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**THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE:
73% CONCERNED ABOUT POTENTIAL THREAT TO HUMAN SURVIVAL,
QUINNIPIAC UNIVERSITY POLL ON AI FINDS;
86% SUPPORT INDEPENDENT SAFETY STANDARDS FOR AI COMPANIES**

Following recent warnings about rogue AI agents, sparking debate over safety versus economic advantage as the U.S. and China race to develop AI systems, 73 percent of Americans are either very concerned (38 percent) or somewhat concerned (35 percent) that future AI systems could potentially threaten human survival, while 25 percent are either not so concerned (14 percent) or not concerned at all (11 percent). This is according to a Quinnipiac (KWIN-uh-pea-ack) University national poll of adults released today examining attitudes about artificial intelligence. The survey was conducted in collaboration with the Quinnipiac University School of Computing & Engineering and the Quinnipiac University School of Business.

IMPACT

Fifty-three percent of Americans think AI will do more harm than good in their day-to-day lives, while 34 percent think AI will do more good than harm in their day-to-day lives, with 13 percent not offering an opinion. This is little changed from Quinnipiac University's Poll on AI from March 30, 2026.

AI AGENTS VS. HUMANS

When asked which concerns them more, over half of Americans (52 percent) say they are more concerned about AI being used by humans to do harm to humanity, while 33 percent say they are more concerned about autonomous AI agents doing harm to humanity and 2 percent volunteer no harm to humanity, with 12 percent not offering an opinion.

"The results show a clear theme about the fear of harm coming from AI and its users. More people expect AI to do more harm than good in their day-to-day lives, and while there are significant concerns about future AI threatening humans, Americans are much more worried about AI being used by people to do harm to others," said Brian O'Neill, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Computer Science and Associate Dean, Quinnipiac University School of Computing and Engineering.

LEADERS OF AI COMPANIES

A vast majority of Americans say they do not have trust in the leaders of AI companies.

Seventy-four percent say they have either not so much trust (29 percent) or none at all (45 percent) in the leaders of AI companies, while 24 percent say they have either a lot of (3 percent) or some (21 percent) trust in the leaders of AI companies.

“Americans are not convinced AI’s advances are in their interests. More than half expect AI to do more harm than good in their daily lives, and nearly three-quarters express little or no trust in the leaders of AI companies. The industry needs to give people a reason to welcome AI,” said Tamilla Triantoro, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Business Analytics and Information Systems, Quinnipiac University School of Business.

GUARDRAILS

Ninety-one percent of Americans think it is either very important (74 percent) or somewhat important (17 percent) that the United States establish guardrails for AI systems, while 7 percent think it is either not so important (3 percent) or not important at all (4 percent).

A vast majority of Americans (86 percent) support requiring companies that are developing AI systems to meet independent safety standards, even if it slows down AI development, while 9 percent oppose it.

PACE OF DEVELOPMENT

Americans were given four options about the pace of AI development and asked which one comes closest to their line of thinking about what AI companies in the U.S. should do:

- 30 percent think stop developing powerful AI systems until their safety can be evaluated;
- 47 percent think slow down developing powerful AI systems until their safety can be evaluated;
- 14 percent think keep developing powerful AI systems at the current pace;
- 5 percent think move faster in developing powerful AI systems.

“AI companies face a trust problem, not just questions about their technology. Seventy-four percent of Americans have little or no trust in their leaders, while 86 percent support independent safety standards even if development slows. Meanwhile, nearly 8 in 10 Americans want powerful AI development slowed or stopped until safety can be evaluated, and just 5 percent want it accelerated. Taken together, these results suggest that the public wants safeguards that do not depend simply on taking company leaders at their word,” said Chetan Jaiswal, Ph.D., Professor of Computer Science and Associate Chair, Department of Computing, Quinnipiac University School of Computing and Engineering.

U.S. VS. CHINA

More than two-thirds of Americans (69 percent) think it is either very important (40 percent) or somewhat important (29 percent) that the United States keep up with China in developing AI systems, while 27 percent think it is either not so important (14 percent) or not important at all (13 percent).

“The public is not neatly divided into a competition camp and a safety camp. Sixty-nine percent say keeping up with China in AI is important, while 91 percent think establishing guardrails for AI is important. Sixty-five percent of Americans hold both views. That does not tell us how people would resolve every trade-off, but it does show that valuing competition should not be mistaken for opposing safeguards,” added Jaiswal.

SAFETY VS. INNOVATION

Eighty-one percent of Americans think safety is more important than staying at the forefront of innovation when it comes to AI, while 14 percent think staying at the forefront of innovation is more important than safety.

DATA CENTERS

Seventy-two percent of Americans say they would oppose the building of an AI data center in their community, while 21 percent say they would support it, with 7 percent not offering an opinion.

In Quinnipiac University's Poll on AI in March, 65 percent said they would oppose the building of an AI data center in their community, 24 percent said they would support it, and 11 percent did not offer an opinion.

"AI faces a public acceptance test when it acquires a physical address. Only 21 percent would support an AI data center in their own community, while 72 percent would oppose one. Securing local support for the physical infrastructure behind AI may become one of the industry's most immediate challenges," added Triantoro.

"We generally do not want data centers in our communities. However, we all want to benefit from what data centers provide – not just access to AI systems but also to other cloud computing services that they afford. With the current rhetoric around data centers, it seems most people associate them with AI and not with the rest of the things in our lives that they support," added O'Neill.

1,202 U.S. adults nationwide were surveyed from September 24th – 27th with a margin of error of +/- 3.5 percentage points, including the design effect.

The Quinnipiac University Poll, directed by Doug Schwartz, Ph.D. since 1994, conducts independent, non-partisan national and state polls on politics and issues. Surveys adhere to industry best practices and are based on probability-based samples using random digit dialing with live interviewers calling landlines and cell phones.

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Email poll@qu.edu or follow us on X [@QuinnipiacPoll](https://twitter.com/QuinnipiacPoll).

19. How excited are you about AI; very excited, somewhat excited, not so excited, or not excited at all?

	ADULTS.....			AGE IN YRS.....			
	Tot	Men	Wom	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Very excited	11%	14%	8%	10%	17%	9%	9%
Somewhat excited	31	35	28	33	27	33	35
Not so excited	20	20	21	18	23	22	20
Not excited at all	35	29	40	37	32	31	32
DK/NA	3	2	3	2	2	4	4

20. How concerned are you about AI; very concerned, somewhat concerned, not so concerned, or not concerned at all?

	ADULTS.....			AGE IN YRS.....			
	Tot	Men	Wom	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Very concerned	43%	34%	51%	42%	41%	42%	43%
Somewhat concerned	39	43	35	42	35	41	41
Not so concerned	9	8	9	8	12	6	8
Not concerned at all	9	14	4	9	11	10	6
DK/NA	1	1	1	-	1	-	2

21. When it comes to your day-to-day life, do you think AI will do more good than harm or do more harm than good?

	ADULTS.....			AGE IN YRS.....			
	Tot	Men	Wom	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Do more good	34%	45%	24%	34%	35%	32%	39%
Do more harm	53	42	63	61	54	51	42
DK/NA	13	14	13	5	12	17	19

22. Would you support or oppose the building of an AI data center in your community?

	ADULTS.....			AGE IN YRS.....			
	Tot	Men	Wom	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Support	21%	26%	15%	14%	21%	23%	27%
Oppose	72	67	78	79	73	72	63
DK/NA	7	7	7	6	6	5	10

23. How much trust would you say you have in the leaders of AI companies; a lot, some, not so much, or none at all?

	ADULTS.....			AGE IN YRS.....			
	Tot	Men	Wom	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
A lot	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	4%	4%
Some	21	23	19	16	17	22	29
Not so much	29	26	31	26	26	33	33
None at all	45	45	44	55	52	39	29
DK/NA	3	3	3	2	2	2	4

24. In thinking about companies that are developing AI systems, do you support or oppose requiring them to meet independent safety standards, even if it slows down AI development?

	ADULTS.....						
				AGE IN YRS.....			
	Tot	Men	Wom	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Support	86%	84%	87%	84%	85%	90%	85%
Oppose	9	10	8	13	9	6	8
DK/NA	6	6	5	3	6	4	7

25. Which comes closest to your line of thinking, AI companies in the U.S.: should stop developing powerful AI systems until their safety can be evaluated, should slow down developing powerful AI systems until their safety can be evaluated, should keep developing powerful AI systems at the current pace, or should move faster in developing powerful AI systems?

	ADULTS.....						
				AGE IN YRS.....			
	Tot	Men	Wom	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Stop	30%	24%	36%	42%	33%	20%	20%
Slow down	47	46	47	43	47	52	48
Current pace	14	17	11	9	13	19	19
Move faster	5	8	2	4	4	6	6
DK/NA	4	4	4	2	4	3	6

26. How important do you think it is that the United States keep up with China in developing AI systems; very important, somewhat important, not so important, or not important at all?

	ADULTS.....						
				AGE IN YRS.....			
	Tot	Men	Wom	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Very important	40%	51%	30%	24%	39%	45%	56%
Somewhat important	29	25	33	33	22	30	29
Not so important	14	12	16	21	19	12	7
Not important at all	13	10	15	17	18	8	6
DK/NA	4	3	5	5	1	5	3

27. How important do you think it is that the United States establish guardrails for AI systems; very important, somewhat important, not so important, or not important at all?

	ADULTS.....						
				AGE IN YRS.....			
	Tot	Men	Wom	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Very important	74%	67%	81%	73%	77%	72%	76%
Somewhat important	17	23	12	19	13	20	17
Not so important	3	4	2	4	3	3	3
Not important at all	4	4	3	3	6	4	2
DK/NA	2	2	2	1	1	1	2

28. Which of the following do you think is more important when it comes to AI: safety or staying at the forefront of innovation?

	ADULTS.....						
				AGE IN YRS.....			
	Tot	Men	Wom	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Safety	81%	71%	90%	85%	83%	80%	74%
Innovation	14	22	7	12	12	16	18
DK/NA	5	7	3	3	4	4	7

29. How concerned are you that future AI systems could potentially threaten human survival; very concerned, somewhat concerned, not so concerned, or not concerned at all?

	ADULTS.....						
				AGE IN YRS.....			
	Tot	Men	Wom	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Very concerned	38%	27%	49%	37%	40%	37%	40%
Somewhat concerned	35	37	32	34	36	37	33
Not so concerned	14	17	12	17	14	13	14
Not concerned at all	11	17	6	12	8	13	12
DK/NA	1	1	2	-	2	1	1

30. Which concerns you more: autonomous AI agents doing harm to humanity or AI being used by humans to do harm to humanity?

	ADULTS.....						
				AGE IN YRS.....			
	Tot	Men	Wom	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Autonomous AI	33%	31%	35%	27%	28%	41%	36%
Humans	52	56	49	66	55	48	42
NO HARM (VOL)	2	3	1	1	3	2	4
DK/NA	12	10	14	6	14	9	18