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National Survey: Trump's Immigration Policies & the 2026 Political Landscape

Findings from a survey of 1,500 US adults

G. Elliott Morris

Wave Polling and Research

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Survey overview

Methodology

- **1,500 US adults**, Feb 6–10, 2026
- Online via Verasight
- Margin of error: ± 2.5 pp

Key findings at a glance

1. **Trump's coalition is fracturing:** ~14% of 2024 Trump voters have defected
2. **Wrong priorities:** 69% say the administration focuses too much on deportations
3. **Immigration enforcement hurts the GOP:** Pushes more voters away; 51% view GOP less favorably
4. **Why Trump voters are leaving:** Immigration is a top-3 driver of defection
5. **Path to citizenship:** 72% support a path to citizenship

Finding 1: Trump's coalition is fracturing

~14%

of 2024 Trump voters have defected

(now say they'll vote Democratic or are undecided)

Demographic	Trump defectors	Loyal Trump voters
Median age	40	54
Under 45	62%	37%
White (non-Hispanic)	54%	76%
Hispanic / Latino	25%	15%
Bachelor's degree +	36%	36%
Women	45%	43%
Urban / suburban	64%	51%
Rural	36%	49%

Finding 2: Wrong priorities

69%

say the administration focuses too much on deportations and not enough on the economy

By group

Non-Trump voters	**87%**
Trump defectors	**77%**
Loyal Trump voters	**32%**

Top issues for 2026 vote

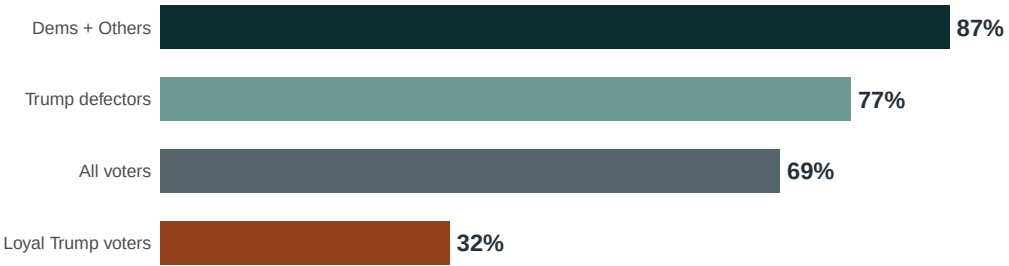
Inflation / cost of living	26%
Democracy & elections	15%
Jobs & the economy	14%
Deportations	12%

{*Q: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "The Trump administration is focusing too much on deportations and not focusing enough on fixing the economy, inflation, and the rising cost of living."*}

Finding 2: “Too focused on deportations”

"Too focused on deportations"

% who agree the administration focuses too much on deportations vs. the economy



Q: Do you agree or disagree? 'The Trump administration is focusing too much on deportations and not focusing enough on fixing the economy, inflation, and the rising cost of living.'

Finding 3: Immigration enforcement is hurting the GOP

Enforcement pushes voters away

- **35%** say enforcement makes them *less likely* to vote Republican
  vs. 26% more likely
- **35%** say ICE deployments make them *less likely*
  vs. 25% more likely
- Only **40%** approve of handling of deportations; **57%** disapprove

GOP image has deteriorated

51% view the Republican Party *less favorably* than a year ago (vs. only 17% more favorably)

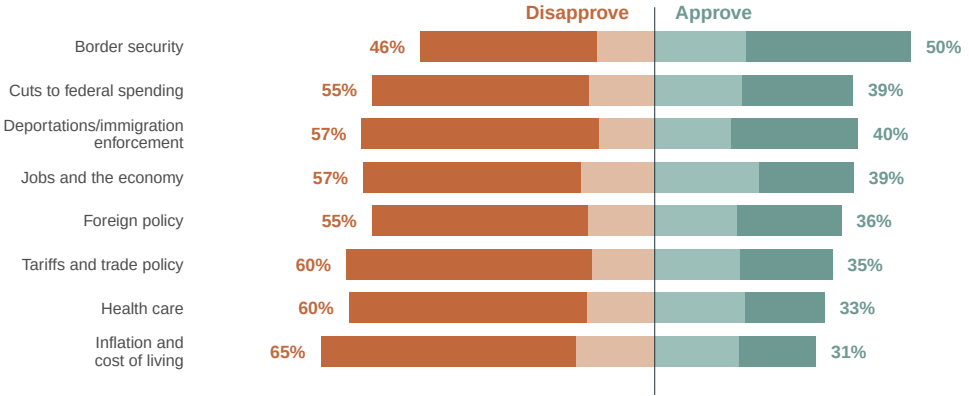
33% would view Dems more favorably if leaders pressed to reduce ICE deployments (vs. 20% less)

{*Q: Are you more likely or less likely to vote for a Republican candidate because of immigration enforcement policies / ICE deployments?*}

Finding 3: Approval of Trump admin handling of issues

Approval of Trump administration's handling of issues

All respondents | Darker shade = stronger opinion

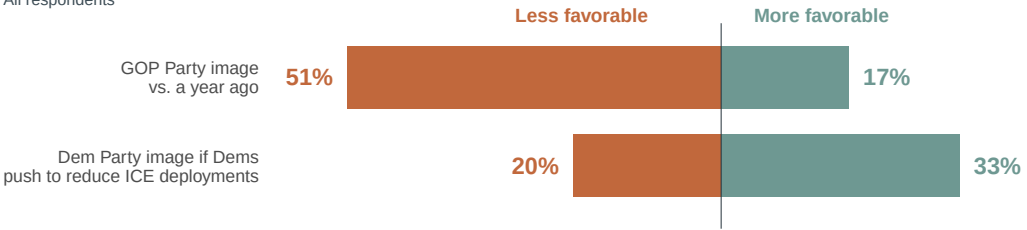


Q: Do you approve or disapprove of the way the Trump administration is handling each of the following?

Finding 3: Party image

Party image: immigration is hurting the GOP and helping the Dems

All respondents

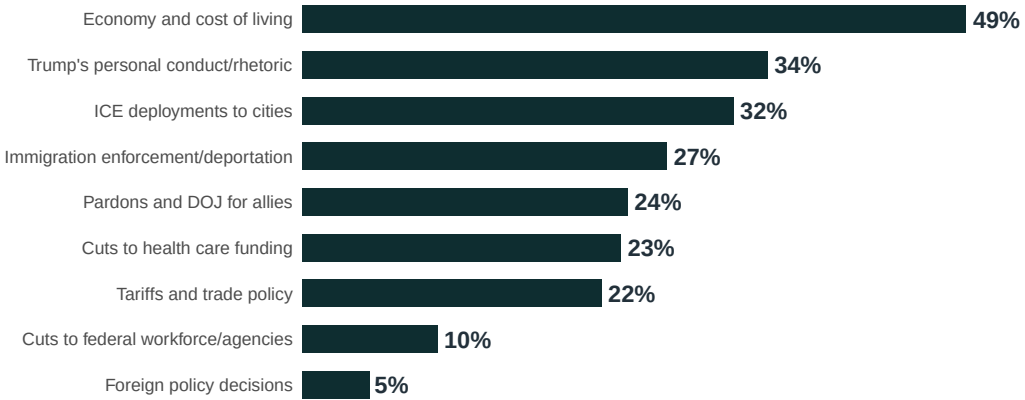


Q: Compared to a year ago, is your opinion of the Republican Party more favorable, less favorable, or about the same?
Q: Would your opinion of the Democratic Party be more or less favorable if Dem leaders pushed to reduce ICE deployments?

Finding 4: Why Trump voters are leaving

Why Trump voters are leaving

Reasons for changing opinion among Trump defectors | Select up to 3



Q: Which of the following are the biggest reasons your opinion on Trump has changed? (Select up to 3.)

Finding 5: Large majorities support a path to citizenship

72%

support a path to **citizenship** for undocumented immigrants (44% strongly)

71%

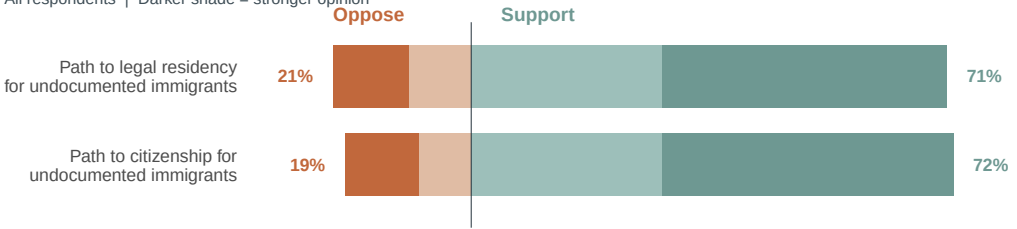
support a path to **legal residency** for undocumented immigrants

{*Q: Do you support or oppose a plan that would allow immigrants who are already here, living in the U.S. illegally, the chance to become U.S. citizens / earn legal residency if they meet certain requirements?*}

Finding 5: Broad support for a path to citizenship

Broad support for a path to citizenship

All respondents | Darker shade = stronger opinion



Q: Do you support or oppose a plan that would allow immigrants who are already here, living in the U.S. illegally, the chance to become U.S. citizens / earn legal residency if they meet certain requirements?

Strategic implications for 2026

Immigration enforcement is a vulnerability for Republicans

- Net **–9 points**: enforcement makes more voters *less* likely to vote Republican than more likely
- ∼14% of Trump's 2024 coalition has defected; immigration is a top driver
- Democrats lead the generic ballot 51–40

A two-front strategy: immigration + economics

- Anti-deportation messaging is compatible with economic messaging, not a substitute
- Voters' #1 issue is inflation/cost of living; 69% say admin is too focused on deportations
- Candidates leave votes on the table if either front is missing

Pro-immigrant positions are popular

- Paths to citizenship (72%) and legal residency (71%) have supermajority support
- Opposing ICE deployments is a net positive for Democratic favorability (+13 points)

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Thank You

Questions?

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