

KNIGHT FOUNDATION/GALLUP

AMERICAN VIEWS: TRUST, MEDIA AND DEMOCRACY

WAVE TWO

-- TOPLINE --

Results are based on mail interviews collected between November 8, 2019 and February 16, 2020 with a random sample of ~20,046—adults, ages 18+, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia. For results based on this sample of national adults, the margin of sampling error is ± 1 percentage point at the 95% confidence level.

Gallup obtained a randomly selected address-based sample of U.S. households for this study from Dynata. Respondents were chosen at random within each household on the basis of which member has the next birthday. The study also included oversamples of households known to include young, Hispanic or African-American adults. Households known to have a young adult were randomly assigned to have the survey taken either by the youngest adult member of the household or by the adult with the next birthday. The oversample data are combined with the national sample data and weighted to be representative of the U.S. adult population.

Samples are weighted to correct for unequal selection probability and non-response. They are also weighted to match the national demographics of gender, age, race, Hispanic ethnicity, education, region and population density. Demographic weighting targets are based on the March 2019 Current Population Survey figures for the aged 18 and older U.S. population. Population density targets are based on the 2010 census. All reported margins of sampling error include the computed design effects for weighting.

In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion polls.

1. How often, if at all, do you use each of the following approaches for staying up-to-date on the news?

Sorted by a "daily"

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Less often	Never	No answer
A television station (on television, online, or on an app)	62	16	6	8	7	2
A website or app produced by an individual, group, or organization	39	17	6	10	22	6
A radio station (on the radio, online, or on an app)	36	17	7	14	21	6
A newspaper (in print, online, or on an app)	29	18	6	17	25	5
Direct communication with people in your local area (outside of your household), including in person, on the phone, or online	28	27	10	13	16	6
A magazine (in print, online, or on an app)	5	10	14	23	41	7

2. In which format do you get most of your news?

	<u>2019-2020</u>
From a printed newspaper or magazine	5
From television	41
Online using a computer, smartphone or app	46
From a radio	9
No answer	*

3. In the box below, please write the name of the specific news source you use most often; this could be the name of a television channel or program, a newspaper, a website or app, a radio program, magazine or other source. Please be as specific as possible.

	2019-2020
Local news program (non-specific)	14
Fox/Fox Network/Fox News/Fox business	12
CNN/CNN news	7
NPR/national public radio	4
Local radio (non-specific)	4
Newspaper (local)	4
MSNBC	3
NBC/NBC news/NBC Nightly News	3
Facebook	3
Local Fox affiliate news program	3
New York Times	2
Google	2
ABC/ABC news	2
CBS/CBS news	2
Local ABC affiliate news program	2
Apple news	1
Twitter	1
Local NBC affiliate news program	1
Yahoo	1
Local CBS affiliate news program	1
Reddit	1
Washington Post	1
MSN	1
BBC/British Broadcasting Corporation	1
Internet (non-specific)	1
Wall Street Journal	1
You Tube	1
Univision	1
Social media	1
Drudge Report	1
Podcast (non-specific)	1
Telemundo	1
PBS/PBS News Hour	<1
Other	10
No answer	6

4. How much, if any, bias do you believe there is in the news source you use most often?

	<u>A great deal</u>	<u>A fair amount</u>	<u>Only a little</u>	<u>None at all</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	21	36	31	10	1

5. How closely do you follow each of these different news topics?

A. News about political figures and events in Washington

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Somewhat closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	33	36	20	9	1
2017	31	38	21	10	< 1

B. News about your state government

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Somewhat closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	20	44	26	8	2
2017	16	41	32	11	1

C. News about issues affecting your local community

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Somewhat closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	33	43	18	5	2
2017	25	44	24	6	1

D. International affairs

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Somewhat closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	19	40	27	12	2
2017	20	40	27	12	1

6. How knowledgeable would you rate yourself on each of the following types of issues?

A. Important issues facing the United States

	<u>Highly</u>	<u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Not very</u>	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	28	52	13	3	3
2017	29	54	13	3	<1

B. Important issues facing your local community

	<u>Highly</u>	<u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Not very</u>	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	19	53	20	3	4
2017	18	54	23	4	1

Next, we have some questions about the news media, by which we mean news organizations that report on local, state or national news.

7. What is your overall opinion of the news media in the United States today?

	<u>Very Favorable</u>	<u>Somewhat favorable</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Somewhat unfavorable</u>	<u>Very unfavorable</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	10	21	23	22	22	3
2017	11	22	23	22	21	2

8. To what extent do you see political bias in news coverage?

	<u>Great deal</u>	<u>Fair amount</u>	<u>Not too much</u>	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	46	37	11	2	3
2017	45	38	13	2	2

For comparison: *People & The Press* telephone surveys

	<u>Great deal</u>	<u>Fair amount</u>	<u>Not too much</u>	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2012 Jan 4-8 ^	37	30	21	10	3
2007 Dec 19-30 ^	31	31	25	9	4
2003 Dec 19-2004 Jan 4 ^	30	35	24	9	2
2000 Jan 12-16 ^	32	37	20	6	5
1996 Nov 8-30 †	30	44	21	4	2
1989 Aug 9-28	25	51	19	3	2

^ Survey conducted by Pew

† Survey conducted by Louis Harris & Associates

9. Please indicate which of these statements comes closer to how you personally feel -- Although there is some bias in the news media, there are enough sources of news to be able to sort out the facts. There is so much bias in the news media that it's often difficult to sort out the facts.

	<u>Enough sources to sort out facts</u>	<u>So much bias it is difficult to sort out facts</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	51	45	4
2017	50	47	3

For comparison: American Society of Newspaper Editors News Credibility mail survey conducted by MORI Research

	<u>Enough sources to sort out facts</u>	<u>So much bias it is difficult to sort out facts</u>	<u>No answer</u>
1984 Dec 14-1985 Jan 30	66	34	--

10. Regardless of your opinion of the news media today, generally speaking, how important is the news media to our democracy?

	<u>Critical</u>	<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Not that important</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	42	39	12	4	3
2017	44	40	12	3	2

11. How well is the news media supporting our democracy today?

	<u>Very well</u>	<u>Well</u>	<u>Acceptably</u>	<u>Poorly</u>	<u>Very poorly</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	10	19	26	25	17	3
2017	10	18	27	28	15	2

12. How important is the role of the news media in accomplishing each of the following goals?

Sorted by a "critical"

	<u>Critical</u>	<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Not that important</u>
Providing accurate and fair news reports	58	30	6	1
Making sure Americans have the knowledge they need to be informed about public affairs	55	33	6	1
Holding leaders in politics, business, and other institutions accountable for their actions	51	31	10	3
Making residents feel connected to the U.S. as a whole	35	42	16	3
Reflecting the diversity of the U.S. population	33	36	18	8
Making residents feel connected to their community	30	42	19	4

Q.12 (MEDIA IMPORTANCE IN ACCOMPLISHING GOALS) CONTINUED

FULL RESULTS AND TRENDS:

A. Providing accurate and fair news reports

	<u>Critical</u>	<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Not that important</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	58	30	6	1	4

B. Holding leaders in politics, business, and other institutions accountable for their actions

	<u>Critical</u>	<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Not that important</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	51	31	10	3	4
2017	50	33	11	3	3

C. Making sure Americans have the knowledge they need to be informed about public affairs

	<u>Critical</u>	<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Not that important</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	55	33	6	1	4
2017	54	34	7	2	3

D. Making residents feel connected to their community

	<u>Critical</u>	<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Not that important</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	30	42	19	4	5
2017	30	45	19	4	3

E. Making residents feel connected to the U.S. as a whole

	<u>Critical</u>	<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Not that important</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	35	42	16	3	5
2017	38	41	15	3	3

Q.12 (MEDIA IMPORTANCE IN ACCOMPLISHING GOALS) CONTINUED

F. Reflecting the diversity of the U.S. population

	<u>Critical</u>	<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Not that important</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	33	36	18	8	5

13. How is the news media performing in each of these same areas?

<i>Sorted by a "very well/well"</i>	<u>Very well/ Well</u>	<u>Acceptably</u>	<u>Poorly/ Very poorly</u>
Making sure Americans have the knowledge they need to be informed about public affairs	31	28	37
Providing objective news reports	31	25	40
Holding leaders in politics, business, and other institutions accountable for their actions	30	25	42
Making residents feel connected to their community	29	39	28
Making residents feel connected to the U.S. as a whole	26	32	37
Reflecting the diversity of the U.S. population	25	33	37

FULL RESULTS AND TRENDS:

A. Providing objective news reports

	<u>Very well</u>	<u>Well</u>	<u>Acceptably</u>	<u>Poorly</u>	<u>Very poorly</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	9	22	25	23	17	4
2017 ^	9	21	26	25	15	3

B. Holding leaders in politics, business, and other institutions accountable for their actions

	<u>Very well</u>	<u>Well</u>	<u>Acceptably</u>	<u>Poorly</u>	<u>Very poorly</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	11	19	25	26	16	4
2017	11	19	26	28	14	3

C. Making sure Americans have the knowledge they need to be informed about public affairs

	<u>Very well</u>	<u>Well</u>	<u>Acceptably</u>	<u>Poorly</u>	<u>Very poorly</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	10	21	28	23	14	4
2017	10	20	29	25	13	3

Q.13 (MEDIA PERFORMANCE IN ACCOMPLISHING GOALS) CONTINUED

D. Making residents feel connected to their community

	<u>Very well</u>	<u>Well</u>	<u>Acceptably</u>	<u>Poorly</u>	<u>Very poorly</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	8	21	39	19	9	5
2017	8	20	40	20	9	3

E. Making residents feel connected to the U.S. as a whole

	<u>Very well</u>	<u>Well</u>	<u>Acceptably</u>	<u>Poorly</u>	<u>Very poorly</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	8	18	32	24	13	5
2017	8	19	32	25	13	3

F. Reflecting the diversity of the U.S. population

	<u>Very well</u>	<u>Well</u>	<u>Acceptably</u>	<u>Poorly</u>	<u>Very poorly</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	8	17	33	24	13	5

14. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement. Democracy only works well when citizens are keeping up with the news.

	<u>Strongly agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly disagree</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	29	45	17	4	5

15. When it comes to information about politics and local government in your community, would you say you feel very confident, somewhat confident, not very confident, or not confident at all about knowing each of the following?

A. Where local politicians stand on the key issues facing your community

	<u>Very confident</u>	<u>Somewhat confident</u>	<u>Not very confident</u>	<u>Not all confident</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	10	46	32	9	4

B. The best ways to get involved to make a difference

	<u>Very confident</u>	<u>Somewhat confident</u>	<u>Not very confident</u>	<u>Not all confident</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	12	40	34	9	5

C. How to communicate your concerns to local officials

	<u>Very confident</u>	<u>Somewhat confident</u>	<u>Not very confident</u>	<u>Not all confident</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	12	36	36	12	5

D. How other members of your community feel about their local government

	<u>Very confident</u>	<u>Somewhat confident</u>	<u>Not very confident</u>	<u>Not all confident</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	7	38	38	12	5

16. Who do you think should have the main responsibility for making sure Americans receive an accurate and politically-balanced picture of the news?

	<u>2019-2020</u>	<u>2017</u>
News organizations, by virtue of how they report the news and what stories they cover	46	48
Americans themselves, by virtue of what news sources they use and how carefully they evaluate the news	50	48
No answer	4	3

17. Does the increase in information available today make it...?

	<u>2019-2020</u>	<u>2017</u>
Easier to be well-informed because there are more sources of news that are easily accessed through newer technologies	38	38
Harder to be well-informed because people have to sort through lots of information to determine what is true or important	60	58
No answer	2	3

18. How much, if at all, do each of the following aspects of the news environment today contribute to making you feel overwhelmed by information?

A. An increased number of news organizations reporting the news

	<u>Great deal</u>	<u>Fair amount</u>	<u>Not too much</u>	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	20	37	28	12	3

B. The pace or speed of news reporting – the 24-hour news cycle

	<u>Great deal</u>	<u>Fair amount</u>	<u>Not too much</u>	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	23	34	27	12	3

C. Technological advances that give you access to news wherever you are

	<u>Great deal</u>	<u>Fair amount</u>	<u>Not too much</u>	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	21	29	29	18	3

D. News and non-news items mixed together on social media and Internet sites

	<u>Great deal</u>	<u>Fair amount</u>	<u>Not too much</u>	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	32	29	22	13	3

19. When you feel overwhelmed by the information you get, what are you most likely to do? *Please pick only one answer choice.*

2019-2020

Pick one or two sources you trust and only pay attention to those	39
Try and consult a variety of sources to see where they agree on facts	30
Rely on friends, family or others to help you sort out what you need to know	9
Stop paying attention to news altogether	18
No answer	5

20. Would you say each of the following is a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem with news coverage today?

2019-2020

Sorted by "major problem"

	Major problem	Minor problem	Not a problem	No answer
The spread of inaccurate information on the Internet	74	18	5	3
Owners of news outlets attempting to influence the way stories are reported	70	21	5	3
Too much bias in the reporting of news stories that are supposed to be objective	68	25	5	2
News organizations being too dramatic or too sensational in order to attract more readers or viewers	66	25	6	3
Too much bias in the selection of what stories news organizations cover or don't cover	66	26	5	3
Increasing number of news sources reporting from a particular point of view (such as conservative or liberal) rather than being neutral	65	26	6	3
News organizations reporting information they think is accurate but turns out to be inaccurate	55	33	9	3
Not enough investigative journalism to uncover important facts	52	33	12	3
News organizations not adequately representing the views and experiences of certain subgroups in society	47	39	11	3

FULL RESULTS AND TRENDS:

A. Too much bias in the reporting of news stories that are supposed to be objective

	<u>Major problem</u>	<u>Minor problem</u>	<u>Not a problem</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	68	25	5	2
2017	65	29	4	2

Q.20 (PROBLEMS IN NEWS COVERAGE) CONTINUED

B. Too much bias in the selection of what stories news organizations cover or don't cover

	<u>Major problem</u>	<u>Minor problem</u>	<u>Not a problem</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	66	26	5	3
2017	64	29	4	2

C. Owners of news outlets attempting to influence the way stories are reported

	<u>Major problem</u>	<u>Minor problem</u>	<u>Not a problem</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	70	21	5	3
2017	69	24	4	3

D. Not enough investigative journalism to uncover important facts

	<u>Major problem</u>	<u>Minor problem</u>	<u>Not a problem</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	52	33	12	3
2017	59	30	8	3

E. News organizations reporting information they think is accurate but turns out to be inaccurate

	<u>Major problem</u>	<u>Minor problem</u>	<u>Not a problem</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	55	33	9	3
2017	57	35	6	3

F. News organizations being too dramatic or too sensational in order to attract more readers or viewers

	<u>Major problem</u>	<u>Minor problem</u>	<u>Not a problem</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	66	25	6	3
2017	66	27	5	3

G. The spread of inaccurate information on the Internet

	<u>Major problem</u>	<u>Minor problem</u>	<u>Not a problem</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	74	18	5	3
2017	73	20	3	4

Q.20 (PROBLEMS IN NEWS COVERAGE) CONTINUED

H. Increasing number of news sources reporting from a particular point of view (such as conservative or liberal) rather than being neutral

	<u>Major problem</u>	<u>Minor problem</u>	<u>Not a problem</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	65	26	6	3
2017	61	31	6	3

I. News organizations not adequately representing the views and experiences of certain subgroups in society

	<u>Major problem</u>	<u>Minor problem</u>	<u>Not a problem</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	47	39	11	3

21. Which concerns you more -- The news that you get might be biased or The news most other people are getting might be biased?

	<u>Your news biased</u>	<u>Others' news biased</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	34	64	2

22. Which do you think is a bigger problem for the U.S. – people paying attention to the news, only from sources that support rather than challenge their own views or people not paying attention to any news?

	<u>Paying attention to news that only supports views</u>	<u>Not paying attention to any news</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	62	37	2

23. Which one of the following concerns you most when you come across a news report you think might be inaccurate—Please select only one answer choice.

	<u>2019-2020</u>
That the facts might be made up entirely by the reporter	28
That the facts are wrong because the reporter made errors in his or her work	18
That the facts are correct but the reporter is misrepresenting them	52
No answer	2

24. Next we have a question about journalists and their background characteristics, such as their gender, age, race and so on. Do you think news organizations should or should not try and hire reporters with different backgrounds to increase the diversity of their reporting staffs?

	<u>Should</u>	<u>Should not</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	75	22	4

25. Which one of the following is the area in which news organizations most need to hire different types of reporters to increase the diversity of their reporting staffs? Please choose only one answer from the list.

BASED ON – 15,184—ADULTS WHO THINK NEWS ORGANIZATION SHOULD INCREASE THE DIVERSITY OF THEIR STAFFS; ± 1 PCT PTS

	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Race/ ethnicity</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Income/ social class</u>	<u>Political views</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	6	34	10	17	30	4

26. Which comes closer to your view about the way the press should be able to cover presidents and presidential administrations –or

	<u>2019-2020</u>
Reporters should have regular access to White House officials, even when they ask challenging or aggressive questions of those officials	74
The White House should feel free to ban members of the press if they believe their reporting is not fair to the administration	23
No answer	3

27. When it comes to covering presidential election campaigns, do you think the news media gives too much, the right amount or too little coverage to each of the following?

	<u>Too much</u>	<u>Right amount</u>	<u>Too little</u>	<u>No answer</u>
Public opinion polls, including who is leading in the race	42	47	9	3
The issues that matter most to voters	6	38	53	2
Major campaign events, such as debates or conventions	24	63	10	3
The policy positions of the candidates and political parties	12	43	42	3
The candidates' qualifications for office	9	36	52	3
Controversial statements or actions from a candidate's past	45	30	23	3

28. Overall, how often do you get news about important current events in the U.S. and the world from each of the following websites or apps?

<i>2019-2020</i> <i>Sorted by a "frequently"</i>	<u>Frequently</u>	<u>Occasionally</u>	<u>Rarely</u>	<u>Never</u>	<u>No answer</u>
Google	32	27	15	23	3
Facebook	24	18	15	40	3
You Tube	11	14	17	54	4
Twitter	8	8	11	68	4
Apple News	7	7	9	73	4
Instagram	5	8	11	71	4

29. Do you think major internet companies like Google, Facebook, Twitter, and others that show news about current events should -- ?

	<u>2019-2020</u>
Put more emphasis on finding ways to exclude false information or hateful expression on their websites or apps	70
Put more emphasis on allowing people to express themselves freely and avoiding censorship	28
No answer	2

30. If a major internet company like Google, Facebook, Twitter, suspects that a posting on their platform was made by a person or organization from another country that was trying to influence the 2020 U.S. presidential election outcome, should the internet company –

	<u>2019-2020</u>
Remove the posting, even if they are not certain it came from a foreign actor	57
Leave the posting up until they can confirm it came from a foreign actor	41
No answer	3

31. Please say whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Neither agree nor disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>No answer</u>
People like me don't have any say about what the government does	39	28	31	2
I think I'm better informed about politics and government than most people	37	45	16	2
If a person doesn't care how an election comes out, then that person shouldn't vote in it.	34	25	39	2

32. In general, how attached do you feel to your local community?

	<u>Very</u>	<u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Not very</u>	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	24	51	19	5	*

33. Which one of the following statements comes closest to your view of news organizations that you personally distrust – Please pick only one answer choice.

	<u>2019-2020</u>
They are trying to ruin the country	9
They are trying to persuade people to adopt a certain viewpoint	74
They are trying to report news accurately and fairly but are not able to do so	16
No answer	1

34. Which one of the following statements comes closest to your view?

	<u>2019-2020</u>
The news media is under attack politically, and those attacks are justified	36
The news media is under attack politically, but those attacks are not justified	41
The news media is not under attack politically	22
No answer	2

35. How much blame does the news media deserve for political divisions in this country?

	<u>A great deal</u>	<u>A moderate amount</u>	<u>Not much</u>	<u>None at all</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	47	36	12	4	1

36. How much do you think the news media could do to heal political divisions in this country?

	<u>A great deal</u>	<u>A moderate amount</u>	<u>Not much</u>	<u>None at all</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2019-2020	49	34	14	3	1