

Gun Policy: The Views of Republicans and Democrats

Do you know how many firearms are currently in civilian possession in the US? According to official numbers, over 393 million guns are owned by Americans, which makes up for 46% of the global stock of civilian firearms. This statement alone indicates how strong and well-developed gun culture is in this country.

On the other hand, the rate of firearm deaths (both homicides and suicides) keeps growing at a rapid pace, causing the gun policy to be one of the hottest and most discussed topics. Unsurprisingly, the two major opposing parties in the US: Republicans and Democrats, are having very diverse opinions concerning this matter. While Republicans want to keep it easy, Democrats are voting for more restrictions, and they only agree on a couple of points.

To go into detail, Republicans are generally supporting gun ownership. They believe that it should be accessible to the majority of US citizens. According to the survey by the Pew Research Center, the majority of Republicans don't really see gun violence as a "very big" problem: 42% of the party representatives see the problem as "moderately big"; and 23% believe there is no issue at all.

Thus, when it comes to the majority of suggestions concerning stricter regulations of gun possession among civilians, Republicans vote for such changes very reluctantly. Instead, the party representatives strongly support the allowance of concealed carry of firearms in most public places. And, they also vote for allowing school teachers and authorities to carry guns at the workplace. All in all, Republicans are convinced that stricter gun policies cannot help minimize cultural brutality and prevent cruel crimes. But they believe that death penalties can.

Democrats, on the contrary, have a very different viewpoint on gun policy. According to Pew Research Center, as many as 65% of the party representatives believe that the problem of gun violence is very big. And another 26% think that it is moderately big. Due to their outlook on the problem, the majority of Democrats are strongly against making concealed carry of guns allowed. They also don't support reducing the waiting time for legal firearm purchases. They, on the contrary, support stricter background checks. Democrats even suggest creating federal databases to gain stronger control over gun sales. One more point in Democrats' policy is a restriction of sales of assault-style weapons.

Despite critically opposing ideas that Republicans and Democrats have regarding gun policy, they do find a few points of contact on this issue. Namely, the equal number of Republicans and Democrats vote for restricting mentally ill people from purchasing and owning firearms. Another shared idea with a small gap in the number of votes is that gun ownership should not be accessible to people who are included in no-fly or watch lists. Finally, the last policy update on which both parties somewhat agree implies the introduction of background checks for private sales and sales made at gun shows.

Overall, Republicans and Democrats have fundamentally contradicting views on issues related to gun violence. Despite the fact that the number of firearms crimes keeps striking, Republicans keep stubbornly voting for more sparing policies and less control. Democrats, on the contrary, are spreading awareness of the issue.

They assure that the problem is real and suggest stricter policies. The goal of stricter gun policies is to minimize the danger for citizens. Interestingly enough, despite the strong gun culture in the country, according to surveys, most Americans would rather support democrats. 52% of citizens believe that gun control has to be stricter, and personally, I would also stand by the same ideas that the Democratic party is spreading.