

## **Half of Americans Dislike President Obama's Track Record as President and Believe Positions He Has Taken as President Have Hurt the Country**

*But, three in five like him as a person and almost three-quarters believe President Obama is very intelligent*

**NEW YORK, N.Y. – January 10, 2012** – The White House and re-election team await their Republican challenger which will dictate the exact nature of the campaign that President Obama runs for the general election. After three years in office, what do Americans think of the President? Well, three in five (62%) say they like him as a person, half (49%) like his political opinions, but only 43% like Barack Obama's track record as president while half (50%) dislike it.

These are some of the results of *The Harris Poll* of 2,237 adults surveyed online between December 5 and 12, 2011 by [Harris Interactive](#).

As might be expected, Republicans and Conservatives are more inclined to dislike most aspects pertaining to the President while Democrats and Independents are more inclined to like them. Among Independents, almost two-thirds (65%) say they like Barack Obama as a person, half (50%) like his political opinions, and 42% like his track record as president. If we look at the potential swing states for the upcoming general election, 62% of people in those states like the President as a person, 48% like his political opinions and just two in five (40%) like Barack Obama's track record as president.

Looking at some other attributes of the President, three-quarters of Americans (73%) including over half of Republicans (56%) think the President is a very intelligent person. Half of U.S. adults believe he inspires confidence personally (51%) and that his diverse background is an asset (49%). Over half (56%), however, believe by focusing on healthcare reform, he let the economy continue to struggle and half (49%) also believe positions he has taken as President have hurt the country. Half of Americans (49%) disagree that he has done little as President while 44% agree with that statement.

When asked about Barack Obama's political stance, two in five Americans (42%) believe he is neither too liberal nor too conservative, 31% believe he is too liberal and 4% say he is too conservative. Looking at the 2012 swing states, over one-third of people in those states (35%) believe Barack Obama is too liberal.

If Barack Obama is the Democratic nominee, which appears to be a given, two in five Americans (42%) would vote for him, 44% would not and 10% are not sure. Among Independents, 46% say they would not vote for Barack Obama while 39% would but among Moderates, almost half (47%) would vote for him while 38% say they would not. Among the possible 2012 swing states, almost half (47%) say they will not vote for the President while 40% say they would.

### **So What?**

The general election race will come into focus in the next few weeks as the Republican primary draws to a close. At that time, President Obama's re-election campaign will know which Republican they are running against, but they will also be running against the President's first term. Americans, especially those in the swing states, have

been hurt by the economy and while it may be rebounding that needs to be perceived by voters. If it's not, then the President has quite the uphill battle.

**TABLE 1  
PERCEPTION OF BARACK OBAMA**

"Thinking about presidential politics, looking at the list of attributes, please indicate how you feel about each."

Base: All adults

	<b>Total Like (NET)</b>	Strongly like	Somewhat like	<b>Total Dislike (NET)</b>	Somewhat dislike	Strongly dislike	Not sure
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Barack Obama as a person	<b>62</b>	37	25	<b>27</b>	12	16	11
Barack Obama's political opinions	<b>49</b>	25	24	<b>43</b>	12	31	8
Barack Obama's track record as president	<b>43</b>	15	29	<b>50</b>	16	34	7

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

**TABLE 1A  
PERCEPTION OF BARACK OBAMA – SUMMARY OF LIKE**

"Thinking about presidential politics, looking at the list of attributes, please indicate how you feel about each."

*Those saying "Strongly/Somewhat like"*

Base: All adults

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Party ID</b>			<b>Party Philosophy</b>			<b>Swing States</b>	
		Rep.	Dem.	Ind.	Cons.	Mod.	Lib.	2012	2008
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Barack Obama as a person	<b>62</b>	28	89	65	33	69	87	62	61
Barack Obama's political opinions	<b>49</b>	10	82	50	17	56	78	48	48
Barack Obama's track record as president	<b>43</b>	8	75	42	15	49	71	40	39

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding; 2012 Swing States are Colorado, Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Ohio and Virginia; 5% states in 2008 are Florida, Indiana, Missouri, Montana, North Carolina and Ohio

**TABLE 2  
ATTITUDES TOWARDS BARACK OBAMA**

"Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements about Barack Obama."

Base: All adults

	<b>Total Agree (NET)</b>	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	<b>Total Disagree (NET)</b>	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
He is a very intelligent person	<b>73</b>	43	29	<b>18</b>	10	9	9
By focusing on healthcare reform, he let the economy continue to struggle	<b>56</b>	31	24	<b>34</b>	18	17	10
He inspires confidence personally	<b>51</b>	23	28	<b>40</b>	13	26	9
Positions he has taken as President have hurt the country	<b>49</b>	30	18	<b>43</b>	20	23	9
His diverse background is an asset	<b>49</b>	22	26	<b>36</b>	14	22	15
He has done little as President	<b>44</b>	25	19	<b>49</b>	23	27	7

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

**TABLE 2A  
ATTITUDES TOWARDS BARACK OBAMA – SUMMARY OF AGREE**

"Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements about Barack Obama."

*Those saying "Strongly/Somewhat agree"*

Base: All adults

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Party ID</b>			<b>Party Philosophy</b>			<b>Swing States</b>	
		Rep.	Dem.	Ind.	Cons.	Mod.	Lib.	2012	2008
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
He is a very intelligent person	<b>73</b>	56	91	73	56	76	87	77	75
By focusing on healthcare reform, he let the economy continue to struggle	<b>56</b>	84	31	58	81	52	27	59	59
He inspires confidence personally	<b>51</b>	24	79	49	26	56	76	49	52
Positions he has taken as President have hurt the country	<b>49</b>	82	21	50	78	43	21	51	52
His diverse background is an asset	<b>49</b>	22	75	46	23	53	75	49	52
He has done little as President	<b>44</b>	73	17	49	70	39	17	47	48

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding; 2012 Swing States are Colorado, Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Ohio and Virginia; 5% states in 2008 are Florida, Indiana, Missouri, Montana, North Carolina and Ohio

**TABLE 3**  
**BARACK OBAMA'S POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY**  
 "Do you think Barack Obama...?"

Base: All adults

	Total	Party ID			Party Philosophy			Swing States	
		Rep.	Dem.	Ind.	Cons.	Mod.	Lib.	2012	2008
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Is too liberal	<b>31</b>	70	4	32	71	20	2	35	36
Is neither too liberal nor too conservative	<b>42</b>	13	70	43	9	51	68	41	38
Is too conservative	<b>4</b>	*	6	4	1	3	14	4	4
Not sure	<b>22</b>	16	20	22	19	26	16	20	22

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding; 2012 Swing States are Colorado, Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Ohio and Virginia; 5% states in 2008 are Florida, Indiana, Missouri, Montana, North Carolina and Ohio; \* indicates less than 1%

**TABLE 4**  
**VOTING FOR BARACK OBAMA**

"If Barack Obama was the Democratic nominee for President, which is closest to the way you think?"

Base: All adults

	Total	Party ID			Party Philosophy			Swing States	
		Rep	Dem	Ind	Cons	Mod.	Lib.	2012	2008
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Would vote for him (NET)</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>
I definitely would vote for him	<b>27</b>	2	57	22	6	29	55	28	24
I probably would vote for him	<b>16</b>	4	23	17	8	18	20	12	15
<b>Would not vote for him (NET)</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>47</b>
I probably would not vote for him	<b>8</b>	8	3	13	7	10	3	7	8
I definitely would not vote for him	<b>37</b>	80	7	33	73	28	6	39	39
I wouldn't vote at all	<b>3</b>	2	2	3	1	3	4	3	3
Not sure	<b>10</b>	5	8	12	6	12	12	10	10

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding; 2012 Swing States are Colorado, Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Ohio and Virginia; 5% states in 2008 are Florida, Indiana, Missouri, Montana, North Carolina and Ohio

### Methodology

This **Harris Poll** was conducted online within the United States between December 5 and 12, 2011 among 2,237 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, SVP, Harris Poll, Public Relations and Youth Research, Harris Interactive

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