



INDEPENDENT CENTER

2023 Nationwide Registered Voter Survey Among Independents

Online survey among n800 U.S. Adults who are registered to vote and self-identify as independent.

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Conducted in partnership with The Bullfinch Group.

2023 Nationwide Registered Voter Survey Among Independents
CONFIDENTIAL DOCUMENT

Field Dates: 10/20-23/2023
Margin of error: 3.46

SCREENER SECTION

You have been selected to participate in a survey on a confidential basis. This is a rare opportunity to voice your opinions. Your responses will be kept confidential; you are not being asked to buy anything or donate money. We simply want to know what you think and how you feel.

Screener 1: Are you, or is anyone in your household, employed by the news media, a market research firm, an elected official, or actively involved with political campaigns?

100% No (**continue**)

Screener 2: Are you currently registered to vote?

100% Yes (**continue**)

Screener 3: In politics today, and regardless of how you are registered, do you consider yourself to be a...
(ROTATE 1-7: TOP TO BOTTOM, BOTTOM TO TOP)

0% Strong Democrat (**Terminate**)
0% Not so strong Democrat (**Terminate**)
25% Independent leaning Democrat **n200**
50% Independent **n400**
25% Independent leaning Republican **n200**
0% Not so strong Republican (**Terminate**)
0% Strong Republican (**Terminate**)

0% Other / Unsure (**Terminate**)

GENERAL SENTIMENT

GS1. At this time next year, do you think that you will personally be **(ROTATE)** better or worse **(END ROTATE)** off than you are today?

42% **Total Better off**

10% Much better off

32% Somewhat better off

40% **Total Worse off**

27% Somewhat worse off

12% Much worse off

19% Unsure

GS2. At this time next year, do you think America will be **(ROTATE)** better or worse **(END ROTATE)** off than it is today?

28% **Total Better off**

4% Much better off

24% Somewhat better off

55% **Total Worse off**

33% Somewhat worse off

22% Much worse off

18% Unsure

GS3. Do you **(ROTATE)** approve or disapprove **(END ROTATE)** of the job President Joe Biden is doing?

36% **Total Approve**

9% Strongly approve

27% Somewhat approve

61% **Total Disapprove**

20% Somewhat disapprove

41% Strongly disapprove

4% Unsure

GS4. Do you **(ROTATE)** approve or disapprove **(END ROTATE)** of the job the U.S. Congress is doing?

13% **Total Approve**

1% Strongly approve

12% Somewhat approve

80% **Total Disapprove**

35% Somewhat disapprove

45% Strongly disapprove

8% Unsure

GS5. On the following scale, please indicate where you see yourself politically.

(DO NOT SHOW numeric scale....)

0	2% = progressive liberal / Strong Democrat
1	1%
2	4%
3	5%
4	9%
5	56% = Moderate Centrist / Independent
6	8%
7	7%
8	5%
9	1%
10	2% = Staunch-Conservative / Strong Republican

Mean 5.2

GS6. Please indicate where you think you saw yourself politically, roughly 5 years ago (around 2018).

(DO NOT SHOW numeric scale....)

0	4% = progressive liberal / Strong Democrat
1	4%
2	6%
3	7%
4	9%
5	46% = Moderate Centrist / Independent
6	7%
7	7%
8	4%
9	3%
10	4% = Staunch-Conservative / Strong Republican

Mean 4.8

GS7. On the following scale, please indicate how you see yourself voting in future elections.

(DO NOT SHOW numeric scale....)

0	5% = Exclusively vote for Democratic candidates
1	3%
2	5%
3	6%
4	8%
5	48% = Vote Independent / split ticket
6	7%
7	6%
8	6%
9	3%
10	5% = Exclusively vote for Republican candidates

Mean 5.1

POLITICAL FAVORABILITY SENTIMENT

You will now read a list of political officials and entities in the United States. After each, please indicate whether you have a **(ROTATE)** favorable or unfavorable **(END ROTATE)** opinion of each. If you don't know or haven't heard of the subject, please note that.

(RANDOMIZE)

F1. Donald Trump

36% Total Favorable

16% Very favorable
21% Somewhat favorable

62% Total Unfavorable

14% Somewhat unfavorable
48% Very unfavorable

1% Never heard of
2% Unsure

F2. Joe Biden

37% Total Favorable

10% Very favorable
28% Somewhat favorable

59% Total Unfavorable

18% Somewhat unfavorable
42% Very unfavorable

0% Never heard of
3% Unsure

F3. The Republican party

29% Total Favorable

3% Very favorable
26% Somewhat favorable

65% Total Unfavorable

28% Somewhat unfavorable
36% Very unfavorable

0% Never heard of
6% Unsure

F4. The Democratic party

36% Total Favorable

6% Very favorable
31% Somewhat favorable

57% Total Unfavorable

26% Somewhat unfavorable
31% Very unfavorable

0% Never heard of
7% Unsure

F5. A politician that works with both sides of the aisle

72% Total Favorable

29% Very favorable
44% Somewhat favorable

14% Total Unfavorable

8% Somewhat unfavorable
6% Very unfavorable

5% Never heard of
9% Unsure

F6. An independent candidate not affiliated with the Republican or Democratic parties

63% Total Favorable

16% Very favorable
47% Somewhat favorable

11% Total Unfavorable

6% Somewhat unfavorable
5% Very unfavorable

4% Never heard of
23% Unsure

F7. No Labels

26% Total Favorable

7% Very favorable
19% Somewhat favorable

13% Total Unfavorable

8% Somewhat unfavorable
5% Very unfavorable

32% Never heard of
29% Unsure

F8. Forward Party

9% **Total Favorable**

2% Very favorable
7% Somewhat favorable

11% **Total Unfavorable**

7% Somewhat unfavorable
4% Very unfavorable

60% Never heard of
20% Unsure

(END RANDOMIZE)

F9. If next year's congressional election were between (ROTATE) a viable Republican, A viable Democrat, A viable third-party candidate who was Independent (END VOTE), how would you vote?

38% **Total Independent**

12% Strongly Independent
26% Lean Independent

22% **Total Republican**

4% Strongly Republican
18% Lean Republican

19% **Total Democrat**

5% Strongly Democrat
14% Lean Democrat

21% Unsure

F10. Which of the following do you think would be the best candidate to represent you and your neighbors in Congress? **(RANDOMIZE 1-3)**

11% A candidate who works and votes with the Republicans in Congress.
9% A candidate who works and votes with the Democrats in Congress.
66% A candidate who works and votes with both Republicans and Democrats in Congress.
14% Unsure

For the next question, please consider the following:

'Fiscally liberal' broadly advocates for more government programs and intervention in economic matters.
'Fiscally moderate' broadly advocates for a rational amount of government programs and intervention in economic matters.
'Fiscally conservative' broadly advocates for less government programs or intervention in economic matters.

F11. Thinking for a moment about your economic views...Do you consider yourself to be... ?
(RANDOMIZE 1-3)

14% Fiscally liberal
50% Fiscally moderate
25% Fiscally conservative

11% Unsure

For the next question, please consider the following:

'Socially liberal' broadly advocates for populist, or politically 'left-leaning' rights for individuals.
'Socially tolerant' broadly advocates for centrist, or 'common good' rights for individuals.
'Socially conservative' broadly advocates for traditional Christian, or politically 'right-leaning' rights for individuals.

F12. Thinking for a moment about your social views...Do you consider yourself to be... ? **(RANDOMIZE 1-3)**

18% Socially liberal
43% Socially tolerant
26% Socially conservative

13% Unsure

F13. If you could choose, which type of elected official would you prefer to have represent you and your community? **(ROTATE 1-9, 9-1)**

13% Total Fiscally Liberal
6% Fiscally liberal and socially liberal
4% Fiscally liberal and socially tolerant
3% Fiscally liberal and socially conservative

47% Total Fiscally Moderate
11% Fiscally moderate and socially liberal
27% Fiscally moderate and socially tolerant
9% Fiscally moderate and socially conservative

27% Total Fiscally Conservative
3% Fiscally conservative and socially liberal
11% Fiscally conservative and socially tolerant
12% Fiscally conservative and socially conservative

14% Unsure

F14. Which of the following policy statements do you believe is more important for U.S. elected officials to focus their efforts? (ROTATE 1-2)

- 73% Ensuring everybody receives an equal opportunity to achieve their desired outcome.
 - 18% Ensuring everybody receives equal outcomes regardless of the opportunities they were given.
 - 9% Unsure
-

ISSUE IMPORTANCE

II1. Of the following, what would you say is the most pressing issue in America today? (RANDOMIZE 1-12)

- 20% Jobs and the economy
 - 17% Government leadership
 - 13% Immigration
 - 12% Taxes and government spending
 - 9% Health care
 - 7% National security
 - 6% Abortion
 - 4% Energy and the environment
 - 3% Police reform and criminal justice
 - 3% Education
 - 2% Free speech and censorship
 - 1% Social reforms

 - 2% None of the above
 - 1% Refused
-

You will now read a list of questions and statements regarding social issues in the United States. After each, please indicate the responses that you most identify personally / agree with the most. (RANDOMIZE 1-3)

(RANDOMIZE S1-S11) (REPORT MEAN OF EACH QUESTION USING 1-3)

S1. Freedom of speech: *Some individuals and media spread wrong views with dubious objectives*

- 34% The spreading of mistaken views aiming at manipulating and/or influencing the public opinion should be forbidden.
 - 32% Illegal messages of hate and/or extreme views should be banned.
 - 34% The government should not censor any opinion in any case.
-

S2. Religion: *The Church performs certain social tasks. Therefore...*

- 10% The Government shall contribute to its financing, and take into consideration their views when passing laws.
 - 40% Government and Church must be separate, but the Government may finance some of the social tasks undertaken by the Church (schools, asylums...)
 - 50% The Church shall finance itself, and be on equal grounds with any other association.
-

S3. Military service: *The defense of the country is the responsibility of those serving in the army.*

- 17% Military service shall be mandatory as a way to contribute to common welfare and/or to better educate our youth.
- 65% Military service shall be voluntary. That is the best way to have a professional army prepared to defend our interests and commitments abroad.
- 18% Military service shall be voluntary in case an army exists, and if so, its nature should be limited to its most basic duties of defense.

S4. Sex: *Sex between consenting adults is a matter of individual privacy. Nonetheless...*

- 24% Behaviors such as prostitution should be banned.
 - 19% Prostitution should be legal and regulated.
 - 58% Laws should not interfere with sex between consenting adults, in any case.
-

S5. Drugs: *Drugs are a tragedy for many families*

- 53% The government should fight drug trafficking with more resources and stricter laws and enforcement.
 - 37% The use of some drugs currently forbidden should be legal, although its distribution should be controlled.
 - 10% Drugs should be legal, decriminalizing its use and liberalizing its distribution.
-

S6. Security: *Preventive measures may lead to improved safety. However, in many cases, this collides with some individual rights such as the right to privacy.*

- 35% Safety of all goes before the rights of one; security forces should take into consideration broader concerns in addressing safety issue.
 - 31% The laws and the judiciary should establish clear cases where preventive measures go before certain individual rights.
 - 34% The government should not violate any individual right to improve security.
-

S7. Discrimination: *In some institutions, groups or professions, there is a disparity between the number of men and women, or between different races or social groups.*

- 11% Quota obligations are the best instrument to remedy historical situations of discrimination.
 - 20% Integration subsidies or tax benefits to underrepresented groups are the best instrument to address discrimination.
 - 69% Any imposition or benefit based on criteria of sex, race or social group, violates the principle of equality before the law, and should not be imposed by the Government.
-

S8. Immigration: *Borders are used to control immigration.*

- 29% We must strongly limit the entry of new immigrants and/or expel those who do not integrate.
 - 55% The Government shall regulate immigration to allow necessary immigrants to come in a legal way.
 - 16% There should be no differences of rights based on the place of birth or one's nationality.
-

S9. Nation: *The modern state tends to be associated with the concept of a nation.*

- 30% The Government shall actively promote patriotism and defend the national identity, culture and language.
 - 29% The Government shall protect personal choices on culture and language that characterizes the nation.
 - 41% The Government shall not intervene in matters as personal as identity or culture.
-

S10. Environment: *One of the greatest concerns is the challenges facing the environment.*

- 38% Laws should provide clarity to address a cleaner environment by imposing strict limitations of pollutants.
- 39% Regulations and laws for clean energies should be promoted through more subsidies to those who pollute less and more taxes to those who pollute the most.
- 24% Well-defined property rights make it the responsibility of property owners to address pollution and polluting activity.

S11. Equality: *The status of being equal, especially in status, rights, and opportunities.*

- 33% The government should actively promote fairness with programs and regulations to intervene directly in community, social and economic relationships.
 - 45% The government's role is to ensure the laws and protections are in place to protect against discrimination but not intervene directly.
 - 22% The government should not be involved at all in private interactions.
-

You will now read a list of questions and statements regarding economic issues in the United States. After each, please indicate the responses that you most identify personally / agree with the most. **(RANDOMIZE 1-3)**

(RANDOMIZE E1-E10) (REPORT MEAN OF EACH QUESTION USING 1-3)

E1. Globalization: *Imports may be limited by the Government through various instruments such as tariffs, prohibitions, or certain regulations.*

- 48% The Government should limit imports from other countries to favor domestic producers.
 - 23% The Government should limit imports from some third world countries, as they use cheap labor.
 - 29% The Government should not restrict international trade. It must be free and tariffs should be reduced or eliminated.
-

E2. Taxes: *Taxes are necessary to cover the Government expenditure.*

- 55% The rich should pay more taxes to increase the benefits and services provided by the State.
 - 29% Taxes should not go up. They must be at the level required to meet the expenses of the State.
 - 16% Taxes should go down, even if that means cutting some benefits and services provided by the State.
-

E3. Retirement: *Retirement funds guarantee a level of welfare for the elderly.*

- 13% Retirement plans must be managed by the Government with a public system of mandatory contributions.
 - 50% Retirement plans should be guaranteed by the Government, with some kind of mixed model that can combine public and private plans.
 - 38% Retirement plans are a matter of individual planning and savings. The Government should not require mandatory contributions to a public system.
-

E4. Solidarity: *The poor and needy depend on the solidarity of the rest of society.*

- 30% The Government should be responsible for removing or reducing poverty and inequality in society.
 - 49% The Government shall manage aid and an adequate assistance to the needy, including engaging private charitable institutions to supplement.
 - 21% Private charity should be the main channel for the solidarity of society.
-

E5. Licenses: *Some professionals require a qualification to work.*

- 42% Professional sectors should be regulated by law. The exercise of qualified professions should require the appropriate licenses and permits granted in each case by the competent Government body.
 - 40% Professional sectors should be regulated by independent bodies, such as professional associations. Qualified professionals should join them, as their supervision ensures the quality of their services.
 - 18% Licenses, permits and professional associations are unnecessary obstacles. The exercise of any profession should be free for anyone qualified.
-

- E6. Labor unions: *Labor unions represent the interests of workers.*
- 27% The labor unions are essential to protect the rights of workers. The Government shall provide them with funding and assign them special functions on labor laws.
 - 27% The labor unions, as representatives of workers, should have special status on laws regulating labor, but should not be funded by the Government.
 - 46% Labor unions should be governed by the rules applicable to any other association, and no public funding or special functions shall be attributed to them.
-
- E7. Health care: *Medical coverage is a necessity for everyone eventually.*
- 13% The Government should manage public medical centers paid by contributions to a mandatory public health insurance.
 - 52% The Government should guarantee universal access to health care centers using some sort of public funding.
 - 35% The government should not manage medical centers. Medical facilities should be private, and citizens be free to buy the health insurance they wish.
-
- E8. Banking: *The Central Bank and the banking system, consisting of commercial banks, put the money into circulation.*
- 36% Both the Central Bank and commercial banks should be public and meet social needs.
 - 47% The Central Bank has a key role regulating the economy, so it must be independent and supervise commercial banks.
 - 17% The Central Bank should have its powers reduced, leaving commercial banks free to operate as they see fit.
-
- E9. Large stores: *Larger stores have certain competitive advantages versus small traditional shops.*
- 30% Some big retail stores have unfair competition practices. More stringent conditions of operation should be imposed on them, or be forced to close or be broken up.
 - 22% Some advantages of big retailers should be corrected by regulating certain matters, such as restricting them from selling their own products that compete with the brands they sell
 - 49% Big stores are businesses like any other. They are entitled to compete freely in the market, with no restrictions.
-
- E10. Labor market: *Labor contracts bind employers and employees on their obligations.*
- 17% Labor laws should impose more restrictions on firing people and further limit precarious employment by ensuring greater worker protection.
 - 59% Labor laws should always maintain a special protection to workers, protecting them against abusive firing and precarious employment.
 - 25% Employment contracts should enjoy freedom of clauses between parties. Laws should not interfere in purely contractual matters, such as duration or termination causes.
-

Moving on...

II15: Thinking ahead to next year's Presidential election, which of the following do you think will have the biggest impact on your vote? **(RANDOMIZE 1-12)**

- 17% Candidates' stance on jobs and the economy
 - 16% Candidates' stance on taxes and government spending
 - 10% Candidates' stance on immigration
 - 10% Candidates' stance on government leadership
 - 8% Candidates' stance on abortion
 - 7% Candidates' stance on national security
 - 7% Candidates' stance on health care
 - 5% Candidates' stance on energy and the environment
 - 3% Candidates' stance on social reforms
 - 2% Candidates' stance on free speech and censorship
 - 2% Candidates' stance on police reform and criminal justice
 - 1% Candidates' stance on education

 - 9% None of the above
 - 2% Refused
-

II16. Which of the following do you believe would make the government more effective? **(ROTATE 1-3, 3-1)**

- 19% Growing and investing more in government-run programs and regulations
 - 40% Reforming government programs to offer more choice with competition from the private sector
 - 20% Reducing and eliminating government-run programs and regulations

 - 21% Unsure
-

II17. Which of the following do you believe would make our educational system more effective? **(ROTATE 1-3, 3-1)**

- 37% Growing and investing more in government-run public schools.
 - 51% Reforming education to give parents vouchers to choose public or private options.
 - 12% Eliminating public schools and providing funding to parents to select whatever private options they want.
-

II18. Which of the following do you believe would help address housing affordability? **(ROTATE 1-3, 3-1)**

- 46% More government involvement in offering more subsidies and programs targeted at disadvantaged individuals
 - 40% Reducing regulatory barriers that delay construction and impose higher costs on building housing.
 - 15% Eliminating all government programs and regulation in the housing market to allow private providers to build what they want and where.
-

NEXT ELECTION SERIES

Now thinking ahead to the general election next November...

NE1. If next year's presidential election were between (ROTATE) Republican Donald Trump, Democrat Joe Biden, A viable third-party candidate who was Independent (END VOTE), how would you vote?

35% Total Independent
14% Strongly Independent
21% Lean Independent

31% Total Trump
18% Strongly Trump
13% Lean Trump

24% Total Biden
12% Strongly Biden
12% Lean Biden

10% Unsure

(ROTATE NEXT TWO QUESTIONS)

NE2. Do you want Joe Biden to run for President in 2024? **(ROTATE 1-2)**

19% Yes
63% No
19% Unsure

NE3. Do you want Donald Trump to run for President in 2024? **(ROTATE 1-2)**

30% Yes
58% No
12% Unsure

(END ROTATE)

NE4. Would you like to see a viable third-party candidate run for President in 2024? **(ROTATE 1-2)**

61% Yes
18% No
21% Unsure

NE9. For which elected office, if any, would you vote for an independent candidate, not aligned with the Republican or Democratic party? Select all that apply **(ROTATE 1-5,5-1)**

52%	U.S. House of Representatives
52%	President
51%	Your state legislature
51%	U.S. Senate
51%	Locally elected positions
3%	I would never vote for an independent candidate
23%	Unsure

NE13: Thinking ahead to next year's Presidential election, which of the following specific issues would you like to see candidates focusing their efforts on? **(SELECT ALL THAT APPLY) (RANDOMIZE 1-10)**

71%	Affordability / inflation
51%	Health care reform
46%	Safety / criminal reforms
40%	Social security reform
32%	Discrimination / equality
26%	Training and apprenticeship work programs
24%	Social reforms
21%	Cannabis legalization
18%	Paid maternity leave
10%	Trans issues
12%	Other
4%	None of the above
1%	Refused

MESSAGING SERIES

Moving on...

M1. How do you view the current political climate in America? **(ROTATE 1-4, 4-1)**

10%	Total Positive
2%	Very positively
8%	Somewhat positively
83%	Total Negative
39%	Somewhat negatively
44%	Very negatively
8%	Unsure

(IF RESPONSE 3 OR 4 IN PREVIOUS QUESTION)

M1A. Which of the following do you believe is most accurate about the current political climate in America? **(ROTATE 1-3, 3-1)**

43%	It has never been worse
41%	It has rarely been worse
11%	It is about average
5%	Unsure

(ASK ALL in SAMPLE)

M2. If the current political climate and rhetoric continue unchanged, how (ROTATE) likely or unlikely (END ROTATE) do you think it is that America could disband or have states vote to leave the nation? **(ROTATE 1-4, 4-1)**

33% Total Likely
11% Very likely
22% Somewhat likely

48% Total Unlikely
19% Somewhat unlikely
28% Very unlikely

20% Unsure

M3. Do you believe that your voice and opinions are being heard in Washington, DC by your elected representatives? **(ROTATE 1-4,4-1)**

21% Total Yes
2% Yes, Strongly
19% Yes, Somewhat

66% Total No
29% No, Somewhat
37% No, Strongly

13% Unsure / Depends

M4. Do you think your voice and opinions would be more clearly heard in Washington, DC if your elected representative was a moderate Independent, not aligned with either Republicans or Democrats? **(ROTATE 1-4,4-1)**

49% Total Yes
11% Yes, Strongly
38% Yes, Somewhat

19% Total No
11% No, Somewhat
9% No, Strongly

31% Unsure / Depends

DEMOGRAPHICS SECTION

Now just a few questions to make sure we have a representative sample:

Gender Your gender identification?

47%	Female
53%	Male
0%	Other

Age In what year were you born?

Age Range **IF UNSURE OR REFUSED, ASK:** Which of the following categories best describes your age?

6%	18 to 24
6%	25 to 29
14%	30 to 39
14%	40 to 49
27%	50 to 64
34%	65 or older

Ethnicity Do you consider yourself to be of Hispanic or Latino descent, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or some other Central or Latin American background?

10%	Yes
91%	No
0%	Unsure

Race And which of the following best describes your racial background?

71%	White or Caucasian
12%	Black or African American
10%	Hispanic
3%	Asian or Pacific Islander
1%	Native American
3%	Other

Ideology Thinking for a moment about your social, economic, and political views...Do you consider yourself to be... **(ROTATE VALUES 1-5; TOP-TO-BOTTOM / BOTTOM-TO-TOP)?**

17%	Total Liberal
4%	Very Liberal
13%	Somewhat Liberal
54%	Moderate
23%	Total Conservative
17%	Somewhat Conservative
6%	Very Conservative
2%	Libertarian
5%	Unsure

2020 Vote For whom did you vote in the 2020 Presidential election (**ROTATE 1-2**)?

41%	Joe Biden
37%	Donald Trump
6%	Someone Else
13%	Did not vote
2%	Don't recall
2%	Refused

Education What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed?

2%	Less than high school
19%	High school graduate
25%	Some college
12%	College graduate with associate or 2-year degree
24%	College graduate with bachelor's or 4-year degree
14%	Post-graduate degree
3%	Technical or vocational school graduate
1%	Unsure

Marital Status What would best describe your marital status?

31%	Single or never married
44%	Married
3%	Separated
13%	Divorced
8%	Widowed
2%	Other

Children Do you have children currently living in your household?

29%	Yes
71%	No
1%	Refused

Neighborhood Would you best describe the neighborhood or area you live in as...

28%	Urban
47%	Suburban
25%	Rural
0%	Unsure

401K Do you invest into an IRA or 401k?

45%	Yes
55%	No

Income	We want to classify people into broad income groups only. Would you estimate your total household income to be...?
39%	Below \$40,000
33%	Between \$40,000 and \$79,999
13%	Between \$80,000 and \$124,999
10%	Above \$125,000
2%	Unsure
4%	Prefer not to answer
