

---

## Majorities of Americans Give President Obama Negative Ratings on Handling of Economy and Do Not Have Confidence in White House to Fix Economic Crisis

*Majorities still give him positive marks on overall job approval*

**ROCHESTER, N.Y. – June 22, 2009** – After five months in office, there may be a small bump in the road for President Obama as Americans appear to be a little more negative towards him. While his job approval is still strong with 54% of U.S. adults giving him positive ratings and 46% giving the president negative marks. This is down from last month, where three in five Americans (59%) gave President Obama positive job ratings while two in five (41%) gave him negative job ratings.

These are some of the findings of The Harris Poll, a new nationwide survey of 2,177 U.S. adults surveyed online between June 8 and 15, 2009 by Harris Interactive.

Opinion has also moved downward on how the president and White House are handling the economy. Just over two in five Americans (43%) give President Obama positive marks for his job on the economy while 57% give him negative marks. This is down from last month when 46% gave him positive marks and 54% gave him negative ratings. In the negative for the first time is confidence in the White House and Administration to produce policies to help fix the economic crisis. Now, 51% of Americans are not confident this will happen while 49% are confident. In May, 55% of Americans were confident while 45% were not.

Looking at how certain groups feel about President Obama's job shows where some cracks are appearing:

- It is not surprising that Democrats give President Obama an overwhelmingly positive job rating in comparison to Republicans (85% vs. 19%). Among Independents, more give him negative ratings (53%) than positive (47%);
- There is a gender gap emerging. Men are split with 50% giving President Obama positive ratings and 50% giving him negative ratings while almost three in five women (58%) give him positive ratings;
- Three in five Easterners (60%), 57% of Westerners and just over half of Midwesterners (52%) give President Obama positive ratings. Southerners, however, are negative with 51%;
- There are generational differences. Younger people still give President Obama positive ratings, the oldest generation does not as 54% of Matures (those aged 64 and older) give him negative marks; and,
- Attitudes on the direction of the country had been slowly moving upwards but that has stopped this month. In May 44% of Americans believed the country was going in the right direction while 56% said it was going off on the wrong track. This month, 43% believe it is going in the right direction and 57% say it is going off on the wrong track.

**So What?**

While a majority of Americans still approve of the overall job President Obama is doing, the honeymoon may be nearing its end. When certain groups such as Southerners give him negative marks it is not surprising, but when Independents and Matures are added to the mix, it seems that people may have hit the point where they expect change to occur and, to them, it hasn't yet happened. There are many things that the president is trying to deal with at once – the economy, health care, North Korea, and Iran are the major ones in the forefront, but there is also Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and a myriad of other issues. With attitudes towards his handling of the economy continuing to be negative and a lack of confidence in the White House's ability to fix the crisis, will it be much longer until the honeymoon is officially over?

**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	May	June
	%	%	%	%
<b>POSITIVE</b>	55	58	59	54
Excellent	17	18	17	14
Pretty good	38	40	42	39
<b>NEGATIVE</b>	45	42	41	46
Only fair	27	26	25	25
Poor	18	15	16	21

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

**TABLE 2  
PRESIDENT OBAMA'S JOB RATING – BY GENDER AND PARTY**

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

Base: All adults

	Total	Gender		Political Party		
		Men	Women	Rep.	Dem.	Ind.
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>POSITIVE</b>	54	50	58	19	85	47
Excellent	14	14	15	2	29	7
Pretty good	39	36	43	17	56	40
<b>NEGATIVE</b>	46	50	42	81	15	53
Only fair	25	24	26	36	11	32
Poor	21	26	16	45	3	21

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+)
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>POSITIVE</b>	54	60	52	49	57	57	54	55	46
Excellent	14	13	13	17	14	12	16	17	11
Pretty good	39	48	39	33	42	45	38	38	34
<b>NEGATIVE</b>	46	40	48	51	43	43	46	45	54
Only fair	25	23	28	25	25	28	26	24	23
Poor	21	17	20	26	19	15	20	21	31

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

**TABLE 4**  
**PRESIDENT OBAMA'S JOB RATING ON THE ECONOMY**

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

Base: All adults

	March	April	May	June
	%	%	%	%
<b>POSITIVE</b>	47	49	46	43
Excellent	13	13	10	3
Pretty good	34	36	36	34
<b>NEGATIVE</b>	53	51	54	57
Only fair	30	27	30	27
Poor	23	24	24	30

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

**TABLE 5**  
**CONFIDENCE IN WHITE HOUSE ON ECONOMY**

"How confident are you that the White House and the Administration will produce policies to help fix the economic crisis?"

Base: All adults

	March	April	May	June
	%	%	%	%
<b>CONFIDENT (NET)</b>	57	57	55	49
Very confident	16	17	17	12
Somewhat confident	41	40	38	37
<b>NOT CONFIDENT (NET)</b>	43	43	45	51
Not that confident	23	21	24	25
Not at all confident	20	22	21	27

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

**TABLE 6**  
**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
		%	%
<b>2009</b>	June	43	57
	May	44	56
	April	42	58
	March	32	68
	January	19	72
<b>2008</b>	October	11	83
	September	16	77
	June	14	80
	April	15	75
	February	23	69
<b>2007</b>	December	18	74
	February	29	62
<b>2006</b>	May	24	69
	February	32	59
<b>2005</b>	November	27	68
	January	46	48
<b>2004</b>	September	38	57
	June	35	59
<b>2003</b>	December	35	57
	June	44	51
<b>2002</b>	December	36	57
	June	46	48
<b>2001</b>	December	65	32
	June	43	52
<b>2000</b>	October	50	41
	June	40	51
<b>1999</b>	June	37	55
	March	47	45
<b>1998</b>	December	43	51
	June	48	44
<b>1997</b>	December	39	56
	April	36	55
<b>1996</b>	December	38	50
	June	29	64
<b>1995</b>	December	26	62
	June	24	65
<b>1994</b>	December	29	63
	June	28	65
<b>1993</b>	June	21	70
	March	39	50
<b>1992</b>	June	12	81
	January	20	75
<b>1991</b>	December	17	75
	January	58	32
<b>1990</b>	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 June 8 and 15, 2009 among 2,177 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.***

J36306  
Q1205, 1215, 705, 710

### ***The Harris Poll® #64, June 22, 2009***

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

### **About Harris Interactive**

Harris Interactive is a global leader in custom market research. With a long and rich history in multimodal research, powered by our science and technology, we assist clients in achieving business results. Harris Interactive serves clients globally through our North American, European and Asian offices and a network of independent market research firms. For more information, please visit [www.harrisinteractive.com](http://www.harrisinteractive.com).

**Press Contact:**

Corporate Communications  
Harris Interactive  
585-272-8400  
[press@harrisinteractive.net](mailto:press@harrisinteractive.net)