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Increasing Public Concern Over North Korea's Nuclear Capability, Intentions

84% say Trump is willing to use military force against N. Korea

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84% say Trump is willing to use military force against N. Korea

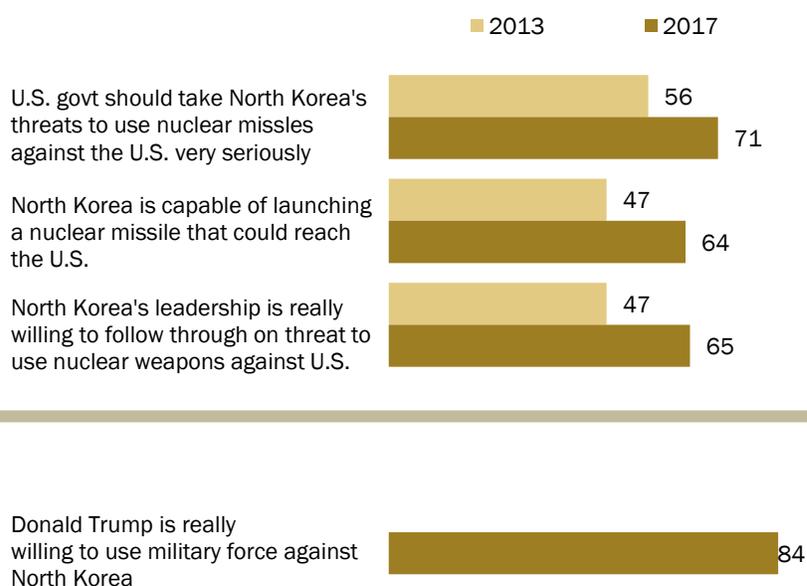
As Donald Trump sets off on his visit to Asia, the public has become increasingly concerned over North Korea's capability and its willingness to use nuclear weapons against the United States.

About seven-in-ten Americans (71%) say the U.S. should take North Korea's nuclear threats "very seriously," up from 56% in 2013.

And more say North Korea is capable of reaching the U.S. with a nuclear missile – and is "really willing" to follow through on threats to use nuclear weapons against the U.S. – than did so four years ago.

Most say N. Korea is willing to use nuclear weapons; even more say Trump is willing to use military force

% who say ...



Source: Survey conducted Oct. 25-30, 2017.

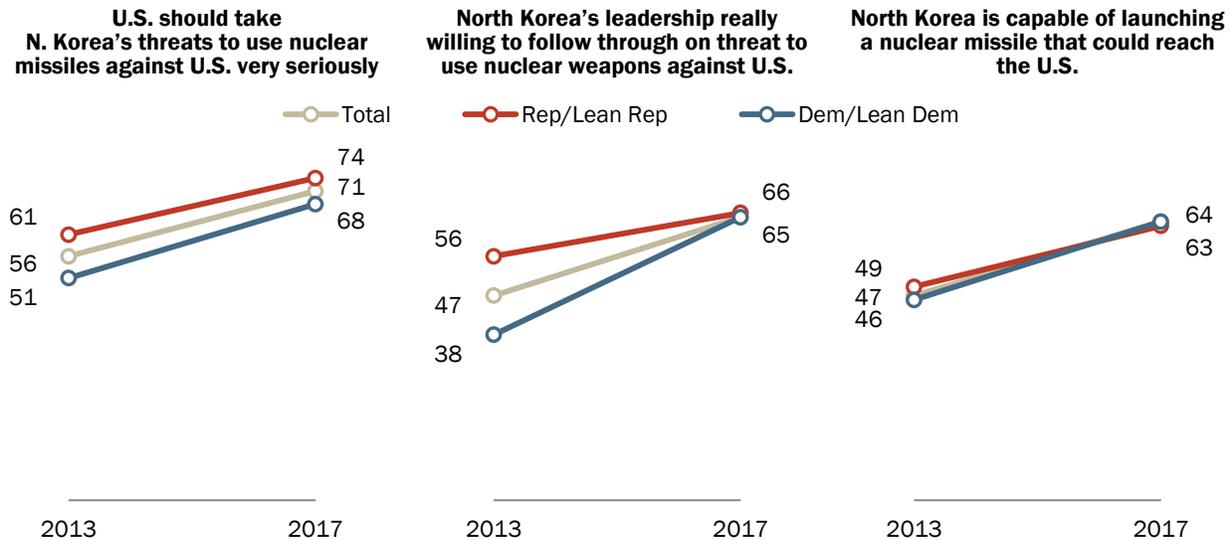
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The new Pew Research Center survey, conducted Oct. 25-30 among 1,504 adults, also finds that an overwhelming majority (84%) say Donald Trump is "really willing to use military force against North Korea."

There are, at most, modest partisan and demographic differences in views of North Korea's nuclear capabilities and intentions. Nearly identical shares of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents (66%) and Democrats and Democratic leaners (65%) say North Korea's leaders are really willing to follow through on its threat to use nuclear weapons against the U.S. In 2013, 56% of Republicans and just 38% of Democrats said that about North Korea's leadership.

Rising concern over North Korea among both Republicans and Democrats

% who say ...



Source: Survey conducted Oct. 25-30, 2017.

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And substantial majorities in both parties – and across all demographic categories – say Donald Trump is willing to use military force against North Korea. Nearly nine-in-ten Republicans (88%) say Trump is “really willing” to use military force, as do 83% of Democrats.

By contrast, there are deep partisan differences in confidence in Trump’s ability to handle the situation with North Korea. Among the public overall, 39% say they are very or somewhat confident in Trump’s handling of this situation; 13% are not too confident and 46% are not at all confident.

Fully 80% of Republicans and Republican leaners say they are at least somewhat confident in Trump’s ability to handle the situation in North Korea, compared with just 9% of Democrats and Democratic leaners. (These views, along with other attitudes about Trump and congressional leaders, were released in this Nov. 2 report: [“Declining Confidence in Trump, Lower Job Ratings for Congressional Leaders.”](#))

Acknowledgements

This report is a collaborative effort based on the input and analysis of the following individuals:

Research team

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Methodology

The analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted October 25-30, 2017 among a national sample of 1,504 adults, 18 years of age or older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia (378 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 1,126 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 698 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers under the direction of SSRS. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Marketing Systems Group. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see <http://www.pewresearch.org/methodology/u-s-survey-research/>

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and nativity and region to parameters from the 2015 Census Bureau's American Community Survey and population density to parameters from the Decennial Census. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status (landline only, cell phone only, or both landline and cell phone), based on extrapolations from the 2016 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size among respondents with a landline phone. The margins of error reported and statistical tests of significance are adjusted to account for the survey's design effect, a measure of how much efficiency is lost from the weighting procedures.

The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

Survey conducted Oct. 25-30, 2017

Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	1,504	2.9 percentage points
Half form	735 (min)	4.2 percentage points
Republican/Lean Rep	628	4.5 percentage points
Rep/Lean Rep half form	307 (min)	6.4 percentage points
Democrat/Lean Dem	735	4.2 percentage points
Dem/Lean Dem half form	365 (min)	5.9 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

Pew Research Center undertakes all polling activity, including calls to mobile telephone numbers, in compliance with the Telephone Consumer Protection Act and other applicable laws.

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**PEW RESEARCH CENTER
OCTOBER 2017 POLITICAL SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
OCTOBER 25-30, 2017
N=1,504**

QUESTIONS 1-2, 10, 19, 42-48, 58-59 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

NO QUESTIONS 3-9, 11-18, 22-25, 28-34, 49-53, 56-57, 60-79, 83-90

QUESTIONS 20-21, 26-27, 35-41, 54-55, 80-82, 91 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

Thinking about North Korea ...

ASK ALL:

Q.92 In your view, how seriously should the U.S. government take North Korea's threats to use nuclear missiles against the U.S. - **[READ]**?

Oct 25-30 <u>2017</u>		Apr 4-7 <u>2013</u>
71	Very seriously	56
20	Somewhat seriously	27
7	Not too seriously	9
2	Not at all seriously	5
1	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	3

ASK FORM 1 [N=769]:

Q.93F1 From what you've read and heard, do you think North Korea's leadership is really willing to follow through on its threat to use nuclear weapons against the U.S., or not?

Oct 25-30 <u>2017</u>		Apr 4-7 <u>2013</u>
65	Really willing to use	47
29	No, not really willing to use	41
5	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	12

ASK FORM 2 [N=735]:

Q.94F2 From what you've read and heard, do you think Donald Trump is really willing to use military force against North Korea, or not?

Oct 25-30 <u>2017</u>	
84	Really willing to use
11	No, not really willing to use
5	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

ASK ALL:

Q.95 Do you think North Korea is capable of launching a nuclear missile that could reach the United States, or not?

Oct 25-30 <u>2017</u>		Apr 4-7 <u>2013</u>
64	Yes, is capable	47
31	No, is not capable	43
5	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	10

NO QUESTIONS 96-98

QUESTIONS 99-101 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK ALL:

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

ASK IF INDEP/NO PREF/OTHER/DK/REF (PARTY=3,4,5,9):

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

				(VOL.)	(VOL.)	(VOL.)	Lean	Lean
	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	<u>No preference</u>	<u>Other party</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>
Oct 25-30, 2017	22	32	41	3	1	2	17	19
Jun 8-Jul 9, 2017	25	31	39	3	1	2	16	18
Apr 5-11, 2017	24	31	42	2	1	*	17	20
Feb 7-12, 2017	23	34	37	3	1	2	15	18
Jan 4-9, 2017	25	28	41	4	*	1	18	19
Nov 30-Dec 5, 2016	24	33	35	5	1	3	15	16
Oct 20-25, 2016	26	33	36	3	*	2	15	17
Aug 23-Sep 2, 2016	27	32	33	5	*	3	11	16
Aug 9-16, 2016	27	32	35	2	1	2	13	16
Jun 15-26, 2016	24	33	37	4	1	2	16	16
Yearly Totals								
2016	25.4	32.0	36.5	3.4	.5	2.2	14.6	17.0
2015	23.7	30.4	40.1	3.6	.4	1.8	16.4	17.3
2014	23.2	31.5	39.5	3.1	.7	2.0	16.2	16.5
2013	23.9	32.1	38.3	2.9	.5	2.2	16.0	16.0
2012	24.7	32.6	36.4	3.1	.5	2.7	14.4	16.1
2011	24.3	32.3	37.4	3.1	.4	2.5	15.7	15.6
2010	25.2	32.7	35.2	3.6	.4	2.8	14.5	14.1
2009	23.9	34.4	35.1	3.4	.4	2.8	13.1	15.7
2008	25.7	36.0	31.5	3.6	.3	3.0	10.6	15.2
2007	25.3	32.9	34.1	4.3	.4	2.9	10.9	17.0
2006	27.8	33.1	30.9	4.4	.3	3.4	10.5	15.1
2005	29.3	32.8	30.2	4.5	.3	2.8	10.3	14.9
2004	30.0	33.5	29.5	3.8	.4	3.0	11.7	13.4
2003	30.3	31.5	30.5	4.8	.5	2.5	12.0	12.6
2002	30.4	31.4	29.8	5.0	.7	2.7	12.4	11.6
2001	29.0	33.2	29.5	5.2	.6	2.6	11.9	11.6
2001 Post-Sept 11	30.9	31.8	27.9	5.2	.6	3.6	11.7	9.4
2001 Pre-Sept 11	27.3	34.4	30.9	5.1	.6	1.7	12.1	13.5
2000	28.0	33.4	29.1	5.5	.5	3.6	11.6	11.7
1999	26.6	33.5	33.7	3.9	.5	1.9	13.0	14.5
1998	27.9	33.7	31.1	4.6	.4	2.3	11.6	13.1
1997	28.0	33.4	32.0	4.0	.4	2.3	12.2	14.1
1996	28.9	33.9	31.8	3.0	.4	2.0	12.1	14.9
1995	31.6	30.0	33.7	2.4	.6	1.3	15.1	13.5
1994	30.1	31.5	33.5	1.3	--	3.6	13.7	12.2
1993	27.4	33.6	34.2	4.4	1.5	2.9	11.5	14.9
1992	27.6	33.7	34.7	1.5	0	2.5	12.6	16.5
1991	30.9	31.4	33.2	0	1.4	3.0	14.7	10.8
1990	30.9	33.2	29.3	1.2	1.9	3.4	12.4	11.3
1989	33	33	34	--	--	--	--	--
1987	26	35	39	--	--	--	--	--

QUESTION 102 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED