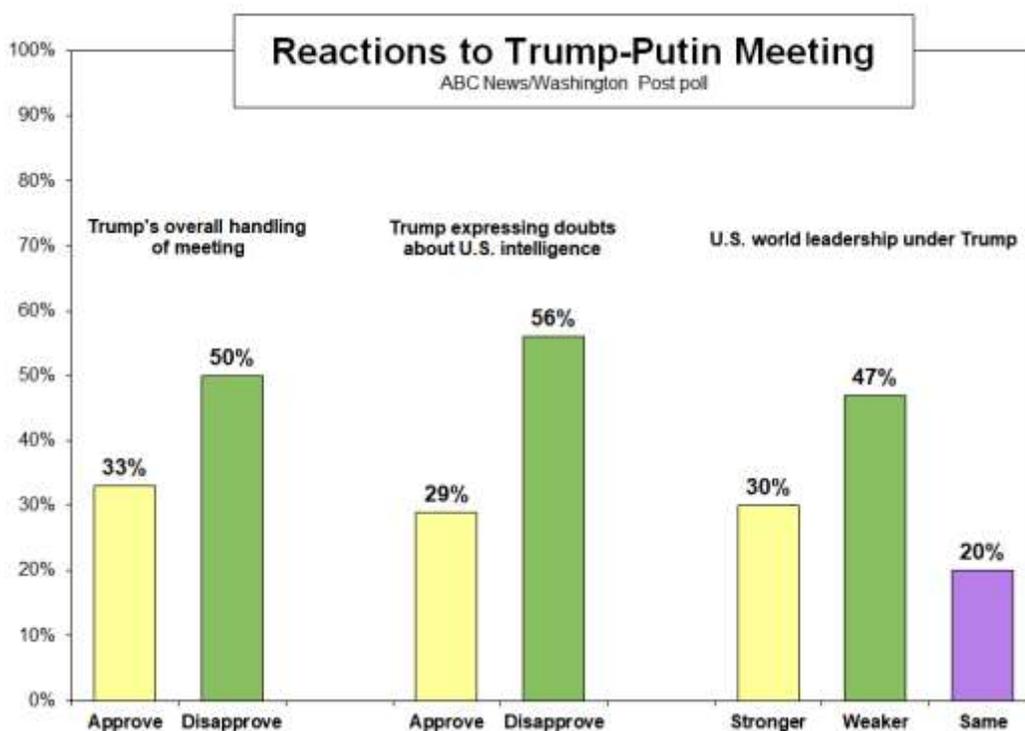


Little Public Support for Trump in Doubting Russian Interference

A majority of Americans disapprove of Donald Trump casting doubt about U.S. intelligence on Russian interference in the 2016 election, with relatively modest support for the president even in his own party and among conservatives in a new ABC News/Washington Post poll.

The public by a 17-point margin also says America's leadership in the world has gotten weaker, not stronger, under Trump. And just 33 percent approve of his handling of his summit with Vladimir Putin last week, with four in 10 saying he went too far in supporting the Russian leader.

Fifty-six percent disapprove of Trump, in a post-summit news conference with Putin, expressing doubt about U.S. intelligence conclusions that Russia tried to influence the U.S. election; just 29 percent approve. Indeed 41 percent disapprove "strongly," vs. just 14 percent strongly approving.



Just 51 percent of Republicans and 44 percent of conservatives approve of Trump questioning U.S. intelligence on the matter, tepid levels of support in his base. In the political center, 59 percent of independents disapprove, as do 68 percent of moderates. Indeed disapproval of Trump on this issue is as high among moderates as it is among liberals.

In terms of intensity of sentiment, the survey, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#), finds that 70 percent of Democrats and 61 percent of liberals strongly disapprove of Trump questioning U.S. intelligence on the matter, while just 28 percent of Republicans and 24 percent of conservatives strongly approve.

Trump casting doubt on U.S. intelligence		
	Approve	Disapprove
All	29%	56
Democrats	15	78
Republicans	51	31
Independents	29	59
Liberals	19	69
Moderates	24	68
Conservatives	44	42

Trump walked back his comments after returning to Washington, saying he misspoke when he questioned U.S. intelligence conclusions that Russia in fact tried to influence the election. But he also seemed to equivocate, saying, “Could be other people also. A lot of people out there.”

Trump’s challenges on this issue are made clear by the more typical partisan and ideological divisions on the broader question of whether he’s strengthened or weakened U.S. leadership in the world. Overall, 47 percent of Americans say America’s leadership has weakened under Trump, 30 percent say it’s grown stronger and 20 percent see no change. While 80 percent of Democrats see a weakened United States, 74 percent of Republicans say it’s stronger.

Again, though, Trump loses the middle, with independents seeing weaker rather than stronger U.S. leadership by 47-22 percent (as do moderates, by 54-17 percent). Moreover, while 72 percent of liberals say the United States has grown weaker in terms of world leadership, fewer conservatives say the opposite, 55 percent.

Better for Trump is that views on U.S. leadership under his presidency haven’t worsened despite the uproar over the Putin meeting. Last November, 53 percent said U.S. leadership had grown weaker; it’s in fact slightly lower now.

U.S. world leadership under Trump			
	Stronger	Weaker	Same
All	30%	47	20
Democrats	6	80	12
Republicans	74	9	17
Independents	22	47	26
Liberals	12	72	14
Moderates	17	54	28
Conservatives	55	22	20

In terms of the Trump-Putin summit overall, 50 percent disapprove of how Trump handled it, while, as noted, 33 percent approve. (The rest, 18 percent, have no opinion.) Again Trump has comparative difficulty in his base; 66 percent of Republicans approve while 83 percent of Democrats disapprove, and 58 percent of conservatives approve while 73 percent of liberals disapprove.

In the middle, independents divide by 33-46 percent, disapproving by a 13-point margin. Among moderates this swells to a 45-point margin, 19-64 percent, approve-disapprove.

Trump's handling of his meeting with Putin		
	Approve	Disapprove
All	33%	50
Democrats	8	83
Republicans	66	18
Independents	33	46
Liberals	15	73
Moderates	19	64
Conservatives	58	25

Lastly, 40 percent say Trump went too far in supporting Putin; 15 percent say he didn't go far enough and 35 percent say he handled this about right. The partisan divisions are more balanced: Sixty-eight percent of Democrats say he went too far, 68 percent of Republicans say he handled it about right and independents are essentially divided on the question.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by landline and cellular telephone July 18-20, 2018, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 464 adults. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 5.5 percentage points for the full sample, including the design effect. Partisan divisions are 32-24-38 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 SSRS of Glen Mills, Pa. 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>.

Media contacts: [Heather Riley](#) or [Julie Townsend](#).

Full results follow.

1. Under Donald Trump, do you think America's leadership in the world has gotten (stronger), gotten (weaker), or remained about the same?

	Stronger	Weaker	Same	No opinion
7/20/18	30	47	20	4

11/1/17	26	53	20	1
7/13/17	27	48	23	3

2. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Trump handled his meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin this week? Do you feel that way strongly, or somewhat?

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
7/20/18	33	18	15	50	13	37	18

3. At a news conference with Putin, Trump expressed doubts about U.S. intelligence conclusions that the Russian government tried to influence the outcome of the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Do you approve or disapprove of Trump expressing doubts about U.S. intelligence on this issue? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
7/20/18	29	14	15	56	15	41	15

4. Overall, do you think Trump went too far in supporting Putin, not far enough, or handled this about right?

	Too far	Not far enough	About right	No opinion
7/20/18	40	15	35	10

*** END ***