



**National Poll:
Voting Counts But Will All Votes Be Counted**

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This Marist College Institute for Public Opinion poll reports:

- **Many Americans expect Election Day irregularities at the ballot box:** In the midst of an intensely polarized election and with the memory of the ballot wrangling in Florida still fresh, many Americans think it is likely there will be problems at the polls this Election Day. Although 51% of Americans think a good number of the problems have been corrected, 40% believe most of the problems experienced four years ago have not been fixed, and 9% are unsure if any improvements have been made since election 2000. Democrats and Republicans have very different views on this issue with Independents divided.

Question Wording: Do you think that the problems that people had with voting on Election Day 2000 have been completely corrected, mostly corrected, are mostly not corrected, or are not corrected at all?

	Completely/ Mostly Corrected	Completely Corrected	Mostly Corrected	Mostly Not Corrected	Not Corrected at All	Unsure
Americans	51%	4%	47%	26%	14%	9%
Democrats	34%	2%	32%	38%	20%	8%
Republicans	71%	7%	64%	15%	5%	9%
Independents	50%	2%	48%	26%	16%	8%

- **Ballot bedlam?** Americans are concerned about a number of potential pitfalls on Election Day. 50% of residents nationwide expect many people will be confused about how to vote; 43% think it is likely many votes will not actually be counted; and 36% think it is likely many voters will show up to the polls only to be told they are not eligible to cast a ballot. The partisan and racial divides on these issues are wide.

Question Wording: Do you think it is very likely, likely, not very likely, or not likely at all that each of the following will happen on Election Day:

	Very Likely or Likely	Very Likely	Likely	Not Very Likely	Not Likely at All	Unsure
Americans						
That many people will be confused about how to cast their ballots	50%	23%	27%	33%	15%	2%
Democrats	60%	32%	28%	30%	9%	1%
Republicans	33%	13%	20%	40%	25%	2%
Independents	51%	20%	31%	33%	15%	1%
White	48%	20%	28%	35%	15%	2%
African American	66%	37%	29%	23%	7%	4%
Latino	48%	19%	29%	32%	20%	<1%
That many votes will not actually be counted	43%	20%	23%	33%	21%	3%
Democrats	59%	28%	31%	27%	12%	2%
Republicans	26%	11%	15%	39%	31%	4%
Independents	42%	19%	23%	34%	22%	2%
White	38%	16%	22%	37%	23%	2%
African American	67%	38%	29%	22%	7%	4%
Latino	45%	16%	29%	23%	29%	3%
That many people will show up to vote and be told they are not eligible	36%	14%	22%	42%	19%	3%
Democrats	49%	24%	25%	35%	13%	3%
Republicans	23%	8%	15%	51%	23%	3%
Independents	35%	12%	23%	39%	24%	2%
White	31%	12%	19%	47%	19%	3%
African American	53%	26%	27%	27%	13%	7%
Latino	36%	14%	22%	37%	27%	<1%

- **And the winner is....** Most Americans think the popular vote, not the Electoral College, should be used to determine the winner of the presidential election. Only Republicans divide on this issue.

Question Wording: If in November's presidential election one candidate wins the popular vote, but another candidate wins the Electoral College, who do you think should become president: the winner of the popular vote or the winner of the Electoral College?

	Popular Vote	Electoral College	Unsure
Americans	60%	35%	5%
Democrats	74%	23%	3%
Republicans	45%	51%	4%
Independents	64%	28%	8%

- **Voters are tuned in:** Most voters are following the presidential campaign and see much at stake in next week's vote. 83% of registered voters nationwide say they are following the campaign give-and-take closely or very closely. 77% believe it matters a great deal whether George Bush or John Kerry wins the election next week.

Question Wording: Would you say that you are following the presidential campaign very closely, closely, not very closely, or not at all?

Registered voters	Very Closely	Closely	Not Very Closely	Not at All
October 2004	37%	46%	14%	3%

Question Wording: Do you think it matters a great deal, somewhat, not too much, or not at all whether George Bush or John Kerry wins the presidential election this year?

Registered voters	A Great Deal	Somewhat	Not Too Much	Not at All
October 2004	77%	14%	6%	3%

- **People are talking...** The campaign has become a regular topic of conversation among friends and family. On average, voters have had seven conversations with others in the past week about the upcoming election.

Question Wording: How many times in the past week have you talked with someone about the presidential campaign?

	Average	None	1 to 4	5 to 9	10 or More
Registered voters	7	12%	36%	24%	28%

- **...but will voters turnout?** Questions that indicate whether registered voters are likely to vote on Election Day point to a substantially higher voter turnout next week than four years ago.¹

Actual Turnout of VAP in 2000 was 51%	Likely Voters October 2004	Likely Voters October 2000
Voting age population	64%	48%
Men	61%	47%
Women	66%	49%
18 to 30	48%	24%
31 to 44	60%	46%
45 to 60	74%	54%
Over 60	81%	61%

¹ Likely voters are defined by asking registered voters how interested they are in the presidential campaign, their chance of voting in the presidential election, and their intensity of support for their candidate.

Actual Turnout of VAP in 2000 was 51%	Likely Voters October 2004	Likely Voters October 2000
White	69%	50%
African American	55%	48%
Latino	45%	27%
Democrats	68%	51%
Republicans	74%	62%
Independents	55%	44%

- **Much depends on the GOTV:** One-third of registered voters, overall, and 46% in the battleground states have been contacted by a presidential candidate or by someone working on a presidential campaign. Similar proportions of both Democrats and Republicans have been contacted.

Question Wording: Over the past few months were you personally contacted by a presidential candidate or by someone working on a presidential campaign who offered you campaign information or asked you to vote?

	Been Contacted
Registered voters	33%
Battleground states	46%
Democrats	37%
Republicans	33%
Independents	29%
Men	30%
Women	36%
Access to the Internet	37%

- **Sitting on the sidelines:** Despite the intensity of voter interest surrounding this year's presidential contest, there are still many Americans that will not participate next week. These voters include those registered to vote but who indicate they are not likely to participate, as well as, voting age adults who are not registered.

Residents on the sidelines are more disconnected from politics than those who plan to participate. They are less likely to follow the campaign closely, are not as interested in the campaign, see less difference between the two parties and are less likely to identify with one of them, are less likely to think it matters a great deal who wins the presidency, are less likely to think issues in Washington, DC affect them or that their vote counts, and were less likely to hear about politics growing up than those Americans likely to vote.

They are more likely to be under 45 years of age, be minority, not have graduated from college, earn less than \$50,000 a year, and report being more financially strapped than

their voting counterparts.

Voting Age Americans	Americans on the Sidelines ²	Likely Voters
Follow campaign closely	58%	91%
Very interested in presidential campaign	7%	87%
Sees great deal of difference between parties	32%	54%
Matters a great deal who wins presidency	59%	83%
Thinks issues in Washington, DC affect them	43%	62%
Thinks their vote counts	66%	84%
Adults spoke politics when they were growing up	55%	68%
Men	52%	47%
Women	48%	53%
18 to 30	25%	12%
31 to 44	33%	24%
45 to 60	27%	36%
Over 60	15%	28%
White	63%	80%
African American	14%	10%
Latino	16%	7%
Identify as Democrats	31%	35%
Identify as Republicans	22%	34%
Identify as Independents	45%	30%
Not college graduate	78%	59%
College graduate	22%	41%
HH income less than \$50,000	61%	49%
HH income \$50,000 or more	39%	51%
Always have trouble making ends meet	36%	24%

- **Could voting reforms make a difference in voter turnout?** Holding weekend elections, Internet voting, allowing registration on Election Day, and compulsory voting provide encouragement to some Americans to vote on Election Day.

Question Wording: Would each of the following make you more likely to vote, less likely to vote, or would it not make a difference one way or the other?

	More Likely	Less Likely	No difference
Holding elections on the weekend			
Americans	15%	5%	80%
Registered voters	13%	5%	82%
Likely voters	11%	4%	85%
Registered voters not likely to vote	16%	7%	77%
Not registered to vote	27%	4%	69%

² Americans on the sidelines are those that have indicated they are registered but are not likely to vote or are currently not registered, 36% of those interviewed.

	More Likely	Less Likely	No difference
Allowing people to vote over the Internet			
Americans	20%	15%	65%
Registered voters	16%	16%	68%
Likely voters	16%	16%	68%
Registered voters not likely to vote	19%	13%	68%
Not registered to vote	37%	12%	51%
Allowing people to register and vote on the same day			
Americans	23%	4%	73%
Registered voters	21%	4%	75%
Likely voters	18%	5%	77%
Registered voters not likely to vote	28%	2%	70%
Not registered to vote	39%	2%	59%
Having to pay a fine if you did not vote			
Americans	30%	11%	59%
Registered voters	27%	10%	63%
Likely voters	25%	10%	65%
Registered voters not likely to vote	36%	10%	54%
Not registered to vote	43%	16%	41%

Nature of the Sample: 2,010 Americans

This survey was conducted from October 14th through October 19th, 2004. 2,010 adults 18 years of age or older within the continental United States were interviewed by telephone. Telephone numbers were selected based upon a list of telephone exchanges from throughout the nation. The exchanges were selected to ensure that each region was represented in proportion to its population. The results of the entire survey are statistically significant at $\pm 2.5\%$. There are 1,732 registered voters, 1,325 likely voters, and 685 adults who are either registered but not likely to vote or currently not registered. The results for these sub-samples are statistically significant at $\pm 2.5\%$, $\pm 3\%$, and $\pm 4\%$, respectively. The battleground states include 17 states. Nine of the battleground states were carried by less than seven points by Former Vice President Gore in 2000. The Gore states include Iowa, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Washington, and Wisconsin. Eight of the battleground states were carried by less than seven points by President Bush in 2000. The Bush states include Arkansas, Arizona, Florida, Missouri, Nevada, New Hampshire, Ohio, and West Virginia. Gore's home state of Tennessee is not included. There are 754 adults and 646 registered voters from the battleground states. The results for these subs-samples are statistically significant at $\pm 3.5\%$ and $\pm 4\%$, respectively. The margin for error increases for cross-tabulations.