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ELECTION WATCH

Post-Debate Polls Reveal Slight Bush Lead

The federal election takes place in less than two weeks and, now that the presidential debates are behind us, both candidates are wrapping up their campaigns. The national tracking polls have gone back into President Bush's favor this week, largely a reflection of the President's improved performance in the last two debates. Nevertheless, Kerry's gains have closed the gap. With this year's thin margin many pollsters and analysts see several wildcard factors that will influence the outcome of the election. They include partisan voter turnout and the election outcome among undecided voters and in the swing states.

The latest numbers for the swing states are below:

	EV	Kerry	Bush	Nader		
Florida	27	50	49	0	Oct 17	Survey USA
Iowa	7	51	48	0	Oct 18	Zogby
Michigan	17	49	46	0	Oct 19	Rasmussen
Minnesota	10	47	47	0	Oct 19	Rasmussen
New Hampshire	4	49	47	0	Oct 18	Rasmussen
New Mexico	5	48	46	2	Oct 18	American Res. Group
Ohio	20	47	47	Off ballot	Oct 18	Rasmussen
Pennsylvania	21	47	46	Off ballot	Oct 19	Strategic Vision
Virginia	13	47	50	0	Oct 18	Zogby
Wisconsin	10	47	49	0	Oct 19	Strategic Vision
AVERAGE	134	48.2	47.5	0.25		

These states account for 134 electoral votes in the Electoral College. Since these states account for half of the 270 electoral votes needed to win, the election will be decided here. On the average, the candidates are in a statistical dead heat. Getting partisan voter turnout in these states will be a top priority for the Democratic and Republican campaigns. Undecided voters and their "wildcard" effect will have the most impact in these areas too.

The latest national polls:

Reuters/Zogby (likely voters) October 20-22
BUSH/CHENEY: 47%
John F. Kerry: 45%
Nader/Camejo: 1%

Rasmussen Reports (likely voters) October 20-22
BUSH/CHENEY: 49 %
Kerry/Edwards: 46%

ABC News (registered and likely voters) October 17-19
BUSH/CHENEY: 51%
Kerry/Edwards: 46%
Nader/Camejo: 1%

Washington Post (likely voters) October 17-19
BUSH/CHENEY: 50%
Kerry/Edwards: 47%
Nader/Camejo: 1%

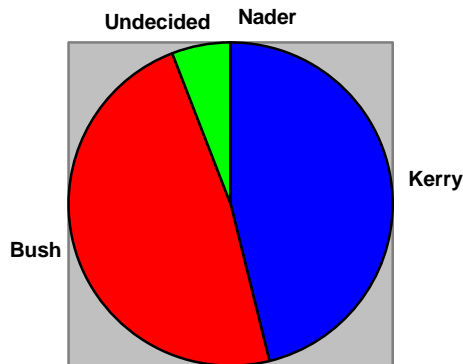
Pew Research Center (registered voters) October 15-19
BUSH/CHENEY: 46%
Kerry/Edwards: 46%
Nader/Camejo: 1%

TIPP (likely voters) October 15-18
BUSH/CHENEY: 47%
Kerry/Edwards: 46%
Nader/Camejo: 1%

Average Tracking Poll Data

Week of October 15-22
BUSH/CHENEY: 48%
Kerry/Edwards: 46%
Nader/Camejo: .08%
Undecided: 5.82%

Average Tracking Poll Data (October 21, 2004)



New Muslim Poll Shows Shift in Politics

This past week Project MAPS and Zogby International released the 2004 American Muslim Poll. The poll revealed a complete political reversal for the American Muslim community since the 2000 election. In 2000, 3 out of 4 American Muslims supported President Bush and the Republican Party. Today, however, political affiliation has shifted to the Democratic and various independent parties. On Election Day, 76% of American Muslims will support Senator Kerry while only 7% will support President Bush. This is significant because out of the 5 million or so Muslims in the United States, 78% are registered to vote. Sizable populations of Muslim voters in Michigan, Ohio, and Virginia could have a direct effect on the outcome of the election.

Political Self-Identification	2001	2004
Democrat:	40	50
Republican:	23	12
Independent/Minor party:	28	31
Libertarian:	1	1

(Source

The poll lists several reasons for the shift including the fallout of September 11, 2001, the Bush administration’s pursuit of the “War on Terror,” and the unwillingness of the U.S. government to confront the Israeli-Palestine conflict. American Muslims also expressed a wish to further integrate the Muslim community into American society. A vast majority support participation in the political process, non-Muslim charities, and interfaith activities. As one of the fastest-growing segments of the American population, the shift in political affiliation is very important. Pollster James Zogby, one of the poll’s publishers, said “The results of our poll are some of the most striking this election season.”

The full report is available online at www.projectmaps.com