

The Economist/YouGov Poll



Sample 1000 General Population Respondents
Conducted March 17-20, 2012
Margin of Error $\pm 4.1\%$

1. How closely have you been following news about the 2012 presidential election campaign?

Very closely	32%
Somewhat closely	37%
Not too closely	20%
Not at all	11%

2. Would you say things in this country today are...

Generally headed in the right direction	26%
Off on the wrong track	60%
Not sure	15%

3. How important are the following issues to you?

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not very Important	Unimportant
The war in Iraq	29%	36%	25%	11%
The economy	82%	15%	2%	1%
Immigration	38%	38%	15%	9%
The environment	39%	37%	16%	9%
Terrorism	47%	31%	16%	6%
Gay rights	18%	26%	25%	31%
Education	53%	34%	9%	3%
Health care	68%	25%	5%	2%
Social security	62%	28%	8%	2%
The budget deficit	61%	26%	10%	4%
The war in Afghanistan	36%	38%	20%	7%
Taxes	60%	31%	7%	2%
Medicare	55%	31%	12%	2%
Abortion	28%	31%	20%	21%

4. Which of these is the **most** important issue for you?

The war in Iraq	0%
The economy	36%
Immigration	4%
The environment	5%
Terrorism	2%
Gay rights	2%
Education	6%
Health care	10%
Social security	13%
The budget deficit	11%
The war in Afghanistan	1%
Taxes	4%
Medicare	4%
Abortion	3%

5. As you may know, the U.S. plans to withdraw all of its troops from Afghanistan by the end of the year 2014. Which of the following is closest to your view about how long U.S. troops should stay in Afghanistan?

The U.S. should stick to its timetable for withdrawing troops by 2014	18%
The U.S. should speed up its withdrawal from Afghanistan	52%
The U.S. should keep troops in Afghanistan as long as it takes to accomplish its goals	13%
Not sure	18%

6. Have events in Afghanistan in recent months changed your mind about how long U.S. troops should be kept in Afghanistan?

Yes, they have made me think troops should be withdrawn earlier than I thought before	40%
Yes, they have made me think troops should be kept longer than I thought before	6%
No, they haven't changed my views on the war in Afghanistan	55%

7. Do you think most people in Afghanistan want to have U.S. troops in their country or would they like the U.S. to leave?

Most would like U.S. troops to stay	6%
About equally divided	25%
Most would like U.S. troops to leave	52%
Not sure	17%

8. Do you think the United States made a mistake sending troops to fight in Afghanistan?

Yes	36%
No	39%
Not sure	26%

9. What do you think will eventually happen in Afghanistan?

The United States will win the war in Afghanistan.	18%
The United States will withdraw from Afghanistan without winning.	82%

10. In general, how often do you think it is appropriate for a U.S. president to apologize to other countries when America makes a mistake in foreign policy?

Always appropriate	28%
Sometimes appropriate	38%
Never appropriate	21%
Not sure	13%

11. In general, do you feel the laws covering the sale of handguns should be made more strict than they are now?

Make gun laws more strict	39%
No change	34%
Make gun laws less strict	17%
Not sure	10%

12. Are you in favor or opposed to the death penalty for persons convicted of murder?

Favor the death penalty	54%
Opposed to the death penalty	23%
Not sure	23%

13. Do you have a favorable or an unfavorable opinion of the following people?

	Very favorable	Somewhat favorable	Somewhat unfavorable	Very unfavorable	Don't know
Barack Obama	26%	21%	8%	38%	6%
Mitt Romney	13%	25%	24%	26%	13%
Newt Gingrich	9%	19%	19%	39%	14%
Ron Paul	12%	26%	24%	20%	18%
Rick Santorum	11%	25%	18%	31%	15%

14. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?

Strongly Approve	16%
Somewhat Approve	26%
Somewhat Disapprove	15%
Strongly Disapprove	36%
Not Sure	7%

15. Below are some issues facing the country. For each one, indicate whether you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling that issue.

	Strongly approve	Somewhat approve	Somewhat disapprove	Strongly disapprove	No opinion
The war in Iraq	20%	26%	18%	23%	13%
The economy	15%	22%	16%	38%	9%
Immigration	8%	20%	19%	36%	16%
The environment	13%	24%	18%	28%	17%
Terrorism	20%	28%	14%	24%	13%
Gay rights	12%	22%	15%	28%	24%
Education	17%	25%	17%	26%	16%
Health care	21%	20%	12%	39%	9%
Social securitys	13%	23%	17%	30%	16%
The budget deficit	12%	20%	17%	41%	11%
The war in Afghanistan	12%	27%	23%	26%	12%
Taxes	14%	22%	19%	34%	12%
Medicare	15%	22%	17%	31%	15%
Abortion	14%	20%	12%	28%	26%

16. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the United States Congress is handling its job?

Strongly approve	1%
Somewhat approve	7%
Neither approve nor disapprove	15%
Somewhat disapprove	24%
Strongly disapprove	43%
Not sure	9%

17. Are you registered to vote as...

Asked of registered voters who live in states with party registration

Democrat	41%
Republican	36%
Other Party	1%
Independent/No Party	22%
Not sure	1%

18. Are you satisfied with the field of Republicans who have declared their candidacy for the Republican presidential nomination or would you like someone else to enter the race?

Asked of registered voters who usually vote in Republican primary elections

Satisfied with current field	53%
Would like someone else to enter	29%
Not sure	19%

19. Who would you like to be the Republican nominee for President in 2012?

Asked of eligible registered voters who usually vote in Republican primary elections

Mitt Romney	31%
Newt Gingrich	21%
Ron Paul	12%
Rick Santorum	23%
Other	10%
No preference	3%

20. Romney vs. Gingrich two-way race

Asked of eligible voters who usually vote in Republican primary elections. Not asked of respondents who support Romney or Gingrich, whose preference was determined from Q19

Romney	52%
Gingrich	48%

21. Romney vs. Santorum two-way race

Asked of eligible voters who usually vote in Republican primary elections. Not asked of respondents who support Romney or Santorum, whose preference was determined from Q19

Romney	50%
Santorum	50%

22. Santorum vs. Gingrich two-way race

Asked of eligible voters who usually vote in Republican primary elections. Not asked of respondents who support Santorum or Gingrich, whose preference was determined from Q19

Gingrich	45%
Santorum	55%

23. What would you prefer to see happen in the Republican nomination campaign?

Asked of eligible voters who usually vote in Republican primary elections

All candidates except Romney drop out, allowing Romney to focus on the general election	24%
Newt Gingrich drops out, leaving Rick Santorum as the main challenger to Mitt Romney	28%
The current field of candidates all stay in the race until one clinches the nomination	48%

24. If the 2012 presidential election were being held today, and the candidates were Barack Obama, the Democrat, and Mitt Romney, the Republican, would you vote for Barack Obama or Mitt Romney?

Asked of registered voters

Barack Obama	47%
Lean Barack Obama	2%
Lean Mitt Romney	1%
Mitt Romney	41%
Other	5%
Not sure	4%

25. If the 2012 presidential election were being held today, and the candidates were Barack Obama, the Democrat, and Newt Gingrich, the Republican, would you vote for Barack Obama or Newt Gingrich?

Asked of registered voters

Barack Obama	50%
Lean Barack Obama	1%
Lean Newt Gingrich	2%
Newt Gingrich	37%
Other	7%
Not sure	4%

26. If the 2012 presidential election were being held today, and the candidates were Barack Obama, the Democrat, and Rick Santorum, the Republican, would you vote for Barack Obama or Rick Santorum?

Asked of registered voters

Barack Obama	51%
Lean Barack Obama	1%
Lean Rick Santorum	1%
Rick Santorum	39%
Other	5%
Not sure	3%

27. If the 2012 presidential election were being held today, and the candidates were Barack Obama, the Democrat, and Ron Paul, the Republican, would you vote for Barack Obama or Ron Paul?

Asked of registered voters

Barack Obama	46%
Lean Barack Obama	1%
Lean Ron Paul	2%
Ron Paul	40%
Other	6%
Not sure	4%

28. Regardless of who you would support, who do you think would win the presidential election if Mitt Romney became the Republican nominee?

Barack Obama	56%
Mitt Romney	40%
Someone else	5%

29. Regardless of who you would support, who do you think would win the presidential election if Rick Santorum became the Republican nominee?

Barack Obama	65%
Rick Santorum	30%
Someone else	5%

30. Regardless of who you would support, who do you think would win the presidential election if Newt Gingrich became the Republican nominee?

Barack Obama	70%
Newt Gingrich	24%
Someone else	6%

31. Do you think the difference in incomes between rich people and poor people in the United States today is larger, smaller, or about the same as it was 30 years ago?

Larger	73%
About the same	23%
Smaller	3%

32. Do you think this is a good thing, a bad thing, or haven't you thought about it?

A good thing	10%
A bad thing	56%
Haven't thought about it	35%

33. How important is it that the federal government in Washington enacts policies that attempt to do each of the following?

	Extremely important	Somewhat important	Somewhat unimportant	Not at all important	Not sure
Grow and expand the economy	68%	18%	5%	3%	6%
Increase the equality of opportunity for people to get ahead if they want to	49%	24%	9%	10%	7%
Reduce the wealth gap between the rich and poor	33%	26%	11%	21%	9%

34. As you probably know, many of the major tax cuts passed by Congress during the Bush administration are due to expire at the end of this year. Would you favor...?

Making these tax cuts permanent	28%
Extending the tax cuts for households earning less than \$250,000 per year but letting the tax cuts expire for households earning more than \$250,000 per year	37%
Letting all the tax cuts expire as scheduled	12%
Don't Know	22%

35. Which of the following groups in society have been favored during Barack Obama's time as President?

	Very favored	Somewhat favored	Not favored	Not sure
Men	11%	26%	35%	29%
Women	15%	31%	32%	23%
Blacks	32%	27%	22%	19%
The working class	14%	26%	43%	16%
The middle class	11%	26%	46%	17%
The rich	25%	20%	37%	18%
Muslims	28%	23%	26%	23%
Immigrants	27%	26%	27%	20%
Corporations and lobbyists	34%	24%	22%	21%

36. Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Agree strongly	Agree somewhat	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree somewhat	Disagree strongly
Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class.	14%	20%	17%	18%	32%
Over the past few years, blacks have gotten less than they deserve.	6%	13%	29%	19%	33%
It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if blacks would only try harder they could be just as well off as whites.	25%	24%	24%	14%	13%
Irish, Italians, Jewish and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors.	42%	17%	20%	14%	6%

37. Over the last week, some conservative politicians have criticized Democrats for condemning conservative talk radio host Rush Limbaugh, who described a female Georgetown University law student as "a slut" and "a prostitute," but not condemning which liberal TV commentator who has made similar comments about Republican women?

Bill Maher	37%
Rachel Maddow	1%
Chris Matthews	2%
Didn't hear which liberal commentator is being discussed	60%

38. Do you think of yourself as a part of the Tea Party movement?

Yes	15%
No	70%
Not sure	15%

39. Would you say Barack Obama is...

Very liberal	33%
Liberal	19%
Moderate	24%
Conservative	6%
Very conservative	1%
Not sure	16%

40. Would you say Mitt Romney is...

Very liberal	3%
Liberal	8%
Moderate	26%
Conservative	29%
Very conservative	9%
Not sure	25%

41. Would you say Rick Santorum is...

Very liberal	1%
Liberal	3%
Moderate	8%
Conservative	23%
Very conservative	40%
Not sure	25%

42. Do you think Barack Obama...

Says what he believes	38%
Says what he thinks people want to hear	52%
Not sure	10%

43. Regardless of whether you agree with him, do you like Barack Obama as a person?

Like a lot	32%
Like somewhat	28%
Dislike	29%
Not sure	12%

44. Do you think Mitt Romney...

Says what he believes	21%
Says what he thinks people want to hear	57%
Not sure	22%

45. Regardless of whether you agree with him, do you like Mitt Romney as a person?

Like a lot	10%
Like somewhat	28%
Dislike	32%
Not sure	30%

46. Do you think Rick Santorum...

Says what he believes	49%
Says what he thinks people want to hear	27%
Not sure	24%

47. Regardless of whether you agree with him, do you like Rick Santorum as a person?

Like a lot	10%
Like somewhat	26%
Dislike	34%
Not sure	30%

48. Which of these words would you use to describe Barack Obama?

	Yes	No Opinion	No
Arrogant	37%	35%	28%
Bold	30%	55%	16%
Effective	23%	45%	32%
Exciting	16%	63%	20%
Experienced	18%	48%	34%
Honest	29%	38%	33%
Hypocritical	34%	41%	25%
Inspiring	33%	44%	23%
Intelligent	59%	30%	11%
Partisan	26%	57%	17%
Patriotic	28%	44%	29%
Religious	18%	57%	25%
Sincere	30%	43%	27%
Steady	27%	57%	16%
Strong	30%	50%	20%

49. Which of these words would you use to describe Mitt Romney?

	Yes	No Opinion	No
Arrogant	31%	51%	18%
Bold	15%	71%	14%
Effective	17%	67%	16%
Exciting	4%	64%	32%
Experienced	35%	57%	8%
Honest	15%	58%	27%
Hypocritical	30%	55%	15%
Inspiring	8%	63%	29%
Intelligent	43%	49%	8%
Partisan	19%	72%	9%
Patriotic	28%	66%	6%
Religious	37%	59%	4%
Sincere	15%	60%	25%
Steady	18%	69%	13%
Strong	17%	73%	10%

50. Which of these words would you use to describe Rick Santorum?

	Yes	No Opinion	No
Arrogant	25%	57%	19%
Bold	17%	74%	9%
Effective	11%	68%	21%
Exciting	6%	68%	26%
Experienced	15%	68%	17%
Honest	27%	58%	16%
Hypocritical	20%	62%	18%
Inspiring	11%	64%	25%
Intelligent	27%	55%	18%
Partisan	26%	67%	7%
Patriotic	31%	62%	7%
Religious	49%	49%	2%
Sincere	26%	61%	13%
Steady	18%	71%	12%
Strong	17%	70%	13%

51. Overall, do you think the economy is getting better or worse?

Getting better	30%
About the same	32%
Getting worse	32%
Not sure	5%

52. Do you think the stock market will be higher or lower 12 months from now?

Higher	24%
About the same	34%
Lower	17%
Not sure	25%

53. Would you say that you and your family are...

Better off financially than you were a year ago	13%
About the same financially as you were a year ago	47%
Worse off financially than you were a year ago	35%
Not sure	5%

54. If an election for U.S. Congress were being held today, who would you vote for in the district where you live?

The Democratic Party candidate	38%
The Republican Party candidate	33%
Other	1%
Not sure	17%
I would not vote	12%

55. Gender

Male	48%
Female	52%

56. Education

No high school	13%
High school graduate	29%
Some college	23%
2-year college	9%
4-year college	17%
Post-graduate	9%

57. Age

18-29	21%
30-44	27%
45-64	34%
65+	17%

58. Race

White	72%
Black	12%
Hispanic	8%
Other	8%

59. Region

Northeast	18%
Midwest	20%
South	39%
West	23%

60. Party Identification

Democrat	33%
Lean Democrat	10%
Independent	19%
Lean Republican	11%
Republican	27%

Sponsorship	<i>The Economist</i>
Fieldwork	YouGov
Interviewing Dates	March 17-20, 2012
Target population	U.S. citizens, aged 18 and over.
Sampling method	Respondents were selected from YouGov's PollingPoint panel using sample matching. A random sample (stratified by age, gender, race, education, and region) was selected from the 2005–2007 American Community Study. Voter registration, turnout, religion, news interest, minor party identification, and non-placement on an ideology scale, were imputed from the 2008 Current Population Survey Registration and Voting Supplement and the Pew Religion in American Life Survey. Matching respondents were selected from the PollingPoint panel, an opt-in Internet panel.
Weighting	The sample was weighted using propensity scores based on age, gender, race, education, news interest, voter registration, and non-placement on an ideology scale. The weights range from 0.2 to 7, with a mean of one and a standard deviation of 0.87.
Number of respondents	1000
Margin of error	± 4.1% (adjusted for weighting)
Survey mode	Web-based interviews
Questions not reported	38 questions not reported.