

From: Anzalone Liszt Research <newsletter@anzaloneresearch.com>

Subject: Nuclear Power Polling - ALR's National Polling Summary

Reply: newsletter@anzaloneresearch.com

Having trouble viewing this email? [Click here](#)



April 7, 2011

Anzalone Liszt Research National Polling Summary

Friends,

Below you will find the weekly Anzalone Liszt Research National Polling Newsletter, which provides a pollster's take on data and trends that affect political campaigns.

The recent tragedy in Japan is, most importantly, a human tragedy. Our thoughts go out to the tens of thousands of people killed or missing, and to the millions displaced or otherwise affected. We encourage [donations to the Red Cross](#) or other organizations that are helping people affected by the disaster, as many have already done.

With that said, we take a look at an issue tangential to the tsunami this week and look at how public opinion on nuclear power has changed prior to the Japanese crisis.

Following our analysis are additional news items and data we thought you'd enjoy.

John Anzalone and Jeff Liszt

STORY THIS WEEK: NUCLEAR POWER POLLING

Changes in nuclear polling

The crisis in Japan has caused a significant drop in support for *new* nuclear plants, with two recent polls finding opposition to new nuclear plants exceeding support for them. After finding the public split on the issue in October (45% favor / 44% oppose), a March [Pew poll](#) found the public now opposing new plant construction by a 13-point margin (39% favor / 52% oppose). A recent [CBS poll](#) showed a similar trend, with Americans now opposing new by a 7-point margin (43% favor / 50% oppose), a sharp departure from their strong support for them back in July, (57% favor / 43% oppose)

Despite the decline in support for new nuclear construction, Gallup finds that 57% of Americans still support the nuclear power, a number that has moved relatively little since the tsunami. Over two-thirds (69%) of the public thinks nuclear power plants in the US are safe, according to CBS.

With that said, the crisis in Japan is one of the three major news events in the last 40 years that has moved public opinion away from building new nuclear plants. The first of the three, at Three Mile Island in 1979, dropped support for building more nuclear plants from 69% down to 46% in [CBS polling](#), despite no loss of life. The second, the more catastrophic Chernobyl meltdown in the Ukraine that affected thousands, dropped American support for nuclear power to 34%, with 59% opposed. Opinion had moved back towards nuclear power in the 25 years between Chernobyl and the tsunami in Japan: according to CBS, support for new nuclear power before the tsunami ranged peaked at 57% in July, 2008.

It is unclear how this will play out over the years—will the public quickly move back to old levels of support for building more nuclear plants, or have we seen a longer-term shift? If the impact of the BP oil spill is any indication, the shift in views might be short-lived; Pew reports the [startling finding](#) that 57% of Americans support increased offshore drilling, only slightly down from the 63% that supported it in February 2010 before last year's oil spill into the Gulf of Mexico. Just 44% of people supported more offshore drilling in the weeks immediately following the BP spill.

Demographic divides

There are stark divides across demographics on the nuclear power:

- *Gender:* Men favor construction of nuclear plants in the US 55%-36% while women oppose it 55%-34%, according to Gallup. This may be the largest gender gap on any issue in politics.
- *Education:* Voters with a postgraduate degree are supportive of new nuclear power 63%-33% while voters with a high school degree or less are opposed 56%-31%.
- *Partisanship:* Democrats oppose new nuclear power 61%-32% while Republicans support it 61%-33%. Independents are split 43%-45%.

While there certainly is a partisan divide here, it's uncommon to see such an issue where 30% of Republicans and 30% of Democrats disagree with the rest of their party. It's also unusual to see other demographics play as much of a role in people's feelings on the issue as partisan leanings—people clearly think about nuclear power in other ways than just through a strict partisan lens.

Where the public wants its energy to come from

Voters are split on nuclear power, but they have strong opinions about other power sources. [According to CNN](#), voters want more wind, solar, and natural gas, but less oil and coal:

Which of these energy sources should we rely on more, and which should we rely on less?

	More	Less
Solar	88	11
Wind	83	17
Natural gas	70	29
Coal	43	56
Oil	28	71

Nuclear polling around the world

Unsurprisingly, the same debate about nuclear power is playing out around the world. Here is a sampling:

□

- **France:** France is one of the world's largest consumers of nuclear power and generates about 75% of its energy from nuclear. The [French are opposed](#) to a referendum that would end nuclear power in France 55%-42%, according to a poll sponsored by their state-run energy company.
- **Germany:** 80% of voters [recently said](#) they wanted to reverse Chancellor Merkel's decision to extend the operating life of German nuclear plants (about 25% of Germany's power is from nuclear energy). Also, Merkel's party's recent loss of a 58-year political stronghold in SW Germany surrounding wealthy Stuttgart has been blamed in large part on public uneasiness with her handling of nuclear power in the weeks since the Japanese tsunami.
- **Thailand:** Voters are opposed 83%-17% to new nuclear power, [according to](#) Thai polling conducted by Abac. Thailand currently gets no energy from nuclear power.
- **Sweden:** In Sweden, where roughly a third of electricity comes from nuclear power, 57% want to either keep nuclear power's use the same or increase it (down from 80% in 2008). [21% of Swedes](#) want to increase their use of nuclear power (down from 47% in 2008), while 36% want to get rid of nuclear power all together (up from 15%).
- **Lithuania:** According to [Veidas magazine](#), 88% of voters are opposed to plans to build a new nuclear plant in Lithuania, compared to 41% who were opposed in January.

OTHER NEWS FROM THE POLLING AND POLITICAL WORLD

Our strategic partner CivicScience: ALR is excited to share the news about our strategic partner, digital polling company [CivicScience](#), and the recent funding round they closed. John Anzalone sits on the Civic Science Advisory Board. We believe that our partnership with CivicScience will bring a tremendous amount of value to our clients heading into the 2010 election cycle. You owe it to yourselves to read the [press release](#) CivicScience issued to announce the funding. You will laugh out loud.

Government shutdown blame: Voters say they would [blame both sides](#) about equally (39% Republicans / 39% Obama administration) if the government were to shut down. In 1995, 46% of voters said they would blame Republicans, compared to 27% who would blame Clinton.

Voters prefer government compromise: In the same poll, 55% of voters said they agree more with the statement "lawmakers who share my views should be more willing to compromise, even if they pass a budget I disagree with", while 36% agreed more with the statement "lawmakers who share my views should stand by their principles, even if it means the government shuts down." Democratic voters prefer compromise (69% compromise / 21% shut down), while Republican voters narrowly favor shutting down government (50% shut down / 43% compromise)

Nate Silver looks at presidential primary polling: Silver looks at both [Democratic](#) and [Republican](#) presidential primary polling going back to the 70's. Key finding: early Republican primary polling is quite predictive of final result, while Democratic primary polling is far less so.

Voters back unions over governors: In general, [voters say](#) they agree with unions over governors (48% union / 39% governors) in the collective bargaining disputes going on around the country.

Tea Party favorability continues to fall: The favorability of the Tea Party continues to [go down](#), as CNN find their popularity at 32% favorable / 47% unfavorable.

Support for female combat troops: [Quinnipiac](#) and [ABC/Washington Post](#) find that more than 2/3 of Americans support allowing women in the military to serve in ground units that engage in close combat. Neither poll finds any gender gap on the issue.

Public wants to keep funding NPR: The same Quinnipiac poll found that Americans oppose cutting off NPF federal funding (34% support / 52% oppose).

PUBLIC POLLING

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S JOB RATING				
Polling Firm	Date	Sample	Approve	Disapprove
Gallup	3/29-31/11	Adults	47%	44%
AP-GfK	3/24-28/11	Adults	53%	45%
CBS	3/18-21	Adults	49%	41%

DIRECTION OF THE COUNTRY				
Polling Firm	Date	Sample	Right Direction	Wrong Track
CBS	3/18-21	Adults	30%	64%
NBC/WSJ	2/24-28/11	Adults	31%	60%
NBC/WSJ	1/13-17/11	Adults	35%	56%

UNEMPLOYMENT					
Polling Firm	Date	Sample	Unemployment rate	Discouraged workers* (thousands)	Part time for economic reasons (thousands)
Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)	Mar 2011	Adults	8.8%	921	8,433
BLS	Feb 2011	Adults	8.9%	1,020	8,340
BLS	Jan 2011	Adults	9.0%	993	8,407
BLS	Dec 2010	Adults	9.4%	1,318	8,931
BLS	Nov 2010	Adults	9.8%	1,282	8,960

*Defined by the BLS as persons not looking for a job because they believe no jobs are available for them

PARTY SELF ID					
Polling Firm	Date	Sample	Dem	Rep	Ind / other
Pollster.com Trend	4/5/11	Adults	30%	23%	36%

Find us on Facebook 

Join Our Mailing List!

Follow us on 

[Forward email](#)

 SafeUnsubscribe™

Trusted Email from
Constant Contact
Try it FREE today.

This email was sent to chase@anzalonerresearch.com by newsletter@anzalonerresearch.com | [Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Anzalone Liszt Research | 260 Commerce St | Montgomery | AL | 36104