

# State of the Facts 2019

Conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research  
With funding from USAFacts

*Interviews: 10/15-28/2019  
1,032 adults*

*Margin of error: +/- 4.2 percentage points at the 95% confidence level among all adults*

*NOTE: All results show percentages among all respondents, unless otherwise labeled.*

**Q1. Do you think things in the nation are generally headed in the right direction, or do you feel that things are off on the wrong track?**

**[HALF SAMPLE ASKED RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER]**

	AP-NORC/USAFacts 10/15-28/2019
Right direction	34
Wrong direction	64
DON'T KNOW	-
SKIPPED/REFUSED	*
N =	1,032

**CUR2. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as president?**

*If don't know, skipped, or refused in CUR2.*

**CUR3. If you had to choose, do you lean more toward approving or disapproving of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as president?**

*If approve in CUR2.*

**CUR3A. Would you say you approve of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as president strongly or do you approve just somewhat?**

*If disapprove in CUR2.*

**CUR3B. Would you say you disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as president strongly or do you disapprove just somewhat?**

**[HALF SAMPLE ASKED RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDERS]**

	AP-NORC/USAFacts 10/15-28/2019
<b>Approve NET</b>	<b>37</b>
Strongly approve	20
Somewhat approve	18
Lean toward approving	*
<b>Do not lean either way</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Disapprove NET</b>	<b>60</b>
Lean toward disapproving	15
Somewhat disapprove	15
Strongly disapprove	44
DON'T KNOW	1
SKIPPED/REFUSED	1
N =	1,032

**Q2. Next, how closely do you pay attention to information about each of the following topics?**

**[GRID ITEMS RANDOMIZED; HALF SAMPLE ASKED OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDERS]**

AP-NORC/USAFacts 10/15-28/2019	<b>Extremely/ Very closely NET</b>	Extremely closely	Very closely	<b>Somewhat closely</b>	<b>Not too/Not closely at all NET</b>	Not too closely	Not closely at all	DK	SKP /REF
The environment	<b>43</b>	14	29	<b>39</b>	<b>17</b>	11	5	*	*
Natural disasters	<b>49</b>	14	35	<b>36</b>	<b>15</b>	11	3	-	*
Health care	<b>49</b>	16	33	<b>38</b>	<b>13</b>	10	2	-	*
Crime	<b>44</b>	14	30	<b>38</b>	<b>17</b>	13	4	*	*
The economy and jobs	<b>49</b>	14	35	<b>35</b>	<b>15</b>	11	4	*	*
Education	<b>42</b>	14	29	<b>40</b>	<b>18</b>	14	4	-	*
Foreign affairs	<b>38</b>	12	25	<b>38</b>	<b>24</b>	18	6	-	*
Immigration	<b>46</b>	19	27	<b>38</b>	<b>17</b>	13	4	-	*
The federal budget	<b>29</b>	9	21	<b>42</b>	<b>28</b>	21	7	*	*
Infrastructure	<b>24</b>	6	18	<b>41</b>	<b>35</b>	25	10	1	*

N = 1,032

**Q3. Next we would like to ask you some questions about where you get information about the government. Thinking about some of the ways you get information about the government these days, how often, if at all, do you get information from ...**

**[GRID ITEMS RANDOMIZED]**

	<b>Several times a day/Once a day NET</b>	Several times a day	Once a day	<b>At least once a week</b>	<b>Less often/ Never NET</b>	Less often	Never	DK	SKP /REF
AP-NORC/USAFacts 10/15-28/2019									
National newspapers	<b>19</b>	6	13	<b>21</b>	<b>60</b>	29	31	-	1
Federal government agencies	<b>12</b>	3	8	<b>21</b>	<b>67</b>	38	29	-	*
Your state government	<b>14</b>	4	10	<b>25</b>	<b>60</b>	39	21	*	1
Businesses	<b>16</b>	5	11	<b>20</b>	<b>63</b>	34	29	-	1
Members of Congress	<b>14</b>	4	10	<b>16</b>	<b>70</b>	38	32	*	*
Local TV news	<b>52</b>	20	32	<b>21</b>	<b>26</b>	15	11	-	1
Nonpartisan think tanks	<b>9</b>	3	7	<b>14</b>	<b>74</b>	32	42	1	1
The president	<b>28</b>	10	17	<b>22</b>	<b>50</b>	24	26	*	*
National TV news networks such as ABC, CBS, or NBC	<b>50</b>	21	29	<b>21</b>	<b>28</b>	17	11	-	1
Social media	<b>54</b>	33	21	<b>17</b>	<b>28</b>	16	12	-	1
Local newspapers	<b>23</b>	4	18	<b>24</b>	<b>52</b>	26	27	-	*
Cable news networks such as CNN, Fox News, or MSNBC	<b>47</b>	23	24	<b>21</b>	<b>31</b>	17	14	*	1
Public TV or radio such as PBS or NPR	<b>34</b>	14	20	<b>22</b>	<b>44</b>	23	21	-	*

N = 1,032

**Q4. Regardless of how often you get information from these sources, how much do you trust information from them about the government?**

[GRID ITEMS RANDOMIZED; HALF SAMPLE ASKED OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDERS]

	<b>A great deal/ Quite a bit NET</b>	A great deal	Quite a bit	<b>A moderate amount</b>	<b>Only a little/Not at all NET</b>	Only a little	Not at all	DK	SKP /REF
AP-NORC/USAFacts 10/15-28/2019									
National newspapers	<b>19</b>	6	14	<b>33</b>	<b>46</b>	27	19	1	1
Federal government agencies	<b>14</b>	3	10	<b>36</b>	<b>49</b>	34	16	*	1
Your state government	<b>19</b>	4	15	<b>38</b>	<b>42</b>	30	13	*	1
Businesses	<b>8</b>	1	7	<b>34</b>	<b>56</b>	38	17	*	1
Members of Congress	<b>10</b>	3	8	<b>32</b>	<b>57</b>	37	20	*	*
Local TV news	<b>27</b>	7	20	<b>36</b>	<b>36</b>	27	10	*	1
Nonpartisan think tanks	<b>13</b>	3	10	<b>31</b>	<b>53</b>	29	25	1	1
The president	<b>19</b>	7	12	<b>20</b>	<b>61</b>	22	39	-	*
National TV news networks such as ABC, CBS, or NBC	<b>25</b>	7	18	<b>34</b>	<b>41</b>	26	15	*	*
Social media	<b>11</b>	3	8	<b>24</b>	<b>64</b>	40	23	1	*
Local newspapers	<b>20</b>	5	15	<b>39</b>	<b>40</b>	27	12	1	1
Cable news networks such as CNN, Fox News, or MSNBC	<b>23</b>	5	18	<b>32</b>	<b>44</b>	31	13	*	*
Public TV or radio such as PBS or NPR	<b>31</b>	10	21	<b>29</b>	<b>39</b>	26	13	*	*

N = 1,032

**Q5. Have you ever used federal government websites (e.g. Census Bureau, IRS, Centers for Disease Control) to look up information?**

[HALF SAMPLE ASKED RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDERS]

	AP-NORC/USAFacts 10/15-28/2019
Yes	58
No	42
DON'T KNOW	-
SKIPPED/REFUSED	*

N = 1,032

**Q6. How much do you trust information from the federal government about the following topics?**

**[GRID ITEMS RANDOMIZED; HALF SAMPLE ASKED OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDERS]**

AP-NORC/USAFacts 10/15-28/2019	<b>A great deal/ Quite a bit NET</b>	A great deal	Quite a bit	<b>A moderate amount</b>	<b>Only a little/Not at all NET</b>	Only a little	Not at all	DK	SKP /REF
The environment	<b>13</b>	3	10	<b>39</b>	<b>46</b>	31	16	*	1
Natural disasters	<b>36</b>	9	28	<b>34</b>	<b>29</b>	21	8	*	*
Health care	<b>22</b>	5	17	<b>38</b>	<b>40</b>	31	9	*	*
Crime	<b>24</b>	5	19	<b>40</b>	<b>35</b>	26	9	*	1
The economy and jobs	<b>24</b>	5	19	<b>41</b>	<b>34</b>	27	7	*	1
Education	<b>21</b>	5	16	<b>42</b>	<b>37</b>	28	8	*	*
Foreign affairs	<b>16</b>	3	13	<b>37</b>	<b>46</b>	30	16	*	*
Immigration	<b>18</b>	5	13	<b>36</b>	<b>45</b>	30	15	*	*
The federal budget	<b>18</b>	3	14	<b>39</b>	<b>43</b>	30	13	*	*
Infrastructure	<b>16</b>	3	13	<b>43</b>	<b>40</b>	29	11	1	*

N = 1,032

**Q7. Thinking about information you consider factual, how important is each of the following factors?**

**[GRID ITEMS RANDOMIZED; HALF SAMPLE ASKED OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDERS]**

AP-NORC/USAFacts 10/15-28/2019	<b>Extremely /Very important NET</b>	Extremely important	Very important	<b>Somewhat important</b>	<b>Not too/Not important at all NET</b>	Not too important	Not important at all	DK	SKP /REF
It is accurate	<b>84</b>	62	22	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	3	1	-	-
It provides all relevant information	<b>81</b>	44	37	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>	4	1	*	-
It explains the way the information was gathered	<b>75</b>	37	39	<b>20</b>	<b>4</b>	3	1	*	*
It presents opposing views	<b>59</b>	21	38	<b>30</b>	<b>11</b>	9	2	*	-
It has a high quality presentation	<b>39</b>	13	26	<b>43</b>	<b>18</b>	14	4	*	*
It does not include opinions	<b>54</b>	28	26	<b>32</b>	<b>13</b>	9	3	1	1

N = 1,032

**Q8. How likely are you to consider information factual if it has each of the following characteristics?**

**[GRID ITEMS RANDOMIZED; HALF SAMPLE ASKED OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDERS]**

AP-NORC/USAFacts 10/15-28/2019	<b>Extremely/ Very likely NET</b>	Extremely likely	Very likely	<b>Moderately likely</b>	<b>Not too/Not at all likely NET</b>	Not too likely	Not at all likely	DK	SKP /REF
It is based in data	<b>61</b>	22	38	<b>30</b>	<b>9</b>	7	2	-	*
It comes from a non-partisan source	<b>34</b>	8	26	<b>43</b>	<b>22</b>	16	6	*	*
It is verified by an academic institution	<b>44</b>	12	33	<b>37</b>	<b>18</b>	13	5	*	*
It is verified by federal government agencies	<b>28</b>	7	21	<b>47</b>	<b>24</b>	18	6	*	2
Your friends and family think that it is true	<b>14</b>	4	9	<b>42</b>	<b>44</b>	31	13	*	1
It is verified by a business	<b>13</b>	3	10	<b>48</b>	<b>39</b>	31	8	*	1
It is verified by the media	<b>16</b>	4	12	<b>40</b>	<b>44</b>	27	17	*	*
Most people think that it is true	<b>14</b>	3	11	<b>36</b>	<b>49</b>	32	16	*	1
It is verified by scientists	<b>55</b>	22	33	<b>32</b>	<b>12</b>	8	4	*	*
It comes from someone you agree with politically	<b>19</b>	4	15	<b>54</b>	<b>27</b>	20	7	*	1

N = 1,032

**Q9. Next, these days, how easy or difficult is it for you to ...**

**[GRID ITEMS RANDOMIZED; HALF SAMPLE ASKED OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDERS]**

AP-NORC/USAFacts 10/15-28/2019	Very/ Somewhat easy NET	Very easy	Somewhat easy	Neither easy nor difficult	Somewhat / Very difficult NET	Somewha t difficult	Very difficult	DK	SKP /REF
Find factual information on the subjects you are interested in	<b>44</b>	12	32	<b>24</b>	<b>32</b>	25	7	*	*
Know if information is true or not	<b>31</b>	9	22	<b>22</b>	<b>47</b>	36	12	*	*
Understand the difference between fact and opinion	<b>50</b>	20	30	<b>20</b>	<b>29</b>	23	6	-	*

N = 1,032

**Q10. How often do you feel like you ...**

**[GRID ITEMS RANDOMIZED; HALF SAMPLE ASKED OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDERS]**

AP-NORC/USAFacts 10/15-28/2019	Always /Often NET	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely /Never NET	Rarely	Never	DK	SKP /REF
Get conflicting information from different sources	<b>58</b>	12	45	<b>34</b>	<b>8</b>	6	2	*	*
Come across sources that include only one side	<b>64</b>	12	52	<b>27</b>	<b>9</b>	7	2	*	*

N = 1,032



**Q11. How often do you think each of the following are based on factual information?**

**[GRID ITEMS RANDOMIZED; HALF SAMPLE ASKED OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDERS]**

AP-NORC/USAFacts 10/15-28/2019	<b>Always /Often NET</b>	Always	Often	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Rarely /Never NET</b>	Rarely	Never	DK	SKP /REF
Political candidates' campaign messages	<b>9</b>	2	7	<b>43</b>	<b>47</b>	35	11	*	*
Debates between political candidates	<b>13</b>	2	12	<b>47</b>	<b>39</b>	32	7	*	1
Voting choices made by Americans	<b>14</b>	3	11	<b>53</b>	<b>32</b>	26	6	*	*
Reporting from the media	<b>21</b>	3	18	<b>47</b>	<b>31</b>	24	7	*	*
Decisions made by policymakers	<b>14</b>	2	12	<b>55</b>	<b>30</b>	24	7	1	*

N = 1,032

**Q12. Which of the following statements comes closest to your view, even if neither is exactly right?  
Political division in the United States is more a result of Americans ...**

**[HALF SAMPLE ASKED RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDERS]**

	AP-NORC/USAFacts 10/15-28/2019
<u>Having different beliefs</u> about how to address major problems facing the country	60
<u>Relying on different facts</u> about major problems facing the country	37
DON'T KNOW	1
SKIPPED/REFUSED	2

N =

1,032

**Q13. How much influence do you think the political beliefs of each of the following have over information provided by the federal government?**

[GRID ITEMS RANDOMIZED; HALF SAMPLE ASKED OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDERS]

AP-NORC/USAFacts 10/15-28/2019	<b>A great deal/ Quite a bit NET</b>	A great deal	Quite a bit	<b>A moderate amount</b>	<b>Only a little/Not at all NET</b>	Only a little	Not at all	DK	SKP /REF
Members of Congress	<b>45</b>	17	28	<b>33</b>	<b>20</b>	16	4	1	1
The president	<b>54</b>	25	29	<b>27</b>	<b>18</b>	9	9	1	1
Employees in federal agencies	<b>30</b>	8	22	<b>39</b>	<b>30</b>	23	7	1	1

N = 1,032

**PID. Combines PID1, PIDI, PIDA, and PIDB.**

	AP-NORC/USAFacts 10/15-28/2019
<b>Democrat NET</b>	<b>42</b>
Strong Democrat	14
Moderate Democrat	18
Lean Democrat	10
<b>Independent/None – Don't lean</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Republican NET</b>	<b>38</b>
Lean Republican	11
Moderate Republican	17
Strong Republican	9

N =

1,032

**G11B. Generally speaking, do you consider yourself a ...**

	AP-NORC/USAFacts 10/15-28/2019
Liberal	20
Moderate	46
Conservative	31
DON'T KNOW	*
SKIPPED/REFUSED	2

N =

1,032

**AGE.**

	AP-NORC/USAFacts 10/15-28/2019
18-24	12
25-34	20
35-44	14
45-54	15
55-64	18
65-74	13
75+	8
N =	1,032

**GENDER.**

	AP-NORC/USAFacts 10/15-28/2019
Male	48
Female	52
N =	1,032

**RACE/ETHNICITY.**

	AP-NORC/USAFacts 10/15-28/2019
White	63
Black or African American	12
Hispanic	16
Other	9
N =	1,032

**MARITAL STATUS.**

	AP-NORC/USAFacts 10/15-28/2019
Married	48
Widowed	5
Divorced	10
Separated	2
Never married	24
Living with partner	11
N =	1,032

**EMPLOYMENT STATUS.**

	AP-NORC/USAFacts 10/15-28/2019
Employed	56
Not employed	44
N =	1,032

**EDUCATION.**

	AP-NORC/USAFacts 10/15-28/2019
Less than a high school diploma	11
High school graduate or equivalent	28
Some college	28
College graduate or above	33
N =	1,032

**INCOME.**

	AP-NORC/USAFacts 10/15-28/2019
Under \$10,000	7
\$10,000 to under \$20,000	10
\$20,000 to under \$30,000	15
\$30,000 to under \$40,000	7
\$40,000 to under \$50,000	7
\$50,000 to under \$75,000	17
\$75,000 to under \$100,000	18
\$100,000 to under \$150,000	12
\$150,000 or more	8
N =	1,032

### **Study Methodology**

This survey was conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research and with funding from USAFacts.

Data were collected using the AmeriSpeak Omnibus®, a monthly multi-client survey using NORC’s probability-based panel designed to be representative of the U.S. household population. The survey was part of a larger study that included questions about other topics not included in this report. During the initial recruitment phase of the panel, randomly selected U.S. households were sampled with a known, non-zero probability of selection from the NORC National Sample Frame and then contacted by U.S. mail, email, telephone, and field interviewers (face-to-face). The panel provides sample coverage of approximately 97 percent of the U.S. household population. Those excluded from the sample include people with P.O. Box only addresses, some addresses not listed in the USPS Delivery Sequence File, and some newly constructed dwellings.

Interviews for this survey were conducted between October 15 and 28, 2019, with adults age 18 and over representing the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Panel members were randomly drawn from AmeriSpeak, and 1,032 completed the survey—888 via the web and 144 via telephone. Interviews were conducted in both English and Spanish, depending on respondent preference. The final stage completion rate is 29.1 percent, the weighted household panel response rate is 34.2 percent, and the weighted household panel retention rate is 85.6 percent, for a cumulative response rate of 8.5 percent. The overall margin of sampling error is +/- 4.2 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level, including the design effect. The margin of sampling error may be higher for subgroups.

Once the sample has been selected and fielded, and all the study data have been collected and made final, a poststratification process is used to adjust for any survey nonresponse as well as any noncoverage or under and oversampling resulting from the study specific sample design. Poststratification variables included age, gender, census division, race/ethnicity, and education. Weighting variables were obtained from the 2018 Current Population Survey. The weighted data reflect the U.S. population of adults age 18 and over.

For more information, email [info@apnorc.org](mailto:info@apnorc.org).

### **About USAFacts**

USAFacts is a not-for-profit, nonpartisan civic initiative providing the most comprehensive and understandable single source of government data.

For more information, please visit [usafacts.org](http://usafacts.org).

### **About the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research**

The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research taps into the power of social science research and the highest-quality journalism to bring key information to people across the nation and throughout the world.

- The Associated Press (AP) is the world’s essential news organization, bringing fast, unbiased news to all media platforms and formats.

- NORC at the University of Chicago is one of the oldest and most respected, independent research institutions in the world.

The two organizations have established The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research to conduct, analyze, and distribute social science research in the public interest on newsworthy topics, and to use the power of journalism to tell the stories that research reveals.

The founding principles of The AP-NORC Center include a mandate to carefully preserve and protect the scientific integrity and objectivity of NORC and the journalistic independence of AP. All work conducted by the Center conforms to the highest levels of scientific integrity to prevent any real or perceived bias in the research. All of the work of the Center is subject to review by its advisory committee to help ensure it meets these standards. The Center will publicize the results of all studies and make all datasets and study documentation available to scholars and the public.