



THE PEW RESEARCH CENTER
For The People & The Press

NEWS Release
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Japan Disaster Still Dominates Public's News Interest Public Sees Better News about Jobs, But Not Prices

With the employment picture slowly improving in recent months, fewer Americans say they are hearing mostly bad news about the job situation. At the same time, perceptions of news about prices – especially gas prices – remain overwhelmingly negative.

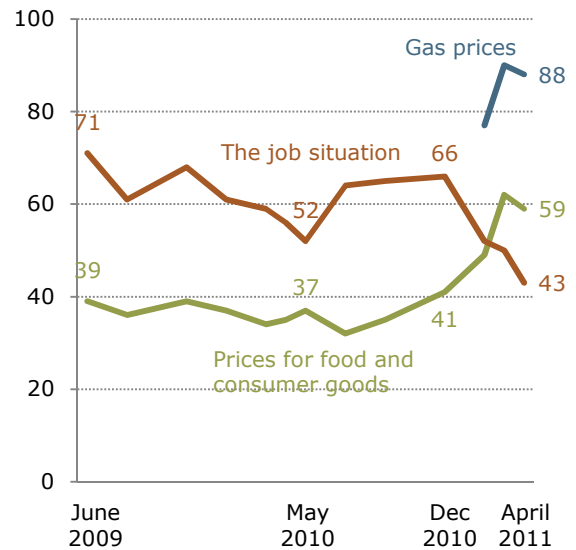
Currently, 43% say they are hearing mostly bad news about the job situation – down seven points from last month and the lowest percentage since June 2009, when the question was first asked. About as many (42%) say they are hearing a mix of good and bad news, while 12% say they are hearing mostly good news about jobs.

However, perceptions of news about prices – gas prices as well as prices for food and consumer goods – have gotten worse since February. Currently, 88% say they are hearing mostly bad news about gas prices and 59% say the same about the prices of food and consumer goods.

The public's views of news about the overall economy have improved since last month: 60% say they are hearing mixed news, while 33% say the news is mostly bad and 5% say

As Job News Has Improved, News about Prices Has Worsened

Percent hearing mostly bad news about...



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 31-Apr. 3, 2011.

the economic news is mostly good. Last month, 38% said the news was mostly bad. But in January, just 24% said news about the economy was mostly bad.

According to the latest News Index Interest survey, conducted March 31-April 3 among 1,008 adults, the public continued to track the aftermath of the earthquake and tsunami in Japan more closely than any other news last week. But Americans also kept a close watch on economic news. Half (50%) say they followed news about the disaster in Japan very closely; 42% say the same about economic news. Still, they followed news about Japan much more intensely: 50% say they followed news about Japan more closely than any other major story, compared with 14% who tracked the economy most closely.

Media coverage of the unrest in Libya continues to surpass public interest in this story. News about the fighting in Libya – and the airstrikes conducted by U.S. and NATO forces – accounted for 34% of the newshole, much more than any other story, according to a separate analysis by the Pew Research Center’s Project for Excellence in Journalism. Just 13% of the public says this was the news they followed most closely.

The aftermath of the March 11 disaster in Japan accounted for 12% of coverage, down from 15% one week earlier and 57% the week before that. And news about the economy – including last week’s upbeat news about employment and more negative numbers on housing prices – made up 10% of coverage.

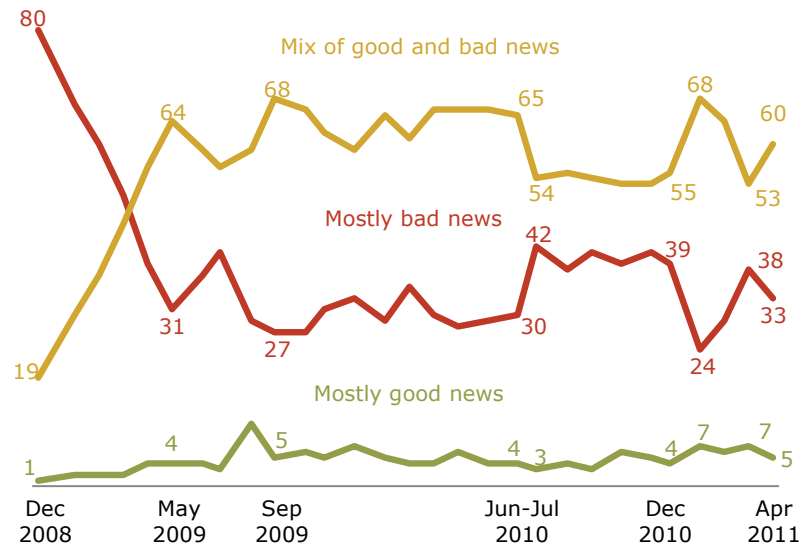
Perceptions of Economic News

Perceptions of economic news have fluctuated since mid-2009 – along with the ups and downs of an economy struggling to recover. During the first half of 2010, about two-thirds of the public said they were hearing a mix of good and bad economic news, but then perceptions grew more negative as the recovery stalled.

At the start of 2011, the public detected a more upbeat tone to economic news, but that perception soon worsened as concerns grew about gas prices and inflation.

In January, 68% said they were hearing mixed economic news while just 24% said the news was mostly bad. By March, just 53% said they were hearing mixed news and 38% said they were hearing mostly bad news. In the new survey, 60% say they are hearing a mix of good and bad news about the economy while 33% say the news is mostly bad.

More Hearing Mix of News About U.S. Economy



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 31-Apr. 3, 2011.

Differing Views of News about Jobs and Prices

The public's views of news about the job situation and prices for food and consumer goods have moved in the opposite directions since December. Currently, 43% say the news about the job situation is mostly bad, down 23 points since December.

By contrast, 59% say they are hearing mostly bad news about food and consumer prices. That is little changed from last month (62%), but is up 18 points since December 2010. Moreover, opinions of the news about gas prices are overwhelmingly negative (88% mostly bad).

The public's view of news about real estate values – like perceptions of job news – have improved since December. Currently, 48% say news about real estate is mostly bad, while 38% say they are hearing more mixed news. That is essentially unchanged from March, but better than in December, when 62% said they were hearing mostly bad news and 28% said they were hearing a mix.

Perceptions of news about financial markets – already more positive than most other sectors – are little changed since March, despite recent stock market increases. Currently, 51% say they are hearing a mix of good and bad news about this, 30% say they are hearing mostly bad news and 13% say they are hearing mostly good news.

Impressions of News About Economic Sectors

<i>Recent news about...</i>	Mostly good news %	Mostly bad news %	Mixed news %	DK %
The job situation				
Mar 31-Apr 3, 2011	12	43	42	2=100
Mar 3-6, 2011	10	50	37	3=100
Feb 3-6, 2011	9	52	37	2=100
Dec 2-5, 2010	6	66	27	1=100
Real estate values				
Mar 31-Apr 3, 2011	6	48	38	8=100
Mar 3-6, 2011	8	46	36	10=100
Feb 3-6, 2011	8	51	34	7=100
Dec 2-5, 2010	6	62	28	4=100
Financial markets				
Mar 31-Apr 3, 2011	13	30	51	6=100
Mar 3-6, 2011	12	33	47	8=100
Feb 3-6, 2011	17	31	46	6=100
Dec 2-5, 2010	13	38	44	4=100
Food, consumer prices				
Mar 31-Apr 3, 2011	3	59	34	4=100
Mar 3-6, 2011	7	62	26	5=100
Feb 3-6, 2011	7	49	39	5=100
Dec 2-5, 2010	16	41	39	5=100
Gas Prices				
Mar 31-Apr 3, 2011	1	88	10	1=100
Mar 3-6, 2011	1	90	7	2=100
Feb 3-6, 2011	2	77	18	3=100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 31-Apr. 3, 2011.
 Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Republicans See More Bad Economic News Than Do Democrats

Republicans offer more negative assessments of recent economic news than do Democrats or independents. More than four-in-ten Republicans (42%) say they are hearing mostly bad news about the economy, compared with 26% of Democrats and 30% of independents. About half of Republicans (53%) say they are hearing a mix of good and bad news; 65% of Democrats and 63% of independents say this.

About half of Republicans (49%) say they are hearing mostly bad news about the job situation, compared with 34% of Democrats. Independents fall in between (42%). Fully 17% of Democrats say they are hearing mostly good news about jobs, almost double the 9% of Republicans who say this.

Nearly two-thirds of Republicans (65%) say they are hearing mostly bad news about food and consumer prices, compared with 53% of Democrats. About six-in-ten independents (61%) say the same.

More than half of Republicans (54%) say they are hearing mostly bad news about real estate values, compared with 42% of Democrats.

Differing Perceptions by Party

	Total %	Rep %	Dem %	Ind %
<i>Economic news is...</i>				
Mostly bad	33	42	26	30
Mostly good	5	4	7	5
Mix of good and bad	60	53	65	63
Don't know	2	1	2	2
	100	100	100	100
<i>News about the job situation</i>				
Mostly bad	43	49	34	42
Mostly good	12	9	17	12
Mix of good and bad	42	39	46	45
Don't know	2	3	2	1
	100	100	100	100
<i>News about food, consumer prices</i>				
Mostly bad	59	65	53	61
Mostly good	3	4	3	3
Mix of good and bad	34	28	40	33
Don't know	4	3	4	3
	100	100	100	100
<i>News about real estate values</i>				
Mostly bad	48	54	42	49
Mostly good	6	4	8	6
Mix of good and bad	38	35	42	39
Don't know	8	7	8	6
	100	100	100	100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 31-Apr. 3, 2011.
Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

The Week's News

For the second week in a row, the public kept its focus on the aftermath of the disaster in Japan, while the fighting in Libya received the most media coverage.

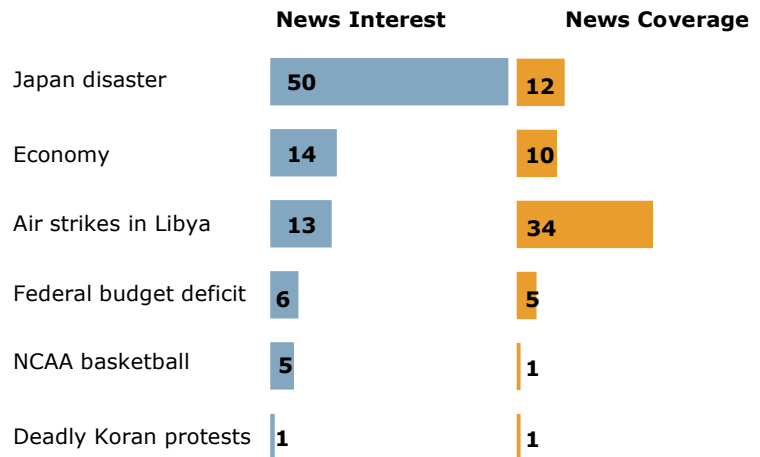
Despite the violence and the U.S. role in the fighting, interest in the situation in Libya is comparable to interest in more general economic news. Fewer than four-in-ten (37%) say they followed news about the airstrikes in Libya very closely; this was the top story for 13%. Meanwhile, 42% say they followed news about the economic situation very closely, while this was the top story for 14%.

Men are more likely than women to say they have been following the U.S. and allied air strikes in Libya very closely (43% vs. 31%). There is no significant difference among partisans on this story.

Three-in-ten (30%) say they very closely followed the discussions in Washington about how to address the federal budget deficit; 6% say they followed this news more closely than any other top story. More than a third of Republicans (36%) say they are following the budget debate very closely, compared with 27% of Democrats. News about the budget debate made up 5% of coverage.

Just 15% say they very closely followed news that broke late in the week about deadly protests in Afghanistan that followed a Florida pastor's burning of a Koran; 1% say this was the news they followed most closely. This story accounted for 1% of coverage.

News Coverage vs. News Interest



News interest shows the percentage of people who say they followed this story most closely, Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, April 1-3, 2011. News coverage shows the percentage of news coverage devoted to each story, Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism, March 28-April 3, 2011.

And 13% say they followed the NCAA basketball tournament very closely, down slightly from the 18% that said this in 2010; 5% say this was the news they followed most closely. News about the tournament accounted for 1% of the coverage measured by PEJ.

News Interest

% following each story very closely

Which one story did you follow most closely?



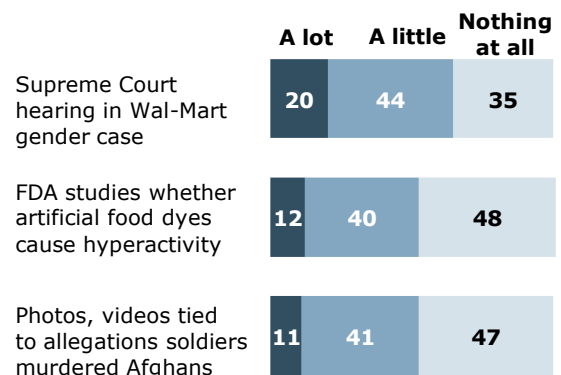
PEW RESEARCH CENTER. Mar 31-Apr 3, 2011. Percentage following "very closely" based on April 1-3, 2011 for "Deadly Koran protests." "Most closely" ranking based on April 1-3 polling.

Many Unaware of Food Dye Scare, Afghan Photos

Nearly half of the public says they heard nothing at all last week about the Food and Drug Administration looking into whether artificial food dyes can cause hyperactivity in children or the publication of grisly photos tied to allegations that U.S. soldiers murdered civilians in Afghanistan.

Fully 48% say they heard nothing at all about the FDA action; 12% say they heard a lot about this story and 40% say they heard a little. Women are almost twice as likely to say they heard a lot about this topic than are men (15% versus 8%).

What People Are Hearing About...



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 31-Apr. 3, 2011.

Fully 47% say they heard nothing at all about the publication of photos and videos allegedly taken by U.S. soldiers accused of killing Afghans; 11% say they heard a lot about the photos and videos, while 41% say they heard a little. Last fall, when five soldiers tied to these incidents were charged with premeditated murder, 15% had heard a lot about the story and 45% had heard a little.

More had heard about a Supreme Court hearing last week about a major gender discrimination case involving Wal-Mart. Two-in-ten (20%) say they heard a lot about this story, while 44% say they heard a little. About a third (35%) say they heard nothing at all about this. The hearing dealt with whether women who have worked at Wal-Mart may sue the retailer in a class action law suit.

These findings are based on the most recent installment of the weekly News Interest Index, an ongoing project of the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. The index, building on the Center's longstanding research into public attentiveness to major news stories, examines news interest as it relates to the news media's coverage. The weekly survey is conducted in conjunction with The Project for Excellence in Journalism's News Coverage Index, which monitors the news reported by major newspaper, television, radio and online news outlets on an ongoing basis. In the most recent week, data relating to news coverage were collected March 28 to April 3, and survey data measuring public interest in the top news stories of the week were collected March 31 to April 3, from a nationally representative sample of 1,008 adults.

About the News Interest Index

The *News Interest Index* is a weekly survey conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press aimed at gauging the public's interest in and reaction to major news events. This project has been undertaken in conjunction with the Project for Excellence in Journalism's *News Coverage Index*, an ongoing content analysis of the news. The News Coverage Index catalogues the news from top news organizations across five major sectors of the media: newspapers, network television, cable television, radio and the internet. Each week (from Monday through Sunday) PEJ compiles this data to identify the top stories for the week. (For more information about the Project for Excellence in Journalism's News Coverage Index, go to www.journalism.org.) The News Interest Index survey collects data from Thursday through Sunday to gauge public interest in the most covered stories of the week.

Results for this survey are based on telephone interviews conducted March 31-April 3, 2011, among a national sample of 1,008 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (670 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 338 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 171 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.

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin, region, and population density to parameters from the March 2010 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey. The sample is also weighted to match current patterns of telephone status based on extrapolations from the 2010 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 within the landline sample. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. The following table shows the 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	Sample Size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	1,008	4.0 percentage points
Mar 31-Apr 1 sample	410	6.0 percentage points
April 1-3 sample	598	5.0 percentage points
Republicans	257	7.5 percentage points
Democrats	285	7.0 percentage points
Independents	375	6.5 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.

About the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press

The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press is an independent opinion research group that studies attitudes toward the press, politics and public policy issues. We are sponsored by The Pew Charitable Trusts and are one of seven projects that make up the Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan "fact tank" that provides information on the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world.

The Center's purpose is to serve as a forum for ideas on the media and public policy through public opinion research. In this role it serves as an important information resource for political leaders, journalists, scholars, and public interest organizations. All of our current survey results are made available free of charge.

All of the Center's research and reports are collaborative products based on the input and analysis of the entire Center staff consisting of:

Andrew Kohut, Director
Scott Keeter, Director of Survey Research
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PEW RESEARCH CENTER NEWS INTEREST INDEX
MARCH 31-APRIL 3, 2011 OMNIBUS
FINAL TOPLINE
N=1,008

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 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
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, 2010	37	29	15	18	1
January 6-9, 2011	39	37	11	12	1
December 16-19, 2010	39	31	14	15	2
December 9-12, 2010	39	30	14	16	1
December 2-5, 2010	52	28	11	9	*
November 18-21, 2010	46	31	11	11	*
November 11-14, 2010	38	30	15	16	1
November 4-7, 2010	44	32	11	13	*
October 28-November 1, 2010	39	34	11	15	1
October 21-24, 2010	41	29	14	14	1
October 14-17, 2010	42	33	12	13	*
October 7-10, 2010	36	33	15	15	1
September 30-October 3, 2010	43	35	10	11	1
September 23-26, 2010	43	34	13	9	1
September 16-19, 2010	37	30	16	16	1
September 2-6, 2010	43	31	13	12	*
August 19-22, 2010	39	31	14	15	1
August 5-8, 2010	39	33	14	13	1
July 29-August 1, 2010	51	33	11	5	*
July 22-25, 2010	46	33	14	6	1
July 15-18, 2010	37	33	14	15	1
July 8-11, 2010	36	33	15	16	*
July 1-5, 2010	48	30	13	8	*
June 24-27, 2010	37	37	15	11	1
June 17-20, 2010	38	34	15	13	*
June 10-13, 2010	39	35	17	9	*
June 3-6, 2010	35	33	16	14	1
May 27-30, 2010	43	29	13	15	*
May 20-23, 2010	40	35	13	11	*
May 13-16, 2010	49	32	11	8	1
May 7-10, 2010	42	34	11	12	*
April 30-May 3, 2010	32	37	17	14	1
April 23-26, 2010	42	31	13	14	*
April 16-19, 2010	40	32	14	14	0
April 9-12, 2010	40	32	15	13	*
April 1-5, 2010	33	34	14	19	*
March 19-22, 2010	41	32	14	13	*

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
March 12-15, 2010	41	35	12	12	*
March 5-8, 2010	40	34	12	13	*
February 26-March 1, 2010	31	33	17	19	*
February 19-22, 2010	38	34	15	12	*
February 12-15, 2010	35	34	15	16	*
February 5-8, 2010	43	36	13	9	*
January 29-February 1, 2010	45	32	13	10	*
January 22-25, 2010	41	34	14	10	*
January 15-18, 2010	37	38	14	11	*
January 8-11, 2010	39	33	15	12	*
December 18-21, 2009	45	31	14	10	0
December 11-14, 2009	42	31	14	13	*
December 4-7, 2009	41	36	13	9	1
November 13-16, 2009	38	33	14	15	*
October 30-November 2, 2009	34	32	17	16	*
October 23-26, 2009	44	30	15	10	1
October 9-12, 2009	41	29	16	13	*
October 2-5, 2009	44	30	15	11	0
September 25-28, 2009	44	37	10	10	*
September 18-21, 2009	44	34	15	7	*
September 11-14, 2009	45	32	14	9	*
September 3-6, 2009	41	31	15	13	*
August 28-31, 2009	45	30	13	12	1
August 21-24, 2009	50	27	13	10	1
August 14-17, 2009	41	37	11	12	*
August 7-10, 2009	42	34	13	10	*
July 31-August 3, 2009	46	34	11	8	*
July 24-27, 2009	45	35	12	8	*
July 17-20, 2009	43	35	11	11	1
July 10-13, 2009	37	38	13	11	*
July 2-5, 2009	38	35	15	12	*
June 19-22, 2009	42	33	15	10	*
June 12-15, 2009	41	35	12	12	*
June 5-8, 2009	41	34	11	14	*
May 29-June 1, 2009	43	37	11	8	*
May 21-24, 2009	44	35	13	9	*
May 15-18, 2009	44	35	12	8	*
May 8-11, 2009	42	34	12	12	*
May 1-4, 2009	47	36	11	5	1
April 17-20, 2009	52	30	10	7	1
April 9-13, 2009	48	29	13	10	0
March 27-30, 2009	48	32	10	10	*
March 20-23, 2009	52	34	8	6	*
March 13-16, 2009	48	33	9	10	*
February 27-March 2, 2009	56	30	8	6	*
February 13-16, 2009	55	29	10	6	*
January 30-February 2, 2009	52	31	12	5	*
January 23-26, 2009	57	30	8	5	0
January 16-19, 2009	43	35	13	9	*
January 2-4, 2009	42	36	15	7	*
December 12-15, 2008	51	33	9	7	*
December 5-8, 2008	42	38	13	7	*
November 21-24, 2008	59	24	9	8	*
November 14-17, 2008	56	29	9	6	*
November 7-10, 2008	54	31	8	7	*
October 31-November 3, 2008	63	27	6	4	*
October 24-27, 2008	52	35	7	5	1
October 17-20, 2008	62	29	6	3	*
October 10-13, 2008	65	25	7	3	*

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 3-6, 2008	69	23	5	3	*
September 26-29, 2008	70	22	5	3	*
September 19-22, 2008	56	27	12	5	*
September 5-8, 2008	44	33	16	7	*
August 29-31, 2008	41	34	13	11	1
August 15-18, 2008	39	36	15	10	*
August 8-11, 2008	39	35	16	10	*
August 1-4, 2008	47	34	11	8	0
July 25-28, 2008	46	32	10	12	*
July 18-21, 2008	45	33	13	9	*
July 11-14, 2008	44	33	12	10	1
June 27-30, 2008	49	31	12	7	1
June 13-16, 2008	42	33	14	11	*
May 9-12, 2008	45	31	13	11	*
May 2-5, 2008	43	31	15	10	1
April 18-21, 2008	41	35	13	10	1
April 4-7, 2008	39	37	12	12	*
March 28-31, 2008	42	36	14	8	*
March 20-24, 2008	45	33	13	9	*
February 29-March 3, 2008	38	35	15	11	1
February 15-18, 2008	37	36	11	16	8
February 1-4, 2008	40	37	14	8	1
January 18-21, 2008	42	31	16	11	*
January 11-14, 2008	36	32	15	16	1
November 2-5, 2007	27	37	16	19	1
October 19-22, 2007	25	34	20	21	*
August 10-13, 2007	28	36	18	18	*
Mid-November, 2006	31	40	17	11	1
December, 2005	35	35	18	11	1
Early November, 2005	35	39	17	9	*
Mid-May, 2005	30	39	19	11	1
January, 2005	35	41	17	7	*
Mid-October, 2004	30	43	16	10	1
Early September, 2004	39	34	15	11	1
Mid-January, 2004	37	41	15	7	*
December, 2003	35	38	14	11	2
November, 2003	40	34	15	10	1
October, 2003	32	39	16	12	1
September, 2003	39	30	18	12	1
March, 2003	40	35	16	8	1
February, 2003	42	33	15	10	*
December, 2002	38	34	17	10	1
February, 2002	35	40	15	9	1
January, 2002	30	44	16	9	1
December, 2001	37	40	13	8	2
Mid-November, 2001	41	36	15	7	1
June, 2001	24	41	18	16	1
May, 2001	34	36	15	15	0
April, 2001	36	34	16	13	1
February, 2001	30	39	18	12	1
January, 2001	32	38	17	11	2
June, 1995	26	41	22	11	*
March, 1995	27	45	19	9	*
February, 1995	23	41	22	13	1
December, 1994	28	43	20	9	*
October, 1994	27	40	20	12	1
June, 1994	25	42	23	10	*
May, 1994	33	40	16	10	1
January, 1994	34	39	16	10	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
Early January, 1994	36	44	13	7	*
December, 1993	35	41	15	8	1
October, 1993	33	38	20	9	*
September, 1993	37	40	14	8	1
Early September, 1993	39	39	14	9	*
August, 1993	41	36	14	9	*
May, 1993	37	38	18	6	1
February, 1993	49	36	10	5	*
January, 1993	42	39	12	7	*
September, 1992	43	37	13	6	1
May, 1992	39	39	15	6	1
March, 1992	47	38	11	4	*
February, 1992	47	37	10	6	*
January, 1992	44	40	11	5	*
October, 1991	36	38	16	9	1
b. Military air strikes in Libya by the U.S. and its allies					
March 31-April 3, 2011	37	31	17	14	1
March 24-27, 2011	33	34	17	15	*
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
March 17-20, 2011: <i>The conflict between rebels and government forces in Libya</i>	26	28	21	23	1
March 10-13, 2011: <i>Growing violence in Libya</i>	29	29	21	20	*
March 3-6, 2011	31	31	18	19	1
February 24-27, 2011	38	30	15	16	*
February 17-20, 2011: <i>News about the situation in Egypt</i>	34	32	17	16	1
February 17-20, 2011: <i>Anti-government protests in other Middle Eastern and North African nations</i>	20	30	22	28	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	*
January 20-23, 2011: <i>Political instability in Tunisia following the collapse of the government</i>	7	15	25	53	1
January, 2007: <i>The U.S. air strikes on suspected terrorist sites in Somalia</i>	17	32	27	23	1
May, 1999: <i>NATO air strikes against Serbian forces</i>	32	38	19	10	1
Late April, 1999	41	39	13	7	*
April, 1999	41	37	16	6	0
March, 1999: <i>NATO air strikes against Serbian forces in Kosovo</i>	43	32	15	9	1
August, 1998: <i>U.S. military strikes against sites linked to terrorists in Afghanistan and Sudan</i>	44	35	13	8	*
July 10-24, 1986: <i>The U.S. air strike against Libya</i>	58	27	11	3	1

PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
BASED ON INTERVIEWING CONDUCTED					
MARCH 30-APRIL 1, 2011 [N=410]					
c. Political unrest in Syria	22	25	28	25	*
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
March 24-27, 2011: Egyptians voting in a referendum to modify their constitution	8	19	30	43	*
February 17-20, 2011: News about the situation in Egypt	34	32	17	16	1
February 17-20, 2011: Anti-government protests in other Middle Eastern and North African nations	20	30	22	28	1
February 10-13, 2011: Anti-government protests in Egypt and the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak	39	31	14	15	1
February 3-6, 2011: Anti-government protests in Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries	32	35	16	18	*
January 27-30, 2011	17	26	21	35	*
January 20-23, 2011: Political instability in Tunisia following the collapse of the government	7	15	25	53	1
January 13-16, 2011: The collapse of the Lebanese government	4	11	20	64	*
May 20-23, 2010: A government crackdown on protestors in Thailand	7	14	27	52	1
July 31-August 3, 2009: The Iranian government's crackdown on opposition protestors	18	23	26	31	2
July 2-5, 2009: News about controversy surrounding the recent Iranian election	22	31	23	23	*
June 26-29, 2009: The Iranian government's crackdown on election protestors	31	27	18	23	1
June 19-22, 2009: Protests in Iran over disputed elections	28	28	21	22	1
March 20-24, 2008: Violent protests in Tibet against the Chinese government	12	27	26	35	*
September 28-October 1, 2007: Pro-democracy protests by Buddhist monks in Burma	13	27	20	39	1
March 17-21, 2005: Protests and political changes in Lebanon	10	28	25	36	1
October 6-8, 2000: Civil unrest and rioting in Belgrade, Yugoslavia	18	27	24	31	*
January 9-12, 1997: Protests and demonstrations in Belgrade against Serbian President Milosevic	7	14	29	49	1
BASED ON INTERVIEWING CONDUCTED					
APRIL 1-3, 2011 [N=598]					
c. Deadly protests in Afghanistan after a Florida pastor burned a Koran	15	19	29	36	1

PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
September 9-12, 2010: <i>Controversy over a Florida pastor's plan, later cancelled, to burn copies of the Koran on September 11th</i> ¹	33	25	15	25	1
June, 2005: <i>Newsweek's retraction of a story about flushing the Koran down a toilet as part of prisoner interrogation</i>	20	29	21	29	1
d. The NCAA basketball tournament					
March 31-April 3, 2011	13	13	17	57	*
April 1-5, 2010	18	13	13	56	*
April 3-6, 2009	15	12	15	58	*
March 28-31, 2008	13	14	13	59	1
March, 1998	20	13	19	47	1
April, 1990	24	16	14	46	*
e. The aftermath of a major earthquake and tsunami in Japan					
March 31-April 3, 2011	50	35	9	5	*
March 24-27, 2011	50	35	12	3	*
March 17-20, 2011	55	31	9	4	*
March 11-13, 2011: <i>A major earthquake and tsunami off the coast of Japan</i> ²	52	29	12	7	*
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
February 24-27, 2011: <i>A major earthquake in New Zealand</i>	20	30	26	23	1
October 28-November 1, 2010: <i>A tsunami and a volcano erupting in Indonesia</i>	11	25	27	36	1
March 12-15, 2010: <i>Major aftershocks in Chile following an earthquake in late February</i>	18	41	27	14	*
March 5-8, 2010: <i>A major earthquake in Chile</i>	27	42	19	12	*
February 19-22, 2010: <i>Haiti releasing most of the Americans who were accused of attempted kidnapping</i>	16	30	29	23	*
February 12-15, 2010: <i>The aftermath of a major earthquake and relief efforts in Haiti</i>	37	37	17	8	*
February 5-8, 2010	42	39	13	6	*
January 29-February 1, 2010	45	38	13	4	*
January 22-25, 2010	50	40	8	3	*
January 15-18, 2010: <i>A major earthquake in Haiti</i>	60	28	8	4	*
August 14-17, 2009: <i>A typhoon that caused flooding and mudslides in Taiwan</i>	7	21	30	41	1
April 9-13, 2009: <i>A major earthquake in Italy</i>	18	35	25	22	*
May 16-19, 2008: <i>The earthquake in China</i>	30	41	17	12	*
May 9-12, 2008: <i>Reports about the cyclone that hit Burma</i>	23	35	23	19	*
November 2-5, 2007: <i>The impact of Hurricane Noel on the Bahamas and Cuba</i>	11	22	31	35	1

¹ On the first night of the field period (September 9) the item was worded: "Plans by a Florida pastor to burn copies of the Koran on September 11th."

² This item was added to polling on the second day of the field period. Data were collected March 11-13, 2011. N=671.

PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
September 7-10, 2007: <i>The impact of Hurricanes Felix and Henriette on Mexico and Central America</i>	14	29	29	27	1
August 24-27, 2007: <i>The destruction caused by Hurricane Dean in Mexico and the Caribbean</i>	18	39	24	18	1
October, 2005: <i>The earthquake in Pakistan</i>	22	39	23	16	*
January 2005: <i>The earthquake and tsunami in the Indian Ocean</i>	58	32	7	3	*
January 2004: <i>The earthquake in Iran</i>	16	34	31	19	*
February 2001: <i>The earthquake in India</i>	15	33	31	20	1
March 2000: <i>Flood rescue efforts in Mozambique</i>	10	26	30	34	*
September 1999: <i>The earthquake in Turkey</i>	27	37	23	12	1
November 1998: <i>Hurricane Mitch and the rain and mudslides in Central America</i>	36	36	16	11	1
February 1995: <i>The earthquake in Japan</i>	25	47	20	8	*
May 1991: <i>The cyclone that devastated Bangladesh</i>	23	36	23	17	1
July 1990: <i>The earthquake in Iran</i>	20	36	28	16	*
f. Discussions in Washington about how to address the federal budget deficit					
March 31-April 3, 2011	30	27	21	22	*
March 17-20, 2011	24	25	24	26	1
March 3-6, 2011	26	29	19	26	1
February 17-20, 2011	27	30	17	25	1
December 2-5, 2010	35	25	21	17	2
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
November 11-14, 2010: Proposals made by leaders of the federal budget deficit commission	15	21	21	41	1
January 9-12, 2009: Projections of a record high federal budget deficit this year	35	30	19	16	*
November, 1990: Congressional and administration efforts to reach a budget deficit agreement	34	33	20	11	2
October, 1990: Attempts by Congress and the administration to find ways to reduce the budget deficit	34	37	17	12	*
August, 1990	19	30	27	23	1
July, 1990: President Bush's call for higher taxes to help reduce the federal deficit	30	34	22	14	*
June, 1990: Special meetings between the Bush administration and congressional leaders to find ways to reduce the federal deficit	18	33	28	20	1
April, 1990: The spending and tax proposals made by Congressman Dan Rostenkowski to help reduce the budget deficit	10	22	26	42	*

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.**]

BASED ON INTERVIEWING CONDUCTED APRIL 1-3, 2011 ONLY [N=598]

Apr 1-3

2011

50	The aftermath of a major earthquake and tsunami in Japan
14	Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy
13	Military air strikes in Libya by the U.S. and its allies
6	Discussions in Washington about how to address the federal budget deficit
5	The NCAA basketball tournament
1	Deadly protests in Afghanistan after a Florida pastor burned a Koran
4	Some other story (VOL.)
8	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

ASK ALL:

PEW.3 How much if anything, have you heard about each of the following? Have you heard a lot, a little or nothing at all? [**INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE**]

	<u>A lot</u>	<u>A little</u>	<u>Nothing at all</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
a. The Supreme Court hearing arguments about a major gender-discrimination case involving Wal-Mart March 31-April 3, 2011	20	44	35	*
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:				
July 1-5, 2010: <i>A Supreme Court ruling on the constitutionality of state and local gun control laws</i>	28	41	30	*
February 3-9, 2010: <i>The Supreme Court's decision on campaign finance rules that now allows corporations to spend on behalf of candidates in elections</i> ³	19	46	35	1
July 10-13, 2009: <i>Claims that a private swimming pool near Philadelphia discriminated against a group of black and Latino children</i>	16	31	53	1
July, 2007: <i>Any of the decisions issued by the Supreme Court over the past year</i>	19	61	18	2
April, 2007: <i>A recent Supreme Court ruling upholding a ban on a specific abortion procedure often referred to as a "partial birth abortion"</i>	26	45	28	2
April, 2003: <i>A recent Supreme Court case dealing with the University of Michigan's admissions program that takes race into account, as well as grades, activities and other factors when deciding who to admit</i>	18	36	4	*
b. The FDA studying whether artificial dyes in foods make children hyperactive March 31-April 3, 2011	12	40	48	*
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:				
November 18-21, 2010: <i>Warnings by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) that alcoholic energy drinks are unsafe</i>	42	37	20	1
November 11-14, 2010: <i>The federal FDA's new graphic warning labels for cigarette packs in the U.S.</i>	17	38	44	1
April 23-26, 2010: <i>The FDA encouraging food companies to reduce salt in processed foods</i>	20	48	33	*
July 2-5, 2009: <i>An FDA panel recommending restrictions on painkillers such as Tylenol and Vicodin because they can cause liver damage</i>	29	38	33	*

³ Supreme Court items asked in February 2010, July 2007, April 2007 and April 2003 were not asked as part of a list.

PEW.3 CONTINUED...

	<u>A lot</u>	<u>A little</u>	<u>Nothing at all</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
June 19-22, 2009: <i>The FDA advising consumers to stop using Zicam cold remedy because it could damage people's sense of smell</i>	21	35	44	*
c. Photos and videos related to allegations that a few American soldiers murdered Afghan civilians March 31-April 3, 2011	11	41	47	1
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:				
September 30-October 3, 2010: <i>Five U.S. soldiers who have been charged with the premeditated murder of civilians in Afghanistan</i>	15	45	40	1
June, 2005: <i>Reported mistreatment of prisoners held by the U.S. at Guantanamo Bay</i>	49	40	10	1
May, 2004: <i>Reports of mistreatment of Iraqi prisoners by U.S. troops</i>	58	34	7	1

Thinking about recent economic news ...

ASK ALL:

PEW.4 Are you hearing mostly good news about the economy these days, mostly bad news about the economy or a mix of both good and bad news?

	<u>Hearing mostly good news</u>	<u>Hearing mostly bad news</u>	<u>A mix of good and bad news</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
March 31-April 3, 2011	5	33	60	2
March 3-6, 2011	7	38	53	2
February 3-6, 2011	6	29	64	1
January 6-9, 2011	7	24	68	1
December 2-5, 2010	4	39	55	1
November 11-14, 2010	5	41	53	2
October 7-10, 2010	6	39	53	2
September 2-6, 2010	3	41	54	2
August 5-8, 2010	4	38	55	3
July 1-5, 2010	3	42	54	1
June 10-13, 2010	4	30	65	1
May 7-10, 2010	4	29	66	1
April 1-5, 2010	6	28	66	*
March 5-8, 2010	4	30	66	1
February 5-8, 2010	4	35	61	*
January 8-11, 2010	5	29	65	1
December 4-7, 2009	7	33	59	1
October 30-November 2, 2009	5	31	62	2
October 9-12, 2009	6	27	66	1
September 3-6, 2009	5	27	68	1
August 7-10, 2009	11	29	59	1
July 2-5, 2009	3	41	56	*
June 12-15, 2009	4	37	59	*
May 8-11, 2009	4	31	64	1
April 9-13, 2009	4	39	56	1
March 13-16, 2009	2	51	46	1
February 13-16, 2009	2	60	37	1
January 16-19, 2009	2	67	30	1
December 5-8, 2008	1	80	19	*

ASK ALL:

PEW.5 Thinking about some specific aspects of the nation's economy... Please tell me if you are hearing mostly good news, mostly bad news or a mix of both good and bad news about each of the following. **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**

	Hearing mostly <u>good news</u>	Hearing mostly <u>bad news</u>	A mix of good and <u>bad news</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
a. The financial markets				
March 31-April 3, 2011	13	30	51	6
March 3-6, 2011	12	33	47	8
February 3-6, 2011	17	31	46	6
December 2-5, 2010	13	38	44	4
September 2-6, 2010	9	43	40	8
July 1-5, 2010	4	46	44	6
May 7-10, 2010	6	41	49	3
April 1-5, 2010	15	30	50	6
March 5-8, 2010	11	26	59	4
January 8-11, 2010	16	32	47	6
October 30-November 2, 2009	12	33	48	7
August 7-10, 2009	20	31	43	6
June 12-15, 2009	9	43	45	3
b. Real estate values				
March 31-April 3, 2011	6	48	38	8
March 3-6, 2011	8	46	36	10
February 3-6, 2011	8	51	34	7
December 2-5, 2010	6	62	28	4
September 2-6, 2010	6	57	32	5
July 1-5, 2010	9	49	35	7
May 7-10, 2010	12	41	42	5
April 1-5, 2010	12	44	38	6
March 5-8, 2010	8	45	42	5
January 8-11, 2010	11	43	40	5
October 30-November 2, 2009	13	43	37	6
August 7-10, 2009	11	40	41	7
June 12-15, 2009	11	45	40	3
c. Prices for food and consumer goods				
March 31-April 3, 2011	3	59	34	4
March 3-6, 2011	7	62	26	5
February 3-6, 2011	7	49	39	5
December 2-5, 2010	16	41	39	5
September 2-6, 2010	12	35	42	10
July 1-5, 2010	9	32	48	10
May 7-10, 2010	8	37	46	9
April 1-5, 2010	10	35	46	9
March 5-8, 2010	9	34	50	7
January 8-11, 2010	12	37	45	6
October 30-November 2, 2009	12	39	42	7
August 7-10, 2009	10	36	46	9
June 12-15, 2009	9	39	46	6
d. The job situation				
March 31-April 3, 2011	12	43	42	2
March 3-6, 2011	10	50	37	3
February 3-6, 2011	9	52	37	2
December 2-5, 2010	6	66	27	1
September 2-6, 2010	5	65	28	2
July 1-5, 2010	5	64	30	1
May 7-10, 2010	9	52	38	2
April 1-5, 2010	9	56	33	2

PEW.5 CONTINUED...

	Hearing mostly <u>good news</u>	Hearing mostly <u>bad news</u>	A mix of good and <u>bad news</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
March 5-8, 2010	5	59	35	1
January 8-11, 2010	6	61	31	2
October 30-November 2, 2009	3	68	27	2
August 7-10, 2009	6	61	32	1
June 12-15, 2009	1	71	27	1
e. Gas prices				
March 31-April 3, 2011	1	88	10	1
March 3-6, 2011	1	90	7	2
February 3-6, 2011	2	77	18	3