

HOW THE POLL WAS CONDUCTED AND THE MARGIN OF ERROR CALCULATED

The CBS News 2016 Battleground Tracker is a panel study based on interviews conducted on the internet of registered voters in Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Michigan, North Carolina, New Hampshire, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Wisconsin, California, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, New Jersey, New York, South Carolina, and Texas. The poll was conducted by YouGov, an online polling organization.

The most recent wave interviewed registered voters on July 13-15, 2016 in eleven battleground states (Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Michigan, North Carolina, New Hampshire, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Wisconsin) and combined single state polls in Iowa, Michigan, and Ohio. All YouGov respondents were recontacted July 15-16, 2016 for a follow-up survey on the Trump Vice Presidential announcement, were recontacted again July 22-23, 2016 for a follow-up survey at the conclusion of the Republican National Convention, and finally recontacted July 29-30, 2016 for a follow-up survey at the conclusion of the Democratic National Convention.

The first wave was fielded between September 3-10, 2015, with 4860 respondents, and the second wave fieldwork was completed between October 15-22, 2015, with 3952 respondents and the third wave between November 15-19, 2015. The fourth wave was fielded between December 13-17, 2015. The majority of the 2nd-4th wave respondents are recontacted panelists. The first 4 waves consist of interviews in Iowa, New Hampshire, and South Carolina only. The fifth wave added new interviews in Florida, Georgia, and Texas, and was completed between January 17-21, 2016. The sixth wave was fielded only in South Carolina, with interviews completed February 10-12, 2016. The seventh wave was fielded also in February, among panelists in Georgia, Texas, and Virginia. The eighth wave fielded February 22-26, 2016, and recontacted panelists from the January wave in Georgia and Texas. Virginia respondents were all new to the panel. The ninth wave was fielded to new respondents in Michigan from March 2-4, 2016, and in addition, respondents in Florida, Illinois, and Ohio were contacted March 9-11, 2016. Respondents in New York, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin were contacted March 29-April 1, 2016 for the tenth wave. In the eleventh wave of our primary surveys, respondents in California, New York, and Pennsylvania were contacted April 13-15, 2016. The twelfth was conducted April 20-22, 2016 and interviewed panelists in Indiana and Pennsylvania. The thirteenth wave was the first general election poll, and was conducted of registered voters in Florida and Ohio May 16-19, 2016. The fourteenth wave was fielded May 31-June 3, 2016, and consists of registered voters in California and New Jersey, interviewing both those likely to vote in the November general election and the upcoming Democratic primary election. The fifteenth wave of the Battleground Tracker interviewed registered voters in Colorado, Florida, North Carolina, and Wisconsin from June 21-24, 2016.

Respondents were selected from YouGovs and two other online panels. These are “opt-in” panels which are open for anyone to join. However, YouGov also randomly selected persons from voter registration lists who had previously voted in primary elections and contacted them by phone. A total of 24017 registered voters were contacted by phone and the YouGov sample includes 1821 phone recruits.

Recontact rates ranged from 34% to 75% for each state for the reinterview waves. In addition, new respondents were selected from the YouGov panel each wave.

For the October, November, and December waves, all respondents from previous waves were contacted to participate. In the January wave, all respondents from previous waves in Iowa, New Hampshire, and South Carolina were contacted to participate. Florida, Georgia, and Texas are completely new interviews. In the February wave, all respondents from previous South Carolina waves were contacted to participate. In the March wave, all respondents from the previous Florida wave were invited to participate. All respondents from the New York survey in late March were invited to participate in the April wave. In the June 21-24, 2016 survey, all respondents from the previous Florida general election poll (conducted May 16-19, 2016) were invited to participate.

Approximately 60% of the October wave consists of reinterviews, with the remainder coming from new additions. Approximately 70% of the November wave consists of reinterviews from the previous waves, approximately 90% of the December and January waves consist of reinterviews. Approximately 84% of the February South Carolina wave consists of reinterviews.

Total Interviews												
September			October			November			December			
IA	NH	SC	IA	NH	SC	IA	NH	SC	IA	NH	SC	
YouGov	1263	1078	1170	1003	918	1083	1134	1002	1021	920	837	884
Research Now	407	272	335	339	230	282	421	334	426	332	254	518
Critical Mix	0	0	335	0	0	97	0	0	62	0	0	67
Total	1670	1350	1840	1342	1148	1462	1555	1336	1509	1252	1091	1469
January			February			March 2-4						
FL	GA	IA	NH	SC	TX	SC	GA	TX	VA	MI		
YouGov	988	494	906	764	943	984	1011	1322	3146	1193	1415	
Research Now	0	0	341	276	359	0	233	98	0	54	0	
Critical Mix	0	0	0	0	68	0	71	0	0	0	0	
Total	988	494	1247	1040	1370	984	1315	1420	3146	1193	1415	
March 9-11			March 29-April 1			April 13-15			April 20-22			
FL	IL	OH	NY	PA	WI	CA	NY	PA	IN	PA		
YouGov	1877	1681	1742	1654	729	1086	2403	2050	837	1084	1917	
Research Now	0	0	0	0	0	415	0	0	0	0	0	
Critical Mix	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Total	1877	1681	1742	1654	729	1501	2403	2050	837	1084	1917	
May 16-19		May 31-June 3			June 21-24							
FL	OH	CA	NJ	CO	FL	NC	WI					
YouGov	880	875	1200	910	707	1126	842	783				
SSI	98	89	0	210	161	72	115	169				
Toluna	22	36	0	80	132	3	43	47				
Total	1000	1000	1200	1200	1000	1200	1000	1000				
July 13-15			July 15-16		July 22-23		July 29-30					
IA	MI	OH	Battle Ground	Battle Ground	Battle Ground	Battle Ground						
YouGov	751	1082	1047	3289	2458	2131	2211					
Critical Mix	129	0	2	17	0	0	0					
SSI	118	119	55	77	0	0	0					
Total	998	1201	1104	3383	2458	2131	2211					

In the February SEC Primary wave, Republican respondents from the January wave in Georgia and Texas were invited to participate. We did not interview Democrats in these states in January. Similarly, Republican respondents from the January wave in Florida were invited to participate in the mid-March wave, and Republican respondents from the late-march wave in Pennsylvania were invited to take the April wave. Approximately 60% of the New York and Pennsylvania portions of the April wave consist of reinterviews; all California respondents were new interviews this month. In the final Pennsylvania poll, all previous Republican respondents were invited to participate. Approximately 80% of the Pennsylvania Republicans in the April 20-22 wave had taken at least one previous wave. Approximately 50% of the Florida registered voters in the June 21-24, 2016 wave had taken the previous survey. Approximately 20% of the Battleground sample in the July 13-15, 2016 wave had taken a previous survey. The Iowa, Michigan, and Ohio samples consist of 50-75% recontacts.

All respondents in Florida (January), Virginia (February), Michigan (early March), Illinois and Ohio (mid-March), Wisconsin (late March), California (April), and Indiana (late April) only participated in one wave. Reinterviews of the primary election panel surveys are summarized below.¹ The general election surveys started with the May 16-19, 2016 wave and are summarized in a separate table below.

Respondents were selected for participation from available panel members to be representative of registered voters from each state in terms of age, race, and gender. A propensity score (based upon a case-control logistic regression including age, race, gender, education, born-again status, party registration, and 2012

¹Florida (January), Georgia, Pennsylvania, and Texas counts are Likely Republican Voters only. Democratic voters were not contacted in the first wave.

Recontacts and New Interviews								
Primary Election Surveys								
	IA	NH	SC	GA	TX	FL	NY	PA
Six Waves	-	-	434	-	-	-	-	-
Five Waves	450	349	278	-	-	-	-	-
Four Waves	404	375	400	-	-	-	-	-
Three Waves	414	408	374	-	-	-	-	544
Two Waves	742	547	658	300	489	633	1256	429
One Wave	823	643	1303	195	496	356	1196	252
Total	2833	2322	3447	495	985	989	2452	1225

Recontacts and New Interviews									
General Election Surveys									
	FL	OH	CA	NJ	CO	NC	WI	IA	MI
Four Waves	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Three Waves	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Two Waves	680	516	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
One Wave	840	1073	1200	1200	1000	1000	1000	998	1201
Total	1520	1589	1200	1200	1000	1000	1000	998	1201

vote) was estimated for each respondent and responding panelists were post-stratified upon propensity score deciles, and adjusted for differential recontact from the prior wave. A score for likelihood of voting was computed for each respondent based upon past turnout and self-reported likelihood of voting in the presidential primary.

Finally, the product of the base weights and turnout probabilities were raked to match parameters from past primary and general elections in the state drawn from exit polls, and aggregate parameters from the current voter file. The weights were trimmed to have a maximum value of seven.

The “margin of error” is an approximate 95 percent confidence interval for the sampling proportion. It is calculated for a sample proportion using

$$\hat{p} \pm \sqrt{(1 + CV^2)/n}$$

where CV is the coefficient of variation of the sample weights and n is the sample size used to compute the proportion. This is a measure of sampling error (the average of all estimates obtained using the same sample selection and weighting procedures repeatedly should, in principle, be within the margin of error in 95 percent of such samples). It does not reflect non-sampling errors, including potential selection bias in panel participation or in response to a particular survey. The validity of the margin of error for total survey error (including non-sampling error) requires that, after controlling for the sample selection and weighting variables, survey measurements be independent of sample selection.