



CRITICAL ISSUES POLL

# **Only 6% of Americans Say Jeffrey Epstein Likely Did Not Collaborate with Foreign Intelligence, as 45% Say He Likely Did**

## **Russian and Israeli Intelligence Services Top List of Public Suspicion**

University of Maryland Critical Issues Poll

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The public push for the release of all available files related to convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein finally led to near unanimous congressional votes to force their release after President Donald Trump reversed his opposition to such an action. The principal driving force for the public demand is likely the enormity of the crime involving about a thousand victims, many of whom were children when abused, with most of the likely abusers – primarily wealthy influential men - never punished or even revealed. But there has been another possible source of anger discussed on social media: the suspicion of the involvement of foreign intelligence services in Epstein's scheme. In fact, Representative Thomas Massie, one the leaders of the push to get the files released, [noted that](#) Trump's reluctance to comply was in part because "Epstein had close ties to our own intelligence agency and Israel's intelligence agencies." To what extent do the American people connect the Epstein operation to foreign intelligence services?

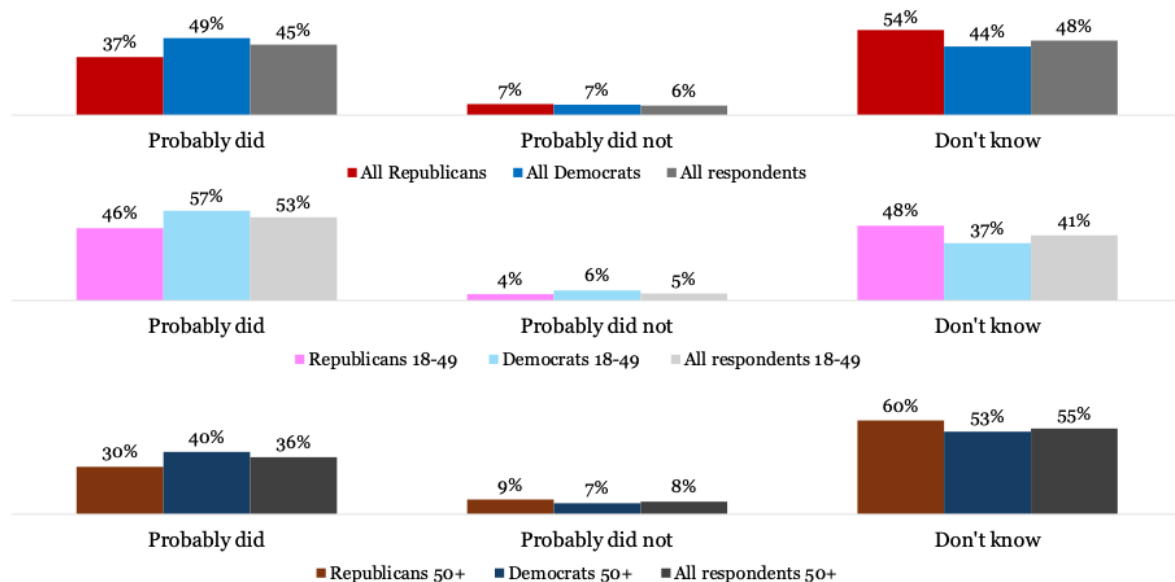
The latest round of the [University of Maryland Critical Issues Poll](#) set to find out. The poll was fielded with Ipsos among 1,017 American adults from November 14-16, 2025, with a margin of error of +/- 3.2 percentage points.

Here is what we found:

We asked: “Thinking about the activities of convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, do you think Epstein probably did or probably did not collaborate with foreign intelligence services as part of his alleged sex trafficking activities, or you do not know enough to say?”

Forty-five percent of respondents, including 53% of Americans 18-49 years old, said that Epstein probably collaborated with a foreign intelligence service, compared to only 6% who said he probably did not, while 48% said they didn’t know. While Democrats and Republicans equally said it was improbable that Epstein did not collaborate with a foreign intelligence service (7% each), more Democrats (49%) than Republicans (37%) said Epstein likely collaborated with such a service, while a larger percentage of Republicans (54%) than Democrats (44%) said they didn’t know. A larger percent of both Democrats (57%) and Republicans (46%) aged 18-49 said Epstein probably collaborated with such a service, while a larger percentage of Republicans (54%) than Democrats (44%) said they didn’t know. A larger percent of both Democrats (57%) and Republicans (46%) aged 18-49 said Epstein probably collaborated with a foreign intelligence service.

Q. Thinking about the activities of convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, do you think Epstein probably did or probably did not collaborate with foreign intelligence services as part of his alleged sex trafficking activities, or you do not know enough to say?



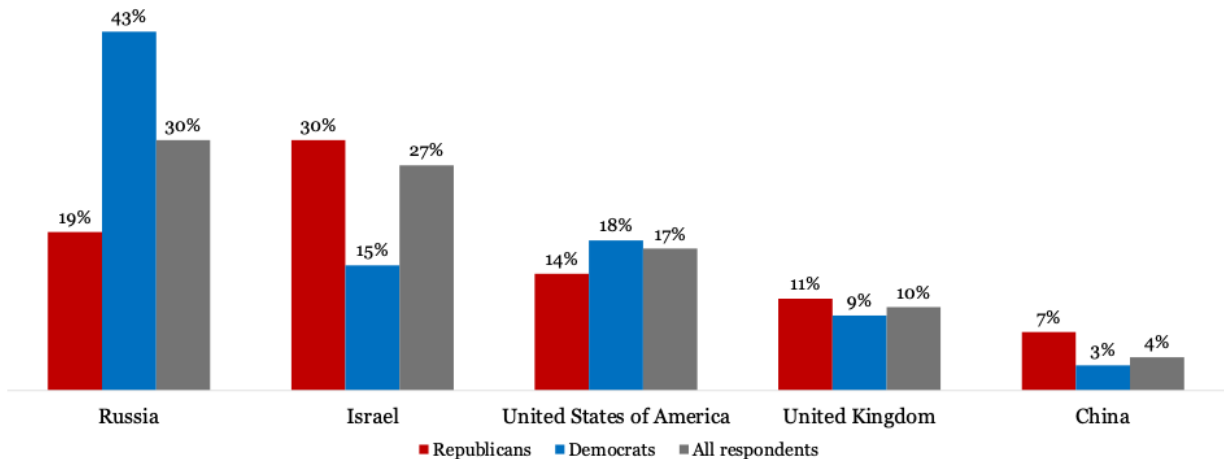
Source: University of Maryland Critical Issues Poll with Ipsos, November 14-16, 2025.

We followed up with an open-ended question among the 45% of respondents who said Epstein probably collaborated with a foreign intelligence service: “What country’s intelligence service do you think Jeffrey Epstein collaborated with?” Many specified only one while others specified more than one. Even though the American intelligence service (we did not specify intelligence services’ names) is not ‘foreign,’ many respondents still specified the U.S., usually as one of several. The two countries that topped the list were Russia and Israel – both among those who selected only one intelligence service and multiple. Overall, 30% specified Russia, 27% specified Israel,

17% specified the U.S., 10% specified the U.K., and 4% specified China. Republicans suspected Israel first (30%) while Democrats suspected Russia first (43%).

Q. What country’s intelligence service do you think Jeffrey Epstein collaborated with? (Open-ended)

(Among those that said “probably did” when asked “Thinking about the activities of convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, do you think Epstein probably did or probably did not collaborate with foreign intelligence services as part of his alleged sex trafficking activities, or you not know enough to say?”)

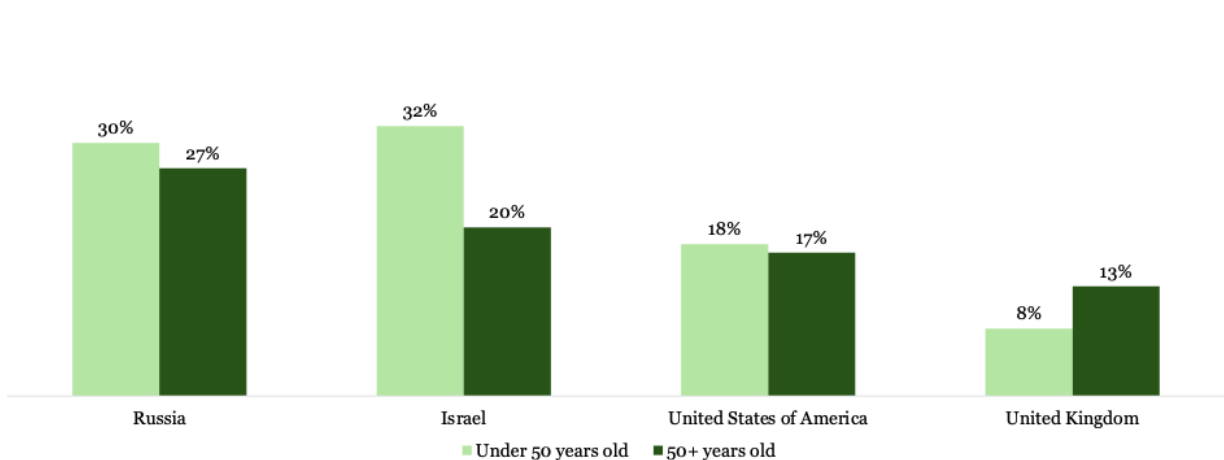


Source: University of Maryland Critical Issues Poll with Ipsos, November 14-16, 2025.

Americans aged 18-49 suspected Israel first (32%) while those 50 and older suspected Russia first (27%).

Q. What country’s intelligence service do you think Jeffrey Epstein collaborated with? (Open-ended)

(Among those that said “Probably did” when asked “Thinking about the activities of convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, do you think Epstein probably did or probably did not collaborate with foreign intelligence services as part of his alleged sex trafficking activities, or you not know enough to say?”)

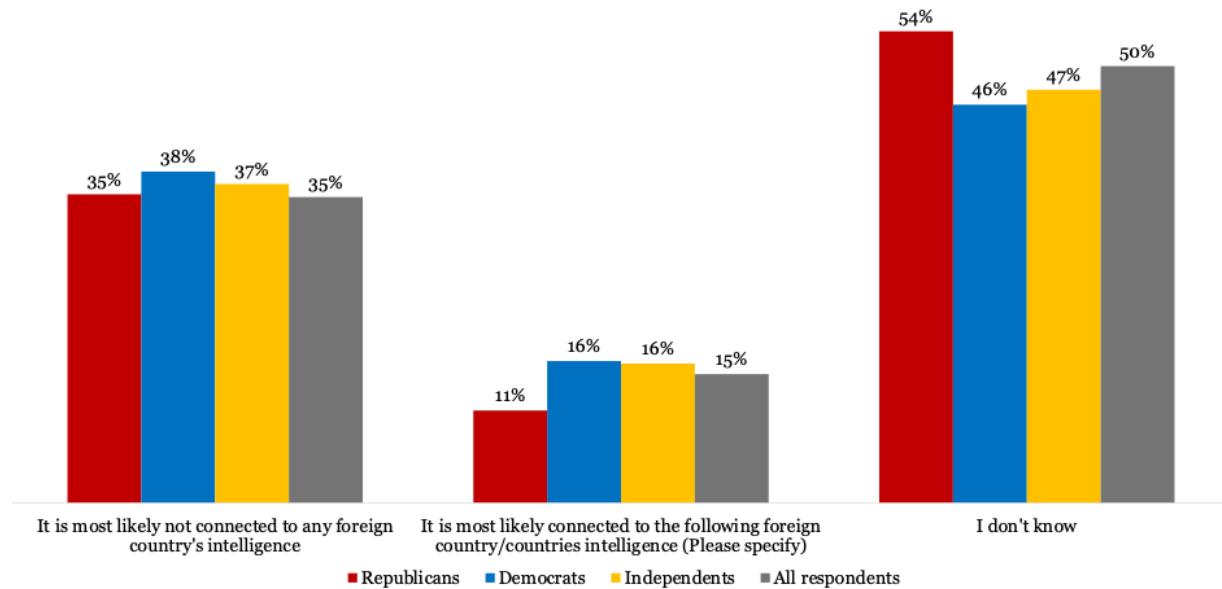


Source: University of Maryland Critical Issues Poll with Ipsos, November 14-16, 2025.

## Analysis

A [poll](#) we conducted last August found a large percentage of Americans (35%) thought that it was unlikely that Epstein was “connected” to a foreign intelligence service, while only 15% said he was likely connected to such a service and 50% said they didn’t know.

Q. Which of the following is closer to your view about the operation run by convicted pedophile, Jeffrey Epstein?



Source: University of Maryland Critical Issues Poll with SSRS, July 29 – August 7, 2025.

Keeping in mind that the number of those who said Epstein was likely connected to a foreign intelligence service was small in August, 44% identified Israel’s intelligence, 23% identified US intelligence, while 12% identified Russia’s intelligence.

It is notable that even though the questions in both polls clearly specified “foreign” intelligence, respondents often mentioned American intelligence, usually in addition to the intelligence of another country. While it is certainly likely that respondents overlooked the word “foreign,” it is also possible that respondents presumed that such a significant operation could not have carried out on American soil involving prominent Americans without the knowledge or cooperation of U.S. intelligence.

The shift in opinion has been significant since August 2025, going from 35% of Americans saying that Epstein was likely unconnected to a foreign intelligence service to only 6% in November. This happened while mainstream media has largely avoided mentioning the possible role of foreign intelligence services in Epstein’s operation. As late as this week, a CNN host [questioned](#) Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene on her social media post suggesting such a link ‘without evidence.’

But the issue has been covered by independent broadcasters and independent media sites on both the right and the left. Independent broadcasters such as Tucker Carlson, Glenn Greenwald, Candace Owens, among others, as well as sites such as Drop Site News, Breaking Points, Zeteo, IHIP News, The Young Turks, and more, directly addressed the subject over the past several months. Pushback by other prominent broadcasters on the right such as Marc Levin and Ben Shapiro brought the issue to the attention of even broader audiences. It is possible that this coverage accounts for the spike in the percentage of Americans believing that a foreign intelligence service was involved in Epstein's operation. This is bolstered by the fact that younger Americans, who typically rely less on mainstream media, tend to see a foreign intelligence connection more than older Americans.

Russian and Israeli intelligence, in addition to U.S. intelligence, have been the primary targets of suspicion, but it is interesting to note the difference between Republicans and Democrats: While Republicans suspected Israel first, Democrats suspected Russia first. This despite the fact that, generally, Democrats have been much more focused on, and [more critical](#) of, Israel than Republicans. While younger Republicans have become far more critical of Israel, as our [previous poll](#) has shown, Republicans remain far more friendly to and supportive of Israel than Democrats.

Certainly, allusion to a possible role of Israeli intelligence in Epstein's operation has been made, sometimes directly, by influential Republican independent broadcasters. One case that had garnered significant attention was when Tucker Carlson [spoke](#) at a Turning Point USA conference in July and directly suggested the role of Israel's Mossad intelligence service in Epstein's operation, apparently angering some [TPUSA donors](#). But independent broadcasting sites on the left, such as Drop Site, have run stories with alleged evidence linking Epstein's activities to Israelis who were connected to Israeli intelligence.

So, it isn't surprising that the Israeli link is suspected by both Democrats and Republicans, but that Democrats suspect Russian secret service more is a bit surprising. To be sure, in some cases the coverage on the left had mentioned a [Russian connection](#), including in a recent report by [Drop Site](#) based on reportedly leaked emails. But the suspicion of Russia among Democrats may be much broader, dating back to the fear of possible Russian intervention during the first Trump administration as well as what Democrats see as too much [deference](#) by President Donald Trump to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

I am grateful to Karenna Sarney for her assistance with the data analysis.