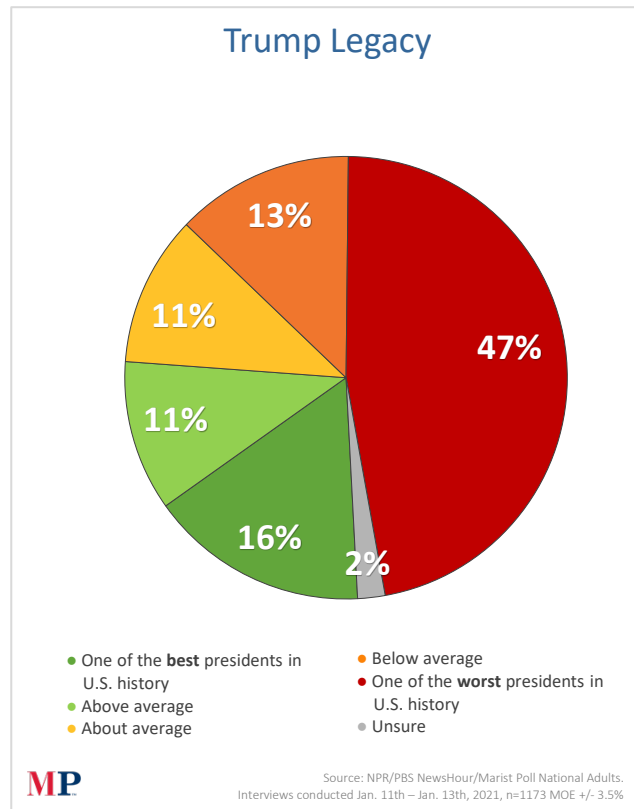


## PLURALITY CONSIDERS TRUMP ONE OF NATION’S WORST PRESIDENTS... BIDEN VIEWED AS A UNITER, NOT DIVIDER

January 19, 2021

Six in ten Americans (60%) think history will remember President Donald Trump as either a below average president (13%) or one of the worst presidents in U.S history (47%). A plurality of Americans also say Trump has changed the nation for the worse.

- In December 2016, 17% of Americans rated President Barack Obama as one of the worst U.S. presidents.
- Most Democrats (92%) and a majority of independents (55%) say Trump has been a subpar president. 62% of the GOP perceive him to have been one of the best (33%) or an above average president (29%).
- 46% of Americans think Trump has changed the nation for the worse. 38% say he has changed it for the better, and 15% think he has had no real impact. At the start of Trump’s presidency in February 2017, 43% thought Trump was changing the nation for the worse. 38% thought he was changing it for the better, and 16% said he was making no real impact.
- Trump leaves office with a 38% approval rating among Americans, identical to his rating last week. 28% strongly approve of Trump’s job performance, and 46% strongly disapprove.



57% of Americans *disapprove* of Trump’s handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, similar to 59% in December. 39% approve. On the economy, 51% approve of how Trump has handled the issue, and 45% disapprove. In December, 50% approved, and 45% disapproved.

**"Americans are ready to close the book on what most view as an unsuccessful Trump presidency," says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist Poll. "The flipside is many are hopeful for the Biden Administration. Biden is on the positive side of fifty percent for the transition with many still on the fence."**

A majority of registered voters (55%) think President-elect Joe Biden will do more to unite the country than to divide it (39%). In December, those proportions stood at 59% and 35%, respectively. Not surprisingly, opinion falls along party lines.

When it comes to how Biden is doing on the transition, 51% approve, and 32% disapprove. A notable 17% are unsure. In December, 56% of voters approved. 29% disapproved, and 16% were unsure.

49% of residents have a favorable opinion of Joe Biden, 43% have an unfavorable one, and 8% are unsure or have never heard of him. Biden's favorable score is almost identical to what it was last month.

Driven by Democrats (94%) and independents (63%), 65% of residents nationally consider Biden's election as president to be legitimate. In a 2017 poll conducted by *The Washington Post* and the University of Maryland, 57% of Americans said Trump's victory was legitimate. While 70% of Republicans think the 2020 election is not legitimate, a notable 25% consider the election to be legitimate.

## Other Findings

### **Biden's Inauguration**

Despite the violence at the U.S. Capitol, 63% of Americans think Biden's inauguration should be held as planned. 28% think it is too much of a security risk to be held at the Capitol. Regardless of party, a majority think the inauguration should be held at the Capitol. Republicans (72%) are more likely than Democrats (58%) and independents (66%) to have this view.

### **The Biden Administration and the Coronavirus**

Half of Americans (50%) think the Biden Administration will handle the coronavirus vaccine distribution better than the Trump Administration. 16% say it will do a worse job, and 28% think the distribution will be about the same. While most Democrats (86%) believe the Biden Administration will outperform the Trump Administration in terms of the vaccine distribution, a plurality of Republicans (42%) think the process will be about the same. Among independents, 45% think the Biden Administration will do better, 15% say it will do worse than Trump's administration, and 36% say it will be about the same.

When thinking about the coronavirus, nearly half of Americans (48%) say the vaccine distribution should be Biden's top priority. 24% think Biden should focus on financial relief to small businesses while 13% rank direct payments to individuals as the number-one coronavirus-related priority. Nine percent assert Biden should first work on extending unemployment benefits when tackling the pandemic.

74% of Americans support Biden's plan to ask Americans to wear masks for 100 days. Regardless of party, a majority favor this proposal.

### **The Impact of Coronavirus**

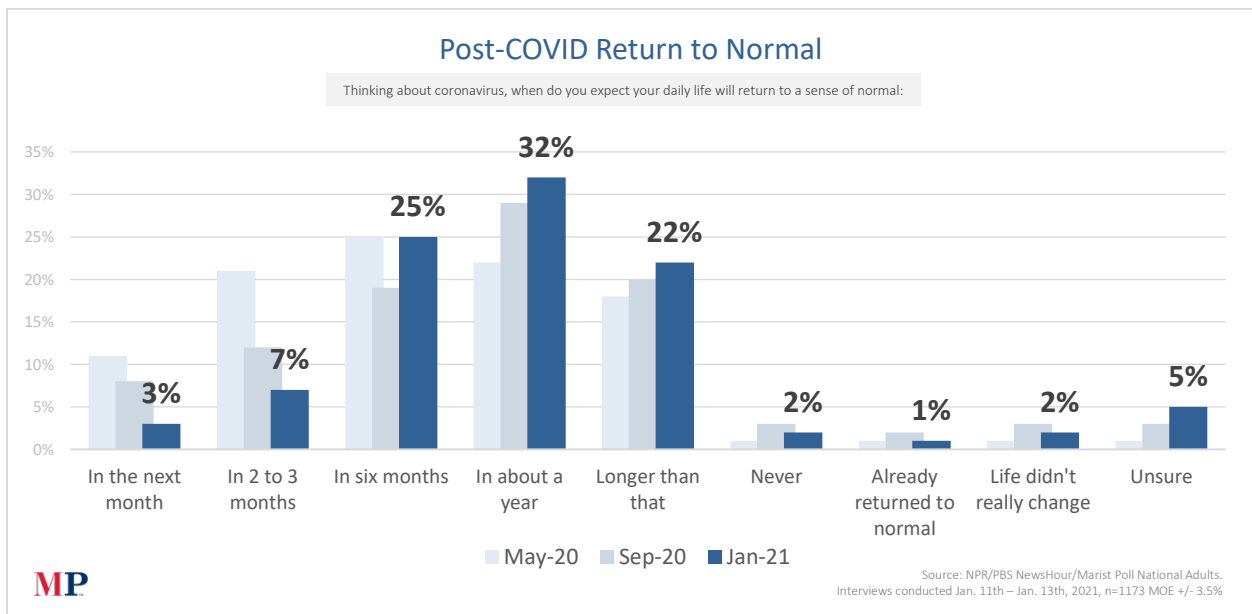
72% of Americans say they or someone they know have been sick with coronavirus, up from 68% in December. When looking at the financial impact of the virus, 32% say they or someone they know have lost a job or income due to the pandemic, down from 40%.

**Acceptance of the Vaccine**

62% of Americans say they would now be willing to receive the coronavirus vaccine if it becomes available to them (58%) or have already received it (4%). 31% say they will not be immunized. In December, 61% said they would receive the vaccine, and 32% reported they would not.

**A Post-COVID Age**

Most Americans (79%) think it will take six months or longer before their life will return to a sense of pre-coronavirus normalcy.



**Direction of the Nation Hits All-Time Low**

75% of Americans think the U.S. is moving in the wrong direction while 20% say it is moving in the right one. The proportion of Americans who think the nation is on track is at its lowest point in twenty years. In February 2020, 41% thought the nation was on track, and 50% said it was off course.

Republicans (83% from 15% in February) and independents (81% from 51%) have grown increasingly pessimistic since February. In contrast, while 68% of Democrats still view the nation as moving in the wrong direction, they have become increasingly optimistic. 26% say the nation is on the right track compared with 8% in February.