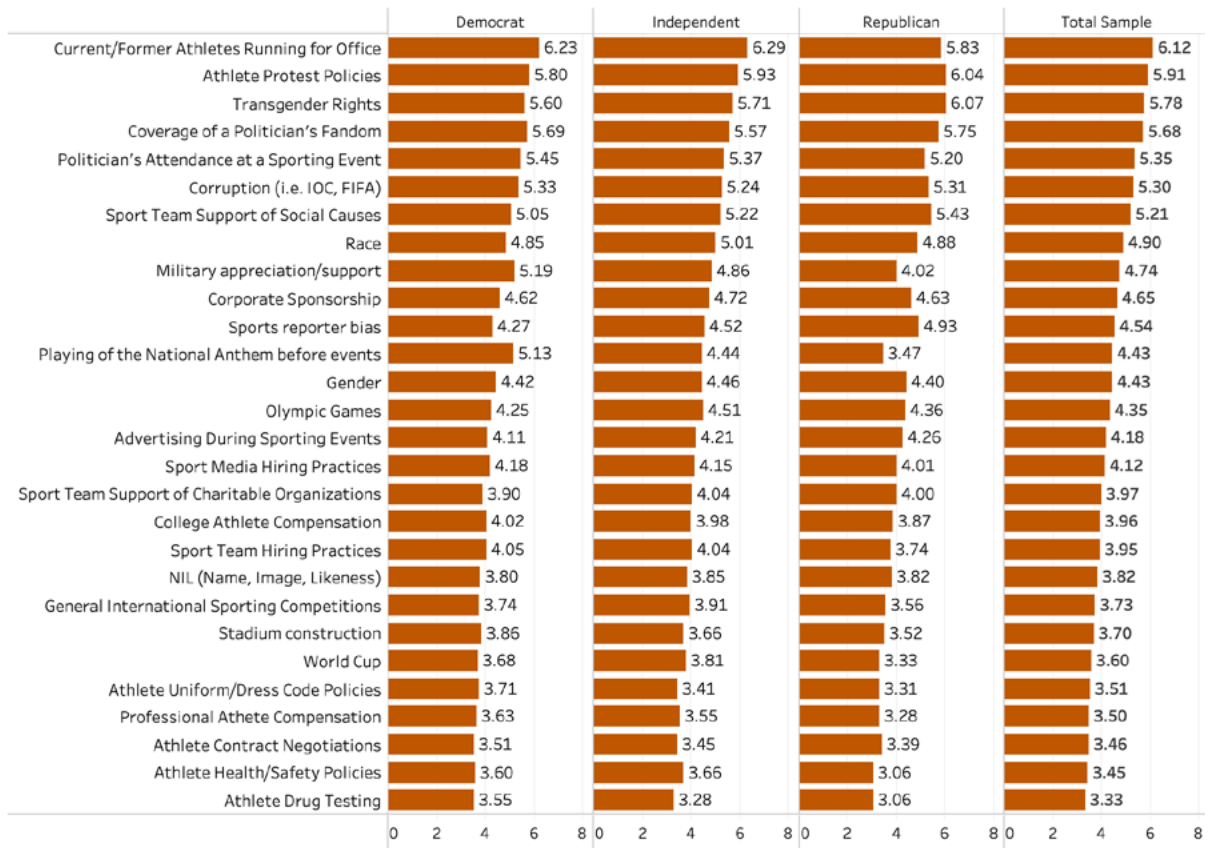


WHAT SPORTS MEDIA CONTENT TOPICS ARE VIEWED AS POLITICAL?

To evaluate the topics sports media viewers felt were political in nature, all participants were asked to rate a list of topics on a scale of “1 – not political at all” to “7 – very political.” Results determined that topics directly involving politics (e.g., athletes running for office, athlete protest policies, coverage of a politician’s fandom, etc.) were viewed as highly political content. Participants also evaluated transgender rights as one of the most political topics currently in sports, a topic that has received much attention in various state legislatures during the past year.¹ Notably, participants rated transgender rights and the politics of gender, as a whole, very differently, with gender being rated as more politically neutral. Furthermore, participants rated the Olympic Games as more political in nature than other international sporting competitions, including the World Cup. It is worth noting that this data was collected while ongoing discussions of diplomatic boycotts of the 2022 Winter Olympic Games in China were occurring.²

Do You Believe the Following Topics Are “Political” In Nature? (1 = Not Political at All; 7 = Very Political)



When examining the data by party identification, results reveal key insights pertaining to differences in perceptions of the playing of the national anthem and displays of military appreciation and support. Democrats (n = 5,126) rated the playing of the national anthem to be much more political in nature than Republicans (n = 3,472), and Democrats also rated displays of military appreciation and support (n = 5,189) to be much more political than Republicans (n = 4,025).

1 <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/articles/2021-12-01/these-states-restrict-how-transgender-students-participate-in-school-sports>

2 <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/world/europe/uk-china-olympics-diplomatic-boycott.html>

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