

For Immediate Release:

September 29, 2012

Obama leads Romney by 3% in National Poll

President Barack Obama leads former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney 46% - 43% nationally, with 3% choosing another candidate and 8% not sure.

The poll was conducted by Merriman River Group Research, on September 24 - 27, 2012. A nationally representative sample of 981 registered voters was surveyed using automated, "IVR" technology. The sampling margin of error is +/-3.1%

President	
Obama	46%
Romney	43%
Other	3%
Not Sure	8%
Total	100%

Contacts:

- Matt Fitch, Executive Director, matt@merrimanriver.com, (203) 675-8322
- Seth Rosenthal, Director of Opinion Research, seth@merrimanriver.com
- Twitter: @MRG_Research

Direction of the Economy and Country

The poll found an electorate largely unhappy with the direction of the economy (59% negative - 41% positive) and the nation (56% negative - 30% positive). However, Obama performs strongly among those with a positive outlook, and just well enough among those with a negative outlook, to maintain an overall lead. Obama also holds a wide lead among the 15% of voters who think that the country's direction is "staying about the same."

President * Economy_Direction Crosstabulation

% within Economy_Condensed

		Economy_Direction	
		Negative	Positive
President	Obama	23%	78%
	Romney	67%	11%
	Other	4%	1%
	Not Sure	6%	9%
Total		100%	100%

President * National_Direction Crosstabulation

% within Direction

		National_Direction		
		Negative Direction	Staying about the same	Positive Direction
President	Obama	17%	54%	93%
	Romney	73%	21%	2%
	Other	4%	3%	0%
	Not Sure	5%	22%	5%
Total		100%	100%	100%

Personal Demographics

Obama has a 6% lead among women, while Romney has a 2% lead among men. Obama leads with younger voters, while Romney has a strong lead among seniors. Romney holds a 12% lead among white voters, while Obama leads among every other racial and ethnic group.

President * Gender Crosstabulation

% within Gender

		Gender	
		Male	Female
President	Obama	44%	47%
	Romney	46%	41%
	Other	3%	3%
	Not Sure	7%	9%
Total		100%	100%

President * Age Crosstabulation

% within Age

		Age				
		18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
President	Obama	55%	51%	45%	44%	37%
	Romney	36%	39%	41%	46%	54%
	Other	5%	1%	4%	4%	2%
	Not Sure	3%	9%	10%	6%	7%
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

President * Race_Ethnicity Crosstabulation

% within Race_Ethnicity

		Race_Ethnicity					
		White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Other	Mixed
President	Obama	40%	71%	50%	51%	41%	56%
	Romney	52%	23%	38%	32%	39%	17%
	Other	2%	2%		3%	9%	12%
	Not Sure	6%	4%	13%	14%	11%	15%
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Socio-Economic Factors

Obama and Romney are running even among those who are unemployed. Obama holds a 5% lead among those with full- and part-time jobs, while Romney holds large leads among those who are self-employed and homemakers. Romney's advantage with the self-employed suggests one reason that his campaign's "we built that" catchphrase resonates with many of his supporters. Romney holds a 16% lead among married voters while Obama holds a 24% lead among voters who have never been married and a 43% lead among those who are divorced or separated. The two candidates are running about even at all educational levels except for the small number of individuals surveyed with no high school degree, who favor Obama.

President * Employment Crosstabulation

% within Employment

		Employment						
		Employed full-time	Employed part-time	Self-employed	Student	Retired	Homemaker	Unemployed
President	Obama	47%	45%	41%	67%	49%	36%	38%
	Romney	42%	40%	53%	17%	44%	57%	37%
	Other	3%	5%	1%		3%	2%	6%
	Not Sure	8%	10%	5%	17%	5%	5%	19%
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

President * Marital Crosstabulation

% within Marital

		Marital				
		Married	Single, never married	Divorced/Separated	Widowed	Living with a partner
President	Obama	36%	57%	66%	43%	63%
	Romney	52%	33%	23%	49%	20%
	Other	4%	2%	1%	4%	
	Not Sure	8%	8%	9%	3%	17%
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

President * Education_Level Crosstabulation

% within Education_Level

		Education_Level			
		No Degree	HS Degree	College Degree	Graduate Degree
President	Obama	63%	44%	46%	44%
	Romney	26%	45%	44%	45%
	Other	5%	4%	3%	2%
	Not Sure	7%	8%	8%	8%
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%

Communities & Religion

On the urban/suburban/rural front, not surprisingly, Obama holds a strong lead in big cities, while Romney holds strong leads in small towns and rural areas. Obama holds a 12% lead among the crucial suburban voting bloc. Romney holds the lead among born-again and evangelical Christians, but his 17% advantage is smaller than might be expected for a Republican presidential candidate and is more than offset by Obama's 12% lead among those who are not born-again or evangelical.

President * Community Crosstabulation

% within Community

		Community				
		A big city	A small city	A suburb	A small town	A rural area
President	Obama	54%	44%	53%	38%	30%
	Romney	32%	44%	41%	50%	61%
	Other	1%	3%	3%	5%	5%
	Not Sure	13%	9%	3%	6%	5%
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

President * BornAgain/Evangelical Crosstabulation

% within BornAgain

		BornAgain	
		Yes	No
President	Obama	37%	51%
	Romney	54%	39%
	Other	3%	3%
	Not Sure	6%	7%
Total		100%	100%

Party I.D., Fox News

The two candidates hold nearly identically large margins among their party faithful, and are also essentially splitting the Independent vote. Obama's overall margin is largely attributable to a 6% party I.D. advantage for Democrats over Republicans. Romney is holding on to the vast majority of the Tea Party vote, while Obama leads among non-Tea-Party members by 17%. Level of trust in Fox News's election coverage essentially mirrors the Party I.D. results. Obama has a slight edge among those who trust Fox's election coverage "about equally" with other coverage.

President * Party Crosstabulation

% within Party

		Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent
President	Obama	86%	8%	41%
	Romney	9%	86%	43%
	Other	0%	3%	5%
	Not Sure	4%	3%	11%
Total		100%	100%	100%

President * Tea_Party Crosstabulation

% within Tea_Party

		Tea Party	
		No	Yes
President	Obama	53%	10%
	Romney	36%	86%
	Other	3%	4%
	Not Sure	8%	
Total		100%	100%

President * Fox_Election_Trust Crosstabulation

% within Fox_Election_Trust

		Fox_Election_Trust		
		Trust Less	Trust Equally	Trust More
President	Obama	89%	41%	13%
	Romney	7%	37%	83%
	Other	1%	8%	1%
	Not Sure	2%	14%	3%
Total		100%	100%	100%

Military Families

Interestingly, Obama holds a 5% lead among members of military families—individuals with close relatives who have served active duty in the Middle East in the past 10 years.

President * Military_Family Crosstabulation

% within Military_Family

		Military Family	
		No	Yes
President	Obama	45%	50%
	Romney	43%	45%
	Other	3%	2%
	Not Sure	9%	3%
Total		100%	100%

Sidewalks

On September 3, 2012, Nate Silver, who writes the New York Times's FiveThirtyEight blog, sent the following tweet: "Heuristic: if a place has sidewalks, it votes Democratic. Otherwise, it votes Republican." (<https://twitter.com/fivethirtyeight/status/242744278814695424>).

To test his idea, we asked the question "Would you say that most of the streets near your home generally do, or do not, have sidewalks?" Those with sidewalks outnumbered those without sidewalks 54% - 46%.

As Mr. Silver predicted, voters with sidewalks favor Obama by 15%, while those without sidewalks favor Romney by 17%. There is also a 13% party I.D. advantage for Democrats over Republicans among those who live in areas with sidewalks and a 5% advantage for Republicans over Democrats in areas without sidewalks. Voters without sidewalks are also more likely to identify as an Independent.

President * Sidewalks Crosstabulation

% within Sidewalks

		Sidewalks	
		No	Yes
President	Obama	35%	53%
	Romney	52%	38%
	Other	5%	1%
	Not Sure	8%	8%
Total		100%	100%

Party * Sidewalks Crosstabulation

% within Sidewalks

		Sidewalks	
		No	Yes
Party	Democrat	26%	39%
	Republican	31%	26%
	Independent	43%	35%
Total		100%	100%

Issue and Demographic Toplines

Economy_Direction

Negative	59%
Positive	41%
Total	100%

National_Direction

Negative Direction	56%
Staying about the same	15%
Positive Direction	30%

Gender

Male	49%
Female	51%
Total	100%

Age

18-24	10%
25-34	21%
35-49	27%
50-64	25%
65+	17%
Total	100%

Race_Ethnicity

White	64%
Black	11%
Asian	1%
Hispanic	16%
Other	5%
Mixed	4%
Total	100%

Employment

Employed full-time	42%
Employed part-time	9%
Self-employed	8%
Student	1%
Retired	24%
Homemaker	6%
Unemployed	9%
Total	100%

Marital

Married	56%
Single, never married	22%
Divorced/Separated	11%
Widowed	7%
Living with a partner	3%
Total	100%

Education_Level

No Degree	5%
HS Degree	36%
College Degree	37%
Graduate Degree	22%
Total	100%

Community

A big city	22%
A small city	26%
A suburb	22%
A small town	21%
A rural area	9%
Total	100%

BornAgain/Evangelical

Yes	37%
No	63%
Total	100%

Party ID

Democrat	34%
Republican	28%
Independent	38%
Total	100%

Tea_Party

No	87%
Yes	13%
Total	100%

How much do you generally trust news coverage of the election on the Fox News Channel on cable TV? Would you say that you trust Fox News more than you trust other election coverage; that you trust Fox News less than you trust other election coverage; or that you have about the same level of trust in Fox News as in other election coverage?

Fox_Election_Trust

Trust Less	32%
Trust Equally	31%
Trust More	37%
Total	100%

Have you, or a member of your immediate family such as a spouse, sibling, parent, or child served active military duty in Iraq or Afghanistan at any time during the past ten years?

Military_Family

No	82%
Yes	18%
Total	100%

Now, a quick question about sidewalks in your area or neighborhood. Would you say that most of the streets near your home generally do, or do not, have sidewalks?

Sidewalks

No	46%
Yes	54%
Total	100%