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Obama Approval Continues to Show Party, Age, Race Gaps

Overall ratings remain stable near 50%

by Jeffrey M. Jones

PRINCETON, NJ -- President Barack Obama's approval ratings remain polarized by political party and race, and continue to show a significant gap between younger and older Americans.

Job Approval Ratings of Barack Obama, by Selected Subgroup

	Approval
Party	
Democrat	82%
Independent	47%
Republican	14%
Democrat-Republican gap	68 pct. pts.
Race	
White	43%
Black	89%
Black-white gap	46 pct. pts.
Age	
18 to 29 years	58%
39 to 49 years	50%
50 to 64 years	48%
65 years and older	43%
Young-old gap	15 pct. pts.

May 3-9, 2010, Gallup Daily tracking

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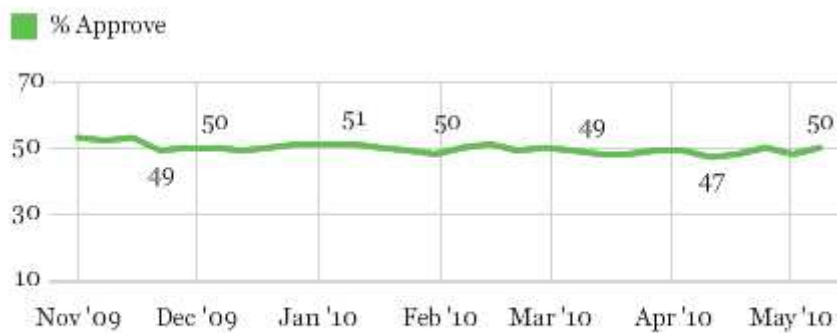
These party, race, and age gaps have been apparent throughout Obama's presidency.

- His first-year ratings were [the most polarized for a president in Gallup history](#), with an average 65-point gap between Republicans and Democrats. Obama's approval ratings have become slightly more polarized thus far in his second year in office, with an average 69-point gap between Democrats (83%) and Republicans (14%) since late January.
- Obama's approval ratings among non-Hispanic whites slid below the majority level in July 2009, and have not returned to that mark, [generally hovering around 40%](#) since mid-November. Meanwhile, his approval ratings among blacks have been stable throughout his presidency, right around 90%.
- Though the latest 58% weekly approval average among 18- to 29-year-olds is among the lowest Obama has registered to date, it remains his highest current rating among the four age groups and is significantly better than his rating among senior citizens. Older Americans last gave

Obama an approval rating above 50% last July. The gap in ratings between young adults and senior citizens has averaged 16 points during Obama's presidency.

More broadly, Obama's 50% approval average among all Americans for the week ending May 9 continues an extended run of stable ratings for him. Since mid-November, Obama's approval ratings have narrowly ranged between 47% and 51%.

Weekly Average Job Approval Ratings for Barack Obama



November 2009-May 2010 Gallup Daily tracking

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Thus, little Obama has done in recent months -- including his work to help pass landmark healthcare legislation -- and little that has happened recently on his watch have caused a significant, lasting shift in the way Americans evaluate the job he is doing as president.

Although his second-year ratings have been highly stable, he is on pace to follow most other presidents in [seeing a significant drop](#) from his first-year to his second-year average. Obama averaged 57% approval his first year in office -- mainly because his job approval scores during the initial months of his presidency were [in the 60% range](#) -- and has averaged 49% thus far in his second year.

Explore Obama's approval ratings in-depth and compare to past presidents in the [Gallup Presidential Job Approval Center](#).

Survey Methods

Results are based on telephone interviews with 3,578 national adults, aged 18 and older, conducted May 3-9, 2010, as part of Gallup Daily tracking. For results based on the total sample of national adults, one can say with 95% confidence that the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 2 percentage points.

Interviews are conducted with respondents on landline telephones and cellular phones.

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

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