

BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

Global Opinion Report No. 125

Week: June 20-26, 2010

Presentation: June 30, 2010

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Prelude

This week report consists of 27 surveys. One of these is a multi-country survey while the rest of 26 are national surveys.

Can Turkey Really Deliver To Palestinians & The Muslim World?

Last decade has seen a new Turkey; politically stable and economically prosperous. This led to the change in foreign policy mood of the Turkish state. As a result of the last month Freedom Flotilla episode Turkey remained in the headlines of the news channels across the world. Palestinians, as found in the recent survey¹ believe Turkey to be the closest ally.

The survey shows that Palestinians now hope that Flotilla really advocated the Palestinian cause effectively before the international community. They expect that these efforts will result in lifting or softening of Israeli blockade. Turkey played major role in the whole of Freedom Flotilla campaign and this won appreciation from Muslims living all across the world and especially Palestinians.

Following the incident Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan declared that he himself would lead a Flotilla to ameliorate Palestinian conditions. Besides Flotilla Turkey has been quite active in addressing the issues related with Muslim countries. Turkey took a clear stand in favor of Iran regarding its nuclear issue. Turkey remained active in Freidns of Pakistan forum. Turkish leadership also remained very mobile in the last couple of years visiting the Muslim countries.

Does Turkey really has the capacity to deliver anything to Palestinians or the Muslim world? AKP at home has been trying to bring forth several reforms but it had not been very successful except for taking bold initiatives. It came to the verge of being banned by the constitutional court regarding the legislation about lifting ban on scarf. Recent surveys also show that CHP popularity is also growing among Turks.

Is AKP taking more interest in the Muslim world related issues to win yet another ballet at home? Current Turkish leadership did not really remained successful in bringing revolutionary changes that it propounded like lifting ban on headscarf's, will it be able to achieve such a high goals at international front? Should Palestinians really attach more hopes with Turkey to help them win their independent homeland? Should the Muslim world look toward Turkey for providing leadership?

¹ <http://www.pcpsr.org/survey/polls/2010/p36epressrelease.html>

SUMMARY OF POLLS

MIDDLE EAST

Abbas Would Clearly Win Palestinian Ballot

Mahmoud Abbas would win a new election in the Palestinian territories, according to a poll by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research. 54 per cent of respondents would vote for the current Palestinian Authority president and leader of Fatah in the next ballot, up four points since March.

June 25, 2010

Palestinians See Turkey as Best Regional Ally

Many people in the Palestinian territories consider Turkey as their closest ally in the region, according to a poll by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research. 43 per cent of respondents believe Turkey is the most supportive of the Palestinians and their cause.

June 22, 2010

WEST & CENTRAL ASIA

CHP Grows, Virtually Ties AKP in Turkey

Turkey's governing Justice and Development Party (AKP) is technically tied with the Republican People's Party (CHP), according to a poll by Sonar Arastirma. 32.5 per cent of respondents would vote for the CHP in the next legislative election, while 31.1 per cent would support the ruling AKP.

June 21, 2010

EAST ASIA

Thais Urge for Dialogue, Not Elections, For Peace

Many people in Thailand reject the notion that a new general election will achieve national reconciliation, according to a poll by Bangkok University. Only 16.6 per cent of respondents think dissolving the legislature is the best way forward.

June 23, 2010

East Europe

Most Czechs Agree with Euthanasia

Most people in the Czech Republic support the practice of euthanasia, according to a poll by CVVM. 61 per cent of respondents share this point of view, down one point since May 2009.

June 26, 2010

Czech Decidedly Favour Abortion

A solid majority of people in the Czech Republic agree with legal abortions at the request of the mother, according to a poll by CVVM. 70 per cent of respondents share this point of view, down three points since May 2009.

June 22, 2010

WEST EUROPE

Just Over a Third of French Happy with Sarkozy

The popularity of French president Nicolas Sarkozy remains well below the 50 per cent mark, according to a poll by Ifop published in *Paris Match*. 35 per cent of respondents approve of Sarkozy's performance, up one point since May.

June 26, 2010

NORTH AMERICA

Americans Blame BP for Oil Spill, Britons Divided

People in the United States and Britain hold differing views on the main culprit of the Gulf of Mexico oil spill, according to a poll by Angus Reid Public Opinion. While 63 per cent of Americans think BP Plc deserves most of the blame for the incident, only 31 per cent of Britons concur.

June 25, 2010

Verdict on Healthcare Reform Bill Still Divided

The healthcare reform legislation Congress passed in late March divided the public then and has not gained significant support in the three months since.

June 22, 2010

Obama's Rating Steady Despite Tough Environment

Since the beginning of this year, President Obama has signed a controversial health care measure, coped with a stubbornly high jobless rate and struggled to manage the largest environmental disaster in the nation's history. In that period, Obama's overall job approval rating has moved from 49% to 48%.

June 24, 2010

Obama Receives 44% Approval on Oil Spill While BP Gets 16%

Americans give President Obama a 44% approval rating on his handling of the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, up slightly from 40% in early June. Meanwhile, 16% of Americans approve of BP's handling of the spill.

June 21, 2010

Registered Voters' House Voting Preferences Tied at 46%

Registered voters divide evenly when asked which party's candidate they would vote for if the congressional elections were held today, with 46% preferring the Republican candidate and 46% the Democratic candidate. Registered voters' preferences have generally been closely divided since Gallup began tracking preferences in March.

June 22, 2010

Americans' Church Attendance Inches Up in 2010

Americans' self-reported church attendance has continued to inch up in 2010, with 43.1% of Americans reporting weekly or almost weekly attendance. This is up slightly from 42.8% in 2009 and 42.1% in 2008. The increase comes as Americans' economic confidence has also risen, suggesting that, instead of church attendance rising when economic times get bad, as some theorize, the opposite pattern may be occurring.

June 25, 2010

More Women Without Children

Nearly one in five American women ends her childbearing years without having borne a child, compared with one-in-ten in the 1970s. While childlessness has risen for all racial and ethnic groups, and most education levels, it has fallen over the past decade for women with advanced degrees.

June 25, 2010

In 2010, Conservatives Still Outnumber Moderates, Liberals

Conservatives have maintained their leading position among U.S. ideological groups in the first half of 2010. Gallup finds 42% of Americans describing

themselves as either very conservative or conservative. This is up slightly from the 40% seen for all of 2009 and contrasts with the 20% calling themselves liberal or very liberal.

June 25, 2010

Americans See Congress as Ineffective, Self-Serving, Entrenched

Americans who believe most members of Congress do not deserve to be re-elected support their position by saying representatives are simply doing a bad job, that they have been in office too long, that they are not making decisions based on what's best for the country, or that they are too focused on self-interest, special interests, and partisanship. Relatively few cite Congress' performance on specific issues.

June 23, 2010

Public Uncertain How to Improve Job Situation

This is broad public agreement that past government policies intended to address the financial crisis and recession have not worked. At the same time, there is very little agreement about what the government should do now to deal with the nation's biggest economic concern -- the job situation.

June 21, 2010

Public Sees a Future Full of Promise and Peril

Imagine a future in which cancer becomes a memory, ordinary people travel in space, and computers carry on conversations like humans. Now imagine a darker future -- a world beset by war, rising temperatures and energy shortages, one where the United States faces a terrorist attack with nuclear weapons.

June 22, 2010

System Fails to Reform Prisoners, Say Americans

A large majority of people in the United States say the country's penitentiary system fails at helping prisoners become law-abiding citizens, according to a poll by Angus Reid Public Opinion. 75 per cent of respondents share this point of view.

June 23, 2010

Canadians Want Deeper Inquiry into MP Expenses

The terms of the proposal to review the way federal lawmakers spend their allowances did not please many people in Canada, according to a poll by Angus Reid Public Opinion. 57 per cent of respondents think the probe announced recently does not go far enough.

June 24, 2010

LATIN AMERICA

Most Venezuelans Want Chávez Out in 2012

Most people in Venezuela are hoping to see president Hugo Chávez leave in 2012 when his current term expires, according to a poll by Hinterlaces. 64 per cent of respondents want Chávez to step down in two years, up three points since October 2008.

June 24, 2010

AUSTRALASIA

Most Australians Were Unhappy with Rudd

Just as Kevin Rudd stands down as leader of the Australian Labor Party (ALP) and prime minister, the majority of people in the country were expressing dissatisfaction with his work, according to a poll by Newspoll published in *The Australian*. 55 per cent of respondents were unhappy with Rudd's leadership, up one point since late May.

June 25, 2010

Australian Opposition Maintains Lead

Australia's political scene is definitely experiencing a shift away from the governing party, according to a poll by Newspoll published in *The Australian*. 40 per cent of respondents would vote for the opposition alliance of Liberals and Nationals.

June 24, 2010

New Zealanders Welcome Three-Strike Law

Most people in New Zealand agree with the plan to apply the "Three Strikes and you are out" guidelines in the country, according to a poll by Research New Zealand. 81 per cent of respondents are in favour of this proposal.

June 22, 2010

MULTI-COUNTRY POLLS

Global Economic Crisis Was Personal in Countries Far and Wide

Gallup's Personal Economy Index before and after the global economic meltdown in 2008 shows the crisis touched everyday lives around the world. In 61 out of 96 countries, scores fell significantly, documenting a decline in economic situations at the personal and community level. Ireland led the declines, followed by other major economies such as Singapore, Spain, and the United Kingdom.

June 22, 2010

CYBER WORLD

Oil Leak Spreads Online

Eight weeks after the oil rig explosion in the Gulf of Mexico triggered one of the largest environmental catastrophes in the country's history, attention to the subject hit unprecedented levels in social media last week.

June 24, 2010

Adults Text While Driving Too!

Adults are just as likely as teens to have texted while driving and are substantially more likely to have talked on the phone while driving.

June 18, 2010

MIDDLE EAST

Abbas Would Clearly Win Palestinian Ballot

June 25, 2010

Mahmoud Abbas would win a new election in the Palestinian territories, according to a poll by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research. 54 per cent of respondents would vote for the current Palestinian Authority president and leader of Fatah in the next ballot, up four points since March.

Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh is second with 39 per cent.

Abbas won the January 2005 presidential ballot in the Palestinian Territories with 62.32 per cent of all cast ballots. In January 2006, Hamas won the Palestinian Legislative Council election, securing 74 of the 112 seats at stake. Haniyeh officially took over as prime minister in March. The Israeli government believes Hamas is directly responsible for the deaths of 377 citizens in a variety of attacks, which include dozens of suicide bombings.

In February 2007, Hamas and Fatah leaders reached an accord which set the guidelines for a power-sharing Palestinian administration, headed by Hamas. In June, amid a wave of violent clashes between Hamas and Fatah factions, Hamas militants seized control of Gaza. Abbas issued a decree to form a 12-member emergency government based in the West Bank and expelled Hamas from the administration. Fatah member Salam Fayyad was appointed as prime minister by Abbas.

Abbas has extended his tenure—which was supposed to end in January 2009—indefinitely. The extension is part of an Egypt-sponsored plan to foster reconciliation between Hamas and Fatah. Abbas has said he does not intend to seek a new term in office in the next presidential election, which has not yet been scheduled.

On Jun. 20, Abbas revealed his desire to visit Gaza for the first time since the Hamas takeover, saying, "I ask myself this question 100 times every day; I have always thought of going there."

Polling Data

If a presidential election were to take place today, and Mahmoud Abbas were nominated by Fatah and Ismail Haniyeh were nominated by Hamas, who would you vote for?

	Jun. 2010	Mar. 2010	Dec. 2009
Mahmoud Abbas	54%	50%	54%
Ismail Haniyeh	39%	40%	38%
Not sure	7%	10%	8%

*Source: Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research
Methodology: Face-to-face interviews with 1,200 Palestinian adults in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, conducted from Jun. 10 to Jun. 13, 2010. Margin of error is 3 per cent.*

Palestinians See Turkey as Best Regional Ally

June 22, 2010

Many people in the Palestinian territories consider Turkey as their closest ally in the region, according to a poll by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research. 43 per cent of respondents believe Turkey is the most supportive of the Palestinians and their cause.

In February 2007, Hamas and Fatah leaders reached an accord which set the guidelines for a power-sharing administration of the Palestinian Authority, headed by Hamas. In June, amid a wave of violent clashes between Hamas and Fatah factions, Hamas militants seized control of Gaza.

In January 2008, Israel completely sealed off its borders with Gaza. This followed insistent launching of rockets into Israel by Hamas. The border closure has left Gaza isolated. It is difficult to receive cargo of all types, including humanitarian aid.

On May 31, Israel raided a flotilla of six ships occupied mostly by Turkish, pro-Palestinian citizens who were attempting to deliver humanitarian aid to Gaza. Nine people died in the confrontation, and dozens more were detained and later deported by Israel. The raid—which will be subject to various investigations—sparked widespread condemnation of Israel and brought the Gaza blockade under the spotlight. It also soured relations between Turkey and Israel.

On Jun. 15, upon Israel announcing it would set up a special committee to investigate the events on the raided ships, Turkish foreign minister Ahmet Davutoglu declared: "We have no trust at all that Israel [can conduct] an objective investigation."

Polling Data

Which regional country is the most supportive of the Palestinians and their cause?

Turkey	43%
Egypt	13%
Iran	6%
Saudi Arabia	5%
Syria	5%
Lebanon	3%
Jordan	2%

Source: Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research

Methodology: Face-to-face interviews with 1,200 Palestinian adults in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, conducted from Jun. 10 to Jun. 13, 2010. Margin of error is 3 per cent.

WEST & CENTRAL ASIA

CHP Grows, Virtually Ties AKP in Turkey

June 21, 2010

Turkey's governing Justice and Development Party (AKP) is technically tied with the Republican People's Party (CHP), according to a poll by Sonar Arastirma. 32.5 per cent of respondents would vote for the CHP in the next legislative election, while 31.1 per cent would support the ruling AKP.

The CHP is up 5.4 points since January; support for the AKP is up 1.6 points. The National Action Party (MHP) is in third place with 18.6 per cent. Support is much lower for the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP), the Felicity Party (SP), the Democratic Left Party (DSP), and the Turkish Democratic Party (DP).

Turkish voters renewed the Great National Assembly in July 2007. Final results gave the AKP 46.6 per cent of the vote and 341 seats in the legislature. Parties require at least 10 per cent of the vote to earn seats under the country's proportional representation system. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, a member of the AKP, has served as prime minister since March 2003.

On May 22, Kemal Kilicdaroglu took over as leader of the CHP, following the resignation of Deniz Baykal. Kilicdaroglu discussed his views on international relations, saying, "Foreign policy should be approached with the skills of a chess master. Foreign policy cannot be executed based on personality. Foreign policy cannot be executed as a fait accompli. There are years of hard work behind it."

On Jun. 11, Erdogan stressed that a recent row with Israel and increasing ties with Iran do not mean that Turkey is drifting away from the West. The prime minister declared: "Those who allege that Turkey has broken away from the West are the intermediaries of an ill-intentioned propaganda."

Polling Data

What party would you support in the next parliamentary election?

	May 2010	Jan. 2010	Oct. 2009
Republican People's Party (CHP)	32.5%	27.1%	28.2%
Justice and Development Party (AKP)	31.1%	29.5%	31.7%

National Action Party (MHP)	18.6%	20.4%	19.6%
Peace and Democracy Party (BDP)	4.3%	6.3%	6.6% (*)
Felicity Party (SP)	3.7%	5.5%	6.1%
Democratic Left Party (DSP)	3.5%	4.1%	2.0%
Turkish Democratic Party (DP)	2.4%	3.0%	1.9%

(*) *The BDP replaced the Democratic Society Party (DTP)*

Source: Sonar Arastirma

Methodology: Interviews with 3,000 Turk adults, conducted from May 24 to May 27, 2010. Margin of error is 2.0 per cent.

EAST EUROPE

Thais Urge for Dialogue, Not Elections, For Peace

June 23, 2010

Many people in Thailand reject the notion that a new general election will achieve national reconciliation, according to a poll by Bangkok University. Only 16.6 per cent of respondents think dissolving the legislature is the best way forward.

Conversely, 28 per cent of respondents think the government should listen to representatives from all political parties in order to foster unity and stability, and 24.9 per cent believe the best course of action is to help the poor and create jobs.

Thailand has experienced more than three years of political instability, including the dissolution of the lower house, a cancelled national election, a military coup and the enactment of a new constitution. In December 2007, Thailand held a legislative ballot. Final results gave the People's Power Party (PPP) 232 of the 480 seats, followed by the Democratic Party (PP) with 165 mandates. In January 2008, PPP leader Samak Sundaravej became prime minister.

Samak's government faced fierce opposition and major street protests led by the civic organization People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD). The group accused Samak of being a puppet of former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who was deposed in a 2006 military coup.

In August 2008, the PAD occupied the Government House in Bangkok, demanding Samak's resignation. Samak stepped down in September after the national Constitutional Court found that he violated conflict of interest laws when he received payments for hosting two television cooking shows. Then deputy prime minister Somchai Wongsawat took over as acting head of government.

In November, PAD yellow-clad activists took over Bangkok's international airport—where the government had been working from after its offices were invaded in August—demanding Somchai's resignation. The airport was forced to shut down entirely, stranding thousands of tourists.

In December, the Constitutional Court ordered the PPP and its two coalition partners, the Machima Thipatai Party and the Chart Thai Party, to disband after it found them guilty of voter fraud in the 2007 ballot. The court also banned Somchai and executives from the three parties from participating in politics for five years. Somchai accepted the verdict and stepped down. Protesters at the airport ended the siege. PP leader Abhisit Vejjajiva became prime minister, with the support of 235 lawmakers in the House of Representatives.

In March 2009, Thaksin accused Privy Council president Prem Tinsulanonda of masterminding the 2006 military coup, and openly called for a "people's revolution" to topple the Abhisit government. In April, the National United Front of Democracy Against Dictatorship (UDD)—an extension of the Puea Thai Party led by Thaksin and whose followers wear red shirts—organized protests in Bangkok and Chonburi.

In June, the PAD's Yellow Shirts formally created a political party, the New Politics Party, and chose labour activist Somsak Kosaisuk as its leader.

On Mar. 12, 2010, the Red Shirt movement took control of Ratchaprasong, an area in the heart of Bangkok's commercial district, demanding early legislative elections and the resignation of prime minister Abhisit.

On May 13, after issuing several public warnings, the government ordered the military to enter the Red Shirts' camp in Ratchaprasong and disperse the dissidents. Power, water and food supplies were cut from the camp. Eighty-five people died in the confrontations, which went on for days. The Red Shirts eventually surrendered. As they were leaving, some of them lit 36 buildings on fire, including a major shopping mall, and looted stores and banks. Another 54 people died in these events.

On May 25, a Thai court issued an arrest warrant against Thaksin on terrorism charges for his alleged participation in the Red Shirts' actions.

Prime minister Abhisit has set up four separate panels to study the incidents that led to last month's violence. On Jun. 22, Chaturon Chaiseng, a former cabinet member under Thaksin, warned that the government has appointed only loyalists to these commissions, adding, "Abhisit's plan excludes the opposition totally. The people he picked mostly supported the coup and the present constitution, which is the fundamental problem."

Polling Data

What should be the main priority for the government to achieve reconciliation?

Listening to the opinion of all parties	28.0%
Helping the poor, creating jobs	24.9%
Dissolving the legislature	16.6%
Launching an impartial investigation into recent political violence	9.5%
Arrest and punish terrorists	6.6%

Source: Bangkok University

Methodology: Interviews with 1,628 Thai adults, conducted on Jun. 16 and Jun. 16, 2010. No margin of error was provided.

EAST EUROPE

Most Czechs Agree with Euthanasia

June 26, 2010

Most people in the Czech Republic support the practice of euthanasia, according to a poll by CVVM. 61 per cent of respondents share this point of view, down one point since May 2009.

In the Czech Republic, assisting a person to commit suicide is equivalent to murder.

Euthanasia has been extensively discussed in the Czech legislature for years, but no changes in the status quo have been approved.

Last August, the newspaper Mlada fronta Dnes (MfD) reported that some doctors practise "wild euthanasia" in the Czech Republic, meaning that they administer drugs and treatment to patients to help them die when their situation becomes extreme.

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

Do you support or oppose euthanasia?

May 2010	May 2009	May 2008	May 2007
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Support	61%	62%	62%	58%
Oppose	29%	27%	27%	28%
Not sure	10%	11%	11%	15%

Source: CVVM

Methodology: Interviews with 1,061 Czech adults, conducted from May 3 to May 10, 2010. No margin of error was provided.

Czech Decidedly Favour Abortion

June 22, 2010

A solid majority of people in the Czech Republic agree with legal abortions at the request of the mother, according to a poll by CVVM. 70 per cent of respondents share this point of view, down three points since May 2009.

Only three per cent of respondents think abortion should be completely banned, and just seven per cent think it should only be legal if the woman's health is at risk.

Abortion is legal in the Czech Republic within the first 12 weeks of gestation. The procedure can also be performed for medical reasons in the first 24 weeks of pregnancy, or at any time during gestation and if the fetus has defects.

Czechoslovakia was separated into two countries, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, in the "velvet divorce" of 1993, a reference to the "velvet revolution" in 1989 when mass peaceful demonstrations led to the end of communist rule in the country.

The law allowing for abortion was introduced with some restrictions in 1975, when the Czech Republic was still part of Czechoslovakia. Since 1992, abortions for non-medical reasons are not covered by the state-administered health care system, but rates for this procedure are generally low.

Earlier this year, in neighbouring Poland, the Polish branch of the American anti-abortion Center for Bio-Ethical Reform (CBR) issued a campaign linking abortions to the Nazi occupation. Ads on billboards recalled that it was part of Nazi policy to have "girls and women" in the "Slave native population have as many abortions as possible" so that the "non-German population" would not multiply.

Polling Data

What is your opinion on abortion?

	May 2010	May 2009	May 2008	May 2007
Abortion should be allowed at the request of the woman	70%	73%	75%	72%
Abortion should be allowed for societal reasons	16%	16%	15%	19%
Abortion should only be allowed if a woman's health is at risk	7%	5%	6%	5%
Abortion should be banned	3%	2%	1%	1%
Not sure	4%	4%	3%	2%

Source: CVVM

Methodology: Interviews with 1,061 Czech adults, conducted from May 3 to May 10, 2010. No margin of error was provided.

WEST EUROPE

Just Over a Third of French Happy with Sarkozy

June 26, 2010

The popularity of French president Nicolas Sarkozy remains well below the 50 per cent mark, according to a poll by Ifop published in *Paris Match*. 35 per cent of respondents approve of Sarkozy's performance, up one point since May.

The popularity of French prime minister François Fillon remains stable, at 55 per cent.

In May 2007, 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 Fillon—who had been his adviser and presidential campaign leader—as prime minister.

On Jun. 24, thousands of French workers took to the streets to protest against a government proposal to reform the pension system, which would entail raising the retirement age to 62.

Bernard Thibault, leader of the large CGT workers' union, declared: "This draft bill will not get passed in its current form. The workers have decided to take to the streets in large numbers to prevent the text from getting passed."

Polling Data

Do you approve or disapprove of Nicolas Sarkozy's performance as president?

	Jun. 2010	May 2010	Apr. 2010	Mar. 2010
Approve	35%	34%	33%	36%
Disapprove	64%	66%	67%	64%

Do you approve or disapprove of François Fillon's performance as prime minister?

	Jun. 2010	May 2010	Apr. 2010	Mar. 2010
Approve	55%	54%	52%	54%
Disapprove	44%	46%	47%	46%

Source: Ifop / Paris Match

Methodology: Telephone interviews with 1,005 French adults, conducted on Jun. 3 to Jun. 4, 2010. No margin of error was provided.

NORTH AMERICA

Americans Blame BP for Oil Spill, Britons Divided

June 25, 2010

People in the United States and Britain hold differing views on the main culprit of the Gulf of Mexico oil spill, according to a poll by Angus Reid Public Opinion. While 63 per cent of Americans think BP Plc deserves most of the blame for the incident, only 31 per cent of Britons concur.

On Apr. 20, a blowout at an oil well owned by BP Plc and located southeast of the Louisiana coast in the Gulf of Mexico caused a major oil spill which is now considered the largest in U.S. history. Several attempts aimed at containing the oil spill failed.

On Jun. 15, U.S. President Barack Obama discussed the oil spill in an address to the nation, saying, "We will fight this spill with everything we've got for as long as it takes. We will make BP pay for the damage their company has caused. And we will do whatever's necessary to help the Gulf Coast and its people recover from this tragedy."

On Jun. 23, British Prime Minister David Cameron declared at the House of Commons: "BP itself wants to pay for the clean-up, wants to stop the gushing of the oil into the Gulf, recognizes it's going to have to pay money in respect of fishermen and others who have

lost their livelihoods. But we do want to make sure that this remains a strong and stable company, for our benefit but also for the benefit of the United States."

Polling Data

As you may know, an oil platform collapsed in the Gulf of Mexico on Apr. 20 and has been leaking oil since. From what you have seen, read or heard about this, how much blame do you think each one of the following deserves for the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico? – "Most of the Blame" responses listed

	USA	BRI
BP Plc (majority owner of the oil field)	63%	31%
Transocean Ltd. (owner and operator of the oil rig)	30%	37%
Halliburton Energy Services Inc. (was involved in casing the oil well)	22%	22%
Cameron International Corp. (provider of blowout-prevention equipment)	21%	22%
The U.S. government (establishes regulations for offshore drilling)	20%	14%

*Source: Angus Reid Public Opinion
Methodology: Online interviews with 1,004 American adults and 2,018 British adults, conducted on Jun. 8 and Jun. 9, 2010. Margin of error is 3.1 per cent for the U.S. sample, and 2.2 per cent for the Britain sample.*

Verdict on Healthcare Reform Bill Still Divided

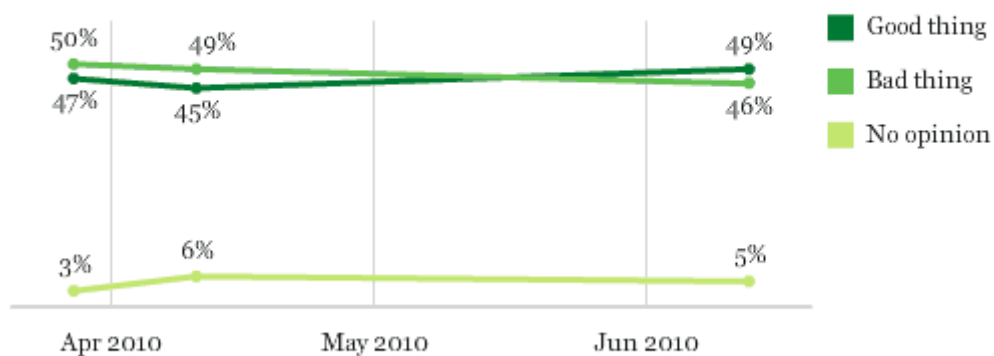
Among age groups, seniors continue to be the most opposed

June 22, 2010

The healthcare reform legislation Congress passed in late March divided the public then and has not gained significant support in the three months since.

Reaction to Congress' Passage of Healthcare Reform Bill

As you may know, earlier this year Congress passed legislation that restructures the nation's healthcare system. All in all, do you think it is a good thing or a bad thing that Congress passed this legislation?



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The 49% of Americans who today say passage of healthcare reform was a good thing, compared with 46% calling it a bad thing, is a bit more positive than the two prior readings in which the slight plurality called it a bad thing. However, the four percentage-point increase since April in favorability toward the law, from 45% to 49%, is not statistically significant.

President Obama on Tuesday marked the 90-day anniversary of his signing of the healthcare reform bill into law by announcing a number of consumer-oriented healthcare regulations under the umbrella of a "patients' bill of rights." However, highlighting the anemic nature of public support for the new healthcare legislation, the June 11-13 *USA Today*/Gallup poll also shows [50% of Americans in favor of Congress' repealing all or much of the law](#).

Public reviews of the healthcare reform bill continue to be highly partisan. Roughly three-quarters of Democrats (76%) and liberals (78%) call its passage a good thing, compared with 17% of Republicans and 22% of conservatives. Independents lean against the bill by an eight-point margin, 51% to 43%, largely unchanged from April.

Reaction to Congress' Passage of Healthcare Reform Bill

Recent trend, by party ID

	Republicans	Independents	Democrats
	%	%	%
June 11-13, 2010			
Good thing	17	43	76
Bad thing	79	51	18
April 8-11, 2010			
Good thing	10	41	81
Bad thing	86	51	16

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On the basis of age, the largest well of opposition is found among seniors, 60% of whom call passage of the bill a bad thing, similar to the 57% in April. By contrast, attitudes are more favorable than unfavorable among young and middle-aged adults.

Reaction to Congress' Passage of Healthcare Reform Bill

Recent trend, by age

	18 to 29 years	30 to 49 years	50 to 64 years	65 and older
	%	%	%	%
June 11-13, 2010				
Good thing	57	49	51	36
Bad thing	40	43	44	60
April 8-11, 2010				
Good thing	50	48	44	37
Bad thing	44	47	51	57

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Bottom Line

New Gallup polling finds that Americans remain about equally divided in their reactions to Congress' passage of healthcare reform legislation earlier this year. Seniors -- [who were among the most widely opposed to the legislation](#) prior to passage, given [their broad satisfaction with the status quo](#) under Medicare -- have not relented in opposing the bill. And while one might expect the highly charged views of partisans to remain fixed, as they have, it is noteworthy that support among independents has not grown.

Survey Methods

Results for this *USA Today*/Gallup poll are based on telephone interviews conducted June 11-13, 2010, with a random sample of 1,014 adults, aged 18 and older, living in the continental U.S., selected using random-digit-dial sampling.

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 landline telephones (for respondents with a landline telephone) and cellular phones (for respondents who are cell phone-only). Each sample includes a minimum quota of 150 cell phone-only respondents and 850 landline respondents, with additional minimum quotas among landline respondents for gender within region. Landline respondents are chosen at random within each household on the basis of which member had the most recent birthday.

Samples are weighted by gender, age, race, education, region, and phone lines. Demographic weighting targets are based on the March 2009 Current Population Survey figures for the aged 18 and older non-institutionalized population living in continental U.S. telephone households. All reported margins of sampling error include the computed design effects for weighting and sample design.

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.

Obama's Rating Steady Despite Tough Environment

Mixed Views on Immigration Policy

June 24, 2010

Since the beginning of this year, President Obama has signed a controversial health care measure, coped with a stubbornly high jobless rate and struggled to manage the largest environmental disaster in the nation's history. In that period, Obama's overall job approval rating has moved from 49% to 48%.

Obama's Mid-Year Report Card			
	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Jun</u>	<u>Change</u>
<i>Job approval ...</i>	%	%	
Overall job	49	48	-1
Foreign policy	44	45	+1
Energy policy	45	45	0
Iraq	45	45	0
Afghanistan	45	45	0
Economy	42	43	+1
Health care	38	42	+4
Oil leak	--	39	—
Budget deficit	32	35	+3
Immigration policy	30	33	+3
<i>Personal image...</i>			
Good communicator	83	77	-6
Warm and friendly	77	68	-9
Well informed	69	67	-2
Well organized	70	63	-7
Cares about people	64	60	-4
Trustworthy	61	58	-3
Overall favorable rating*	65	56	-9
Able to get things done	57	55	-2
Strong leader	62	53	-9
Pew Research Center June 16-20.			
* Favorability from Nov 2009 and June 10-13, 2010.			

On major issues, ranging from the economy to Afghanistan, Obama's ratings also have changed little since the beginning of the year. He continues to get his highest ratings on foreign policy, energy policy, Afghanistan and Iraq; Obama gets his worst marks on the budget deficit and immigration.

His personal image, while not as strong as it was in January, remains generally positive. Fully 77% view him as a good communicator, while 68% see him as warm and friendly and 67% say he is well-informed. On the other hand, ratings for his ability to get things done (55%) and strong leadership (53%) are much lower. The proportion viewing him as a strong leader has declined markedly since February 2009, from 77% to 53%.

Despite these changes, bottom-line attitudes toward Obama's job performance have changed little in 2010. Nor has Obama's overall job approval been affected by increasing criticism of his handling of the situation in the Gulf of Mexico, which continues to dominate news coverage and [the public's attention](#).

The latest national survey by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, conducted June 16-20 among 1,802 adults, finds that 39% approve of Obama's handling of the oil leak while 52% disapprove. Although his approval mark is little changed from early May (38%), in the initial stages of the disaster, the proportion disapproving of his job in dealing with the leak has risen 16 points (from 36%).

Majority Now Opposes Increased Offshore Drilling			
	Feb 2010	May 2010	Jun 2010
<i>Allowing more offshore oil and gas drilling in U.S. waters...</i>	%	%	%
Favor	63	54	44
Oppose	31	38	52
Don't know	6	8	4
	100	100	100
<i>People should be willing to pay higher prices to protect environment ...</i>	Jan 2007	Apr 2009	Jun 2010
Agree	60	49	49
Disagree	37	48	47
Don't know	3	3	3
	100	100	100
<i>There need to be stricter laws and regulations to protect environment...</i>			
Agree	83	83	81
Disagree	15	16	17
Don't know	2	1	2
	100	100	100
Pew Research Center June 16-20 Q50a & Q42a-b. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.			

The survey finds further evidence that the disaster has undermined public support for increased offshore drilling for oil and gas in U.S. waters. Just 44% favor increased offshore drilling, down 10 points since early May and 19 points since February. A majority (52%) now opposes more offshore drilling.

Nearly seven-in-ten Democrats (69%) and 51% of independents oppose increased offshore drilling; in February, majorities in both groups favored more offshore drilling. By contrast, most Republicans (63%) continue to favor expanded drilling in U.S. waters, but support has slipped from earlier this year (74% in February).

Yet the public remains divided over whether people should be willing to pay higher prices to protect the environment. Nearly half (49%) agree that they should, while about as many (47%) disagree. That is little changed from April 2009; however, last year's survey marked the first time in a series of surveys dating to 1992 when a majority did not say that people should be willing to pay higher prices to protect the environment.

Support for "Path to Citizenship" and Arizona's New Immigration Law			
<i>Provide a way for illegal immigrants in the US to gain citizenship under certain conditions* ...</i>	Jun <u>2007</u> %	Apr <u>2009</u> %	Jun <u>2010</u> %
Favor	63	63	68
Oppose	30	34	30
Don't know	<u>7</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>
	100	100	100
<i>Arizona immigration law...</i>			
Approve			64
Disapprove			32
Don't know			<u>3</u>
			100
Pew Research Center June 16-20 Q53 & Q58. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding. * ...if they pass background checks, pay fines and have jobs.			

The public also expresses mixed views on immigration policy. There is broad support for Arizona's new immigration law, which requires police to verify the legal status of someone they have stopped or arrested if they suspect that the person is in the country illegally. By two-to-one (64% to 32%), more favor than oppose the new law.

At the same time, there is a similar level of support for providing a way for illegal immigrants currently in the country to gain legal citizenship if they pass background checks, pay fines and have jobs. Support for the so-called path to citizenship has increased somewhat from last year (from 63% to 68%).

More generally, opinion about immigrants' impact on the nation's traditional customs and values has not become more negative in recent years, although increasing numbers see immigrants as a burden because they take jobs, housing and health care. Currently, 50% see immigrants as a burden because of those factors, up from 40% last year.

The survey finds that views of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have remained very stable in recent months, a period when both conflicts have received little news coverage and garnered little public interest (the survey was conducted before Obama accepted Gen. Stanley McChrystal's resignation as commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan). Nearly six-in-ten (59%) say the United States will definitely or probably succeed in Afghanistan, while about the same percentage (58%) sees success as at least probable in Iraq.

Obama Receives 44% Approval on Oil Spill While BP Gets 16%

Obama's overall job approval rating, at 47% last week, is little changed

June 21, 2010

Americans give President Obama a 44% approval rating on his handling of the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, up slightly from 40% in early June. Meanwhile, 16% of Americans approve of BP's handling of the spill.

Approval of Obama's Handling of Oil Spill

Turning back to Barack Obama, do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico?

	% Approve	% Disapprove	% No opinion
2010 Jun 19-20	44	48	9
2010 Jun 5-6	40	46	13

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Approval of BP's Handling of Oil Spill

Next, do you approve or disapprove of the way the oil company BP is handling the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico?

	% Approve	% Disapprove	% No opinion
2010 Jun 19-20	16	76	8

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These data are based on Gallup Daily tracking interviews conducted June 19-20. During the three-day period of June 18-20, President Obama's three-day job approval rating was 49%. Obama's approval on the oil spill trailed his overall approval rating by seven percentage points in [polling conducted during the period of June 4-6](#), 40% to 47%, meaning approval on both measures has increased at least marginally over the past two weeks.

In the current poll, 40% of Americans disapprove of how *both* Obama and BP are handling the spill. The next-largest group of 32% approve of Obama's actions relating to the oil spill, but not BP's. Ten percent approve of both; 6% approve of BP but not Obama.

Approval of Obama's and BP's Handling of Oil Spill

Combined responses

	Approve of both Obama's and BP's handling of oil spill	Approve of Obama, disapprove of BP	Approve of BP, disapprove of Obama	Disapprove of both
June 19-20, 2010	10%	32%	6%	40%

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These views are highly partisan.

- Sixty-one percent of Republicans and independents who lean Republican disapprove of both Obama's and BP's handling of the spill. The percentage of Republicans who approve of BP's actions and disapprove of Obama's is about the same as the percentage who approve of Obama but disapprove of BP.
- The majority of Democrats and Democratic leaners (56%) approve of Obama's handling of the oil spill while disapproving of BP's, but a not insubstantial 24% disapprove of both.

Approval of Obama's and BP's Handling of Oil Spill, by Party

Combined responses

	Approve of both Obama's and BP's handling of oil spill	Approve of Obama, disapprove of BP	Approve of BP, disapprove of Obama	Disapprove of both
Republicans/ leaners	7%	11%	13%	61%
Democrats/ leaners	11%	56%	1%	24%

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No Sign That Obama's Overall Job Approval Rating Has Been Significantly Affected

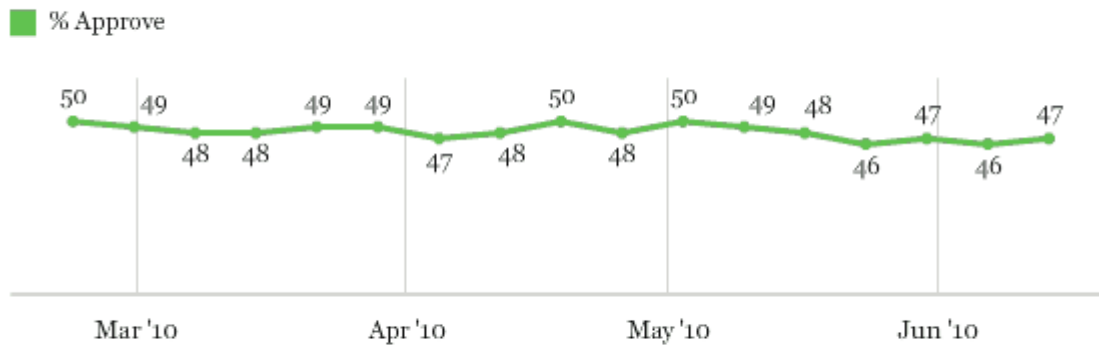
The trend data show a four-point increase in approval of Obama's handling of the oil spill between Gallup's June 5-6 poll and the June 19-20 poll. These results suggest a possibly slight benefit to Obama from his recent visits to the Gulf region, culminating in his nationally televised address from the Oval Office last Tuesday.

There is less evidence that the oil spill has affected Obama's standing in the public's eye from a comparison of [his weekly overall job approval average](#) before the BP spill on April 20 with his average after the spill. Obama's ratings have been slightly lower in the last four weeks than they were in the four weeks prior to that, but his average in either

time period is not much different from his 48% average in the four weeks immediately prior to the spill.

President Obama's Job Approval Rating

Weekly averages



Gallup Daily tracking

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Bottom Line

President Obama gets substantially higher approval ratings for handling the Gulf Coast oil spill than does BP, and Obama's approval ratings both on the spill and overall have edged up slightly over the last two weeks. However, weekly trends in Obama's overall job approval rating show no significant impact from the oil spill; his weekly average now is little different from what it was in the weeks prior to the spill.

Survey Methods

Results are based on telephone interviews conducted as part of Gallup Daily tracking June 19-20, 2010, with a random sample of 1,046 adults, aged 18 and older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia, selected using random-digit-dial sampling.

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 landline telephones and cellular phones, with interviews conducted in Spanish for respondents who are primarily Spanish-speaking. Each daily sample includes a minimum quota of 150 cell phone respondents and 850 landline respondents, with additional minimum quotas among landline respondents for gender within region. Landline respondents are chosen at random within each household on the basis of which member had the most recent birthday.

Samples are weighted by gender, age, race, Hispanic ethnicity, education, region, adults in the household, cell phone-only status, cell phone-mostly status, and phone lines. Demographic weighting targets are based on the March 2009 Current Population Survey figures for the aged 18 and older non-institutionalized population living in U.S. telephone households. All reported margins of sampling error include the computed design effects for weighting and sample design.

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.

Registered Voters' House Voting Preferences Tied at 46%

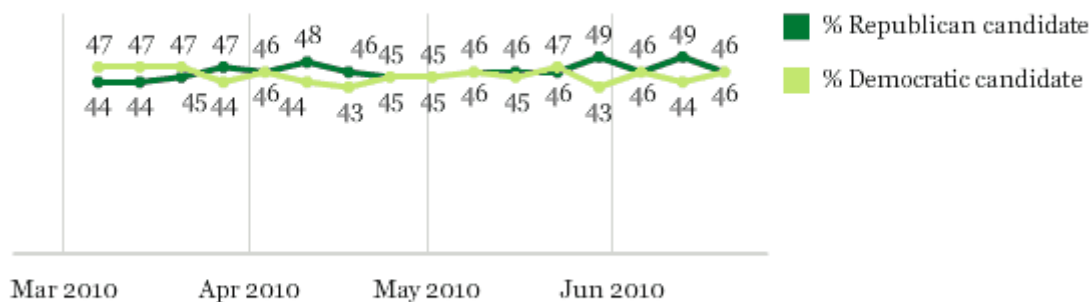
Preferences have been closely divided for much of the year

June 22, 2010

Registered voters divide evenly when asked which party's candidate they would vote for if the congressional elections were held today, with 46% preferring the Republican candidate and 46% the Democratic candidate. Registered voters' preferences have generally been closely divided since Gallup began tracking preferences in March.

If the elections for Congress were being held today, which party's candidate would you vote for in your congressional district -- [ROTATED: the Democratic Party's candidate or the Republican Party's candidate]?

Based on registered voters



Gallup Daily tracking

Note: Percentages include those who lean toward one candidate

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Gallup tracks U.S. House voting preferences using the generic ballot for Congress. The generic ballot has proven [an accurate predictor of the actual vote for the U.S. House in midterm elections](#). The latest results are based on interviews with U.S. registered voters conducted June 14-20 on the Gallup Daily tracking survey.

In recent weeks there have been some fluctuations within a three-point range in the percentages preferring the Republican (from 46% to 49%) and Democratic (from 43% to 46%) candidates. All of these fluctuations are within the margin of sampling error.

Nevertheless, all of the recent results are more favorable to Republicans than Democrats. Historically, Democrats have almost always led on the generic ballot among all registered voters. But the size of that lead usually shrinks once turnout is factored in (something Gallup typically does in the fall of a midterm election year), given usual Republican advantages in voter turnout.

Democrats typically need a cushion of at least five percentage points among registered voters to maintain an advantage once turnout is taken into account. For example, [Democrats consistently led by double digits among voters in 2006](#) before winning enough seats to take party control of the U.S. House, so they still held an advantage even with a Republican edge in turnout. In 1994, however, the best Republican year in recent memory, the generic ballot results among all registered voters generally showed a tied race or a Republican advantage for most of that election year.

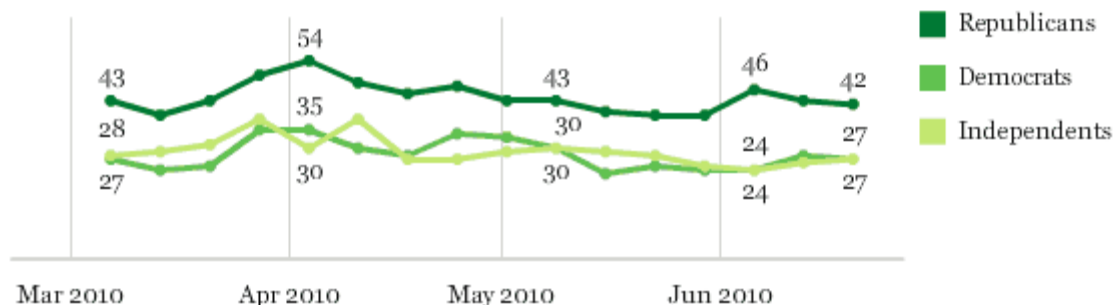
Thus, this year's generic ballot results suggest a better Republican year than Democratic year. If polling continues to show a close race, Democrats would need unusually strong turnout to be competitive in the fall. Perhaps in recognition of these patterns, the Democratic Party has announced an unprecedented voter mobilization effort to try to turn out sympathetic voters in an attempt to hold on to the gains they have made in the past two elections.

GOP Voters Continue to Be More Enthusiastic

Republicans also continue to hold an advantage in expressed enthusiasm about voting. Currently, 42% of Republicans say they are very enthusiastic about voting, compared with 27% of Democrats. That 15-point gap in enthusiasm is typical of what Gallup has measured this year.

Percentage Very Enthusiastic About Voting in 2010 Midterm Elections, by Political Party

Based on registered voters



Gallup Daily tracking

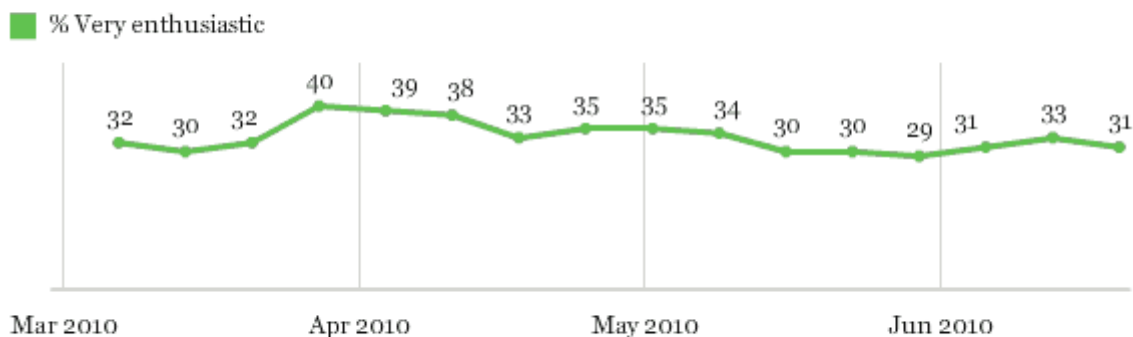
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Republicans continue to hold an edge in enthusiasm even though overall voter enthusiasm is down from earlier in the campaign. In late March, 40% of all registered voters said they were very enthusiastic about voting. In the latest data, 31% are, and since mid-May the number has been no higher than 33%.

Would you say you are enthusiastic or not enthusiastic about voting in this year's congressional elections?

If "enthusiastic": Are you very enthusiastic or somewhat enthusiastic?

Based on registered voters



Gallup Daily tracking

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Bottom Line

Though there have recently been some minor fluctuations in Gallup's weekly tracking results of registered voters' congressional voting preferences, these have generally been fairly closely divided this year, and they point to a better year for Republicans than for Democrats.

Explore more Gallup data relating to the upcoming congressional midterm elections, including Gallup's complete generic ballot trend since 1950 in our [Election 2010 key indicators interactive](#).

Survey Methods

Results are based on telephone interviews conducted as part of Gallup Daily tracking/the Gallup Healthways Well-Being Index survey June 14-20, 2010, with a random sample of 1,612 adults, aged 18 and older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia, selected using random-digit-dial sampling.

For results based on the total sample of national adults, one can say with 95% confidence that the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 3 percentage points.

Interviews are conducted with respondents on landline telephones and cellular phones, with interviews conducted in Spanish for respondents who are primarily Spanish-speaking. Each daily sample includes a minimum quota of 150 cell phone respondents and 850 landline respondents, with additional minimum quotas among landline respondents for gender within region. Landline respondents are chosen at random within each household on the basis of which member had the most recent birthday.

Samples are weighted by gender, age, race, Hispanic ethnicity, education, region, adults in the household, cell phone-only status, cell phone-mostly status, and phone lines. Demographic weighting targets are based on the March 2009 Current Population Survey figures for the aged 18 and older non-institutionalized population living in U.S. telephone households. All reported margins of sampling error include the computed design effects for weighting and sample design.

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' Church Attendance Inches Up in 2010

Increase accompanies rise in economic confidence

June 25, 2010

Americans' self-reported church attendance has continued to inch up in 2010, with 43.1% of Americans reporting weekly or almost weekly attendance. This is up slightly from 42.8% in 2009 and 42.1% in 2008. The increase comes as Americans' economic confidence has also risen, suggesting that, instead of church attendance rising when economic times get bad, as some theorize, the opposite pattern may be occurring.

*Frequent Church Attendance + Economic Confidence Index,
Yearly Averages*

	% Frequent[^] church attendance	Economic Confidence Index
2010 (Jan-May)	43.1	-26
2009	42.8	-35
2008	42.1	-50

[^]Percentage saying they attend "at least once a week" or "almost every week"
Gallup Daily tracking

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Gallup's measure of church attendance is based on more than 800,000 interviews collected as part of Gallup Daily tracking between February 2008 and May 2010. The measure asks respondents to report their church, synagogue, or mosque attendance in one of five categories of frequency. (Detailed month-by-month data are presented on page 2.)

How often do you attend church, synagogue, or mosque?

	% At least once a week	% Almost every week	% About once a month	% Seldom	% Never	Sample size
2010 (Jan-May)	35	8	11	25	20	146,355
2009	35	8	12	25	20	353,849
2008	34	8	12	26	20	311,591

Gallup Daily tracking

GALLUP[®]

There has been well-publicized speculation about the possibility that church attendance has risen over the past two years as Americans became more despondent and worried as a result of the economic recession. However, trends in Gallup's Economic Confidence Index, an ongoing measure of perceived economic confidence, reflect just the opposite pattern, with both church attendance and economic confidence increasing from 2008 to 2009, and now into 2010.

Such correlations do not prove causality, and it is possible that despite the more positive economic confidence, other economic realities such as unemployment could be related to the increase in church attendance. Still, these particular population-level data do little to directly support the theory that people seek out the solace of religion, as measured in religious service participation, when economic times turn tough.

Church Attendance Among Subgroups

Gallup Daily tracking also documents the extent to which church attendance varies significantly across subgroups of the U.S. adult population.

Frequent^ Church Attendance, January-May 2010

By demographic group

	%
Conservative	55
Non-Hispanic black	55
Republican	55
65+	53
Black Hispanic	52
South	51
Married	48
Women	47
White Hispanic	46
Midwest	44
College graduate	44
Postgraduate	44
High school or less	44
SAMPLE AVERAGE	43
50 to 64	43
Some college	41
Non-Hispanic white	41
30 to 49	41
Moderate	39
Democrat	39
Men	39
Independent	38
East	38
West	37
Not married	36
18 to 29	35
Asian	31
Liberal	27

^ Percentage saying they attend "at least once a week" or "almost every week"
Gallup Daily tracking

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Major correlates of church attendance include politics (with Republicans and conservatives more likely than others to attend), race (with blacks more likely to attend),

age (with older Americans more likely to attend), region (highest in the South), marital status (married adults more likely to attend), and gender (women more likely than men to attend).

Discussion

Church attendance as measured by these self-reports is generally a very stable measure. Still, given the large sample sizes involved in Gallup Daily tracking, the small increase in attendance between 2008 and so far in 2010 is statistically significant, suggesting that there has in fact been an uptick in religious service participation in the real world over the last 2 ½ years. The fact that economic confidence has also increased over this time period confirms previous findings showing [little evidence that increased church attendance is a reaction to perceptions of economic woes](#).

Gallup has also found [Americans becoming slightly more conservative in 2009 and so far in 2010](#). As noted above, conservatives are substantially more likely to attend church than are moderates or, in particular, liberals, suggesting a relationship between this evidence of increasing conservatism and increasing behavioral religiosity.

It is possible that demographics could be affecting church attendance. Gallup analysis documents that Americans in their 60s, 70s, and 80s are significantly more likely to attend church than those who are younger. The oldest of the large group of baby boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) are now entering their 60s. Thus, with each advancing year, more and more baby boomers enter the age range that traditionally has been associated with higher religious service participation. If baby boomers do in fact attend church more frequently as they age, it follows that church attendance would increase steadily in the years ahead.

Survey Methods

Results are based on telephone interviews conducted as part of Gallup Daily tracking February 2008-May 2010, with a random sample of a total of 811,895 national adults, aged 18 and older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia, selected using random-digit-dial sampling.

For results based on the total sample of national adults, one can say with 95% confidence that the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 1 percentage point.

For results based on the total sample of 311,591 adults interviewed in 2008, one can say with 95% confidence that the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 1 percentage point.

For results based on the total sample of 353,849 adults interviewed in 2009, one can say with 95% confidence that the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 1 percentage point.

For results based on the total sample of 117,156 adults interviewed January-May 2010, one can say with 95% confidence that the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 1 percentage point.

Interviews are conducted with respondents on landline telephones and cellular phones, with interviews conducted in Spanish for respondents who are primarily Spanish-speaking. Each daily sample includes a minimum quota of 150 cell phone respondents and 850 landline respondents, with additional minimum quotas among landline respondents for gender within region. Landline respondents are chosen at random within each household on the basis of which member had the most recent birthday.

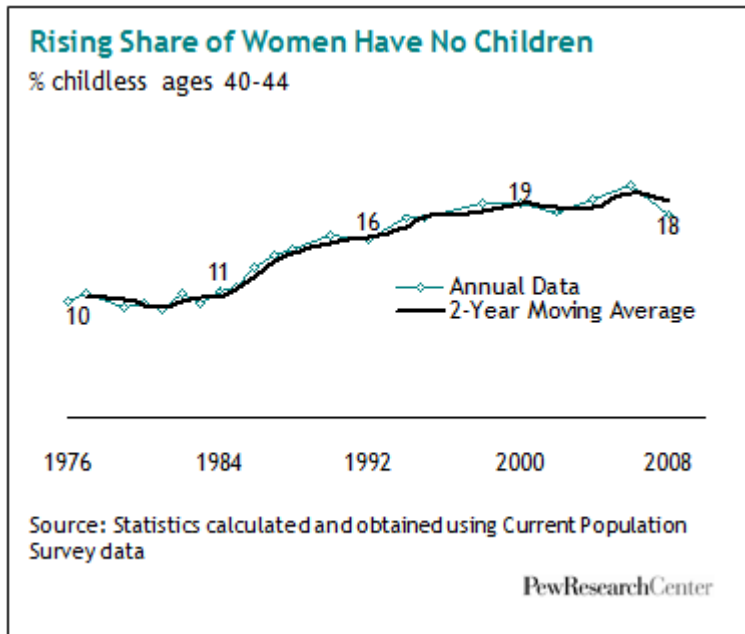
Samples are weighted by gender, age, race, Hispanic ethnicity, education, region, adults in the household, cell phone-only status, cell phone-mostly status, and phone lines. Demographic weighting targets are based on the March 2009 Current Population Survey figures for the aged 18 and older non-institutionalized population living in U.S. telephone households. All reported margins of sampling error include the computed design effects for weighting and sample design.

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.

More Women Without Children

June 25, 2010

Nearly one in five American women ends her childbearing years without having borne a child, compared with one-in-ten in the 1970s. While childlessness has risen for all racial and ethnic groups, and most education levels, it has fallen over the past decade for women with advanced degrees.



The most educated women still are among the most likely never to have had a child. But in a notable exception to the overall rising trend, in 2008, 24% of women ages 40-44 with a master's, doctoral or professional degree had not had children, a decline from 31% in 1994.

By race and ethnic group, white women are most likely not to have borne a child. But over the past decade, childless rates have risen more rapidly for black, Hispanic and Asian women, so the racial gap has narrowed. By marital status, women who have never married are most likely to be childless, but their rates have declined over the past decade, while the rate of childlessness has risen for the so-called ever-married -- those who are married or were at one time.

Among all women ages 40-44, the proportion that has never given birth, 18% in 2008, has grown by 80% since 1976, when it was 10%. There were 1.9 million childless women ages 40-44 in 2008, compared with nearly 580,000 in 1976.

This report is based mainly on data from the June fertility supplement of the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey. The main comparisons use combined data from 2006 and 2008 (referred to in the report as "2008") and from 1992 and 1994 (referred to as "1994"). Two years of data are combined for each time point so as to have adequate sample size for detailed analysis. This report uses the standard measure of childlessness at the end of childbearing years, which is the share of women ages 40-44 who have not borne any children.¹

Attitudes and International Comparisons

Over the past few decades, public attitudes toward childlessness have become more accepting. Most adults disagree that people without children "lead empty lives," a share

that rose to 59% in 2002 from 39% in 1988, according to the [General Social Survey](#). In addition, children increasingly are seen as less central to a good marriage. In a [2007 Pew Research Center survey](#), 41% of adults said that children are very important for a successful marriage, a decline from 65% who said so in 1990.

As for the impact on society, attitudes are more mixed. About half the public -- [46% in a 2009 Pew Research Center poll](#) -- say it makes no difference one way or the other that a growing share of women do not ever have children. Still, a notable share of Americans -- 38% in that 2009 survey -- say this trend is bad for society, an increase from 29% in a 2007 Pew Research survey.

Compared with other developed nations, childless rates in the United States are on par with some nations and higher than others, according to data compiled by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Among women born in 1960, 17% in the U.S. were childless at approximately age 40, compared with 22% in the United Kingdom, 19% in Finland and the Netherlands, and 17% in Italy and Ireland. Rates ranged from 12% to 14% for Spain, Norway, Denmark, Belgium and Sweden, and from 7% to 11% for several Eastern European countries and Iceland.

Possible Explanations

Why has childlessness risen in recent decades? Scholars say that social pressure to bear children appears to have diminished for women and that today the decision to have a child is seen as an individual choice.² Improved job opportunities and contraceptive methods help create alternatives for women who choose not to have children.

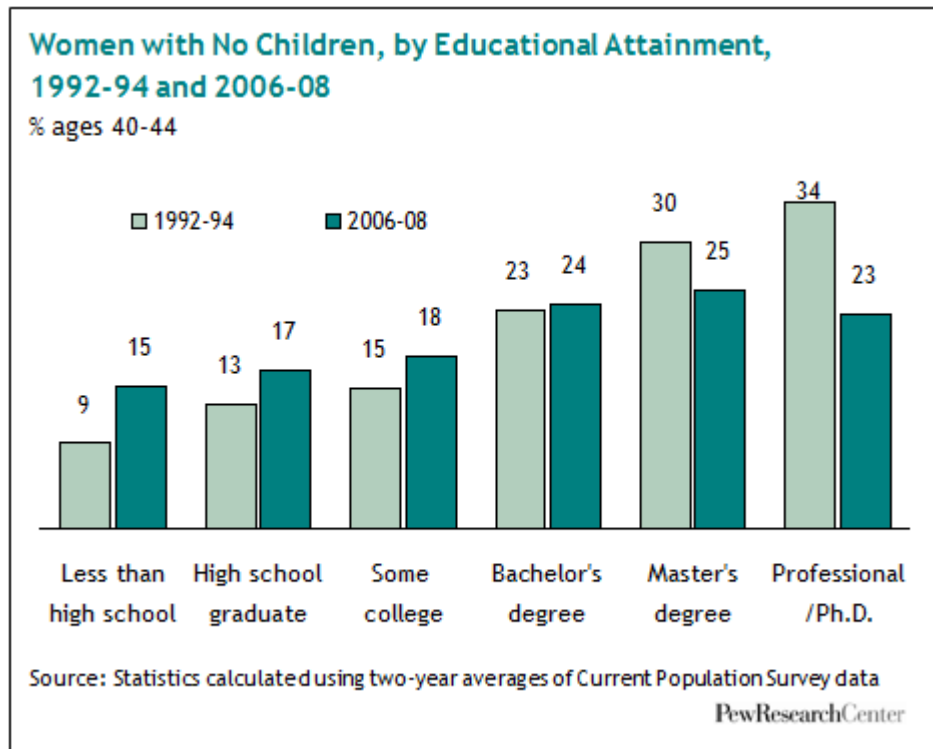
At the same time, there has been a general trend toward delayed marriage and childbearing, especially among highly educated women. Given that the chance of a successful pregnancy declines with age, some women who hope to have children never will, despite the rise in fertility treatments that facilitate pregnancy.

About 10% of women ages 15-44 are not able to get pregnant after a year of trying (six months if ages 35 and older), according to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). Among older women, ages 40-44, there are equal numbers of women who are childless by choice and those who would like children but cannot have them, according to an analysis of data from the National Survey of Family Growth.³ In 2002, among women ages 40-44, 6% were deemed voluntarily childless, 6% involuntarily childless and 2% childless but hoping to have children in the future.

Some women who do not bear their own children raise children as adoptive mothers or stepmothers. According to the 2008 American Community Survey, there are 61.6 million biological children in U.S. households, as well as 1.6 million adopted children and 2.5 million stepchildren. This report analyzes only the population of women who have not borne biological children.

Differences by Education

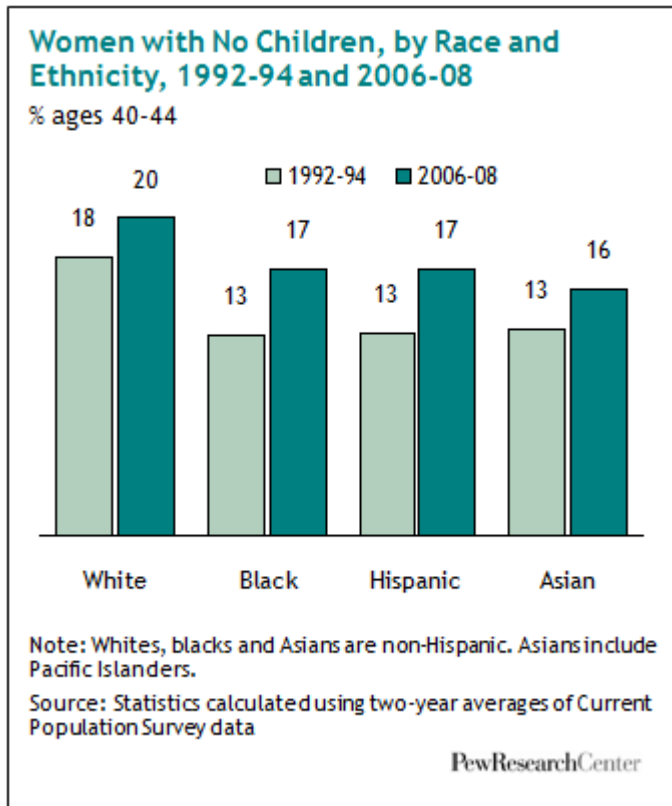
Childlessness is most common among highly educated women. In 2008, 24% of women ages 40-44 with a bachelor's degree had not had a child. Rates were similar for women with a master's degree (25%) and those with a doctorate or a professional degree, such as a medical or legal degree (23%).



Among women with some college but no degree, 18% were childless in 2008, compared with 17% for high school graduates and 15% of women without a high school diploma. Since the 1990s, rates of childlessness have risen most sharply for the least educated women. The most dramatic change has occurred among women with less than a high school diploma, whose likelihood of bearing no children rose 66% from 1994 to 2008. Rates rose less steeply over the same time period among high school graduates and women with some college but not a degree.

Among women ages 40-44 with a bachelor's degree, there has been essentially no change in the likelihood of being childless. But rates have declined among women with advanced degrees -- by 17% for those with master's degrees and 32% for those with doctorates or professional degrees. Women with advanced degrees were more likely in 1994 to be childless than were women with bachelor's degrees -- 34% of women with doctorates or professional degrees were childless, as were 30% of those with master's degrees and 23% of those with bachelor's degrees. The decline in childlessness for the most educated women from 1994 to 2008 erased that gap.

Among all women ages 40-44, 9% held an advanced degree (a master's degree or higher) in 2008.



Differences by Race and Ethnicity

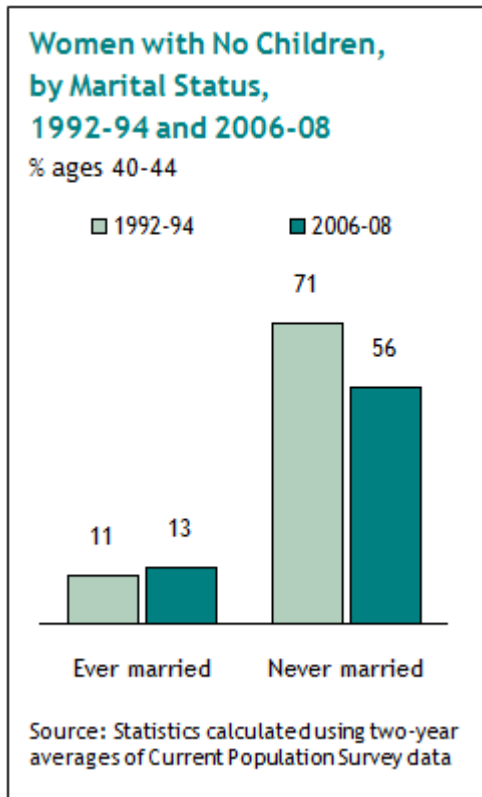
One-in-five (20%) white women ages 40-44 was childless in 2008, the highest rate among racial and ethnic groups.

By comparison, 17% of black and Hispanic women were childless in 2008, and 16% of Asian women were childless.

Rates of childlessness rose more for nonwhites than whites from 1994 to 2008.

During those years, the childlessness rates for black women and for Hispanic women grew by more than 30%. The rate for white women increased only 11%.

Marital Status



Among 40-44-year-old women currently married or married at some point in the past, 13% had no children of their own in 2008, a small increase from 11% in 1994.

The childless rate among these women rose for whites, blacks and Hispanics, with the largest increases among black and Hispanic women.

A [rising share of births is to women who never married](#), and this is reflected in a decline in childlessness among this group.

Among women in this group, 56% were childless in 2008, compared with 71% in 1994. The childless rate fell for never-married white and black women.⁴

Data are incomplete for Hispanic and Asian women.

Continue reading the [full report at pewsocialtrends.org](http://pewsocialtrends.org).

1. A small number of births (7,666 out of 4,251,095 in 2008, according to the National Center for Health Statistics) are to women ages 45 and older.
2. Preston, Samuel H., and Caroline Sten Harnett. "The Future of American Fertility." National Bureau of Economic Research. Working Paper 14498. 2008.
3. Abma, Joyce C., and Gladys M. Martinez. "Childlessness Among Older Women in the United States: Trends and Profiles." *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 68:4. (2006).
4. Sample sizes for Hispanic and Asian women are too small for meaningful analysis.

In 2010, Conservatives Still Outnumber Moderates, Liberals

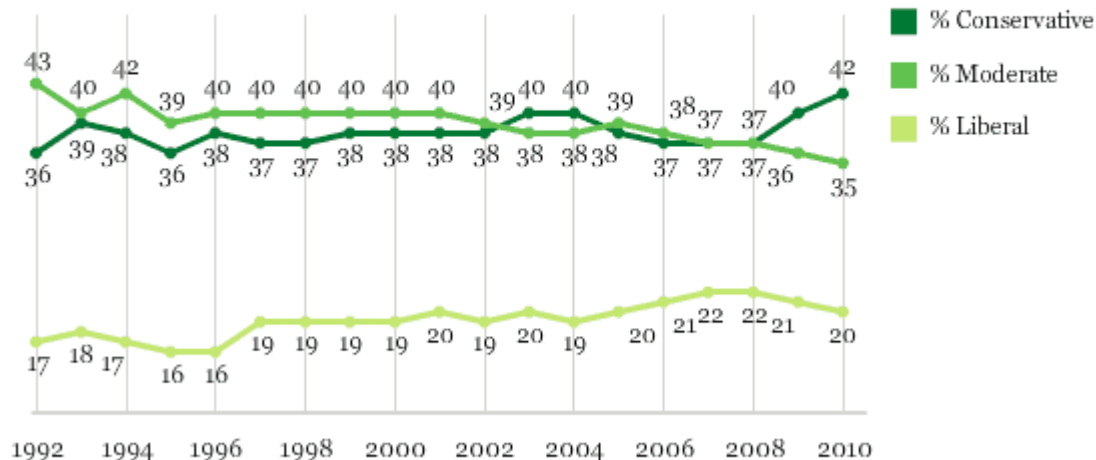
Last year's increase in conservatism among independents is holding

June 25, 2010

Conservatives have maintained their leading position among U.S. ideological groups in the first half of 2010. Gallup finds 42% of Americans describing themselves as either very conservative or conservative. This is up slightly from the 40% [seen for all of 2009](#) and contrasts with the 20% calling themselves liberal or very liberal.

Political Ideology -- 2010 Half-Year Update[^]

How would you describe your political views -- [very conservative, conservative, (or) moderate, liberal, (or) very liberal]?



[^]1992-2009 trends are yearly averages

The 2010 results are based on eight Gallup and *USA Today*/Gallup surveys conducted from January through June, encompassing interviews with more than 8,000 U.S. adults. The 42% identifying as conservative represents a continuation of the slight but statistically significant edge conservatives achieved over moderates in 2009. Should that figure hold for all of 2010, it would represent the highest annual percentage identifying as conservative in Gallup's history of measuring ideology with this wording, dating to 1992.

The recent rise in conservatism's fortunes follows a decline seen after 2003; liberalism has experienced the opposite pattern. From 1993 to 2002, the ideological trend had been fairly stable, with roughly 40% identifying as moderate, 38% as conservative, and 19% as liberal. Before that, the presidential bid of independent candidate Ross Perot may have contributed to a heightened proportion of Americans (43%) calling themselves moderate in 1992.

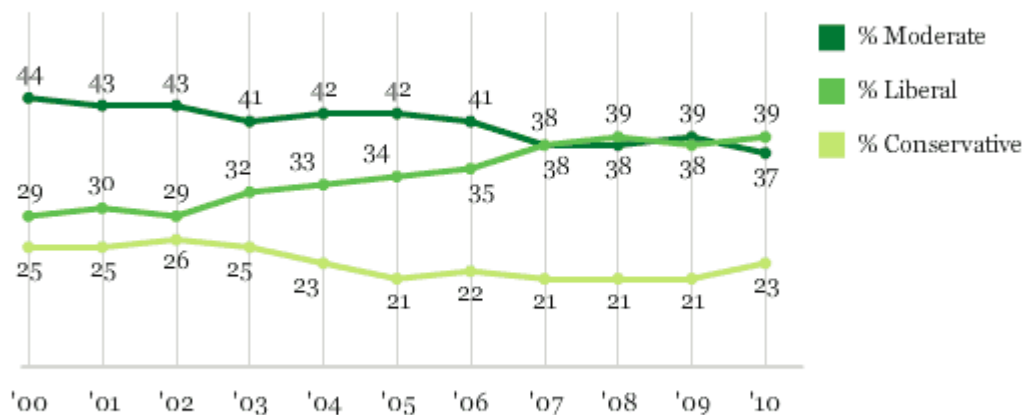
Partisans Maintain Their 2009 Ideological Leanings

There are no significant changes so far in 2010 compared with 2009 in how Republicans, Democrats, and independents characterize their respective political views. Consistent with the patterns seen last year, nearly 4 in 10 Democrats call themselves liberal and a similar proportion of Democrats say they are moderate.

Longer term, Democrats have grown increasingly liberal in their political orientation.

Recent Political Ideology Trend -- Among Democrats

2000-2009 based on annual averages; 2010 based on January-June

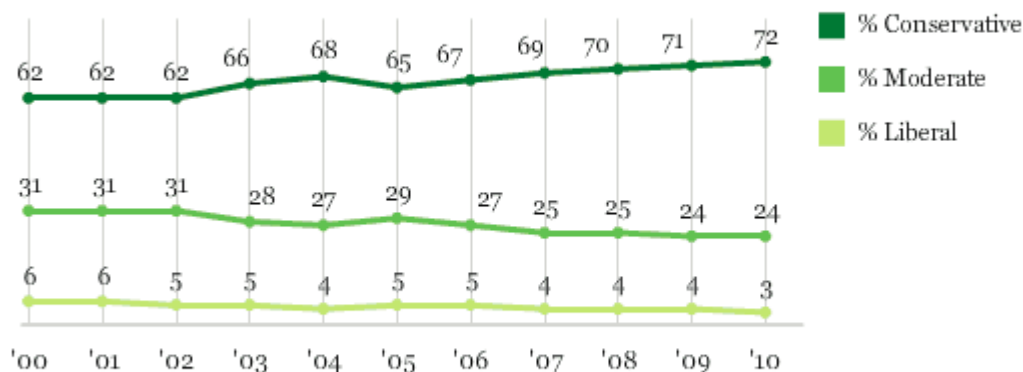


GALLUP®

Seven in 10 Republicans continue to call themselves conservative, similar to 2009, while most of the remaining Republicans identify as moderate. Since 2002, however, the percentage conservative has increased by 10 points.

Recent Political Ideology Trend -- Among Republicans

2000-2009 based on annual averages; 2010 based on January-June

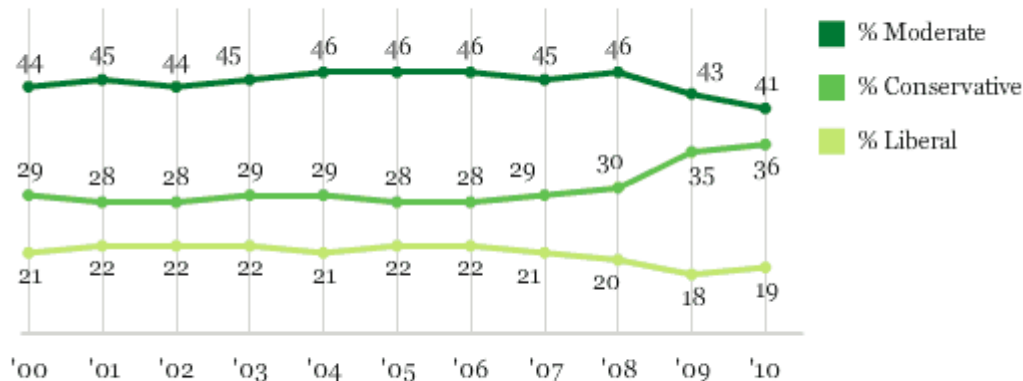


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Independents today are slightly more likely to say they are moderate than conservative, with fewer than 20% identifying as liberal. While this is similar to 2009, it represents an increase in conservatism among this group since 2008.

Recent Political Ideology Trend -- Among Independents

Based on annual averages; 2010 based on January-June



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Bottom Line

The ideological orientation of Americans seen thus far in 2010 would represent a record-high level of conservatism (since at least 1992) if it is maintained for the full year. This follows an increase in the percentage of conservatives in 2009 that was fueled by heightened conservatism among independents, a pattern that continues today.

Survey Methods

Results are based on the combined findings of eight separate Gallup and *USA Today*/Gallup surveys conducted from January through June 2010. For results based on the total sample of 8,207 national adults, one can say with 95% confidence that the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 1 percentage point.

Party breakdowns for 2010 are based on 2,395 Republicans, 3,134 independents, and 2,565 Democrats. For results based on samples of these sizes, one can say with 95% confidence that the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 2 percentage points.

Interviews are conducted with respondents on landline telephones (for respondents with a landline telephone) and cellular phones (for respondents who are cell phone-only). Each sample includes a minimum quota of 150 cell phone-only respondents and 850 landline respondents, with additional minimum quotas among landline respondents for gender within region. Landline respondents are chosen at random within each household on the basis of which member had the most recent birthday.

Samples are weighted by gender, age, race, education, region, and phone lines. Demographic weighting targets are based on the March 2009 Current Population Survey figures for the aged 18 and older non-institutionalized population living in continental U.S. telephone households. All reported margins of sampling error include the computed design effects for weighting and sample design.

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 See Congress as Ineffective, Self-Serving, Entrenched

Americans want most members of Congress ousted

June 23, 2010

Americans who believe most members of Congress do not deserve to be re-elected support their position by saying representatives are simply doing a bad job, that they have been in office too long, that they are not making decisions based on what's best for the country, or that they are too focused on self-interest, special interests, and partisanship. Relatively few cite Congress' performance on specific issues.

(Asked of those who say most members of Congress do not deserve to be re-elected)
We'd like to know a little more about your views on whether most members of Congress deserve to be re-elected. Please tell me some of the reasons why you believe most members of Congress do not deserve to be re-elected.

Category	%
NOT DOING A GOOD JOB	
Doing a bad job/Not doing their job	29
NOT BEING REPRESENTATIVE; NOT MAKING DECISIONS ON CORRECT CRITERIA	
Not working in best interests of country as a whole	15
Self-serving/Self-interested/Corrupt	13
Too partisan/Vote along party lines/Not working together	12
Not listening to the American people	6
Cater to lobbyists/special interests	3
TIME IN OFFICE; BEEN THERE TOO LONG, NEED NEW BLOOD	
Many have been there too long/Need new members/Fresh ideas	15
SPECIFIC COMPLAINTS	
Too much spending/debt	5
Not addressing economic issues	4
Healthcare legislation	4
Too many Democrats in Congress	2
Financial bailouts	2
Oppose Obama too much	2
Too many Republicans in Congress	1
Not addressing military/war issues	1
Not addressing immigration issues	1

USA Today/Gallup, June 11-13, 2010

GALLUP*

More than 6 out of 10 Americans in Gallup polls conducted this year have consistently said "most members of Congress" do not deserve re-election. These are the highest numbers in Gallup's history of asking this question.

These data underscore this year's conventional wisdom that 2010 is a particularly bad time for congressional incumbents. Americans' approval of Congress in the same June 11-13 *USA Today*/Gallup poll is at 20%, at the low end of the historical range of that measure. Favorable ratings of both political parties are also [near record lows](#). A recent

Gallup poll also found that, [by about a 2-to-1 ratio, Americans prefer a candidate who has never been in Congress to an incumbent.](#)

There are a number of theories as to why Americans are so down on their elected representatives, but there is little empirical evidence that addresses the issue directly. In the June 11-13 poll, the 659 respondents who said most members of Congress do not deserve to be re-elected were asked to explain in their own words why they felt that way. The responses were recorded verbatim and coded into categories.

Although there are some specific complaints about issues, the most prevalent explanations for why Americans think most members of Congress do not deserve to be re-elected deal with broader concerns.

- The most frequently given response, mentioned by 29%, is fairly straightforward and direct, if not a bit tautological: Members of Congress are doing a bad job or just are not doing their job, period.
- The next-most prevalent responses focus on the perception that members of Congress are making decisions based on inappropriate or ineffective criteria (self-interest, partisanship, special interests), with the result that they are not working for all Americans and the interests of the entire country.
- Fifteen percent of those who believe most members of Congress do not deserve to be re-elected say it is because they have been there too long and that there is a need for new blood. This is not a new complaint. In 1996, for example, 74% of Americans were in favor of a constitutional amendment to limit the number of terms that members of Congress and the U.S. Senate could serve.
- The final category of responses -- representing only a minority of all anti-incumbency explanations given -- contains a broad list of specific criticisms, including debt, economic issues, healthcare legislation, financial bailouts, wars, and immigration issues.

Partisan Differences

Differences between the two partisan groups are minor, with a few notable exceptions:

- Republicans are more likely to say members of Congress do not act in the interests of the country as a whole and are not listening to the American people. Democrats are more likely to say that members are too partisan.
- Republicans are slightly more likely to mention the federal debt and healthcare legislation.

(Asked of those who say most members of Congress do not deserve to be re-elected) We'd like to know a little more about your views on whether most members of Congress deserve to be re-elected. Please tell me some of the reasons why you believe most members of Congress do not deserve to be re-elected.

By party ID

	Republicans/ Leaners	Democrats/ Leaners
	%	%
NOT DOING A GOOD JOB		
Doing a bad job/Not doing their job	28	27
NOT BEING REPRESENTATIVE; NOT MAKING DECISIONS ON CORRECT CRITERIA		
Not working in best interests of country as a whole	19	11
Self-serving/Self-interested/Corrupt	13	13
Too partisan/Vote along party lines/Not working together	8	17
Not listening to the American people	8	3
Cater to lobbyists/special interests	2	5
TIME IN OFFICE; BEEN THERE TOO LONG, NEED NEW BLOOD		
Many have been there too long/Need new members/Fresh ideas	14	18
SPECIFIC COMPLAINTS		
Too much spending/debt	7	3
Not addressing economic issues	3	4
Healthcare legislation	6	1
Too many Democrats in Congress	2	3
Financial bailouts	1	3
Oppose Obama too much	2	1
Too many Republicans in Congress	--	2
Not addressing military/war issues	*	1
Not addressing immigration issues	1	*

* Less than 0.5%

USA Today/Gallup, June 11-13, 2010

GALLUP®

Bottom Line

Americans are not enamored with the job members of Congress are currently doing in representing the public's interests in Washington, D.C. A Gallup open-ended question probing the reasons for this helps explain why a majority say most members do not deserve to be re-elected. Americans' anti-incumbent sentiment focuses more on general, philosophical concerns rather than on specific issues. How incumbent representatives can alter these perceptions in time to stave off a major turnover in Congress in this fall's midterm election is a question whose answer is not immediately clear.

Survey Methods

Results for this *USA Today*/Gallup poll are based on telephone interviews conducted June 11-13, 2010, with a random sample of 659 national adults who say most members of Congress do not deserve to be re-elected, aged 18 and older, living in the continental U.S., selected using random-digit-dial sampling.

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 landline telephones (for respondents with a landline telephone) and cellular phones (for respondents who are cell phone-only). Each sample includes a minimum quota of 150 cell phone-only respondents and 850 landline respondents, with additional minimum quotas among landline respondents for gender within region. Landline respondents are chosen at random within each household on the basis of which member had the most recent birthday.

Samples are weighted by gender, age, race, education, region, and phone lines. Demographic weighting targets are based on the March 2009 Current Population Survey figures for the aged 18 and older non-institutionalized population living in continental U.S. telephone households. All reported margins of sampling error include the computed design effects for weighting and sample design.

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.

Public Uncertain How to Improve Job Situation

June 21, 2010

This is broad public agreement that past government policies intended to address the financial crisis and recession have not worked. At the same time, there is very little agreement about what the government should do now to deal with the nation's biggest economic concern -- the job situation.

Looking Forward: No Consensus about Proposals to Help Job Situation

<i>Effect on job situation...</i>	Help <u>a lot</u>	Help <u>a little</u>	Not help <u>at all</u>	<u>DK</u>
	%	%	%	%
Additional spending on roads, bridges, public works	37	43	18	2=100
Cutting taxes on businesses	36	39	21	5=100
Budget cuts to reduce deficit	34	39	21	7=100
Providing money to state and local govt's to avoid layoffs	33	41	23	3=100
Cutting personal income taxes	31	36	29	4=100

Pew Research Center/National Journal June 17-20, 2010.
Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

None of the options currently under discussion for dealing with the job situation are viewed as very helpful. In fact, fewer than four-in-ten say each of these proposals would help the job situation a lot: additional spending on public works (37%); cutting taxes for businesses (36%) or individuals (31%); budget cuts to reduce the deficit (34%); or providing money to state and local governments to help them avoid layoffs (33%).

The latest Pew Research/National Journal Congressional Connection Poll, sponsored by SHRM, which was conducted June 17-20 among 1,009 adults, finds that majorities do think each proposal would at least do a little to help the job situation. Relatively few say the proposals would not help the job situation at all, although slightly more say this about cutting personal income taxes (29%) than the other options.

Looking Back: Most Say Stimulus, Bailout Have Not Helped

	Apr <u>2010</u>	June <u>2010</u>
	%	%
<i>Economic stimulus plan...</i>		
Has helped the job situation	33	33
Has not helped	62	60
Don't know	<u>5</u>	<u>7</u>
	100	100
<i>Gov't loans to troubled banks & financial institutions...</i>		
Helped prevent more severe crisis	42	38
Did not help	49	54
Don't know	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>
	100	100

Pew Research Center/National Journal June 17-20, 2010. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

The survey finds continued public skepticism about the impact of last year's economic stimulus legislation, as well as the government's loans to troubled banks and financial

institutions. Six-in-ten (60%) say the stimulus has not helped the job situation while just a third (33%) say that it has helped.

A majority (54%) also says that the government's loans to troubled financial institutions did not help prevent a more severe economic crisis, while 38% say it did help. Opinions about the impact of the financial bailout, like views of the stimulus, have changed little changed since April.

Little Enthusiasm for any Job Remedies

Fewer than Half of Democrats Say Additional Spending Would Do a Lot to Improve Job Outlook					
Would help improve job situation "a lot"...	Total %	Rep %	Dem %	Ind %	R-D diff
Cutting taxes on businesses	36	55	22	37	+33
Budget cuts to reduce deficit	34	48	22	34	+26
Cutting personal income taxes	31	41	20	36	+21
Providing money to state and local gov'ts to avoid layoffs	33	27	40	35	-13
Additional spending on roads, bridges, public works	37	29	44	37	-15
Pew Research Center/National Journal June 17-20, 2010.					

There are sizable partisan differences in views about the effectiveness of proposals to address the job situation. Still, none of these options gets an overwhelmingly positive response from Republicans, Democrats or independents.

Indeed, cutting business taxes is the only proposal viewed by a majority of Republicans (55%) as helping the job situation a lot. None of the options are viewed as very helpful by a majority of Democrats or independents.

More than four-in-ten Democrats (44%) say additional spending on public works would do a lot to help the job situation while 40% say the same about providing money to state and local governments to avoid layoffs. Far fewer see tax cuts for businesses (22%), budgets cuts to reduce the deficit (22%) or tax cuts for individuals (20%) as helping a lot. Independents' views about proposals to improve the job situation show little variance -- between 34% and 37% view them as helping a lot.

Most Say Stimulus Has Not Helped			
<i>Has stimulus helped job situation?</i>	<u>Yes</u> %	<u>No</u> %	<u>DK</u> %
Total	33	60	7=100
College grad+	44	52	4=100
Some college	31	63	6=100
HS or less	28	64	9=100
<i>Family income</i>			
\$75,000 or more	39	58	4=100
\$30,000-74,999	34	60	6=100
Less than \$30,000	29	65	7=100
Republican	15	80	5=100
Democrat	53	40	6=100
Independent	34	59	7=100
Pew Research Center/National Journal June 17-20, 2010. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.			

Still Skeptical of Stimulus, TARP

People with less education and lower incomes are particularly skeptical of the impact of last year's economic stimulus legislation on the job situation.

Just 28% of those with no more than a high school education say the stimulus has helped the job situation, compared with 44% of college graduates. Only about three-in-ten (29%) of those with family incomes of less than \$30,000 view the impact of the stimulus positively; that compares with 39% of those with family incomes of \$75,000 or more.

Republicans have an overwhelmingly negative view of the effect of the stimulus: 80%

Republicans Even More Critical of TARP			
<i>Gov't loans to troubled banks helped prevent more severe crisis...</i>	<u>April</u> %	<u>June</u> %	<u>Change</u>
Total	42	38	-4
College grad+	56	45	-11
Some college	42	35	-7
HS or less	34	34	0
Republican	35	25	-10
Democrat	54	52	-2
Independent	37	39	+2
Pew Research Center/National Journal June 17-20, 2010. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.			

say it has not helped the job situation. Most independents (59%) also say the stimulus has not helped. A narrow majority of Democrats (53%) say the stimulus has helped the job situation, though 40% disagree.

The public's views of the impact of government loans to troubled banks and financial

institutions have changed little since April. But college graduates and Republicans, in particular, have grown more skeptical of the bailout.

Fewer than half of college graduates (45%) now say that the bailout helped prevent a more severe economic crisis, down from 56% in April. And just a quarter of Republicans (25%) now say that the financial bailout helped prevent a worse crisis, down from 35% in April. Opinions among Democrats and independents are virtually unchanged over the last two months.

More Give Administration Poor Ratings for Oil Leak Response

Responses to the Gulf Oil Leak			
	May 6-9 2010	May 20-23 2010	June 17-20 2010
<i>Response of the Obama administration...</i>	%	%	%
Excellent/Good	--	31	33
Only fair	--	31	29
Poor	--	26	35
Don't know	--	12	4
		100	100
<i>Response of BP...</i>			
Excellent/Good	24	19	18
Only fair	36	26	28
Poor	27	44	49
Don't know	13	11	5
	100	100	100

Pew Research Center/National Journal June 17-20.
Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Over the past month, the public's views of how both the Obama administration and BP have handled the Gulf oil leak have changed only modestly. Still, a significantly higher percentage gives the administration a poor rating now (35%) than did so last month (26%), largely because Republicans have grown much more critical of its handling of the oil leak.

The administration continues to get much higher marks for its response to the oil leak than does BP. Currently, 33% rate the administration's response to the leak as excellent or good; another 29% say the administration has done only fair. Both measures are little changed from May.

By contrast, just 18% give positive ratings to BP's response, while 28% say it has been only fair. And even with the rise in poor ratings for the Obama administration, many more rate BP's response to the oil leak as poor (49%) than say that about the administration's response (35%).

Republicans Now Much More Critical of Obama Administration than of BP				
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Ind</u>
<i>Obama administration</i>	%	%	%	%
Excellent/Good	33	10	59	30
Only fair	29	24	30	31
Poor	35	64	8	35
Don't know	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
	100	100	100	100
<i>BP</i>				
Excellent/Good	18	20	17	17
Only fair	28	29	29	29
Poor	49	47	51	48
Don't know	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>
	100	100	100	100
Pew Research Center/National Journal June 17-20 2010				
Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.				

Opinions about the administration's response to the oil leak have become more partisan since May. Currently, 64% of Republicans rate the administration's response as poor, up from 44% last month. Republicans now are less critical of BP than of the administration; fewer than half (47%) of Republicans say BP has done a poor job in responding to the leak.

By contrast, Democratic evaluations of the administration's response to the leak have become somewhat more positive (48% excellent/good in May, 59% excellent/good today). As was the case in May, independents are divided: 30% say the administration has done an excellent or good job, 31% only fair, while 35% say the administration has done a poor job in responding to the leak.

Mixed Views of Kagan Nomination, Many Offer No Opinion

With Senate hearings on Elena Kagan's nomination to the Supreme Court set to begin June 28, the public remains divided over whether she should be confirmed, though many still express no opinion. On balance, more Americans support Kagan's nomination than oppose it (by 33% to 25%), but more than four-in-ten (42%) say they do not know or decline to offer an opinion.

The latest Pew Research/National Journal Congressional Connection Poll finds that views of Kagan have changed little since President Obama announced his choice on May 10. A Congressional Connection Poll conducted May 13-16 found 33% supporting Kagan's confirmation, 21% opposed, and 46% with no opinion.

In recent weeks, the nomination has received scant coverage and generated little controversy. According to the Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism, the nomination accounted for 13% of the newshole in the week immediately

after President Obama unveiled his pick, but 1% or less of overall news coverage in each succeeding week.

Heading into the Senate Judiciary Committee hearings, views of Kagan are comparable to those of President George W. Bush's second and third nominees, Harriet Miers and Samuel Alito. Miers, a one-time White House counsel, withdrew her nomination in the fall of 2005 amid questions about her qualifications. Several months later, the Senate, then controlled by Republicans, confirmed Alito on a 58-42 vote on Jan. 31, 2006.

Support for Kagan Comparable to Support for Alito, Miers					
	<i><u>Roberts*</u></i>	<i><u>Miers</u></i>	<i><u>Alito*</u></i>	<i><u>Sotomayor*</u></i>	<i><u>Kagan</u></i>
<i>Should Senate confirm to Court?</i>	<i><u>Sep 2005</u></i>	<i><u>Oct 2005</u></i>	<i><u>Jan 2006</u></i>	<i><u>June 2009</u></i>	<i><u>Jun 2010</u></i>
	%	%	%	%	%
Should	46	33	33	50	33
Should not	21	27	19	25	25
Don't know	<u>33</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>42</u>
	100	100	100	100	100
Pew Research Center/National Journal June 17-20, 2010. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.					
* Survey conducted closest to start of Senate hearings.					

The divided opinion about Kagan stands in contrast to the broader support for Sonia Sotomayor last year after Obama nominated the former appeals court judge to the Supreme Court. Last June, twice as many said the Senate should confirm Sotomayor as opposed her confirmation (50% vs. 25%). The Senate voted 68-31 to confirm Sotomayor on Aug. 6, 2009.

Continued Partisan Divide over Kagan Nomination

Views of Kagan's Confirmation			
<i>Should Senate confirm to court?</i>	<i><u>Yes</u></i>	<i><u>No</u></i>	<i><u>DK</u></i>
	%	%	%
Total	33	25	42=100
Men	32	30	38=100
Women	34	20	46=100
College grad+	40	25	35=100
Some college	34	26	40=100
HS or less	27	25	47=100
Republican	17	43	40=100
Democrat	54	10	37=100
Independent	33	25	42=100
Pew Research Center/National Journal June 17-20, 2010. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.			

More than half (54%) of Democrats say Kagan should be confirmed, compared with 17% of Republicans and 33% of independents. Democratic support is unchanged from when the question was first asked in mid-May.

Among Republicans, 43% say Kagan should not be confirmed, slightly higher than the 35% that said this in May. Independents mirror the public as a whole -- 33% say Kagan should be confirmed, while 25% say she should not be. About four-in-ten in each group offer no opinion.

Last June, Sotomayor, whose nomination sparked more controversy than Kagan's has so far, had broader support from all partisan groups. About seven-in-ten Democrats (69%) said she should be confirmed, along with 47% of independents and 30% of Republicans.

Currently, men are evenly split over Kagan's nomination; 32% say she should be confirmed, 30% say she should not, while 38% offer no opinion. Women are somewhat more supportive (34% confirm vs. 20% oppose) while 46% have no opinion. Last year, nearly half of men (47%) supported Sotomayor's confirmation while 28% were opposed. Women favored Sotomayor's confirmation by more than two-to-one (52% to 22%).

No Consensus on Kagan's Ideology

Impressions of Kagan's Ideology				
	Lib- eral %	Mod- erate %	Conserv- ative %	Don't know %
Total	28	24	7	41=100
Republican	45	13	6	36=100
Democrat	17	38	8	36=100
Independent	29	23	7	41=100

Pew Research Center/National Journal June 17-20, 2010.
Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

The survey also finds that many Americans are unsure of Kagan's political ideology: 28% say they think she is liberal, while 24% say they see her as moderate. Just 7% see her as conservative. Four-in-ten (41%) offer no opinion or say they do not know.

Republicans are much more likely to see Kagan as liberal (45%) than Democrats (17%) or independents (29%). Democrats, meanwhile, are more likely to see the nominee as moderate. Close to four-in-ten (38%) say they think she is moderate, compared with 13% of Republicans and 23% of independents.

Public Sees a Future Full of Promise and Peril

Life in 2050: Amazing Science, Familiar Threats

June 22, 2010

Imagine a future in which cancer becomes a memory, ordinary people travel in space, and computers carry on conversations like humans. Now imagine a darker future -- a world beset by war, rising temperatures and energy shortages, one where the United States faces a terrorist attack with nuclear weapons.

Imagining Life in 2050			
In next 40 years...	Probably/Definitely		
	Will happen	Will not happen	DK
Science/technology	%	%	%
Computers will be able to converse like humans	81	18	1=100
Cancer will be cured	71	27	2=100
Artificial limbs will perform better than natural ones	66	31	3=100
Ordinary people will travel in space	53	45	2=100
Energy/environment			
Most of our energy will <u>not</u> come from coal/oil/gas	74	24	6=100
World will face major energy crisis	72	25	3=100
Earth will get warmer	66	30	4=100
War/terrorism			
Another world war	58	37	4=100
Major terrorist attack on U.S. involving nuclear weapons	53	43	4=100
Pew Research Center/Smithsonian magazine April 21-26, 2010. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.			

Most Americans think that these developments and many others are likely to unfold over the next 40 years. In the public's view, this promises to be an era of technological progress. Large majorities expect that computers will be able to carry on conversations (81% say this definitely or probably will happen) and that there will be a cure for cancer (71%). About two-thirds (66%) say that artificial arms and legs will outperform real limbs while 53% envision ordinary people traveling in space.

At the same time, most say that war, terrorism and environmental catastrophes are at least probable by the year 2050. Nearly six-in-ten (58%) see another world war as definite or probable; 53% say the same about the prospect for a major terrorist attack on the United States involving nuclear weapons. An even higher percentage (72%) anticipates that the world will face a major energy crisis in the next 40 years.

The public is evenly divided over whether the quality of the earth's environment will improve over the next 40 years; as many say the environment is not likely to improve

(50%) as say it is (47%). There continues to be a widespread belief that the earth will get warmer in the future, though the percentage expressing this view has declined by 10 points, from 76% to 66%, since 1999.

Moreover, 60% say the world's oceans will be less healthy 40 years from now than they are today; just 32% say the oceans will be more healthy. The survey was conducted just after the April 20 explosion and fire on the Deepwater Horizon well in the Gulf of Mexico but before the full extent of the massive environmental damage caused by the oil leak became evident.

These are among the findings of a new survey of attitudes and expectations about the future, conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press and *Smithsonian* magazine in conjunction with the magazine's 40th anniversary (see "[40 Things You Need to Know about the Next 40 Years](#)").

Most Americans Still Optimistic about the Long-Term Future		
Over next 40 years, view of...	May 1999	April 2010
<i>Life for you/your family</i>	%	%
Optimistic	81	64
Pessimistic	15	31
Don't know	4	4
	100	100
<i>Future of U.S.</i>		
Optimistic	70	61
Pessimistic	27	36
Don't know	3	3
	100	100
<i>U.S. economy will be...</i>		
Stronger	64	56
Weaker	31	39
Neither/DK	5	5
	100	100
Pew Research Center/Smithsonian magazine April 21-26, 2010. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.		

The survey, conducted by landline and cell phones April 21-26 among 1,546 adults, was informed by a 1999 survey on the future that explored many of the same topics (see "[Optimism Reigns, Technology Plays Key Role](#)," October 24, 1999).

Despite the current economic slump and the widespread anticipation of crises to come, most Americans remain upbeat about the future, both for themselves and the nation. Today, 64% say they are very or somewhat optimistic about life for themselves and their family over the next 40 years, while 61% are optimistic about the future of the United States. Moreover, 56% say the U.S. economy will be stronger than it is today.

Today's recession-weary public is less sanguine about the long-term future than it was in May 1999, a time of very strong economic growth. Still, majorities across most demographic and political groups see things getting better -- both for themselves and the nation -- over the next four decades.

Race Relations and Health Care Expected to Improve

Thinking ahead 40 years, 68% say race relations in the United States will better, which is unchanged from the 1999 survey. And in the wake of the election of the nation's first African American president, large majorities say that the election of a woman (89%) and Hispanic (69%) will definitely or probably occur.

Notably, far more Americans think that health care will be more affordable in the future than did so in May 1999. Currently, 50% say health care will be more affordable in 2050, while 46% say it will be less affordable. In 1999, just 36% said health care would be more affordable compared with 60% who said it would be less affordable.

The U.S. in 2050		
<i>More likely to happen in the U.S...</i>	<u>May 1999</u>	<u>April 2010</u>
<i>Race relations...</i>	%	%
Will improve	68	68
Will get worse	28	23
<i>Rich/poor gap...</i>		
Will grow	69	58
Will get smaller	27	34
<i>Health care...</i>		
Will be more affordable	36	50
Will be less affordable	60	46
<i>Public education...</i>		
Will improve	66	49
Will get worse	30	46
<i>Role in the world...</i>		
Will be more important	--	40
Will be less important	--	53
Pew Research Center/Smithsonian magazine April 21-26, 2010.		

While a clear majority (58%) expects the gap between rich and poor in the United States to grow by 2050, fewer people say this than did so in 1999 (69%). About a third (34%) now says the rich-poor gap will get smaller, up from 27% 11 years ago.

However, Americans are less optimistic about long-term prospects for public education than they were 11 years ago. About half (49%) say the public education system will improve by 2050, down from 66% who expressed that view in 1999.

The public expresses mixed views about America's role in the world in 2050. On the one hand, people are divided over whether China will overtake the U.S. as the world's main

superpower -- 46% say this will definitely or probably happen, while 49% say it will not. However, most Americans (53%) say that the United States will be less important in the world 40 years from now than it is today; 40% say it will be more important.

System Fails to Reform Prisoners, Say Americans

June 23, 2010

A large majority of people in the United States say the country's penitentiary system fails at helping prisoners become law-abiding citizens, according to a poll by Angus Reid Public Opinion. 75 per cent of respondents share this point of view.

Americans also hold negative views about other aspects of the country's judicial system. 50 per cent of respondents say their criminal courts do a good job in determining the guilt of accused offenders, while 42 per cent think this is not the case. In addition, 67 per cent of Americans think their justice system does not treat every person fairly.

On Jun. 18, Ronnie Lee Gardner, a killer sentenced to death, was executed by firing squad in Utah. Only three prisoners have faced a firing squad in the U.S. over the past three decades.

Several judges at different levels of the justice system, including the Utah Supreme Court, had recently denied Gardner's plea for commuting his sentence to life in prison. Andrew Parnes, Gardner's lawyer, had argued on behalf of his client, saying, "He asserts that executing him now, after nearly 25 years on death-row in Utah, so lacks retributive or deterrent value that it violates the Eighth Amendment [of the U.S. Constitution]."

Polling Data

Do you agree or disagree with each of these statements?

	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
The justice system in the U.S. treats every person fairly	26%	67%	7%
The criminal courts in the U.S. do a good job in determining whether or not an accused person is guilty	50%	42%	8%
The prison system in the U.S. does a good job in helping prisoners become law-abiding	16%	75%	8%

Source: Angus Reid Public Opinion

Methodology: Online interviews with 1,021 American adults, conducted on Jun. 9 and Jun. 10, 2010. Margin of error is 3.1 per cent.

Canadians Want Deeper Inquiry into MP Expenses

June 24, 2010

The terms of the proposal to review the way federal lawmakers spend their allowances did not please many people in Canada, according to a poll by Angus Reid Public Opinion. 57 per cent of respondents think the probe announced recently does not go far enough.

Canadians renewed the House of Commons in October 2008. The Conservative party—led by Stephen Harper—received 37.6 per cent of the vote, and secured 143 seats in the 308-member lower house. Harper assembled a minority administration. The Tories also earned a minority mandate after the 2006 election, ending more than 12 years of government by the Liberal party. In December, Michael Ignatieff took over as Liberal leader, replacing Stéphane Dion.

Since 2008, Canadian auditor-general Sheila Fraser had signalled her intention to conduct a review of the expenses of Canadian federal lawmakers. The Board of Internal Economy, an all-party body that oversees the expenditures of Parliament, initially rejected the idea.

On Jun. 16, Fraser announced that a deal had been reached to "examine management practices, controls and reporting systems" in Parliament, adding, "If the sample reflects that all the transactions are within the rules, there would be no need to go any further. If we see that there is total disregard for the rules, obviously we would extend our testing and do more in-depth work." Fraser has said she will not reveal the names of individual lawmakers who have violated guidelines.

Liberal Party lawmaker Marcel Proulx—a member of the Board of Internal Economy—explained the rationale, saying, "We observed the number of emails, the number of demands, the real public interest in knowing what happens, how the money is spent. So the best way, we judged, was to invite the auditor-general to do an audit and produce a report by fall of 2011."

Polling Data

As you may know, Members of Parliament are entitled to a stipend, additional to their salary, in order to perform their duties. Auditor-General Sheila Fraser will soon probe how MPs are spending their allowances. Fraser said the probe will look only into some cases, and in the end no individual cases will be mentioned. From what you have seen, read or heard, do you think the audit into MPs' allowances goes too far, is about right, or does not go far enough?

Goes too far	8%
Is about right	26%

Does not go far enough 57%

Not sure 9%

Source: Angus Reid Public Opinion

Methodology: Online interviews with 1,031 Canadian adults, conducted on Jun. 16 and Jun. 17, 2010. Margin of error is 3.1 per cent.

LATIN AMERICA

Most Venezuelans Want Chávez Out in 2012

June 24, 2010

Most people in Venezuela are hoping to see president Hugo Chávez leave in 2012 when his current term expires, according to a poll by Hinterlaces. 64 per cent of respondents want Chávez to step down in two years, up three points since October 2008.

Chávez—a left-leaning leader—has been in office since February 1999. In July 2000, he was elected to a six-year term with 59.5 per cent of all cast ballots. In August 2004, Chávez won a referendum on his tenure with 59 per cent of the vote. The special election was called after opposition organizations in Venezuela gathered 2.5 million signatures to force a recall ballot. In December 2006, Chávez earned a new six-year term with 62.89 per cent of the vote.

Chávez's government has vowed to bring "21st Century Socialism" to Venezuela.

On Feb. 2, Chávez said he expects to celebrate another 11 years in office.

Venezuela currently imports 70 per cent of its food intake. Earlier this month, while government port authorities faced criticism over the rotting of over 100,000 tonnes of food, Chávez chastised private food distributing companies, calling them "food hoarders" and blaming them for the grocery and goods shortages that have become frequent across the country. The rotting food had been imported by the government and was destined for sale at government-run grocery chains.

Polling Data

Which of these options would you prefer?

	May 2010	Oct. 2008
Hugo Chávez stepping down in 2012	64%	61%

Allowing Hugo Chávez to remain as president until 2021	31%	34%
Not sure	5%	5%

Source: Hinterlaces

Methodology: Face-to-face interviews with 1,300 Venezuelan adults, conducted on May 12, 2010. Margin of error is 2.8 per cent.

AUSTRALASIA

Most Australians Were Unhappy with Rudd

June 25, 2010

Just as Kevin Rudd stands down as leader of the Australian Labor Party (ALP) and prime minister, the majority of people in the country were expressing dissatisfaction with his work, according to a poll by Newspoll published in *The Australian*. 55 per cent of respondents were unhappy with Rudd's leadership, up one point since late May.

The popularity of opposition leader Tony Abbott of the Liberal Party is also low, with 49 per cent of respondents dissatisfied with his work. Rudd was still the preferred prime minister over Abbott, 46 per cent to 37 per cent.

On Jun. 23, ALP member and deputy prime minister Julia Gillard called for a snap leadership challenge to Rudd to be held the following day. Although the prime minister had expressed confidence in having enough backers within his party's ranks, he decided to step aside before the vote took place. Gillard became the first woman to serve as prime minister in Australia.

Yesterday, Gillard discussed her environmental proposals, saying, "If elected as Prime Minister I will re-prosecute the case for a carbon price at home and abroad. I will do that as global economic conditions improve and as our economy continues to strengthen."

Abbott dismissed the new prime minister, saying, "It's clear that if you want to change the policies you're going to have to change the government. They've changed the salesman but they haven't changed the product."

Polling Data

Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way Kevin Rudd is doing his job as prime minister?

	Jun. 20	May 30	May 16
Satisfied	36%	36%	39%

Dissatisfied	55%	54%	51%
Uncommitted	9%	10%	10%

Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way Tony Abbott is doing his job as leader of the opposition?

	Jun. 20	May 30	May 16
Satisfied	38%	37%	42%
Dissatisfied	49%	49%	45%
Uncommitted	13%	14%	13%

Who do you think would make the better prime minister?

	Jun. 20	May 30	May 16
Kevin Rudd (ALP)	46%	49%	49%
Tony Abbott (Lib.)	37%	33%	33%
Uncommitted	17%	18%	18%

Source: Newspoll / The Australian

Methodology: Telephone interviews with 1,147 Australian voters, conducted from Jun. 18 to Jun. 20, 2010. Margin of error is 3 per cent.

Australian Opposition Maintains Lead

June 24, 2010

Australia's political scene is definitely experiencing a shift away from the governing party, according to a poll by Newspoll published in *The Australian*. 40 per cent of respondents would vote for the opposition alliance of Liberals and Nationals.

The governing Australian Labor Party (ALP) remains second with 35 per cent, followed by the Australian Greens with 15 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 four-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 Jun. 22, an unnamed spokesman for the opposition coalition said that Abbott had recently told a party crowd that they are "within reach of a famous victory" ahead of the next legislative election. He also quoted Abbott as saying that the victory is "within our ready grasp." Abbott later denied having said these words.

Yesterday, Rudd tendered his resignation as ALP leader and prime minister and was substituted by Julia Gillard.

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?

	Jun. 20	May 30	May 16
Coalition (Liberal / National)	40%	41%	43%
Australian Labor Party	35%	35%	37%
Australian Greens	15%	16%	12%
Others	10%	8%	8%

Two-Party Preferred Vote

	Jun. 20	May 30	May 16
Australian Labor Party	52%	51%	50%
Coalition (Liberal / National)	48%	49%	50%

Source: Newspan / The Australian

Methodology: Telephone interviews with 1,147 Australian voters, conducted from Jun. 18 to Jun. 20, 2010. Margin of error is 3 per cent.

New Zealanders Welcome Three-Strike Law

June 22, 2010

Most people in New Zealand agree with the plan to apply the "Three Strikes and you are out" guidelines in the country, according to a poll by Research New Zealand. 81 per cent of respondents are in favour of this proposal.

New Zealanders renewed the House of Representatives in November 2008. Final results gave the conservative National party 45.50 per cent of the vote and 59 seats in the 122-member legislature. The Labour party garnered 33.77 per cent of the vote and 43 mandates. The remaining seats went to other parties and independents.

Also in November 2008, National leader John Key formed a government with the support of ACT, United Future and the Maori Party. Helen Clark announced her resignation as Labour leader, and was supplanted by former trade and defence minister Phil Goff.

On May 25, the "Three Strikes and you are out" law—introduced by National and ACT under the name Sentencing and Parole Reform Bill—became law following a 63-58 vote in the House of Representatives. The law imposes maximum jail terms and no parole for 40 different offences, including murder, aggravated burglary and robbery, for people convicted for the third time.

Green Party leader Metiria Turei expressed disappointment with the new law, claiming it will "further embed discrimination in the justice system against Maori."

Polling Data

Under the 'Three Strikes and you are out' proposal, a criminal convicted for the third time of certain violent or sexual offences, will be sentenced to the maximum term available for their third offence, without the possibility of parole. Are you in favour or not in favour of this proposed law?

Yes, in favour 81%

No, not in favour 12%

Don't know 7%

Source: Research New Zealand

Methodology: Telephone interviews with 502 adults in New Zealand, conducted from May 18 to May 25, 2010. Margin of error is 4.8 per cent.

MULTI-COUNTRY POLLS

Global Economic Crisis Was Personal in Countries Far and Wide

Personal outlooks on jobs, standard of living declined significantly

June 22, 2010

Gallup's Personal Economy Index before and after the global economic meltdown in 2008 shows the crisis touched everyday lives around the world. In 61 out of 96 countries, scores fell significantly, documenting a decline in economic situations at the personal and community level. Ireland led the declines, followed by other major economies such as Singapore, Spain, and the United Kingdom.

While GDP is an important measure of rising and falling economic activity in the monetized sector, it is an imprecise measure of how these changes translate into living conditions for the bulk of a country's population. Gallup's Personal Economy Index measures respondents' personal economic situations and the economics of the communities they live in. The subjective four measures that make up the index -- people's outlooks on the local job market and the local economy, as well as their outlook on and satisfaction with their own standard of living -- help compensate for these existing "blind spots."

After years of phenomenal growth, Ireland became the first in the euro-zone to enter recession in 2008, the effects of which started to show in residents' outlooks on jobs and the local economy that year. Amid double-digit unemployment in 2009, Irish optimism about the local job market, personal standard of living, and the local economy -- three of the four items that make up the Personal Economy Index -- nearly evaporated. Two percent of Irish said it was a good time to find a job at that time.

Dramatic Declines on Irish Personal Economic Measures

In 2009, far fewer Irish were optimistic on each of the four items that make up the Personal Economy Index.

	Good time to find a job	City economy getting better	Standard of living getting better	Satisfied with standard of living
May 2006	71%	72%	67%	92%
April 2008	35%	55%	67%	90%
April 2009	2%	19%	24%	79%

Note: Data for 2007 are not available as the survey was not conducted in Ireland that year.

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Optimism faded elsewhere around the world, but not necessarily on the same items and not necessarily to same degree. In most countries where index scores dropped, however, outlooks soured on local job market conditions and local economies. For example, in the U.S., 50% of Americans in 2007 said it was a good time to find a job; by July 2009, 14% said so.

Outlooks Improve in Few Countries

Even as the global economy crumbled, people's perceptions of their economic situations improved in eight countries in disparate corners of the world. Double-digit increases in countries such as Zimbabwe, Chad, and Malawi likely reflect macroeconomic progress and more investment in infrastructure and education.

Countries Where Personal Economy Index Scores Showed Statistical Improvement

	Pre-Crisis survey date	Personal Economy Index	Post-Crisis survey date	Personal Economy Index	Increase since crisis
Zimbabwe	Jul 2007	8	Jul 2009	43	35
Chad	Nov 2007	39	Dec 2009	53	14
Malawi	Oct 2006	45	Sep 2009	56	11
Uruguay	Jul 2007	40	Aug 2009	48	8
Kosovo	Jan 2007	36	Sep 2009	43	7
Paraguay	Jul 2007	38	Aug 2009	44	6
Sweden	Apr 2007	62	Dec 2009	68	6
Indonesia	Apr 2007	38	May 2009	43	5

Personal Economy indexes are mean scores based on adults' responses to four questions about the local job market, local economy, and personal living standards. In cases where 2007 data were not available, 2006 data were used.

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In the case of Kosovo, Gallup observed improvement on most satisfaction measures after the country's independence that was not necessarily entirely related to actual improvements in the economic situation. Still, improvements on most measures in 2008 mostly carried over into 2009, and in some cases, improved even more.

Zimbabwe stands out because its scores on the Personal Economy Index increased more than those of any other country surveyed, rising from 8 in 2007 to 43 in 2009. Residents' outlook on each of the four items in the Personal Economy Index improved, which may largely be attributable to the easing of hyperinflation in 2009 and economic growth for the first time in a decade.

Dramatic Increases on Zimbabweans' Personal Economic Measures

In 2009, Zimbabweans were far more optimistic on each of the four items that make up the Personal Economy Index.

	Good time to find a job	City economy getting better	Standard of living getting better	Satisfied with standard of living
July 2007	10%	3%	9%	12%
March 2008	12%	1%	4%	9%
July 2009	48%	48%	47%	27%

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People in Some Countries Weather Economic Storm

Personal economic outlooks remained relatively stable in 27 countries and areas, including Brazil and South Korea, which can be viewed as a positive indicator given the volatile economic climate.

Countries Where Personal Economy Index Scores Did Not Change Statistically

	Pre-Crisis survey date	Personal Economy Index	Post-Crisis survey date	Personal Economy Index	Change since crisis
Peru	Jul 2007	40	Aug 2009	44	4
Cyprus	Sep 2006	43	May 2009	47	4
Lebanon	Oc 2006	32	Aug 2009	36	4
Morocco	Dec 2007	53	Aug 2009	56	3
Jordan	Oct 2007	40	Oct 2009	43	3
South Korea	May 2007	47	Jul 2009	48	1
Zambia	Jul 2007	31	Nov 2009	32	1
Philippines	Aug 2007	64	Jun 2009	65	1
Palestinian Territories	Jul 2007	26	Aug 2009	27	1
Tanzania	Mar 2006	31	Nov 2009	31	0
Mali	Jun 2006	46	Oct 2009	46	0
Panama	Sep 2007	55	Aug 2009	55	0
Afghanistan	Oct 2006	47	Dec 2009	46	-1
Mauritania	Aug 2007	47	Sep 2009	46	-1
Bolivia	Apr 2007	54	May 2009	53	-1
Chile	Aug 2007	45	Sep 2009	44	-1
Dominican Republic	Sep 2007	43	Sep 2009	42	-1
Brazil	Aug 2007	58	Sep 2009	56	-2
Nepal	Jul 2007	51	Jul 2009	49	-2
Albania	Jan 2007	38	Oct 2009	36	-2
Georgia	Feb 2006	20	May 2009	18	-2
Thailand	Aug 2007	54	Nov 2009	51	-3
Macedonia	Jan 2007	28	Sep 2009	25	-3
Kyrgyzstan	May 2007	40	Jul 2009	37	-3
Colombia	Jul 2007	54	Aug 2009	50	-4
Yemen	Jan 2007	32	Sep 2009	28	-4
Uganda	Jun 2007	39	Jun 2009	34	-5

Personal Economy indexes are mean scores based on adults' responses to four questions about the local job market, local economy, and personal living standards. In cases where 2007 data were not available, 2006 data were used.

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Bottom Line

Gallup's Personal Economy Index scores in the 96 countries where data are available from before and after the global economic meltdown illustrate how widespread the effects of the crisis were and how it altered people's personal economic perceptions. In some countries, people's outlooks started to look dismal ahead of the meltdown in late 2008 and they became gloomier even well into 2009. In the majority of the countries surveyed, the dramatic pre-crisis/post-crisis change suggests a long road to recovery.

Survey Methods

Results are based on face-to-face and telephone interviews with approximately 1,000 adults in each of the 96 countries surveyed, aged 15 and older, conducted in 2006/2007 and 2009. For results based on the total sample of national adults, one can say with 99% confidence that the median margin of sampling error for the Personal Economy Index is ± 3.2 points. The margin of error at the individual item level ranges from ± 2.1 percentage points in China to ± 5.7 percentage points in South Korea. The margin of error reflects the influence of data weighting. 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.

The Gallup Personal Economy Index is an aggregation of four individual questions:

- *Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your standard of living, all the things you can buy and do?*
- *Right now, do you feel your standard of living is getting better or getting worse?*
- *Right now, do you think that economic conditions in the city or area where you live, as a whole, are getting better or getting worse?*
- *Thinking about the job situation in the city or area where you live today, would you say that it is now a good time or a bad time to find a job?*

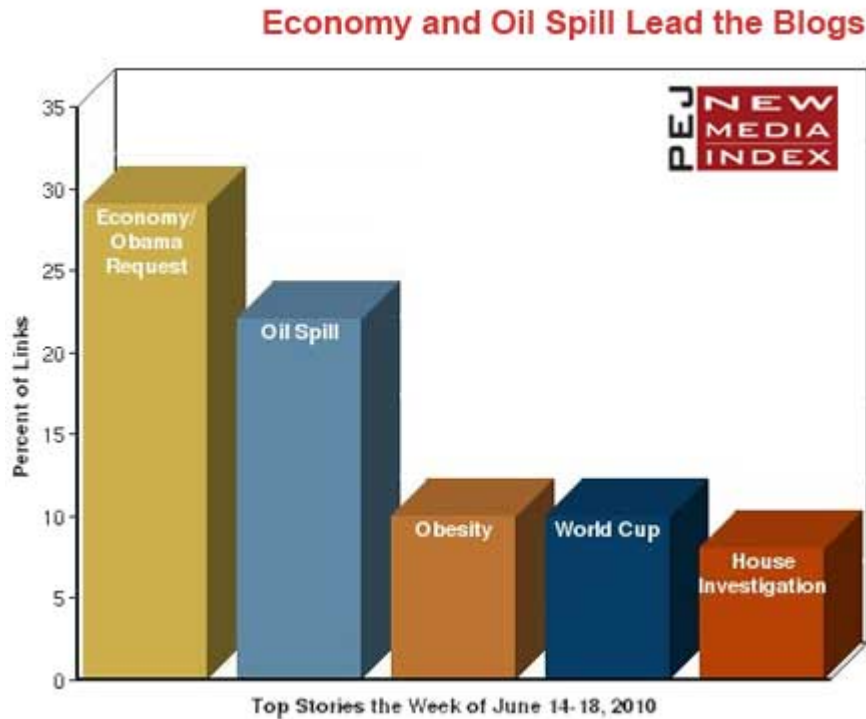
A positive answer to each question is coded "1" and all other responses as "0." If a record has no answer for an item, then that item is not eligible for inclusion in the calculations. An individual record has an index calculated if it has valid scores for at least three questions. A record's final index score is the mean of valid items multiplied by 100. The final country-level index score is the mean of all individual records for which an index score was calculated.

CYBER WORLD

Oil Leak Spreads Online

June 24, 2010

Eight weeks after the oil rig explosion in the Gulf of Mexico triggered one of the largest environmental catastrophes in the country's history, attention to the subject hit unprecedented levels in social media last week.



While the disaster has consistently [garnered major coverage in the American mainstream press](#) over the past two months, it had not been a major subject of interest in blogs or on Twitter.

But from June 14-18, 22% of the news links on blogs and 14% on Twitter were about the oil crisis according to New Media Index from the Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism -- the highest levels for the story on both platforms.

Why did social media interest in the topic spike dramatically last week? It's not entirely clear, but it was a week in which the oil story clearly became more political and Washington-centric. President Obama delivered an Oval Office speech, BP officials met with Obama and BP boss Tony Hayward faced a tough grilling on Capitol Hill.

Twitter's most linked-to news stories tended to be more about BP executives, while blogs linked more often to news about the spill itself. In the conversation that ensued, bloggers in particular displayed a significant level of distrust towards both BP and federal officials.

Politics also put the economy back in the top seed on blogs (29% percent of the links). Conservative bloggers reacted strongly to President Obama's urging of Congress to approve nearly [\\$50 billion in emergency aid](#) to state and local governments. Most criticized Obama for wasting taxpayer money.

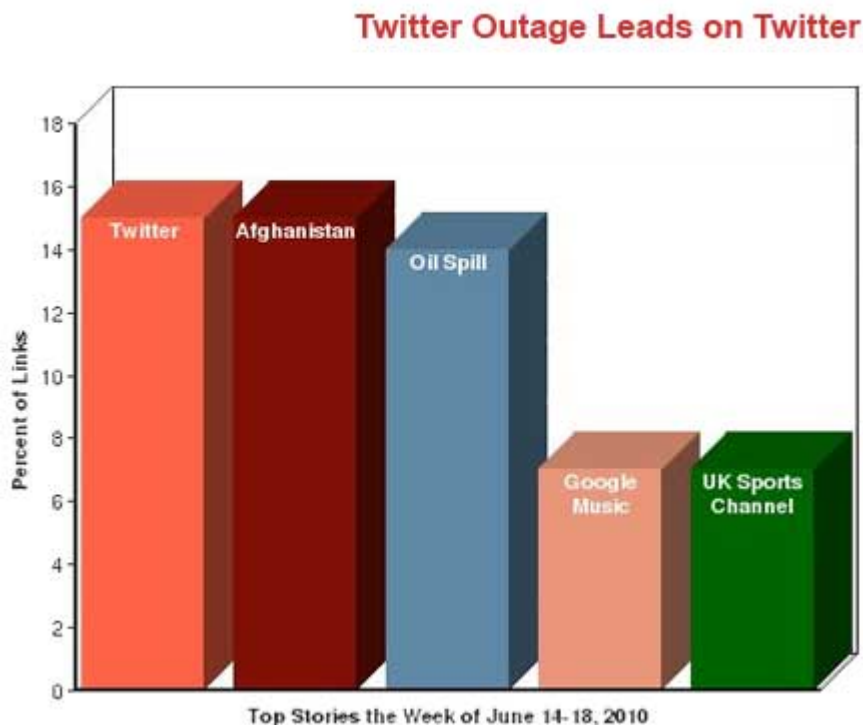
This marks the first time in [seven weeks](#) that the economy has ranked among the top five subjects on blogs.

The next two topics on blogs, both at 10%, moved well beyond the Washington focus. One was a [warning](#) based on 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans that obesity is "the single greatest threat to public health in this century." Another was a [BBC report](#) that organizers of the World Cup in South Africa will not ban the plastic horns, known as vuvuzelas, despite complaints from players and fans.

But politics returned at number five, with a report about an investigation of [eight House members](#) who held fundraisers with business lobbyists prior to the vote on a Wall Street reform bill.

On Twitter, typically known for its focus on technology, the top story (15% of all links) was about Twitter itself -- namely a [CNET report](#) that a failed upgrade of the site's software the night of June 14 left the site unusable for many.

Just after that (also at 15%) came a story that had not been among the top five Twitter subjects since the week of [January 4-8](#): the war in Afghanistan.



Two Afghanistan-related stories generated links from Twitterers including a [Fox News report](#) that the U.S. military had issued a nationwide alert for 17 members of the Afghan military that had gone AWOL from an Air Force base in Texas. The other was a [Wired story](#) about a contract from the U.S. military with Northrop Grumman to build spy blimps for use in the war.

After the oil spill (No 3 at 14%), the No. 4 subject on Twitter was the news that Google might be launching its own [music service](#) in the fall (at 7%). Next was a [BBC report](#), also

at 7%, that the British 24-hour sports news channel Sky Sports News was becoming a pay-TV channel after eight years of being available for free.

On the video-sharing site YouTube, the [most-viewed news video](#) was of Rep. Bob Etheridge's (D-NC) physical confrontation with two unknown men claiming to be students who asked him questions while he walked down the street.

The video became a political embarrassment for the congressman and was viewed almost 2.5 million times last week alone.

Oil Spill

Social media users linked to a wide range of stories regarding the ongoing crisis. On Twitter, for example, the tweets focused mainly on BP. Many linked to a June 15 [BBC report](#) that BP's credit rating was downgraded by Fitch Ratings -- one of the world's biggest credit rating agencies -- or to a June 16 [MSNBC report](#) about an apology from BP's Chairman Carl-Henric Svanberg after he had referred to those affected by the spill as "small people."

Bloggers seemed to focus more on the spill itself. Some pointed to the June 15 [Washington Post report](#) that the government's estimate of the size of the spill had risen to as much as 35,000 to 60,000 barrels escaping each day. Others linked to a June 14 investigative report by the [Los Angeles Times](#) that some of the malfunctioning equipment at the oil rig was inspected by foreign governments such as the Republic of the Marshall Islands and not the U.S. government.

A number of bloggers voiced their distrust of the information they were receiving.

"remember they told us 5000 barrels ... then 10 ... now 35-60 ... and i have heard 80 mentioned now ... all lies ... in fact its a lie-fest from start to finish," decried [Follow the Money](#).*

"BP is currently capturing only about 15,000 barrels a day from the spill," pointed out Sara Beth at [1115.org](#). "That no longer sounds as impressive as we were once invited to believe."

Others focused on who was to blame for the situation.

"Why aren't the mayors, governors, senators, and representatives of the Gulf coast states SCREAMING about all this?" asked Eowyn at [Fellowship of the Minds](#). "Aren't they PAID A HANDSOME SALARY to represent the interests of their constituents? Are they not sworn to protect the United States of America? Where's their outrage?"

"The gulf oil spill tragedy began long before the actual spill ... the previous administration did all it could to weaken any governmental oversight, and regulations

were written by industry lobbyists and not those who had concern for the environment or those who live in it," suggested [flyin ur eye](#).

Following Obama's June 15 speech from the Oval Office and the announcement the following day that that BP would pay \$20 billion into an [escrow account](#) to cover damage claims, the focus turned to the president's performance.

"It's no surprise that President Obama would take to the airwaves to address the catastrophe in the Gulf," wrote Jeff Mays at [Black Voices](#). "I was disappointed, though, that Obama's speech did not detail how the spill will be stopped."

"The Talk Sucked, but the Walk is not that shabby at all!" decided [Jake Today](#). "Obama sat down with BP execs and 20 minutes later he had a \$20 billion down payment on the Gulf repair job ... and an apology from the BP chairman. Now that's 20 minutes well spent. Hmm, can we have a lot less talk and a lot more walk please."

A few conservatives questioned Obama's motives.

"As predicted from day 1, every single one of the environmentalist agenda's wildest dreams will start being enacted under the guise of the Obama administration's new-found crisis," warned Ryan G at [Beacon of Truth](#).

Money for the States

[Obama's request](#) for \$50 billion in state and local aid to help prevent layoffs of teachers, police, and firefighters was met with enormous skepticism by conservative bloggers.

"How much blood can Obama drain from a body that is already struggling to survive, until the point is reached where it simply collapses under its own weight, and perishes?" wondered [The Jersey Nut](#). "Looks like Professor Obama is interested in finding out...."

"It doesn't appear that President Obama has a game plan to help the economy, other than continuing to feed the already-bloated public sector," added Bill Roberts at [Daily Brisk](#).

There were a handful of liberal voices who argued that Obama's additional request vindicated warnings from some left-wing economists, such as Paul Krugman of the *New York Times* that the initial stimulus bill passed in 2009 was not large enough to lower unemployment.

After [quoting a Krugman](#) blog from January 2009 warning of the dangers of a weak stimulus, Jed Lewison of the [Jed Report](#) wrote, "Flash forward to today, and the only thing that Krugman was wrong about was that the unemployment rate peaked at over 10 percent.... Instead of talking about things like domestic spending freezes and deficit reduction commissions ... the President should spend more time making the case that the best way to get the budget in balance is to grow the economy -- thereby increasing revenue."

YouTube

The most viewed news video on YouTube last week was an embarrassing moment for a member of Congress. Two unknown men claiming to be students asked [Rep. Bob Etheridge](#) (D-NC) "Do you fully support the Obama agenda?" as he walked down the street. The representative then grabbed one of the men and demanded to know their identities.

The video was first posted on the conservative website biggovernment.com and became a widely-disseminated embarrassment for Etheridge in a short period of time. He later issued an apology for his behavior.

Meanwhile, the identities of the men who filmed the video are still not known.

For more on the New Media Index, including a clip of the week's top YouTube video and methodology, see [journalism.org](#).

*For the sake of authenticity, PEJ has a policy of not correcting misspellings or grammatical errors that appear in direct quotes from blog postings.

Adults Text While Driving Too!

June 18, 2010

Adults are just as likely as teens to have texted while driving and are substantially more likely to have talked on the phone while driving.

In addition, 49% of adults say they have been passengers in a car when the driver was sending or reading text messages on their cell phone. Overall, 44% of adults say they have been passengers of drivers who used the cell phone in a way that put themselves or others in danger.

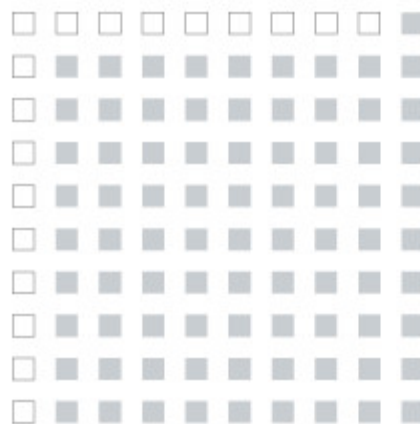
Beyond driving, some cell-toting pedestrians get so distracted while talking or texting that they have physically bumped into another person or an object.

These are some of the key findings from a new survey by The Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project:

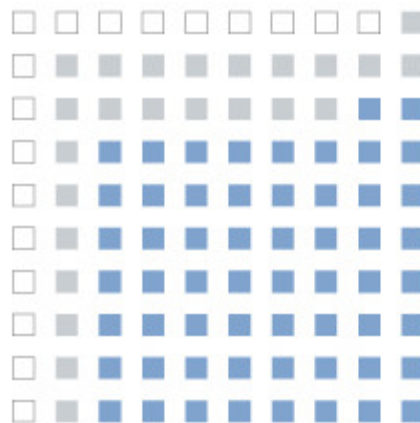
- Nearly half (47%) of all texting adults say they have sent or read a text message while driving. That compares with one in three ([34% texting teens](#) ages 16-17 who said they had "texted while driving" in a September 2009 survey.¹
- Looking at the general population, this means that 27% of all American adults say they have sent or read text messages while driving. That compares with 26% of all American teens ages 16-17 who reported texting at the wheel in 2009.

- Three in four (75%) cell-owning adults say they have talked on a cell phone while driving. Half (52%) of cell-owning teens ages 16-17 reported talking on a cell phone while driving in the 2009 survey.
- Among all adults, that translates into 61% who have talked on a cell phone while driving. That compares with 43% of all American teens ages 16-17 who said they had talked on their phones while driving in the 2009 survey.
- Half (49%) of all adults say they have been in a car when the driver was sending or reading text messages on their cell phone. The same number (48%) of all teens ages 12-17 said they had been in a car "when the driver was texting."²
- 44% of all adults say they have been in a car when the driver used the cell phone in a way that put themselves or others in danger. About the same number of teens (40%) said they had been in a car when the driver used a cell phone in a dangerous way.
- Beyond driving, one in six (17%) cell-owning adults say they have physically bumped into another person or an object because they were distracted by talking or texting on their phone. That amounts to 14% of all American adults who have been so engrossed in talking, texting or otherwise using their cell phones that they bumped into something or someone.

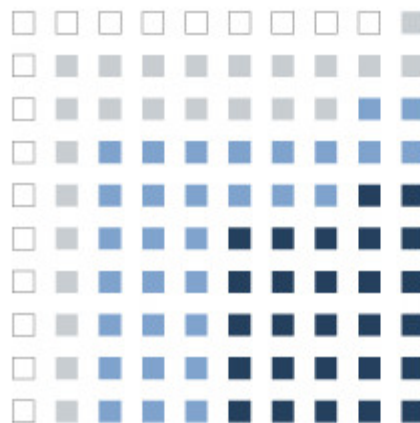
Close to half (47%) of all adults who use text messaging say they have sent or read messages while behind the wheel



82% of all adults have a cell phone



58% send or receive text messages



27% have sent or read a text message while driving

Pew Internet & American Life Project, Spring Change Assessment Survey conducted from April 29 - May 30, 2010. N=2,252 adults ages 18 and older. The margin of error for all adults is $\pm 2\%$. For results based on cell users (N=1917) and texters (N=1189), the margin of error is $\pm 3\%$.

These new findings for those ages 18 and older come from a nationwide phone survey of 2,252 American adults (744 of the interviews were conducted on cell phones) conducted between April 29 and May 30. In that survey, 1,917 were cell owners and 1,189 used text messaging. The margin of error in the full sample is two percentage points and in the cell subpopulation is three percentage points.

[Read the full report](#) including additional findings and methodology at pewinternet.org.

The findings for teens are based on previously released data from a separate nationwide telephone survey conducted by Princeton Survey Research International between June 26 and September 24, 2009, among a sample of 800 teens ages 12-17 and a parent or guardian. For a full discussion of the results from this earlier survey, see the ["Teens and Distracted Driving"](#) report.

[1] In the May 2010 survey, adult respondents were asked: "Have you ever sent or read a text message while driving?" In the September 2009 survey, teen respondents ages 16-17 were asked: "Have you ever texted while driving?"

[2] The same difference in question wording applies here as well. The adults were asked: "Have you ever been in a car when the driver was sending or reading text messages on their cell phone?" The teens were asked: "Have you ever been in a car when the driver was texting?"