

Most Americans think crime is on the rise across the U.S.

New USA Today/Ipsos poll shows nearly two-thirds believe cities are under siege by protesters, counter-protesters

Topline Findings

Washington, DC, September 22, 2020 -- Amidst perceptions that crime in the U.S. is on the rise, a majority of Americans believe our cities are under siege and more police should be deployed to get things under control, according to a new USA Today/Ipsos poll. However, views on crime and protests vary significantly by party affiliation.

Detailed Findings

- 1. Crime and unrest is a top concern for Americans, with many saying it has gotten worse in their communities and in the country as a whole.
 - Currently, one in three Americans (34%) say crime, violence, or unrest is the most worrying topic right now, second only to COVID-19 (44%). Concern over unrest is particularly high among Republicans (42%), who rate it as their top issue above the coronavirus.
 - More Americans think the rates of various types of crime have gotten worse, rather than better, in the past six months both in their community and in the U.S. as a whole.
 - This is particularly true for vandalism and theft: 50% say this has gotten worse in their community, while just 7% say it has gotten better. Two-thirds (68%) agree vandalism across the U.S. has gotten worse.
 - More Americans think assault of police officers has gotten worse over the last six months
 than assault by police officers. This difference is more pronounced at a national level (63%
 assault of police officers vs. 49% assault by police officers has gotten worse in the U.S.)
 rather than within communities (40% assault of police officers vs. 32% assault by police
 officers has gotten worse).
- With cities under siege, Americans support deploying police and arming themselves against
 protesters and counter-protesters. However, there are significant gaps among partisans on
 this issue.
 - Two-thirds (64%) believe American cities are under siege by protesters and counterprotesters. However, fewer in urban cities believe this compared to those in rural areas (59% vs. 71%, respectively). Significantly more Republicans (83%) than Democrats (48%) agree with this sentiment.
 - A majority of Americans believe the government should deploy more police to get protests and unrest under control (56%), and that people should arm themselves to protect private property during protests (54%). On the latter, approximately one in five Americans have either purchased a firearm, or know someone who has, in response to the recent protests.
 - For both of these sentiments (deploying the police and people arming themselves), there is more than a 40-point gap between Republicans and Democrats, with the former significantly more likely to hold these views.
 - At the same time, however, 61% of Americans acknowledge that most protesters are peaceful.





- 3. Coronavirus remains a concern as people continue to protest.
 - Currently, 44% of Americans find COVID-19 to be the most worrying topic in the country, topping a list of issues including crime, healthcare, unemployment, and climate change, among others.
 - Seventy-one percent believe the recent protests will lead to a spike in COVID-19 cases.
 There is widespread agreement on this point; majorities agree, regardless of partisanship, gender, race and ethnicity, or region of the country.
- 4. A variety of outside actors from both sides of the aisle are seen as making protests more dangerous.
 - A majority of Americans feel Black Lives Matter, Antifa, the media (both mainstream and conservative), conservative militias, and Donald Trump are all making protests more dangerous.
 - Ultimately, perceptions of these groups and their involvement depends on partisanship. For
 example, 70% of Republicans think Antifa are making protests more dangerous, compared to
 45% of Democrats. On the other hand, 72% of Democrats and 41% of Republicans say the
 same is true about conservative militias.
 - While 54% of all Americans say Donald Trump is making protests more dangerous, significantly fewer (29%) feel the same about Joe Biden.

These are the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between September 17-18, 2020, on behalf of USA Today. For this survey, a sample of 1,108 adults age 18+ from the continental U.S., Alaska, and Hawaii was interviewed online in English. The poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 3.4 percentage points for all respondents.

For full results, please refer to the following annotated questionnaire:





Full Annotated Questionnaire

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

	Total (N=1,108)	White (N=798)	Black (N=115)	Republican (N=435)	Democrat (N=497)
COVID-19/coronavirus	44%	43%	48%	35%	56%
Crime, violence, or unrest	34%	37%	31%	42%	27%
Healthcare	26%	28%	22%	20%	32%
Climate change	21%	20%	14%	8%	36%
Racial injustice	20%	14%	47%	9%	32%
Political extremism or polarization	20%	23%	13%	22%	22%
Unemployment	17%	16%	19%	18%	14%
Terrorism	14%	15%	8%	20%	7%
Natural disasters	11%	11%	10%	12%	10%
Immigration	11%	12%	4%	19%	4%
Government budget and debt	10%	10%	7%	16%	5%
Social inequality	10%	9%	9%	6%	14%
Education	9%	8%	12%	10%	10%
Taxes	9%	11%	6%	13%	4%
Opioid or drug addiction	8%	10%	4%	12%	5%
Nuclear conflict	4%	4%	3%	5%	2%
Foreign conflicts	3%	3%	2%	4%	3%
Other	2%	2%	1%	3%	1%
None of these	3%	3%	5%	2%	1%

2. How safe, if at all, do you feel when you are out in your community?

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Very safe	18%	21%	8%	23%	15%
Mostly safe	38%	42%	29%	44%	37%
Somewhat safe	29%	27%	32%	23%	31%
Not very safe	10%	8%	20%	8%	12%
Not at all safe	4%	3%	11%	2%	5%
Safe (Net)	56%	63%	37%	67%	52%
Not safe (Net)	44%	37%	63%	33%	48%

3. [IF FEEL SOMEWHAT, NOT VERY, OR NOT AT ALL SAFE WHEN OUT IN THEIR COMMUNITY] What makes you not feel safe when out in your community? (Select all that apply)

	Total (N=442)	White (N=281)	Black (N=71)	Republican (N=129)	Democrat (N=224)
The coronavirus pandemic	63%	62%	73%	50%	76%
Crime	45%	41%	49%	41%	48%
Potential for accidents or injury	25%	22%	33%	22%	28%
Unrest and riots	24%	26%	23%	36%	21%
Racial injustice	23%	15%	48%	12%	34%
Something else	7%	5%	6%	6%	6%
None of these	6%	6%	6%	4%	4%

2020 K Street, NW, Suite 410 Washington DC 20006 +1 202 463-7300 Contact: Chris Jackson

Senior Vice President, US, Public Affairs, Ipsos





4. Do you think the rates of the following types of crime have gotten better (gone down), gotten worse (gone up), or stayed the same in your community over the last six months?

Gotten Better Summary

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Assault by police officers	13%	13%	8%	22%	8%
Robbery	10%	8%	10%	12%	10%
Murder or homicide	9%	8%	9%	12%	8%
Assault of police officers	8%	6%	6%	10%	8%
Vandalism or theft	7%	6%	13%	9%	8%

Gotten Worse Summary

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Vandalism or theft	50%	52%	49%	53%	49%
Robbery	41%	42%	39%	45%	39%
Murder or homicide	40%	39%	54%	40%	43%
Assault of police officers	40%	40%	43%	46%	38%
Assault by police officers	32%	25%	61%	17%	46%

a. Murder or homicide

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Gotten better	9%	8%	9%	12%	8%
Gotten worse	40%	39%	54%	40%	43%
Stayed the same	35%	40%	24%	39%	34%
Don't know	15%	14%	13%	9%	15%

b. Robbery

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Gotten better	10%	8%	10%	12%	10%
Gotten worse	41%	42%	39%	45%	39%
Stayed the same	36%	37%	37%	34%	38%
Don't know	13%	13%	13%	10%	13%

c. Vandalism or theft

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Gotten better	7%	6%	13%	9%	8%
Gotten worse	50%	52%	49%	53%	49%
Stayed the same	33%	33%	28%	31%	34%
Don't know	10%	9%	11%	7%	8%

d. Assault of police officers

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Gotten better	8%	6%	6%	10%	8%
Gotten worse	40%	40%	43%	46%	38%
Stayed the same	33%	36%	29%	30%	37%
Don't know	19%	17%	23%	14%	16%

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Senior Vice President, US, Public Affairs, Ipsos





e. Assault by police officers

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Gotten better	13%	13%	8%	22%	8%
Gotten worse	32%	25%	61%	17%	46%
Stayed the same	39%	46%	20%	45%	35%
Don't know	16%	16%	11%	16%	11%

5. Do you think the rates of the following types of crime have gotten better (gone down), gotten worse (gone up), or stayed the same <u>across the entire U.S.</u> over the last six months?

Gotten Better Summary

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Assault by police officers	13%	13%	6%	25%	6%
Robbery	8%	7%	6%	9%	8%
Murder or homicide	7%	7%	6%	9%	7%
Assault of police officers	6%	5%	4%	6%	5%
Vandalism or theft	6%	5%	10%	7%	6%

Gotten Worse Summary

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Vandalism or theft	68%	72%	63%	74%	65%
Assault of police officers	63%	67%	57%	70%	60%
Robbery	60%	62%	55%	67%	53%
Murder or homicide	60%	62%	63%	69%	56%
Assault by police officers	49%	45%	70%	30%	67%

a. Murder or homicide

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Gotten better	7%	7%	6%	9%	7%
Gotten worse	60%	62%	63%	69%	56%
Stayed the same	20%	19%	23%	14%	26%
Don't know	13%	12%	8%	8%	11%

b. Robbery

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Gotten better	8%	7%	6%	9%	8%
Gotten worse	60%	62%	55%	67%	53%
Stayed the same	21%	22%	25%	15%	29%
Don't know	11%	9%	15%	8%	9%

c. Vandalism or theft

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Gotten better	6%	5%	10%	7%	6%
Gotten worse	68%	72%	63%	74%	65%
Stayed the same	17%	16%	17%	12%	21%
Don't know	9%	8%	10%	8%	8%

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Senior Vice President, US, Public Affairs, Ipsos





d. Assault of police officers

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat		
Gotten better	6%	5%	4%	6%	5%		
Gotten worse	63%	67%	57%	70%	60%		
Stayed the same	18%	16%	26%	13%	23%		
Don't know	13%	11%	13%	10%	12%		

e. Assault by police officers

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Gotten better	13%	13%	6%	25%	6%
Gotten worse	49%	45%	70%	30%	67%
Stayed the same	25%	31%	12%	34%	17%
Don't know	12%	12%	12%	12%	10%

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

Total Agree Summary

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
I believe the recent protests will lead to a spike in COVID-19 cases.	71%	73%	62%	68%	74%
Looting and vandalism around protests are mostly done by people not affiliated with the protests	68%	68%	64%	61%	79%
American cities are under siege by protesters and counter-protesters	64%	70%	54%	83%	48%
Most protesters are peaceful	61%	57%	75%	40%	83%
The government should deploy more police to get protests and unrest under control	56%	61%	34%	82%	35%
People should arm themselves to protect private property during protests	54%	57%	40%	77%	33%
The Black Lives Matter movement has done more harm than good	53%	59%	30%	80%	28%

a. American cities are under siege by protesters and counter-protesters

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Strongly agree	30%	34%	20%	48%	15%
Somewhat agree	35%	36%	34%	35%	33%
Somewhat disagree	15%	13%	17%	8%	24%
Strongly disagree	12%	10%	19%	4%	22%
Don't know	9%	7%	10%	6%	6%
Agree (Net)	64%	70%	54%	83%	48%
Disagree (Net)	27%	23%	36%	11%	46%

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Senior Vice President, US, Public Affairs, Ipsos







b. The Black Lives Matter movement has done more harm than good

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	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat	
Strongly agree	34%	39%	19%	59%	13%	
Somewhat agree	19%	20%	11%	21%	15%	
Somewhat disagree	17%	16%	16%	10%	24%	
Strongly disagree	22%	17%	44%	5%	42%	
Don't know	8%	8%	10%	5%	6%	
Agree (Net)	53%	59%	30%	80%	28%	
Disagree (Net)	39%	33%	60%	15%	66%	

c. The government should deploy more police to get protests and unrest under control

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Strongly agree	31%	35%	14%	53%	11%
Somewhat agree	26%	27%	19%	28%	24%
Somewhat disagree	17%	16%	18%	10%	24%
Strongly disagree	18%	14%	37%	2%	34%
Don't know	9%	9%	11%	7%	7%
Agree (Net)	56%	61%	34%	82%	35%
Disagree (Net)	35%	30%	56%	12%	58%

d. People should arm themselves to protect private property during protests

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Strongly agree	26%	29%	16%	44%	9%
Somewhat agree	28%	28%	25%	33%	23%
Somewhat disagree	18%	18%	17%	11%	25%
Strongly disagree	19%	18%	29%	6%	34%
Don't know	9%	7%	14%	6%	8%
Agree (Net)	54%	57%	40%	77%	33%
Disagree (Net)	37%	36%	46%	17%	59%

e. Most protesters are peaceful

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Strongly agree	28%	23%	43%	9%	47%
Somewhat agree	33%	34%	32%	31%	36%
Somewhat disagree	19%	22%	10%	29%	9%
Strongly disagree	14%	16%	8%	26%	5%
Don't know	6%	5%	7%	4%	4%
Agree (Net)	61%	57%	75%	40%	83%
Disagree (Net)	33%	38%	18%	55%	14%





 Looting and vandalism around protests are mostly done by people not affiliated with the protests

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Strongly agree	38%	36%	40%	29%	49%
Somewhat agree	30%	32%	25%	32%	30%
Somewhat disagree	13%	13%	14%	17%	10%
Strongly disagree	8%	8%	10%	12%	3%
Don't know	12%	12%	12%	10%	8%
Agree (Net)	68%	68%	64%	61%	79%
Disagree (Net)	20%	20%	24%	29%	13%

g. I believe the recent protests will lead to a spike in COVID-19 cases.

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	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Strongly agree	33%	32%	25%	32%	31%
Somewhat agree	38%	41%	37%	36%	42%
Somewhat disagree	12%	11%	13%	11%	13%
Strongly disagree	7%	6%	7%	11%	5%
Don't know	10%	10%	18%	10%	8%
Agree (Net)	71%	73%	62%	68%	74%
Disagree (Net)	19%	17%	20%	22%	18%

7. Have the following made the protests across the country more or less dangerous?

Total More Dangerous Summary

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Mainstream news media	60%	67%	44%	77%	46%
Black Lives Matter	59%	68%	30%	81%	41%
Donald Trump	54%	50%	72%	25%	85%
Antifa	53%	60%	38%	70%	45%
Conservative militias	52%	55%	52%	41%	72%
Conservative news media	51%	51%	55%	38%	67%
Local police	38%	32%	66%	21%	54%
Joe Biden	29%	35%	10%	58%	7%

a. Black Lives Matter

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Much more dangerous	31%	38%	10%	55%	10%
Somewhat more dangerous	28%	30%	21%	26%	31%
Had no impact	14%	12%	15%	8%	22%
Somewhat less dangerous	9%	6%	21%	4%	14%
Much less dangerous	8%	5%	20%	3%	12%
Don't know	11%	10%	14%	4%	11%
More dangerous (Net)	59%	68%	30%	81%	41%
Less dangerous (Net)	16%	10%	41%	7%	26%





b. Conservative militias

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Much more dangerous	28%	29%	29%	15%	47%
Somewhat more dangerous	24%	25%	23%	26%	25%
Had no impact	17%	17%	15%	22%	11%
Somewhat less dangerous	7%	6%	7%	11%	4%
Much less dangerous	4%	4%	3%	6%	1%
Don't know	21%	19%	22%	20%	12%
More dangerous (Net)	52%	55%	52%	41%	72%
Less dangerous (Net)	10%	9%	11%	17%	5%

c. Donald Trump

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Much more dangerous	40%	36%	56%	9%	71%
Somewhat more dangerous	15%	14%	15%	16%	15%
Had no impact	15%	17%	7%	23%	5%
Somewhat less dangerous	8%	9%	1%	16%	2%
Much less dangerous	12%	14%	5%	26%	2%
Don't know	12%	10%	14%	9%	6%
More dangerous (Net)	54%	50%	72%	25%	85%
Less dangerous (Net)	20%	23%	7%	42%	4%

d. Joe Biden

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	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Much more dangerous	16%	19%	5%	34%	2%
Somewhat more dangerous	13%	16%	5%	24%	5%
Had no impact	30%	31%	35%	20%	38%
Somewhat less dangerous	10%	9%	12%	6%	17%
Much less dangerous	14%	10%	26%	4%	26%
Don't know	18%	16%	18%	12%	12%
More dangerous (Net)	29%	35%	10%	58%	7%
Less dangerous (Net)	24%	19%	38%	10%	42%

e. Local police

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Much more dangerous	13%	10%	25%	6%	19%
Somewhat more dangerous	25%	22%	41%	15%	36%
Had no impact	23%	28%	7%	27%	19%
Somewhat less dangerous	15%	17%	12%	23%	12%
Much less dangerous	10%	10%	4%	20%	4%
Don't know	14%	13%	10%	9%	11%
More dangerous (Net)	38%	32%	66%	21%	54%
Less dangerous (Net)	25%	27%	16%	43%	15%



Contact: Chris Jackson

Senior Vice President, US, Public Affairs, Ipsos





f. Conservative news media

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Much more dangerous	24%	24%	25%	15%	34%
Somewhat more dangerous	28%	27%	31%	23%	32%
Had no impact	21%	20%	22%	27%	17%
Somewhat less dangerous	8%	7%	9%	12%	6%
Much less dangerous	5%	4%	2%	10%	2%
Don't know	15%	17%	12%	13%	9%
More dangerous (Net)	51%	51%	55%	38%	67%
Less dangerous (Net)	13%	12%	11%	22%	8%

g. Mainstream news media

g. Mainstream news media								
	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat			
Much more dangerous	29%	34%	12%	47%	14%			
Somewhat more dangerous	31%	32%	31%	29%	32%			
Had no impact	19%	18%	22%	11%	29%			
Somewhat less dangerous	7%	5%	13%	4%	11%			
Much less dangerous	3%	1%	9%	3%	5%			
Don't know	11%	10%	12%	6%	8%			
More dangerous (Net)	60%	67%	44%	77%	46%			
Less dangerous (Net)	10%	6%	22%	7%	17%			

h. Antifa

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Much more dangerous	38%	44%	22%	57%	24%
Somewhat more dangerous	16%	16%	16%	13%	21%
Had no impact	13%	12%	15%	9%	19%
Somewhat less dangerous	3%	2%	4%	2%	5%
Much less dangerous	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Don't know	27%	24%	41%	16%	30%
More dangerous (Net)	53%	60%	38%	70%	45%
Less dangerous (Net)	6%	4%	6%	5%	7%

8. In the past three months, have you or someone you know purchased a firearm in response to the recent protests across the country? Select all that apply.

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
You	6%	5%	10%	10%	5%
Member of your household	6%	4%	5%	9%	5%
Another family member	8%	6%	8%	10%	7%
Friend	9%	8%	7%	12%	8%
Acquaintance or coworker	4%	5%	1%	6%	3%
None of the above	78%	80%	78%	68%	82%





9. Of the choices listed below, which is your main source of television news about current events and politics? (Select one)

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
FOX News	20%	21%	20%	36%	9%
CNN	13%	10%	21%	6%	24%
ABC	11%	11%	13%	8%	14%
NBC	10%	10%	9%	9%	10%
CBS	7%	7%	5%	6%	6%
Public Television	6%	5%	8%	5%	6%
MSNBC	6%	7%	7%	2%	11%
Other	8%	7%	8%	7%	7%
None of the above	20%	21%	9%	21%	11%

10. Are you currently registered to vote at your current address, or not?

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Yes, registered to vote at my current address	80%	82%	74%	88%	87%
No, not registered to vote at my current address	16%	15%	22%	10%	10%
Not sure	5%	3%	4%	2%	3%

11. Did you, or a member of your immediate family, ever serve on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces? Select all that apply.

	Total	White	Black	Republican	Democrat
Yes, I did	12%	12%	14%	16%	12%
Yes, an immediate family member did	26%	30%	24%	28%	24%
No	63%	60%	61%	57%	65%
Yes, I did, or an immediate family member did (Net)	37%	40%	39%	43%	35%





About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between September 17-18, 2020, on behalf of USA Today. For this survey, a sample of 1,108 adults age 18+ from the continental U.S., Alaska, and Hawaii was interviewed online in English. The sample includes 798 white Americans, 115 Black Americans, 435 Republicans, and 497 Democrats.

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 2018 American Community Survey data. The sample drawn for this study reflects fixed sample targets on demographics. Posthoc 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 3.4 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=1,108, DEFF=1.5, adjusted Confidence Interval=+/-4.9 percentage points).

The poll also has a credibility interval of plus or minus 4.0 percentage points for white Americans, plus or minus 10.4 percentage points for Black Americans, plus or minus 5.4 percentage points for Republicans, and plus or minus 5.0 percentage points for Democrats.

For more information on this news release, please contact:

Chris Jackson Senior Vice President, US Public Affairs +1 202 420-2025 chris.jackson@ipsos.com

Mallory Newall Director, US Public Affairs +1 202 420-2014 mallory.newall@ipsos.com





About Ipsos

lpsos is the world's third largest market research company, present in 90 markets and employing more than 18,000 people.

Our passionately curious research professionals, analysts and scientists have built unique multi-specialist capabilities that provide true understanding and powerful insights into the actions, opinions and motivations of citizens, consumers, patients, customers or employees. We serve more than 5000 clients across the world with 75 business solutions.

Founded in France in 1975, Ipsos is listed on the Euronext Paris since July 1st, 1999. The company is part of the SBF 120 and the Mid-60 index and is eligible for the Deferred Settlement Service (SRD).

ISIN code FR0000073298, Reuters ISOS.PA, Bloomberg IPS:FP www.ipsos.com

