

Divided We Stand

Democrats and Republicans Diverge
on US Foreign Policy

RESULTS OF THE 2020 CHICAGO
COUNCIL SURVEY OF AMERICAN PUBLIC
OPINION AND US FOREIGN POLICY

LESTER
CROWN CENTER
ON US FOREIGN POLICY



RESULTS OF THE 2020 CHICAGO COUNCIL SURVEY OF
AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION AND US FOREIGN POLICY

Divided We Stand

Democrats and Republicans
Diverge on US Foreign Policy

By Dina Smeltz, Ivo Daalder, Karl Friedhoff, Craig Kafura, and Brendan Helm

2020 Chicago Council Survey Team

Karl Friedhoff
Fellow, Public Opinion and Asia Policy

Brendan Helm
Research Assistant

Craig Kafura
Assistant Director, Public Opinion and Foreign Policy

Charlie Rahr
Intern

Giulia Shaughnessy
Intern

Dina Smeltz
Senior Fellow, Public Opinion and Foreign Policy

Foreign Policy Advisory Board

Joshua Busby
Associate Professor of Public Affairs, Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, The University of Texas at Austin

Ivo Daalder
President, Chicago Council on Global Affairs

Michael Desch
Professor of International Relations, Department of Political Science, University of Notre Dame

Daniel Drezner
Professor of International Politics, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University

Peter Feaver

Professor of Political Science and Public Policy, Duke University

Richard Fontaine
CEO, Center for a New American Security

Brian Hanson
Vice President, Studies, Chicago Council on Global Affairs

Bruce Jentleson
Professor of Public Policy and Political Science, Sanford School of Public Policy, Duke University

Ellen Laipson
Distinguished Fellow and President Emeritus, Stimson Center

Tod Lindberg
Senior Fellow, Hudson Institute

James Lindsay
Senior Vice President, Director of Studies, Council on Foreign Relations

Diana Mutz
Samuel A. Stouffer Professor of Political Science and Communication, University of Pennsylvania

Robert Pape
Professor of Political Science, University of Chicago

Kori Schake
Director of Foreign and Defense Policy Studies, American Enterprise Institute

James Steinberg

University Professor of Social Science, International Affairs, and Law, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs is an independent, nonpartisan organization. All statements of fact and expressions of opinion contained in this report are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs or of the project funders.

Copyright © 2020 by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs. All rights reserved.

Printed in the United States of America.

This report may not be reproduced in whole or in part, in any form (beyond that copying permitted by sections 107 and 108 of the US Copyright Law and excerpts by reviewers for the public press), without written permission from the publisher. For further information about the Chicago Council or this study, please write to the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, Prudential Plaza, 180 North Stetson Avenue, Suite 1400, Chicago, Illinois 60601, or visit thechicagocouncil.org.

Contents

Contents.....	3
Executive Summary	4
Americans Want to Remain Engaged in World, Support Alliances and Trade	5
Partisan Differences on Top Threats Facing the Country	6
Democrats Favor an Internationalist Approach: Diplomacy and Cooperation.....	8
Republicans Favor a Nationalist Approach: Self-Sufficiency and Independence	9
Conclusion	10
Bipartisan Ideas on the role of the United States: Engagement, Alliances, and Trade ...	11
Continued Support for US International Engagement and Leadership	11
Continued Support for Alliances.....	12
US Alliances in East Asia	12
US Alliances in Europe	13
US Alliances in the Middle East.....	13
Continued Embrace of Globalization and Trade Amid the Pandemic	14
Conclusion.....	15
Partisan Differences on Threats to US Security	16
Democrats Worry about Global and Domestic Problems.....	16
An Internationalist Approach to Foreign Policy	21
Democrats Believe Globalized Production Is Better for the United States	23
Summary	25
Partisan Spending Priorities	26
Republicans See Threats Originating Externally.....	28
A Nationalist Approach to Foreign Policy.....	28
Republicans Prefer to Produce Goods at Home	31
Summary	31
Party Supporters Are Not Completely Split on China	32
Conclusion.....	33
Appendix	34
Methodology.....	43
About the Survey Sample	46
About the Chicago Council Survey	47

Executive Summary

The worldwide spread of COVID-19 has reminded Americans that the United States is not immune to events that take place in other parts of the world. Far from feeding calls to retreat from international engagement, Americans remain supportive of an active US role in the world, with solid majorities supporting US security alliances and free trade as the best ways to maintain safety and prosperity. Most Americans also continue to believe that globalization is largely beneficial for the United States.

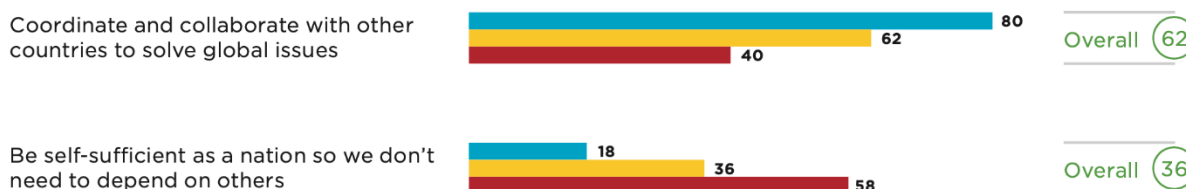
But there are profound differences between Democrats and Republicans on which foreign policy issues matter most today. And they are even more sharply divided on how the United States should deal with these issues and engage the rest of the world. Generally speaking, Democrats prefer an internationalist approach: cooperating with other countries, amplifying US participation in international organizations and agreements, and providing aid to other nations. In contrast, Republicans prefer a nationalist approach: putting US interests above those of other countries, creating economic self-sufficiency, and taking a unilateral approach to diplomacy and global engagement (Figure A).

Figure A: Lessons from the Coronavirus Pandemic

Which of the following statements comes closest to your view? The coronavirus outbreak has made it clear that it is more important for the United States to: (%)

n = 2,111

■ Democrat ■ Independent ■ Republican



2020 Chicago Council Survey

The foreign-policy positions of the two candidates in the upcoming 2020 presidential election mirror this public divide. President Donald J. Trump articulated a clear message favoring nationalism over multilateralism at the 74th United Nations General Assembly in 2019. He noted that the future belongs not to the “globalists” but to the “patriots,” going on to elaborate: “The future belongs to sovereign and independent nations who protect their citizens, respect their neighbors, and honor the differences that make each country special and unique.”¹

This agenda contrasts sharply with that put forth by the Democratic candidate. Former Vice President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. has stated that his foreign policy will embrace the networks of partnerships and alliances the United States has built over the decades to enhance national security and freedom. “Working cooperatively with other nations,” Biden has argued, will “amplify our own strength, extend our presence

¹ Donald J. Trump, “Remarks by President Trump to the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly,” [Whitehouse.gov](https://www.whitehouse.gov), September 24, 2019, [whitehouse.gov](https://www.whitehouse.gov).

around the globe, and magnify our impact while sharing global responsibilities with willing partners.”²

These two perspectives on US engagement in the world are poles apart, and the choices voters make this fall will therefore have far-reaching consequences for the direction of US foreign policy.

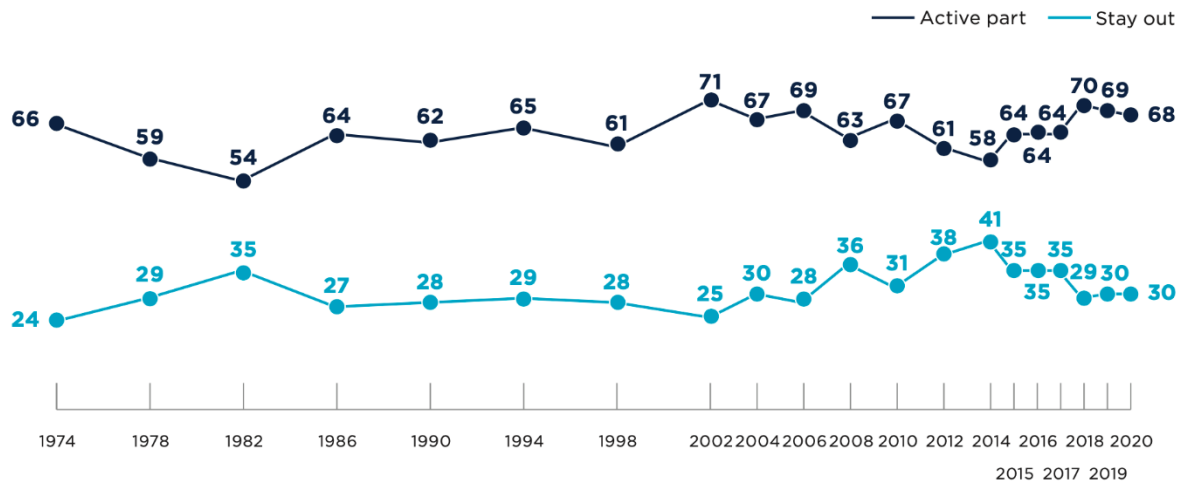
Americans Want to Remain Engaged in World, Support Alliances and Trade

COVID-19 reached American shores at the start of 2020 and has inflicted untold damage on both lives and livelihoods. Within eight months, 6 million American citizens have been infected by the virus that causes COVID-19, nearly 190,000 have died from it, and tens of millions have lost their jobs.³ Despite the pandemic, Americans continue to reject retreat from the world.⁴ Instead, Americans across party lines continue to endorse robust US involvement and leadership internationally. Nearly seven in 10 (68%) maintain that the United States should take an active part in world affairs, and 54 percent overall say that the United States should be more involved, not less, in addressing the world’s problems (Figure B).

Figure B: US Role in World Affairs

Do you think it will be best for the future of the country if we take an active part in world affairs or if we stay out of world affairs? (%)

n = 2,111



2020 Chicago Council Survey

Americans view alliances as a key part of that engagement. Solid majorities continue to say alliances in Europe (68%) and East Asia (59%) mostly benefit the United States as well as its allies. About three-quarters still support maintaining or increasing the US commitment to NATO (73%). Seven in ten Americans (71%) believe that the United

² Joseph R. Biden, Jr., “Why America Must Lead Again: Rescuing U.S. Foreign Policy After Trump,” *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2020, [foreignaffairs.com](https://www.foreignaffairs.com).

³ Eli Rosenberg, “U.S. economy added 1.8 million jobs in July as it worked to recover from the coronavirus pandemic,” *Washington Post*, August 7, 2020, [washingtonpost.com](https://www.washingtonpost.com).

⁴ Dina Smeltz, Ivo Daalder, Karl Friedhoff, Craig Kafura, and Brendan Helm, “Rejecting Retreat: Results of the 2019 Chicago Council Survey,” *The Chicago Council on Global Affairs*, September 9, 2019, [thechicagocouncil.org](https://www.thechicagocouncil.org).

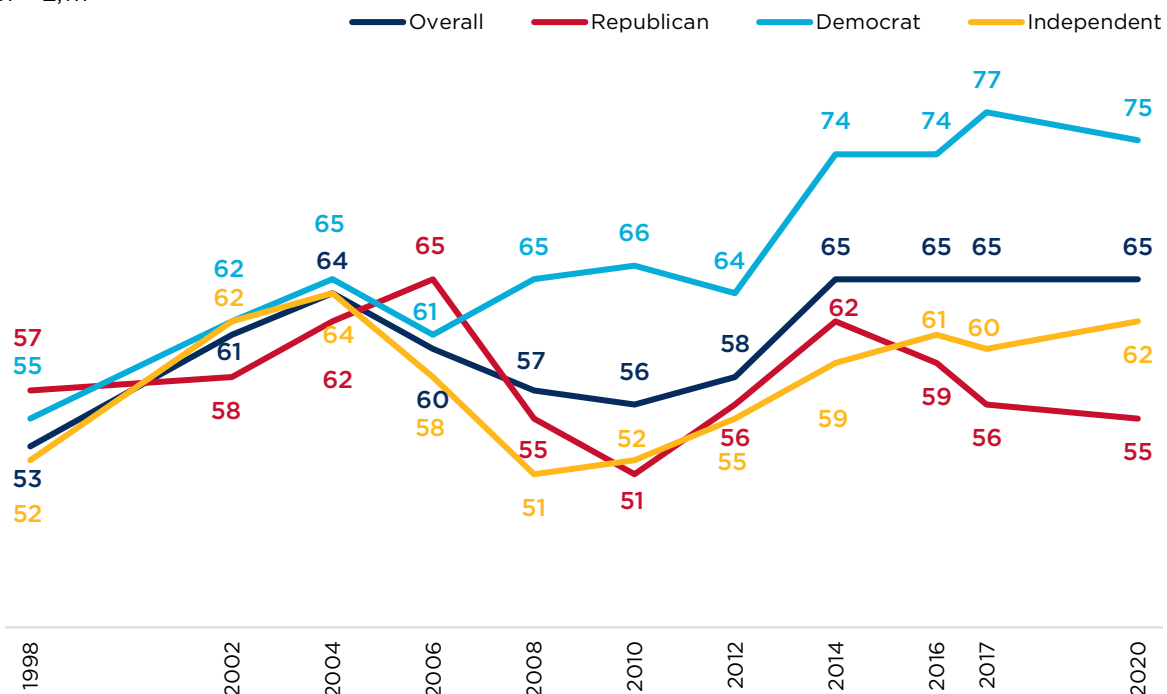
States should consult with major allies before making foreign-policy decisions. On each of these questions, majorities of both Democrats and Republicans agree.

The US public also continues to support globalization and free trade (Figure C). Two-thirds of Americans still believe that globalization is beneficial to the United States (65%) and majorities believe that international trade is good for the economy (74%), consumers (82%), improving relations with other countries (85%), and creating jobs (59%) in the United States.

Figure C: Effects of Globalization

Turning to something else, do you believe that globalization, especially the increasing connections of our economy with others around the world, is mostly good or mostly bad for the United States? (% mostly good)

n = 2,111



2020 Chicago Council Survey

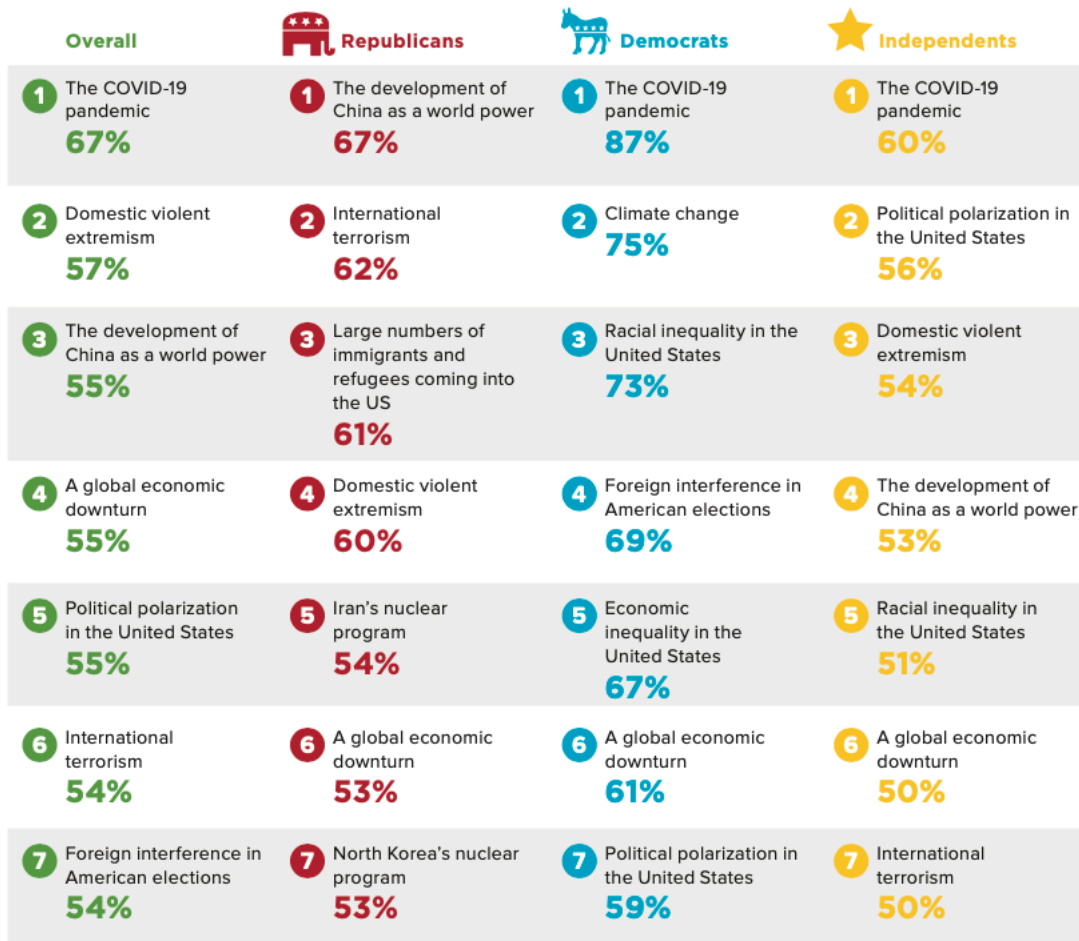
Partisan Differences on Top Threats Facing the Country

When it comes to the most important foreign policy issues affecting the United States, Democrats and Republicans are worlds apart. Democrats are most concerned about global problems such as the COVID-19 pandemic (which 87% see as a critical threat) and climate change (75%), followed by societal issues such as racial inequality (73%) and economic inequality (67%). Furthermore, seven in 10 Democrats are concerned about foreign interference in US elections (69%) (Figure D).

Figure D: **Top 7 Critical Threats**

Below is a list of possible threats to the vital interest of the United States in the next 10 years. For each one, please select whether you see this as a critical threat, an important but not critical threat, or not an important threat at all (% critical threat):

n varies



2020 Chicago Council Survey

Republicans identify traditional security challenges as the most critical threats facing the country, including the development of China as a world power (67%), international terrorism⁵ (62%), and Iran's nuclear program (54%). Six in 10 also consider large numbers of immigrants and refugees coming into the country (61%) as a critical threat—a long-standing Republican concern.

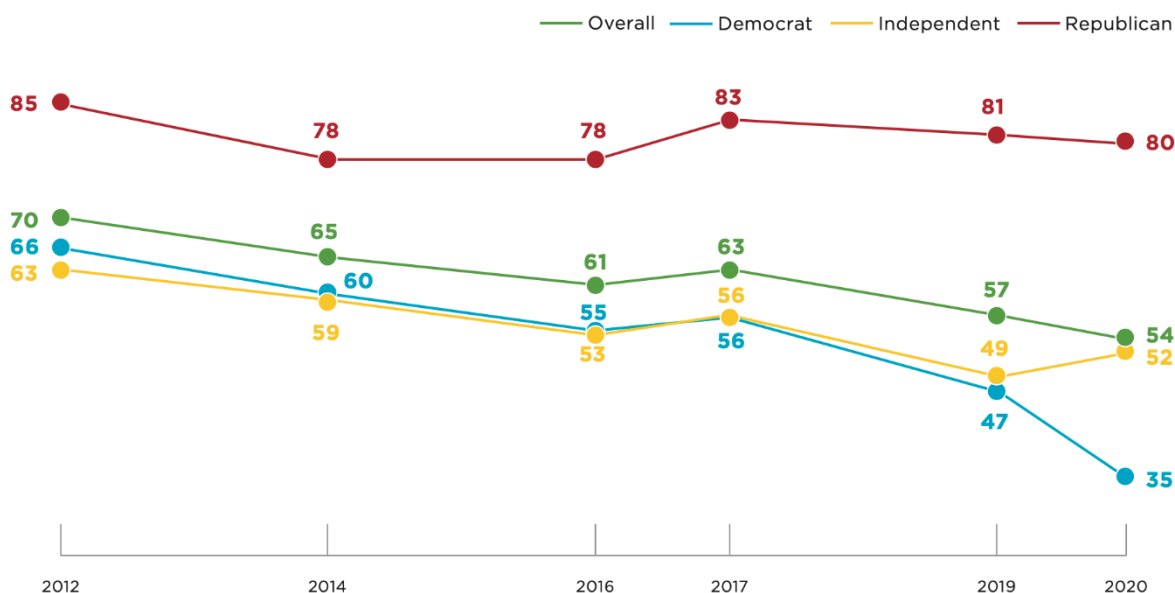
Thus, there are stark differences in how Democrats and Republicans want US policy to address the most pressing issues facing the country as well as how to engage with the rest of the world.

⁵ International terrorism and domestic violent extremism are also viewed by a majority of Democrats as critical threats, but they do not rate these as highly relative to other threats as Republicans do.

Democrats Favor an Internationalist Approach: Diplomacy and Cooperation
A vast majority of Democrats (80%) say the COVID-19 outbreak has increased the importance of the United States coordinating and collaborating with other countries to solve global issues. Democrats' strong support for working through international organizations is likely rooted in the belief that the United States is no greater a country than others (64%)—a sentiment that has grown dramatically since 2017, when just 43 percent agreed (Figure E).

Figure E: American Exceptionalism

Some people say the United States has a unique character that makes it the greatest country in the world. Others say that every country is unique, and the United States is no greater than other nations. Which view is closer to your own? (% greatest country in the world)
n = 2,111



2020 Chicago Council Survey

Democrats also strongly advocate addressing global problems by working within the international community, pursuing solutions such as increasing US participation in international organizations (63%), providing humanitarian aid (59%), and signing international agreements (55%). They also say that international organizations should be more involved, including the World Health Organization (71%), the United Nations (68%), and the World Trade Organization (53%). Compared with Republicans, they are more likely to strongly agree that “problems like climate change and pandemics are so big that no country can solve them alone, and international cooperation is the only way we can make progress in solving these problems” (72% of Democrats strongly agree, compared to 36% of Republicans).

One example is China. Despite the shared view among both Democrats and Republicans that Beijing is an unfair trade partner and mostly a rival to Washington, DC, most Democrats still favor a strategy of engagement over containment. In fact, six in 10 Democrats (60%) say that the United States should pursue friendly engagement with China. Asked about specific policy proposals regarding China, a

majority of Democrats oppose restricting the exchange of scientific research between the United States and China (57%) or limiting the number of students from China studying in the United States (64%).

Democrats' attitudes toward trade also reflect an internationalist orientation. A large majority of Democrats (75%) support the global production of various goods across several countries to ensure that a crisis or disaster does not hurt the supply of goods around the world. Only 24 percent favor the United States producing all its own goods. Seven in 10 Democrats (70%) also prefer that the United States coordinate the production of goods with other countries, even at the risk of having to rely on those countries if shortages arise. Just 28 percent of Democrats say that the United States should produce all its critical goods to ensure domestic supply, even if this means higher prices for US consumers.

Recent administrations, both Democratic and Republican, have favored the use of sanctions as an economic stick—but three in 10 Democrats (30%) think the United States should decrease the use of sanctions against other countries. This extends to placing tariffs on products imported from China, which 56 percent of Democrats oppose.

Republicans Favor a Nationalist Approach: Self-Sufficiency and Independence

In contrast to the Democrats, a majority of Republicans (58%) believe the COVID-19 outbreak has made it more important for the United States to be self-sufficient as a nation. This perspective likely rests upon the idea that the United States is exceptional: 80 percent of Republicans say that the United States is the greatest country in the world, and close to half of Republicans (48%) agree that “the United States is rich and powerful enough to go it alone, without getting involved in the problems of the rest of the world.”

Republican views in favor of self-sufficiency are a function of their commitment to upholding US independence and sovereignty in international affairs. A majority of Republicans (61%) reject the idea that the United States should be more willing to make decisions within the United Nations if it means pursuing a policy that is not its first choice, putting them at direct odds with 84 percent of Democrats. In further contrast to Democrats, there is no Republican majority support for any international organization to be more involved in addressing the world's problems.

Republicans identify China as a higher critical threat than any other threat presented in the survey (67%), and a significant majority say that the United States should actively seek to limit China's power and influence (64% versus 36% of Democrats). Republicans also support squeezing people-to-people exchanges with China: two-thirds are in favor of limiting the number of students from China in the United States (65%) and restricting the exchange of scientific research between the two countries (66%).

Perhaps because of their focus on security threats, Republicans favor more muscular approaches to addressing international challenges. To combat terrorism (which 62% of Republicans say is a critical threat), nearly nine in 10 Republicans (87%) want to increase or maintain the use of drone strikes against suspected terrorists. Republicans also support those same aggressive measures at home, with majorities supporting using US troops to suppress domestic protests (59%) and riots, looting, and

vandalism (83%). Two in three also support an increase in funding for immigration enforcement (64%).

On trade, Republicans tend to favor protectionist policies. Two-thirds of Republicans (60%) prefer the United States produce its own critical goods to ensure domestic supply rather than buying or selling overseas (versus 37% who want to coordinate production globally). However, Republicans are more divided on the best approach in a crisis or a disaster. About half of Republican supporters favor individual countries producing the goods they need (47%), while the other half favor many countries producing goods that are traded internationally (51%).

On trade with China, Republican preferences are the inverse of Democratic preferences. Majorities of Republicans support increasing tariffs on products imported from China (76%), and seven in 10 (70%) support significantly reducing trade between the US and China, even if this leads to greater costs for American consumers.

Conclusion

In recent years, commentators have questioned whether the American public is committed to remaining involved in world affairs or whether the country is drifting toward isolationism. But this isn't the most relevant question, as a majority of Americans continue to support global engagement. Rather, the most important question is how the United States should relate to the rest of the world. President Trump's foreign policy is largely based on the importance of "America First," emphasizing the central role of nationalism and sovereignty in US relations with other countries. In contrast, Biden has emphasized the importance of working with other countries to address global challenges such as COVID-19 and climate change. While these ideas no doubt reflect the candidates' perspectives on how the United States should engage the world, they're perfectly tailored to appeal to their respective constituencies.

While Democratic and Republican presidential candidates have had some foreign policy differences in past elections, the differences have often been at the margins and within a common view of the international role of the United States as well as the threats the country faces. Today, the differences between the two candidates are glaring, reinforced by respective partisan preferences among the wider public. In November, voters will not only decide who will become the next US president but also they will help determine the path US foreign policy takes—either working in partnership with the international community or moving toward a greater degree of national self-reliance.

Bipartisan Ideas on the role of the United States: Engagement, Alliances, and Trade

The importance of foreign policy to the American public is always a point of debate during election years, but the COVID-19 outbreak has had an outsized influence on the life of every American. At times, the pandemic has emphasized the ways in which foreign policy can affect the daily lives of the country's citizens. From debates over globalization and self-sufficiency, to relations with China, America's dealings with the rest of the world have been a focal point throughout 2020.

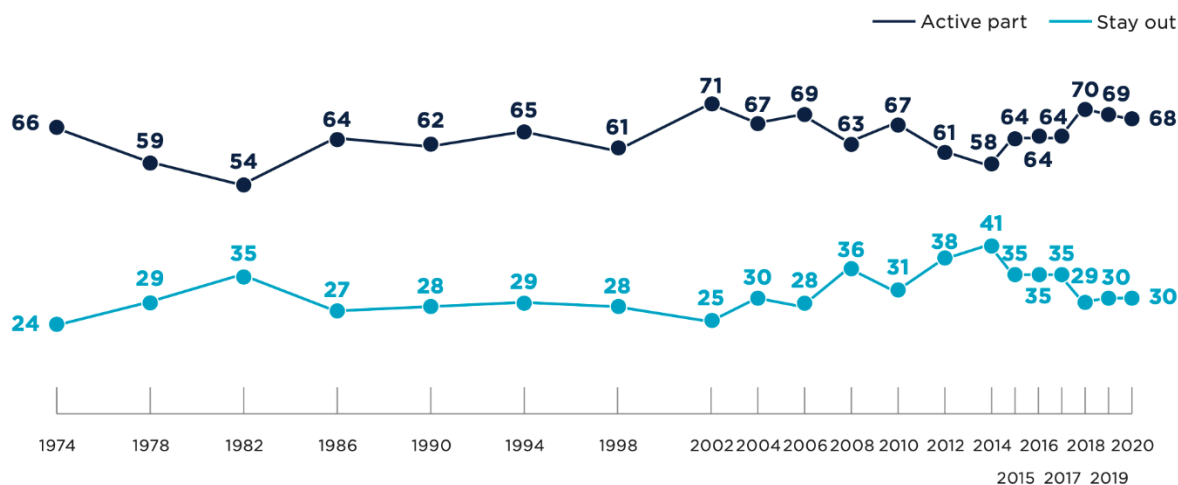
Continued Support for US International Engagement and Leadership

One potential response to the ongoing challenges facing the United States—and to the COVID-19 pandemic in particular—is for the United States to pursue isolationist policies. This would include shutting US borders and disconnecting from the world economy in an attempt to seek self-sufficiency and limit the country's exposure to foreign risks. Indeed, this is the approach pursued by the White House. But Americans broadly reject this kind of retreat from the world. Instead, the American public continues to support an active role in the world for the United States, US alliances around the world, and international trade.

Majorities of Americans continue to favor US global engagement, with seven in 10 respondents overall (68%) saying that taking an active part in world affairs will benefit the future of the country the most (Figure 1). This result is in line with some of the highest readings in our survey over the past 46 years.

Figure 1: US Role in World Affairs

Do you think it will be best for the future of the country if we take an active part in world affairs or if we stay out of world affairs? (%)
n = 2,111



2020 Chicago Council Survey

Americans want the United States to continue to lead abroad, but few want it to lead alone. In fact, majorities across the board prefer a shared leadership role for the United States (68%). Just 24 percent prefer the United States take a dominant leadership role, and very few say the United States should have no global leadership

role at all (7%). Furthermore, a majority of Americans believe the United States should be more involved in addressing global issues (54%), with another 25 percent saying it should be as involved as it is now.

Against the backdrop of current world crises, Americans believe that problems such as climate change and pandemics are too large for one country to handle alone. A strong majority (84%) agrees that international cooperation is the only way to solve such large global challenges. As one survey respondent notes, “Isolationism doesn’t work. Countries need to work together to solve large issues.”

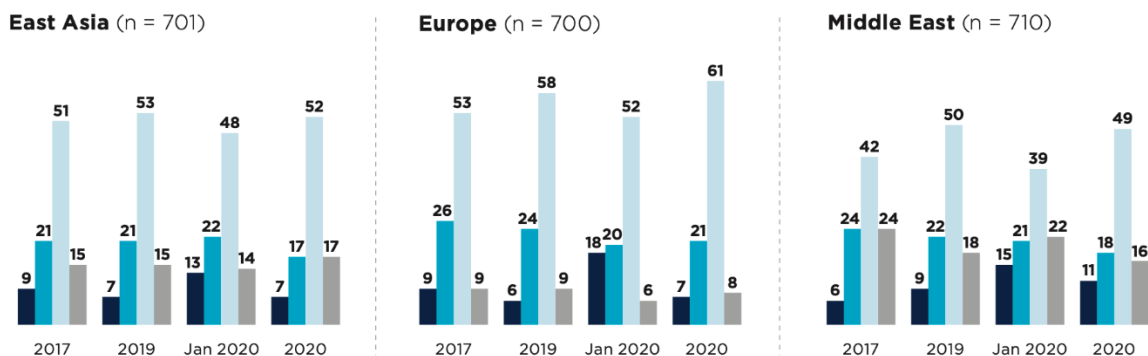
Continued Support for Alliances

In addition to a shared commitment to international engagement, Americans strongly agree on the persisting value of alliances to the United States. Indeed, support for US security alliances around the world is at or near all-time highs (Figure 2). Consistent with this strong support, a majority of respondents say that the United States should be more willing to make decisions with its allies when dealing with international problems—even if this means sometimes going along with a policy that is not its first choice (71%, up from 66% in 2018). Likewise, nearly six in ten say America should mainly consult with major allies before making foreign-policy decisions (56%), rather than mainly making foreign-policy decisions on its own (24%; 19% are unsure). And a majority of the public (76%) rejects the notion that having allies is not worth the cost of defending them.

Figure 2: Security Alliances

Which of the following comes closest to your view on US security alliances. Do they: (%)

■ Mostly benefit the US ■ Mostly benefit our allies ■ Benefit both ■ Benefit neither



Note: Figures may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

2020 Chicago Council Survey

US Alliances in East Asia

The Trump administration has argued that America’s allies in East Asia have taken unfair advantage of the United States. Currently, the US government is in negotiations with Japan and South Korea over the financial burden of hosting US troops, aiming to shift more responsibility to Tokyo and Seoul. But Americans see alliances in East Asia as a win-win: a majority of respondents say that alliances in East Asia either benefit both countries or mostly benefit the United States (59%). One respondent argues, “The United States benefits by having a strategic presence in Asia and allies who can

represent its interests locally, as well as support US policies, further US interests, help with intelligence gathering, as well as expand trade.” To underscore American commitment to South Korea as an ally, Americans are also willing to send US troops to defend South Korea if it is attacked by North Korea (58%); a bare majority also see North Korea’s nuclear program as a critical threat to the US (51%).

In addition to concerns about North Korea, China may be another reason for Americans’ embrace of their East Asian allies. Public attitudes toward China have become strikingly more unfavorable over the past two years. On a 0–100 scale, where 0 represents a very cold, unfavorable feeling and 100 represents a very warm, favorable feeling, Americans give China an average rating of 32, down from 45 in 2018 and a high of 53 in 1986. Nearly three in four also view China as both a rival to the United States (72%) and an unfair trade partner (73%). With Americans increasingly concerned about the rise of China (55% say it is a critical threat), a larger proportion of the public says that the United States should prioritize building up strong relations with traditional allies such as Japan and South Korea, even if this diminishes our relations with China (77% compared with 66% in 2018). In addition, while Taiwan is not a formal US ally, American public support for military action to defend the island from Chinese invasion is now at an all-time high (41%).

US Alliances in Europe

Despite strains between the United States and its European allies over recent years, US alliances in the region remain popular with the public. A majority of Americans (67%) say the transatlantic alliance benefits both the United States and its allies or mostly benefits the United States. As one survey respondent elaborates in written comments, “If the United States and the European Union are strongly aligned, then it is more difficult for countries like Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea to cause havoc at a global level. It also allows for more effective and unified responses to an issue that affects one or multiple nations within that alliance.”

Asked specifically about the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Americans remain largely committed, as they have since 1974. A majority (73%) want to either maintain the US commitment to NATO or increase it, and 52 percent support the use of US troops if Russia invades a NATO ally, such as Latvia, Lithuania, or Estonia. At the same time, however, more than half of Americans favor the decision to decrease the US troop presence from Germany (57%), with an additional 16 percent saying that all troops should be withdrawn from Germany. This could suggest that President Trump’s repeated criticism of Germany may have started to resonate publicly.⁶

US Alliances in the Middle East

Six in ten Americans think that both the United States and its allies in the Middle East benefit from their partnership or the United States alone mostly benefits (61%). When asked about specific benefits of US alliances with Middle Eastern countries, several respondents point to preventing or combating terrorism. One participant notes that “Security benefits both the United States and the Middle East—we are all better protected against terrorists.” Another adds, “That part of the world seems to be critical to everyone’s security as terrorists from the region threaten everyone.”

⁶ In July 2020, President Trump announced cuts to US troop levels in Germany, calling for a reduction of US troops stationed there from 34,500 to 25,000, a cut of 9,500. In late July, while this survey was still in the field, US Secretary of Defense Mark Esper adjusted that total of troops being withdrawn to 11,900 to hit the 25,000-troop target. For more, see Ryan Browne and Zachary Cohen, “US to withdraw nearly 12,000 troops from Germany in move that will cost billions and take years,” CNN, July 29, 2020, CNN.com.

Concerns about terrorism have subsided considerably since previous surveys, and current readings are at the lowest levels recorded since the Chicago Council began asking about the threat in 1998 (54%, down from 69% in 2019). Even so, a majority of Americans continue to favor using US troops to fight against violent Islamic extremist groups in Iraq and Syria (59%). In addition, 49 percent of respondents worry about the threat from Iran's nuclear program (down from 57% in 2019). But some believe Iran is another destabilizing factor that makes alliances in this region important: "Israel and Saudi Arabia benefit from us; we benefit by them keeping Iran and its proxies out of the United States for the most part."

Continued Embrace of Globalization and Trade Amid the Pandemic

The events of the first half of 2020—a global pandemic and deep economic recession—have led to increased scrutiny on the effects of globalization and trade. Many commentators have speculated that the pandemic would bring about the end of globalization because it highlights the risks associated with specialized production of goods.⁷ As COVID-19 spread, countries closed their borders to travel and prioritized national needs above international markets, resulting in worldwide shortages of personal protective equipment and other critical medical devices. There is similar speculation that national interests could limit global vaccine distribution, as nations that develop them will likely focus on inoculating their own populations first.⁸

Despite these predictions, and the dual shocks of the pandemic and recession, Americans as a whole continue to view US economic engagement abroad as worthy (Figure 3). Indeed, two-thirds (65%) say that globalization is mostly good for the United States. Majorities of Americans also continue to believe that international trade is good for creating jobs in the United States (59%), the US economy (74%), consumers (82%), and US relations with other countries (85%). While somewhat fewer say that international trade is good for the US economy and job creation than in 2019, current readings are still at relatively high points reflecting a surge in positive evaluations of international trade since 2016.

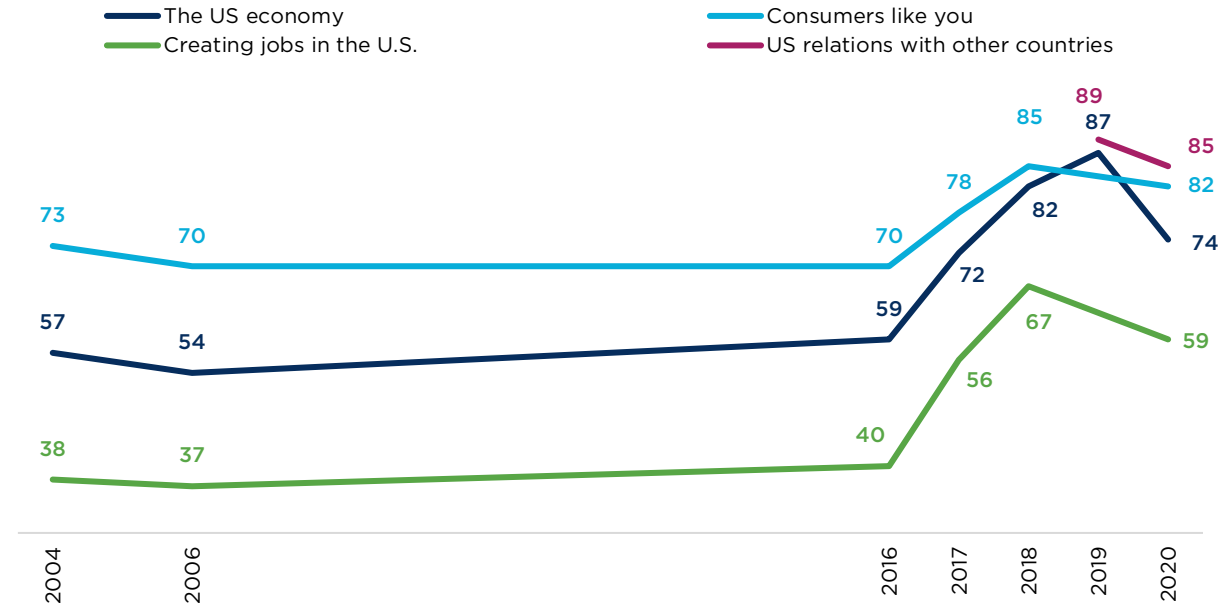
⁷ Henry Farrell and Abraham Newman, "Will the Coronavirus End Globalization as We Know It?," *Foreign Affairs*, March 16, 2020, [foreignaffairs.com](https://www.foreignaffairs.com).

⁸ Richard N. Haas, "Opinion: How nationalism could ruin the COVID-19 vaccine," *Marketwatch*, July 16, 2020, [marketwatch.com](https://www.marketwatch.com).

Figure 3: **International Trade**

Overall, do you think international trade is good or bad for: (% good)

n = 2,111



2020 Chicago Council Survey

Conclusion

Although confronted with the worst global health pandemic in a century, the worst recession since the Great Depression, and nationwide protests over racial injustice, Americans have not turned inward. The fact that support for international engagement and partnerships with allies remains stable despite these crises is remarkable. Far from seeking isolation from the rest of the world, Americans remain committed to an active foreign policy, to shared leadership with allies and partners around the globe, and to globalization and international trade.

Partisan Differences on Threats to US Security

While Americans across the political spectrum agree that the United States should remain engaged in the world, Democrats and Republicans diverge in their perceptions of the most alarming threats facing the country. Democrats identify challenges that tend to be global in nature as the most critical threats, but they are also concerned about societal challenges within the United States. Meanwhile, Republicans identify traditional security threats originating externally as the most critical for national security (see Appendix Sidebar “A Note about Independents,”).

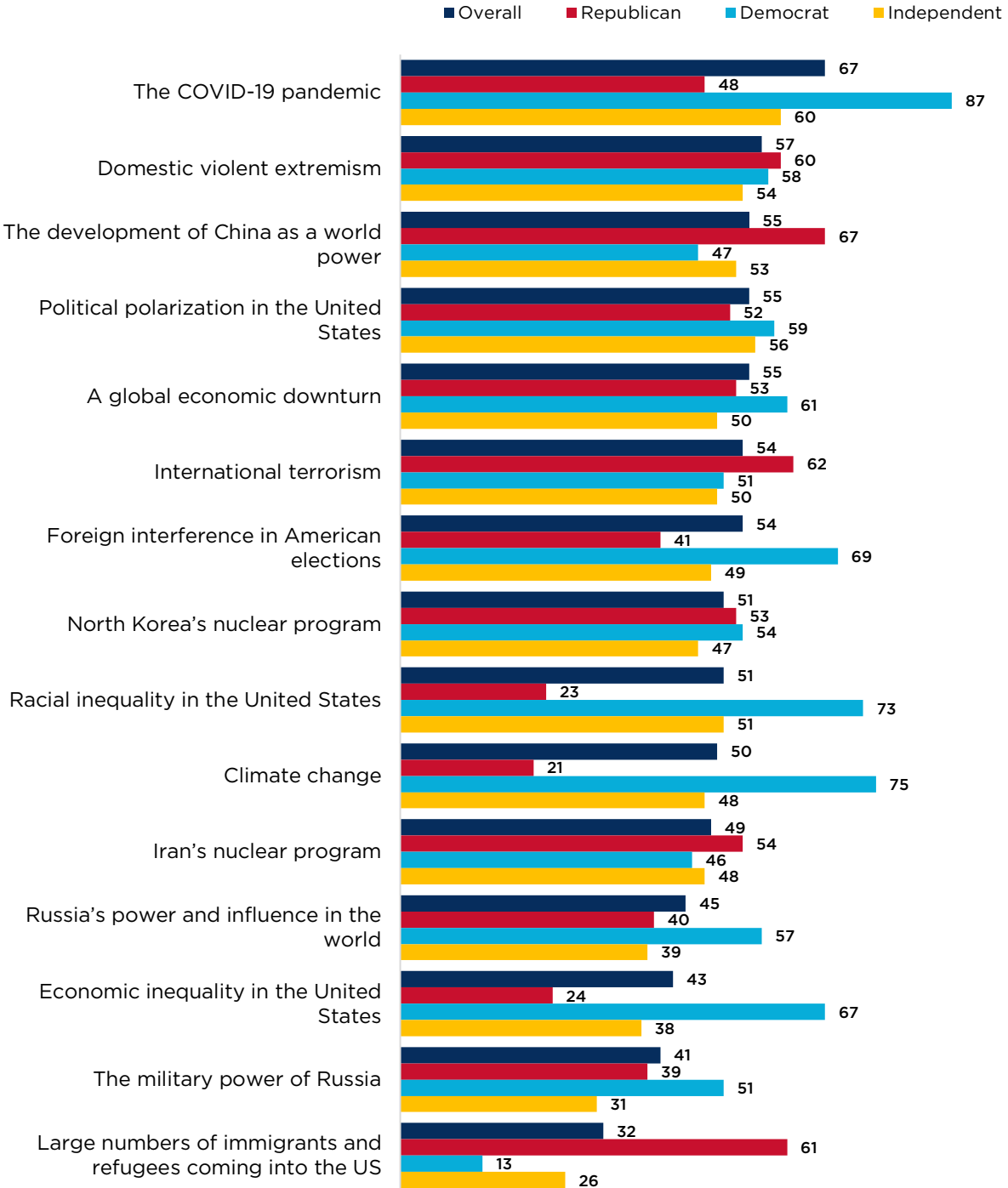
Democrats Worry about Global and Domestic Problems

During this year’s Democratic National Convention, party leaders focused on their perceptions of the top threats facing the country today, chiefly the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and social justice (Figure 4). These highlights also reflect the everyday concerns of Democrats.

Figure 4: Critical Threats

Below is a list of possible threats to the vital interest of the United States in the next 10 years. For each one, please select whether you see this as a critical threat, an important but not critical threat, or not an important threat at all (% critical threat):

n varies



The COVID-19 pandemic is the top-ranked threat facing the country among Democrats, with 87 percent describing it as critical. Climate change is a close second (75%); the gap between Democrats and Republicans on climate change as a critical threat is 54 percentage points—the largest partisan difference on critical threats in the 2020 survey.

Democrats are also concerned about the integrity of the US presidential election this November.⁹ Seven in ten Democrats describe foreign interference in US elections as a critical threat (69%). In addition, an August 2020 Pew survey found that 88 percent of Democrats say it is likely that Russia or other foreign governments will attempt to influence the US presidential election this November.¹⁰

On the domestic front, Democrats view the challenges of racial (73%) and economic (67%) inequality in the United States as critical threats—views that are shared by few Republicans. On the contrary, few Democrats (13%) view large numbers of immigrants and refugees entering the United States as a critical threat, while this is one of the top concerns among Republicans. In fact, a combined majority of Democrats favor increasing (43%) or maintaining (41%) current levels of legal immigration.

The survey also reveals Democrats' deep disappointment with the way the current government is handling of the issues they see as top threats (Appendix Figure 1). Majorities say the US government's response to the pandemic, climate change, election interference, and domestic inequality have been ineffective. This dissatisfaction, along with Democrats' well-documented dislike of President Trump,¹¹ has led to changes in the way they view their own country. A majority of Democrats now say that the United States is no greater than other countries (64%), a sentiment that has grown dramatically since 2017, when just 43 percent agreed (Figure 5). In 2012, just 34 percent of Democrats agreed with this idea, with two-thirds saying that the United States was the greatest country in the world.

⁹ John Sides and Lynn Vavreck, *The Gamble: Choice and Chance in the 2012 Presidential Election*. Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013. Accessed August 18, 2020. doi:10.2307/j.ctt2tt8sb.

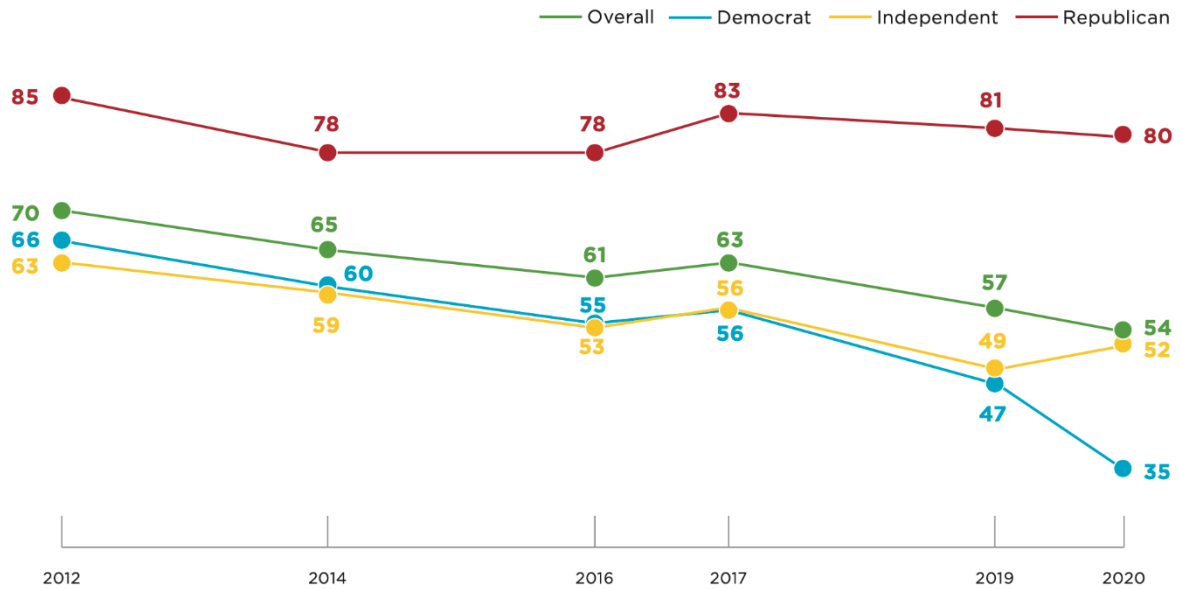
¹⁰ Hannah Hartig, "75% of Americans say it's likely that Russia or other governments will try to influence 2020 election," *Pew Research*, August 18, 2020, [pewresearch.org](https://www.pewresearch.org).

¹¹ Amina Dunn, "Trump's approval ratings so far are unusually stable – and deeply partisan," *Pew Research*, August 24, 2020, [pewresearch.org](https://www.pewresearch.org).

Figure 5: **American Exceptionalism**

Some people say the United States has a unique character that makes it the greatest country in the world. Others say that every country is unique, and the United States is no greater than other nations. Which view is closer to your own? (% greatest country in the world)

n = 2,111



2020 Chicago Council Survey

A Note about Independents

Independents account for about a third of American adults in this survey sample (34% overall), but nearly half of this third say they lean toward one of the parties (9% Democrat, 8% Republican). These proportions have been fairly consistent over the past 10 years, though a greater percentage of independents leaned toward either the Democratic or Republican party prior to that.

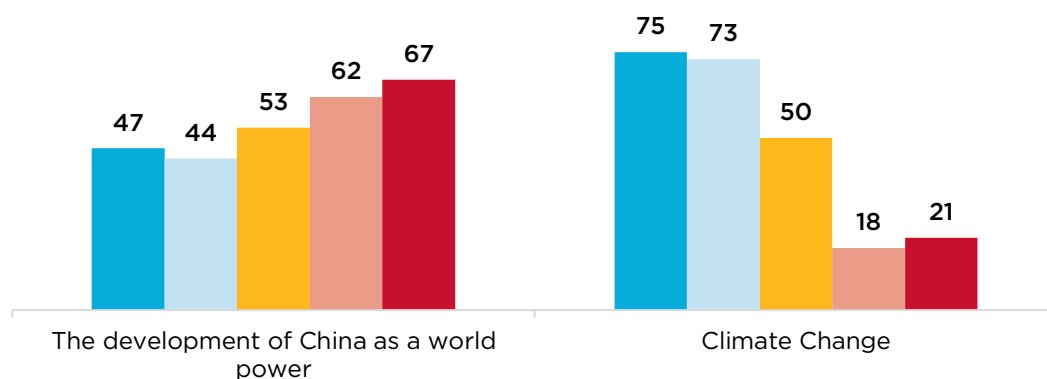
As might be expected, those leaning toward the Democratic party resemble Democrats in their views on foreign policy, while those leaning toward the Republican party resemble GOP supporters. The remaining 17 percent are “pure” independents—those who are less likely to be registered to vote, less likely to have voted in 2016, and most inclined to say the United States should stay out of world affairs. Rather than leaning one way or the other, the views of pure independents tend to fall in between the two traditional party supporters (figure).

Critical Threat Perception Among

Below is a list of possible threats to the vital interest of the United States in the next 10 years. For each one, please select whether you see this as a critical threat, an important but not critical threat, or not an important threat at all (% critical threat):

n = 2,111

■ Democrat ■ Lean Democrat ■ Independent ■ Lean Republican ■ Republican



2020 Chicago Council Survey

For example, regarding the threat of the development of China as a world power, the opinions of independents who lean Democrat resemble those of outright Democrat supporters. However, independents who lean toward Republicans have opinions that resemble outright Republicans in threat perceptions from China’s rise, while pure Independents land in the middle. On climate change, the leaners’ perception of a critical threat falls very close to those of Democrats and Republicans. Slightly less than half of pure independents view it as a critical threat, falling between the two poles.

In the same way that Democrats and Republicans weigh domestic and international threats differently, they also deviate in their beliefs about how the United States should handle these challenges, the tools that Washington should use when crafting foreign policy, and how to engage with allies and rivals alike. Democrats believe that addressing these threats requires greater cooperation with the international

community and a multilateral approach to global issues. In contrast, Republicans are more likely to opt for self-sufficiency and independence from international institutions and foreign entanglements.

An Internationalist Approach to Foreign Policy

“Working cooperatively with other nations that share our values and goals does not make the United States a chump. It makes us more secure and more successful. We amplify our own strength, extend our presence around the globe, and magnify our impact while sharing global responsibilities with willing partners.”

—Joseph R. Biden, Jr., *Foreign Affairs*¹²

Democrats’ belief in greater international cooperation and multilateralism have been reinforced by the COVID-19 experience. Most say the coronavirus outbreak has made it clear that it is more important for the United States to collaborate with other countries to solve global issues than to be self-sufficient (80%). Just 18 percent say that the outbreak should spur more self-sufficiency and reduced reliance on other nations (Figure 6).

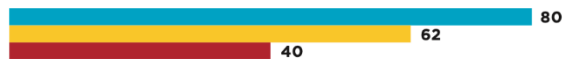
Figure 6: Lessons from the Coronavirus Pandemic

Which of the following statements comes closest to your view? The coronavirus outbreak has made it clear that it is more important for the United States to: (%)

n = 2,111

■ Democrat ■ Independent ■ Republican

Coordinate and collaborate with other countries to solve global issues



Overall (62)

Be self-sufficient as a nation so we don't need to depend on others



Overall (36)

2020 Chicago Council Survey

In turn, majorities of Democrats say the United States should participate more in international organizations (63%) and international agreements (55%) and believe it should provide humanitarian aid (59%) and economic aid (47%) to other countries (Figure 7).

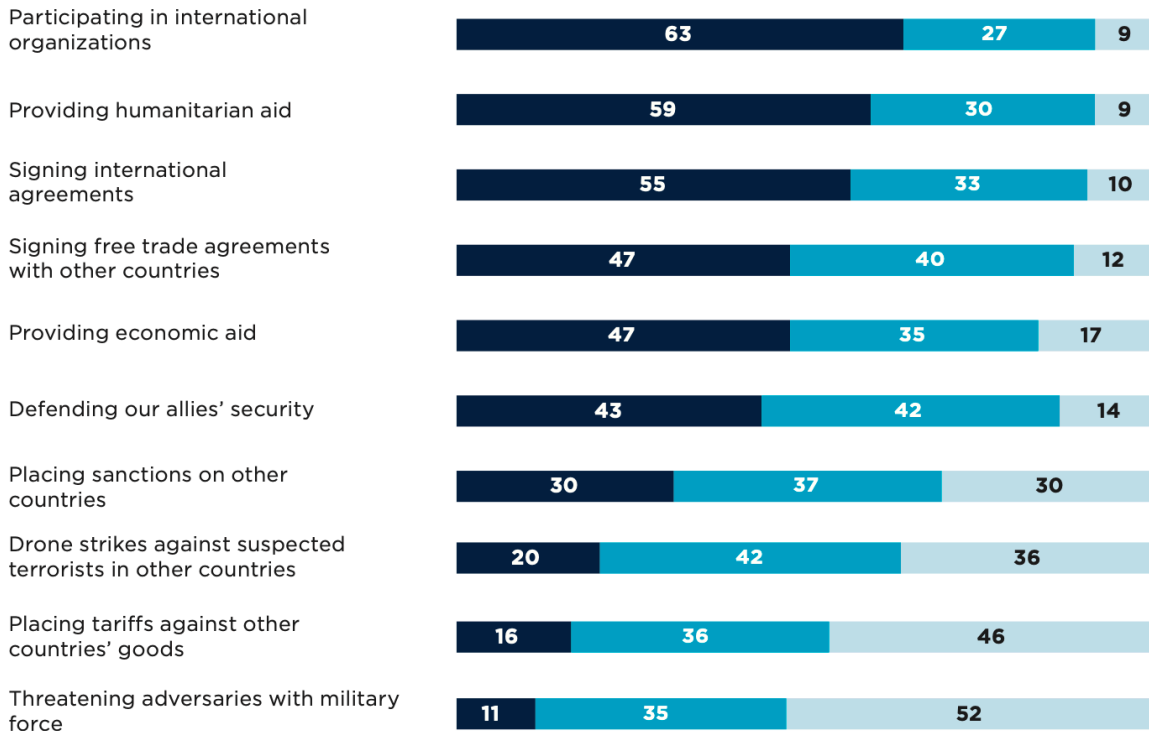
¹² Joseph R. Biden, Jr., “Why America Must Lead Again: Rescuing U.S. Foreign Policy After Trump,” *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2020, [foreignaffairs.com](https://www.foreignaffairs.com).

Figure 7: Democrats' Approaches to Foreign Policy

The United States uses different foreign policy approaches to achieve its foreign policy goals. Do you think the United States should use the following foreign policy approaches more than it is now, less than it is now, or the same as it is now? (%)

n = 702

■ More than now ■ Same as now ■ Less than now



Note: Figures may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

2020 Chicago Council Survey

Democrats also favor increasing the profile of international organizations in helping to solve world problems. Majorities of Democrats say the World Health Organization (71%), the United Nations (68%), and the World Trade Organization (53%) should be more involved in addressing the world's problems. For Democrats, participation in the United Nations is not only for symbolic value. A vast majority (84%) say the United States should be more willing to make decisions within the United Nations, even in the case of pursuing a policy that is not its first choice.

Democratic supporters rate the maintenance of existing alliances as the most effective tool to achieve US foreign-policy goals (60% of respondents cite it as very effective; see Appendix Figure 2). Democratic backing for the transatlantic alliance is steadfast: a large majority (85%) want to maintain (54%) or increase (31%) the US commitment to NATO, and more than half (56%) favor using US troops if Russia invades a NATO ally, such as Latvia, Lithuania, or Estonia. At the same time, nearly a third of Democrats approve of the recent US decision to reduce the US military

presence in Germany (29%), and more than a third would support even further cuts or complete withdrawal (36%).

On China, however, Democrats are prepared to take a softer approach. While both Democrats and Republicans view China as a rival of the United States, six in ten Democrats (60%) continue to say that the United States should undertake friendly cooperation and engagement with China. A majority of Democrats also oppose restricting the exchange of scientific research (57%) or limiting the number of students from China studying in the United States (64%) (see sidebar "Party Supporters Are Not Completely Split on China,").

Democrats also want to cut back on some foreign policy approaches favored by Republicans. Approximately half of Democrats say the United States should threaten adversaries with military force less often (52%), cut back on tariffs against other countries' goods (46%), cut the defense budget (43%), and cut federal spending on immigration enforcement (49%; see sidebar "Partisan Spending Priorities,").

Democrats Believe Globalized Production Is Better for the United States

The Democrats' internationalist orientation is also reflected in their attitudes toward trade. They support the globalized production of goods and using free trade agreements more often as a diplomatic tool. And they disapprove of the use of tariffs against other countries.

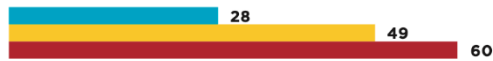
Three-quarters of Democrats continue to say that globalization is mostly good for the United States (75%), consistent with views going back to 2014 (See Appendix Figure 8). In line with their high approval for an interconnected economy, Democrats are more comfortable with the production of goods in several countries than manufacturing all goods solely within the United States. In a question designed to tap into attitudes about the best way to organize supply chains, seven in 10 Democrats (70%) prefer that production be spread across many different countries, implying a willingness to rely on other countries if shortages were to arise (Figure 8). Only 28 percent say that the United States should produce and keep goods within the country, even if that might result in higher prices.

Figure 8: **Multilateralism: US Supply Chains**

Right now different countries produce different goods, resulting in lower costs for consumers. Which one of the following two approaches would be better for the United States? (%)
n = 1,049

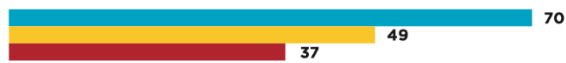
■ Democrat ■ Independent ■ Republican

The United States produces critical goods here and does not buy or sell critical goods overseas, ensuring our own supply of goods, even if this means higher prices



Overall (44)

Countries agree to coordinate the production of critical goods globally, keeping prices low, even if this means relying on other countries' production if shortages arise



Overall (53)

2020 Chicago Council Survey

Moreover, to ensure that a crisis or disaster does not hurt the supply of goods around the world, a large majority of Democrats say that many countries should produce various goods (75%). Just 24 percent say that each country should make all the goods they need themselves (Figure 9).

Figure 9: **Supply Chains during Crisis**

To ensure that a crisis or disaster in one place does not hurt the supply of goods around the world, which situation is better? (%)
n = 1,062

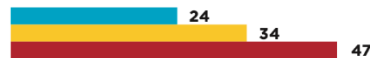
■ Democrat ■ Independent ■ Republican

Many different countries around the world produce various goods



Overall (64)

Individual countries make all the goods they need themselves



Overall (34)

2020 Chicago Council Survey

Reflecting their support for international agreements generally, a plurality of Democrats believe that the country should advance American interests by pursuing more free-trade agreements with other countries (47%). A plurality also favors reducing the use of tariffs against other countries' goods (46%)—aligning with their opposition to increasing US tariffs on Chinese imports (56%).

Summary

Democrats view multilateralism as fundamental to American efforts to confront the most difficult challenges facing the nation. They also value international organizations and agreements as important elements of diplomacy, and they think the United States should continue to peacefully cooperate with China, rather than pursue a containment policy. Finally, they see trade and globalization holding clear benefits for the United States.¹³

¹³ Previous Chicago Council Surveys have found Democrats much more likely than Republicans to endorse US participation in various international treaties. In 2018, for example, 83 percent of Democrats but only 46 percent of Republicans favored US participation in the Paris Agreement, and 82 percent of Democrats versus 53 percent of Republicans supported the US being part of the Iran nuclear agreement.

Partisan Spending Priorities

Dealing with the problems the United States faces doesn't just stop with foreign policies. Domestic spending is also top-of-mind heading into the 2020 election.

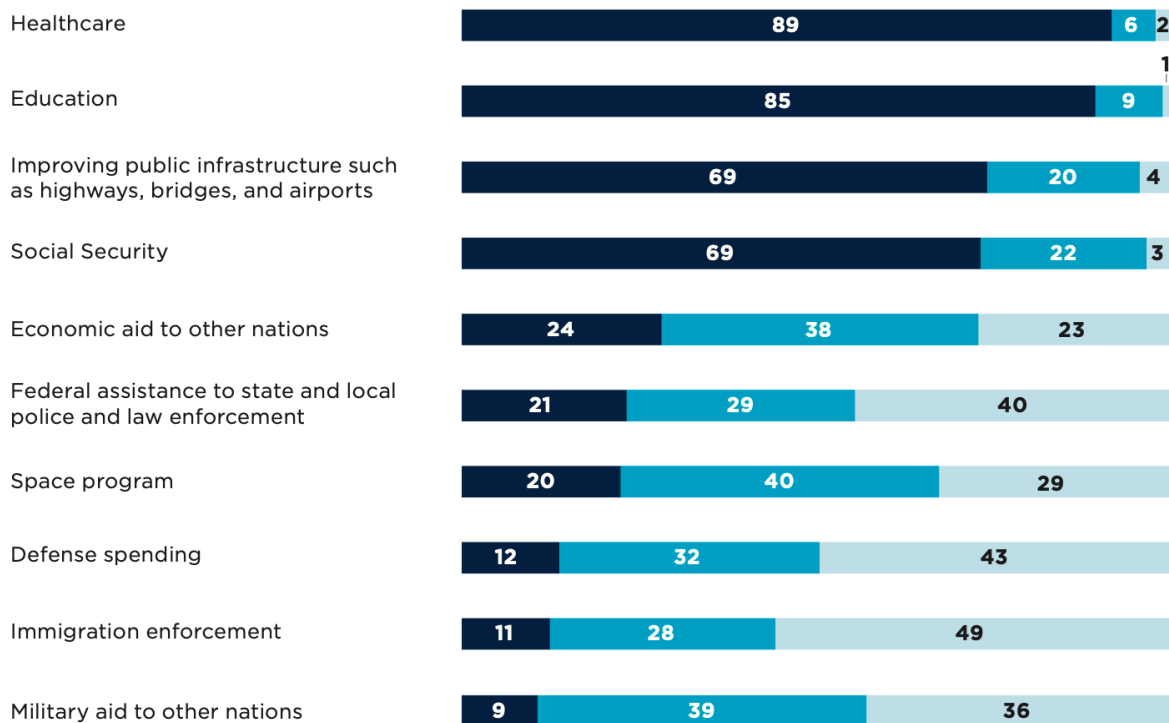
Democrats' spending priorities are focused on domestic concerns, with large majorities wanting to expand spending on healthcare (89%), education (85%), Social Security (69%), and improving public infrastructure (69%). Few want to expand defense spending, and a plurality (43%) favors cuts. A plurality of Democrats also support cuts to federal spending on immigration enforcement (49%), as well as federal assistance to state and local police and law enforcement (40%, see Figure 1).

Spending sidebar Figure 1: Democrats on Federal Programs

Below is a list of present federal government programs. For each, please select whether you feel it should be expanded, cut back or kept about the same. (%)

n = 702

■ Expanded ■ Kept about the same ■ Cut back



Note: Figures may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

2020 Chicago Council Survey

Republican spending priorities also have a domestic tack, and there is some overlap with Democrats' priorities: majorities of Republicans want to expand federal spending on

infrastructure (62%) and education (57%), and, pluralities want to expand spending on healthcare (46%) and Social Security (48%).

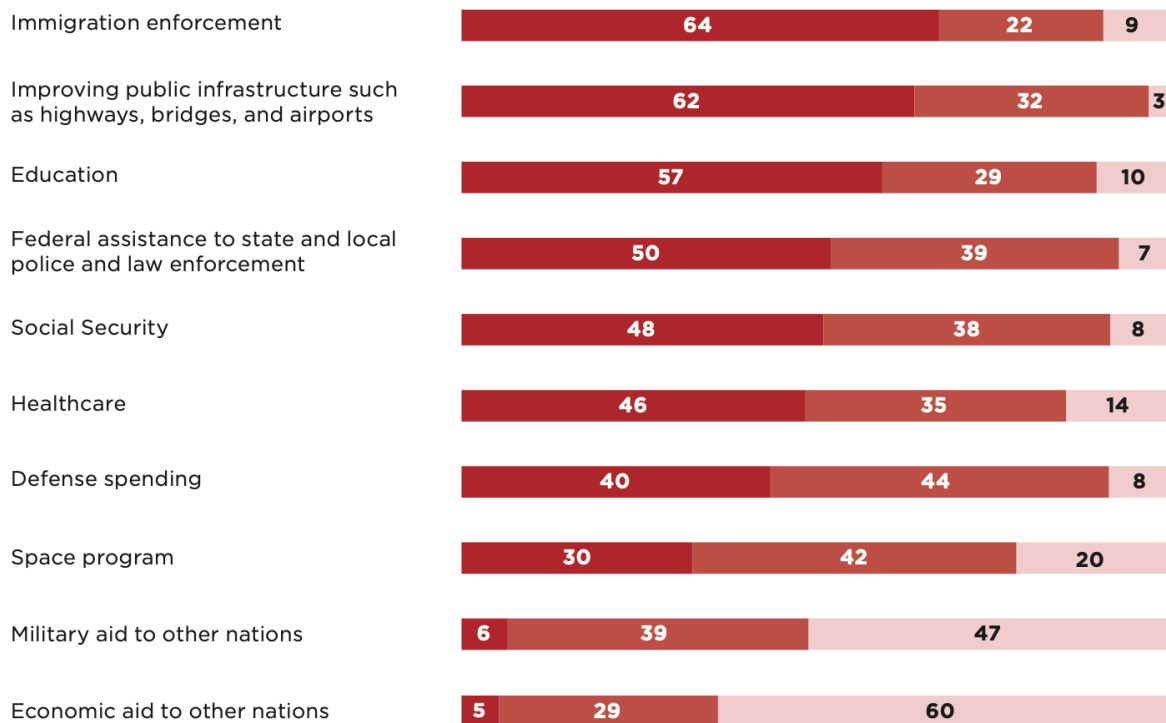
Beyond that, however, there is less agreement. Majorities of Republicans want to increase spending on immigration enforcement (64%) and federal assistance to state and local police (50%), and four in 10 want to expand defense spending, all areas in which Democrats are more likely to favor spending cuts. These areas of spending align with Republican preferences for a more muscular approach to foreign policy, which applies to their views on domestic unrest as well (Figure 2). Majorities of Republicans favor the use of US troops to suppress riots, looting, and vandalism in the United States (83%) as well as to suppress protests in the United States (59%). By contrast, majorities of Democrats oppose the domestic use of US military forces, either to suppress riots (60%) or protests (81%).

Spending sidebar Figure 2: **Republicans on Federal Programs**

Below is a list of present federal government programs. For each, please select whether you feel it should be expanded, cut back or kept about the same. (%)

n = 659

■ Expanded ■ Kept about the same ■ Cut back



Note: Figures may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

2020 Chicago Council Survey

Republicans See Threats Originating Externally

While Democrats worry most about global and domestic challenges, Republicans tend to see the most urgent threats facing the country as coming from outside national borders. They view the development of China as a world power as the most serious threat facing the United States (67%, up 13 percentage points from 2019—a new high), followed by international terrorism (62%). While a majority of Democrats (51%) also cite international terrorism as a critical threat, it is not in their top ten (see Figure 4).

Six in ten Republicans (61%) consider large numbers of immigrants and refugees coming into the country as a critical threat to the United States, a longstanding partisan concern. A majority of Republicans say they are satisfied with government attention to this issue (56%), and two-thirds (64%) favor increasing federal spending on immigration enforcement (see sidebar “Partisan Spending Priorities,”).

Conversely, Republicans do not share Democrats’ criticisms of the United States’ internal issues. Only a quarter of Republicans say that economic inequality (24%) or racial inequality (23%) are critical threats. And while about half of Republicans consider COVID-19 a critical threat (48%), a solid majority (63%) say the government response has been effective.

Domestic violent extremism is among top threats for both Democrats (58%) and Republicans (60%). However, these similar views belie the fact that Republicans and Democrats likely hold very different interpretations of the groups that might carry out acts associated with domestic violent extremism. Democrats tend to consider such acts emanating from white supremacists; Republicans, on the other hand, likely have in mind groups such as anti-fascist protest movements or the looters taking advantage of protests around the country. On a related note, half of Republicans (50%) favor increasing federal spending to state and local police and law enforcement.

A Nationalist Approach to Foreign Policy

“Wise leaders always put the good of their own people and their own country first. The future does not belong to globalists. The future belongs to patriots. The future belongs to sovereign and independent nations who protect their citizens, respect their neighbors, and honor the differences that make each country special and unique.”
—Donald J. Trump, at the 2019 United Nations General Assembly¹⁴

A large majority of Republicans say that the United States is the greatest country in the world (80%) (see Figure 5). This stance on American exceptionalism might lead them to believe that the United States does not need any help from other countries. A majority of Republicans say that the pandemic should motivate self-sufficiency to avoid national dependence on others (58%). To this point, 48 percent of Republicans agree that “the United States is rich and powerful enough to go it alone, without getting involved in the problems of the rest of the world.”

Republicans favor a nationalist foreign policy that hinges on self-reliance and autonomy and that promotes the use of more direct, forceful means to achieve US goals. These means include maintaining superior military power, economic pressure, independence in decision making, and a more confrontational approach toward China (Figure 10).

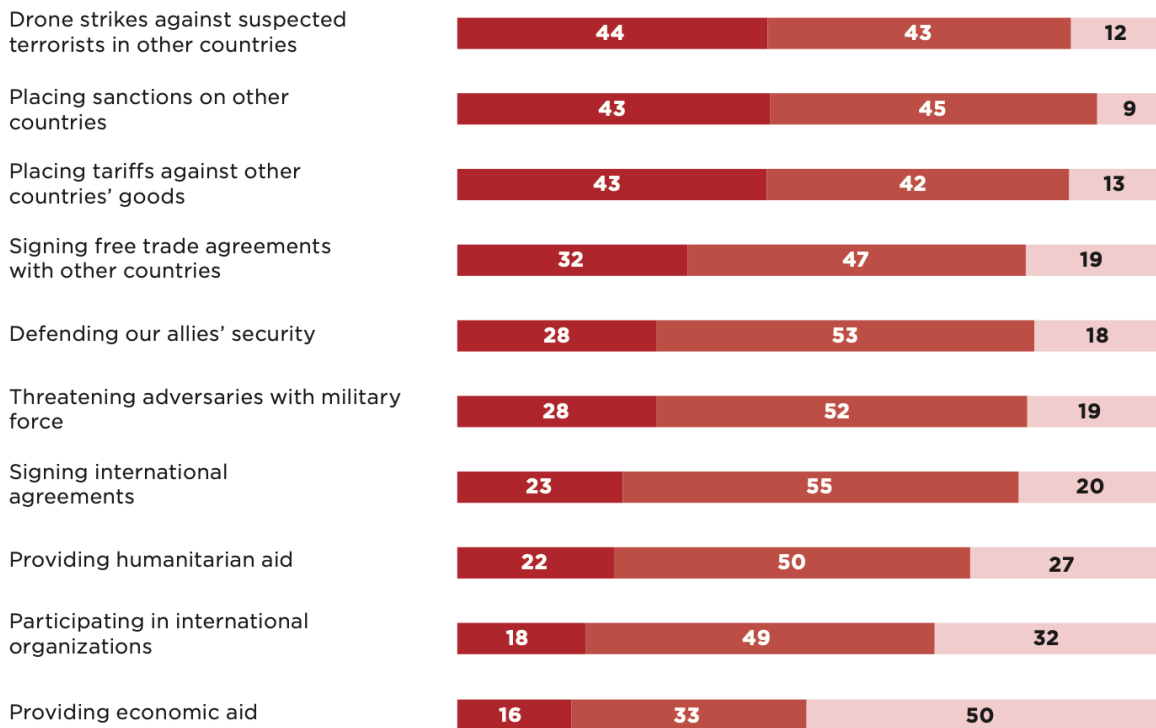
¹⁴ Donald J. Trump, “Remarks by President Trump to the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly,” *Whitehouse.gov*, September 24, 2019, *whitehouse.gov*.

Figure 10: Republicans' Approaches to Foreign Policy

The United States uses different foreign policy approaches to achieve its foreign policy goals. Do you think the United States should use the following foreign policy approaches more than it is now, less than it is now, or the same as it is now? (%)

n = 659

■ More than now ■ Same as now ■ Less than now



Note: Figures may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

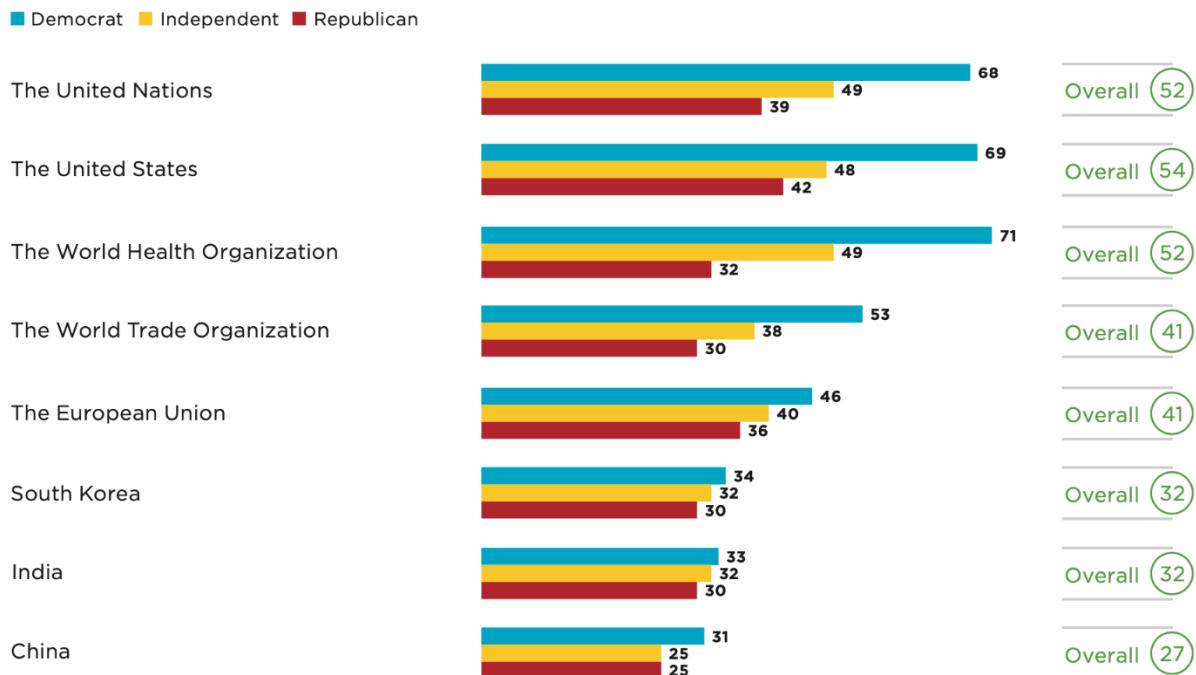
2020 Chicago Council Survey

Nearly half of Republicans are satisfied with current US involvement in international organizations (49%), and a third (32%) believe the United States should decrease its current participation (Figure 11). This preference for unilateralism stretches to the United Nations and beyond. There is no majority support among Republicans for any international organization to be more involved in addressing the world's problems. Pluralities say the World Health Organization should be less involved (39%) in addressing the world's problems, and they are evenly split on the World Trade Organization, with 30 percent saying it should be more involved and 30 percent saying it should be less involved.

Figure 11: Involvement in Addressing World Problems

Should the following countries and international organizations be more involved, less involved, or as involved as they are now in addressing the world's problems? (% more involved)

n = 2,111



2020 Chicago Council Survey

Similar to Democrats, Republicans say that maintaining existing alliances is a very effective foreign policy tool (56% Republicans, 60% Democrats; see Appendix Figure 2). But there are large partisan differences on the degree to which partisans are committed to NATO. Six in 10 (60%) Republicans favor maintaining or increasing the US commitment—25 percentage points below Democratic support (85%). The level of support Republicans have for NATO has decreased 11 points since 2019 and is the lowest since the question was first asked in 1974. Partisan differences are similar when it comes to using US troops to defend a NATO ally, such as Latvia, Lithuania, or Estonia, from Russian invasion. Today, less than half of Republicans support defending their NATO ally (47%), a decrease of nine percentage points over the past year. A majority of Republicans approve of the recent US decision to reduce the US military presence in Germany (51%), and about a third would support even further cuts (33%).

Overall, Republicans favor more forceful measures to achieve US foreign policy goals. Since 1998, large majorities of Republicans have consistently said that maintaining superior military power worldwide is a very important goal for US foreign policy (70%

in 2018).¹⁵ In a separate question, majorities also think that maintaining US military superiority worldwide (80%) and conducting drone strikes against suspected terrorists in other countries (63%) are very effective ways to achieve US foreign policy goals (see Appendix). In terms of the use of these foreign policy approaches, Republicans are most likely to say the United States should increase the use of drone strikes against terrorists (44%), sanctions against other countries (43%), and tariffs against other countries' goods (43%). To support those policies, Republicans want to either maintain (44%) or expand (40%) defense spending.

A majority of Republicans also prefer a more confrontational approach with China (see sidebar "Party Supporters Are Not Completely Split on China"). Two-thirds (64%) say that the United States should actively seek to limit China's power and influence in the world (versus 33% who prefer engagement with Beijing). Furthermore, Republicans support putting the squeeze on people-to-people exchanges, with two-thirds (65%) in favor of limiting the number of students from China in the United States. That also extends to restricting the exchange of scientific research between the two countries (66% support among Republicans). Finally, a very large majority of Republicans support increasing tariffs on products imported from China (76%) and significantly reducing trade between the United States and China, even if this leads to greater costs for American consumers (70%).

Republicans Prefer to Produce Goods at Home

The aforementioned results suggest that Republicans maybe be more attuned to the vulnerabilities presented by globalization, especially given the economic shocks from the worldwide pandemic. A majority continues to say that globalization is mostly good for the United States (55%), consistent with past readings, though this is 20 percentage points lower than support among Democrats. And Republicans favor a made-in-America approach: a majority of Republicans think that in order to ensure the domestic supply of critical goods, the United States should produce critical goods domestically and not buy or sell critical goods overseas (60%). Four in ten say that instead, production should be coordinated globally (37%) (see Figure 7).

Republicans are more split on the best path to take in a crisis or a disaster, however. About half of Republican supporters (47%) say it is best if individual countries produce all the goods they need internally, while the other half (51%) say it is best if many countries produce goods (see Figure 9).

Republicans also consider the use of economic statecraft differently than Democrats. While a plurality of Democrats favor using free trade agreements (FTAs) more often, a plurality of Republicans think the current level of trade agreements is sufficient (47% same as now, 32% think the United States should use FTAs more often).

A plurality of Republicans are also more likely to say that the United States should use tariffs against other countries' goods more than it does now (43%), compared with just 16 percent of Democrats. Trade with China is a live case: 76 percent of Republicans support increasing tariffs on Chinese imports.

Summary

Republicans believe the United States is an exceptional country and want to protect its independence from the restraints of international organizations and treaties. They

¹⁵ For example, see *America Engaged: Results of the 2018 Chicago Council Survey* by Smeltz et al, or *America in the Age of Uncertainty: Results of the 2016 Chicago Council Survey* by Smeltz et al.

see forceful approaches as the most potent means of dealing with threats to the nation, whether that threat be the influence of China, terrorism, or immigration.

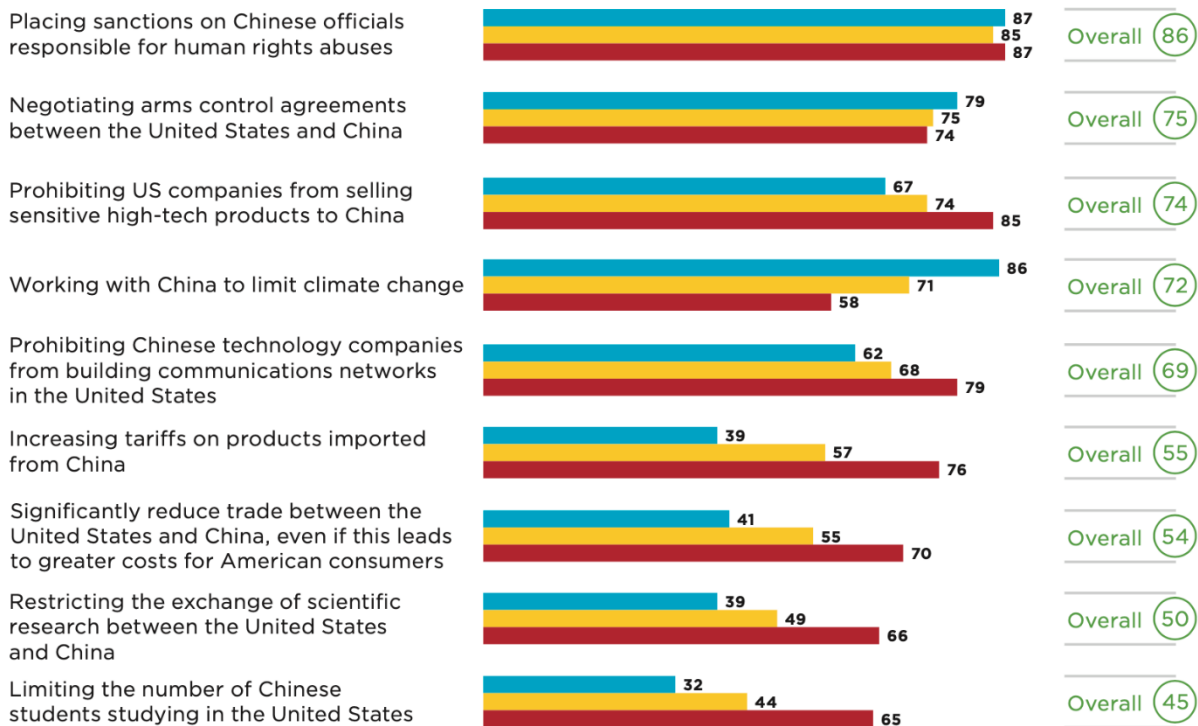
Party Supporters Are Not Completely Split on China

Majorities across party lines favor a certain range of both cooperative and forceful measures (figure). On the cooperative side, majorities of Democrats and Republicans alike support bilateral negotiations on arms control agreements and working with China to limit climate change. And on the forceful side, majorities favor sanctioning Chinese officials responsible for human-rights abuses, prohibiting the sale of sensitive high-tech products to China, and prohibiting Chinese technology firms from building communication networks in the United States. Moreover, large majorities of Republicans (80%), Democrats (77%), and independents (77%) all agree on the priority for US policy in Asia: building up strong relations with traditional allies, rather than seeking a new partnership with China.

China sidebar Figure 1: US Policy Toward China

Would you support or oppose the following US policies towards China? (% support)
n varies (1,373 to 1,438)

■ Democrat ■ Independent ■ Republican



2020 Chicago Council Survey

Conclusion

This November, Americans will head to the polls—or mail in their ballots—for one of the most critical elections in US history. Just as the two parties present differing agendas for the country, partisans within the public hold divergent views on foreign policy priorities and how to address them.

Democrats want the country to pursue greater coordination with the international community through US alliances and global institutions, addressing nontraditional threats such as pandemics and climate change, and sharing both the burdens and benefits of globalization. Republicans prefer that the United States undertake actions that would move the country toward being more self-sufficient, focusing on more traditional security threats, and using more muscular tools to achieve greater gains for the United States.

The differences between Democrats and Republicans in policy priorities and preferences have existed long before today. However, the ongoing domestic unrest in the United States, coupled with the coronavirus pandemic—a global crisis on a scale not seen since the Influenza of 1918—has brought those differences to the front of the debate. And while foreign policy is not normally at the top of the electoral agenda, this year, it is inextricably linked to the current state of affairs in the United States and the rest of the world. America's handling of the pandemic has caused many Americans—and many more around the world—to question whether the United States is still capable of confronting significant global challenges.

The current presidential administration's approach to alliances, trade, and diplomacy have been a sharp break with the past and further raises the stakes for the 2020 election. The public's electoral choices will determine whether the United States will work within international institutions in partnership with other countries or move toward a greater degree of self-reliance and unilateralism. While the election will affect the course of domestic political debates within the country, it will also shape the role, policies, and reputation of the United States in the world.

Appendix

Party Composition

The proportion of Americans supporting either of the two political parties has remained relatively consistent over the past 20 years, with about a third each self-describing as Democratic, Republican, or independent. But the demographic composition of self-identified party supporters has changed greatly since the first Chicago Council Survey, and these shifts seem to have had an effect on collective partisan attitudes.

In 1974, a large majority of Democrats identified themselves as white (84%), but there has been a significant increase in the diversity in Democratic support over the past 46 years. Today, less than half of self-described Democrats are white (45%) while a nearly equal number identify as Black (22%) or Hispanic (22%). At the same time, supporters of the Democratic party are on average younger than Republicans. About half of Democrats are below the age of 45 (49%) compared with 40 percent of Republicans. And, in terms of education, Democratic supporters are more likely to have either completed some college (27%) or have a bachelor's degree or higher (37%).

The demographic characteristics of self-described Republican supporters, however, have not experienced nearly as much diversification since 1974. In 2020, 81 percent of Republican supporters report that they are white, while 10 percent are Hispanic, and just 2 percent are Black. By comparison, 95 percent of Republicans in 1974 were white, 3 percent were Black, and 1 percent were Hispanic.

Age is another differentiator. A majority of Republicans are 45 or older (60%)—a large change from just 10 years ago (when 50% of Republicans were 45 or older) and an even larger change from 1986 (when 58% were younger than 45). Levels of education have also changed among Republican party supporters: about a third currently report that their highest level of education is a high school diploma (33%) while another third has a bachelor's degree or higher (30%). Over the past decade, the proportion of Republicans who have completed some or all of college has stayed relatively steady while the proportion whose highest level of education is high school has increased.

While Democrats and Republicans have distinct beliefs that define their parties, the level of diversity and average age undoubtedly has an impact on the predominant views of the party. For example, nonwhite Americans are much more likely than white Americans to say that racial inequality (66% nonwhite, 41% white) or economic inequality (55% non-white, 37% white) are critical threats to the United States. Nonwhite Americans are more likely to view COVID-19 and climate change as a critical threat (78% and 57%, respectively) than white people (61% and 46%). And 59 percent of white Americans say the United States is the greatest country in the world compared with 47 percent of nonwhite Americans (53 percent of nonwhites say instead that the United States is no greater than other countries).

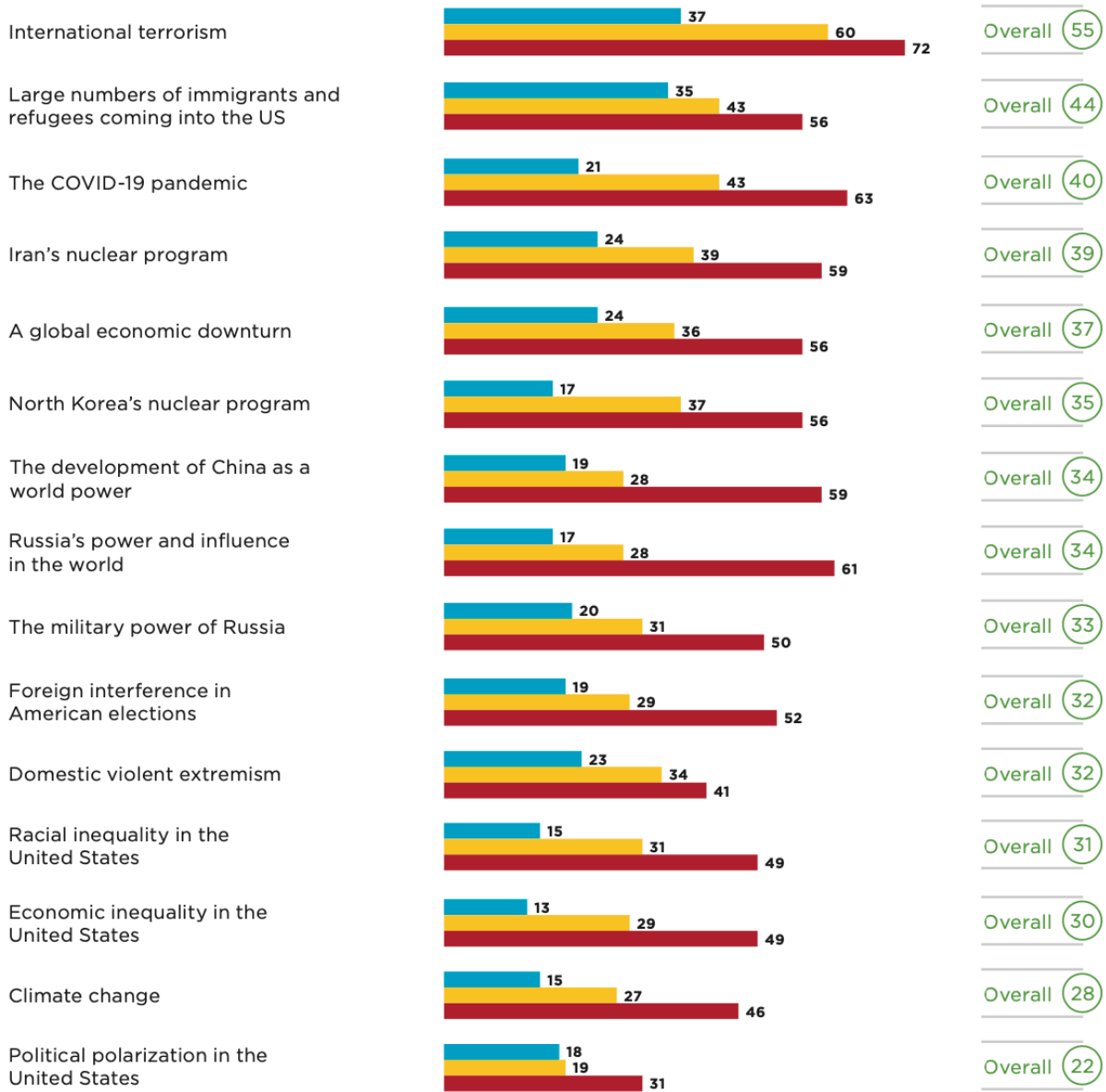
Similarly, those who are 45 or older are more likely than those who are younger than 45 to say that immigrants coming into the United States (37% are 45 or older, 25% are younger than 45) or the development of China as a world power (61% 45 or older, 48% younger than 45) are critical threats. On whether the United States is the greatest country, 64 percent of Americans over 45 years of age say that it is the greatest, compared with 43 percent of those younger than 45 (57% of younger Americans say the United States is no greater than other nations).

Appendix Figure 1: US Effectiveness in Dealing With Threats

How effective do you think the US government is in dealing with the following threats? (% very + somewhat effective)

n varies

■ Democrat ■ Independent ■ Republican



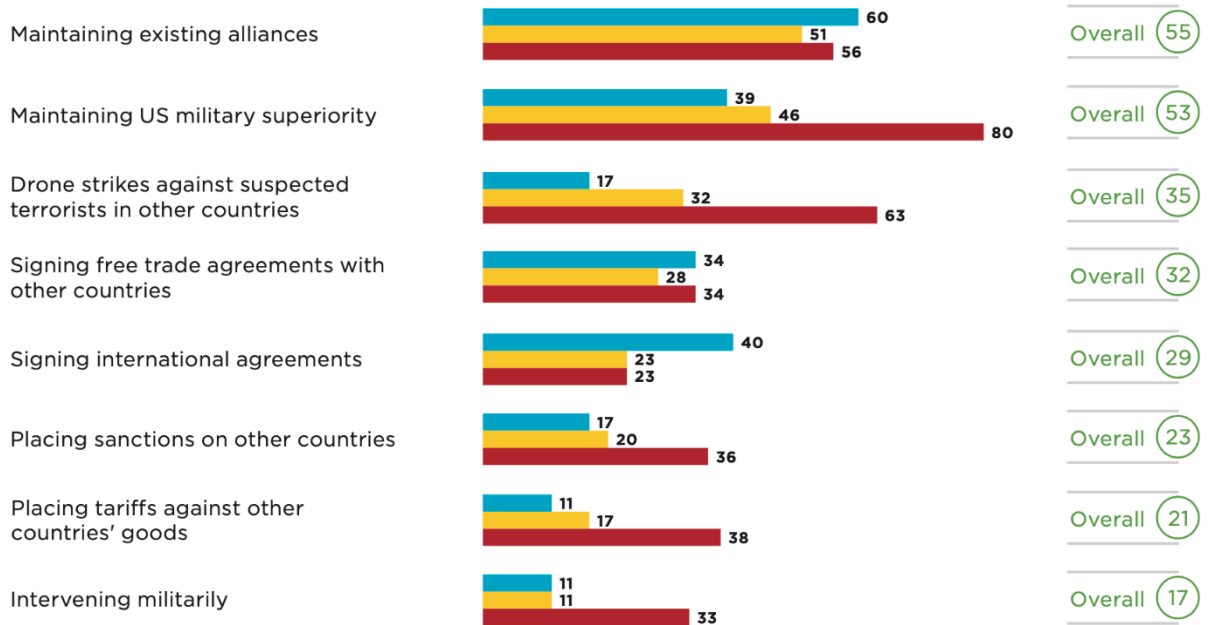
2020 Chicago Council Survey

Appendix Figure 2: Efficacy of US Foreign Policy Tools

And how effective do you think each of the following approaches are to achieving the foreign policy goals of the United States – very effective, somewhat effective, not very effective, or not effective at all? (% very effective)

n = 1,019

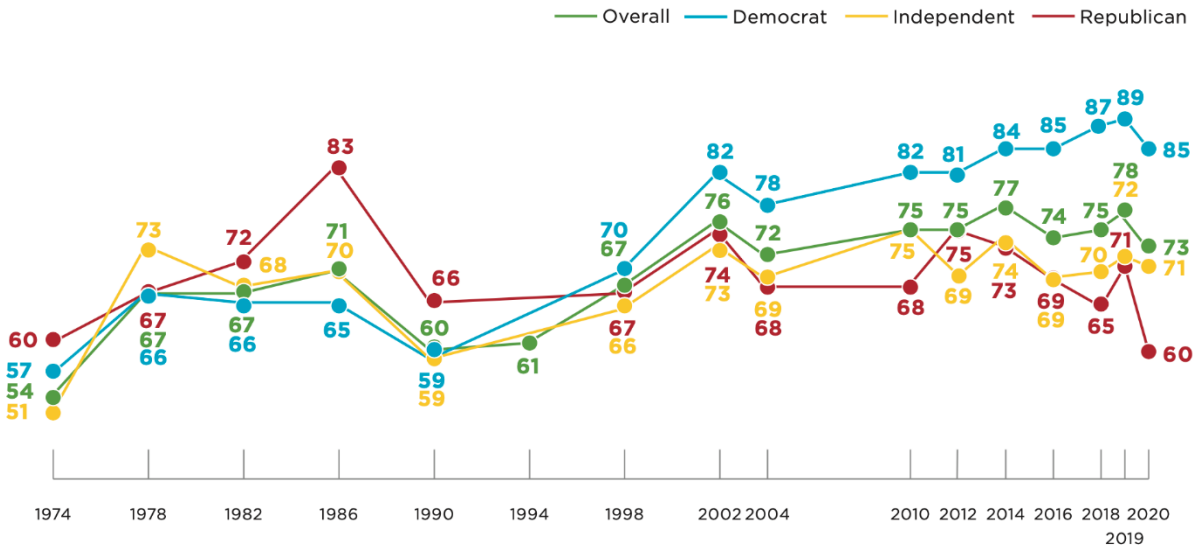
■ Democrat ■ Independent ■ Republican



January 2020 Chicago Council Survey

Appendix Figure 3: **Commitment to NATO**

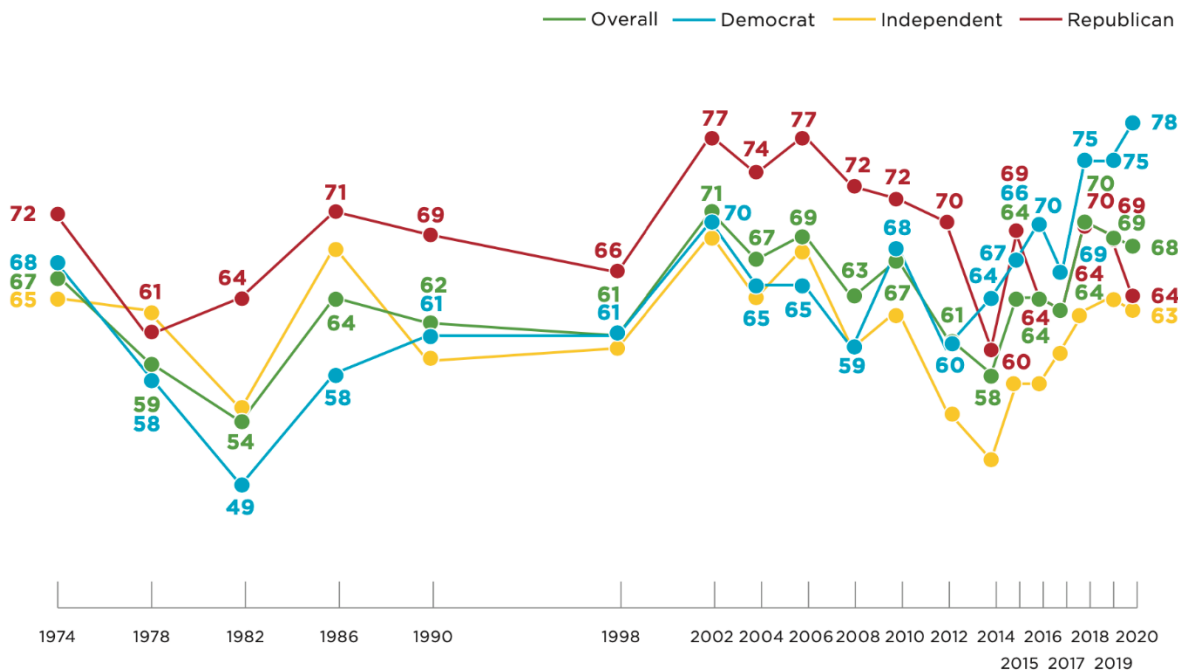
Do you feel we should increase our commitment to NATO, keep our commitment what it is now, decrease our commitment to NATO, or withdraw from NATO entirely? (% increase + keep same)
n = 2,111



2020 Chicago Council Survey

Appendix Figure 4: **Active Part in World Affairs**

Do you think it will be best for the future of the country if we take an active part in world affairs or if we stay out of world affairs? (% active part)
n = 2,111

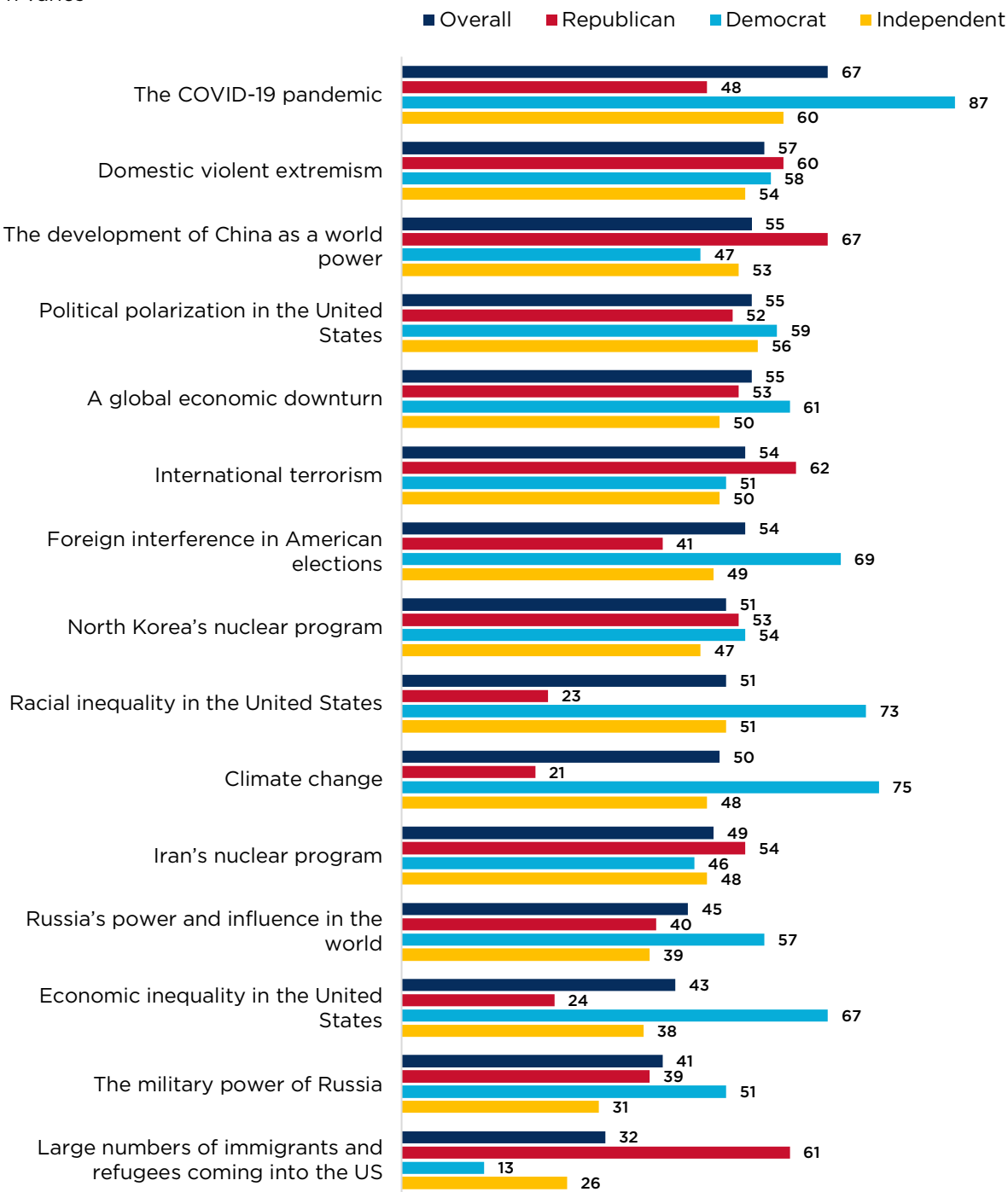


2020 Chicago Council Survey

Appendix Figure 5: Critical Threats

Below is a list of possible threats to the vital interest of the United States in the next 10 years. For each one, please select whether you see this as a critical threat, an important but not critical threat, or not an important threat at all (% critical threat):

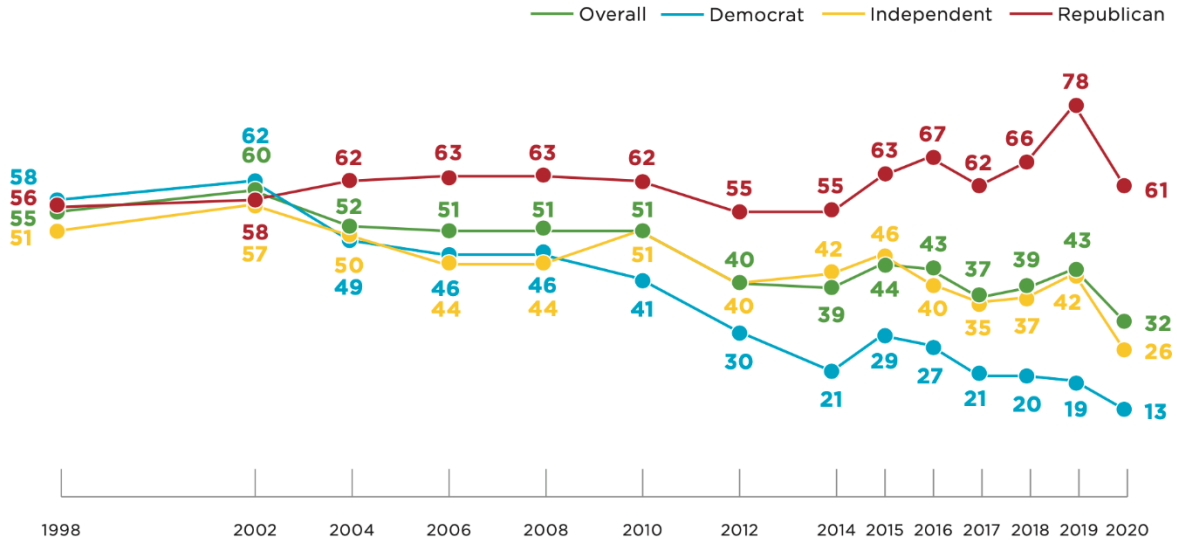
n varies



Appendix Figure 6: Threat of Immigrants Coming into the US

Below is a list of possible threats to the vital interest of the United States in the next 10 years. For each one, please select whether you see this as a critical threat, an important but not critical threat, or not an important threat at all: Large numbers of immigrants and refugees coming into the US (% critical threat)

n = 1,665



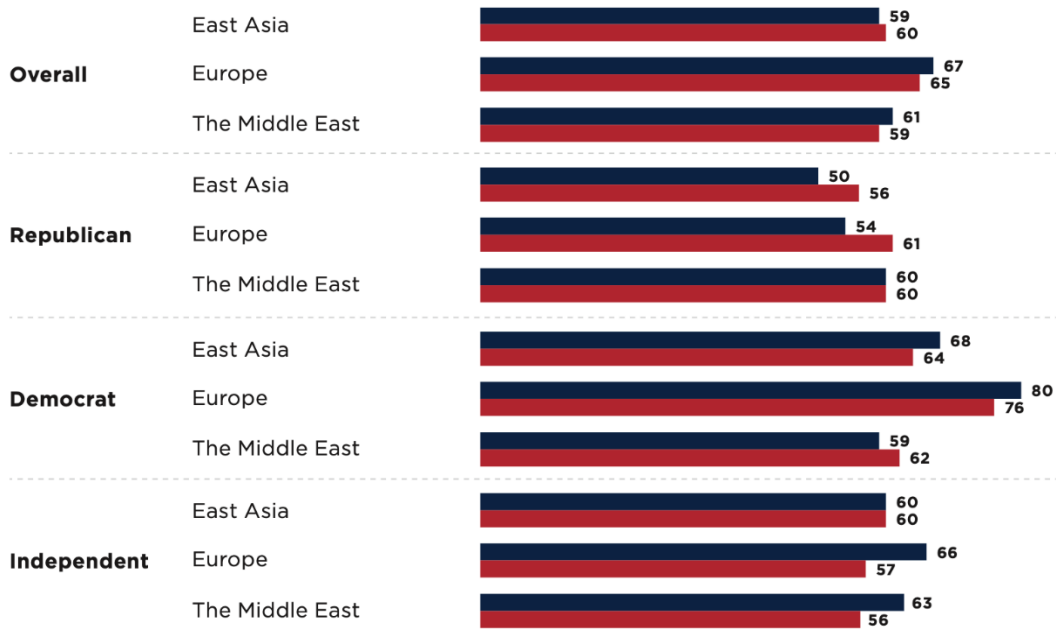
2020 Chicago Council Survey

Appendix Figure 7: Views of US Security Alliances

Which of the following comes closest to your view on US security alliances in: (% mostly benefit the U.S. + benefit both the U.S. and our allies):

n = 2,111

■ 2020 ■ 2019

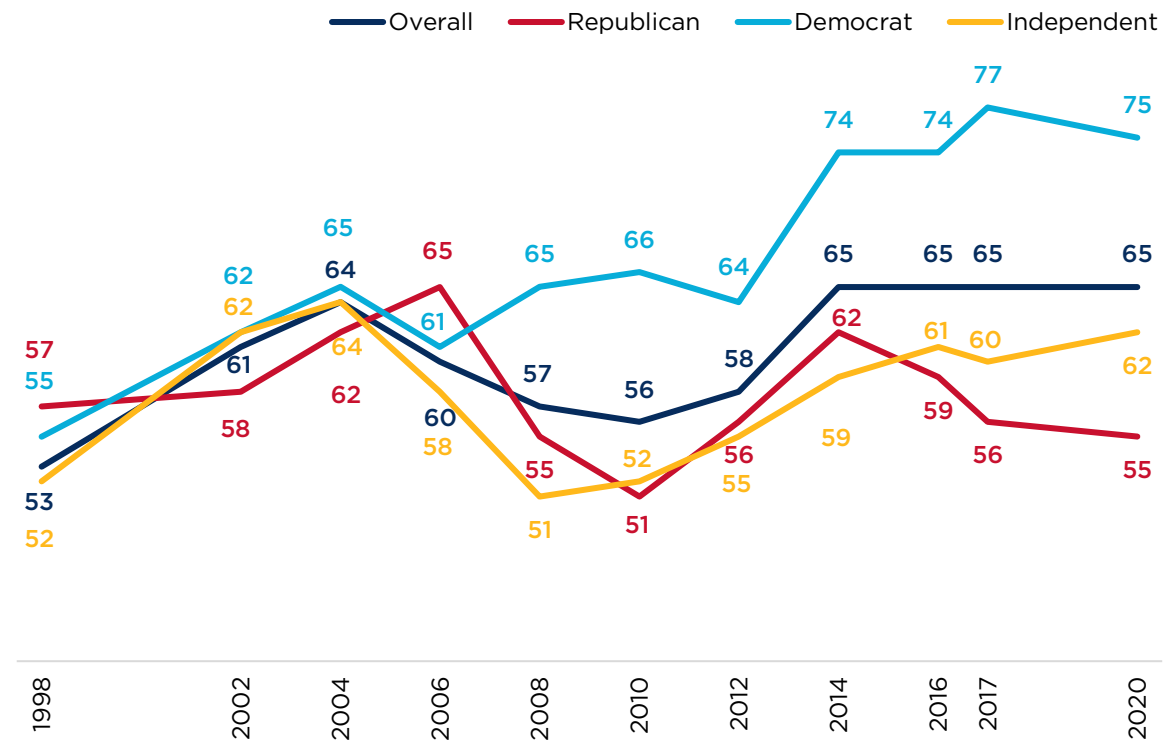


2020 Chicago Council Survey

Appendix Figure 8: Effects of Globalization

Turning to something else, do you believe that globalization, especially the increasing connections of our economy with others around the world, is mostly good or mostly bad for the United States? (% mostly good)

n=2,111



2020 Chicago Council Survey

Methodology

This report is based on the results of a survey commissioned by the Chicago Council of Global Affairs. The 2020 Chicago Council Survey, a project of the Lester Crown Center on US Foreign Policy, is the latest effort in a series of wide-ranging surveys on American attitudes toward US foreign policy. The 2020 Chicago Council Survey is made possible by the generous support of the support of the Crown family and the Korea Foundation.

The survey was conducted from July 2 to July 19, 2020, among a representative national sample of 2,111 adults. The margin of sampling error for the full sample is +/- 2.3 percentage points, including a design effect of 1.2056. The margin of error is higher for partisan subgroups or for partial-sample items.

Partisan identification is based on respondents' answers to a standard partisan self-identification question: "Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an independent, or what?"

The survey was conducted by Ipsos Public Affairs, a polling, social science, and market research firm in Palo Alto, California using a randomly selected sample of their large-scale nationwide research panel, KnowledgePanel® (KP). KnowledgePanel is the first and largest online research panel that is representative of the entire US population. Panel members are randomly recruited through probability-based sampling, and households are provided with access to the internet and hardware if needed.

Ipsos recruits panel members using address-based sampling methods to ensure full coverage of all households in the nation. Once household members are recruited for the panel and assigned to a study sample, they are notified by email to take the survey, or panelists can visit their online member page (instead of being contacted by telephone or postal mail).

The survey was fielded to a total of 3,472 panel members, yielding a total of 2,208 completed surveys (a completion rate of 63.6%). The median survey length was 24 minutes. Of the 2,208 total completed surveys, 97 cases were excluded for quality-control reasons, leaving a final sample size of 2,111 respondents:

Respondents were excluded if they failed at least one of three key checks:

- Respondents who completed the survey in eight minutes or less
- Respondents who refused to answer half or more of the items in the survey
- Respondents who failed three or four of the following checks:
 - Completed the survey faster than 8 minutes
 - Refused or skipped question Q3_1, which was specifically designed to make sure respondents were paying attention ("In order to make sure that your browser is working correctly, please select number 4 from the list below")
 - Refused one or more full survey battery that included five items or more (of which there were 13 such lists)
 - Respondents who gave the same exact answer ("straight-lined") to every item on one of four grid questions in the survey (Q5, Q7D, Q8A, or Q802)

In general, the specific survey samples represent an equal probability selection method (EPSEM) sample from the panel for general population surveys. The raw

distribution of KP mirrors that of the US adults fairly closely, barring occasional disparities that may emerge for certain subgroups due to differential attrition.

Additional measures are undertaken to ensure selection of general population samples from KP behave as EPSEM, starting by weighting the pool of active members to the geodemographic benchmarks secured from the latest March supplement of the Current Population Survey (CPS) along several dimensions. Using the resulting weights as measure of size, in the next step a PPS (probability proportional to size) procedure is used to select study specific samples. It is the application of this PPS methodology with the imposed size measures that produces fully self-weighting samples from KP, for which each sample member can carry a design weight of unity. Moreover, in instances for which a study design requires any form of oversampling of certain subgroups, such departures from an EPSEM design are accounted for by adjusting the design weights in reference to the CPS benchmarks for the population of interest.

The geodemographic benchmarks used to weight the active panel members for computation of size measures include:

- Gender (male, female)
- Age (18–29, 30–44, 45–59, and 60+)
- Race/Hispanic ethnicity (white, non-Hispanic; Black, non-Hispanic; other, non-Hispanic; two-or more races, non-Hispanic; Hispanic)
- Education (less than high school, high school, some college, bachelor's degree or higher)
- Census region (Northeast, Midwest, South, West)
- Household income (less than \$10,000, \$10,000–\$24,999, \$25,000–\$49,999, \$50,000–\$74,999, \$75,000–\$99,999, \$100,000–\$149,999, \$150,000 or more)
- Home ownership status (own, rent/other)
- Metropolitan area (yes, no)
- Hispanic origin (Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, other, non-Hispanic)

Once the study sample has been selected, the survey administered, and all the survey data are edited and made final, design weights are adjusted to account for any differential nonresponse that may have resulted during the field period. Depending on the specific target population for a given study, geodemographic distributions for the corresponding population are obtained from the CPS, the American Community Survey (ACS), or in certain instances from the weighted KP profile data. For this purpose, an iterative proportional fitting (raking) procedure is used to produce the final weights. In the final step, calculated weights are examined to identify and, if necessary, trim outliers at the extreme upper and lower tails of the weight distribution. The resulting weights are then scaled to aggregate to the total sample size of all eligible respondents.

For this study, the following benchmark distributions of US adults (18 and older) from the March 2019 Current Population Survey (CPS) Supplement Data were used for the raking adjustment of weights:

- Gender (male, female) by age (18–29, 30–44, 45–59, 60+)

- Race/Hispanic ethnicity (white, non-Hispanic; Black, non-Hispanic; other, non-Hispanic; two or more races, non-Hispanic; Hispanic)
- Census region (Northeast, Midwest, South, West) by metropolitan status (metro, non-metro)
- Education (less than high school, high school, some college, bachelor's degree or higher)
- Household income (less than \$25,000, \$25,000-\$49,999; \$50,000-\$74,999, \$75,000-\$99,999, \$100,000-\$149,999, \$150,000 or more)

For more information about the sample and survey methodology, please consult the Ipsos Panel Book at www.ipsos.com.

For more information about the Chicago Council Survey, please contact Craig Kafura, Assistant Director of Public Opinion and Foreign Policy, at ckafura@thechicagocouncil.org or Dina Smeltz, Senior Fellow for Public Opinion and Foreign Policy, at dsmeltz@thechicagocouncil.org.

About the Survey Sample

ABOUT THE SURVEY SAMPLE

Weighted	Democrat	Independent	Republican		Democrat	Independent	Republican
% of 2020 sample n = 2,111	36	34	29	Ideology (%)			
Average age	46	47	51	Conservative	9	25	73
Racial composition (%)				Moderate	34	52	23
White, non-Hispanic	45	66	81	Liberal	57	21	2
Black, non-Hispanic	22	9	2	Age (%)			
Hispanic	22	16	10	18-29	25	20	18
Other, non-Hispanic	11	8	6	30-44	24	29	22
Gender (%)				45-59	24	25	25
Female	58	46	50	60+	27	26	35
Male	42	54	50				
Education (%)							
High school or less	37	38	42				
Some college/associate's degree	27	28	28				
College graduates	37	34	30				

Note: Figures may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

2020 Chicago Council Survey

About the Chicago Council Survey

The Chicago Council Survey, conducted every four years since 1974, biennially since 2002, and now annually, is a trusted and widely cited source of longitudinal data on American public opinion about a broad range of US foreign policy and international issues. With its combination of time series and comprehensive coverage, the Chicago Council Survey is a valuable resource to policymakers, academics, media, and the general public because of its unique ability to capture the sense of particular eras—post-Vietnam, post-Cold War, post-9/11—and to define critical shifts in American public thinking. The Chicago Council Surveys are highly respected and widely used in policy circles and academic research both in the United States and abroad. Several scholarly works have drawn on Chicago Council Survey data, including *The Foreign Policy Gap* (Page, Bouton), *Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy* (Holsti), *Faces of Internationalism* (Wittkopf), and *The Rational Public* (Page and Shapiro). All of the Chicago Council Survey data sets are available to the public via the Roper Center, and ICPSR and the 2020 data will soon be available at www.thechicagocouncil.org.

In addition to the annual Chicago Council Survey of American public opinion and US foreign policy, the Chicago Council's polling has often expanded to international polling in East Asia as well as in Mexico and Russia. The Council has also reintroduced a leaders' survey as an important component of the 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2020 Chicago Council Surveys. Besides these comprehensive reports, the Chicago Council Survey team publishes and disseminates short opinion briefs on topical issues such as international trade, immigration, North Korea's nuclear program, and tensions with China, Iran, and Russia. These short reports can be found on the Council's website and on the Chicago Council Survey blog www.RunningNumbers.org.