



## **President Barack Obama's Approval Rating & The Economy**

\*\*\* Complete Tables for Poll Appended \*\*\*

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### **This Marist Poll Reports:**

#### **Obama Approval Rating at 55%...Loses Majority of Independent Voters**

While the Obama Administration is embroiled in a bitter battle to get a health care plan pushed through Congress, President Barack Obama is faring well, overall, in the eyes of a majority of voters. However, the president's job performance may have lost a bit of its luster for members of one key voting group for the first time since taking office.

55% of U.S. registered voters approve of the job President Barack Obama is doing in office while 35% say they disapprove. The president has held his own in the court of public opinion during the last few months. In The Marist Poll's June survey, the president received a similar job approval rating -- 56%. These proportions are consistent with those Mr. Obama received in April. In Marist's April 27<sup>th</sup> and April 8<sup>th</sup> surveys, the president received kudos from 55% and 56% of voters, respectively.

But, is President Obama on a slippery slope with Independent voters? Currently, 47% of Independents nationwide say they approve of the job the president is doing while 37% disapprove. This is the first time Obama has lost a majority of Independents since taking office. In June, 51% believed Obama was meeting their standards, and in Marist's April 27<sup>th</sup> and April 8<sup>th</sup> surveys, 54% and 53%, respectively, thought this way.

There is also movement in the GOP camp. Although a similar proportion of Republicans -- 20% -- currently approve of the president's job performance compared with those in June -- 23% -- more members of the GOP *disapprove* of Mr. Obama now. 71% today say they are not pleased with the way the president is running the country. 61% shared this view in June.

Looking at the president's own party, it's not surprising that most Democrats -- 90% -- report that President Obama's job performance is meeting their standards. This proportion is little changed from Marist's previous survey.

Although a majority of the U.S. electorate approves of President Obama's job performance, the president fails to receive a majority of voters who believe he is changing the country for the better. Half believe this to be the case while 31% say Mr. Obama is changing the nation for the worse. 15% of voters say he is not altering the country at all. There has been little change on this question since Marist last asked it in June.

### **52% Approve of Economic Handling...Obama Does Not Own Economic Conditions**

A slim majority of voters -- 52% -- say they approve of the way President Obama is handling the economy while 41% disapprove. Little has changed since The Marist Poll last asked this question in June. At that time, 53% reported they agreed with the way the president is dealing with the nation's turbulent economy while 41% did not.

There is a clear partisan divide on this issue. 83% of Democrats say they approve of Mr. Obama's methods while just 18% of Republicans agree. Similar proportions of Democrats and Republicans held these views in June.

As was the case with the president's job approval rating, there has been a dip in support among Independent voters. Currently, this group divides with 47% approving of the president's handling of the economy and 45% disapproving. In June, half of Independents supported President Obama's economic tactics, and in early April, even more Independents thought well of Obama's economic management. At that time, 54% of Independents approved of Obama's handling of the economy.

And, while many Republicans in Congress would like to place ownership of the economy and a host of other issues on President Obama's plate, they may have a difficult time doing so when it comes to the nation's financial situation. Nearly three quarters of voters nationwide -- 74% -- think the president inherited today's economic conditions while 18% say they are a result of the president's own policies. Even a majority of Republicans -- 55% - - currently report the president is not to blame for today's economic conditions.

### **Country Moving In Right Direction, According to Half of U.S Residents**

50% of Americans believe the nation is moving in the right direction while 42% think the country is on the wrong course. These survey results are comparable to those found in Marist's June survey.

# Marist Poll August 2009

## National Tables

### **Nature of the Sample: 938 U.S. Residents**

This survey of 938 United States residents was conducted on August 3<sup>rd</sup> through August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Residents 18 years of age and older were interviewed by telephone. Telephone numbers were selected based upon a list of telephone exchanges from throughout the nation. The exchanges were selected to ensure that each region was represented in proportion to its population. To increase coverage, this land-line sample was supplemented by respondents reached through random dialing of cell phone numbers. The two samples were then combined. Results are statistically significant at  $\pm 3.2\%$ . There are 854 registered voters. The results for this subset are statistically significant at  $\pm 3.5\%$ . The error margin increases for cross-tabulations.

		Registered Voters		
		Do you approve or disapprove of the job Barack Obama is doing as president?		
		Approve	Disapprove	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %
	Registered Voters	55%	35%	10%
Party ID	Democrat	90%	6%	4%
	Republican	20%	71%	9%
	Independent	47%	37%	16%
Region	Northeast	63%	26%	11%
	Midwest	62%	32%	6%
	South	47%	43%	11%
	West	55%	33%	12%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	53%	32%	14%
	\$50,000 or more	58%	35%	7%
Education	Not college graduate	53%	34%	13%
	College graduate	59%	35%	5%
Age	18 to 29	65%	29%	7%
	30 to 44	55%	29%	16%
	45 to 59	55%	38%	8%
	60 or older	49%	41%	10%
Gender	Men	54%	38%	7%
	Women	55%	33%	13%

Marist Poll National Registered Voters "N=854 MOE +/- 3.5%" Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

		Registered Voters			
		Overall, would you describe the direction in which President Barack Obama is moving the country as:			
		Change for the better	Change for the worse	No change at all	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
	Registered Voters	50%	31%	15%	4%
Party ID	Democrat	82%	5%	9%	5%
	Republican	18%	62%	17%	3%
	Independent	42%	33%	19%	5%
Region	Northeast	56%	21%	18%	5%
	Midwest	54%	31%	12%	2%
	South	45%	35%	14%	5%
	West	46%	35%	15%	4%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	48%	26%	18%	7%
	\$50,000 or more	51%	34%	13%	1%
Education	Not college graduate	45%	29%	20%	5%
	College graduate	57%	33%	6%	4%
Age	18 to 29	65%	13%	23%	0%
	30 to 44	44%	25%	24%	7%
	45 to 59	47%	37%	12%	4%
	60 or older	47%	41%	9%	4%
Gender	Men	51%	33%	13%	2%
	Women	48%	30%	16%	6%

Marist Poll National Registered Voters "N=854 MOE +/- 3.5%" Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

		Registered Voters		
		Do you approve or disapprove of how President Barack Obama is handling the economy?		
		Approve	Disapprove	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %
	Registered Voters	52%	41%	7%
Party ID	Democrat	83%	11%	6%
	Republican	18%	74%	8%
	Independent	47%	45%	8%
Region	Northeast	58%	33%	9%
	Midwest	57%	38%	5%
	South	48%	45%	7%
	West	47%	44%	9%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	50%	39%	11%
	\$50,000 or more	54%	42%	4%
Education	Not college graduate	49%	42%	9%
	College graduate	57%	38%	5%
Age	18 to 29	63%	33%	5%
	30 to 44	51%	38%	11%
	45 to 59	51%	44%	5%
	60 or older	47%	46%	7%
Gender	Men	52%	44%	4%
	Women	51%	38%	11%

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		Registered Voters		
		Do you think the current economic conditions are mostly something President Obama inherited or are they mostly a result of his own policies?		
		Economic conditions mostly inherited	Economic conditions mostly result of his own policies	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %
	Registered Voters	74%	18%	8%
Party ID	Democrat	88%	8%	3%
	Republican	55%	32%	13%
	Independent	76%	14%	10%
Region	Northeast	77%	16%	7%
	Midwest	78%	13%	9%
	South	69%	21%	10%
	West	77%	17%	6%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	75%	17%	9%
	\$50,000 or more	76%	17%	6%
Education	Not college graduate	74%	17%	9%
	College graduate	75%	17%	8%
Age	18 to 29	82%	8%	11%
	30 to 44	80%	13%	7%
	45 to 59	74%	20%	6%
	60 or older	67%	23%	10%
Gender	Men	73%	19%	9%
	Women	75%	17%	8%

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		Americans		
		In general, thinking about the way things are going in the country, do you feel things are going in the right direction or that things are going in the wrong direction?		
		Right direction	Wrong direction	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %
	Americans	50%	42%	8%
	Registered Voters	51%	42%	7%
Party ID	Democrat	78%	16%	6%
	Republican	24%	69%	7%
	Independent	45%	48%	7%
Region	Northeast	54%	39%	7%
	Midwest	59%	37%	4%
	South	43%	47%	10%
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Education	Not college graduate	49%	41%	10%
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Age	18 to 29	60%	27%	13%
	30 to 44	52%	44%	4%
	45 to 59	47%	47%	6%
	60 or older	45%	46%	8%
Gender	Men	51%	43%	6%
	Women	50%	40%	10%
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