Ipsos Poll Conducted for Reuters

Core Political Approval 7.30.13

These are findings from an Ipsos poll conducted for Thomson Reuters from July 26-30, 2013 . For the survey, a sample of 1,326 Americans, including 505 Democrats, 481 Republicans, and 189 Independents ages 18+ were interviewed online . The precision of the Reuters/Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points for all adults, 5.0 percentage points for Democrats, 5.1 percentage points for Republicans, and 8.1percentage points for Independents. For more information about credibility intervals, please see the appendix.

The data were weighted to the U.S. current population data by gender, age, education, and ethnicity. Statistical margins of error are not applicable to online polls. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error and measurement error. Figures marked by an asterisk (*) indicate a percentage value of greater than zero but less than one half of one per cent. Where figures do not sum to 100, this is due to the effects of rounding.

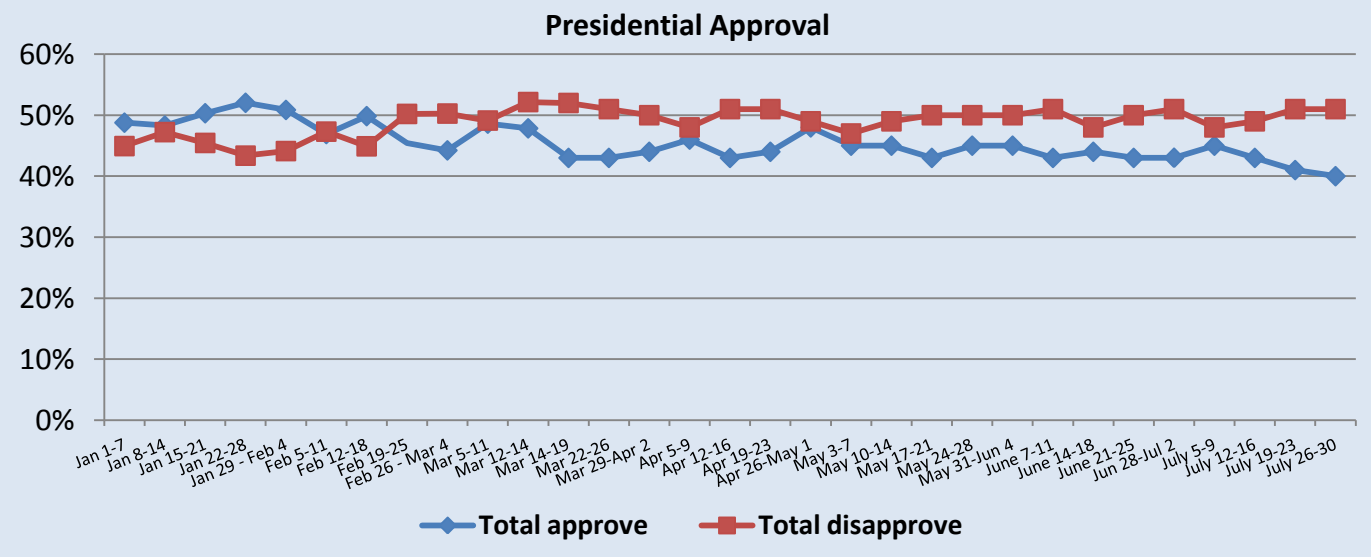
CORE POLITICAL APPROVAL

Q1. Generally speaking, would you say things in this country are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?

	All adults	Democrats	Republicans	Independents
Right direction	25%	47%	9%	12%
Wrong track	56%	31%	86%	74%
Don't know	19%	22%	5%	14%

Q2. Overall, do you approve or disapprove about the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?
Q2a. Is that strongly (approve/disapprove) or somewhat (approve/disapprove)? (*Asked of those who selected "approve" or "disapprove"*) Q2b. If you had to choose, do you lean more towards approve or disapprove? (*Asked of those who selected "don't know"*)

	All adults	Democrats	Republicans	Independents
Strongly approve	16%	31%	4%	8%
Somewhat approve	19%	33%	4%	14%
Lean towards approve	4%	8%	1%	1%
Lean towards disapprove	3%	4%	2%	4%
Somewhat disapprove	15%	10%	19%	23%
Strongly disapprove	33%	8%	69%	42%
Not sure	9%	6%	1%	8%
Total approve	*40%*	*72%*	*9%*	*24%*
Total disapprove	*51%*	*22%*	*90%*	*68%*



Q3. In your opinion, which political party has a better plan, policy or approach to each of the following?

All adults	Democratic Party	Republican Party	Independents	Other	None	Don't know
Healthcare	31%	21%	5%	2%	18%	23%
The war on terror	23%	23%	6%	2%	18%	27%
Iran	23%	20%	4%	2%	20%	32%
The US Economy	27%	23%	6%	2%	19%	24%
Immigration	29%	23%	4%	2%	18%	24%
Social Security	28%	19%	6%	2%	19%	26%
Medicare	31%	18%	6%	2%	18%	26%
Taxes	27%	21%	7%	4%	18%	23%
Gay marriage	38%	13%	6%	2%	16%	24%
Jobs and employment	28%	21%	6%	2%	18%	24%
The federal government deficit	23%	24%	6%	2%	22%	24%
Supporting small businesses	29%	22%	7%	2%	14%	26%
Education	30%	19%	5%	2%	19%	25%
Foreign policy	23%	23%	5%	2%	17%	30%
Women's rights	38%	14%	6%	3%	14%	25%
The environment	33%	16%	7%	2%	16%	25%
Israel	22%	21%	5%	1%	17%	34%

Democrats *(n=505)*	Democratic Party	Republican Party	Independents	Other	None	Don't know
Healthcare	60%	6%	2%	2%	12%	17%
The war on terror	45%	8%	6%	2%	16%	24%
Iran	44%	6%	3%	1%	18%	28%
The US Economy	54%	8%	2%	1%	15%	19%
Immigration	56%	11%	1%	1%	15%	16%
Social Security	56%	5%	2%	2%	12%	22%
Medicare	56%	5%	4%	1%	13%	22%
Taxes	54%	5%	3%	6%	16%	17%
Gay marriage	62%	5%	3%	3%	11%	16%
Jobs and employment	55%	5%	4%	3%	14%	19%
The federal government deficit	47%	7%	3%	2%	22%	19%
Supporting small businesses	56%	5%	7%	3%	10%	20%
Education	56%	8%	3%	1%	13%	19%
Foreign policy	46%	8%	4%	1%	14%	26%
Women's rights	64%	3%	2%	4%	8%	18%
The environment	58%	5%	4%	3%	11%	19%
Israel	42%	6%	3%	1%	15%	34%

Q3. In your opinion, which political party has a better plan, policy or approach to each of the following?

Republicans *(n=481)*	Democratic Party	Republican Party	Independents	Other	None	Don't know
Healthcare	6%	56%	4%	1%	18%	15%
The war on terror	5%	59%	3%	2%	14%	18%
Iran	5%	52%	3%	2%	16%	23%
The US Economy	3%	64%	4%	1%	16%	12%
Immigration	6%	56%	3%	3%	15%	17%
Social Security	5%	53%	6%	1%	20%	15%
Medicare	9%	51%	4%	1%	18%	16%
Taxes	4%	59%	8%	2%	15%	14%
Gay marriage	23%	36%	4%	2%	18%	17%
Jobs and employment	4%	60%	4%	1%	16%	14%
The federal government deficit	4%	62%	6%	1%	15%	11%
Supporting small businesses	7%	62%	4%	1%	10%	15%
Education	5%	51%	4%	2%	21%	17%
Foreign policy	5%	61%	3%	3%	12%	16%
Women's rights	17%	40%	7%	3%	15%	18%
The environment	14%	43%	7%	1%	16%	18%
Israel	6%	57%	2%	1%	13%	21%

Independents *(n=189)*	Democratic Party	Republican Party	Independents	Other	None	Don't know
Healthcare	18%	8%	20%	2%	28%	24%
The war on terror	12%	12%	17%	4%	27%	28%
Iran	16%	10%	17%	3%	28%	27%
The US Economy	15%	6%	21%	4%	31%	23%
Immigration	15%	11%	17%	3%	26%	27%
Social Security	14%	7%	23%	1%	29%	26%
Medicare	23%	3%	19%	2%	28%	25%
Taxes	18%	9%	19%	3%	26%	25%
Gay marriage	28%	4%	17%	5%	21%	25%
Jobs and employment	13%	8%	22%	1%	29%	27%
The federal government deficit	7%	12%	19%	4%	31%	26%
Supporting small businesses	14%	13%	20%	2%	24%	27%
Education	20%	4%	16%	3%	30%	26%
Foreign policy	10%	12%	18%	3%	27%	30%
Women's rights	28%	5%	19%	1%	21%	26%
The environment	21%	5%	24%	2%	24%	23%
Israel	9%	9%	23%	2%	26%	31%

PARTY ID	All Adults
Strong Democrat	14%
Moderate Democrat	21%
Lean Democrat	8%
Lean Republican	5%
Moderate Republican	14%
Strong Republican	10%
Independent	14%
None of these	9%
Don't know	5%
Total Democrat	*43%*
Total Republican	*29%*

How to Calculate Bayesian Credibility Intervals

The calculation of credibility intervals assumes that Y has a binomial distribution conditioned on the parameter θ\, i.e., Y|θ~Bin(n,θ), where n is the size of our sample. In this setting, Y counts the number of "yes", or "1", observed in the sample, so that the sample mean ($\bar{y}$) is a natural estimate of the true population proportion θ. This model is often called the likelihood function, and it is a standard concept in both the Bayesian and the Classical framework. The Bayesian [1] statistics combines both the prior distribution and the likelihood function to create a posterior distribution. The posterior distribution represents our opinion about which are the plausible values for θ adjusted after observing the sample data. In reality, the posterior distribution is one's knowledge base updated using the latest survey information. For the prior and likelihood functions specified here, the posterior distribution is also a beta distribution (π(θ/y)~β(y+a,n-y+b)), but with updated hyper-parameters.

Our credibility interval for ϑ is based on this posterior distribution. As mentioned above, these intervals represent our belief about which are the most plausible values for ϑ given our updated knowledge base. There are different ways to calculate these intervals based on . Since we want only one measure of precision for all variables in the survey, analogous to what is done within the Classical framework, we will compute the largest possible credibility interval for any observed sample. The worst case occurs when we assume that a=1 and b=1 and . Using a simple approximation of the posterior by the normal distribution, the 95% credibility interval is given by, approximately:

$$\bar{y} \mp \frac{1}{\sqrt{n}}$$

For this poll, the Bayesian Credibility Interval was adjusted using standard weighting design effect 1+L=1.3 to account for complex weighting[2]

Examples of credibility intervals for different base sizes are below. Ipsos does not publish data for base sizes (sample sizes) below 100.

Sample size	Credibility intervals
2,000	2.5
1,500	2.9
1,000	3.5
750	4.1
500	5.0
350	6.0
200	7.9
100	11.2

[1] *Bayesian Data Analysis, Second Edition, Andrew Gelman, John B. Carlin, Hal S. Stern, Donald B. Rubin, Chapman & Hall/CRC | ISBN: 158488388X | 2003*

[2] *Kish, L. (1992). Weighting for unequal Pi . Journal of Official, Statistics, 8, 2, 183200.*