

BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

Global Opinion Report No. 107

February 14-20, 2010

Presentation: February 24, 2010

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Prelude

This week report consists of 29 surveys. All of these are national surveys.

Will internet with all its resources make us more intelligent or stupid?¹

Every now and then we hear that internet can give you information about this and that due to available of vast resources of info over its cyber space. But does it make us more intelligent? This was the subject of a Pew survey along with the future expectations as a result of increasing facilities over internet. An overwhelming majority of around 80 percent says internet will make humans more intelligent by 2010. I feel it very difficult to digest. Whatever the developments we may see in communication technology and availability of information but human brain will still be human brain. It will not become a computer itself. Supporters may say that millions of pages of data can help one get more knowledge in less time and almost free of cost. Moreover developments in the field of artificial intelligence will also be helpful in increasing human intelligence.

Internet is a good source for getting information and artificial intelligence may help in finding relevant material in comparatively short time. But on other hand human brain capacity to assimilate and absorb this knowledge will not go beyond a certain limit as it is gifted by nature. Some practices and process of learning may increase that capacity but not beyond a certain limit. One can not say more books you purchase, more you will be intelligent and knowledgeable. Several say google is severely damaging concentration and that is not with out reason. In depth reading habit is changing into mere skimming through pages one after another. Does it not seem illogical that internet will increase human intelligence? Those about 80 percent respondents to Pew who believe that internet will make them more intelligent, seem to be mere enthusiasts?

¹ <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1499/google-does-it-make-us-stupid-experts-stakeholders-mostly-say-no>

Summary of Polls

MIDDLE EAST

PM Netanyahu's Likud Still Favoured in Israel

The political party of Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu continues to draw high popular support, according to a poll by *Maagar Mochot*. A prospective tally of seats shows that the Likud party would get 32 seats in the Knesset in the next legislative election.

February 20, 2010

Likud Extends Lead Over Kadima in Israel

Israel's governing party is the most popular in the country a year after the last legislative ballot, according to a poll by Dialog published in *Haaretz*. A prospective tally of seats shows that the Likud party would garner 35 seats in the next election to the Knesset, up three since July 2009.

February 15, 2010

WEST & CENTRAL ASIA

Fewer Afghans Optimistic About Future

The number of people in Afghanistan thinking that their country is heading in the right direction has decreased since mid-2009, according to a poll by the International Republican Institute (IRI). 56 per cent of respondents say things are going well, down six points since last July.

February 14, 2010

Tajikistanis Expect Fair Election This Year

Most people in Tajikistan expect this month's legislative election to be fair, according to a poll by IFES. 68 per cent of respondents share this view, while only 11 per cent think the ballot will not be fair.

February 16, 2010

EAST ASIA

Cambodians Clearly Optimistic About Future

A large majority of people in Cambodia think their country is heading in the right direction, according to a poll by the International Republican Institute (IRI). 79 per cent of respondents share this view, while 20 per cent say things are not heading the right way.

February 18, 2010

JAPAN & KOREAS

DPJ Candidates Have Upper Hand in Japan

The ruling Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) is slightly more popular than the opposition Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) ahead of this year's upper house election, according to a poll by *Kyodo News*. 33.6 per cent of respondents would cast their proportional representation ballot for the DPJ in the election to the House of Councillors, while 23.4 per cent would back the LDP representatives.

February 16, 2010

EAST EUROPE

Two-in-Five Russians Would Rely on Death Penalty

Many people in Russia think capital punishment should be fully re-instated and applied, according to a poll by the Russian Public Opinion Research Center. 44 per cent of respondents share this opinion.

February 19, 2010

Few Russians Regard Gorbachev in a Positive Light

Public perceptions on former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev have not changed dramatically in Russia over the past two years, according to a poll by the Yury Levada Analytical Center. Only 13 per cent of respondents hold a positive opinion of Gorbachev, while 34 per cent have negative views.

February 15, 2010

WEST EUROPE

French Socialists Ponder Options for 2012 Ballot

Current International Monetary Fund (IMF) chief Dominique Strauss-Kahn and current Socialist Party (PS) leader Martine Aubry are the most popular candidates for the PS presidential nomination ahead of France's 2012 election, according to a poll by Ifop published in *Le Journal du Dimanche*. 27 per cent of PS supporters would like Aubry to be the candidate.

February 15, 2010

Tories Keep Double-Digit Lead in Britain

The opposition Conservative Party remains ahead of its rivals in Britain, according to a poll by Angus Reid Public Opinion. 40 per cent of respondents would support the Tories in this year's general election, up two points in a week.

February 20, 2010

Britons Believe Most MPs Abused Allowances

A large proportion of people in Britain think most Members of Parliament have abused the existing system of allowances, according to a poll by Angus Reid Public Opinion. 50 per cent of respondents say most MPs have misused the expenses system for their own benefit.

February 16, 2010

A Third of Italians Say Immigrants Cause Crime

Some people in Italy believe foreign-born residents are the main cause of crime in the country, according to a poll by Ispo published in *Corriere della Sera*. 35 per cent of respondents share this view.

February 18, 2010

Opposition Popular Party Favoured by Spaniards

People in Spain are voicing support for the party currently in the Official Opposition in the next legislative election, according to a poll by Sigma Dos published in *El Mundo*. 43 per cent of respondents would vote for the Popular Party (PP) in the next ballot, essentially unchanged since December.

February 17, 2010

NORTH AMERICA

Americans OK with Obama Meeting Dalai Lama

The majority of people in the United States have no problem with Barack Obama convening with the Dalai Lama, according to a poll by Angus Reid Public Opinion. 64 per cent of respondents agree with the planned meeting between the U.S. president and the Buddhist spiritual leader.

February 16, 2010

Americans' Rating of United Nations Improved, but Still Low

Thirty-one percent of Americans say the United Nations is doing a good job of solving the problems it has had to face, according to the Feb. 1-3 Gallup World Affairs poll. While still a negative review, the current U.N. rating is a significant improvement over last year's 26% and the best since 2005.

February 19, 2010

In U.S., Canada Places First in Image Contest; Iran Last

Americans' perceptions of 20 nations that figure prominently in the news or U.S. foreign policy held quite steady in the first year of the Obama administration. Canada retained its top position in Gallup's annual country ratings, with 90% of Americans viewing it favorably, unchanged from 2009. Iran continues to rank last, with 10% this year.

February 19, 2010

In U.S., 6 in 10 View Iran as Critical Threat to U.S. Interests

A Gallup poll finds 61% of Americans viewing the military power of Iran as a critical threat to U.S. vital interests over the next 10 years. An additional 29% say Iran is an important, though not a critical, threat to the United States. The findings come as Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is seeking the support of several Arab nations for additional sanctions on Iran in a trip to the region this week.

February 16, 2010

Majorities Not Confident about US Policies in Afghanistan

According to The Harris Poll, a majority of adults continues to give President Obama negative ratings on his handling of Afghanistan. In addition, most are not confident that US policies will be successful. However, the President's standing has improved since November and the majority who support his decision to send an additional 30,000 troops to Afghanistan has also increased by 7 points.

February 11, 2010

Most People Believe Osama bin Laden Is Alive and Many Believe He Is in Pakistan

A new Harris Poll finds that more than three-quarters (78%) of adult Americans believe Osama bin Laden is alive. A plurality (37%) believes that he is living in Pakistan, but many people (32%) do not feel able to even guess where he is.

February 10, 2010

Americans See Slight Improvement in U.S. Global Image

After five years when fewer than half of Americans believed the United States was seen favorably in the eyes of the world, Gallup's decade-long trend lines on this measure have again crossed. Fifty-one percent now say the U.S. is viewed favorably, up from 45% a year ago.

February 15, 2010

Americans More Divided on Strength of National Defense

Americans are more likely now (45%) than they were a year ago (37%) to say the United States' national defense is "not strong enough." At the same time, fewer believe the nation's defense is "about right."

February 18, 2010

One in Three Cite "American People" as Key U.S. Asset

Americans were asked in a recent *USA Today*/Gallup survey to name the one or two strengths of the United States that make them feel most optimistic about the future of the country and, conversely, the main weaknesses that make them the most pessimistic. The

American people themselves, named by 35%, and the nation's military (14%) dominate the list of perceived strengths.

February 17, 2010

Does Google Make Us Stupid?

Respondents to the fourth "Future of the Internet" survey, conducted by the Pew Internet & American Life Project and Elon University's Imagining the Internet Center, were asked to consider the future of the internet-connected world between now and 2020, majorities believe that by 2020 internet search engines would enhance human intelligence instead of decreasing their IQs.

February 19, 2010

Some Americans Expect Higher Unemployment in 2011

People in the United States are divided in their assessment of the country's employment crisis, according to a poll by Angus Reid Public Opinion. 36 per cent of respondents expect the unemployment rate to be higher a year from now, 25 per cent think it will remain the same, and 26 per cent believe it will be lower.

February 18, 2010

Some Canadians Willing to Pay, Travel for Health Care

Two-in-five Canadians would consider paying or going abroad to seek medical treatment, according to a poll by Angus Reid Public Opinion. 40 per cent of respondents would be willing to pay out of their own pocket to have quicker access to medical services that currently have long wait times, and 42 per cent would consider traveling to another country.

February 19, 2010

Most Canadians Generally Agree with Euthanasia

Most people in Canada support the legalization of euthanasia, according to a poll by Angus Reid Public Opinion. 67 per cent of respondents share this point of view, down four points since August.

February 16, 2010

LATIN AMERICA

Mexicans Evenly Split on Abortion

The legal status of abortion divides opinions in Mexico, according to a poll by Consulta Mitofsky. 48.8 per cent of respondents agree with allowing women to seek an abortion on a voluntary basis, whereas 45.3 per cent disagree.

February 20, 2010

AUSTRALASIA

Australians Would Not Change Flag or Anthem

People in Australia reject the notion of modifying two of their national symbols, according to a poll by Essential Research. 54 per cent of respondents oppose changing the Australian flag, and 52 per cent reject changing the national anthem.

February 19, 2010

Australian Political Scene Becomes Tighter

Australia's main federal parties are virtually tied, according to a poll by Newspoll published in *The Australian*. 40 per cent of respondents would vote for the governing Australian Labor Party (ALP) in the next election to the House of Representatives, while 39 per cent would support the Coalition of Liberals and National.

February 17, 2010

MIDDLE EAST

PM Netanyahu's Likud Still Favoured in Israel

February 20, 2010

The political party of Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu continues to draw high popular support, according to a poll by *Maagar Mochot*. A prospective tally of seats shows that the Likud party would get 32 seats in the Knesset in the next legislative election.

The opposition Kadima is second with 23 seats, followed by Israel Our Home with 14, Labour also with 14, and the International Organization of Torah-observant Sephardic Jews (Shas) with 11. Support is lower for the United Torah Judaism, Vitality-Together, Jewish Home, and National Union. The Arab parties would get nine seats in the Knesset.

In February 2009, Israeli voters renewed the Knesset. The Likud party, led by Netanyahu, secured 27 seats in the legislature. The far-right Israel Our Home, the Labour party, Shas, United Torah Judaism, and the Jewish Home joined Likud in a coalition. In March, Netanyahu was sworn in as prime minister.

Netanyahu served as prime minister from June 1996 to July 1999, and resigned from Ariel Sharon's cabinet—where he held the finance portfolio—after opposing the "Disengagement Plan."

The Israeli government and its security agency, Mossad, are currently under scrutiny as reports have emerged that the targeted killing of Hamas operative Mahmoud al-Mabhouh in Dubai last month can be directly linked to Israel.

Dubai police have revealed that the perpetrators of the killing in a Dubai hotel—all of whom remain at large—used fake identities stolen from regular Israelis living in Britain. The British government has expressed its displeasure with the situation, saying that, if proven that Israel is indeed involved in al-Mabhouh's extra-judicial killing, it will say that the forgery of British passports for such purposes is not acceptable.

The Israeli government has so far said it does not comment "on speculation."

Polling Data

Prospective results of a Knesset election

(Results presented in seats)

Likud (Consolidation)	32
Kadima (Forward)	23

Israel Our Home (Yisrael Beiteinu)	14
Labour	14
International Organization of Torah-observant Sephardic Jews (Shas)	11
United Torah Judaism (Yahadut Hatorah)	5
Vitality-Together (Meretz-Yachad)	5
Jewish Home (Habayit Hayehudi)	4
National Union (HaIhud HaLeumi)	3
Arab parties	9

Source: Maagar Mochot

Methodology: Telephone interviews with 578 Israeli adults, conducted from Feb. 7 to Feb. 9, 2010. Margin of error is 4.5 per cent.

Likud Extends Lead Over Kadima in Israel

February 15, 2010

Israel's governing party is the most popular in the country a year after the last legislative ballot, according to a poll by Dialog published in *Haaretz*. A prospective tally of seats shows that the Likud party would garner 35 seats in the next election to the Knesset, up three since July 2009.

The opposition Kadima is second with 26 seats, followed by Israel Our Home with 14, the International Organization of Torah-observant Sephardic Jews (Shas) with 10, and the Labour party with nine. Support is lower for United Torah Judaism, Vitality-Together, National Union, and Jewish Home. The Arab parties would get eight seats in the Knesset.

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Netanyahu served as prime minister from June 1996 to July 1999, and resigned from Ariel Sharon's cabinet—where he held the finance portfolio—after opposing the "Disengagement Plan."

On Feb. 8, Kadima leader Tzipi Livni criticized Netanyahu's proposal to allow all Israeli citizens who live overseas to vote in general elections, saying, "This law is immoral. Netanyahu has yielded to [Israel Our Home leader Avigdor] Lieberman's demands. This is the same Netanyahu who failed in the previous elections and needed a bloc in order to form a coalition. This initiative is a continuation of the government's efforts to secure a political majority. (...) Elections in Israel are about Israel's character and future. Such decisions should lie with those who live here."

Polling Data

Prospective results of a Knesset election

(Results presented in seats)

	Feb. 2010	Jul. 2009
Likud (Consolidation)	35	32
Kadima (Forward)	26	29
Israel Our Home (Yisrael Beiteinu)	14	14
International Organization of Torah-observant Sephardic Jews (Shas)	10	11
Labour	9	10
United Torah Judaism (Yahadut Hatorah)	5	5
Vitality-Together (Meretz-Yachad)	5	4
National Union (HaIhud HaLeumi)	5	3
Jewish Home (Habayit Hayehudi)	3	3
Arab parties	8	9

Source: Dialog / Haaretz

Methodology: Interviews with 491 Israeli adults, conducted on Feb. 1 and Feb. 2, 2010. Margin of error is 4.5 per cent.

WEST & CENTRAL ASIA

Fewer Afghans Optimistic About Future

February 14, 2010

The number of people in Afghanistan thinking that their country is heading in the right direction has decreased since mid-2009, according to a poll by the International Republican Institute (IRI). 56 per cent of respondents say things are going well, down six points since last July.

Afghanistan has been the main battleground in the war on terrorism. The conflict began in October 2001, after the Taliban regime refused to hand over Osama bin Laden without evidence of his participation in the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington. Al-Qaeda operatives hijacked and crashed four airplanes on Sept. 11, 2001, killing nearly 3,000 people.

The United States-led Operation Enduring Freedom and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) currently command the war on terrorism in Afghanistan.

Hamid Karzai has been Afghanistan's president since November 2004, when he won the first-ever presidential election in the country with 55.4 per cent of all cast ballots. Before that, he headed an interim government for two years.

Afghanistan held a new presidential election in August 2009. At least 26 people were killed in election-related violence. Following weeks of uncertainty, accusations of fraud and partial ballot recounts, final results gave Karzai 49.67 per cent of the vote, followed by opposition candidate Abdullah Abdullah with 30.59 per cent. A run-off vote was supposed to take place but Abdullah declined to participate, alleging lack of transparency in the process.

On Nov. 19, Karzai was sworn in for a second term. In his inauguration speech, Karzai talked about the future, saying, "To put an end to the three decades of war is what most Afghans want. (...) Peace and security cannot be achieved only militarily."

Polling Data

Do you think Afghanistan is moving in the right direction or the wrong direction?

	Nov. 2009	Jul. 2009	May 2009
Right direction	56%	62%	30%
Wrong direction	27%	24%	37%
Neither	13%	11%	7%

Not sure 3% 4% 26%

Source: International Republican Institute (IRI)

Methodology: Interviews with 2,380 Afghan adults, conducted from Nov. 16 to Nov. 25, 2009.

Margin of error is 2 per cent.

Tajikistanis Expect Fair Election This Year

February 16, 2010

Most people in Tajikistan expect this month's legislative election to be fair, according to a poll by IFES. 68 per cent of respondents share this view, while only 11 per cent think the ballot will not be fair.

Three political parties are recognized by a majority of the population: 87 per cent of respondents say they are aware of the governing People's Democratic Party (HDKT), 69 per cent know the Islamic Renaissance Party (NIT), and 61 per cent know the Communist Party (CH). Less than half of respondents acknowledge five other parties.

Elections in Tajikistan have never been deemed completely free and fair by monitoring international organizations. In 2005, Tajikistan renewed its legislative branch, in an election deemed as "irregular" by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

In the 2006 presidential election, incumbent Emomali Rakhmonov won a new term with 79.3 per cent of the vote. Rakhmonov has been in office since 1992. The ruling HDKT—which supports the president—is widely expected to win the upcoming election.

On Feb. 1, the France-based organization Reporters without Borders called on the Tajikistani authorities "to stop using the judicial system to harass independent news media," following reports that a court has ordered a newspaper to pay a large amount to the government for alleged damages, and reports of four other newspapers facing similar lawsuits.

The Assembly of Representatives election is scheduled for Feb. 28.

Polling Data

How fair do you expect the February 2010 elections to be?

Completely fair 26%

Somewhat fair 42%

Somewhat unfair 9%

Completely unfair 2%

Not sure 20%

Which political parties in Tajikistan are you aware of? - "Yes" mentions listed

People's Democratic Party 87%

Islamic Renaissance Party 69%

Communist Party 61%

Democratic Party 42%

Social-Democratic Party 24%

Agrarian Party 19%

Socialist Party of Tajikistan 19%

Party of Economic Reforms 16%

None 12%

Source: International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)

Methodology: Interviews with 1,500 Tajikistani adults, conducted from Dec. 26, 2009, to Jan. 6, 2010. Margin of error is 2.5 per cent.

EAST ASIA

Cambodians Clearly Optimistic About Future

February 18, 2010

A large majority of people in Cambodia think their country is heading in the right direction, according to a poll by the International Republican Institute (IRI). 79 per cent of respondents share this view, while 20 per cent say things are not heading the right way.

Cambodia held a legislative election in July 2008. The Cambodia People's Party (CPP) was officially declared the winner of the election, with 90 of the 123 seats at stake. The Sam Rainsy Party (PSR) finished second, with 26 mandates.

Since 1993, when multi-party democracy was restored in Cambodia, the CPP has been in coalition with the royalist Funcinpec party and as senior partner since 1997. Hu Sen, Cambodia's prime minister, is the longest serving head of government in South-East Asia.

Since 2008, Cambodia and neighbouring Thailand have fought over the ownership of the famous Preah Vihear temple as part of a larger territorial dispute. Thailand opposes Cambodia's application for the temple to become a world heritage site.

On Feb. 11, Hu said he will take the matter to the International Court of Justice, declaring, "Cambodia has reached the limits of its patience. Cambodia wants to solve this territorial dispute by filing a complaint to the international court at The Hague."

Polling Data

Do you think Cambodia is moving in the right direction or the wrong direction?

Right direction	79%
Wrong direction	20%
Neither / Not sure	1%

Source: International Republican Institute (IRI)

Methodology: Interviews with 1,600 Cambodian adults, conducted from Jul. 31 to Aug. 26, 2009.

Margin of error is 2.5 per cent.

JAPAN & KOREA

DPJ Candidates Have Upper Hand in Japan

February 16, 2010

The ruling Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) is slightly more popular than the opposition Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) ahead of this year's upper house election, according to a poll by *Kyodo News*. 33.6 per cent of respondents would cast their proportional representation ballot for the DPJ in the election to the House of Councillors, while 23.4 per cent would back the LDP representatives.

In the 2007 election to the House of Councillors, the DPJ secured 39.5 per cent of the proportional representation vote and 60 of the 121 seats at stake. The LDP garnered 28.1 per cent of the vote and 37 seats. An election to renew half of the House of Councillors is expected to take place in July.

In August 2009, Japanese voters renewed the House of Representatives. Final results gave the DPJ a victory with 308 of the 480 lower house seats at stake. Yukio Hatoyama, the DPJ leader, was sworn in as prime minister in September.

Aside from a brief period in the 1990s, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) had administered Japan's government for more than five decades.

On Feb. 2, Hatoyama said that he wants DPJ secretary general Ichiro Ozawa—who has recently been tied to an ongoing corruption scandal—to take a prominent role in this year's campaign, saying "Given what he has achieved until today, I certainly would like Secretary General Ozawa to lead."

Polling Data

Which party would you vote for in the proportional representation block of the House of Councillors election?

Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) 33.6%

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) 23.4%

Other / Undecided 43.0%

Source: Kyodo News

Methodology: Telephone interviews with 1,012 Japanese adults, conducted on Feb. 5 and Feb. 6, 2010. No margin of error was provided.

EAST EUROPE

Two-in-Five Russians Would Rely on Death Penalty

February 19, 2010

Many people in Russia think capital punishment should be fully re-instated and applied, according to a poll by the Russian Public Opinion Research Center. 44 per cent of respondents share this opinion.

Conversely, 18 per cent of respondents say lawmakers should completely abolish the death penalty, while 29 per cent would preserve the current state of moratorium.

Both the Soviet Union and Russia contemplated the death penalty as punishment for several crimes. Executions were usually carried out by firing squad. Russian president Boris Yeltsin introduced a decree to enact a "gradual cessation" of the practice. In 1997, Yeltsin signed a moratorium on capital punishment, which remains in place today.

Russian voters renewed the State Duma in December 2007. United Russia (YR)—whose candidate list was headed by then president Vladimir Putin—secured 64.1 per cent of the vote and 315 of the legislature's 450 seats. On that same month, Putin endorsed Dmitry Medvedev as a presidential candidate, and Medvedev said it would be of the "utmost importance" to have Putin as prime minister.

In March 2008, Medvedev easily won Russia's presidential election with 70.28 per cent of the vote. In May, Medvedev was sworn in as president. His nomination of Putin as prime minister was confirmed by the State Duma in a 392-56 vote.

In November 2009, Russia's Constitutional Court ruled that the moratorium on capital punishment—which expired last year—had to be extended until the Russian Federation acts to completely ban executions.

Valery Zorkin, the court's head, explained that the end of the moratorium "does not make it possible to apply the death penalty on Russian territory" because the country has signed on to international treaties banning the use of capital punishment.

Polling Data

How would you solve the question of the application of the death penalty in Russia?

It should be completely abolished by the legislatures	18%
It should be allowed as it stands now (moratorium)	29%
It should be fully enacted and used	44%
Hard to answer	10%

Source: Russian Public Opinion Research Center

Methodology: Interviews with 1,600 Russian adults, conducted on Jan. 23 and Jan. 24, 2010.

Margin of error is 3.4 per cent.

Few Russians Regard Gorbachev in a Positive Light

February 15, 2010

Public perceptions on former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev have not changed dramatically in Russia over the past two years, according to a poll by the Yury Levada Analytical Center. Only 13 per cent of respondents hold a positive opinion of Gorbachev, while 34 per cent have negative views.

Gorbachev was the leader of the Soviet Communist Party from 1985 to 1991. He envisioned the policies of "*perestroika*" (restructuring)—a series of economic reforms to improve worker productivity and living standards—and "*glasnost*" (openness) which introduced greater personal freedoms and sought to foster debate.

An attempted coup in August 1991 severely hampered Gorbachev's authority, as support shifted to Russian nationalist Boris Yeltsin. In December 1991, the Soviet Union collapsed following Gorbachev's resignation. Gorbachev currently serves as the chairman of environmental organization Green Cross International.

Earlier this month, Gorbachev discussed the situation in Afghanistan in an op-ed published in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, stating, "The military method of resolving the Afghan problem was increasingly showing its shortcomings with each passing year. This was a secret to no one and

everyone was talking about it. (...) The way ahead will be very difficult. At the moment, the chances of success--and it is success and not military 'victory,' that should be the topic of conversation--can be described as 'fifty-fifty' at best."

Polling Data

Do you have a positive or negative opinion of Mikhail Gorbachev?

	Dec. 2009	Dec. 2007
Positive	13%	12%
Neutral	45%	43%
Negative	34%	38%
Hard to answer	7%	7%

Source: Yury Levada Analytical Center

Methodology: Interviews with 1,600 Russian adults, conducted from Dec. 18 to Dec. 22, 2009.

No margin of error was provided.

WEST EUROPE

French Socialists Ponder Options for 2012 Ballot

February 15, 2010

Current International Monetary Fund (IMF) chief Dominique Strauss-Kahn and current Socialist Party (PS) leader Martine Aubry are the most popular candidates for the PS presidential nomination ahead of France's 2012 election, according to a poll by Ifop published in *Le Journal du Dimanche*. 27 per cent of PS supporters would like Aubry to be the candidate.

Strauss-Kahn is in second place with 25 per cent, followed by 2007 PS presidential candidate Ségolène Royal with 11 per cent, and PS member François Hollande with nine per cent. Support is lower for former prime ministers Lionel Jospin and Laurent Fabius, Évry mayor Manuel Valls, Paris mayor Bertrand Delanoë, and PS lawmakers Arnaud Montebourg and Pierre Moscovici.

Amongst the general population, Strauss-Kahn is the frontrunner with 23 per cent, followed by Aubry with 20 per cent. Support is much lower for all of the remaining candidates.

In May 2007, Nicolas Sarkozy, candidate for the centre-right Union for a Popular Movement (UMP) and former interior minister, won the presidential run-off with 53.06 per cent of the vote. Sarkozy appointed François Fillon—who had been his adviser and presidential campaign leader—as prime minister.

Royal defeated Strauss-Kahn to secure the PS's presidential nomination in 2007. Strauss-Kahn was later appointed as managing director of the IMF. He is considered a potential candidate for the next ballot.

On Feb. 4, Strauss-Kahn admitted that he would consider leaving his IMF post before the end of his term, declaring, "I intend to see out my mandate, but if you ask me whether, in certain circumstances, I could reconsider that question again, the answer is yes."

The next presidential election in France will take place in May 2012.

Polling Data

Which of these people would you like to see become the candidate for the Socialist Party (PS) in the 2012 presidential election?

	All	PS supporters
Dominique Strauss-Kahn	23%	25%
Martine Aubry	20%	27%
Ségolène Royal	9%	11%
François Hollande	7%	9%
Lionel Jospin	2%	3%
Laurent Fabius	2%	4%
Manuel Valls	1%	1%
Bertrand Delanoë	1%	1%
Arnaud Montebourg	1%	2%
Pierre Moscovici	--	1%
Other / Not sure	34%	16%

Source: Ifop / Le Journal du Dimanche

Methodology: Telephone interviews with 959 French adults, conducted on Jan. 28 and Jan. 29, 2010. No margin of error was provided.

Tories Keep Double-Digit Lead in Britain

February 20, 2010

The opposition Conservative Party remains ahead of its rivals in Britain, according to a poll by Angus Reid Public Opinion. 40 per cent of respondents would support the Tories in this year's general election, up two points in a week.

The governing Labour party is second with 26 per cent, followed by the Liberal Democrats with 18 per cent. 16 per cent of respondents would vote for other parties.

In June 2007, Gordon Brown officially became Labour leader and prime minister, replacing Tony Blair. Brown had worked as chancellor of the exchequer. Blair served as Britain's prime minister since May 1997, winning majority mandates in the 1997, 2001 and 2005 elections to the House of Commons.

Since December 2005, David Cameron has been the leader of the Conservative party. In December 2007, current parliamentarian Nick Clegg became the new leader of the Liberal Democrats.

On Feb. 18, Cameron vowed to implement tougher guidelines for advertisers, saying, "You can't cut children off from the commercial world, of course you can't, but we should be able to help parents more in terms of trying to make sure that our children get a childhood and that they are not subject to unnecessary and inappropriate commercialization and sexualization too young."

The next election to the House of Commons must be held on or before Jun. 3. Sitting prime ministers can dissolve Parliament and call an early ballot at their discretion.

Polling Data

If a General Election were held tomorrow, which one of the following parties would you be most likely to support in your constituency? - *Decided Voters with Leaners*

	Feb. 17	Feb. 10	Jan. 27	Jan. 10
Conservative	40%	38%	40%	40%
Labour	26%	25%	24%	24%
Liberal Democrats	18%	20%	19%	20%
Other	16%	16%	17%	17%

Source: Angus Reid Public Opinion

Methodology: Online interviews with 2,002 British adults, conducted on Feb. 16 and Feb. 17, 2010. Margin of error is 2.2 per cent.

Britons Believe Most MPs Abused Allowances

February 16, 2010

A large proportion of people in Britain think most Members of Parliament have abused the existing system of allowances, according to a poll by Angus Reid Public Opinion. 50 per cent of respondents say most MPs have misused the expenses system for their own benefit.

A further 22 per cent of Britons think that practically every MP has abused the expenses mechanism.

In June 2007, Gordon Brown officially became Labour leader and prime minister, replacing Tony Blair. Brown had worked as chancellor of the exchequer. Blair served as Britain's prime minister since May 1997, winning majority mandates in the 1997, 2001 and 2005 elections to the House of Commons.

In May 2009, the British newspaper *Daily Telegraph* published a leaked memo showing that several lawmakers have spent their allowances on things such as tennis court repairs, horse manure, light bulbs, pornographic movies and even mortgage payments. The scandalous revelations greatly affected the reputation of Britain's Parliament, mostly because such expenses billed to the taxpayers are technically allowed due to loose regulation. Members of all major political parties have been implicated in the scandal.

Michael Martin, speaker of the House of Commons, resigned—a first in over three centuries—over the expense row. Martin was accused of resisting new legislation that would have made lawmakers' expenses more transparent.

On Feb. 4, 392 current and former lawmakers received orders to pay back roughly \$1.7 million U.S. for their misuse of allowances. A day after, Keir Starmer, director of public prosecutions, announced that four current lawmakers would be criminally charged for actions related to the expenses scandal. They are Labour MPs Elliot Morley, David Chaytor and Jim Devine, and Conservative House of Lords member Lord Hanningfield.

The three Labour members issued a joint statement saying that they are "clearly extremely disappointed" at the announcement, and adding, "We totally refute any charges that we have committed an offense and we will defend our position robustly."

Polling Data

How many current MPs in the House of Commons do you think have misused the expenses system for personal gain?

Practically all of them 22%

Most of them	50%
Some of them	24%
Only a few of them	4%

Source: Angus Reid Public Opinion

Methodology: Online interviews with 2,004 British adults, conducted on Feb. 9 and Feb. 10, 2010. Margin of error is 2.2 per cent.

A Third of Italians Say Immigrants Cause Crime

February 18, 2010

Some people in Italy believe foreign-born residents are the main cause of crime in the country, according to a poll by Ispo published in *Corriere della Sera*. 35 per cent of respondents share this view.

Additionally, 44 per cent of respondents say all illegal immigrants should be expelled, even if they have not committed any crime or misdeeds, and 34 per cent disagree with the idea that immigrants are necessary for the national economy.

In August 2008, the government of Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi sent 3,000 military troops to patrol city streets across the country as part of a plan to curb crime and illegal immigration. A major outcry followed, with critics accusing Berlusconi of singling out Roma peoples as criminals. Pope Benedict XVI called for Catholics to help others stay away from "racism, intolerance and exclusion."

Last month, two African-born migrants working in a farm in the southern region of Calabria said they were shot with pellet guns in what they say was a racially-motivated attack. The incident quickly evolved into a massive clash between hundreds of African workers, local residents of the town of Rosarno, and police. Hundreds of migrant workers fled the town two days later.

On Feb. 12, Berlusconi surprised his Albanian counterpart Sali Berisha during a press conference after discussing matters of immigration, jokingly saying, "We will only accept pretty girls from Albania."

Polling Data

I will read some statements about immigrants. For each one, say if you agree or disagree.

	Agree	Disagree
Immigrants are the main cause of crime	35%	65%
Illegal immigrants should be expelled even if they have not committed any misdeeds	44%	54%

Immigrants are necessary for our economy

65% 34%

Source: Ispo / Corriere della Sera

Methodology: Telephone interviews with 814 Italian adults, conducted on Jan. 20 to Jan. 22, 2010. No margin of error was provided.

Opposition Popular Party Favoured by Spaniards

February 17, 2010

People in Spain are voicing support for the party currently in the Official Opposition in the next legislative election, according to a poll by Sigma Dos published in *El Mundo*. 43 per cent of respondents would vote for the Popular Party (PP) in the next ballot, essentially unchanged since December.

The governing Socialist Worker's Party (PSOE) is in second place with 37.7 per cent. 18.8 per cent of respondents would vote for other parties.

José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero was sworn in as president of the government in April 2004, following his party's victory in the legislative ballot. The conservative PP had administered the government under José María Aznar since 1996. Mariano Rajoy took over as PP leader in August 2003.

In March 2008, Spain held a general election. The PSOE secured a new term in office with 43.36 per cent of the vote and 169 seats in the lower house, followed by the PP with 39.85 per cent and 153 mandates. Zapatero retained his post as head of government.

Since late 2007, defaults on so-called subprime mortgages—credit given to high-risk borrowers—in the United States have caused volatility in domestic and global financial markets and pushed the U.S. economy into a recession. A recession is defined as two consecutive quarters of negative growth. The crisis has affected the global financial and credit systems.

Spain's economy has been severely affected by the global financial downturn, as well as by its own setbacks in the domestic real estate market. The Spanish treasury has said that it could take "until 2011" for the national economy to recover from the crisis. The government has pledged a stimulus package worth close to \$120 billion U.S. to help the slumping manufacturing and service sectors. The unemployment rate rose to 19.3 per cent in the third quarter of 2009.

Each European Union (EU) member state presides over the Council of the EU for a period of six months, in accordance with a pre-established rotation. In January, Spain took over these responsibilities from Sweden.

Earlier this month, Zapatero presented before the EU a plan to cut the country's deficit and spur economic growth. Rajoy criticized it as unfeasible, adding that Zapatero "squandered the government's credibility."

Polling Data

Which party would you vote for in the next general election?

Jan. 2010

Dec. 2009

Popular Party (PP)	43.5%	43.6%
Socialist Worker's Party (PSOE)	37.7%	38.5%
Other parties	18.8%	17.9%

Source: Sigma Dos / El Mundo

Methodology: Telephone interviews with 1,000 Spanish adults, conducted from Feb. 2 to Feb. 4, 2010. Margin of error is 3.16 per cent.

NORTH AMERICA

Americans OK with Obama Meeting Dalai Lama

February 16, 2010

The majority of people in the United States have no problem with Barack Obama convening with the Dalai Lama, according to a poll by Angus Reid Public Opinion. 64 per cent of respondents agree with the planned meeting between the U.S. president and the Buddhist spiritual leader.

Obama and the Dalai Lama are scheduled to meet at the White House on Feb. 18. The announcement—which was widely expected—has angered the government of China, which sees the Dalai Lama and his influence over Buddhist Tibet as a threat to Chinese national unity.

On Feb. 11, White House spokesman Robert Gibbs said the scheduled meeting will go ahead, adding, "The Dalai Lama is an internationally respected religious leader and spokesman for Tibetan rights, and the president looks forward to an engaging and constructive dialogue."

A day later, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Ma Zhaoxu renewed calls for Obama to reconsider his decision to meet with the Dalai Lama, saying, "We urge the U.S. side to fully understand the high sensitivity of Tibet-related issues, honour its commitment to recognizing Tibet as part of China and opposing 'Tibet independence.'"

Polling Data

Do you agree or disagree with President Barack Obama meeting the Dalai Lama in the U.S.?

Agree 64%

Disagree 16%

Not sure 20%

Source: Angus Reid Public Opinion

Methodology: Online interviews with 1,004 American adults, conducted on Feb. 9 and Feb. 10, 2010. Margin of error is 3.1 per cent.

Americans' Rating of United Nations Improved, but Still Low

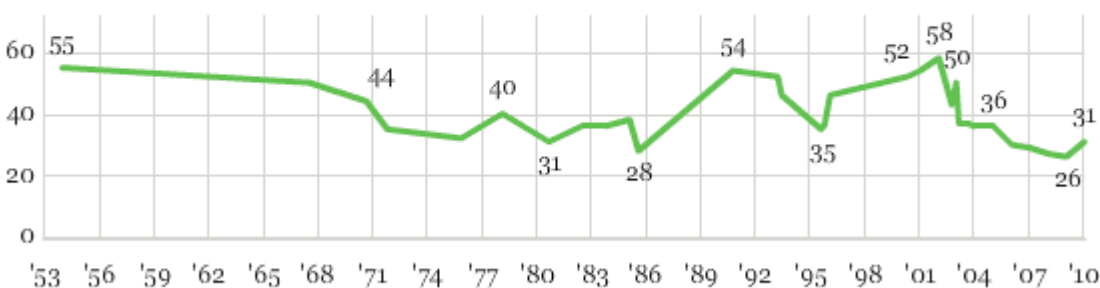
Thirty-one percent of Americans say United Nations is doing a good job

February 19, 2010

Thirty-one percent of Americans say the United Nations is doing a good job of solving the problems it has had to face, according to the Feb. 1-3 Gallup World Affairs poll. While still a negative review, the current U.N. rating is a significant improvement over last year's 26% and the best since 2005.

Do you think the United Nations is doing a good job or a poor job in trying to solve the problems it has had to face?

■ % Good job



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Gallup first asked Americans to assess the job the United Nations is doing in 1953. Americans have never held the United Nations in particularly high esteem, with a historical average of 40% saying it is doing a good job. The all-time high rating was 58% in 2002 shortly after the Sept. 11 terror attacks produced a rally in Americans' support for government institutions.

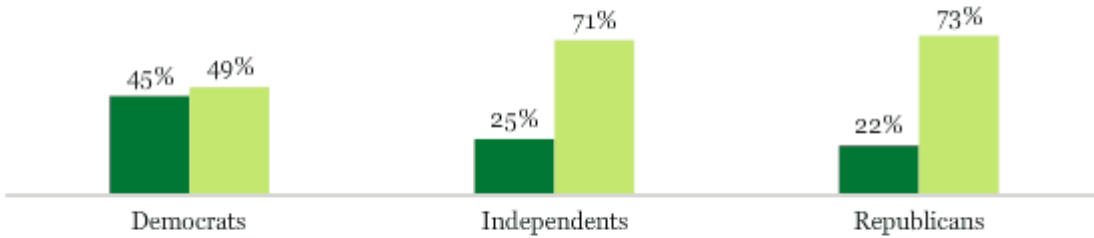
"Americans' views of the United Nations have been particularly dour in recent years, coinciding with the U.S. military action in Iraq that began in March 2003."

Americans' views of the United Nations have been particularly dour in recent years, coinciding with the U.S. military action in Iraq that began in March 2003. The U.S. government sought United Nations backing for the action, but ultimately the United States and its allies invaded Iraq without U.N. support when it was clear a U.N. resolution authorizing military action in Iraq would not pass. Since 2003, an average of 32% of Americans has said the United Nations is doing a good job, including last year's historical low of 26%.

The new Gallup poll finds Democrats (45%) are twice as likely as Republicans (22%) to evaluate the United Nations positively. At 25%, independents' views are nearly the same as those of Republicans.

View of Job United Nations is Doing, by Political Party

■ Good job ■ Poor job



Feb. 1-3 Gallup poll

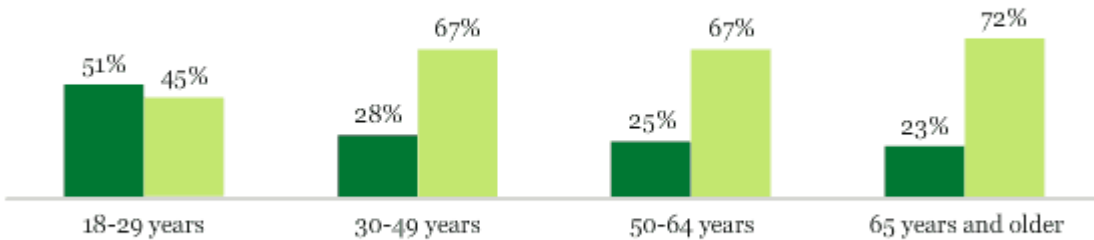
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Since last year, Democrats' ratings have improved the most, from 34% to 45%, and most of the improvement in the United Nations' image is due to higher ratings from Democrats. Positive ratings from independents (from 22% to 25%) and Republicans (from 20% to 22%) ratings are also up, but not to a meaningful degree.

Additionally, young adults give the United Nations a much more positive evaluation than older Americans. The poll finds 51% of 18- to 29-year-olds saying the United Nations is doing a good job, while fewer than 30% in the older age groups do.

View of Job United Nations is Doing, by Age

■ Good job ■ Poor job



Feb. 1-3 Gallup poll

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Higher ratings of the United Nations from young adults has been the norm in recent years, though the current rating from 18- to 29-year-olds is the highest Gallup has measured since 2004 (53%).

Survey Methods

Results are based on telephone interviews with a random sample of 1,025 national adults, aged 18 and older, conducted Feb. 1-3, 2010. For results based on the total sample of national adults, one can say with 95% confidence that the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 4 percentage points.

Interviews are conducted with respondents on land-line telephones (for respondents with a land-line telephone) and cellular phones (for respondents who are cell-phone only).

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

In U.S., Canada Places First in Image Contest; Iran Last

Favorable views of Russia, Palestinian Authority up slightly; views of Iraq down

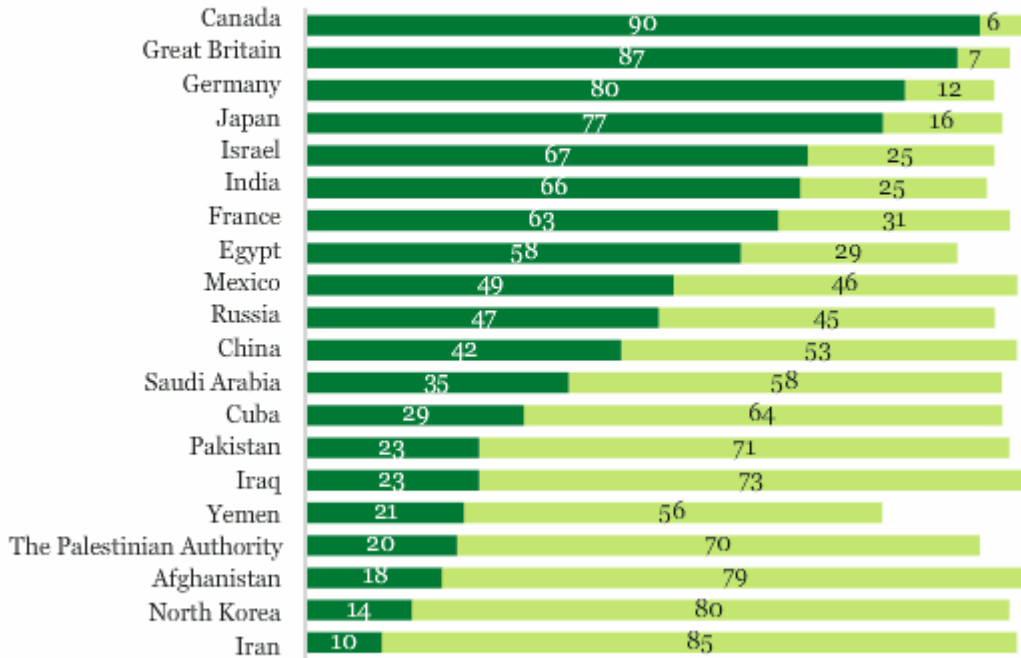
February 19, 2010

Americans' perceptions of 20 nations that figure prominently in the news or U.S. foreign policy held quite steady in the first year of the Obama administration. Canada retained its top position in Gallup's annual country ratings, with 90% of Americans viewing it favorably, unchanged from 2009. Iran continues to rank last, with 10% this year.

2010 Country Favorability Ratings

Next, I'd like your overall opinion of some foreign countries. What is your overall opinion of ... ? Is it very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly unfavorable, or very unfavorable?

■ % Total favorable ■ % Total unfavorable



Feb. 1-3, 2010

GALLUP®

Eight of the countries rated in this year's World Affairs survey are viewed favorably by a majority of Americans. Great Britain nearly matches Canada in favorability, while smaller majorities hold positive views of Germany, Japan, Israel, India, France, and Egypt. Mexico and Russia are both about as likely to be viewed unfavorably as favorably, while 10 countries are generally viewed unfavorably.

"Although the two-percentage-point decline in Mexico's overall favorable rating between 2009 and today is not significant, the result is that, for the first time since 1993, fewer than half of Americans have a favorable view of the United States' southern neighbor."

Yemen was included on the list for the first time this year, amid news that the Christmas Day underwear bomber had ties to a Yemen-based al Qaeda terrorist group. Its 21% favorable rating is among the lowest in the Feb. 1-3 poll, although about one in four Americans have no opinion of that country.

Only Iraq saw a statistically significant, albeit small, drop in favorability over the past year on the basis of the combined percentages viewing each "very favorably" or "mostly favorably."

Most countries' ratings are essentially unchanged, while favorability toward Russia and the Palestinian Authority is up slightly.

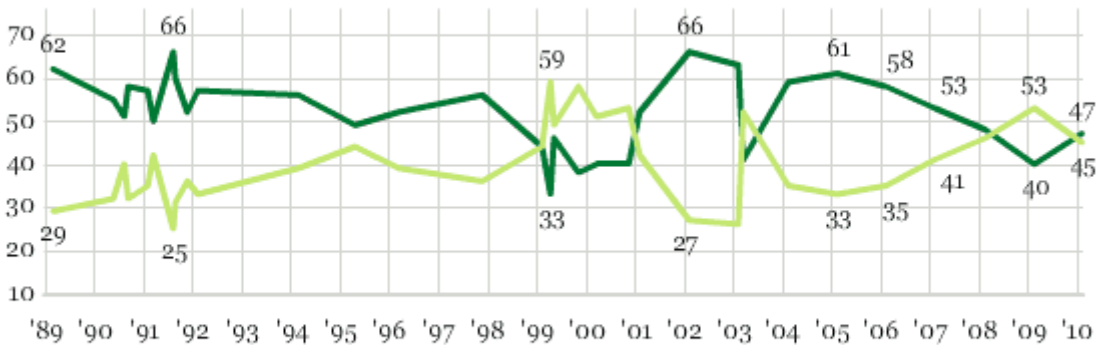
Partial Rebound in Views of Russia

After dipping to 40% in 2009 -- most likely in response to Russia's 2008 military crackdown on Georgian separatists -- favorability toward Russia has recovered somewhat to 47%; however, this remains lower than where it stood for much of the past decade.

The historical high point for positive U.S. feelings toward Russia was 66%, first reached in 1991 and repeated in 2002. However, favorability toward Russia plummeted to 41% in March 2003, after that country sharply opposed the United States' launching of the Iraq war. (U.S. public opinion of France and Germany, two other countries opposed to the war, also turned more negative in 2003.) By February 2004, Russia's favorability score was back to 59%, and it remained above 50% until 2008.

*Americans' Overall Views of Russia**

■ % Total favorable ■ % Total unfavorable



* "Soviet Union" from 1989-1992

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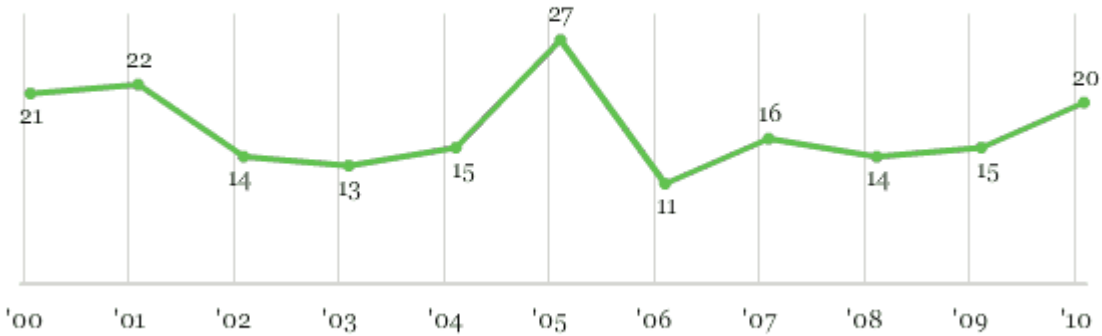
Palestinian Authority Sees Slight Improvement

Americans' views of the official governing body of the Palestinian people -- the Palestinian Authority -- have been decidedly negative over the years. However, there was a slight improvement in views over the past year, from 15% viewing the Palestinian Authority favorably in 2009 (and just 11% after the Hamas group won the Palestinian elections in 2006) to 20% today.

Favorability toward the Palestinian Authority was quite low for most of the Bush administration, except for February 2005, when the two sides had just announced an informal truce during Mideast peace talks.

Americans' Overall Views of the Palestinian Authority

■ % Total favorable



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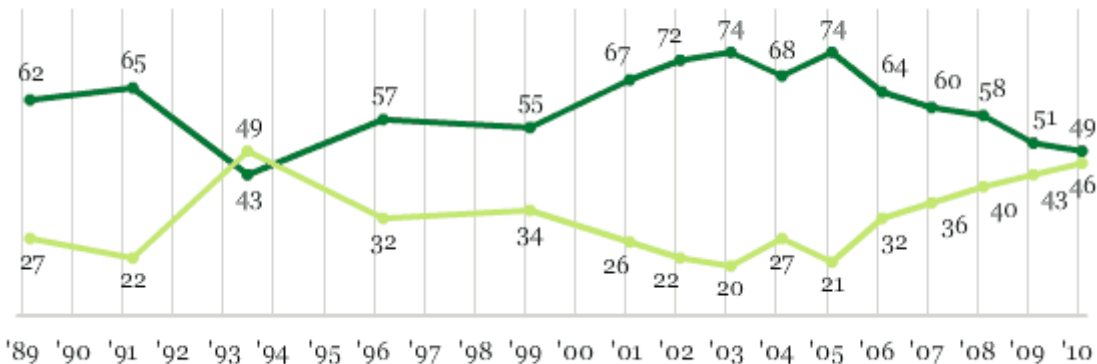
Favorability Toward Mexico Still Dampened

Although the two-percentage-point decline in Mexico's overall favorable rating between 2009 and today is not significant, the result is that, for the first time since 1993, fewer than half of Americans have a favorable view of the United States' southern neighbor. Mexico's image in the U.S. has generally been in decline since 2005.

Heightened U.S. attention to illegal immigration from Mexico, as well as to intensifying violence in the Mexican drug war, could explain the deterioration of Mexico's U.S. image in recent years.

Americans' Overall Views of Mexico

■ % Total favorable ■ % Total unfavorable



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Notable Differences

Most of the countries rated this year are viewed more favorably by young adults (aged 18 to 34) than by those 55 and older. Additionally, some are viewed differently by Republicans and Democrats.

- As a result of the generational differences, Egypt, China, Russia, and Mexico are all viewed favorably by at least 6 in 10 young adults, but by fewer than half of adults 55 and older.
- Significant age gaps exist in favorability toward Cuba, Yemen, Pakistan, North Korea, the Palestinian Authority, and Iran, although most members of all age groups still view these countries negatively.
- France, Russia, Cuba, North Korea, the Palestinian Authority, and Yemen are all viewed more favorably by Democrats than by Republicans. Israel is the only country rated this year that is viewed more favorably by Republicans.

Country Ratings Showing Significant Age and/or Partisan Gaps

% Total favorable

	18 to 34 years	35 to 54 years	55 and older	Repub- lican	Demo- crat
	%	%	%	%	%
China	62	38	34	39	45
Cuba	39	32	22	23	37
Egypt	72	60	47	57	64
France	75	63	55	52	76
India	76	67	60	64	69
Iran	18	10	6	9	13
Israel	63	67	70	80	53
Mexico	60	52	38	46	55
North Korea	30	11	6	11	18
Pakistan	34	22	17	25	24
Russia	61	47	38	40	56
The Palestinian Authority	28	17	15	12	25
Yemen	35	22	10	17	26

Feb. 1-3, 2010

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A handful of countries -- Canada, Great Britain, Germany, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Afghanistan -- receive similar ratings from the broad age and partisan groups.

17. Next, I'd like your overall opinion of some foreign countries. What is your overall opinion of [RANDOM ORDER]? Is it very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly unfavorable, or very unfavorable?

	Very favorable	Mostly favorable	Mostly unfavorable	Very unfavorable	No opinion
	%	%	%	%	%
Afghanistan	3	15	48	31	4
Canada	39	51	5	1	5
China	5	37	36	17	5
Cuba	3	26	43	21	7
Egypt	8	50	24	5	14
France	13	50	24	7	6
Germany	19	61	10	2	8
Great Britain	30	57	6	1	5
India	9	57	20	5	9
Iran	1	9	39	46	4
Iraq	3	20	44	29	3
Israel	22	45	19	6	8
Japan	19	58	12	4	7
Mexico	7	42	32	14	5
North Korea	3	11	33	47	5
Pakistan	2	21	47	24	6
Russia	6	41	35	10	7
Saudi Arabia	3	32	41	17	7
The Palestinian Authority	3	17	44	26	10
Yemen	2	19	37	19	23

Feb. 1-3, 2010

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Survey Methods

Results are based on telephone interviews with a random sample of 1,025 national adults, aged 18 and older, conducted Feb. 1-3, 2010. For results based on the total sample of national adults, one can say with 95% confidence that the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 4 percentage points.

Interviews are conducted with respondents on land-line telephones (for respondents with a land-line telephone) and cellular phones (for respondents who are cell-phone only).

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

In U.S., 6 in 10 View Iran as Critical Threat to U.S. Interests

International terrorism viewed as top threat to U.S.

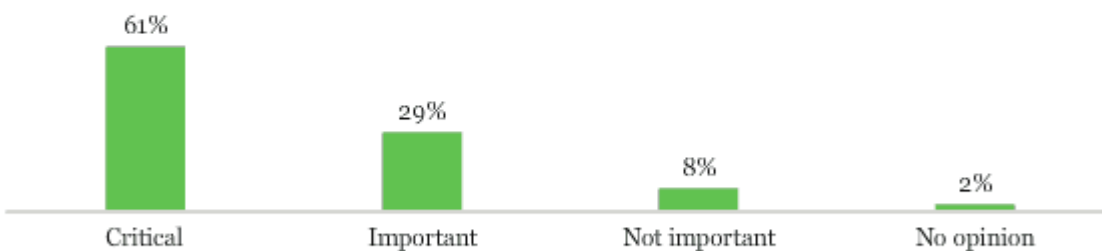
February 16, 2010

A Gallup poll finds 61% of Americans viewing the military power of Iran as a critical threat to U.S. vital interests over the next 10 years. An additional 29% say Iran is an important, though not a critical, threat to the United States. The findings come as Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is seeking the support of several Arab nations for additional sanctions on Iran in a trip to the region this week.

Views of Iran as a Threat to U.S. Vital Interests

I am going to read you a list of possible threats to the vital interest of the United States in the next 10 years. For each one, please tell me if you see this as a critical threat, an important but not critical threat, or not an important threat at all.

■ The military power of Iran



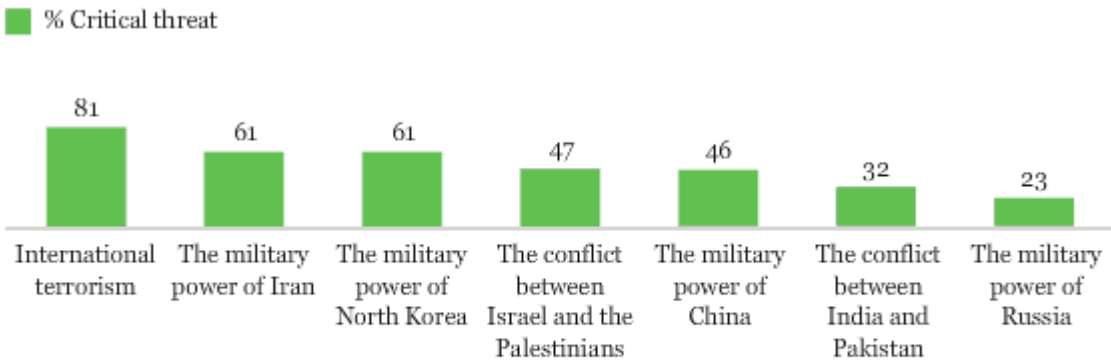
Gallup poll, Feb. 1-3, 2010

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"There is a notable difference in perceptions of Iran by age. Younger Americans (those aged 18 through 29) are significantly less likely than Americans aged 30 and older to view Iran as a critical threat."

The findings are based on a Feb. 1-3 Gallup poll that asked Americans to assess the threat of each of seven international issues to the United States. Only international terrorism was more likely to be rated as a critical threat to U.S. vital interests than Iran. Americans rated the military power of North Korea and Iran as equal threats.

Views of International Issues as Critical Threats to U.S. Vital Interests



Gallup poll, Feb. 1-3, 2010

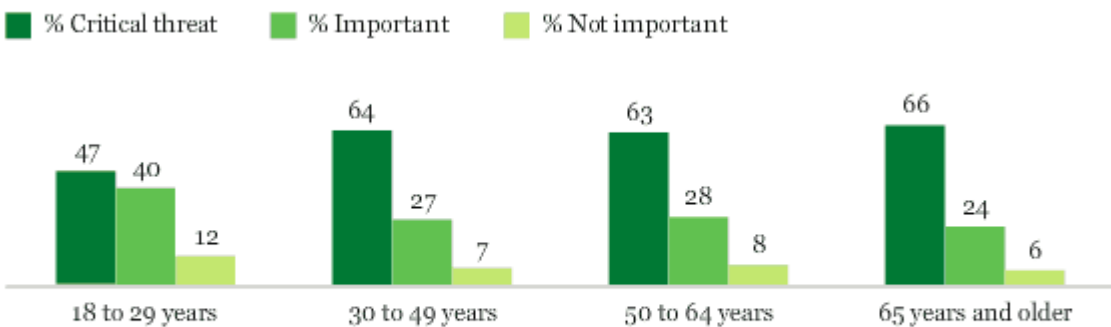
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The poll was conducted prior to Clinton's trip, and it is unclear whether her remarks have changed Americans' views on how serious a threat Iran is to the United States. Clinton warned that Iran is moving toward a military dictatorship as the United States and other nations seek to prevent it from developing nuclear weapons.

A majority of Republicans, independents, and Democrats view Iran's military power as a critical threat to the U.S., though Republicans are somewhat more likely to do so (at 68%, compared to 60% for independents and 57% for Democrats).

There is a notable difference in perceptions of Iran by age. Younger Americans (those aged 18 through 29) are significantly less likely than Americans aged 30 and older to view Iran as a critical threat.

Views of Iran as a Threat to U.S. Vital Interests, by Age



Gallup poll, Feb. 1-3, 2010

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Older Americans are more likely than younger Americans to perceive that several of the issues tested are critical threats to the United States. However, the greatest difference by age is on Iran,

and could stem in part from the fact that young adults were not yet born when U.S.-Iran tensions were arguably at their greatest, during the 1979-1981 Iranian hostage crisis.

Views of International Issues as Critical Threats to U.S. Vital Interests, by Age

Figures reflect percentages viewing each issue as a critical threat

	18 to 29 years	30 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 years and older
International terrorism	73%	82%	83%	84%
The military power of Iran	47%	64%	63%	66%
The military power of North Korea	56%	58%	65%	66%
The conflict between Israel and the Palestinians	40%	45%	50%	52%
The military power of China	47%	45%	49%	42%
The conflict between India and Pakistan	22%	31%	38%	35%
The military power of Russia	28%	18%	22%	27%

Gallup poll, Feb. 1-3, 2010

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Partisan differences in evaluations of the seven international issues as threats are generally small. Though Republicans are more likely than Democrats to perceive six of the seven issues as critical threats, Republican-Democratic differences are only as large as 12 percentage points on terrorism and 11 points on the military power of Iran.

Views of International Issues as Critical Threats to U.S. Vital Interests, by Party Affiliation

Figures are percentage viewing each issue as a critical threat

	Republicans %	Independents %	Democrats %	Republican– Democratic gap (in pct. pts.)
International terrorism	89	79	77	12
The military power of Iran	68	60	57	11
The military power of North Korea	67	54	63	4
The conflict between Israel and the Palestinians	51	45	46	5
The military power of China	51	43	44	7
The conflict between India and Pakistan	29	32	34	-5
The military power of Russia	27	23	19	8

Gallup poll, Feb. 1-3, 2010

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There is a larger difference by political ideology with respect to China's military power, which 55% of conservatives regard as a critical threat, compared with 35% of liberals. Like Republicans, conservatives tend to view the various issues as more serious threats.

Changes in Views of Issues as Threats

Terrorism also ranked as the top issue in 2004, when Gallup last asked this question. Americans' perceptions of the threat of international terrorism are essentially the same today as six years ago. In 2004, 82% said terrorism was a critical threat to U.S. interests, compared with the 81% in the latest poll.

Similarly, there has been essentially no change in the perceived threat of the India-Pakistan conflict. However, since 2004, Americans have become more likely to view the military power of China as a critical threat (39% in 2004 vs. 46% today) and the military power of Russia as a threat (18% vs. 23%).

The biggest change has been with respect to the conflict in the Middle East. The percentage of Americans believing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a critical threat to the U.S. has fallen from 58% to 47%.

Changes in Views of International Issues as Critical Threats, 2004 to 2010

Figures reflect percentages viewing each issue as a critical threat

	2004	2010	Change
International terrorism	82	81	-1
The conflict between Israel and the Palestinians	58	47	-11
The military power of China	39	46	+7
The conflict between India and Pakistan	32	32	0
The military power of Russia	18	23	+5

Gallup poll, Feb. 1-3, 2010

Note: The military power of Iran and North Korea were not asked in 2004.

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Bottom Line

It's not clear whether the United States will succeed in getting the international community to impose additional sanctions on Iran. Nine in 10 Americans view Iran as an important threat to U.S. vital interests, including 61% who say it is a critical threat. That puts concern about Iran on par with North Korea, another nation with nuclear ambitions, and behind only international terrorism.

Track key 2010 election indicators on our politics page.

Survey Methods

Results are based on telephone interviews with 1,025 national adults, aged 18 and older, conducted Feb. 1-3, 2010. For results based on the total sample of national adults, one can say with 95% confidence that the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 4 percentage points.

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

Majorities Not Confident about US Policies in Afghanistan

While Obama's Rating Still Negative, Some Signs of Improvement

February 11, 2010

According to *The Harris Poll*, a majority of adults continues to give President Obama negative ratings on his handling of Afghanistan. In addition, most are not confident that US policies will

be successful. However, the President's standing has improved since November and the majority who support his decision to send an additional 30,000 troops to Afghanistan has also increased by 7 points.

These are some of the results of *The Harris Poll* of 2,576 adults surveyed online between January 18 and 25, 2010 by **Harris Interactive**.

Other findings in the latest Harris Poll include:

- By 53% to 38%, President Obama is rated negatively on his handling the situation in Afghanistan over the past several months. Nonetheless, these ratings have improved since November when he received 60% to 31% negative marks.
- However, almost six in ten (57%) US adults support (either strongly or somewhat) the "surge", sending an additional 30,000 troops to the country. A third (32%) opposes such action. In December a slightly smaller 53% to 33% also supported the sending of additional troops.
- Only one in ten (11%) adults now think the situation in Afghanistan is getting better while those who believe the situation is getting worse has shrunk to 32% while 46% think there hasn't been any change. This represents an improvement in the US public's perceptions since November 2009 when 47% thought things were getting worse, only 6% thought things were getting better and 39% said there has been no real change.
- Furthermore, only 15% are now confident that U.S. policies in Afghanistan will be successful – a small improvement since 12% was recorded in November's 12%. Just over half (53%) are not confident – again a significant improvement since November when 61% said they were not confident.

While the US public is supportive of sending more US troops to Afghanistan, there is less consensus concerning the length of the time troops should remain. President Obama has announced that troops will start coming home in the summer of 2011. One in five (20%) feel that the summer of 2011 is a good timetable. Over one in four (27%) feel that a timetable should not be set. Over a third (36%) believes that the troops should come home before 2011; this includes 18% who say troops should come home now.

- By political party affiliation, Democrats are more likely to side with Obama's timetable (34%). However, half of Republicans (50%) feel that we shouldn't set a timetable. Independents split in a similar fashion as the entire population – 19% say the summer of 2011 is a good timetable, 29% say there shouldn't be a timetable and the remaining 35% feel the troops should come home either now or before 2011.

Most people do not think it will be possible to improve things in Afghanistan. Pluralities of the US public do not think it will be possible to *reduce corruption* (44%), *leave behind a stable government* (40%) and *prevent Al Qaeda from using Afghanistan as a base to train terrorists* (37%).

- However, by a range of 25% to 33% significant numbers do think these things are possible and many (29% to 35%) are not sure at all.

Differences by party

Not surprisingly, there are large differences between how Democrats and Republicans rate the president's handling of Afghanistan. Six in ten (61%) Democrats rate him positively while almost eight in ten (76%) Republican rates him negatively. However, a majority of Independents (58%) join the majority of Republicans in giving him negative rating.

Four in ten of all Democrats (43%) join most Republicans (59%) and Independents (62%) in saying they are not confident that U.S. policies in Afghanistan will be successful.

However, the one area that people from all parties can agree on is the decision to send additional 30,000 troops. Two-thirds (67%) of Republicans and 57% of Democrats and Independents support this.

So what?

These new findings show that the US public still has serious reservations about the situation in Afghanistan and the President's handling of this war. However, public opinion is not as bleak towards the President as it was a few months ago, though there is a long way to go before the public is fully supportive.

TABLE 1

OBAMA'S HANDLING OF AFGHANISTAN

"Now turning to Afghanistan, overall how would you rate the job President Obama has done in handling Afghanistan over the past several months?"

Base: All Adults

	April 2009	Sept 2009	Nov 2009	Jan 2010	Political Party		
	Republican	Democrat	Independent				
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Positive (NET)	51	36	31	38	18	61	33
Excellent	10	5	4	7	2	15	4
Pretty Good	41	32	26	30	16	46	29
Negative (NET)	36	54	60	53	76	31	58
Only fair	26	35	33	31	41	22	35
Poor	10	19	27	22	34	9	24
Not sure	13	10	9	9	6	8	8

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE 2
SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN – GETTING BETTER OR WORSE

"Do you think that the situation in Afghanistan is...?"

Base: All Adults

	July 2005	May 2007	August 2008	April 2009	Sept 2009	Nov 2009	January 2010			
	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent						
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Getting better	17	12	11	12	8	6	11	10	18	8
Getting worse	30	26	37	28	42	47	32	41	24	34
No real change	37	36	35	45	41	39	46	43	48	47
Not sure	16	26	18	16	9	8	11	7	10	11

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE 3
CONFIDENCE IN SUCCESS IN AFGHANISTAN?

"How confident are you that U.S. policies in Afghanistan will be successful?"

Base: All Adults

	July 2005	May 2007	August 2008	April 2009	Sept 2009	Nov 2009	January 2010			
	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent						
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Confident	25	22	17	27	14	12	15	13	22	12
Not confident	45	41	54	40	55	61	53	59	43	62
Not sure	30	37	29	33	31	28	32	29	35	27

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE 4
TROOP SURGE IN AFGHANISTAN

"Do you support or oppose President Obama's decision to send an additional 30,000 troops to Afghanistan?"

Base: All Adults

_____ Dec Jan Age _____ Political Party

	2009*	2010	18-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-64	65+	Rep.	Dem.	Ind.
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
SUPPORT (NET)	53	57	34	42	59	57	67	67	67	57	57
Strongly support	24	24	11	16	26	23	28	35	38	20	21
Somewhat support	29	33	23	27	33	34	39	32	29	37	36
OPPOSE (NET)	33	32	46	45	32	30	28	26	25	35	34
Somewhat oppose	18	17	28	20	17	16	15	12	13	20	17
Strongly oppose	15	15	18	25	15	14	13	14	12	15	17
Not at all sure	14	10	20	13	10	12	5	8	8	8	9

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding.

* - BBC America/Harris Poll

TABLE 5
TROOP SURGE IN AFGHANISTAN

"President Obama recently announced that some of the troops that were part of the surge in Afghanistan will start coming home in the summer of 2011. Do you think...?"

Base: All Adults

	Jan 2010	By Party		
		Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
This is a good timetable for U.S. troops to come home.	20	8	34	19
There should be no timetable for U.S. troops to come home.	27	50	11	29
Some U.S. troops should come home before 2011.	18	15	23	16
All U.S. troops should come home now.	18	12	19	19
Other	4	3	3	6
Not sure	12	13	10	11

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 6
WHAT IS POSSIBLE IN AFGHANISTAN

"Do you think it will or will not be possible for the United States and its allies in Afghanistan to..."

Base: All Adults

	Will be possible	Will not be possible	Not at all sure
	%	%	%
Reduce corruption	27	44	29

Leave behind a stable democratic government	25	40	35
Prevent Al Qaeda from using Afghanistan as a base to train terrorists who will attack the U.S.	33	37	30
	-	-	-

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding

Methodology

This Harris Poll was conducted online within the United States between January 18 and 25, 2010 among 2,576 adults (aged 18 and over). Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words "margin of error" as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

Most People Believe Osama bin Laden Is Alive and Many Believe He Is in Pakistan

Very little confidence in Pakistan's ability to defeat the Taliban

February 10, 2010

A new Harris Poll finds that more than three-quarters (78%) of adult Americans believe Osama bin Laden is alive. A plurality (37%) believes that he is living in Pakistan, but many people (32%) do not feel able to even guess where he is.

Confidence in Pakistan's ability to defeat the Taliban is very low, and a 49% plurality of adults think it likely that "at some time in the next few years, there will be a government in Pakistan that supports Al Qaeda in its efforts to launch terrorist attacks in the U.S."

These are some of the results of *The Harris Poll* of 2,576 adults surveyed online between January 18 and 25, 2010 by **Harris Interactive**.

The main findings of this poll are:

- While fully 78% of adults believe Osama bin Laden is alive, only 23% feel that he is "definitely alive." Most people (55%) think he is "probably alive."
- Only 11% of those who think he is alive believe that bin Laden is still in Afghanistan, whereas 37% believe he is in Pakistan. A few people think he is in Yemen (7%), Iran (5%) or somewhere else (8%).
- Hardly anyone (3%) is "very confident" that Pakistan will defeat the Taliban, while another 19% are "somewhat confident." Most people are either "not at all confident" (23%) or "not that confident" (40%).
- Half of all adults (49%) think it is very (12%) or somewhat (37%) likely that at some time in the next few years a Pakistani government will support Al Qaeda in its efforts to launch terrorist attacks in the U.S. Only 30% thinks this is not likely.

So what?

The economy, jobs and health care may top the list of issues people want the government to address, but fear of another terrorist attack against the U.S.A. is not far beneath the surface. This is fed not just by news from Afghanistan, the Yemen and Iran but by a widespread belief that the Taliban or others who support Al Qaeda could take control of the government of Pakistan.

TABLE 1
IS OSAMA BIN LADEN ALIVE

"Do you believe that Osama Bin Laden is still alive?"

Base: All Adults

	Generation				Party I.D.			
	Total	Echo Boomers (18-33)	Gen. X (34-45)	Baby Boomers (46-64)	Matures (65+)	Republican	Democrat	Independent
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
ALIVE (NET)	78	72	81	80	81	82	80	78
He's definitely alive	23	20	23	26	21	25	25	20
He's probably alive	55	52	58	54	60	57	56	58
NOT ALIVE (NET)	10	13	10	8	6	8	10	12
He's probably not alive	8	9	8	7	6	7	7	9
He's definitely not alive	2	4	1	1	*	1	2	2
Not at all sure	12	15	9	11	13	10	10	10

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE 2

WHERE IS BIN LADEN HIDING

"What country do you feel Osama Bin Laden is hiding in?"

Base: Believe Bin Laden is alive

	Generation					Party I.D.		
	Total	Echo Boomers (18-33)	Gen. X (34-45)	Baby Boomers (46-64)	Matures (65+)	Republican	Democrat	Independent
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Pakistan	37	30	33	41	47	38	36	42
Afghanistan	11	12	12	10	11	9	14	9
Yemen	7	9	6	5	8	6	7	7
Iran	5	5	4	4	4	5	5	4
Somewhere else	8	10	11	7	3	7	8	7
Not at all sure	32	35	34	32	26	35	29	32

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE 3

CONFIDENCE IN PAKISTAN

"How confident are you that the government of Pakistan will be able to defeat the Taliban and other extremists in its country?"

Base: All Adults

	Generation					Party I.D.		
	Total	Echo Boomers (18-33)	Gen. X (34-45)	Baby Boomers (46-64)	Matures (65+)	Republican	Democrat	Independent
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
CONFIDENT (NET)	21	22	20	22	19	21	24	21
Very confident	3	5	2	2	1	1	5	2
Somewhat confident	19	17	18	21	17	20	20	19

NOT CONFIDENT (NET)	63	55	66	65	71	69	59	69
Not that confident	40	36	42	41	45	44	39	43
Not at all confident	23	20	24	24	26	24	20	27
Not at all sure	15	23	14	13	10	10	17	10

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE 4

AL QAEDA IN PAKISTAN

"How likely do you think it is that at some time in the next few years there will be a government in Pakistan that supports Al Qaeda in its efforts to launch terrorist attacks in the US?"

Base: All Adults

	Generation					Party I.D.		
	Total	Echo Boomers (18-33)	Gen. X (34-45)	Baby Boomers (46-64)	Matures (65+)	Republican	Democrat	Independent
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
LIKELY (NET)	49	43	49	51	56	60	43	49
Very likely	12	12	10	13	12	14	12	11
Somewhat likely	37	32	39	38	45	46	31	38
NOT LIKELY (NET)	30	31	30	31	28	26	36	32
Not that likely	25	25	24	27	25	22	30	26
Not at all likely	5	6	6	4	3	3	6	6
Not at all sure	20	25	21	18	16	14	21	19

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding.

Methodology

This Harris Poll was conducted online within the United States between January 18 and 25, 2010

among 2,576 adults (aged 18 and over). Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

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Americans See Slight Improvement in U.S. Global Image

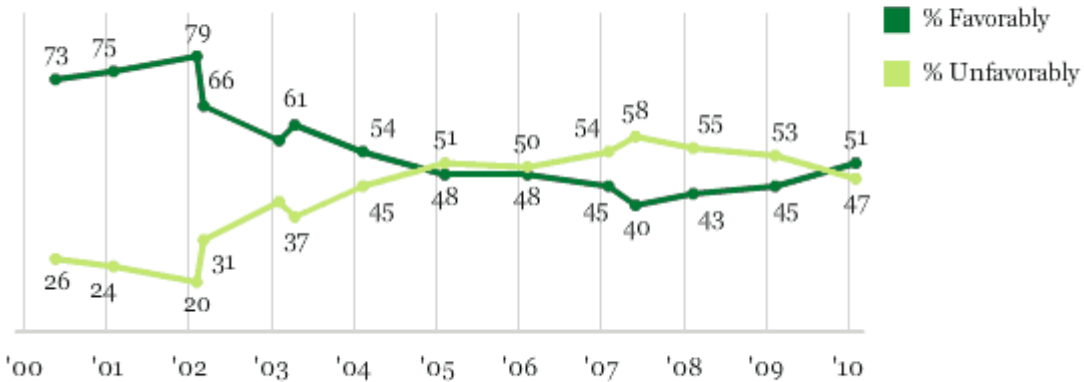
For first time since 2004, slim majority say world views U.S. favorably

February 15, 2010

After five years when fewer than half of Americans believed the United States was seen favorably in the eyes of the world, Gallup's decade-long trend lines on this measure have again crossed. Fifty-one percent now say the U.S. is viewed favorably, up from 45% a year ago.

Americans' Perceptions of U.S. Global Position

In general, how do you think the United States rates in the eyes of the world -- very favorably, somewhat favorably, somewhat unfavorably, or very unfavorably?



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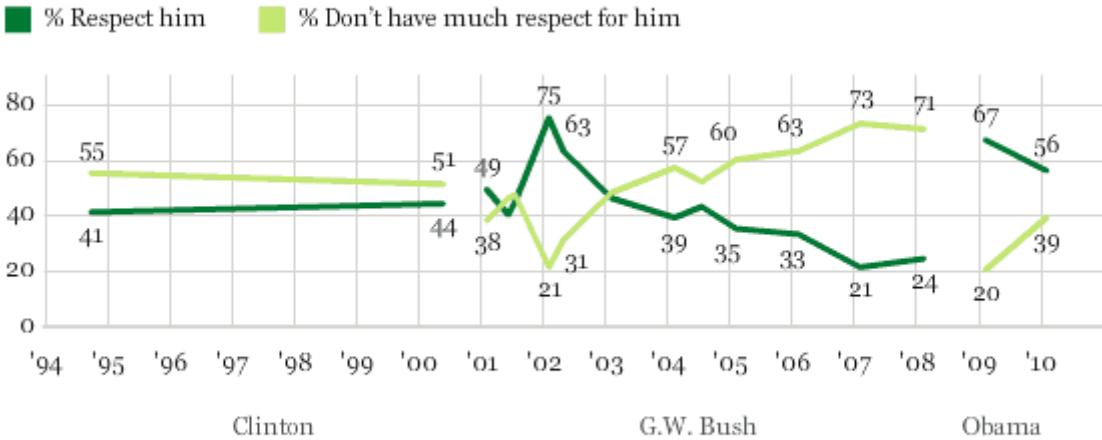
Also positive with respect to U.S. attitudes about the country's global image: 56% of Americans believe leaders of other countries around the world respect President Barack Obama. While this is lower than the soaring 67% who perceived this a year ago, shortly after Obama took office, it continues to far outpace the levels received by Presidents George W. Bush and Bill Clinton during most of their terms.

"Not since April 2003 have a majority of Americans been satisfied with the United States' global position."

Only Bush achieved a similarly high percentage on this measure (in the first few months after 9/11), but that quickly eroded as international criticism of him over the Iraq war mounted after 2002. However, even prior to 9/11, fewer than half of Americans thought Bush was well-regarded internationally. The same was true for Clinton in the two measurements taken toward the beginning and toward the end of his presidency, in 1994 and 2000.

Americans' Perceptions of Global Respect for U.S. President

Do you think leaders of other countries around the world have respect for [Barack Obama], or do you think they don't have much respect for him?



Selected trend; see table at end of this report for full trend.

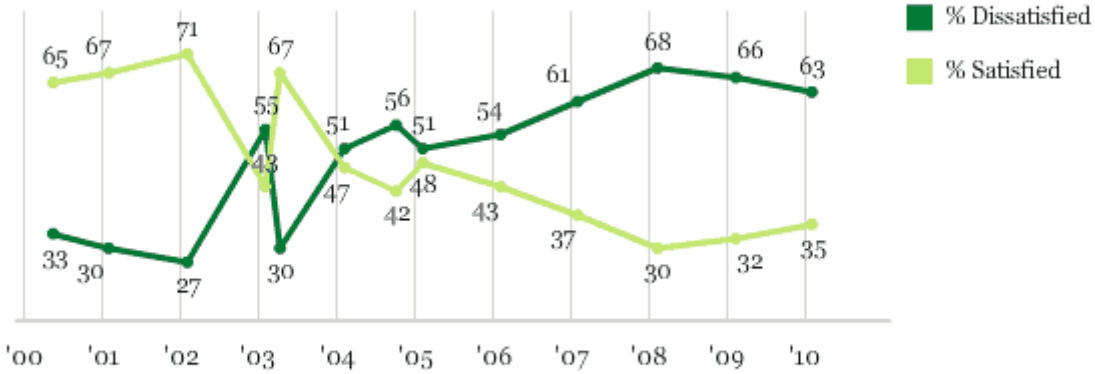
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Both sets of findings are consistent with Gallup's worldwide polling that shows a significant improvement since Obama took office in how residents of more than 100 countries view the United States. The global median job approval rating for U.S. leadership rose from 34% in 2008 to 51% in 2009.

Although more Americans now than in the past believe the U.S. and its president are held in high regard by the world community, there has been little improvement in Americans' satisfaction with the United States' position in the world. Currently, 35% are satisfied, similar to the 32% found last year at the start of the Obama administration and only slightly better than the 30% in the last year of the Bush administration. Not since April 2003 have a majority of Americans been satisfied with the United States' global position.

Americans' Satisfaction With U.S. Position in the World

On the whole, would you say that you are satisfied or dissatisfied with the position of the United States in the world today?



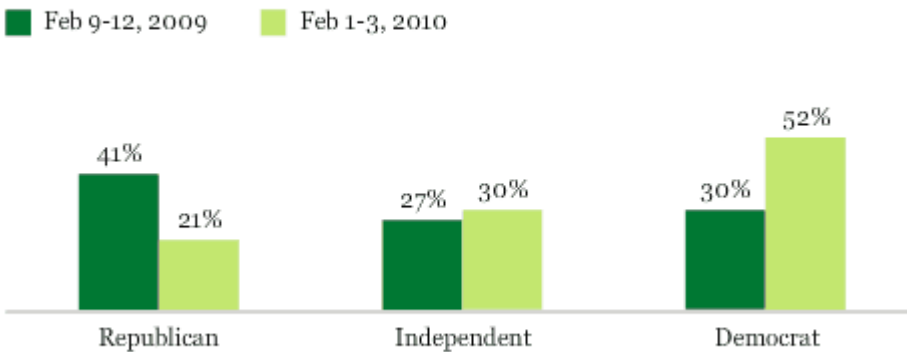
Selected trend; see table at end of this report for full trend.

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The views of Republicans and Democrats on this question have essentially flipped in the past year. Although Obama was already president at the time of Gallup's 2009 World Affairs survey, it was apparently too soon into his presidency for partisans to tailor their views on this question accordingly. At that time, a higher percentage of Republicans than of Democrats were satisfied with the U.S. position in the world. Today, the reverse is true.

Satisfaction With U.S. Position in the World -- by Party ID

% Satisfied

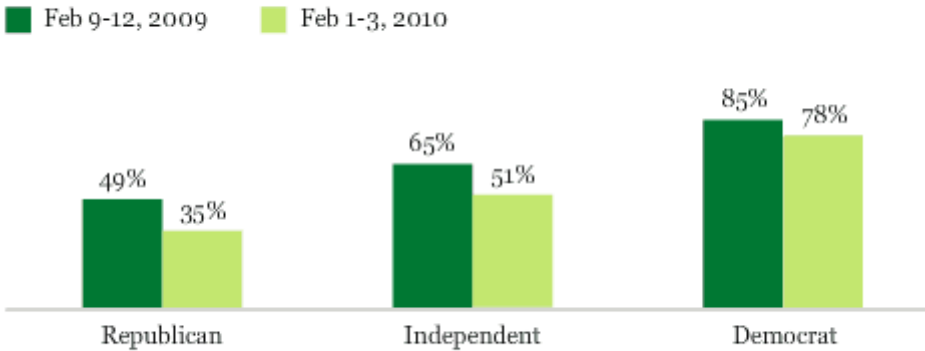


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Public perceptions of Obama's reputation have grown more partisan over the past year. While the percentage saying Obama is viewed favorably has declined among all groups, it is down only slightly among Democrats, but more steeply among independents and Republicans.

Perceptions of Global Respect for President Obama -- by Party ID

% Respected by world leaders



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Bottom Line

Americans' perceptions of how the U.S. is viewed internationally and, in particular, how the president himself is viewed, have grown more positive since the end of the Bush administration, even with this year's drop in the percentage believing that world leaders view Obama favorably. However, neither those improved attitudes nor Obama's handling of foreign policy has elevated Americans' reported satisfaction with the United States' position in the world.

Survey Methods

Results are based on telephone interviews with 1,025 national adults, aged 18 and older, conducted Feb. 1-3, 2010. For results based on the total sample of national adults, one can say with 95% confidence that the maximum margin of error is ± 4 percentage points.

Interviews are conducted with respondents on land-line telephones (for respondents with a land-line telephone) and cellular phones (for respondents who are cell-phone only).

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

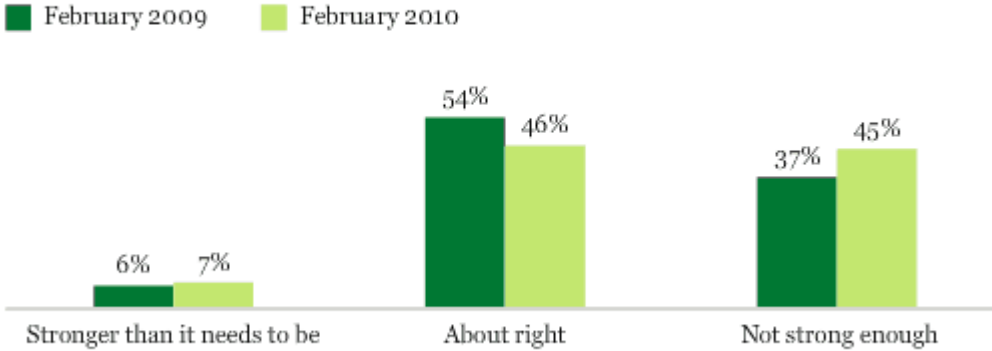
Americans More Divided on Strength of National Defense

Nearly as many now say it is "not strong enough" as say it is "about right"

February 18, 2010

Americans are more likely now (45%) than they were a year ago (37%) to say the United States' national defense is "not strong enough." At the same time, fewer believe the nation's defense is "about right."

Do you, yourself, feel that our national defense is stronger now than it needs to be, not strong enough, or about right at the present time?



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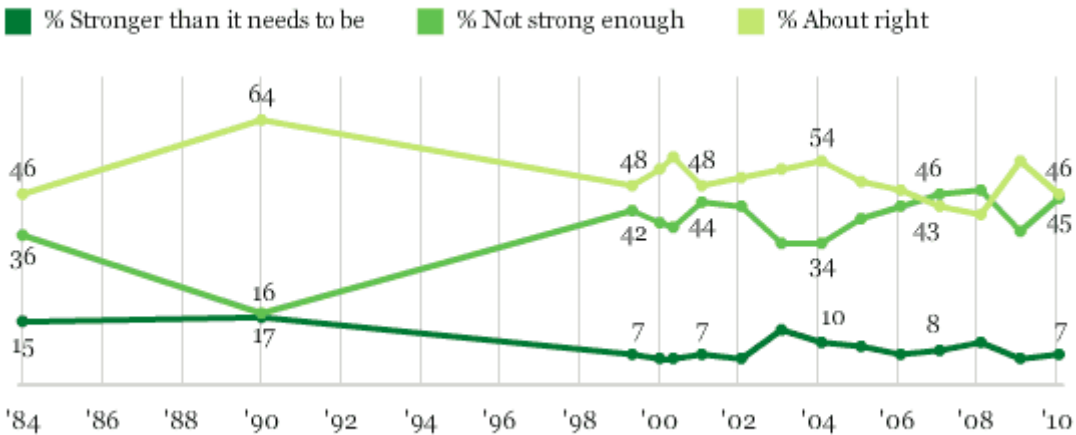
These results are based on Gallup's annual World Affairs poll, conducted Feb. 1-3.

"When asked about the government's spending on the military and national defense, Americans do not show a great degree of consensus -- 36% say the government is spending 'about the right amount,' 34% say 'too much,' and 27% 'too little.'"

Gallup has asked Americans to evaluate the national defense of the United States periodically since 1984 and yearly since 1999. Americans typically say the U.S. national defense is about right or not strong enough, with relatively few saying it is too strong. Currently, Americans are equally likely to say national defense is about right or not strong enough.

The current figures are similar to the opinions Gallup measured from 2006 to 2008, and the 45% who now believe the nation's defense is not strong enough is just two points shy of the 2008 high. Last year's rosier assessment may have been a temporary shift owing to positive feelings toward the new president, as the poll was conducted during the initial weeks of Barack Obama's administration.

Trend in Americans' Views of Strength of U.S. National Defense

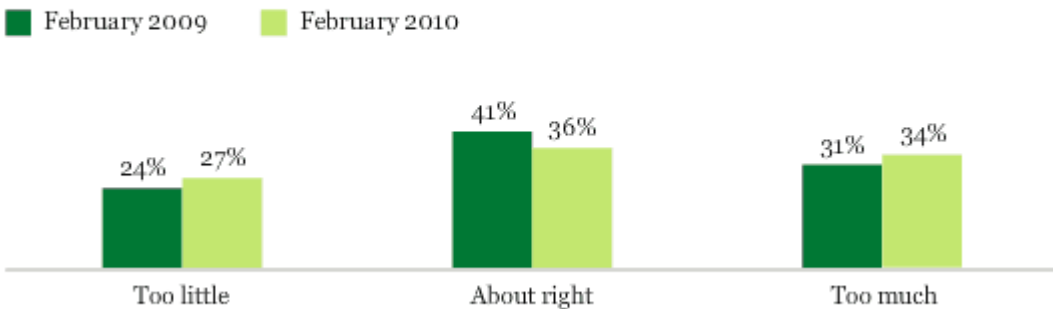


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When asked about the government's spending on the military and national defense, Americans do not show a great degree of consensus -- 36% say the government is spending "about the right amount," 34% say "too much," and 27% "too little."

Compared with last year, slightly fewer Americans now say defense spending is about right, with small but equal gains in the percentages who say the United States is spending too much and too little.

There is much discussion as to the amount of money the government in Washington should spend for national defense and military purposes. How do you feel about this? Do you think we are spending too little, about the right amount, or too much?



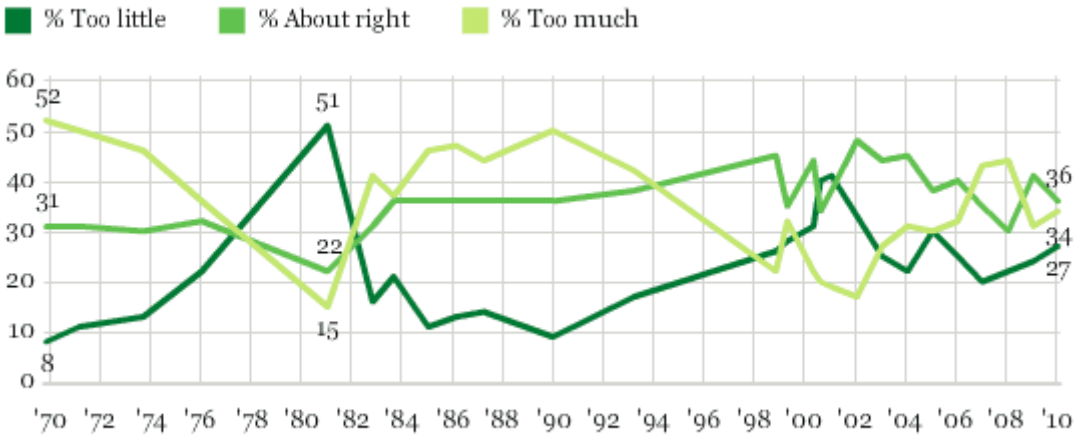
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Gallup has asked this question since 1969, and the current results are similar to the historical average over this time.

The high point in the percentage saying the U.S. is spending too much, 52%, came in that initial 1969 measurement, as the U.S. was engaged in the Vietnam War. The high point in saying the U.S. is spending too little on defense came at the very beginning of the Reagan administration, in January 1981. Reagan campaigned on strengthening the military, and greatly increased defense

spending during his presidency. By November 1982, the percentage of Americans who said the U.S. was spending too little on defense dropped to 16%.

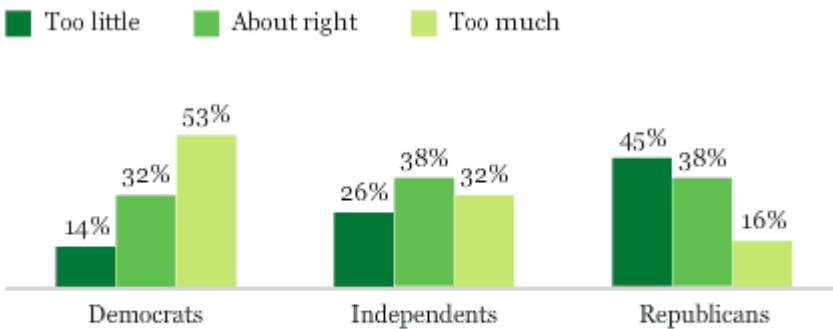
Views of Amount U.S. Spends on National Defense and the Military



GALLUP

Views of defense spending vary significantly by partisanship. A majority of Democrats, 53%, say the U.S. spends too much on defense, with 14% saying "too little." On the other hand, 45% of Republicans say too little is spent on defense, with 16% saying "too much." Independents' opinions are more evenly divided.

Views of Defense Spending, by Political Party



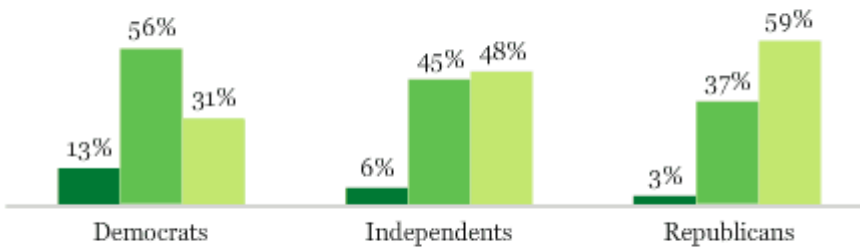
Gallup poll, Feb. 1-3, 2010

GALLUP

Republicans and Democrats also disagree in their views of the strength of the nation's defense. A majority of Republicans say the U.S. national defense is not strong enough (59%). Democrats are most likely to say it is about right (56%), while independents divide about equally between saying it is not strong enough (48%) and about right (45%).

Views of Strength of National Defense, by Political Party

■ Stronger than needs to be ■ About right ■ Not strong enough



Gallup poll, Feb. 1-3, 2010

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Bottom Line

Americans are less likely this year than last year to say the nation's defense, and the amount the government spends on it, is where they think it should be. Americans' views on the two issues are not entirely consistent, though. Whereas 7% say national defense is stronger than needed, 34% say the government spends too much on defense. And while 45% say national defense is not strong enough, a smaller 27% believe too little is spent in this regard.

These apparent inconsistencies may reflect Americans' priorities for government spending as much as an assessment of the current situation, especially since Democrats tend to favor a reduction in military spending and Republicans an increase. Americans may also be reluctant to call for increased defense spending even if they think the military is not as strong as it should be because they have concerns over the amount of overall government spending in general and the growing federal budget deficit in particular.

Survey Methods

Results are based on telephone interviews with a random sample of 1,025 national adults, aged 18 and older, conducted Feb. 1-3, 2010. For results based on the total sample of national adults, one can say with 95% confidence that the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 4 percentage points.

Interviews are conducted with respondents on land-line telephones (for respondents with a land-line telephone) and cellular phones (for respondents who are cell-phone only).

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

One in Three Cite “American People” as Key U.S. Asset

Poor governance ranks as top perceived national weakness

February 17, 2010

Americans were asked in a recent *USA Today*/Gallup survey to name the one or two strengths of the United States that make them feel most optimistic about the future of the country and, conversely, the main weaknesses that make them the most pessimistic. The American people themselves, named by 35%, and the nation's military (14%) dominate the list of perceived strengths.

Top 10 Perceived U.S. Strengths

What are the one or two strengths of the United States that make you most optimistic about the future of the country over the next 20 years?

	%
The American people (spirit, strength, will, etc.)	35
U.S. military strength/superiority	14
Technology/Innovation/Inventions	6
Government leadership	6
Individual freedoms/Freedom (nonspecific)	5
President Obama	5
The economy	5
Morality/Religion	4
Healthcare	4
Education	4

USA Today/Gallup, Jan. 8-10, 2010

GALLUP®

The "American people" category includes a number of basic qualities that Americans cite in response to this question: their spirit, optimism, strength, will, resilience, cohesiveness, patriotism, and diversity. However, many of those citing Americans as the nation's top strength simply say "the American people."

Other strengths in the top 10 include U.S. technology and innovation (6%), freedom (5%), and the economy (5%). At least 5% of Americans also mention government leadership generally, and President Obama specifically.

Poor governance -- including "politics," poor leadership, Congress, corruption, and inefficiency - ranks as the leading weakness that Americans say makes them feel the most pessimistic about

the country's future. Twenty percent of Americans mention this. Other factors named by at least 10% are the military -- including involvement in wars and vulnerability to terrorism (15%) -- the economy (13%), lack of healthcare (11%), and lack of jobs (10%).

Top 10 Perceived U.S. Weaknesses

What are the one or two weaknesses of the United States that make you most pessimistic about the future of the country over the next 20 years?

	%
Poor governance (politics, Congress, corruption, etc.)	20
Military/Homeland security/Terrorism/Wars	15
The economy	13
Lack of healthcare for many citizens	11
Unemployment/Lack of jobs/Weak job base	10
Federal budget deficit/Too much government spending	9
Corporate corruption/Greed/Big business	6
Foreign affairs/policies	6
Apathy/Lack of caring, involvement by citizens	5
Lack of religious values/morality	5

USA Today/Gallup, Jan. 8-10, 2010

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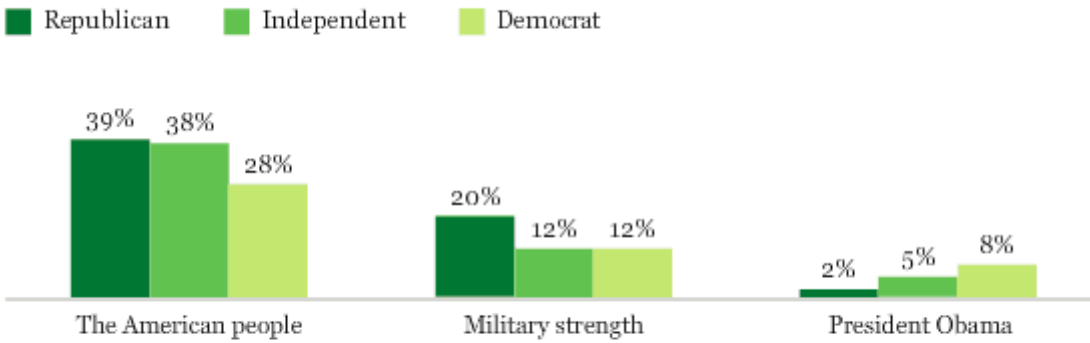
Slight Generational and Partisan Differences

While the rank order of perceived strengths is roughly similar for Americans of different ages and political leanings, there are a few notable differences in degree.

Mentions of the American people as a national strength are more prevalent among Americans aged 35 to 54 (42%) and 55 and older (35%) than among those aged 18 to 34 (23%).

The main differences among the parties in perceptions of U.S. strengths are a lower relative percentage of Democrats mentioning the American people, a higher percentage of Republicans mentioning the military and homeland security, and a higher percentage of Democrats mentioning President Obama.

Perceived U.S. Strengths -- Partisan Differences

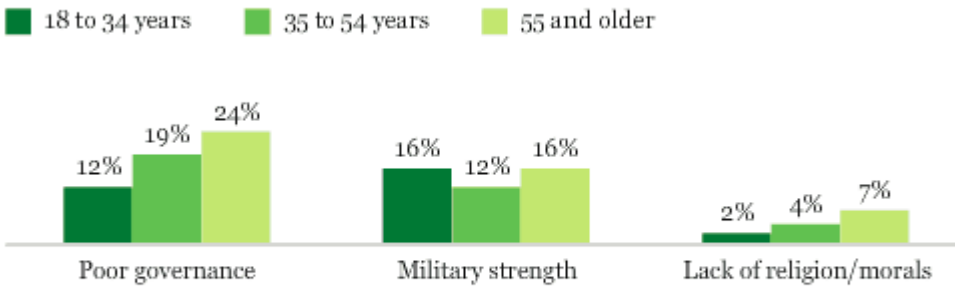


USA Today/Gallup, Jan. 8-10, 2010

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In terms of perceived weaknesses of the country, government corruption ranks as the top weakness for middle-aged (19%) and older (24%) Americans, but ties for third among younger adults (at 12%). While the military/homeland security receives about equal mentions from all three age groups, it is the top-mentioned U.S. weakness among those 18 to 34. Older Americans are more likely than young adults to perceive a lack of religion and morals as a key national weakness.

Perceived U.S. Weaknesses -- Generational Differences



USA Today/Gallup, Jan. 8-10, 2010

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While equal percentages of Republicans, independents, and Democrats cite government as a top U.S. weakness, Republicans (20%) are more likely than independents (11%) and Democrats (14%) to cite problems with the military and homeland security. They are less likely than Democrats to cite public apathy (2% vs. 7%, respectively).

Bottom Line

Americans are most likely to consider the qualities of the common people to be the nation's best hope for the future. The 35% citing the spirit and will of Americans as a national strength far

outweighs the 5% citing Americans' apathy as a national weakness. The military is more of a double-edged sword: 14% cite the nation's military strength and superiority as a national strength, but 15% cite military unpreparedness, lack of security from terrorism, and involvement in wars as a national weakness. While a small segment of Americans (5%) believe the government in general is a key strength -- and an additional 5% cite President Obama as a strength specifically -- 20% see poor leadership in government as one of the country's leading weaknesses, with an additional 9% citing the federal budget deficit.

Survey Methods

Results are based on telephone interviews with a random sample of 1,023 national adults, aged 18 and older, conducted Jan. 8-10, 2010. For results based on the total sample of national adults, one can say with 95% confidence that the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 4 percentage points.

Interviews are conducted with respondents on land-line telephones (for respondents with a land-line telephone) and cellular phones (for respondents who are cell-phone only).

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

15. What are the one or two strengths of the United States that make you most optimistic about the future of the country over the next 20 years?

Open-ended

	%
The American people (spirit, strength, will, etc.)	35
U.S. military strength	14
Technology/Innovation/Inventions	6
Government leadership	6
Individual freedoms/Freedom (nonspecific)	5
President Obama	5
The economy	5
Morality/Religion	4
Healthcare	4
Education	4
Jobs/Employment	3
Environment/Global climate/Green resources	2
Democratic government	2
Foreign affairs/policies	2
Free markets/Free enterprise	2
Other	7
Nothing (vol.)	8
No opinion	10

USA Today/Gallup, Jan. 8-10, 2010

Table adds to more than 100% due to multiple responses.

(vol.) = Volunteered response

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16. What are the one or two weaknesses of the United States that make you most pessimistic about the future of the country over the next 20 years?

Open-ended

	%
Poor governance (politics, Congress, corruption, etc.)	20
Military/Homeland security/Terrorism/Wars	15
The economy	13
Lack of health care for many citizens	11
Unemployment/Lack of jobs/Weak job base	10
Federal budget deficit/Too much government spending	9
Corporate corruption/Greed/Big business	6
Foreign affairs/policies	6
Apathy/Lack of caring, involvement by citizens	5
Lack of religious values/morality	5
Too lax on immigration	4
Education	4
Loss of individual freedom	2
Too dependent on foreign resources	2
Lack of bipartisanship in government	2
U.S. citizens' sense of entitlement	2
President Obama	1
Gap between the rich and poor	1
Environment/Global warming	1
Unfavorable reputation of U.S. in the world	1
Other	5
Nothing (vol.)	5
No opinion	7

USA Today/Gallup; Jan. 8-10, 2009

Table adds to more than 100% due to multiple responses

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Does Google Make Us Stupid?

February 19, 2010

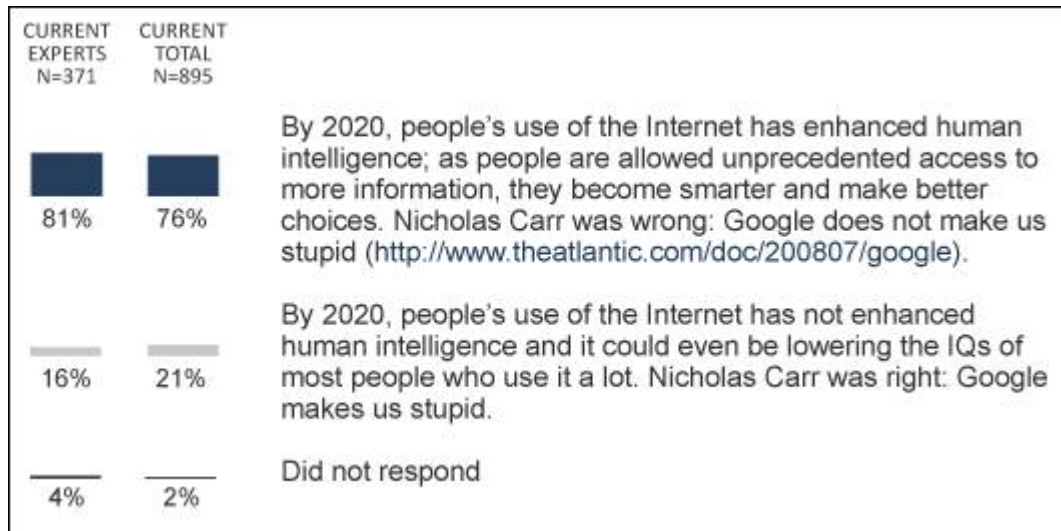
Respondents to the fourth "Future of the Internet" survey, conducted by the Pew Internet & American Life Project and Elon University's Imagining the Internet Center, were asked to consider the future of the internet-connected world between now and 2020 and the likely innovation that will occur. The survey required them to assess 10 different "tension pairs" - each

pair offering two different 2020 scenarios with the same overall theme and opposite outcomes - and to select the one most likely choice of two statements. Although a wide range of opinion from experts, organizations, and interested institutions was sought, this survey, fielded from Dec. 2, 2009 to Jan. 11, 2010, should not be taken as a representative canvassing of internet experts. By design, the survey was an "opt in," self-selecting effort.

Among the issues addressed in the survey was the provocative question raised by eminent tech scholar Nicholas Carr in a cover story for the *Atlantic Monthly* magazine in the summer of 2009: "Is Google Making us Stupid?" Carr argued that the ease of online searching and distractions of browsing through the web were possibly limiting his capacity to concentrate. "I'm not thinking the way I used to," he wrote, in part because he is becoming a skimming, browsing reader, rather than a deep and engaged reader. "The kind of deep reading that a sequence of printed pages promotes is valuable not just for the knowledge we acquire from the author's words but for the intellectual vibrations those words set off within our own minds. In the quiet spaces opened up by the sustained, undistracted reading of a book, or by any other act of contemplation, for that matter, we make our own associations, draw our own inferences and analogies, foster our own ideas.... If we lose those quiet spaces, or fill them up with 'content,' we will sacrifice something important not only in our selves but in our culture."

Jamais Cascio, an affiliate at the Institute for the Future and senior fellow at the Institute for Ethics and Emerging Technologies, challenged Carr in a subsequent article in the *Atlantic Monthly*. Cascio made the case that the array of problems facing humanity - the end of the fossil-fuel era, the fragility of the global food web, growing population density, and the spread of pandemics, among others - will force us to get smarter if we are to survive. "Most people don't realize that this process is already under way," he wrote. "In fact, it's happening all around us, across the full spectrum of how we understand intelligence. It's visible in the hive mind of the Internet, in the powerful tools for simulation and visualization that are jump-starting new scientific disciplines, and in the development of drugs that some people (myself included) have discovered let them study harder, focus better, and stay awake longer with full clarity." He argued that while the proliferation of technology and media can challenge humans' capacity to concentrate there were signs that we are developing "fluid intelligence-the ability to find meaning in confusion and solve new problems, independent of acquired knowledge." He also expressed hope that techies will develop tools to help people find and assess information smartly.

With that as backdrop, respondents were asked to indicate which of two statements best reflected their view on Google's effect on intelligence. The chart shows the distribution of responses to the paired statements. The first column covers the answers of 371 longtime experts who have regularly participated in these surveys. The second column covers the answers of all the respondents, including the 524 who were recruited by other experts or by their association with the Pew Internet Project. As shown, 76% of the experts agreed with the statement, "By 2020, people's use of the internet has enhanced human intelligence; as people are allowed unprecedented access to more information they become smarter and make better choices. Nicholas Carr was wrong: Google does not make us stupid."



Respondents were also asked to "share your view of the internet's influence on the future of human intelligence in 2020 -- what is likely to stay the same and what will be different in the way human intellect evolves?" What follows is a selection of the hundreds of written elaborations and some of the recurring themes in those answers:

Nicholas Carr and Google staffers have their say:

- "I feel compelled to agree with myself. But I would add that the Net's effect on our intellectual lives will not be measured simply by average IQ scores. What the Net does is shift the emphasis of our intelligence, away from what might be called a meditative or contemplative intelligence and more toward what might be called a utilitarian intelligence. The price of zipping among lots of bits of information is a loss of depth in our thinking."-- *Nicholas Carr*

- "My conclusion is that when the only information on a topic is a handful of essays or books, the best strategy is to read these works with total concentration. But when you have access to thousands of articles, blogs, videos, and people with expertise on the topic, a good strategy is to skim first to get an overview. Skimming and concentrating can and should coexist. I would also like to say that Carr has it mostly backwards when he says that Google is built on the principles of Taylorism [the institution of time-management and worker-activity standards in industrial settings]. Taylorism shifts responsibility from worker to management, institutes a standard method for each job, and selects workers with skills unique for a specific job. Google does the opposite, shifting responsibility from management to the worker, encouraging creativity in each job, and encouraging workers to shift among many different roles in their career....Carr is of course right that Google thrives on understanding data. But making sense of data (both for Google internally and for its users) is not like building the same artifact over and over on an assembly line; rather it requires creativity, a mix of broad and deep knowledge, and a host of connections to other people. That is what Google is trying to facilitate." -- *Peter Norvig, Google Research Director*

- "Google will make us more informed. The smartest person in the world could well be behind a plow in China or India. Providing universal access to information will allow such people to

realize their full potential, providing benefits to the entire world." - *Hal Varian, Google, chief economist*

The resources of the internet and search engines will shift cognitive capacities. We won't have to remember as much, but we'll have to think harder and have better critical thinking and analytical skills. Less time devoted to memorization gives people more time to master those new skills.

- "Google allows us to be more creative in approaching problems and more integrative in our thinking. We spend less time trying to recall and more time generating solutions." -- *Paul Jones, biblio, University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill*

- "Google will make us stupid and intelligent at the same time. In the future, we will live in a transparent 3D mobile media cloud that surrounds us everywhere. In this cloud, we will use intelligent machines, to whom we delegate both simple and complex tasks. Therefore, we will lose the skills we needed in the old days (e.g., reading paper maps while driving a car). But we will gain the skill to make better choices (e.g., knowing to choose the mortgage that is best for you instead of best for the bank). All in all, I think the gains outweigh the losses." -- *Marcel Bullinga, Dutch Futurist at futurecheck.com*

- "I think that certain tasks will be 'offloaded' to Google or other Internet services rather than performed in the mind, especially remembering minor details. But really, that is a role that paper has taken over many centuries: did Gutenberg make us stupid? On the other hand, the Internet is likely to be front-and-centre in any developments related to improvements in neuroscience and human cognition research." -- *Dean Buble, wireless industry consultant*

- "What the internet (here subsumed tongue-in-cheek under "Google") does is to support SOME parts of human intelligence, such as analysis, by REPLACING other parts such as memory. Thus, people will be more intelligent about, say, the logistics of moving around a geography because "Google" will remember the facts and relationships of various locations on their behalf. People will be better able to compare the revolutions of 1848 and 1789 because "Google" will remind them of all the details as needed. This is the continuation ad infinitum of the process launched by abacuses and calculators: we have become more "stupid" by losing our arithmetic skills but more intelligent at evaluating numbers." -- *Andreas Kluth, writer, Economist magazine*

- "It's a mistake to treat intelligence as an undifferentiated whole. No doubt we will become worse at doing some things ('more stupid') requiring rote memory of information that is now available though Google. But with this capacity freed, we may (and probably will) be capable of more advanced integration and evaluation of information ('more intelligent')." -- *Stephen Downes, National Research Council, Canada*

- "The new learning system, more informal perhaps than formal, will eventually win since we must use technology to cause everyone to learn more, more economically and faster if everyone is to be economically productive and prosperous. Maintaining the status quo will only continue the existing win/lose society that we have with those who can learn in present school structure doing ok, while more and more students drop out, learn less, and fail to find a productive niche

in the future." -- *Ed Lyell, former member of the Colorado State Board of Education and Telecommunication Advisory Commission*

- "The question is flawed: Google will make intelligence different. As Carr himself suggests, Plato argued that reading and writing would make us stupid, and from the perspective of a preliterate, he was correct. Holding in your head information that is easily discoverable on Google will no longer be a mark of intelligence, but a side-show act. Being able to quickly and effectively discover information and solve problems, rather than do it "in your head," will be the metric we use." -- *Alex Halavais, vice president, Association of Internet Researchers*

- "What Google does do is simply to enable us to shift certain tasks to the network -- we no longer need to rote-learn certain seldomly-used facts (the periodic table, the post code of Ballarat) if they're only a search away, for example. That's problematic, of course -- we put an awful amount of trust in places such as Wikipedia where such information is stored, and in search engines like Google through which we retrieve it -- but it doesn't make us stupid, any more than having access to a library (or in fact, access to writing) makes us stupid. That said, I don't know that the reverse is true, either: Google and the Net also don't automatically make us smarter. By 2020, we will have even more access to even more information, using even more sophisticated search and retrieval tools -- but how smartly we can make use of this potential depends on whether our media literacies and capacities have caught up, too." -- *Axel Bruns, Associate Professor, Queensland University of Technology*

- "My ability to do mental arithmetic is worse than my grandfather's because I grew up in an era with pervasive personal calculators.... I am not stupid compared to my grandfather, but I believe the development of my brain has been changed by the availability of technology. The same will happen (or is happening) as a result of the Googleization of knowledge. People are becoming used to bite sized chunks of information that are compiled and sorted by an algorithm. This must be having an impact on our brains, but it is too simplistic to say that we are becoming stupid as a result of Google." -- *Robert Acklund, Australian National University*

- "We become adept at using useful tools, and hence perfect new skills. Other skills may diminish. I agree with Carr that we may on the average become less patient, less willing to read through a long, linear text, but we may also become more adept at dealing with multiple factors.... Note that I said 'less patient,' which is not the same as 'lower IQ.' I suspect that emotional and personality changes will probably more marked than 'intelligence' changes." -- *Larry Press, California State University, Dominguez Hills*

Technology isn't the problem here. It is people's inherent character traits. The internet and search engines just enable people to be more of what they already are. If they are motivated to learn and shrewd, they will use new tools to explore in exciting new ways. If they are lazy or incapable of concentrating, they will find new ways to be distracted and goof off.

- "The question is all about people's choices. If we value introspection as a road to insight, if we believe that long experience with issues contributes to good judgment on those issues, if we (in short) want knowledge that search engines don't give us, we'll maintain our depth of thinking and

Google will only enhance it. There is a trend, of course, toward instant analysis and knee-jerk responses to events that degrades a lot of writing and discussion. We can't blame search engines for that.... What search engines do is provide more information, which we can use either to become dilettantes (Carr's worry) or to bolster our knowledge around the edges and do fact-checking while we rely mostly on information we've gained in more robust ways for our core analyses. Google frees the time we used to spend pulling together the last 10% of facts we need to complete our research. I read Carr's article when *The Atlantic* first published it, but I used a web search to pull it back up and review it before writing this response. Google is my friend." -- *Andy Oram, editor and blogger, O'Reilly Media*

- "Google isn't making us stupid -- but it is making many of us intellectually lazy. This has already become a big problem in university classrooms. For my undergrad majors in Communication Studies, Google may take over the hard work involved in finding good source material for written assignments. Unless pushed in the right direction, students will opt for the top 10 or 15 hits as their research strategy. And it's the students most in need of research training who are the least likely to avail themselves of more sophisticated tools like Google Scholar. Like other major technologies, Google's search functionality won't push the human intellect in one predetermined direction. It will reinforce certain dispositions in the end-user: stronger intellects will use Google as a creative tool, while others will let Google do the thinking for them." -- *David Ellis, York University, Toronto*

- "For people who are readers and who are willing to explore new sources and new arguments, we can only be made better by the kinds of searches we will be able to do. Of course, the kind of Googled future that I am concerned about is the one in which my every desire is anticipated, and my every fear avoided by my guardian Google. Even then, I might not be stupid, just not terribly interesting." -- *Oscar Gandy, emeritus professor, University of Pennsylvania*

- "I don't think having access to information can ever make anyone stupider. I don't think an adult's IQ can be influenced much either way by reading anything and I would guess that smart people will use the Internet for smart things and stupid people will use it for stupid things in the same way that smart people read literature and stupid people read crap fiction. On the whole, having easy access to more information will make society as a group smarter though." -- *Sandra Kelly, market researcher, 3M Corporation*

- "The story of humankind is that of work substitution and human enhancement. The Neolithic revolution brought the substitution of some human physical work by animal work. The Industrial revolution brought more substitution of human physical work by machine work. The Digital revolution is implying a significant substitution of human brain work by computers and ICTs in general. Whenever a substitution has taken place, men have been able to focus on more qualitative tasks, entering a virtuous cycle: the more qualitative the tasks, the more his intelligence develops; and the more intelligent he gets, more qualitative tasks he can perform.... As obesity might be the side-effect of physical work substitution by machines, mental laziness can become the watermark of mental work substitution by computers, thus having a negative effect instead of a positive one." -- *Ismael Peña-Lopez, lecturer at the Open University of Catalonia, School of Law and Political Science*

- "Well, of course, it depends on what one means by 'stupid' -- I imagine that Google, and its as yet unimaginable new features and capabilities will both improve and decrease some of our human capabilities. Certainly it's much easier to find out stuff, including historical, accurate, and true stuff, as well as entertaining, ironic, and creative stuff. It's also making some folks lazier, less concerned about investing in the time and energy to arrive at conclusions, etc." -- *Ron Rice, University of California, Santa Barbara*

- "Nick [Carr] says, 'Once I was a scuba diver in the sea of words. Now I zip along the surface like a guy on a Jet Ski.' Besides finding that a little hard to believe (I know Nick to be a deep diver, still), there is nothing about Google, or the Net, to keep anyone from diving -- and to depths that were not reachable before the Net came along."-- *Doc Searls, co-author of "The Cluetrain Manifesto"*

It's not Google's fault if users create stupid queries.

- "To be more precise, unthinking use of the Internet, and in particular untutored use of Google, has the ability to make us stupid, but that is not a foregone conclusion. More and more of us experience attention deficit, like Bruce Friedman in the Nicholas Carr article, but that alone does not stop us making good choices provided that the 'factoids' of information are sound that we use to make out decisions. The potential for stupidity comes where we rely on Google (or Yahoo, or Bing, or any engine) to provide relevant information in response to poorly constructed queries, frequently one-word queries, and then base decisions or conclusions on those returned items." -- *Peter Griffiths, former Head of Information at the Home Office within the Office of the Chief Information Officer, United Kingdom*

- "The problem isn't Google; it's what Google helps us find. For some, Google will let them find useless content that does not challenge their minds. But for others, Google will lead them to expect answers to questions, to explore the world, to see and think for themselves." -- *Esther Dyson, longtime internet expert and investor*

- "People are already using Google as an adjunct to their own memory. For example, I have a hunch about something, need facts to support, and Google comes through for me. Sometimes, I see I'm wrong, and I appreciate finding that out before I open my mouth." -- *Craig Newmark, founder Craig's List*

- "Google is a data access tool. Not all of that data is useful or correct. I suspect the amount of misleading data is increasing faster than the amount of correct data. There should also be a distinction made between data and information. Data is meaningless in the absence of an organizing context. That means that different people looking at the same data are likely to come to different conclusions. There is a big difference with what a world class artist can do with a paint brush as opposed to a monkey. In other words, the value of Google will depend on what the user brings to the game. The value of data is highly dependent on the quality of the question being asked." -- *Robert Lunn, consultant, FocalPoint Analytics*

The big struggle is over what kind of information Google and other search engines kick back to users. In the age of social media where users can be their own content creators it might get harder and harder to separate high-quality material from junk.

- "Access to more information isn't enough -- the information needs to be correct, timely, and presented in a manner that enables the reader to learn from it. The current network is full of inaccurate, misleading, and biased information that often crowds out the valid information. People have not learned that 'popular' or 'available' information is not necessarily valid."-- *Gene Spafford, Purdue University CERIAS, Association for Computing Machinery U.S. Public Policy Council*

- "If we take 'Google' to mean the complex social, economic and cultural phenomenon that is a massively interactive search and retrieval information system used by people and yet also using them to generate its data, I think Google will, at the very least, not make us smarter and probably will make us more stupid in the sense of being reliant on crude, generalised approximations of truth and information finding. Where the questions are easy, Google will therefore help; where the questions are complex, we will flounder." -- *Matt Allen, former president of the Association of Internet Researchers and associate professor of internet studies at Curtin University in Australia*

- "The challenge is in separating that wheat from the chaff, as it always has been with any other source of mass information, which has been the case all the way back to ancient institutions like libraries. Those users (of Google, cable TV, or libraries) who can do so efficiently will beat the odds, becoming 'smarter' and making better choices. However, the unfortunately majority will continue to remain, as Carr says, stupid." -- *Christopher Saunders, managing editor, internetnews.com*

- "The problem with Google that is lurking just under the clean design home page is the "tragedy of the commons": the link quality seems to go down every year. The link quality may actually not be going down but the signal to noise is getting worse as commercial schemes lead to more and more junk links." -- *Glen Edens, former senior vice president and director at Sun Microsystems Laboratories, chief scientist Hewlett Packard*

Literary intelligence is very much under threat.

- "If one defines -- or partially defines -- IQ as literary intelligence, the ability to sit with a piece of textual material and analyze it for complex meaning and retain derived knowledge, then we are indeed in trouble. Literary culture is in trouble.... We are spending less time reading books, but the amount of pure information that we produce as a civilization continues to expand exponentially. That these trends are linked, that the rise of the latter is causing the decline of the former, is not impossible.... One could draw reassurance from today's vibrant Web culture if the general surfing public, which is becoming more at home in this new medium, displayed a growing propensity for literate, critical thought. But take a careful look at the many blogs, post comments, Facebook pages, and online conversations that characterize today's Web 2.0 environment.... This type of content generation, this method of 'writing,' is not only sub-literate, it may actually undermine the literary impulse.... Hours spent texting and e-mailing, according to

this view, do not translate into improved writing or reading skills." -- *Patrick Tucker, senior editor, The Futurist magazine*

New literacies will be required to function in this world. In fact, the internet might change the very notion of what it means to be smart. Retrieval of good information will be prized. Maybe a race of "extreme Googlers" will come into being.

- "The critical uncertainty here is whether people will learn and be taught the essential literacies necessary for thriving in the current infosphere: attention, participation, collaboration, crap detection, and network awareness are the ones I'm concentrating on. I have no reason to believe that people will be any less credulous, gullible, lazy, or prejudiced in ten years, and am not optimistic about the rate of change in our education systems, but it is clear to me that people are not going to be smarter without learning the ropes." -- *Howard Rheingold, author of several prominent books on technology, teacher at Stanford University and University of California-Berkeley*

- "Google makes us simultaneously smarter and stupider. Got a question? With instant access to practically every piece of information ever known to humankind, we take for granted we're only a quick web search away from the answer. Of course, that doesn't mean we understand it. In the coming years we will have to continue to teach people to think critically so they can better understand the wealth of information available to them." -- *Jeska Dzwigalski, Linden Lab*

- "We might imagine that in ten years, our definition of intelligence will look very different. By then, we might agree on 'smart' as something like a 'networked' or 'distributed' intelligence where knowledge is our ability to piece together various and disparate bits of information into coherent and novel forms." -- *Christine Greenhow, educational researcher, University of Minnesota and Yale Information and Society Project*

- "Human intellect will shift from the ability to retain knowledge towards the skills to discover the information i.e. a race of extreme Googlers (or whatever discovery tools come next). The world of information technology will be dominated by the algorithm designers and their librarian cohorts. Of course, the information they're searching has to be right in the first place. And who decides that?" -- *Sam Michel, founder Chinwag, community for digital media practitioners in the United Kingdom*

One new "literacy" that might help is the capacity to build and use social networks to help people solve problems.

- "There's no doubt that the internet is an extension of human intelligence, both individual and collective. But the extent to which it's able to augment intelligence depends on how much people are able to make it conform to their needs. Being able to look up who starred in the 2nd season of the Tracey Ullman show on Wikipedia is the lowest form of intelligence augmentation; being able to build social networks and interactive software that helps you answer specific questions or enrich your intellectual life is much more powerful. This will matter even more as the internet becomes more pervasive. Already my iPhone functions as the external, silicon lobe of my brain. For it to help me become even smarter, it will need to be even more effective and flexible than it

already is. What worries me is that device manufacturers and internet developers are more concerned with lock-in than they are with making people smarter. That means it will be a constant struggle for individuals to reclaim their intelligence from the networks they increasingly depend upon." -- *Dylan Tweney, senior editor, Wired magazine*

Nothing can be bad that delivers more information to people, more efficiently. It might be that some people lose their way in this world, but overall, societies will be substantially smarter.

- "The Internet has facilitated orders of magnitude improvements in access to information. People now answer questions in a few moments that a couple of decades back they would not have bothered to ask, since getting the answer would have been impossibly difficult." -- *John Pike, Director, globalsecurity.org*

- "Google is simply one step, albeit a major one, in the continuing continuum of how technology changes our generation and use of data, information, and knowledge that has been evolving for decades. As the data and information goes digital and new information is created, which is at an ever increasing rate, the resultant ability to evaluate, distill, coordinate, collaborate, problem solve only increases along a similar line. Where it may appear a 'dumbing down' has occurred on one hand, it is offset (I believe in multiples) by how we learn in new ways to learn, generate new knowledge, problem solve, and innovate." -- *Mario Morino, Chairman, Venture Philanthropy Partners*

Google itself and other search technologies will get better over time and that will help solve problems created by too-much-information and too-much-distraction.

- "I'm optimistic that Google will get smarter by 2020 or will be replaced by a utility that is far better than Google. That tool will allow queries to trigger chains of high-quality information -- much closer to knowledge than flood. Humans who are able to access these chains in high-speed, immersive ways will have more patterns available to them that will aid decision-making. All of this optimism will only work out if the battle for the soul of the Internet is won by the right people -- the people who believe that open, fast, networks are good for all of us." -- *Susan Crawford, former member of President Obama's National Economic Council, now on the law faculty at the University of Michigan*

- "If I am using Google to find an answer, it is very likely the answer I find will be on a message board in which other humans are collaboratively debating answers to questions. I will have to choose between the answer I like the best. Or it will force me to do more research to find more information. Google never breeds passivity or stupidity in me: It catalyzes me to explore further. And along the way I bump into more humans, more ideas and more answers." -- *Joshua Fouts, Senior Fellow for Digital Media & Public Policy at the Center for the Study of the Presidency*

The more we use the internet and search, the more dependent on it we will become.

- "As the Internet gets more sophisticated it will enable a greater sense of empowerment among users. We will not be more stupid, but we will probably be more dependent upon it." -- *Bernie Hogan, Oxford Internet Institute*

Even in little ways, including in dinner table chitchat, Google can make people smarter.

- "[Family dinner conversations] have changed markedly because we can now look things up at will. That's just one small piece of evidence I see that having Google at hand is great for civilization." -- *Jerry Michalski, president, Sociate*

'We know more than ever, and this makes us crazy.'

- "The answer is really: both. Google has already made us smarter, able to make faster choices from more information. Children, to say nothing of adults, scientists and professionals in virtually every field, can seek and discover knowledge in ways and with scope and scale that was unfathomable before Google. Google has undoubtedly expanded our access to knowledge that can be experienced on a screen, or even processed through algorithms, or mapped. Yet Google has also made us careless too, or stupid when, for instance, Google driving directions don't get us to the right place. It has confused and overwhelmed us with choices, and with sources that are not easily differentiated or verified. Perhaps it's even alienated us from the physical world itself - from knowledge and intelligence that comes from seeing, touching, hearing, breathing and tasting life. From looking into someone's eyes and having them look back into ours. Perhaps it's made us impatient, or shortened our attention spans, or diminished our ability to understand long thoughts. It's enlightened anxiety. We know more than ever, and this makes us crazy." -- *Andrew Nachison, co-founder, We Media*

A final thought: Maybe Google won't make us more stupid, but it should make us more modest.

- "There is and will be lots more to think about, and a lot more are thinking. No, not more stupid. Maybe more humble." -- *Sheizaf Rafaeli, Center for the Study of the Information Society, University of Haifa*

Read more about responses to other "tension pairs" tested in the survey as well as a more complete description of the survey methodology and respondents at pewinternet.org.

Some Americans Expect Higher Unemployment in 2011

February 18, 2010

People in the United States are divided in their assessment of the country's employment crisis, according to a poll by Angus Reid Public Opinion. 36 per cent of respondents expect the unemployment rate to be higher a year from now, 25 per cent think it will remain the same, and 26 per cent believe it will be lower.

In 2008, the federal government—then under the leadership of U.S. president George W. Bush—took control of mortgage lenders Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Other financial institutions—

including Bear Stearns, Merrill Lynch, Lehman Brothers, American International Group (AIG), IndyMac Bancorp and Washington Mutual—have been sold, placed under bankruptcy protection, or received emergency loans from the Federal Reserve.

The U.S. economy grew at an annual rate of 2.2 per cent from July to September 2009—the first quarterly gain after four consecutive declines. The country’s unemployment rate stands at 9.7 per cent.

On Jan. 27, during his State of the Union address, U.S. president Barack Obama discussed his views on employment, saying, "The true engine of job creation in this country will always be America’s businesses. But government can create the conditions necessary for businesses to expand and hire more workers. We should start where most new jobs do—in small businesses, companies that begin when an entrepreneur takes a chance on a dream, or a worker decides it’s time she became her own boss. Through sheer grit and determination, these companies have weathered the recession and they’re ready to grow."

Polling Data

Right now, the unemployment rate in the U.S. is 9.7 per cent. One year from now, do you think the unemployment rate will be higher, the same, or lower than it is now?

Higher	36%
The same	25%
Lower	26%
Not sure	13%

Source: Angus Reid Public Opinion

Methodology: Online interviews with 1,003 American adults, conducted on Feb. 11 and Feb. 12, 2010. Margin of error is 3.1 per cent.

Some Canadians Willing to Pay, Travel for Health Care

February 19, 2010

Two-in-five Canadians would consider paying or going abroad to seek medical treatment, according to a poll by Angus Reid Public Opinion. 40 per cent of respondents would be willing to pay out of their own pocket to have quicker access to medical services that currently have long wait times, and 42 per cent would consider traveling to another country.

In Canada, the universality criterion establishes that all residents of a province or territory must be entitled to the insured, public-run health services provided by their provincial or territorial health care insurance plan on uniform terms and conditions.

Earlier this month, it was announced that Newfoundland and Labrador premier Danny Williams traveled to the United States to seek treatment for an undisclosed heart condition.

Conservative senator and retired heart surgeon Wilbert Keon discussed Williams’s decision, saying, "I can’t imagine anything that couldn’t be done in Canada that is done in America."

Newfoundland and Labrador deputy premier Kathy Dunderdale said that Williams would answer all questions related to the trip and the surgery "once he recovers," and added: "It was never offered to him as an option to have this procedure done in the province."

Polling Data

If you were able to, would you be willing to pay out of your own pocket to have quicker access to medical services that currently have long wait times?

Yes	40%
No	30%
Not sure	29%

If you were able to, would you consider traveling to another country to have quicker access to medical services that currently have long wait times?

Yes	42%
No	33%
Not sure	24%

Source: Angus Reid Public Opinion

Methodology: Online interviews with 1,001 Canadian adults, conducted on Feb. 12 and Feb. 13, 2010. Margin of error is 3.1 per cent.

Most Canadians Generally Agree with Euthanasia

February 16, 2010

Most people in Canada support the legalization of euthanasia, according to a poll by Angus Reid Public Opinion. 67 per cent of respondents share this point of view, down four points since August.

Yesterday, legislators in the Canadian province of Quebec began hearings on euthanasia. Members of the standing committee on health and social services are expected to hear from about 30 people on the subject, and will later use the findings to launch a public consultation on euthanasia in the province.

Dr. Yves Lamontagne, president of the Quebec College of Physicians, offered his views on legalizing euthanasia, saying, "That the person has a choice, I respect that. But what we do not want is the physician becoming the executor of someone else's choice."

Quebec lawmakers are not in a position to draft rules and regulations on euthanasia. Any legislation on the matter must be approved at the federal level.

The Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Albania and Thailand allow for some form of euthanasia, as well as the states of Oregon and Washington in the United States.

Polling Data

Generally speaking, do you support or oppose legalizing euthanasia in Canada?

	Feb. 2010	Aug. 2009
Support	67%	71%
Oppose	23%	21%
Not sure	10%	8%

Source: Angus Reid Public Opinion

Methodology: Online interviews with 1,003 Canada adults, conducted on Feb. 2 and Feb. 3, 2010. Margin of error is 3.1 per cent.

LATIN AMERICA

Mexicans Evenly Split on Abortion

February 20, 2010

The legal status of abortion divides opinions in Mexico, according to a poll by Consulta Mitofsky. 48.8 per cent of respondents agree with allowing women to seek an abortion on a voluntary basis, whereas 45.3 per cent disagree.

While 41.1 per cent of respondents think abortion should be considered a crime, 45.7 per cent of them say it should not.

In Mexico, abortion is permitted nationwide in cases of rape. Some states also allow the procedure to be performed in order to save the woman's life, and in cases of severe fetal deformities.

In 2007, the Mexico City legislature endorsed a proposal which allows women to interrupt a pregnancy in the first 12 weeks of gestation.

In 2008, Mexico's Supreme Court issued a ruling on abortion, which read: "To affirm that there is an absolute constitutional protection of life in gestation would lead to the violation of the fundamental rights of women." The ruling effectively averted the possibility of having a federal law on abortion.

On Feb. 15, opposition Democratic Revolution Party (PRD) leader Jesús Ortega urged lawmakers with the party everywhere in the country to oppose attempts to criminalize abortion, saying that they should "not support initiatives that violate the human rights of women."

Polling Data

Do you agree or disagree with allowing women to have an abortion if they so desire?

Agree	48.8%
Disagree	45.3%
Not sure	5.9%

Do you think abortion should be considered a crime?

Yes	41.1%
No	45.7%
Not sure	13.2%

Source: Consulta Mitofsky

Methodology: Face-to-face interviews with 1,000 Mexican adults, conducted from Dec. 4 to Dec. 9, 2009. Margin of error is 3.5 per cent.

AUSTRALASIA

Australians Would Not Change Flag or Anthem

February 19, 2010

People in Australia reject the notion of modifying two of their national symbols, according to a poll by Essential Research. 54 per cent of respondents oppose changing the Australian flag, and 52 per cent reject changing the national anthem.

In addition, 41 per cent support Australia becoming a republic, while 32 per cent are opposed.

The Australian national flag includes the Union Jack—which is meant to symbolize historical links with Britain—as well as the stars of the Southern Cross.

Last month, former television journalist Ray Martin called for changes in Australia’s national flag, declaring, "I object to having the British flag in the corner of our flag. We have well and truly reached the point where we should have our own flag. I think we have to grow up and move on to the next stage."

Federal opposition leader Tony Abbott disagreed with Martin, stating, "I’m very happy with the flag we’ve got. I think it represents our history and I think it represents our future and it’s a flag we can be proud of. I don’t see any reason to change it."

Australia—independent from Britain since 1901—held a referendum on whether to become a presidential republic in 1999. The pro-monarchy side won the vote, receiving 55 per cent of all cast ballots.

Polling Data

Do you support or oppose the following?

	Support	Oppose	Neither	Don’t know
Australia becoming a republic	41%	32%	23%	4%
Changing the Australian flag	23%	54%	20%	2%
Changing the national anthem	22%	52%	24%	3%

Source: Essential Research

Methodology: Online interviews with 1,078 Australian adults, conducted from Jan. 26 to Jan. 29, 2010. No margin of error was provided.

Australian Political Scene Becomes Tighter

February 17, 2010

Australia's main federal parties are virtually tied, according to a poll by Newspoll published in *The Australian*. 40 per cent of respondents would vote for the governing Australian Labor Party (ALP) in the next election to the House of Representatives, while 39 per cent would support the Coalition of Liberals and National.

The Australian Greens are a distant third with 12 per cent. Australia's preferential voting system—where electors indicate an order of predilection for each contender, and the ballots from smaller parties are re-distributed—gives the ALP a six-point lead over the Coalition.

Australia held a federal election in November 2007. Final results gave the ALP 85 seats in the 150-member House of Representatives. ALP leader Kevin Rudd was officially sworn in as prime minister in December, bringing an end to the 11-year tenure of Liberal leader John Howard as head of Australia's government.

Howard failed to retain his seat in the Bennelong constituency and stepped down as Liberal leader. Since their electoral defeat in 2007, the Liberals have had three different leaders: former defence minister Brendan Nelson, former environment minister Malcolm Turnbull, and former health minister Tony Abbott, who defeated Turnbull in an internal leadership ballot by just one vote in December 2009.

On Feb. 7, Greens senator Bob Brown expressed concerns about a coal export deal with China, saying, "[It] will produce more greenhouse gases into our atmosphere (...) than the government's carbon pollution reduction scheme (CPRS) scheme, in fact more than double. They are saying we have to act on climate change in this country, but we don't have to act on it. It's going to come out of chimneys in China so why should we worry."

Polling Data

If a federal election to the House of Representatives were held today, which one of the following would you vote for? If "Uncommitted", to which one of these do you have a leaning?

	Feb. 14	Jan. 31	Jan. 17
Australian Labor Party	40%	41%	40%
Coalition (Liberal / National)	39%	40%	38%
Australian Greens	12%	12%	12%
Others	9%	7%	10%

Two-Party Preferred Vote

	Feb. 14	Jan. 31	Jan. 17
Australian Labor Party	53%	52%	54%
Coalition (Liberal / National)	47%	48%	46%

Source: Newspan / The Australian

Methodology: Telephone interviews with 1,151 Australian voters, conducted from Feb. 12 to Feb. 14, 2010. Margin of error is 3 per cent.
