

# MARIST POLL™

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NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist Poll\*

**Nearly Two-Thirds Want Tougher Stance on Russia...  
About Six in Ten Say Trump Rarely, If Ever, Tells the Truth...  
Dems with Advantage in Midterm Elections  
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**This NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist Poll Reports:**

*The United States' Relationship with Russia*

While many Americans (59%) think it is better to build relationships with Russia and not treat the nation as a threat (32%), nearly two-thirds (64%) of residents nationally, including 47% of Republicans, do not think President Donald Trump has been tough enough on Russia.

Americans divide about whether or not President Trump should consider Russian President Vladimir Putin to be an enemy (45%) or an ally (44%) of the United States. But a majority of Americans (53%) think President Trump has not been above board in his dealings with Putin and Russia. In fact, 27% say Trump has done something illegal, and 26% say he has done something unethical but not illegal. 36% believe Trump has done nothing wrong. These proportions are little changed from March.

The U.S. Intelligence Community contends that Russia interfered in the 2016 presidential election. More than seven in ten Americans (72%) trust the assessment of the CIA and the FBI over Russian President Putin who, according to President Trump, strongly denies his government's involvement. Of note, 21% of Republicans concur with Trump's opinion of Putin over the U.S. Intelligence Community.

When specifically asked whether Russia interfered, 69% of Americans, including 51% of Republicans, believe Russia *did* interfere in the 2016 presidential election. 24% do not think Russia meddled in the electoral process.

Furthermore, 63% of Americans think Russian interference in 2016 had an impact on the election. This includes 37% who believe it changed the outcome, and 26% who say it impacted the election but not enough to alter the result. 30% of Americans believe Russian involvement had no impact on the election at all.

A majority of Americans (57%) also think it is likely or very likely that Russia will interfere in this November's elections. 38% report it is not very likely or not likely at all that this intrusion will occur. The proportion of Americans who think Russia will meddle in the midterms this fall has steadily increased since this question was first asked in February.

"President Trump wants improved relations with Russia and many Americans agree," says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. "But Americans are calling on him to be tougher in his dealings with Russia and don't think he has come clean about his own role."

Special Counsel Robert Mueller has been tasked with investigating possible wrongdoing and Russian involvement in the 2016 presidential election. 46% of Americans, relatively unchanged from 45% in April, say the investigation has been fair. 32% report it has not been fair, and 21% are unsure. Of note, half of Republicans (50%), down slightly from 55% previously, say the probe has been unfair.

More than two in three residents nationally (68%), including 60% of Republicans, say Mueller should be allowed to finish his investigation. 17% think he should be fired, and 15% are unsure.

Close to six in ten Americans (59%) think the FBI is just doing its job and is not biased against the Trump Administration. 33% believe the Bureau is biased against Trump.

When it comes to Mueller's favorability rating, 33% of Americans have a favorable view of him, relatively unchanged since the beginning of this year. 30% have an unfavorable one. 37% have either never heard of Mueller or are unsure how to rate him.

"Despite a flood of events, what is startling is that on each issue relative to this investigation, very little has changed in public opinion," says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion.

### *President Trump, Congress, and the Midterm Elections*

More than six in ten Americans do not think President Trump is honest. 61% assert Trump tells the truth only some of the time, hardly ever, or never. 36% say the president is truthful most or almost all of the time. It is not surprising then that 56% of Americans, including 90% of Democrats and 60% of independents, think President Trump tells the truth less often than past U.S. presidents. 32%, including 71% of Republicans, say Trump exhibits more honesty than previous presidents.

Six in ten Americans (60%) report they are embarrassed by the president's behavior compared with 32% who are proud of the President's conduct. 62% of Americans say they are more likely to trust their favorite news source over President Trump (28%).

Overall, President Trump's job approval rating is upside down (39% to 51%) among residents nationally and is little changed from when the NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist Poll last reported it in April. The proportion of Americans who strongly disapprove of the president's performance (41%) far surpasses the proportion of those who strongly approve (25%) of how the president is doing his job. Of note, the proportion of Americans who strongly approve of the president's job performance is at its highest point since Trump took office. This is fueled mainly by Republicans.

There is a 43-point gender gap in President Trump's approval rating. Men approve of Trump, 50% to 39% in stark contrast to 30% of women who rate the president positively and 62% who don't.

"You would be hard pressed to find a president who has more sharply divided the nation along gender lines," says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. "It remains to be seen what role this may play in the midterm elections, the 2020 presidential election, and political party affiliation going forward."

Though still underwater, President Trump's favorable rating (41%) is up from April (36%), mostly due to improved standing among Republicans. It is at its highest point since December 2016 (43%). 54% of Americans, little changed from 57% in April, have an unfavorable impression of the president.

In the foreign policy realm, a plurality of Americans (46%) think President Trump's actions during his recent meeting with NATO members hurt the relationship the United States has had with its European allies. 19% say Mr. Trump helped the relationship, and 21% report his actions had no impact.

In general though, fewer Americans, 54% down from 62% last August, assert President Trump's

decisions as president have weakened the role of the United States on the world stage. 37% think Trump has strengthened the nation's global position. One in ten is unsure.

Again, gender drives the narrative. By more than two to one, women say Trump has weakened not strengthened (63% to 28%) the U.S. on the world stage. But men divide. 46% say he has bolstered America's position internationally compared with 44% who think he has weakened it.

Impressions of President Trump improve on the issue of the economy. A plurality of Americans, 46%, report Trump's decisions as president have strengthened the U.S. economy. This is the largest proportion of residents with this view since this question was first asked in March 2017. 40% currently say President Trump has weakened the economy, down from 46% previously.

Nearly half of Americans (49%) describe the direction in which President Trump is moving the U.S. economy as "change for the better."

However, the president underperforms on other issues. Half of Americans (50%) characterize the direction Trump is moving U.S. immigration policy as "change for the worse." Pluralities apply the same descriptor to the manner in which Trump is moving U.S. foreign policy (47%) and the nation's relationship with Russia (41%). Americans divide about whether the overall direction the president is moving the country is change for the better (41%) or change for the worse (45%). Of note, the proportion of Americans who think Trump is changing the nation for the better is at its highest since this question was first asked in February 2017. Americans also divide, 41% to 42%, respectively, about whether the president is improving or worsening U.S. trade policy.

| National Adults  |                       |                      |                       |        |
|--|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|--------|
| Overall, would you describe the direction in which President Trump is moving each of the following as: |                       |                      |                       |        |
|  | Change for the better | Change for the worse | No real change at all | Unsure |
|  | Row %                 | Row %                | Row %                 | Row %  |
| The U.S. economy   | 49%                   | 32%                  | 16%                   | 3%     |
| The country overall  | 41%                   | 45%                  | 12%                   | 2%     |
| U.S. trade policy  | 41%                   | 42%                  | 12%                   | 5%     |
| U.S. immigration policy  | 38%                   | 50%                  | 9%                    | 3%     |
| U.S. foreign policy  | 37%                   | 47%                  | 10%                   | 6%     |
| The United States' relationship with Russia  | 33%                   | 41%                  | 19%                   | 7%     |

NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist Poll of National Adults

A plurality of Americans (47%) disapprove of President Trump's decision to put tariffs or taxes on imports and foreign-made goods from certain countries. 43% approve. Nine percent are unsure.

Turning to Capitol Hill, neither Republicans nor Democrats are held in high esteem and perceptions have worsened. Among registered voters, Democrats receive their lowest rating (23%) since this question was first asked in April 2011. Republicans receive an identical rating, 23% down from 28% in January.

Looking forward to November's midterm elections, 47% of registered voters nationally say they are more likely to vote for the Democrat in their district than the Republican (40%). Seven percent are undecided. In April, the Democrats (44%) had a five-point advantage over the Republicans (39%).

By more than two to one, voters under the age of 30 support the Democratic candidate (60% to 29%). The Republican candidate gains support among older voters.

But when it comes to whether or not they perceive this year's elections to be very important, voters under the age of 30 (59%) are the least likely to consider the midterms to be of *significant* importance. Overall, 69% of registered voters nationally perceive the elections to be very important. Democrats (78%) are more likely than Republicans (68%) and independents (64%) to have this view.

President Trump casts a long shadow over the midterm elections. A plurality of voters (46%) say their impression of Trump makes them more likely to support the Democrat for Congress. 37% report their opinion of the president makes them more likely to vote for the Republican. When this question was last asked in 2014 during the Obama Administration, 42% said their impressions of President Obama made them more likely to vote for the GOP candidate. 32% said they were more likely to support the Democrat.

Voters under the age of 30 are currently more likely than their counterparts to say their view of Trump makes them more inclined to support the Democrat (58%) than the Republican (27%).

On the issue of immigration, a plurality of voters (44%), including 58% of voters under the age of 30, report they are more likely to support a candidate for Congress who opposes President Trump's policy. 38% say they are more likely to vote for a candidate who aligns with the president on the issue.

There is less of a consensus on the impact of President Trump's pick for the Supreme Court on the November vote. 33% of voters nationally say they are more likely to vote for a candidate who opposes President Trump's nominee to the Supreme Court. 31% are more likely to support

a candidate who is for Brett Kavanaugh's nomination. 29% say the nomination does not make a difference to their vote.

Among voters under the age of 30, a plurality (43%) say the Kavanaugh nomination does not make any difference to their vote. But more than three times the proportion of young voters say they are more likely to support a candidate who opposes Trump's nominee (38%) than who supports him (12%).

On the issue of abortion, 41% of Americans think Roe v. Wade should either be overturned (17%), or it should be kept but with more restrictions (24%). 36% say Roe v. Wade should either be kept but with fewer restrictions (15%) or expanded to allow an abortion under any circumstance (21%).

Republicans (71%) favor overturning Roe v. Wade (36%) or keeping it but with added restrictions (35%). Democrats (52%) favor the reduction of some of Roe v. Wade's restrictions (21%) or establishing the right to an abortion under any circumstances (31%).

### *Faith in Institutions*

Americans (88%) overwhelmingly have confidence in the United States military, and majorities of residents have a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in the Supreme Court (57%) and the FBI (56%). However, confidence wanes in reference to other U.S. institutions. 43% say they have trust in the presidency, 32% have faith in the Democratic Party, and 27% have confidence in the Republican Party. Congress (25%) and the media (25%) receive the lowest votes of confidence.

National Adults

Do you have a great deal of confidence, quite a lot, not very much confidence, or no confidence at all in each of the following:

|                        | A great deal of confidence/Quite a lot | Not very much/No confidence at all | Unsure |
|------------------------|--|------------------------------------|--------|
|                        | Row %                                  | Row %                              | Row %  |
| The military           | 88%                                    | 10%                                | 2%     |
| The U.S. Supreme Court | 57%                                    | 38%                                | 4%     |
| The FBI                | 56%                                    | 38%                                | 6%     |
| The presidency         | 43%                                    | 55%                                | 2%     |
| The Democratic Party   | 32%                                    | 64%                                | 4%     |
| The Republican Party   | 27%                                    | 68%                                | 4%     |
| The media              | 25%                                    | 71%                                | 4%     |
| Congress               | 25%                                    | 70%                                | 5%     |

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