



This Washington Post-University of Maryland poll conducted by Ipsos was completed online Aug. 24-31, 2020, among a random national sample of 1,929 U.S. citizens. The sample was drawn through the Ipsos KnowledgePanel, an ongoing survey panel recruited through random sampling of U.S. households. Results have a margin of sampling error of plus or minus three percentage points. Sampling, field work and data processing were conducted by Ipsos of Washington, D.C.

(Full methodological details at the end of this document.)

*= less than 0.5 percent

1. Which of these statements best describes you?

	You are ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN that you are registered to vote at your current address	You are PROBABLY registered, but there is a chance your registration has lapsed	You are NOT registered to vote at your current address	No opinion
8/31/20	82	3	12	3

2. What are the chances you will vote in the presidential election this fall?

	Absolutely certain to vote	Will probably vote	Chances are 50-50	Less than 50-50 chance	No opinion
8/31/20	78	7	5	10	*
8/31/20 RV	90	5	3	2	*

3. Thinking specifically about this fall's presidential election, if you vote, how would you prefer to cast your ballot?

	In person at a polling place	By mail	By dropping off your ballot at an election office, polling place or ballot box	No opinion
8/31/20	49	33	16	1
8/31/20 RV	51	32	17	*

4. And would you prefer to vote on Election Day or before Election Day?

	On Election Day	Before Election Day	No opinion
8/31/20	38	61	1
8/31/20	39	61	*

NET 3/4.

	----- On Election Day -----					----- Before Election Day -----					
	NET	In person	By mail	Drop off	No op.	NET	In person	By mail	Drop off	No op.	No op.
8/31/20	38	32	3	2	0	61	17	30	14	0	1
8/31/20 RV	39	34	2	2	*	61	17	29	15	0	*

5. (IF VOTED IN 2016) In the 2016 general election, how did cast your vote?

	In person at a polling place	By mail	By dropping off your ballot at an election office, polling place or ballot box	No opinion
8/31/20	75	20	5	0

6. (IF VOTED IN 2016) Was that on Election Day or before Election Day?

	On Election Day	Before Election Day	No opinion
8/31/20	59	41	*

NET 5/6.

	----- On Election Day -----					----- Before Election Day -----					
	NET	In person	By mail	Drop off	No op.	NET	In person	By mail	Drop off	No op.	No op.
8/31/20	59	57	1	1	0	41	17	19	4	*	*

7. Is your current address the same as your address in November 2016 or are you living at a different address?

	Same address	Different	No opinion
8/31/20	72	27	*

8. (IF SAME ADDRESS) Are you currently living in the same state as in November 2016, or are you living in a different state?

	Same state	Different state	No opinion
8/31/20	99	*	*

9. Have you ever voted by mail in any election, including absentee mail voting, or is this something you haven't done?

	Have voted by mail in the past	Have never voted by mail	No opinion
8/31/20	39	61	0

10. **This year**, have you tried to vote by mail or absentee mail in any election, such as a primary or special election?

	Yes	No	No opinion
8/31/20	32	67	*

11. (IF TRIED TO VOTE BY MAIL/ABSENTEE THIS YEAR) Did you encounter any of the following issues when trying to vote by mail or absentee this year?

8/31/20 -- Summary table

Yes	No	No opinion
-----	----	------------

a. Had trouble getting your ballot	4	95	*
b. Had trouble completing your ballot	1	98	1
c. Had trouble returning your ballot	2	97	1
d. Your ballot was rejected	1	98	1

NET 10/11.

---- Tried to vote by mail/absentee this year ----							
		Trouble	Trouble	Trouble		Didn't try	No
	NET	getting	completing	returning	Ballot	to vote	opinion
		ballot	ballot	ballot	rejected	by mail	
8/31/20	32	1	*	1	*	67	*

12. How well do you feel you understand the rules for voting in your state?

		----- Well -----		----- Not well -----			No
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not too well	Not well at all	opinion
8/31/20	88	50	37	12	8	4	1

13. As far as you know, which of the following best describes the way mail-in voting will be handled in your state this fall?

		Voters must contact their elections office to request a mail-in-ballot	All voters in your state will be automatically sent a ballot-request form	All voters in your state will be automatically sent an election ballot	Not sure /No opinion
8/31/20		34	13	14	38

14. As far as you know, what is the deadline for mail-in ballots to be counted in your state?

		Must be postmarked by Election Day	Must be postmarked the day before Election Day	Must be received by Election Day	[In Louisiana:] Must be received the day before Election Day	Not sure /No opinion
8/31/20		27	7	18	*	49

15. As far as you know, does your state allow any eligible citizen to vote in an election by mail/absentee, or does your state only allow people to vote by mail/absentee under certain conditions, such as if they are disabled or traveling on Election Day?

		State allows any eligible citizen to vote by mail/absentee	State only allows mail/absentee voting under certain conditions	Not sure/No opinion
8/31/20		47	12	41

16. Some states require voters to provide a reason for voting by mail instead of in-person, such as being elderly, disabled or being out of town on Election Day. Do you think fear of being infected with the coronavirus while voting should or should NOT qualify as a reason to allow someone to vote by mail?

		Fear of coronavirus infection should qualify as a reason to vote by mail	Fear of coronavirus infection should NOT qualify as a reason to vote by mail	No opinion
8/31/20		74	25	2

17. If you vote in this fall's presidential election, how confident are you that your vote will be counted accurately?

	----- Confident -----			----- Less confident -----			No op.
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not too confident	Not confident at all	
8/31/20	80	41	39	19	12	7	1

18. Regardless of the voting rules in your state, how confident would you be about your ballot being counted accurately if you voted in the following ways?

8/31/20 -- Summary table

	----- Confident -----			----- Less confident -----			No op.
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not too	Not at all	
a. If you voted in person on Election Day	90	62	28	8	5	3	2
b. If you voted in person early	86	50	35	13	8	5	1
c. If you voted by mail or absentee mail	65	28	37	34	20	14	1

19. Thinking about the state where you live -- how confident are you that the votes for president in your state will be counted accurately this year?

	----- Confident -----			----- Less confident -----			No op.
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not too confident	Not confident at all	
8/31/20	82	37	45	17	12	5	1

20. Thinking about the United States overall, how confident are you that the votes for president across the country will be counted accurately this year?

	----- Confident -----			----- Less confident -----			No op.
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not too confident	Not confident at all	
8/31/20	62	16	46	37	27	10	1

Compare to:

How confident are you that the votes for president across the country will be accurately counted this year: very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident or not confident at all?

	--- More confident ---			----- Less confident -----			No opinion
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not too	Not at all	
10/26/16*LV	71	43	29	28	15	13	1
9/8/16 LV	66	31	35	33	17	16	1
9/8/16	63	27	36	35	18	18	1
12/19/04**	71	43	28	29	16	13	0
10/27/04 LV	70	25	46	28	20	8	1

*2016 and earlier Post-ABC phone surveys

**"were accurately counted"

Questions 21-25 held for release.

26. Thinking about voter fraud - such as when a person votes multiple times or someone votes who is not eligible to vote - how often do you think this will happen in the presidential election this fall?

	----- Often -----			----- Not often -----			No
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Occasionally	Rarely	opinion
8/31/20	34	13	21	64	27	37	1

27. Thinking about voter suppression - when people are prevented from voting, even though they tried to vote and met all eligibility requirements - how often do you think this will happen in the presidential election this fall?

	----- Often -----			----- Not often -----			No
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Occasionally	Rarely	opinion
8/31/20	37	14	23	62	31	31	1

28. And how often do you think political campaigns try to discourage people from voting by promoting false information about the voting process?

	----- Often -----			----- Not often -----			No
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Occasionally	Rarely	opinion
8/31/20	54	27	26	45	28	17	1

Questions 29-30 held for release.

31. How do you feel about the possibility that you or someone in your immediate family might catch the coronavirus?

	----- Worried -----			----- Not worried -----			No
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not too worried	Not at all worried	opinion
8/31/20	60	19	41	39	27	12	1

Compare to:

	----- Worried -----			----- Not worried -----			Already caught	No
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not too	Not at all	it (vol.)	op
8/15/20*	65	31	34	29	15	14	5	*
7/15/20	66	33	33	29	17	12	5	1
5/28/20	63	30	33	35	22	13	2	*
3/25/20	69	30	39	30	20	10	1	*
3/13/20**RV	53	15	38	47	31	16	*	*

*Post/ABC phone surveys

**NBC/Wall Street Journal phone survey

32. Given the current situation with the coronavirus outbreak, how comfortable would you feel going to a polling place to vote in-person this fall?

	---- Comfortable ----			--- Uncomfortable ---			No
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Very	opinion
8/31/20	52	27	25	47	27	20	1

Compare to:

Even if you might not normally do all of the following, given the current situation with the coronavirus (covid-19) outbreak how comfortable would you feel doing any of the following? Going to a polling place to vote

	---- Comfortable ----			--- Uncomfortable ---			Refused
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Very	*
6/5/20*	45	20	25	55	28	27	*

*American Enterprise Institute

Given the current situation with the coronavirus outbreak, would you feel comfortable or uncomfortable doing each of the following? Going to a polling place to vote

	Comfortable doing this	Uncomfortable doing this	No answer
3/24/20*	33	66	1

*Pew Research Center

33. Would you support or oppose your state allowing any eligible citizen to vote by mail in the presidential election this fall?

	----- Support -----			----- Oppose -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
8/31/20	73	51	22	25	14	11	2

34. (IF SUPPORT) Which of the following methods would you prefer your state use to administer mail-in voting this fall?

	Have voters request a mail-in ballot from the elections office	Send a ballot- request form to all registered voters	Send a ballot to all registered voters	No opinion *
8/31/20	28	32	40	

NET 32/33.

	----- Support -----			Oppose	No opinion
	NET	Voters request mail-in ballot	Send request form to all voters	Send a ballot to all voters	
8/31/20	73	20	23	29	25

35. Earlier this summer, the U.S. Postal Service made changes to its operations to reduce costs, which slowed mail delivery in many areas. The Postal Service has now said it will reverse some of these changes and resume normal service. Do you think the cost-reduction changes were justified, or were they not justified?

	Cost-reduction changes <u>were</u> justified	Cost-reduction changes <u>were</u> <u>not</u> justified	No opinion
8/31/20	42	54	3

Questions 36-38 held for release.

39. When it comes to administering elections, how much do you think each of the following tries to accommodate what most citizens want?*

8/31/20 -- Summary table

	-Great deal/Good amt.-			- Not too much/At all -			No op.
	NET	A great deal	A good amount	NET	Not too much	Not at all	
a. Your state's governor	58	10	47	40	30	10	3
b. Your state's legislature	60	20	40	38	25	12	2
c. State election officials	64	14	49	34	26	8	3
d. Local election officials	70	20	50	27	20	7	3
e. President Trump	38	16	22	59	18	41	3
f. Congress	37	5	31	61	44	17	3

*For D.C. residents: a. "Your city's mayor" b. "Your city council" c. not displayed

40. Overall, do you think the way elections are carried out in the United States makes it easier for (White citizens) to vote, easier for (Black citizens) to vote, or are both groups treated equally?

	Easier for White citizens	Easier for Black citizens	Both are treated equally	No opinion
8/31/20	40	2	57	2

41. Overall, do you think the way elections are carried out in the United States makes it easier for (White non-Hispanic citizens) to vote, easier for (Hispanic citizens) to vote, or are both groups treated equally?

	Easier for White non-Hispanic citizens	Easier for Hispanic citizens	Both are treated equally	No opinion
8/31/20	41	2	55	1

42. In the past month, did you spend any time volunteering through or for any organization or association, or not?

	Yes	No	No opinion
8/31/20	12	87	1

43. During a typical month before March 1, 2020, when the coronavirus began spreading widely in the United States, did you spend any time volunteering through or for any organization or association, or not?

	Yes	No	No opinion
8/31/20	22	78	1

44. If your area needed election poll workers this fall, would you be willing to volunteer as a poll worker at an in-person voting location, or not willing?

	Willing	Not willing	No opinion
8/31/20	33	66	1

45. Just your best guess -- do you think enough votes will be counted by election night that the winner of the presidential election will be clear, or do you think it will take longer than that?

	Will be clear on election night	Will take longer than that	No opinion
8/31/20	33	66	2

46. (IF THINK IT WILL TAKE LONGER) How long do you think it will take before enough votes are counted to determine a clear winner?

	The day after Election Day	Two to three days after Election Day	Four to five days after Election Day	A week after Election Day	It will take longer than that	No op
8/31/20	19	30	12	22	16	1

NET 45/46.

	Will be clear on Election night	----- Day after	Will take longer than that	----- 2-3 days	4-5 days	A week	Longer	No op.	No opinion
		NET							

8/31/20 33 66 12 20 8 14 11 * 2

PARTYID. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as...

	A Democrat	A Republican	An independent	Other party	No op.
8/31/20	32	30	32	5	2

*** END ***

METHODOLOGICAL DETAILS

This poll was jointly sponsored and funded by The Washington Post, the University of Maryland’s Center for Democracy and Civic Engagement and Ipsos. The poll is a random sample of U.S. citizens living in the United States with small oversamples in Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, Ohio, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, South Carolina, Utah, Washington, West Virginia and Wisconsin. The sample was weighted to ensure citizens from oversampled states were represented in accordance with share of the overall U.S. population. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish.

The questionnaire was administered with the exact questions in the exact order as they appear in this document. Demographic questions are not shown. If a question was asked of a reduced base of the sample, a parenthetical preceding the question identifies the group asked. Phrases surrounded by parentheticals within questions indicate clauses that were randomly rotated for respondents.

Ipsos conducted sampling, interviewing and tabulation for the survey using the KnowledgePanel, a representative panel of adults age 18 and over living in the United States. KnowledgePanel members are recruited through probability sampling methods using address-based sampling. Panel members who do not have internet access are provided with a tablet and internet service.

This survey uses statistical weighting procedures to account for deviations in the survey sample from known population characteristics, which helps correct for differential survey participation and random variation in samples. The overall sample was weighted to match the demographic makeup of citizens age 18 or older in the U.S. by gender, age, race/ethnicity, education, household income, Census region, language proficiency and state groupings for oversampled states according the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS) and to residents in a metropolitan area according to the Current Population Survey.

The margin of sampling error for the overall sample including the design effect is plus or minus 2.5 percentage points. For results based on subgroups, the margin of sampling error may be higher. Note that sampling error is only one of many potential sources of error in this or any other public opinion poll.

All error margins have been adjusted to account for the survey’s design effect, which is 1.5. The design effect is a factor representing the survey’s deviation from a simple random sample and takes into account decreases in precision due to sample design and weighting procedures. Surveys that do not incorporate a design effect overstate their precision.

