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Democrats Far Less Negative than a Month Ago

Record Partisan Gap in Views of Economic News

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Democrats Far Less Negative than a Month Ago Record Partisan Gap in Views of Economic News

With the election less than two months away, partisan differences in views of economic news have become wider than ever. Despite this month's lackluster jobs report, there has been a modest decline in the percentage of Americans saying news about the economy is mostly bad – with virtually all of the change coming among Democrats.

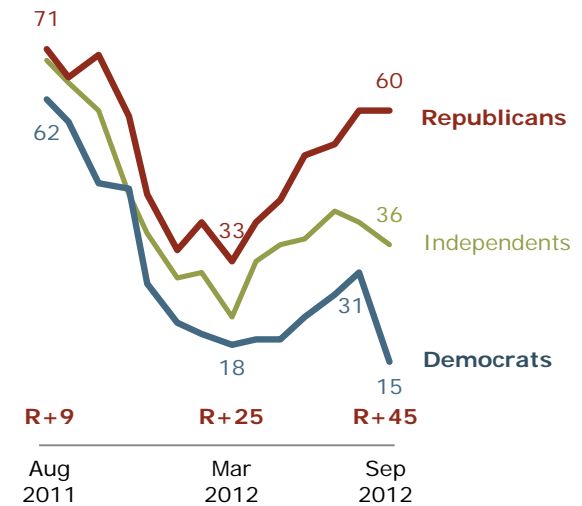
Just 15% of Democrats say recent economic news is mostly bad, down from 31% a month ago and among the lowest percentages over the last four years. Six-in-ten Republicans (60%) say news about the economy is mostly bad, as do 36% of independents. Opinions among Republicans and independents are largely unchanged from a month ago.

Among the public generally, 58% say they are hearing a mix of good and bad news about the economy, while 35% say they are hearing mostly bad news and 6% mostly good news. After climbing upward over the course of the spring and summer, the share of Americans saying the economic news they are hearing is mostly bad fell six points since last month, from 41% to 35%.

However, the percentage hearing mostly bad news about gas prices has more than doubled since July. Currently, 75% say they are hearing mostly bad news about gas prices, up from 58% a month ago and just 31% in July.

Republicans, Democrats Hearing Very Different Economic News

Percent saying they are hearing mostly bad news about the economy...



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Sept 7-9, 2012.

The latest national survey by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, conducted Sept. 7-9 among 1,012 adults, finds that views of economic news are more negative today than in March, when 24% said they were hearing mostly bad news. But they are far more positive than they were in August 2011, when 67% said economic news was mostly bad.

Public perceptions of news about the job situation remain negative, but no more negative than during the past few months. About half (52%) say they are hearing mostly bad news about the job situation. The percentage hearing mostly bad news about jobs has been about at this level since June; in March just 38% said the news about jobs was mostly bad.

While news about gas prices is viewed more negatively, a majority of Americans (58%) also say they are hearing mostly bad news about prices for food and consumer goods. While that is little changed from August (54%),

Views of Jobs News Hold Steady; More Hearing Bad News about Gas Prices

<i>News about...</i>	2011	2012			
	Aug	March	July	Aug	Sept
The economy	%	%	%	%	%
Mostly bad	67	24	40	41	35
Mix of good and bad	30	62	55	53	58
Mostly good	1	11	4	3	6
Don't know	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>
	100	100	100	100	100
The job situation					
Mostly bad	74	38	51	55	52
Mix of good and bad	21	42	38	35	34
Mostly good	4	17	9	6	12
Don't know	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>
	100	100	100	100	100
Gas prices					
Mostly bad	66	85	31	58	75
Mix of good and bad	26	12	35	28	19
Mostly good	4	2	31	10	3
Don't know	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100	100	100
Consumer prices					
Mostly bad	62	50	45	54	58
Mix of good and bad	28	38	40	33	31
Mostly good	4	7	9	7	7
Don't know	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>
	100	100	100	100	100
Real estate values					
Mostly bad	63	39	39	41	43
Mix of good and bad	27	42	41	36	32
Mostly good	4	9	14	11	20
Don't know	<u>6</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>5</u>
	100	100	100	100	100
Financial markets					
Mostly bad	69	29	35	41	37
Mix of good and bad	25	48	50	44	41
Mostly good	2	15	6	6	14
Don't know	<u>4</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>7</u>
	100	100	100	100	100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Sept. 7-9, 2012. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

it is up 13 points since July.

However, small but growing numbers say they are hearing mostly good news about other sectors – real estate values and the financial markets. While 43% say news about real estate values has been mixed, and 32% say the news is mostly bad, 20% say it is mostly good, nearly double the percentage from a month ago (11%).

The percentage hearing mostly good news about financial markets also has increased, from 6% last month to 14% currently. About four-in-ten (41%) say news about the markets been mixed, while 37% say it has been mostly bad.

Partisan Differences Increase Sharply

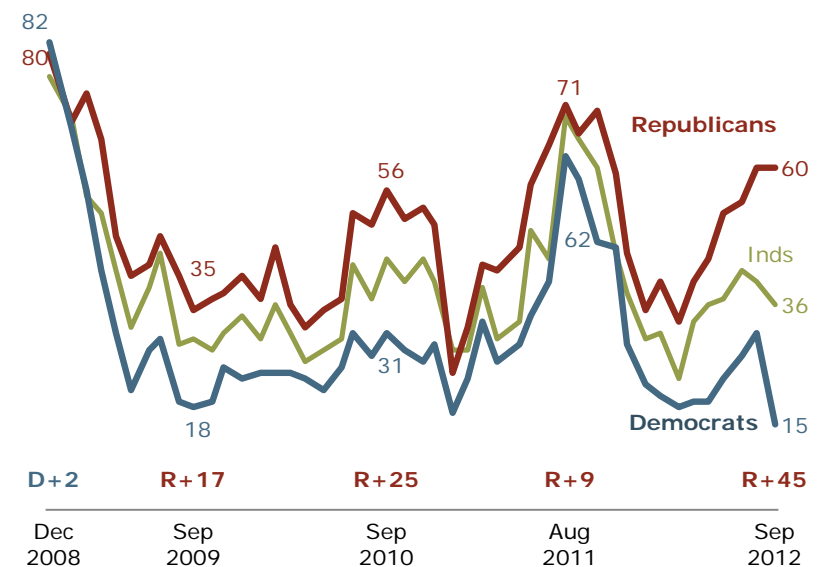
Amid the nation's financial crisis four years ago, there were virtually no differences in how Republicans, Democrats and independents viewed economic news. About eight-in-ten in each group said the news they were hearing was mostly bad.

Differences in perceptions of economic news emerged after Barack Obama took office. But they never have been as great as they are today. Four times as many Republicans as Democrats say the news they have been hearing about the economy is mostly bad (60% vs. 15%).

As in recent months, the views of independents are roughly equidistant from those of Republicans and Democrats. In the current survey, 36% of independents say they hearing mostly bad economic news, little changed from a month ago (40%).

Wider Partisan Divide in Views of Economic News

Percent saying they are hearing mostly bad news about the economy...



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Sept 7-9, 2012.

There also are substantial differences in how Republicans and Democrats view recent news about specific economic sectors. Half or more Republicans say the news about all the sectors included in the survey has been mostly bad. For Democrats, news about only one sector – gas prices – stands out as particularly negative (65% mostly bad).

More than twice as many Republicans (75%) as Democrats (34%) say news about the job situation has been mostly bad. Democrats' views of job news are less negative than last month, when 43% said the news was mostly bad. Opinions among Republicans (75% now mostly bad) and independents (now 54%) are largely unchanged over this period.

Wide Partisan Differences in Views of Job News

<i>% hearing mostly bad news about ...</i>	Rep	Dem	Ind	R-D diff
	%	%	%	
Job situation	75	34	54	+41
Consumer prices	74	40	64	+34
Financial markets	52	23	42	+29
Real estate values	57	30	44	+27
Gas prices	89	65	78	+24

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Sept 7-9, 2012.

About the Survey

The analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted September 7-9, 2012 among a national sample of 1,012 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (604 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 408 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 189 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see: <http://people-press.org/methodology/>.

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and region to parameters from the March 2011 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey and population density to parameters from the Decennial Census. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status, based on extrapolations from the 2011 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size among respondents with a landline phone. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. The following table shows the sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

Group	Sample Size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	1,012	3.6 percentage points
Republicans	247	7.3 percentage points
Democrats	364	6.0 percentage points
Independents	347	6.1 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER
September 7-9, 2012 OMNIBUS
FINAL TOPLINE
N=1,012

PEW.1, PEW.5, PEW.6, PEW.8 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

NO QUESTIONS PEW.2, PEW.7

PEW.3, PEW.4 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK ALL:

Now thinking about recent economic news...

PEW.9 Are you hearing mostly good news about the economy these days, mostly bad news about the economy or a mix of both good and bad news?

	<u>Hearing mostly good news</u>	<u>Hearing mostly bad news</u>	<u>A mix of good and bad news</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
September 7-9, 2012	6	35	58	1
August 2-5, 2012	3	41	53	3
July 5-8, 2012	4	40	55	2
May 31-June 3, 2012	3	37	57	3
May 3-6, 2012	6	32	60	2
April 5-8, 2012	11	30	57	2
March 8-11, 2012	11	24	62	2
February 2-5, 2012	8	30	59	3
January 5-8, 2012	9	30	60	1
December 1-4, 2011	6	36	56	1
November 10-13, 2011	3	48	48	1
October 6-9, 2011	1	58	39	2
September 1-4, 2011	2	61	35	1
August 4-7, 2011	1	67	30	2
July 7-10, 2011	3	49	46	2
June 2-5, 2011	2	46	50	1
May 12-15, 2011	6	35	56	2
March 31-April 3, 2011	5	33	60	2
March 3-6, 2011	7	38	53	2
February 3-6, 2011	6	29	64	1
January 6-9, 2011	7	24	68	1
December 2-5, 2010	4	39	55	1
November 11-14, 2010	5	41	53	2
October 7-10, 2010	6	39	53	2
September 2-6, 2010	3	41	54	2
August 5-8, 2010	4	38	55	3
July 1-5, 2010	3	42	54	1
June 10-13, 2010	4	30	65	1
May 7-10, 2010	4	29	66	1
April 1-5, 2010	6	28	66	*
March 5-8, 2010	4	30	66	1
February 5-8, 2010	4	35	61	*
January 8-11, 2010	5	29	65	1
December 4-7, 2009	7	33	59	1
October 30-November 2, 2009	5	31	62	2
October 9-12, 2009	6	27	66	1
September 3-6, 2009	5	27	68	1
August 7-10, 2009	11	29	59	1
July 2-5, 2009	3	41	56	*
June 12-15, 2009	4	37	59	*
May 8-11, 2009	4	31	64	1
April 9-13, 2009	4	39	56	1
March 13-16, 2009	2	51	46	1

PEW.9 CONTINUED...

	Hearing mostly <u>good news</u>	Hearing mostly <u>bad news</u>	A mix of good and <u>bad news</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
February 13-16, 2009	2	60	37	1
January 16-19, 2009	2	67	30	1
December 5-8, 2008	1	80	19	*

ASK ALL:

PEW.10 Thinking about some specific aspects of the nation's economy... Please tell me if you are hearing mostly good news, mostly bad news or a mix of both good and bad news about each of the following.

[READ AND RANDOMIZE]

	Hearing mostly <u>good news</u>	Hearing mostly <u>bad news</u>	A mix of good and <u>bad news</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
a. The financial markets				
September 7-9, 2012	14	37	41	7
August 2-5, 2012	6	41	44	9
July 5-8, 2012	6	35	50	8
May 31-June 3, 2012	5	47	42	6
March 8-11, 2012	15	29	48	8
November 10-13, 2011	4	50	41	5
August 4-7, 2011	2	69	25	4
June 2-5, 2011	5	40	45	9
May 12-15, 2011	11	33	45	11
March 31-April 3, 2011	13	30	51	6
March 3-6, 2011	12	33	47	8
February 3-6, 2011	17	31	46	6
December 2-5, 2010	13	38	44	4
September 2-6, 2010	9	43	40	8
July 1-5, 2010	4	46	44	6
May 7-10, 2010	6	41	49	3
April 1-5, 2010	15	30	50	6
March 5-8, 2010	11	26	59	4
January 8-11, 2010	16	32	47	6
October 30-November 2, 2009	12	33	48	7
August 7-10, 2009	20	31	43	6
June 12-15, 2009	9	43	45	3
b. Real estate values				
September 7-9, 2012	20	43	32	5
August 2-5, 2012	11	41	36	11
July 5-8, 2012	14	39	41	7
May 31-June 3, 2012	14	43	36	6
March 8-11, 2012	9	39	42	10
November 10-13, 2011	6	55	32	7
August 4-7, 2011	4	63	27	6
June 2-5, 2011	7	56	28	9
May 12-15, 2011	9	45	35	11
March 31-April 3, 2011	6	48	38	8
March 3-6, 2011	8	46	36	10
February 3-6, 2011	8	51	34	7
December 2-5, 2010	6	62	28	4
September 2-6, 2010	6	57	32	5
July 1-5, 2010	9	49	35	7
May 7-10, 2010	12	41	42	5
April 1-5, 2010	12	44	38	6
March 5-8, 2010	8	45	42	5
January 8-11, 2010	11	43	40	5
October 30-November 2, 2009	13	43	37	6
August 7-10, 2009	11	40	41	7

PEW.10 CONTINUED...

	Hearing mostly <u>good news</u>	Hearing mostly <u>bad news</u>	A mix of good and <u>bad news</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
June 12-15, 2009	11	45	40	3
c. Prices for food and consumer goods				
September 7-9, 2012	7	58	31	4
August 2-5, 2012	7	54	33	5
July 5-8, 2012	9	45	40	6
May 31-June 3, 2012	7	46	40	7
March 8-11, 2012	7	50	38	6
November 10-13, 2011	5	52	36	7
August 4-7, 2011	4	62	28	5
June 2-5, 2011	5	58	30	6
May 12-15, 2011	3	58	32	6
March 31-April 3, 2011	3	59	34	4
March 3-6, 2011	7	62	26	5
February 3-6, 2011	7	49	39	5
December 2-5, 2010	16	41	39	5
September 2-6, 2010	12	35	42	10
July 1-5, 2010	9	32	48	10
May 7-10, 2010	8	37	46	9
April 1-5, 2010	10	35	46	9
March 5-8, 2010	9	34	50	7
January 8-11, 2010	12	37	45	6
October 30-November 2, 2009	12	39	42	7
August 7-10, 2009	10	36	46	9
June 12-15, 2009	9	39	46	6
d. The job situation				
September 7-9, 2012	12	52	34	2
August 2-5, 2012	6	55	35	4
July 5-8, 2012	9	51	38	3
May 31-June 3, 2012	8	55	35	2
March 8-11, 2012	17	38	42	3
December 1-4, 2011	10	51	37	2
November 10-13, 2011	5	64	28	2
August 4-7, 2011	4	74	21	2
June 2-5, 2011	5	58	34	3
May 12-15, 2011	9	51	37	3
March 31-April 3, 2011	12	43	42	2
March 3-6, 2011	10	50	37	3
February 3-6, 2011	9	52	37	2
December 2-5, 2010	6	66	27	1
September 2-6, 2010	5	65	28	2
July 1-5, 2010	5	64	30	1
May 7-10, 2010	9	52	38	2
April 1-5, 2010	9	56	33	2
March 5-8, 2010	5	59	35	1
January 8-11, 2010	6	61	31	2
October 30-November 2, 2009	3	68	27	2
August 7-10, 2009	6	61	32	1
June 12-15, 2009	1	71	27	1
e. Gas prices				
September 7-9, 2012	3	75	19	3
August 2-5, 2012	10	58	28	5
July 5-8, 2012	31	31	35	2
May 31-June 3, 2012	19	48	31	2
March 8-11, 2012	2	85	12	2
November 10-13, 2011	9	47	36	8

PEW.10 CONTINUED...

	Hearing mostly <u>good news</u>	Hearing mostly <u>bad news</u>	A mix of good and <u>bad news</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
August 4-7, 2011	4	66	26	4
June 2-5, 2011	8	68	23	2
May 12-15, 2011	1	84	14	1
March 31-April 3, 2011	1	88	10	1
March 3-6, 2011	1	90	7	2
February 3-6, 2011	2	77	18	3