

NEW CUBAN-AMERICAN ATTITUDES & QUESTIONS FOR U.S.–CUBA POLICY

The Brookings Institution in partnership with the Cuba Study Group held a conference on April 2 with representatives of Cuban-American political and humanitarian organizations, academic experts, as well as current and former policy practitioners to discuss a recent poll on current Cuban-American opinions and the implications for U.S. Cuba policy. The poll was conducted on March 26, 2007 by the Cuban Research Institute at the Florida International University and sponsored by the Cuba Study Group. It represents their eighth poll inquiring into the attitudes of the Cuban-American community in South Florida. The poll explores opinions on current U.S. relations with Cuba, the desirability and effectiveness of the U.S. government embargo, and the ideology of the community. The most significant results of that survey are included in the attached data summaries.

Among the results were the findings that a majority of Cuban-Americans registered to vote support a return to the policies that existed until 2003 that, as stated in the poll, “were more liberal on family visits, humanitarian and financial support, and allowed more licensed travels.” A majority of registered voters also favored a national dialogue between dissidents, exiles, and representatives of the Cuban government, the sale of medicines and trade in food. By a narrow margin these voters favored re-establishing diplomatic relations. A majority of Cuban-Americans still want to continue the embargo. However, this represents the lowest percentage of support for the embargo since the poll was first taken in 1991. The latest findings also show that the community is ideologically split between those who immigrated earlier (1959-1973) and the most recent immigrants (1985-2007). The former show a slight majority supporting more open policies, but also strong support for the embargo, while the latter exhibit significantly greater support for more open policies and oppose the embargo by a majority.

The Brookings Institution considers that the findings of the latest poll demonstrate a significant shift in attitudes among the Cuban-American community. This shift offers the Administration an opportunity to review current regulations and introduce less restrictive procedures within the Cuban Assets Control Regulations. We therefore attach the results of the 2007 Florida International University poll, together with a digest of the findings undertaken by The Brookings Institution.

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Key Findings of the Florida International University March 2007 Poll

- **Growing support for a more open U.S. policy towards Cuba:**
 - A return to more open travel and remittance policies of 2003 (64.4%)
 - Unrestricted travel to Cuba (55%)
 - U.S. companies selling medicines to Cuba (68.6%)
 - U.S. companies trading food with Cuba (64.4%)
 - U.S. diplomatic relations with Cuba (51.3%)
 - Dialogue with representatives of Cuba's government (65%)
- **Continued, but weakened, majority support for the U.S. embargo:**
 - A majority of Cuban-Americans still support maintaining the embargo on Cuba (57.5%), but this is the smallest majority since the first poll in 1991.
 - 76% say the embargo has worked "not very well" or "not well at all."
- **Smaller majority support for more open U.S. policy among registered voters:**
 - 65.9% of those polled were U.S. citizens, of which 91% registered to vote.
 - Support for more open policies among registered voters was less than the total sample, but still reached a majority for all major questions, except support for unrestricted travel (42.3%).
- **Significantly greater support for a more open policy exists among those not registered to vote:**
 - 83.4% support for a return to less restrictive policies of 2003 versus 52.1% for registered voters.
 - 45.2% support continuing the embargo versus 65.5% for registered voters.
- **Difference among waves of immigration:**
 - Newly arrived Cuban-Americans (1985-2007) favor open dialogue and lifting the embargo much more than those who arrived earlier.
 - Newer arrivals are more than twice as likely to note a moderate to major personal and family effect from the current restrictions.
- **The Cuban-Americans remain predominantly Republican, but greater flexibility exists among more recent arrivals:**
 - 66.1% of Cuban-Americans registered as Republicans.
 - A larger percentage of new arrivals are registering as Democrats than has been seen among earlier arrivals (25.8% of those arriving after 1995 are registered as Democrats versus 13.4% of those who arrived 1965-1973).

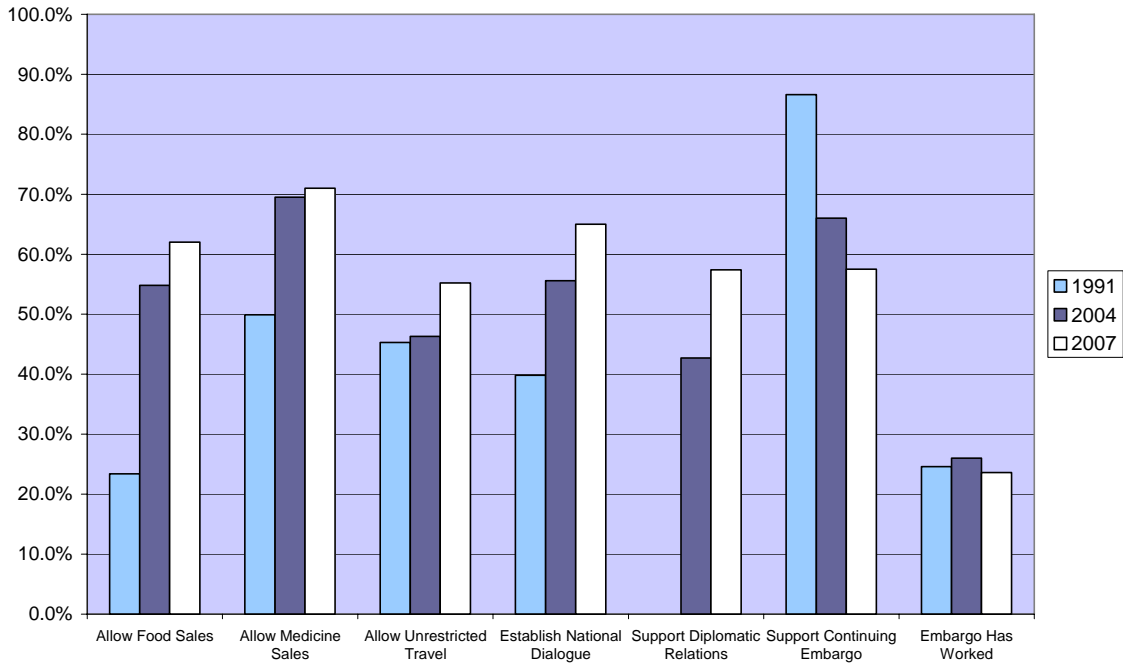
Digest of the March 2007 Florida International University Cuba Poll

	Earliest available Poll results	2004	2007	2007 (registered voters)	2007 (not registered to vote)
Support return to more open 2003 policy	--	--	64.4%	52.1%	82.4%
Support unrestricted travel from U.S. to Cuba	45.3% (1991)	46.3%	55.2%	42.3%	73.9%
Support U.S. companies selling medicines to Cuba	49.9% (1993)	69.5%	71.7%	66.8%	78.9%
Support U.S. Companies trading food with Cuba	23.4% (1993)	54.8%	62.0%	55.0%	72.5%
Support diplomatic relations with Cuba	38.2% (2000)	42.7%	51.3%	50.6%	67.5%
Support dialogue between exiles, dissidents and representatives of Cuba's government	39.8% (1991)	55.6%	65.0%	60.1%	72.0%
Support continuing US Embargo on Cuba	78.2 (1997)	66.1%	57.5%	65.6%	45.2%

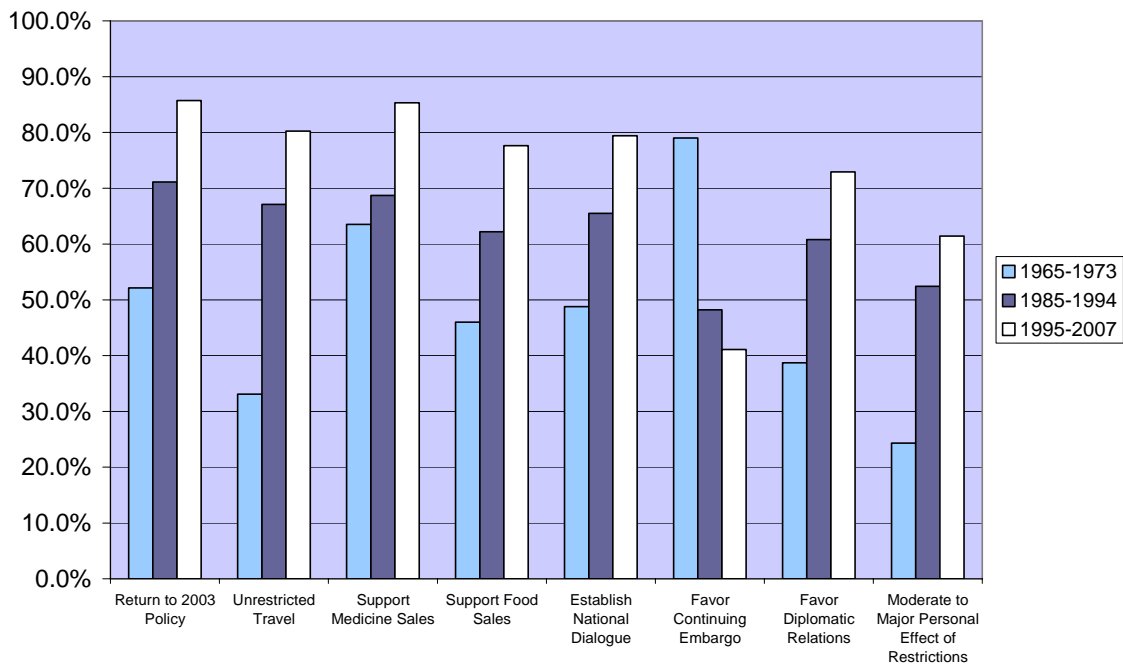
Results by Periods of Immigration

	1965-1973	1985-1994	1995-2007
Return to 2003 policy	52.1%	71.1%	85.7%
Unrestricted Travel	33.1%	67.1%	80.2%
Allow Medicine Sales	63.5%	68.7%	85.3%
Allow Food Sales	46.0%	62.2%	77.6%
Establish National Dialogue	48.8%	65.5%	79.4%
Favor Continuing Embargo	79.0%	48.2%	41.1%
Favor diplomatic relations	38.7%	60.8%	72.9%
Moderate to Major personal/family effect of restrictions	24.3%	52.4%	61.4%
Small or No personal/family effect of restrictions	74.2%	46.2%	38.6%
Registered to vote	98.4%	84.5%	60.0%
US Citizen	96.9%	56.4%	19.0%
Plan to become US Citizen	50.0%	93.8%	90.1%
Republican/Democrat	73.1% / 13.4%	65.7% / 22.4%	61.3% / 25.8%

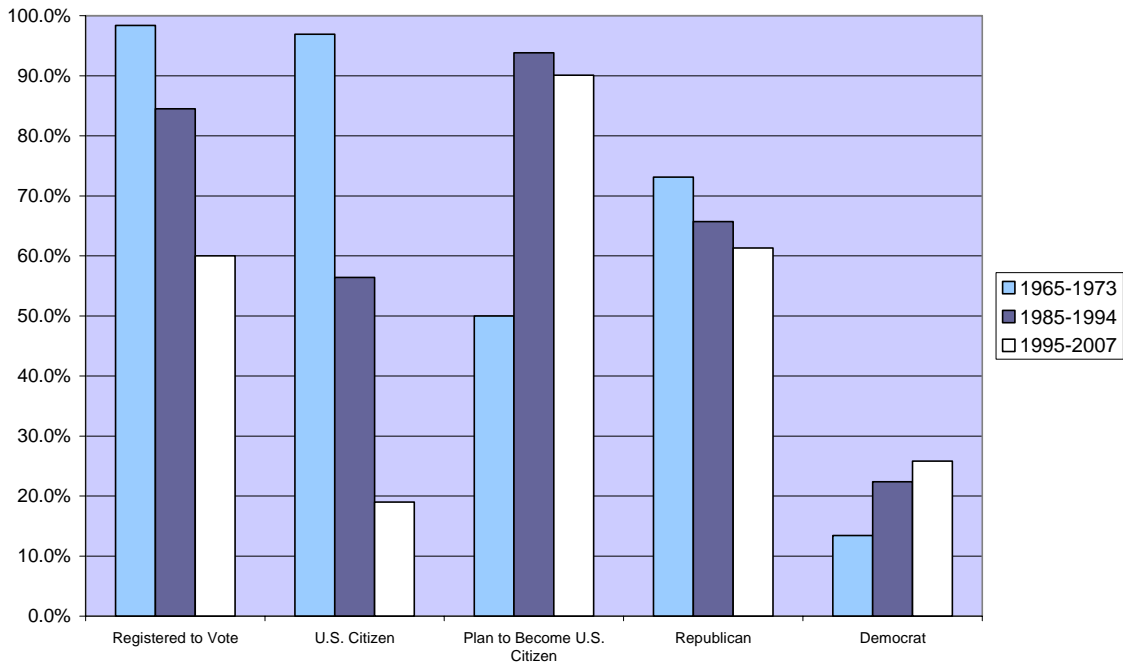
Digest of 2007 Florida International University Cuba Poll



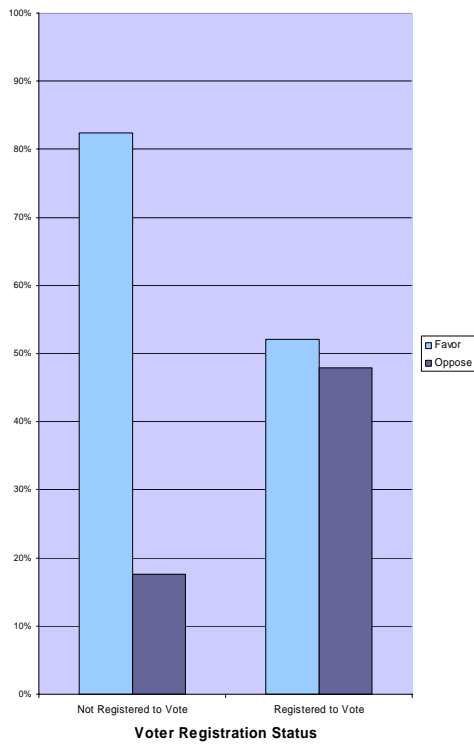
Results by Periods of Immigration



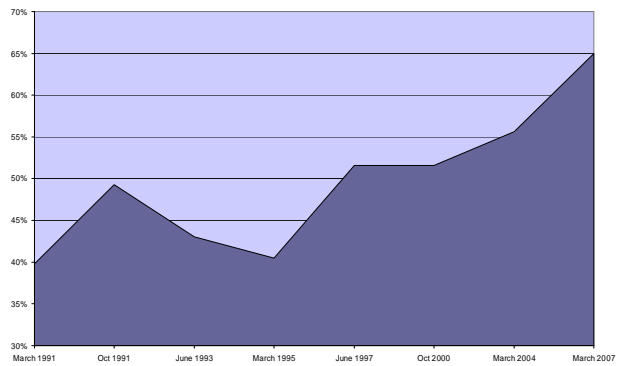
Citizenship and Political Preferences by Periods of Immigration



Return to 2003 Policy



Favor National Dialogue



Appendix

URL for the March 26, 2007 Florida International University poll:

<http://www.fiu.edu/~ipor/cuba8/>

PPT presentation of poll: <http://www3.brookings.edu/comm/events/20070402ppt.pdf>

Press Coverage of March 2007 Florida International University Poll

Adriana Garcia, "Cuban Americans Moderate Views on Cuba: Poll," *Reuters*
(April 2, 2007)

Associated Press writers, "Poll: Cuban-American Support for Embargo Slips," *AP*
(April 3, 2007)

Ewen MacAskill, "Miami Cubans Soften over US Embargo," *Guardian UK*
(April 3, 2007)

Karen Branch-Brioso, "U.S.-Cuba Relations Could be Modified," *The Tampa Tribune*
(April 8, 2007)

Maria Peña, "Cuban Exile asks for Political Change towards Cuba," *EFE*
(April 4, 2007)

Oxford Analytica, "Cuban Exiles Remain Key Constituency," *Forbes.com*
(April 5, 2007)

Pablo Bachelet, "Fewer Support Sanctions on Cuba," *Miami Herald*
(April 2, 2007)

Randy Schultz, "These Myths of History are History," *Palm Beach Post*
(April 8, 2007)

United Press International writers, "Poll Results: Ease up on Cuba Travel," *UPI*
(April 2, 2007)

Vanessa Bauza, "Poll: Cuban-Americans Back Change," *South Florida Sun-Sentinel* (April 3, 2007)