

# NATIONAL OPINION BALLOT REPORT

*Results of the Foreign Policy Association's 2019 National Opinion Survey*

## GREAT DECISIONS 2019



**FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION**  
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**OPINION BALLOTS** have been included with the Foreign Policy Association's *Great Decisions* since 1955 to enable participants to make their views known. Each year FPA sends the NATIONAL OPINION BALLOT REPORT to the White House, the departments of State and Defense, members of Congress, the media and concerned citizens.

## ABOUT GREAT DECISIONS BALLOTERS...

**A. How long have you participated in the Great Decisions program (i.e., attended one or more discussion sessions)?**

This is the first year I have participated	35.6%
I participated in one previous year	16.4%
I participated in more than one previous year	48%

**B. How did you learn about the Great Decisions program?**

Word of mouth	35.8%
Local library	13.5%
Foreign Policy Association website	0.2%
Promotional brochure	2.2%
Other organization	48.3%

**C. Where does your Great Decisions group meet?**

Private home	6%
Library	26.1%
Community center	22.4%
Learning in retirement	15.6%
Other	29.9%

**D. How many hours, on average, do you spend reading one Great Decisions chapter?**

Less than 1 hour	12.9%
1-2 hours	67.6%
3-4 hours	17.8%
More than 4 hours	1.7%

**E. Would you say you have or have not change your opinion in a fairly significant way as a result of taking part in the Great Decisions Program?**

Have	41.7%
Have not	35.6%
Not Sure	22.7%

**F. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Although the media often reports about national and international events and developments, this news is seldom as interesting as the things that happen directly in our community and neighborhood.**

Agree strongly	2.1%
Agree somewhat	9.9%
Neither agree or disagree	20%
Disagree somewhat	31.3%
Disagree strongly	36.8%

**G. Generally speaking, how interested are you in politics?**

Very much interested	70.3%
Somewhat interested	27.4%
Not too interested	2.3%
Not interested at all	0%

**H. Do you think it is best for the future of the United States if the U.S. takes an active role in world affairs or stays out of world affairs?**

Takes an active role in world affairs	98.3%
Stays out of world affairs	1.7%

**I. How often are you asked for your opinion on foreign policy?**

Often	10%
Sometimes	64.8%
Never	25.1%

**J. Have you been abroad during the last two years?**

Yes	60.2%
No	39.8%

**K. Do you know, or are you learning, a foreign language?**

Yes	50%
No	50%

**L. Do you have any close friends or family that live in other countries?**

Yes	44.8%
No	55.2%

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**M. Do you donate to any charities that help the poor in other countries?**

Yes	64.7%
No	36.3%

**N. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or something else?**

Republican	11.1%
Democrat	58.8%
Independent	27.4%
Other	2.7%

**O. With which gender do you most identify?**

Male	44.8%
Female	54.2%
Transgender Male	0%
Transgender Female	0%
Gender variant/non-conforming	0%
Other	0.4%
Prefer not to answer	0.6%

**P. What race do you consider yourself?**

White/Caucasian	94.1%
Black/African-American	0.6%
Hispanic/Latino	1.5%
Asian-American	0.6%
Native American	0%
Other	1.3%
Prefer not to answer	1.9%

**Q. Were you born in the United States or another country?**

United States	92.3%
Another country	7.7%

**R. Are you a citizen of the United States, another country, or both?**

United States	96.8%
Another country	0.6%
U.S. and another country	2.5%

**S. How important is religion in your life?**

Very important	23%
Somewhat important	28.5%
Not too important	25.7%
Not at all important	22.8%

**T. What is your age?**

18 and Under	0.2%
19-29	0.8%
30-39	0.4%
40-49	0.8%
50-59	4.5%
60-69	28.2%
70-79	47.9%
80-89	15.1%
90 or older	1.9%

**U. Are you currently employed?**

Full-time employee	3.1%
Part time employee	5.2%
Self-employed	2.1%
Unemployed	0.4%
Retired	86.2%
Student	0.6%
Homemaker	2.3%

**V. Can you give us an estimate of your household income in 2018 before taxes?**

Below \$30,000	2.5%
\$30,000-\$50,000	9.6%
\$50,000-\$75,000	14.9%
\$75,000-\$100,000	16.1%
\$100,000-\$150,000	21%
Over \$150,000	17.8%
Not Sure	1%
Prefer not to say	17%

**W. What is the highest level of education you have completed?**

Did not graduate from high school	0.2%
High school graduate	1.1%
Some college, but no degree (yet)	5.7%
2-year college degree	1.3%
4-year college degree	20.3%
Some postgraduate work, but no degree (yet)	11.9%
Postgraduate degree (MA, MBA, MD, JD, PhD, etc.)	60%

(Totals may not equal 100% after rounding.)

The NATIONAL OPINION BALLOT REPORT was prepared by the Foreign Policy Association: Karen M. Rohan, editor in chief; Matthew Barbari, assistant editor.

Ballot questions were composed, collected and tabulated by Lauren Prather, assistant professor of political science at the School of Global Policy and Strategy at University of California, San Diego, in affiliation with UCSD.

## BALLOT REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

**O**nion ballots are included in each edition of Great Decisions, a briefing book prepared annually by the nonpartisan, not-for-profit Foreign Policy Association. This year, 6,621 opinion ballots were returned by Great Decisions participants from across the country. Their responses reflect opinions crafted after the study and discussion of each of this year's eight Great Decisions topics. The majority of ballot participants were middle or upper-middle class and held an advanced degree. They did not shy away from partisan politics either—most were Democrats, although Republicans and Independent were well represented.

*The ballots cast by Great Decisions participants include:*

**Support For:**

- ✓ A strong and active State Department helping to build relationships with diplomacy
- ✓ Developing a strong defense against cyber-attacks
- ✓ Taking a more active role in helping to curb the global migration crisis
- ✓ U.S. taking a more “hands off” role in the Middle East
- ✓ A sensible and humane policy regarding migration

**Opposition to:**

- ✓ Saudi Arabia's war on Yemen
- ✓ Tariffs on goods from China
- ✓ President Trump's border wall and travel ban
- ✓ Growing populist movements in Europe
- ✓ North Korea growing its nuclear arsenal

**Other Views:**

- ✓ Asylum seekers provide only a minor threat, if any at all
- ✓ Populism on the rise in both Europe and the U.S.
- ✓ Biggest fears regarding cyber-attacks focus around elections or the economy

### Some questions from the previous opinion ballots, asked again in 2019

(Previous years' answers are in parentheses)

**A. From 2007's “International migration in a globalizing economy”: Do you think it is a contradiction to support the free movement of goods and services that characterize globalization, on the one hand, and to limit the free movement of workers, on the other hand??**

Yes	52.9%	(62.5%)
No	47.1%	(37.5%)

**B. From 2012's “Mexico: transborder crime and governance”: Who should lead the efforts to combat drug cartels in North and Central America?**

U.S. alone	0.5%	(1%)
Mexico alone	0%	(1%)
U.S. and Mexico	84.4%	(58%)
Central American Nations	1.6%	(6%)
Mexico and C.A. Nations	13.6%	(34%)

**C. From 2013's “Turkey's challenges”: How likely or not do you think it is that Turkey will join the European Union?**

Very Likely	2.7%	(3.7%)
Somewhat likely	21.7%	(40.6%)
Not too likely	62.6%	(48.2%)
Not likely at all	13.5%	(7.5%)

*(Totals from older ballot reports may not equal 100% because some participants did not mark particular ballots or volunteered other responses not tabulated here.)*

**D. From 2012's "Promoting democracy": In your opinion, which method of promoting democracy is the most appropriate unilateral U.S. strategy?**

Diplomacy	49.6%	(41%)
Sanctions (includes conditional aid)	2.9%	(8%)
Democracy assistance in the form of funding, training, organizing, etc.	47.4%	(51%)
Military force	0%	(1%)

**E. From 2012's "Cybersecurity": Which of the following is the most compelling argument for cyberspace governance?**

The proliferation of internationalized cybercrime	36.2%	(40%)
The incidence of "political" cyber-attacks (e.g. pro-nationalist hackers)	17.6%	(8%)
The impact of cyber activity on foreign and military policy	15.8%	(23%)
The possibility of cyber "arms race" in the near future	25.6%	(22%)
Other	7%	(4.9%)

**F. From 2010's "China looks at the world: the world looks at China": Given the rising strength and power of China in the international system, what do you expect a future China to look like? (Select one option)**

Replacing the U.S. as the hegemon in a unipolar world	8.2%	(8%)
A major rival in a bipolar world	16.5%	(13%)
Becoming a "pole" in a multipolar world order	70.7%	(68%)
Domestic issues will prevent China from assuming larger global role	4.6%	(11%)

**G. From 2014's "Trade": People debate whether the U.S. government should increase restrictions on imports, keep restrictions on imports at current levels, or decrease restrictions on imports. What do you think the U.S. government should do?**

Increase the restrictions on imports	6.4%	(13.6%)
Keep restrictions on imports the same	40.8%	(52.1%)
Decrease restrictions on imports	52.8%	(34.3%)

**H. From 2003's "Alone or together: the U.S. and the world": Overall, have organizations such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization done more good than harm for poor nations?**

More good	61%	(50%)
More harm	5.9%	(13%)
Both, equally	33.1%	(37%)

**I. From 2015's "Sectarianism in the Middle East": In terms of the political situation in the Middle East, which is the most important?**

Democratic governments,	32.4%	(15.3%)
Stable governments,	67.6%	(84.7%)

**J. From 2010's "The Global financial crisis and its effects": Which of the following statements best describes the future U.S. role in the world?**

The U.S. will remain the dominant power for the next 10 years	34.6%	(40%)
The U.S. will remain the dominant power for the foreseeable future	40.5%	(45%)
The U.S. is no longer the dominant global power	24.9%	(15%)

**K. From 2007's "U.S.-China economic relations": In terms of the U.S., do you see China's surging economy as:**

A threat, taking jobs from the U.S.	5.7%	(16%)
A boon, providing cheap goods to the U.S.	10.7%	(11%)
Both	83.6%	(74%)

**L. From 2007's "Russia and 'Putinism)": Considering the following, do you believe that, as a matter of policy, the U.S. should:**

*Actively seek a closer and more stable relationship with Russia?*

Yes	73.3%	(97%)
No	26.7%	(3%)

*Attempt to have friendly relations with former Russian republics but avoid meddling in Moscow's 'sphere of influence'?*

Yes	63.8%	(87%)
No	36.2%	(13%)

*Make strong efforts to establish close ties to those former Russian republics that could be of most use to the U.S. for security reasons or to promote stable access to fossil fuels for the U.S. and its European allies?*

Yes	84.6%	(70%)
No	15.4%	(30%)

**M. From 2014's "Syria's Refugee Crisis": In general, do you support or oppose Western countries sending arms and military supplies to anti-government groups in Syria?**

Support strongly	11.6%	(11.6%)
Somewhat support	35.6%	(43.7%)
Somewhat oppose	21.3%	(22%)
Strongly oppose	15.1%	(10.9%)
Not sure	16.4%	(11.8%)

# TOPIC I /REFUGEES AND GLOBAL MIGRATION

*Every state in today's global system has its own laws and policies about who is permitted to cross its borders, and how they will do so.*

A topic of particular importance to NATIONAL OPINION BALLOT participants, migration featured the largest number of respondents that both have interest in the topic, and have followed news on it. Migration has been an issue that has seen the rise of right-wing populist groups in Europe, worsening relations between countries, and human rights crises. Nearly 70% of respondents believe that the migration issue is a “global crisis.”

Ballot participants believe that the U.S. and other resource-rich countries have a responsibility to help solve the migration crisis, as well as helping refugees and asylum seekers from Syria. Balloters also think that a travel ban is unnecessary.

Despite their belief in responsibilities to help asylum seekers, balloters think that overall migration should be limited, but also that global migration has a positive effect on the host country’s economy, and more neutral effects elsewhere.

## **A. Have you engaged in any of the following activities related to the “Refugees and global migration” topic?**

Read the article on global migration in the 2019 Great Decisions briefing book	93.3%
Discussed the article on global migration with a Great Decisions discussion group	91%
Discussed the article on global migration with friends and family	63.2%
Followed news related to global migration	88%
Taken a class in which you learned about issues related to global migration	12%
Have or had a job related to global migration	0.4%
None of the above	0.01%

## **B. How interested would you say you are in issues related to global migration?**

Very Interested	70.2%
Somewhat interested	28.8%
Not too interested	1%
Not at all interested	0%

## **C. To what extent do you think migrants, especially refugees and asylum-seekers, pose a threat to the host country's security?**

Major threat	8.4%
Minor threat	62.2%
No threat	29.4%

## **D. Do you think global migration has a positive, negative, or neutral effect on the culture of the host country?**

Positive	49.7%
Neutral	32.9%
Negative	17.4%

## **Do you think global migration has a positive, negative, or neutral effect on the economy of the host country?**

Positive	59.6%
Neutral	23.8%
Negative	16.7%

## **Do you think global migration has a positive, negative, or neutral effect on the security of the host country?**

Positive	11.4%
Neutral	66.9%
Negative	16.7%

## **E. Do countries like Germany and the United States, with the resources to take in migrants like refugees and asylum-seekers, have a responsibility to do so?**

Yes	86.1%
No	13.9%

## **F. Do you believe there should be a limit on how many global migrants can settle in the United States per year?**

Yes, migration should be limited	83.4%
No, migration should not be limited	16.7%

## **G. Do you believe that migration is a global “crisis”?**

Yes	67%
No	33%

## **H. To what extent do you think it is important to consider what country or region migrants are coming from when approving their stay in new countries?**

Very important	18.1%
Somewhat important	47%
Not too important	26.5%
Not important at all	8.5%

## **I. Do you think the U.S. has a responsibility to accept refugees from Syria into the country, or do you think the U.S. does not have a responsibility to do this?**

The U.S. has a responsibility to accept refugees from Syria	78.1%
The U.S. does not have a responsibility to accept refugees	21.9%

**J.** President Trump initiated a travel ban for people from seven countries including Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen. The ban also includes restrictions on refugees until enhanced vetting procedures are put in place. Do you think a ban on travel from these seven countries is necessary as a safeguard against terrorism until enhanced vetting procedures can be put into place, is unnecessary because it goes against American principles and travel can become more secure as vetting procedures are improved, or, do you not know enough about this issue to have an opinion at this time?

The travel ban is necessary	17.1%
The travel ban is unnecessary	65.4%
Not sure	17.5%

*“I am very much in favor of the Statue of Liberty, rather than a wall of any kind, as the metaphor of our country’s approach to global migration”*



*“We should accept refugees to the degree we make available resources to manage and support them.”*

(Comments from balloters are in green boxes throughout the report)

## TOPIC 2/THE MIDDLE EAST: REGIONAL DISORDER

*As the presidency of Donald J. Trump passes the half-way point, the Middle East remains a region in turmoil.*

With nearly 100% interest in the topic, the Middle East remains a region of much discussion and deliberation for Great Decisions readers. U.S. relations with the Middle East remain shaky, with allies committing atrocities during war, attacking and killing journalists and stoking flames with their neighbors.

NATIONAL OPINION BALLOT respondents want to see the U.S. begin to pull itself out of the region, serving mostly as an outside party to help settle disputes. Most respondents came away with a negative view of U.S. actions in the region, and oppose the Trump administration's move of the U.S. embassy in Israel to Jerusalem. Over half the respondents also want the U.S. to stop selling weapons to Saudi Arabia due to the atrocities in Yemen, while more than 90% believe the U.S. should put extra pressure on Saudi Arabia to end the violence.

**A.** Have you engaged in any of the following activities related to the “Middle East: Regional Disorder” topic?

Read the article on The Middle East in the 2019 Great Decisions briefing book	95.7%
Discussed the article on The Middle East with a Great Decisions group	92.3%
Discussed the article on The Middle East with friends and family	62.6%
Followed news related to The Middle East	88.3%
Taken a class in which you learned about issues related to The Middle East	13.6%
Traveled to the Middle East	31.2%
None of the above	0%

**B.** How interested would you say you are in issues related to the “Middle East: Regional Disorder” topic?

Very interested	68.4%
Somewhat interested	30.2%
Not too interested	1.3%
Not at all interested	0.1%

**C.** After reading this article, which of these four do you think is the key issue faced by countries in the Middle East?

Relations with neighbors	58.5%
Global Relations	16.6%
Terrorism	9.9%
War	15%

**D.** Consider the following, do you believe that, as a matter of policy, the U.S. should...

Actively seek to benefit ourselves and our allies in the Middle East?

Yes	55.3%
No	44.7%

Serve as an outside party to help settle disputes between countries in the Middle East?

Yes	79.6%
No	20.4%

Have no role or influence in the Middle East at all?

Yes	9.5%
No	90.5%

**E. Since the “Arab Spring” in 2011, in your opinion has the Middle East,**

Becoming More Democratic	6.1%
Become Less Democratic	46.4%
About the same as it was	47.5%

**F. After reading the article, what is your opinion on how the role of the U.S. has affected the Middle East?**

Positive	1.9%
Negative	40.7%
Mixed	56.1%
Neither	1.3%

**G. To what extent do you agree with the Trump Administration’s decision to move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem?**

Strongly agree	9.1%
Somewhat agree	13.3%
Somewhat disagree	20.1%
Strongly disagree	57.4%

**H. To what extent do you agree that the United States should continue selling weapons to Saudi Arabia?**

Strongly agree	4.5%
Somewhat agree	17.8%
Somewhat disagree	26.4%
Strongly disagree	51.3%

**I. To what extent do you agree that the United States should pressure Saudi Arabia to end the war in Yemen?**

Strongly agree	75.1%
Somewhat agree	19.9%
Somewhat disagree	3.9%
Strongly disagree	1.2%

## TOPIC 3/NUCLEAR NEGOTIATIONS

*Nuclear weapons have not gone away, and the Trump administration has brought a new urgency, along with a new approach, to dealing with them.*

Despite the Cold War coming to an end in 1991, fears of nuclear war have not subsided. The new threats of Iran and North Korea, and their growing arsenal of nuclear weapons, has kept nuclear negotiations in the forefront of American foreign policy. The Trump administration has taken a new approach to nuclear antiproliferation, having participated in a historic first meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un in 2018, followed by two additional encounters in 2019.

Ballot participants remain wary of North Korea, with more than 90% viewing the country as some form of threat to the United States. Participants see war with North Korea as a last resort, and do not view the agreements between President Trump and Kim Jong-un as leading to an effective disarmament of North Korea. Balloters were split when it came to the spread of nuclear weapons, and to the possibility of a future nuclear conflict.

**A. Have you engaged in any of the following activities related to the “Nuclear Negotiations: Back to the Future?” topic?**

Read the article on the nuclear negotiations topic in the 2019 Great Decisions briefing book	95.2%
Discussed the article on the nuclear negotiations topic with a Great Decisions discussion group	92.1%
Discussed the article on the nuclear negotiations topic with friends or family	58.4%
Followed news related to the nuclear negotiations topic	77.6%
Taken a class in which you learned about issues related to the nuclear negotiations topic	0.1%
Have or had a job related to nuclear negotiations	0.5%
None of the above	0.01%

**B. How interested would you say you are in issues related to the nuclear negotiations topic?**

Very interested	58.5%
Somewhat interested	38.8%
Not too interested	2.5%
Not at all interested	0.2%

**C. To what extent do you think North Korea’s nuclear program poses a threat to the United States?**

Major threat	45.1%
Minor threat	52.9%
Not a threat	3%

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**D. To what extent do you think North Korea's nuclear program poses a threat to the world?**

Major threat	50.5%
Minor threat	47.5%
No threat	2%

**E. How satisfied have you been with the way the United States interacts diplomatically with North Korea?**

Very satisfied	4.8%
Somewhat satisfied	21.3%
Somewhat dissatisfied	34.6%
Very dissatisfied	39.4%

**F. Do you think there is a possibility of nuclear war in the near future?**

Yes	27.3%
No	35.2%
Unsure	37.6%

**G. How confident do you feel in the United States' diplomatic ability to negotiate nuclear power and weapons with other countries?**

Very confident	5.4%
Somewhat confident	24.3%
Not too confident	46.4%
Not confident at all	24%

**H. Do you think current nuclear negotiation issues may lead to a new cold war with Russia?**

Yes	46.1%
No	16.2%
Maybe	37.7%

**I. In your opinion, is the development of nuclear weapons by other countries always a negative or malicious action?**

Yes	35.3%
No	34.8%
Maybe	28.9%

**J. At the summit on June 12 between President Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and subsequent negotiations, do you think North Korea has agreed to give up its nuclear weapons?**

Yes	2.4%
No	97.6%

**K. Overall, do you think that the United States gained more from the summit, North Korea gained more, or do you think both countries gained about the same amount from the summit?**

The United States gained more	3.2%
North Korea gained more	69.2%
Both countries gained about the same	27.6%

**L. Do you think it is more important to avoid war with North Korea, or do you think it is more important to take away North Korea's nuclear weapons?**

More important to avoid war	75%
More important to take away nuclear weapons	25%

## TOPIC 4/THE RISE OF POPULISM IN EUROPE

*Mass migration, and the problems associated with it, have directly abetted the rise of populist parties in Europe.*

A rising tide of populism has swelled in many European countries, with right-wing populist parties taking control of governments and achieving larger representation in parliament and congress. Issues such as migration, countries' rights and European identity have fueled this rise of populism.

NATIONAL OPINION BALLOT respondents believe that the rise of populism will have an adverse impact on the future of the EU. They also worry about populist movements taking shape and gaining a foothold in more European countries. They also see some connection between rising populism and rising instances of terrorist attacks and violence. Respondents fear that the increase in populist movements could be a threat to both the EU and the U.S. and are pessimistic regarding the possibility that populism will have an increasing presence on the political landscape.

**A. Have you engaged in any of the following activities related to the “The Rise of Populism in Europe” topic?**

Read the article on the “The Rise of Populism in Europe” topic in the 2019 Great Decisions briefing book	96%
Discussed the article on the “The Rise of Populism in Europe” topic with a Great Decisions discussion group	92%
Discussed the article on the “The Rise of Populism in Europe” topic with friends or family	65.5%
Followed news related to the “The Rise of Populism” topic	83.5%
Taken a class in which you learned about issues related to the “The Rise of Populism in Europe” topic	0.1%
Have or had a job related to the “The Rise of Populism in Europe” topic	0.02%
Traveled to Europe	65.4%
None of the above	0%

**B. How interested would you say you are in issues related to the “The Rise of Populism in Europe” topic?**

Very interested	70%
Somewhat interested	28.3%
Not too interested	1.5%
Not at all interested	0.2%

**C. Are you concerned that populism is a threat to the European Union?**

Very concerned	53.9%
Somewhat concerned	38.2%
Not too concerned	6.8%
Not concerned at all	1.2%

**D. Do you think that populism in the Europe is a threat to the United States?**

Major threat	32.7%
Minor threat	51.2%
No threat	16%

**E. Do you think the rise of populism in Europe has lead to higher incidences of terrorism within the European Union?**

Absolutely	33%
Somewhat	39.6%
Unsure	19.6%
Not likely	6.1%
Not at all	1.7%

**F. How likely do you think it is that populism will become a dominant ideology in political parties across the European Union?**

Very likely	21%
Somewhat likely	60.4%
Not too likely	18.2%
Not likely at all	0.5%

**G. How likely do you think it is that a wave of populism will spread to the United States?**

Very likely	36.7%
Somewhat likely	47.3%
Not too likely	15.6%
Not likely at all	0.5%

**H. How likely do you think it is that a wave of populism will spread across the world?**

Very likely	22.9%
Somewhat likely	57.1%
Not too likely	19.2%
Not likely at all	0.8%

**I. How likely are you to agree or disagree with the following statement: It is very important to have been born in the U.S. to truly be “one of us?”**

Strongly agree	1.8%
Somewhat agree	6.6%
Somewhat disagree	16.7%
Strongly disagree	74.8%

## TOPIC 5/DECODING U.S. - CHINA TRADE

*Though arguably the most advanced economy in the world, the United States still uses centuries-old numbers to measure trade.*

President Trump has made rebalancing the trade deficit with China a major piece of his administration’s policy known as “America First.” U.S. tariffs on Chinese goods has led China to retaliate, placing tariffs on U.S. products like auto parts, soybeans, and crude oil. President Trump cites China’s theft of intellectual property from U.S. businesses as one reason to impose tariffs.

Ballot respondents see the tariffs and trade war as a global negative, only leading to a slowdown in the economy and a having a negative impact on both countries. Respondents correctly predicted the breakout of a trade war should tariffs be levied. More than 80% of respondents oppose tariffs on imported Chinese goods, with many seeing the negative effects being passed on to American consumers. Readers are doubtful that tariffs will benefit the U.S. and help protect U.S. jobs from being outsourced.

**A. Have you engaged in any of the following activities related to the “Decoding U.S.- China Trade” topic?**

Read the article on the U.S. and China in the 2019 Great Decisions briefing book	94.1%
Discussed the article on the U.S. and China with a Great Decisions discussion group	91.9%
Discussed the article on the U.S. and China topic with friends or family	64.9%
Followed news related to the U.S. and China	79.6%
Taken a class in which you learned about issues related to the U.S. and China	0.1%
Have or had a job related to U.S. and China trade	0.04%
Traveled to China	0.3%
None of the above	0%

**Don’t forget you can submit your  
ballots online at [www.fpa.org/ballot](http://www.fpa.org/ballot)**

**B. How interested would you say you are in issues related to the U.S. and China?**

Very interested	68.3%
Somewhat interested	29.2%
Not too interested	2.3%
Not at all interested	0.2%

**C. On September 17, 2018, President Donald Trump announced tariffs on \$200 billion worth of Chinese imports, totaling \$250 billion worth of tariffs on Chinese products. To what extent do you agree with President Donald Trump's decision to impose tariffs on Chinese imports?**

Very much agree	5.4%
Somewhat agree	13.5%
Neither agree or disagree	6.6%
Somewhat disagree	27.3%
Very much disagree	47.2%

**D. Do you think President Trump's tariffs on Chinese imports will protect U.S. jobs?**

Yes, it will protect U.S. jobs	1%
It might protect some U.S. jobs	17%
Unsure	9.7%
It might not protect some U.S. jobs	32.7%
It will not protect any U.S. jobs	39.6%

**E. How do you think tariffs between the United States and China impact the global economy?**

Greatly improve the global economy	1%
Somewhat improve the global economy	7%
No effect	8.9%
Somewhat weaken the global economy	67.3%
Greatly weaken the global economy	15.8%

**F. How do you think tariffs between the United States and China will impact the United States' economy?**

Greatly improve the U.S. economy	1.2%
Somewhat improve the U.S. economy	7.3%
No effect	5.6%
Somewhat weaken the U.S. economy	69.6%
Greatly weaken the U.S. economy	16.3%

**G. Do you think that tariffs between the United States and China could escalate into a trade war?**

Yes	62.3%
No	10.9%
Maybe	26.8%

**H. To what extent would you be personally be affected by a trade war, either through the process you pay or the business you work for, or would you probably not be affected?**

Positively affected	4%
Negatively affected	62.8%
Probably not affected	33.2%

**I. To what extent do you think the recent tariffs between the U.S. and China will affect consumers in the United States?**

Primarily positive	1.9%
Somewhat positively	4.2%
Somewhat negatively	55.2%
Primarily negative	38.7%

**J. To what extent do you support or oppose raising tariffs on products imposed from China if the tariffs resulted in China raising tariffs on American products?**

Strongly support	3.3%
Somewhat support	12.5%
Somewhat oppose	30.6
Strongly oppose	53.6%

*"China is acting in its self interest and will 'take everything it can get' and the U.S. must stop giving.*

*Saying no to China is difficult, but must be done to get agreement on the rules of trade."*



*"Open trade is the way to go. However, we should try to protect ourselves against any un-fair tactics used by any other country."*

The views expressed in the comments are those of the individual respondents and not that of the Foreign Policy Association.

## TOPIC 6/CYBER CONFLICTS AND GEOPOLITICS

*Cyber conflict is a new and continually developing threat, which can include foreign interference in elections, industrial sabotage and attacks on infrastructure.*

The 2016 U.S. presidential election and the accusations of interference by Russian hackers, has led to cyber warfare and conflicts becoming a dominant issue in both domestic and foreign policy. Whether it is theft of intellectual property, election hacking, government information leaks or fake accounts on social media created to stir trouble, many Americans are affected by the new reality of an interconnected world.

NATIONAL OPINION BALLOT participants show an interest in cyber conflicts, with many viewing the U.S. economy and elections as the areas most likely to be affected by cyber-attacks. Respondents are worried about future cyber-attacks against the U.S. government, and agree that the U.S. is especially at risk for these kinds of attacks. They believe that the U.S. should focus on developing a stronger defense against these attacks, rather than improving U.S. ability to launch its own cyber-attacks, or enacting international policy to try and curb these attacks.

### A. Have you engaged in any of the following activities related to the “Cyber Conflicts and Geopolitics” topic?

Read the article on cybersecurity in the 2019 Great Decisions briefing book	94.6%
Discussed the article on cybersecurity with a Great Decisions discussion group	88.4%
Discussed the article on cybersecurity with friends or family	63.6%
Followed news related to cybersecurity	78%
Taken a class in which you learned about issues related to cybersecurity	0.06%
Have or had a job related to cybersecurity	0.03%
None of the above	0.01%

### B. How interested would you say you are in issues related to cybersecurity?

Very interested	68.7%
Somewhat interested	29%
Not too interested	2.3%
Not at all interested	0%

### C. To what extent do you agree with President Donald Trump’s proposal to create a Space Force to protect United States’ cybersecurity via satellites?

Strongly agree	10.8%
Somewhat agree	22.4%
Neither agree or disagree	26.3%
Somewhat disagree	20.4%
Strongly disagree	20%

### D. Which area do you think is under the most immediate threat of cyber attacks?

International communications	13.4%
U.S. government communications	14.8%
U.S. elections	36.8%
The U.S. economy	35%

### E. In your opinion what actions should the United States take first to protect itself against cyber-attacks?

Push to create international cybersecurity laws	16.9%
Develop stronger <b>defensive</b> mechanisms against cyberattacks	73.4%
Develop stronger <b>offensive</b> mechanisms to launch cyberattacks against others	8.9%
Nothing, the United States is adequately protected	
Against cyber threats	0.8%

### F. Do you agree that the government’s computer systems and satellite communications, especially in space, should be treated the same as physical territory?

Strongly agree	53.8%
Somewhat agree	37.8%
Somewhat disagree	5.1%
Strongly disagree	3.3%

### G. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: The United States is especially at risk for cyber-attacks.

Strongly agree	69.4%
Somewhat agree	28.5%
Somewhat disagree	1.6%
Strongly disagree	0.6%

### H. How worried are you that cyber-attacks on U.S. government computers could have a negative impact on you, such as tampering with your Social Security or tax records?

Very worried	29.7%
Somewhat worried	51.9%
Not too worried	17.1%
Not at all worried	1.4%

*“The most concerning aspect of cyber threats is the unknown component. The level of threat cannot be accurately measured as with a traditional military threat”*

## TOPIC 7/THE UNITED STATES AND MEXICO

*The United States and Mexico have a long, intertwined history, with both countries prominently featured in each other's politics and agendas.*

The United States' relationship with its southern neighbor involves many areas of foreign policy such as nations' sovereignty and immigration policy, especially deportation. The U.S.-Mexico border has been the site of a showdown between President Trump and Mexico President Andrés Manuel López Obrador regarding Trump's plan for a border wall, which he hopes would curb cross-border crime and migration.

Ballot respondents disapprove of the way the Trump administration has handled the U.S.-Mexico relationship, with 66% seeing the relationship change for the worse. Nearly half of respondents see President Trump as an enemy of Mexico, and nearly all respondents oppose the building of a border wall. There was also universal opposition to President Trump's plan to send troops to the border to prevent the migrant caravan from entering the U.S. Among the many issues facing the U.S.-Mexico partnership, half of balloters believe that it is the mass migration from Central America that is the most testing.

### A. Have you engaged in any of the following activities related to the "The United States and Mexico: Partnership Tested" topic?

Read the article on the U.S. and Mexico in the 2019 Great Decisions briefing book	96%
Discussed the article on the U.S. and Mexico topic with a Great Decisions discussion group	91.9%
Discussed the article on the U.S. and Mexico topic with friends or family	65.7%
Followed news related to the U.S. and Mexico	85%
Taken a class in which you learned about issues related to the U.S. and Mexico	0.07%
Have or had a job related to the U.S. and Mexico	0.07%
Traveled to Mexico	59.9%
None of the above	0.01%

### B. How interested would you say you are in issues related to the U.S. and Mexico?

Very interested	71.6%
Somewhat interested	26.4%
Not too interested	1.8%
Not at all interested	0.2%

### C. After reading the article, do you think the U.S. and Mexican relations have changed for the better, changed for the worse, or stayed the same?

Changed for the better	9.1%
Stayed the same	24.7%
Changed for the worse	66.2%

### D. Do you think Mexico's most recently elected president Andrés Manuel López Obrador and U.S. President Donald Trump's relationship will improve or weaken the two countries relationship?

Improve greatly	1.4%
Improve somewhat	21.3%
Stay the same	31.5%
Weaken somewhat	26.8%
Weaken greatly	8.9%

### E. Do you think Donald Trump considers Mexico to be a friend or an enemy of the United States?

Friend	12.7%
Enemy	49.7%
Not sure.	37.6%

### F. To what extent do you approve or disapprove of the way the United States has been handling the war on drugs?

Strongly approve	1.6%
Somewhat approve	14.7%
Neither approve nor disapprove	15.5%
Somewhat disapprove	32.7%
Strongly disapprove	35.5%

### G. To what extent do you approve or disapprove of the way the United States has been handling immigration?

Strongly approve	2.6%
Somewhat approve	4.4%
Neither approve nor disapprove	3%
Somewhat disapprove	22.4%
Strongly disapprove	67.5%

### H. To what extent do you approve or disapprove of the way the United States has been handling border control?

Strongly approve	3.4%
Somewhat approve	9.9%
Neither approve nor disapprove	5.9%
Somewhat disapprove	25.2%
Strongly disapprove	67.5%

**I. Generally, do you think American foreign policy has a positive effect on Mexico or a negative effect, or does American foreign policy have no effect on Mexico?**

Positive effect	19.1%
Negative effect	65.5%
No effect	15.4%

**J. With regards to the relationship between the U.S. and Mexico, which of the following do you think is the biggest issue testing the relationship?**

Mass migration from Central America	46.9%
Drug cartels	33.7%
Terrorism and Organized crime	2.8%
NAFTA and trade	10.7%
Other	5%

**K. Recently NAFTA was renegotiated and the new trade deal is called the USMCA. Do you think the USMCA will have a positive impact on the U.S. economy, a negative impact on the U.S. economy, or not much of an impact on the U.S. economy?**

Positive impact on the U.S. economy	25.2%
Negative impact on the U.S. economy	8.7%
Not much impact on the U.S. economy	66.1%

**L. In October 2018, President Trump announced he would send 15,000 U.S. troops to the Mexico border to prevent a migrant caravan from entering the United States. To what extent did you support this decision?**

Strongly support	9.3%
Somewhat support	5.4%
Neither support nor oppose	3.4%
Somewhat oppose	13.5%
Strongly oppose	68.4%

**M. To what extent do you support or oppose building a wall along the border with Mexico?**

Strongly support	8.1%
Somewhat support	8.1%
Somewhat oppose	12.1%
Strongly oppose	71.8%

*“The war on drugs should shift to a war on addiction in the USA. Crush the demand rather than fight the supply; then the cartels will dry up.”*

## TOPIC 8/STATE OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT

Many positions in the State Department have never been filled, and meetings with foreign leaders such as Kim Jong-un and Vladimir Putin have been undertaken with little advance planning.

Since his election, Donald Trump has changed the way the U.S. handles diplomacy. Central to that has been his handling of the U.S. Department of State, which has had two secretaries and two acting secretaries in his first two years in office. Trump has cut funding to the department, left positions at embassies unfilled and has taken the reins of diplomacy himself, leading many of the negotiations with other governments.

NATIONAL OPINION BALLOT participants are wary of President Trump's treatment of the State Department. Most respondents disagree with the assertion that the State Department has grown too big to be effective anymore, while nearly three quarters of respondents said the next federal budget should increase spending on the State Department. A majority of responders believe the State Department has been negatively affected by the Trump administration with nearly as many saying that they would prefer good diplomacy as the pathway to peace, rather than military strength.

**A. Have you engaged in any of the following activities related to the “State of the State Department and Diplomacy” topic?**

Read the article on the State Department topic in the 2019 Great Decisions briefing book	93.8%
Discussed the article on the State Department with a Great Decisions discussion group	88.5%
Discussed the article on the State Department with friends or family	58.8%
Followed news related to the State Department	80%
Take a class in which you learned about issues related to the State Department	0.08%
Have or had a job related to the State Department	0.06%
None of the above	0.01%

**B. How interested would you say you are in issues related to the State Department and diplomacy?**

Very interested	69.1%
Somewhat interested	28.4%
Not too interested	2.3%
Not at all interested	0.2%

**C. How satisfied have you been with the foreign diplomacy of the State Department?**

Very satisfied	13.2%
Somewhat satisfied	33.3%
Not too satisfied	34.7%
Not at all satisfied	18.7%

**D. To what extent do you think the State Department's reputation has been affected since the 2016 election of Donald Trump?**

Positively affected	4.5%
Negatively affected	90.5%
Not affected	4.9%

**E. In your opinion, how important is the role of the State Department in foreign policy decisions making?**

Very important	82.7%
Somewhat important	12.4%
Not too important	4.3%
Not important at all	0.6%

**F. To what extent do you agree or disagree that federal departments, like the State Department, have grown too big to be effective?**

Strongly agree	4.5%
Somewhat agree	19.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	22.4%
Somewhat disagree	25.5%
Strongly disagree	28.2%

**G. If you were making up the budget for the federal government this year, would you increase spending, decrease spending, or keep spending the same amount for the State Department and American embassies?**

Increase spending	76.2%
Decrease spending	6.2%
Keep spending the same	17.6%

**H. Please select which of the following statements comes closer to your opinion:**

The best way to ensure peace is through military strength 12.8%

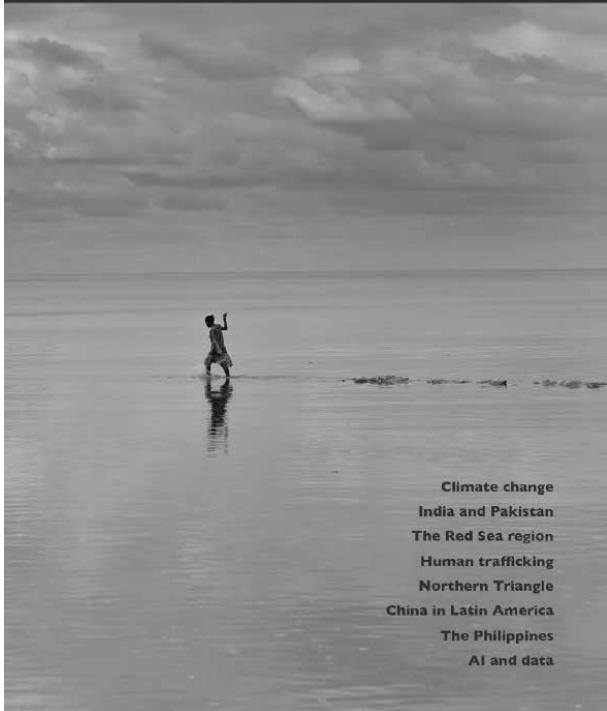
Good diplomacy is the best way to ensure peace 87.2%

*"I don't think that the foreign policy of the United States has been so successful in recent decades that the changes sought by the Trump administration should be rejected out of hand."*



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