

University of Iowa Hawkeye Poll – Topline Results
Iowans support U.S. Supreme Court term limits, oppose expansion of court size
May 23, 2022
March/April poll of Iowans

Sample: 1,063 voting-age residents in Iowa (online and by phone), margin of error +/-3.1%. Among these, 947 respondents took the online version of the survey, with a margin of error of 3.2%.

Results for this release use only responses to the web survey since the questions about U.S. Supreme Court reforms were not asked on the phone version to reduce interview length.

About: The Hawkeye Poll was fielded March 31 to April 13, 2022.

The poll was conducted by the Hawkeye Poll Cooperative, comprised of University of Iowa faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students in the Department of Political Science. The poll is a teaching, research, and service project, which uses the facilities of the Iowa Social Science Research Center directed by Frederick J. Boehmke, professor of political science and faculty advisor for the poll. The Department of Political Science, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the UI Public Policy Center fund the poll; financial support was provided through a Student Technology Fee award (#1290-91).

The Iowa Social Science Research Center (ISRC) assisted with data collection. Responses were gathered by phone (116) and online (947). For the phone portion, the ISRC obtained a random sample of Iowans consisting of 40% household landline numbers and 60% mobile phone numbers. All respondents who stated they were over age 18 and willing to participate in the survey were included. After training, students in the class used the ISRC's computer-assisted interviewing resources to complete the calling and interviews. No quotas were set for the phone component. For the online portion, the ISRC contracted with a respected web panel vendor to field the survey to a demographically representative sample of 947 online respondents. Respondents invited to complete the online survey were Iowa adults, aged 18 to 120 years, recruited for participation via web panel. To obtain a census-representative sample, quotas were set on the following demographics: sex, age, and urbanicity.

Media contacts:

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Respondent identification: All respondents who stated they were older than 18 and willing to participate in the survey were included. Responses were completed online and by phone. To obtain a census-representative sample, quotas were set for the online data collection on the following demographics: sex, age, and urbanicity. No quotas were set for the phone data collection.

Weighting: Reported results are weighted by age, sex, and partisan identification.

Currently, U.S. Supreme Court justices have lifetime appointments, but the idea of term limits is getting more attention and discussion. Do you think judges should serve a fixed term?

	%
Yes, judges should serve a fixed term	62.9
No, judges should serve life terms	20.3
Don't Know/Declined	16.7
Total	100.0

In addition, there are nine justices on the U.S. Supreme Court. Law experts and some prominent Democratic politicians have proposed expanding the size of the supreme court. Do you think the number of justices should be expanded?

	%
Yes, the number of Supreme Court justices should be more than nine	23.4
No, the number of Supreme Court justices should not be changed	57.0
Don't Know/Declined	19.6
Total	100.0

People support expansion of the supreme court for a variety of reasons, some of which we've listed below. Whether you support expansion or not, we are interested in which of these considerations you agree with. Please select all that apply, if any: Court expansion could make the court more ideologically balanced.

	%
No	51.2
Yes	30.5
Don't Know/Declined	18.3
Total	100.0

Court expansion could offer a wider range of opinions on the court.

	%
No	40.6
Yes	41.1
Don't Know/Declined	18.3
Total	100.0

Court expansion could give more opportunities for a wider variety of generations to be represented.

	%
No	48.0
Yes	33.7
Don't Know/Declined	18.3
Total	100.0

Court expansion has happened many times before, and it is not abnormal.

	%
No	70.9
Yes	10.8
Don't Know/Declined	18.3
Total	100.0

People oppose expansion of the supreme court for a variety of reasons, some of which we've listed below. Whether you oppose expansion or not, we are interested in which of these considerations you agree with. Please select all that apply, if any: Court expansion could undermine the integrity of the judicial system if the number of justices can be changed this easily.

	%
No	47.0
Yes	36.1
Don't Know/Declined	16.8
Total	100.0

Court expansion could diminish the power of the justices.

	%
No	53.3
Yes	29.9
Don't Know/Declined	16.8
Total	100.0

There is a long tradition of a nine-member bench, and we should keep it.

	%
No	58.8
Yes	24.4
Don't Know/Declined	16.8
Total	100.0

Court expansion could yield more opinions, make arguments less productive, and deliberations more difficult.

	%
No	51.1
Yes	32.1
Don't Know/Declined	16.8
Total	100.0

Agreement with the statement that court expansion could offer a wider range of opinions on the court by support for a post-15-week abortion ban.

	Strongly support	Support	Neutral	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
No	51.7	43.3	43.9	37.2	35.3	42.1
Yes	32.2	42.8	36.2	52.8	51.1	43.0
Don't Know/Declined	16.1	13.9	19.9	9.9	13.6	14.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Democrat, a Republican, an Independent, or what?

	%
Democrat	30.2
Republican	31.0
Independent	29.7
No preference	7.2
Other	1.8
Total	100.0

What is your age?

	%
18-34	29.6
35-54	32.4
55-69	25.4
70 and over	12.6
Total	100.0

Do you support or oppose Iowa adopting a post-15 week ban if the U.S. Supreme Court rules for the Mississippi abortion law?

	%
Strongly support	19.6
Support	20.0
Neutral	19.9
Oppose	14.3
Strongly oppose	26.1
Total	100.0