

THE TOP ISSUES: IMPROVEMENT IN IRAQ, ECONOMIC CONCERNS
July 7 - 14, 2008

While Americans remain pessimistic about the direction of the country in general and the state of the economy in particular, they are increasingly positive about the way things are going in Iraq.

Only 7% of Americans would say the war in Iraq is going very well, but 45% say it is going at least *somewhat* well. This marks the most positive assessment of the war since January, 2006, and a 10 point upswing since just last month.

HOW IS THE WAR IN IRAQ GOING?

	Now	6/2008	6/2007	1/2006
Well	45%	35%	22%	49%
Badly	51	62	77	49

However, 51% say the war is going at least somewhat badly. And six in 10 Americans continue to believe the United States should never have gotten involved in Iraq in the first place.

**DID THE U.S. DO THE RIGHT THING
 GOING TO WAR WITH IRAQ?**

	Now	4/2008
Right thing	36%	37%
Should have stayed out	59	57

ENERGY COSTS, NUCLEAR POWER AND THE 2008 ELECTION

One solution advocated by John McCain for energy problems - building more nuclear power plants to generate electricity - now gets new consideration from many Americans. 57% think more nuclear power plants should be built - the highest number since 1977, before the nuclear accidents at the Three Mile Island power plant in Pennsylvania and the disaster at Chernobyl. Americans were divided just a year ago.

DO YOU APPROVE OF BUILDING MORE NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS?

	Now	4/2007	6/2001	5/1986	7/1977
Yes	57%	45%	51%	34%	69%
No	34	47	42	59	21

But most voters do not believe the policies of the next president - whether it is Barack Obama or John McCain - will help bring

down gas prices. 30% think Obama's energy policies will help bring down the price of gas, and 25% think John McCain's will.

**WILL THE CANDIDATES' ENERGY POLICIES
BRING DOWN GAS PRICES?**

(Among registered voters)

	Obama	McCain
Yes	30%	25%
No	50	56
Don't Know	20	19

Americans continue to feel the pinch of gas prices that average more than four dollars a gallon across the country. 65% of Americans say that gas prices have caused financial hardship for them or their households and more than a third characterize this hardship as serious.

**HAVE GAS PRICES CAUSED
FINANCIAL HARDSHIP IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD?**

	Now	6/2008
Yes, serious	34%	36%
Yes, not serious	31	29
No	35	34

THE ECONOMY AND THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION

Overall, the economy and jobs remain the most important problem facing the country today, with the more specific issue of the cost of gas tied with the war in Iraq in second place. 39% of Americans now count the economy and jobs together as the country's most important problem, up five points from last month.

MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM

	Now	6/2008
Economy & Jobs	39%	34%
Gas & Oil Prices	14	16
War in Iraq	14	15

When rating the national economy, only 19% say the condition of the economy is even somewhat good, slightly above the all-time low of 16% reached in May. Eight in 10 Americans rate the condition of the economy as bad, including 35% who say it is very bad. A year ago a majority of Americans said the condition of the economy was at least somewhat good.

CONDITION OF THE ECONOMY

	Now	6/2008	5/2008	7/2007
Good	19%	20%	16%	55%
Bad	80	78	83	43

Looking ahead, more than two thirds of all Americans think the economy is getting worse, while only 3% say it is getting better. 29% say the economy is staying the same.

IS THE ECONOMY...?

	Now	6/2008
Getting better	3%	3%
Getting worse	67	69
Staying the same	29	27

However, Americans remain positive about their own financial situation. While only 13% say their household finances are very good, nearly three in four say it is at least somewhat good.

Bush continues to receive dismally low marks on his handling of the economy. Now only 20% approve of the job he is doing with this issue - a new low. His overall job approval rating is 28%, up slightly from an all-time low of 25% reached last month.

BUSH'S JOB APPROVAL

	Now	6/2008
Overall	28%	25%
Economy	20%	21%

When looking at the direction of the country as a whole, eight in 10 say the country is off on the wrong track. Only 14% of Americans think the country is headed in the right direction, unchanged from last month's all-time low.

DIRECTION OF THE COUNTRY

	Now	6/2008
Right direction	14%	14%
Wrong track	81	83

This poll was conducted among a random sample of 1796 adults nationwide interviewed by telephone July 7-14, 2008. Oversamples of African Americans and Hispanics were interviewed, for a total of 297 interviews with African Americans and 246 interviews with Hispanics.

Respondents could be interviewed in either English or Spanish, and the poll included a sample of cell phones. The results then weighted in proportion to the racial composition of the adult population in the U.S. Census.

The error due to sampling could be plus or minus three percentage points based on the entire sample. The sampling errors could be plus or minus six percentage points for the African American and Hispanic samples.

CBS NEWS/NEW YORK TIMES POLL
The Top Issues: Improvement in Iraq, Economic Concerns
July 7-14, 2008

q1-9 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q10 Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as President?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **				
	*** Party ID ***				
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	May08b
	%	%	%	%	%
Approve	28	60	10	23	25
Disapprove	65	33	86	67	67
DK/NA	7	7	4	10	8

q11 Do you feel things in this country are generally going in the right direction or do you feel things have pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track?

Right direction	14	33	4	11	14
Wrong track	81	58	94	84	83
DK/NA	5	9	2	5	3

q12 What do you think is the most important problem facing the country today?

Economy / jobs	39	36	46	34	34
Gas/Heating Oil Crisis	14	17	11	15	16
War in Iraq	14	5	17	14	15
Environment	3	5	2	4	2
Health Care	3	2	4	2	4
Immigration	2	3	1	4	2
Foreign Policy	2	1	2	3	1
Defense / Military	2	4	1	1	0
Moral Values/Family Values	2	3	1	1	2
Other	16	21	11	19	21
DK/NA	3	3	4	3	3

q13 Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the economy?

					Apr08b
Approve	20	43	7	16	21
Disapprove	71	45	89	71	74
DK/NA	9	12	4	13	5

q14 How would you rate the condition of the national economy these days? Is it very good, fairly good, fairly bad, or very bad?

					May08b
Very good	1	2	0	1	1
Fairly good	18	33	9	17	19
Fairly bad	45	44	44	47	45
Very bad	35	19	46	35	33
DK/NA	1	2	1	0	2

q15 Do you think the economy is getting better, getting worse, or staying about the same?

** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **

*** Party ID ***

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	May08b
	%	%	%	%	%
Better	3	5	2	2	3
Worse	67	51	78	68	69
Same	29	43	19	29	27
DK/NA	1	1	1	1	1

q16-72 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q73 Looking back, do you think the United States did the right thing in taking military action against Iraq, or should the U.S. have stayed out?

					Apr08b
Right thing	36	70	15	33	37
Stayed out	59	27	80	60	57
DK/NA	5	3	5	7	6

q74 How would you say things are going for the U.S. in its efforts to bring stability and order to Iraq? Would you say things are going very well, somewhat well, somewhat badly, or very badly?

					May08b
Very well	7	17	2	5	4
Somewhat well	38	58	24	39	31
Somewhat badly	27	14	35	28	29
Very badly	24	7	37	24	33
DK/NA	4	4	2	4	3

q75-92 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q93 Do you think Barack Obama's energy policies would help bring down gas prices if he is elected President, or not?

** REGISTERED VOTERS **

Yes	30	14	45	24
No	50	68	35	54
DK/NA	20	18	20	22

q94 Do you think John McCain's energy policies would help bring down gas prices if he is elected President, or not?

Yes	25	36	17	24
No	56	44	65	55
DK/NA	19	20	18	21

q95 Would you approve or disapprove of building more nuclear power plants to generate electricity?

** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **

*** Party ID ***

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	Apr07b
	%	%	%	%	%
Approve	57	71	47	57	45
Disapprove	34	21	43	34	47
Don't know/No answer	9	8	10	9	8

q96 How would you rate the financial situation in your household these days? Is it very good, fairly good, fairly bad, or very bad?

					Mar08c
Very good	13	23	9	9	9
Fairly good	61	63	59	60	63
Fairly bad	19	9	23	22	20
Very bad	7	4	9	7	7
Don't know/No answer	0	1	0	2	1

q97 Have recent price increases in gasoline caused any financial hardship for you or others in your household, or not?

IF YES, ASK: Has that been a serious hardship, or not serious?

					May08b
Yes, serious	34	24	36	40	36
Yes, not serious	31	33	29	31	29
No	35	43	35	29	34
DK/NA	0	0	0	0	1

	<u>UNWEIGHTED</u>	<u>WEIGHTED</u>
Total Respondents	1796	
Total Republicans	451	470
Total Democrats	745	662
Total Independents	600	664
Registered Voters	1534	1462