



Taiwan Public Opinion Foundation

September 2023 Public Opinion Poll – English Excerpt

Released:

September 26, 2023

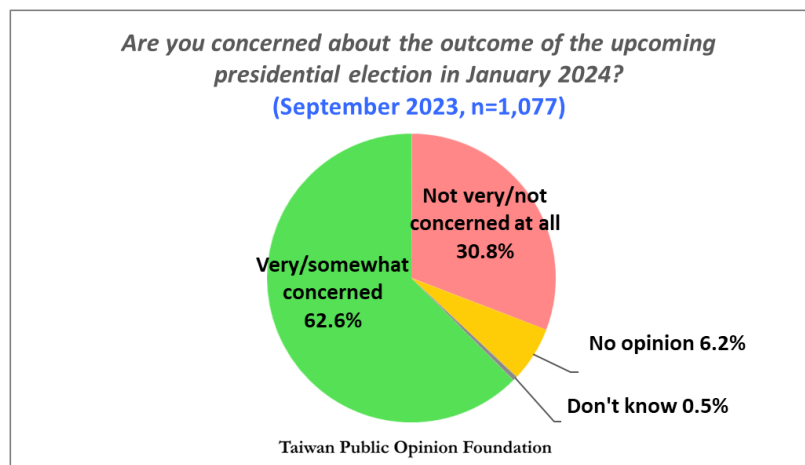
Taiwan Public Opinion Foundation (TPOF) today released the result of its September 2023 nation-wide poll. This marks the 86th monthly survey conducted by the TPOF aimed at tracking the development and changes in Taiwan's public opinion. The full release in Chinese language is available on our [official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

How the Survey was Conducted

This survey was conducted on September 18-20, 2023, with a sample size of 1,077. 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 ± 2.99 percentage points with 95% level of confidence.

Main Findings:

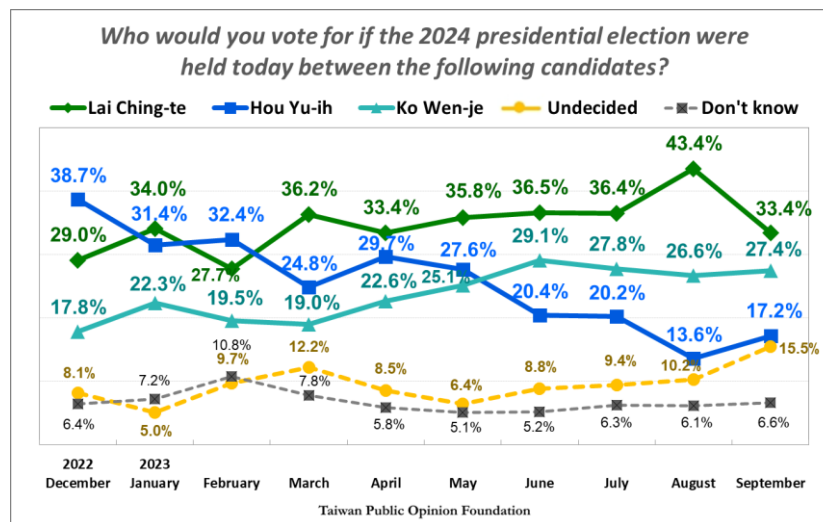
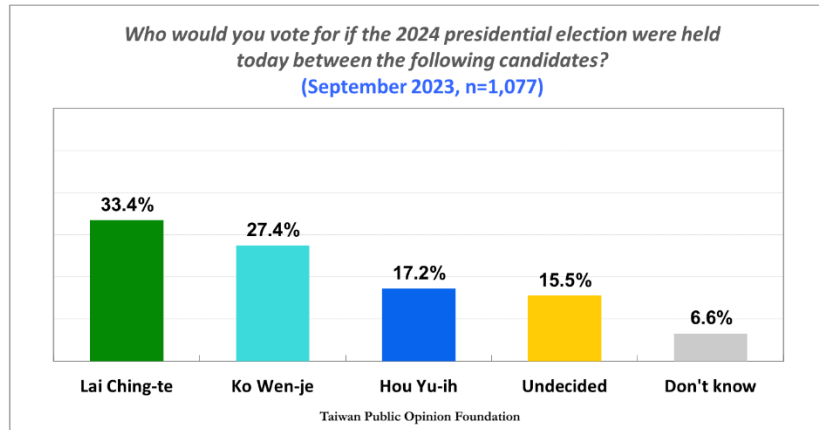
1. Taiwan is scheduled to hold the next presidential election on January 13, 2024. The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 62.6% said they are concerned about the outcome of the election, while 30.8% are not concerned. The significant number who are not concerned indicates Taiwanese public currently have less of a psychological involvement in the outcome of this presidential election compared to past elections. This could be due to the ruling party's candidate Lai Ching-te is leading the polls by significant margin and as a result the race is perceived as less competitive.



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 33.4%, former Taipei City Mayor Ko Wen-je of the TPP came second at 27.4%, and New Taipei City Mayor Hou Yu-ih of the KMT came third at 17.2%. Compared to July poll, the DPP candidate and frontrunner Lai saw a massive 10% slide. While Lai is still leading the second-place Ko by a 6% margin, this latest poll indicates the dynamic of the race is shifting and becoming more competitive just four months before voting day.

Why has Lai's popularity suffered such a major hit? Over the course of August and September [a national controversy](#) emerged involving the ruling Tsai government's importing of foreign eggs to cope with egg shortage in Taiwan's domestic market. As facts came to light the food safety standards, costs to taxpayers, and even the legality of the import program itself have been heavily criticized, Tsai government's controversial Minister of Agriculture Chen Chi-chung resigned over the controversy as his handling of the program and the ensued controversy were widely seen as incompetent.

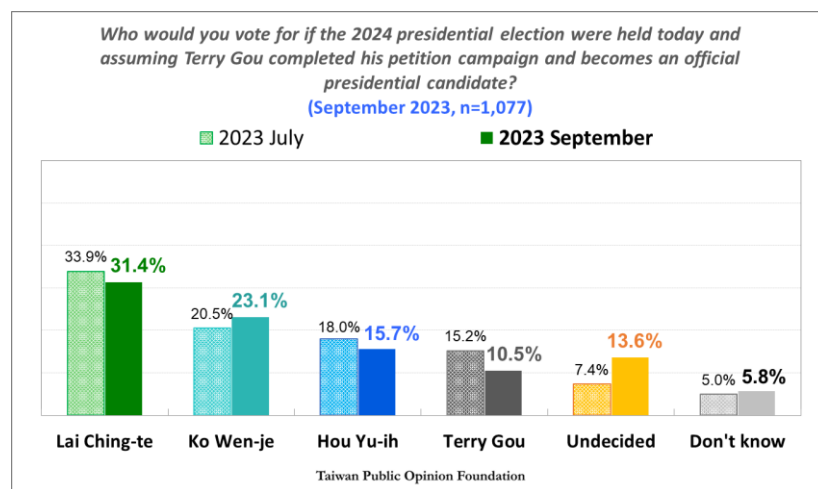
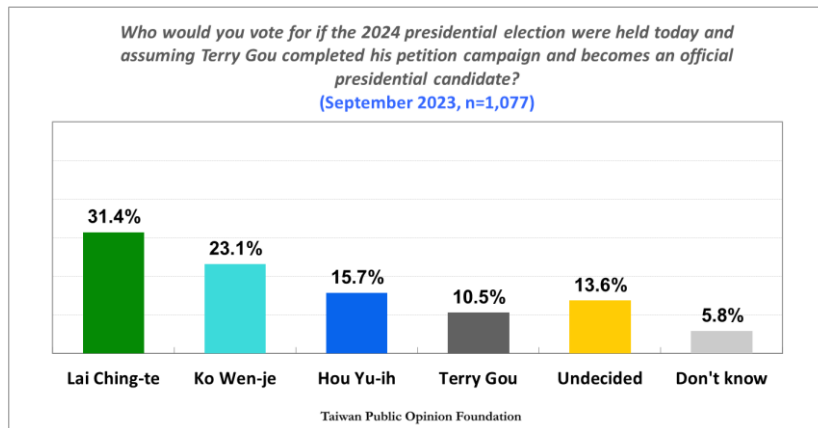
While Ko continues to hold the No. 2 spot in the poll, he has still not been able to break the 27-30% ceiling and obtain more support that would be necessary to outrun Lai. On the other hand KMT's Hou has seemingly recovered a small level of support after his [trip to the U.S.](#), but still lags behind both Lai and Ko by significant margins.



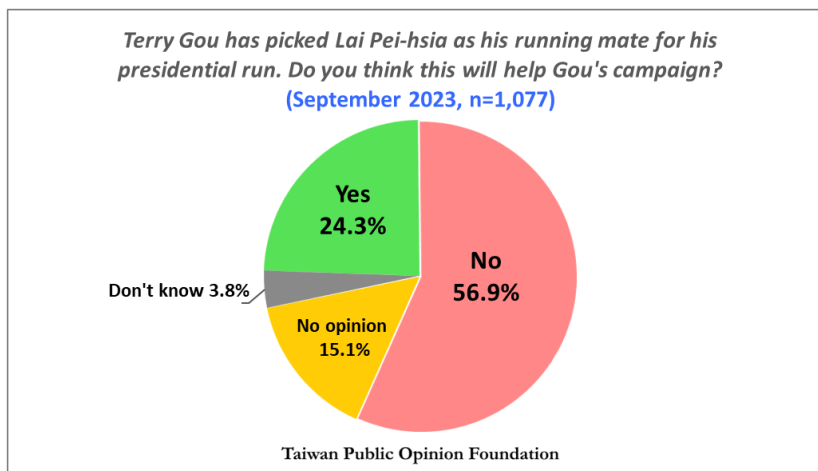
3. Foxconn tycoon Terry Gou was a contender for KMT's presidential nomination but lost out to Hou Yu-ih in May. On August 28 Gou announced [he is officially seeking presidential candidacy](#), though as an independent candidate he is legally obligated to collect significant number of petition signatures 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, only 10.5% said they would support Hou in a four-way race, which is a 5% decline from July.

If Gou successfully becomes a candidate, he will take away the most support from Ko, but would have minimum impact on Hou. Overall however, Gou's entry will theoretically take away *some* votes from all three major candidates, but is not

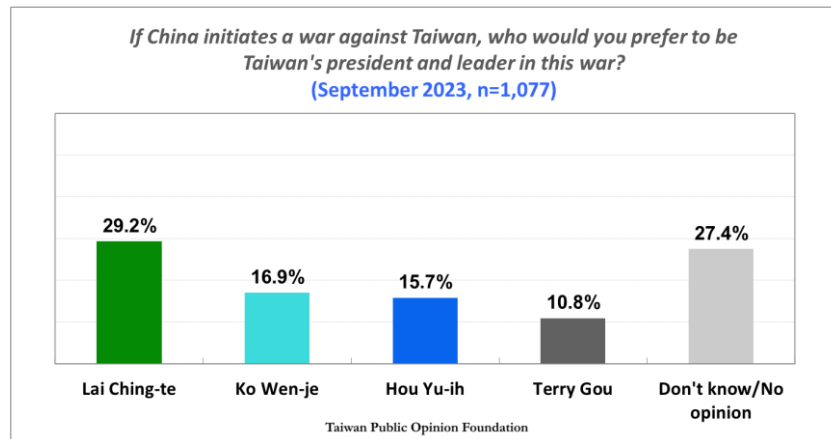
expected to have any decisive impact on the outcome.



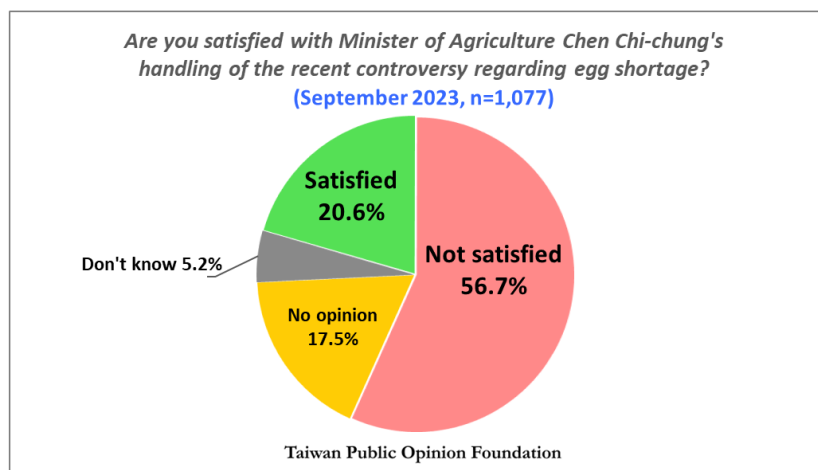
- Terry Gou has [picked](#) singer and actress Lai Pei-hsia as his running mate for seeking presidential candidacy, a choice that has surprised many and generated some public interest regarding the entertainer. The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 56.9% said they do not think this running mate choice will help Gou's campaign.



5. Which presidential candidate commands the most public confidence as a wartime leader in a war with China? The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, Lai received the most vote of confidence at 29.2%, followed by Ko at 16.9%, Hou at 15.7%, and Gou at 10.8%. This means that Taiwanese public do not have a consensus on who can lead Taiwan through in a war, but more people put their confidence in Lai compared to all other candidates.

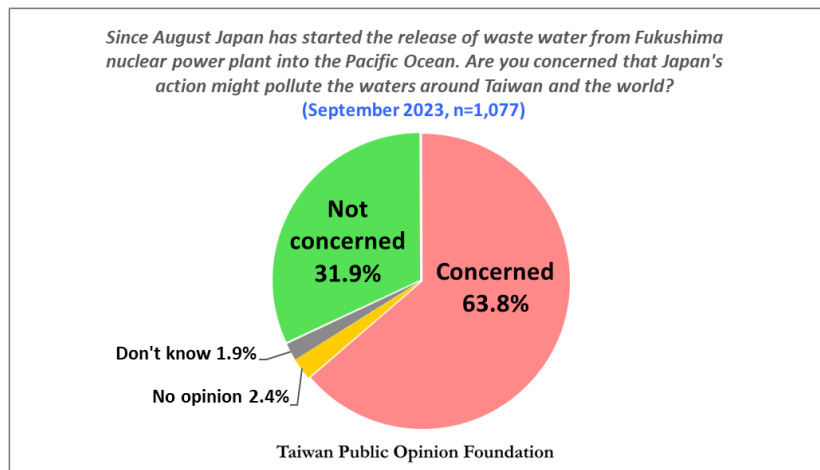


6. On the controversy related to Tsai government's importing of foreign eggs and the egg shortage itself, the poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 56.7% said they are not satisfied with Minister of Agriculture Chen Chi-chung's handling of the egg shortage. The poll was conducted between September 18-20, while Chen officially resigned on September 19.

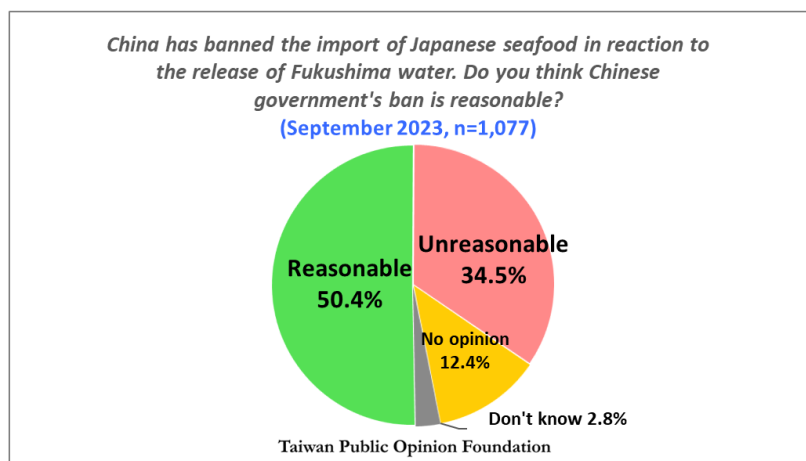


7. Japan started the [release of waste water](#) from the wrecked Fukushima nuclear power plant on August 24, a decision that has turned out to be internationally controversial and strongly condemned by neighboring countries like China and South Korea. While Japanese government repeatedly assured international community that the waste water has been treated to reduce its radioactivity at a

minimum, the poll finds a majority of 63.8% Taiwanese public said they are concerned Japan's action might pollute the waters around Taiwan and the world, while a minority of 31.9% are not concerned. Compared to the last time TPOF poll asked the same question back in April 2021, Taiwanese public's concerns of the Fukushima water have significantly reduced though the majority still remains skeptical.

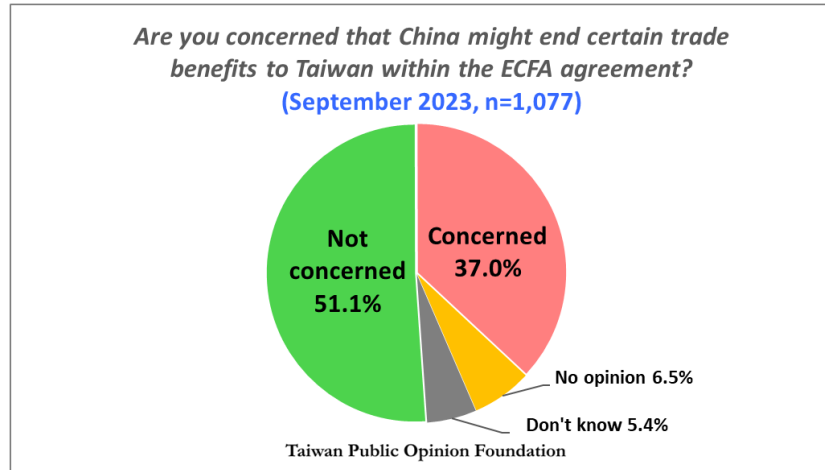


8. In reaction to Japan's release of Fukushima water, China has [moved to ban](#) seafood imports from Japa. The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 50.4% thought China's ban is reasonable, while a minority of 34.5% thought it was unreasonable. Despite Taiwanese public's general distrust of Chinese government, more Taiwanese people seem to agreed with Beijing's reaction this time.



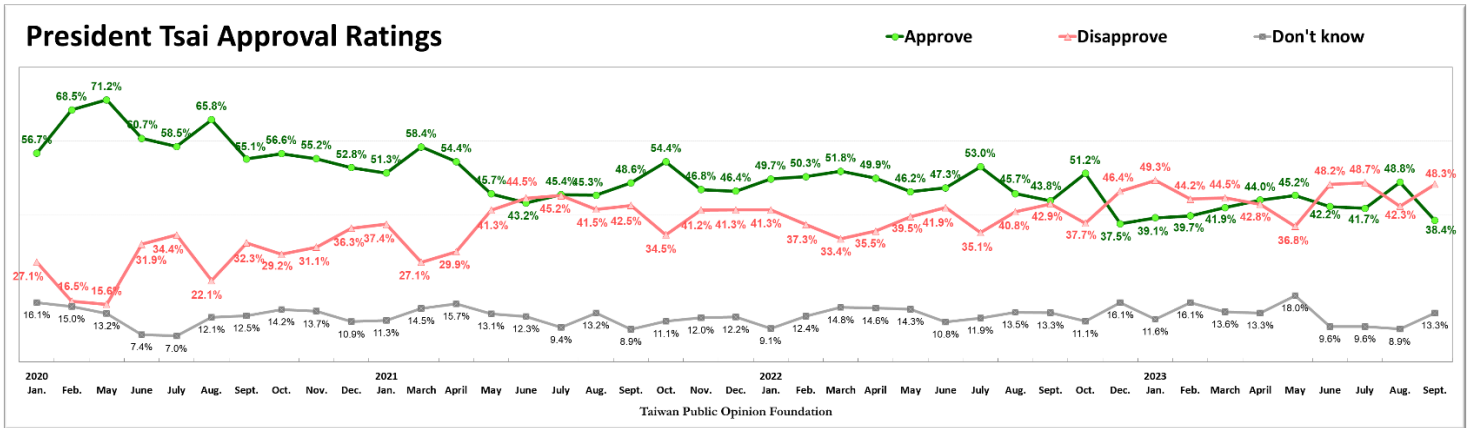
9. Amidst speculative reports that China might end certain trade benefits to Taiwan bestowed under the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA), the poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 51.1% said they are not concerned about ECFA benefits ending, while a minority of 37%

are concerned. This means that Taiwanese public might not be too concerned about Beijing's threat to end ECFA benefits, and in fact such move might only antagonize more Taiwanese which as we have seen in the past only serve to benefit the ruling government electorally at the expense of the oppositions.

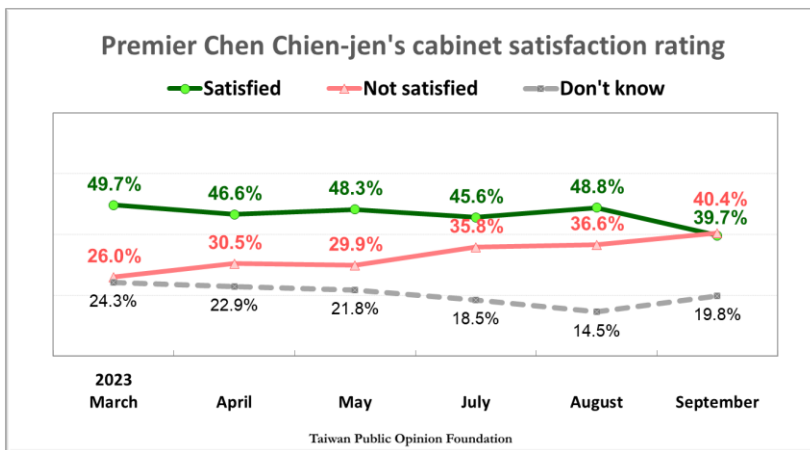


10. On Presidential job approval rating, the poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 48.3% disapproved of the way Tsai Ing-wen is handling her job as the President, while a minority of 38.4% approved of her. In a timespan of just one month Tsai's approval rating reversed course again and is now fully in the red. While Tsai only has less than one year's term left as the president, her approval ratings would directly affect the electoral prospect of not just her Vice President and DPP presidential candidate Lai, but also the down-ballot of the DPP candidates in the Legislative Yuan elections that will be held at the same time.

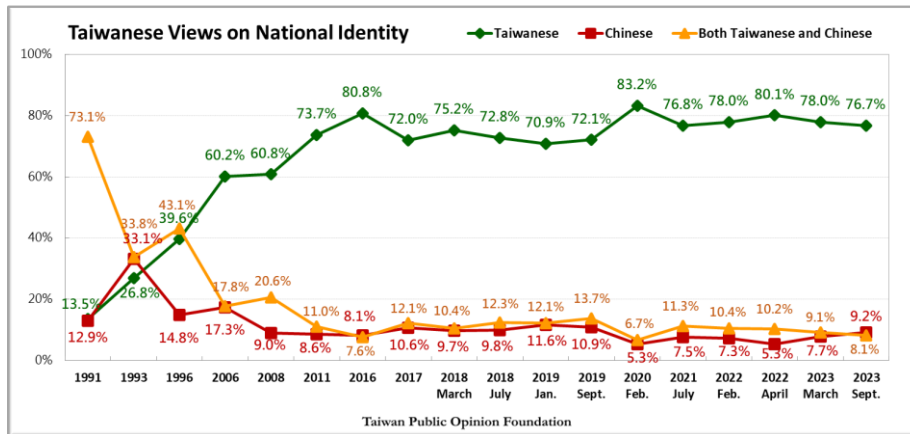
Looking back at the events through August and September, the most prominent national news headline was no doubt the controversy related to Tsai government's handling of egg shortage and egg import. It is clear this controversy is now negatively affecting the DPP 2024 presidential and legislative campaigns at an extent that the Tsai government likely did not expect.



11. Premier Chen Chien-jen has been in office for seven months since President Tsai appointed him to the position. The poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, 40.4% were not satisfied with Chen cabinet's performance, while 39.7% were satisfied. Clearly the egg controversy also damaged Chen cabinet's public image and as a result for the first time in seven months the cabinet's satisfaction rating is now in the red.



12. Concerning Taiwanese national identity, the poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, 76.7% said they see themselves as Taiwanese, 9.2% as Chinese, 8.1% both Taiwanese and Chinese, and 6% said they do not know. Consistent with past polls, Taiwanese identity has been embraced by vast majority of Taiwanese people for more than a decade and that balance has hardly changed in recent years.



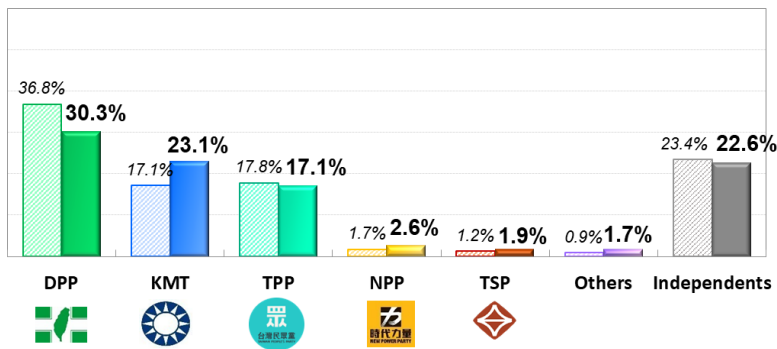
13. On political party affiliation, the poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, 30.3% said they support the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), 23.1% support the Kuomintang (KMT), 17.1% support the Taiwan People's Party (TPP), 2.6% support the New Power Party (NPP), 1.9% support the Taiwan State-building Party (TSP), and 22.6% respondents identified themselves as independents. Compared to our August poll, the DPP lost 6.5% but still holds the lead as the most popular political party, while the KMT took back the No. 2 spot from the TPP.

In recent months Taiwanese partisan affiliation seems to change rapidly in reaction to current domestic events. The DPP suffered a massive slide in December 2022 following the landslide defeat in local elections, it also lost considerable support in June following news of sexual harassment scandal and key DPP party cronies were indicted or implicated in committing financial scams. The latest egg controversy again damaged the party's support.

Clearly the Taiwanese public these days have very high expectation of the public images of the political parties they support, the partisan politics remains as competitive as ever, and there is no single dominating political party in Taiwan's politics. This also means that the results of both the presidential and legislative elections of January 2024 are far from certain, and things could still change rapidly in the coming months.

Taiwanese Partisan Affiliation

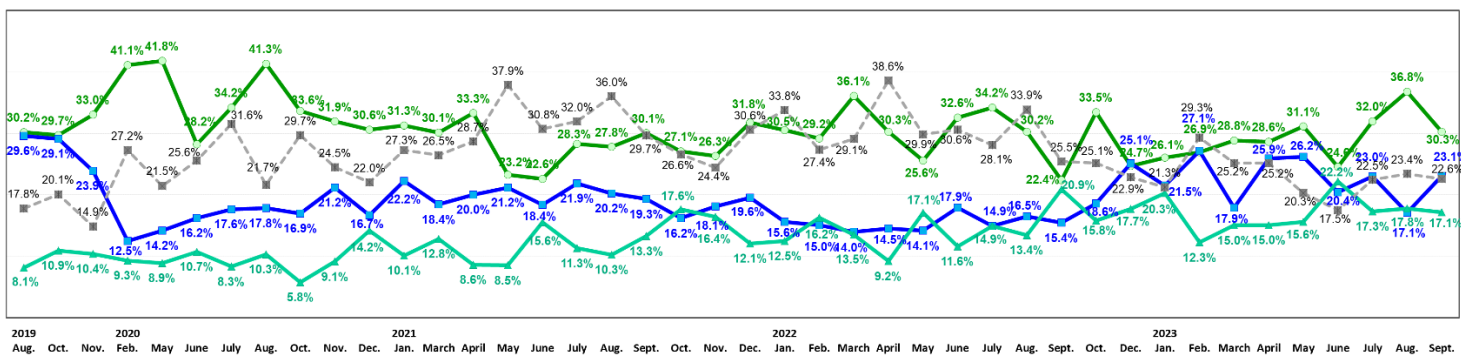
2023 August 2023 September



Taiwan Public Opinion Foundation

Taiwanese Partisan Affiliation 2019 - 2023

DPP KMT TPP Independents



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