

# [***Americans Suddenly More Conservative Than Liberal On Social Issues, Poll Says***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68DX-3RB1-DXVP-500P-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Length:** 510 words

**Byline:** Molly Bohannon, Forbes Staff

**Highlight:** For years, Americans have been equally likely to identify as socially conservative or liberal. Not anymore.

**Body**

**Topline**

As hot-button social issues like abortion and transgender rights dominate ***politics***, more Americans and the highest percentage since 2012 are identifying as socially conservative, according to a Gallup poll released Thursday, marking a shift from a time when Americans were about as likely to say they were socially liberal as conservative.

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For the first time in a decade, Americans are more likely to identify as socially conservative than as socially liberal.

Manuel Balce Ceneta/AP Photo

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**Key Facts**

An annualpollon values and beliefs conducted in May by Gallup found that 38% of Americans identify as conservative or very conservative on social issues, compared to 29% of respondents who identified as liberal or very liberal.

Last year, the difference was almost imperceptible as 34% identified as liberal and 33% as conservative, a degree of separation much more similar to past Gallup polls: For most of the past eight years, Gallup has said Americans were about as likely to say they were socially liberal as socially conservative.

The poll also found that middle-aged Americans saw the highest percentage increase in those identifying as socially conservative, jumping an average of 12% for people between ages 30 and 64.

Americans 65 and older, however, are the only age group that has stayed stable, with the number of people identifying as socially conservative actually decreasing 1%.

**Surprising Fact**

The largest increase came from within as Republicans themselves are becoming more socially conservative. In 2021, 60% identified as socially conservative compared to 74% today. Independents increased only 5% and there was no change among Democrats.

**Tangent**

Americans are also more likely to identify as fiscally conservative, though that s nothing new. This year, 44% of respondents, up slightly from an average of 40% from 2020 and 2022, said they were fiscally conservative, marking the highest percentage since 2012.

**Key Background**

The increase in social conservatism has been on display in Republican-led states this year as many have passed or introduced legislation limiting abortion rights or the rights of transgender people, two issues that have become critical in today s political culture war. This week, Missouri joined more than a dozen states this legislative session that havebannedor restricted gender-affirming care, predominantly for transgender youth. But the meaning of conservatism, and what it means to be a Republican, has been percolating lately as the Republican Party looks to identify its presidential nominee out of a field led by former President Donald Trump, whosome  sayhas ruined the party by taking it too far right. The last time Gallup reported a difference bigger than this year s was in 2012 a year in which Obama won reelection and publiclysupportedgay marriage, and the Supreme Court upheld Obamacare when 38% of respondents identified as socially conservative and 28% as socially liberal.

**Further Reading**

Social Conservatism in U.S. Highest in About a Decade(Gallup)

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