

Opinion Poll: 2009 U.S. Image of Japan Study (Summary)

1. Perception of Japan as a Dependable Ally or Friend (See Graph 1)

The percentage among the general public was 80%, which marked the highest-ever record. The percentage among opinion leaders was also high at 91%, which was a slight decrease from last year.

- Ratio of respondents who consider Japan as a dependable ally or friend. (Figures in parenthesis are results in 2008 and 2007.)

General public: 80%* (67%, 74%)

Opinion leaders: 91% (92%, 91%)

*: highest figures

2. The Most Important Partner of the U.S. in the Asian Region (See Graphs 2 and 3)

- Over 40% of American respondents regard Japan as the most important partner in the Asian Region.

- The percentage of those who chose China increased from last year among both the general public and opinion leaders.

The most important partner of the U.S. in the Asian Region

1: Japan

General public: 46% (43%, 48%)

Opinion leaders: 44% (54%, 53%)

2: China

General public: 39% (34%, 34%)

Opinion leaders: 42% (38%, 38%)

3: Russia

General public: 8% (10%, 8%)

Opinion leaders: 8% (5%, 5%)

3. Japan-U.S. Relations

- The percentage of those who think Japan-U.S. cooperative relations are “Excellent” or “Good” basically remains at high level as in recent years.

- The percentage of the general public and opinion leaders who answered that the degree of mutual understanding between the people of Japan and the U.S. is "Good" increased.

(1) Evaluation of the present level of Japan-U.S. cooperation in general

- Rating of positive responses, either "excellent" or "good" (See Graph 4)

General public: 73%* (63%, 67%)

Opinion leaders: 81% (85%, 86%)

*: highest figures

(2) Japan-U.S. relations in the future (See Graph 5)

(Will improve)

General public: 45% (46%, 47%)

Opinion leaders: 46% (36%, 30%)

(Will not change)

General public: 47% (38%, 43%)

Opinion leaders: 48% (56%, 58%)

(3) The way which would most improve relations between the U.S. and Japan.

"Improve economic/trade Relations"

General public: 45% (36%, 36%)

Opinion leaders: 47% (40%, 36%)

"Increase global cooperation"

General public: 27% (27%, 30%)

Opinion leaders: 29% (31%, 29%)

"Strengthen political/security relations"

General public: 20% (20%, 25%)

Opinion leaders: 19% (24%, 26%)

"Promote cultural exchanges"

General public: 7% (8%, 8%)

Opinion leaders: 4% (4%, 8%)

(4) Degree of mutual understanding between the people of Japan and the U.S. (See Graph 6)

(Good)

General public: 42%* (38%, 36%)

Opinion leaders: 39%* (27%, 23%)

*: highest figures

(Fair)

General public: 48% (43%, 49%)

Opinion leaders: 52% (57%, 60%)

4. Evaluation of the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements

- With regard to the Japan-U.S. security arrangements, there has been no significant change; a large majority of the U.S. public shows their support for the maintenance of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty and views it as important to the U.S.'s own security as well.

(1) Evaluation of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty (See Graph 7)

(The Treaty should be maintained)

General public: 87% (78%, 87%)

Opinion leaders: 89% (87%, 88%)

(2) The contribution of the Japan-US Security Treaty to the peace and stability of Japan and the Far East (See Graph 8)

(Rating of positive responses, either "Great deal" or "Moderate amount")

General public: 80%* (65%, 77%)

Opinion leaders: 83% (82%, 88%)

*: highest figures

(3) Importance of the Japan-US Security Treaty for U.S. security interests (See Graph 9)

(Rating of positive responses, either "very important" or "somewhat important")

General public: 90%* (84%, 89%)

Opinion leaders: 89%* (87%, 88%)

*: highest figures

5. Economic and Trade Relations

- In response to the question of whether or not Japan and the U.S. should sign a Free Trade Agreement (FTA), over 60% of respondents answered in the affirmative.

Should Japan and the U.S. sign a Free Trade Agreement (FTA)? (New question)

“Yes”

General public: 62%

Opinion leaders: 67%

“No”

General public: 27%

Opinion leaders: 23%

6. Evaluation of Japan's International Role

- As to the question of whether Japan has played an important international role commensurate with its economic strength, approximately 70% of the respondents answered affirmatively.

- Japan was highly evaluated especially in the fields of "Science / Technology" and "Global Economy" as last year.

(1) Does Japan play an important international role commensurate with its economic strength? (See Graph 10)

“Yes” (Opinion leaders includes the response “Yes, somewhat”)

General public: 68% (62%, 69%)

Opinion leaders: 73% (66%, 70%)

“No”

General public: 24% (24%, 25%)

Opinion leaders: 24% (31%, 27%)

(2) In the following areas, does Japan currently play an important international role?

(Rating of positive response)

"Science / Technology"

General public: 66% (60%, 67%)

Opinion leaders: 97% (96%, 96%)

"Global Economy"

General public: 62% (53%, 62%)

Opinion leaders: 96% (96%, 96%)

"Cultural Exchange"

General public: 57% (48%, 58%)

Opinion leaders: 79% (71%, 68%)

"World Politics"

General public: 46% (38%, 48%)

Opinion leaders: 67% (63%, 61%)

"Global Issues"

General public: 41% (37%, 40%)

Opinion leaders: 71% (66%, 64%)

"Economic Aid"

General public: 34% (29%, 34%)

Opinion leaders: 69% (57%, 61%)

"Security/PKO"

General public: 29% (29%, 33%)

Opinion leaders: 45% (41%, 43%)

7. Perceptions of countries sharing common values with U.S.

- The percentage of response answering that Japan and U.S. share common values indicated a high level, next to the U.K.

(The figures are the total of those who responded "to a great extent" and "to some extent." Figures in parenthesis are results in 2008 and 2007. India was added as an option in 2008.)

Country	<General public>	<Opinion leaders>
U.K.	89% (76%, 85%)	U.K. 95% (96%, 96%)
Japan	87% (73%, 83%)	Japan 94% (93%, 94%)
Germany	84% (73%, 79%)	Germany 92% (96%, 92%)

France	72% (58%, 62%)	France	84% (81%, 74%)
Taiwan	58% (51%, 58%)	Taiwan	74% (85%, 83%)
India	58% (45%)	India	69% (77%)
Russia	50% (44%, 52%)	Russia	50% (58%, 58%)
China	50% (42%, 45%)	China	47% (52%, 45%)
North Korea	15% (18%, 14%)	North Korea	8% (7%, 6%)

8. Sources of Information on Japan

- The order of sources of information on Japan was as follows:

General public: television, magazines or books, newspapers

Opinion leaders: newspapers, magazines or books, television

Sources of information on Japan

<General public>

Television:	79% (74%, 80%)
Magazines/Books	71% (64%, 72%)
Newspapers	67% (63%, 71%)
School Studies	56% (52%, 51%)
Internet	52% (39%, 43%)
Movies	39% (37%, 40%)
Japanese Friends	33% (29%, 29%)
Friends/Neighbors	31% (30%, 29%)
Radio	30% (26%, 34%)
Experience in Japan	12% (12%, 12%)

<Opinion leaders>

Newspapers	85% (86%, 89%)
Magazines/Books	81% (86%, 83%)
Television	73% (75%, 72%)
Internet	65% (58%, 60%)
School Studies	59% (61%, 61%)
Radio	49% (46%, 48%)
Japanese Friends	45% (44%, 46%)
Friends/Neighbors	34% (39%, 38%)
Movies	34% (30%, 32%)
Experience in Japan	22% (28%, 24%)

9. Perceptions of Japan (General public only)

- Over 80% of respondents answered affirmatively to images of Japan as “a country that has great traditions and culture,” “a country with a strong economy and high technology,” “a peaceful country,” and “a country that disseminates new culture to the world, such as animation, fashion, and cuisine.”

(The percentage shows the ratio of those who responded positively to the following choices.)

A country that has great traditions and culture: 96% (92%, 95%)

A country with a strong economy and technology: 88% (91%, 94%)

A country with beautiful nature:	85% (80%, 78%)
A peaceful country:	84% (77%, 81%)
A country that disseminates new culture to the world, such as animation, fashion, and cuisine:	80% (73%, 78%,)
A country that has potential for growth:	78% (76%, 78%)
A western-oriented country:	68% (62%, 63%)
A country that has shown leadership in global society:	65% (59%, 64%)
A democratic country:	55% (47%, 51%)
A country that is difficult to understand:	45% (47%, 48%)
A militant country:	26% (31%, 29%)
A country Americans should be wary of :	22% (31%, 29%)

10. Japan becoming a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council
(Opinion leaders only)

- The percentage of opinion leaders who answered Japan should become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council has increased by 8 points since last year.

Should Japan become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council?

Yes	57%* (49%, 52%)
No	39% (47%, 42%)
Don't know/Refused	4% (4%, 6%)

*: highest figures

(END)