ARAB AMERICANS

A Yalla Vote® Tracking Poll

April 2023
During the second week of Arab American Heritage Month, the Arab American Institute conducted a nationwide poll of Arab American voters. It was a hybrid poll including online and telephone responses, conducted by Zogby Analytics. What follows are the key summary points.

Arab American opinion on President Biden is split. Though more favorably inclined than the than the general public, 47% of Arab Americans hold a favorable view and 47% hold a negative view of Mr. Biden. This represents a significant drop from a previous high of 74% favorable in our 2020 poll. Arab Americans have an overwhelmingly negative view of President Trump with 61% holding a negative attitude towards the former President, including 40% reporting a “very negative view.”

Alongside the low favorability rating for President Trump, Arab Americans have left the Republican party at an unprecedented rate. Support for the Republican party among Arab Americans dropped to 24% from 32% in 2020, bringing party support back down to pre-Trump Administration levels. This coincides with a steady growth in the number of Arab Americans who identify as being Independent. Independents overtook Republicans for the first time since 2012, with support at 28 percent. Arab Americans support for the Democratic party remains steady at 40% after a fall in 2020.

Looking to the legislative branch, a majority (53%) of Arab Americans say they would prefer a Democrat-controlled Congress. Thirty percent preferred Republicans and 17% remained unsure, including a plurality of Independents. Republicans support was highest among men and foreign-born Arab Americans, while Democrats do best with women and native-born Arab Americans. Democrats hold a significant lead over Republicans with younger voters, while Republicans lead with 65+ year-olds.

Nearly eight in ten Arab Americans were concerned with political polarization in the country, with 43% responding they were greatly concerned. When asked which party was to blame for political polarization, 48% blamed both parties, while 29% blame the Republicans and 23% blame the Democrats.
When asked to identify the top two challenges facing US-Arab Relations, 39% of Arab Americans cited the political and economic crises in Lebanon. This was followed closely by securing justice for Palestinians (37%) meeting the humanitarian needs of the Syrian people (37%). Among younger Arab Americans, those aged 18-29 and 30-49, securing justice for Palestinians remained the most cited concern; whereas older Arab Americans those aged 50-64 and 65+, respectively cited the humanitarian crisis in Syria and the crises in Lebanon as their top concerns.

Arab Americans are deeply concerned about First Amendment issues in the United States. When asked about the laws and executive orders over two dozen states that prohibit individuals, groups, or businesses from receiving state funding or employment if they are found to engage in activities that boycott Israel, 81% of Arab Americans said they were concerned these policies violate Americans’ right to freedom of speech. At the same time 73% expressed concern over book bans targeting Black history and the LGBTQ community, with 43% saying they were very concerned.

When provided a list of 14 policy concerns and asked to identify the issues they feel are most important in determining their votes in this election, 43% of Arab Americans said their number one concern was gun violence. This was followed by the budget deficit and controlling government spending (34%), jobs and the economy (33%), the environment and climate change (30%), and health care (20%). One in six democrats listed gun violence as their number one priority, while over half of Republicans (54%) chose the budget deficit. Independents were nearly evenly split on their number one priority, with 38% saying gun violence and 36% saying the budget deficit.

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When asked about how they would identify if a “Middle Eastern or North African” (MENA) category was added to the decennial census, a striking 74% of the population responded that they would use the MENA category. When asked how they would identify in combination with other racial and ethnic categories, 35% of Arab Americans would check MENA alone while 31% would check MENA and White, and 5% would check MENA and Black or African American.

Troublingly, 53% of Arab Americans reported experiencing discrimination because of their ethnicity or national origin. This percentages grew when looking at Arab American Muslims and younger generations (those ages 18-29 and 30-49). Fifty-eight percent of Arab American Muslims and 66% of younger generations of Arab Americans reported experiencing discrimination.

Arab Americans remain an active voting block with 94% of Arab Americans registered to vote. Where the Arab American vote will be most critical are in the key battleground states of Michigan (where they can be as much as 5% of the vote), and Ohio and Pennsylvania (where they are between 1.7 to 2% of likely voters).
• 40% of Arab Americans identify as Democrats, unchanged from 2020.

• 24% of Arab Americans identify as Republicans, a steep decline from 2020.

• 28% identify as Independents, the highest amount recorded since tracking began in 1996.
• Republicans’ drop in party identification reverting to pre-Trump levels.

• Democrats’ party identification remains steady after a fall in 2020.

• Independents continue a steady growth in party identification since 2014 and overtake Republicans for the first time since 2012.
Democrats lead Republicans on Control of Congress Preference

Which party would you rather have in control of Congress?

Democrats: 53%
Republicans: 30%
Not Sure: 17%

Arab American Poll – April 2023
Both Parties enjoy high levels of support from their members, showing a highly polarized environment.

A plurality of Independents are unsure which party they would prefer controlling Congress.

Republicans do best with men and foreign-born Arab Americans, while Democrats do best with women and native-born Arab Americans.
- Democrats hold a significant lead over Republicans with younger voters, while Republicans lead with 65+ year olds.

- Democrats enjoy strong support from Muslim and Catholic voters.

- Protestant/Orthodox voters are equally divided with Democrats at 41% and Republicans at 39%.
Arab Americans Divided Over President Biden

Overall, how would you rate your attitude towards President Biden?

- Very positive: 19
- Somewhat positive: 28
- Somewhat negative: 14
- Very negative: 33

Overall, how would you rate your attitude towards Former President Trump?

- Very positive: 21
- Somewhat positive: 14
- Somewhat negative: 40
- Very negative: 22

• Arab Americans are divided over President Biden with 47% having a favorable view, while 47% have a negative view.

• Positive attitudes toward President Biden are significantly lower than his 2020 mark of 74%.

• Arab Americans have an overwhelmingly negative view of former President Trump with 61% holding a negative attitude towards him, including 40% reporting a “very negative view.”
Arab Americans Overwhelmingly Concerned Over Polarization

- 79% of Arab Americans are concerned with political polarization.
- 48% blame both parties for political polarization, while 29% blame the Republicans and 23% blame the Democrats.
Arab American Voters on the Issues

Of the following issues, in your opinion, which are the most important in determining your vote in the 2024 election?

- Arab Americans’ largest concerns for the 2024 election are gun violence, the budget deficit, jobs and the economy, and climate change.
- Race relations and health care are also important to Arab Americans.

- Race relations in the US today
- Gun violence
- The environment and climate change
- Combating terrorism
- Addressing police violence
- The budget deficit and controlling government spending
- Addressing attacks on educational curriculums
- Social Security and Medicare
- Immigration reform
- Jobs and the economy
- Health care
- Abortion
- Protecting the integrity of our elections
- Crime
Arab Americans on Laws Restricting the Right to Boycott Israel

In more than two dozen states, laws or executive orders have been issued prohibiting individuals, groups, or businesses from receiving state funding or employment if they are found to engage in activities that boycott Israel. How concerned are you that such policies violate free speech rights of Americans?

- 81% of Arab Americans are concerned that policies targeting those boycotting Israel violate Americans’ right to freedom of speech.
Arab Americans Overwhelmingly Concerned About Book Banning Efforts

In some school systems across the country, specific books which were deemed controversial are being banned and removed from libraries. These include books containing Black history and LGBTQ content. How concerned are you about the efforts to ban these books?

- 73% of Arab Americans are concerned over the efforts to ban books in schools.

- Only 27% reported being somewhat or not concerned at all.
Majority of Arab Americans Report Facing Discrimination

Have you personally experienced discrimination in the past because of your ethnicity or country of origin?

- 53% of Arab Americans report experiencing discrimination
- 58% of Muslims and 66% of both 18–29 and 30–49-year-olds report facing discrimination.

Arab American Poll - April 2023
Arab Americans believe addressing the crises in Lebanon is the most important challenge facing US-Arab relations followed closely by securing justice for Palestinians and meeting the humanitarian needs of the Syrian people.
Arab Americans on a MENA Category

If the Census added a category of Middle Eastern or North African (MENA) that included the country of your ancestry, would you check off that category or would you not?

- 74% of Arab Americans would check off the MENA category on the Census.
- Only 22% would currently not check the MENA category.
If a MENA category were available on the Census in a combined race and ethnicity question asking you to check how you self-identify, which category or categories would you choose to describe yourself?

- 35% of Arab Americans would check MENA alone.
- 31% would check MENA and White and 19% would check White alone.
- 5% would check MENA and Black or African American.

**Arab American Poll – April 2023**
Zogby Analytics was commissioned by AAI to conduct a hybrid (online and live operator telephone) survey of 402 Arab Americans.

Telephone samples are randomly drawn from random telephone lists. Up to four calls are made to reach a sampled phone number, respondents that were not available but qualified to respond were allowed to set appointments to be recalled within the time frame of the field work.

Additionally, using internal and trusted interactive partner resources, thousands of adults were randomly invited to participate in this interactive survey. Each invitation was password coded and secure so that one respondent could only access the survey one time.

Using information based on census data, voter registration figures, and exit polls, we use complex weighting techniques to best represent the demographics of the population being surveyed. Weighted variables may include age, race, gender, region, party, education, and religion.

Based on a confidence interval of 95%, the margin of error for 402 is +/- 4.9 percentage points. This means that all other things being equal, the identical survey repeated will have results within the margin of error 95 times out of 100.

Subsets of the data have a larger margin of error than the whole data set. As a rule we do not rely on the validity of very small subsets of the data especially sets smaller than 50-75 respondents. At that subset we can make estimations based on the data, but in these cases the data is more qualitative than quantitative.

Additional factors can create error, such as question wording and question order.

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