Ipsos Public Affairs

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Interview dates: August 31- Sept 4, 2012
Base: 1,447 registered voters (RV)
Base: 600 RV Democrats, 610 RV Republicans, 177 RV Independents
Base: 1,185 Likely Voters (LV), 195 Non-aligned RVs

Ipsos Poll conducted for Reuters
CONVENTIONS DAY 9 (9.4.12)

These are findings from an Ipsos poll conducted for Thomson Reuters from August 31 – Sept 4, 2012. For the survey, a sample of 1,447 American registered voters was interviewed online. The precision of the Reuters/Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 2.9 percentage points for all respondents. For more information about credibility intervals, please see the appendix.

The data were weighted to the U.S. current population data by gender, age, education, and ethnicity. Statistical margins of error are not applicable to online polls. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error and measurement error. Figures marked by an asterisk (*) indicate a percentage value of greater than zero but less than one half of a per cent. Where figures do not sum to 100, this is due to the effects of rounding.

Non-aligned Registered Voters are defined as those individuals not indicating a candidate preference at the Presidential Voting Intention question (Q3 below).

POLITICAL AND ISSUES QUESTIONS

Q1. Generally speaking, would you say things in this country are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)	Non-aligned RVs
Right direction	25%	45%	6%	19%	12%
Wrong track	62%	37%	89%	66%	64%
Don't know	13%	18%	5%	14%	24%

Q2. Generally speaking, would you say the following things are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?

		All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)	Non-aligned RVs
The national economy	Right direction	17%	31%	5%	10%	6%
	Wrong track	75%	59%	92%	85%	81%
	Don't know	8%	10%	3%	6%	13%
Employment and jobs	Right direction	20%	34%	7%	15%	6%
	Wrong track	73%	57%	89%	80%	81%
	Don't know	7%	9%	4%	5%	13%
Healthcare system	Right direction	30%	53%	8%	29%	13%
	Wrong track	59%	34%	86%	62%	62%
	Don't know	10%	12%	5%	9%	25%
Immigration policy	Right direction	24%	39%	11%	22%	10%
	Wrong track	58%	38%	77%	63%	63%
	Don't know	18%	23%	12%	15%	27%
National deficit	Right direction	15%	25%	5%	15%	7%
	Wrong track	72%	55%	90%	75%	74%
	Don't know	13%	20%	5%	10%	19%
Education system	Right direction	26%	41%	11%	25%	13%
	Wrong track	61%	46%	75%	65%	65%
	Don't know	14%	13%	14%	10%	22%

		All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)	Independents (RV)
National politics	Right direction	16%	25%	6%	18%	4%
	Wrong track	68%	55%	83%	68%	67%
	Don't know	17%	20%	12%	14%	29%
American foreign policy	Right direction	27%	44%	9%	29%	11%
	Wrong track	52%	32%	75%	52%	58%
	Don't know	21%	24%	16%	18%	31%
Fuel and gas prices	Right direction	8%	12%	3%	11%	2%
	Wrong track	85%	78%	94%	83%	84%
	Don't know	8%	11%	4%	6%	14%
Your cost of living	Right direction	13%	20%	7%	13%	4%
	Wrong track	79%	71%	88%	82%	85%
	Don't know	7%	9%	5%	5%	11%

Q3. If the 2012 Presidential Election were being held today and the candidates were [ROTATE] Barack Obama for president and Joe Biden for vice president, the Democrats, and [INSERT CANDIDATE BELOW AND ROTATE LIST] Mitt Romney for president and Paul Ryan for vice president, the Republicans [END ROTATE], for whom would you vote?

	All LIKELY Voters (LV)	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)
Barack Obama for president and Joe Biden for vice president, the Democrats	45%	43%	79%	8%	35%
Mitt Romney for president and Paul Ryan for vice president, the Republicans	46%	43%	9%	86%	36%
Wouldn't vote	1%	3%	1%	2%	5%
None / Other	3%	4%	4%	1%	10%
Don't know / Refused	6%	8%	8%	4%	14%

Q4. In your opinion, which candidate for President has a better plan, policy or approach to each of the following?

8. Healthcare

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)	Non-aligned RVs
Barack Obama, Democrat	41%	73%	8%	37%	17%
Mitt Romney, Republican	32%	6%	68%	20%	7%
None	13%	8%	12%	23%	37%
Don't know	15%	13%	12%	20%	39%

b. Medicare

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)	Non-aligned RVs
Barack Obama, Democrat	38%	68%	9%	32%	22%
Mitt Romney, Republican	31%	6%	65%	23%	6%
None	13%	9%	11%	25%	35%
Don't know	17%	16%	15%	21%	37%

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Q5. When you think about abortion, which of the following is closest to your personal opinion?

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)	Non-aligned RVs
Abortion should be illegal in all cases	16%	13%	23%	11%	11%
Abortion should be illegal in most cases	27%	17%	40%	22%	28%
Abortion should be legal in most cases	24%	28%	17%	35%	23%
Abortion should be legal in all cases	23%	34%	13%	22%	18%
Unsure	9%	8%	7%	10%	20%

Q6. As you may know, the US federal budget has a significant deficit. Here are the main expenses for the government. In your view, which of the following areas can we afford to cut back on? (Select all that apply)

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)	Non-aligned RVs
Social Security	11%	10%	12%	11%	12%
Medicare	11%	7%	16%	14%	6%
Defense & the Military	36%	48%	21%	42%	34%
Education	12%	5%	21%	12%	5%
Alternative energy development	28%	15%	45%	22%	20%
Law enforcement	10%	10%	9%	15%	9%
Other	28%	22%	35%	29%	17%
None	17%	20%	15%	16%	18%

Q7. Would you say you are generally favorable or unfavorable towards these public figures?

8. President Barack Obama

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)	Non-aligned RVs
Very favorable	27%	52%	5%	13%	6%
Somewhat favorable	14%	23%	4%	17%	8%
Lean towards favorable	11%	13%	6%	17%	28%
Total favorable	**52%**	**88%**	**14%**	**47%**	**41%**
Lean towards unfavorable	11%	6%	14%	21%	22%
Somewhat unfavorable	6%	2%	10%	4%	8%
Very unfavorable	31%	5%	62%	28%	28%
Total unfavorable	**48%**	**12%**	**86%**	**53%**	**59%**

b. Vice President Joe Biden

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)	Non-aligned RVs
Very favorable	14%	25%	4%	8%	1%
Somewhat favorable	18%	32%	5%	13%	5%
Lean towards favorable	17%	24%	10%	21%	20%
Total favorable	**49%**	**81%**	**19%**	**42%**	**27%**
Lean towards unfavorable	18%	11%	19%	26%	37%
Somewhat unfavorable	8%	3%	14%	11%	11%
Very unfavorable	25%	5%	48%	21%	25%
Total unfavorable	**51%**	**19%**	**81%**	**58%**	**73%**

c. Republican Presidential Candidate Mitt Romney

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)	Non-aligned RVs
Very favorable	19%	4%	41%	8%	2%
Somewhat favorable	17%	7%	28%	18%	7%
Lean towards favorable	15%	10%	18%	25%	20%
Total favorable	51%	20%	87%	51%	28%
Lean towards unfavorable	17%	23%	7%	23%	32%
Somewhat unfavorable	8%	12%	3%	10%	15%
Very unfavorable	24%	45%	3%	16%	25%
Total unfavorable	49%	80%	13%	49%	72%

d. Republican Vice Presidential Candidate Paul Ryan

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)	Non-aligned RVs
Very favorable	19%	3%	42%	10%	3%
Somewhat favorable	15%	8%	23%	11%	10%
Lean towards favorable	19%	12%	24%	26%	25%
Total favorable	53%	24%	90%	48%	38%
Lean towards unfavorable	17%	23%	6%	27%	29%
Somewhat unfavorable	6%	10%	2%	10%	11%
Very unfavorable	23%	44%	3%	16%	21%
Total unfavorable	47%	76%	10%	52%	62%

CONVENTION QUESTIONS

Q8. In your opinion, which candidate for President is stronger on each of the following?

		All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)	Non-aligned RVs
Eloquent	Barack Obama, Democrat	46%	68%	24%	41%	30%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	25%	8%	49%	21%	5%
	Neither	14%	11%	13%	22%	30%
	Don't know	15%	12%	14%	17%	34%
Presidential	Barack Obama, Democrat	43%	76%	10%	37%	21%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	37%	9%	74%	29%	11%
	Neither	10%	6%	7%	25%	34%
	Don't know	10%	9%	10%	9%	35%
Understands people like me	Barack Obama, Democrat	41%	73%	8%	38%	20%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	28%	5%	58%	17%	4%
	Neither	21%	15%	23%	32%	46%
	Don't know	10%	8%	11%	14%	29%
Is a good person	Barack Obama, Democrat	43%	76%	10%	38%	25%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	33%	6%	68%	24%	7%
	Neither	9%	4%	8%	17%	25%
	Don't know	16%	13%	15%	20%	42%
Likeable	Barack Obama, Democrat	50%	80%	20%	47%	31%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	30%	7%	61%	22%	11%
	Neither	11%	6%	10%	20%	29%
	Don't know	9%	6%	9%	11%	30%
Tough enough for the job	Barack Obama, Democrat	38%	69%	8%	27%	15%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	38%	9%	76%	28%	9%
	Neither	12%	9%	7%	26%	33%
	Don't know	13%	12%	9%	18%	43%

		All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)	Non-aligned RVs
Represents America	Barack Obama, Democrat	40%	73%	8%	32%	18%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	38%	9%	76%	31%	10%
	Neither	11%	8%	8%	24%	36%
	Don't know	10%	9%	9%	14%	37%
Smart enough for the job	Barack Obama, Democrat	42%	74%	9%	38%	18%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	38%	11%	76%	27%	16%
	Neither	9%	5%	6%	17%	29%
	Don't know	11%	10%	9%	19%	37%
Has the right values	Barack Obama, Democrat	40%	72%	7%	35%	20%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	37%	8%	75%	27%	13%
	Neither	11%	8%	8%	22%	29%
	Don't know	12%	11%	9%	16%	38%
Will protect American jobs	Barack Obama, Democrat	35%	65%	6%	29%	9%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	38%	10%	75%	27%	6%
	Neither	14%	13%	9%	25%	45%
	Don't know	13%	12%	10%	19%	40%
A man of faith	Barack Obama, Democrat	28%	52%	6%	19%	18%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	44%	21%	74%	38%	22%
	Neither	11%	9%	8%	24%	22%
	Don't know	16%	18%	11%	19%	38%
Would be fun to meet in person	Barack Obama, Democrat	46%	76%	16%	40%	24%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	23%	3%	50%	14%	4%
	Neither	18%	13%	18%	29%	41%
	Don't know	13%	8%	15%	17%	31%
Can be effective in Washington	Barack Obama, Democrat	33%	61%	6%	21%	12%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	37%	11%	71%	26%	11%
	Neither	18%	17%	11%	33%	41%
	Don't know	13%	12%	11%	20%	36%

TO BE ACTIVATED AUG 28 ONWARDS (BASE = 1,447)
Q9. The Republican National Convention is currently under way [AUG 31 ONWARDS: CHANGE TO "was recently held"] in Tampa, Florida. How much, if anything, have you seen or heard or read about the Republican National Convention?

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)	Non-aligned RVs
A great deal	24%	21%	32%	18%	8%
Some	33%	30%	38%	36%	29%
A little bit	26%	31%	21%	22%	34%
Nothing at all	16%	18%	9%	23%	29%

ASK ALL WHO HAVE HEARD AT LEAST A LITTLE BIT (BASE = 1,228)
Q10. And what is your evaluation of the Republican National Convention so far?

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)	Non-aligned RVs
Excellent	15%	6%	26%	9%	6%
Good	26%	11%	42%	28%	10%
Average	35%	39%	29%	40%	62%
Poor	13%	23%	2%	13%	18%
Terrible	11%	21%	1%	10%	5%

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ASK ALL WHO HAVE HEARD AT LEAST A LITTLE BIT ABOUT EITHER CONVENTION. TO BE ACTIVATED AUG 28 ONWARDS
Q11. And where have you seen or heard or read about the Convention?

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)	Non-aligned RVs
Television	85%	86%	87%	83%	81%
Newspaper	32%	37%	31%	24%	25%
Social media like Facebook or Twitter	18%	20%	17%	18%	8%
Radio	21%	21%	21%	20%	19%
Blogs	8%	11%	6%	9%	10%
News websites	30%	31%	28%	33%	19%
Conversations with friends, family, or colleagues	24%	24%	25%	21%	14%
Other	3%	3%	1%	4%	7%

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How to Calculate Bayesian Credibility Intervals

The calculation of credibility intervals assumes that Y has a binomial distribution conditioned on the parameter θ\, i.e., Y|θ~Bin(n,θ), where n is the size of our sample. In this setting, Y counts the number of "yes", or "1", observed in the sample, so that the sample mean (y □) is a natural estimate of the true population proportion θ. This model is often called the likelihood function, and it is a standard concept in both the Bayesian and the Classical framework. The Bayesian[1] statistics combines both the prior distribution and the likelihood function to create a posterior distribution. The posterior distribution represents our opinion about which are the plausible values for θ adjusted after observing the sample data. In reality, the posterior distribution is one's knowledge base updated using the latest survey information. For the prior and likelihood functions specified here, the posterior distribution is also a beta distribution (π(θ/y)~β(y+a,n-y+b)), but with updated hyper-parameters.

Our credibility interval for ϑ is based on this posterior distribution. As mentioned above, these intervals represent our belief about which are the most plausible values for ϑ given our updated knowledge base. There are different ways to calculate these intervals based on $\pi(\theta/y)$. Since we want only one measure of precision for all variables in the survey, analogous to what is done within the Classical framework, we will compute the largest possible credibility interval for any observed sample. The worst case occurs when we assume that a=1 and b=1 and $y = n/2$. Using a simple approximation of the posterior by the normal distribution, the 95% credibility interval is given by, approximately:

$$\bar{y} \mp \frac{1}{\sqrt{n}}$$

For this poll, the Bayesian Credibility Interval was adjusted using standard weighting design effect 1+L=1.3 to account for complex weighting[2]

Analysis Domain	Sample size	Credibility intervals
Registered voters (RV)	1,447	2.9
RV Democratic	600	4.6
RV Republican	610	4.5
RV Independent	195	8.0
Likely Voters	1,185	3.2

[1] *Bayesian Data Analysis, Second Edition, Andrew Gelman, John B. Carlin, Hal S. Stern, Donald B. Rubin, Chapman & Hall/CRC | ISBN: 158488388X | 2003*

[2] *Kish, L. (1992). Weighting for unequal Pi . Journal of Official, Statistics, 8, 2, 183200.*