

# MARISTPOLL

## Marist College Institute for Public Opinion

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### POLL MUST BE SOURCED:

#### NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist Poll\*

### **Majority Question Trump's Russian Dealings**

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#### **This NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist Poll Reports:**

President Donald Trump's Administration is shrouded in doubt about whether or not the president or his campaign associates have been candid with the American people about their dealings with Russia. 54% of U.S. residents believe the president's dealings with Russia have been shady. This includes 25% of Americans who think President Trump has done something illegal, and 29% who believe he has done something unethical but not illegal. 49% of Americans in February agreed there had been some wrongdoing in his interactions with Russia or Russian President Vladimir Putin. 36% of Americans, compared with 40% previously, think Trump has done nothing wrong, and 10% are unsure. Among those who are following the controversy a great deal or a good amount, 59% think President Trump has done something wrong.

Americans are also not willing to clear Trump's campaign associates from the accusations of wrongdoing. 58% of U.S. residents say some of Trump's advisors either have done something illegal, 33%, or have done something unethical but not illegal, 25%, in their Russian dealings. Less than three in ten, 29%, say Trump's campaign associates have done nothing wrong, and 13% are unsure. 65% of Americans who are closely following news about the Russia connection have doubts about the integrity of Trump's associates.

Not surprisingly, a partisan divide exists. At least eight in ten Democrats say Trump or his campaign associates engaged in inappropriate activities with Russia or Putin. Republicans are more likely than Democrats to consider Trump or his associates to be honest in their interactions. Among Republicans, 73% believe Trump did nothing wrong, and 62% think his campaign associates are in the clear.

47% of Americans think the Russian hacking into the 2016 presidential election poses a major threat to future elections. 20% consider it to be a minor threat, and 13% do not think it is a threat at all. 12% say Russia was not involved in the hacking. 56% of those who have

\*All references to the survey must be sourced as "NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist Poll"

been following the Russia controversy say Russia's actions are potentially injurious to future U.S. elections.

"Many Americans believe something went on that was not on the up and up between Trump or his campaign associates and Russia," says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. "Americans are wary that the activities during the 2016 campaign raise a red flag for future U.S. elections."

The Russia investigation overshadows what Americans consider a positive move for the United States. 59% of U.S. residents think it is better to build relationships with Russia than treat the nation as a threat, 31%. And, a plurality of U.S. residents, 46%, believe President Trump's goal of improving relations with Russia is mostly a good thing for the United States. 41% do not. On the question of whether the United States should engage in diplomacy or treat Russia as an enemy, Republicans, 67%, and independents, 60%, support relationship building. Democrats divide, 46% in favor and 44% who say Russia should be treated as a threat.

When Trump enters the equation, there is a clear partisan split. 75% of Republicans say the president's goal of improving Russian relations is mostly beneficial for the United States while 70% of Democrats say it is mostly detrimental. On this question, nearly half of Americans who are following the developments in the Russia investigation, 49%, think Trump's goal is mostly a bad thing while 42% believe it is a good one.

Americans, however, do not perceive Russia to be the beneficiary, if the United States reduces its role on the world stage. A plurality, 45%, say China will reap the benefits. Less than one in four, 24%, say Russia will take the spoils. Five percent cite Saudi Arabia, 4% say Germany, and 5% mention another country.

When compared with Russian President Vladimir Putin, do Americans consider President Trump to be the more effective leader? 42% of Americans do think Trump is the more effective leader. 36% say Putin, and a notable 22% are unsure. Trump's base is intact. 78% of those who say they supported Trump in the 2016 presidential election, 75% of Republicans, 68% of Tea Party supporters, and 56% of white residents without a college education think Trump is a better leader than Putin. Independents divide, 41% for Putin and 40% for Trump. 19% of independents are unsure. Half of Democrats, 50%, think Putin is a more effective leader than President Trump, only 23% think Trump is, and 27% are unsure.