

New Survey Finds Most Americans Worried About Voter Fraud

Public is very concerned about the vulnerability of the country's voting system to hackers

CHICAGO, Oct. 1, 2016 — Most Americans think there is at least some fraud in elections, and 8 in 10 approve of laws that require voters to show photo identification, according to a national poll conducted by [The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research](#). Along with these misgivings, only about 4 in 10 Americans have a high degree of confidence that the votes in the 2016 presidential election will be counted correctly.

“Even though there is no apparent cyberthreat to the 2016 election results, the possibility is still of serious concern to the public,” said [Trevor Tompson](#), director of The AP-NORC Center. “It is hard to believe that recent computer hacks at major federal agencies, large corporations, and the Democratic National Committee have not raised people's concern about this issue.”

Some of the poll's key findings are:

- There has been little evidence of systematic voter fraud, yet a third of the public thinks there is a great deal of voter fraud in U.S. elections, and about 4 in 10 say there is some fraud. Only a quarter think there is hardly any fraud.
- In recent years, legislation requiring voters to provide valid photo identification in order to cast a ballot has been enacted in several states. Many of these laws have been struck down by the courts. However, 8 in 10 Americans approve of voter identification laws, with more than 6 in 10 saying they strongly support such measures. Those who say there is a great deal of election fraud are especially supportive of voter identification laws, with 77 percent strongly in favor.
- Although the Department of Homeland Security reports no credible cyberthreat to the 2016 election results, the public has widespread concerns about the vulnerability of the country's voting system to hackers. Forty-one percent of Americans are quite concerned about the security of the election, and 35 percent are somewhat concerned. Only 23 percent express little concern.
- Thirty-nine percent have a great deal or quite a bit of confidence that votes will be counted correctly, and another 29 percent are moderately confident. Thirty-one percent have little or no confidence that the vote counts for president will be accurate this year.
- Since the 2000 presidential election, extensive changes have been made in how Americans vote. Nearly 6 in 10 think new technology introduced in recent years makes vote counting more precise. Only 15 percent say new technology has hurt the accuracy of vote counting, and about 3 in 10 think it has not made any difference.
- Most states allow eligible voters to cast a ballot before Election Day, either during the early voting period or with an absentee ballot. Sixty percent of the public approves of giving voters a chance to cast their ballots before Election Day.



About the Survey

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®. The survey was part of a larger study that included questions about other topics not included in this report. Interviews for this survey were conducted between September 15 and 18, 2016, with adults age 18 and over representing the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Panel members were randomly drawn from AmeriSpeak, and 1,022 completed the survey—821 via the web and 201 via telephone. The final stage completion rate is 29.6 percent, the weighted household panel response rate is 26.2 percent, and the weighted household panel retention rate is 95.0 percent, for a cumulative response rate of 7.4 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.

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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.

About AmeriSpeak Omnibus

AmeriSpeak Omnibus is a once-a-month, multi-client survey using a probability sample of at least 1,000 nationally representative adults age 18 and older. Respondents are interviewed online and by phone from NORC's AmeriSpeak Panel—the most scientifically rigorous multi-client household panel in the United States. AmeriSpeak households are selected randomly from NORC's National Sample Frame, the industry leader in sample coverage. The National Frame is representative of over 99 percent of U.S. households and includes additional coverage of hard-to-survey population segments, such as rural and low-income households, that are underrepresented in other sample frames. More information about AmeriSpeak is available at AmeriSpeak.norc.org.



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