

Views on Experience vs. Outsider Status Pose a Potential Challenge to Trump

Americans prefer experience to outsider status in the next president and also give it a higher priority in an ABC News/Washington Post poll, a potential challenge for Donald Trump as he builds toward the general election campaign.

The public by 55-41 percent prefers a president with “experience in how the political system works” over “someone from outside the existing political establishment.” Most Democrats want experience, while independents are split and most Republicans prefer an outsider.

Among those who prefer experience, moreover, 78 percent call it extremely or very important to them. Among those who prefer an outsider, fewer, 54 percent, call it highly important.

The experience/outsider division among registered voters is closer, 51-45 percent. Again, though, there’s a priority gap: Seventy-seven percent of registered voters who are focused on experience call it highly important, vs. 55 percent of those more interested in an outsider.

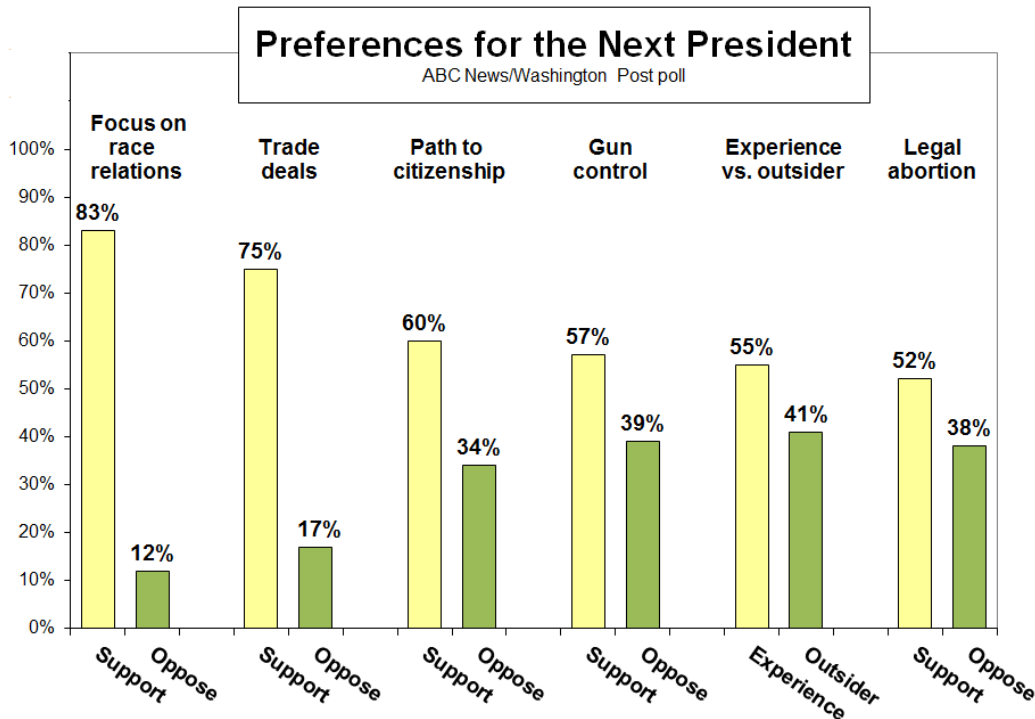
OTHER ISSUES – The poll also finds broad agreement that the next president should focus on improving race relations – another potential difficulty for Trump – and, perhaps surprisingly, on supporting international trade.

There’s less consensus on three other issues, immigration, gun control and abortion.

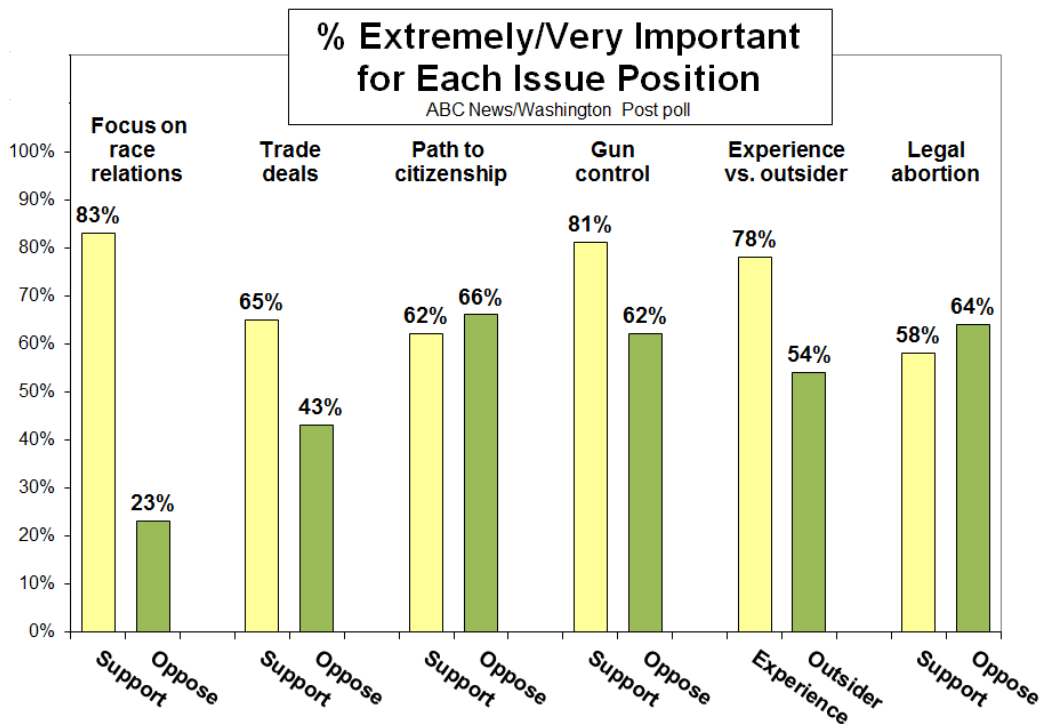
Putting an “especially strong focus” on trying to improve race relations tops the list of issues tested; more than eight in 10 Americans favor it and, among them, 83 percent call it highly important. As reported Saturday, Hillary Clinton leads Trump in trust to handle race relations by a wide 58-26 percent.

Seventy-five percent also say they’d rather see the next president favor trade agreements with other countries – a counterintuitive result, given that, in an ABC/Post poll in May, more said trade with other countries takes away jobs than said it creates them, 53-33 percent. This poll asked if the next president should support or oppose trade agreements with other countries; respondents may have been thinking of the principle of honoring existing pacts. Regardless, it suggests that there’s room for both sides of the trade debate to make themselves heard.

Among other issues, six in 10 prefer a president who supports a path to citizenship rather than one who opposes it, 57 percent want someone who supports rather than opposes stricter gun control laws and 52 percent prefer a president who supports legal abortion in most cases.



IMPORTANCE – As with experience vs. outsider status, there are differences in priorities. Supporters of trade agreements are more apt than opponents to call it a highly important issue, 65 vs. 43 percent. Eighty-one percent of those who favor stricter gun laws call it highly important, declining to six in 10 of those who’s rather see the next president oppose stricter gun laws.



Roughly six in 10 also say a candidate's views on immigration and abortion are extremely or very important, but, in these cases, with about equal numbers on both sides of the issues.

Views on race relations and trade agreements are similar across partisan and ideological lines in this poll, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#). On other issues there are sharp divisions, with Democrats preferring a president who supports a path to citizenship, stricter gun control and legal abortion in most cases, and Republicans favoring one who'd oppose each of these. Independents are more apt to side with Democrats.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by landline and cellular telephone July 11-14, 2016, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 1,003 adults. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 3.5 points, including the design effect. Partisan divisions are 33-23-35 percent, Democrats-Republicans-independents.

The survey was produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#) of New York, N.Y., with sampling, data collection and tabulation by Abt-SRBI of New York, N.Y. See details on the survey's methodology [here](#).

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ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>.

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Full results follow.

1-19, 20a-b, 21b, 22-23 previously released.

*= less than 0.5 percent

20a. All else equal, would you like the next president to be someone who has experience in how the political system works, or someone from outside the existing political establishment?

	Experience in political system	Outside establishment	No opinion
7/14/16	55	41	4
5/19/16	52	43	5
3/6/16	62	34	5
1/24/16	62	33	4
12/13/15	57	37	5
10/18/15	57	39	4

20b. All else equal, would you like the next president to be someone who puts an especially major focus on trying to improve race relations in this country, or someone who does not put an especially major focus on this issue?

	Puts major focus on improving race relations	Does not put major focus on improving race relations	No opinion
7/14/16	83	12	5

20c. All else equal, would you like the next president to be someone who supports a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, or someone who opposes it?

	Support path to citizenship	Oppose path to citizenship	No opinion
7/14/16	60	34	6
3/29/15	51	45	5

20e. All else equal, would you like the next president to be someone who supports trade agreements between the United States and other countries, or someone who opposes them?

	Supports trade agreements	Opposes trade agreements	No opinion
7/14/16	75	17	8

20f. All else equal, would you like the next president to be someone who supports legal abortion in most cases, or someone who opposes it in most cases?

	Supports legal abortion	Opposes legal abortion	No opinion
7/14/16	52	38	10

20g. All else equal, would you like the next president to be someone who supports stricter gun control laws, or someone who opposes them?

	Supports stricter gun control	Opposes stricter gun control	No opinion
7/14/16	57	39	4

21. Now how important is each of those issues to you? First is electing someone who [Q20 ANSWER]. Would you say that's extremely important, very important, somewhat important or not so important to you?

Full wording:

- a1. Someone who has experience in how the political system works
- a2. Someone from outside the existing political establishment
- b1. Someone who puts an especially major focus on trying to improve race relations in this country
- b2. Someone who does not put an especially major focus on trying to improve race relations in this country
- c1. Someone who supports a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants
- c2. Someone who opposes a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants
- e1. Someone who supports trade agreements between the United States and other countries
- e2. Someone who opposes trade agreements between the United States and other countries
- f1. Someone who supports legal abortion in most cases
- f2. Someone who opposes legal abortion in most cases
- g1. Someone who supports stricter gun control laws
- g2. Someone who opposes stricter gun control laws

7/14/16 - Summary table (Asked among those who provided this response in Q28.)

	- More important -			- Less important-			No
	NET	Extremely	Very	NET	Smwt	Not so	op.
a1. Has experience in political system	78	41	38	22	20	2	0
a2. From outside political system	54	29	26	45	37	8	1

b1. Major focus on race relations	83	48	34	17	16	1	*
b2. Not major focus on race relations	23	12	11	77	53	23	0
c1. Supports path to citizenship	62	26	37	37	31	6	1
c2. Opposes path to citizenship	66	33	33	34	23	10	*
e1. Supports trade agreements	65	27	38	35	31	4	*
e2. Opposes trade agreements	43	20	23	56	48	8	1
f1. Supports legal abortion	58	31	27	41	32	9	*
f2. Opposes legal abortion	64	36	28	36	27	9	1
g1. Supports stricter gun control	81	47	35	18	15	3	*
g2. Opposes stricter gun control	62	29	34	37	17	20	*

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