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Chris Christie Story Attracts Little Public Interest

*Recent Opinions of New Jersey
Governor Are Largely Unchanged*

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
ON THIS REPORT:**

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Christie Story Attracts Little Public Interest

Recent Opinions of New Jersey Governor Are Largely Unchanged

The public paid far more attention to last week's cold snap than to the controversy swirling around New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie. There also has been little short-term change in opinions about Christie: 60% say their opinion of Christie has not changed in recent days, while 16% now view him less favorably and 6% more favorably.

The national survey by the Pew Research Center, conducted Jan. 9-12 among 1,006 adults finds that just 18% paid very close attention to Christie's apology on Jan. 9 for the highway lane closures ordered by his aides. By contrast, 44% very closely followed news about the cold winter weather that gripped much of the U.S. and 28% tracked news about the economy.

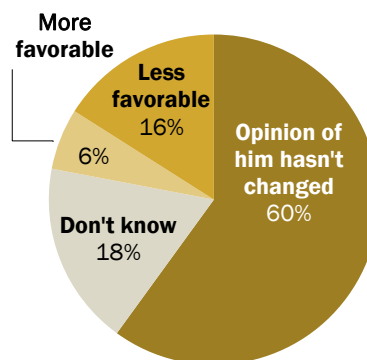
The release of a book by former Defense Secretary Robert Gates that criticized the Obama administration drew even less interest than news about Christie. Just 11% followed news about Gates' book very closely.

The survey finds that majorities of Republicans (69%), Democrats (55%) and independents (60%) say that their opinion of Christie has not changed lately. Among Republicans, about as many say their opinion has become more favorable (9%) as less favorable (10%).

More Democrats say their opinion has become less favorable (25%) than more favorable (3%). Among independents, 14% say their opinion of

Views of Chris Christie Largely Unchanged in Recent Days

In past few days, view of Chris Christie has become ...

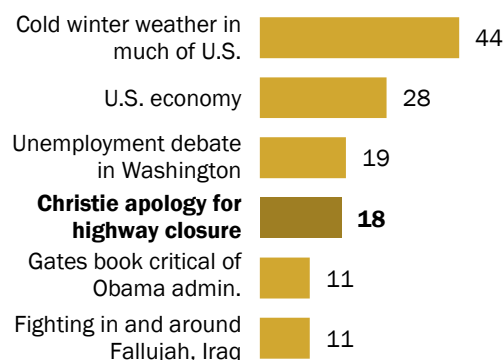


Survey conducted Jan. 9-12, 2014.

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Winter Weather Leads News Interest

% following each story 'very closely'



Survey conducted Jan. 9-12, 2014.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Christie has become less favorable and 6% more favorable.

Those who followed news about Christie's apology at least fairly closely are more likely to have changed their opinions about the New Jersey government in recent days. Nonetheless, 57% of those who tracked news about Christie say their opinion of him has not changed; 29% say it has become less favorable, while 11% say it has become more favorable.

Republicans are about as likely as Democrats to have followed the Christie story at least fairly closely last week (43% vs. 46%). Like Republicans overall, those who followed the story at least fairly closely are closely divided between those who are more favorable to Christie (18%) and less favorable (17%), with 62% saying their opinion hasn't changed.

Democrats who closely followed Christie's apology have come to have sharply less favorable opinions of Christie: 43% say their opinion is now less favorable, 3% more favorable, and half (50%) say their opinion hasn't changed.

More or Less Favorable Opinion of Christie over Last Few Days?

	All %	Rep %	Dem %	Ind %
More favorable	6	9	3	6
Less favorable	16	10	25	14
Opinion hasn't changed	60	69	55	60
Don't know	<u>18</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>20</u>
	100	100	100	100

Among those following story 'very' or 'fairly' closely

More favorable	11	18	3	13
Less favorable	29	17	43	25
Opinion hasn't changed	57	62	50	59
Don't know	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>
	100	100	100	100

Very/fairly closely N 460 135 154 149

Survey conducted Jan. 9-12, 2014. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

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This Week's News

The most closely followed story of the week was the cold winter weather that swept much of the country. About three-quarters of the public followed the news very closely (44%) or fairly closely (32%). Attention was lowest in the West, where 28% paid very close attention to the news, compared with 55% of those in the Midwest, 51% of those in the East and 43% of those in the South.

About three-in-ten (28%) very closely followed reports about the U.S. economy, while two-in-ten (19%) very closely tracked the debate in Washington over extending long-term unemployment benefits.

Overall, 18% say they followed news about Christie's apology for the lane closures ordered by his aides very closely. Interest in this story was higher in the East (26% very closely) and Midwest (23%) than in the South or West (14% each).

Just one-in-ten (11%) very closely followed news about former Defense Secretary Robert Gates' new book, in which he is critical of the Obama administration. An identical percentage (11%) paid very close attention to the fighting in and around the Iraqi city of Fallujah. More Republicans (17%) than Democrats (7%) very closely followed the story last week.

About the Survey

The analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted January 9-12, 2014 among a national sample of 1,006 adults, 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (502 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 504 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 288 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 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, 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:

Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	1,006	3.6 percentage points
Republican	266	7.1 percentage points
Democrat	290	6.8 percentage points
Independent	366	6.0 percentage points
Followed Christie story 'very' or 'fairly' closely	460	5.4 percentage points
Followed Christie story less closely	533	5.0 percentage points
<i>Among those following Christie story 'very' or 'fairly' closely</i>		
Republican	135	9.9 percentage points
Democrat	154	9.3 percentage points
Independent	149	9.4 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.

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PEW RESEARCH CENTER
January 9-12, 2014 OMNIBUS
FINAL TOPLINE
N=1,006

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					
January 9-12, 2014	28	29	19	23	1
January 2-5, 2014	29	31	17	22	1
December 12-15, 2013	26	27	21	24	1
November 14-17, 2013	32	32	17	19	*
October 31-November 3, 2013	31	37	16	15	*
October 17-20, 2013	41	31	16	12	*
October 3-6, 2013	34	30	19	16	1
September 25-29, 2013	35	30	16	18	*
September 19-22, 2013	28	33	20	19	1
September 12-15, 2013	28	34	17	20	*
August 1-4, 2013	28	35	19	17	1
July 18-21, 2013	28	29	20	23	1
June 20-23, 2013	28	30	19	22	1
June 13-16, 2013	30	32	15	22	*
June 6-9, 2013	33	31	15	21	*
May 16-19, 2013	30	31	20	19	*
May 9-12, 2013	28	30	21	20	1
March 28-31, 2013	30	30	17	22	1
March 7-10, 2013	35	30	16	19	*
January 31-February 3, 2013	33	33	16	16	1
January 17-20, 2013	36	32	15	16	*
January 3-6, 2013	34	32	18	16	1

SEE TREND FOR PREVIOUS YEARS: <http://www.people-press.org/files/2014/01/NII-Economy-trend.pdf>

b. Cold winter weather in much of the country					
January 9-12, 2014	44	32	12	11	1
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
January 24-27, 2013: <i>Cold winter weather</i>	37	28	15	19	1
November 3-6, 2011: <i>An unusual autumn snow storm on the East Coast</i>	20	26	26	27	1
February 3-6, 2011: <i>Snow and ice storms across the United States</i>	45	34	13	8	*
January 13-16, 2011: <i>Winter storms in the Eastern U.S.</i>	35	32	17	16	1
December 16-19, 2010: <i>Cold winter weather</i>	43	27	13	16	1
February 12-15, 2010: <i>Major snow storms affecting the East Coast and the South</i>	39	31	16	14	*
January 8-11, 2010: <i>Unusually cold winter weather</i>	42	30	17	12	*
January 16-19, 2009: <i>Cold winter weather in much of the country</i>	33	31	21	15	*
December 14-17, 2007: <i>Snow and ice storms in the Midwest and Northeast</i>	30	31	21	18	*

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
February 16-19, 2007: <i>Cold winter weather and snowstorms in the Northeast and Midwest</i>	30	33	18	18	1
February 9-12, 2007: <i>Cold winter weather</i>	36	36	15	13	*
January 19-22, 2007: <i>Snow and ice storms in some parts of the country</i>	31	32	22	14	1
January 5-8, 2007: <i>Winter snowstorms in the western U.S.</i>	24	30	25	21	*
January, 2001: <i>Cold winter weather and storms in the Northeast and Midwest</i>	42	31	15	11	1
January, 1999: <i>Cold winter weather and storms in the Midwest</i>	37	34	17	12	*
Early December, 1998: <i>Unseasonable weather patterns</i>	39	35	13	12	1
January, 1994: <i>News about cold weather conditions in the Northeast and Midwest</i>	51	30	12	7	*
c. Fighting in and around the Iraqi city of Fallujah					
January 9-12, 2014	11	20	23	44	1
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
December 15-18, 2011: <i>The complete withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq</i>	34	32	18	14	2
October 21-23, 2011: <i>President Obama announcing a complete withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq by the end of 2011</i>	30	30	19	20	1
December 16-19, 2010: <i>The current situation and events in Iraq</i>	19	30	27	24	*
September 2-6, 2010: <i>The withdrawal of U.S. combat troops from Iraq</i>	36	37	15	11	*
August 26-29, 2010: <i>The current situation and events in Iraq</i>	25	36	24	15	1
August 19-22, 2010: <i>The withdrawal of U.S. combat troops from Iraq</i>	31	33	19	17	1
August 5-8, 2010: <i>The current situation and events in Iraq</i>	23	35	22	18	1
May 13-16, 2010	31	34	21	13	2
March 12-15, 2010	22	36	28	14	*
March 5-8, 2010	26	34	20	20	*
January 29-February 1, 2010	23	33	27	17	*
January 15-18, 2010	20	35	28	17	*
October 16-19, 2009	23	30	24	23	*
September 11-14, 2009	21	33	30	16	*
August 21-24, 2009	25	35	22	18	1
August 14-17, 2009	19	38	23	18	*
July 2-5, 2009: <i>U.S. troops withdrawing from Iraqi cities</i>	25	34	20	21	0
April 24-27, 2009: <i>The current situation and events in Iraq</i>	21	35	25	19	*
March 20-23, 2009	25	37	21	17	*
February 27-March 2, 2009: <i>Barack Obama's plan to withdraw most U.S. troops from Iraq by August 2010</i>	40	37	13	9	1
December 12-15, 2008: <i>The current situation and events in Iraq</i>	24	35	25	16	*
November 21-24, 2008	32	31	24	13	0
November 14-17, 2008	24	33	27	16	*
October 31-November 3, 2008	30	35	22	12	1

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
October 24-27, 2008	29	35	25	11	*
October 10-13, 2008	23	34	30	13	*
October 3-6, 2008	29	33	28	10	*
September 5-8, 2008	24	37	26	13	*
August 29-31, 2008	22	32	29	16	1
August 22-25, 2008	26	31	27	15	1
August 1-4, 2008	27	40	23	10	*
July 25-28, 2008	28	33	22	17	*
July 18-21, 2008	33	35	20	12	*
July 11-14, 2008	24	35	24	16	1
July 3-7, 2008	25	35	25	15	*
June 20-23, 2008	25	36	24	15	*
May 9-12, 2008	29	35	21	14	1
May 2-5, 2008	26	35	25	13	1
April 25-28, 2008	29	35	23	12	1
April 18-21, 2008	29	39	20	11	1
April 11-14, 2008	25	39	20	15	1
April 4-7, 2008	25	37	23	15	*
March 28-31, 2008	29	40	19	11	1
March 20-24, 2008	30	38	19	13	*
March 14-17, 2008	29	38	23	10	*
March 7-10, 2008	28	39	18	15	*
February 29-March 3, 2008	28	40	19	13	*
February 8-11, 2008	24	35	25	16	*
February 1-4, 2008	28	39	22	11	*
January 25-28, 2008	23	35	26	16	*
January 18-21, 2008	31	33	20	15	1
January 11-14, 2008	25	38	21	16	*
January 4-7, 2008	27	38	20	15	*
December 14-17, 2007	26	32	24	18	*
December 7-10, 2007	28	37	21	14	*
November 23-26, 2007	25	37	21	16	1
November 16-19, 2007	31	37	19	12	1
November 9-12, 2007	29	38	19	13	1
November 2-5, 2007	31	35	18	15	1
October 26-29, 2007	28	37	21	13	1
October 19-22, 2007	28	37	20	15	*
October 12-15, 2007	26	36	18	19	1
October 5-8, 2007	29	33	22	16	*
September 28 - October 1, 2007	30	41	18	11	*
September 21-24, 2007	32	38	17	13	*
September 14-17, 2007	31	36	18	15	0
September 7-10, 2007	32	34	20	14	*
August 30 - September 2, 2007	31	34	18	16	1
August 24-27, 2007	34	36	18	12	*
August 17-20, 2007	33	34	18	15	*
August 10-13, 2007	36	37	14	13	*
August 3-6, 2007	29	40	19	12	*
July 27-30, 2007	28	36	19	16	1
July 20-23, 2007	28	34	21	16	1
July 13-16, 2007	25	41	17	16	1
July 6-9, 2007	36	34	18	12	*
June 29-July 2, 2007	32	35	19	13	1
June 22-25, 2007	30	36	18	15	1
June 15-18, 2007	30	37	20	13	*
June 8-11, 2007	32	38	15	14	1
June 1-4, 2007	30	36	20	13	1
May 24-27, 2007	33	36	18	12	1

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
May 18-21, 2007	36	34	15	14	1
May 11-14, 2007	30	34	18	17	1
May 4-7, 2007	38	37	15	10	*
April 27-30, 2007	27	35	21	16	1
April 20-23, 2007	28	35	22	15	*
April 12-16, 2007	34	33	20	13	*
April 5-9, 2007	33	39	16	11	1
March 30-April 2, 2007	34	37	16	13	*
March 23-March 26, 2007: <i>News about the current situation in Iraq</i>	31	38	18	12	1
March 16-19, 2007	34	34	17	15	*
March 9-12, 2007	34	37	16	13	*
March 2-5, 2007	37	37	16	9	1
February 23-26, 2007	36	36	15	13	*
February 16-19, 2007	30	36	19	14	1
February 9-12, 2007	37	34	18	11	*
February 2-5, 2007	38	38	17	7	*
January 26-29, 2007	36	38	15	11	*
January 19-22, 2007	37	34	18	10	1
January 12-15, 2007	38	36	17	8	1
January, 2007	46	40	8	5	1
January 5-8, 2007	40	32	16	12	0
December, 2006	42	39	12	7	*
November 30-December 3, 2006	40	36	13	11	*
Mid-November, 2006	44	38	12	6	*
September, 2006	33	43	14	8	2
August, 2006	41	39	12	7	1
June, 2006	37	43	13	6	1
May, 2006	42	35	15	7	1
April, 2006	43	36	13	7	1
March, 2006	43	38	12	6	1
February, 2006	39	42	12	6	1
January, 2006	40	40	12	7	1
December, 2005	45	38	11	5	1
Early November, 2005	41	40	13	6	*
Early October, 2005	43	36	15	6	*
Early September, 2005	32	40	20	7	1
July, 2005	43	37	13	6	1
Mid-May, 2005	42	42	11	5	*
Mid-March, 2005	40	39	14	5	2
February, 2005	38	45	13	4	*
January, 2005	48	37	11	4	*
December, 2004	34	44	15	6	1
Mid-October, 2004	42	38	11	8	1
Early September, 2004	47	37	9	6	1
August, 2004	39	42	12	6	1
July, 2004	43	40	11	6	*
June, 2004	39	42	12	6	1
April, 2004	54	33	8	5	*
Mid-March, 2004	47	36	12	4	1
Early February, 2004	47	38	10	4	1
Mid-January, 2004	48	39	9	4	*
December, 2003	44	38	11	6	1
November, 2003	52	33	9	5	1
September, 2003	50	33	10	6	1
Mid-August, 2003	45	39	10	5	1
Early July, 2003	37	41	13	8	1
June, 2003	46	35	13	6	*

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 *
May, 2003	63	29	6	2	
April 11-16, 2003: <i>News about the war in Iraq</i>	47	40	10	2	1
April 2-7, 2003	54	34	9	2	1
March 20-24, 2003	57	33	7	2	1
March 13-16, 2003: <i>Debate over the possibility that the U.S. will take military action in Iraq</i>	62	27	6	4	1
February, 2003	62	25	8	4	1
January, 2003	55	29	10	4	2
December, 2002	51	32	10	6	1
Late October, 2002	53	33	8	5	1
Early October, 2002	60	28	6	5	1
Early September, 2002: <i>Debate over the possibility that the U.S. will invade Iraq</i>	48	29	15	6	2
d. The debate in Washington over extending long-term unemployment benefits					
January 9-12, 2014	19	26	23	31	1
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
February 16-20, 2012: <i>Congress passing a bill to extend payroll tax cuts and unemployment benefits¹</i>	24	27	21	27	1
December 16-19, 2010 ² : <i>The extension of tax cuts and unemployment benefits approved by Congress and signed by President Obama</i>	37	27	15	19	1
December 9-12, 2010: <i>The agreement reached between Barack Obama and Congressional Republicans to extend tax cuts and unemployment benefits</i>	37	29	15	17	1
July 22-25, 2010: <i>Congress voting to extend unemployment benefits</i>	42	33	15	10	1
e. The release of a book by former Defense Secretary Robert Gates criticizing the Obama administration					
January 9-12, 2014	11	16	18	54	1
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
November 11-14, 2010: <i>The publication of George W. Bush's book about his life</i>	13	18	21	48	1
May 30 - June 2, 2008: <i>The release of a book by Former White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan criticizing the Bush Administration</i>	14	23	22	40	1
November 20-23, 2009: <i>News about Sarah Palin and the release of her book</i>	10	20	23	46	1
July 2004: <i>The publication of Bill Clinton's book about his life</i>	8	14	21	55	2
Early July, 2003: <i>The publication of Hillary Clinton's book about her life</i>	8	14	25	52	1

¹ In February 16-20, 2012, the wording of item was changed after the first night of interviewing to reflect Congress passing this legislation. On February 16, 2012, the item wording was "Negotiations in Congress to extend payroll tax cuts and unemployment benefits."

² The wording of item PEW.1c was changed after the first night of interviewing (December 16, 2010), to reflect Congress passing and Obama signing this legislation. On December 16, 2010 the item read "The debate in Washington over extending tax cuts and unemployment benefits."

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
f. New Jersey Governor Chris Christie apologizing for the closure of highway lanes last year ordered by his aides January 9-12, 2014	18	21	19	41	1

ASK ALL:

PEW.2 Thinking about Chris Christie, in the past few days, have you come to have a MORE favorable opinion of him, a LESS favorable opinion, or hasn't your opinion of him changed lately?

Jan 9-12

2014

6	More favorable opinion
16	Less favorable opinion
60	Opinion hasn't changed
18	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)