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Do Americans Think the Country Is Losing or Gaining Ground in Science?

Democrats and Republicans both think it is important that the U.S. is a world leader in science, but most Democrats now think it is losing ground compared with other countries

BY Brian Kennedy and Emma Kikuchi

FOR MEDIA OR OTHER INQUIRIES:

Brian Kennedy, Senior Researcher, Science and Society Research

Eileen Yam, Director, Science and Society Research

Haley Nolan, Communications Manager
202.419.4372

www.pewresearch.org

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About Pew Research Center

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About this research

This Pew Research Center report looks at Americans' views on scientists and scientific research.

Why did we do this?

Pew Research Center does research to help the public, media and decision-makers understand important topics. This research builds on our longstanding work studying public trust in scientists and Americans' views on the role of science in society.

Learn more about [Pew Research Center](#), our research on [trust in science](#) and other research on [science and society](#).

How did we do this?

For this report, we surveyed 5,111 U.S. adults from Oct. 20 to 26, 2025. Everyone who took part in this survey is a member of the Center's [American Trends Panel](#). The survey represents the views of the full U.S. adult population.

Here are the [survey questions](#) used for this report, the [detailed responses](#) and [the survey methodology](#).

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Do Americans Think the Country Is Losing or Gaining Ground in Science?

Democrats and Republicans both think it is important that the U.S. is a world leader in science, but most Democrats now think it is losing ground compared with other countries

Key takeaways:

- Large shares of both Republicans and Democrats see being a world leader in science as important.
- Yet, Republicans and Democrats sharply diverge in their views of the direction of scientific research in the United States. **The share of Democrats who say the U.S. is losing ground in science compared with other countries is up 28 percentage points since 2023.**
- Most Republicans and Democrats continue to see government investments in scientific research as worthwhile, but Republicans are far more open to saying that it is possible for private investment alone to drive scientific progress.
- A majority of U.S. adults say colleges and universities make significant contributions to science, but Democrats are much more likely than Republicans to hold this view.

The Trump administration has reshaped federal science policy in the last year. It has reduced the number of research grants and cut the size of the federal science and health workforce. The Trump administration has also shifted priorities away from climate change research while increasingly focusing on artificial intelligence.

In this changing environment, Democrats and Republicans continue to largely agree that being a world leader in science is important and government investments in research are worthwhile. But they strongly disagree on whether the country is keeping up with other countries in science, with the share of Democrats who say the country is losing ground in scientific achievements up sharply in the last two years.

This mirrors underlying other partisan differences in attitudes around science we have been tracking for years. In particular, the partisan differences in trust in scientists and the value of science for society are far wider than they were before the COVID-19 pandemic. Republicans have become less confident in scientists and less likely to say science has had a mostly positive effect on society, while Democratic views are largely unchanged.

We surveyed 5,111 U.S. adults to understand how they are thinking about the state of science in the U.S. and funding scientific research.

This research builds on our longstanding work studying trust in science and views on the value of science in society.

This analysis covers the public's views on the following questions:

- How important is it for the U.S. to be a world leader in science?
- Is the U.S. gaining or losing ground in science?
- Are government investments in scientific research worthwhile?
- How much do key institutions, such as colleges and universities, contribute to science?

How important is it for the U.S. to be a world leader in science?

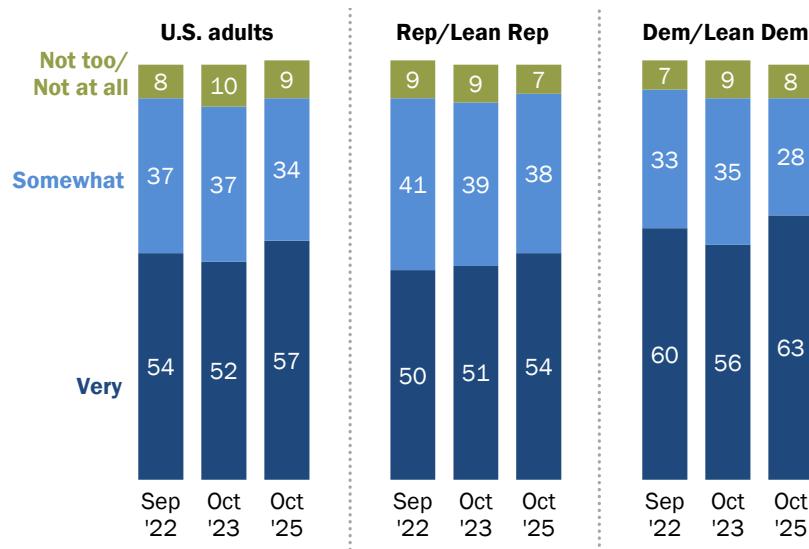
Republicans and Democrats broadly agree on the importance of the United States being a world leader in scientific achievements.

Almost all Democrats and Republicans say it is at least somewhat important that the U.S. is a world leader in science. And more than half of Republicans and Democrats say this is very important (although Democrats are modestly more likely to say this).

The share of Americans who say it is very important for the U.S. to be a world leader in science is up five percentage points since 2023.

Majority of Americans say it is very important for the U.S. to be a world leader in scientific achievements

% who say that, thinking about all the important goals for the United States, it is ___ important for the U.S. to be a world leader in scientific achievements



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

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 20-26, 2025.

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What do Americans think of the direction of American science?

While there's bipartisan agreement about the importance of being a world science leader, partisans sharply disagree on how the country is faring. Democrats have become far more negative and Republicans less negative on the direction of science in the United States in the last two years.

About two-thirds of Democrats say the U.S. is losing ground compared with other countries when it comes to scientific achievements, a **28 percentage point increase** since it was last asked in 2023 (during the Biden presidency).

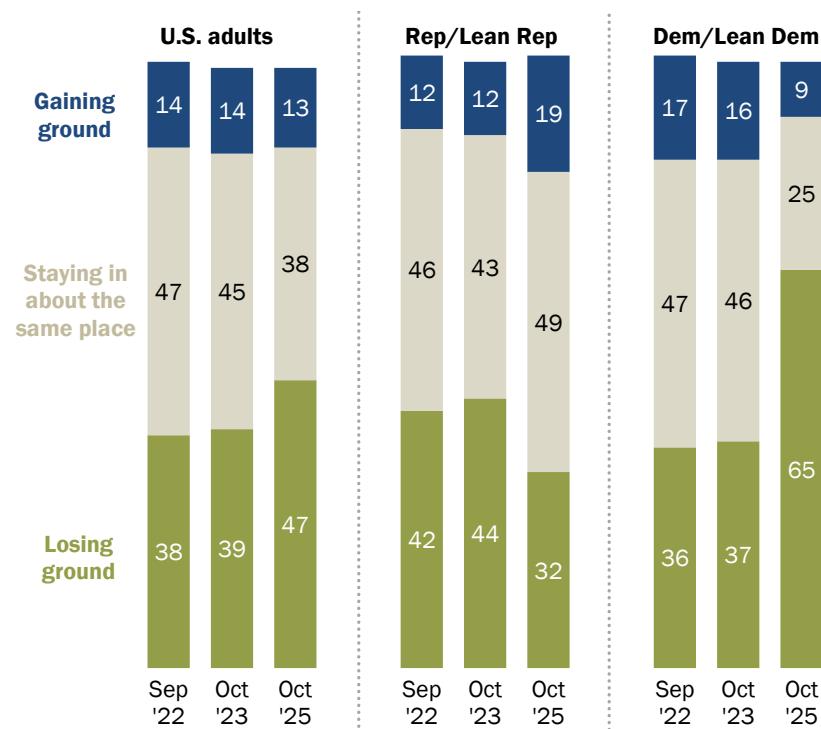
By contrast, just one-third of Republicans and those who lean to the GOP say the country is losing ground, down 12 points from 2023.

Democrats and Democratic leaners are now 33 points more likely than Republicans to say the country is losing ground to other countries in science. Two years ago, the difference was the opposite and far more

modest: Democrats were seven points *less* likely to say this than Republicans.

Two-thirds of Democrats now say the U.S. is losing ground in scientific achievements

% who say that when it comes to scientific achievements, the U.S. is ___ compared with other countries in the world



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

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 20-26, 2025.

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What do Americans think of government funding of science?

Most Americans, including large majorities of Democrats and Republicans, say government investments in science are worthwhile.

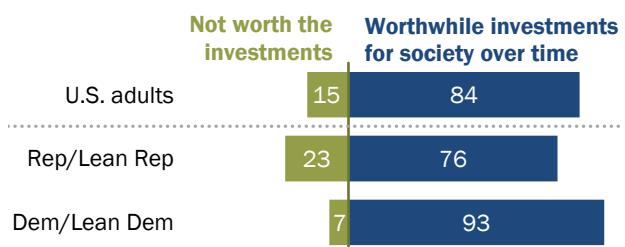
In May 2025, the Trump administration proposed a federal budget that would drastically cut science funding, but Congress has been working on bills that could reject some of those cuts.

More than eight-in-ten Americans (84%) say government investments in scientific research aimed at advancing knowledge are worthwhile, while only 15% say they are not worth the investments. Large majorities of both Democrats (93%) and Republicans (76%) say these government investments are worthwhile (although Democrats are more likely to say this).

Most U.S. adults have consistently said government investments in science are worth it in Center surveys over the years. The share of U.S. adults who say this is up six percentage points since 2023, driven by Republicans.

Most say U.S. government investment in scientific research is worthwhile

% who say government investments in scientific research aimed at advancing knowledge are usually ...



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

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 20-26, 2025.

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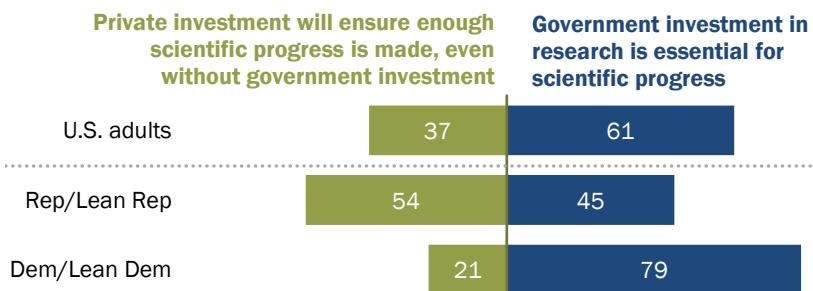
Although Americans in both parties largely agree that government investments in science are worthwhile, Democrats and Republicans disagree to a far greater degree if they are essential for scientific progress.

While most Republicans see government investment as worthwhile, they are far less likely to say government investment is essential. A slight majority of Republicans say private investment will ensure enough scientific progress is made, even without government investment (54%).

Democrats tilt to a far greater degree in the other direction, with about eight-in-ten saying government investment in research is essential for scientific progress.

61% say government investment in research is essential for scientific progress instead of thinking private investment will be enough

% who say each of the following



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

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 20-26, 2025.

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Which institutions contribute to science in the U.S.?

We asked Americans how much four institutions – colleges and universities, private companies, federal government agencies and charitable foundations – contribute to America’s scientific achievements.

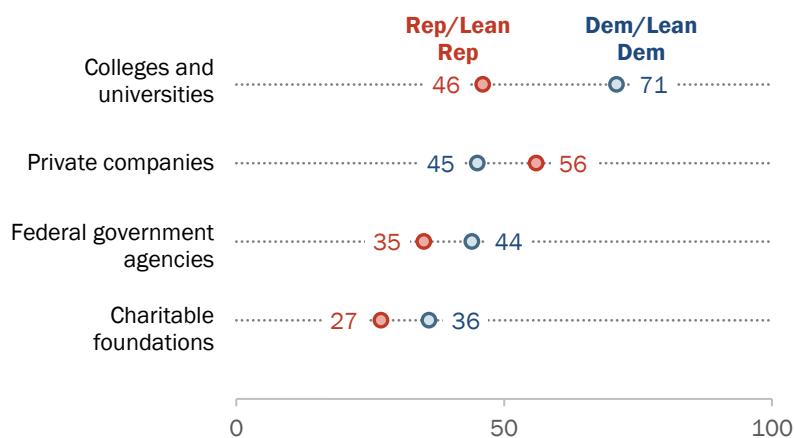
Democrats are most likely to say colleges and universities contribute a great deal or quite a bit to science (71%), while Republicans are most likely to say private companies contribute at least quite a bit (56%).

The share of Republicans who say private companies contribute at least quite a bit is similar to the share who think private investment alone can drive scientific progress.

Republicans and Democrats also differ in how they rate the higher education system, including how it does in research and innovation.

Democrats are far more likely than Republicans to say colleges and universities contribute to science

% who say that each of the following contributes a great deal/quite a bit to scientific achievements in the U.S.



Note: Respondents who gave other responses of “Some,” “Not too much,” “Not at all,” “Not sure” or did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 20-26, 2025.

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Americans' confidence in scientists

Key Takeaways:

- 77% of U.S. adults now say they have a great deal (28%) or fair amount of confidence (49%) in scientists to act in the public's best interests. This is about the same as last year.
- Americans' confidence in scientists remains lower than it was prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Confidence in scientists is similar to what it was in December 2021 after declining during the first two years of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Democrats continue to have more confidence in scientists than Republicans (90% vs. 65% say they have at least a fair amount), but the views of Democrats and Republicans are largely unchanged in the last year.
- Scientists continue to rank higher in confidence compared with other prominent groups in society, such as business leaders or elected officials.

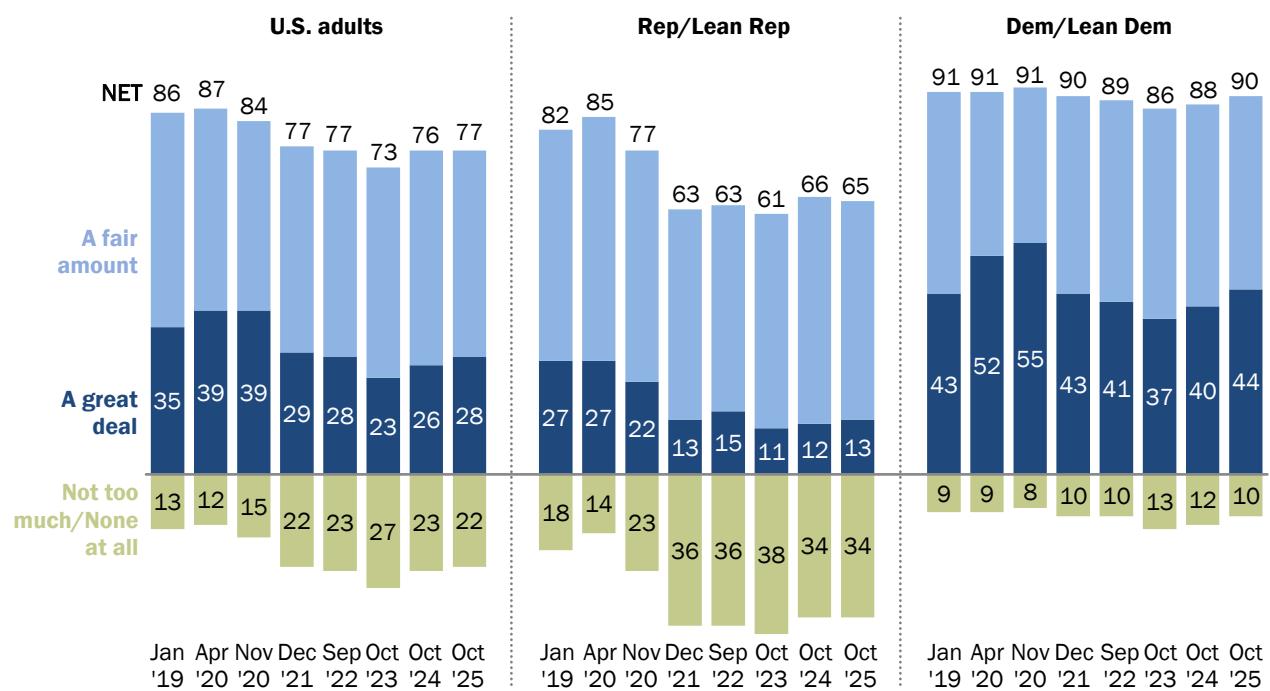
Americans' confidence in scientists since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic

Pew Research Center has tracked trends in public trust in scientists closely since 2016. In the new survey, public confidence in scientists is about the same as last year: 77% of U.S. adults say they have at least a fair amount of confidence in scientists to act in the public's best interests, including 28% who say they have a great deal of confidence in scientists. Last year, 76% of Americans said they had at least a fair amount of confidence in scientists to act in the best interests of the public.

Still, public confidence in scientists remains lower than it was at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in April 2020, 87% of U.S. adults said they had at least a fair amount of confidence in scientists to act in the public's best interests. About four-in-ten had strong trust in scientists in early 2020.

Democrats continue to have more confidence in scientists than Republicans

% who have ___ of confidence in scientists to act in the best interests of the public



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

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 20-26, 2025.

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Democrats and those who lean to the Democratic party remain more confident in scientists to act in the public's best interests than Republicans and GOP leaners. In the new survey, 90% of Democrats say they have at least a fair amount of confidence in scientists, compared with 65% of Republicans. This gap in confidence between Republicans and Democrats has been broadly similar in every Center survey since 2021.

Among Republicans, public confidence in scientists is still far lower than it was at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The share of Republicans with at least a fair amount of confidence in scientists declined by 22 percentage points between April 2020 and December 2021. Since 2021, confidence in scientists among Republicans has remained relatively steady.

Views by race and ethnicity

Overall, White, Black and Hispanic adults have similar levels of confidence in scientists to act in the public's best interests. Asian adults are more likely to have higher levels of confidence. This pattern has been consistent in our surveys since 2021.

In our surveys prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and early in the pandemic, White adults were more likely than Black adults to express higher levels of confidence in scientists.

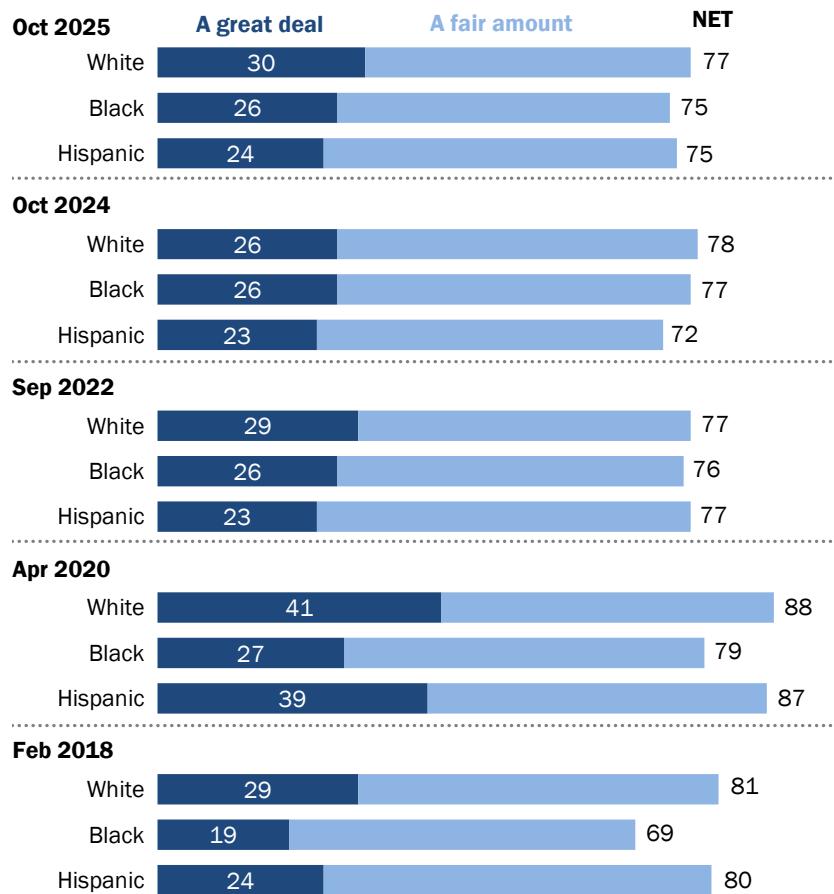
[Other research](#) also found a confidence gap between White and Black Americans prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This gap between White and Black Americans largely closed following the start of the COVID-19 pandemic because confidence in scientists declined among White Republicans.

In the new survey, 64% of White Republicans say they have at least a fair amount of confidence in scientists, much lower than the 85% who felt the same in April 2020.

White and Black Americans have had similar levels of confidence in scientists in recent years

% who have ___ of confidence in scientists to act in the best interests of the public



Note: White and Black adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic adults are of any race. Asian adults are not shown because the sample sizes were too small to analyze separately in 2018, 2020 and 2022. Select years are shown; for full details refer to the Appendix. Respondents who gave other responses of "Not too much" or "None at all" or did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 20-26, 2025.

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Black Americans have a similar level of confidence in scientists now than they did five years ago.

Views by education

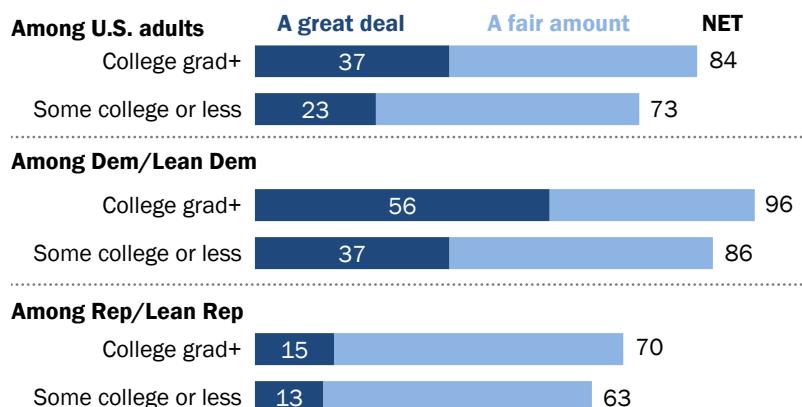
College graduates are more likely to have a great deal of confidence in scientists than adults without a college degree, but this difference is driven by Democrats. There's no similar education gap in high confidence among Republicans.

Among Democrats, 56% of those with a college degree have a great deal of confidence in scientists to act in the public's best interests. In contrast, 37% of Democrats without a college degree have a high level of confidence in scientists.

It's a different story among Republicans. Small shares of those with or without a college degree have a great deal of confidence in scientists.

College graduates are more likely to have a great deal of confidence in scientists among Democrats, but not among Republicans

% who have ___ of confidence in scientists to act in the best interests of the public



Note: Respondents who gave other responses of "Not too much" or "None at all" or did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 20-26, 2025.

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Americans' confidence in scientists compared with other groups

Americans continue to have more confidence in scientists to act in the public's best interests than many other groups we've asked about, including journalists, business leaders and elected officials.

Scientists have consistently ranked at the top or near the top of the groups since we started asking about confidence in 2016.

In the new survey, Americans have similar levels of confidence in scientists and the military. The military has consistently ranked near the top with scientists in our surveys.

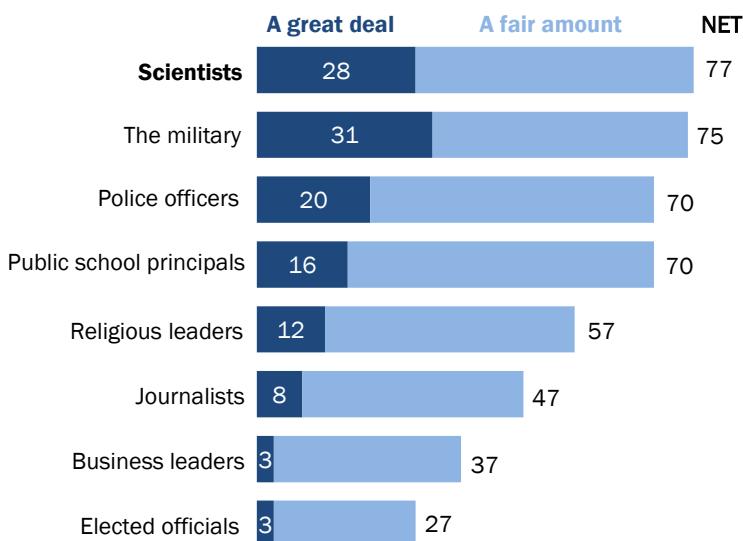
Americans have the least amount of confidence in business leaders and elected officials to act in the best interests of the public. These two groups have consistently ranked at the bottom of the groups included in our surveys.

Scientists are not the only group that the public has less confidence in than five years ago. Between 2020 and 2023, confidence in all eight groups we asked about declined.

Since 2023, confidence in all eight groups, including scientists, has either not changed or increased. Refer to the [Appendix](#) for more on confidence in prominent groups since 2019.

Americans still have more confidence in scientists than many other groups in society

% of U.S. adults who have ___ of confidence in the following groups to act in the best interests of the public



Note: Respondents who gave other responses of "Not too much" or "None at all" or did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 20-26, 2025.

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Americans' views on the impact of science on society

Key Takeaways:

- 61% of Americans say science has had a mostly positive effect on society, up slightly from 57% in 2023. This is still lower than the 73% of U.S. adults who said this in 2019, prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Democrats continue to be more likely than Republicans to say science has had a mostly positive effect on society (76% vs. 51%). Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, this difference between Democrats and Republicans was far more modest.

Views on the impact of science on society over time

Pew Research Center has had a longstanding interest in studying Americans' views of the impact of science. **A majority of Americans (61%) say science has had a mostly positive effect on society.** This is up slightly from 57% in 2023, but still 12 percentage points lower than the 73% of Americans who said this in 2019 prior to the coronavirus pandemic.

Americans' confidence in scientists to act in the best interests of the public is also lower than it was prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. *For more, refer to [Americans' confidence in scientists](#).*

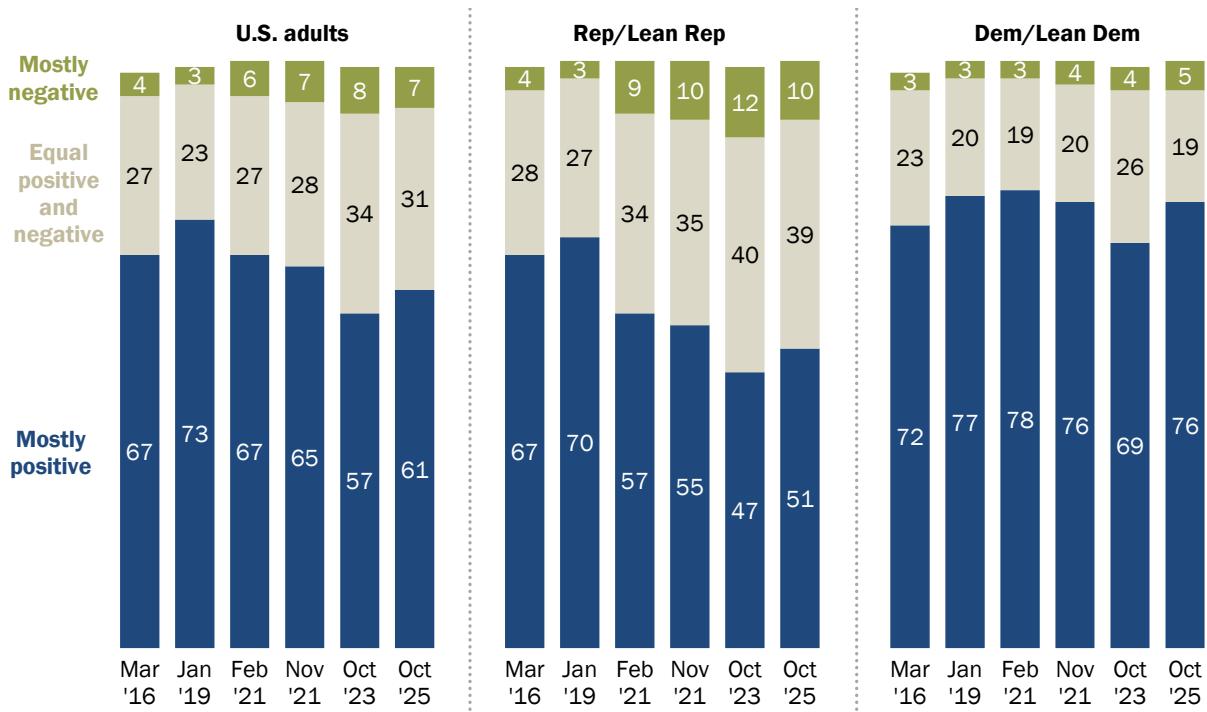
Democrats and those who lean to the Democratic party are much more likely than Republicans and GOP leaners to say science has had a mostly positive impact on society (76% vs. 51%). This gap has been at least 20 percentage points wide in every Center survey since 2021. In Center surveys prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the difference between Republicans and Democrats on this question was no more than seven points.

Republican views on the effect of science on society have turned less positive since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Republicans are now 19 points less likely to say science has had a mostly positive effect on society than in 2019.

Among Democrats, the share saying science has had a mostly positive effect on society declined slightly between 2021 and 2023 and then rebounded in the new October 2025 survey. Democrats are seven points more likely than two years ago to say science has had a mostly positive effect on society.

Democrats view the impact of science on society more positively than Republicans

% who say science has had a(n) ___ effect on society



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

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 20-26, 2025.

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Views by race, ethnicity, gender and party

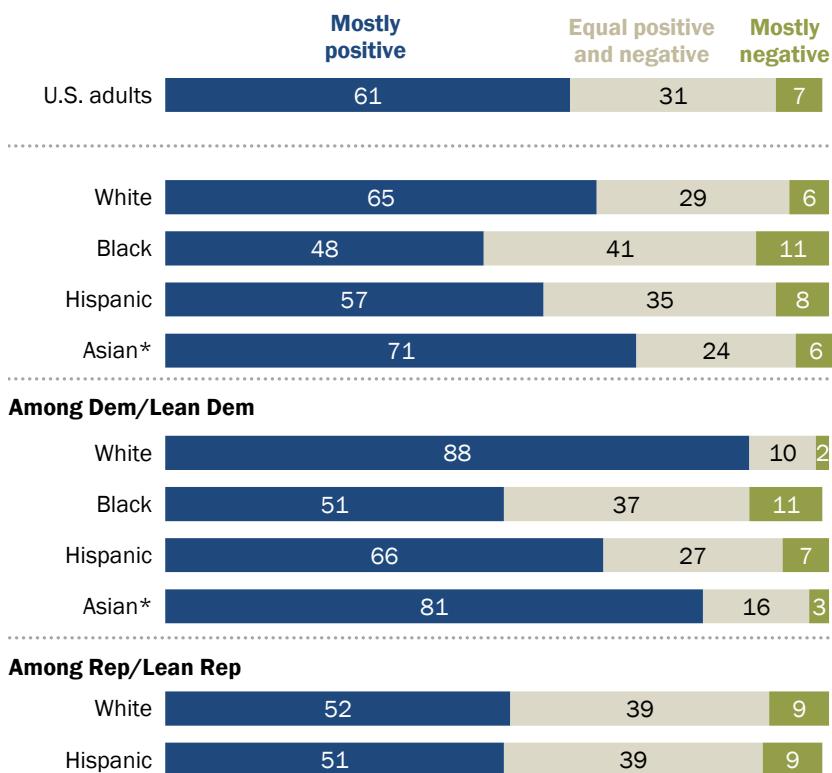
Asian and White adults continue to be more likely to view the impact of science on society more positively than Hispanic and Black adults.

Among Democrats, these differences are at least as big or bigger. About eight-in-ten or more White and Asian Democrats see science's impact as mostly positive. Black Democrats are far less likely to say the same (51%). Hispanic Democrats sit in the middle with 66% offering a positive rating of the effect of science on society.

Men continue to be more likely than women to say science has had a positive effect on society (67% vs. 56%) and this gender difference exists among Republicans and Democrats.

Black and Hispanic adults are less likely than White and Asian adults to say science has had a mostly positive impact on society

% who say science has had a(n) ___ effect on society



* Estimates for Asian adults are representative of English speakers only.

Note: Sample sizes for Black and Asian Republicans are too small to analyze responses separately. Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown. White, Black and Asian adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic adults are of any race.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 20-26, 2025.

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The share of White Republicans and Black Democrats who say science has had a mostly positive effect on society is lower than it was in 2019.

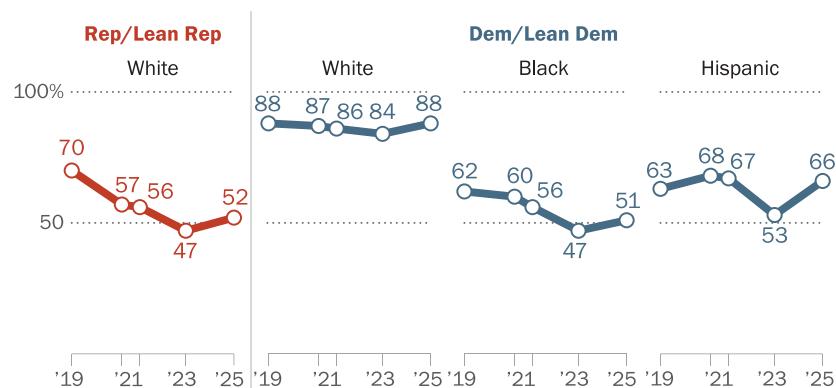
About half of White Republicans say science has had a mostly positive effect, down from the 70% of White Republicans who said this six years ago.

About half of Black Democrats also say science has had a positive effect on society. In 2019, 62% of Black Democrats said this.

The share of Hispanic Democrats who say science has had a mostly positive effect declined between 2021 and 2023 and then rebounded in the new survey. (66% of Hispanic Democrats say science has had a mostly positive effect on society, about identical to the share who said this in 2021.)

White Republicans and Black Democrats are less likely to say science has had a positive effect on society now than in 2019

*% who say science has had a **mostly positive** effect on society*



Note: Sample sizes for Black, Hispanic and Asian Republicans and Asian Democrats are too small to analyze responses separately. Respondents who gave other responses of “Equal positive and negative,” “Mostly negative” or did not give an answer are not shown. White and Black adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic adults are of any race.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 20-26, 2025.

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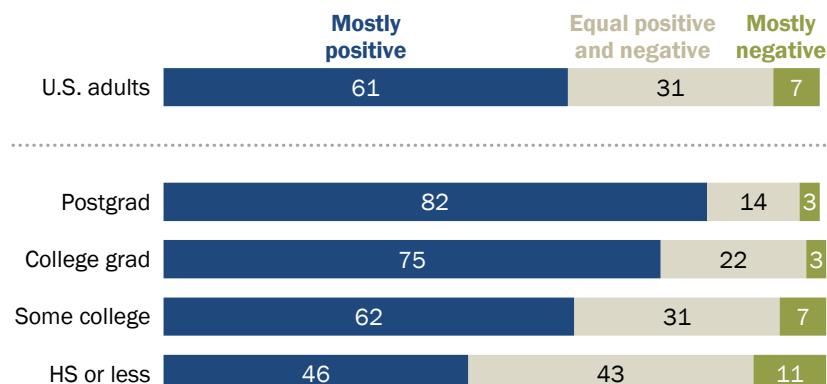
Views by education

Americans with higher levels of education are much more likely than those with less education to say science has had a positive effect on society. A vast majority of those with a postgraduate degree (82%) and a bachelor's degree (75%) say the impact of science has been mostly positive.

In contrast, less than half of adults with a high school diploma or less education (46%) say science has had a mostly positive effect on society.

Education is closely related to how Americans view the effect of science on society

% who say science has had a(n) ___ effect on society



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

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 20-26, 2025.

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Across both parties, adults with more education give more positive ratings of the impact of science on society than those with less education (unlike [confidence in scientists](#), in which there are education differences among Democrats but not Republicans).

- 92% of Democrats with a postgraduate degree view the effect of science on society positively, compared to 63% of Democrats with a high school education or less.
- 69% of Republicans with a postgraduate degree view the effect of science on society positively, compared to 37% of Republicans with a high school education or less. Half of Republicans with a high school diploma or less education say the effect of science on society has been equally positive and negative.

Acknowledgments

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Primary research team

Eileen Yam, *Director, Science and Society Research*
Galen Stocking, *Associate Director, Science and Society Research*
Brian Kennedy, *Senior Researcher*
Giancarlo Pasquini, *Research Associate*
Emma Kikuchi, *Research Analyst*
Isabelle Pula, *Research Assistant*

Editorial and graphic design

Mia Hennen, *Editorial Assistant*
Peter Bell, *Associate Director, Design and Production*
Kaitlyn Radde, *Associate Information Graphics Designer*

Communications and web publishing

Haley Nolan, *Communications Manager*
DeVonte Smith, *Communications Associate*
Reem Nadeem, *Digital Producer*

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Methodology

The American Trends Panel survey methodology

Overview

Data in this report comes from Wave 182 of the American Trends Panel (ATP), Pew Research Center's nationally representative panel of randomly selected U.S. adults. The survey was conducted from Oct. 20 to 26, 2025. A total of 5,111 panelists responded out of 5,866 who were sampled, for a survey-level response rate of 87%.

The cumulative response rate accounting for nonresponse to the recruitment surveys and attrition is 3%. 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 5,111 respondents is plus or minus 1.7 percentage points.

The survey includes an [oversample](#) of non-Hispanic Asian adults and parents with children younger than 18 in order to provide more precise estimates of the opinions and experiences of these smaller demographic subgroups. These oversampled groups are weighted back to reflect their correct proportions in the population.

SSRS conducted the survey for Pew Research Center via online (n=4,945) and live telephone (n=166) interviewing. Interviews were conducted in both English and Spanish.

To learn more about the ATP, read “[About the American Trends Panel](#).”

Panel recruitment

Since 2018, the ATP has used address-based sampling (ABS) for recruitment. A study cover letter and a pre-incentive are mailed to a stratified, random sample of households selected from the U.S. Postal Service's Computerized Delivery Sequence File. This Postal Service file has been estimated to cover 90% to 98% of the population.¹ Within each sampled household, the adult with the next birthday is selected to participate. Other details of the ABS recruitment protocol have changed over time but are available upon request.² Prior to 2018, the ATP was recruited using landline and cellphone random-digit-dial surveys administered in English and Spanish.

¹ AAPOR Task Force on Address-based Sampling. 2016. “[AAPOR Report: Address-based Sampling](#).”

² Email pewsurveys@pewresearch.org.

A national sample of U.S. adults has been recruited to the ATP approximately once per year since 2014. In some years, the recruitment has included additional efforts (known as an “oversample”) to improve the accuracy of data for underrepresented groups. For example, Hispanic adults, Black adults and Asian adults were oversampled in 2019, 2022 and 2023, respectively.

Sample design

The overall target population for this survey was noninstitutionalized persons ages 18 and older living in the United States. It featured a stratified random sample from the ATP in which non-Hispanic Asian adults and parents with children younger than 18 were selected with certainty. The remaining panelists were sampled at rates designed to ensure that the share of respondents in each stratum is proportional to its share of the U.S. adult population to the greatest extent possible. Respondent weights are adjusted to account for differential probabilities of selection as described in the Weighting section below.

Questionnaire development and testing

The questionnaire was developed by Pew Research Center in consultation with SSRS. The web program used for online respondents was rigorously tested on both PC and mobile devices by the SSRS project team and Pew Research Center researchers. The SSRS project team also populated test data that 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 gift code to Amazon.com, Target.com or Walmart.com. 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.

Data collection protocol

The data collection field period for this survey was Oct. 20 to 26, 2025. Surveys were conducted via self-administered web survey or by live telephone interviewing.

For panelists who take surveys online:³ Postcard notifications were mailed to a subset on Oct. 20.⁴ Survey 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 Oct. 20. All remaining English- and Spanish-speaking sampled online panelists were included in the full launch and were sent an invitation on Oct. 21.

**Invitation and reminder dates for web respondents,
ATP Wave 182**

| | Soft launch | Full launch |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Initial invitation | Oct. 20, 2025 | Oct. 21, 2025 |
| First reminder | Oct. 23, 2025 | Oct. 23, 2025 |
| Final reminder | Oct. 25, 2025 | Oct. 25, 2025 |

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Panelists participating online were sent an email invitation and up to two email reminders if they did not respond to the survey. ATP panelists who consented to SMS messages were sent an SMS invitation with a link to the survey and up to two SMS reminders.

For panelists who take surveys over the phone with a live interviewer: Prenotification postcards were mailed on Oct. 17. Soft launch took place on Oct. 20 and involved dialing until a total of four interviews had been completed. All remaining English- and Spanish-speaking sampled phone panelists' numbers were dialed throughout the remaining field period. Panelists who take surveys via phone can receive up to six calls from trained SSRS interviewers.

Data quality checks

To ensure high-quality data, Center researchers performed data quality checks to identify any respondents showing patterns of satisficing. This includes checking for whether respondents left questions blank at very high rates or always selected the first or last answer presented. As a result of this checking, three ATP respondents were removed from the survey dataset prior to weighting and analysis.

³ The ATP does not use routers or chains in any part of its online data collection protocol, nor are they used to direct respondents to additional surveys.

⁴ Postcard notifications for web panelists are sent to 1) panelists who were recruited within the last two years and 2) panelists recruited prior to the last two years who opt to continue receiving postcard notifications.

Weighting

The ATP data is weighted in a process that accounts for multiple stages of sampling and nonresponse that occur at different points in the panel survey process. First, each panelist begins with a base weight that reflects their probability of recruitment into the panel. These weights are then calibrated to align with the population benchmarks in the accompanying table to correct for nonresponse to recruitment surveys and panel attrition. If only a subsample of panelists was invited to participate in the wave, this weight is adjusted to account for any differential probabilities of selection.

Among the panelists who completed the survey, this weight is then calibrated again to align with the population benchmarks identified in the accompanying table and trimmed at the 1st and 99th percentiles to reduce the loss in precision stemming from variance in the weights. Sampling errors and tests of statistical significance take into account the effect of weighting.

American Trends Panel weighting dimensions

| Variable | Benchmark source |
|--|--|
| Age (detailed) | 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) |
| Age x Gender | |
| Education x Gender | |
| Education x Age | |
| Race/Ethnicity x Education | |
| Race/Ethnicity x Gender | |
| Race/Ethnicity x Age | |
| Born inside vs. outside the U.S. among Hispanics and Asian Americans | |
| Years lived in the U.S. | |
| Census region x Metropolitan status | |
| Volunteerism | 2023 CPS Volunteering & Civic Life Supplement |
| Frequency of internet use | 2025 National Public Opinion Reference Survey (NPORS) |
| Religious affiliation | |
| Party affiliation x Race/Ethnicity | |
| Party affiliation x Age | |
| Validated 2024 presidential election turnout and vote choice | Candidate vote share is based on official results from the Federal Election Commission. Turnout is based on estimates from the Election Lab at the University of Florida. The size of the voting-eligible population is based on the 2023 ACS. |

Note: Estimates from the ACS are based on noninstitutionalized adults. For weighting to the 2024 presidential election results, panelists are considered validated voters if their self-report of having voted was confirmed after matching to a national voter registry.

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.

Sample sizes and margins of error, ATP Wave 182

| Group | Unweighted sample size | Plus or minus ... |
|--------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| U.S. adults | 5,111 | 1.7 percentage points |
| Half form | At least 2,546 | 2.4 percentage points |
| White | 3,047 | 2.1 percentage points |
| Half form | At least 1,519 | 3.0 percentage points |
| Black | 541 | 5.2 percentage points |
| Half form | At least 266 | 7.3 percentage points |
| Hispanic | 710 | 4.5 percentage points |
| Half form | At least 351 | 6.3 percentage points |
| Asian* | 559 | 5.8 percentage points |
| Half form | At least 273 | 8.6 percentage points |
| Postgrad | 1,062 | 3.9 percentage points |
| Half form | At least 510 | 5.5 percentage points |
| College grad | 1,293 | 3.4 percentage points |
| Half form | At least 635 | 5.0 percentage points |
| Some college | 1,484 | 3.0 percentage points |
| Half form | At least 741 | 4.3 percentage points |
| HS or less | 1,256 | 3.1 percentage points |
| Half form | At least 627 | 4.4 percentage points |
| Rep/Lean Rep | 2,337 | 2.5 percentage points |
| Half form | At least 1,161 | 3.5 percentage points |
| Dem/Lean Dem | 2,544 | 2.4 percentage points |
| Half form | At least 1,262 | 3.4 percentage points |

* Estimates for Asian adults are representative of English speakers only.

Note: White, Black and Asian adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic adults are of any race. This survey includes oversamples of non-Hispanic Asian adults and parents with children younger than 18. Unweighted sample sizes do not account for the sample design or weighting and do not describe a group's contribution to weighted estimates. See the Sample design and Weighting sections above for details.

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

Final dispositions, ATP Wave 182

| | AAPOR code | Total |
|--|------------|--------------|
| Completed interview | 1.1 | 5,111 |
| Logged in (web)/Contacted (CATI), but did not complete any items | 2.11 | 151 |
| Started survey; broke off before completion | 2.12 | 66 |
| Never logged on (web)/Never reached on phone (CATI) | 2.20 | 535 |
| Survey completed after close of the field period | 2.27 | 0 |
| Other non-interview | 2.30 | 0 |
| Completed interview but was removed for data quality | 2.90 | 3 |
| Total panelists sampled for the survey | | 5,866 |
| Completed interviews | I | 5,111 |
| Partial interviews | P | 0 |
| Refusals | R | 217 |
| Non-contact | NC | 535 |
| Other | O | 3 |
| Unknown household | UH | 0 |
| Unknown other | UO | 0 |
| Not eligible | NE | 0 |
| Total | | 5,866 |
| AAPOR RR1 = I / (I+P+R+NC+O+UH+UO) | | 87% |

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Cumulative response rate, ATP Wave 182

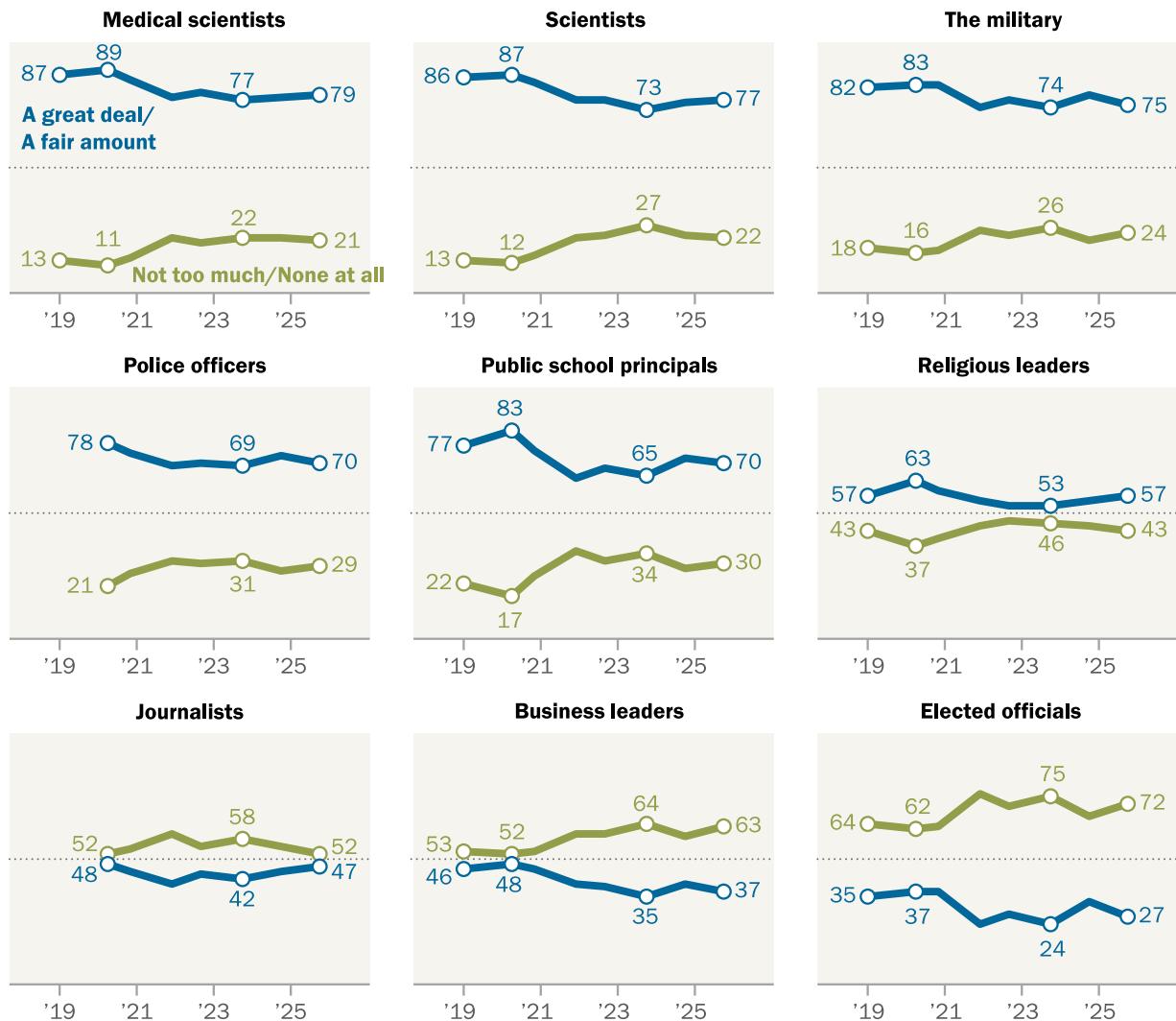
| | Total |
|---|-----------|
| Weighted response rate to recruitment surveys | 12% |
| % of recruitment survey respondents who agreed to join the panel, among those invited | 74% |
| % of those agreeing to join who were active panelists at start of Wave 182 | 40% |
| Response rate to Wave 182 survey | 87% |
| Cumulative response rate | 3% |

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Appendix

Americans' confidence in prominent groups to act in the public's best interest

% of U.S. adults who have ___ of confidence in the following groups to act in the best interests of the public



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

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 20-26, 2025.

"Do Americans Think the Country Is Losing or Gaining Ground in Science?"

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Confidence in scientists by race and ethnicity

% who have ___ of confidence in **scientists** to act in the best interests of the public

| | A great deal | White A fair amount | NET | A great deal | Black A fair amount | NET | A great deal | Hispanic A fair amount | NET |
|----------|---------------------|--------------------------------|------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Oct 2025 | 30 | 47 | 77 | 26 | 48 | 75 | 24 | 51 | 75 |
| Oct 2024 | 26 | 52 | 78 | 26 | 51 | 77 | 23 | 50 | 72 |
| Oct 2023 | 23 | 49 | 72 | 20 | 51 | 71 | 21 | 49 | 69 |
| Sep 2022 | 29 | 48 | 77 | 26 | 50 | 76 | 23 | 54 | 77 |
| Dec 2021 | 29 | 49 | 78 | 26 | 49 | 75 | 26 | 48 | 75 |
| Nov 2020 | 40 | 44 | 85 | 35 | 44 | 78 | 35 | 51 | 86 |
| Apr 2020 | 41 | 48 | 88 | 27 | 52 | 79 | 39 | 49 | 87 |
| Jan 2019 | 38 | 49 | 87 | 29 | 56 | 85 | 28 | 54 | 82 |
| Dec 2018 | 34 | 50 | 84 | 25 | 52 | 77 | 33 | 48 | 82 |
| Feb 2018 | 29 | 52 | 81 | 19 | 50 | 69 | 24 | 56 | 80 |
| Jun 2016 | 22 | 57 | 79 | 16 | 47 | 63 | 22 | 53 | 75 |

Note: White and Black adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic adults are of any race. Asian adults are not shown because the sample sizes were too small to analyze separately in September 2022, April 2020, January 2019, February 2018 and June 2016. Respondents who gave other responses of "Not too much" or "None at all" or did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 20-26, 2025.

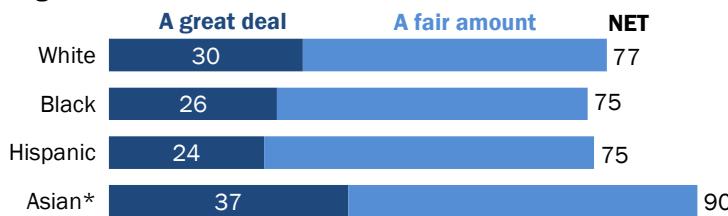
"Do Americans Think the Country Is Losing or Gaining Ground in Science?"

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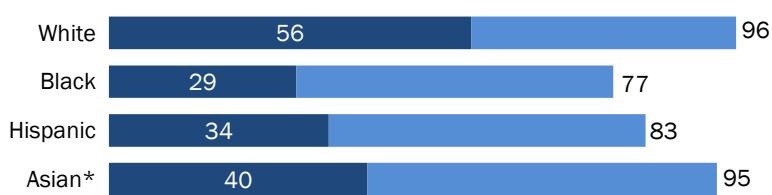
Confidence in scientists by race and ethnicity and partisan affiliation

*% who have ___ of confidence in **scientists** to act in the best interests of the public*

Among U.S. adults



Among Dem/Lean Dem



Among Rep/Lean Rep



* Estimates for Asian adults are representative of English speakers only.

Note: White and Black adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic adults are of any race. Sample sizes for Black, Hispanic and Asian Republicans are too small to analyze separately. Respondents who gave other responses of "Not too much" or "None at all" or did not give an answer are not shown.

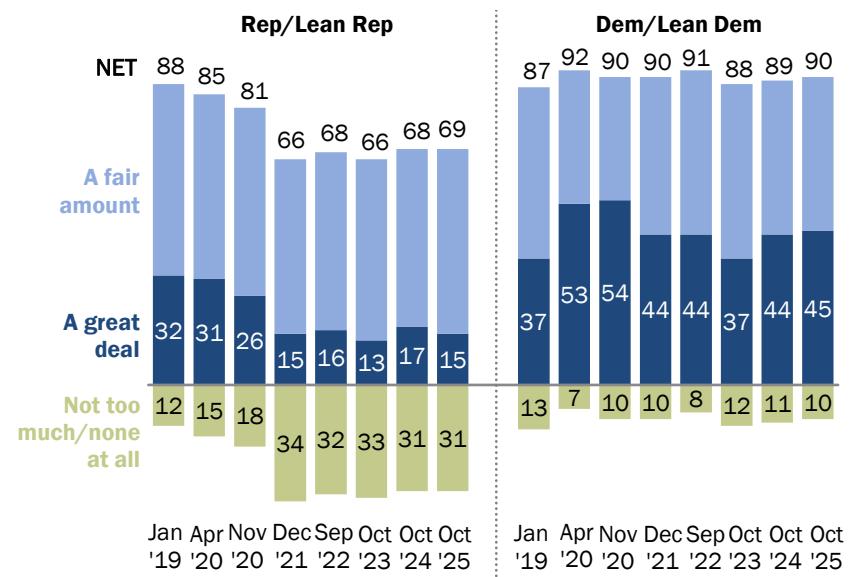
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 20-26, 2025.

"Do Americans Think the Country Is Losing or Gaining Ground in Science?"

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Confidence in medical scientists to act in the public's best interest among Republicans and Democrats

*% who have ___ of confidence in **medical scientists** to act in the best interests of the public*



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

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 20-26, 2025.

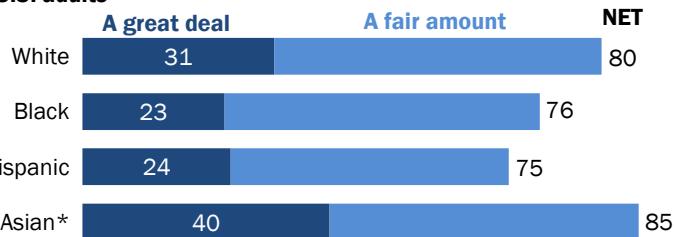
"Do Americans Think the Country Is Losing or Gaining Ground in Science?"

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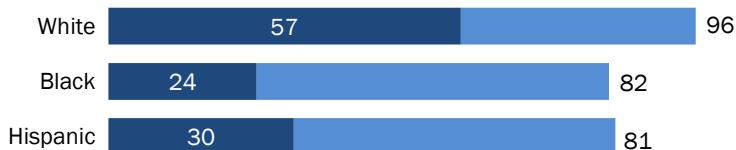
Confidence in medical scientists by race and ethnicity and partisan affiliation

*% who have ___ of confidence in **medical scientists** to act in the best interests of the public*

Among U.S. adults



Among Dem/Lean Dem



Among Rep/Lean Rep



* Estimates for Asian adults are representative of English speakers only.

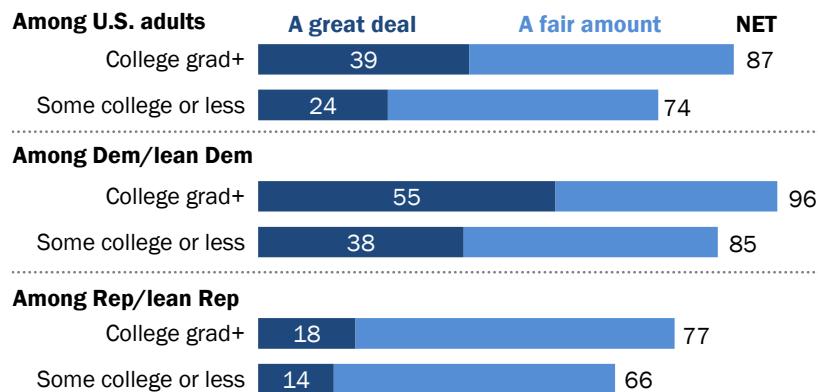
Note: White and Black adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic adults are of any race. Sample sizes for Black, Hispanic and Asian Republicans and Asian Democrats are too small to analyze separately. Respondents who gave other responses of "Not too much" or "None at all" or did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 20-26, 2025.

"Do Americans Think the Country Is Losing or Gaining Ground in Science?"

Confidence in medical scientists by education and partisan affiliation

*% who have ___ of confidence in **medical scientists** to act in the best interests of the public*



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

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 20-26, 2025.

"Do Americans Think the Country Is Losing or Gaining Ground in Science?"

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