News

Pope Leo and Donald Trump composite image

Pope Leo XIV and U.S. President Donald Trump are pictured in a combination photo. A new poll shows Trump trailing Pope Leo by 54 percentage points in net favorability. The Economist/YouGov survey, released June 2, 2026, was conducted May 29 to June 1, after the release of Pope Leo's first encyclical, "Magnifica Humanitas." (OSV News/Simone Risoluti)

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A new poll shows President Donald Trump trailing Pope Leo XIV by 54 percentage points in net favorability.

The Economist/YouGov survey, released June 2, was conducted May 29 to June 1, after the release of Pope Leo's new encyclical, "Magnifica Humanitas: On Safeguarding the Human Person in the Time of Artificial Intelligence," addressing the human dignity concerns posed by artificial intelligence. It also comes amid souring public sentiment on the war in Iran.

The poll found the U.S.-born Pope Leo had the highest net favorability rating of a group of public figures they polled at plus-37 percentage points. Trump, conversely,

had a minus-17 rating, a difference of 54 percentage points.

Vice President JD Vance had a minus-8 rating, and former Vice President Kamala Harris had a minus-3 rating, the survey found.

Meanwhile, the survey also found that 65% of Americans said AI technology is advancing too quickly. A similar share said they agreed with Pope Leo that aspects of AI technology can be utilized for good as long as unique human dignity is protected. An even higher share – 83% – said they agreed with the pontiff's statement that "so-called artificial intelligences do not undergo experiences, do not possess a body, do not feel joy or pain, do not mature through relationships and do not know from within what love, work, friendship or responsibility mean."

The same Economist/YouGov survey found a record-high 61% of Americans disapprove of how Trump is handling his job as president. Pollsters attributed that rating to corresponding concern about inflation and the war in Iran.

Similarly, a June 3 Marquette Law School Poll national survey found that Trump's overall approval has continued to decline, down to 38%. However, that poll also found Trump still holds influence with voters in Republican primary elections. Among all Republicans, 71% said they would vote for a primary candidate Trump endorsed, while just 20% said they would vote for an incumbent Republican Trump opposed.

The survey also follows a May Washington Post-ABC News-Ipsos poll that found Americans broadly disapproved of Trump's social media and verbal attacks on Pope Leo after the pontiff raised objections to the conflict in Iran.

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