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[Two in three Californians believe race relations are worsening across the country. Voters divided about the right of white nationalist groups to continue to hold their public demonstrations.](#)

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Two in three California voters (66%) believe that race relations in the United States have worsened over the past year. Majorities across each of the state's major racial and ethnic subgroups feel this way, although this view is most widely shared by African Americans. The poll also finds that 67% of the state's voters have little confidence in President Donald Trump's ability to handle the country's race relations.

When asked to assess race relations in California, a plurality (48%) feels they are about the same here as elsewhere, while another 25% think race relations in the state are worse than in the country generally. African American and Latino voters are more likely than white non-Hispanics to believe race relations in California are worse than elsewhere.

Voters hold divided views when asked about the right of white nationalist groups to continue to hold public demonstrations. Statewide, 46% think the country has gone too far in allowing such groups to carry out these demonstrations, while nearly as many (43%) believe their right to hold such demonstrations should not be restricted, under our First Amendment guarantees of freedom of speech and assembly.

These are the main topline findings from the latest Berkeley IGS Poll conducted online in English and Spanish among 1,200 registered voters in California.

Californians believe race relations are worsening across the country

When California voters are asked about the general state of race relations in the U.S, a large majority (66%) believes they have worsened over the past year. By contrast, just 7% think they have improved.

The state's African American voters, Democrats and those voting for Hillary Clinton for President in last year's election are the voter segments most likely to report this, with greater than eight in ten holding to this view. This negative assessment is also shared by greater than six in ten of the state's white non-Hispanic, Latino and Asian American voters.

Republicans and voters supporting Donald Trump last year are less likely to say

this, but even among these segments about one third or more believe the country's race relations are worsening.

Table 1
Perceptions of race relations in the U.S. compared to one year ago
(among California registered voters)

	Worse %	About the same %	Better %	No opi c
Total statewide	66	25	7	
<u>Party registration</u>				
Democrats	81	12	6	
Republicans	41	48	10	
No party preference/others	62	26	6	
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>				
White non-Hispanic	63	29	6	
Latino	69	20	8	
African American*	81	15	4	
Asian American/other	62	26	10	
<u>Vote in 2016 pres election</u>				
Clinton voters	87	10	1	
Trump voters	32	53	13	
Other candidates	61	35	1	
Non-voters	58	26	12	

* small sample size ** Less than 1/2 of 1%

Little confidence in President Trump's ability to handle the nation's race relations

Californians express little confidence in President Trump's ability to manage the nation's race relations. Statewide, more than twice as many voters say they

have little or no confidence in the President as express confidence in Trump's abilities in this area.

Like most other matters relating to the newly elected President, confidence in Trump's handling of race relations is highly partisan. About nine in Democrats and virtually all those who supported Hillary Clinton in last year's presidential election express little confidence in the President on race relations. By contrast, large majorities of Republicans and those voting for Trump last year say they have confidence in the President's abilities in this area.

Table 2
Confidence in President Trump's ability
to handle matters relating to the country's race relations
(among California registered voters)

	Confident	Not	No
	%	confident	opinio
		%	%
Total statewide	31	67	2
<u>Party registration</u>			
Democrats	10	89	1
Republicans	74	24	2
No party preference/others	27	67	6
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>			
White non-Hispanic	37	60	3
Latino	22	76	2
African American*	12	85	3
Asian American/other	34	61	5
<u>Vote in 2016 pres election</u>			
Clinton voters	4	96	••
Trump voters	85	12	3
Other voters	21	76	3
Non-voters	34	60	6

* small sample size ** Less than 1/2 of 1%

Plurality believes race relations in California are about the same as the rest of the country, and one in four say they're worse

When asked to assess the state of race relations in California, a 48% plurality sees them as no different than the rest of the country, while another 25% see them as worse and 23% see them as better.

Majorities of voters across all major subgroups of the electorate view race relations as being about the same in California as in the U.S. generally, including each of the state's major ethnic populations. African Americans and Latinos are also more likely than white non-Hispanics to believe that race relations in the state are worse here than elsewhere.

When examining opinions about this by region, fewer voters in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area than in other parts of the state feel race relations in California are worse than elsewhere.

Table 3
Perceptions of race relations in California compared to the rest of the c
(among California registered voters)

	Better	About the	Worse
	%	same	%
	%	%	%
Total statewide	23	48	25
<u>Party registration</u>			
Democrats	27	45	26
Republicans	15	54	26
No party preference/others	22	48	22
<u>Region</u>			
Los Angeles County	24	49	25
South Coast	24	44	27
Other Southern California	20	52	23
Central Valley	17	43	31
San Francisco Bay Area	28	52	18
Other Northern California	18	51	30
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>			
White non-Hispanic	27	50	18
Latino	16	44	36
African American*	17	44	37
Asian American/other	23	51	24

* small sample size

Divided views about the right of white nationalist groups to continue to hold public demonstrations

California voters are about evenly divided when asked whether the nation has gone too far in allowing white nationalist groups to hold their public demonstrations, or whether their right to demonstrate should not be restricted under the nation's First Amendment guarantees of freedom of speech and

assembly. Statewide 46% agree with the former view, while 43% hold to the latter perspective.

Views about this differ by party, political ideology and racial/ethnic lines. Majorities of Democrats, political liberals, and ethnic voters believe the country has gone too far in allowing white nationalist groups to hold these demonstrations. By contrast, Republicans, strong conservatives and white non-Hispanics are more likely to believe that the rights of these groups to demonstrate should not be restricted.

Table 4
Views about the right of white nationalist groups to hold public demonstrations
(among California registered voters)

	We have gone too far in allowing such demonstrations	The right to demonstrate should not be restricted	No opinion
	%	%	%
Total statewide	46	43	11
<u>Party registration</u>			
Democrats	53	39	8
Republicans	42	50	8
No party preference/others	39	42	19
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>			
White non-Hispanic	40	52	8
Latino	51	35	14
African American*	58	27	15
Asian American/other	59	27	14
<u>Political ideology</u>			
Very liberal	49	41	10
Liberal	58	37	5
Moderate	41	44	15
Conservative	43	49	8
Very conservative*	40	52	8

* small sample size

About the Survey

The findings in this report are based on a survey of California registered voters by the Institute of Governmental Studies (IGS) at the University of California, Berkeley. The latest Berkeley IGS Poll was conducted online by YouGov August 27-September 5, 2017 in English and Spanish. The survey was completed among a statewide sample of 1,200 registered voters, and included an

oversampling of 200 voters who were the parents of children under age 18. According to YouGov, results from the overall sample have a margin of error of +/- 4%.

YouGov administered the survey by inviting California registered voters who are included among its online panel of over 1.5 million Americans to participate in the poll. Panelists were recruited using a variety of methods, including telephone-to-web and mail-to-web recruitment, partner-sponsored solicitations, web-based advertising and email campaigns, as well as through past telephone and mail surveys. Eligible voters were selected to participate in the poll using a proprietary sampling technology frame that establishes interlocking demographic and regional targets, so that the characteristics of those polled approximate the profile of the state's overall registered voter population. After survey administration, YouGov also applied statistical weights to align the statewide voter sample and the parent oversample to their proper population proportions, and following this, to a wide range of political, demographic and regional characteristics of the state's registered voter population. IGS was responsible for the development and translation into Spanish of all survey questions.

Questions asked

In your opinion, are race relations in the United States better, about the same or worse than they were one year ago?

Compared to race relations in the rest of the country, how would you describe race relations in California – better, about the same or worse?

White nationalist groups have held a growing number of protests recently focused on U.S. race relations. Which of the following best represents your view

about these types of demonstrations? (1) We have gone too far in allowing these groups to carry out these types demonstrations, which can increase racial tensions and lead to violence or (2) We should not restrict the ability of groups to carry out these types of demonstrations, which are guaranteed under our 1st Amendment rights of freedom of speech and assembly.

How much confidence do you have in President Trump's ability to handle matters relating to race relations in this country- a great deal of confidence, some confidence, not much confidence, or no confidence at all?

About the Institute of Governmental Studies

The Institute of Governmental Studies (IGS) is an interdisciplinary organized research unit that pursues a vigorous program of research, education, publication and public service. A component of the University of California (UC) system's flagship Berkeley campus, it is the oldest organized research unit in the UC system and the oldest public policy research center in the state. IGS conducts periodic surveys of California public opinion on matters of politics, public policy and public issues through its Berkeley IGS Poll, housed within its newly established Jack Citrin Center for Public Opinion Research. A complete listing of poll stories issued by the Berkeley IGS Poll can be found at <https://igs.berkeley.edu/research/berkeley-igs-poll>.



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