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What Do The American People Think About Trump: The Trump Traits

Welcome to NAVIGATOR – a project designed to better understand the American public's views on issues of the day and help advocates, elected officials, and other interested parties understand the language, imagery and messaging needed to make and win key policy arguments. This edition is a special report reviewing select data from national surveys conducted by Navigator from April 2018 to June 2019 tracking how the American public evaluates different traits of the President of the United States: Donald Trump. From health care to taxes to political reform and many other important issues facing the country, perceptions of the President are inextricably tied to how to win important policy arguments and progressives

should be equipped on how to characterize Trump and his agenda. More information about Navigator and past waves of its research can be found here.

Over the past year, Navigator has asked a series of questions to track how the public views President Trump on a variety of different dimensions. Some of the questions we have tracked over time include:

- Does Trump want what is best for **himself**, or what is best for **the country**?
- Does Trump put **wealthy people first**, or does he put **working and middle class people first**?
- Is Trump bringing the **wrong kind** of change to Washington, or the **right kind**?
- Is Trump bringing **more corruption** to Washington, or is he **fixing corruption** in Washington?
- Has Trump mostly **broken promises** he made during the campaign, or mostly **kept them**?

This report will review how Americans have responded to these questions over time, and highlight notable demographic differences in responses to these metrics.

TRAIT: What's Best for Himself, or What's Best for the Country?

Most Americans believe President Trump wants what is best for himself more so than what's best for the country. In tracking this question over the last 14 months, Navigator has consistently found that by double-digit margins (ranging from 12% to 24%), a majority of Americans believe Trump prioritizes himself over the country, with the results in Navigator's first poll matching the latest edition in June 2019, 59% to 41%.

Consistently throughout this report, we generally find that self-identified independents, people of color, women, white Americans with a college degree, and those outside the FoxHole (i.e., Republicans regularly watching Fox News - see our special report on this group here) agree Trump wants what is best for himself over those agreeing he wants what is best for the country:

- Independents: +30
- People of color: +54
- Women: +22
- Outside the FoxHole: +40
- Whites with a college degree: +12
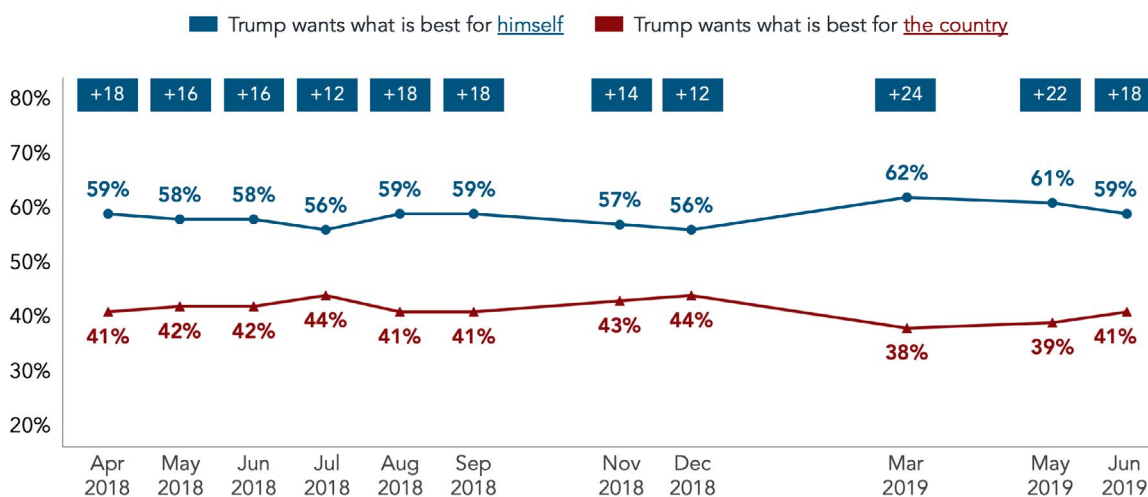
Demographic	Best for Himself	Best for the Country
Party Identification		
Democrat	90%	10%
Independent	**65%**	**35%**
Republican	20%	80%
Race		
White	52%	48%
All people of color	**77%**	**23%**
Gender		
Women	**61%**	**39%**
Men	56%	44%
Race/Education		
White + no college degree	50%	50%
White + college degree	**56%**	**44%**
FoxHole (News Consumption + Party ID)		
Republicans Regularly Watching Fox News	13%	87%
All Others	**70%**	**30%**

TRAIT: For the Wealthy, or for Working and Middle Class People?

By a two to one margin, Americans think that Trump puts wealthy people first, not working and middle class people. Over the course of the past nine months, we have tracked this question on four separate occasions and in each found that more than 60% of the public believes Trump prioritizes the wealthy over the middle class (66% in last month's survey). While a divide often exists on Trump between college-educated and non-college educated whites, that difference is less pronounced for this particular dimension.

Among key demographic groups, those agreeing Trump puts wealthy people first over those agreeing he puts working and middle class people first:

- Independents: +46
- People of color: +52
- Women: +30
- Outside the FoxHole: +54
- Whites with a college degree: +34
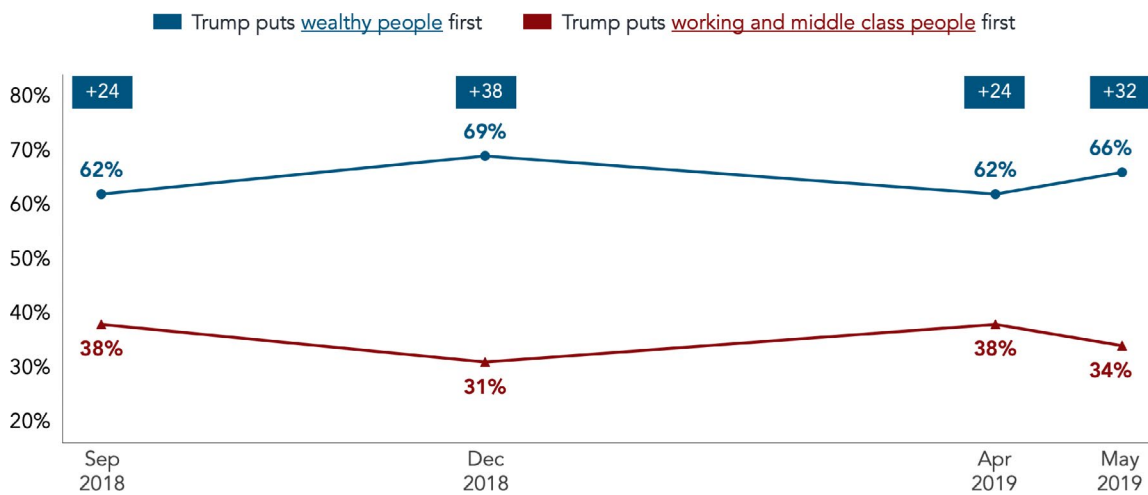
Demographic	Wealthy First	Working/Middle Class First
Party Identification		
Democrat	94%	6%
Independent	**73%**	**27%**
Republican	29%	71%
Race		
White	63%	37%
All people of color	**76%**	**24%**
Gender		
Women	**65%**	**35%**
Men	68%	32%
Race/Education		
White + no college degree	60%	40%
White + college degree	**67%**	**33%**
The FoxHole (News Consumption + Party ID)		
Republicans Regularly Watching Fox News	27%	73%
All Others	**77%**	**23%**

TRAIT: Bringing the Right or Wrong Kind of Change to Washington?

A strong majority of the public thinks that Trump's style of governing as President is bringing the wrong kind of change to Washington. Donald Trump narrowly won the presidency in 2016 on campaign promises that he would be a disruptor and shake up the status quo, but most Americans think the change he has brought to Washington has been the wrong kind of change. Majorities in each of the five tracking surveys we have included this question on agree that Trump is bringing the wrong kind of change, with our latest survey finding Americans agree by an 18-point margin, 59% to 41%.

Among key demographic groups, those agreeing Trump is bringing the right kind of change to Washington over those agreeing Trump is bringing the wrong kind of change to Washington:

- Independents: +34
- People of color: +60
- Women: +26
- Outside the FoxHole: +42
- Whites with a college degree: +24

Trump is bringing the wrong kind of change to Washington

Trump is bringing the right kind of change to Washington

	+18	+8	+12			+20		+18

	May 2018	Jun 2018	Jul 2018		Dec 2018		Apr 2019
Wrong	59%	54%	56%		60%		59%
Right	41%	46%	44%		40%		41%
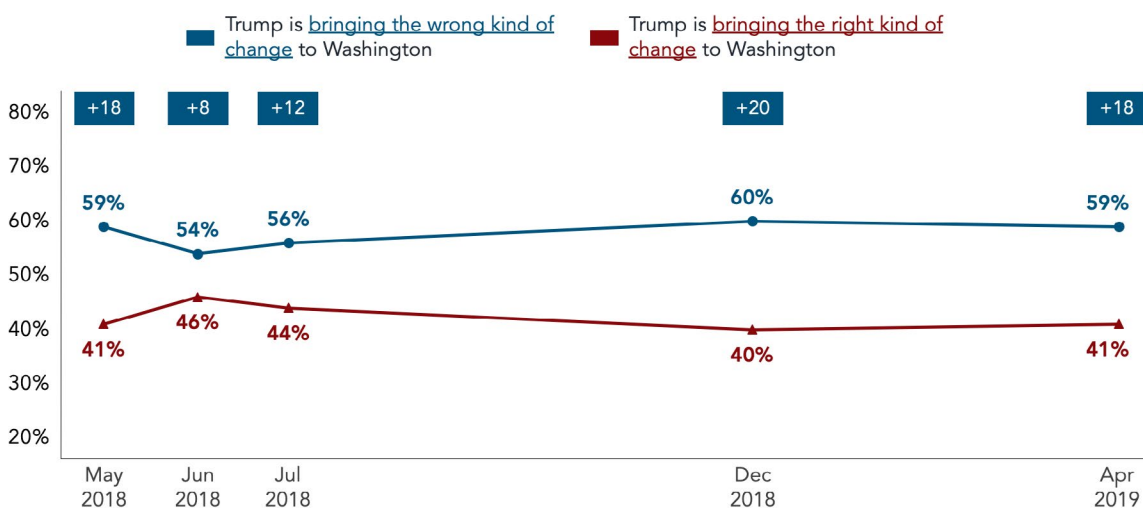
Demographic	Bringing Wrong Change	Bringing Right Change
Party Identification		
Democrat	94%	6%
Independent	**67%**	**33%**
Republican	13%	87%
Race		
White	51%	49%
All people of color	**80%**	**20%**
Gender		
Women	**63%**	**37%**
Men	54%	46%
Race/Education		
White + no college degree	42%	58%
White + college degree	**62%**	**38%**
The FoxHole (News Consumption + Party ID)		
Republicans Regularly Watching Fox News	8%	92%
All Others	**71%**	**29%**

TRAIT: Bringing More Corruption to Washington, or Fixing It?

Just as most Americans think Trump is bringing the wrong kind of change to Washington, they also see him making it more corrupt by similar margins. President Trump has consistently proclaimed that he is "draining the swamp" of corruption in Washington, yet the public believes, by double-digit margins, that he is doing the opposite. Over the course of tracking this question, Navigator has found that the margin believing he is bringing more corruption to Washington has actually inched up over the course of the past year from 57% in May 2018 to 61% when last asked in April this year.

Among key demographic groups, those agreeing Trump is bringing more corruption Washington over those agreeing Trump is fixing corruption in Washington:

- Independents: +42
- People of color: +48
- Women: +32
- Outside the FoxHole: +44
- Whites with a college degree: +28
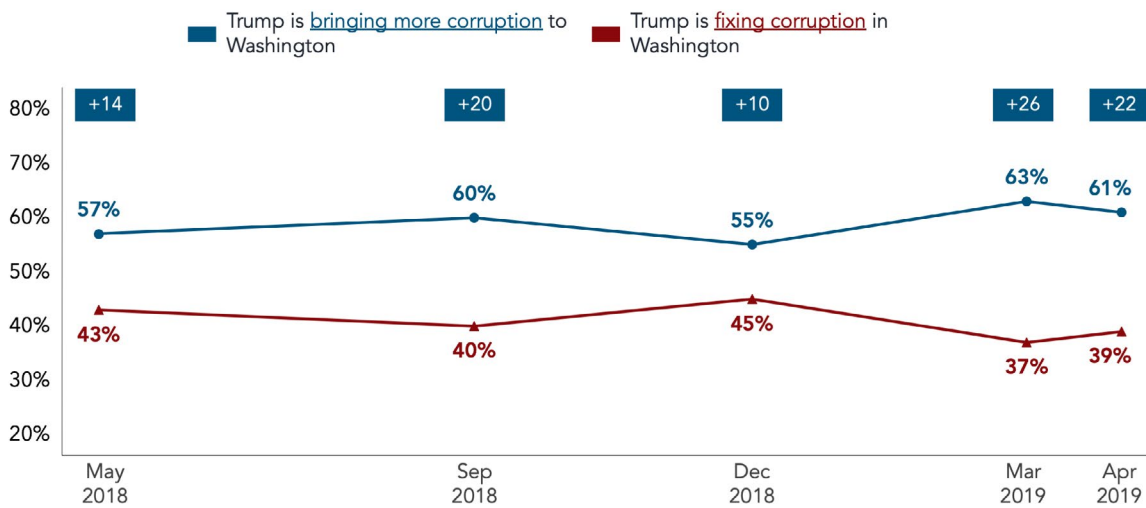
Demographic	Bringing More Corruption	Fixing Corruption
Party Identification		
Democrat	93%	7%
Independent	**71%**	**29%**
Republican	17%	83%
Race		
White	56%	44%
All people of color	**74%**	**26%**
Gender		
Women	**66%**	**34%**
Men	55%	45%
Race/Education		
White + no college degree	52%	48%
White + college degree	**64%**	**36%**
The FoxHole (News Consumption + Party ID)		
Republicans Regularly Watching Fox News	14%	86%
All Others	**72%**	**28%**

TRAIT: Mostly Breaking Promises, or Mostly Keeping Them?

Unlike the other traits we have tracked over time, Americans are more split on whether President Trump is keeping or breaking his campaign promises. In September, Navigator first asked whether Trump has kept his word from the 2016 campaign and found those saying he was mostly keeping the promises he made over those agreeing he was breaking them by a 12-point margin, 56% to 44%. However, in recent months, Navigator has revisited the question and found the percentage who believe he is breaking his promises has been trending in an upward trajectory from 44% in last September to 51% in June. The increase comes almost exclusively among whites, where only 39% thought he was breaking his campaign promises, which has increased by 7 points to 46%.

There are key demographic groups showing more of an even divide than other traits (In particular, women and white college educated Americans), but other groups still show a wider divide:

- Independents: +18
- People of color: +30

- Women: -2
- Outside the FoxHole: +20

- Whites with a college degree: Even
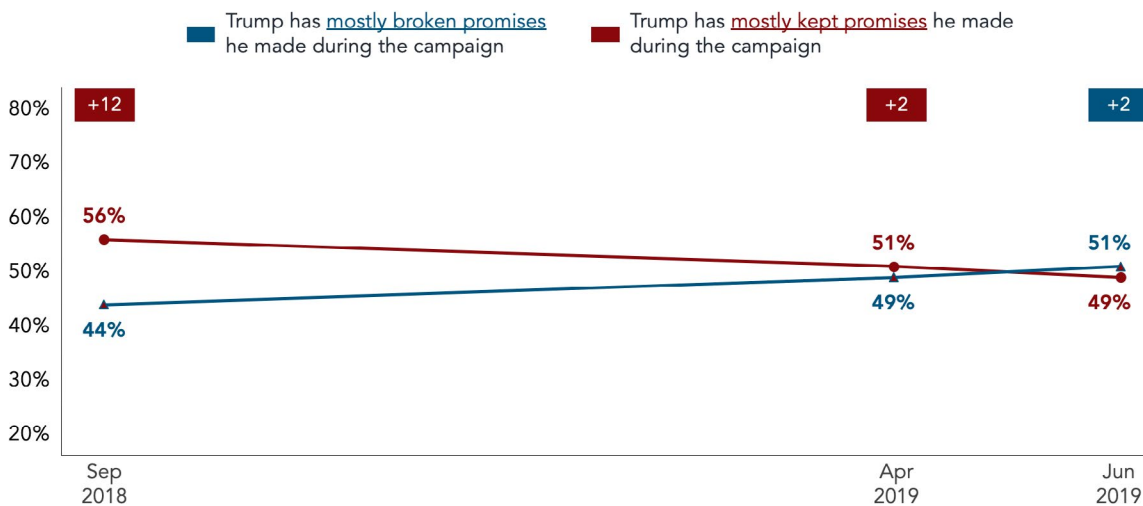
Demographic	Broken Promises	Kept Promises
Party Identification		
Democrat	76%	24%
Independent	59%	41%
Republican	18%	82%
Race		
White	46%	54%
All people of color	65%	35%
Gender		
Women	49%	51%
Men	53%	47%
Race/Education		
White + no college degree	43%	57%
White + college degree	50%	50%
The FoxHole (News Consumption + Party ID)		
Republicans Regularly Watching Fox News	15%	85%
All Others	60%	40%

NEW TRAIT: Is Trump Doing Better Than Expected, or Worse?

In our first assessment on how Trump's performance compares to people's expectations, Trump is viewed as doing worse than expected by a significant margin. We added a new trait in June that will be tracked over time to evaluate how Trump's job performance compares to their expectations, and this month's edition found that only 42% of Americans believe he is doing better than expected versus 58% who think he is doing worse than expected. 35% say that they both approve of President Trump overall and think he has exceeded expectations, while 50% both disapprove of Trump and think he has performed worse than expected.

While most of the key demographic groups are more likely than not to think Trump is doing worse than expected, a narrow majority of whites with a college degree think he is doing better than expected (53% better - 47% worse) while at the same time registering approval for Trump's job performance at 45% approve - 53% disapprove.

- Independents: +20
- People of color: +68
- Women: +22
- Outside the FoxHole: +38
- Whites with a college degree: -6

Demographic	<u>Worse</u> Than Expected	<u>Better</u> Than Expected
Party Identification		
Democrat	89%	11%
Independent	**60%**	**40%**
Republican	21%	79%
Race		
White	49%	51%
All people of color	**84%**	**16%**
Gender		
Women	**61%**	**39%**
Men	46%	54%
Race/Education		
White + no college degree	50%	50%
White + college degree	**47%**	**53%**
The FoxHole (News Consumption + Party ID)		
Republicans Regularly Watching Fox News	15%	85%
All Others	**69%**	**31%**

APPENDIX: Summary of Trump Traits by Key Demographic Groups

Demographic	Puts wealthy people first (vs. working & middle-class people)	Bringing more corruption to Washington (vs. fixing corruption in Washington)	Wants what's best for himself (vs. what's best for the country)	Bringing wrong kind of change (vs. bringing the right kind of change)	Mostly broken his promises (vs. mostly kept his promises)
Total	+32	+22	+18	+18	+2
Party Identification					
Democrat	+88	+86	+80	+88	+52
Independent	+46	+42	+30	+34	+18
Republican	-42	-66	-60	-74	-64
Race					
White	+26	+12	+4	+2	-8
All people of color	+52	+48	+54	+60	+30
Gender					
Women	+30	+32	+22	+26	-2
Men	+36	+10	+12	+8	+6
Race/Education					
White + no college degree	+20	+4	Even	-16	-14
White + college degree	+34	+28	+12	+24	Even
FoxHole (News Consumption + Party ID)					
Republicans Regularly Watching Fox News	-44	-72	-74	-84	-70
All Others	+54	+44	+40	+42	+20

Note: Data displayed for each trait reflects only the last edition it was asked in.

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About Navigator

In a world where the news cycle is the length of a tweet, our leaders often lack the real-time public-sentiment analysis to shape the best approaches to talking about the issues that matter the most. Navigator is designed to act as a consistent, flexible, responsive tool to inform policy debates by conducting research and reliable guidance to inform allies, elected leaders, and the press. Navigator is a project led by pollsters from Global Strategy Group and GBAO along with an advisory committee, including: Andrea Purse, The Hub Project; Arkadi Gerney, The Hub Project; Christina Reynolds, EMILY's List; Delvone Michael, Working Families; Felicia Wong, Roosevelt Institute; Mike Podhorzer, AFL-CIO; Jesse Ferguson, progressive strategist; Navin Nayak, Center for American Progress Action Fund; Ron Klain, Revolution; and Stephanie Valencia, Latino Victory Project; Symone Sanders, progressive strategist; Melanie Newman, Planned Parenthood.

To learn more about Navigator: http://navigatorresearch.org/

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