

AEI Political Report

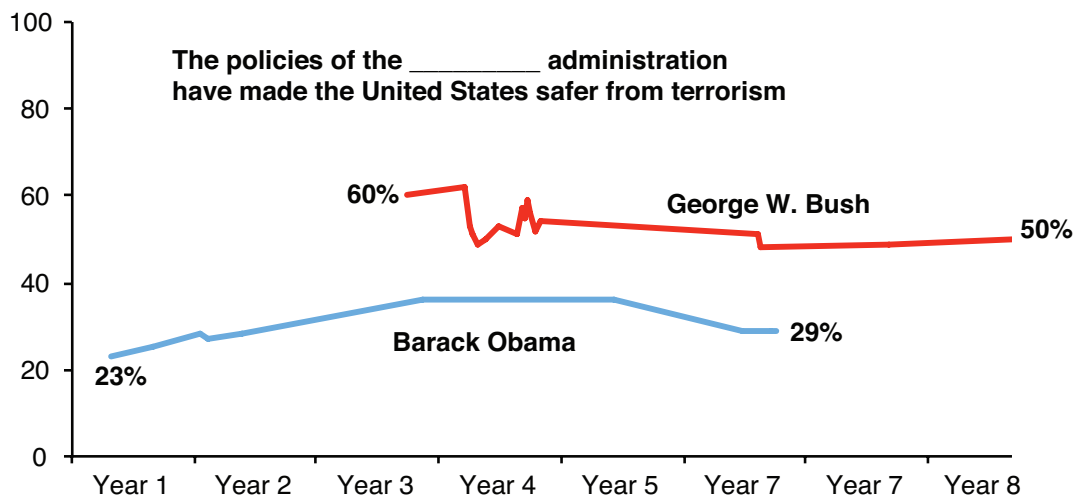
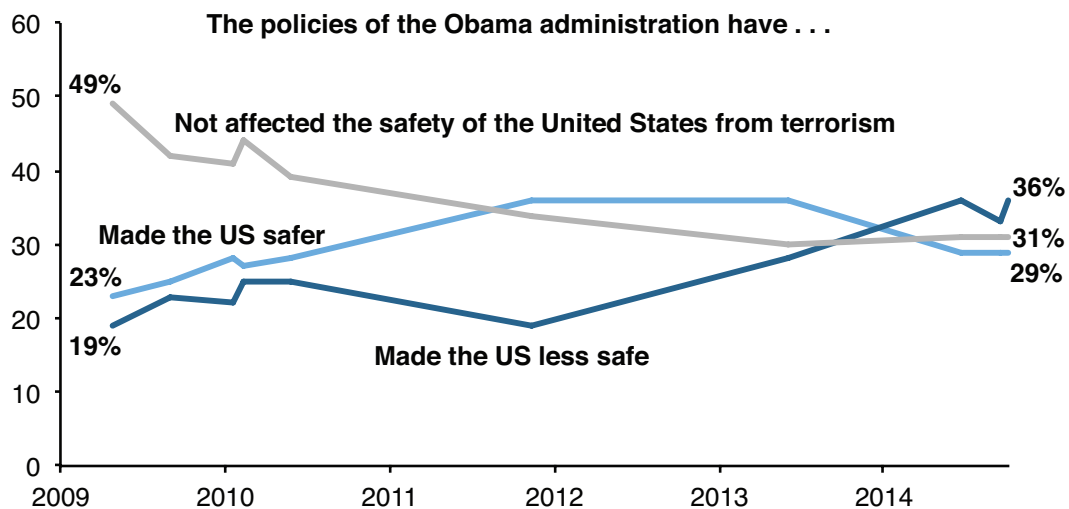
A MONTHLY POLL COMPILATION

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Are We Safer?

Throughout most of Barack Obama's presidency, Americans have said the policies of his administration have either not affected the safety of the United States from terrorism or have made the U.S. safer. In 2014, as the trend below shows, that changed. During George W. Bush's tenure, majorities or strong pluralities consistently said the Bush administration's policies had made the U.S. safer from terrorism, with no fewer than 48 percent giving that response. This was true even as President Bush's approval ratings tanked.

Q: Do you think . . . ?



Note: Asked of registered voters from June 2004 to October 2004.

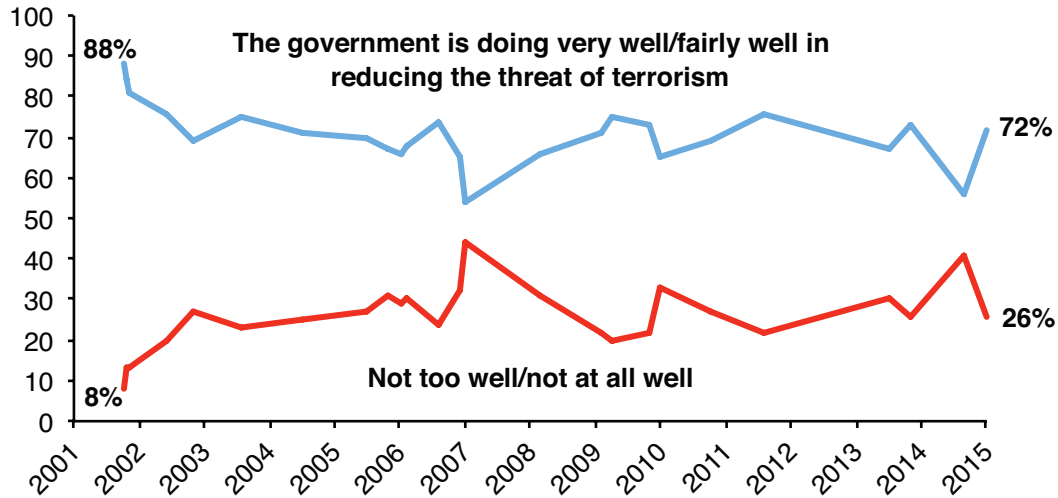
Source: CBS News/*New York Times*, September–October 2003, March 2004, April 2004, mid-September 2004, mid-October 2004, late October 2004, late August 2006, September 2007, April 2009, February 2010, and May 2013 to October 2014; CBS News, March–April 2004, May 2004, August 2004, late September 2004, early October 2004, early August 2006, September 2008, August 2009, January 2010, May 2010, and November 2011.

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The Feds Get Positive Marks

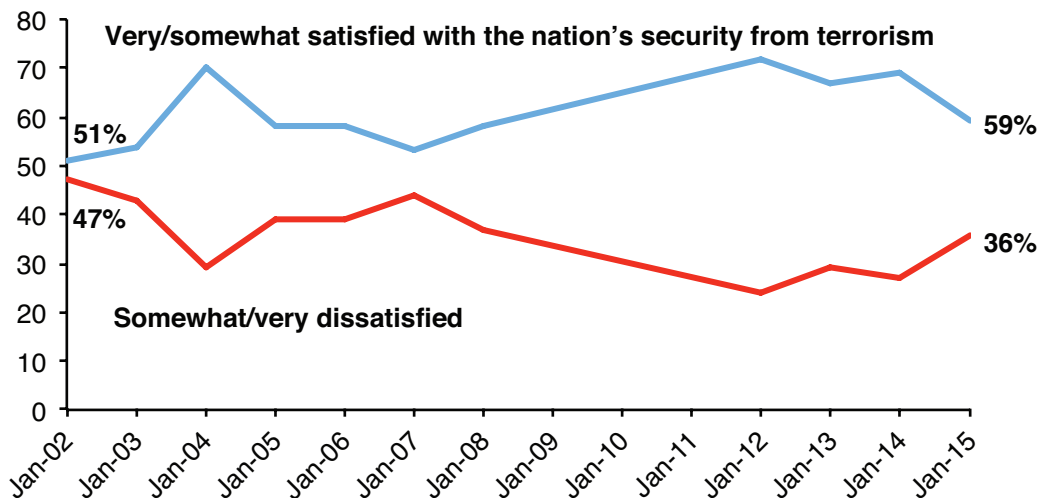
At a time when the federal government gets few positive marks, half or more of Americans say the government is doing very well or fairly well in reducing the threat of terrorism. In a January Pew Research Center poll, 22 percent said the government is doing very well, 50 percent said fairly well, 17 percent said not too well, and nine percent said not at all well in reducing the threat. In a Gallup poll from the same month, 59 percent of respondents said they were satisfied with the nation's security from terrorism, down from 69 percent who gave that response in January 2014.

Q: In general, how well do you think the U.S. government is doing in reducing the threat of terrorism?



Note: Asked of registered voters in November 2002.
Source: Pew Research Center, latest that of January 2015.

Q: Next, we'd like to know how you feel about the state of the nation in each of the following areas. For each one, please say whether you are . . .

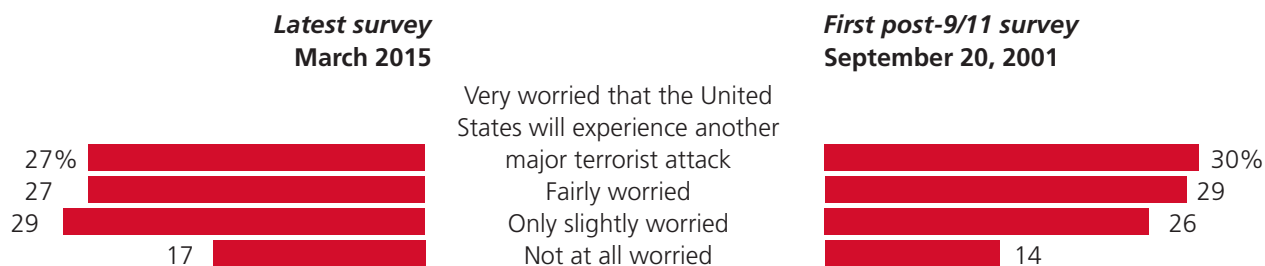


Source: The Gallup Organization, latest that of January 2015.

Concern about Terrorism

In a NBC News/*Wall Street Journal* trend dating to late September 2001, the percentage of Americans who say they are very or fairly worried about the possibility of another major terrorist attack has remained relatively constant, with majorities most often saying they are more worried than not. When Gallup asked people about 15 issues in early 2014 and then again this year, worries about future terrorism at home had increased the most. Fifty-one percent told Gallup they worry a great deal about the possibility of future terrorist attacks in the United States, up 12 points from 2014. Defending the country from future terrorist attacks ranks highest among Americans' priorities for President Obama and Congress this year in terms of those who say it should be a "top priority," with 76 percent giving Pew pollsters that response in January.

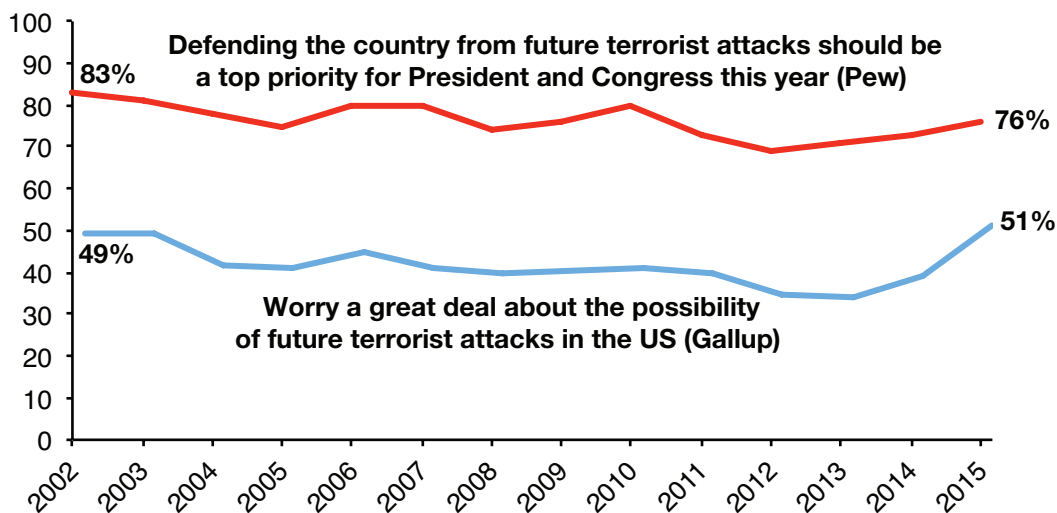
Q: How worried are you . . . ?



Source: NBC News/*Wall Street Journal*, latest that of March 2015.

Q: Next, I'm going to read a list of problems facing the country. For each one, please tell me if you personally worry about this problem a great deal, a fair amount, only a little, or not at all? How much do you personally worry about the possibility of future terrorist attacks in the U.S.? (The Gallup Organization)

Q: I'd like to ask you about priorities for President Obama and Congress this year. As I read from a list, please tell me if you think each should be a top priority, important but lower priority, not too important, or should it not be done . . . Defending the country from future terrorist attacks. (Pew Research Center)



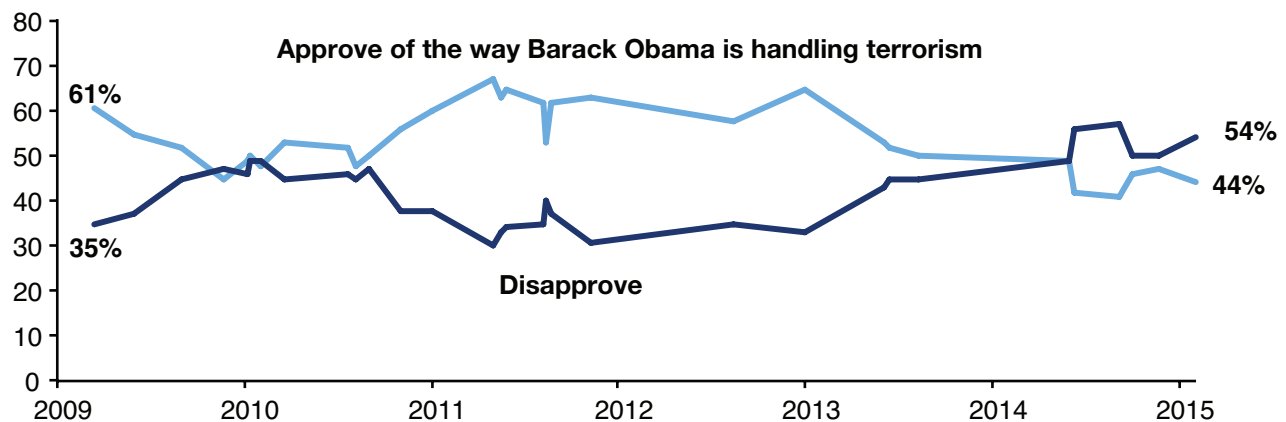
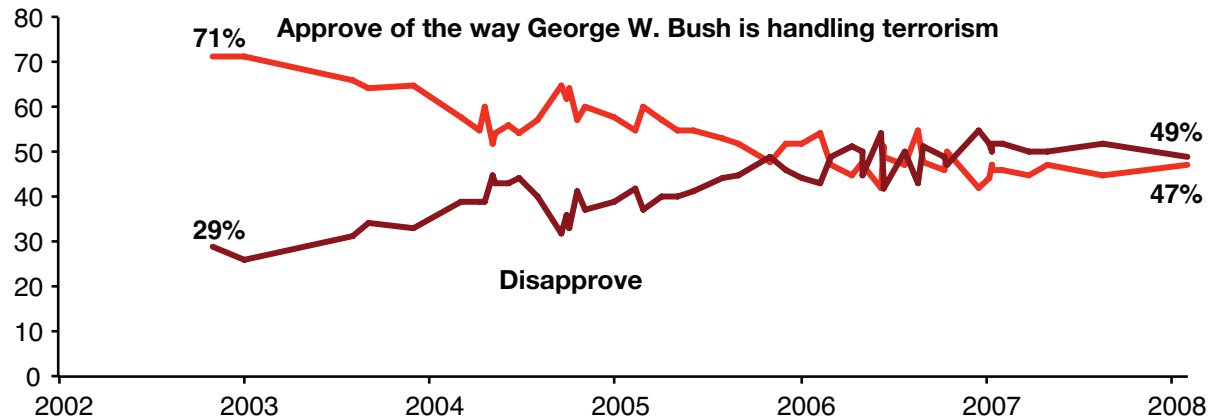
Note: Asked of a half sample in Gallup's March 2014 survey.

Source: The Gallup Organization, latest that of March 2015, and Pew Research Center, latest that of January 2015.

Handling Terrorism: Comparing Bush and Obama

Forty-four percent of Americans approve of the way President Obama is handling terrorism, while 54 percent disapprove, according to a February 2015 CNN/Opinion Research Corporation poll. At the same point in George W. Bush's presidency, February 2007, 46 percent told Gallup pollsters they approved of the way Bush was handling terrorism, and 52 percent said they disapproved.

Q: Do you . . . ?



Note: Asked of a half sample in November 2002.

Source: The Gallup Organization and CNN/Opinion Research Corporation, including in some instances Gallup/CNN/USA Today, Gallup/UBS, Gallup/USA Today, CNN/NBC News/CBS News, and CNN/Time/Harris.

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ISIS

Since the fall, concerns about ISIS have risen, with only a small percentage saying the group is not a threat. Most polls show that more Americans disapprove than approve of the job President Obama is doing handling ISIS.

Q: Do you think the militant group ISIS is a threat to the security of the United States, or not?

Q: (Of those who say ISIS is a threat) Do you think it is a major threat or a minor threat?

	March 2015	February 2015	September 2014
The militant group ISIS is a major threat to the security of the United States	62%	65%	58%
A minor threat	21	18	21
Not a threat	13	13	16

Note: For comparison, in September 2014, 49 percent said Al Qaeda was a major threat. In a February–March 2015 online survey by *The Economist/YouGov*, 58 percent said ISIS posed an immediate and serious threat to the United States, while 41 percent said the same of Al Qaeda. Source: CBS News/*New York Times*, September 2014; CBS News, February 2015 and March 2015.

Q: Do you approve or disapprove of how President Obama is doing handling ISIS (Islamic militants operating in Syria and Iraq)? (McClatchy/Marist)

Q: Now, as you may know, a terrorist group called ISIS is operating in Syria and Iraq. ISIS militants have made significant territorial gains in these countries and have declared an independent Islamic state . . . Do you generally approve or disapprove of the job Barack Obama is doing handling the situation involving the terrorist militants known as ISIS in Iraq and Syria? (NBC News/Wall Street Journal)

Q: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling . . . ISIS, the Islamic militant group that controls some areas of Iraq and Syria? (CNN/Opinion Research Corporation)

Q: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling the situation with ISIS militants in Iraq and Syria? (CBS News/*New York Times*, CBS News)

Q: Do you approve or disapprove of the job Barack Obama is doing on the following issues? Handling the Islamic extremist group ISIS (operating in Syria and Iraq) (Fox News)

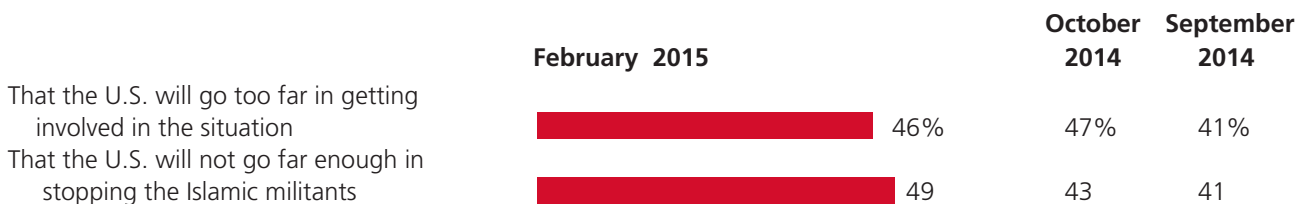
		Approve	Disapprove
Sep. 2014	McClatchy/Marist	48%	46%
Mar. 2015	McClatchy/Marist	35	56
		Approve	Disapprove
Oct. 2014	NBC/WSJ	37%	55%
		Approve	Disapprove
Sep. 2014 (early)	CNN/ORC	37%	59%
Sep. 2014 (late)	CNN/ORC	45	49
Feb. 2015	CNN/ORC	40	57
		Approve	Disapprove
Sep. 2014	CBS/NYT	39%	48%
Oct. 2014 (early)	CBS/NYT	40	51
Oct. 2014 (late)	CBS	38	50
Feb. 2015	CBS	39	51
Mar. 2015	CBS	36	53
		Approve	Disapprove
Oct. 2014	Fox*	35%	56%
Dec. 2014	Fox*	35	56
Jan. 2015	Fox*	33	56

Note: *Asked of registered voters. In Fox's January 2015 survey, question wording read "Islamist extremist group ISIS (operating in Iraq and Syria)."

Responding to the Threat of ISIS

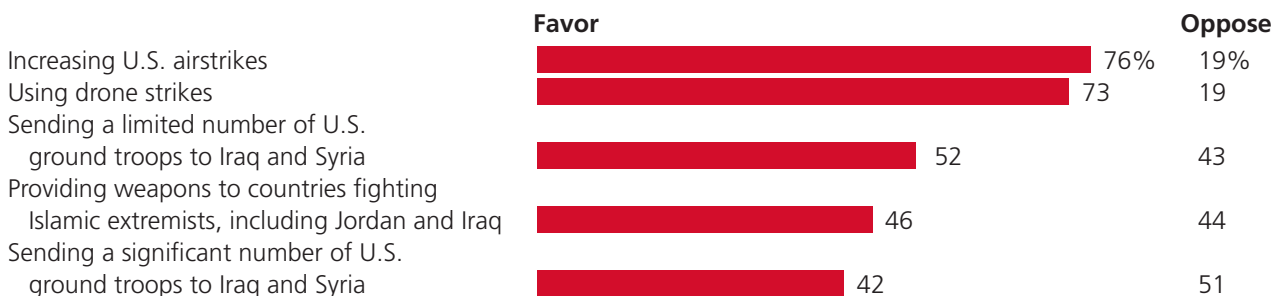
Most Americans support the use of airstrikes against ISIS, but say airstrikes alone will not be enough to remove the threat. They remain divided, however, on whether or not the United States should use ground troops.

Q: What concerns you more about the action in Iraq and Syria . . . ?



Source: Pew Research Center, latest that of February 2015.

Q: In the fight against Islamic extremists, do you favor or oppose . . . ?

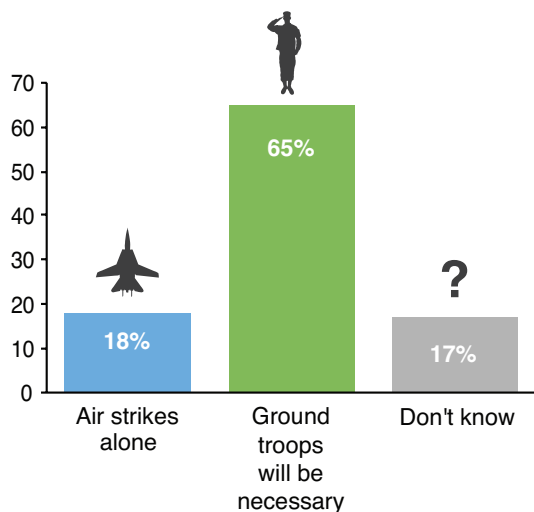


Note: Asked of registered voters.

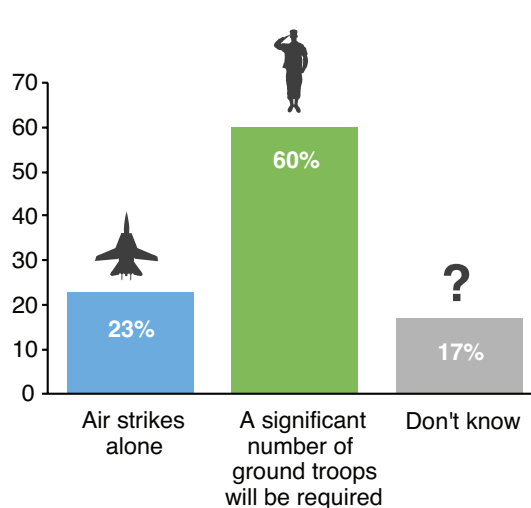
Source: Fox News, March 2015.

Q: Do you think the United States will be able to remove the threat from ISIS militants using airstrikes alone, or do you think ground troops will be necessary in order to remove the threat from ISIS? (CBS News)

Q: Do you think defeating the Islamic extremist group ISIS can be done through air strikes alone or will it require a significant number of ground troops to defeat ISIS? (Fox News)



Source: CBS News, February 2015.



Note: Asked of registered voters.
Source: Fox News, February 2015.

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Q: Do you approve or disapprove of U.S. airstrikes against the Islamic extremist group ISIS? (Fox News)

Q: As you may know, the United States is conducting airstrikes against ISIS in Syria and Iraq. Do you favor or oppose these air strikes? (Reason/Rupe)

Q: Do you favor or oppose U.S. airstrikes against ISIS militants in Iraq and Syria? (CBS News)

		Approve		Disapprove
Sep. 2014	Fox*		78%	15%
Oct. 2014	Fox*		74	17
Mar. 2015	Fox*		83	13

Note: *Asked of registered voters.

		Favor		Oppose
Oct. 2014	Reason/Rupe		66%	28%

		Favor		Oppose
Oct. 2014	CBS		71%	20%
Feb. 2015	CBS		77	16

Q: Do you favor or oppose the United States sending ground troops into combat operations against ISIS forces in Iraq or Syria? (CNN/Opinion Research Corporation)

Q: Do you favor or oppose the U.S. sending ground troops into Iraq or Syria to fight ISIS militants? (CBS News/New York Times, CBS News)

Q: Would you favor or oppose the United States sending ground troops to fight ISIS in Iraq and Syria? (Reason/Rupe)

Q: Would you favor or oppose the U.S. sending ground troops to fight Islamic militants in Iraq and Syria? (Pew Research Center)

		Favor		Oppose
Sep. 2014	CNN/ORC		38%	60%
Oct. 2014	CNN/ORC		45	53
Nov. 2014	CNN/ORC		43	55
Feb. 2015	CNN/ORC		47	50

		Favor		Oppose
Sep. 2014	CBS/NYT		39%	55%
Oct. 2014 (early)	CBS		44	50
Oct. 2014 (late)	CBS		47	46
Feb. 2015	CBS		57	37
Mar. 2015	CBS		43	46

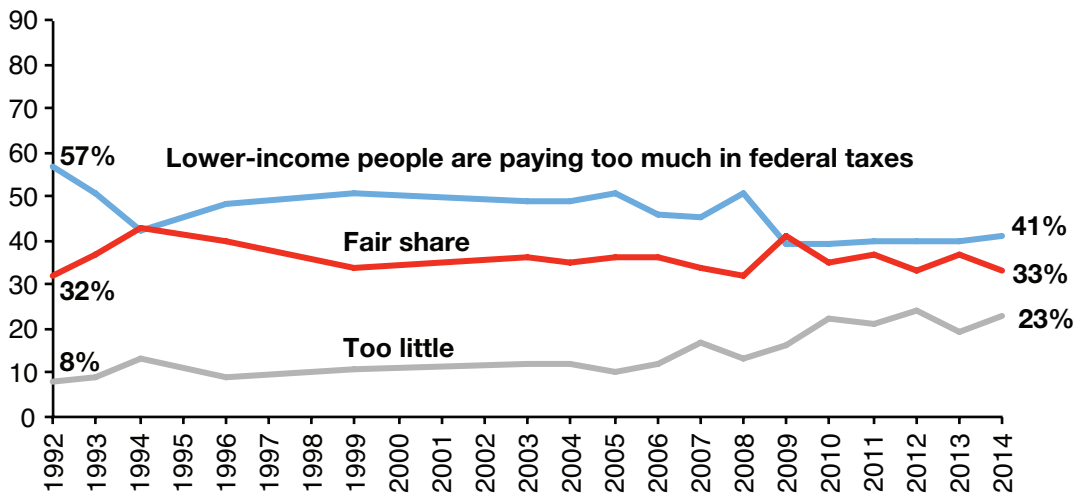
		Favor		Oppose
Oct. 2014	Reason/Rupe		43%	52%

		Favor		Oppose
Oct. 2014	Pew		39%	55%
Feb. 2015	Pew		47	49

Tax Time: Who's Paying Their Fair Share?

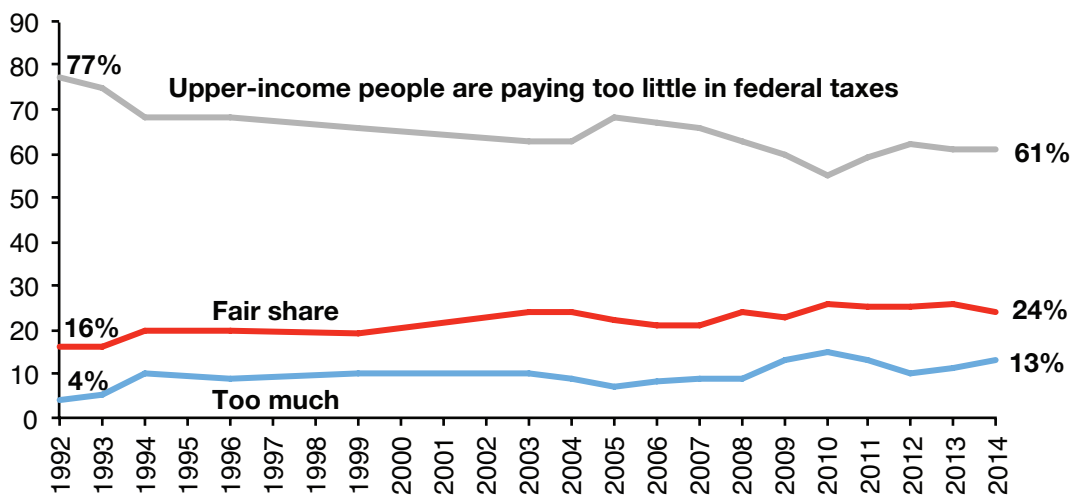
Politicians have long debated how much upper-, middle-, and lower-income Americans should pay in taxes. While public opinion on this matter has remained fairly stable, slight shifts have begun to emerge. The proportion of Americans who think lower-income people are paying too little in federal taxes has increased by about 10 percentage points over the past decade to nearly a quarter (23 percent). At the same time, the percent of Americans who say upper-income people are paying too much has also increased, while the percent who say they are paying too little has decreased from 77 percent the first time Gallup asked the question in 1992 to 61 percent in April 2014.

Q: As I read off some different groups, please tell me if you think



Source: The Gallup Organization, including in some instances Gallup/CNN/USA Today and Gallup/USA Today.

Q: As I read off some different groups, please tell me if you think



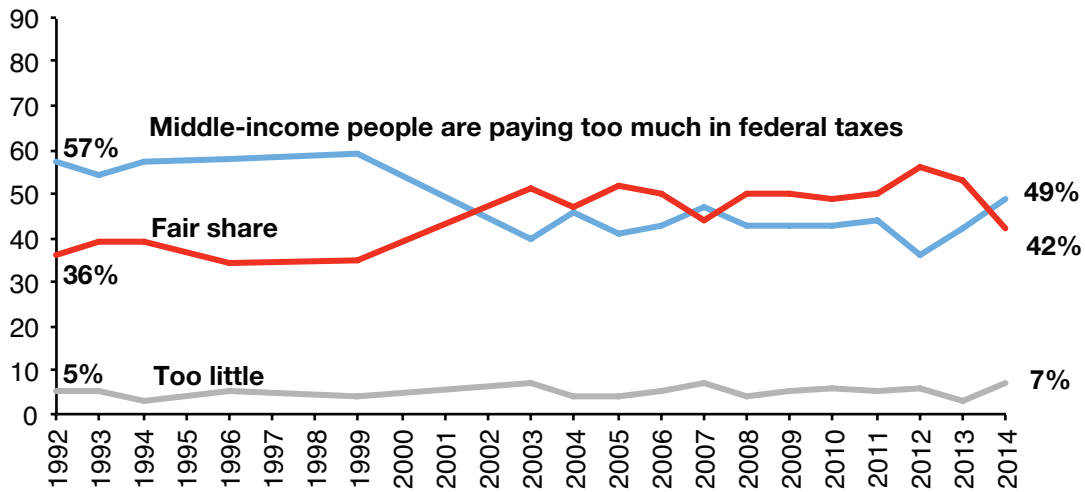
Source: The Gallup Organization, including in some instances Gallup/CNN/USA Today and Gallup/USA Today.

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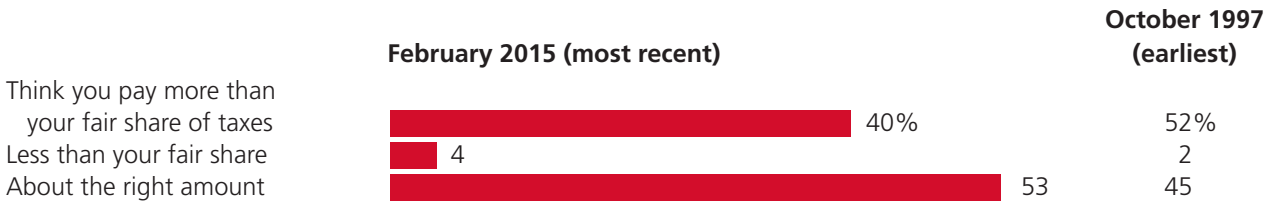
Public opinion has recently been split between those who say middle-income people pay too much in federal taxes and those who say they pay their fair share. Since most Americans self-identify as middle-class, it is not surprising that only seven percent say this cohort pays too little. A majority (53 percent) feel they pay the right amount in federal income taxes, while a similar majority (55 percent) think corporations pay less than their fair share.

Q: As I read off some different groups, please tell me if you think



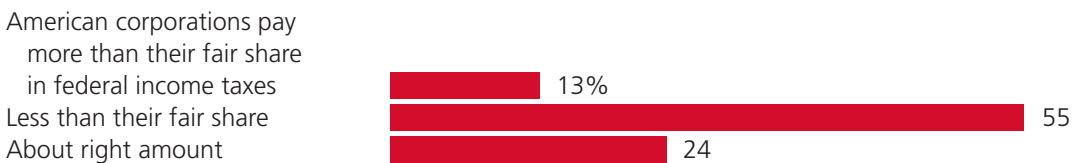
Source: The Gallup Organization, including in some instances Gallup/CNN/USA Today and Gallup/USA Today.

Q: Considering what you get from the federal government, do you . . . ?



Source: Pew Research Center, latest that of February 2015.

Q: Do you think . . . ?



Note: CBS News, January 2015.

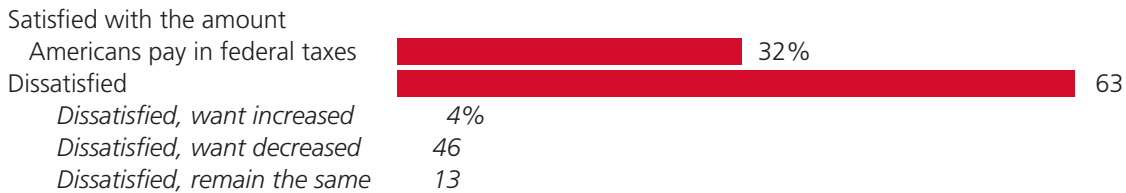


Irked about Taxes and the IRS

Sixty-three percent of Americans are dissatisfied with the amount Americans pay in federal taxes. Of that group, a strong plurality (46 percent) want to see the amount of federal income taxes Americans pay decreased. Thirty-five percent say the way the government spends our taxes bothers them the most about paying federal income taxes, and 28 percent say it bothers them that the rich are not paying enough in taxes. Partisans differ on what bothers them.

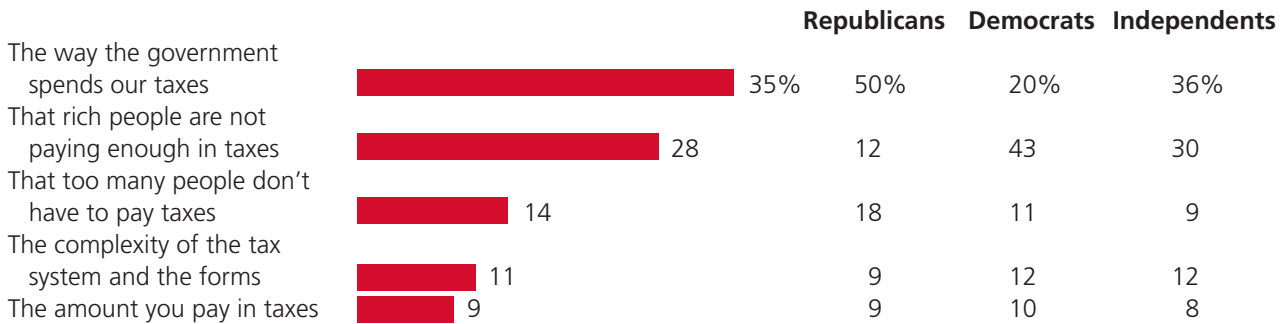
Q: Next, we'd like to know how you feel about the state of the nation in each of the following areas. For each one, please say whether you are . . .

Q: (Of those dissatisfied) Would you like to see the amount Americans pay in federal income taxes increased, decreased, or remain about the same?



Source: The Gallup Organization, January 2015.

Q: Thinking about paying federal income taxes, which one of the following bothers you the most?



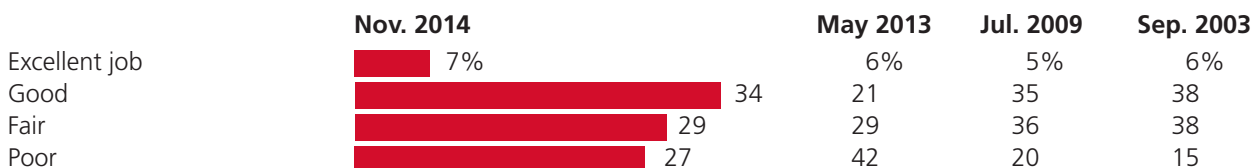
Note: Asked of registered voters.

Source: Fox News, March 2014.

When Pew asked a slightly different question in February 2015, 64 percent of people said the feeling that corporations don't pay their fair share bothered them "a lot" about the federal tax system. In separate questions, 61 percent gave that response about the feeling that some wealthy people don't pay their fair share, 44 percent said the complexity of the tax system, 27 percent said the amount they pay in taxes, and 20 percent the feeling that some poor people don't pay their fair share.

Q: How would you rate the job being done by . . . ?

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

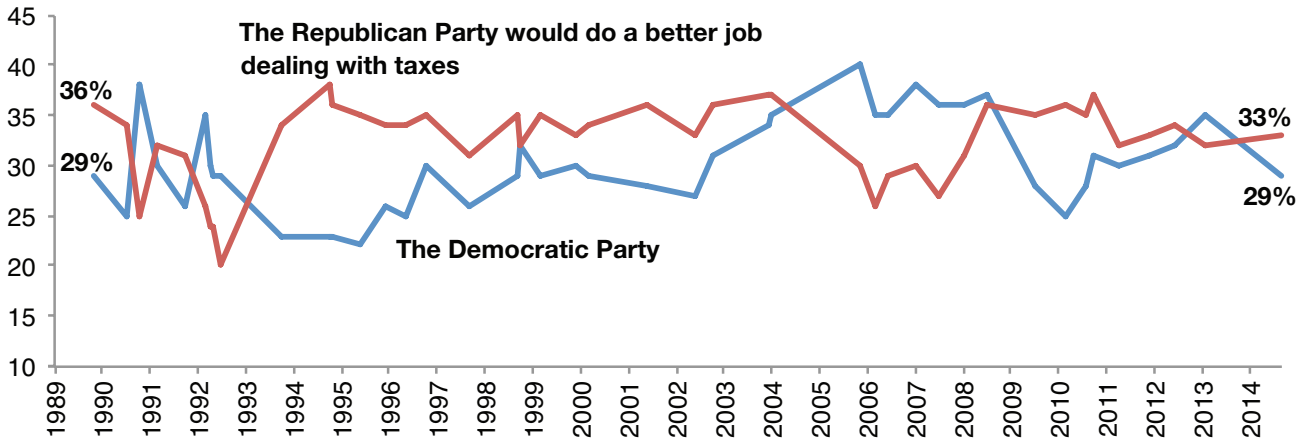


Source: The Gallup Organization, latest that of November 2014.

The Politics of Taxes

Americans have often said that when dealing with taxes, the Republican Party would do a better job than the Democratic Party. In a December Pew poll, 52 percent said they disapproved of the way President Obama was handling tax policy, the highest disapproval rating on this measure since Pew first asked about it in 2009. While 59 percent in a February Pew poll say there is so much wrong with the federal tax system that Congress should completely change it, reforming the tax system ranked 16th out of 24 as a top priority for the president and Congress in a January Pew poll.

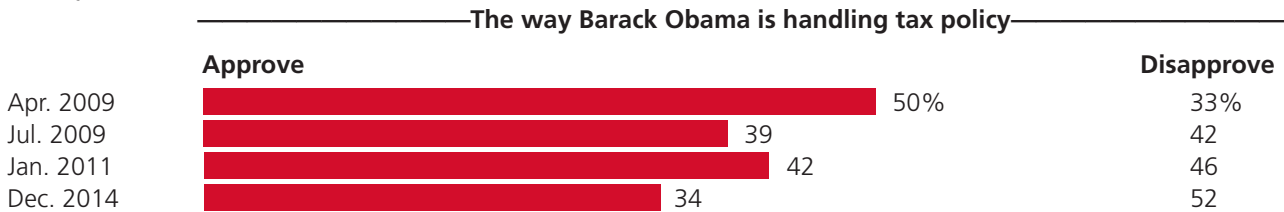
Q: Let me read you some specific issues. When it comes to dealing with taxes . . .



Note: In September 2014, 17 percent of registered voters said the parties would do about the same job dealing with taxes, and 17 percent also said neither party would do a good job. Asked of registered voters from 1989 to 1992 and in May 1996, October 1998, October 2002, July 2008, August 2010, October 2010, and September 2014. Asked of a half sample in September 2014.
Source: NBC News/Wall Street Journal, latest that of September 2014.

In a February 2015 Pew survey that asked a slightly different question, 47 percent of Americans said the Republican Party could do a better job dealing with taxes, while 36 percent said the Democratic Party could do a better job.

Q: Do you . . . ?



Source: Pew Research Center, latest that of December 2014.

Q: Which of the following statements comes closest to your overall view of the federal tax system in this country?



Source: Pew Research Center, February 2015.