



Written by [Mary McHugh](#) on June 9, 2010

ABC Runs Frustration Index Poll

Calling it “a gage to try to get at the anger and what’s behind the anger” in the country, ABC News’ George Stephanopoulos discussed the network’s “Frustration Poll” during Tuesday’s Good Morning America. On a scale from 0-100, with 100 standing for “the grouchiest,” the Index today stands at 67 which is a 16-year low.



In conjunction with the *Washington Post*, the ABC poll took place by phone from June 3-6, 2010. It was a random sample of 1,004 adults and included both landline and cell-phone-only adults, with the result for the full sample having a 3.5-point margin for error.

Previously, the “frustration” Index had only twice been higher: When the economy sunk in 2008 and following the last major recession in 1992. The four fundamental measures of public attitudes were classified as follows:

Ratings of the President’s performance on the Economy — This was split 50/49 percent, with not much difference since April, but 5 points better now than in February and March. The number saying his economic performance is improving was 30 percent in this poll, a 7-point gain this year.

Views of the Economy — It’s going on two years since the economy fell towards the end of President Bush’s 2nd term, and 88 percent of those polled believe it’s still suffering. There was a 30-percent drop of 7 points in those who think the stimulus has helped the economy.

Satisfaction with Government — As expressed by ABC on its [website](#): “More liberals trust the Democrats to handle the country’s main problems, 69 percent, than conservatives trust the Republicans, 51 percent.” This is both a typical and revealing contrast, in that liberals generally would rely on the current crop of Democrats to solve things, whereas conservatives have learned their Republican counterparts cannot always, nor even often, be trusted to vote conservatively or constitutionally. Elsewhere the website added, “One in four Americans is now angry with the way the federal government is working, up seven points in less than two months to match its record high, set in 1992.”

Support for Incumbents — Since the 67-percent frustration indicated by this current poll is higher than 1994’s estimated level (when Republicans gained Congressional control) and that of 2006 (when Democrats grabbed it back), at this time things do not bode well for incumbents. In April, 32 percent of those polled said they would probably vote for their representatives once more; now 60 percent say they are inclined to consider new candidates. This is the most on record.

Over a year ago there were peaked hopes for the future generated by the start of the Obama Administration — this has dropped by 13 points. Instead, 60 percent of those polled think the country is now “seriously off on the wrong track” and not headed the right way. When asked if the President “understands the problems of people like you,” the result showed 51 percent thought so, down from 56



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percent in a *Washington Post* poll from late March. Obama is down to 57 percent as a strong leader, compared with 65 percent in March. He peaked much higher in these two categories at the time he first took office.

By all accounts it will be an interesting summer — and revealing primary season.



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