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Most Say Tensions Between Trump Administration and News Media Hinder Access to Political News

Large majorities of both Democrats and Republicans say the relationship between the two is unhealthy

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Most Say Tensions Between Trump Administration and News Media Hinder Access to Political News

Large majorities of both Democrats and Republicans say the relationship between the two is unhealthy

Following a presidential campaign season characterized by regular conflicts between [Donald Trump and the news media](#) and the continuation of these tensions [since President Trump took office](#), nearly all Americans have taken notice, and large majorities feel these tensions are causing problems.

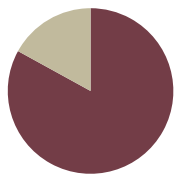
According to a new Pew Research Center survey, 94% of Americans say they have heard about the current state of the relationship between the Trump administration and the news media. And what they've seen does not reassure them: Large majorities feel the relationship is unhealthy and that the ongoing tensions are impeding Americans' access to important political news.

Moreover, both of these concerns are widely shared across nearly all demographic groups, including large majorities of both Democrats and Republicans.

These findings come from a survey conducted March 13-27, 2017, among 4,151 adults who are members of Pew Research Center's nationally representative American Trends Panel.

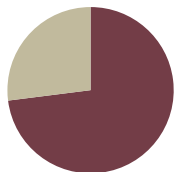
Large majorities say relationship between Trump and news media is unhealthy, impedes access to political news

% of U.S. adults who think ...



83%

... the relationship between Trump and the media is generally **unhealthy**



73%

... the tensions between Trump and the media are **getting in the way** of Americans' access to important political news

Source: Survey conducted March 13-27, 2017.

"Most Say Tensions Between Trump Administration and News Media Hinder Access to Political News"

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Relationship between Trump and news media seen as unhealthy, impeding public's access to political news

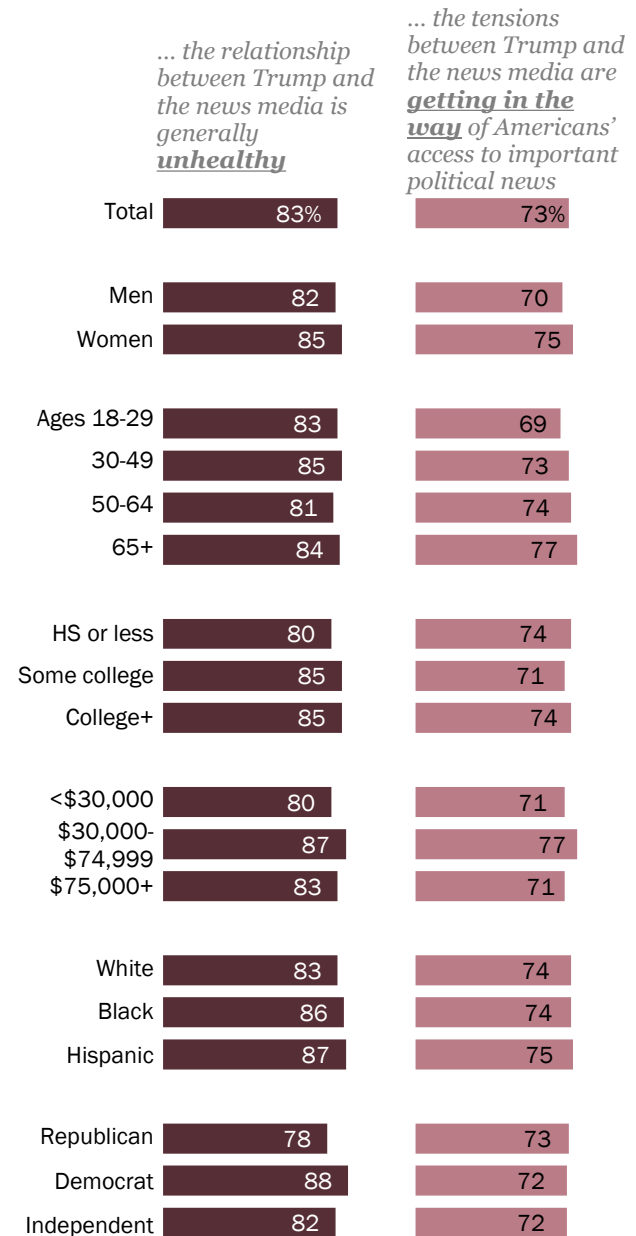
The current tensions between Trump and the news media are, according to most U.S. adults, problematic. About eight-in-ten Americans (83%) say current tensions have made the relationship between the administration and the news media unhealthy; just 15% say it is healthy despite current tensions.

Americans also think these tensions are impacting them directly. About three-in-four U.S. adults (73%) say that these tensions are getting in the way of access to important national political news and information.

What's more, these sentiments cut across party lines. Fully 88% of Democrats say the relationship is unhealthy, as do 78% of Republicans. And about seven-in-ten members of both parties say access to important political news is impacted. The findings are similarly consistent across other demographic groups such as age, race, income and education.

Belief that the relationship between Trump and the press is unhealthy and problematic is widely shared

% of U.S. adults who say ...



Note: Whites and blacks include only non-Hispanics. The Hispanic sample in the American Trends Panel is predominantly native born and English speaking.

Source: Survey conducted March 13-27, 2017.

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Public highly aware of the relationship between Trump and the news media

Awareness of the current state of the relationship between the Trump administration and the news media is virtually ubiquitous in America. Nearly all U.S. adults (94%) say they have heard about it, with roughly three-in-four (72%) saying they have heard a lot. Only 6% say they have heard nothing at all.

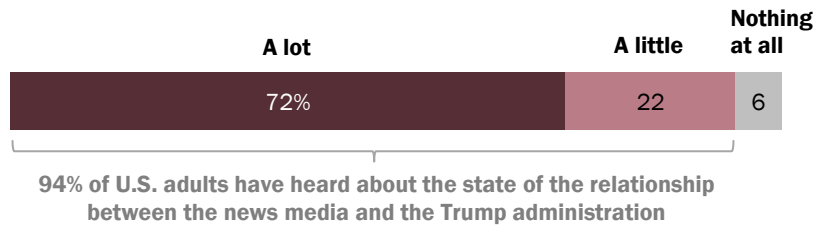
There were some age differences in how much people had heard about the

relationship. Younger Americans are somewhat less likely to have heard a lot about the relationship. Fully 55% of adults ages 18-29 say they've heard a lot compared with 71% of those 30-49, 77% of those 50-64 and 86% of those 65 and older. Still, 87% of 18- to 29-year-olds had heard at least a little about the issue. This difference is consistent with findings showing that [younger Americans tend to be less interested in news overall](#).

The findings do not speak to who Americans blame for these tensions or what Americans want done about the situation. But what is clear is that they currently have high levels of awareness and concern.

Nearly all Americans are aware of the ongoing relationship between the news media and Trump

% of U.S. adults who have heard ___ about the relationship between the U.S. news media and the Trump administration



Source: Survey conducted March 13-27, 2017.

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Acknowledgments

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Methodology

The American Trends Panel (ATP), created by Pew Research Center, is a nationally representative panel of randomly selected U.S. adults recruited from landline and cellphone random-digit-dial surveys. Panelists participate via monthly self-administered web surveys. Panelists who do not have internet access are provided with a tablet and wireless internet connection. The panel is being managed by Abt SRBI.

Data in this report are drawn from the panel wave conducted March 13- 27, 2017, among 4,151 respondents. The margin of sampling error for the full sample of 4,151 respondents is plus or minus 2.7 percentage points.

Members of the American Trends Panel were recruited from two large, national landline and cellphone random-digit-dial (RDD) surveys conducted in English and Spanish. At the end of each survey, respondents were invited to join the panel. The first group of panelists was recruited from the 2014 Political Polarization and Typology Survey, conducted Jan. 23 to March 16, 2014. Of the 10,013 adults interviewed, 9,809 were invited to take part in the panel and a total of 5,338 agreed to participate.¹ The second group of panelists was recruited from the 2015 Survey on Government, conducted Aug. 27 to Oct. 4, 2015. Of the 6,004 adults interviewed, all were invited to join the panel, and 2,976 agreed to participate.²

The ATP data were weighted in a multi-step process that begins with a base weight incorporating the respondents' original survey selection probability and the fact that in 2014 some panelists were subsampled for invitation to the panel. Next, an adjustment was made for the fact that the propensity to join the panel and remain an active panelist varied across different groups in the sample. The final step in the weighting uses an iterative technique that aligns the sample to population benchmarks on a number of dimensions. Gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and region parameters come from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2015 American Community Survey. The county-level population density parameter (deciles) comes from the 2010 U.S. Decennial Census. The telephone service benchmark comes from the January-June 2016 National Health Interview Survey and is projected to 2017. The volunteerism benchmark comes from the 2015 Current Population Survey Volunteer Supplement. The party affiliation benchmark is the average of the three most recent Pew Research Center general public telephone surveys. The Internet

¹ When data collection for the 2014 Political Polarization and Typology Survey began, non-internet users were subsampled at a rate of 25%, but a decision was made shortly thereafter to invite all non-internet users to join. In total, 83% of non-internet users were invited to join the panel.

² Respondents to the 2014 Political Polarization and Typology Survey who indicated that they are internet users but refused to provide an email address were initially permitted to participate in the American Trends Panel by mail but were no longer permitted to join the panel after Feb. 6, 2014. Internet users from the 2015 Survey on Government who refused to provide an email address were not permitted to join the panel.

access benchmark comes from the 2015 Pew Survey on Government. Respondents who did not previously have internet access are treated as not having internet access for weighting purposes. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. Interviews are conducted in both English and Spanish, but the Hispanic sample in the American Trends Panel is predominantly native born and English speaking.

The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	4,151	2.7 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

The March 2017 wave had a response rate of 80% (4,151 responses among 5,177 individuals in the panel). Taking account of the combined, weighted response rate for the recruitment surveys (10.0%) and attrition from panel members who were removed at their request or for inactivity, the cumulative response rate for the wave is 2.6%.³

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³ Approximately once per year, panelists who have not participated in multiple consecutive waves are removed from the panel. These cases are counted in the denominator of cumulative response rates.

Topline questionnaire

**2017 PEW RESEARCH CENTER'S AMERICAN TRENDS PANEL
WAVE 25 MARCH
FINAL TOPLINE
March 13–March 27, 2017
TOTAL N=4,151⁴**

ASK ALL:

ADMIN1

How much, if anything, have you heard about the relationship between the [RANDOMIZE ORDER: Trump administration and the U.S. news media/U.S. news media and the Trump administration]?

Mar 13-Mar 27

2017

72	A lot
22	A little
6	Nothing at all
*	No answer

ASK ALL:

ADMIN2

Which of the following statements comes closest to your view, even if neither is exactly right? [RANDOMIZE]

Mar 13-Mar 27

2017

15	Despite current tensions, the relationship between the [USE SAME ORDER FROM ADMIN1: Trump administration and the U.S. news media/U.S. news media and the Trump administration] is generally HEALTHY
83	Current tensions have made the relationship between the [USE SAME ORDER FROM ADMIN1: Trump administration and the U.S. news media/U.S. news media and the Trump administration] generally UNHEALTHY
2	No answer

ASK ALL:

ADMIN3

Would you say that these tensions between the [USE SAME ORDER FROM ADMIN1: Trump administration and the U.S. news media/U.S. news media and the Trump administration] are getting in the way or not getting in the way of Americans' access to important national political news and information? [RANDOMIZE]

Mar 13-Mar 27

2017

73	Getting in the way
26	Not getting in the way
1	No answer

⁴ The Wave 25 survey was administered exclusively in web mode. The survey included N=181 previous mail mode panelists that were converted to web and were provided an internet-enabled tablet if necessary.