



Financial Times/Harris Poll Monthly Opinions of Adults from Five European Countries and the United States

January 2009 - Below are the most recent data from the Financial Times/Harris Poll, a monthly poll of adults from five countries in Europe and the U.S. The European countries include France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and Spain.

For more information about the polls and to view the articles by the Financial Times that are based on these data, visit www.ft.com. For inquiries, contact Harris Interactive Corporate Communications at 585-272-8400 or press@harrisinteractive.net.

Source

This FT/Harris Poll was conducted online by Harris Interactive among a total of 6,299 adults (aged 16-64) within France (1,021), Germany (1,107), Great Britain (1,071), Spain (1,007) and the United States (1,066), and adults (aged 18-64) in Italy (1,027) between 8 and 15 January 2009.

Complete survey methodology

This **FT/Harris Poll** was conducted online by Harris Interactive among a total of 6,299 adults (aged 16-64) within France, Germany, Great Britain, Spain, and the United States and adults (aged 18-64) in Italy between 8 and 15 January 2009. Figures for age, sex, education, region and Internet usage were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

Unweighted bases for the survey are: Total (6,299); France (1,021); Germany (1,107); Great Britain (1,071); Italy (1,027); Spain (1,007); and the United States (1,066).

Weighted bases for the survey are: Total (6,297); France (1,021); Germany (1,107); Great Britain (1,071); Italy (1,027); Spain (1,007); and the United States (1,066).

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 populations within those countries that were surveyed. 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 and the British Polling Council.

TABLE 1
INTERNATIONAL PRIORITY FOR PRESIDENT OBAMA

“On January 20th Barack Obama will begin his Presidency. Which one of the following issues do you believe should be at the top of President Obama’s list of priorities in international policy?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1071	1021	1027	1007	1107	1066
Dealing with the international financial crisis	41	40	44	46	35	58
Ensuring there is an immediate and lasting peace between Israel and the Palestinians	11	20	20	21	11	3
Tackling the threat of climate change	12	13	7	7	23	4
Dealing with the threat from international terrorism	14	6	11	11	10	17
Improving the situation in Iraq	6	8	4	4	7	7
Trying to end poverty in Africa	3	6	7	7	3	2
Stopping Iran from making a nuclear bomb	6	4	6	2	5	6
Improving the situation in Afghanistan	5	2	2	1	3	3
Establishing a better relationship with Russia	3	1	1	1	4	1

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

A strong majority of Americans as well as plurality of adults in Spain, Italy, Great Britain and France all believe dealing with the international financial crisis should be at the top of priorities for President Obama in international policy. For Germans, just over one-third believe dealing with the international financial crisis but almost one-quarter say it should be tackling the threat of climate change. For one in five French, Italian and Spanish adults, ensuring a lasting peace between Israel and the Palestinians should be the top priority.

**TABLE 2
EU TROOPS TO AFGHANISTAN**

“If President Obama calls on European Union states to increase significantly the number of troops they deploy in Afghanistan, how should your country respond?”

Base: All EU adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany
	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1071	1021	1027	1007	1107
It should send more troops as a gesture of solidarity with President Obama, irrespective of conditions within Afghanistan	5	4	5	6	5
It should send more troops but only if warranted by conditions within Afghanistan	38	44	42	50	35
It should not send more troops as a gesture of defiance toward President Obama, irrespective of conditions within Afghanistan	7	9	5	19	8
It should not send more troops under any circumstances	50	44	48	26	52

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

Half of Germans and Britons and just under half of Italians say if President Obama calls on EU states to increase their troops in Afghanistan significantly, their country should not send more troops under any circumstances. Half of Spaniards say Spain should send more troops, but only if warranted by conditions within Afghanistan. French adults are split evenly as just over two in five say France should not send any troops under any circumstances, and the same number believe it should send more troops but only if conditions warrant.

**TABLE 3
MORE US TROOPS INTO AFGHANISTAN**

“Should President Obama send more US troops into Afghanistan this year?”

Base: All U.S. adults

	United States
	%
Unweighted base	1066
Yes	30
No	46
Not sure	24

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

In the US, just under half of Americans believe President Obama should not send more US troops into Afghanistan this year while three in ten say he should and one-quarter are unsure.

TABLE 4
EMPHASIS ON WAR ON TERROR FOR PRESIDENT OBAMA

“The Bush presidency was dominated by what the former President called the ‘war on terror’, specifically the threat posed by al Qaeda and international terrorism. How much emphasis should President Obama now place on the threat posed by al Qaeda and international terrorism?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1071	1021	1027	1007	1107	1066
He should place this at the top of his list of priorities in international policy	24	17	25	26	13	45
He should place less emphasis on it than former President Bush but remain wary	58	75	55	59	71	45
He should place very little emphasis on it	10	6	8	8	8	8
He should place no emphasis on it	8	2	12	7	8	3

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

Strong majorities in all the European countries, including three-quarters of French adults, believe President Obama should place less emphasis than President Bush on the threat posed by al Qaeda and international terrorism but still remain wary. In the US, Americans are split as just over two in five believe international terrorism should be at the top of the list of priorities in international policy and the same number say less emphasis should be placed on it than President Bush did.

TABLE 5
IMPACT OF OBAMA ON INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

“Overall, how much of a positive or negative impact do you think that President Obama will have on the course of international events?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1071	1021	1027	1007	1107	1066
POSITIVE IMPACT (NET)	77	92	90	85	82	68
Strong positive impact	29	39	41	23	29	29
Moderate positive impact	30	37	36	38	31	26
Slight positive impact	19	16	13	25	22	13
Neutral impact	15	7	6	12	13	15
NEGATIVE IMPACT (NET)	8	1	4	3	5	16
Slight negative impact	3	1	2	1	2	5
Moderate negative impact	2	*	1	1	1	5
Strong negative impact	3	*	1	1	2	6

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

Note: * indicates less than 0.5%

At least three-quarters of adults in the five European countries as well as two-thirds of Americans all believe that President Obama will have a positive impact on the course of international events.

**TABLE 6
OBAMA AND RUSSIA**

“How far should President Obama go to establish a better working relationship with Russia’s leaders?”
Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1071	1021	1027	1007	1107	1066
He should go as far as he can making many major concessions if required	16	8	18	13	7	14
He should tread very carefully, possibly making a few major concessions	68	73	68	67	65	60
He should make no major concessions at all	15	19	14	20	28	26

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

At least three in five adults in all six countries believe that in dealing with Russia’s leaders President Obama should tread very carefully, possibly making a few major concessions. Over one-quarter of Germans and Americans say President Obama should make no major concessions at all to Russia’s leaders.

**TABLE 7
EU SEAT FOR UN**

“As you may be aware, for the last 60 years, the United Nations Security Council has had five permanent members – Britain, France, Russia, China and the U.S. Do you believe the time has now come for Britain and France to give up their seats, replacing them with a single European Union seat?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1071	1021	1027	1007	1107	1066
Yes, they should give up their seats, replacing them with a single EU seat	23	29	70	58	49	23
No, they should keep their seats	77	71	30	42	51	77

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

Perhaps not surprisingly, over seven in ten French and British adults believe that their countries should keep their UN seats on the Security Council and not replace them with a single EU seat at the UN. Seven in ten Italians and a majority of Spaniards believe the opposite, that it is time for Britain and France to give up their seats and replace them. Germans are pretty evenly split as just over half say they should keep their seat while just under half say it is time for a EU seat. Three-quarters of Americans say the two countries should keep their seats.

**TABLE 8
OBAMA MEETING WITH IRANIAN LEADERS**

“The major countries of the West want Iran to stop producing a nuclear weapon. Do you believe that President Obama should personally meet leading figures in the Iranian government to try and persuade them to stop doing this?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1071	1021	1027	1007	1107	1066
Yes, it would help if he were to meet with Iranian leaders in person to discuss the issue	76	83	84	75	68	65
No, it would not help if he were to meet with Iranian leaders in person to discuss the issue	24	17	16	25	32	35

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

At least two-thirds of adults in all six countries believe that it would help the Iranian situation if President Obama personally met with leading figures in the Iranian government to persuade them to stop producing a nuclear weapon.

**TABLE 9
OBAMA’S RESPONSE TO GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS**

“The world is currently in the middle of a major economic crisis. Do you think President Obama is more likely to respond by...?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1071	1021	1027	1007	1107	1066
Putting America’s economic interests first, saving US jobs, even if this means putting up trade barriers with Europe	35	29	33	39	33	49
Recognising the need for the US and other major countries to work together to overcome the problems facing the world economy	65	71	67	61	67	51

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

At least three in five adults in the five European countries and just over half of Americans believe that President Obama will recognise the need for the US and other major countries to work together to overcome the problems facing the world economy.

**TABLE 10
CONCERN OVER OBAMA’S LACK OF EXPERIENCE HINDERING US ECONOMIC RECOVERY**

“How concerned are you that President Obama’s lack of experience may hinder the economic recovery effort in the US?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1071	1021	1027	1007	1107	1066
Extremely concerned	5	1	2	3	2	23
Very concerned	6	2	4	10	6	11
Somewhat concerned	31	39	24	42	35	30
Not concerned at all	58	58	70	46	56	36

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

Seven in ten Italians and majorities of adults in Great Britain, France, and Germany as well as a plurality of Spaniards, all say they are not concerned at all that President Obama’s lack of experience will hinder the economy recovery effort in the US. Americans are a bit more divided. Just over one-third say they are not at all concerned about the lack of experience while three in ten are somewhat concerned, one in ten are very concerned and almost one-quarter are extremely concerned that Obama’s lack of experience will hinder the economic recovery in the US.

**TABLE 11
CONCERN OVER OBAMA’S LACK OF EXPERIENCE HINDERING ECONOMIC RECOVERY IN OTHER COUNTRIES**

“How concerned are you that President Obama’s lack of experience may hinder the economic recovery effort in your country?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany
	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1071	1021	1027	1007	1107
Extremely concerned	4	1	2	7	3
Very concerned	10	4	6	12	6
Somewhat concerned	31	32	25	32	35
Not concerned at all	56	64	67	48	56

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

Majorities of adults in Great Britain, France, Italy and Germany and just under half of adults in Spain say they are not concerned at all that President Obama’s lack of experience may hinder the economic recovery effort in their country.

TABLE 12
CONCERN OVER OBAMA’S LACK OF EXPERIENCE HINDERING ECONOMIC RECOVERY IN EUROPE

“How concerned are you that President Obama’s lack of experience may hinder the economic recovery effort in Europe?”

Base: All U.S. adults

	United States
	%
Unweighted base	1066
Extremely concerned	16
Very concerned	9
Somewhat concerned	29
Not concerned at all	45

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

A plurality of Americans say they are not concerned at all that President Obama’s lack of experience may hinder the economic recovery in Europe, while three in ten say they are somewhat concerned.

TABLE 13
CUTTING TAXES AND INCREASING SPENDING COMPARED TO OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

“Given the pressures facing the world financial system, do you believe it would be right for your country to pursue policies aimed at stimulating the economy, such as cutting taxes and boosting spending particularly if other European countries do so, or do you believe such policies would be wrong because they risk creating too much borrowing by the state, no matter what other countries may do?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany
	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1071	1021	1027	1007	1107
It would be right for my government to boost the economy by cutting taxes and increasing spending but only if other European countries do so	31	38	29	26	21
It would be right for my government to boost the economy by cutting taxes and increasing spending no matter what other European countries do	47	50	51	61	63
It would be wrong for my government to boost the economy by cutting taxes and increasing spending, no matter what other European countries do	22	12	20	14	15

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

Majorities of adults in France, Italy, Spain and Germany as well as just under half of British adults believe it would be right for their government to boost the economy by cutting taxes and increasing spending no matter what other European countries do.

**TABLE 14
CONTINUING EMBARGO ON CUBA**

“How much would you support or oppose President Obama continuing the embargo on Cuba?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1071	1021	1027	1007	1107	1066
SUPPORT (NET)	11	9	12	18	8	35
Very much support	4	3	5	7	3	20
Somewhat support	7	6	6	11	5	15
Neutral	61	51	43	32	50	42
OPPOSE (NET)	28	40	45	50	42	22
Somewhat oppose	14	21	22	24	25	12
Very much oppose	13	20	23	26	17	10

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

Half of Spaniards and a plurality of Italians would oppose President Obama continuing the embargo on Cuba while three in five Britons and half of French and German adults are neutral on the issue. One-third of Americans would support Obama continuing the embargo on Cuba, while one in five would oppose it and two in five are neutral on the issue.

**TABLE 15
GREATEST THREATS TO GLOBAL STABILITY**

“Which one, if any, of the following countries do you think is the greatest threat to global stability?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and in the U.S.

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unweighted base	1071	1021	1027	1007	1107	1066
US	19	10	10	21	11	8
China	14	27	25	17	24	19
Russia	17	12	7	8	15	9
Iran	18	25	32	20	17	29
Iraq	8	8	11	14	12	10
North Korea	7	3	3	7	5	16
India	-	*	-	*	-	*
Pakistan	1	1	-	*	*	*
Israel	2	2	1	3	1	*
Palestine	-	*	*	*	*	-
Saudi Arabia	*	-	-	-	-	*
No one country – all are a threat	-	*	1	-	*	*
No country – terrorist organisations	-	-	-	-	-	*
Afghanistan	1	-	-	-	*	*
UK	*	-	-	-	-	-
Syria	-	*	-	-	*	*
Muslim countries (not specified)	-	-	-	*	-	-
Middle East (country not specified)	*	-	*	*	*	*
Africa (country not specified)	-	*	*	-	-	-
Other	*	*	*	*	*	*
None	14	11	10	10	13	7
Not sure/Not stated/Refused	*	*	*	*	*	1

Note: * indicates less than 0.5%; “-“ indicates no response

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