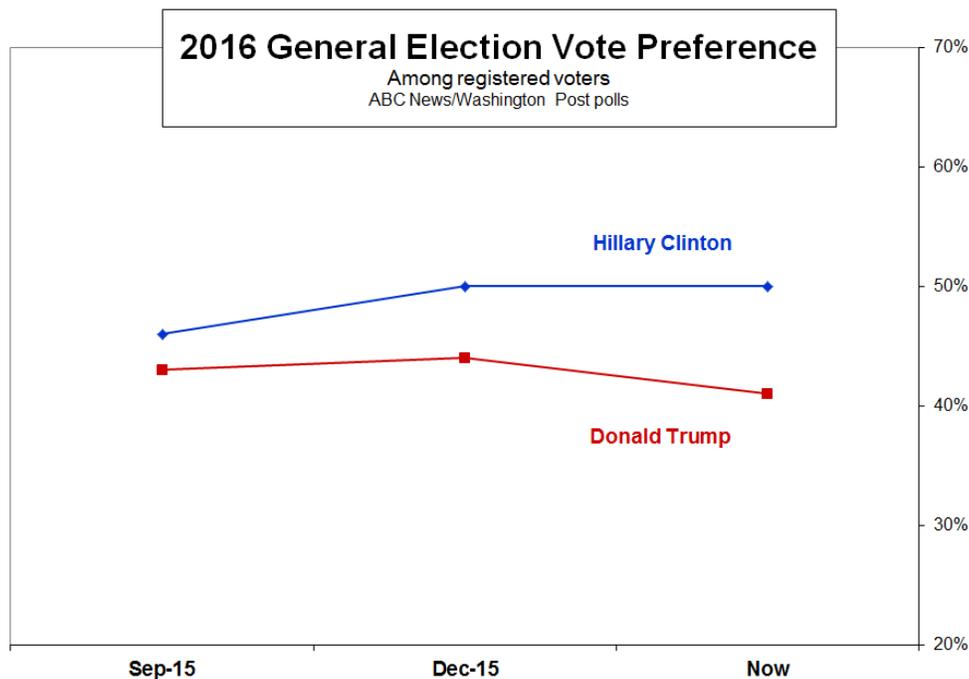


Challenges for Trump vs. Clinton: Favorability, Attributes and More

A rougher road to his party's nomination isn't Donald Trump's only challenge: he faces trouble in a hypothetical general election contest as well, trailing Hillary Clinton in personal ratings, facing 2-1 opposition on his signature policy issues and falling short in vote preference and expectations alike.

A fight still can be made of it: Trump runs competitively with Clinton in trust to handle the economy, the single most-cited issue in a new ABC News/Washington Post poll, albeit well down from its prominence in past years. Trump also has a slight advantage in handling dysfunction in the political system, a broad concern. And Clinton's ratings on favorability and trustworthiness, while better than Trump's, are no great shakes.

That said, should this matchup come about, the current advantage is Clinton's. She leads Trump by 50-41 percent in vote preference among registered voters, her widest advantage in three ABC/Post polls since September. Among all adults, including those currently not registered, Clinton's lead swells to 54-36 percent. And the public by 59-36 percent predicts that Clinton would win – up from a 12-point gap on this question in January to 23 points today. (Some political scientists suggest that, early on, expectations outdo preferences, predictively.)

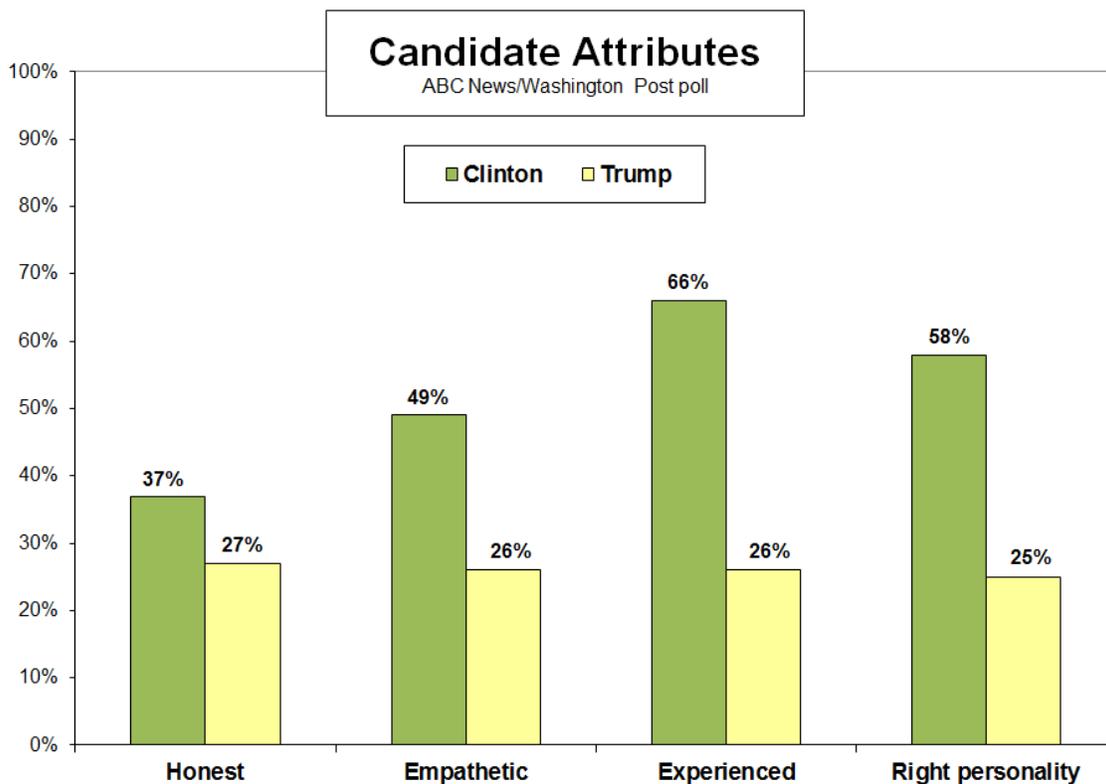


Polls, though, are not predictive – they measure current sentiment, not future choices. Campaigns matter, and turnout generally helps Republican candidates. But the contours of this potential matchup are instructive as an early exploration of how voters may come to their choices.

FAVES and ATTRIBUTES – In one basic gauge, just 30 percent of Americans express a favorable opinion of Trump, while 67 percent see him unfavorably, up 8 points since November and near the peak, 71 percent last spring. Many, 56 percent, see him “strongly” unfavorably, a new high. Both of these reflect remarkable levels of unpopularity for a major domestic political figure.

Clinton, by contrast, is seen unfavorably by 52 percent and strongly so by 41 percent, each 15 points less bad than Trump’s ratings in this poll, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#). (Forty-six percent see Clinton favorably. Ted Cruz’s score is 35-51 percent and Marco Rubio’s 39-45 percent, favorable-unfavorable.)

Among key attributes, while just 37 percent of Americans see Clinton as honest and trustworthy, that goes even lower for Trump, to 27 percent. Trump essentially remains there (25 or 26 percent) on other items – understanding the problems of average Americans, possessing the kind of personality and temperament it takes to serve effectively as president and having the right experience. Clinton, by contrast, advances to 49, 58 and 66 percent on these, respectively.

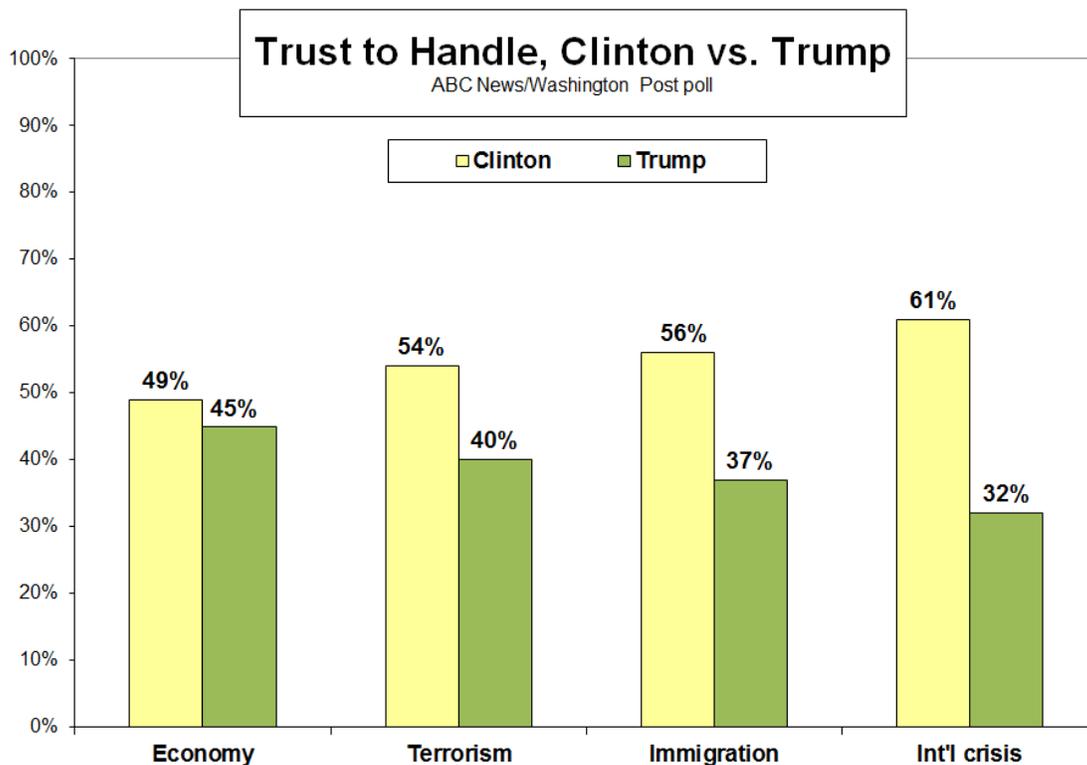


Since September, Trump has seen increases of 10 points in the view that he's not trustworthy, 9 points in questions about his personality and temperament and 5 points in the sense he doesn't understand most people's problems. Clinton's held essentially steady on these in the same time.

Differences on some of these are less wide among registered voters than among all adults. Trump's favorability rating is 9 points lower than Clinton's among registered voters, compared with 16 points among all adults, and his rating on honesty and trustworthiness is just 5 points off hers among registered voters. That said, Trump still trails Clinton by 16 points on empathy, 28 points on personality and temperament and 36 points on experience among registered voters.

ISSUES – Trump has a deficit on several issues, as well: Clinton leads him by 14 points among all adults in trust to handle terrorism, 19 points on immigration and a broad 29 points in trust to handle an international crisis. (Among registered voters, these are 8, 14 and 24 points.)

Nonetheless, they are close, 49-45 percent among all adults (and 46-49 percent among those registered to vote), in trust to handle the economy – and 28 percent of Americans pick the economy as the single most important issue in the election. That's far and away the top issue – but, at the same time, just half what it was in advance of the 2012 election.



Trump's challenged, as well, by the fact that Americans by 63-33 percent oppose his suggestion to temporarily ban Muslims from entering the country, and by 61-36 percent disagree with the mass deportation of undocumented immigrants. Those views are closer among registered voters, but still with majorities opposed, 60 and 58 percent, respectively.

Trump has potential in another direction: Seven in 10 Americans see the current political system as dysfunctional, and among them, 28 percent (in an open-ended question) pick him as the presidential candidate most likely to try to address it, while 23 percent pick Clinton. Eighteen percent name Bernie Sanders, with Cruz, Rubio and John Kasich in the single digits.

Looking at this another way, among people who feel strongly that the system is dysfunctional, Trump leads Clinton by 49-37 percent. Among those who see it as dysfunctional but don't feel strongly about it, that flips to 58-38 percent for Clinton; and among those who see it as a functional system, it's Clinton by 71-25 percent.

In any case, Clinton prevails easily on another question, asking which candidate would be most willing to compromise with others to get things done: Forty-one percent name her, vs. 15 percent Trump and 14 percent Sanders, with the other GOP candidates again in single digits.

OBAMA & GOPers – Clinton, further, gets a boost from the incumbent: Barack Obama's job approval rating has inched back over half in this poll, to 51 percent; 43 percent disapprove, the fewest since January 2013. And slightly more say things have gotten better for the country under Obama than say things have gotten worse, 48 vs. 43 percent.

Both those matter: Clinton gets 88 percent support from Obama approvers, and an identical 88 percent among those who say things have gotten better under his presidency. Trump wins broad backing from their opposites – but less broad, 74 percent in each case.

That result marks another difficulty for Trump, shortfalls in his base. While Clinton wins support from 84 percent of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents who are registered to vote, Trump's support slips to 76 percent among leaned Republicans. And Clinton's at 77 percent among liberals, vs. Trump's 69 percent among conservatives.

In fact the movement away from Trump in expectations has occurred chiefly in core GOP groups. Compared with January, this poll finds 14-point increases among strong conservatives and leaned Republicans alike in expectations that Clinton would win a matchup with Trump. Thirty-nine percent of strong conservatives and 36 percent of leaned Republicans now say so.

Partisans usually come home in the course of the campaign. But as reported yesterday, just a bare majority of leaned Republicans say they'd be satisfied with Trump as the party's nominee. Among those who'd be dissatisfied, just 53 percent say they'd vote for Trump in the general election, dropping to 40 percent among those who would be very dissatisfied. Among the latter group, 35 percent say they'd back Clinton; a quarter say they'd find a third party or sit it out.

The defection rate is similar among registered leaned Democrats who'd be dissatisfied with Clinton as the nominee. But there are many fewer of them – while 48 percent of registered leaned Republicans would be dissatisfied with Trump as their nominee, just 25 percent of registered leaned Democrats would be dissatisfied with Clinton.

	Clinton	Trump	Other/Neither/not vote
Reg. leaned Reps. NET	15	76	9
Satis. with Trump	3	97	0
Dissat. with Trump NET	29	53	18
Very dissatisfied	35	40	24
Reg. leaned Dems. NET	84	9	6
Satis. with Clinton	97	3	1
Dissat. with Clinton	47	29	23
Very dissatisfied	NA	NA	NA

GROUPS – Clinton leads Trump by 21 points among women – the same, as it happens, as her advantage over Sanders among women for the Democratic nomination. That compares to a non-significant +5 for Trump among men, 48-43 percent. Trump had led by 15 points among men in September, when he and Clinton were nearly even overall.

Similarly, while Trump leads Clinton by 9 points among whites, 49-40 percent, that’s narrowed from 14 points in December and 16 in September. (Obama lost whites to Mitt Romney by 20 points in 2012 and easily won re-election nonetheless.)

Clinton – like Obama – maintains a large advantage among nonwhites, 73-19 percent. Combining these results with December’s for adequate sample sizes, that’s 86-9 percent among blacks and 70-25 percent among Hispanics.

More educated and younger adults are additional groups in which Clinton finds support. She leads Trump by a wide 26 points, 58-32 percent, among registered voters with a college degree; those without a degree divide evenly. And while 18- to 39-year-olds tend to favor Sanders for the nomination, they back Clinton by 59-31 percent vs. Trump, compared with a dead heat, 45-46 percent, among those age 40 and older.

Trump, for his part, prevails by a wide margin, 59-31 percent, among registered voters living in rural areas – but they account for just two in 10 registered voters overall. Suburbanites roughly divide, 46-42 percent, Clinton-Trump; urban residents back Clinton by 2-1, and account for four in 10 registered voters overall.

Trump also does especially well with registered voters who are angry at the way the government in Washington is working; he has a 44-point lead in this group, 68-24 percent. But they account for just a quarter of registered voters overall; by contrast it’s +7 Clinton among those who are dissatisfied but not angry, and 78-16 percent in her favor among those who are satisfied.

The “outsider” issue cuts strongly to vote as well: Among registered voters looking chiefly for an outsider, 78 percent support Trump, while among those more interested in a candidate with political experience, Clinton wins 72 percent. Trump’s challenge is that experience beats outsider as a desired attributed by a substantial margin, 23 points.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by landline and cellular telephone March 3-6, 2016, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 1,000 adults, including 864 registered voters. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 3.5 points, including the design effect, for the full sample and 4.0 points for registered voters. Partisan divisions are 34-25-32 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](#).

Analysis by Gary Langer.

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

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Full results follow.

3-15, 22, 25-28, 33 previously released; 29-32 held for release.

*= less than 0.5 percent

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

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
3/6/16	51	31	20	43	11	33	6
1/24/16	50	31	18	46	11	36	4
12/13/15	45	24	22	51	12	39	3
11/19/15	46	24	22	50	10	40	4
10/18/15	51	28	23	45	10	35	4
9/10/15	49	27	22	46	9	37	5
7/19/15	45	26	20	50	13	37	5
5/31/15	45	22	23	49	11	38	6
3/29/15	47	26	21	47	11	36	6
1/15/15	50	24	26	44	9	35	6
12/14/14	41	21	20	54	13	41	5
10/26/14	43	21	22	51	12	39	6
10/12/14	40	20	20	51	12	39	8
9/7/14	42	24	18	51	12	39	6
6/1/14	46	23	23	51	14	37	3
4/27/14	41	23	19	52	12	40	6
3/2/14	46	25	22	50	12	38	3
1/23/14	46	23	23	50	9	41	4
12/15/13	43	23	20	55	14	41	3
11/17/13	42	22	21	55	11	44	3
10/20/13	48	28	20	49	10	39	3
9/15/13	47	25	22	47	11	37	6
7/21/13	49	25	24	44	12	32	7
5/19/13	51	32	20	44	10	33	5
4/14/13	50	27	23	45	10	35	5
3/10/13	50	29	21	46	11	36	4
1/13/13	55	32	23	41	8	33	4

Call for full trend.

2. Compared to when he took office, do you think things overall have gotten better or gotten worse for the country during Obama's presidency? Have things gotten somewhat better/worse or much better/worse?

	----- Better -----			----- Worse -----			Stayed the	No
	NET	Much	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Much	same (vol.)	opinion
3/6/16	48	24	24	43	15	28	6	2

16. If the general election were being held today and the candidates were (Hillary Clinton, the Democrat) and (Donald Trump, the Republican), for whom would you vote? Would you lean toward (Clinton) or toward (Trump)?

NET LEANED VOTE PREFERENCE - REG VOTERS

	Clinton	Trump	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Would not vote (vol.)	No opinion
3/6/16	50	41	1	3	5	1
12/13/15	50	44	1	3	2	1
9/10/15	46	43	1	6	4	1

17. (ASK IF NAMED CLINTON) Would you definitely vote for Clinton, probably vote for her or just possibly vote for her?

	Definitely would	Probably would	Possibly would	No opinion
3/6/16 RV	73	13	14	*

18. (ASK IF NAMED TRUMP) Would you definitely vote for Trump, probably vote for him or just possibly vote for him?

	Definitely would	Probably would	Possibly would	No opinion
3/6/16 RV	76	11	12	1

19. Regardless of whom you support, if (Clinton) and (Trump) are the nominees for president, who would you expect to win, (Clinton) or (Trump)?

	Clinton	Trump	Other (vol.)	No opinion
3/6/16	59	36	1	4
1/24/16	54	42	1	3

20. Who do you trust more to handle [ITEM] - (Clinton) or (Trump)? And who do you trust more to handle [NEXT ITEM]?

3/6/16 - Summary Table

	Clinton	Trump	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
a. The economy	49	45	*	5	1
b. Terrorism	54	40	*	4	2
c. Immigration issues	56	37	*	4	2
d. An international crisis	61	32	*	5	1

Trend where available:

b. Terrorism

	Clinton	Trump	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
3/6/16	54	40	*	4	2
3/29/15*	50	42	*	6	1

*"threat of terrorism"

21. (HALF SAMPLE) What is the single most important issue in your choice for president?

	2016 3/6	----- 2012 5/20	----- 2012 1/15	----- 2012 11/3
Economy/jobs	28	52	51	56
Income Inequality	1	NA	NA	NA
Health care/repealing Obamacare	5	7	3	4
Morals/family values	3	5	3	4
Ethics/honesty/corruption in government	8	4	6	7
Supporting the Democrats*	*	1	1	2
Federal budget deficit	2	1	2	2
Taxes	1	1	2	2
Supporting the Republicans*	*	1	1	1
Education	2	1	1	1
Change	2	*	*	1
Environment	1	*	*	1
Immigration/illegal immigration	11	*	*	1
Leadership/strong leadership/good leader	4	0	2	1
Social Security	1	1	1	1
Supreme Court Appointments	*	NA	NA	NA
Terrorism/national security	7	1	2	1
Abortion	*	1	*	1
Afghanistan/War in Afghanistan	NA	1	1	*
Experience	1	1	1	*
Gas/oil prices/energy/ethanol	*	*	*	*
Iraq/War in Iraq	NA	NA	1	*
Housing/mortgages	0	0	1	*
Foreign policy	4	1	1	*
Global warming	*	0	0	0
Iran/Situation in Iran	1	*	*	0
Guns/Gun control	*	*	*	0
Stock market/Wall Street	0	0	0	0
Middle class Americans/helping the middle class	1	1	1	NA
Banks/Financial institutions	0	*	NA	
Gay marriage/gay rights	0	1	*	"
Other (SPECIFY)	11	14	10	10
No opinion	4	4	7	5

*1/15/12 and previous "the/a Republican" instead of "Romney"

*5/20/12 and previous "Beating Romney/re-electing Obama"

22. Do you think the current political system in the United States is basically functional or basically dysfunctional? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	----- Functional-----			---- Not functional ----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
3/6/16	29	10	19	69	18	51	2
9/10/15	33	12	21	64	18	46	3

23. (ASK IF DYSFUNCTIONAL) Of all the candidates running for president, in either party, who do you think would try to do the most to address that? (IF NEEDED: Who do you think would try to do the most to address government dysfunction?)

Other None No

	Clinton	Cruz	Kasich	Rubio	Sanders	Trump	(vol.)	(vol.)	opinion
3/6/16	23	9	5	4	18	28	1	4	5

24. Of all the candidates running for president, in either party, who do you think would be most willing to compromise with others to get things done?

	Clinton	Cruz	Kasich	Rubio	Sanders	Trump	Other (vol.)	None (vol.)	No opinion
3/6/16	41	8	6	8	14	15	1	2	5

*** END ***