



McClatchy-Marist Poll

Voters' Expectations Tempered for Obama's Middle East Trip

*** Complete Tables for Poll Appended ***

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Contact: Lee M. Miringoff
Barbara L. Carvalho
Mary E. Griffith
Marist College
845.575.5050

This McClatchy-Marist Poll Reports:

What do U.S. registered voters think will come of President Barack Obama's trip to the Middle East?

About two-thirds of voters -- 66% -- don't think it will make much difference in easing the tensions in the region. 19% believe the president's trip will increase tensions in the area while 15% say the visit will decrease them.

"Voters are not optimistic that the president's trip will be a productive one," says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. "But, such low expectations present an opportunity for President Obama to make strides both abroad and in voters' views of his standing internationally."

But, will Mr. Obama's presence help jump-start negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians? 65% of voters nationally do not think his trip will help restart peace talks. 27%, however, believe his visit will, and 3% say it will make no difference in the process. Six percent are unsure.

While 80% of Republicans and 70% of independent voters do not think President Obama's visit to the Middle East will restart peace talks between the Israelis and the Palestinians, Democrats divide. 47% of Democrats do not think it will help restart talks while 43% believe the trip will.

Obama's Handling of Foreign Policy Receives Mixed Reviews...Lowest Point in Two Years

There has been a decline in the proportion of registered voters nationally who approve of how President Barack Obama is dealing with foreign policy. Registered voters divide with

46% reporting they approve of his handling of the issue and 47% saying they disapprove. Eight percent are unsure. When McClatchy-Marist last reported this question in December 2012, a slim majority of voters -- 51% -- approved of how the president was dealing with foreign policy. 42% disapproved, and 7% were unsure.

The president's current approval rating is the lowest he's received on this issue since April 2011. At that time, 46% gave the president a thumbs-up on foreign policy. 48% disapproved, and 6% were unsure.

Seven in Ten View Iran as Imminent Nuclear Threat

70% of registered voters think Iran is close to becoming a nuclear threat. This includes 31% who believe the nation is very close and 39% who believe it is close. 18% don't perceive the country as an imminent nuclear danger while 6% don't think it is a threat at all. Six percent are unsure.

Republicans -- 84% -- are most likely to think Iran is on the cusp of becoming a nuclear threat. More than seven in ten independent voters -- 72% -- agree. Among Democrats, 59% have this view.

How the Survey was Conducted

Nature of the Sample: McClatchy-Marist National Poll of 1,233 Adults

This survey of 1,233 adults was conducted March 4th through March 7th, 2013. Adults 18 years of age and older residing in the continental United States 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 landline sample was supplemented by respondents reached through random dialing of cell phone numbers. The two samples were then combined and balanced to reflect the 2010 census results for age, gender, income, race, and region. Results are statistically significant within ± 2.8 percentage points. There are 1,068 registered voters. The results for this subset are statistically significant within ± 3.0 percentage points. The error margin increases for cross-tabulations.

Nature of the Sample

		National Adults	National Registered Voters
		Col %	Col %
National Adults		100%	
National Registered Voters		87%	100%
Party Identification	Democrat	n/a	35%
	Republican	n/a	26%
	Independent	n/a	37%
	Other	n/a	1%
Party Identification	Strong Democrats	n/a	21%
	Not strong Democrats	n/a	14%
	Democratic leaning independents	n/a	14%
	Just Independents	n/a	8%
	Republican leaning independents	n/a	15%
	Not strong Republicans	n/a	12%
	Strong Republicans	n/a	15%
	Other	n/a	1%
	Political Ideology	Very conservative	n/a
Conservative		n/a	32%
Moderate		n/a	34%
Liberal		n/a	19%
Very liberal		n/a	5%
Gender	Men	49%	48%
	Women	51%	52%
Age	Under 45	40%	36%
	45 or older	60%	64%
Age	18 to 29	18%	14%
	30 to 44	22%	22%
	45 to 59	29%	31%
	60 or older	31%	33%
Race	White	69%	71%
	African American	11%	11%
	Latino	14%	13%
	Other	5%	5%
Region	Northeast	18%	18%
	Midwest	22%	22%
	South	37%	37%
	West	23%	23%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	49%	47%
	\$50,000 or more	51%	53%
Education	Not college graduate	60%	58%
	College graduate	40%	42%
Interview Type	Landline	70%	73%
	Cell Phone	30%	27%

McClatchy-Marist Poll National Adults. Interviews conducted March 4th through March 7th, 2013, N=1233 MOE +/- 2.8 percentage points. National Registered Voters: N=1068 MOE +/- 3.0 percentage points. Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

McClatchy-Marist Poll National Tables

		National Registered Voters		
		President Obama plans to go to the Middle East this month. Do you expect his visit to increase tensions in the region, decrease tensions in the region, or not make any difference?		
		Increase tensions	Decrease tensions	Not make any difference
		Row %	Row %	Row %
National Registered Voters		19%	15%	66%
Party Identification	Democrat	14%	25%	61%
	Republican	25%	4%	70%
	Independent	20%	13%	67%
Party Identification*	Strong Democrats	11%	30%	59%
	Soft Democrats	19%	16%	65%
	Just Independents	28%	9%	63%
	Soft Republicans	18%	10%	72%
	Strong Republicans	32%	1%	66%
Political Ideology	Very liberal-Liberal	11%	23%	66%
	Moderate	18%	15%	68%
	Conservative-Very conservative	26%	10%	64%
Region	Northeast	14%	13%	73%
	Midwest	16%	17%	67%
	South	24%	12%	64%
	West	20%	16%	64%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	22%	16%	63%
	\$50,000 or more	16%	14%	70%
Education	Not college graduate	21%	16%	63%
	College graduate	16%	13%	71%
Race	White	19%	12%	69%
	African American	15%	28%	58%
	Latino	26%	9%	65%
Age	18 to 29	20%	25%	55%
	30 to 44	20%	11%	69%
	45 to 59	19%	13%	68%
	60 or older	18%	14%	68%
Age	Under 45	20%	17%	63%
	45 or older	19%	13%	68%
Gender	Men	16%	13%	72%
	Women	22%	17%	61%
Interview Type	Landline	19%	13%	68%
	Cell Phone	19%	19%	62%

McClatchy-Marist Poll National Registered Voters. Interviews conducted March 4th through March 7th, 2013, N=1068 MOE +/- 3.0 percentage points. Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

*Soft Democrats include registered voters who identify as "not strong Democrats" or Democratic leaning independents. Soft Republicans include those registered voters who identify as "not strong Republicans" or Republican leaning independents.

McClatchy-Marist Poll National Tables

		National Registered Voters				
		Do you think President Obama's visit to the Middle East will help restart negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians or not help restart negotiations?				
		Help restart negotiations	Not help restart negotiations	No difference	Unsure	
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	
National Registered Voters		27%	65%	3%	6%	
Party Identification	Democrat	43%	47%	2%	8%	
	Republican	12%	80%	3%	4%	
	Independent	22%	70%	2%	6%	
Party Identification*	Strong Democrats	52%	39%	1%	8%	
	Soft Democrats	30%	62%	2%	6%	
	Just Independents	23%	59%	4%	14%	
	Soft Republicans	15%	78%	4%	3%	
Political Ideology	Strong Republicans	9%	85%	2%	4%	
	Very liberal-Liberal	43%	48%	0%	9%	
	Moderate	28%	62%	4%	6%	
Region	Conservative-Very conservative	17%	77%	3%	3%	
	Northeast	27%	66%	2%	5%	
	Midwest	28%	62%	2%	7%	
Region	South	27%	64%	2%	7%	
	West	24%	67%	4%	5%	
	Household Income	Less than \$50,000	32%	57%	3%	8%
	\$50,000 or more	22%	73%	1%	4%	
Education	Not college graduate	28%	63%	3%	7%	
	College graduate	25%	68%	2%	5%	
Race	White	22%	69%	3%	7%	
	African American	42%	51%	0%	6%	
	Latino	36%	57%	5%	3%	
Age	18 to 29	37%	57%	2%	4%	
	30 to 44	25%	69%	2%	5%	
	45 to 59	23%	70%	3%	4%	
	60 or older	26%	61%	3%	9%	
Age	Under 45	30%	64%	2%	4%	
	45 or older	25%	66%	3%	7%	
Gender	Men	24%	70%	3%	4%	
	Women	29%	60%	2%	8%	
Interview Type	Landline	25%	66%	3%	6%	
	Cell Phone	30%	61%	3%	6%	

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McClatchy-Marist Poll National Tables

		National Registered Voters		
		Do you approve or disapprove of how President Barack Obama is handling foreign policy?		
		Approve	Disapprove	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %
National Registered Voters		46%	47%	8%
Party Identification	Democrat	75%	16%	9%
	Republican	13%	80%	6%
	Independent	43%	51%	6%
Party Identification*	Strong Democrats	81%	11%	7%
	Soft Democrats	69%	24%	7%
	Just Independents	41%	45%	13%
	Soft Republicans	20%	73%	7%
	Strong Republicans	6%	91%	3%
Political Ideology	Very liberal-Liberal	67%	23%	10%
	Moderate	58%	35%	7%
	Conservative-Very conservative	23%	71%	6%
Region	Northeast	55%	40%	5%
	Midwest	46%	45%	9%
	South	45%	49%	6%
	West	41%	49%	10%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	48%	41%	11%
	\$50,000 or more	47%	50%	3%
Education	Not college graduate	45%	47%	8%
	College graduate	47%	46%	7%
Race	White	39%	54%	7%
	African American	81%	14%	5%
	Latino	50%	34%	16%
Age	18 to 29	56%	39%	5%
	30 to 44	42%	49%	9%
	45 to 59	44%	50%	6%
	60 or older	46%	45%	9%
Age	Under 45	47%	45%	8%
	45 or older	45%	47%	7%
Gender	Men	46%	50%	4%
	Women	46%	43%	10%
Interview Type	Landline	42%	50%	8%
	Cell Phone	55%	38%	7%

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	Registered Voters		
	Do you approve or disapprove of how President Barack Obama is handling foreign policy?		
	Approve	Disapprove	Unsure
	Row %	Row %	Row %
March 2013	46%	47%	8%
December 2012	51%	42%	7%
March 2012	50%	45%	5%
November 2011	49%	45%	6%
April 2011	46%	48%	6%
November 2010	44%	47%	9%
June 2009	54%	32%	14%
April 2009	55%	24%	21%
Marist Poll National Registered Voters			

McClatchy-Marist Poll National Tables

		National Registered Voters				
		Do you think Iran is very close, close, not very close or not close at all to being a nuclear threat?				
		Very close	Close	Not very close	Not close at all	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
National Registered Voters		31%	39%	18%	6%	6%
Party Identification	Democrat	21%	38%	25%	8%	8%
	Republican	42%	42%	9%	3%	4%
	Independent	34%	38%	17%	5%	6%
Party Identification*	Strong Democrats	19%	39%	26%	10%	6%
	Soft Democrats	23%	38%	25%	4%	9%
	Just Independents	24%	41%	15%	10%	11%
	Soft Republicans	41%	41%	11%	4%	3%
	Strong Republicans	51%	39%	5%	2%	3%
Political Ideology	Very liberal-Liberal	20%	32%	28%	9%	10%
	Moderate	28%	42%	21%	6%	4%
	Conservative-Very conservative	42%	41%	10%	4%	4%
Region	Northeast	29%	41%	19%	4%	7%
	Midwest	30%	40%	18%	6%	6%
	South	31%	38%	17%	6%	8%
	West	34%	37%	18%	8%	3%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	25%	40%	19%	7%	9%
	\$50,000 or more	38%	38%	17%	5%	3%
Education	Not college graduate	28%	39%	17%	7%	8%
	College graduate	35%	39%	18%	4%	4%
Race	White	35%	39%	16%	4%	6%
	African American	22%	32%	27%	13%	6%
	Latino	20%	40%	25%	7%	8%
Age	18 to 29	15%	45%	26%	8%	6%
	30 to 44	41%	33%	17%	4%	4%
	45 to 59	34%	39%	15%	7%	6%
	60 or older	30%	39%	18%	6%	8%
Age	Under 45	31%	38%	21%	6%	5%
	45 or older	32%	39%	16%	6%	7%
Gender	Men	36%	36%	17%	7%	4%
	Women	27%	41%	18%	4%	9%
Interview Type	Landline	32%	40%	16%	6%	6%
	Cell Phone	28%	36%	22%	6%	7%

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