

News Politics

Britons standing firm in support of Ukraine

Geraldine Scott

The majority of Britons back government support of Ukraine against Russian aggression even if the war continues for another year.

Only a quarter of people believe Ukraine will win the war, according to polling by CT Group, but they still back sending money and support to Kyiv, fearing Russia will invade Nato countries if President Putin is allowed to win.

The report came as Grant Shapps said the Russian leader was “bluffing” his way through the war. The defence secretary said it was important that the West did not blink because Russia would be unable to keep up operations indefinitely.

CT Group, the consultancy founded by the political strategist Sir Lynton Crosby, found that 57 per cent of Britons backed the government giving Ukraine financial support. Some 51 per cent thought the government had done enough to support the country, and backed sanctions as the way to aid Ukraine. Only 26 per cent expected Ukraine to win the war and 31 per cent thought international organisations would facilitate a peace treaty between Ukraine and Russia. Fifty-seven per cent thought that if Russia were to win,

Most Britons think President Putin will invade Nato countries if victorious

Sir Lynton Crosby Comment

As the war enters its third year the public continue to back Britain’s leaders’ unwavering support for Ukraine. In the latest research by the CT Group of attitudes to Ukraine, Russia and global security, 73 per cent of Britons continue to support Ukraine over Russia. Moreover, they want Britain to work closely with its allies within Nato to devise a co-ordinated strategy aimed at deterring further Russian aggression.

While more voters than ever are heading to the polls globally this year, domestic issues such as the economy, cost of living, health and immigration will be alongside global security in people’s minds as they enter polling booths.

These elections also take place against a backdrop of global volatility and uncertainty, so war and security are more prominent in our media and at dinner tables than at any time in the past decade.

Although most Britons would prefer Russia to lose the war than any other outcome, one of the most

pressing insights from our research is the public’s widespread expectation that international organisations will facilitate a peace treaty to resolve the war in Ukraine. Almost three in five Britons (57 per cent) believe Russia will invade Nato countries should they win in Ukraine. Yet 44 per cent believe Nato is unprepared for such a full-scale war.

The consequences are stark. Yet meaningful progress hinges on strategic leverage, which in turn is underscored by the West’s unstinting support for Ukraine. This is critical. Strong and unwavering support should not be viewed as just helpful mood music: it will ultimately fuel a substantive momentum shift towards Ukraine.

The plight of Ukraine serves as a litmus test for the international community’s commitment to upholding the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity. The public are looking for national leaders to show united strength.

And leaders in turn should be confident that they have the public’s resolute backing. There is no evidence of fatigue among Britons: 57 per cent of people back the UK government financially supporting Ukraine. Only 20 per cent oppose the UK continuing to do this. Two thirds of voters support further sanctions on Russia. All this at a time when public finances remain under pressure and only a quarter (26 per cent) of Britons expect Ukraine to be fully victorious. They

recognise that failure to act decisively carries grave consequences, not only for Ukraine but also for the broader stability of Europe and the world. A failure to uphold the values of collective security would embolden aggressors and undermine the foundations of the rules-based international order. The ramifications of such a scenario would be felt acutely by the UK, with ripple effects extending far beyond its borders.

It is clear from our research that Britons recognise that their own security interests are inexorably linked to the stability of Europe and the broader international community. By standing firm in support of Ukraine, the UK can demonstrate its commitment to upholding the values of democracy and freedom. The British people are clear: they believe that financial support for Ukraine should be maintained regardless of other threats and conflicts. They believe that supporting Ukraine can avoid a global war later by containing Russian aggression and putting a stop to its ambitions. Critically they believe that standing with Ukraine sends a message to all would-be aggressors that the international community will fight back if other nations are invaded.

Our research should serve as a sobering reminder of the precarious state of global peace and security. The stakes could not be higher. *Sir Lynton Crosby is the executive chairman of CT Group*

it was either somewhat or highly likely that Putin would invade Nato countries.

Shapps said he was confident that Ukraine would prevail. He told Times Radio: “Putin is bluffing. Putin can’t keep his war economy at this level without busting his entire economy and the fact of the matter is we just need to stay strong for Ukraine.” He added that Russia’s advance into Kharkiv showed the importance of the West maintaining its support, as he urged Germany and other allies to give President Zelensky permission to use their weapons to strike targets in Crimea.

Zelensky has called on the West to allow weapons sent to Ukraine to be allowed to be used to strike Russian targets. Britain has supplied long-range Storm Shadow missiles and other allies have provided similar weapons. Shapps confirmed that these were being used against Putin’s forces in Crimea, but would not be drawn on whether Britain would allow them to be used against targets inside Russia.

He told *Sunday Morning with Trevor Phillips* on Sky News: “I cannot go into decisions about how weapons are permitted, but I can say this: Ukraine is in a fight for its survival. The United Kingdom has led the way. We are very helpful, therefore, to our Ukrainian friends and we encourage others to do the same. What I’d like to see is all our partners, including Germany, who do have the facility to provide those longer-range weapons but don’t allow them to be used in Crimea — which is part of Ukraine — I think those are the things which would need to happen first.”
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THE BEAR