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4 pp.

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## NJ Says Occupy Wall Street

According to the most recent statewide poll by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind™, just 22% say the country is headed in the right direction, while two-thirds (67%) say the country is "on the wrong track." This is a stark contrast to voters' views of the direction of the state expressed in the same survey: 46% saying the state is headed in the right direction and 43% saying the state is on the wrong track ([released 10/25/11](#)).

Nearly 9 of 10 New Jersey Republicans (88%) say the country is headed in the wrong direction, but independents agree (78%-16%) and so do Democrats (49%-36%). "When New Jersey voters' see the direction of their state as better than the direction of the country, it's a sure sign something is deeply wrong," said Peter Woolley, a political scientist and director of the poll.

President Obama has a net negative approval rating (44%-47%) for two months running now, the first time in his presidency. However, men and women differ, with men disapproving 51% to 41% and women approving 48% to 42%.

Meanwhile, 4 of 5 voters (81%) are following the Occupy Wall Street protests, with 3 of 5 (62%) saying they've heard "a great deal" about them. Overall, New Jerseyans support the movement by a margin of 46%-29%.

"Sympathy for the Wall Street protesters is a direct reflection of voters' general dissatisfaction with the direction of the country," said Woolley. "Something broke and voters know that whatever it was, it hasn't been fixed."

Sympathy for the movement cuts across gender, age and education. Men and women, both young and old voters, high school-educated and those with graduate degrees support the protests in equal proportions.

Support for the movement does reflect partisan splits. Democrats support it by the wide margin of 6 to 1 (68-11), and Republicans oppose it by 2 to 1 (53-23). Similarly, self-described liberals support it by about 9 to 1 (70-8) and conservatives condemn it

by almost 2 to 1 (50-28). Those who approve of the president support it by 61%-13%, and those who disapprove of the president oppose it by 47%-31%.

Voters in north Jersey, closer to Wall Street, are also more likely to support the movement than voters south of the Driscoll Bridge (51% compared to 42%). And while those who say the country is going in the right direction support the movement 56%-17%, even those who say the country is on the wrong track split in favor of the movement 42%-36%.

However, 1 in 4 voters is unsure whether to support or oppose the protests (24%), and that substantial proportion of "don't know" cuts across every demographic subgroup from party and ideology to age and education.

"The fact that so many people don't know what to make of the protests is a reflection of the movement's incoherence," said Woolley. "The protest has no one message. It means whatever the beholders, pro or con, want it to mean," he said. "But mostly it means voters are dissatisfied with the direction of the country."

The Fairleigh Dickinson University poll of 800 registered voters statewide was conducted by telephone using both landlines and cell phones from Oct. 17 through Oct. 23, 2011, and has a margin of error of +/-3.5 percentage points.

*Methodology, questions, and tables on the web at: <http://publicmind.fdu.edu>  
Radio actualities at 201.692.2846 For more information, please call 201.692.7032*

**Methodology, Questions, and Tables**

The most recent survey by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind was conducted by telephone from Oct. 17, 2011, through Oct. 23, 2011, using a randomly selected sample of 800 registered voters statewide. The margin of error for a sample of 800 randomly selected respondents is +/- 3.5 percentage points. The margin of error for subgroups is larger and varies by the size of that subgroup. Survey results are also subject to non-sampling error. This kind of error, which cannot be measured, arises from a number of factors including, but not limited to, non-response (eligible individuals refusing to be interviewed), question wording, the order in which questions are asked, and variations among interviewers. PublicMind interviews are conducted by Opinion America of Cedar Knolls, NJ, with professionally trained interviewers using a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) system. Random selection is achieved by computerized random-digit dialing. This technique gives every person with a land-line phone number (including those with unlisted numbers) an equal chance of being selected. Landline households are supplemented with a separate, randomly selected sample of cell-phone-only-households, interviewed in the same time frame. The total combined sample is mathematically weighted to match known demographics of age, race and gender.

**Question:** In your opinion, do you believe that the country is moving in the right direction or do you believe it has gotten off on the wrong track?

	All	liberals	moderates	conservatives	Dem	Ind	Rep.
Right direction	<b>22%</b>	34	19	14	36	6	9
Wrong track	<b>67%</b>	51	70	80	49	78	88
Unsure/mixed	<b>10%</b>	16	11	6	15	16	3

**Right/wrong direction trend**

	2011					2010						
	Sep	May	Apr	Feb	Jan	Nov	Oct	Aug	My	Mar 30	Mar 3	Jan
Right direction	18%	34%	32%	39	35	31	30	33	34	42	38	35
Wrong track	71%	51%	57%	49	52	58	60	54	52	51	52	53
Unsure/mixed	11%	15%	11%	12	13	11	10	13	13	8	10	12

	2009							2008
	Oct 30	Oct 9	Sep	July	Apr	Mar	Jan	Oct
Right direction	41	41	44	49	51	51	34	13
Wrong track	50	49	46	41	37	37	52	78
Unsure/mixed	8	9	10	11	11	12	13	9

**US2:** In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?

	All	Men	Women	Dem	Ind	Rep.
Approve	<b>44%</b>	41	48	73	37	12
Disapprove	<b>47%</b>	51	42	17	51	83
Unsure/mixed	<b>9%</b>	7	10	9	12	6

**Obama approval, previous measures**

	2011					2010						2009					
	Sep	May	Ap	Fe	Ja	No	Oct	Aug	May	Mar	Jan	Oct	Se	Jun	Ap	Mar	Jan*
<b>Approve</b>	44%	55	47	54	47	51	47	49	49	53	48	52	56	61	66	66	72
<b>Disapprove</b>	47%	36	42	36	41	40	43	40	40	38	41	37	36	29	22	21	10
<b>unsure</b>	9%	9	11	10	12	9	10	11	11	9	11	10	8	10	12	13	18

\*January 2009 question asked how Obama was handling his transition to the presidency.

**Question:** How much have you heard about a protest movement called "Occupy Wall Street"...READ?"

	All	Dem.	ind.	Rep.	men	Women
A great deal	<b>62%</b>	62	62	65	69	56
Some	<b>19%</b>	17	18	22	16	22
Just a little	<b>9%</b>	11	8	7	9	10
Or nothing really	<b>9%</b>	10	12	6	7	12

<b>Question:</b> Would you say you support or oppose the protest movement “occupy Wall Street”?														
	Party ID				ideology			Direction of US		NJ region		ethnicity		
	All	Dem.	ind.	Rep.	lib	mod	cons	right	wrong	north	south	white	Hisp	AA
Support	46%	68	40	23	70	46	28	56	42	51	42	43	54	62
Oppose	29%	11	27	53	8	28	50	17	36	28	31	33	25	11
unsure	24%	21	33	23	22	26	22	27	22	22	27	24	21	26

	Pres. approval		gender		age			education			
All	approve	disapprove	men	women	18-34	35-54	55+	H.S.	college	College +	
Support	46%	61	31	46	47	50	45	48	43	45	49
Oppose	29%	13	47	36	23	19	35	27	28	33	26
unsure	24%	26	21	19	30	31	20	25	29	23	26

### Exact Question Wording and Order

US1. In your opinion, do you believe that the country is moving in the right direction or has it gotten off on the wrong track?

US2. In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?

US3. How much have you heard about a protest movement called “Occupy Wall Street”...READ?”

A great deal

Some

Just a little

Or nothing really

US4. Would you say you support or oppose the protest movement “occupy Wall Street”?

### Sample Characteristics (%)

#### Gender

Male 49

Female 51

#### Age

18-29 12

30-44 26

45-59 31

60+ 29

Ref. 2

#### In addition to being American, would you say you are...?

White 70

Black 14

Hispanic or Latino 8

Asian 4

Other/ref. 4

#### Party ID

Dem. + lean Dem. 45

ind. + unsure + ref. 18

Rep. + lean Rep. 37