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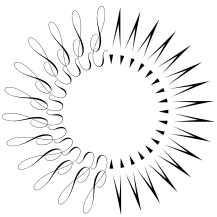
Trust

The Pew Charitable Trusts



Moments of Hope

As the pandemic buffeted the globe, Pew worked to help policymakers navigate fiscal woes, protect consumers, and provide historic funding for America's national parks.



TIME CAPSULE

In 1998, a time when the federal government was increasingly shifting responsibility and authority to governors and state legislatures, The Pew Charitable Trusts made a grant to the University of Richmond to create a center focused on policy issues in state capitols. The Pew Center on the States soon stood on its own and became the platform for the Trusts' robust research portfolio examining state policy and offering states assistance in development, implementation, and evaluation of their programs. Pew's efforts in the states have grown to cover a variety of topics, such as researching the shortfall in funding pension obligations owed public employees; finding effective strategies that advance fiscally sound, data-driven criminal and juvenile justice policies; and analyzing the trends and pressures on state budgets. Since that initial commitment more than two decades ago, Pew has gone on to work in every state and the District of Columbia, assisting policymakers in finding ways to make government more efficient and effective.

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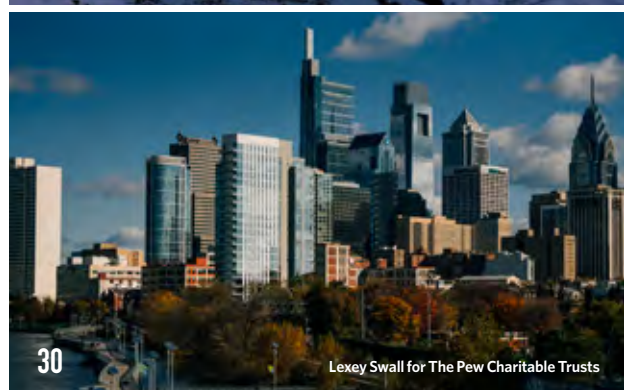
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Cover: Christian W. Hundley/Getty Images

An Extraordinary Year



The year 2020 was a headline writer's dream. From a pandemic, to global protests for social justice, to Brexit and a contentious U.S. election, there was an extraordinary number of stories to tell. And much of what we read in our newspapers and online last year was surprising, troubling, disappointing, and heartbreaking.

But here is the headline I would write about 2020: In difficult times, good things still happen. We saw that last year as Pew and our partners—despite unprecedented challenges including working at home, communicating on laptops and smartphones, and keeping families safe and friends supported—continued to improve policy, inform the public, and support the foundation of our civic life. That work produced an impressive list of accomplishments, many of which are highlighted in this issue of *Trust*.

Here are some examples.

Pew's evidence-based approach and convening of stakeholders—ranging from conservationists, to hunters and fishers, to business leaders—helped build strong bipartisan support to pass the Great American Outdoors Act. This legislation—including \$6.65 billion for priority repairs—is the largest investment in our national parks in nearly 65 years and will ensure these national treasures remain available for people to enjoy and learn from for decades to come.

Similarly, research from Pew's consumer finance project was critical to getting Virginia's Fairness in Lending Act across the finish line last year. Virginia consumers can now obtain safer and less costly loans, and residents of the commonwealth are expected to save \$100 million annually.

In 2020, Pew continued its decades-long work to strengthen the fiscal health of states and cities, including our hometown of Philadelphia. Research from our state fiscal health team is being used to develop federal legislation that will help ease the economic pain caused by COVID-19, including technical support for those leaders entrusted with managing state and local budgets during these difficult times. Pew's data is also informing how Philadelphia and other jurisdictions can best manage tax revenue, pension liabilities, and rainy day funds.

Philadelphia shares many of the problems other communities, large and small, have faced even before the onset of COVID-19. But according to Elinor Haider, who directs Pew's Philadelphia research and policy initiative, "Housing affordability in Philadelphia is really

different from other places. It's not that prices are so high; it's that incomes are so low." After more than a decade of research on the city and urban issues, the initiative has now begun to develop specific policy recommendations for Philadelphia. That focus now includes identifying barriers to accessing home loans, learning from innovative home-funding policies in other cities, and improving ways to target limited resources. You'll learn more about how Pew is expanding its mission in Philadelphia in this issue.

Our state fiscal health team has also taken a look at states and cities that depend on the leisure and hospitality industries. Americans are traveling less; avoiding restaurants and movies; and paying fewer sales taxes. And while most, if not all, states have lost revenue because of this decline in tourism, Hawaii, Florida, and Nevada have been hit the hardest, as we report in this issue of *Trust*. Hawaii's general fund is projected to decline 15.6% this year. Sales tax revenue plummeted in Nevada after casinos were ordered to close. And Florida endured massive layoffs when families stopped attending theme parks.

The recent events at the U.S. Capitol were a painful illustration of America's political and social divisions, which make it difficult to make progress. The Pew Research Center studied this gap in 2020. As you'll read in *Trust*, some 77% of Americans say the country is more divided now than before the pandemic, compared with a median of 47% in 13 other nations surveyed. But even in a survey that highlights differences of opinion about race, climate change, the economy, and public health, there is still good news: Overwhelming majorities of Trump and Biden supporters surveyed said that their preferred candidate should focus on addressing the needs of *all* Americans.

That sentiment is by no means the end of the partisan divides that have defined our politics for many years. But it might signal a willingness to begin to come together. Facts and data can help—both in the United States and around the world—by providing a common language for us to address long-standing systemic problems as well as emerging challenges. As the achievements highlighted in this issue of *Trust* show, when we come together, good things can still happen—even in the worst of times.



Susan K. Urahn, *President and CEO*

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THE BIG PICTURE

Emperor penguins dive off an ice shelf into Antarctica's Southern Ocean, one of the least-altered marine ecosystems on Earth. These waters are home to thousands of species found nowhere else and are vital to the health of the planet, producing strong upwelling currents that carry critical nutrients north of the equator and play a role in regulating the climate. To protect this unique and critical region, Pew is working with partners to encourage the adoption of ecosystem-based fisheries management practices and establish a network of large-scale marine protected areas around Antarctica.





A worker separates oysters headed for a sorting machine on the Cedar Point Oyster Farm in Durham, New Hampshire. *Jerry and Marcy Monkman/EcoPhotography*

A Home for Oversized Oysters

BY JOHN BRILEY

Unlike most seafood purveyors, oyster growers face a constant Goldilocks pressure: Their product must be just the right size—neither too big nor too small—to hit the sweet spot shellfish consumers expect at restaurants and markets. That's not a problem in a normal year with steady demand—growers can simply harvest oysters when they're within that ideal size window.

But, of course, 2020 wasn't normal, and oyster sales are way down because of the COVID-19 pandemic. That's left many farmers holding bivalves that grew beyond the ideal size for the half-shell market, and it has created a major dilemma over what to do with those XXL mollusks.

For growers in seven states, a solution is now at hand: Under a program called Supporting Oyster Aquaculture and Restoration (SOAR), growers can sell their live,

oversized oysters to be transplanted into reef restoration projects. SOAR, which was formed by The Pew Charitable Trusts and The Nature Conservancy, launched in October in Maine, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire and has since expanded to Maryland, New Jersey, New York, and Washington state. It's one of the few programs that transplant still-living oysters onto reefs.

Oyster reefs convey a range of benefits. They help protect shorelines by reducing wave energy and blunting storm surges. Living reefs also provide habitat for a range of wildlife, and because their main inhabitants—oysters—filter water as they feed, they also benefit the broader ecosystem and coastal communities.

Despite all of these attributes, oyster reefs are among the most imperiled marine habitats on Earth. Globally, over 85% of these reefs have disappeared because

of overharvesting, pollution, and habitat destruction—factors that have also reduced native U.S. oyster populations to a fraction of their historic levels.

To counter that, some states, including Maryland, New York, and Virginia, have invested in oyster reef restoration in recent years, with encouraging results. Still, projects face challenges because of the time, money, space, and expertise needed to raise baby oysters to a size substantial enough to increase their chance of survival once they're relocated to a reef. Adding large, healthy, adult oysters to these projects through the SOAR initiative could rapidly accelerate progress in restoration.

SOAR was developed with guidance and support from state and federal agencies and is the largest partnership between growers and restoration experts to date, with \$5 million in funding in 2020. It expects to buy at least 5 million oysters to populate 27 acres of reefs across 20 restoration sites, and SOAR staff anticipate that more than 100 shellfish companies will ultimately sell to the program. Revenue from those sales would help support 200 jobs in New England, the mid-Atlantic, and the Pacific Northwest.

The program will purchase only native oysters—specifically, the Eastern (or American) oyster on the U.S. East Coast and the Olympia oyster in Washington—because nonnative species can disrupt ecosystems, in part by outcompeting native species. The initiative builds upon similar smaller-scale efforts over the past several years in New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Washington, among other states.

“Rebuilding wild native shellfish habitats is one of the most promising opportunities for restoring coastal ecosystems,” says Aaron Kornbluth, an officer on Pew’s campaign to protect marine life on the East Coast who has worked extensively on oyster reef rehabilitation.

Pew hopes that SOAR can catalyze greater collaboration between oyster growers and states, conservationists, and other stakeholders, and that reef restoration projects can become a new market for shellfish farmers—which would not only benefit growers and shellfish populations, but also coastal ecosystems and communities.

Protections for Deep-Sea Corals

The Gulf of Mexico is home to a wondrous array of marine life, including ancient deep-sea corals that are vital to the health of the ecosystem. In the Gulf, coral habitats provide food, shelter, and breeding grounds for sharks, crabs, snapper, grouper, and other wildlife. However, although some deep-sea corals can reach hundreds of feet tall and live for thousands of years, they are slow-growing and highly vulnerable to damage and destruction by certain fishing methods, which can break or smother them. And, once damaged, corals can take centuries to recover—if they survive at all.

Now, at least some of those fragile organisms are protected, thanks to a new federal rule designating 21 sites that total 484 square miles (an area more than twice the size of New Orleans) as Habitat Areas of Particular Concern, restricting the use of damaging fishing gear in most of them.

The October action by the Commerce Department followed initial approval of the plan—in 2018—by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council. All told, the plan drew nearly 30,000 supporting signatures in two rounds of public comment. The newly protected sites are among dozens of deep-sea coral hot spots that scientists, fishermen, conservationists, and fishery managers identified as priority areas for conservation, management, and research.

And research around coral ecosystems is promising, as it turns out they, like some other deep-sea organisms, are natural disease fighters. Sponges, for example, produce chemicals, some of which are shown to fight infection in humans. Discoveries from sponges already have led to the development of antibiotics and cancer-fighting drugs, and their skeletons are being studied for potential use in bone grafting. Scientists see similar potential in deep-sea corals. Researchers have discovered that one type of gorgonian coral, also known as sea fans, contains powerful anti-inflammatory chemicals and that some soft corals have potential anti-cancer and antiviral properties.

The October rule also allows the Gulf council to recommend measures to avoid, mitigate, or offset any adverse impacts from other industrial activities at the 21 sites, including oil and gas exploration and drilling. In most of the new areas, the council restricted damaging fishing gear, such as trawls, traps, anchors, and longlines, that can break or smother corals. Trolling and other hook-and-line fishing will still be allowed, because those methods do not normally affect the deep ocean floor where these corals live.

“This new rule will benefit not only the corals but a host of other marine life,” says Holly Binns, who directs Pew’s conserving marine life program in the Gulf of Mexico and U.S. Caribbean. “It’s also going to be a big help to current and future generations of anglers, commercial fishermen, and seafood consumers, as well as countless others who rely on a healthy Gulf of Mexico.”

—John Briley



A mushroom coral deep in the Gulf of Mexico. NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration and Research

Dental Therapy Gains Momentum

Healthy smiles are something many Americans take for granted, yet not everyone has the same access to dental care. Across the country, some 56 million people live in areas where dentists are in short supply. And for the 72 million children and adults who rely on Medicaid—which is accepted by only a third of U.S. dentists—routine oral health care remains a challenge. Dental therapists can help fill this gap.

These midlevel providers offer preventive care and routine restorative procedures, such as filling cavities and placing temporary crowns, and they can help increase dental care for underserved communities. Because they work under the general supervision of a dentist, dental therapists also aren't fettered to an office. They can be mobile and deliver care directly to people who would otherwise have a hard time reaching a provider—visiting nursing homes, schools, veterans' homes, and more.

For nearly a decade, Pew has promoted dental therapy as a sensible way to increase access to oral health care for populations in need, supporting licensing, practice requirements, and training standards for dental therapists. Today, a dozen states from Alaska to Maine

have come to allow the work of dental therapists, always with bipartisan support.

"Dental therapists are a common-sense way to increase access to oral health care for underserved communities," says Kristen Mizzi Angelone, senior manager for Pew's dental campaign. "Allowing the use of these midlevel providers gives the dentists who supervise them the opportunity to focus their time and skills on more complex procedures."

Last year ushered in a new milestone for these providers when the Commission on Dental Accreditation accredited a dental therapy education program for the first time ever, at Iñiaḡvik College in Utqiagvik, Alaska, on the northernmost tip of the state. In 2005, Alaska was the first state to allow the use of dental therapists, and today these providers serve some 40,000 Indigenous people across the state—ensuring that people living in rural communities now have regular access to dental care.

"Accreditation represents a huge milestone for a program that grew out of great need in rural Alaska," says Dr. Mary Williard, the Alaska Dental Therapy Education Program chair. "We are now an important step closer to the day when dental care is no longer a privilege, but is available when and where it is needed."

—*Demetra Aposporos*



Alexis Matsui for The Pew Charitable Trusts

Government Restrictions on Religion Reach Highest Level in a Decade

In 2018, the global median level of government restrictions on religion—that is, laws, policies, and actions by officials that impinge on religious beliefs and practices—continued to climb, reaching an all-time high since the Pew Research Center first began tracking these trends in 2007.

The year-over-year increase from 2017 to 2018 was relatively modest, but it contributed to a substantial rise in government restrictions on religion over more than a decade. In 2007, the first year of the study, the global median score on the Government Restrictions Index (a 10-point scale based on 20 indicators) was 1.8. After some fluctuation in the early years, the median score has risen steadily since 2011 and now stands at 2.9 for 2018, the most recent full year for which data is available.

The increase in government restrictions reflects a wide variety of events around the world, including a rise from 2017 to 2018 in the number of governments using force—such as detentions and physical abuse—to coerce religious groups.

The total number of countries with “high” or “very high” levels of government restrictions has been mounting as well. Most recently, that number climbed from 52 countries (26% of the 198 countries and territories included in the study) in 2017 to 56 countries (28%) in 2018. The latest figures are close to the 2012 peak in the top two tiers of the Government Restrictions Index.

As of 2018, most of the 56 countries with high or very high levels of government restrictions on religion are in the Asia-Pacific region (25 countries, or half of all countries in that region) or the Middle East-North Africa region (18 countries, or 90% of all countries in the region).

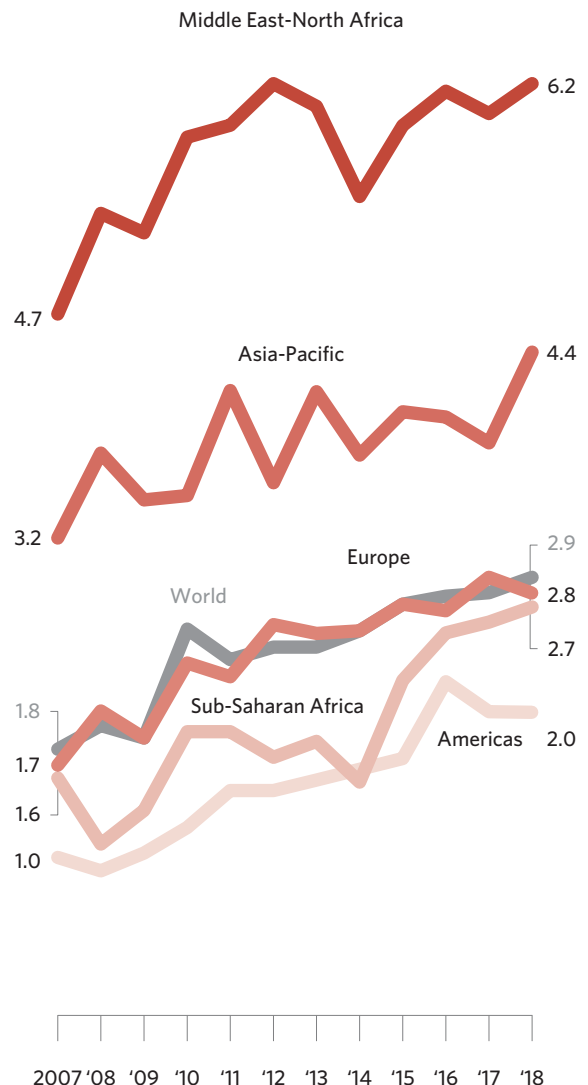
Of the five regions examined in the study, the Middle East and North Africa continued to have the highest median level of government restrictions in 2018 (6.2 out of 10). However, Asia and the Pacific had the largest increase in its median government restrictions score, rising from 3.8 in 2017 to 4.4 in 2018, partly because a greater number of the region’s governments used force against religious groups, which included property damage, detention, displacement, abuse, and killings.

In total, 31 out of 50 countries (62%) in Asia and the Pacific experienced government use of force related to religion, up from 26 countries (52%) in 2017. The increase was concentrated in the category of “low levels” of government use of force (between one and nine incidents during the year). In 2018, 10 Asia-Pacific countries fell into this category, up from five the previous year.

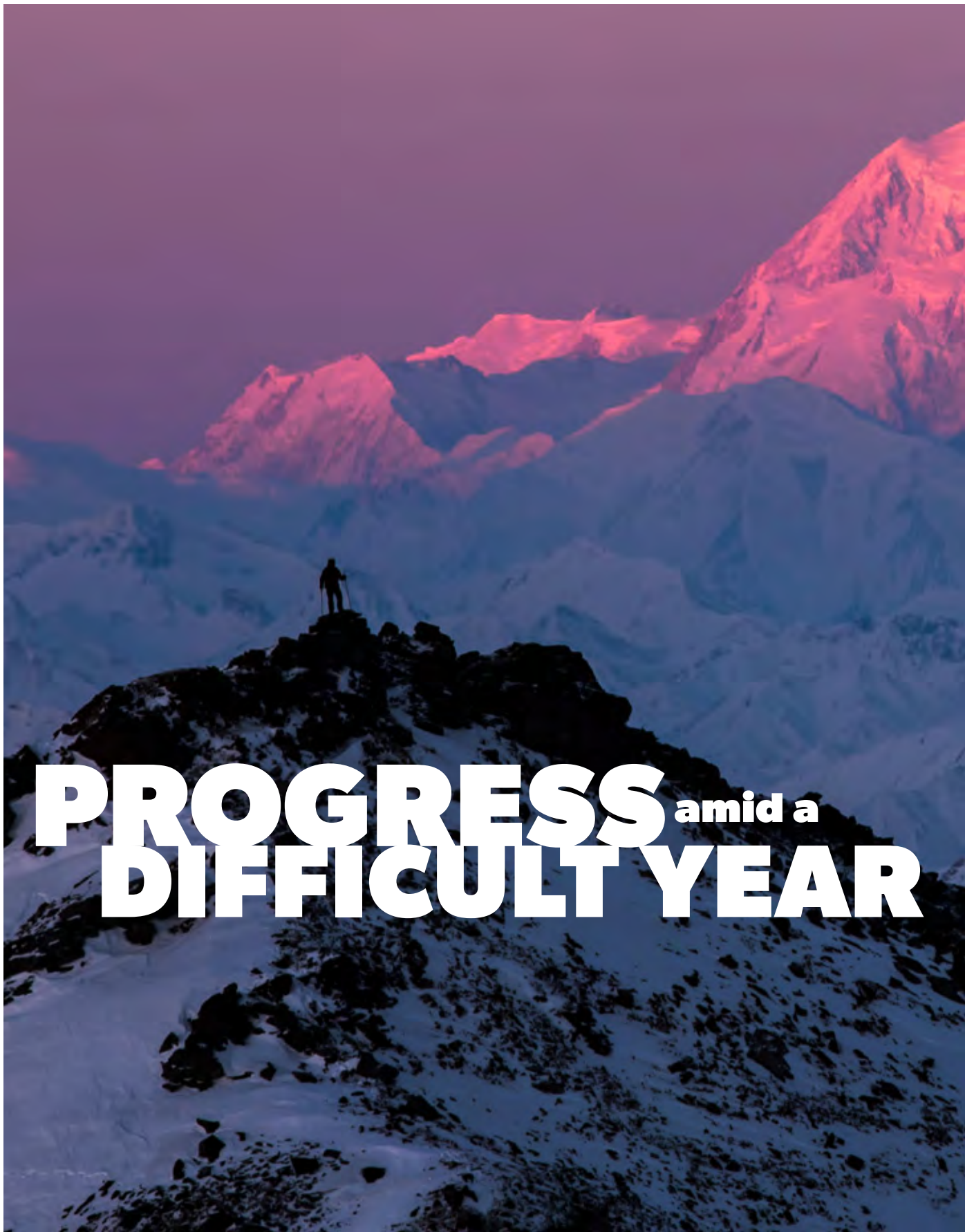
—Demetra Aposporos

Government restrictions on religion, by region

Median scores on the Government Restrictions Index



Source: Pew Research Center



PROGRESS amid a **DIFFICULT YEAR**



From conducting research to help state policymakers cope with the pandemic's fiscal impacts to promoting legislation that delivered the largest investment in our national parks in more than a half-century, Pew worked with partners in 2020 to improve public policy, inform the public, and invigorate civic life.

A lone hiker surveys Alaska's Denali National Park, which needs some \$30 million in transportation infrastructure repairs. Steven Miley/Alamy Stock Photo



DRUG REFORM

The first major reform to over-the-counter drug regulation since 1972 will streamline oversight of these medications that 4 in 5 Americans use as a first response to minor ailments. The new federal law, which had bipartisan support, updates the process FDA uses to regulate consumer products such as cold and cough treatments, pain relievers, and antiperspirants and is intended to help the agency move faster to protect consumers from unsafe drugs. It also allows manufacturers to more easily market innovative products. Pew staff compiled evidence outlining the benefits of reforms and helped create a coalition of medical organizations, drug manufacturers, and consumer groups to support the effort.

Fahroni/Getty Images

PAYDAY LOANS

Virginians can now obtain safer and less costly small loans, thanks to the Fairness in Lending Act, which reforms the state's payday and auto title loan market. Research from Pew's consumer finance project and a grassroots coalition of community, faith, and business leaders helped achieve bipartisan support

for the legislation, which is expected to save Virginia consumers an estimated \$100 million annually. Citing the coronavirus pandemic, Governor Ralph Northam (D) moved up the law's enactment date by six months to Jan. 1, 2021, to help sooner during a time when many are struggling financially.

MARINE CONSERVATION

In August, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission voted to adopt an ecosystem-based approach that considers the marine environment as a whole to set annual fishing quotas for menhaden, a species so vital to the East Coast marine food web that it is often called the most important fish in the sea. The standards are based on “ecological reference points” that account for the needs of the forage fish’s many predators, such as striped bass, osprey, and whales, and were developed based on research supported by the Pew-managed Lenfest Ocean Program.



Andrew Caballero-Reynolds/AFP via Getty Images

ECONOMY





The COVID-19 pandemic sent shockwaves through the U.S. economy last year, and the financial pain was especially hard on lower-income Americans, according to a Pew Research Center study released in September. A third of lower-income adults said they or someone in their household had lost a job because of COVID-19, compared to 26% of middle-income and 14% of upper-income adults. Also notable: Thirty-seven percent of lower-income earners reported that they or someone in their household was forced to take a pay cut because of the outbreak, and 35% said they had visited a food bank. Here, cars wait in line at a food distribution site near Orlando, Florida, last November.

Paul Hennessy/SOPA Images/LightRocket via Getty Images



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

Lyda Hill

The biggest investment in our national parks in nearly 65 years was achieved last year when President Donald Trump signed the Great American Outdoors Act on Aug. 4, following its bipartisan passage in Congress. Over a five-year period, the act will direct up to \$6.65 billion for priority repairs within national parks (like these at the Grand Canyon) and nearly \$3 billion for repairs within national forests, national wildlife refuges, Bureau of Land Management lands, and Bureau of Indian Education schools. Pew provided data and built a coalition that generated broad public support for the bill, which is financed by mineral revenues from development on federal lands and waters rather than taxpayer revenue.

NATIONAL PARKS



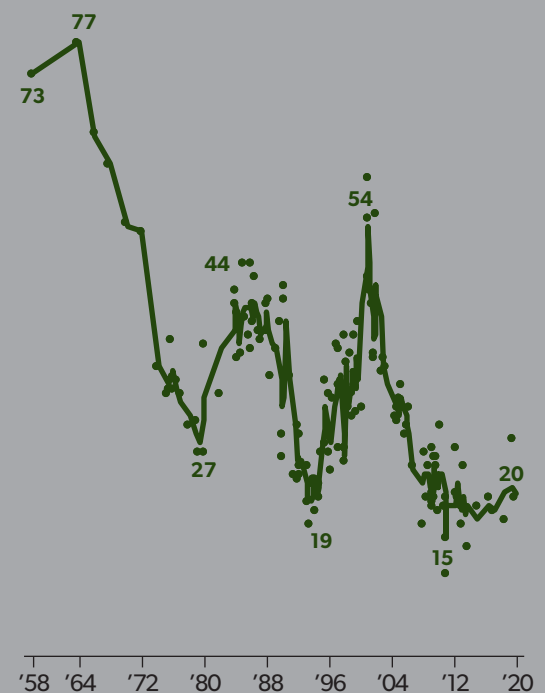
NPS/Kristen M. Caldon/Flickr Creative Commons

TRUSTⁱⁿ GOVERNMENT

Amid a year defined by the pandemic and the accompanying economic recession, just 20% of Americans said they trust the federal government to do the right thing, continuing a decade of historic lows in the public's trust in government. Yet a majority want the government to play a major role in everything from keeping the country safe from terrorism (91%) to ensuring access to health care (65%) and alleviating poverty (62%), according to the most recent study of attitudes about government from the Pew Research Center.

Public trust in federal government near historic lows for over a decade

% who say they trust the federal government to do what is right just about always/most of the time



STATE FISCAL HEALTH

Although states collectively began 2020 with the largest fiscal cushion in at least two decades, COVID-19 forced many to dip into their rainy day savings. Research and analysis from Pew's state fiscal health team is helping to lay critical groundwork for federal relief legislation as well as future state planning. The House of Representatives, the Senate, and the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs relied on Pew analyses to help cope with fiscal challenges resulting from the pandemic. Pew's home state of Pennsylvania also launched a new long-term fiscal scorecard that included three key indicators pulled from Pew's work: state tax revenue volatility, rainy day funds, and state personal income.

As the coronavirus forced people to begin working and attending school remotely across the U.S., many parts of the country without broadband access struggled to adjust—at least 18 million Americans, mostly in rural areas, lack a reliable high-speed internet connection. Some states turned to data from Pew's broadband research initiative to help formulate solutions: Texas and Colorado both referenced the importance of

stakeholder outreach and engagement in efforts to expand broadband, which Pew findings have shown as critical to success. And two organizations that inform lawmakers—the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service's Administration for Children and Families and the National Lieutenant Governors Association—also cited the importance of Pew's findings.



BROADBAND

Jacob Biba/The New York Times/Redux

PHILADELPHIA

Pew's hometown shows some strengths in its small and midsize business environment yet lags behind a dozen other major cities in new business formation, self-employment, and business density, according to a report from Pew's Philadelphia research and policy initiative. Small and midsize businesses—defined as those with 499 or fewer employees—totaled nearly 23,000 establishments, employed 4 in 10 workers, and paid half of all business taxes in the city, according to pre-pandemic data. The report illuminates growth patterns and vulnerabilities that can help city and state officials weigh policy responses.



Lexey Swall for The Pew Charitable Trusts



AUSTRALIA



Two new Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs) developed by Ngadju and Ngururpa peoples and approved by the Australian Government in October will conserve 18 million acres of Western Australia's Outback, providing a long-term framework for active management of the natural and cultural values of these lands by Traditional Owners. This addition of the 11-million-acre Ngadju IPA in the Great Western Woodland (shown) and the 7-million-acre Ngururpa IPA in the Great Sandy Desert means that 78 declared IPAs now cover 183 million acres of deserts, woodlands, rainforests, rivers, wetlands, and coastal habitats in Australia. The Pew Charitable Trusts' long-term investment in the country's Indigenous land management— principally via Country Needs People, a network of more than 40 Indigenous organizations—played a key role in supporting Traditional Owners to establish these new reserves.

Kerry Trapnell for The Pew Charitable Trusts



The Lingering Effects of the Pandemic



← Pew documents how COVID-19 has devastated state budgets that rely on tourism and the virus's impact on how Americans work.

There was scant traffic last May along the Las Vegas Strip, where most businesses had been closed since mid-March in an effort to tamp down the spread of the coronavirus. Mario Tama/Getty Images

Tourism Declines Take a Toll on State Revenues

Hawaii, Florida, and Nevada predict significant budget hits after
leisure and hospitality job losses from pandemic.

By Mike Maciag

A police officer secures the entrance to a beach in South Beach, Miami, last year. Florida closed parts of public beaches and limited the hours of operation for bars, clubs, and restaurants due to the coronavirus. *Eva Marie Uzategui/AFP via Getty Images*

Hawaii's economy thrives on tourism and all the dollars spent at hotels, restaurants, and attractions throughout the state. So when the COVID-19 pandemic forced business closures and grounded air travel in March, the islands sustained a major economic blow. Leisure and hospitality workers suffered massive layoffs, and as of November state employment in the industry remained down 42% from February.

Nationally, leisure and hospitality jobs have endured by far the largest losses of any major industry. A review of U.S. Department of Labor jobs data for November, however, shows vast differences in how the industry has held up across states. Five had incurred sharp reductions of about a third or more from February's pre-pandemic employment totals. A few others, meanwhile, had largely recovered from an initial wave of layoffs and were down less than 10%. For areas that lean heavily on tourism and hospitality, how the industry recovers matters not only for regional economies, but also for the vital tax dollars generated to fund state and local government budgets.

Leisure and hospitality employment dropped by more than 7.5 million jobs nationwide immediately following the business closures and travel restrictions issued in March. Just over half of the lost jobs, including temporary layoffs, have since been recovered in the industry, defined to include restaurants, drinking establishments, lodging, attractions, and related venues. Still, November job estimates remained down about 20% from February, three times the private sector's total rate of decline.

The industry supports at least some jobs everywhere, but the resulting revenues are especially critical for tourism-dependent states. Leisure and hospitality workers accounted for a quarter of Nevada's and nearly 20% of Hawaii's labor force last year, for example.

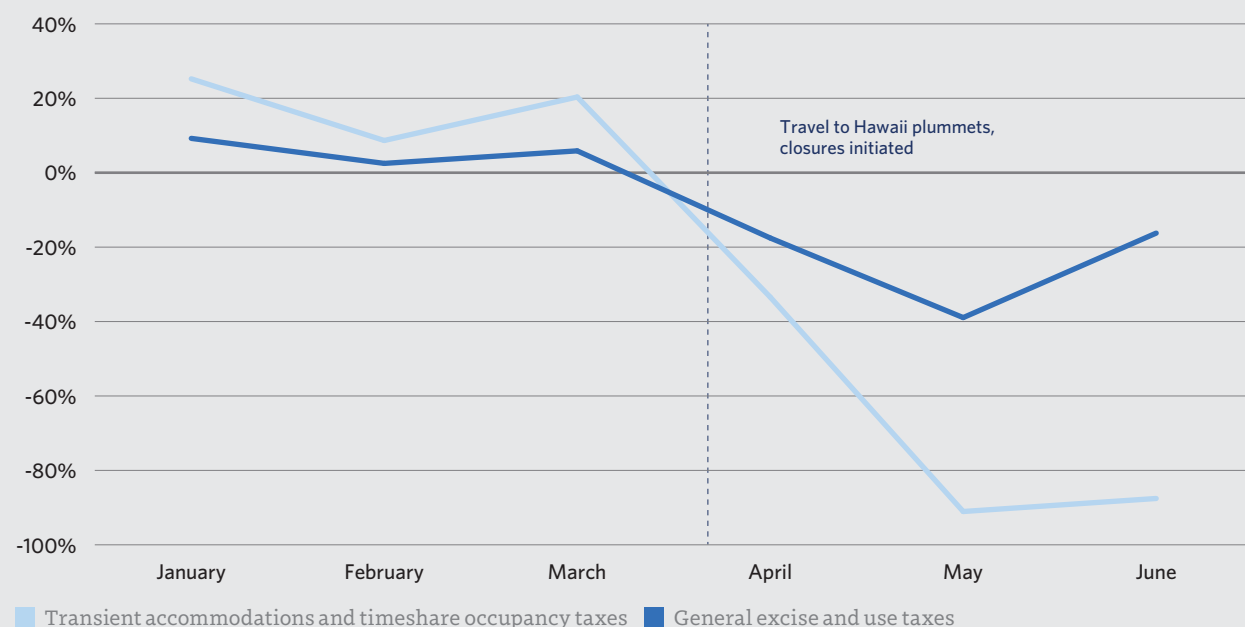
The hit to Hawaii's budget has been severe: The state's January revenue forecast shows an estimated 15.6% general fund tax revenue loss in fiscal year 2021 on top of a 9.7% decline in fiscal year 2020 from pre-pandemic projections. In fact, when estimated revenues for both years are compared with fiscal 2019, the cumulative decline in percentage terms is greater than any other nonenergy state, according to a Pew analysis of revenue forecasts.

No major source of tax revenue has gone unscathed. Hawaii Department of Taxation data shows that taxes on transient accommodations and rental vehicles had nearly vanished as of June, and excise taxes assessed on businesses were down about 16% over the year. Although these revenue streams sustained especially sharp declines, income taxes and other sources weren't spared, either.

The state's revenue losses aren't surprising given the absence of tourists. The first week of December, the number of passengers flying to Hawaii was still down more than 70% from a year ago. Hotels and resorts have sustained severe losses as fewer travelers are checking in. Some remain open, albeit with limited capacity, but others have shut down entirely. In March, Governor David Ige (D) issued a mandatory 14-day quarantine for

Hawaii Tax Revenue Fell Sharply in 2020 Because of Pandemic-Related Shutdowns

A collapse in tourism contributed to major declines in monthly state tax collections compared with 2019



Source: The Pew Charitable Trusts

all arriving travelers that remains in effect. In October, the state implemented a new pre-travel testing program exempting those testing negative for COVID-19 from the quarantine. Policymakers hoped that could lead some tourists to opt not to cancel their plans.

Nevada also experienced a dramatic tourism slowdown. Like Hawaii, the state relies heavily on the industry to fund its budget: The hotel and casino industry generates about 38% of general fund revenue, according to figures published by the Nevada Resort Association.

In March, Governor Steve Sisolak (D) ordered nonessential businesses to close, shuttering casinos and cutting off a key revenue stream. Gaming revenues essentially disappeared as sales tax collections, which typically make up more than half of the state’s tax revenue, also plummeted. Casinos later reopened with restrictions in early June. Unlike Hawaii, Nevada has since recovered the vast majority of leisure and hospitality jobs, down 14% since February.

Tourism-Dependent States Project Significant Pandemic-Related Revenue Losses

The three most reliant on leisure and hospitality jobs expect major declines from prior forecasts

State	Leisure and hospitality share of total employment (2019)	FY 2020 estimated revenue change from pre-COVID forecast	FY 2021 estimated revenue change from pre-COVID forecast
Nevada	25.1%	-8.3%	-12.7%
Hawaii	19.3%	-9.7%	-15.6%
Florida	14.0%	-5.7%	-5.7%

Source: The Pew Charitable Trusts

A “Keep Out” sign discourages entry from the beach at the Sheraton Maui Resort & Spa in Lahaina, Hawaii. Tourism usually makes up one-fifth of the state’s gross domestic product, but spending by visitors dropped significantly last year. Mia Shimabuku/Bloomberg via Getty Images



Still, the state's gaming revenue remained down 22% over the year in August. More broadly, sales tax collections remained down, but by a smaller margin.

Florida similarly faced sharper revenue reductions than most states did earlier, but its December forecast showed smaller losses than Hawaii or Nevada's projections. Sales taxes, which account for the bulk of the state's revenues, dipped about 3% last fiscal year.

The state's economy is a long way from recovering, however, as leisure and hospitality employment remained 16% below February totals as of November. The pandemic canceled many spring break plans. Walt Disney World, which announced massive layoffs, and other major tourist destinations remained closed for months. In all, the number of visitors in the second quarter was down a staggering 61% from a year ago, according to Florida's tourism bureau.

In sharp contrast, some areas of the country rely little on the industry for tax revenue. Leisure and hospitality employees last year made up the smallest shares of the workforce in Iowa and Nebraska, two states projecting among the least disruption to their budgets from the pandemic, according to a Pew review of state revenue forecasts. Nebraska Economic Forecasting Advisory Board members said the state's economy was holding up better than elsewhere, in part because it relies less on hospitality services.

As of November, Hawaii (-42%), Massachusetts (-36%), and New York (-35%) had sustained the largest percentage losses in leisure and hospitality jobs

from pre-pandemic totals in February, while industry employment was down about only 2% in Idaho and Oklahoma. But these jobs are more important to some states' economies than others. The losses are most critical to Hawaii's economy, where the sector accounts for nearly 1 in 5 jobs. The industry accounts for between 9% and 12% of total employment in nearly all other states.

Of course, many factors dictate states' revenue losses. Government-mandated closures because of the coronavirus have shuttered many businesses. Other industries, such as energy and oil production, are also struggling. States' varying tax structures further explain why some are projecting larger losses as certain revenue streams tend to be more volatile, particularly during a recession.

Going forward, how well the leisure and hospitality sector rebounds carries major implications for state budgets. So far, industry job growth has followed uneven trajectories across states. Some segments of the industry, too, face larger deficits.

In the coming months, much of the industry's fate—and that of several states' budgets—will depend largely on the course of the pandemic.

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Mike Maciag is an officer with The Pew Charitable Trusts' state fiscal health initiative.

How the Pandemic Has—and Hasn't—Changed How Americans Work

By Kim Parker, Juliana Menasce Horowitz, and Rachel Minkin

The abrupt closure of many workplaces last spring ushered in an era of remote work for millions of Americans and may portend a significant shift in how a large segment of the workforce operates in the future. Only 1 in 5 workers who say their job responsibilities can be mainly done from home say they worked from home all or most of the time before the pandemic. Now, 71% of those workers are doing their job from home all or most of the time and more than half say they would want to keep doing so after the pandemic if given the choice, according to a Pew Research Center survey.

Of course, not all employed adults have that option. In fact, a majority of workers say their job responsibilities cannot be done from home, with a clear class divide between workers who can and cannot telework. Fully 62% of workers with a bachelor's degree

or more education say their work can be done from home. This compares with only 23% of those without a four-year college degree. Similarly, while a majority of upper-income workers can do their work from home, most lower- and middle-income workers cannot.

Among those who are not currently teleworking all of the time, about 8 in 10 say they have at least some in-person interaction with other people at their workplace, with 52% saying they interact with others a lot. About half of these workers say they're concerned about being exposed to the coronavirus from the people they interact with at work or unknowingly exposing others.

While the coronavirus has changed the way many workers do their job, it hasn't significantly reshaped the culture of work for most people. Among workers who are in the same job as they were before the coronavirus

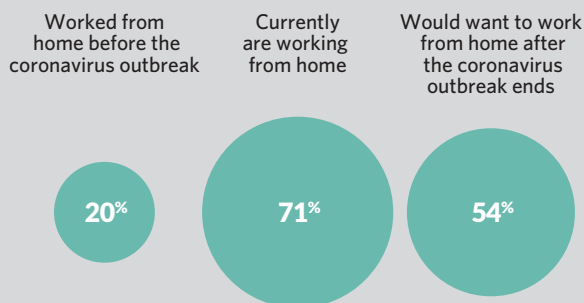
outbreak started, more than 6 in 10 say they are as satisfied with their job now as they were before the pandemic and that there's been no change in their productivity or job security. Even higher shares say they are just as likely now to know what their supervisor expects of them as they were before and that they have the same opportunities for advancement.

Other findings of the survey, conducted in October of 10,332 U.S. adults, are:

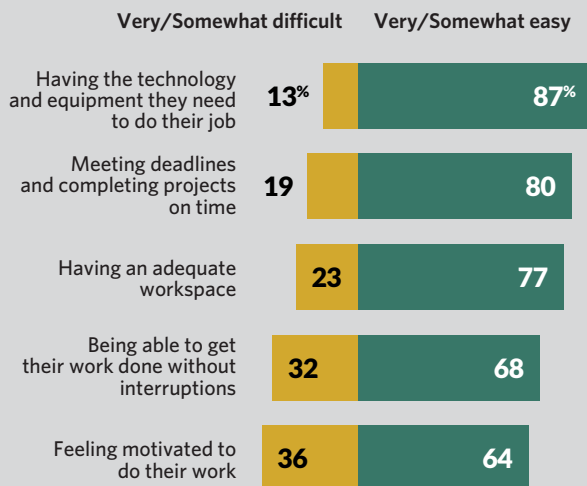
- A majority (64%) of those who are currently working from home all or most of the time say their workplace is currently closed or unavailable to them; 36% say they are choosing not to go to their workplace.

Many workers would like to telework after the pandemic is over; transition to working from home has been relatively easy for many

Among employed adults who say that, for the most part, the responsibilities of their job can be done from home, % saying they ____ all or most of the time



Among employed adults who are currently working from home all or most of the time, % saying that, since the coronavirus outbreak, each of the following has been ____ for them



Source: Pew Research Center

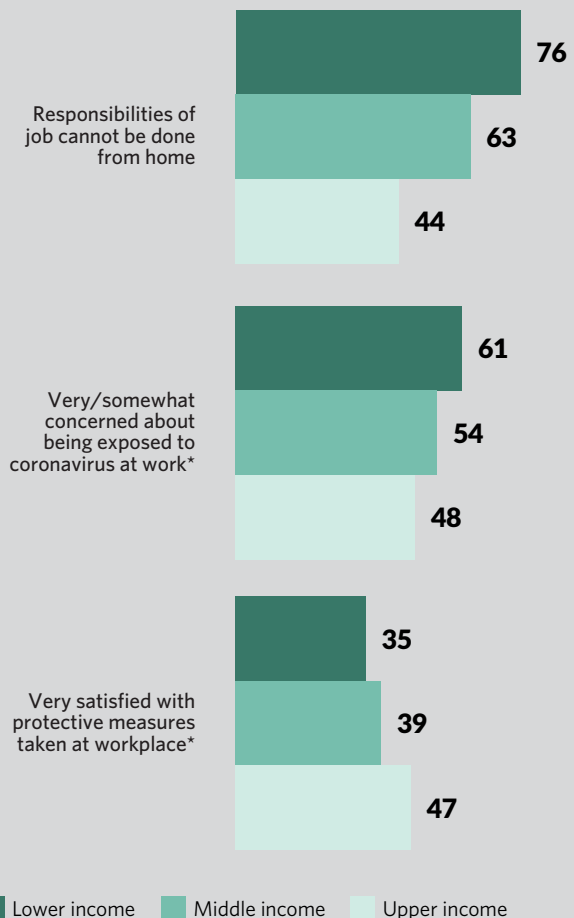
- Younger teleworkers ages 18 to 49 are more likely (42%) than workers 50 and older (20%) to say they've had a hard time feeling motivated to do their work since the coronavirus outbreak started.
- Parents with children younger than 18 who are teleworking are more likely to say it has been difficult to get their work done without interruptions (50%) than people without children under 18 (20%).

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Kim Parker directs social trends research, Juliana Menasce Horowitz is associate research director, and Rachel Minkin is a research associate at the Pew Research Center.

Lower-income workers are less likely to have option of teleworking, more likely to be concerned about exposure to coronavirus

% of employed adults saying...

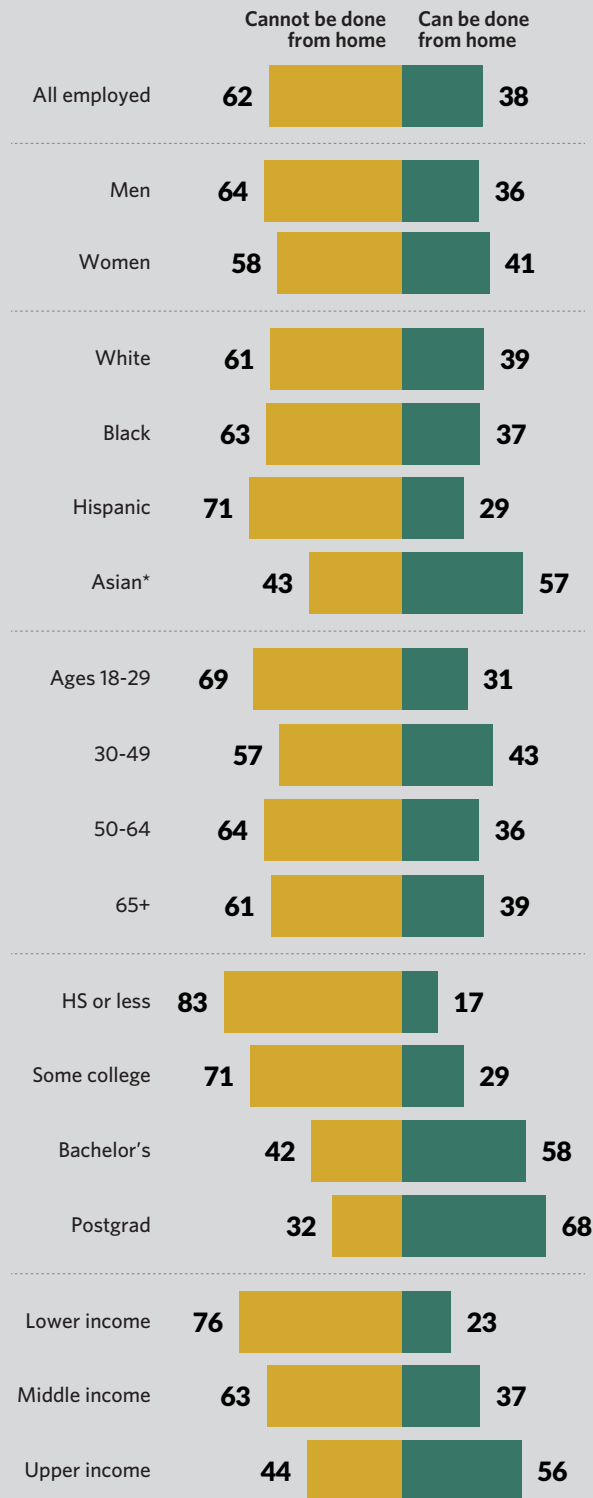


* Based on those who are not working at home all of the time and who have at least some in-person interaction with others at their job.

Source: Pew Research Center

About 4 in 10 working say their jobs can mostly be done from home

% of employed adults saying that, regardless of their current work arrangement, for the most part, the responsibilities of their job...

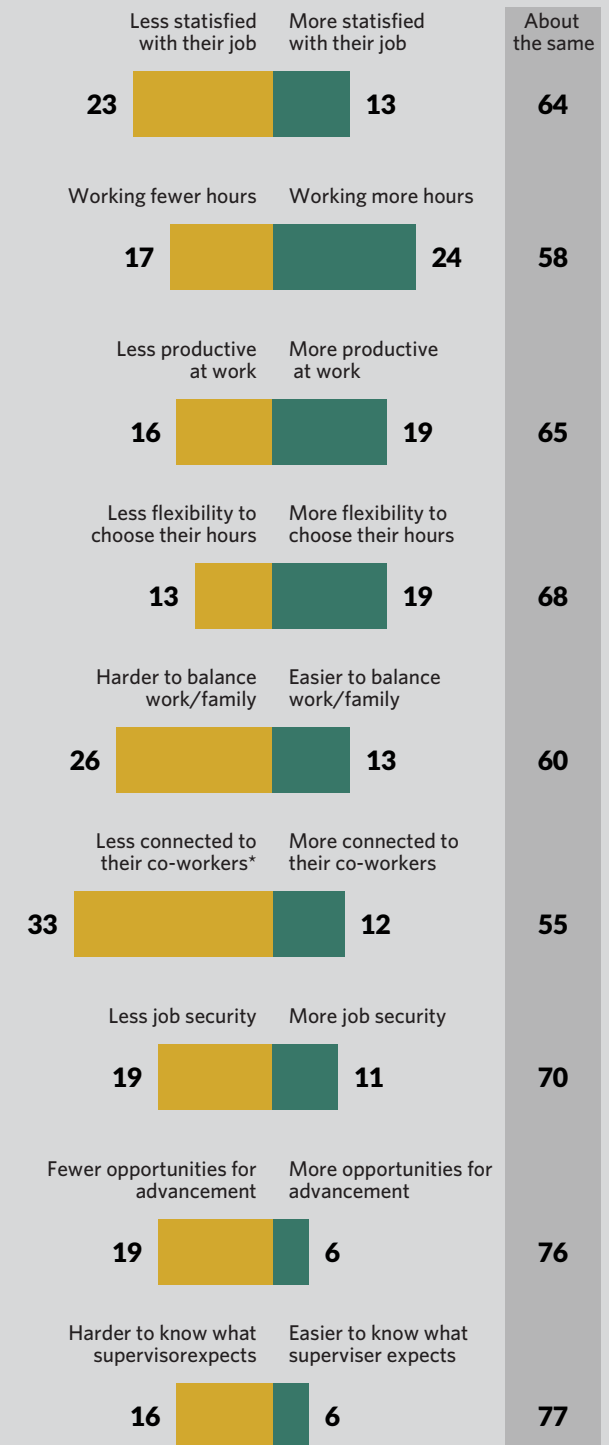


* Asian adults were interviewed in English only.

Source: Pew Research Center

Amid COVID-19, majorities of workers say they have seen little change in various aspects of their work lives compared with before the outbreak

Among employed adults who are working in the same job as before the coronavirus outbreak, % saying that, compared with before the coronavirus outbreak, they are/they have/it is...



* This question was not asked of those who are self-employed and do not have any employees.

Source: Pew Research Center



FOUR PRIORITIES FOR
PHILADELPHIA

Pew's mission in its hometown expands to focus on policy issues that will build the city's resiliency and strengthen its future.

BY TOM INFIELD

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LEXEY SWALL FOR THE PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS

For generations, the modest Philadelphia row house has made the city a relatively affordable place to live. Over the past decade, that affordability has started to change, however. About 40% of households now qualify as housing cost-burdened, spending at least 30% of their income on shelter, according to a report issued in September by Pew's Philadelphia research and policy initiative.

One factor is that local housing prices have risen in recent years, in part because of population growth. But the main cause of housing cost-burden is Philadelphia's poverty rate, which is the highest among the nation's 20 largest cities. "Housing affordability in Philadelphia is really different from other places," says Elinor Haider, who directs the Pew initiative. "It's not that prices are so high; it's that incomes are so low."

The initiative is now working to identify barriers to accessing home loans, learn from innovative home-funding policies in other cities, and improve targeting of limited resources, Haider says.

More loan capital also is needed, she says, to help existing homeowners perform upkeep on their properties and remain in their homes; the median age of the city's 685,000 housing units is 72 years, and much of the housing is in need of repair that residents cannot afford.

Homeowners who have low credit scores, as many low-income people do, often have problems securing home-repair loans.

The focus on this element of housing policy reflects a new mission in the city where The Pew Charitable Trusts was formed in 1948. Since the creation of the Philadelphia research initiative more than a dozen years ago, Pew has explored a range of issues in the city and conducted surveys of residents, providing rich analysis of city services and other topics—but without specific policy recommendations. Reports often compared Philadelphia with other similar cities, providing new insights on national urban issues.

Now, that research will continue—with "policy" added to the initiative's name and mission.

The initiative is focusing on four key areas to address the quality of life in Philadelphia: easing the housing problem, contending with the opioid epidemic, modernizing the civil court system, and improving the city's fiscal health. The work, all of which is seen through the lens of recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, will involve collaboration with Pew experts working on those issues in a variety of states and at the federal level, expanding the organization's expertise in its hometown.

"The commitment is to double down on our research and double down on the expertise

we can bring to the city,” says Frazierita Klasen, the senior vice president who oversees Pew’s work in Philadelphia. “That is what this initiative represents: combining our local research capacity with our national subject-matter expertise to help identify evidence-based solutions that could be applied to Philadelphia. We’re moving from analysis to asking how can we get policy objectives achieved.”

Haider, who joined Pew in 2018, is a public finance expert with master’s degrees from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. She knows her way around City Hall because of her previous leadership as an economic development official for former Mayor Michael Nutter and the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corp., the city’s public-private economic development partnership.

“Our goal is a stronger and more resilient Philadelphia,” she says. “We hope to address challenges facing the city through what we see as actionable research that leads to positive change.”

Haider takes over from Larry Eichel, a former top editor, columnist, and national reporter for *The Philadelphia Inquirer* who started the Philadelphia research initiative in 2009. Eichel continues as senior adviser.

From its beginning, the Philadelphia research initiative aimed to bring facts to bear on the challenges faced by an old industrial metropolis at the outset of a new century.

In March 2009, the research initiative issued the first of its annual “State of the City” reports, which presented elected officials, policy advocates, and the news media with a complex portrait of Philadelphia gleaned from scores of measurable indicators, including demographics, household income, job growth and



Jacqueline Haskins (left) and her mother, Shirley Carter, sit in front of their home in the Mantua neighborhood of West Philadelphia. Pew was founded in Philadelphia and has long worked in support of its hometown.

unemployment, and crime. Pew researchers followed that with several reports looking into the immediate problem of how to close the city’s budget gap. Would the licensing of casino gambling make a dent—and at what social cost? Would raising taxes help or hurt over the long run? How much of a problem was the size of city government itself?

“There really was nobody else doing this kind of work,” Eichel says. “When we started, Philadelphia was still seen as a city in long-term decline, or at least a place that was stuck, that wasn’t going anywhere.”

Over the years, the work of the research initiative closely followed the arc of the city itself. A 2014 report provided an early look into the expanding population of millennials, a phenomenon that had been widely observed by residents but had not been quantified. In 2016, Pew reported on gentrification and neighborhood change. In 2017, it explored the large influx of immigrants, which, with the boom in millennials, was causing the city’s overall population to grow for the first time in decades. The city that was stuck seemed to be getting unstuck.



A couple walks past Philadelphia's Municipal Court building.

Always, however, there was Philadelphia's poverty problem, which looms even larger in the wake of the pandemic. Against that backdrop, Pew looked at the minimum wage, school closings, drug-related homicides, the lack of summer jobs for teens, and the opioid crisis.

Cherelle Parker, a member of Philadelphia City Council who has worked closely with Pew, says the Trusts' help has been embraced by city officials because it is seen as nonpartisan and concerned with the big picture framed by long-term trends.

Pew "has helped give us direction," Parker says. "It is invaluable to have independent, nonpartisan, data-driven information. The entity that produces this research has to have the respect and trust of the people in order for it to be valuable. And Pew has that."

Although the Philadelphia initiative has identified policy areas where it will focus its work, it will recommend no positions before beginning its research, Klasen says. "Our policy recommendations will be grounded in data, the facts, and evidence," she says.

Pew's ability to break down its research data for each of the 10 City Council districts has been an eye-opener for Parker—particularly regarding data that deals with the crucial issue of housing stability in her area, Northwest Philadelphia, which includes several


large neighborhoods that have historically high levels of African American homeownership.

She says the data showed her that although helping people to buy housing is important, the more pressing issue in her district is helping the existing residents, many of them seniors, to maintain their homes. Doing so helps not only them, Parker says; it also helps whole communities.

"Homeownership stabilizes neighborhoods," Parker says. "Any neighborhood where you see a high level of civic engagement, a high level of voter participation, that's an area where people have a stake in their community."

Pew's goal to help the city with another of its key problems—opioid misuse—goes beyond any particular neighborhood or area of the city. Heroin and heroin substitutes are sold openly on the streets of low-income Kensington, but substance use disorders exist in every neighborhood, often the result of people becoming dependent on the pain drugs initially prescribed by their doctors.

A 2018 Pew report noted that the city is "facing one of the highest drug overdose death rates in the nation, fueled predominantly by an intensifying opioid crisis." City health officials have said they expect the 2020 death toll to be even higher as a result of fallout from the pandemic.

A photograph of a person walking on a walkway at the Thomas Jefferson University Hospital complex in Center City, Philadelphia. The walkway is viewed through a grid of windows, creating a pattern of light and dark squares. The person is silhouetted against the bright light coming through the windows. The background shows a cityscape with various buildings, including a prominent domed building.

“Because of high demand for services, as well as the aging infrastructure of streets, bridges, sidewalks, sewers, and water lines, Philadelphia’s finances are precarious even in the best of economic times.”

A person traverses a walkway at the Thomas Jefferson University Hospital complex in Center City.



A medical assistant pulls a box of Suboxone, a medication used to treat opioid use disorder, from a safe at the offices of the Prevention Point facility in Philadelphia's Kensington neighborhood.

The fight against the opioid epidemic has been led by primary care and emergency room doctors and clinics. Pew proposes to bring together a larger array of stakeholders, including city government, medical schools, hospitals, and insurance companies, to break down factors that have limited the use of buprenorphine, one of the most effective drugs for opioid treatment.

Another new area of focus—modernization of the civil courts—is Philadelphia Municipal Court's Civil Division, where small claims cases are heard. Each year, thousands of Philadelphians are called into court over disputes involving housing, family relations, insurance, personal injury, and other financial claims under \$12,000, all of which are likely to proliferate as a result of the pandemic.

These cases can be devastating for people with low incomes, many of whom miss their court appearances—sometimes because they never received notice to appear—and wind up with judgments against them, ruining their credit and hindering their chance to climb out of poverty. Pew is working on civil court modernization nationally and will examine similar courts in other cities,

looking for good examples to apply in Philadelphia.

The fourth area of focus—helping to improve the city's fiscal health—represents the continuation of a long-term effort by Pew's Philadelphia researchers.

Because of high demand for services, as well as the aging infrastructure of streets, bridges, sidewalks, sewers, and water lines, Philadelphia's finances are precarious even in the best of economic times. And the city is already one of the most heavily taxed in the nation, limiting the options for new tax revenue.

Pew's research and policy initiative proposes to help Philadelphia with its budgeting practices, having encouraged the city to put money away for the next economic downturn in a rainy day fund. Haider and her team are working with the city to better understand its small-business ecosystem and make tax incentives more effective in producing economic development and jobs.

Pew works to help policymakers stabilize pension funding in states around the nation, including Pennsylvania, and hopes to continue to build on that experience in Philadelphia, where the deferred cost of employee pension obligations affects the city's ability to





provide funding for schools, streets, and other services. Fifteen percent of the city's general fund revenue goes to pension payments.

A 2008 report co-produced by Pew and the Pennsylvania Economy League, "Philadelphia's Quiet Crisis: The Rising Cost of Employee Benefits," helped bring the issue to center stage. A year later, Pew's Philadelphia research initiative released a follow-up report, "Quiet No More: Philadelphia Confronts the Cost of Employee Benefits." Then, in 2010, another report was titled "Not Out of the Woods."

Pew has followed the issue year by year since then. In 2014, the city moved to dedicate a portion of its sales tax revenue to pension funding, which has helped reduce unfunded pension debt. A Pew analysis in 2017 found that the city still owed \$11.3 billion in back payments and that the pension fund had only 43% of the money required to cover its obligations. But, Haider says, Philadelphia has been making real and steady progress, as documented in a 2019 Pew report that found the city in good position to substantially pay down its pension debt in the decade ahead.

As part of that work, Pew recently convened a meeting of Philadelphia finance officials with their counterparts from other cities. Ron Dubow, who as Philadelphia finance director chairs the pension fund board, says it was helpful to compare best practices from around the country. It was also encouraging, he says, to hear from Pew's "outside independent" experts—who work with pension officials in other states and cities—that Philadelphia is on track toward substantially replenishing the pension fund within a few more years.

Pew is now working with Parker and others on City Council to draft legislation to require regular stress testing of the city's pension system to prepare for financial potholes that might appear in the road ahead—such as the coronavirus crisis, something that no one could have anticipated. When the pandemic hit, Pew quickly attempted to assess its impact on Philadelphia.

"This kind of work is what really differentiates Pew," Haider says. "We're able to think about the long term in ways that other organizations can't. Pensions is a perfect example of something that needs to be looked at over the long term if you're thinking about the future of the city."

It's the sort of work that will help build a more resilient city, she says, and that "is what the Philadelphia research and policy initiative is all about."

"Philadelphia is Pew's hometown, and we care deeply about it," Klasen adds. The new mission of the research and policy initiative, she says, "represents a commitment to help the city of Philadelphia come to terms with its challenges."

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Tom Infield is a longtime Philadelphia journalist and frequent contributor to Trust.

The distinctive roofline of Philadelphia's City Hall as reflected on a nearby building.

The Fact Tank is analysis and news about data from the writers and social scientists at the Pew Research Center. More is available at pewresearch.org/fact-tank

America Is Exceptional in Its Political Divide

The pandemic has revealed how pervasive the divide in American politics is relative to other nations.

BY MICHAEL DIMOCK AND RICHARD WIKE

In his first speech as president-elect, Joe Biden made clear his intention to bridge the deep and bitter divisions in American society. He pledged to look beyond red and blue and to discard the harsh rhetoric that characterizes our political debates.

It will be a difficult struggle. Americans have rarely been as polarized as they are today.

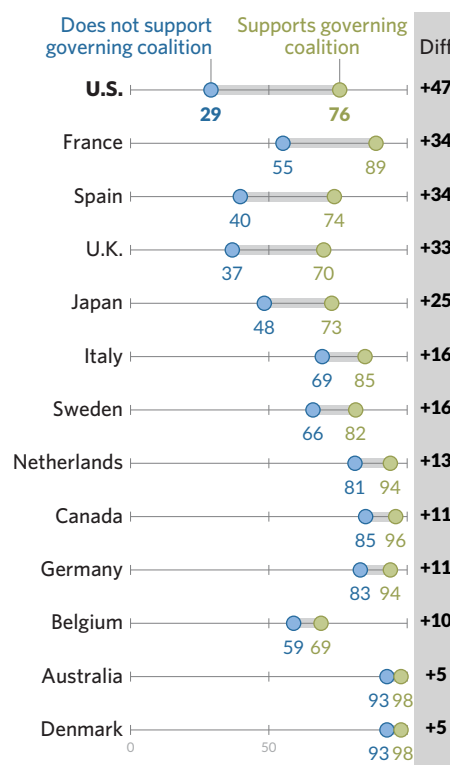
The studies we've conducted at the Pew Research Center over the past few years illustrate the increasingly stark disagreement between Democrats and Republicans on the economy, racial justice, climate change, law enforcement, international engagement, and a long list of other issues. The 2020 presidential election further highlighted these deep-seated divides. Supporters of Biden and Donald Trump believe the differences between them are about more than just politics and policies. A month before the election, roughly 8 in 10 registered voters in both camps said their differences with the other side were about core American values, and roughly 9 in 10—again in both camps—worried that a victory by the other would lead to “lasting harm” to the United States.

The U.S. is hardly the only country wrestling with deepening political fissures. Brexit has polarized British politics, the rise of populist parties has disrupted party systems across Europe, and cultural conflict and economic anxieties have intensified old cleavages and created new ones in many advanced democracies. America and other advanced economies face many common strains over how opportunity is distributed in a global economy and how our culture adapts to growing diversity in an interconnected world.

But the 2020 pandemic has revealed how pervasive the divide in American politics is relative to other nations. Over the summer, 76% of Republicans (including independents who lean to the party) felt the U.S. had done a good job dealing with the coronavirus outbreak, compared with just 29% of those who do not identify with the Republican Party. This 47-percentage-point gap was the largest gap found between those who support the governing

Majorities of governing party supporters say their country has dealt with coronavirus outbreak well

*% who say their own country has done a **good** job dealing with the coronavirus outbreak*



Source: Pew Research Center

party and those who do not across 14 nations surveyed. Moreover, 77% of Americans said the country was now more divided than before the outbreak, as compared with a median of 47% in the 13 other nations surveyed.

Much of this American exceptionalism preceded the coronavirus: In a Pew Research Center study conducted before the pandemic, Americans were more ideologically divided than any of the 19 other publics surveyed when asked how much trust they have in scientists and whether scientists make decisions solely based on facts. These fissures have pervaded nearly every aspect of the public and policy response to the crisis over the course of the year. Democrats and Republicans differ over mask wearing, contact tracing, how well public health officials are dealing with the crisis, whether to get a vaccine, and whether life will remain changed in a major way after the pandemic. For Biden supporters, the coronavirus outbreak was a central issue in the election—in an October poll, 82% said it was very important to their vote. Among Trump supporters, it was easily the least significant among six issues tested on the survey: Just 24% said it was very important.

Why is America cleaved in this way? Once again, looking across other nations gives us some indication. The polarizing pressures of partisan media, social media, and even deeply rooted cultural, historical, and regional divides are hardly unique to America. By comparison, America's relatively rigid, two-party electoral system stands apart by collapsing a wide range of legitimate social and political debates into a singular battle line that can make our differences appear even larger than they may actually be. And when the balance of support for these political parties is close enough for either to gain near-term electoral advantage—as it has in the U.S. for more than a quarter century—the competition becomes cutthroat and politics begins to feel zero-sum, where one side's gain is inherently the other's loss. Finding common cause—even to fight a common enemy in the public health and economic threat posed by the coronavirus—has eluded us.

Over time, these battles result in nearly all societal tensions becoming consolidated into two competing camps. As Ezra Klein and other writers have noted, divisions between the two parties have intensified over time as various types of identities have become “stacked” on top of people's partisan identities. Race, religion, and ideology now align with partisan identity in ways that they often didn't in eras when the two parties were relatively heterogenous coalitions. In their study of polarization across nations, Thomas Carothers and Andrew O'Donohue argue that polarization runs particularly deep in the U.S. in part because American polarization is “especially multifaceted.” According to

Carothers and O'Donohue, a “powerful alignment of ideology, race, and religion renders America's divisions unusually encompassing and profound. It is hard to find another example of polarization in the world,” they write, “that fuses all three major types of identity divisions in a similar way.”

Of course, there's nothing wrong with disagreement in politics, and before we get nostalgic for a less polarized past it's important to remember that eras of relatively muted partisan conflict, such as the late 1950s, were also characterized by structural injustice that kept many voices—particularly those of non-White Americans—out of the political arena. Similarly, previous eras of deep division, such as the late 1960s, were far less partisan but hardly less violent or destabilizing. Overall, it's not at all clear that Americans are further apart from each other than we've been in the past, or even that we are more ideologically or affectively divided—that is, exhibiting hostility to those of the other party—than citizens of other democracies. What's unique about this moment—and particularly acute in America—is that these divisions have collapsed onto a singular axis where we find no toehold for common cause or collective national identity.

Americans both see this problem and want to address it. Overwhelming majorities of both Trump (86%) and Biden (89%) supporters surveyed this fall said that their preferred candidate, if elected, should focus on addressing the needs of all Americans, “even if it means disappointing some of his supporters.”

“Finding common cause—even to fight a common enemy in the public health and economic threat posed by the coronavirus—has eluded us.”

In his speech, President-elect Biden vowed to “work as hard for those who didn't vote for me as those who did” and called on “this grim era of demonization in America” to come to an end. That's a sentiment that resonates with Americans on both sides of the fence. But good intentions on the part of our leaders and ourselves face serious headwinds in a political system that reinforces a two-party political battleground at nearly every level.



Michael Dimock is president of the Pew Research Center where Richard Wike directs global attitudes research.

Maryland Flood Risk Leads Property Owners, Communities to Accept Buyouts

State hazard mitigation officer ties successes to outreach and collaboration

Courtesy of JaLeesa Tate



As the state hazard mitigation officer for the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), JaLeesa Tate (left) develops policies and strategies to address threats from natural disasters. Her department works with state agencies, communities, and local federal offices to reduce the impact of flooding on neighborhoods across a state with a diverse geography and mix of urban and rural communities. That sometimes includes buying out properties that have experienced repeated flooding.

The Pew Charitable Trusts' flood-prepared communities team spoke with Tate about how government can help people and communities with the tough decision to leave a home in a high-flood-risk area. Tate's responses have been edited for clarity and length.

Hazard mitigation officer for Maryland must be a big job. How do you identify places with flood risk, and how does that risk vary across the state?

Being a state hazard mitigation officer is all-encompassing. I work closely with a strong network of resilience professionals in Maryland and, in particular, three state agencies—the Department of the Environment, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the Insurance Administration—to share and analyze data on flooding and sea level rise. Maryland's United States Army Corps of Engineers Silver Jackets Team is also a vital partner and forum for information exchange. Most importantly, we have strong relationships with our local jurisdictions, as they know best the local risk. Collaboration is critical to ensuring the data is ground truthed, as it's used to inform our decisions.

Maryland is often called "America in Miniature": In the western region, we have mountainous terrain subject to flooding from ice jams and snow melt; the central region is more developed and susceptible to urban and flash flooding; and the south and east experience coastal flooding, nuisance or tidal flooding, and storm surge. These flood risks are compounded by erosion and land subsidence.

What are some of the costs and benefits to homeowners of a buyout, and how does quality of life factor into your decision to offer buyouts?

The greatest benefit for buyout programs is allowing homeowners to relocate outside of a hazard-

prone area. This protects life and property and aids in building the community's overall resilience. The hard costs to homeowners are often reimbursed under the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Assistance programs. The emotional costs relate to abandoning their homes and communities, some of which they have been in for multiple generations. But relocating to safer areas can increase quality of life and provide reassurance to homeowners.

When evaluating potential projects, I look at risk to the residents. I also evaluate how the parcel can increase the quality of life for the community—for instance, as a park or green infrastructure to mitigate flood risks.

What are the advantages of neighborhood buyout projects compared with individual buyout incentives?

Buying out multiple properties at once can serve as a demonstration project: Showing the benefits to other communities helps build support for similar projects in their own flood-prone areas. A neighborhood buyout eliminates the flood risk to a larger portion of the population and increases opportunities for reusing the property. Community-scale projects can also help us get the most out of our resources—funding, staff, equipment, maintenance, etc. Finally, individual buyouts can create a patchwork pattern and unintentionally diminish the character of the community.

How is Maryland helping residents of lower-income neighborhoods relocate from flood-risky areas before disasters strike while maintaining the social fabric of their communities?

We take a multidisciplinary approach from start to finish. Partnerships are critical to provide all services and resources the community may need. For example, we are implementing a buyout program in Allegany County, partnering with the county, the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), and the mobile home park owner to carry out the project. DHCD will use funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant to assist tenants with relocation, while FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program will support the buyout and restoration of the waterway.

Another example is an ongoing project in Baltimore City. After flooding in 2018, the city didn't meet the Stafford Act to activate federal assistance, so Maryland's Silver Jackets Team offered technical engineering and outreach assistance to the Frederick Avenue Corridor community. Organizations at the city, state, federal, and community levels joined forces to provide preparedness information to residents and start feasibility studies on ways to address flash flooding, including the possibility of removing a multifamily structure and relocating its residents from the flood-prone area.

We are continuously trying to improve. There is evidence that disaster assistance programs disproportionately benefit certain populations and widen socioeconomic disparities. In Maryland and

elsewhere, we must re-evaluate how disaster assistance is administered to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion are incorporated through the process.

After properties have been bought out, what's the best use of the land? If it becomes a neighborhood amenity like a park, how does the state ensure there's funding to maintain it?

Following buyouts, the land should be for flood mitigation with co-benefits for the community. We've found it's beneficial to host visioning sessions for the community on potential reuses. This ensures community buy-in and active participation in maintenance of the property. We also seek out partnerships with "mitigation champions" for additional resources that expand the possibilities for alternative uses, especially since FEMA's mitigation grants don't support the reuse and maintenance of properties.

How do buyout programs complement other mitigation approaches?

Maryland has a variety of multiagency committees focused on the resilience. They make sure projects align with statewide risk reduction goals and fully leverage state resources.

We work closely with Chesapeake and Coastal Grants Gateway, a DNR program that provides resources for communities to plan and carry out nature-based risk reduction projects. A study on the effectiveness and feasibility of buyouts while integrating nature. The program sometimes identifies buyouts as a solution, and then MEMA can fund those activities.



Floodwaters reach the front steps of houses along a downtown street in Ocean City, Maryland, in 2015. *Cliff Owen/AP Images*

Small Fish May Hold Key to Cardiovascular Health

Pew biomedical scholar Steven Farber studies zebrafish for answers about heart disease, an illness that affects 48% of Americans.

BY STEVEN FARBER



Carnegie Science

Welcome to our lab and please don't mind the fish smell. The basement of this building in Baltimore houses more aquariums than you could easily count, in a variety of sizes, and there's also a pump room—you can hear it pushing out 260 gallons of water a minute into the fish tanks. Don't worry, you get used to the aquarium aroma. It's strongest in the room filled with small tanks that aren't all that different than you might have at home, but we've got more. There are 16 racks holding rows and rows of clear plastic tanks full of zebrafish, some 80,000 in all, in various stages of development.

And why are they here? Well, zebrafish can teach us a lot about human health and also help us understand fundamental questions about how cells function. These tiny see-through fish have a very similar genome to humans, and because the fish are optically clear, we can see right into their bodies and ask a whole range of questions not possible in other

systems. By watching how zebrafish respond to fats known as lipids, we can help develop new treatments for heart disease and potentially save lives. Lipids are the fatty molecules, like cholesterol and oils, that we eat, and they are key to making up all of our cells. But before I get into how I came to investigate the contribution that dietary nutrients make to important functions that support good cardiovascular health, it might help to explain how I turned my focus to fish.

In 1994 I was reading *Science* magazine, trying to figure out what I was going to do as a postdoctoral researcher, when I saw an article that said, "Zebrafish hit the big time." And I was intrigued at the thought of studying biochemistry and biochemical processes live in these fish, because I could look right through their bodies.

When thinking about human disease today, we often use the term "environmental mismatch." And what that means is humans have evolved on this planet for a

really long time, and through much of that time, they had nutrients and food sources different from our modern industrial food system. For example, not that long ago in Africa we were wandering around as hunter-gatherers, with many days before we could successfully kill some big game. Our bodies evolved ways to manage these periods of feasting and famine. Now, in just a very short evolutionary window of time, many humans all around the world constantly have all the food. So the genes that evolved to make people very thrifty and efficient with their calories can actually become liabilities in modern society.

Today, we find genetic variance in people's susceptibility to obesity and cardiovascular disease and plenty of things we cannot explain—such as why certain parts of the genome have changes that are associated with a resistance to metabolic diseases and other genome changes are more likely to cause people problems. We also don't fully understand the kind of diets we should be eating—there's been a lot of contradictory advice on healthy eating given to people over the years. I think there's just a huge knowledge gap in this healthy diet space that will require an evidence-based approach. I and many others have a sense that diet can profoundly affect human health and partially explain why cardiovascular disease happens. For example, why do people develop insulin resistance or adult-onset diabetes? Our goal is to use the zebrafish to answer some of these questions.

And we're doing some innovative research here. It was my idea to use fish to study lipid biology. Through a microscope, we can see the valves inside the heart as it's beating, and we can look at every single cell. That's why this fish is premier for cell biology and the work that we do on lipid metabolism.

With modern genome engineering such as CRISPR/Cas9, we were able to cut the DNA at the right spot and insert light-emitting protein, such as the kind that makes fireflies light up, very precisely right into the protein that makes LDL, or bad cholesterol. Once we marked these bad cholesterol particles, we could see these lipoproteins in places we did not expect. And they explain some weird things that happened to people who have diseases that mess with their lipoproteins—for example, we see a lot of lipoproteins around the areas where tendons form. So we're asking, why are these tendon areas places where these lipoproteins go?

Once we created these fish, we realized that we could test medications on them, working in collaboration with Jeff Mumm of Johns Hopkins, who has a big robotic platform. We can take something the size of a coffee mug filled with 12,000 zebrafish embryos and pour it into a vessel in the robot, which then puts a single embryo in each depression on a 96-well plate. We then use a robot to distribute every drug that's ever been used in people to the embryos, putting a camera over the plate and

measuring what lowers the bad cholesterol, and quickly ruling out things that killed the fish.

We started by testing the 3,200 compounds in the Johns Hopkins Discovery Library that our collaborators created. Out of those, we got just 22 hits of drugs that worked. Many of these drugs are already deemed to be safe. So now we can put these compounds into mice, and we may ultimately even put them into people, because they're already FDA-approved. Our dream would be to find some drug that works on toenail fungus that could actually be amazing at lowering bad cholesterol. Given the success of the first screen, we are now about to take a deep dive and explore a library of 10,000 compounds that are not FDA-approved and are new chemical entities. With these experiments, our small 12-person lab is tackling a big problem in a new way.

Another innovative program I began is called BioEYES. It uses zebrafish in hands-on activities with children grades K through 12 across the country to foster an interest in science. The kids have to figure out whether the fish is male or female, set up a mating, collect the embryos, and watch them develop. They ultimately get to see the fish's beating heart. Since it began in 2002 in Philadelphia, this program has reached 155,000 kids. The key to its success was its conception with a teacher, Jamie Shuda, who knew how the classroom works. When you team up the scientists with the crazy ideas with the teacher who understands the demands of a classroom and school setting, you can do some cool stuff.

I was recently giving a seminar at NYU, and one of the postdocs said something like, "Oh, yeah, I had the fish come to my classroom in Philadelphia, and it was a reason I kind of got into science." This isn't the first time that's happened to me. I mean, this project is really a gift. And I try to tell my colleagues that it can be immensely rewarding to be inspiring the next generation of life science STEM leaders. STEM education is going to be at the heart of addressing a lot of problems with health, the environment, and inequity. So you either have a populace that's trained to think critically or you don't. And I believe science education is going to be at the heart of how well we're going to do as a country, and as a world.

Steven Farber is a 2002 Pew biomedical scholar, a principal investigator at the Carnegie Institution for Science Department of Embryology, and an adjunct professor in the Johns Hopkins University Department of Biology in Baltimore. Hear more about his work in Pew's podcast, "After the Fact," pewtrusts.org/afterthefact.

Pew experts explore innovative ideas on the most critical subjects facing our world.



Lexey Swall for The Pew Charitable Trusts

Policymakers Can Look to Corrections Reforms for Guidance

States have reduced prison populations, saved taxpayer dollars, and invested in community-based services

BY JAKE HOROWITZ AND ELIZABETH COMPA

With several high-profile deaths of civilians at the hands of police in 2020 alone, policymakers throughout the country face growing public pressure to reconsider how money is allocated between law enforcement and other public services. For leaders in dozens of states, the discussions about priorities, trade-offs, and what works are reminiscent of the debates in recent years over another critical component of the criminal justice system: changes to incarceration policies.

Since 2007, more than 30 states have undertaken data-driven, evidence-backed reforms to their criminal justice systems that sought to reduce correctional populations, capture savings, and shift money into public safety strategies that offer better returns on investment. That work continues as more states enact reforms intended to improve outcomes for individuals, communities, and taxpayers.

Through its justice policy work dating back nearly two decades, The Pew Charitable Trusts has identified key actions for policymakers to take to develop effective reforms that produce and protect public safety. They should:

Commit to reform

Changing long-standing policies and practices, including reconsidering budget allocations once considered sacrosanct, requires political will. When Georgia launched its criminal justice reform process in 2011, Governor Nathan Deal (R) and other leaders made an explicit commitment to curb rising prison populations and correctional spending and deliver better outcomes. Champions of change overcame the wariness of some system actors to pass significant legislative packages over several years that addressed many aspects of the system, including adult corrections, juvenile justice, and misdemeanor bail.

Following reforms in 2012, Georgia has reduced its prison population to the lowest point since 2002 and seen a modest reduction in the substantial racial disparities behind bars. Although the process has faced obstacles and setbacks, stakeholders demonstrated that sustained commitment to data-driven reform can bear fruit in multiple policy areas over several years.

Follow the data

States undertaking well-informed justice reform start from a foundation of good data about core population and cost drivers of their systems, and selectively focus their efforts. The ability to empirically diagnose points of dysfunction lets reformers craft responsive policies.

For example, South Dakota's justice reform work group found that 80% of 2012 prison admissions were for nonviolent offenses, often drug use and possession. Lawmakers reclassified these drug offenses to the lowest felony level, with the presumption of probation as punishment as a first step toward tackling high rates of imprisonment for nonviolent offenses.

Couple funding cuts with reductions in scope of work

Reforms should not create unfunded mandates by removing money from an agency without changing responsibilities. Effective changes have specified where corrections departments would be expected to do less, rather than risk poorer performance by reducing funding with no altering of duties.

States began by looking at bread-and-butter agency activities and agreeing on better approaches, generally by shortening lengthy prison terms for specified offenses, reducing community supervision revocations, and making greater use of alternatives to incarceration to reduce prison admissions. The more states build out community-based alternative treatments for mental health and substance use disorders, for instance, the less they rely on correctional agencies to deliver those services.

When South Dakota lawmakers reduced the use of prison for drug offenses, for example, they effectively directed the corrections department to hold fewer people with substance use disorders.

Build the alternatives

In 2003, the Washington State Institute for Public Policy, a nonpartisan public research center, found that adding prison beds would produce negligible public safety returns for the state, and that money would go further if spent on research-based, well-implemented rehabilitation and prevention programs.

In many instances, however, states must lay substantial groundwork to build these services. Before its 2012 justice reform process, West Virginia sought community-based treatment providers for substance use disorders, but the solicitation received no responses. During the reform process, policymakers focused on

designing a funding model that responded to providers' needs and successfully drew bids for contracts.

In the years since, West Virginia has built critical infrastructure and invested millions of dollars in community-based treatment. Other states, such as Utah and Kansas, gave juvenile justice reforms a running start by investing and reallocating money for community-based services at the outset—before the reforms had time to yield financial savings available for reinvestment.

Be specific about reinvestment

Explicit statutory language that protects reinvestment and ensures that dollars are routed to community-based programming helps cement reforms. As part of its juvenile reform package in 2016, Kansas created the Evidence-Based Programs Fund, which mandated that all savings associated with reforms resulting from the legislation go to nonresidential services and supports. Louisiana mandated in its 2017 reform legislation that 70% of savings go to certain reinvestment priorities, specifying allocation among state agencies and community-based grant programs.

Sustain changes through oversight

Finally, as policymakers consider realigning justice priorities, strong oversight of implementation is crucial. This means tracking performance measures over time to determine whether policy and practice changes are achieving their goals.

Oversight bodies should include government officials and nongovernment stakeholders who can offer critical perspectives and share lived experiences. At their best, oversight bodies serve as credible sources of information to lawmakers and the public.

Utah's Council on Criminal and Juvenile Justice (CCJJ), created by the Legislature in 1983 and tasked with overseeing the performance of the state's 2015 and 2017 reforms, presents data findings and identifies emerging challenges for lawmakers annually in reports and committee hearings. CCJJ members led a 2019 initiative focused on community supervision as part of a push to address Utah's high rate of returns to prison from parole.

The current political moment has created new opportunities for real change in how government budgets reflect civic priorities for protecting public safety. States' robust reform work in recent years offers critical insights that can help ensure that reforms are comprehensive, enforceable, and sustainable. The success of state criminal justice reforms underscores the importance of data-driven policy development, strategic direction of budgetary resources, and oversight to strengthen new approaches.



Jake Horowitz is a director and Elizabeth Compa is an officer with The Pew Charitable Trusts' public safety performance project.

Stateline, an initiative of The Pew Charitable Trusts, is a team of veteran journalists who report and analyze trends in state policy with a focus on fiscal and economic issues, health care, demographics, and the business of government. More stories are available at pewtrusts.org/stateline.



A lone rider awaits a train on a downtown platform in Washington, D.C., last March on a transit system that is usually packed with people. Weekday rail ridership in the city dropped more than 90% because of the coronavirus pandemic, and dozens of stations were closed temporarily to reduce operating costs. *Chip Somodevilla/Getty Images*

Public Transit, Battered by Pandemic, Triumphs at Ballot Box

BY JENNI BERGAL

Far fewer people are riding buses and trains during the COVID-19 pandemic, but in November's election, voters still approved more than a dozen proposals to increase spending on public transit.

From California to Virginia, voters supported sales or property tax hikes and bond issues to pay for maintenance, improvements, or expansion of mass transit systems that have been hit hard in the last nine months.

"Transit ridership is down in most cities. At the same time, it's still moving millions of people a day, and a lot of those people are essential workforce—nurses, grocery store workers, people working in warehouses," said Alex Engel, spokesperson for the National Association of City Transportation Officials. "There's a lot of recognition that our transit systems need to be there now for them and to make sure we're maintaining them for the future as well."

Though President Joe Biden strongly supports public transit, Senate Republicans may favor other funding priorities. The recent elections show that more local governments will be stepping up to generate their own funding, given the uncertainty about federal help, said Michael Walk, a program manager at the Texas A&M Transportation Institute, a university-based transportation research agency.

"It's a recognition of need," he said. "Cities and regions are saying, 'What can we do on our own so that we're relying less on federal funds?'"

Ridership has plummeted across the nation since last March, as health and safety concerns and the transition to telework have driven away customers who normally would ride trains and buses.

American Public Transportation Association data shows ridership dropped 76% nationally in the second quarter of 2020, compared with the same period in 2019. In New York City and Chicago, rail line ridership was down 87% during that period; in the Washington, D.C., area, it declined 93%.

Even so, voters approved measures that would raise their taxes to aid mass transit.

In the San Francisco Bay Area, voters threw a lifeline to Caltrain, a financially troubled regional commuter line that runs through three Silicon Valley counties. Nearly 70% voted for Measure RR, which enacts a 1/8-cent sales tax that will go to the train line.

"Remarkably, Caltrain has never had a dedicated source of revenue in its 30 years of existence. About 70% of revenue is generated by ticket sales," said San Mateo County Supervisor Dave Pine, Caltrain's board chair. "During the time of COVID, with our ridership down over 90%, we've lost a majority of our revenue."

Caltrain also has burned through its federal CARES Act funding, which totaled nearly \$65 million, and is facing at least \$18.5 million in deficits for fiscal 2021,

which ends June 30, 2021, Pine said. The extra sales tax revenue the rail line will get from Measure RR will generate an estimated \$108 million a year.

In the short term, that will allow it to continue operating during the pandemic and keep the 50% fare discount for lower-income residents it recently created, he said.

In the longer term, he added, the revenue will help with operating expenses for the new electrified service it hopes to roll out by the end of 2022. Caltrain plans to expand the capacity of the rail corridor and eventually triple ridership from 65,000 pre-pandemic to 180,000 passengers a day by 2040.

"It's remarkable we got 70% approval, considering most voters aren't using the train," Pine said. "They appreciate that it keeps cars off the highway and reduces carbon emission."

In Austin, Texas, voters overwhelmingly backed Proposition A, an 8.75 cents per \$100 property tax hike that will help fund a \$7.1 billion plan to build and operate a new rail system, a downtown transit tunnel, expanded bus service, and new park-and-rides that would connect people to rapid bus and light rail. The dedicated revenue will be funneled to an independent organization that will oversee, finance, and execute the project.

"We knew there was an appetite for a transit system. And it was a way to keep our economy vibrant and robust," said Gina Fiandaca, an assistant city manager in Austin. "It's a big ask to increase your property tax. We were encouraged by the vote of confidence. It's a testament to the optimism of the people of Austin."

"The ridership reductions you see today are not a bellwether for what ridership will always be like in the future."

—Michael Walk, program manager,
Texas A&M Transportation Institute

There weren't a lot of other revenue sources available to the city, Fiandaca said. "It was important to us that it would be a sustainable source, in perpetuity."

The measure also includes \$300 million for "anti-displacement measures" to help neighborhood residents and businesses, such as providing rent assistance and building housing near the transit system.

Currently, Austin has a bus system and a rail line connecting neighborhoods to downtown. In September, total ridership was down more than 50% compared with the same month in 2019.

Austin officials are hoping to get about 45% of the total \$7.1 billion needed for the project from the Federal

Transit Administration (FTA), which they have been working with to make sure they meet criteria for matching funds. But it isn't a done deal.

"There's always uncertainty and there's risk," Fiandaca said, "but we really do believe that with our early outreach to FTA, we're well positioned."

More Buses in Missoula

In Missoula, Montana, voters passed a property tax increase that will expand bus service and frequency while keeping it free. Homeowners will pay about \$81 a year more in taxes on a \$300,000 home under the measure, which will bring in an additional \$3 million a year for Mountain Line, the local bus system.

Corey Aldridge, Mountain Line's general manager, said that means it can run buses additional hours on Saturdays and add Sunday service for the first time.

"In our community, we've seen a real shift in the way people view public transportation. They see it as a solution," Aldridge said. "It reduces air pollution. It allows people with no cars or one car to get around to where they need to be. It's something that in the future is going to be vitally important."

Mountain Line has been somewhat insulated from the pandemic's economic impact, Aldridge noted,

because it relies on property taxes rather than fares or sales taxes to operate.

During the pandemic, average daily ridership—about 6,000 riders—has dropped between 50% and 70%, according to Aldridge.

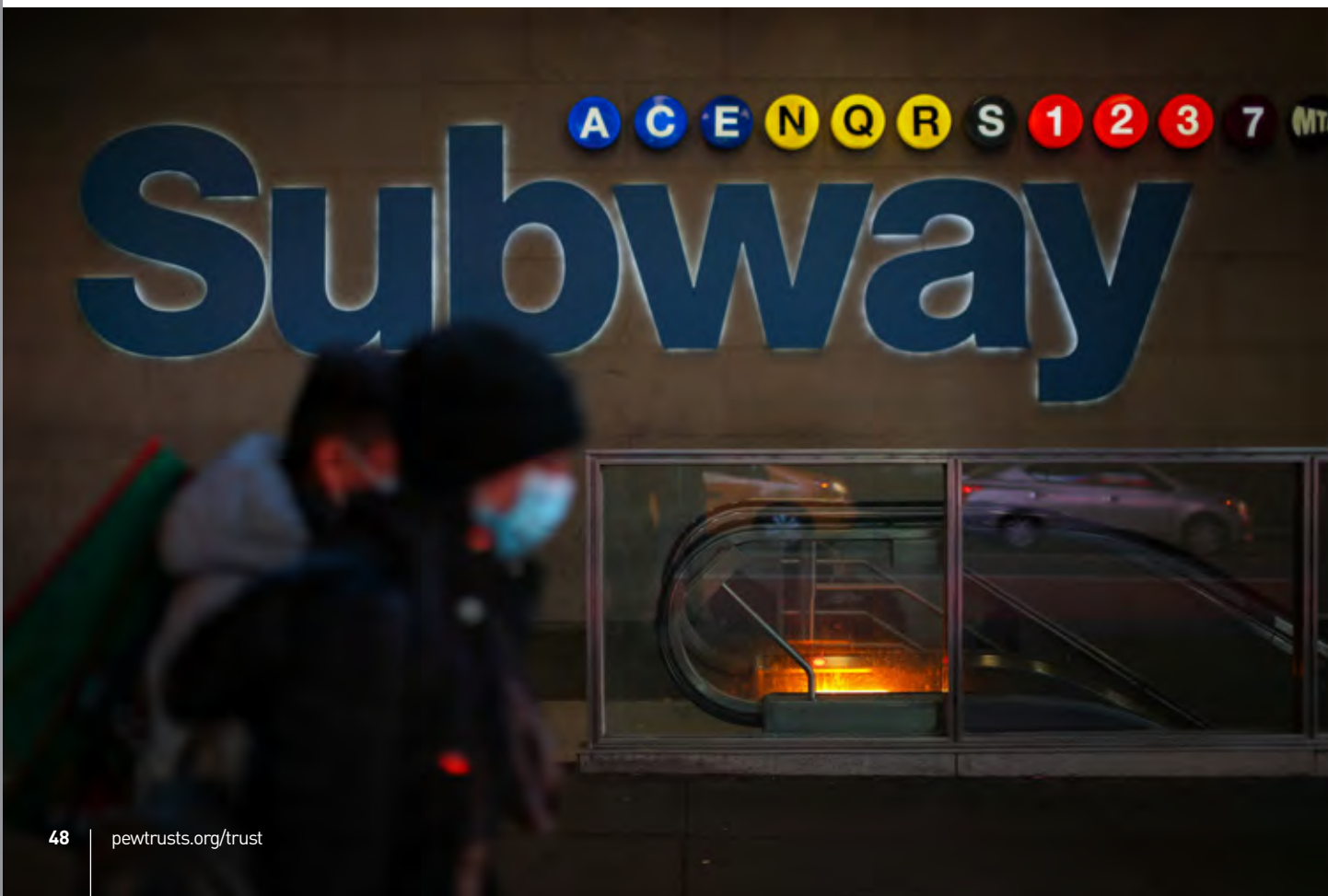
While most of the successful transit measures directly taxed residents, in Fairfax County, Virginia, voters approved a \$160 million bond issue to fund the county's share of annual payments to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. It will be used for service, capital projects, and other improvements.

One of the few public transit setbacks occurred in Gwinnett County, Georgia, where voters narrowly defeated a 1% sales tax hike to fund a \$12 billion transit expansion over 30 years. The measure would have extended the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority rail system and bus rapid transit in suburban Atlanta.

Whether transit issues passed or failed had a lot to do with where the voting took place, said David Ditch, a transportation policy analyst at the Heritage Foundation, a conservative Washington, D.C.-based think tank.

"The ones that passed this year were at the city or county level, in places that were much more tax-

In New York City, people wearing face masks walk past a subway escalator last November as daily life continued during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Tayfun Coskun/Anadolu Agency via Getty Images*





Commuters ride a bus in the Big Apple in November; the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority needs \$12 billion in federal funds by March to avoid drastic cuts to transit services necessitated by an enormous fall in ridership and revenues throughout 2020.

Gabriela Bhaskar/Bloomberg via Getty Images

friendly constituencies,” Ditch said. “They are fairly blue, sometimes dark blue areas, and they’re not as adverse to taxes as the states as a whole.”

Local governments would do better investing in beefed-up bus service, Ditch said, which is more flexible and doesn’t have fixed costs like rail.

“You’ve spent all this money on a commuter rail line or a monorail. There’s a temptation to keep subsidizing it indefinitely,” he said. “This is supposed to be a public good, a public service. If you’re just keeping it going because you don’t want to look bad politically, you’re lighting taxpayer dollars on fire for the sake of a small number of riders. That’s not a good use of our resources.”

Nor is it a good idea to invest in fixed rail until it’s clear what will happen with commuting trends after the pandemic, Ditch added.

“Until we know what the post-COVID normal is, committing to big infrastructure projects seems foolhardy,” he said. “And that includes big highway expansion projects as well.”

A Look Ahead

While Biden is a strong supporter of Amtrak and public transportation, it’s unclear how that support will

translate to local communities.

Under Biden’s proposed infrastructure plan, the federal government would help provide every American city of 100,000 or more residents with “high-quality, zero-emissions public transportation options.” Those projects would range from improving existing transit and bus lines to installing infrastructure for pedestrians and bicyclists.

But Congress holds the power of the purse and it’s hard to predict how much congressional support there will be for bigger investments, given the pandemic’s current effect on ridership, said Walk of the Texas A&M Transportation Institute.

Ultimately, Walk said, he doesn’t think people will shy away from public transit once the pandemic has ended. “The ridership reductions you see today are not a bellwether for what ridership will always be like in the future.”

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Jenni Bergal is a staff writer for Stateline.

How much do you know about science?

The Pew Research Center regularly surveys the public about science issues. In 2019, it found that many Americans could answer at least some questions about science concepts, and results from that polling appeared in the report “What Americans Know About Science.” Test your knowledge of science facts and applications of scientific principles by taking our 11-question quiz.

Mark Garlick/Science Photo Library via Getty Images

1. Oil, natural gas and coal are examples of ...

- a. Geothermal resources
- b. Fossil fuels
- c. Biofuels
- d. Renewable resources

2. A scientist is conducting a study to determine how well a new medication treats ear infections. The scientist tells the participants to put 10 drops in their infected ear each day. After two weeks, all participants' ear infections had healed.

Which of the following changes to the design of this study would most improve the ability to test if the new medication effectively treats ear infections?

- a. Create a second group of participants with ear infections who do not use any ear drops
- b. Have participants put ear drops in both their infected ear and healthy ear
- c. Have participants use ear drops for only one week
- d. Create a second group of participants with ear infections who use 15 drops a day

3. Which of the following is an example of genetic engineering?

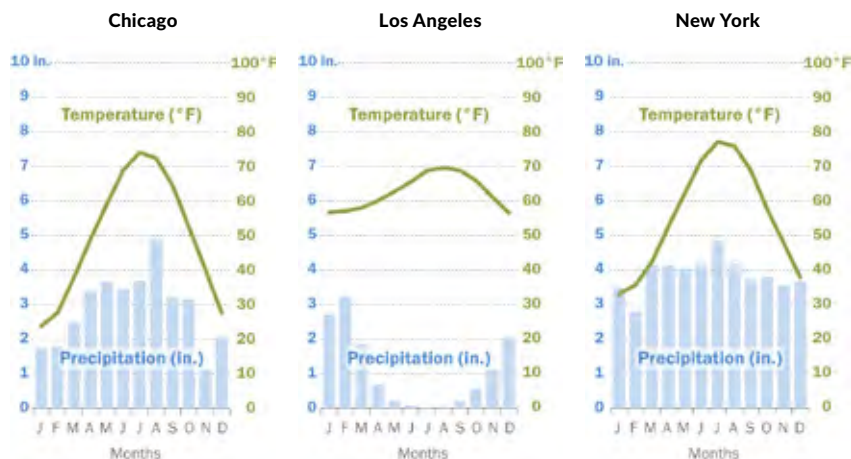
- a. Inserting a gene into plants that makes them resistant to insects
- b. Attaching the root of one type of plant to the stem of another type of plant
- c. Finding the sequences of bases in plant DNA
- d. Growing a whole plant from a single cell

4. What is the main cause of seasons on the Earth?

- a. The tilt of the Earth's axis in relation to the sun
- b. The speed with which the Earth rotates around the sun
- c. Changes in the amount of energy coming from the sun
- d. The distance between the Earth and the sun

- 5.** These graphs show the monthly precipitation and average temperature for three cities in the United States over the course of one year. Based on the graphs, which city has the greatest annual range of temperatures?

- a. Chicago
- b. Los Angeles
- c. New York
- d. They all have the same annual temperature range



- 6.** The time a computer takes to start has increased dramatically. One possible explanation for this is that the computer is running out of memory.

This explanation is a scientific ...

- a. Experiment
- b. Conclusion
- c. Hypothesis
- d. Observation

- 7.** Many diseases have an incubation period. Which of the following best describes what an incubation period is?

- a. The period during which someone builds up immunity to a disease
- b. The effect of a disease on babies
- c. The period during which someone has an infection but is not showing symptoms
- d. The recovery period after being sick

- 9.** An antacid relieves an overly acidic stomach because the main components of antacids are...

- a. Isotopes
- b. Acids
- c. Bases
- d. Neutral

- 10.** Which of these is a major concern about the overuse of antibiotics?

- a. It can lead to antibiotic-resistant bacteria
- b. There will be an antibiotic shortage
- c. Antibiotics can cause secondary infections
- d. Antibiotics will get into the water system

- 8.** When large areas of forest are removed so land can be converted for other uses such as farming, which of the following occurs?

- a. Increased erosion
- b. Decreased carbon dioxide
- c. Greater oxygen production
- d. Colder temperature

- 11.** A car travels at a constant speed of 40 miles per hour. How far does the car travel in 45 minutes?

- a. 25 miles
- b. 30 miles
- c. 35 miles
- d. 40 miles

Turn page for answers

Answers

1. **B:** Fossil fuels
2. **A:** Create a second group of participants with ear infections who do not use any ear drops.
Sixty percent of people surveyed identified the need for a control group to determine the effectiveness of a new drug.
3. **A:** Inserting a gene into plants that makes them resistant to insects
4. **A:** The tilt of the Earth's axis in relation to the sun
5. **A:** Chicago
6. **C:** Hypothesis
About half of people were able to recognize a hypothesis about a problem in everyday life—52% identified a hypothesis about a computer slowing down.
7. **C:** The period during which someone has an infection but is not showing symptoms
8. **A:** Increased erosion
9. **C:** Bases
People found this to be the most challenging question in the set. About 4 in 10 (39%) correctly answered that bases are the main component of antacids.
10. **A:** It can lead to antibiotic-resistant bacteria.
About 8 in 10 (79%) correctly identified that antibiotic resistance is a major concern about the overuse of antibiotics.
11. **B:** 30 miles

Colonies of *E. coli* bacteria, some of which develop resistance to antibiotics, grow in a petri dish after being isolated from a patient's blood. Rodolfo Parulan Jr./Getty Images



Teens, Parents, and Religion

A Pew Research Center survey finds parents are more likely than their teens to say religion is important to them and to overestimate its importance for their kids.

BY DAVID O'REILLY

American teenagers and their parents have a lot in common when it comes to religion, according to a survey by the Pew Research Center—"though not quite as much as the parents may think."

The report analyzes the responses of more than 1,800 U.S. teens and one of their parents, each of whom took separate online questionnaires exploring such topics as their concepts of God, ways of praying, religious beliefs and doubts, and notions of morality.

"Pew Research Center gets so many questions nowadays from people wanting to know what Generation Z thinks," says Elizabeth Sciupac, a senior researcher on the Center's domestic religion team and co-author of the report, referring to the moniker for those born after 1996. "This survey doesn't begin to answer all of that, but it does start to flesh out a picture of what they look like religiously."

Among the findings:

- Parents are more likely than teens to say that religion is very important in their lives—and to overestimate rather than underestimate how important religion is

to their teen. For instance, far fewer teens (24%) than parents (43%) say that religion is very important in their lives.

- Teenagers attend religious services about as often as their parents, but 38% say they attend mainly because mom or dad want them to. Thirty-five percent say they attend because they want to.
- Most U.S. teens ages 13-17 share the religious affiliation of one or both parents.
- Eight in 10 parents who identify as evangelical Protestants have a teen who identifies as such. But little more than half the teenage children of mainline Protestants identify the same way their parents do, and about one-quarter of mainline Protestant parents have a teen who is religiously unaffiliated.

The report marked some new territory for the Center's religion research, says Sciupac, "in part because the religion team doesn't do a lot with teens." Asking respondents to speculate on how another respondent might answer certain questions was also a novel approach for the team, she says.

"Some of what I loved most about this survey were the answers we got to open-ended questions, where people had a chance to write in their own responses," Sciupac says. "We see teens grappling with big questions, like 'Why does God let people die?' And they have these really well-thought-out answers."

"It was wonderful how much came up in our conversation," says Lilace Guignard of Wellsboro, Pennsylvania, after she and son Gabe, 16, took a short version of the original Pew questionnaire modified for this article. "He's much more thoughtful about all this than I knew to expect."

Like the original survey, the short version queried Lilace and Gabe on such topics as their frequency of prayer, belief in God, and denominational identity. It, too, asked what each thought the other's answer to certain questions might be.

Gabe answered that religion is "very important" to him and supposed his mom would say the same. To his surprise, she ranked it "fairly important" because,

Most parents and teens share a religious identity

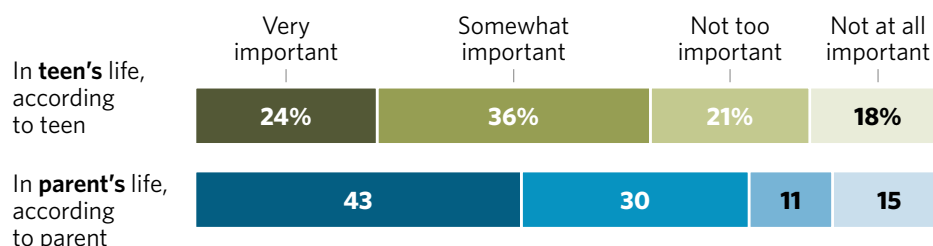
Among parents of teens in each religious group, % whose teen identifies as...

PARENT	TEEN			
	Evangelical Protestant	Mainline Protestant	Catholic	Unaffiliated
Evangelical Protestant	80%	6%	1%	12%
Mainline Protestant	12	55	4	24
Catholic	1	1	81	15
Unaffiliated	2	3	5	86

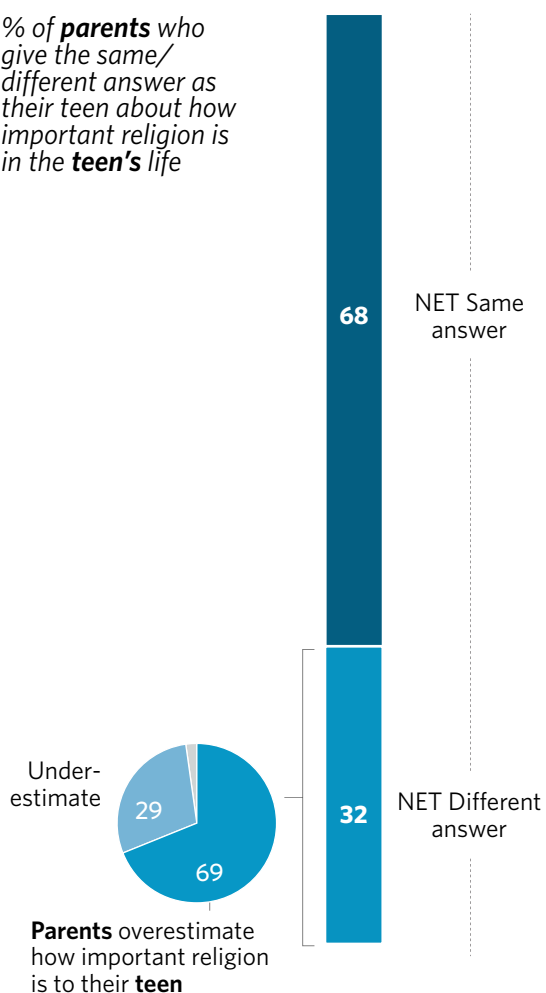
Source: Pew Research Center

Parents more likely than teens to say religion is very important in their lives

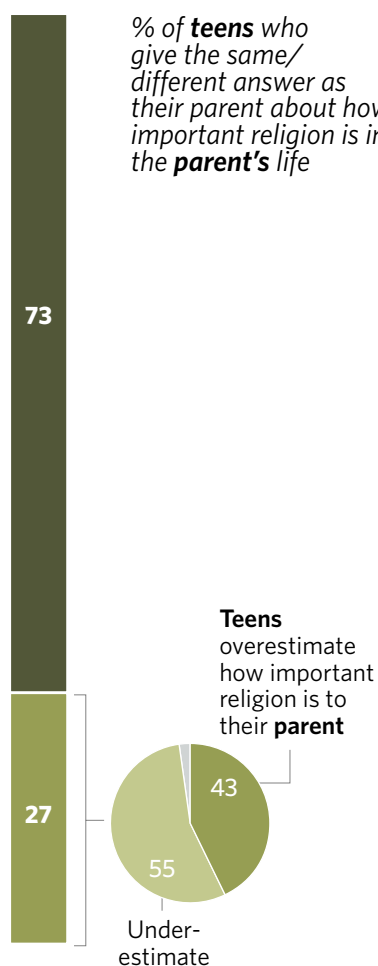
% of U.S. teens/parents of teens who say religion is ____ in their lives



% of **parents** who give the same/different answer as their teen about how important religion is in the **teen's** life



% of **teens** who give the same/different answer as their parent about how important religion is in the **parent's** life



Source: Pew Research Center

she explained, religious identities “have a tendency to divide people.”

Both Lilace and Gabe identify as Presbyterian, and they attended church services together nearly every week before the pandemic. But neither knew until they took the questionnaire that the other prays once a day, or that they both favor conversational, informal prayer over formal recitation. “I said I pray at night,” says Lilace, a part-time teacher of creative writing, outdoor recreation leadership, and women’s studies at Mansfield University of Pennsylvania. “And he said, ‘Yeah, me, too.’”

As they talked further they discovered each feels a special devotion to God—whom Lilace conceives as God the Creator, and Gabe as God the Father. “The talk he and I had focused on how we experienced God firsthand through the natural world, and how this was the foundation for our absolute certainty about God,” says Lilace. “It was a wonderful thing to discover we shared this.”

The survey’s findings “give us an up-to-date view of how teens are not only experiencing religion for themselves but also with their families,” says Sciupac, as well as “how much they feel obligated, how much they feel engaged, what is shaping their religious lives. I think that can bring a lot to the table for a variety of groups who are interested in these things.”

The report’s data analysis mined a larger religious attitudes survey that the Center conducted in 2019. “This report tried to capture how teenagers and one parent interact when it comes to religion,” says Sciupac, and “how they align and don’t align.”

The analysis examined the results of a self-administered web survey conducted in March and April 2019 among 1,811 adolescents ages 13-17 and one parent per child, in both English and Spanish. Released in September 2020, the report’s full title is “U.S. Teens Take After Their Parents Religiously, Attend Services Together and Enjoy Family Rituals.”

About two-thirds of adolescents taking the survey say they identify with a religion, with about one-quarter identifying as Catholic and 21% as evangelical Christian. The evangelical teens say religion is “very important” in their lives nearly twice as often as those of other Christian groups and are also far likelier to believe in God “with absolute certainty,” attend religious services weekly, and pray daily.

If the major Christian traditions are counted separately, however, those who identify as “nones” (that is, agnostic, atheist, or “nothing in particular”) make up the single largest religious category among teens, at 32%.

The survey’s sample size was not large enough to allow for analysis of the views of some religious groups, including Black Protestant denominations, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Orthodox Christian churches, and non-Christian faiths.

Among the parents who took the survey, 57% were mothers. Although mothers are typically involved when one parent is more engaged in the religious upbringing of children, the survey found that teens identified about equally with their father’s religious beliefs (50%) and their mother’s (47%).

Among the report’s other findings:

- About 70% of teens and parents accurately estimated how important religion was to the other. But when they estimated incorrectly, parents overestimated its importance 69% of the time, while teens underestimated its importance for mom or dad 55% of the time.
- Less religious parents are likely to have teens who are also less religious. Eighty percent of parents who say that religion is “not too important” or “not at all important” in their lives have a teen who feels the same way.
- Half of teens say they hold all the same religious beliefs as their parents, but among those who say their beliefs differ, a third say the parent is unaware.

The survey’s findings “give us an up-to-date view of how teens are not only experiencing religion for themselves but also with their families.”

What do these findings say about the future of religion in America, whose young adult population has grown markedly less religious in recent decades? Sciupac and her colleagues urge a cautious reading.

“While it is possible that these adolescents will ultimately be equally or more religious than current young adults,” they write in the report, “this survey neither supports nor contradicts such a hypothesis. In fact, previous research has suggested that much of the movement away from religion among adults occurs after they come of age, move out of their childhood homes, or otherwise gain a measure of independence from their parents.”

What’s more, the researchers note, “religion varies across the life course, often declining in late adolescence and early adulthood, and then increasing as people age, form new relationships, start their own families, and mature into later adulthood.”

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David O’Reilly was the longtime religion reporter at The Philadelphia Inquirer.

Ocean plastic pollution is a huge—but solvable—problem



Sebnem Coskun/Anadolu Agency via Getty Images

BY WINNIE LAU

With roughly 11 million metric tons of plastic flowing into our ocean each year—a figure that could nearly triple by 2040 without urgent action—many people might view marine plastic pollution as an insurmountable problem.

In fact, that flow could be reduced by 80% over the next 20 years, largely through technologies, business processes, and policy models that already exist.

Those are among the top-line findings of a report my colleagues at The Pew Charitable Trusts and I—along with SYSTEMIQ, a London-based sustainability consultancy, and four thought partners—published recently. In that report, titled “Breaking the Plastic Wave,” and in a corresponding paper in *Science*, we identified the sources of the problem and a credible pathway to solving it.

First, the sobering news: Our research found that continuing what we dubbed the “business-as-usual”

scenario would, in 2040, send enough plastic into the ocean to cover every yard of coastline in the world with 110 pounds of plastic. Further, we found that the commitments that governments and industry had made up to mid-2019 would produce only a 7% reduction in the annual flow by 2040.

However, all is not lost. We also analyzed a full “system change” pathway in which governments and industry around the world, working together and taking ambitious action, could achieve that 80% reduction.

A full system change would deliver a host of benefits, starting with a cleaner, healthier marine environment. Although the magnitude of the effects of plastic on ocean life are not fully known, more than 800 marine species are already known to be affected by marine plastic pollution, and numerous studies have found plastic particles in seafood. In addition, mismanaged plastic waste poses considerable health risks to local communities.

Reaching full system change would require eight simultaneous interventions: reducing plastic production and consumption; substituting some plastics with alternatives such as paper and compostable materials; designing products and packaging for recycling; expanding waste collection rates in middle- and low-income countries; increasing recycling; developing new recycling technologies; tackling the sources of microplastics; and reducing plastic waste exports.

Notably, we found that reducing plastic production and consumption was the largest lever, and would lessen plastic waste generation by 30%. Improved recycling—mainly through product and packaging redesign and doubling mechanical recycling capacity worldwide—could yield a 20% drop. Substituting plastic with alternatives such as paper and compostable materials could cut marine plastic pollution by another 17%.

Our study also identifies how—by significantly reducing the amount of plastic produced and used, and scaling up collection and recycling, among other solutions—we can move toward a circular plastics economy, in which almost all plastic is reused or recycled.

This goal is achievable, but there are some challenges.

Over 30% of current global plastic waste ends up in the environment. Much of the world lacks waste management services, and to achieve global coverage would require getting those services to 500,000 additional people per day between now and 2040. Even in wealthy countries, such as the United States, rural communities also need better access to waste management services. Unless we start to reduce the amount of plastic waste generated, this collection gap will increasingly fuel plastic pollution.

This lack of collection is one reason that only 15% of plastic was recycled in 2016 globally. Another reason is the higher cost of recycled—compared with newly produced—plastic. And low-value plastic, such as plastic wrap and condiment packets, are prohibitively expensive to collect and recycle, and often end up in the environment—and these items are projected to be the

fastest-growing segment of plastic production.

Although some of these vexing plastics can be substituted with renewable materials, such as paper, coated paper, and compostable materials, companies will need to weigh the risks and trade-offs of doing so, such as land and water use, cost, and greenhouse gas emissions.

Overall, we found, striving for full system change could benefit the most stakeholders. Globally, projected plastic-related greenhouse gas emissions could be cut by up to 25% by 2040 if the world could decrease plastic production through our modeled interventions. Collectively, governments around the world could save \$70 billion in waste management costs over the next 20 years. Businesses could seize emerging opportunities and work with the government on improved governance and funding of the waste sector. And industry could reassess its plans so as to avoid lost investment in new plastic infrastructure.

For example, consumer goods companies could develop refill systems and other new product delivery models in place of single-use products. Companies could also use alternative materials to design products that are more easily recyclable or have less or no packaging.

Governments could help achieve full system change through policies that create incentives for more sustainable business models; remove the cost advantage of using new plastic materials versus reusing or recycling materials; improve recycling and waste disposal; and guide consumer behavior.

Reducing the flow of ocean-bound plastic by 80% will require a societywide effort. The good news is that it would benefit marine life, the planet, and humans alike—and that it could happen within our generation.

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Winnie Lau is senior manager of The Pew Charitable Trusts' preventing ocean plastics project. A version of this article originally appeared in The Hill on Oct. 23, 2020.

"Over 30% of current global plastic waste ends up in the environment."



Francisco Robles/AFP via Getty Images

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

*The Pew Charitable Trusts applies a rigorous, analytical approach to **improve public policy**, **inform the public**, and **invigorate civic life**, as these recent accomplishments illustrate.*

IMPROVING PUBLIC POLICY



Waters roil around the rugged coastline of Tristan da Cunha island, part of an isolated archipelago by the same name in the South Atlantic Ocean, midway between Africa and South America. Image Professionals GmbH/Alamy Stock Photo

New marine protected area for Tristan da Cunha

The Tristan da Cunha Island Council in November committed to designate most of the archipelago's exclusive economic zone as a marine protected area. The move will fully safeguard an area that spans more than 265,000 square miles, and creates the largest marine reserve in the Atlantic Ocean and the fourth-largest fully protected marine reserve on the planet.

These waters serve as a feeding ground for the critically endangered Tristan albatross and endangered Atlantic yellow-nosed albatross, as well as the vulnerable spectacled petrel. Eighty-five percent of the world's endangered northern rockhopper penguins breed on Tristan, whose nutrient-rich waters support 11 different species of cetaceans. To help the community actively manage these newly protected waters, the Pew Bertarelli Ocean Legacy Project is committed to supporting long-term implementation projects. These initiatives include developing a partnership with Global Fishing

Watch to support the planning and management of effective marine protections by harnessing near real-time, open-source, and interactive data to evaluate ocean conditions, marine biology, and human activity, such as fishing.

The commitment is the result of a collaboration between Pew Bertarelli Ocean Legacy, which has worked to establish the scientific case for the protected area and secure community and government support, and the Blue Nature Alliance. The latter organization also partnered with five other donors to build an endowment to support local conservation and sustainable development, without which the community would have supported a marine protected area only half the size. Both projects are working with scientists and partner groups to conduct research and develop monitoring projects to bolster the reserve's management and long-term durability.

South Carolina governor signs Disaster Relief and Resilience Act

In September, South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster (R) signed into law the bipartisan Disaster Relief and Resilience Act, which creates a State Office of Resilience to develop, implement, and maintain a watershed-based plan to respond to flooding and other climate-related natural disasters. It also creates two new funds dedicated to pre-disaster mitigation activities, such as buyouts, wetland restoration, and other nature-based solutions. The legislation stems from Pew-backed recommendations that were included in a November 2019 report issued by the South Carolina Floodwater Commission. South Carolina joins North Carolina and Texas, where efforts by Pew and its partners have led to the adoption of watershedwide plans to reduce flood risk.

Analysis shows effects of insufficient retirement savings on Pennsylvania taxpayers

In October, Pew's retirement savings project released data analysis on how insufficient retirement savings in Pennsylvania are affecting the state's taxpayers. Pennsylvanians' inadequate retirement savings will not only reduce the quality of life for many entering retirement age, but will also put pressure on public spending and increase taxpayer burdens. The county-by-county data shows that from a 2015 baseline through 2030, Pennsylvania can expect to see an additional \$14.3 billion in state spending on programs such as Medicaid because of the insufficient savings, with an average added taxpayer burden of \$4,009 per household over that same period. The analysis finds that if households saved \$1,170 a year—or about \$98 a month—over this 15-year period, they could erase the retirement savings gap completely.

Improvements for consumers needing loans

In October, Bank of America, the country's second-largest bank, introduced Balance Assist, a three-month installment loan up to \$500 that will be available nationwide this year. The loan meets core standards for safe loans that Pew published in 2018, including affordable monthly payments and a cost that is far lower than payday and similar loans. In addition to providing information to the bank's consumer advisory panel, Pew staff consulted with bank officials as they developed this offering. Bank of America becomes the second top-five bank (after U.S. Bank) to work with Pew to introduce a safe installment loan alternative to payday loans.



Trees flank a road stretching through the Outback of Western Australia. *Abstract Aerial Art/Getty Images*

Australian government agrees to a streamlined process for carbon farming

The Australian government in September announced a 10-year investment package for new energy technologies, including a streamlined process for securing funding for carbon farming. In December 2019, Pew and its partners secured implementation of a carbon farming program in Western Australia that allows ranchers on state-owned pastoral leases to earn and trade carbon credits by reducing grazing and allowing the regeneration of native trees and other vegetation that absorb carbon dioxide. However, participation has been limited due to burdensome procedures for reviewing applications that can take up to six years. The Australian government has committed to a streamlined approval process that would take no more than 12 months. Pew worked with landholders, industry representatives, and the federal minister for energy to remove current impediments. The action will enable Pew and its partners to ramp up on-the-ground efforts to encourage Outback ranchers to adopt and receive financial remuneration for an approach that will allow restoration of critically important ecosystems across the Outback while reducing carbon emissions.

EU environment ministers back new land and sea protections

European environment ministers unanimously agreed in November to protect at least 30% of the European Union's lands and seas by 2030. The commitment will allow the EU to support setting that goal, which a growing number of governments, scientists, and nongovernmental organizations,

including Pew, are urging be set by the Convention on Biological Diversity when its parties convene this year in Kunming, China. Staff from multiple Pew environmental projects worked with partner groups to secure this action.



A drone photo shows trees lying like piles of matchsticks in a German forest, felled to prevent the spread of the invasive bark beetle. Lino Mirgeler/Picture Alliance via Getty Images

Efforts to improve public pensions

- In September, New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy (D) signed a \$32.7 billion fiscal year 2021 state budget that included the full scheduled pension contribution of \$4.7 billion, the largest in state history. Pew's public sector retirement systems project provided technical assistance to the New Jersey Senate, including analysis of pension contribution amounts that were sufficient to meet the state's pension obligations and achievable goals given the fiscal impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as analysis of potential borrowing options. Pew research showed that New Jersey's pension fund was only 38% funded, the lowest in the nation, with a pension debt that exceeded \$130 billion.
- In November, Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf (D) signed into law a requirement to stress test the state's public pension system. Twelve states now require stress tests, which simulate a range of scenarios for economic projections and investment returns to give policymakers a better sense of potential liabilities and costs. That information can help guide retirement system investments—and state budgets. Pennsylvania's law follows reforms that Pew's public sector retirement systems project supported in 2017 that, in addition to creating a hybrid pension plan for public employees, reduced investment fees by \$3 billion. Pew advised a state commission in 2018 as it crafted a recommendation to adopt stress testing and also contributed to the drafting of the legislation.



A polar bear walks through fireweed on an island in Canada's Hudson Bay. *Dennis Fast/VWPics/Universal Images Group via Getty Images*

Canada backs Inuit-led Arqviiliit Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area in Hudson Bay

In November, the Canadian government announced its commitment to establish the Inuit-led Arqviiliit (Ottawa Islands) Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA). This proposed designation represents the first government-backed IPCA proposal for Canada's Arctic waters and would conserve a 24-island archipelago in eastern Hudson Bay within the Nunavik marine region. The new IPCA is slated to cover nearly 60,000 acres of critical habitat for polar bears, bowhead whales, seals, and a variety of waterfowl. The IPCA would be managed by Nunavik Inuit through an Indigenous guardian program that will bring much-needed jobs to the community. Pew's northern oceans conservation project and partner groups played a key role in securing this new IPCA pledge.

NOAA finalizes Caribbean ecosystem-based fishery management plans

In September, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) finalized new island-based fishery management plans for Puerto Rico, St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John, which had been approved by the U.S. Caribbean Fishery Management Council in April 2019. The new plans, which Pew and its partners helped develop, will put catch limits on 21 highly targeted species that were without safeguards—including dolphinfish, also called mahi-mahi—and lower catch limits for parrotfish and surgeonfish to account for their essential role in maintaining healthy coral reefs. The plans also maintain the current ban on damaging or harvesting corals, which are often taken by the aquarium trade industry. The decision by NOAA represents a major milestone in efforts by Pew's conserving marine life in the United States project to implement a holistic approach to fisheries management, and it provides a foundation for securing the Caribbean's first regionwide ecosystem-based fishery plan.



Computer-generated images such as these accompanied the Philadelphia Orchestra's online concert in October. Courtesy of the Philadelphia Orchestra

A boost for online arts programs

Arts organizations are adapting to pandemic-related restrictions with imaginative digital programming that audiences can experience from home. With support from The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, the Philadelphia Orchestra debuted the first phase of its collaboration with digital media artist Refik Anadol in an online concert in October. Conducted by Yannick Nezet-Seguin, the orchestra performed the second movement of Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 accompanied by Anadol's computer-generated visualizations of imagined sacred spaces inspired by Renaissance architecture. The orchestra will continue its collaboration with Anadol in a performance of Beethoven's "Missa Solemnis" scheduled for its next concert season. In September, Pig Iron Theatre Company connected with audiences online through a Zoom-based adaptation of the play "Zero Cost House," which was first performed in 2012 with Center support. *The New York Times* wrote that the company "reconfigured [the play] superbly for Zoom" and described the work as "probing, funny, [and] hugely resonant."

Survey shows most Philadelphians know someone with COVID-19

Pew's Philadelphia research and policy initiative's August survey of city residents focused on the effects of the coronavirus pandemic and found that 58% of Philadelphians knew someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 and that 24% knew someone who had died from it. One-fourth of residents have fallen behind on rent or mortgage payments and nearly one-third have done so on credit card or other bills. In most cases, Hispanic and Black people experienced these effects more than White people did. In addition to the pandemic, the survey probed reactions to the protests following the death of George Floyd and the police response. Only 35% of residents rated the Philadelphia Police Department's performance in responding to the demonstrations as "good" or "excellent" while 64% said it was "only fair" or "poor." And Philadelphians' respect for police has waned, with 62% of residents saying they have "a great deal" or "a good amount" of respect for police, down from 72% in 2016. Also, only 49% of Philadelphians said they feel "completely" or "pretty" safe in their neighborhoods at night—the lowest percentage recorded in more than a decade of asking the question.

INFORMING THE PUBLIC

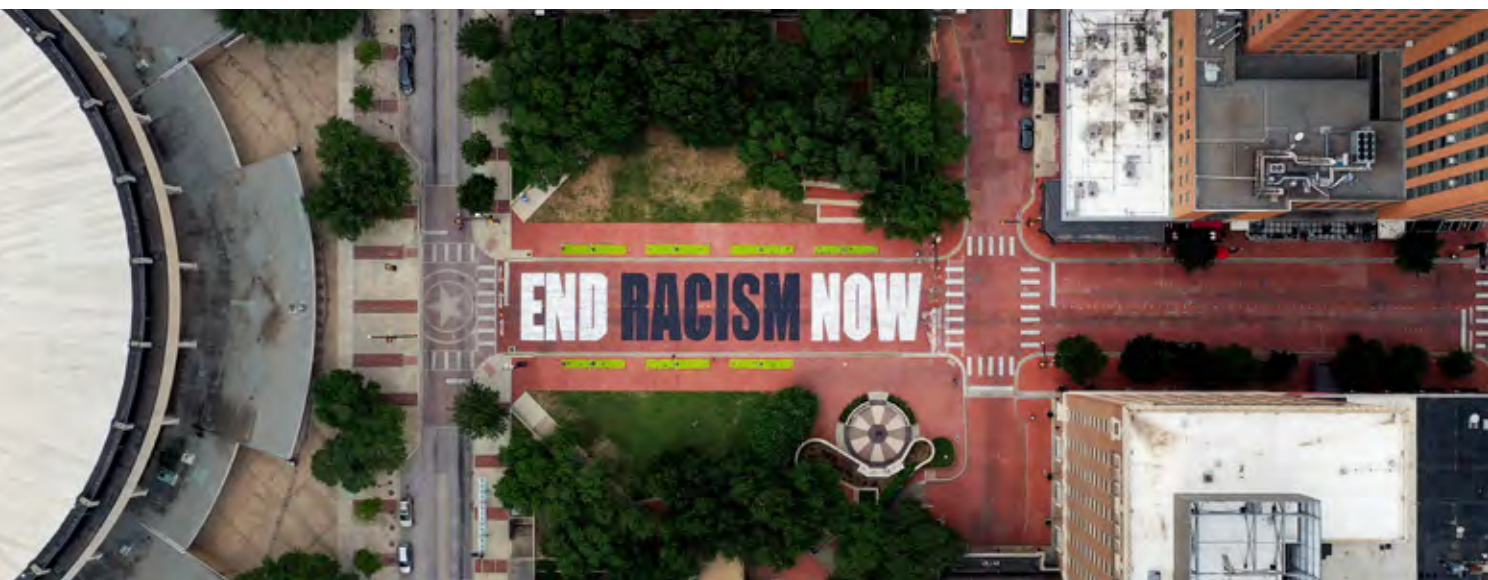
The dating game is getting harder to play

The Pew Research Center in August published a report examining Americans' attitudes toward and personal experiences with online dating and relationships, based on a pre-pandemic survey, which found that nearly half of U.S. adults, including a majority of women, say dating has become harder in the past 10 years. Three-fourths of American adults who are single and looking for a committed relationship or casual dates say that it has been very or somewhat difficult to find people to date despite the general willingness of singles looking for a relationship to be open to dating people with different traits and from a variety of backgrounds. Large majorities of these singles say they would consider a relationship with someone of a different religion or different race or ethnicity. Most also say they would seriously date someone who makes significantly more or significantly less money than they do. But many hesitate about being in a relationship with someone who lives far away or has a significant amount of debt.

Public supports skepticism of the news media

The Pew Research Center released a report in August culminating a yearlong exploration into factors related to trust in the news media that found that although roughly two-thirds of Americans (63%) think it's better for society if the public is skeptical of the news media, three-quarters of U.S. adults (75%) say it's possible for

the public to improve its level of confidence in the news media. At the same time, most Americans (61%) expect the news they get to be accurate, and nearly 7 in 10 (69%) think news organizations generally try to cover up mistakes when they do happen.



Local artists painted this mural on Main Street in Fort Worth, Texas, after George Floyd's death. Tom Pennington/Getty Images

People split on prospects for racial progress

The Pew Research Center in October released a report exploring Americans' outlook on racial equality, finding that the public is about evenly split on whether the increased focus on issues of race and racial inequality in the summer of 2020 will lead to major policy changes to address racial inequality, and a sizable share (46%) say this will not lead to changes that will improve the lives of Black people. The survey also found that views of the country's progress on racial equality have become more negative in the past year, particularly among Black and Hispanic adults and Democrats across racial and ethnic groups: Forty-nine percent of U.S. adults now say the country hasn't gone far enough when it comes to Black people having equal rights with White people.

The Global God Divide

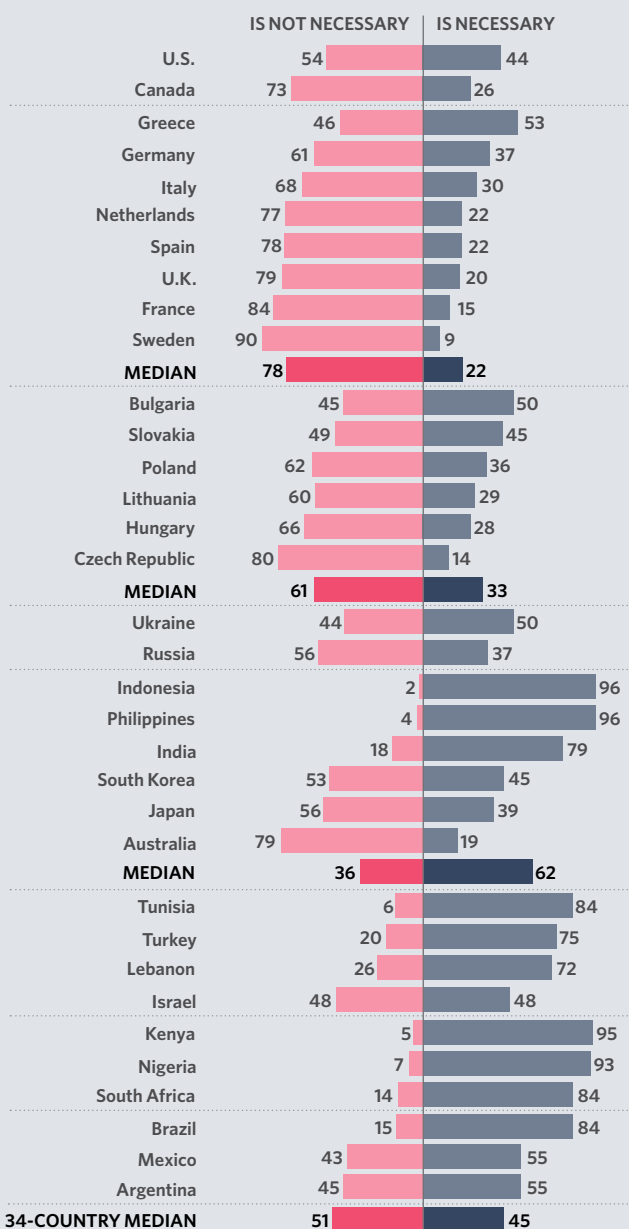
What is the connection between belief in God and morality? And how important are God and prayer in people's lives? In a report published in July, the Pew Research Center posed these questions to 38,426 people across 34 countries spanning six continents. A median of 45% said it is necessary to believe in God to be moral and have good values. But there were large regional variations in answers to this question. People in emerging economies tended to be more religious and more likely to consider religion to be important in their lives, and they were also more likely than people who lived in advanced economies to say that belief in God is necessary to be moral.



Gaby Bonilla/
The Pew Charitable Trusts

Most in Western Europe say belief in God not needed to be moral

% who say belief in God ___ in order to be moral and have good values



Connection between belief in God and morality over time

% who say it is necessary to believe in God in order to be moral and have good values

	2002	2019	CHANGE
Bulgaria	33	50	+18
Russia	26	37	+11
Japan	29	39	+10
Mexico	61	55	-6
Turkey	84	75	-9
Ukraine	61	50	-11
South Korea	56	45	-11
U.S.	58	44	-14

Note: All differences shown are statistically significant.

Importance of God has declined in many European nations since 1991 but has increased in the former Soviet Union

% who say God plays an important role in their life

	1991	2019	CHANGE
Spain	71	45	-26
Italy	81	60	-21
Poland	83	69	-14
France	43	31	-12
Lithuania	56	44	-12
U.K.	48	40	-8
Czech Rep.	30	24	-6
Slovakia	60	55	-5
Hungary	45	44	-1
Germany	48	51	+3
Ukraine	50	62	+12
Bulgaria	41	55	+14
Russia	40	56	+16

Note: Statistically significant differences shown in bold.

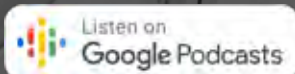
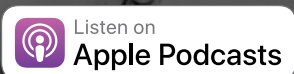


AFTER
THE
FACT



STATES OF INNOVATION

From making small loans more affordable for consumers, to improving community flood preparedness, to designing corridors for wildlife to migrate safely across high-traffic roads—protecting animals and drivers—state leaders are working together to tackle big challenges. Learn more from the latest season of Pew's podcast, *After the Fact*.



pewtrusts.org/afterthefact

An aerial photograph of a wide, sandy beach stretching along the ocean. The beach is mostly empty, with a few scattered people and small structures. In the background, a dense urban skyline is visible under a cloudy sky. The ocean waves are breaking gently onto the shore.

**A nearly deserted stretch of
Miami's South Beach shows
the effects of the pandemic on
the tourism industry last May.**

The Lingering Effects of the Pandemic, Page 22
