



Institute of Politics
at FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

YouGov[®]

New IOP@FSU/YouGov Poll Shows Biden with Small Lead in Florida Florida Voters Sharply Divided on Trump's Handling of COVID-19

A new poll of Florida voters, sponsored by the Institute of Politics at Florida State University (IOP@FSU) and conducted by YouGov, indicates that former Vice President Joe Biden has a small lead on President Donald Trump in the 2020 presidential election race in Florida. If the election were held today, 48% of respondents indicated that they would cast their ballots for Vice President Joe Biden. This was 2 percentage points more than the 46% of respondents who indicated they would vote for President Donald Trump.

“It looks like all eyes will be on Florida again,” said IOP@FSU director Hans Hassell and associate professor of political science at Florida State University. “This is an important state, and the presidential race in Florida remains close just as it always seems to be.”

The poll revealed an increasingly polarized but closely divided electorate not just in the presidential election but also in voters' evaluations of President Trump and former Vice President Joe Biden. When asked to rate the job President Donald Trump is doing as president, 49% approved of his job, while 48% disapproved. There were, however, strong differences between Democrats and Republicans, with 92% of Republicans approving of President Trump's job performance while only 7% of Democrats had a similar view. Independents were more closely divided, with 47% approving and 48% disapproving of the president's job performance.

Voters' evaluations of Joe Biden are similarly divided. When asked about their opinion of Joe Biden, 45% indicated they had a favorable opinion of the former vice president, while 48% had an unfavorable opinion. As before, these opinions varied by partisan affiliation. For Democrats, 88% had a favorable opinion, while 5% had an unfavorable opinion. For Republicans, 10% had a favorable opinion, while 87% had an unfavorable opinion. Again, independents were more closely divided, with 37% having a favorable opinion and 51% having an unfavorable opinion.

Yet, despite the close partisan contest, a majority of voters remain largely confident that ballots will be cast and counted accurately. Overall, 65% of respondents indicated that they were confident that votes would be cast and counted accurately. A small majority (53%) indicated they were confident that mail ballots would be cast and counted accurately; however, large majorities of respondents indicated they were confident that early in-person ballots (88%) and Election Day in-person ballots (90%) would be cast and counted accurately.

The IOP@FSU/YouGov survey also found voters were diverse in their plans about how to vote. Overall, 44% of respondents indicated that they would vote by mail, with 30% indicating that they would vote early in-person, and 24% indicating they would vote in-person on Election Day.

“Floridians remain largely confident in the voting process,” said Hassell. “Voting is an essential component of a strong democracy, and we can be confident that voters largely trust our system to work as it should.”

About the Institute of Politics at Florida State University (IOP@FSU)

The Institute of Politics at Florida State University (IOP@FSU) is envisioned as a world-class, nonpartisan, and nationally renowned institute that promotes engagement in politics by students and citizens. Housed within the College of Social Sciences and Public Policy, the IOP@FSU supports applied political research by a cadre of world-class scholars and mobilizes the talents of our alumni, students, faculty, and friends all in the heart of Florida’s Capital City.

The IOP@FSU offers wide-ranging opportunities for FSU students to become civically engaged, promotes research in politics, citizen involvement, and public service, and promotes the awareness of politics, citizen involvement, and public service in the general public.

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IOP@FSU/YouGov Fall 2020 Florida Survey

Sampling and Weighting Methodology for the Fall 2020 Florida Statewide Study

The IOP@FSU Fall 2020 Florida Survey was conducted in collaboration with YouGov. The survey was in the field from Friday, October 16, 2020, to Monday, October 26, 2020.

YouGov interviewed 1,496 respondents in Florida who were then matched down to a sample of 1,376 registered voters and then subset on 1,200 likely voters to produce the final dataset. The full set of survey stats were matched to a sampling frame on gender, age, race, and education. The frame was constructed by stratified sampling from the registered voter portion of the 2016 Current Population Survey sample with selection within strata by weighted sampling with replacements (using the person weights on the public use file).

The matched cases were weighted to the sampling frame using propensity scores. The matched cases and the frame were combined, and a logistic regression was estimated for inclusion in the frame. The propensity score function included age, gender, race/ethnicity, and years of education. According to these deciles, the propensity scores were grouped into deciles of the estimated propensity score in the frame and post-stratified.

The weights were then post-stratified on 2016 Presidential vote choice, and a four-way stratification of gender, age (4-categories), race (4-categories), and education (4-categories). Finally, the weights were subset on likely voters and trimmed and recentered to produce the final weight.

The weight-adjusted margin of error for the survey is 3.2%.

Survey Panel Data

The YouGov panel, a proprietary opt-in survey panel, comprises 1.2 million U.S. residents who have agreed to participate in YouGov Web surveys. At any given time, YouGov maintains a minimum of five recruitment campaigns based on salient current events.

Panel members are recruited by several methods and on various topics to help ensure diversity in the panel population. Recruiting methods include Web advertising campaigns (public surveys), permission-based email campaigns, partner sponsored solicitations, telephone-to-Web recruitment (RDD based sampling), and mail-to-Web recruitment (Voter Registration Based Sampling).

The primary method of recruitment for the YouGov Panel is Web advertising campaigns that appear based on keyword searches. In practice, a search in Google may prompt an active YouGov advertisement soliciting opinion on the search topic. After the short survey concludes, respondents are invited to join the YouGov panel to receive and participate in additional surveys. After a double opt-in procedure, where respondents must confirm their consent by responding to an email, the database checks to ensure the newly recruited panelist is new and that the address information provided is valid.

Sampling and Sample Matching

Sample matching is a methodology for selecting “representative” samples from non-randomly selected pools of respondents. It is ideally suited for Web access panels but could also be used for other types of surveys, such as phone surveys. Sample matching starts with an enumeration of the target population. For general population studies, the target population is all adults and can be enumerated through the decennial Census or a high-quality survey, such as the American Community Survey. In other contexts, this is known as the sampling frame, though, unlike conventional sampling, the sample is not drawn from the frame. Traditional sampling, then, selects individuals from the sampling frame at random for participation in the study. This may not be feasible or economical as the contact information, especially email addresses, is not available for all individuals in the frame. Refusals to participate increase sampling costs in this way.

Second, we select one or more matching members from our pool of opt-in respondents for each member of the target sample. This is called the matched sample. Matching is accomplished using a large set of available variables in consumer and voter databases for both the target population and the opt-in panel.

Second, for each member of the target sample, we select one or more matching members from our pool of opt-in respondents. This is called the matched sample. Matching is accomplished using a large set of variables that are available in consumer and voter databases for both the target population and the opt-in panel.

The purpose of matching is to find an available respondent similar to the selected member of the target sample. The result is a sample of respondents who have the same measured characteristics as the target sample. Under certain conditions described below, the matched sample will have similar properties to a true random sample. That is, the matched sample mimics the characteristics of the target sample.

When choosing the matched sample, it is necessary to find the closest matching respondent in the panel of opt-ins to each member of the target sample. YouGov employs the proximity matching method to find the closest matching respondent. For each variable used for matching, we define a distance function, $d(x,y)$, which describes how "close" the values x and y are on a particular attribute. The overall distance between a member of the target sample and a member of the panel is a weighted sum of each attribute's individual distance functions. The weights can be adjusted for each study based upon which variables are thought to be important for that study, though, for the most part, we have not found the matching procedure to be sensitive to small adjustments of the weights. On the other hand, a large weight forces the algorithm toward an exact match on that dimension.

IOP@FSU/YouGov Fall 2020 Florida Survey

If the 2020 presidential election were held today, would you vote for Donald Trump or Joe Biden, or are you undecided?

N=1,200; Weight Adjusted Margin of Error = ±3.2%

	Race					Party ID			Gender		Education		Age					
	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Other	Rep	Dem	Ind	M	F	HS or Less	College +	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Donald Trump	46%	55%	5%	44%	31%	91%	4%	43%	49%	44%	52%	43%	21%	33%	35%	47%	49%	57%
Joe Biden	48%	41%	76%	51%	64%	6%	94%	46%	47%	49%	42%	51%	72%	57%	57%	49%	44%	39%
Undecided	6%	4%	19%	5%	5%	3%	2%	11%	4%	7%	5%	6%	6%	10%	8%	3%	7%	4%

	Trump's Handling COVID			Presidential Vote 2016		
	Approve Strongly	Neither Approve/Disapprove	Disapprove Strongly	Clinton	Trump	Other
Donald Trump	97%	53%	1%	4%	90%	24%
Joe Biden	2%	32%	94%	91%	6%	47%
Undecided	2%	15%	5%	5%	4%	29%

How would you rate the job Donald Trump is doing as president?

N=1,200; Weight Adjusted Margin of Error = ±3.2%

	Race					Party ID			Gender		Education		Age					
	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Other	Rep	Dem	Ind	M	F	HS or Less	College +	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Approve strongly	36%	42%	3%	34%	28%	72%	4%	29%	37%	35%	43%	32%	12%	23%	25%	28%	39%	49%
Approve somewhat	14%	15%	8%	15%	6%	20%	3%	18%	14%	14%	13%	15%	14%	18%	16%	21%	13%	9%
Neither approve/disapprove	3%	2%	12%	4%	1%	2%	3%	4%	2%	3%	4%	3%	4%	8%	6%	3%	1%	1%
Disapprove somewhat	5%	3%	16%	6%	7%	3%	6%	6%	3%	6%	4%	4%	12%	6%	4%	6%	6%	2%
Disapprove strongly	43%	39%	61%	41%	58%	4%	84%	43%	44%	42%	37%	46%	57%	45%	49%	42%	41%	39%

	Trump's Handling COVID			Presidential Vote 2016		
	Approve Strongly	Neither Approve/Disapprove	Disapprove Strongly	Clinton	Trump	Other
Approve strongly	92%	19%	1%	1%	73%	11%
Approve somewhat	8%	37%	2%	5%	20%	27%
Neither approve/disapprove	0%	26%	1%	3%	1%	16%
Disapprove somewhat	0%	10%	5%	4%	3%	7%
Disapprove strongly	0%	8%	92%	87%	3%	39%

Please tell us whether you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, neither favorable nor unfavorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable opinion of Joe Biden.

N=1,200; Weight Adjusted Margin of Error = ±3.2%

	Race					Party ID			Gender		Education		Age					
	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Other	Rep	Dem	Ind	M	F	HS or Less	College +	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Very favorable	26%	21%	38%	36%	36%	6%	57%	14%	24%	29%	28%	26%	14%	24%	26%	21%	31%	28%
Somewhat favorable	19%	16%	36%	17%	27%	4%	31%	23%	20%	18%	14%	23%	40%	26%	28%	23%	14%	12%
Neither favorable/unfavorable	6%	4%	16%	8%	8%	3%	6%	10%	5%	7%	5%	5%	8%	16%	8%	6%	4%	4%
Somewhat unfavorable	8%	9%	4%	8%	0%	10%	3%	13%	9%	7%	8%	7%	15%	10%	10%	10%	5%	5%
Very unfavorable	40%	49%	4%	31%	28%	78%	2%	39%	42%	39%	46%	37%	21%	23%	27%	40%	46%	52%
DK/No opinion	1%	0%	3%	1%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%

	Trump's Handling COVID			Presidential Vote 2016		
	Approve Strongly	Neither Approve/Disapprove	Disapprove Strongly	Clinton	Trump	Other
Very favorable	4%	9%	51%	55%	4%	8%
Somewhat favorable	1%	12%	35%	33%	3%	29%
Neither favorable/unfavorable	2%	24%	7%	6%	4%	8%
Somewhat unfavorable	6%	14%	4%	5%	9%	17%
Very unfavorable	86%	39%	3%	2%	80%	33%
DK/No opinion	1%	2%	0%	0%	1%	5%

How do you plan on voting in the presidential election this year?

N=1,200; Weight Adjusted Margin of Error = ±3.2%

	Race					Party ID			Gender		Education		Age					
	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Other	Rep	Dem	Ind	M	F	HS or Less	College +	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
In person on Election Day	24%	24%	19%	30%	23%	37%	15%	19%	26%	23%	26%	22%	27%	31%	27%	30%	21%	20%
In person before Election Day	30%	31%	32%	27%	26%	34%	24%	33%	27%	31%	26%	36%	12%	26%	33%	33%	32%	30%
By mail	44%	44%	48%	40%	49%	29%	59%	45%	44%	44%	47%	40%	61%	37%	38%	35%	45%	50%
Unsure	2%	2%	1%	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%	1%	3%	2%	2%	0%	6%	2%	3%	2%	1%

How confident are you that votes for president cast by the following methods will be accurately counted in this year's election?

N=1,200; Weight Adjusted Margin of Error = ±3.0%

	Race					Party ID			Gender		Education		Age					
	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Other	Rep	Dem	Ind	M	F	HS or Less	College +	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Very confident	27%	26%	16%	34%	35%	18%	35%	29%	28%	25%	24%	29%	32%	27%	33%	24%	26%	25%
Somewhat confident	39%	39%	51%	32%	33%	37%	39%	40%	39%	38%	38%	39%	24%	45%	43%	44%	41%	33%
Not too confident	22%	24%	16%	22%	23%	30%	13%	25%	20%	24%	24%	22%	18%	20%	12%	22%	25%	27%
Not at all confident	9%	9%	11%	6%	8%	12%	6%	6%	9%	8%	9%	8%	14%	5%	6%	9%	7%	11%
DK/No opinion	3%	3%	6%	7%	1%	3%	5%	1%	3%	4%	6%	2%	12%	4%	6%	2%	2%	3%

How confident are you that votes for president cast by the following methods will be accurately counted in this year's election?

Method = In person on Election Day

N=1,200; Weight Adjusted Margin of Error = ±3.0%

	Race					Party ID			Gender		Education		Age					
	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Other	Rep	Dem	Ind	M	F	HS or Less	College +	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Very confident	62%	63%	46%	63%	67%	64%	60%	61%	68%	56%	58%	68%	46%	61%	57%	59%	65%	65%
Somewhat confident	28%	30%	33%	24%	22%	28%	28%	30%	25%	32%	31%	27%	31%	28%	27%	29%	30%	27%
Not too confident	5%	5%	8%	6%	6%	3%	7%	7%	4%	6%	5%	4%	11%	8%	6%	6%	5%	4%
Not at all confident	2%	2%	7%	2%	2%	3%	3%	1%	2%	3%	3%	1%	7%	2%	5%	4%	1%	2%
DK/No opinion	2%	1%	6%	5%	3%	2%	3%	1%	1%	3%	3%	1%	6%	2%	5%	2%	0%	2%

How confident are you that votes for president cast by the following methods will be accurately counted in this year's election?

Method = In person before Election Day

N=1,200; Weight Adjusted Margin of Error = ±3.0%

	Race					Party ID			Gender		Education		Age					
	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Other	Rep	Dem	Ind	M	F	HS or Less	College +	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Very confident	56%	55%	43%	54%	64%	50%	58%	56%	59%	51%	52%	58%	46%	54%	53%	50%	56%	58%
Somewhat confident	34%	36%	37%	28%	22%	37%	29%	35%	31%	36%	34%	33%	33%	37%	30%	37%	33%	33%
Not too confident	7%	6%	3%	7%	7%	8%	5%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	4%	6%	6%	8%	6%
Not at all confident	3%	1%	7%	7%	5%	3%	5%	1%	2%	4%	5%	1%	8%	1%	5%	6%	2%	2%
DK/No opinion	3%	1%	9%	4%	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%	3%	3%	1%	6%	4%	7%	0%	1%	2%

How confident are you that votes for president cast by the following methods will be accurately counted in this year's election?

Method = By Mail

N=1,200; Weight Adjusted Margin of Error = ±3.2%

	Race					Party ID			Gender		Education		Age					
	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Other	Rep	Dem	Ind	M	F	HS or Less	College +	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Very confident	23%	23%	14%	26%	30%	13%	35%	21%	24%	22%	21%	24%	39%	28%	29%	15%	19%	22%
Somewhat confident	31%	29%	44%	25%	35%	23%	37%	31%	32%	29%	33%	32%	14%	34%	30%	32%	37%	27%
Not too confident	22%	24%	18%	17%	16%	26%	16%	27%	20%	24%	20%	21%	25%	18%	19%	26%	22%	23%
Not at all confident	22%	23%	18%	28%	17%	37%	10%	19%	23%	22%	24%	21%	17%	20%	17%	24%	21%	26%
DK/No opinion	2%	1%	4%	5%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	6%	0%	5%	2%	1%	2%

If the winner of the presidential election cannot be determined on election night because it is taking longer than usual to count the votes, would that make you more confident that the votes were accurately counted, less confident that the votes were accurately counted, or would it have no effect on your confidence in the accuracy of the results?

N=1,200; Weight Adjusted Margin of Error = ±3.%

	Race					Party ID			Gender		Education		Age					
	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Other	Rep	Dem	Ind	M	F	HS or Less	College +	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
More confidence	21%	20%	19%	27%	21%	15%	30%	17%	20%	21%	19%	23%	30%	32%	23%	16%	15%	21%
Less confidence	40%	41%	36%	37%	40%	55%	25%	37%	43%	37%	42%	40%	31%	26%	32%	41%	43%	46%
No effect on confidence	32%	33%	30%	29%	34%	23%	39%	36%	30%	34%	27%	34%	32%	38%	33%	35%	38%	25%
DK/No opinion	7%	6%	14%	8%	5%	7%	7%	9%	7%	8%	12%	3%	8%	4%	12%	8%	4%	8%

Sample Characteristic

N=1,200; Weight Adjusted Margin of Error = ±3.%

Interview Language	
English	96%
Spanish	3%
Hispanic	
Yes	19%
No	81%

Age	
18-24	6%
25-34	11%
35-44	13%
45-54	15%
55-64	24%
65+	33%

Trump's Handling COVID	
Approve Strongly	30%
Approve Somewhat	15%
Neither Approve/Disapprove	5%
Disapprove Somewhat	5%
Disapprove Strongly	46%

Race (All Categories)	
American Indian or Alaska Native	1%
Asian or Asian American	1%
Black or African American	12%
Caucasian or White	81%
Pacific Islander	<1%
Mixed	3%
Other	4%

Education	
No High School	4%
High School Grad	26%
Some College	20%
2-Year Degree	13%
4-Year Degree	24%
Post-Grad	14%

2016 Vote Choice	
Hillary Clinton	38%
Donald Trump	43%
Gary Johnson	2%
Jill Stein	<1%
Evan McMullin	<1%
Other	<1%
Did Not Vote for President	17%

Gender (All Categories)	
Female/Woman	53%
Male/Man	46%
Transgender Female/Woman	<1%
Transgender Male/Man	<1%
Gender Variant/Non-conforming	<1%
Prefer Not to Answer	<1%

Media Market	
Ft. Myers	6%
Gainesville	2%
Jacksonville	8%
Miami	15%
Orlando	25%
Panama City	1%
Pensacola	3%
Tallahassee	3%
Tampa	30%
West Palm Beach	8%

Party Identification	
Strong Democrat	27%
Not Very Strong Democrat	10%
Lean Democrat	7%
Independent	12%
Lean Republican	9%
Not Very Strong Republican	9%
Strong Republican	26%
Not Sure	1%