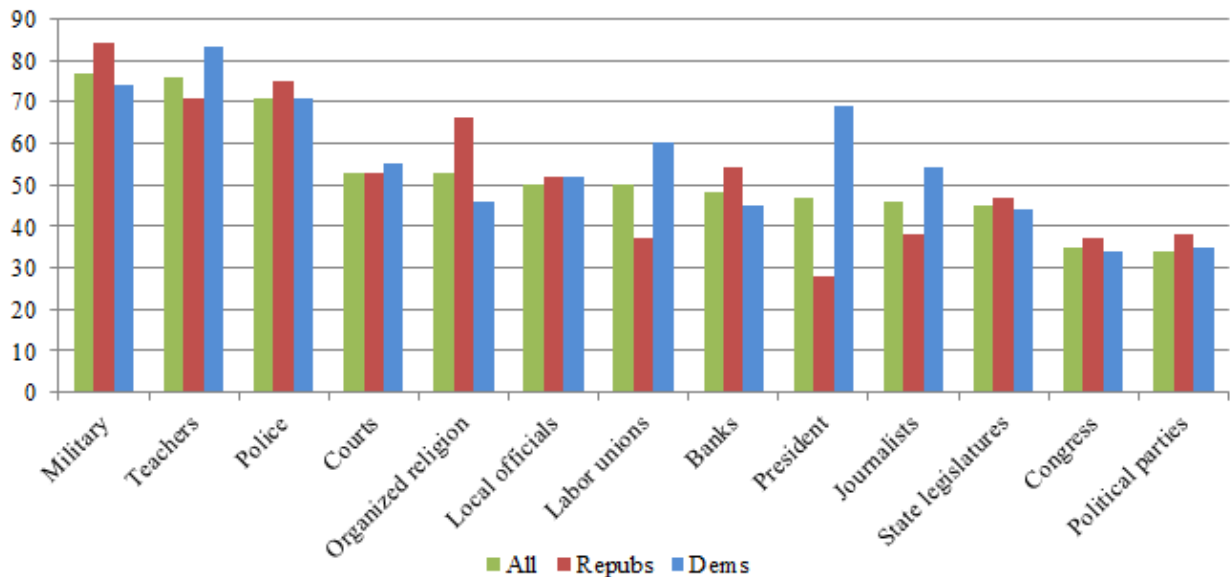


PARTISANSHIP REACH EXTENDS BEYOND OBAMACARE AND APPROVAL RATINGS TO NON-PARTISAN GROUPS

Cynicism and partisanship dominate American public opinion, even when the focus is on groups that aren't directly connected to the divisive world of politics. In a reflection of either the hangover effect of the recession or the current state of the political system, only three out of 13 civil and political institutions are rated as helpful by Americans today, and a majority of respondents believe the country is headed in the wrong direction. Add to this that partisanship divides American opinion over seemingly non-partisan institutions, like organized religion and civil servants, and the most recent national poll from Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind paints a bleak picture of attitudes toward government and institutions today.

Americans were asked to rate the helpfulness of a variety of institutions by giving them a score between 0 and 100, with a score of 100 considered "very helpful." Teachers, the military and police average the highest scores, and are the only groups identified as clearly helpful. The remainder cluster in the middle range of the scale — as neutral opinions — or are seen as decidedly unhelpful, like Congress and political parties.

Average "Helpful" Score



What people think of some institutions is shaped by their party views. Organized religion is perceived as significantly more helpful by Republicans (average = 66) than by Democrats (average = 46). The same is true for teachers and journalists, two groups whom Democrats evaluate as significantly more helpful than Republicans. The average score among Democrats for teachers is 83, whereas among Republicans it is 71. Journalists garner a 54 among Democrats, a number which is still decidedly neutral, but closer to the helpful side of the scale than found among Republicans, with an average of 38. An approximate ten point difference separates Democrats and Republicans over the military (74 versus 84, respectively) and banks (45 versus 54, respectively).

“These partisan differences provide additional proof of an ideological divide that transcends politics. Even non-partisan institutions look like a Rorschach test to Democrats and Republicans,” said Krista Jenkins, director of PublicMind and professor of political science.

The same poll finds that partisanship divides Americans over beliefs about the likely effectiveness of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Overall, 38 percent of respondents believe it is likely that health care costs will be reduced in the long run. Decidedly more, 56 percent, think the legislation’s other goal, expanding health insurance for Americans, will likely occur.

Again, partisan differences are striking. Just over one-in-ten Republicans (12%) believe health care costs will be reduced compared with six-in-ten Democrats (61%). And, by a ratio of two-to-one, Democrats are twice as likely to say more will become insured (73%) as compared with Republicans (35%).

“Despite the law’s implementation, Democrats and Republicans continue to evaluate the ACA through party loyalties and feelings toward the president,” said Jenkins. “There’s no sign that the public is ready to move on by disconnecting the legislation from Democratic ownership.” The poll finds that among those who approve of the president’s job performance, 67 percent believe the legislation will reduce health care costs, compared with just 11 percent of those who disapprove of the president’s performance. Seventy-nine percent of those who approve also believe the law will reduce the ranks of the uninsured. Among those who disapprove of the president, fewer than half that number (37%) say the same.

Currently, 40 percent of Americans approve of the job Obama’s doing as president. In December, that number was 34 percent. Sixty-nine percent of Democrats give him a thumbs up, compared with only 11 percent of Republicans.

A majority of respondents continue to believe the country is headed in the wrong direction. The current poll finds only a third (32%) say the country is on solid footing, with a majority (56%) who say things are amiss. In December 2013, the split was virtually the same (32 to 58 percent).

“It’s hard to find anything good to say about these numbers, unless you’re a teacher, service member or police officer. Americans are cynical, divided and concerned about the direction of the country. The fact that institutions like the courts and elected officials are evaluated poorly, or with uncertainty, is troubling given the vital role they and others play in our democracy,” said Jenkins.

The Fairleigh Dickinson University poll of 1151 adults aged 18 and older who reside in the United States was conducted by telephone with both landline and cell phones from April 21 through April 27, 2014 and has a margin of error of +/- 2.9 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 April 21 through April 27, 2014 using a randomly selected sample of 1151 individuals aged 18 and older who reside in the United States. One can be 95 percent confident that the error attributable to sampling has a range of +/- 2.9 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'd like to ask you about a number of people and groups in society. On a scale of 0 to 100, with 0 meaning they don't help society at all, and 100 meaning they help society a lot, please tell me how you feel about the following:

		PID			Gender		Race		Age			
	All	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	White	Nonwhite	18-29	30-44	45-59	60+
Military	77	74	73	84	76	78	78	76	71	78	84	79
Teachers	76	83	75	71	76	77	75	81	82	80	74	73
Police	71	71	65	75	69	72	74	65	66	73	73	70
Organized religion	53	46	43	66	51	54	55	47	40	52	58	58
The Courts	53	55	51	53	53	53	56	48	59	53	51	51
Elected officials at the town and county level	50	52	45	52	49	51	52	45	50	47	53	52
Labor unions	50	60	55	37	47	52	57	52	59	47	49	44
Banks/financial inst.	48	45	44	54	47	49	52	40	48	47	47	50
The President	47	69	40	28	45	50	44	60	49	51	46	44
Journalists	46	54	48	38	43	50	46	47	45	46	47	48
State legislatures	45	44	47	47	46	45	46	41	45	48	45	44
Congress	35	34	34	37	34	36	35	35	43	35	34	30
Political parties	34	35	26	38	33	35	34	32	31	34	34	35

How closely, if at all, are you following news about the Affordable Care Act, or Obamacare as it's more commonly known?

		PID			Gender		Race		Age			
	All	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	White	Nonwhite	18-29	30-44	45-59	60+
Very closely	35%	33	30	40	36	34	36	32	19	29	44	44
Somewhat closely	46%	51	46	41	45	47	46	49	54	49	43	40
Not at all closely	18%	16	22	18	18	18	18	19	27	20	12	14
DK/Ref (vol)	1%	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1

In your opinion, how likely or unlikely [ROTATE] do you believe it is that the Affordable Care Act will, in the long run, drive down health care costs for the country as a whole?

		PID			Gender		Race		Age			
	All	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	White	Nonwhite	18-29	30-44	45-59	60+
Very likely	22%	37	21	6	21	23	18	33	20	23	24	20
Somewhat likely	16%	24	17	6	17	15	13	23	27	16	11	12
Somewhat unlikely	15%	14	20	13	15	15	17	10	17	12	14	18
Very unlikely	41%	15	37	73	42	40	47	26	29	42	48	43
DK/Ref (vol)	6%	10	5	3	6	7	6	8	7	7	4	7

<i>In your opinion, how likely or unlikely [ROTATE] do you believe it is that the Affordable Care Act will, in the long run, drive down health care costs for the country as a whole?</i>					
	Obama job performance		Attentiveness to ACA		
	Approve	Disapprove	Very closely	Somewhat closely	Not at all closely
Very likely	40	6	31	20	9
Somewhat likely	27	5	9	19	20
Somewhat unlikely	15	15	8	19	18
Very unlikely	8	72	48	36	41
DK/Ref (vol)	9	2	3	6	13

<i>In your opinion, how likely or unlikely [ROTATE] do you believe it is that the Affordable Care Act will, in the long run, result in fewer uninsured Americans?</i>												
	All	PID			Gender		Race		Age			
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	White	Nonwhite	18-29	30-44	45-59	60+
Very likely	37%	54	40	14	37	37	35	41	36	39	38	33
Somewhat likely	19%	19	19	21	19	20	20	20	24	21	17	16
Somewhat unlikely	14%	11	13	18	15	13	15	11	17	12	11	16
Very unlikely	24%	12	19	42	25	23	25	21	17	24	28	26
DK/Ref (vol)	6%	5	9	5	5	7	6	7	6	3	5	9

<i>In your opinion, how likely or unlikely [ROTATE] do you believe it is that the Affordable Care Act will, in the long run, result in fewer uninsured Americans?</i>					
	Obama job performance		Attentiveness to ACA		
	Approve	Disapprove	Very closely	Somewhat closely	Not at all closely
Very likely	60	19	46	36	18
Somewhat likely	19	18	11	25	23
Somewhat unlikely	9	17	10	14	20
Very unlikely	7	41	29	20	25
DK/Ref (vol)	5	5	2	5	14

<i>To begin, do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?</i>												
	All	PID			Gender		Race		Age			
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	White	Nonwhite	18-29	30-44	45-59	60+
Approve	40%	69	34	11	39	41	35	54	40	44	38	39
Disapprove	48%	16	50	84	48	47	53	32	39	47	53	50
DK/Mixed/Ref (vol)	12%	14	17	5	13	11	12	14	21	9	9	11

Exact Question Wording and Order

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

- 1 Approve
- 2 Disapprove
- 8 DK/Unsure/mixed [DON'T READ]
- 9 Refused [DON'T READ]

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/Unsure [DON'T READ]
- 9 Refused [DON'T READ]

US3. *Do you approve or disapprove of the way Congress is handling its job?*

- 1 Approve
- 2 Disapprove
- 8 DK/Unsure/mixed [DON'T READ]
- 9 Refused [DON'T READ]

US3. *I'd like to ask you about a number of people and groups in society. On a scale of 0 to 100, with 0 meaning they don't help society at all, and 100 meaning they help society a lot, please tell me how you feel about the following:*

Congress

Organized religion

The President

The courts

The police

The military

Teachers

Journalists

Banks and other financial institutions

Labor unions

Political parties

State legislators

Elected officials at the town and county level

0-100

999 DK/Refused

Now I'd like to ask you about some things that have been in the news recently.

ACA1 *How closely, if at all, are you following news about the Affordable Care Act, or Obamacare as it's more commonly known?*

- 1 Very closely
- 2 Somewhat closely
- 3 Not at all closely
- 8 DK/Refused

ROTATE ACA2 AND ACA3

ACA2 In your opinion, how likely or unlikely [ROTATE] do you believe it is that the Affordable Care Act will, in the long run, drive down health care costs for the country as a whole?

- 1 Very likely
- 2 Somewhat likely
- 3 Somewhat unlikely
- 4 Very unlikely
- 8 DK/Refused

ACA3 In your opinion, how likely or unlikely [ROTATE] do you believe it is that the Affordable Care Act will, in the long run, result in fewer uninsured Americans?

- 1 Very likely
- 2 Somewhat likely
- 3 Somewhat unlikely
- 4 Very unlikely
- 8 DK/Refused

		Sample characteristics N = 1151; MoE = +/- 2.9
Gender	<i>Male</i>	49%
	<i>Female</i>	51%
Age	<i>18-29</i>	22%
	<i>30-44</i>	25%
	<i>45-59</i>	28%
	<i>60+</i>	24%
	<i>Refused</i>	1%
Race	<i>White</i>	69%
	<i>African American</i>	12%
	<i>Hispanic</i>	12%
	<i>Asian</i>	2%
	<i>Other/Refused</i>	4%
Party (with leaners)	<i>Dem</i>	41%
	<i>Ind/DK/Refused</i>	24%
	<i>Repub</i>	34%