



**THE PEW RESEARCH CENTER**  
For The People & The Press

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
**Thursday, March 15, 2012**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:**  
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## Fewer Give Press Good Marks for Coverage Campaign Interest Comparable to Most Previous Elections, Well Below 2008

The presidential campaign again proved to be the top story for the public and the media last week. Overall public interest is comparable to most previous primary election cycles, but well below the high mark set four years ago.

Last week, which included Super Tuesday contests in 10 states, 28% say they followed election news very closely, according to the latest weekly News Interest Index survey, conducted March 8-11 among 1,005 adults by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press.

Similar to current results, in February 2004 about three-in-ten (29%) said they followed news about the presidential candidates very

closely. In March 2000 and March 1996, about a quarter in each survey (26%) said they were following campaign news this closely shortly after Super Tuesday voting.

Still, interest and coverage were far below the week of Super Tuesday primaries in 2008, when 39% said they followed election news very closely. That year, both parties had

### Comparing News Interest After Super Tuesday

<i>Following news about candidates for president...</i>	<b>Mar 1992</b>	<b>Mar 1996</b>	<b>Mar 2000</b>	<b>Feb 2004</b>	<b>Feb 2008</b>	<b>Mar 2012</b>
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very closely	35	26	26	29	39	28
Fairly closely	40	41	41	37	37	27
Not too closely	16	20	19	20	15	21
Not closely at all	9	13	13	13	9	23
Don't know	*	*	1	1	0	*
	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>% following news about candidates very closely...</i>	%	%	%	%	%	%
Republicans	26	38	31	22	44	37
Democrats	47	22	24	42	47	28
Independents	32	19	24	25	29	26

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 8-11, 2012. Dates for news interest correspond with surveys conducted immediately following Super Tuesday for each presidential election year. Numbers may not add to 100% because of rounding.

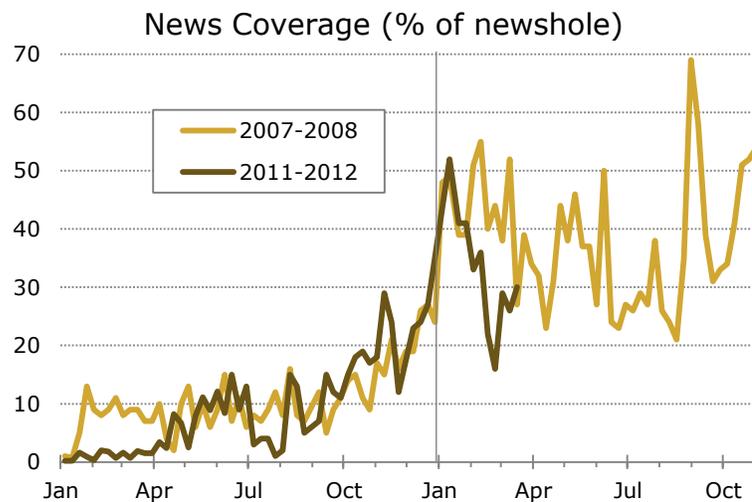
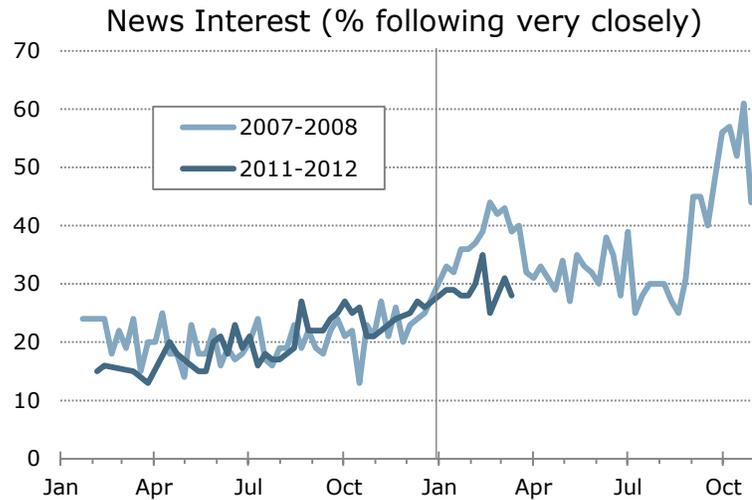
contested races, including the high-profile fight between Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton for the Democratic nomination; 24 states voted on Feb. 5, 2008, that campaign's Super Tuesday.

Coverage also was greater four years ago. Last week, election news accounted for 30% of coverage, according to the Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism (PEJ). The week of Super Tuesday in 2008, campaign coverage accounted for 55% of the newshole.

In early 2008, Democrats tracked election news following Super Tuesday much more closely than they did this year (47% very closely vs. 28% now). With only the GOP engaged in a primary fight this year, Republican interest stands about where it was four years ago (44% very closely in 2008 vs. 37% today). The same is true for independents (29% then, 26% now).

Understandably, the party without a primary contest generally follows a campaign less closely than the one that

## Comparing Campaign Interest and Coverage



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar 8-11, 2012.

does at this point. In February 2004, when Democrats were choosing a candidate to challenge George W. Bush, Democrats (42%) were much more likely than Republicans (22%) or independents (25%) to say they were following campaign news very closely.

In March 1996, when Bill Clinton was running for reelection, the reverse was the case. At that point, Republicans (38%) were more likely to say they were following news about the candidates very closely than were Democrats (22%) or independents (19%).

Throughout much of 2011, interest in campaign coverage was comparable to interest in 2007. Interest rose steadily in early 2008 as the public and the media focused on the Clinton-Obama fight.

In the current campaign, 23% say they did not follow news about the candidates at all closely last week, a number higher than similar points in previous campaigns going back to 1992. That includes 22% of Democrats, 23% of independents and 15% of Republicans.

## Mixed Ratings for Primary Campaign Coverage

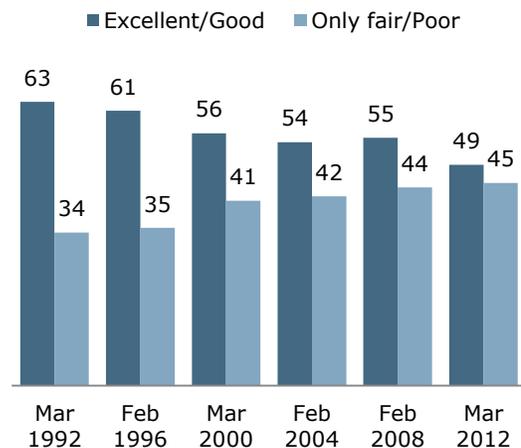
The public has become increasingly critical of news organizations' campaign coverage over the past two decades. Currently, about half (49%) rate media coverage of the campaign as excellent or good while about as many (45%) rate it as only fair or poor.

Four years ago, the balance tilted positive. More than half (55%) rated coverage as excellent or good just after Super Tuesday; 44% said it was only fair or poor. The positive numbers have edged downwards across partisan lines. At a comparable point in the 1992 campaign, 63% rated press coverage as excellent or good, while 34% said it was only fair or poor.

Just as they did four years ago, Republicans offer the most negative assessments of campaign coverage: 55% rate the job being done by news organizations as only fair or poor, while 42% say it has been excellent or good. About a third of Democrats (35%) give the coverage a negative rating; about six-in-ten (59%) are more positive. Independents are divided (49% say excellent or good; 46% say only fair or poor).

In 2008, 52% of Republicans said the job the press was doing covering the campaign was only fair or poor, while 46% said the coverage was excellent or good. Democrats were much more praising: 66% rated the coverage as excellent or good; 33% rated it only fair or poor. Among independents, 53% offered a positive rating and 46% a negative one.

### Job Press Has Done Covering the Campaign So Far



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 7-11, 2012. Q22.

### Most Republicans Give Negative Rating to Campaign Coverage

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
<b>March 2012</b>	%	%	%	%
Excellent/Good	49	42	59	49
Only fair/Poor	45	55	35	46
Don't know	5	4	6	5
	100	100	100	100
<b>Feb 2008</b>				
Excellent/Good	55	46	66	53
Only fair/Poor	44	52	33	46
Don't know	1	2	1	*
	100	100	100	100

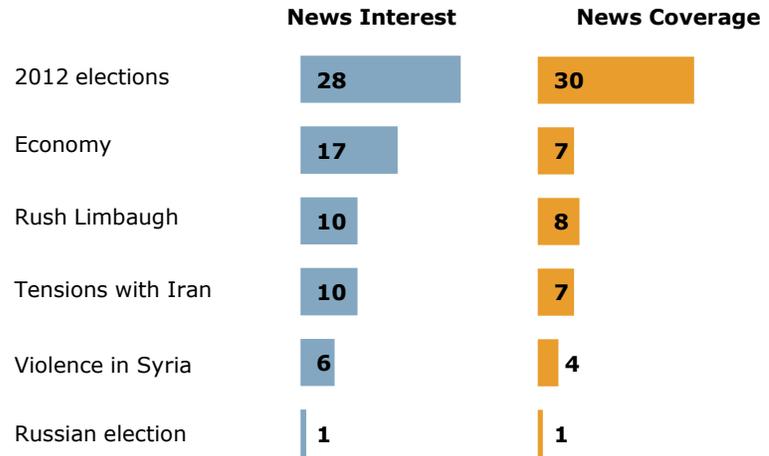
PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 7-11, 2012. Q22. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

## The Week's News

While the presidential campaign topped the public's news interest and media coverage, Americans also continued to closely track news about the nation's economy.

Nearly two-in-ten (17%) say they followed news about the condition of the economy most closely. Economic news made up 7% of coverage. Just under four-in-ten (37%) say they followed news about the economy very closely, a level of interest that has shifted only slightly since the start of the year.

### News Interest vs. News Coverage



News interest shows the percentage of people who say they followed this story most closely, Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, March 8-11, 2012. News coverage shows the percentage of news coverage devoted to each story, Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism, March 5-11, 2012.

One-in-ten (10%) say their top story was the controversy over Rush Limbaugh's crude comments about a woman who advocates requiring health care coverage for contraceptives, even for workers at certain religiously affiliated institutions. Twice as many women than men say this was their top story (14% vs. 7%), though men and women are about equally likely to say they followed this news very closely. Overall, 20% followed this story very closely.

Limbaugh's comments and the controversy that followed came in the context of the ongoing debate over requirements for birth control coverage in the 2010 federal health care reform law. Though the overall health care debate accounted for 10% of coverage last week, most of that dealt with the fight over Limbaugh's comments about Sandra Fluke, the Georgetown law student who had testified before a congressional panel. According to PEJ, the back and forth over Limbaugh – including President Obama's comments – accounted for 8% of the week's coverage.

One-in-ten (10%) say their top story was news about the international tensions over Iran's nuclear program; 25% say they followed this news very closely. News about Iran's

nuclear program -- and concerns raised by the U.S. and Israel -- accounted for 7% of coverage.

Two other foreign stories attracted modest interest. Fewer than two-in-ten (17%) say they followed news about the political violence in Syria very closely; 6% say this was their top story. News about the ongoing violence in Syria made up 4% of coverage.

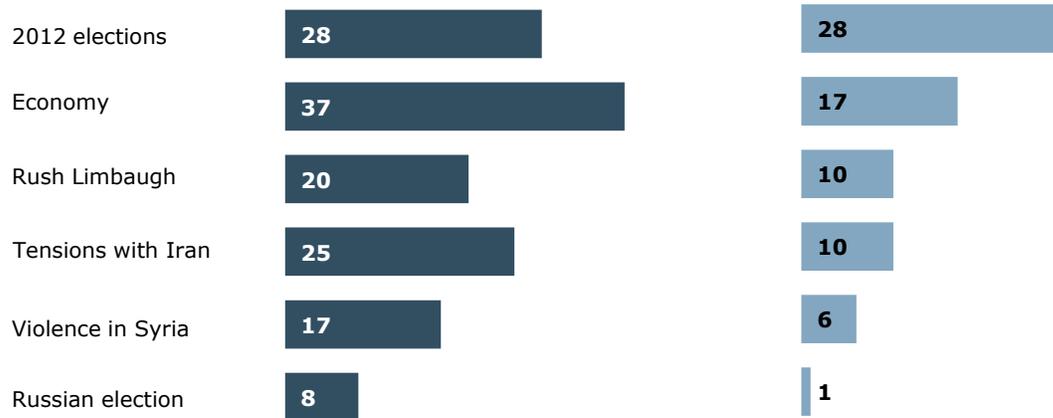
About one-in-ten (8%) very closely followed reports about the Russian elections and protests about their validity; 1% says this was the news they followed most closely. News about the elections made up 1% of coverage.

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## News Interest

*% following each story very closely...*

*Which one story did you follow most closely?*



PEW RESEARCH CENTER March 8-11, 2012.

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These findings are based on the most recent installment of the weekly News Interest Index, an ongoing project of the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. The index, building on the Center's longstanding research into public attentiveness to major news stories, examines news interest as it relates to the news media's coverage. The weekly survey is conducted in conjunction with The Project for Excellence in Journalism's News Coverage Index, which monitors the news reported by major newspaper, television, radio and online news outlets on an ongoing basis. In the most recent week, data relating to news coverage were collected March 5-11, and survey data measuring public interest in the top news stories of the week were collected March 8-11, 2012 from a nationally representative sample of 1,005 adults. This report also includes material from a March 7-11 survey among 1,503 adults.

## About the News Interest Index

The *News Interest Index* is a weekly survey conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press aimed at gauging the public's interest in and reaction to major news events. This project has been undertaken in conjunction with the Project for Excellence in Journalism's *News Coverage Index*, an ongoing content analysis of the news. The News Coverage Index catalogues the news from top news organizations across five major sectors of the media: newspapers, network television, cable television, radio and the internet. Each week (from Monday through Sunday) PEJ compiles this data to identify the top stories for the week. (For more information about the Project for Excellence in Journalism's News Coverage Index, go to [www.journalism.org](http://www.journalism.org).) The News Interest Index survey collects data from Thursday through Sunday to gauge public interest in the most covered stories of the week.

Results for this survey are based on telephone interviews conducted March 8-11, 2012, among a national sample of 1,005 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (602 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 403 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 199 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older.

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

<b>Group</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Plus or minus ...</b>
Total sample	1,005	4.0 percentage points
Republicans	242	7.5 percentage points
Democrats	307	6.5 percentage points
Independents	360	6.0 percentage points

Some of the analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted March 7-11, 2012, among a national sample of 1,503 adults, 18 years of age or older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia (900 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 603 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 310 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews

were conducted in English 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 March 2011 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey and population density to parameters from the Decennial Census. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status and relative usage of landline and cell phones (for those with both), based on extrapolations from the 2011 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size within the landline sample. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. The following table shows the sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Plus or minus...</b>
Total sample	1,503	3.0 percentage points
Republicans	412	6.0 percentage points
Democrats	518	5.0 percentage points
Independents	507	5.5 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**  
**MARCH 8-11, 2012 NEWS INTEREST INDEX**  
**FINAL TOPLINE**  
**N=1,005**

**ASK ALL:**

PEW.1 As I read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past week, please tell me if you happened to follow each news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. First, **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE;] [IF NECESSARY "Did you follow [ITEM] very closely, fairly closely, not too closely or not at all closely?"]**

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.) DK/Ref</b>
a. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy					
March 8-11, 2012	37	32	14	17	*
March 1-4, 2012	41	27	15	17	1
February 23-26, 2012	37	33	14	15	1
February 16-20, 2012	33	32	16	17	1
February 9-12, 2012	42	30	14	13	1
February 2-5, 2012	38	32	16	13	1
January 26-29, 2012	35	31	16	19	*
January 19-22, 2012	35	30	16	19	1
January 12-15, 2012	33	32	14	20	1
January 5-8, 2012	39	31	15	15	*
December 15-18, 2011	36	32	14	16	1
December 8-11, 2011	41	29	13	16	1
December 1-4, 2011	40	33	13	13	1
November 17-20, 2011	35	33	16	15	1
November 10-13, 2011	39	31	15	14	*
November 3-6, 2011	37	31	15	17	1
October 27-30, 2011	38	33	14	15	1
October 20-23, 2011	38	32	14	16	1
October 13-16, 2011	39	32	14	14	*
October 6-9, 2011	43	28	14	14	1
September 29-October 2, 2011	46	26	14	14	*
September 22-25, 2011	44	33	11	11	*
September 8-11, 2011	40	30	15	14	1
September 1-4, 2011	44	30	11	15	*
August 25-28, 2011	44	28	14	13	1
August 18-21, 2011	44	29	12	14	1
August 4-7, 2011	46	30	11	13	1
July 28-31, 2011	43	30	13	13	*
July 21-24, 2011	41	32	13	13	1
July 14-17, 2011	41	30	14	14	1
July 7-10, 2011	36	30	15	18	1
June 30-July 3, 2011	38	32	13	16	1
June 23-26, 2011	37	29	15	19	*
June 16-19, 2011	39	33	14	13	*
June 9-12, 2011	39	30	15	16	1
June 2-5, 2011	35	34	17	14	*
May 19-22, 2011	33	34	17	16	*
May 12-15, 2011	32	32	17	18	2
May 5-8, 2011	40	35	15	9	1
April 21-25, 2011	41	33	12	14	*
April 14-17, 2011	44	30	14	12	1
April 7-10, 2011	46	30	14	10	*
March 31-April 3, 2011	42	31	16	11	0
March 24-27, 2011	36	32	17	15	*
March 17-20, 2011	38	32	17	13	*
March 10-13, 2011	40	30	16	13	*
March 3-6, 2011	37	31	17	13	1

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	Very <u>closely</u>	Fairly <u>closely</u>	Not too <u>closely</u>	Not at all <u>closely</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
February 24-27, 2011	49	29	11	10	*
February 17-20, 2011	35	33	14	17	*
February 10-13, 2011	36	34	13	16	*
February 3-6, 2011	35	37	14	14	*
January 20-23, 2011	37	33	14	15	1
January 13-16, 2011	37	29	15	18	1
January 6-9, 2011	39	37	11	12	1
<a href="http://www.people-press.org/files/2011/11/NII-Economy-Trends.pdf">SEE TRENDS FOR PREVIOUS YEARS:</a> <a href="http://www.people-press.org/files/2011/11/NII-Economy-Trends.pdf">http://www.people-press.org/files/2011/11/NII-Economy-Trends.pdf</a>					
b. Rush Limbaugh using crude language to criticize a woman who favors requiring health insurance to cover birth control					
March 8-11, 2012	20	20	22	37	1
<b>TREND FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
March 6-9, 2009: <i>Debate over Rush Limbaugh's influence over the Republican Party</i>	15	19	23	43	*
c. Political violence in Syria					
March 8-11, 2012	17	23	23	37	1
February 23-26, 2012	18	24	21	35	1
February 9-12, 2012	17	23	23	36	*
January 12-15, 2012	12	17	26	45	1
<b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
August 4-7, 2011: <i>Political violence following uprisings in Syria</i>	10	19	26	44	1
May 5-8, 2011	14	27	30	28	1
June 2-5, 2011: <i>Anti-government protests and violence in some Middle Eastern countries</i>	18	25	25	32	*
April 28-May 1, 2011	18	29	25	27	1
February 3-6, 2011: <i>Anti-government protests in Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries</i>	32	35	16	18	*
January 27-30, 2011	17	26	21	35	*
d. International tensions over Iran's nuclear program					
March 8-11, 2012	25	27	18	30	1
February 16-20, 2012	21	25	21	32	1
<b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
February 9-12, 2012: <i>Tension between Iran and Israel over Iran's nuclear program</i>	26	25	21	29	*
January 12-15, 2012: <i>Mounting tensions between the U.S. and Iran</i>	24	30	18	27	*
January 5-8, 2012: <i>Tensions between the U.S. and Iran over shipping in the Persian Gulf</i>	23	26	19	32	*
December 1-4, 2011: <i>Tensions between Britain and Iran following an attack on the British embassy by Iranian protestors</i>	12	19	24	44	1
June 10-13, 2010: <i>New U.N. sanctions against Iran because of its nuclear program</i>	19	28	25	27	1
March 26-29, 2010: <i>Reports about tensions between Israel and the United States</i>	20	27	21	31	1
October 2-5, 2009: <i>Talks between the United States and Iran over Iran's nuclear program</i>	30	32	18	20	*

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	Very closely	Fairly closely	Not too closely	Not at all closely	(VOL.) DK/Ref
May 21-24, 2009: <i>Iran testing a missile that could reach Israel</i>	20	29	25	26	*
July 11-14, 2008: <i>The Iranian government firing test missiles capable of striking Israel</i>	25	29	22	23	1
January 11-14, 2008: <i>News about an encounter between U.S. and Iranian ships</i>	25	26	21	27	1
December 7-10, 2007: <i>A new intelligence report stating that Iran stopped its nuclear weapons program in 2003</i>	25	31	20	23	1
October 26-29, 2007: <i>Mounting tensions between the United States and Iran</i>	26	34	21	18	1
September 28 – October 1, 2007: <i>Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's recent trip to New York City where he spoke at Columbia University and the United Nations</i>	23	31	20	25	1
June 1-4, 2007: <i>Recent talks between the United States and Iran</i>	19	27	27	26	1
February 23-26, 2007: <i>Mounting tensions between the United States and Iran</i>	29	37	18	15	1
September, 2006: <i>Iran's nuclear research program</i>	23	34	19	23	1
August, 2006	24	34	20	20	3
June, 2006	21	32	22	22	3
April, 2006	26	30	23	20	1
March, 2006	24	31	22	22	1
e. Russia's presidential election and related protests					
March 8-11, 2012	8	17	27	48	1
<b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
December 15-18, 2011: <i>Political protests in Russia</i>	6	12	24	57	1
March 7-10, 2008: <i>The election of a new president in Russia</i>	7	18	23	51	1
December 7-10, 2007: <i>Recent parliamentary elections in Russia</i>	5	14	22	58	1
January 2000: <i>The resignation of Russian President Boris Yeltsin</i>	11	32	33	22	2
September 1999: <i>Political instability in Russia</i>	9	23	34	33	1
September 1998: <i>Economic and political instability in Russia</i>	18	30	28	24	*
Late August 1998: <i>Economic problems in Russia</i>	8	22	29	41	*
July 1996: <i>The Russian presidential elections</i>	7	25	31	37	*
January 1994: <i>The Russian elections</i>	11	32	31	26	*
October 1993: <i>Boris Yeltsin's conflict with the Russian parliament</i>	19	36	24	20	1
September 1993: <i>Boris Yeltsin's decision to dissolve the Russian parliament</i>	18	32	27	22	1
September 1993: <i>The political and economic changes going on in Russia</i>	12	36	29	22	*
April 1993: <i>The voter referendum in Russia</i>	10	20	36	32	2
January 1992: <i>Mikhail Gorbachev's resignation as the Soviet Union came to an official end</i>	31	42	20	7	*

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.) DK/Ref</b>
December 1991: <i>The end of Mikhail Gorbachev's rule, as a new commonwealth was formed to replace the Soviet Union</i>	30	36	19	15	*
October 1991: <i>The breakup of the Soviet Union following the failed coup to depose Mikhail Gorbachev</i>	47	32	12	8	1
July 1991: <i>Russian President Boris Yeltsin's election victory and visit to the U.S.</i>	12	28	33	26	1
f. News about candidates for the 2012 presidential elections					
March 8-11, 2012	28	27	21	23	*
March 1-4, 2012	31	24	20	24	1
February 23-26, 2012	28	29	18	24	1
February 16-20, 2012	25	29	19	25	2
February 9-12, 2012	35	25	18	20	1
February 2-5, 2012	30	27	20	21	1
January 26-29, 2012	28	30	21	21	1
January 19-22, 2012	28	30	17	24	*
January 12-15, 2012	29	29	18	23	1
January 5-8, 2012	29	30	16	25	*
December 15-18, 2011	26	24	20	29	1
December 8-11, 2011	27	27	18	28	*
December 1-4, 2011	25	28	20	26	1
November 17-20, 2011	24	31	21	23	1
November 3-6, 2011	22	31	20	26	1
October 27-30, 2011	21	26	21	30	1
October 20-23, 2011	21	28	22	28	1
October 13-16, 2011	26	29	22	23	1
October 6-9, 2011	25	25	23	27	1
September 29-October 2, 2011	27	26	21	25	*
September 22-25, 2011	25	26	23	25	1
September 15-18, 2011	24	28	21	27	1
September 8-11, 2011	22	26	21	31	*
September 1-4, 2011	22	23	22	32	1
August 25-28, 2011	22	22	22	33	1
August 18-21, 2011	27	26	19	28	1
August 11-14, 2011	19	24	20	36	1
August 4-7, 2011	18	21	22	37	1
July 28-31, 2011	17	27	21	35	1
July 21-24, 2011	17	22	28	32	*
July 14-17, 2011	18	26	27	28	1
July 7-10, 2011	16	23	27	33	1
June 30-July 3, 2011	21	28	24	25	2
June 23-26, 2011	19	26	24	31	*
June 16-19, 2011	23	29	23	25	*
June 9-12, 2011	18	30	22	30	1
June 2-5, 2011	21	31	22	26	*
May 26-29, 2011	20	27	24	28	*
May 19-22, 2011	15	27	24	32	1
May 12-15, 2011	15	22	26	35	1
May 5-8, 2011	16	24	27	32	1
April 21-25, 2011	18	26	23	32	1
April 14-17, 2011	20	23	29	27	1
March 24-27, 2011	13	19	26	41	1
March 10-13, 2011	15	21	26	38	0
February 10-13, 2011	16	19	24	40	*
February 3-6, 2011	15	20	23	42	*

[SEE TRENDS FOR PREVIOUS YEARS:](http://www.people-press.org/files/2011/11/NII-Election-Trends.pdf) <http://www.people-press.org/files/2011/11/NII-Election-Trends.pdf>

**ASK ALL:**

PEW.2 Which ONE of the stories I just mentioned have you followed most closely, or is there another story you've been following MORE closely? **[DO NOT READ LIST. ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE.]**

Mar 8-11

2012

28	News about candidates for the 2012 presidential elections
17	Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy
	Rush Limbaugh using crude language to criticize a woman who favors requiring
10	health insurance to cover birth control
10	International tensions over Iran's nuclear program
6	Political violence in Syria
1	Russia's presidential election and related protests
8	Some other story <b>(VOL.)</b>
19	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>

**PEW.3-PEW.4 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

**PEW.4-PEW.9 IN SEPARATE RELEASE**

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS**  
**MARCH 2012 POLITICAL SURVEY**  
**FINAL TOPLINE**  
**March 7-11, 2012**  
**N=1503**

**QUESTIONS 1-2, 4-6, 12-14, 18-21 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

**NO QUESTIONS 3, 7-11, 15-17**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.22 All in all, how would you rate the job news organizations have done in covering the presidential campaign so far: excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>
Mar 7-11, 2012	13	36	27	18	5
<b>2008 Election<sup>1</sup></b>					
Oct 17-20, 2008	14	38	24	22	2
Oct 10-13, 2008	11	42	24	21	2
May 30-Jun 2, 2008	9	34	34	20	3
Feb 8-11, 2008	11	44	27	17	1
Sep 28-Oct 1, 2007	6	35	32	21	6
<b>2004 Election</b>					
June, 2004	10	37	34	15	4
Early February, 2004	11	43	30	12	4
<b>2000 Election</b>					
June, 2000	7	41	38	10	4
March, 2000	10	46	32	9	3
February, 2000	13	50	25	7	5
<b>1996 Election</b>					
September, 1996	13	44	29	11	3
July, 1996	7	35	42	14	2
February, 1996	16	45	25	10	4
<b>1992 Election</b>					
September, 1992	12	45	27	11	5
May, 1992	10	44	33	10	3
March, 1992	12	51	28	6	3
February, 1992	11	45	32	7	5

**QUESTIONS 23-24, 27-30, 32-34, 38-39, 42, 55-56, 64-69, 72-75 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

**NO QUESTIONS 25-26, 31, 35-37, 40-41, 46-54, 57, 62-63, 70-71**

**QUESTIONS 43-45, 58-61, 76 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

<sup>1</sup> In 2008 and previous years, question asked about "the press."