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Changing Partisan Coalitions in a Politically Divided Nation

Party identification among registered voters, 1994-2023

FOR MEDIA OR OTHER INQUIRIES:

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How we did this

Pew Research Center conducted this analysis to explore partisan identification among U.S. registered voters across major demographic groups and how voters' partisan affiliation has shifted over time. It also explores the changing composition of voters overall and the partisan coalitions.

For this analysis, we used annual totals of data from Pew Research Center telephone surveys (1994-2018) and online surveys (2019-2023) among registered voters. All telephone survey data was adjusted to account for differences in how people respond to surveys on the telephone compared with online surveys (refer to [Appendix A](#) for details).

All online survey data is from the Center's nationally representative [American Trends Panel](#). The surveys were conducted in both English and Spanish. Each survey is weighted to be representative of the U.S. adult population by gender, age, education, race and ethnicity and other categories. Read more about [the ATP's methodology](#), as well as how Pew Research Center measures many of the [demographic categories used in this report](#).

Changing Partisan Coalitions in a Politically Divided Nation

Party identification among registered voters, 1994-2023

The contours of the 2024 political landscape are the result of long-standing patterns of partisanship, combined with the profound demographic changes that have reshaped the United States over the past three decades.

Many of the factors long associated with voters' partisanship remain firmly in place. For decades, gender, race and ethnicity, and religious affiliation have been important dividing lines in politics. This continues to be the case today.

Yet there also have been profound changes – in some cases as a result of demographic change, in others because of dramatic shifts in the partisan allegiances of key groups.

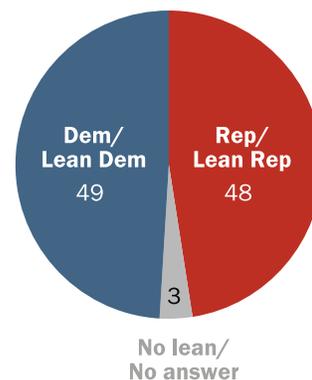
The combined effects of change and continuity have left the country's two major parties at virtual parity: About half of registered voters (49%) identify as Democrats or lean toward the Democratic Party, while 48% identify as Republicans or lean Republican.

In recent decades, neither party has had a sizable advantage, but **the Democratic Party has lost the edge it maintained from 2017 to 2021.** (*Explore this further in [Chapter 1](#).*)

Pew Research Center's comprehensive analysis of party identification among registered voters – based on hundreds of thousands of interviews conducted over the past three decades – tracks the changes in the country and the parties since 1994. Among the major findings:

Voters are roughly evenly split between the parties

% of registered voters who are ...



Note: Based on registered voters.
Source: 2023 American Trends Panel annual profile survey conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

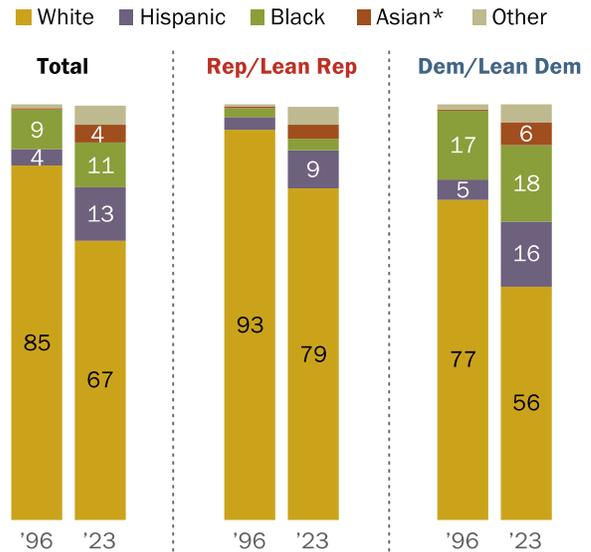
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The partisan coalitions are increasingly different. Both parties are more racially and ethnically diverse than in the past. However, this has had a far greater impact on the composition of the Democratic Party than the Republican Party.

The share of voters who are Hispanic **has roughly tripled** since the mid-1990s; the share who are Asian has **increased sixfold** over the same period. Today, 44% of Democratic and Democratic-leaning voters are Hispanic, Black, Asian, another race or multiracial, compared with 20% of Republicans and Republican leaners. However, the Democratic Party's advantages among Black and Hispanic voters, in particular, have narrowed somewhat in recent years. (*Explore this further in [Chapter 8](#).*)

The nation's growing diversity has had a much larger impact on the Democratic than Republican coalition

% of registered voters who are ...



* Estimates for Asian voters are representative of English speakers only.

Note: Based on registered voters. Telephone data adjusted for survey mode; details in Appendix A. White, Black and Asian voters include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic voters are of any race. No answer responses not shown. Source: Annual totals of Pew Research Center telephone surveys (1996) and American Trends Panel annual profile online survey (2023).

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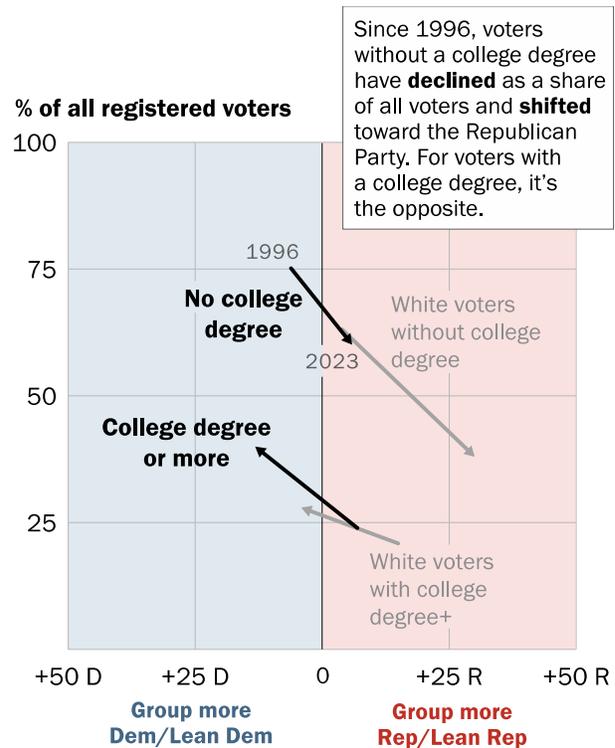
Education and partisanship: The share of voters with a four-year bachelor's degree keeps increasing, reaching 40% in 2023. And the gap in partisanship between voters with and without a college degree continues to grow, especially among White voters. More than six-in-ten White voters who do not have a four-year degree (63%) associate with the Republican Party, which is up substantially over the past 15 years. White college graduates are closely divided; this was not the case in the 1990s and early 2000s, when they mostly aligned with the GOP. (*Explore this further in [Chapter 2.](#)*)

Beyond the gender gap: By a modest margin, women voters continue to align with the Democratic Party (by 51% to 44%), while nearly the reverse is true among men (52% align with the Republican Party, 46% with the Democratic Party). The gender gap is about as wide among **married men and women**. The gap is wider among **men and women who have never married**; while both groups are majority Democratic, 37% of never-married men identify as Republicans or lean toward the GOP, compared with 24% of never-married women. (*Explore this further in [Chapter 3.](#)*)

A divide between old and young: Today, each younger age cohort is somewhat more Democratic-oriented than the one before it. The youngest voters (those ages 18 to 24) align with the Democrats by nearly two-to-one (66% to 34% Republican or lean GOP); majorities of older voters (those in their mid-60s and older) identify as Republicans or lean Republican. While there have been wide age divides in American politics over the last two decades, this wasn't always the case; **in the 1990s there were only very modest age differences** in partisanship. (*Explore this further in [Chapter 4.](#)*)

College grads grow as a share of voters, have moved more Democratic; those without a degree have shifted to GOP

Change in partisan affiliation and share of registered voters with and without college degree, 1996 to 2023



Note: Based on registered voters. Telephone data adjusted for survey mode; details in Appendix A. White voters include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Source: Annual totals of Pew Research Center telephone surveys (1996) and American Trends Panel annual profile online survey (2023).

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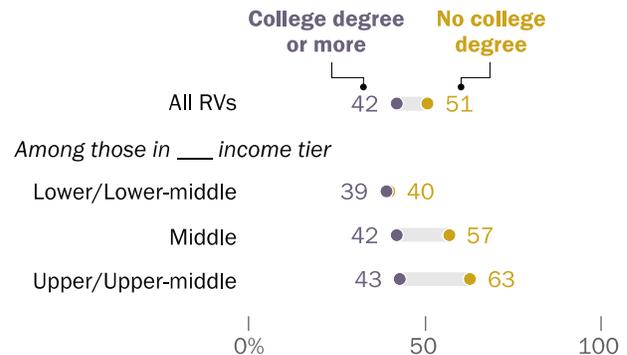
Education and family income: Voters without a college degree differ substantially by income in their party affiliation. Those with **middle, upper-middle and upper family incomes tend to align with the GOP.** A majority with **lower and lower-middle incomes identify as Democrats or lean Democratic.** There are no meaningful differences in partisanship among voters with at least a four-year bachelor's degree; across income categories, majorities of college graduate voters align with the Democratic Party. *(Explore this further in [Chapter 6.](#))*

Rural voters move toward the GOP, while the suburbs remain divided: In 2008, when Barack Obama sought his first term as president, voters in rural counties were evenly split in their partisan loyalties. Today, **Republicans hold a 25 percentage point advantage among rural residents (60% to 35%).** There has been less change among voters in urban counties, who are mostly Democratic by a nearly identical margin (60% to 37%). The suburbs – perennially a political battleground – remain about evenly divided. *(Explore this further in [Chapter 7.](#))*

Growing differences among religious groups: Mirroring movement [in the population overall](#), the share of voters who are religiously unaffiliated has grown dramatically over the past 15 years. These voters, who have long aligned with the Democratic Party, have become even more Democratic over time: Today 70% identify as Democrats or lean Democratic. In contrast, Republicans have made gains among several groups of religiously affiliated voters, particularly White Catholics and White evangelical Protestants. White evangelical Protestants now **align with the Republican Party by about a 70-point margin (85% to 14%).** *(Explore this further in [Chapter 5.](#))*

Non-college voters tilt Republican overall, but wide differences by income

Among registered voters in each income tier, % who are **Republican/lean Republican**



Note: Based on registered voters. Family income tiers are based on adjusted 2022 earnings. No answer responses not shown. Source: 2023 American Trends Panel annual profile survey conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

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What this report tells us – and what it doesn't

In most cases, the partisan allegiances of voters do not change a great deal from year to year. Yet as this study shows, the long-term shifts in party identification are substantial and say a great deal about how the country – and its political parties – have changed since the 1990s.

The steadily growing alignment between demographics and partisanship reveals an important aspect of steadily growing partisan polarization. Republicans and Democrats do not just hold different beliefs and opinions about major issues, they are much more different racially, ethnically, geographically and in educational attainment than they used to be.

Yet over this period, there have been only modest shifts in overall partisan identification. Voters remain evenly divided, even as the two parties have grown further apart. The continuing close division in partisan identification among voters is consistent with the relatively narrow margins in the popular votes in most national elections over the past three decades.

Republican and Democratic strengths – and weaknesses – among some key demographic groups

% of registered voters in each group who are ...

Key groups where the Republican Party has wide advantages ...

Share of the electorate		Dem/Lean Dem	Rep/Lean Rep
17	White evangelical Protestant	14	85
1	Latter-day Saint (Mormon)	23	75
38	White voters without a college degree	33	63
11	Veterans	35	63
14	Rural	35	60
33	White men	39	60
10	Born in 1940s	43	54

Key groups where the Democratic Party has wide advantages ...

Share of the electorate		Dem/Lean Dem	Rep/Lean Rep
21	Women with a college degree	60	37
29	Urban	60	37
13	Hispanic	61	35
14	Born in 1990s	62	35
4	Asian*	63	35
26	Religiously unaffiliated	70	27
11	Black	83	12

* Estimates for Asian voters are representative of English speakers only.

Note: Based on registered voters. White, Black and Asian voters include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic voters are of any race. No answer responses not shown.

Source: 2023 American Trends Panel annual profile survey conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

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Partisan identification provides a broad portrait of voters' affinities and loyalties. But while it is indicative of voters' preferences, it does not perfectly predict how people intend to vote in elections, or whether they will vote. In the coming months, Pew Research Center will release

reports analyzing voters' preferences in the presidential election, their engagement with the election and the factors behind candidate support.

Next year, we will release a detailed study of the 2024 election, based on validated voters from the Center's American Trends Panel. It will examine the demographic composition and vote choices of the 2024 electorate and will provide comparisons to the [2020](#) and [2016](#) validated voter studies.

The partisan identification study is based on annual totals from surveys conducted on the Center's American Trends Panel from 2019 to 2023 and telephone surveys conducted from 1994 to 2018. The survey data was adjusted to account for differences in how the surveys were conducted. For more information, refer to [Appendix A](#).

How we adjusted historical measures of partisan identification for transition from telephone to web

Previous Pew Research Center analyses of voters' party identification relied on telephone survey data. This report, for the first time, combines data collected in telephone surveys with data from online surveys conducted on the Center's nationally representative American Trends Panel.

Directly comparing answers from online and telephone surveys is complex because there are differences in how questions are asked of respondents and in how respondents answer those questions. Together these differences are known as "mode effects."

As a result of mode effects, it was necessary to adjust telephone trends for leaned party identification in order to allow for direct comparisons over time.

In this report, telephone survey data from 1994 to 2018 is adjusted to align it with online survey responses. In 2014, Pew Research Center randomly assigned respondents to answer a survey by telephone or online. The party identification data from this survey was used to calculate an adjustment for differences between survey mode, which is applied to all telephone survey data in this report.

Please refer to [Appendix A](#) for more details.

1. The partisanship and ideology of American voters

The partisan identification of registered voters is now evenly split between the two major parties: **49% of registered voters are Democrats or lean to the Democratic Party**, and a nearly identical share – **48%** – **are Republicans or lean to the Republican Party.**

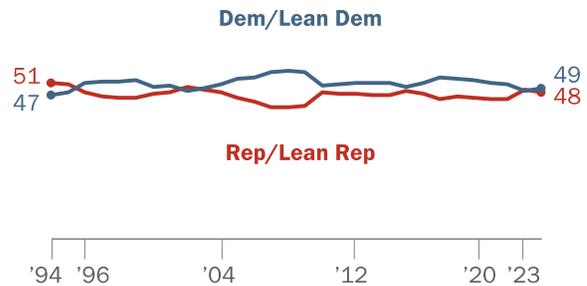
The partisan balance has tightened in recent years following a clear edge in Democratic Party affiliation during the last administration.

- Four years ago, in the run-up to the 2020 election, Democrats had a 5 percentage point advantage over the GOP (51% vs. 46%).

The share of voters who are in the Democratic coalition reached 55% in 2008. For much of the last three decades of Pew Research Center surveys, the partisan composition of registered voters has been more closely divided.

Registered voters are now evenly split between the two major parties

% of registered voters who are ...



Note: Based on registered voters. Telephone data adjusted for survey mode; details in Appendix A.

Source: Annual totals of Pew Research Center telephone surveys (1994-2018) and American Trends Panel annual profile online surveys (2019-2023).

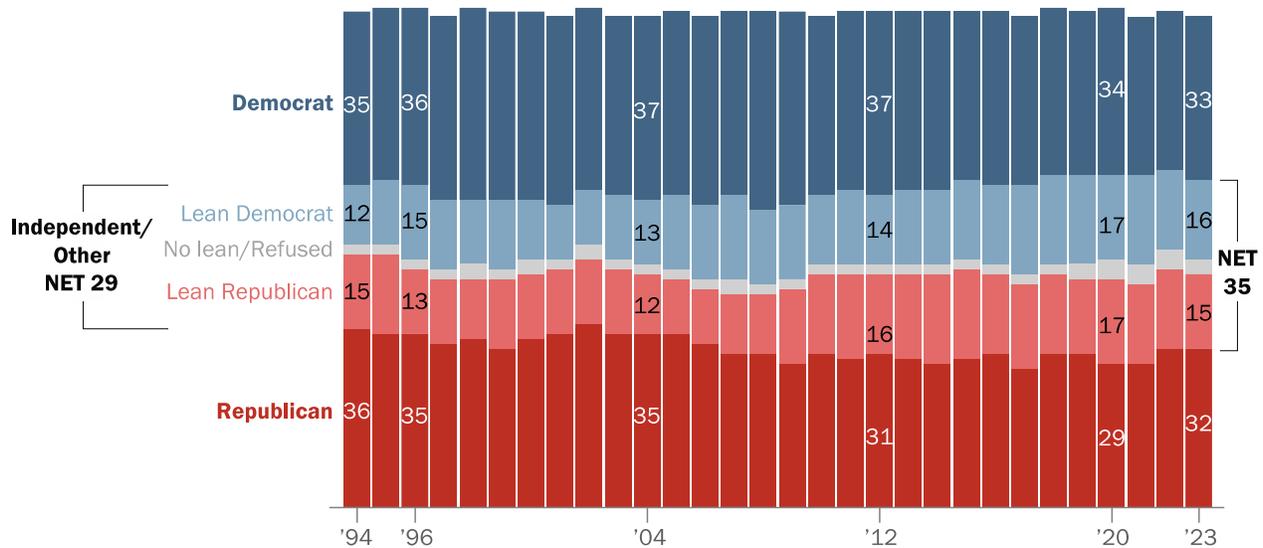
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Partisans and partisan leaners in the U.S. electorate

About two-thirds of registered voters identify as a partisan, and they are roughly evenly split between those who say they are **Republicans** (32% of voters) and those who say they are **Democrats** (33%). Roughly a third instead say they are **independents or something else** (35%), with most of these voters leaning toward one of the parties. **Partisan leaners** often share the same political views and behaviors as those who directly identify with the party they favor.

Partisans, independents and partisan leaners among U.S. voters

% of registered voters who are ...



Note: Based on registered voters. Telephone data adjusted for survey mode; details in Appendix A.

Source: Annual totals of Pew Research Center telephone surveys (1994-2018) and American Trends Panel annual profile online surveys (2019-2023).

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The share of voters who identify as independent or something else is somewhat higher than in the late 1990s and early 2000s. As a result, there are more “leaners” today than in the past. Currently, 15% of voters **lean toward the Republican Party** and 16% **lean toward the Democratic Party**. By comparison, in 1994, 27% of voters leaned toward either the GOP (15%) or the Democratic Party (12%).

Party identification and ideology

While the electorate overall is nearly equally divided between those who align with the Republican and Democratic parties, a greater share of registered voters say they are both ideologically **conservative and associate with the Republican Party** (33%) than say they are **liberal and align with the Democratic Party** (23%).

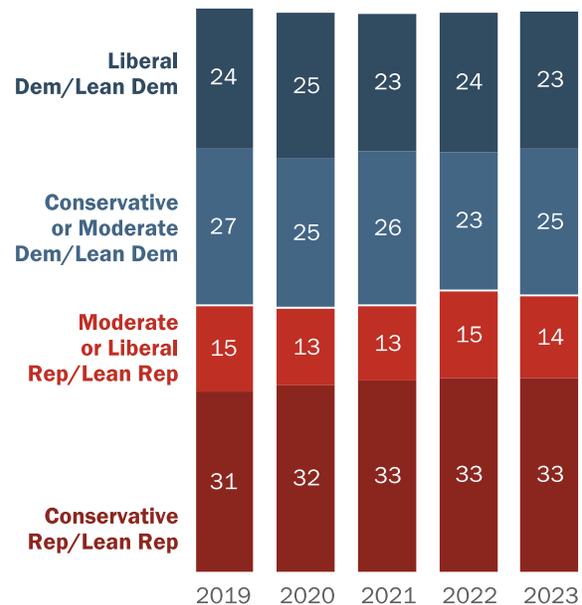
A quarter of voters associate with the **Democratic Party and describe their views as either conservative or moderate**, and 14% identify as **moderates or liberals and are Republicans or Republican leaners**.

The partisan and ideological composition of voters is relatively unchanged over the last five years.

(As a result of significant mode differences in measures of ideology between telephone and online surveys, there is not directly comparable data on ideology prior to 2019.)

Leaned party identification and ideology of U.S. voters

% of registered voters who are ...



Note: Based on registered voters. No answer responses not shown.
Source: American Trends Panel annual profile surveys conducted 2019-2023.

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2. Partisanship by race, ethnicity and education

As has long been the case, White voters are much more likely than those in other racial and ethnic groups to associate with the Republican Party. Hispanic and Asian voters tilt more Democratic. Black voters remain overwhelmingly Democratic.

However, there have been some shifts toward the GOP in most groups in recent years.

The Republican Party now holds a 15 percentage point advantage among White voters: 56% of non-Hispanic White voters identify with or lean toward the Republican Party, while 41% align with the Democratic Party.

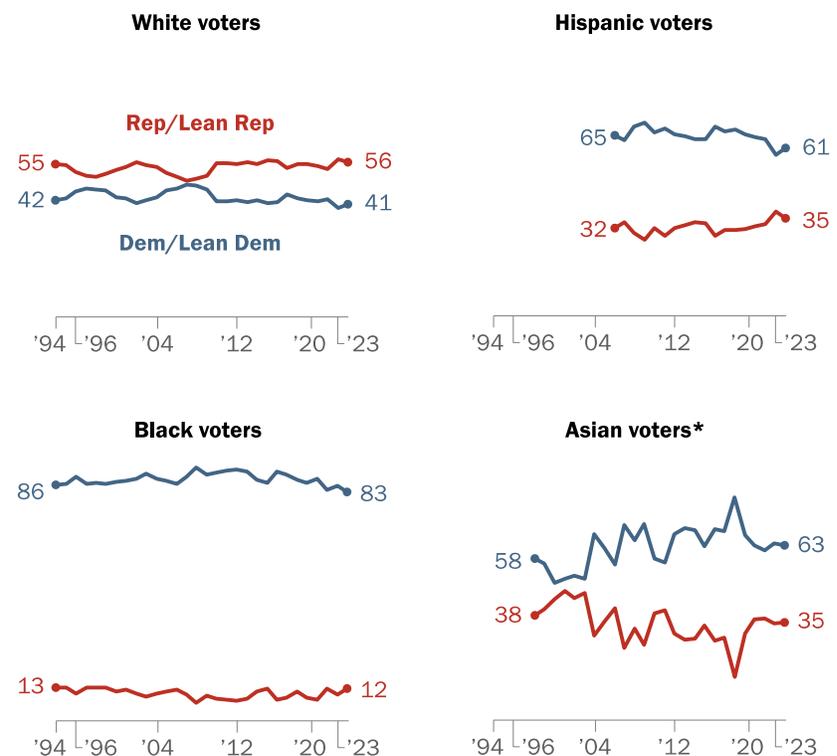
- This double-digit lead for the GOP among White voters has held for more than a decade. The last time White voters were about equally split between the two parties was in 2008.

About six-in-ten Hispanic voters (61%) are Democrats or lean to the Democratic Party, while 35% are Republicans or Republican leaners.

- The Democratic Party's edge among Hispanic voters over the last two years is somewhat narrower than it was in years prior.

Majorities of Hispanic, Black and Asian voters continue to favor the Democratic Party, while White voters remain more aligned with GOP

% of registered voters in each group who are ...



* Estimates for Asian voters are representative of English speakers only.

Note: Based on registered voters. Telephone data adjusted for survey mode; details in Appendix A. White, Black and Asian voters include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic voters are of any race. Data for Hispanic voters shown only for years with interviews in English and Spanish. Insufficient sample to show Asian voters before 1998.

Source: Annual totals of Pew Research Center telephone surveys (1994-2018) and American Trends Panel annual profile online surveys (2019-2023).

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Black voters continue to overwhelmingly associate with the Democratic Party, although the extent of the Democratic advantage among this group has fallen off over the last few years.

- Currently, 83% of Black voters are Democrats or lean Democratic, while 12% align with the GOP.
- As recently as 2020, the share associating with the Democratic Party was 5 percentage points higher. That somewhat larger edge in party affiliation had been in place for much of the last two decades.

About six-in-ten Asian voters (63%) align with the Democratic Party, while 36% are oriented toward the GOP.

- The balance of partisan association among Asian voters has changed little over the last few years.

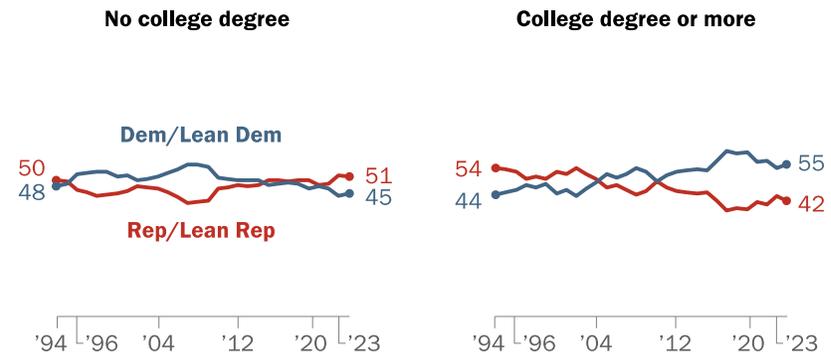
Education and partisanship

The relationship between education and partisanship has shifted significantly since the early years of the 21st century.

- The Republican Party now holds a 6 percentage point advantage over the Democratic Party (51% to 45%) among **voters who do not have a bachelor's degree**. Voters who do not have a four-year degree make up a 60% majority of all registered voters.
- By comparison, the Democratic Party has a 13-point advantage (55% vs. 42%) among those with a **bachelor's degree or more** formal education.

GOP has edge among voters without a college degree, while college grads continue to favor Democrats

% of registered voters in each group who are ...



Note: Based on registered voters. Telephone data adjusted for survey mode; details in Appendix A.

Source: Annual totals of Pew Research Center telephone surveys (1994-2018) and American Trends Panel annual profile online surveys (2019-2023).

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This pattern is relatively recent.

In fact, until about two decades ago the Republican Party fared better among college graduates and worse among those without a college degree.

In the last years of George W. Bush's presidency and the first year of Barack Obama's, Democrats had a double-digit advantage in affiliation over Republicans among voters without a college degree. For example, in 2007, 56% of voters without a degree were Democrats or leaned Democratic, while 42% were Republicans or GOP leaners. This group was narrowly divided between the two parties for most of the next 15 years, but in the last few years it has tilted more Republican.

College graduates moved in the opposite direction, becoming more Democratic over this same period.

- Since 2017, the gap in partisanship between college graduates and those without a degree has been wider than at any previous point in Pew Research Center surveys dating back to the 1990s.

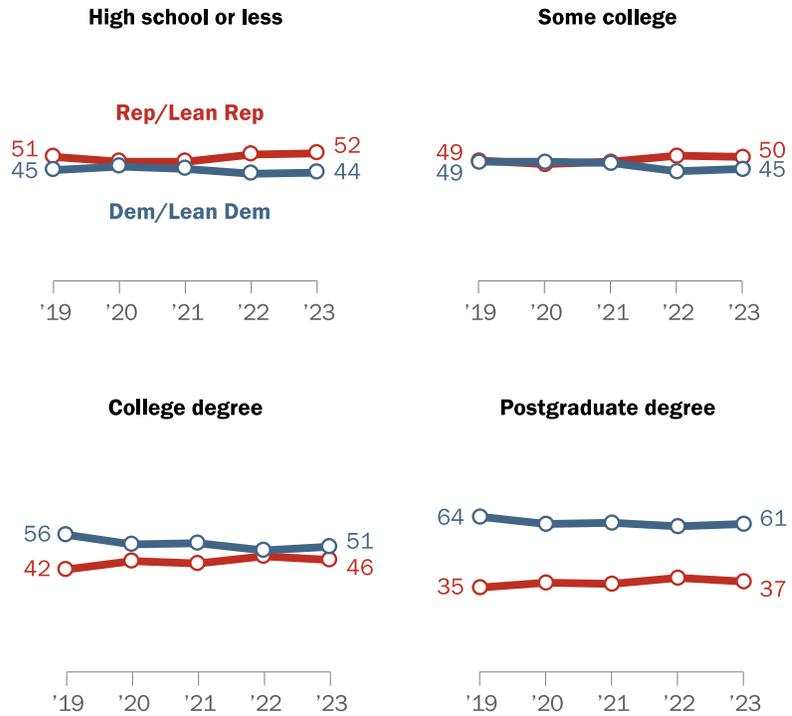
Voters with postgraduate degrees are even more Democratic than those with bachelor’s degrees.

About six-in-ten registered voters who have a postgraduate degree (61%) identify with or lean toward the Democratic Party, while 37% associate with the Republican Party. Voters with a bachelor’s degree but no graduate degree are more closely divided: 51% Democratic, 46% Republican.

Voters with a high school degree or less education and those who have attended some college but do not have a bachelor’s degree both tilt Republican by similar margins.

Voters with postgraduate degrees are substantially more Democratic than those with four-year degrees

% of registered voters in each group who are ...



Note: Based on registered voters. No answer responses not shown.
Source: American Trends Panel surveys of U.S. adults conducted 2019-2023.

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Education, race and partisanship

White voters are far more polarized along educational lines than are Hispanic and Black voters.

White voters by education

By nearly two-to-one (63% vs. 33%), **White voters without a bachelor's degree** associate with the Republican Party.

The GOP's advantage among this group has remained relatively steady over the last several years but reflects a major shift since 2009. This group is now substantially more Republican-oriented than at any prior point in the last three decades.

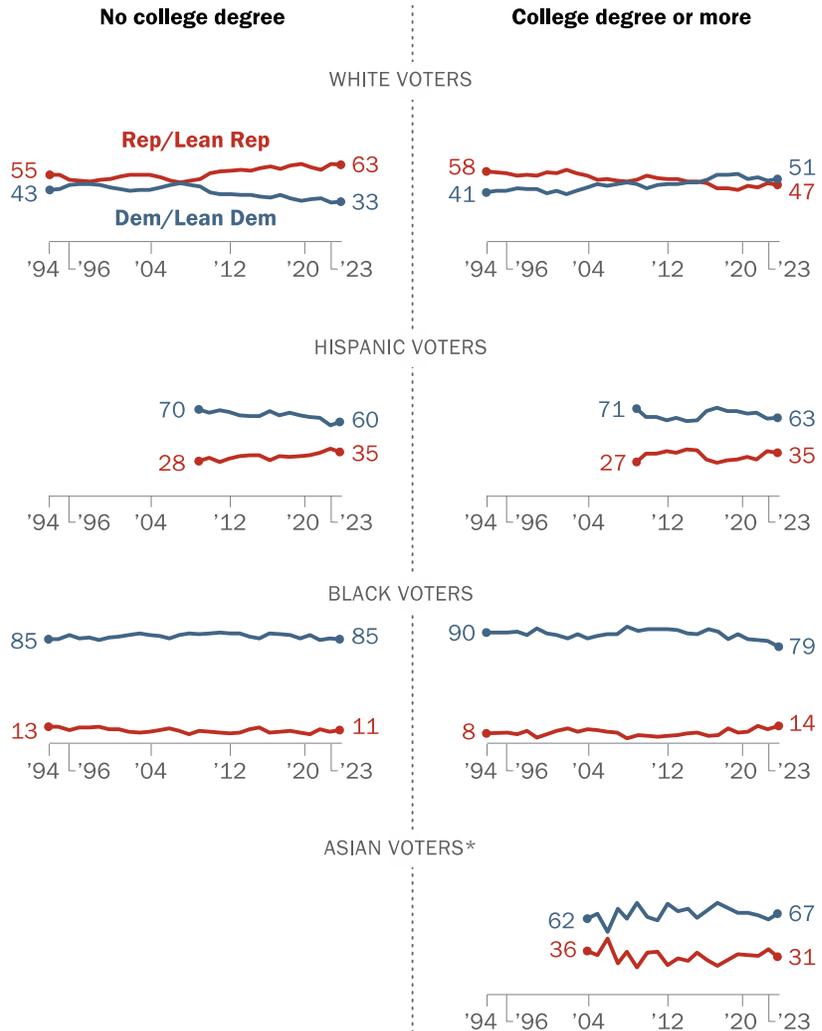
Today, **White voters with a bachelor's degree** are closely divided between associating with the Democratic Party (51%) and the Republican Party (47%). Prior to 2005, this group had a clear Republican orientation.

Hispanic voters by education

In contrast, there are no meaningful differences in the partisan leanings of Hispanic

Educational differences in partisanship are widest among White voters

% of registered voters in each group who are ...



* Estimates for Asian voters are representative of English speakers only.
 Note: Based on registered voters. Telephone data adjusted for survey mode; details in Appendix A. Insufficient sample to show Black college-educated voters in 1995, Asian college-educated voters in 2018 and Asian voters without a college degree. White, Black and Asian voters include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic voters are of any race. Data for Hispanic voters shown only for years with interviews in English and Spanish.
 Source: Annual totals of Pew Research Center telephone surveys (1994-2018) and American Trends Panel annual profile online surveys (2019-2023).

voters with and without bachelor's degrees. Democrats hold a clear advantage in affiliation among both groups of Hispanic voters, although the share of Hispanics (both those with and without bachelor's degrees) who align with the Democratic Party has edged lower in recent years.

Black voters by education

Black voters both with (79%) and without college degrees (85%) remain overwhelmingly Democratic in their partisan affinity.

Black college graduates are somewhat less closely aligned with the Democratic Party now than they were for most of the prior three decades (for most of this period, 85% or more of Black college graduate voters affiliated with the Democratic Party).

Asian voters by education

Two-thirds of Asian voters with a college degree align with the Democratic Party; 31% associate with the Republican Party. The partisan balance among Asian voters with a college degree has remained largely the same over our last two decades of surveys. (Asian American voters without a college degree are a smaller group, and sample sizes do not allow for reporting trends among this group.)

Partisanship by race and gender

Visit the chapter on [partisanship by gender, sexual orientation and marital and parental status](#) for discussion of overall trends among men and women.

Six-in-ten White men who are registered voters identify as Republicans or lean Republican, as do 53% of White women voters.

The balance of partisanship among White women voters has tilted toward the GOP in recent years, but it was more divided in 2017 and 2018.

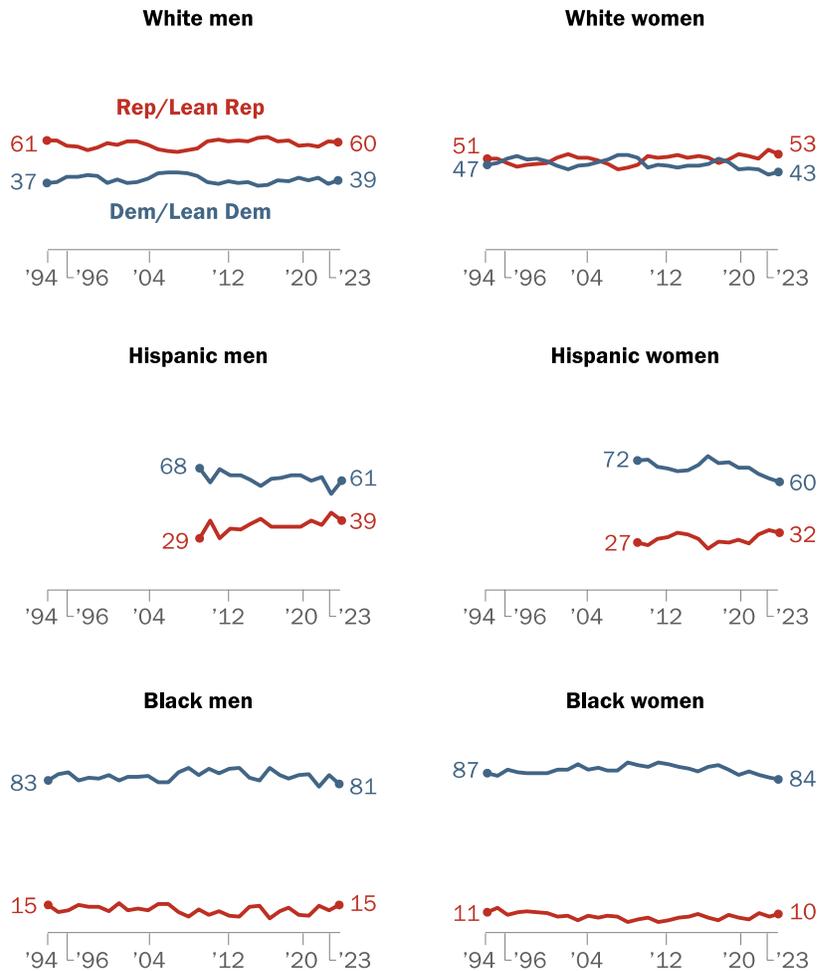
Among Hispanic voters, about six-in-ten men (61%) and women (60%) associate with the Democrats. Hispanic women voters have become somewhat less Democratic in recent years (down from 74% in 2016).

About eight-in-ten Black voters – both women (84%) and men (81%) – are Democrats or Democratic leaners.

About six-in-ten men (61%) and women (64%) among Asian voters identify as Democrats or lean toward the Democratic Party. (There is insufficient sample to show longer-term trends among Asian voters by gender.)

Partisan identification by gender among racial and ethnic groups

% of registered voters in each group who are ...



Note: Based on registered voters. Telephone data adjusted for survey mode; details in Appendix A. White and Black voters include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic voters are of any race. Data for Hispanic voters shown only for years with interviews in English and Spanish. Insufficient sample to show trend among Asian voters.

Source: Annual totals of Pew Research Center telephone surveys (1994-2018) and American Trends Panel annual profile online surveys (2019-2023).

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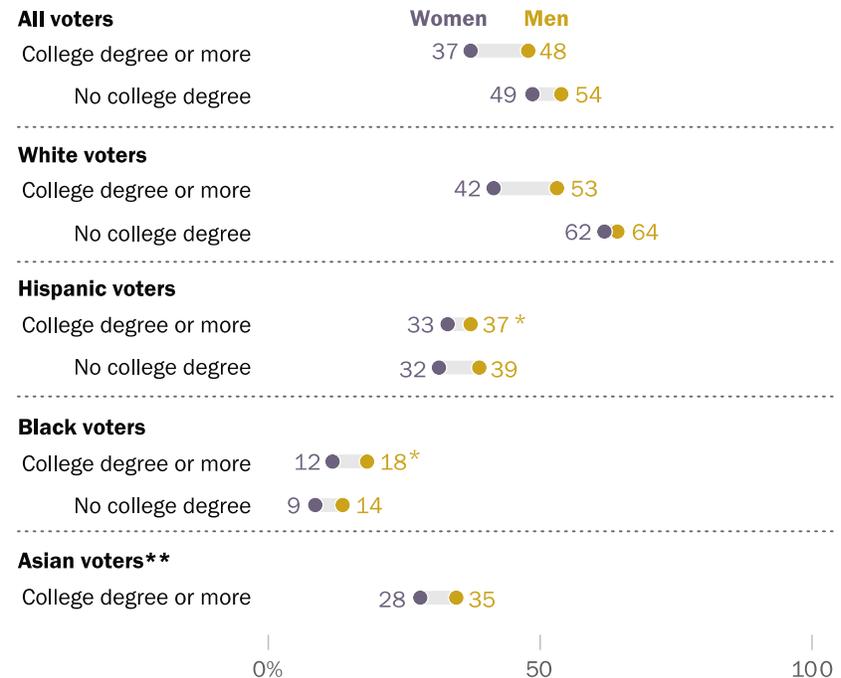
Partisanship across educational and gender groups by race and ethnicity

Among White voters, there are wide differences in partisanship by gender, by educational attainment – and by the combination of these.

- Among **White voters without a college degree**, 64% of men and 62% of women say they identify as or lean toward the Republican Party (about a third of each associate with the Democrats).
- White men with a college degree also tilt Republican** among voters, though to a lesser extent (53% are Republicans or lean Republican, 45% are Democrats or lean Democratic).
- In contrast, **White women with a college degree are more Democratic** than Republican by 15 percentage points (42% Republican or Republican leaning, 57% Democrat or lean Democrat).

Gender gap in partisanship among White voters with at least a four-year degree, but not among White voters without one

% of registered voters who are **Republican/lean Republican** among ...



* Several subgroups have relatively small sample sizes. There are 207 Hispanic men with a college degree or more, for an effective sample size of 84 (margin of error of +/- 10.7 percentage points at 95% confidence). There are 183 Black men with a college degree or more, for an effective sample size of 93 (margin of error of +/- 10.2 points).

** Estimates for Asian voters are representative of English speakers only.

Note: Based on registered voters. White, Black and Asian voters include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic voters are of any race. Insufficient sample to show Asian voters with less than four-year degree.

Source: 2023 American Trends Panel annual profile conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

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Among Black and Hispanic voters, there are only modest differences in partisanship across the combination of gender and education. In both groups, there are no significant differences between men with and without college degrees, or between their women counterparts. (Because Asian

American voters without a college degree are a small group, sample sizes do not allow comparing college and non-college Asian men and women.)

This dynamic has changed over time, as college-educated White men and women have grown more Democratic and those with less formal education have grown more Republican.

Then

As recently as 15 years ago, there were sizable gender gaps in partisanship among *both* college and non-college White voters. In both cases, men were substantially more likely than women to associate with the Republican Party.

But, at that time, there was *not* a substantial difference in the partisanship of college and non-college White voters – for either women or men.

Now

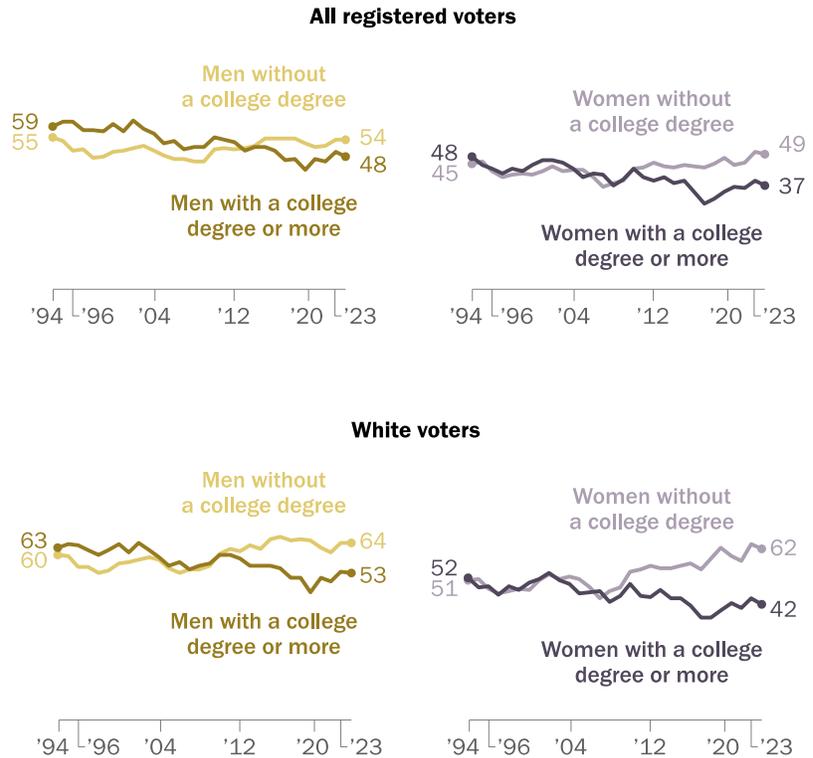
Today, there is no gender gap in partisanship among non-college White voters, while there *is* a gender gap among college graduate White voters.

The difference in partisanship between White women voters who have a college degree and those who do not, in particular, is quite large.

By contrast, there is little variation in the partisanship of Black and Hispanic voters by these characteristics, and the relationship has varied less over time.

Among White voters, sizable shifts in partisan dynamics by gender and education since early 2000s

% of registered voters who are **Republican/lean Republican** among ...



Note: Based on registered voters. Telephone data adjusted for survey mode; details in Appendix A. White voters include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic.

Source: Annual totals of Pew Research Center telephone surveys (1994-2018) and American Trends Panel annual profile online surveys (2019-2023).

3. Partisanship by gender, sexual orientation, marital and parental status

Men continue to be more likely than women to associate with the Republican Party.

Partisan affiliation also varies by marital status, with gender differences in party identification apparent among married and unmarried voters.

Sexual orientation is also strongly associated with partisanship among both men and women.

- Among all registered voters, **men tilt to the GOP** (52% of men identify with or lean toward the Republican Party, 46% to the Democratic Party).
- By a similar margin, **women tilt Democratic** (51% Democratic, 44% Republican, including leaners).

Marital status

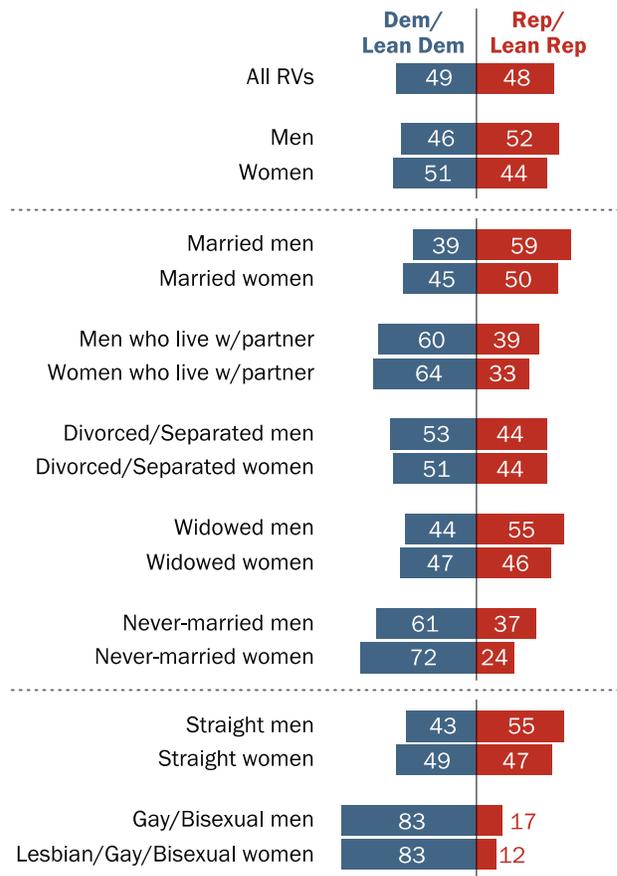
Married men and women are more likely to identify with or lean toward the Republican Party than their unmarried counterparts, with 59% of married men and half of married women oriented toward the GOP.

And while majorities of both men and women voters who have never been married and do not live with a partner align with the Democratic Party, never-married women are particularly likely to do so:

- Women who have never been married are three times as likely to associate with the Democratic Party as with the Republican Party (72% vs. 24%).

Partisanship varies by gender, marital status and sexual orientation

% of registered voters who are ...



Note: Based on registered voters. No answer responses not shown. Source: 2023 American Trends Panel annual profile survey conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

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- By a narrower – though still sizable – margin (61% to 37%), never-married men also favor the Democrats.
- Democrats have a substantial advantage among both women and men who live with a partner but are not married, and a narrower edge among those who are divorced or separated.
- Widowed men tilt Republican (55% GOP vs. 44% Democratic, including party leaners), while widowed women are about equally likely to associate with the GOP or Democrats (46% and 47%).

Sexual orientation

Lesbian, gay and bisexual women overwhelmingly identify with or lean toward the Democratic Party over the GOP (83% vs. 12%). Similarly, the Democratic Party enjoys a wide advantage among gay and bisexual men (83% vs. 17%).

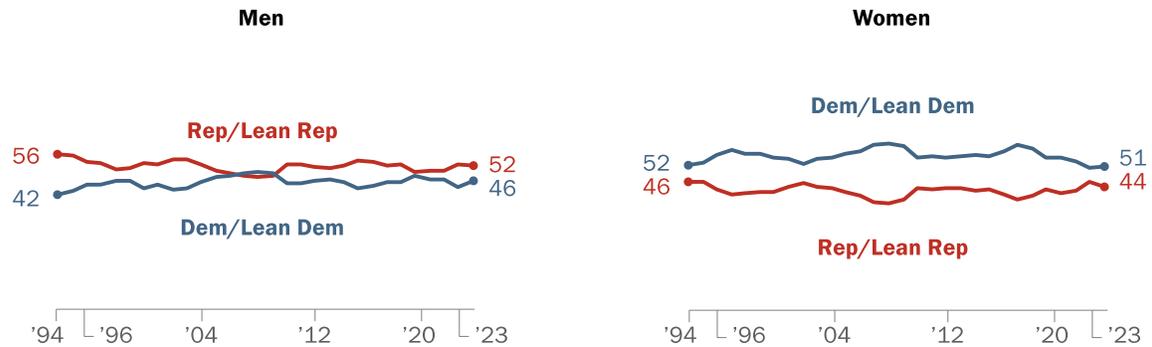
Straight men are more likely to associate with the Republican Party than straight women (55% vs. 47%).

Gender and partisanship

The Republican Party has held an edge among men for much of the last 30 years. Although that narrowed somewhat between 2019 and 2021, the GOP advantage has since returned.

Men continue to be more likely than women to align with Republican Party

% of registered voters who are ...



Note: Based on registered voters. Telephone data adjusted for survey mode; details in Appendix A.

Source: Annual totals of Pew Research Center telephone surveys (1994-2018) and American Trends Panel annual profile online surveys (2019-2023).

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While women have consistently been more likely to associate with the Democratic Party over the past several decades, the Democratic edge among women is narrower than it was a few years ago.

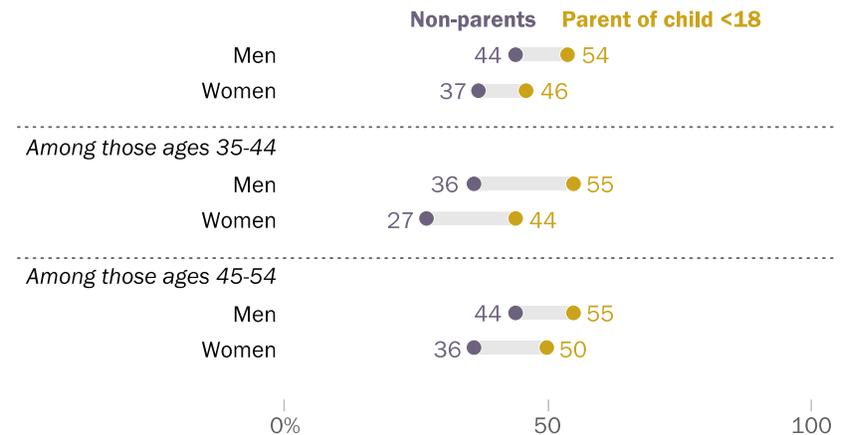
Parents are more Republican than voters without children

A slim majority (54%) of fathers of children under age 18 identify with or lean toward the Republican Party, compared with 44% of men who do not have children. There is a nearly identical gap in partisan association between mothers of minor children and women without children.

At all age levels, parents are more Republican-oriented than non-parents. For example, 55% of men ages 35 to 44 who have children under 18 identify with or lean toward the GOP. This compares with about a third (36%) of men of the same age who are not parents.

Wide 'parental gap' in partisan identification

% of registered voters who are **Republican/lean Republican** among ...



Note: Based on registered voters.

Source: 2023 American Trends Panel annual profile survey conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

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4. Age, generational cohorts and party identification

Today, age is strongly associated with partisanship – and this pattern has been in place for more than a decade.

The Democratic Party holds a substantial edge among younger voters, while the Republican Party has the advantage among the oldest groups.

- About two-thirds of **voters ages 18 to 24** (66%) associate with the Democratic Party, compared with 34% who align with the GOP.
- There is a similarly large gap in the partisan affiliation of **voters ages 25 to 29** (64% are Democrats or lean that way vs. 32% for Republicans).
- **Voters in their 30s** also tilt Democratic, though to a lesser extent: 55% are Democrats or Democratic leaners, 42% are Republicans or Republican leaners.

Neither party has a significant edge over the other among voters in their 40s and 50s:

- Half of **voters in their 40s** associate with the Democratic Party, and 47% are affiliated with the Republican Party.
- The shares are reversed among **voters in their 50s**: 50% align with the Republicans, 47% with the Democrats.

Among voters ages 60 and older, the GOP holds a clear advantage:

- Republican alignment is 10 percentage points higher than Democratic alignment (53% vs. 43%) among **voters in their 60s**.
- **Voters ages 70 to 79** are slightly more likely to be aligned with the GOP (51%) than the Democratic Party (46%).

A majority of voters under 30 align with the Democrats; Republicans have the edge among those over 60

% of registered voters who are ...

	Dem/ Lean Dem	Rep/ Lean Rep	Diff.
Ages 18-24*	66	34	D+32
25-29	64	32	D+32
30-39	55	42	D+13
40-49	50	47	D+3
50-59	47	50	R+3
60-69	43	53	R+10
70-79	46	51	R+5
80+	39	58	R+19

* Ages 18-24 have a relatively small sample size of 181, for an effective sample size of 93 (margin of error of +/- 10.2 percentage points at 95% confidence).

Note: Based on registered voters. Statistically significant differences in **bold**. No answer responses not shown.

Source: 2023 American Trends Panel annual profile survey conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

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- About six-in-ten **voters 80 and older** (58%) identify with or lean toward the GOP, while 39% associate with the Democratic Party.

Older voters overwhelmingly identify with a party; among younger voters, substantial numbers lean

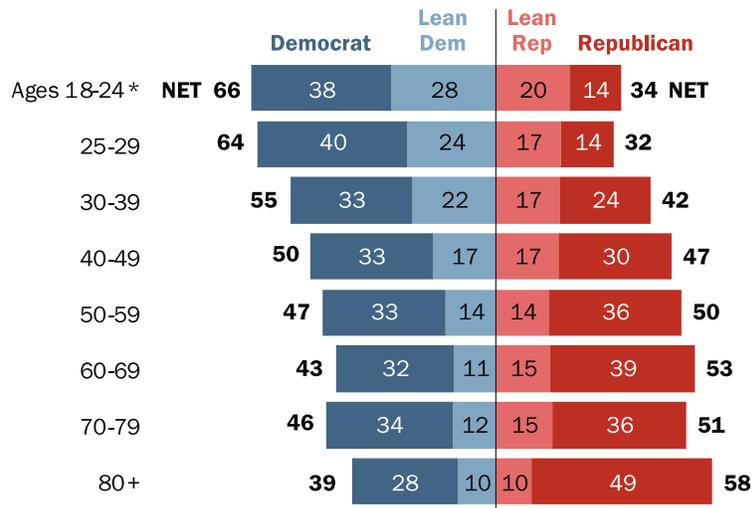
In addition to the differences in the overall partisan tilt of younger and older voters, younger voters are considerably more likely than older voters to opt out of identifying directly with a party.

For instance, among voters 80 and older, 77% identify with a party (49% as Republicans, 28% as Democrats). About two-in-ten instead say they are “something else” or independent, with most of them leaning to one of the parties.

By comparison, only about half (52%) of voters under 25 identify directly with a party (38% Democrat, 14% Republican). About half instead say they are something else or independent, with 28% leaning Democratic and 20% leaning Republican.

Younger voters are more likely to be partisan ‘leaners’ than older voters

% of registered voters who are ...



* Ages 18-24 have a relatively small sample size of 181, for an effective sample size of 93 (margin of error of +/- 10.2 percentage points at 95% confidence).

Note: Based on registered voters. No answer responses not shown.

Source: 2023 American Trends Panel annual profile survey conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

Partisanship among men and women within age groups

The age differences in partisanship seen in the public overall are evident among both men and women.

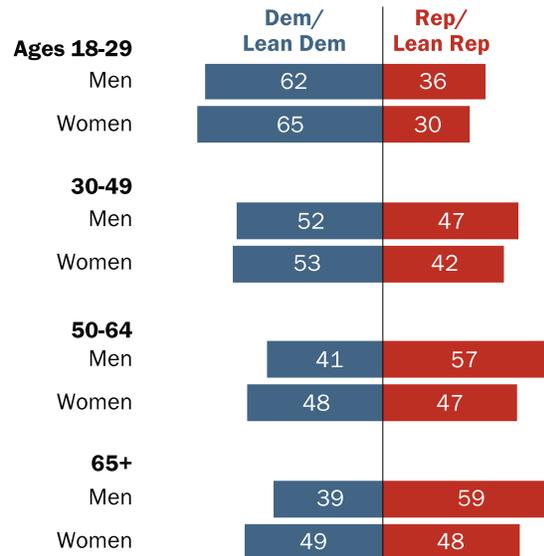
For instance, both men and women under 30 align with Democrats by about a two-to-one margin.

Men and women voters ages 30 to 49 are fairly divided in their partisan allegiances, though the Democratic Party holds a modest edge among women in this age group.

Republicans have a substantial advantage among men 50 and older, while women this age are about equally likely to affiliate with each of the two parties.

By wide margins, men and women under 30 are oriented to the Democratic Party

% of registered voters who are ...



Note: Based on registered voters. No answer responses not shown.
Source: 2023 American Trends Panel annual profile survey conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

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Race, age and partisanship

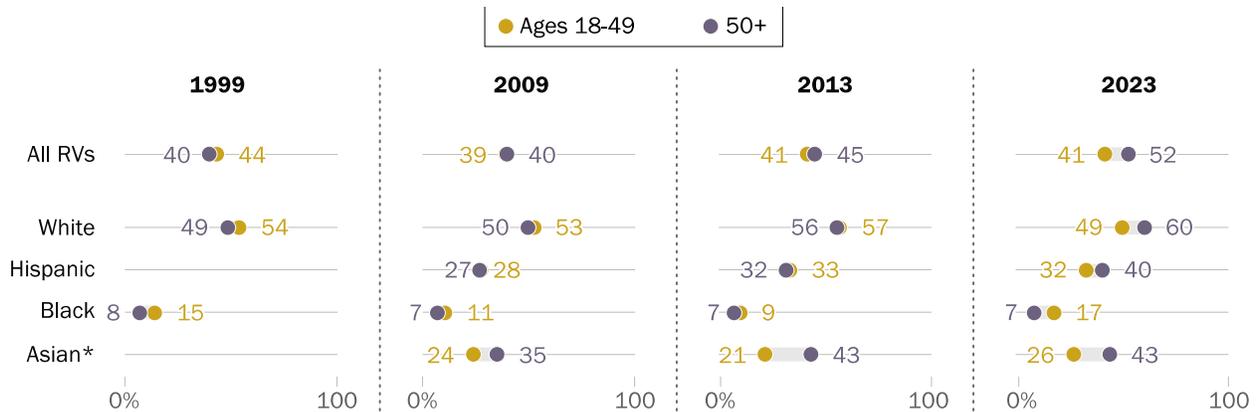
Among White, Hispanic and Asian voters, older adults today are generally more Republican (and less Democratic) than younger adults.

But this is not the case for Black voters: 17% of Black voters under 50 identify as or lean Republican, compared with just 7% of Black voters 50 and older.

- In surveys dating back to the 1990s, younger Black voters consistently have either been somewhat more Republican than older Black voters (as in 1999, when 15% of those under 50 were or leaned Republican vs. 8% of those 50 and older), or there has been no difference in Black partisanship by age.

Black voters in all age groups are overwhelmingly Democratic, but younger Black voters tend to be somewhat more Republican than older ones

% of registered voters who are **Republican/lean Republican**



* Asian voters representative of English speakers only. Several subgroups had relatively low sample sizes. There were 84 Asian voters ages 50 and older in 2009, for an effective sample size of 64 (margin of error of +/- 12.2 percentage points at 95% confidence). There were 93 Asian voters 50 and older in 2013, for an effective sample size of 72 (margin of error of +/- 11.5 points).

Note: Based on registered voters. Because of sample size limitations and no Spanish-language interviewing, unable to show Hispanic voters and Asian voters in 1999. White, Black and Asian voters include those who report being of only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic voters are of any race.

Source: Annual totals of Pew Research Center telephone surveys (1999, 2009 and 2013) and 2023 American Trends Panel annual profile online survey.

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The partisanship of generational cohorts

Looking at the partisanship of people born at roughly the same time (age cohorts) allows us to compare across generations over time. (For details on the age cohorts, visit [Appendix C.](#))

Today, each younger age cohort is somewhat more Democratic-oriented than the one before it. *But that has not always been the case.* For instance, in the late 1990s, the balance of partisanship of voters across age groups (cohorts) varied only very modestly:

A snapshot of the partisanship of age cohorts over the last 25 years

% of registered voters born in each decade who are ...

	1999			2009			2023		
	Age in 1999	Dem/ Lean Dem	Rep/ Lean Rep	Age in 2009	Dem/ Lean Dem	Rep/ Lean Rep	Age in 2023	Dem/ Lean Dem	Rep/ Lean Rep
Born in 1920s	70-79	52	46						
Born in 1930s	60-69	55	43	70-79	52	45			
Born in 1940s	50-59	54	43	60-69	53	44	74-83	43	54
Born in 1950s	40-49	52	45	50-59	55	43	64-73	44	52
Born in 1960s	30-39	47	51	40-49	50	48	54-63	45	50
Born in 1970s	20-29	52	46	30-39	54	44	44-53	48	49
Born in 1980s				20-29	60	38	34-43	52	44
Born in 1990s							24-33	62	35

Note: Based on registered voters. Cohorts shown for years when most members are ages 18 to 79. Refer to Appendix C for details.

Source: Annual totals of Pew Research Center telephone surveys (1999, 2009) and 2023 American Trends Panel annual profile online survey.

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- In 1999, voters who were in their 70s at the time – those who were born in the 1920s and came of age during the presidency of Franklin Roosevelt – were 52% Democratic in their orientation, 46% Republican. The youngest age cohort at the time – voters in their 20s, born in the 1970s – had the *exact same* partisan makeup. Only one age cohort stood out as different – those born in the 1960s (then in their 30s) were more Republican, on balance, than other age groups.
- Ten years later, in 2009, the then-youngest age cohort (people born in the 1980s, then in their 20s) was clearly more Democratic-oriented than older groups, but there was little difference between the older cohorts (though those born in the 1960s remained slightly more Republican than both groups older and younger than them).

Now, and for the last several years, a starker – and more linear – age pattern is evident. Those born in the 1990s (now in their mid-20s to early 30s) are more Democratic than those born in the 1980s, who are in turn more Democratic than those born in the 1970s. And the oldest age cohorts are the most Republican-oriented.

Partisanship of age cohorts over time

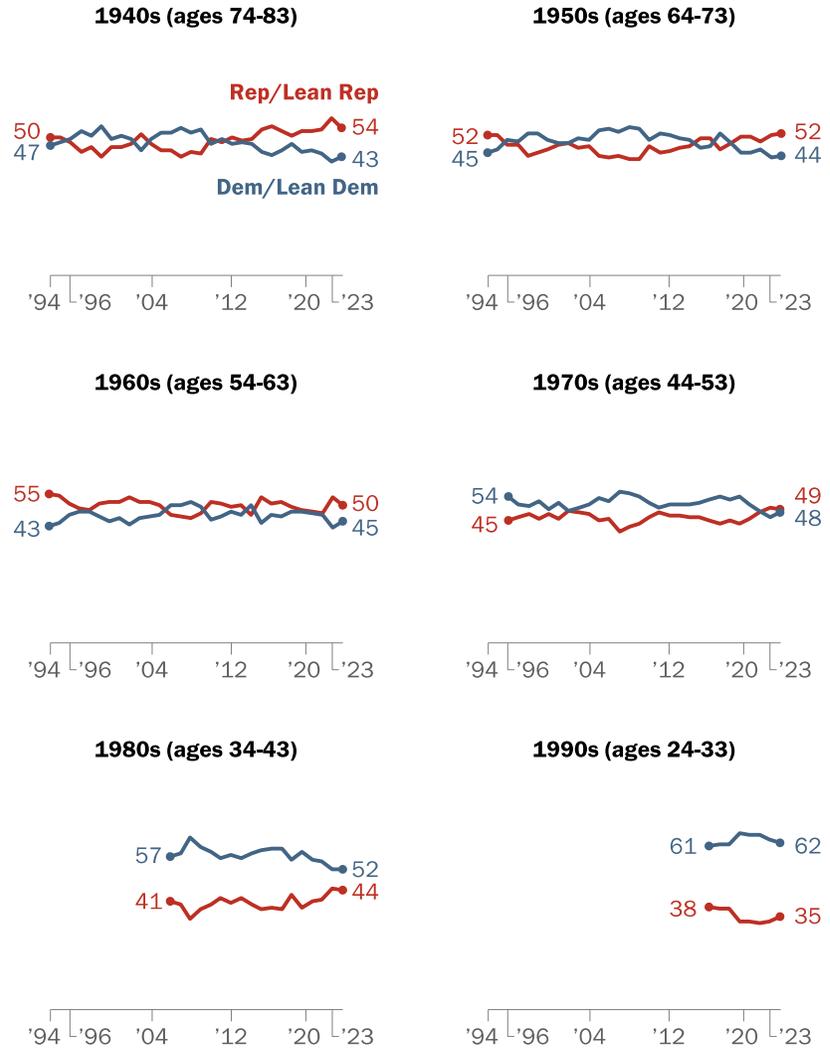
Voters born in the 1940s (ages 74 to 83 in 2023) have had a Republican tilt for the last several years – but were evenly split in their partisanship a decade ago. The Democratic Party last had an edge among this group in the first year of the Obama administration.

Voters born in the 1950s (ages 64 to 73 in 2023) are more likely to be Republicans or Republican leaners (52%) than Democrats or Democratic leaners (44%). The GOP has held an edge with this group for the last several years, following growth in GOP affiliation over the last 15 years.

Compared with those born the decade after them, **voters born in the 1960s** (ages 54 to 63 in 2023) have tended to be more closely aligned with the GOP throughout their adulthood. Currently, the GOP

Trends in partisanship among age cohorts

% of registered voters born in each decade who are ...



Note: Based on registered voters. Cohorts shown for years when most members are ages 18 and older. Refer to Appendix C for details.
 Source: Annual totals of Pew Research Center telephone surveys (1994-2018) and American Trends Panel annual profile online surveys (2019-2023).

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has a 5 percentage point edge over Democrats among these voters (50% to 45%).

Voters born in the 1970s (ages 44 to 53 in 2023) have historically been more likely to align with Democrats than Republicans. Democrats have had a 3-point or greater edge among these voters in 17 out of 23 years since 2000. However, today these voters are about equally split between associating with Republicans (49%) and Democrats (48%).

Voters born in the 1980s (ages 34 to 43 in 2023) favor the Democrats in their affiliation and have done so since they first reached adulthood. But the gap between the two parties has narrowed considerably among these voters in the last few years. Currently, 52% of voters born in the 1980s associate with the Democrats and 44% with Republicans.

Voters born in the 1990s (ages 24 to 33 in 2023) are more aligned with the Democratic Party than those in older age cohorts. About six-in-ten voters born in the 1990s (62%) currently associate with the Democrats, and a similar share were Democrats or Democratic leaners when they first entered the electorate almost a decade ago. (Note: Most of those born in the 2000s are not yet eligible to vote.)

5. Party identification among religious groups and religiously unaffiliated voters

The relationship between partisanship and voters' religious affiliation continues to be strong – especially when it comes to whether they belong to any organized religion at all.

The gap between voters who identify with an organized religion and those who do not has grown much wider in recent years.

Protestants mostly align with the Republican Party.

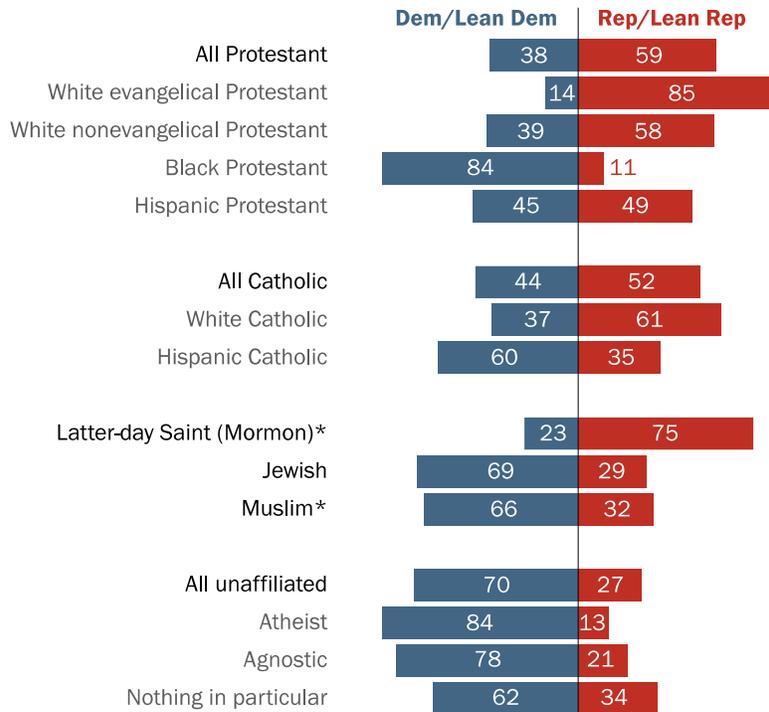
Protestants remain the largest single religious group in the United States. As they have for most of the past 15 years, a majority of Protestant registered voters (59%) associate with the GOP, though as recently as 2009 they were split nearly equally between the two parties.

Partisan identity among Catholics had been closely

divided, but **the GOP now has a modest advantage among Catholics.** About half of Catholic voters identify as Republicans or lean toward the Republican Party, compared with 44% who identify as Democrats or lean Democratic.

Most religious 'nones' align with Democrats; Protestants, Catholics tend toward the Republicans

% of registered voters who are ...



* Several subgroups had relatively small sample sizes. There are 154 members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) for an effective sample size of 89 (margin of error of +/- 10.4 percentage points at 95% confidence). There are 298 Muslims, for an effective sample size of 94 (margin of error of +/- 10.1 points).

Note: Based on registered voters. White and Black voters include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic voters are of any race. No answer responses not shown.

Source: 2023 American Trends Panel annual profile survey conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023. Muslim estimates from survey of U.S. adults conducted Feb. 12-25, 2024.

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Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints remain overwhelmingly Republican.

Three-quarters of voters in this group, widely known as Mormons, identify as Republicans or lean Republican. Only about a quarter (23%) associate with the Democratic Party.

Jewish voters continue to mostly align with the Democrats.

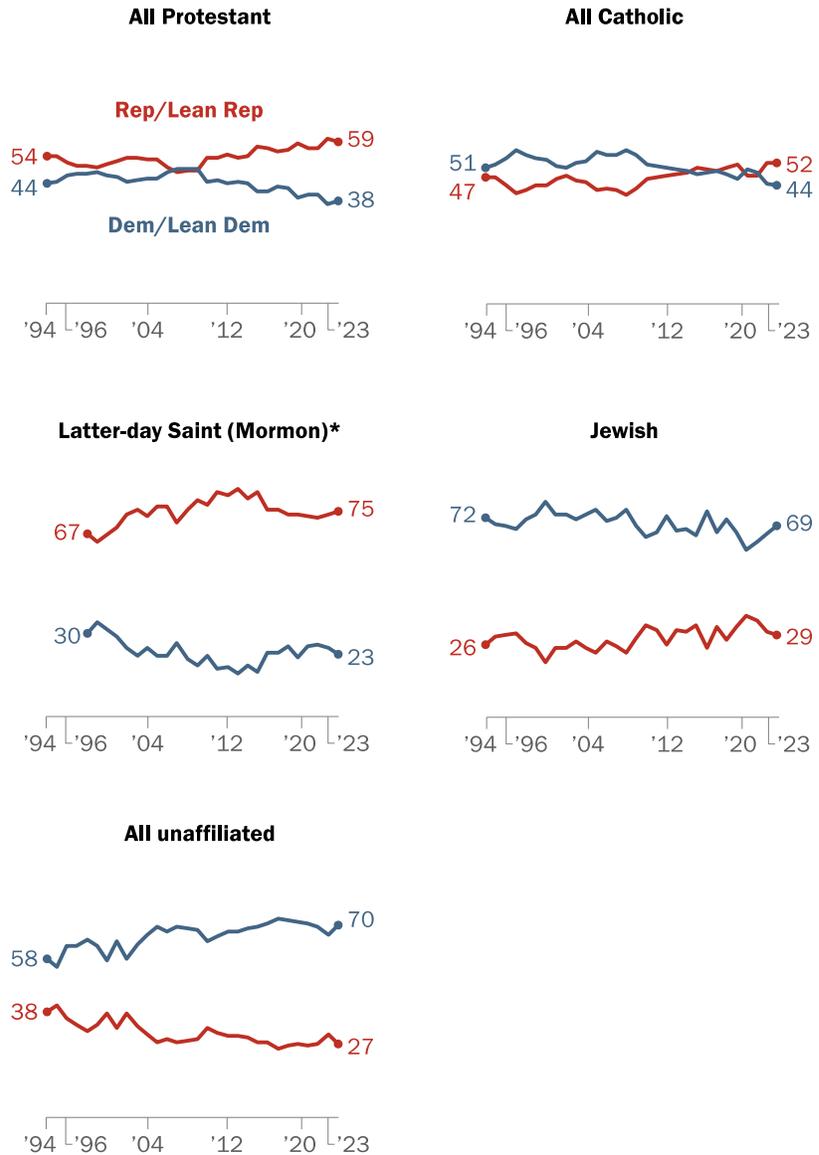
About seven-in-ten Jewish voters (69%) associate with the Democratic Party, while 29% affiliate with the Republican Party. The share of Jewish voters who align with the Democrats has increased 8 percentage points since 2020.

Muslims associate with Democrats over Republicans by a wide margin.

Currently, 66% of Muslim voters say they are Democrats or independents who lean Democratic, compared with 32% who are Republicans or lean Republican. (Data for Muslim voters is not available for earlier years because of small sample sizes.)

Protestants remain solidly Republican, and Catholics now tilt toward the GOP

% of registered voters in each group who are ...



* Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) have a relatively small sample size in 2023 of 154, for an effective sample size of 89 (margin of error of +/- 10.4 percentage points at 95% confidence).

Note: Based on registered voters. Telephone data adjusted for survey mode; details in Appendix A. Insufficient sample to show Latter-day Saint voters in 2000.

Source: Annual totals of Pew Research Center telephone surveys (1994-2018) and American Trends Panel annual profile online surveys (2019-2023).

Democrats maintain a wide advantage among religiously unaffiliated voters.

Religious “nones” have become more Democratic over the past few decades as their size in the U.S. population overall and in the electorate has grown significantly. While 70% of religiously unaffiliated voters align with the Democratic Party, just 27% identify as Republicans or lean Republican.

Related: [*Religious “nones” in America: Who they are and what they believe*](#)

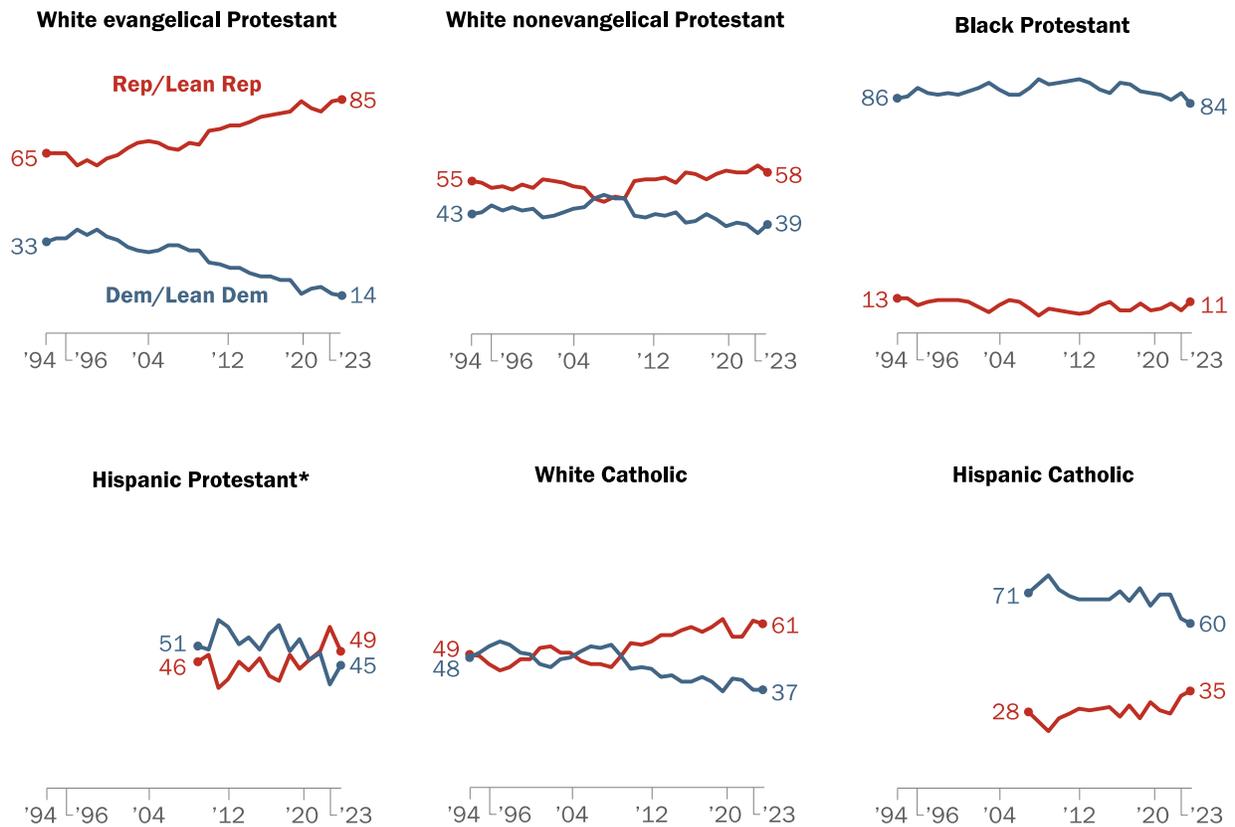
Religion, race and ethnicity, and partisanship

Over the past few decades, White evangelical Protestant voters have moved increasingly toward the GOP.

- Today, 85% of White evangelical voters identify with or lean toward the GOP; just 14% align with the Democrats.

How race, ethnicity and religious identification intersect with voters' partisanship

% of registered voters in each group who are ...



* Hispanic Protestants had a relatively small sample size in 2022 of 285, for an effective sample size of 93 (margin of error of +/- 10.1 percentage points at 95% confidence).

Note: Based on registered voters. Telephone data adjusted for survey mode; details in Appendix A. White and Black voters include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic voters are of any race. Insufficient sample to Hispanic Catholic voters in 2008. Data for Hispanic voters shown only for years with interviews in English and Spanish.

Source: Annual totals of Pew Research Center telephone surveys (1994-2018) and American Trends Panel annual profile online surveys (2019-2023).

- Over the past three decades, there has been **a 20 percentage point rise in the share of White evangelicals who associate with the GOP** – and a 20-point decline in the share identifying as or leaning Democratic.

Over the past 15 years, the GOP also has made gains among White nonevangelical and White Catholic voters.

About six-in-ten White nonevangelicals (58%) and White Catholics (61%) align with the GOP. Voters in both groups were equally divided between the two parties in 2009.

Partisanship among Hispanic voters varies widely among Catholics and Protestants.

- 60% of Hispanic Catholic voters identify as Democrats or lean Democratic, but that share has declined over the past 15 years.
- Hispanic Protestant voters are evenly divided: 49% associate with the Republican Party, while 45% identify as Democrats or lean Democratic.

A large majority of Black Protestants identify with the Democrats (84%), but that share is down 9 points from where it was 15 years ago (93%).

Party identification among atheists, agnostics and ‘nothing in particular’

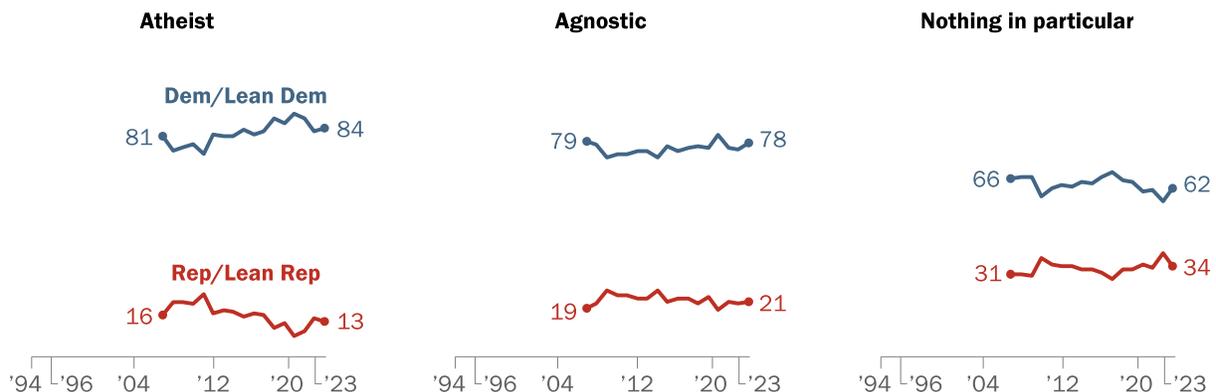
Atheists and agnostics, who make up relatively small shares of all religiously unaffiliated voters, are heavily Democratic.

Among those who identify their religion as “nothing in particular” – and who comprise a majority of all religious “nones” – Democrats hold a smaller advantage in party identification.

- More than eight-in-ten **atheists** (84%) align with the Democratic Party, as do 78% of **agnostics**.
- 62% of voters who describe themselves as “**nothing in particular**” identify as Democrats or lean Democratic, while 34% align with the GOP.

Religious ‘nones’ are majority Democratic, especially those who identify as atheist or agnostic

% of registered voters in each group who are ...



Note: Based on registered voters. Telephone data adjusted for survey mode; details in Appendix A.

Source: Annual totals of Pew Research Center telephone surveys (1994-2018) and American Trends Panel annual profile online surveys (2019-2023).

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Partisanship and religious service attendance

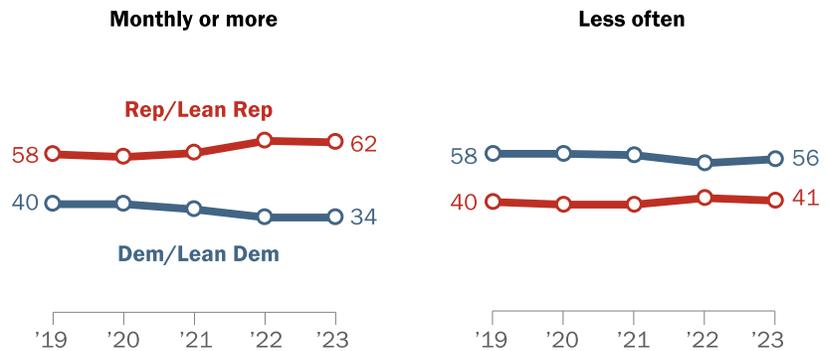
Voters who regularly attend religious services are more likely to identify with or lean toward the Republican Party than voters who attend less regularly.

In 2023, 62% of registered voters who attended religious services once a month or more aligned with Republicans, compared with 41% of those who attend services less often.

This pattern has been evident for many years. However, the share of voters who identify as Republicans or lean Republican has edged up in recent years.

Republicans hold majority among voters who regularly attend religious services; most less frequent observers align with the Democratic Party

% of registered voters who are ___ among those who attend religious services ...



Note: Based on registered voters. No answer responses not shown.
Source: American Trends Panel annual profile surveys conducted 2019-2023.

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For White, Hispanic and Asian voters, **regular attendance at religious services is linked to an increase in association with the Republican Party.**

However, **this is not the case among Black voters.**

Only about one-in-ten Black voters who are regular attenders (13%) and a similar share (11%) of those who attend less often identify as Republicans or Republican leaners.

Higher GOP association among regular attenders of religious services is seen across most denominations.

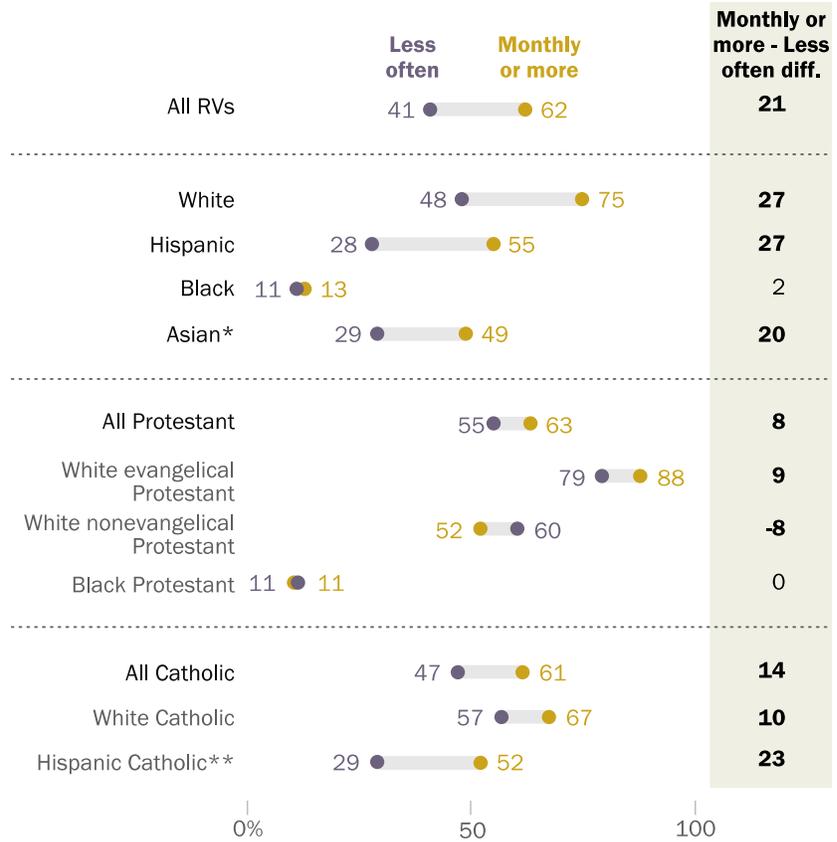
For example, among Catholic voters who attend services monthly or more often, 61% identify as Republicans or lean toward the Republican Party.

Among less frequent attenders, 47% align with the GOP.

Black Protestants are an exception to this pattern: Black Protestant voters who attend religious services monthly or more often are no more likely to associate with the Republican Party than less frequent attenders.

Across most Christian denominations, voters who attend services regularly are more likely than others to align with the GOP

*% of registered voters who are **Republican/lean Republican** among those who attend religious services ...*



* Estimates for Asian voters are representative of English speakers only. There are 136 Asian voters who attend church monthly or more, for an effective sample size of 70 (margin of error of +/- 11.7 percentage points at 95% confidence).

** There are 167 Hispanic Catholics who attend monthly or more, for an effective sample size of 50 (margin of error of +/- 13.9 points). There are 289 Hispanic Catholics who attend less often, for an effective sample size of 97 (margin of error of +/- 9.9 points).

Note: Based on registered voters. White and Black voters include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic voters are of any race. Statistically significant differences in **bold**.

Source: 2023 American Trends Panel annual profile survey conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

6. Partisanship by family income, home ownership, union membership and veteran status

Economic indicators such as family income, home ownership and union membership are all associated with partisanship.

Partisanship by income groups

Democrats have a substantial advantage over Republicans among voters in the *lowest* income tier, and a modest advantage among those at the *highest* income tier:

- About six-in-ten voters with lower family incomes (58%) associate with the Democratic Party, compared with 36% who affiliate with the Republican Party.
- Among upper-income voters – those on the other end of the income spectrum – 53% are Democrats or Democratic leaners, while 46% are Republicans or GOP leaners.

But Republicans have a modest edge among upper-middle-income voters. Voters in the lower-middle tier and those squarely in the middle of the income distribution are roughly evenly split in their partisan orientation.

Read the [methodology](#) for more about income tiers, which are adjusted for household size and cost of living.

Voters at the lowest and highest income levels tilt more Democratic than middle- and upper-middle-income voters

Among registered voters in each income tier, % who are ...

	Dem/ Lean Dem	Rep/ Lean Rep
Lower income	58	36
Lower-middle income	50	46
Middle income	48	51
Upper-middle income	46	52
Upper income	53	46

Note: Based on registered voters. Family income tiers are based on adjusted 2022 earnings. No answer responses not shown. Source: 2023 American Trends Panel annual profile survey conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

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The relationship between income and partisanship differs by education

Among voters without a bachelor's degree, higher income is associated with being more Republican. But there are no income differences in partisanship among college graduates.

While [voters who do not have a bachelor's degree tilt Republican overall](#), this differs across income groups.

Among voters without a college degree, those who are in the lower or lower-middle tiers of family incomes are more likely than those in the middle and higher income groups to associate with the Democratic Party.

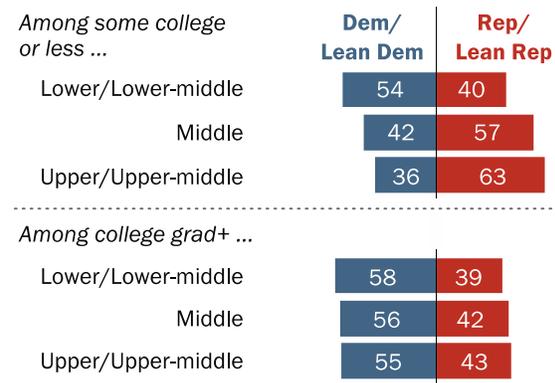
- A 54% majority of voters without a college degree who are lower or lower-middle income are Democrats or Democratic leaners.
- By contrast, 57% of voters without a college degree who are middle income and 63% of those who are upper or upper-middle income associate with the Republican Party.

College graduates' partisan allegiances do not differ by income level:

- By similar-sized margins, majorities of voters with a bachelor's degree or more in all income groups associate with the Democratic Party.

Wide income gap in partisanship among voters without bachelor's degrees

Among registered voters in each income tier, % who are ...



Note: Based on registered voters. Family income tiers are based on adjusted 2022 earnings. No answer responses not shown. Source: 2023 American Trends Panel annual profile survey conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

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Union members remain more Democratic than Republican

Union members have long been a Democratically oriented group – and that remains the case today.

Today, nearly six-in-ten voters who belong to a union (59%) associate with the Democratic Party, while around four-in-ten (39%) identify with or lean toward the GOP.

Voters who do not belong to a union are about equally likely to associate with each of the two parties: 49% are Republicans or Republican leaners, while 48% are Democrats or Democratic leaners.

A majority of union members affiliate with the Democratic Party

% of registered voters who are ...

	Dem/ Lean Dem	Rep/ Lean Rep
Union members	59	39
Not union members	48	49

Note: Based on registered voters. No answer responses not shown.
Source: 2023 American Trends Panel annual profile survey conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

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Homeowners are more Republican than renters

About half of voters who own a home (51%) align with the GOP, while slightly fewer (45%) are Democrats or Democratic leaners.

Voters who rent, however, favor Democrats by two-to-one: 64% of voters who rent their home associate with the Democratic Party, while 32% identify with or lean toward the Republican Party.

Homeowners are slightly more Republican-oriented, while Democrats have a clear advantage among renters

% of registered voters who are ...

	Dem/ Lean Dem	Rep/ Lean Rep
Homeowners	45	51
Renters	64	32

Note: Based on registered voters. No answer responses not shown.
Source: 2023 American Trends Panel annual profile survey conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

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Partisanship of military veterans

Voters who are military veterans favor the Republican Party: 63% identify with or lean toward the GOP, while far fewer (35%) are Democrats or Democratic leaners.

Non-veteran voters tilt more Democratic: About half (51%) associate with the Democratic Party, while 46% affiliate with the Republican Party.

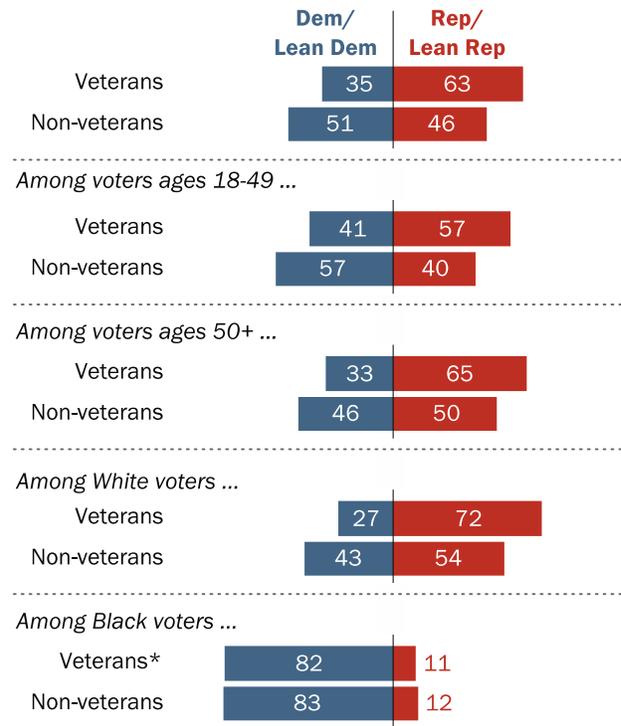
The Republican Party's relative advantage among veterans is seen among both older and younger voters. In both groups, veterans are about 15 percentage points more Republican-oriented than non-veterans.

Similarly, among White voters, veterans are substantially more Republican-aligned than non-veterans. Around seven-in-ten White veterans (72%) identify with or lean toward the Republicans. By contrast, 54% of White non-veterans are Republicans or GOP leaners.

In contrast, among Black voters there is no difference in the partisanship of veterans and non-veterans (about eight-in-ten in both groups associate with the Democratic Party).

By a wide margin, military veterans are more likely to associate with the GOP

% of registered voters who are ...



* Black veterans had a relatively small sample size of 153, for an effective sample size of 87 (margin of error of +/- 10.5 percentage points at 95% confidence).

Note: Based on registered voters. White and Black voters include those who report being one race and are not Hispanic. No answer responses not shown.

Source: 2023 American Trends Panel annual profile survey conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

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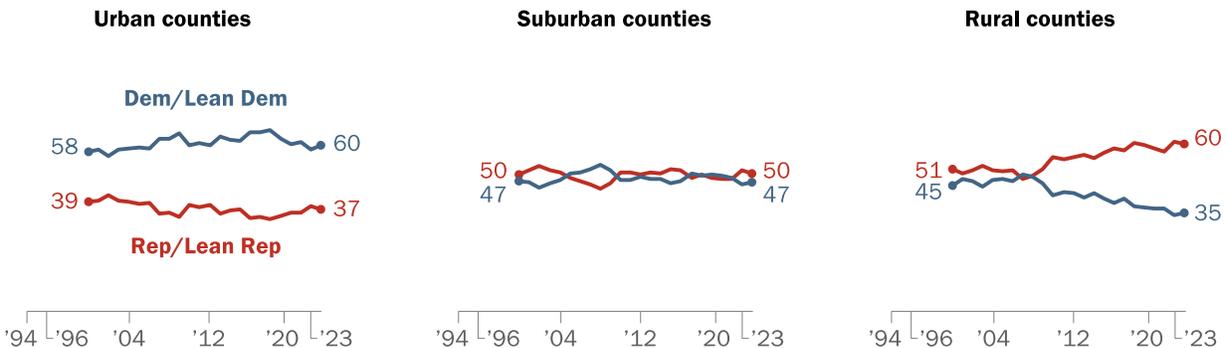
7. Partisanship in rural, suburban and urban communities

Voters' partisanship has long varied by the type of community they live in. Those in urban counties mostly align with the Democratic Party, while the reverse is true among those in rural counties. In suburbs, [where a majority of Americans live](#), voters' partisanship is fairly evenly divided.

There have been only modest changes in these patterns in recent years. Over the past two decades, however, **voters in rural counties have become increasingly Republican.**

Partisanship among voters in urban and rural communities are mirror images; suburban voters continue to be closely divided

Among those who live in _____, % of registered voters who are ...



Note: Based on registered voters. County definitions based on 2013 National Center for Health Statistics Urban-Rural Classification Scheme. Source: Annual totals of Pew Research Center telephone surveys (1994-2018) and American Trends Panel annual profile online surveys (2019-2023).

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- In 2000, the Republican Party held a narrow leaned identification advantage over the Democratic Party among **rural voters** (51% vs. 45%), but that grew substantially over the next decade. By 2010, the GOP's advantage had widened to 13 percentage points. It has nearly doubled since then, and the Republican Party now holds a 25-point edge over the Democratic Party.
- The Democratic Party, by contrast, has a nearly identical advantage among **voters in urban counties**: 60% identify with or lean to the Democratic Party, while 37% identify as or lean Republican. This gap has been relatively consistent over the past two decades, though it is slightly narrower than in 2016 (when 65% of voters in urban counties associated with the Democratic Party and 34% with the GOP).
- By comparison, **suburban voters** have been closely divided over the past two decades. Half of voters in suburban counties currently align with the Republican Party, while 47% associate with the Democratic Party – identical to the shares who aligned with each party in 2000.

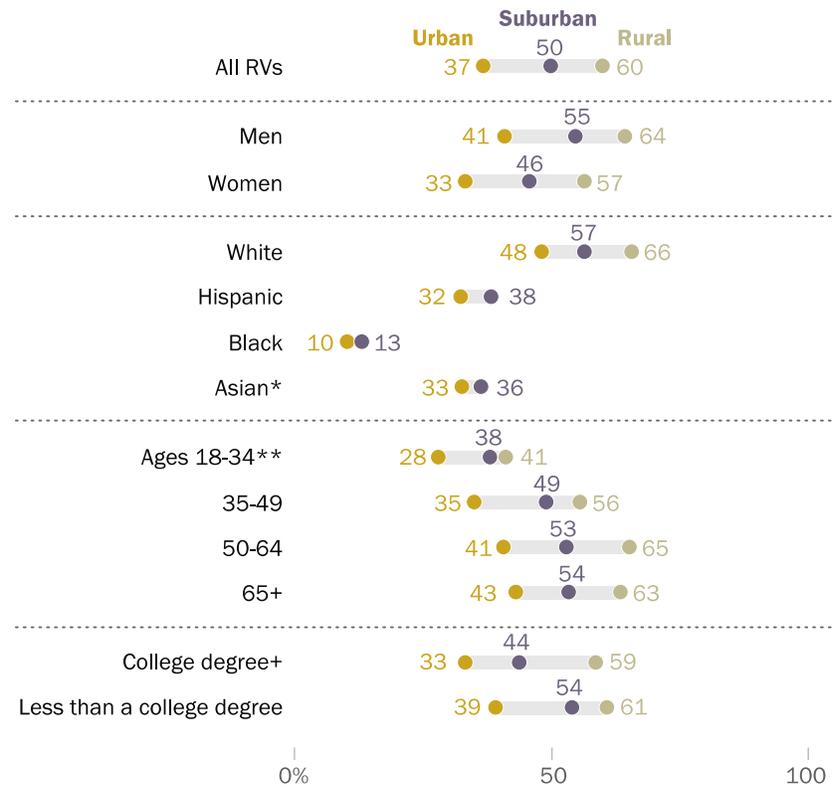
Demographic differences in partisanship by community type

For the most part, the demographic differences in partisanship seen among all voters are evident among those living in different community types.

- Women voters are less likely than men to align with the GOP, and this is evident across urban, suburban and rural counties.
- Younger voters are less committed to the Republican Party than are older voters, regardless of the type of county in which they live.
- White voters in rural counties are especially likely to identify as Republican or lean Republican (66% do so). That compares with 57% of White voters in suburbs and 48% in urban counties.
- Among Hispanic, Black and Asian voters, there is little difference in partisanship between those who live in urban counties and those who live in suburban counties. *(Hispanic, Asian and Black rural voters are smaller groups, and sample sizes do not allow for separate reporting.)*

Gender, education, race and ethnicity differences in partisanship by community type

Among those who live in ___ counties, % of registered voters who are **Republicans/lean Republican**



* Estimates for Asian voters are representative of English speakers only.
 ** Ages 18-34 in rural counties have a relatively small sample size. There are 91 respondents, an effective sample size of 53 (margin of error of +/- 13.5 percentage points at 95% confidence).

Note: Based on registered voters. Insufficient sample to show rural estimates for Hispanic, Black and Asian voters. County definitions based on 2013 National Center for Health Statistics Urban-Rural Classification Scheme.

Source: The 2023 American Trends Panel annual profile survey conducted Aug. 7-27, 2023.

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8. The changing demographic composition of voters and party coalitions

Mirroring changes in the U.S. population overall, registered voters have become more educated, more racially and ethnically diverse, older, and more religiously diverse over the past three decades.

Many of these changes have altered the makeup of *both* parties, but several have had a more pronounced impact on the Democratic Party than the Republican Party.

Race and ethnicity

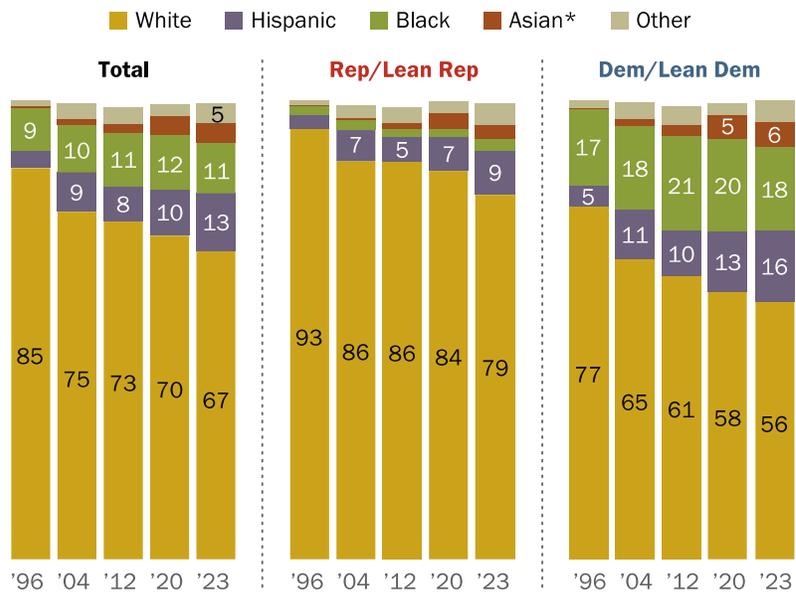
As the United States has become more racially and ethnically diverse, so too has the electorate.

Today, 67% of registered voters are White, 13% are Hispanic, 11% are Black and 4% are Asian. In 1996, when President Bill Clinton was running for reelection, 85% of voters were White, 4% were Hispanic, 9% were Black and about 1% were Asian.

Both parties are more racially and ethnically diverse than three decades ago, but not to the same degree. There has been more change in the composition of the Democratic coalition than the Republican coalition.

Both parties grow more racially and ethnically diverse – but changes are larger for the Democratic Party

% of registered voters who are ...



* Estimates for Asian voters are representative of English speakers only.
 Note: Based on registered voters. Telephone data adjusted for survey mode; details in Appendix A. White, Black and Asian voters include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic voters are of any race. No answer responses not shown.
 Source: Annual totals of Pew Research Center telephone surveys (1994-2018) and American Trends Panel annual profile online surveys (2019-2023).

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- White voters make up 79% of **Republicans and Republican leaners**. In 1996, they constituted 93% of the party's

voters. Hispanic voters have tripled from 3% to 9% of the GOP over this period. Black and Asian voters are each currently 3% of the party.

- Within the **Democratic coalition**, the share who are non-Hispanic White has fallen 21 percentage points since 1996 (from 77% to 56%). The share who are Hispanic has about tripled, from 5% then to 16% today. Asian voters have increased from less than 1% of Democrats' coalition to 6% over the same period. The share of Black voters within the Democratic coalition has remained fairly stable, and they currently make up 18% of Democratic and Democratic-leaning voters.

Age and the U.S. electorate

The electorate has grown older in recent decades. Currently, **about six-in-ten voters are ages 50 and older** (29% are 50 to 64 and 29% are 65 and older). By comparison, 41% of voters were 50 and older in 1996.

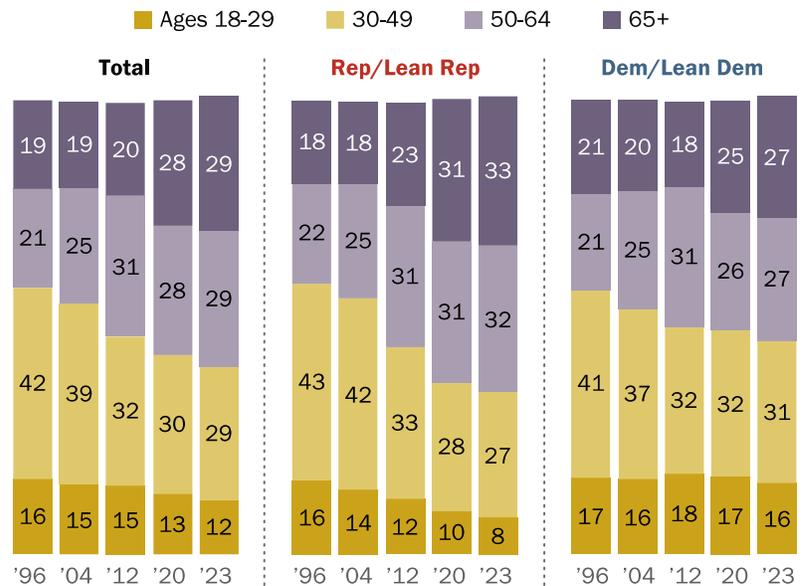
Reflecting this broader change, both parties' voters are significantly older now than they were 20 years ago. But today Republican and Republican-leaning voters tend to be older than voters in the Democratic coalition. (In 1996, there was very little difference between the age profiles of the two parties.)

- About two-thirds of voters who align with the Republican Party are **50**

and older (32% are 50 to 64 and 33% are 65-plus), compared with slightly more than half of those who associate with the Democratic Party (27% each for ages 50 to 64 and those 65 and older). The share of voters **under 30** is twice as large among Democrats (16%) than Republicans (8%). A similar share in each party falls **between the ages of 30 and 49** (27% among the Republican Party and 31% among the Democratic Party).

Voters have gotten older since the 1990s, but the change is particularly evident in the GOP

% of registered voters who are ...



Note: Based on registered voters. Telephone data adjusted for survey mode; details in Appendix A. No answer responses not shown.

Source: Annual totals of Pew Research Center telephone surveys (1994-2018) and American Trends Panel annual profile online surveys (2019-2023).

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Education

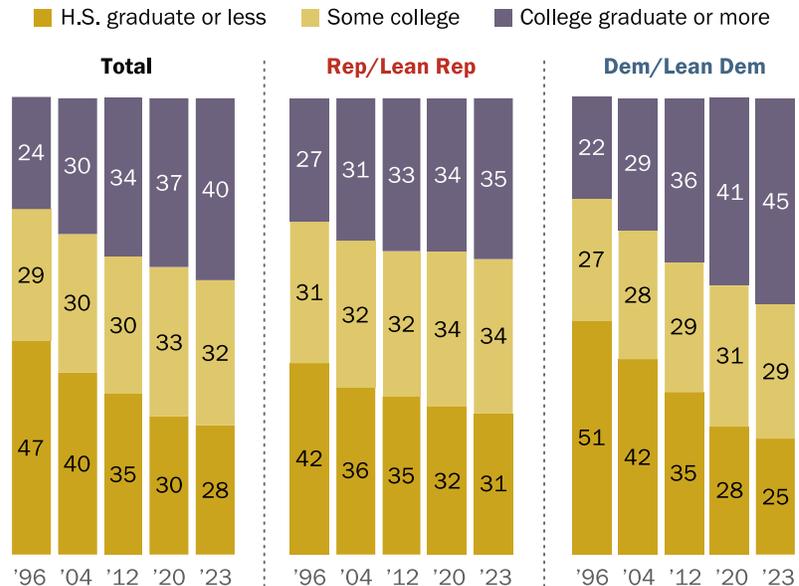
The share of **voters with a bachelor's degree or more** has increased significantly among registered voters since 1996, from about a quarter (24%) to four-in-ten today.

Voters with a high school degree or less education have declined roughly in parallel, so that now about three-in-ten have a high school degree or less (28%), compared with nearly half (47%) in 1996. The share of voters with some college experience but no bachelor's degree has remained relatively stable across this period (32% today, 29% in 1996).

- Among voters who associate with the **Democratic Party**, the share of voters with a college degree or more has approximately doubled since 1996, from 22% to 45% now. The share of Democratic voters who have no college experience has fallen by about half (from 51% to 25%).
- The **Republican coalition** has also become more educated, but much more modestly. Today, the GOP's supporters are divided about equally between those who never went to college (31%), those who attended college but didn't receive a bachelor's degree (34%) and those who have a bachelor's degree or more (35%).

Share of Democratic voters with bachelor's degrees has roughly doubled since 1990s; less change in the educational profile among Republican voters

% of registered voters who are ...



Note: Based on registered voters. Telephone data adjusted for survey mode; details in Appendix A. No answer responses not shown.

Source: Annual totals of Pew Research Center telephone surveys (1994-2018) and American Trends Panel annual profile online surveys (2019-2023).

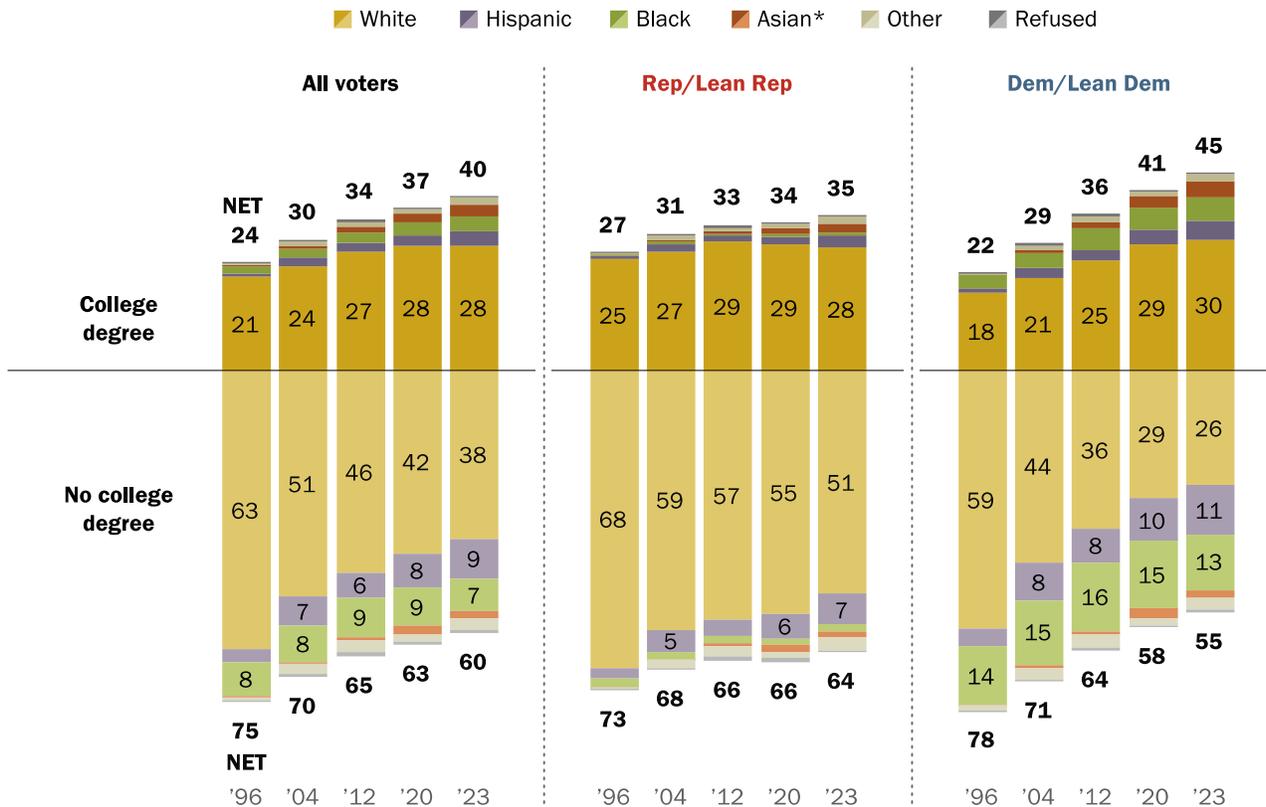
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Education by race and ethnicity

The dual trends of increasing education levels and increasing racial and ethnic diversity over the last three decades have resulted in dramatic changes to the electoral landscape.

White voters without a bachelor's degree make up about half of GOP voters and about a quarter of Democratic voters

% of registered voters who are ...



* Estimates for Asian voters are representative of English speakers only.

Note: Based on registered voters. Telephone data adjusted for survey mode; details in Appendix A. White, Black and Asian voters include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic voters are of any race. No answer responses to education not shown. Source: Annual totals of Pew Research Center telephone surveys (1994-2018) and American Trends Panel annual profile online surveys (2019-2023).

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White voters without a bachelor's degree remain the largest single group of voters across education levels, race and ethnicity. But where they once represented a clear majority (63%) in 1996, they are now about four-in-ten voters overall (38%).

Overall, about two-in-ten voters are Hispanic (9%), Black (7%) or Asian (2%) and without a bachelor's degree.

Non-Hispanic White adults with a bachelor's degree or more represent 28% of voters today, which is up modestly since 1996 (21%). Approximately one-in-ten registered voters are **Hispanic (3%), Black (3%) or Asian (3%) and have bachelor's degrees.**

The Republican Party

- White voters without a college degree remain the largest bloc within the Republican coalition, but their share has fallen by 17 percentage points since 1996 (from 68% to 51%).
- 28% of those who associate with the GOP are White voters with a bachelor's degree, roughly on par with the 25% who were White college graduates in 1996.
- 7% of Republican and Republican-leaning voters are Hispanic without a degree, up from 2% in 1996. Another 3% are Hispanic with a degree (1% in 1996).

The Democratic Party

The Democratic Party does not have a single dominant bloc of voters across education levels, race and ethnicity.

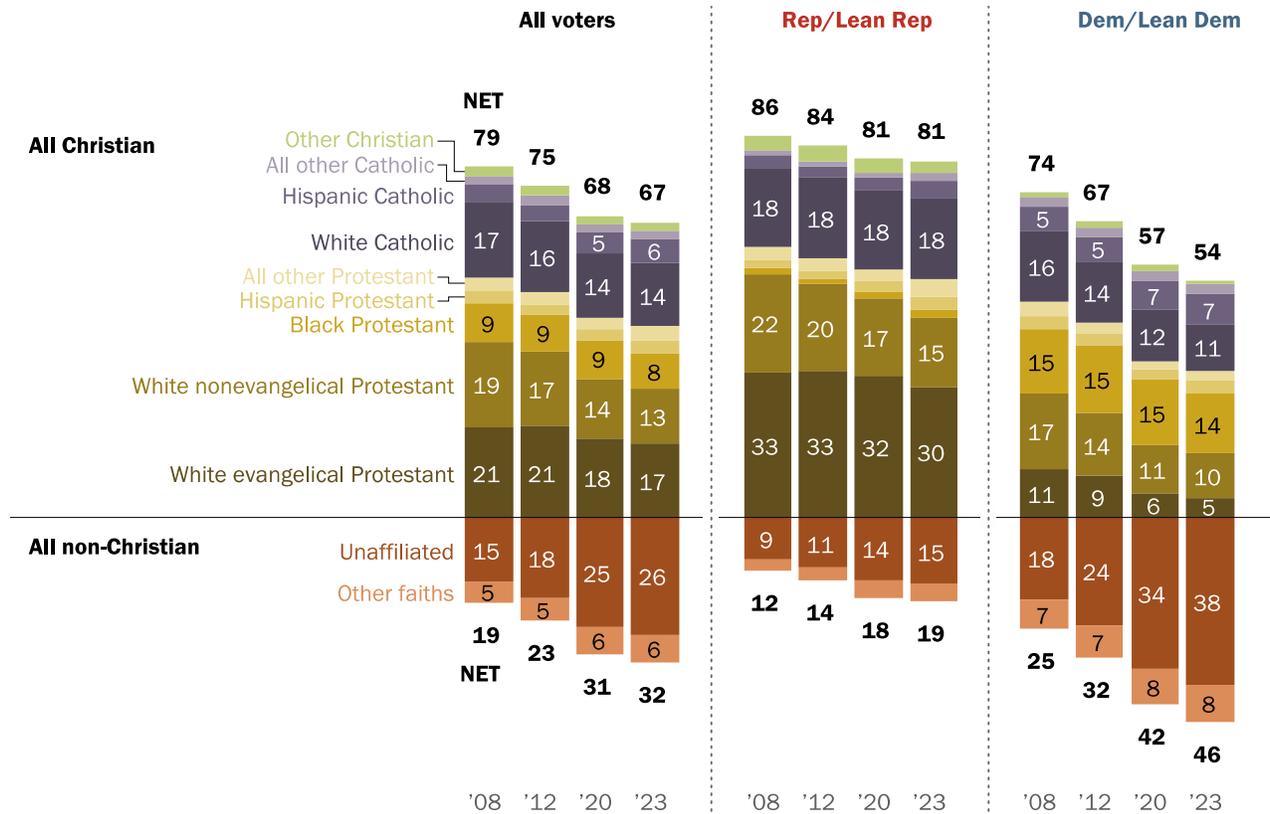
- Three-in-ten voters in the Democratic coalition are White with a bachelor's degree, up from 18% in 1996.
- About a quarter are White voters without a degree (26%). In 1996, this group made up a majority (59%) of Democratic and Democratic-leaning voters.
- Black voters who do not have a bachelor's degree make up 13% of the Democratic coalition today, nearly identical to the 14% in 1996, while 5% of Democratic voters are Black college graduates (3% in 1996)
- Hispanic voters without a college degree constitute 11% of Democratically aligned voters today (up from 4% in 1996), while Hispanic voters with a degree are 4% of the coalition (1% in 1996).
- 4% of voters who affiliate with or lean to the Democrats are Asian voters with a bachelor's degree, and 2% are Asian voters without a degree (in 1996, Asian voters overall made up no more than 1% of all Democratic voters).

Religious affiliation

Americans have become **less Christian** and **less religious** in recent decades, and the electorate reflects those changes. **Two-thirds of voters identify with a Christian denomination, while about a quarter say they are religiously unaffiliated (26%).** Fifteen years ago, about eight-in-ten voters were Christians (79%) and 15% were unaffiliated. (We used different questions about religious affiliation prior to 2008, so comparable data only goes back 15 years.)

Declining shares of voters are Christian in both party coalitions, but the change is much more pronounced in the Democratic Party than the GOP

% of registered voters who are ...



Note: Based on registered voters. White, Black and Asian voters include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic voters are of any race. Refer to Appendix B for full details of religious category definitions. No answer responses not shown.

Source: Annual totals of Pew Research Center telephone surveys (1994-2018) and American Trends Panel annual profile online surveys (2019-2023).

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These broader trends of declining shares of Christians and increasing shares of religious “nones” have impacted the demographic composition of the two parties’ coalitions in diverging ways.

- The **Republican coalition** remains overwhelmingly Christian. About eight-in-ten Republican and Republican-leaning voters (81%) identify with a Christian religious denomination, which is down modestly from 2008 when 86% identified as Christian.

Among GOP voters, the shares who identify as White evangelical Protestants (30% now, 33% in 2008) and White Catholics (18% now and in 2008) are little changed over the past 15 years. White nonevangelical Protestants have declined as a share of Republican and Republican-leaning voters from 22% to 15% over the same period, while religious “nones” have grown from 9% to 15% of GOP voters.

- About half of voters in the **Democratic coalition** are Christian (54%), while 38% are religiously unaffiliated and 8% are of non-Christian faiths. As recently as 2008, Christians made up 74% of Democratically oriented registered voters. Over this time period, the share of religiously unaffiliated voters in the coalition has roughly doubled.

Today, White evangelical (5%) and White nonevangelical Protestants (10%) are 15% of the Democratic coalition, down from 28% 15 years ago. The share of Democratically aligned voters who are Black Protestants has changed very little over this period (15% then to 14% now).

Ideological composition of voters

The electorate continues to have more voters who call themselves conservative than call themselves liberal. About a quarter of voters say they are **liberal (16%) or very liberal (8%)**, while 37% say they are **conservative (26%) or very conservative (10%)**.

Almost four-in-ten voters say they are **moderate (36%)**.

These shares are little changed since 2019.

The Republican coalition is overwhelmingly conservative: **49% of Republican-aligned voters say they are conservative and 20% say they are very conservative.**

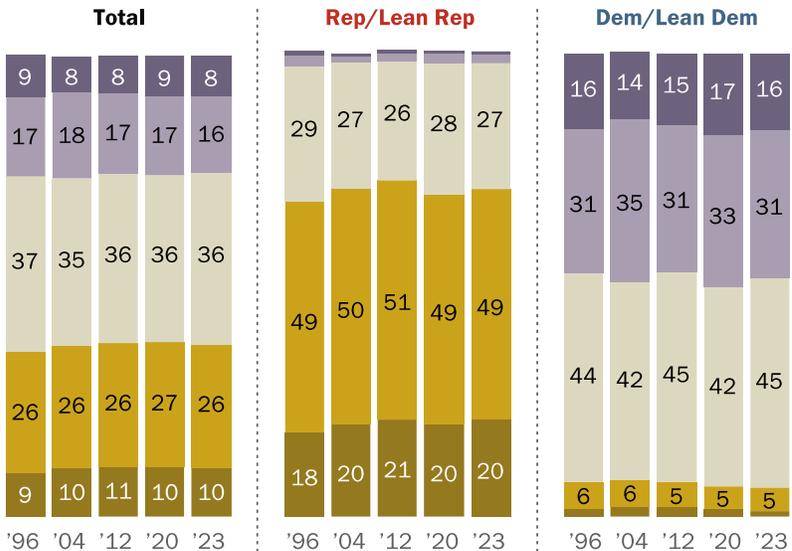
About three-in-ten GOP voters say they are moderate (27%), and there are very few liberal identifiers in the party (less than 5%).

The Democratic coalition is more ideologically mixed than the Republican coalition. Among voters who associate with the Democrats, **about half say they are very liberal (16%) or liberal (31%)**, while nearly as many say they are moderate (45%). Around 6% say they are conservative.

GOP coalition is majority conservative, while Democrats are split between liberals and moderates

% of registered voters who are ...

Very conservative Conservative Moderate Liberal Very liberal



Note: Based on registered voters. No answer responses not shown. Source: American Trends Panel annual profile surveys conducted 2019-2023.

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Acknowledgments

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

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We would like to thank former Pew Research Center senior researcher Bradley Jones for his valuable advice and recommendations. We also thank Senior Survey Advisor Scott Keeter for his thoughts and feedback throughout this project.

Methodology

Overview of survey methodologies

The analysis of changes in party identification over time is based on a compilation of survey estimates conducted by telephone between 1994 and 2018 and online surveys conducted on Pew Research Center's [American Trends Panel](#) between 2019 and 2023. Data from telephone surveys is adjusted to account for differences in survey mode; for details on the adjustment process, refer to [Appendix A](#).

The data from 1994 to 2018 is based on 262 telephone surveys and more than 355,000 interviews among registered voters conducted by Pew Research Center from January 1994 to December 2018. These surveys are combined into one large data file that can be sorted according to a range of demographic characteristics, with comparisons made across different time periods. Yearly totals are calculated by combining all surveys for the

Survey methodology summary by year

Year	Number of surveys	Sample size	Plus or minus ___ percentage points	Survey mode
1994	6	7,696	1.2	Telephone
1995	4	5,079	1.5	Telephone
1996	7	7,988	1.2	Telephone
1997	9	8,907	1.1	Telephone
1998	13	15,223	0.9	Telephone
1999	10	11,102	1.0	Telephone
2000	11	15,662	0.8	Telephone
2001	10	9,985	1.0	Telephone
2002	11	14,215	0.9	Telephone
2003	12	11,658	1.0	Telephone
2004	15	20,162	0.7	Telephone
2005	13	17,142	0.8	Telephone
2006	14	19,850	0.8	Telephone
2007	12	16,881	0.9	Telephone
2008	16	26,126	0.7	Telephone
2009	13	18,469	0.9	Telephone
2010	12	20,182	0.8	Telephone
2011	12	15,644	0.9	Telephone
2012	12	18,779	0.8	Telephone
2013	10	12,849	1.0	Telephone
2014	12	19,436	0.8	Telephone
2015	8	13,332	1.0	Telephone
2016	8	12,441	1.0	Telephone
2017	7	10,245	1.1	Telephone
2018	5	6,683	1.4	Telephone
2019	1	12,456	1.3	Online
2020	1	10,043	1.3	Online
2021	1	10,043	1.3	Online
2022	1	10,484	1.3	Online
2023	1	10,124	1.3	Online

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calendar year, with appropriate weights applied. The table shows the number of surveys and interviews conducted each year as well as the margin of error for each yearly sample.

The data from 2019 to 2023 is based on American Trends Panel annual profile surveys conducted each summer. These surveys included at least 10,000 respondents and were conducted online. The methodology for the 2023 American Trends Panel profile survey is below.

The 2023 American Trends Panel profile survey methodology

Overview

The American Trends Panel (ATP), created by Pew Research Center, is a nationally representative panel of randomly selected U.S. adults. Panelists participate via self-administered web surveys. Panelists who do not have internet access at home are provided with a tablet and wireless internet connection. Interviews are conducted in both English and Spanish. The panel is being managed by Ipsos.

The most current data in this report is drawn from ATP Wave 133, conducted from Aug. 7 to Aug 27, 2023. A total of 11,945 panelists responded out of 12,925 who were sampled, for a response rate of 92%. The cumulative response rate accounting for nonresponse to the recruitment surveys and attrition is 4%. The break-off rate among panelists who logged on to the survey and completed at least one item is less than 1%. The margin of sampling error for the full sample of 11,945 respondents is plus or minus 1.4 percentage points. The survey interviewed 10,124 registered voters, for a sampling error of plus or minus 1.3 percentage point.

Panel recruitment

The ATP was created in 2014, with the first cohort of panelists invited to join the panel at the end of a large, national, landline and cellphone random-digit-dial survey that was conducted in both English and Spanish. Two additional recruitments

American Trends Panel recruitment surveys

Recruitment dates	Mode	Invited	Joined	Active panelists remaining
Jan. 23 to March 16, 2014	Landline/ cell RDD	9,809	5,338	1,493
Aug. 27 to Oct. 4, 2015	Landline/ cell RDD	6,004	2,976	875
April 25 to June 4, 2017	Landline/ cell RDD	3,905	1,628	431
Aug. 8 to Oct. 31, 2018	ABS	9,396	8,778	4,096
Aug. 19 to Nov. 30, 2019	ABS	5,900	4,720	1,460
June 1 to July 19, 2020; Feb. 10 to March 31, 2021	ABS	3,197	2,812	1,535
May 29 to July 7, 2021; Sept. 16 to Nov. 1, 2021	ABS	1,329	1,162	783
May 24 to Sept. 29, 2022	ABS	3,354	2,869	1,684
April 17 to May 30, 2023	ABS	686	576	568
	Total	43,580	30,859	12,925

Note: RDD is random-digit dial; ABS is address-based sampling. Approximately once per year, panelists who have not participated in multiple consecutive waves or who did not complete an annual profiling survey are removed from the panel. Panelists also become inactive if they ask to be removed from the panel.

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were conducted using the same method in 2015 and 2017, respectively. Across these three surveys, a total of 19,718 adults were invited to join the ATP, of whom 9,942 (50%) agreed to participate.

In August 2018, the ATP switched from telephone to address-based sampling (ABS) recruitment. A study cover letter and a pre-incentive are mailed to a stratified, random sample of households selected from the U.S. Postal Service’s Delivery Sequence File. This Postal Service file has been estimated to cover as much as 98% of the population, although some studies suggest that the coverage could be in the low 90% range.¹ Within each sampled household, the adult with the next birthday is asked to participate. Other details of the ABS recruitment protocol have changed over time but are available upon request.²

We have recruited a national sample of U.S. adults to the ATP approximately once per year since 2014. In some years, the recruitment has included additional effort (known as an “oversample”) to boost sample size with underrepresented groups. For example, Hispanic adults, Black adults and Asian adults were oversampled in 2019, 2022 and 2023, respectively.

Across the six address-based recruitments, a total of 23,862 adults were invited to join the ATP, of whom 20,917 agreed to join the panel and completed an initial profile survey. Of the 30,859 individuals who have ever joined the ATP, 12,925 remained active panelists and continued to receive survey invitations at the time this survey was conducted.

The American Trends Panel never uses breakout routers or chains that direct respondents to additional surveys.

Sample design

The overall target population for this survey was noninstitutionalized persons ages 18 and older living in the U.S., including Alaska and Hawaii. All active panel members were invited to participate in this wave.

Questionnaire development and testing

The questionnaire was developed by Pew Research Center in consultation with Ipsos. The web program was rigorously tested on both PC and mobile devices by the Ipsos project management team and Pew Research Center researchers. The Ipsos project management team also populated

¹ AAPOR Task Force on Address-based Sampling. 2016. “[AAPOR Report: Address-based Sampling](#).”

² Email pewsurveys@pewresearch.org.

test data that was analyzed in SPSS to ensure the logic and randomizations were working as intended before launching the survey.

Incentives

All respondents were offered a post-paid incentive for their participation. Respondents could choose to receive the post-paid incentive in the form of a check or a gift code to Amazon.com or could choose to decline the incentive. Incentive amounts ranged from \$5 to \$20 depending on whether the respondent belongs to a part of the population that is harder or easier to reach. Differential incentive amounts were designed to increase panel survey participation among groups that traditionally have low survey response propensities.

Data collection protocol

The data collection field period for this survey was Aug. 7 to Aug. 27, 2023. Postcard notifications were mailed to all ATP panelists with a known residential address on Aug. 7.

Invitations were sent out in two separate launches: soft launch and full launch. Ninety panelists were included in the soft launch, which began with an initial invitation sent on Aug. 7. The ATP panelists chosen for the initial soft launch were known responders who had completed previous ATP surveys within one day of receiving their invitation. All remaining English- and Spanish-speaking sampled panelists were included in the full launch and were sent an invitation on Aug. 8.

All panelists with an email address received an email invitation and up to five email reminders if they did not respond to the survey. All ATP panelists who consented to SMS messages received an SMS invitation and up to five SMS reminders. On Aug. 25, interactive voice recording reminder calls were made to 39 tablet households that previously provided consent to receive these reminders.

Invitation and reminder dates, ATP Wave 133

	Soft launch	Full launch
Initial invitation	August 7, 2023	August 8, 2023
First reminder	August 11, 2023	August 11, 2023
Second reminder	August 15, 2023	August 15, 2023
Third reminder	August 18, 2023	August 18, 2023
Fourth reminder	August 22, 2023	August 22, 2023
Fifth reminder	August 25, 2023	August 25, 2023
Interactive voice recording reminder	August 25, 2023	August 25, 2023

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Data quality checks

To ensure high-quality data, the Center’s researchers performed data quality checks to identify any respondents showing clear patterns of satisficing. This includes checking for very high rates of leaving questions blank, as well as always selecting the first or last answer presented. As a result of this checking, two ATP respondents were removed from the survey dataset prior to weighting and analysis.

Weighting

The ATP data is weighted in a multistep process that accounts for multiple stages of sampling and nonresponse that occur at different points in the survey process. First, each panelist begins with a base weight that reflects their probability of selection for their initial recruitment survey. These weights are then rescaled and adjusted to account for changes in the design of ATP recruitment surveys from year to year. Finally, the weights are calibrated to align with the population benchmarks in the accompanying table to correct for nonresponse to recruitment surveys and panel attrition. If only a subsample of panelists was invited to participate in the wave, this weight is adjusted to account for any differential probabilities of selection.

American Trends Panel weighting dimensions

Variable	Benchmark source
Age (detailed)	2022 American Community Survey (ACS)
Age x Gender	
Education x Gender	
Education x Age	
Race/Ethnicity x Education	
Black (alone or in combination) x Hispanic	
Born inside vs. outside the U.S. among Hispanics and Asian Americans	
Years lived in the U.S.	
Census region x Metropolitan status	
Volunteerism	
Party affiliation x voter registration	2022 CPS Voting and Registration Supplement
Party affiliation x Race/Ethnicity	2023 National Public Opinion Reference Survey (NPORS)
Frequency of internet use	
Religious affiliation	

Note: Estimates from the ACS are based on noninstitutionalized adults. Voter registration is calculated using procedures from Hur, Achen (2013) and rescaled to include the total U.S. adult population.

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Among the panelists who completed the survey, this weight is then calibrated again to align with the population benchmarks identified in the accompanying table and trimmed at the 1st and 99.5th percentiles to reduce the loss in precision stemming from variance in the weights. Sampling errors and tests of statistical significance take into account the effect of weighting.

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.

Sample sizes and margins of error, ATP Wave 133

Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ___ percentage points
Registered voters	10,124	1.3
Men	4,506	2.1
Women	5,555	1.7
White voters	6,746	1.5
Hispanic voters	1,113	4.9
Black voters	1,276	3.9
Asian voters	510	5.9
Ages 18-24	181	10.2
25-29	398	6.5
30-39	1,335	3.6
40-49	1,589	3.1
50-59	1,904	2.9
60-69	2,333	2.7
70-79	1,801	3.0
80+	561	5.5
No college degree	4,902	1.9
College graduate+	5,182	1.7
Urban	3,153	2.6
Suburban	5,748	1.7
Rural	1,203	3.6
Lower income	1,261	3.9
Lower-middle income	704	5.3
Middle income	5,100	1.8
Upper-middle income	1,406	3.4
Upper income	1,051	3.6

Note: All groups are among registered voters.

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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.

Dispositions and response rates

Final dispositions, ATP Wave 133

	AAPOR code	Total
Completed interview	1.1	11,945
Logged on to survey; broke off	2.12	46
Logged on to survey; did not complete any items	2.1121	42
Never logged on (implicit refusal)	2.11	889
Survey completed after close of the field period	2.27	1
Completed interview but was removed for data quality		2
Screened out		0
Total panelists sampled for the survey		12,925
Completed interviews	I	11,945
Partial interviews	P	0
Refusals	R	977
Non-contact	NC	1
Other	O	2
Unknown household	UH	0
Unknown other	UO	0
Not eligible	NE	0
Total		12,925
AAPOR RR1 = I / (I+P+R+NC+O+UH+UO)		92%

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Cumulative response rate as of ATP Wave 133

	Total
Weighted response rate to recruitment surveys	11%
% of recruitment survey respondents who agreed to join the panel, among those invited	71%
% of those agreeing to join who were active panelists at start of Wave 133	49%
Response rate to Wave 133 survey	92%
Cumulative response rate	4%

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How family income tiers are calculated

Family income data reported in this study is adjusted for household size and cost-of-living differences by geography. Panelists then are assigned to income tiers that are based on the median adjusted family income of all American Trends Panel members. The process uses the following steps:

1. First, panelists are assigned to the midpoint of the income range they selected in a family income question that was measured on either the most recent annual profile survey or, for newly recruited panelists, their recruitment survey. This provides an approximate income value that can be used in calculations for the adjustment.
2. Next, these income values are adjusted for the cost of living in the geographic area where the panelist lives. This is calculated using price indexes published by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. These indexes, known as [Regional Price Parities \(RPP\)](#), compare the prices of goods and services across all U.S. metropolitan statistical areas as well as non-metro areas with the national average prices for the same goods and services. The most recent available data at the time of the annual profile survey is from 2021. Those who fall outside of metropolitan statistical areas are assigned the overall RPP for their state's non-metropolitan area.
3. Family incomes are further adjusted for the number of people in a household using the methodology from Pew Research Center's previous work on [the American middle class](#). This is done because a four-person household with an income of say, \$50,000, faces a tighter budget constraint than a two-person household with the same income.
4. Panelists are then assigned an income tier:
 - *Lower-income* adults are in families with adjusted family incomes that are less than half the median adjusted family income for the full ATP at the time of the most recent annual profile survey.
 - *Lower middle income* indicates adjusted family incomes from half to less than two-thirds of the median.
 - *Middle income* indicates adjusted incomes from two-thirds to less than double the median.
 - *Upper middle income* indicates adjusted family incomes from double to less than triple the median.
 - *Upper income* indicates adjusted family incomes that are at least triple the median.

The median adjusted family income for the panel is roughly \$71,800. Using this median income, the middle-income range is about \$47,900 to \$143,600. Lower-income families have adjusted incomes less than \$35,900 and lower-middle-income families have adjusted incomes from \$35,900 to less than \$47,900. Meanwhile, upper-middle-income families have adjusted incomes from \$143,600 to less than \$215,400, and upper-income families have adjusted incomes \$215,400 or greater. (All figures expressed in 2022 dollars and scaled to a household size of three.) If a panelist did not provide their income and/or their household size, they are assigned “no answer” in the income tier variable.

Two examples of how a given area’s cost-of-living adjustment was calculated are as follows: The Anniston-Oxford metropolitan area in Alabama is a relatively inexpensive area, with a price level that is 16.2% less than the national average. The San Francisco-Oakland-Berkeley metropolitan area in California is one of the most expensive areas, with a price level that is 19.8% higher than the national average. Income in the sample is adjusted to make up for this difference. As a result, a family with an income of \$41,900 in the Anniston-Oxford area is as well off financially as a family of the same size with an income of \$59,900 in San Francisco.

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Appendix A: Adjusting for mode effects when combining telephone surveys and the American Trends Panel

Since 2018, Pew Research Center’s primary U.S. public opinion source has been **online surveys** conducted on the nationally representative [American Trends Panel](#). Previously, **telephone surveys** were the Center’s primary U.S. public opinion source.

This transition from telephone to online surveys was necessary for a variety of reasons, including declining cooperation rates by telephone and increasing costs associated with reaching people on their cellphones. But it created a new challenge of determining how well these different survey modes align when studying long-term trends in public opinion (these differences across mode are known as “[mode effects](#)”).

Directly comparing answers from online and telephone surveys is complex because there are differences in how questions are asked of respondents *and* in how respondents answer those questions. These changes affected Pew Research Center’s measurements of party identification, making it necessary to adjust telephone trends for leaned party identification to account for mode effects in order to allow for direct comparisons over time.

Measuring party identification across survey modes

On both telephone and online surveys, party identification is measured by asking two questions. The first measures straight identification with the Republican or Democratic Party, while the second asks those who do not identify with one of the parties if they “lean” toward a party.

Telephone questions

The questions used on the telephone to measure the party identification offered three explicit responses: Republican, Democrat or Independent, but they allowed for a number of volunteered response options. These responses were not read by interviewers, but they could mark them as respondents’ answers if respondents said they did not identify with or lean toward either party.

ASK ALL:

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

- 1 Republican
- 2 Democrat
- 3 Independent
- 4 No preference **(VOL.)**
- 5 Other party **(VOL.)**
- 9 Don't know/Refused **(VOL.)**

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?

- 1 Republican
- 2 Democrat
- 9 Other/Don't know/Refused (**VOL.**)

Online questions

The transition to online surveys meant adjusting the questions. Because online surveys are not administered by an interviewer (that is, respondents see the question and answer the question without having to interact with an interviewer), it is not possible to replicate the “volunteered” response option that is available when there is an interviewer involved. Researchers had to decide whether or not to include explicit options for the previously volunteered response options.

After testing different approaches, a single additional explicit response option (“something else”) was added to the first question, but the second question only offers the original explicit options. This is because respondents tend to select explicit responses at far higher rates than they would have volunteered a similar response to an interviewer on the telephone.

FIRST SCREEN:**ASK ALL:**

PARTY In politics today, do you consider yourself a...

- 1 Republican
- 2 Democrat
- 3 Independent
- 4 Something else

SECOND SCREEN:**ASK IF INDEP/SOMETHING ELSE (PARTY=3, 4 OR REFUSED):**

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to...

- 1 The Republican Party
- 2 The Democratic Party

Adjusting telephone survey trends

As a result of these differences in administering phone and online surveys, partisan identification measurements differ between the two modes. One way to think about this is that if the same set of respondents was given an otherwise identical survey on the phone and online, the results would differ solely as a result of the way in which the survey was conducted. The biggest difference between the two modes is that there are fewer independents who do not lean toward a party in the online survey data than there are in the phone data.

To account for mode effects between the phone and web modes, a universal adjustment was applied to the party identification measures from Pew Research Center telephone surveys conducted between 1994 and 2018. This adjustment makes data from the two modes directly comparable.

Researchers determined the size of the adjustment using a statistical analysis of data from an experiment that directly tested the impact of telephone vs. web modes on responses to the party identification questions. Here are the details of this experiment and the statistical analysis:

In 2014, Pew Research Center conducted [an experiment](#) to assess the impact of answering a survey online versus by telephone on commonly measured public attitudes, including party identification. This survey was conducted July 7-Aug. 4, 2014, among 3,351 respondents on the Center's American Trends Panel. The survey randomly assigned half of its respondents to take the survey online, resulting in 1,509 online-mode completed interviews. The other half took the survey via a telephone interview, resulting in 1,494 phone-mode completed interviews. (The remaining completed interviews were completed by mail among respondents without web access and are excluded from this analysis.)

All respondents in the experimental survey answered questions about their party identification, allowing us to estimate the impact the different modes had. We fit a set of logistic regression models to the data from 2014 to estimate the impact of survey mode on party identification. The dependent variables in the models are five levels of partisanship (with the categories: Republican, Lean Republican, No lean/Don't know/No answer, Lean Democrat, and Democrat). The predictive variables in the model are survey mode (phone or online), gender, education, age category, race and ethnicity, and a measure of partisanship from a previous telephone survey that all respondents completed.³

The regressions return an adjustment parameter (the coefficient on the "mode" variable in the regression) that is applied to all phone estimates of party identification. The shares of leaned party identifiers for all phone surveys is converted to the logit scale ($z = \log(p/(1 - p))$), the coefficient from the regression is added to that share and the share is converted back to a probability ($p = 1/(1 + \exp(-z))$).

The adjustment method uses a single set of parameters to adjust all telephone surveys from 1994 to 2018. This requires some key assumptions: First, the strong assumption that the mode effect is constant over time (which is unavoidable because we do not have data back to the 1990s that

³ All American Trends Panel respondents in the experiment were recruited from two large telephone surveys in 2014. The respondents answered questions about their party identification on those surveys.

allows for comparing these survey modes). And second, this approach assumes that the mode effect is constant for all subgroups (a second adjustment strategy relaxed this assumption and produced nearly identical adjustments; details are below).

As a result of these adjustments, estimates of leaned party identification in previously published Pew Research Center reports differ from what is reported here. There was nothing inaccurate about the previous reports; they accurately discussed trends in party identification as measured using telephone surveys. Previously reported leaned party identification trends and the new adjusted trends tell essentially the same stories about how American voters' partisanship has changed over the past 30 years.

The biggest difference between the two modes is **there are fewer independents who do not lean toward a party in the online survey data than there are in the phone data**, thus the primary impact of the adjustment is increasing the shares of leaned partisanship for both parties. On average, the shares of Republicans and Republican leaners are about 3.8 percentage points higher in the adjusted data, while the share of Democrats and Democratic leaners are about 3.1 points higher in the adjusted data. For example, in 1994, the phone survey data (unadjusted) had leaned partisan identification at 46% Republican/lean Republican, 44% Democrat/lean Democratic. After adjustment, the 1994 data is 51% Republican/lean Republican, 47% Democrat/lean Democratic. The relative balance of partisan identification and the overall patterns of partisan identification are the same in both approaches.

Please visit the [full report from the 2014 mode experiment](#) for more on mode effects between telephone and online surveys.

Mode-adjustment validation

We validated the regression-based mode adjustments with a second approach known as multiple imputation. The two approaches produce nearly identical results.

The multiple-imputation approach relied on the fact that prior to 2019, the American Trends Panel recruitment surveys were conducted via telephone. Any panelists recruited during that time were first asked their party identification over the phone in their initial recruitment survey and then asked again online when they took their first survey on the ATP. For individuals who were only ever asked about their party identification over the phone, this method filled in likely values for what each person would have said if they had also been asked the question online. This was done using a statistical model based on those individuals for which both a phone and online

measurement were available. This process was then repeated multiple times on different random subsamples of the data in order to account for statistical uncertainty in the statistical modeling.

Appendix B: Religious category definitions

The “Other Protestant” category includes other minority Protestants as well as Protestants who declined to provide their race and a few White Protestants who were not asked the evangelical/born-again question.

The “Other Catholics” category includes other minority Catholics and Catholics who declined to provide their race.

“Other Christians” includes Latter-day Saints (Mormons) and Orthodox Christians.

The “Other faiths” category includes Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus and members of other faiths.

Religious category definitions

White evangelical Protestant
White nonevangelical Protestant

Black Protestant
Other Protestants

White Catholic
Hispanic Catholic

Other Catholics
Other Christians

Latter-day Saint (Mormon)

Orthodox Christian

Other faiths

Jewish

Muslim

Buddhist

Hindu

Unitarian

Other non-Christian faiths

Religiously unaffiliated

Atheist

Agnostic

Nothing in particular

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Appendix C: Age cohort definitions

This report uses age cohort groups that are defined as the decade when respondents were born. Decades are defined as the years sharing the same tens-place digit (e.g., the cohort born in the 1940s was born between Jan. 1, 1940, and Dec. 31, 1949).

Data is shown for years when the majority of an age cohort's members are ages 18 and older and ages 79 and younger. This means data for the younger cohorts is first reported for the year when their oldest members turn 26, and reporting stops when the majority of older cohorts are 80 or older (for example, the born in the 1920s and 1930s cohorts are not reported for 2023).

Age cohort definitions

Cohort	Years of birth	Ages in 2023
Born in the 1920s	1920-1929	N/A
Born in the 1930s	1930-1939	N/A
Born in the 1940s	1940-1949	74-83
Born in the 1950s	1950-1959	64-73
Born in the 1960s	1960-1969	54-63
Born in the 1970s	1970-1979	44-53
Born in the 1980s	1980-1989	34-43
Born in the 1990s	1990-1999	24-33

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