

November 1, 2023

National Security Survey

Summary: Researchers at the University of South Florida conducted a nationwide survey of 1,200 eligible voters to measure attitudes related to the ongoing war in Ukraine, recent violence in the Middle East, and laws governing how elected officials handle classified documents in the United States. This report provides topline results, including key differences based on political affiliation. The survey included a representative sample of 1,200 eligible voters, fielded between October 23rd and October 28th, 2023. Results are reported with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error +/- 2.7.

Consistent with national trends, a majority of American’s expressed dissatisfaction with the job that President Biden is doing on key policy issues:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| • Jobs and the Economy: | 41% Approve | 56% Disapprove |
| • Foreign Policy: | 37% Approve | 57% Disapprove |
| • Immigration/Border Security: | 30% Approve | 64% Disapprove |
| • Unifying Americans: | 36% Approve | 55% Disapprove |

A majority of eligible voters view Ukraine as an “ally” (48%) or “partner” (23%) to the United States, while most (60%) describe Russia as an “enemy”. However, when it comes to military aid, Democrats and Republicans are divided on what should be done:

- Most Democrats believe that America’s financial and military support of Ukraine has been “worth the cost” (57%), while a 50% of Independents and 58% of Republicans disagree.
- Two-thirds of Democrats (68%) support providing additional military aid to Ukraine, while 55% of Republicans oppose doing so. Independents are divided on the issue (48% support / 43% oppose).
- A majority of Democrats (61%) support the United States fulfilling Ukraine’s request for military fighter jets, while most Republicans (56%) oppose doing so. Independents are more evenly divided on the issue (43% support / 45% oppose).
- A small majority of Democrats (52%) prefer a Presidential candidate who promises to provide additional military aid to Ukraine, while only 22% of Republicans say the same. A plurality of GOP voters (45%) say that they prefer a candidate who promises to stop providing military aid to Ukraine.

A majority of voters in both parties are concerned about the risks of a military conflict with Russia:

- Three quarters of Americans (75%) say that they are concerned about the possibility of the United States being drawn into a military conflict with Russia over our support of Ukraine (including a majority of Democrats, Republicans, and Independents).
- More than two-thirds (69%) are concerned that our ongoing support of Ukraine could harm America’s own military readiness (including 60% of Democrats, 78% of Republicans, and 67% of Independents).

Most Americans feel that more needs to be done to ensure the security of classified information in the hands of elected officials:

- A bipartisan plurality (47%) say that the United States does not have strong enough laws to govern the handling of classified documents by elected officials.
- A bipartisan majority (59%) say that the laws governing how elected officials handle classified documents are not adequately enforced.
- Most Republicans (59%) think that the laws governing how elected officials handle classified documents are not equally applied to Democrats and Republicans. A plurality of Independents (45%) say the same, while a small majority of Democrats (51%) disagree.

Most Americans say that elected officials found “guilty” of mishandling classified documents should not be allowed to hold public office in the future:

- A two-thirds majority (69%) of eligible voters – including 85% of Democrats, 70% of Independents, and 51% of Republicans – say that elected officials who are found “guilty” in court of mishandling classified documents should be disqualified from holding public office in the future.
- Nearly half (48%) say that Joe Biden probably violated the law with regard to his handling of classified documents.
- A majority (59%) say that Donald Trump violated the law with regard to his handling of classified documents.

Most Americans support providing military aid to Israel but oppose committing American troops to fight directly against Hamas:

- A majority (59%) support providing military aid to Israel in the form of weapons and ammunition, but a similar number (59%) say that they would oppose “committing troops to fight on the ground against Hamas in Palestine.
- A majority in both parties (66%) support the United States providing Humanitarian aid to Palestinians affected by the conflict.
- While a plurality of respondents (44%) feel that Israel’s response to the October 7th attacks has been “appropriate”, a quarter of Democrats (25%) feel that Israel’s response has been “too aggressive”, and 28% of Republicans feel that the response “has not been aggressive enough”.

Most Americans are anxious that fighting in the Middle East could expand:

- A large, bipartisan majority (82%) are concerned that the fighting between Israel and Hamas “could lead to a broader war in the Middle East”.
- A similar bipartisan majority (79%) are concerned that the United States could be drawn into a military conflict in the Middle East due to the fighting between Israel and Hamas.

Topline Results

Do you approve or disapprove of the job that President Joe Biden is doing in each of the following areas?

	Total Approve	Strongly Approve	Somewhat Approve	Total Disapprove	Somewhat Disapprove	Strongly Disapprove	Unsure
Jobs and the Economy	40.8%	13.9	26.9	55.9%	16.8	39.1	3.3%
Foreign Policy	36.7%	12.3	24.4	56.7%	18.6	38.1	6.7%
Immigration & Border Security	30.4%	8.6	21.8	63.8%	18.7	45.1	5.9%
Unifying Americans	36.1%	11.8	24.3	55.2%	16.0	39.2	8.8%

N=1,200

How closely have you followed news about the war in Ukraine?

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Very Closely	26.7%	21.6%	27.2%	23.8%
Somewhat Closely	51.9%	52.9%	53.3%	51.0%
Not Very Closely	19.8%	21.9%	18.3%	22.1%
Not at All	1.6%	3.6%	1.2%	3.1%

N=1,200

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of following statements: **The war in Ukraine directly impacts America's national security interests.**

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Strongly Agree	30.4%	21.1%	21.1%	23.8%
Somewhat Agree	48.4%	43.5%	48.3%	46.0%
Somewhat Disagree	11.6%	19.1%	16.1%	15.5%
Strongly Disagree	4.2%	8.1%	8.9%	6.9%
Unsure	5.3%	8.1%	5.6%	7.8%

N=1,200

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of following statements: **America's financial and military support has been effective in Ukraine's fight against Russia.**

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Strongly Agree	33.9%	22.7%	17.3%	24.6%
Somewhat Agree	40.7%	37.2%	33.8%	36.5%
Somewhat Disagree	10.9%	17.8%	22.3%	16.3%
Strongly Disagree	3.9%	10.7%	14.9%	9.8%
Unsure	10.6%	11.7%	11.8%	12.8%

N=1,200

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of following statements: **America's financial and military support of Ukraine has been worth the cost to U.S. taxpayers.**

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Strongly Agree	28.8%	15.0%	9.9%	17.6%
Somewhat Agree	27.8%	20.4%	20.7%	22.8%
Somewhat Disagree	20.1%	24.2%	26.3%	23.0%
Strongly Disagree	12.2%	25.7%	31.3%	23.1%
Unsure	11.1%	14.8%	11.8%	13.5%

N=1,200

Would you support or oppose the United States providing additional military aid to Ukraine in the form of conventional weapons and ammunition?

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Strongly Support	32.0%	18.1%	13.0%	20.1%
Somewhat Support	35.5%	30.3%	23.2%	29.9%
Somewhat Oppose	13.8%	20.1%	26.0%	19.8%
Strongly Oppose	9.5%	22.7%	29.4%	20.7%
Unsure	9.3%	8.9%	8.4%	9.6%

N=1,200

Would you support or oppose the United States providing military fighter jets to Ukraine?

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Strongly Support	28.0%	16.5%	9.9%	17.5%
Somewhat Support	32.8%	26.7%	26.6%	28.8%
Somewhat Oppose	16.7%	19.9%	24.2%	19.8%
Strongly Oppose	10.3%	25.5%	31.9%	22.8%
Unsure	12.2%	11.5%	7.4%	11.1%

N=1,200

Thinking ahead to next year's Presidential election, which of the following statements best describes you?

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
I would prefer a candidate who promises to provide additional military aid to Ukraine.	51.5%	35.0%	21.6%	36.2%
It doesn't matter to me whether a candidate supports providing aid to Ukraine.	35.3%	37.2%	33.8%	36.3%
I prefer a candidate who promises to stop providing military aid to Ukraine	13.2%	27.8%	44.7%	27.6%

N= 1,125 Likely Voters

How concerned are you about the United States being drawn into a military conflict with Russia over our support of Ukraine?

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Very Concerned	29.6%	28.2%	29.5%	29.5%
Somewhat Concerned	45.2%	45.0%	45.8%	45.2%
Not Very Concerned	21.7%	22.1%	21.1%	21.3%
Not at All Concerned	3.4%	4.6%	4.6%	4.1%

N=1,200

How concerned are you that providing military aid to Ukraine could harm America's own military readiness?

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Very Concerned	21.2%	32.3%	38.1%	30.3%
Somewhat Concerned	38.9%	34.9%	40.3%	38.3%
Not Very Concerned	31.5%	25.2%	16.1%	24.3%
Not at All Concerned	8.5%	7.6%	5.6%	7.1%

N=1,200

In your opinion, which of the following best describes America’s relationship with Ukraine?

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Ukraine is an “enemy” of the United States	2.4%	2.5%	4.0%	3.3%
Ukraine is a “competitor” to the United States	2.4%	3.3%	4.0%	3.6%
Ukraine is a “partner” to the United States	21.9%	24.9%	25.1%	23.0%
Ukraine is an “ally” of the United States	59.0%	43.3%	43.0%	47.8%
Unsure	14.3%	25.9%	22.9%	22.3%

N=1,200

In your opinion, which of the following best describes America’s relationship with Russia?

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Russia is an “enemy” of the United States	69.6%	56.7%	59.1%	59.8%
Russia is a “competitor” to the United States	20.9%	29.8%	31.3%	27.2%
Russia is a “partner” to the United States	1.1%	1.0%	1.9%	1.5%
Russia is an “ally” of the United States	2.4%	1.5%	0.6%	1.8%
Unsure	6.1%	10.9%	7.1%	9.8%

N=1,200

In your opinion, does the United States have strong enough laws to govern the handling of classified documents by elected officials?

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Yes	41.0%	32.1%	32.8%	34.2%
No	44.2%	48.1%	48.6%	46.5%
Unsure	14.8%	19.9%	18.6%	19.3%

N=1,200

In your opinion, are laws governing how elected officials handle classified documents adequately enforced in the United States?

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Yes	27.8%	19.3%	18.3%	21.6%
No	54.5%	60.6%	65.9%	59.2%
Unsure	17.7%	20.1%	15.8%	19.3%

N=1,200

In your opinion, are laws governing how elected officials handle classified documents equally applied to both Democrats and Republicans?

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Yes	50.8%	36.1%	23.8%	36.4%
No	25.9%	44.5%	58.8%	42.1%
Unsure	23.3%	19.3%	17.3%	21.5%

N=1,200

Do you believe that Donald Trump violated the law with regard to his handling of classified documents?

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Yes	90.5%	58.8%	28.8%	59.3%
No	5.3%	22.7%	54.5%	26.2%
Unsure	4.2%	18.6%	16.7%	14.5%

N=1,200

Do you believe that Joe Biden violated the law with regard to his handling of classified documents?

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Yes	24.1%	52.2%	73.4%	48.1%
No	47.6%	21.1%	10.2%	26.1%
Unsure	28.3%	26.7%	16.4%	25.8%

N=1,200

How much do you trust each of the following groups or individuals when it comes to protecting our nation's most sensitive secrets: **President Joe Biden**.

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
A Great Deal	50.3%	17.8%	3.1%	23.1%
A Little	31.5%	22.1%	7.7%	20.8%
Not Very Much	10.1%	19.9%	19.8%	17.5%
Not at All	6.4%	36.4%	69.0%	36.2%
Unsure	1.9%	3.8%	0.3%	2.4%

N=1,200

How much do you trust each of the following groups or individuals when it comes to protecting our nation's most sensitive secrets: **Democrats in Congress.**

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
A Great Deal	45.5%	9.4%	1.2%	18.5%
A Little	40.2%	30.0%	12.7%	27.3%
Not Very Much	10.9%	21.6%	26.9%	20.4%
Not at All	2.1%	33.1%	57.6%	29.8%
Unsure	1.3%	5.9%	1.6%	3.9%

N=1,200

How much do you trust each of the following groups or individuals when it comes to protecting our nation's most sensitive secrets: **Former President Donald Trump.**

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
A Great Deal	2.9%	10.2%	39.0%	16.5%
A Little	6.6%	20.6%	26.6%	17.5%
Not Very Much	10.3%	14.8%	15.5%	13.7%
Not at All	79.1%	51.2%	17.3%	50.0%
Unsure	1.1%	3.3%	1.6%	2.3%

N=1,200

How much do you trust each of the following groups or individuals when it comes to protecting our nation's most sensitive secrets: **Republicans in Congress.**

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
A Great Deal	3.2%	4.6%	26.6%	10.5%
A Little	14.6%	26.9%	46.8%	27.6%
Not Very Much	30.9%	34.1%	20.4%	29.3%
Not at All	49.2%	27.7%	4.6%	28.3%
Unsure	2.1%	6.6%	1.6%	4.4%

N=1,200

In your opinion, if an elected official is found “guilty” in court of mishandling classified documents, should they be allowed to hold public office in the future?

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Yes	8.5%	9.7%	22.0%	12.4%
No	84.7%	69.5%	51.4%	69.3%
Unsure	6.9%	20.9%	26.6%	18.3%

N=1,200

How closely have you followed news about the recent outbreak of violence between Israel and Hamas in the Middle East?

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Very Closely	26.9%	28.0%	38.7%	30.3%
Somewhat Closely	46.8%	48.9%	43.3%	45.6%
Not Very Closely	20.1%	18.1%	14.6%	19.1%
Not at All	3.4%	5.1%	3.4%	5.1%

N=1,200

Thinking about the Israeli military’s response to the Hamas’ attacks, which of the following statements best describes your opinion?

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Israel’s response has been too aggressive	24.9%	23.4%	7.4%	18.7%
Israel’s response has been appropriately aggressive	44.2%	39.4%	52.0%	43.8%
Israel’s response has not been aggressive enough	12.7%	16.3%	27.9%	18.1%
Unsure	18.3%	20.9%	12.7%	19.5%

N=1,200

Would you support or oppose the United States providing military aid to Israel in the form of weapons and ammunition?

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Strongly Support	27.0%	21.1%	39.3%	27.5%
Somewhat Support	31.8%	31.8%	34.1%	31.8%
Somewhat Oppose	11.4%	18.1%	10.8%	13.9%
Strongly Oppose	17.2%	15.8%	9.3%	15.2%
Unsure	12.7%	13.2%	6.5%	11.7%

N=1,200

Would you support or oppose the United States committing troops to fight on the ground against Hamas in Palestine?

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Strongly Support	9.8%	7.9%	16.7%	10.8%
Somewhat Support	19.3%	13.7%	22.3%	18.1%
Somewhat Oppose	24.1%	25.7%	25.1%	24.7%
Strongly Oppose	34.7%	40.7%	27.2%	34.7%
Unsure	12.2%	12.0%	8.7%	11.8%

N=1,200

Would you support or oppose the United States providing humanitarian aid to Palestinian citizens affected by the current conflict?

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Strongly Support	52.4%	33.1%	25.5%	35.3%
Somewhat Support	27.5%	35.6%	29.4%	31.0%
Somewhat Oppose	6.1%	8.1%	16.4%	10.3%
Strongly Oppose	5.0%	9.9%	17.0%	10.6%
Unsure	9.0%	13.2%	13.6%	12.9%

N=1,200

How satisfied are you with the Biden Administration’s response to the fighting between Israel and Hamas?

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Very Satisfied	22.5%	6.9%	2.5%	10.3%
Somewhat Satisfied	41.3%	26.7%	18.9%	28.2%
Not Very Satisfied	14.0%	26.5%	25.4%	22.3%
Not at All Satisfied	9.0%	22.1%	40.6%	23.3%
Unsure	13.2%	17.8%	12.7%	16.0%

N=1,200

How concerned are you that the fighting between Israel and Hamas could lead to a broader war in the Middle East?

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Very Concerned	37.6%	38.7%	42.1%	38.4%
Somewhat Concerned	45.8%	42.8%	43.0%	44.0%
Not Very Concerned	10.9%	9.4%	7.7%	9.3%
Not at All Concerned	1.9%	2.0%	4.0%	2.7%
Unsure	4.0%	7.1%	3.1%	5.7%

N=1,200

How concerned are you that the United States could be drawn into a military conflict in the Middle East due to the fighting between Israel and Hamas?

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Total
Very Concerned	38.1%	37.9%	41.2%	38.7%
Somewhat Concerned	42.6%	38.9%	41.5%	40.8%
Not Very Concerned	12.2%	14.3%	9.6%	11.9%
Not at All Concerned	2.7%	3.6%	4.6%	3.5%
Unsure	4.5%	5.3%	3.1%	5.1%

N=1,200

Survey Information

1,200 eligible U.S. voters were surveyed via an online web-panel (Prodege MR). The survey was fielded from October 23rd through October 28th 2023, and the results are reported with a 95% confidence level and a margin of error of +/- 2.7. Respondents were selected via stratified, quota sampling to ensure a representative sample. Balanced quotas for gender, age, race/ethnicity, education and party affiliation were determined based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau. Quotas were stratified by Census region for geographical representativeness.

Sample Comparison	USF Survey Sample	U.S. Demographics*
<i>Gender</i>		
Female	49.9%	50.4%
Male	49.8%	49.6%
Non-Binary/Other	0.3%	-
<i>Age</i>		
18-24	11.1%	12.0%
25-44	34.1%	34.2%
45-64	32.7%	31.6%
65+	22.1%	22.2%
<i>Race</i>		
Black/African American	14.3%	13.6%
White/Caucasian	71.0%	75.5%
Asian	6.3%	6.3%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.3%	0.3%
American Indian/Alaska Native	1.3%	1.3%
Other	6.8%	3.0%
<i>Ethnicity</i>		
Hispanic	19.7%	19.1%
Non-Hispanic	80.3%	80.9%
<i>Education</i>		
Less than 4 Year Degree	66.6%	66.3%
4 Year Degree (or higher)	33.4%	33.7%
<i>Political Affiliation (registered voters only, n = 1,101)</i>		
Democrat	34.3%	33.0%
Independent (and Other)	36.3%	38.0%
Republican	29.3%	29.0%
<i>Census Region</i>		
Northeast	16.9%	17.1%
Midwest	21.1%	20.6%
South	38.2%	38.6%
West	23.8%	23.6%

About our Research Team

Stephen Neely (PhD, North Carolina State University, 2013) is an Associate Professor in the School of Public Affairs at the University of South Florida. He is Director of the School's Master's program in Public Administration. His areas of specialization include survey research, quantitative data analysis, and public policy. For additional information please visit his [USF faculty page](#). Dr. Neely can be contacted by email at srneely@usf.edu

About the University of South Florida

The University of South Florida is a high-impact global research university dedicated to student success. Over the past 10 years, no other public university in the country has risen faster in U.S. News and World Report's national university rankings than USF. Serving more than 50,000 students on campuses in Tampa, St. Petersburg and Sarasota-Manatee, USF is designated as a Preeminent State Research University by the Florida Board of Governors, placing it in the most elite category among the state's 12 public universities. USF has earned widespread national recognition for its success graduating under-represented minority and limited-income students at rates equal to or higher than white and higher income students. USF is a member of the American Athletic Conference. Learn more at www.usf.edu.

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