



  
**INDEPENDENT  
CENTER VOICE**

# 2026: TUNED IN

Listening to American voices beyond the noise



# 2026: TUNED IN

2025 Nationwide Online Survey of (n1200) Adults (n1000 Registered Voters)

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**Independent Center Voice 2026 Nationwide Online Survey**  
Toplines

Field Dates: 12/30/2025 – 01/01/2026

Total Adult Margin of Error:  $\pm 2.83\%$

Registered Voter (RV) Margin of Error:  $\pm 3.1\%$

## **Screener Section**

You have been selected to participate in a survey on a confidential basis. This is a rare opportunity to voice your opinions. Your responses will be kept confidential; you are not being asked to buy anything or donate money. We simply want to know what you think and how you feel.

Screener 1: Are you, or is anyone in your household, employed by the news media, a market research firm, an elected official, or actively involved with political campaigns?

100% No (**continue**)

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Screener 2: Are you currently registered to vote?

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Yes	83%	100%
No	17%	-

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## General Sentiment

GSPS. At this time next year, do you think that you will personally be (ROTATE) better or worse (END ROTATE) off than you are today? (ROTATE 1-4/4-1)

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
<u>TOTAL BETTER</u>	60%	60%
Much better off	19%	17%
Somewhat better off	41%	43%
<u>TOTAL WORSE</u>	27%	28%
Somewhat worse off	20%	22%
Much worse off	6%	6%
Unsure	13%	12%

GSAS. At this time next year, do you think America will be (ROTATE) better or worse (END ROTATE) off than it is today? (ROTATE 1-4/4-1)

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
<u>TOTAL BETTER</u>	42%	44%
Much better off	12%	12%
Somewhat better off	30%	32%
<u>TOTAL WORSE</u>	46%	46%
Somewhat worse off	27%	26%
Much worse off	19%	20%
Unsure	12%	10%

GSTI. Please select and rank the top three most pressing issues in America today from the list below, where 1 is the most pressing, 2 is the second most pressing, and 3 is the third most pressing.

### Most Pressing

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Economy (such as jobs, unemployment, taxes, food prices/inflation)	46%	44%
Government (such as political extremism, polarization, the role of elected officials)	14%	15%
Health Care (such as Medicare, Medicaid, Affordable Care Act, cost of health care)	13%	13%
Immigration (such as legalization & citizenship, border security, refugee resettlement)	11%	11%
Social Issues (such as crime, equality, civil liberties, abortion)	8%	8%
Environment (such as climate change, EPA, energy regulations)	4%	4%
Education (such as school choice, student loans, testing standards)	3%	3%
International (such as trade, foreign policy, global affairs/conflicts)	3%	3%



(USE "MOST PRESSING" = 1 RESPONSE FROM PREVIOUS FOR FOLLOWING)

And which of the following do you see as the most important aspect of that issue?

GSTE.C. IF Economy:

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=ECONOMY	46%	44%
Jobs	16%	17%
Unemployment	10%	8%
Taxes	8%	9%
Food prices/inflation	65%	65%
Other	1%	1%

GSTGA. IF Government:

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=GOVERNMENT	14%	15%
Political extremism	50%	52%
Polarization	19%	19%
The role of elected officials	29%	28%
Other	2%	1%

GSTHC. IF Health Care:

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=HEALTH CARE	13%	13%
Medicare	23%	25%
Medicaid	9%	7%
Affordable Care Act	21%	22%
Cost of health care	45%	46%
Other	1%	1%

GSTIM. IF Immigration:

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=IMMIGRATION	11%	11%
Legalization & citizenship	20%	19%
Border security	62%	67%
Refugee resettlement	8%	7%
Other	10%	6%

GSTSI. IF Social Issues:

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=SOCIAL ISSUES	8%	8%
Crime	45%	42%
Equality	28%	28%
Civil liberties	12%	13%
Abortion	14%	16%
Other	1%	1%



GSTEV. IF Environment:

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=ENVIRONMENT	4%	4%
Climate change	83%	82%
EPA	7%	8%
Energy regulations	7%	8%
Other	4%	3%

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GSTED. IF Education:

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=EDUCATION	3%	3%
School choice	21%	21%
Student loans	34%	32%
Testing standards	29%	32%
Other	16%	14%

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GSTIN. IF International:

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=INTERNATIONAL	3%	3%
Trade	30%	29%
Foreign policy	27%	29%
Global affairs/conflicts	39%	42%
Other	3%	-

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(CONTINUE WITH ALL)

GSTA. Do you (ROTATE) approve or disapprove (END ROTATE) of the job President Donald Trump is doing? (ROTATE 1-4/4-1)

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
<u>TOTAL APPROVE</u>	38%	40%
Strongly approve	19%	21%
Somewhat approve	19%	19%
<u>TOTAL DISAPPROVE</u>	58%	57%
Somewhat disapprove	13%	11%
Strongly disapprove	44%	46%
Unsure	4%	3%



GSCA.

Do you (ROTATE) approve or disapprove (END ROTATE) of the job the U.S. Congress is doing?  
(ROTATE 1-4/4-1)

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
<u>TOTAL APPROVE</u>	29%	31%
Strongly approve	6%	6%
Somewhat approve	23%	25%
<u>TOTAL DISAPPROVE</u>	61%	62%
Somewhat disapprove	28%	27%
Strongly disapprove	33%	35%
Unsure	10%	8%

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PSY.

When it comes to your political philosophy, where would you place yourself on the following scale?

**(DO NOT SHOW numeric scale....)**

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Very liberal / Progressive	5%	5%
1	6%	6%
2	8%	8%
3	6%	6%
4	10%	9%
Moderate / Centrist	33%	30%
6	10%	11%
7	7%	8%
8	5%	5%
9	5%	5%
Staunch / Strong conservative	6%	6%

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PSF.

On the following scale, please indicate how you see yourself voting in future elections.

**(DO NOT SHOW numeric scale....)**

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Exclusively vote for Democratic candidates	10%	11%
1	10%	11%
2	7%	8%
3	6%	6%
4	8%	7%
Vote Independent / split ticket	24%	20%
6	8%	8%
7	8%	8%
8	5%	6%
9	8%	8%
Vote Independent / split ticket	7%	8%



PSEO. In the perfect world, where on the following scale, would you like to see America's elected officials stand politically?

**(DO NOT SHOW numeric scale....)**

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Strongly along Democratic lines	7%	7%
1	6%	6%
2	8%	8%
3	7%	7%
4	10%	11%
Centrist / Independent	28%	24%
6	9%	9%
7	8%	9%
8	5%	6%
9	6%	7%
Strongly along Republican lines	6%	7%

## Favorabilities

You will now read a list of political officials and entities in the United States. After each, please indicate whether you have a (ROTATE) favorable or unfavorable (END ROTATE) opinion of each. If you don't know or haven't heard of the subject, please note that.

(RANDOMIZE)

04FV001. Donald Trump

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Very / Somewhat favorable	33%	36%
Neutral / Unsure	13%	11%
Very / Somewhat unfavorable	53%	53%
Never heard of	1%	1%

04FV002. The Republican party

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Very / Somewhat favorable	31%	34%
Neutral / Unsure	23%	20%
Very / Somewhat unfavorable	44%	46%
Never heard of	1%	1%

04FV003. The Democratic party

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Very / Somewhat favorable	35%	37%
Neutral / Unsure	27%	24%
Very / Somewhat unfavorable	37%	39%
Never heard of	1%	1%



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04FV004. A politician willing to work with both sides of the aisle

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Very / Somewhat favorable	63%	66%
Neutral / Unsure	26%	24%
Very / Somewhat unfavorable	7%	7%
Never heard of	4%	3%

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04FV101. A bipartisan candidate

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Very / Somewhat favorable	29%	31%
Neutral / Unsure	51%	51%
Very / Somewhat unfavorable	9%	9%
Never heard of	11%	9%

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04FV102. A non-partisan candidate

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Very / Somewhat favorable	26%	27%
Neutral / Unsure	56%	56%
Very / Somewhat unfavorable	9%	9%
Never heard of	9%	8%

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04FV103. An elected official that is not a member of either party

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Very / Somewhat favorable	30%	31%
Neutral / Unsure	56%	56%
Very / Somewhat unfavorable	10%	10%
Never heard of	5%	4%

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04FV104. A politically Independent candidate

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Very / Somewhat favorable	37%	38%
Neutral / Unsure	51%	51%
Very / Somewhat unfavorable	8%	9%
Never heard of	4%	3%

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## Ballot Support

02AL001. If the 2026 midterm elections were held today, how would you vote in your congressional election? (ROTATE 1-2)

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
The Democrat candidate	40%	44%
The Republican candidate	30%	33%
Other / third-party / Independent	10%	11%
I would not vote	9%	3%
Unsure	11%	10%

02AL002. Imagine a future congressional election where a strong, well-funded independent candidate emerges who is not affiliated with either the Republican or Democratic party. If this candidate shared many of your views and was willing to work with both sides of the aisle, how likely would you be to vote for them? (ROTATE 1-4/4-1)

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
<u>TOTAL LIKELY</u>	76%	78%
Very likely	33%	34%
Somewhat likely	42%	44%
<u>TOTAL UNLIKELY</u>	11%	10%
Somewhat unlikely	7%	7%
Very unlikely	4%	3%
Unsure	13%	11%

02AL101. Regardless of your past voting history or political affiliation, which of the following do you find to be the most compelling reason to support an independent candidate? (SELECT ONE) (RANDOMIZE 1-5)

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
The "People over Party" Argument: Political parties have become too focused on special interests and self-preservation; an Independent is beholden only to their constituents, not a national party agenda.	27%	28%
The "Problem Solver" Argument: Independent-minded leaders are free to look at problems from many angles and find the best solution, rather than being forced to view every issue through a single partisan lens.	27%	28%
The "Representation" Argument: Most Americans don't fit perfectly into a "Red" or "Blue" box; Independent candidates better reflect the complex, diverse views of the actual majority of the country.	13%	12%
The "Gridlock" Argument: Because they don't answer to party leadership, Independents are uniquely positioned to bridge the divide, de-escalate anger, and force the two sides to work together.	10%	10%
The "Competition" Argument: In every other aspect of American life, choice and competition yield better results; ending the two-party duopoly would force politicians to work harder to earn our support.	7%	8%
None of these / Other	7%	6%
Unsure	9%	8%



## To The Next 250 Years

The year 2026 marks the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. As you answer the following questions, we ask you to consider this historic milestone and reflect on the continued health and future of our American democracy.

08FT056. Overall, how would you rate the current health of American democracy? (ROTATE 1-4/4-1)

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
<u>TOTAL HEALTHY</u>	31%	33%
Very healthy	6%	7%
Somewhat healthy	25%	26%
<u>TOTAL UNHEALTHY</u>	64%	64%
Somewhat unhealthy	35%	33%
Very unhealthy	29%	30%
Unsure	5%	4%

08FT063. How do you feel about the current political climate in America? (ROTATE 1-2)

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
It's fine	9%	10%
We can do better	85%	86%
Unsure	6%	4%

08FT064. How do you think federally elected officials in Washington, DC are doing at their job? (ROTATE 1-2)

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
They're doing fine	10%	10%
We can do better	82%	85%
Unsure	8%	6%

08FT067. How do you feel our elected officials in Washington, DC do at addressing the issues that concern you the most? (ROTATE 1-2)

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
They're doing fine	10%	11%
We can do better	82%	84%
Unsure	8%	6%



08FT078. Looking ahead to the next two and a half centuries, how confident are you that the American system of government will endure for another 250 years? (ROTATE 1-4/4-1)

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
<u>TOTAL CONFIDENT</u>	40%	42%
Very confident	11%	11%
Somewhat confident	29%	30%
<u>TOTAL NOT CONFIDENT</u>	48%	48%
Not very confident	29%	29%
Not at all confident	19%	19%
Unsure	12%	10%

08FT092. Thinking about your role as a voter in the upcoming 2026 elections, which of the following best describes how you intend to use your vote to ensure the continued health of our democracy? (Select the one that best applies) (RANDOMIZE 1-4)

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
I will look past party labels to vote for candidates who prioritize bipartisan cooperation and seek to modernize the system to make it more accountable and stable for the people.	36%	39%
I will vote for candidates who will go to Washington to work and vote with Democrats to advance a progressive agenda and ensure that Republican policies do not pass.	20%	22%
I will vote for candidates who will go to Washington to work and vote with Republicans to advance a conservative agenda and ensure that Democratic policies do not pass.	19%	20%
I do not believe that my choice of candidate has a significant impact on the long-term health of our democracy.	13%	12%
Unsure / Other	12%	8%

08FT093. Many believe that a citizen's vote is their strongest voice in a democracy. As we look toward future elections and the next 250 years of our nation, which of the following best describes how you intend to make your voice heard? (RANDOMIZE 1-4)

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
I will use my vote to support candidates based strictly on their individual character and honesty, regardless of their party or the likelihood of them winning.	32%	34%
I will use my vote to support independent or non-partisan candidates who promise to modernize our government and make it more accountable to people rather than parties.	27%	27%
I will use my vote to support the established party system, believing that working within the current Republican or Democratic parties is the most effective way to be heard.	23%	25%
Unsure / Other	18%	14%



08FT095. As we look toward the next 250 years, which of the following do you believe would better serve the health of our democracy? (ROTATE 1-2)

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Expanding our options to include more than just the two major political parties.	56%	57%
Sticking with the current two-party system of Republicans and Democrats.	24%	25%
Unsure	21%	18%

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08FT099. By the next presidential election, Millennials and Gen Z will be over half of the electorate. A majority of these voters do not identify with either major party and reject "Republican" or "Democratic" labels. Is this shift a (ROTATE) good or bad (END ROTATE) thing for the future of our democracy? (ROTATE 1-4/4-1)

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
<u>TOTAL GOOD THING</u>	56%	58%
Very good thing	20%	20%
Somewhat good thing	36%	37%
<u>TOTAL BAD THING</u>	20%	21%
Somewhat bad thing	14%	15%
Very bad thing	6%	6%
Unsure	24%	22%

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08FT103. Which one of the following issues do you believe is the most important for the country to address today? (RANDOMIZE 1-7)

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Healthcare	27%	27%
Immigration	16%	17%
Taxes	12%	11%
Social Security	12%	12%
Voting and political parties	9%	9%
Environment	7%	6%
Education	5%	6%
Other	8%	8%
Unsure	5%	4%



08FT104. In the interest of reaching a bipartisan agreement, which one of these issues would you be most willing to compromise on? (RANDOMIZE 1-7)

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Taxes	12%	13%
Environment	11%	12%
Immigration	11%	12%
Healthcare	9%	9%
Voting and political parties	8%	8%
Education	7%	7%
Social Security	6%	6%
I am not willing to compromise on any of these issues	26%	26%
Unsure	10%	8%

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## Demographics

Now just a few questions to make sure we have a representative sample of participants:

Party ID: In politics today, and regardless of how you are registered, do you consider yourself to be a...  
**(ROTATE 1-7: TOP TO BOTTOM, BOTTOM TO TOP)**

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
<u>TOTAL DEMOCRAT</u>	29%	31%
Strong Democrat	20%	22%
Not so strong Democrat	9%	8%
<u>TOTAL INDEPENDENT</u>	38%	37%
Independent leaning Democrat	9%	9%
Independent	23%	21%
Independent leaning Republican	7%	7%
<u>TOTAL REPUBLICAN</u>	28%	30%
Not so strong Republican	10%	11%
Strong Republican	17%	19%
Other	2%	1%
Unsure	4%	1%

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Gender Your gender identification?

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Female	52%	52%
Male	48%	48%

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Ethnicity Do you consider yourself to be of Hispanic or Latino descent, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or some other Central or Latin American background?

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Yes	13%	13%
No	87%	87%

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Race And which of the following best describes your racial background?

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
White or Caucasian	69%	71%
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin	8%	7%
Native American or American Indian	3%	2%
Black or African American	16%	15%
Asian or Pacific Islander	4%	4%
Other	1%	1%



Age: \_\_\_\_\_ In what year were you born?

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Age Range IF UNSURE OR REFUSED, ASK: Which of the following categories best describes your age?

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
18 to 24	11%	9%
25 to 29	8%	8%
30 to 39	16%	16%
40 to 49	17%	16%
50 to 64	29%	29%
65 or older	20%	22%

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Ideology: Thinking for a moment about your social, economic, and political views...Do you consider yourself to be... **(ROTATE VALUES 1-5; TOP-TO-BOTTOM / BOTTOM-TO-TOP)**?

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
<u>TOTAL LIBERAL</u>	28%	29%
Very Liberal	13%	13%
Somewhat Liberal	15%	17%
<u>MODERATE</u>	35%	34%
<u>TOTAL CONSERVATIVE</u>	31%	34%
Somewhat Conservative	18%	19%
Very Conservative	13%	15%
Libertarian	1%	1%
Unsure	5%	2%

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2024 Vote For whom did you vote in the 2024 Presidential election **(ROTATE 1-2)**?

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Donald Trump	36%	41%
Kamala Harris	40%	47%
Someone Else	4%	5%
Did not vote	17%	4%
Don't recall	1%	1%
Prefer not to say	2%	2%

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Education What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed?

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Less than high school	2%	1%
High school graduate	23%	21%
Some college	20%	18%
College graduate with associate or 2-year degree	12%	13%
College graduate with bachelor's or 4-year degree	25%	28%
Post-graduate degree	14%	16%
Technical or vocational school graduate	3%	2%
Unsure	1%	1%

LGBTQ+ Do you consider yourself to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning?

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Yes	8%	8%
No	90%	91%
Unsure	1%	1%
Prefer not to answer	1%	1%

Marital Status What would best describe your marital status?

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Single or never married	38%	36%
Married	41%	44%
Separated	2%	2%
Divorced	13%	13%
Widowed	4%	5%
Other	1%	1%

Children Do you have children currently living in your household?

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Yes	30%	30%
No	69%	70%
Refuse	1%	-

Neighborhood Would you best describe the neighborhood or area you live in as...

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Urban	28%	28%
Suburban	51%	52%
Rural	21%	20%
Unsure	1%	1%



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401K      Do you invest into an IRA or 401k?

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Yes	49%	54%
No	51%	46%

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Occupation      Please describe your current occupational status.

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Employed (Government)	10%	10%
Employed (Private Sector)	39%	41%
Small Business Owner	7%	7%
Student	5%	4%
Homemaker	4%	4%
Retired	23%	25%
Unemployed	10%	7%
Other	3%	2%
Unsure	1%	-

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Income      We want to classify people into broad income groups only. Would you estimate your total household income to be...?

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Below \$40,000	31%	27%
Between \$40,000 and \$79,999	33%	34%
Between \$80,000 and \$124,999	17%	19%
Above \$125,000	16%	18%
Unsure	1%	1%
Prefer not to answer	2%	1%

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Homeowner      Do you currently own (outright/pay mortgage) your residence?

	TOTAL	RVs
BASE=TOTAL SAMPLE	100%	83%
Own (outright/pay mortgage)	59%	64%
I do not own my residence (rent/other)	41%	37%

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