Pinkston.

RONALD REAGAN CENTER ON CIVILITY AND DEMOCRACY

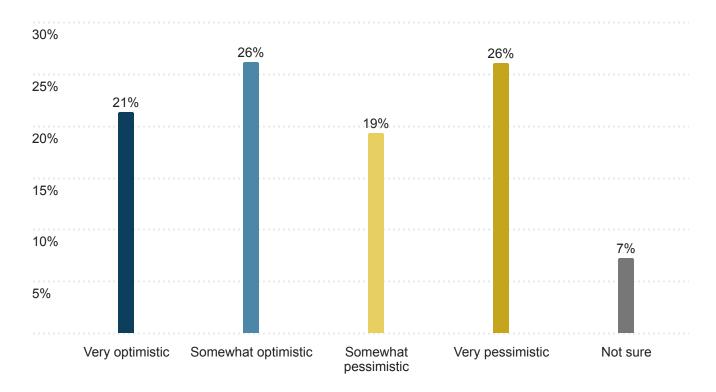
Survey on Civility and Democracy

Report of Findings Released March 5, 2025

Methodology: Pinkston conducted an online survey of a nationally representative sample of 1,555 U.S. adults on issues related to civility and democracy. The survey was conducted January 21-27, 2025 and has a margin of error of 2.3%.

Perceptions of Democracy and Leaders, Desire for Common Ground

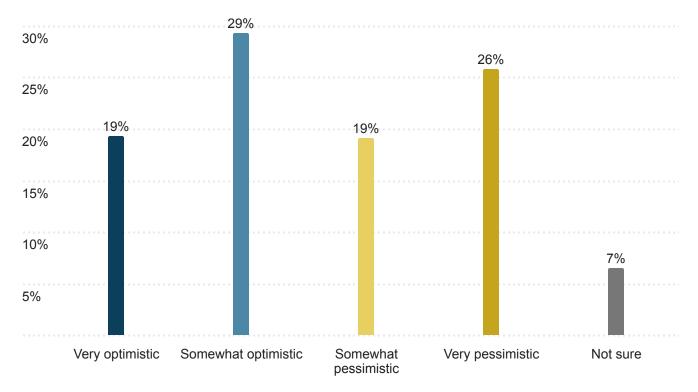
With the election behind us, are you optimistic or pessimistic about our country's ability to... Focus on what unites us (more than what divides us)



Americans are mixed in their expectations about the country's ability to focus on what unites us. *Immediately following the inauguration*, about half (47%) said they were optimistic and a similar amount (45%) expressed pessimism. These opinions were further split between strong convictions (21% very optimistic and 26% very pessimistic) and more moderate viewpoints (26% somewhat optimistic and 19% somewhat pessimistic).

- Republicans (72%) are most likely to be optimistic about the country's ability to focus on what unites us. Just 30% of Democrats and 36% of Independents are optimistic.
- Older Americans express less confidence in the future: those ages 65 and over (32%) are significantly more likely to be very pessimistic about our country's ability to focus on what unites compared with those who are ages 18-29 (24%) or 30-41 (20%).
- Rural residents (53%) are more optimistic than those in cities (46%) or suburbs (45%).
- Those with a household income of \$150k+ (53%) are more likely to be optimistic about the country's unity than those making less than \$30k (43%).

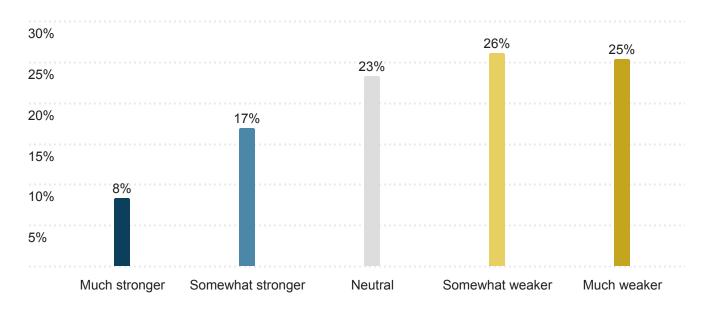
With the election behind us, are you optimistic or pessimistic about our country's ability to... Find "common ground" and work together



Feelings about the country's ability to find common ground and work together are similarly mixed. *Immediately following the inauguration*, about half (49%) said they were optimistic and a similar amount (45%) expressed pessimism. These opinions were further split between strong convictions (19% very optimistic and 26% very pessimistic) and more moderate viewpoints (29% somewhat optimistic and 19% somewhat pessimistic).

- Republicans (71%) are most likely to be optimistic about the country's ability to find common ground and work together. Just 31% of Democrats and 40% of Independents are optimistic.
- Older Americans express less confidence in the future: those ages 65 and over (33%) are significantly more likely to be very pessimistic about finding common ground and working together compared with those who are ages 18-29 (18%) or 30-41 (22%).
- Rural residents (53%) are more optimistic than those in cities (48%) or suburbs (46%).

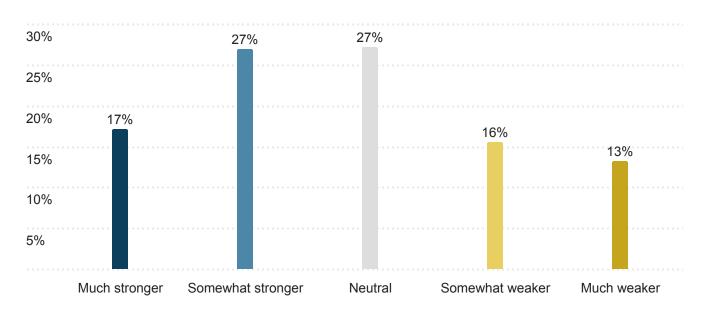
Looking at the state of our democracy today, would you say that our democracy is stronger or weaker than in the past?



Half of Americans (52%) believe our democracy is weaker today compared to only a quarter (25%) who say it is stronger. Perceptions skew towards "much weaker" (25%), with only 8% saying the state of our democracy today is much stronger than in the past.

- Independents (59%) and Democrats (61%) are more likely than Republicans (40%) to consider our democracy weaker today.
- Older Americans (72% over age 65 and 58% of ages 54-65) are more likely to say that our democracy is weaker compared to young people (38% of ages 18-29 and 34% of those ages 30-41).

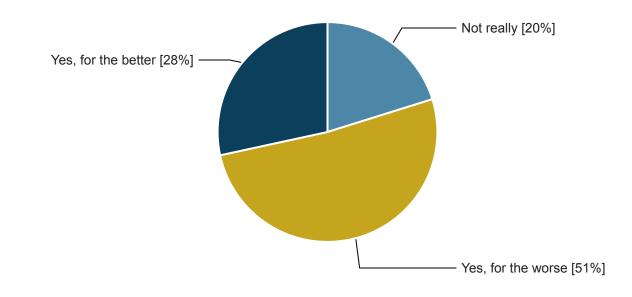
Looking ahead to the future of our democracy, would you say that our democracy will be stronger or weaker in the next 10 years?



Despite perceptions today, the outlook for the future is more optimistic. Just under half of Americans (44%) believe our democracy will be *stronger* in the next 10 years, compared to 29% who think it will be weaker.

- Republicans (64%) are more likely than Independents (32%) and Democrats (31%) to think our democracy will be stronger in the future.
- Younger Americans (47% of ages 18-29 and 52% of those ages 30-41) are more likely to believe that our democracy will be stronger in 10 years compared to older Americans (38% over age 65).

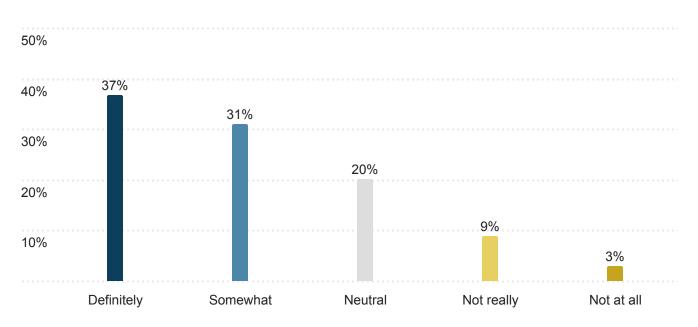
Do you believe the character and values of elected officials have changed?



Half of Americans (51%) cite a decline in elected officials' character and values. Twenty percent believe they are the same, and 28% believe they have improved.

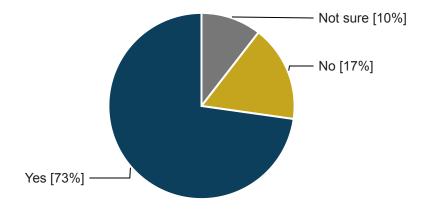
- Republicans (45%) are more likely than Independents (13%) and Democrats (20%) to believe politicians have changed for the better, as are males (33% vs. females 24%).
- Older Americans (over 65, 67%) are significantly more likely to believe the character and values of elected officials have changed for the worse compared to those 18-29 (39%) or 30-41 (40%). Disappointment increases by age.

Do you believe that the incentives for those seeking elected office have changed?



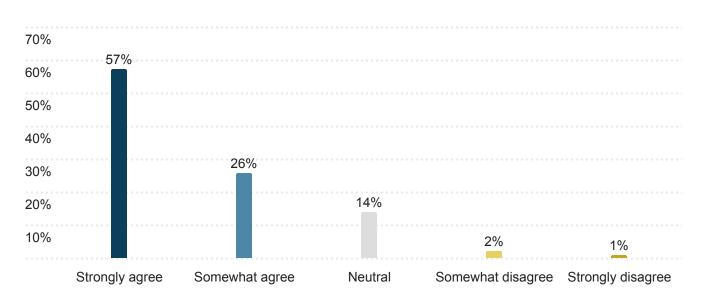
- Those older than 65 (46%) are more likely to say that incentives for those seeking elected office has definitely changed.
- Those with a post-graduate degree (45%) are more likely than those with a high school degree (31%) to say definitely.
- Democrats (47%) are more likely to say definitely than Republicans (31%) and Independents (32%).

Do you think that outrageous and uncivilized behavior by elected officials is tolerated more today than in the past?



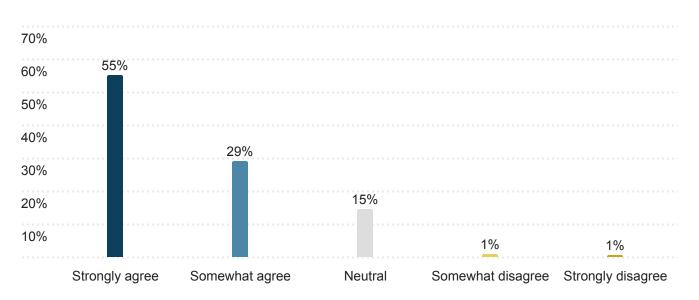
Three quarters (73%) of Americans believe that we "tolerate outrageous and uncivilized behavior by elected officials" more today than in the past.

Do you agree or disagree with this statement? "I want elected officials to work harder to find common ground with officials from different political parties."



More than eight out of 10 Americans (83%) expect government leaders to find common ground across political lines. These expectations are not just theoretical (above) but extend to Americans' own elected officials (below).

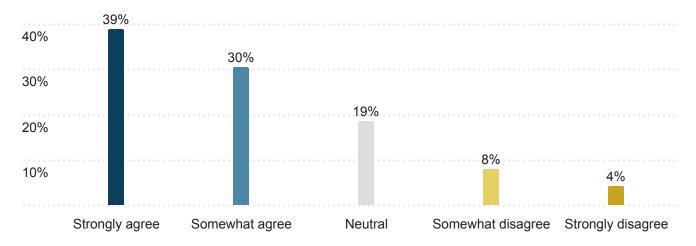
Do you agree or disagree with this statement? "I want **my** elected officials to work harder to find common ground with officials from different political parties."



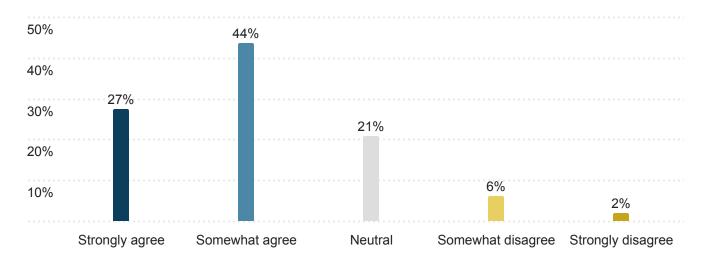
84% agree that they want their elected officials to work harder to find common ground with officials from different political parties - 55% strongly agree.

- Those Older than 65 (70%) and 54-65 (59%) are more likely to agree than those aged 18-29 (39%).
- Whites (62%) tend to "strongly agree" more than other racial groups such as African-Americans (51%) and Hispanics (40%).
- Those with a Post-Graduate degree (65%) are significantly more likely to "strongly agree" than those with a High-School diploma (48%).
- Democrats are more likely to "strongly agree" than Republicans (52%) and Independents (52%).

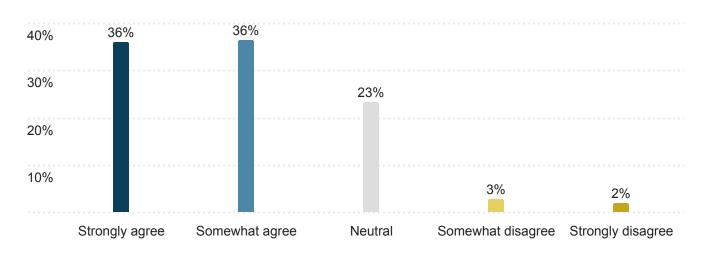
I believe the values set forth in the U.S. Constitution are as relevant today as in the past.



I think it is possible to find common ground on most issues.

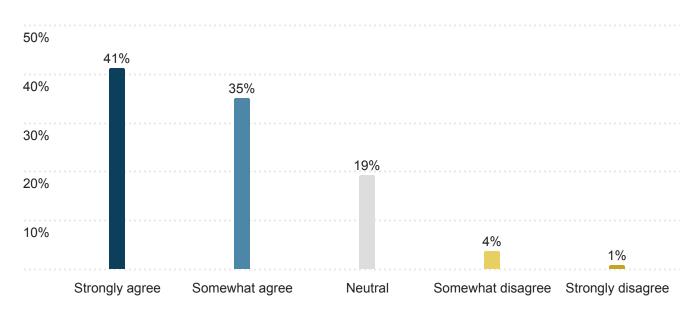


I want to find a way to be part of the solution to restoring civility to our country.



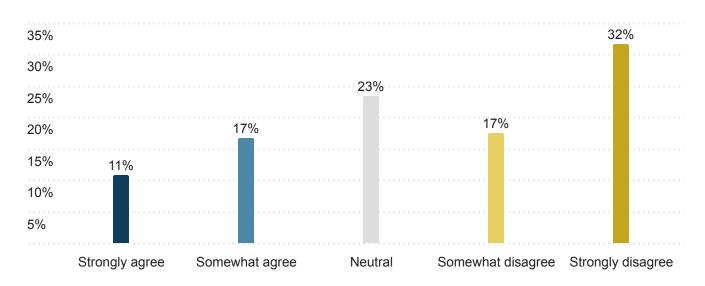
Not only do they believe it is possible, the majority of Americans (72%) desires to be a part of the solution in restoring civility to our country, with 36% strongly agreeing.

We can settle differences with policy, rather than personal attacks.



People endorse civility: three quarters (76%) believe we can settle differences with policy, rather than personal attacks.

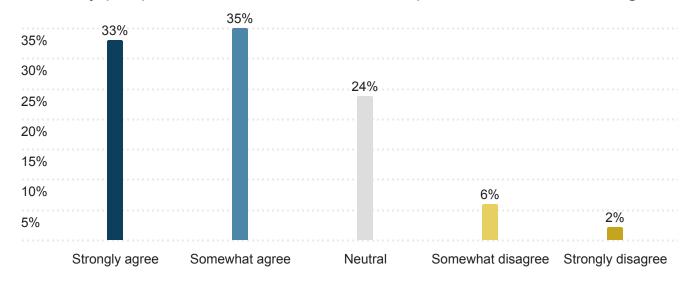
- Those who are older than 65 are more likely to believe we can settle differences with policy (84%, vs. 70% of those ages 18-29).
- Democrats are significantly more likely to "strongly agree" that we can settle differences with policy, rather than personal attacks (48% vs. 39% for Republicans and 35% for Independents).



Sometimes brute force is justified when traditional politics fail.

Yet, nearly a quarter of Americans (28%) support the use of force when politics fail. By contrast, half do not feel force is necessary, including 32% who strongly disagree.

- Younger people (40% of those ages 18-29) are more likely to support resorting to force, compared to those older than 65 (10%).
- Republicans (33%) are more likely to consider force justified than Democrats (24%) and Independents (24%).
- Black Americans (36%) and Hispanics (33%) are more likely to agree than white Americans (24%).



Too many people are as committed to their political views as a religion.

Most Americans (68%) are concerned that too many people see politics as their religion.

- Men (71%) are more likely than women (65%) to hold this view.
- White Americans (72%) are more likely to feel that too many people view politics as a religion compared with Black Americans (55%) and Hispanics (59%).

Respondent Profile:

Age Groups: 18-29 (14%), 30-41 (21%), 42-53 (20%), 54-65 (22%), 66+ (22%) Gender: 50% Male, 50% Female Race/Ethnicity: 66% White, 15% Hispanic/Latino(a), 13% African-American, 9% Asian/Pacific Islander, 3% Native American, 2% Other Income: Less than \$30k (20%), \$30k-\$74,999k (31%), \$75k-\$99,999k (17%), \$100k-\$149,999k (20%), \$150k-\$249,999k (9%), \$250k+ (2%)

Children: 63% with child(ren) of any age, 37% with no child(ren) at all **Type of School Child(ren) attend(ed):** 82% Public School 17% Private School

Type of School Child(ren) attend(ed): 82% Public School, 17% Private School, 7% Home School, 6% Charter or Magnet School, 6% Other

Education: 3% Some High School, 26% High School Diploma, 11% Associates Degree, 21% Some College, 27% Bachelor's Degree, 12% Post-Graduate Degree

Marital Status: 43% Married, 26% Single, 13% Divorced, 11% In a Committed Relationship, 6% Widowed

Community: 43% Suburban, 33% Urban, 24% Rural Political Party: 38% Republican, 37% Democrat, 21% Independent, 3% Other Whether Voted in 2024: 82% voted, 18% did not vote