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The Arkansas Poll, 2017 Summary Report

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Interviews conducted by: Issues & Answers Network, Inc.
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Note: Results for past years are selective in the interest of space. Visit the Arkansas Poll website for more: <http://fulbright.uark.edu/departments/political-science/partners/arkansas-poll.php>.

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Most Important Problem

What is the most important problem or issue facing people in Arkansas today? ¹	2015	2016	2017
• the economy	43 (47)%	27 (28)%	28 (29)%
• healthcare	8 (10)%	19 (20)%	14 (13)%
• drugs	--	--	8 (7)%
• crime	4 (3)%	13 (11)%	6 (6)%
• politicians/politics	5 (6)%	14 (16)%	4 (5)%
• education	5 (4)%	13 (14)%	4 (4)%
• other/don't know/refused	31 (27)%	9 (7)%	35 (35)%

Public Figure Approval Ratings/Elections

Do you approve or disapprove of _____ as governor?	Approve	Disapprove	DK/Ref
Mike Huckabee 1999	66%	13%	21%
2001	70%	17%	13%
2003	47%	38%	16%
2005	58%	27%	15%
Mike Beebe 2007	70%	9%	21%
2009	70%	9%	20%
2011	72 (74)%	13 (14)%	15 (12)%
2012	71 (72)%	14 (15)%	15 (14)%
2013	66 (68)%	17 (17)%	18 (14)%
Asa Hutchinson 2015	57 (63)%	18 (17)%	25 (20)%
2016	60 (66)%	17 (18)%	23 (16)%
2017	62 (65)%	16 (16)%	23 (19)%
Do you approve of _____ as a U.S. Senator?			
Blanche Lincoln 2001	51%	13%	36%
2003	55%	10%	35%
2005	55%	17%	28%
2007	50%	24%	26%
2009	43%	34%	23%
John Boozman 2011	40 (44)%	24 (26)%	36 (30)%
2013	30 (34)%	28 (29)%	42 (37)%
2015	38 (44)%	18 (18)%	44 (38)%
2016	35 (38)%	25 (29)%	40 (33)%
2017	39 (41)%	22 (25)%	39 (34)%
Do you approve of _____ as a U.S. Senator?			
Mark Pryor 2003	52%	11%	37%
2005	56%	12%	32%
2007	53%	18%	29%
2009	51%	22%	27%
2011	47 (48)%	27 (29)%	27 (21)%
2013	33 (34)%	41 (44)%	26 (23)%
Tom Cotton 2015	45 (51)%	27 (27)%	29 (21)%
2016	45 (50)%	27 (29)%	28 (21)%
2017	48 (51)%	26 (29)%	26 (20)%

¹ In odd-numbered years, the Arkansas Poll records and codes the open-ended answers of respondents. In even-numbered years, respondents are asked to choose from the most frequently mentioned issues of the previous year.

Do you approve of _____ as president?			
George W. Bush 2005	38%	56%	7%
2007	30%	65%	6%
Barack Obama 2009	42%	47%	10%
2010	35 (31)%	57 (62)%	9 (7)%
2011	32 (31)%	60 (64)%	8 (5)%
2012	34 (31)%	59 (62)%	8 (6)%
2013	27 (29)%	65 (66)%	8 (5)%
2014	27 (27)%	66 (68)%	8 (5)%
2015	28 (27)%	62 (66)%	11 (7)%
2016	37 (36)%	56 (60)%	8 (4)%
Donald Trump 2017	47 (50)%	40 (41)%	14 (9)%
Presidential race – 2016	Trump (R)	Clinton (D)	Other
2016: At this point, are you more likely to vote for ...? ²	59%	36%	4%
2016: Actual Arkansas vote distribution	61%	34%	5%
2017: For whom did you vote in the 2016 presidential race? ²	58%	35%	7%

Current Issues

Do you favor laws that would make it more difficult for a woman to get an abortion, favor laws that would make it easier to get an abortion or should no change be made to existing abortion laws?	More Difficult	Easier	No Change	DK/ Refused
1999	45%	14%	32%	9%
2001	46%	13%	35%	7%
2003	47%	13%	33%	7%
2005	44%	9%	39%	8%
2007	41%	13%	36%	9%
2009	43%	11%	38%	8%
2013	44 (44)%	11 (11)%	34 (35)%	11 (10)%
2015	46 (47)%	12 (12)%	30 (30)%	12 (11)%
2017	45 (47)%	13 (13)%	25 (24)%	17 (16)%
Do you think abortions should be legal under any circumstances, legal only under certain circumstances or illegal in all circumstances?	Illegal	Depends	Legal	DK/Ref
	18 (18)%	61 (63)%	13 (13)%	8 (5)%
In general, would you say you favor stricter gun control, less strict gun control, or should no change be made to existing gun control laws?	Stricter	Less Strict	No Change	DK/ Refused
2000	39%	15%	42%	4%
2002	36%	15%	45%	4%
2004	38%	12%	45%	5%
2006	37%	11%	47%	5%
2008	29%	13%	54%	4%
2009	24%	20%	52%	4%
2013	33 (33)%	15 (15)%	47 (48)%	6 (4)%
2015	39 (36)%	18 (18)%	36 (38)%	8 (8)%
2016	31 (31)%	14 (14)%	52 (53)%	3 (3)%
2017	38 (37)%	15 (15)%	41 (43)%	6 (5)%

² Respondents offering “don’t know” or who refused to answer are removed from the analysis on these items.

	Yes	No	DK/Ref
Do you think same-sex marriages should be recognized? 2015	29 (27)%	63 (64)%	8 (8)%
2016	33 (33)%	57 (60)%	10 (8)%
2017	35 (33)%	57 (59)%	9 (8)%
Do you think gays/lesbians should have equal rights ... housing? 2015	72 (72)%	19 (19)%	9 (10)%
2017	78 (79)%	13 (12)%	10 (9)%
Do you think gays/lesbians should have equal rights ... jobs? 2015	79 (80)%	13 (12)%	8 (8)%
2017	84 (84)%	10 (10)%	6 (6)%
Do you think gays/lesbians should have eq rights ... adoption?	43 (41)%	45 (48)%	12 (12)%
Are any of your family members or close friends gay or lesbian?	42 (44)%	54 (52)%	4 (4)%
Do you support the death penalty ... (if convicted of murder? 2015	71 (73)%	19 (17)%	10 (10)%
2017	72 (73)%	17 (16)%	11 (11)%
Do you support legalization of possessing sm amounts of marijuana?	47 (46)%	43 (45)%	10 (10)%
Do you think global warming, or climate change, will pose a serious threat to you or your way of life in your lifetime?	2015	2016	2017
Yes	25 (24)%	25 (25)%	30 (29)%
No	65 (67)%	64 (67)%	61 (62)%
Don't Know/Refused/Other	10 (9)%	11 (7)%	10 (9)%
Which of the following statements comes closest to your view of the way political campaigns are funded in the U.S.?			
The system works pretty well, only minor changes needed	9 (9)%	--	--
There are some good things but fundamental changes are needed	25 (26)%	--	--
The system has so much wrong we need to completely rebuild it	55 (57)%	--	--
Don't know/refused/other	11 (9)%		

Political Party and Ideology

Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?	Republican	Democrat	Indep't	Other	DK/Refused ³
1999	23%	35%	31%	4%	7%
2000	23 (25)%	36 (38)%	35 (34)%	0%	6 (2)%
2001	27%	33%	32%	5%	3%
2002	28 (30)%	33 (35)%	33 (31)%	3 (2)%	3 (2)%
2003	24%	38%	31%	4%	3%
2004	30 (32)%	35 (36)%	28 (27)%	3 (3)%	4 (2)%
2005	23%	36%	33%	4%	4%
2006	23 (25)%	36 (37)%	33 (33)%	3 (3)%	4 (3)%
2007	24%	39%	30%	3%	2%
2008	24 (27)%	35 (34)%	33 (33)%	7 (5)%	2 (1)%
2009	24%	33%	34%	7%	3%
2010	21 (25)%	28 (27)%	42 (41)%	7 (6)%	3 (1)%
2011	26 (29)%	31 (33)%	34 (31)%	6 (5)%	4 (2)%
2012	29 (32)%	31 (30)%	33 (32)%	3 (3)%	4 (3)%
2013	24 (27)%	30 (31)%	37 (36)%	4 (3)%	5 (3)%
2014	28 (31)%	31 (33)%	33 (33)%	3 (3)%	5 (1)%
2015	27 (32)%	32 (32)%	32 (31)%	3 (3)%	6 (3)%
2016	29 (34)%	25 (26)%	37 (36)%	3 (2)%	7 (3)%
2017	29 (32)%	24 (25)%	35 (35)%	5 (5)%	7 (4)%

³ Values in parentheses include "very likely voters" only; percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Independents only:	Closer to Rs	Closer to Ds	Just Indep't		DK/Ref
1999	33%	29%	34%		4%
2000	35 (39)%	25 (26)%	35 (30)%		5 (2)%
2001	29%	36%	31%		4%
2002	30 (31)%	32 (34)%	33 (33)%		4 (3)%
2003	33%	34%	33%		2%
2004	39 (41)%	31 (32)%	30 (26)%		0 (1)%
2005	30%	35%	32%		4%
2006	33 (35)%	34 (34)%	30 (23)%		2 (3)%
2007	34%	37%	29%		1%
2008	35 (38)%	30 (29)%	33 (31)%		3 (3)%
2009	39%	32%	27%		2%
2010	44 (50)%	21 (16)%	33 (33)%		2 (2)%
2011	42 (48)%	29 (28)%	26 (22)%		3 (2)%
2012	41 (46)%	26 (22)%	28 (27)%		6 (5)%
2013	43 (51)%	21 (22)%	31 (22)%		6 (6)%
2014	38 (43)%	25 (23)%	30 (28%)		8 (6)%
2015	42(52)%	23 (20)%	30 (25)%		5 (3)%
2016	37 (45)%	18 (19)%	40 (35)%		5 (2)%
2017	37 (38)%	26 (26)%	32 (31)%		5 (5)%

Do you think of yourself as ...?	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative		DK/Ref
1999	14%	38%	38%		10%
2000	16%	36%	39%		9%
2001	17%	39%	38%		6%
2002	15%	39%	41%		5%
2003	17%	36%	39%		7%
2004	17%	35%	42%		7%
2005	13%	40%	39%		8%
2006	16%	39%	39%		7%
2007	16%	37%	39%		6%
2008	14%	35%	43%		8%
2009	14%	37%	42%		7%
2010	14 (12)%	35 (36)%	44 (48)%		8 (4)%
2011	16 (16)%	34 (34)%	45 (47)%		5 (3)%
2012	13 (12)%	32 (32)%	46 (51)%		9 (6)%
2013	14 (14)%	31 (31)%	44 (48)%		11 (7)%
2014	14 (14)%	30 (31)%	44 (49)%		12 (6)%
2015	14 (13)%	31 (32)%	46 (50)%		10 (6)%
2016	13 (14)%	29 (30)%	45 (49)%		14 (7)%
2017	16 (14)%	27 (27)%	46 (52)%		11 (6)%

Life in Arkansas

Overall, do you feel that Arkansas is generally headed in the right direction or the wrong direction?	Right	Wrong		DK/ Refused ⁴
2003	63%	26%		11%
2005	73%	18%		9%
2007	69%	21%		8%
2008	71%	19%		10%
2009	72%	16%		12%
2010	67 (68)%	22 (21)%		11 (11)%
2011	74 (76)%	20 (19)%		7 (6)%
2012	73 (74)%	17 (17)%		10 (9)%
2013	63 (66)%	20 (20)%		16 (14)%
2014	57 (60)%	25 (27)%		18 (14)%
2015	65 (69)%	21 (20)%		15 (12)%
2016	57 (63)%	26 (27)%		17 (11)%
2017	64 (65)%	20 (20)%		17 (15)%
Would you say you are better off financially, worse off, or about the same compared to a year ago?	Better	About the Same	Worse	DK/ Refused
2003	27%	45%	28%	1%
2005	28%	49%	22%	1%
2007	30%	48%	20%	1%
2008	20%	38%	41%	1%
2009	22%	46%	31%	2%
2010	19 (18)%	46 (47)%	34 (35)%	1 (0)%
2011	19 (19)%	49 (49)%	31 (32)%	1 (1)%
2012	23 (24)%	49 (50)%	27 (26)%	0 (1)%
2013	14 (14)%	58 (58)%	26 (26)%	2 (1)%
2014	22 (22)%	50 (52)%	24 (25)%	5 (1)%
2015	18 (18)%	54 (55)%	26 (27)%	1 (1)%
2016	21 (20)%	55 (56)%	22 (23)%	3 (1)%
2017	28 (28)%	54 (57)%	16 (14)%	2 (1)%
And, looking ahead, do you think a year from now, you will be ... as now?	Better	About the Same	Worse	DK/ Refused
2003	35%	49%	12%	5%
2005	34%	46%	15%	5%
2007	38%	45%	12%	3%
2008	35%	39%	18%	8%
2009	32%	48%	17%	4%
2010	28 (25)%	46 (45)%	20 (23)%	7 (7)%
2011	25 (21)%	52 (56)%	18 (20)%	4 (4)%
2012	26 (27)%	48 (46)%	13 (13)%	13 (14)%
2013	18 (18)%	47 (49)%	24 (25)%	11 (8)%
2014	26 (26)%	51 (54)%	13 (14)%	10 (7)%
2015	22 (20)%	55 (58)%	18 (19)%	5 (4)%
2016	27 (26)%	46 (50)%	13 (12)%	15 (13)%
2017	32 (33)%	50 (51)%	11 (10)%	8 (6)%

⁴ Values in parentheses include “very likely voters” only; percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Methodology and Sample Information

Between October 12th and October 22nd, 2017, Issues & Answers Network, Inc. completed 801 telephone interviews among a random sample of adult Arkansans. Forty percent of all respondents interviewed (n=320) use their cell phones for all or most of their calls.

The survey's margin of error statewide is +/- 3.5 percentage points, meaning that we are 95 percent confident that the actual result lies within 3.5 percentage points (in either direction) of the result our sample produced.

Employing guidelines established by the American Association for Public Opinion Research, the poll's overall cooperation rate was 28%. The figure for cell phone sample was 23%. This figure reflects completed surveys as a percentage of all eligible individuals contacted.⁵

To assess the quality of the sample drawn for the poll, the Arkansas Poll team publishes what most polling organizations do not: a comparison of survey respondents' key demographic characteristics to those of the state as a whole. This information is reported in the table below.

	2017 Arkansas Poll Sample	State of Arkansas
Average Age (for 18+ pop.)	57	49
Married	52%	49% ^{**}
Gender		
Male	43%	49%
Female	57%	51%
Educational Attainment		
High school graduates	90%	85%
College graduates	35%	21%
Median Household Income	\$35,001-\$50,000	\$41,371
Race/Ethnicity		
White	79%	73%
Black or African American	10%	16%
Multi-Ethnic	4%	2%
Hispanic	2%	7% [*]
Native American	2%	1%
Asian	<1%	2%
Something Else, Don't Know, Refused	2%	-

Sources: The 2017 Arkansas Poll, U.S. Census Bureau 2016 estimates.

^{*}Hispanics are not included in percentages for other groups.

^{**} Imputed by dividing number of husband-wife households by total households.

⁵ AAPOR Response Rate Calculator 4.0 was used for this computation.