



Peaceful Handover of Power, Respecting Elections Cornerstones of American Democracy

Ipsos Poll on Behalf of the University of Virginia Center of Politics

Washington, DC, May 16, 2019 – A new poll conducted by Ipsos, on behalf of the University of Virginia Center for Politics, looks at American views of the current state of the democratic system. While the Constitution created the three branches of government to be equal, only slightly more than a third (35%) of Americans think the Presidency, Congress, and the Supreme Court have the same amount of power. Of the three branches, Americans are most likely to consider the Supreme Court the most powerful (22%), closely followed by Congress (20%), and lastly, the Presidency (17%).

Americans think the peaceful handover of power after elections and both parties respecting the results of elections (both 91%) are essential for American democracy, with broad agreement across party lines. Four in five also believe that the two-term limit for the president is essential (79%), with Independents (87%) more likely than Democrats or Republicans (both 78%) to say this. While nearly two-thirds of Americans (62%) think the president's ability to veto legislation passed by Congress is essential for our democracy to work well, views are highly split by partisanship. Four in five Republicans (83%) agree with this, while only 61% of Independents and half of Democrats (49%) say the same. One third or fewer Americans think lifetime appointments to the U.S. Supreme Court (33%) and the filibuster in the Senate (30%) are essential for the healthy functioning of American democracy.

While some have advocated for delaying the 2020 elections due to the Russia investigations, just 16% of Americans agree with this. Republicans largely drive support (31%, compared to 12% of Independents and 9% of Democrats). Americans also reject the notion that President Trump should ignore the results of the 2020 election and stay in office if he loses; just 7% think he should do this.

Six in ten Americans (61%) believe that Trump does not respect the customs or traditions of the presidency. Views on this are highly partisan; while 86% of Democrats and 61% of Independents agree, only 29% of Republicans feel the same way. A majority of Americans also think Trump does not respect the laws of the U.S. (56%), with Democrats again driving sentiment (83%). Most Republicans think that President Trump achieved many of his goals in his first two years in office (75%) and that there is a "deep state" trying to undermine his presidency (77%). Finally, less than a third of Americans (30%) think the Mueller investigation prevented President Trump from achieving significant portions of his agenda. Over half of Republicans (60%) agree, compared to only a quarter of Independents (26%) and even fewer Democrats (14%).

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1. Which branch of the federal government do you think is the most powerful?

	Total (N=1005)	Democrat (N=376)	Republican (N=345)	Independent (N=205)
The Supreme Court	22%	25%	20%	19%
Congress	20%	23%	18%	16%
The Presidency	17%	15%	21%	16%
All are equal	35%	34%	36%	40%
Don't know	6%	3%	5%	9%

2. Do you think the following are essential or not essential for the healthy functioning of American democracy?

Total essential

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Peaceful handover of power after elections	91%	91%	92%	93%
Both parties respecting the results of elections	91%	90%	94%	94%
The two-term limit for the president	79%	78%	78%	87%
The president's ability to veto legislation passed by Congress	62%	49%	83%	61%
Lifetime appointments to the U.S. Supreme Court	33%	32%	39%	30%
The filibuster in the U.S. Senate	30%	34%	29%	32%

a) The President's ability to veto legislation passed by Congress

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Essential	62%	49%	83%	61%
Not essential	26%	37%	12%	25%
Don't know	12%	14%	5%	14%

b) The filibuster in the U.S. Senate

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Essential	30%	34%	29%	32%
Not essential	39%	39%	42%	39%
Don't know	30%	27%	29%	29%

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c) Peaceful handover of power after elections

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Essential	91%	91%	92%	93%
Not essential	4%	4%	4%	3%
Don't know	6%	5%	4%	4%

d) Both parties respecting the results of elections

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Essential	91%	90%	94%	94%
Not essential	5%	7%	4%	2%
Don't know	4%	4%	2%	4%

e) The two-term limit for the President

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Essential	79%	78%	78%	87%
Not essential	15%	17%	16%	8%
Don't know	6%	5%	5%	5%

f) Lifetime appointments to the U.S. Supreme Court

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Essential	33%	32%	39%	30%
Not essential	55%	58%	52%	56%
Don't know	12%	10%	9%	14%

3. Do you believe Trump should get two more years in office and the 2020 election delayed?

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Yes	16%	9%	31%	12%
No	77%	89%	62%	80%
Don't know	6%	3%	7%	8%



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4. Do you believe if Trump loses the 2020 election, he should ignore the results and stay in office?

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Yes	7%	7%	11%	3%
No	87%	90%	81%	91%
Don't know	6%	3%	9%	6%

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

Total agree

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Donald Trump does not respect the customs or traditions of the Presidency.	61%	86%	29%	61%
President Trump does not respect the laws of the United States.	56%	83%	20%	57%
President Trump achieved many of his goals in his first two years in office.	41%	22%	75%	35%
There is a “deep state” trying to undermine Donald Trump’s presidency.	41%	19%	77%	38%
The Mueller investigation prevented President Trump from achieving significant portions of his agenda.	30%	14%	60%	26%

a) President Trump achieved many of his goals in his first two years in office.

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Strongly agree	14%	4%	31%	8%
Somewhat agree	27%	18%	43%	27%
Neither agree nor disagree	15%	18%	8%	20%
Somewhat disagree	13%	11%	11%	16%
Strongly disagree	26%	46%	4%	24%
Don't know	4%	3%	3%	5%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>41%</i>	<i>22%</i>	<i>75%</i>	<i>35%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>39%</i>	<i>57%</i>	<i>15%</i>	<i>40%</i>

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b) The Mueller investigation prevented President Trump from achieving significant portions of his agenda.

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Strongly agree	14%	6%	29%	9%
Somewhat agree	17%	8%	31%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	14%	17%	20%
Somewhat disagree	14%	16%	9%	18%
Strongly disagree	32%	52%	8%	30%
Don't know	6%	4%	6%	5%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>30%</i>	<i>14%</i>	<i>60%</i>	<i>26%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>47%</i>	<i>68%</i>	<i>18%</i>	<i>49%</i>

c) There is a “deep state” trying to undermine Donald Trump’s presidency.

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Strongly agree	24%	9%	49%	21%
Somewhat agree	17%	10%	28%	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%	18%	9%	27%
Somewhat disagree	8%	11%	7%	8%
Strongly disagree	28%	49%	5%	23%
Don't know	5%	3%	2%	4%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>41%</i>	<i>19%</i>	<i>77%</i>	<i>38%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>37%</i>	<i>60%</i>	<i>11%</i>	<i>31%</i>

d) President Trump does not respect the laws of the United States.

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Strongly agree	39%	65%	8%	37%
Somewhat agree	16%	18%	12%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	11%	9%	10%	15%
Somewhat disagree	10%	4%	19%	10%
Strongly disagree	21%	3%	50%	16%
Don't know	2%	*	1%	2%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>56%</i>	<i>83%</i>	<i>20%</i>	<i>57%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>32%</i>	<i>7%</i>	<i>69%</i>	<i>26%</i>

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e) Donald Trump does not respect the customs or traditions of the Presidency.

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Strongly agree	43%	69%	12%	42%
Somewhat agree	17%	17%	16%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	13%	6%	17%	18%
Somewhat disagree	10%	6%	17%	8%
Strongly disagree	15%	2%	36%	12%
Don't know	2%	*	1%	1%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>61%</i>	<i>86%</i>	<i>29%</i>	<i>61%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>24%</i>	<i>8%</i>	<i>53%</i>	<i>20%</i>

6. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements

Total agree

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
America needs a strong leader to take the country back from the rich and powerful	71%	79%	63%	74%
The American economy is rigged to advantage the rich and powerful	70%	84%	49%	73%
Traditional parties and politicians don't care about people like me	69%	64%	74%	72%
The mainstream media is more interested in making money than telling the truth	66%	49%	87%	69%
Experts in this country don't understand the lives of people like me	65%	62%	67%	66%
Politicians should be able to say what's on their minds regardless of what anyone else thinks about their views	59%	52%	67%	63%
To fix America, we need a strong leader willing to break the rules	33%	23%	52%	26%

a) America needs a strong leader to take the country back from the rich and powerful

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Strongly agree	44%	52%	37%	39%
Somewhat agree	28%	27%	26%	35%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%	11%	23%	18%
Somewhat disagree	5%	5%	6%	3%
Strongly disagree	4%	4%	6%	3%
Don't know	3%	1%	2%	2%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>71%</i>	<i>79%</i>	<i>63%</i>	<i>74%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>10%</i>	<i>9%</i>	<i>12%</i>	<i>6%</i>

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b) To fix America, we need a strong leader willing to break the rules

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Strongly agree	15%	13%	23%	11%
Somewhat agree	18%	11%	29%	15%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	16%	17%	28%
Somewhat disagree	21%	23%	16%	23%
Strongly disagree	24%	35%	13%	19%
Don't know	3%	2%	2%	4%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>33%</i>	<i>23%</i>	<i>52%</i>	<i>26%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>45%</i>	<i>58%</i>	<i>29%</i>	<i>43%</i>

c) The American economy is rigged to advantage the rich and powerful

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Strongly agree	41%	54%	23%	39%
Somewhat agree	29%	30%	26%	34%
Neither agree nor disagree	13%	10%	18%	13%
Somewhat disagree	9%	5%	17%	9%
Strongly disagree	6%	1%	13%	4%
Don't know	2%	*	2%	2%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>70%</i>	<i>84%</i>	<i>49%</i>	<i>73%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>15%</i>	<i>6%</i>	<i>31%</i>	<i>13%</i>

d) Traditional parties and politicians don't care about people like me

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Strongly agree	36%	33%	36%	38%
Somewhat agree	33%	31%	38%	34%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	22%	15%	20%
Somewhat disagree	9%	11%	9%	5%
Strongly disagree	2%	2%	1%	2%
Don't know	2%	*	1%	1%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>69%</i>	<i>64%</i>	<i>74%</i>	<i>72%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>10%</i>	<i>13%</i>	<i>10%</i>	<i>7%</i>

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e) The mainstream media is more interested in making money than telling the truth

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Strongly agree	41%	24%	64%	38%
Somewhat agree	25%	25%	23%	31%
Neither agree nor disagree	13%	16%	7%	14%
Somewhat disagree	9%	15%	3%	7%
Strongly disagree	10%	19%	1%	9%
Don't know	2%	1%	2%	1%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>66%</i>	<i>49%</i>	<i>87%</i>	<i>69%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>19%</i>	<i>34%</i>	<i>4%</i>	<i>16%</i>

f) Politicians should be able to say what's on their minds regardless of what anyone else thinks about their views

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Strongly agree	26%	21%	33%	26%
Somewhat agree	33%	31%	34%	37%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%	20%	18%	18%
Somewhat disagree	12%	16%	9%	10%
Strongly disagree	7%	9%	4%	7%
Don't know	3%	3%	3%	2%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>59%</i>	<i>52%</i>	<i>67%</i>	<i>63%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>19%</i>	<i>25%</i>	<i>13%</i>	<i>17%</i>

g) Experts in this country don't understand the lives of people like me

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Strongly agree	34%	33%	34%	36%
Somewhat agree	30%	30%	33%	29%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	23%	18%	26%
Somewhat disagree	8%	8%	10%	5%
Strongly disagree	3%	4%	2%	1%
Don't know	3%	3%	2%	2%
<i>Agree (Net)</i>	<i>65%</i>	<i>62%</i>	<i>67%</i>	<i>66%</i>
<i>Disagree (Net)</i>	<i>11%</i>	<i>13%</i>	<i>13%</i>	<i>7%</i>

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7. How do you get most of your news? Select one.

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Television	41%	42%	46%	39%
Online/internet	28%	24%	28%	32%
Social media (Twitter, Facebook)	11%	15%	7%	8%
Print newspapers/magazines	6%	6%	5%	10%
Mobile News apps	5%	9%	4%	2%
Radio	5%	3%	6%	6%
None of the above	3%	1%	4%	3%

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

	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent
CNN	17%	25%	9%	15%
FOX News	16%	6%	35%	11%
NBC	11%	13%	9%	12%
ABC	11%	12%	9%	13%
CBS	11%	10%	13%	12%
Public Television	6%	7%	3%	7%
MSNBC	5%	10%	1%	1%
Other	8%	6%	8%	11%
None of the above	15%	12%	13%	18%

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About the Study

These are findings from an Ipsos poll conducted May 14-15 on behalf of the University of Virginia Center for Politics. For the survey, a sample of 1,005 adults 18+ from the continental U.S., Alaska and Hawaii were interviewed online in English. The sample includes 376 Democrats, 345 Republicans, and 205 Independents.

The sample for this study was randomly drawn from Ipsos' 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 a 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 non-probability 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=1,005, DEFF=1.5, adjusted Confidence Interval=+/-5.0 percentage points).

The poll also has a credibility interval plus or minus 5.8 percentage points for Democrats, 6.0 percentage points for Republicans, and 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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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 89 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 €1,749.5 million in 2018.

GAME CHANGERS

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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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and is eligible for the Deferred Settlement Service (SRD).

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