



The Associated Press-NORC
Center for Public Affairs Research

AMERICANS' PRIORITIES FOR 2017

Conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research

Interviews: 12/14-19/2016

1,017 adults

Margin of error: 3.7 percentage points at the 95% confidence level among all adults

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

Q1. Generally speaking, would you say things in this country are heading in the right direction or the wrong direction?

	AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016	AP-NORC 12/10-13/2015
Right direction	42	30
Wrong direction	56	69
DON'T KNOW	2	1
SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	*	*
N=	1,017	1,042

Q2. Thinking about the problems facing the United States and the world today, which problems would you like the government to be working on in the year 2017?

Please list up to 5 problems.

[Open-ended question coded. Respondents were able to list up to 5 problems. Reported proportions are among the 95 percent of respondents who provided at least one valid response to the questions. Respondents who did not answer are not included.]

	AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016	AP-NORC 12/10-13/2015
Domestic issues (N=823)	86	83
The economy (N=650)	67	67
Foreign policy issues (N=551)	56	67
Politics (N=242)	26	24
Personal financial issues (N=121)	13	12
Other issues (N=62)	7	10

	AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016
Domestic issues	
Health care (all) (N=420)	43
Education (N=223)	24
Environment/climate change (N=197)	19
Racism/racial inequality/racial issues (N=142)	14
Gun issues (N=57)	8
Social security (N=76)	8
Infrastructure (N=68)	7
Crime/violence (N=59)	6
Income inequality/concerns about poor and/or middle class (N=60)	6
Welfare issues/entitlement reform (N=56)	6
Police brutality/other policing issues (N=57)	6

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Other domestic issues (N=69)	6
Social injustice/discrimination (N=49)	5
Energy (N=46)	5
Veterans' issues (N=29)	4
Morals/values (N=22)	3
Drugs (N=32)	3
Helping vulnerable populations (elderly, poor) (N=29)	3
LGBT issues (N=12)	2
Women's rights/women's health (N=21)	2
Abortion (N=20)	2
Media concerns (N=5)	1
The economy	
Unemployment/jobs (N=281)	29
Economy, general (N=202)	19
Taxes (N=125)	14
Debt/deficit/government spending/budget (N=124)	13
Poverty/hunger/homelessness (N=110)	12
Trade (N=33)	3
Other economic issues (N=36)	3
Financial/business/Wall St. regulation (N=13)	1
Inflation (N=5)	*
Foreign policy issues	
Immigration (N=257)	26
Terrorism (all) (N=176)	18
"Foreign Policy"/US involvement overseas/aggression (put general mentions of other countries here) (N=101)	11
War/Iraq/Afghanistan/military issues (N=79)	8
National security/defense (N=57)	6
World peace (N=25)	2
Cybersecurity/hacking (N=16)	2
Russia (N=16)	2
Other foreign issues (N=18)	2
International aid (N=15)	1
Middle East, general (N=5)	*
Syria (non-refugees) (N=4)	*
Politics	
Trump (N=71)	8
Smaller government/get gov't out of our lives/less regulation (N=31)	4
Other political issues (N=37)	4
Bipartisanship vs. gridlock/shutdown (N=14)	2
Government corruption/fraud (N=26)	2
Voting laws/voter fraud/voting issues (N=18)	2
Division/unity (N=17)	2
Specific parties/politicians/Congress (N=9)	1
Government accountability/transparency (N=5)	1

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Uphold Constitution/protect freedoms (N=14)	1
Term limits (N=11)	1
Supreme Court (N=13)	1
Special interest money in politics/lobbying (N=6)	*
Campaign finance reform (N=3)	*
Need effective leadership /"do nothing" leaders/Congress (N=2)	*
Personal financial issues	
Minimum wage/wages (N=84)	9
Personal financial situation/cost of living for Americans (N=15)	2
Housing costs (foreclosure/housing prices/upside down in mortgage) (N=24)	2
Gas prices/oil/energy costs (N=9)	1
Other personal financial issues (N=2)	*
Other issues (N=62)	7

If at least one response given in Q2

Q3. For each of these problems that you mentioned, how much effort would you like the federal government to devote to solving this problem in the year 2017?

	No effort/ only a little effort NET	No effort at all	Only a little effort	A moderate amount of effort	A lot of effort/ great deal of effort NET	A lot of effort	A great deal of effort	DK/ REF
AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016								
Domestic issues								
Cost of healthcare/medical bills (N=52)	2	-	2	4	94	36	58	-
Social Security (N=76)	1	1	-	7	92	26	66	-
Media concerns (N=5)	9	-	9	-	91	9	83	-
Helping vulnerable populations (elderly, poor) (N=29)	9	3	5	2	90	31	58	-
Social injustice/discrimination (N=49)	2	2	1	7	90	39	52	-
Environment/climate change (N=197)	2	*	2	11	87	23	65	-
Other healthcare issues (N=13)	-	-	-	14	86	62	24	-
Health-related issues (N=33)	9	-	9	5	85	27	59	-
Crime/violence (N=59)	3	3	-	12	85	19	66	-
Income inequality/concerns about poor and/or middle class (N=60)	2	1	1	13	85	27	59	-

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AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016	No effort/ only a little effort NET	No effort at all	Only a little effort	A moderate amount of effort	A lot of effort/ great deal of effort NET	A lot of effort	A great deal of effort	DK/REF
Healthcare for elderly/Medicare (N=19)	-	-	-	15	85	25	60	-
Health care reform (N=318)	2	1	1	14	84	23	61	-
Energy (N=46)	5	-	5	12	83	26	58	-
Veterans' issues (N=29)	5	5	-	11	82	17	65	2
Education (N=223)	4	1	3	13	82	31	51	*
Drugs (N=32)	-	-	-	19	81	22	59	-
Abortion (N=20)	8	-	8	11	80	9	71	-
Welfare issues/entitlement reform (N=56)	10	5	5	11	79	18	62	-
Racism/racial inequality/racial issues (N=142)	13	4	9	10	77	26	52	-
Police brutality/other policing issues (N=57)	6	2	4	17	77	21	56	-
Infrastructure (N=68)	3	2	*	20	77	43	34	-
Other domestic issues (N=69)	17	9	8	10	74	11	63	-
Gun issues (N=57)	10	7	3	16	74	25	50	-
Morals/values (N=22)	21	11	10	7	71	24	47	-
Women's rights/women's health (N=21)	23	17	6	13	64	41	23	-
LGBT issues (N=12)	26	26	-	33	41	22	19	-
The economy								
Unemployment/jobs (N=281)	4	2	2	11	85	33	52	1
Taxes (N=125)	4	2	2	20	76	32	44	-
Debt/deficit/government spending/budget (N=124)	*	-	*	11	89	31	58	-
Trade (N=33)	5	-	5	15	80	30	50	-
Economy, general (N=202)	3	-	3	15	81	30	51	*
Other economic issues (N=36)	3	3	-	22	75	27	48	-
Poverty/hunger/homelessness (N=110)	7	5	2	15	75	21	54	2
Financial/Business/Wall St regulation (N=13)	-	-	-	31	69	2	66	-
Inflation (N=5)	7	7	-	20	73	-	73	-
Foreign policy issues								
Refugees (N=5)	-	-	-	-	100	37	63	-
Terrorism (general mentions) (N=133)	1	-	1	7	93	24	68	-
Cybersecurity/hacking (N=16)	5	5	-	4	92	23	69	-

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	No effort/ only a little effort NET	No effort at all	Only a little effort	A moderate amount of effort	A lot of effort/ great deal of effort NET	A lot of effort	A great deal of effort	DK/ REF
AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016								
National security / defense (N=57)	-	-	-	10	90	26	64	-
Immigration (N=257)	3	1	2	12	85	33	52	-
ISIS (N=36)	-	-	-	13	83	26	57	3
Syria (non-refugees) (N=4)	-	-	-	18	82	55	27	-
Russia (N=16)	12	12	-	7	80	15	65	-
War/Iraq/Afghanistan/military issues (N=79)	14	10	4	9	77	33	44	-
"Foreign Policy"/ US involvement overseas/aggression (put general mentions of other countries here) (N=101)	4	2	2	19	77	39	38	-
General mentions of radical Islam (N=6)	27	27	-	-	73	-	73	-
World peace (N=25)	-	-	-	27	73	14	60	-
Middle East, general (N=5)	-	-	-	31	69	39	30	-
Other foreign issues (N=18)	-	-	-	31	69	48	21	-
International aid (N=15)	-	-	-	38	62	17	45	-
Politics								
Special interest money in politics/ lobbying (N=6)	-	-	-	-	100	27	73	-
Need effective leadership /"do nothing" leaders/Congress (N=2)	-	-	-	-	100	-	100	-
Supreme Court (N=13)	-	-	-	-	100	31	69	-
Government accountability/transparency (N=5)	-	-	-	6	94	21	73	-
Smaller government/get gov't out of our lives/less regulation (N=31)	4	4	-	9	87	32	56	-
Government corruption/fraud (N=26)	2	2	-	12	86	21	64	-
Voting laws/voter fraud/voting issues (N=18)	-	-	-	18	82	13	69	-
Term limits (N=11)	-	-	-	19	81	21	60	-
Other political issues (N=37)	10	-	10	10	81	24	56	-
Bipartisanship vs. Gridlock/shutdown (N=14)		-	-	20	80	38	41	-
Trump (N=71)	13	10	3	8	80	10	69	-

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	No effort/ only a little effort NET	No effort at all	Only a little effort	A moderate amount of effort	A lot of effort/ great deal of effort NET	A lot of effort	A great deal of effort	DK/ REF
AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016								
Specific parties/politicians/Congress (N=9)	-	-	-	26	74	-	74	-
Division/unity (N=17)	5	-	5	22	73	26	47	-
Uphold Constitution/protect freedoms (N=14)	10	10	-	25	65	14	52	-
Campaign finance reform (N=3)	-	-	-	49	51	-	51	-
Personal financial issues								
Housing costs (foreclosure / housing prices/upside down in mortgage) (N=24)	-	-	-	15	85	25	60	-
Minimum wage/wages (N=84)	5	5	*	15	80	30	51	-
Other personal financial issues (N=2)	-	-	-	24	76	-	76	-
Personal financial situation/cost of living for Americans (N=15)	11	10	2	16	73	26	46	-
Other Issues (N=62)	18	12	6	13	69	19	50	-
Gas prices/oil/energy costs (N=9)	3	3	-	30	66	24	42	-

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If at least one response given in Q2

Q4. How confident are you in the ability of the federal government to make progress on this problem in 2017?

[ASKED FOR EACH VERBATIM RESPONSE IN Q2]

AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016	Not at all/ slightly confident NET	Not at all confident	Slightly confident	Moderately confident	Very/ extremely confident	Very confident	Extremely confident	DK/ REF
Domestic issues								
Income inequality/ concerns about poor and/or middle class (N=60)	91	74	17	5	3	3	-	-
Energy (N=46)	83	54	29	4	11	10	2	1
Media concerns (N=5)	83	44	39	17	-	-	-	-
Social injustice/ discrimination (N=49)	80	54	26	9	10	1	9	-
Environment/ climate change (N=197)	79	56	23	14	4	2	2	3
Women's rights/ women's health (N=21)	79	54	26	13	7	7	-	-
Racism/racial Inequality/racial issues (N=142)	75	47	28	16	7	3	4	2
Other domestic issues (N=69)	70	43	27	18	7	2	5	4
Education (N=223)	68	37	31	19	10	6	4	2
Welfare issues/ entitlement Reform (N=56)	68	41	27	22	10	5	5	-
Police brutality/other policing issues (N=57)	66	40	26	27	8	5	2	-
Healthcare for elderly/Medicare (N=19)	63	30	33	27	3	3	-	7
LGBT issues (N=12)	63	46	17	33	4	4	-	-
Crime/violence (N=59)	63	28	36	20	17	15	2	-

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AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016	Not at all/ slightly confident NET	Not at all confident	Slightly confident	Moderately confident	Very/ extremely confident	Very confident	Extremely confident	DK/ REF
Cost of healthcare/medical bills (N=52)	62	34	28	23	15	14	1	-
Gun issues (N=57)	60	37	23	13	22	16	6	5
Helping vulnerable populations (elderly, poor) (N=29)	60	25	35	31	-	-	-	8
Social Security (N=76)	57	13	44	28	14	12	2	1
Morals/values (N=22)	56	24	32	34	9	-	9	-
Veterans' issues (N=29)	55	20	35	28	17	13	4	-
Drugs (N=32)	54	31	23	40	6	-	6	-
Health care reform (N=318)	51	19	32	28	19	14	5	2
Other healthcare issues (N=13)	45	25	20	15	27	23	4	14
Abortion (N=20)	45	35	11	31	21	16	6	2
Infrastructure (N=68)	43	16	27	38	19	18	1	-
Health-related issues (N=33)	32	15	17	37	32	19	12	-
The economy								
Inflation (N=5)	100	30	70	-	-	-	-	-
Financial/Business/ Wall St regulation (N=13)	74	42	32	23	2	2	-	-
Poverty/hunger/ homelessness (N=110)	71	46	25	21	8	3	5	-
Other economic issues (N=36)	60	37	23	30	8	4	4	2
Debt/deficit/ government spending/budget (N=124)	57	30	27	21	20	15	5	2
Taxes (N=125)	56	25	31	25	19	8	10	1
Economy, general (N=202)	51	16	36	28	21	15	6	-
Trade (N=33)	40	6	34	32	29	23	6	-

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AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016	Not at all/ slightly confident NET	Not at all confident	Slightly confident	Moderately confident	Very/ extremely confident	Very confident	Extremely confident	DK/ REF
Unemployment/ jobs (N=281)	38	13	24	32	28	18	10	2
Foreign policy issues								
International aid (N=15)	79	57	21	22	-	-	-	-
Other foreign issues (N=18)	71	14	57	25	4	-	4	-
Russia (N=16)	70	45	25	20	9	9	-	-
"Foreign Policy"/ US involvement overseas/ aggression (put general mentions of other countries here) (N=101)	65	31	34	25	9	6	2	1
World peace (N=25)	58	11	46	32	4	4	-	6
Cybersecurity/ hacking (N=16)	55	5	50	40	5	3	2	-
War/Iraq/ Afghanistan/ military issues (N=79)	51	35	16	14	35	24	10	-
Middle East, general (N=5)	43	43	-	26	31	31	-	-
Syria (non- refugees) (N=4)	42	-	42	45	13	13	-	-
Refugees (N=5)	37	37	-	-	63	27	36	-
Immigration (N=257)	36	17	19	33	31	21	10	*
Terrorism (general mentions) (N=133)	30	7	23	38	30	23	7	3
General mentions of radical Islam (N=6)	25	8	17	40	36	-	36	-
National security/ defense (N=57)	24	3	21	37	39	28	11	-
ISIS (N=36)	20	7	13	41	34	24	11	5
Politics								
Campaign finance reform (N=3)	100	51	49	-	-	-	-	-

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AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016	Not at all/ slightly confident NET	Not at all confident	Slightly confident	Moderately confident	Very/ extremely confident	Very confident	Extremely confident	DK/ REF
Need effective leadership/ "do nothing" leaders/Congress (N=2)	100	100	-	-	-	-	-	-
Voting laws/voter fraud/voting issues (N=18)	94	80	14	-	6	6	-	-
Special interest money in politics / lobbying (N=6)	93	93	-	-	7	7	-	-
Trump (N=71)	87	63	25	11	2	2	-	-
Government accountability/transparency (N=5)	83	44	39	17	-	-	-	-
Term limits (N=11)	80	34	46	3	17	17	-	-
Bipartisanship vs. gridlock/shutdown (N=14)	77	29	49	12	10	10	-	-
Government corruption/fraud (N=26)	67	27	39	32	2	-	2	-
Specific parties/politicians/Congress (N=9)	65	65	-	23	12	6	6	-
Uphold Constitution/protect freedoms (N=14)	63	50	14	24	13	10	3	-
Division/unity (N=17)	62	36	25	31	7	7	-	-
Other political issues (N=37)	56	30	25	26	17	17	-	2
Smaller government/get gov't out of our lives/less regulation (N=31)	54	37	17	15	30	24	6	1
Supreme Court (N=13)	32	17	16	9	59	10	48	-

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AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016	Not at all/ slightly confident NET	Not at all confident	Slightly confident	Moderately confident	Very/ extremely confident	Very confident	Extremely confident	DK/ REF
Personal financial issues								
Personal financial situation / cost of living for Americans (N=15)	60	26	35	25	14	6	8	-
Minimum wage/wages (N=84)	58	46	12	33	9	7	2	-
Housing costs (foreclosure/ housing prices/ upside down in mortgage) (N=24)	65	49	17	21	14	10	4	-
Gas prices/ oil/energy costs (N=9)	38	38	-	62	-	-	-	-
Other personal financial issues (N=2)	24	-	24	76	-	-	-	-
Other Issues (N=62)	69	28	41	18	13	6	7	-

PID1. Do you consider yourself a Democrat, a Republican, an Independent or none of these?

	AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016
Democrat	34
Republican	23
Independent	27
None of these	15
DON'T KNOW	*
SKIP/REFUSED	1

N=

1,017

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If Democrat in PID1...

PIDA. Do you consider yourself a strong Democrat or a moderate Democrat?

	AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016
Strong Democrat	43
Moderate Democrat	57
DON'T KNOW	*
SKIP/REFUSED	-
<i>N=</i>	<i>348</i>

If Republican in PID1...

PIDB. Do you consider yourself a strong Republican or a moderate Republican?

	AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016
Strong Republican	34
Moderate Republican	66
DON'T KNOW	-
SKIP/REFUSED	1
<i>N=</i>	<i>243</i>

If Independent, None of these, or Don't Know/Skip/Refused in PID1...

PIDi. Do you lean more toward the Democrats or the Republicans?

	AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016
Lean Democrat	28
Lean Republican	27
Don't lean	44
DON'T KNOW	*
SKIP/REFUSED	1
<i>N=</i>	<i>426</i>

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POLITICS. Combines PID1, PIDI, PIDa, and PIDb.

	AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016
Democrat NET	47
Strong Democrat	15
Moderate Democrat	20
Lean Democrat	12
Independent/None – Don't lean	19
Republican NET	34
Lean Republican	11
Moderate Republican	15
Strong Republican	8
Unknown	*

N=

1,017

DM5. Which one of the following best describes where you live?

	AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016
Urban area	25
Suburban area	49
Rural area	25
DON'T KNOW	1
SKIP/REFUSED	1

N=

1,017

AGE

	AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016
18-24	12
25-34	19
35-44	15
45-54	18
55-64	16
65-74	14
75+	6

N=

1,017

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GENDER

	AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016
Male	48
Female	52

N= 1,017

RACE/ETHNICITY

	AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016
White	64
Black or African American	12
Hispanic	16
Other	8

N= 1,017

MARITAL STATUS

	AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016
Married	49
Widowed	5
Divorced	11
Separated	2
Never married	25
Living with partner	8

N= 1,017

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

	AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016
Employed	57
Not employed	43

N= 1,017

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EDUCATION

	AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016
Less than a high school diploma	12
High school graduate or equivalent	29
Some college	26
College graduate or above	33

N=

1,017

INCOME

	AP-NORC 12/14-19/2016
Under \$10,000	6
\$10,000 to under \$20,000	9
\$20,000 to under \$30,000	11
\$30,000 to under \$40,000	11
\$40,000 to under \$50,000	7
\$50,000 to under \$75,000	18
\$75,000 to under \$100,000	12
\$100,000 to under \$150,000	16
\$150,000 or more	8

N=

1,017

AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research Poll

Study Methodology

This survey was conducted by The Associated Press NORC Center for Public Affairs Research and with funding from NORC at the University of Chicago. Data were collected using AmeriSpeak Omnibus®, a monthly multi-client survey using NORC at the University of Chicago'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 December 14 and 19, 2016, with adults age 18 and over representing the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Panel members were randomly drawn from AmeriSpeak, and 1,017 completed the survey—846 via the web and 171 via telephone. The final stage completion rate is 30.5 percent, the weighted household panel response rate is 34.3 percent, and the weighted household panel retention rate is 95.0 percent, for a cumulative response rate of 9.9 percent. The overall margin of sampling error is +/- 3.7 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 non-coverage or under and oversampling resulting from the study specific sample design. Poststratification variables included age, gender, census division, race/ethnicity, and household phone status. Weighting variables were obtained from the 2016 Current Population Survey. The weighted data, which reflect the U.S. population of adults age 18 and over, were used for all analyses.

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- 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.

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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.