Americans Vote for U.S. Midterms Amid Concerns Over Rising Living Costs



People cast their ballots at a polling station in West Des Moines, Iowa.

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - **Americans voted in the 2026 midterm elections, with President Donald Trump's falling approval ratings, the economic fallout of the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran and mounting living costs emerging as major challenges for Republicans to retain control of Congress.**

Widely viewed as a referendum on Trump's second presidency, the elections determine which party controls the U.S. Congress for the final two years of his term.

Congress has two chambers: the House of Representatives and the Senate. Both play key roles in passing legislation and overseeing the executive branch.

All 435 seats in the House were being contested, while 35 of the Senate's 100 seats were up for election, including two special elections.

Republicans currently control both chambers, and Democrats were seeking to win control of one or both to constrain Trump's agenda.

A Democratic-controlled chamber could block or challenge parts of the president's legislative agenda and launch investigations into his administration. If Democrats take control of the House, they could also pursue impeachment proceedings against Trump.

Although he is not on the ballot, Trump has put himself at the center of the campaign. Over the past month, he has held rallies in battleground states and urged voters to "pretend" he is on the ballot, seeking to boost Republican turnout.

Some Republican officials, however, appear increasingly concerned about the party's prospects. A senior GOP official told Politico that election night could be "quite a brutal evening," adding that "once the dominoes start falling, it becomes hard to stop them."

Those concerns come amid persistently low approval ratings for Trump, with polls pointing to growing dissatisfaction with his performance in office.

A Reuters/Ipsos survey completed on Monday found that only 32 percent of respondents approved of the president's performance, close to a career low of 31 percent recorded two weeks earlier.

Trump's launching of the war of aggression against Iran has emerged as a major political vulnerability, with the war contributing to higher global oil prices and rising gasoline and diesel costs in the United States.

A separate Reuters/Ipsos finding showed that 55 percent of respondents considered the U.S. war on Iran not worth its cost, compared with 25 percent who said it was worth it.

The increase in fuel prices has added to pressure on American households and businesses, further undermining Trump's campaign promises to bring down the cost of living.

In the latest Reuters/Ipsos poll, 78 percent of respondents said the rising cost of living was either a very important or the most important factor in deciding how to vote. On the issue, respondents favored Democrats over Republicans by 43 percent to 32 percent.

Voters' attitudes toward the congressional elections also reflect dissatisfaction with Trump. Among independent voters, 50 percent said their vote would be a vote against the president, compared with 13 percent who viewed it as a vote in his favor.

Bomb Threats on Flights Cause Disruption in Europe



A screengrab from a video shows a police officer and a sniffer dog inspecting a Ryanair airplane and its baggage, in Murcia, Spain, November 3, 2026.

OVIEDO, Spain (AFP) - **Spanish Poland and Bulgaria authorities reported bomb threats involving flights on Tuesday.**

Spanish officials began searching a Ryanair plane after a bomb threat involving a flight from Manchester that landed Tuesday in the southeastern city of Murcia, authorities said.

"Security procedures have been activated following a bomb threat involving a plane from Manchester that has landed in Murcia," Francisco Lucas, the Spanish government's representative in Murcia, posted on U.S. social media platform X.

"The 114 passengers and seven crew members have disembarked and are undergoing security checks," he added. "The aircraft is now being inspected."

The plane landed on schedule at Murcia's international airport in Corvera, according to airport operator Aena.

Other flights continued to operate at the airport normally, Aena told regional newspaper La Opinion de Murcia.

Poland and Bulgaria also reported bomb threats involving flights on Tuesday.

Warsaw Modlin Airport temporarily closed after a bomb threat involving a flight from London, according to the airport.

In the Bulgarian capital, Sofia, counterterrorism officers were deployed to inspect a plane arriving from Israel after authorities received a threat by email, according to local news agency BTA.

Warsaw-Modlin Airport in Poland was closed until further notice after a flight from London was diverted there following a reported bomb threat, the airport said in a statement.

The Boeing 737 MAX, originally bound for Warsaw Chopin Airport from London Heathrow, landed at Modlin at 10.01 am local time with 181 people on board.

The aircraft was directed to a designated area while authorities investigated the threat and carried out security checks.

Passengers began disembarking and were to wait in the arrivals hall, according to the statement.

On Monday, a Wizz Air flight from London to Sofia was diverted to Budapest following a bomb threat. No explosive device was found during checks, and the aircraft later continued to Bulgaria.

On Oct. 18, an Austrian Airlines flight was diverted to Sofia following a bomb threat. Bulgarian MiG-29 fighter jets escorted the aircraft, which continued to Vienna after security checks found no threat.

Several Schools Blocked Across France as Thousands Join Protests



PARIS (AFP) - **Several high schools and universities were blocked early Tuesday across France as thousands took to the streets following a call by student organizations, according to broadcaster BFMTV.**

Blockades continued at several high schools and universities in Paris, as well as in Marseille and Toulouse, where 12 of the city's 13 high schools were disrupted on Monday.

Several student organizations in Lille also called for the mobilization to continue, including through a demonstration.

The "Black Tuesday" called by high school student organizations is also expected to unfold in Lyon, where authorities approved a student demonstration.

On Monday, the police prefecture banned the planned march from the Pantheon to the area around the Medef headquarters, citing a route that was "incompatible with the security constraints currently in force."

An alternative route between Porte de Charenton and Porte de Montreuil was later proposed, but the order was challenged before an administrative court.

In Lyon, 900 people took part in the demonstration, according to the Rhone prefecture, while youth organizations put the turnout at 1,500. The march took place peacefully, according to the prefecture.

The prefecture also reported 17 arrests in the Rhone department during mobilization activities outside schools.

Three people were arrested outside Jacques-Brel High School in Venissieux over mortar fire, a fire and damage, while four were arrested outside Aragon-Picasso High School in Givors. A total of 27 schools in the department were disrupted, it said.

The Higher Education Ministry reported that 51 higher education institutions were disrupted Tuesday morning out of 184 nationwide.

Earlier, the student union Union Etudiante had said one in two universities were disrupted, and more than 50 campuses were blocked.

The National High School Union (USL) said 500 schools were blocked, compared with 48 high schools reported by the Education Ministry.

Meanwhile, the CGT-Interior union called on ministry staff, including police officers and administrative and technical personnel, to join a nationwide strike and demonstration scheduled for Nov. 5.

The union said police officers who are off duty could attend demonstrations in civilian clothes, while other staff could take strike action. It criticized the proposed 2027 budget, saying it would freeze salaries and that bonuses were distributed unequally among staff.

The Paris Administrative Court rejected requests to overturn the partial ban on the student unions' planned demonstration, the Paris police prefecture said.

The only authorized route is therefore between Porte de Charenton and Porte de Montreuil, the prefecture said, urging demonstrators to use it.

Earlier, the Ile-de-France student union Interfac had called on students to gather at Jussieu at 1.30 pm to decide collectively how to proceed if the prefecture's ban was upheld.

German Metalworkers Continue Strikes Over Wages, Job Security



BERLIN (Dispatches) - **Metal and electrical industry workers in Germany's southwestern state of Baden-Wurttemberg continued strikes Tuesday over wages and job security, German newspaper Welt reported.**

Employees gathered in Stuttgart's Feuerbach district, including workers from technology company Bosch, following walkouts at several locations Monday.

IG Metall Stuttgart estimated that around 1,000 employees attended the joint rally.

Workers at automotive supplier Mahle were also called to participate, although a company spokesperson said operations had not been disrupted.

Monday's industrial action included walkouts at medical technology company Aesculap in Tuttlingen, according to the union.

The strikes followed two rounds of collective bargaining that failed to produce an agreement.

IG Metall is demanding a 5% wage increase over 12 months, along with guarantees for jobs and production sites.

During the second round of talks, employers offered a one-time payment next year and a 1.3% wage increase from July 2028, citing difficult economic conditions and high costs facing German industry.

Negotiations are scheduled to resume Thursday in Ludwigsburg.

"We will not be fobbed off with a sham," said Barbara Resch, IG Metall's district manager.

She said genuine job security could not be achieved at employees' expense or by weakening collective bargaining standards.

"Thursday will reveal whether the employers are truly committed to making a genuine contribution to the future of jobs in Baden-Württemberg," Resch said.

In Bangladesh, paramilitary forces were deployed in industrial suburbs around the capital as protests by garment sector workers demanding a wage hike stretched into their fourth day on Tuesday, defying calls to return to factories.

Protesters were on the streets despite the government's announcement of a board to review the minimum wage in the vital garment industry, which employs millions of people and generates the bulk of Bangladesh's export earnings.

Police have filed cases against thousands of unidentified protesters for torching police vehicles and damaging property, with 58 officers injured since protests began, police spokesperson Kamarum Munira said.

North Korea Rejects U.S. Allegations Over Binance Crypto Theft, Warns of Response

SEOUL (AFP) - **North Korea has rejected U.S. allegations linking it to a multibillion-dollar cryptocurrency theft involving Binance, accusing Washington of using cybercrime allegations to undermine its international reputation.**

Kim Yo Jong, the influential sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and a senior Workers' Party official, called the allegations a "grave political provocation," state news agency KCNA reported on Tuesday.

She said the FBI was attempting to portray North Korea as a "cyber criminal state" by alleging that a hacking group supported by Pyongyang was involved in the theft.

"The U.S. assertion is an absurd rhetoric and nothing new," Kim said in a statement. She accused Washington of routinely blaming North Korea for major international cyberattacks without providing credible evidence.

Kim also cited U.S. allegations linking Pyongyang to last year's cryptocurrency theft involving exchange Bybit.

North Korea has repeatedly denied U.S. accusations of state-sponsored cyberattacks, while Washington has accused North Korean hacking groups of stealing digital assets to finance the country's weapons programs.

Kim suggested Washington could benefit from recovering stolen cryptocurrency, referring to U.S. plans to establish a strategic cryptocurrency reserve.

She said Pyongyang was closely monitoring US provocations and that Washington's hostile attitude could prompt it to reconsider its position on several issues.

News in Brief

WASHINGTON (AP) - The U.S. Supreme Court has rejected an emergency request by the Trump administration to force California election officials to set aside mail-in ballots from approximately 20,000 registered voters suspected by federal authorities of being non-citizens, delivering a setback to the administration just one day before the November midterm elections. "The application for injunction pending appeal presented to Justice Kagan and by her referred to the Court is denied," said the court. Earlier Monday, the Trump administration appealed to the nation's highest court, asking justices to intervene in the escalating legal dispute and prevent the ballots from being counted before their eligibility was established.

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MONTREAL (AP) - Seven Montreal police employees have been dismissed over allegations of racist and discriminatory behavior, a report said Monday. Citing a press conference, CBC News said Montreal Police Chief Fady Dagher announced the administrative dismissals. He said two people were fired from Station 21 and five from Station 39. The firings followed an internal disciplinary investigation, while separate criminal probes are still ongoing, Dagher said, adding that any decision on charges rests with Crown prosecutors.

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BEIJING (Xinhua) - China and Russia on Tuesday vowed to deepen their military ties during a meeting between their top defense officials in Beijing. Visiting Russian Defense Minister Andrey Belousov held talks with Gen. Zhang Shengmin, vice chairman of China's Central Military Commission. Zhang said China-Russia relations have entered a "new stage of more substantive engagement and faster development, playing a constructive role in maintaining global strategic stability and improving global governance."

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GENEVA (AFP) - The International Committee of the Red Cross was hosting on Tuesday representatives from over 100 countries in Geneva for discussions on bolstering respect for international law at a time of rampant abuses. The issue is pressing, ICRC President Mirjana Spoljaric told the gathering, warning that the so-called laws of war were increasingly being trampled on even as the globe grapples with over 130 armed conflicts — its highest number since World War II. "We are living through an age of fading restraint, where the rules are too often ignored, rejected or used to justify violations," she warned.

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PRAGUE (Reuters) - Thousands of protesters, including university students and artists, took to the streets in Prague and other cities on Tuesday as Czech public television and radio workers held a one-day strike against a government plan to cut financing and move funding to the state budget. Workers and demonstrators called the plan an attempt to hurt the broadcasters' independence and viability, and they demanded that the government scrap the planned reform. The strike also led to broadcast curbs. The strike escalates a fight over the future of the broadcasters that a 2025 Reuters Institute survey found were among the country's most followed and most trusted news sources. The government's bill passed a preliminary vote last month and now awaits further debate in parliament.