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U.S. Public Continues to Favor Legal Abortion, Oppose Overturning Roe v. Wade

More agree with Democrats than Republicans on abortion policy

FOR MEDIA OR OTHER INQUIRIES:

Carroll Doherty, Director of Political Research Jocelyn Kiley, Associate Director, Research Bridget Johnson, Communications Manager

202.419.4372

www.pewresearch.org

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U.S. Public Continues to Favor Legal Abortion, Oppose Overturning Roe v. Wade

More agree with Democrats than Republicans on abortion policy

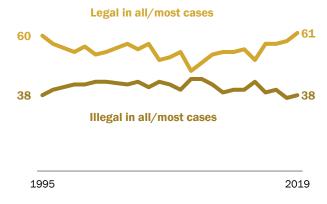
As debates over abortion continue in states around the country, a majority of Americans (61%) continue to say that abortion should be legal in all (27%) or most (34%) cases. A smaller share of the public (38%) says abortion should be illegal in all (12%) or most cases (26%).

The new survey by Pew Research Center, conducted July 22-August 4 among 4,175 adults, also finds little support for overturning Roe v. Wade, the landmark Supreme Court decision that established a woman's right to an abortion. Seven-in-ten say they do not want to see the Roe v. Wade decision completely overturned; 28% say they would like to see the Supreme Court completely overturn the 1973 decision.

Consistent with these views, a majority of Americans say their greater concern is that some states are making it too difficult (59%) rather than too easy (39%) for people to be able to get an abortion.

Majority continues to say abortion should be legal in all or most cases

% who say abortion should be ...



Notes: No answer responses not shown. 2019 data from Pew Research Center's online American Trends Panel; prior data from telephone surveys. Data from 1995-2005 from ABC/Washington Post; data for 2006 from AP-Ipsos. Trend lines show aggregated data for years where more than one survey was conducted. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 22-Aug. 4, 2019.

Partisan divides over abortion policy remain deep and the issue also exposes differences within the two parties, especially the GOP.

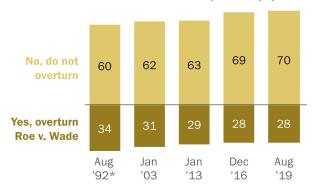
Democrats broadly back access to legal abortion: About eight-in-ten Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents (82%) say abortion should be legal in all or most cases. A somewhat larger share of liberal (91%) than conservative and moderate (75%) Democrats say abortion should be legal in all or most cases.

Democrats are ideologically divided over how far protections for legal abortion should extend: Conservative and moderate Democrats are more likely to say abortion should be legal in *most* cases (45%) than in *all* cases (30%). The balance of opinion is reversed among liberal Democrats: 51% say abortion should be legal in all cases, while 39% say it should be legal in most cases.

Among Republicans and Republican leaners, significantly more say abortion should be illegal (62%) than legal (36%) in all or most cases. Republicans are deeply split on this question by ideology: 77% of conservative Republicans say abortion should be illegal in all or most cases; just 22% say it should be legal. By contrast, 57% of moderate and liberal Republicans think abortion should be legal in all or most cases, compared with a smaller share (41%) who say it should be illegal.

Broad public opposition to completely overturning Roe v. Wade

Would you like to see the Supreme Court completely overturn its Roe versus Wade decision, or not? (%)



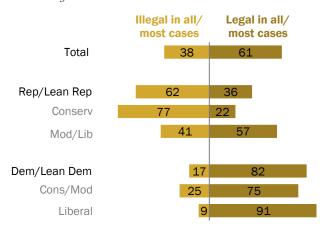
Notes: No answer responses not shown. 2019 data from Pew Research Center's online American Trends Panel; prior data from telephone surveys.

*1992 data from Gallup and based on registered voters. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 22-Aug. 4, 2019.

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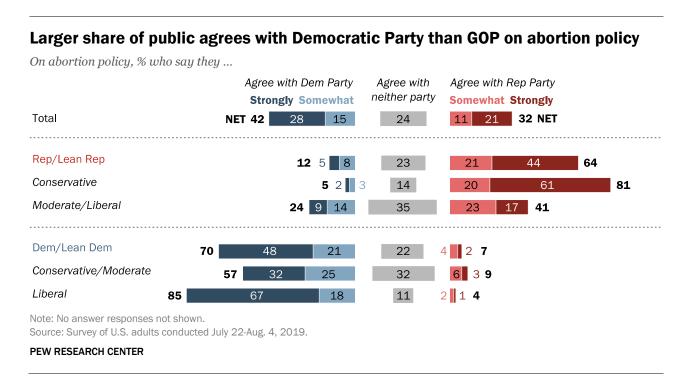
Wide divide among Republicans in views of legal abortion

% who say abortion should be ...



Note: No answer responses not shown. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 22-Aug. 4, 2019.

When it comes to abortion policy, the public expresses somewhat more agreement with the Democratic Party's policies than those of the Republican Party – though a sizable minority says they don't agree with either party's policies.



Overall, 42% agree with the Democratic Party's policies on abortion either strongly (28%) or somewhat (15%). A smaller share (32%) says they strongly (21%) or somewhat (11%) agree with the policies of the GOP. About a quarter (24%) says they don't agree with either party on this issue.

Most partisans agree with their own party's stance on abortion policy, but moderates in both parties are especially likely to express some doubts about their own party's policies on abortion.

Among Republicans and Republican leaners, 64% agree with the GOP's stance on abortion, while 23% say they do not agree with either party and 12% say they agree with the Democratic Party's policies. About eight-in-ten conservative Republicans (81%) agree with the GOP on abortion policy, compared with just 41% of moderate and liberal Republicans. A majority of moderate and liberal Republicans (59%) do not agree with either party (35%) or agree with the Democratic Party (24%) on abortion policy.

Seven-in-ten Democrats and Democratic leaners say they agree with their own party on abortion policy; 22% say they do not agree with either party and just 7% agree with the GOP. Liberal Democrats (85%) are much more likely than conservatives and moderates (57%) to agree with the Democratic Party's policies on abortion. Roughly a third of conservatives and moderates (32%) say they do not agree with either party's policies; 9% say they agree with the GOP.

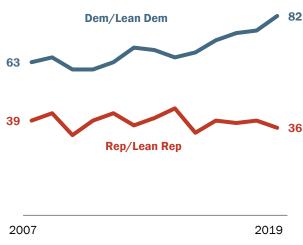
Partisan gap in views of legal abortion has widened in recent years

While Republicans and Democrats have long differed in their views on abortion, the partisan gap today is larger than it has been in recent years. And the growing partisan gap has been driven largely by an increase in support for legal abortion among Democrats.

In the current survey, Democrats and Democratic leaners are 46 percentage points more likely than Republicans and Republican leaners to say abortion should be legal in all or most cases (82% vs. 36%). This gap is wider than it has been in previous Pew Research Center surveys dating to 2007. For instance, in 2016, there was a 33-point gap between the shares of Democrats (72%) and Republicans (39%) who supported legal abortion in all or most cases.

Growing share of Democrats favor legal abortion in all or most cases

% who say abortion should be <u>legal</u> in all or most cases



Notes: 2019 data from Pew Research Center's online American Trends Panel; prior data from telephone surveys. Trend lines show aggregated data for years where more than one survey was conducted

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 22-Aug. 4, 2019.

Differences in views on legal abortion extend beyond party affiliation; there are significant divides in views on the basis of religious affiliation, education and age. Notably, there are virtually no differences in the opinions of women and men.

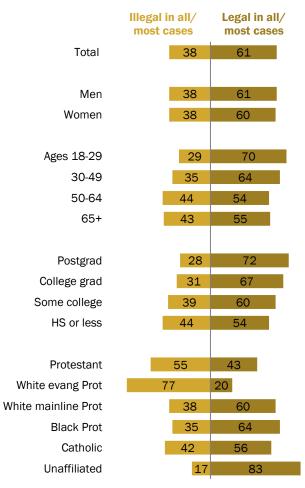
A majority of white mainline Protestants (60%) and black Protestants (64%) say abortion should be legal in all or most cases. By contrast, 77% of white evangelical Protestants say abortion should be illegal in all or most cases. Among Catholics, more say abortion should be legal (56%) than illegal (42%) in all or most cases. Those who are not affiliated with a religion are among the most supportive of legal abortion: 83% say abortion should be legal in all or most cases.

Among all adults, those with higher levels of educational attainment are more supportive of legal abortion than those with less education. While 72% of those with postgraduate degrees say abortion should be legal in all or most cases, a smaller majority of those who have not completed college (57%) say the same.

Across age groups, those under 50 are more supportive of legal abortion than are those 50 and older. For example, 70% of those ages 18 to 29 say abortion should be legal in all or most cases, compared with 55% of those ages 65 and older.

Large differences in views of legal abortion by religious affiliation

% who say abortion should be ...



Note: No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 22-Aug. 4, 2019.

Most Americans oppose overturning Roe v. Wade

Seven-in-ten say they do not want the Supreme Court to completely overturn its Roe v. Wade decision, compared with 28% who want to see the decision completely overturned.

Similar majorities of women (70%) and men (69%) do not want Roe v. Wade overturned.

Republicans are divided in their views, reflecting internal ideological differences. Half of Republicans and Republican leaners do not want the Supreme Court to overturn Roe v. Wade; nearly as many (48%) would like to see the decision overturned.

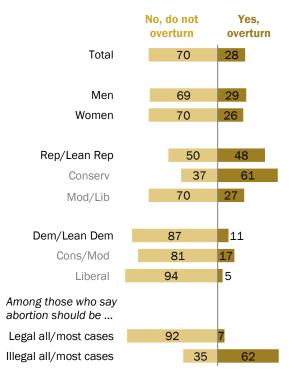
By 61% to 37%, conservative Republicans say they would like Roe v. Wade to be overturned. Moderate and liberal Republicans take the opposite view: 70% do not want the Supreme Court to overturn the decision, while just 27% say they want this to happen.

Nearly nine-in-ten Democrats and Democratic leaners (87%) do not want Roe v. Wade overturned, including 94% of liberal Democrats and 81% of conservative and moderate Democrats.

Views on the Roe v. Wade decision are tied to overall views on whether abortion should be legal or illegal. For instance, 92% of those who

Republicans divided on whether Roe v. Wade should be completely overturned

Would you like to see the Supreme Court completely overturn its Roe versus Wade decision, or not? (%)



Note: No answer responses not shown. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 22-Aug. 4, 2019.

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say abortion should be legal in all or most cases do not want the Supreme Court to overturn Roe v. Wade. A majority of those who say abortion should be illegal in all or most cases (62%) want the decision overturned; however, a sizable minority (35%) of those who think abortion should be illegal in all or most cases do not want the court to completely overturn its 1973 decision.

Who knows someone who has had an abortion?

When asked whether they personally know someone who has had an abortion - such as a close

friend, family member or the respondent themselves -57% of the public says they know someone who has had an abortion; 42% say they do not.

About half or more across most demographic groups say they know someone who has had an abortion.

Women (63%) are 12 percentage points more likely than men (51%) to say they personally know someone who has had an abortion.

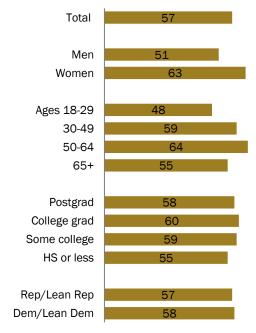
Across age groups, the youngest adults ages 18 to 29 (48%) are less likely than older adults – particularly those ages 50 to 64 – to say they know someone who has had an abortion.

The share who know someone who has had an abortion varies little across levels of educational attainment.

Nearly identical shares of Democrats and Democratic leaners (58%) and Republicans and Republican leaners (57%) say they personally know someone who has had an abortion.

Majority of public says they know someone who has had an abortion

% who say they personally know someone who has had an abortion



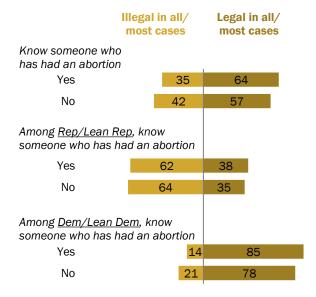
Note: No answer responses not shown. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 22-Aug. 4, 2019.

Those who personally know someone who has had an abortion are only modestly more likely than those who do not to say abortion should be legal. Almost two-thirds of those who know someone who has had an abortion say abortion should be legal in all or most cases (64%). Among those who do not know someone who has had an abortion, support for legal abortion is slightly lower (57%).

Among Democrats and Democratic leaners, those who know someone who has had an abortion are 7 percentage points more likely than those who don't to support legal abortion (85% and 78%, respectively). There is only a 3-point difference among Republicans and Republicans leaners in support for legal abortion between those who know someone who has had an abortion (38%) and those who do not (35%).

Knowing someone who has had an abortion has a modest impact on abortion policy views

% who say abortion should be ...



Note: No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 22-Aug. 4, 2019.

Broad concern that some states are making it 'too difficult' to get an abortion

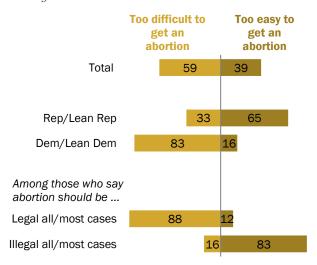
About six-in-ten Americans (59%) say their greater concern is that some states are making it too difficult for people to be able to get an abortion; 39% say their greater concern is that some states are making it too easy for people to be able to get an abortion.

A majority of Democrats and Democratic leaners (83%) say their greater concern is that some states are making it too difficult for people to get an abortion. By 65% to 33%, Republicans and Republican leaners say their greater concern is that some states are making it too easy for people to get an abortion.

Views on this question are closely related to overall views on whether abortion should be legal or illegal. Almost nine-in-ten of those who say abortion should be legal in all or most cases (88%) say their greater concern is that some

Views of access to abortion in states are similar to opinions about legal abortion

% who say their greater concern is that some states are making it ...



Note: No answer responses not shown. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 22-Aug. 4, 2019.

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states are making it too difficult to get an abortion. Among those who think abortion should be illegal in all or most cases, 83% say their greater concern is over states making it too easy for people to get an abortion.

Demographic differences on this question are similar to those on whether abortion should be legal or illegal.

Trend and mode changes

Results for this report are based on a survey conducted through Pew Research Center's American Trends Panel – a probability-based, nationally representative panel of U.S. adults administered online. Two of the questions on this survey have been included on telephone surveys in the past.

Results from self-administered (online) and interviewer-administered (telephone) surveys are sometimes different even when the questions are worded the same. This difference is called a mode effect.

To assess possible mode effects in abortion attitudes, the two questions with previous phone trends were included on a recent telephone survey in addition to this wave of the American Trends Panel. The two surveys produced similar estimates for these two abortion attitudes. Results for both surveys are shown in the topline.

Charts in the report that draw upon trend data from telephone surveys include footnotes indicating the mode of data collection. For more information about mode effects, <u>click here</u>.

Acknowledgments

This report is a collaborative effort based on the input and analysis of the following individuals:

Research team

Carroll Doherty, *Director*, *Political Research*Jocelyn Kiley, *Associate Director*, *Political Research*Alec Tyson, *Senior Researcher*Bradley Jones, *Research Associate*Hannah Hartig, *Research Associate*Amina Dunn *Research Assistant*Hannah Gilberstadt, *Research Assistant*Claire Brockway, *Intern*

Communications and editorial

Bridget Johnson, *Communications Manager* Nida Asheer, *Communications Associate*

Graphic design and web publishing

Alissa Scheller, Information Graphics Designer Sara Atske, Associate Digital Producer

Methodology

The American Trends Panel survey methodology

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. The panel is being managed by Ipsos.

Data in this report are drawn from the panel wave conducted July 22 to August 4, 2019. A total of 4,175 panelists responded out of 5,766 who were sampled, for a response rate of 72%. This does

not include 12 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 5.1%. The break-off rate among panelists who logged onto the survey and completed at least one item is 1.6%. The margin of sampling error for the full sample of 4,175 respondents is plus or minus 1.9 percentage points.

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	2,499				
Aug. 27 to Oct. 4, 2015	Landline/ cell RDD	6,004	2,976	1,463				
April 25 to June 4, 2017	Landline/ cell RDD	3,905	1,628	799				
Aug. 8, 2018–Oct. 31, 2018	ABS/web	9,396	8,778	8,670				
	Total	29,114	18,720	13,431				

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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The subsample from the ATP was selected by grouping panelists into five strata so demographic groups that are underrepresented in the panel had a higher probability of selection than overrepresented groups:

- Stratum A consists of panelists who are non-internet users. They were sampled at a rate of 100%.
- Stratum B consists of panelists with a high school education or less. They were sampled at a rate of 98.6%.
- Stratum C consists of panelists that are Hispanic, unregistered to vote, or non-volunteers. They were sampled at a rate of 41.5%.

- Stratum D consists of panelists that are black or 18-34 years old. They were sampled at a rate of 20.4%.
- Stratum E consists of the remaining panelists. They were sampled at a rate of 15%.

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 which 9,942 agreed to participate.

In August 2018, the ATP switched from telephone to address-based recruitment. Invitations were sent to a random, address-based sample (ABS) of households selected from the U.S. Postal Service's Delivery Sequence File. 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. For a random half-sample of invitations, households without internet access were instructed to return a postcard. These households were contacted by telephone and sent a tablet if they agreed to participate. A total of 9,396 were invited to join the panel, and 8,778 agreed to join the panel and completed an initial profile survey. Of the 18,720 individuals who have ever joined the ATP, 13,431 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.¹

¹ AAPOR Task Force on Address-based Sampling. 2016. "AAPOR Report: Address-based Sampling."

Weighting

The ATP data were weighted in a multistep process that begins with a base weight incorporating the respondents' original survey selection probability and the fact that in 2014 and 2017 some respondents were subsampled for invitation to the panel. The next step in the weighting uses an iterative technique that aligns the sample to population benchmarks on the dimensions listed in the accompanying table.

Sampling errors and test of statistical-significance take into account the effect of weighting. Interviews are conducted in both English and Spanish, but the American Trends Panel's Hispanic sample is predominantly U.S. born and English speaking.

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.

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:

Weighting dimensions

Variable	Benchmark source
Gender	2017 American
Age	Community Survey
Education	·

Race/Hispanic origin Hispanic nativity Home internet

access	
Region x Metropolitan status	2018 CPS March Supplement
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.

Note: Estimates from the ACS are based on non-institutionalized adults. Voter registration is calculated using procedures from Hur, Achen (2013) and rescaled to include the total US adult population.

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Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus
Total sample	4,175	1.9 percentage points
Rep/Lean Rep	1,789	2.9 percentage points
Dem/Lean Dem	2,239	2.6 percentage points
Among those who say abort	ion should be	
Legal in all/most cases	2,550	2.5 percentage points
Illegal in all/most cases	1,557	3.1 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

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2019 PEW RESEARCH CENTER'S AMERICAN TRENDS PANEL WAVE 52 JULY FINAL TOPLINE JULY 22-AUGUST 4, 2019 N=4,175

Note: In several cases, questions from past surveys conducted by telephone are shown as trends for comparison. This is noted throughout this topline.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK ALL:

PTYISSUE

Which party would you say you agree with on each of the following policy areas?

[RANDOMIZE; REVERSE ORDER OF OPTIONS FOR RANDOM HALF SAMPLE, WITH OPTION 5 ALWAYS LAST; MAINTAIN SAME ORDER OF RESPONSE OPTIONS FOR SINGLE RESPONDENT]

PTYISSUE ITEM a. PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

b. Abortion policy

July 22-		Apr 5-
Aug 4		May 2
<u>2019</u>		<u>2016</u>
21	Strongly agree with the Republican Party	14
11	Somewhat agree with the Republican Party	13
15	Somewhat agree with the Democratic Party	17
28	Strongly agree with the Democratic Party	26
24	Don't agree with either party	27
2	No answer	3

c. Policies to deal with the economy

July 22-		Apr 5-
Aug 4		May 2
2019		<u>2016</u>
21	Strongly agree with the Republican Party	15
20	Somewhat agree with the Republican Party	20
23	Somewhat agree with the Democratic Party	23
14	Strongly agree with the Democratic Party	16
20	Don't agree with either party	24
2	No answer	2

d. Health care policy

July 22-		Apr 5-
Aug 4		May 2
2019		<u>2016</u>
15	Strongly agree with the Republican Party	15
17	Somewhat agree with the Republican Party	18
21	Somewhat agree with the Democratic Party	21
24	Strongly agree with the Democratic Party	22
21	Don't agree with either party	22
2	No answer	2

ASK ALL:

On a different topic,

ABORTLGL Do you think abortion should be... [SHOW IN REVERSE ORDER FOR RANDOM HALF OF SAMPLE]

	Legal	Legal in	Illegal in			NET	NET
	in all	most	most	Illegal in	No	Legal in	Illegal in
	cases	cases	cases	all cases	<u>answer</u>	<u>all/most</u>	<u>all/most</u>
July 22-Aug 4, 2019	27	34	26	12	1	61	38

PHONE TREND FOR COMPARISON:

Do you think abortion should be [READ IN ORDER TO RANDOM HALF OF SAMPLE, IN REVERSE ORDER TO OTHER HALF OF SAMPLE]?

	Legal in all	Legal in most	Illegal in most	Illegal in all	(VOL.)	NET Legal in	NET Illegal in
	<u>cases</u>	<u>cases</u>	cases	<u>cases</u>	DK/Ref		<u>all/most</u>
July 10-15, 2019	24	34	24	15	3	58	39
Sep 18-24, 2018	25	34	22	15	5	58	<i>37</i>
Jun 8-18, 2017	25	33	24	16	3	<i>57</i>	40
Oct 20-25, 2016	22	36	23	14	4	59	<i>37</i>
Mar 17-26, 2016	24	33	24	16	3	56	41
Sep 22-27, 2015	20	31	25	18	6	51	43
Sep 2-9, 2014	22	34	26	14	5	55	40
Jul 17-21, 2013	20	34	24	15	7	54	40
Oct 24-28, 2012	23	32	25	13	7	55	39
Apr 4-15, 2012	23	31	23	16	7	53	39
Nov 9-14, 2011	20	31	26	17	6	51	43
Sep 22-Oct 4, 2011	19	35	25	16	5	54	41
Feb 22-Mar 1, 2011	18	36	26	16	4	54	42
Jul 21-Aug 5, 2010	17	33	27	17	7	50	44
August 11-27, 2009	16	31	27	17	8	47	45
April, 2009	18	28	28	16	10	46	44
Late October, 2008	18	35	24	16	7	53	40
Mid-October, 2008	19	38	22	14	7	<i>57</i>	36
August, 2008	17	37	26	15	5	54	41
June, 2008	19	38	24	13	6	<i>57</i>	<i>37</i>
November, 2007	18	33	29	15	5	51	44
October, 2007	21	32	24	15	8	53	39
August, 2007	17	35	26	17	5	52	43
AP/Ipsos-Poll: February, 2006	19	32	27	16	6	51	43
ABC/WaPo: December, 2005	17	40	27	13	3	57	40
ABC/WaPo: April, 2005	20	36	27	14	3	56	41
ABC/WaPo: December, 2004	21	34	25	17	3	55	42
ABC/WaPo: May, 2004	23	31	23	20	2	54	43
ABC/WaPo: January, 2003	23	34	25	17	2	<i>57</i>	42
ABC/WaPo: August, 2001	22	27	28	20	3	49	48
ABC/BeliefNet: June, 2001	22	31	23	20	4	53	43
ABC/WaPo: January, 2001	21	38	25	14	1	59	39
ABC/WaPo: September, 2000 (RVs)		35	25	16	3	55	41
ABC/WaPo: July, 2000	20	33	26	17	4	53	43
ABC/WaPo: September, 1999	20	37	26	15	2	<i>57</i>	41
ABC/WaPo: March, 1999	21	34	27	15	3	55	42
ABC/WaPo: July, 1998	19	35	29	13	4	54	42
ABC/WaPo: August, 1996	22	34	27	14	3	56	41
ABC/WaPo: June, 1996	24	34	25	14	2	58	39
ABC/WaPo: October, 1995	26	35	25	12	3	61	<i>37</i>

ABORTLGL PHONE TREND FOR COMPARISON CONTINUED...

	Legal	Legal	Illegal	Illegal		NET	NET
	in all	in most	in most	in all	(VOL.)	Legal in	Illegal in
	cases	cases	cases	cases	DK/Ref	all/most	all/most
ABC: September, 1995	24	36	25	11	4	60	36
ABC/WaPo: July, 1995	27	32	26	14	1	59	40

ASK ALL:

ABORTION2 Thinking about abortion policies around the country, which is your greater concern? [RANDOMIZE]

July 22- Aug 4 <u>2019</u>	
59	That some states are making it too DIFFICULT for people to be able to get an abortion
39	That some states are making it too EASY for people to be able to get an abortion
2	No answer

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK ALL:

ABORTION5 Do you happen to personally know someone (such as a close friend, family member, or yourself) who has had an abortion?

July 22-Aug 4 2019 57 Yes 42 No 1 No answer

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

ASK ALL:

ROEWADE In 1973 the Roe versus Wade decision established a woman's constitutional right to an

abortion, at least in the first three months of pregnancy. Would you like to see the Supreme

Court completely overturn its Roe versus Wade decision, or not?

July 22Aug 4
2019
28 Yes, overturn Roe versus Wade
70 No, do not overturn Roe versus Wade
3 No answer

PHONE TREND FOR COMPARISON:

In 1973 the Roe versus Wade decision established a woman's constitutional right to an abortion, at least in the first three months of pregnancy. Would you like to see the Supreme Court completely overturn its Roe versus Wade decision, or not?

	Yes, overturn Roe	No, not overturn Roe	(VOL.)
	versus Wade	versus Wade	DK/Ref
July 10-15, 2019	29	68	4
Nov 30-Dec 5, 2016	28	69	3
Jan 9-13, 2013	29	63	7
Nov 2005	25	65	9
July 2005	29	65	6
Jun 2005	30	63	7
Jan 2003	31	62	7
Gallup: Mar 2002 (RVs)	36	60	4
Gallup: Aug 1992 (RVs)	34	60	6
Gallup: Oct 1989 (RVs)	33	61	6