

March 2016 Poll Report: Americans and Firearms

Readers are reminded that the narrative throughout this report refers to national composite aggregate data—the 1015 completed surveys as well as the supplemental sample of 540 Florida respondents. Text throughout this report presents national composite results while many graphs and tables also present results among Florida respondents.

National Composite	Florida Composite
1,015 respondents	540 respondents

Importance of Gun Issues

Over three-quarters, 78.2 percent, of Americans surveyed report that the issue of gun control / gun rights will be very (49.3 percent) or somewhat important (29.0 percent) to them in the November, 2016 elections. This is in marked contrast to the 1.9 percent who, elsewhere in our survey, selected gun control/Second Amendment rights as the most important issue facing the country today. Readers are advised that when asked to choose one issue, survey respondents had a long list of issues to choose from, including jobs and the economy, the federal deficit, and 15 other issues. In this section of the survey, which focuses on firearms, the issue is not competing with another topic.

Questions on Regulation of Ownership

Survey respondents were asked which of several positions on gun control best reflected their own personal views. Results are presented here.

Which of the following best reflects your own personal position on gun control?	National - %	Florida - %
There should be no new, additional regulations or control of firearms for any reason	24.9	19.6
Some new, additional limited licensing or permitting and some restrictions on certain firearms such as assault weapons	60.0	62.2
Firearms should not be owned privately	7.6	12.0
Unsure	7.5	6.1

Related Questions: Carry Rights and Political Viewpoint

A number of gun control / gun rights statements were presented to poll respondents. Each was asked to indicate if they strongly agreed, somewhat agreed, somewhat disagreed, or strongly disagreed with each statement. The following table holds the cumulative totals for those strongly and somewhat agreeing with each statement.

Gun Rights / Gun Controls	National % Strongly and Somewhat Agree	Florida % Strongly and Somewhat Agree
Our active duty military should be allowed to carry their firearms on U.S. Military bases within the United States	82.7	83.5
I support open carry laws allowing qualified citizens to openly carry firearms (with exceptions such as day care centers, schools)	55.1	45.0
Administrators, faculty and staff should be allowed to carry guns on college campuses	47.5	41.5
Students should be allowed to carry guns on college campuses	21.8	20.0
I'm more likely to support a candidate in November, 2016 who opposes any new, additional controls on firearms	35.0	34.4
I'm more likely to support a candidate in November, 2016 who supports the need for some controls on firearm ownership such as permitting and licensing	63.4	70.9
Firearm purchasers should also undergo mental health background checks in addition to criminal background checks	83.7	83.3

