
Slight Rise in President Obama's Ratings from Last Month

Also more Americans say the country is going in the right direction this month

ROCHESTER, N.Y. – April 23, 2009 – President Obama is inching closer to completing his first 100 days in office and has now completed his first European visit and attended the Summit of Americas. He also dealt with the capture of Americans by Somali pirates and all of this appears to have resonated well with U.S. adults as 58% now give President Obama positive ratings, up from 55% in March. Two in five (42%) give the president negative ratings, down from 45% last month.

Additionally, these are some of the findings of *The Harris Poll*, a new nationwide survey of 2,401 U.S. adults surveyed online between April 13 and 21, 2009 by Harris Interactive:

- While Democrats give President Obama high marks for the first few weeks (87% positive), not surprisingly only 22% of Republicans do the same. Independents feel more positively towards the president's work so far as 58% give him positive marks and 42% give him negative ratings;
- Nine in ten African Americans (91%) give the president positive ratings as do just under two-thirds of Hispanics (64%) and just over half (53%) of Whites;
- Two-thirds of Easterners (68%), three in five Westerners (60%) and Midwesterners (58%) give President Obama positive ratings. Southerners are more divided – just over half (52%) give the president positive ratings while 48% give him negative ratings;
- The support of younger Americans is holding strong for the president as almost two-thirds (64%) of Echo Boomers (those aged 18-32) give the president positive ratings. Baby Boomers (aged 45-63) also approve as 60% of them give the president positive ratings as do 55% of Matures (aged 64 and older). Interestingly, Gen Xers (those aged 33-44) are more divided as 51% give President Obama positive marks while 49% give him negative ratings; and,
- Along with the president's high ratings, Americans are also more inclined to think that the country is going in the right direction. While 58% of adults still believe that the country is going off on the wrong track, 42% say it is going in the right direction. This is a marked improvement from the 32% who thought things were going in the right direction and 68% who said things were going off on the wrong track in March.

So What?

Americans have a more positive attitude these days. Yes, the economy is still not recovered and yes, people are still losing their jobs. But, at the same time, Americans seem to be looking ahead and, perhaps, believe a corner has been turned. The

changing of seasons, as the cold days of winter give into the warmer, hopefully sunnier days of spring may also be helping. President Obama also has the benefit of having a few good weeks. His recent trips abroad have all produced positive press and the successful conclusion to the Somali pirate hostage issue helped add to the good media coverage. The question becomes, does this positive attitude hold? It is probably a little precarious and, with the influx of more bad economic news and/or some other bad news from abroad or within the US, people's positivity may quickly dissipate.

**TABLE 1
PRESIDENT OBAMA'S JOB RATING - TREND**

"How would you rate the overall job President Barack Obama is doing?"

Base: All adults

| | March | April |
|-------------|-------|-------|
| | % | % |
| POSITIVE | 55 | 58 |
| Excellent | 17 | 18 |
| Pretty good | 38 | 40 |
| NEGATIVE | 45 | 42 |
| Only fair | 27 | 26 |
| Poor | 18 | 15 |

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

**TABLE 2
PRESIDENT OBAMA'S JOB RATING**

"How would you rate the overall job President Barack Obama is doing?"

Base: All adults

| | Total | Race/Ethnicity | | | Political Party | | |
|-------------|-------|----------------|-------|----------|-----------------|------|------|
| | | White | Black | Hispanic | Rep. | Dem. | Ind. |
| | % | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| POSITIVE | 58 | 53 | 91 | 64 | 22 | 87 | 58 |
| Excellent | 18 | 15 | 32 | 23 | 4 | 35 | 13 |
| Pretty good | 40 | 37 | 60 | 41 | 19 | 52 | 45 |
| NEGATIVE | 42 | 47 | 9 | 36 | 78 | 13 | 42 |
| Only fair | 26 | 30 | 5 | 25 | 44 | 11 | 28 |
| Poor | 15 | 17 | 3 | 11 | 34 | 2 | 14 |

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 3
PRESIDENT OBAMA'S JOB RATING – BY GENERATION AND REGION
 "How would you rate the overall job President Barack Obama is doing?"

Base: All adults

| | Total | Region | | | | Generation | | | |
|-----------------|-------|--------|---------|-------|------|----------------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------|
| | | East | Midwest | South | West | Echo Boomers (18-32) | Gen X (33-44) | Baby Boomers (45-63) | Matures (64+) |
| | | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| POSITIVE | 58 | 68 | 58 | 52 | 60 | 64 | 51 | 60 | 55 |
| Excellent | 18 | 24 | 13 | 16 | 20 | 17 | 16 | 20 | 18 |
| Pretty good | 40 | 43 | 44 | 37 | 40 | 48 | 35 | 40 | 37 |
| NEGATIVE | 42 | 32 | 42 | 48 | 40 | 36 | 49 | 40 | 45 |
| Only fair | 26 | 23 | 27 | 30 | 24 | 25 | 30 | 24 | 29 |
| Poor | 15 | 10 | 16 | 18 | 16 | 11 | 19 | 16 | 16 |

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 4
RIGHT DIRECTION OR WRONG TRACK

"Generally speaking, would you say things in the country are going in the right direction or have they pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track?"

Base: All adults

| | TREND | Right Direction | Wrong Track |
|-------------|-----------|-----------------|-------------|
| | | % | % |
| 2009 | April | 42 | 58 |
| | March | 32 | 68 |
| | January | 19 | 72 |
| 2008 | October | 11 | 83 |
| | September | 16 | 77 |
| | June | 14 | 80 |
| | April | 15 | 75 |
| | February | 23 | 69 |
| 2007 | December | 18 | 74 |
| | February | 29 | 62 |
| 2006 | May | 24 | 69 |
| | February | 32 | 59 |
| 2005 | November | 27 | 68 |
| | January | 46 | 48 |
| 2004 | September | 38 | 57 |
| | June | 35 | 59 |
| 2003 | December | 35 | 57 |
| | June | 44 | 51 |
| 2002 | December | 36 | 57 |
| | June | 46 | 48 |
| 2001 | December | 65 | 32 |
| | June | 43 | 52 |
| 2000 | October | 50 | 41 |
| | June | 40 | 51 |
| 1999 | June | 37 | 55 |
| | March | 47 | 45 |
| 1998 | December | 43 | 51 |

| | | | |
|-------------|----------|----|----|
| | June | 48 | 44 |
| 1997 | December | 39 | 56 |
| | April | 36 | 55 |
| 1996 | December | 38 | 50 |
| | June | 29 | 64 |
| 1995 | December | 26 | 62 |
| | June | 24 | 65 |
| 1994 | December | 29 | 63 |
| | June | 28 | 65 |
| 1993 | June | 21 | 70 |
| | March | 39 | 50 |
| 1992 | June | 12 | 81 |
| | January | 20 | 75 |
| 1991 | December | 17 | 75 |
| | January | 58 | 32 |
| 1990 | October | 20 | 73 |
| | February | 48 | 43 |

Note: Prior to March, 2009 this question was asked via telephone

Methodology

This Harris Poll was conducted online within the United States April 13 and 21, 2009 among 2,401 adults (aged 18 and over). Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words "margin of error" as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

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By Regina A. Corso, Director, *The Harris Poll*

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Press Contact:

Harris Interactive
Corporate Communications
585-272-8400
press@harrisinteractive.net

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