



The Asia Foundation

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

2010 National Survey of the Thai Electorate: Exploring National Consensus and Color Polarization

March 28, 2011

Q1. What is the 2010 National Survey of the Thai Electorate?

Designed and managed by The Asia Foundation's office in Thailand, the 2010 National Survey is our second national public perception survey of 1,500 Thai citizens.

Q2. What does the survey focus on?

The 2010 National Survey is designed to gather first-hand opinions from a broad and nationally representative sample of Thai citizens on a variety of crucial governance and political issues. Building on the original survey that the Foundation conducted in 2009, it is intended to provide policy makers and opinion leaders in government, the international community, and the broader public with reliable data on which they can draw in making decisions and crafting future policy.

The survey offers an opportunity to test the degree to which Thailand has become politically polarized. Survey findings suggest that partisan political divisions along color lines in Thai society have been considerably exaggerated.

Q3. What topics are covered in the survey report?

Key topics explored include the state of democracy in Thailand, elections, color politics, conflict and security, and options for reconciliation.

Q4. When was the survey fieldwork conducted?

Interviews were conducted between September 17 and October 23, 2010.

Q5. How many Thai citizens were surveyed? Is the survey nationally representative?

The 2010 National Survey report captures responses from a nationally representative sample of 1,500 individuals of voting age from 27 provinces across the country. Respondents polled were 18 years and older and split evenly between men and women.

To ensure comparability between the 2010 and 2009 survey findings, respondents were polled across five geographic areas: Greater Bangkok, Central, North, South, and Northeast.

Q6. How many questions are in the survey?

The survey questionnaire included 111 questions, which were asked in-person.

Q7. How was the survey questionnaire developed?

As in our other surveys, the Foundation has developed a rigorous methodology that has been tried-and-tested in the other countries we work in and adapted for use in Thailand. The survey is both a look at perceptions of Thai citizens at a specific point in time and a valid and reliable tool to measure shifts in public opinion over time.

Q8. What is the survey's margin of error?

Using rigorous survey standards, the 2010 National Survey was designed with a 3% margin of error. The 3% margin of error for this survey applies to results based on the *full sample*. For results based on a sub-sample of the national respondent base – for example, results for one of the geographic regions of the country – the margin of error will be larger than 3%. This is because those results are based on smaller sample sizes.

(A full explanation of the methodology is provided in Appendix 2 of the report.)

Q9. How is the 2010 National Survey different from the original 2009 survey?

Just over half of the questions from the 2010 National Survey are the same as those asked in 2009, which enables a close comparative assessment of how Thais have been affected by the political turmoil that marked 2010.

Both 2010 and 2009 National Surveys analyze responses from 1,500 Thai citizens (excluding citizens from the three southernmost provinces of Yala, Narathiwat, and Pattani). In the 2010 National Survey, an additional 100 respondents were interviewed in the three southernmost provinces. To ensure comparability between the 2010 and 2009 survey findings, the responses from the southernmost provinces were excluded from the overall analysis contained in the current report, however, any significant differences are mentioned.

The three southernmost provinces were not polled in the 2009 National Survey because, at the time, there was a lack of qualified local enumerators with the capacity to conduct the interviews in the local dialect. The Foundation has since supported the training of a pool of 25 enumerators living in the Deep South, with the same team conducting the interviews for the 2010 National Survey and 2010 Southern Survey.

(A full explanation of the methodology is provided in Appendix 2 of the report.)

Q10. How is the 2010 National Survey different from the 2010 Southern Survey?

The 2010 Southern Survey focused exclusively on the three southern border provinces of Yala, Narathiwat, and Pattani. Conducted between July 2, 2010 and August 30, 2010, the 2010 Southern Survey provides essential information on citizen views and experiences in a region that has been plagued by unrest.

Q11. Who did The Asia Foundation partner with to carry out the survey?

Technical experts from MIA Advisory, a professional Bangkok-based survey firm, conducted the face-to-face, in-home interviews with respondents. MIA Advisory also conducted the 2009 National Survey and 2010 Southern Survey interviews.

Q12. Who funded the survey?

The survey is funded by The Asia Foundation.

Q13. What is The Asia Foundation?

The Foundation is a non-profit, non-governmental organization committed to the development of a peaceful, prosperous, just, and open Asia-Pacific region. It has maintained a resident office and country program in Thailand since 1954.

Q14. What does The Asia Foundation do in Thailand?

The Foundation in Thailand works to promote peaceful conflict resolution, encourage citizen engagement in the political process, and support innovative programs that will build more responsive and transparent systems of governance throughout the country.

Q15. What does The Asia Foundation think of the survey?

As with our past survey reports, the Foundation does not take a position on the findings. Our role is to place robust, useful, and unique data in the public domain that can illuminate the situation on the ground and provide context for relevant policy work.

Q16. Why does The Asia Foundation conduct this survey?

The Foundation has established a reputation for developing sophisticated empirical surveys for use across Asia in order to pinpoint citizen concerns and needs, to gauge public support for development initiatives, and to inform important policy debate and Foundation program design and refinement.

Q17. Where can I read or download the survey report?

The complete 2010 National Survey is available on the Foundation website at <http://www.asiafoundation.org>. The 2009 National Survey and 2010 Southern Survey are also available. All survey reports are available in Thai.

Q18. Is the raw data from the survey available?

Please contact the Foundation's Thailand office at tafthailand@asiafound.org.

Q19. Who should I contact for more information?

For non-media queries, please contact the Foundation's Thailand office at tafthailand@asiafound.org. For media queries, please contact Eelynn Sim at esim@asiafound.org.

###