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Republicans Sour on Ben Bernanke

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As Ben Bernanke prepares to step down as chairman of the Federal Reserve in January, the public views him somewhat more favorably (38%) than unfavorably (31%), with 32% unable to offer a rating. Bernanke is better known now than he was in March 2008, when 55% could not rate him; at that time, 24% viewed him favorably and 21% held an unfavorable view.

The national survey by the Pew Research Center, conducted Sept. 4-8 among 1,506 adults, finds that Republicans view Bernanke less favorably than they did five years ago. Currently, more Republicans have an unfavorable (42%) than favorable (32%) view of Bernanke. In March 2008, three years after George W. Bush nominated him as Fed chair, Republicans viewed Bernanke favorably by three-to-one (36%-12%).

Tea Party Republicans, in particular, have a highly negative view of the outgoing Fed chair. Fully 64% of Republicans and Republican leaners who agree with the Tea Party have an unfavorable impression of Bernanke. That compares with just 32% of non-Tea Party Republicans.

By contrast, Bernanke's image among Democrats is more positive than it was in 2008. In the current survey, Democrats view Bernanke favorably by a 42%-19% margin. Democrats had mixed views of Bernanke in 2008 (22% favorable, 25% unfavorable). Independents continue to express mixed views of the Fed chair.

Public Views of Ben Bernanke

<i>Opinion of Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke ...</i>	March 2008	Sept 2013	Change
	%	%	
Favorable	24	38	+14
Unfavorable	21	31	+10
Can't rate/DK	<u>55</u>	<u>32</u>	-23
	100	100	

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Sept. 4-8, 2013.
 Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Shifting Partisan Opinions of Departing Fed Chairman

	Rep	Dem	Ind
Sept 2013	%	%	%
Favorable	32	42	38
Unfavorable	42	19	35
Can't rate/DK	<u>26</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>27</u>
	100	100	100
March 2008			
Favorable	36	22	20
Unfavorable	12	25	22
Can't rate/DK	<u>51</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>57</u>
	100	100	100
<i>08-13 change in "unfavorable"</i>	+30	-6	+13

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Sept. 4-8, 2013.
 Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Bernanke is better known – and better liked – among college graduates than those with less education. About three-quarters of college graduates (76%) are able to offer a rating of Bernanke and they view him more favorably than unfavorably by a 46%-31% margin. Among those who have not completed college, fewer have an impression of Bernanke (65%) and opinions are more mixed (35% favorable vs. 31% unfavorable).

Views of Bernanke are closely tied to impressions of the stock market recovery. Among the roughly one-in-five Americans (21%) who say the stock market has fully recovered from the recession: 55% view Bernanke favorably compared with 32% who view him unfavorably (14% have no opinion). Bernanke is not as well known, and is viewed less favorably, among those who say the market has partially recovered (53% of the public) or has hardly recovered at all (18% from the recession. (For more, see [“Five Years after Market Crash, U.S. Economy Seen as ‘No More Secure’](#),” Sept. 12, 2013.)

Bernanke Popular among Those Who See Full Market Recovery

	Fav- orable	Un- favorable	Can't rate/DK
<i>View of Fed Chair Ben Bernanke ...</i>			
	%	%	%
Total	38	31	32=100
18-49	34	31	36=100
50+	43	30	27=100
College grad+	46	31	24=100
Some college or less	35	31	35=100
<i>Family income</i>			
\$75,000 or more	45	34	21=100
\$30,000-\$75,000	40	32	28=100
Less than \$30,000	32	28	40=100
Republican	32	42	26=100
Democrat	42	19	39=100
Independent	38	35	27=100
<i>Among Rep/Rep-leaning</i>			
Tea Party	24	64	13=100
Non-Tea Party	38	32	31=100
<i>Since recession, stock market has ...</i>			
Fully recovered	55	32	14=100
Partially recovered	38	32	30=100
Hardly recovered at all	30	38	32=100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Sept. 4-8, 2013.
Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

About the Survey

The analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted September 4-8, 2013 among a national sample of 1,506 adults, 18 years of age or older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia (751 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 755 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 401 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 nativity 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 and relative usage of landline and cell phones (for those with both), 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	1,506	2.9 percentage points
Republican	396	5.7 percentage points
Democrat	472	5.3 percentage points
Independent	569	4.8 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 FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
SEPTEMBER 2013 POLITICAL SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
September 4-8, 2013
N=1,506

QUESTIONS 1, 3a-b, 3f, 3i, 4-8, 10 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED
NO QUESTIONS 2, 3d-e, 3g-h, 9, 11-14
QUESTIONS 3c, 15, 16, 17a, HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK ALL:

Next,

Q.17 Would you say your overall opinion of **[INSERT NAME; RANDOMIZE; OBSERVE FORM SPLITS]** very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable? How about **[NEXT NAME]? [IF NECESSARY: Just in general, is your overall opinion of [NAME] very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable?] [INTERVIEWERS: PROBE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN "NEVER HEARD OF" AND "CAN'T RATE."]**

	-----Favorable-----			-----Unfavorable-----			(VOL.)	(VOL.)
	Total	Very	Mostly	Total	Very	Mostly	Never heard of	Can't rate/Ref
b. Ben Bernanke, chairman of the Federal Reserve								
Sep 4-8, 2013	38	6	31	31	10	20	17	14
March, 2008	24	4	20	20	7	13	31	25

QUESTIONS 17c-d, 29a-b, 29d, 35-39, 41, 44, 45, 60-61, 63-67, 69, 78-84 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED
NO QUESTIONS 18-28, 30-34, 40, 42, 43, 46-54, 57-59, 62, 68, 70-77
QUESTIONS 29c, 55, 56, 85 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK ALL:

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

ASK IF INDEP/NO PREF/OTHER/DK/REF (PARTY=3,4,5,9):

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

	Republican	Democrat	Independent	(VOL.)		(VOL.)	Lean Rep	Lean Dem
				No preference	Other party			
Sep 4-8, 2013	26	32	38	3	1	1	17	15
Jul 17-21, 2013	19	29	46	3	*	2	19	18
Jun 12-16, 2013	23	33	39	3	*	2	17	15
May 1-5, 2013	25	32	37	2	1	3	14	16
Mar 13-17, 2013	26	33	34	3	1	3	14	15
Feb 13-18, 2013	22	32	41	2	*	2	15	19
Jan 9-13, 2013	25	32	38	2	*	2	15	16
Dec 17-19, 2012	21	32	38	4	*	4	15	14
Dec 5-9, 2012	23	33	38	3	1	2	14	19
Oct 31-Nov 3, 2012	26	34	34	3	1	3	13	16
Oct 24-28, 2012	28	33	33	4	*	2	12	16
Oct 4-7, 2012	27	31	36	3	1	3	15	15
Sep 12-16, 2012	24	35	36	2	*	2	14	16
Yearly Totals								
2012	24.7	32.6	36.4	3.1	.5	2.7	14.4	16.1
2011	24.3	32.3	37.4	3.1	.4	2.5	15.7	15.6
2010	25.2	32.7	35.2	3.6	.4	2.8	14.5	14.1
2009	23.9	34.4	35.1	3.4	.4	2.8	13.1	15.7
2008	25.7	36.0	31.5	3.6	.3	3.0	10.6	15.2
2007	25.3	32.9	34.1	4.3	.4	2.9	10.9	17.0
2006	27.8	33.1	30.9	4.4	.3	3.4	10.5	15.1
2005	29.3	32.8	30.2	4.5	.3	2.8	10.3	14.9
2004	30.0	33.5	29.5	3.8	.4	3.0	11.7	13.4

PARTY/PARTYLN CONTINUED...

				(VOL.)	(VOL.)	(VOL.)	Lean	Lean
	Republican	Democrat	Independent	No preference	Other party	DK/Ref	Rep	Dem
2003	30.3	31.5	30.5	4.8	.5	2.5	12.0	12.6
2002	30.4	31.4	29.8	5.0	.7	2.7	12.4	11.6
2001	29.0	33.2	29.5	5.2	.6	2.6	11.9	11.6
2001 Post-Sept 11	30.9	31.8	27.9	5.2	.6	3.6	11.7	9.4
2001 Pre-Sept 11	27.3	34.4	30.9	5.1	.6	1.7	12.1	13.5
2000	28.0	33.4	29.1	5.5	.5	3.6	11.6	11.7
1999	26.6	33.5	33.7	3.9	.5	1.9	13.0	14.5
1998	27.9	33.7	31.1	4.6	.4	2.3	11.6	13.1
1997	28.0	33.4	32.0	4.0	.4	2.3	12.2	14.1
1996	28.9	33.9	31.8	3.0	.4	2.0	12.1	14.9
1995	31.6	30.0	33.7	2.4	.6	1.3	15.1	13.5
1994	30.1	31.5	33.5	1.3	--	3.6	13.7	12.2
1993	27.4	33.6	34.2	4.4	1.5	2.9	11.5	14.9
1992	27.6	33.7	34.7	1.5	0	2.5	12.6	16.5
1991	30.9	31.4	33.2	0	1.4	3.0	14.7	10.8
1990	30.9	33.2	29.3	1.2	1.9	3.4	12.4	11.3
1989	33	33	34	--	--	--	--	--
1987	26	35	39	--	--	--	--	--

ASK REPUBLICANS AND REPUBLICAN LEANERS ONLY (PARTY=1 OR PARTYLN=1):

TEAPARTY3 From what you know, do you agree or disagree with the Tea Party movement, or don't you have an opinion either way?

BASED ON REPUBLICANS AND REPUBLICAN LEANERS [N=657]:

	Agree	Disagree	No opinion either way	(VOL.) Haven't heard of	(VOL.) Refused	Not heard of/DK
Sep 4-8, 2013	35	9	54	1	1	--
Jul 17-21, 2013	37	10	50	2	1	--
Jun 12-16, 2013	44	9	46	1	2	--
May 23-26, 2013	41	7	48	1	3	--
May 1-5, 2013	28	8	61	2	1	--
Mar 13-17, 2013	43	7	47	1	1	--
Feb 13-18, 2013	36	9	52	1	3	--
Feb 14-17, 2013	43	9	45	1	2	--
Jan 9-13, 2013	35	10	51	2	2	--
Dec 5-9, 2012	37	11	51	1	*	--
Oct 31-Nov 3, 2012 (RVs)	40	8	49	1	2	--
Oct 4-7, 2012	38	9	50	1	3	--
Sep 12-16, 2013	39	7	52	1	1	--
Jun 28-Jul 9, 2012	40	9	47	2	1	--
Jun 7-17, 2012	42	8	48	1	1	--
May 9-Jun 3, 2012	36	9	53	1	2	--
Apr 4-15, 2012	42	8	48	1	1	--
Mar 7-11, 2012	38	10	49	2	1	--
Feb 8-12, 2012	40	7	51	1	1	--
Jan 11-16, 2012	42	8	47	1	1	--
Jan 4-8, 2012	37	8	52	1	1	--
Dec 7-11, 2011	40	9	48	2	1	--
Nov 9-14, 2011	41	9	49	*	1	--
Sep 22-Oct 4, 2011	37	11	51	1	1	--
Aug 17-21, 2011	43	7	49	*	1	--
Jul 20-24, 2011	40	7	51	*	1	--
Jun 15-19, 2011	42	9	47	1	1	--
May 25-30, 2011	37	7	52	1	3	--
Mar 30-Apr 3, 2011	45	9	46	*	1	--
Mar 8-14, 2011	37	7	54	1	*	--

TEAPARTY3 CONTINUED...

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>No opinion either way</u>	(VOL.) <u>Haven't heard of</u>	(VOL.) <u>Refused</u>	<i>Not heard of/ DK</i>
Feb 22-Mar 1, 2011	41	9	48	1	1	--
Feb 2-7, 2011 ¹	43	8	47	1	1	--
Jan 5-9, 2011	45	6	47	1	1	--
Dec 1-5, 2010	48	5	45	1	1	--
Nov 4-7, 2010	51	5	42	1	1	--
Oct 27-30, 2010 (RVs)	58	5	27	--	1	9
Oct 13-18, 2010 (RVs)	54	5	30	--	1	10
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010 (RVs)	56	6	29	--	*	9
Jul 21-Aug 5, 2010	46	5	36	--	1	13
Jun 16-20, 2010	46	5	30	--	*	19
May 20-23, 2010	53	4	25	--	1	16
Mar 11-21, 2010	48	4	26	--	1	21

¹ In the February 2-7, 2011, survey and before, question read "...do you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the Tea Party movement..." In October 2010 and earlier, question was asked only of those who had heard or read a lot or a little about the Tea Party. In May 2010 through October 2010, it was described as: "the Tea Party movement that has been involved in campaigns and protests in the U.S. over the past year." In March 2010 it was described as "the Tea Party protests that have taken place in the U.S. over the past year."