

Election Persuadables: Few, Far Between and Potentially Important

A close election may come down to persuadable Americans, those who don't currently intend to vote for Kamala Harris or Donald Trump but don't flatly rule it out. But bringing them aboard is no simple task: Persuadables are few and far between, especially among registered and likely voters; less favorably inclined toward Harris and Trump alike; and notably disengaged from the election.

Indeed the question is not simply for whom they vote – but whether they vote at all.

Twelve percent of people in the latest ABC News/Washington Post/Ipsos poll are open to changing their minds. This includes 7 percent who don't currently support Harris but say they'd consider voting for her, and an identical 7 percent who don't currently support Trump but would consider voting for him (with slight overlap – 1 percent would consider both).

But those numbers shrink among registered and likely voters. Just 4 percent of registered voters and 2 percent of likely voters don't support Harris now but say they'd consider her. It's a similar 5 percent of registered voters and 3 percent of likely voters for Trump. This analysis, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#), indicates slim pickings among persuadables, even though in a close race, every vote counts.

In results among all adults (for adequate sample sizes), persuadables are relatively disengaged. Only about four in 10 are closely following the election, compared with two-thirds of adults overall. Only about a quarter say they're certain to vote in November, compared with 63 percent of Americans overall. Indeed, roughly half of persuadables say they won't vote given a choice between Harris and Trump, compared with 14 percent of all adults. And fewer report being registered to vote or say they voted in 2020, additional strong indicators of voting this fall.

	All adults	Don't now support but would consider...	
		Harris	Trump
Closely following the election	67%	38%	37%
Absolutely certain to vote	63	25	27
Would not vote	14	53	53
Registered to vote	80	52	61
Voted in 2020	66	31	44

Persuadables are less likely than other people to align with either major party and more apt to be independents or pick another party. They're also more apt to be political moderates – 64 percent of those who are open to voting for Harris and 62 percent of those who are open to supporting Trump, vs. 42 percent of Americans overall.

Twenty-eight percent of persuadable Trump voters favor a third-party candidate, as do 17 percent of persuadable Harris voters (a slight difference, given sample sizes). These compare with only 7 percent of adults overall. The poll was conducted before news that Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., is expected to leave the race.

	All adults	Don't now support but would consider...	
		Harris	Trump
Republican	29%	18%	19%
Democrat	29	16	12
Independent/other	41	64	67
Third-party vote	7	17	28
Liberal	24	17	6
Moderate	42	64	62
Conservative	32	18	28

Persuadables also are more apt than adults generally to express dissatisfaction with the choice between Harris and Trump as the major-party candidates. Far more say neither of the two is honest and trustworthy, represents their personal values or understands the problems of people like them.

	All adults	Don't now support but would consider...	
		Harris	Trump
Major-party candidates:			
Satisfied	44%	26%	22%
Dissatisfied	55	73	75
Neither candidate:			
Is honest and trustworthy	32	56	61
Represents your values	25	57	53
Understands your problems	26	50	43

As with adults generally, the economy and inflation are by far the most important issues among persuadable adults. There are, however, some differences on issue importance: Persuadables are

less likely than the general public to say that protecting American democracy and appointments to the U.S. Supreme Court will be highly important in their vote.

Those who'd consider Trump are less apt than adults overall to say abortion, the Israel-Hamas war and race relations are highly important; and, compared with those who'd consider Harris, more apt to focus on immigration and slightly more apt to place importance on crime. Those who'd consider Harris are less apt than adults overall to say immigration is highly important; and, compared with those who'd consider Trump, somewhat more apt to focus on gun violence.

Top issues:	All adults	Don't now support but would consider...	
		Harris	Trump
The economy	89%	88%	90%
Inflation	86	87	91
Health care	77	75	78
Protecting American democracy	77	64	63
Crime and safety	76	71	81
Immigration	70	59	76
SCOTUS appointments	65	46	46
Gun violence	63	70	58
Abortion	59	50	48
Israel-Hamas war	50	41	37
Race relations	50	49	40

Demographically, persuadables are comparatively young (30 percent under age 30, compared with 20 percent of adults overall) and have lower annual household incomes (41 percent less than \$50,000, compared with 26 percent of adults overall). Potential Harris persuadables are more apt to be urban residents and people of color.

	All adults	Don't now support but would consider...	
		Harris	Trump
Male	49%	49%	46%
Female	51	51	54
Age 18-29	20	30	30
65+	22	9	9
White people	61	50	64
People of color (net)	39	50	36
Black people	12	12	11
Hispanic people	17	25	14
Urban	35	48	38
Suburban	46	40	47
Rural	19	12	15

	All adults	Don't now support but would consider...	
		Harris	Trump
No college degree	65	70	66
College graduate	35	30	34
Household income:			
Less than \$50,000	26	42	41
\$50,000-\$99,999	28	29	23
\$100,000 or more	45	29	35

In all, among people who don't currently support Harris or Trump, nearly nine in 10 say they wouldn't even consider doing so. That leaves the campaigns with two tasks – one, to maximize turnout by their current supporters. And two, to fish in the small and challenging pool of persuadables.

See more on the latest ABC News/Washington Post/Ipsos poll [here](#).