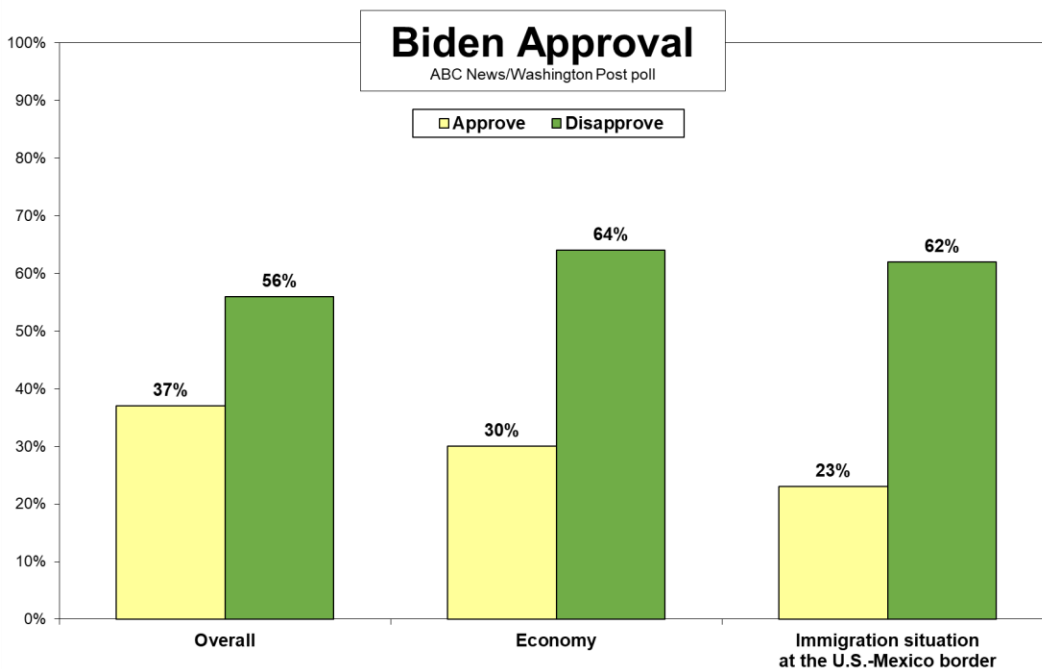


Troubles for Biden: Not Just His Age

Joe Biden's job approval rating is 19 points underwater, his ratings for handling the economy and immigration are at career lows, a record number of Americans say they've gotten worse off under his presidency, three-quarters say he's too old for another term and Donald Trump is looking better in retrospect – all severe challenges for Biden in his re-election campaign ahead.

Forty-four percent of Americans in the latest ABC News/Washington Post poll say they've gotten worse off financially under Biden's presidency, the most for any president in ABC/Post polls since 1986. Just 37 percent approve of his job performance, while 56 percent disapprove. Still fewer approve of Biden's performance on the economy, 30 percent.

On handling immigration at the U.S.-Mexico border, Biden's rating is even lower, 23 percent approval. In terms of intensity of sentiment, 20 percent strongly approve of his work overall, while 45 percent strongly disapprove. And the 74 percent who say he's too old for a second term is up 6 percentage points since May. (Views that Trump is too old also are up, but to 50 percent.)



Such is down-on-Biden sentiment that if a government shutdown occurs at month's end, 40 percent in this poll, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#), say they'd chiefly blame him and the Democrats in Congress, vs. 33 percent who'd pin it on the Republicans in Congress – even given the GOP infighting behind the budget impasse.

TRUMP – Trump, for his part, has improved in retrospect. When he reluctantly left office in January 2021, 38 percent approved of his work as president, essentially the same as Biden’s rating now. But today, looking back, 48 percent say they approve of Trump’s performance when he was in office – matching his peak as president. Essentially as many, 49 percent, now disapprove, down from 60 percent when he left the White House.

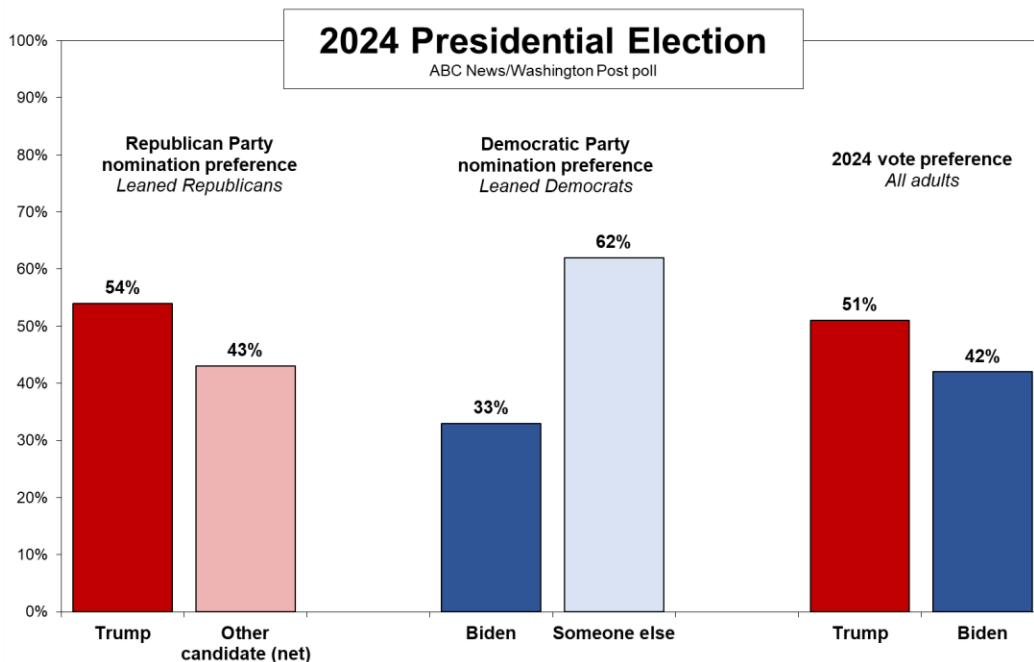
Comparison with Biden may be a factor. Among the 56 percent of Americans who disapprove of Biden’s work in office, a wide 75 percent say that, looking back, they approve of Trump.

It’s also notable that Trump has an even split in his retrospective job approval rating even as most Americans continue to reject his assertion that the 2020 election was stolen from him. Sixty percent of Americans instead say Biden legitimately won, and an additional 12 percent have no opinion; 29 percent think Biden did not win legitimately.

ELECTION – These views play into early-stage election preferences. A remarkable 62 percent of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents say the party should pick someone other than Biden as its nominee in 2024; just a third back Biden. Desire for a different candidate is at a numerical high, but also consistent with past results (56 to 58 percent) the past year.

Who, if not Biden, is an open question. In an open-ended question, 8 percent express a preference for Kamala Harris, 8 percent for Bernie Sanders and 7 percent for Robert F. Kennedy Jr., with other mentions in the low single digits. Just “someone else” comes in at 20 percent.

Trump has far broader intraparty support; 54 percent of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents favor him for the GOP nomination, again similar to previous results, and well ahead of his opposition. Ron DeSantis has 15 percent support, compared with 25 percent (using a slightly different question approach) in May. All others are in single digits.



Head-to-head in a hypothetical November 2024 matchup, Trump has 51 percent support, Biden 42 percent – numerically up 3 points for Trump and down 2 points for Biden from an ABC/Post poll in February, shifts that are not statistically significant.

There's even less change from the most recent ABC/Post poll in May, which had the race at 49-42 percent (again with a different, but comparable, question wording). Still, with Trump inching over 50 percent – and other polls showing a closer contest – a close look is warranted.

FACTORS – A variety of factors may be at play. Biden's poor performance ratings, the extent of economic discontent, the immigration crisis and doubts about his age clearly are relevant. All have been the subject of extensive recent news coverage, focusing public discourse on negatives for the president. Trump, meanwhile, has used his criminal indictments to bolster his base through claims of political persecution, and enjoys positive coverage of his GOP frontrunner status.

Question order can be a factor. As is customary for ABC/Post polls at this still-early stage of an election cycle, this survey asked first about Biden and Trump's performance, economic sentiment and a handful of other issues (Ukraine aid, abortion and a government shutdown) before candidate preferences. That's because these questions are more germane than candidate support in an election so far off. Since many results are negative toward Biden, it follows that he's lagging in 2024 support. Nonetheless, those sentiments are real, have been consistently negative in recent surveys, and clearly mark Biden's challenges ahead.

Another possible factor is message-sending. A hypothetical vote-preference question 14 months before an election is predictive of nothing; it's best seen as an opportunity for the public to express its like or dislike of the candidates. Biden is broadly unpopular and doubts about his suitability for a second term are extensive; wherever they end up in more than a year, a substantial number of Americans today are taking the opportunity to express their displeasure.

In one example of message-sending, among people who say Trump should be prohibited by the U.S. Constitution from serving again as president, 18 percent also support him over Biden for 2024. Such people seem to be expressing their antipathy toward Biden, not their support for Trump.

In terms of sampling, this survey was conducted using the ABC/Post poll's longstanding [methodology](#). Demographic results are typical. So are partisan preferences; 25 percent of respondents identify themselves as Democrats, 25 percent as Republicans and 42 percent as independents. Forty-one percent are Democrats or independents who lean toward the Democratic Party; 45 percent are Republicans or lean toward the GOP, consistent this year.

Additionally, survey respondents who say they voted in 2020 report having supported Biden over Trump by 50-46 percent, very close to the actual outcome, 51-47 percent.

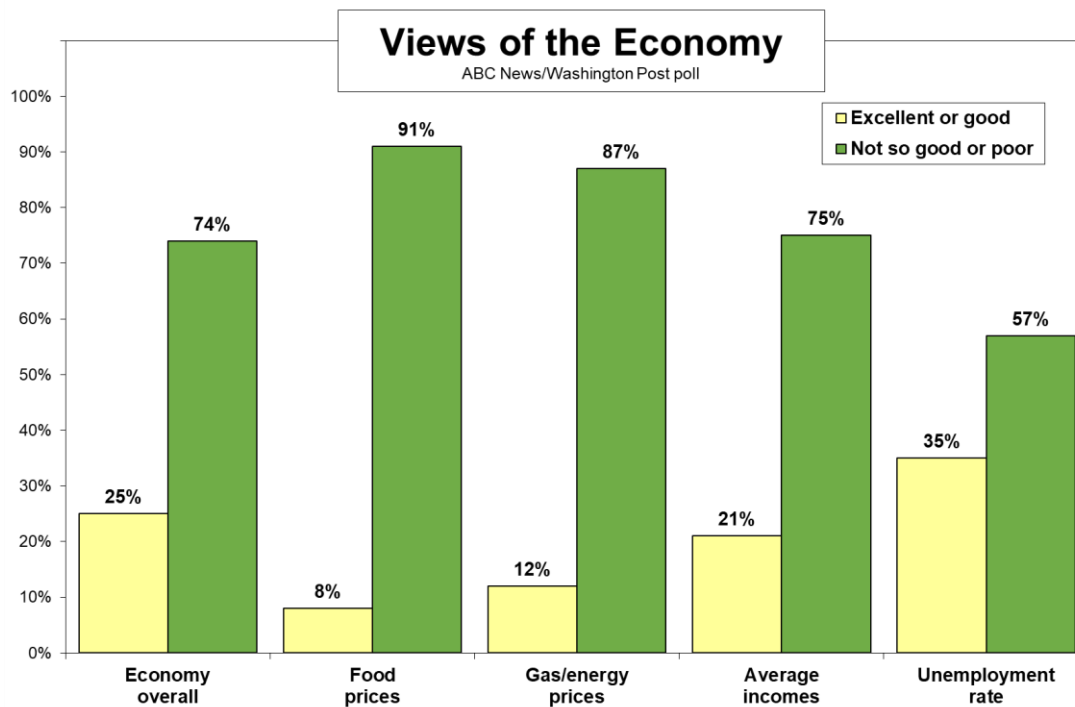
GROUPS – Trump-Biden results are essentially identical among those who report being registered to vote, 52-42 percent. Some polling analysts focus on this group, even though there's

more than a year to register, an activity on which political campaigns expend great effort. We focus on the general population at this stage to give all adults a voice, regardless of their current registration status.

Even with the public's general discontent with Biden, some group-level results are notable. Among them:

- Biden has just 50 percent support from members of racial and ethnic minority groups (the same as in May), while Trump has inched up from 32 to 39 to 43 percent support in this group in this year's ABC/Post polls. Among Hispanics it's a surprising 50-44 percent, Trump-Biden, albeit with a small sample.
- Among 18- to 35-year-olds, Trump has a slight 53-38 percent advantage (marginally significant at this sample size). Still, that essentially matches what it was in May, and Trump also was numerically ahead in this group (albeit not significantly) by 50-43 percent in February.
- Trump has gained 7 points from May among men, now a 61-34 percent result against Biden. That's led by a 15-point gain for Trump among non-college-educated white men, a mainstay group for him, to 79 percent support.
- Americans continue to oppose the U.S. Supreme Court ruling ending the constitutional right to an abortion, 64-30 percent. Biden is preferred to Trump by critics of that decision by 57-35 percent. Supporters of the ruling favor Trump by a much wider 81-16 percent.
- Preferences have fluctuated among non-Hispanic white Catholics, often a contested group. They supported Trump over Biden by 63-33 percent in February; this shrank to a dead heat in May; and it's back to 66-32 percent now.
- Among people who reported having voted for Trump in 2020, 96 percent still support him now. Biden, though, retains fewer of his 2020 supporters, 88 percent. Of the rest, 7 percent support Trump now (up from 3 percent in February), with the rest undecided, supporting another candidate or not planning to participate.
- Among people who say they did not vote in 2020, Trump has a 57-32 percent advantage currently. This was 52-31 percent in May.
- Among the 62 percent of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents who oppose Biden for the nomination, 16 percent say they'd vote for Trump over Biden.
- The relationship between candidate preference and economic sentiment is strong. Among the 44 percent of Americans who say they've gotten worse off financially under Biden's presidency, Trump has an 84-12 percent advantage. Among those who are in the same shape financially – not worse, but also not better off – it flips to 66-25 percent, Biden-Trump, and is similar among the comparatively few who are better off.

THE ECONOMY – Candidate-preference results also are differentiated by ratings of the national economy – which 74 percent overall rate negatively, with sharp partisan differences. The poll probed for details on that sentiment, finding two major irritants: food prices, rated negatively (as not so good or poor) by 91 percent; and gas and energy prices, rated negatively by 87 percent.



Not that other ratings are rosy: Seventy-five percent rate the incomes of average Americans negatively. It's much lower for the unemployment rate, 57 percent – but still negative, given the dark public mood.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by landline and cellular telephone Sept. 15-20, 2023, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 1,006 adults. Partisan divisions are 25-25-42 percent, Democrats-Republicans-independents. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 3.5 percentage points, including the design effect. Sampling error is not the only source of differences in polls.

The survey was produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#), with sampling and data collection by Abt Associates of Rockville, Md. See details on the survey's methodology [here](#).

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com. Join our [mailing list](#) to get updates on all new poll releases.

Media contacts: [Van Scott](#) (212-456-7243) or [Alisa Vasquez](#) (443-688-3667).

Full results follow.

Q6, 15-18 held for release. *=less than 0.5 percent.

1. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Joe Biden is handling his job as president?
Do you approve/disapprove strongly or somewhat?

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
9/20/23	37	20	17	56	11	45	7
5/3/23	36	18	18	56	9	47	8
2/1/23	42	18	24	53	10	42	5
11/2/22	41	19	23	53	11	42	6
9/21/22	39	22	18	53	11	41	8
4/28/22	42	21	21	52	10	42	6
2/24/22	37	20	18	55	11	44	7
11/10/21	41	19	22	53	10	44	6
9/1/21	44	25	19	51	9	42	5
6/30/21	50	30	19	42	7	35	8
4/21/21	52	34	18	42	7	35	6

2. Looking back, do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump handled his job when he was president? Do you approve/disapprove strongly or somewhat?

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
9/20/23	48	33	14	49	8	41	3

Compare to:

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump has handled his job as president?
Do you approve/disapprove strongly or somewhat?

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
1/13/21	38	27	10	60	8	52	2
10/9/20*	44	30	13	54	9	45	3
9/24/20	44	28	16	53	8	46	2
8/15/20	43	29	15	55	7	47	2
7/15/20	39	28	11	57	9	48	3
5/28/20	45	32	12	53	11	42	3
3/25/20	48	34	15	46	11	35	6
2/17/20	43	31	12	53	11	42	4
1/23/20	44	35	10	51	9	42	4
10/30/19	38	30	8	58	10	48	5
9/5/19	38	27	11	56	8	48	6
7/1/19	44	32	12	53	8	45	3
4/25/19	39	28	12	54	9	45	6
1/24/19	37	28	9	58	9	49	5
11/1/18	40	28	12	53	9	43	8
10/11/18	41	29	12	54	7	46	6
8/29/18	36	24	12	60	7	53	4
4/11/18	40	25	15	56	10	46	4
1/18/18	36	24	13	58	9	49	5
11/1/17	37	25	12	59	8	50	4
9/21/17	39	26	13	57	9	48	4
8/20/17	37	22	15	58	13	45	5
7/13/17	36	25	11	58	10	48	6
4/20/17	42	27	15	53	10	43	5

*10/9/20 and prior "is handling"

3. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Biden is handling [ITEM]?

9/20/23 - Summary table

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
a. the economy	30	64	6
b. the immigration situation at the U.S.-Mexico border	23	62	15

Trend:

a. the economy

	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
9/20/23	30	64	6
2/1/23	37	58	4
9/21/22	36	57	6
4/28/22	38	57	5
2/24/22	37	58	5
11/10/21	39	55	6
9/1/21	45	49	5
4/21/21	52	41	7

b. the immigration situation at the U.S.-Mexico border

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
9/20/23	23	NA	NA	62	NA	NA	15
2/1/23	28	NA	NA	59	NA	NA	13
6/30/21	33	NA	NA	51	NA	NA	16
4/21/21	37	16	20	53	10	42	11

Changing topics,

4. Would you describe [ITEM] these days as excellent, good, not so good or poor?

9/20/23 - Summary table

	----- Positive -----			----- Negative -----			No op.
	NET	Excellent	Good	NET	Not so good	Poor	
a. the state of the nation's economy	25	2	23	74	31	42	1
b. the unemployment rate	35	10	24	57	32	25	8
c. gas or energy prices	12	1	11	87	35	52	2
d. food prices	8	1	8	91	36	55	1
e. the incomes of average Americans	21	2	19	75	40	35	4

Trend:

a. the state of the nation's economy

	----- Positive -----			----- Negative -----			No opinion
	NET	Excellent	Good	NET	Not so good	Poor	
9/20/23	25	2	23	74	31	42	1
9/21/22	24	3	21	74	36	38	1
2/24/22	24	3	21	75	36	39	1
11/10/21	29	2	26	70	33	38	1
4/21/21	42	4	38	58	37	20	1
9/24/20	40	9	31	59	37	22	1
8/15/20	31	7	24	68	34	33	1
5/28/20	34	8	26	65	40	24	1
9/5/19	56	16	40	43	30	13	1

11/1/18 65 15 49 34 25 9 1

Call for full trend.

b-e. No trend.

5. Would you say you, yourself, are better off financially than you were when Biden became president, not as well off, or in about the same shape financially?

	Better off	Not as well off	About the same	No opinion
9/20/23	15	44	39	1
2/1/23	16	41	42	1
2/24/22	17	35	47	1
Trump:				
11/1/18	25	13	60	2
Obama:				
9/22/16	29	25	45	2
1/15/15	25	25	49	2
10/12/14	22	30	46	2
10/28/12 LV	22	33	45	1
9/9/12 RV	20	32	47	*
5/20/12 RV	17	31	51	1
1/15/12 RV	15	31	53	1
11/3/11 RV	13	35	51	1
9/1/11 RV	14	36	50	1
7/18/09	8	27	64	*
G.W. Bush:				
10/5/04 LV	30	30	40	1
10/29/03	22	27	50	1
9/13/03	21	30	49	*
8/11/03	17	25	58	1
Clinton:				
6/11/00	34	14	50	2
7/19/98	30	15	52	3
3/1/98	32	9	57	1
6/23/96	29	22	49	0
2/27/94	12	17	71	*
G.H.W. Bush:				
1/17/93	27	28	44	1
8/9/92	22	32	45	1
6/7/92	19	32	49	*
3/11/92	20	33	46	1
2/2/92	19	31	49	*
12/15/91	17	33	49	*
10/21/91	20	27	53	1
3/4/91	19	18	63	1
Reagan:				
1/16/89	42	18	39	1
1/18/87	37	23	40	1
9/8/86	41	20	39	1

7. Do you support or oppose the decision by the U.S. Supreme Court eliminating the constitutional right to have an abortion? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

----- Support ----- ----- Oppose ----- No

	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
9/20/23	30	21	8	64	11	53	7
5/3/23	27	22	6	66	12	54	7
11/2/22	30	22	8	63	7	56	7
9/21/22	29	21	9	64	11	53	7

8. The federal government might have to partially shut down at the start of next month because of a dispute over spending and policy issues. Who do you think is mainly responsible for this situation - (Biden and the Democrats in Congress) or (the Republicans in Congress)?

	Biden and the Democrats in Congress	The Republicans in Congress	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
9/20/23	40	33	19	*	8

Call for comparative data.

9. (ASK IF LEANED DEMOCRAT) Would you like the Democratic Party to nominate Biden to run for a second term as president in 2024, or would you like the Democratic Party to nominate someone other than Biden as its candidate for president?

	Nominate Biden	Nominate someone other than Biden	No opinion
9/20/23	33	62	5
5/3/23	36	58	6
2/1/23	31	58	10
9/21/22	35	56	9

10. (ASK IF SOMEONE ELSE) Who would you like the Democratic Party to nominate as its candidate for president in 2024? (OPEN-END)

	9/20/23
Kamala Harris	8
Bernie Sanders	8
Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.	7
Gavin Newsom	3
Elizabeth Warren	2
Marianne Williamson	2
Pete Buttigieg	1
Cory Booker	1
Amy Klobuchar	1
Just someone else	20
Other	8
No opinion	40

	9/10 NET	9/20/23
Nominate Biden		33
Nominate someone else NET		62
Kamala Harris		5
Bernie Sanders		5
Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.		4
Gavin Newsom		2
Elizabeth Warren		1
Marianne Williamson		1
Pete Buttigieg		1
Cory Booker		*
Amy Klobuchar		*
Just someone else		12
Other		5

No opinion 25
 No opinion 5

11. (ASK IF LEANED REPUBLICAN) Who would you like the Republican Party to nominate as its candidate for president in 2024? Which candidate would you lean toward?

9/20/23
 Donald Trump 54
 Ron DeSantis 15
 Nikki Haley 7
 Mike Pence 6
 Tim Scott 4
 Chris Christie 3
 Vivek Ramaswamy 3
 Doug Burgum *
 Asa Hutchinson *
 Other 6
 No opinion 4

Compare to:

(ASK IF LEANED REPUBLICAN) Who would you like the Republican Party to nominate as its candidate for president in 2024? (OPEN-END)
 (ASK IF NOT DESANTIS, HALEY, HUTCHINSON, PENCE, SCOTT, OR TRUMP) What if the only candidates were (Ron DeSantis), (Nikki Haley), (Asa Hutchinson), (Mike Pence), (Tim Scott), and (Donald Trump) - who would you like the Republican Party to nominate as its candidate for president in 2024?

5/3/23
 Donald Trump 51
 Ron DeSantis 25
 Nikki Haley 6
 Mike Pence 6
 Tim Scott 4
 Asa Hutchinson 1
 None of these (vol.) 1
 No opinion 6

12. I'd like you to rate the chances that you will vote in the general election for president in 2024: Are you absolutely certain to vote, will you probably vote, are the chances 50-50, or less than that?

		Certain to vote	Probably vote	Chances 50/50	Less than that	Don't think will vote (vol.)	Already voted (vol.)	No op.
9/20/23	RV	84	7	4	2	1	NA	1
9/20/23		76	8	8	4	3	NA	1

Call for full trend.

13. If the 2024 presidential election were being held today and the candidates were (Donald Trump, the Republican) and (Joe Biden, the Democrat), for whom would you vote? Would you lean toward (Trump) or (Biden)?

	Trump	Biden	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Would not vote (vol.)	No opinion
9/20/23	51	42	1	3	2	1
2/1/23	48	44	1	3	2	1
9/21/22	46	48	1	3	1	1

9/20/23 RV	52	42	1	3	1	1
2/1/23 RV	48	45	1	2	2	1
9/21/22 RV	48	46	1	3	1	1

Compare to:

If the candidates for president in 2024 were (Donald Trump, the Republican) and (Joe Biden, the Democrat), would you (definitely vote for Trump, probably vote for Trump), (definitely vote for Biden, probably vote for Biden), or are you undecided about that? Who would you lean toward?

	---- Vote Trump ----				---- Vote Biden ----				Someone else (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Would not vote (vol.)	No op.
	NET	Def	Prob	Lean	NET	Def	Prob	Lean				
5/3/23	49	36	9	5	42	32	6	4	1	4	2	1

14. Do you think Joe Biden did or did not legitimately win the 2020 presidential election? (IF DID NOT) Do you think there has or has not been solid evidence of widespread voter fraud in the 2020 election?

	Did win legitimately	NET	----- Did not legitimately win ----- Solid evidence of fraud	No solid evidence of fraud	No opinion
9/20/23	60	29	22	7	12
1/13/21	62	32	NA	NA	6

19. (If re-elected, Biden would be 82 years old at the start of his second term) and (if elected again, Trump would be 78 years old at the start of his second term). Do you think only (Biden) is too old for another term as president, only (Trump) is too old for another term as president, both are too old for another term as president, or neither is too old for another term as president?

	Only Biden is too old	Only Trump is too old	Both are too old	Neither is too old	No opinion
9/20/23	26	1	48	23	2
5/3/23	26	1	43	28	3

2020 VOTE. Did you happen to vote in the last presidential election when Joe Biden ran against Donald Trump, or did you skip that one? Which candidate did you vote for?

Summary table among 2020 voters

	Biden	Trump	Jorgensen	Hawkins	Other	No opinion
9/20/23	50	46	1	*	2	1

*** END ***