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Majority of Public Favors Same-Sex Marriage, but Divisions Persist

Little change in opinion since 2017

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Majority of Public Favors Same-Sex Marriage, but Divisions Persist

Little change in opinion since 2017

After years of generally steady increases, opinions about same-sex marriage are mostly unchanged since 2017. Today, a majority of Americans (61%) favor allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally, while about half as many (31%) oppose same-sex marriage.

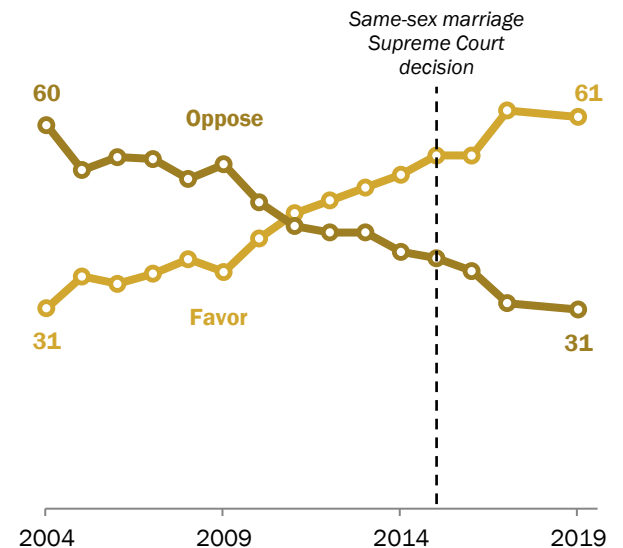
While attitudes about same-sex marriage are changed little from two years ago, support has increased substantially over the past two decades. In 2004, opinion was almost the reverse of what it is today: 60% opposed same-sex marriage, while just 31% were in favor.

The Pew Research Center survey, conducted March 20-25 among 1,503 adults finds that Republicans and Democrats remain deeply divided over legal marriage for gays and lesbians – though support has increased significantly in both parties over the past 15 years.

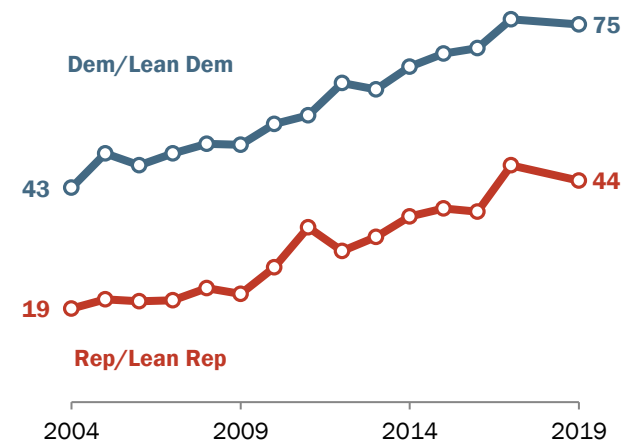
Today, three-quarters of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents favor same-sex marriage, up from 43% 15 years ago. By contrast, fewer than half of Republicans and Republican leaners (44%) support same-sex marriage; in 2004, just 19% of Republicans supported it.

Public remains supportive of same-sex marriage; wide partisan gap persists

% who ___ allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally



% who *favor* allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally



Notes: Data for 2007-2015 based on yearly averages.

Don't know responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted March 20-25, 2019.

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Support for same-sex marriage also has increased among nearly all demographic groups over the past 15 years, including [across generations](#) and [by religious affiliation](#):

- Support for same-sex marriage is highest among Millennials (74%) – as has generally been the case for nearly a decade. A majority of Gen Xers (58%) support allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally, as do about half of Boomers (51%) and 45% of the Silent Generation.
- Among religious groups, majorities of Catholics (61%), white mainline Protestants (66%) and the religiously unaffiliated (79%) say they support same-sex marriage. By contrast, just 29% of white evangelical Protestants favor same-sex marriage, while about twice as many (63%) are opposed.

Continue exploring [attitudes about same-sex marriage](#).

Acknowledgements

This report is a collaborative effort based on the input and analysis of the following individuals:

Research team

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Methodology

The analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted March 20-25, 2019 among a national sample of 1,503 adults, 18 years of age or older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia (300 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 1,203 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 792 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers under the direction of Abt Associates. A combination of landline and cell phone random-digit-dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International, LLC. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. The weighting procedure corrected for the different sampling rates. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see <http://www.pewresearch.org/methodology/u-s-survey-research/>.

The combined landline and cell phone sample is weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and nativity, and region to parameters from the 2017 Census Bureau's American Community Survey one-year estimates and population density to parameters from the decennial census. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status (landline only, cell phone only, or both landline and cell phone), based on extrapolations from the 2018 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size among respondents with a landline phone. The margins of error reported and statistical tests of significance are adjusted to account for the survey's design effect, a measure of how much efficiency is lost from the weighting procedures.

The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

Survey conducted March 20-25, 2019

Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	1,503	3.0 percentage points
Rep/Lean Rep	657	4.5 percentage points
Dem/Lean Dem	708	4.4 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

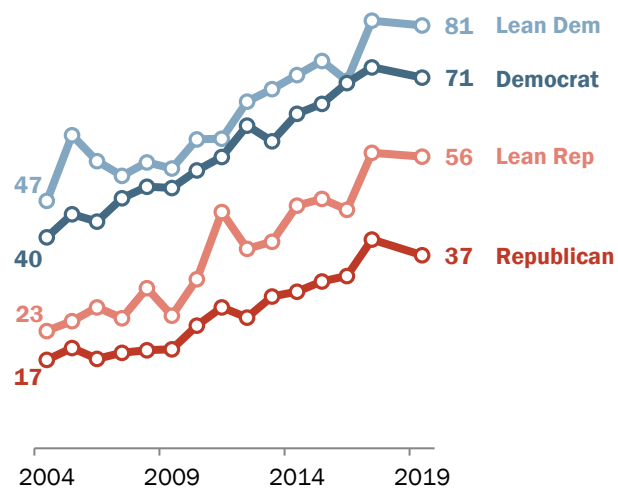
Pew Research Center undertakes all polling activity, including calls to mobile telephone numbers, in compliance with the Telephone Consumer Protection Act and other applicable laws.

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Appendix A: Charts

Wide gap between Republicans, GOP leaners in views of same-sex marriage

% who *favor* allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally



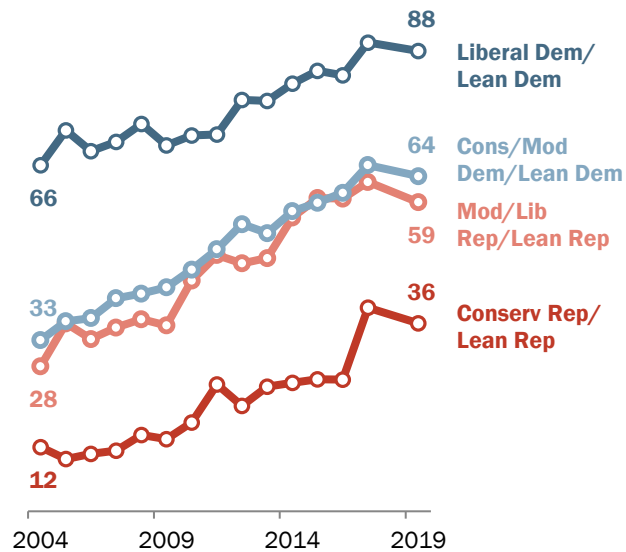
Note: Data for 2007-2015 based on yearly averages.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted March 20-25, 2019.

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Liberal Democrats remain most supportive of same-sex marriage

% who *favor* allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally



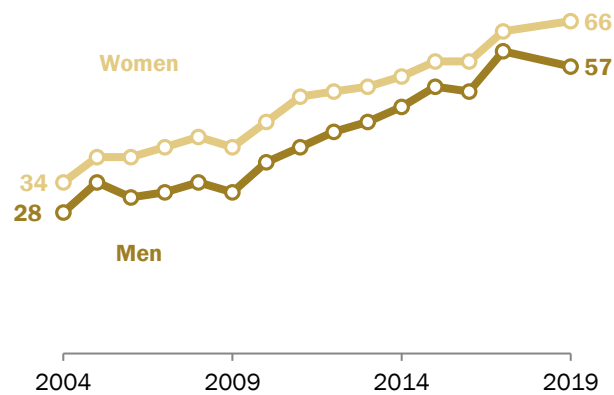
Note: Data for 2007-2015 based on yearly averages.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted March 20-25, 2019.

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As in the past, women are more likely than men to favor same-sex marriage

% who favor allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally



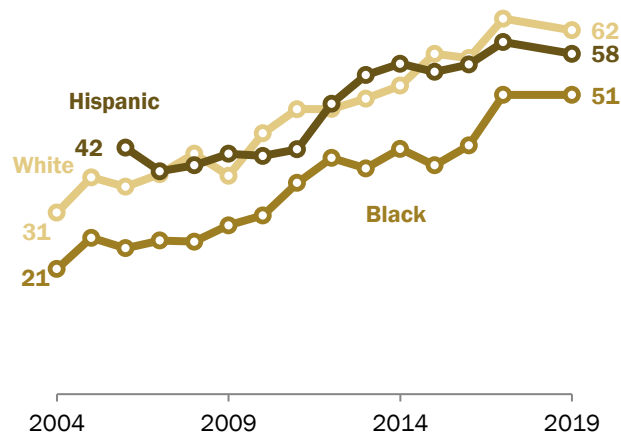
Note: Data for 2007-2015 based on yearly averages.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted March 20-25, 2019.

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Support for same-sex marriage steady among whites, blacks and Hispanics

% who favor allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally

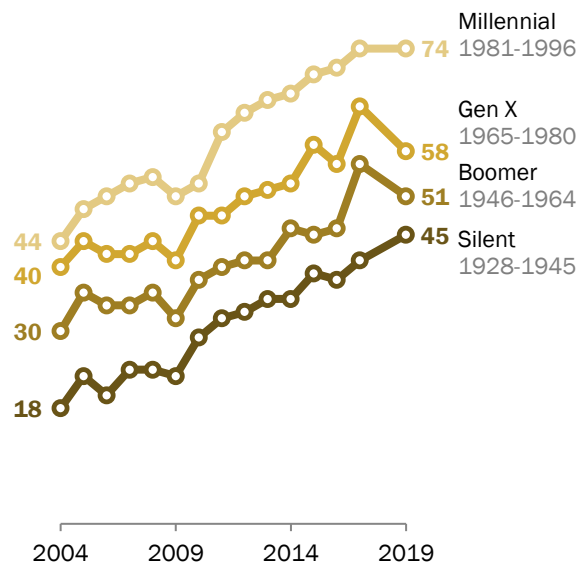


Notes: Data for 2007-2015 based on yearly averages.
Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic;
Hispanics are of any race. Prior to 2006, sample size of Hispanics
insufficient for analysis.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted March 20-25, 2019.

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Consistent generational divide in support for same-sex marriage

% who favor allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally

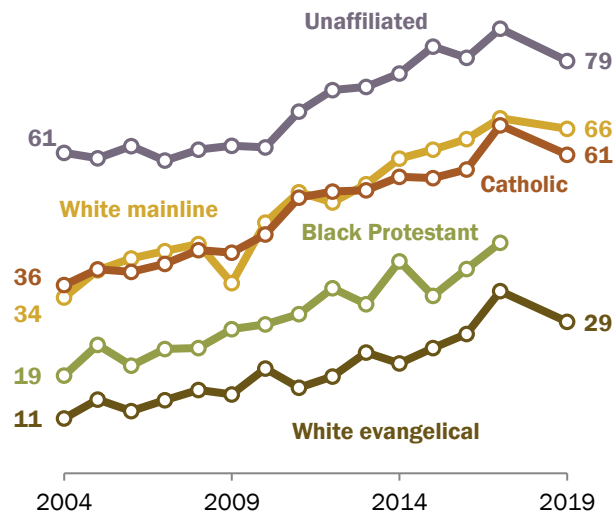


Notes: Data for 2007-2015 based on yearly averages. Changes from 2017 to 2019 are not significant at the 95% confidence level.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted March 20-25, 2019.

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Support for same-sex marriage among religious affiliations largely unchanged

% who *favor* allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally



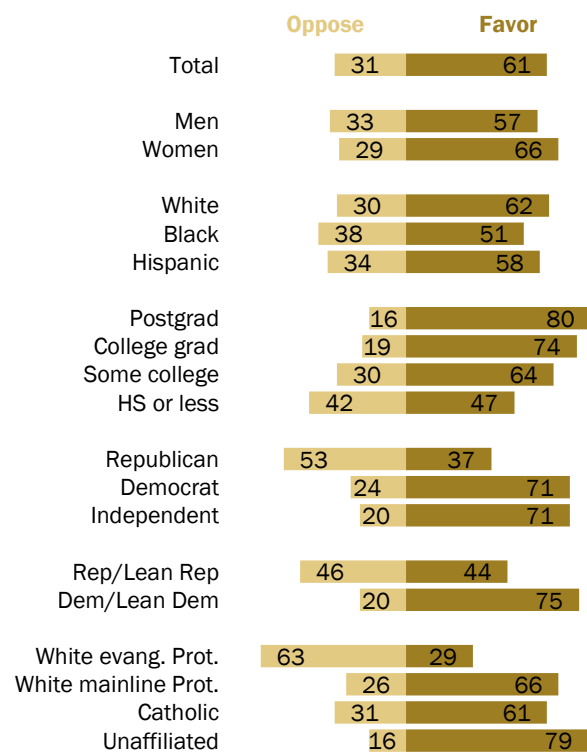
Notes: Data for 2007-2015 based on yearly averages. Sample size of black Protestants insufficient for analysis.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted March 20-25, 2019.

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Wide educational and religious differences in views of gay marriage

% who ____ allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally



Notes: Don't know responses not shown. Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted March 20-25, 2019.

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**PEW RESEARCH CENTER
MARCH 2019 POLITICAL SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
MARCH 20-25, 2019
N=1,503**

QUESTIONS 1-2, 10, 14, 20, 25, 33-34, 44, 47-50a-d, 54-57 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED

NO QUESTIONS 3-9, 11-13, 15-18, 21-24, 26-32, 35-43, 45-46, 51-53

QUESTIONS 19, 50e-f HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK ALL:

Q.58 Do you strongly favor, favor, oppose, or strongly oppose allowing gays and lesbians to marry legally?

	-----Favor-----			-----Oppose-----			
	Strongly			Strongly			(VOL.)
	Total	<i>favor</i>	<i>Favor</i>	Total	<i>oppose</i>	<i>Oppose</i>	DK/Ref
Mar 20-25, 2019	61	31	30	31	19	12	8
Jun 8-18, 2017	62	31	32	32	14	18	6
Mar 17-26, 2016	55	26	30	37	15	22	7
Jul 14-20, 2015	54	28	26	39	18	20	7
May 12-18, 2015	57	28	28	39	21	18	5
Sep 2-9, 2014	49	24	25	41	20	22	10
Feb 12-26, 2014	54	24	30	39	19	20	7
May 1-5, 2013 ¹	51	21	30	42	19	22	8
Mar 13-17, 2013	49	22	27	44	22	21	8
Oct 24-28, 2012	49	22	27	40	19	21	11
Jun 28-Jul 9, 2012	48	23	25	44	24	20	8
Jun 7-17, 2012	48	23	25	44	23	21	9
Apr 4-15, 2012	47	22	25	43	22	21	11
Sep 22-Oct 4, 2011	46	--	--	44	--	--	9
Feb 22-Mar 1, 2011	45	20	25	46	25	21	9
Aug 25-Sep 6, 2010	43	16	27	47	26	22	10
Jul 21-Aug 5, 2010	41	17	24	48	24	24	10
Aug 11-17, 2009	39	14	25	53	31	22	8
Mid-April, 2009	35	14	21	54	31	23	11
August, 2008	39	13	26	52	30	22	9
June, 2008	40	15	25	52	31	21	8
Late May, 2008	38	15	23	49	29	20	13
November, 2007	36	12	24	54	29	25	10
August, 2007	36	13	23	55	31	24	9
Early January, 2007	37	13	24	55	33	22	8
Early November, 2006 (RVs)	30	10	20	57	31	26	13
July, 2006	35	12	23	56	31	25	9
June, 2006	33	13	20	55	32	23	12
March, 2006	39	10	29	51	28	23	10
July, 2005	36	13	23	53	31	22	11
December, 2004	32	14	18	61	38	23	7
August, 2004	29	8	21	60	35	25	11
July, 2004	32	10	22	56	33	23	12
Mid-March, 2004	32	10	22	59	35	24	9
Early February, 2004	30	9	21	63	42	21	7

¹ In May 1-5, 2013, Jun 28-Jul 9, 2012, Sep 22-Oct 4, 2011, July 21-Aug 5, 2010, Aug 11-17, 2009, August 2008, August 2007, Early January 2007, Early November 2006, March 2006, July 2005, December 2004, Early February 2004, November 2003, Mid-July 2003, March 2001 and June 1996 the question was asked as part of a list of items. In Jun 7-17, 2012, Apr 4-15, 2012, August 2009, April 2009, May 2008 and June 2008, the question read "allowing gay and lesbian couples;" all other instances read "allowing gays and lesbians."

Q.58 CONTINUED...

	-----Favor-----			-----Oppose-----			(VOL.)
	Total	<i>Strongly</i> <i>favor</i>	<i>Favor</i>	Total	<i>Strongly</i> <i>oppose</i>	<i>Oppose</i>	<i>DK/Ref</i>
November, 2003	30	10	20	62	41	21	8
October, 2003	30	9	21	58	33	25	12
Mid-July, 2003	38	10	28	53	30	23	9
March, 2001	35	8	27	57	34	23	8
June, 1996	27	6	21	65	41	24	8

NO QUESTIONS 59, 62-63, 72-74**QUESTION 60, 66-69 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****QUESTION 61, 64-65, 70-71, 75-77 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED****ASK ALL:**

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

ASK IF INDEP/NO PREF/OTHER/DK/REF (PARTY=3,4,5,9):

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

	Republican	Democrat	Independent	(VOL.) No preference	(VOL.) Other party	(VOL.) DK/Ref	Lean Rep	Lean Dem
Mar 20-25, 2019	26	30	37	3	1	3	14	19
Jan 9-14, 2019	25	31	40	2	1	2	16	18
Sep 18-24, 2018	25	32	37	3	1	2	15	18
Jun 5-12, 2018	25	31	38	3	1	2	15	18
Apr 25-May 1, 2018	27	28	38	4	1	2	14	19
Mar 7-14, 2018	26	28	41	3	*	1	17	18
Jan 10-15, 2018	26	33	34	3	1	3	12	18
Yearly Totals								
2018	25.7	30.8	37.6	3.0	.8	2.0	14.7	18.3
2017	23.6	31.4	39.4	3.3	.6	1.7	15.8	18.7
2016	25.4	32.0	36.5	3.4	.5	2.2	14.6	17.0
2015	23.7	30.4	40.1	3.6	.4	1.8	16.4	17.3
2015	23.7	30.4	40.1	3.6	.4	1.8	16.4	17.3
2014	23.2	31.5	39.5	3.1	.7	2.0	16.2	16.5
2013	23.9	32.1	38.3	2.9	.5	2.2	16.0	16.0
2012	24.7	32.6	36.4	3.1	.5	2.7	14.4	16.1
2011	24.3	32.3	37.4	3.1	.4	2.5	15.7	15.6
2010	25.2	32.7	35.2	3.6	.4	2.8	14.5	14.1
2009	23.9	34.4	35.1	3.4	.4	2.8	13.1	15.7
2008	25.7	36.0	31.5	3.6	.3	3.0	10.6	15.2
2007	25.3	32.9	34.1	4.3	.4	2.9	10.9	17.0
2006	27.8	33.1	30.9	4.4	.3	3.4	10.5	15.1
2005	29.3	32.8	30.2	4.5	.3	2.8	10.3	14.9
2004	30.0	33.5	29.5	3.8	.4	3.0	11.7	13.4
2003	30.3	31.5	30.5	4.8	.5	2.5	12.0	12.6
2002	30.4	31.4	29.8	5.0	.7	2.7	12.4	11.6
2001	29.0	33.2	29.5	5.2	.6	2.6	11.9	11.6
2001 Post-Sept 11	30.9	31.8	27.9	5.2	.6	3.6	11.7	9.4
2001 Pre-Sept 11	27.3	34.4	30.9	5.1	.6	1.7	12.1	13.5
2000	28.0	33.4	29.1	5.5	.5	3.6	11.6	11.7
1999	26.6	33.5	33.7	3.9	.5	1.9	13.0	14.5
1998	27.9	33.7	31.1	4.6	.4	2.3	11.6	13.1
1997	28.0	33.4	32.0	4.0	.4	2.3	12.2	14.1
1996	28.9	33.9	31.8	3.0	.4	2.0	12.1	14.9

PARTY/PARTYLN CONTINUED ...

				(VOL.) No	(VOL.) Other	(VOL.) DK/Ref	Lean	Lean
	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	<u>preference</u>	<u>party</u>		<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>
1995	31.6	30.0	33.7	2.4	.6	1.3	15.1	13.5
1994	30.1	31.5	33.5	1.3	--	3.6	13.7	12.2
1993	27.4	33.6	34.2	4.4	1.5	2.9	11.5	14.9
1992	27.6	33.7	34.7	1.5	0	2.5	12.6	16.5
1991	30.9	31.4	33.2	0	1.4	3.0	14.7	10.8
1990	30.9	33.2	29.3	1.2	1.9	3.4	12.4	11.3
1989	33	33	34	--	--	--	--	--
1987	26	35	39	--	--	--	--	--