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Interest in Egypt News Has Plummeted Since the Arab Spring

Fewer See Events in Egypt as Critical to U.S. Interests

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Interest in Egypt News Has Plummeted Since the Arab Spring Fewer See Events in Egypt as Critical to U.S. Interests

Public interest in news from Egypt has plummeted since the early weeks of the Arab Spring in February 2011. And the share of Americans saying what happens in Egypt is “very important” to U.S. interests has fallen by 10 points – from 46% to 36% – since then.

The survey by the Pew Research Center, conducted July 11-14 among 1,002 adults, finds that about a quarter (23%) say the United States can have a lot of influence on the current situation, while nearly as many (24%) say it has little or no influence; 48% say the U.S. can have some influence on events in Egypt.

The recent violent turmoil in Egypt, which followed former president Mohamed Morsi’s ouster by the country’s security forces, has attracted little interest among Americans. Just 15% say they followed Morsi’s removal from power very closely; nearly six-in-ten (59%) followed the news not too closely or not at all closely.

Two years ago, more than twice as many (39%) paid very close attention to the sudden end of Hosni Mubarak’s 30-year rule, following widespread anti-government protests. [It was one of the top stories of 2011](#), a year that featured a number of major overseas news stories.

Interest in current news from Egypt is low across all demographic groups. And there are no significant partisan differences in opinions about the importance of events in Egypt to U.S. interests and the influence

of the United States on the current situation there. Currently, 40% of independents, 36% of Democrats and 35% of Republicans say what happens in Egypt is very important to U.S.

Egypt Seen as Less Important, Few Say U.S. Has Much Influence

<i>Importance of what happens in Egypt to U.S. interests ...</i>	Feb 2011	July 2013
	%	%
Very important	46	36
Somewhat important	38	47
Not very important	12	14
Don't know	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100
<i>How much influence can U.S. have on current situation in Egypt?</i>		
A lot of influence	--	23
Some	--	48
Not much/None	--	24
Don't know	--	<u>5</u>
		100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER July 11-14, 2013. Feb 2011 data from CBS News. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Less Interest in Egypt News than During Arab Spring

<i>% following news from Egypt...</i>	Feb 2011	July 2013
Very closely	39	15
Fairly closely	31	25
Not too closely	14	22
Not at all closely	15	37

PEW RESEARCH CENTER July 11-14, 2013.

interests. In a February 2011 poll by CBS News, 53% of Republicans, 47% of Democrats and 44% of independents held this view.

Most Say Issues at Home Concern Them More

Fully 78% say that while the news from Egypt is important, “there are issues in the United States that concern me more.” And a majority (55%) says they feel they lack the background information to really know what is going on there. These opinions are little changed from two years ago, when public interest in Egypt news was substantially higher.

However, the share saying that news from Egypt “is changing so

quickly I can’t keep up” has increased 12 points since February 2011 – from 34% to 46%. And about half of Americans (48%) say it is hard to know which group could best lead the country.

These opinions, like views of Egypt’s importance and U.S. influence, span demographic and partisan groups. For instance, comparable percentages of Democrats (52%), independents (49%) and Republicans (46%) say it is hard to know which groups could best lead the country. And nearly equal shares among all three groups say events in Egypt are changing so quickly it is hard to keep up (48% of Democrats, 47% of Republicans, 45% of independents).

Most Say While Egypt News Is Important, Domestic Issues Are of Greater Concern

<i>Would you say this applies to you?</i>	No	Yes
Egypt important, but bigger concerns in U.S.	19	78
I lack the background to understand	43	55
Hard to know which group best to lead	45	48
Can't keep up with changing news	53	46

PEW RESEARCH CENTER July 11-14, 2013.

About the Survey

The analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted July 11-14, 2013, among a national sample of 1,002 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (502 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 500 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 268 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. 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 2011 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 2012 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	1,002	3.7 percentage points
Republican	260	7.3 percentage points
Democrat	280	7.0 percentage points
Independent	387	6.0 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
July 11-14, 2013 OMNIBUS
FINAL TOPLINE
N=1002

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. Egypt's military removing elected President Mohamed Morsi and installing an interim government July 11-14, 2013	15	25	22	37	1
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
November 29-December 2, 2012: <i>Political turmoil and protests in Egypt</i>	14	26	23	37	*
June 14-17, 2012: <i>The political situation in Egypt</i>	13	20	24	42	*
May 24-27, 2012: <i>The presidential election in Egypt</i>	4	15	22	57	1
December 1-4, 2011: <i>The recent elections in Egypt</i>	7	16	28	48	*
February 17-20, 2011: <i>News about the situation in Egypt</i>	34	32	17	16	1
February 10-13, 2011: <i>Anti-government protests in Egypt and the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak</i>	39	31	14	15	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	*

PEW.1b-f PREVIOUSLY RELEASED
NO QUESTIONS PEW.2-PEW.3

ASK ALL:

PEW.4 Thinking about the news from Egypt... As I read some statements please tell me if each applies to you, or not? First, **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]. [READ ONCE AND REPEAT IF NECESSARY: "Would you say that this applies to you, or not?"]**

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
a. I feel like the news is changing so quickly that I can't keep up July 11-14, 2013	46	53	2
February 3-6, 2011	34	64	1
b. I feel like I lack the background information to know what's really going on July 11-14, 2013	55	43	2
February 3-6, 2011	52	47	1
c. It is hard to know which group could best lead the country July 11-14, 2013	48	45	7
d. While this is important news, there are issues in the United States that concern me more July 11-14, 2013	78	19	2
February 3-6, 2011	73	24	2

ASK ALL:

PEW.5 How important to the interests of the United States is what happens in Egypt **[READ IN ORDER]**?

Jul 11-14		<i>CBS News</i>	
<u>2013</u>		<u>2011</u>	
36	Very important	46	
47	Somewhat important	38	
14	Not very important	12	
3	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	4	

NO QUESTIONS PEW.6-PEW.7**ASK ALL:**

PEW.8 How much influence do you think the U.S. can have on the current situation in Egypt **[READ IN ORDER]**?

Jul 11-14	
<u>2013</u>	
23	A lot of influence
48	Some influence
18	Not much influence, or
6	No influence at all
5	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

PEW.9-PEW.11 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED