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Americans Rate Iran Most Negatively of 22 Countries

Canada, Great Britain viewed most favorably

by Jeffrey M. Jones

GALLUP NEWS SERVICE

PRINCETON, NJ -- Gallup's annual update on Americans' favorable ratings of nations around the world show Great Britain and Canada as the most positively rated, and Iran as the most negatively rated. Generally speaking, Americans' ratings of other nations are fairly stable from year to year, though they do change in response to international events.

In its Feb. 6-9, 2006, World Affairs poll, Gallup asked Americans to give their overall opinion of 22 different countries on a scale ranging from "very favorable" to "very unfavorable." A total of 12 countries received net favorable ratings and 10 received net unfavorable ratings.

Positively Rated Countries

Four of the 22 countries can be classified as having very positive ratings. Canada (89%) and Great Britain (88%) receive the best ratings overall, with nearly 9 in 10 rating them favorably, including greater than 4 in 10 giving them "very favorable" ratings.

Japan (81%) and Germany (79%) are rated favorably by about 8 in 10 Americans. While not included in this year's poll, Australia and Italy have previously fallen into the very positive grouping. Australia's past ratings are similar to those of Great Britain and Canada, while Italy's are similar to those of Japan and Germany.

Very Positively Rated Countries							
Mostly Very						Total	
	Very favor- able	Mostly favor- able	un-favor- able	un-favor- able	No opin- ion	Total favor- able	un-favor- able
2006							
Feb 6-9	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Canada	40	49	6	3	2	89	9
Great Britain	46	42	5	3	4	88	8
Japan	20	61	9	4	5	81	13
Germany	17	62	11	4	6	79	15

Five more countries can be classified as having moderately positive ratings, with roughly 2 in 3 Americans expressing favorable views. These countries include Israel (68%), Taiwan (67%), the Philippines (67%), India (66%), and Mexico (64%). Brazil was not included in this year's survey, but would generally fall in this grouping.

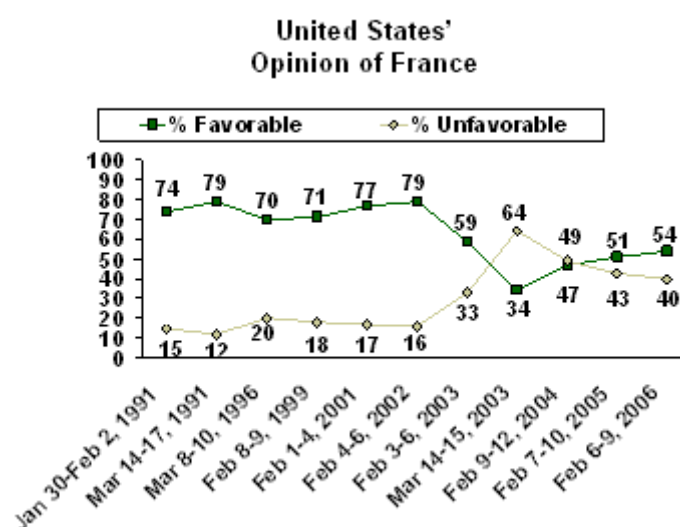
Moderately Positively Rated Countries							
Mostly Very						Total	
	Very favor- able	Mostly favor- able	un-favor- able	un-favor- able	No opin- ion	Total favor- able	un-favor- able
2006							
Feb 6-9	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Israel	21	47	18	5	9	68	23
Taiwan	12	55	14	5	14	67	19
The Philippines	11	56	17	4	12	67	21

India	10	56	16	7	11	66	23
Mexico	14	50	24	8	5	64	32

Three other countries have net positive ratings but are a step below the other positively rated countries. These include Egypt (58%), Russia (54%), and France (54%). Though excluded from this survey, South Korea and Turkey, based on past data, would typically fall into this group as well.

Positively Rated Countries							
	Mostly Very					Total	Total un-favorable
	Very favor-able	Mostly favor-able	un-favor-able	un-favor-able	No opin-ion		
2006							
Feb 6-9	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Egypt	8	50	22	5	14	58	27
Russia	5	53	27	8	7	58	35
France	12	42	28	12	7	54	40

Prior to the run-up to the war with Iraq, France would have fallen into the very positive or moderately positive group, as at least 7 in 10 Americans gave France favorable ratings in the 1990s and early part of this decade. In February 2003, 59% gave France favorable ratings, but that plummeted to 34% a month later as France opposed the United States' threatened invasion of Iraq. In each of the past three years, favorable ratings of France have improved, increasing to 47% in 2004, 51% in 2005, and the current 54%.

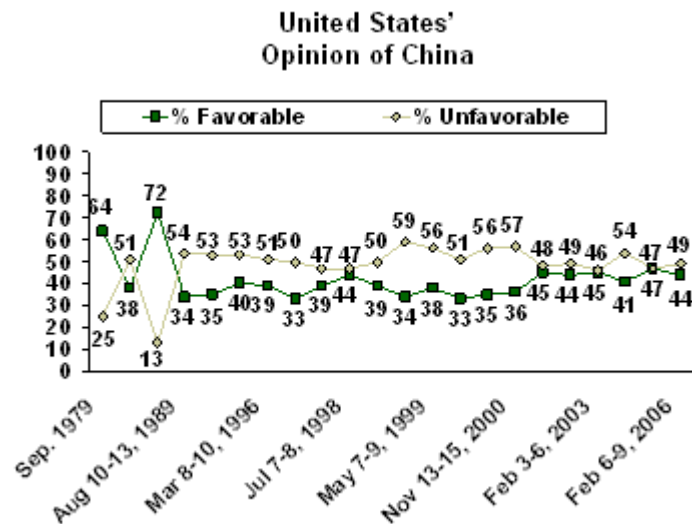


Negatively Rated Countries

Americans are slightly more likely to give China an unfavorable (49%) than a favorable (44%) rating. This is the only country that receives a net negative rating, but is not rated unfavorably by most Americans.

Negatively Rated Country							
	Mostly Very					Total	Total un-favorable
	Very favor-able	Mostly favor-able	un-favor-able	Very unfavor-able	No opin-ion		
2006							
Feb 6-9	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
China	4	40	35	14	6	44	49

Unlike the current data, China has been rated positively in the past. In early 1989, 72% rated it favorably and only 13% unfavorably. This was before the incident in Tiananmen Square that resulted in the deaths of Chinese student protestors. When Gallup measured opinions of China again in August 1989 -- two months after that incident -- just 34% viewed China favorably and 54% unfavorably. Since then, China has not received a net positive rating.



Four countries can be classified as moderately negative, where unfavorable opinions outnumber favorable by at least a 3-to-1 margin. These include the predominantly Muslim nations of Saudi Arabia (31%), Pakistan (30%), Afghanistan (27%), and Libya (22%). Libya's favorable rating is nearly as low as some of the very negatively rated countries; but views of it are not as negative as some of the other countries in the poll. Colombia, though not included in the most recent poll, is another country that would typically fall in this group.

Moderately Negatively Rated Countries

		Mostly Very				Total	
		Very	Mostly	un-	un-	No	Total
		favor-	favor-	favor-	favor-	opin-	favor-
		able	able	able	able	ion	able
		able	able	able	able	ion	able
2006							
Feb 6-9	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Saudi Arabia	3	28	44	18	7	31	62
Pakistan	2	28	43	16	11	30	59
Afghanistan	3	24	42	23	8	27	65
Libya	2	20	42	16	20	22	58

The five most negatively rated countries all have ratios of 3-to-1 -- or better -- unfavorable to favorable opinions by Americans. Iran is the most negatively rated, with just 7% favorable opinions and 86% unfavorable. North Korea (10% favorable, 81% unfavorable) and the Palestinian Authority (11% favorable, 78% unfavorable) are rated only slightly better than Iran. Twenty-one percent of Americans have a favorable view of Iraq and Cuba.

Very Negatively Rated Countries

		Mostly Very				Total	
		Very	Mostly	un-	un-	No	Total
		favor-	favor-	favor-	favor-	opin-	favor-
		able	able	able	able	ion	able
		able	able	able	able	ion	able
2006							
Feb 6-9	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Iraq	3	18	39	36	5	21	75
Cuba	3	18	51	20	7	21	71
The Palestinian Authority	1	10	49	29	10	11	78

North Korea	2	8	38	43	8	10	81
Iran	1	6	40	46	6	7	86

In the past 15 years, Iraq usually was the most negatively rated country. From 1991 to 2003 -- while Saddam Hussein was in power -- Iraq's favorable ratings averaged only 6%. Since the ousting of Saddam Hussein's government in 2003, Americans' opinion of Iraq has improved, although it still is decidedly more negative than positive. The current 21% favorable rating follows ratings of 29% in 2005 and 21% in 2004.

Changes in This Year's Ratings

Gallup measures public opinion on many of these countries yearly and on others periodically. Generally speaking, the ratings are fairly stable -- countries that are rated positively one year are usually rated positively the next, and the countries rated negatively usually receive negative ratings whenever they are asked. But as the examples of the Iraq war dispute with France and the incident at Tiananmen Square illustrate, Americans' views of other countries can change quickly in response to international events.

In addition to some of the changes in country ratings detailed above, other variations evident from this year's poll include the following:

- Germany, another opponent of the invasion of Iraq, also saw its ratings drop around the time of the war, though they did not drop as low as France's ratings at that time. Germany's rating bottomed out at 49% in March 2003 (compared with France's 34%), and rebounded to 69% in February 2003. Like France, there has been continued modest improvement in Germany's rating in the last two years (73% in 2005 and 79% today).
- Opinion about Afghanistan has declined in the past year, from 40% favorable to 27% favorable. The current reading is similar to what Gallup measured for Afghanistan from 2002-2004.
- Views of Pakistan have taken a similar path to those of Afghanistan, as the slightly higher favorable ratings of 2005 (41%) have returned to more negative, but also more typical, levels this year (30% favorable, 59% unfavorable).
- The 21% favorable rating of Cuba is down from 28% ratings in each of the last three years, and is the lowest for Cuba since a 10% score in 1996.
- At 7% favorable, views of Iran are slightly more negative this year than in the recent past. From 2001 to 2005, favorable ratings of Iran ranged from 11% to 17%. Iran had previously received single digit favorable ratings in 1989 and 1996.
- Americans' ratings of the Palestinian Authority are the lowest Gallup has measured. After a 27% favorable rating last year, views of the Palestinian Authority tumbled to 11% this year. The poll was conducted shortly after the Hamas political group won a majority of the parliamentary seats in the recent Palestinian elections.
- Mexico's current 64% rating is the lowest this decade. Favorable ratings for it ranged from 67% to 74% in 2001 to 2005, though they were below 60% in the mid- and late-1990s.
- Japan's ratings have become more positive over time. The current 81% rating matches last year's as the most positive rating Gallup has measured. From November 1991 to November 1995, Japan's average favorable rating was 48%. Its next two ratings -- in March 1996 and February 1999 -- were 65% and 69%. Since that time, at least 7 in 10 Americans have rated Japan positively.

Survey Methods

These results are based on telephone interviews with a randomly selected national sample of 1,002 adults, aged 18 and older, conducted Feb. 6-9, 2006. For results based on this sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the maximum error attributable to sampling and other random effects is ± 3 percentage points. In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion polls.

Next, I'd like your overall opinion of some foreign countries. First, is your overall opinion of [RANDOM ORDER]very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly unfavorable, or very unfavorable? How about -- [INSERT NEXT ITEM]?

	Very favor- able %	Mostly favor- able %	Mostly unfavor- able %	Very unfavor- able %	No opinion %
Afghanistan					
2006 Feb 6-9	3	24	42	23	8
2005 Feb 7-10	6	34	37	17	6
2004 Feb 9-12	4	24	39	26	7
2003 Feb 3-6	2	23	40	26	9
2002 Feb 4-6	4	22	34	34	6
Australia					
2004 Feb 9-12	39	49	5	2	5
2001 Feb 1-4 ^	43	42	4	4	7
Brazil					
2004 Feb 9-12	11	55	18	3	13
2001 Feb 1-4 ^	13	56	12	5	14
1999 Feb 8-9	10	49	13	4	24
Canada					
2006 Feb 6-9	40	49	6	3	2
2005 Feb 7-10	38	48	8	2	4
2004 Feb 9-12	36	51	7	4	2
2003 Feb 3-6	43	46	6	1	4
2002 Feb 4-6	49	43	4	1	3
2001 Feb 1-4 ^	51	39	4	3	3
1999 Feb 8-9	43	47	2	1	7
1996 Mar 8-10	47	42	5	*	6
1992 Feb 6-9	40	51	4	1	4
1991 Mar 14-17	48	43	2	1	6
1989 Aug 10-13	49	44	1	1	5
1989 Feb 28-Mar 2	45	47	2	1	2
1987 Nov 6-Dec 4	51	42	2	1	4
China					
2006 Feb 6-9	4	40	35	14	6
2005 Feb 7-10	5	42	35	12	6
2004 Feb 9-12	6	35	38	16	5
2003 Feb 3-6	6	39	34	12	9
2002 Feb 4-6	6	38	37	12	7
2001 Feb 1-4 ^	5	40	31	17	7
2000 Nov 13-15	5	31	39	18	7
2000 Mar 17-19	6	29	40	16	9
2000 Jan 25-26	4	29	33	18	16
1999 May 7-9	5	33	38	18	6
1999 Mar 12-14 ^	2	32	39	20	7
1999 Feb 8-9	8	31	34	16	11
1998 Jul 7-8	6	38	36	11	9
1998 Jun 22-23	5	34	42	9	10
1997 Jun 26-29	5	28	36	14	17

1996 Mar 8-10	6	33	35	16	10
1994 Feb 26-28	4	36	38	15	7
1991 Mar 14-17	5	30	35	18	12
1989 Aug 10-13	5	29	32	22	12
1989 Feb 28-Mar 2	12	60	10	3	15
1985 Feb 22-Mar 3	5	33	35	16	11
1979 Sep	18	46	18	7	10

Colombia

2003 Feb 3-6	2	24	42	15	17
2002 Feb 4-6	5	23	44	16	12
2001 Feb 1-4 ^	7	23	38	21	11

Cuba

2006 Feb 6-9	3	18	51	20	7
2005 Feb 7-10	3	25	46	19	7
2004 Feb 9-12	3	25	44	23	5
2003 Feb 3-6	4	24	42	21	9
2002 Feb 4-6	4	27	41	20	8
2001 Feb 1-4 ^	4	23	41	27	5
1999 May 7-9	4	20	45	24	7
1999 Mar 19-21	4	28	48	13	7
1996 Mar 8-10 ^	2	8	40	41	9

Egypt

2006 Feb 6-9	8	50	22	5	14
2005 Feb 7-10	8	56	22	4	10
2004 Feb 9-12	7	51	25	7	10
2003 Feb 3-6	6	50	20	5	19
2002 Feb 4-6	7	47	29	5	12
2001 Feb 1-4 ^	11	54	19	4	12
1996 Mar 8-10	10	48	19	5	17
1991 Aug 8-11	9	54	15	5	17
1991 Mar 14-17	11	55	14	3	17
1991 Jan 30-Feb 2	10	56	12	3	19

France

2006 Feb 6-9	12	42	28	12	7
2005 Feb 7-10	12	39	30	13	6
2004 Feb 9-12	10	37	31	18	4
2003 Feb 3-6	13	46	23	10	8
2002 Feb 4-6	23	56	13	3	5
2001 Feb 1-4 ^	22	55	12	5	6
1999 Feb 8-9	17	54	14	4	11
1996 Mar 8-10	15	55	16	4	11
1991 Mar 14-17	18	61	9	3	9
1991 Jan 30-Feb 2	17	57	11	4	11

Germany

2006 Feb 6-9	17	62	11	4	6
2005 Feb 7-10	17	56	18	4	5
2004 Feb 9-12	13	56	19	7	5
2003 Feb 3-6	12	59	16	5	8
2002 Feb 4-6	22	61	8	3	6
2001 Feb 1-4 ^	20	55	9	7	9
2000 Nov 13-15	16	61	11	5	7
1999 Nov 4-7	11	66	13	5	5
1999 Feb 8-9	18	61	7	4	10
1996 Mar 8-10	17	58	13	3	9
1993 Jun 29-30	10	53	19	9	9
1992 Feb 6-9	17	57	14	6	6

1991 Mar 14-17	16	62	11	3	8	
Great Britain						
2006 Feb 6-9	46	42	5	3	4	
2005 Feb 7-10	48	43	3	1	5	
2004 Feb 9-12	40	47	7	3	3	
2003 Feb 3-6	45	44	4	2	5	
2002 Feb 4-6	48	42	5	2	3	
2001 Feb 1-4 ^	41	44	6	3	6	
2000 Nov 13-15	27	55	7	3	8	
1999 May 7-9	37	52	5	3	3	
1999 Feb 8-9	34	50	4	3	9	
1996 Mar 8-10	30	51	8	2	9	
1991 Mar 14-17	49	40	4	1	6	
1991 Jan 30-Feb 2	45	45	3	1	6	
1989 Feb 28-Mar 2	29	57	4	3	7	
India						
2006 Feb 6-9	10	56	16	7	11	
2005 Feb 7-10	10	65	15	3	7	
2004 Feb 9-12	8	53	23	6	10	
2002 Feb 4-6	7	49	25	8	11	
2001 Feb 1-4 ^	8	50	24	6	12	
2000 Mar 17-19	7	40	30	8	15	
Indonesia						
2005 Feb 7-10	6	51	23	5	15	
Iran						
2006 Feb 6-9	1	6	40	46	6	
2005 Feb 7-10	1	11	49	33	6	
2004 Feb 9-12	3	14	46	31	6	
2003 Feb 3-6	2	11	48	29	10	
2002 Feb 4-6	2	9	46	38	5	
2001 Feb 1-4 ^	2	10	45	38	5	
1996 Mar 8-10	1	5	38	46	10	
1991 Aug 8-11	1	12	44	35	9	
1991 Mar 14-17	3	11	41	35	10	
1991 Jan 30-Feb 2	2	11	39	40	8	
1989 Aug 10-13	1	4	27	62	6	
1989 Feb 28-Mar 2	1	4	27	62	6	
Iraq						
2006 Feb 6-9			3	18	39	36
2005 Feb 7-10			4	25	38	28
2004 Feb 9-12			4	17	39	35
2003 Feb 3-6			1	4	33	57
2002 Feb 4-6			2	4	39	49
2001 Feb 1-4 ^			2	7	34	51
2000 Nov 13-15			2	4	35	53
1999 May 7-9			1	4	38	53
1999 Feb 8-9			2	5	27	60
1996 Mar 8-10			1	5	34	52
1992 Feb 6-9			1	3	30	62
1991 Aug 8-11			1	6	32	54
1991 Mar 14-17			2	5	26	62
1991 Jan 30-Feb 2			*	3	17	73
Israel						
2006 Feb 6-9			21	47	18	5
2005 Feb 7-10			19	50	20	5

2004 Feb 9-12	14	45	25	10	6
2003 Feb 3-6	22	42	23	6	7
2002 Feb 4-6	16	42	25	10	7
2001 Feb 1-4 ^	18	45	20	12	5
2000 Mar 17-19	16	46	20	8	10
2000 Jan 25-26	11	43	21	7	18
1999 May 7-9	15	53	19	6	7
1999 Feb 8-9	18	48	16	7	11
1996 Mar 8-10	17	45	18	11	9
1992 Feb 6-9	12	36	27	16	9
1991 Nov 21-14	11	36	26	11	16
1991 Sep 26-29	11	45	25	9	10
1991 Aug 8-11	15	47	19	6	12
1991 Mar 14-17	20	49	16	7	8
1991 Jan 30-Feb 2	28	51	10	3	8
1989 Aug 10-13	11	34	29	16	10
1989 Feb 28-Mar 2	8	41	25	13	13

Italy

2003 Feb 3-6	18	62	6	3	11
2001 Feb 1-4 ^	24	54	8	4	10

Japan

2006 Feb 6-9	20	61	9	4	5
2005 Feb 7-10	22	59	9	5	5
2004 Feb 9-12	19	56	14	6	5
2003 Feb 3-6	18	59	10	5	8
2002 Feb 4-6	17	62	12	4	5
2001 Feb 1-4 ^	17	56	14	7	6
2000 Nov 13-15	13	57	17	5	8
1999 May 7-9	14	61	15	5	5
1999 Feb 8-9	15	54	16	5	10
1996 Mar 8-10	12	53	18	7	10
1995 Nov 6-8	4	42	34	11	9
1994 Jun 11-12	6	40	32	12	10
1994 Feb 26-28	7	47	28	14	4
1993 Jun 29-30	7	41	30	16	6
1992 Feb 6-9	9	38	28	22	3
1991 Nov 21-24	7	41	29	12	11
1991 Mar 14-17	10	55	19	7	9
1991 Jan 30-Feb 2	11	51	21	9	8
1989 Aug 10-13	10	48	23	10	9
1989 Feb 28-Mar 2	12	57	16	7	8

Jordan

2005 Feb 7-10	6	48	27	5	14
1999 Feb 8-9	16	48	13	4	19
1991 Aug 8-11	3	27	36	14	19
1991 Mar 14-17	4	18	42	21	16

Libya

2006 Feb 6-9	2	20	42	16	20
2004 Feb 9-12	2	23	43	20	12
2003 Feb 3-6	1	17	39	24	19
2002 Feb 4-6	2	13	41	27	17
2001 Feb 1-4 ^	2	9	40	35	14

Mexico

2006 Feb 6-9	14	50	24	8	5
2005 Feb 7-10	15	59	16	5	5
2004 Feb 9-12	13	55	20	7	5

2003 Feb 3-6	13	61	16	4	6
2002 Feb 4-6	16	56	17	5	6
2001 Feb 1-4 ^	17	50	17	9	7
1999 Feb 8-9	12	43	26	8	11
1996 Mar 8-10	11	46	23	9	11
1993 Jun 29-30	7	36	35	14	8
1991 Mar 14-17	12	53	18	4	13
1989 Feb 28-Mar 2	7	55	21	6	11

North Korea

2006 Feb 6-9	2	8	38	43	8
2005 Feb 7-10	1	12	38	42	7
2004 Feb 9-12	2	10	42	41	5
2003 Mar 14-15 ^	2	6	33	53	6
2003 Feb 3-6	1	11	38	42	8
2002 Feb 4-6	3	20	38	27	12
2001 Feb 1-4 ^	3	28	37	22	10
2000 Nov 13-15	3	23	41	22	11

Pakistan

2006 Feb 6-9	2	28	43	16	11
2005 Feb 7-10	4	37	40	9	10
2004 Feb 9-12	3	25	42	22	8
2003 Feb 3-6	2	24	42	20	12
2002 Feb 4-6	4	26	42	21	7
2000 Mar 17-19	2	19	39	20	20

Poland

2005 Feb 7-10	17	61	8	1	13
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Russia

2006 Feb 6-9	5	53	27	8	7
2005 Feb 7-10	6	55	27	6	6
2004 Feb 9-12	7	52	26	9	6
2003 Mar 14-15 ^	4	37	40	12	7
2003 Feb 3-6	6	57	20	6	11
2002 Feb 4-6	11	55	20	7	7
2001 Feb 1-4 ^	6	46	27	15	6
2000 Nov 13-15	5	35	39	14	7
2000 Mar 17-19	5	35	39	12	9
1999 Nov 4-7	4	34	44	14	4
1999 May 7-9	4	42	36	13	5
1999 Apr 13-14	3	30	45	14	8
1999 Feb 8-9	6	38	34	10	12
1997 Nov 21-23	7	49	29	7	8
1996 Mar 8-10	6	46	29	10	9
1995 Apr 21-24	5	44	32	12	7
1994 Feb 26-28	8	48	28	11	5
1992 Feb 6-9	12	45	20	13	10
1991 Nov 21-24	7	45	24	12	12
1991 Aug 23-25	9	51	22	9	9
1991 Aug 8-11	11	55	19	6	9
1991 Mar 14-17	6	44	32	10	8
1991 Jan 30-Feb 2	8	49	26	9	8
1990 Sep 10-11	7	51	23	9	10
1990 May 17-20	7	48	24	8	13
1990 Aug 10-13	8	43	27	13	9
1989 Feb 28-Mar 2	7	55	20	9	9

Saudi Arabia

2006 Feb 6-9	3	28	44	18	7
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2005 Feb 7-10	3	33	42	16	6
2004 Feb 9-12	3	25	47	19	6
2003 Feb 3-6	3	27	41	20	9
2002 Feb 4-6	4	23	42	22	9
2001 Feb 1-4 ^	7	40	28	18	7
1991 Aug 8-11	11	45	21	12	11

The Palestinian Authority

2006 Feb 6-9	1	10	49	29	10
2005 Feb 7-10	3	24	43	19	11
2004 Feb 9-12	2	13	44	32	9
2003 Feb 3-6	1	12	44	29	14
2002 Feb 4-6	3	11	44	32	10
2001 Feb 1-4 ^	4	18	39	24	15
2000 Jan 25-26	3	18	36	16	27

Taiwan

2006 Feb 6-9	12	55	14	5	14
2002 Feb 4-6	9	53	17	5	16
2001 Feb 1-4 ^	11	52	14	8	15
2000 Mar 17-19	10	37	27	10	16
1996 Mar 8-10	10	49	17	5	19

The Philippines

2006 Feb 6-9	11	56	17	4	12
2002 Feb 4-6	8	48	27	7	10
2001 Feb 1-4 ^	12	51	19	6	12

Syria

2005 Feb 7-10	2	23	41	19	15
2000 Jan 25-26	2	18	32	12	36
1991 Aug 8-11	2	22	37	15	25

Ukraine

2005 Feb 7-10	9	58	15	3	15
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^ Asked of half sample

* Less than 0.5%