

THE RISING TIDE AND HIDDEN COST OF SOCIALISM

Over the past several years, the United States has seen an increase in people identifying as socialist or supporting socialist policies. Socialist policy proposals, such as Medicare for All and the Green New Deal, have been found to be popular with voters, but would result in trillions of dollars in new taxes on Americans.

Did you know?...

- In a [Gallup poll](#), 43% of Americans say socialism would be a good thing for the country. In contrast, a [1942 survey found](#) that only 25% of the country felt socialism in America would be a good thing.
- [In 2023](#), there were 8 members of the United States Congress who identified as socialists, with 5 of those individual's members of the Democratic Socialists of America.
- [The Green New Deal](#) is estimated to cost Americans \$93 trillion over 10 years.
- As taxes have risen around the country, some states have suffered population loss while states with lower taxes have seen population increases.



Socialism Gains Strong Momentum Among Gen Z

In 2023, a [Fraiser Institute](#) poll indicated that 45% of Americans aged 18-24 agree that socialism is the ideal economic system for the U.S.

Going along with the increase in socialist political support, socialist political candidates have increased at every level of elected government. The Democratic Socialists of America identify having 200 elected officials “spanning every level of government,” including electing socialists to Congress, State Assemblies, Mayoral positions and City Councils.

The Rising Tide And Hidden Cost Of Socialism

Executive Summary

Over the past several years, the United States has seen an increase in people identifying as socialist or supporting socialist policies. Popular opinion on socialism has risen to new heights in America, with as many as four out of ten Americans believing socialism would be a good thing for the country. Going along with the increase in socialist political support, socialist political candidates have increased at every level of elected government. The Democratic Socialists of America identify having 200 elected officials “spanning every level of government,” including electing socialists to Congress, State Assemblies, Mayoral positions and City Councils.

Socialist policy proposals, such as Medicare for All and the Green New Deal, have been found to be popular with voters, but would result in trillions of dollars in new taxes on Americans. Despite the popularity of some socialist policies, demographic trends in the past several years indicate that states mandating high taxes can lose citizens to states with lower taxes. In recent years, several states with high income tax rates lost shares of their population, while several states with lower or no income tax saw increases in their total population.

People Identifying As Socialists

According to polling, Americans today are more supportive of socialism and socialist policies than any time in the last century.

- In a [Gallup poll](#), 43% of Americans say socialism would be a good thing for the country. In contrast, a [1942 survey found](#) that only 25% of the country felt socialism in America would be a good thing.
- [In 2018](#), 57% of Democrats viewed socialism positively.
- [In 2019](#), when asked during the next 50 years wither most nations of the world will have a democratic or socialist system of government, those who believed socialist governments would be the majority rose by 15 points from a similar survey in 1949.
- [In 2019](#), 40% of respondents supported leaning toward government control of the U.S. Economy, with only 34% leaning toward free market control.
- In 2023, a [Fraiser Institute](#) poll indicated that 45% of Americans aged 18-24 agree that socialism is the ideal economic system for the U.S.

Politicians Identifying As Socialists

In recent years, socialist candidates have won elections at almost every level of governments.

- [In 2023](#), there were 8 members of the United States Congress who identified at socialists, with 5 of those individual's members of the Democratic Socialists of America.
- In 2024, [the DSA identified](#) nearly 100,000 members, over 150 chapters, and over 200 elected officials “spanning every level of government.”
- In New York, the DSA has [endorsed](#) numerous successful candidates for office, including Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Zohran Mamdani and Representative Jamaal Bowman

- In 2023, Greg Cesar, a [proud member](#) of the Austin DSA, won the [election](#) to the U.S. House of Representatives for Texas 35th.
- In 2021, Cori Bush, Rashida Talib, Alexandria-Ocasio Cortez, and Jamaal Bowman all [served as elected officials](#) in Congress who identified as socialists.
- In 2019, [at least five members](#) of the DSA won seats as Alderman of the Chicago City Council.
- [In 2023](#), four of the five Minneapolis City Council candidates endorsed by the DSA won their elections
- [In 2024](#), a second democratic socialist was elected to the City Council of Portland, Maine.
- [In 2022](#), two socialist candidates were elected to the Washington DC City Council.
- In 2024, DSA [supported](#) candidate Emma Mulvaney-Stanek [won](#) the race for Mayor of Burlington, Vermont
- In 2025, DSA [supported](#) candidate Nikki Perez [won](#) the race for Mayor of Burbank, California
- In 2023, DSA [endorsed](#) candidate Nicole Speer [won](#) the race for Mayor of Boulder, Colorado
- In 2021, DSA [supported](#) candidate Khalid Kamau [won](#) the race for Mayor of South Fulton, Georgia.
- In 2024, DSA [identified](#) two candidates who held seats on the Wilmington City Council.

The Cost Of Popular Socialist Policies

Maria Savart, DSA's national director, said that [continuing](#) elections of socialists to Congress like Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Rashida Talib would legitimize democratic socialist policy proposals like Medicare for All and the Green New Deal. [In April 2020](#), 69% of registered voters identified support with Medicare For all.

- The Green New Deal is [estimated](#) to cost Americans \$93 trillion over 10 years.
- The initial Bernie Sanders [proposal](#) for Medicare for All would cost taxpayers between \$27.7 trillion and \$32.1 trillion depending on how much provider cuts are implemented.

In July 2024, the DSA [identified](#) playing a crucial role in raising the minimum wage in Renton, Washington to "the nation's highest minimum wage."

- Mandating a rise to the minimum wage [can](#) lead to the long-term possibility of job losses as employers are unable to offer more job opportunities due to the higher costs of entry level employees.

The Risk Of High Taxes Can Lead To Populations Moving On

As taxes have risen around the country, some states have suffered population loss while states with lower taxes have seen population increases.

- According to the [Tax Foundation](#), between 2023 and 2024, Hawaii lost the greatest share of its population to other states (0.65 percent). Not far behind were New York and California, which each lost 0.61 percent of their residents to other state
- According to the [Tax Foundation](#), between 2023 and 2024, South Carolina saw the greatest population growth attributable to net inbound domestic migration (1.26 percent). Other states that saw significant

domestic migration-related population growth were Idaho (0.83 percent), Delaware (0.79 percent), North Carolina (0.76 percent), and Tennessee (0.68 percent).

- According to [U-Haul Moving Company](#), South Carolina claimed the top spot in 2024's U-Haul study, with the highest ratio of inbound-to-outbound one-way U-Haul moves, followed by Texas, North Carolina, Florida, and Tennessee. At the other end of the spectrum, the states with the highest ratio of outbound-to-inbound moves were California, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania.
- According to the [Tax Foundation](#), of the 26 states whose overall state and local tax burdens per capita were below the national average in 2022 (the most recent year of data available), 18 experienced net inbound interstate migration in FY 2024. Meanwhile, of the 25 states and DC with tax burdens per capita at or above the national average, 17 of those jurisdictions experienced net outbound domestic migration.
- Six states [identified](#) in the top third of the states which gained population do not levy an individual income tax. Conversely, Hawaii, New York, California, and New Jersey, all of which identified losing population have double-digit income tax rates.