

Americans confident in future despite believing country is on wrong track, new survey finds

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Most American voters have confidence in the future of the United States, even though a large majority believes the country is heading down the wrong track, according to a new survey from the George Washington University Society of Presidential Pollsters.

The new poll found 69 percent of respondents were confident in the future of the country. Just 26 percent said they had "very little" confidence in America's future, and only 5 percent were not confident at all.

"Although we find ourselves in an era of deep political polarization, Americans of all ages, backgrounds and party affiliations remain confident that the country will persevere," Mark Penn, president and managing partner of the Stagwell Group and founder of the GW Society of Presidential Pollsters, said.

"On this Constitution Day, American voters still appear to believe that the Constitution is mostly working to achieve those values identified in the preamble: providing for the common defense, securing the blessings of liberty, promoting the general welfare and establishing justice," Christopher Arterton, a professor emeritus of political management and the founding dean of the GW Graduate School of Political Management, said. "Still, there remains work to do. Americans are less certain that constitutional government has insured domestic tranquility or formed a more perfect union."

Although most voters expressed confidence in the future of the United States, a striking percentage (64 percent) believed the country was not going down the right path. Only 28 percent believed the nation was headed in the right direction. Voters were nearly as downcast about the future of the U.S. economy, with 58 percent holding a negative outlook and 34 percent saying it was headed down the right track.

Majorities of those surveyed expressed dissatisfaction with Congress as well as the presidency. Seven out of 10 believed Congress is not working as an institution, while 54 percent felt the institution of the presidency is currently ineffective. Surveyed voters were far more pleased with the Supreme Court and the U.S. military; 65 percent of respondents were satisfied with how the court was operating and 81 percent believed the armed forces are a properly functioning institution.

The [online survey](#) of 1,907 registered voters was conducted by HarrisX on behalf of the GW Society of Presidential Pollsters from Sept. 4-7, 2020. Results were weighted for age within gender, region, race, ethnicity, marital status, household size, income, employment, education, political party and political ideology where necessary to align them with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

More information: [The complete results from the survey are available online.](#)

Provided by George Washington University

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