

U.S. Adults Have Mixed Views about Providing Foreign Aid to Poorer Countries

Contributed by Harris Interactive
Friday, 08 July 2005
Last Updated Friday, 08 July 2005

U.S. Adults Have Mixed Views about Providing Foreign Aid to Poorer Countries for Public Health Initiatives and HIV/AIDS Treatment and Prevention

ROCHESTER, N.Y. â€“ July 6, 2005 â€“ The American public overall does not appear to be a strong proponent for increased foreign aid to poorer countries for public health initiatives and to help with the prevention of disease including HIV/AIDS. While one-in-five (21%) U.S. adults believes the U.S. government spends about the right amount, twice that number (43%) thinks the government spends too much to help prevent disease and improve public health and one-quarter (23%) believes it does not spend enough. Furthermore, when asked specifically about providing foreign aid to poorer countries to help prevent and treat HIV/AIDS, just over a third (36%) of adults believe that the U.S. government does not spend enough.

However, Democrats and Independents are much more likely than Republicans to feel that the government does not spend enough to help poorer countries with these health initiatives.

Approximately three in 10 Democrats (31%) and Independents (29%) believe the U.S. government does not spend enough money to help prevent disease and improve public health in poorer countries, while only 11 percent of Republicans feel this way.

Forty-six percent of Democrats and 41 percent of Independents, compared to 21 percent of Republicans, believe the U.S. government does not spend enough money to help prevent and treat HIV/AIDS in poorer countries.

These are some of the results of a Harris Interactive? online survey of 2,547 U.S. adults conducted between June 23 and 27, 2005 for The Wall Street Journal Onlineâ€™s Health Industry Edition.

Restricted vs. unrestricted foreign aid for HIV/AIDS prevention.

A plurality of adults (47%) believe the U.S. government should allow other countries to decide how aid dollars for the prevention of HIV/AIDS are best spent based on their own experience and understanding of what works best in their countries. Approximately one-third (32%) believes the U.S. government should have the right to set limits on how its aid dollars are spent by other governments, while another one-in-five (21%) believes the U.S. government should not be in the business of funding any HIV/AIDS prevention programs outside the United States.

Democrats and Independents appear to have a different point of view than Republicans as to how foreign aid dollars for HIV/AIDS are awarded. While majorities of Democrats (52%) and Independents (59%) tend to support unrestricted foreign aid, a plurality of Republicans (45%) tend to believe the U.S. government should have the right to set restrictions on how its monetary assistance is spent by other countries.

TABLE 1

PERCEPTIONS OF FOREIGN AID FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

"Based on what you know or have heard, do you believe the U.S. government spends too much, not enough or about the right amount on foreign aid to poorer countries to help prevent disease and improve public health?"

Base: All Adults

?All Adults

Party I.D.

Republican

Democrat

Independent

?%

%

%

%

Spends too much

43

49

41

40

Does not spend enough

23

11

31

29

Spends about the right amount

21

28

16

19

Not sure

14
12
12
11

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE 2

PERCEPTIONS OF FOREIGN AID FOR HIV/AIDS PREVENTION

"Based on what you know or have heard, do you believe the U.S. government spends too much, not enough or about the right amount on foreign aid to poorer countries to help prevent and treat HIV/AIDS?"

Base: All Adults

?All Adults

Party I.D.

Republican

Democrat

Independent

?%

%

%

%

Spends too much

24

30

20

25

Does not spend enough

36

21

46

41

Spends about the right amount

25

35

18

22

Not sure

16

14

16

12

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE 3

FUNDING HIV/AIDS PREVENTION

"The statements below represent different points of view regarding foreign aid funding to help prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS. Which do you tend to agree with most?"

Base: All Adults

?All Adults

Party I.D.

Republican

Democrat

Independent

?%

%

%

%

The U.S. government should allow other countries to decide how aid dollars for the prevention of HIV/AIDS are best spent based on their own experience and understanding of what works best in their countries, including funding condom distribution programs or prevention programs among high-risk populations such as drug users and commercial sex workers

47

32

52

59

The U.S. government should have the right to set limits on how its aid dollars are spent by other governments. For

example, it should be allowed to state that money for HIV/AIDS prevention should only go to countries that use the money for abstinence education rather than condom distribution programs or prevention programs among high-risk populations such as drug users and commercial sex workers

32

45

28

24

The U.S. government should not be in the business of funding any HIV/AIDS prevention programs outside the U.S.

21

23

20

17

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding.

Downloadable PDFs of Wall Street Journal Online/Harris Interactive Health-Care Polls are posted at

http://www.harrisinteractive.com/news/newsletters_wsj.asp.

Methodology Harris Interactive conducted the online survey within the United States between June 23 and 27, 2005 among a nationwide cross section of 2,547 adults, aged 18 and over. Figures for age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, income and region were weighted where necessary to align with population proportions. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

Though this online sample is not a probability sample, in theory, with probability samples of this size, Harris Interactive estimates with 95 percent certainty that the overall results have a sampling error of plus or minus 3 percentage points of what they would be if the entire U.S. adult population had been polled with complete accuracy. Sampling error for the sub-samples of Republicans (769), Democrats (837) and independents (652) is higher and varies. Unfortunately, there are several other possible sources of error in polls or surveys that are probably more serious than theoretical calculations of sampling error. This includes refusals to be interviewed (nonresponse), question wording and question order, and weighting. It is impossible to quantify the errors that may result from these factors.

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

About the Survey The Wall Street Journal Online/Harris Interactive Health-Care Poll is an exclusive poll that is published in the award-winning Health Industry Edition of The Wall Street Journal Online at www.wsj.com/health.

About The Wall Street Journal Online The Wall Street Journal Online at [WSJ.com](http://www.wsj.com), published by Dow Jones & Company (NYSE: DJ; <http://www.dowjones.com/>), offers authoritative analysis, breaking news and commentary from top industry journalists. Launched in 1996, the Online Journal is the largest paid subscription news site on the Web, with more than 689,000 subscribers world-wide. The Online Journal provides in-depth business news and financial information 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with insight and analysis, including breaking business and technology news and analysis from around the world. It draws on the Dow Jones network of more than 1,500 reporters and editors -- the largest staff of business and financial journalists in the world. For the second consecutive year in 2003, the Online Journal received a WebAward for the "Best Newspaper Web Site" and was also cited by Yahoo! Internet Life magazine as the "Best Business News" site (2002 & 2001).

About Dow Jones & Company In addition to The Wall Street Journal and its international and online editions, Dow Jones & Company (NYSE: DJ; [dowjones.com](http://www.dowjones.com)) also publishes Barron's and the Far Eastern Economic Review, Dow Jones Newswires, Dow Jones Indexes and the Ottaway group of community newspapers. Dow Jones is co-owner with Reuters Group of Factiva, with Hearst of SmartMoney and with NBC of the CNBC television operations in Asia and Europe. Dow Jones also provides news content to CNBC and radio stations in the U.S.

About Harris Interactive? Harris Interactive Inc. (<http://www.harrisinteractive.com/>), the 15th largest and fastest-growing market research firm in the world, is a Rochester, NY-based global research company that blends premier strategic consulting with innovative and efficient methods of investigation, analysis and application. Known for The Harris Poll? and for pioneering Internet-based research methods, Harris Interactive conducts proprietary and public research to help its clients achieve clear, material and enduring results.

Harris Interactive combines its intellectual capital, databases and technology to advance market leadership through its U.S. offices and wholly owned subsidiaries, HI Europe in London (<http://www.hieurope.com/>), Novatris in Paris (<http://www.novatris.com/>), and through an independent global network of affiliate market research companies. EOE M/F/D/V.

To become a member of the Harris Poll OnlineSM and be invited to participate in future online surveys, <http://www.harrispollonline.com/>.