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Harris maintaining large lead over Trump in California.

by Mark DiCamillo, Director, *Berkeley IGS Poll*

The latest *Berkeley IGS Poll* completed online among 3,045 likely voters across California, finds Vice President Kamala Harris comfortably ahead of former President Donald Trump 57% to 35%, with each polling close to their respective shares of their party's electorate in this deeply blue state. Another 3% are favoring other candidates, while 5% undecided.

Harris draws nearly universal support from Democrats, liberals, and voters describing themselves as pro-choice or progressive in politics. Trump holds similarly large leads among Republicans, conservatives, and voters identifying with MAGA, or who describe themselves as evangelical Christians or libertarian in politics. There is a large gender gap in preferences, with females backing Harris by 33 points, while men favor her by just 12 points. Harris draws broad support from the state's black voters (72%) and Asian American voters (66%) but receives somewhat lower levels of support from Latino voters (54%). Among whites, preferences divide along educational lines, with 65% of those with a college degree backing Harris, while among non-college graduates it's just 45%. Regionally, Harris holds big leads in the San Francisco Bay Area, Los Angeles County, and the Central Coast, while Trump runs even or is narrowly ahead in Orange County, the Inland Empire, the Central Valley and in the North Coast/Sierras region.

Voters offer widely differing views of the political leanings of each candidate, as most Californians consider Harris a liberal and Trump a conservative. However, Trump voters are much more likely than Harris voters and undecided voters to see her as "very liberal."

Voters were presented with eleven candidate attributes and asked whether each applied more to Harris or Trump, both, or neither. Responses align closely to voting preferences, with Harris backers and Trump backers ascribing the positive attributes to their favored candidate and the negative attributes to their opponent. Because of the poll's large sample size, the responses of undecided voters can also be examined, and their opinions are more varied.

For example, undecided voters choose Harris as the candidate who *will do more for working people*, who *can better unite the country* and who *cares about the needs of people like you*. However, undecided voters see Trump as being *better in managing the nation's economy*, *better in managing the nation's foreign policy*, *has the right vision for the country's future*, and *has the toughness needed to be president*. On the other hand, undecided voters are far more likely to believe Trump *is too extreme* and *poses a risk to the nation*, and perhaps because of this, they hold much more negative opinions of him overall than they do of Harris.

Observed IGS co-director Eric Schickler,” As has become the norm for Democrats in California, Harris is on track for a substantial victory here, but the gulf in candidate preferences and perceptions across groups reflect the deep divides that make this a very close race nationally.”

Table 1
California likely voter preferences for President in 2024

| | Harris % | Trump % | Others % | Undecided % |
|------------------------------------|-------------|------------|-------------|----------------|
| Total -- late September | 57 | 35 | 3 | 5 |
| Early August | 59 | 34 | NA | 7 |
| <u>Region</u> | | | | |
| Los Angeles County | 64 | 28 | 2 | 6 |
| San Diego County | 51 | 38 | 3 | 8 |
| Orange County | 47 | 46 | 4 | 3 |
| Inland Empire | 45 | 43 | 6 | 6 |
| Central Coast | 63 | 35 | 1 | 1 |
| Central Valley | 47 | 46 | 4 | 3 |
| San Francisco Bay Area | 71 | 20 | 4 | 5 |
| North Coast/Sierras | 39 | 48 | 4 | 9 |
| <u>Party registration</u> | | | | |
| Democrats | 88 | 6 | 3 | 3 |
| Republicans | 7 | 87 | 2 | 4 |
| No Party Preference/other | 57 | 29 | 6 | 8 |
| <u>Political ideology</u> | | | | |
| Strongly conservative | 5 | 86 | 4 | 5 |
| Somewhat conservative | 13 | 82 | 2 | 3 |
| Moderate | 57 | 30 | 6 | 7 |
| Somewhat liberal | 93 | 3 | 1 | 3 |
| Strongly liberal | 93 | * | 4 | 3 |
| <u>Other political descriptors</u> | | | | |
| Progressive | 88 | 5 | 5 | 2 |
| Pro-choice | 83 | 10 | 3 | 4 |
| Libertarian | 26 | 64 | 7 | 3 |
| Evangelical Christian | 14 | 71 | 6 | 9 |
| MAGA | 1 | 94 | 4 | 1 |
| <u>Race/ethnicity</u> | | | | |
| White (total) | <u>56</u> | <u>37</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>3</u> |
| Non-college graduate | 45 | 49 | 3 | 3 |
| College graduate | 65 | 28 | 3 | 4 |
| Latino | 54 | 35 | 4 | 7 |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 66 | 26 | 4 | 4 |
| Black | 72 | 11 | 7 | 10 |
| <u>Gender</u> | | | | |
| Female | 62 | 29 | 3 | 6 |
| Male | 52 | 40 | 3 | 5 |
| <u>Age</u> | | | | |
| 18-29 | 60 | 30 | 5 | 5 |
| 30-39 | 54 | 29 | 8 | 9 |
| 40-49 | 53 | 38 | 3 | 6 |
| 50-64 | 57 | 37 | 3 | 3 |
| 65 or older | 59 | 35 | 4 | 2 |

How California voters assess the candidates on eleven attributes

Eleven candidate attributes, eight positive and three negative, were posed to voters, asking them whether they felt each attribute applied more to Harris, Trump, neither or both.

Most of the responses align closely to voters' preferred candidate, with Harris voters and Trump voters rating the positive attributes to their favored candidate and the negative attributes to their opponent. However, the views of undecided voters are more varied.

For example, undecided rate three positive attributes as being more applicable to Harris than Trump, with the rest saying both, neither or don't know:

- *“Will do more for working people” (25% Harris vs. 12% Trump)*
- *“Can better unite the country” (16% Harris vs. 4% Trump)*
- *“Cares about the needs of people like you” (17% Harris vs. 11% Trump)*

These same voters are more apt to choose Trump over Harris on these other positive attributes:

- *“Will be better in managing the nation's economy” (37% Trump vs. 16% Harris)*
- *“Has the toughness needed to be President” (29% Trump vs. 10% Harris)*
- *“Will be better in managing the nation's foreign policy” (27% Trump vs. 15% Harris)*
- *“Has the right vision for the country's future” (20% Trump vs. 9% Harris)*

On the other hand, larger proportions of undecided voters ascribe two negative attributes to Trump more than Harris and by considerable margins. These include:

- *“Is too extreme” (53% Trump vs. 5% Harris)*
- *“Poses a risk to the nation” (39% Trump vs. 8% Harris)*

| <i>Table 2</i> | | | | | |
|---|---------------|--------------|-------------|----------------|-----------|
| Which candidate, Harris or Trump, do the following descriptions better apply to? (among likely voters in California) | | | | | |
| | Harris | Trump | Both | Neither | DK |
| | % | % | % | % | % |
| <i>Will do more for working people</i> | <u>56</u> | <u>34</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>14</u> | <u>2</u> |
| Harris voters | 93 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| Trump voters | -- | 93 | 2 | 4 | 1 |
| Undecided voters | 25 | 12 | 14 | 28 | 21 |
| <i>Has the right vision for the country's future</i> | <u>53</u> | <u>35</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>8</u> | <u>2</u> |
| Harris voters | 91 | -- | -- | 7 | 1 |
| Trump voters | -- | 95 | 1 | 3 | 1 |
| Undecided voters | 9 | 20 | 9 | 38 | 24 |
| <i>Will be better in managing the nation's foreign policy</i> | <u>52</u> | <u>36</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>7</u> | <u>3</u> |
| Harris voters | 88 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 3 |
| Trump voters | -- | 96 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Undecided voters | 15 | 27 | 14 | 30 | 14 |
| <i>Cares about the needs of people like you</i> | <u>53</u> | <u>32</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>11</u> | <u>2</u> |
| Harris voters | 90 | -- | 1 | 8 | 1 |
| Trump voters | 1 | 90 | 2 | 6 | 1 |
| Undecided voters | 17 | 11 | 16 | 46 | 10 |
| <i>Can better unite the country</i> | <u>52</u> | <u>25</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>18</u> | <u>3</u> |
| Harris voters | 87 | -- | 1 | 10 | 2 |
| Trump voters | 1 | 70 | 2 | 24 | 3 |
| Undecided voters | 16 | 4 | 15 | 44 | 21 |
| <i>Will be better in managing the nation's economy</i> | <u>50</u> | <u>39</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>3</u> |
| Harris voters | 85 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Trump voters | -- | 98 | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Undecided voters | 16 | 37 | 6 | 26 | 15 |
| <i>Has the toughness needed to be President</i> | <u>48</u> | <u>37</u> | <u>6</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>4</u> |
| Harris voters | 81 | 2 | 8 | 5 | 4 |
| Trump voters | 1 | 97 | 1 | 1 | -- |
| Undecided voters | 10 | 29 | 32 | 15 | 14 |
| <i>Will bring needed change to the country</i> | <u>46</u> | <u>34</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>14</u> | <u>4</u> |
| Harris voters | 79 | 1 | 2 | 14 | 4 |
| Trump voters | 1 | 92 | 1 | 5 | 1 |
| Undecided voters | 11 | 8 | 19 | 49 | 13 |
| <i>It's not clear where he/she stands on the issues</i> | <u>34</u> | <u>34</u> | <u>10</u> | <u>15</u> | <u>7</u> |
| Harris voters | 6 | 54 | 10 | 23 | 7 |
| Trump voters | 83 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 5 |
| Undecided voters | 19 | 12 | 40 | 16 | 13 |
| <i>Poses a risk to the nation</i> | <u>32</u> | <u>58</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>2</u> |
| Harris voters | 1 | 95 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Trump voters | 88 | 3 | 4 | 5 | -- |
| Undecided voters | 8 | 39 | 34 | 9 | 10 |
| <i>Is too extreme</i> | <u>27</u> | <u>60</u> | <u>6</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>5</u> |
| Harris voters | 1 | 95 | 1 | -- | 3 |
| Trump voters | 75 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 7 |
| Undecided voters | 5 | 53 | 28 | 2 | 12 |

Harris viewed positively by her home state voters, while Trump is viewed negatively

Statewide 58% of likely voters say they have a favorable opinion of Harris overall, with 40% saying their view is strongly favorable. On the other hand, Trump’s overall image among the state’s likely voters is much more negative, with 61% viewing him unfavorably, 58% of whom saying their opinion is strongly unfavorable. These ratings are virtually unchanged from those found by the poll in early August, shortly after Harris became the Democratic Party’s nominee.

Nearly all of those backing Harris (96%) view her positively, while nearly all Trump supporters hold a negative opinion of her (96%). The reverse is also true, as nearly all voters who are backing Trump view him positively (97%) and view Harris negatively (97%).

There are, however, significant differences in how the state’s undecided voters view the two candidates. Among these voters more (43%) have a favorable opinion of Harris than view her unfavorably (39%). By contrast, a much larger proportion of the state’s undecided voters (55%) hold a negative opinion of Trump overall than view him positively (31%).

Table 3
Voter image ratings of Kamala Harris and Donald Trump
(among likely voters in California)

| | Total likely voters % | Harris voters % | Trump voters % | Undecided voters % |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| <u>Kamala Harris</u> | | | | |
| Favorable | <u>58</u> | <u>96</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>43</u> |
| Strongly favorable | 40 | 69 | 1 | 5 |
| Somewhat favorable | 18 | 27 | 1 | 38 |
| Unfavorable | <u>40</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>96</u> | <u>39</u> |
| Somewhat unfavorable | 5 | 3 | 3 | 22 |
| Strongly unfavorable | 35 | 1 | 93 | 17 |
| No opinion | <u>2</u> | <u>--</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>18</u> |
| <u>Donald Trump</u> | | | | |
| Favorable | <u>37</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>97</u> | <u>31</u> |
| Strongly favorable | 28 | 1 | 77 | 1 |
| Somewhat favorable | 9 | 1 | 20 | 30 |
| Unfavorable | <u>61</u> | <u>97</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>55</u> |
| Somewhat unfavorable | 3 | 2 | 2 | 19 |
| Strongly unfavorable | 58 | 95 | 1 | 36 |
| No opinion | <u>2</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>--</u> | <u>14</u> |

While most consider Harris a liberal and Trump a conservative, Trump voters are much more likely than Harris backers and undecided voters to see her as “very liberal”

Voters offer widely differing views of the political leanings of each candidate, with 68% of Californians describing Harris as a political liberal, while 77% of voters view Trump as a conservative.

Harris voters and Trump voters hold generally similar opinions of the political leanings of Trump, with about three in four viewing him as a conservative. The state’s undecided voters also hold similar views.

However, there are significant differences between how Harris backers, Trump supporters and undecided voters view the political leanings of Harris. Nearly all Trump voters (89%) consider Harris a liberal, compared to just 58% among Harris’s supporters, and 45% among undecided voters feel she is a liberal.

In addition, relatively few of Harris’ supporters (5%) consider their candidate “very liberal” in politics, and just 22% of undecided voters say this. By contrast, 82% of Trump’s supporters describing her as “very liberal.” with 53% rating her as only somewhat liberal.

Table 4
Likely voter impressions of the political ideologies of Harris and Trump

| | Total likely voters % | Harris voters % | Trump voters % | Undecided voters % |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| <u>Kamala Harris</u> | | | | |
| Liberal | 68 | 58 | 89 | 45 |
| Very liberal | 33 | 5 | 82 | 22 |
| Somewhat liberal | 35 | 53 | 7 | 23 |
| Moderate | 22 | 33 | 4 | 19 |
| Conservative | 5 | 5 | 2 | 21 |
| Somewhat conservative | 4 | 2 | 1 | 19 |
| Very conservative | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| No opinion | 5 | 4 | 5 | 15 |
| <u>Donald Trump</u> | | | | |
| Liberal | 4 | 4 | 4 | 10 |
| Very liberal | 3 | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| Somewhat liberal | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Moderate | 8 | 2 | 16 | 6 |
| Conservative | 77 | 78 | 76 | 72 |
| Somewhat conservative | 33 | 20 | 55 | 32 |
| Very conservative | 43 | 58 | 21 | 40 |
| No opinion | 11 | 16 | 4 | 12 |

About the Survey

The findings in this report are based on a *Berkeley IGS Poll* completed by the Institute of Governmental Studies (IGS) at the University of California, Berkeley. The poll was administered online in English and Spanish September 25 - October 1, 2024, among 3,045 Californians considered likely to vote in the 2024 November general election.

The poll was conducted by distributing email invitations to stratified random samples of the state’s registered voters. Each email invited voters to participate in a non-partisan survey conducted by the University and provided a link to the IGS website where the survey was housed. Reminder emails were distributed to non-responding voters and an opt out link was provided for voters not wishing to receive further email invitations.

Samples of California registered voters with email addresses were derived from information contained on the official voter registration rolls and provided to IGS by Political Data, Inc., a leading supplier of registered voter lists. To protect the anonymity of respondents, voters’ email addresses and all other

personally identifiable information derived from the original voter listing were purged from the data file and replaced with a unique and anonymous identification number during data processing. In addition, after the completion of data collection, post-stratification weights were applied to the survey data file to align the sample of registered voters to population characteristics of the registered voters statewide and within major regions of the state.

The sampling error associated with the survey results is difficult to calculate precisely because of sample stratification and post-stratification weighting. Nevertheless, it is likely that findings from the overall likely voter sample have a sampling error of about +/-2.5 points at the 95% confidence level.

Question wording

In the November Presidential election, the names of the following candidates will appear on the California ballot: (RANDOMIZED) (1) Kamala Harris, Democrat, (2) Donald J. Trump, Republican, (3) Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., independent, (4) Cornel West, independent, (5) Jill Stein, Green Party, (6) Chase Oliver, Libertarian Party. If the election were held today, for whom would you vote?

Regardless of who you are supporting, please indicate whether your opinion of the following candidates is favorable or unfavorable, or whether you don't yet know enough about them to offer an opinion: (1) Donald Trump, former President, (2) Kamala Harris, Vice President. (RANDOMIZED)

For each of the following, please indicate whether you think each phrase better describes Kamala Harris, better describes Donald Trump, describes both equally or doesn't describe either one? (SEE RELEASE FOR THE WORDING OF EACH ATTRIBUTE) (RANDOMIZED)

On a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 means very liberal, 4 means moderate, and 7 means very conservative, where would you place (Kamala Harris) (Donald Trump) in terms of her/his politics? You may choose any number from 1 to 7 for your answer. (Note: In this report scores of 2 or 3 are classified as somewhat liberal, while scores of 5 or 6 are classified as somewhat conservative.)

About the Institute of Governmental Studies

The Institute of Governmental studies (IGS) is an interdisciplinary organized research unit that pursues a vigorous program of research, education, publication and public service. A component of the University of California system's flagship Berkeley campus, IGS is the oldest organized research unit in the UC system and the oldest public policy research center in the state. IGS's co-directors are Professor Eric Schickler and Associate Professor G. Cristina Mora.

IGS conducts periodic surveys of California public opinion on matters of politics and public policy through its *Berkeley IGS Poll*. The poll seeks to provide objective, non-partisan survey data for public benefit and for scholarly analysis. Veteran pollster Mark DiCamillo serves as director of the *Berkeley IGS Poll*. A complete listing of its reports can be found by visiting the weblink: <https://igs.berkeley.edu/research/berkeley-igs-poll>.