

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
SEPTEMBER 2013 POLITICAL SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
September 4-8, 2013
N=1,506

ASK ALL:

Q.1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President? **[IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**

	Approve	Dis- Approve	(VOL.) DK/Ref		Approve	Dis- Approve	(VOL.) DK/Ref
Sep 4-8, 2013 (U)	44	49	8	Jan 5-9, 2011	46	44	10
Jul 17-21, 2013	46	46	7	Dec 1-5, 2010	45	43	13
Jun 12-16, 2013	49	43	7	Nov 4-7, 2010	44	44	12
May 1-5, 2013	51	43	6	Oct 13-18, 2010	46	45	9
Mar 13-17, 2013	47	46	8	Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010	47	44	9
Feb 13-18, 2013 (U)	51	41	7	Jul 21-Aug 5, 2010	47	41	12
Jan 9-13, 2013	52	40	7	Jun 8-28, 2010	48	41	11
Dec 5-9, 2012	55	39	6	Jun 16-20, 2010	48	43	9
Jun 28-Jul 9, 2012	50	43	7	May 6-9, 2010	47	42	11
Jun 7-17, 2012	47	45	8	Apr 21-26, 2010	47	42	11
May 9-Jun 3, 2012	46	42	11	Apr 8-11, 2010	48	43	9
Apr 4-15, 2012	46	45	9	Mar 10-14, 2010	46	43	12
Mar 7-11, 2012	50	41	9	Feb 3-9, 2010	49	39	12
Feb 8-12, 2012	47	43	10	Jan 6-10, 2010	49	42	10
Jan 11-16, 2012	44	48	8	Dec 9-13, 2009	49	40	11
Dec 7-11, 2011	46	43	11	Oct 28-Nov 8, 2009	51	36	13
Nov 9-14, 2011	46	46	8	Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	52	36	12
Sep 22-Oct 4, 2011	43	48	9	Sep 10-15, 2009	55	33	13
Aug 17-21, 2011	43	49	7	Aug 20-27, 2009	52	37	12
Jul 20-24, 2011	44	48	8	Aug 11-17, 2009	51	37	11
Jun 15-19, 2011	46	45	8	Jul 22-26, 2009	54	34	12
May 25-30, 2011	52	39	10	Jun 10-14, 2009	61	30	9
May 5-8, 2011	50	39	11	Apr 14-21, 2009	63	26	11
May 2, 2011 (WP)	56	38	6	Mar 31-Apr 6, 2009	61	26	13
Mar 30-Apr 3, 2011	47	45	8	Mar 9-12, 2009	59	26	15
Feb 22-Mar 1, 2011	51	39	10	Feb 4-8, 2009	64	17	19
Feb 2-7, 2011	49	42	9				

See past presidents' approval trends: [George W. Bush](#), [Bill Clinton](#)

NO QUESTION 2**ASK ALL:**

Now, thinking about how Barack Obama is handling some issues...

Q.3 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling **[INSERT ITEMS; RANDOMIZE; OBSERVE FORM SPLITS]**. How about **[NEXT ITEM]**? **[REPEAT INTRODUCTION AS NECESSARY]**

	Approve	Disapprove	(VOL.) DK/Ref
a. The economy			
Sep 4-8, 2013 (U)	43	52	5
Jun 12-16, 2013	44	50	5
Feb 13-18, 2013 (U)	40	56	4
Mar 7-11, 2012	43	53	4
Jan 11-16, 2012	38	59	4
Nov 9-14, 2011	35	58	6
Aug 17-21, 2011	34	60	6
May 2, 2011	40	55	4

Q.3 CONTINUED...

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Mar 30-Apr 3, 2011	39	56	6
Jan 6-9, 2011	42	51	7
Jun 16-20, 2010	43	51	5
May 6-9, 2010	41	51	8
Apr 21-26, 2010	38	54	8
Mar 10-14, 2010	41	52	7
Jan 6-10, 2010	42	51	7
Oct 28-Nov 8, 2009	42	52	5
Jul 22-26, 2009	38	53	9
Jun 10-14, 2009	52	40	8
Apr 14-21, 2009	60	33	7
Feb 4-8, 2009	56	24	20

QUESTION 3 ITEMS b,c HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**NO ITEMS d-e.****ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=744]:**

f.F1	The nation's foreign policy			
	Sep 4-8, 2013 (U)	33	57	11
	Jan 11-16, 2012	46	45	10
	Nov 9-14, 2011	46	40	13
	Jun 16-20, 2010	45	40	15
	Mar 10-14, 2010	42	40	18
	Jan 6-10, 2010	44	40	16
	Oct 28-Nov 8, 2009	44	38	18
	Jul 22-26, 2009	47	32	21
	Jun 10-14, 2009	57	31	12
	Apr 14-21, 2009	61	22	17
	Feb 4-8, 2009	52	17	31

NO ITEMS g-h.**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=762]:**

i.F2	The situation in Syria			
	Sep 4-8, 2013 (U)	29	56	15

QUESTION 4 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK ALL:

Thinking now about Syria ...

Q.5 Would you favor or oppose the U.S. conducting military airstrikes against Syria in response to reports that the Syrian government used chemical weapons?

ASK IF FAVOR OR OPPOSE (Q.5=1,2) [N=1,374]:

Q.5a Do you [favor/oppose] very strongly, or not so strongly?

(U)		
Sep 4-8		Aug 29-Sep 1
<u>2013</u>		<u>2013</u>
28	Favor	29
16	Very strongly	--
12	Not so strongly	--
*	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	--
63	Oppose	48
45	Very strongly	--
18	Not so strongly	--
1	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	--
9	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	23

ASK ALL:

Q.6 Do you think Barack Obama has explained clearly why the U.S. should launch military airstrikes against Syrian military targets or has he not explained the reasons clearly enough?

	Explained <u>clearly</u>	Not clearly <u>enough</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Sep 4-8, 2013 (U)	35	54	12
Aug 29-Sept 1, 2013	32	48	20
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:			
March, 2003: <i>Do you think George W. Bush has explained clearly what's at stake as to why the U.S. might use military force to end the rule of Saddam Hussein, or do you think he has not explained the reasons clearly enough?</i>	49	47	4
February, 2003	53	40	7
January, 2003	42	53	5
December, 2002	48	45	7
Late October, 2002	48	45	7
Mid-September, 2002	52	37	11
Late August, 2002	37	52	11
<i>New York Times August, 1990: Do you think George Bush has explained clearly what's at stake and why the U.S. is sending troops to Saudi Arabia, or do you think he has not explained the reasons clearly enough?</i>	50	41	9

ASK ALL:

Q.7 In your view, who should have the final authority for deciding whether the United States should conduct military airstrikes against Syria **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**?

(U)	
Sep 4-8	
<u>2013</u>	
61	Congress
30	President Obama
2	Depends (VOL.)
6	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

Q.7 TRENDS FOR COMPARISON...*Invade Iraq with ground troops...*

Gallup/CNN/USA Today:

October

2002

54	Congress
40	President Bush
2	Depends (VOL.)
4	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

Send ground troops to serve in a combat situation in Yugoslavia...

Gallup/CNN/USA Today:

April

1999

64	Congress
31	President Clinton
1	Depends (VOL.)
4	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

ASK ALL:

Q.8 As I read some statements about the situation in Syria, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with each. First, **[INSERT ITEM, RANDOMIZE]**: do you agree or disagree? How about **[NEXT ITEM]**? **[REPEAT AS NECESSARY: Do you agree or disagree?]**

BASED ON INTERVIEWS SEP. 5-8 ONLY [N=1,242]:

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u>
a. The U.S. has a moral obligation to stop the violence against civilians			
Sep 5-8, 2013 (U)	54	43	4
Jun 12-16, 2013 ¹	49	46	4
b. The U.S. must act to show that the use of chemical weapons is unacceptable			
Sep 5-8, 2013 (U)	60	36	4
c. The U.S. will lose credibility around the world if it does not act			
Sep 5-8, 2013 (U)	39	56	5
d. The situation in Syria is a threat to the security of the U.S			
Sep 5-8, 2013 (U)	45	50	6
e. U.S. airstrikes in Syria are likely to make things in the Middle East worse			
Sep 5-8, 2013 (U)	75	19	6
f. There are no good options for the U.S. in how it deals with Syria			
Sep 5-8, 2013 (U)	61	34	4

NO QUESTIONS 9, 11-14, 18-28, 30-34, 40, 42-43, 46-54, 57-59, 62, 68, 70-77**QUESTIONS 10, 15-17, 29, 35-39, 41, 44-45, 55-56, 60-61, 63-67, 69, 78-85 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

¹ In June 2013, the question was worded "The U.S. has a moral obligation to do what it can to stop the violence in Syria."

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
	Republican	Democrat	Independent	No preference	Other party	DK/Ref	Rep	Dem
Sep 4-8, 2013	26	32	38	3	1	1	17	15
Jul 17-21, 2013	19	29	46	3	*	2	19	18
Jun 12-16, 2013	23	33	39	3	*	2	17	15
May 1-5, 2013	25	32	37	2	1	3	14	16
Mar 13-17, 2013	26	33	34	3	1	3	14	15
Feb 13-18, 2013	22	32	41	2	*	2	15	19
Jan 9-13, 2013	25	32	38	2	*	2	15	16
Dec 17-19, 2012	21	32	38	4	*	4	15	14
Dec 5-9, 2012	23	33	38	3	1	2	14	19
Oct 31-Nov 3, 2012	26	34	34	3	1	3	13	16
Oct 24-28, 2012	28	33	33	4	*	2	12	16
Oct 4-7, 2012	27	31	36	3	1	3	15	15
Sep 12-16, 2012	24	35	36	2	*	2	14	16
Yearly Totals								
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	--	--	--	--	--

ASK REPUBLICANS AND REPUBLICAN LEANERS ONLY (PARTY=1 OR PARTYLN=1):

TEAPARTY3 From what you know, do you agree or disagree with the Tea Party movement, or don't you have an opinion either way?

BASED ON REPUBLICANS AND REPUBLICAN LEANERS [N=657]:

				(VOL.)	(VOL.)	Not
	Agree	Disagree	No opinion either way	Haven't heard of	Refused	heard of/ DK
Sep 4-8, 2013	35	9	54	1	1	--
Jul 17-21, 2013	37	10	50	2	1	--
Jun 12-16, 2013	44	9	46	1	2	--

TEAPARTY3 CONTINUED...

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>No opinion either way</u>	<u>(VOL.) Haven't heard of</u>	<u>(VOL.) Refused</u>	<u>Not heard of/ DK</u>
May 23-26, 2013	41	7	48	1	3	--
May 1-5, 2013	28	8	61	2	1	--
Mar 13-17, 2013	43	7	47	1	1	--
Feb 13-18, 2013	36	9	52	1	3	--
Feb 14-17, 2013	43	9	45	1	2	--
Jan 9-13, 2013	35	10	51	2	2	--
Dec 5-9, 2012	37	11	51	1	*	--
Oct 31-Nov 3, 2012 (RVs)	40	8	49	1	2	--
Oct 4-7, 2012	38	9	50	1	3	--
Sep 12-16, 2013	39	7	52	1	1	--
Jun 28-Jul 9, 2012	40	9	47	2	1	--
Jun 7-17, 2012	42	8	48	1	1	--
May 9-Jun 3, 2012	36	9	53	1	2	--
Apr 4-15, 2012	42	8	48	1	1	--
Mar 7-11, 2012	38	10	49	2	1	--
Feb 8-12, 2012	40	7	51	1	1	--
Jan 11-16, 2012	42	8	47	1	1	--
Jan 4-8, 2012	37	8	52	1	1	--
Dec 7-11, 2011	40	9	48	2	1	--
Nov 9-14, 2011	41	9	49	*	1	--
Sep 22-Oct 4, 2011	37	11	51	1	1	--
Aug 17-21, 2011	43	7	49	*	1	--
Jul 20-24, 2011	40	7	51	*	1	--
Jun 15-19, 2011	42	9	47	1	1	--
May 25-30, 2011	37	7	52	1	3	--
Mar 30-Apr 3, 2011	45	9	46	*	1	--
Mar 8-14, 2011	37	7	54	1	*	--
Feb 22-Mar 1, 2011	41	9	48	1	1	--
Feb 2-7, 2011 ²	43	8	47	1	1	--
Jan 5-9, 2011	45	6	47	1	1	--
Dec 1-5, 2010	48	5	45	1	1	--
Nov 4-7, 2010	51	5	42	1	1	--
Oct 27-30, 2010 (RVs)	58	5	27	--	1	9
Oct 13-18, 2010 (RVs)	54	5	30	--	1	10
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010 (RVs)	56	6	29	--	*	9
Jul 21-Aug 5, 2010	46	5	36	--	1	13
Jun 16-20, 2010	46	5	30	--	*	19
May 20-23, 2010	53	4	25	--	1	16
Mar 11-21, 2010	48	4	26	--	1	21

Key to Pew Research trends noted in the topline:

(U)	Pew Research Center/USA Today polls
(WP)	Pew Research Center/Washington Post polls

² In the February 2-7, 2011, survey and before, question read "...do you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the Tea Party movement..." In October 2010 and earlier, question was asked only of those who had heard or read a lot or a little about the Tea Party. In May 2010 through October 2010, it was described as: "the Tea Party movement that has been involved in campaigns and protests in the U.S. over the past year." In March 2010 it was described as "the Tea Party protests that have taken place in the U.S. over the past year."