American Perspectives on Racism and Racial Justice

By Cruz Fox and David Schleifer

PUBLIC AGENDA
Executive Summary

Americans widely agree on racial equality as a general principle, but Americans differ by political affiliation and by race and ethnicity in their views on racism, its impacts, and how to address it, according to a Public Agenda/USA TODAY Hidden Common Ground survey of 2,788 adults fielded in February and March 2023.

Because most Americans identify as either religious, or spiritual, or both, one goal of this research is to understand similarities and differences in views on racism and racial justice between people of varying degrees of religiosity and spirituality. This research finds that the 18 percent of Americans who identify as largely spiritual are consistently more likely to believe that racism negatively impacts people of color and to favor various approaches to address it. By comparison, the 6 percent of Americans who identify as largely religious are less likely to believe that racism has significant impacts or to support taking actions to address racism. The 42 percent who identify as both religious and spiritual and the 35 percent who are neither religious nor spiritual are less consistent in their views on racism, its impacts, and how to address it.

Findings in Brief

1. Americans agree on the principle of racial equality. But Democrats and Republicans differ in their views on racism, its impact on people of color, and the impact on white people of efforts to combat it. Differences of opinion by religiosity and spirituality also emerge in views on racism and its impacts.
   - A 91 percent majority of Americans believe that all people deserve an equal opportunity to succeed, no matter their race or ethnicity. This basic principle is widely held across political affiliations, races and ethnicities, and by people with different degrees of religiosity and spirituality.
   - Among Democrats, 82 percent believe that racism makes it more difficult for people of color to succeed, compared to 45 percent of Republicans. Meanwhile, 61 percent of Republicans believe that efforts to combat racism are making life more difficult for white Americans, compared to 31 percent of Democrats.
   - Americans who identify as largely spiritual are particularly likely to believe that racism makes it more difficult for people of color to succeed.
   - More than 80 percent of Democrats but less than half of Republicans believe that racism is a serious problem at both individual and system levels. People who are largely spiritual are particularly likely to believe that racism is both an individual and systemic problem.
   - A 77 percent majority of Americans think it is a serious problem that people are too quick to accuse others of racism. Republicans are particularly likely to see this as a serious problem, as are people who identify as both religious and spiritual.

2. Largely spiritual Americans as well as Democrats are especially supportive of actions to address racism and especially likely to see roles for various institutions in doing so. In a range of policy areas, Americans tend to favor equally distributing funding to all communities. But Democrats are somewhat more likely to favor providing additional funding to close gaps in communities of color.
   - A 65 percent majority of Americans believe that overcoming racism requires changes in laws and institutions, as well as in individual attitudes. Democrats and largely spiritual people are especially likely to think that overcoming racism requires both institutional and individual change.
• Fifty nine percent of Americans think it is a serious problem that elected officials are not doing enough to ensure people of color are treated fairly, including 78 percent of Democrats and 69 percent of largely spiritual people.

• But 52 percent of Americans think elected officials focus too much on racial fairness, including 66 percent of Republicans. People who are largely religious and who are both religious and spiritual are most likely to believe that elected officials focus too much on racial fairness.

• While a 73 percent majority of Americans think individuals have roles to play in overcoming racism, fewer (56 percent) see roles for government in overcoming racism. Fifty percent see roles for religious leaders and communities and 47 percent see roles for spiritual leaders and communities.

• In K–12, higher education, housing, health, and voting rights, Americans generally favor equally distributing resources across all communities. But more Democrats than Republicans favor additional investments in communities of color.

• When it comes to specific actions to address racism and its harms, overall support is strongest for expanding access to higher education for students of color and for creating K–12 curriculum that addresses racism. Support is weaker for financially compensating Native Americans for their ancestors’ land or financially compensating Black Americans whose ancestors were enslaved.

3. Most Americans believe that religious and spiritual people, leaders, and communities should speak up about racism and advocate for policies to address it. Democrats are especially likely to believe so, as are largely spiritual people and people who are both religious and spiritual.

• About two-thirds of Americans believe that religious people and spiritual people should speak up against racism. People who identify as largely spiritual or as both religious and spiritual are especially likely to believe so, as are Democrats.

• About two-thirds of Americans support religious and spiritual leaders and communities advocating for policies to overcome racism. Again, people who identify as largely spiritual or as both religious and spiritual are most supportive, as are Democrats.

• But this pattern shifts somewhat when it comes to the less action-oriented question of whether religion and spirituality in general bring together people of different racial backgrounds. While most Americans believe that they do, slightly more Republicans believe so, as do more people who are both religious and spiritual.

This survey does not include a sufficiently large sample of Native Americans to be able to compare their views to those of other racial and ethnic groups, a limitation that Public Agenda hopes to address in future research.

To learn more about these findings or about the Hidden Common Ground initiative, email research@publicagenda.org or go to https://www.publicagenda.org/reports/hcg-racial-justice-2023/.

This Public Agenda/USA TODAY Hidden Common Ground® (HCG) research is supported by the Fetzer Institute. The Hidden Common Ground initiative challenges the narrative that Americans are hopelessly divided and incapable of working together. Through research and public engagement, HCG helps Americans identify and strengthen their common ground, productively navigate their differences, and create equitable and productive solutions to the challenges of our time.

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Most Americans identify as either religious, or spiritual, or both. The survey asked respondents to what extent they consider themselves to be religious and, separately, to what extent they considered themselves to be spiritual. People who identify themselves as very or moderately religious and as very or moderately spiritual are categorized in this research as “both religious and spiritual.” People who identify themselves as very or moderately religious but slightly or not at all spiritual are categorized as “largely religious.” People who identify as very or moderately spiritual but slightly or not at all religious are categorized as “largely spiritual.” People who identify as slightly or not at all religious or spiritual are categorized as “neither spiritual nor religious.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Both religious and spiritual</th>
<th>Largely religious</th>
<th>Largely spiritual</th>
<th>Neither religious nor spiritual</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>42%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of Americans are both very or moderately religious and very or moderately spiritual.</td>
<td>of Americans are very or moderately religious but only slightly or not at all spiritual or do not know if they are spiritual.</td>
<td>of Americans are very or moderately spiritual but only slightly or not at all religious or do not know if they are religious.</td>
<td>of Americans are slightly or not at all religious or do not know, and slightly or not at all spiritual or do not know.</td>
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Including

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Both religious and spiritual</th>
<th>Largely religious</th>
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<td>Republicans</td>
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<td>8%</td>
<td>13%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independents</td>
<td>36%</td>
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<td>21%</td>
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<td>Unaffiliated</td>
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<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
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<td>Black</td>
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<td>Latino</td>
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<td>White</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>17%</td>
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Base: All respondents, N=2,788; Both religious and spiritual, N=1,065; Largely spiritual, N=531; Largely religious, N=158; Neither religious nor spiritual, N=934; Democrat, N=1,074; Republican, N=658; Independent, N=717; Politically unaffiliated, N=338; White (non-Hispanic), N=1,479; Black (non-Hispanic), N=510; Latina, N= 519; Asian American, N=166. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.


2 The Independent group includes those who self-identify as Independents, without respect to whether they “lean” Democratic or Republican. The “politically unaffiliated” group includes those who have no preference toward political affiliation with the three dominant categories of political affiliations Republican, Democrat, or Independents) or who skipped the question, “Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as...?” A small number of these people may be affiliated with small political parties.
FINDING

Americans agree on the principle of racial equality. But Democrats and Republicans differ in their views on racism, its impact on people of color, and the impact on white people of efforts to combat it. Differences of opinion by religiosity and spirituality also emerge in views on racism and its impacts.

A 91 percent majority of Americans somewhat or strongly agree with the statement that “All people deserve an equal opportunity to succeed, no matter their race or ethnicity.” This basic principle is widely held across political affiliations, racial and ethnic identities, and by people with different degrees of religiosity and spirituality; see Figure 1. It is also widely held across ages and levels of educational attainment.
Americans widely believe that all people regardless of race or ethnicity deserve equal opportunity.

**Figure 1.** Percent who strongly or somewhat agree that all Americans deserve an equal opportunity to succeed, no matter their race or ethnicity:

Yet Americans vary in their view on the effects of racism and efforts to combat it. For example, 82 percent of Democrats believe that racism makes it more difficult for people of color to succeed, compared to 45 percent of Republicans, with Independents falling in between (62 percent). More Americans who are largely spiritual believe so, compared to those who are largely religious, both religious and spiritual, or neither religious nor spiritual. Relatively large majorities of Black (80 percent), Latino (73 percent), and Asian (73 percent) Americans also think racism makes it more difficult for people of color to succeed, compared to 56 percent of white Americans; see **Figure 2**.

By contrast, 61 percent of Republicans believe that efforts to combat racism are making life more difficult for white Americans, compared to 31 percent of Democrats and 43 percent of Independents. Slight majorities of those who are largely religious and of those who are both religious and spiritual also believe that efforts to combat racism are making life more difficult for white Americans. Differences by race and ethnicity on this question are relatively modest, with white and Latino Americans slightly more likely to agree than Asian or Black Americans; see **Figure 2**.
About two-thirds of Americans believe that racism makes life difficult for people of color. About four in ten believe that efforts to address racism are making life difficult for white people.

**Figure 2** Percent who strongly or somewhat agree with each of the following statements:

**Racism makes it more difficult for people of color to succeed in America.**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Political affiliation</th>
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<td></td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>62%</td>
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<th>Largely religious</th>
<th>Largely spiritual</th>
<th>Neither religious nor spiritual</th>
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<td></td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>59%</td>
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<thead>
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<th>White</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Efforts to combat racism are making life more difficult for white Americans.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>44%</td>
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<th>Largely religious</th>
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<td></td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>56%</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Race and ethnicity</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>40%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>47%</td>
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**Base:** All respondents, N=2,788; Democrat, N=1,074; Republican, N=658; Independent, N=717; Politically unaffiliated, N=339; Both religious and spiritual, N=1,165; Largely spiritual, N=533; Largely religious, N=168; Neither religious nor spiritual, N=934; White (non-Hispanic), N=1,479; Black (non-Hispanic), N=610; Latino, N= 519; Asian American, N=168. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.
A similar pattern emerges in views on the extent to which racism is an individual- and systemic-level problem. For example, most Democrats (84 percent) say it is a serious problem that individuals treat Black, Latino, Asian, and Native Americans worse than white Americans. Most Democrats (83 percent) also say it is a serious problem that laws, systems, and institutions do so. By contrast, about half of Republicans see these two forms of racism as problems (51 percent and 46 percent, respectively), with Independents falling in between (65 percent and 61 percent, respectively); see Figure 3. People of color are especially likely to say that both individual and systemic racism are serious problems; see Figure 3.

More Democrats than Republicans believe that racism is both a systemic and individual problem, as do more Asian, Black, and Latino Americans than white Americans.

Figure 3. Percent who say each of the following are very or somewhat serious problems:

Individuals treating Black, Latino, Asian, and Native Americans worse than white Americans.
**Figure 3.** (continued) Percent who say each of the following are very or somewhat serious problems:

Laws, systems, and institutions treating Black, Latino, Asian, and Native Americans worse than white Americans.

### Political affiliation

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<th>Total</th>
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<td>64%</td>
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<td>83%</td>
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### Religiosity and spirituality

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<th>Largely spiritual</th>
<th>Neither religious nor spiritual</th>
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<td>64%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>72%</td>
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### Race and ethnicity

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<th>Latino</th>
<th>White</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>57%</td>
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<td>78%</td>
<td>81%</td>
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<tr>
<td>64%</td>
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<td>77%</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>46%</td>
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**Base:** All respondents, N=2,788; Democrat, N=1,074; Republican, N=658; Independent, N=717; Politically unaffiliated, N=339; Both religious and spiritual, N=1,165; Largely spiritual, N=531; Largely religious, N=158; Neither religious nor spiritual, N=934; White (non-Hispanic), N=1,479; Black (non-Hispanic), N=510; Latino, N= 519; Asian American, N=166. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.
A 77 percent majority of Americans think it is a serious problem that people are too quick to accuse others of racism. Statistically similar shares of white (79 percent), Latino (77 percent), and Asian (76 percent) Americans believe that this is a serious problem, compared to somewhat fewer (though still a majority) of Black Americans (68 percent). Republicans and people who identify as both religious and spiritual are especially likely to see this as a serious problem; see Figure 4.

About three-quarters of Americans think it is a problem that people are too quick to make accusations of racism.

**Figure 4.** Percent who say that people being too quick to accuse others of racism is a very or somewhat serious problem:

- **Political affiliation**
  - Total: 69%
  - Democrats: 77%
  - Republicans: 86%
  - Independents: 74%
  - Unaffiliated: 74%

- **Religiosity and spirituality**
  - Total: 72%
  - Both religious and spiritual: 83%
  - Largely religious: 77%
  - Largely spiritual: 70%
  - Neither religious nor spiritual: 75%

- **Race and ethnicity**
  - Total: 68%
  - Asian: 77%
  - Black: 76%
  - Latino: 90%
  - White: 100%

**Base:** All respondents, N=2,788; Democrat, N=1,074; Republican, N=658; Independent, N=717; Politically unaffiliated, N=339; Both religious and spiritual, N=1,165; Largely spiritual, N=531; Largely religious, N=158; Neither religious nor spiritual, N=934; White (non-Hispanic), N=1,479; Black (non-Hispanic), N=510; Latino, N=519; Asian American, N=166. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.
Largely spiritual Americans as well as Democrats are especially supportive of actions to address racism and especially likely to see roles for various institutions in doing so. In a range of policy areas, Americans tend to favor equally distributing funding to all communities. But Democrats are somewhat more likely to favor providing additional funding to close gaps in communities of color.

Consistent with their differing views on whether racism is both an individual and systemic problem, Americans also differ in their views on whether overcoming it requires changes in laws and institutions, as well as in individual attitudes. Sixty-five percent of Americans overall believe that both types of change are necessary, including far more Democrats (82 percent) than Republicans (50 percent), with Independents falling in between (64 percent). There are also substantial differences in views on this question between people of color and white people, and more modest differences in views by religiosity and spirituality; see Figure 5.
About two-thirds of Americans believe that overcoming racism requires changes in laws and institutions and in individual attitudes. Democrats, largely spiritual people, and people of color are especially likely to think so.

**Figure 5.** Percent who strongly or somewhat agree that overcoming racism requires more than changing people’s attitudes, it requires fundamental changes in our laws and institutions:

Americans also differ in their views on whether elected officials are focusing too much or not enough on racial fairness. For example, 59 percent of Americans think it is a serious problem that elected officials are not doing enough to ensure that Black, Latino, Asian, and Native Americans are treated fairly, while 52 percent think it is a problem that elected officials are focusing on it too much; see **Figure 6**.

Democrats and largely spiritual people are especially likely to think it is a problem that elected officials are not doing enough to ensure that Black, Latino, Asian, and Native Americans are treated fairly. Republicans are especially likely to think it is a problem that elected officials are focusing on it too much. People who are largely religious and people who are both religious and spiritual are also more likely to think elected officials are focusing too much on racial fairness; see **Figure 6**.

Differences of opinion by race and ethnicity on the question of whether elected officials are not doing enough are actually larger than on the question of whether elected officials are focusing on it too much; see **Figure 6**.
Americans are split over whether elected officials are focusing too much or not enough on racial fairness.

**Figure 6.** Percent who say each of the following are very or somewhat serious problems:

- **Elected officials not doing enough to ensure that Black, Latino, Asian, and Native Americans are treated fairly.**

- **Elected officials focusing too much on whether Black, Latino, Asian, and Native Americans are treated fairly.**

**Base:** All respondents, N=2,788; Democrat, N=1,074; Republican, N=658; Independent, N=717; Politically unaffiliated, N=339; Both religious and spiritual, N=1,165; Largely spiritual, N=531; Largely religious, N=158; Neither religious nor spiritual, N=934; White (non-Hispanic), N=1,479; Black (non-Hispanic), N=510; Latino, N= 519; Asian American, N=166. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.
Nearly three-quarters of Americans (73 percent) believe that individuals have roles to play in overcoming racism. But fewer believe that institutional entities do. For example, 56 percent of Americans believe that governments have a role to play in overcoming racism, 50 percent believe that religious leaders or communities have roles to play, and 47 percent believe that spiritual leaders and communities have roles to play; see Figure 7.

Generally speaking, more Democrats than people of other political affiliations see roles for institutional entities in overcoming racism. Differences of opinion by race and ethnicity tend to be modest or minimal. Differences by religion and spirituality do not follow a perfectly consistent pattern, but generally speaking more largely spiritual people than largely religious people see roles for most institutional entities in overcoming racism; see Figure 7.

About three-quarters of Americans think individuals have roles to play in overcoming racism. Fewer think that any other entities do.

Figure 7. Percent who believe each of the following have roles to play in overcoming racism in America:
Figure 7. (continued) Percent who believe each of the following have roles to play in overcoming racism in America:

**National and local governments**

![Graph showing political affiliation, religiosity and spirituality, and race and ethnicity](image)

**Institutions such as schools, colleges, and hospitals**

![Graph showing political affiliation, religiosity and spirituality, and race and ethnicity](image)
Figure 7. (continued) Percent who believe each of the following have roles to play in overcoming racism in America:

**Religious leaders and communities**

- **Political affiliation**
  - Total: 46% 50%
  - Democrats: 49%
  - Republicans: 43%
  - Independents: 50%
  - Unaffiliated: 57%

- **Religiosity and spirituality**
  - Total: 39% 50% 56%
  - Both religious and spiritual: 43%
  - Largely religious: 50%
  - Largely spiritual: 55%
  - Neither religious nor spiritual: 50%

- **Race and ethnicity**
  - Total: 45% 50% 53%
  - Asian: 50%
  - Black: 51%
  - Latino: 56%
  - White: 43%

**Spiritual leaders and communities**

- **Political affiliation**
  - Total: 39% 47% 56%
  - Democrats: 41%
  - Republicans: 48%
  - Independents: 50%
  - Unaffiliated: 57%

- **Religiosity and spirituality**
  - Total: 34% 39% 52%
  - Both religious and spiritual: 39%
  - Largely religious: 47%
  - Largely spiritual: 50%
  - Neither religious nor spiritual: 57%

- **Race and ethnicity**
  - Total: 44% 47% 51%
  - Asian: 46%
  - Black: 48%
  - Latino: 60%
  - White: 43%
Figure 7. (continued) Percent who believe each of the following have roles to play in overcoming racism in America:

 Corporations and businesses

 Political affiliation

 Religiosity and spirituality

 Race and ethnicity

 Grassroots community organizations

 Base: All respondents, N=2,788; Democrat, N=1,074; Republican, N=658; Independent, N=777; Politically unaffiliated, N=339; Both religious and spiritual, N=1,165; Largely religious, N=531; Largely spiritual, N=158; Neither religious nor spiritual, N=934; White (non-Hispanic), N=1,479; Black (non-Hispanic), N=510; Latino, N=519; Asian American, N=166. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.
This survey asked Americans how our nation should distribute resources to level the playing field for people of color in five policy areas: K–12 education, higher education, housing, health care, and voting rights. Options included:

- Equally distribute resources to all communities.
- Distribute resources to all communities with additional investment to close gaps in Black, Latino, Asian, and Native American communities.
- Primarily distribute resources to Black, Latino, Asian, and Native American communities.
- Do none of the above.

Overall, more Americans favor equally distributing resources to all communities than favor additional investments to close gaps in communities of color. Even fewer favor primarily distributing resources to communities of color; see Figure 8.

Abound seven in ten Republicans favor equal distribution of resources in K–12 education, higher education, housing, health care, and voting rights. About one in ten Republicans favor additional investment to close gaps in communities of color in those policy areas and fewer favor primarily distributing resources to communities of color. About half of Democrats favor equal distribution of resources, about one-third favor additional investment to close gaps, and fewer favor primarily distributing resources to communities of color.

Support for additional investment to close gaps in communities of color in K–12 education, higher education, housing, health care, and voting rights is higher among people of color than among white Americans. One-quarter to one-third of Asian, Black, and Latino Americans favor additional investment to close gaps in communities of color in those policy areas, compared to less than one in five white Americans. Around fifteen percent of Asian, Black, and Latino Americans support primarily distributing resources to communities of color, compared to around five percent of white Americans. About two-thirds of white Americans support equal distribution of resources, compared to about half of Asian, Black, and Latino Americans.

About one-third of largely spiritual people support additional investment to close gaps in communities of color, which is greater than the support expressed by people of other degrees of religiosity and spirituality. Support for primarily distributing resources to communities of color is strongest among largely religious people, although it never exceeds 19 percent of them in any policy area. Support for equal distribution of resources is strongest among Americans who are both religious and spiritual and among those who are neither religious nor spiritual.
More Americans favor distributing resources equally across all communities than favor additional investments to close gaps in communities of color.

**Figure 8.** Percent who say that, in order to level the playing field for Black, Latino, Asian, and Native Americans in each of the following areas, our nation should do each of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Equally distribute resources to all communities</th>
<th>Distribute resources to all communities with additional investment to close gaps in Black, Latino, Asian, and Native American communities</th>
<th>Primarily distribute resources to Black, Latino, Asian, and Native American communities</th>
<th>None of the above</th>
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<td>Voting rights</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>K-12 schools</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The health care system</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleges, universities, and community colleges</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The housing market</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Base: All respondents, N=2,788. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.*
When it comes to specific actions to address racism and its harms, support tends to be strongest among Democrats, largely spiritual people, and people of color. For example, a 68 percent majority of Americans support expanding access to colleges, universities, and community colleges for people of color. And a 61 percent majority supports K–12 schools educating students about the extent of racism that communities of color face. Support for both of these actions is highest among Democrats, largely spiritual people, and people of color; see Figures 9 and 10.

About two-thirds of Americans support expanding higher education access for students of color. Democrats, largely spiritual people, and people of color are especially supportive.

**Figure 9.** Percent who strongly or somewhat support expanding access to colleges, universities, and community colleges for Black, Latino, Asian, and Native Americans:

- **Political affiliation**
  - Total: 55%
  - Democrats: 68%
  - Republicans: 56%
  - Independents: 65%
  - Unaffiliated: 83%
- **Religiosity and spirituality**
  - Total: 64%
  - Both religious and spiritual: 68%
  - Largely religious: 70%
  - Largely spiritual: 78%
- **Race and ethnicity**
  - Total: 62%
  - Asian: 68%
  - Black: 74%
  - Latino: 82%
  - White: 81%

**Base:** All respondents, N=2,788; Democrat, N=1,074; Republican, N=658; Independent, N=717; Politically unaffiliated, N=339; Both religious and spiritual, N=1,339; Largely spiritual, N=533; Largely religious, N=158; Neither religious nor spiritual, N=934; White (non-Hispanic), N=1,478; Black (non-Hispanic), N=510; Latino, N=519; Asian American, N=166. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.
About six in ten Americans support educating students about the racism that people of color face. Democrats, largely spiritual people, and people of color are especially supportive.

Figure 10. Percent who strongly or somewhat support K-12 schools educating students about the extent of the racism that Black, Latino, Asian, and Native Americans face:

Base: All respondents, N=2,788; Democrat, N=1,074; Republican, N=658; Independent, N=717; Politically unaffiliated, N=339; Both religious and spiritual, N=1,165; Largely spiritual, N=531; Largely religious, N=158; Neither religious nor spiritual, N=934; White (non-Hispanic), N=1,479; Black (non-Hispanic), N=510; Latino, N= 519; Asian American, N=166. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.
Just over half (54 percent) of Americans support investing in communities of color that are most affected by climate change. There are substantial differences of opinion on this question by political affiliation, religiosity and spirituality, and by race and ethnicity; see Figure 11.

Support for investing in communities of color affected by climate change is strongest among Democrats, largely spiritual people, and people of color.

**Figure 11.** Percent who strongly or somewhat support investing in Black, Latino, Asian, and Native American communities that are most affected by climate change:

**Base:** All respondents, N=2,788; Democrat, N=1,074; Republican, N=658; Independent, N=717; Politically unaffiliated, N=339; Both religious and spiritual, N=1,165; Largely spiritual, N=531; Largely religious, N=158; Neither religious nor spiritual, N=934; White (non-Hispanic), N=1,479; Black (non-Hispanic), N=510; Latino, N=519; Asian American, N=166. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.
Just over half of Americans support financially compensating Native Americans whose ancestors’ land was taken unlawfully or deceitfully. Similarly large differences emerge by political affiliation and by race and ethnicity; see Figure 12. The sample of Native Americans in this survey was unfortunately not large enough to report on their responses.

**Figure 12.** Percent who strongly or somewhat support financially compensating Native Americans whose ancestors’ land was taken unlawfully or deceitfully:

**Base:** All respondents, N=2,788; Democrat, N=1,074; Republican, N=658; Independent, N=717; Politically unaffiliated, N=339; Both religious and spiritual, N=1,165; Largely spiritual, N=531; Largely religious, N=158; Neither religious nor spiritual, N=934; White (non-Hispanic), N=1,479; Black (non-Hispanic), N=510; Latino, N=519; Asian American, N=166. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.
About two in five Americans (41 percent) support financially compensating Black Americans whose ancestors were enslaved, while 48 percent oppose doing so, and 12 percent say they do not know. Again, more Democrats and people of color are supportive, with support particularly high among Black Americans; see Figure 13.

About four in ten Americans support financially compensating Black Americans whose ancestors were enslaved, including most Democrats and people of color.

Figure 13. Percent who strongly or somewhat support financially compensating Black Americans whose ancestors were enslaved:

Base: All respondents, N=2,788; Democrat, N=1,074; Republican, N=658; Independent, N=717; Politically unaffiliated, N=339; Both religious and spiritual, N=1,165; Largely spiritual, N=531; Largely religious, N=158; Neither religious nor spiritual, N=934; White (non-Hispanic), N=1,479; Black (non-Hispanic), N=510; Latino, N=519; Asian American, N=166. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.
Most Americans believe that religious and spiritual people, leaders, and communities should speak up about racism and advocate for policies to address it. Democrats are especially likely to believe so, as are largely spiritual people, and people who are both religious and spiritual.

Most Americans think that religion and that spirituality bring people of different racial backgrounds together. More Republicans and more people who are both religious and spiritual think that religion in particular brings together across racial backgrounds; see Figure 14.
Most Americans believe that religion and spirituality bring people of different races together.

**Figure 14.** Percent who strongly or somewhat agree with the following statements:

**Religion brings people of different racial backgrounds together.**

- Political affiliation:
  - Total: 58% 66% 78%
  - Democrats: 56% 69% 78%
  - Republicans: 57% 66% 78%
  - Independents: 58% 69% 78%
  - Unaffiliated: 54% 63% 73%

- Religiosity and spirituality:
  - Total: 53% 65% 80%
  - Both religious and spiritual: 53% 65% 80%
  - Largely religious: 56% 69% 77%
  - Largely spiritual: 69% 73% 87%
  - Neither religious nor spiritual: 56% 68% 73%

- Race and ethnicity:
  - Total: 69% 73%
  - Asian: 68% 70%
  - Black: 70% 72%
  - Latino: 75% 73%
  - White: 80% 83%

**Spirituality brings people of different racial backgrounds together.**

- Political affiliation:
  - Total: 63% 70% 78%
  - Democrats: 63% 70% 78%
  - Republicans: 63% 70% 78%
  - Independents: 63% 70% 78%
  - Unaffiliated: 63% 70% 78%

- Religiosity and spirituality:
  - Total: 56% 69% 77%
  - Both religious and spiritual: 56% 69% 77%
  - Largely religious: 56% 69% 77%
  - Largely spiritual: 69% 73% 87%
  - Neither religious nor spiritual: 56% 68% 73%

- Race and ethnicity:
  - Total: 73% 83%
  - Asian: 72% 75%
  - Black: 75% 76%
  - Latino: 73% 75%
  - White: 83% 83%

**Base:** All respondents, N=2,788; Democrat, N=1,074; Republican, N=658; Independent, N=717; Politically unaffiliated, N=339; Both religious and spiritual, N=1,165; Largely spiritual, N=531; Largely religious, N=158; Neither religious nor spiritual, N=934; White (non-Hispanic), N=1,479; Black (non-Hispanic), N=510; Latino, N=519; Asian American, N=166. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.
But when it comes to taking action to address racism, this pattern shifts. For example, Democrats are especially supportive of religious leaders and communities speaking up against racism and of spiritual leaders and communities doing so. Black and Asian Americans are more supportive of religious and spiritual leaders and communities speaking up against racism than white and Latino Americans are. People who are largely spiritual or who are both religious and spiritual are also particularly supportive; see Figure 15.

Seven in ten Americans support both religious and spiritual leaders and communities speaking up against racism.

Figure 15. Percent who strongly or somewhat support the following:

Religious leaders and communities speaking up against racism.

Political affiliation
- Total: 57%
- Democrats: 66%
- Republicans: 71%
- Independents: 80%
- Unaffiliated: 69%

Religiosity and spirituality
- Total: 62%
- Both religious and spiritual: 71%
- Largely religious: 77%

Race and ethnicity
- Total: 68%
- Asian: 79%
- Black: 78%
- Latino: 79%
- White: 71%
About two-thirds of Americans believe that both religious and spiritual people have responsibilities to speak up against racism. This belief is particularly strong among Democrats, people who are largely spiritual, people who are both religious and spiritual, and Black and Asian Americans; see Figure 16.
About two-thirds of Americans believe that both religious and spiritual people should speak up against racism.

Figure 16. Percent who strongly or somewhat agree with the following statements:

**Religious people have a responsibility to speak up against racism.**

- **Political affiliation**
  - Total: 48% 63% 73% 64%
  - Democrats: 60% 65% 75% 64%
  - Republicans: 49% 60% 75% 64%
  - Independents: 63% 66% 73% 66%
  - Unaffiliated: 56% 61% 70% 73%

- **Religiosity and spirituality**
  - Total: 56% 61% 70% 73%
  - Both religious and spiritual: 53% 57% 65% 73%
  - Largely religious: 56% 61% 70% 73%
  - Largely spiritual: 73%
  - Neither religious nor spiritual: 0%

- **Race and ethnicity**
  - Total: 63% 66% 72% 73%
  - Asian: 67% 73%
  - Black: 67% 73%
  - Latino: 67% 73%
  - White: 67% 73%

**Spiritual people have a responsibility to speak up against racism.**

- **Political affiliation**
  - Total: 49% 60% 75% 64%
  - Democrats: 60% 65% 75% 64%
  - Republicans: 49% 60% 75% 64%
  - Independents: 63% 66% 73% 66%
  - Unaffiliated: 56% 61% 70% 73%

- **Religiosity and spirituality**
  - Total: 53% 57% 65% 73%
  - Both religious and spiritual: 53% 57% 65% 73%
  - Largely religious: 56% 61% 70% 73%
  - Largely spiritual: 73%
  - Neither religious nor spiritual: 0%

- **Race and ethnicity**
  - Total: 62% 65% 72% 75%
  - Asian: 66%
  - Black: 66%
  - Latino: 66%
  - White: 66%

**Base:** All respondents, N=2,788; Democrat, N=1,074; Republican, N=658; Independent, N=717; Politically unaffiliated, N=339; Both religious and spiritual, N=1,165; Largely spiritual, N=531; Largely religious, N=158; Neither religious nor spiritual, N=934; White (non-Hispanic), N=1,479; Black (non-Hispanic), N=510; Latino, N=519; Asian American, N=166. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.
A similar pattern emerges on the question of whether religious or spiritual leaders and communities should actually advocate for laws and policies to overcome racism. Support is strongest among Democrats, people who are largely spiritual or both religious and spiritual, and people of color; see Figure 17.

About two-thirds of Americans support both religious and spiritual leaders and communities advocating for policies to address racism.

**Figure 17.** Percent who strongly or somewhat agree with the following statements:

**Religious leaders and communities advocating for laws and policies to overcome racism.**
Figure 17. (continued) Percent who strongly or somewhat agree with the following statements:

Spiritual leaders and communities advocating for laws and policies to overcome racism.

<table>
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<th>Political affiliation</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<th>Republicans</th>
<th>Independents</th>
<th>Unaffiliated</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>57%</td>
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<table>
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<th>Total</th>
<th>Both religious and spiritual</th>
<th>Largely religious</th>
<th>Largely spiritual</th>
<th>Neither religious nor spiritual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race and ethnicity</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Latino</th>
<th>White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: All respondents, N=2,788; Democrat, N=1,074; Republican, N=658; Independent, N=717; Politically unaffiliated, N=339; Both religious and spiritual, N=1,165; Largely spiritual, N=531; Largely religious, N=158; Neither religious nor spiritual, N=934; White (non-Hispanic), N=1,479; Black (non-Hispanic), N=510; Latino, N=519; Asian American, N=166. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.
This report summarizes findings from a nationally representative survey of 2,788 adult Americans 18 years and older. The survey was designed by Public Agenda and fielded February 28 to March 3, 2023, by Ipsos. Respondents completed the survey online in English. The survey has a credibility interval of plus or minus 2.3 percentage points for all respondents. Credibility intervals are greater for population subgroups. The sample was randomly drawn from Ipsos’s online panel, partner online panel sources, and “river” sampling. Ipsos calibrates respondent characteristics to be representative of the U.S. population using standard procedures such as raking-ratio adjustments. The source of these population targets is U.S. Census 2019 American Community Survey data. Post-hoc weights were made to the population characteristics on gender, age, race and ethnicity, region, and education. Political affiliation benchmarks are drawn from recent high-quality telephone polls.

In order to develop the survey questions, Public Agenda conducted three demographically diverse online focus groups in November 2022: one with predominantly Republicans, one with predominantly Democrats, and one with people of a variety of political affiliations.

When referencing this report, cite Public Agenda. For a complete methodology and topline with full question wording, email research@publicagenda.org or go to https://www.publicagenda.org/reports/hcg-racial-justice-2023/.
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