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Public Is Skeptical of the Iran Agreement – and Trump’s Handling of the Issue

Only about a quarter have heard ‘a lot’ about the nuclear agreement

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Public is Skeptical of the Iran Agreement – and Trump’s Handling of the Issue

Only about a quarter have heard ‘a lot’ about the nuclear agreement

As Donald Trump prepares to announce his long-awaited decision on the Iran nuclear agreement, more Americans say they disapprove (40%) than approve (32%) of the agreement, with about a quarter (28%) offering no opinion.

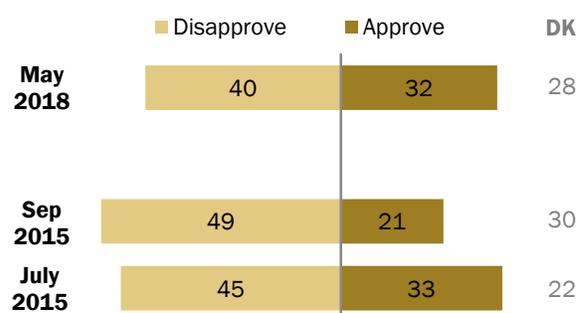
Opinions about the agreement are less negative today [than in September 2015](#) and about the same as in July of that year, shortly after the agreement was announced.

With a number of major stories vying for the public’s attention, relatively few Americans (27%) say they have heard “a lot” about the 2015 agreement on Iran’s nuclear program between Iran, the U.S. and other nations. Nearly half (46%) say they have heard “a little” about the agreement, while 26% say they have heard “nothing at all” about it.

The latest national survey by Pew Research Center, conducted April 25-May 1 among 1,503 adults, finds that fewer than half (42%) say they are very or somewhat confident in Trump’s handling of the situation with Iran; 52% say they are not too confident or not at all confident in him on this issue.

More continue to disapprove than approve of Iran nuclear agreement

% who say they ___ of the 2015 agreement on Iran’s nuclear program



Note: Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 25-May 1, 2018.

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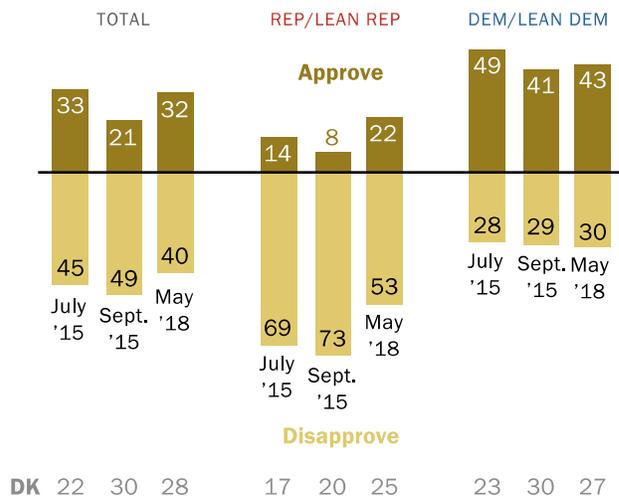
Republicans and Republican-leaning independents are somewhat less negative toward the Iran nuclear agreement than they were in 2015, after it was reached. Currently, 53% of Republicans and Republican leaners disapprove of the agreement, while 22% approve.

In both September and July of 2015, larger majorities of Republicans disapproved of the Iran agreement (73% in September, 69% in July).

By contrast, opinion among Democrats and Democratic leaners is little changed from 2015. As was the case then, fewer than half of Democrats (43%) approve of the agreement, while 30% disapprove.

Republicans less likely to disapprove of Iran agreement today than in 2015

% who say they ___ of the agreement on Iran's nuclear program



Note: Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.
 Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 25-May 1, 2018.

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Fewer than half are confident in Trump's handling of situation with Iran

About a third of Americans (34%) say they are not confident at all in Trump's handling of the situation with Iran, while another 18% say they are not too confident. About four-in-ten (42%) are very (24%) or somewhat (18%) confident in Trump on this issue.

Across most issues, with the exception of trade and the economy, more have little or no confidence in Trump than say they are at least somewhat confident in him.

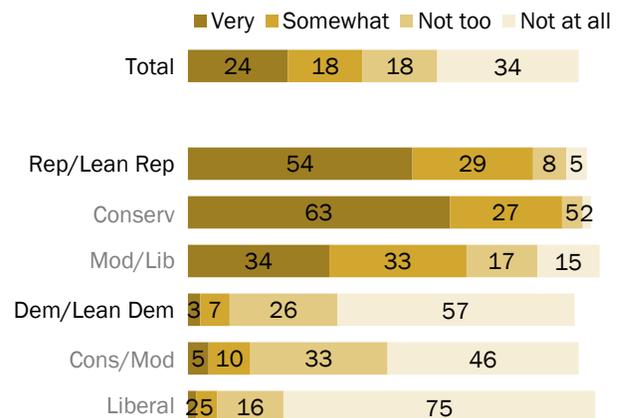
As with views of Trump's handling of other issues, confidence in the president on Iran varies widely across partisan groups. About eight-in-ten Republicans and Republican leaners say they are very (54%) or somewhat (29%) confident in Trump on Iran, compared to about one-in-ten Democrats and Democratic leaners (11%). About half of Republicans are very confident (54%), while over half of Democrats (57%) are not at all confident.

A large majority of liberal Democrats (75%) say they have no confidence at all in Trump's handling of the situation with Iran. A somewhat smaller majority of conservative Republicans (63%) say they are very confident in him on this issue.

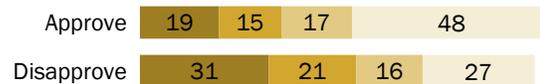
Overall, most of those who approve of the Iran agreement have little or no confidence in Trump's handling of the situation with Iran: 48% have no confidence at all in him, while another 17% have not too much confidence. Among those who disapprove of the agreement, about half (52%) are very or somewhat confident in Trump's handling of the situation with Iran; 43% have little or no confidence in him on this issue.

Wide partisan, ideological divisions in confidence in Trump on Iran

% who say they are ___ confident that Trump can handle the situation with Iran



Among those who ___ of the 2015 Iran agreement ...



Note: Don't know responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 25-May 1, 2018.

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Modest public awareness of Iran deal

Overall, 27% of Americans say they have heard a lot about the 2015 nuclear agreement between Iran, the U.S. and other nations, while 46% say they have heard a little about it; 26% say they have heard nothing at about the agreement.

In September 2015, after the Iran agreement was reached, somewhat more (36%) said that they had heard a lot about the agreement.

Young people, as well as adults with no more than a high school education, are among the most likely to say they have heard nothing about the Iran deal.

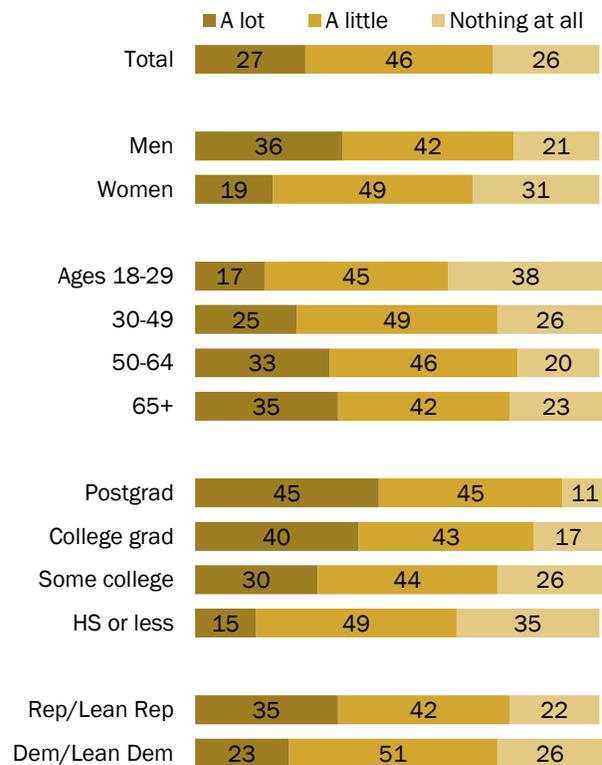
Nearly four-in-ten of those under 30 (38%) say they have heard nothing at all about the Iran nuclear agreement, while 45% have heard a little and just 17% have heard a lot about it. Among older age groups, no more than about a quarter say they have heard nothing about the issue.

And while 45% of adults with a postgraduate degree say they have heard a lot about the Iran agreement – and 40% of those with a four-year degree say the same – smaller shares of those with some college experience but no degree (30%) and those with no more than a high school diploma (15%) have heard a lot about the agreement.

Republicans are somewhat more likely than Democrats to say they have heard a lot about the Iran nuclear agreement (35% vs. 23%). About a quarter in each party (26% of Democrats, 22% of Republicans) say they have heard nothing at about it.

Only about a quarter of Americans have heard ‘a lot’ about Iran nuclear deal

% who say they have heard ___ about the 2015 agreement on Iran’s nuclear program



Note: Don't know responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 25-May 1, 2018.

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The balance of opinion about the Iran nuclear agreement among the minority of adults who have heard a lot about it is similar to views among the overall public: 53% disapprove of the agreement, while 45% approve. Opinion is divided among those who have heard a little about the deal (38% disapprove, 37% approve). Most of those who have heard nothing at all about the agreement express no opinion (59%); among those who offer an opinion, more disapprove (30%) than approve (11%).

Acknowledgements

This report is a collaborative effort based on the input and analysis of the following individuals:

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Methodology

The analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted April 25-May 1, 2018 among a national sample of 1,503 adults, 18 years of age or older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia (376 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 1,127 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 740 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers under the direction of Abt Associates. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see <http://www.pewresearch.org/methodology/u-s-survey-research/>

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and nativity and region to parameters from the 2016 Census Bureau's American Community Survey one-year estimates and population density to parameters from the Decennial Census. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status (landline only, cell phone only, or both landline and cell phone), based on extrapolations from the 2016 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size among respondents with a landline phone. The margins of error reported and statistical tests of significance are adjusted to account for the survey's design effect, a measure of how much efficiency is lost from the weighting procedures.

The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

Survey conducted April 25-May 1, 2018

Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	1,503	2.9 percentage points
Rep/Lean Rep	644	4.5 percentage points
Dem/Lean Dem	710	4.3 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

Pew Research Center undertakes all polling activity, including calls to mobile telephone numbers, in compliance with the Telephone Consumer Protection Act and other applicable laws.

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**PEW RESEARCH CENTER
MAY 2018 POLITICAL SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
APRIL 25 – MAY 1, 2018
N=1,503**

QUESTIONS 1-2, 8-9, 26-36 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**NO QUESTIONS 3-7, 10-19, 23-25, 37-39, 42-44, 48-59****QUESTIONS 20-22, 40-41, 45-47 AND ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****ASK ALL:**

Q.60 Thinking about Donald Trump's ability to handle a number of things, please tell me whether you are very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident that Trump can **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE]**? How about **[NEXT ITEM]**? **[IF NECESSARY: Are you very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident that Trump can **[ITEM]**?**

ITEMS a-h PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

	Very <u>confident</u>	Somewhat <u>confident</u>	Not too <u>confident</u>	Not at all <u>confident</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
ASK ALL FORM 2 ASKED APR 26-MAY 1 ONLY [N=745]:					
i.F2 Handle the situation with Iran Apr 25-May 1, 2018	24	18	18	34	6

NO QUESTION 61, 63-69**QUESTION 62 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED****QUESTIONS 70-73 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****ASK ALL:**

Q.74 How much, if anything, have you heard about the 2015 agreement on Iran's nuclear program between Iran, the United States and other nations? Have you heard **[READ IN ORDER]**?¹

Apr 25-May 1 <u>2018</u>		Sep 3-7 <u>2015</u>	Jul 14-20 <u>2015</u>
27	A lot	36	35
46	A little	32	44
26	Nothing at all	30	21
*	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	1	1

Q.74 TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:

How much, if anything, have you heard about negotiations between the United States and Iran on Iran's nuclear program? Have you heard ...

	<u>A lot</u>	<u>A little</u>	Nothing <u>at all</u>	(VOL.) <u>Don't know/ Refused</u>
Mar 25-29, 2015	27	49	24	1
Dec 3-8, 2013 U.S.-Iran Pact (U) ²	24	48	28	1

¹ In earlier surveys, question was worded: "How much, if anything, have you heard about a recent agreement on Iran's nuclear program between Iran, the United States and other nations?"

² In December 2013, question referred to "the recent agreement between the United States and Iran on Iran's nuclear program." In November 2013, question referred to "recent international talks regarding Iran's nuclear enrichment program." From September 2006 to March 2012, question read: "How much, if anything, have you read or heard about the dispute over Iran's nuclear program? Have you heard...." In January 11-16, 2012, the question read: "...recent tensions between the U.S. and Iran over Iran's nuclear program and disputes in the Persian Gulf." In February 2006, question read: "The Iranian government recently said it will resume research on nuclear technology, despite opposition from other countries. How much, if anything, have you read or heard about this?"

Q.74 TRENDS FOR COMPARISON CONTINUED...

	<u>A lot</u>	<u>A little</u>	<u>Nothing at all</u>	(VOL.) <u>Don't know/ Refused</u>
Oct 30-Nov 6, 2013	24	49	26	1
Mar 7-11, 2012	41	38	21	*
Feb 8-12, 2012	38	39	23	*
Jan 11-16, 2012	42	41	15	2
Sept 30-Oct 4, 2009	41	41	18	*
Sep 2006	41	44	14	1
Feb 2006	32	46	21	1

ASK ALL:

Q.75 From what you know, do you approve or disapprove of this agreement? **[IF NECESSARY: The agreement on Iran's nuclear program between Iran, the United States and other nations]**

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Apr 25-May 1, 2018	32	40	28
Sep 3-7, 2015	21	49	30
Jul 14-20, 2015	33	45	22

TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:

From what you know, do you approve or disapprove of the agreement between U.S. and Iran on Iran's nuclear program?

Dec 3-8, 2013 (U)	32	43	25
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From what you know, do you approve or disapprove of the United States negotiating directly with Iran over the issue of its nuclear program?

Mar 25-29, 2015	49	40	11
Sep 30-Oct 4, 2009	63	28	9
September, 2006 ³	54	32	14

QUESTIONS 80-83 AND ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**NO QUESTIONS 77-79**

³ In September 2006, question read: "From what you know, would you favor or oppose the United States negotiating directly with Iran over the issue of its nuclear program?"

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?

				(VOL.)	(VOL.)	(VOL.)	Lean	Lean
	Republican	Democrat	Independent	No preference	Other party	DK/Ref	Rep	Dem
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
Nov 29-Dec 4, 2017	20	32	40	4	1	3	13	19
Oct 25-30, 2017	22	32	41	3	1	2	17	19
Jun 8-Jul 9, 2017	25	31	39	3	1	2	16	18
Apr 5-11, 2017	24	31	42	2	1	*	17	20
Yearly Totals								
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
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 Post-Sept 11	30.9	31.8	27.9	5.2	.6	3.6	11.7	9.4
2001 Pre-Sept 11	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	--	--	--	--	--

Key to Pew Research trends noted in the topline:

(U)

Pew Research Center/USA Today polls