



## **NBC News/WSJ/Marist Poll: Obama Holds Lead Over Romney in Ohio**

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### **This NBC News/WSJ/Marist Poll Reports:**

The presidential contest is in its final days, and in the key battleground state of Ohio, President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden receive the support of 51% to 45% for Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan among Ohio likely voters, including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate and those who voted early. One percent backs another candidate, and 3% are undecided.

“Both campaigns have invested heavily in Ohio and continue to do so,” says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. “As Election Day approaches, President Obama is better positioned to win the critical Buckeye State.”

In NBC News/WSJ/Marist's October 11<sup>th</sup> survey, Obama and Biden were ahead of Romney and Ryan, 51% to 45%, among likely voters statewide, including those who were undecided yet leaning toward a candidate and those who voted absentee. One percent was for another candidate, and 4% were undecided.

### **Key points:**

- **Party ID.** 94% of Democrats who are likely to vote support President Obama. 95% of Republicans who are likely to cast a ballot are for Romney. Among independent voters in Ohio, 48% support Romney compared with 44% for Obama.
- **Enthusiasm.** 69% of likely voters in Ohio are very enthusiastic about going to the polls on Tuesday. Looking at each candidate's supporters, 74% of those who are behind Romney express a high degree of enthusiasm compared with 70% of those who back the president. Enthusiasm in Ohio has increased over the past few weeks. In the previous survey, 60% of likely voters expressed a high level of enthusiasm. There has been a bump in the enthusiasm for, both, supporters of Obama and Romney. In mid-October, 65% of Romney's supporters were pumped up about casting their ballot compared with 59% of Obama's backers.

- **Intensity of support.** 88% of Ohio likely voters who prefer a candidate strongly support their choice, and 10% are somewhat behind their pick. One percent might vote differently, and 1% is unsure. 90% of Ohio likely voters who are for Romney are firmly in his camp compared with 87% of Obama's backers who express a similar level of commitment.
- **Gender.** Among women who are likely to go to the polls, Obama -- 57% -- leads Romney -- 39%. However, among men in Ohio who are likely to vote, Romney garners the support of 52% to 44% for Obama. In NBC News/WSJ/Marist's previous survey, Obama -- 54% -- led Romney -- 42% -- among women who are likely to vote. At that time, men who are likely to cast a ballot divided, 47% for Obama and 47% for Romney.
- **Age.** President Obama has the support of 49% of voters under 45 years of age compared with Romney who receives 45%. Similarly, the president has a six point lead over Romney among voters 45 and older, 51% to 45%.
- **Early voters.** 35% of registered voters in Ohio say they have already voted or plan to do so early. Among likely voters, Obama -- 62% -- leads Romney -- 36%. However, Romney -- 52% -- is ahead of Obama -- 42% -- among likely voters who plan to go to the polls on Tuesday.

Looking at registered voters in Ohio, including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate and those who voted early, 51% support Obama compared with 44% for Romney. Two percent are behind another candidate, and 3% are undecided.

### **Majority Views Obama Favorably... More Divided About Romney**

52% of Ohio likely voters have a positive view of the president. 45%, however, have an unfavorable opinion of him, and 4% are unsure.

In NBC News/WSJ/Marist's previous survey, 51% of likely voters statewide had a favorable impression of the president while 44% did not. Five percent, at that time, were unsure.

45% of likely voters think well of Romney while 48% do not. Six percent are unsure.

In Mid-October, 44% of Ohio likely voters had a favorable opinion of him while 50% did not. Six percent, then, were unsure.

### **Candidates Close on Economy... Obama Tops Romney on Foreign Policy**

48% of Ohio registered voters think Obama will do a better job handling the nation's economy. 45%, though, believe Romney is more capable to deal with the issue. Seven percent are unsure. Among likely voters in Ohio, 48% have more confidence in the president to improve the economy while 46% say Romney is the candidate for the job. Six percent are unsure.

When NBC News/WSJ/Marist last reported this question, 47% of registered voters statewide said Obama would better tackle the economy while 45% thought Romney would do a better job. Eight percent, at that time, were unsure.

When it comes to foreign policy, Obama -- 50% -- outdistances Romney -- 40%. 10% are unsure. Likely voters agree. Among this group of voters, 50% say Obama is better suited to take on foreign policy issues. This compares with 41% who think Romney can better handle these challenges. Eight percent are unsure.

Last month, Obama -- 50% -- also had the upper hand on foreign policy over Romney -- 40% -- among registered voters statewide. 10%, then, were unsure.

### **Half Approve of Obama's Job Performance... President Receives Good Reviews on Handling of Hurricane Sandy**

50% of registered voters statewide approve of the president's overall job performance. 45% disapprove, and 6% are unsure.

In mid-October, 47% gave the president a thumbs-up while 46% thought he fell short. Six percent were unsure.

72% of registered voters approve of how President Obama is handling Hurricane Sandy. Seven percent disapprove, and 20% are unsure. Most Democrats -- 90% -- praise the president's actions, and a majority of Republicans -- 53% -- do the same. Among independents, 69% give the president high marks on his handling of this natural disaster.

Among Ohio likely voters, 73% approve of how the president dealt with this issue. Seven percent disapprove, and 19% are unsure.

### **Not Quite Half Sees Country on Wrong Path**

49% of registered voters in Ohio believe the nation is moving in the wrong direction while 45% think it is traveling in the right one. Six percent are unsure.

Previously, 51% of Ohio registered voters thought the country was on the wrong path while 44% said it was on the proper course. Five percent were unsure.

### **U.S. Senate Race Closer, but Brown Still in Front**

In the U.S. Senate race in Ohio, 50% of likely voters statewide, including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate and those who voted early, support Sherrod Brown. This compares with 45% who back Josh Mandel. One percent is for another candidate, and 4% are undecided.

When NBC News/WSJ/Marist last reported this question, Brown -- 52% -- led Mandel -- 41% -- among likely voters, including those who were undecided yet leaning toward a candidate and those who voted absentee. One percent was for another candidate, and 6% were undecided.

Among registered voters in Ohio, including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate and those who voted early, 49% support Brown compared with 44% for Mandel. One percent backs another candidate, and 5% are undecided.