

CHRISTIE UP, OBAMA DOWN

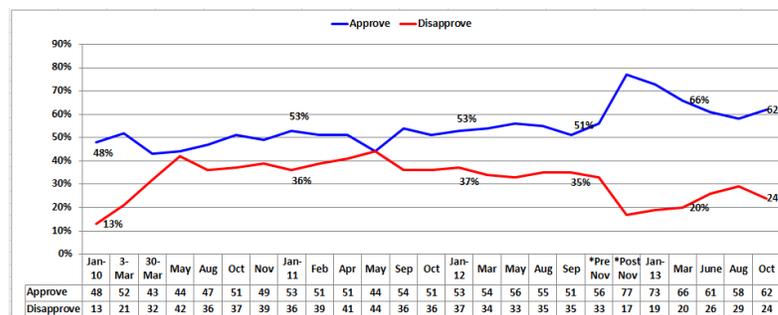
As Garden State voters sour on events in our nation’s capital, they remain largely upbeat about trends and leaders that are closer to home. A recent statewide poll of registered voters from Fairleigh Dickinson University’s PublicMind finds that less than half (45%) approve of the job that President Obama is doing and not even a third say the country is headed in the right direction (30%). However, here in New Jersey Governor Christie receives an almost two-thirds (62%) approval rating, and 57 percent of respondents believe the state is on solid footing.

Numbers for the president and the country are down from where they were when the questions were last asked in August (49% Obama approval; 40% say country headed in right direction), but appear more stable for questions concerning Christie (58% job approval) and the state’s trajectory (49% state headed in the right direction).

“The government shutdown and looming debt ceiling deadline are clearly fanning the flames of voter ire,” said Krista Jenkins, director of PublicMind and professor of political science at Fairleigh Dickinson University. “We’ve not seen this much discontent regarding events at the national level since January of 2012, when barely a quarter of those polled said things were headed in the right direction. Governor Christie, on the other hand, continues to remain largely immune to voter discontent in an environment that’s rife with disgust for all things political.”

Governor Christie’s strong approval rating builds on a trend that began months ago. Since the beginning of the year, his approval rating has averaged 64 percent. His current 62 percent job approval is punctuated by the strong support he has among registered voters as the gubernatorial election approaches in a few weeks. As PublicMind reported on Tuesday, October 8, 50 percent intend to vote for Christie in November while 22 percent direct their support to Senator Buono.

Christie Approval



Christie's appeal, unlike that for President Obama, can be best described as transcending partisanship for many voters. For example, 47 percent of Democrats approve of the governor's job performance. Whereas, in President Obama's case, party loyalties prevail. An overwhelming majority of Democrats (76%) approve of President Obama and almost equal numbers of Republicans disapprove of Obama's leadership (80%).

As for Governor Christie, another way of parsing his appeal is by looking at what voters like and dislike about him. A question was asked about his appeal in regard to his personality and politics, and how voters distinguish between the two in their appraisal of the governor. Almost half (46%) like everything about him - both his personality and his policies. Republicans are, not surprisingly, the most decisive (76%), but as many Democrats (28%) like everything as dislike everything about him (28%).

"This question provides some clues as to what drives approval for the governor. When you look just at the percent of those who like the governor, regardless of their feelings about his policies, two-thirds say there's something about his personality that strikes a chord," said Jenkins. "But barely a quarter find his personality opposite to what they find agreeable in a political leader."

Women have less positive views of Christie as compared to men. Among women, 41 percent like his personality and his policies while about half (51%) of men say the same. Regarding job approval, a gap of eleven percentage points separates women from men. Two-thirds (67%) of men approve of his job performance compared with slightly more than half (56%) of women.

"Again, we've seen this trend for some time. Although largely favorable toward the governor, women have consistently expressed less support for the governor, something that illustrates one of the few dents in the governor's armor," said Jenkins.

The Fairleigh Dickinson University poll of 702 registered voters in New Jersey was conducted by telephone with both landline and cell phones from September 30 through October 5, 2013, and has a margin of error of +/-3.7 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

The most recent survey by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind was conducted by telephone from September 30 through October 6, 2013 using a randomly selected sample of 702 registered voters who reside in New Jersey. One can be 95 percent confident that the error attributable to sampling has a range of +/- 3.7 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 landline 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 respondents interviewed in the same time frame. The total combined sample is mathematically weighted to match known demographics of age, race and gender.

Tables

<i>In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?[Randomize approve/disapprove]</i>								
		PID			Gender		Race	
	All	Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Women	White	Non-white
Approve	45%	76	34	9	39	51	38	64
Disapprove	39%	10	36	80	47	32	48	17
Neither (vol)	15%	12	28	11	14	16	13	19
DK/Ref. (vol)	1%	1	1	-	-	1	1	-

<i>In your opinion, do you believe the country is moving in the right direction or is it on the wrong track? [Randomize right direction/wrong track]</i>								
		PID			Gender		Race	
	All	Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Women	White	Non-white
Right direction	30%	50	25	7	27	33	23	48
Wrong track	57%	34	64	86	64	51	67	34
Neither (vol)	12%	15	11	7	9	15	10	17
DK/Ref. (vol)	1%	1	-	-	-	1	-	1

<i>Now thinking about New Jersey, do you approve or disapprove of the job Chris Christie is doing as governor?[Randomize approve/disapprove]</i>												
		Following governor's race				PID			Gender		Race	
	All	Very closely	Somewhat closely	Just a little	Not at all	Dem	Ind	Repub	Male	Female	White	Nonwhite
Approve	62%	57	61	67	59	47	60	85	67	56	66	53
Disapprove	24%	32	24	21	25	38	22	6	19	29	20	34
Neither (vol)	11%	11	13	9	11	13	12	8	12	11	11	11
DK/Ref (vol)	3%	1	3	2	4	2	6	1	1	4	3	2

	Union household		Candidate pref.	
	Union	Non-union	Christie	Buono
Approve	44	67	90	16
Disapprove	35	21	2	69
Neither (vol)	19	9	7	12
DK/ Ref (vol)	2	3	1	3

<i>In your opinion, do you think things in New Jersey are moving in the right direction or are they on the wrong track?</i>												
		Following governor's race				PID			Gender		Race	
	All	Very closely	Somewhat closely	Just a little	Not at all	Dem	Ind	Repub	Male	Female	White	Nonwhite
Right direction	57%	54	60	56	57	46	51	75	63	52	60	51
Wrong track	29%	32	32	24	27	39	35	12	24	33	27	33
Neither (vol)	14%	14	8	19	16	15	14	12	13	15	13	16
DK/Ref (vol)	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

	Union household		Candidate pref.	
	Union	Non-union	Christie	Buono
Right direction	47	60	78	18
Wrong track	36	27	11	67
Neither (vol)	17	13	11	14
DK/Ref (vol)	1	-	0	0

I'm going to read you four statements about Chris Christie. Please tell me which comes closest to your own views: 1) I like him, AND I like his policies; 2) I like him, BUT I don't like his policies; 3) I don't like him, BUT I like his policies; 4) I don't like him, AND I don't like his policies.

	All	Following governor's race				PID		
		Very closely	Somewhat closely	Just a little	Not at all	Dem	Ind	Repub
Like him/like policies	46%	42	47	46	46	28	40	76
Like him/dislike policies	21%	25	23	21	18	29	26	9
Don't like him/like policies	10%	8	10	12	9	11	10	8
Don't like him/don't like policies	18%	24	17	16	18	28	20	4
DK/Ref (vol)	5%	1	3	5	10	5	4	3

	Gender		Race		Union household		Candidate pref.	
	Male	Female	White	Nonwhite	Union	Non-union	Christie	Buono
Like him/like policies	51	41	49	39	32	50	73	6
Like him/dislike policies	21	22	19	26	25	20	14	27
Don't like him/like policies	11	8	10	10	14	9	9	10
Don't like him/don't like policies	13	22	17	22	24	17	1	54
DK/Ref (vol)	4	6	5	3	6	4	3	2

<i>How closely are you following the election for governor?</i>				
	All	PID		
		Dem	Ind	Repub
Very closely	19%	19	13	25
Somewhat closely	34%	33	38	34
Just a little	24%	25	26	24
Not at all	22%	24	20	16
DK/Refused (vol)	1%	1	2	-

Exact Question Wording and Order

US1. *In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?*

- 1 Approve
- 2 Disapprove
- 8 DK/ mixed (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

US2. *In your opinion, do you believe the country is moving in the right direction or is it on the wrong track?*

- 1 Right direction
- 2 Wrong track
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

NJ1. *Now thinking about New Jersey, do you approve or disapprove of the job Chris Christie is doing as governor?*

- 1 Approve
- 2 Disapprove
- 3 Neither or neutral (vol)
- 8 DK or both (vol)
- 9 Ref. (vol)

NJ2. *In your opinion, do you think things in New Jersey are moving in the right direction or are they on the wrong track?*

- 1 Right direction
- 2 Wrong track
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

NJ3 *I'm going to read you four statements about Chris Christie. Please tell me which comes closest to your own views: 1) I like him, AND I like his policies; 2) I like him, BUT I don't like his policies; 3) I don't like him, BUT I like his policies; 4) I don't like him, AND I don't like his policies.*

RANDOMIZE BUT KEEP 1 AND 2, 3 AND 4 TOGETHER

- 1 I like him, AND I like his policies
- 2 I like him, BUT I don't like his policies
- 3 I don't like him, BUT I like his policies
- 4 I don't like him, AND I don't like his policies
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

Sample characteristics – Registered voters

Gender

Male	49
Female	51

Age

18-29	12
30-44	26
45-59	32
60+	27
Refused	3

Race/Ethnicity

White	68
Black/African-American	12
Latino or Hispanic	10
Asian	5
Other/refused	5

Public employee household

Yes	23
No	75
Unsure/refused	2

Party identification

Democrat/Lean Democrat	46
Independent/DK/refused	19
Republican/Lean Republican	35