

BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

Global Opinion Report No. 136

Week: September 05-11, 2010

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M. Zubair

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Prelude

This week report consists of 21 surveys. Two of these are multi-country surveys while the rest of 19 are national surveys.

Commentary: Nine Years after 9/11, Few See Terrorism as Top U.S. Problem

One percent see it as the top problem today, down from 46% in 2001

by Frank Newport

PRINCETON, NJ -- Nine years after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, 1% of **Americans** mention terrorism as the most important problem facing the country, down from 46% just after the attacks.

Terrorism as Most Important U.S. Problem

September 2001-August 2010

■ % Naming terrorism



GALLUP

Just before the attacks, in a Gallup poll conducted Sept. 7-10, 2001, less than one-half of **1%** of Americans mentioned terrorism as the nation's most important problem. One month later, in October 2001, **46%** named terrorism, the highest in Gallup's history.

From that point on, terrorism slowly faded as a response to this question. At the one-year anniversary of the attacks, in September 2002, **19%** of Americans mentioned terrorism as the country's top problem, already eclipsed by the economy at the top of the list. By the five-year anniversary of the attacks in September 2006, **11%** of Americans mentioned terrorism. Terrorism continued to drop from that point, albeit with an uptick to **8%** mentions in January of this year, reflecting the widespread news coverage of the "Christmas Day bomber" who allegedly attempted to detonate explosives on a Northwest Airlines plane headed for Detroit.

As terrorism has faded, other concerns have risen in importance. Over the past nine years, Americans have most commonly mentioned the *war in Iraq* (from 2003 to early 2008) and the *economy or jobs* (from 2008 to the present) as the top problem facing the country.

Despite the drop in top-of-mind mentions of terrorism, Americans still say it is an important issue when they are reminded of it. **Gallup** recently asked Americans to rate the importance of a number of issues to their vote in this year's midterm elections, and **75%** rated terrorism as an extremely or very important issue. Still, Americans rated economic issues such as the economy, jobs, and federal spending, as well as corruption in government and healthcare, even higher. They rated *terrorism* as more important than *immigration*, *Afghanistan*, and the *environment*.

The Sept. 11 attacks took place during the Republican Bush administration, which soon thereafter launched a "war on terrorism." Republicans have consistently been given more credit than Democrats for handling terrorism over the years since; in an August *USA Today*/Gallup poll, **55%** of Americans say the Republicans in Congress are better able to handle the issue of terrorism, while **31%** choose the Democrats.

Bottom Line

The low top-of-mind salience of terrorism as the top problem facing the nation no doubt reflects the absence of major terrorist attacks on U.S. soil in the nine years since 2001, although there have been occasional news reports of thwarted attacks. It may also reflect the degree to which *economic concerns* are crowding out most other issues at this point in the nation's history.

The dramatic jump in perceptions of terrorism as the most important problem between September and October 2001, however, serves as a reminder of the potential for terrorism to reclaim its prominence as a concern should there be new terrorist incidents in the future.

SOURCE: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/142961/nine-years-few-terrorism-top-problem.aspx>

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

AMERICA:

Population: 307,212,123 (July 2010 est.)

Ethnic Groups: white 79.96%, black 12.85%, Asian 4.43%, Amerindian and Alaska native 0.97%, native Hawaiian and other Pacific islander 0.18%, two or more races 1.61% (July 2007 estimate)

note: a separate listing for Hispanic is not included because the US Census Bureau considers Hispanic to mean persons of Spanish/Hispanic/Latino origin including those of Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican, Dominican Republic, Spanish, and Central or South American origin living in the US who may be of any race or ethnic group (white, black, Asian, etc.); about 15.1% of the total US population is Hispanic

GDP per Capita: \$46,000 (2009 est.)

◆ Britain's American colonies broke with the mother country in 1776 and were recognized as the new nation of the United States of America following the Treaty of Paris in 1783. During the 19th and 20th centuries, 37 new states were added to the original 13 as the nation expanded across the North American continent and acquired a number of overseas possessions. The two most traumatic experiences in the nation's history were the Civil War (1861-65), in which a northern Union of states defeated a secessionist Confederacy of 11 southern slave states, and the Great Depression of the 1930s, an economic downturn during which about a quarter of the labor force lost its jobs. Buoyed by victories in World Wars I and II and the end of the Cold War in 1991, the US remains the world's most powerful nation state. Over a span of more than five decades, the economy has achieved steady growth, low unemployment and inflation, and rapid advances in technology.

- <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/us.html>

SUMMARY OF POLLS

WEST & CENTRAL ASIA

Afghans Less Confident in Elections This Time

Afghans' increasing lack of confidence in the honesty of their elections, along with major security concerns, could keep some from voting next week in the country's second parliamentary elections. Gallup surveys show the percentage of Afghans who do not trust their electoral process spiraled from 49% just after last year's fraud-marred presidential election to 67% earlier this year.

September 10, 2010

Turks Downbeat About Their Institutions

As Turks debate an upcoming referendum that would modify the country's constitution, a recent Pew Global Attitudes survey reveals how much confidence in Turkish institutions has slipped over the last few years.

September 7, 2010

WEST EUROPE

British Public Favours Cutting Government Debts

A new BBC World Service poll today reveals that six in ten (60%) people in Britain favour “taking steps to reduce the government’s budget deficit and debt.” However, when it comes to cutting spending on some of the largest government programs there is overwhelming opposition - 82 per cent oppose cutting spending on education and healthcare, 80 per cent oppose cutting spending on support for senior citizens, and 66 per cent oppose cuts to spending on the military.

September 09, 2010

Papal Visit Poll

The Pope, who is arriving in Britain on Thursday, is more widely recognised than the Archbishop of Canterbury. While one in four people (25%) British adults support his visit, one in ten (11%) oppose it, according to an Ipsos MORI poll conducted exclusively for The Tablet.

September 07, 2010

Britons Laud Trade Unions, But Ponder if Strikes Should be Limited

Many people in Britain believe that trade unions are necessary and important, but a majority also questions whether they have become too involved in political activities, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

September 07, 2010

Churchill as Best Prime Minister, Low Interest in Reading Tony Blair’s book

A sizeable proportion of people in Britain maintain a positive opinion of Winston Churchill and two thirds believe that Gordon Brown has been the worst head of government since the end of the Second World War, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found. Supporters of Labour party are more interested in reading Tony Blair’s book than others.

September 09, 2010

NORTH AMERICA

Nine Years After 9/11, Few See Terrorism as Top U.S. Problem

Nine years after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, 1% of Americans mention terrorism as the most important problem facing the country, down from 46% just after the attacks.

September 10, 2010

Approval for President Obama Drops to New Low in United States

The approval rating for U.S. President Barack Obama dropped this month, and half of Americans disapprove of his performance, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found. In the online survey of a representative national sample of 1,007 American adults, 43 per cent of respondents (-2 since July) approve of Obama’s performance, while 51 per cent (+5) disapprove.

Aug. 31, 2010

Americans OK Allowing Tax Cuts for Wealthy to Expire

A majority of Americans favor letting the tax cuts enacted during the Bush administration expire for the wealthy. While 37% support keeping the tax cuts for all Americans, 44% want them extended only for those making less than \$250,000 and 15% think they should expire for all taxpayers.

September 10, 2010

Since the Start of the Great Recession, More Children Raised by Grandparents

One child in 10 in the United States lives with a grandparent, a share that increased slowly and steadily over the past decade before rising sharply from 2007 to 2008, the first year of the Great Recession, according to a new Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data.

September 9, 2010

A Third of Americans Regard Obama and Palin as Out of Touch

More than half of Americans praise the intelligence of Barack Obama, but some cracks are appearing in the second year of his mandate, as a third of respondents believe that their president is out of touch, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

September 09, 2010

Americans Support Federal Involvement in Education

Forty-three percent of U.S. adults want the federal government to be more involved in education than it is currently and 20% want it to keep the same level of involvement, while 35% want it less involved. Parents of school-aged children are particularly supportive of expanding the government's role in education, with 56% favoring more involvement.

September 8, 2010

Americans Spending More Time Following the News

There are many more ways to get the news these days, and as a consequence Americans are spending more time with the news than over much of the past decade. Digital platforms are playing a larger role in news consumption, and they seem to be more than making up for modest declines in the audience for traditional platforms.

September 12, 2010

Americans Support Push to Shut Down Adult Services Section of Craigslist

Many adults in the United States support a move to shut down the Adult Services section of the Craigslist classified advertisements website, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

September, 02, 2010

Parties Tied at 46% in Generic Ballot for Congress

Republicans and Democrats are tied at 46% among registered voters in Gallup's weekly tracking of congressional voting preferences, marking a shift after five consecutive weeks in which the Republicans held the advantage.

September 7, 2010

Almost Half of Americans Voice Dissatisfaction with Health Care Reform

Americans remain skeptical in their assessment of the health care legislation signed into law by U.S. President Barack Obama earlier this year, with a large proportion of Republican Party supporters expecting a decrease in the quality of medical services, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

September 07, 2010

British Columbians Clearly More Upset than Ontarians Over HST

The recent implementation of a harmonized sales tax (HST) is affecting residents of two Canadian provinces in different ways, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found. The online survey of representative provincial samples of 804 Ontarian and 803 British Columbian adults also finds that respondents question

whether the promise of lower consumer prices down the road will actually materialize.

September 02, 2010

More Canadians Are Questioning the Benefits of Immigration

More Canadians are questioning whether immigration is benefitting the country, with Albertans and Ontarians voicing concern over the role of illegal immigrants in Canadian society, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found. 46 per cent of respondents (+5 since August 2009) say immigration is having a negative effect in Canada, while 34 per cent (-3) believe it is having a positive effect.

September 09, 2010

MULTI-COUNTRY POLLS

Employed or Not, Many Young People Desire to Migrate

Millions of young people worldwide would move away from their countries permanently if they had the opportunity, regardless of whether they have jobs at home. In most places, except the Middle East and North Africa, Gallup finds adults younger than 30 who are employed, underemployed, or not in the workforce are equally likely to desire to migrate.

September 8, 2010

Australia's Environment Admired by Americans, Britons and Canadians

Australia is regarded by many people in Canada, the United States and Britain as an attractive destination due to its natural environment, but several misconceptions about life in the country persist, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

September 08, 2010

CYBERWORLD

Bloggers Debate Growth of Government

Several controversies -- including the growth of anti-poverty programs, what liberals think of conservatives and the nature of President Obama's opposition -- stirred up divisive online conversation. Heated commentary and even inflammatory accusations ensued from both sides of the political spectrum and often seemed to result in the ideological foes talking past each other.

September 9, 2010

WEST ASIA & CENTRAL ASIA

Afghans Less Confident in Elections This Time

Sixty-seven percent do not trust honesty of process

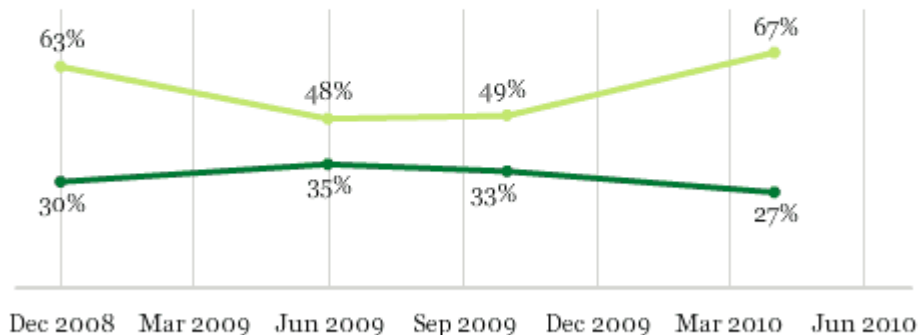
September 10, 2010

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*In this country, do you have confidence in each of the following, or not?
How about the honesty of elections?*

Asked of Afghan adults

■ Yes ■ No



GALLUP®

Gallup surveyed Afghans in April, shortly after the parliamentary elections were postponed from May to September because of insufficient funds, security, and the need to improve electoral procedures. The postponement may have affected citizens' confidence, which was low already compared with the confidence of others in the region. Only Pakistanis are marginally less likely to be confident in the honesty of their country's elections; 23% express trust in their process.

*In this country, do you have confidence in each of the following, or not?
How about the honesty of elections?*

	Yes	No
Bangladesh	57%	31%
India	46%	42%
Sri Lanka	43%	44%
Afghanistan	27%	67%
Pakistan	23%	68%

Surveys conducted in April 2010 in Bangladesh and Afghanistan, in May 2010 in Pakistan and Sri Lanka, and in June 2010 in India.

GALLUP®

For Afghans, as well as the country's neighbors and allies, the parliamentary elections are a crucial test after allegations of widespread fraud left the presidential race undecided for months. As with the last election, Afghans have a number of obstacles to overcome just to cast their vote, including threats from the Taliban. But this time, many Afghans must also overcome their increasing disenchantment with their country's election process. If

voters turn out and the election goes relatively smoothly, the public may gain more confidence in the process going forward.

Survey Methods

Results are based on face-to-face interviews with 1,000 adults, aged 15 and older, conducted in April 2010 in Afghanistan. Gender-matched sampling was used during the final stage of selection. Results are based on face-to-face interviews with 1,000 adults, aged 15 and older, conducted in April 2010 in Bangladesh and in May 2010 in Pakistan and Sri Lanka, and with 6,000 adults in June 2010 in India. For results based on the total sample of national adults, one can say with 95% confidence that the maximum margin of sampling error ranges from ± 1.7 percentage points in India to ± 4.1 percentage points in Afghanistan.

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.

Turks Downbeat About Their Institutions

Even Military Less Well-Regarded

September 7, 2010

As Turks debate an upcoming referendum that would modify the country's constitution, a recent Pew Global Attitudes survey reveals how much confidence in Turkish institutions has slipped over the last few years.

Rating Groups and Institutions

% Good influence

	2002	2007	2010	'07-'10 Change
	%	%	%	%
Military	79	85	72	-13
Police	--	--	68	--
Prime Minister*	7	63	52	-11
Nat'l government	7	61	51	-10
Religious leaders	32	61	41	-20
Media	47	26	30	+4

*In 2002, question asked about Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit
PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q27a,btur,c-e,g.

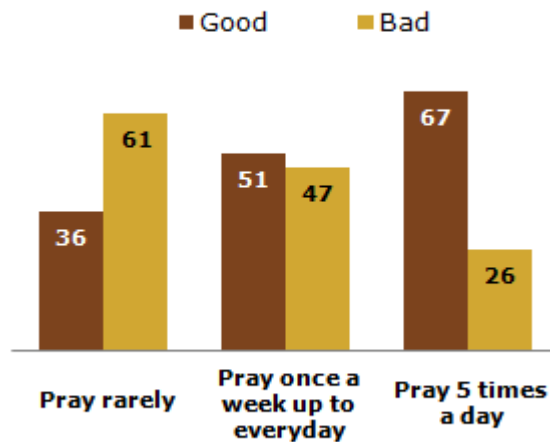
The referendum, which is backed by the ruling religiously-oriented Justice and Development Party (AKP) and opposed by more secular opposition groups, includes provisions regarding the judiciary, as well as measures that would increase civilian

control of the military. Throughout the country's history, the military has played a major role in Turkish politics, and it continues to be a popular institution: 72% say it is having a very or somewhat good influence on the way things are going in Turkey. However, this is down from 85% in 2007. And the number of Turks who believe the military is having a very good impact has declined from 57% to 30% over this period. Confidence in the military has dropped most steeply among the nation's Kurdish population -- just 37% of Kurds give the military a positive rating, compared with 64% in the 2007 poll.

Among the institutions and leaders tested on the poll, which was conducted April 12-30, the police receive the second highest ratings, with 68% of Turks saying the police are having a good influence on the way things are going. The police receive especially favorable ratings from AKP supporters (84% good). Relatively few Kurds (39% good) offer a positive assessment.

Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's ratings have slipped over that last three years. Currently, 52% say he is having a good impact and 43% say he is having a bad impact, while in 2007 63% described his impact as good and 33% as bad. Unsurprisingly, Erdogan gets his highest marks from supporters of his own AKP, 90% of whom think he is having a positive effect. The prime minister receives especially strong ratings in the Central Anatolia region of the country (71% good), which is a stronghold of the AKP.

More Religious Turks Say Erdogan Having Good Impact



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q27btur.

Views about Erdogan are also correlated with religiosity. Two-thirds (67%) of Muslim Turks who pray five times a day assign the prime minister a positive rating. Among those who pray at least once a week but less than five times daily, views are essentially split (51% good, 47% bad). And among those who hardly ever pray or only do so during religious holidays, just 36% say Erdogan is having good impact.

Although Erdogan's ratings have declined since 2007, he still gets considerably better marks than former Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit received in 2002 -- at the time, only 7% of Turks felt he was having a good influence on the country.

Views about the national government are very similar to views about Prime Minister Erdogan. Roughly half (51%) think the national government is having a positive impact, down from 61% three years ago. And the national government gets its best reviews among AKP supporters, residents of Central Anatolia and Muslims who pray frequently.

Ratings for religious leaders have declined substantially since 2007 -- 41% believe they are having a positive influence, a decline of 20 percentage points from three years ago. Muslims who pray five times daily (56% good) give religious leaders higher ratings than do those who pray at least once a week but less than five times a day (37%) and those who rarely pray (24%). AKP supporters (63% good) and residents of Central Anatolia (61%) also believe religious leaders are having a positive effect in Turkey.

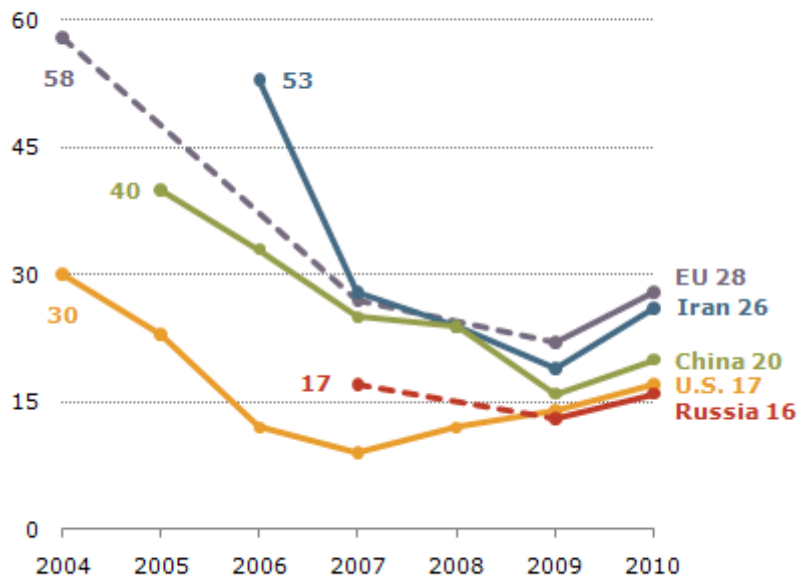
The media receive the lowest ratings among the institutions tested: only 30% of Turks think the media is having a positive effect on society.

Negative Ratings for Major Powers

In recent years, the image of the United States has been largely negative in Turkey. In fact, Turkey was the country in which the U.S. received its lowest favorability rating in every Pew Global Attitudes survey conducted between 2006 and 2009. This year, just 17% of Turks have a positive opinion of the U.S., tying Turkey with Pakistan and Egypt for the lowest U.S. favorability rating among the 22 nations surveyed.¹ Still, the number of Turks who hold a positive view of the U.S. is larger today than it was at its nadir in 2007, when only 9% rated the U.S. favorably.

A Negative View of Other Nations

% Favorable



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q7a,c,d-f.

The U.S. is not alone in receiving negative reviews in Turkey. Ratings for other countries and organizations are also low, and in many cases are lower today than they were a few years ago.

For instance, as negotiations regarding Turkey's bid for membership in the European Union have stalled, attitudes toward the EU have deteriorated. In 2004, 58% of Turks held a favorable opinion of the EU, however, by 2009 this number had plummeted to 22%. Views of the EU have improved slightly over the last year -- currently, 28% rate the organization favorably. Support for joining the EU has also declined: in 2005, 68% of Turks wanted their country to become an EU member; today, a slim 54% majority holds this view.

The Kurdish minority is much more pro-European than the rest of the population. About half (49%) express a favorable opinion of the EU and eight-in-ten favor EU membership for Turkey.

Ratings for Iran and China have also tumbled in recent years. In 2006, when the Pew Global Attitudes Project first asked about Iran, 53% of Turks expressed a positive opinion; today, just with 26% hold this view. In 2005, 40% expressed a favorable opinion of China, compared with 20% now. However, as is the case with the EU, ratings for both Iran and China did improve marginally between 2009 and 2010.

Attitudes toward Russia have remained consistently low over the last three years -- 17% of Turks said they had a positive view of Russia in 2007 and 16% express this view in the 2010 survey.

While Turks express largely negative opinions about other countries, they also tend to believe the feeling is mutual. When asked how they think people in other nations around the world feel about Turkey, 68% of Turks say they think their country is generally disliked, the highest percentage among the 22 countries surveyed. The only other nation in which a majority believes their country is unpopular abroad is the U.S. -- 60% of Americans think the U.S. is generally disliked by others around the globe.

WEST EUROPE

British Public Favours Cutting Government Debts

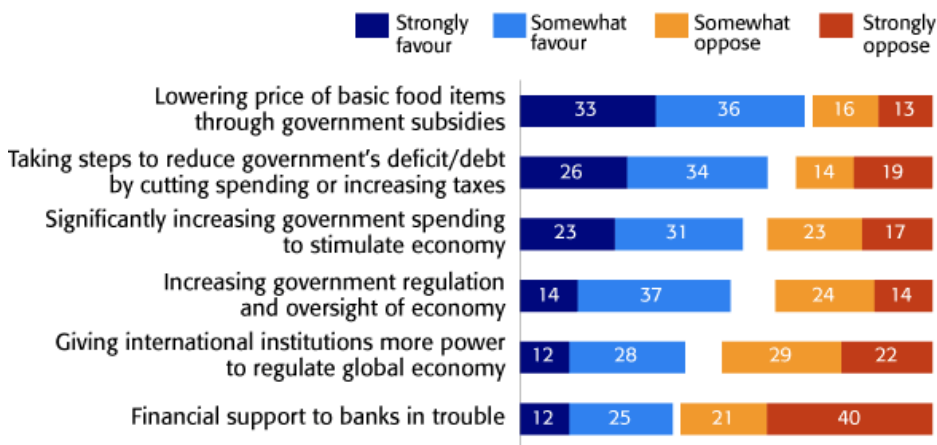
But Opposes Cuts to Education and Healthcare and for Pensioners

A new BBC World Service poll today reveals that six in ten (60%) people in Britain favour “taking steps to reduce the government’s budget deficit and debt.”

However, when it comes to cutting spending on some of the largest government programs there is overwhelming opposition - 82 per cent oppose cutting spending on education and healthcare, 80 per cent oppose cutting spending on support for senior citizens, and 66 per cent oppose cuts to spending on the military.

Support for Government Actions in Current Economic Conditions

“Favour” vs “Oppose,” United Kingdom, 2010



The white space in this chart represents “Depends/neither/both” and “DK/NA.”

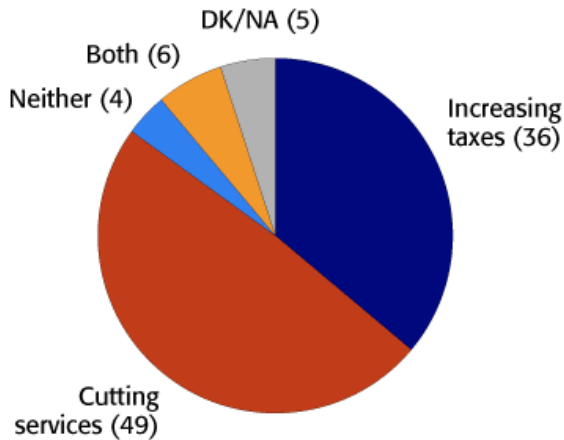
Asked of half of sample

Despite this apparent contradiction between public support for reducing the deficit, but strong opposition to cuts in specific programmes, many doubt that government currently spends tax money wisely. When asked what portion of their taxes they believe are used in

ways that do not serve the ‘interests and values of British people’, people estimate on average that 46p in each pound is used in ways that are not in the common interest.

Preferred Focus for Government Approach to Reducing Deficit

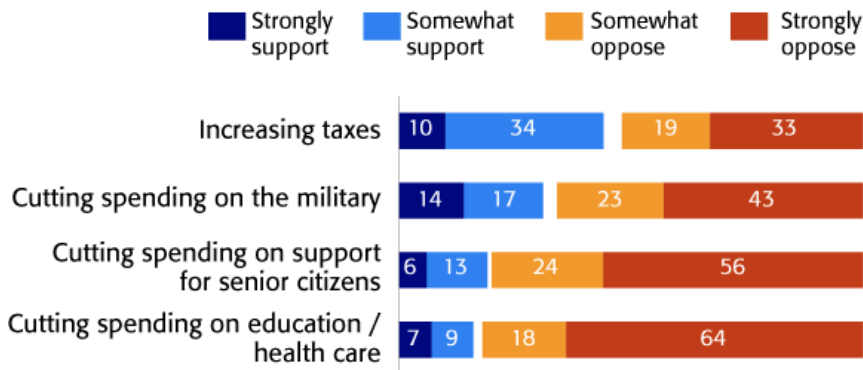
“Increasing Taxes” vs “Cutting Spending on Services,” United Kingdom, 2010



In comparison to the strong opposition to cuts to key services, opposition to increasing taxes is more modest with 52 per cent wanting no increase, and 44 per cent prepared to accept an increase.

Support for Measures to Address Government Deficit/Debt

“Support” vs “Oppose,” United Kingdom, 2010

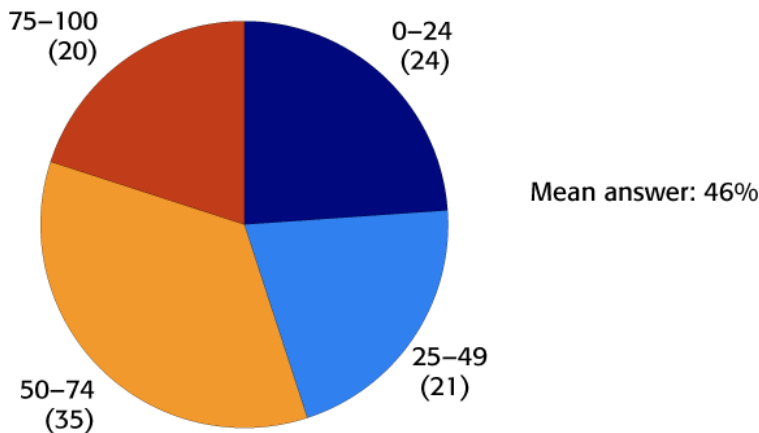


The white space in this chart represents “Depends/neither” and “DK/NA.”

Other findings from the survey suggest that the number of people in favour of giving financial support to troubled banks has waned since last year. While 55 per cent supported it in 2009 and 42 per cent opposed it, support has now dropped to 37 per cent, with 61 per cent opposed.

Percentage of Taxes Used in Ways Considered Not Serving People's Interests

Distribution of Answers across Four Bands
United Kingdom, 2010

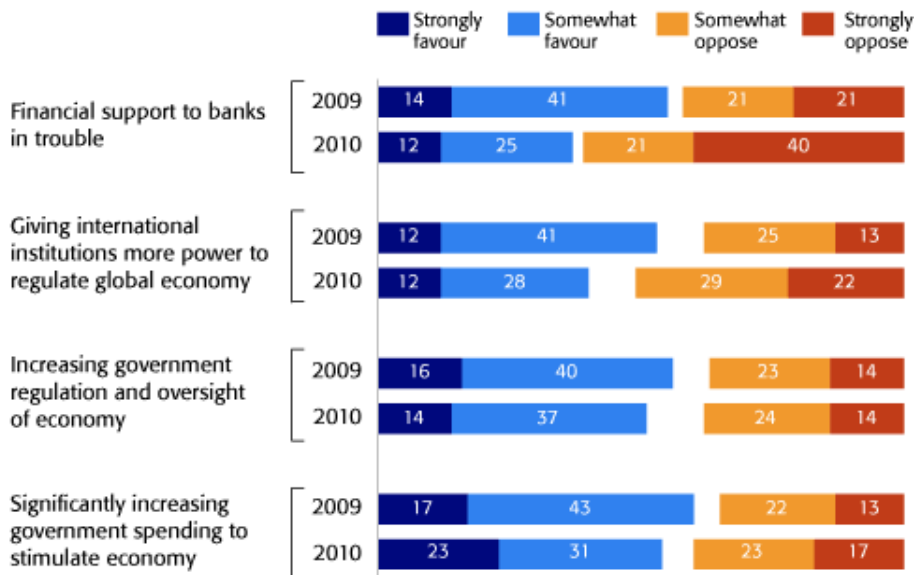


There is slim majority support for significant government stimulus spending, but support for this has fallen from 60 per cent to 54 per cent over the past year.

The telephone survey of 1,000 UK adults was conducted for the BBC between June 28th and July 5th, 2010 by the international polling firm GlobeScan, together with the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) at the University of Maryland. Full-sample results are considered accurate within +/- 3.1 per cent 19 times out of 20. Some questions were asked to a half sample.

Support for Government Actions in Current Economic Conditions

"Favour" vs "Oppose," United Kingdom, Trends: 2009–2010



The white space in this chart represents "Depends/neither/both" and "DK/NA."
 Asked of half of sample

The UK poll is part of a 26-country global study, to be released later this month, looking at how attitudes towards budget deficits compare across the world.

Steven Kull, Director of PIPA comments, "Although Britons generally accept the idea of debt-reduction, the coalition faces the problem of a lack of confidence in Westminster. As long as citizens think large amounts of public money are being spent in ways that do not serve the public interest, they are going to resist both increasing taxes and cuts to specific programs they do think serve them."

GlobeScan Research Director Sam Mountford comments, "The recent controversy over UK bank bail-outs and MP expenses are likely to have contributed to this trust gap over the use of public money. Sixty-one percent of the UK public are now opposed to bailing out banks any further."

Papal Visit Poll

Published: 7 September 2010
 Fieldwork: 20-26 August 2010
 Theme: Religious Beliefs

The Pope, who is arriving in Britain on Thursday, is more widely recognised than the Archbishop of Canterbury. While one in four people (25%) British adults support his visit, one in ten (11%) oppose it, according to an Ipsos MORI poll conducted exclusively for The Tablet. The poll covered a wide range of subjects relating to the Papal visit,

religion and society as well as the allegations of sexual abuse in the Roman Catholic Church.

Catholics are far more enthusiastic about the visit. Almost two thirds (71%) of people who describe themselves as Catholic support the visit of the Pope, with almost half (47%) strongly supporting it. Two thirds (63%) of British adults neither support nor oppose the Pope's state visit to Britain. Indifference towards the visit is evidenced yet further with three quarters (76%) saying they will not be following the Pope's time in Britain closely - one in five (22%) say they will.

The public draw a distinction between religion and the Roman Catholic Church as forces for good. Half (52%) agree that "religion is, on balance, a force for good" while two in five (41%) feel the same is true of the Roman Catholic church.

Just one in ten (11%) feel that the Roman Catholic Church has handled the allegations about priests sexually abusing children well, indeed only 15% of Catholics feel the same way; while over half (55%) of the public feel the Catholic Church has handled the allegations badly, a third (32%) say 'very badly'.

The good news for Christians is that two in three (67%) agree that British society should retain its Christian culture. More people agree that religious organisations should be allowed to run some schools than disagree (49% agree, 28% disagree).

Simon Cowell, David Cameron and Fabio Capello are all recognised by more people than the Pope, however, Archbishop Rowan Williams is less recognised. Two thirds (65%) correctly named the Pope from a photo bearing no clues to his position, while half (50%) recognised the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Technical details

Ipsos MORI interviewed a representative sample of 996 adults aged 15+ across Great Britain. Interviews were conducted face-to-face between 20-26 August 2010. Data are weighted to match the profile of the population. Where percentages do not sum to 100, this may be due to computer rounding, the exclusion of "don't know" categories, or multiple answers. An asterisk (*) denotes any value of less than half a per cent. Data are based on all adults unless otherwise stated.

Britons Laud Trade Unions, But Ponder if Strikes Should be Limited

Respondents are divided on the amount of influence that trade unions currently have in Britain.

September 07, 2010

Many people in Britain believe that trade unions are necessary and important, but a majority also questions whether they have become too involved in political activities, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative sample of 2,006 British adults, 28 per cent of respondents think trade unions have too much influence in Britain, 22 per cent say they

have too little influence, and 33 per cent claim they have about the right amount of influence.

Trade Unions

Next, we'd like to ask you some questions about trade unions. How much influence do you think trade unions currently have in Britain?

	Region					
	Total	London	South of England	Midlands and Wales	North	Scotland
Too much influence	28%	32%	31%	29%	23%	28%
About the right amount	33%	37%	34%	32%	33%	31%
Too little influence	22%	16%	18%	23%	29%	24%
Not sure	16%	15%	17%	16%	16%	17%

Two-thirds of Britons agree that trade unions are a necessary and important entity in society (68%) and believe that they effectively improve the salaries and working conditions of workers (66%).

A majority of respondents (55%) claim that the UK has adequate labour laws to protect workers. In addition, three-in-five respondents (59%) believe that trade unions are too involved in political activities.

Trade Unions

Over the next six months, do you think the UK economy will improve, remain the same, or decline?

	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
Trade unions are a necessary and important entity in our society	68%	21%	11%
The UK has adequate labour laws to protect workers	55%	32%	13%
Trade unions are too involved in political activities	59%	24%	17%
Trade unions effectively improve the salaries and working conditions of workers	66%	23%	12%

When to Call a Strike

Respondents were provided with a list of eight trade unions, and asked to what extent each one of them should exercise their right to call a strike. At least one-in-five respondents believe that all of these unions should be able to call a strike "Always" or "Most of the time".

Thinking of trade unions, to what extent do you think each of the following should exercise their right to call a strike?

	Always	Most of the time	Some of the time	Never
Emergency workers	10%	11%	25%	53%
Health workers	10%	12%	32%	45%
State school teachers	12%	13%	40%	36%
Civil servants	11%	14%	42%	33%
Airline and airport personnel	11%	13%	46%	30%
Council employees (services such as rubbish collection, parks keeping, librarians)	11%	14%	45%	30%
Public transport employees	11%	14%	47%	28%
Telecommunications workers	11%	14%	48%	27%

More than half of respondents (53%) believe emergency workers should never exercise their right to call a strike, and 45 per cent feel the same way about health workers.

Fewer respondents believe state school teachers (36%), civil servants (33%), airline and airport personnel (30%), council employees (30%), public transport employees (28%) and telecommunications workers (27%) should never exercise their right to call a strike.

Britons Regard Churchill as Best Prime Minister Since Second World War

Labour Party supporters express more interest than other voters in reading or buying Tony Blair's autobiography.

September 09, 2010

A sizeable proportion of people in Britain maintain a positive opinion of Winston Churchill and two thirds believe that Gordon Brown has been the worst head of government since the end of the Second World War, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

The online survey of a representative sample of 2,025 British adults also found that supporters of the Labour Party are more interested in reading or buying the autobiography of former Prime Minister Tony Blair than the average Briton.

Best Prime Ministers

Four-in-five Britons (79%) describe Churchill as a good prime minister. No other British head of government reaches the 50 per cent mark on this indicator, with Margaret Thatcher (47%), Tony Blair (39%), Harold Wilson (37%), David Cameron (34%), and Harold Macmillan (31%) getting a good review from at least three-in-ten respondents.

Churchill's overall score of +75 (a comparison between positive and negative responses) is the best for all 13 heads of government featured in the study. Only three other prime

ministers posted a positive rating: Wilson (+16), Clement Attlee (+15) and Cameron (+7). In stark contrast, Gordon Brown (-45) and John Major (-25) had the lowest scores.

Below is a list of all the people who have served as Prime Minister since the end of the Second World War. For each one, please say whether you think they were (or have been) a good prime minister or a bad prime minister.

	Good Prime Minister	Bad Prime Minister	Not sure	Score
Winston Churchill	79%	4%	17%	+75
Clement Attlee	23%	8%	68%	+15
Anthony Eden	13%	17%	70%	-4
Harold Macmillan	31%	12%	57%	-19
Alec Douglas-Home	12%	18%	69%	-6
Harold Wilson	37%	21%	42%	+16
Edward Heath	22%	32%	46%	-10
James Callaghan	22%	27%	51%	-5
Margaret Thatcher	47%	40%	12%	+7
John Major	25%	50%	25%	-25
Tony Blair	39%	47%	14%	-8
Gordon Brown	20%	65%	15%	-45
David Cameron	34%	27%	39%	+7

Tony Blair's Book

About one-in-five Britons say they plan to buy or have bought Blair's autobiography (5%), or plan to read the book or have already read it (14%). People who voted for the Labour Party in the 2010 General Election are more likely to express interest in buying (9%) or reading (19%) the book.

As you may know, the autobiography of former Prime Minister Tony Blair, entitled "A Journey", will be published on 1 September. Do you plan to read or buy this book?

	Great Britain	Labour Party Voters in 2010
I plan to buy the book / I have bought the book	5%	9%
I plan to read the book / I have read the book	14%	19%
I do not plan to either read or buy the book	82%	72%

In addition, 14 per cent of respondents say the fact that Blair will give the proceeds of his autobiography to a project funded by the Royal British Legion that provides rehabilitation

services for seriously injured members of the armed forces makes them more likely to buy the book.

NORTH AMERICA

Nine Years After 9/11, Few See Terrorism as Top U.S. Problem

One percent see it as the top problem today, down from 46% in 2001

September 10, 2010

Nine years after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, 1% of Americans mention terrorism as the most important problem facing the country, down from 46% just after the attacks.

Terrorism as Most Important U.S. Problem

September 2001-August 2010

■ % Naming terrorism



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Just before the attacks, in a Gallup poll conducted Sept. 7-10, 2001, less than one-half of 1% of Americans mentioned terrorism as the nation's most important problem. One month later, in October 2001, 46% named terrorism, the highest in Gallup's history.

From that point on, terrorism slowly faded as a response to this question. At the one-year anniversary of the attacks, in September 2002, 19% of Americans mentioned terrorism as the country's top problem, already eclipsed by the economy at the top of the list. By the five-year anniversary of the attacks in September 2006, 11% of Americans mentioned terrorism. Terrorism continued to drop from that point, albeit with an uptick to 8% mentions in January of this year, reflecting the widespread news coverage of the "Christmas Day bomber" who allegedly attempted to detonate explosives on a Northwest Airlines plane headed for Detroit.

As terrorism has faded, other concerns have risen in importance. Over the past nine years, Americans have most commonly mentioned the war in Iraq (from 2003 to early 2008)

and the economy or jobs (from 2008 to the present) as the top problem facing the country.

Despite the drop in top-of-mind mentions of terrorism, Americans still say it is an important issue when they are reminded of it. Gallup recently asked Americans to rate the importance of a number of issues to their vote in this year's midterm elections, and 75% rated terrorism as an extremely or very important issue. Still, Americans rated economic issues such as the economy, jobs, and federal spending, as well as corruption in government and healthcare, even higher. They rated terrorism as more important than immigration, Afghanistan, and the environment.

The Sept. 11 attacks took place during the Republican Bush administration, which soon thereafter launched a "war on terrorism." Republicans have consistently been given more credit than Democrats for handling terrorism over the years since; in an August *USA Today*/Gallup poll, 55% of Americans say the Republicans in Congress are better able to handle the issue of terrorism, while 31% choose the Democrats.

Bottom Line

The low top-of-mind salience of terrorism as the top problem facing the nation no doubt reflects the absence of major terrorist attacks on U.S. soil in the nine years since 2001, although there have been occasional news reports of thwarted attacks. It may also reflect the degree to which economic concerns are crowding out most other issues at this point in the nation's history.

The dramatic jump in perceptions of terrorism as the most important problem between September and October 2001, however, serves as a reminder of the potential for terrorism to reclaim its prominence as a concern should there be new terrorist incidents in the future.

Survey Methods

Results for this *USA Today*/Gallup poll are based on telephone interviews conducted Aug. 27-30, 2010, with a random sample of 1,021 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.

Approval for President Obama Drops to New Low in United States

Seven-in-ten Americans are dissatisfied with Congress.

Aug. 31, 2010

The approval rating for U.S. President Barack Obama dropped this month, and half of Americans disapprove of his performance, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found. In the online survey of a representative national sample of 1,007 American adults, 43 per cent of respondents (-2 since July) approve of Obama's performance, while 51 per cent (+5) disapprove.

The level of strong approval for the U.S. President (14%, +2) continues to trail the level of strong disapproval by double digits (34%, +6). Four-in-five Republicans (84%, +2) are dissatisfied with Obama, while three-in-four Democrats (74%, -4) are content with the American president.

Three-in-five Independents (62%, +9) disapprove of Obama's performance, while just one third approve of it (34%, -4).

The approval rating for the U.S. Congress stands at 22 per cent this month (-1), while 70 per cent of respondents disapprove of its actions (+6). The level of strong approval for federal lawmakers is four per cent (=), while two-in-five Americans (41%, +6) are strongly dissatisfied.

U.S. Politics					
Do you approve or disapprove of Barack Obama's performance as president? - TREND					
	Aug. 2010	Jul. 2010	Jun. 2010	May 2010	Apr. 2010
Approve	43%	45%	44%	48%	46%
Disapprove	51%	46%	50%	45%	45%
Not sure	6%	9%	6%	7%	9%

This month, Congress garnered a slightly lower level of support across political lines. Two-in-five Democrats (38%, -4) provide a positive assessment of the legislative branch, along with 13 per cent of Independents (-3) and 10 per cent of Republicans (-2).

U.S. Politics					
Do you approve or disapprove of the performance of the United States Congress? - TREND					
	Aug. 2010	Jul. 2010	Jun. 2010	May 2010	Apr. 2010
Approve	22%	23%	18%	25%	24%
Disapprove	70%	64%	72%	63%	63%
Not sure	8%	13%	10%	12%	13%

Analysis

After a brief recovery in July, Obama's disapproval rating has fallen beyond the 50 per cent mark. With the congressional election less than three months away, the biggest problem for the president is the way he is connecting with Independents, who are now dissatisfied with his performance by a 2-to-1 margin.

The numbers for Congress are relatively steady, but seven-in-ten Americans are dissatisfied with the way the federal lawmakers are handling their duties. The anti-incumbent feeling may prove to be a challenge in the Midwest and the South, where at least two-in-five respondents strongly disapprove of Congress.

Americans OK Allowing Tax Cuts for Wealthy to Expire

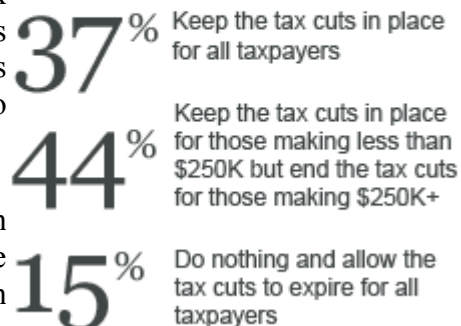
One in three favor keeping tax cuts for all taxpayers

September 10, 2010

A majority of Americans favor letting the tax cuts enacted during the Bush administration expire for the wealthy. While 37% support keeping the tax cuts for all Americans, 44% want them extended only for those making less than \$250,000 and 15% think they should expire for all taxpayers.

These results are based on an Aug. 27-30 USA Today/Gallup poll. The fate of the 2001 and 2003 federal income tax cuts that were a centerpiece of Bush administration policy could be a significant campaign issue this fall. The tax cuts are set to expire after this year unless Congress votes to extend them. Congress plans to take up the issue next week when it returns to session.

Views on the Tax Cuts Enacted During the Bush Administration Should Congress -- _____?



It appears as though Congress, like the American public, broadly agrees that the tax cuts should be extended for American families earning less than \$250,000. The debate Congress will have this fall will be over whether to extend the tax cuts for wealthier Americans. Most Republicans and some Democrats in Congress are thought to favor extending them for wealthier Americans. President Obama said Wednesday that he is opposed to any plan that would extend the tax cuts for wealthier Americans.

The president's views on ending the tax cuts for wealthy Americans are in line with the views of the majority of rank-and-file Democrats. Meanwhile, the majority of Republicans want the tax cuts extended for all taxpayers, regardless of their income level. Independents' views fall between those of the two groups, but a majority (56%) would seem to endorse the idea of not extending tax cuts for higher-income Americans, whether or not they want them extended for middle- and lower-income Americans.

Views on the Tax Cuts Enacted During the Bush Administration, by Political Party Affiliation

Should Congress -- _____?

	Vote to keep the tax cuts in place for all taxpayers	Vote to keep the tax cuts in place for those making less than \$250,000 but end the tax cuts for those making \$250,000 or more	Do nothing and allow the tax cuts to expire for all taxpayers
Republican	54%	32%	11%
Independent	39%	41%	15%
Democrat	18%	60%	19%

USA Today/Gallup poll, Aug. 27-30, 2010

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Bottom Line

With about one in three Americans, including a minority of independents and Democrats, in favor of extending the Bush-era tax cuts for all taxpayers, Democrats may not be putting themselves at great political risk by allowing the tax cuts to expire for wealthy Americans. In fact, the middle ground of extending tax cuts for low- and middle-income Americans but allowing them to expire for wealthy Americans -- the Democrats' most likely proposal -- is the specific option the public prefers most.

Gallup has typically found Americans unsympathetic to the argument that upper-income Americans are overtaxed. They generally believe upper-income Americans pay too little in taxes and favor higher taxes on wealthy Americans as a means to fund government programs, such as Social Security.

Survey Methods

Results for this *USA Today*/Gallup poll are based on telephone interviews conducted Aug. 27-30, 2010, with a random sample of 1,021 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.

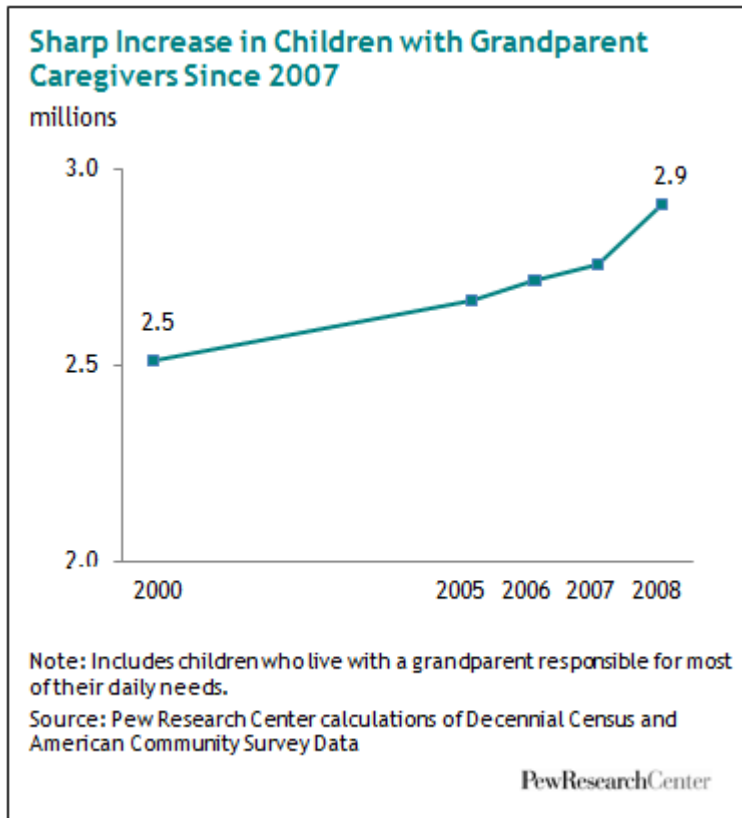
Samples are weighted by gender, age, race, education, region, and phone lines. Demographic weighting targets are based on the March 2009 Current Population Survey figures for the aged 18 and older non-institutionalized population living in continental U.S. telephone households. All reported margins of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

Since the Start of the Great Recession, More Children Raised by Grandparents

September 9, 2010

One child in 10 in the United States lives with a grandparent, a share that increased slowly and steadily over the past decade before rising sharply from 2007 to 2008, the first year of the Great Recession, according to a new Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data.



About four-in-ten (41%) of those children who live with a grandparent (or grandparents) are also being raised primarily by that grandparent,¹ according to the census data.

This figure -- 2.9 million children²-- rose slowly throughout the decade and it, too, spiked from 2007 to 2008. In that single year, there was a 6% increase.

The phenomenon of grandparents serving as primary caregivers is more common among blacks³ and Hispanics than among whites,⁴ but the sharpest rise since the recession began has been among whites.

The number of white grandparents primarily responsible for their grandchildren rose by 9% from 2007 to 2008, compared with an increase of just 2% among black grandparents and no change among Hispanic grandparents.

Almost half (49%) of children being raised by grandparents also live with a single parent. For about four-in-ten (43%) of these children, there is no parent in the household. About 8% have both parents in the household, in addition to the caregiver grandparent.

Grandparent Caregivers, 2000-2008

grandparents primarily responsible for most basic needs of a grandchild

	Total 2008	% Change 2007-08	% Change 2000-08
Total	2,636,728	+5	+8
Race and Ethnicity			
White	1,397,090	+9	+19
Black	621,887	+2	-12
Hispanic	483,182	0	+14
Asian	89,608	-3	+9
Poverty Level			
Below poverty level	468,059	+1	+2
1-3 times poverty level	1,251,111	+4	+12
3-5 times poverty level	595,608	+8	+6
5 times or higher than poverty level	303,488	+6	+4

Note: Whites, blacks, and Asians are non-Hispanic. Asians include Pacific Islanders.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of Decennial Census and American Community Survey data

PewResearchCenter

Whether or not they live with and raise their grandchildren, being a grandparent is central to the lives of most older Americans. According to a 2009 Pew Research Center survey, 80% of those ages 65 and older have grandchildren, as do 51% of those ages 50-64.⁵ The survey finds that grandparents place a premium on time spent with their grandchildren.

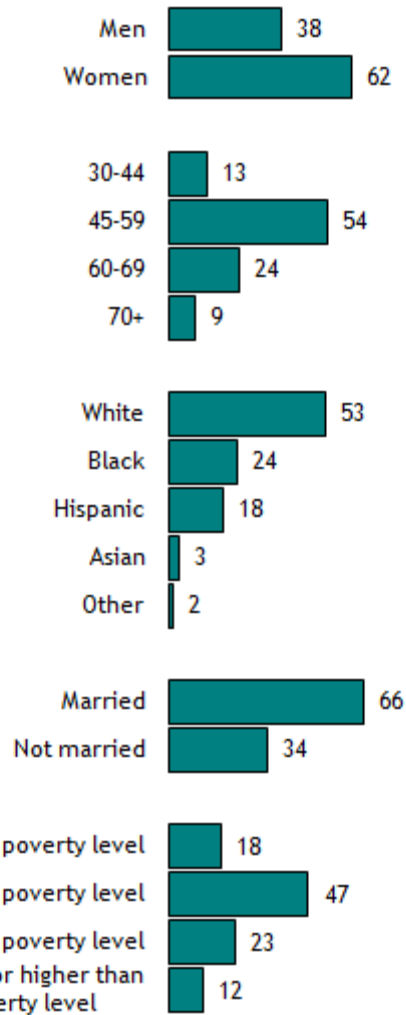
Just as the number of children being cared for by their grandparents has increased from 2000 to 2008, the corresponding number of grandparents serving as primary caregivers to their grandchildren increased 8%, from 2.4 million in 2000 to 2.6 million in 2008.

Three percent of that increase occurred from 2000 to 2007, and 5% occurred from 2007 to 2008.

Among grandparents who serve as primary caregivers for grandchildren, there are notable differences by race, ethnicity and income. More than half of grandparent primary caregivers (53%) are white, while 24% are African American, 18% are Hispanic and 3% are Asians. In comparison, in the population ages 50 and older, 78% are white, 10% are black, 8% are Hispanic and 4% are Asian.

Profile of Grandparent Caregivers, 2008

% of grandparents primarily responsible for most basic needs of a grandchild



Note: Whites, blacks, Asians, and others are non-Hispanic. Asian includes Pacific Islanders. Numbers may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of American Community Survey data

PewResearchCenter

While grandparents who serve as primary caregivers for their grandchildren are disproportionately black and Hispanic, the increase in grandparent primary caregiving across the decade has been much more pronounced among whites. From 2000 to 2008, there was a 19% increase in the number of white grandparents caring for their grandkids.

There has been a smaller, but still notable increase in Hispanic grandparents serving as primary caregivers since 2000, which may be linked to the increasing size of the older

Hispanic population in the U.S. By contrast, the number of blacks serving as grandparents declined by 12%.⁶

For the most part, grandparent caregivers have very limited financial resources. Nearly one-in-five (18%) are living below the poverty line,⁷ while 47% have household incomes that fall between one- and three-times the poverty line. In comparison, among the population ages 50 and older, 8% are below the poverty line, and 32% are living on an income that is between one- and three-times the poverty rate.

From 2000 to 2008, grandparents with incomes between one- and three-times the poverty level have shown the largest increase (12%) in caregiving for their grandchildren. However, much of the increase in grandparent caregiving since the onset of the recession has occurred among grandparents who have incomes that are at least three times the poverty level.

Overall grandparent primary caregivers are relatively young -- more than two-thirds (67%) are younger than age 60, with 13% younger than age 45. This likely reflects the fact that younger grandparents are still physically able to take on the needs of grandchildren.

Some 62% of grandparent caregivers are female, and 38% are men. Two-thirds of grandparent caregivers are married, while 34% are not.

The plurality of grandparents who care for their grandchildren have been doing so for quite a long time. More than half (54%) report that they have been the primary caregiver to at least one grandchild for three years or more, and 23% have been the primary caregiver to a grandchild for between one and two years.

1. Anyone who reported that they live with and are “currently responsible for most of the basic needs of their grandchild(ren) under the age of 18” is considered to be a primary caregiver grandparent.

2. This is a conservative estimate, since only those under age 18 who were the children or grandchildren of the household head could be easily linked to grandparent caregivers. They account for over 95% of minors living in a household with someone who claims to be a grandparent caregiver.

3. All references to whites, blacks, Asians and others are to the non-Hispanic components of those populations.

4. The share of all children under age 18 who are cared for primarily by a grandparent was 4% in 2008. Among white children, 3% were cared for primarily by a grandparent. This number is 8% among blacks, 4% among Hispanics, and 2% among Asians.

5. These percentages are based on non-institutionalized adults. Adults living in institutional settings such as nursing homes were not included in the survey (see Pew Social & Demographic Trends, “*Growing Old in America: Expectations vs. Reality*”, June 29, 2009).

6. From 2000 to 2008, the share of Hispanics ages 50 and older increased 2 percentage points, and the share of Asians increased by 1 percentage point. Whites showed a 3 percentage point decline, and blacks showed a decline of almost 1 percentage point. In 2008, whites comprised 78% of people over 50, blacks comprised 10%, Hispanics comprised 8% and Asians comprised 4%.

7. To put this in perspective, the poverty threshold for a family of two adults and two children in 2008 was \$21,834 (see <http://www.census.gov/prod/2009pubs/p60-236.pdf>).

A Third of Americans Regard Obama and Palin as Out of Touch

Independent voters have a more nuanced view of Obama, but rely mostly on negative words to describe Palin.

September 09, 2010

More than half of Americans praise the intelligence of Barack Obama, but some cracks are appearing in the second year of his mandate, as a third of respondents believe that their president is out of touch, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 1,000 American adults, respondents were asked to select up to six words or phrases from a list to describe two politicians and two media personalities. This exercise, which has been used by Angus Reid Public Opinion in the past to review perceptions in Canada and Britain, facilitates an analysis based on emotional responses.

Barack Obama

At least three-in-ten respondents used one of seven words or phrases to describe Barack Obama. More than half of respondents (52%) said the U.S. President is intelligent. The three other positive responses were strong (32%), honest (31%) and compassionate (30%). Still, three negative words or phrases were used to describe Obama: out of touch (33%), arrogant (31%) and inefficient (30%).

Political Personalities

Here are some words that people may use to describe a person. Please select up to six words you think describe Barack Obama.

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Down to earth	28%	42%	11%	25%
Arrogant	31%	11%	63%	32%
Open	21%	32%	8%	19%
Secretive	27%	15%	44%	32%
Efficient	21%	34%	5%	19%
Inefficient	30%	14%	51%	37%
Compassionate	30%	50%	10%	23%
Uncaring	15%	5%	31%	16%
Honest	31%	50%	12%	24%
Dishonest	25%	7%	53%	26%
Strong	32%	53%	10%	26%
Weak	18%	9%	33%	19%
Exciting	7%	13%	1%	5%
Boring	9%	6%	14%	7%
In touch	22%	35%	6%	19%
Out of touch	33%	14%	56%	39%
Intelligent	52%	67%	31%	57%
Foolish	17%	9%	32%	15%
None of these / I don't know who this person is	3%	3%	0%	2%

Across party lines, at least half of Democrats think Obama is intelligent, strong, honest and compassionate, while most Republicans brand him as arrogant, out of touch, dishonest and inefficient. Independents have a more nuanced view, with 57 per cent calling Obama intelligent, and 39 per cent believing he is out of touch.

Sarah Palin

More than a third of respondents think Sarah Palin is foolish (37%). Three other negative words or phrases used to describe the former Republican Vice Presidential nominee are out of touch (32%), arrogant (31%), and inefficient (27%). About one-in-four respondents rely on two positive words: strong (27%) and intelligent (26%).

Across party lines, more than two-in-five Democrats regard Palin as foolish, out of touch and arrogant, while almost half of Republicans consider her intelligent, down to earth, strong and honest. Two-in-five Independents say Palin is foolish, and three-in-ten think she is arrogant and out of touch.

Political Personalities

Here are some words that people may use to describe a person. Please select up to six words you think describe Sarah Palin.

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Down to earth	26%	12%	49%	28%
Arrogant	31%	42%	14%	33%
Open	21%	14%	37%	18%
Secretive	14%	15%	8%	16%
Efficient	11%	6%	21%	10%
Inefficient	27%	37%	12%	26%
Compassionate	20%	10%	39%	20%
Uncaring	16%	23%	7%	14%
Honest	20%	8%	46%	17%
Dishonest	23%	35%	6%	19%
Strong	27%	15%	48%	28%
Weak	21%	29%	9%	16%
Exciting	14%	7%	28%	13%
Boring	17%	27%	4%	15%
In touch	16%	8%	33%	14%
Out of touch	32%	45%	14%	31%
Intelligent	26%	13%	49%	27%
Foolish	37%	49%	13%	43%
None of these / I don't know who this person is	7%	8%	3%	7%

Jon Stewart

Almost half of respondents (47%) could not provide any words to describe Jon Stewart. The Comedy Central host is seen as intelligent (26%), in touch (20%) and honest (19%). The word used the most by Democrats is intelligent, while Republicans countered with arrogant. One third of Independents also perceive Stewart as intelligent.

Glenn Beck

Two-in-five respondents (39%) did not know enough about Glenn Beck to choose any words or phrases. The conservative radio and television host is clearly a polarizing figure, with at least one-in-five Americans regarding him as arrogant (28%), intelligent (25%) and foolish (21%).

A third of Democrats think Beck is arrogant, while two-in-five Republicans consider him intelligent. Independents are almost evenly split when using these two words, with 30 per cent branding Beck as arrogant, and 28 per cent saying he is intelligent.

Analysis

Partisan views paint a very clear picture of perceptions of the current president and one of his possible rivals in the 2012 election. Democrats maintain very positive views of Obama after his first year and a half in office, while Republicans regard Palin as a person who is honest and has the human touch. Independents—always a key voting component in presidential elections—are more likely to regard Obama as intelligent, but provide a scathing review of both politicians as being out of touch.

For the two television personalities, the ratings are significantly lower. Stewart seems to be connecting well with Democrats, while Beck earns a considerable amount of positive reviews from Republicans. However, while Independents are more likely to use positive words to describe Stewart, some negative phrases appear when they ponder how they feel about Beck.

Americans Support Federal Involvement in Education

Democrats want more federal involvement in schools; Republicans want less

September 8, 2010

Forty-three percent of U.S. adults want the federal government to be more involved in education than it is currently and 20% want it to keep the same level of involvement, while 35% want it less involved. Parents of school-aged children are particularly supportive of expanding the government's role in education, with 56% favoring more involvement.

The Federal Government's Role in Education

In terms of public education in this country, do you think the federal government [should be more involved in education than it currently is, should keep its involvement about the same, (or) should be less involved in education than it currently is]?

	More involved	Keep the same	Less involved	No opinion
	%	%	%	%
National adults				
2010 Aug 5-8	43	20	35	1
2000 Apr 7-9	46	22	29	3
K-12 parents				
2010 Aug 5-8	56	16	27	1
2000 Apr 7-9	50	22	26	2

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Ten years ago, Americans were slightly more likely to favor greater government involvement in education over less involvement, 46% to 29%. The next year (in 2001), President George W. Bush and Sen. Ted Kennedy succeeded in passing the landmark No Child Left Behind education initiative through Congress. Among other things, this

compelled states to meet extensive new testing and achievement standards in order to receive Title I federal education funding.

The new findings, from Gallup's Aug. 5-8 Work and Education poll, do not speak directly to public support for No Child Left Behind; however, they do suggest that Americans are, at a minimum, content with the current level of federal involvement in education. Still, views on this are highly partisan. Sixty percent of Republicans favor less federal involvement in education while 63% of Democrats want to see more. By 44% to 33%, independents tend to favor more involvement over less.

Support for expanded federal government involvement in education is also higher among younger Americans than among older Americans.

The Federal Government's Role in Education -- by Age

	18 to 34	35 to 54	55 and older
	%	%	%
Federal government should be more involved	64	46	30
Federal government role kept the same	16	20	23
Federal government should be less involved	20	32	45

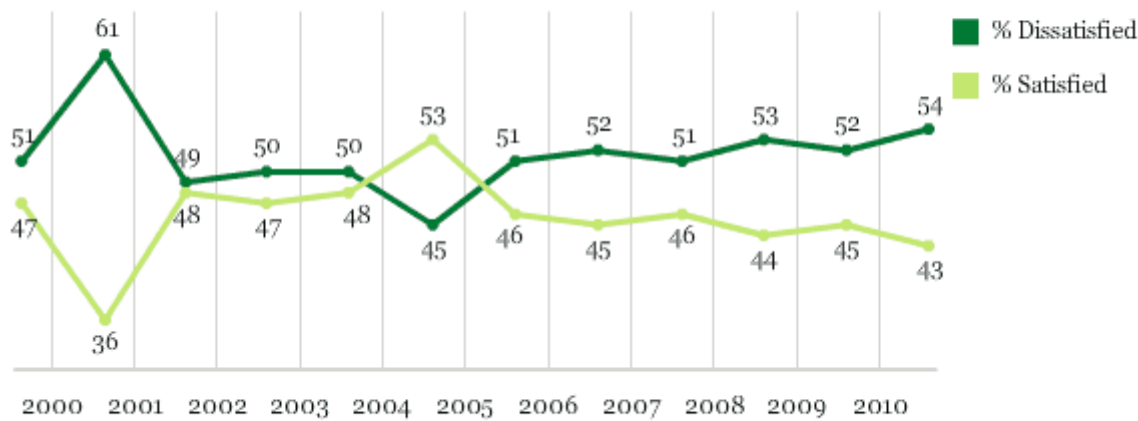
Aug. 5-8, 2010

GALLUP®

The same poll finds 54% of Americans dissatisfied with the quality of K-12 education in the United States today, the highest Gallup has recorded since August 2000.

Satisfaction With U.S. Education

Overall, how satisfied are you with the quality of education students receive in kindergarten through grade 12 in the U.S. today -- would you say you are completely satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or completely dissatisfied?



GALLUP®

By contrast, American parents have remained largely satisfied with the quality of education their own children are receiving. The 80% currently saying they are either completely (35%) or somewhat (45%) satisfied is the most positive assessment Gallup has measured since the question was first asked in 1999.

Bottom Line

President Obama has promised to rework federal education law in a way that gives more responsibility for meeting educational standards and improving outcomes back to state and local governments. However, the public may not immediately support this. A combined 63% of Americans want the federal government's role in education either maintained at its current level or increased. The figure is 72% among parents of K-12 schoolchildren. The fact that a majority of Americans are dissatisfied with the status of education today may give added support to an expanded federal role.

Survey Methods

Results for this Gallup poll are based on telephone interviews conducted Aug 5-8, 2010, with a random sample of 1,013 [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.

For results based on the total sample of 218 parents with children in Kindergarten through Grade 12, one can say with 95% confidence that the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 8 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.

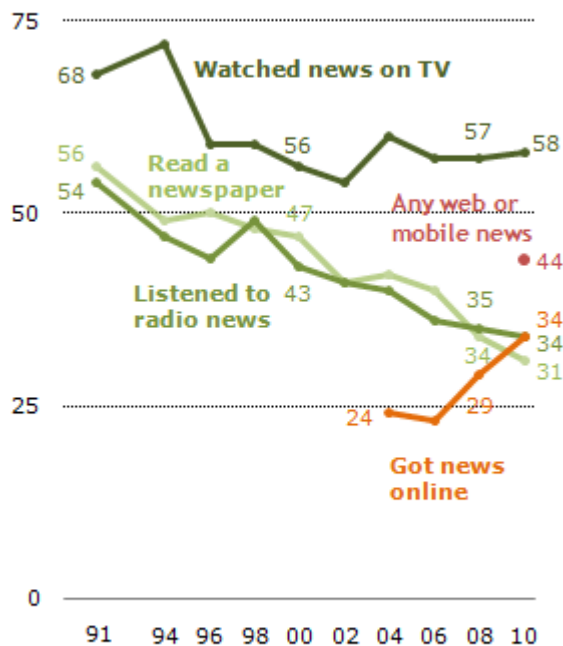
In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion polls.

Americans Spending More Time Following the News

September 12, 2010

There are many more ways to get the news these days, and as a consequence Americans are spending more time with the news than over much of the past decade. Digital platforms are playing a larger role in news consumption, and they seem to be more than making up for modest declines in the audience for traditional platforms. As a result, the average time Americans spend with the news on a given day is as high as it was in the mid-1990s, when audiences for traditional news sources were much larger.

Where People Got News Yesterday



PEW RESEARCH CENTER June 8-28, 2010.

Roughly a third (34%) of the public say they went online for news yesterday – on par with radio, and slightly higher than daily newspapers. And when cell phones, email, social networks and podcasts are added in, 44% of Americans say they got news through one or more internet or mobile digital source yesterday.

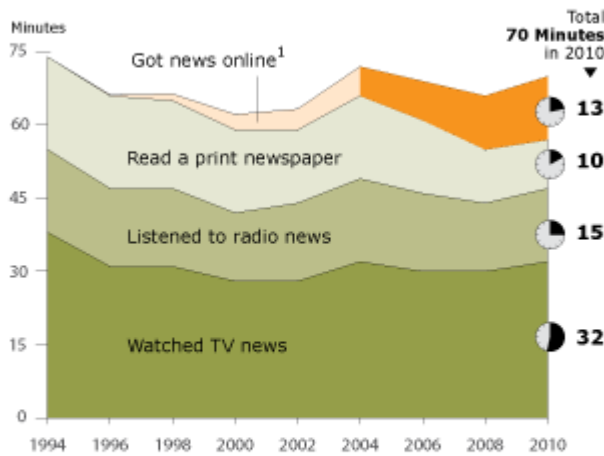
At the same time, the proportion of Americans who get news from traditional media platforms – television, radio and print – has been stable or edging downward in the last few years. There has been no overall decline in the percentage saying they watched news on television, and even with the continued erosion of print newspaper and radio audiences, three-quarters of Americans got news yesterday from one or more of these three traditional platforms.

In short, instead of replacing traditional news platforms, Americans are increasingly integrating new technologies into their news consumption habits. More than a third (36%) of Americans say they got news from both digital and traditional sources yesterday, just shy of the number who relied solely on traditional sources (39%). Only 9% of Americans got news through the internet and mobile technology without also using traditional sources.

The net impact of digital platforms supplementing traditional sources is that Americans are spending more time with the news than was the case a decade ago. As was the case in 2000, people now say they spend 57 minutes on average getting the news from TV, radio

or newspapers on a given day. But today, they also spend an additional 13 minutes getting news online, increasing the total time spent with the news to 70 minutes. This is one of the highest totals on this measure since the mid-1990s and it does not take into account time spent getting news on cell phones or other digital devices .

Minutes Spent With News Yesterday



PEW RESEARCH CENTER June 8-28, 2010.
 Estimated time getting news from each source. Online news includes newspapers read online. Online news "yesterday" not asked prior to 2004. Pre-2004 figures estimated from other data.

The biennial news consumption survey by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, conducted June 8-28 on cell phones and landlines among 3,006 adults, finds further evidence that the combination of digital and traditional platforms is leading to increased news consumption.

The groups that are driving the increase in time spent with the news – particularly highly educated people – are most likely to use digital and traditional platforms. Fully 69% of those with some post-graduate experience got news through a digital source yesterday; this also is the group that showed the largest rise in time spent with the news from 2006-2008 to 2010 (from 81 minutes yesterday to 96 minutes). There also has been a modest increase in time spent with the news among those 30 to 64 – but not among older and younger age groups.

Digital platforms are supplementing the news diets of news consumers, but there is little indication they are expanding the proportion of Americans who get news on a given day. The vast majority of Americans (83%) get news in one form or another as part of their daily life. But even when cell phones, podcasts, social networks, email, Twitter and RSS feeds are accounted for, 17% of Americans say they got no news yesterday, little changed from previous years.

Increase in Time Spent with News Driven by the Highly Educated and Middle-Aged

	2006-2008 Average	2010	Change
Total minutes with news	67 mins	70 mins	+3
18-29	47	45	-2
30-39	64	68	+4
40-49	66	74	+8
50-64	75	81	+6
65+	82	83	+1
Post graduate	81	96	+15
BA/BS	79	80	+1
Some college	68	71	+3
HS or less	58	58	0

PEW RESEARCH CENTER June 8-28, 2010.
 Estimated time yesterday, in minutes, watching, listening to or reading news in newspapers, on radio, on television, or online. (Online news time added in 2004.)

Moreover, while young people are most likely to integrate new technologies into their daily lives, they are not using these sources to get news at higher rates than do older Americans. Rather, those in their 30s are the only age group in which a majority (57%) reports getting news on one or more digital platforms yesterday.

The integration of traditional and digital technology is common among those in older age groups as well. Nearly half (49%) of people in their 40s, and 44% of those between 50 and 64, got news through one or more digital modes yesterday – rates that are comparable to those 18 to 29 (48%). Digital news consumption is low only among those ages 65 and older, just 23% of whom used one or more digital modes for news yesterday.

Print Newspaper Decline Only Partially Offset by Online Readership

Only about one-in-four (26%) Americans say they read a newspaper in print yesterday, down from 30% two years ago and 38% in 2006. Meanwhile, online newspaper readership continues to grow and is offsetting some of the overall decline in readership. This year, 17% of Americans say they read something on a newspaper’s website yesterday, up from 13% in 2008 and 9% in 2006.

But the online audience is only partially stemming the decline in the share of Americans who turn to newspapers; even when all online newspaper readership is included, 37% of Americans report getting news from newspapers yesterday, virtually unchanged from 39% two years ago, but down from 43% in 2006. (These percentages still may miss some people who access newspaper content indirectly through secondary online sources such as news aggregators or search engines.)

Print and Online Newspaper Readership

<i>Read yesterday...</i>	2006	2008	2010	06-10 change
Any newspaper*	43	39	37	-6
In print	38	30	26	-12
Online	9	13	17	+8
Print only	34	25	21	-13
Online only	5	9	11	+6
Both print & online	4	5	5	+1

PEW RESEARCH CENTER June 8-28, 2010. Q9,11,20.
 Figures may not add exactly to subtotals because of rounding.

*Includes respondents who reported reading a newspaper yesterday as well as those who said they got news online yesterday and, when prompted, said they visited the websites of one or more newspapers when online (Q20).

In general, daily newspaper readers tend to be older on average than the general public, but the regular readership of some of the major national newspapers – USA Today, the Wall Street Journal, and especially the New York Times – defy this trend. More than half of regular USA Today and Wall Street Journal (55% each) readers are younger than 50 – a profile that largely matches the nation as a whole (roughly 55% of all adults are between 18 and 49). Fully two-thirds (67%) of regular New York Times readers are younger than 50, with a third (34%) younger than 30 – making its audience substantially younger than the national average (55% younger than 50, 23% younger than 30).

The young profile of the regular New York Times readership is undoubtedly linked to the paper’s success online. Nearly one-in-ten of internet users younger than 30 (8%) – and 6% of all internet users – volunteer the New York Times when asked to name a few of the websites they use most often to get news and information.

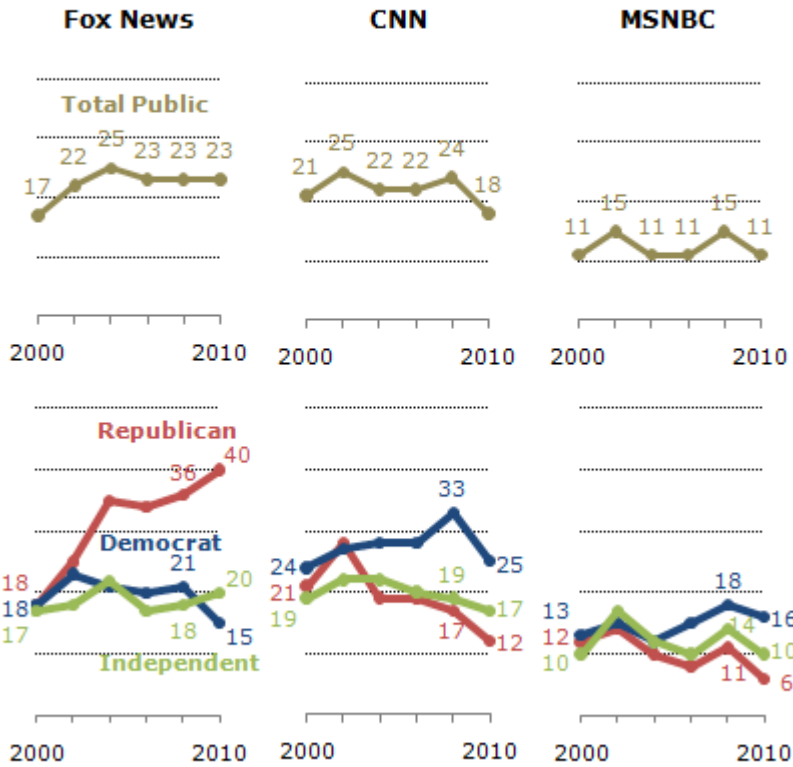
Cable News Audiences in Flux

Overall, cable news continues to play a significant role in peoples’ news habits – 39% say they regularly get news from a cable channel. But the proportions saying they regularly watch CNN, MSNBC and CNBC have slipped substantially from two years ago, during the presidential election.

Only Fox News has maintained its audience size, and this is because of the increasing number of Republicans who regularly get news there. Four-in-ten Republicans (40%) now say they regularly watch Fox News, up from 36% two years ago and just 18% a decade ago. Just 12% of Republicans regularly watch CNN, and just 6% regularly watch MSNBC.

More Republicans Watching Fox News; CNN, MSNBC Lose Regular Viewers Since 2008

Percent who regularly watch...



PEW RESEARCH CENTER June 8-28, 2010. Q28g,h,i.

As recently as 2002, Republicans were as likely to watch CNN (28%) as Fox News (25%). The share of Democrats who regularly watch CNN or Fox News has fallen from 2008.

In terms of specific programs, Fox News hosts Sean Hannity, Glenn Beck and Bill O'Reilly have succeeded in attracting conservative and attentive audiences. This is also the case for radio host Rush Limbaugh.

Most of those who regularly watch O'Reilly (63%) and Hannity (65%) are 50 or older; 44% of the public is 50 or older. By contrast, the Daily Show and Colbert Report have the youngest audiences of any outlet included in the survey. Large majorities of those who say they regularly watch the Colbert Report (80%) and the Daily Show (74%) are younger than 50; 55% of public is 18 to 49.

Youngest and Oldest News Audiences

<i>Age of regular readers, viewers or listeners</i>	18-49 %	50 and older %
Colbert Report	80	20
Daily Show	74	26
New York Times	67	33
NPR	56	44
News magazines	55	45
Wall St. Journal	55	42
USA Today	55	44
Total public	55	44
Nightly news	37	62
Sunday shows	36	63
Bill O'Reilly	35	63
Sean Hannity	33	65

PEW RESEARCH CENTER June 8-28, 2010.

News Audiences' Political Views

Ideology continues to be closely associated with people's choice of certain news sources. Eight-in-ten Americans (80%) who regularly listen to Rush Limbaugh or watch Sean Hannity are conservative – roughly twice the national average of 36%. And at the other end of the spectrum, the New York Times, Keith Olbermann, the Daily Show, the Colbert Report and Rachel Maddow have regular audiences that include nearly twice the proportion of liberals than in the public.

News audiences also vary widely when it comes to opinions about current issues and topics. For instance, those who describe themselves as supporters of the Tea Party movement make up disproportionately large proportions of the audiences for Limbaugh's radio show and Fox News opinion programs. This also is the case for supporters of the NRA (National Rifle Association).

By contrast, supporters of gay rights make up large shares of regular New York Times readers, viewers of the Colbert Report and NPR listeners. Several ideologically divergent news audiences – including Wall Street Journal readers and viewers of the Colbert Report and Glenn Beck show – include larger-than-average percentages of self-described libertarians.

How News Audiences Describe their Views

Percent of Americans who describe themselves as...

A Tea Party supporter: 25%	A gay rights supporter: 40%	An NRA supporter: 40%	Libertarian: 18%
<i>% of audiences</i>	<i>% of audiences</i>	<i>% of audiences</i>	<i>% of audiences</i>
76 Rush Limbaugh	78 New York Times	76 Rush Limbaugh	33 Wall Street Journal
76 Glenn Beck	69 Colbert Report	73 Sean Hannity	29 Colbert Report
75 Sean Hannity	65 NPR	71 Glenn Beck	27 Glenn Beck
68 Bill O'Reilly	62 Daily Show	68 Bill O'Reilly	27 Political blogs
52 Fox News	62 Keith Olbermann	60 Fox News	27 Daily Show

PEW RESEARCH CENTER June 8-28, 2010 Q98a,e,g,h. Audience figures show the percent of regular readers, viewers or listeners who say these terms describe them. For full profiles of all audiences, see Section 4.

News Outlets' Appeal: From Breaking News to Entertainment

News audiences are drawn to different sources for different reasons. A substantial majority (64%) of regular CNN viewers say they turn to the network for the latest news and headlines; far fewer say they turn to

What Regular Audiences Like About Sources

Turn to source mostly for...

Regularly watch, read or listen to...	Latest head- lines %	In depth report- ing %	Views and opin- ions %	Enter- tain- ment %	(Vol.) Mix/ All %	(Vol.) Oth/ DK %	N
CNN	64	10	6	4	14	2	274
Network evening	59	13	8	6	9	5	470
Daily newspaper	53	7	8	8	18	4	690
USA Today	52	9	9	16	9	5	144
Fox News	44	11	11	5	22	6	386
MSNBC	43	12	15	13	13	2	167
Morning news	39	4	13	18	19	7	318
News magazines	31	23	20	6	16	5	275
Wall St. Journal	30	37	11	2	16	4	132
New York Times	30	33	11	4	18	4	153
Political blogs	27	10	29	10	11	12	307
Sunday talk shows	24	19	37	6	9	6	403
NPR	21	20	18	12	28	2	371
Hardball	19	19	42	7	10	3	120
Rachel Maddow	18	14	33	10	15	11	93
Sean Hannity	14	21	39	6	18	2	225
Keith Olbermann	14	16	39	11	14	6	90
O'Reilly Factor	11	20	44	6	18	2	341
Glenn Beck	10	24	32	6	23	4	223
Rush Limbaugh	10	15	37	7	28	4	185
Daily Show	10	2	24	43	20	1	194
Colbert Report	3	2	18	53	19	5	151

PEW RESEARCH CENTER June 8-28, 2010. Q82a-x.

Figures read across and are based on regular readers/viewers/listeners of each source.

CNN ————— for in-depth reporting (10%), interesting views and opinions (6%) or entertainment (4%). Similarly, the main appeal of network evening news, USA Today and daily newspapers is the latest news and headlines.

Regular Fox News viewers offer somewhat different reasons for tuning into that network: 44% say they go to Fox for the latest news, but a sizable minority (22%) volunteers several reasons or say that all apply.

Regular readers of the Wall Street Journal and New York Times are drawn particularly by in-depth reporting; 37% and 33%, respectively, say they mostly read those papers for in-depth reporting, the highest percentages for any new outlet.

For the audiences of evening cable programs – whether liberal or conservative – interesting views and opinions are the primary appeal. That is the case for regular listeners of Rush Limbaugh as well, although many Limbaugh listeners cite multiple reasons or say that all apply.

For some news audiences, such as regular NPR listeners, no single reason stands out as to why people watch, read or listen: 28% of regular NPR listeners cite several, or all, of the reasons listed, while nearly as many say they listen for the latest news (21%) or for in-depth reporting (20%).

Entertainment is by far the biggest reason why regular viewers of the Colbert Report and the Daily Show tune into those programs; 53% of the regular Colbert audience and 43% of the Daily Show audience say they mostly watch those programs for entertainment. Yet entertainment also is a factor for many regular viewers of morning news shows (18%), readers of USA Today (16%) and other audiences.

Fewer Liberals Enjoying the News

Fewer Liberal Democrats and Young People Enjoy News than in '08

<i>Enjoy keeping up with news "a lot"</i>	2008	2010	Change
	%	%	
Total	52	45	-7
Conserv Rep	56	57	+1
Mod/Lib Rep	47	39	-8
Independent	45	43	-2
Cons/Mod Dem	58	46	-12
Liberal Dem	67	45	-22
18-29	38	27	-11
30-49	49	43	-6
50-64	59	53	-6
65+	64	60	-4

PEW RESEARCH CENTER June 8-28, 2010. Q37.

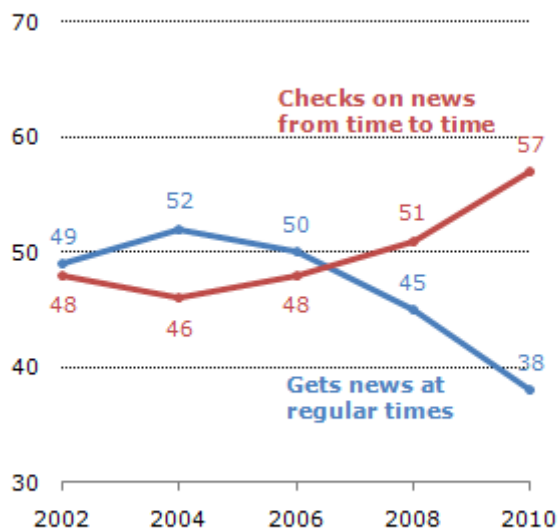
Overall, the share of Americans who say keeping up with the news is something they enjoy a lot has dipped, from a consistent 52% in recent biennial news consumption surveys, including 2008, to 45% in 2010.

The decline is linked to partisanship and ideology: in 2008 67% of liberal Democrats said they enjoyed the news a lot, compared with just 45% today. By contrast, about as many conservative Republicans say they enjoy keeping up with the news today as did so two years ago (57% now, 56% then). This has resulted in a switch in news enjoyment. Today, conservative Republicans enjoy keeping up with the news more than any other ideological and partisan group; just two years ago it was the liberal Democrats who held that distinction.

Other Key Findings

- While 26% of all Americans say they read a print newspaper yesterday, that figure falls to just 8% among adults younger than 30.
- Far more men (50%) than women (39%) get news on digital platforms, such as the internet and mobile technology, on any given day. Men are more likely to get news by cell phone, email, RSS feeds or podcasts than are women. But men and women are equally likely to get news through Twitter or social networking sites.

More Say They Graze for News



PEW RESEARCH CENTER June 8-28, 2010. Q91.

- More people say they mostly get news “from time to time” rather than at “regular times.” The percentage of so-called news grazers has increased nine points (from 48% to 57%) since 2006.
- Search engines are playing a substantially larger role in people’s news gathering habits – 33% regularly use search engines to get news on topics of interest, up from 19% in 2008.
- About three-in-ten adults (31%) access the internet over their cell phone, but just 8% get news there regularly.
- Most Facebook and Twitter users say they hardly ever or never get news there.

- One-in-four adults (25%) who have Tivos or DVRs say they program them to record news programs.
- About eight-in-ten (82%) say they see at least some bias in news coverage; by a 43% to 23% margin, more say it is a liberal than a conservative bias.
- Roughly a third (35%) read a book yesterday, which is largely unchanged over the past decade. Of those, 4% read an electronic or digital book.
- The public struggled with a four-question current events quiz – just 14% answered all four correctly. But about half (51%) of regular Wall Street Journal readers aced the quiz, as did 42% of regular New York Times readers.
- Among news audiences, Obama gets his highest approval ratings among regular viewers of Keith Olbermann (84% approve) and Rachel Maddow (80%); his rating is nearly as high among regular readers of the New York Times (79%). Obama gets his lowest ratings among regular Sean Hannity viewers (7%) and Rush Limbaugh listeners (9%).
- Partisan gaps in media credibility continue to grow, with Republicans far more skeptical of most major news sources than Democrats. The one exception is Fox News, which twice as many Republicans believe all or most of (41%) than Democrats (21%).

Americans Support Push to Shut Down Adult Services Section of Craigslist

Women are more likely than Men to side with the rationale of 14 attorneys general who have called for changes on the website.

September, 02, 2010

Many adults in the United States support a move to shut down the Adult Services section of the Craigslist classified advertisements website, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

Last month, 17 attorneys general wrote an open letter to Craigslist, requesting that the Adult Services portion of the sites be shut down immediately. The attorneys general claim that because Craigslist —cannot, or will not screen the ads to ensure that they are not promoting or enabling illegal activity—such as prostitution or child trafficking—the ads should not be accepted at all.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 1,007 American adults, 68 per cent of respondents support shutting down the Adult Services section of Craigslist, while 20 per cent oppose this course of action. At least three-in-five respondents in each one of the four main regions agree with the 17 attorneys general on this matter.

Women (79%) are more likely than men (55%) to support shutting down the Adult Services section of Craigslist. Respondents over the age of 55 (75%) are also more likely to endorse this idea than those aged 35-54 (67%) and those aged 18-34 (60%).

Republicans (72%) and Democrats (69%) agree on the notion of shutting down the Adult Services section of Craigslist, along with 63 per cent of Independents.

Craigslist

As you may know, 17 attorneys general wrote an open letter to Craigslist, requesting that the Adult Services portion of the sites be shut down immediately. The attorneys general claim that because Craigslist “cannot, or will not” screen the ads to ensure that they are not promoting or enabling illegal activity—such as prostitution or child trafficking—the ads should not be accepted at all. Thinking about this, do you support or oppose shutting down the Adult Services section of Craigslist?

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
Support	68%	70%	68%	69%	63%
Oppose	20%	22%	21%	19%	21%
Not sure	12%	8%	12%	12%	16%

Craigslist

As you may know, 17 attorneys general wrote an open letter to Craigslist, requesting that the Adult Services portion of the sites be shut down immediately. The attorneys general claim that because Craigslist “cannot, or will not” screen the ads to ensure that they are not promoting or enabling illegal activity—such as prostitution or child trafficking—the ads should not be accepted at all. Thinking about this, do you support or oppose shutting down the Adult Services section of Craigslist?

	Total	Male	Female	Age 18-34	Age 35-54	Age 55+
Support	68%	55%	79%	60%	67%	75%
Oppose	20%	30%	11%	24%	20%	17%
Not sure	12%	15%	10%	16%	13%	8%

Parties Tied at 46% in Generic Ballot for Congress

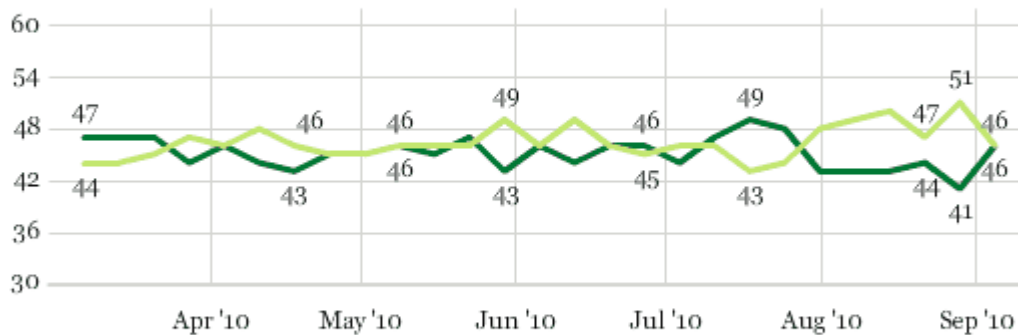
Latest weekly update shows more competitive contest
 September 7, 2010

Republicans and Democrats are tied at 46% among registered voters in Gallup's weekly tracking of congressional voting preferences, marking a shift after five consecutive weeks in which the Republicans held the advantage.

Candidate Preferences in 2010 Congressional Elections

Based on registered voters

■ % Democratic candidate ■ % Republican candidate



Results based on weekly averages of Gallup Daily tracking

GALLUP®

These results are based on aggregated data from more than 1,650 registered voters surveyed Aug. 30-Sept. 5 as part of Gallup Daily tracking. The results reflect more competitive voting intentions than has been the case recently. Republicans' leads over Democrats among registered voters in three of the previous four weeks were the highest Gallup has measured for this midterm election campaign, and higher than any GOP advantage Gallup has measured in a midterm election year since 1942.

Last week marked the return of President Barack Obama from his 10-day vacation, and included his national address to announce the official end of combat operations in Iraq. The president's three-day job approval rating rose to 47% for Aug. 29-31 -- a level it had reached only once since mid-July. Last week also brought media commentary in the aftermath of conservative talk-show host Glenn Beck's massive rally in Washington, D.C. It is not clear if these or other factors affected Americans' voting preferences as measured by the generic ballot.

Whether the 2010 race has shifted more permanently to a more competitive positioning will be apparent in the coming weeks. Nevertheless, even the current tie in the generic ballot among registered voters points to a better year for Republicans than for Democrats, given the GOP's usual advantage in voter turnout in midterm elections.

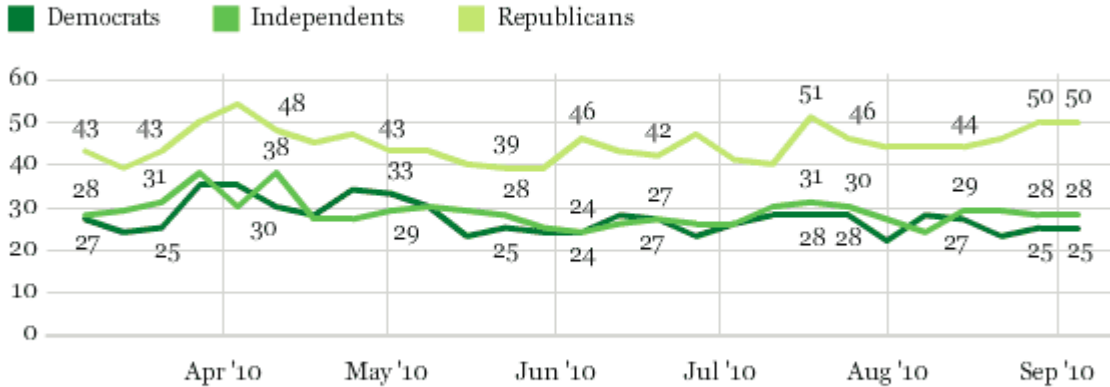
Republicans Maintain 25-Point Lead on Enthusiasm

There has been no change in the advantage Republicans hold over Democrats on motivation to vote in the fall elections. Republicans remain twice as likely as Democrats to be "very enthusiastic" about voting, tied with the previous week's measure as the largest such advantage of the year.

Enthusiasm About Voting in 2010 Congressional Elections by Party, Weekly Averages

% Very enthusiastic

Based on registered voters



Gallup Daily tracking



Recent Gallup research has shown that Republicans, and conservative Republicans in particular, have given much more thought than Democrats to the upcoming congressional elections, another key measure of turnout used in Gallup's likely voter modeling. Conservative Republicans currently score at a historically high level on this measure.

Bottom Line

The latest Gallup update on 2010 voting preferences marks the first time in over a month at which Republicans have not held an advantage among registered voters on Gallup's weekly generic ballot update. This shift, coupled with the fact that Democrats led on the measure earlier in the summer, shows that voter sentiments are not immune to change. Hoping to prove this, Democrats from the president on down are gearing up to maximize their chances of keeping party control of the House, just as voter attention to the campaign is increasing after the Labor Day weekend.

Survey Methods

Results are based on telephone interviews conducted as part of Gallup Daily tracking survey Aug. 30-Sept. 5, 2010, with a random sample of 1,651 registered voters, 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 registered voters, 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.

Almost Half of Americans Voice Dissatisfaction with Health Care Reform

More than half of respondents continue to expect higher health care bills as a result of the new legislation.

September 07, 2010

Americans remain skeptical in their assessment of the health care legislation signed into law by U.S. President Barack Obama earlier this year, with a large proportion of Republican Party supporters expecting a decrease in the quality of medical services, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 1,000 American adults, 38 per cent of respondents (-1 since June) say they are satisfied with the signing of the new health care legislation into law, while 46 per cent (+4) are dissatisfied.

The level of strong dissatisfaction with the health care legislation stands at 29 per cent, while only nine per cent of Americans are "very satisfied" with the changes. Three-in-four Republicans (75%) and more than half of Independents (52%) are dissatisfied with the health care legislation, while three-in-five Democrats (62%) are satisfied.

Health Care				
As you may know, President Obama has signed the new health care legislation into law. Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with this development?				
	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Very satisfied	9%	19%	3%	5%
Moderately satisfied	29%	43%	13%	29%
Moderately dissatisfied	17%	15%	14%	19%
Very dissatisfied	29%	8%	61%	33%
Not sure	16%	15%	10%	15%

There has been little fluctuation since June on one question, with 57 per cent of respondents expecting the cost of health care to increase, 19 per cent thinking it will remain the same, and 11 per cent foreseeing a decrease. Majorities of Republicans (73%) and Independents (62%) expect to face higher costs, along with 44 per cent of Democrats (-2 since June, but markedly higher than in March, right after the law was introduced).

The notion that the legislation would lead to better health care is gradually losing support. One-in-five Americans (20%, -4 since March) think the quality of health care will improve, 23 per cent expect it to stay the same, and 42 per cent believe it will worsen. Once again, Republicans (73%) and Independents (47%) provide a gloomier forecast than Democrats (21%).

Analysis

With the Congressional election just two months away, most Americans are unconvinced about the health care legislation. Republicans continue to vehemently oppose the move, few Independents expect the new law to make things better, and the endorsement from Democrats is no longer pervasive.

Dissatisfaction with the new law is slowly creeping closer to the 50 per cent mark at the national level, but the main concern for a large proportion of Americans is still financial. For the past six months, at least half of Americans have expected to pay more for medical services.

British Columbians Clearly More Upset than Ontarians Over HST

Ontarians report higher fuel and electricity costs, while more than two-thirds of British Columbians have already altered their purchasing behaviour.

September 02, 2010

The recent implementation of a harmonized sales tax (HST) is affecting residents of two Canadian provinces in different ways, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found. The online survey of representative provincial samples of 804 Ontarian and 803 British Columbian adults also finds that respondents question whether the promise of lower consumer prices down the road will actually materialize.

Effect of the HST

Overall, two thirds of respondents in the two provinces (ON 67%, BC 68%) say the HST has severely or moderately affected the finances of their household. Three-in-ten British Columbians (31%) report being "severely affected" by the new tax, along with one-in-four Ontarians (24%).

Less than one-in-ten respondents in the two provinces (ON 7%, BC 9%) say the HST has not affected the finances of their household at all.

Personal Experience

Ontarians report being particularly impacted by two items that now include HST. Four-in-five respondents in Ontario say the total cost of gasoline (79%) and their electricity bill (80%) has increased

"significantly" or "moderately" since the HST came into effect. These two items were not affected by the introduction of the HST in British Columbia.



More than half of Ontarians also say that basic groceries (63%), dining out (57%) and their cell phones (54%) are now more expensive. Almost half (47%) also report that the cost of adult clothes has increased significantly or moderately due to the HST.

A large majority of British Columbians (89%) say dining out has become more expensive, along with basic groceries (76%), cell phone bills (63%) and adult clothing (61%).

Fewer people in the two provinces are reporting a higher cost for children's clothing (BC 29%, ON 17%) and dry cleaning (24% on both).

Harmonized Sales Tax

On July 1, the HST was implemented in [Ontario / British Columbia]. Now that a few weeks have passed with the new tax, which of the following statements comes closest to your own personal experience?

	ONTARIO 	BRITISH COLUMBIA 
The HST has severely affected the finances of my household	24%	31%
The HST has moderately affected the finances of my household	43%	37%
The HST has slightly affected the finances of my household	23%	23%
The HST has not affected the finances of my household at all	7%	9%



Purchasing Behaviour

One-in-five Ontarians (22%) and three-in-ten British Columbians (29%) say they are buying much less than they used to since the HST came into effect.

While two-in-five Ontarians (42%) claim that the HST has not impacted their purchasing behaviour so far, only 28 per cent of British Columbians feel the same way.

Harmonized Sales Tax

Thinking now about specific purchases and expenditures, how has the HST impacted the cost of the following in your experience? – “The total cost has increased significantly” and “The total cost has increased moderately” responses listed.

	ONTARIO 	BRITISH COLUMBIA 
Gasoline	79%	n.a.
My electricity bill	80%	n.a.
Dining out	57%	89%
Dry cleaning	24%	24%
My cell phone bill	54%	63%
Adult clothing	47%	61%
Children's clothing	17%	29%
Basic groceries	63%	76%

Lower Prices?

The two provincial governments have argued that the implementation of the HST will ultimately lead to lower consumer prices. A sizeable proportion of Ontarians (65%) and British Columbians (72%) believe that the total cost of most goods and services that now carry the HST will increase over the next two years.

The likelihood of lower consumer prices down the road rings true for about one-in-twenty respondents in the two provinces (ON 4%, BC 5%).

The Provincial Governments

The Government of Ontario does not get high marks on the way it explained its decision to implement the HST. Only 12 per cent of respondents think it did a good job, with four-in-five respondents (81%) saying it performed badly (36%) or very badly (45%) in this regard.

Still, the numbers are nowhere near the level of animosity that is palpable in British Columbia. Only three per cent of respondents think the BC Government did a good job in explaining its decision to implement the HST. About one-in-five (18%) say their efforts were handled badly, but three-in-four (75%) say the BC Government did a very bad job.

Analysis

The survey shows that the implementation of the HST has affected the two provinces in dissimilar ways. For Ontarians, most of the pain is coming from the purchase of gasoline

and electricity. However, two-in-five respondents report no impact on their purchasing behaviour, and just one-in-four claim to be severely affected by the HST.

In British Columbia, which does not have to deal with heftier gas or electricity bills, the negative reaction to the tax appears to be deeper. Three-in-ten British Columbians say the HST has severely affected the finances of their household, and three-in-five have already modified their purchasing behaviour. The public is almost universal in panning the way the tax was implemented and explained by the provincial administration.

More Canadians Are Questioning the Benefits of Immigration

Most respondents in Alberta and Ontario perceive immigration negatively and call for the deportation of illegal immigrants.

September 09, 2010

More Canadians are questioning whether immigration is benefitting the country, with Albertans and Ontarians voicing concern over the role of illegal immigrants in Canadian society, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

The online survey of a representative sample of 1,007 Canadian adults also found that half of respondents would not allow the Tamil migrants who arrived in Canada a few weeks ago to stay in the country as refugees.

Overall, 46 per cent of respondents (+5 since August 2009) say immigration is having a negative effect in Canada, while 34 per cent (-3) believe it is having a positive effect. Albertans (56%) and Ontarians (55%) are more likely to view immigration in a negative light than respondents in all other provinces.

Next, we'd like to ask you some questions about immigration. All things considered, do you think immigration is having a positive effect or a negative effect in Canada?

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Positive effect	34%	44%	30%	32%	29%	42%	29%
Negative effect	46%	35%	56%	45%	55%	35%	45%
Not sure	20%	22%	15%	23%	16%	22%	26%

Legal and Illegal Immigration

About two-in-five Canadians (38%) believe the number of legal immigrants who are allowed to relocate in Canada should decrease. A similar proportion (39%) would keep the current levels, and 16 per cent call for more immigrants to be allowed into Canada. Ontario (42%) and Quebec (40%) hold the highest level of support for decreasing legal immigration.

A plurality of respondents (44%) think the illegal immigrants who currently reside in Canada take jobs away from Canadian workers, while a smaller proportion (38%) believe

they are employed in jobs that Canadian workers do not want. More than half of Ontarians (52%) think illegal immigrants are taking jobs away from Canadians.

Almost half of Canadians (47%) believe illegal immigrants should be required to leave their jobs and be deported from Canada, while 23 per cent would allow them to stay in Canada and eventually apply for citizenship. Almost one-in-five (17%) would allow these illegal immigrants to work in Canada on a temporary basis, but would not give them a chance to become citizens.

Ontarians (53%) and Albertans (52%) hold the highest level of support for the deportation of illegal immigrants, while British Columbians are at the other end of the spectrum on this question (39%).

Next, we'd like to ask you some questions about immigration. All things considered, do you think immigration is having a positive effect or a negative effect in Canada?

	August 2009	September 2010
Positive effect	37%	34%
Negative effect	41%	46%
Not sure	23%	20%

The Tamil Ship

There has been little change in the way Canadians feel about the ship carrying about 490 Tamil migrants from Sri Lanka that arrived in British Columbia a few weeks ago. Half of respondents (50%) think the passengers and crew should be deported to their country of origin, even if the refugee claims are legitimate and there is no discernible link between the migrants and any terrorist organization. One third of Canadians (32%) would allow the passengers and crew to stay in Canada as refugees.

Analysis

On questions related to immigration, the views of Canadians appear to be hardening. Alberta, which was particularly unconvinced on the benefits of immigration in the August 2009 survey, has now been joined by Ontario. The two provinces are home to a population that is perceiving immigration negatively, and where a majority calls for the deportation of illegal immigrants. Ontarians also reject the claim that illegal immigrants are simply performing the tasks that Canadians don't want to carry out.

Quebecers still see some benefits to immigration, and are more likely than all other Canadians to assume that illegal immigrants are not taking jobs away from Canadian workers. Still, Quebecers choose a decrease in legal immigration over an increase by a 4-to-1 margin.

British Columbia holds the highest proportion of respondents that regard immigration in a positive light. BC is also the only province where a plurality would allow the Tamil migrants to stay as refugees.

MULTI-COUNTRY POLLS

Employed or Not, Many Young People Desire to Migrate

Job status does make a difference for youth in Middle East and North Africa

September 8, 2010

Millions of young people worldwide would move away from their countries permanently if they had the opportunity, regardless of whether they have jobs at home. In most places, except the Middle East and North Africa, Gallup finds adults younger than 30 who are employed, underemployed, or not in the workforce are equally likely to desire to migrate.

Employment, Migration, and Age Around the World

Percentage who would like to move permanently to another country

	Employed	Underemployed	Not in workforce
Sub-Saharan Africa			
Aged 15 to 29	43%	44%	45%
Aged 30 to 65	31%	32%	22%
Europe			
Aged 15 to 29	27%	28%	26%
Aged 30 to 65	17%	23%	11%
The Americas			
Aged 15 to 29	27%	25%	26%
Aged 30 to 65	13%	20%	10%
Asia			
Aged 15 to 29	12%	14%	12%
Aged 30 to 65	8%	10%	5%
Middle East and North Africa			
Aged 15 to 29	25%	31%	14%
Aged 30 to 65	14%	23%	6%

Based on surveys in 105 countries in 2009 and 2010. Results are projected to total population of each country aged 15 and older.

GALLUP®

Employment status makes a difference in the migration desires of older adults. In Europe, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), and the Americas, older, underemployed adults aged 30 to 65 are more likely to say they would like to migrate than those who are the same age and are employed or not in the workforce. In Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, however, older adults who are employed or underemployed are equally likely to want to move.

These results are based on interviews with 108,404 adults in 105 countries in 2009 and 2010. Gallup classifies respondents as "employed" if they are employed full time or are employed part time but do not want to work full time. Respondents are "underemployed" if they are employed part time but want to work full time or are unemployed. Those "not in the workforce" are not working and are not looking for and/or available for work. They may be full-time students, retired, disabled, or homemakers, though they may not fit any of these scenarios.

MENA is the only region where younger adults' migration desires are more like older adults'. Underemployed young adults in the MENA region are most likely to express a desire to resettle elsewhere -- just like their older adult counterparts.

Employment, Migration, and Age in the Middle East and North Africa

Percentage who would like to move permanently to another country

	Employed	Underemployed	Not in workforce
Middle East and North Africa			
15 to 29	25%	31%	14%
30 to 65	14%	23%	6%
Persian Gulf states			
15 to 29	8%	9%	11%
30 to 65	8%	15%	3%
Other countries in Middle East and North Africa			
15 to 29	26%	32%	15%
30 to 65	15%	24%	7%

Based on surveys in 105 countries in 2009 and 2010. Results are projected to total population of each country aged 15 and older.

GALLUP®

MENA's unemployment rate is the highest among the regions of the world, driven largely by high unemployment among youth. A mismatch between skills and available jobs, in tandem with new entrants flooding the job market, makes the market extremely competitive and finding quality jobs at home more difficult.

Within MENA, the migration desires of young adults in traditionally labor-receiving Persian Gulf states and labor-sending states differ by job status. In Persian Gulf states, young people's desire to migrate is relatively low and about equal in each employment group. However, across the rest of MENA, underemployed young adults are the most likely to want to relocate.

Bottom Line

Age and employment status are global predictors of people's desire to migrate. Those with fewer commitments or greater mobility -- younger adults -- are generally more likely to say they would like to move. This may at least partly explain why job status matters less to young people than to older adults in most regions. But the similarities in the migration desires of younger and older adults in MENA suggest there are multiple factors beyond age and employment status that affect the desire to move.

Survey Methods

Results are based on telephone and face-to-face interviews with 108,404 adults in 105 countries in 2009 and 2010. For most countries, sample sizes range between 1,000 and 3,000 interviews. One can say with 95% confidence that the margin of sampling error, accounting for weighting and sample design, is 0.5% for the sample of adults who would like to migrate and ranges from ± 2 percentage points to ± 2.5 percentage points within regions. Results are projected to the total population of each country, aged 15 and older, using 2008 World Bank population estimates.

Regions and Countries Included in the Analysis

Europe	The Americas	Asia	Sub-Saharan Africa	Middle East and North Africa
Albania	Argentina	Armenia	Burundi	Algeria
Austria	Bolivia	Australia	Cameroon	Bahrain
Belarus	Brazil	Azerbaijan	Chad	Egypt
Bulgaria	Canada	Bangladesh	Comoros	Iraq
Czech Republic	Chile	China	Congo (Kinshasa)	Israel
Denmark	Colombia	Cyprus	Djibouti	Jordan
France	Costa Rica	Georgia	Ghana	Kuwait
Germany	Dominican Republic	Hong Kong	Kenya	Lebanon
Greece	Ecuador	India	Malawi	Palestinian Territories
Ireland	El Salvador	Indonesia	Mali	Qatar
Italy	Guatemala	Japan	Mauritania	Saudi Arabia
Latvia	Honduras	Kazakhstan	Niger	Syria
Lithuania	Mexico	Kyrgyzstan	Nigeria	Tunisia
Macedonia	Nicaragua	Malaysia	Rwanda	Turkey
Moldova	Panama	Nepal	Senegal	United Arab Emirates
Poland	Paraguay	New Zealand	Somaliland region	Yemen
Portugal	Peru	Philippines	Sudan	
Russia	United States	Singapore	Tanzania	
Slovenia	Uruguay	South Korea	Uganda	
Spain	Venezuela	Sri Lanka	Zambia	
Sweden		Tajikistan		
Switzerland		Thailand		
Ukraine		Turkmenistan		
United Kingdom		Uzbekistan		
		Vietnam		

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Australia's Environment Admired by Americans, Britons and Canadians

Few respondents in the three countries were able to correctly identify Julia Gillard and Tony Abbott when shown their pictures.

September 08, 2010

Australia is regarded by many people in Canada, the United States and Britain as an attractive destination due to its natural environment, but several misconceptions about life in the country persist, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

The online survey of representative national samples of 1,014 Canadians, 1,007 Americans and 1,739 Britons also shows that respondents have a hard time identifying the country's two main political leaders, but offer glowing reviews when they ponder their interaction with Australian people.

Life in Australia

At least two-thirds of respondents (USA 66%, BRI 70%, CAN 74%) say they would expect to be able to practice their religion and observe their cultural traditions freely and without restrictions if they moved to Australia.

Three-in-five Canadians (62%) and Britons (67%)—along with almost half of Americans (48%)—expect to work in the same profession that they currently have in their respective countries.

At least one-in-four respondents believe they will pay higher taxes if they moved to Australia (USA 33%, BRI 25%, CAN 25%). There is a discernible difference in one question: while three-in-four Britons (77%) expect to have a better quality of life in Australia, only 39 per cent of Americans and 36 per cent of Canadians concur.

Australia is clearly not regarded as a dangerous place when respondents are asked to contemplate crime and public safety. Two thirds of Canadians (69%) expect Australia to be as safe as their own country. Two-in-five Britons (40%) and one third of Americans (32%) believe Australia would be safer than their respective countries.




Remarkably, one third of Americans (33%) think it is "very likely" or "moderately likely" that they will see a kangaroo in the streets of an Australian city on an average day, along with 21 per cent of Canadians and 16 per cent of Britons.

The Australian People

Respondents in Canada, the United States and Britain were asked to choose words to describe the last Australian person they met in their own country. The findings were overwhelmingly positive, with more than 70 per cent of respondents in the three countries branding Australians as down to earth, more than three-in-five saying they are open, and more than half claiming they are honest.

Two thirds of Canadians (66%) and Americans (65%) describe Australians as "intelligent", along with almost half of Britons (47%). Every negative attribute is in single digits across the three countries, with one exception: one-in-five Britons (19%) assert that Australians are arrogant.

We'd like to ask you some questions about Australia. When you think of Australia, what is the most appealing thing that comes to mind?

	CANADA 	UNITED STATES 	GREAT BRITAIN 
Natural environment	36%	35%	37%
People	21%	23%	11%
Good system of government	8%	7%	6%
Social Services / Quality of life	7%	5%	12%
Stable economy	7%	6%	7%
Multiethnic, Diverse	4%	5%	6%
Good employment opportunities	2%	3%	11%
None of these / Not sure	16%	17%	11%

Australia as a Country

At least two-in-five respondents (CAN 46%, BRI 44%, USA 41%) consider Australia as an ally of their own country, while a third (BRI 38%, CAN 35%, USA 33%) deem it a friend.

When asked about the most appealing thing that comes to mind when they think about Australia, the top answer was the natural environment (BRI 37%, CAN 36%, USA 35%). One-in-four Americans (23%) and Canadians (21%) mention the people, while Britons also have positive things to say about social services and quality of life (12%) and perceive Australia as a place for good employment opportunities (11%).

It was impossible for a third of Americans (34%), a third of Britons (also 34%) and two-in-five Canadians (40%) to choose a least appealing thing when thinking about Australia. The top response are the fact that Australia is remote and isolated (CAN 29%, USA 28%, BRI 21%), followed by the climate and weather (USA 13%, BRI 13%, CAN 10%). Discrimination was an issue for 10 per cent of respondents in Canada and Britain, while high taxes are a concern for 10 per cent of Americans.

Two-in-five respondents in the three countries (CAN 40%, USA 40%, BRI 39%) rate the state of relations between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians as good or very good. The state of relations between Australia-born citizens and immigrants gets a more positive rating (CAN 43%, BRI 46%, USA 49%).

The notion of Australia being a country that does what the United States wants it to do in foreign affairs is only endorsed by 19 per cent of Canadians, 19 per cent of Americans and 16 per cent of Britons. Conversely, a third of Canadians (34%) and Americans (34%) believe Australia has become a bigger actor in foreign affairs. Britons (41%) are more likely to believe that Australia remains a small country with little influence in foreign affairs.

Misconceptions

Respondents were shown four incorrect statements about Australia and asked whether they thought they were true or false. Half of Britons (49%) and Canadians (48%)—as well as two-in-five Americans (39%)—mistakenly believe that same-sex marriage is legal in Australia. More than half of Americans (53%) wrongly assume that the Australian dollar is worth more than the British pound, along with two-in-five Britons (40%) and a third of Canadians (32%).

Three-in-five Americans (61%) incorrectly identify Australia as a Republic, along with 33 per cent of Britons and 28 per cent of Canadians. Significantly fewer respondents (USA 26%, CAN 18%, BRI 18%) erroneously think that Australia—which has no nuclear facilities to generate electricity—is a global leader in nuclear energy production.

The Political Leaders

In order to gauge the level of awareness of Australia's main federal political leaders, respondents in the three countries were shown pictures of both Julia Gillard and Tony Abbott, and asked to name each one.

While nine per cent of Britons correctly identified Gillard, only four per cent of Canadians and 0.34 per cent of Americans were able to do so. Abbott was correctly identified by six per cent of Britons, one per cent of Canadians, and 0.06 per cent of Americans.

A large proportion of respondents in the three countries (USA 56%, CAN 52%, BRI 40%) have not been following news related to Australia over the past month. When informed about the fact that the last General Election in Australia did not produce a clear winner, one-in-four respondents (USA 26%, BRI 25%, CAN 24%) express concern about the stability of Australia's government.

CYBER WORLD

Bloggers Debate Growth of Government

September 9, 2010

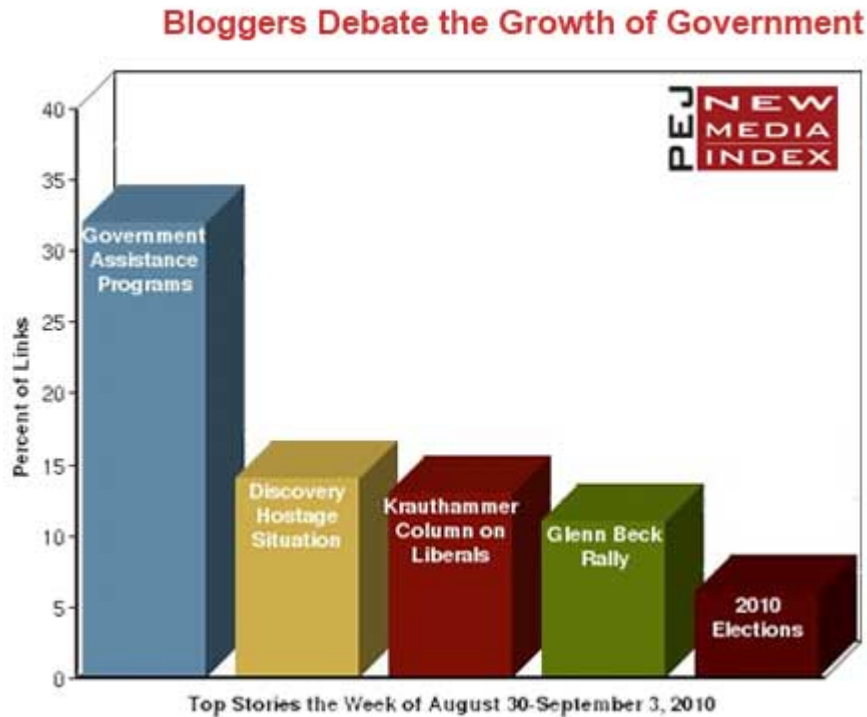
Last week, politics was the overriding theme in the blogosphere.

Several controversies -- including the growth of anti-poverty programs, what liberals think of conservatives and the nature of President Obama's opposition -- stirred up divisive online conversation.

Heated commentary and even inflammatory accusations ensued from both sides of the political spectrum and often seemed to result in the ideological foes talking past each other.

For the week of Aug. 30-Sept. 3, almost a third (32%) of the news links on blogs linked to a [USA Today](#) article reporting that one-in-six (and rising) Americans are on

government assistance programs like Medicare. That made it the week's No. 1 subject in the blogosphere, according to the New Media Index from the Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism.



The majority of bloggers who discussed the story saw it as a strong indication that the economy is in terrible shape and blamed President Obama for the growth of public dependence on government.

A few bloggers, however, saw it as an indictment of the private sector and called for more attention to the challenges of assisting those in need.

Despite the mainstream press' continued focus on the economy, the subject had not been of great interest to bloggers. Last week was the first time since June 14-18 that an economy-related topic led the blogs. That week, the focus was on Obama's request for \$50 billion in emergency aid to state and local governments. Indeed, last week marked just the fourth time in 2010 that an economy-focused subject was among the top three stories in the blogosphere.

Two of the other top stories last week were pure politics -- and heated politics at that.

The No. 3 subject, at 13%, was a column by *Washington Post* columnist Charles Krauthammer declaring that liberalism is under siege because liberal elites throw charges of bigotry against the majority of Americans who disagree with them.

The fourth subject, at 11%, was the Aug. 28 Tea Party rally in Washington, D.C., led by talk show host Glenn Beck. The same topic was the fourth largest topic the previous week leading up to the event.

These two subjects combined to trigger an angry debate about the opponents of Obama and the makeup of the Tea Party rallies. Conservatives argued that Obama and the Democrats are dismissive ideologues, ignoring the desires of the country in order to push a radical agenda. Liberals countered that the Tea Parties are made up of ill-informed conservatives who are afraid of minorities.

The other two stories that ranked among the top subjects on blogs last week had political components as well.

The second-largest story, at 14%, was the Sept. 1 hostage situation at the headquarters of the Discovery Channel outside of Washington, D.C. The culprit, James Lee, was killed during the incident although no bystanders were harmed. Much of the attention to this story was led by bloggers who labeled Lee an "eco-terrorist" and complained that the mainstream press was not accurately portraying his radical motives.

The fifth story, at 6%, was a Los Angeles Times article suggesting that if a large anti-incumbent wave occurs in the upcoming November elections that favors Republicans, it might also mean that large numbers of women in Congress would be replaced by men.

On the social networking site Twitter, the top two subjects were technology-related, which is often the case for a platform that is often used to both announce and evaluate new advances in social media and applications.

The No. 1 subject, with 24% of the news links from tweets involved Apple's new social network for music called Ping. Available through iTunes, Ping will allow users to follow their friends and favorite artists. Both Mashable and the BBC declared that Ping will be a direct competitor to the well-known social networking site MySpace.

The initial reaction on Twitter was mixed, however, as some users expressed optimism about the network's potential while others thought the design had some fundamental flaws.

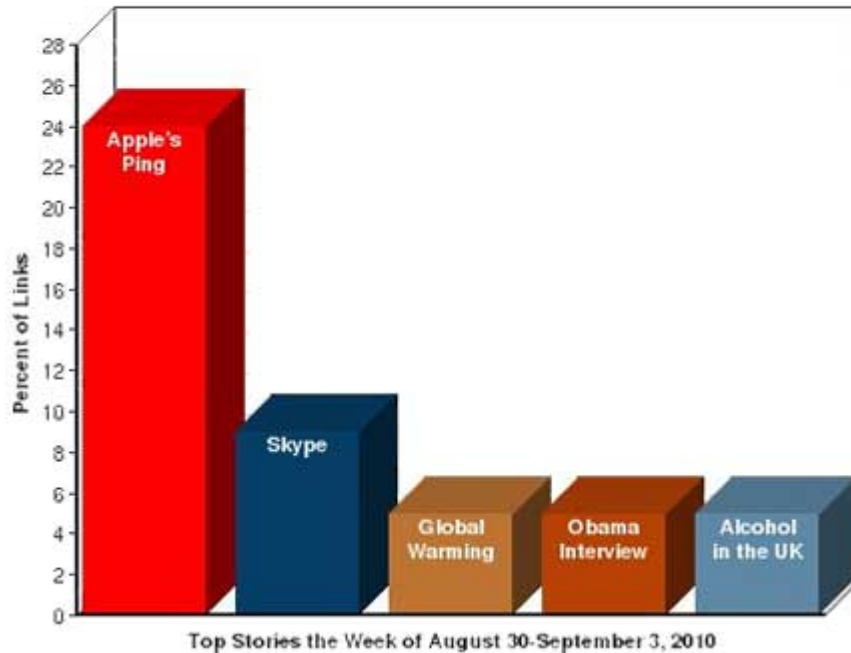
"Playing with ping.fm," tweeted Bob Belderbos. "A great tool to update multiple soc. network apps (e.g. when you release a blog post)."

"I really like the iTunes 10 hybrid list/album view. However, I don't see myself actively ever using Ping," shared Jason Lake.

The second topic, at 9%, was the newest product from Skype called Skype Connect which is aimed at making their phone calling technology more useable for businesses.

The next three topics, however, were wide-ranging -- involving climate change, the commander in chief and cultural habits.

Apple's Newest Network Tops Twitter



A Guardian report that Bjørn Lomborg, one of the world's best known climate change skeptics, has reversed his position and now declares climate change to be one of the chief concerns facing the planet, was third at 5%.

A story about President Obama's interview with NBC's Brian Williams where he discussed the Gulf oil spill, the recovery after Katrina and the Glenn Beck rally was fourth at 5%. That was followed (also at 5%) by a BBC story about a study showing that last year, alcohol consumption in the UK saw its sharpest year-to-year decline since 1948.
