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# More Express Sympathy for Israel than the Palestinians

*Many Have Some Sympathy for Both  
Sides in Mideast Conflict*

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION  
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# More Express Sympathy for Israel than the Palestinians

## *Many Have Some Sympathy for Both Sides in Mideast Conflict*

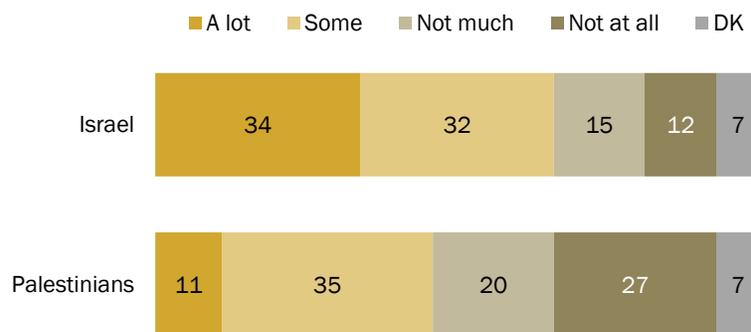
As a cease-fire ends more than seven weeks of fighting in Gaza, the public expresses more sympathy for Israel than the Palestinians in their ongoing dispute.

Most Americans say they sympathize “a lot” (34%) or “some” (32%) with Israel, while roughly a quarter sympathize with Israel “not much” (15%) or “not at all” (12%).

There is less public sympathy for the Palestinians: 11% sympathize with Palestinians a lot, though 35% have some sympathy for them. Nearly half say they have little (20%) or no sympathy (27%) for the Palestinians.

### Higher Levels of Sympathy for Israel than Palestinians

*In the dispute between Israel and the Palestinians, how much do you sympathize with ... (%)*



Survey conducted August 20-24, 2014. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

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The new national survey by the Pew Research Center, conducted August 20-24 among 1,501 adults, finds little change in opinions about how President Obama is handling the situation in the Middle East. Currently, 49% say Obama is striking about the right balance in dealing with the situation in the Middle East; relatively few say he is favoring the Palestinians too much (22%) or favoring Israel too much (13%). These views are little changed from April.

In addition, the fighting between Israel and Hamas has had only a modest impact on views of prospects for a peaceful two-state solution: 43% say a way can be found for Israel and an independent Palestinian state to coexist peacefully, while 48% don't think this can happen. In April, 46% thought a peaceful solution could be achieved, while 44% did not.

## Demographic Divides in Middle East Sympathies

The current survey marks the first time the Pew Research Center has assessed levels of sympathy for Israel and the Palestinians independently. The Pew Research has long tracked a different question which asks respondents which side they sympathize with *more* in the dispute between Israel and the Palestinians.

In this “forced-choice” question (last asked by [Pew Research in July](#)), 51% say they sympathize *more* with Israel while just 14% sympathize *more* with the Palestinians. That question does not offer explicit options for expressing sympathy for both sides, or neither side. In the July survey, 3% volunteered that they sympathized with both Israel and the Palestinians, while 15% volunteered that they sympathized with neither side.

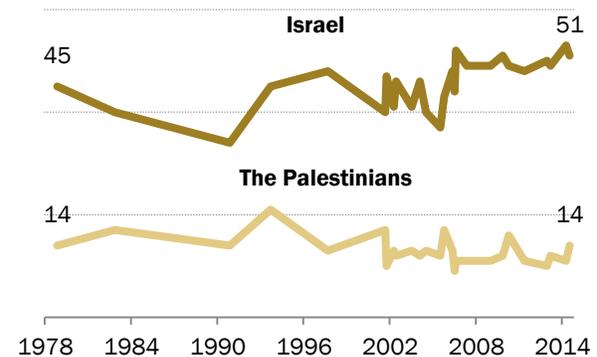
The new survey finds that opinions are more mixed when people are asked separately about their sympathies for Israel and the Palestinians. The wide demographic and partisan differences evident in responses to the forced-choice question are also seen on the new measure, with Republicans, older adults and white evangelical Protestants among the most likely to be highly sympathetic toward Israel, while expressing little sympathy for the Palestinians.

By contrast, many Democrats, particularly liberal Democrats, as well as young people and the religiously unaffiliated express at least some sympathy for both sides in the Middle East.

Liberal Democrats express similar levels of sympathy for Israel and the Palestinians: 20% of liberal Democrats say they sympathize with Israel a lot, while 45% say they have some sympathy for Israel; 19% of liberal Democrats have a lot of sympathy for the Palestinians and 45% have some sympathy. However, liberal Democrats are more likely to say they have no sympathy at all for the Palestinians (23%) than for Israel (14%). In July, when asked to choose between sympathizing more with Israel or the Palestinians, liberal Democrats backed Israel by a 39%-21% margin.

### When Asked to Choose, Public Sympathizes with Israel by Wide Margin

*In the dispute between Israel and the Palestinians, which side do you sympathize with more? (%)*



Survey conducted July 8-14, 2014. Trends from 1990 and earlier from Chicago Council on Foreign Relations.

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Conservative Republicans are far more likely to sympathize with Israel (63% a lot, 21% some) than with the Palestinians (4% a lot, 22% some). Nearly seven-in-ten (68%) say they have not much or no sympathy at all with the Palestinians, compared with just 12% who say this about Israel.

Among those under 30, 62% have a lot or some sympathy with Israel compared with 50% who have the same level of sympathy with the Palestinians. Among those 65 and older, sympathy with Israel surpasses that with the Palestinians by a 72%-40% margin.

White evangelical Protestants are deeply sympathetic toward Israel. About eight-in-ten (81%) say they sympathize with Israel, including 59% who say they have a lot of sympathy. Their views of the Palestinians are much cooler: 36% have at least some sympathy with them, while 61% have not much or none at all.

Among the religiously unaffiliated, roughly as many say they have at least some sympathy with Israel (61%) as with the Palestinians (57%).

### Liberal Democrats, the Religiously Unaffiliated Have Similar Levels of Sympathy for Israel, Palestinians

*In the dispute between Israel and the Palestinians, sympathize with ...*

	Israel			Palestinians		
	A lot %	Some %	Not much/ at all %	A lot %	Some %	Not much/ at all %
Total	34	32	27	11	35	47
White	40	30	24	10	35	48
Black	30	34	32	12	36	47
Hispanic	18	40	35	6	33	50
18-29	23	39	31	15	35	42
30-49	28	33	33	11	36	47
50-64	42	32	20	10	36	48
65+	46	26	22	8	32	53
Republican	53	24	16	4	25	64
Conservative	63	21	12	4	22	68
Moderate/Liberal	35	30	23	4	31	55
Independent	32	34	29	13	37	45
Democrat	22	40	31	13	44	37
Conserv/Moderate	24	38	32	9	44	43
Liberal	20	45	30	19	45	31
Protestant	43	28	23	6	33	55
White evangelical	59	22	16	5	31	61
White mainline	31	34	25	7	32	52
Black Protestant	30	34	32	12	40	45
Catholic	27	35	28	9	34	46
White Catholic	33	31	24	13	33	42
Unaffiliated	18	43	33	17	40	37

Survey conducted August 20-24, 2014. Don't know responses not shown.

Whites and blacks included only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race.

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## Sympathy with Israel, Palestinians Not Mutually Exclusive

The new survey shows that, for many, holding a sympathetic or unsympathetic view of one side does not translate into holding the opposite view of the other side. Overall, 37% say they have either a lot or some sympathy with both Israel and the Palestinians. Another 18% say they have not much or no sympathy at all for both sides.

However, a much larger share of the public sympathizes at least some with Israel and not with the Palestinians (29%) than sympathizes with the Palestinians and not with Israel (8%).

Among Republicans, roughly half (49%) sympathize with Israel and not with the Palestinians. About a quarter (26%) say they sympathize with both sides; very few say they sympathize only with the Palestinians (2%). Among conservative Republicans, 58% sympathize with Israel while expressing little or no sympathy for the Palestinians.

By contrast, a plurality of Democrats (43%) express sympathy for both Israel and the Palestinians. The shares siding only with Israel (19%) or only with the Palestinians (12%) are relatively modest. Half of liberal Democrats (50%) express sympathy for both sides in the Middle East.

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### Many Sympathize with Both Israel and the Palestinians

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Sympathize with both sides	37	26	43	40
Sympathize with Israel, not Palestinians	29	49	19	25
Sympathize with Palestinians, not Israel	8	2	12	9
Sympathize with neither side	18	14	18	20
Other/DK	8	9	8	6
	100	100	100	100

Survey conducted August 20-24, 2014. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding. "Sympathize" includes those with a lot or some sympathy; "not sympathize" includes those with not much or no sympathy at all.

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## Views of Obama's Handling of Middle East Situation

About half (49%) of the public says Obama is striking about the right balance in dealing with the situation in the Middle East, while 22% say he is favoring the Palestinians too much and 13% think he is favoring Israel too much.

Views are little changed since the question was last asked in late April.

As in April, there are wide opinion gaps on this question across party lines. A 45%-plurality of Republicans say Obama is favoring the Palestinians too much. Among conservative Republicans, as many as 55% take this view.

By contrast, most Democrats (71%) say Obama is striking the right balance in dealing with the situation in the Middle East.

### Partisan Divides in Views of Obama's Handling of the Situation in the Middle East

*Thinking about the situation in the Middle East, Barack Obama is ...*

	Favoring Israel too much	Favoring Palestinians too much	Striking right balance	DK
	%	%	%	%
Total	13	22	49	16=100
Republican	10	45	32	14=100
Conservative	8	55	25	12=100
Moderate/Liberal	12	26	46	16=100
Independent	17	22	45	17=100
Democrat	12	6	71	11=100
Conservative/Moderate	6	11	75	8=100
Liberal	21	1	70	9=100
Protestant	8	28	48	16=100
White evangelical	5	42	37	17=100
White mainline	15	24	46	15=100
Black Protestant	4	8	79	8=100
Catholic	13	21	47	18=100
White Catholic	12	27	45	16=100
Unaffiliated	19	10	56	15=100

Survey conducted August 20-24, 2014. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

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## Can Israel and Independent Palestinian State Peacefully Coexist?

The public remains divided over whether or not a way can be found for Israel and an independent Palestinian state to coexist peacefully: 43% say they think this can happen, while 48% do not think so.

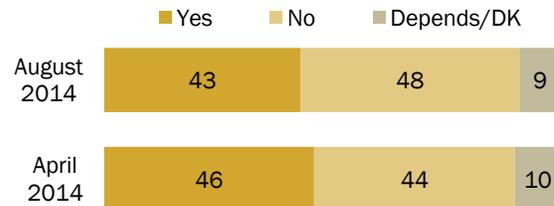
In April, 46% thought a two-state solution in the Middle East could work, while 44% disagreed.

Among those under 30, 53% think an independent Palestinians state can peacefully exist alongside Israel, compared with 42% who do not believe this can happen. Opinion is more negative among those 65 and older: by a 53%-34% margin, more say they don't think a peaceful two-state solution can be achieved than say it can be.

Across partisan groups, 60% of conservative Republicans say they are doubtful about the prospects for a two-state solution, while 36% think this can be achieved. Among liberal Democrats, a slim majority (55%) thinks a way can be found for an independent Palestinian state to peacefully coexist with Israel; 40% do not think this can happen.

### Fighting Has Limited Impact on Views of Prospects for Two-State Solution

*Can way be found for Israel and independent Palestinian state to coexist peacefully, or not? (%)*



Survey conducted August 20-24, 2014. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

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### Young Adults Among Most Optimistic about Potential for Two-State Solution

*Can way be found for Israel and independent Palestinian state to coexist peacefully, or not?*

	Yes %	No %	Depends/DK %
Total	43	48	9=100
18-29	53	42	5=100
30-49	47	44	9=100
50-64	38	54	8=100
65+	34	53	13=100
Republican	38	56	6=100
Conservative	36	60	4=100
Moderate/Liberal	41	48	11=100
Independent	43	50	7=100
Democrat	49	42	9=100
Conservative/Moderate	47	44	10=100
Liberal	55	40	5=100

Survey conducted August 20-24, 2014. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding. Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race

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## About the Survey

The analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted August 20-24, 2014 among a national sample of 1,501 adults, 18 years of age or older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia (600 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 901 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 487 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted under the direction of Abt SRBI. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see <http://people-press.org/methodology/>

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and nativity and region to parameters from the 2012 Census Bureau's American Community Survey and population density to parameters from the Decennial Census. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status (landline only, cell phone only, or both landline and cell phone), based on extrapolations from the 2013 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size among respondents with a landline phone. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting.

The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Unweighted sample size</b>	<b>Plus or minus ...</b>
Total sample	1,501	2.9 percentage points
Republican	382	5.8 percentage points
Democrat	473	5.2 percentage points
Independent	534	4.9 percentage points
Protestant	706	4.3 percentage points
White evangelical	303	6.5 percentage points
White mainline	218	7.7 percentage points
Black Protestant	111	10.7 percentage points
Catholic	289	6.6 percentage points
White Catholic	203	7.9 percentage points
Unaffiliated	318	6.3 percentage points
18-29 years old	236	7.4 percentage points
30-49	412	5.6 percentage points
50-64	422	5.5 percentage points
65+	405	5.6 percentage points

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

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

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS**  
**AUGUST 2014 POLITICAL SURVEY**  
**FINAL TOPLINE**  
**August 20-24, 2014**  
**N=1,501**

**QUESTIONS 1-3, 13a-b, 13d-f, 14, 30-36, 38, 40, 49-50, 52, 54 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**  
**NO QUESTIONS 4-12, 15-20, 23, 26-29, 37, 39, 41-48, 51, 53, 55-59**  
**QUESTIONS 13c, THOUGHT, 21-22, 24-25 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.60 In the dispute between Israel and the Palestinians, how much do you sympathize with **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE]**? A lot, some, not much, or not at all? And how much do you sympathize with **[NEXT ITEM]**? A lot, some, not much, or not at all?

		<u>A lot</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Not much</u>	<u>Not at all</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>
a.	Israel Aug 20-24, 2014	34	32	15	12	7
b.	The Palestinians Aug 20-24, 2014	11	35	20	27	7

**NO QUESTION 61****ASK ALL:**

Q.62 Thinking about the situation in the Middle East these days, do you think Barack Obama is **[RANDOMIZE: favoring Israel too much; favoring the Palestinians too much]** or striking about the right balance?<sup>1</sup>

	<u>Favoring Israel</u> <u>too much</u>	<u>Favoring the</u> <u>Palestinians too much</u>	<u>Striking about</u> <u>the right balance</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>
Aug 20-24, 2014	13	22	49	16
Apr 23-27, 2014	9	22	45	24
Mar 13-17, 2013	9	21	41	29
May 25-30, 2011	6	21	50	24
Apr 21-26, 2010	7	21	47	25
Oct 28-Nov 8, 2009	7	16	51	26
Jun 10-14, 2009	6	17	65	14

**ASK ALL:**

Q.63 Do you think a way can be found for Israel and an independent Palestinian state to coexist peacefully with each other, or not?

Aug 20-24 <u>2014</u>		Apr 23-27 <u>2014</u>	(GA) Spring <u>2013</u>
43	Yes	46	50
48	No	44	41
2	It depends <b>(VOL.)</b>	1	*
7	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>	9	9

**NO QUESTIONS 64-65, 67-68, 71-76, 78-84, 87-89**  
**QUESTIONS 85-86, 90-91 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**  
**QUESTIONS 66, 69-70, 77 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

<sup>1</sup> Data from September 2011 not shown because of differences in questionnaire context.

**ASK ALL:**

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

**ASK IF INDEP/NO PREF/OTHER/DK/REF (PARTY=3,4,5,9):**

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	(VOL.) No preference	(VOL.) Other party	(VOL.) DK/Ref	Lean Rep	Lean Dem
Aug 20-24, 2014	24	31	37	4	1	4	15	16
Jul 8-14, 2014	25	34	37	2	1	1	16	15
Apr 23-27, 2014	24	30	41	2	1	2	18	17
Jan 23-Mar 16, 2014	22	31	41	3	1	2	17	17
Feb 14-23, 2014	22	32	39	4	1	2	14	17
Jan 15-19, 2014	21	31	41	3	1	2	18	16
Dec 3-8, 2013	24	34	37	3	*	2	17	15
Oct 30-Nov 6, 2013	24	32	38	4	*	2	16	14
Oct 9-13, 2013	25	32	37	3	1	3	16	18
Sep 4-8, 2013	26	32	38	3	1	1	17	15
Jul 17-21, 2013	19	29	46	3	*	2	19	18
<b>Yearly Totals</b>								
2013	23.9	32.1	38.3	2.9	.5	2.2	16.0	16.0
2012	24.7	32.6	36.4	3.1	.5	2.7	14.4	16.1
2011	24.3	32.3	37.4	3.1	.4	2.5	15.7	15.6
2010	25.2	32.7	35.2	3.6	.4	2.8	14.5	14.1
2009	23.9	34.4	35.1	3.4	.4	2.8	13.1	15.7
2008	25.7	36.0	31.5	3.6	.3	3.0	10.6	15.2
2007	25.3	32.9	34.1	4.3	.4	2.9	10.9	17.0
2006	27.8	33.1	30.9	4.4	.3	3.4	10.5	15.1
2005	29.3	32.8	30.2	4.5	.3	2.8	10.3	14.9
2004	30.0	33.5	29.5	3.8	.4	3.0	11.7	13.4
2003	30.3	31.5	30.5	4.8	.5	2.5	12.0	12.6
2002	30.4	31.4	29.8	5.0	.7	2.7	12.4	11.6
2001	29.0	33.2	29.5	5.2	.6	2.6	11.9	11.6
2001 Post-Sept 11	30.9	31.8	27.9	5.2	.6	3.6	11.7	9.4
2001 Pre-Sept 11	27.3	34.4	30.9	5.1	.6	1.7	12.1	13.5
2000	28.0	33.4	29.1	5.5	.5	3.6	11.6	11.7
1999	26.6	33.5	33.7	3.9	.5	1.9	13.0	14.5
1998	27.9	33.7	31.1	4.6	.4	2.3	11.6	13.1
1997	28.0	33.4	32.0	4.0	.4	2.3	12.2	14.1
1996	28.9	33.9	31.8	3.0	.4	2.0	12.1	14.9
1995	31.6	30.0	33.7	2.4	.6	1.3	15.1	13.5
1994	30.1	31.5	33.5	1.3	--	3.6	13.7	12.2
1993	27.4	33.6	34.2	4.4	1.5	2.9	11.5	14.9
1992	27.6	33.7	34.7	1.5	0	2.5	12.6	16.5
1991	30.9	31.4	33.2	0	1.4	3.0	14.7	10.8
1990	30.9	33.2	29.3	1.2	1.9	3.4	12.4	11.3
1989	33	33	34	--	--	--	--	--
1987	26	35	39	--	--	--	--	--

**ASK REPUBLICANS AND REPUBLICAN LEANERS ONLY (PARTY=1 OR PARTYLN=1):**

TEAPARTY3 From what you know, do you agree or disagree with the Tea Party movement, or don't you have an opinion either way?

**BASED ON REPUBLICANS AND REPUBLICAN LEANERS [N=608]**

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>No opinion either way</u>	<u>(VOL.) Haven't heard of</u>	<u>(VOL.) Refused</u>	<u>Not heard of/ DK</u>
Aug 20-24, 2014	34	10	53	*	2	--
Jul 8-14, 2014	35	12	50	2	1	--
Apr 23-27, 2014	33	11	54	1	1	--
Jan 23-Mar 16, 2014	37	11	50	1	1	--
Feb 14-23, 2014	36	9	54	1	1	--
Jan 15-19, 2014	35	12	52	1	*	--
Dec 3-8, 2013	32	9	57	1	1	--
Oct 30-Nov 6, 2013	40	9	48	2	1	--
Oct 9-13, 2013	41	11	45	2	1	--
Sep 4-8, 2013	35	9	54	1	1	--
Jul 17-21, 2013	37	10	50	2	1	--
Jun 12-16, 2013	44	9	46	1	2	--
May 23-26, 2013	41	7	48	1	3	--
May 1-5, 2013	28	8	61	2	1	--
Mar 13-17, 2013	43	7	47	1	1	--
Feb 13-18, 2013	36	9	52	1	3	--
Feb 14-17, 2013	43	9	45	1	2	--
Jan 9-13, 2013	35	10	51	2	2	--
Dec 5-9, 2012	37	11	51	1	*	--
Oct 31-Nov 3, 2012 (RVs)	40	8	49	1	2	--
Oct 4-7, 2012	38	9	50	1	3	--
Sep 12-16, 2012	39	7	52	1	1	--
Jun 28-Jul 9, 2012	40	9	47	2	1	--
Jun 7-17, 2012	42	8	48	1	1	--
May 9-Jun 3, 2012	36	9	53	1	2	--
Apr 4-15, 2012	42	8	48	1	1	--
Mar 7-11, 2012	38	10	49	2	1	--
Feb 8-12, 2012	40	7	51	1	1	--
Jan 11-16, 2012	42	8	47	1	1	--
Jan 4-8, 2012	37	8	52	1	1	--
Dec 7-11, 2011	40	9	48	2	1	--
Nov 9-14, 2011	41	9	49	*	1	--
Nov 9-14, 2011	41	9	49	*	1	--
Sep 22-Oct 4, 2011	37	11	51	1	1	--
Aug 17-21, 2011	43	7	49	*	1	--
Jul 20-24, 2011	40	7	51	*	1	--
Jun 15-19, 2011	42	9	47	1	1	--
May 25-30, 2011	37	7	52	1	3	--
Mar 30-Apr 3, 2011	45	9	46	*	1	--
Mar 8-14, 2011	37	7	54	1	*	--
Feb 22-Mar 1, 2011	41	9	48	1	1	--
Feb 2-7, 2011 <sup>2</sup>	43	8	47	1	1	--
Jan 5-9, 2011	45	6	47	1	1	--
Dec 1-5, 2010	48	5	45	1	1	--
Nov 4-7, 2010	51	5	42	1	1	--
Oct 27-30, 2010 (RVs)	58	5	27	--	1	9
Oct 13-18, 2010 (RVs)	54	5	30	--	1	10

<sup>2</sup> In the February 2-7, 2011, survey and before, question read "...do you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the Tea Party movement..." In October 2010 and earlier, question was asked only of those who had heard or read a lot or a little about the Tea Party. In May 2010 through October 2010, it was described as: "the Tea Party movement that has been involved in campaigns and protests in the U.S. over the past year." In March 2010 it was described as "the Tea Party protests that have taken place in the U.S. over the past year."

**TEAPARTY3 CONTINUED...**

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>No opinion either way</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>Haven't heard of</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>Refused</u>	Not heard of/ <u>DK</u>
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010 (RVs)	56	6	29	--	*	9
Jul 21-Aug 5, 2010	46	5	36	--	1	13
Jun 16-20, 2010	46	5	30	--	*	19
May 20-23, 2010	53	4	25	--	1	16
Mar 11-21, 2010	48	4	26	--	1	2

**Key to Pew Research trends noted in the topline:**

(GA)

Pew Research Center Global Attitudes Project