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The Impact of Artificial Intelligence by 2040

National public opinion poll findings

February 2024

AI's IMPACT ON PERSONAL LIVES

As Americans begin to encounter artificial intelligence (AI) tools in their daily lives, they are wary about the impact these technologies could have by 2040.

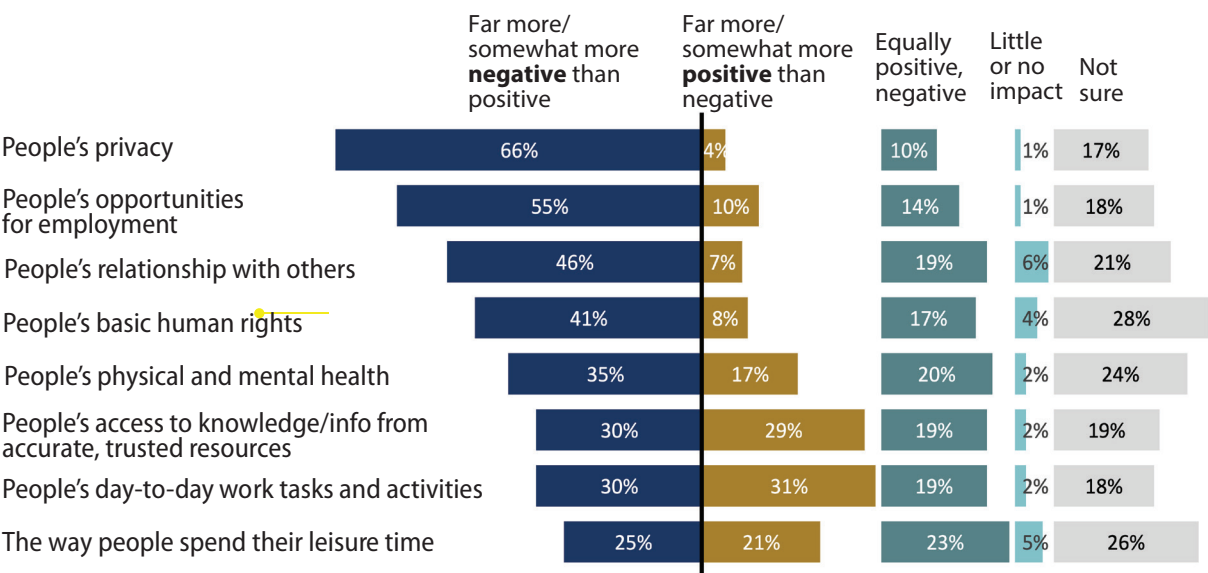
They are especially concerned about the continued erosion of personal privacy, their opportunities for employment in the AI age, how these systems might change their relationships with others and the potential impact on basic human rights.

Americans have more optimism about AI's potential effect on day-to-day work activities and people gaining greater access to accurate knowledge and information.

At the same time, many people say they are either not sure what lies ahead as AI expands, or they expect both positive and negative impacts.

Artificial intelligence's level of impact on people's personal lives

% of U.S. adults who say artificial intelligence will have ____ level of impact by the year 2040 on ...



*Those who did not answer are not shown

**Numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Source: Elon University poll of U.S. adults, Oct. 20-22, 2023

THE NATIONAL PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

AI's IMPACT ON SOCIETY

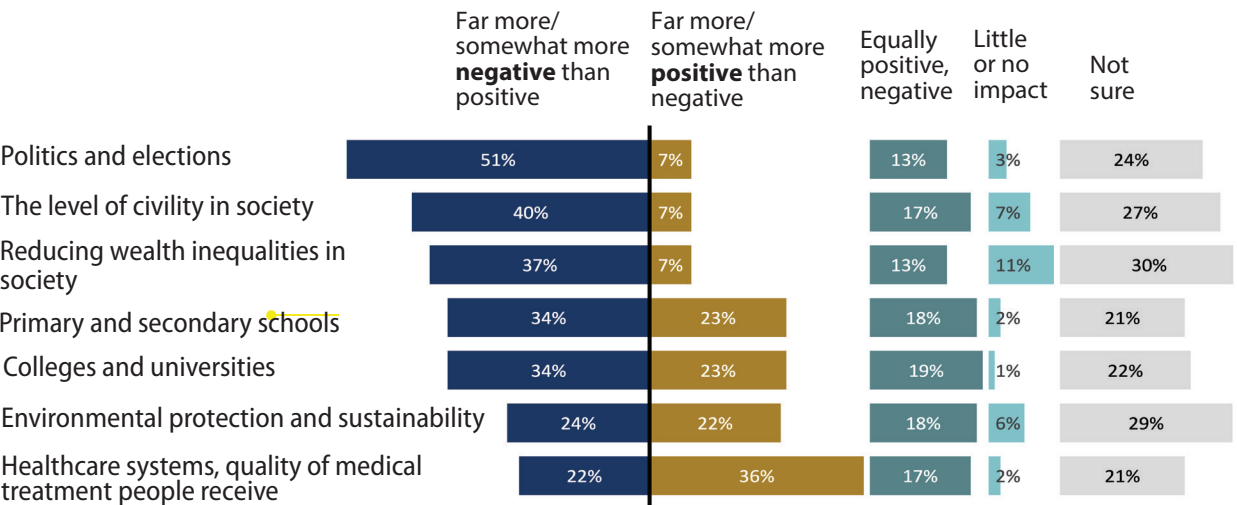
Americans are more likely than not to hope AI will improve the nation's healthcare systems and the quality of medical treatment by 2040. Still, they have deep concern that AI will negatively impact politics and elections and further erode the level of civility in society. They also are concerned that the level of wealth inequality will continue to grow.

Adults' opinions are more evenly split about the impact of AI on K-12 education and colleges and universities, as well as issues related to environmental protection.

On each of the issues we queried, about a quarter or more of Americans say they are not sure what the impact of AI will be on societal systems, or they expect little or no impact.

Artificial intelligence's level of impact on societal institutions and systems

% of U.S. adults who say artificial intelligence will have ____ level of impact by the year 2040 on ...



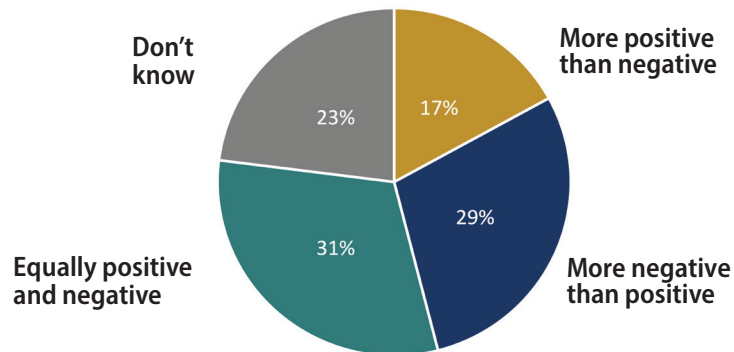
*Those who did not answer are not shown
**Numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Source: Elon University poll of U.S. adults, Oct. 20-22, 2023

BIG-PICTURE OPINIONS ABOUT AI

The results of this national survey make it clear that Americans are divided when they think about AI's impact on people's daily lives. Just 17% are more positive than negative. The rest are divided among those who say they are more positive than negative, those who are equally positive and negative and those who say they don't know which way things will unfold.

Overall, how will the increased use of AI affect the quality of people's daily lives?

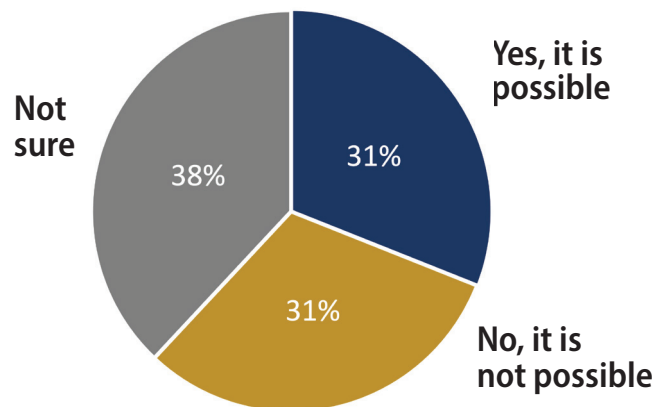


*Those who did not answer are not shown

Source: Elon University poll of U.S. adults, Oct. 20-22, 2023

As they size AI up, Americans have a split verdict about the big question of whether AI systems can be designed to make decisions in people's best interests.

Do you think it is possible or not possible for people to design AI computer programs that can consistently make decisions in people's best interest in complex situations?



*Those who did not answer are not shown

Source: Elon University poll of U.S. adults, Oct. 20-22, 2023

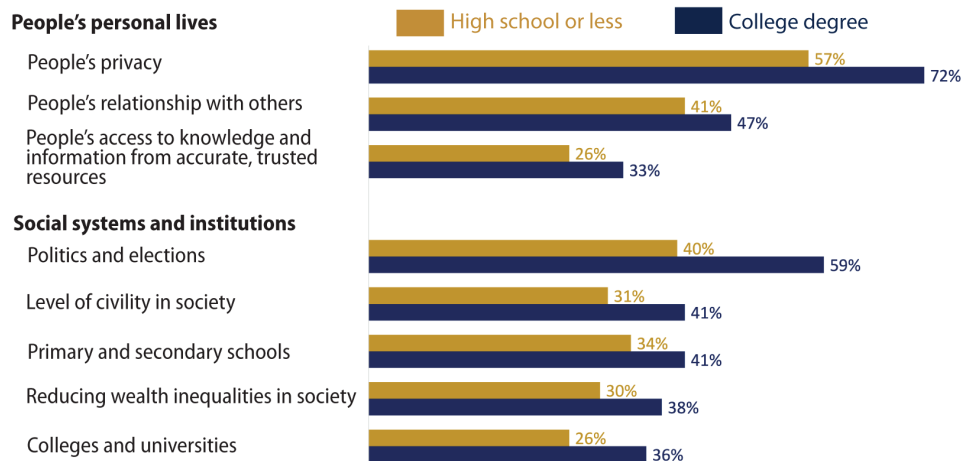
THE NATIONAL PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

PATTERNS IN THE SURVEY FINDINGS

There are some patterns in the general public survey data that are worth noting. Those with higher levels of education – a college degree or more – are more likely than those with a high school education or less to say the effects of AI will be more negative than positive. Some areas where that shows up: concerns about people’s privacy, politics and elections, colleges and universities, wealth inequalities and the level of civility in society.

Those with higher levels of education are more likely to say the impact of artificial intelligence will be more negative in some areas of life

% of U.S. adults in each group who say the impact of AI by the year 2040 will be very or somewhat more negative than positive in these aspects of life



*Those who did not answer are not shown

Source: Elon University poll of U.S. adults, Oct. 20-22, 2023

Those with higher levels of education are considerably more upbeat about the impact of AI on people’s day-to-day work activities. Some 46% of those with college degrees say the effect of AI will be more positive than negative on people’s day-to-day work tasks, while 21% of those with high school or less education think so.

Women and men at times have different views about the impact and outcomes of the technology. For instance, women are more pessimistic than men when it comes to the effect of AI on people’s opportunities for employment and on their overall physical and mental health. Men are somewhat more doubtful about the impact of AI on people’s leisure time.

There are also some differences by race and ethnicity. White Americans are generally more likely than Black Americans to say the impact of AI will be more negative than positive. That includes their views on the influence of AI when it comes to privacy, access to accurate information, the level of civility in society and politics and elections. The views of Hispanic Americans on these issues usually sit between Black Americans and White Americans. (There were not enough Asian Americans in the sample to do a statistically reliable analysis. At the same time, the views of Asian American adults were included in the overall sample.) On many of these issues, Black Americans and women were particularly likely to say they were not sure what the impact of AI would be on various aspects of life.

METHODOLOGY FOR THE IPSOS PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY OF U.S. ADULTS

The public opinion survey was conducted using Ipsos' KnowledgePanel®, a probability-based online panel designed to be representative of the U.S. population. Initially, participants are chosen scientifically by a random selection of telephone numbers and residential addresses. Persons in selected households are then invited by telephone or by mail to participate in the web-enabled KnowledgePanel. For those who agree to participate, but do not already have Internet access, Ipsos provides at no cost a laptop/netbook and ISP connection. People who already have computers and Internet service are permitted to participate using their own equipment. Panelists then receive unique log-in information for accessing surveys online, and then are sent emails throughout each month inviting them to participate in research. This survey was conducted on the Ipsos Omnibus survey. The firm's explanation of its KnowledgePanel and Omnibus survey methodology can be found [online](#).

Topline from Ipsos survey 2023 ELON UNIVERSITY IPSOS OMNIBUS – KNOWLEDGE PANEL OCTOBER 20-22, 2023 N=1,021

ASK ALL: BLH2

One way to define artificial intelligence (AI) is computer technology that performs tasks that humans typically do, such as understanding language and answering questions.

How much have you heard or read about artificial intelligence (AI)?

	Oct '23
A lot	32
A little	59
Nothing at all	9
Refused	*

ASK ALL: BLH3

Overall, how will the increased use of artificial intelligence (AI) affect the quality of people's daily lives? The impact of AI will be ...

	Oct '23
More positive than negative	17
More negative than positive	29
Equally positive and negative	31
Don't know	23
Refused	1

ASK ALL: BLH4

Do you think it is possible or not possible for people to design artificial intelligence (AI) computer programs that can consistently make decisions in people's best interest in complex situations?

	Oct '23
Yes, it is possible	31
No, it is not possible	31
Not sure	38
Refused	1

BLH6

By the year 2040, what level of impact will AI have on each of the following? The impact will be ...

	Far more positive than negative	Somewhat more positive than negative	Equally positive, negative	Somewhat more negative than positive	Far more negative than positive	Little or no impact	Not Sure	Refused
People's basic human rights	2	6	17	19	22	4	28	2
People's privacy	2	3	10	23	43	1	17	2
People's opportunities for employment	3	7	14	24	31	1	18	1
People's day-to-day work tasks and activities	7	24	19	14	15	2	18	1
People's physical and mental health	5	13	20	18	17	2	24	2

BLH7

By the year 2040, what level of impact will AI have on each of the following? The impact will be ...

	Far more positive than negative	Somewhat more positive than negative	Equally positive, negative	Somewhat more negative than positive	Far more negative than positive	Little or no impact	Not Sure	Refused
People's access to knowledge and information from accurate, trusted resources	8	21	19	14	16	2	19	1
People's relationship with others	2	5	19	23	23	6	21	1
People spend their leisure time	5	16	23	13	12	5	26	1

BLH8

Now, some more general questions about the possible impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on society and institutions. By the year 2040, what level of impact will AI have on each of the following? The impact will be ...

	Far more positive than negative	Somewhat more positive than negative	Equally positive, negative	Somewhat more negative than positive	Far more negative than positive	Little or no impact	Not Sure	Refused
Reducing wealth inequalities in society	3	5	13	14	23	11	30	1
Level of civility in society	2	5	17	19	21	7	27	2
Healthcare systems and the quality of medical treatment people receive	11	25	17	11	11	2	21	2
Environmental protection and sustainability	5	17	18	11	12	6	29	2
Politics and elections	2	5	13	16	35	3	24	2

BLH9

Thinking again to the year 2040, by 2040, what level of impact will AI have on each of the following? The impact will be ...

	Far more positive than negative	Somewhat more positive than negative	Equally positive, negative	Somewhat more negative than positive	Far more negative than positive	Little or no impact	Not Sure	Refused
Primary and secondary schools	6	18	18	16	18	2	21	1
Colleges and universities	7	17	19	15	19	1	22	1

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