

APRIL 8, 2013

Views of Economic News Remain Mixed

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## Gun Debate Draws More Interest than Immigration Policy Debate

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## Views of Economic News Remain Mixed

# Gun Debate Draws More Interest than Immigration Policy Debate

As Congress returns to Washington to resume work on gun control and immigration legislation, the public is paying far closer attention to news about the gun control debate than news about the debate over immigration policy.

A national survey by the Pew Research Center, conducted April 4-7 among 1,003 adults, finds 37% say they are following the debate over gun control very closely. That compares with just 23% who say they are very closely following news about debate over immigration policy. Among this week's stories, only military threats made by North Korea and its plan to restart a nuclear reactor drew about as much interest (36% very closely).

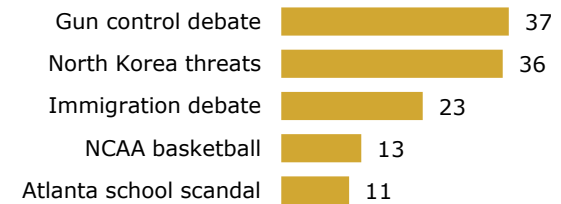
In recent weeks, no story has received more public attention than the debate over gun control. Other closely followed stories since mid-March have been news about the economy (30% very closely), news about automatic federal spending cuts (24%) and discussions about how to address the federal budget deficit and national debt (also 24%).

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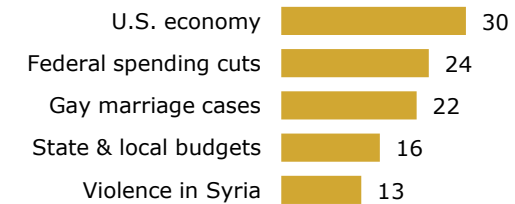
### Gun Debate Tops Public Interest

*% following very closely*

#### April 4-7



#### March 28-31



#### March 14-17



PEW RESEARCH CENTER April 4-7, 2013.

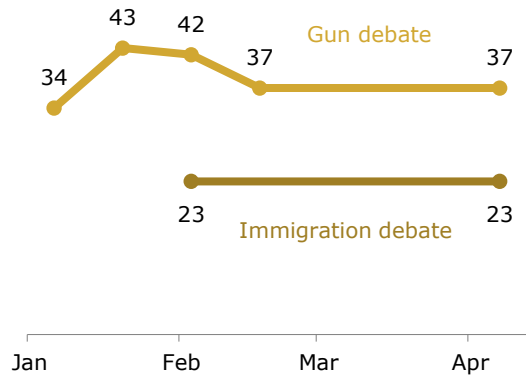
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Since the start of the year, roughly four-in-ten have followed news about the gun control debate very closely on four of five surveys on which it was included. By contrast, the debate over immigration policy has drawn very close interest from 23% of the public both times it was included (Jan. 31-Feb. 3 and April 4-7).

The current survey finds only slight partisan differences in interest in the gun control debate. About four-in-ten Republicans (41%), 37% of independents and 34% of Democrats say they are following news about the debate very closely.

### More Interest in News about Gun Debate than Immigration Debate

*% following very closely*

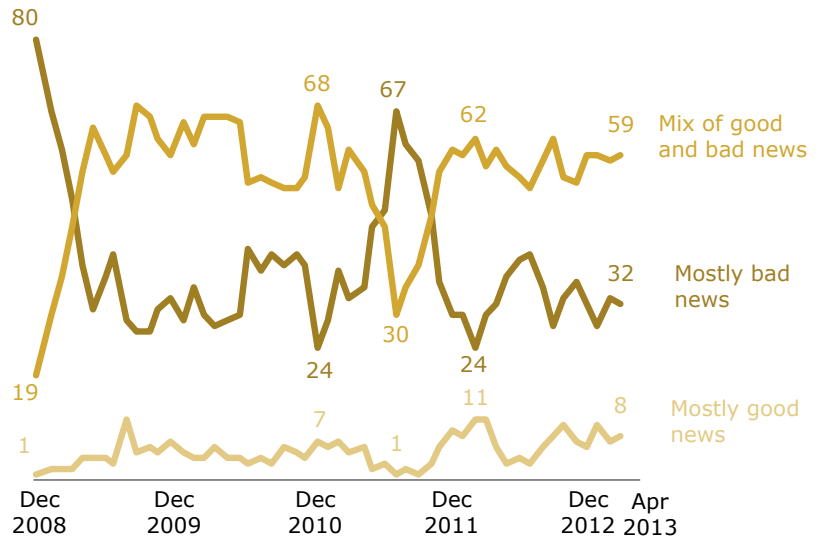


PEW RESEARCH CENTER April 4-7, 2013.  
Jan. 17-20 survey asked about "President Obama announcing proposals for strengthening gun laws."

## Views of Economic News Remain Mixed

Following a disappointing jobs report on April 5, the public continues to say they are hearing a mix of both good and bad news about the economy. About six-in-ten (59%) say they are hearing mixed economic news compared with 32% who say they are hearing mostly bad news and 8% who say they are hearing mostly good news. Opinions about the tone of economic news have changed little since the start of the year.

### Public's View of Recent Economic News



PEW RESEARCH CENTER April 4-7, 2013.

Republicans are about as likely to say they are hearing mostly bad news about the economy (48%) as mixed news (46%). Democrats are far more likely to say the economic news they have been hearing recently has been mixed (66%) rather than mostly bad (20%). Partisan views have changed little since the start of the year.

## About the Surveys

Most of the analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted April 4-7, 2013 among a national sample of 1,003 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (500 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 503 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 229 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English. 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://people-press.org/methodology/>.

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and region to parameters from the 2011 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, based on extrapolations from the 2012 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. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. 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:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Unweighted sample size</b>	<b>Plus or minus ...</b>
Total sample	1,003	3.7 percentage points
Republicans	262	7.3 percentage points
Democrats	301	6.8 percentage points
Independents	359	6.2 percentage points

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

Some of the analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted March 28-31, 2013 among a national sample of 1,001 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (500 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 501 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 235 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source and Universal Survey under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English. 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://people-press.org/methodology/>.

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and region to parameters from the 2011 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, based on extrapolations from the 2012 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. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. 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:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Unweighted sample size</b>	<b>Plus or minus ...</b>
Total sample	1,001	3.7 percentage points
Republicans	256	7.4 percentage points
Democrats	339	6.4 percentage points
Independents	319	6.6 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.

Some of the analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted March 14-17, 2013 among a national sample of 924 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (512 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 412 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 197 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source and Universal Survey under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English. 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://people-press.org/methodology/>.

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and region to parameters from the 2011 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, based on extrapolations from the 2012 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. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. 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:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Unweighted sample size</b>	<b>Plus or minus ...</b>
Total sample	924	3.9 percentage points
Republicans	228	7.8 percentage points
Democrats	300	6.8 percentage points
Independents	315	6.6 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**  
**April 4-7, 2013, OMNIBUS**  
**FINAL TOPLINE**  
**N=1,003**

**ASK ALL:**

PEW.1 As I read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past week, please tell me if you happened to follow each news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. First, **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE] [IF NECESSARY "Did you follow [ITEM] very closely, fairly closely, not too closely or not at all closely?"]**

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.) DK/Ref</b>
a. The NCAA basketball tournament					
April 4-7, 2013	13	13	17	58	*
March 29-April 1, 2012	13	12	18	57	*
March 31-April 3, 2011	13	13	17	57	*
April 1-5, 2010	18	13	13	56	*
April 3-6, 2009	15	12	15	58	*
March 28-31, 2008	13	14	13	59	1
March, 1998	20	13	19	47	1
April, 1990	24	16	14	46	*
b. Debate over gun control in the U.S.					
April 4-7, 2013	37	28	17	18	*
February 14-17, 2013	37	29	15	19	*
January 31-February 3, 2013	42	32	13	12	1
January 3-6, 2013	34	30	18	16	1
<b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
January 17-20, 2013: <i>President Obama announcing proposals for strengthening gun laws</i>	43	29	15	13	1
June, 1999: <i>Debates about gun control legislation in Congress and state legislatures</i>	28	37	22	12	1
c. Charges that leaders in the Atlanta public school system faked results on standardized tests					
April 4-7, 2013	11	17	20	52	1
d. Military threats from North Korea and its plan to restart a nuclear reactor					
April 4-7, 2013	36	28	16	20	*
<b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
February 14-17, 2013: <i>North Korea conducting a nuclear test</i>	18	23	21	37	1
April 12-15, 2012: <i>North Korea's failed launch of a rocket carrying a satellite<sup>1</sup></i>	22	27	21	29	1
March 1-4, 2012: <i>North Korea taking steps to halt its nuclear program</i>	17	22	24	36	1
January 5-8, 2012: <i>The situation in North Korea following the death of its leader Kim Jong-il</i>	17	29	24	30	*
December 2-5, 2010: <i>Tensions between North Korea and South Korea</i>	35	30	19	16	1
May 27-30, 2010	19	24	24	32	1
May 29-June 1, 2009: <i>Reports about North Korea testing nuclear weapons and missiles</i>	34	36	17	13	*

<sup>1</sup> Wording for Thursday, April 12, 2012, was: "North Korea's controversial plan to launch a rocket carrying a satellite" for PEW1.c and PEW2.



## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <b>DK/Ref</b>
April 3-6, 2009: <i>North Korea's plans to test a long range missile</i>	23	31	19	27	*
June 27-30, 2008: <i>North Korea takes steps to halt its nuclear weapons program</i>	19	30	26	24	1
February 16-19, 2007: <i>Recent negotiations to shut down North Korea's nuclear weapons program</i>	15	31	22	31	1
Late October, 2006: <i>North Korea's announcement that it recently tested a nuclear weapon</i>	45	33	13	8	1
February, 2005: <i>North Korea's nuclear weapons program</i>	22	34	22	22	*
September, 2003	19	32	27	21	1
May, 2003	27	40	22	11	*
March, 2003	34	34	19	12	1
February, 2003	33	34	18	13	2
January, 2003	33	34	18	14	1
Late October, 2002: <i>North Korea's admission that it has been secretly developing nuclear weapons</i>	25	31	23	20	1
June, 1994: <i>Reports about North Korea's building of nuclear weapons and refusal to allow U.N. inspections</i>	27	33	26	14	*
e. Debate over immigration policy in the U.S.					
April 4-7, 2013	23	22	22	32	*
<b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
January 31-February 3, 2013: <i>Debate in Washington over immigration policy</i>	23	25	22	29	1
June 28-July 1, 2012: <i>The Supreme Court decision on Arizona's immigration law</i>	29	21	19	30	1
April 26-29, 2012: <i>The issue of immigration</i>	21	24	26	27	1
May 12-15, 2011	18	22	27	32	1
September 2-6, 2010	30	31	19	20	1
August 12-15, 2010	27	31	19	21	1
July 29-August 1, 2010: <i>A court ruling that stops most of Arizona's immigration law from going into effect</i>	40	32	17	10	1
July 8-11, 2010: <i>The U.S. Justice Department challenging the legality of Arizona's recent immigration law</i>	30	27	19	23	1
July 1-5, 2010: <i>The issue of immigration</i>	34	30	20	14	1
May 7-10, 2010: <i>A new Arizona law that gives police more authority to question people they suspect might be illegal immigrants</i>	38	27	13	21	1
April 30-May 3, 2010	36	31	13	20	*
October 12-15, 2007: <i>The issue of immigration</i>	23	29	19	29	*
June 29-July 2, 2007: <i>The debate in Congress over new immigration policy</i>	26	30	21	23	*
June 22-25, 2007	24	28	22	26	*
June 15-18, 2007	22	32	21	25	*
June 8-11, 2007	24	29	20	26	1
May 24-27, 2007	27	31	22	19	1

**PEW.1 CONTINUED...**

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>
April 12-16, 2007: <i>The issue of immigration</i>	21	29	24	26	*
August, 2006	34	40	16	9	1
June, 2006	36	41	15	7	1
May, 2006	44	33	13	9	1
April, 2006	39	34	16	10	1
December, 1994: <i>Passage of Proposition 187, the California law that bars education, health and welfare benefits from illegal immigrants and their children</i>	26	32	22	20	*

**NO QUESTIONS PEW.2-PEW.3****ASK ALL:**

Now thinking about recent economic news...

PEW.4 Are you hearing mostly good news about the economy these days, mostly bad news about the economy or a mix of both good and bad news?

	<u>Hearing mostly good news</u>	<u>Hearing mostly bad news</u>	<u>A mix of good and bad news</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>
April 4-7, 2013	8	32	59	2
March 7-10, 2013	7	33	58	1
January 31-February 3, 2013	10	28	59	3
January 3-6, 2013	6	32	59	2
December 6-9, 2012	7	36	54	2
November 1-4, 2012	10	33	55	2
October 4-7, 2012	8	28	62	2
September 7-9, 2012	6	35	58	1
August 2-5, 2012	3	41	53	3
July 5-8, 2012	4	40	55	2
May 31-June 3, 2012	3	37	57	3
May 3-6, 2012	6	32	60	2
April 5-8, 2012	11	30	57	2
March 8-11, 2012	11	24	62	2
February 2-5, 2012	8	30	59	3
January 5-8, 2012	9	30	60	1
December 1-4, 2011	6	36	56	1
November 10-13, 2011	3	48	48	1
October 6-9, 2011	1	58	39	2
September 1-4, 2011	2	61	35	1
August 4-7, 2011	1	67	30	2
July 7-10, 2011	3	49	46	2
June 2-5, 2011	2	46	50	1
May 12-15, 2011	6	35	56	2
March 31-April 3, 2011	5	33	60	2
March 3-6, 2011	7	38	53	2
February 3-6, 2011	6	29	64	1
January 6-9, 2011	7	24	68	1
December 2-5, 2010	4	39	55	1
November 11-14, 2010	5	41	53	2
October 7-10, 2010	6	39	53	2
September 2-6, 2010	3	41	54	2
August 5-8, 2010	4	38	55	3
July 1-5, 2010	3	42	54	1
June 10-13, 2010	4	30	65	1
May 7-10, 2010	4	29	66	1
April 1-5, 2010	6	28	66	*

**PEW.4 CONTINUED...**

	Hearing mostly <u>good news</u>	Hearing mostly <u>bad news</u>	A mix of good and <u>bad news</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>
March 5-8, 2010	4	30	66	1
February 5-8, 2010	4	35	61	*
January 8-11, 2010	5	29	65	1
December 4-7, 2009	7	33	59	1
October 30-November 2, 2009	5	31	62	2
October 9-12, 2009	6	27	66	1
September 3-6, 2009	5	27	68	1
August 7-10, 2009	11	29	59	1
July 2-5, 2009	3	41	56	*
June 12-15, 2009	4	37	59	*
May 8-11, 2009	4	31	64	1
April 9-13, 2009	4	39	56	1
March 13-16, 2009	2	51	46	1
February 13-16, 2009	2	60	37	1
January 16-19, 2009	2	67	30	1
December 5-8, 2008	1	80	19	*

**PEW.5-PEW.10 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER**  
**March 28-31, 2013, OMNIBUS**  
**FINAL TOPLINE**  
**N=1,001**

**ASK ALL:**

PEW.1 As I read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past week, please tell me if you happened to follow each news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. First, **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE] [IF NECESSARY "Did you follow [ITEM] very closely, fairly closely, not too closely or not at all closely?"]**

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.) DK/Ref</b>
a. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy					
March 28-31, 2013	30	30	17	22	1
March 7-10, 2013	35	30	16	19	*
January 31-February 3, 2013	33	33	16	16	1
January 17-20, 2013	36	32	15	16	*
January 3-6, 2013	34	32	18	16	1
December 6-9, 2012	38	30	16	14	1
November 8-11, 2012	41	31	15	12	1
November 1-4, 2012	38	30	16	14	1
October 25-28, 2012	44	30	14	11	1
October 18-21, 2012	39	36	12	12	1
October 12-14, 2012	42	28	14	15	1
October 4-7, 2012	40	29	13	17	*
September 27-30, 2012	34	37	13	15	1
September 20-23, 2012	36	32	17	15	*
September 13-16, 2012	38	32	17	12	1
September 7-9, 2012	36	31	17	15	2
August 31-September 3, 2012	33	31	20	16	1
August 23-26, 2012	38	30	15	16	1
August 16-19, 2012	33	32	16	19	*
August 9-12, 2012	30	31	20	18	1
August 2-5, 2012	33	29	20	17	1
July 26-29, 2012	32	30	20	19	*
July 19-22, 2012	39	29	16	16	*
July 12-15, 2012	32	33	18	17	1
July 5-8, 2012	34	28	18	19	1
June 28-July 1, 2012	38	28	15	18	1
June 21-24, 2012	33	32	17	17	*
June 14-17, 2012	39	28	15	17	*
June 7-10, 2012	35	32	15	18	*
May 31-June 3, 2012	37	34	13	14	1
May 24-27, 2012	33	31	19	16	1
May 17-20, 2012	35	30	16	19	*
May 10-13, 2012	40	26	16	17	*
May 3-6, 2012	38	29	13	20	*
April 26-29, 2012	34	32	17	16	1
April 19-22, 2012	35	35	13	14	2
April 12-15, 2012	39	28	16	17	1
April 5-8, 2012	37	31	16	16	1
March 29-April 1, 2012	34	33	15	18	1
March 22-25, 2012	36	29	16	18	1
March 15-18, 2012	40	35	11	14	1
March 8-11, 2012	37	32	14	17	*
March 1-4, 2012	41	27	15	17	1
February 23-26, 2012	37	33	14	15	1
February 16-20, 2012	33	32	16	17	1
February 9-12, 2012	42	30	14	13	1
February 2-5, 2012	38	32	16	13	1

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	Very <u>closely</u>	Fairly <u>closely</u>	Not too <u>closely</u>	Not at all <u>closely</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
January 26-29, 2012	35	31	16	19	*
January 19-22, 2012	35	30	16	19	1
January 12-15, 2012	33	32	14	20	1
January 5-8, 2012	39	31	15	15	*
<a href="http://www.people-press.org/files/2013/01/NII-Economy-trend.pdf">SEE TREND FOR PREVIOUS YEARS: http://www.people-press.org/files/2013/01/NII-Economy-trend.pdf</a>					
b. News about state and local budgets					
March 28-31, 2013	16	26	24	34	1
<b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
July 12-15, 2012: <i>News about state and local budget problems</i>	18	28	24	29	1
July 14-17, 2011	27	28	22	22	1
May 26-29, 2011	26	29	19	26	*
March 17-20, 2011	26	29	22	23	1
February 17-20, 2011	28	31	17	23	1
January 6-9, 2011	24	37	18	20	1
June 24-27, 2010	26	35	22	15	1
March 5-8, 2010	31	32	19	18	*
April 9-13, 2009	28	30	21	21	*
c. The Supreme Court hearing cases about same-sex marriage					
March 28-31, 2013	22	29	22	26	1
<b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
May 29-June 1, 2009: <i>The California Supreme Court upholding a ban on gay marriage</i>	22	35	19	23	1
May 8-11, 2009: <i>Steps to legalize gay marriage in ME and NH</i>	16	16	22	45	1
April 9-13, 2009: <i>Gay marriage in IA &amp; VT</i>	13	21	23	42	1
Nov. 7-10, 2008: <i>CA vote bans gay marriage</i>	18	26	24	32	*
June 20-23, 2008: <i>Same sex marriage in CA</i>	22	26	25	27	*
May 16-19, 2008: <i>CA Supreme Court ruling</i>	19	27	25	28	1
May 2004: <i>Gay marriage</i>	20	27	25	27	1
March 2004: <i>Gay marriage</i>	29	33	20	17	1
Early-February 2004: <i>Debate over gay marriage</i>	26	32	22	19	1
Mid-August 2003: <i>Debate over gay marriage</i>	19	30	22	28	1
d. Automatic government spending cuts that began on March 1st					
March 28-31, 2013	24	24	19	32	1
March 7-10, 2013	31	26	18	25	1
<b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
February 21-24, 2013: <i>News about automatic cuts to federal spending that will take effect next week, unless the president and Congress act</i>	25	26	19	29	1
December 13-16, 2012: <i>The debate in Washington over automatic spending cuts and tax increases that would take effect in January unless the President and Congress act</i>	37	28	16	18	1
December 6-9, 2012	37	26	17	20	1
November 29-December 2, 2012	40	26	14	20	1
November 15-18, 2012	33	24	16	25	1

**PEW.1 CONTINUED...**

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.) DK/Ref</b>
November 8-11, 2012	38	20	20	20	*
July 19-22, 2012	23	21	22	33	1
e. Political violence in Syria					
March 28-31, 2013	13	22	25	40	1
December 13-16, 2012	14	26	26	33	1
December 6-9, 2012	19	28	23	29	1
November 29-December 2, 2012	15	23	23	39	1
August 16-19, 2012	12	24	26	37	2
July 19-22, 2012	17	24	23	36	1
June 28-July 1, 2012	13	19	26	42	*
June 14-17, 2012	15	24	21	40	1
May 31-June 3, 2012	12	25	25	37	1
<b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
April 12-15, 2012: <i>International efforts to stop political violence in Syria</i>	14	23	25	37	1
April 5-8, 2012	15	21	27	37	1
March 15-28, 2012: <i>Political violence in Syria</i>	16	26	27	30	1
March 8-11, 2012	17	23	23	37	1
February 23-26, 2012	18	24	21	35	1
February 9-12, 2012	17	23	23	36	*
January 12-15, 2012	12	17	26	45	1
August 4-7, 2011: <i>Political violence following uprisings in Syria</i>	10	19	26	44	1
May 5-8, 2011	14	27	30	28	1
June 2-5, 2011: <i>Anti-government protests and violence in some Middle Eastern countries</i>	18	25	25	32	*
April 28-May 1, 2011	18	29	25	27	1
February 3-6, 2011: <i>Anti-government protests in Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries</i>	32	35	16	18	*
January 27-30, 2011	17	26	21	35	*

**NO QUESTION PEW.2****PEW.3a PREVIOUSLY RELEASED****PEW.3b, PEW.3c, PEW.4-6 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER**  
**March 14-17, 2013 OMNIBUS**  
**FINAL TOPLINE**  
**N=924**

**ASK ALL:**

PEW.1 As I read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past week, please tell me if you happened to follow each news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. First, **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE] [IF NECESSARY "Did you follow [ITEM] very closely, fairly closely, not too closely or not at all closely?"]**

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.) DK/Ref</b>
a. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy					
March 14-17, 2013	28	33	18	20	1
March 7-10, 2013	35	30	16	19	*
January 31-February 3, 2013	33	33	16	16	1
January 17-20, 2013	36	32	15	16	*
January 3-6, 2013	34	32	18	16	1
December 6-9, 2012	38	30	16	14	1
November 8-11, 2012	41	31	15	12	1
November 1-4, 2012	38	30	16	14	1
October 25-28, 2012	44	30	14	11	1
October 18-21, 2012	39	36	12	12	1
October 12-14, 2012	42	28	14	15	1
October 4-7, 2012	40	29	13	17	*
September 27-30, 2012	34	37	13	15	1
September 20-23, 2012	36	32	17	15	*
September 13-16, 2012	38	32	17	12	1
September 7-9, 2012	36	31	17	15	2
August 31-September 3, 2012	33	31	20	16	1
August 23-26, 2012	38	30	15	16	1
August 16-19, 2012	33	32	16	19	*
August 9-12, 2012	30	31	20	18	1
August 2-5, 2012	33	29	20	17	1
July 26-29, 2012	32	30	20	19	*
July 19-22, 2012	39	29	16	16	*
July 12-15, 2012	32	33	18	17	1
July 5-8, 2012	34	28	18	19	1
June 28-July 1, 2012	38	28	15	18	1
June 21-24, 2012	33	32	17	17	*
June 14-17, 2012	39	28	15	17	*
June 7-10, 2012	35	32	15	18	*
May 31-June 3, 2012	37	34	13	14	1
May 24-27, 2012	33	31	19	16	1
May 17-20, 2012	35	30	16	19	*
May 10-13, 2012	40	26	16	17	*
May 3-6, 2012	38	29	13	20	*
April 26-29, 2012	34	32	17	16	1
April 19-22, 2012	35	35	13	14	2
April 12-15, 2012	39	28	16	17	1
April 5-8, 2012	37	31	16	16	1
March 29-April 1, 2012	34	33	15	18	1
March 22-25, 2012	36	29	16	18	1
March 15-18, 2012	40	35	11	14	1
March 8-11, 2012	37	32	14	17	*
March 1-4, 2012	41	27	15	17	1
February 23-26, 2012	37	33	14	15	1
February 16-20, 2012	33	32	16	17	1
February 9-12, 2012	42	30	14	13	1
February 2-5, 2012	38	32	16	13	1

**PEW.1 CONTINUED...**

	Very <u>closely</u>	Fairly <u>closely</u>	Not too <u>closely</u>	Not at all <u>closely</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
January 26-29, 2012	35	31	16	19	*
January 19-22, 2012	35	30	16	19	1
January 12-15, 2012	33	32	14	20	1
January 5-8, 2012	39	31	15	15	*

SEE TREND FOR PREVIOUS YEARS: <http://www.people-press.org/files/2013/01/NII-Economy-trend.pdf>

b. Discussions in Washington about how to address the federal budget deficit and national debt

March 14-17, 2013	24	26	20	29	1
January 24-27, 2013	23	28	19	29	1
November 3-6, 2011	24	31	21	24	1
October 27-30, 2011	25	28	21	25	1
July 28-31, 2011	41	27	15	17	*
July 21-24, 2011	38	28	17	17	*
July 14-17, 2011	34	29	18	19	*
May 5-8, 2011	29	28	22	20	1
April 21-25, 2011	30	31	18	21	*
April 14-17, 2011	36	27	18	19	1

**TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:**

March 7-10, 2013: <i>Automatic spending cuts that began on March 1st</i>	31	26	18	25	1
February 21-24, 2013: <i>News about automatic cuts to federal spending that will take effect next week, unless the president and Congress act</i>	25	26	19	29	1
December 13-16, 2012: <i>The debate in Washington over automatic spending cuts and tax increases that would take effect in January unless the President and Congress act</i>	37	28	16	18	1
December 6-9, 2012	37	26	17	20	1
November 29-December 2, 2012	40	26	14	20	1
November 15-18, 2012	33	24	16	25	1
November 8-11, 2012	38	20	20	20	*
July 19-22, 2012	23	21	22	33	1
October 13-16, 2011: <i>The debate in Washington over jobs and the deficit</i>	29	32	15	24	1
September 29-October 2, 2011: <i>Congress working on a budget extension to avoid a government shutdown</i>	31	26	20	22	*
September 22-25, 2011: <i>The debate in Washington over jobs and the deficit</i>	35	26	19	19	1
September 15-18, 2011: <i>The debate in Washington over President Obama's jobs legislation</i>	31	28	19	21	2
September 8-11, 2011: <i>Barack Obama's speech about jobs to a joint session of Congress</i>	28	18	17	36	1
June 16-19, 2011: <i>Debate in Washington over whether to raise the federal debt limit</i>	24	26	22	28	*
June 2-5, 2011	23	24	22	31	*
May 26-29, 2011: <i>Discussions in Washington about how to address the federal budget deficit</i>	25	26	20	29	*
May 12-15, 2011	21	26	24	28	1



## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>
April 7-10, 2011: <i>The threat of a government shutdown because of budget disagreements in Washington</i>	47	26	15	12	*
March 31-April 3, 2011: <i>Discussions in Washington about how to address the federal budget deficit</i>	30	27	21	22	*
March 17-20, 2011	24	25	24	26	1
March 3-6, 2011	26	29	19	26	1
February 17-20, 2011	27	30	17	25	1
December 2-5, 2010	35	25	21	17	2
December 2-5, 2010: <i>The debate in Washington over the federal income tax cuts passed when George W. Bush was president</i>	39	26	17	17	1
November 11-14, 2010: <i>Proposals made by leaders of the federal budget deficit commission</i>	15	21	21	41	1
September 16-19, 2010: <i>The debate in Washington over competing Democratic and Republican tax plans</i>	21	24	21	34	*
September 9-12, 2010	16	19	22	42	1
May 8-11, 2009: <i>The debate in Washington over the federal budget</i>	22	28	19	31	*
March 27-30, 2009: <i>Debate over Barack Obama's budget proposal</i>	28	34	18	19	1
March 6-9, 2009: <i>Obama proposing a \$630 billion fund for overhauling health care</i>	41	32	13	14	*
February 27-March 2, 2009: <i>Barack Obama's budget proposal for next year that raises taxes on wealthy Americans and increases spending on health care, education and other programs</i>	47	34	9	10	*
February 27-March 2, 2009: <i>The Obama administration's plan to help homeowners facing foreclosure which could cost as much as \$275 billion</i>	31	36	19	13	1
February 20-23, 2009: <i>The \$780 billion economic stimulus legislation approved by Congress and signed into law by President Obama</i>	41	37	14	8	*
February 13-16, 2009: <i>Congress passing Barack Obama's economic stimulus plan</i>	50	32	13	5	*
February 6-9, 2009: <i>The debate in Congress over Barack Obama's economic stimulus plan</i>	41	33	15	11	*
January 30-February 2, 2009	36	29	22	13	*
January 16-19, 2009: <i>Debate in Washington over what the government should do about the nation's economic problems</i>	35	33	17	15	*
January 9-12, 2009: <i>Projections of a record high federal budget deficit this year</i>	35	30	19	16	*
December 19-22, 2008: <i>The Bush administration's plan to provide billions in emergency loans to U.S. automakers</i>	37	33	16	13	1
December 12-15, 2008: <i>The debate over a government bailout for the U.S. auto industry</i>	40	33	18	9	*

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>
December 5-8, 2008: <i>The debate in Congress over a government bailout for the U.S. auto industry</i>	34	38	17	11	*
November 21-24, 2008	41	26	17	15	1
October 3-6, 2008: <i>The debate in Washington over a plan to use government funds to stabilize financial markets</i>	62	26	7	5	*
September 26-29, 2008	60	22	10	8	*
September 12-15, 2008: <i>The federal government taking control of the mortgage companies Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac</i>	28	35	19	17	1
March 20-24, 2008: <i>The buyout of Wall Street investment bank Bear Stearns</i>	21	26	21	32	*
February 8-11, 2008: <i>President Bush and Congress agreeing on an economic Stimulus plan</i>	22	33	23	21	1
January 25-28, 2008	24	36	19	21	*
February, 2003: <i>George W. Bush's tax cut and economic stimulus plan</i>	26	33	23	16	2
February, 2003	26	33	23	16	2
January, 2003	28	34	21	15	2
February, 2002: <i>The debate in Congress over George W. Bush's budget and tax cut plan</i>	17	31	28	23	1
April, 2001	24	38	20	18	*
February, 2001: <i>George W. Bush's tax cut plan</i>	31	35	19	14	1
August, 1997: <i>The debate in Washington about the federal budget</i>	14	34	25	26	1
May, 1997	16	38	23	22	1
February, 1997	19	28	22	29	2
March, 1996	24	35	23	18	*
January, 1996	32	42	17	9	*
September, 1995	20	35	27	18	*
August, 1995: <i>The debate in Congress over the federal budget</i>	18	34	27	20	1
February, 1995: <i>The debate in Congress over the Balanced Budget Amendment</i>	12	31	28	28	1
August, 1993: <i>The debate in Congress over Bill Clinton's budget bill</i>	30	36	21	13	*
June, 1993	12	38	31	18	1
February, 1993: <i>Bill Clinton's economic plan</i>	49	36	10	5	*
September, 1992 (RV): <i>George Bush's plan to improve the economy by cutting government spending and cutting taxes</i>	28	44	18	9	1
November, 1990: <i>Congressional and administration efforts to reach a budget deficit agreement</i>	34	33	20	11	2
October, 1990: <i>Attempts by Congress and the administration to find ways to reduce the budget deficit</i>	34	37	17	12	*
August, 1989: <i>Passage of a bill to bailout ailing savings and loan institutions</i>	26	30	20	23	1
c. The selection of the new Pope					
March 14-17, 2013	21	28	21	28	1
May, 2005	22	33	23	20	2

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>
<b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
March 7-10, 2013: <i>Catholic cardinals meeting in Rome to select a new pope</i>	14	23	26	36	*
February 14-17, 2013: <i>Pope Benedict announcing that he would step down as head of the Catholic Church</i>	18	26	27	29	1
March 29-April 1, 2012: <i>Pope Benedict's visit to Cuba and Mexico</i>	5	15	23	57	*
September 16-19, 2010: <i>Pope Benedict's visit to Great Britain and his comments on the Catholic Church's handling of sex-abuse scandals</i>	10	16	26	47	1
d. The current situation and events in Afghanistan					
March 14-17, 2013	16	25	29	31	1
September 20-23, 2012	25	27	27	21	1
September 7-9, 2012	18	27	29	25	1
<b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
May 3-6, 2012: <i>President Obama's trip to Afghanistan</i>	19	24	23	33	1
April 19-22, 2012: <i>Photos of American soldiers posing with body parts of dead Afghan insurgents</i>	14	22	27	35	1
March 22-25, 2012: <i>Reports about a soldier accused of killing at least 16 civilians in Afghanistan<sup>2</sup></i>	28	31	21	19	1
March 15-18, 2012: <i>The current situation and events in Afghanistan</i>	27	33	21	18	1
March 1-4, 2012	22	29	25	24	1
February 23-26, 2012: <i>Protests in Afghanistan after NATO personnel burned copies of the Koran</i>	17	22	24	36	1
February 2-5, 2012: <i>The Defense Department announcing its plan to end the U.S. combat mission in Afghanistan</i>	22	31	22	24	1
October 6-9, 2011: <i>The current situation and events in Afghanistan</i>	20	28	25	26	1
September 15-18, 2011: <i>Attacks on the U.S. embassy and NATO's headquarters in Afghanistan</i>	16	24	22	37	1
September 1-4, 2011: <i>The current situation and events in Afghanistan</i>	17	32	26	25	*
August 11-14, 2011: <i>The 30 U.S. troops killed in Afghanistan in a helicopter attack</i>	39	33	13	14	1
June 30-July 3, 2011: <i>The current situation and events in Afghanistan</i>	22	34	24	20	1
June 23-26, 2011: <i>Discussions in Washington about U.S. troop levels in Afghanistan</i>	27	32	20	20	1
June 2-5, 2011: <i>The current situation and events in Afghanistan</i>	20	35	23	21	1
April 1-3, 2011: <i>Deadly protests in Afghanistan after a Florida pastor burned a Koran</i>	15	19	29	36	1

<sup>2</sup> The phrase "at least" was added before "16 civilians" on Friday, March 23, 2012, when it became clear the soldier may have killed more Afghans.

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>
December 16-19, 2010: <i>The Obama administration's review of the Afghanistan war strategy</i>	17	26	25	31	1
December 9-12, 2010: <i>The current situation and events in Afghanistan</i>	24	31	22	22	1
November 18-21, 2010	27	33	21	18	1
October 21-24, 2010	21	34	23	21	1
October 7-10, 2010	21	36	20	22	1
September 30-October 3, 2010	23	37	23	15	1
September 23-26, 2010	29	40	19	11	1
September 9-12, 2010	30	33	20	17	*
September 9-12, 2010: <i>Controversy over a Florida pastor's plan, later cancelled, to burn copies of the Koran on September 11th<sup>3</sup></i>	33	25	15	25	1
July 29-August 1, 2010: <i>The current situation and events in Afghanistan</i>	34	35	22	9	*
July 15-18, 2010	22	33	23	22	*
July 8-11, 2010	23	32	24	20	1
July 1-5, 2010	29	34	23	14	1
June 24-27, 2010: <i>General Stanley McChrystal resigning as head of U.S. forces in Afghanistan after being quoted criticizing President Obama and his Afghanistan strategy</i>	28	31	19	21	1
June 17-20, 2010	21	30	27	22	*
May 20-23, 2010	22	33	25	20	*
April 9-12, 2010	21	29	27	22	1
February 19-22, 2010: <i>The U.S. military effort in Afghanistan</i>	24	36	21	19	*
January 8-11, 2010: <i>Suicide bombing that killed seven Americans at a CIA base in Afghanistan</i>	24	31	27	17	1
December 11-14, 2009: <i>The U.S. military effort in Afghanistan</i>	35	33	18	13	*
December 4-7, 2009: <i>President Obama's decision to send more U.S. troops to Afghanistan</i>	43	33	14	8	1
November 20-23, 2009: <i>The debate over whether to send more troops to Afghanistan</i>	29	31	17	22	1
November 13-16, 2009	29	28	20	22	1
November 6-9, 2009: <i>The U.S. military effort in Afghanistan</i>	22	35	24	18	*
October 30-November 2, 2009	24	32	21	22	*
October 23-26, 2009	32	29	21	18	*
October 16-19, 2009	25	31	20	24	*
September 25-28, 2009: <i>The debate over whether to send more troops to Afghanistan</i>	27	40	17	16	*
September 18-21, 2009: <i>The U.S. military effort in Afghanistan</i>	26	33	25	16	*
September 11-14, 2009	25	35	22	18	1
September 3-6, 2009	23	33	23	21	0
August 7-10, 2009	24	32	23	21	1

<sup>3</sup> On the first night of the field period (September 9) the item was worded: "Plans by a Florida pastor to burn copies of the Koran on September 11<sup>th</sup>."

**PEW.1 CONTINUED...**

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.) DK/Ref</b>
May 15-18, 2009: <i>Barack Obama's decision to block the release of photos showing abuse of detainees in Iraq and Afghanistan</i>	25	30	21	24	1
March 20-23, 2009: <i>The U.S. military effort in Afghanistan</i>	24	32	22	22	*
February 20-23, 2009: <i>The Obama administration's decision to send 17,000 additional U.S. troops to Afghanistan</i>	27	29	24	19	1
January 30-February 2, 2009: <i>The U.S. military effort in Afghanistan</i>	26	34	24	16	*
January 2-4, 2009	22	33	23	21	1
October 24-27, 2008	28	32	22	17	1
October 10-13, 2008: <i>The military effort in Afghanistan against Taliban fighters</i>	19	34	29	18	*
September 12-15, 2008	21	34	25	19	1
August 29-31, 2008	18	27	32	23	*
July 18-21, 2008: <i>The military effort in Afghanistan against Taliban fighters</i>	27	33	24	16	*
July 11-14, 2008	19	28	29	23	1
July 3-7, 2008	19	28	32	21	*
June 20-23, 2008	20	30	30	20	*
March 2-5, 2007: <i>A bombing in Afghanistan near where Vice President Cheney was staying</i>	19	33	26	21	1
June, 2005: <i>Newsweek's retraction of a story about flushing the Koran down a toilet as part of prisoner interrogation</i>	20	29	21	29	1
Late July, 2002: <i>The U.S. military effort in Afghanistan</i>	41	38	13	7	1
June, 2002	38	32	20	9	1
April, 2002	39	39	13	8	1
Early April, 2002	45	37	12	5	1
February, 2002	47	39	8	5	1
January, 2002	51	35	9	4	1
December, 2001	44	38	12	5	1
Mid-November, 2001	49	36	11	3	1
Early November, 2001	45	36	12	6	1
Mid-October, 2001	51	35	10	3	1

**NO QUESTIONS PEW.2-PEW.5****PEW.6-PEW.7 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****PEW.8-PEW.10 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**