

Overview

The divisions that characterized the presidential election last November persisted in this most recent survey, and perhaps have even deepened over the first 100 Days of Donald Trump's presidency. The electorate is divided on the direction of the country, the near-term outlook on their own finances and the issues facing the country, and who they trust to provide news and information. We surveyed members of a national internet probability-based panel during the pre-election period, in January, March and again in April.

Direction of the country: The gap between those who see the country heading in the right direction and those who don't has widened slightly since March, from 2 points in the direction of "wrong track" to 6 points. Trump and Clinton voters lined up on either side of the optimism divide: 90% of Trump voters said "right direction", and 87% of Clinton's voters "wrong track". Third party voters tipped the balance – 67% said the country is on the wrong track.

Financial situation in the next 12 months: Comparing responses from before and after the election, we found that people's optimism about their near term financial future changed after the election, depending on which candidate they supported. When we look back at Trump voter responses, we see they were less optimistic than Clinton's voters before the election, but more optimistic than Clinton's voters in the current survey, after Trump's election.

Outlook on important issues: Nearly 4 out of 5 Trump voters were optimistic about the prospect of improvements in jobs and employment in the coming year; majorities predicted things will stay the same or get better in the area of threats of terrorism, healthcare reform, individual freedoms, race relations, rights of women and minorities, and the environment. Two thirds or more of Clinton voters predicted worsening of all categories other than jobs/employment, where a majority of Clinton voters expected to see things at least staying as they are.

Trump Job Approval: Partisan divides were also of course apparent in the presidential job approval ratings. An overall 10 point increase in Trump's job rating since March was mainly the result of a subset of his voters who had abstained from giving him a rating in March moving into the "approval" category in the most recent survey. Overall, 87% of Trump voters approved of the president's efforts so far and 87% of Clinton voters disapproved.

Trump Accomplishments: Just over half of respondents gave Trump credit for doing as much or more than he said he would. That includes 71% of Trump's voters, 25% of Clinton's and 44% of 3rd party voters.

Feelings about Trump and his policies: We asked respondents to differentiate between their personal feelings about Trump and their judgment of his policies. Overall, 37% had positive feelings, and 27% approved of his policies. Just over one in five (22%) both liked him and approved of his policies; a third disliked him and disapproved of his policies. Among Trump voters, just over half both liked Trump and approved of his policies; another 17% also liked his policies but not his persona. Nearly seven out of 10 Clinton voters disliked Trump and his policies, and another 20% disliked him but may be giving him the benefit of the doubt – they weren't sure yet about his policies.

Personal Attributes: We asked to what extent a list of positive attributes applied to Trump. Slim majorities endorsed Trump as keeping his promises, bringing needed change to DC, and representing American values. Attributes where he did not get majority endorsement: speaking for people like them, inspiring confidence, being ethical and trustworthy, and basing policy decisions on facts. Endorsement of these attributes slipped slightly in every category since March. Even Trump voters drifted slightly downward from full-throated attribution of positive attributes to the new president last March in particular in the area of being ethical and trustworthy.

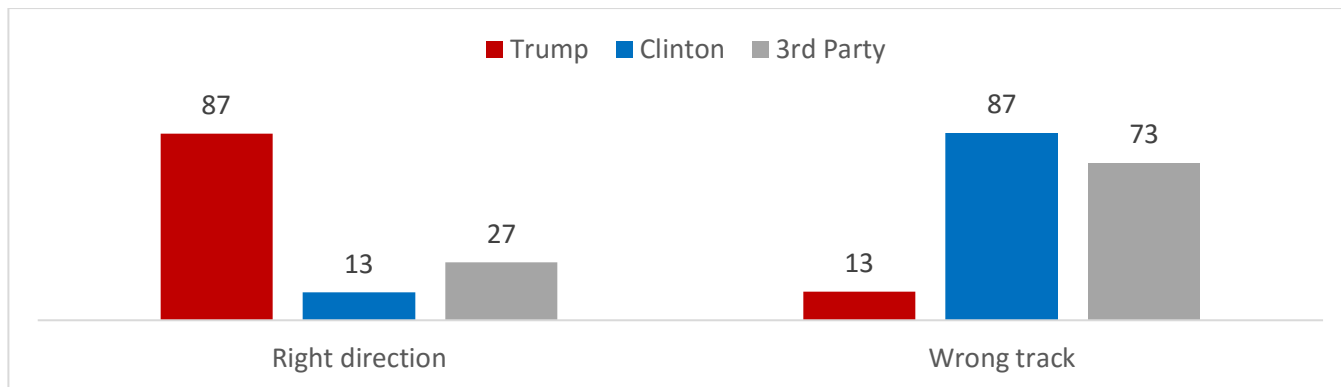
Little voter Remorse Very few regret their November vote. More than 9 out of 10 of Trump voters would vote for him again and nearly nine out of 10 of Clinton's supporters would back their candidate if the choices were the same.

What news to trust? Americans are also split on what news sources to trust. Those who trusted Fox News were very little inclined to trust any additional source other than the Trump administration. Those who trusted other outlets tended to trust several source, and to not to trust Fox News.

Right Direction/Wrong track

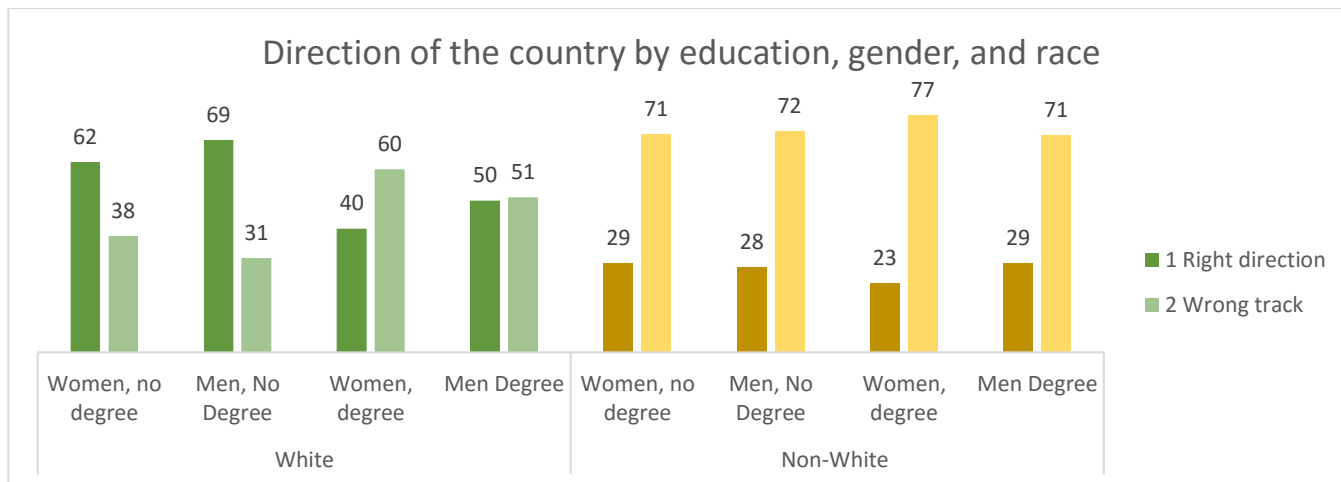
Generally speaking, do you feel that the country is headed in the right direction, or is it off on the wrong track?

The public’s sense of whether the country is on the right track was deeply dependent on who they voted for in the election last November. 87% of Clinton voters said the country was on the wrong track, and 87% of Trump supporters said it is headed in the right direction. Nearly three out of four 3rd party voters said “wrong track”.



The tendency to think that the country is on the right track decreased with education – 54% of those whose schooling terminated at or before high school said things are going well, along with 46% of people with some college and 38% of college graduates.

Even more than other Clinton-supporting blocs, African Americans were pessimistic about the direction the country is headed: only 10% said we are on the right track, along with just over a third of Hispanics (34%) and 59% of Non-Hispanic whites. However, whites split along the lines of gender and education more than people in other categories of race/ethnicity. Non-whites expressed a more uniformly pessimistic view.

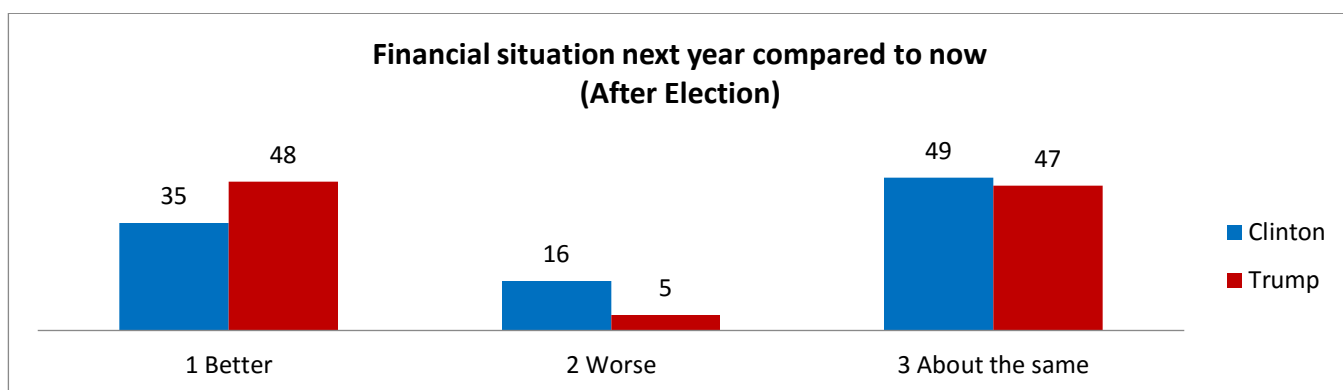
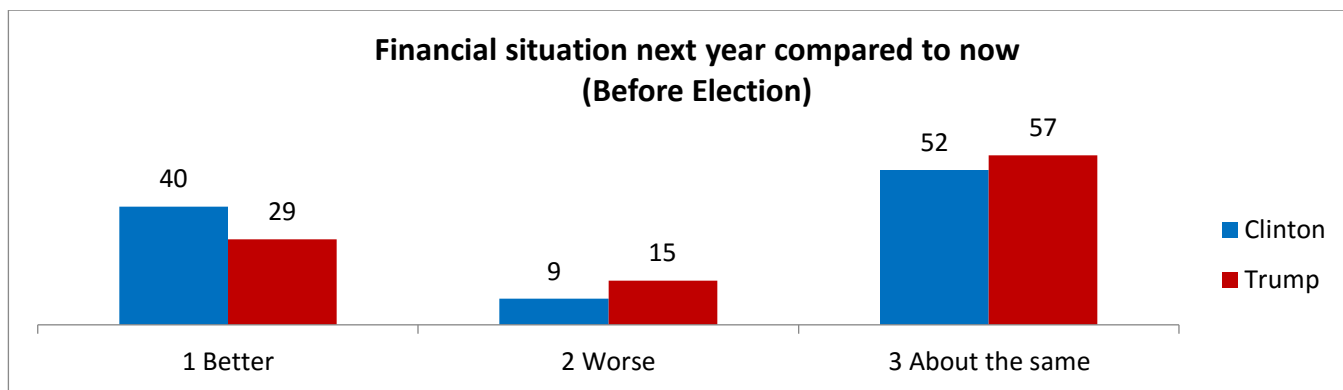


Financial Perceptions

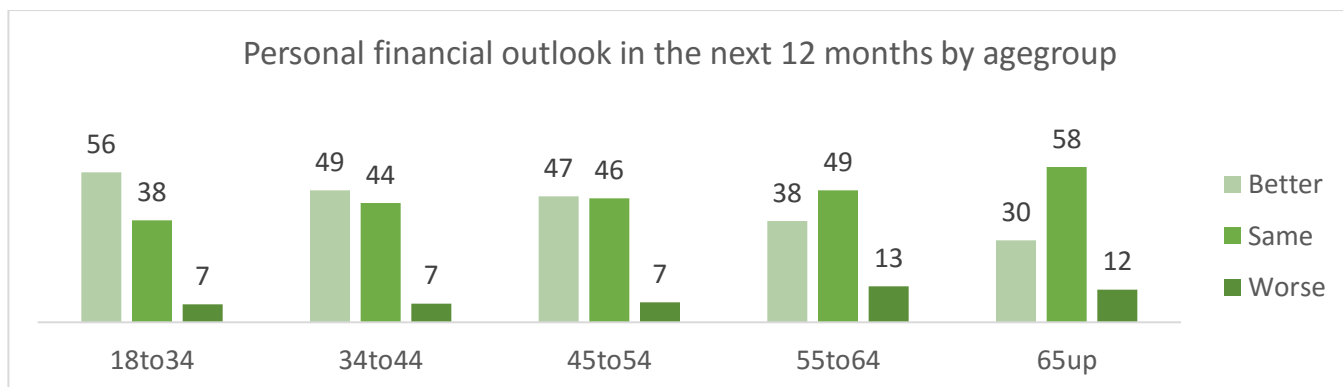
We also asked respondents to predict if their financial life would improve in the coming year, before and after the election. Results indicate that people’s optimism about their personal financial life were affected by political outcomes.

Now looking ahead--do you think that a year from now you (and your family) will be better off financially or worse off, or just about the same as now?

Before the election, Trump voters were less likely to be optimistic about their financial future than Clinton voters by 29% to 40%. After the election, the situation reversed: 35% of Clinton's voters said things would be better vs. 48% of Trump's. After the election, 16% of Clinton's voters predicted they would be worse off in the coming year, similar to the 15% of Trump's voters who predicted the same thing before the election.



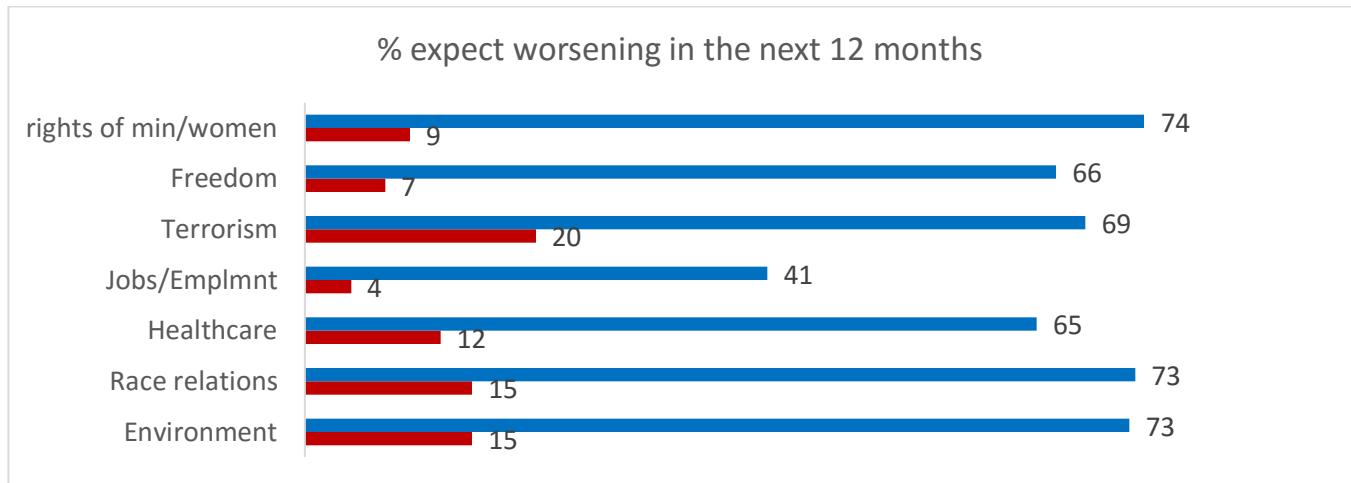
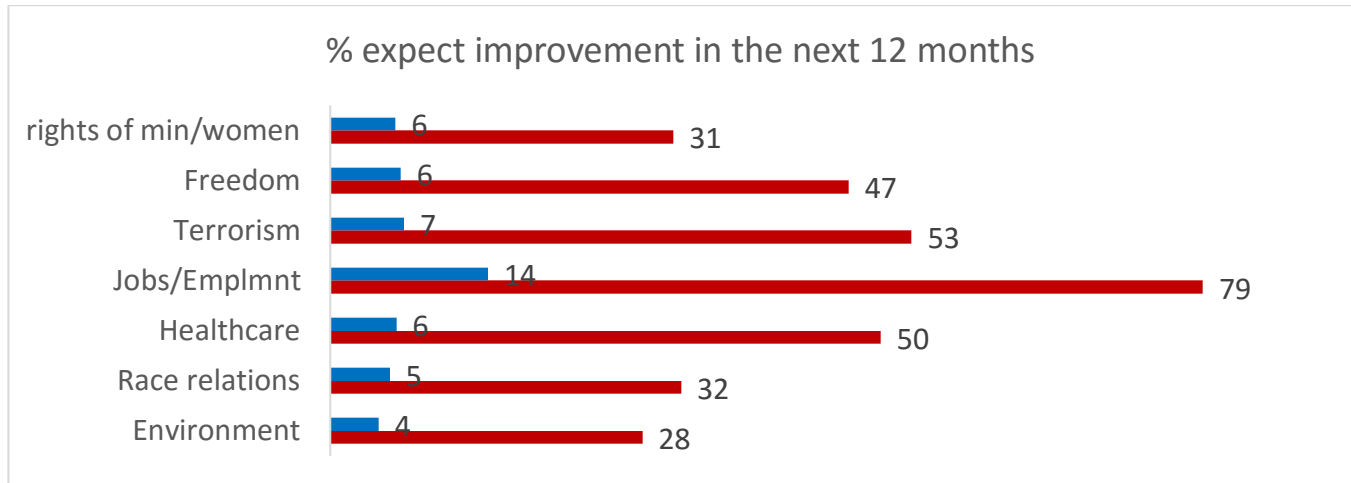
Personal financial optimism decreases with age. More than half of adults under the age 35 predict that their personal financial situation will improve in the coming months.



Issues facing the country

We asked respondents to tell us if they expected things to get better, worse or about the same in the areas of jobs and employment, threat of terrorism, healthcare reform, individual freedoms, race relations, minority and women's rights, and the environment. Trump voters were particularly optimistic about job creation, somewhat optimistic that

threat of terrorism would diminish, and that the country’s healthcare situation would improve. Very few Clinton voters agreed, and only a few thought that things would get better or stay the same in the coming year.

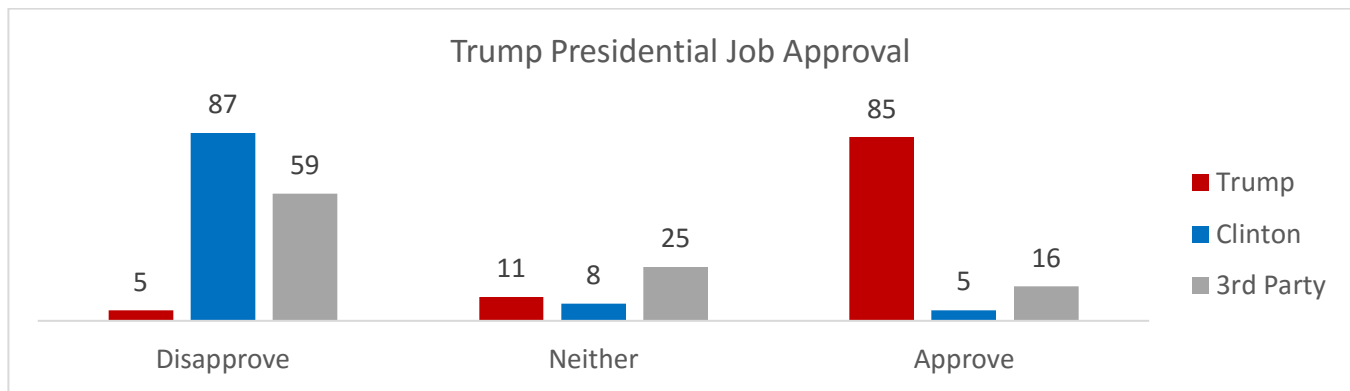


Trump Presidential Job Approval Rating

Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the job that Donald Trump is doing as president?

President Trump’s approval rating increased ten points since it was measured in March, to 40% in the April survey. The increase was mainly due to a movement toward approval among about a third of his own voters who had previously said they “neither approve nor disapprove”.

More than eight out of 10 (85%) Trump voters in the most recent poll approved of the job the president is doing. A similar proportion of Clinton voters (87%) disapproved, along a tie-breaking majority of 3rd party voters (59%)



In March, a third (33%) of Trump voters opted to give a neutral “wait and see” rating. They may have liked what they saw since then: fully 78% of that group now approve (this is a positive movement among more than one out of four of all Trump voters.)

While Trump movement from neutrality or disapproval to approval since March was associated with endorsement of Trump keeping his promises ($p < .001$); seeing Trump as a change agent ($p < .01$); representing American values ($p < .001$), and to a lesser extent the sense that Trump speaks for them ($p = .01$). Movement toward disapproval was associated with those who attribute Trump with honesty and ethics ($p < .001$), or believe that he bases policy on sound data ($p < .01$).

Non-Hispanic whites approved (50%) more than disapproved (36%) while 14% remained neutral, representing a 14-point increase in approval among this group since March. The increase was driven entirely by white Trump voters whose ratings increased 23 percentage points over that time to 85%. In contrast, a similarly high percentage of non-Trump whites gave the president a negative rating in March (71%) and now (68%). More than eight out of 10 (82%) African American respondents gave Trump a negative rating then and now. A majority of Hispanic voters disapproved in March (63%) and now (60%).

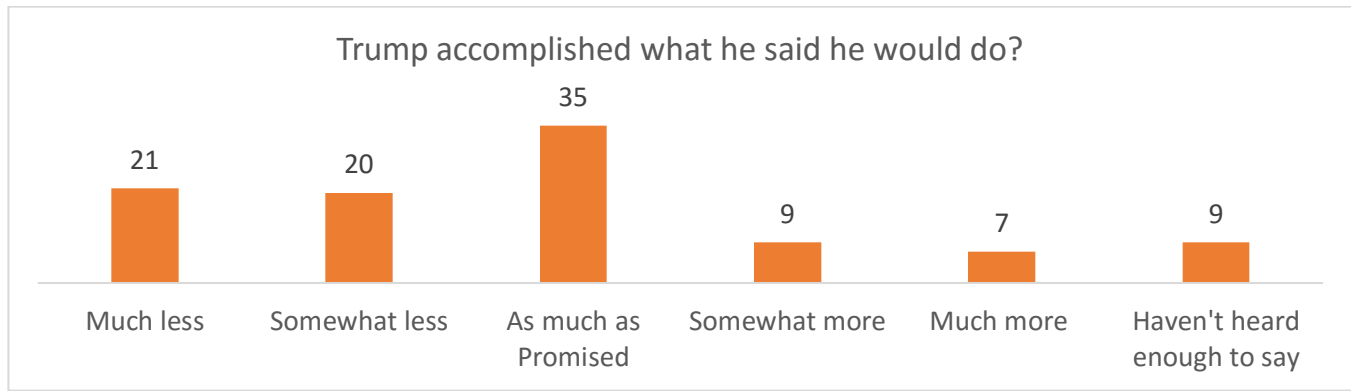
Has Trump done what he promised he would do?

We asked respondents how Trump has done in accomplishing what he promised.

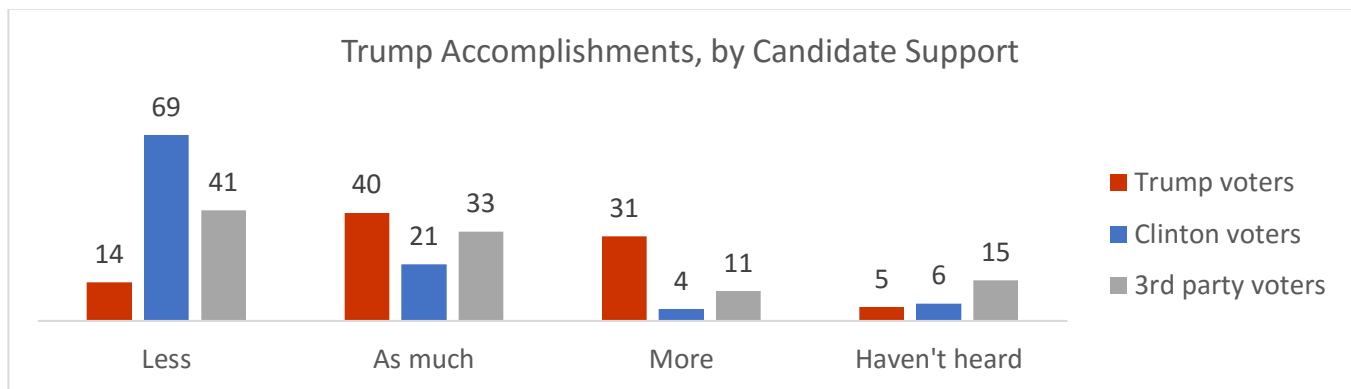
Whether or not you approve of the job Donald Trump has been doing as president so far, would you say he has done more, less or about as much as he said he would do in his first 100 days?

Despite some very visible setbacks, such as being unable to repeal and replace Obamacare, build a wall on the border with Mexico, or enact tax reform, the survey indicated that many Americans may be giving the president credit for trying to do what he said he would do.

Overall, just over half (51%) said Trump has accomplished as much or more than promised. This includes just over a third (35%) of the public who give him credit for doing what he said, and 16% who said he has done more. Roughly one out of five (41%) said “less”, including 21% who saw his accomplishments as much less than he promised.



Most Trump voters saw Trump as doing what he promised. Just under half (49%) said he has done as much as promised and another 31% said more. Not surprisingly, others disagreed. While just over one out of five Clinton voters (21%) gave him credit for accomplishing what he said he would do, 69% said that he has not. About one in five third party voters said as much or more, and 14% said they weren't sure.



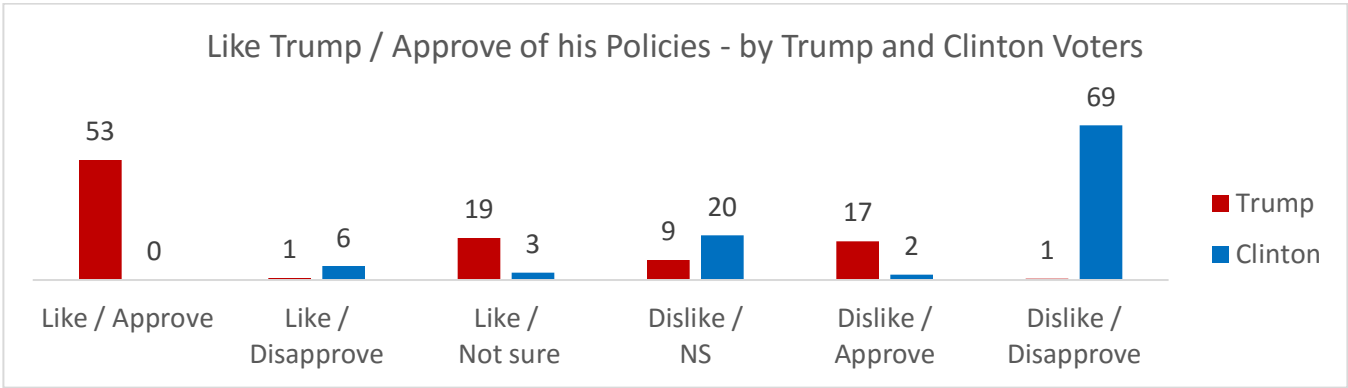
Feelings toward Trump

Overall, Trump is not engendering particularly warm feelings among the public. In a question that asked respondents to choose between liking or disliking Trump and approving or disapproving of his policies, 38% indicated that they liked Trump personally, compared to 62% who felt otherwise.

Which of the following statements best describes how you feel toward Donald Trump?

- 22% I like him personally and approve of most or all of his policies
- 4% I like him personally but disapprove of most or all of his policies
- 12% I like him personally and am not sure, or am waiting to see about his policies
- 20% I dislike him personally and am not sure, or am waiting to see about his policies
- 33% I dislike him personally and disapprove of most or all of his policies
- 9% I dislike him personally but approve of most or all of his policies

President Trump's non-traditional style may have set up some conflicting feelings even among his own voters. 17% of Trump voters – nearly one in five – said they disliked him personally, but approved of his policies. A similar proportion (19%) liked him but weren't sure of his policies. A slim 53% majority of Trump voters both like him and approve of his policies. 70% of Clinton's voters disliked him and his policies

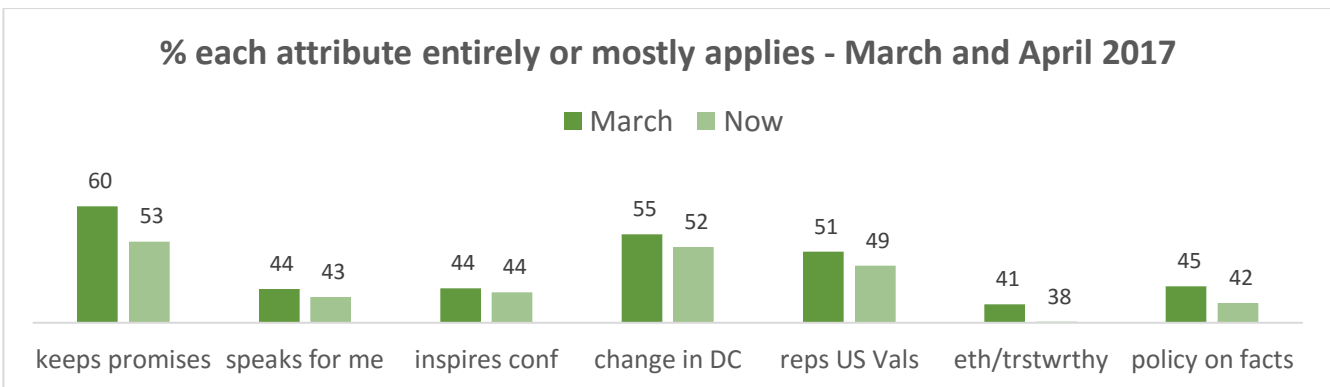


Trump attributes

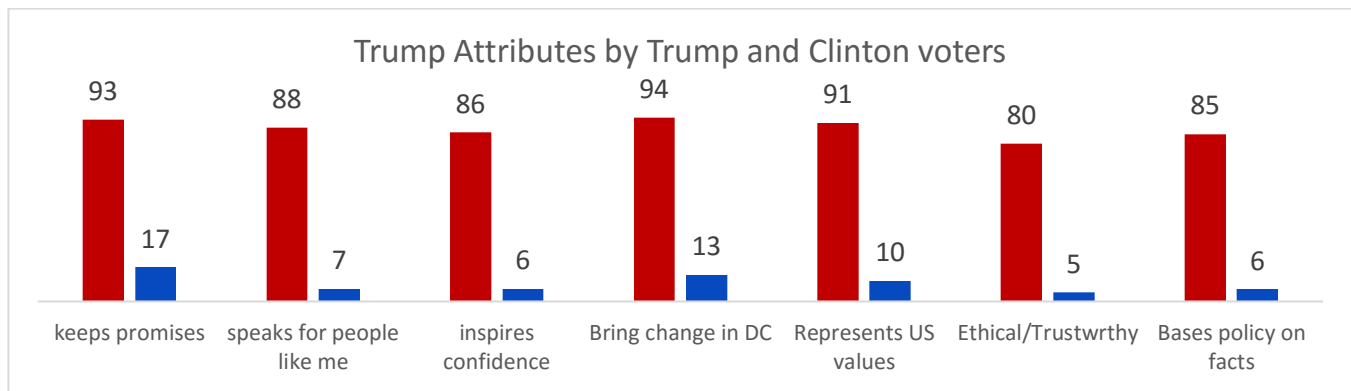
In the surveys in March and April, we asked respondents to indicate to what extent the following attributes applied, or did not apply, to Donald Trump (1) Keeps his promises, (2) speaks for people like you, (3) inspires confidence and optimism, (4) is creating needed change in Washington DC, (5) represents American values, (6) is ethical and trustworthy, (7) bases policy decisions on facts and good data.

In the current poll just under or over half of respondents gave Trump credit for keeping his promises (53%), creating change (52%), and representing American values (49%). Just over four in 10 credited him with speaking for people like them (43%), inspiring confidence (44%), and basing policy on facts (42%). Just under four in ten said he is ethical and trustworthy (38%).

There was a significant seven-point drop in the proportion who said that Trump keeps his promises, from 60% to 53% between March and April. All other changes were within the margin of error.



The vast majority of Clinton voters say that the attributes mostly or entirely do not apply to Trump. Trump voters were as overwhelmingly positive as Clinton voters were negative.



However, what does not show in the chart above is the cascade of Trump voters shifting downward in their ratings from the highest positive category of *entirely applies* in Feb/March to say that the attribute *mostly applies* now. The chart below shows that this shift reached double digits for **keeping promises** (-10), and **changing things in D C** (-11). All changes were statistically significant. Clinton voters showed very little change from Feb/March to now, none of the change was significant.

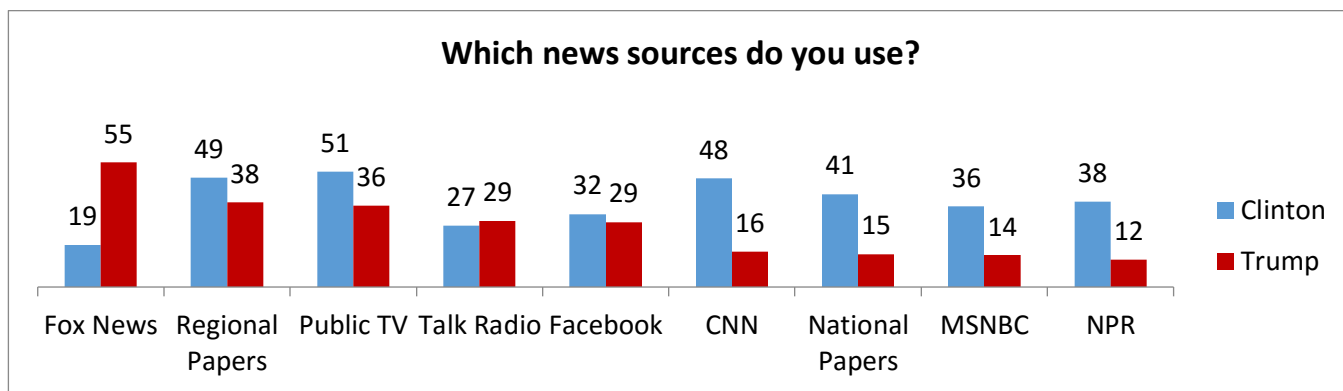
Who would they vote for now?

When asked how they would vote now, few who voted for Trump in November indicated any regrets: 91% backed their candidate again. Trump would pick up 2% of Clinton voters, 8% of Johnson’s voters and 15% of Stein’s. Similarly, 89% of Clinton’s voters would choose her again. Clinton would also pick up 14% of Johnson voters and 34% of Stein’s. Two percent of each of the two main candidates’ voters would switch sides, and about 2.5% would not vote at all.

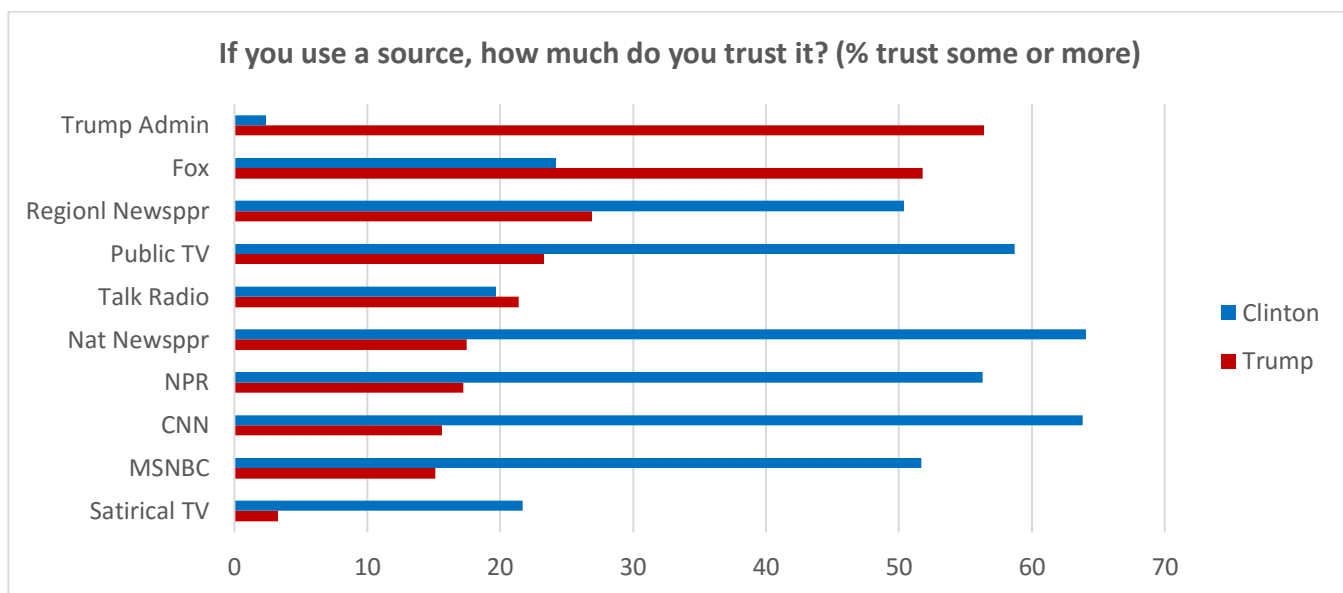
Who now?	Trump voters	Clinton voters	Johnson voters	Stein voters
Trump	91.4	1.8	8.3	15.3
Clinton	1.1	89.2	14.1	33.5
Johnson	0.9	0.9	68.8	0.0
Stein	0.3	0.9	0.3	47.6
Other	3.7	4.9	5.8	2.7
Wouldn’t vote	2.6	2.5	2.7	1.0

News sources

In March, we asked respondents to tell us which sources of news they used and how much they trusted each one. We found that Trump voters relied on Fox news much more often than other sources, although they were also reliant on regional newspapers and public television. Clinton supporters obtained information from a greater number of sources, relying on newspapers, public TV, CNN, and national papers and to a lesser extent MSNBC and NPR.



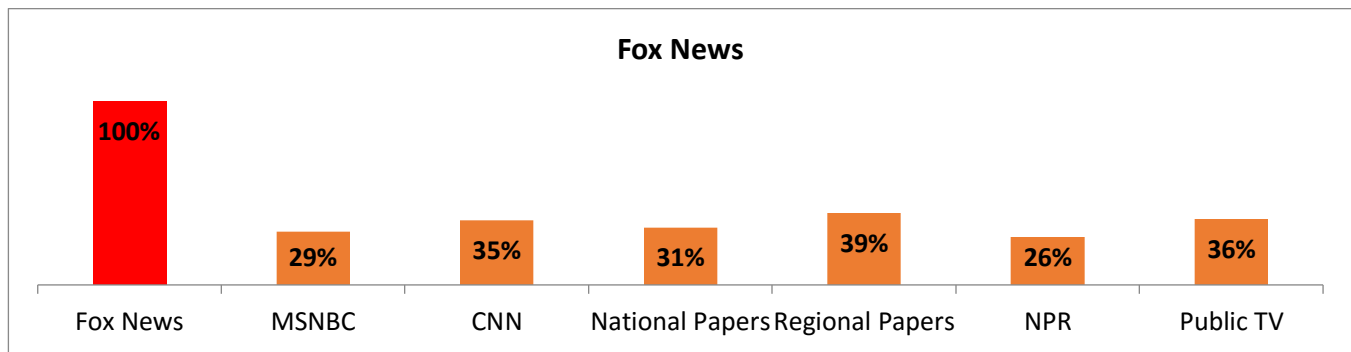
A similar pattern was found when we asked which news sources they *trusted*, in this era of concern over “fake news.” In addition to the sources of news we asked about before, we asked about their level of trust in news emanating from the Trump administration. Trump supporters tended to trust only Fox News and the Trump administration itself. Clinton voters tended to spread their trust around more, in particular looking to national newspapers and CNN and to a lesser extent national public radio, regional newspapers, and MSNBC. A little over 1 in 5 Clinton voters trusted satirical television shows as a source of information. Not shown are online sources, none of which had more than single digit trust among any constituency.



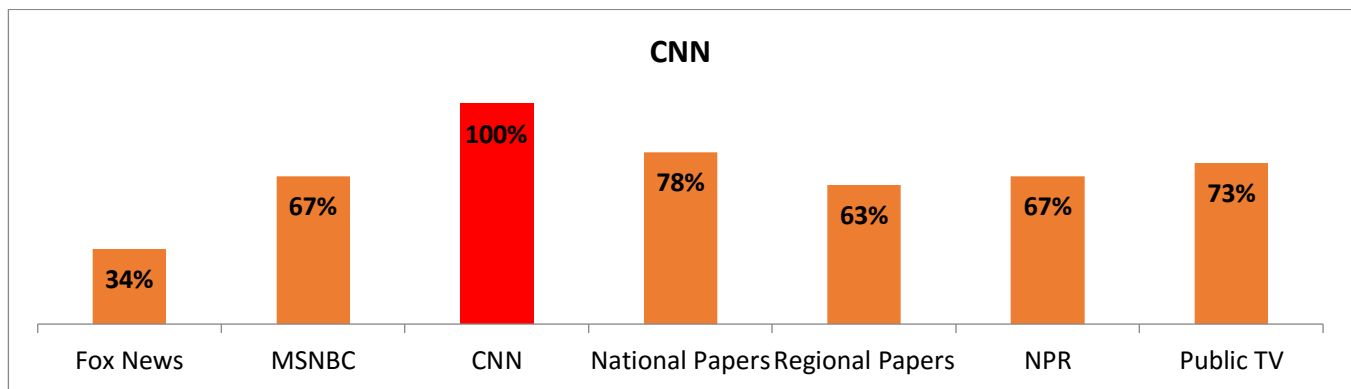
Comparison of trust levels among those who trust each source

In fact, Fox News occupied a unique position among trusted sources as may be seen in the charts on this and the next page. These charts show the level of trust in other sources, among people who trusted the source indicated in red.

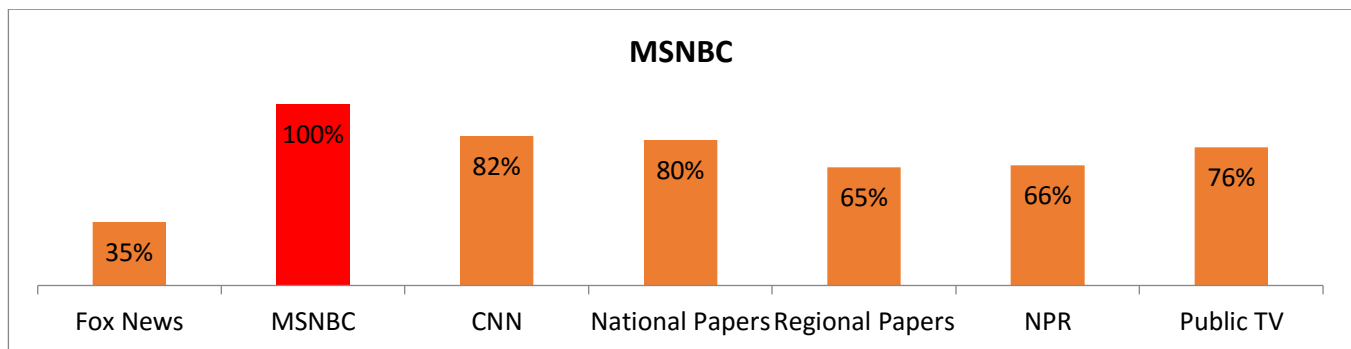
For example, 100% of the people in the first chart said they trusted Fox News. We charted their level of trust for other sources – all were between 26% and 39%.



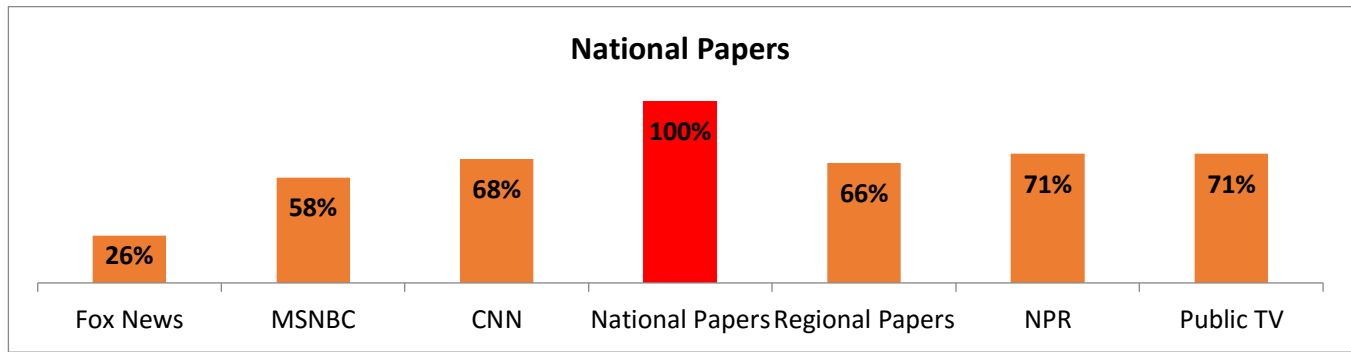
In contrast, people who trusted CNN were also likely to trust other sources, except Fox News. Nearly eight in 10 said they trusted national papers, and more than 60% trust MSNBC, regional papers and NPR and 73% trusted Public TV.



Those who trusted MSNBC also trusted other sources, but not Fox News. Trust was around 80% for CNN and national papers, around 75% for public TV and around 65% for regional papers and NPR.



People who trusted national newspapers also tended to trust them more than most other sources – rating MSNBC below 60%, and CNN, Regional papers, NPR and Public TV around – above or below - the 70% mark. This group trusted Fox News the least.



Methodology

The data in this report is based on surveys conducted by the University of Southern California Dornsife / LA Times Daybreak poll. For this report, 3039 adult American members of a national probability-based internet panel based in USC’s Center for Economic and Social Research of whom 2,584 reported voting in the November election. The surveys were conducted in a national probability-based internet panel March 12-25 and April 1-30. Survey results were weighted to match demographic characteristics such as race and gender, from the U.S. Census Current Population Survey and also weighted to match the population distribution by location in order to ensure the correct balance between residents of urban and rural zip codes. For some measures in this report, we referred to panel member responses to questions in surveys conducted before the election in August and October, and directly after the election in January and February. We compared change over time among this group of panel members, and report on the results of new questions asked in April, close to the end of the first 100 days of Donald Trump’s presidency. The margin of error is +/-2 percentage points. The results of this report were presented at the “Trump’s First 100 Days” Conference conducted by USC Dornsife College’s Jesse M. Unruh Institute of Politics at USC’s Town & Gown on April 26, 2017.

More information on the survey’s sample, results and methodology, including the full question text, are available online at uasdata.usc.edu or by contacting uas-l@usc.edu.