

More than half of French people think US no longer a 'trusted ally', survey says



© Gerard Julien, AFP | Waiters serve a terrace restaurant near the gardens of the Palais-Royal on June 14, 2018, in Paris.

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A survey of more than 1,000 people conducted this week found a 33 percent drop in the number who believe the United States remains a "trusted ally" of France under President Donald Trump since a similar survey in 2014.

France may be America's oldest ally, but more than half of French people no longer consider the United States a reliable partner, according to a new survey released Wednesday.

Just 44 percent of those polled said the United States remained a "trusted ally" under President Donald Trump – a 33-point plunge since a similar survey was conducted in May 2014 when former president Barack Obama was still in the White House.

Some 54 percent said they had a "very bad opinion" of the Republican leader.

Only 17 percent said they had a positive opinion of Trump in the Ifop poll, jointly commissioned by the American Jewish Committee advocacy group, France's Foundation for Political Innovation and the Sursaut think-tank collective.

Supporters of the far-right National Rally party – formerly the National Front – led by Marine Le Pen were the only group to express a more positive opinion, with 42 percent backing Trump.

With Trump pursuing punitive trade tariffs, 78 percent said the US is bad for French economic growth. And with his decision to pull out of the Paris climate agreement, 88 percent see Trump's America as an adversary rather than an ally in the fight against climate change.

Attitudes also vary between age groups, with the oldest French nationals holding the most pessimistic views of the United States.

Only 38 percent of those over 65 see Washington as a trusted ally compared to 52 percent of those aged 18 to 24.

The diplomatic ties that bind the two nations date back to the American Revolutionary War in the 18th century and their alliance during World War II. But US foreign policy has also been the target of strong criticism from France, notably when they disagreed over the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

The figures do, however, point to a slight improvement since Trump first won the presidency in November 2016, when just 38 percent considered the US a trusted ally.

The survey questioned 1,007 people online from September 10 to 11.

(FRANCE 24 with AFP)