

# Americans Shifting Priorities, Remaining Positive

Americans have shifted their priorities from domestic to international issues in the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, according to a recent Gallup poll.

Also, trust in the government, the president and Congress has surged to all-time highs, with President Bush receiving the highest presidential approval rating ever recorded by Gallup—90 percent.

Three international issues—terrorism, military/defense and foreign affairs—have become the leading issues among the top eight concerns of the American people. Education, which was the top-ranked issue earlier this year, is now fifth.

Ninety-five percent of Americans think it is “extremely” or “very important” for the president and Congress to deal with terrorism in the next year. And the importance attached to domestic issues other than the economy has declined by roughly 10 points, according to Gallup.

The poll revealed that 56 percent of Americans trust Republicans in dealing with terrorism, compared with 21 percent supporting Democrats on the same issue.

Americans are divided when it comes to trusting one party to boost the economy. Forty-five percent said they have more confidence in the Republicans and 43 percent expressed confidence in the Democrats.

Fifty-seven percent of Americans think military and defense issues are now “extremely important,” compared with 26 percent in January. Fifty-two percent of Americans said foreign affairs are a priority, compared with 17 percent supporting foreign affairs in January.

Another another Gallup poll found that two-thirds of Americans (67 percent) said they are satisfied with the way things are going in the country today. That’s up

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from 61 percent a few days after the terrorist attacks, and 24 percentage points higher than before the attacks.

“This is the highest satisfaction rating since January 2000, and close to the record satisfaction of 71 percent measured in February 1998, during the height of good economic times,” the report read.

In 1991, at the end of the Gulf War, 66 percent of Americans were satisfied with the state of the country.

*Alex Smirnov is BCE's research associate.*