



Majority View Coronavirus as Biggest Event of 2020... Optimistic About 2021

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This Marist Poll Reports:

In a year rocked by a pandemic, racial strife, and a historic presidential election, 51% of Americans consider the coronavirus pandemic to be the most significant event of 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic surpasses other groundbreaking and notable events that occurred during the last year. The presidential election (27%) places a distant second. The shutdown of the economy (13%) and the outcry for racial justice (7%) follow.

Black Americans (66%), Democrats (63%), and Americans under the age of 30 (63%) are more likely than any other demographic group to perceive the pandemic as the most impactful event of 2020. Among Republicans, a plurality (37%) say the presidential election was the most consequential, though a similar 35% of the GOP think the coronavirus pandemic is the most noteworthy.

Despite (or, perhaps, because of) the trials and tribulations of 2020, a majority of Americans (56%) are more optimistic than pessimistic (38%) about what is ahead for the world in 2021. Americans are slightly less optimistic than in 2019 and 2018 when 60% reported optimism for the New Year. Democrats (77%) and Black Americans (70%) are the most optimistic while Republicans (53%) are the most pessimistic.