

# Ford's 'Hidden' Voter Strength

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President Ford not only continues to win the approval of a solid majority of Republican voters, but has surprising appeal among certain traditionally Democratic groups, including young voters and Catholics.

These "hidden strengths" among Democratic-oriented voter blocs could hold the President in good stead in an election bid in 1976.

In the latest survey, conducted in late March, 37 per cent of the public nationwide say they approve of the way Mr. Ford is handling his job as President, 43 per cent disapprove, and 20 per cent are undecided.

Mr. Ford's approval rating is currently 34 points below his initial rating of 71 per cent, recorded in August. His rating, however, has stabilized during the first months of 1975 after an overall downtrend in the final months of 1974.

A majority of 60 per cent of Republicans currently voice approval of the President's performance in office, while 24 per cent disapprove and 16 per cent are undecided.

Among Democrats, disapproval outweighs approval, 54 to 29 per cent, although Southern Democrats are

more closely divided in their views. Among independents, disapproval also outweighs approval, 43 to 35 per cent.

Following is the question that has been asked over the last 35 years to measure presidential popularity:

Do you approve or disapprove of the way (name of incumbent) is handling his job as president?:

Here is the trend for Mr. Ford and his current standing among the groups discussed:

	Ap- prove	Dis- approve	No opinion
Latest	37%	43%	20%
Mar. 7-10	38	45	17
Feb. 28-Mar. 3	39	45	16
Jan. 31-Feb. 3	39	43	18
Jan. 10-13	37	39	24
Dec. 6-9	42	41	17
Nov. 15-18	48	32	20
Nov. 8-11	47	33	20
Oct. 18-21	55	28	17
Oct. 11-14	52	28	19
Sept. 27-30	50	28	22
Sept. 6-9	66	13	21
Aug. 16-19	71	3	26
Republicans	60%	24%	16%
Democrats	29	54	17
Independnts	35	43	22
Protestants	40	40	20
Catholics	38	45	17
Under 30	39	44	17
30-49 years	38	41	21
50 & over	34	45	21
Men	36	49	15
Women	38	38	24
East	31	47	22
Midwest	36	46	18
South	41	36	23
West	41	44	15

The new findings are based on in-person interviews with 1566 adults, 18 and older, taken in more than 300 sampling locations across the nation during the period March 28-31.