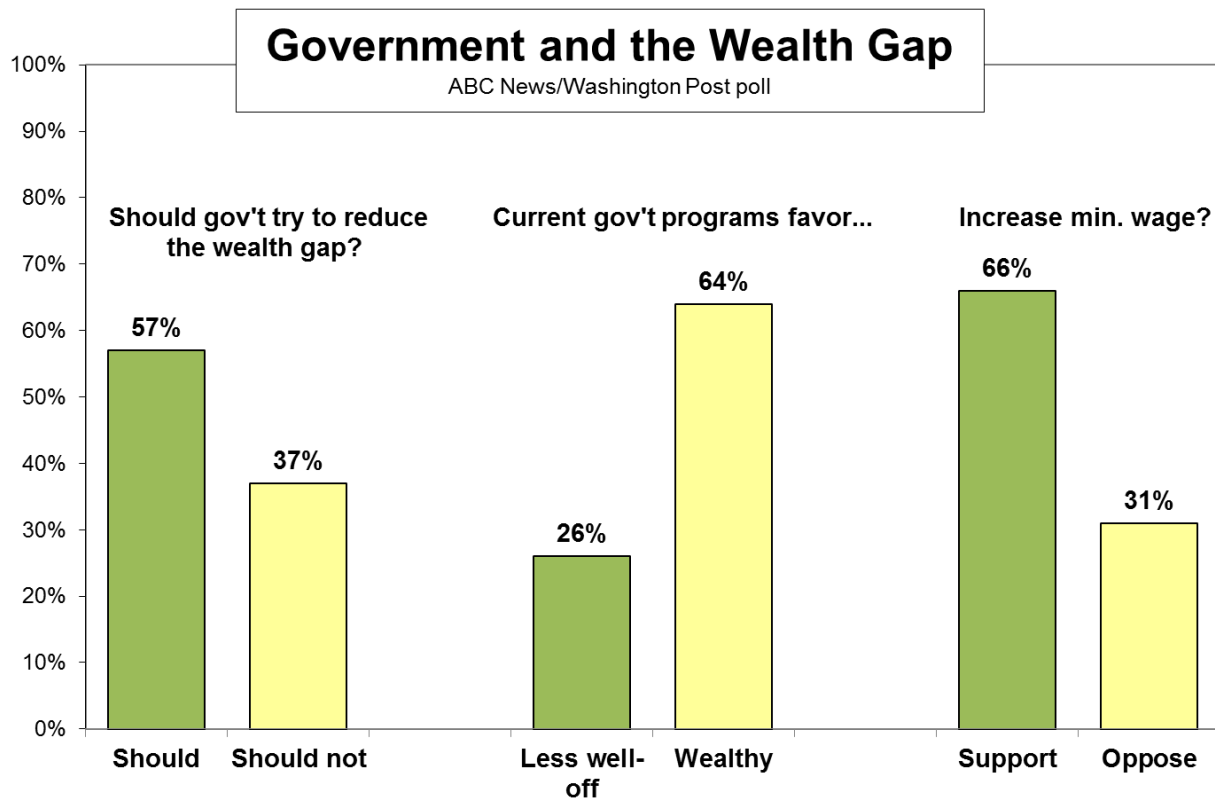


Most Back Minimum Wage Hike & Policies to Address the Wealth Gap

Two-thirds of Americans in a new ABC News/Washington Post poll support increasing the minimum wage, rejecting arguments that doing so could encourage layoffs and reflecting majority sentiment that current federal government policies favor the wealthy.

Those who support a higher minimum wage even have a recommended level: The average response in this group is \$10.25 per hour, very close to the \$10.10 proposal endorsed by Barack Obama and now before the U.S. Senate.

Support for raising the minimum wage is linked to broader concern about income inequality, a theme sounded by Obama in a speech Dec. 4. Sixty-four percent of Americans say federal policies currently favor the wealthy, and 57 percent say they'd support efforts to try to reduce the wealth gap in this country. Support for boosting the minimum wage soars in both those groups.



Currently \$7.25 an hour, the federal minimum wage last was raised in 2009. Obama urged making it \$9 in his 2013 State of the Union address, and more recently backed the \$10.10

proposal. At the state level, lawmakers in California, New York, Connecticut and Rhode Island have increased minimum wages in the past year, and New Jerseyans voted in an \$8.25 minimum last month.

This poll, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#), offered pro and con arguments on the issue, noting that some say the minimum wage should be raised “to help low-income workers get by,” while others say taking such action “will lead some businesses to cut jobs.” The result is 2-1 in favor: Sixty-six percent support raising the minimum wage, while 31 percent oppose it.

Intensity of sentiment is even more lopsided: Nearly half, 48 percent, “strongly” support raising the minimum wage, vs. 20 percent who are strongly opposed.

Told its current level and asked what the minimum wage should be, Americans, on average, say \$9.41 per hour. That rises to \$10.25 just among those who favor raising the minimum wage.

GROUPS – Support for raising the minimum wage is higher among lower-income Americans than their higher-income counterparts. Eighty percent of those with household incomes less than \$20,000 a year favor an increase, compared with 59 percent of those earning \$50,000 or more.

In partisan terms, support for a higher minimum wage peaks at 85 percent among Democrats and liberals alike, and also draws 71 percent of moderates and 65 percent of independents. Support declines to 50 percent of Republicans and 46 percent of strong conservatives.

Among other groups, likely reflecting income gaps, support for the increase is higher among women, less-educated Americans and nonwhites than among their opposites.

More broadly, as noted, 64 percent say that federal policies currently favor the wealthy and 57 percent say the government should try to reduce the gap between the wealthy and those less well-off. These also are highly partisan views: Among Democrats, 81 percent say federal policies favor the wealthy and 76 percent support government efforts to reduce the wealth gap. Those divide to 48 and 40 percent, respectively, among Republicans.

Obama’s speech earlier this month calling for efforts to address wage inequality may nonetheless extend beyond his core supporters. Among political independents, a key group with which he’s recently struggled, 62 percent say current federal policies favor the wealthy, and 58 percent favor efforts to address the wealth gap.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone Dec. 12-15, 2013, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 1,005 adults, including landline and cell-phone-only respondents. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 3.5 points, including design effect.

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 Christopher Weiss.

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

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Full results follow.

1-13, 16-23 previously released; 26-27 held for release.

14. Do you think the federal government should or should not pursue policies that try to reduce the gap between wealthy and less well-off Americans? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	----- Should pursue -----			--- Should not pursue ---			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
12/15/13	57	39	18	37	10	26	6
9/29/12 RV	52	31	21	43	13	30	5
11/3/11 RV	58	41	16	37	11	26	5
11/3/11	60	43	18	35	11	24	5

15. Do you think federal government policies currently do more to favor (less well-off Americans) or more to favor (the wealthy)?

	Favor less	Favor	Treat	No
	well-off Americans	wealthy	equally (vol.)	opinion
12/15/13	26	64	5	5

24. Some people say (the minimum wage should be raised to help low-income workers get by). Others say (raising the minimum wage will lead some businesses to cut jobs). Given these arguments, do you support or oppose raising the minimum wage? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	----- Support -----			----- Oppose -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
12/15/13	66	48	18	31	11	20	2

25. The minimum wage in this country is now seven dollars and 25 cents an hour. What do you think it should be?

	Mean	Median	None	No
			(vol.)	opinion
12/15/13 All	\$9.41	\$9.00	2	8
If favor increase	\$10.25	\$10.00	0	5

*** END ***