

Concerns about the Vulnerability of the Election System Ahead of the 2018 Midterms

Conducted by the University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy and The Associated
Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research
With funding from NORC at the University of Chicago

Interviews: 9/13-16/2018

1,059 adults

Margin of error: +/- 4.3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level among all adults

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

Q30. How much confidence do you have that the votes in the 2018 midterm elections will be counted accurately?

	AP-NORC 9/13-16/2018	AP-NORC 9/15-18/2016 ¹
A great deal/Quite a bit NET	40	39
A great deal	16	16
Quite a bit	24	23
A moderate amount	37	29
Only a little/None at all NET	22	31
Only a little	15	18
None at all	8	13
DON'T KNOW	*	1
SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	*	*
<i>N=</i>	<i>1,059</i>	<i>1,022</i>

Q31. How concerned are you that the country's voting system might be vulnerable to hackers?

	AP-NORC 9/13-16/2018	AP-NORC 9/15-18/2016
Extremely/Very concerned NET	45	41
Extremely concerned	18	17
Very concerned	27	25
Somewhat concerned	34	35
Not too/Not at all concerned NET	20	23
Not too concerned	16	17
Not at all concerned	5	5
DON'T KNOW	1	*
SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	*	1
<i>N=</i>	<i>1,059</i>	<i>1,022</i>

¹ In 2016, this question read, "How much confidence do you have that the votes in the 2016 presidential election will be counted accurately?"

Q32. How concerned are you that each of the following might be vulnerable to hackers?

AP-NORC 9/13-16/2018	Extremely/ very concerned NET	Extremely concerned	Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Not very/not at all concerned NET	Not very concerned	Not at all concerned	DK	SKP/ REF
Voting registration information	45	21	25	33	21	16	4	*	1
Voting equipment	40	19	21	36	23	17	6	*	*
The final election results	44	19	25	32	23	17	6	*	*

N=1,059

Q33. How much responsibility should each of the following have in addressing the security of elections?

[ITEMS RANDOMIZED]

AP-NORC 9/13-16/2018	A great deal/Quite a bit NET	A great deal	Quite a bit	A moderate amount	Only a little/None at all NET	Only a little	None at all	DK	SKP/ REF
Congress	64	38	26	22	13	6	8	*	1
Intelligence and national security agencies such as the FBI, CIA, NSA, and DHS	79	56	23	14	6	2	4	1	*
The President	51	34	17	22	26	11	15	*	1
State election officials	77	51	26	16	6	3	3	1	1
Local election officials	73	49	25	18	7	4	3	1	1
The Federal Election Commission	78	59	18	15	6	3	2	1	1

N=1,059

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Q34. How confident are you that votes cast using each of the following methods would be counted accurately?

[ITEMS RANDOMIZED]

AP-NORC 9/13-16/2018	Extremely/ Very Confident NET	Extremely confident	Very confident	Somewhat confident	Not very/Not at all confident NET	Not very confident	Not at all confident	DK	SKP/ REF
Electronic voting machines that do not provide paper receipts	21	6	15	45	33	21	12	1	*
Electronic voting machines that provide paper receipts	50	15	34	38	12	7	5	*	*
Paper ballots that are scanned into a machine	41	12	29	43	16	11	4	*	*
Paper ballots that are hand counted	30	10	20	36	33	22	11	*	*
Paper ballots that are mailed in	26	9	18	40	33	21	12	*	*
Votes cast online using blockchain, the technology behind Bitcoin and other virtual currencies (N=537)	18	5	13	35	45	29	16	1	1
Votes cast online (N=522)	19	5	14	39	41	23	18	1	1

N=1,059

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Q35. [Do/Would] you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose your state doing each of the following:

AP-NORC 9/13- 16/2018	Strongly/ Somewhat favor NET	Strongly favor	Somewhat favor	Neither favor nor oppose	Strongly/ Somewhat oppose NET	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	DK	SKP/ REF
Allowing people to print out their ballot from a website and submit it by mail or in person	33	8	24	23	43	21	23	*	1
Allowing people to vote entirely online by submitting their ballot through a website	28	8	20	19	53	21	32	*	*
Conducting elections using only voting by mail-in ballot and not having any voting in-person	19	6	13	22	58	23	34	*	*

N=1,059

Q36. As far as you know, what options will you have for voting in the 2018 midterm elections this November?

	AP-NORC 9/13-16/2018
Electronic voting machine	52
Paper ballot	37
Mail-in ballot	40
Online submission	6
Don't Know	17
SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	*

N=

1,059

Q37. How likely are you to vote in the 2018 midterm elections this November?

	AP-NORC 9/13-16/2018
I will certainly/I will probably vote NET	73
I will certainly vote	57
I will probably vote	16
I'm not sure if I will or will not vote	13
I will probably not/I will certainly not vote NET	14
I will probably not vote	6
I will certainly not vote	8
DON'T KNOW	*
SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	*

N=

1,059

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Q38. How likely would you be to vote in the 2018 midterm elections if your state ONLY allowed people to vote in each of the following ways?

[ITEMS RANDOMIZED]

AP-NORC 9/13-16/2018	I would certainly/I would probably vote NET	I would certainly vote	I would probably vote	I'm not sure if I would or would not vote	I would probably not/I would certainly not vote NET	I would probably not vote	I would certainly not vote	DK	SKP/ REF
Electronic voting machines that do not provide paper receipts	65	45	20	17	17	8	9	-	1
Electronic voting machines that provide paper receipts	75	52	23	13	11	4	7	-	1
Paper ballots that are scanned into a machine	71	50	21	15	13	5	7	*	1
Paper ballots that are hand counted	64	46	18	19	17	7	10	*	1
Paper ballots that are mailed in	61	45	16	16	22	12	10	*	1
Votes cast online using blockchain, the technology behind Bitcoin and other virtual currencies (N=537)	48	34	15	22	29	16	13	-	1
Votes cast online (N=522)	63	48	15	14	22	12	10	*	1

N=1,059

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Q39. Earlier this year, hackers and cyber-security officials gathered to identify vulnerabilities in the country’s electoral system. [According to news reports, hackers were able to compromise voting machines to alter vote tallies/Their goal is to find problems before others do to try to prevent hackers from compromising U.S. elections]. Given that, how much confidence do you have that the votes in the 2018 midterm election will be counted accurately?

According to news reports, hackers were able to compromise voting machines to alter vote tallies

	NORC 9/13-16/2018
A great deal/Quite a bit NET	35
A great deal	9
Quite a bit	26
A moderate amount	41
Only a little/None at all NET	24
Only a little	17
None at all	7
DON’T KNOW	-
SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	1
<i>N=</i>	<i>537</i>

Their goal is to find problems before others do to try to prevent hackers from compromising U.S. elections

	NORC 9/13-16/2018
A great deal/Quite a bit NET	39
A great deal	13
Quite a bit	26
A moderate amount	43
Only a little/None at all NET	17
Only a little	9
None at all	8
DON’T KNOW	1
SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	1
<i>N=</i>	<i>522</i>

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

	NORC 9/13-16/2018
Democrat	33
Republican	22
Independent	26
None of these	18
DON'T KNOW	-
SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	1
<i>N=</i>	<i>1,059</i>

If Democrat in PID1

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

	NORC 9/13-16/2018
Strong Democrat	42
Moderate Democrat	58
DON'T KNOW	-
SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	-
<i>N=</i>	<i>368</i>

If Republican in PID1

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

	NORC 9/13-16/2018
Strong Republican	34
Moderate Republican	66
DON'T KNOW	-
SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	-
<i>N=</i>	<i>249</i>

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If independent, none of these, or DON'T KNOW/SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED in PID1
PID1. Do you lean more toward the Democrats or the Republicans?

	NORC 9/13-16/2018
Lean Democrat	31
Lean Republican	22
Don't lean	46
DON'T KNOW	*
SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	1
<i>N=</i>	<i>442</i>

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

	NORC 9/13-16/2018
Democrat NET	47
Strong Democrat	14
Moderate Democrat	19
Lean Democrat	14
Independent/None – Don't lean	21
Republican NET	32
Lean Republican	10
Moderate Republican	15
Strong Republican	7
Unknown	1
<i>N=</i>	<i>1,059</i>

AGE

	NORC 9/13-16/2018
18-24	12
25-34	19
35-44	16
45-54	15
55-64	18
65-74	15
75+	6
<i>N=</i>	<i>1,059</i>

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GENDER

	NORC 9/13-16/2018
Male	48
Female	52
<i>N=</i>	<i>1,059</i>

RACE/ETHNICITY

	NORC 9/13-16/2018
White	63
Black or African American	12
Hispanic	16
Other	8
<i>N=</i>	<i>1,059</i>

MARITAL STATUS

	NORC 9/13-16/2018
Married	49
Widowed	5
Divorced	13
Separated	2
Never married	24
Living with partner	8
<i>N=</i>	<i>1,059</i>

EDUCATION

	NORC 9/13-16/2018
Less than a high school diploma	11
High school graduate or equivalent	29
Some college	28
College graduate or above	33
<i>N=</i>	<i>1,059</i>

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INCOME

	AP-NORC 9/13-16/2018
Under \$10,000	7
\$10,000 to under \$20,000	9
\$20,000 to under \$30,000	10
\$30,000 to under \$40,000	11
\$40,000 to under \$50,000	9
\$50,000 to under \$75,000	19
\$75,000 to under \$100,000	13
\$100,000 to under \$150,000	15
\$150,000 or more	8

N=

1,059

Study Methodology

This survey was conducted by the University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy and The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research with funding from NORC at the University of Chicago. Staff from Harris Public Policy and The AP-NORC Center collaborated on all aspects of the study.

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 September 13 and 16, 2018, with adults age 18 and over representing the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Panel members were randomly drawn from AmeriSpeak, and 1,059 completed the survey—842 via the web and 217 via telephone. Interviews were conducted in English. The final stage completion rate is 25.5 percent, the weighted household panel response rate is 28.6 percent, and the weighted household panel retention rate is 86 percent, for a cumulative response rate of 6.3 percent. The overall margin of sampling error is +/- 4.3 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.

A topline with full question wordings is available at www.apnorc.org. For more information, email info@apnorc.org.

About the University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy

One of the largest graduate professional schools at the University of Chicago, Harris Public Policy has been driven by the belief that evidence-based research, not ideology or intuition, is the best guide for public policy. For more than three decades, our exceptional community of scholars, students, and alumni have applied this exacting perspective to the world’s most pressing problems using the latest tools of social science. Through our undergraduate and graduate programs, we empower a new generation of data-driven leaders to create a positive social impact throughout our global society.

<https://harris.uchicago.edu/>

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.

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- 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.