

# The Economist/YouGov Poll



Sample 1000 General Population Respondents  
Conducted January 29-February 1, 2011  
Margin of Error  $\pm 3.7\%$

1. 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	15%	30%	19%	23%	13%
The economy	15%	20%	15%	41%	9%
Immigration	11%	20%	15%	41%	14%
The environment	14%	31%	16%	22%	17%
Terrorism	17%	28%	16%	26%	13%
Gay rights	16%	27%	12%	23%	23%
Education	18%	28%	18%	22%	14%
Health care	22%	19%	10%	41%	8%
Social security	14%	19%	16%	35%	15%
The budget deficit	10%	20%	15%	44%	11%
The war in Afghanistan	11%	30%	21%	26%	13%
Taxes	10%	27%	21%	32%	11%

**2. How important are the following issues to you?**

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Unimportant
The war in Iraq	41%	40%	16%	3%
The economy	84%	14%	1%	0%
Immigration	51%	33%	13%	3%
The environment	44%	37%	14%	5%
Terrorism	55%	34%	10%	1%
Gay rights	23%	24%	28%	24%
Education	63%	27%	8%	2%
Health care	73%	21%	5%	1%
Social security	67%	26%	6%	1%
The budget deficit	64%	28%	8%	1%
The war in Afghanistan	44%	40%	14%	2%
Taxes	64%	28%	6%	1%

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

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

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

Strongly Approve .....	19%
Somewhat Approve .....	25%
Somewhat Disapprove .....	17%
Strongly Disapprove .....	32%
Not Sure .....	7%

**5. Do you consider Egypt to be an ally or an enemy of the United States?**

Ally of U.S. ....	22%
Friendly .....	31%
Unfriendly .....	11%
Enemy of the U.S. ....	2%
Not sure .....	34%

**6. Do you think that people in Egypt have a favorable or an unfavorable view of the United States?**

Very favorable .....	3%
Somewhat favorable .....	25%
Somewhat unfavorable .....	34%
Very unfavorable .....	11%
Don't know .....	28%

**7. Which group do you think is the largest in the U.S.?**

Liberals .....	12%
Moderates .....	44%
Conservatives .....	19%
Not sure .....	25%

**8. Do you think there are more liberals or conservatives in the U.S.?** Asked if respondent thinks moderates are the largest ideological group

Liberals .....	29%
Conservatives .....	47%
Not sure .....	23%

**9. Overall, do you think policies of the government in Washington are ...**

Too liberal .....	39%
About right .....	13%
Too conservative .....	25%
Not sure .....	23%

**10. Do you think that government should increase or decrease its regulation of business?**

Increase .....	29%
Keep the same .....	17%
Decrease .....	37%
Not sure .....	16%

**11. In some countries, the economy is completely controlled by the government. In other countries, the economy operates with almost no government interference. Other countries are in between. How would you describe the U.S. economy?**

1 Government-run economy .....	6%
2 .....	10%
3 .....	16%
4 .....	21%
5 .....	19%
6 .....	17%
7 Free market system .....	6%
Don't know .....	7%

**12. What do you think is the best economic system?**

1 Government-run economy .....	2%
2 .....	2%
3 .....	8%
4 .....	23%
5 .....	14%
6 .....	20%
7 Free market system .....	22%
Don't know .....	9%

**13. Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with the following statements**

	Agree strongly	Agree somewhat	Disagree somewhat	Disagree strongly
The government should see to it that everyone has a job and a good standard of living	19%	29%	28%	24%
Government derives its only just authority from the consent of the governed	39%	38%	17%	6%
Americans are becoming too dependent on government	35%	32%	23%	11%
There is too much inequality in America	30%	32%	24%	15%
Government is too controlled by special interests	60%	33%	5%	2%
People should get ahead on their own	32%	48%	16%	4%

**14. Did you listen to President Obama’s State of the Union address last Tuesday?**

Yes, listened to all of it .....	27%
Yes, listened to part of it .....	26%
No, did not listen to it .....	47%

**15. Traditionally, Republican and Democratic members of Congress sit in separate sections during the State of the Union address. This year, some members of Congress chose to sit next to colleagues from the opposing party. Do you think this is a sign of greater willingness of the parties to cooperate in the future, or was it just a one-time gesture intended to generate publicity?**

Sign of greater willingness to cooperate .....	14%
One-time gesture to generate publicity .....	65%
Not sure .....	22%

**16. Do you think the current Congress will accomplish more or less than Congress usually does during a two-year term?**

More than usual .....	16%
About the same .....	38%
Less than usual .....	29%
Not sure .....	17%

**17. In your opinion, do the Democrats in Congress...**

Mostly provide constructive policy alternatives .....	33%
Mostly just oppose the other party .....	47%
Not sure .....	20%

**18. In your opinion, do the Republicans in Congress...**

Mostly provide constructive policy alternatives .....	27%
Mostly just oppose the other party .....	54%
Not sure .....	18%

**19. In dealing with President Obama, do you think the Republicans in Congress...**

Mostly provide constructive policy alternatives .....	32%
Mostly just oppose the President .....	49%
Not sure .....	19%

**20. If you had to choose, would you rather have a congressperson who...**

Compromises to get things done. ....	57%
Sticks to his or her principles, no matter what. ....	43%

**21. In his State of the Union speech, President Obama proposed freezing annual domestic spending for the next five years. In your opinion, how likely is he to succeed in this pledge?**

Very likely .....	4%
Somewhat likely .....	22%
Not too likely .....	35%
Not at all likely .....	24%
Not sure .....	16%

**22. Do you support or oppose the domestic spending freeze proposed by President Obama?**

Strongly support .....	20%
Somewhat support .....	26%
Neither support, nor oppose .....	16%
Somewhat oppose .....	11%
Strongly oppose .....	7%
Not sure .....	19%

**23. How concerned are you about the size of the federal budget deficit?**

Very concerned .....	57%
Somewhat concerned .....	32%
Not very concerned .....	8%
Not at all concerned .....	3%

24. When, if ever, do you think the federal budget should be balanced, so that the amount the government spends is equal to the amount it collects in taxes?

Immediately .....	40%
Next year .....	7%
In a few years .....	43%
Not necessary to balance the budget .....	10%

25. Overall, do you think that the federal government should increase or decrease the amount it spends?

Increase .....	5%
Keep the same .....	12%
Decrease .....	72%
Not sure .....	10%

26. Do you think that the federal government should increase or decrease taxes?

Increase .....	20%
Keep the same .....	32%
Decrease .....	38%
Not sure .....	10%



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

	Increase	Keep the same	Decrease	Not sure
Social Security	37%	44%	12%	7%
National Defense	22%	36%	36%	6%
Medicare	31%	48%	14%	7%
Aid to the Poor	28%	42%	23%	7%
Medicaid	25%	48%	20%	7%
Veterans' Benefits	42%	47%	5%	6%
Health research	37%	40%	17%	7%
Education	48%	30%	17%	5%
Highways	30%	50%	15%	6%
Mass Transit	26%	38%	28%	8%
Foreign Aid	2%	18%	73%	7%
Unemployment benefits	20%	44%	29%	7%
Science and Technology	36%	40%	17%	7%
Agriculture	17%	42%	33%	8%
Housing	17%	39%	35%	9%
The Environment	26%	37%	30%	7%

28. Do you think the cost of government entitlement programs, including Social Security and Medicare, is a major economic problem for the U.S.?

Yes .....	51%
No .....	35%
Not sure .....	14%

29. Should the government raise taxes or cut benefits in order to address the economic problem caused by the cost of major entitlement programs? Asked if respondent thinks that the cost of entitlement is a major economic problem

Raise taxes .....	11%
Cut benefits .....	38%
Both .....	23%
Neither .....	29%

30. Last year Congress extended the tax cuts enacted in 2001 under President George W. Bush for two more years. Do you favor making the tax cuts permanent or letting them expire after two years?

Make tax cuts permanent .....	41%
Let tax cuts expire .....	37%
Not sure .....	22%

31. Do you favor increasing taxes on families making over \$250,000 per year?

Favor .....	58%
Oppose .....	28%
Not sure .....	13%

32. Do you think personal income taxes are too high or too low?

Too high .....	46%
About right .....	30%
Too low .....	9%
Not sure .....	15%

33. Do you think corporate income taxes are too high or too low?

Too high .....	23%
About right .....	17%
Too low .....	40%
Not sure .....	19%

**34. Do you currently have health insurance?**

Yes ..... 79%  
 No ..... 19%  
 Not sure ..... 2%

**35. What kind of health care coverage do you currently have?** Asked if respondent has health insurance

I have private insurance or belong to an HMO. .... 63%  
 I'm covered by a government plan, such as Medicare or Medicaid. .... 27%  
 Other ..... 8%  
 Not sure ..... 2%

**36. Have you personally been affected by any changes to the health care system resulting from the health care reform law that was passed last year by Congress?**

Yes ..... 31%  
 No ..... 51%  
 Not sure ..... 18%

**37. Have the changes that you experienced as a result of the health care legislation been positive or negative?** Asked if respondent has been personally affected by health care law

Positive ..... 24%  
 Neither positive, nor negative ..... 13%  
 Negative ..... 63%

**38. Do you favor or oppose repealing President Obama's health care reform law passed last year by Congress?**

Favor ..... 41%  
 Oppose ..... 39%  
 Not sure ..... 20%

**39. How important an issue is campaign finance reform to you?**

Very Important .....	30%
Somewhat Important .....	38%
Not very Important .....	23%
Unimportant .....	9%

**40. Do you favor or oppose limiting the amount of money the following groups can spend in support of a political campaign?**

	Strongly favor	Favor	Neither favor, nor oppose	Oppose	Strongly oppose
Individuals	17%	25%	35%	12%	11%
Labor Unions	31%	21%	25%	12%	12%
Corporations	33%	20%	22%	12%	13%
Foreign corporations	43%	13%	17%	10%	18%
Special interest groups	34%	16%	22%	13%	14%
Candidates spending their own money on their own campaign	25%	19%	31%	12%	12%

**41. Would you say Barack Obama is...**

Very liberal .....	31%
Liberal .....	21%
Moderate .....	27%
Conservative .....	3%
Very conservative .....	1%
Not sure .....	17%

**42. Do you think Barack Obama...**

Says what he believes .....	47%
Says what he thinks people want to hear .....	53%

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

Like a lot .....	34%
Like somewhat .....	31%
Dislike .....	24%
Not sure .....	11%

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

	Yes	No Opinion	No
Honest	34%	35%	31%
Intelligent	65%	25%	10%
Religious	15%	56%	29%
Inspiring	39%	39%	22%
Patriotic	31%	41%	28%
Strong	30%	49%	22%
Bold	31%	52%	17%
Experienced	12%	43%	45%
Sincere	38%	34%	28%
Partisan	27%	52%	21%
Effective	23%	47%	31%
Unifying	20%	50%	30%
In Touch	25%	43%	32%
Realistic	28%	42%	30%
Decisive	23%	54%	23%

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

Strongly approve .....	3%
Somewhat approve .....	11%
Neither approve nor disapprove .....	18%
Somewhat disapprove .....	29%
Strongly disapprove .....	31%
Not sure .....	8%

**46. Would you say things in this country today are...**

Generally headed in the right direction .....	32%
Off on the wrong track .....	54%
Not sure .....	14%

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

Getting better .....	29%
About the same .....	34%
Getting worse .....	30%
Not sure .....	6%

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

Higher .....	31%
About the same .....	32%
Lower .....	17%
Not sure .....	20%

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

Better off financially .....	13%
About the same as now .....	46%
Worse off financially .....	37%
Not sure .....	4%

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<b>Sponsorship</b>	<i>The Economist</i>
<b>Fieldwork</b>	YouGov
<b>Interviewing Dates</b>	January 29-February 1, 2011
<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 0.4 to 5.9, with a mean of one and a standard deviation of 0.64.
<b>Number of respondents</b>	1000
<b>Margin of error</b>	± 3.7% (adjusted for weighting)
<b>Survey mode</b>	Web-based interviews
<b>Questions not reported</b>	23 questions not reported.