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Large Majorities in Both Parties Say NATO Is Good for the U.S.

Wide partisan divide in views of U.S. compromising with allies

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Large Majorities in Both Parties Say NATO is Good for the U.S.

Wide partisan divide in views of U.S. compromising with allies

As the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) celebrates its 70th anniversary this month, Americans overwhelmingly say being a member of NATO is beneficial for the United States.

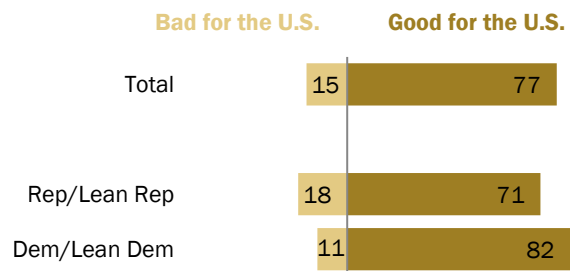
Nearly eight-in-ten Americans (77%) – including large majorities in both parties – say being a member of NATO is good for the United States. These numbers are essentially unchanged from April 2016.

However, the public is more divided about whether the NATO alliance is more important to the United States or other NATO countries. A plurality of the public (42%) says NATO is about as important to the U.S. as it is to other NATO countries. About a third (34%) say the alliance is more important to other NATO countries, while just 15% say it is more important to the U.S.

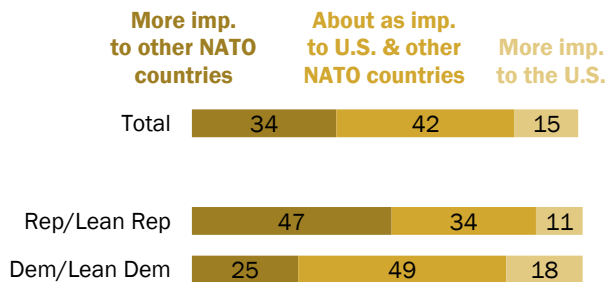
While they agree that NATO membership is good for the U.S., Republicans and Democrats differ over the alliance’s importance to its members. Nearly half of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents (47%) say NATO is more important to other NATO countries than the U.S.; only a quarter of Democrats and Democratic leaners say the same. These views also are little changed since 2016, during the presidential campaign.

Most Republicans and Democrats view NATO membership as good for the U.S.

% who say being a member of NATO is ...



% who say the NATO alliance is ...



Note: Don't know responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted March 20-25, 2019.

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The survey by Pew Research Center, conducted March 20-25 among 1,503 adults, also finds:

- Americans remain divided on whether the U.S. should have an active role in the world: 49% say the United States should pay less attention to problems overseas and concentrate on problems here at home. A somewhat smaller share (44%) says it's best for the future if the U.S. is active in world affairs. These views are little changed from two years ago, but in 2014 a majority said the U.S. should focus less on international problems.
- A majority of the public (54%) says the U.S. should take into account the interests of U.S. allies even if means making compromises with them; 40% say the U.S. should follow its national interests "even when its allies strongly disagree." As in recent years, Democrats are far more likely than Republicans to favor cooperating with allies even if it means compromising with them.

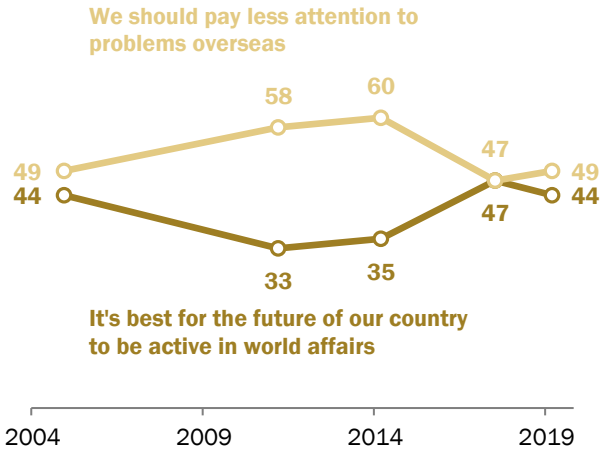
Partisan gap over whether U.S. should be active in world affairs

Over the past five years, Democrats have shifted toward favoring an active U.S. presence in world affairs. Today, 51% of Democrats and Democratic leaners say it's best for the country to be active in world affairs. A somewhat smaller share of Democrats (43%) say the country should focus on problems here at home. These views have changed little since 2017, but in 2014 only 38% of Democrats said it was best for the future of the U.S. for it to be active globally.

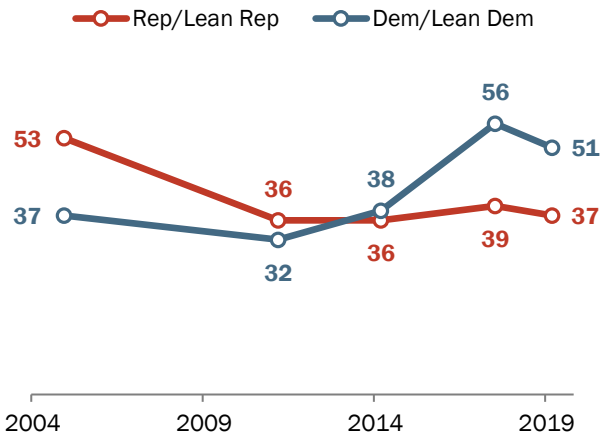
Among Republicans and Republican leaners, a majority (57%) continues to favor the U.S. paying less attention to problems overseas and focusing domestically. About four-in-ten (37%) say the country should be active in world affairs, which is largely unchanged since 2011.

Public is narrowly divided on whether the U.S. should be active in world affairs

% who say ...



% who say it's best for the future of our country to be active in world affairs



Note: Don't know responses not shown.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted March 20-25, 2019.

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More whites favor an active U.S. presence in world affairs than blacks or Hispanics. About half of white Americans (49%) say it's best for the country to be active in world affairs, but just 39% of Hispanics and 29% of blacks say the same.

Support for an active U.S. role in world affairs is concentrated among white Democrats: 63% of white Democrats and Democratic leaners say the U.S. should be active globally, while just 39% of white Republicans say the same. Among nonwhite Democrats, fewer than half (38%) support an active U.S. role, placing their views closer to those of white Republicans than white Democrats.

More educated Americans are the most supportive of an active U.S. presence on the world stage. A strong majority of those with a postgraduate degree (66%) say the U.S. should be active globally, compared to 29% saying it should concentrate on domestic problems.

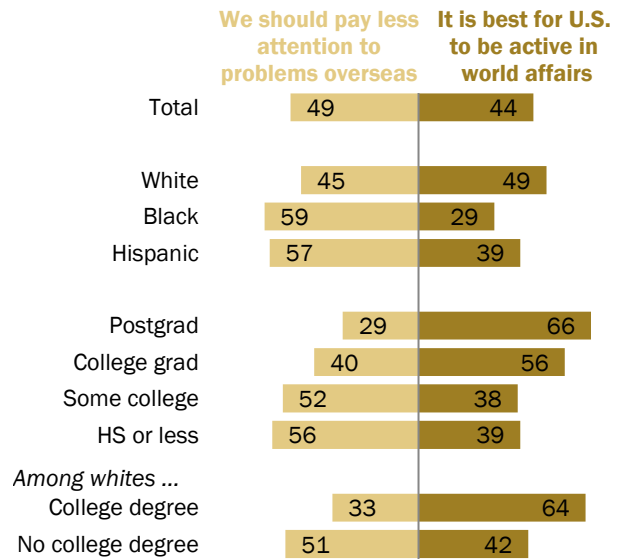
Those who have a four-year college degree are more narrowly divided, but a majority favors an active U.S. global role (56% active vs. 40% pay less attention).

Americans who have not completed college tend to favor paying less attention to problems overseas and concentrating here at home. Larger shares of those with some college experience (52% vs. 38%) and those with a high school degree or less (56% vs. 39%) say we should pay less attention overseas than say it's best to be active in world affairs.

Whites without a college degree are skeptical of an active U.S. presence in world affairs. About half of whites without a college degree (51%) say the U.S. should pay less attention to problems overseas. Most whites with a college degree take the opposite view (64% say U.S. should be active in world affairs); only a third say we should pay less attention to international problems.

Racial, education differences in views of whether U.S. should be active globally

% who say ...



Notes: Don't know responses not shown. Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted March 20-25, 2019.

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Older adults are somewhat more likely than younger people to support the U.S. being active in world affairs: 48% of those age 50 and older say it's best for the future to be active globally, compared with 41% among those ages 18 to 49.

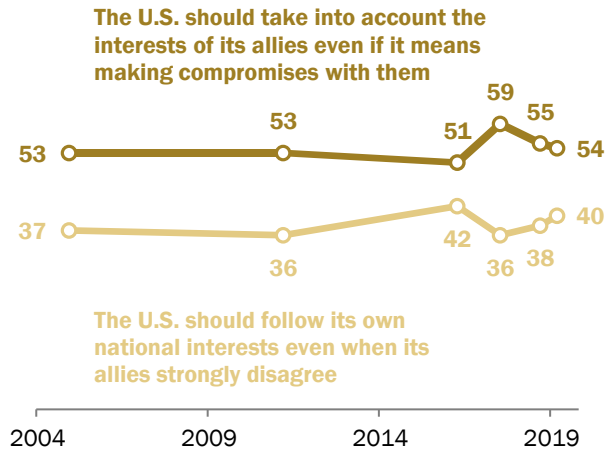
Views of U.S. relationship with its allies

A majority of Americans (54%) say “the U.S. should take into account the interests of its allies even if it means making compromises with them,” while 40% say “the U.S. should follow its own national interests even when its allies strongly disagree.”

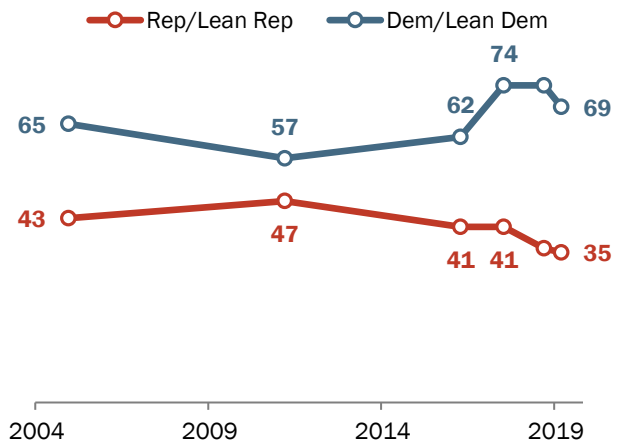
A wide partisan gap remains on how accommodating the U.S. should be toward its allies. A strong majority of Democrats and Democratic leaners (69%) say the U.S. should compromise with allies. About half as many Republicans and Republican leaners (35%) say the same.

Continuing partisan divide on making compromises with U.S. allies

% who say that in foreign policy ...



% who say the U.S. should take into account interests of its allies, even if it means making compromises



Note: Don't know responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted March 20-25, 2019.

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Younger and more educated Americans are more supportive of the U.S. compromising with its allies than older adults and those with less education.

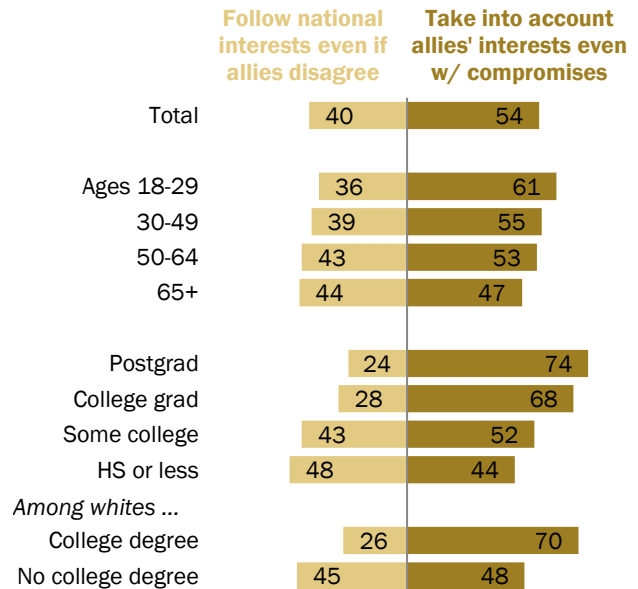
A majority of those age 18 to 29 (61%) say the U.S. should take into account allies' interests even if it means making compromises. Only about a third (36%) say the U.S. should follow its own interests when allies strongly disagree. Adults age 65 and older are about evenly divided (47% vs. 44%).

Large majorities of postgraduates (74%) and four-year college graduates (68%) say the U.S. should take allies' interests into account. About half of those with some college education (52%) and 44% of those with a high school education or less agree.

Whites without a college degree are about equally divided between compromising with allies (48%) and following U.S. national interests when allies disagree (45%). College-educated whites largely favor taking into account allies' interests and compromising when necessary (70% say this).

Older and less educated adults less supportive of compromising with allies

% who say that in foreign policy, the U.S. should ...



Notes: Don't know responses not shown. Whites include only those who are not Hispanic.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted March 20-25, 2019.

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Most say world problems would be worse without the U.S.

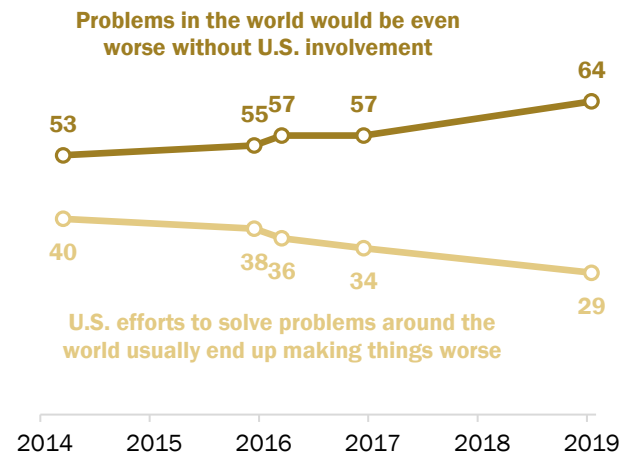
A large majority of Americans (64%) say that problems in the world would be worse without U.S. involvement, in a separate survey conducted in January. About three-in-ten (29%) say that U.S. involvement in the world generally hurts more than it helps.

Since 2016, the share of Americans who say global problems would be worse without U.S. involvement has increased seven percentage points, from 57% to 64%. All of the change has come among Republicans and Republican-leaning independents: Currently, 76% say problems would worsen without U.S. involvement, up from 60% three years ago.

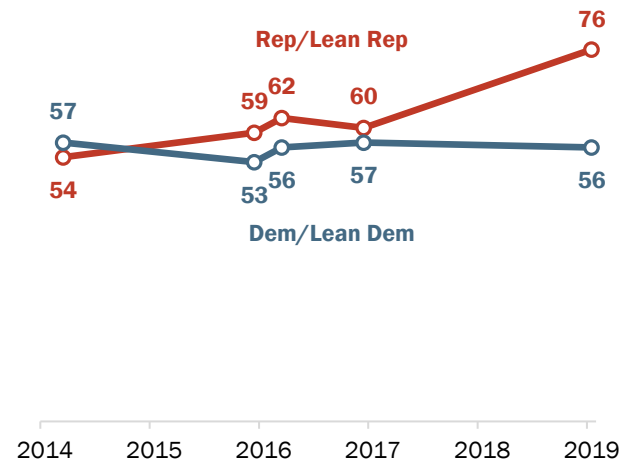
Democrats' views are little changed over this period. In the January survey, 56% of Democrats and Democratic leaners say world problems would be worse without U.S. involvement.

Increasing share of the public says problems in the world would be worse without U.S. involvement

% who say ...



% who say problems in the world would be even worse without U.S. involvement



Note: Don't know responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Jan. 9-14, 2019.

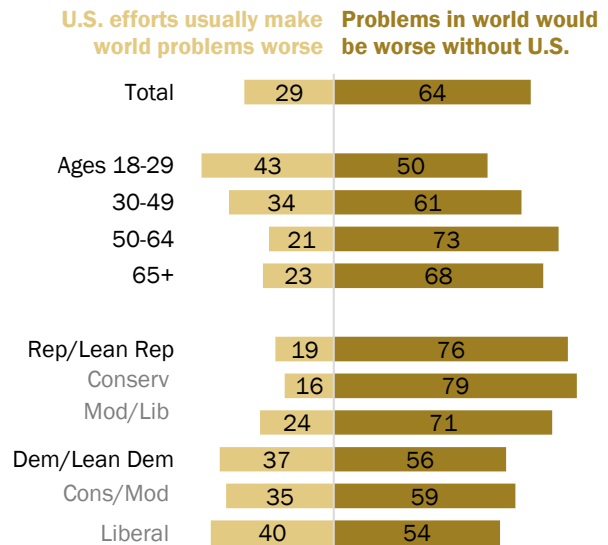
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Younger Americans are more likely to say that U.S. involvement in the world usually makes problems worse compared with those 50 and older. Those under 30 are about evenly divided with 43% saying that U.S. involvement usually makes problems worse, and 50% saying that things would be even worse without U.S. involvement.

While there are partisan differences in these attitudes, there are no ideological divides within the parties on the question of whether the U.S. does more harm than good on the international stage.

Younger Americans more skeptical that U.S. impacts world problems positively

% who say ...



Note: Don't know responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Jan. 9-14, 2019.

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Acknowledgements

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

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Methodology

The analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted March 20-25, 2019 among a national sample of 1,503 adults, 18 years of age or older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia (300 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 1,203 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 792 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers under the direction of Abt Associates. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International, LLC. 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. The weighting procedure corrected for the different sampling rates. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see <http://www.pewresearch.org/methodology/u-s-survey-research/>.

The combined landline and cell phone sample is weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and nativity and region to parameters from the 2017 Census Bureau's American Community Survey one-year estimates 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 2018 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 March 20-25, 2019

Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	1,503	3.0 percentage points
Half form	751 (min)	4.2 percentage points
Rep/Lean Rep	657	4.5 percentage points
Rep/Lean Rep half form	326 (min)	6.4 percentage points
Dem/Lean Dem	708	4.4 percentage points
Dem/Lean Dem half form	350 (min)	6.2 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.

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**PEW RESEARCH CENTER
MARCH 2019 POLITICAL SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
MARCH 20-25, 2019
N=1,503**

QUESTIONS 1-2, 10, 14, 33-34, 47-49 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

NO QUESTIONS 3-9, 11-13, 15-18, 21-24, 26-32, 35-43, 45-46

QUESTIONS 19-20, 25, 44 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK ALL:

Q.50 I'm going to read you some pairs of statements that will help us understand how you feel about a number of things. As I read each pair, tell me whether the FIRST statement or the SECOND statement comes closer to your own views — even if neither is exactly right. The first pair is **[READ AND RANDOMIZE PAIRS BUT NOT STATEMENTS WITHIN EACH PAIR, EXCEPT FOR ITEM d AND e WHICH SHOULD HAVE STATEMENTS RANDOMIZED WITHIN PAIR]. [IF NECESSARY: Next], [NEXT PAIR]. [IF NECESSARY: "Which statement comes closer to your views, even if neither is exactly right?"]**

QUESTIONS 50a, 50d-f HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

	In foreign policy, the U.S. should take into account the interests of its allies even if it means making <u>compromises with them</u>	In foreign policy, the U.S. should follow its OWN national interests even when its allies <u>strongly disagree</u>	(VOL.) Both/Neither/ DK/Ref	
b.				
	Mar 20-25, 2019	54	40	5
	Sep 18-24, 2018	55	38	7
	Jun 8-Jul 9, 2017	59	36	5
	Apr 12-19, 2016	51	42	7
	Feb 22-Mar 1, 2011 ¹	53	36	11
	December, 2004	53	37	10
		It's best for the future of our country to be active in <u>world affairs</u>	We should pay less attention to problems overseas and concentrate <u>on problems here at home</u>	(VOL.) Both/Neither/ DK/Ref
c.				
	Mar 20-25, 2019	44	49	6
	Jun 8-Jul 9, 2017	47	47	6
	Jan 23-Mar 16, 2014	35	60	5
	Feb 22-Mar 1, 2011	33	58	8
	December, 2004	44	49	7

NO QUESTIONS 51-53

QUESTIONS 54-55 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

¹ In Feb 22-Mar 1, 2011 and before, item was asked as part of a list with follow-up asking whether respondents felt strongly or not strongly about their position.

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=752]:

Q.56F2 As you may know, NATO [**PRONOUNCED:** NAY-toe], or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, is a military alliance between the U.S., Canada, and many European countries. All in all, would you say being a member of NATO is [**READ**]

Mar 20-25		Apr 12-19
<u>2019</u>		<u>2016</u>
77	Good for the U.S. [OR]	77
15	Bad for the U.S	16
9	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	7

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=752]:

Q.57F2 Would you say the NATO alliance is [**READ AND RANDOMIZE OPTIONS 1 AND 2; WITH OPTION 3 ALWAYS LAST; REVERSE ORDER FOR RANDOM HALF SAMPLE: OPTION 3 ALWAYS FIRST, FOLLOWED BY RANDOMIZED OPTIONS 1 AND 2**]

Mar 20-25		Apr 12-19
<u>2019</u>		<u>2016</u>
15	More important to the U.S. [OR]	15
34	More important to other NATO member countries [OR]	37
42	About as important to the U.S. as other NATO member countries	41
8	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	7

QUESTIONS 58, 60-61, 64-71 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

NO QUESTIONS 59, 62-63, 72-74

QUESTIONS 75-77 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

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.)	(VOL.)	Lean	Lean
	Republican	Democrat	Independent	No preference	Other party	DK/Ref	Rep	Dem
Mar 20-25, 2019	26	30	37	3	1	3	14	19
Jan 9-14, 2019	25	31	40	2	1	2	16	18
Sep 18-24, 2018	25	32	37	3	1	2	15	18
Jun 5-12, 2018	25	31	38	3	1	2	15	18
Apr 25-May 1, 2018	27	28	38	4	1	2	14	19
Mar 7-14, 2018	26	28	41	3	*	1	17	18
Jan 10-15, 2018	26	33	34	3	1	3	12	18
Yearly Totals								
2018	25.7	30.8	37.6	3.0	.8	2.0	14.7	18.3
2017	23.6	31.4	39.4	3.3	.6	1.7	15.8	18.7
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

PARTY/PARTYLN CONTINUED ...

				(VOL.)	(VOL.)	(VOL.)	Lean	Lean
	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>
				<u>preference</u>	<u>party</u>			
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 <i>Post-Sept 11</i>	30.9	31.8	27.9	5.2	.6	3.6	11.7	9.4
2001 <i>Pre-Sept 11</i>	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	--	--	--	--	--

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER
JANUARY 2019 POLITICAL SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
JANUARY 9-14, 2019
N=1,505**

QUESTIONS 1-2, 3-4, 10, 17-18, 25, 29-30, 50-53, 55-63, 69-71 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

NO QUESTIONS 5-9, 11-16, 19-24, 26-28, 31-49, 54, 64-68, 72-82

ASK ALL:

Q.83 Which comes closer to your view — even if neither is exactly right. [**READ AND RANDOMIZE PAIRS BUT NOT STATEMENTS WITHIN EACH PAIR, EXCEPT FOR ITEM C WHICH SHOULD HAVE STATEMENTS RANDOMIZED WITHIN PAIR**]. Next, [**NEXT PAIR**]. [**IF NECESSARY: “Which statement comes closer to your views, even if neither is exactly right?”**]

NO ITEM a

	U.S. efforts to solve problems around the world usually end up <u>making things worse</u>	Problems in the world would be even worse <u>without U.S. involvement</u>	(VOL.) Both/Neither/ <u>DK/Ref</u>
b.			
Jan 9-14, 2019	29	64	7
Nov 30-Dec 5, 2016	34	57	9
Mar 17-26, 2016	36	57	6
Dec 8-13, 2015	38	55	7
Jan 23-Mar 16, 2014	40	53	7

QUESTIONS 83c-e, 86-88, 90-92, 97-98 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

NO QUESTIONS 84-85, 89, 93-96