

**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>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
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
SEE TRENDS FOR PREVIOUS YEARS: http://www.people-press.org/files/2011/11/NII-Economy-Trends.pdf					
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
TREND FOR COMPARISON:					
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
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
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
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
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
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
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>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
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 (VOL.)
19	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

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>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Mar 7-11, 2012	13	36	27	18	5
2008 Election¹					
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
2004 Election					
June, 2004	10	37	34	15	4
Early February, 2004	11	43	30	12	4
2000 Election					
June, 2000	7	41	38	10	4
March, 2000	10	46	32	9	3
February, 2000	13	50	25	7	5
1996 Election					
September, 1996	13	44	29	11	3
July, 1996	7	35	42	14	2
February, 1996	16	45	25	10	4
1992 Election					
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

¹ In 2008 and previous years, question asked about "the press."