



REASON-RUPE

Public Opinion Survey

JANUARY 2013 TOPLINE RESULTS

RELEASED: JANUARY 30, 2013

The Reason-Rupe January 2013 Poll interviewed 1000 adults on both mobile (500) and landline (500) phones, including 228 respondents without landlines from January 17 to 21, 2013. The margin of sampling error is +/- 3.8%. The margin of error increases for open-ended questions asked of subsets of the survey sample. Princeton Survey Research Associates International (PSRAI) conducted the survey. Interviews were done in English by Princeton Data Source LLC. Statistical results are weighted to correct known demographic discrepancies. When feasible, answer choices within questions were rotated. For more methodological information, please visit <http://reason.com/reason-rupe-poll-methodology>.

The poll questionnaire, crosstabs, and analysis can be found at reason.com/poll.

1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as president?

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Approve | 52% |
| Disapprove | 42% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 7% |
| Total | 100% |

2 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling the economy?

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Approve | 48% |
| Disapprove | 47% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 5% |
| Total | 100% |

3 Do you approve or disapprove of the job the U.S. Congress is doing?

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Approve | 17% |
| Disapprove | 74% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 9% |
| Total | 100% |

4 What ONE word would you use to describe Congress? (OPEN) (ASKED OF HALF SAMPLE)

| | |
|----------------------------------|------|
| <i>NET Positive</i> | 11% |
| <i>NET Negative</i> | 85% |
| Incompetent/Inept/Terrible/Bad | 40% |
| Partisan/Uncompromising/Stubborn | 13% |
| Greedy/Selfish/Corrupt | 11% |
| Childish/Immature/Irresponsible | 5% |
| Excellent/Good/Ok | 4% |
| Efficient/Hard Working | 4% |
| Honest/Dedicated | 3% |
| Other-Neutral | 4% |
| Other-Negative | 16% |
| Total | 100% |

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Answer Given | 88% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 12% |
| Total | 100% |

5 Overall...in recent years, do you think Congress has had a positive impact or a negative impact on the national economy – or not much impact either way?

| | |
|---------------------|------|
| Positive | 10% |
| Negative | 53% |
| Not much either way | 32% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 5% |
| Total | 100% |

6 In just a few words...what do you think should be President Obama's TOP priority for his second term? (OPEN) (ASKED OF HALF SAMPLE)

| | |
|---|------|
| Economy | 29% |
| Jobs | 19% |
| Federal Deficit/Cut Spending/Balance Budget | 13% |
| Health care | 6% |
| Fix Congress/Bipartisanship | 5% |
| American People/Uniting Nation | 5% |
| Gun control/Violence | 3% |
| Foreign Policy/Ending the Wars | 3% |
| Tax reform | 3% |
| Leaving Office/Fixing His Mistakes | 3% |
| Immigration reform | 2% |
| Education | 1% |
| Other | 7% |
| Total | 100% |

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Answer Given | 94% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 6% |
| Total | 100% |

7 In your view, does the federal government spend too much money, too little money, or about the right amount of money?

| | |
|------------------------|------|
| Too much | 74% |
| Too little | 5% |
| About the right amount | 14% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 6% |
| Total | 100% |

8 What one or two things in particular do you think the government spends too much money on? (OPEN) (Results below show first mention, ASKED IF Q7=1)

| | |
|-------------------------------|------|
| Defense/Military/Wars | 21% |
| Themselves/Salaries/Campaigns | 17% |
| Welfare/Social Programs | 13% |
| Foreign Aid | 13% |
| Entitlements | 5% |
| Wasteful Spending | 6% |
| Pork/Special Interests | 4% |
| Health Care/Obamacare | 3% |
| Federal Bureacracy | 3% |
| Research Grants/Studies | 2% |
| Corporate Bailouts | 2% |
| Unemployment Benefits | 1% |
| Other | 9% |
| Total | 100% |
| | |
| Answer Given | 90% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 10% |
| Total | 100% |

9 Which of these statements do you think best describes the federal budget deficit?

| | |
|---|------|
| It is a major problem that the country must address now, | 75% |
| It is a major problem that should be addressed when the economy is better, OR | 20% |
| It is not much of a problem for the country? | 3% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 3% |
| Total | 100% |

10 In your opinion, what is the MOST important thing that should be done to reduce the national debt? (OPEN) (ASKED IF Q9=1)

| | |
|---------------------------------------|------|
| Reduce Spending | 36% |
| Tax reform/Increase taxes | 9% |
| Jobs/Grow Economy | 8% |
| Reduce Politicians' Pay/Perks | 5% |
| Reduce Spending: Defense | 6% |
| Reduce Spending: Entitlements/Welfare | 5% |
| Reduce Foreign Aid | 5% |
| Cut Size of Govt | 4% |
| Pay Down Debt | 4% |
| Other | 18% |
| Total | 100% |

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Answer Given | 87% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 13% |
| Total | 100% |

Earlier this month, Congress allowed the payroll tax holiday to end for all Americans and increased taxes on wealthier Americans to avert the so-called “fiscal cliff.” Experts agree that further Congressional action is necessary to reduce the national debt. Please tell me if you would strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose the following proposals to reduce the national debt.

11 Would you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose increasing taxes on all taxpayers as a way to reduce the national debt?

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| <i>NET Support</i> | 33% |
| <i>NET Oppose</i> | 65% |
| Strongly support | 11% |
| Somewhat support | 22% |
| Somewhat oppose | 20% |
| Strongly oppose | 45% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 2% |
| Total | 100% |

12 Would you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose increasing taxes on only wealthier households as a way to reduce the national debt?

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| <i>NET Support</i> | 66% |
| <i>Net Oppose</i> | 31% |
| Strongly support | 40% |
| Somewhat support | 26% |
| Somewhat oppose | 15% |
| Strongly oppose | 16% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 3% |
| Total | 100% |

13 Would you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose reducing spending as a way to reduce the national debt?

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| <i>NET Support</i> | 85% |
| <i>NET Oppose</i> | 12% |
| Strongly support | 60% |
| Somewhat support | 25% |
| Somewhat oppose | 6% |
| Strongly oppose | 6% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 3% |
| Total | 100% |

14 In just a few words...why do you feel taxes should be increased on wealthier households?
 (OPEN) (ASKED IF Q12=SUPPORT)

| | |
|---|------|
| They Can Afford It/Impact Less | 26% |
| They Can Afford It/ Should Contribute More | 25% |
| Wealthy Get Tax Advantages/Loopholes/Paying Less Then Everyone Else | 18% |
| Middle Class/Poor Can't Pay More | 6% |
| Equality/Fairness | 7% |
| For the Common Good | 5% |
| They Have It Better | 4% |
| Income Inequality/Rich Reap Most Benefits from Economy | 4% |
| Everyone Should Pay More | 2% |
| Other | 3% |
| Total | 100% |
| | |
| Answer Given | 97% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 3% |
| Total | 100% |

15 The federal government is expected to hit its debt limit — which is the legal limit on how much the federal government can borrow — in the next few months. Do you think Congress should or should NOT raise the debt ceiling?

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------|
| Should raise the debt ceiling | 29% |
| Should not raise the debt ceiling | 64% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 7% |
| Total | 100% |

16 If Congress decides NOT to raise the debt ceiling, which of the following do you think is likely to happen

| | |
|---|------|
| It will cause a major economic crisis, | 25% |
| It will cause a minor economic downturn, | 30% |
| It won't cause a serious economic problem, OR | 10% |
| It will help the economy? | 22% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 12% |
| Total | 100% |

17 Over the past 20 years, federal government spending increased 39 percent per person, adjusted for inflation. Would you say the increase in federal government spending has (improved) the quality of life in the U.S., (reduced) the quality of life in the U.S., or has not had much impact either way?

| | |
|------------------------------------|------|
| Improved the quality of life | 17% |
| Reduced the quality of life | 40% |
| Has not had much impact either way | 39% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 4% |
| Total | 100% |

18 If the federal government reduces its spending levels to what was spent per person during the Clinton administration in the 1990's, plus inflation, do you think it would help the economy, hurt the economy, or would not make much difference either way?

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------|
| Help the economy | 49% |
| Hurt the economy | 12% |
| Not make much difference either way | 31% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 9% |
| Total | 100% |

19 Congress passed, and the president recently signed, a \$633 billion defense bill for 2013. To help balance the budget, do you favor or oppose cutting defense spending?

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Favor | 49% |
| Oppose | 45% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 6% |
| Total | 100% |

20 What percentage of defense spending do you think could be cut — if any — without reducing U.S. security?

| | |
|-----------------------|------|
| None | 15% |
| 1% to less than 10% | 21% |
| 10% to less than 25% | 25% |
| 25% to less than 50% | 14% |
| 50% to less than 75% | 5% |
| 75% to less than 100% | 1% |
| 100% | 2% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 18% |
| Total | 100% |

21 With the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq winding down, would you favor or oppose returning defense spending to the level of money spent during the Clinton administration, plus inflation?

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Favor | 61% |
| Oppose | 25% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 15% |
| Total | 100% |

22 For every dollar you pay in federal taxes, about how many cents do you think are wasted by the government?

| | |
|--------------------|--------|
| Mean | \$0.47 |
| Median | \$0.50 |
| Don't Know/Refused | 11% |
| Total | 100% |

23 Would you favor or oppose raising the eligibility age for Medicare from 65 to 67?

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Favor | 31% |
| Oppose | 66% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 3% |
| Total | 100% |

24 The Social Security and Medicare programs provide retirement and health benefits to everybody who meets the age or disability requirements, including the wealthiest Americans. Do you think these programs should be changed so that benefits are only provided to those who are below certain income levels, or not?

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Yes | 40% |
| No | 56% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 4% |
| Total | 100% |

25 Social Security recipients receive increases in their benefits based on an estimate of increases in the cost-of-living. To slow down the rising costs of Social Security, some have proposed changing the method used to estimate increases in the cost-of-living so that benefits increase by a smaller amount. Would you favor or oppose this reform to Social Security?

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Favor | 39% |
| Oppose | 55% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 6% |
| Total | 100% |

26 Would you favor or oppose eliminating all federal tax deductions and tax credits if it results in lower overall income tax rates?

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Favor | 50% |
| Oppose | 42% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 9% |
| Total | 100% |

27 Would you favor or oppose cutting the mortgage interest tax deduction if it results in lower overall tax rates?

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Favor | 59% |
| Oppose | 32% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 9% |
| Total | 100% |

28 Do you think raising taxes on wealthy households makes a meaningful difference in reducing the money available for investing in business start-ups, or not?

| | |
|---|------|
| Yes, makes a meaningful difference | 35% |
| No, does not make a meaningful difference | 58% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 7% |
| Total | 100% |

29 Do you think raising taxes on wealthy households will (reduce) technological innovation, (increase) technological innovation, or not have much impact either way?

| | |
|--|------|
| Will reduce technological innovation | 12% |
| Will increase technological innovation | 11% |
| Will not have much impact either way | 73% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 4% |
| Total | 100% |

30 As you may know, taxes were just increased on high-earners. Do you think that these individuals will reduce the amount they work and invest, or will this NOT affect the amount they work and invest?

| | |
|---|------|
| Yes, will reduce the amount they work and invest | 26% |
| No, will not reduce the amount they work and invest | 68% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 5% |
| Total | 100% |

| | | |
|----|--|------|
| 31 | Which do you think is more important for technological innovation in our country | |
| | Private sector investment | 66% |
| | Government investment | 25% |
| | Don't Know/Refused | 9% |
| | Total | 100% |
| 32 | In just a few words, what, if anything, should be the government's reaction to the school shooting that occurred in Newtown, Connecticut last month? (OPEN) <i>(Some respondents provided up to three answers, Percentages Sum to More than 100%, ASKED OF HALF SAMPLE)</i> | |
| | % of Respondents Who Mentioned.... | |
| | Nothing/Federal Government Should Not Get Involved | 21% |
| | Security at Schools | 20% |
| | Stronger/More Gun Control | 16% |
| | Better Mental Health Services | 12% |
| | Ban Assault Weapons/Large Magazine Clips | 9% |
| | More Background Checks | 7% |
| | Respondent Agrees with President Obama's Plan | 7% |
| | Enforce Existing Gun Laws | 6% |
| | Respondent Wants Government to do Something | 5% |
| | Let States Handle Gun Laws | 2% |
| | Ban All Guns/Turn guns and ammunition into authorities | 1% |
| | Other | 13% |
| | Answer Given | 91% |
| | Don't Know/Refused | 9% |
| | Total | 100% |
| 33 | Of the following factors that some say might have helped prevent the Newtown tragedy, which one do you consider MOST important? | |
| | Better mental health treatment | 24% |
| | Stricter gun control laws | 19% |
| | Better parenting | 18% |
| | Having armed school officials or armed guards on site | 17% |
| | Less violence in media and video games | 10% |
| | Don't Know/Refused | 4% |
| | Something else | 3% |
| | Haven't you followed this news story enough to say? | 3% |
| | All of above | 1% |
| | Combination of above | 1% |
| | Total | 100% |

34 If the federal ban on assault weapons that expired in 2004 were still in effect, do you think it would have helped avoid the Newtown tragedy, or not?

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Yes | 27% |
| No | 67% |
| Depends (VOL.) | 1% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 4% |
| Total | 100% |

35 If the federal ban on assault weapons that expired in 2004 were still in effect, how would it have helped avoid the Newtown tragedy? (OPEN) (ASKED IF Q34=1)

| | |
|--|-----|
| Would have made it more difficult for Lanza to obtain the weapons used | 42% |
| Would have prevented Lanza from obtaining weapons used | 30% |
| Weapons wouldn't have fired bullets so rapidly/reducing number of casualties | 10% |
| Other (i.e. no reason for civilian to own assault weapon) | 18% |
| Answer Given | 93% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 7% |

36 Do you think people should be prohibited from owning assault weapons, or should people be allowed to own them?

| | |
|--|------|
| Prohibited from owning assault weapons | 44% |
| Allowed to own assault weapons | 51% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 5% |
| Total | 100% |

37 In just a few words, how would you describe an assault weapon? (OPEN)

(Some respondents provided up to three answers, Percentages Sum to More than 100%, ASKED OF HALF SAMPLE)

% of Respondents Who Mentioned....

| | |
|---|-----|
| Automatic Weapon | 29% |
| Fires Rapidly | 27% |
| Large Magazines | 23% |
| Fires Multiple Rounds | 17% |
| Powerful/Dangerous Gun | 15% |
| Military Style Weapon | 13% |
| Any Weapon i.e. knife or gun | 8% |
| Semi-Automatic | 7% |
| Designed to kill many people | 7% |
| Not for Hunting or Traditional Protection | 4% |
| Other | 6% |

| | |
|--|------|
| Answer Given | 93% |
| Don't Know | 7% |
| Total | 100% |
| | |
| 38 Many elected officials have called for swift government action in response to the Newtown school shooting. Which comes closest to your view | |
| Elected officials are exploiting the tragedy for political reasons | 52% |
| Elected officials are reacting responsibly | 41% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 7% |
| Total | 100% |
| | |
| 39 Do you or does any other member of your household own a handgun, rifle, shotgun, or any other kind of firearm? Is that you or another member of your household? | |
| <i>NET Household Owns Firearm</i> | 42% |
| <i>NET Household Does Not Own Firearm</i> | 54% |
| Yes, self | 17% |
| Yes, other member of household | 13% |
| Yes, self and other member of household (VOL.) | 12% |
| No | 54% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 4% |
| Total | 100% |
| | |
| 40 Please tell me which comes closer to your own opinion...the less government the better; or, there are more things government should be doing | |
| The less government the better | 47% |
| There are more things government should be doing | 46% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 7% |
| Total | 100% |
| | |
| 41 Please tell me which comes closer to your own opinion...we need a strong government to handle today's complex economic problems; or, people would be better able to handle today's problems within a free market with less govt involvement | |
| We need a strong government to handle today's complex economic problems | 45% |
| People would be better able to handle today's problems within a free market with less govt involvement | 49% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 7% |
| Total | 100% |

42 Some people think the government should promote traditional values in our society. Others think the government should not favor any particular set of values. Which comes closer to your own view?

| | |
|--|------|
| Government should promote traditional values | 50% |
| Government should not favor any particular set of values | 42% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 7% |
| Total | 100% |

43 Thinking about your overall political philosophy, would you describe yourself as...

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Conservative | 28% |
| Moderate | 23% |
| Liberal | 17% |
| Libertarian | 5% |
| Progressive [or] | 6% |
| Something else? | 15% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 6% |
| Total | 100% |

44 In politics today, do you consider yourself a...Republican, Democrat, Independent, or what?

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Republican | 22% |
| Democrat | 36% |
| Independent | 32% |
| Or what | 5% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 4% |
| Total | 100% |

45 Do you lean more towards the Democratic Party or the Republican Party?
{Asked of non-partisans}

| | |
|---|------|
| Republican | 30% |
| Democratic | 35% |
| Independent/Don't Lean to Either Party (VOL.) | 20% |
| Other party (VOL.) | 1% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 13% |
| Total | 100% |

46 Party Identification Combined

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Democrat | 36% |
| Independent Leaning Democrat | 13% |
| Independent | 9% |
| Independent Leaning Republican | 13% |
| Republican | 24% |
| Don't Know | 7% |

47 Do you consider yourself to be a supporter of the Tea Party movement or not?

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Supporter | 25% |
| Not a supporter | 62% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 13% |
| Total | 100% |

48 Gender

| | |
|--------|------|
| Male | 49% |
| Female | 51% |
| Total | 100% |

49 What is your age?

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| 18-24 | 14% |
| 25-34 | 17% |
| 35-44 | 17% |
| 45-54 | 18% |
| 55-64 | 17% |
| 65+ | 17% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 2% |
| Total | 100% |

50 What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?

| | |
|---------------|------|
| < High School | 8% |
| High School | 33% |
| Some College | 32% |
| College | 16% |
| Post-Grad | 11% |
| Don't Know | 0% |
| Total | 100% |

51 Race/Ethnicity

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Caucasian | 67% |
| African-American | 12% |
| Latino | 13% |
| Other | 7% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 1% |
| Total | 100% |

52 What is your household income category?

| | |
|--|------|
| Less than \$30,000 per year | 29% |
| \$30,000 but less than \$45,000 | 14% |
| \$45,000 but less than \$60,000 | 15% |
| \$60,000 but less than \$75,000 | 7% |
| \$75,000 but less than \$90,000 | 7% |
| \$90,000 but less than \$110,000 | 5% |
| \$110,000 but less than \$150,000 | 8% |
| \$150,000 but less than \$250,000 [or] | 5% |
| More than \$250,000 | 2% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 8% |
| Total | 100% |

53 Thinking about 10 years from now, what do you expect your annual household income to approximately be?

| | |
|--|------|
| Less than \$30,000 per year | 5% |
| \$30,000 but less than \$45,000 | 14% |
| \$45,000 but less than \$60,000 | 14% |
| \$60,000 but less than \$75,000 | 10% |
| \$75,000 but less than \$90,000 | 7% |
| \$90,000 but less than \$110,000 | 8% |
| \$110,000 but less than \$150,000 | 4% |
| \$150,000 but less than \$250,000 [or] | 8% |
| More than \$250,000 | 5% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 26% |
| Total | 100% |

54 DERIVED: Expected income in 2013 compared to current income

| | |
|----------------------|-----|
| Expect Lower Income | 17% |
| Expect Same Income | 29% |
| Expect Higher Income | 54% |

55 Which of the following best describes your current employment status?

| | |
|--|------|
| Employed Full Time | 41% |
| Employed Part Time | 11% |
| Small Business Owner (Self Employed) | 7% |
| Taking Care of Home and Family (Homemaker) | 8% |
| Retired | 18% |
| Student | 4% |
| Unemployed | 8% |
| Disabled (VOL.) | 3% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 1% |
| Total | 100% |

56 Are you employed by local, state, or the federal government?

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Yes | 18% |
| No | 81% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 1% |
| Total | 100% |

57 What is your religious preference? Is it Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, some other religion, or no religion?

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Protestant | 48% |
| Catholic | 23% |
| Jewish | 2% |
| Muslim | 1% |
| Other (SPECIFY) | 5% |
| No Religion | 20% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 3% |
| Total | 100% |

58 Aside from weddings and funerals, How often do you attend religious services? Would you say...

| | |
|-------------------------|------|
| Once a Week (or more) | 33% |
| A few times a month | 14% |
| A few times a year [or] | 29% |
| Never? | 23% |
| Don't Know/Refused | 1% |
| Total | 100% |