



The Associated Press-NORC
Center for Public Affairs Research

Americans' Priorities for 2016

Conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research

Interviews: 12/10-13/2015

1,042 adults

Margin of error: +/- 3.9 percentage points at the 95% confidence level among all adults

NOTE: All results show percentages among all respondents, unless otherwise labeled.

Q1. Generally speaking, would you say things in this country are heading in the right direction or the wrong direction?

	AP-NORC 12/10-13/2015
Right direction	30
Wrong direction	69
Don't know (DO NOT READ)	1
Refused (DO NOT READ)	*

N=

1,042

Q2. Thinking about the problems facing the United States and the world today, which problems would you like the government to be working on in the year 2016?

Please list up to 5 problems.

[Open-ended question coded. Respondents were able to list up to 5 problems. Reported proportions are among the 95 percent of Americans who provided at least one valid response to the questions. Respondents who did not answer are not included.]

	AP-NORC 12/10-13/2015
Domestic issues (N=822)	83
The economy (N=631)	67
Foreign policy issues (N=689)	67
Politics (N=248)	24
Personal financial issues (N=118)	12
Other Issues (N=103)	10

	AP-NORC 12/10-13/2015
Domestic Issues	
Health care (n=303)	31
Education (N=222)	25
Environment/climate change (N=186)	18
Gun issues (N=134)	15
Racial issues (N=77)	8
Income inequality (N=86)	8
Welfare issues (N=73)	7
Crime (N=59)	6
Other domestic issues (N=73)	6
Social Security (N=69)	5
Infrastructure (N=56)	5
Policing issues (N=43)	5

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Veterans' issues (N=42)	5
Drugs (N=27)	3
Social injustice/discrimination (N=33)	3
Vulnerable populations (N=29)	3
Energy (N=32)	3
Morals/values (N=24)	2
Abortion (N=20)	2
LGBT issues (N=11)	1
Women's rights (N=12)	1
The economy	
Unemployment/jobs (N=204)	24
Economy, general mentions (N=192)	20
Poverty/hunger/homelessness (N=123)	13
Taxes (N=125)	13
Debt/deficit/government spending (N=118)	12
Financial/business/Wall St. regulation (N=32)	4
Other economic issues (N=27)	3
Trade (N=13)	1
Inflation (N=4)	1
Foreign policy issues	
Terrorism (n=372)	34
Immigration (N=304)	29
National security/defense (N=86)	9
War/military issues (N=52)	6
Foreign policy, general mentions (N=58)	6
Other foreign policy issues (N=38)	4
Middle East mentions (N=12)	1
International aid (N=12)	1
Politics	
Other political issues (N=74)	7
Bipartisanship vs. gridlock (N=34)	3
Obama (N=31)	3
Other specific party/politicians mentions (N=30)	3
Government corruption/fraud (N=26)	3
Smaller government (N=21)	2
Special interest money in politics/lobbying (N=15)	1
Government accountability/transparency (N=11)	1
Campaign finance reform (N=13)	1
Uphold Constitution (N=11)	1
Need effective leadership (N=10)	1
Term limits (N=11)	1
Voting laws/voter fraud (N=7)	1
Personal financial issues	
Minimum wage (N=62)	7
Housing costs (N=20)	3
Other personal financial issues (N=18)	2

Cost of living (N=19)	1
Energy costs (N=14)	1

Q3. For each of these problems that you mentioned, how much effort would you like the federal government to devote to solving this problem in the year 2016?

AP-NORC 12/10-13/2015	No effort/ only a little effort NET	No effort at all	Only a little effort	A moderate amount of effort	A lot of effort/ great deal of effort NET	A lot of effort	A great deal of effort	DK/ REF
Domestic Issues								
LGBT issues (N=11)	24	24	-	15	61	12	49	-
Other domestic issues (N=73)	20	12	8	6	73	16	57	1
Drugs (N=27)	12	12	-	29	59	29	30	-
Gun issues (N=134)	9	7	2	11	80	26	54	-
Income inequality (N=86)	9	5	4	5	86	37	49	-
Infrastructure (N=56)	8	-	8	35	56	24	32	1
Welfare issues (N=73)	8	4	4	6	85	22	63	1
Veterans' issues (N=42)	8	1	7	13	79	22	58	-
Social Security (N=69)	7	6	1	17	77	20	57	-
Vulnerable populations (N=29)	7	7	-	5	87	22	65	-
Health care (N=303)	6	1	5	14	80	27	53	*
Environment/climate change (N=186)	6	1	5	13	81	32	49	*
Education (N=222)	6	2	5	11	82	31	51	*
Crime (N=59)	6	-	6	10	84	22	62	-
Social injustice/discrimination (N=33)	6	4	2	24	70	19	51	-
Morals/values (N=24)	5	5	-	20	74	22	52	-
Racial issues (N=77)	5	4	1	11	84	32	52	-
Policing issues (N=43)	5	1	4	6	89	18	71	-
Abortion (N=20)	1	1	-	9	89	17	72	-
Women's rights (N=12)	-	-	-	21	79	22	58	-
Energy (N=32)	-	-	-	20	78	23	55	2
The economy								
Taxes (N=125)	9	3	6	16	75	22	53	-
Other economic issues (N=27)	9	2	7	16	75	37	38	-
Poverty/hunger/homelessness (N=123)	7	3	5	9	84	32	52	-
Unemployment/jobs (N=204)	6	2	4	12	82	35	47	*

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	No effort/ only a little effort NET	No effort at all	Only a little effort	A moderate amount of effort	A lot of effort/ great deal of effort NET	A lot of effort	A great deal of effort	DK/ REF
Debt/deficit/government spending (N=118)	6	4	3	11	83	26	56	-
Economy, general mentions (N=192)	3	1	3	14	82	35	48	-
Trade (N=13)	3	-	3	11	86	34	52	-
Financial/business/Wall St. regulation (N=32)	1	1	-	11	88	21	67	-
Inflation (N=4)	-	-	-	-	100	10	90	-
Foreign policy issues								
War/military issues (N=52)	9	-	9	13	79	12	66	-
Immigration (N=304)	4	*	4	10	86	33	53	-
National security/defense (N=86)	4	4	-	9	86	25	61	-
Terrorism (N=372)	3	2	1	3	93	19	75	
Foreign policy, general mentions (N=58)	3	2	1	13	85	43	42	-
Other foreign policy issues (N=38)	2	2	-	12	87	22	65	-
Middle East mentions (N=12)	-	-	-	9	91	32	59	-
International aid (N=12)	-	-	-	20	73	27	46	7
Politics								
Obama (N=31)	45	19	26	2	53	17	37	-
Smaller government (N=21)	19	13	6	9	73	25	47	-
Other specific party/politicians mentions (N=30)	11	8	2	3	86	34	52	-
Other political issues (N=74)	8	4	5	11	81	16	65	-
Uphold Constitution (N=11)	6	6	-	27	67	24	43	-
Government corruption/fraud (N=26)	5	5	-	15	80	15	65	-
Government accountability/transparency (N=11)	5	5	-	-	95	-	95	-
Bipartisanship vs. gridlock (N=34)	3	3	-	13	85	14	71	-
Special interest money in politics/lobbying (N=15)	-	-	-	-	100	32	68	-
Campaign finance reform (N=13)	-	-	-	-	100	19	81	-

	No effort/ only a little effort NET	No effort at all	Only a little effort	A moderate amount of effort	A lot of effort/ great deal of effort NET	A lot of effort	A great deal of effort	DK/REF
Term limits (N=11)	-	-	-	35	65	27	38	-
Need effective leadership (N=10)	-	-	-	7	93	-	93	-
Voting laws/voter fraud (N=7)	-	-	-	24	76	-	76	-
Personal financial issues								
Housing costs (N=20)	33	6	27	13	54	6	49	-
Cost of living (N=19)	11	11	-	26	63	29	35	-
Other personal financial issues (N=18)	10	-	10	7	83	27	57	-
Energy costs (N=14)	8	8	-	18	74	40	34	-
Minimum wage (N=62)	7	4	3	13	79	20	59	2

Q4. How confident are you in the ability of the federal government to make progress on the important problems and issues facing the country in 2016?

[HALF SAMPLE ASKED OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER]

	AP-NORC 12/10-13/2015
Not at all/slightly confident NET	61
Not at all confident	29
Slightly confident	33
Moderately confident	30
Very/extremely confident NET	8
Very confident	5
Extremely confident	2
Don't know (DO NOT READ)	*
Refused (DO NOT READ)	*

N=

1,042

The following questions are for classification purposes only. Be assured that your responses will be combined with those of other participants to this survey.

Q36. Are you currently registered to vote at your address, or not?

	AP-NORC 12/10-13/2015
Yes	78
No	22
Don't know (DO NOT READ)	*
Refused (DO NOT READ)	*
<i>N=</i>	1,042

Q37. Do you consider yourself a Democrat, a Republican, an Independent or none of these?

	AP-NORC 12/10-13/2015
Democrat	31
Republican	24
Independent	29
None of these	16
Don't know (DO NOT READ)	1
Refused (DO NOT READ)	*
<i>N=</i>	1,042

If Democrat in Q37

Q37A. Do you consider yourself a strong Democrat or a moderate Democrat?

	AP-NORC 12/10-13/2015
Strong Democrat	40
Moderate Democrat	60
Don't know (DO NOT READ)	*
Refused (DO NOT READ)	*
<i>N=</i>	342

If Republican in Q37

Q37B. Do you consider yourself a strong Republican or a moderate Republican?

	AP-NORC 12/10-13/2015
Strong Republican	24
Moderate Republican	76
Don't know (DO NOT READ)	*
Refused (DO NOT READ)	*
<i>N=</i>	246

If independent, None of these, or Don't Know/Skip/Refused in Q37

Q37C. Do you lean more toward the Democrats or the Republicans?

	AP-NORC 12/10-13/2015
Lean Democrat	36
Lean Republican	23
Don't lean	39
Don't know (DO NOT READ)	1
Refused (DO NOT READ)	*

N=

478

Q37/Q37A/Q37B/Q37C. Party Identification

	AP-NORC 12/10-13/2015
Democrat (NET)	47
Strong Democrat	12
Moderate Democrat	18
Lean Democrat	17
Don't lean/Independent/None	18
Republican (NET)	34
Lean Republican	11
Moderate Republican	18
Strong Republican	6
DON'T KNOW/SKIP/REFUSED	1

N=

1,042

Generally speaking, do you consider yourself a...?

	AP-NORC 12/10-13/2015
Liberal	21
Conservative	29
Moderate	46
Don't know (DO NOT READ)	3
Refused (DO NOT READ)	1

N=

1,042

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AGE

	AP-NORC 12/10-13/2015
18-24	12
25-34	17
35-44	19
45-54	15
55-64	18
65-74	12
75+	7
<i>N=</i>	<i>1,042</i>

GENDER

	AP-NORC 12/10-13/2015
Male	48
Female	52
<i>N=</i>	<i>1,042</i>

RACE/ETHNICITY

	AP-NORC 12/10-13/2015
White	65
Black or African American	12
Hispanic	16
Other	8
<i>N=</i>	<i>1,042</i>

MARITAL STATUS

	AP-NORC 12/10-13/2015
Married	50
Widowed	7
Divorced	10
Separated	2
Never married	26
Living with partner	6
<i>N=</i>	<i>1,042</i>

INCOME

	AP-NORC 12/10-13/2015
Under \$10,000	8
\$10,000 to under \$20,000	10
\$20,000 to under \$30,000	13
\$30,000 to under \$40,000	11
\$40,000 to under \$50,000	10
\$50,000 to under \$75,000	15
\$75,000 to under \$100,000	13
\$100,000 to under \$150,000	14
\$150,000 or more	7

N=

1,042

AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research Poll

Study Methodology

This survey was conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research and with funding from NORC at the University of Chicago. Data were collected using the AmeriSpeak Panel, which is a probability-based panel designed to be representative of the U.S. household population. The survey was part of a larger omnibus survey that included questions about other topics not included in this report. During the initial recruitment phase of the panel, randomly selected U.S. households were sampled with a known, non-zero probability of selection from the NORC National Sample Frame and then contacted by U.S. mail, email, telephone, and field interviewers (face-to-face).

Interviews for this survey were conducted between December 10-13, 2015, with adults age 18 and over from the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Panel members were randomly drawn from the AmeriSpeak Panel, and 1,042 completed the survey—728 via the web and 314 via telephone. The final stage completion rate is 30.5 percent, the weighted household panel response rate is 36.8 percent, and the weighted household panel retention rate is 99 percent, for a cumulative response rate of 11.1 percent. The overall margin of sampling error is +/- 3.9 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level, including the design effect. The margin of sampling error may be higher for subgroups.

Once the sample has been selected and fielded, and all the study data has been collected and made final, a poststratification process is used to adjust for any survey nonresponse as well as any non-coverage or under- and oversampling resulting from the study-specific sample design. Poststratification variables included age, gender, Census division, race/ethnicity, and household phone status. The weighted data, which reflect the U.S. population of adults age 18 and over, were used for all analyses.

About the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research

The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research taps into the power of social science research and the highest-quality journalism to bring key information to people across the nation and throughout the world.

- The Associated Press (AP) is the world's essential news organization, bringing fast, unbiased news to all media platforms and formats.
- NORC at the University of Chicago is one of the oldest and most respected, independent research institutions in the world.

The two organizations have established the AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research to conduct, analyze, and distribute social science research in the public interest on newsworthy topics, and to use the power of journalism to tell the stories that research reveals.

The founding principles of the AP-NORC Center include a mandate to carefully preserve and protect the scientific integrity and objectivity of NORC and the journalistic independence of AP. All work conducted by the Center conforms to the highest levels of scientific integrity to prevent any real or perceived bias in the research. All of the work of the Center is subject to review by its advisory committee to help

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ensure it meets these standards. The Center will publicize the results of all studies and make all datasets and study documentation available to scholars and the public.