



## Obama’s Approval Ratings Highest on Record since First Year in Office

**NEW YORK , N.Y.** – As President Obama prepares to pass the torch to President-elect Trump today, The Harris Poll takes a final look at America’s feelings towards his time in office. For the first time since August 2009, just over half of Americans rate President Barack Obama positively. As his two-term Presidency comes to a close, 51% of adults say the President is doing an excellent or pretty good job overall. While Obama’s positive ratings have been steadily climbing since March of 2016, this new rating is significantly higher than the 44% who felt positively in September/October of 2016, the last time this question was asked.

When Obama first entered office, ratings were quite high, with a majority of Americans saying he was doing an excellent or pretty good job between March and June of 2009. The highest rating on record came in May of that same year when nearly 6 in 10 Americans believed he was doing a good job (59%) and, until today, August of 2009 was the last showing of a positive tilt at 51%.

These are some of the results of **The Harris Poll®** of 2,192 U.S. adults ages 18+ surveyed online between January 9 and 11, 2017.

### Positive thinkers

While the masses agree President Obama is doing at least a pretty good job overall, some groups are more positively leaning than others. Those most likely to rate the President positively are:

- Democrats (86% vs. 46% Independent and 15% Republican);
- Millennials (66% vs. 55% 35-44, 45% 45-54, 43% 55-64, 41% 65+);
- Urban or Suburban dwellers (62% urban and 50% suburban vs. 39% rural);
- Parents (58% of those with a child under 18 in the house vs. 48% without);
- Westerners (58% vs. 48% Midwesterners, 49% Southerners, and 49% Northeasterners);
- Women (55% vs. 48% men); and,
- College educated adults (54% college grad and 53% some college vs. 45% high school or less).

**TABLE 1**

### PRESIDENT OBAMA’S JOB RATING - TREND

"How would you rate the overall job President Barack Obama is doing?"

Base: All adults

	TREND	Positive*	Negative**
		%	%
<b>2017</b>	<b>January</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>49</b>
2016	September/October	44	56
	July	43	57
	March	42	58

	February	41	59
	January	45	55
2015	December	37	63
	November	41	59
	October	41	59
	September	41	59
	August	40	60
	July	39	61
	June	38	62
	May	41	59
	April	38	62
	March	37	63
	February	38	62
	Jan (post-SOTU)	42	58
	Jan (pre-SOTU)	39	61
2014	December	33	67
	November	35	65
	October	34	66
	September	30	70
	August	32	68
	July	34	66
	June	38	62
	May	38	62
	April	33	67
	March	35	65
	February	35	65
	January	32	68
2013	December	34	66
	November	32	68
	October	35	65
	September	34	66
	July	39	61
	June	41	59
	March	38	62
2012	December	45	55
	September	41	59
	April	41	59
	March	40	60
	January	36	64

2011	December	36	64
	November	34	66
	October	33	67
	September	32	68
	July	38	62
	May	46	54
	April	38	62
	March	39	61
	Feb.	42	58
	Jan.	44	56
2010	Dec.	36	64
	Nov.	38	62
	Oct.	37	63
	Sept.	38	62
	Aug.	40	60
	June	39	61
	May	42	58
	March	41	59
	Jan.	40	60
2009	Dec.	41	59
	Nov.	43	57
	Oct.	45	55
	Sept.	49	51
	Aug.	51	49
	June	54	46
	May	59	41
	April	58	42
	March	55	45

\*Positive = excellent or pretty good. \*\*Negative = only fair or poor.



## **Methodology**

This **Harris Poll** was conducted online within the United States between January 9 and 11, 2017 among 2,192 adults (aged 18 and over). Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, The Harris Poll avoids the words "margin of error" as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Poll surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in our panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

***These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.***

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***The Harris Poll*** <sup>®</sup> #3, January 20, 2017

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Begun in 1963, The Harris Poll is one of the longest running surveys measuring public opinion in the U.S. and is highly regarded throughout the world. The nationally representative polls, conducted primarily online, measure the knowledge, opinions, behaviors and motivations of the general public. New and trended polls on a wide variety of subjects including politics, the economy, healthcare, foreign affairs, science and technology, sports and entertainment, and lifestyles are published weekly.

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