

Bloomberg News National Poll

SELZER & COMPANY
1,000 U.S. adults ages 18 and over
Margin of Error: \pm 3.1 percentage points

Study #2004
December 4-7, 2010
Weighted by age and race

Methodology

December 13 (Bloomberg) -- The Bloomberg National Poll, conducted December 4-7 for Bloomberg News by Selzer & Co. Inc. of Des Moines, IA, is based on interviews with 1,000 U.S. adults ages 18 or older.

Interviewers contacted households with randomly selected landline and cell phone telephone numbers. Percentages based on the full sample may have a maximum margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points.

Responses were weighted by age and race to reflect the general population based on recent census data. Results based on smaller samples of respondents—such as by gender or age—have a larger margin of error. Republishing the copyrighted Bloomberg National Poll without credit to Bloomberg News is prohibited.

Poll Questions

In general, do you think things in the nation are headed in the right direction, or have they gotten off on the wrong track?

- 27 Right direction
- 66 Wrong track
- 7 Not sure

Which of the following do you see as the most important issue facing the country right now? (**Read list. Rotate.) Sorted.**)

- 50 Unemployment and jobs
- 25 The federal deficit and government spending
- 9 Health care
- 7 The war in Afghanistan
- 5 Immigration
- 1 Other (VOL) (specify:)
- 3 Not sure

Are you better off or worse off than you were two years ago?

- 35 Better off
- 51 Worse off
- 14 Not sure

Which of the following best describes your attitude toward the federal budget deficit? (**Read list.**)

- 48 It is dangerously out of control and threatens our economic future
- 43 It is a burden that will require some sacrifice down the road
- 5 It will cause no lasting harm
- 4 Not sure

Do you think now is the time for bold and fast change to bring down the federal deficit, even if it means more sacrifice for more people, or is it more important to minimize sacrifices for the American people?

- 40** Bold and fast change
- 51** More important to minimize sacrifice
- 9** Not sure

I'm going to mention some of the ideas for reducing the deficit. For each, please tell me if this is something you favor or oppose. (If [FAVOR/OPPOSE], ask: Do you [FAVOR/OPPOSE] strongly or just [FAVOR/OPPOSE]?) (Read list. Rotate.)

| | Net Favor | Net Oppose | Strongly Favor | Favor | Oppose | Strongly Oppose | Not Sure |
|---|-----------|------------|----------------|-------|--------|-----------------|----------|
| Freeze non-defense discretionary spending for programs such as education and medical research, which is almost 20% of the budget, at current levels for a few years | 43 | 53 | 14 | 29 | 32 | 21 | 4 |
| Cut defense spending, which accounts for 20% of the federal budget | 45 | 51 | 17 | 28 | 33 | 18 | 4 |
| Reduce benefits for Medicare | 15 | 82 | 4 | 11 | 46 | 36 | 3 |
| Reduce benefits for Medicaid, which is government help for medical care for low-income people | 26 | 72 | 10 | 16 | 42 | 30 | 2 |
| Raise the amount of salary subject to Social Security tax beyond the current limit of about \$107,000 | 51 | 38 | 15 | 36 | 29 | 9 | 11 |
| Reduce cost-of-living increases to Social Security | 31 | 65 | 10 | 21 | 38 | 27 | 4 |
| Create a national 6.5% sales tax with revenues specifically going to deficit reduction | 46 | 49 | 13 | 33 | 32 | 17 | 5 |
| Decrease the amount paid to hospitals and doctors who provide Medicare services | 29 | 67 | 9 | 20 | 44 | 23 | 4 |
| Gradually raise the age of eligibility for Social Security to 69 | 37 | 60 | 10 | 27 | 34 | 26 | 3 |
| Add a 15-cents-a-gallon federal gasoline tax | 25 | 74 | 7 | 18 | 32 | 42 | 1 |
| Eliminate all tax deductions, including the home mortgage deduction, in return for lower tax rates | 41 | 51 | 12 | 29 | 33 | 18 | 8 |
| Replace Medicare with a system in which government vouchers would help participants pay for their own health insurance | 35 | 58 | 8 | 27 | 33 | 25 | 7 |
| Cut subsidies to farmers | 33 | 61 | 10 | 23 | 39 | 22 | 6 |
| Eliminate tax cuts the wealthiest Americans have received in recent years | 59 | 38 | 33 | 26 | 20 | 18 | 3 |
| Begin means testing for Social Security and Medicare and reduce benefits for the wealthy | 67 | 27 | 24 | 43 | 19 | 8 | 6 |
| Impose a tax on Wall Street profits | 70 | 24 | 34 | 36 | 17 | 7 | 6 |

When it comes to Social Security, do you favor an approach that keeps the current system in place or an approach that would be a dramatic overhaul? **(Alternated with next question every other interview.)**

- 55 Keeps current system in place
- 38 Dramatic overhaul
- 7 Not sure

When it comes to Medicare, do you favor an approach that keeps the current system in place or an approach that would be a dramatic overhaul? **(Alternated with previous question every other interview.)**

- 50 Keeps current system in place
- 41 Dramatic overhaul
- 9 Not sure

All of the current proposals for cutting Social Security and Medicare do not affect anyone who currently receives these benefits, or anyone who will receive these benefits within 10 years. What do you think is best? **(Read list.)**

- 21 To exclude current participants and people who will soon receive benefits from any cuts
- 20 To exclude current participants but impose modest cuts for people who will soon receive benefits
- 49 To treat everyone the same and impose cuts for current and future participants
- 10 Not sure

The U.S. Congress is considering whether to renew most or all of the Bush tax cuts that expire at the end of December. In your view, what action would be best for the U.S. economy?

- 19 Extend the tax cuts permanently for all income levels
- 34 Extend the tax cuts permanently for the middle class but not for those earning \$250,000 a year or more
- 16 Permanently extend the tax cuts for the middle class and extend for only two years the tax cuts for the highest income earners
- 27 Let all tax cuts expire as scheduled and return rates to previous levels to help cut the deficit
- 4 Not sure

If Congress decided to raise taxes only for those with the highest household income, should it be for those who earn more than \$250,000, more than \$500,000 or more than \$1 million?

- 43 \$250,000
- 28 \$500,000
- 23 \$1 million
- 6 Not sure

The Federal Reserve has announced plans to buy \$600 billion of longer-term federal government debt in a policy that's been dubbed QE2. The Fed says the purchases will bring down long-term interest rates and promote the economic recovery. Critics say it won't work and will instead lead to much higher inflation. Do you think this action will or will not help the U.S. economy?

- 25 Will help economy
- 54 Will not help economy
- 21 Not sure

Some people say the Federal Reserve has too much power and is not accountable to the Congress. Others say it is best to have an independent body that can make unpopular decisions. Do you think the Federal Reserve should be more accountable to Congress or left as an independent body, or should it be abolished entirely?

- 39** More accountable
- 37** Left as independent
- 16** Fed should be abolished
- 8** Not sure

Wall Street firms will pay out large end-of-year bonuses to their employees. Which of the following is closest to your view?

- 7** The bonuses are a reflection of Wall Street's return to health and an appropriate incentive
- 17** Bonuses above \$400,000 at firms that received federal assistance during the financial crisis should be subject to a one-time 50 percent tax, as has been proposed by some lawmakers
- 71** The government should prevent firms that received federal assistance in the financial crisis from paying out big bonuses this year
- 5** Not sure

I'm going to mention some things that have been talked about as legislative goals for the next two years. For each, please tell me if you favor or oppose. (**Read list. Rotate.**)

| | Favor | Oppose | Not sure |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Repeal the health care overhaul | 55 | 40 | 5 |
| Pass a comprehensive immigration law | 74 | 20 | 6 |
| Put the federal budget on track to be balanced in 20 years | 87 | 10 | 3 |
| Pass a constitutional amendment to define marriage as between one man and one woman | 51 | 46 | 3 |
| Ratify the START treaty on reducing nuclear weapons with Russia | 63 | 26 | 11 |
| Extend unemployment benefits to those who have been out of work longer than 99 weeks | 58 | 39 | 3 |
| Cut taxes on corporations | 31 | 65 | 4 |
| Cut taxes on individuals | 60 | 35 | 5 |

Thinking forward to the election for president in 2012, do you think Barack Obama deserves to be re-elected or deserves to be defeated?

- 42** Deserves to be re-elected
- 45** Deserves to be defeated
- 4** Depends on alternatives (VOL)
- 9** Not sure

Do you approve or disapprove of the job Barack Obama is doing as president?

(Follow with:) Do you approve or disapprove of the job he is doing: **(Rotate all but first.)**

| | Approve | Disapprove | Not Sure |
|-------------------------------------|---------|------------|----------|
| As president | 47 | 48 | 5 |
| With the economy | 41 | 54 | 5 |
| With health care | 44 | 51 | 5 |
| With the budget deficit | 31 | 60 | 9 |
| With creating jobs | 40 | 55 | 5 |
| With relations with other countries | 56 | 37 | 7 |
| With policies on trade with China | 36 | 40 | 24 |

Now, I'd like to mention some major economic and political figures and groups. For each, please tell me if your feelings are very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly unfavorable, or very unfavorable. If you don't know enough to answer, just say so. **(Record "don't know" as "not sure." Rotate list.)**

| | Net Favorable | Net Unfavorable | Very Favorable | Mostly Favorable | Mostly Unfavorable | Very Unfavorable | Not Sure |
|---|---------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|----------|
| Barack Obama , President of the United States | 52 | 44 | 21 | 31 | 20 | 24 | 4 |
| Sarah Palin , former governor of Alaska | 33 | 57 | 9 | 24 | 24 | 33 | 10 |
| Hillary Clinton , Secretary of State | 65 | 29 | 21 | 44 | 17 | 12 | 6 |
| The Republican Party | 43 | 48 | 10 | 33 | 29 | 19 | 9 |
| The Democratic Party | 48 | 43 | 14 | 34 | 25 | 18 | 9 |
| The Tea Party | 37 | 41 | 12 | 25 | 17 | 24 | 22 |
| John Boehner , the incoming speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives | 30 | 22 | 8 | 22 | 12 | 10 | 48 |
| Nancy Pelosi , the outgoing speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives | 31 | 48 | 9 | 22 | 17 | 31 | 21 |
| George W. Bush , former president of the United States | 39 | 57 | 12 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 4 |
| Ben Bernanke , chairman of the Federal Reserve | 34 | 25 | 7 | 27 | 17 | 8 | 41 |

Recently, several supporters of the Tea Party movement were elected to Congress. Do you expect them to remain true to their principles and to confront both Republicans and Democrats, or do you expect them to compromise in order to get things done?

- 32 Remain true to principles
- 57 Start compromising to get things done
- 11 Not sure

Do you consider yourself a supporter of the Tea Party Movement? **(If yes, ask:)** Do you consider yourself a strong supporter, or just a supporter?

- 8 Yes, strong supporter
- 20 Yes, just a supporter
- 62 No, not a supporter
- 10 Not sure

Which do you think is better for the American people: for the Republicans and Democrats in Congress to each stick to their principles even if it means gridlock and nothing gets done, or do you want the parties to work together even if it means compromising some principles?

- 10** Stick to principles even if it means gridlock
- 87** Work together even if it means compromising some principles
- 3** Not sure

In the past, when Congress failed to act on a budget because the two sides could not agree, the federal government was shut down. Is that something you would support if needed, or is it something to be avoided at any cost?

- 38** Would support if needed
- 56** Avoid at any cost
- 6** Not sure

As you prepare for the upcoming holidays, do you anticipate you will spend more or spend less than last year, or spend about the same?

- 12** Spend more
- 46** Spend less
- 41** About the same
- 1** Not sure

Do you anticipate you will need to take on debt for holiday spending this year, or cover costs for gifts and other expenses from what you have on hand or from savings?

- 12** Take on debt
- 83** Cover from what is on hand or savings
- 5** Not sure

Do you think you will purchase more or fewer gifts over the Internet this year than in past years?

- 30** More
- 43** Fewer
- 19** Don't buy gifts on Internet (VOL)
- 8** Not sure

What is your age?

- 14** Under 25
- 18** 25 to 34
- 19** 35 to 44
- 19** 45 to 54
- 14** 55 to 64
- 16** 65 and over
- Refused/not sure

In politics as of today, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

- 26** Republican
- 31** Democrat
- 40** Independent
- 1** Other (VOL)
- 2** Refused/not sure

What is the last grade of school you completed?

- 30 High school graduate or less
- 25 Some college
- 27 College degree
- 18 Postgraduate work or degree
- Refused/not sure

Do you have children under the age of 18 living at home?

- 40 Yes
- 59 No
- 1 Refused/not sure

Which of the following best describes your religious beliefs—Catholic, Protestant, some other kind of Christian, Jewish, Muslim, other, or none?

- 21 Catholic
- 29 Protestant
- 26 Some other kind of Christian
- 2 Jewish
- Muslim
- 2 Other
- 15 None
- 5 Refused/not sure

Would you describe yourself as a "born again" or fundamentalist Christian, or not?
(Based on all, so percentages do not add to 100%.)

- 31 Yes
- 22 No
- 2 Not sure

With what racial or ethnic group do you identify most—White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, or some other group?

- 68 White
- 12 Black
- 9 Hispanic
- 4 Asian
- 2 Other
- 5 Refused/not sure

Is your total annual household income before taxes above or below \$50,000 per year?

Below **ASK b**
Above **ASK c**

- | | | |
|---|-----------|---------------------------|
| b. Is it above or below \$25,000 per year? | 20 | Below (<\$25,000) |
| | 23 | Above (\$25,000-\$49,999) |
| c. Is it above or below \$100,000 per year? | 27 | Below (\$50,000-\$99,999) |
| | 22 | Above (\$100,000 or more) |
| | 8 | Refused/not sure |

Sex:

48 Male

52 Female