

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER  
MARCH 2019 POLITICAL SURVEY  
FINAL TOPLINE  
MARCH 20-25, 2019  
N=1,503**

**QUESTIONS 1-2, 10, 14 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED****NO QUESTIONS 3-9, 11-13, 15-18****QUESTION 19 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****ASK ALL:**

Q.20 Some people say they are basically content with the federal government, others say they are frustrated, and others say they are angry. Which of these best describes how you feel?

	<u>Basically content</u>	<u>Frustrated</u>	<u>Angry</u>	<b>(VOL.) DK/Ref</b>
Mar 20-25, 2019	18	57	21	4
Nov 29-Dec 4, 2017	17	55	24	5
Apr 5-11, 2017	19	55	22	3
Mar 17-26, 2016	20	57	21	2
Aug 27-Oct 4, 2015	18	57	22	3
Feb 12-26, 2014	17	62	19	2
Oct 9-13, 2013	12	55	30	3
Sep 25-29, 2013	17	51	26	5
Jan 9-13, 2013	20	58	19	3
Sep 22-Oct 4, 2011	17	58	21	3
Aug 17-21, 2011	11	60	26	3
Feb 22-Mar 1, 2011	22	59	14	5
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010	21	52	23	4
Apr 1-5, 2010	23	52	21	4
Mar 11-21, 2010	19	56	21	5
Early January, 2007	21	58	16	5
Early October, 2006	21	54	20	5
March, 2004	32	52	13	3
Mid November, 2001	53	34	8	5
June, 2000	28	53	13	6
February, 2000	33	54	10	3
October, 1997	29	56	12	3

**NO QUESTIONS 21-24****ASK ALL:**

Q.25 How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right? Just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?

	<u>Just about always</u>	<u>Most of the time</u>	<u>Only some of the time</u>	<b>(VOL.) Never</b>	<b>(VOL.) DK/Ref</b>
Mar 20-25, 2019	3	14	71	10	2
Nov 29-Dec 4, 2017	3	15	67	14	2
Apr 5-11, 2017	4	16	68	11	2
Aug 27- Oct 4, 2015	3	16	67	13	1
Feb 12-26, 2014	3	21	68	7	1
Oct 9-13, 2013	3	16	68	12	1
Jan 9-13, 2013	3	23	67	6	2
Sep 22-Oct 4, 2011	3	17	72	7	2
Aug 17-21, 2011	3	16	72	8	1
Feb 22-Mar 1, 2011	4	25	65	4	2
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010	3	21	65	10	1
Apr 1-5, 2010	5	20	61	13	1

**Q.25 CONTINUED...**

	Just about always	Most of the time	Only some of the time	(VOL.) Never	(VOL.) DK/Ref
Mar 11-21, 2010	3	19	65	11	2
January, 2007	3	28	63	5	1
February, 2006	4	30	59	6	1
Mid-September, 2005	3	28	63	4	2
Mid-March, 2004	4	32	59	4	1
February, 2000	5	35	56	3	1
May, 1999	3	28	62	5	2
February, 1999	4	27	64	4	1
November, 1998 <sup>1</sup>	4	22	61	11	2
February, 1998	5	29	61	4	1
October, 1997	3	36	59	2	*

**NO QUESTIONS 26-32, 35-43****QUESTIONS 33-34 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED****ASK ALL:**

Next,

Q.44 If you were making up the budget for the federal government this year, would you increase spending, decrease spending or keep spending the same for **[INSERT FIRST ITEM, RANDOMIZE, OBSERVE FORM SPLITS]**? What about for **[NEXT ITEM]**? **[REPEAT AS NECESSARY, AT LEAST EVERY THIRD ITEM]**: Would you increase spending, decrease spending or keep spending the same for **[ITEM]**?

		Increase spending	Decrease spending	Keep spending the same	(VOL.) DK/Ref
<b>ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=751]:</b>					
a.F1	Health care				
	Mar 20-25, 2019	53	17	27	4
	Apr 5-11, 2017	50	18	29	3
	Feb 13-18, 2013	38	22	34	6
	Feb 2-7, 2011	41	24	30	5
	Jun 18-21, 2009	61	10	24	6
	February, 2002	69	4	24	3
	April, 2001	71	4	23	2
	May, 1997	57	7	34	2
	December, 1994	52	11	33	4
	August, 1990	74	6	18	2
	May, 1990	80	3	16	1
	May, 1987	72	3	23	2
b.F1	Anti-terrorism defenses in the U.S.				
	Mar 20-25, 2019	42	14	40	4
	Apr 5-11, 2017	46	11	41	2
	Feb 13-18, 2013	32	19	45	3
	Feb 2-7, 2011	33	21	43	4
	Jun 18-21, 2009	35	17	41	7
	February, 2002	63	4	29	4
c.F1	Veterans benefits and services				
	Mar 20-25, 2019	72	4	22	3
	Apr 5-11, 2017	75	3	21	2
	Feb 13-18, 2013	53	6	38	3
	Feb 2-7, 2011	51	6	40	3
	Jun 18-21, 2009	63	2	29	6
	April, 2001	58	3	34	5

<sup>1</sup> The November, 1998 survey was conducted Oct. 26-Dec. 1, 1998. The question asked, "How much of the time do you trust the government in Washington to do the right thing? Just about always, most the time, or only some of the time?"

**Q. 44 CONTINUED...**

		<u>Increase spending</u>	<u>Decrease spending</u>	<u>Keep spending the same</u>	<b>(VOL.) DK/Ref</b>
<b>NO ITEM d.</b>					
e.F1	Social Security				
	Mar 20-25, 2019	48	8	39	4
	Apr 5-11, 2017	46	6	45	3
	Feb 13-18, 2013	41	10	46	3
	Feb 2-7, 2011	41	12	43	3
	May, 1997	44	7	46	3
	December, 1994	46	7	45	2
	May, 1990	63	3	32	2
	May, 1987	64	3	31	2
f.F1	Rebuilding highways, bridges and roads				
	Mar 20-25, 2019	62	7	27	3
	Apr 5-11, 2017	58	7	33	1
	Feb 13-18, 2013	38	17	43	2
	Feb 2-7, 2011	38	21	37	3
	May, 1990	54	5	40	1
g.F1	Economic assistance to needy people in the U.S.				
	Mar 20-25, 2019	46	17	34	3
	Apr 5-11, 2017	45	21	33	1
	Feb 13-18, 2013	27	24	44	4
	Feb 2-7, 2011	42	20	34	3
<b>ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=752]:</b>					
h.F2	Scientific research				
	Mar 20-25, 2019	52	14	31	3
	Apr 5-11, 2017	48	12	38	2
	Feb 13-18, 2013	37	20	40	3
	Feb 2-7, 2011	36	23	37	4
	Jun 18-21, 2009	39	14	40	7
	April, 2001	41	10	46	3
	May, 1997	45	14	38	3
	December, 1994	37	15	44	4
	May, 1990	51	9	37	3
	May, 1987	45	9	42	4
<b>ASK FORM 2 ONLY (MARCH 21-25) [N=703]:<sup>2</sup></b>					
i.F2	Military defense				
	Mar 21-25, 2019	40	23	34	3
	Apr 5-11, 2017	46	20	32	1
	Feb 13-18, 2013	32	24	41	3
	Feb 2-7, 2011	31	30	36	3
	Jun 18-21, 2009	40	18	37	5
	February, 2002	60	5	31	4
	April, 2001	47	11	40	2
	May, 1997	21	30	46	3
	December, 1994	31	23	44	2
	August, 1990	23	43	31	3
	May, 1990	18	40	39	3
	May, 1987	24	29	44	3

<sup>2</sup> Due to a programming error, respondents were not asked questions Q44iF2-Q44nF2 on the first night of the survey. There are 49 missing cases for those questions due to this error.

**Q. 44 CONTINUED...**

		<u>Increase spending</u>	<u>Decrease spending</u>	<u>Keep spending the same</u>	<b>(VOL.) DK/Ref</b>
j.F2	Government assistance for the unemployed				
	Mar 21-25, 2019	31	23	43	4
	Apr 5-11, 2017	29	24	44	2
	Feb 13-18, 2013	24	32	41	3
	Feb 2-7, 2011	27	28	41	4
	Jun 18-21, 2009	44	15	36	6
	February, 2002	40	14	41	5
	May, 1997	20	33	44	3
	December, 1994	25	23	49	3
	February, 1989	26	14	57	3
	May, 1987	41	15	41	3
k.F2	Medicare				
	Mar 21-25, 2019	55	8	34	3
	Apr 5-11, 2017	51	9	39	2
	Feb 13-18, 2013	36	15	46	3
	Feb 2-7, 2011	40	12	43	5
	Jun 18-21, 2009	53	6	37	4
	February, 2002	63	3	31	3
	April, 2001	70	2	26	2
	May, 1997	44	8	44	4
l.F2	Environmental protection				
	Mar 21-25, 2019	55	14	30	2
	Apr 5-11, 2017	46	19	34	1
	Feb 13-18, 2013	33	22	43	3
	Feb 2-7, 2011	36	26	36	3
	Jun 18-21, 2009	43	16	34	6
	February, 2002	43	9	45	3
	April, 2001	48	9	40	3
	May, 1997	46	14	38	2
	December, 1994	40	17	40	3
	May, 1990	71	3	24	2
	May, 1987	59	4	34	3
m.F2	Economic assistance to needy people around the world				
	Mar 21-25, 2019	35	28	33	3
	Apr 5-11, 2017	29	31	38	2
	Feb 13-18, 2013	21	48	28	3
	Feb 2-7, 2011	21	45	29	4
	Jun 18-21, 2009	26	34	33	7
n.F2	Education				
	Mar 21-25, 2019	72	9	18	1
	Apr 5-11, 2017	67	9	22	1
	Feb 13-18, 2013	60	10	29	2
	Feb 2-7, 2011	62	11	25	2
	Jun 18-21, 2009	67	6	23	4
	February, 2002	73	3	22	2
	April, 2001	76	5	18	1

**NO QUESTIONS 45-46, 51-53****QUESTIONS 47-50a-d PREVIOUSLY RELEASED****QUESTION 50e-f HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=752]:**

Q.54F2 In general, how much trust and confidence do you have in the wisdom of the American people when it comes to making political decisions? A very great deal, a good deal, not very much, or none at all?

	Very great <u>deal</u>	Good <u>deal</u>	Not very <u>much</u>	None <u>at all</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Mar 20-25, 2019	7	31	47	12	2
Mar 7-14, 2018	10	32	44	12	2
Mar 17-26, 2016	9	25	51	14	2
Aug 27-Sep 13, 2015	9	26	49	14	2
January 2007	13	44	34	8	1
October 1997	11	53	32	3	1
<i>Gallup</i> : September 1964	14	63	19	1	3

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=751]:**

Q.55F1 If you had to choose, would you rather have a smaller government providing fewer services, or a bigger government providing more services?

	Smaller government, <u>fewer services</u>	Bigger government, <u>more services</u>	(VOL.) <u>Depends</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Mar 20-25, 2019	47	47	4	2
Apr 25-May 1, 2018	46	46	5	4
Jun 27-Jul 9, 2017	45	48	2	4
Apr 5-11, 2017	45	48	2	4
Aug 23-Sep 2, 2016	50	41	4	5
Sep 22-27, 2015	53	38	3	6
Sep 2-9, 2014	50	42	3	5
Sep 4-8, 2013	51	40	2	7
Sep 12-16, 2012	51	40	4	6
Jan 4-8, 2012	52	39	2	7
Sep 22-Oct 4, 2011	48	41	2	8
Mar 8-14, 2011	50	42	3	5
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010	50	42	3	5
Apr 1-5, 2010	50	39	4	8
Feb 3-9, 2010	50	40	3	7
Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	51	40	4	6
Mar 9-12, 2009	48	40	3	9
Late October 2008	42	43	4	11
November 2007	47	42	4	7
January 2007	45	43	4	8
<i>LA Times/Bloomberg</i> : January 2006	49	38	--	13
<i>LA Times</i> : January 2005	52	36	--	12
<i>ABC/Wash Post</i> : June 2004	50	46	--	4
<i>CBS/NYT</i> : November 2003	45	42	4	9
<i>CBS/NYT</i> : July 2003	48	40	5	7
<i>ABC</i> : November 2002 ( <i>Likely voters</i> )	60	35	--	5
<i>Wash Post</i> : September 2002	54	39	--	7
<i>ABC/Wash Post</i> : July 2002	53	42	--	6
<i>ABC/Wash Post</i> : January 2002	54	41	--	5
<i>CBS/NYT</i> : January 2002	46	40	3	11
<i>LA Times</i> : November 2001	48	41	--	11
<i>CBS/NYT</i> : October 2001	48	39	3	11
<i>LA Times</i> : March 2001	59	29	--	12
<i>CBS</i> : January 2001	51	36	5	8
<i>CBS</i> : November 2000	54	31	5	10
<i>CBS</i> : October 2000	57	32	5	6
<i>ABC/Wash Post</i> : October 2000 ( <i>RVs</i> )	58	32	--	10
<i>ABC/Wash Post</i> : Early October 2000 ( <i>RVs</i> )	58	33	--	9
<i>LA Times</i> : September 2000 ( <i>RVs</i> )	59	26	--	15

**Q.55F1 CONTINUED...**

	Smaller government, fewer services	Bigger government, more services	(VOL.) Depends	(VOL.) DK/Ref
ABC/Wash Post: July 2000	59	34	--	7
ABC/Wash Post: April 2000	56	38	--	7
CBS: September 1999	46	43	5	6
ABC/Wash Post: August 1998	59	35	--	6
ABC/Wash Post: August 1996	63	32	--	5
LA Times: April 1996	62	28	--	10
CBS/NYT: February 1996	61	30	4	5
LA Times: October 1995	68	23	--	9
LA Times: September 1995	62	27	--	11
LA Times: January 1995	63	27	--	10
LA Times: June 1993	60	29	--	11
ABC/Wash Post: February 1993	67	30	--	2
ABC/Wash Post: July 1992	55	38	--	7
CBS/NYT: October 1991	42	43	7	8
CBS/NYT: January 1989 <sup>3</sup>	41	48	4	7
CBS/NYT: October 1988 (Likely voters)	47	37	7	9
ABC/Wash Post: July 1988	49	45	--	6
CBS/NYT: May 1988	43	44	5	8
ABC/Wash Post: July 1984	49	43	--	7
CBS/NYT: March 1980	54	32	--	14
CBS/NYT: June 1978	53	36	--	11
Wash Post: January 1978	40	39	--	21
CBS/NYT: November 1976	42	45	--	13
CBS/NYT: October 1976 (RVs)	49	37	--	14
CBS/NYT: September 1976 (RVs)	48	41	--	11
CBS/NYT: June 1976	42	43	--	15
CBS/NYT: May 1976	41	43	--	16
CBS/NYT: April 1976	40	44	--	16

**QUESTIONS 56-57, 64-65, 70-71, 75-77 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED****QUESTIONS 58, 60-61, 66-69 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****NO QUESTIONS 59, 62-63, 72-74****ASK ALL:**

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

**ASK IF INDEP/NO PREF/OTHER/DK/REF (PARTY=3,4,5,9):**

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

	Republican	Democrat	Independent	(VOL.) No preference	(VOL.) Other party	(VOL.) DK/Ref	Lean Rep	Lean Dem
Mar 20-25, 2019	26	30	37	3	1	3	14	19
Jan 9-14, 2019	25	31	40	2	1	2	16	18
Sep 18-24, 2018	25	32	37	3	1	2	15	18
Jun 5-12, 2018	25	31	38	3	1	2	15	18
Apr 25-May 1, 2018	27	28	38	4	1	2	14	19
Mar 7-14, 2018	26	28	41	3	*	1	17	18
Jan 10-15, 2018	26	33	34	3	1	3	12	18
<b>Yearly Totals</b>								
2018	25.7	30.8	37.6	3.0	.8	2.0	14.7	18.3
2017	23.6	31.4	39.4	3.3	.6	1.7	15.8	18.7
2016	25.4	32.0	36.5	3.4	.5	2.2	14.6	17.0
2015	23.7	30.4	40.1	3.6	.4	1.8	16.4	17.3

<sup>3</sup> In 1989 and earlier, CBS/NYT question read, "In general, government grows bigger as it provides more services. If you had to choose, would you rather have a smaller government providing less services or a bigger government providing more services?"

## PARTY/PARTYLN CONTINUED ...

	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	(VOL.) No <u>preference</u>	(VOL.) Other <u>party</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>	Lean <u>Rep</u>	Lean <u>Dem</u>
2015	23.7	30.4	40.1	3.6	.4	1.8	16.4	17.3
2014	23.2	31.5	39.5	3.1	.7	2.0	16.2	16.5
2013	23.9	32.1	38.3	2.9	.5	2.2	16.0	16.0
2012	24.7	32.6	36.4	3.1	.5	2.7	14.4	16.1
2011	24.3	32.3	37.4	3.1	.4	2.5	15.7	15.6
2010	25.2	32.7	35.2	3.6	.4	2.8	14.5	14.1
2009	23.9	34.4	35.1	3.4	.4	2.8	13.1	15.7
2008	25.7	36.0	31.5	3.6	.3	3.0	10.6	15.2
2007	25.3	32.9	34.1	4.3	.4	2.9	10.9	17.0
2006	27.8	33.1	30.9	4.4	.3	3.4	10.5	15.1
2005	29.3	32.8	30.2	4.5	.3	2.8	10.3	14.9
2004	30.0	33.5	29.5	3.8	.4	3.0	11.7	13.4
2003	30.3	31.5	30.5	4.8	.5	2.5	12.0	12.6
2002	30.4	31.4	29.8	5.0	.7	2.7	12.4	11.6
2001	29.0	33.2	29.5	5.2	.6	2.6	11.9	11.6
2001 <i>Post-Sept 11</i>	30.9	31.8	27.9	5.2	.6	3.6	11.7	9.4
2001 <i>Pre-Sept 11</i>	27.3	34.4	30.9	5.1	.6	1.7	12.1	13.5
2000	28.0	33.4	29.1	5.5	.5	3.6	11.6	11.7
1999	26.6	33.5	33.7	3.9	.5	1.9	13.0	14.5
1998	27.9	33.7	31.1	4.6	.4	2.3	11.6	13.1
1997	28.0	33.4	32.0	4.0	.4	2.3	12.2	14.1
1996	28.9	33.9	31.8	3.0	.4	2.0	12.1	14.9
1995	31.6	30.0	33.7	2.4	.6	1.3	15.1	13.5
1994	30.1	31.5	33.5	1.3	--	3.6	13.7	12.2
1993	27.4	33.6	34.2	4.4	1.5	2.9	11.5	14.9
1992	27.6	33.7	34.7	1.5	0	2.5	12.6	16.5
1991	30.9	31.4	33.2	0	1.4	3.0	14.7	10.8
1990	30.9	33.2	29.3	1.2	1.9	3.4	12.4	11.3
1989	33	33	34	--	--	--	--	--
1987	26	35	39	--	--	--	--	--