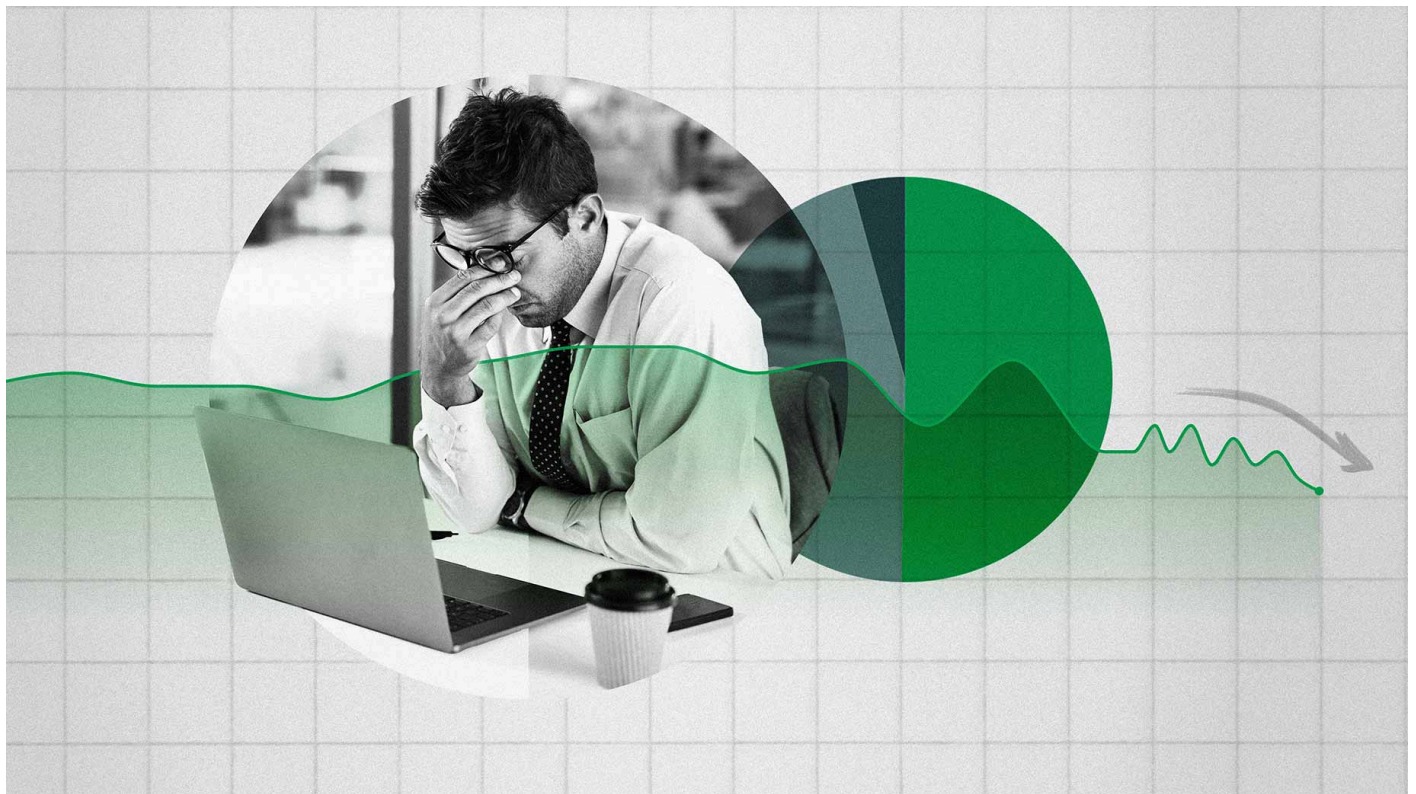


GALLUP®

NOVEMBER 18, 2024

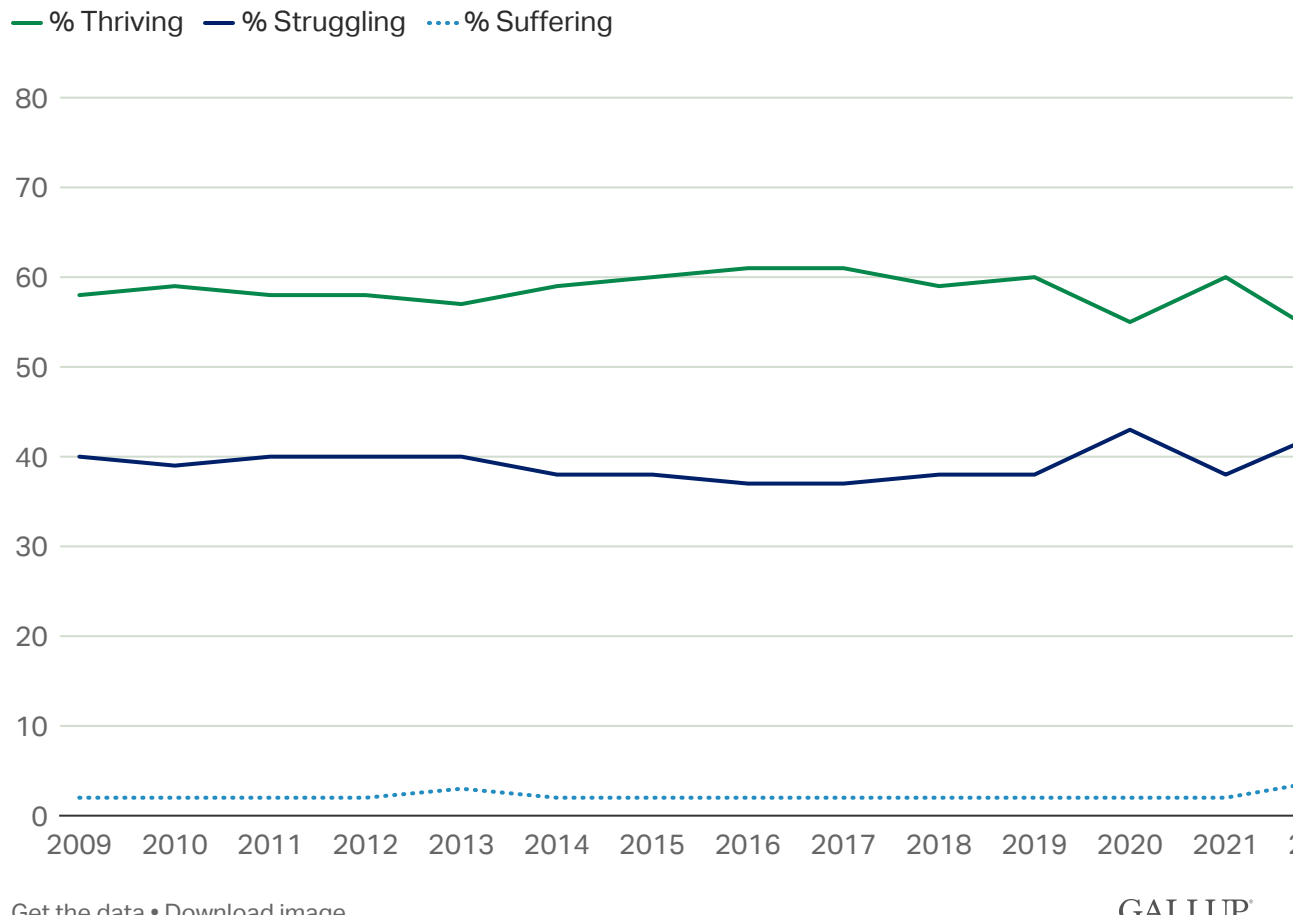
U.S. Employee Life Evaluation Hits New Record Low

BY RYAN PENDELL



Trended Life Evaluation of U.S. Employees

The Life Evaluation Index measures how people rate their current and expected future lives.



Fifty percent of U.S. employees are thriving in their overall lives, according to Gallup's latest updated workplace wellbeing indicator. This marks a new record low since Gallup began measuring employee wellbeing in 2009. The rate of employees who were thriving peaked at 61% in both 2016 and 2017 but began declining in 2020. A brief rebound occurred in January 2021 as COVID-19 vaccinations became available and hopes of loosened restrictions grew. However, the downward trend continued.

Gallup's Life Evaluation Index measures respondents' perceptions of where they stand now and in the future. Thriving respondents have positive views of both their present life situation and the next five years. They report significantly fewer health problems and less worry, stress, sadness, depression and anger. They also report more hope, happiness, energy, interest and respect.

Employee thriving has implications for workplaces and business performance.

Employers who develop a culture of wellbeing are likely to see benefits across organizational outcomes. For example, when employees are thriving in life overall, they miss 53% fewer days of work due to health issues and are 32% less likely to be watching for or actively seeking new jobs.

For more insights, read Gallup's latest article on employee wellbeing: Despite Employer Prioritization, Employee Wellbeing Falters.

AUTHOR(S)

Ryan Pendell is a Senior Workplace Science Editor at Gallup.

SURVEY METHODS



JUNE 26, 2020 | UPDATED APRIL 14, 2021

Thriving Employees Create a Thriving Business

BY JIM HARTER



STORY HIGHLIGHTS

- Reporting workplace wellbeing metrics will soon become a requirement
- Workers who aren't thriving experience higher worry, anger and employee burnout
- Employee engagement lays the groundwork for employee wellbeing

Much like a financial audit, reporting employee engagement or net promoter scores for customers has become a requirement for boards and institutional investors over the past two decades.

While employee engagement has been on the rise for the past 10 years, as of this writing, 36% of U.S. workers and just 22% globally are engaged. Engaged employees produce far better wide-ranging outcomes.

However, Gallup recently discovered that engaged workers who are *not thriving in their lives* are much more vulnerable and add risk to your organization.

For example, comparing employees who are engaged but *not* thriving in life with those who are engaged *and* thriving, those in the former group report the following risks:

- 61% higher likelihood of burnout often or always
- 48% higher likelihood of daily stress
- 66% higher likelihood of daily worry
- double the rate of daily sadness and anger

Gallup recently discovered that engaged workers who are not thriving in their lives are much more vulnerable and add risk to your organization.

Thriving employees have 53% fewer missed days due to health issues. Suffering and struggling employees have a substantially higher disease burden due to diagnoses of depression and anxiety, among others. This translates into big differences in productivity.

Reporting employees' mental health and wellbeing will soon become a requirement for all organizations.

How many employees in your company are suffering, struggling or thriving?

If you want to know the wellbeing of your employees, this two-part question, called the Best Possible Life Scale, is the best question item Gallup analytics has ever found to measure what we call Gallup Net Thriving because it encompasses all aspects of an individual's wellbeing:

Please imagine a ladder with steps numbered from zero at the bottom to 10 at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you.

Q1: On which step of the ladder would you say you personally feel you stand at this time? (0-10)

Q2: On which step do you think you will stand about five years from now? (0-10)

Individual employees who score high on both parts of the Best Possible Life Scale -- their present life and their anticipated wellbeing in the next five years -- are "thriving." Your organization will need to know how your employees, collectively, answer the Best Possible Life Scale questions to effectively meet the new demand of managing the whole person. Just like stock price is an indicator of current and future earnings, Gallup Net Thriving assesses the current and future resiliency of your workforce.

Even prior to COVID-19, work and life had become blended. Remote working and flextime were on the rise. And then, with many employees ordered to work from home to flatten the coronavirus curve, work and life became *completely* blended for most employees.

Even with a vaccine and economic recovery, work and life will never be separated like they were in the past.

How Does Gallup Define "Thriving"?

Gallup uses the Best Possible Life Scale as the global standard to measure Gallup Net Thriving across 160 countries.

Packed into any person's responses to these two simple questions is almost everything in their life -- from basic needs such as food and shelter to personal safety, a good job, social status, money and health.

Thriving employees have 53% fewer missed days due to health issues. Suffering and struggling employees have substantially higher disease burden due to diagnoses of depression and anxiety, among others. This translates into big differences in productivity.

Let's call the two parts of the Best Possible Life Scale "best life present" and "best life future." They are both important because one reveals your current state, which influences your decisions right now, and the other reveals your hope for the future. Even people in a negative state can keep going if they have hope that things will get better.

Gallup tracked wellbeing in 2020 during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the percentage of people who rated their lives highly on *best life present* dropped at a historic rate -- while *best life future* improved slightly. People believed there was a way out. Based on current estimates, *best life present* is rebounding slowly.

Gallup analyzed how best life present and best life future predict happiness, health, and negative outcomes such as stress, depression and burnout. Information from best life present and best life future gives us, in combination, indicators of whether individuals are suffering, struggling or thriving -- an index of the resiliency of a culture.

We determined the thriving, struggling and suffering categories based on analytics from over a million respondents across 160 countries.

- **Thriving:** These respondents have positive views of their present life situation (7 or higher best life present rating) and have positive views of the next five years (8 or higher best life future rating). They report significantly fewer health problems and less

worry, stress, sadness, depression and anger. They report more hope, happiness, energy, interest and respect. Across countries, the percentage of thriving employees ranges from 8% to 87%.

- **Struggling:** These respondents struggle in their present life situation and have uncertain or negative views about their future. They report more daily stress and worry about money than thriving respondents do. Across countries, the percentage of struggling employees ranges from 12% to 77%.
- **Suffering:** These respondents report that their lives are miserable (4 and below best life present rating) and have negative views of the next five years (4 and below best life future rating). They are more likely to report that they lack the basics of food and shelter and more likely to have physical pain and a lot of stress, worry, sadness and anger. They have less access to health insurance and care and more than double the disease burden compared with thriving respondents. Across countries, the percentage of suffering employees ranges from 0% to 35%.

How Employers Can Improve Net Thriving

The first step in improving net thriving is engaging your employees. Engaged workers are more likely to involve themselves in your organizations' wellbeing initiatives. Managers who engage their employees establish trust -- making them open to wellbeing efforts that affect the whole person and issues related to suffering, struggling and thriving.

Work should be a stabilizing force in people's lives. This is particularly true in psychologically brutal times like those the world experienced in 2020. And employers play a central role in shaping the whole person. Employers can aim the strengths of each individual at what Gallup discovered are the five essential elements of wellbeing: career, social, financial, physical and community.

*The Best Possible Life Scale originated from pioneering social researcher Dr. Hadley Cantril in his 1965 book *The Pattern of Human Concerns*. George Gallup included the item in his 1977 classic volume *Human Needs and Satisfaction: A Global Survey*, and it has been tracked in Gallup's World Poll since 2005 in more than 160 countries, representing 98% of the world's population.

Help your employees thrive at work and every other part of life:

- Read our new book [Wellbeing at Work](#) to discover how to build resilient and thriving teams.
 - [Partner with Gallup](#) to find areas where your employees' wellbeing may be at risk.
 - [Explore our resources on wellbeing](#), and see why employees need wellbeing for high performance.
-

AUTHOR(S)

Jim Harter, Ph.D., is Chief Scientist, Workplace for Gallup and bestselling author of [Culture Shock](#), [Wellbeing at Work](#), [It's the Manager](#), [12: The Elements of Great Managing](#) and [Wellbeing: The Five Essential Elements](#). His research is also featured in the groundbreaking *New York Times* bestseller, [First, Break All the Rules](#). Dr. Harter has led more than 1,000 studies of workplace effectiveness, including the largest ongoing meta-analysis of human potential and business-unit performance. His work has also appeared in many publications, including *Harvard Business Review*, *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*, and in many prominent academic journals.

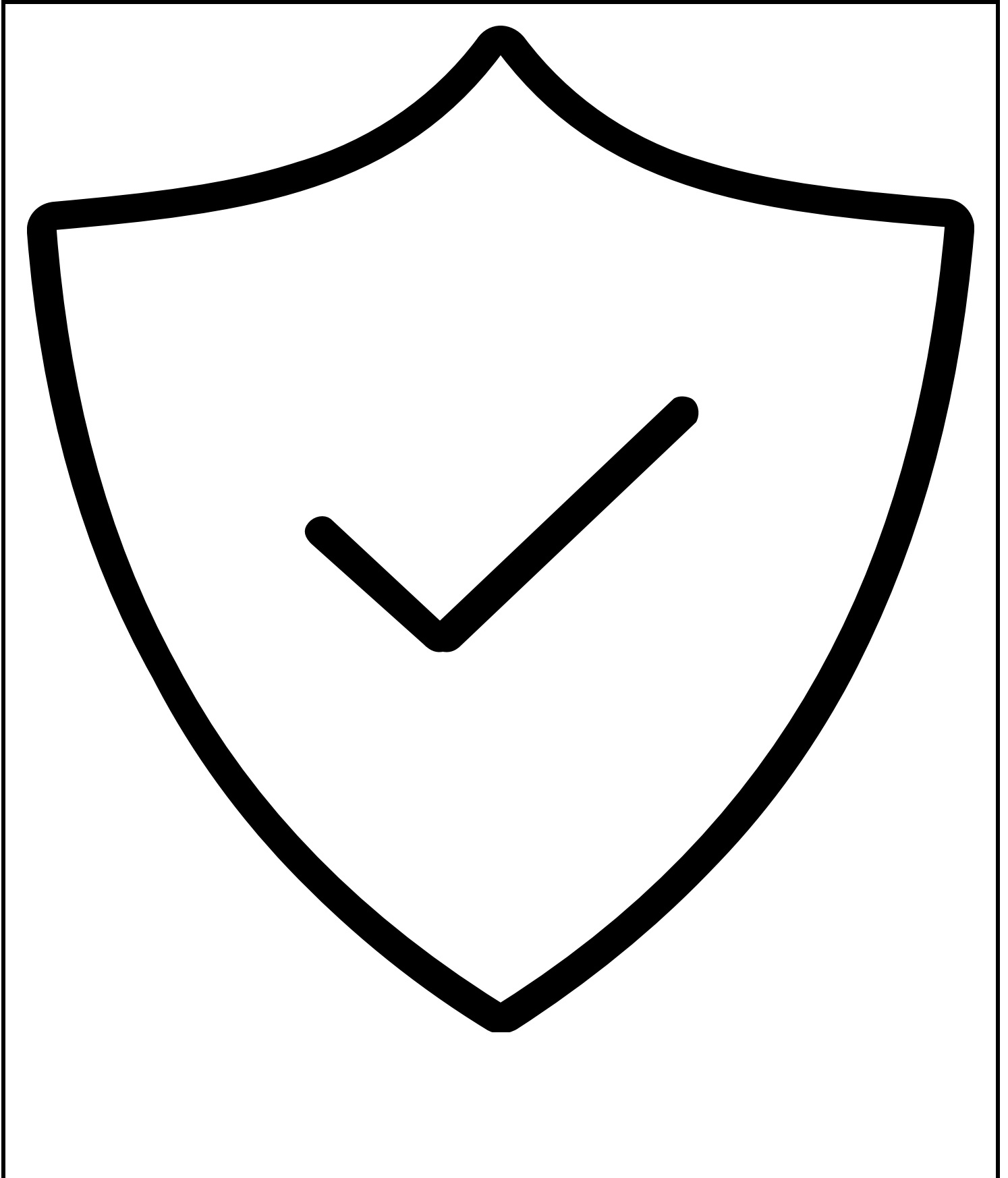
Top 5 CliftonStrengths: Achiever | Focus | Learner | Relator | Futuristic

RELEASE DATE: November 18, 2024

SOURCE: Gallup <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/653396/employee-life-evaluation-hits-new-record-low.aspx>

CONTACT: Gallup World Headquarters, 901 F Street, Washington, D.C., 20001, U.S.A
+1 202.715.3030

Copyright © 2024 Gallup, Inc. All rights reserved.



Cookie Settings

Gallup uses cookies to ensure the best website experience. Please select the cookies you want. You can change this setting anytime, but doing so may impair functionality on our websites.

[Privacy Statement](#)

Gallup uses cookies to ensure the best website experience. Please select the cookies you want. You can change this setting anytime, but doing so may impair functionality on our websites.

[Privacy Statement](#)

Please select the cookies you want for the best website experience.

ESSENTIAL WE USE ESSENTIAL COOKIES TO PROVIDE OUR VISITORS BASIC FUNCTIONS THROUGH OUR WEBSITES. WITHOUT THESE COOKIES, OUR WEBSITES WILL NOT WORK PROPERLY.

ANALYTICS WE USE STATISTICS COOKIES TO COLLECT INFORMATION ANONYMOUSLY. THIS INFORMATION HELPS US UNDERSTAND HOW OUR VISITORS USE OUR WEBSITES.

MARKETING MARKETING COOKIES HELP GALLUP IMPROVE THE ADS WE DISPLAY ON THIRD-PARTY WEBSITES AND ALLOW THIRD PARTIES TO GATHER WEB-USAGE INFORMATION REQUIRED TO DETERMINE AD PERFORMANCE.

Accept All

[Manage Preferences](#)

Save Preferences

Back

Hide Cookie Settings

Close

Gallup uses Cookies to ensure the best website experience. Continuing without changing Cookie settings assumes you consent to our use of cookies on this device. You can change this setting at any time, but that may impair functionality on our websites.

Gallup recently updated our policies. By continuing to use Gallup websites, you are agreeing to the revised terms.

- [Privacy Statement](#)
- [Site Terms of Use and Sale](#)
- [Product Terms of Use](#)
- [Adjust your cookie settings.](#)