

FOR RELEASE JULY 10, 2017

Sharp Partisan Divisions in Views of National Institutions

Republicans increasingly say colleges have negative impact on U.S.

FOR MEDIA OR OTHER INQUIRIES:

Carroll Doherty, Director of Political Research
Jocelyn Kiley, Associate Director, Research
Bridget Johnson, Communications Associate

202.419.4372

www.pewresearch.org

RECOMMENDED CITATION

Pew Research Center, July, 2017, "Sharp Partisan Divisions in Views of National Institutions"

About Pew Research Center

Pew Research Center is a nonpartisan fact tank that informs the public about the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world. It does not take policy positions. It conducts public opinion polling, demographic research, content analysis and other data-driven social science research. The Center studies U.S. politics and policy; journalism and media; internet, science and technology; religion and public life; Hispanic trends; global attitudes and trends; and U.S. social and demographic trends. All of the Center's reports are available at www.pewresearch.org. Pew Research Center is a subsidiary of The Pew Charitable Trusts, its primary funder.

© Pew Research Center 2017

Sharp Partisan Divisions in Views of National Institutions

Republicans increasingly say colleges have negative impact on U.S.

Republicans and Democrats offer starkly different assessments of the impact of several of the nation’s leading institutions – including the news media, colleges and universities and churches and religious organizations –

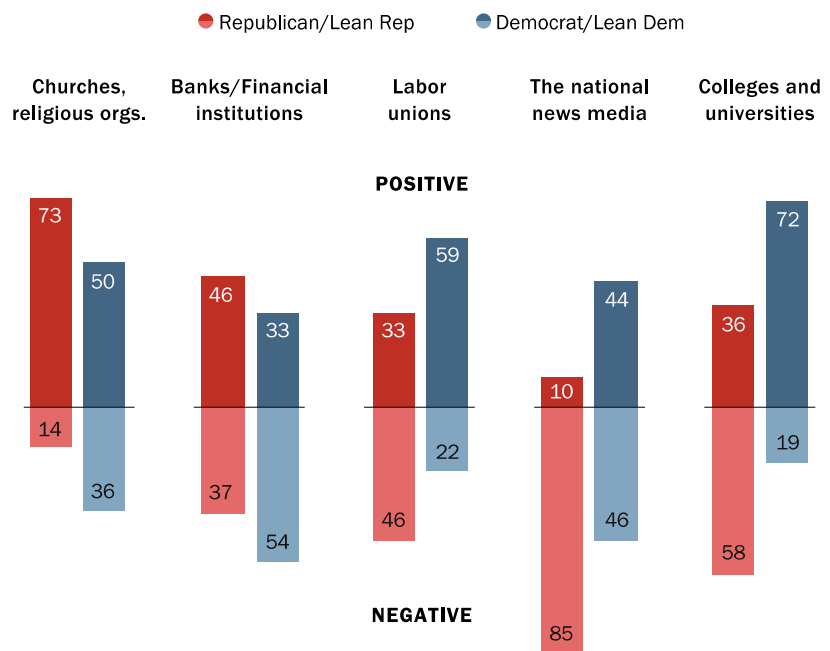
and in some cases, the gap in these views is significantly wider today than it was just a year ago.

While a majority of the public (55%) continues to say that colleges and universities have a positive effect on the way things are going in the country these days, Republicans express increasingly negative views.

A majority of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents (58%) now say that colleges and universities have a negative effect on the country, up from 45% last year. By contrast, most Democrats and Democratic leaners (72%) say colleges and universities have a positive effect, which is little changed from recent years.

Wide partisan differences over the impact of major institutions on the country

% who say each has a positive/negative effect on the way things are going in the country



Note: Don't know responses not shown.
Source: Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

The national survey by Pew Research Center, conducted June 8-18 among 2,504 adults, finds that partisan differences in views of the national news media, already wide, have grown even wider. Democrats’ views of the effect of the national news media have grown more positive over the past year, while Republicans remain overwhelmingly negative.

About as many Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents think the news media has a positive (44%) as negative (46%) impact on the way things are going in the country. The share of Democrats holding a positive view of the news media's impact has increased 11 percentage points since last August (33%).

Republicans, by about eight-to-one (85% to 10%), say the news media has a negative effect. These views have changed little in the past few years.

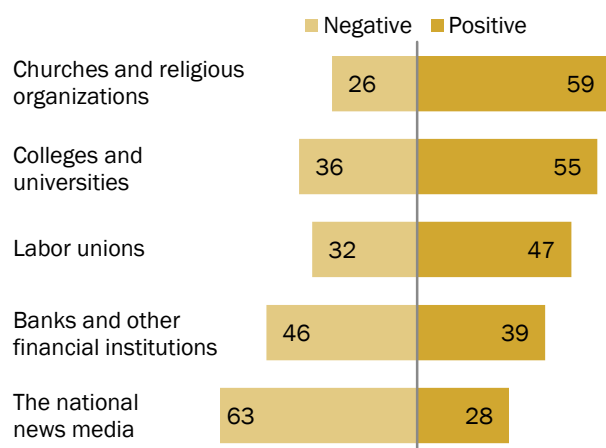
Aside from their growing differences over the impact of colleges and the news media, Republicans and Democrats remain far apart in their assessments of the effects of other institutions on the nation. Democrats continue to be more likely than Republicans to view labor unions positively (59% vs. 33%), while larger shares of Republicans have positive views of churches and religious institutions (73% of Republicans vs. 50% of Democrats) and banks and financial institutions (46% vs. 33%).

Yet even as partisan divides in views of some of these institutions have widened in recent years, the public's overall evaluations are little changed. Majorities of Americans say churches and religious organizations (59%) and colleges and universities (55%) have a positive effect. Nearly half (47%) say labor unions have a positive impact; 32% see their impact negatively.

Views of the impact of banks and other financial institutions are more negative (46%) than positive (39%). And by roughly two-to-one (63% to 28%), more Americans say that the national news media has a negative than positive effect on the way things are going in the country.

Little change in overall public views of the impact of nation's institutions

% who say each has a ____ effect on the way things are going in the country



Note: Don't know responses not shown.

Source: Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

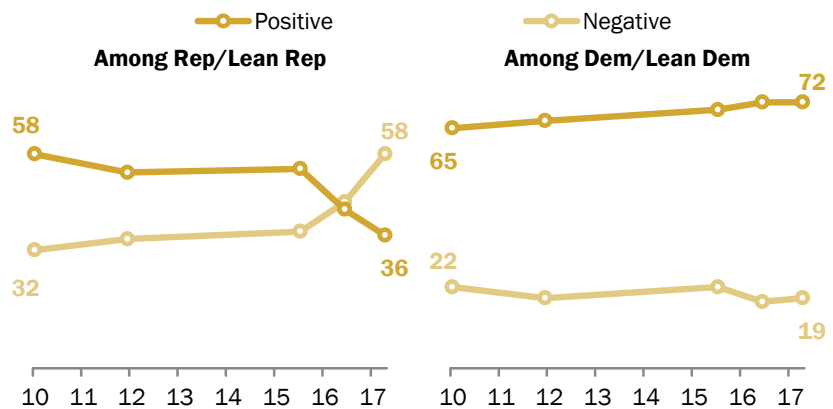
The survey finds that Republicans' attitudes about the effect of colleges and universities have changed dramatically over a relatively short period of time.

As recently as two years ago, most Republicans and Republican leaners held a positive view of the role of colleges and universities. In September 2015, 54% of Republicans said colleges and universities had a positive impact on the way things were going in the country; 37% rated their impact negatively.

By 2016, Republicans' ratings of colleges and universities were mixed (43% positive, 45% negative). Today, for the first time on a question asked since 2010, a majority (58%) of Republicans say colleges and universities are having a negative effect on the way things are going in the country, while 36% say they have a positive effect.

Since 2015, Republicans' views of the impact of colleges have turned much more negative

% who say colleges and universities have a ___ effect on the way things are going in the country



Note: Don't know responses not shown.
Source: Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Among Republicans, there is an ideological gap in views of the impact of colleges and universities and other institutions: Nearly two-thirds of conservative Republicans (65%) say colleges are having a negative impact, compared with just 43% of moderate and liberal Republicans.

The ideological differences are less striking among Democrats. Wide majorities of both liberal Democrats (79%) and conservative and moderate Democrats (67%) say colleges have a positive impact.

However, Democrats are more ideologically divided than are Republicans over the effect of churches and religious organizations.

Liberal Democrats are about as likely to say the impact of churches and religious organizations is negative (44%) as they are to say it is positive (40%). By two-to-one (58% to 29%), more conservative and moderate Democrats say churches have a positive than negative effect on the country.

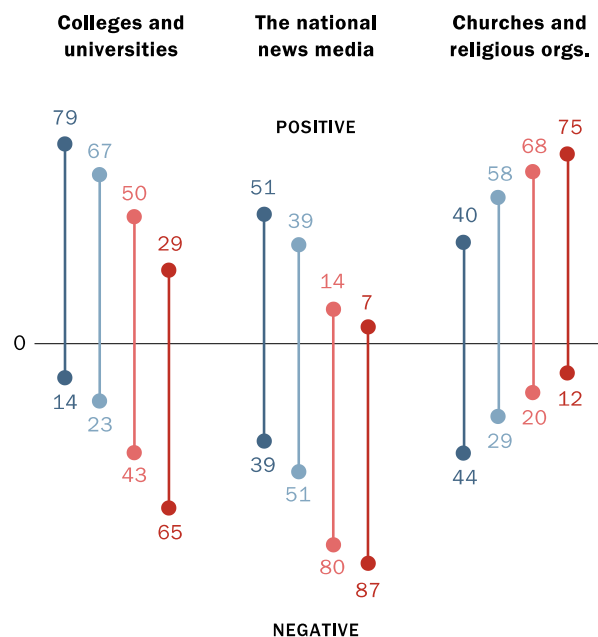
Majorities of both conservative Republicans and Republican leaners (75%) and moderate and liberal Republicans (68%) say churches and religious organizations have a positive impact.

There also are pronounced ideological differences in views of the national media. On balance, more liberal Democrats say the national news media has a positive (51%) than negative (39%) impact on the country. Opinion among conservative and moderate Democrats is the reverse (39% positive, 51% negative). Among Republicans, negative views of the news media are shared by large majorities of both conservative Republicans (87%) and moderate and liberal Republicans (80%).

Ideological differences in Republicans' views of colleges and universities

% who say each has a positive/negative effect on the way things are going in the country

DEMOCRAT/LEAN DEMOCRAT REPUBLICAN/LEAN REPUBLICAN
 ● Liberal ● Moderate/Liberal
 ● Conservative/Moderate ● Conservative



Note: Don't know responses not shown.
 Source: Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Partisan gap over news media's impact on country grows

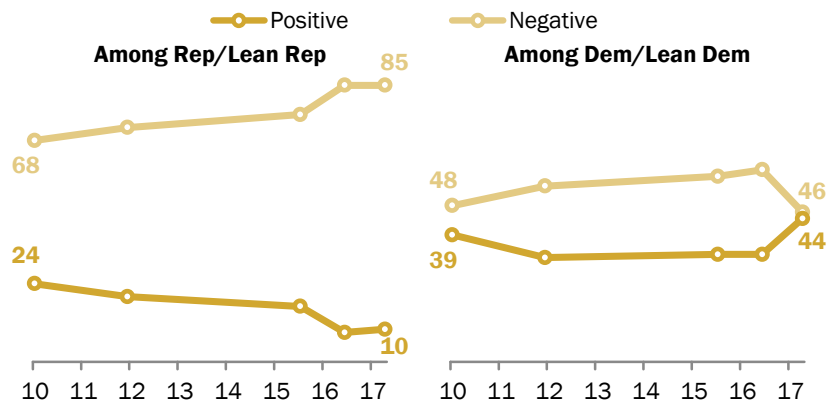
Currently, Democrats are divided in their views of the effects of the national news media. Nearly half of Democrats and Democratic leaners say the news media has a negative impact on the country (46%) while about as many (44%) view its impact positively.

This marks a major shift from just a year ago, when 33% of Democrats said the national news media had a positive effect and 59% said it had a negative effect.

Republicans' views of the news media's impact are virtually unchanged from last year, but have grown more negative since 2010. Currently, 85% of Republicans and Republican leaners say the news media has a negative effect on the way things are going in the country, up from 76% two years ago and 68% in 2010.

Growing share of Democrats say news media has a positive effect on the way things are going in the U.S.

% who say *the national news media* has a ___ effect on the way things are going in the country



Note: Don't know responses not shown.

Source: Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Among Democrats and Democratic leaners, there have been particularly pronounced improvements in assessments of the national news media among older adults, those with a college degree and liberals.

Democrats age 50 and older are 26 percentage points more likely to say the news media is having a positive impact today than they were in 2015 (59% now, 33% then). By contrast, views among Democrats under 50 are little different today than they were in 2015; just 33% of this group currently rates the media's impact positively.

Overall, 53% of Democrats with a college degree say the news media has a positive effect on the way things are going, up from 31% who said this in 2016 and 30% who said this in 2015. Among Democrats without a college degree, 40% view the media's impact positively, up modestly from 2015 (34%).

About half (51%) of liberal Democrats think the national news media is having a positive effect on the country these days; significantly higher than the shares who said this in either 2015 (26%) or 2016 (31%). By comparison, 39% of moderate and conservative Democrats say the media has a positive impact, little different than views over the past few years.

Perceptions of news media improve among older Democrats, liberals

% of Democrats/Democratic leaners who say the national news media has a positive effect on the way things are going in the country

	2015	2016	2017	'15-'17
	%	%	%	change
All Dem/Lean Dem	33	33	44	+11
18-49	32	25	33	+1
50+	33	46	59	+26
College grad+	30	31	53	+23
Some college or less	34	34	40	+6
Liberal	26	31	51	+25
Conservative/Moderate	37	35	39	+2

Source: Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Positive views of colleges decline across most GOP groups

Over the past two years, the share of Republicans and Republican leaners who view the impact of colleges and universities positively has declined 18 percentage points (from 54% to 36%), and this shift in opinion has occurred across most demographic and ideological groups within the GOP.

Younger Republicans continue to express more positive views of colleges than do older Republicans. But the share of Republicans under 50 who view colleges positively has fallen 21 points since 2015 (from 65% to 44%), while declining 15 points among those 50 and older (43% to 28%).

Since 2015, positive views of colleges and universities have fallen 11 points among Republicans with a college degree or more education (from 44% to 33%) and 20 points among those who do not have a college degree (57% to 37%). There also have been double-digit declines in the share of conservative Republicans (from 48% to 29%) and moderate and liberal Republicans (from 62% to 50%) who say colleges have a positive effect on the country.

Among Republicans, broad decline in positive views of the impact of colleges

% of Republicans and Republican leaners who say colleges and universities have a positive effect on the way things are going in the country

	2015	2016	2017	'15-'17
	%	%	%	change
All Rep/Lean Rep	54	43	36	-18
18-49	65	56	44	-21
50+	43	31	28	-15
College grad+	44	40	33	-11
Some college or less	57	45	37	-20
Conservative	48	41	29	-19
Moderate/Liberal	62	47	50	-12

Source: Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

A closer look at Republican and Democratic views on the impact of colleges and universities reveals different demographic patterns within the two party coalitions.

Among Republicans and Republican leaners, younger adults have much more positive views of colleges and universities than older adults. About half (52%) of Republicans ages 18 to 29 say colleges and universities have a positive impact on the country, compared with just 27% of those 65 and older. By contrast, there are no significant differences in views among Democrats by age, with comparable majorities of all age groups saying colleges and universities have a positive impact.

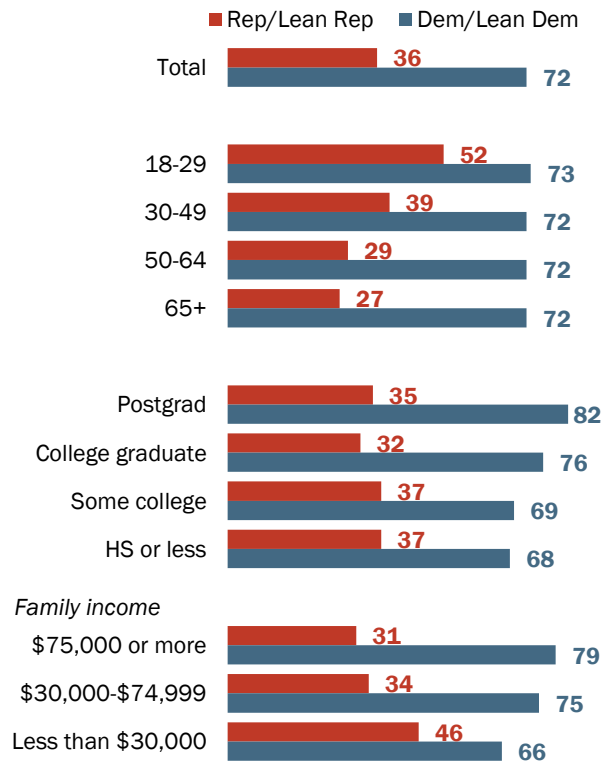
Views of the impact of colleges and universities differ little among Republicans, regardless of their level of educational attainment. Democrats with higher levels of education are somewhat more positive than are those with less education, but large majorities across all groups view the impact of colleges positively.

This pattern among Democrats also is seen across income categories: Wide majorities say colleges have a positive effect on the way things are going in the country, though

Democrats with higher family incomes are somewhat more likely than lower income Democrats to say this. Among Republicans, nearly half of those with family incomes of less than \$30,000 (46%) say colleges and universities have a positive effect, compared with only about a third (32%) of those with higher incomes.

Across educational groups, Republicans give colleges & universities low ratings

% who say colleges and universities have a positive effect on the way things are going in the country ...



Source: Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Assessments of the impact of banks and labor unions on the country

Democrats continue to be much more likely than Republicans to say that labor unions are having a positive impact on the way things are going in the country today (59% vs. 33%). Nonetheless, positive views among Republicans are up six points since 2016 and are above lows reached in 2010, in the wake of the economic recession. Views among Democrats are little changed in recent years, but also are more positive than they were in 2010.

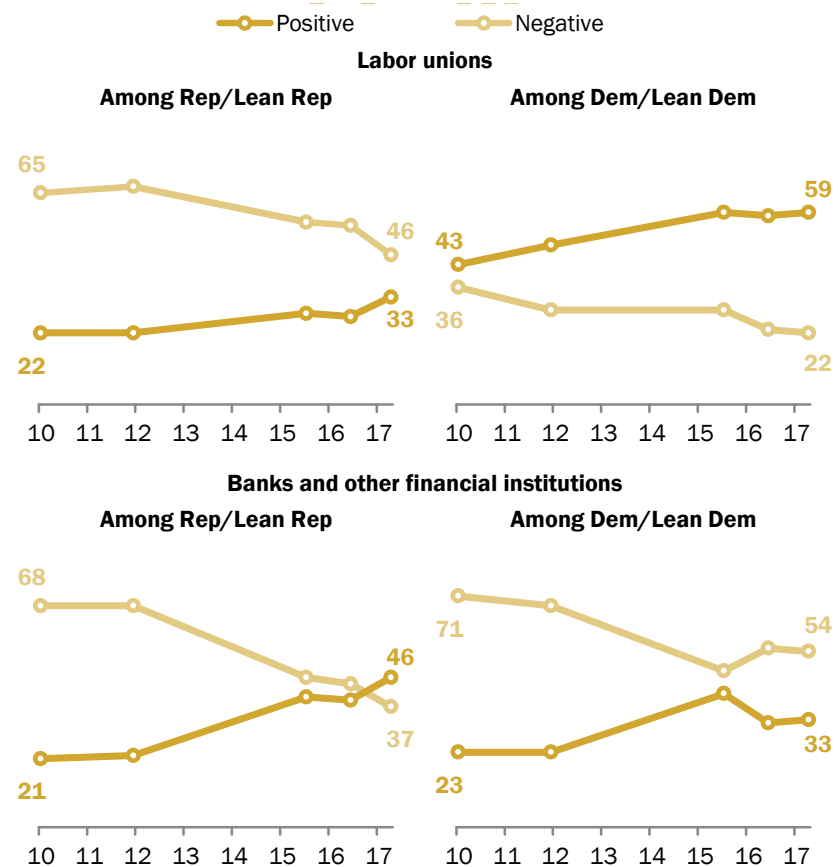
By 46% to 37%, more Republicans say banks and financial institutions are having a positive than negative effect on the country. Positive Republican views are up seven points since 2016; this is the first time in surveys dating to 2010 that Republican views of the impact of financial institutions have been more positive than negative.

Democrats continue to be more likely to say banks are having a negative (54%) rather than positive (33%)

impact on the country. Democratic views are somewhat more negative than they were in 2015 and little changed from one year ago. As a result, there is now a 13-point gap in the share of Republicans (46%) and Democrats (33%) who view the impact of banks and financial institutions positively; in 2015, there were no partisan differences in these views.

More Republicans now say financial institutions have a positive than negative impact on the country

% who say each has a ___ effect on the way things are going in the country



Note: Don't know responses not shown.
Source: Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017.

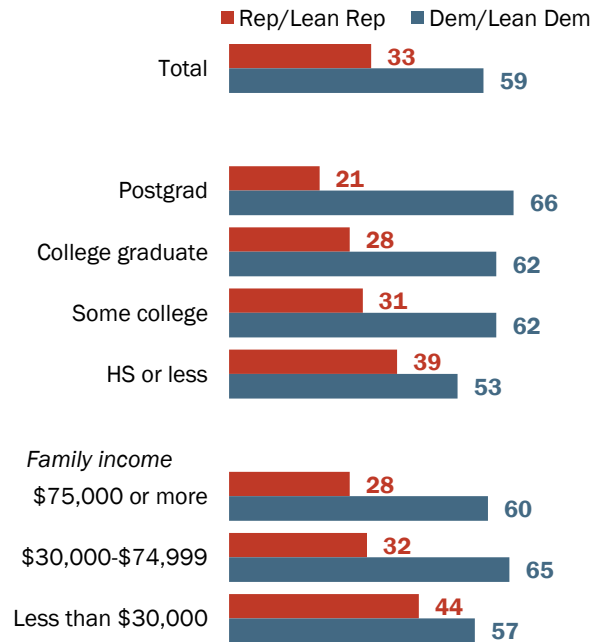
PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Among Democrats, those with lower levels of education are less likely to view the impact of unions positively. Only about half of Democrats (53%) with no more than a high school diploma say labor unions have a positive effect on the country. Among Democrats with postgraduate degrees, two-thirds (66%) say this.

By contrast, Republicans with less education are more likely than those with higher levels of educational attainment to see the impact of unions positively. Nearly four-in-ten Republicans with no more than a high school degree (39%) say labor unions have a positive effect, compared with just 21% of Republicans with a postgraduate degree.

Differing educational patterns in partisan views of unions' impact

% saying labor unions have a positive effect on the way things are going in the country



Source: Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Little change in views of churches' impact

Public views of the impact of churches and religious organizations on the country have changed little in recent years. Currently, 59% say churches have a positive effect on the country, while 26% say they have a negative effect.

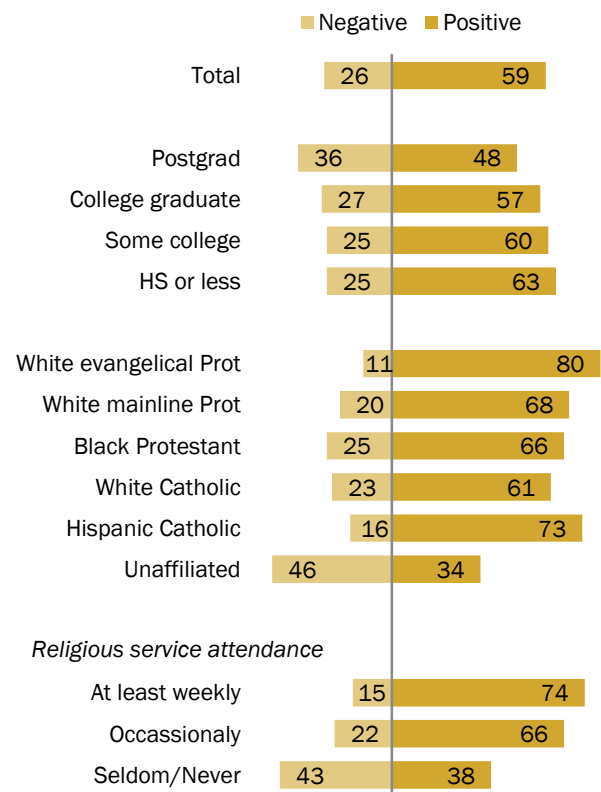
The partisan differences in views of the impact of churches also have remained fairly stable: 73% of Republicans and Republican leaners say churches and religious organizations have a positive effect, compared with 50% of Democrats and Democratic leaners.

Views of the impact of religious organizations also vary by education and religious affiliation. Among adults with a college degree or less education, majorities say churches have a positive effect, compared with about half of (48%) those with a postgraduate degree.

Majorities across major religious denominations – including 80% of white evangelical Protestants, 66% of black Protestants and 61% of white Catholics – view the impact of churches positively. By contrast, only about a third of the religiously unaffiliated (34%) take a positive view. Views of churches' impact also are much more positive among those who attend religious services at least occasionally than those who do not.

Educational, religious differences in public's views of churches' impact

% who say churches and other religious institutions have a ___ effect on the way things are going in the country



Notes: Don't know responses not shown. Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race. Source: Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Acknowledgements

This report is a collaborative effort based on the input and analysis of the following individuals:

Research team

Carroll Doherty, *Director, Political Research*

Jocelyn Kiley, *Associate Director, Political Research*

Alec Tyson, *Senior Researcher*

Bradley Jones, *Research Associate*

Baxter Oliphant, *Research Associate*

Rob Suls, *Research Associate*

Hannah Fingerhut, *Research Assistant*

Shiva Maniam, *Research Assistant*

Samantha Smith, *Research Assistant*

Laura Thorsett, *Research Intern*

Communications and editorial

Bridget Johnson, *Communications Associate*

Graphic design and web publishing

Peter Bell, *Information Graphics Designer*

Methodology

The analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted June 8-18, 2017 among a national sample of 2,504 adults, 18 years of age or older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia (628 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 1,876 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 1,109 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see <http://www.pewresearch.org/methodology/u-s-survey-research/>

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and nativity and region to parameters from the 2015 Census Bureau's American Community Survey and population density to parameters from the Decennial Census. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status (landline only, cell phone only, or both landline and cell phone), based on extrapolations from the 2016 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size among respondents with a landline phone. The margins of error reported and statistical tests of significance are adjusted to account for the survey's design effect, a measure of how much efficiency is lost from the weighting procedures.

The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

Survey conducted June 8-18, 2017

Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	2,504	2.3 percentage points
Republican/Lean Rep	1,050	3.5 percentage points
Democrat/Lean Dem	1,230	3.2 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

Pew Research Center undertakes all polling activity, including calls to mobile telephone numbers, in compliance with the Telephone Consumer Protection Act and other applicable laws.

Pew Research Center is a nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization and a subsidiary of The Pew Charitable Trusts, its primary funder.

Appendix: Topline questionnaire

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER
SUMMER 2017 POLITICAL LANDSCAPE SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
JUNE 8-18, 2017
N=2,504**

QUESTION 1 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

NO QUESTIONS 2-11, 13

QUESTION 12 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK ALL:

Q.A14 Next, (is/are) **[INSERT ITEM, RANDOMIZE]** having a positive or negative effect on the way things are going in the country these days? How about **[NEXT ITEM] [INTERVIEWER: IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: "Overall do you think (it is/they are) having a POSITIVE or NEGATIVE effect on the way things are going in this country today?" IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**?

		<u>Positive</u>	<u>Negative</u>	<u>(VOL.) Neither/ No Influence/ Mixed</u>	<u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u>
a.	Labor unions				
	Jun 8-18, 2017	47	32	8	13
	Aug 23-Sep 2, 2016	43	36	10	10
	Sep 16-Oct 4, 2015	45	40	7	8
	Feb 8-12, 2012	37	45	5	14
	Mar 11-21, 2010	32	49	4	14
b.	Churches and religious organizations				
	Jun 8-18, 2017	59	26	10	5
	Aug 23-Sep 2, 2016	57	27	11	5
	Sep 16-Oct 4, 2015	61	28	8	3
	Feb 8-12, 2012	57	26	8	9
	Mar 11-21, 2010	63	22	7	8
c.	Colleges and universities				
	Jun 8-18, 2017	55	36	4	4
	Aug 23-Sep 2, 2016	57	30	7	5
	Sep 16-Oct 4, 2015	63	28	6	3
	Feb 8-12, 2012	60	26	5	8
	Mar 11-21, 2010	61	26	4	9
d.	Banks and other financial institutions				
	Jun 8-18, 2017	39	46	8	7
	Aug 23-Sep 2, 2016	34	50	9	6
	Sep 16-Oct 4, 2015	40	47	8	5
	Feb 8-12, 2012	22	68	5	6
	Mar 11-21, 2010	22	69	4	6
e.	The national news media				
	Jun 8-18, 2017	28	63	6	3
	Aug 23-Sep 2, 2016	22	70	5	3
	Sep 16-Oct 4, 2015	25	65	7	3
	Feb 8-12, 2012	26	61	7	5
	Mar 11-21, 2010	31	57	6	6

QUESTIONS 15, 36-37, 62, 126, 128-129 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**NO QUESTIONS 16-24, 28-29, 31-35, 38-39, 41-49, 52-61, 63-76, 79-125, 130-142, 144-167****QUESTIONS 25-27, 30, 40, 50-51, 77-78, 127, 143, 168-169 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****ASK ALL:**

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

ASK IF INDEP/NO PREF/OTHER/DK/REF (PARTY=3,4,5,9):

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

			(VOL.)		(VOL.)	Lean	Lean	
	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	No preference	Other party	<u>DK/Ref</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>
Jun 8-18, 2017	24	30	40	3	1	2	17	18
Apr 5-11, 2017	24	31	42	2	1	*	17	20
Feb 7-12, 2017	23	34	37	3	1	2	15	18
Jan 4-9, 2017	25	28	41	4	*	1	18	19
Nov 30-Dec 5, 2016	24	33	35	5	1	3	15	16
Oct 20-25, 2016	26	33	36	3	*	2	15	17
Aug 23-Sep 2, 2016	27	32	33	5	*	3	11	16
Aug 9-16, 2016	27	32	35	2	1	2	13	16
Jun 15-26, 2016	24	33	37	4	1	2	16	16
Yearly Totals								
2016	25.4	32.0	36.5	3.4	.5	2.2	14.6	17.0
2015	23.7	30.4	40.1	3.6	.4	1.8	16.4	17.3
2014	23.2	31.5	39.5	3.1	.7	2.0	16.2	16.5
2013	23.9	32.1	38.3	2.9	.5	2.2	16.0	16.0
2012	24.7	32.6	36.4	3.1	.5	2.7	14.4	16.1
2011	24.3	32.3	37.4	3.1	.4	2.5	15.7	15.6
2010	25.2	32.7	35.2	3.6	.4	2.8	14.5	14.1
2009	23.9	34.4	35.1	3.4	.4	2.8	13.1	15.7
2008	25.7	36.0	31.5	3.6	.3	3.0	10.6	15.2
2007	25.3	32.9	34.1	4.3	.4	2.9	10.9	17.0
2006	27.8	33.1	30.9	4.4	.3	3.4	10.5	15.1
2005	29.3	32.8	30.2	4.5	.3	2.8	10.3	14.9
2004	30.0	33.5	29.5	3.8	.4	3.0	11.7	13.4
2003	30.3	31.5	30.5	4.8	.5	2.5	12.0	12.6
2002	30.4	31.4	29.8	5.0	.7	2.7	12.4	11.6
2001	29.0	33.2	29.5	5.2	.6	2.6	11.9	11.6
2001 Post-Sept 11	30.9	31.8	27.9	5.2	.6	3.6	11.7	9.4
2001 Pre-Sept 11	27.3	34.4	30.9	5.1	.6	1.7	12.1	13.5
2000	28.0	33.4	29.1	5.5	.5	3.6	11.6	11.7
1999	26.6	33.5	33.7	3.9	.5	1.9	13.0	14.5
1998	27.9	33.7	31.1	4.6	.4	2.3	11.6	13.1
1997	28.0	33.4	32.0	4.0	.4	2.3	12.2	14.1
1996	28.9	33.9	31.8	3.0	.4	2.0	12.1	14.9
1995	31.6	30.0	33.7	2.4	.6	1.3	15.1	13.5
1994	30.1	31.5	33.5	1.3	--	3.6	13.7	12.2
1993	27.4	33.6	34.2	4.4	1.5	2.9	11.5	14.9
1992	27.6	33.7	34.7	1.5	0	2.5	12.6	16.5
1991	30.9	31.4	33.2	0	1.4	3.0	14.7	10.8
1990	30.9	33.2	29.3	1.2	1.9	3.4	12.4	11.3
1989	33	33	34	--	--	--	--	--
1987	26	35	39	--	--	--	--	--