



Ipsos/NPR poll: Majority of Americans support policies aimed to keep guns out of hands of dangerous individuals

Alternate solutions, namely arming teachers, not seen as a viable path forward

Washington, DC, February 28, 2018 — In light of the recent school shooting in Parkland, Fla., Ipsos has partnered with NPR to study American perspectives on guns, following up on an NPR/Ipsos poll on the same issue conducted October of 2017. Recent events have not changed Americans' support for the Second Amendment, with 74 percent saying they have no problem with people owning guns (unchanged from October). However, crime or gun violence is now one of the most worrying problems in America, up 10 percentage points from October (from 27% to 37%); it is the single top issue of concern for both Democrats and Independents. However, after mass casualty events, concerns around gun violence and crime often surge, and it will be important to continue measuring the importance of this issue over time.

Three-quarters of Americans now think gun laws should be more strict than they are today, up seven points from last fall. Vast majorities of Americans continue to support banning firearm attachments, or bump stocks, that allow rifles to rapidly fire similar to an automatic weapon (81%), banning high-capacity ammunition magazines that hold more than 10 rounds (73%), and banning assault-style weapons (72%). Nearly all Americans (94%) support requiring background checks for all gun buyers, and more than 8 in 10 (82%) favor raising the legal age to purchase a gun to 21. However, most Americans (59%) oppose training teachers to carry guns in schools and see it as the least effective way to reduce gun violence in schools.

Less than half of Americans (48%) now say the benefits of owning a gun outweigh the risks, down five points from October. Fewer Americans, specifically Democrats and Independents, also believe that the NRA represents the views of people like them (36% agree), down seven points from October. The American public is split on whether "the only way to stop a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun" (47% agree, 46% disagree).

At this moment in time, two-thirds of Americans indicate that gun issues will be major factor in their November midterm election vote. Most also disagree (63%) with the current ban on government funding for gun violence research, with three-quarters agreeing that gun violence is a public health issue (73%) and that Congress needs to do more to address it (78%).

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1. Which three of the following topics do you find the most worrying? (Select up to three)

	Total		Democrat		Republican		Independent	
	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17
Crime or gun violence	37%	27%	46%	37%	26%	19%	41%	26%
Terrorism	35	41	22	33	48	55	36	40
Healthcare	34	33	38	35	33	32	29	34
Political extremism or polarization	26	22	32	20	26	21	24	23
Immigration	18	16	10	12	32	24	13	12
Government budget and debt	17	16	12	11	21	22	19	18
Climate change	16	20	24	27	10	11	16	20
Nuclear conflict	16	19	17	21	14	20	16	17
Education	14	13	17	19	12	10	11	7
Social inequality	14	13	23	20	5	3	14	16
Unemployment	14	11	13	12	11	8	16	12
Taxes	13	11	10	8	18	12	11	11
Natural disasters	9	14	6	12	10	13	12	16
Foreign conflicts	9	10	11	10	8	10	8	13
Other	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	5
None of these	3	4	2	1	1	7	6	5

2. To the best of your knowledge, are the following statements TRUE or FALSE? *Denotes correct answer

a. The percentage of Americans who own a gun has increased over the last twenty years.

	Total		Democrat		Republican		Independent	
	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17
True	78%	78%	80%	78%	77%	80%	77%	74%
False*	8	10%	7	12%	11	9%	7	9%
Don't know	14	13%	12	10%	12	12%	16	17%

b. About half of all civilian-owned guns in the world are in the United States.

	Total		Democrat		Republican		Independent	
	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17
True*	64%	62%	70%	70%	62%	55%	65%	60%
False	13	16	12	12	17	22	10	16
Don't know	23	23	19	18	22	23	25	24

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c. After the Sandy Hook massacre, Congress put tough new background check laws in place.

	Total		Democrat		Republican		Independent	
	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17
True	23%	35%	19%	27%	31%	43%	23%	34%
False*	53	42	62	52	46	36	55	40
Don't know	24	23	19	21	23	21	23	26

d. Households with guns are more likely to experience a fatality from crime, accident, or suicide than households without guns.

	Total		Democrat		Republican		Independent	
	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17
True*	46%	47%	63%	59%	31%	37%	37%	39%
False	37	32	20	20	59	44	37	36
Don't know	17	21	17	20	10	19	25	25

e. The United States government regularly conducts research on gun deaths in this country.

	Total		Democrat		Republican		Independent	
	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17
True	34%	43%	25%	39%	44%	51%	39%	41%
False*	36	29	49	36	29	24	32	27
Don't know	29	28	26	25	27	25	29	32

f. There have been 18 school shootings that resulted in deaths in 2018.

	Total (N = 1,006)	Democrat (N = 340)	Republicans (N = 370)	Independents (N = 186)
True	55%	63%	48%	51%
False*	26	19	37	26
Don't know	19	18	15	23

g. Since the Sandy Hook shooting in 2012, more than 400 people have been shot in school shootings.

	Total (N = 1,006)	Democrat (N = 340)	Republicans (N = 370)	Independents (N = 186)
True*	57%	70%	47%	52%
False	17	8	28	19
Don't know	26	22	25	29



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3. To the best of your knowledge, how many guns are there in the United States per 100 people:

	Total		Democrat		Republican		Independent	
	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17
8 guns per 100 people	10%	10%	8%	11%	13%	10%	9%	9%
32 guns per 100 people	28	29	26	26	33	33	23	30
88 guns per 100 people*	21	21	23	27	21	18	18	16
175 guns per 100 people	15	14	16	15	14	11	17	17
Don't know	26	26	26	21	19	28	32	28

4. Which of the following statements comes closest to your overall view of gun laws in this country? Do you think gun laws should be...

	Total		Democrat		Republican		Independent	
	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17
Gun laws should be a lot more strict than they are today	44%	45%	68%	65%	22%	29%	37%	32%
Gun laws should be somewhat more strict than they are today	31	23	24	19	38	26	31	29
Gun laws are about right	17	20	5	9	27	33	23	23
Gun laws should be somewhat less strict than they are today	4	7	1	6	8	6	5	10
Gun laws should be a lot less strict than they are today	4	4	1	1	6	6	4	6
<i>More strict (Net)</i>	<i>75%</i>	<i>68%</i>	<i>92%</i>	<i>84%</i>	<i>59%</i>	<i>55%</i>	<i>68%</i>	<i>61%</i>
<i>Less strict (Net)</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>11%</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>16</i>

5. Please indicate whether you would favor or oppose the following proposals about gun policy:

a. Banning assault-style weapons

	Total		Democrat		Republican		Independent	
	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17
Strongly favor	54%	58%	76%	74%	36%	48%	45%	45%
Somewhat favor	18	21	12	17	22	22	21	31
Somewhat oppose	14	12	7	7	18	16	18	16
Strongly oppose	14	8	5	2	24	14	16	8
<i>Favor (Net)</i>	<i>72%</i>	<i>79%</i>	<i>88%</i>	<i>91%</i>	<i>58%</i>	<i>70%</i>	<i>66%</i>	<i>76%</i>
<i>Oppose (Net)</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>24</i>

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b. Banning high-capacity ammunition magazines that hold more than 10 rounds

	Total		Democrat		Republican		Independent	
	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17
Strongly favor	54%	53%	74%	68%	35%	43%	49%	42%
Somewhat favor	19	25	14	20	24	27	21	33
Somewhat oppose	15	12	7	7	20	16	19	14
Strongly oppose	12	10	4	4	21	15	11	11
<i>Favor (Net)</i>	73%	78%	88%	88%	59%	69%	70%	75%
<i>Oppose (Net)</i>	27	22	12	12	41	31	30	25

c. Banning firearm attachments (i.e. bump stocks) that allow rifles to rapidly fire similar to an automatic weapon

	Total		Democrat		Republican		Independent	
	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17
Strongly favor	62%	62%	80%	76%	49%	52%	55%	54%
Somewhat favor	19	21	12	12	24	25	23	28
Somewhat oppose	13	11	5	9	19	14	16	10
Strongly oppose	6	7	2	3	8	9	7	7
<i>Favor (Net)</i>	81%	82%	92%	88%	73%	77%	77%	82%
<i>Oppose (Net)</i>	19	18	8	12	27	23	23	18

d. Requiring background checks for all gun buyers

	Total	Democrat	Republicans	Independents
Strongly favor	81%	92%	72%	75%
Somewhat favor	13	7	17	18
Somewhat oppose	3	-	4	6
Strongly oppose	3	1	7	1
<i>Favor (Net)</i>	94%	99%	89%	93%
<i>Oppose (Net)</i>	6	1	11	7

e. Raising the legal age to buy a gun from 18 to 21

	Total	Democrat	Republicans	Independents
Strongly favor	61%	76%	48%	56%
Somewhat favor	21	16	24	23
Somewhat oppose	10	4	15	15
Strongly oppose	8	3	13	6
<i>Favor (Net)</i>	82%	92%	72%	79%
<i>Oppose (Net)</i>	18	8	28	21

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f. Training teachers to carry guns in schools

	Total (N = 1,006)	Democrat (N = 340)	Republicans (N = 370)	Independents (N = 186)
Strongly favor	19%	7%	30%	21%
Somewhat favor	23	11	37	19
Somewhat oppose	22	22	17	26
Strongly oppose	37	59	16	34
<i>Favor (Net)</i>	<i>41%</i>	<i>18%</i>	<i>68%</i>	<i>40%</i>
<i>Oppose (Net)</i>	<i>59</i>	<i>82</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>60</i>

g. Adding those with mental illnesses to the federal gun background check system

	Total (N = 1,006)	Democrat (N = 340)	Republicans (N = 370)	Independents (N = 186)
Strongly favor	73%	79%	70%	70%
Somewhat favor	19	17	18	22
Somewhat oppose	5	2	9	7
Strongly oppose	3	2	3	1
<i>Favor (Net)</i>	<i>92%</i>	<i>96%</i>	<i>88%</i>	<i>92%</i>
<i>Oppose (Net)</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>8</i>

6. Of the list below, which do you think is the most effective way to reduce gun violence in schools?

	Total	Democrat	Republicans	Independents
Having stricter gun laws	29%	41%	17%	28%
Having armed security guards or resource officers in schools	24	15	34	26
Using metal detectors at school entrances	19	21	19	16
Increasing funding to hire more school psychologists and counselors	11	14	9	11
Arming teachers with guns	8	3	13	10
Don't know	9	6	8	9

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7. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

a. I have no problem with people owning guns

	Total		Democrat		Republican		Independent	
	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17
Strongly agree	41%	42%	28%	29%	58%	60%	45%	40%
Somewhat agree	32	31	36	30	29	28	31	38
Somewhat disagree	13	13	18	20	7	7	12	10
Strongly disagree	10	12	15	20	4	5	10	7
Don't know	4	2	3	1	3	1	3	4
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	74%	73%	64%	60%	87%	88%	76%	79%
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	23	25	34	39	11	12	22	17

b. The benefits of gun ownership outweigh the risks

	Total		Democrat		Republican		Independent	
	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17
Strongly agree	24%	25%	10%	11%	43%	39%	26%	28%
Somewhat agree	24	28	18	21	33	33	23	34
Somewhat disagree	20	21	24	31	11	12	24	18
Strongly disagree	22	17	38	29	8	10	16	10
Don't know	10	9	10	7	4	6	11	10
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	48%	53%	28%	32%	76%	72%	49%	62%
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	42	38	62	61	19	22	40	28

c. The National Rifle Association (NRA) represents the views of people like me

	Total		Democrat		Republican		Independent	
	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17	2/28	10/17
Strongly agree	17%	20%	4%	12%	34%	34%	18%	21%
Somewhat agree	19	23	10	15	32	32	18	22
Somewhat disagree	14	13	16	11	14	14	15	16
Strongly disagree	36	31	62	55	13	12	32	23
Don't know	14	12	9	7	8	8	16	19
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	36%	43%	14%	27%	66%	66%	36%	43%
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	50	44	77	66	27	27	48	39

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d. If more people carried guns, the United States would be safer

	Total	Democrat	Republicans	Independents
Strongly agree	14%	5%	28%	13%
Somewhat agree	17	9	27	13
Somewhat disagree	22	20	22	30
Strongly disagree	37	59	15	34
Don't know	9	7	8	10
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>31%</i>	<i>15%</i>	<i>55%</i>	<i>26%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>59</i>	<i>79</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>64</i>

e. The only way to stop a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun

	Total	Democrat	Republicans	Independents
Strongly agree	25%	8%	47%	26%
Somewhat agree	22	16	24	26
Somewhat disagree	18	22	12	19
Strongly disagree	28	47	11	23
Don't know	7	6	5	7
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>47%</i>	<i>24%</i>	<i>71%</i>	<i>52%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>69</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>42</i>

f. Congress needs to do more to address gun violence

	Total	Democrat	Republicans	Independents
Strongly agree	56%	79%	33%	51%
Somewhat agree	23	14	31	26
Somewhat disagree	8	2	17	6
Strongly disagree	7	3	12	9
Don't know	6	2	7	8
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>78%</i>	<i>93%</i>	<i>64%</i>	<i>77%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>15</i>

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g. There should be a ban on government funding for gun violence research

	Total	Democrat	Republicans	Independents
Strongly agree	11%	12%	11%	10%
Somewhat agree	12	8	17	13
Somewhat disagree	26	20	30	29
Strongly disagree	37	50	30	30
Don't know	14	10	12	18
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>23%</i>	<i>20%</i>	<i>28%</i>	<i>23%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>70</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>59</i>

h. Gun violence is a public health issue

	Total	Democrat	Republicans	Independents
Strongly agree	43%	58%	28%	41%
Somewhat agree	30	25	34	32
Somewhat disagree	11	7	17	10
Strongly disagree	9	6	16	9
Don't know	7	4	5	8
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>73%</i>	<i>83%</i>	<i>62%</i>	<i>73%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>19</i>

8. Thinking about the midterm elections in November of this year, how much of a factor will gun-related issues be in your decision for whom to vote?

	Total	Democrat	Republicans	Independents
A very strong factor	35%	48%	29%	30%
A somewhat strong factor	31	29	36	30
Not much of a factor	12	10	17	12
Not a factor at all	9	5	11	14
Will not/do not plan to vote	5	2	2	4
Don't know	9	6	5	9

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9. Do you approve or disapprove of President Trump’s handling of the aftermath of the school shooting in Parkland, Florida?

	Total	Democrat	Republicans	Independents
Strongly approve	14%	2%	31%	11%
Somewhat approve	12	2	25	12
Lean toward approve	9	5	15	8
Lean toward disapprove	9	10	7	9
Somewhat disapprove	8	12	6	9
Strongly disapprove	34	61	7	33
Don’t know	14	8	10	17
<i>Approve (Net)</i>	<i>35%</i>	<i>9%</i>	<i>71%</i>	<i>31%</i>
<i>Disapprove (Net)</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>83</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>51</i>

10. How do you get most of your news?

	Total	Democrat	Republicans	Independents
Television	43%	46%	41%	42%
Print newspapers/magazines	5	6	3	5
Online/internet	25	22	28	23
Radio	6	4	9	6
Mobile News apps	6	9	6	4
Social media (Twitter, Facebook)	13	11	11	14
None of the above	3	1	2	7

11. Of the choices listed below, which is your main source of television news?

	Total	Democrat	Republicans	Independents
FOX News	20%	9%	41%	16%
CNN	15	22	9	16
MSNBC	5	9	3	5
ABC	11	13	7	12
CBS	10	13	6	10
NBC	12	16	11	7
Public Television	5	4	3	7
None of the above	15	8	15	18

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12. With which political party do you most identify?

	Total	Democrat	Republicans	Independents
Strong Democrat	14%	38%	-	-
Moderate Democrat	15	40	-	-
Lean Democrat	8	23	-	-
Lean Republican	7	-	22%	-
Moderate Republican	12	-	38	-
Strong Republican	13	-	40	-
Independent	21	-	-	100%
Other	2	-	-	-
Don't know/Refuse	8	-	-	-

13. How would you describe the area in which you live?

	Total	Democrat	Republicans	Independents
Rural	22%	20%	25%	20%
Suburban	49	46	55	46
Urban	29	34	20	34

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About the Study

These are findings from an Ipsos poll conducted February 27-28, 2018, on behalf of NPR. For the survey, a sample of roughly 1,005 adults age 18+ from the continental U.S., Alaska and Hawaii was interviewed online in English. The sample includes 351 Democrats, 341 Republicans, and 203 Independents.

The sample for this study was randomly drawn from Ipsos's online panel (see link below for more info on "Access Panels and Recruitment"), partner online panel sources, and "river" sampling (see link below for more info on the Ipsos "Ampario Overview" sample method) and does not rely on a population frame in the traditional sense. Ipsos uses fixed sample targets, unique to each study, in drawing sample. After a sample has been obtained from the Ipsos panel, Ipsos calibrates respondent characteristics to be representative of the U.S. Population using standard procedures such as raking-ratio adjustments. The source of these population targets is U.S. Census 2016 American Community Survey data. The sample drawn for this study reflects fixed sample targets on demographics. Post-hoc weights were made to the population characteristics on gender, age, race/ethnicity, region, and education.

Statistical margins of error are not applicable to online nonprobability sampling polls. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error and measurement error. Where figures do not sum to 100, this is due to the effects of rounding. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points for all respondents. Ipsos calculates a design effect (DEFF) for each study based on the variation of the weights, following the formula of Kish (1965). This study had a credibility interval adjusted for design effect of the following (n=1,006, DEFF=1.5, adjusted Confidence Interval=5.0).

The poll also has a credibility interval plus or minus 6.0 percentage points for Democrats, plus or minus 6.1 percentage points for Republicans, and plus or minus 7.8 percentage points for Independents.

For more information about conducting research intended for public release or Ipsos' online polling methodology, please visit our [Public Opinion Polling and Communication](#) page where you can download our brochure, see our public release protocol, or contact us.

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About Ipsos Public Affairs

Ipsos Public Affairs is a non-partisan, objective, survey-based research practice made up of seasoned professionals. We conduct strategic research initiatives for a diverse number of American and international organizations, based not only on public opinion research, but elite stakeholder, corporate, and media opinion research.

Ipsos has media partnerships with the most prestigious news organizations around the world. In Canada, the U.S., UK, and internationally, Ipsos Public Affairs is the media polling supplier to Reuters News, the world's leading source of intelligent information for businesses and professionals. Ipsos Public Affairs is a member of the Ipsos Group, a leading global survey-based market research company. We provide boutique-style customer service and work closely with our clients, while also undertaking global research.

About Ipsos

Ipsos is an independent market research company controlled and managed by research professionals. Founded in France in 1975, Ipsos has grown into a worldwide research group with a strong presence in all key markets. Ipsos ranks fourth in the global research industry.

With offices in 88 countries, Ipsos delivers insightful expertise across five research specializations: brand, advertising and media; customer loyalty; marketing; public affairs research; and survey management.

Ipsos researchers assess market potential and interpret market trends. They develop and build brands. They help clients build long-term relationships with their customers. They test advertising and study audience responses to various media and they measure public opinion around the globe.

Ipsos has been listed on the Paris Stock Exchange since 1999 and generated global revenues of €1,782.7 million in 2016.

GAME CHANGERS

« Game Changers » is the Ipsos signature.

At Ipsos we are passionately curious about people, markets, brands and society.

We make our changing world easier and faster to navigate and inspire clients to make smarter decisions.

We deliver with security, speed, simplicity and substance. We are Game Changers.

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