continuous decline over the last two years, this is certainly a warning sign for a presidential candidate heading into the final few months of the campaign.
- Hou You-ih received an average rating of 48, the lowest of all three candidates and it is even lower than Terry Gou who was not nominated by KMT. Notably, Hou’s rating suffered a massive loss over the course of the first half of 2023, for reasons that we can only speculate. The loss of 20% means a whooping five million Taiwanese who once had good feelings about Hou now no longer see him in a positive light.
- Ko Wen-je received an average rating of 53. While this is slightly lower than Lai’s, Ko has reason to feel confident since his number has remained quite stable for the last two years. Events that have transpired over the past few months – such as Ko’s lengthy overseas visit to the U.S. or his announcement of presidential campaign have not changed this fundamental “base”. If Ko’s presidential support in the poll rises, we know it is not so much that Ko himself won over more hearts and minds but that his opponents have become more unpopular.

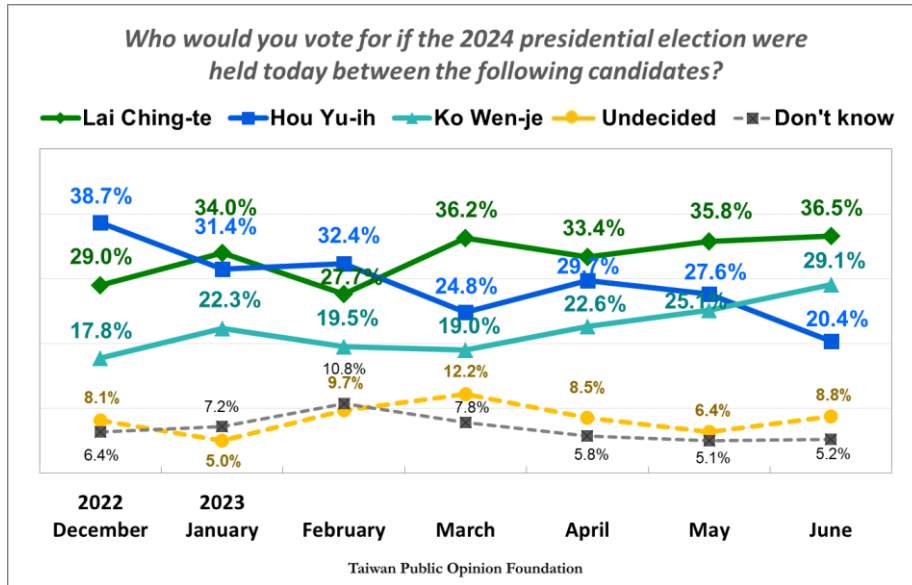




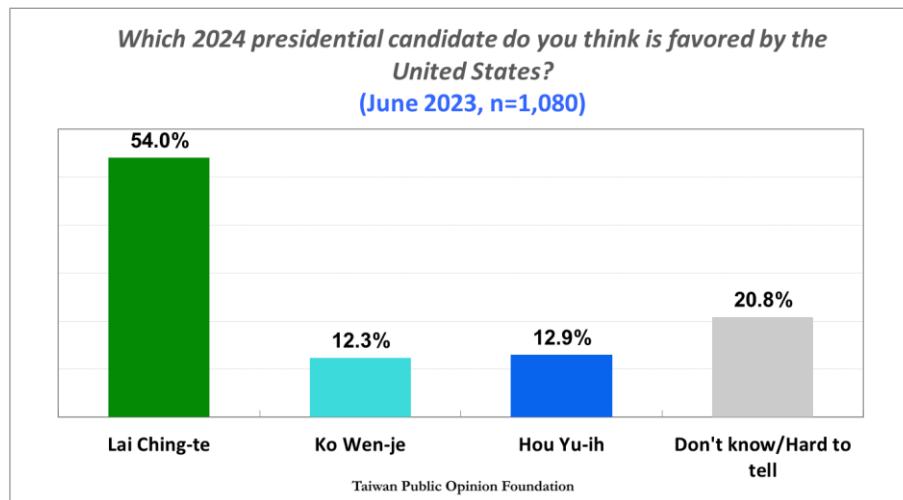


6. On 2024 presidential election, the poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, Vice President Lai Ching-te leads at 36.5%, former Taipei City Mayor Ko Wen-je came second at 29.1%, and New Taipei City Mayor Hou Yu-ih came third at 20.4%. Compared to past poll, Hou's support all but collapsed over the span of one month, whereas Lai and Ko both gained ground. Ko's gain is particularly noticeable which he done so at the expense of Hou.



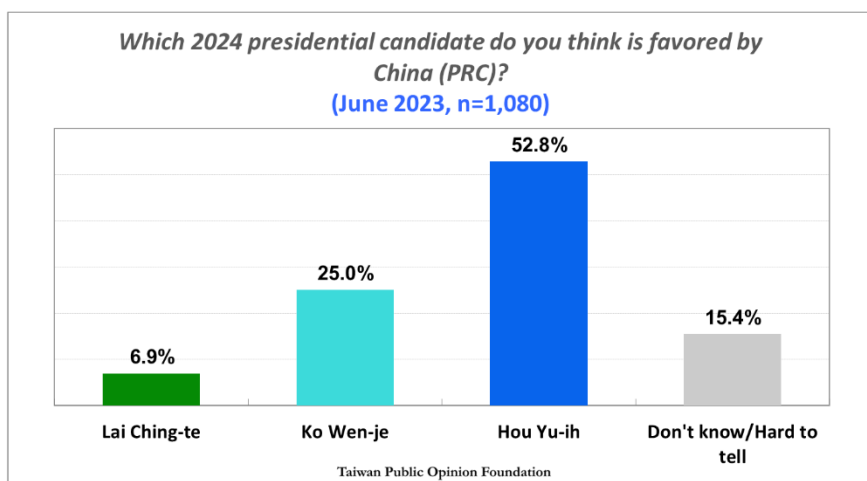


7. The poll asked respondents which 2024 presidential candidate they think is *favored by the United States*. Among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a whopping 54% said they think DPP candidate Lai Ching-te is most favored by the U.S., while only small percentage said that would be Ko Wen-je or Hou Yu-ih. Regardless of whether U.S. decision makers in Washington D.C. “favors” one Taiwanese candidate over another, Taiwanese public appears to think Lai is their favor.

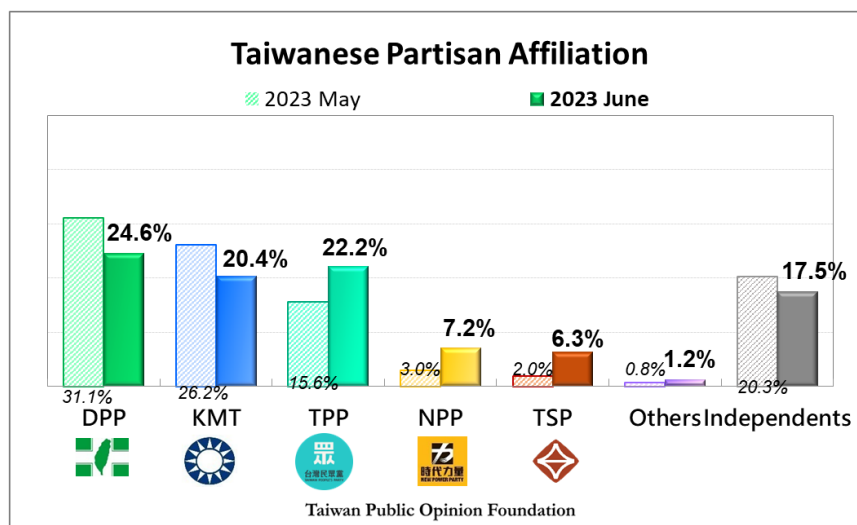


8. The poll asked respondents which 2024 presidential candidate they think is *favored by China (PRC)*. Among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 52.8% said they think KMT candidate Hou Yu-ih is most favored by Beijing, while 25% attributed to Ko, and only 6.9% attributed to Lai. This means that most Taiwanese think KMT’s Hou is Beijing’s preferred candidate, which

doesn't bode well for Hou as it is commonly thought that *closeness* to China/Beijing is a quality that majority of Taiwanese are averse to. This is even though out of all three presidential candidates, Hou is the one that has made the least statements about cross-strait policies and there is no evidence of his *closeness* to China/Beijing.

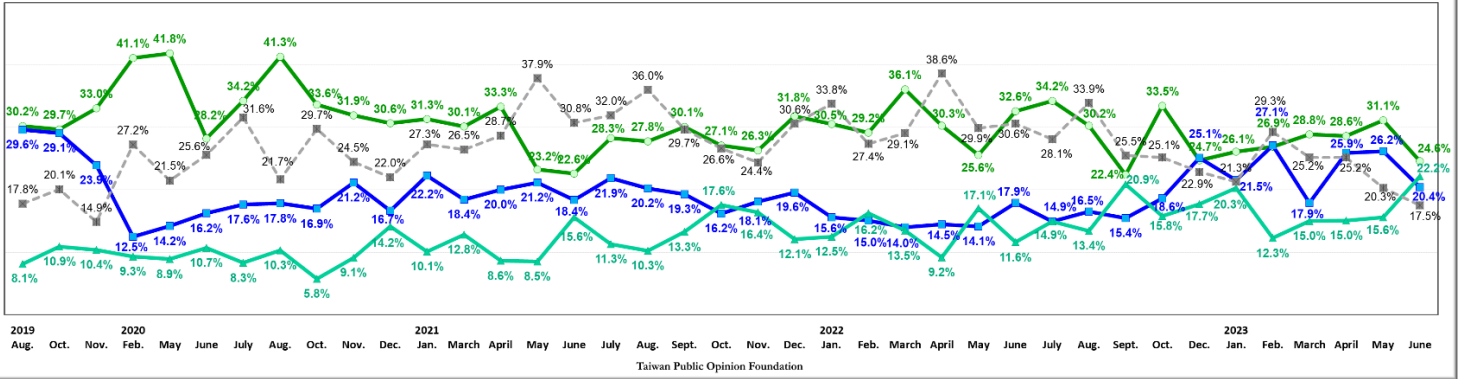


- On political party affiliation, the poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, 24.6% said they support the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), 22.2% support the Taiwan People's Party (TPP), 20.4% support the Kuomintang (KMT), 7.2% support the New Power Party (NPP), 6.3% support the Taiwan State-building Party (TSP), and 17.5% respondents identified themselves as independents. Compared to our May poll, we see a major shift in Taiwanese partisan affiliation as both DPP and KMT lost significant support while TPP made large gain of almost 7% in a month. The two minor parties NPP and TSP also made impressive gains.



Taiwanese Partisan Affiliation 2019 - 2023

—●— DPP
 —■— KMT
 —▲— TPP
 —■— Independents



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