



ISPU American Muslim Poll Key Findings

In early 2016, the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding conducted a survey of Muslims, Jews, Protestants, and Catholics to examine their attitudes on various issues ranging from politics and religion, to violence and identity. What emerged from the results is a profile of a Muslim community that is both pious and patriotic, optimistic and weary of discrimination; a community that is similar to Jews in its politics, and much like Protestants in its religious practice.

Muslims lean Democratic, favor Democratic Candidates

- Compared with America's major faith groups, Hillary Clinton finds her strongest support among Muslims (40 percent of Muslims vs. 30 percent of Jews and 13 percent of Protestants and Catholics).
- Muslims are as likely as Jews to favor Bernie Sanders (27 and 24 percent, respectively).
- Donald Trump has his lowest support in the Muslim community (4 percent).
- Muslims lean Democratic to a degree only eclipsed by Jews (44 and 50 percent of Muslims and Jews respectively), and have the lowest share of Republicans of any religious group by a substantial margin (6 percent of Muslims vs. 16 percent of Jews and 34 and 47 percent of Catholics and Protestants respectively).
- Muslims identify the economy, Islamophobia and education as the most important priorities for the next president.

Muslims are pious and patriotic

- Muslims are similar to Protestants in their religious service attendance (42 percent of Muslims and 45 percent of Protestants attend religious service at least weekly) and are as likely as Protestants to say religion is important to their lives (87 percent of Muslims and 94 percent of Protestants).
- Muslims are as likely as Protestants to have a strong American identity (85 and 84 percent respectively). They are also as likely as other Americans to identify strongly with their faith (89 percent of Muslims, 84 percent of Jews, and at least 95 percent of Catholics and Protestants).
- Muslims who say their faith is important to their identity are *more* likely to say being American is important to how they think of themselves (91 percent) than those who expressed a weak religious identity (68 percent).

Muslims are at least as likely as members of other faith groups to reject violence

- Muslims oppose the targeting and killing of civilians by the military more than people in other faith groups (65 percent say it is never justified compared to 45 percent among Jews and 43 and 40 percent among Catholics and Protestants respectively).
- Muslims are as likely as people in other faith groups to also oppose the targeting and killing of civilians by individuals or small groups (Between 80 and 84 percent of Muslim, Jews, Catholics and Protestants say it is never justified).



- There is no correlation between Muslim religious identity, the importance of religion or frequency of mosque attendance and Muslim attitudes toward violence.

Mosque attendance linked to greater civic engagement not radicalization

- There is no correlation between Muslim attitudes toward violence and their frequency of mosque attendance.
- Muslim Americans who regularly attend mosques are more likely than those who do not frequent mosques to work with their neighbors to solve community problems (49 vs. 30 percent), be registered to vote (74 vs. 49 percent), and are more likely to plan to vote (92 vs. 81 percent).

Muslims are most optimistic despite reporting most discrimination

- The percentage of Muslims who are satisfied with the direction the country is going is almost double the level of optimism shown by Jews, the second-most satisfied religious group (63 vs. 38 percent).
- More than half of Muslims reported experiencing some level of discrimination in the past year based on their religion, with 18 percent reporting regular discrimination, in comparison to 5 percent of Jews, 4 percent of Catholics and 2 percent of Protestants.
- Those who report regular discrimination were less likely than those who reported no discrimination to be optimistic about the country (49 vs. 72 percent), but more likely to engage in community activities (55 vs. 31 percent).
 - This suggests that Muslims respond to discrimination by becoming more proactive and involved rather than more isolated.

Muslims are engaged in their community, less politically

- Muslims are as likely (38 percent) as Jews (40 percent) and Catholics (42 percent) to cooperate with people in their neighborhoods to solve problems.
- Muslims are the least likely faith group to be politically engaged.
 - Only 60 percent of Muslims who reported they could legally vote were registered to do so compared with at least 86 percent of Jews, Catholics, and Protestants.
 - Eighty-five percent of respondents in the same group say they plan on casting their ballot in the next presidential election.
 - Roughly 15 percent of Muslims who are able to vote do not plan to vote in the upcoming presidential election, the largest of any group.
- Muslims who plan to participate in the next election differ from those who do not plan to do so in their perception of the effectiveness of voting.
- The top reasons Muslims mention for voting are:
 - “Civic duty” (27 percent)
 - “I want to make a difference” (22 percent)
 - “I want to make sure a specific candidate is not elected (8%)
 - “It is my right to vote/Voting is an important right or freedom” (8%)
- The top reasons Muslims mention for *not* voting are:
 - “My vote doesn’t matter/count/won’t make a difference” (19%)
 - “I don’t like any of the people running” (17%)



- o “The issues I care about are not represented by any candidate” (10%)

Methodology

ISPU created the questionnaire for this study and commissioned two firms to conduct the survey: Social Science Research Solutions (SSRS) for a nationally representative survey of Muslims and Jews, and Triton Polling & Research for a nationally representative survey of the general American public. ISPU owns all data and intellectual property related to this study.

SSRS conducted a survey of Muslims and Jews for ISPU from January 18 through January 27, 2016. SSRS interviewed 515 Muslim and 312 Jewish respondents. Sample for the study came from three sources. SSRS telephoned a sample of households that was prescreened as being Muslim or Jewish in SSRS’s weekly national omnibus survey of 1,000 randomly selected respondents ($N = 550$) as well as purchasing a listed sample for Muslim households in both landline and cell phone frames from Experian, a sample provider that flags specific characteristics for each piece of sample ($N = 171$). SSRS’s Omnibus survey completed half of all interviews with cell phone respondents, so prescreened respondents included those who were originally interviewed on both landline and cell phones. In an effort to supplement the number of Muslim interviews they were able to complete in the given time frame and with the amount of available prescreened sample, SSRS employed a web panel and completed the final 106 Muslim interviews via an online survey with samples from a nonprobability panel. The data from this project are weighted to match estimates of the Jewish and/or Muslim populations determined from 3 years of data collected through the SSRS Omnibus as well as estimates from the Pew Research Center’s 2011 survey of Muslim Americans. The telephone portion of respondents has a margin of error at 95 percent confidence level of Muslims ± 6.9 percent and Jews ± 7 percent.

Triton live-agent surveys were conducted by an in-house, state-of-the-art call center located outside of Bend, Oregon. All surveys incorporated standard statistical methods to select a representative sample of the target population. Triton conducted this telephone poll of the general public, on behalf of ISPU, by live interviews to respondents via landline and cell phones between January 18 and January 30, 2016, securing a sample size of 1,021 completed surveys with a margin of error at 95 percent confidence level of ± 3.1 percent. The weighting applied was gender, age, and region.

For more details on polling methodology, visit <http://www.ispu.org/poll>.