Ipsos Poll Conducted for Reuters

Core Political Approval 8.13.13

These are findings from an Ipsos poll conducted for Thomson Reuters from August 9-13, 2013 . For the survey, a sample of 1,291 Americans, including 513 Democrats, 430 Republicans, and 194 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, 4.9 percentage points for Democrats, 5.4 percentage points for Republicans, and 8.0 percentage 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. To see more information on this and other Reuters/Ipsos polls, please visit http://polling.reuters.com/.

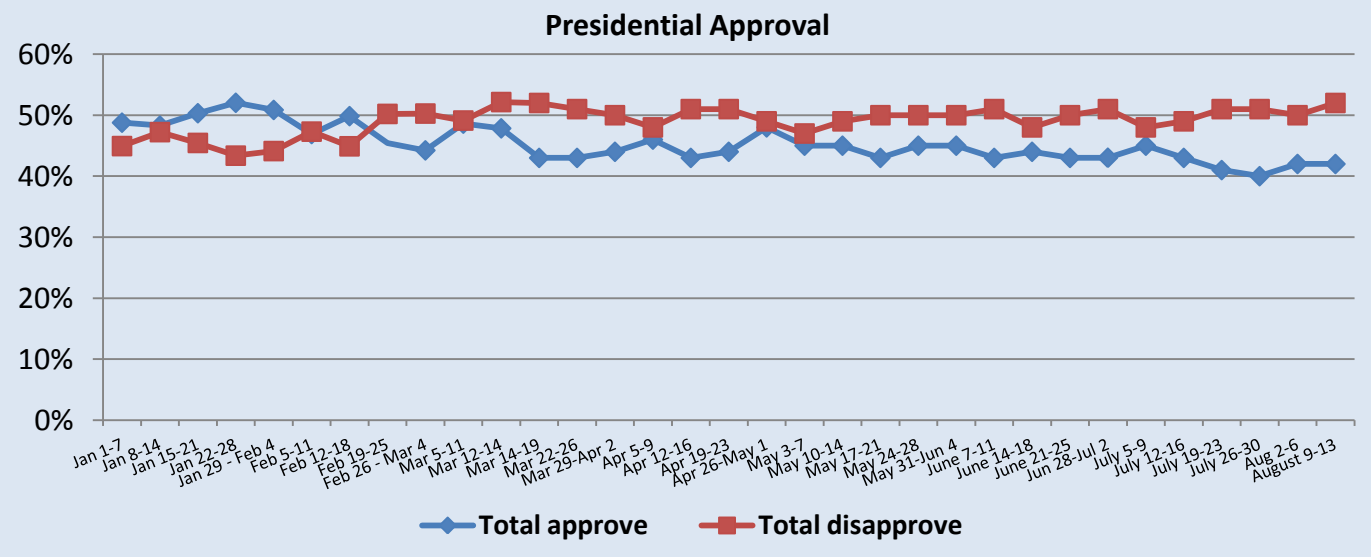
CORE POLITICAL APPROVAL

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%	44%	10%	12%
Wrong track	59%	40%	83%	73%
Don't know	16%	17%	8%	15%

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	21%	40%	5%	4%
Somewhat approve	18%	30%	6%	15%
Lean towards approve	4%	4%	0%	6%
Lean towards disapprove	6%	6%	3%	10%
Somewhat disapprove	13%	9%	20%	14%
Strongly disapprove	33%	9%	64%	40%
Not sure	6%	1%	2%	10%
Total approve	*42%*	*74%*	*12%*	*25%*
Total disapprove	*52%*	*24%*	*86%*	*65%*



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	34%	22%	7%	2%	16%	20%
The war on terror	27%	23%	7%	2%	16%	26%
Iran	21%	21%	6%	3%	17%	33%
The US Economy	29%	23%	8%	2%	15%	23%
Immigration	26%	21%	8%	3%	16%	26%
Social Security	31%	19%	7%	2%	16%	24%
Medicare	31%	19%	8%	2%	15%	25%
Taxes	27%	22%	9%	2%	17%	24%
Gay marriage	38%	13%	7%	3%	15%	24%
Jobs and employment	29%	21%	8%	3%	16%	23%
The federal government deficit	23%	24%	8%	2%	18%	26%
Supporting small businesses	28%	26%	7%	2%	12%	25%
Education	33%	19%	7%	3%	14%	24%
Foreign policy	25%	23%	7%	2%	14%	30%
Women's rights	37%	15%	7%	3%	13%	25%
The environment	36%	15%	7%	3%	14%	24%
Israel	20%	23%	6%	3%	16%	33%

Democrats *(n=513)*	Democratic Party	Republican Party	Independents	Other	None	Don't know
Healthcare	65%	6%	2%	1%	12%	13%
The war on terror	52%	7%	4%	1%	13%	22%
Iran	40%	11%	3%	2%	15%	30%
The US Economy	56%	7%	4%	1%	12%	19%
Immigration	51%	10%	3%	1%	13%	22%
Social Security	60%	4%	4%	1%	12%	19%
Medicare	61%	4%	4%	1%	9%	20%
Taxes	54%	5%	5%	1%	14%	21%
Gay marriage	62%	7%	4%	1%	10%	16%
Jobs and employment	58%	6%	4%	1%	13%	18%
The federal government deficit	48%	8%	4%	1%	16%	23%
Supporting small businesses	53%	12%	4%	1%	9%	21%
Education	62%	4%	4%	2%	9%	19%
Foreign policy	49%	9%	4%	1%	10%	26%
Women's rights	66%	3%	2%	3%	9%	18%
The environment	62%	4%	4%	2%	9%	18%
Israel	38%	11%	3%	1%	15%	32%

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

Republicans *(n=430)*	Democratic Party	Republican Party	Independents	Other	None	Don't know
Healthcare	11%	60%	5%	2%	12%	9%
The war on terror	7%	62%	3%	2%	12%	14%
Iran	8%	49%	4%	5%	14%	21%
The US Economy	6%	64%	5%	3%	12%	10%
Immigration	9%	50%	7%	5%	14%	15%
Social Security	9%	55%	5%	2%	15%	14%
Medicare	9%	52%	6%	3%	14%	16%
Taxes	6%	61%	6%	3%	11%	12%
Gay marriage	25%	32%	7%	3%	15%	17%
Jobs and employment	7%	59%	6%	5%	11%	12%
The federal government deficit	3%	63%	5%	3%	12%	13%
Supporting small businesses	8%	63%	4%	3%	8%	14%
Education	13%	54%	5%	3%	11%	13%
Foreign policy	7%	60%	3%	2%	12%	16%
Women's rights	15%	44%	8%	4%	13%	17%
The environment	18%	44%	5%	3%	15%	16%
Israel	8%	56%	3%	2%	10%	20%

Independents *(n=194)*	Democratic Party	Republican Party	Independents	Other	None	Don't know
Healthcare	13%	9%	24%	2%	23%	28%
The war on terror	13%	8%	22%	1%	23%	33%
Iran	4%	15%	20%	1%	20%	40%
The US Economy	12%	8%	24%	3%	20%	32%
Immigration	7%	12%	23%	4%	19%	34%
Social Security	11%	8%	22%	3%	23%	34%
Medicare	11%	11%	23%	2%	24%	30%
Taxes	6%	12%	27%	2%	23%	30%
Gay marriage	19%	4%	17%	7%	20%	33%
Jobs and employment	9%	9%	25%	3%	23%	30%
The federal government deficit	8%	9%	27%	2%	24%	30%
Supporting small businesses	11%	14%	25%	2%	19%	29%
Education	14%	5%	21%	3%	23%	34%
Foreign policy	8%	8%	22%	1%	19%	42%
Women's rights	18%	4%	23%	3%	15%	36%
The environment	18%	4%	22%	4%	20%	32%
Israel	3%	12%	21%	5%	19%	39%

PARTY ID	All Adults
Strong Democrat	13%
Moderate Democrat	23%
Lean Democrat	7%
Lean Republican	5%
Moderate Republican	15%
Strong Republican	9%
Independent	15%
None of these	9%
Don't know	4%
Total Democrat	*43%*
Total Republican	*28%*

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.*