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Public Skeptical of Decision to Hold Olympic Games in Russia

*Terrorism and Security Drive
Concerns*

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
ON THIS REPORT:**

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Public Skeptical of Decision to Hold Olympic Games in Russia

Terrorism and Security Drive Concerns

With the 2014 Winter Olympics approaching, more say it was a bad decision (44%) than a good decision (32%) to hold the games in Russia. About one-in-four (24%) say they don't know.

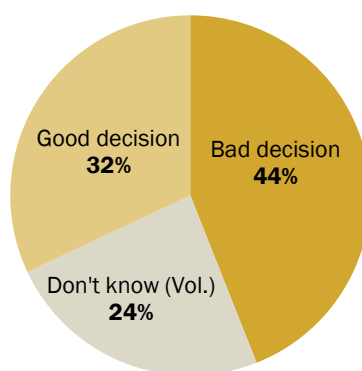
Concerns about terrorism and safety are foremost among those who think it was a bad decision to hold the Olympics in Russia. In an open-ended question, 62% of those who say it was a bad decision to hold the Winter Olympics in Russia mention terrorism or general security in Sochi as a reason they feel this way.

Far fewer (5%) mention the Russian government or President Vladimir Putin as reasons why it was a bad decision to hold the games there, while 4% say Russia's treatment of gays and lesbians make the country a bad choice to host the games.

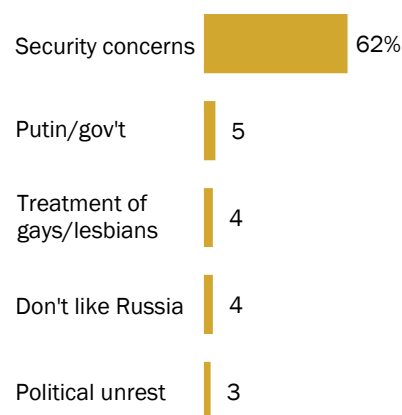
Most adults are planning to watch either "a lot" (18%) or some (37%) of the Olympics, according to the new national survey by the Pew Research Center, conducted Jan. 30-Feb. 2 among 1,003 adults. About one-in-four

Security Concerns Cited by Most Who Think It Was a 'Bad Decision' to Hold Winter Games in Russia

Was the decision to hold the 2014 Winter Olympics in Russia a good or bad decision?



Among those saying 'bad decision' Why do you think it was a bad decision?

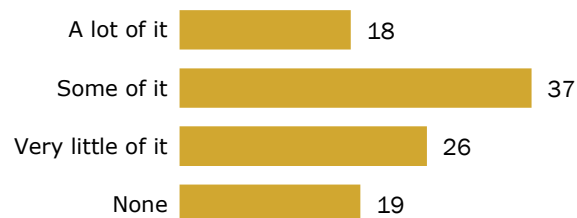


Survey conducted Jan. 30-Feb. 2, 2014. Multiple responses accepted for open-ended follow-up question. See topline for full results.

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Most Plan to Watch At Least Some of the Sochi Olympics

% planning to watch ...



Survey conducted Jan. 30-Feb. 2, 2014. Don't know responses not shown.

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adults (26%) say they plan to watch “very little” and 19% say they will not watch at all. Nearly one-in-four of those 50 and older (23%) plan to watch a lot, compared with 14% of those younger than 50.

Young adults stand out in their support of Russia’s hosting of the Olympics. Among adults ages 18-29, about twice as many say it was a “good decision” as a “bad decision” to hold the Winter Olympics in Russia – 49% vs. 25%. By contrast, a 55% majority of adults 50 and older say it was a bad decision, compared with about one-in-four (24%) saying it was a good decision. Among adults ages 30-49, 42% say it was a bad decision and 33% say it was a good decision.

Across all demographic groups, concerns about terrorism and safety are dominant among those who think it was a bad decision to hold the Olympics in Russia. Seven-in-ten Republicans (70%) and 63% of Democrats who said it was a bad decision cite concerns about security. And 7% of Democrats and 2% of Republicans mention Russia’s policies toward gays and lesbians as a reason it was a bad decision.

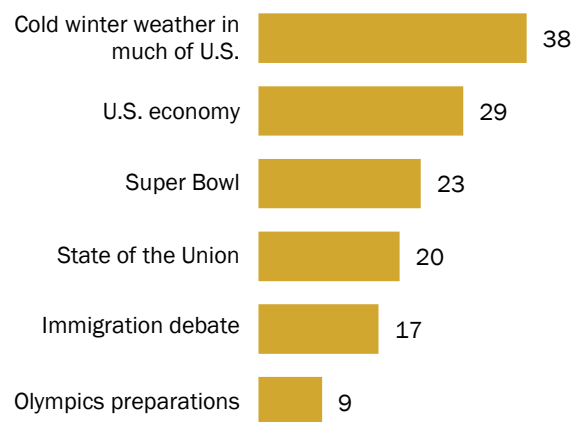
In 2008, opinions about hosting the Summer Olympics in China changed over time and became more positive as the games began. In a survey four months before the event, the public was evenly divided about whether it was a good idea to hold the Summer Olympics in China (41% good, 43% bad). [But during the games’ opening weekend](#), more viewed the decision to hold the games in China as good than bad (52% good, 31% bad).

The Week’s News

One-in-five (20%) closely followed the State of the Union last week, down from 26% last year and the lowest news interest during Obama’s tenure. (By comparison, 24% of the public followed George W. Bush’s 2006 State of the Union address to start his sixth year in office.) Twice as many Democrats (33%) as Republicans (16%) and independents (15%) followed Obama’s speech closely.

Winter Weather Draws News Interest

% following news very closely



Survey conducted Jan. 30-Feb. 2, 2014.

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Cold winter weather in much of the country was the most followed news story of the week, with nearly four-in-ten (38%) saying they paid very close attention. People living in the South (45%), the Northeast and the Midwest (42% each) were much more likely than those in the West (21%) to closely follow news about the cold weather.

About three-in-ten (29%) closely followed news about the economy last week. The Super Bowl was closely followed by 23%, which is roughly equal to interest in past years. An additional 17% closely followed debate over immigration policy in the U.S., while about one-in-ten (9%) paid close attention to preparations for the Olympics.

About the Survey

The analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted January 30-February 2, 2014 among a national sample of 1,003 adults, 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (501 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 502 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 285 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	1,003	3.6 percentage points
Republican	274	7.0 percentage points
Democrat	269	7.0 percentage points
Independent	374	6.0 percentage points
Say it was a bad decision to hold 2014 Winter Olympics in Russia	473	5.3 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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January 30-February 2, 2014 OMNIBUS
FINAL TOPLINE
N=1,003

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 30-February 2, 2014	29	31	17	23	*
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. Barack Obama's State of the Union speech					
January 30-February 2, 2014	20	19	16	43	1
February 14-17, 2013	26	20	16	37	*
January 26-29, 2012	29	18	16	37	1
January 27-30, 2011	28	22	13	36	1
January 29-February 1, 2010	33	22	17	29	1

TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:

February 27-March 2, 2009: Barack Obama's first address to a joint session of Congress	37	26	14	23	*
February 1-4, 2008: President Bush's State of the Union address	18	17	20	45	*
January 26-29, 2007: Reports about George Bush's State of the Union address	25	26	20	28	1
February, 2006: George W. Bush's State of the Union address	24	22	19	34	1
February, 2003	36	24	15	24	1
January, 1994: Reports about Bill Clinton's State of the Union address	26	25	18	31	*
February, 1992: President Bush's State of the Union Address	26	26	20	27	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
c. Debate over immigration policy in the U.S.					
January 30-February 2, 2014	17	21	24	37	1
July 11-14, 2013	18	24	24	33	*
June 27-30, 2013: <i>The U.S. Senate passing immigration reform legislation</i>	21	29	22	28	*
June 20-23, 2013: <i>Debate over immigration policy in the U.S.</i>	20	28	23	29	1
June 13-16, 2013	23	26	22	29	1
June 6-9, 2013	21	28	21	30	1
May 23-26, 2013	17	23	23	37	1
May 9-12, 2013	20	24	25	30	1
April 25-28, 2013	19	25	24	32	*
April 18-21, 2013	21	22	25	31	1
April 4-7, 2013	23	22	22	32	*
January 31-February 3, 2013: <i>Debate in Washington over immigration policy</i>	23	25	22	29	1
June 28-July 1, 2012: <i>The Supreme Court decision on Arizona's immigration law</i>	29	21	19	30	1
April 26-29, 2012: <i>The issue of immigration</i>	21	24	26	27	1
May 12-15, 2011	18	22	27	32	1
September 2-6, 2010	30	31	19	20	1
August 12-15, 2010	27	31	19	21	1
July 29-August 1, 2010: <i>A court ruling that stops most of Arizona's immigration law from going into effect</i>	40	32	17	10	1
July 8-11, 2010: <i>The U.S. Justice Department challenging the legality of Arizona's recent immigration law</i>	30	27	19	23	1
July 1-5, 2010: <i>The issue of immigration</i>	34	30	20	14	1
May 7-10, 2010: <i>A new Arizona law that gives police more authority to question people they suspect might be illegal immigrants</i>	38	27	13	21	1
April 30-May 3, 2010	36	31	13	20	*
October 12-15, 2007: <i>The issue of immigration</i>	23	29	19	29	*
June 29-July 2, 2007: <i>The debate in Congress over new immigration policy</i>	26	30	21	23	*
June 22-25, 2007	24	28	22	26	*
June 15-18, 2007	22	32	21	25	*
June 8-11, 2007	24	29	20	26	1
May 24-27, 2007	27	31	22	19	1
April 12-16, 2007: <i>The issue of immigration</i>	21	29	24	26	*
August, 2006	34	40	16	9	1
June, 2006	36	41	15	7	1
May, 2006	44	33	13	9	1
April, 2006	39	34	16	10	1
December, 1994: <i>Passage of Proposition 187, the California law that bars education, health and welfare benefits from illegal immigrants and their children</i>	26	32	22	20	*
d. The Super Bowl					
January 30-February 2, 2014	23	18	21	37	1
January 31-February 3, 2013	18	17	23	40	1
February 2-5, 2012	23	21	21	34	1

PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	Very closely	Fairly closely	Not too closely	Not at all closely	(VOL.) DK/Ref
February 3-6, 2011	24	19	20	37	*
February 5-8, 2010	27	20	20	33	*
January 30-February 2, 2009	19	15	26	38	1
February 1-4, 2008	20	21	27	32	*
February 9-12, 2007	26	21	16	36	1
February, 2000	31	22	15	32	0
February, 1990	22	22	19	37	0
e. Preparations for the Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia					
January 30-February 2, 2014	9	20	25	45	1
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
August 1-4, 2008: <i>News about the upcoming Olympic games in Beijing, China</i>	13	33	31	23	*
July 25-28, 2008: <i>News about China as the Beijing Olympic Games approach</i>	12	31	29	28	*
April 4-7, 2008: <i>News about the upcoming summer Olympics in Beijing, China</i>	5	18	31	45	1
August, 2004: <i>Preparations for the summer Olympics in Athens, Greece</i>	10	22	29	38	1
f. Cold winter weather in much of the country					
January 30-February 2, 2014	38	32	14	14	1
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
January 9-12, 2014	44	32	12	11	1
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	*
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	*

ASK ALL:

Thinking about the Olympic Games...

ASK ALL:

PEW.2 All things considered, was the decision to hold the 2014 Winter Olympics in Russia a good or bad decision?

2008 Summer Olympics in China

Jan 30-Feb 2 <u>2014</u>		Aug 8-11 <u>2008</u>	(GAP) Apr 9-17 <u>2008</u>
32	Good	52	41
44	Bad	31	43
24	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	17	17

ASK IF "BAD DECISION" (PEW.2=2) [N=473]:

PEW.3 Why do you think it was a bad decision to hold the 2014 Winter Olympics in Russia? [OPEN END. PROBE FOR CLARITY ONLY. DO NOT PROBE FOR ADDITIONAL MENTIONS. IF MORE THAN ONE MENTION, RECORD ALL IN ORDER OF MENTION.]

Jan 30-Feb 2

2014

62	Terrorism concerns/Not safe
5	Vladimir Putin/Don't trust their government/Corrupt
4	Treatment of gays and lesbians
4	Don't like Russia (general)
3	Political turmoil/Instability/Unrest
2	Weather
2	Bad relationship with U.S.
2	Games should be in U.S.
2	Cost/Economic concerns
1	Social/Human rights issues (general)
1	Communist country
1	Too far away/Difficult to get to
1	Not prepared/Not doing a good job
7	Other
7	Don't know/Refused

*Figures add to more than 100% because of multiple responses.***ASK ALL:**

PEW.4 How much of the Olympic Games do you plan to watch? [READ IN ORDER]

TREND FOR COMPARISON¹:*How much of the Olympic Games do you plan to watch/are you watching?*

Jan 30-Feb 2 <u>2014</u>		Aug 8-11 <u>2008</u>
18	A lot of it	22
37	Some of it	36
26	Very little of it	25
19	None	17
*	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	*

Key to Pew Research trends noted in the topline:

(GAP)

Pew Research Global Attitudes Project

¹ Item asked "do you plan to watch" on Aug. 8, 2008, the day before the opening ceremony (N=245). Item asked "are you watching" Aug. 9-11, 2008, the day of the opening ceremony and the two days afterward (N=760).