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 **PUBLIC AGENDA**

Confidence in U.S. Foreign Policy Index

Energy, Economy New Focal Points
for Anxiety Over U.S. Foreign Policy

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**FOREIGN
AFFAIRS**



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Introduction

It's been more than 15 years since Bill Clinton's campaign advisors confidently declared "it's the economy, stupid," to sum up the public's mood of the moment. For the past few years, foreign policy and the war in Iraq in particular have been at the forefront of public concern. But the economy is reasserting itself as a priority—and economic concerns are shaping how the public views foreign policy.

The most dramatic example of this is the public's worry about the cost of energy. Fully 7 in 10 say they worry "a lot" about the rise in the cost of energy, a 16-point jump from six months ago. But for the public, economics and security are tied together on this issue. Becoming less dependent on other countries for our supply of energy is now the public's first choice as a national security strategy, with 6 in 10 saying it would do "a great deal" to make the country more secure.

This is not to say that the Iraq war no longer matters to the public. It does and is still a central concern. But there has been a distinct change in the public's emphasis. When asked to volunteer the top foreign policy problem facing the United States, Iraq still comes out on top in our survey. But the number who say this has fallen dramatically—a year ago, 29 percent said Iraq was the biggest problem, compared with 19 percent now. That's a 10-point drop. A year ago, the economy barely registered at three percent as a foreign policy concern. Now 11 percent say the economy's the biggest international problem—on par with terrorism at 10 percent.

In the shift toward economics, the Iraq war is getting less attention in the media, and in the wake of the "surge," more of the coverage it's getting has been positive.¹ As a result, the Iraq situation seems to appear more under control and possibly less threatening for the public. Attitudes about the

war remain negative by substantial margins. But Republicans, in particular, are giving the war effort better grades. In any case, nearly two-thirds (65 percent) of the public still wants to withdraw, and more than 6 in 10 give the government a grade of "C" or worse for its conduct of the war.

Since we have conducted this survey, Iraq has had a spillover effect onto other, seemingly unrelated questions. Throughout 2007, the public reported serious concern about the war in Iraq and widespread dissatisfaction with foreign policy. The shift in emphasis to economic worries, along with comparative improvement in attitudes on Iraq has brought about something of a small rebound on other foreign policy issues. Very likely this is more a matter of salience, with domestic economics taking up more of the public's attention, than greater confidence in the world situation. Also, the focus on the presidential campaign, with the discussion turning to what the next president may do rather than what's happening now, may have affected public confidence.

So, overall anxiety about foreign policy remains high, but the intensity of that feeling appears more muted. For example, the Foreign Policy Anxiety Indicator stands at 132, a four-point drop from six months ago but still above the 130 reading we started with in the fall of 2006. Of the five questions we use to calculate the indicator, the most significant shift was one of intensity. Slightly fewer say the world is becoming a more dangerous place. Specifically, there was a seven-point decline in those who say it's "much more dangerous."

The Confidence in U.S. Foreign Policy Index is a joint venture with "Foreign Affairs," America's most influential publication on international affairs and foreign policy. The survey is conducted by Public Agenda with major support from the Ford Foundation and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. For the Foreign Policy Index, Public Agenda regularly interviews a nationwide random sample of adult Americans to track the changing state of mind of average Americans toward our foreign policy—what worries people most, where

¹ The press coverage on Iraq dropped from 23 percent of the total news reported in September 2007 (the last iteration of the Index) to just five percent in March 2008. See Jurkowitz, Mark. "Why News of Iraq Dropped." *Project for Excellence in Journalism*, 26 March 2008. Available at: <http://www.journalism.org/node/10365>.

Introduction (continued)

they support or resist current policy, what their priorities are and what foreign policy initiatives make sense to them.

Each edition of the Index asks the public what worries them most about the international challenges facing the nation, to grade the U.S. government on its efforts to address them and what they believe might be the most effective strategies and priorities. With our Anxiety Indicator, we've designed a way of measuring the public's overall confidence in or concerns regarding foreign policy over time. In addition, the Confidence in U.S. Foreign Policy Index tries to identify "tipping points," specific areas where public concerns have reached such a high pitch that political leaders ignore them at their peril. Our standard for a tipping point consists of a situation where surveys show a substantial majority is strongly concerned about a problem and believes the government has the power to address it. Energy independence is the issue closest to a tipping point right now.

Events in the news frequently drive survey results on foreign relations, even more than they do with domestic affairs. Certainly the bad news on the economy and the rise in gasoline prices over the last six months has made a difference. This edition of the Index was also in the field during the five-year anniversary of the Iraq war and the milestone of the 4,000th American fatality there.

The sixth edition of the study was based on interviews with a national random sample of 1,006 adults over the age of 18 conducted between March 18 and April 1, 2008. It covered over 25 different issues in more than 110 different survey questions. The margin of error for the overall sample is plus or minus three percentage points. Full survey results for this report, as well as for previous editions, can be found at publicagenda.org, confidenceinforeignpolicy.org or foreignaffairs.org.

Summary of findings

Energy independence is now clearly the public’s number one national security strategy, and concern about oil prices has risen dramatically; the public is near a tipping point on this issue but may actually be growing more doubtful about whether the government can or will do anything about it..... 5

Economic concerns are showing a greater influence on public attitudes on foreign affairs..... 7

The public’s preference for diplomacy, always strong, has increased dramatically, particularly regarding Iran 9

Iraq has become relatively less important to the public, but while some measures have improved, overall attitudes remain distinctly negative; this may be affecting the public’s perception of the danger from foreign threats and their general view of the Muslim world 11

There is more public interest in global development, although most Americans don’t see it as something that will improve national security 14

Foreign policy anxiety indicator 16

Indicator methodology 17

Grades at a glance 18

Worries at a glance 19

Strategies at a glance 20

Full survey results..... 21

Energy independence is now clearly the public's number one national security strategy, and concern about oil prices has risen dramatically; the public is near a tipping point on this issue but may actually be growing more doubtful about whether the government can or will do anything about it

With oil prices at or above record levels, it's no surprise that public concern about energy has also spiked dramatically. A staggering 70 percent of those surveyed say they worry "a lot" about the rise in the cost of gas and fuel—a 16-point jump. This outpaces any other concern by a wide margin. The next highest "worry," about casualties in Iraq, is at 56 percent. There's also been a sharp increase in those who say they worry "a lot" that problems abroad may hurt our supply of oil and raise prices for American consumers.

More importantly, the public strongly makes the connection between energy and national security. That in itself is not new—for several years, the Foreign Policy Index has shown energy independence to be one of the public's most favored strategies for improving the nation's security, along with improving the effectiveness of our intelligence operations and tighter controls on illegal immigration. The difference now is that energy has moved to the top, with a seven-point increase in those who think becoming less dependent on other countries for our supply of energy would do "a great deal" to enhance security.

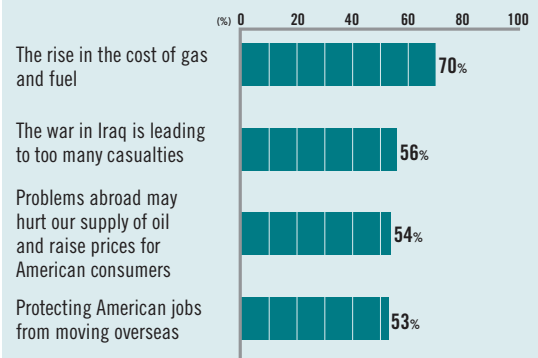
In analyzing the Index, we look for potential "tipping points"—areas where public concern is particularly strong. Generally speaking, the public thinks it doesn't have as firm a grasp on foreign policy as on domestic issues, so they're willing to let the professionals handle things—unless events seem seriously off track. A tipping point is reached when a substantial majority is strongly concerned about a problem and also believes the government has the power to address it.

Energy has those elements. In addition to the high numbers who worry "a lot" about the price and supply of fuel, the public gives the government poor grades for its efforts in becoming less dependent on foreign countries. More than three-quarters (77 percent) give the government a "C" or worse in this area, and 53 percent give flatly failing "D" or "F" grades. Some 44 percent also say the government can do "a lot" to achieve less dependence. That's one of the highest ratings in the Index—although

Worries about the cost of gas and fuel are now the number one foreign policy concern...

Is the following something that you worry about a lot, is this something you worry about somewhat or is this something you do *not* worry about?

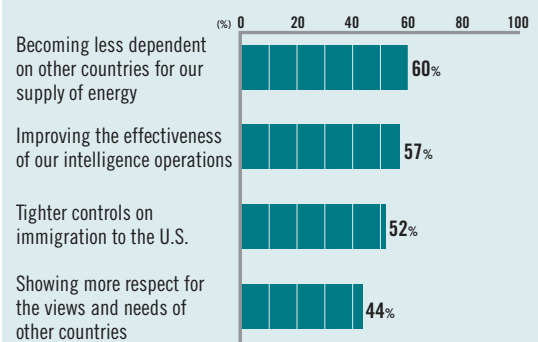
% who say they "worry a lot" about:



...and energy independence is seen as a top strategy

Please tell me if each of the following would enhance our security a great deal, somewhat or not at all.

% who say the following would help "a great deal:"

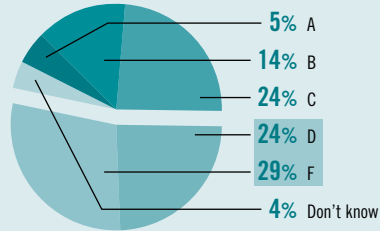


Question wording may be slightly edited for space and clarity. Percentages may not equal 100 percent due to rounding or the omission of some answer categories.

that did slide from 50 percent in the last round of the survey. There was also an increase in those who say it's "unrealistic" to expect the government to maintain a stable supply of oil at a reasonable price (65 percent). So while the public still thinks it can do something about energy problems, there's increasing doubt about the prospects for doing it.

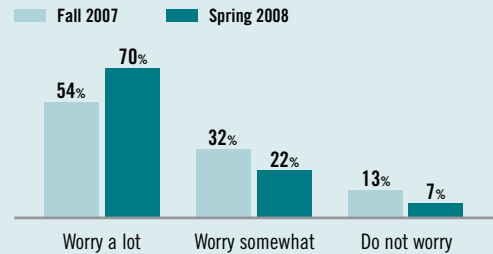
Majorities give failing grades to our government for reducing dependence on foreign energy

What grade would you give the United States when it comes to becoming less dependent on other countries for our supply of energy?

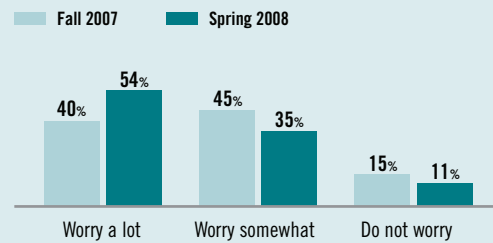


Concern about energy has risen dramatically in the past six months...

Is the rise in cost of gas and fuel something that you worry about a lot, is this something you worry about somewhat or is this something you do *not* worry about?

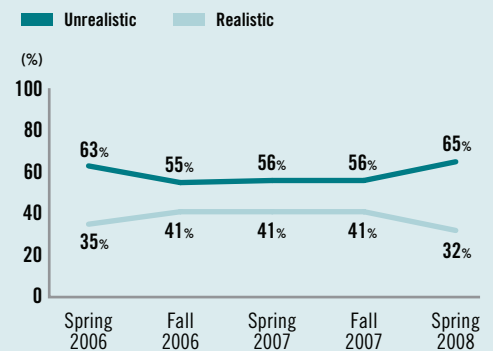


Is the possibility of problems abroad hurting our supply of oil and raising prices for American consumers something that you worry about a lot, is this something you worry about somewhat or is this something you do *not* worry about?



...and more think it's not realistic for the government to keep oil prices reasonable

Do you think it's realistic or unrealistic to believe that the U.S. government will be able to maintain a stable supply of oil at a reasonable price?



Economic concerns are showing a greater influence on public attitudes on foreign affairs

The war in Iraq has dominated foreign policy attitudes, and for several years it's been the public's major concern overall. But in historic terms, it's certainly more usual for domestic affairs, and particularly the economy, to dominate. Given the events of the past few months—the subprime mortgage crisis, the prospect of a recession, record gas prices—it's no surprise that the economy is outpacing Iraq in most surveys. Yet while it's common to look at the shift in emphasis between the economy and foreign policy, the Index provides insight into how the economy shapes perceptions of foreign policy itself.

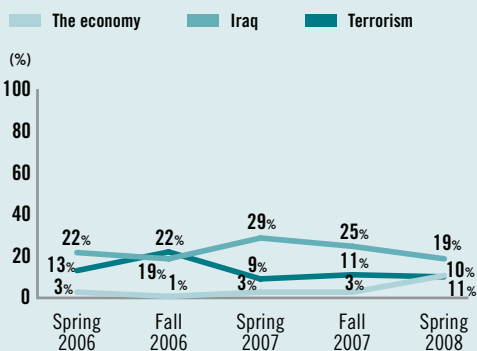
The war in Iraq is still considered to be the most important foreign policy problem facing the United States today. But that concern has dropped six points in six months, back to 2006 levels. By contrast, the economy, an issue that barely registered as a foreign policy problem (a mere three percent of the population mentioned it in Fall 2007) rose eight points. That puts it on par with terrorism, which has been at about 10 percent since 2007.

Even more significantly, other economic-related themes show up strongly in this edition of the report. Besides the cost of fuel, the number who worry “a lot” that the United States may owe too much money to other countries rose nine points in six months, to 40 percent. More than half of those surveyed, 53 percent, say they worry “a lot” about protecting American jobs from moving overseas. That's an eight-point increase over a year. But the number who say the government can do “a lot” about protecting jobs from going overseas has stayed stable, at 43 percent, while nearly three-quarters (74 percent) continue to say it's unrealistic to expect U.S. companies to keep jobs here when labor is cheaper elsewhere.

The economy is increasingly seen as a global concern...

What do you think is the most important problem facing the United States in its dealings with the rest of the world?

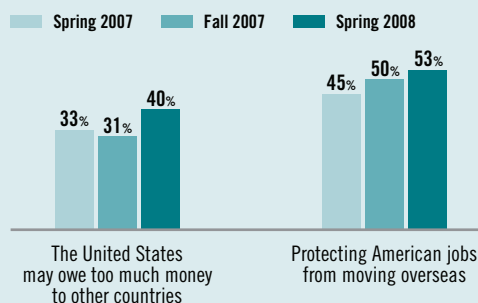
Top three open-end responses:



...and economic issues are an increasing foreign policy concern

Is the following something that you worry about a lot, is this something you worry about somewhat or is this something you do *not* worry about?

% who say they “worry a lot” about:

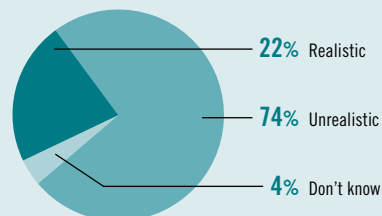


Economic concerns (continued)

Attitudes have also become more negative about international trade. In previous rounds of the Index, the public showed great uncertainty over the benefits of trade—fully half said they were unsure who benefited more from trade, the United States or other countries, compared with about one-third who thought other countries benefited more. Now roughly as many say other countries benefit more (42 percent) as are unsure (41 percent). Only 14 percent think the United States benefits more from trade.

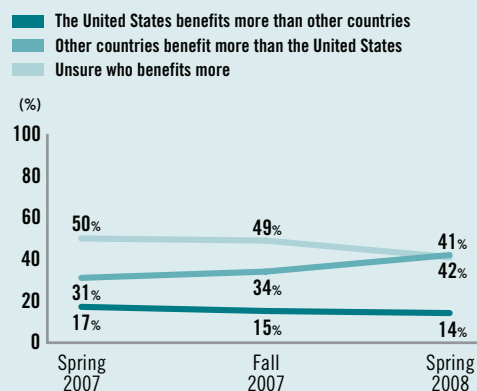
Nearly 3 in 4 are skeptical that anything can be done to prevent outsourcing...

Do you think it's realistic or unrealistic to believe that U.S. companies will keep jobs in the United States when labor is cheaper elsewhere?



...and increasing numbers don't believe the United States benefits from global trade

Thinking about the benefits of international trade, do you think for the most part:



The public's preference for diplomacy, always strong, has increased dramatically, particularly regarding Iran

Over the course of the Foreign Policy Index, we've found a clear preference for non-military solutions to international problems. If anything, that has strengthened in this edition.

For example, 69 percent of the public now say there should be more emphasis on diplomatic and economic methods in the war on terrorism over military means, an increase of five points since we first asked the question in 2005. More than half of the public continues to say it's "very important" to only use force when we have the support of our allies.

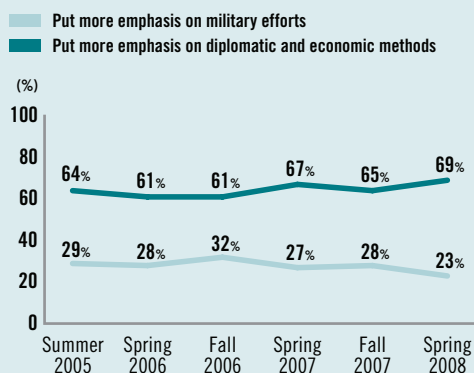
And while there's been a lot of debate in policy circles and the media over whether the United States should negotiate with its enemies, the public generally thinks we should—at least specifically in the Israeli-Palestinian situation. Seventy percent think the United States and Israel will have to work with unfriendly countries in the Middle East to resolve the conflict (32 percent "agree strongly").

But the most difficult relationship for the United States in the Middle East (aside from Iraq) is with Iran and the ongoing dispute over its nuclear program. There's been a 12-point jump over the last six months in those who favor using diplomacy to establish better relations with Iran, with 47 percent now saying that's the best strategy. As in previous editions of the survey, very few want to use force or even threaten to do so with Iran (only 12 percent total).

That's true even though preventing the spread of nuclear weapons is one of the public's top foreign policy priorities, with three-quarters calling it "very important." Yet this is another area where the public wonders how much can be done. Nearly 6 in 10 (58 percent) think it's unrealistic to expect the United States to prevent more countries from developing nuclear weapons, and only 23 percent think the United States can do "a lot" to prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear power.

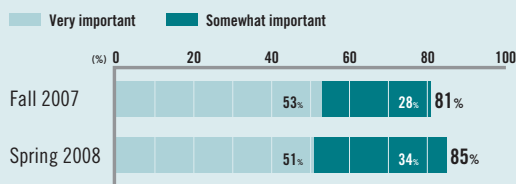
The public consistently favors non-military tactics in the war on terror...

Thinking about things the government must do to fight terrorism, in your opinion, should the government:



...and large majorities say we should use force only with the backing of our allies

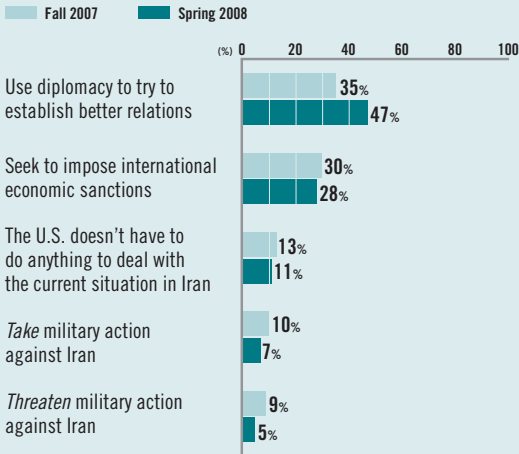
How important to our foreign policy should initiating military force only when we have the support of our allies be? Should this be very important, somewhat important, not very important or not at all important?



The public's preference for diplomacy (continued)

Nearly half now favor diplomacy in dealing with Iran...

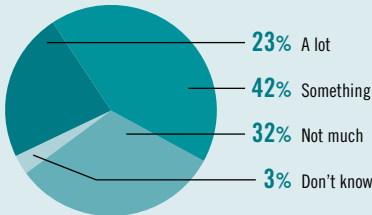
In your view, what is the *one* best way for the U.S. to deal with the current situation in Iran?



Note: Asked only of those who say they follow the situation in Iran.

...yet only about a quarter think the government can do much to prevent a nuclear Iran

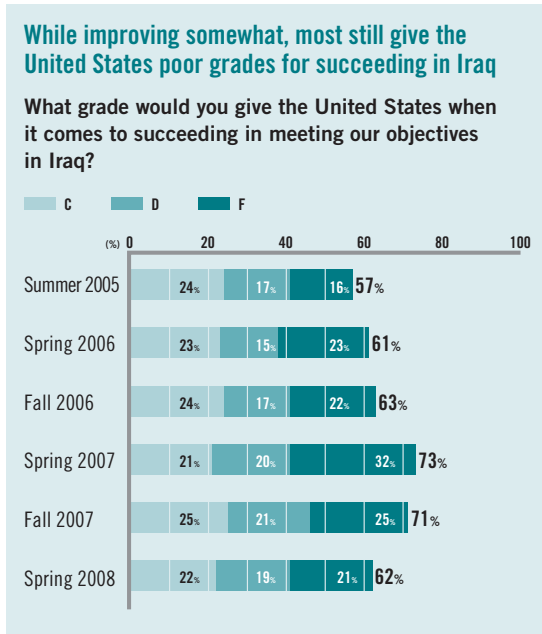
Is preventing Iran from becoming a nuclear power something our government can do a lot about, something about or not much about?



Iraq has become relatively less important to the public, but while some measures have improved, overall attitudes remain distinctly negative; this may be affecting the public's perception of the danger from foreign threats and their general view of the Muslim world

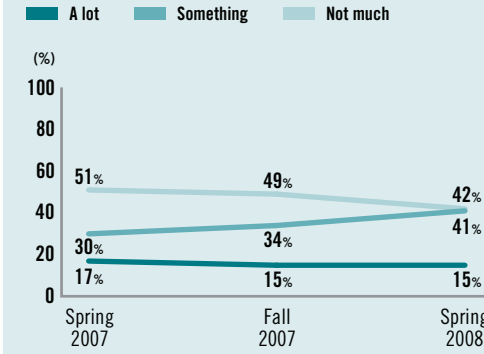
Since we began the Foreign Policy Index in 2005, the Iraq war has been the public's central concern and driving anxiety, so strong that it's had a spillover effect on seemingly unrelated problems. Now that the public seems to be shifting focus to the economy, and the situation in Iraq seems less out-of-control, we're seeing the effects of this shift on other questions as well.

As we noted in the introduction, Iraq has been getting less media attention overall, and the surge has produced more positive news coverage. There's been some improvement in public ratings on Iraq, but the overall picture remains quite negative. About 6 in 10 (62 percent) give the United States a grade of "C" or less on meeting our objectives in Iraq, with 40 percent giving flatly failing "D" or "F" grades. That's a nine-point decline in grades of "C" or worse and essentially puts grades where they were in the fall of 2006. Fewer say there's "not much" the United States can do to create a democratic Iraq (44 percent, down seven points from six months ago) or to control the violence there (42 percent, also down seven points).



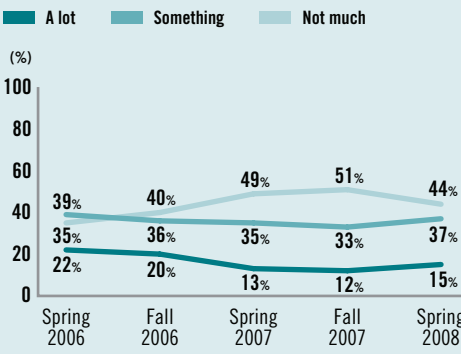
Though slightly fewer this spring, many believe not much can be done to reduce the violence in Iraq...

Is controlling the violence in Iraq something our government can do a lot about, something about, or not much about?



...or to create a democratic Iraq

Is creating a democratic Iraq something our government can do a lot about, something about, or not much about?



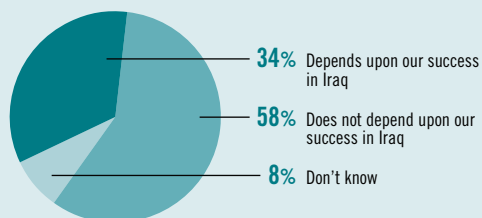
The public remains negative on Iraq (continued)

But public views remain skeptical on many fundamental questions.

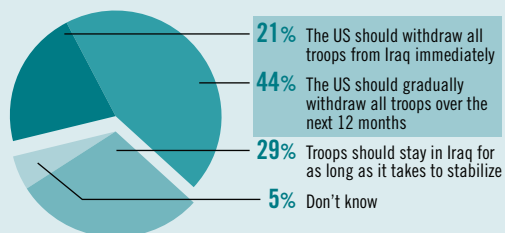
- Only 15 percent, for example, think the United States can do “a lot” in either building democracy or controlling violence in Iraq.
- Half don’t think the government is being truthful about the war.
- Nearly two-thirds want to withdraw, and only 3 in 10 say we should stay in Iraq “as long as it takes to stabilize the country.” Some 53 percent say we should withdraw even if it means “more violence and more Iraqi casualties.”
- Majorities, 56 percent, say we have a moral obligation to the Iraqi people, but that’s a four-point decline from a year ago.
- Almost 6 in 10 don’t believe our safety from terrorism depends on Iraq, and 47 percent worry “a lot” that the war is requiring so much time and money that it is distracting us from other threats in the world.

Six in ten don’t believe our safety depends on Iraq and two-thirds favor withdrawal

Do you think America’s safety from terrorism:

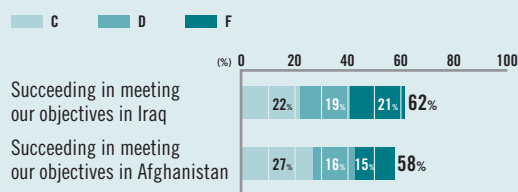


In your opinion, do you think that... ?



Fewer believe we’re failing in Afghanistan than Iraq

What grade would you give the United States when it comes to:



Attitudes about the war in Afghanistan, which gets much less media coverage, are less intensely negative than on Iraq. Only 15 percent think the United States can do “a lot” about creating a stable Afghanistan, and roughly the same number give “A” or “B” grades for succeeding in meeting our objectives there as for Iraq (28 percent for Afghanistan compared to 31 percent in Iraq). But fewer say there’s “not much” to be done (36 percent, compared to 44 percent in Iraq), and fewer give flatly failing “D” or “F” grades (31 percent compared with 40 percent for Iraq).

The political tumult and ongoing struggle with al Qaeda in Pakistan ranks much lower on the public’s radar, but there is considerable skepticism about our efforts there. Four in ten say there’s “not much” the United States can do about stopping anti-American terrorists in Pakistan. But the public isn’t nearly as tuned into the Pakistan situation as they are on Iraq, with nearly 1 in 5 (18 percent) saying they don’t know enough to give the United States a grade for working with the government of Pakistan to hunt down anti-American terrorists.

The fact that Iraq both seems less out-of-control and gets less media attention may also be affecting the public’s overall sense of danger in the world. Broadly speaking, 74 percent tell us they think the world is becoming more dangerous for the United States and the American people. But as noted in the introduction, there’s been a change in the intensity of that feeling, with a seven-point decline in those who view the world as becoming “much more dangerous.”

The public remains negative on Iraq (continued)

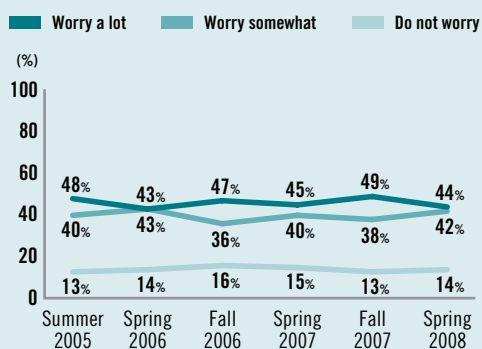
There's also been a decline in several other areas that are related to the public's sense of threat. For example, there was a five-point decline in those who worry "a lot" about the possibility that terrorists may attack the United States with nuclear, biological or chemical weapons, although overall worry about a terror attack held stable. Concerns about Muslims are also moderating. There was an

eight-point decline in those who think Islam is more likely to encourage violence among its believers than other religions (to 41 percent). Those who worry "a lot" about growing hatred of the United States in Muslim countries fell eight points, to 33 percent.

Another change has been in public attitudes about the use of torture in the war on terrorism. Fewer people believe that we can't fight terrorism without sometimes using torture; this number fell dramatically in the past six months to 36 percent, eight points lower than in September. While it's possible that the public is turning against so-called "extreme interrogation," it's also possible that the public is feeling less threatened by terrorism, and therefore sees less need to use such controversial measures. This may also explain why the government gives higher grades of "A" and "B" than in the past year on having a strong, well-supplied military (64 percent), giving the war on terrorism the attention it deserves (54 percent), stopping countries from getting nuclear weapons (43 percent) and conducting effective intelligence operations (42 percent).

The public is slightly less worried about a terrorist attack

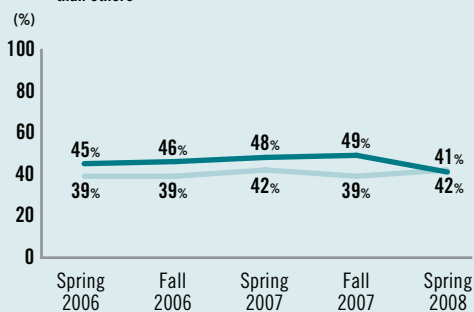
Do you worry about terrorist groups using biological, chemical, or nuclear weapons to attack the United States? Is this something that you worry about a lot, something you worry about somewhat or is this something you do *not* worry about?



Fewer believe today that Islam is more violent than other religions

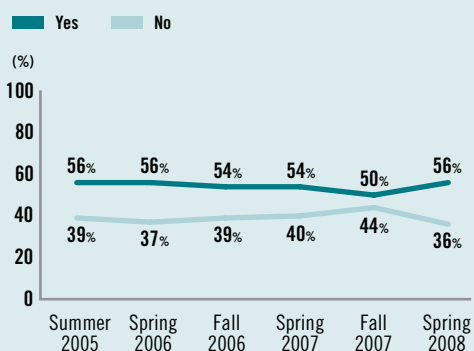
Which statement comes closer to your own views even if neither is exactly right?

- The Islamic religion is more likely than others to encourage violence among its believers
- The Islamic religion does not encourage violence more than others



Fewer people believe we need to use torture to fight terrorists

Do you think that we can fight terrorism without sometimes using torture against suspected terrorists?



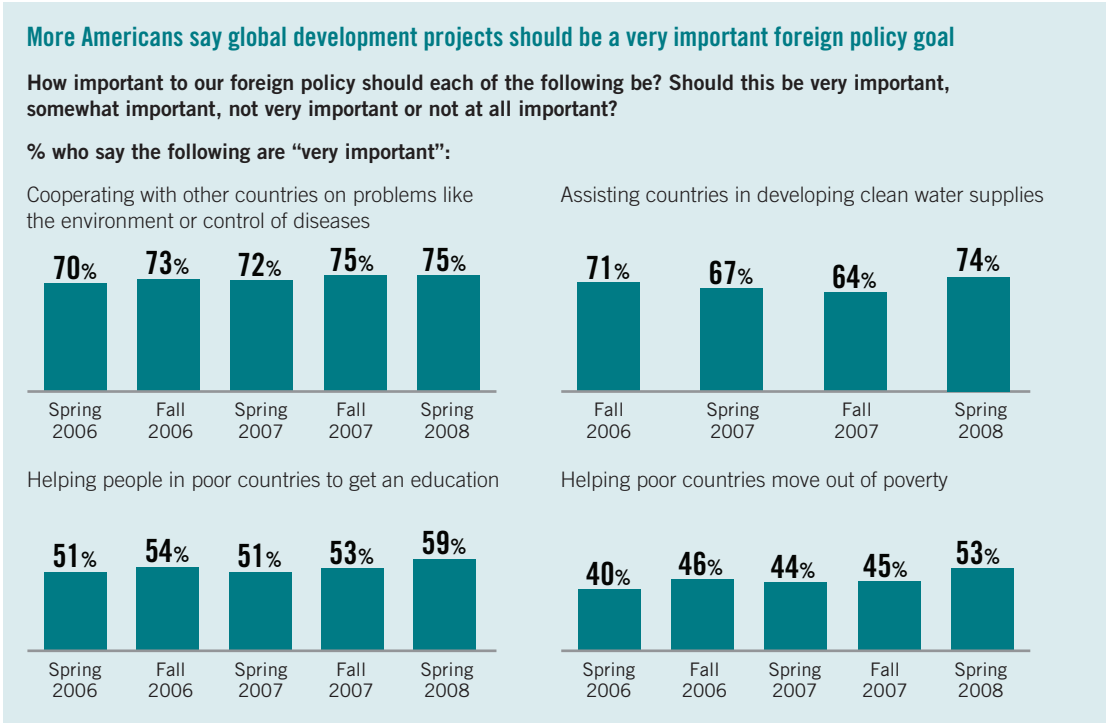
There is more public interest in global development, although most Americans don't see it as something that will improve national security

Americans want to help out in the world, and they believe in democracy. But on the whole, we've found they don't view these as national security strategies—they don't rank high on the list of things Americans believe will actually make them safer. But in this edition of the Index, we're seeing a lot more public interest in these as priorities and possibilities.

We've sometimes used the analogy that Americans balk at being the world's policeman, but they wouldn't mind being the world's firefighter, moving in with humanitarian aid in a crisis. About three-quarters say helping other countries struck by natural disasters, cooperating with other countries on the environment and the spread of disease and helping countries develop clean water supplies should be "very important" priorities, on par with preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. Americans also think the country does well in this area, with 76 percent giving the government an "A" or "B" grade on international disaster relief.

Generally speaking, long-term development projects are lower priorities for the public. But over time we've seen greater interest in these ideas. Support for building clean water supplies went up 10 points since the last round of the Index, for example. Since we first asked these questions in the spring of 2006, there has been a 13-point increase in support for "helping poor countries move out of poverty" (53 percent) and an eight-point increase in helping people in poor countries get an education (59 percent). About half (51 percent) now say there would be less terrorism in the world if there were less poverty, a five-point gain since 2005.

Still, most of these development projects are still not seen as security strategies on par with energy independence or better intelligence gathering. For example, 66 percent say improving the treatment of women in other countries should be a "very important" priority, a nine-point increase since we first asked the question in 2006. But only 37 percent say supporting equal rights and education



More public interest in global development (continued)

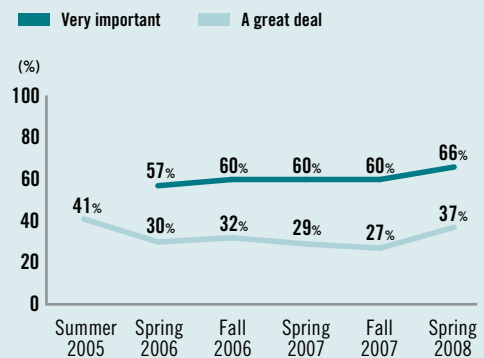
opportunities for women in Muslim countries would do “a great deal” to improve U.S. security, though this number did increase 10 percent in the last six months.

Americans also believe in democracy, and 54 percent say there would be less violence in the world if more countries were democratic. But this ranks much lower as a priority and there’s considerable skepticism about it as a strategy. Only 24 percent say “actively creating democracies in other countries” should be a “very important” priority for foreign policy, and 67 percent say “democracy is something countries can only come to on their own.” Only 28 percent believe the United States can help other countries become democratic.

Two-thirds say it’s very important to improve the treatment of women, but fewer than 2 in 5 think helping Muslim women will increase security

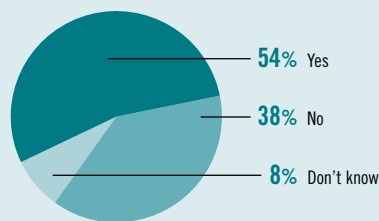
How important to our foreign policy should improving the treatment of women in other countries be? Should this be very important, somewhat important, not very important or not at all important?

Please tell me if creating policies that support equal rights and better educational opportunities for women in Muslim countries would enhance our security a great deal, somewhat or not at all.

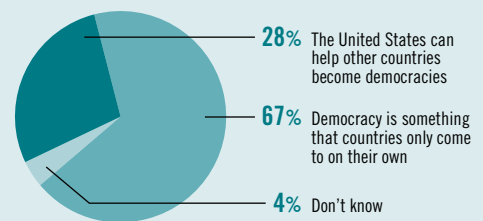


Majorities say democracy makes the world less violent, but most say countries have to come to democracy on their own

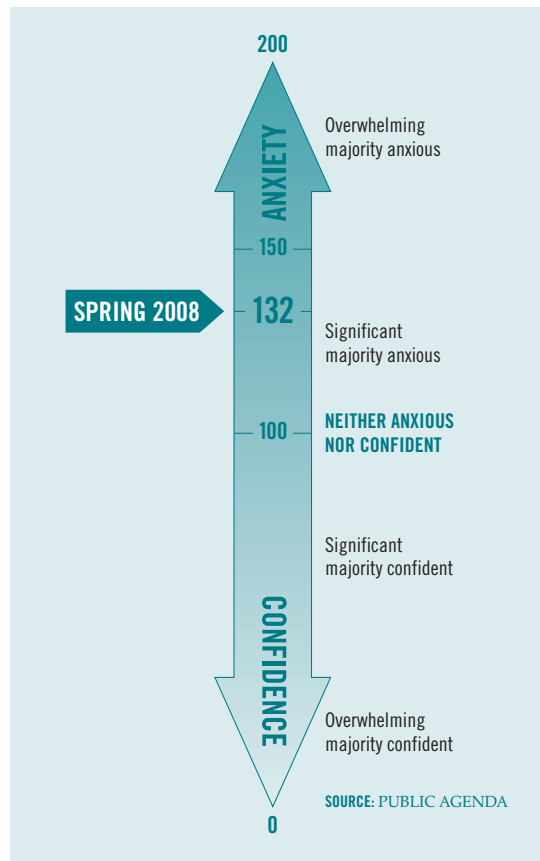
Do you believe that when more countries become democratic, there will be less conflict and violence in the world?



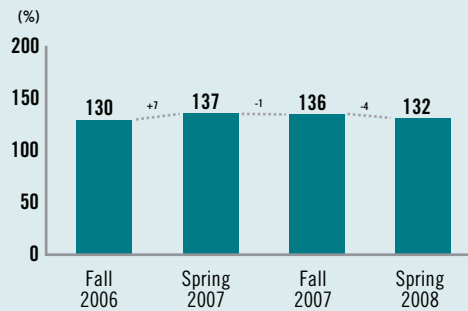
Do you think that:



FOREIGN POLICY ANXIETY INDICATOR

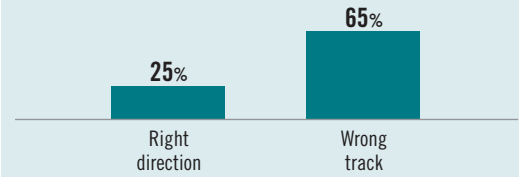


Anxiety remains steady over time and well over the neutral mark of 100

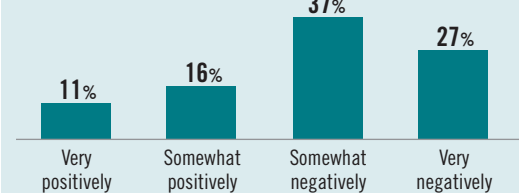


The Anxiety Indicator is designed to provide a measure of Americans' comfort level with the nation's foreign policy, much the same way the Consumer Confidence Index measures the public's satisfaction with the economy. Our indicator scale is divided into zones, with 100 serving as a neutral midpoint. We don't anticipate the indicator ever being at either the 0 or the 200 level, but a score of 50 or below would indicate a period of calm, perhaps even complacency. Above the "redline" of 150 would be anxiety shading into real fear and a withdrawal of public confidence in U.S. policy.

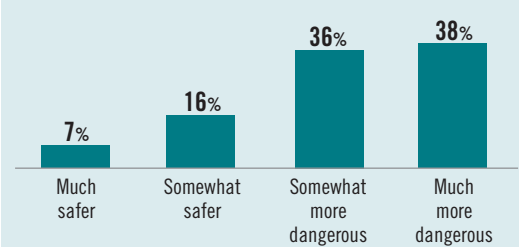
Thinking about recent U.S. relations with the rest of the world, would you say things are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?



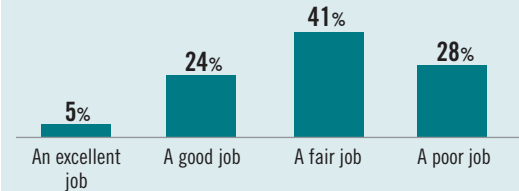
How do you think the rest of the world sees the United States?



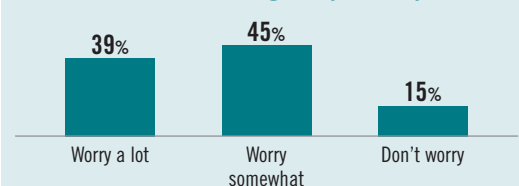
Thinking about current U.S. relations with the rest of the world, would you say that the world is becoming safer or more dangerous for the United States and the American people?



How good a job is the United States doing these days in creating a more peaceful and prosperous world?



Is "the way things are going for the United States in world affairs" something that you worry about?



Indicator methodology

The Anxiety Indicator is a figure on a scale from 0 to 200, with the neutral value being 100, and is derived by comparing the positive and negative responses to five key questions while disregarding non-responses (such as “not sure” or “no answer”).

The five questions are the following:

Thinking about recent U.S. relations with the rest of the world, would you say things are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?

How do you think the rest of the world sees the United States? Would you say they see the United States positively or negatively?

Thinking about current U.S. relations with the rest of the world, would you say that the world is becoming safer or more dangerous for the United States and the American people?

How good a job is the United States doing these days as a leader in creating a more peaceful and prosperous world?

Would you say you worry about the way things are going in world affairs a lot, somewhat or do you *not* worry about them?

These numbers are calculated in the following way:

1. If the question assumes either one positive or one negative response (right track or wrong direction, yes or no), the following formula is used to calculate this question index component:

$$K = 100 + (p(-) - p(+))$$

where $p(+)$ is the percent that answered positively, $p(-)$ is the percent that answered negatively.

2. If the question allows a choice from two positive or two negative responses (very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied), the following formula is used to calculate this question index component:

$$K = 100 + (p1(-) - p1(+)) + 0.5*(p2(-) - p2(+))$$

where $p1(+)$ is the percent that answered strongly positive, $p1(-)$ is the percent that answered strongly negative, $p2(+)$ is the percent that answered moderately positive, and $p2(-)$ is the percent that answered moderately negative.

The index question components are then averaged to calculate the index.

When the index level is more than 100, the number giving a negative response is more than the number giving a positive response. When all answers are strongly positive, the index is 0. When all answers are strongly negative, the index is 200.

Spring 2008: Grades at a glance

What grade would you give the United States when it comes to achieving the following goals?

	A (%)	B (%)	A+B (%)	A+B change since Fall 2007 (%)	A+B change since 2005 (%)	C (%)	D (%)	F (%)	C+D+F (%)	D+F (%)	D+F change since Fall 2007 (%)	D+F change since 2005 (%)
Helping other countries when natural disasters strike	44	32	76	7	-7	15	4	3	22	7	-4	3
Making sure we have a strong, well-supplied military	31	33	64	6	-3	18	8	5	31	13	-2	3
Giving the war on terror all the attention it deserves	23	31	54	6	-4	23	11	8	42	19	-1	4
Stopping countries or groups from getting nuclear weapons	16	27	43	3	3	23	12	11	46	23	-5	0
Helping improve the lives of people living in poor countries	15	28	43	4	1	30	13	9	52	22	-6	-3
Living up to our ideals of human rights and justice in the way we conduct our foreign policy	14	26	40	4	-4	31	12	10	53	22	-4	0
Hunting down anti-American terrorists	13	26	39	-2	-15	31	13	10	54	23	-6	6
Conducting effective U.S. intelligence operations	12	30	42	5	—	26	11	6	43	17	-3	—
Doing our best to bring peace between Israel and the Palestinians	12	25	37	4	-8	24	14	13	51	27	-4	9
Helping to create democracy in the rest of the world	11	30	41	6	-9	29	15	8	52	23	-2	6
Having good working relations with other countries	11	30	41	-3	-4	36	11	7	54	18	0	-2
Working with the government of Pakistan to hunt down anti-American terrorists in Pakistan	11	20	31	—	—	27	13	11	51	24	—	—
Working with other countries to reduce global warming	10	20	30	3	—	25	17	16	58	33	0	—
Protecting people or nations that are threatened with genocide or ethnic cleansing	9	23	32	4	-4	30	17	11	58	28	-5	2
Avoiding trade agreements that harm the United States	9	19	28	5	—	28	16	13	57	29	0	—
Protecting our borders from illegal immigration	9	11	20	5	-5	24	22	29	75	51	-8	6
Succeeding in meeting our objectives in Iraq	8	23	31	6	-8	22	19	21	62	40	-6	7
Having good relations and reputation with Muslim countries	8	16	24	4	-4	30	18	19	67	37	-2	5
Stopping illegal drugs from coming into the country	8	15	23	4	0	22	19	31	72	50	-6	0
Succeeding in meeting our objectives in Afghanistan	7	21	28	0	-12	27	16	15	58	31	-6	8
Reaching out to moderate Muslims overseas	6	19	25	4	—	32	11	9	52	20	-8	—
Limiting the amount of money we owe other countries	6	11	17	3	—	23	16	27	66	43	2	—
Becoming less dependent on other countries for our supply of energy	5	14	19	0	—	24	24	29	77	53	1	—
Protecting American jobs from moving overseas	5	11	16	-1	-2	21	22	36	79	58	-1	6

Question wording may be slightly edited for space and clarity.
Percentages may not equal 100 percent due to rounding or the omission of some answer categories.

Spring 2008: Worries at a glance

Is the following something that you worry about a lot, is this something you worry about somewhat or is this something you do not worry about?

	Worry a lot (%)	Worry a lot change since Fall 2007 (%)	Worry a lot change since 2005 (%)	Worry somewhat (%)	Do not worry (%)	Do not worry change since Fall 2007 (%)	Do not worry change since 2005 (%)
Rise in the cost of gas and fuel	70	16	—	22	7	-6	—
The war in Iraq is leading to too many casualties	56	-4	0	28	15	2	-3
Problems abroad may hurt our supply of oil and raise prices for American consumers	54	14	12	35	11	-4	-8
Protecting American jobs from moving overseas	53	3	—	34	12	-4	—
The war in Iraq is requiring so much money and attention that it may be distracting the United States from other threats in the world	47	1	4	33	19	0	-4
Terrorist groups may use biological, chemical or nuclear weapons to attack the United States	44	-5	-4	42	14	1	1
It may be too easy for illegal immigrants to come into the country	43	-2	1	34	23	0	-4
The possibility of unfriendly nations becoming nuclear powers	40	-2	—	44	14	-1	—
The United States may owe too much money to other countries	40	9	8	34	23	-7	-13
The way things are going for the United States in world affairs	39	5	—	45	15	1	—
Global warming	39	-2	—	33	27	1	—
The rise of Islamic extremism around the world	38	-2	—	43	18	1	—
There may be another major terrorist attack against the United States in the near future	37	-3	0	45	19	5	-2
The United States may be losing the trust and friendship of people in other countries	35	1	-5	43	21	-1	-4
The US will get into a military conflict with Iran	35	—	—	42	21	—	—
That our actions in the Mideast are aiding the recruitment of terrorists	34	-5	—	41	23	2	—
There may be growing hatred of the United States in Muslim countries	33	-8	-7	40	25	4	0
The growing power of China may be a threat to the United States	32	2	3	38	26	-2	-7
Pakistan is providing a safe haven for Al Qaeda	30	—	—	45	22	—	—

Question wording may be slightly edited for space and clarity.
Percentages may not equal 100 percent due to rounding or the omission of some answer categories.

Spring 2008: Strategies at a glance

Please tell me if the following would enhance our security a great deal, somewhat or not at all:

	A great deal (%)	A great deal change since Fall 2007 (%)	A great deal change since 2005 (%)	Somewhat (%)	Not at all (%)	Not at all change since Fall 2007 (%)	Not at all change since 2005 (%)
Becoming less dependent on other countries for our supply of energy	60	7	—	29	9	2	—
Improving the effectiveness of our intelligence operations	57	1	-8	32	6	2	2
Tighter controls on immigration to the U.S.	52	0	-6	35	11	0	1
Showing more respect for the views and needs of other countries	44	6	-5	43	10	-6	-2
Maintaining our military edge by exploring new technologies or placing weapons in space	38	4	-2	39	17	0	-6
Creating policies that support equal rights and better educational opportunities for women in Muslim countries	37	10	-4	41	19	-9	-1
Closer cooperation with the UN	35	1	1	45	15	-3	-11
Tighter control over foreign students who come to our colleges and universities to study	32	-4	-9	38	25	5	2
Giving government more power to investigate possible terrorist activities, even if we have to give up some of our privacy in order to do it	30	5	—	37	29	-6	—
Building large projects such as roads, dams, and hospitals in developing countries	26	3	-3	46	24	-3	-2
Attacking countries that develop weapons of mass destruction	26	1	—	37	32	-3	—
Doing more to help Muslim countries develop economically	22	3	-5	55	21	-4	-5

Question wording may be slightly edited for space and clarity.
Percentages may not equal 100 percent due to rounding or the omission of some answer categories.

Full Survey Results

This sixth edition of the study was based on telephone interviews conducted between March 18, 2008 and April 1, 2008 among a nationally representative sample of 1,006 adults, 18 years and older. It covered over 25 different issues in more than 110 different survey questions. The margin of error for this study is $\pm 3\%$.

	March 2008 (%)	Sept 2007 (%)	March 2007 (%)	Sept 2006 (%)	Jan 2006 (%)	June 2005 (%)
1 What do you think is the most important problem facing the United States in its dealings with the rest of the world?*						
Iraq (war)	19	25	29	19	22	—
Economy	11	3	3	1	3	—
Terrorism	10	11	9	22	13	—
The U.S.'s reputation	8	9	8	9	9	—
High energy/gas oil prices/dependence	5	2	2	3	*	—
2 How do you think the rest of the world sees the United States? Would you say they see the United States positively or negatively?						
Positively (net)	27	24	22	24	25	—
Very positively	11	7	7	9	—	—
Somewhat positively	16	17	15	15	—	—
Negatively (net)	63	64	68	64	62	—
Somewhat negatively	37	34	34	32	—	—
Very negatively	27	30	34	32	—	—
Neutral or mixed	6	10	8	8	10	—
Don't know	3	2	2	3	3	—
3 How important to our national security is it that the rest of the world sees the United States positively?						
Very important	63	67	67	65	—	—
Somewhat important	24	22	24	22	—	—
Not too important	5	4	5	5	—	—
Not at all important	3	5	3	6	—	—
Don't know	4	1	1	2	—	—
4 Do you think that people in other countries see the United States ...						
... as a strong leader, or not?						
Yes	65	—	59	66	69	—
No	30	—	37	30	27	—
Don't know	4	—	4	4	4	—
... as a country to be feared, or not?						
Yes	59	—	59	53	63	—
No	36	—	36	41	32	—
Don't know	5	—	5	6	5	—

*Top 5 responses from open-ended question.

4 (continued) **Do you think that people in other countries see the United States ...**

... as a free and democratic country, or not?

Yes	82	—	84	81	81	—
No	13	—	13	14	15	—
Don't know	5	—	3	5	4	—

... as a bully, or not?

Yes	60	—	67	63	63	—
No	37	—	29	31	32	—
Don't know	3	—	4	5	5	—

... as pampered and spoiled, or not?

Yes	73	—	76	72	73	—
No	21	—	21	20	23	—
Don't know	6	—	3	8	4	—

... as arrogant, or not?

Yes	73	—	75	78	74	—
No	19	—	22	17	22	—
Don't know	8	—	3	5	4	—

... with envy, or not?

Yes	71	—	71	67	71	—
No	24	—	28	27	24	—
Don't know	4	—	2	6	5	—

... as a country of opportunity for everyone, or not?

Yes	78	—	79	81	80	—
No	20	—	18	16	17	—
Don't know	3	—	2	3	2	—

... as generous toward other countries, or not?

Yes	69	—	72	66	72	—
No	25	—	25	29	23	—
Don't know	6	—	3	5	5	—

... as corrupt and immoral, or not?

Yes	55	—	55	52	56	—
No	35	—	40	42	37	—
Don't know	10	—	5	5	7	—

6 **Thinking about recent U.S. relations with the rest of the world, would you say things are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?**

Right direction	25	28	26	35	37	—
Wrong track	65	65	67	58	59	—
Don't know	9	7	6	7	4	—

7 **Thinking about things that the government must do to fight terrorism, in your opinion, should the government put more emphasis on military efforts, or should it put more emphasis on diplomatic and economic methods?**

More emphasis on military efforts	23	28	27	32	28	29
More emphasis on diplomatic and economic methods	69	65	67	61	61	64
Don't know	7	7	5	6	10	7

	March 2008 (%)	Sept 2007 (%)	March 2007 (%)	Sept 2006 (%)	Jan 2006 (%)	June 2005 (%)
8 Thinking about current U.S. relations with the rest of the world, would you say that the world is becoming safer or more dangerous for the United States and the American people? Is that much or somewhat safer/more dangerous?						
Much safer	7	5	4	6	—	—
Somewhat safer	16	12	9	13	—	—
Somewhat more dangerous	36	34	34	36	—	—
Much more dangerous	38	45	48	43	—	—
Don't know	4	3	4	2	—	—
9 How good a job is the United States doing these days as a leader in creating a more peaceful and prosperous world? Would you say the United States is doing ...						
An excellent job	5	5	6	10	—	—
A good job	24	20	20	21	—	—
A fair job	41	42	39	39	—	—
A poor job	28	32	34	30	—	—
Don't know	2	1	1	1	—	—
9A Do you think U.S. troops should stay in Iraq to control the violence even though it may mean more U.S. casualties, or do you think we should withdraw even if that means more violence and more Iraqi casualties?						
U.S. troops should stay in Iraq	39	38	—	—	—	—
We should withdraw	53	55	—	—	—	—
Don't know	8	6	—	—	—	—
10 What grade would you give the United States when it comes to achieving the following goals?						
Helping other countries when natural disasters strike						
A	44	38	42	47	49	54
B	32	31	35	32	31	29
C	15	18	15	12	12	11
D	4	6	4	4	4	2
F	3	5	3	4	3	2
Don't know	2	3	1	1	1	1
Making sure we have a strong, well-supplied military						
A	31	27	29	30	32	30
B	33	31	30	32	33	37
C	18	24	20	20	20	19
D	8	10	10	8	8	5
F	5	5	7	7	4	5
Don't know	4	2	3	2	2	2
Giving the war on terror all the attention it deserves						
A	23	22	24	25	26	23
B	31	26	26	31	32	35
C	23	27	25	24	20	23
D	11	11	10	8	9	9
F	8	9	9	6	9	6
Don't know	5	6	5	5	4	3

10 (continued) **What grade would you give the United States when it comes to achieving the following goals?**

Hunting down anti-American terrorists

	March 2008 (%)	Sept 2007 (%)	March 2007 (%)	Sept 2006 (%)	Jan 2006 (%)	June 2005 (%)
A	13	12	16	19	18	19
B	26	29	26	28	28	35
C	31	24	25	25	27	25
D	13	13	15	13	10	10
F	10	16	12	11	12	7
Don't know	7	6	6	4	6	4

Helping to create democracy in the rest of the world

A	11	11	11	15	16	19
B	30	24	25	25	30	31
C	29	35	34	30	28	30
D	15	14	13	13	12	10
F	8	11	9	10	7	7
Don't know	6	6	8	6	6	4

Doing our best to bring peace between Israel and the Palestinians

A	12	12	14	13	15	16
B	25	21	22	25	29	29
C	24	27	27	34	24	30
D	14	17	14	10	12	11
F	13	14	14	12	9	7
Don't know	11	10	8	6	10	7

Helping improve the lives of people living in poor countries

A	15	12	15	13	14	15
B	28	27	27	25	31	27
C	30	29	29	32	28	28
D	13	15	13	12	11	16
F	9	13	10	12	11	9
Don't know	4	3	5	5	6	4

Living up to our ideals of human rights and justice in the way we conduct our foreign policy

A	14	12	11	13	14	15
B	26	24	27	27	31	29
C	31	32	29	29	27	29
D	12	13	12	13	11	12
F	10	13	13	11	10	10
Don't know	6	6	8	6	7	5

Stopping countries or groups from getting nuclear weapons

A	16	18	15	13	14	13
B	27	22	23	23	27	27
C	23	24	25	25	27	29
D	12	17	17	18	14	15
F	11	11	13	13	10	8
Don't know	10	8	8	7	7	7

Succeeding in meeting our objectives in Iraq

A	8	5	7	7	11	13
B	23	20	14	24	22	26
C	22	25	21	24	23	24
D	19	21	20	17	15	17
F	21	25	32	22	23	16
Don't know	6	4	5	5	6	4

10 (continued) **What grade would you give the United States when it comes to achieving the following goals?**

Succeeding in meeting our objectives in Afghanistan

	March 2008 (%)	Sept 2007 (%)	March 2007 (%)	Sept 2006 (%)	Jan 2006 (%)	June 2005 (%)
A	7	7	7	8	11	13
B	21	21	19	22	21	27
C	27	26	27	28	28	28
D	16	19	17	17	14	14
F	15	18	22	16	15	9
Don't know	13	10	8	9	11	10

Protecting people or nations that are threatened with genocide or ethnic cleansing

A	9	10	10	11	13	12
B	23	18	23	23	24	24
C	30	27	26	27	25	28
D	17	19	16	15	15	16
F	11	14	15	12	11	10
Don't know	10	12	10	12	11	10

Conducting effective U.S. intelligence operations

A	12	13	11	12	11	—
B	30	24	25	29	26	—
C	26	28	26	31	28	—
D	11	12	12	9	11	—
F	6	8	8	7	10	—
Don't know	16	14	16	11	13	—

Having good working relations with other countries

A	11	9	11	10	10	11
B	30	35	31	35	32	34
C	36	35	35	29	37	32
D	11	11	14	14	10	14
F	7	7	8	8	6	6
Don't know	4	3	1	4	4	4

Working with other countries to reduce global warming

A	10	9	9	—	—	—
B	20	18	16	—	—	—
C	25	26	27	—	—	—
D	17	15	14	—	—	—
F	16	18	20	—	—	—
Don't know	12	14	13	—	—	—

Avoiding trade agreements that harm the United States

A	9	7	8	—	—	—
B	19	16	18	—	—	—
C	28	31	28	—	—	—
D	16	16	15	—	—	—
F	13	13	11	—	—	—
Don't know	14	16	19	—	—	—

Stopping illegal drugs from coming into the country

A	8	6	7	6	7	7
B	15	13	11	11	13	16
C	22	20	20	24	22	24
D	19	22	25	19	20	24
F	31	34	33	33	31	26
Don't know	4	5	4	7	6	3

10 (continued) **What grade would you give the United States when it comes to achieving the following goals?**

Having good relations and reputation with Muslim countries

	March 2008 (%)	Sept 2007 (%)	March 2007 (%)	Sept 2006 (%)	Jan 2006 (%)	June 2005 (%)
A	8	5	5	5	6	7
B	16	15	15	14	19	21
C	30	33	28	32	28	32
D	18	21	23	17	19	19
F	19	18	22	22	17	13
Don't know	8	8	7	9	9	7

Protecting our borders from illegal immigration

A	9	5	8	6	6	7
B	11	10	13	12	13	18
C	24	24	25	27	27	29
D	22	22	22	23	20	21
F	29	37	29	28	30	24
Don't know	5	2	4	4	4	2

Protecting American jobs from moving overseas

A	5	4	6	7	4	4
B	11	13	12	11	11	14
C	21	20	20	25	24	26
D	22	22	22	21	22	21
F	36	37	35	30	35	31
Don't know	5	4	5	6	4	5

Limiting the amount of money we owe other countries

A	6	4	5	7	6	—
B	11	10	11	13	14	—
C	23	28	22	26	25	—
D	16	18	17	15	16	—
F	27	23	27	21	17	—
Don't know	16	16	18	19	21	—

Becoming less dependent on other countries for our supply of energy

A	5	4	6	8	9	—
B	14	15	15	15	11	—
C	24	25	28	25	30	—
D	24	27	23	26	23	—
F	29	25	25	22	23	—
Don't know	4	3	3	4	5	—

Reaching out to moderate Muslims overseas

A	6	7	—	—	—	—
B	19	14	—	—	—	—
C	32	28	—	—	—	—
D	11	17	—	—	—	—
F	9	11	—	—	—	—
Don't know	22	22	—	—	—	—

Working with the government of Pakistan to hunt down anti-American terrorists in Pakistan

A	11	—	—	—	—	—
B	20	—	—	—	—	—
C	27	—	—	—	—	—
D	13	—	—	—	—	—
F	11	—	—	—	—	—
Don't know	18	—	—	—	—	—

11 Is the following something that you worry about a lot, is this something you worry about somewhat or is this something you do *not* worry about?

The war in Iraq is leading to too many casualties

	March 2008 (%)	Sept 2007 (%)	March 2007 (%)	Sept 2006 (%)	Jan 2006 (%)	June 2005 (%)
Worry a lot	56	60	64	55	56	56
Worry somewhat	28	27	23	29	26	26
Do not worry	15	13	12	15	17	18
Don't know	*	*	*	1	*	*

Terrorist groups may use biological, chemical or nuclear weapons to attack the United States

Worry a lot	44	49	45	47	43	48
Worry somewhat	42	38	40	36	43	40
Do not worry	14	13	15	16	14	13
Don't know	*	*	*	1	*	*

The war in Iraq is requiring so much money and attention that it may be distracting the United States from other threats in the world

Worry a lot	47	46	48	42	44	43
Worry somewhat	33	34	35	36	36	34
Do not worry	19	19	16	21	19	23
Don't know	1	1	*	1	*	*

Problems abroad may hurt our supply of oil and raise prices for American consumers

Worry a lot	54	40	45	46	55	42
Worry somewhat	35	45	37	37	33	39
Do not worry	11	15	17	17	11	19
Don't know	*	*	*	1	*	—

It may be too easy for illegal immigrants to come into the country

Worry a lot	43	45	43	39	41	42
Worry somewhat	34	32	36	33	36	31
Do not worry	23	23	21	27	22	27
Don't know	*	*	*	1	1	1

There may be growing hatred of the United States in Muslim countries

Worry a lot	33	41	42	42	34	40
Worry somewhat	40	38	36	36	42	34
Do not worry	25	21	21	20	22	25
Don't know	2	*	1	1	1	1

The United States may be losing the trust and friendship of people in other countries

Worry a lot	35	34	36	34	29	40
Worry somewhat	43	43	42	39	43	35
Do not worry	21	22	21	26	27	25
Don't know	1	1	1	1	1	1

There may be another major terrorist attack against the United States in the near future

Worry a lot	37	40	42	45	41	37
Worry somewhat	45	46	37	37	42	42
Do not worry	19	14	20	17	16	21
Don't know	*	*	*	1	*	—

11 (continued) **Is the following something that you worry about a lot, is this something you worry about somewhat or is this something you do *not* worry about?**

The United States may owe too much money to other countries

	March 2008 (%)	Sept 2007 (%)	March 2007 (%)	Sept 2006 (%)	Jan 2006 (%)	June 2005 (%)
Worry a lot	40	31	33	27	27	32
Worry somewhat	34	38	35	37	34	31
Do not worry	23	30	31	32	36	36
Don't know	3	1	1	3	2	2

The growing power of China may be a threat to the United States

Worry a lot	32	30	25	30	29	29
Worry somewhat	38	40	43	38	38	37
Do not worry	26	28	31	31	32	33
Don't know	3	1	1	1	*	1

The way things are going for the United States in world affairs

Worry a lot	39	34	32	35	—	—
Worry somewhat	45	51	52	48	—	—
Do not worry	15	14	16	16	—	—
Don't know	1	1	*	2	—	—

Rise in the cost of gas and fuel

Worry a lot	70	54	57	—	—	—
Worry somewhat	22	32	30	—	—	—
Do not worry	7	13	12	—	—	—
Don't know	*	*	*	—	—	—

Protecting American jobs from moving overseas

Worry a lot	53	50	45	45	52	—
Worry somewhat	34	34	37	36	35	—
Do not worry	12	16	17	19	12	—
Don't know	1	*	*	*	1	—

Global warming

Worry a lot	39	41	41	33	32	—
Worry somewhat	33	33	34	35	37	—
Do not worry	27	26	24	30	29	—
Don't know	1	*	1	2	2	—

That our actions in the Mideast are aiding the recruitment of terrorists

Worry a lot	34	39	37	37	33	—
Worry somewhat	41	38	40	37	40	—
Do not worry	23	21	22	24	25	—
Don't know	3	1	1	2	2	—

The rise of Islamic extremism around the world

Worry a lot	38	40	40	38	31	—
Worry somewhat	43	41	39	41	45	—
Do not worry	18	17	19	18	22	—
Don't know	2	1	2	2	2	—

The possibility of unfriendly nations becoming nuclear powers

Worry a lot	40	42	41	38	31	—
Worry somewhat	44	43	41	41	45	—
Do not worry	14	15	17	18	22	—
Don't know	1	*	*	2	2	—

11 (continued) **Is the following something that you worry about a lot, is this something you worry about somewhat or is this something you do *not* worry about?**

Pakistan is providing a safe haven for Al Queda

	March 2008 (%)	Sept 2007 (%)	March 2007 (%)	Sept 2006 (%)	Jan 2006 (%)	June 2005 (%)
Worry a lot	30	—	—	—	—	—
Worry somewhat	45	—	—	—	—	—
Do not worry	22	—	—	—	—	—
Don't know	4	—	—	—	—	—

The US will get into a military conflict with Iran

Worry a lot	35	—	—	—	—	—
Worry somewhat	42	—	—	—	—	—
Do not worry	21	—	—	—	—	—
Don't know	2	—	—	—	—	—

12 Do you think/believe that ...

... improved communication and dialogue with the Muslim world will reduce hatred of the United States?

Yes	59	53	53	53	56	59
No	36	43	43	41	37	38
Don't know	5	4	4	6	7	3

... we can fight terrorism without sometimes using torture against suspected terrorists?

Yes	56	50	54	54	56	56
No	36	44	40	39	37	39
Don't know	7	6	6	6	7	5

... when more countries become democratic, there will be less conflict and violence in the world?

Yes	54	46	50	52	53	51
No	38	48	46	42	42	45
Don't know	8	5	4	6	5	4

... if there is less poverty in the world, there will be less terrorism?

Yes	51	46	45	44	47	46
No	46	52	51	53	49	52
Don't know	3	2	4	2	4	3

13 Do you think it's realistic or unrealistic to expect/believe that ...

... U.S. companies will keep jobs in the United States when labor is cheaper elsewhere?

Realistic	22	23	23	26	22	21
Unrealistic	74	75	75	70	74	78
Don't know	4	2	2	3	3	1

... the U.S. government will be able to maintain a stable supply of oil at a reasonable price?

Realistic	32	41	41	41	35	—
Unrealistic	65	56	56	55	63	—
Don't know	3	3	3	4	3	—

... international cooperation can reduce global warming?

Realistic	61	60	65	—	—	—
Unrealistic	33	34	29	—	—	—
Don't know	5	6	6	—	—	—

13 (continued) **Do you think it's realistic or unrealistic to expect/ believe that ...**

... the U.S. government can prevent more countries from developing nuclear weapons?

	March 2008 (%)	Sept 2007 (%)	March 2007 (%)	Sept 2006 (%)	Jan 2006 (%)	June 2005 (%)
Realistic	38	36	35	41	35	—
Unrealistic	58	62	63	55	63	—
Don't know	4	3	2	4	3	—

14 **Is the following something our government can do a lot about, something about or not much about?**

Slowing illegal immigration in the United States

A lot	41	46	47	49	48	—
Something	39	34	36	37	37	—
Not much	19	19	16	11	14	—
Don't know	1	1	1	3	1	—

Creating a democratic Iraq

A lot	15	12	13	20	22	—
Something	37	33	35	36	39	—
Not much	44	51	49	40	35	—
Don't know	5	3	3	4	4	—

Preventing jobs from going overseas

A lot	43	44	42	42	44	—
Something	36	31	35	34	34	—
Not much	20	24	22	22	21	—
Don't know	1	1	1	1	1	—

Establishing good relations with moderate Muslims

A lot	30	30	33	36	35	—
Something	45	45	41	40	41	—
Not much	21	23	22	20	20	—
Don't know	4	2	3	3	4	—

Preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction

A lot	25	27	24	32	35	—
Something	46	42	43	43	44	—
Not much	27	30	30	23	19	—
Don't know	2	2	2	2	2	—

Preventing another major terrorist attack against the United States

A lot	39	37	36	45	39	—
Something	39	42	42	39	40	—
Not much	20	21	21	15	19	—
Don't know	2	1	1	2	2	—

Decreasing our dependence on other countries for our supply of energy

A lot	44	50	49	51	50	—
Something	39	35	36	36	35	—
Not much	15	14	14	11	12	—
Don't know	2	1	2	1	3	—

Reducing global warming

A lot	37	37	34	35	30	—
Something	34	33	36	36	40	—
Not much	25	26	26	24	26	—
Don't know	3	4	3	5	5	—

14 (continued) **Is the following something our government can do a lot about, something about or not much about?**

Reducing our debts to other countries

A lot
Something
Not much
Don't know

March 2008 (%)	Sept 2007 (%)	March 2007 (%)	Sept 2006 (%)	Jan 2006 (%)	June 2005 (%)
41	38	44	45	41	—
38	39	40	36	39	—
16	20	14	13	15	—
5	3	2	5	5	—

Controlling the violence in Iraq

A lot
Something
Not much
Don't know

15	15	17	—	—	—
41	34	30	—	—	—
42	49	51	—	—	—
2	1	2	—	—	—

Stopping anti-American terrorists in Pakistan

A lot
Something
Not much
Don't know

16	—	—	—	—	—
41	—	—	—	—	—
40	—	—	—	—	—
2	—	—	—	—	—

Preventing Iran from becoming a nuclear power

A lot
Something
Not much
Don't know

23	—	—	—	—	—
42	—	—	—	—	—
32	—	—	—	—	—
3	—	—	—	—	—

Creating a stable Afghanistan

A lot
Something
Not much
Don't know

15	—	—	—	—	—
43	—	—	—	—	—
36	—	—	—	—	—
6	—	—	—	—	—

15 Do you think the United States can effectively help other countries become democratic, or is democracy something that countries only come to on their own when they're ready for it?

The United States can help other countries become democracies
Democracy is something that countries only come to on their own
Don't know

28	22	23	31	36	38
67	73	74	64	58	54
4	5	3	5	6	4

17 How important to our foreign policy should each of the following be? Should this be very important, somewhat important, not very important or not at all important?

Taking into account the views and interests of other countries

Very important
Somewhat important
Not very important
Not at all important
Don't know

52	47	47	49	40	—
40	43	43	41	47	—
4	6	6	6	6	—
2	4	4	3	4	—
2	*	1	1	2	—

Minding our own business and getting less involved with global issues

Very important
Somewhat important
Not very important
Not at all important
Don't know

35	36	32	30	31	—
42	38	38	40	38	—
11	13	12	14	13	—
10	11	16	13	14	—
2	2	2	3	3	—

17 (continued) **How important to our foreign policy should each of the following be? Should this be very important, somewhat important, not very important or not at all important?**

Actively creating democracies in other countries

	March 2008 (%)	Sept 2007 (%)	March 2007 (%)	Sept 2006 (%)	Jan 2006 (%)	June 2005 (%)
Very important	24	16	17	24	20	—
Somewhat important	49	51	48	45	46	—
Not very important	17	19	20	17	18	—
Not at all important	6	10	12	11	12	—
Don't know	4	3	2	2	3	—

Helping other countries when they are struck by natural disasters

Very important	73	70	68	71	71	—
Somewhat important	24	24	28	26	24	—
Not very important	2	4	1	1	2	—
Not at all important	1	2	2	1	2	—
Don't know	1	*	1	*	1	—

Initiating military force only when we have the support of our allies

Very important	51	53	51	45	50	—
Somewhat important	34	28	33	36	31	—
Not very important	6	8	7	10	8	—
Not at all important	5	9	7	6	7	—
Don't know	3	2	2	3	3	—

Cooperating with other countries on problems like the environment or control of diseases

Very important	75	75	72	73	70	—
Somewhat important	23	21	24	22	25	—
Not very important	2	2	2	3	2	—
Not at all important	*	2	1	1	3	—
Don't know	*	*	*	1	1	—

Helping poor countries move out of poverty

Very important	53	45	44	46	40	—
Somewhat important	40	41	45	42	48	—
Not very important	5	8	7	8	6	—
Not at all important	2	4	3	4	4	—
Don't know	1	1	*	1	1	—

Assisting countries in developing clean water supplies

Very important	74	64	67	71	—	—
Somewhat important	23	30	27	24	—	—
Not very important	2	4	4	3	—	—
Not at all important	*	2	1	2	—	—
Don't know	*	*	*	*	—	—

Helping people in poor countries to get an education

Very important	59	53	51	54	51	—
Somewhat important	33	35	38	35	37	—
Not very important	5	9	7	6	8	—
Not at all important	2	4	4	4	4	—
Don't know	1	*	*	1	1	—

Improving the treatment of women in other countries

Very important	66	60	60	60	57	—
Somewhat important	27	30	29	30	35	—
Not very important	4	6	5	5	4	—
Not at all important	2	3	4	4	3	—
Don't know	2	1	1	1	1	—

17 (continued) **How important to our foreign policy should each of the following be? Should this be very important, somewhat important, not very important or not at all important?**

Preventing the spread of nuclear weapons

	March 2008 (%)	Sept 2007 (%)	March 2007 (%)	Sept 2006 (%)	Jan 2006 (%)	June 2005 (%)
Very important	75	75	75	—	—	—
Somewhat important	21	19	20	—	—	—
Not very important	2	2	3	—	—	—
Not at all important	1	3	1	—	—	—
Don't know	1	1	1	—	—	—

Cooperating with other countries on reducing global warming

Very important	61	56	60	—	—	—
Somewhat important	26	28	27	—	—	—
Not very important	6	7	5	—	—	—
Not at all important	6	6	6	—	—	—
Don't know	1	2	2	—	—	—

18 **Thinking about the benefits of international trade, do you think for the most part the United States benefits more than other countries, or that other countries benefit more than the United States or are you unsure who benefits?**

The United States benefits more than other countries	14	15	17	—	—	—
Other countries benefit more than the United States	42	34	31	—	—	—
Unsure who benefits more	41	49	50	—	—	—
Don't know	3	2	1	—	—	—

18A **Please tell us the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement: To resolve the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, the U.S. and Israel will have to work with unfriendly countries in the Middle East, such as Syria.**

Strongly agree	32	—	—	—	—	—
Somewhat agree	38	—	—	—	—	—
Somewhat disagree	11	—	—	—	—	—
Strongly disagree	6	—	—	—	—	—
Don't know	12	—	—	—	—	—

Note: Questions 19 and 20 were asked later in the survey.

21 **How much do you trust our government to tell the public the truth about our relations with other countries? Would you say you trust them ...**

Very much	8	8	7	10	11	—
Somewhat	39	34	33	39	37	—
Not too much	26	28	32	27	28	—
Not at all	26	29	27	22	23	—
Don't know	1	*	*	1	*	—

21A **How truthful do you think the government has been in what it told the public about our actions in Iraq?**

Completely	8	11	7	—	—	—
Somewhat	40	36	39	—	—	—
Not very	28	26	27	—	—	—
Not at all	23	26	27	—	—	—
Don't know	2	1	1	—	—	—

	March 2008 (%)	Sept 2007 (%)	March 2007 (%)	Sept 2006 (%)	Jan 2006 (%)	June 2005 (%)
22 How would you describe the current violence in Iraq? Would you say it is ... ?						
Mostly a civil war	42	47	50	—	—	—
Mostly an uprising opposing the United States's role in Iraq	44	42	42	—	—	—
Don't know	13	10	7	—	—	—
23 In your opinion ... ?						
Should the U.S. withdraw all troops from Iraq immediately	21	19	19	—	—	—
Should the U.S. gradually withdraw all troops over the next 12 months	44	48	51	—	—	—
Should troops stay in Iraq for as long as it takes to stabilize the country	29	30	27	—	—	—
Don't know	5	3	3	—	—	—
24 Does the United States have a moral obligation to the Iraqi people, or should we act exclusively in our own nation's interest without regard to how it affects the Iraqi people?						
Moral obligation	56	57	60	—	—	—
Nation's interest	31	33	31	—	—	—
Don't know	12	9	8	—	—	—
25 Do you think America's safety from terrorism depends upon our success in Iraq, or does it not depend on our success in Iraq?						
Depends upon our success in Iraq	34	36	34	—	—	—
Does not depend upon our success in Iraq	58	60	61	—	—	—
Don't know	8	4	5	—	—	—
Note: Questions 19 and 20 were asked out of numerical order.						
19 Now turning to the topic of Iran, how closely are you following recent news about the current situation in Iran? Would you say you are following it very closely, somewhat closely, not too closely or not at all closely?						
Very closely	14	19	21	—	—	—
Somewhat closely	39	45	43	—	—	—
Not too closely	27	21	19	—	—	—
Not at all closely	18	16	16	—	—	—
Don't know	1	—	*	—	—	—
20 In your view, of the five choices I read, what is the one best way for the United States to deal with the current situation in Iran? (Base: Respondents who have closely followed the current situation in Iran)						
Use diplomacy to try to establish better relations	47	35	44	—	—	—
Seek to impose international economic sanctions	28	30	28	—	—	—
Threaten military action against Iran	5	9	5	—	—	—
Take military action against Iran	7	10	8	—	—	—
The United States doesn't have to do anything to deal with the current situation in Iran	11	13	11	—	—	—
Don't know	2	4	3	—	—	—
26 Which statement comes closer to your own views even if neither is exactly right?						
The Islamic religion is more likely than others to encourage violence among its believers	41	49	48	46	45	—
The Islamic religion does not encourage violence more than others	42	39	42	39	39	—
Don't know	16	11	10	14	15	—

	March 2008 (%)	Sept 2007 (%)	March 2007 (%)	Sept 2006 (%)	Jan 2006 (%)	June 2005 (%)
27 What is your impression—do you think the majority of Muslims support terrorism, or do you think a small minority of Muslims support terrorism?						
The majority of Muslims support terrorism	18	21	21	—	—	—
A small minority of Muslims support terrorism	73	74	71	—	—	—
Don't know	8	6	7	—	—	—
28 Please tell me if each of the following would enhance our security a great deal, somewhat or not at all.						
Improving the effectiveness of our intelligence operations						
A great deal	57	56	63	62	60	65
Somewhat	32	39	31	28	33	30
Not at all	6	4	3	6	3	4
Don't know	4	1	2	3	3	1
Tighter controls on immigration to the United States						
A great deal	52	52	51	51	50	58
Somewhat	35	36	38	40	41	30
Not at all	11	11	10	5	8	10
Don't know	2	1	1	3	*	2
Showing more respect for the views and needs of other countries						
A great deal	44	38	42	43	45	49
Somewhat	43	44	43	42	43	38
Not at all	10	16	14	13	11	12
Don't know	2	1	1	1	1	1
Creating policies that support equal rights and better educational opportunities for women in Muslim countries						
A great deal	37	27	29	32	30	41
Somewhat	41	44	43	44	45	37
Not at all	19	28	25	20	19	20
Don't know	2	2	2	3	4	2
Tighter control over foreign students who come to our colleges and universities to study						
A great deal	32	36	34	40	32	41
Somewhat	38	42	46	39	44	34
Not at all	25	20	18	19	21	23
Don't know	4	2	1	1	3	2
Maintaining our military edge by exploring new technologies or placing weapons in space						
A great deal	38	34	36	37	33	40
Somewhat	39	44	40	36	45	34
Not at all	17	17	19	21	16	23
Don't know	6	6	4	6	5	4
Closer cooperation with the UN						
A great deal	35	34	33	36	33	34
Somewhat	45	45	45	40	46	37
Not at all	15	18	20	21	18	26
Don't know	5	2	2	3	3	3

28 (continued) **Please tell me if each of the following would enhance our security a great deal, somewhat or not at all.**

Attacking countries that develop weapons of mass destruction

	March 2008 (%)	Sept 2007 (%)	March 2007 (%)	Sept 2006 (%)	Jan 2006 (%)	June 2005 (%)
A great deal	26	25	17	36	29	—
Somewhat	37	35	37	30	40	—
Not at all	32	35	43	29	24	—
Don't know	5	4	3	5	6	—

Giving government more power to investigate, even if we had to give up some of our privacy in order to do it

A great deal	30	25	21	24	27	—
Somewhat	37	38	41	35	35	—
Not at all	29	35	36	37	36	—
Don't know	3	2	2	3	1	—

Building large projects such as roads, dams and hospitals in developing countries

A great deal	26	23	23	28	19	29
Somewhat	46	48	46	42	55	43
Not at all	24	27	30	26	23	26
Don't know	3	1	1	3	3	2

Doing more to help Muslim countries develop economically

A great deal	22	19	20	20	20	27
Somewhat	55	52	52	47	53	46
Not at all	21	25	27	29	23	26
Don't know	3	3	2	3	3	2

Becoming less dependent on other countries for our supply of energy

A great deal	60	53	55	57	57	—
Somewhat	29	38	34	30	33	—
Not at all	9	7	10	11	8	—
Don't know	1	1	1	1	2	—

29 Here are some criticisms of U.S. foreign policies that have been made in recent years. For each, please tell me if you find the criticism to be totally justified, partly justified or not justified at all.

The United States has been too quick to resort to war

(Base : Approximately half of respondents)

Totally justified	28	29	31	27	34	35
Partially justified	41	35	39	36	31	27
Not justified at all	29	33	28	33	32	37
Don't know	2	2	2	3	3	1

The United States is so concerned with its own security that it sometimes abuses prisoners in the war on terrorism

(Base : Approximately half of respondents)

Totally justified	18	19	20	—	—	—
Partially justified	41	44	39	—	—	—
Not justified at all	34	34	36	—	—	—
Don't know	6	2	4	—	—	—

29 (continued) **Here are some criticisms of U.S. foreign policies that have been made in recent years. For each, please tell me if you find the criticism to be totally justified, partly justified or not justified at all.**

The United States has often been allied with governments that are unjust and exploit their own people

(Base : Approximately half of respondents)

Totally justified
Partially justified
Not justified at all
Don't know

March 2008 (%)	Sept 2007 (%)	March 2007 (%)	Sept 2006 (%)	Jan 2006 (%)	June 2005 (%)
17	20	18	17	15	24
47	48	50	44	48	46
28	27	26	32	30	26
7	5	5	7	7	4

U.S. policies are too pro-Israel for the United States to be able to broker peace between Israel and the Palestinians

(Base : Approximately half of respondents)

Totally justified
Partially justified
Not justified at all
Don't know

15	17	19	23	14	21
47	48	47	47	48	41
29	29	25	22	25	30
8	5	9	7	12	8

The United States is only concerned with its own interests and disregards the interests of other countries

(Base : Approximately half of respondents)

Totally justified
Partially justified
Not justified at all
Don't know

12	15	20	15	16	19
45	49	40	46	40	36
38	33	37	35	39	44
4	2	2	3	5	1

Characteristics of the sample

	March 2008 (%)		March 2008 (%)
Gender		Race	
Male	48	White	68
Female	52	Black/African-American	11
Age		Hispanic	13
18–29	21	Asian	2
30–39	16	Something else	4
40–49	22	Income	
50–64	23	\$15,000 or under	14
65 or more	16	\$15,001 to \$25,000	9
Region		\$25,001 to \$35,000	13
Northeast	19	\$35,001 to \$50,000	15
Midcentral	22	\$50,001 to \$75,000	20
South	36	Over \$75,000	19
West	23	Religion	
Party		Christian	81
Republican	23	Protestant	59
Democrat	34	Roman Catholic	25
Independent	27	Mormon	2
Something else	10	Orthodox Church	1
Political ideology		Something else	5
Liberal	23	Born-again/evangelical	46
Moderate	33	Not born-again/evangelical	47
Conservative	32	Jewish	2
Education		Muslim	1
Less than high school	15	Buddhist	1
High school graduate	31	Atheist	2
Some college or trade school, no degree	18	Agnostic	2
Associate's or 2-year degree	9	Something else	3
Bachelor's or 4-year degree	15	No religion	8
Graduate degree	11		

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