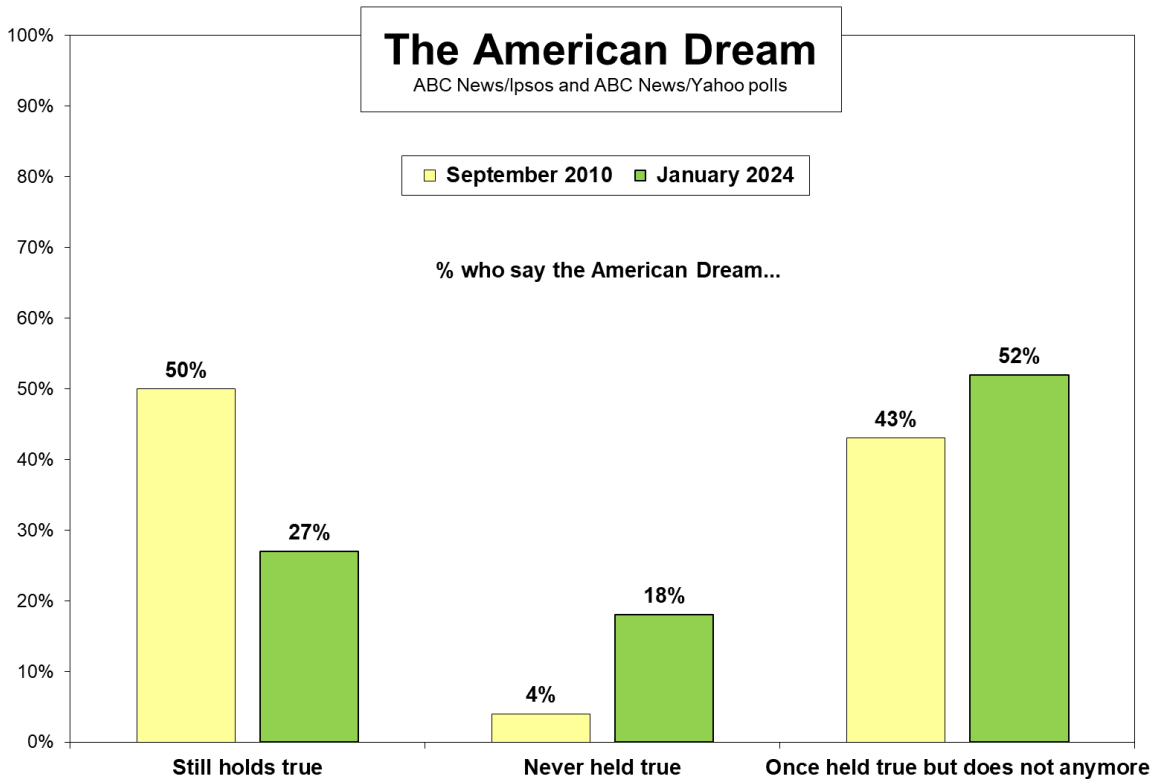


The American Dream: A Rude Awakening?

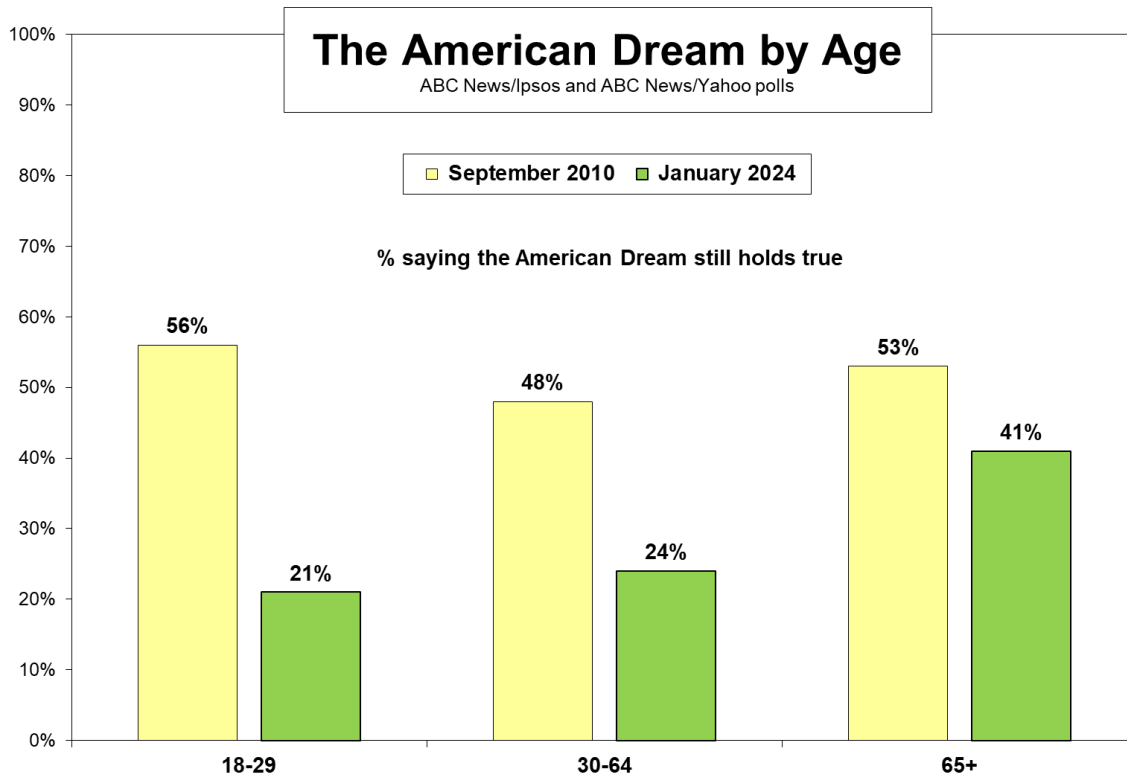
In a dispiriting sign of the times, barely more than a quarter of Americans say the American Dream still holds true, about half as many as said so 13 years ago.

Defined as “if you work hard you’ll get ahead,” just 27 percent in this ABC News/Ipsos poll say the American Dream still holds, down sharply from 50 percent when the question first was asked in 2010. Eighteen percent now say it never held true, up from 4 percent.

The rest, 52 percent, say the promise used to hold true but no longer does, up 9 percentage points. Taken together, 69 percent say the American Dream does not hold true today, up 22 points. And that’s in comparison to a poll taken in the aftermath of the Great Recession.



Although pessimism about the American Dream has grown across groups, the change is sharpest among young adults. Their view that the American Dream still holds true has dropped by 35 points, from 56 percent in 2010 to 21 percent now. That compares with a 24-point decline among those age 30 to 64 and 12 points among those 65 and older.



Differences among other groups also are evident. The survey, produced by [Langer Research Associates](#) with fieldwork by [Ipsos](#), finds that attitudes of Black Americans towards the concept of the American Dream are notably pessimistic. The share of Black people who say it still holds true has fallen by 34 points, to 21 percent, compared with a 22-point drop among those of other racial or ethnic backgrounds.

Indeed, 32 percent of Black people say the American Dream never held true (up 23 points from 2010), compared with 16 percent of others (up 13 points).

Income also differentiates views. Among people with household incomes less than \$50,000 a year, just 18 percent say the American Dream still holds true. It's 27 percent in the \$50,000- to less-than-\$100,000 bracket and 33 percent among those in \$100,000-plus households.

There's also a gap by education, which correlates with income. Among people who haven't gone beyond high school, 22 percent say the American Dream still holds true (down 25 points from 2010), compared with 40 percent of those with a postgraduate degree (down 19 points).

Partisan differences are muted; a third of Republicans and Democrats alike say the American Dream still holds true, as do a quarter of independents. Declines since 2010 are largely consistent across these groups.

Economic attitudes, predictably, matter as well. Among those who rate the economy positively, 45 percent say the American Dream still holds true, compared with 22 percent of those who say

the economy is in bad shape. And it's 41 percent among those who say they've gotten better off financially since the start of Joe Biden's presidency, vs. 23 percent among those who are worse off.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Ipsos poll was conducted online via the probability-based Ipsos KnowledgePanel® Jan. 4-8, 2024, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 2,228 adults. Partisan divisions are 25-25-41 percent, Democrats-Republicans-independents. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 2.5 percentage points, including the design effect, for the full sample. 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 Ipsos. See details on the survey's methodology [here](#).

Analysis by Jared Sousa.

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 [Brooks Lancaster](#).

Full results follow.

Q1-23, 25-27 previously released.

24. Which of these best describes the "American Dream" - that if you work hard you'll get ahead?

	It still holds true	It never held true	It once held true but does not anymore	Skip
1/8/24*	27	18	52	3
9/14/10**	50	4	43	2

*Mode change. 2010, no opinion
**ABC News/Yahoo News

*** END ***