

Public Opinion on Abortion

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In recent years, there has been considerable activity on abortion-related measures in state legislatures, Congress, and in the courts. These initiatives need to be seen in the context of extensive polling over the last four decades on the issue.

In the 42 years since the Supreme Court decided *Roe v. Wade* (1973), pollsters have asked hundreds of questions about abortion. This AEI Special Poll Report, excerpted from our long AEI Public Opinion Study [*Attitudes About Abortion*](#), covers some of the highlights.

Opinion on abortion has been very stable. Between 1975 and 2014, Gallup asked the identical three-part question on the legality of abortion more than fifty times. In 1975, 21 percent said abortion should be legal under all circumstances, 54 percent said legal only under certain circumstances, and 22 percent said illegal in all circumstances. Those responses in Gallup's May 2014 poll were very similar: 28, 50, and 21 percent, respectively. Opinion bulks in the middle.

Five other polling organizations (ABC News/*Washington Post*, Pew, Quinnipiac, AP, and PRRI) ask a four-part question about legality, and again the results have been very stable over the twenty years this question has been asked. The press usually reports the results of this question suggesting that a majority want to keep abortion legal. That is a fair reading of the responses. Take Pew's latest question: 22 percent think abortion should be legal in all cases, 34 percent in most cases, with 26 percent saying it should be illegal in most cases, and another 13 percent illegal in all cases. Adding the 22 and 34 percent gives us a 56 percent solid majority for keeping abortion legal. Another way of looking at the responses, however, tells us that most Americans qualify their support for abortion, just as the Gallup data show. Sixty percent are in the middle, with only 22 percent at the pure pro-choice position (legal in all cases) and 14 percent at the pure pro-life position (illegal in all cases).

Given the middle ground most people occupy on abortion, it shouldn't surprise us that opinion is nuanced regarding the acceptability of abortion in various cases. Americans support significant restrictions on abortion, including notification of spouses, parental consent, and a ban on abortions after the first trimester. In a Gallup question asked five times since 1996, approximately two-thirds of Americans say abortion should be generally *legal* in the first three months of pregnancy. A slightly higher proportion says abortion should be generally *illegal* in the second three months. Americans support by overwhelming margins the availability of abortion in the cases of rape, danger to the mother's life or physical health, and if there is a strong chance of a serious defect in the baby.

In recent years, several states have banned abortion after 20 weeks and these bans were discussed in the 2014 election cycle. The first questions we have been able to find about abortion at 20 weeks were asked in 1989, and majorities supported a test to determine if a fetus could live outside the womb before the abortion. In 2013, two questions by different pollsters showed that people would rather have abortions be legal without restriction up to 20 weeks than up to 24 weeks.

Responses to Gallup's question on the morality of abortion, first asked in 2001, also show great stability. In 2001, 42 percent said it was morally acceptable and 43 percent morally wrong. In May 2014, those responses were 42 and 48 percent, respectively. People also seem to be evenly divided on whether the pro-choice or pro-life label fits them. Those responses move in a very narrow range.

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Most Americans do not want to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. A majority of Americans has consistently opposed a constitutional amendment to ban abortion. In January 2013, 63 percent told Pew researchers they would not like to see the Supreme Court overturn its *Roe v. Wade* decision.

When it comes time to vote, most Americans say abortion is one of many issues they will consider during an election. To our knowledge, abortion has never ranked as the most important issue in the country. In Gallup's long trend, no more than five percent has ever volunteered it as the most important problem facing the country. We have not included this trend in this Special Report.

Although opinion about abortion is stable, it is deeply ambivalent. Americans are simultaneously pro-life and pro-choice. Substantial numbers of people tell the pollsters that abortion is an act of murder. They also say that the decision to have an abortion should be a personal choice. Those two views are fundamentally contradictory, yet many Americans hold them simultaneously. They see no reason to resolve the tensions in their own positions. They believe in the sanctity of life as well as in the importance of individual choice.

Legality

Q: Do you think abortions should be legal under any circumstances, legal only under certain circumstances, or illegal in all circumstances? [Starting in 1994, those people who answered "legal under certain circumstances" were asked another question asking them whether abortion should be legal under most circumstances or only in a few circumstances.]

		Legal under all circumstances	Legal under certain circumstances		Illegal in all circumstances	
Apr. 1975	Gallup	21%	54%		22%	
Dec. 1977	Gallup	22	55		19	
Feb. 1979	Gallup	22	54		19	
Jul. 1980	Gallup	25	53		18	
May 1981	Gallup	23	52		21	
Jun. 1983	Gallup	23	58		16	
Jan. 1985	Gallup	21	55		21	
Oct. 1988	Gallup	24	57		17	
Apr. 1989	Gallup/ <i>Newsweek</i>	27	50		18	
Jul. 1989	Gallup	29	51		17	
Apr. 1990	Gallup	31	53		12	
May 1991	Gallup	32	50		17	
Sep. 1991	Gallup	33	49		14	
Jan. 1992	Gallup	31	53		14	
Jul. 1992	Gallup/ <i>Newsweek</i>	34	48		13	
Mar. 1993	Gallup	32	51	<i>Legal</i>	<i>Legal in only</i>	13
Mar. 1994	Gallup	31	51	<i>under most</i>	<i>a few</i>	13
Sep. 1994	Gallup	33	52	<i>circumstances*</i>	<i>circumstances*</i>	15
Feb. 1995	Gallup	33	50	13%	38%	13
Sep. 1995	Gallup	31	54	9	41	15
Jul. 1996	Gallup	25	58	14	39	12
Sep. 1996	Gallup	23	51	13	43	15
Aug. 1997	Gallup	22	61	-	-	18
Nov. 1997	Gallup	26	55	12	48	15
Jan. 1998	Gallup	23	59	15	40	17
Apr. 1999	Gallup	27	55	16	42	17
Jan. 2000	Gallup	26	56	12	42	16
Mar. 2000	Gallup	28	51	17	39	15
Mar. 2001	Gallup	26	51	11	38	19
				13	38	18

May 2001	Gallup	26	58	15	41	15
Aug. 2001	Gallup	26	56	12	43	17
Feb. 2002	Gallup	26	54	-	-	18
Mar. 2002	Gallup	27	53	12	40	19
May 2002	Gallup	25	51	12	39	22
Jan. 2003	Gallup	24	57	14	42	18
May 2003	Gallup	23	57	15	42	19
Oct. 2003	Gallup	26	55	14	40	17
May 2004	Gallup	24	56	13	42	19
Mar. 2005	Gallup	23	55	14	39	20
May 2005	Gallup	23	53	12	40	22
Sep. 2006	CNN/ORC	24	50	10	40	24
May 2007	Gallup	26	55	15	40	18
Oct. 2007	CNN/ORC	23	54	13	40	22
May 2008	Gallup	28	54	13	40	17
Jun. 2008	CNN/ORC	25	51	12	39	22
May 2009	Gallup	22	53	15	37	23
Jul. 2009	Gallup/USA Today	21	57	13	42	18
Nov. 2009	CNN/ORC	26	50	10	40	23
Apr. 2010	CNN/ORC	21	56	13	42	22
May 2010	Gallup	24	54	15	37	19
May 2011	Gallup	27	50	10	39	22
Sep. 2011	CNN/ORC	25	53	12	41	21
May 2012	Gallup	25	52	13	39	20
Aug. 2012	CNN/ORC	35	47	9	37	15
Dec. 2012	Gallup/USA Today	28	52	13	38	18
May 2013	Gallup	26	52	13	38	20
May 2013	CNN/ORC	25	54	11	42	20
May 2014	Gallup	28	50	11	37	21

Note: *The categories “legal under most circumstances” and “legal under a few circumstances” do not add up to “legal under certain circumstances” because of “do not know” and “refused to answer” responses. For more information, see the following Gallup studies: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/126581/Generational-Differences-Abortion-Narrow.aspx>, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/127559/Education-Trumps-Gender-Predicting-Support-Abortion.aspx>, and <http://www.gallup.com/poll/1576/Abortion.aspx>.

Q: Do you think abortion should be legal in all cases, should be legal in most cases, illegal in most cases, or illegal in all cases?

		Legal in all cases	Legal most cases	Illegal most cases	Illegal all cases
Jul. 1995	ABC/Wash Post	27%	32%	26%	14%
Sep. 1995	ABC/Wash Post	24	36	25	11
Oct. 1995	ABC/Wash Post	26	35	25	12
Jun. 1996	ABC/Wash Post	24	34	25	14
Aug. 1996	ABC/Wash Post	22	34	27	14
Jul. 1998	ABC/Wash Post	19	35	29	13
Mar. 1999	ABC/Wash Post	21	34	27	15
Sep. 1999	ABC/Wash Post	20	37	26	15
Jul. 2000	ABC/Wash Post	20	33	26	17
Sep. 2000#	ABC/Wash Post	20	35	25	16
Jan. 2001	ABC/Wash Post	21	38	25	14
Jun. 2001	ABC/Wash Post	22	31	23	20
Aug. 2001	ABC/Wash Post	22	27	28	20
Jan. 2003	ABC/Wash Post	34	25	17	20
May 2004	ABC/Wash Post	23	31	23	17
Dec. 2004	ABC/Wash Post	21	34	25	14
Apr. 2005	ABC/Wash Post	20	36	27	13

Dec. 2005	ABC/Wash Post	17	40	27	12
Feb. 2007	ABC/Wash Post	16	39	31	16
Nov. 2007	ABC/Wash Post	19	36	27	15
Jan. 2008	ABC/Wash Post	21	36	25	16
Jun. 2008	ABC/Wash Post	18	35	28	18
Aug. 2008	ABC/Wash Post	22	32	26	18
Jun. 2009	ABC/Wash Post	20	35	26	17
Nov. 2009	ABC/Wash Post	19	35	28	16
Mar. 2010	Wash Post	17	35	27	18
Mar. 2012	ABC/Wash Post	21	33	25	17
Jul. 2012	Kaiser/Wash Post	19	36	25	17
Jul. 2013	ABC/Wash Post	20	35	26	15
Nov. 2005	PSRA/Newsweek	17	41	23	14
Aug. 2007	Pew	17	35	26	15
Oct. 2007	Pew	21	32	24	15
Nov. 2007	Pew	18	33	29	13
Jun. 2008	Pew	19	38	24	15
Aug. 2008	Pew	17	37	26	14
Oct. 2008	Pew	19	38	22	16
Late Oct. 2008	Pew	18	35	24	16
Apr. 2009	Pew	18	28	28	16
Aug. 2009	Pew	17	31	27	17
Jul.-Aug. 2010	Pew	17	33	27	17
Feb.-Mar. 2011	Pew	18	36	26	16
Sep.-Oct. 2011	Pew	19	35	25	16
Nov. 2011	Pew	20	31	26	17
Apr. 2012	Pew	23	31	23	16
Oct. 2012	Pew	23	32	25	13
Jul. 2013	Pew	20	34	24	15
Sep. 2014	Pew	22	34	26	14
May 2004	Quinnipiac	20	35	26	14
Jul. 2004	Quinnipiac	18	35	27	13
Dec. 2004	Quinnipiac	16	41	26	13
Mar. 2005	Quinnipiac	19	35	24	15
May 2005	Quinnipiac	18	37	27	14
Jul. 2005	Quinnipiac	20	37	24	12
Apr.-May 2007	Quinnipiac	17	37	26	13
Jul. 2008	Quinnipiac	19	38	24	14
Apr. 2009	Quinnipiac	15	37	27	14
Jan. 2010	Quinnipiac	18	34	24	18
Apr. 2010	Quinnipiac	18	33	27	16
Feb. 2012*	Quinnipiac	22	33	25	14
Jan. 2013*	Quinnipiac	24	32	25	14
Jul. 2013*	Quinnipiac	20	38	25	12
Sep. 2013	Quinnipiac	19	34	23	16
Nov. 2014*	Quinnipiac	23	33	24	12
Feb. 2006	AP/Ipsos	19	32	27	16
May-Jun. 2009	AP-GfK/Roper	19	33	24	20
Aug. 2011	AP-GfK/Roper	18	33	29	16
Oct. 2013	AP-GfK	34	19	13	29
Jan. 2014	AP-GfK	20	36	30	11
Mar. 2014	AP-GfK	21	35	28	14
May 2014	AP-GfK	22	34	28	14

Sep. 2014	AP-GfK	23	33	29	13
Oct. 2014	AP-GfK	22	32	31	13
Sep. 2011	PRRI^	21	32	29	14
Aug. 2012	PRRI	20	34	27	14
Sep. 2012	PRRI	22	34	24	15
Jun. 2013	PRRI	19	35	28	14
Jul.-Aug. 2014	PRRI	20	33	24	17

Note: *Asked of registered voters. ^Public Religion Research Institute.

Q: Which comes closest to your view? (1) Abortion should be generally available to those who want it; or (2) Abortion should be available but under stricter limits than it is now; or (3) Abortion should not be permitted.

		Generally available	Stricter limits	Not permitted
Sep. 1989#	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	40%	40%	18%
Nov. 1989	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	41	42	15
Jan. 1990	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	39	40	18
Aug. 1990	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	41	41	16
Jun. 1991	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	37	38	22
Aug. 1991	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	41	40	15
Sep. 1991	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	42	38	18
Jan. 1992	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	40	39	19
Mar. 1992	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	44	37	17
Jun. 1992	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	42	39	17
Jun. 1992	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	43	39	16
Jul. 1992	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	41	39	18
Aug. 1992	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	41	40	17
Oct. 1992	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	43	37	16
Mar. 1993	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	42	36	20
Jul. 1994	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	40	37	21
Jan. 1995	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	40	37	21
Jan. 1995	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	40	37	23
Feb. 1995	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	43	38	18
Apr. 1995	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	38	40	20
Aug. 1995	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	40	36	22
Oct. 1995	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	37	41	20
Feb. 1996	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	40	41	18
Apr. 1996	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	37	41	21
Jun. 1996	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	35	41	20
Jul. 1996	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	37	42	19
Jan. 1998	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	32	45	22
Nov. 1999	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	34	41	22
Feb. 2000	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	34	41	23
May 2000	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	37	39	22
Jul. 2000	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	28	48	21
Jul. 2000	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	34	40	22
Sep. 2000	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	35	42	21
Oct. 2000	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	32	44	21
Mar. 2001	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	33	43	23
Jan. 2003	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	38	37	22
Jan. 2003	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	39	38	22
Jan. 2003	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	41	43	11
Jul. 2003	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	35	38	25
May 2004	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	36	37	25
Nov. 2004	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	34	44	21
Jan. 2005	CBS/ <i>NYT</i>	36	35	26

Mar. 2005	CBS/NYT	35	37	25
Apr. 2005	CBS/NYT	36	38	24
Dec. 2005	CBS/NYT	38	39	20
Jan. 2006	CBS/NYT	38	38	21
Mar. 2007	CBS/NYT	34	41	23
May 2007	CBS/NYT	39	37	21
Jul. 2007	CBS/NYT	41	34	22
Sep. 2007	CBS/NYT	34	39	25
Dec. 2007	CBS/NYT	36	43	18
Aug. 2008	CBS/NYT	34	39	24
Sep. 2008	CBS/NYT	37	42	19
Jun. 2009	CBS/NYT	36	41	21
Oct. 2009	CBS	41	35	20
Nov. 2009	CBS	34	40	23
Apr. 2010	CBS	36	38	23
Aug. 2010	CBS	36	39	23
Dec. 2010	CBS/NYT	36	40	20
Sep. 2011	CBS/NYT	31	42	23
Jan. 2012	CBS/NYT	37	37	23
Sep. 2012	CBS/NYT	42	35	20
Oct. 2012	CBS/NYT	46	32	20
Feb. 2013	CBS	42	31	24
Jul. 2013	CBS	37	40	21
Feb. 2014	CBS/NYT	38	40	21
Aug. 2014	CBS	36	34	26
Oct. 2014	CBS	39	34	25

Note: # Question wording was, "...abortion should be available but more difficult to get than it is now or abortion should not be available."

Q: Which comes closest to your view on abortion – abortion should always be legal, should be legal most of the time, should be made illegal except in cases of rape, incest, and to save the mother's life, or abortion should be made illegal without any exceptions?

		Always legal	Legal most of the time	Only in cases of rape or incest	Always illegal
Jan. 2003	NBC/WSJ	27%	17%	40%	14%
Nov. 2003	NBC/WSJ	29	14	41	13
Jun. 2004	NBC/WSJ	29	12	45	12
Jan. 2005	NBC/WSJ	24	19	41	12
Apr. 2006	NBC/WSJ	27	19	41	10
Nov. 2007	NBC/WSJ	25	15	40	13
Sep. 2008	NBC/WSJ	25	24	37	10
Apr. 2013	NBC/WSJ	26	19	42	10

Abortion After 20 Weeks

Q: (Here are some possible restrictions on abortion that are being debated in some states.) Would you favor or oppose... in a pregnancy of 20 weeks or more, requiring a test to make sure that the fetus is not developed enough to live outside the womb before a woman could have an abortion?

		Favor test	Oppose test
Sep. 1989	CBS/NYT	65%	24%

Q: If a woman who is at least 20 weeks pregnant wants an abortion, should the doctor first be required to determine whether the fetus can survive outside the womb, or not?

Jul. 1989	AP/Media General	Yes, be required 62%	No, not required 21%
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Q: The US Supreme Court has said abortion is legal without restriction in about the first 24 weeks of pregnancy. Some states have passed laws reducing this to 20 weeks. If it has to be one or the other, would you rather have abortions legal without restriction up to 20 weeks, or up to 24 weeks?

Jul. 2013*	Quinnipiac	Up to 20 weeks 55%	Up to 24 weeks 30%
Jul. 2013	ABC News/WashPost	56	27

Gender Breakdown, ABC News/WashPost

Men	52%	30%
Women	59	23

Note: *Asked of registered voters.

Q: As you may know, the House of Representatives recently approved legislation that would ban virtually all abortions nationwide after 20 weeks of pregnancy, except in cases of rape and incest that are reported to authorities. Supporters say the legislation is necessary because they believe a fetus can feel pain at that point of the pregnancy. Opponents say it undermines the right to abortion that the US Supreme Court established in 1973. Would you support or oppose such legislation?

		Legislation banning abortions after 20 weeks	
		Support	Oppose
Jun. 2013	National Journal/United Technologies	48%	44%
		Gender Breakdown	
		Men	46% 45%
		Women	50 44

Moral Acceptability

Q: Next, I'm going to read you a list of issues. Regardless of whether or not you think it should be legal, for each one, please tell me whether you personally believe that in general it is morally acceptable or morally wrong. Abortion.

		Abortion is morally acceptable	Morally wrong	Depends (vol.)
May 2001	Gallup	42%	45%	11%
May 2002	Gallup	38	53	8
May 2003	Gallup	37	53	9
May 2004	Gallup	40	50	8
May 2005	Gallup	40	51	8
May 2006	Gallup	43	44	11
May 2007	Gallup	40	51	7
May 2008	Gallup	40	48	10
May 2009	Gallup	36	56	6
May 2010	Gallup	38	50	9
May 2011	Gallup	39	51	7
May 2012	Gallup	38	51	9
May 2013	Gallup	42	49	8
May 2014	Gallup	42	48	8

Constitutional Amendment?

Q: The 1973 Roe v. Wade decision established a woman's constitutional right to an abortion, at least in the first three months of pregnancy. Would you like to see the Supreme Court completely overturn its Roe v. Wade decision or not?

		Yes, completely overturn	No
Jul. 1989	Gallup	31%	58%
Oct. 1989	Gallup	33	61
Aug. 1992	Gallup	34	60
Mar. 2002	Gallup	36	60
Jan. 2003	Pew Research Center	31	62
Jun. 2005	Pew Research Center	30	63
Jul. 2005	Gallup	29	68
Jul. 2005*	NBC/WSJ	29	65
Jul. 2005	Pew Research Center	29	65
Dec. 2005*	NBC/WSJ	30	66
Jan. 2006	Gallup	25	66
May 2009	CNN/ORC	30	68
May 2011	Gallup	33	52
Jan. 2013	Pew Research Center	29	63

Note: *Question begins "The Supreme Court's 1973. . ."

Abortion as an Election Issue

Q: In making your decision about who to vote for this fall, will the issue of abortion be very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

		Very important	Somewhat important	Not too important	Not at all important
Aug. 2004	Pew Research Center	45%	25%	13%	14%
Oct. 2004	Pew Research Center	47	27	12	11
Jun. 2007	Pew Research Center	40	30	13	14
Oct. 2007	Pew Research Center	39	26	17	13
May 2008	Pew Research Center	40	27	15	15
Aug. 2008	Pew Research Center	39	26	17	15
Oct. 2008	Pew Research Center	41	29	16	12
Jul.–Aug. 2010	Pew Research Center	43	24	13	17
Apr. 2012	Pew Research Center	39	25	14	18
Sep. 2012	Pew Research Center	46	24	13	14
Sep. 2014*	Pew Research Center	46	24	11	16

Note: Question asked of registered voters. In September 2014, 83 percent of registered voters said the economy was "very important" to them; 77 percent said health care; 62 percent, immigration; 54 percent, the environment; 32 percent, gay marriage; 75 percent, terrorism; 65 percent, the federal budget deficit; 64 percent, foreign policy; 36 percent, birth control; 57 percent, economic inequality. *Question wording was: "(As you think about the elections for Congress this November (2014), how important are each of the following issues to you?) Is the issue of abortion . . ."

Q: Thinking about how the abortion issue might affect your vote for major offices, would you: Only vote for a candidate who shares your views on abortion; or consider a candidate's position on abortion as just one of many important factors when voting; or not see abortion as a major issue?

		-----How abortion might affect your vote-----		
		Only vote for candidate who shares views	Just one of many important factors	Not see abortion as major issue
Jun. 1992	Gallup	13%	46%	36%
Jul. 1996	Gallup	17	50	30
Jul. 1996	Gallup	15	53	30
Apr.–May 1999	Gallup	19	52	26
Mar.–Apr. 2000	Gallup	14	52	32
May 2001	Gallup	21	52	25
May 2004	Gallup	14	46	39
Oct. 2004	Gallup	17	46	35
May 2007	Gallup	16	60	23
May 2008	Gallup	13	49	37
Sep. 2012	Gallup	17	45	34

Note: Question asked of registered voters except in 2008 when it was asked of a national adult sample.

Pro-choice or Pro-life?

Q: On the issue of abortion, would you say you are more pro-life or more pro-choice?

		Pro-choice	Pro-life
Aug. 1997	Fox News	50%	40%
Jan. 1998	Fox News	49	46
Jun. 1999	Fox News	42	44
Jan. 2000	Fox News	43	44
Jul. 2000	Fox News	54	38
Jan. 2001	Fox News	47	42
Jan. 2002	Fox News	47	41
Apr. 2003	Fox News	49	41
Jul. 2003	Fox News	44	44
Apr. 2004	Fox News	44	47
Apr. 2005	Fox News	47	42
Feb.–Mar. 2006	Fox News	49	41
Feb. 2007	Fox News	51	40
May 2007	Fox News	51	39
Oct. 2007	Fox News	48	37
Sep. 2008	Fox News	49	41
May 2009	Fox News	43	49
Nov. 2009	Fox News	47	44
Jan. 2011	Fox News	42	50
Apr. 2013	Fox News	49	44
Jan. 2014	Fox News	45	48
Oct. 2014	Fox News	48	43

Note: Question asked of registered voters.

Q: With respect to the abortion issue, would you consider yourself to be pro-choice or pro-life?

		Pro-choice	Pro-life
Sep. 1995	Gallup	56%	33%
Jul. 1996	Gallup	53	36
Aug. 1997	Gallup	47	44
Nov. 1997	Gallup	51	40
Jan. 1998	Gallup	48	45
Apr.-May 1999	Gallup	48	42
Mar.-Apr. 2000	Gallup	48	43
Mar. 2001	Gallup	47	41
May 2001	Gallup	48	42
Aug. 2001	Gallup	46	46
May 2002	Gallup	47	46
May 2003	Gallup	48	45
Oct. 2003	Gallup	48	45
May 2004	Gallup	49	44
May 2005	Gallup	48	44
May 2006	Gallup	51	41
May 2007	CNN/ORC	45	50
May 2007	Gallup	49	45
Aug. 2008	CNN/ORC	53	44
May 2008	Gallup	50	44
Apr. 2009	CNN/ORC	49	45
May 2009	Gallup	42	51
Jul. 2009	Gallup/ <i>USA Today</i>	46	47
May 2010	Gallup	45	47
May 2011	Gallup	49	45
Jun. 2011	Gallup	46	48
Jul. 2011	Gallup	47	47
May 2012	Gallup	41	50
Sep. 2012	Gallup	47	46
May 2013	Gallup	45	48

Note: The trend here is taken only from polls where the pro-life/pro-choice question was asked after other questions on abortion.