



The Battleground: The Presidential Race in Ohio

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This Marist Poll reports:

Presidential Race in Ohio:

- **Obama and McCain Locked in Tight Race in Ohio:** Senator Barack Obama receives the support of 46% of registered voters in Ohio compared with 43% for Senator John McCain. When it comes to likely voters, including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate, Obama has 48% to 45% for McCain. In a Marist Poll conducted just two weeks ago, Obama had 49% among likely voters to McCain's 45%. Candidate support divides along party lines. However, Ohio's important Independent voters now give the edge to Barack Obama. Half of Independents likely to vote on Election Day favor Obama while 41% say they are behind McCain.

Question Wording: If next week's presidential election were held today, whom would you support if the candidates are:

	John McCain/ Sarah Palin the Republicans	Barack Obama/ Joe Biden the Democrats	Other	Undecided
Registered voters				
October 29, 2008	43%	46%	1%	10%
October 13, 2008	40%	48%	1%	11%
September 2008	44%	44%	2%	10%
Likely voters w/ leaners				
October 29, 2008	45%	48%	2%	5%
Democrats	10%	83%	<1%	7%
Republicans	88%	8%	<1%	4%
Independents	41%	50%	4%	5%

	John McCain/ Sarah Palin the Republicans	Barack Obama/ Joe Biden the Democrats	Other	Undecided
October 13, 2008	45%	49%	1%	5%
Democrats	7%	89%	1%	3%
Republicans	85%	8%	<1%	7%
Independents	47%	44%	3%	6%
September 2008	45%	47%	1%	7%
Democrats	7%	90%	<1%	3%
Republicans	89%	7%	<1%	4%
Independents	42%	42%	2%	14%

- Voters Express High Level of Commitment to Choice of Candidate:** Most registered voters in Ohio say they strongly support their pick for president regardless of whom they are going to support. In fact, there's an 8 percentage point jump from just two weeks ago. Among the candidates' supporters, 88% of those in the Obama camp say they are firmly behind the Democrat while 83% of McCain's backers report they are unwavering in their commitment to him.

Question Wording: Would you say that you strongly support [ticket], somewhat support them, or do you think you might vote differently on Election Day?

Registered voters	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Might Vote Differently	Unsure
October 29, 2008	86%	12%	2%	<1%
McCain/Palin supporters	83%	16%	1%	<1%
Obama/Biden supporters	88%	9%	3%	<1%
October 13, 2008	78%	17%	4%	1%
September 2008	81%	14%	4%	1%

- Voters Divide on Values vs. Issues:** When given the choice, 44% of Ohio's electorate reports they'd prefer a candidate who shares their values rather than one who has a similar stand on the issues. 40%, however, would like a president who is with them on the issues. Looking at the candidate's supporters, 53% of McCain's backers want a candidate who shares their values. 49% of those behind Obama would like a president who is compatible on the issues.

Question Wording: If you had to choose, would you prefer a candidate who shares your positions on the issues but does not share your values, or a candidate who shares your values but not your positions on the issues?

Registered voters	Shared Issues	Shared Values	Unsure
October 29, 2008	40%	44%	16%
McCain/Palin supporters	32%	53%	15%
Obama/Biden supporters	49%	39%	12%

- The More Things Change, the More They Stay the Same:** In this hotly contested race, both candidates are walking a tightrope in Ohio, hoping not to alienate any voters. And, looking at voters' impressions of them, the two have been successful. Both McCain and Obama hold onto a majority of registered voters who perceive them positively. They also have each maintained the same *unfavorable* rating they received in a Marist Poll conducted two weeks ago -- 44% and 37%, respectively.

Question Wording: Overall, do you have a favorable or an unfavorable impression of [candidate]?

Registered voters	Favorable	Unfavorable	Unsure
John McCain			
October 29, 2008	51%	44%	5%
October 13, 2008	54%	44%	2%
September 2008	56%	38%	6%
Barack Obama			
October 29, 2008	56%	37%	7%
October 13, 2008	60%	37%	3%
September 2008	54%	38%	8%

- Ohio's Electorate Divides Over Governor Sarah Palin...Majority View Biden Positively:** With 6% of the state's registered voters undecided, 49% view Palin positively compared with 45% who do not. Two weeks ago, 51% of voters had a favorable impression of Palin, and 42% had an unfavorable one. On the Democratic side, Senator Joe Biden holds onto a majority of voters -- 53% -- who have a positive opinion of him, a dip from the Marist Poll's previous survey. 13% say they are unsure about the senator from Delaware.

Question Wording: Overall, do you have a favorable or an unfavorable impression of [candidate]?

Registered voters	Favorable	Unfavorable	Unsure
Sarah Palin			
October 29, 2008	49%	45%	6%
October 13, 2008	51%	42%	7%
September 2008	54%	32%	14%
Joe Biden			
October 29, 2008	53%	34%	13%
October 13, 2008	58%	34%	8%
September 2008	45%	33%	22%

Nature of the Sample: 763 Ohio Registered Voters

This survey of 763 registered voters in Ohio was conducted from October 24th and October 26th, 2008. Registered voters were interviewed by telephone in proportion to the voter registration in each county in Ohio and adjusted for turnout in statewide elections. Results are statistically significant at $\pm 3.5\%$. There are 661 likely voters. The results for this sub-sample are statistically significant at $\pm 4\%$. The error margin increases for cross-tabulations.