

Executive Summary

From June 6 to June 21, 2017, Zogby Research Services (ZRS) conducted a national telephone survey of Iranian Americans for PAAIA. Overall, 402 randomly selected respondents were interviewed. Because this is the seventh such survey we have conducted for PAAIA, we have been able to compare this year's results with previous findings. While there are some changes in attitudes that can be observed, the results of this year's poll are consistent, in many areas, with those from past years.

1. As we have consistently found since 2009, Iranian Americans remain deeply connected with their family in Iran, with more than one half making contact at least several times a month. Most speak with family or friends by phone, although there is an increasing reliance on Internet services, mobile apps and social media.
2. About one-quarter say they have traveled to Iran in the past few years and about one-third report visits in recent years from friends and family in Iran. While only a few of those who have gone to Iran report having problems with either U.S. or Iranian authorities, three-quarters of all respondents say that new policies put in place by the Trump Administration may deter them from traveling to Iran in the future.
3. More than one-half of Iranian Americans report having personally experienced discrimination because of their ethnicity, with the common forms of that discrimination being in social circumstances or at airports.

Iranian Americans are concerned that this discrimination will grow in the future because of the hostile rhetoric used by some politicians and the negative policies advanced by the Trump Administration.

4. It may be this growing concern that led respondents to choose improving the image of Iranian Americans and protecting Iranian American civil rights as the most important goals that should be advanced by Iranian American organizations.

It is important to note that in previous years, respondents said that the most important goal of Iranian American groups should be to promote human rights and democracy in Iran. The shift to domestic concerns in 2017 is significant.

5. As a result of the Trump Administration's hostile rhetoric, travel ban, and negative approach toward Iran and the Iran Nuclear Deal, more than three-quarters of Iranian Americans have a negative view of President Trump. This stands in marked contrast to the three-quarters of respondents in last year's poll who gave then-President Obama a positive rating.
6. While slightly less than two-thirds of Iranian Americans believe that the nuclear deal with Iran should be kept, only about half say that the agreement has had a positive impact.

Moving beyond the deal, Iranian Americans believe that the United States should make it a priority to push for democracy and greater rights in Iran and should allow Americans to invest in Iran in order to create more employment for Iranians.

7. Iran's President Hassan Rouhani is viewed favorably by 55% of respondents, while the country's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei is seen favorably by only 6%.

Opinion, however, is divided as to whether Rouhani's election as president actually can make a difference in the future of Iran or in improving U.S.-Iran relations. When asked what type of government they prefer for Iran, the single most favored option is a secular democracy.