

Roanoke College Poll | May 14-23, 2023
Topline and Select Party Crosstabs
Virginians' Political Anxiety, Satisfaction with Democracy, and Trust in Institutions

Hi, I'm _____ and I'm calling from Roanoke College. How are you? We're conducting a survey of Virginia residents regarding important issues and your opinion is very important to us; we're not selling anything and won't ask for any money. Your responses are anonymous and confidential. Are you 18 or older and a resident of Virginia?

Political Anxiety

1. 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, only some of the time, or never?

	Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never	Unsure/Refused
May 2023	5%	14%	59%	20%	2%
Nov. 2022	4%	18%	56%	22%	1%
May 2022	2%	17%	56%	24%	1%
Nov. 2021	3%	18%	52%	27%	1%
Aug. 2021	1%	18%	63%	17%	2%
Feb. 2021	2%	16%	63%	16%	3%
Nov. 2020	1%	17%	60%	18%	4%
May 2020	0%	16%	64%	17%	2%
Nov. 2019	3%	13%	61%	20%	4%
Feb. 2019	1%	11%	70%	16%	2%
Nov. 2018	1%	13%	61%	22%	2%
May 2018	1%	11%	70%	18%	0%
Feb. 2018	2%	17%	62%	18%	2%
Nov. 2017	2%	14%	60%	24%	1%
Oct. 2017	1%	11%	72%	17%	0%
Aug. 2017	1%	14%	61%	23%	2%

2. Which of the following statements is closer to your view: Ordinary citizens can do a lot to influence the government in Washington if they are willing to make the effort OR There's not much ordinary citizens can do to influence the government in Washington?

	Citizens can influence govt.	Cannot	Unsure/Refused
May 2023	52%	46%	3%
Nov. 2022	58%	40%	3%
May 2022	52%	46%	2%
Nov. 2021	60%	38%	2%
Aug. 2021	55%	41%	4%
Feb. 2021	52%	45%	3%
Nov. 2020	61%	35%	4%
May 2020	47%	49%	4%
Nov. 2019	58%	38%	5%
Feb. 2019	56%	38%	6%
Nov. 2018	63%	30%	8%
May 2018	57%	41%	2%
Feb. 2018	65%	32%	4%

Nov. 2017	63%	34%	3%
Oct. 2017	57%	41%	2%
Aug. 2017	60%	37%	4%

3. Thinking about the way things are going in politics today ... on the issues that matter to you would you say your side has been winning more often than it's been losing, or losing more often than it's been winning?

	Winning	Losing	Both	Unsure/Refused
May 2023	28%	61%	3%	7%
Nov. 2022	32%	58%	3%	7%
May 2022	22%	65%	3%	9%
Nov. 2021	29%	58%	4%	9%
Aug. 2021	30%	49%	7%	14%
Feb. 2021	26%	50%	11%	14%
Nov. 2020	33%	42%	10%	15%
May 2020	29%	50%	11%	10%
Nov. 2019	28%	43%	12%	18%
Feb. 2019	27%	44%	16%	14%
Nov. 2018	34%	42%	14%	10%
May 2018	23%	60%	11%	7%
Feb. 2018	29%	51%	11%	9%
Nov. 2017	27%	53%	10%	10%
Oct. 2017	23%	61%	10%	6%
Aug. 2017	22%	57%	13%	8%

4. Which comes closest to your feelings about how the federal government is working? Are you enthusiastic, satisfied, dissatisfied, or angry?

	Enthusiastic	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Angry	Unsure/Refused
May 2023	3%	24%	50%	19%	2%
Nov. 2022	6%	24%	51%	17%	1%
May 2022	3%	21%	52%	21%	3%
Nov. 2021	3%	26%	47%	20%	3%
Aug. 2021	2%	28%	45%	21%	5%
Feb. 2021	6%	32%	41%	14%	8%
Nov. 2020	2%	24%	49%	19%	6%
May 2020	3%	25%	49%	19%	5%
Nov. 2019	3%	21%	50%	19%	8%
Feb. 2019	1%	21%	49%	20%	8%
Nov. 2018	2%	25%	49%	18%	7%
May 2018	3%	15%	54%	26%	3%
Feb. 2018	3%	23%	45%	21%	8%
Nov. 2017	2%	19%	60%	14%	5%
Oct. 2017	3%	15%	55%	24%	3%
Aug. 2017	1%	15%	57%	22%	5%

5. When you think about the future of the United States, which do you agree with more: the country's best years are ahead of us or the country's best years are behind us?

	Best ahead	Best behind	Same/Unsure	Refused
May 2023	41%	55%	3%	1%
Nov. 2022	50%	46%	3%	1%
May 2022	44%	52%	4%	1%
Nov. 2021	49%	45%	5%	1%
Aug. 2021	54%	40%	5%	2%
Feb. 2021	59%	30%	9%	2%
Nov. 2020	62%	29%	8%	2%
May 2020	60%	31%	7%	1%
Nov. 2019	55%	32%	10%	3%
Feb. 2019	55%	35%	10%	0%
Nov. 2018	57%	33%	8%	2%
May 2018	56%	37%	7%	1%
Feb. 2018	56%	34%	10%	1%
Nov. 2017	57%	37%	6%	1%
Oct. 2017	57%	37%	6%	1%
Aug. 2017	56%	32%	11%	1%

6. Looking broadly at the important issues facing the United States, do you think that Americans are united in facing those challenges or is the nation divided?

	United	Divided	Both/Unsure	Refused
May 2023	14%	84%	2%	1%
Nov. 2022	16%	82%	1%	1%
May 2022	13%	85%	2%	0%
Nov. 2021	14%	84%	2%	0%
Aug. 2021	8%	89%	3%	1%
Feb. 2021	5%	91%	3%	1%
Nov. 2020	8%	88%	3%	1%
May 2020	10%	86%	4%	0%
Nov. 2019	7%	90%	4%	0%
Feb. 2019	8%	88%	4%	0%
Nov. 2018	6%	89%	3%	2%
May 2018	11%	87%	2%	0%
Feb. 2018	13%	84%	3%	0%
Nov. 2017	10%	86%	3%	1%
Oct. 2017	11%	88%	2%	0%
Aug. 2017	8%	88%	4%	0%

Democracy and Political Trust¹

With 10 being the most satisfied, please tell me on a score of 0 to 10, on the whole, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in:

Average score

7. The United States

5.23

8. Your City or County	6.26
9. Virginia	6.18

Please tell me on a score of 0 to 10 how much you personally trust each of the following institutions. A score of 0 means you do not trust the institution at all and 10 means you have complete trust.

	Average score
10. The Legal System	4.74
11. The Police	5.72
12. Politicians	3.28
13. Political Parties	3.44
14. The State Legislature	4.73
16. The Governor	4.95
17. The Nation's Congress	3.99
18. The President	4.28

Demographics

19. Gender

Male	48%
Female	50%

20. Region

Southwest Virginia	10%
Southside	8%
Shenandoah Valley	6%
Central Virginia/Richmond	19%
Northern Virginia	33%
Tidewater	24%

21. Thanks so much for your patience. I have a few questions about you for statistical purposes. Are you currently married, living with a partner, divorced, separated, widowed, or have you never been married?

Married	46%
Living with partner	10%
Divorced	7%
Separated	2%
Widowed	7%
Never married	27%
Refused	1%

22. How much education have you completed?

Less than high school	3%
High School	14%
Some college/technical school	23%
Associate's Degree	10%
Bachelor's Degree	25%
Advanced Degree	24%
Refused	1%

23. In what year were you born? [CODED INTO CATEGORIES]

18-29	20%
30-44	26%
45-64	32%
65 or older	21%
Refused	1%

24. Are you of Hispanic origin or descent, such as Mexican, Dominican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or some other Spanish background?

Yes, Hispanic	9%
No, not Hispanic	89%
Refused	2%

25. Would you consider yourself Caucasian or white, African-American or Black, Asian or some other race?

White / Hispanic / Latino	61%
African-American	18%
Asian/Other/multi-racial	18%
No response	3%

26. I'm going to read several income groups. When I come to the group that includes your annual family income, please stop me.

Less than \$20,000	10%
\$20,000-\$35,000	11%
\$35,000-\$50,000	11%
\$50,000-\$75,000	18%
\$75,000-\$100,000	12%
More than \$100,000	31%
Refused	6%

27. Politically speaking, do you consider yourself to be liberal, moderate or conservative?

Liberal	27%
Moderate	35%
Conservative	28%
Other/Unsure	7%
Refused	3%

28. And would you describe your political party affiliation as Democrat, Republican, Independent, some other party or no affiliation?

Democrat	34%
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Republican	21%
Independent	28%
Other/None	14%
Refused	3%

29. [IF INDEPENDENT, OTHER OR REFUSED] As of today, do you lean more toward the Democratic party or toward the Republican party?

Democrat	33%
Republican	26%
Independent/Neither	39%
Don't Know/No Answer	1%

Select Party Crosstabs

	<i>Democrat</i>	<i>Republican</i>	<i>Independent</i>
Trust Government Always/Most of Time	29%	14%	15%
Citizens Can Influence Government	68%	40%	50%
Your Side Winning on Issues	42%	28%	22%
Dissatisfied/Angry w/ Federal Government	54%	80%	78%
Best Years Ahead	60%	30%	34%
U.S. Issues, Americans United	21%	12%	10%
<i>Political Anxiety Index (average)</i>	<i>2.20</i>	<i>154.50</i>	<i>129.40</i>
<i>On a scale of 0-10, satisfaction with how democracy works in:</i>			
The United States	5.99	4.95	5.14
Your City or County	6.93	5.86	6.02
Virginia	6.61	6.07	6.07
<i>On a scale of 0-10, level of trust in institutions:</i>			
The Legal System	5.23	4.73	4.36
The Police	5.31	6.74	5.64
Politicians	3.99	3.37	2.68
Political Parties	4.19	3.85	2.77
The State Legislature	5.21	4.95	4.32
The Governor	4.30	6.25	5.01
The Nation's Congress	4.61	4.15	3.49
The President	6.29	2.43	3.92

¹ European Social Survey Round 10 Data (2020). Data file edition 3.0. Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research, Norway – Data Archive and distributor of ESS data for ESS ERIC. [doi:10.21338/NSD-ESS10-2020](https://doi.org/10.21338/NSD-ESS10-2020).