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# More View Netanyahu Favorably Than Unfavorably; Many Unaware of Israeli Leader

*Little Change in Views of Level of U.S. Support for Israel*

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION  
ON THIS REPORT:**

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## *Little Change in Views of Level of U.S. Support for Israel*

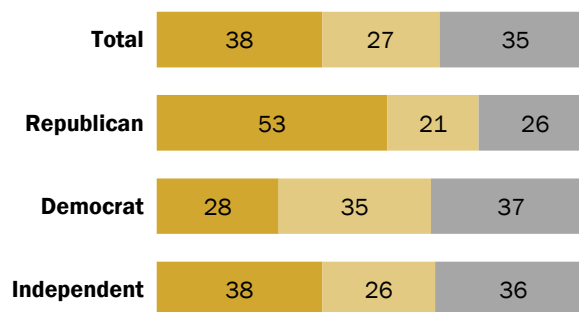
The public has a more positive than negative view of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu ahead of his address to a joint session of Congress next week. About four-in-ten (38%) have a favorable opinion of the Israeli leader, compared with 27% who hold an unfavorable view. Roughly a third (35%) express no opinion of Netanyahu, including 23% who say they have never heard of him.

Netanyahu will address Congress on March 3 at the invitation of House Speaker John Boehner and congressional Republicans. Netanyahu is better known – and viewed much more favorably – among Republicans than among Democrats or independents.

More than twice as many Republicans view Netanyahu favorably (53%) as unfavorably (21%); 26% have no opinion. By contrast, Democrats hold mixed views of Netanyahu (28% favorable vs. 35% unfavorable); 37% have no opinion. Independents' opinions of Netanyahu mirror those of the overall public (38% favorable, 26% unfavorable, 36% no opinion).

### Opinions of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

% who say ... ■ Favorable ■ Unfavorable ■ No opinion



Survey conducted Feb. 18-22, 2015. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

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The new survey by the Pew Research Center, conducted Feb. 18-22 among 1,504 adults, finds little change since 2012 in opinions about U.S. support for Israel. Overall, 48% say that the level of U.S. support for Israel is about right; 29% say the U.S. is not supportive enough of Israel, while 18% say it is too supportive. In October 2012, 41% said U.S. support for Israel was about right, 25% said the United States was not supportive enough and 22% said it was too supportive.

Currently, 54% of Republicans say the U.S. is not supportive enough of Israel; 36% say U.S. support is about right and 7% say it is too supportive. A majority of Democrats (55%) view the level of U.S. support for Israel as appropriate; 26% say it is too supportive, while 15% say it is not supportive enough.

There have long been wide differences among religious groups in opinions about Israel, with white evangelical Protestants consistently expressing more support for Israel. [Last August](#), 59% of white evangelical Protestants said they sympathized with Israel “a lot” in its dispute with the Palestinians. No more than about a third in other major religious groups expressed a great deal of sympathy for Israel.

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### Little Change Since 2012 in Opinions About U.S. Support for Israel

*Thinking about U.S. relationship with Israel, is the U.S. \_\_\_\_\_ of Israel?*

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
<b>Feb 2015</b>				
Too supportive	18	7	26	20
Not supportive enough	29	54	15	27
About right	48	36	55	49
Don't know	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>
	100	100	100	100
<b>Oct 2012</b>				
Too supportive	22	13	25	26
Not supportive enough	25	46	9	24
About right	41	34	55	39
Don't know	<u>11</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>11</u>
	100	100	100	100

Survey conducted Feb. 18-22, 2015. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

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These differences also are reflected in the current poll: 55% of white evangelicals think the United States is not supportive enough of Israel. Among other groups, majorities or pluralities say U.S. support is about right.

People who have no religious affiliation are more likely than other adults to say the U.S. is too supportive of Israel; 31% of the religiously unaffiliated say this, at least double the share of any other group. Still, nearly half the religiously unaffiliated (49%) view U.S. support for Israel as appropriate.

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### In Relationship With Israel, the U.S. is ...

	Too Supportive	Not supportive enough	About right	DK	N
	%	%	%	%	
Total	18	29	48	5=100	1,504
Protestant	12	38	47	4=100	669
White evangelical Prot.	6	55	36	3=100	290
White mainline Prot.	15	24	59	2=100	207
Catholic	16	28	49	7=100	344
White Catholic	16	30	51	4=100	210
Unaffiliated	31	15	49	5=100	359
<i>Among Rep/Lean Rep</i>					
White evangelical Prot.	4	66	29	1=100	218
White mainline Prot.	8	46	43	3=100	107
White Catholic	12	49	38	2=100	120

Survey conducted Feb. 18-22, 2015. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding. Whites include only those who are not Hispanic.

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Religious affiliation and partisanship are strongly associated. White evangelical Protestants are far more likely to affiliate or lean toward the Republican Party than those in other religious traditions (75% in the current survey) and this accounts for a significant amount of the differences between religious groups in their views on U.S. support for Israel. Nevertheless, religious affiliation is independently associated with these views. Among Republicans and Republican leaners, white evangelicals are more likely than those of other religious traditions to say the U.S. is not supportive enough of Israel: 66% say this, compared with 46% of Republican white mainline Protestants and 49% of Republican white Catholics.

The current survey does not include a large enough sample of Jews to analyze. Jewish views on this question can be found in the Pew Research Center's [2013 survey of Jewish Americans](#). In that survey, conducted February-June 2013, 54% of Jews said U.S. support for Israel was about right, 31% said the U.S. was not supportive enough and 11% said it was too supportive.

## Netanyahu Popular Among Conservatives

Among Republicans, conservatives are especially likely to have an opinion of Netanyahu and to rate him highly. Nearly six-in-ten (59%) conservative Republicans have a favorable impression of Netanyahu, while only 18% have an unfavorable view. Roughly a third of conservative Republicans (35%) have a *very* favorable impression of Netanyahu, by far the highest share of any partisan group. By contrast, only about a third of moderate and liberal Republicans view Netanyahu favorably (3% very favorably) and about as many (29%) view him unfavorably.

Democrats also are divided ideologically in their opinions of Netanyahu: By about two-to-one, more liberal Democrats have an unfavorable impression (43%) than a favorable impression (20%) of the Israeli leader. Liberal Democrats are the only partisan or demographic group in which negative opinions surpass positive views. Conservative and moderate Democrats have mixed opinions of Netanyahu (35% favorable, 30% unfavorable).

Among religious groups, white evangelical Protestants have the most favorable impressions of Netanyahu (50% favorable, 17% unfavorable). The Israeli prime minister is viewed more favorably than unfavorably among white mainline Protestants (43% favorable, 24% unfavorable) and among white Catholics (42%, 29%). People who are religiously unaffiliated are as likely to have an unfavorable view of Netanyahu as a favorable one (33% vs. 32%).

There are no significant differences in opinions of Netanyahu by religious tradition among Republicans and Republican leaners.

### Views of Netanyahu Among Partisan and Religious Groups

	(NET) Favorable %	Very fav %	(NET) Unfavorable %	Very unfav %	Never heard of/ Can't rate (Vol.) %
Total	38	13	27	10	35=100
Republican	53	27	21	8	26=100
Conserv Rep	59	35	18	7	23=100
Mod/Lib Rep	34	3	29	13	37=100
Independent	38	13	26	10	36=100
Democrat	28	5	35	13	37=100
Cons/Mod Dem	35	7	30	8	35=100
Liberal Dem	20	2	43	19	37=100
Protestant	42	16	22	8	36=100
White evang. Prot.	50	26	17	8	33=100
White mainline Prot.	43	11	24	7	33=100
Catholic	37	12	28	10	35=100
White Catholic	42	16	29	7	29=100
Unaffiliated	32	9	33	14	35=100
<i>Among Rep/Lean Rep</i>					
White evang. Prot. Republicans	58	33	14	8	28=100
White mainline Prot.	58	22	14	6	29=100
Catholic	51	22	24	11	25=100

Survey conducted Feb. 18-22, 2015. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

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Across most partisan and religious groups, relatively large shares do not express an opinion of Netanyahu. Even among conservative Republicans, who are among the most likely to have an opinion of him, nearly a quarter (23%) do not.

Among demographic groups, particularly large shares of women (41% no opinion of Netanyahu), adults under 30 (45%) and those with no more than a high school education (40%) are among the most likely to not express an opinion of Netanyahu.

The share of Americans not offering an opinion of the Israeli Prime Minister is largely made up of those who are unfamiliar with him. Overall, 35% say either they have never heard of him (23%) – the predominant response – or can't rate him (10%) or simply decline to answer (3%).

The percentages saying they have never heard of Netanyahu are higher among women than men (27% vs. 19%), those under 30 years of age compared with those 65 and older (37% vs. 12%), and those without college experience compared with college graduates (29% vs. 13%).

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### Young People, Less Educated Are Less Likely to Express Opinion of Netanyahu

	Favorable %	Unfavorable %	Never heard of/ Can't rate (Vol) %
Total	38	27	35=100
Men	41	30	29=100
Women	35	24	41=100
18-29	28	27	45=100
30-49	32	29	39=100
50-64	47	23	30=100
65+	47	27	26=100
Post-grad	40	37	23=100
College grad	45	23	32=100
Some college	37	27	36=100
HS or less	35	25	40=100

Survey conducted Feb. 18-22, 2015. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

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## About the Survey

The analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted February 18-22, 2015 among a national sample of 1,504 adults, 18 years of age or older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia (526 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 978 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 559 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see <http://www.pewresearch.org/methodology/u-s-survey-research/>

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and nativity and region to parameters from the 2013 Census Bureau's American Community Survey and population density to parameters from the Decennial Census. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status (landline only, cell phone only, or both landline and cell phone), based on extrapolations from the 2014 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size among respondents with a landline phone. The margins of error reported and statistical tests of significance are adjusted to account for the survey's design effect, a measure of how much efficiency is lost from the weighting procedures.

The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Unweighted sample size</b>	<b>Plus or minus ...</b>
Total sample	1,504	2.9 percentage points
Republican	399	5.6 percentage points
Democrat	440	5.4 percentage points
Independent	585	4.6 percentage points
Protestant	669	4.3 percentage points
White evangelical	290	6.6 percentage points
White mainline	207	7.8 percentage points
Catholic	344	6.1 percentage points
White Catholic	210	7.8 percentage points
Unaffiliated	359	5.9 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

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**PEW RESEARCH CENTER  
FEBRUARY 2015 POLITICAL SURVEY  
FINAL TOPLINE  
FEBRUARY 18-22, 2015  
N=1,504**

**QUESTIONS 1-2, 5, 8, 11c, 13, 16-18, 51b PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

**NO QUESTIONS 3-4, 6-7, 9-10, 12, 14-15, 19-24, 30-50**

**QUESTIONS 11a-b, 11d, 25-29, 51a HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

**ASK ALL:**

Next,

Q.51 Would you say your overall opinion of **[INSERT NAME; RANDOMIZE]** is very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable? How about **[NEXT NAME]? [IF NECESSARY: Just in general, is your overall opinion of **[NAME]** very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable?] [INTERVIEWERS: PROBE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN "NEVER HEARD OF" AND "CAN'T RATE."]**

	-----Favorable-----			-----Unfavorable-----			(VOL.) Never	(VOL.) Can't
	Total	Very	Mostly	Total	Very	Mostly	heard of	rate/Ref
c. Benjamin Netanyahu Feb 18-22, 2015	38	13	24	27	10	17	23	12

**QUESTIONS 52-54, 56, 58F1-59F2 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

**NO QUESTIONS 55, 57, 60-61, 64-65, 69, 72-73, 77**

**QUESTIONS 62-63, 66-68, 70-71, 74-76 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.78 Thinking about the relationship between the United States and Israel ... Is the U.S. **[RANDOMIZE: too supportive of Israel, not supportive enough of Israel], or is U.S. support of Israel about right?**

Feb 18-22 <u>2015</u>		Oct 4-7 <u>2012</u>	Mar 7-11 <u>2012</u>
18	Too supportive of Israel	22	22
29	Not supportive enough	25	20
48	About right	41	46
5	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	11	12

**NO QUESTION 79**

**QUESTION 80 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

**ASK ALL:**

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

**ASK IF INDEP/NO PREF/OTHER/DK/REF (PARTY=3,4,5,9):**

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	(VOL.) No	(VOL.) Other	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>	Lean	Lean
				<u>preference</u>	<u>party</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	
Feb 18-22, 2015	24	31	38	4	1	1	18	17
Jan 7-11, 2015	21	30	44	3	1	1	19	18
Dec 3-7, 2014	24	31	39	3	1	2	17	17
Nov 6-9, 2014	27	32	36	2	*	1	15	16
Oct 15-20, 2014	24	33	38	4	*	1	13	17
Sep 2-9, 2014	24	33	38	3	1	2	15	15
Aug 20-24, 2014	24	31	37	4	1	4	15	16
Jul 8-14, 2014	25	34	37	2	1	1	16	15

**PARTY/PARTYLN CONTINUED...**

				(VOL.)	(VOL.)	(VOL.)	Lean	Lean
	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	<u>preference</u>	<u>party</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>
Apr 23-27, 2014	24	30	41	2	1	2	18	17
Jan 23-Mar 16, 2014	22	31	41	3	1	2	17	17
Feb 14-23, 2014	22	32	39	4	1	2	14	17
<b>Yearly Totals</b>								
2014	23.2	31.5	39.5	3.1	.7	2.0	16.2	16.5
2013	23.9	32.1	38.3	2.9	.5	2.2	16.0	16.0
2012	24.7	32.6	36.4	3.1	.5	2.7	14.4	16.1
2011	24.3	32.3	37.4	3.1	.4	2.5	15.7	15.6
2010	25.2	32.7	35.2	3.6	.4	2.8	14.5	14.1
2009	23.9	34.4	35.1	3.4	.4	2.8	13.1	15.7
2008	25.7	36.0	31.5	3.6	.3	3.0	10.6	15.2
2007	25.3	32.9	34.1	4.3	.4	2.9	10.9	17.0
2006	27.8	33.1	30.9	4.4	.3	3.4	10.5	15.1
2005	29.3	32.8	30.2	4.5	.3	2.8	10.3	14.9
2004	30.0	33.5	29.5	3.8	.4	3.0	11.7	13.4
2003	30.3	31.5	30.5	4.8	.5	2.5	12.0	12.6
2002	30.4	31.4	29.8	5.0	.7	2.7	12.4	11.6
2001	29.0	33.2	29.5	5.2	.6	2.6	11.9	11.6
2001 Post-Sept 11	30.9	31.8	27.9	5.2	.6	3.6	11.7	9.4
2001 Pre-Sept 11	27.3	34.4	30.9	5.1	.6	1.7	12.1	13.5
2000	28.0	33.4	29.1	5.5	.5	3.6	11.6	11.7
1999	26.6	33.5	33.7	3.9	.5	1.9	13.0	14.5
1998	27.9	33.7	31.1	4.6	.4	2.3	11.6	13.1
1997	28.0	33.4	32.0	4.0	.4	2.3	12.2	14.1
1996	28.9	33.9	31.8	3.0	.4	2.0	12.1	14.9
1995	31.6	30.0	33.7	2.4	.6	1.3	15.1	13.5
1994	30.1	31.5	33.5	1.3	--	3.6	13.7	12.2
1993	27.4	33.6	34.2	4.4	1.5	2.9	11.5	14.9
1992	27.6	33.7	34.7	1.5	0	2.5	12.6	16.5
1991	30.9	31.4	33.2	0	1.4	3.0	14.7	10.8
1990	30.9	33.2	29.3	1.2	1.9	3.4	12.4	11.3
1989	33	33	34	--	--	--	--	--
1987	26	35	39	--	--	--	--	--

**ASK REPUBLICANS AND REPUBLICAN LEANERS ONLY (PARTY=1 OR PARTYLN=1):**

TEAPARTY3 From what you know, do you agree or disagree with the Tea Party movement, or don't you have an opinion either way?

**BASED ON REPUBLICANS AND REPUBLICAN LEANERS [N=679]:**

				(VOL.)	(VOL.)	Not
	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>either way</u>	<u>heard of</u>	<u>Refused</u>	heard of/ <u>DK</u>
Feb 18-22, 2015	36	9	54	*	*	--
Jan 7-11, 2015	34	9	54	1	2	--
Dec 3-7, 2014	34	9	55	2	1	--
Nov 6-9, 2014	31	10	57	1	1	--
Oct 15-20, 2014	32	8	56	2	2	--
Sep 2-9, 2014	38	10	50	1	1	--
Aug 20-24, 2014	34	10	53	*	2	--
Jul 8-14, 2014	35	12	50	2	1	--
Apr 23-27, 2014	33	11	54	1	1	--
Jan 23-Mar 16, 2014	37	11	50	1	1	--
Feb 14-23, 2014	36	9	54	1	1	--
Jan 15-19, 2014	35	12	52	1	*	--
Dec 3-8, 2013	32	9	57	1	1	--
Oct 30-Nov 6, 2013	40	9	48	2	1	--
Oct 9-13, 2013	41	11	45	2	1	--

## TEAPARTY3 CONTINUED...

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>No opinion either way</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>Haven't heard of</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>Refused</u>	Not heard of/ <u>DK</u>
Sep 4-8, 2013	35	9	54	1	1	--
Jul 17-21, 2013	37	10	50	2	1	--
Jun 12-16, 2013	44	9	46	1	2	--
May 23-26, 2013	41	7	48	1	3	--
May 1-5, 2013	28	8	61	2	1	--
Mar 13-17, 2013	43	7	47	1	1	--
Feb 13-18, 2013	36	9	52	1	3	--
Feb 14-17, 2013	43	9	45	1	2	--
Jan 9-13, 2013	35	10	51	2	2	--
Dec 5-9, 2012	37	11	51	1	*	--
Oct 31-Nov 3, 2012 (RVs)	40	8	49	1	2	--
Oct 4-7, 2012	38	9	50	1	3	--
Sep 12-16, 2012	39	7	52	1	1	--
Jun 28-Jul 9, 2012	40	9	47	2	1	--
Jun 7-17, 2012	42	8	48	1	1	--
May 9-Jun 3, 2012	36	9	53	1	2	--
Apr 4-15, 2012	42	8	48	1	1	--
Mar 7-11, 2012	38	10	49	2	1	--
Feb 8-12, 2012	40	7	51	1	1	--
Jan 11-16, 2012	42	8	47	1	1	--
Jan 4-8, 2012	37	8	52	1	1	--
Dec 7-11, 2011	40	9	48	2	1	--
Nov 9-14, 2011	41	9	49	*	1	--
Nov 9-14, 2011	41	9	49	*	1	--
Sep 22-Oct 4, 2011	37	11	51	1	1	--
Aug 17-21, 2011	43	7	49	*	1	--
Jul 20-24, 2011	40	7	51	*	1	--
Jun 15-19, 2011	42	9	47	1	1	--
May 25-30, 2011	37	7	52	1	3	--
Mar 30-Apr 3, 2011	45	9	46	*	1	--
Mar 8-14, 2011	37	7	54	1	*	--
Feb 22-Mar 1, 2011	41	9	48	1	1	--
Feb 2-7, 2011 <sup>1</sup>	43	8	47	1	1	--
Jan 5-9, 2011	45	6	47	1	1	--
Dec 1-5, 2010	48	5	45	1	1	--
Nov 4-7, 2010	51	5	42	1	1	--
Oct 27-30, 2010 (RVs)	58	5	27	--	1	9
Oct 13-18, 2010 (RVs)	54	5	30	--	1	10
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010 (RVs)	56	6	29	--	*	9
Jul 21-Aug 5, 2010	46	5	36	--	1	13
Jun 16-20, 2010	46	5	30	--	*	19
May 20-23, 2010	53	4	25	--	1	16
Mar 11-21, 2010	48	4	26	--	1	21

<sup>1</sup> In the February 2-7, 2011, survey and before, question read "...do you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the Tea Party movement..." In October 2010 and earlier, question was asked only of those who had heard or read a lot or a little about the Tea Party. In May 2010 through October 2010, it was described as: "the Tea Party movement that has been involved in campaigns and protests in the U.S. over the past year." In March 2010 it was described as "the Tea Party protests that have taken place in the U.S. over the past year."