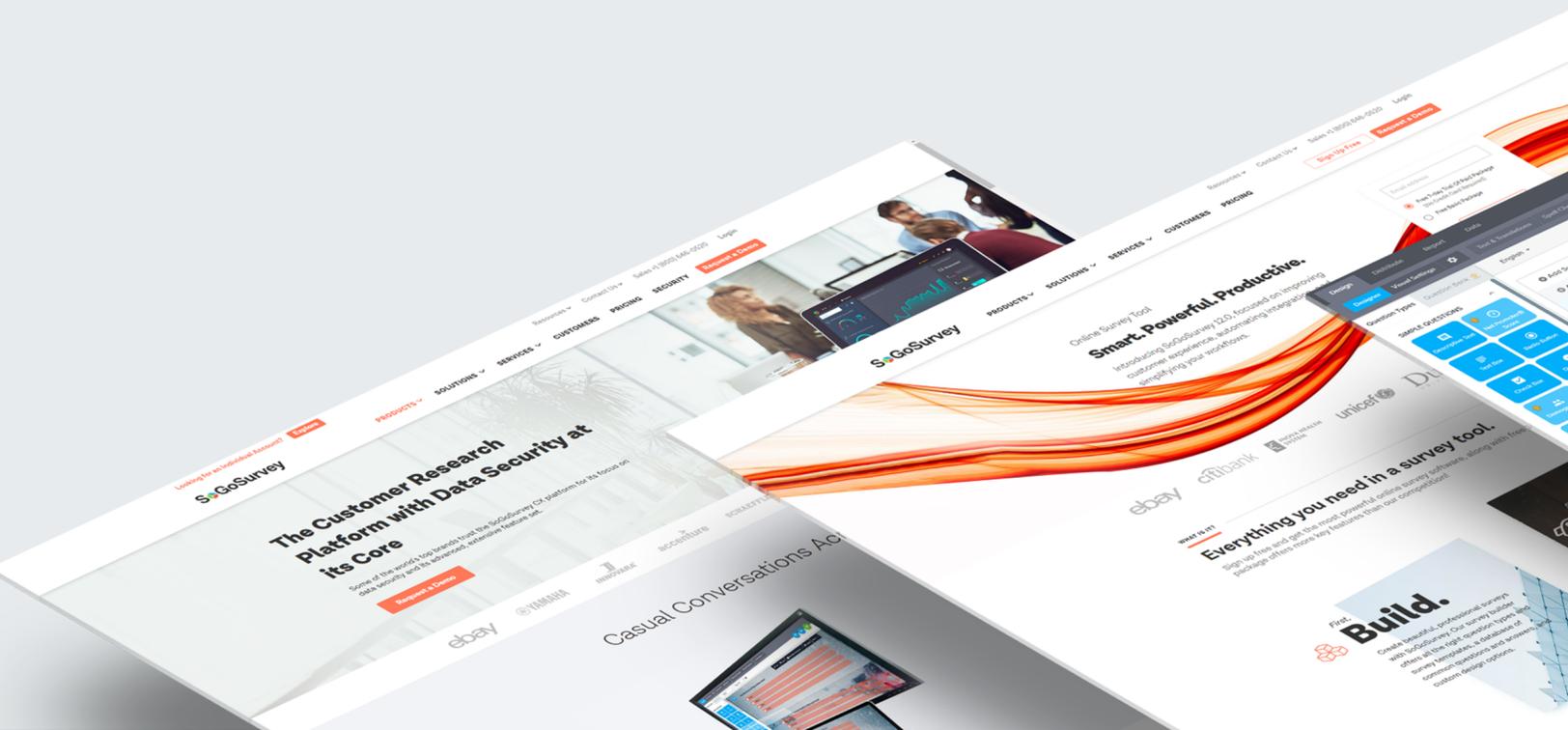


Youth Voting Trends Study: The Power of Neutrality

While passion, extremism, and polarization are often believed to drive turnout among young voters, data in this study shows repeatedly that this is not the case. Instead, those driving voting trends are the middle group of young adults, the moderates who find themselves unable to commit fully to one ideology or party.



Study Introduction:

Context and Purpose

According to the United States Election Project, in the 2012 presidential election 54.9% of eligible voters turned out and in 2016 that number was 55.5%.

For those same two periods, the number of “youth voters,” defined as ages 18-29 at the time of election, voted at a rate of 41% in 2012 and 43% in 2016. While younger voters appear to turn out at a lower rate than the population as a whole, the portion of eligible voters who do vote increases with every successive age demographic. This suggests a more or less natural progression of civic engagement over the life of a typical voter. Determining the causes of lower turnout among youth voters may be difficult.

Data from The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement (CIRCLE) from 2010 reinforces this view. Reasons given by young non-voters were similar to the reasons for not voting given by all respondents. Given reasons were “busy,” “don’t feel vote counts,” and “didn’t like candidate.” Again, these results are reflected in roughly the same percentages for youth as all other age demographics.

A quick Google search turns up quite a few studies and data sets on turnout and voting patterns with various demographic data and sorting. There are certain questions about potential voters in this age range that do not seem to be covered by the readily available studies. Some of the holes left by these studies include, for example:

- Issues that, when raised in public media, would influence the respondent to participate or not participate in an election.
- Whether young adults are more likely to vote in an election in which they have met or spoken directly with a candidate—or have been in contact with someone educating voters on a particular ballot issue.
- How easy or difficult respondents feel the voting process is.

In an attempt to understand the voting trends of America’s youth and fill in the knowledge gaps, SoGoSurvey experts carefully crafted a survey to discover the answers.

Study Highlights

63%

26%

Of the **63%** of young adults registered to vote, **26%** don't actually vote in elections.

51%

23%

Neutral respondents indicate voting **51%** of the time, which is at least **23%** higher than voters with an ideological preference of either liberal or conservative.

60%

22%

18%

Following a neutral or moderate trend evident in young adult voting patterns, **60%** of participants indicated they are not affiliated with any party. Trailing far behind are the **22%** who are affiliated with the Democratic party and the **18%** with the Republican party.

16%

21%

Unaffiliated respondents are **16%** more likely to vote than Democratic respondents and **21%** more likely than Republican respondents.

59%

36%

59% of young adults believe their vote counts. Those who believe their vote counts are **36%** more likely to vote than those that said their vote didn't count.

65%

65% of people who believe their vote doesn't count think that the government runs the country, not people or corporations.

70%

70% of young adults indicated they would vote if they had more information about candidates and issues that were relevant for the election.

3/4 th

3 out of 4 young adults don't consider themselves to be politically active.

Questions and Responses

QUESTION

02

Please select your primary location.

OVERVIEW

The majority of respondents came from five states:



HIGHLIGHTS

Segmented the five states with the most respondents by Q4: Do you vote in elections?. Answers Yes, always and Sometimes were merged.

- Texas | Yes + Sometimes vote: 77% | No, never vote: 23%
- California | Yes + Sometimes vote: 83% | No, never vote: 17%
- Florida | Yes + Sometimes vote: 79% | No, never vote: 11%
- New York | Yes + Sometimes vote: 74% | No, never vote: 25%
- Illinois | Yes + Sometimes vote: 83% | No, never vote: 18%

Segmented by answers to Q6: Ideologically, how would you identify yourself?: Conservative, Neutral, and Liberal. States within the top three percentages are listed for each ideology.

- Conservative: Florida: 10%, Arizona: 8%, Illinois, New York, Ohio: 6%
- Neutral: Texas: 15%, Florida: 7%, California, Illinois, New York, Ohio: 5%
- Liberal: New York: 12%, California, Texas, Michigan: 10%, Florida, Maryland: 7%

Questions and Responses

QUESTION

02

Please select your primary location.

REFLECTION

Seeing high percentages from states like Texas, California, Florida, New York, and Illinois is no surprise. All five states rank among the top ten highest populated states in 2019. It is, however, interesting to see which states among the most populated stand out for a sense of civic responsibility and ideology.

California and Illinois are tied for the highest percentage of young adults who vote. Traditionally, both are very important states to win for national elections, so a solid sense of civic duty may not be surprising.

It is in the ideological data where some interesting outliers are revealed. When it comes to an ideological breakdown, Texas takes a firm middle ground. Outpacing all other states with an exceptionally high 15%, most young adults from Texas would self-identify as neutral on the ideological spectrum. Honorable mentions go to Florida for rating the most conservative and New York for being the most liberal. Ohio was the only state not listed among the top five populous states but appeared in two different ideological categories.

Questions and Responses

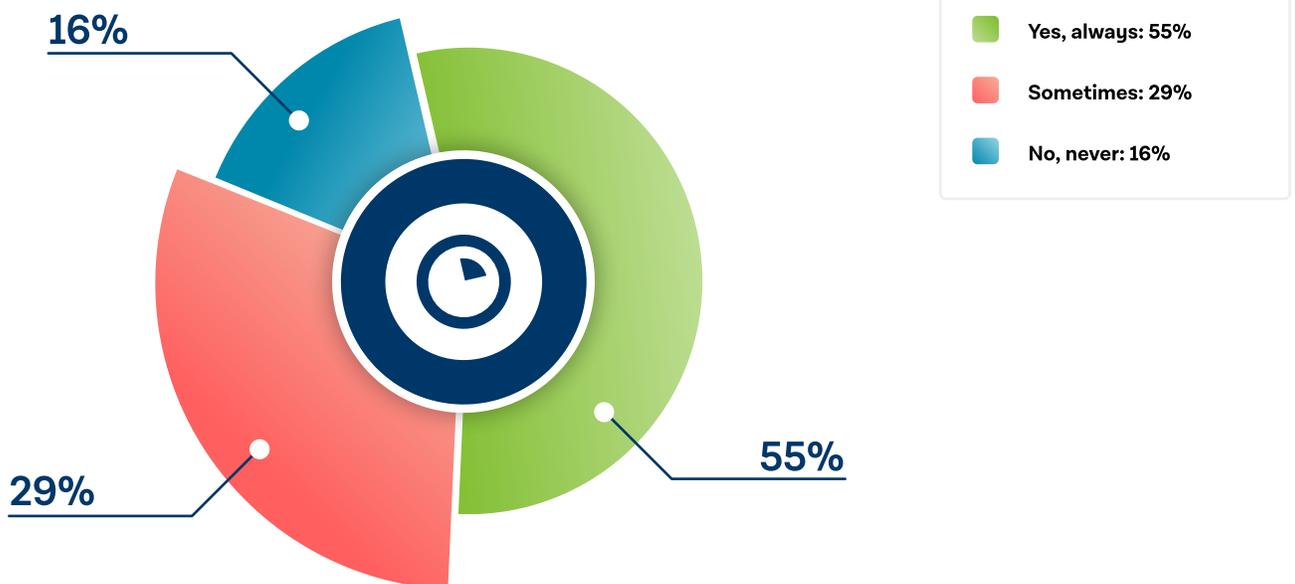
QUESTION

04

Do you vote in elections?

OVERVIEW

Of all respondents in the targeted age group, young adults indicated that they vote:



REFLECTION

The 55% of respondents who selected Yes, always were excused from the remainder of this questionnaire. After this question, all data is from participants who answered Sometimes or No, never to question four.

Questions and Responses

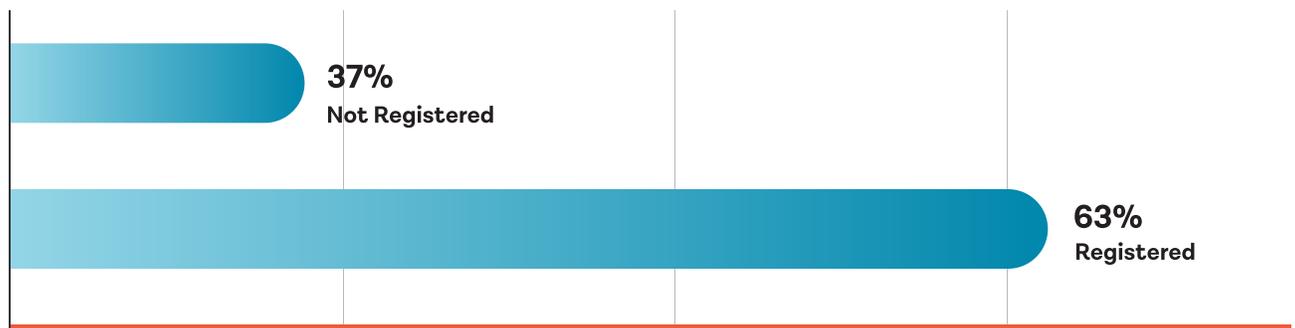
QUESTION

05

Are you registered to vote?

OVERVIEW

A strong majority indicated that they were registered to vote:



HIGHLIGHTS

Segmenting respondents by Q4: Do you vote in elections?:

- Yes | Sometimes vote: 84% | No, never vote: 26%
- No | Sometimes vote: 16% | No, never vote: 74%

REFLECTION

Of the 63% of young adults registered to vote, 26% don't actually vote in elections.

A positive relationship is evident between voters who are registered and who actually vote. Though a strong 63% of young adults are registered to vote, when that number is broken up further it is revealed that almost 30% of registered 21 to 26 year-old voters don't vote. It is notable that so many registered voters in this age group do not actually vote.

For those who are registered and yet still don't vote, the question is why? Is it a matter of ideology or party? A particular candidate or policy? Access to information? Or is it apathy?

Questions and Responses

QUESTION

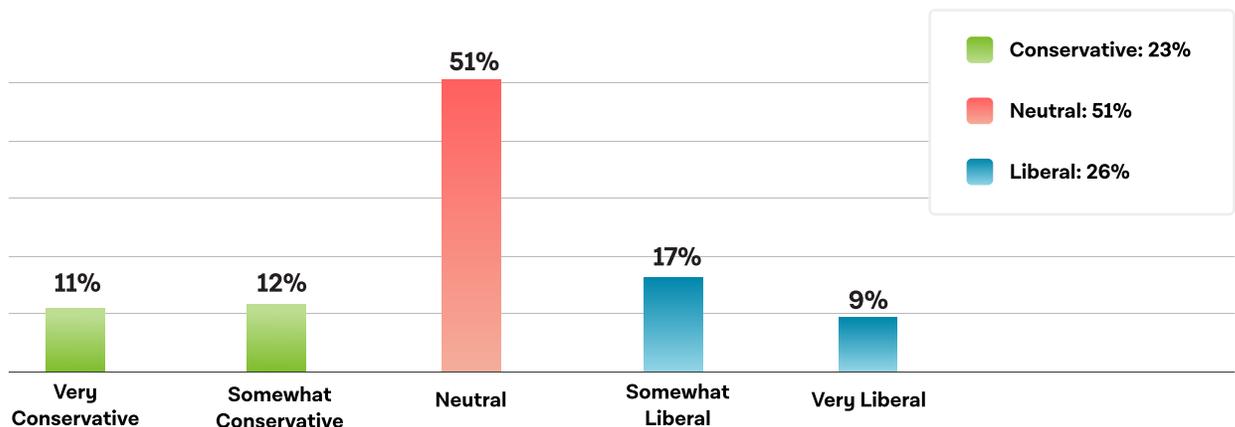
06

Ideologically, how would you identify yourself?

OVERVIEW

By grouping the like conservative and liberal categories together to aggregate those who identified generally with either ideology, results can be summarized as:

- Very Conservative: 11%
 - Somewhat Conservative: 12%
 - Neutral: 51%
 - Somewhat Liberal: 17%
 - Very Liberal: 9%
- Conservative: 23%
Neutral: 51%
Liberal: 26%



HIGHLIGHTS

Segmenting ideology respondents of Very Conservative + Somewhat Conservative, Neutral, and Very Liberal + Somewhat Liberal by Q4: Do you vote in elections?

- Conservative | Sometimes vote: 20% | No, never vote: 27%
- Neutral | Sometimes vote: 51% | No, never vote: 49%
- Liberal | Sometimes vote: 28% | No, never vote: 24%

Questions and Responses

QUESTION

06

Ideologically, how would you identify yourself?

REFLECTION

The split between neutral and non-neutral respondents is nearly even, with slightly more of these occasional voters choosing Neutral (51%) and 48% expressing ideological preferences. Of the latter, 28% identified as generally liberal and just 20% as generally conservative.

The most robust numbers when it comes to ideology are those grouped closer to the middle of the scale. Even within groups that identified with a specific ideology, the majority chose the more moderate 'Somewhat' answer options within their respective political beliefs. With the extreme polarization present in modern politics, it's easy to believe that a significant number of voters, especially the younger and more passionate ones, are completely divided by the gaping ideological chasm between the far-right conservative and far-left liberal. Rather than seeing this extremism reflected in the younger voter generation—one that has grown up in a period of tense political divisions—the results show that younger voters actually cling to firmly moderate beliefs.

A liberal lean to this moderate trend is evident as well. The second largest category following the Neutral 51% is the Somewhat Liberal 17%. What accounts for this slight liberal uptick? While this question is beyond the scope of this study, the cause could be related to the current political climate, exposure to certain policy issues, education, or any number of other elements.

Ideology appears to have a significant impact on how voting trends operate. Closely following the numbers for ideology, those with a neutral view almost double the voting rates of either liberals or conservatives. Those whose beliefs fall within the political extremes were much more likely to report never voting. For some young voters with strong ideological identifications, rather than being forced into a bad decision by poor voting options on either end of their spectrum, the choice appears to be simply not to vote at all. It seems that a moderate political perspective gives younger voters the freedom to vote.

The significance of the effect of ideology on voting trends cannot be underestimated. The results offer a sample of how polarization can undermine the voting mindset of young Americans. If this trend is accurate, voting among rising generations will continue to decrease if American ideologies become increasingly polarized.

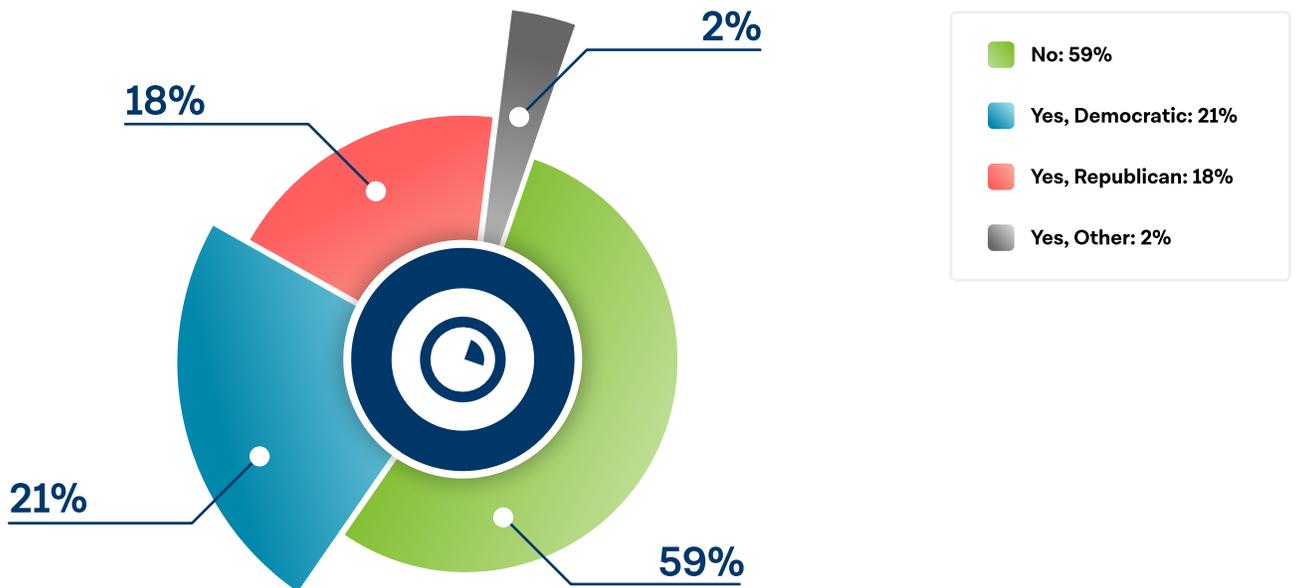
Questions and Responses

QUESTION

07

Are you affiliated with a specific party?

OVERVIEW



HIGHLIGHTS

Segmenting party affiliations by Q4: Do you vote in elections?

- No | Sometimes vote: 45% | No, never vote: 83%
- Yes, Democratic | Sometimes vote: 29% | No, never vote: 9%
- Yes, Republican | Sometimes vote: 24% | No, never vote: 6%
- Yes, Other | Sometimes vote: 2% | No, never vote: 1%

Questions and Responses

QUESTION

07

Are you affiliated with a specific party?

REFLECTION

Following the ideological precedent set with question six, a pattern of neutrality further emerges. Young people do align with ideological beliefs and certain parties, but with a fairly equal split: Democratic/Liberal wins by small margin over Republican/Conservative respondents. Predominant beliefs, however, are in the moderate range.

Almost 60% indicate they are not affiliated with any party. This is trailed far behind by the 22% who are affiliated with the Democratic party and the 18% with the Republican party.

Unaffiliated respondents are 16% more likely to vote than Democratic respondents and 21% more likely than Republican respondents.

In a descending staircase of percentages, it is evident that the unaffiliated—which could be equated to the ideological moderates—have the highest likelihood of voting. Lagging behind are both Democratic and Republican voters, although both parties are fairly matched to each other. The true surprise of these numbers, however, is the 83% of non-affiliated young adults who don't vote at all.

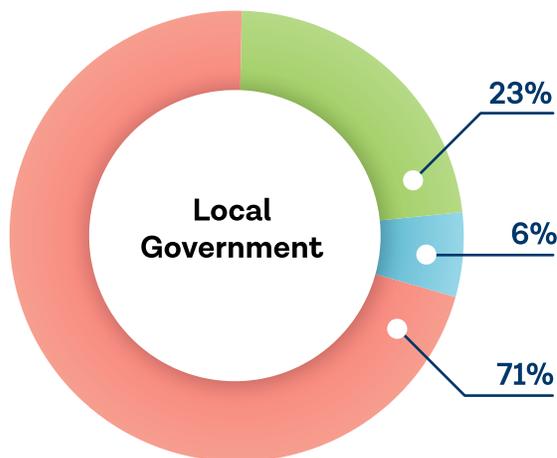
Questions and Responses

QUESTION

08

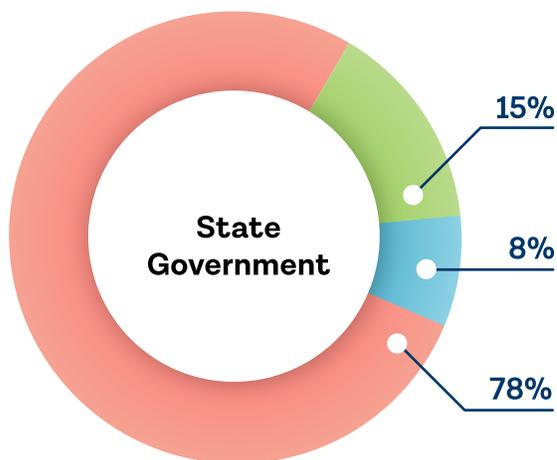
How often do you vote in elections at the following levels?

OVERVIEW



Local Government

- Never Vote in Local Elections: 23%
- Sometimes Vote in Local Elections: 71%
- Always Vote in Local Elections: 6%



State Government

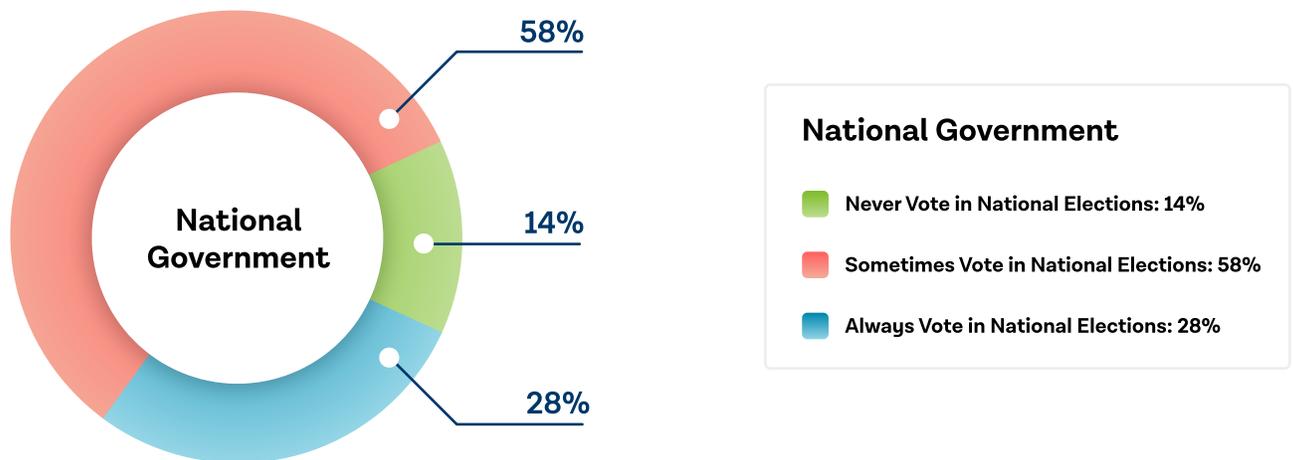
- Never Vote in State Elections: 15%
- Sometimes Vote in State Elections: 78%
- Always Vote in State Elections: 8%

Questions and Responses

QUESTION

08

How often do you vote in elections at the following levels?



REFLECTION

Results show a progressively increasing commitment to voting from smaller to larger-scale elections. There is a significant decrease in the Never response between local and state elections and an even more significant increase in the Always response between state and national elections. The results show a significant trend toward voting for what may be considered the highest stakes elections—likely the U.S. Presidency.

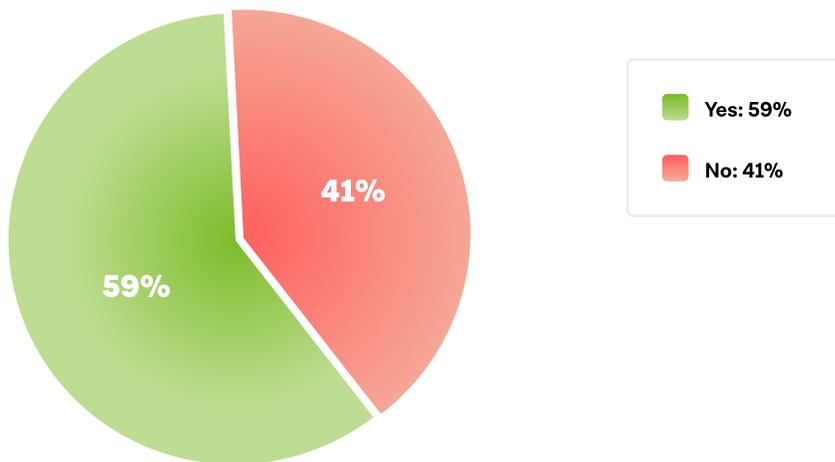
Questions and Responses

QUESTION

09

Do you believe your vote counts?

OVERVIEW



HIGHLIGHTS

Segmenting by Q4: Do you vote in elections?

- Yes | Sometimes vote: 68% | No, Never vote: 43%
- No | Sometimes vote: 32% | No, Never vote: 57%

Segmenting ideology respondents of Very Conservative + Somewhat Conservative, Neutral, and Very Liberal + Somewhat Liberal by Q9: Do you believe your vote counts?

- Conservative+ | Yes: 22% | No: 24%
- Neutral | Yes: 51% | No: 51%
- Liberal+ | Yes: 28% | No: 25%

Questions and Responses

QUESTION

09

Do you believe your vote counts?

REFLECTION

Looking at these responses in conjunction with question eight (frequency of voting in multiple levels of elections), it appears that many respondents (as many as 27%) sometimes or always vote in state and national elections despite believing that their vote doesn't count.

Results indicate that 59% of participants believe their vote counts. Those young adults who believe their votes count are 36% more likely to vote than those that said their votes didn't count.

It might be assumed that those with an optimistic view of the impact of their vote will actually vote. However, 43% of participants who believe that their vote counts still don't vote. It seems that a positive perspective does not always translate into action. Two-fifths of young adults who believe in the power of the voting system are still not motivated enough to actually be a part of it. If the belief that voting makes a difference is not the main motivator for why people vote, what is it? Civic responsibility? Peer pressure? Something else?

Once again, numbers reveal how powerful a driving force ideology is for young adult voters. For both conservative and liberal ideologies, the split between voting optimism and pessimism is fairly even. Conservatives have a slightly more negative take on the value of their votes at 22% compared to 28% of liberals. At 24% and 25% for conservatives and liberals respectively, those at both ends of the spectrum seem to have a similar view of the relevance of their votes.

Neutrals or moderates by far have the most positive belief in the power of their vote. While being the most optimistic, young adults who identified as Neutral still have the highest disregard for the impact of voting at a rate of 51%. For the young adults finishing college and starting their careers, there seems to be a muddled sense of what beliefs to hold onto and when and how to take action.

Questions and Responses

QUESTION

10

Who runs the country?

OVERVIEW

Who young adults believe run the country:



HIGHLIGHTS

Segmenting by Q9: Do you believe your vote counts?

- Government | Yes: 54% | No: 65%
- People | Yes: 32% | No: 15%
- Corporations | Yes: 14% | No: 20%

REFLECTION

Results of this study show that young people believe the government’s power exceeds that of ordinary people or wealthy corporations.

The way a young person sees the value of their vote also has a relationship with who they believe runs the country. A majority 65% of participants who don’t believe their vote matters also believe the government is in control. The idea of a powerful entity like the government that controls everything might indicate why these younger voters don’t believe their vote matters. The people who believed their vote does matter are much more optimistic about power. Beyond government, the highest percentage of participants who believe that their vote counted were those who indicated that people run the country.

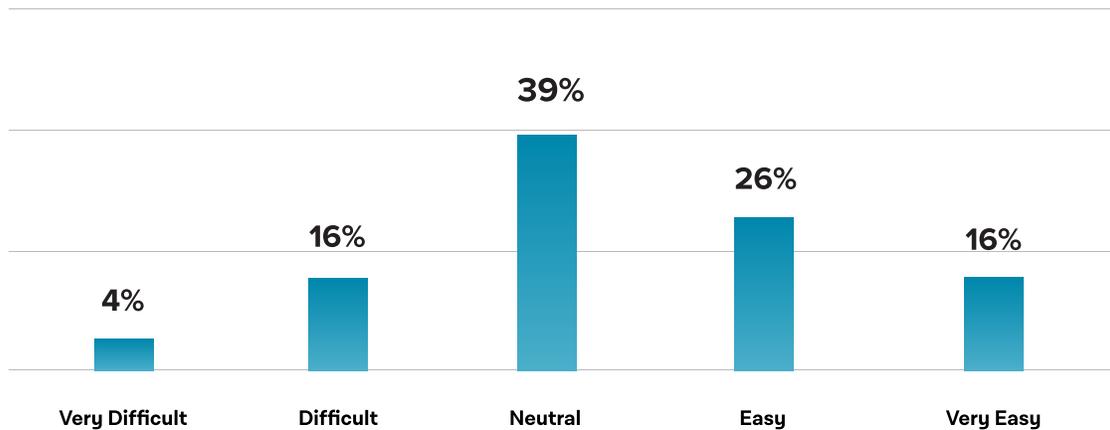
Questions and Responses

QUESTION

11

How would you rate the voting process?

OVERVIEW



HIGHLIGHTS

Segmented answer options by Q4: Do you vote?

- Very Difficult | Sometimes vote: 1% | No, never vote: 7%
- Difficult | Sometimes vote: 15% | No, never vote: 17%
- Neutral | Sometimes vote: 37% | No, never vote: 43%
- Easy | Sometimes vote: 31% | No, never vote: 17%
- Very Easy | Sometimes vote: 16% | No, never vote: 15%

Questions and Responses

QUESTION

11

How would you rate the voting process?

REFLECTION

Overall, young adults appear to find the voting process to be generally easy. Combined with the large portion who rated it as Neutral, 80% of young voters said they had no trouble with the voting process. Despite this perception, a significant number of those who find voting easy do not actually vote. Among those who identified voting as Very Easy, 15% never vote and just 16% sometimes vote. Interestingly, the likelihood of voting is remarkably similar among those who identified it as Difficult and those who chose Very Easy.

Reflecting the recurring prominence of neutrality in this study, the highest percentage of occasional voters and the highest percentage of non-voters identified ease of voting as Neutral. These results seem to indicate that the perceived difficulty of the voting process has very little effect on whether young adults actually vote or not.

Questions and Responses

QUESTION

12

Please rate your level of agreement with each statement. "I would vote if..."

OVERVIEW

A) an issue I cared about was on the ballot.



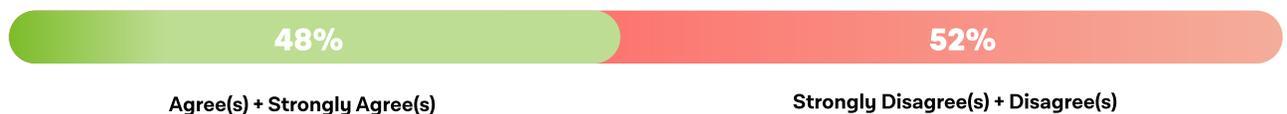
B) I had more information.



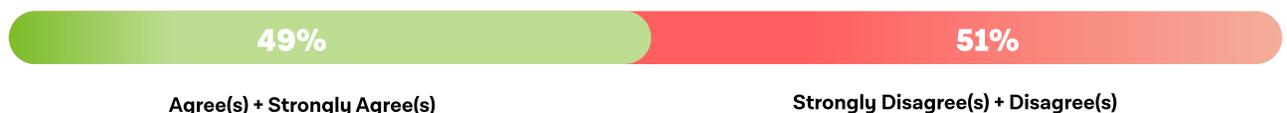
C) someone working on a campaign contacted me directly.



D) I met or spoke with a candidate.



E) I always had the day off.



Questions and Responses

QUESTION

12

Please rate your level of agreement with each statement. “I would vote if...”

REFLECTION

One clear highlight in this section is the 70% of respondents who generally agreed that they would vote if they had more information about candidates and issues. Close behind is the 69% of participants who generally agreed that they would be more likely to vote if an issue they cared about was on the ballot.

In contrast, the highest level of general disagreement was seen in response to likelihood of voting if contacted directly by someone from a campaign. Apparently, young adults want to be educated and well informed but not contacted. In fact, direct contact with an actual candidate seemed almost equally likely to encourage voting or to discourage voting.

Interestingly, despite lobbying efforts and campaigns to support election day holidays, having the day off was perceived to have almost no difference in encouraging voting. In fact, the balance was tipped to the negative, with only 49% agreeing that they'd be more likely to vote if they always had the day off.

Questions and Responses

QUESTION

13

What issue(s) would inspire you to vote?

HIGHLIGHT

This was a write-in question. Arranged from highest frequency of appearance, responses included:

- 32: Health or healthcare
- 25: Women's rights or issues
- 18: Education
- 16: Abortion
- 14: Taxes
- 12: Gun control or rights
- 10: Climate

REFLECTION

Many of the most frequently mentioned issues are also media priorities—topics that are often referenced and discussed in current politics and on the news. In other words, the political issues that impact young voters are the same issues the rest of the country sees as relevant.

For comparison, reference a 2020 Gallup poll that ranked the importance of different political issues to American adults. Starting with the most important issues, the top ten were: healthcare, terrorism and national security, gun policy, education, economy, immigration, climate change, abortion, the distribution of income and wealth in the U.S., and the federal budget deficit.

However, the one issue from this study that is not reflected on the top of the Gallup list is women's rights or issues. This difference could potentially be attributed to the high percentage of female participants in this study.

Questions and Responses

QUESTION

14

What's most likely to make you vote for a certain candidate?

HIGHLIGHT

This is a write-in question. Highest frequency responses include:

- 29: Nothing
- 29: People
- 25: Candidate
- 23: Vote
- 23: Care
- 23: Good

REFLECTION

It is perhaps notable that one of the most frequently selected responses to this question is Nothing. In keeping with young voters' lack of interest in connecting directly with candidates, this may indicate that it is indeed the issues that matter most, not those being elected.

Questions and Responses

QUESTION

15

Do you...

OVERVIEW

15.a. consider yourself to be politically active?



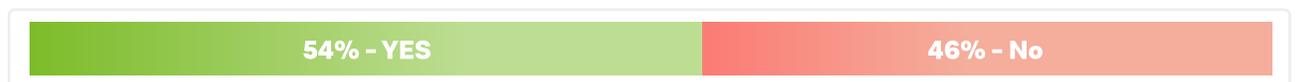
15b. follow political news?



15c. follow campaigns?



15d. discuss political issues with friends/family?



Questions and Responses

QUESTION

15

Do you...

HIGHLIGHTS

Segmenting based off of Q6: Ideologically, how would you identify yourself?

Consider yourself to be politically active

- Conservative | Yes: 22% | No: 78%
- Neutral | Yes: 19% | No: 81%
- Liberal | Yes: 34% | No: 66%

Follow political news

- Conservative | Yes: 31% | No: 69%
- Neutral | Yes: 44% | No: 56%
- Liberal | Yes: 51% | No: 49%

Follow campaigns

- Conservative | Yes: 31% | No: 69%
- Neutral | Yes: 24% | No: 76%
- Liberal | Yes: 37% | No: 63%

Discuss political issues with friends/family

- Conservative | Yes: 53% | No: 47%
- Neutral | Yes: 54% | No: 46%
- Liberal | Yes: 54% | No: 46%

Questions and Responses

QUESTION

15

Do you...

HIGHLIGHTS

Segmenting based off Q9: Does your vote count?

Consider yourself politically active

- Yes | Yes: 33% | No: 67%
- No | Yes: 12% | No: 88%

Follow political news

- Yes | Yes: 54% | No: 56%
- No | Yes: 30% | No: 70%

Follow campaigns

- Yes | Yes: 37% | No: 63%
- No | Yes: 16% | No: 84%

Discuss political issues with friends/family

- Yes | Yes: 66% | No: 34%
- No | Yes: 38% | No: 62%

REFLECTION

A majority 76% of participants don't consider themselves to be politically active. This lack of political investment translates into low percentages of young adult interest in political news and campaigns as well. Only willingness to discuss political issues with friends and family reaches slightly into the positive range at 54%.

Questions and Responses

QUESTION

15

Do you...

An overall 78% of respondents always or sometimes vote in elections. A strong 70% indicated they would vote if they have more information about candidates and issues. It's interesting, then, that these same voters are not politically active.

The interest of voters draws a sharp line at activism. Young adults will vote, they are willing to discuss topics, and they even follow the news somewhat. But personal engagement with a candidate or politics in general is plainly aversive for this group.

It is paradoxical that for a generation that desires education before voting, young adults are largely apathetic about getting that information. Political involvement is limited to the voting booth and personal conversations.

This study suggests that young adults with a liberal ideology are the most politically involved. Though not quite an overwhelming lead, liberals have the highest frequencies in each category. Particularly when following political news and discussing politics with friends and family, liberals squeak by with a 51% and 54% majority, respectively.

It is hard to say if these comparatively higher percentages is due to more intense commitment and political fervor. Gallup research has noted that supporters of the ideology/party not currently running the White House often have more political fervor at the time than the opposing party. This theory could account for the higher levels of indifference conservatives indicate when it comes to following political news and discussing those issues. With the conservative party in the White House through 2020, they may not feel the same sense of urgency that liberals may be experiencing. Likewise, lack of political affiliation is unsurprisingly common among those disinterested in being politically active or following campaign news.

Overall political engagement decreases among those who don't believe their votes count. These results suggest that young adult political activism requires a modicum of hope.

Questions and Responses

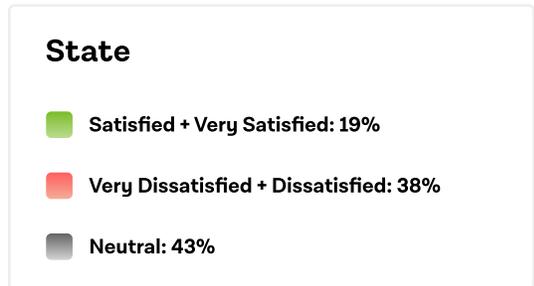
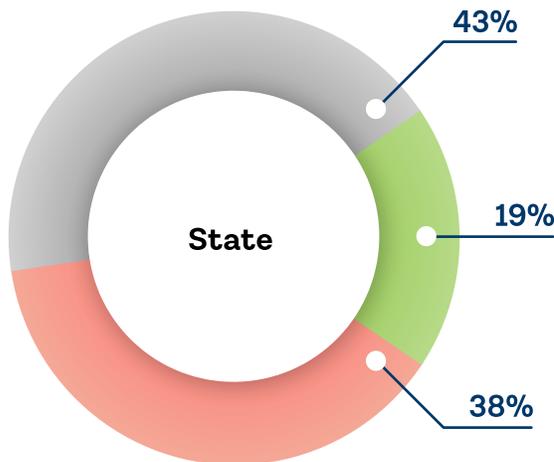
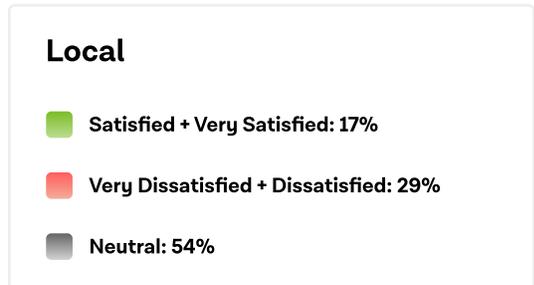
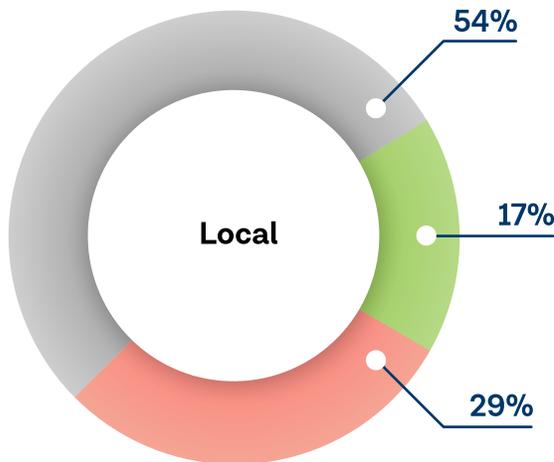
QUESTION

16

Overall, how satisfied are you with how the government operates at each of the levels below?

OVERVIEW

To simplify result review, Very Dissatisfied and Dissatisfied are combined, and Satisfied and Very Satisfied percentages are also combined.

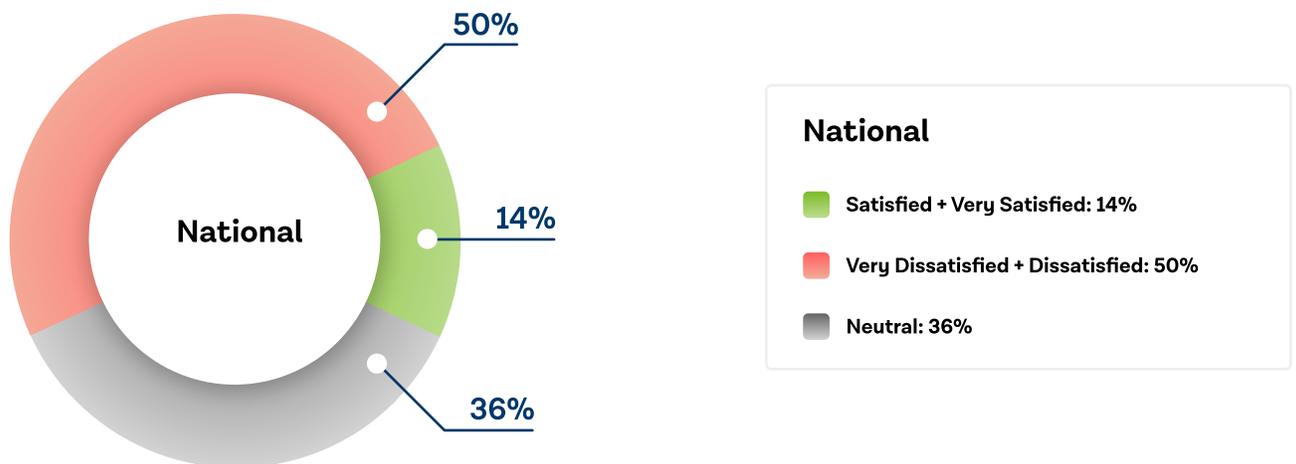


Questions and Responses

QUESTION

16

Overall, how satisfied are you with how the government operates at each of the levels below?



REFLECTION

The highest overall satisfaction levels for most young adult voters is found at the state government level. While 19% is hardly a high approval rate, states appear to be satisfying participants slightly more than local governments (17% satisfaction) or national governments (14% satisfaction).

From the lowest to the highest levels of government, dissatisfaction increases progressively — 29% locally, 38% at the state level, and 50% general dissatisfaction at the national level. Interestingly, local government has the lowest level of dissatisfaction, but not the highest level of satisfaction.

These numbers closely reflect the results of question eight, which noted increased voting participation at the national level as compared with state and local elections. Whether high dissatisfaction leads to increased voting or increased voting interest has led to greater dissatisfaction with the election outcome, it appears that the relationship between these two variables is an intriguing topic for future study.

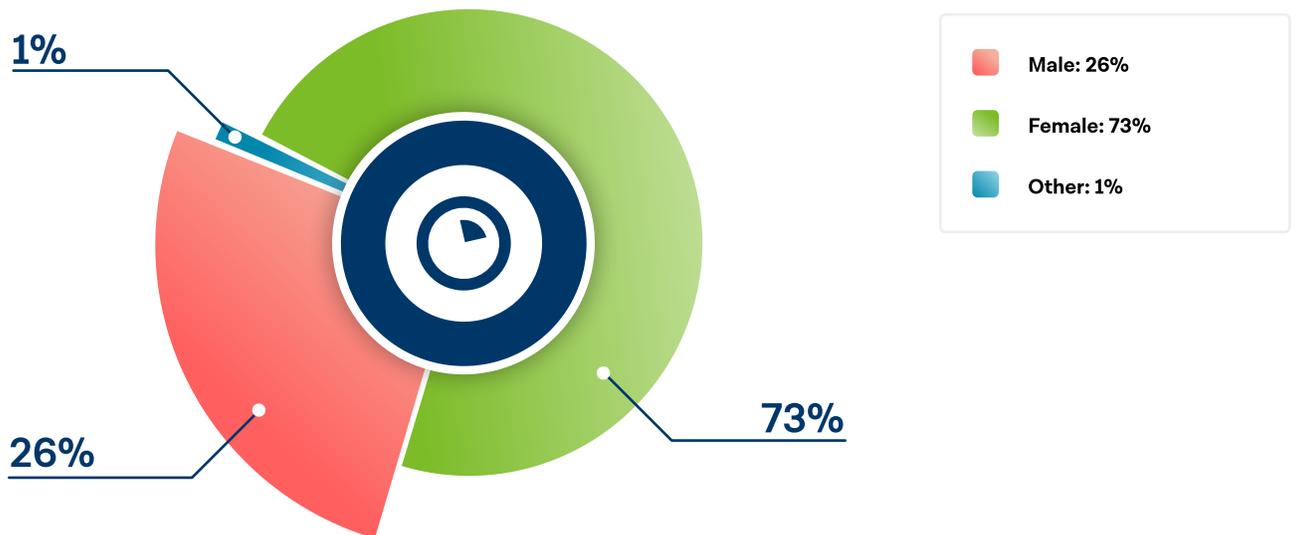
Questions and Responses

QUESTION

17

Gender: How do you identify?

OVERVIEW



HIGHLIGHTS

Segmenting Q4: Do you vote in elections? by gender:

- Sometimes | Male: 61% | Female: 64% | Other: 50%
- No, never | Male: 39% | Female: 36% | Other: 50%

Segmenting Q6: Ideologically, how would you identify yourself? by gender:

- Conservative+ | Male: 27% | Female: 21% | Other: 0%
- Neutral | Male: 51% | Female: 51% | Other: 25%
- Liberal+ | Male: 21% | Female: 28% | Other: 75%

Questions and Responses

QUESTION

17

Gender: How do you identify?

HIGHLIGHTS

Segmenting Q9: Do you believe your vote counts? by gender:

- Yes | Male: 51% | Female: 62% | Other: 25%
- No | Male: 49% | Female: 38% | Other: 75%

Segmenting Q15: Do you...

Consider yourself to be politically active

- Yes | Male: 35% | Female: 21%
- No | Male: 65% | Female: 79%

Follow political news

- Yes | Male: 49% | Female: 42%
- No | Male: 51% | Female: 58%

Follow campaigns

- Yes | Male: 33% | Female: 37%
- No | Male: 67% | Female: 73%

Discuss political issues with family/friends

- Yes | Male: 49% | Female: 56%
- No | Male: 56% | Female: 44%

Questions and Responses

QUESTION

17

Gender: How do you identify?

REFLECTION

Approximately three out of four participants identified as female. The comparison between males who vote and females who vote is very similar. Results indicate that females vote 3% more than males. At 64% and 61%, the numbers show that both male and female participants were more likely to vote occasionally than never to vote at all.

Males respondents were generally more conservative, with those identifying as Female or Other more liberal. Male and female participants evenly split the neutral ideology group. At 62%, females have the strongest belief that their votes count. However, results of question 15 suggest that males are much more politically engaged. Females indicate a slightly higher level of political engagement than males only when it comes to a willingness to discuss political issues with friends and family.

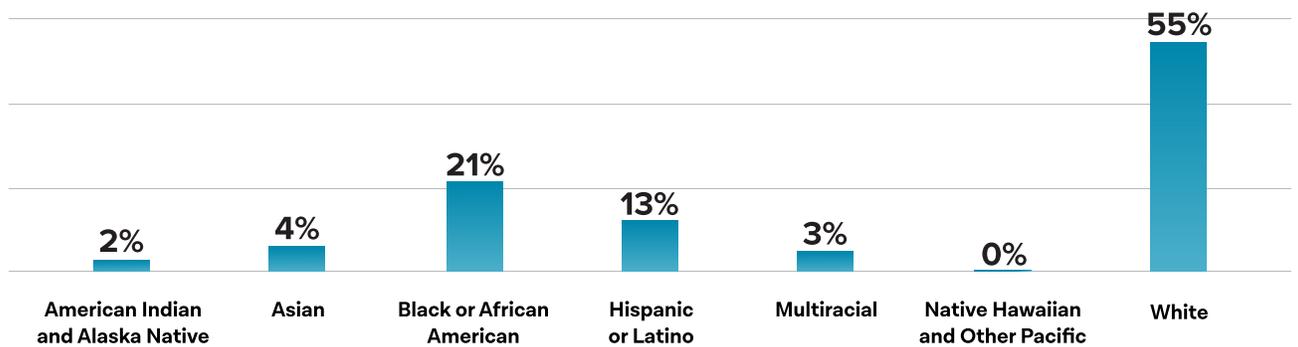
Questions and Responses

QUESTION

18

Race/Ethnic Background: How do you identify?

OVERVIEW



HIGHLIGHTS

Each answer option segmented by Q9: Do you believe your vote counts?

- American Indian and Alaska Native | Yes: 30% | No: 70%
- Asian | Yes: 68% | No: 32%
- Black or African American | Yes: 53% | No: 47%
- Hispanic or Latino | Yes: 64% | No: 36%
- Multiracial | Yes: 79% | No: 21%
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander: | Yes: 50% | No: 50%
- White | Yes: 59% | No: 41%

Questions and Responses

QUESTION

18

Race/Ethnic Background: How do you identify?

REFLECTION

Examining results by ethnicity, those who identified as Multiracial expressed the highest level of optimism (79%) that their votes count, followed by those who identified as Asian (68%) and Hispanic or Latino (64%).

Interestingly, those who identified as members of the two groups with the highest participation (White, Black or African American) had nearly split opinions about whether their votes count. While both groups believed at a percent just above 50%, the positive percentage of White respondents (59%) is noticeably higher than the positive percentage of Black or African American respondents (53%).

On the less optimistic side, the outlier is the group of participants who identified as American Indian and Alaska Native. This group was the only one in which the belief that votes don't count (70%) far outweighed the belief that they do (30%).

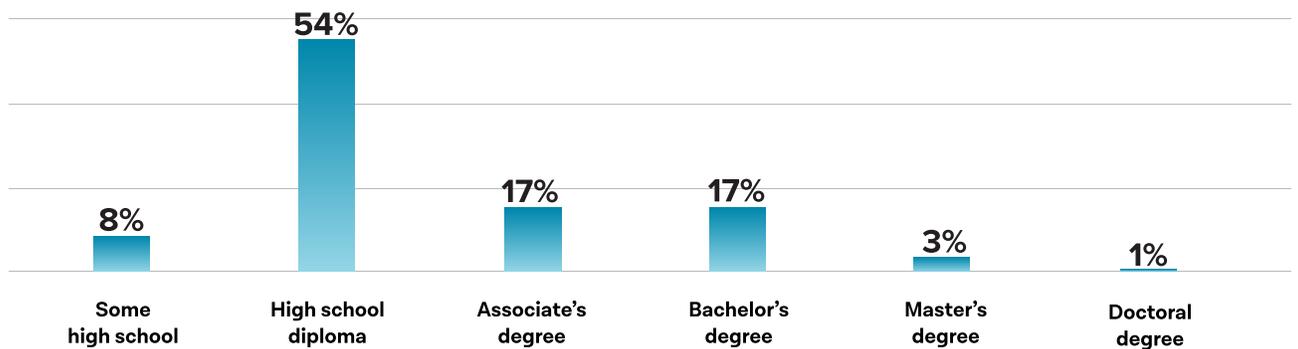
Questions and Responses

QUESTION

19

Education: What is your highest level of educational achievement?

OVERVIEW



HIGHLIGHTS

Each answer option segmented by Q4: Do you vote?

- Some high school | Sometimes vote: 43% | No, never vote: 57%
- High school diploma | Sometimes vote: 59% | No, never vote: 41%
- Associate's degree | Sometimes vote: 75% | No, never vote: 25%
- Bachelor's degree | Sometimes vote: 71% | No, never vote: 29%
- Master's degree | Sometimes vote: 77% | No, never vote: 23%
- Doctoral degree | Sometimes vote: 67% | No, never vote: 33%

Questions and Responses

QUESTION

19

Education: What is your highest level of educational achievement?

REFLECTION

In segmenting voting habits by participants' education level, an interesting pattern emerges. Those who identified their highest level of education as completing some or all of high school were noticeably less likely to vote than those with an associate's degree or more.

Interestingly, results do not show a consistently strong correlation between educational attainment and likelihood of voting: Those with a bachelor's degree are less likely to vote (Sometimes vote: 71%) than those with an associate's degree (75%), and those with a doctoral degree report that they are a full 10% less likely to vote than those with a master's degree (67% vs. 77%).

Those young adults with a doctoral degree, who make up only about one percent of the entire study population, also identify a higher rate of never voting (33%) than any other group with post-high school degrees.

Methodology

This study was conducted by SoGoSurvey between October 17, 2019, and October 25, 2019. The survey was administered to 1,385 adult (18+) participants in the United States. Those outside of the identified target age range (21 – 26 years old) were branched out of the survey, which brought the participant total to 974. Those who responded Yes, always to question four (Do you vote?) were exited from the survey. After question four, only the 442 participants who continued were those who indicated their frequency of voting as Sometimes or No, never. This report is based on the data collected from these 442 participants.

THE REFERENCES

- <https://www.sogosurvey.com/blog/>
- <http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2018/10/12-young-people-on-why-they-probably-wont-vote.html>
- <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2018/11/voter-registration-young-people-apathy.html>
- <https://www.npr.org/2018/09/10/645223716/on-the-sidelines-of-democracy-exploring-why-so-many-americans-dont-vote>
- <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/just-how-many-swing-voters-are-there/>
- <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/06/26/opinion/sunday/republican-platform-far-right.html>
- <https://www.people-press.org/2016/04/26/a-wider-ideological-gap-between-more-and-less-educated-adults/>

THE PLATFORM

This research was conducted using the SoGoSurvey Enterprise solution. Ready to learn more about the topics you care about? Learn more about how our platform can deliver the answers you need! Visit us at [SoGoSurvey.com](https://www.sogosurvey.com) or call us at +1 (800) 646-0520.

ABOUT SOGOSURVEY

Founded in 2013, SoGoSurvey answered the market demand for a robust survey platform delivering high-quality analysis at an affordable price. Today, clients worldwide trust SoGoSurvey with their most sensitive and powerful data, as they investigate employee engagement, customer experience, and more. We are the challengers, and we continue to expand our products and services to deliver the critical answers that inform positive change.