

Negative Views of Race Relations in the U.S. at an All-Time High
 July 8-12, 2016

- 69% of Americans now view race relations as bad -- one point higher than the previous all-time high reached in 1992, after the LA riots following the Rodney King verdict. Whites are just as pessimistic about race relations as blacks, and just one in 10 Americans thinks race relations are getting better.
- 54% of Americans were surprised by the Dallas sniper attack that killed five police officers. While a slight majority of whites (55%) were surprised, a slight majority of blacks (52%) were not.
- More Americans agree (41%) with the Black Lives Movement than disagree (25%), though 29% don't have an opinion. Blacks (70%) are far more likely to agree with the movement than whites (37%).
- Most white Americans think their local police are doing a good job and make them feel safe. But most blacks rate their local police as either fair (34%) or poor (23%), and nearly half of blacks say their local police make them feel mostly anxious.

Views of Race Relations

Following the shooting of two black men by white police officers in Louisiana and Minnesota and the subsequent shooting of five police officers by a black gunman in Dallas, negative views of race relations in the U.S. have risen to a level not seen since the 1992 Los Angeles riots that followed the Rodney King verdict. Now just 26% of Americans think race relations in the U.S. are mostly good – an 11 point drop from a year ago - while 69% say they are mostly bad. Back in May 1992, 68% said race relations were bad.

Positive opinions of race relations rose above 50% in the 2000s, and reached a high of 66% in April 2009, shortly after President Barack Obama took office. But those positive assessments have been dropping steadily since mid-2014, after the conflicts between blacks and the police in Ferguson, Missouri following the shooting of Michael Brown by a white police officer.

	Race Relations in the U.S.					
	Now	7/2015	8/2014	4/2009	2/2000	5/1992
Good	26%	37%	47%	66%	52%	25%
Bad	69	57	44	22	38	68

White Americans have traditionally been more optimistic about race relations than black Americans, but in this poll their views are similar: whites are just as pessimistic as blacks about the state of race relations in the U.S.

Race Relations in the U.S.

	*** Whites ***		*** Blacks ***	
	Now	7/2015	Now	7/2015
Good	25%	37%	24%	28%
Bad	71	56	72	68

And there is growing pessimism about whether race relations are improving. Now just one in 10 Americans thinks race relations are getting better, while six in 10 think they are getting worse.

Race Relations in the U.S. Are Getting...

	Now	7/2015
Better	9%	21%
Worse	59	38
Staying the same	30	39

The Shooting in Dallas

Most Americans have heard or read a lot about the events in Dallas, and 54% were surprised by the shooting of the Dallas police officers. But while 55% of whites say they were surprised by the shooting, just over half blacks – 52% - say they were not surprised.

Were You Surprised at the Shootings of Police Officers in Dallas?

	Total	Whites	Blacks
Yes, surprised	54%	55%	48%
No, not surprised	45	45	52

Black Lives Matter

More Americans agree with the Black Lives Matter movement (41%) than disagree (25%), though about a third don't have an opinion either way. 70% of black Americans agree with the Black Lives Matter movement, while white Americans are more divided.

Do You Agree or Disagree with Black Lives Matter?

	Total	Whites	Blacks
Mostly agree	41%	37%	70%
Mostly disagree	25	31	7
No opinion	29	28	22

Assessing the Police

Despite increasing scrutiny of police tactics following a number of civilian deaths at the hands of police caught on video over the last two years, three in four Americans give police in their community positive marks for doing their job. There are racial differences in this assessment, however. While eight in ten white Americans think their local police are doing at least a good job, less than half of black Americans agree. Instead, 57% of blacks rate their local police as either fair (34%) or poor (23%).

Rating of Local Police

	Total	Whites	Blacks
Excellent/Good	75%	81%	43%
Fair/poor	24	18	57

80% of Americans overall and 85% of white Americans say their local police make them feel mostly safe -- but just over half of black Americans agree, while 45% say the police make them mostly anxious. These percentages have changed little since 2014.

Do Police in Your Community Make you Feel...?

	Total	Whites	Blacks
Mostly safe	80%	85%	53%
Mostly anxious	18	14	45

Three in four blacks also think the police are more likely to use deadly force against a black person than a white person. Most white Americans - 56% - think race doesn't make a difference in the use of deadly force by police.

Police Are Most Likely to Use Deadly Force Against...

	Total	Whites	Blacks
A black person	43%	36%	75%
A white person	1	1	1
Race doesn't matter	49	56	18

This poll was conducted by telephone July 8-12, 2016 among a random sample of 1,600 adults nationwide. Data collection was conducted on behalf of CBS News and The New York Times by SSRS of Media, PA. Phone numbers were dialed from samples of both standard land-line and cell phones.

The poll employed a random digit dial methodology. For the landline sample, a respondent was randomly selected from all adults in the household. For the cell sample, interviews were conducted with the person who answered the phone.

Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish using live interviewers.

The data have been weighted to reflect U.S. Census figures on demographic variables.

The error due to sampling for results based on the entire sample could be plus or minus three percentage points. The error for subgroups may be higher and is available by request. The margin of error for the sample of whites is three points and for the sample of blacks nine points. The margin of error includes the effects of standard weighting procedures which enlarge sampling error slightly.

This poll release conforms to the Standards of Disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

CBS NEWS/NEW YORK TIMES POLL
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Q19. Do you think race relations in the United States are generally good or generally bad?

	* TOTAL RESPONDENTS *			Jul15b
	Total	Whites	Blacks	
	%	%	%	%
Generally good	26	25	24	37
Generally bad	69	71	72	57
Don't know/No answer	5	4	3	6

Q20. Do you think race relations in the United States are getting better, getting worse or staying about the same?

Getting better	9	9	11	21
Getting worse	59	62	53	38
Staying the same	30	28	36	39
Don't know/No answer	1	1	--	1

Q38. How would you describe your feelings about the police in your community? Would you say they make you feel mostly (safe) or mostly (anxious)?

Mostly safe	80	85	53	76
Mostly anxious	18	14	45	21
Don't know/No answer	2	2	2	3

Q39. In general, do you think the police in most communities are more likely to use deadly force against a (black person), or more likely to use it against a (white person), or don't you think race affects police use of deadly force?

More likely against black person	43	36	75	41
More likely against white person	1	1	1	1
Race does not affect	49	56	18	52
Don't know/No answer	7	6	7	6

Q40. How would you rate the job your local police are doing in your community--excellent, good, fair, or poor?

Excellent	38	45	13
Good	37	36	30
Fair	17	15	34
Poor	7	3	23
Don't know/No answer	1	1	1

Q41. From what you have heard or seen about Black Lives Matter, do you mostly agree or mostly disagree with Black Lives Matter, or don't you have an opinion either way?

Mostly agree	41	37	70
Mostly disagree	25	31	7
Don't have an opinion either way	29	28	22
Don't know/No answer	4	4	2

Q51. Recently five police officers were shot and killed in Dallas at a protest in response to the shooting of two black men by police. How much have you heard or read about this incident -- a lot, some, or not much?

	* TOTAL RESPONDENTS *		
	Total	Whites	Blacks
	%	%	%
A lot	56	57	66
Some	28	29	22
Not much	14	13	10
Nothing at all	1	1	2
Don't know/No answer	*	*	--

Q52. Were you personally surprised at the shooting of police officers at a protest in Dallas, or didn't this surprise you?

Surprised	54	55	48
Didn't surprise you	45	45	52
Don't know/No answer	1	1	1

	<u>Unweighted</u>	<u>Weighted</u>
Total Respondents	1,600	
Total Whites	1,207	1,134
Total Blacks	171	195