



Voter sentiments on the U.S. election system



From the Democracy Fund’s national survey following the 2016 presidential election.¹



The majority of Americans have confidence in our election system and accept the outcome of the election:

85%

of voters say they had a pleasant experience on November 8th.

59%

of respondents believe the election was fairly determined.

However, voters still have concerns about key safeguards within the system.

Percent of voters who are “very” or “somewhat” concerned that each of the following nationwide phenomena might have affected the outcome of the 2016 presidential election.

ALL U.S. VOTERS	DEMOCRATS	REPUBLICANS	
45%	46%	47%	instances of voter fraud, like people voting multiple times or voting without being registered.
38%	44%	33%	a candidate or party changed the election results to create false or inaccurate vote counts.
39%	47%	31%	an electronic security breach or hack impacted the vote counts.
38%	41%	36%	a voting machine miscalculated votes.
36%	50%	23%	successful interference on Election Day by an outside country.

▶ Almost half of voters who believe that the 2016 election was “very fairly” determined still expressed some concern regarding the integrity of the U.S. election system.

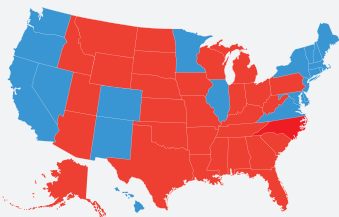
Minority voters are more likely to express concerns about election problems, including feeling fearful, intimidated, or had voting problems on Election Day:



23%
OF AFRICAN
AMERICAN VOTERS

18%
OF HISPANIC VOTERS

12%
OF WHITE VOTERS



LOOKING AHEAD

Educating Americans about key safeguards in the electoral process will be essential in coming years. Key information can improve Americans’ perceptions of ballot security, including:

- ▶ Voting machines are held under **lock and key** with additional protections in place to ensure that no one can access the devices without proper credentials.
- ▶ **No one person ever has unlimited access to a voting machine** and most states require a post-election review of the paper record to ensure that the results are correct. Together, these serve as a **check and balance** to prevent tampering with the machines and to catch any errors in the count.
- ▶ The U.S. election system is **extremely decentralized**, which is what makes it so difficult to coordinate an attack on the process of rigging the system. Approximately **10,000 local jurisdictions** administer elections.

For additional information and resources, visit democracyfund.org.

1. This online survey of 1,500 U.S. adults was conducted November 9–11, 2016 via VeraQuest, Inc. Panelists are required to double opt-in to ensure voluntary participation in the surveys they are invited to complete. Adult respondents were randomly selected to be generally proportional of the age, sex, region, race/ethnicity, income, and education strata of the U.S., based on Census proportions, and quotas were established for demographics to confirm sufficient diversity of the sample in proportions so that they would resemble that of the United States.