



CBS NEWS POLL
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THE ECONOMY, IRAQ, AND 2008 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN
September 12-16, 2008

America's view of the economy is pessimistic overall: only 22% of Americans say the condition of the national economy is even somewhat good, and six in 10 think the economy is getting worse, not better. A third of all Americans say they are worse off now than four years ago, and nearly one in five say they are falling behind financially.

The economy and jobs remains the issue that is most important to registered voters in deciding who they would like to see elected President in November, no surprise for a poll conducted over a period of days that was witness to the collapse of Lehman Brothers - the largest bankruptcy in the history of the country - followed by the largest one-day stock market plunge in seven years.

Barack Obama rates slightly higher than John McCain in voter confidence in handling the economy, but more voters think their taxes will go up if Obama becomes President. Meanwhile, for the first time in over three years a majority of Americans thinks things are going well in Iraq, and confidence in the troop surge is at an all-time high.

THE CONDITION OF THE ECONOMY

22% of Americans say the condition of the economy is at least somewhat good, up four points from August and six points from the all-time low reached last May. But nearly eight in 10 say the economy is at least fairly bad, including four in 10 who say it is very bad.

CONDITION OF THE ECONOMY

	Now	8/2008	5/2008	9/2007
Good	22%	18%	16%	50%
Fairly bad	39	41	40	29
Very bad	39	41	43	18

61% of Americans say the economy is getting worse, while only 6% say the economy is getting better. 32% do not see a change in either direction.

IS THE ECONOMY...?

	Now	7/2008
Getting better	6%	5%
Getting worse	61	64
No change	32	31

And looking at the country overall, eight in 10 Americans think the country is off on the wrong track.

DIRECTION OF THE COUNTRY

	Now	7/2008
Right direction	14%	14%
Wrong track	81	81

Not surprisingly, President Bush's job approval rating remains low as well. Now only 27% of Americans approve of the job George W. Bush is doing as president, while a record 68% disapprove, marking the highest disapproval rating recorded of any president since Gallup began asking the question in 1938.

JOB DISAPPROVAL: HIGHS FOR EACH PRESIDENT

(CBS News and Gallup Polls)

G. W. Bush	68% (9/2008)
Truman	67% (1/1952)*
Nixon	66% (8/1974)*
Carter	60% (6/1980 & 8/1980)
G. H. Bush	59% (7/1992 & 10/1992)
Johnson	52% (3/1968 & 8/1969)*
Clinton	50% (8/1993 & 11/1994)
Reagan	47% (1/1983)
Ford	46% (4/1975, 11/1975 & 12/1975)*
Roosevelt	46% (11/1938)*
Eisenhower	36% (3/1958)*
Kennedy	30% (11/1963)*

*Gallup polls

THE ECONOMY AND THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN

When choosing among a list of issues facing the country today, Nearly one out of every two Americans picks the economy and jobs as the issue that will be most important to them in deciding who they would like to see elected president this year, far ahead of terrorism and national security, gas prices and energy, health care, and the war in Iraq. The number of Americans who pick the economy has risen eight points from August, while the number of Americans who pick the war in Iraq has declined seven points, from 15% in August to 8% now.

WHICH ISSUE IS MOST IMPORTANT IN VOTING FOR PRESIDENT?

(registered voters)

	Now	8/2008
The economy and jobs	48%	40%
Terrorism and national security	14	9
Gas prices and energy	10	15
Health care	10	9
The war in Iraq	8	15

Slightly more voters have confidence in Barack Obama's ability to handle the economy than have confidence in John McCain. Most are at least somewhat confident in both candidates, however. But less than one in four Americans are very confident in either.

CONFIDENCE IN HANDLING THE ECONOMY

(registered voters)

	Obama	McCain
Very confident	23%	18%
Somewhat confident	37	35
Not too/at all confident	39	46

While voters are more confident in Obama's handling of the economy, they are also more likely to think their taxes will go up in an Obama Administration. 49% think their taxes will go up under Obama, while only 34% think their taxes will go up under McCain. Few voters think their taxes will go down -- no matter who is in office.

IF OBAMA/McCAIN IS PRESIDENT, WILL YOUR TAXES...

(registered voters)

	Obama	McCain
Go up	49%	34%
Go down	15	8
Stay the same	33	55

Some Americans do not object to raising taxes, at least when considering the 2001 tax cuts instituted by President Bush. 42% of Americans think those tax cuts should be made permanent, but 36% say they should be allowed to expire.

THE 2001 TAX CUTS...

	Now	8/2008
Should be made permanent	42%	47%
Should be allowed to expire	36	34

Most voters who think the tax cuts should be made permanent support McCain, while most who think they should be allowed to expire are supporting Obama.

AMERICANS AND THEIR PERSONAL FINANCES

When comparing their family's financial situation now to four years ago, 33% say they are worse off now than four years ago, while 29% say they are better off. 36% say their family's financial situation hasn't changed.

FAMILY'S FINANCIAL SITUATION COMPARED TO FOUR YEARS AGO

Worse now	33%
Better now	29
Same	36

37% of Americans are making enough to save or buy extras, but 44% are making just enough to get by, and 17% say they are not making enough to pay their bills and meet their other financial obligations.

IS YOUR INCOME...?

	Now	6/2008
Enough to buy extras	37%	33%
Just enough to pay bills	44	47
Not enough to pay bills	17	18

The unemployment rate has risen steadily over the past year and a half, and in August it rose above 6% for the first time in five years. 29% of Americans say that someone in their household has been out of work and looking for a job at some point within the last twelve months. This percentage has been generally consistent over the past twenty-five years during periods of recession and economic hard times.

HOUSEHOLD UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE PAST YEAR

	Now	8/2002	7/1992	3/1982
Yes	29%	29%	29%	29%
No	71	71	70	71

One in five say they are very concerned that someone in their household will be out of work in the next twelve months, and another one in four are somewhat concerned, but more than half are not concerned at all.

CONCERN ABOUT LOSING YOUR JOB IN THE NEXT YEAR

	Now
Very	21%
Somewhat	23
Not at all	56

THE WAR IN IRAQ

For the first time in over three years, a majority of Americans thinks things are going well in Iraq. 52% now say the war there is going at least somewhat well - the highest number since just after the Iraqi elections held in January 2005.

HOW IS THE SITUATION IN IRAQ GOING?

	Now	8/2008	6/2008	6/2007	2/2005
Well	52%	45%	35%	22%	53%
Badly	46	51	62	77	47

Americans also think the surge is working. 50% say it is making the situation in Iraq better - the highest number to date.

IMPACT OF U.S. TROOP SURGE

	Now	3/2008	9/2007	6/2007
Making things better	50%	42%	30%	17%
Making things worse	10	13	14	24
No impact	30	34	51	52

Nevertheless, most Americans continue to think the U.S. should have stayed out of Iraq in the first place, and 53% now say the war in Iraq is not a part of the war on terrorism - more than ever before.

IS THE IRAQ WAR PART OF THE WAR ON TERRORISM?

	Now	10/2007	10/2006	7/2005	10/2004
Yes	39%	46%	43%	46%	50%
No	53	48	52	50	45

Looking ahead to the future, nearly six in 10 Americans think the next President should try to end the war in Iraq within the next year or two, while about 4 in 10 think he should continue fighting in Iraq as long as he feels it is necessary.

WHAT SHOULD THE NEXT PRESIDENT DO IN IRAQ?

End the war in a year or two	59%
Continue fighting if necessary	37

Voters are at least somewhat confident that both Barack Obama and John McCain can handle the situation in Iraq, though more say they are very confident in McCain.

CONFIDENCE IN HANDLING IRAQ

(registered voters)

	Obama	McCain
Very confident	26%	36%
Somewhat confident	26	20
Not too/at all confident	46	43

This poll was conducted among a random sample of 1133 adults nationwide, including 1004 registered voters, interviewed by telephone September 12-16, 2008. Phone numbers were dialed from RDD samples of both standard land-lines and cell phones. The error due to sampling for results based on the entire sample and registered voters could be plus or minus three percentage points. The error for subgroups is higher.

CBS NEWS/NEW YORK TIMES POLL
The Economy, Iraq, and the 2008 Presidential Campaign
September 12-16, 2008

q1 - q11 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q12 In deciding who you would like to see elected President this year, which one of the following issues will be most important to you - 1. Terrorism and national security, 2. the economy and jobs, 3. health care, 4. the war in Iraq, 5. gas prices and energy policy, 6. illegal immigration, or 7. something else?

	**** REGISTERED VOTERS ****				
	**** Party ID ****				
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	Aug08a
	%	%	%	%	%
The economy and jobs	48	41	58	40	40
Terrorism and natl. security	14	29	2	16	9
Gas prices and energy	10	9	7	15	15
Health care	10	5	15	8	9
The war in Iraq	8	4	12	9	15
Illegal immigration	3	3	1	4	6
Something else	5	6	4	6	4
DK/NA	2	3	1	2	2

q13 Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as President?

	*** TOTAL RESPONDENTS ***				
Approve	27	62	6	20	Sep08a 29
Disapprove	68	30	92	73	64
DK/NA	5	8	2	7	7

q14 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?

					Jul08a
Right direction	14	31	5	11	14
Wrong track	81	61	94	81	81
DK/NA	5	8	1	8	5

q15 How would you rate the condition of the national economy these days? Is it very good, fairly good, fairly bad, or very bad?

					Aug08a
Very good	2	4	1	1	1
Fairly good	20	38	5	21	17
Fairly bad	39	43	37	38	41
Very bad	39	13	57	39	41
DK/NA	0	2	0	1	0

q16 Do you think the economy is getting better, getting worse, or staying about the same?

**** TOTAL RESPONDENTS ****

	**** Party ID ****				Jul08b
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	
	%	%	%	%	%
Better	6	8	4	6	5
Worse	61	40	74	64	64
Same	32	50	21	29	31
DK/NA	1	2	1	1	0

q17 What do you want the next President's goals to be in Iraq: end the fighting in Iraq within the next year or two, or continue fighting in Iraq as long as he felt it was necessary?

End war	59	27	82	59
Continue fighting	37	69	15	35
DK/NA	4	4	3	6

q18 Do you think of the war in Iraq as part of the war on terrorism, or do you think of it as separate from the war on terrorism?

IF ANSWERED "PART OF WAR ON TERRORISM", ASK: Is it a major part of the war on terrorism, or a minor part of the war on terrorism?

					Oct07a
Major part of war on terror	26	54	10	21	35
Minor part of war on terror	13	15	9	17	11
Separate from war on terror	53	23	73	56	48
Don't know/No answer	8	8	8	6	6

q19 Many of the tax cuts passed in 2001 were temporary and are set to expire in a few years. Should those tax cuts be made permanent or should they be allowed to expire?

					Aug08a
Made permanent	42	66	28	37	47
Allowed to expire	36	18	51	32	34
Depends (vol.)	5	3	3	7	3
DK/NA	17	13	18	24	16

q20 Which of the following three statements comes closest to expressing your overall view of the health care system in the United States? 1. On the whole, the healthcare system works pretty well and only minor changes are necessary to make it work better. 2. There are some good things in our health care system, but fundamental changes are needed. 3. Our healthcare system has so much wrong with it that we need to completely rebuild it.

					Jul07a
Minor changes	14	29	6	11	11
Fundamental changes	50	54	42	56	50
Rebuild	35	16	52	32	38
Don't know/No answer	1	1	0	1	1

q21-q24 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q25 How confident are you in Barack Obama's ability to make the right decisions about the economy -- are you very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?

**** REGISTERED VOTERS ****

	**** Party ID ****				Aug08a
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	
	%	%	%	%	%
Very confident	23	1	46	16	23
Somewhat confident	37	22	43	44	42
Not too confident	22	44	5	23	16
Not at all confident	17	32	5	16	18
DK/NA	1	1	1	1	1

q26 How confident are you in Barack Obama's ability to make the right decisions about the war in Iraq -- are you very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?

					Jul08b
Very confident	26	4	50	18	14
Somewhat confident	26	10	35	32	38
Not too confident	19	35	5	22	20
Not at all confident	27	52	8	27	26
DK/NA	2	0	2	1	2

q27-q31 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q32 How confident are you in John McCain 's ability to make the right decisions about the economy -- are you very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?

					Aug08a
Very confident	18	37	5	13	11
Somewhat confident	35	53	16	43	43
Not too confident	22	7	29	30	28
Not at all confident	24	2	48	14	16
DK/NA	1	1	2	0	2

q33 How confident are you in John McCain's ability to make the right decisions about the war in Iraq -- are you very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?

					Jul08b
Very confident	36	73	9	35	25
Somewhat confident	20	21	15	27	29
Not too confident	17	4	23	21	19
Not at all confident	26	2	50	17	24
DK/NA	1	0	3	0	3

q32-q41 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q42 If Barack Obama is elected President in November, do you think your taxes will go up, go down, or stay about the same?

**** REGISTERED VOTERS ****

	**** Party ID ****			
Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	
%	%	%	%	
Go up	49	77	23	53
Go down	15	1	29	12
Stay about the same	33	20	43	32
Don't know/No answer	3	2	5	3

q43-q47 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q48 If John McCain is elected President in November, do you think your taxes will go up, go down, or stay about the same?

Go up	34	11	54	31
Go down	8	12	1	13
Stay about the same	55	74	40	53
Don't know/No answer	3	3	5	3

q49-q65 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q65-q69 BLANK

q70 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?

	*** TOTAL RESPONDENTS ***				Aug08a
Did the right thing	42	75	18	40	38
Should have stayed out	54	21	76	56	57
DK/NA	4	4	6	4	5

q71 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?

Very well	10	24	1	8	7
Somewhat well	42	61	27	43	38
Somewhat badly	24	9	31	30	31
Very badly	22	3	40	17	20
DK/NA	2	3	1	2	4

q72 As you may know, the United States has sent a troop surge to Iraq. From what you have heard or read, would you say the troop surge is making the situation in Iraq better, making it worse, or is it having no impact on the situation in Iraq so far?

Making it better	50	77	34	47	43
Making worse	10	2	15	11	13
No impact	30	12	43	29	33
Don't know/No answer	10	9	8	13	11

q73 - q79 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q80 In the last twelve months, has any adult in your household been out of work and actively looking for a job?

					Aug02a
Yes	29	18	36	30	29
No	71	82	64	70	71
DK/NA	0	0	0	0	0

q81 How concerned are you that in the next 12 months you or someone else in your household might be out of work and looking for a job--very concerned, somewhat concerned, or not concerned at all?

					Aug08a
Very concerned	21	11	29	19	24
Somewhat concerned	23	17	28	23	25
Not at all concerned	56	72	42	58	50
DK/NA	0	0	1	0	1

q82 Is your family financially better off today than it was four years ago, worse off financially, or is it about the same as it was four years ago?

					REG Oct04f
Better off	29	47	15	30	32
Worse off	33	12	51	31	26
About the same	36	39	32	38	41
Don't know/No answer	2	2	2	1	1

q83 Think about your household income, would you say that it is more than enough so that you can save money or buy some extras, just enough to meet your bills and obligations, or is it not enough to meet your bills and obligations?

					May08b
Can save and buy extras	37	53	27	35	33
Just enough to pay bills	44	36	51	43	47
Not enough to pay bills	17	8	22	18	18
DK/NA	2	3	0	4	2

	<u>UNWEIGHTED</u>	<u>WEIGHTED</u>
Total Respondents	1133	
Republicans - Total	326	322
Democrats - Total	437	437
Independents - Total	370	374
Registered Voters	1004	
Republicans - Reg. Voters	305	298
Democrats - Reg. Voters	402	382
Independents - Reg. Voters	297	262