

Appendix

Vera/Lucid Voter Poll Methodology

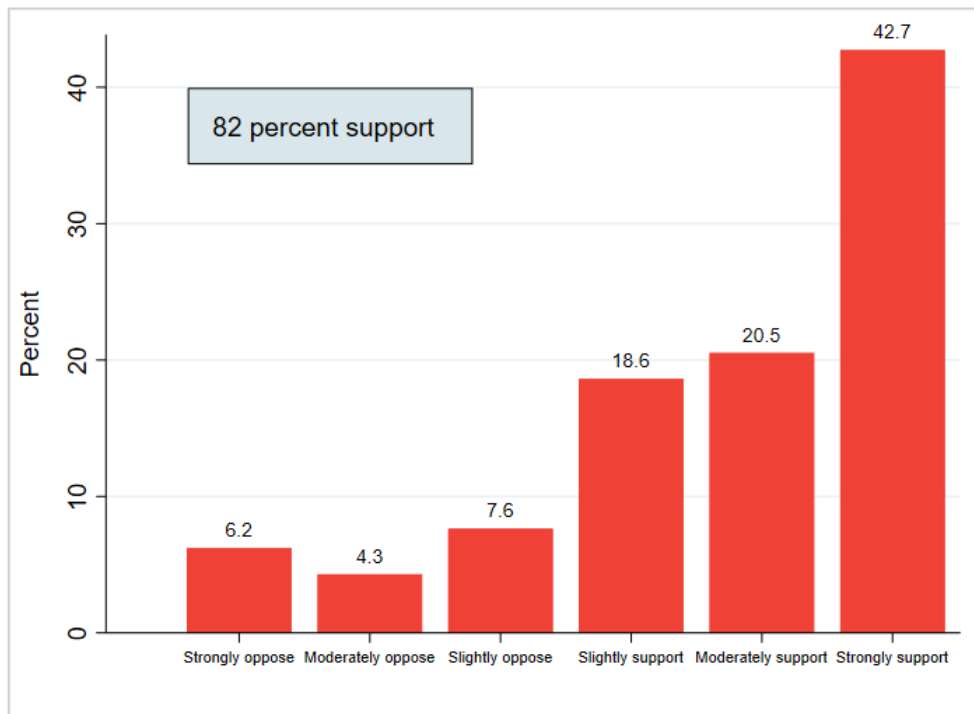
January 2021

Vera partnered with the survey firm Lucid to conduct a public opinion poll to explore the 2020 presidential vote among the American public and attitudes toward government-funded attorneys in immigration courts in the United States. Lucid administered the survey online in August 2020 and included 2,000 adults (18 years and older) living in the United States. Half of respondents (1,000 people) were randomly assigned to answer question one, below. The remaining 1,000 people were randomly assigned to answer different questions—these additional questions are not presented here but can be viewed in the full national polling document, which lays out details of the entire survey (forthcoming winter 2021).

1. Do you support or oppose the government paying for an attorney for immigrants facing deportation who cannot afford one in immigration court?

Respondents were also asked whether they intended to vote in the 2020 presidential election, with 1,609 people expressing an intention to vote. These 1,609 people were then asked for whom they were voting for president: 49.8 percent chose Joe Biden, 41.6 percent chose Donald Trump, 3.6 percent chose another candidate, and 5.0 percent were undecided at the time the survey was fielded.¹ These results are in line with the actual popular vote percentages in the 2020 presidential election, in which 51 percent of voters cast a ballot for Biden, 47 percent for Trump, and 2 percent for another candidate.² Responses to question one among Biden supporters are depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Attitudes on government-funded attorneys for immigrants facing deportation among Biden supporters



n = 419

Key findings from Figure 1

- **Four in five Biden supporters (82 percent) support government-funded attorneys for immigrants facing deportation.**
 - Forty-three percent express *strong* support.
 - Although not depicted in Figure 1, it bears mentioning that nearly half of Trump supporters (45 percent) also support government-funded attorneys for immigrants facing deportation.

In addition to questions about government-funded attorneys in immigration court, people were asked about government spending on a variety of issues. Before answering the questions on government spending, respondents were shown an introduction screen that read, “We are faced with many problems and issues in this country, none of which can be solved easily or inexpensively. We’re going to list some of these issues, and for each one we’d like you to tell us whether you think the government is spending too much money on it, too little money, or about the right amount.” Then, respondents were asked the following, displayed in question two, below.

2. Some people think the government is spending too much money on **[insert issue]**. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 7.

Others feels that the government is spending too little on [insert issue]. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 1.

And of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6.

Where would you place yourself on this scale?

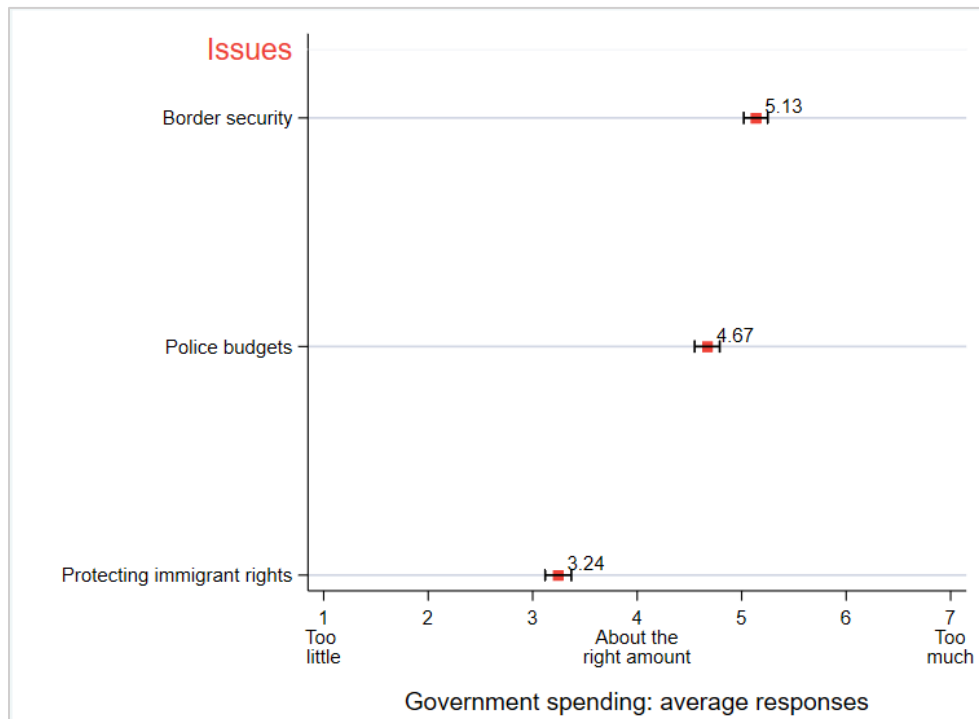
1 The government is <u>spending too little</u>	2	3	4 The government is spending about the right amount	5	6	7 The government is <u>spending too much</u>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In question two, above, the text in brackets indicates where each issue was inserted into the question. One issue was inserted at a time, and the question was repeated for each new issue. Issues appeared in a randomly assigned order for each respondent. Although the survey asked about many issues, here we home in on responses to three issues: border security, police budgets, and protecting immigrant rights.

The only immigration issues in the government spending questions were about border security and protecting immigrant rights, each representing a different side of the immigration debate. On the one hand, the Trump administration promoted a platform focused on security and enforcement, with constant promises to build a wall between the U.S.–Mexico border. On the other hand, immigration advocates call for more humane laws and the fair treatment of immigrants: policies that seek to protect immigrant rights. Finally, although not about immigration, we also home in on attitudes toward spending on police budgets, because the Black Lives Matter movement rose to the top of national consciousness ahead of the 2020 presidential election as people across the United States protested against police violence inflicted on Black communities and called for the redistribution of funds from police budgets to essential services and investments in communities.³

Figure 2, below, displays average (or mean) responses among Biden supporters to the spending questions. Each question is plotted on the y-axis (the vertical axis) and the x-axis displays response options, ranging from a value of one (the government is spending too little on an issue) to seven (the government is spending too much). Each red marker in the figure shows the mean response among Biden supporters for each issue, and the black lines extending from the markers plot 95 percent confidence intervals.⁴

Figure 2. Attitudes on government spending on border security, police budgets, and protecting immigrant rights among Biden supporters



n = 801

Key findings from Figure 2

- On average, Biden’s supporters believe the government is spending less than the ideal amount on protecting immigrant rights.
- Biden’s supporters are also more likely to feel the government is spending too much on border security and police budgets compared to the amount the government spends on protecting immigrant rights.⁵

For more information

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For more information about this appendix, please contact Lucila Figueroa, senior research associate, at lfigueroa@vera.org. For more information about Vera, visit vera.org.

Endnotes

¹ The vote shares in the Vera/Lucid sample are even closer to the actual presidential election vote when looking at vote shares in the pre-election survey among only people categorized as “likely voters”—51 percent of *likely voters* supported Biden, 42 percent favored Trump, and 7 percent planned to vote for another candidate or were undecided. This is further indication that the Vera/Lucid survey is accurately capturing the political landscape among the American public. For information on how “likely voters” are measured, see the national polling document (forthcoming winter 2021).

² Cook Political Report, "2020 National Popular Vote Tracker," accessed January 12, 2021, <https://perma.cc/3JLX-BBJN>.

³ Derek Hawkins, Katie Mettler, and Perry Stein, "'Defund the Police' Gains Traction as Cities Seek to Respond to Demands for a Majority Law Enforcement Shift," *Washington Post*, June 7, 2020, <https://perma.cc/5ZX6-3CMC>.

⁴ A 95 percent confidence interval means there is a 95 percent chance that the true population mean that exists among adults in the United States lies within the confidence interval range.

⁵ Comparing the mean score for government spending on protecting immigrant rights to the average responses for border security and police budgets in paired t-tests reveals significant differences in both comparisons ($p=0.000$). In other words, people are significantly more likely to say the government is spending too little on protecting immigrant rights compared to spending levels on border security and police budgets. (A third paired t-test also reveals a significant difference between spending attitudes on police budgets versus border security, $p=0.000$, making border security the least popular issue).