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# Most Republicans Approve of Trump's Post-election Messaging, but About a Third Say It Has Been Wrong

*Partisans differ on whether social media companies' decisions had a major impact on the election*

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## How we did this

Pew Research Center's [American News Pathways](#) project conducted this study to understand how Americans are reacting to the news and information they are encountering in the wake of the 2020 presidential election.

For this analysis, we surveyed 12,648 U.S. adults between Nov. 18-29, 2020. Everyone who completed the survey is a member of the Center's American Trends Panel (ATP), an online survey panel that is recruited through national, random sampling of residential addresses. This way nearly all U.S. adults have a chance of selection. The survey is weighted to be representative of the U.S. adult population by gender, race, ethnicity, partisan affiliation, education and other categories. Read more about the [ATP's methodology](#).

See here to read more about [the questions used for this report](#) and the report's [methodology](#).

Visit our [interactive data tool](#) to access the questions included in this report, as well as content about the coronavirus outbreak and the 2020 presidential election.

# Most Republicans Approve of Trump's Post-election Messaging, but About a Third Say It Has Been Wrong

*Partisans differ on whether social media companies' decisions had a major impact on the election*

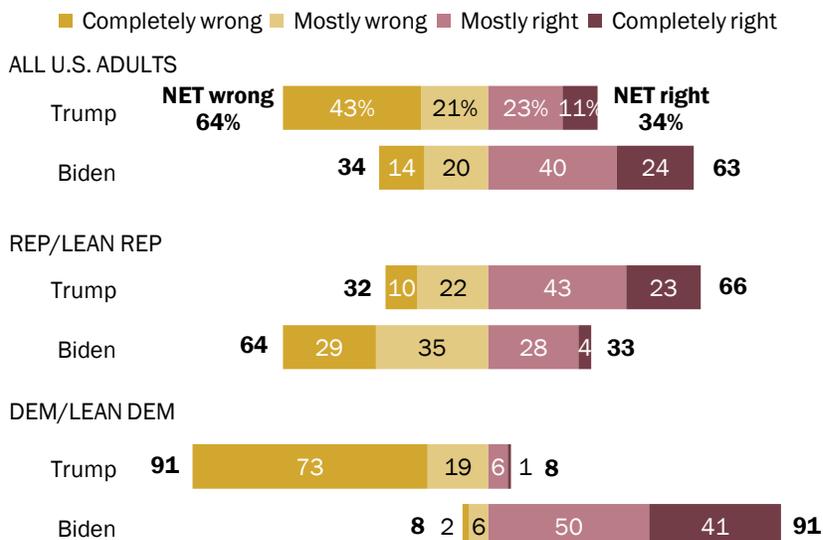
In this starkly atypical year, the aftermath of the 2020 presidential election has been similarly out of the ordinary – with President Donald Trump [thus far refusing to concede](#) to President-elect Joe Biden. But a new Pew Research Center survey finds familiar partisan patterns in how Republicans and Democrats are reacting to the latest news developments, including both the unfolding political drama and the autumn surge in coronavirus cases across the country.

Americans across the partisan divide have drastically different opinions about Trump's and Biden's public statements since polls closed Nov. 3. Majorities within each party approve of the post-election messaging their party's candidate has been delivering and disapprove of the opponent's message. These opinions are particularly common among Democrats and independents who lean toward the Democratic Party, about nine-in-ten of whom say Biden has been delivering the right message and Trump the wrong one.

But the survey, conducted Nov. 18-29 as part of the Center's [American News Pathways project](#), also finds that Republicans are more divided

## Partisans largely approve of their party's candidate's message after the election, although about one-third of Republicans say Trump's has been wrong

*% of U.S. adults who think each candidate has been delivering the \_\_\_\_ message to the country following the presidential election*



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.

"Most Republicans Approve of Trump's Post-election Messaging, but About a Third Say It Has Been Wrong"

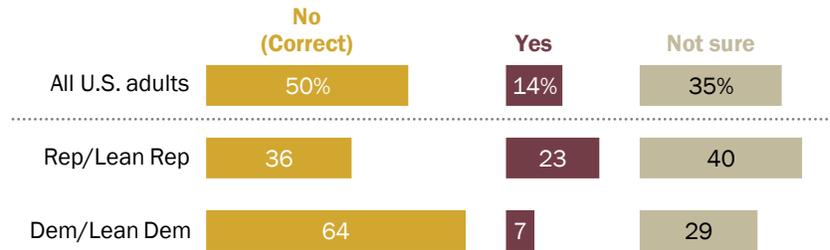
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than Democrats. Roughly a third of Republicans and independents who lean Republican say that Trump has been delivering the *wrong* message since the election – and a nearly identical share say that Biden has been delivering the right one. And even though Trump has [consistently claimed that widespread voter fraud](#) was responsible for his defeat, roughly four-in-ten Republicans say allegations of voter fraud do not deserve more attention.

Half of U.S. adults know that in modern history, there has not been a losing presidential candidate who has declined to publicly concede prior to Inauguration Day. Again, however, there is a large gap between the parties: Roughly two-thirds of Democrats (64%) correctly answer this question, compared with 36% of Republicans. Republicans, on the other hand, are more likely to say that there *has* been a losing candidate who has not conceded in modern history (23%, vs. 7% of Democrats) or that they are not sure whether this has happened (40% vs. 29%).

### Democrats much more likely to recognize that all losing presidential candidates in modern U.S. history have publicly conceded

*As far as you know, has there been a losing presidential candidate in modern history who has not publicly conceded the election prior to Inauguration Day?*



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.

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## Majorities of both parties say their most-used news sources covered the election well, but Democrats are much more likely to praise the media in general

After an election that [captured the attention](#) of a large majority of Americans, most people give their main news sources positive marks on a range of post-election coverage areas, such as the voting process and each candidate's reaction. In each case, however, Democrats are far more likely than Republicans to say their news sources did a good job. For instance, 50% of Democrats say the news sources they turn to most did "very well" at explaining the process of counting votes after polls closed, compared with 16% of Republicans who say the same.

The partisan gaps are even larger when it comes to assessments of the news media's election coverage in general. While roughly seven-in-ten Democrats (69%) say that the news media overall provided "largely accurate" coverage of the election after the polls closed, just 18% of Republicans agree.

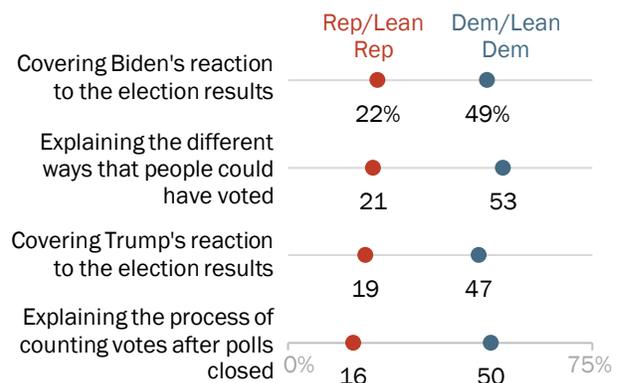
That said, the survey did not find evidence of particular dissatisfaction among Republican Fox News viewers following the network's election-night decision to call Arizona for Biden – a decision [publicly criticized by Trump and others in the party](#). (Biden did [ultimately win that state](#).)

Republicans who say Fox News is a major source of election news for them actually give slightly more positive marks to their main news sources' election coverage compared with other Republicans who use a mix of the sources asked about (see [Chapter 2](#) for more details).

Republicans' news sources [continue to be closely linked](#) with their views on a range of topics. For example, Republicans who rely only on Fox News and/or talk radio (among eight major news sources asked about) for their post-election news are much more likely than Republicans who use other major sources – or at least a wider variety of major news sources – to say Trump's post-election messaging has been right. This Fox News/talk radio group within the GOP also is far more likely to say that allegations of voter fraud deserve more attention.

### Democrats rate media more highly on various types of post-election coverage

*% of U.S. adults who say the news sources they turn to most often did **very well** at each in coverage of Election Day and its aftermath*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.  
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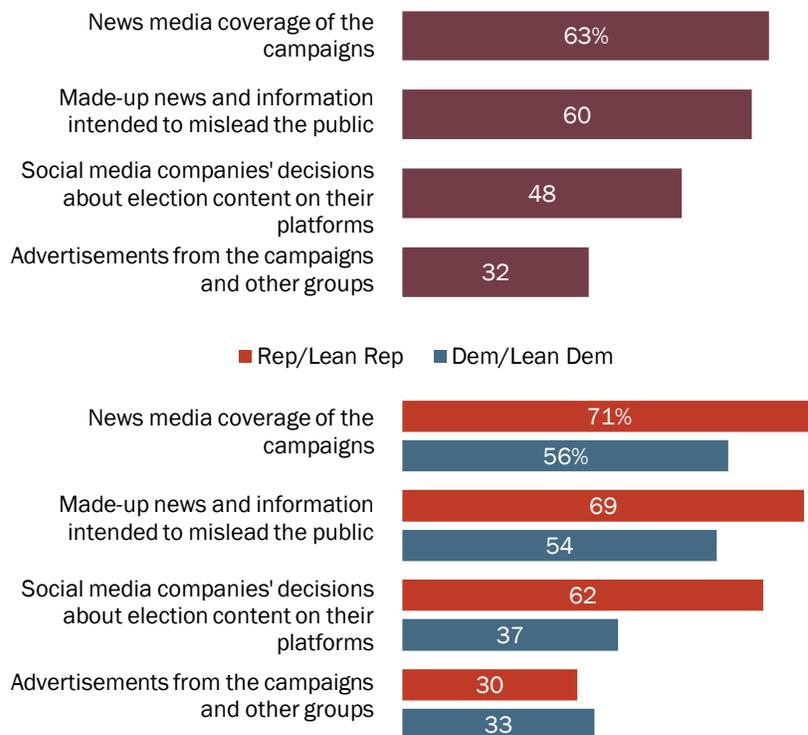
## Republicans more critical of social media companies' decisions about election content

A majority of Americans (60%) say made-up news and information had a major impact on the 2020 presidential election, though Democrats and Republicans both overwhelmingly see it as targeting their own party (see [Chapter 3](#)). Roughly the same portion (63%) say news media coverage in general had a major impact, while fewer (48%) feel the decisions social media companies made about election content on their platforms greatly affected the election and about a third (32%) feel this way about campaign advertisements.

In three of these four areas – news coverage, made-up news and information, and social media companies' decisions – Republicans sense a greater impact on the election than do Democrats. But the biggest partisan gap emerges over the impact of social media companies' decisions: 62% of Republicans say these decisions had a major impact, compared with 37% of Democrats.

### Republicans more likely than Democrats to say social media companies' decisions impacted the election

% of U.S. adults who say each had a **major impact** on the presidential election



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.

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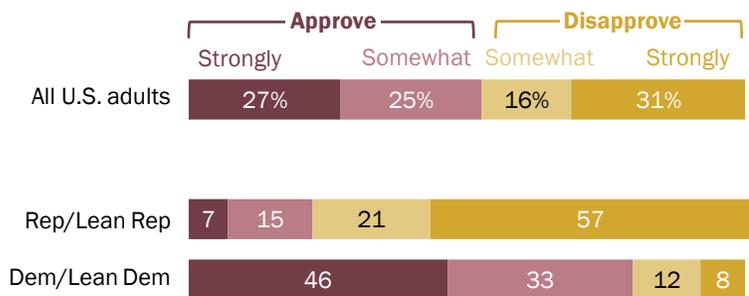
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Perhaps tied to this disconnect is that Republicans are far more likely than Democrats to express disapproval of social media companies blocking or flagging election news and information on their platforms that they judge to be inaccurate or misleading.

Overall, Americans are largely divided between approving (51%) and disapproving (47%) of such actions. But a large majority of Republicans disapprove (78%), while an identical portion of Democrats approve. These findings come after [social media companies flagged posts by Trump](#) related to the election for being false or disputed.

## Democrats far more approving of social media companies flagging political content they judge to be inaccurate

*% of U.S. adults who say they \_\_\_ of social media companies blocking or flagging news and information about political campaigns and candidates on their platforms that they judge to be inaccurate or misleading*



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.

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## Despite a surge in cases, COVID-19 views go largely unchanged

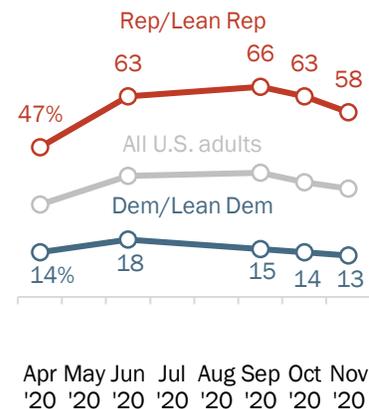
In addition to the election, the survey also gauged attention to the coronavirus outbreak as [the number of COVID-19 cases surged](#) throughout the country. The share of U.S. adults who were paying close attention to the pandemic did not change between mid-October through late November, with 37% following the outbreak very closely. The [partisan gap that increased throughout the spring and summer](#) also remains, with about half of Democrats (47%) following COVID-19 news very closely, compared with 28% of Republicans.

Americans overall are about evenly split on whether the outbreak has been overblown (34%) or underplayed (30%), but large partisan gaps on this question persist. Republicans (58%) are much more likely than Democrats (13%) to say that the pandemic has been exaggerated, though the share of Republicans who take this position has fallen by 5 percentage points in recent weeks.

Relatedly, about twice as many Democrats (45%) as Republicans (21%) say they greatly changed their Thanksgiving plans this year due to the outbreak (see [Chapter 4](#)).

## Partisan gaps persist in views of whether COVID-19 has been exaggerated

*% of U.S. adults who say the coronavirus outbreak has been made a bigger deal than it really is*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.  
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# 1. Partisans disagree on post-election messages from Biden and Trump, attention to voter fraud charges

In the aftermath of Joe Biden’s victory in the 2020 presidential election – and President Donald Trump’s refusal to concede as of publication on Dec. 15 – slightly more than half of all Americans say they have been closely following the candidates’ public statements since the polls closed on Nov. 3.

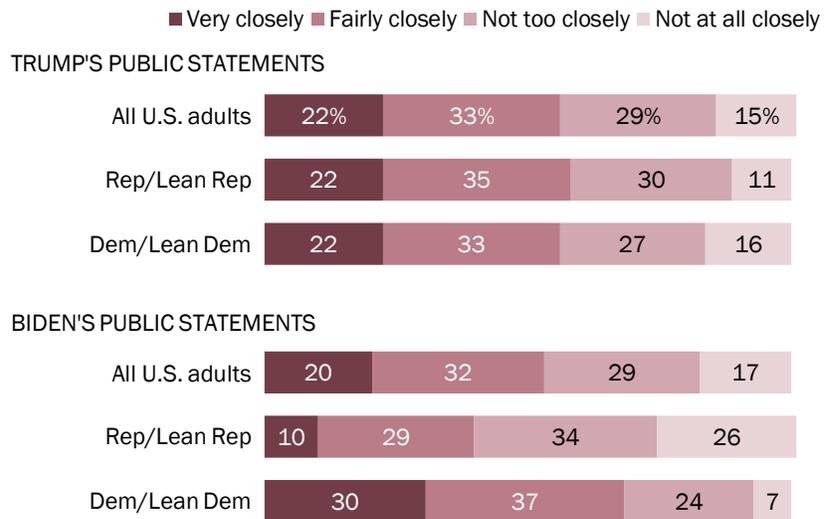
But while members of both parties are paying about the same amount of attention to the statements from Trump, who continues [to publicly challenge the election](#), there is a significant partisan difference in the level of attention to statements by President-elect Biden, [who has been assembling](#) and announcing his new administration.

Overall, 55% of U.S. adults say they have been following Trump’s post-election statements “very” or “fairly” closely, with attention about evenly distributed among Republicans (58%) and Democrats (56%). About the same portion of U.S. adults (53%) say they’ve been following Biden’s statements very or fairly closely. But in this case, there is a major gap between Republicans (39% very or fairly closely following) and Democrats (67%).

There also are wide gaps in how the two candidates’ messages are being evaluated. About one-third (34%) of all Americans say Trump has been delivering a “completely” or “mostly” right message to the country since the election; 64% say it has been completely or mostly wrong. The

## Similar shares of Democrats and Republicans have been following Trump’s public statements since the election; Republicans paying less attention to Biden’s

% of U.S. adults who have been following \_\_\_\_ since the election ...



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer not shown.  
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.  
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numbers are reversed for Biden, with about two-thirds (63%) saying he has generally been delivering the right message and 34% saying it has been mostly or completely wrong.

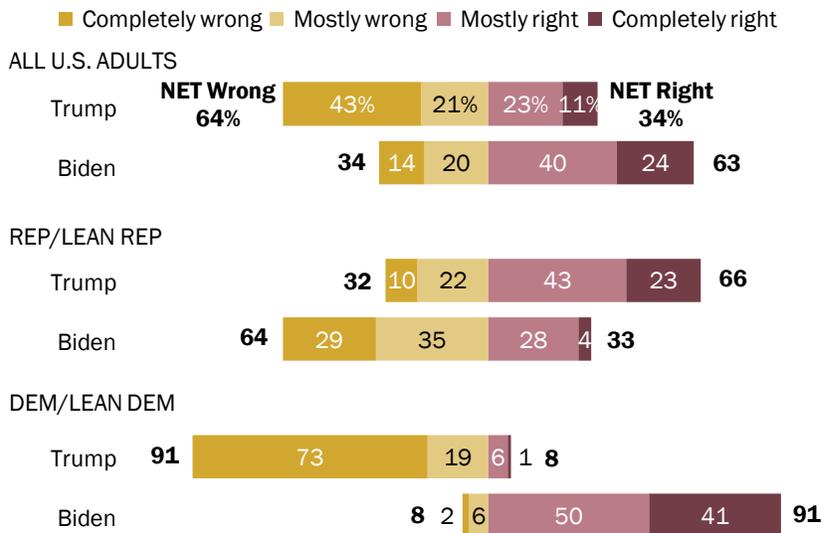
This is not the first time this year that Americans overall have expressed negative views about Trump’s messaging on key events. In an [early September survey](#), 57% said he had been delivering a completely or mostly wrong message to the country about the coronavirus pandemic. And in a [survey in early June](#), 60% said he had been delivering the wrong message in response to the demonstrations that followed the police killing of George Floyd.

As expected, Democrats and Republicans are each much more likely to approve of their party’s candidate’s message and disapprove of their opponent’s since the election. But while Democrats are nearly unanimous in their approval of Biden’s message and disapproval of Trump’s – 91% take each position – about a third of Republicans express disapproval of Trump’s message, and a similar share approve of Biden’s.

Specifically, among Republicans and those who lean Republican, 66% say Trump’s message has been completely or mostly right, while 32% say it has been mostly or completely wrong. And while the majority of Republicans (64%) disapprove of Biden’s message, 33% express approval – about the same portion who disapprove of Trump’s public statements.

**Partisans largely approve of their party’s candidate’s message after the election, although about one-third of Republicans say Trump’s has been wrong**

*% of U.S. adults who think each candidate has been delivering the \_\_\_\_ message to the country following the presidential election*



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer not shown.  
 Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.  
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## Who are the Republicans who most disapprove of Trump's messaging since the polls have closed?

Certain demographic characteristics and news consumption habits set apart the 32% of Republicans who diverge from the party majority on Trump's post-election messaging. (This group largely overlaps with the Republicans who approve of Biden's messaging: Among Republicans who say they disapprove of Trump's message, 64% of them also say they approve of Biden's.)

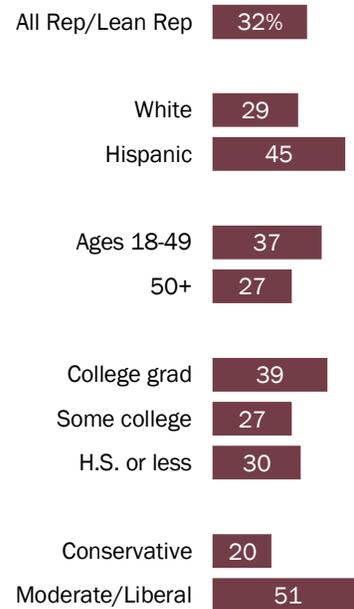
One of the clearest dividing lines among Republicans on this issue is their ideology within the party. Republicans who describe their political ideology as moderate or liberal are far more likely to disapprove of Trump's messaging than conservative Republicans (51% vs. 20%).

Education and age also factor in, though to a lesser degree. Republicans with at least a college degree are more likely than those with less education to say Trump's message has been wrong (39% vs. 30% of those with a high school education or less). Similarly, 37% of Republicans ages 18 to 49 say Trump is delivering the wrong message, compared with 27% of Republicans ages 50 and older.

And while they make up only a small part of the GOP overall, just under half of Hispanic Republicans (45%) say Trump's message has been mostly or completely wrong.

## Among Republicans, those who are younger, have college degrees more likely to say Trump is sending wrong message post-election

*% of Republicans/Republican leaners who generally think Trump has been delivering the **wrong message** to the country following the presidential election*



Note: White adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race. Black Republicans could not be analyzed due to sample size limitations.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.

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There also are significant gaps in Republicans' views of Trump's messaging based on which media sources they turn to most. The [American News Pathways project](#) asked respondents about eight major news sources that they may have used after polls closed on Election Day, and Republicans are divided into three main groups: those who say only sources with conservative-leaning audiences (Fox News and talk radio) are among their major sources for news after the election; those who rely on a mix of sources that include Fox News and/or talk radio and other outlets; and those who rely only on sources that do not include either Fox News or talk radio (i.e., sources with left-leaning or politically mixed audiences). There also is a fourth group that uses none of the eight major sources asked about (see [Appendix](#) for details).

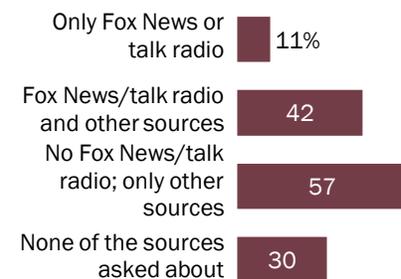
Republicans who rely only on Fox News and talk radio are much less likely than Republicans in the other two media groups to disapprove of Trump's message. Just 11% of Republicans who turn only to Fox News and/or talk radio say Trump's messaging has been mostly or completely wrong. That disapproval figure quadruples among Republicans in the mixed-sources group, to 42%. And it becomes the majority view (57%) among Republicans who rely on major sources other than Fox News or talk radio.

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### Among Republicans, media diet linked with substantial differences in views of Trump's message

*% of Republicans/Republican leaners who generally think Trump has been delivering the **wrong message** to the country following the presidential election*

#### Among those who use \_\_\_ as major sources for political news



Note: The Fox News cable channel and talk radio shows such as Sean Hannity or Rush Limbaugh have audiences that lean Republican and conservative. The other sources asked about include: MSNBC, CNN, NPR, New York Times, Washington Post, and ABC, CBS or NBC network television news. See Appendix for more details.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.

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## Democrats and Republicans differ widely on newsworthiness of voter fraud allegations

Since the polls closed on Nov. 3, Trump's central message has [featured allegations that the results were tainted by voter fraud – despite no credible evidence of such widespread fraud](#). There are clear differences between the parties on how much attention those allegations warrant.

Overall, a plurality of Americans (42%) say those allegations have received too much attention, while 31% say they have received too little attention and 25% say they have received about the right amount of attention.

More than half of Republicans (58%) say those allegations have received too little

attention, while about one-in-five (18%) say they have received too much and 22% say the level of attention has been about right. On the other hand, nearly two-thirds of Democrats (63%) say the allegations have gotten too much attention, with only 8% saying they have not received enough and 28% saying it's been about right.

Within party, differences emerge based on media diet. Among the Republicans who only used Fox News or talk radio as major sources for post-election news, only 6% say there has been too much attention paid to the fraud allegations, compared with 78% who say there has been too little attention. In the group that use other sources in addition to Fox News and/or talk radio, 26% say there has been too much attention, while 45% say there has been too little. And among Republicans who don't rely on Fox News or talk radio and only rely on other sources for their post-

### Partisan divide on amount of attention given to voter fraud allegations, agreement on attention to Trump not conceding

% of U.S. adults who think that \_\_\_\_ have been getting ...

ALLEGATIONS OF VOTER FRAUD	Too much attention	Too little attention	About the right amount
All U.S. adults	42%	31%	25%
Rep/Lean Rep	18	58	22
Dem/Lean Dem	63	8	28
TRUMP NOT CONCEDED			
All U.S. adults	35	19	45
Rep/Lean Rep	39	18	41
Dem/Lean Dem	31	20	48

Note: Respondents who did not give an answer not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.

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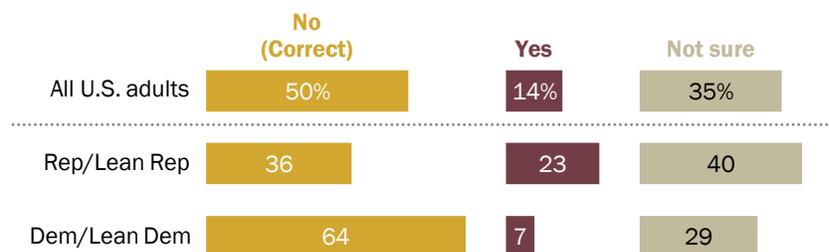
election news, 34% say there's been too much attention to the allegations, while the portion of those saying there's been insufficient attention to the fraud claims falls to 35%.

A question about Trump's refusal to publicly concede to Biden (as of publication on Dec. 15) generated substantially more bipartisan agreement – 39% of Republicans and 31% of Democrats say this has generated too much attention. And pluralities in both parties – 41% among Republicans and 48% among Democrats – say that storyline has gotten about the right amount of attention.

Beneath this rare occurrence of partisan agreement, however, are differences in people's sense of how unusual it is for the losing candidate not to concede. Asked whether there had been a losing presidential candidate in modern history who had not publicly conceded before Inauguration Day, about one-third of Republicans (36%) answer correctly that this has not happened, compared with nearly twice as many Democrats (64%). Instead, Republicans are more likely to say either that it had occurred (23% vs. 7% among Democrats) or that they are not sure (40% vs. 29%).

### Half of U.S. adults know that not conceding after election would be unprecedented in modern history

*As far as you know, has there been a losing presidential candidate in modern history who has not publicly conceded the election prior to Inauguration Day?*



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.

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## 2. Americans generally approve of their news sources' election coverage, but Republicans less so than Democrats

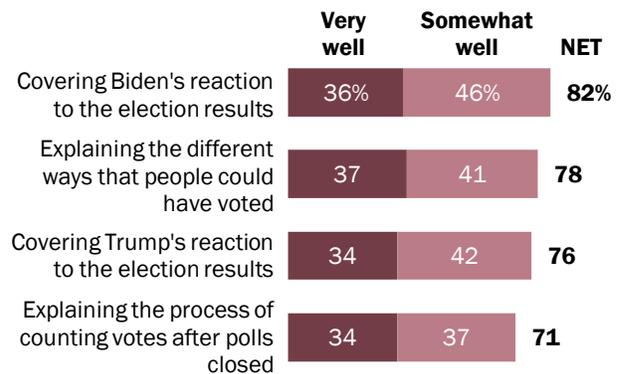
Overall, Americans give positive marks to the news sources they turned to most often for their coverage of Election Day and its aftermath – including four days of uncertainty before major media outlets declared Biden the winner amid Trump’s claims that the results were illegitimate in key battleground states. But within that positive assessment, Democrats and independents who lean Democratic are notably more likely than Republicans and independents who lean Republican to say that the news sources they used most performed well. Some of that may reflect that Democrats are more satisfied than Republicans with the result of the election, as well as [Democrats’ consistently more favorable views of the news media](#).

The survey asked how well people felt the sources they turn to most did in four different areas of post-election coverage: Trump’s reaction to the results, Biden’s reaction, the process of counting votes and the different ways people could have voted. In each of these four evaluations of media performance, Democrats are at least twice as likely as Republicans to say their news sources covered the subject very well.

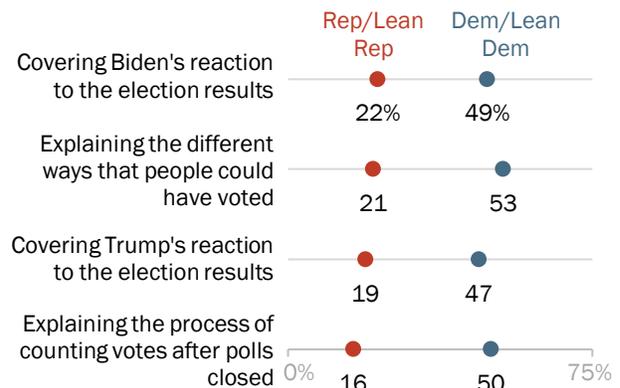
Overall, about three-quarters of Americans say the sources they turn to most did “very” (34%) or “somewhat” well (42%) in their coverage of Trump’s reaction to the election results. While nearly half of Democrats say their sources performed very well (47%) in this area, 19% of Republicans say the same.

### Democrats rate media more highly on various types of post-election coverage

*% of U.S. adults who say the news sources they turn to most often did \_\_\_ at each in coverage of Election Day and its aftermath*



*% of U.S. adults who say the news sources they turn to most often did **very well** at each in coverage of Election Day and its aftermath*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020. “Most Republicans Approve of Trump’s Post-election Messaging, but About a Third Say It Has Been Wrong”

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A similar gap exists on how people's favored sources covered Biden's reaction to the results. Overall, 82% of Americans say their top sources did very well or somewhat well. But Democrats are about twice as likely as Republicans to say their sources did very well (49% vs. 22%).

Beyond coverage of the candidates, a large majority of all Americans (78%) say their most turned to sources did very well (37%) or somewhat well (41%) covering the different ways people could vote during the election, which was held in the midst of a pandemic. Again, Democrats express higher levels of approval – 53% said their sources did “very well” on this, vs. 21% of Republicans.

There is also a large partisan difference in how the most-used sources did in explaining the process of counting votes. That job was complicated by the fact that Trump's early leads among in-person Election Day voters in some states were [eroded by mail-in ballots counted later](#), and by the decision of [Fox News and the Associated Press to call the state of Arizona for Biden](#) on Nov. 3 and 4 even as other news outlets withheld their call.

Among all Americans, 71% say their sources did very well (34%) or somewhat well (37%) explaining the vote count. But only 16% of Republicans said their sources did very well, far fewer than the half of Democrats who say their top sources did very well.

## Republicans who use Fox News as a major source give coverage modestly better grades than those Republicans who don't

One media-related narrative to emerge in the late stages of the campaign was about [possible Republican and conservative disenchantment](#) with the Fox News cable channel, given Trump's increasing criticisms of the outlet and his [widely reported anger](#) when Fox News called Arizona for Biden [well before a number of other outlets](#).

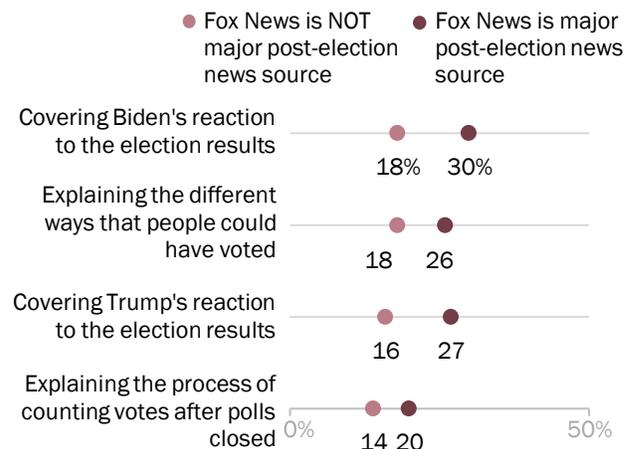
Perhaps not coincidentally, there has been considerable coverage of whether two of Fox's much smaller competitors for conservative viewers – the One America News Network (OANN) and Newsmax TV – [could loosen Fox's strong grip](#) on some of those viewers. (In a [November 2019 survey](#), 65% of Republicans said they trusted Fox News as a news source, about twice as many as for any other source.)

In examining assessments of election coverage of Nov. 3 and its aftermath, this analysis compared Republicans who identified Fox News as a major source for that coverage with those who did not. What emerged – by modest but consistent margins – is that Republicans who used Fox as a major source for coverage consistently say their chosen sources did a better job of covering the events surrounding the election. In at least this data, then, there is no evidence of particular dissatisfaction among Republicans who turned mainly to Fox News for election coverage after polls closed.

Overall, about seven-in-ten (71%) of the Republicans who used Fox as a major source for post-election news say their most-used sources did very well (27%) or somewhat well (44%) in covering Trump's reaction to the election results. Of those who did not use Fox, 61% say their most-used sources did very well (16%) or somewhat well (45%) in covering that subject.

### Republicans who rely most on Fox News slightly more likely to say their sources did well in post-election coverage

*% of Republicans/Republican leaners who say the news sources they turn to most often did **very well** at each in coverage of Election Day and its aftermath*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.  
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The same dynamic holds for coverage of Biden's reaction to the election results, with 30% of Republicans who relied on Fox saying their most-used sources did very well compared with 18% in the non-Fox group.

Republicans give a generally positive assessment of how their most relied on sources covered the ways people could cast ballots in 2020. But again, those in the Fox News group were slightly more pleased with the performance of its most-used sources (26% very well) than the group that did not use Fox as a major source (18% very well).

And while grades were low among Republicans in general for how well the top sources explained the vote count after the polls closed, 20% of those Republicans who cited Fox as a major source say their most-used sources did very well. That compares with 14% of non-Fox Republicans who say their most turned to sources did very well.

## Partisan gaps widen further on the election performance of the media in general

Partisan differences over how news sources covered the events after the polls closed widen further when respondents are asked to evaluate the performance of the news media in general rather than their own most-used sources.

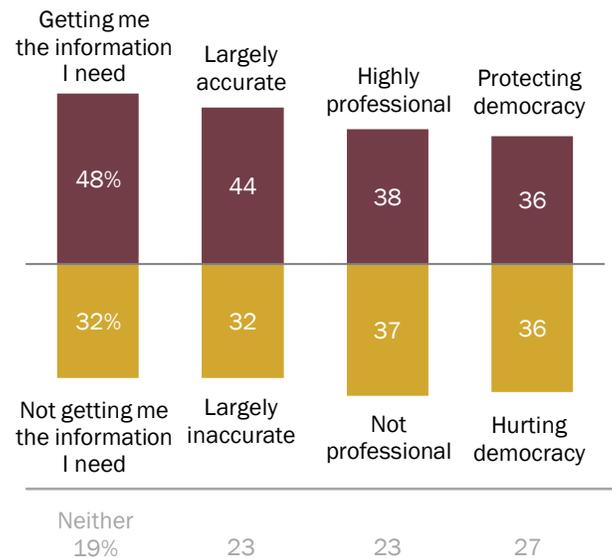
A plurality (44%) of all Americans say that general media coverage of the election since the polls closed was largely accurate, while 32% say it was largely inaccurate and 23% say it was neither. And about half of all U.S. adults (48%) say the media got them the information they needed after the polls closed, compared with 32% who say they did not get the information they needed and 19% who say neither description applies.

Americans are more evenly divided on questions about professionalism and protecting democracy. About four-in-ten each say that post-election coverage was highly professional (38%) and that it was not professional (37%), with 23% saying neither applies. And 36% say media coverage of the election since the polls closed has been protecting democracy, the same portion who said it has been hurting democracy (27% say neither description applies).

On all of these measures, there are dramatic partisan differences, with Democrats being far more likely to rate the media positively. Democrats are almost four times as likely as Republicans to say that media coverage was largely accurate (69% vs. 18%). A majority of Republicans (58%) say it was largely inaccurate, compared with a small fraction (10%) of Democrats. And nearly three-quarters (72%) of Democrats say the news media delivered the information they needed, compared with only 22% of Republicans. Instead, a majority of Republicans (57%) say they did not get the information they were looking for.

### Americans split on whether media's election coverage protects or hurts democracy

*% of U.S. adults who think the news media's coverage of the election after the polls closed was ...*



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer not shown.  
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.  
"Most Republicans Approve of Trump's Post-election Messaging, but About a Third Say It Has Been Wrong"

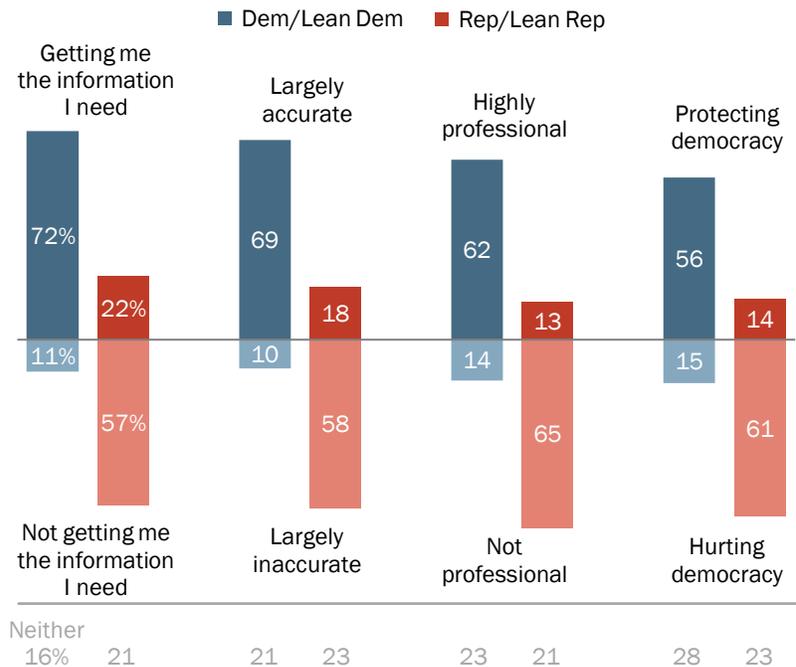
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Only 14% of Republicans say that coverage is protecting democracy, compared with 61% who believe it is hurting democracy. For Democrats, the numbers are almost reversed: 56% say media coverage has been protecting democracy, while 15% say it is hurting it.

And while 13% of Republicans say the coverage has been highly professional, 62% of Democrats say it has. Conversely, 65% of Republicans say it has not been professional, a view shared by only 14% of Democrats.

**Democrats far more positive on ratings of the media’s performance after the election**

*% of U.S. adults who think the news media’s coverage of the election after the polls closed was ...*



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer not shown.  
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.

“Most Republicans Approve of Trump’s Post-election Messaging, but About a Third Say It Has Been Wrong”

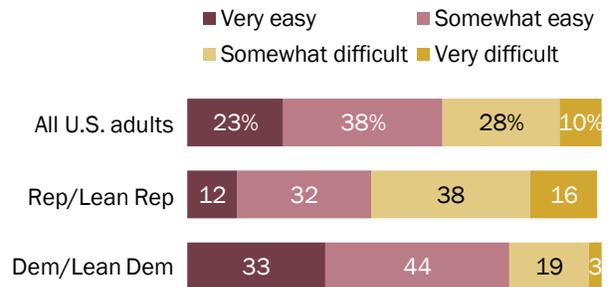
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Republicans also are more likely than Democrats to say it was difficult for them to make sense of the presidential election results as they were coming in. Fewer than half of Republicans (44%) say it was very or somewhat easy to make sense of the results, while a slim majority (54%) say it was very or somewhat difficult. Conversely, a large majority of Democrats (77%) say it was very or somewhat easy to make sense of the results, compared with 22% who say it was somewhat or very difficult.

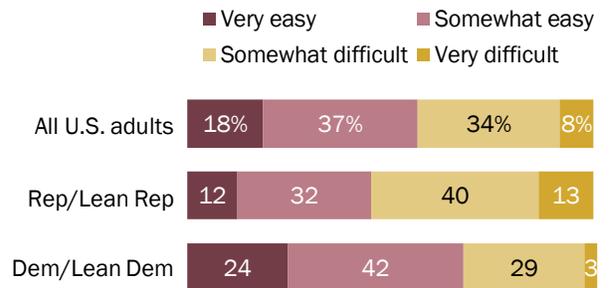
The same pattern emerges on how easy it was for journalists to make sense of the results as they were coming in. Among all Americans, 56% say it was either very or somewhat easy for journalists to make sense of the results. On the Democratic side, 66% say it was very or somewhat easy for journalists, while fewer than half of Republicans (44%) agree.

### Democrats say it was easier to make sense of the results of the election

*% of U.S. adults who say it was \_\_\_\_ for **them** to make sense of the results of the presidential election as they were coming in*



*% of U.S. adults who say it was \_\_\_\_ for **journalists** to make sense of the results of the presidential election as they were coming in*



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer not shown.  
 Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.  
 “Most Republicans Approve of Trump’s Post-election Messaging, but About a Third Say It Has Been Wrong”

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### 3. Concerns about made-up election news are high, and both parties think it is mostly intended to hurt their side

After an election season where [viral online misinformation was rampant](#), six-in-ten Americans say that made-up news and information had a “major impact” on the presidential election, about on par with the portion who say the same of news media coverage.

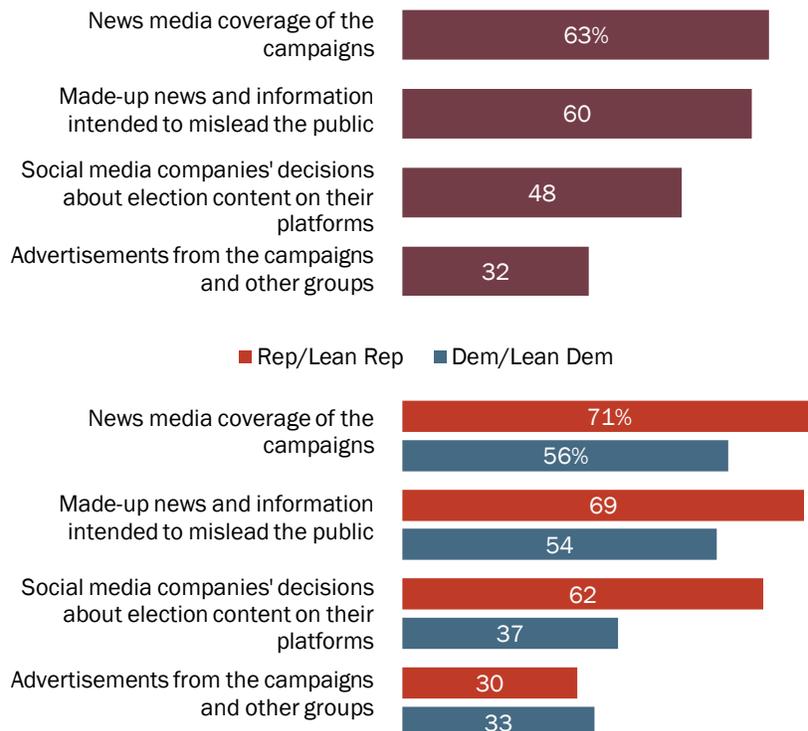
More than half in both parties say this, with 54% of Democrats and independents who lean Democratic and 69% of Republicans and Republican leaners saying that made-up news intended to mislead the public had a major impact on the election.

Fewer Americans say social media companies’ decisions about election content and campaign advertisements had a major impact (48% and 32%, respectively). But the sharpest divide between the parties concerns the impact of

decisions by social media companies about election content on their platforms: A solid majority of Republicans (62%) say those decisions had a major impact, compared with a much smaller percentage of Democrats (37%). It is possible that some of this response by Republicans reflects anger over Twitter and other social media platforms’ [decisions to flag some of President Trump’s posts as misleading](#).

#### Most Americans say made-up news had a major impact on the election; Republicans slightly more likely to say this

*% of U.S. adults who say each had a major impact on the presidential election*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.

“Most Republicans Approve of Trump’s Post-election Messaging, but About a Third Say It Has Been Wrong”

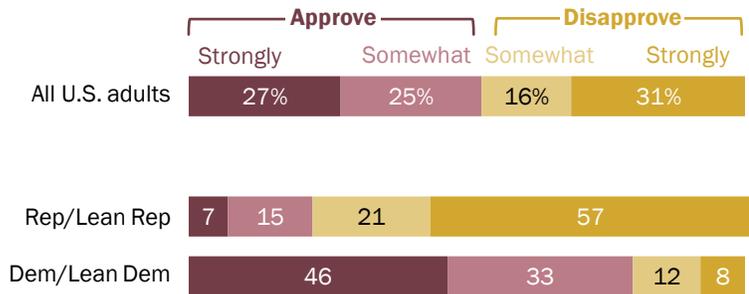
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In addition to thinking that actions by social media companies had a major impact on the election, Republicans also are far more likely to disapprove of these actions.

Nearly eight-in-ten Republicans (78%) disapprove of social media companies blocking or flagging news that they judge to be inaccurate or misleading – with over half (57%) saying they strongly disapprove. Democrats have the inverse view, with 78% saying they approve of social media companies flagging or blocking this type of content (including 46% who strongly approve).

## Democrats far more approving of social media companies flagging political content they judge to be inaccurate

*% of U.S. adults who say they \_\_\_ of social media companies blocking or flagging news and information on their platforms that they judge to be inaccurate or misleading*



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.

"Most Republicans Approve of Trump's Post-election Messaging, but About a Third Say It Has Been Wrong"

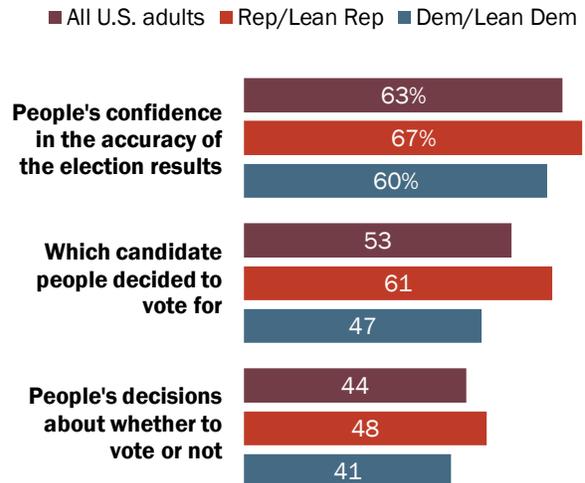
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The survey also asked a few specific questions about the impact of made-up news on the election. Most Americans (63%) say made-up news had a major impact on people's confidence in the results, while about half (53%) say it had a major impact on which candidate people decided to vote for. Fewer (44%) feel made-up news had a major impact on people's decisions about whether to vote at all.

Somewhat more Republicans than Democrats say made-up news had a major impact on these questions. The gap is widest over whether this misinformation had a major impact on which candidate voters supported: 61% of Republicans say it did versus 47% of Democrats.

## Most Americans say made-up information had a major impact on confidence in the election

*% of U.S. adults who say, when it comes to the presidential election, made-up news had a **major impact** on ...*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.  
 "Most Republicans Approve of Trump's Post-election Messaging, but About a Third Say It Has Been Wrong"

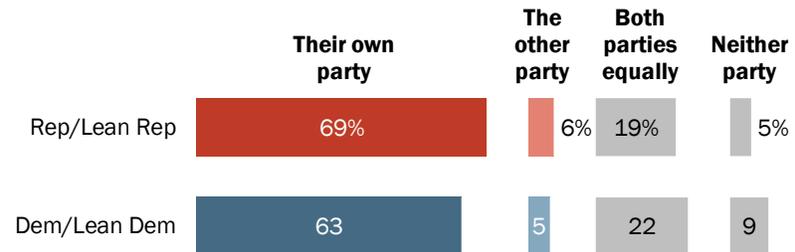
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When asked *which party* election misinformation was mostly intended to hurt, however, both Democrats and Republicans see it as targeting their own side. About seven-in-ten Republicans (69%) say that made-up election news was mostly intended to hurt the Republican Party, and 63% of Democrats say that it was intended to hurt the Democratic Party. Some in each party (19% of Republicans and 22% of Democrats) say that it was intended to hurt both sides equally. But very few

on either side of the partisan divide (6% of Republicans and 5% of Democrats) say that made-up news was mainly intended to hurt the opposing party. These patterns are largely similar to those expressed [in late 2019](#), when respondents were asked which party they expected to be the target of misinformation in the 2020 election.

### Partisans on both sides say that made-up election news was mainly intended to hurt their own party

*% of U.S. adults who say made-up news related to the presidential election was mostly intended to hurt ...*



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.

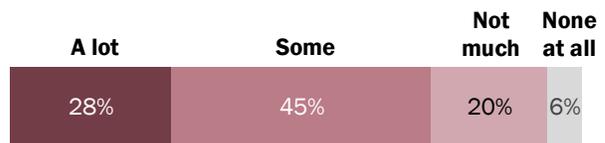
"Most Republicans Approve of Trump's Post-election Messaging, but About a Third Say It Has Been Wrong"

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Most Americans (72%) say they saw at least “some” news about the election that seemed completely made up, including 28% who say they saw “a lot.” And in an election where there was evidence of some voters [being specifically targeted by made-up news](#), a small portion (18%) say they saw made-up news that seemed targeted at them.

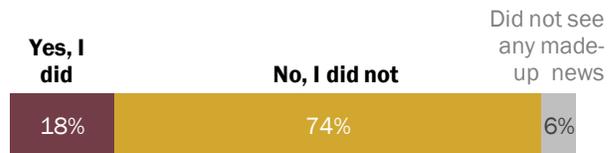
### Most Americans say they saw at least some made-up election news ...

*% of U.S. adults who say they have seen or heard \_\_\_\_\_ about the 2020 presidential election that seemed completely made up*



### ... but far fewer say they saw misinformation targeted at them specifically

*% of U.S. adults who say they came across made-up news or information that they think was targeted at them specifically*



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer not shown.  
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.  
“Most Republicans Approve of Trump’s Post-election Messaging, but About a Third Say It Has Been Wrong”

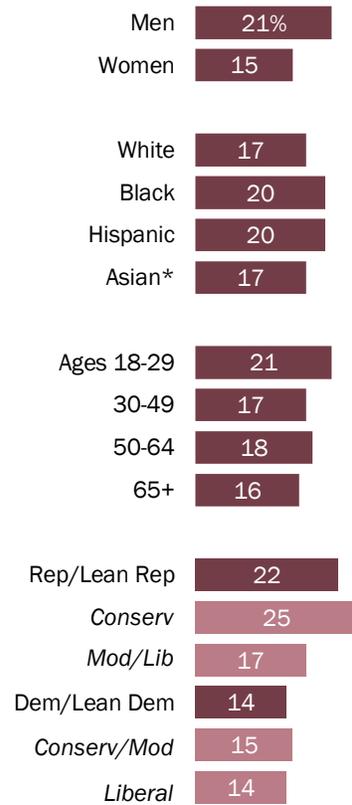
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And some groups are slightly more likely than others to say they felt specifically targeted by misinformation. For instance, a quarter of conservative Republicans (25%) say they feel this way, compared with 14% of liberal Democrats.

Hispanic Americans and men also are slightly more likely to say they saw made-up news targeted specifically at them.

**Conservative Republicans most likely to say they saw made-up news targeted at them**

*% U.S. adults who say they came across made-up news or information that they think was targeted at them specifically*



\*Asian adults were interviewed in English only.

Note: White, Black and Asian adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.

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## 4. Americans' attention to news about the coronavirus pandemic remains steady in November as cases surge

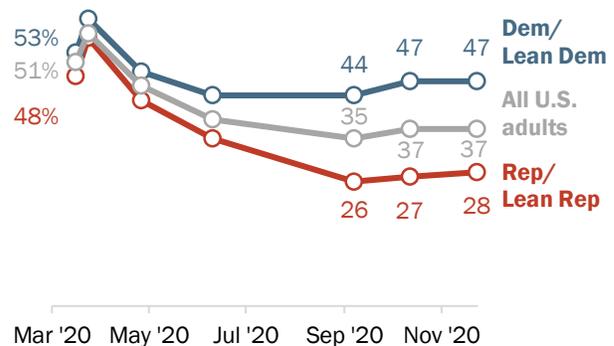
As [cases of the coronavirus surged](#) across the United States in November, Americans' attention to news about the [coronavirus outbreak](#) largely held steady. Also largely unchanged are the public's views about whether the outbreak has been exaggerated and whether the U.S. has done all it could to control the outbreak.

About four-in-ten U.S. adults (37%) say they are following news about the outbreak "very closely," which is unchanged from early October (37%). Another 42% say they are following news about the virus "fairly closely," while 20% are following news about the pandemic either "not too closely" (15%) or "not at all closely" (5%).

Democrats and independents who lean toward the Democratic Party remain more engaged with coronavirus news than Republicans and Republican-leaning independents. Nearly half of Democrats (47%) are following COVID-19 news very closely, compared with about three-in-ten Republicans (28%). This gap in attention across the partisan divide has been consistent throughout surveys conducted in the late summer and fall.

### Little change from mid-October in the attention the public is giving to news about the pandemic

% of U.S. adults who are following news about the coronavirus outbreak **very closely**



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.

"Most Republicans Approve of Trump's Post-election Messaging, but About a Third Say It Has Been Wrong"

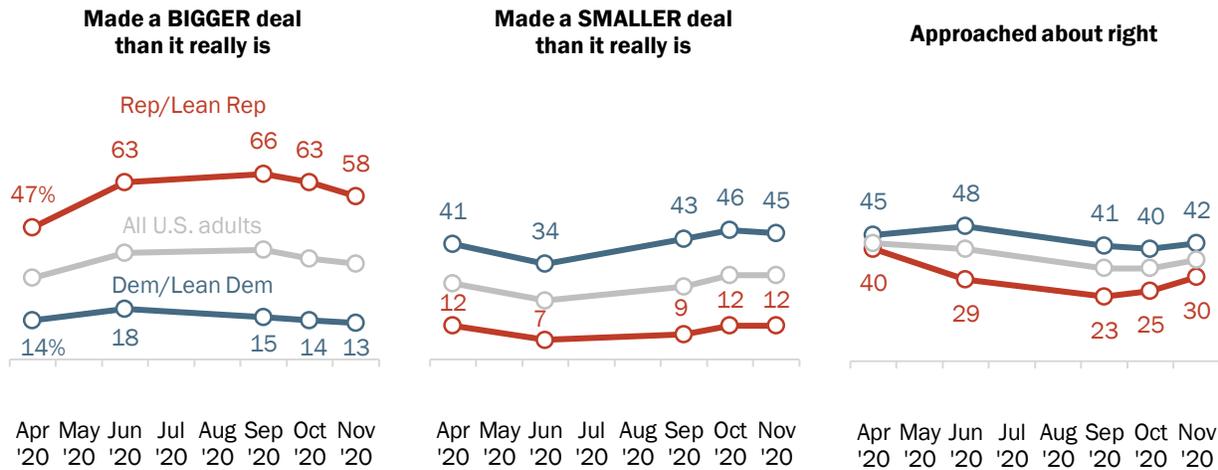
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Republicans and Democrats remain deeply divided over whether the coronavirus outbreak has been exaggerated or not, though compared with before the election, slightly fewer Republicans now say the virus has been made a bigger deal than it really is.

About a third of Americans (34%) say the outbreak has been exaggerated, while three-in-ten (30%) say it has been made a smaller deal than it really is and 36% say it has been approached about right.

### Partisan gaps persist in views of the virus, with a small decrease in share of Republicans who say COVID-19 outbreak has been exaggerated

% of U.S. adults who say the coronavirus outbreak has been ...



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer not shown.  
 Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.  
 "Most Republicans Approve of Trump's Post-election Messaging, but About a Third Say It Has Been Wrong"

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The share of Republicans who say the coronavirus has been blown out of proportion has declined by 5 percentage points recently – from 63% in October to 58% in late November. However, Republicans are still more than four times as likely as Democrats (13%) to say the pandemic has been blown out of proportion.

Democrats, on the other hand, are nearly four times as likely as Republicans to say the coronavirus has been *underplayed* (45% vs. 12%). There is a more modest partisan division in the shares who say the outbreak has been approached about right (42% of Democrats and 30% of Republicans), which reflects a 5-point increase since October in the share of Republicans who say this.

As was the case in [early October](#) and [early September](#), where partisans get their news ties closely with their attitudes about whether or not the coronavirus outbreak has been overblown. For instance, Republicans who use only news outlets with politically right-leaning audiences are still more likely than Republicans who get news from outlets with more politically mixed audiences to say [the virus has been overblown](#).

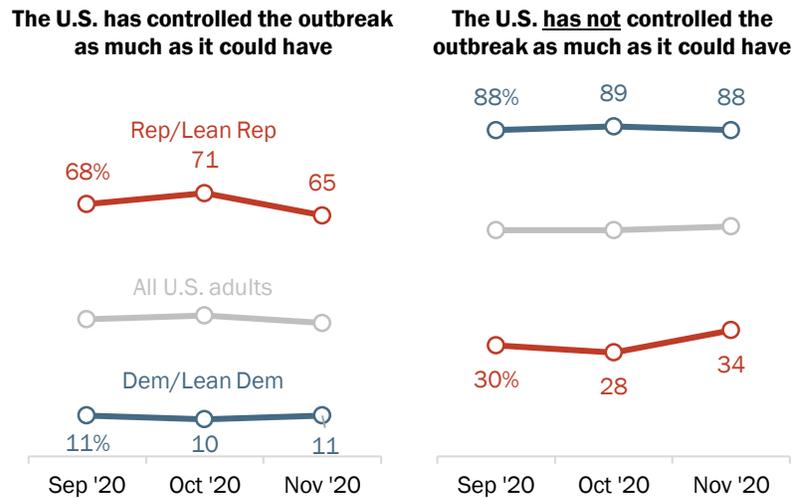
Democrats and Republicans also [remain divided](#) over whether the U.S. has done all that it could have to control the coronavirus outbreak – again, despite a recent modest shift among Republicans.

About two-thirds of Republicans (65%) say the U.S. has controlled the outbreak as much as it could have, compared with about one-in-ten Democrats (11%) who say the same. The share of Republicans who hold this view decreased by 6 percentage points since before the election.

On the other hand, about nine-in-ten Democrats (88%) say the U.S. has not controlled the outbreak as much as it could have. About a third of Republicans (34%) hold this view, up from 28% in October. Among Republicans, these views [also vary by news consumption habits](#).

## Modest increase in share of Republicans who say the U.S. could have done more to control COVID outbreak

% of U.S. adults who say ...



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.

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## Wide party gap in whether Thanksgiving plans changed because of COVID-19

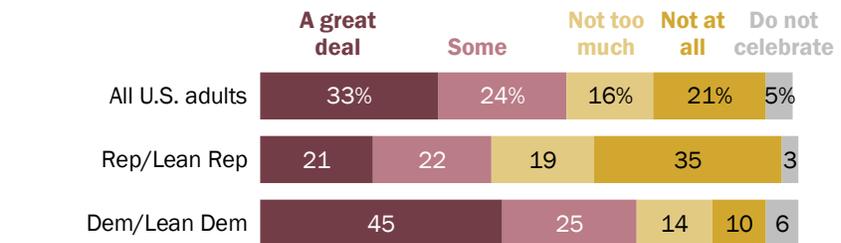
The coronavirus outbreak had widely different impacts on Americans' plans over Thanksgiving depending on partisanship and news habits, especially among Republicans.

Overall, a third of U.S. adults say they changed their Thanksgiving plans “a great deal” this year as a result of the outbreak, while 24% say they changed their plans “some.” On the other hand, 16% of Americans say their plans changed “not too much,” and 21% say they did not change their plans at all.

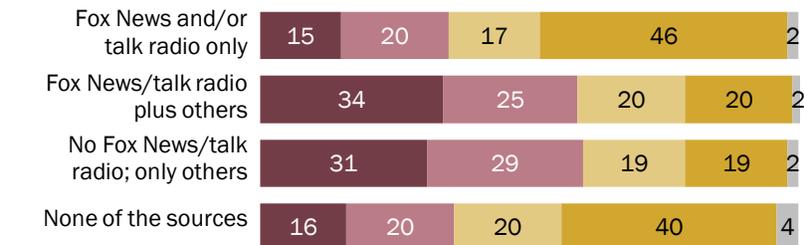
There is a striking partisan gap over whether plans changed for the holiday because of the pandemic. Nearly half of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents (45%) say they changed their plans a great deal; about half as many Republicans and Republican leaners (21%) say the same. Conversely, over three times as many Republicans (35%) as Democrats (10%) say they did not change their plans at all due to the outbreak.

### Far more Democrats than Republicans report changing Thanksgiving plans ‘a great deal’ for COVID-19

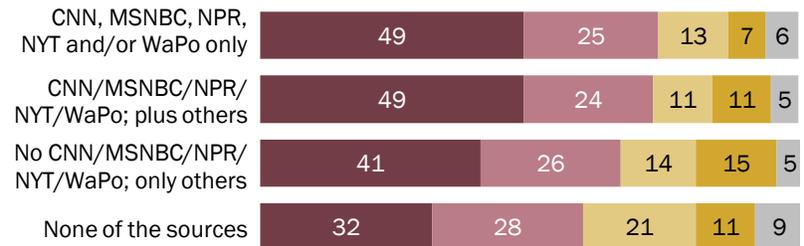
*% of U.S. adults who say they changed their Thanksgiving plans this year \_\_\_ as a result of the coronavirus outbreak*



*Among Rep/Lean Rep who used \_\_\_ as a major source for news about the presidential election since polls closed*



*Among Dem/Lean Dem who used \_\_\_ as a major source for news about the presidential election since polls closed*



Note: In a September 2020 survey, the Fox News cable channel and talk radio shows such as Sean Hannity or Rush Limbaugh had audiences that lean Republican and conservative. CNN, MSNBC, NPR, New York Times, Washington Post had audiences that leaned Democratic and liberal. Sources whose audiences are more mixed include ABC, CBS or NBC network television news. See Appendix for more details.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.

“Most Republicans Approve of Trump’s Post-election Messaging, but About a Third Say It Has Been Wrong”

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Among Republicans, news diet again ties closely to whether plans changed for Thanksgiving because of the coronavirus outbreak. Among Republicans who only used Fox News or talk radio as a major source for news after the election (out of eight news sources asked about; see [Appendix](#) for details), just 15% say their Thanksgiving plans changed a great deal because of the virus, while nearly half (46%) say they didn't change their plans at all.

Two other groups of Republicans are far more likely to say they changed their plans: those who say they used other news sources in addition to Fox News or talk radio, and those who only used other sources, all of which have left-leaning or politically mixed audiences. About six-in-ten Republicans in these two groups say their plans changed either a great deal or some because of the pandemic, while only about one-in-five say they didn't change their plans at all.

On the other hand, among Democrats, news diet has a more modest relationship with whether Americans report changing their plans for Thanksgiving. Democrats who do not use news outlets with left-leaning audiences (but do use outlets with right-leaning or mixed outlets; see [Appendix](#) for more details) were somewhat less likely (41%) than Democrats who get news from outlets with left-leaning audiences (49%) to say their plans changed a great deal. Relatively few Democrats, regardless of where they get their news, say their plans did not change at all.

## Appendix: Grouping respondents by major news sources

This survey asked whether respondents use any of eight news sources as a major source, minor source or not a source for news about the presidential election since polls closed on Election Day. (Responses for all eight sources are [available here](#).) The news outlets identified as major sources were combined with the respondents' partisanship to identify those who get news from only sources with audiences that lean toward their party (i.e., Republicans who get news only from sources with right-leaning audiences and Democrats who only get news from sources with left-leaning audiences) or another mix of sources. Those who do not use any of the eight sources asked about as a major source for political and election news are in a separate category.

### Major sources for political and election news

*% in each category for the survey conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020*

	U.S. adults %	Rep/ Lean Rep %	Dem/ Lean Dem %
<b>Among Rep/Lean Rep</b>			
Only Fox News and/or talk radio	13	28	--
Fox News/talk radio and other sources	6	13	--
No Fox News/talk radio; only other source	9	20	--
None of the sources asked about	18	39	--
<b>Among Dem/Lean Dem</b>			
Only CNN, MSNBC, NPR, NY Times and/or Wash. Post	14	--	28
CNN, MSNBC, NPR, NY Times or Wash. Post and other sources	19	--	38
No CNN, MSNBC, NPR, NY Times or Wash. Post; only other sources	7	--	13
None of the sources asked about	10	--	20

Note: In a September 2020 survey, the Fox News cable channel and talk radio shows such as Sean Hannity or Rush Limbaugh had audiences that lean Republican and conservative. CNN, MSNBC, NPR, New York Times, Washington Post had audiences that lean Democratic and liberal. Sources whose audiences are more mixed include ABC, CBS or NBC network television news.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Nov. 18-29, 2020.

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The eight sources asked about are:

- Fox News cable channel
- CNN
- MSNBC
- ABC, CBS or NBC national network TV
- NPR
- The New York Times
- The Washington Post
- Talk radio, such as Sean Hannity or Rush Limbaugh

Sources were selected from among the top responses (used by about 10% or more of U.S. adults) to a question from November 2019 asking if respondents got news from each of 30 different sources in the past week. More details about this measure and what it reveals about Americans' news habits are [available here](#), and all data for the question is [available here](#).

The eight sources asked about were then classified according to the political partisanship and ideology of their audiences in surveys conducted before the election in November 2019 and September 2020. For this analysis, respondents who call each source a “major source” for political and election news are considered part of its audience. An outlet is considered to have a left-leaning audience if the proportion of all audience members who identify as liberal Democrats is at least two-thirds higher than the proportion who identify as conservative Republicans. Alternatively, an outlet is considered to have a right-leaning audience if the proportion of all audience members who identify as conservative Republicans is at least two-thirds higher than the proportion that identify as liberal Democrats. An outlet is classified as having a mixed audience if neither liberal Democrats nor conservative Republicans make up at least two-thirds more of the audience than the other.

## Methodology

### The American Trends Panel survey methodology

#### Overview

The American Trends Panel (ATP), created by Pew Research Center, is a nationally representative panel of randomly selected U.S. adults. Panelists participate via self-administered web surveys. Panelists who do not have internet access at home are provided with a tablet and wireless internet connection. Interviews are conducted in both English and Spanish. The panel is being managed by Ipsos.

Data in this report is drawn from the panel wave conducted Nov. 18 to Nov. 29, 2020. A total of 12,648 panelists responded out of 13,568 who were sampled, for a response rate of 93%. This does not include four panelists who were removed from the data due to extremely high rates of refusal or straightlining. The cumulative response rate accounting for nonresponse to the recruitment surveys and attrition is 5%. The break-off rate among panelists who logged on to the survey and completed at least one item is 1%. The margin of sampling error for the full sample of 12,648 respondents is plus or minus 1.5 percentage points.

#### Panel recruitment

The ATP was created in 2014, with the first cohort of panelists invited to join the panel at the end of a large, national, landline and cellphone random-digit-dial survey that was conducted in both English and Spanish. Two additional recruitments were conducted using the same method in 2015 and 2017, respectively. Across these three surveys, a total of 19,718 adults were invited to join the ATP, of whom 9,942 (50%) agreed to participate.

In August 2018, the ATP switched from telephone to address-based recruitment. Invitations were sent to a random, address-based sample of households selected

#### American Trends Panel recruitment surveys

Recruitment dates	Mode	Invited	Joined	Active panelists remaining
Jan. 23 to March 16, 2014	Landline/ cell RDD	9,809	5,338	2,187
Aug. 27 to Oct. 4, 2015	Landline/ cell RDD	6,004	2,976	1,245
April 25 to June 4, 2017	Landline/ cell RDD	3,905	1,628	622
Aug. 8 to Oct. 31, 2018	ABS/web	9,396	8,778	5,906
Aug. 19 to Nov. 30, 2019	ABS/web	5,900	4,720	2,334
June 1 to July 19, 2020	ABS/web	1,865	1,636	1,274
	<b>Total</b>	<b>36,879</b>	<b>25,076</b>	<b>13,568</b>

Note: Approximately once per year, panelists who have not participated in multiple consecutive waves or who did not complete an annual profiling survey are removed from the panel. Panelists also become inactive if they ask to be removed from the panel.

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from the U.S. Postal Service's Delivery Sequence File. Two additional recruitments were conducted using the same method in 2019 and 2020, respectively. Across these three address-based recruitments, a total of 17,161 adults were invited to join the ATP, of whom 15,134 (88%) agreed to join the panel and completed an initial profile survey. In each household, the adult with the next birthday was asked to go online to complete a survey, at the end of which they were invited to join the panel. Of the 25,076 individuals who have ever joined the ATP, 13,568 remained active panelists and continued to receive survey invitations at the time this survey was conducted.

The U.S. Postal Service's Delivery Sequence File has been estimated to cover as much as 98% of the population, although some studies suggest that the coverage could be in the low 90% range.<sup>1</sup> The American Trends Panel never uses breakout routers or chains that direct respondents to additional surveys.

### **Sample design**

The overall target population for this survey was non-institutionalized persons ages 18 and older, living in the U.S., including Alaska and Hawaii.

### **Questionnaire development and testing**

The questionnaire was developed by Pew Research Center in consultation with Ipsos. The web program was rigorously tested on both PC and mobile devices by the Ipsos project management team and Pew Research Center researchers. The Ipsos project management team also populated test data which was analyzed in SPSS to ensure the logic and randomizations were working as intended before launching the survey.

### **Incentives**

All respondents were offered a post-paid incentive for their participation. Respondents could choose to receive the post-paid incentive in the form of a check or a gift code to Amazon.com or could choose to decline the incentive. Incentive amounts ranged from \$5 to \$20 depending on whether the respondent belongs to a part of the population that is harder or easier to reach. Differential incentive amounts were designed to increase panel survey participation among groups that traditionally have low survey response propensities.

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<sup>1</sup> AAPOR Task Force on Address-based Sampling. 2016. "[AAPOR Report: Address-based Sampling](#)."

### Data collection protocol

The data collection field period for this survey was Nov. 18 to Nov. 29, 2020. Postcard notifications were mailed to all ATP panelists with a known residential address on Nov. 18, 2020.

On Nov. 18 and Nov. 19, invitations were sent out in two separate launches: Soft Launch and Full Launch. Sixty panelists were included in the soft launch, which began with an initial invitation sent on Nov. 18, 2020. The ATP panelists chosen for the initial soft launch were known responders who had completed previous ATP surveys within one day of receiving their invitation. All remaining English- and Spanish-speaking panelists were included in the full launch and were sent an invitation on Nov. 19, 2020.

All panelists with an email address received an email invitation and up to four email reminders if they did not respond to the survey. All ATP panelists that consented to SMS messages received an SMS invitation and up to four SMS reminders.

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#### Invitation and reminder dates

	Soft Launch	Full Launch
Initial invitation	11/18/2020	11/19/2020
First reminder	11/21/2020	11/21/2020
Second reminder	11/23/2020	11/23/2020
Third reminder	11/25/2020	11/25/2020
Final reminder	11/28/2020	11/28/2020

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### Data quality checks

To ensure high-quality data, the Center's researchers performed data quality checks to identify any respondents showing clear patterns of satisficing. This includes checking for very high rates of leaving questions blank, as well as always selecting the first or last answer presented. As a result of this checking, four ATP respondents were removed from the survey dataset prior to weighting and analysis.

## Weighting

The ATP data was weighted in a multistep process that accounts for multiple stages of sampling and nonresponse that occur at different points in the survey process. First, each panelist begins with a base weight that reflects their probability of selection for their initial recruitment survey (and the probability of being invited to participate in the panel in cases where only a subsample of respondents were invited). The base weights for panelists recruited in different years are scaled to be proportionate to the effective sample size for all active panelists in their cohort.

To correct for nonresponse to the initial recruitment surveys and gradual panel attrition, the base weights for all active panelists are calibrated to align with the population benchmarks identified in the accompanying table to create a full-panel weight.

For ATP waves in which only a subsample of panelists are invited to participate, a wave-specific base weight is created by adjusting the full-panel weights for subsampled panelists to account for any differential probabilities of selection for the particular panel wave. For waves in which all active panelists are invited to participate, the wave-specific base weight is identical to the full-panel weight.

In the final weighting step, the wave-specific base weights for panelists who completed the survey are again calibrated to match the population benchmarks specified above. These weights are trimmed (typically at about the 1st and 99th percentiles) to reduce the loss in precision stemming from variance in the weights. Sampling errors and test of statistical significance take into account the effect of weighting.

## Weighting dimensions

Variable	Benchmark source
Age x Gender	2018 American Community Survey
Education x Gender	
Education x Age	
Race/Ethnicity x Education	
Born inside vs. outside the U.S. among Hispanics and Asian Americans	
Years lived in the U.S.	
Census region x Metro/Non-metro	
Volunteerism	2017 CPS Volunteering & Civic Life Supplement
Voter registration	2016 CPS Voting and Registration Supplement
Party affiliation	Average of the three most recent Pew Research Center telephone surveys
Frequency of internet use	2020 National Public Opinion Reference Survey
Religious affiliation	

Note: Estimates from the ACS are based on non-institutionalized adults. The 2016 CPS was used for voter registration targets for this wave in order to obtain voter registration numbers from a presidential election year. Voter registration is calculated using procedures from Hur, Achen (2013) and rescaled to include the total U.S. adult population. The 2020 National Public Opinion Reference Survey featured 1,862 online completions and 2,247 mail survey completions.

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The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey.

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<b>Group</b>	<b>Unweighted sample size</b>	<b>Plus or minus ...</b>
Total sample	12,648	1.5 percentage points
Rep/Lean Rep	5,144	2.2 percentage points
Dem/Lean Dem	7,201	2.0 percentage points

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Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

**Dispositions and response rates**

<b>Final dispositions</b>	<b>AAPOR code</b>	<b>Total</b>
Completed interview	1.1	12,648
Logged onto survey; broke off	2.12	120
Logged onto survey; did not complete any items	2.1121	74
Never logged on (implicit refusal)	2.11	720
Survey completed after close of the field period	2.27	2
Completed interview but was removed for data quality		4
Screened out		N/A
<b>Total panelists in the survey</b>		<b>13,568</b>
Completed interviews	I	12,648
Partial interviews	P	0
Refusals	R	918
Non-contact	NC	2
Other	O	0
Unknown household	UH	0
Unknown other	UO	0
Not eligible	NE	N/A
<b>Total</b>		<b>13,568</b>
AAPOR RR1 = $I / (I+P+R+NC+O+UH+UO)$		93%

<b>Cumulative response rate</b>	<b>Total</b>
Weighted response rate to recruitment surveys	11%
% of recruitment survey respondents who agreed to join the panel, among those invited	73%
% of those agreeing to join who were active panelists at start of Wave 79	65%
Response rate to Wave 79 survey	93%
<b>Cumulative response rate</b>	<b>5%</b>

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**2020 PEW RESEARCH CENTER'S AMERICAN TRENDS PANEL**  
**Wave 79 Late November Survey**  
**AMERICAN NEWS PATHWAYS TOPLINE**  
**NOVEMBER 18-29, 2020**  
**N=12,648**

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

**RANDOMIZE ORDER OF TRUMPOSTFOL AND BIDENPOSTFOL**

**ASK ALL:**

TRUMPOSTFOL            How closely, if at all, have you been following DONALD TRUMP's public statements since the election?

Nov 18-29

2020

22	Very closely
33	Fairly closely
29	Not too closely
15	Not at all closely
1	No answer

**RANDOMIZE ORDER OF TRUMPOSTFOL AND BIDENPOSTFOL**

**ASK ALL:**

BIDENPOSTFOL            How closely, if at all, have you been following JOE BIDEN's public statements since the election?

Nov 18-29

2020

20	Very closely
32	Fairly closely
29	Not too closely
17	Not at all closely
1	No answer

**ASK ALL:**

CAMPIMPCT            In your view, how much of an impact, if any, did each of the following have on this year's presidential election? **[RANDOMIZE ITEMS]**

	A major <u>impact</u>	A minor <u>impact</u>	Not much of an impact <u>at all</u>	No <u>answer</u>
a. News media coverage of the campaigns Nov 18-29, 2020	63	28	9	1
b. Advertisements from the campaigns and other groups Nov 18-29, 2020	32	49	18	1
c. Decisions social media companies made about election content on their platforms Nov 18-29, 2020	48	36	15	1

**CAMPIMPCT CONTINUED ...**

	A major <u>impact</u>	A minor <u>impact</u>	Not much of an impact <u>at all</u>	No <u>answer</u>
d. Made-up news and information intended to mislead the public Nov 18-29, 2020	60	26	14	*

**DISPLAY ORDER OF ELECTTRUMPMSG AND ELECTBIDENMSG IN SAME ORDER AS  
TRUMPPOSTFOL AND BIDENPOSTFOL SO THAT RESPONDENTS SEES SAME CANDIDATE FIRST  
IN BOTH SETS**

**ASK ALL:**

ELECTTRUMPMSG From what you've seen or heard, do you generally think DONALD TRUMP has been delivering the right message or the wrong message to the country following the presidential election? **[RANDOMIZE ORDER OF OPTIONS 1-4 AND 4-1; USE SAME ORDER FOR ELECTBIDENMSG]**

Nov 18-29  
2020

11	Completely RIGHT message
23	Mostly RIGHT message
21	Mostly WRONG message
43	Completely WRONG message
2	No answer

**DISPLAY ORDER OF ELECTTRUMPMSG AND ELECTBIDENMSG IN SAME ORDER AS  
TRUMPPOSTFOL AND BIDENPOSTFOL SO THAT RESPONDENTS SEES SAME CANDIDATE FIRST  
IN BOTH SETS**

**ASK ALL:**

ELECTBIDENMSG From what you've seen or heard, do you generally think JOE BIDEN has been delivering the right message or the wrong message to the country following the presidential election? **[RANDOMIZE ORDER OF OPTIONS 1-4 AND 4-1; USE SAME ORDER FOR ELECTTRUMPMSG]**

Nov 18-29  
2020

24	Completely RIGHT message
40	Mostly RIGHT message
20	Mostly WRONG message
14	Completely WRONG message
3	No answer

**ASK ALL:**

ELECTNTMIX How many different sources of news did you turn to, if any, to follow the results of the presidential election on Election Day (Nov. 3) after polls closed?

Nov 18-29  
2020

14	Just one source
59	Two to four different sources
16	Five or more different sources
10	Did not follow results of the election
1	No answer

**ASK ALL:**

CAMPCOVEROWN2

Thinking about news coverage of Election Day (Nov. 3) and its aftermath, how well do you think the news sources YOU TURN TO MOST OFTEN have done at...

**[RANDOMIZE ITEMS]**

	Very <u>well</u>	Somewhat <u>well</u>	Not too <u>well</u>	Not at <u>all well</u>	No <u>answer</u>
a. Covering Donald Trump's reaction to the election results Nov 18-29, 2020	34	42	15	8	1
b. Covering Joe Biden's reaction to the election results Nov 18-29, 2020	36	46	11	5	1
c. Explaining the process of counting votes after polls closed on Election Day (Nov. 3) Nov 18-29, 2020	34	37	18	10	1
d. Explaining the different ways that people could have voted across the country this year Nov 18-29, 2020	37	41	14	7	1

**RANDOMIZE ORDER OF ATTENVTFRAUD AND ATTENDTCONCEDE****ASK ALL:**

ATTENVTFRAUD

All in all, do you think that allegations of voter fraud in this year's presidential election have been getting... **[RANDOMIZE OPTIONS 1 AND 2; ALWAYS ASK OPTION 3 LAST; USE SAME ORDER FORATTENDTCONCEDE]**

Nov 18-29

2020

42	Too much attention
31	Too little attention
25	About the right amount of attention
2	No answer

**RANDOMIZE ORDER OF ATTENVTFRAUD AND ATTENDTCONCEDE****ASK ALL:**

ATTENDTCONCEDE

All in all, do you think that Donald Trump not conceding the election after Joe Biden was projected to win has been getting... **[RANDOMIZE OPTIONS 1 AND 2; ALWAYS ASK OPTION 3 LAST; USE SAME ORDER FOR ATTENVTFRAUD]**

Nov 18-29

2020

35	Too much attention
19	Too little attention
45	About the right amount of attention
2	No answer

**ASK ALL:**

ELECTNEWSPAIR

For each pair of opposite phrases, which one do you feel better describes the news media's coverage of the presidential election since polls closed on Election Day (Nov. 3)? **[RANDOMIZE ORDER OF ITEMS; SHOW RESPONSES 1-3 IN ORDER; DISPLAY A-D ON THE SAME SCREEN WITH A LINE SEPARATING EACH SET OF RESPONSES]**

a.	Largely <u>accurate</u>	Largely <u>inaccurate</u>	Neither <u>applies</u>	No <u>answer</u>
Nov 18-29, 2020	44	32	23	1
b.	Getting me the <u>information I need</u>	Not getting me the <u>information I need</u>	Neither <u>applies</u>	No <u>answer</u>
Nov 18-29, 2020	48	32	19	1
c.	Protecting <u>democracy</u>	Hurting <u>democracy</u>	Neither <u>applies</u>	No <u>answer</u>
Nov 18-29, 2020	36	36	27	1
d.	Highly <u>professional</u>	Not <u>professional</u>	Neither <u>applies</u>	No <u>answer</u>
Nov 18-29, 2020	38	37	23	1

**ASK ALL:**

CAMPNEWSFACTS

When it comes to following news about the presidential election since polls closed on Election Day (Nov. 3), would you say most Americans... **[RANDOMIZE OPTIONS]**

Nov 18-29  
2020  
30  
69  
1

Generally got the SAME basic facts regardless of their news sources  
Often got DIFFERENT basic facts depending on their news sources  
No answer

**ASK ALL:**

RESULTFOLDIFF

How easy or difficult was it for you to make sense of the results of the presidential election as they were coming in? **[RANDOMIZE OPTIONS 1-4 AND 4-1]**

Nov 18-29  
2020  
23  
38  
28  
10  
1

Very easy  
Somewhat easy  
Somewhat difficult  
Very difficult  
No answer

**ASK ALL:**

RESULTJOURNDIFF How easy or difficult do you think it was for journalists to make sense of the results of the presidential election as they were coming in? **[DISPLAY OPTIONS IN SAME ORDER AS RESULTFOLDIFF]**

Nov 18-29

2020

18	Very easy
37	Somewhat easy
34	Somewhat difficult
8	Very difficult
3	No answer

**ASK ALL: #Pathways**

CAMP20NEWS2 Please indicate whether each of the following has been a source of news for you about the presidential election since polls closed on Election Day (Nov. 3). **[RANDOMIZE ITEMS; SPLIT ITEMS RANDOMLY ACROSS TWO SCREENS]**

	<u>Major source</u>	<u>Minor source</u>	<u>Not a source</u>	<u>No answer</u>
a. Fox News Cable Channel Nov 18-29, 2020	22	32	45	1
b. CNN Nov 18-29, 2020	27	30	42	1
c. MSNBC Nov 18-29, 2020	17	28	54	1
d. ABC, CBS, or NBC national network TV Nov 18-29, 2020	37	36	26	1
e. NPR Nov 18-29, 2020	14	22	63	1
f. The New York Times Nov 18-29, 2020	16	27	56	1
g. Washington Post Nov 18-29, 2020	12	28	60	1
h. Talk radio, such as Sean Hannity or Rush Limbaugh Nov 18-29, 2020	11	18	70	1

**ASK ALL:**

ELECTTALK How much, if at all, did you talk with others about the results of the presidential election as they were coming in, whether online or in person?

Nov 18-29

2020

28	A lot
38	Some
23	Not too much
10	Not at all
*	No answer

**ASK ALL:**

ELECTSMSHARE Have you posted or shared any news and information about the election results on social media?

Nov 18-29

2020

6	Yes, I have posted a lot
18	Yes, I have posted a little bit
75	No, I have not posted anything
*	No answer

**ASK ALL:**

SOCRESP When it comes to news about political campaigns and candidates, how much do you approve or disapprove of social media companies blocking or flagging news and information on their platforms that they judge to be inaccurate or misleading?

Nov 18-29

2020

27	Strongly approve
25	Somewhat approve
16	Somewhat disapprove
31	Strongly disapprove
1	No answer

**ASK ALL:**

CAMP20MISINFO How much, if any, news and information have you seen or heard about the 2020 presidential election that seemed completely made up?

Nov 18-29

2020

28	A lot
45	Some
20	Not much
6	None at all
1	No answer

Aug 31-Sep 7

2020

25
44
22
7
2

**ASK IF SAW AT LEAST NOT MUCH MADE UP NEWS (CAMP20MISINFO=1-3) [N=12,006]:**

MISINFOSELF Did you come across any made-up news or information that you think was targeted at you specifically?

**BASED ON TOTAL:**

Nov 18-29		
<u>2020</u>		
18	Yes, I did	
74	No, I did not	
1	No answer	
6	<i>Saw or heard "none at all"</i>	
1	<i>No answer to CAMP20MISINFO</i>	

**ASK ALL:**

FKNWSHRTPOST Do you think made-up news and information related to the presidential election was mostly intended to hurt... **[RANDOMIZE OPTIONS 1 & 2; ALWAYS DISPLAY OPTIONS 3 & 4 LAST]**

Nov 18-29		
<u>2020</u>		
34	The Republican Party	
35	The Democratic Party	
21	Both parties about equally	
8	Neither party in particular	
1	No answer	

**TREND FOR COMPARISON:**

Do you think made-up news and information related to the presidential election will mostly be intended to hurt... **[RANDOMIZE 1 & 2; ALWAYS DISPLAY 3 & 4 LAST]**

Oct 29-Nov 11		
<u>2019</u>		
30	The Republican Party	
28	The Democratic Party	
34	Both parties about equally	
7	Neither party in particular	
2	No answer	

**ASK ALL:**

MISINFOIMPACT Thinking about the presidential election, how much of an impact, if any, do you think made-up news and information had on... **[RANDOMIZE ITEMS]**

	A major impact	A minor impact	Not much of an impact at all	No answer
a. People's confidence in the accuracy of the election results				
Nov 18-29, 2020	63	26	10	1
b. Which candidate people decided to vote for				
Nov 18-29, 2020	53	31	15	1

**MISINFOIMPACT CONTINUED ...**

	A major <u>impact</u>	A minor <u>impact</u>	Not much of an impact <u>at all</u>	No <u>answer</u>
c. People's decisions about whether to vote or not				
Nov 18-29, 2020	44	35	20	1

**RANDOMIZE ORDER OF KNOWTURNOUT, HOUSEGAIN AND KNOWCONCEDE****ASK ALL:**

KNOWTURNOUT Compared to the 2016 presidential election, how many Americans cast ballots in this year's presidential election? **[RANDOMIZE OPTIONS 1-2; ALWAYS ASK OPTIONS 3-4 LAST; USE SAME ORDER FOR HOUSEGAIN]**

Nov 18-29

2020

81	More Americans cast ballots (correct)
3	Fewer Americans cast ballots
3	About the same number
12	Not sure
1	No answer

**RANDOMIZE ORDER OF KNOWTURNOUT, HOUSEGAIN AND KNOWCONCEDE****ASK ALL:**

HOUSEGAIN Compared to the number of seats it has now, how many seats will the Democratic Party have in the U.S. House of Representatives next year? **[RANDOMIZE OPTIONS 1-2; ALWAYS ASK OPTIONS 3-4 LAST; USE SAME ORDER AS KNOWTURNOUT]**

Nov 18-29

2020

15	More seats
46	Fewer seats (correct)
9	The same number of seats
30	Not sure
1	No answer

**RANDOMIZE ORDER OF KNOWTURNOUT, HOUSEGAIN AND KNOWCONCEDE****ASK ALL:**

KNOWCONCEDE As far as you know, has there been a losing presidential candidate in modern history who has not publicly conceded the election prior to Inauguration Day?

Nov 18-29

2020

14	Yes, there has been
50	No, there has not been
35	Not sure
1	No answer

On a different topic...

**ASK ALL:**

COVIDFOL How closely have you been following news about the outbreak of the coronavirus strain known as COVID-19?

Nov 18-29		Oct 6-12	Aug 31-Sep 7	Jun 4-10	Apr 20-26	Mar 19-24	Mar 10-16
<u>2020</u>		<u>2020</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2020</u>
37	Very closely	37	35	39	46	57	51
42	Fairly closely	42	46	46	42	35	38
15	Not too closely	16	14	11	10	7	9
5	Not at all closely	4	4	3	2	1	2
*	No answer	*	*	*	*	*	*

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS PREVIOUSLY RELEASED****ASK ALL:**

COVIDDEAL All in all, do you think that the coronavirus outbreak has been... **[RANDOMIZE ANSWER CHOICES 1 AND 2; ALWAYS ASK ANSWER CHOICE 3 LAST]**

Nov 18-29		Oct 6-12	Aug 31-Sep 7	Jun 4-10	Apr 20-26
<u>2020</u>		<u>2020</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2020</u>
34	Made a BIGGER deal than it really is	36	39	38	29
30	Made a SMALLER deal than it really is	30	26	21	27
36	Approached about right	33	33	40	42
*	No answer	1	2	1	1

**ASK ALL:**

COVIDCONTROL Which statement comes closer to your view, even if neither is exactly right?

Nov 18-29		Oct 6-12	Aug 31-Sep 7
<u>2020</u>		<u>2020</u>	<u>2020</u>
36	The U.S. has controlled the outbreak as much as it could have	38	37
62	The U.S. has not controlled the outbreak as much as it could have	61	61
1	No answer	1	2

**ASK ALL:**

COVIDHOLIDAY How much, if at all, have you changed your Thanksgiving plans this year as a result of the coronavirus outbreak?

Nov 18-29	
<u>2020</u>	
33	A great deal
24	Some
16	Not too much
21	Not at all
5	I don't typically celebrate Thanksgiving
*	No answer

**OTHER QUESTIONS PREVIOUSLY RELEASED OR HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

**ASK ALL:**

PARTY In politics today, do you consider yourself a:

**ASK IF INDEP/SOMETHING ELSE (PARTY=3 or 4) OR MISSING [N=5,546]:**PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to...<sup>2</sup>

<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	Something <u>else</u>	No <u>answer</u>	Lean <u>Rep</u>	Lean <u>Dem</u>
27	29	28	14	1	18	21

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<sup>2</sup> PARTY and PARTYLN asked in a prior survey.