



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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### **Citizen Satisfaction with Federal Government Services Drops to All-Time Low, ACSI Data Show**

**ANN ARBOR, Mich., (January 25, 2022)** – Satisfaction with U.S. federal government services has never been worse.

Citizen satisfaction declines sharply in 2021, sliding 2.6% to a score of 63.4 (out of 100), according to the American Customer Satisfaction Index's (ACSI®) [Federal Government Report 2021](#).

“This is the fourth consecutive year that satisfaction with the federal government takes a hit, marking an unprecedented run of negative movement in the index,” says Forrest Morgeson, Assistant Professor of Marketing at Michigan State University and Director of Research at the ACSI. “Citizens’ perceptions of federal government services have been greatly impacted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the fallout from the contentious 2020 federal elections. The results speak volumes, with citizen satisfaction descending to an all-time low. The federal government has its work cut out for it if it hopes to turn things around.”

#### **No federal government quality attribute goes unscathed**

All four primary drivers of citizen satisfaction – process, information, customer service, and website – flounder.

Efficiency and ease of government processes tumbles 5% to 63, while ease of accessing and clarity of information slides 3% to 67. Likewise, the courtesy and professionalism of customer service slips 1% to 73, and government website quality dips 1% to 70.

Collectively, these declines signify a broad erosion of the quality of federal government services experienced by citizens in 2021.

#### **Department of the Interior sets the standard, while Treasury remains the bottom of the barrel**

Citizen satisfaction differs widely across federal departments, with the significant variance between departments largely explained by the nature of their missions.

This year, the Department of the Interior leads the way in citizen satisfaction with a score of 77. It is the only federal department that exceeds the economy-wide national ACSI average (73.7 as of the third quarter of 2021).

Four other federal departments – including the Department of Health and Human Services (71), the Department of Agriculture (70), the Department of Commerce (70), and the Department of Defense (70) – score in the 70s but fall short of the economy-wide ACSI average.

The remainder all score well below this mark, with perennial laggard the Department of the Treasury (54) – which primarily interacts with citizens through its inherently unpopular tax collection mission – sitting dead last.

### **Democrats and Republicans suffer satisfaction downturns**

The ACSI federal government study does not measure public approval of specific politicians or political parties. Nonetheless, factors like political party affiliation are likely to influence citizens' perceptions of the government services they receive, per ACSI data.

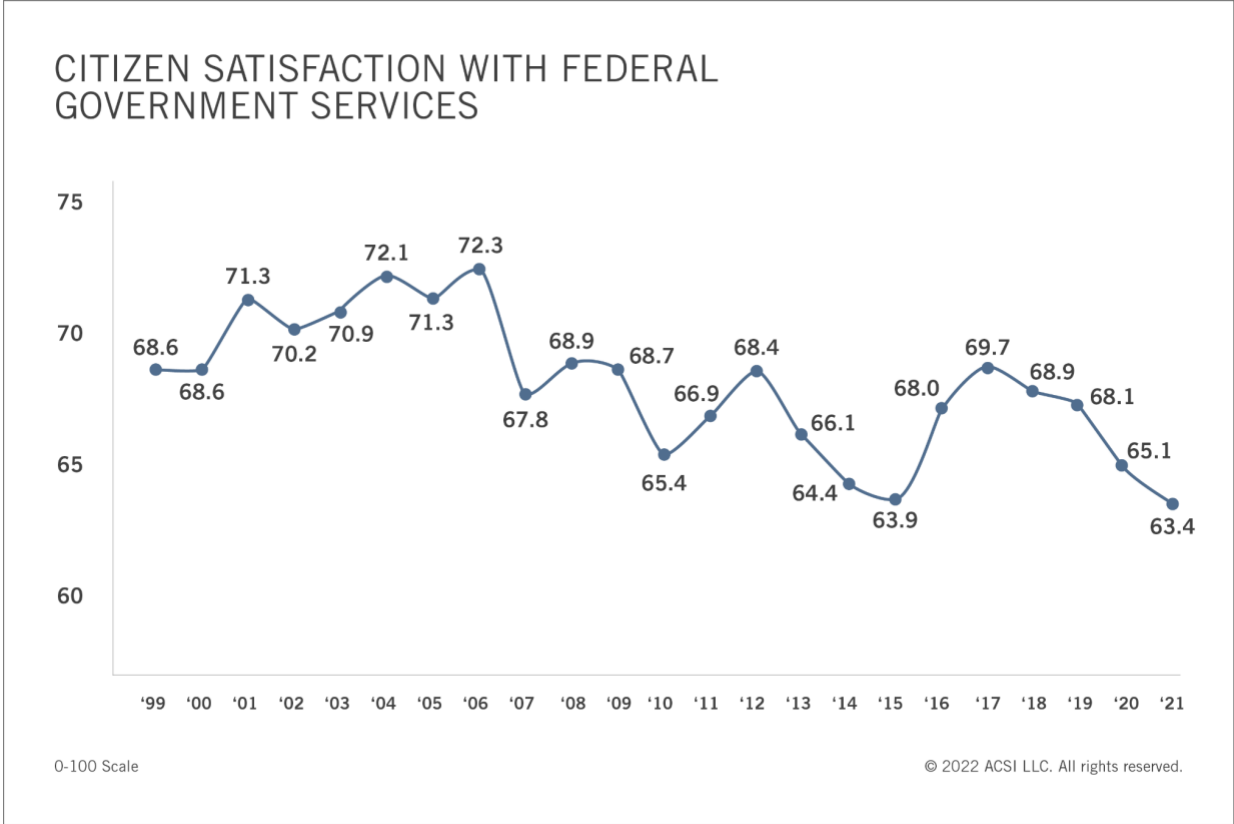
Looking at year-over-year trends by party affiliation, both Democrats (down 4% to 65) and Republicans (down 2% to 64) see declines in citizen satisfaction in 2021. The relatively small group of “Other Party” supporters also experiences much lower satisfaction, plummeting 13% to an ACSI score of 54.

Only Independents who indicate no political party affiliation show a small increase in 2021, up 2% to 63.

Nevertheless, the broad decline in citizen satisfaction across all respondents who indicate a political affiliation – including Democrats, Republicans, and Other Party supporters – reinforces the existence of a widespread erosion in the perceived quality of government output across citizens.

The ACSI Federal Government Report 2021 is based on interviews with 2,387 users, chosen at random and contacted via email throughout the year. Download the [full report](#), and follow the ACSI on [LinkedIn](#) and Twitter at [@theACSI](#).

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**About the ACSI**

The [American Customer Satisfaction Index](http://www.theacsi.org) (ACSI®) has been a national economic indicator for 25 years. It measures and analyzes customer satisfaction with more than 400 companies in 47 industries and 10 economic sectors, including various services of federal and local government agencies. Reported on a scale of 0 to 100, scores are based on data from interviews with roughly 500,000 customers annually. For more information, visit [www.theacsi.org](http://www.theacsi.org).

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