

ELECTION RECAP

Comparing Clarus polling averages to actual results

- Our final nationwide poll showed Obama ahead by 8 points. His Election Day lead was 7 points. The race was really very stable in the final weeks. Obama's average lead in our analysis ranged between 6 and 8 points between Oct. 21 and Election Day.
- Our final Swing State Update had Obama with a clear lead in 10 swing states, enough to elect him President. On Election Day, all 10 of these states went for Obama by percentages ranging from 52 to 57.
- Our Swing State Update had 5 states as "even/unclear." Obama carried three of them on election Day (North Carolina, Florida, Ohio) and McCain carried two (North Dakota and Missouri). The average winning margin of these five states was about 3 points.
- Our Swing State Update showed Obama with a slight lead in Indiana and Montana. On Election Day, Obama carried Indiana by 0.9 percent and McCain carried Montana by 3 points. Indiana was the only state that was something of a surprise.
- Our Swing State Update showed McCain with a clear lead in Georgia, Arizona and West Virginia. McCain carried all of them by percentages ranging from 52 to 56.

Mandate anyone?

When looking at all of the returns from Tuesday, one thing seems clear: This election was more of a Republican defeat than a Democratic victory. Obama and Democrats in Congress need to keep that in mind as they plot policy strategy. There were major Democratic gains in Congress in addition to Obama's substantial Electoral Vote victory, but there was no massive blow-out – as some had expected. In fact, there may have been a slight Democratic pull-back in the last days of the election.

All in all, it was clearly a change election, both anti-Bush and anti-Washington change. Nonetheless, voters showed skepticism for both sides of the partisan divide.

The public mood was, in the end, driven by economic concerns. No surprise, given the financial crisis that erupted in mid-September. Polls show that voters went to vote with a strongly negative attitude about the status quo: positive consumer confidence was a mere 5 percent and only 13 percent were satisfied

with the state of nation.

It was a majority election

Obama won with 53 percent of the vote. Historically speaking, that's a substantial win. Since 1852, only three other Democrats won popular vote majorities: FDR, LBJ, Carter – and now Obama.

It was a generational victory

- Obama won voters under 30 by a wide 35-point margin. In 2004, Kerry carried this group by 9 points.
- Voters over 65 went for McCain by an 8-point margin. Obama won first-time voters 69-30. In 2004, Kerry won them 53-46.

Go west

The most interesting regional and state trend was the Western shift: Obama won three 2004 Bush states in the West by significant margins: Nevada (+12), Colorado (+7), New Mexico (+15). These three states added 19 Electoral votes to the Democratic column. This, of course, was on top of winning California by a massive 24 points, Washington by 17 and Oregon by 12. Until this election, Washington and Oregon had been considered swing states that Gore and Kerry carried by fairly close margins. Republicans were still carrying California in presidential politics as recently as 1988.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Democratic Party

Virginia has moved from a Republican state to a swing state that tilts Democratic. Republicans carried it in every election between 1968 and 2004; Bush carried it twice by 8 points. Democrats have won the last two gubernatorial elections in Virginia and the last two U.S. Senate races. Obama carried the state on Tuesday.

Florida and Ohio

No recounts this time, but Florida and Ohio remain the two mega-swing states. Obama won them by slim margins. Interestingly, Obama could have won without either (and also without Pennsylvania).

Deep Red

When you look at a map of counties nationwide, you find that Obama did better than Kerry throughout most states. The only states where Republicans improved their positions in a good number of counties (parishes) were in Oklahoma, Louisiana, Arkansas, Tennessee, Kentucky and Alabama.

Gender gap alive and well

Obama won men by 1 point, women by 13. Not having Hillary on the ticket apparently didn't hurt him. Exit polling also showed that Democrats who supported Hillary Clinton during the primaries voted for Obama in the general election, 84 percent to 15 percent for McCain. The 15 percent that did not vote for Obama was always an anti-Obama vote that would vote Republican; many of them would have voted Republican

even if Clinton herself had been the nominee.

Race and ethnicity

Obama lost whites but carried minorities with expanded percentages over Democratic performance in 2004:

- Blacks – Obama won 95-4, receiving a vote percentage 7 points higher than Kerry. Plus, Obama expanded the African American electorate.
- Latinos – Obama won 66-32, receiving a vote percentage 13 points higher than Kerry.
- Asians – Obama won 61-35, receiving a vote percentage 5 points higher than Kerry.
- Whites – McCain won 55-43. Obama did 2% better among whites than Kerry.

Income

Obama carried lower income voters by a wide margin and actually carried voters making over \$200,000 (those he said he's tax). McCain's strength was upper middle income voters:

- Under \$30k – Obama won 64-34.
- Middle \$30-100k – Obama won 52-47.
- Upper Middle \$100-200k – McCain won 51-48.
- Over \$200k – Obama won 52-46.

Education

Obama had his greatest strength on both ends of the educational spectrum:

- Obama won 63% of the vote among voters with no high school.
- Obama won 58% of the vote among voters with post-graduate degrees.
- Obama won about 50-51% in middle education categories between these two.

Party

Obama did about the same among Democrats as did Kerry, although the Democratic portion of the electorate expanded since 2004. Despite Sarah Palin, McCain did not do as well among GOP voters as Bush did in 2004:

- Obama won Democrats 89-10; Kerry won Democrats 89-11.
- McCain won Republicans 90-9; Bush won Republicans 93-6.
- Independents: Obama won them 51-45.

Ideology

- Liberals (22% of electorate) – Obama won them 88-10.
 - Conservatives (34% of electorate) – McCain won them 78-20.
 - Moderate (44% of electorate) – Obama won them 60-39.
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**WE HAVE
THREE
ELECTORAL
VOTE CONTEST
WINNERS!!!!**



Alvin L. Murphy of Metairie, Louisiana, **Seth Samuel** of Washington, DC, and **Mitchell Auster** of East Windsor, New Jersey all correctly predicted that Obama would win **364 Electoral Votes**.

Al Murphy had the best overall prediction. Not only did he predict Obama's exact Electoral Vote count but he predicted Obama would win 53 percent of the popular vote. **Seth Samuel** and **Mitchell Auster** also came very close, predicting Obama would win 52 percent of the popular vote. Congratulations to our three **Great Predictors of 2008!!!!**



Dr. Ron Faucheux
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OUR DAILY UPDATES: We will be sending to you regular updates of the latest presidential poll information and a summary of handicapping in all U. S. House and Senate races.

Our data-driven updates will give you the nonpartisan “bottom line” on Congressional and presidential politics. If you do not want to be included in our free e-mail updates, please unsubscribe below.

Thanks very much,
Ron

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