

**KNIGHT FOUNDATION/GALLUP**

**AMERICAN VIEWS: TRUST, MEDIA AND DEMOCRACY**

**-- FINAL TOPLINE --**

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Results are based on mail interviews collected between August 4-October 2, 2017 with a random sample of – 19,196—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  $\pm 1$  percentage point at the 95% confidence level.

Gallup obtained a randomly selected address-based sample of U.S. households for this study from Survey Sampling International. 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. 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 2016 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.

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

<i>2017 Aug 4-Oct 2</i> <i>Sorted by a "great deal"</i>	A great deal	A fair amount	Only a little	Not at all	No answer
Watching television news programs that report the day's news	41	24	21	12	1
Reading a newspaper (printed or online version)	20	21	32	25	2
Seeing or reading links to news stories on Facebook® or other social media sites	20	21	20	36	2
Visiting Internet-only news websites	19	28	29	21	2
Tuning in to TV or radio talk shows that provide commentary on the news	19	23	28	29	2
Getting news alerts on your smartphone	17	17	21	43	2
Listening to news programs on the radio that report the day's news	16	20	30	33	2
Subscribing to a particular news source that sends you links to its top news stories for each day	9	11	17	61	3
Using a website or app that organizes news links for you from a variety of sources, often called a news aggregator	8	9	15	66	2

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

<i>2017 Aug 4-Oct 2</i> <i>Sorted by "very closely"</i>	Very closely	Somewhat closely	Not too closely	Not at all	No answer
News about political figures and events in Washington	31	38	21	10	< 1
News about issues affecting your local community	25	44	24	6	1
International affairs	20	40	27	12	1
Sports	18	23	24	34	1
News about your state government	16	41	32	11	1
Business and finance	11	28	38	22	1

3. 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>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	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>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	18	54	23	4	1

4. Would you describe yourself as someone who has firm views on political issues, meaning your views don't change much; or as someone who has flexible views, meaning your views change from time to time?

	<u>Firm views</u>	<u>Flexible views</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	46	52	2

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

5. 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>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	11	22	23	22	21	2

6. 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>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	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

7. Please indicate which of these statements comes closer to how you personally feel -- Most news media are careful to separate fact from opinion. Most news media don't do a very good job of letting people know what is fact and what is opinion.

	<u>Careful to separate</u>	<u>Don't do good job</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	32	66	2

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

	<u>Careful to separate</u>	<u>Don't do good job</u>	<u>No answer</u>
1984 Dec 14-1985 Jan 30	58	42	--

8. 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>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	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	--

9. Can you think of a news source that reports the news objectively?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	44	51	5

10. *(Asked of those who can think of an objective news source)* Please enter the name of the source(s) in the box below.

**BASED ON –9,814—ADULTS WHO CAN THINK OF AN OBJECTIVE NEWS SOURCE**

*Sources mentioned by 1% or more of respondents*

	<b>2017 Aug 4-Oct 2</b>
FOX News	24
CNN	13
NPR / National Public Radio	10
Local news (non-specific)	5
BBC	5
MSNBC	4
PBS / PBS News Hour	3
NBC /NBC News	3
New York Times	3
ABC/ABC News	3
CBS / CBS News	2
Washington Post	1
OAN / One America News	1
Wall Street Journal	1
Local Fox affiliate	1
Local radio	1
Local newspaper	1
Reuters	1
Television (non-specific)	1
AP/Associated Press	1
Vice News	1

11. How confident are you that you can tell when a new source is reporting factual news and when it is providing opinion or commentary on the news?

	<u>Very confident</u>	<u>Somewhat confident</u>	<u>Not too confident</u>	<u>Not confident at all</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	27	49	17	3	3

12. 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>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	44	40	12	3	2

13. 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>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	10	18	27	28	15	2

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

**2017 Aug 4-Oct 2**  
**Sorted by a "critical"**

	<u>Critical</u>	<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Not that important</u>	<u>No answer</u>
Making sure Americans have the knowledge they need to be informed about public affairs	54	34	7	2	3
Holding leaders in politics, business, and other institutions accountable for their actions	50	33	11	3	3
Providing objective news reports	47	38	10	2	3
Making residents feel connected to the U.S. as a whole	38	41	15	3	3
Making residents feel connected to their community	30	45	19	4	3

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

**2017 Aug 4-Oct 2**  
**Sorted by a "very well/well"**

	<u>Very well/ Well</u>	<u>Acceptably</u>	<u>Poorly/ Very poorly</u>
Providing objective news reports	30	26	40
Holding leaders in politics, business, and other institutions accountable for their actions	30	26	42
Making sure Americans have the knowledge they need to be informed about public affairs	30	29	38
Making residents feel connected to their community	28	40	29
Making residents feel connected to the U.S. as a whole	27	32	38

**Q.15 (HOW NEWS MEDIA PERFORMING) CONTINUED**

DETAILED RESULTS:

**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>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	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>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	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>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	10	20	29	25	13	3

**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>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	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>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	8	19	32	25	13	3

16. How much confidence do you have that each of the following is providing news to their users that is mostly accurate and politically-balanced?

*2017 Aug 4-Oct 2  
Sorted by a "a lot"*

	<u>A lot</u>	<u>A fair amount</u>	<u>Only a little</u>	<u>None at all</u>	<u>No answer</u>
National television network news	16	36	29	17	3
Major national newspapers	14	37	29	15	5
Your local newspaper	12	42	31	11	4
Cable news	11	35	35	16	4
News aggregators -- apps or websites that gather and show news from many different news organizations	7	31	36	19	8
Internet-only news websites	6	30	39	18	7

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

2017 Aug 4-Oct 2

News organizations, by virtue of how they report the news and what stories they cover	48
Americans themselves, by virtue of what news sources they use and how carefully they evaluate the news	48
No answer	3

18. How much of the news you read or watch comes from news organizations that are generally liberal in their point of view?

	<u>All</u>	<u>Most</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Only a little</u>	<u>None</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	5	32	38	15	8	1

19. How much of the news you read or watch comes from news organizations that are generally conservative in their point of view?

	<u>All</u>	<u>Most</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Only a little</u>	<u>None</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	5	22	43	22	7	1

20. What kind of an impact do you think each of the following has had on the news environment in the U.S. over the past 10 years?

**2017 Aug 4-Oct 2**

***Sorted by a "very positive"***

	<u>Very positive</u>	<u>Somewhat positive</u>	<u>Somewhat negative</u>	<u>Very negative</u>	<u>No answer</u>
Videos shot by regular people and then shared with news organizations or posted online	16	42	29	10	3
The Internet	15	42	29	9	4
Cable news	10	42	31	13	4
Political leaders from all parties using social media to communicate directly with the public	10	35	34	19	3
Social media sites like Facebook® and Twitter®	10	32	37	17	3
News aggregators - apps or websites that gather and show news from many different news organizations	9	45	31	9	6

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

2017 Aug 4-Oct 2

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



22. Do you think each of the following is a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem in the U.S. today?

**A. People only choosing news sources that have the same views as their own**

	<u>A major problem</u>	<u>A minor problem</u>	<u>Not a problem</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	60	30	10	< 1

**B. People only associating with other people who have the same views as their own**

	<u>A major problem</u>	<u>A minor problem</u>	<u>Not a problem</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	57	32	11	< 1

23. How often do you share news stories you've seen online with other people, such as friends, family, or social media followers?

	<u>Frequently</u>	<u>Occasionally</u>	<u>Rarely</u>	<u>Never</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	27	37	21	13	1

24. *(Asked of those who share news stories)* Do you share news stories mostly with people who have views similar to your own or mostly with people whose views differ from your own?

**BASED ON –16,567—ADULTS WHO SHARE NEWS STORIES**

	<u>Similar views</u>	<u>Different views</u>	<u>No answer</u>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	68	29	3

25. *(Asked of those who share news stories)* How often do you share news stories with people for each of the following reasons?

**BASED ON –16,567—ADULTS WHO SHARE NEWS STORIES**

**A. Because you think they will agree with and like the article**

	<u>Frequently</u>	<u>Occasionally</u>	<u>Rarely</u>	<u>Never</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	22	48	20	7	3

**B. Because you think it may help to persuade them to change their point of view**

	<u>Frequently</u>	<u>Occasionally</u>	<u>Rarely</u>	<u>Never</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	10	35	34	18	4

The next set of questions focus on the major websites that people use for getting information, as well as other online activities.

26. Here is a list of some of the major websites. Please indicate how often you, personally, use each one, either by visiting the website or using its mobile app.

<i>2017 Aug 4-Oct 2</i> <i>Sorted by a "frequently"</i>	<u>Frequently</u>	<u>Occasionally</u>	<u>Rarely</u>	<u>Never</u>	<u>No answer</u>
Google®	52	22	10	14	2
Facebook®	45	15	10	28	2
Yahoo®	16	17	22	42	3
Apple®	7	9	19	63	3
MSN®	7	13	18	60	3

27. Overall, how often do you get news from these types of major websites?

	<u>Frequently</u>	<u>Occasionally</u>	<u>Rarely</u>	<u>Never</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	35	35	17	12	1

28. Which of the following statements comes closer to how you feel about regulating the methods these types of major websites use to show news items?

	<u>2017 Aug 4-Oct 2</u>
There should be rules or regulations on the methods these major websites use to determine what news content they provide to individual users of their sites	49
These websites should be free to provide users with news content using whatever methods they choose	47
No answer	3

29. As you may know, it's possible that the methods these major websites use for selecting the news stories they show to individual users may exclude certain kinds of stories depending on what the user has read in the past. How much of a problem do you consider this for our democracy?

	<u>A major problem</u>	<u>A minor problem</u>	<u>Not a problem</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	57	35	6	2

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

**2017 Aug 4-Oct 2**

**Sorted by "major problem"**

	Major problem	Minor problem	Not a problem	No answer
The spread of inaccurate information on the Internet	73	20	3	4
Owners of news outlets attempting to influence the way stories are reported	69	24	4	3
News organizations being too dramatic or too sensational in order to attract more readers or viewers	66	27	5	3
Too much bias in the reporting of news stories that are supposed to be objective	65	29	4	2
Too much bias in the selection of what stories news organizations cover or don't cover	64	29	4	2
Increasing number of news sources reporting from a particular point of view (such as conservative or liberal) rather than being neutral	61	31	6	3
Not enough investigative journalism to uncover important facts	59	30	8	3
News organizations reporting information they think is accurate but turns out to be inaccurate	57	35	6	3

31. You may have heard the term "fake news," which refers to inaccurate information presented as an objective news story and designed to deceive people in some way. How often do you think each of the following situations represents "fake news?"

**2017 Aug 4-Oct 2**

**Sorted by "always"**

	Always	Sometimes	Never	No answer
People knowingly portraying false information as if it were true	48	46	4	2
News organizations slanting their stories to promote a certain point of view	35	56	6	2
Journalists reporting stories before they check all their facts and sources to be sure they are accurate	35	57	5	2
Accurate news stories casting a politician or political group in a negative light	28	51	19	3

32. How much of a threat do you believe "fake news" is to our democracy?

	<u>A very serious threat</u>	<u>A somewhat serious threat</u>	<u>Not much of a threat</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	56	32	11	1

33. About how much time do you spend on the Internet each day, not counting any time spent on the Internet for your job?

	Less than <u>an hour</u>	One to less than <u>three hours</u>	Three to less than <u>five hours</u>	Five hours <u>or more</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
2017 Aug 4-Oct 2	29	43	16	8	3

34. How frequently do you check your Facebook® account?

	<u>2017 Aug 4-Oct 2</u>
Multiple times a day	37
About once a day	15
Several times a week	7
Less often	12
Do not have a Facebook account	28
No answer	1