

NOVEMBER 2019

FIRST EDITION

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM INDEX

*American Perspectives on
the First Amendment*

2019 RELIGIOUS FREEDOM INDEX

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First Amendment*

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BECKET
Religious Liberty for All

**RELIGIOUS
FREEDOM
INDEX**

American
Perspectives on the
First Amendment
First Edition

ABOUT THE BECKET FUND FOR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

This report is published by the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, a non-profit, public-interest legal and educational institute with a mission to protect the free expression of all faiths. Becket exists to vindicate a simple but frequently neglected principle: that because the religious impulse is natural to human beings, religious expression is natural to human culture. We advance that principle in three arenas—the courts of law, the court of public opinion, and the academy—both in the United States and abroad. At Becket we like to say we’ve defended the religious rights of people from “A to Z,” from Anglicans to Zoroastrians. Our supporters represent a myriad of religions, but they all share our common vision of a world where religious freedom is respected as a fundamental human right that all are entitled to enjoy and exercise. In defending these ideas, in theory and in practice, we find ourselves at the crossroads of church and state.

The Becket Fund for Religious Liberty

1200 New Hampshire Ave. NW, Suite 700, Washington, D.C. 20036

www.becketlaw.org

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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We also wish to acknowledge our research partner, Heart+Mind Strategies and Dr. Dee Allsop for their work in identifying the need for this Index and partnership in its development.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

When it comes to religious liberty, it has been nearly impossible to assess whether, or how, American opinion has changed. If America is becoming less religious, as some polls indicate, does that necessarily mean it is also becoming less supportive of religious liberty protections? Are we, in fact, divided on questions of religious freedom?

If we go by the media headlines, American culture today is characterized by deep division. Prevailing norms and ideas have shifted, in some cases drastically, and in many cases rapidly. Yet, the headlines and polls that testify to America's cultural divide, attributing it to changing ideas, in some cases fail to provide a "big picture" sense of exactly how much those ideas have changed. When it comes to religious liberty, it has been nearly impossible to assess whether, or how, American opinion has changed. If America is becoming less religious, as some polls indicate, does that necessarily mean it is also becoming less supportive of religious liberty protections? Are we, in fact, divided on questions of religious freedom?

The Religious Freedom Index is designed to give a 30,000-foot view of changes in American attitudes on religious liberty by surveying a nationally representative sample of 1,000 American adults. Rather than focus on the most hot-button issues dominating the news-cycle, questions asked in the Index cover a wide spectrum of religious liberty protections under the First Amendment. The responses to these questions statistically group into six dimensions: 1) Religious Pluralism, 2) Religion and Policy, 3) Religious Sharing, 4) Religion in Society, 5) Church and State, and 6) Religion in Action. The composite Index score is the average score of these dimensions.

2019 KEY FINDINGS:

CONSENSUS IN A POLARIZED SOCIETY:

Even after decades of religious freedom being pulled into the culture wars, Americans accept and support a broad interpretation of religious freedom.

PREFERENCE FOR HANDS-OFF GOVERNMENT APPROACH:

Americans are uncomfortable with the idea of the government penalizing groups and individuals for living out their religious beliefs.

SUPPORT FOR A CULTURE OF ACCOMMODATION:

Contrary to popular narratives of increased tribalism and polarization, Americans support a culture of accommodation for minority faith practices.

CONSENSUS IN A POLARIZED SOCIETY

The central finding from this first year's Index is that religious freedom has survived the culture wars. After years of religious freedom being pushed to the center of polarizing debates, rather than reveal a partisan 50-50 split, the Index scored in the upper third on the scale of favorability toward religious liberty. Across dimensions, we saw public support well above 70 percent on many issues, indicating that the concept of religious freedom maintains its place as a core American cultural value. And yet, the level of news coverage, discussion, and policy efforts surrounding religious freedom indicate that it sits at a historical inflection point. This year's Index composite score of 67 serves as a baseline for future trends. Coming years could show religious freedom weakening and dividing along partisan lines or strengthening and expanding across demographics.

PREFERENCE FOR A HANDS-OFF GOVERNMENT APPROACH

Under the Religious Pluralism dimension, respondents overwhelmingly supported the freedom to believe and to practice beliefs free from persecution by others—87 percent supported the right to practice religion in daily life without facing discrimination or harm. Notably, respondents not only supported freedom from persecution from other individuals, but also supported freedom from government intrusion into religious practices in contexts beyond daily life. With respect to hiring and selecting leaders, for example, 70 percent of respondents supported the ability of religious organizations to make those decisions free from government interference. Respondents were similarly united in their support for the idea that religious groups that provide important services in the community should have the same access to government funds as nonreligious groups that do similar work. On this matter, 66 percent agreed that religious organizations should be eligible on the same terms as nonreligious organizations to receive government funds for providing services to the community. Even in the controversial area of beliefs about marriage, 74 percent of respondents said individuals and groups should not face discrimination, fines, or penalties from the government for those beliefs.

SUPPORT FOR A CULTURE OF ACCOMMODATION

Although many studies find evidence for increased tribalism and exclusivity in American culture, in the context of religious freedom, the Index shows strong support for a culture of acceptance and accommodation of minority beliefs and practices. On a question that included examples of practices from a wide range of religions, including Sikhs, Jehovah's Witnesses and many other, 80 percent of respondents expressed support for the freedom to practice such beliefs in general, and 74 percent supported the expression of similar practices in the workplace.

Even when a religious practice may impose on or inconveniences others, 63 percent of respondents expressed support for the freedom to practice those beliefs in daily life, including the workplace. The responses to this questionnaire are also notable for how Millennials and younger generations generally express greater support than older generations, the reverse of the results for most dimensions.

Launching the first edition of the Religious Freedom Index is like being at Everest base camp—an exciting time of anticipation for the journey to come but only fully understood only once you're up the mountain, able to look back where you were when you began. Likewise, we're eager to present the findings from the first edition of the Index, but also look forward with even greater anticipation to coming years' data that will reveal the trends of where we've been and how we got to the future.

The data gathered in the Index goes far beyond what we are able to communicate in this report. We hope that you will join in the exploration of our findings and ask questions of your own that will lead to additional insights on the intersection of religion and fundamental civil rights. And we hope that you'll continue to join us in years to come as we gain new perspectives on this “base camp”—perspectives that will guide all invested in religious freedom to new insights.






INTRODUCING THE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM INDEX: METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

The Religious Freedom Index includes data gathered in an annual online poll in fall 2019 of a nationally representative sample of American adults (n=1,000). The poll includes 21 questions that contribute to the Index and will be asked with the same phrasing every year. The poll also includes additional questions that are not calculated in any of the Index dimensions and will change from year-to-year based on current events. The polling is scheduled to take place each year between mid-September and mid-October.

After this year's results were gathered through an independent third party, Heart and Mind Strategies constructed the Index and dimensions via factor, path and conceptual analysis including second-factor modeling. Each dimension is calculated by using and scoring individual responses to questions indicated in the graphic below. Within each dimension, the scores on individual responses are used to calculate a summated score for that dimension and re-scaled from 0 to 100. The average of all six of the dimension scores is then used to create the final Index indicator.

On the scale from 0 to 100, 0 indicates minimal support for the principle of religious freedom at issue and 100 indicates robust support for the same principle.

The Becket Fund for Religious Liberty did not participate in the gathering or coding of responses, or in the scale construction. Rather, Becket contributed its broad expertise representing people of all faiths in religious liberty cases to ensure that the polling instrument broadly reflected America's many diverse religions and the full spectrum of religious liberty issues. Becket produces the final report, disseminates the findings, and engages the public in discussions on the Index and religious freedom.

Methodology		
 MODE	_____	Online Survey
 LENGTH	_____	15 minutes
 DATES	_____	October 2-10, 2019
 AUDIENCE	_____	n=1,000
 GEOGRAPHY	_____	USA, nationally representative

Religious Pluralism

Degree personally accept: Freedom for people to choose a religion, if they want to

Degree personally accept: Freedom to practice a religion in daily life without facing discrimination or harm from others

Degree personally accept: Freedom to pray or worship without fear of persecution

Degree personally accept: Tolerance and respect of a broad array of ideas and beliefs about God

Degree personally accept: Freedom to practice one's religious beliefs even if they are contrary to accepted majority practices

Religious Sharing

Degree personally accept: Freedom to express or share religious beliefs with others

Degree personally accept: Freedom of individuals to preach the doctrine of their faith to others

Religion and Policy

Degree personally accept: Freedom for people to run their business or private organizations according to their religious beliefs

Degree personally accept: The freedom to believe that certain behaviors and activities are immoral, sinful, and should be avoided in our society

Degree personally accept: The freedom for any individual or group to believe that marriage is the union of a man and woman without having to worry about facing discrimination, penalties, or fines from government.

Degree personally accept: The freedom for people to rely on their personal religious beliefs to guide their voting decisions—which candidates to vote for and how to vote on different issues.

Degree personally accept: Freedom for religious groups or organizations to make their own employment and leadership decisions without government interference

Degree personally accept: Freedom for religious organizations and leaders to discuss political topics and to endorse or oppose political candidates

Religion in Action

Degree personally accept: Freedom for people or groups to choose not to participate in actions or work that violates their sincere religious beliefs and conscience

Degree personally accept: Freedom of employees to practice their faith at work by wearing religious clothing or refusing to work on certain days of the week

Degree personally accept: Freedom to practice one's religion in daily life or at work even if it creates an imposition or inconvenience for others

Religion in Society

Belief: People of Faith/Religion are a part of the solution

Perception of self-acceptance of people of faith

Perception of personal appreciation of people of faith

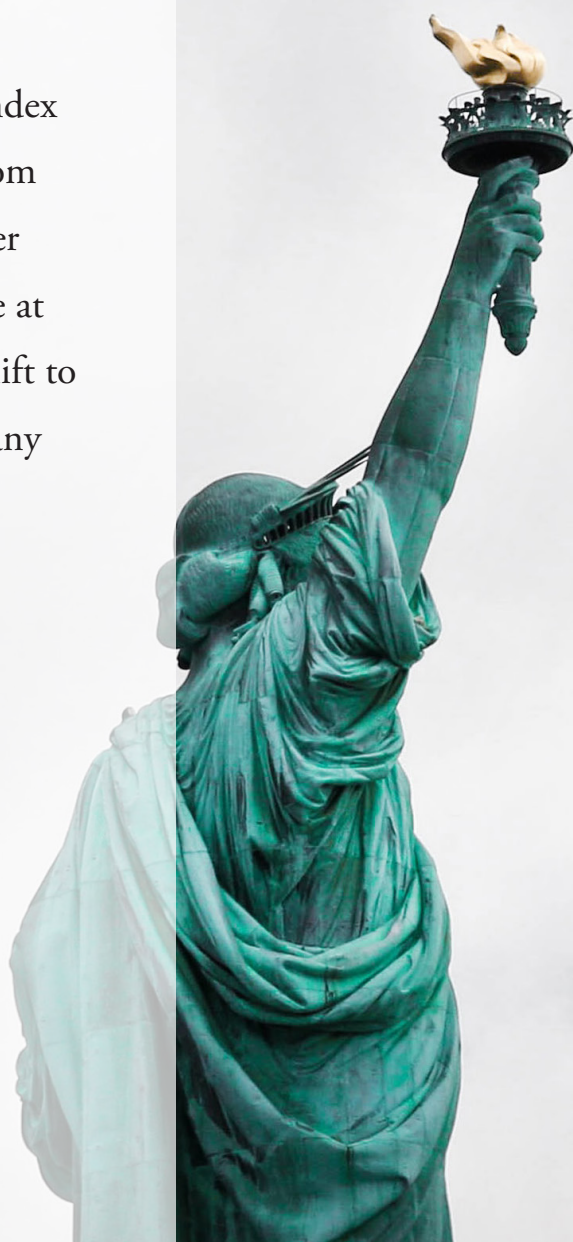
Church & State

Agreement that religious organizations that provide services to help in the community should be just as eligible to receive government funds as non-religious organizations that provide the same kind of services in the community

Agreement that the government should be able to use religious symbols or language in public displays (statues, murals, etc.), because religion has played an important role in our country's history and culture

FIRST YEAR INDEX RESULTS

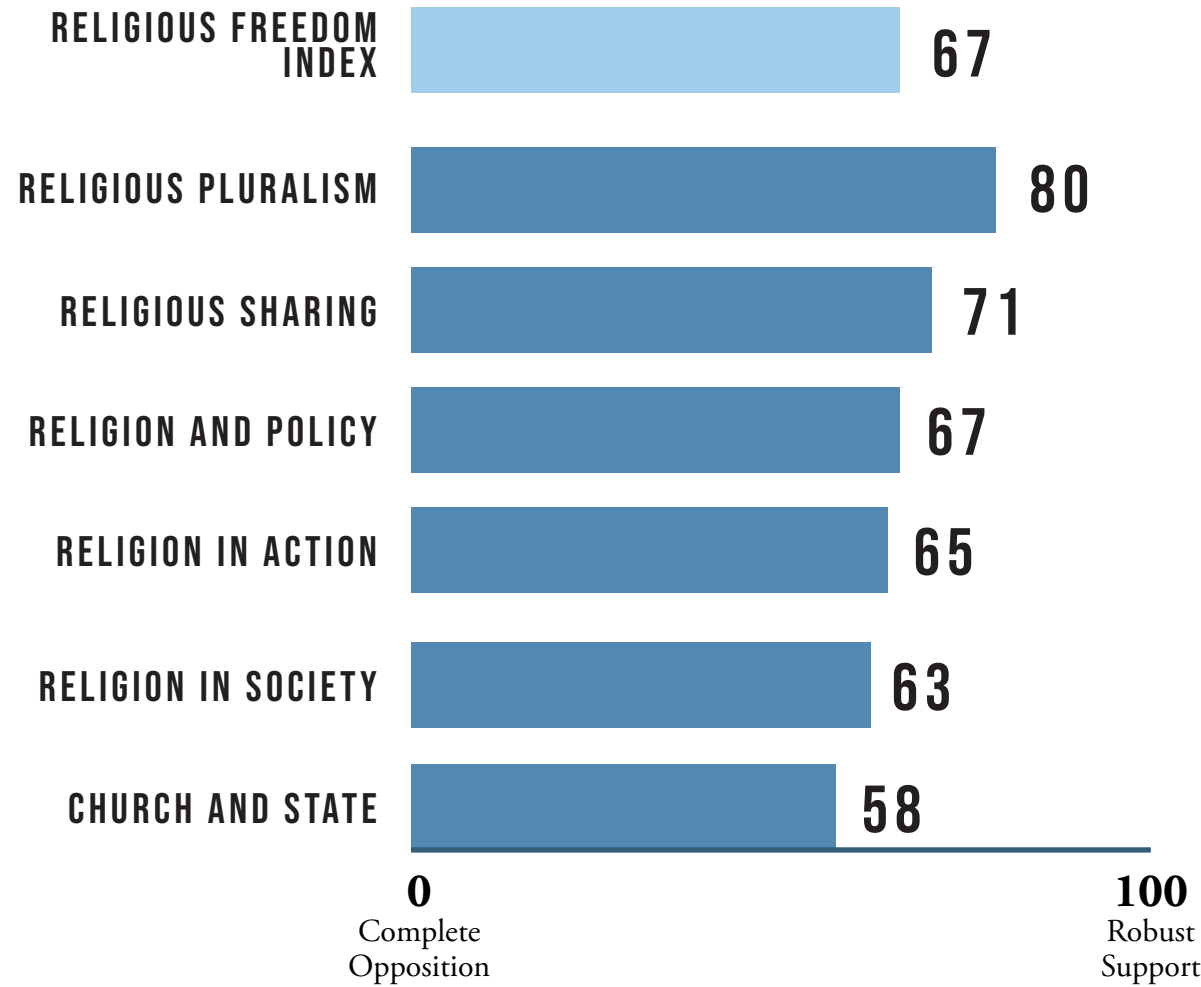
With a first edition score of 67, the 2019 Index indicated strong support for religious freedom protections. Future results will show whether religious liberty will remain a unifying value at the core of American cultural identity, or shift to a partisan and controversial topic like so many others.



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Within each dimension, we find a range of support for different aspects of religious freedom. Most dimensions reflect strong support but—as discussed on the pages that follow—also show variations across different demographic blocks, levels of interaction with religious people, and individual experience with faith.

2019 INDEX AND DIMENSION SCORES



INDEX DIMENSIONS

80

Religious Pluralism

How do respondents view the basic rights to hold beliefs about God, adhere to a religion, and live out the basic tenets of that religion in their daily life?

71

Religious Sharing

When someone follows a religion, to what extent should they be free to share their religion and beliefs with others?

67

Religion and Policy

What is the proper place for religion when it intersects with law and policy? To what extent should the government be able to influence religious practices?

65

Religion in Action

How free are individuals to practice their beliefs beyond the walls of their homes or places of worship?

63

Religion in Society

How does religion contribute to a healthy society and how do people feel about the efforts of religion to make contributions within society?

58

Church and State

What are the boundaries of interactions between government and religion?

The background of the page features a close-up, slightly blurred image of an American flag on the left side, with its stars and stripes clearly visible. To the right of the flag, a portion of a light-colored, textured building facade is visible. The overall composition is clean and professional, with a focus on patriotic imagery.

FIRST EDITION INDEX FINDINGS

Across the dimensions of this year's Index, three themes emerge to provide insights into the way Americans view the state of religious liberty protections. In each of these themes, we see support for robust religious liberty protections in a variety of contexts.

In 2019, the majority of Americans accept and support religious freedom as a fundamental right as shown by the Index indicator score of 67.

Although that fact may not come as a surprise, the Index clearly shows that Americans support a much broader array of religious freedom principles than current news cycles might suggest.

The majorities seen in most of the dimensions are too strong to categorize as the domain of one political party, age group, or education level. Rather, each dimension shows support that crosses political aisles, generation gaps, and educational experiences.

Across dimensions three themes emerge in the Index's first year:

1

CONSENSUS IN A POLARIZED SOCIETY:

Even after decades of religious freedom being pulled into the culture wars, Americans accept and support a broad interpretation of religious freedom.

2

PREFERENCE FOR HANDS-OFF GOVERNMENT APPROACH:

Americans are uncomfortable with the idea of the government penalizing groups and individuals for living out their religious beliefs.

3

SUPPORT FOR A CULTURE OF ACCOMMODATION:

Contrary to popular narratives of increased tribalism and polarization, Americans support a culture of accommodation for minority faith practices.



CONSENSUS IN A POLARIZED SOCIETY

Even after years of religious freedom being pulled into the center of heated and partisan debates, the principles surveyed in the Index show that, while any individual religious freedom topic may be polarizing, Americans still accept and support a broad interpretation of religious freedom. This support is even more significant given the reported decline of religiosity in America shown in many national polls.¹

This year's Index shows the strongest support in the Religious Pluralism dimension, with a score of 80. This dimension deals with the basic rights to hold unique beliefs and to worship according to those beliefs without facing persecution.

The Religious Sharing dimension, which asks about the freedom to share beliefs with others and to have open conversations about religion in public, had the second highest level of support with a score of 71. In the middle range, with scores of 67, 65 and 63 respectively, are the Religion and Policy, Religious in Action, and Religion in Society Dimensions. These categories cover the broadest spectrum of freedoms, ranging from the right of private organizations to operate according to religious beliefs, to the right of religious individuals not to participate in actions and work that violates their faith, to people's appreciation of the contributions religious organizations make to society. At the furthest end of the spectrum is the Church and State dimension, with a score of 58, which touches on the interactions between government and religion in the contexts of funding and speech.

No dimension, nor any single question within a dimension, is supported by less than a majority of respondents. Even in the dimension showing the lowest levels of support—the Church and State dimension—a majority of respondents side with a broad interpretation of religious freedoms. If religious freedom were only a culture-war issue, one would expect

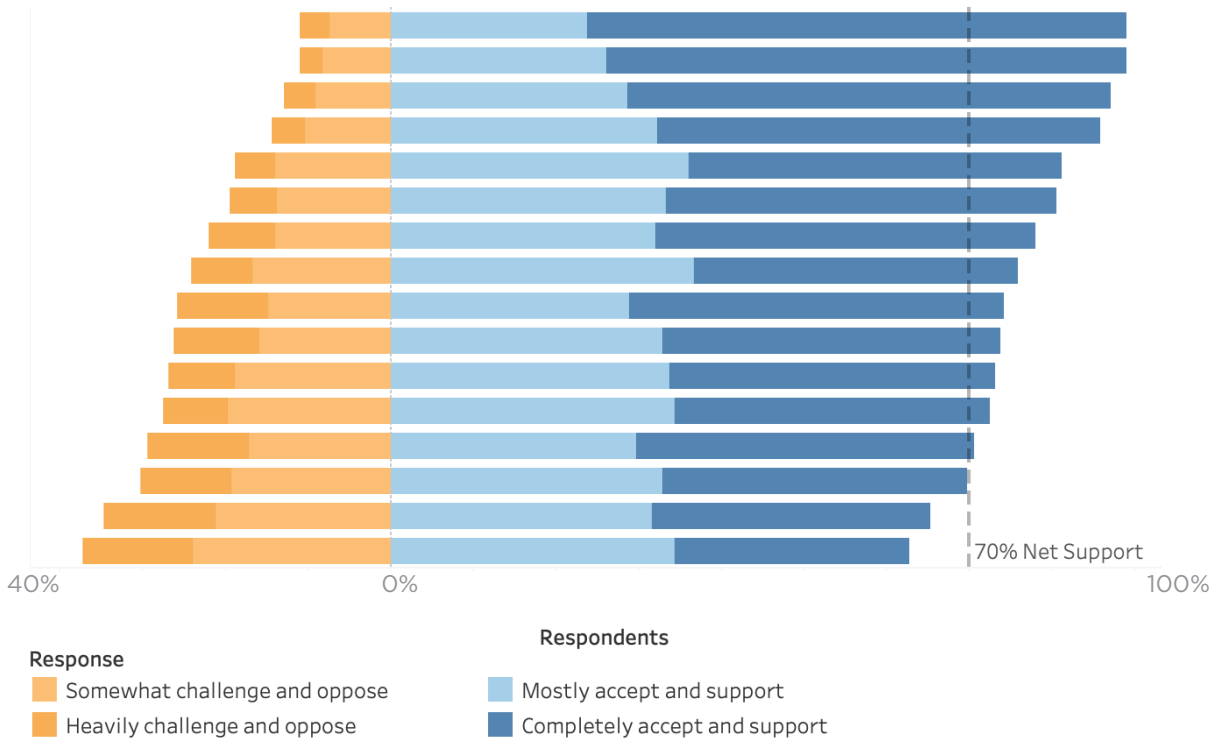
1. "U.S. Public Becoming Less Religious," Pew Research Center, November 3, 2015, <https://www.pewforum.org/2015/11/03/u-s-public-becoming-less-religious/>; "In U.S., Decline of Christianity Continues at Rapid Pace," Pew Research Center, October 17, 2019, <https://www.pewforum.org/2019/10/17/in-u-s-decline-of-christianity-continues-at-rapid-pace/>; Frank Newport, "Five Key Findings on Religion in the U.S.," Gallup, December 23, 2016, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/200186/five-key-findings-religion.aspx>

to see nearly all of the dimensions divided 50-50. Instead, one sits within the 50s, three sit in the 60s and two sit above 70, with Religious Pluralism at 80. Even in dimensions that ask about principles at stake in some of the most recent culture war issues, such as religion influencing business, voting choices, and employment decisions, more than two-thirds of respondents expressed support for protections.

Evidence for Consensus in a Polarized Society

In a set of 16 Index questions where respondents indicated whether they support or oppose religious freedoms, 14 of the questions recieved 70 percent or higher net support.

Questions ranked by percent of net support:



Source: 2019 Religious Freedom Index

PREFERENCE FOR A HANDS-OFF GOVERNMENT APPROACH

With a government ever increasing in reach, it is unsurprising that some of the most significant conflicts in religious liberty have arisen because the government has imposed penalties on religious individuals for living their faith in public. On questions across dimensions where a right is presented as a freedom from government involvement or influence, only a minority of respondents accept and support that intrusion.

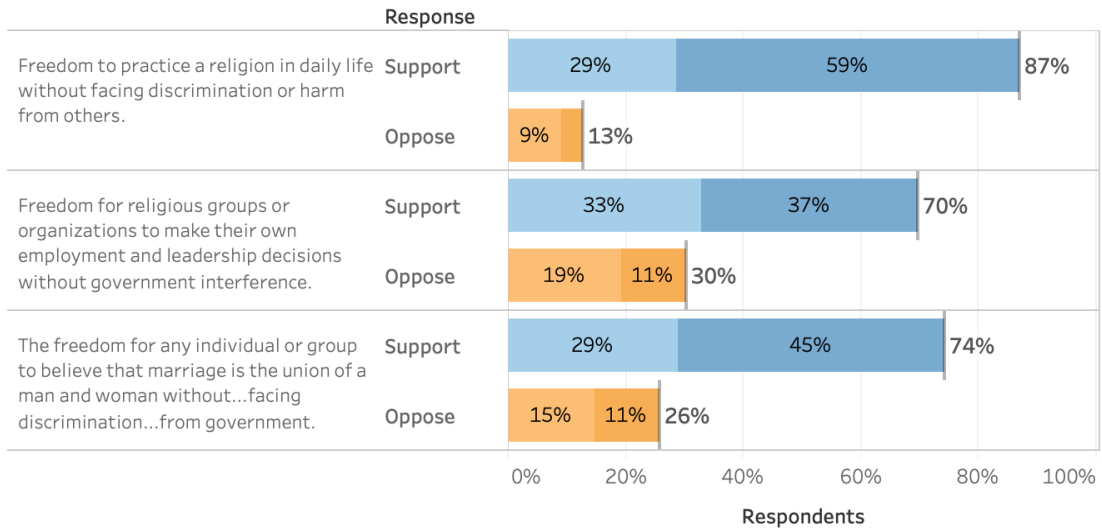
On the fundamental, but rarely discussed, principles of church autonomy and the ministerial exception, 70 percent of respondents supported religious organizations' ability to make their own employment and leadership decisions without government interference.

In a nuanced question, two thirds of respondents agreed that the government should be able to treat nonprofits with religious missions equally to secular nonprofits with respect to eligibility for government funds. Even with some of the more controversial questions, such as those addressing beliefs about marriage, 74 percent of Americans said individuals and groups should not face discrimination, fines, or penalties from the government for their beliefs.

Evidence for a Preference for a Hands-off Government Approach

Respondents supported freedom from government intrusion on religious practice in a range of contexts.

On questions asking to what degree respondents accept and support certain freedoms:



Support

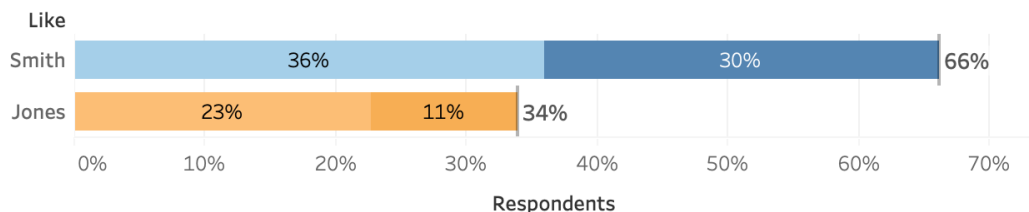


Including when it comes to government funding:

Smith believes religious organizations that provide services to help in the community (e.g., soup kitchens, homeless shelters, etc.) **should be just as eligible to receive government funds as non-religious organizations** that provide the same kind of services in the community.

Jones believes religious organizations that provide services to help in the community **should not be eligible to receive government funds** because the government should not fund religious organizations.

Is your opinion...?



SUPPORT FOR A CULTURE OF ACCOMMODATION

Although one of the dominant narratives of our time is political polarization and distrust of others, the Index shows a more nuanced portrait of how Americans feel about dealing with differences in religious practice and belief.² Across dimensions, with questions addressing minority practices or faiths, or even unpopular beliefs, respondents were broadly supportive of the freedom to practice those beliefs. Furthermore, respondents were supportive of allowing those beliefs to be a part of public life and for governments or workplaces to make room for those practices.

In the Religious Pluralism Dimension, we see some of the clearest evidence of support for minority faith practices. When asked about the freedom to practice one's beliefs even when they are contrary to accepted practices, 81 percent responded that they accept and support this freedom. Notably this question lists examples of practices of Jehovah's Witnesses, Jews, Muslims, Seventh-day Adventists, Sikhs, and other religious traditions that have in the past been sources of controversy or misunderstanding.

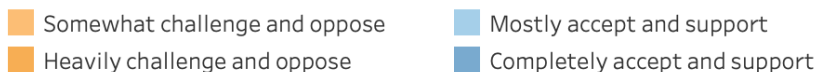
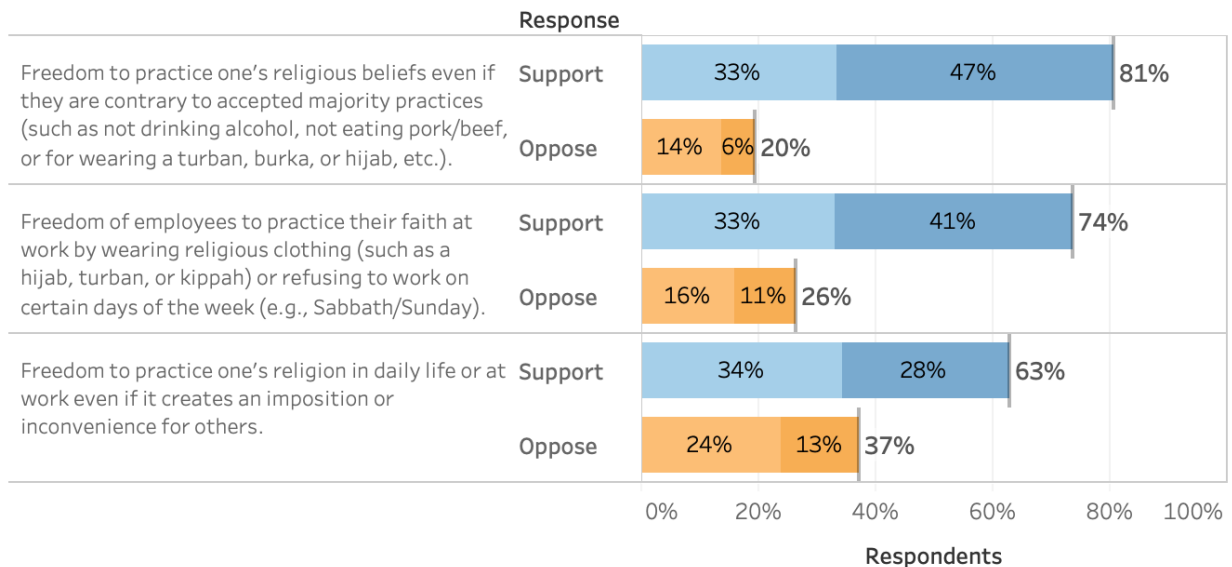
American support extends beyond the freedom to practice those beliefs in general, to the freedom to practice those beliefs in the workplace. Seventy-three percent of respondents supported the freedom to practice similar expressions of faith in the workplace or to change work schedules to accommodate for holy days. Even more notably, 63 percent still support the freedom to practice one's faith in daily life or the workplace *even when it imposes on or inconveniences others*.

2. See, for instance, "New Poll: Voters Find Political Divisions So Bad, Believe U.S. is Two-Thirds of the Way to "Edge of a Civil War," Georgetown University Institute of Politics and Public Service, October 23, 2019, <http://politics.georgetown.edu/press-releases/civility-press-release-oct-2019/> and "Political Polarization in the American Public," Pew Research Center, June 12, 2014, <https://www.people-press.org/2014/06/12/political-polarization-in-the-american-public/>

Evidence for Support for a Culture of Accommodation

Respondents showed support for the freedom to practice a variety of beliefs in private and public settings including the workplace.

To what degree do you personally accept and support versus challenge and oppose:



Source: 2019 Religious Freedom Index

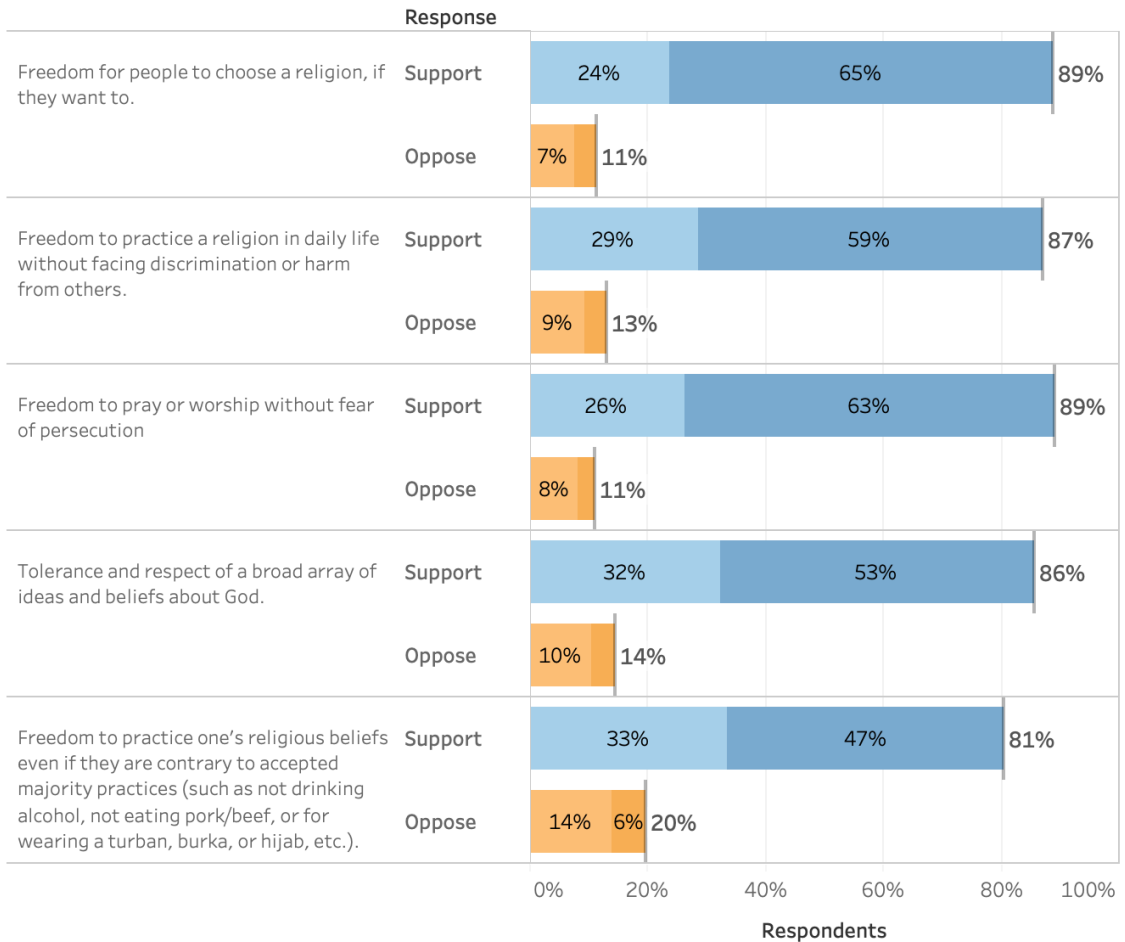


I. RELIGIOUS PLURALISM

The Religious Pluralism Dimension asks respondents about how different belief systems and practices can simultaneously exist in society. They address the freedom to choose to follow a religion, or no religion at all, and what it means to live out that choice in daily life.

Religious Pluralism Questions Results

To what degree do you personally accept and support versus challenge and oppose:



■ Somewhat challenge and oppose
 ■ Mostly accept and support
 ■ Heavily challenge and oppose
 ■ Completely accept and support

Source: 2019 Religious Freedom Index

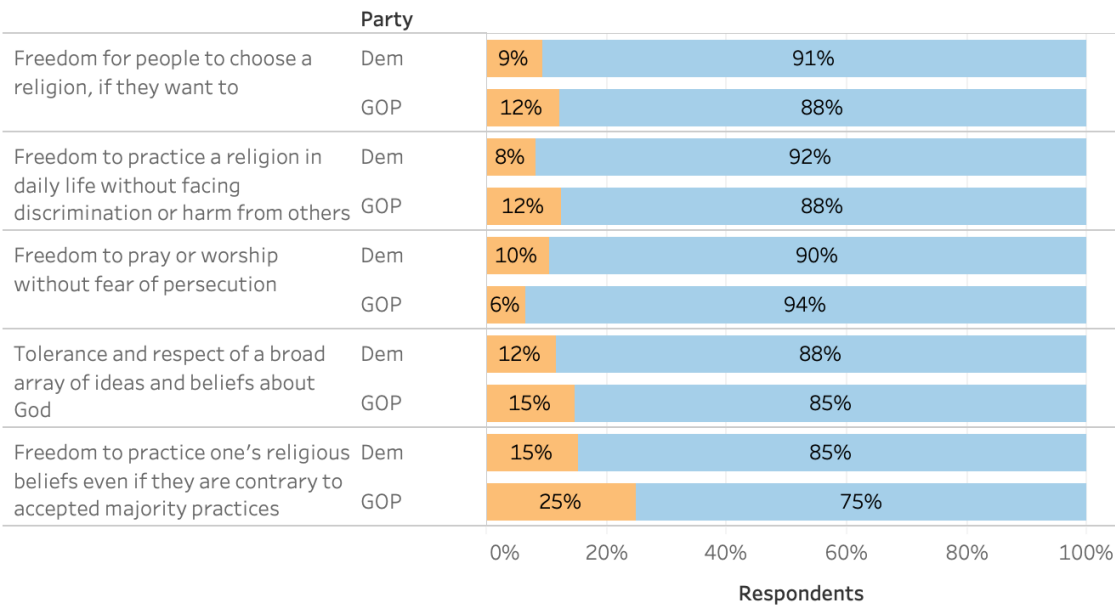
RELIGIOUS PLURALISM DIMENSION DISCUSSION

Respondents were most supportive of freedoms outlined in the Religious Pluralism dimension. The questions addressed by this dimension are those that constitute some of the most basic rights of religious freedom in America—the freedom to believe, worship, and live without fear of persecution.

Respondents were most united in their answers to the questions of this dimension—notably Republicans and Democrats showed no significant difference of opinion.

Democrats and Republicans United on Religious Pluralism

To what degree do you accept and support versus challenge and oppose:



Response
Net Oppose Net Support

Source: 2019 Religious Freedom Index

Of those who expressed support below the average, three demographic groups stand out for similarity in their responses. Males ages 18-24 and 35-44 showed about the same below-average level of support as those who responded that religion was not very important at all

in their lives. Within these two groups, 73-75 percent responded as accepting and supporting of these freedoms, which was lower than the average by a significant margin, but still a strong majority.

Generations born before Gen X (which is the generation born between 1965 and 1980), particularly women above the age of 55, showed above average levels of support for the questions in this dimension. Although this is the case across the dimension as a whole, that is not to say that the younger generations show less support on each item.

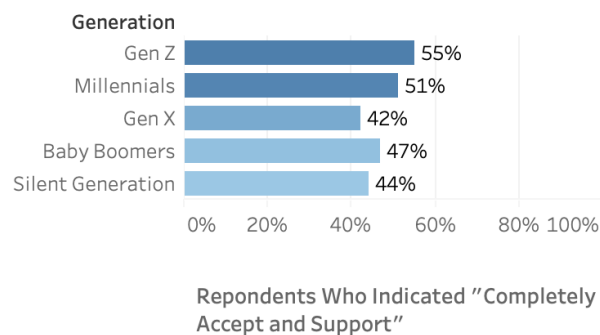
The exception to this generalization is on the last question regarding freedom to practice beliefs that are contrary to majority practices. Here 51 percent of Millennials and 55 percent of Gen Z respond with the highest option of support, “Completely Accept and Support,” whereas no other generation breaks 50 percent for this same response.

Although these beliefs may seem basic to most American audiences, many of the items covered in this section are far from universally accepted in other countries (including European countries). The broad support for these basic rights in the United States likely will not surprise Americans, but elsewhere this level of support would certainly be outside the norm.³

Generations and Support for Specific Minority Practices

To what degree do you accept and support versus challenge and oppose:

Freedom to practice one’s religious beliefs even if they are contrary to accepted majority practices (such as not drinking alcohol, not eating pork/beef, or for wearing a turban, burka, or hijab, etc.).



Source: 2019 Religious Freedom Index

3. Bans on public religious attire are particularly common in recent years, with countries such as France, Chad, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Cameroon joining countries like Saudi Arabia and Qatar in restricting public displays of religious attire. “How Religious Restrictions Have Risen Around the World,” Pew Research Center, July 15, 2019, <https://www.pewforum.org/2019/07/15/a-closer-look-at-how-religious-restrictions-have-risen-around-the-world/>; see also Sophie Hardach, “Most French want burqa law, but not total ban,” Reuters, April 24, 2010, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-france-burqa-poll/most-french-want-burqa-law-but-not-total-ban-idUSTRE63N0KS20100424>; “The Islamic veil across Europe,” BBC News, May 31, 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-13038095>

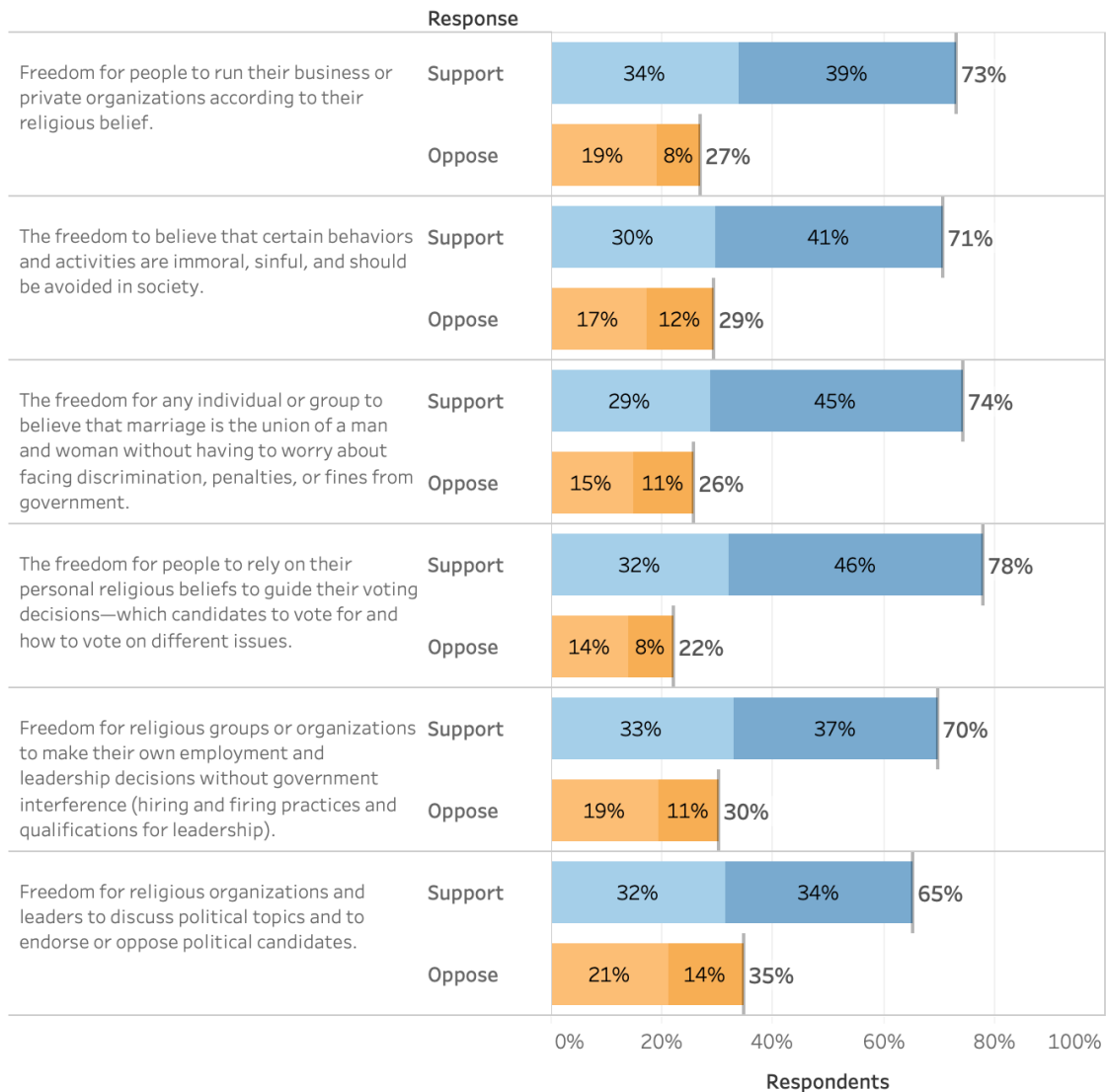


II. RELIGION AND POLICY

The Religion and Policy dimension covers a wide range of religious practice and belief. It asks about the interactions of government, private organizations and individuals with religion. Many of the questions in this dimension relate to current religious freedom debates.

Religion and Policy Questions Results

To what degree do you personally accept and support versus challenge and oppose...



Source: 2019 Religious Freedom Index

RELIGION AND POLICY DIMENSION DISCUSSION

Religion and Policy is one of the most wide-reaching of the dimensions in the Index. The questions included in this dimension ask respondents to indicate their support for situations where people practice religion outside of their homes and places of worship—whether that’s in the voting booth, the office or elsewhere.

This dimension asks about the interaction between government policies and the religious beliefs and practices of religious organizations, businesses, and individuals. Although some of the questions in this dimension touch on many of the most relevant contemporary religious freedom issues, the level of support for this dimension, 67, is precisely the average for the Index as a whole.

Two questions in particular deal with topics that continually arise in current religious freedom conversations—the right of businesses and private organizations to operate according to their beliefs, and the right to believe that marriage is the union of a man and a woman without facing penalties from the government.

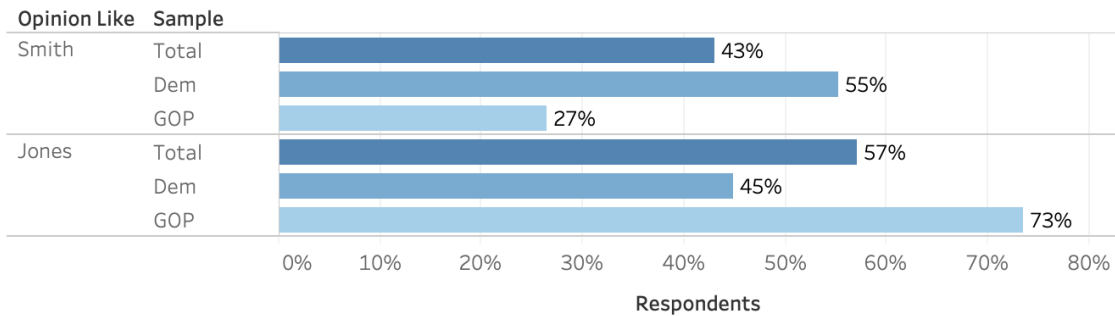
For further context, there were two additional survey questions added on these topics that were not included in the Index. They asked respondents to choose which statement they most agree with when it comes to whether business or private organizations holding views seen as discriminatory should be harassed, boycotted, or even shut down. The majority of respondents, 57 percent, agreed with a statement that businesses and private organizations should be able to hold beliefs without the threat of being boycotted, harassed, or shutdown.

This question also revealed one of the most significant differences between Democrat and Republican respondents, with 73 percent of Republicans agreeing that business owners and private organizations have the right to hold any view they want without the threat of losing their jobs or business, while only 45 percent of Democrats felt the same way. When respondents are asked to choose a side on a similar statement but pertaining to individual people of faith instead of private organizations, perhaps unsurprisingly, the total percent of individuals who support the freedom to hold any view without the threat of being harassed or silenced jumps to 68 percent. Note that this difference is due principally to Democrat respondents’ opinion. Republican support is virtually identical on both questions but 16 percent more Democrats support the right for a person of faith to hold any view they want.

Religious Private Organizations and Political Parties

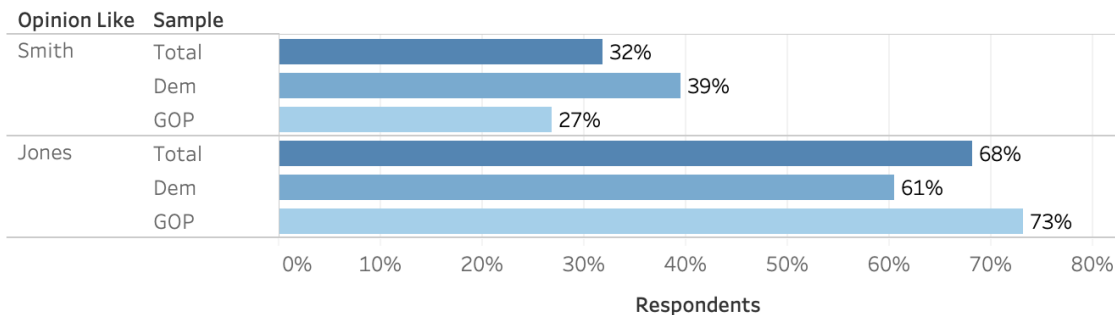
Smith believes that **business owners or private organizations** holding unpopular views—or what some might consider repulsive or discriminatory views—deserve to be boycotted, harassed or even shut down. Society should not tolerate any type of view or behavior that could be construed as hateful or discriminatory.

Jones believes that **business owners or private organizations** have the right to hold any view they want—even if it is no longer politically correct and seems hateful and discriminatory to others—without the threat of losing their jobs or business. A society founded on freedom of speech and freedom of religion should tolerate the expression of these freedoms for all citizens.



Smith believes that **people of faith** holding unpopular views—or what some might consider repulsive or discriminatory views—deserve to be harassed or silenced. Society should not tolerate any type of view or behavior that could be construed as hateful or discriminatory.

Jones believes that **people of faith** have the right to hold any view they want—even if it is no longer politically correct and seems hateful and discriminatory to others—without the threat of being harassed or silenced. A society founded on freedom of speech and freedom of religion should tolerate the expression of these freedoms for all citizens.



Source: 2019 Religious Freedom Index

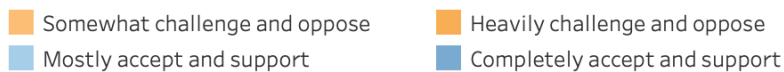
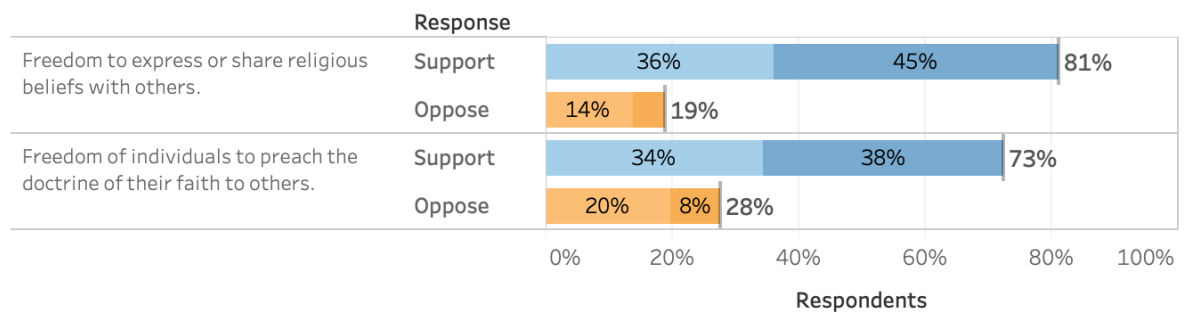


III. RELIGIOUS SHARING

The Religious Sharing dimension considers the exchange of religious ideas in the public square. Closely tied to freedom of speech, this dimension provides insights into unique aspects of communication in American society.

Religious Sharing Questions Results

To what degree do you personally accept and support versus challenge and oppose:



Source: 2019 Religious Freedom Index

RELIGIOUS SHARING DIMENSION DISCUSSION

The practice of sharing beliefs with others is central to a number of faiths. Religious sharing is closely tied with the First Amendment freedoms of speech and assembly. This includes both public expressions of faith, as well as the ability to discuss doctrine and specific beliefs with those of other faiths. Although rarely in the public eye today, this freedom has been controversial at different times in the past.

The Religious Sharing dimension was the most broadly supported after Religious Pluralism. The importance of sharing beliefs and preaching doctrines to others varies by religion. In some ways the perceived centrality of evangelism is reflected in the differences between respondent's religions and the extent of their support—Jehovah's Witnesses and members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) are among the most supportive. Although perhaps less typically associated with evangelism, Muslims and Buddhists are also some of the most supportive of the freedom to share beliefs and preach doctrines of their faith.

On both matters, Atheists showed the least support. They are also the only group for which a majority opposes the right to preach the doctrine of faith to others. Notably, three-quarters of Agnostics support the freedom to share religious beliefs, and 60 percent support the freedom to preach to others.

It should be noted that any conclusions drawn from this finding should be minimal—the sample size of each individual religion is relatively small in the Index's first year. As the sample size grows with each successive year, it will be interesting to see whether these responses by religion hold.

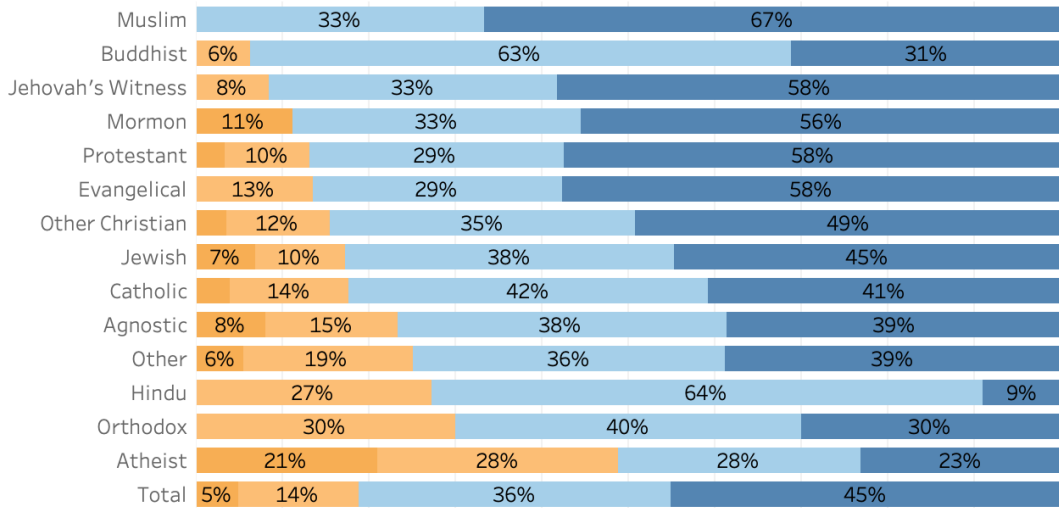
Like the Religious Pluralism dimension, Religious Sharing is one of the foundational and perhaps often overlooked elements of American religious freedom. When it comes to sharing beliefs in public and evangelization, this dimension can also intersect with the Church and State dimension, often in the context of public schooling and public displays. As with the Religious Pluralism dimension, the rights at issue in the Religious Sharing dimension are less secure in many other countries.⁴

⁴ Like restrictions on attire, restrictions on public proselytization are also common. See "How Religious Restrictions Have Risen Around the World," Pew Research Center, July 15, 2019, <https://www.pewforum.org/2019/07/15/a-closer-look-at-how-religious-restrictions-have-risen-around-the-world/>

Religious Sharing by Religion

To what degree do you accept and support versus challenge and oppose:

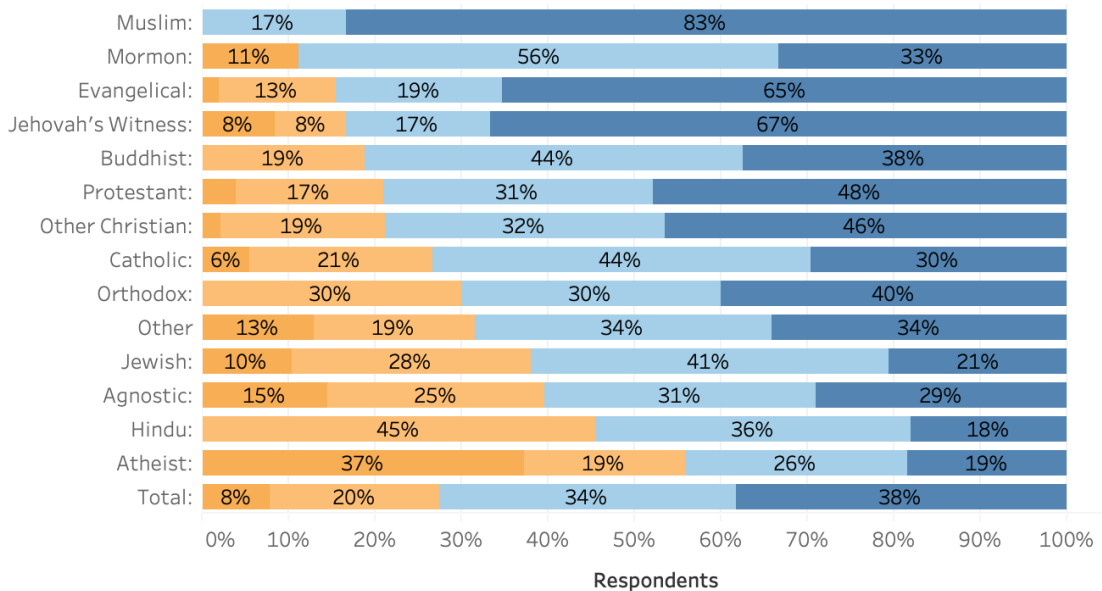
Freedom to express or share religious beliefs with others.



Response



Freedom of Individuals to preach the doctrine of their faith to others.



Source: 2019 Religious Freedom Index

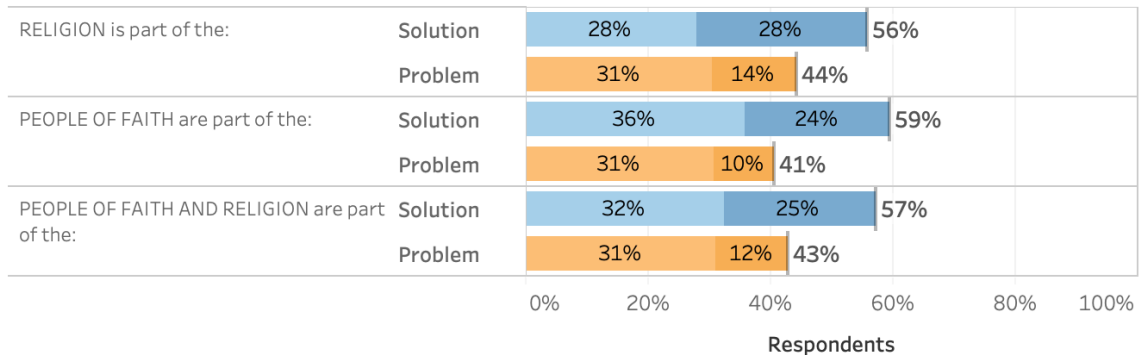


IV. RELIGION IN SOCIETY

The Religion in Society dimension directly asks respondents to evaluate the contributions of religion and people of faith to society. It gives context to religious participation in civil society.

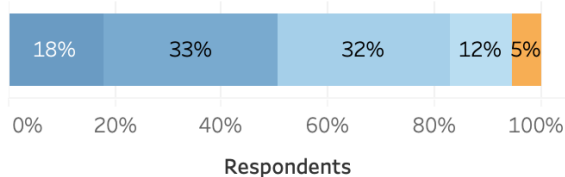
Religion in Society Questions Results

When it comes to issues and what happens in our country today would you say that...

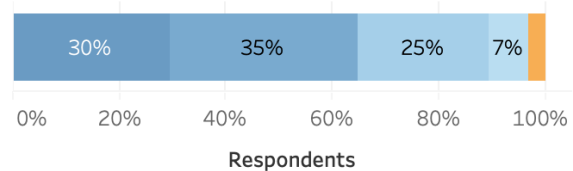


■ Somewhat part of the problem
■ Somewhat part of the solution
■ Definitely part of the problem
■ Definitely part of the solution

To what degree would you say you personally, appreciate the contributions religion and people of faith make to our country and to our society?



How accepting do you feel you are personally toward people of faith in supporting their ability to believe and live according to their beliefs?



Amount
■ Completely
■ A good amount
■ A moderate amount
■ A small amount
■ Not at all

Source: 2019 Religious Freedom Index

RELIGION IN SOCIETY

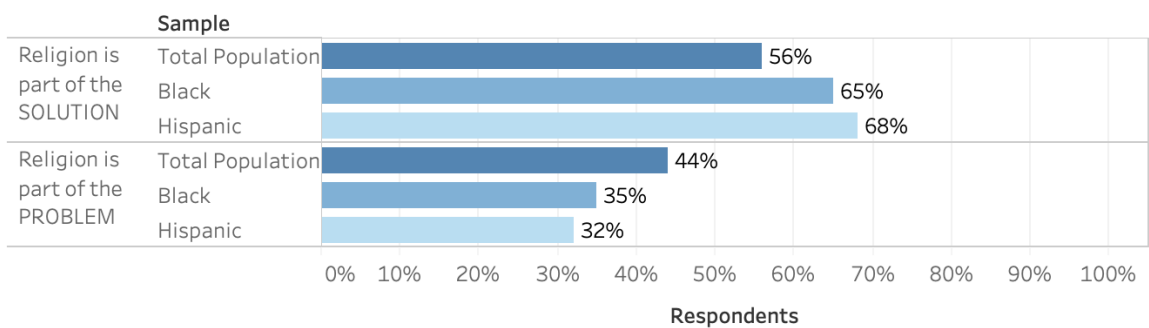
DIMENSION DISCUSSION

Amidst numerous polls⁵ that indicate a general shift in religiosity in America, the question remains how Americans value religion and its role in society. Respondents’ answers to these questions provide insight into how society values religion and people of faith, which in turn adds context for the findings of other dimensions as well.

A majority of respondents—59 percent—said that people of faith are a part of the solution for what happens in our country today, and a slightly lower majority—56 percent, said that religion is part of the solution. Differences in respondent’s political parties, reported importance of faith, and levels of religiosity predicted the greatest disparities in responses. Racial minorities, particularly blacks and Hispanics, were above the average in responding that religion is part of the solution. Black respondents were 9 points above the average with 65 percent saying that religion is part of the solution. And Hispanics were a full 12 points above average with 68 percent saying that religion is part of the solution.

Blacks and Hispanics More Likely to See Religion as Part of the Solution

When it comes to issues and what happens today in our country, would you say that **religion** is part of the problem or is it part of the solution?



Source: 2019 Religious Freedom Index

5. Michael Shermer, “The Number of Americans with No Religious Affiliation Is Rising,” Scientific American, April 1, 2018, <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-number-of-americans-with-no-religious-affiliation-is-rising/>

Interestingly, Hispanics did not show a statistically significant difference from the average when asked whether people of faith were part of the solution. Blacks responded 19 points above average with 78 percent agreeing that people of faith were part of the solution.

Respondents' level of satisfaction with the current level of religious freedom protection in America was correlated with their beliefs about whether religion was part of the problem or solution. Sixty one percent of those who indicated that religious freedom needs more protection also said that religion was part of the solution to what happens in this country. On the other hand, only 38 percent of those who thought religious freedom is protected too much indicated that religion was part of the solution.

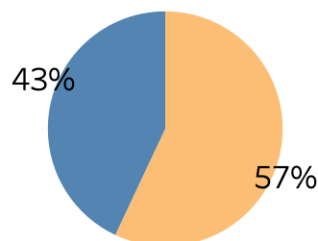
Another survey question asked about respondents' perceptions of whether society accepts and appreciates religion and people of faith's contributions. Here, respondents show a significant disparity—although 51 percent of respondents express personal appreciation for religion's contributions, only 32 percent feel that same level of appreciation by society.⁶

Good works and religion

Majority of respondents say good works would still happen in society **without people of faith or religious organizations**.

Response

- Good works would STILL happen
- Good works would NOT STILL happen



Source: 2019 Religious Freedom Index

In other words, although the majority of respondents feel accepting and appreciative of religion and people of faith's contributions, they do not think that society generally shares their feelings. Furthermore, when asked about the contributions of religious organizations to charitable work like providing food, clothing, or disaster relief, 57 percent of respondents believed that these works would still continue if there were no people of faith or religious organizations to do them.

6. The response options for this question were: completely, a good amount, a moderate amount, a small amount, or not at all. 51 percent includes only respondents who indicated either completely or a good amount and excludes other responses.



V. CHURCH & STATE

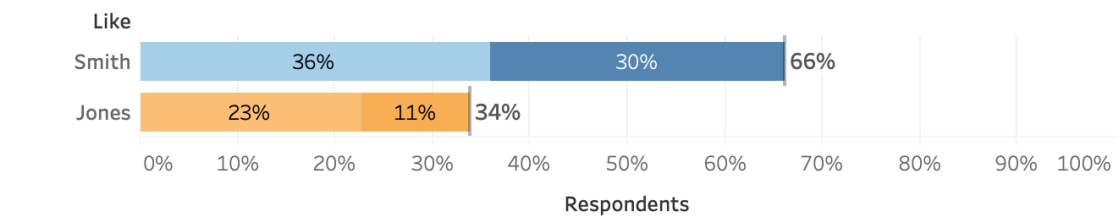
The Church and State dimension surveys respondents about the interactions between government and religion. In asking about government funding and government speech, it draws out opinions on the Constitution's establishment clause.

Church & State Questions Results

Smith believes religious organizations that provide services to help in the community (e.g., soup kitchens, homeless shelters, etc.) **should be just as eligible to receive government funds as non-religious organizations** that provide the same kind of services in the community.

Jones believes religious organizations that provide services to help in the community **should not be eligible to receive government funds** because the government should not fund religious organizations.

Is your opinion...?

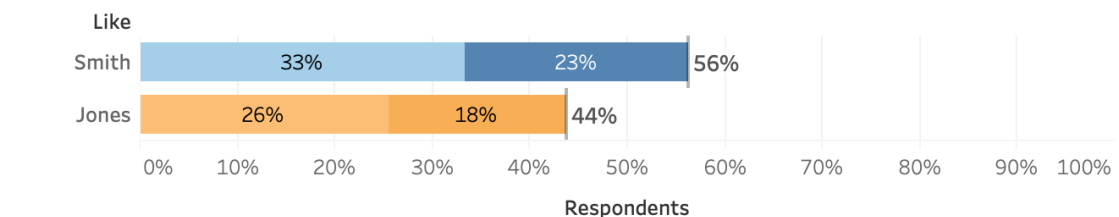


■ Somewhat like Smith
 ■ Exactly like Smith
 ■ Somewhat like Jones
 ■ Exactly like Jones

Smith believes the government should be **able to use** religious symbols or language in public displays (statues, murals, etc.), because religion has played an important role in our country's history and culture.

Jones believes the government should **not be able to use** religious symbols or language in public displays (statues, murals, etc.), because such displays are promoting religion and government should not be involved in promoting religion.

Is your opinion...?



Source: 2019 Religious Freedom Index

CHURCH AND STATE DIMENSION DISCUSSION

Although this dimension shows the most lukewarm support for a broad interpretation of religious freedom, the Church and State questions reveal perspectives on the boundaries of church and state interaction. These responses come in light of last year's Supreme Court term where the most publicized religious freedom case, *American Legion v. American Humanist Association*, dealt directly with religious displays on government property.

The differences in responses between the two questions shown above may come as a surprise to some. The first question asks about government funds going to religious organizations. Sixty six percent of respondents agree with the statement that religious organizations should be just as eligible as nonreligious organization to receive government funds. Notably, the question does not state whether either group is a nonprofit, simply that both provide services to help in the community.

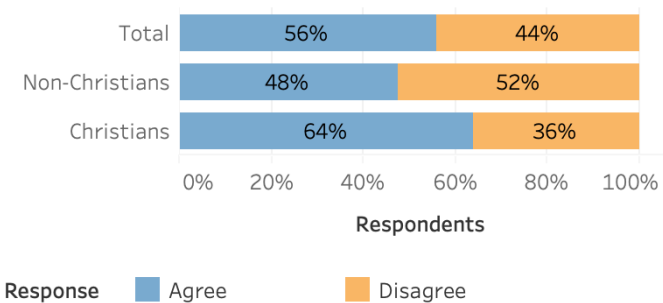
For context, this level of support is comparable to support for the freedom of people or groups to choose not to participate in actions or work that violate their sincere religious beliefs and conscience. In the second question, 10 percent fewer respondents agreed that government can use religious symbols or language in public displays.

Respondents' religion had a notable bearing on how they answered these questions. Christians were 8 points above average in support of government using religious symbols and language, but religious non-Christians were 8 points below that average.

A question that was not included in the Index provides additional insight into a current religious freedom debate. During judicial confirmation hearings of the current administration, the question of religious tests for public office made their way into the news cycle.

Christians and religious non-Christians disagree on government speech and religion

Given two statements, one which says government should be **able to use** religious symbols or language in public displays:



Source: 2019 Religious Freedom Index

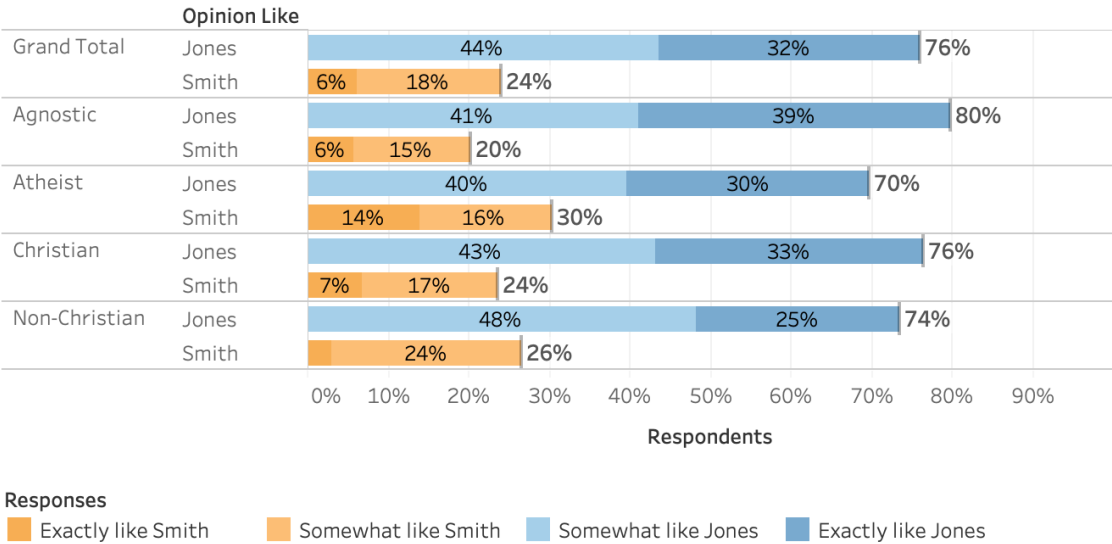
One survey question asked respondents to identify which opinion most matched theirs regarding whether public officials should be blocked or disqualified from serving based on their religious views, or lack thereof. Three quarters of respondents agreed that public officials should not face the threat of being blocked or disqualified from public office for their religious beliefs or lack thereof. A notable group within this question’s context are atheists, who were the first to face such religious tests for public office. On this question, atheist respondents followed the majority with 69 percent siding with the statement that elected officials should not face religious tests.⁷

Political Tests for Public Office

Thinking about the decisions that lawmakers, judges, and other public officials need to make on controversial issues in our society, review the two hypothetical opinions below and indicate which one comes closest to your own.

Smith believes **people seeking to become an elected official** should be scrutinized for the religious beliefs they hold and should be disqualified or blocked from holding public office because of those beliefs. Society should not tolerate public officials who might allow their religious beliefs to influence their decisions.

Jones believes **people seeking to become an elected official** have the right to hold any religious beliefs they want without the threat of being disqualified or blocked from holding political office. A society founded on freedoms of speech and religion should tolerate the expression of these freedoms for all citizens, including public officials.



Source: 2019 Religious Freedom Index

7. Jonathan Greenblatt, "Feinstein, Durbin dangerously close to pushing religious test on judge," The Hill, September 15, 2017, <https://thehill.com/opinion/civil-rights/350930-feinstein-durbin-dangerously-close-to-pushing-religious-test-on-judge>

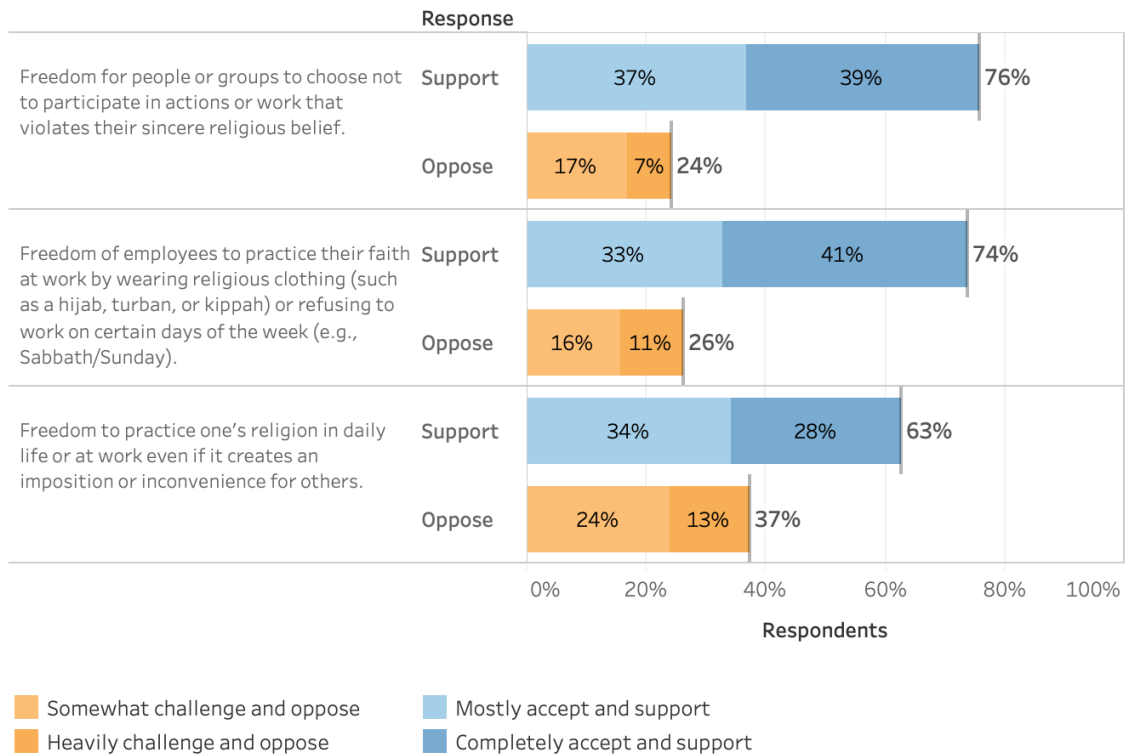


VI. RELIGION IN ACTION

The Religion in Action dimension reveals opinions about when religious people, especially from minority traditions, practice their faith in the public square. It asks about religious practice across a variety of contexts and situations.

Religion in Action Questions Results

To what degree do you personally accept and support versus challenge and oppose...



Source: 2019 Religious Freedom Index

RELIGION IN ACTION

DIMENSION DISCUSSION

Practicing one’s faith often brings religious freedom into contact with other rights, traditions and customs. The responses to the Religion in Action dimension indicate that Americans support the right to practice beliefs even in circumstances where other rights and norms may be at play. The implications of these opinions are perhaps most important to religious minorities whose practices often go unnoticed by the general public until such a conflict arises.

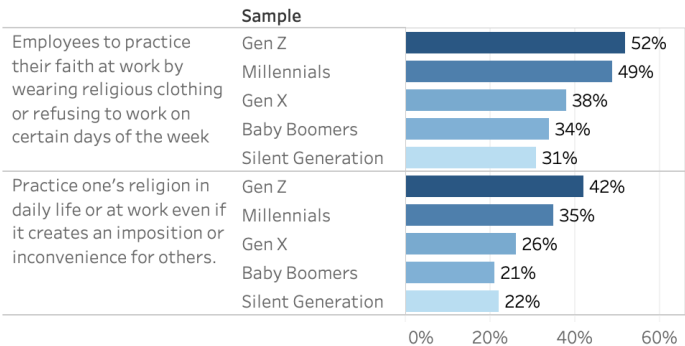
This dimension sees a number of noteworthy dynamics at work. Respondents are most supportive of people or groups choosing not to participate in actions or work that violate their sincere religious beliefs—76 percent expressed acceptance and support of that idea. Although the contemporary context of this question appears most connected to religious freedom debates in the abortion and healthcare context, the principle originates in the pre-founding era when Quakers and other religious pacifists were allowed to abstain from military service.

Generational perspectives on this dimension differs more than on any other dimension. Millennials, Gen Z and younger generations are far more supportive than older generations of the freedom to practice religion in the workplace. In the dimension as a whole there is nearly a 10 percent difference between how the younger and older age groups support freedom to practice beliefs in these situations.

Generations are most in agreement when it comes to the freedom not to participate in actions or work that violate beliefs. On the question regarding the freedom not to participate in actions or work that violate beliefs, there is only a 7 percent difference between the highest level of support (completely accept and support) of the most supportive generation—44 percent of the Silent Generation, and that same level of support for the least supportive

Generational Support for Religious Practice in the Workplace

To what degree do you personally accept and support versus challenge and oppose the freedom to:



Source: 2019 Religious Freedom Index

Respondents who Indicated “Completely Accept and Support”

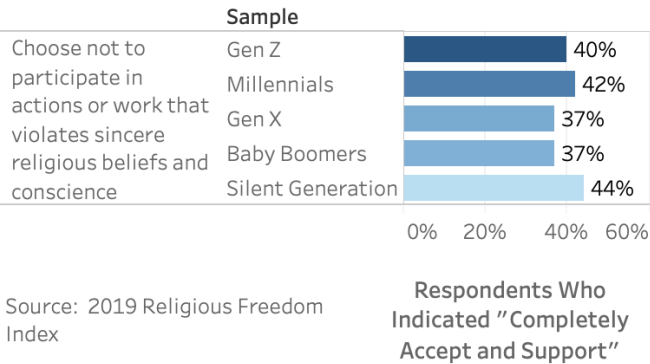
generation—37 percent of Gen X and Baby Boomers. Note however, that at least a third of each generation shows this highest level of support for freedom not to participate in actions or work that violate beliefs. Additionally, a significant block of female respondents, those ages 18-44, expressed support more frequently than the average across all of the dimension’s questions.

Respondents’ political affiliations show no significant bearing on how they answer two of the three questions in this dimension—whether people should have the freedom not to participate in actions or work that violate sincere religious beliefs and whether people have the right to practice religion in daily life or at work even if it creates an imposition or inconvenience for others.

In addition to the Index questions, the survey also asked about perceptions of religious discrimination. First, respondents were asked to estimate how often people of faith face acts of serious religious discrimination. Then respondents who had indicated that faith was important in their lives were asked to identify how often they personally experienced these acts of serious religious discrimination. Seventy-one percent of respondents estimated that such acts occur at least a few times a year. Among those who indicated that faith was important, only 37 percent reported experiencing such acts of discrimination at the same rate. Although those born *during or before* 1980 estimated higher frequency of religious discrimination, those born *after* 1980 who indicated that faith was important actually reported experiencing such discrimination at higher rates.

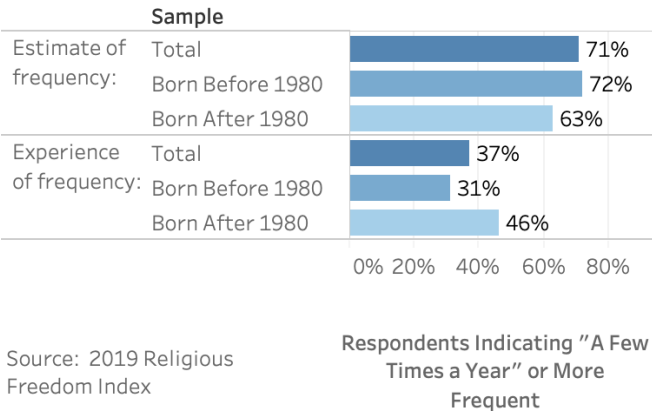
Generational Support for Freedom to Not Participate in Work and Actions that Violate Faith

To what degree do you personally accept and support versus challenge and oppose the freedom to:



Generations Perception and Experience with Religious Discrimination

All respondents were asked about the frequency of acts of religious discrimination. Those who indicated their faith was important were also asked about how frequently they experienced such discrimination.



The background of the page is a collage of fashion-related textures. On the left, there's a vertical strip showing a brown leather garment with long, thin fringes. Below that, a pink wool sweater is visible, and at the bottom, a pair of blue denim jeans. The right side of the page is dominated by a large, close-up image of a pink wool coat, with a person's hands visible near the waistline. The word 'CONCLUSION' is centered over the pink coat image.

CONCLUSION

In the first edition of the Religious Freedom Index there is evidence for broad support of robust religious freedom protections, discomfort with government interfering in religious practice, and positive attitudes toward a culture of accommodation of religious practice. No question in the Index saw less than a majority of net support or agreement with a position expressing support to protect a specific freedom.

The strongest area of support was in the basic religious rights described in the Religious Pluralism dimension. The most divided support was in the interactions between government and religion found in the Church and State dimension. Within each dimension the composition of support and opposition varies depending on political parties, age, ethnicity and many other factors.

We look forward to tracking trends in each of these questions, dimensions and the Index as a whole with each successive year. This increasing body of data will allow for new conversations and insights surrounding the principles at the heart of the First Amendment.

Over the next year, we hope to continue to engage with those interested in this research to explore additional questions within this year's findings as well as make plans for improvements to the coming years' studies. We appreciate those who have already engaged in this conversation by reading this report and its auxiliary online and other content.

APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION 200: RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Q203. Which of the following comes closest to your own opinion?

Some/Other people believe in moral absolutes. They believe the standards of what is right and wrong do not change over time no matter what some people may believe or how culture and society may evolve.

Some/Other people do not believe in moral absolutes. They believe the standards of what is right and wrong change over time depending on the changing beliefs and values of an evolving culture or society.

	2019
All Respondents	1000
Some/Other people believe in moral absolutes. They believe the standards of what is right and wrong do not change over time no matter what some people may believe or how culture and society may evolve.	53%
Some/Other people do not believe in moral absolutes. They believe the standards of what is right and wrong change over time depending on the changing beliefs and values of an evolving culture or society.	47%

Q209. How important is religion in your own life?

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
EXTREMELY/ VERY IMPORTANT (NET)	43%
EXTREMELY/ VERY/ SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT (NET)	70%
Extremely important	22%
Very important	21%
Somewhat important	27%
NOT VERY/ NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT (NET)	30%
Not very important	13%
Not at all important	17%
Question not asked	NA

	2019
Base: Have Religious Affiliation	833
EXTREMELY/ VERY IMPORTANT (NET)	51%
EXTREMELY/ VERY/ SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT (NET)	82%
Extremely important	26%
Very important	25%
Somewhat important	30%
NOT VERY/ NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT (NET)	18%
Not very important	11%
Not at all important	8%

	2019
Base: Have No Religious Affiliation	167
EXTREMELY/ VERY IMPORTANT (NET)	3%
EXTREMELY/ VERY/ SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT (NET)	14%
Extremely important	1%
Very important	2%
Somewhat important	11%
NOT VERY/ NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT (NET)	86%
Not very important	23%
Not at all important	63%

HQ209. Faith Status

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
Person of Faith	70%
Not a Person of Faith	30%

Q213. Please indicate how important you feel it is **to take action to protect freedom of religion**.

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL/ VERY IMPORTANT (NET)	59%
ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL/ VERY IMPORTANT/ IMPORTANT (NET)	80%
ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL/ VERY IMPORTANT/ IMPORTANT/ SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT (NET)	94%
SOMEWHAT/ NOT IMPORTANT (NET)	20%
Absolutely essential	34%
Very important	25%
Important	21%
Somewhat important	14%
Not important	7%

Q214. Which of the following comes closest to your own feelings?

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
PROTECTED (NET)	65%
Religious freedom is protected too much in our country.	13%
Religious freedom is protected just as it should be in our country.	52%
Religious freedom is not protected enough in our country.	35%

SECTION 300: PEOPLE OF FAITH / RELIGION

Q301. When it comes to issues and what happens today in our country, would you say that **religion** is part of the problem or is it part of the solution?

Please note: Individual items may not add up exactly to netted figures due to rounding.

Q303. When it comes to issues and what happens today in our country, would you say that **people of faith** are part of the problem or part of the

	2019
Base: Split Third A	334
PART OF THE SOLUTION (NET)	56%
Definitely part of the solution	28%
Somewhat part of the solution	28%
PART OF THE PROBLEM (NET)	44%
Somewhat part of the problem	31%
Definitely part of the problem	14%
solution?	

	2019
Base: Split Third B	333
PART OF THE SOLUTION (NET)	59%
Definitely part of the solution	24%
Somewhat part of the solution	36%
PART OF THE PROBLEM (NET)	41%
Somewhat part of the problem	31%
Definitely part of the problem	10%

Q305. When it comes to issues and what happens today in our country, would you say that **people of faith and religion** are part of the problem or part of the solution?

	2019
Base: Split Third C	334
PART OF THE SOLUTION (NET)	57%
Definitely part of the solution	25%
Somewhat part of the solution	32%
PART OF THE PROBLEM (NET)	43%
Somewhat part of the problem	31%
Definitely part of the problem	12%

310A. First, overall how accepting do you feel we are **in our society** toward people of faith in supporting their ability to believe and live according to their beliefs?

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
COMPLETELY / GOOD AMOUNT (NET)	38%
COMPLETELY / GOOD / MODERATE AMOUNT (NET)	75%
MODERATE / SMALL AMOUNT (NET)	56%
Completely	12%
A good amount	26%
A moderate amount	37%
A small amount	19%
Not at all	6%

Q310B. Now, thinking about just you...how accepting do you feel **you are personally** toward people of faith in supporting their ability to believe and live according to their beliefs?

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
COMPLETELY / GOOD AMOUNT (NET)	65%
COMPLETELY / GOOD / MODERATE AMOUNT (NET)	90%
MODERATE / SMALL AMOUNT (NET)	32%
Completely	30%
A good amount	35%
A moderate amount	25%
A small amount	7%
Not at all	3%

Q320A. Similarly, to what degree would you say we, **as a society**, appreciate the contributions religion and people of faith make to our country and to our society?

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
COMPLETELY / GOOD AMOUNT (NET)	32%
COMPLETELY / GOOD / MODERATE AMOUNT (NET)	73%
MODERATE / SMALL AMOUNT (NET)	63%
Completely	9%
A good amount	23%
A moderate amount	41%
A small amount	22%
Not at all	6%

Q320B. And, to what degree would you say **you personally**, appreciate the contributions religion and people of faith make to our country and to our society?

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
COMPLETELY / GOOD AMOUNT (NET)	51%
COMPLETELY / GOOD / MODERATE AMOUNT (NET)	83%
MODERATE / SMALL AMOUNT (NET)	44%
Completely	18%
A good amount	33%
A moderate amount	32%
A small amount	12%
Not at all	5%

Q330. It is very interesting to note that the large majority of Americans personally accept and support the ability of people of faith to believe and live according to their beliefs. Yet, when asked, these same people report that they DO NOT feel that our society is very accepting or supporting of people of faith. In other words, our perceptions of how society treats people of faith is very different than how we individually treat people of faith.

Why do you believe our perceptions of how society treats people of faith are so much worse than how most Americans actually see and treat people of faith? Please write a couple of sentences explaining what might be going on. What makes our perceptions so much worse than our actual experience?

	2019
Base	1000
INTOLERANCE (NET)	29%
NEGATIVE IMPRESSIONS/PERCEPTIONS OF RELIGIOUS GROUPS (NET)	20%
CULTURE (NET)	13%
MEDIA (NET)	13%
POLITICS (NET)	9%
OTHER (NET)	13%

SECTION 400: DEFINITIONS AND BENEFITS OF FREEDOM OF RELIGION

Q400. People have different beliefs about what religious freedom includes. For each of the following elements, please indicate the degree to which **you believe** it is part of what should be included and protected in religious freedom.

Note: Statements are listed in the order in which they appeared in the questionnaire.

SUMMARY TABLE OF TOP 2 BOX (ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL/IMPORTANT PART) (NET)	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
01. Freedom for people to choose a religion, if they want to	89%
02. Freedom to practice a religion in daily life without facing discrimination or harm from others	87%
03. Freedom to express or share religious beliefs with others	81%
04. Freedom to pray or worship without fear of persecution	89%
05. Freedom of individuals to preach the doctrine of their faith to others	72%
06. Freedom for people to run their business or private organizations according to their religious beliefs	75%
07. Tolerance and respect of a broad array of ideas and beliefs about God	85%
08. The freedom to believe that certain behaviors and activities are immoral, sinful, and should be avoided in our society (gay marriage, adultery, abortion, pornography, capital punishment, destroying the environment, etc.)	71%
09. Freedom for people or groups to choose not to participate in actions or work that violates their sincere religious beliefs and conscience	78%
10. The freedom for any individual or group to believe that marriage is the union of a man and woman without having to worry about facing discrimination, penalties, or fines from government	76%
11. The freedom for people to rely on their personal religious beliefs to guide their voting decisions—which candidates to vote for and how to vote on different issues	75%
12. Freedom to practice one's religious beliefs even if they are contrary to accepted majority practices (such as not drinking alcohol, not eating pork/beef, or for wearing a turban, burka, or hijab, etc.)	80%
13. Freedom of employees to practice their faith at work by wearing religious clothing (such as a hijab, turban, or kippah) or refusing to work on certain days of the week (e.g., Sabbath/Sunday).	72%
14. Freedom for religious groups or organizations to make their own employment and leadership decisions without government interference (hiring and firing practices and qualifications for leadership).	69%
15. Freedom for religious organizations and leaders to discuss political topics and to endorse or oppose political candidates.	63%
16. Freedom to practice one's religion in daily life or at work even if it creates an imposition or inconvenience for others	64%

Q406. To what degree do you personally accept and support versus challenge and oppose each of the items just covered?

Note: Statements are listed in the order in which they appeared in the questionnaire.

SUMMARY TABLE OF TOP 2 BOX (COMPLETELY/MOSTLY ACCEPT AND SUPPORT) (NET)	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
01. Freedom for people to choose a religion, if they want to	89%
02. Freedom to practice a religion in daily life without facing discrimination or harm from others	87%
03. Freedom to express or share religious beliefs with others	81%
04. Freedom to pray or worship without fear of persecution	89%
05. Freedom of individuals to preach the doctrine of their faith to others	73%
06. Freedom for people to run their business or private organizations according to their religious beliefs	73%
07. Tolerance and respect of a broad array of ideas and beliefs about God	86%
08. The freedom to believe that certain behaviors and activities are immoral, sinful, and should be avoided in our society (gay marriage, adultery, abortion, pornography, capital punishment, destroying the environment, etc.)	71%
09. Freedom for people or groups to choose not to participate in actions or work that violates their sincere religious beliefs and conscience	76%
10. The freedom for any individual or group to believe that marriage is the union of a man and woman without having to worry about facing discrimination, penalties, or fines from government	74%
11. The freedom for people to rely on their personal religious beliefs to guide their voting decisions—which candidates to vote for and how to vote on different issues	78%
12. Freedom to practice one's religious beliefs even if they are contrary to accepted majority practices (such as not drinking alcohol, not eating pork/beef, or for wearing a turban, burka, or hijab, etc.)	81%
13. Freedom of employees to practice their faith at work by wearing religious clothing (such as a hijab, turban, or kippah) or refusing to work on certain days of the week (e.g., Sabbath/Sunday).	74%
14. Freedom for religious groups or organizations to make their own employment and leadership decisions without government interference (hiring and firing practices and qualifications for leadership).	70%
15. Freedom for religious organizations and leaders to discuss political topics and to endorse or oppose political candidates.	65%
16. Freedom to practice one's religion in daily life or at work even if it creates an imposition or inconvenience for others	63%

Q410. A lot of charitable work and service happens in America. All across the country, people are providing food, clothing, or disaster relief for the common good. Thinking of all these good works, which of the following opinions comes closest to your own:

	2019
All Respondents	1000
Some/Other people think these good works are largely due to people of faith and religious organizations.	43%
Some/Other people think all these good works would still happen even if there were no people of faith or religious organizations to do them.	57%

SECTION 600: LIVING WITH DIFFERENCES

Q617. Thinking about the sensitivities involved on highly controversial issues of our day where human rights and religion are involved, review the two hypothetical opinions below and indicate which one comes closest to your own.

Smith believes that **business owners or private organizations** holding unpopular views—or what some might consider repulsive or discriminatory views—deserve to be boycotted, harassed or even shut down. Society should not tolerate any type of view or behavior that could be construed as hateful or discriminatory.

Jones believes that **business owners or private organizations** have the right to hold any view they want—even if it is no longer politically correct and seems hateful and discriminatory to others—without the threat of losing their jobs or business. A society founded on freedom of speech and freedom of religion should tolerate the expression of these freedoms for all citizens.

Is your opinion...?

	2019
Base: Split Half A	500
SMITH (NET)	43%
Exactly like Smith	12%
Somewhat like Smith	31%
JONES (NET)	57%
Somewhat like Jones	41%
Exactly like Jones	16%

Q618. Thinking about the sensitivities involved on highly controversial issues of our day where human rights and religion are involved, review the two hypothetical opinions below and indicate which one comes closest to your own:

Smith believes that **people of faith** holding unpopular views—or what some might consider repulsive or discriminatory views—deserve to be harassed or silenced. Society should not tolerate any type of view or behavior that could be construed as hateful or discriminatory.

Jones believes that **people of faith** have the right to hold any view they want—even if it is no longer politically correct and seems hateful and discriminatory to others—without the threat of being harassed or silenced. A society founded on freedom of speech and freedom of religion should tolerate the expression of these freedoms for all citizens.

Is your opinion...?

	2019
Base: Split Half B	500
SMITH (NET)	32%
Exactly like Smith	8%
Somewhat like Smith	24%
JONES (NET)	68%
Somewhat like Jones	43%
Exactly like Jones	25%

Q619 Thinking about the decisions that lawmakers, judges, and other public officials need to make on controversial issues in our society, review the two hypothetical opinions below and indicate which one comes closest to your own.

Smith believes **people seeking to become an elected official** should be scrutinized for their religious beliefs or lack thereof and should be disqualified or blocked from holding public office because of those beliefs. Society should not tolerate public officials who might allow their religious beliefs or lack thereof to influence their decisions.

Jones believes **people seeking to become an elected official** have the right to hold any religious beliefs they want, or none at all without the threat of being disqualified or blocked from holding political office. A society founded on freedoms of speech and religion should tolerate the expression of these freedoms for all citizens, including public officials.

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
SMITH (NET)	24%
Exactly like Smith	6%
Somewhat like Smith	18%
JONES (NET)	76%
Somewhat like Jones	44%
Exactly like Jones	32%

Q620. Thinking about the government funding of religious organizations that provide services to the community, please review the two hypothetical opinions below and indicate which one comes closest to your own.

Smith believes religious organizations that provide services to help in the community (e.g., soup kitchens, homeless shelters, etc.) **should be just as eligible to receive government funds as non-religious organizations** that provide the same kind of services in the community.

Jones believes religious organizations that provide services to help in the community **should be not be eligible to receive government funds** because the government should not fund religious organizations.

Is your opinion...?

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
SMITH (NET)	66%
Exactly like Smith	30%
Somewhat like Smith	36%
JONES (NET)	34%
Somewhat like Jones	23%
Exactly like Jones	11%

Q621. Now, thinking about the government's use of religious symbols and/or language in public displays, please review the two hypothetical opinions below and indicate which one comes closest to your own.

Smith believes the government should be **able to use** religious symbols or language in public displays (statues, murals, etc.), because religion has played an important role in our country's history and culture.

Jones believes the government should **not be able to use** religious symbols or language in public displays (statues, murals, etc.), because such displays are promoting religion and government should not be involved in promoting religion.

Is your opinion...?

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
SMITH (NET)	56%
Exactly like Smith	23%
Somewhat like Smith	33%
JONES (NET)	44%
Somewhat like Jones	26%
Exactly like Jones	18%

SECTION 700: DISCRIMINATORY BEHAVIOR(S) FREQUENCY

Q720. Let's focus a minute on acts of religious discrimination, where someone is treated differently, is denied service at a store, loses a job, or is penalized by the government because of their religious beliefs or practices. Based on your experience and what you may have seen or heard, which of the following best describes the frequency of this kind of discrimination in the life of a person of faith?

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
ALL THE TIME/FEW TIMES A YEAR (NET)	71%
These kinds of things happen all the time—many times over the course of a year	25%
These kinds of things are more common than you think--maybe a few times a year	46%
NEVER/ALMOST NEVER (NET)	29%
These kinds of things almost never happen—maybe once or twice in a lifetime	23%
These kinds of things never happen	6%

Q730. As a person of faith, which of the following best describes the frequency with which you have been treated differently, been denied service at a store, lost a job or been penalized by the government because of your religious beliefs or practices?

	2019
Base: Person of Faith	703
ALL THE TIME/FEW TIMES A YEAR (NET)	37%
That kind of thing happens all the time—many times over the course of a year	12%
That kind of thing happens a few times a year	24%
NEVER/ALMOST NEVER (NET)	63%
That kind of thing has happened once or twice in my lifetime	25%
That kind of thing has never happened	39%

SECTION 800: RELIGIOUSITY

Q801. How much does faith influence your political beliefs and behaviors?

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
COMPLETELY / GOOD AMOUNT (NET)	30%
COMPLETELY / GOOD / MODERATE AMOUNT (NET)	55%
MODERATE / SMALL AMOUNT (NET)	43%
Completely	12%
A good amount	17%
A moderate amount	25%
A small amount	18%
Not at all	28%

Q802. How **accepted** do you feel in society as a person of faith?

	2019
Base: Person of Faith	703
COMPLETELY / GOOD AMOUNT (NET)	45%
COMPLETELY / GOOD / MODERATE AMOUNT (NET)	82%
MODERATE / SMALL AMOUNT (NET)	51%
Completely	18%
A good amount	27%
A moderate amount	37%
A small amount	15%
Not at all	4%

Q803. How **appreciated** do you feel in society as a person of faith?

	2019
Base: Person of Faith	703
COMPLETELY / GOOD AMOUNT (NET)	35%
COMPLETELY / GOOD / MODERATE AMOUNT (NET)	76%
MODERATE / SMALL AMOUNT (NET)	58%
Completely	13%
A good amount	23%
A moderate amount	40%
A small amount	18%
Not at all	6%

Q805. Do you happen to be a member of a church, synagogue, mosque or temple?

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
Yes	41%
No	59%

Q806. How often do you attend church, synagogue, mosque or temple?

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
WEEKLY (NET)	28%
WEEKLY / MONTHLY (NET)	40%
At least once a week	15%
Almost every week	13%
About once a month	13%
SELDOM / NEVER (NET)	60%
Seldom	29%
Never	30%

Q815. Please indicate where, if at all, you have people of faith in your social circle.

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
PEOPLE OF FAITH IN CIRCLE (NET)	84%
My family	67%
My friends	52%
My co workers	20%
Other associates	13%
I don't have any people of faith in my social circle	16%

Q140. Which of the following best describes your religious affiliation?

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
CHRISTIAN (NET)	66%
Catholic	23%
Protestant	21%
Other Christian	14%
Evangelical	5%
Mormon	1%
Jehovah's Witness	1%
Orthodox	1%
NON-CHRISTIAN (NET)	29%
Agnostic (not affiliated with any religion)	12%
Jewish	3%
Buddhist	2%
Hindu	1%
Muslim	1%
Other	11%
Atheist	4%

SECTION 100: QUOTAS + SCREENING

Q101. HIDDEN QUESTION – 9 PT REGION

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
New England	5%
Middle Atlantic	13%
East North Central	15%
West North Central	7%
South Atlantic	20%
East South Central	6%
West South Central	12%
Mountain	7%
Pacific	16%

Q106. HIDDEN - COMPUTED AGE

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
18-34 (NET)	30%
18-24	13%
25-34	18%
35-54 (NET)	34%
35-44	17%
45-54	17%
55+ (NET)	36%
55-64	17%
65+	19%

Q110. What is your gender?

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
Male	49%
Female	51%

Q131. HIDDEN - COMBINED ETHNICITY

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
Hispanic	16%
White, Non-Hispanic	64%
Black, Non-Hispanic	12%
Asian, Non-Hispanic	6%
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	2%
Other, Non-Hispanic	1%

SECTION 1000: DEMOGRAPHICS

Q1000. Are you currently registered to vote?

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
Yes	80%
No	18%
Not sure	2%

Q1005. In politics today, do you usually think of yourself as a...?

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
Republican	27%
Democrat	35%
Independent	24%
Libertarian	2%
Something else	2%
Not sure	6%
Decline to answer	5%

Q1015/Q1016/Q1017. Combined Ideology

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
CONSERVATIVE (NET)	37%
Very Conservative	12%
Somewhat Conservative	11%
Lean Conservative	13%
Moderate	13%
LIBERAL (NET)	35%
Lean Liberal	9%
Somewhat Liberal	14%
Very Liberal	13%
NOT SURE / DECLINE TO ANSWER (NET)	15%
Not sure	10%
Decline to answer	5%

Q1025. What is the last grade of formal education you have completed?

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
HIGH SCHOOL OR LESS (NET)	36%
Less than high school (8th grade or less)	2%
Some high school (9th-12th grade)	5%

High school graduate	29%
SOME COLLEGE (NET)	34%
Some college, but no degree	20%
Associate's Degree (Vocational / Technical)	14%
Bachelor's degree	17%
POST GRADUATE (NET)	13%
Master's degree	9%
Professional degree	2%
Doctorate degree	2%
Prefer not to answer	-

Q1030. Which of the following best describes your current employment status?

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
EMPLOYED (NET)	48%
Employed full-time	33%
Employed part-time	11%
Self-employed	5%
Not employed	11%
Retired	26%
Student	4%
Stay-at-home spouse or partner	9%
Prefer not to answer	2%

Q1035. Which of the following best describes your marital status?

	2019
Base	1000
Single, never married	30%
Married or civil union	44%
DIVORCED / SEPARATED / WIDOWED (NET)	17%
Divorced	10%
Separated	3%
Widow/Widower	5%
Living with partner	8%
Prefer not to answer	2%

Q1040. How many children under the age of 18 live in your household?

	2019
Base: All Respondents	1000
None	68%
1-4 (NET)	26%
1	12%
2	10%
3	3%
4	2%
5+	1%
Decline to answer	5%
<i>MEAN</i>	<i>0.6</i>

APPENDIX B: METHODOLOGY

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

- The Religious Freedom Index (RFI) is created from data gathered in an annual online poll of a nationally representative sample of American adults 18+ (n=1,000). The poll explores Americans' attitudes on religious freedom and tolerance. Respondents for this survey are those who have volunteered to participate in online surveys and polls. To ensure representation matching the US population, the survey screens a sample that is representative by gender, age, ethnicity/race, and region matching US Census figures.
- All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate. Online opt-in panels such as the one used for this study do not use probability sampling and accordingly the strict calculation of sampling error is not typically done. In the hypothetical case of a perfectly random sample and no response or measurement errors, a sample of this size (n=1000) would produce a margin of error of $\pm 3.1\%$ at a 95% confidence interval. Margins of error for subgroups would be higher.

INDEX CONSTRUCTION

- The poll includes 21 questions that contribute to the Index. The poll also includes additional questions that are not calculated in any of the Index dimensions and may change from year-to-year based on current events. The polling is scheduled to take place each year between mid-September and mid-October.
- Heart and Mind Strategies constructed The Religious Freedom Index: American Perspectives on the First Amendment via factor, path and conceptual analysis including second-factor modeling. The index contains 6 dimensions. Each dimension is calculated by using and scoring individual responses to questions identified on page 3. Within each dimension, the scores on individual responses are used to calculate a summated score for that dimension and re-scaled from 0 to 100. The average of all six of the dimension scores is then used to create the final Index indicator.
- The index uses a scale that ranges from 0 to 100, where 0 indicates no support for the principle of religious freedom at issue and 100 indicates complete support for the same principle.

Becket did not participate in the gathering or coding of responses, or in the scale-construction. Rather, Becket contributed its broad expertise representing people of all faiths in religious liberty cases to ensure that the polling instrument broadly reflected America's many diverse religions and the full spectrum of religious liberty issues.

Religious Pluralism

Degree personally accept: Freedom for people to choose a religion, if they want to

Degree personally accept: Freedom to practice a religion in daily life without facing discrimination or harm from others

Degree personally accept: Freedom to pray or worship without fear of persecution

Degree personally accept: Tolerance and respect of a broad array of ideas and beliefs about God

Degree personally accept: Freedom to practice one's religious beliefs even if they are contrary to accepted majority practices

Religious Sharing

Degree personally accept: Freedom to express or share religious beliefs with others

Degree personally accept: Freedom of individuals to preach the doctrine of their faith to others

Religion and Policy

Degree personally accept: Freedom for people to run their business or private organizations according to their religious beliefs

Degree personally accept: The freedom to believe that certain behaviors and activities are immoral, sinful, and should be avoided in our society

Degree personally accept: The freedom for any individual or group to believe that marriage is the union of a man and woman without having to worry about facing discrimination, penalties, or fines from government.

Degree personally accept: The freedom for people to rely on their personal religious beliefs to guide their voting decisions—which candidates to vote for and how to vote on different issues.

Degree personally accept: Freedom for religious groups or organizations to make their own employment and leadership decisions without government interference

Degree personally accept: Freedom for religious organizations and leaders to discuss political topics and to endorse or oppose political candidates

Religion in Action

Degree personally accept: Freedom for people or groups to choose not to participate in actions or work that violates their sincere religious beliefs and conscience

Degree personally accept: Freedom of employees to practice their faith at work by wearing religious clothing or refusing to work on certain days of the week

Degree personally accept: Freedom to practice one's religion in daily life or at work even if it creates an imposition or inconvenience for others

Religion in Society

Belief: People of Faith/Religion are a part of the solution

Perception of self-acceptance of people of faith

Perception of personal appreciation of people of faith

Church & State

Agreement that religious organizations that provide services to help in the community should be just as eligible to receive government funds as non-religious organizations that provide the same kind of services in the community

Agreement that the government should be able to use religious symbols or language in public displays (statues, murals, etc.), because religion has played an important role in our country's history and culture

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Political Party ID

Democrat	35%
Independent	24%
Republican	27%
Libertarian	2%
Something else	2%
Not sure	6%
Decline to answer	5%

Ideology	Total
Conservative (NET)	37%
Very Conservative	12%
Somewhat Conservative	11%
Lean Conservative	13%
Moderate	13%
Lean Liberal	9%
Somewhat Liberal	14%
Very Liberal	13%
Liberal (NET)	35%
Not Sure	10%
Decline to answer	5%

Member of Church, Synagogue, Mosque, Temple	Total
Yes	41%
No	59%

Frequency of Attendance	
Never	30%
Seldom	29%
About once a month	13%
Almost every week	13%
At least once a week	15%

People of Faith in Social Circle

My family	67%
My friends	52%
My co workers	20%
Other associates	13%
I don't have any people of faith in my social circle	16%

Religious Affiliation	Total
Christian (NET)	66%
Catholic	23%
Protestant	21%
Other Christian	14%
Evangelical	5%
Mormon	1%
Jehovah's Witness	1%
Orthodox	1%
Non-Christian (NET)	29%
Agnostic	12%
Jewish	3%
Muslim	2%
Buddhist	1%
Hindu	1%
Other	11%
Atheist	4%

Gender	Total
Male	49%
Female	51%

Age	
18-24	13%
25-34	18%
35-44	17%
45-54	17%
55-64	17%
65+	19%

Race/Ethnicity	
White	64%
Hispanic	16%
Black	12%
Asian	6%
Multi race	2%
Other	1%

Region	Total
New England	5%
Middle Atlantic	13%
East North Central	15%
West North Central	7%
South Atlantic	20%
East South Central	6%
West South Central	12%
Mountain	7%
Pacific	16%

Employment Status	
EMPLOYED (NET)	48%
Employed full-time	33%
Employed part-time	11%
Self-employed	5%
Not employed	11%
Retired	26%
Student	4%
Stay-at-home spouse or partner	9%
Decline to answer	2%

Education	Total
HIGH SCHOOL OR LESS (NET)	36%
Less than high school	2%
Some high school	5%
High school graduate	29%
SOME COLLEGE (NET)	34%
Some college, but no degree	20%
Associate's Degree	14%
Bachelor's degree	17%
POST-GRADUATE (NET)	13%
Master's degree	9%
Professional degree	2%
Doctorate degree	2%
Decline to answer	-

Marital Status	
Married or civil union	44%
Single, never married	30%
Divorced	10%
Separated	3%
Widow/Widower	5%
Living with partner	8%
Decline to answer	2%

No. of Children (<18) in Household	Total
None	68%
Children in HH	27%
Mean	0.6
Decline to answer	5%

Registered to Vote	Total
Yes	80%
No	18%
Not sure	2%

MEDIA CONTACT

Ryan Colby

Media Relations Manager

202-349-7219

media@becketlaw.org

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