

Californians and Their Government

May 2017

Time Trends – All Respondents

Methodology Note:

Findings for May 2017 are based on a survey of 1,707 California adult residents, with 65 percent interviewed on cell phones (1,107 interviews) and 35 percent interviewed on landline telephones (600 interviews). Live landline and cell phone interviews were conducted in English and Spanish according to the respondents' preferences. Interviews took an average of 18 minutes to complete. Interviewing took place on weekend days and weekday nights May 12–22, 2017.

The sampling error for May 2017, taking design effects from weighting into consideration, is ± 3.2 percent at the 95 percent confidence level for the total unweighted sample of 1,707 adults. This means that 95 times out of 100, the results will be within 3.2 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California were interviewed. Sampling error is only one type of error to which surveys are subject. Results may also be affected by factors such as question wording, question order, and survey timing.

If you have any questions or require additional information regarding this survey, please contact surveys@ppic.org

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Q2. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of
 the way that Jerry Brown is handling his job as
 governor of California?

	approve	disapprove	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	52%	32%	16%	1693
Apr 2017	49%	30%	21%	1687
Mar 2017	58%	25%	17%	1686
Jan 2017	62%	24%	13%	1688
Dec 2016	57%	24%	18%	1695
Oct 2016	55%	24%	21%	1692
Sep 2016	55%	28%	18%	1691
Jul 2016	54%	27%	20%	1686
May 2016	52%	28%	20%	1691
Apr 2016	54%	26%	19%	1689
Mar 2016	51%	29%	19%	1693
Jan 2016	58%	26%	16%	1693
Dec 2015	51%	29%	20%	1677
Sep 2015	52%	29%	19%	1693
Jul 2015	53%	27%	20%	1678
Jun 2015	52%	27%	21%	1681
Apr 2015	50%	27%	23%	1693
Mar 2015	55%	28%	17%	1686
Jan 2015	61%	23%	16%	1694
Dec 2014	54%	28%	18%	1683
Oct 2014	50%	28%	22%	1685
Sep 2014	51%	28%	21%	1679
Jul 2014	53%	28%	19%	1684
May 2014	50%	30%	20%	1680
Apr 2014	51%	26%	23%	1682
Mar 2014	49%	28%	23%	1679
Jan 2014	58%	26%	16%	1689
Dec 2013	47%	28%	25%	1688
Sep 2013	48%	31%	22%	1686
Jul 2013	48%	27%	26%	2090
May 2013	48%	31%	21%	1687
Apr 2013	46%	31%	22%	1687
Mar 2013	49%	31%	20%	1686
Jan 2013	51%	28%	21%	1696
Dec 2012	48%	35%	17%	1985
Oct 2012	42%	37%	21%	1993
Sep 2012	41%	36%	23%	1986
Aug 2012	42%	35%	23%	2461
May 2012	39%	36%	24%	1989
Apr 2012	43%	32%	25%	1983
Mar 2012	40%	33%	27%	1984
Jan 2012	46%	31%	23%	1987
Dec 2011	42%	30%	28%	1982
Nov 2011	44%	30%	26%	2476
Sep 2011	41%	28%	31%	1985
Jul 2011	42%	28%	29%	2481
Jun 2011	42%	24%	33%	1990
Apr 2011	40%	29%	31%	2479
Mar 2011	34%	24%	42%	1984
Feb 2011	34%	17%	49%	2470
Jan 2011	41%	19%	39%	1969

Note: Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding

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Q3. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of
 the way that the California Legislature is
 handling its job?

	approve	disapprove	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	46%	38%	15%	1691
Apr 2017	49%	36%	15%	1696
Mar 2017	51%	33%	16%	1685
Jan 2017	57%	30%	13%	1686
Dec 2016	49%	38%	13%	1697
Oct 2016	46%	33%	20%	1684
Sep 2016	47%	37%	16%	1690
Jul 2016	45%	40%	15%	1687
May 2016	43%	37%	20%	1690
Apr 2016	48%	38%	14%	1694
Mar 2016	44%	39%	18%	1692
Jan 2016	46%	39%	15%	1692
Dec 2015	41%	40%	19%	1678
Sep 2015	45%	38%	17%	1691
Jul 2015	39%	45%	16%	1688
Jun 2015	37%	43%	20%	1694
Apr 2015	42%	43%	15%	1695
Mar 2015	45%	39%	16%	1693
Jan 2015	49%	36%	15%	1689
Dec 2014	41%	42%	17%	1681
Oct 2014	41%	42%	17%	1686
Sep 2014	37%	42%	20%	1673
Jul 2014	38%	46%	16%	1683
May 2014	40%	44%	16%	1684
Apr 2014	40%	44%	17%	1693
Mar 2014	36%	45%	19%	1685
Jan 2014	42%	44%	14%	1698
Dec 2013	38%	43%	19%	1688
Sep 2013	38%	45%	17%	1693
Jul 2013	36%	45%	19%	2096
May 2013	35%	50%	16%	1697
Apr 2013	31%	53%	15%	1699
Mar 2013	34%	49%	17%	1689
Jan 2013	41%	42%	17%	1700
Dec 2012	34%	51%	15%	1992
Oct 2012	28%	55%	17%	1995
Sep 2012	30%	53%	17%	1989
Aug 2012	29%	54%	17%	2480
May 2012	25%	57%	18%	1990
Apr 2012	25%	58%	16%	1992
Mar 2012	25%	54%	21%	1989
Jan 2012	28%	56%	16%	1988
Dec 2011	25%	55%	20%	1987
Nov 2011	25%	55%	19%	2490
Sep 2011	26%	56%	18%	1998
Jul 2011	23%	59%	18%	2496
Jun 2011	23%	58%	19%	1998
Apr 2011	21%	60%	19%	2487
Mar 2011	24%	54%	21%	1982
Feb 2011	24%	52%	24%	2483
Jan 2011	26%	55%	19%	1990
Nov 2010	14%	72%	14%	2486

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Q3. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of
 the way that the California Legislature is
 handling its job?

	approve	disapprove	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
Oct 2010	16%	77%	7%	1989
Sep 2010	16%	75%	9%	1990
Jul 2010	15%	68%	17%	2487
May 2010	16%	72%	12%	1993
Apr 2010	16%	69%	14%	2493
Mar 2010	14%	72%	14%	1996
Jan 2010	18%	71%	11%	1989
Dec 2009	17%	70%	13%	2000
Nov 2009	18%	68%	15%	2491
Sep 2009	21%	68%	11%	1998
Jul 2009	17%	71%	11%	2484
May 2009	21%	65%	14%	1994
Apr 2009	23%	63%	14%	2493
Mar 2009	18%	68%	14%	1995
Feb 2009	21%	65%	14%	2494
Jan 2009	21%	67%	12%	1994
Nov 2008	24%	60%	16%	2482
Oct 2008	25%	63%	12%	1996
Sep 2008	21%	67%	11%	1990
Aug 2008	26%	63%	11%	1991
May 2008	26%	57%	17%	1991
Apr 2008	26%	58%	16%	2495
Mar 2008	30%	55%	15%	1988
Jan 2008	34%	53%	13%	1988
Dec 2007	41%	47%	12%	1992
Oct 2007	33%	50%	17%	2490
Sep 2007	34%	51%	15%	1988
Jun 2007	39%	40%	21%	1987
May 2007	37%	44%	19%	1994
Apr 2007	38%	44%	18%	2483
Mar 2007	41%	42%	17%	1989
Jan 2007	40%	44%	15%	2006
Oct 2006	30%	52%	18%	1993
Sep 2006	34%	50%	16%	1994
Aug 2006	31%	53%	16%	1995
May 2006	26%	54%	20%	1988
Mar 2006	25%	59%	16%	1988
Jan 2006	29%	57%	14%	2000
Jan 2006	24%	54%	22%	2481
Oct 2005	25%	56%	19%	1993
Sep 2005	32%	53%	15%	1992
Aug 2005	27%	56%	17%	1993
May 2005	26%	58%	16%	1992
Jan 2005	37%	50%	13%	1993
Oct 2004	43%	41%	16%	2005
Sep 2004	40%	46%	14%	1988
Aug 2004	42%	45%	13%	1990
Jun 2004	40%	44%	16%	2498
May 2004	40%	43%	17%	1986
Jan 2004	36%	45%	19%	1981
Aug 2003	28%	58%	14%	1979
Jun 2003	39%	44%	17%	1976

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Q3. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of
 the way that the California Legislature is
 handling its job?

	approve	disapprove	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
Feb 2003	36%	45%	19%	1967
Sep 2002	45%	36%	18%	1967
Jan 2002	49%	35%	16%	1942
Dec 2001	53%	29%	18%	1952
Jul 2001	45%	38%	18%	1966
Jan 2001	58%	27%	15%	1960
Sep 2000	56%	31%	12%	1980

Note: Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding

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Q4. How would you rate your own personal financial situation? Would you say you are in excellent shape, good shape, only fair shape, or poor shape financially?

	excellent	good	only fair	poor	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	7%	33%	40%	19%	0%	1689
Dec 2013	5%	34%	40%	20%	1%	1689
Dec 2011	6%	27%	41%	25%	1%	1984
Dec 2009	6%	29%	39%	25%	1%	1984

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Q5. Does the cost of your housing place a financial strain on you and your family today?

	yes, a lot	yes, a little	no	don't know	yes, don't know how much	Unweighted n
May 2017	27%	18%	52%	1%	2%	1698
Nov 2004	14%	16%	70%	0%	0%	2497

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Q6. Do you think the state budget situation in California - that is, the balance between government spending and revenues - is a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem for the people of California today?

	big problem	somewhat of a problem	not a problem	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	43%	37%	13%	7%	1702
Jan 2017	37%	45%	13%	5%	1698
May 2016	44%	37%	13%	6%	1702
Mar 2016	48%	36%	11%	5%	1705
Jan 2016	42%	40%	14%	5%	1697
Dec 2015	45%	36%	11%	8%	1697
Jun 2015	47%	36%	12%	5%	1702
Mar 2015	45%	36%	11%	8%	1699
Jan 2015	46%	39%	11%	4%	1703
Dec 2014	51%	39%	8%	3%	1695
Oct 2014	54%	33%	7%	6%	1698
Sep 2014	55%	32%	7%	6%	1695
May 2014	52%	38%	5%	4%	1698
Jan 2014	50%	40%	7%	3%	1704
Sep 2013	58%	33%	5%	4%	1700
May 2013	61%	30%	6%	2%	1703
Mar 2013	65%	27%	5%	2%	1701
Jan 2013	63%	28%	6%	3%	1703
Dec 2012	68%	26%	4%	2%	1997
Oct 2012	70%	25%	2%	2%	2005
Sep 2012	69%	24%	2%	4%	1998
May 2012	69%	23%	3%	5%	2002
Apr 2012	71%	22%	3%	3%	2004
Mar 2012	67%	24%	5%	4%	2000
Jan 2012	64%	30%	4%	2%	2001
Dec 2011	69%	24%	3%	4%	2001
Sep 2011	68%	27%	2%	3%	1999
Jun 2011	70%	24%	4%	2%	2004
Mar 2011	68%	24%	4%	3%	1999
Jan 2011	68%	26%	3%	3%	2002
Sep 2010	80%	17%	2%	2%	2002
May 2010	81%	15%	1%	3%	2001
Mar 2010	77%	19%	2%	2%	2001
Jan 2010	75%	21%	2%	2%	2000
Dec 2009	78%	18%	2%	2%	1999
Sep 2009	78%	18%	2%	2%	2002
May 2009	74%	22%	2%	3%	2004
Mar 2009	75%	20%	2%	3%	2001
Jan 2009	75%	20%	2%	2%	2000
Oct 2008	74%	22%	2%	2%	2003
Sep 2008	78%	19%	1%	2%	2001
Aug 2008	73%	21%	4%	2%	1999
May 2008	67%	27%	4%	3%	2000
Mar 2008	68%	26%	3%	4%	1998
Jan 2008	64%	30%	3%	3%	1997
May 2007	44%	43%	6%	6%	1996
Jan 2007	45%	42%	7%	6%	2011
May 2006	58%	31%	5%	6%	1998
Jan 2006	61%	30%	4%	4%	2002

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Q16. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Donald Trump is handling his job as president?

	approve	disapprove	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	27%	67%	6%	1690
Mar 2017	31%	61%	7%	1685
Jan 2017	30%	58%	12%	1678

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Q17. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of
 the way the U.S. Congress is handling its job?

	approve	disapprove	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	26%	66%	8%	1695
Mar 2017	36%	55%	9%	1692
Jan 2017	33%	58%	9%	1689
Oct 2016	31%	59%	10%	1703
Sep 2016	29%	65%	6%	1699
Jul 2016	28%	66%	6%	1696
May 2016	28%	67%	6%	1696
Mar 2016	24%	70%	6%	1706
Jan 2016	32%	63%	5%	1694
Dec 2015	26%	67%	7%	1697
Sep 2015	32%	62%	7%	1702
Jul 2015	29%	63%	9%	1690
Jun 2015	27%	68%	5%	1701
Mar 2015	24%	69%	7%	1694
Jan 2015	38%	55%	7%	1700
Oct 2014	24%	68%	8%	1689
Sep 2014	24%	66%	10%	1682
Jul 2014	22%	72%	6%	1690
May 2014	24%	69%	7%	1697
Mar 2014	19%	74%	7%	1695
Jan 2014	26%	69%	5%	1702
Dec 2013	18%	76%	6%	1693
Sep 2013	28%	65%	8%	1682
Jul 2013	30%	62%	7%	2092
May 2013	31%	62%	6%	1696
Mar 2013	29%	67%	4%	1696
Jan 2013	34%	59%	7%	1700
Oct 2012	26%	67%	7%	2000
Sep 2012	27%	67%	7%	1989
Aug 2012	27%	66%	7%	2485
May 2012	22%	69%	8%	1993
Mar 2012	24%	68%	8%	1992
Jan 2012	25%	69%	5%	1993
Dec 2011	20%	75%	5%	1988
Sep 2011	27%	64%	9%	1996
Jul 2011	25%	65%	10%	2495
Mar 2011	30%	58%	12%	1988
Oct 2010	31%	64%	5%	1988
Sep 2010	26%	66%	8%	1990
May 2010	31%	61%	8%	1997
Mar 2010	24%	68%	8%	1992
Jan 2010	36%	55%	9%	1991
Dec 2009	38%	54%	8%	1994
Sep 2009	39%	54%	7%	2000
May 2009	47%	43%	10%	1998
Mar 2009	43%	47%	10%	1993
Jan 2009	37%	56%	7%	1997
Oct 2008	23%	71%	6%	1993
Sep 2008	29%	63%	9%	1991
Aug 2008	27%	64%	9%	1990
Mar 2008	33%	55%	12%	1992
Dec 2007	31%	62%	7%	1992
Sep 2007	33%	57%	10%	1990

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Q17. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of
 the way the U.S. Congress is handling its job?

	approve	disapprove	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
Jun 2007	33%	54%	13%	1989
Jan 2007	42%	44%	13%	2006
Sep 2006	37%	54%	9%	1994
Mar 2006	35%	54%	11%	1992
Oct 2005	42%	46%	11%	1996

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Q18. Do you think things in the United States
 are going in the right direction or the wrong
 direction?

	right direction	wrong direction	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	29%	65%	6%	1689
Jan 2017	36%	57%	7%	1689
Oct 2016	43%	50%	7%	1697
Mar 2016	40%	56%	4%	1702
Sep 2015	44%	51%	5%	1690
Mar 2015	40%	54%	6%	1690
Mar 2014	39%	56%	5%	1691
Dec 2013	35%	57%	7%	1693
Jan 2013	56%	39%	5%	1701
Oct 2012	46%	49%	5%	1998
Sep 2011	30%	65%	5%	1989
Oct 2010	36%	58%	6%	1982
Dec 2009	42%	53%	5%	1997
May 2009	57%	37%	6%	2000
Jan 2009	32%	62%	6%	1993
Aug 2008	21%	74%	5%	1994
Mar 2008	22%	73%	6%	1997
Jun 2007	31%	63%	6%	1982
Jan 2007	34%	60%	6%	2003
Oct 2006	31%	62%	7%	1992
Sep 2005	34%	62%	5%	2002
Jan 2005	43%	51%	5%	1997
Sep 2004	42%	54%	4%	1995
Sep 2003	42%	51%	7%	1979

Note: Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding

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Q19. Turning to economic conditions, do you think that during the next 12 months the United States will have good times financially or bad times?

	good times	bad times	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	39%	50%	11%	1697
Jan 2017	52%	39%	8%	1692
Oct 2016	46%	39%	15%	1693
Mar 2016	48%	42%	10%	1702
Sep 2015	48%	45%	7%	1695
Mar 2015	53%	41%	6%	1686
Mar 2014	45%	48%	7%	1689
Dec 2013	43%	48%	9%	1693
Oct 2012	45%	46%	10%	1997
Sep 2011	29%	65%	6%	1995
Sep 2010	35%	58%	7%	1985
Dec 2009	35%	58%	8%	1999
May 2009	33%	61%	6%	2001
Jan 2009	24%	71%	5%	1995
Aug 2008	23%	70%	7%	1992
Mar 2008	18%	76%	5%	1998
Jun 2007	39%	53%	8%	1993
Jan 2007	47%	46%	8%	2006
Oct 2006	44%	46%	9%	1996
Sep 2005	30%	63%	7%	2002
Jan 2005	48%	43%	9%	1996
Sep 2004	47%	41%	12%	1996
Sep 2003	47%	42%	11%	1974

Note: Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding

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Q20. As you may know, a health reform bill was signed into law in 2010. Given what you know about the health reform law, do you have a [rotate] [1] [generally favorable] [or] [2] [generally unfavorable] opinion of it?

	generally favorable	generally unfavorable	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	48%	41%	10%	1693
Jan 2017	51%	39%	9%	1687
Dec 2015	51%	42%	8%	1686
Mar 2015	52%	42%	6%	1693
Jan 2015	51%	41%	8%	1696
Dec 2014	46%	43%	10%	1690
Oct 2014	46%	44%	11%	1694
Sep 2014	42%	46%	11%	1693
May 2014	48%	43%	9%	1686
Mar 2014	47%	45%	7%	1689
Jan 2014	44%	46%	10%	1697
Dec 2013	44%	44%	13%	1693

Note: Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding

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Q31. If you had to choose, would you rather have a smaller government providing fewer services, or a bigger government providing more services?

	smaller government, fewer services	bigger government, more services	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	39%	54%	7%	1685
Mar 2016	39%	57%	4%	1696
Feb 2002	48%	47%	5%	2010

Note: Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding

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Q32. In general, do you think laws covering the sale of guns
 should be made more strict, less strict, or kept as they are now?

	more strict	less strict	kept as they are now	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	60%	15%	23%	2%	1702
Sep 2015	65%	10%	23%	2%	1706

Note: Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding

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Q33. In general, do you think the use of
 marijuana should be legal, or not?

	yes, legal	no, not legal	[VOL] don't know	Unweighted n
May 2017	56%	41%	3%	1697
Oct 2016	53%	44%	4%	1700
Sep 2016	56%	42%	2%	1697
May 2016	55%	43%	3%	1696
Jun 2015	54%	44%	2%	1697
Mar 2015	53%	45%	2%	1701
Oct 2014	51%	44%	5%	1698
Mar 2014	49%	47%	3%	1692
Sep 2013	52%	45%	3%	1697
Mar 2012	45%	51%	4%	1995
Sep 2011	46%	51%	3%	1994
Sep 2010	47%	49%	4%	1996
May 2010	48%	49%	3%	1997

Note: Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding