

# Bloomberg National Poll

SELZER & COMPANY  
1,004 U.S. adults ages 18 and over  
Margin of Error: ± 3.1 percentage points

Study #1993  
July 9-12, 2010  
**Weighted by age and race**

## Methodology

**July 14 (Bloomberg)** -- The Bloomberg National Poll, conducted July 9-12 for Bloomberg News by Selzer & Co. Inc. of Des Moines, IA, is based on interviews with 1,004 U.S. adults ages 18 or older.

Interviewers contacted households with randomly selected landline and cell phone telephone numbers. Percentages based on the full sample may have a maximum margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points.

Responses were weighted by age and race to reflect the general population based on recent census data. Results based on smaller samples of respondents—such as by gender or age—have a larger margin of error. Republishing the copyrighted Bloomberg National Poll without credit to Bloomberg News is prohibited.

## Poll Questions

In general, do you think things in the nation are headed in the right direction, or have they gotten off on the wrong track?

- 31 Right direction
- 63 Wrong track
- 6 Not sure

Which of the following do you see as the most important issue facing the country right now? (**Read list. Rotate.) Sorted.**)

- 41 Unemployment and jobs
- 26 The federal deficit and government spending
- 13 The oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico
- 9 Health care
- 7 The war in Afghanistan
- 1 Other (VOL) (specify:)
- 3 Not sure

What is your attitude about today's economic environment? Are you:

- 23 Getting back to normal
- 54 Still hunkering down
- 16 Seeing opportunity and taking more risks
- 7 Have no idea

Let me ask you about the U.S. economy specifically—do you feel it is starting to get better, staying the same, or is getting worse?

- 28 Getting better
- 36 Staying same
- 35 Getting worse
- 1 Not sure

In general, would you say you are personally better off or worse off today than you were 18 months ago, or are you in about the same situation?

- 17 Better off
- 29 Worse off
- 54 About the same
- Not sure

Many economists say the US emerged from the recession last year. Which of the following best reflects your opinion? **(Read list.)**

- 13 The economy is faltering and we will fall back into recession
- 14 The economy is on solid ground and we will not fall back into recession
- 71 Regardless of what economists say, it still feels like we are in a recession
- 2 Not sure

The U.S. currently has a huge budget deficit and a high unemployment rate. Which should take priority—reducing the budget deficit or reducing the unemployment rate?

- 28 Reducing the budget deficit
- 70 Reducing the unemployment rate
- 2 Not sure

Long-term unemployment is near a record high. The government is considering again extending unemployment benefits so that people could continue to receive payments for as long as 99 weeks, instead of the normal 26-week cut-off. That would add \$34 billion to the deficit. Do you favor or oppose extending unemployment benefits?

- 47 Favor
- 49 Oppose
- 4 Not sure

Which of the following best describes your attitude toward the federal budget deficit? **(Read list.)**

- 52 It is dangerously out of control and threatens our economic future
- 43 It is a manageable burden that will require some sacrifice down the road
- 4 It will cause no lasting harm
- 1 Not sure

I'm going to mention some general approaches that could be considered to help decrease the deficit—some of which may mean a sacrifice for you and your household. For each, please tell me if you think this approach should be strongly considered, just considered, or taken off the table.

**(Read list. Rotate.)**

Sorted by combined Strongly Considered and Considered	Strongly Considered	Considered	Taken off Table	Not Sure
On Social Security, remove the cap so that wages over \$107,000 a year are subject to the tax	39	40	18	3
Allow the income tax rate for the highest income earners to go back up to where it was 10 years ago	41	31	22	6
Cut defense spending	26	34	38	2
Stop extending unemployment benefits beyond the usual 26 weeks to workers who lost their jobs during the recession	24	35	40	1
Cut federal spending on roads, bridges and public transportation	16	40	43	1
Cut spending on government programs such as education, public housing, and regulatory agencies	23	31	44	2
On Medicare, raise the age at which people become eligible from 65 to 67	18	34	47	1
Raise the income tax rate on middle-class Americans by 2%	8	28	63	1
Reduce Social Security and Medicare benefits	9	18	72	1

Is it your sense that the amount you pay in federal income taxes is higher or lower than it was under the Bush administration, or is it about the same?

- 20 Higher
- 7 Lower
- 65 About the same
- 8 Not sure

Do you think the Troubled Asset Relief Program, known as TARP, was necessary to prevent the financial industry from failing and drastically hurting the US economy, or was it an unneeded bailout?

- 28 Was necessary
- 58 Unneeded bailout
- 14 Not sure

In general, what is your view on the need for government regulation—do you think there is a need for more regulation, less regulation, or about the same as we have now?

- 35 More regulation
- 33 Less regulation
- 30 Same as now
- 2 Not sure

Congress is on the verge of passing a bill that creates new regulations for financial institutions. Is it your sense this legislation does more to protect the financial industry or more to protect consumers?

- 47 The financial industry
- 38 Consumers
- 1 Both equal (VOL)
- 14 Not sure

Is it your sense the new rules passed by Congress will require big Wall Street banks to make major changes in the way they do business, minor changes, or will it really amount to very little if any change?

- 21 Major changes
- 22 Minor changes
- 47 Very little if any change
- 10 Not sure

How confident are you that the new financial regulations will prevent or seriously soften the impact of another crisis—very confident, fairly confident, just somewhat confident, or not confident?

- 5 Very confident
- 13 Fairly confident
- 35 Just somewhat confident
- 44 Not confident
- 3 Not sure

How confident are you that the new financial regulations will make your savings and financial assets more secure—very confident, fairly confident, just somewhat confident, or not confident?

- 4 Very confident
- 15 Fairly confident
- 38 Just somewhat confident
- 40 Not confident
- 3 Not sure

If the economy remains weak and a big financial company teeters on collapse later this year, which of the following do you think would be the best move for the federal government: **(Read list.)**

- 32 To let the company fail—the private sector should deal with the consequences of its actions
- 50 To force the company to work its way through its problems, including bankruptcy, through the courts
- 16 To do whatever is necessary to keep the company and its jobs intact, and avoid significant impact on the economy, even if it means taxpayers have to foot the bill
- 2 Not sure

Turning to the war in Afghanistan, do you think the U.S. can win the war or do you think it is a lost cause?

- 36 Can win the war
- 58 It is a lost cause
- 6 Not sure

Which of the following do you think is the best policy for US involvement in Afghanistan: **(Read list. Do not rotate.)**

- 60 Stick to the plan to start withdrawal of forces in July of next year, even if the country is still as unstable as it is today
- 37 Be open to keeping current number of forces in Afghanistan—or even adding more—if the country is still unstable in July of next year
- 3 Not sure

Whom do you blame most for the spill in the Gulf? **(Read list. Rotate options; but option 4 must always be last.)**

- 44 BP, the oil company doing the drilling
- 19 Lax federal regulations and oversight
- 12 The danger of deepwater drilling in general
- 22 No one is really to blame; it was just an accident
- 3 Not sure

Do you think the spill proves off-shore drilling is just too dangerous and should be banned in U.S. waters, or was this a freak accident and offshore drilling can be made safer and should not be banned?

- 23 Just too dangerous
- 73 Was a freak accident
- 4 Not sure

President Obama has called for a six-month moratorium on all U.S. deepwater drilling, not just in the Gulf, causing layoffs in the entire oil industry, not just for BP. Who should compensate these workers for their lost income? Do you think: **(Read list. Rotate.)**

- 58 BP should pay for lost income for all rig workers, because they are responsible for the spill
- 30 The US government, who declared the halt to deepwater drilling
- 12 Not sure

Comparing President Obama's response to the spill with President Bush's response to Hurricane Katrina, whose performance was worse—President Obama's or President Bush's?

- 35 President Obama
- 51 President Bush
- 14 Not sure

Do you think BP should suffer penalties, such as being banned from drilling in all U.S. waters, or is it sufficient for BP to pay for damage they caused?

- 19 Should suffer penalties
- 79 Sufficient to pay for damage they caused
- 2 Not sure

In paying for the oil spill, which of the following do you think is the best option: **(Read list.)**

- 56 BP must pay for all, even if it forces the company out of business
- 4 BP should not be forced to pay beyond what it can afford to stay in business, with U.S. taxpayers picking up the rest of the costs
- 38 There should be a cap on what is paid out, so that neither BP nor U.S. taxpayers are overburdened
- 2 Not sure

In the time since the spill, have you made it a point of not buying gas from BP stations, or have you not changed your gas-buying habits?

- 18 Made a point not to buy from BP
- 78 Have not changed
- 4 Not sure

I'm going to mention some issues that have been in the news recently. For each, please tell me if you have become more supportive in the past few months, less supportive, or if your opinion on the issue has not changed.

Sorted by More Supportive	More Supportive	Less Supportive	No change	Not Sure
Allowing local law enforcement to detain anyone who cannot produce proof of citizenship when stopped for any offense	48	26	25	1
Tougher regulations on Wall Street firms	45	15	38	2
The stimulus bill passed in 2009 designed to create new jobs	35	31	33	1
The health care overhaul passed earlier this year	29	37	32	2
Banning all off-shore oil drilling	20	37	42	1
The war in Afghanistan	17	34	48	1
Federal money loaned to automotive companies to help them stay in business	17	48	35	-

I'm going to mention some current problems and challenges the U.S. faces. For each, please tell me who you think is most responsible for the current situation—President Obama, Former President Bush, the Democrats in Congress, the Republicans in Congress, or some other person or group? **(Rotate list.)**

	President Obama	President Bush	Congress Democrats	Congress Repubs	Other	Not Sure
The size of the federal deficit	24	32	15	10	13	6
The current unemployment rate	22	32	11	9	19	7
The rising stock market in the last year	28	13	8	6	32	13
The increasing cost of Medicare and Social Security	20	20	18	9	24	9
The number of undocumented workers in the country	12	22	17	6	33	10
The war in Afghanistan	10	60	4	4	15	7

If the elections for the U.S. House of Representatives were being held today, which party's candidate would you vote for in your congressional district: the Democratic Party's candidate or the Republican Party's candidate? **(If not sure, ask:)** Which way are you leaning—toward the Republican candidate or the Democratic candidate?

	All	Likely Voters
Democratic candidate	39	36
Lean Democratic candidate	4	4
Republican candidate	40	44
Lean Republican candidate	3	4
Other (VOL)	5	5
Not sure	9	7

Here are some reasons that might affect your vote in the Congressional elections this fall. For each, please tell me if this will make you more likely or less likely to support a particular candidate, or would it not matter.

Sorted by More Likely	More Likely	Less Likely	Would not Matter	Not Sure
Supports spending government money to create jobs and stimulate the economy	58	24	17	1
Voted against extending unemployment benefits because of the cost	37	37	25	1
Voted to give financial assistance to the banking industry when it was in crisis	19	51	29	1
Voted to give financial assistance to the auto industry when it was in crisis	18	50	32	-
Has not delivered enough federal funds to your state	16	40	41	3
Has been an incumbent for many years	13	34	49	4

In general, should the government provide financial assistance to help the unemployed or people struggling to pay their mortgages, or do such programs interfere too much with the workings of the free market?

- 55 Government should help
- 40 This interferes with free market
- 5 Not sure

Do you see your votes in the November election more as sending a message, or do you see it more about choosing which party has the best ideas to move the nation forward?

- 21 Send a message
- 75 Choose which party has best ideas
- 4 Not sure

If President Obama came to your area to campaign for a Democrat running for office, would that help or hurt the candidate, in your opinion, or would it not matter?

- 26 Would help
- 20 Would hurt
- 53 Would not matter
- 1 Not sure

**[Alternate next two questions every other interview.]**

Given what you know about the last year and a half, do you think things in the U.S. would be better, worse, or about the same if John McCain had been elected president?

- 27 Better
- 37 Worse
- 32 Same
- 4 Not sure

Given what you know about the last year and a half, do you think things in the U.S. would be better, worse, or about the same if Hillary Clinton had been elected president?

- 25 Better
- 17 Worse
- 53 Same
- 5 Not sure

Do you approve or disapprove of the job Barack Obama is doing as president?  
**(Follow with:)** Do you approve or disapprove of the job he is doing: **(Rotate all but first option.)**

	Approve	Disapprove	Not Sure
As president	52	44	4
With the economy	44	52	4
With health care	46	51	3
With the budget deficit	37	59	4
With managing the situation with BP in the Gulf of Mexico	46	49	5
With managing the war in Afghanistan	46	47	7
With addressing problems in the financial industry on Wall Street	42	50	8
With creating jobs	46	50	4

Now, I'd like to mention some major economic and political figures and groups. For each, please tell me if your feelings are very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly unfavorable, or very unfavorable. If you don't know enough to answer, just say so. **(Record "don't know" as "not sure." Rotate list.)**

	Net Favorable	Net Unfavorable	Very Favorable	Mostly Favorable	Mostly Unfavorable	Very Unfavorable	Not Sure
<b>Barack Obama</b> , President of the United States	55	40	24	31	17	23	5
<b>Ben Bernanke</b> , Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board	31	27	6	25	17	10	42
<b>Joe Biden</b> , the Vice-president	44	39	11	33	21	18	17
<b>Sarah Palin</b> , former governor of Alaska	33	55	10	23	21	34	12
<b>Mitt Romney</b> , former governor of Massachusetts	33	26	9	24	17	9	41
<b>Bobby Jindal</b> , governor of Louisiana	32	18	12	20	11	7	50
<b>Mike Huckabee</b> , former governor of Arkansas	33	28	10	23	19	9	39
<b>Glenn Beck</b> , a Fox television personality	28	33	11	17	12	21	39
<b>Newt Gingrich</b> , former Speaker of the House	33	38	11	22	17	21	29
<b>Hillary Clinton</b> , Secretary of State	61	31	22	39	18	13	8
<b>Tim Pawlenty</b> , governor of Minnesota	14	13	4	10	9	4	73
<b>General David Petraeus</b> , the new U.S. commander in Afghanistan	61	8	26	35	5	3	31
<b>The Republican Party</b>	42	46	9	33	28	18	12
<b>The Democratic Party</b>	45	43	14	31	23	20	12
<b>The Tea Party</b>	36	36	14	22	16	20	28

Turning to the health care bill passed earlier this year, what is your opinion of the bill? **(Read list.)**

- 37 It should be repealed
- 47 We should see how it works
- 14 It should be left alone
- 2 Not sure

Which of the following better reflects your view of the tea party? **(Read two options.)**

- 39 It is a movement that has rightly identified that the nation will be best served by a significantly limited and reduced federal government
- 44 It is a movement whose call for a significantly limited and reduced federal government is simplistic and misguided
- 17 Not sure

Would the support of the Tea Party make a candidate more or less attractive to you, or would it not make a difference?

- 18 More attractive
- 25 Less attractive
- 53 No difference
- 4 Not sure

If the 2010 general election for Congress and other state officials were held today, would you definitely vote, probably vote, might or might not vote, or probably not vote?

- 66 Definitely vote
  - 19 Probably vote
  - 6 Might or might not vote
  - 8 Probably not vote
  - 1 Refused/not sure
- 
- Ask b**

**b.** How important is the November election to you—is it exceptionally important, very important, somewhat important, or not all that important to you? **(Based just on those who say they will definitely or probably vote in the 2010 general election; n=875.)**

- 36 Exceptionally important
- 46 Very important
- 16 Somewhat important
- 2 Not all that important
- Refused/not sure