

# The Economist/YouGov Poll



Sample 1000 General Population Respondents  
Conducted March 3-6, 2012  
Margin of Error  $\pm 4\%$

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

Very closely .....	34%
Somewhat closely .....	36%
Not too closely .....	22%
Not at all .....	8%

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

Generally headed in the right direction .....	24%
Off on the wrong track .....	60%
Not sure .....	16%

## 3. How important are the following issues to you?

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not very Important	Unimportant
The war in Iraq	26%	36%	27%	11%
The economy	81%	15%	2%	1%
Immigration	41%	34%	19%	6%
The environment	39%	36%	17%	8%
Terrorism	47%	33%	14%	5%
Gay rights	16%	26%	26%	32%
Education	56%	32%	9%	4%
Health care	69%	23%	5%	2%
Social security	61%	29%	7%	3%
The budget deficit	58%	29%	10%	3%
The war in Afghanistan	34%	38%	21%	6%
Taxes	59%	32%	6%	2%
Medicare	55%	30%	11%	3%
Abortion	27%	29%	25%	19%

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

The war in Iraq .....	1%
The economy .....	38%
Immigration .....	4%
The environment .....	4%
Terrorism .....	3%
Gay rights .....	2%
Education .....	5%
Health care .....	13%
Social security .....	13%
The budget deficit .....	8%
The war in Afghanistan .....	1%
Taxes .....	3%
Medicare .....	3%
Abortion .....	3%

5. Do you approve or disapprove of the following?

	Approve	Disapprove	Not sure
Teaching the Bible in public schools	43%	37%	21%
Non-denominational prayer before high school football games	66%	20%	14%
Displays of religion in government buildings	60%	25%	15%
The inscription "In God We Trust" on U.S. coins	79%	11%	10%
Using taxpayer money to fund social programs run by Christian organizations	30%	44%	26%

6. Should the separation of church and state be absolute?

Yes .....41%  
 No .....34%  
 Not sure .....25%

7. Do you think political candidates running for office talk too much or too little about their religious beliefs?

Talk too much .....42%  
 Talk about the right amount .....35%  
 Talk too little .....22%

8. Regardless of whether they should be legal or not, which of the following things do you personally consider to be morally acceptable or morally wrong?

	Morally acceptable	Morally wrong	Depends/not sure
Birth control	78%	7%	15%
Divorce	57%	13%	30%
The death penalty	51%	20%	29%
Premarital sex	48%	29%	23%
Gay or lesbian relations	43%	38%	19%
Doctor-assisted suicide	37%	33%	30%
Abortion	32%	36%	32%
Gambling	51%	21%	27%

9. Do you favor or oppose increasing trade with other nations?

Favor .....55%  
 Oppose .....20%  
 Not sure .....25%

10. Do you think federal spending on the following programs should be increased or decreased?

	Increase	Keep the same	Decrease	Not sure
Social Security	44%	39%	10%	7%
National Defense	27%	40%	27%	7%
Medicare	39%	42%	10%	9%
Aid to the Poor	33%	39%	18%	10%
Medicaid	31%	44%	16%	9%
Veterans' Benefits	51%	38%	3%	8%
Health research	47%	38%	7%	9%
Education	51%	31%	10%	7%
Highways	38%	46%	6%	10%
Mass Transit	33%	39%	16%	12%
Foreign Aid	5%	21%	66%	9%
Unemployment benefits	26%	41%	25%	8%
Science and Technology	40%	39%	9%	12%
Agriculture	23%	41%	24%	12%
Housing	23%	41%	24%	12%
The Environment	30%	36%	25%	9%

11. Do you think the use of marijuana should be legalized?

Yes .....	48%
No .....	36%
Not sure .....	16%

12. Do you think there is too much or too little environmental regulation by the federal government?

Too much .....	36%
About the right amount .....	30%
Too little .....	33%

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	25%	23%	10%	34%	6%
Mitt Romney	11%	28%	22%	27%	13%
Newt Gingrich	10%	18%	19%	39%	13%
Ron Paul	10%	29%	25%	19%	16%
Rick Santorum	11%	25%	17%	32%	16%

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

Strongly Approve .....	15%
Somewhat Approve .....	28%
Somewhat Disapprove .....	19%
Strongly Disapprove .....	32%
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%	31%	14%	21%	13%
The economy	14%	25%	18%	34%	9%
Immigration	7%	22%	19%	34%	18%
The environment	10%	31%	17%	24%	18%
Terrorism	21%	32%	15%	19%	13%
Gay rights	11%	23%	16%	25%	25%
Education	14%	31%	17%	22%	17%
Health care	18%	23%	15%	36%	8%
Social securitys	12%	24%	19%	26%	18%
The budget deficit	11%	23%	19%	37%	10%
The war in Afghanistan	13%	31%	21%	24%	12%
Taxes	14%	29%	17%	30%	11%
Medicare	12%	26%	18%	26%	18%
Abortion	12%	25%	11%	26%	25%

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

Strongly approve .....	2%
Somewhat approve .....	6%
Neither approve nor disapprove .....	15%
Somewhat disapprove .....	24%
Strongly disapprove .....	42%
Not sure .....	11%

## 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 .....	21%
Not sure .....	2%

## 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 .....	45%
Would like someone else to enter .....	32%
Not sure .....	24%

## 19. If you had to choose one, which of these individuals would you want 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 .....	19%
Ron Paul .....	11%
Rick Santorum .....	22%
Other .....	11%
No preference .....	6%

## 20. Romney vs. Gingrich two-way race, imputed

*Asked of eligible voters who usually vote in Republican primary elections. Respondents who did not name Romney or Gingrich as their preferred Republican nominee were asked whom they would want to be the Republican nominee if Romney or Gingrich were the only two available options. The first choice and Romney-Gingrich hypothetical questions were combined to create this measure.*

Romney .....	56%
Gingrich .....	44%

## 21. Romney vs. Santorum two-way race, imputed

*Asked of eligible voters who usually vote in Republican primary elections. Respondents who did not name Romney or Santorum as their preferred Republican nominee were asked whom they would want to be the Republican nominee if Romney or Santorum were the only two available options. The first choice and Romney-Santorum hypothetical questions were combined to create this measure.*

Romney .....	53%
Santorum .....	47%

## 22. Santorum vs. Gingrich two-way race, imputed

*Asked of eligible voters who usually vote in Republican primary elections. Respondents who did not name Santorum or Gingrich as their preferred Republican nominee were asked whom they would want to be the Republican nominee if Santorum or Gingrich were the only two available options. The first choice and Santorum-Gingrich hypothetical questions were combined to create this measure.*

Gingrich .....	41%
Santorum .....	59%

## 23. 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 .....	2%
Mitt Romney .....	39%
Other .....	6%
Not sure .....	4%

## 24. 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 .....	49%
Lean Barack Obama .....	1%
Lean Newt Gingrich .....	2%
Newt Gingrich .....	37%
Other .....	6%
Not sure .....	5%



25. 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 .....	49%
Lean Barack Obama .....	1%
Lean Rick Santorum .....	1%
Rick Santorum .....	41%
Other .....	5%
Not sure .....	3%

26. 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 .....	2%
Lean Ron Paul .....	3%
Ron Paul .....	38%
Other .....	5%
Not sure .....	6%

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

Barack Obama .....	55%
Mitt Romney .....	41%
Someone else .....	4%

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

Barack Obama .....	66%
Rick Santorum .....	30%
Someone else .....	4%

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

Barack Obama .....	66%
Newt Gingrich .....	29%
Someone else .....	5%

30. Do you have a favorable or an unfavorable opinion of the following groups?

	Very favorable	Somewhat favorable	Neutral	Somewhat unfavorable	Very unfavorable
Chief Executive Officers (CEOs)	4%	14%	40%	26%	16%
Journalists	6%	20%	37%	22%	15%
College professors	13%	28%	34%	13%	12%
Labor unions	9%	18%	33%	17%	23%
Mormons	6%	12%	59%	14%	9%
Muslims	3%	8%	52%	20%	18%

31. How important is religion in your life?

Very important .....	38%
Somewhat important .....	31%
Not too important .....	13%
Not at all important .....	18%

32. How important do you think religion is in the lives of each of the following people?

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not too important	Not at all important
Barack Obama	16%	33%	26%	25%
Hillary Clinton	9%	35%	33%	23%
Mitt Romney	34%	42%	15%	9%
Rick Santorum	47%	31%	15%	7%
Newt Gingrich	9%	36%	36%	19%
Ron Paul	9%	42%	37%	13%

33. We're going to ask you about some things that may contribute to a person's financial success. Thinking about successful people you know or may have heard about, we would like your opinions about how important each of these things was to the financial success of those people

Just your opinion – how important was a college education to the financial success of the successful people you have heard about?

Very important	32%
Somewhat important	38%
Neither important nor unimportant	22%
Somewhat unimportant	6%
Not important at all	3%

34. Just your opinion – how important was the financial success of their parents to the financial success of the successful people you have heard about?

Very important	21%
Somewhat important	38%
Neither important nor unimportant	30%
Somewhat unimportant	6%
Not important at all	5%

35. Just your opinion – how important is faith in God to the financial success of the successful people you have heard about?

Very important	15%
Somewhat important	23%
Neither important nor unimportant	33%
Somewhat unimportant	10%
Not important at all	20%

36. Thinking about when a person goes to college for four years, what usually happens to their education? Do they become...

Much more educated	26%
Somewhat more educated	51%
Neither more nor less educated	19%
Somewhat less educated	3%
Much less educated	1%

37. Thinking about when a person goes to college for four years, what usually happens to the way they think about politics? Do they become...

Much more liberal	14%
Somewhat more liberal	25%
Neither more liberal nor more conservative	53%
Somewhat more conservative	5%
Much more conservative	2%

38. Which one of the following statements is closest to Republican presidential candidate Rick Santorum's position on birth control?

I'm fine with it within a marriage but not outside of the husband-wife relationship because it encourages premarital sex.	10%
It's not okay because it's a license to do things in the sexual realm that is counter to how things are supposed to be.	34%
Contraception. It's working just fine. Just leave it alone.	13%
Have not heard yet about Santorum's position on birth control	43%

39. Last week, conservative talk radio host Rush Limbaugh described a female Georgetown University law student who testified to Congress about women's access to contraception at the Catholic university as "a slut" and "a prostitute." In the controversy that followed, which of these people called the student to express his disappointment in the personal attack?

Rush Limbaugh	7%
Mitt Romney	1%
Barack Obama	50%
Have not heard who called the student	42%

40. Which of the following people said, "President Obama has said he wants everybody in America to go to college. What a snob."

Sarah Palin .....	4%
Rick Santorum .....	42%
Stephen Colbert .....	7%
Have not heard that anyone said this .....	47%

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

Yes .....	14%
No .....	68%
Not sure .....	19%

42. Would you say Barack Obama is...

Very liberal .....	33%
Liberal .....	23%
Moderate .....	23%
Conservative .....	4%
Very conservative .....	1%
Not sure .....	15%

43. Would you say Mitt Romney is...

Very liberal .....	2%
Liberal .....	6%
Moderate .....	30%
Conservative .....	30%
Very conservative .....	11%
Not sure .....	21%

**44. Would you say Rick Santorum is...**

Very liberal .....	1%
Liberal .....	2%
Moderate .....	10%
Conservative .....	29%
Very conservative .....	38%
Not sure .....	21%

**45. Do you think Barack Obama...**

Says what he believes .....	39%
Says what he thinks people want to hear .....	51%
Not sure .....	11%

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

Like a lot .....	33%
Like somewhat .....	32%
Dislike .....	24%
Not sure .....	11%

**47. Do you think Mitt Romney...**

Says what he believes .....	18%
Says what he thinks people want to hear .....	61%
Not sure .....	21%

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

Like a lot .....	8%
Like somewhat .....	29%
Dislike .....	36%
Not sure .....	26%

49. Do you think Rick Santorum...

Says what he believes ..... 47%  
 Says what he thinks people want to hear ..... 30%  
 Not sure ..... 23%

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

Like a lot ..... 11%  
 Like somewhat ..... 24%  
 Dislike ..... 36%  
 Not sure ..... 29%

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

	Yes	No Opinion	No
Arrogant	35%	39%	26%
Bold	27%	57%	16%
Effective	20%	50%	29%
Exciting	15%	67%	18%
Experienced	18%	48%	34%
Honest	31%	39%	29%
Hypocritical	28%	47%	25%
Inspiring	33%	48%	19%
Intelligent	59%	30%	11%
Partisan	26%	59%	15%
Patriotic	29%	46%	25%
Religious	17%	54%	29%
Sincere	31%	45%	24%
Steady	23%	63%	14%
Strong	28%	51%	21%

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

	Yes	No Opinion	No
Arrogant	33%	50%	17%
Bold	13%	71%	16%
Effective	17%	66%	17%
Exciting	4%	64%	32%
Experienced	30%	61%	9%
Honest	12%	58%	29%
Hypocritical	31%	55%	14%
Inspiring	8%	62%	30%
Intelligent	40%	51%	9%
Partisan	22%	70%	8%
Patriotic	28%	64%	8%
Religious	38%	55%	7%
Sincere	15%	55%	30%
Steady	18%	69%	13%
Strong	15%	71%	14%

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

	Yes	No Opinion	No
Arrogant	23%	56%	22%
Bold	16%	73%	11%
Effective	10%	67%	23%
Exciting	6%	65%	28%
Experienced	15%	70%	15%
Honest	27%	57%	16%
Hypocritical	20%	62%	18%
Inspiring	11%	63%	26%
Intelligent	27%	55%	18%
Partisan	23%	70%	7%
Patriotic	31%	61%	8%
Religious	52%	43%	5%
Sincere	27%	58%	15%
Steady	16%	72%	12%
Strong	12%	73%	15%



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

Getting better .....	26%
About the same .....	35%
Getting worse .....	34%
Not sure .....	5%

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

Higher .....	26%
About the same .....	33%
Lower .....	21%
Not sure .....	20%

**56. Would you say that you and your family are...**

Better off financially than you were a year ago .....	14%
About the same financially as you were a year ago .....	45%
Worse off financially than you were a year ago .....	36%
Not sure .....	5%

**57. 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 .....	37%
The Republican Party candidate .....	32%
Other .....	1%
Not sure .....	20%
I would not vote .....	10%

**58. Gender**

Male .....	48%
Female .....	52%

**59. Education**

No high school .....	14%
High school graduate .....	31%
Some college .....	21%
2-year college .....	9%
4-year college .....	16%
Post-graduate .....	9%

**60. Age**

18-29 .....	21%
30-44 .....	26%
45-64 .....	35%
65+ .....	18%

**61. Race**

White .....	72%
Black .....	12%
Hispanic .....	9%
Other .....	7%

**62. Region**

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

## 63. Party Identification

Democrat .....	34%
Lean Democrat .....	11%
Independent .....	18%
Lean Republican .....	9%
Republican .....	28%

<b>Sponsorship</b>	<i>The Economist</i>
<b>Fieldwork</b>	YouGov
<b>Interviewing Dates</b>	March 3-6, 2012
<b>Target population</b>	U.S. citizens, aged 18 and over.
<b>Sampling method</b>	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.
<b>Weighting</b>	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 0.3 to 7, with a mean of one and a standard deviation of 0.79.
<b>Number of respondents</b>	1000
<b>Margin of error</b>	± 4% (adjusted for weighting)
<b>Survey mode</b>	Web-based interviews
<b>Questions not reported</b>	27 questions not reported.