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members of America's Millennial generation to rate the issues and topics most important to them personally when electing the next president. Results from this poll show that ...

Jul. 20, 2016

A new national poll of America's 18- to 29-year-olds by Harvard's Institute of Politics (IOP), located at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, finds there is an emerging consensus among young Americans about their generation's priorities for the next president of the United States.

After 15 years of polling, focus groups and town meetings, the IOP poll asked members of America's Millennial generation to rate the issues and topics most important to them personally when electing the next president. Results from this poll show that economic concerns outweigh all, with 64% indicating it is a top priority. Thirty-one percent (31%) of young Americans indicated that improving the economy is the most important issue in 2016, while 21% reported it was second and 12% ranked it third.

Following improving the economy, combating the spread of terrorism was the second most important issue for young Americans (39% indicated this was a top 3 issue), followed by reducing inequality (34%), uniting the country (31%), dealing with immigration (27%) and reducing the role of money in politics (23%). Read the detailed report on the poll's findings and historic data online at <http://bit.ly/HarvardIOPSummerPoll2016>.

"As they hold their national conventions, Democrats and Republicans have an incredible opportunity- and what could be one of their last chances to interest, excite and engage Millennial citizens in the 2016 presidential elections. This is not just about responding to their hopes in some distant future; it is about taking them

seriously and beginning to address their policy priorities now,” said Maggie

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top again, followed by combating terrorism (35%) and reducing inequality in America (31%).

In addition, the Harvard IOP poll followed up on its April 2016 release, which found that less than half (42%) of 18 to 29 year olds supported capitalism, while 51% opposed it. In this July poll, the IOP asked young Americans to identify the “first word or phrase” that “capitalism” brought to mind. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of young Americans used explicitly negative words to describe capitalism, 15% used words construed as positive and a plurality used words that were coded as neutral (45%).

In the 271 negative cases, young Americans most frequently described capitalism with: “greed” (59 mentions), “corrupt” (19 mentions) and “control” (12 mentions).

On the positive side, 18- to 29-year-olds described capitalism with: “free/free market/free enterprise” (61 out of 152 positive mentions), “good/great” (14 mentions), and “profit” (11 mentions).

“Money” was used 196 times in the remaining 450 mentions and was coded as neutral for the purpose of this analysis. The remaining 128 responses were left blank or individuals indicated that they did not know.

“Should the leadership of both political parties—in Washington and throughout state and local governments—choose to ignore Millennials’ values and principles and only engage them at election time as subgroups in swing states, there is every chance that we will lose their participation in politics and their support of government, paralyzing American progress,” said John Della Volpe, director of polling at the IOP.

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