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Interview dates: January 3-5, 2005
Interviews: 1,001 adults, 836 registered voters
Margin of error: ± 3.1 for all adults, ± 3.4 for registered voters

**THE ASSOCIATED PRESS POLL
CONDUCTED BY IPSOS-PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

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***AP/Ipsos Poll: Bush, Incoming Congress Face Public Criticism
President's Policies Receive Tepid Evaluations***

The Associated Press Poll is conducted by Ipsos-Public Affairs. Between January 3-5, 2005, the AP-Ipsos poll interviewed a representative sample of 1,001 adults nationwide, including 836 registered voters. The margin of error is ± 3.1 for all adults and ± 3.4 for registered voters. Margin of error for subgroups may be higher.

Washington, DC, January 7, 2005 — As Senators and Representatives returned to Washington this week for the start of the 109th Congress, half (53%) of American adults voice disapproval of the way Congress does its work. Four in ten (41%) approve of the way Congress handles its job.

Q. Overall, do you approve, disapprove or have mixed feelings about the way Congress is handling its job? (IF **APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE, ASK:**) Is that strongly (approve/disapprove) or somewhat (approve/disapprove)? (IF **HAVE MIXED FEELINGS OR NOT SURE, ASK:**) If you had to choose, do you lean more toward approve or disapprove?

	ALL ADULTS
Strongly approve	8
Somewhat approve	21
Lean toward approval	12
Still have mixed feelings	4
Lean toward disapproval	19
Somewhat disapprove	16
Strongly disapprove	18
Not sure	2
Total Approve	41
Total Disapprove	53

By party, Republican registered voters (61%) -- and especially Republican women registered voters (66%) -- approve of the job the Republican-controlled Congress has been doing. By contrast, registered Democratic voters (68%) and a plurality of registered Independents (49%) disapprove.

	Reg. Voters: Party Identification			Reg. Voters: Party Identification/Gender				Bush Job Approval	
	Repub- licans	Demo- crats	Inde- pend- ents	Repub- lican men	Repub- lican women	Demo- cratic men	Demo- cratic women	Ap- prove	Disap- prove
Total Approve	61%	27%	34%	56%	66%	22%	31%	58%	25%
Total Disapprove	36%	68%	49%	41%	30%	75%	63%	37%	70%

People under 30 tend to approve of Congress (52%), while people age 50-64 (61%) and seniors 65 and over (62%) disapprove of the job their representatives are doing. Men (58% disapprove) are harsher critics of Congress than women (48%), and men who are college graduates (65%) and live in the suburbs (63%) are especially disparaging.

What stands out in these assessments of Congressional approval is how soft opinion is. Barely one in four either “strongly approve” (8%) or “strongly disapprove” (18%) of the job Congress is doing.

As Inauguration Nears, Public Divides on Bush’s Performance

In contrast to their views of Congress, a majority of Americans hold strong views of how President Bush is handling his job. Overall, as many approve (49%) as disapprove (49%) of Bush’s performance. Moreover, over half the public either “strongly approves” (27%) or “strongly disapproves” (30%) of Bush’s handling of the Presidency.

- Q. Overall, do you approve, disapprove or have mixed feelings about the way George W. Bush is handling his job as President? (IF **APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE, ASK:**) Is that strongly (approve/disapprove) or somewhat (approve/disapprove)? (IF **HAVE MIXED FEELINGS OR NOT SURE, ASK:**) If you had to choose, do you lean more toward approve or disapprove?

	ALL ADULTS	REGISTERED VOTERS *				
	1/3 - 5/05	12/6 - 8/04	11/3 - 5/04	10/4 - 6/04	9/7 - 9/04	8/3 - 5/04
Strongly approve	27	31	33	31	33	30
Somewhat approve.....	12	10	12	9	12	10
Lean toward approval	10	11	6	8	8	9
Still have mixed feelings	1	2	1	1	1	1
Lean toward disapproval	13	14	9	12	11	13
Somewhat disapprove	7	4	5	6	4	5
Strongly disapprove	30	28	34	33	31	32
Not sure	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Approve	49	51	51	48	52	49
Total Disapprove	49	47	48	51	46	50
<i>Mean Rating¹</i>	<i>4.0</i>	<i>4.1</i>	<i>4.1</i>	<i>4.0</i>	<i>4.2</i>	<i>4.0</i>

As usual, one of the strongest links is with partisanship: most Republican voters approve of Bush’s job as President (89% approve; 58% *strongly*), and most Democratic voters disapprove (82%; 54% *strongly*).

People under 30 disapprove (57%) of Bush's performance, whereas people in their thirties (55%) and forties (54%) tend to approve. Whites (53%) are favorable, non-whites are not (65% disapprove). College graduates (56%) disapprove of Bush's performance, while people with some college background approve (56%). Married men (56%) and married women (54%) approve of Bush's job in office, while six in ten single women disapprove (62%).

Views Divided on Bush's Foreign Policy, Negative toward Iraq and Domestic Policy

Bush gains as much approval (50%) as disapproval (48%) for his handling of foreign policy. On other issues, Bush's ratings lag. Slightly more disapprove (51%) than approve (47%) of his handling of the economy. Solid majorities disapprove of Bush's handling of the situation in Iraq (54%) and domestic issues (56%). Four in ten Americans (39%) "strongly disapprove" of Bush's handling of Iraq (24% strongly approve). Likewise, on domestic issues, nearly twice as many "strongly disapprove" (33%) as "strongly approve" (18%) of the job Bush is doing.

Q. And when it comes to **(READ ISSUE)** do you approve or disapprove or have mixed feelings about the way George W. Bush is handling that issue?

(IF APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE, ASK:) Is that strongly (approve/disapprove) or somewhat (approve/disapprove)? **(IF HAVE MIXED FEELINGS OR NOT SURE, ASK:)** If you had to choose, do you lean more toward approve or disapprove?

	Strongly Ap- prove	Some- what Ap- prove	Lean Toward Ap- proval	Still Have Mixed Feelings	Lean Toward Disap- proval	Some- what Disap- prove	Strongly Disap- prove	Not Sure	Total Ap- prove	Total Disap- prove	Mean- Rating ¹
Handling foreign policy issues and the war on terrorism											
1/3-5/05.....	32	12	6	2	12	7	29	-	50	48	4.1
Handling the economy											
1/3-5/05.....	23	16	9	1	12	11	28	-	47	51	3.9
Handling the situation in Iraq											
1/3-5/05.....	24	12	8	2	8	7	39	-	44	54	3.7
Handling domestic issues like health care, education, the environment and energy											
1/3-5/05.....	18	14	11	1	14	9	33	-	43	56	3.6

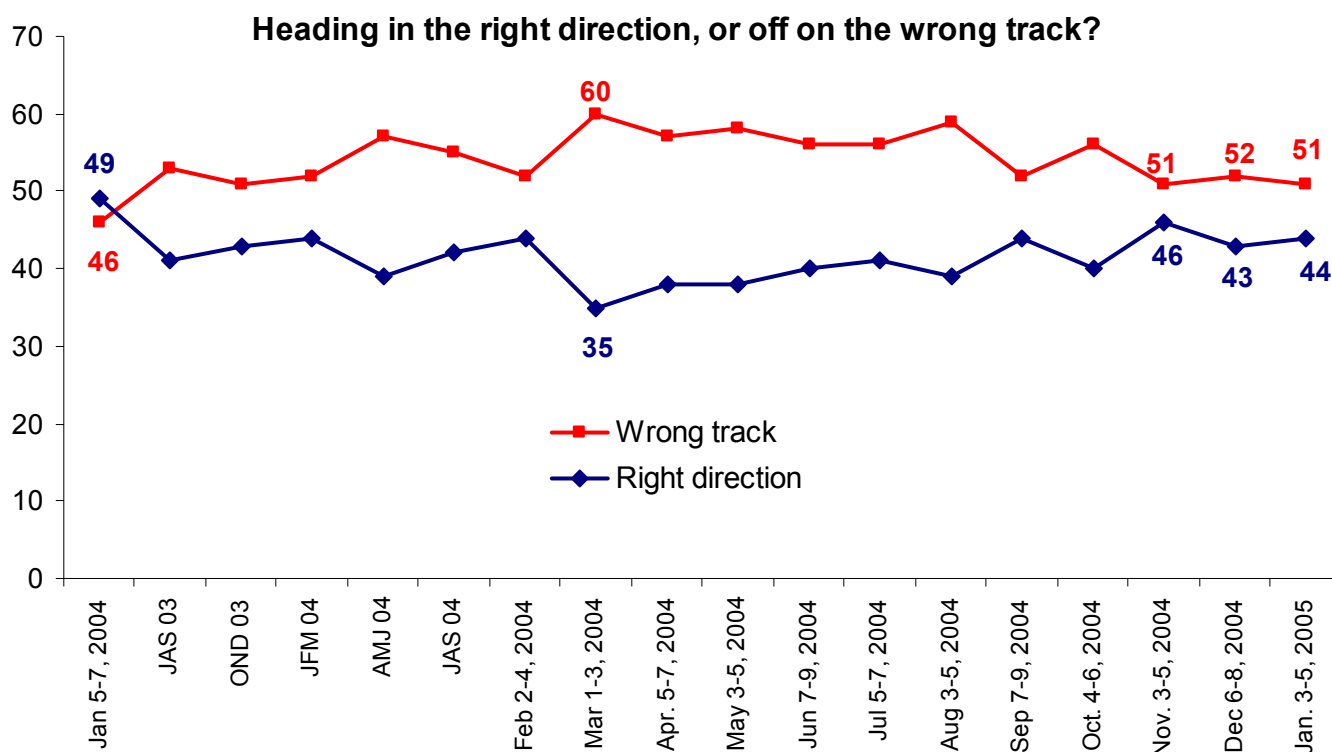
Criticism of Bush's handling of domestic issues is particularly pronounced among residents of the Northeast (63% disapprove) and the Great Lakes region (62%), as well as urban residents in general (61%).

Disapproval of Bush's Iraq policy is stronger among women (58%), non-whites (68%), and residents of urban areas (63%). In addition, some groups say they approve of Bush's handling of foreign policy and the war on terror, but disapprove of his Iraq policies. This gap is widest among people with a high school education (52% approve of foreign policy; 54% disapprove of Iraq policy) and residents of the Oil Patch (61% approve foreign policy; 52% disapprove of the handling of Iraq).

Half Say Country Headed Down Wrong Track

Americans' evaluation of the country's direction remains stable. At present, half (51%) of adults say things in this country are on the wrong track, while 44% believe things are heading in the right direction.

Optimists tend to be male (49% right track), people with some college education (52%), Southerners (49%), those who say their current financial situation is strong (60%), and Republican registered voters (78%). Pessimists are more common among Democratic registered voters (77% wrong track), women without a college education (62%), residents of Northeast (56%) and Pacific (60%) regions, and those in a weak financial situation (61% wrong track).



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