

# How the Press and Public Can Find Common Purpose

Conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago in collaboration with the  
American Press Institute and funding and partnership from Democracy Fund

Interviews: 12/13-16/2018

1,067 adults

Margin of error: +/- 4.1 percentage points at the 95% confidence level among all adults

NOTE: All results show percentages among all respondents, unless otherwise labeled.

**API1. In general, how qualified do you feel you are to participate in discussions with family or friends about important issues in the news?**

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|                                      | NORC<br>12/13-16/2018 |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Not at all/A little qualified</b> | <b>26</b>             |
| Not at all qualified                 | 6                     |
| A little qualified                   | 20                    |
| <b>Somewhat qualified</b>            | <b>39</b>             |
| <b>Extremely/Very qualified</b>      | <b>34</b>             |
| Very qualified                       | 24                    |
| Extremely qualified                  | 10                    |
| DON'T KNOW                           | *                     |
| SKIPPED/REFUSED                      | 1                     |

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N = 1,067

**API2. How well do you feel you understand the important issues facing your community?**

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|                            | NORC<br>12/13-16/2018 |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Not at all/A little</b> | <b>27</b>             |
| Not at all                 | 6                     |
| A little                   | 22                    |
| <b>Somewhat well</b>       | <b>44</b>             |
| <b>Extremely/Very well</b> | <b>28</b>             |
| Very well                  | 21                    |
| Extremely well             | 7                     |
| DON'T KNOW                 | -                     |
| SKIPPED/REFUSED            | 1                     |

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N = 1,067

**API3. How much impact do you think you can have in making your community a better place to live?**

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| NORC<br>12/13-16/2018        |           |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>A small/No impact</b>     | <b>59</b> |
| No impact                    | 12        |
| A small impact               | 47        |
| <b>A Big/Moderate impact</b> | <b>39</b> |
| A moderate impact            | 31        |
| A big impact                 | 8         |
| DON'T KNOW                   | -         |
| SKIPPED/REFUSED              | 2         |

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*N = 1,067*

**API4. How well do you feel you understand the important issues facing your country?**

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| NORC<br>12/13-16/2018      |           |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Not at all/A little</b> | <b>20</b> |
| Not at all                 | 3         |
| A little                   | 18        |
| <b>Somewhat well</b>       | <b>42</b> |
| <b>Extremely/Very well</b> | <b>37</b> |
| Very well                  | 26        |
| Extremely well             | 10        |
| DON'T KNOW                 | -         |

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*N = 1,067*

SKIPPED/REFUSED 1

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*N = 1,067*

**API5. How much impact do you think you can have in making your country a better place to live?**

| NORC<br>12/13-16/2018        |           |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>A small/No impact</b>     | <b>72</b> |
| No impact                    | 19        |
| A small impact               | 53        |
| <b>A Big/Moderate impact</b> | <b>27</b> |
| A moderate impact            | 20        |
| A big impact                 | 7         |
| DON'T KNOW                   | -         |
| SKIPPED/REFUSED              | 1         |

*N = 1,067*

**API6. Thinking about the news media, how important is it for news organizations to do the following?**

| NORC<br>12/13-<br>16/2018   | <b>Not at all/<br/>Not too<br/>important</b> | Not at all<br>important | Not too<br>important | <b>Moderately<br/>important</b> | <b>Extremely/<br/>Very<br/>important</b> | Very<br>important | Extremely<br>important | DK | SKP/REF |
|---|--|-------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|--|-------------------|------------------------|----|---------|
| To hold political leaders accountable                               | <b>8</b>                                     | 4                       | 5                    | <b>17</b>                       | <b>73</b>                                | 29                | 44                     | -  | 1       |
| To report the latest news and information as it happens             | <b>7</b>                                     | 2                       | 4                    | <b>22</b>                       | <b>71</b>                                | 35                | 36                     | -  | 1       |
| To deal fairly with all sides of an issue                           | <b>6</b>                                     | 2                       | 3                    | <b>12</b>                       | <b>81</b>                                | 29                | 52                     | *  | 1       |
| To report the facts, but also provide some context for them as well | <b>13</b>                                    | 4                       | 9                    | <b>21</b>                       | <b>66</b>                                | 33                | 33                     | *  | 1       |

*N = 1,067*

**API7. How important to you is your right to publicly question the [actions/decisions] of the following authority figures?**

| NORC<br>12/13-<br>16/2018 | <b>Not at all/<br/>Not too<br/>important</b> | Not at all<br>important | Not too<br>important | <b>Moderately<br/>important</b> | <b>Extremely/<br/>Very<br/>important</b> | Very<br>important | Extremely<br>important | DK | SKP/REF |
|---------------------------|--|-------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|--|-------------------|------------------------|----|---------|
| Political<br>leaders      | <b>6</b>                                     | 1                       | 5                    | <b>16</b>                       | <b>77</b>                                | 29                | 48                     | -  | 1       |
| Business<br>leaders       | <b>9</b>                                     | 2                       | 7                    | <b>26</b>                       | <b>64</b>                                | 31                | 33                     | -  | 1       |
| Community<br>leaders      | <b>6</b>                                     | 1                       | 5                    | <b>19</b>                       | <b>74</b>                                | 32                | 42                     | -  | 1       |

*N = 1,067*

**API8. How confident are you in your own ability to publicly question the [actions/decisions] of the following authority figures if needed?**

| NORC<br>12/13-<br>16/2018 | <b>Not at all/<br/>Not too<br/>confident</b> | Not at all<br>confident | Not too<br>confident | <b>Moderately<br/>confident</b> | <b>Extremely/<br/>Very<br/>confident</b> | Very<br>confident | Extremely<br>confident | DK | SKP/REF |
|---------------------------|--|-------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|--|-------------------|------------------------|----|---------|
| Political<br>leaders      | <b>30</b>                                    | 9                       | 21                   | <b>35</b>                       | <b>34</b>                                | 20                | 14                     | *  | 1       |
| Business<br>leaders       | <b>33</b>                                    | 9                       | 25                   | <b>35</b>                       | <b>30</b>                                | 18                | 12                     | *  | 1       |
| Community<br>leaders      | <b>26</b>                                    | 7                       | 19                   | <b>37</b>                       | <b>35</b>                                | 21                | 14                     | *  | 1       |

*N = 1,067*

**API9. How important is it to you personally to keep up with news and information?**

| NORC<br>12/13-16/2018                |           |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Not at all/Not very important</b> | <b>8</b>  |
| Not at all important                 | 1         |
| Not very important                   | 7         |
| <b>Moderately important</b>          | <b>38</b> |
| <b>Extremely/Very important</b>      | <b>53</b> |
| Very important                       | 32        |
| Extremely important                  | 21        |
| DON'T KNOW                           | -         |
| SKIPPED/REFUSED                      | 1         |

*N = 1,067*

**API10. Choose the statement that best describes you, even if it is not exactly right. In general...**

|   | NORC<br>12/13-16/2018 |
|---|-----------------------|
| I actively seek out news and information  | 61                    |
| I mostly bump into news and information as I do other things or hear about it from others | 38                    |
| DON'T KNOW  | *                     |
| SKIPPED/REFUSED   | 1                     |

*N = 1,067*

**API11. We are interested in whether you paid to use any media in the last year. For each of the following types of media, please indicate whether you personally subscribe to, donate to, or regularly pay for any of the following or not.**

| NORC<br>12/13-16/2018  | Yes, i personally have a subscription<br>or pay for it on a regular basis | No, i do not<br>personally pay<br>for it | DK | SKP/REF |
|--|---|--|----|---------|
| Cable, satellite television, or streaming services                                     | 73  | 26                                       | -  | 1       |
| A print or digital version of a magazine   | 25  | 73                                       | -  | 2       |
| A print or digital version of a national newspaper                                     | 14  | 85                                       | *  | 1       |
| A print or digital version of a local newspaper  | 27  | 72                                       | -  | 1       |
| Print or digital newsletter  | 18  | 81                                       | -  | 1       |
| A digital-only news site, such as ESPN Insider, The Athletic, or Politico Pro          | 12  | 87                                       | -  | 1       |
| A podcast or YouTube channel through direct payments or funding platforms like Patreon | 12  | 87                                       | -  | 1       |
| A public radio station or public television station such as NPR or PBS                 | 23  | 77                                       | *  | 1       |

*N = 1,067*

**PID1. Do you consider yourself a Democrat, a Republican, an independent or none of the above?**

|                 | NORC<br>12/13-16/2018 |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Democrat        | 33                    |
| Republican      | 27                    |
| Independent     | 25                    |
| None of these   | 15                    |
| DON'T KNOW      | -                     |
| SKIPPED/REFUSED | 1                     |

*N = 1,067*

**PIDA. Do you consider yourself a strong or moderate Democrat?**

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|                   | NORC<br>12/13-16/2018 |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Strong Democrat   | 43                    |
| Moderate Democrat | 57                    |
| DON'T KNOW        | -                     |
| SKIPPED/REFUSED   | *                     |

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*N = 394*

**PIDB. Do you consider yourself a strong or moderate Republican?**

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|                     | NORC<br>12/13-16/2018 |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Strong Republican   | 36                    |
| Moderate Republican | 64                    |
| DON'T KNOW          | -                     |
| SKIPPED/REFUSED     | -                     |

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*N = 262*

**PID. Party identification.**

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|             | NORC<br>12/13-16/2018 |
|-------------|-----------------------|
| Democrat    | 45                    |
| Independent | 18                    |
| Republican  | 38                    |

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*N = 1,067*

**GENDER. Respondent gender.**

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|        | NORC<br>12/13-16/2018 |
|--------|-----------------------|
| Male   | 48                    |
| Female | 52                    |

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*N = 1,067*

**MARITAL. Marital Status.**

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|         | NORC<br>12/13-16/2018 |
|---------|-----------------------|
| Married | 48                    |

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*N = 1,067*

|                     |    |
|---------------------|----|
| Widowed             | 4  |
| Divorced            | 15 |
| Separated           | 2  |
| Never married       | 24 |
| Living with partner | 6  |

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*N = 1,067*

**RACETH. Race/ethnicity.**

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|                                | NORC<br>12/13-16/2018 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| White, non-Hispanic            | 63                    |
| African American, non-Hispanic | 12                    |
| Hispanic                       | 16                    |
| Other                          | 8                     |

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*N = 1,067*

**HHINCOME. Household income.**

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|                              | NORC<br>12/13-16/2018 |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Under \$10,000               | 7                     |
| \$10,000 to under \$20,000   | 8                     |
| \$20,000 to under \$30,000   | 13                    |
| \$30,000 to under \$40,000   | 9                     |
| \$40,000 to under \$50,000   | 10                    |
| \$50,000 to under \$75,000   | 17                    |
| \$75,000 to under \$100,000  | 15                    |
| \$100,000 to under \$150,000 | 13                    |
| \$150,000 or more            | 8                     |

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*N = 1,067*

#### EDUC4. 4-level education.

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|                           | NORC<br>12/13-16/2018 |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| No HS diploma             | 11                    |
| HS graduate or equivalent | 29                    |
| Some college              | 28                    |

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*N = 1,067*

|             |    |
|-------------|----|
| BA or above | 32 |
|-------------|----|

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*N = 1,067*

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#### Study Methodology

NORC at the University of Chicago conducted the study in collaboration with the American Press Institute and funding and partnership from Democracy Fund. The survey was co-designed and written by API and NORC with support and engagement throughout the process by Tom Glaisyer and Jessica Mahone of the Democracy Fund. Data were collected using AmeriSpeak Omnibus®, a monthly multi-client survey using NORC's probability-based panel designed to be representative of the U.S. household population.

During the initial recruitment phase of the panel, randomly selected U.S. households were sampled with a known, non-zero probability of selection from the NORC National Sample Frame and then contacted by U.S. mail, email, telephone, and field interviewers (face-to-face). The panel provides sample coverage of approximately 97 percent of the U.S. household population. Those excluded from the sample include people with P.O. Box only addresses, some addresses not listed in the USPS Delivery Sequence File, and some newly constructed dwellings.

Interviews for this survey were conducted between December 13 and 16, 2018, with adults age 18 and over representing the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Panel members were randomly drawn from AmeriSpeak, and 1,067 completed the survey—992 via the web and 75 via telephone. Interviews were conducted in both English and Spanish, depending on respondent preference. The final stage completion rate is 20.1 percent, the weighted household panel response rate is 34.2 percent, and the weighted household panel retention rate is 85.1 percent, for a cumulative response rate of 5.8 percent. The overall margin of sampling error is +/- 4.1 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level, including the design effect. The margin of sampling error may be higher for subgroups.

Once the sample has been selected and fielded, and all the study data have been collected and made final, a poststratification process is used to adjust for any survey nonresponse as well as any non-coverage or under- and oversampling resulting from the study-specific sample design. Poststratification variables included age, gender, Census division, race/ethnicity, and education. Weighting variables were obtained from the 2018 Current Population Survey. The weighted data reflect the U.S. population of adults age 18 and over.

All differences reported between subgroups of the U.S. population are at the 95 percent level of statistical significance, meaning that there is only a 5 percent (or lower) probability that the observed differences could be attributed to chance variation in sampling.