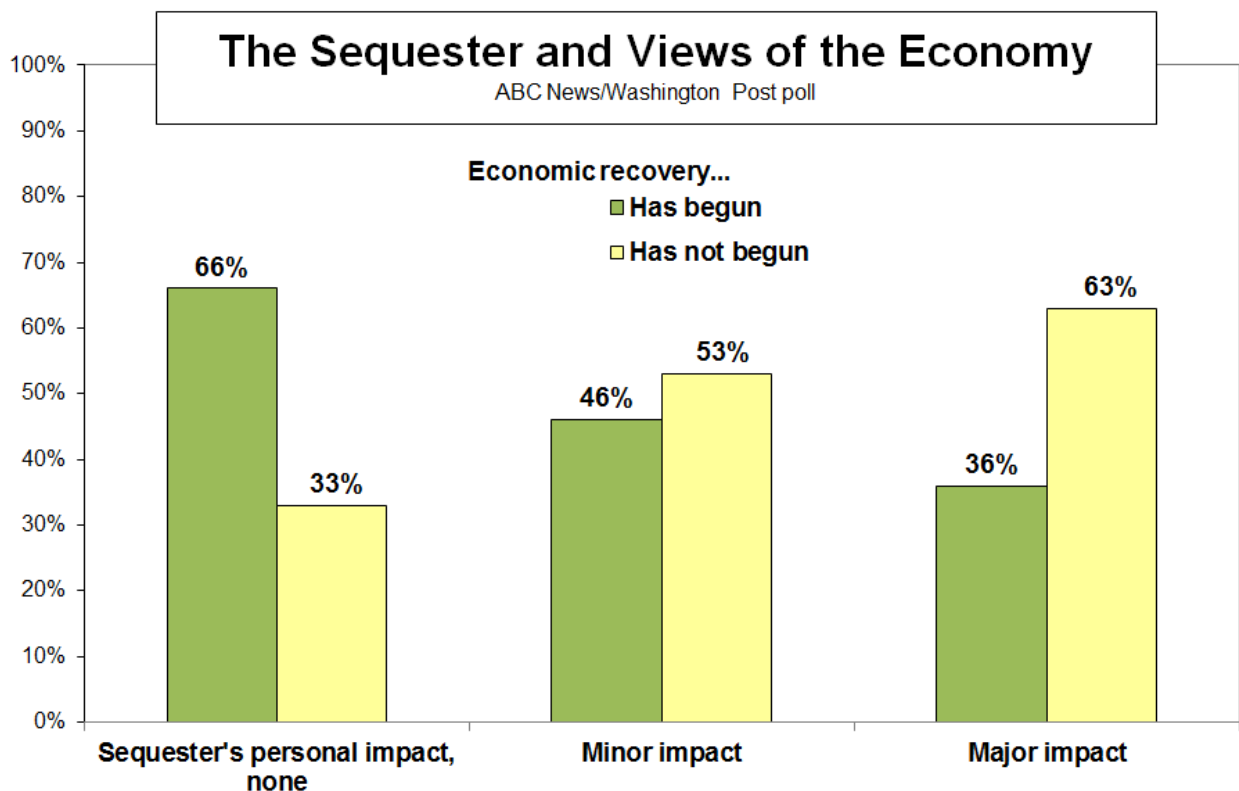


## **Budget Cuts Get Personal; Those Who Are Hurt, Holler**

The federal budget sequester may be dampening a rise in economic optimism: Nearly four in 10 Americans now say sequestration has hurt them personally, up substantially since it began in March – and they’re far less sanguine than others about the economy’s prospects overall.

Thirty-seven percent in the latest ABC News/Washington Post poll say they’ve been negatively impacted by the budget cuts, up from 25 percent in March. As previously, about half of those affected say the harm has been “major.”

Those who are hurt, holler. Among people who report no personal impact of the sequester, 66 percent say economic recovery is under way, and six in 10 are optimistic about the economy’s prospects in the year ahead. Among those who report major harm from the cuts, by contrast, just 36 percent see recovery, and optimism drops to 40 percent.



As reported [earlier this week](#), optimism about the economy is advancing; 56 percent of Americans now say it’s begun to recover, up by 20 percentage points in the past year and a half

to the most since ABC and the Post first asked the question in late 2009. Results on the sequester suggest that could be better still had the cuts not taken effect.

More Americans continue to disapprove than approve of sequestration, now by 56-35 percent – again, a view influenced by experience of the cuts. Eight in 10 of those who report serious harm oppose the cuts, as do about two-thirds of those slightly harmed. But the majority, which has felt no impacts, divides exactly evenly – 46 percent favor the cuts, vs. 46 percent opposed.

Further, this poll, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#), finds that 39 percent overall “strongly” disapprove of the cuts – but that soars to 66 percent of those who say they’ve been harmed in a major way. (Just 16 percent overall strongly approve.)

Experience of the cuts even trumps partisanship and ideology: Among Republicans, conservatives and Tea Party supporters who’ve been harmed by the cuts, most oppose them. Support is far higher among those in these groups who haven’t felt an impact of sequestration.

GROUPS – Perhaps surprisingly, given the partisan nature of the debate, views of the cuts don’t divide sharply along party lines. Majorities of Democrats and Republicans alike oppose the cuts – 59 and 54 percent, respectively – as do a similar 58 percent of independents.

One reason: Republicans are 14 points more apt than Democrats to say they’ve been harmed by the sequester. And among Republicans who’ve been hurt by the cuts, 68 percent disapprove of them. Among those unhurt, disapproval drops to 42 percent.

Ideology has an effect: Forty-seven percent of “very” conservative Americans approve of the cuts, as do 42 percent of those who call themselves “somewhat” conservative. It’s 36 percent among moderates and 24 percent among liberals. But again, impacts of the cuts are a bigger factor in views on the issue. Among conservatives hurt by the cuts, 65 percent disapprove of them; among those unhurt, just 34 percent disapprove.

Similarly, 66 percent of Tea Party supporters who’ve been damaged by the cuts disapprove, vs. 44 percent of those who report no personal impact.

While Barack Obama has been a sharp critic of sequestration, he only runs 43-38 percent against the Republicans in Congress in trust to handle the budget deficit, not a significant difference. He’s done much better on the issue, but also worse; the tables were turned as recently as two years ago, when Obama trailed the GOP in trust to handle the deficit by 8 points.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone May 16-19, 2013, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 1,001 adults, including landline and cell-phone-only respondents. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 3.5 points, including design effect. Partisan divisions are 33-22-38 percent, Democrats-Republicans-independents.

The survey was produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#) of New York, N.Y., with sampling, data collection and tabulation by Abt-SRBI of New York, N.Y.

Analysis by Dana Kraushar and Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>.

Media contacts: [David Ford](#), (212) 456-7243, and [Julie Townsend](#), (212) 456-4934.

Full results follow.

\*= less than 0.5 percent

1-3, 4a-c, 5-12, 15-34 previously released.

4d. Who do you trust to do a better job handling the federal budget deficit - (Obama) or (the Republicans in Congress)?

	Obama	Reps	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
5/19/13	43	38	2	13	5
12/16/12	45	41	2	10	3
1/15/12	40	41	1	14	4
9/1/11	39	42	1	16	2
6/5/11	39	47	2	10	2
3/13/11	45	36	2	14	4
1/16/11	44	41	4	8	2
12/12/10	39	47	2	9	4
4/25/10	45	41	1	10	3
2/8/10	45	43	1	9	1
9/12/09	50	36	1	12	1
7/18/09	54	35	*	9	2
6/21/09	56	30	2	9	2

13. Automatic across-the-board cuts in federal spending have begun to take effect because Obama and the Republicans in Congress were unable to reach a budget agreement earlier this year. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of these budget cuts taking place? Do you approve/disapprove strongly or somewhat?

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
5/19/13	35	16	20	56	18	39	8
4/14/13	35	16	19	57	20	37	8
3/10/13*	39	16	23	53	19	34	8

\*"last week"

14. Have you personally felt any negative impact of these budget cuts, or not? (IF YES) Has it been a major impact or minor?

	----- Yes -----			No opinion	
	NET	Major	Minor	No	opinion
5/19/13	37	18	19	61	2
4/14/13	33	17	16	65	2
3/10/13	25	14	11	73	2

\*\*\* END \*\*\*