



# Ipsos Poll Conducted for Reuters

## Core Political Approval 04.15.14

These are findings from an Ipsos poll conducted for Thomson Reuters from April 11-15, 2014. For the survey, a sample of 1,533 Americans, including 602 Democrats, 537 Republicans, and 235 Independents ages 18+ were interviewed online. The precision of the Reuters/Ipsos online polls is measured using a [credibility interval](#). In this case, the poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 2.9 percentage points for all adults, 4.6 percentage points for Democrats, 4.8 percentage points for Republicans, and 7.3 percentage points for Independents. For more information about credibility intervals, please see the appendix.

The data were weighted to the U.S. current population data by gender, age, education, and ethnicity. Statistical margins of error are not applicable to online polls. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error and measurement error. Figures marked by an asterisk (\*) indicate a percentage value of greater than zero but less than one half of one per cent. Where figures do not sum to 100, this is due to the effects of rounding. To see more information on this and other Reuters/Ipsos polls, please visit <http://polling.reuters.com/>.

### CORE POLITICAL APPROVAL

Q1. Generally speaking, would you say things in this country are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?

	All adults	Democrats	Republicans	Independents
Right direction	25%	43%	12%	12%
Wrong track	58%	37%	84%	66%
Don't know	18%	20%	5%	23%

Q2. Overall, do you approve or disapprove about the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?

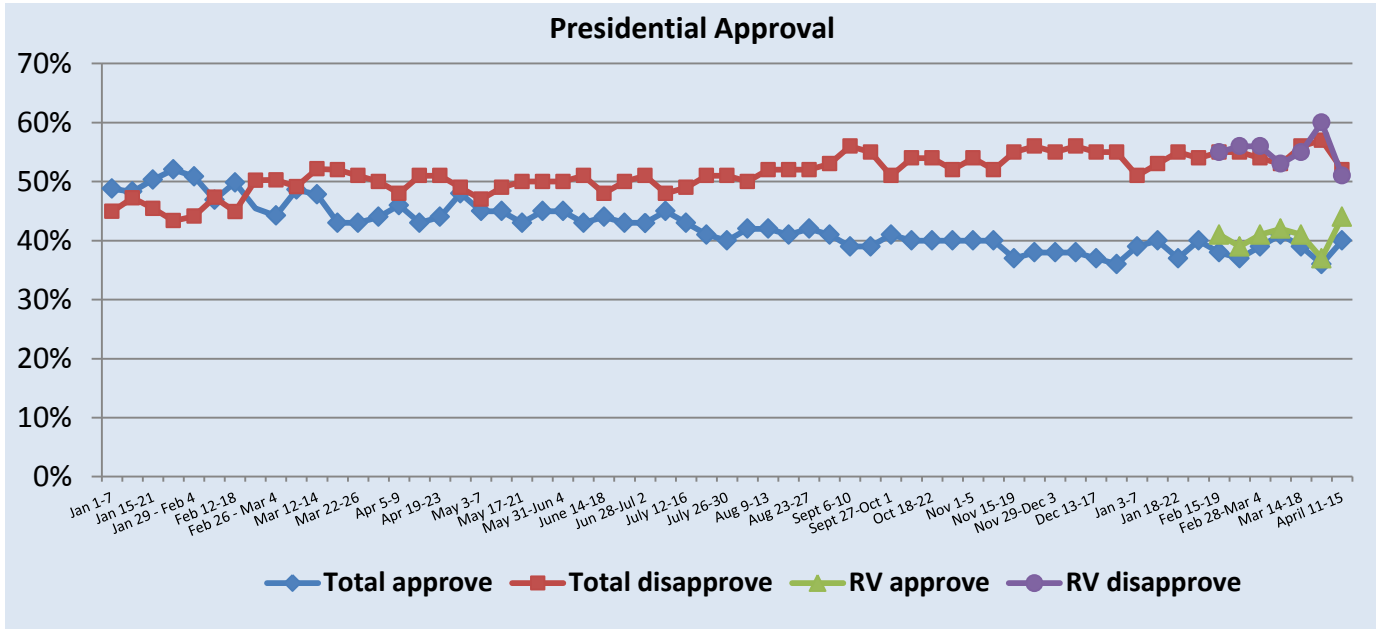
Q2a. Is that strongly (approve/disapprove) or somewhat (approve/disapprove)? (Asked of those who selected "approve" or "disapprove") Q2b. If you had to choose, do you lean more towards approve or disapprove? (Asked of those who selected "don't know")

All adults	All	Democrats	Republicans	Independents
Strongly approve	19%	35%	9%	8%
Somewhat approve	17%	30%	4%	17%
Lean towards approve	4%	6%	1%	4%
Lean towards disapprove	3%	2%	3%	4%
Somewhat disapprove	11%	11%	12%	17%
Strongly disapprove	38%	12%	70%	45%
Not sure	8%	4%	2%	5%
Total approve	40%	71%	14%	29%
Total disapprove	52%	25%	84%	66%

Registered Voters (n=1,327)	All	Democrats	Republicans	Independents
Strongly approve	22%	37%	10%	8%
Somewhat approve	18%	30%	4%	18%
Lean towards approve	4%	6%	1%	4%
Lean towards disapprove	3%	2%	3%	5%
Somewhat disapprove	10%	10%	10%	14%
Strongly disapprove	39%	12%	71%	47%
Not sure	4%	4%	1%	4%
Total approve	44%	73%	14%	31%
Total disapprove	51%	24%	85%	65%

Q2. Overall, do you approve or disapprove about the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?

Q2a. Is that strongly (approve/disapprove) or somewhat (approve/disapprove)? (Asked of those who selected "approve" or "disapprove") Q2b. If you had to choose, do you lean more towards approve or disapprove? (Asked of those who selected "don't know")



Q3. In your opinion, which political party has a better plan, policy or approach to each of the following? (Data based on interviewing from April 6-15, 2014; n=799)

All adults (n=799)	Democratic Party	Republican Party	Independents	Other	None	Don't know
Healthcare	32%	18%	6%	4%	20%	20%
The war on terror	21%	19%	5%	4%	22%	28%
Iran	17%	15%	6%	3%	24%	34%
The US Economy	24%	21%	7%	4%	20%	23%
Immigration	23%	22%	6%	4%	21%	24%
Social Security	28%	17%	5%	4%	21%	25%
Medicare	29%	15%	7%	4%	21%	23%
Taxes	26%	18%	6%	5%	20%	25%
Gay marriage	32%	13%	6%	7%	19%	23%
Jobs and employment	23%	20%	9%	4%	21%	23%
The federal government deficit	21%	19%	6%	4%	23%	27%
Supporting small businesses	26%	23%	7%	4%	15%	25%
Education	27%	16%	6%	5%	20%	26%
Foreign policy	22%	21%	7%	3%	19%	29%
Women's rights	31%	15%	7%	5%	16%	26%
The environment	29%	12%	7%	4%	19%	28%
Israel	17%	19%	6%	5%	21%	32%
Syria	14%	17%	6%	3%	25%	35%

Q4. Generally speaking, would you say the following things are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track? (Select one for each row)

	Right direction	Wrong track	Don't know
The national economy	19%	65%	15%
Employment and jobs	24%	62%	15%
Healthcare system	29%	56%	15%
Immigration policy	20%	57%	23%
National deficit	13%	66%	21%
Education system	21%	62%	17%
National politics	15%	65%	21%
American foreign policy	19%	53%	28%
Fuel and gas prices	12%	77%	11%
Your cost of living	15%	73%	11%

<b>PARTY ID</b>	<u>All Adults</u>	<u>Registered Voters</u>
Strong Democrat	15%	18%
Moderate Democrat	19%	22%
Lean Democrat	6%	7%
Lean Republican	6%	7%
Moderate Republican	13%	15%
Strong Republican	10%	12%
Independent	15%	14%
None of these	10%	5%
Don't know	5%	2%
<i>Total Democrat</i>	<i>41%</i>	<i>46%</i>
<i>Total Republican</i>	<i>29%</i>	<i>33%</i>

## How to Calculate Bayesian Credibility Intervals

The calculation of credibility intervals assumes that  $Y$  has a binomial distribution conditioned on the parameter  $\theta$ , i.e.,  $Y|\theta \sim \text{Bin}(n, \theta)$ , where  $n$  is the size of our sample. In this setting,  $Y$  counts the number of “yes”, or “1”, observed in the sample, so that the sample mean ( $\bar{y}$ ) is a natural estimate of the true population proportion  $\theta$ . This model is often called the likelihood function, and it is a standard concept in both the Bayesian and the Classical framework. The Bayesian <sup>1</sup> statistics combines both the prior distribution and the likelihood function to create a posterior distribution. The posterior distribution represents our opinion about which are the plausible values for  $\theta$  adjusted after observing the sample data. In reality, the posterior distribution is one’s knowledge base updated using the latest survey information. For the prior and likelihood functions specified here, the posterior distribution is also a beta distribution ( $\pi(\theta|y) \sim \beta(y+a, n-y+b)$ ), but with updated hyper-parameters.

Our credibility interval for  $\vartheta$  is based on this posterior distribution. As mentioned above, these intervals represent our belief about which are the most plausible values for  $\vartheta$  given our updated knowledge base. There are different ways to calculate these intervals based on  $\pi(\theta|y)$ . Since we want only one measure of precision for all variables in the survey, analogous to what is done within the Classical framework, we will compute the largest possible credibility interval for any observed sample. The worst case occurs when we assume that  $a=1$  and  $b=1$  and  $y=n/2$ . Using a simple approximation of the posterior by the normal distribution, the 95% credibility interval is given by, approximately:

$$\bar{y} \pm \frac{1}{\sqrt{n}}$$

For this poll, the Bayesian Credibility Interval was adjusted using standard weighting design effect  $1+L=1.3$  to account for complex weighting<sup>2</sup>

Examples of credibility intervals for different base sizes are below. Ipsos does not publish data for base sizes (sample sizes) below 100.

Sample size	Credibility intervals
2,000	2.5
1,500	2.9
1,000	3.5
750	4.1
500	5.0
350	6.0
200	7.9
100	11.2

<sup>1</sup> *Bayesian Data Analysis, Second Edition, Andrew Gelman, John B. Carlin, Hal S. Stern, Donald B. Rubin, Chapman & Hall/CRC | ISBN: 158488388X | 2003*

<sup>2</sup> *Kish, L. (1992). Weighting for unequal Pi. Journal of Official, Statistics, 8, 2, 183200.*