



The Associated Press-NORC
Center for Public Affairs Research

WHO BENEFITS? AMERICANS' EVALUATIONS OF THE NEW TAX PLAN

Most Americans think tax cuts for the middle class, low-income Americans, and small businesses would help the national economy but expect that the tax plan proposed by President Trump and congressional Republicans would not be beneficial to these groups. Instead, most expect the proposed tax changes to benefit large corporations and wealthy Americans with little advantage to the national economy.

According to the latest AP-NORC poll, most Americans disapprove of how Trump is handling taxes. Yet most also admit to knowing little or nothing about the tax plan proposed by the president and congressional Republicans. Trump and Republican leaders in Congress released an outline of their plan in September. The legislation is still being drafted in Congress.

Two-thirds of Americans say taxes are an extremely or very important issue to them personally. But, while 30 percent say they trust the Democrats to deal with the issue and 24 percent say they trust the Republicans, even more, 35 percent, do not have any confidence in either party to take care of taxes. Eleven percent have faith in both parties to deal with the issue.

About 7 in 10 say wealthy households and large corporations pay too little in taxes, while more than half of Americans think they personally pay too much, along with middle-income households and small businesses.

The nationwide poll was conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research from October 12-16, 2017 using the AmeriSpeak® Omnibus, a monthly multi-client survey using NORC at the University of Chicago's probability-based panel. Online and telephone interviews using landlines and cell phones were conducted with 1,054 adults. The margin of sampling error is +/- 4.0 percentage points.



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Three Things You Should Know

About The AP-NORC Poll on Taxes
Among all Americans:

1. Most say tax cuts for small businesses, middle-income households, and low-income households would help the national economy. Fewer than a third think tax cuts for affluent households and large corporations would be beneficial to the economy.
2. Among those who have heard anything about the Republican tax plan, 35 percent anticipate they'll personally benefit, and 38 percent think it will be detrimental to them.
3. Seven in 10 say the current tax burden for large corporations and the wealthy is too low.

Key findings from the poll include:

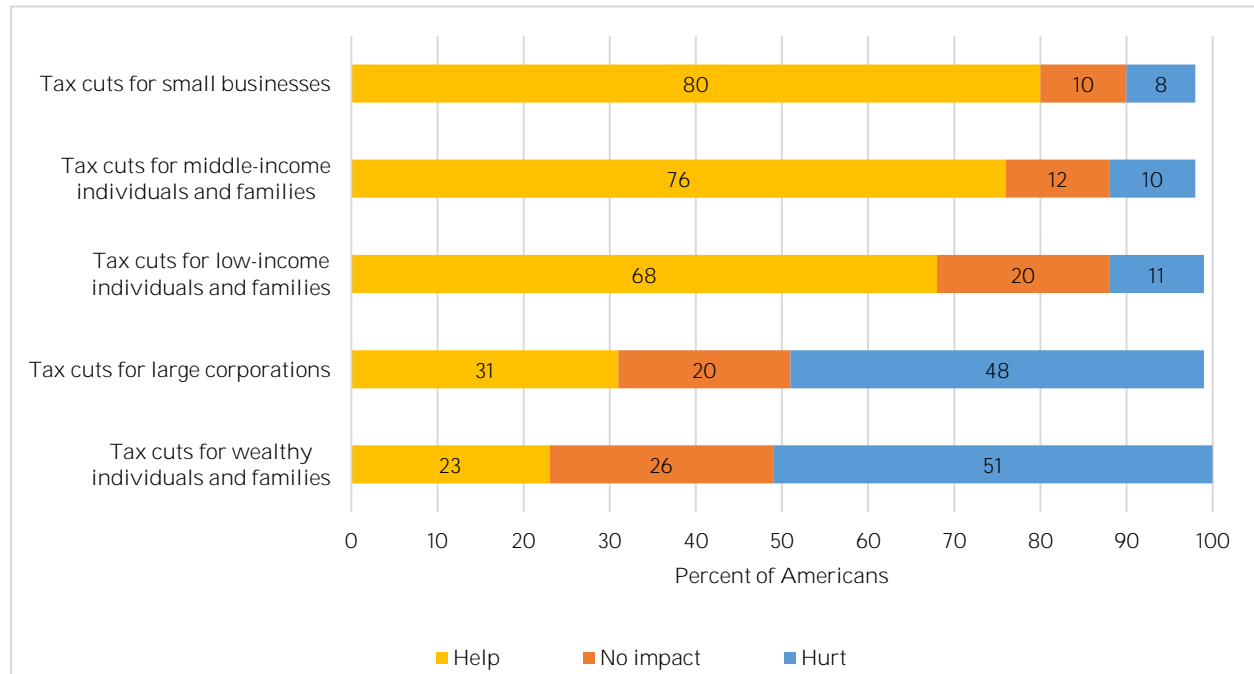
- Most Americans, regardless of party identification, agree that relief for middle- and low-income taxpayers and small businesses would have a positive effect on the national economy.
- Only 23 percent think reductions in the taxes owed by the wealthy would help the economy, including 36 percent of Republicans and 14 percent of Democrats.
- There is considerable partisan disagreement regarding the benefit the economy would derive from tax cuts to large corporations. Overall, 31 percent say a corporate tax cut would help the economy, a view shared by 49 percent of Republicans and just 20 percent of Democrats.
- Forty-three percent of Americans are at least somewhat familiar with the tax plan brought forth by Trump and congressional Republicans, even though 67 percent regard taxes as extremely or very important to them.
- Among those who know anything about the tax plan, a majority expect it will be most beneficial to large corporations and the wealthy. Less than half are counting on positive impacts for small businesses or middle- and low-income families.
- Even controlling for household income, Republicans and Democrats have very different expectations for how the proposed changes would affect their own tax bill. Sixty-four percent of Republicans who know anything about the plan think it will benefit them; only 15 percent of Democrats agree.
- Fifty-six percent of Americans say the middle class and small businesses contribute more than their fair share in taxes. When asked about their personal tax burden, just about as many, 54 percent, say they pay more than their fair share. Forty-five percent say low-income Americans pay more than their fair share in taxes.
- Only 9 percent say wealthy households pay more than their fair share in taxes, and 72 percent consider their tax burden too low. Democrats are more likely than Republicans to say wealthy households pay too little (83 percent vs. 56 percent).
- Similarly, only 14 percent think large corporations are paying more than their fair share, while 72 percent say the corporate tax rate is too low. Eighty-one percent of Democrats say large corporations pay too little in taxes while 57 percent of Republicans say the same.
- Partisans have faith in their own party rather than the opposition to deal with taxes: 62 percent of Democrats trust the Democratic Party and 60 percent of Republicans trust the Republican Party. Among independents, 68 percent trust neither major party. And overall, only 11 percent trust both parties to handle taxes.

MOST AMERICANS SAY TAX CUTS FOR THE MIDDLE CLASS, LOW-INCOME AMERICANS, AND SMALL BUSINESSES WOULD HELP THE ECONOMY.

Eighty percent of Americans say that tax cuts for small businesses would improve the national economy, and 76 percent say the same about tax cuts for middle-income Americans. Sixty-eight percent say tax cuts for low-income Americans would help the economy.

Americans are doubtful that tax cuts for the wealthy and large corporations can help the national economy. Three in 10 Americans say tax cuts for large corporations would help the economy, and about a quarter say tax cuts for wealthy individuals and their families would improve the economy. About half say tax cuts for these groups would hurt the economy.

More than two-thirds of Americans believe tax cuts for small businesses, the middle class, and low-income Americans will help the economy.



Question: Do you think each of the following types of tax cuts would help, hurt, or have no impact on the national economy?
Source: AP-NORC Center poll conducted October 12-16, 2017 with 1,054 adults nationwide.

Partisanship, not income, largely drives attitudes about the impact of various tax cuts on the economy. While large majorities of Democrats and Republicans say the national economy will benefit from small businesses and low-income Americans receiving tax cuts, they differ to the degree. Eighty-nine percent of Republicans say tax cuts for small businesses will help the economy compared with 79 percent of Democrats. And while 75 percent of Democrats say tax cuts for low-income Americans will benefit the economy, 60 percent of Republicans agree. There are no significant differences in attitudes toward how tax cuts for middle-income individuals and families will impact the economy.

A majority of both Republicans and Democrats do not think tax cuts for the wealthy and large corporations would benefit the economy. But, Republicans are more than twice as likely as Democrats to think these tax cuts would be helpful. Thirty-six percent of Republicans say the economy will benefit from tax cuts for wealthy individuals and families compared with 14 percent of Democrats. Forty-nine percent of Republicans say tax cuts for large corporations will help the economy compared with 20 percent of Democrats.

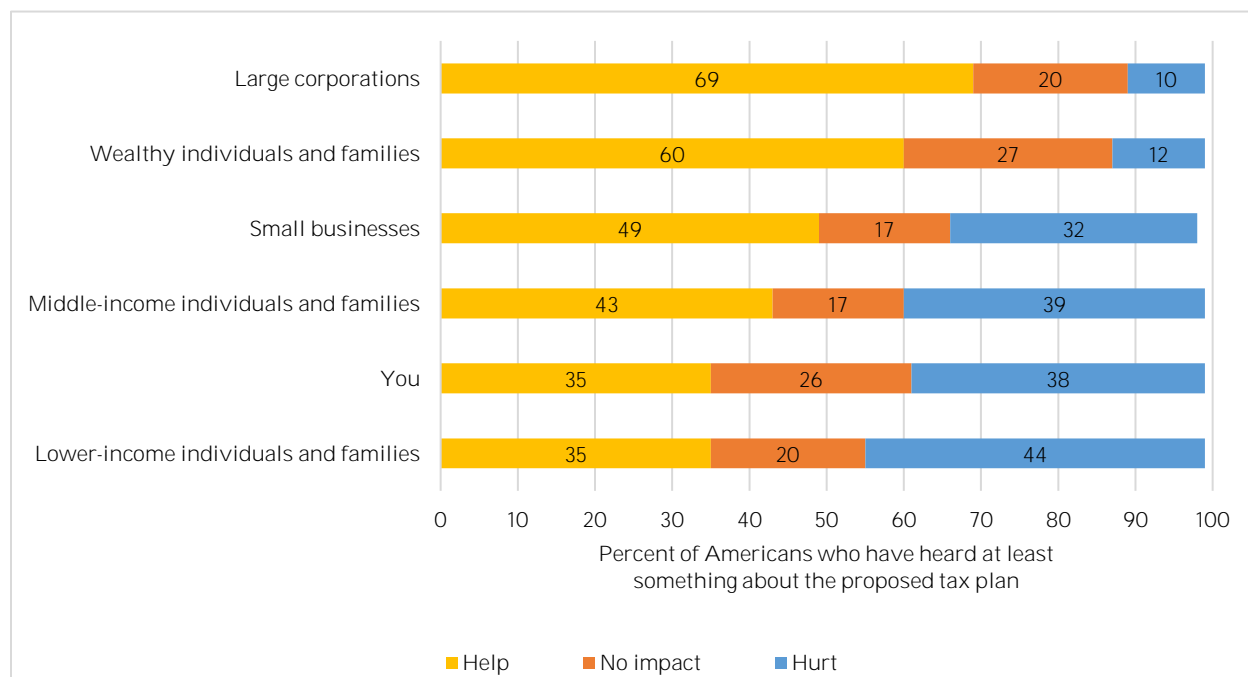
AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE HEARD AT LEAST SOMETHING ABOUT PRESIDENT TRUMP'S PROPOSED TAX PLAN, MORE THAN HALF SAY IT WILL BENEFIT LARGE CORPORATIONS AND THE WEALTHY.

While 67 percent of Americans consider taxes important to them personally, only 43 percent say they have heard a lot or some about the tax plan proposed by President Trump and congressional Republicans. Thirty-six percent say they have heard only a little, and 20 percent say they know nothing at all about the plan.

Among those who have heard at least a little about the proposed tax plan, majorities expect it to help large corporations and wealthy individuals and families. In comparison, fewer than half think the proposed plan would help small businesses or middle-income individuals and families. More say the tax plan would hurt lower-income individuals and families than who say the tax plan would help.

Thirty-five percent of those who have heard about the plan say they expect to personally benefit while just about the same number say the plan would hurt them.

Those who have heard of the president's tax proposal are not confident they will personally benefit from the plan.



Question: Do you think the tax plan proposed by Donald Trump and the Republicans would help, hurt, or have no impact on each of the following?

Source: AP-NORC Center poll conducted October 12-16, 2017 with 1,054 adults nationwide.

Again, partisanship, not income, is the major influencer of attitudes toward how the proposed tax plan will help or hurt businesses and Americans. The largest gap in attitudes between Democrats and Republicans is how the plan will affect the middle class. Republicans are four times as likely as Democrats to say middle-income individuals and families would benefit from the proposed tax plan (78 percent vs. 19 percent). Republicans are also more likely than Democrats to expect small businesses (78 percent vs. 27 percent) and low-income Americans (59 percent vs. 16 percent) to be helped by the tax plan. And Democrats are more likely than Republicans to say wealthy individuals and their families would benefit (67 percent vs. 54 percent). Similar majorities of both Democrats and Republicans expect corporations to benefit.

When it comes to their own tax bill, few Democrats believe they will personally be helped by the proposed tax plan, while most Republicans expect to benefit. Sixty-four percent of Republicans say they think they will personally benefit from the proposed tax cuts compared with just 15 percent of Democrats who say the same.

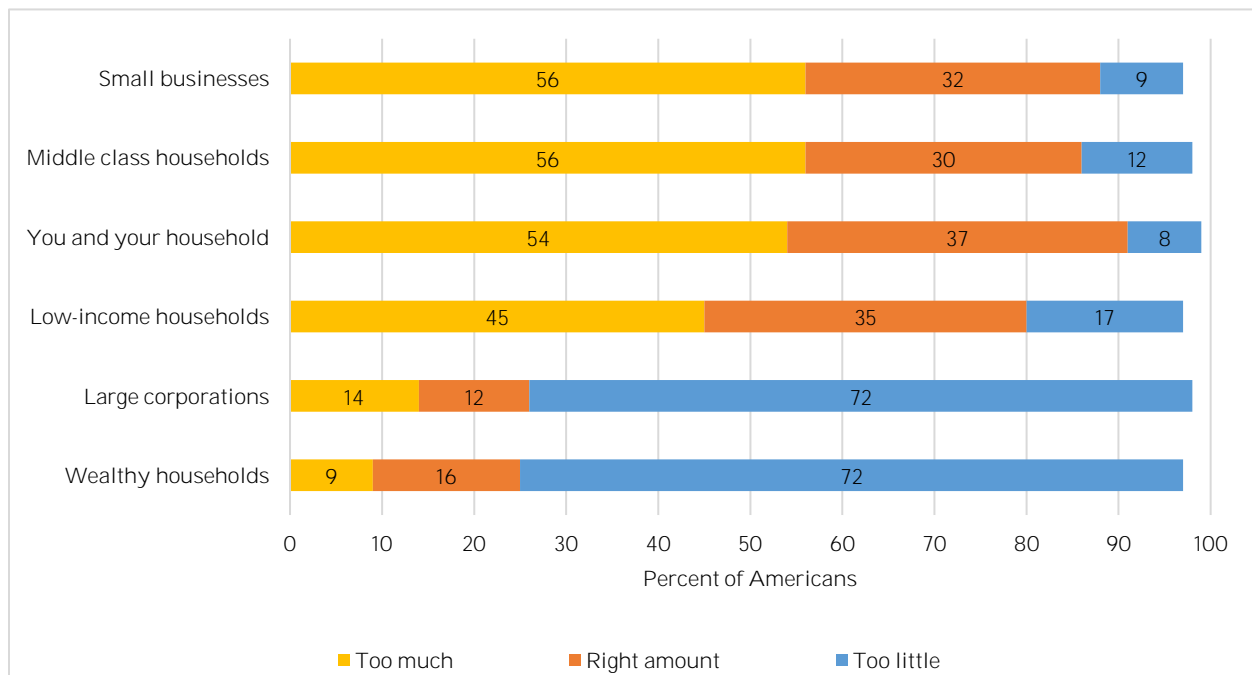
MOST AMERICANS DISAPPROVE OF HOW PRESIDENT TRUMP IS HANDLING TAXES, BUT **THEY AREN'T PUTTING** THEIR TRUST IN DEMOCRATS TO HANDLE THE ISSUE EITHER.

Fifty-nine percent of Americans disapprove of how Trump is handling taxes while 39 percent approve. Few trust the Democrats to do a better job handling taxes than Republicans. Thirty percent of Americans say they trust Democrats more than Republicans to handle taxes, while 24 percent trust Republicans more than Democrats. Another 35 percent lack faith in either party when it comes to taxes. Only 11 percent have faith in both parties to deal with the issues of taxes. Independents (68 percent) are twice as likely as Democrats (24 percent) and Republicans (29 percent) to not trust either party.

MOST AMERICANS SAY THEY PAY TOO MUCH IN TAXES WHILE WEALTHY HOUSEHOLDS AND CORPORATIONS PAY TOO LITTLE.

Most Americans think the middle class and small businesses have too high a tax burden and that they personally also pay too much in taxes. On the other hand, about 7 in 10 say wealthy households and large corporations send too little to the IRS. Nearly half say low-income individuals and families pay too much, a third say they pay the right amount, and about a fifth think low-income Americans pay too little. These figures are largely unchanged from March of this year.

Seven in 10 Americans say wealthy households and large corporations don't pay their fair share in taxes.



Question: Would you say each of the following groups pays too much, too little, or about the right amount in federal taxes?
 Source: AP-NORC Center poll conducted October 12-16, 2017 with 1,054 adults nationwide.

Democrats are more likely than Republicans to say low-income Americans pay too much in taxes (53 percent vs. 36 percent), and that wealthy households pay too little (83 percent vs. 56 percent). On the other hand, Republicans are more likely than Democrats to say small businesses pay too much (64 percent vs. 53 percent). Eighty-one percent of Democrats say large corporations pay too little in taxes while 57 percent of Republicans say the same. Democrats and Republicans largely agree in their assessment of their personal tax burden and the tax burden of the middle class.

ABOUT THE STUDY

Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research and with funding from The Associated Press and NORC at the University of Chicago. 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% 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 12 and 16, 2017, with adults age 18 and over representing the 50 states and the District of Columbia. All interviews were conducted in English by professional interviewers who were carefully trained on the specific survey for this study. Panel members were randomly drawn from AmeriSpeak, and 1,054 completed the survey—914 via the web and 140 via telephone. The final stage completion rate is 24.6 percent, the weighted household panel response rate is 33.7 percent, and the weighted household panel retention rate is 89.0 percent, for a cumulative response rate of 7.4 percent. The overall margin of sampling error is +/- 4.0 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 education. Weighting variables were obtained from the 2017 Current Population Survey. The weighted data, which reflect the U.S. population of adults age 18 and over, were used for all analyses.

All differences reported between subgroups of the U.S. population are at the 95 percent level of statistical significance, meaning that there is only a 5 percent (or lower) probability that the observed differences could be attributed to chance variation in sampling.

A comprehensive listing of the questions, complete with tabulations of top-level results for each question, is available on The AP-NORC Center website: <http://www.apnorc.org>. For more information, email info@apnorc.org.

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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.