Reuters/Ipsos/UVA Center for Politics State Poll: Tennessee
Reuters/Ipsos poll conducted in conjunction with the University of Virginia Center for Politics
10.17.2018

These are findings from an Ipsos poll conducted October 4 – 11, 2018 on behalf of Thomson Reuters and the University of Virginia Center for Politics. For the survey, a sample of 2,000 adults from Tennessee, including 1,108 likely voters, 386 likely voter Democrats, 608 likely voter Republicans, and 73 likely voter Independents ages 18+ were interviewed online in English.

1. In your opinion, what is the most important problem facing the US today? (Select from below or write in).

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Economy generally	9%	9%	13%	8%	10%
Unemployment / lack of jobs	5%	3%	3%	1%	5%
War / foreign conflicts	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%
Immigration	11%	13%	3%	22%	5%
Terrorism / terrorist attacks	9%	10%	6%	14%	7%
Healthcare	23%	26%	34%	18%	38%
Energy issues	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Morality	12%	13%	8%	18%	9%
Education	4%	3%	4%	2%	3%
Crime	9%	7%	7%	8%	2%
Environment	4%	3%	6%	1%	6%
Other	8%	8%	11%	6%	10%
Don't know	4%	2%	3%	1%	3%

2. In November 2018, the next midterm congressional election will be held. Using a 1-to-10 scale, where 10 means you are completely certain you will vote and 1 means you are completely certain you will NOT vote, how likely are you to vote in the upcoming midterm congressional election? (Select one)

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
1	14%	2%	1%	2%	0%
2	3%	0%	1%	0%	0%
3	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%
4	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%
5	9%	3%	3%	2%	4%
6	4%	2%	2%	1%	2%
7	5%	3%	3%	2%	7%
8	6%	6%	5%	5%	4%
9	7%	8%	7%	9%	11%
10	49%	76%	78%	77%	70%

3. How much interest do you have in following news about the upcoming midterm congressional election? (Select one)

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
A great deal	26%	41%	47%	38%	33%
Quite a bit	27%	35%	35%	37%	33%
Only some	21%	17%	13%	19%	26%
Very little	12%	5%	5%	4%	5%
No interest at all	11%	2%	1%	2%	2%
Don't know / Refused	3%	0%	0%	0%	1%

4. Generally speaking, would you say things in this country are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Right direction	39%	46%	14%	75%	27%
Wrong track	47%	47%	82%	20%	63%
Don't know	14%	6%	4%	6%	11%

5. Generally speaking, would you say things in your state are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Right direction	44%	54%	29%	75%	40%
Wrong track	37%	36%	61%	18%	48%
Don't know	18%	10%	10%	8%	12%

6. Thinking about the elections in 2018, if the election for U.S. Congress were held today, would you vote for the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate in your district where you live?

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Democratic candidate	36%	42%	94%	4%	47%
Republican candidate	40%	50%	3%	91%	25%
Candidate from another political party	4%	2%	1%	1%	17%
Will not/do not plan to vote	9%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Don't know / Refused	11%	5%	2%	4%	10%

7.   If the election for U.S. Senate were held today and the candidates were Phil Bredesen and Marsha Blackburn, for whom would you vote?

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Phil Bredesen (Democrat)	38%	44%	92%	7%	59%
Marsha Blackburn (Republican)	37%	47%	3%	86%	21%
Other	4%	3%	3%	1%	11%
Wouldn't vote	10%	1%	1%	0%	3%
Don't know / Refused	12%	6%	2%	6%	6%

8.   [Asked to respondents who chose 'wouldn't vote, other, or don't know/refused] If you had to choose do you lean more towards Phil Bredesen or Marsha Blackburn?

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Phil Bredesen (Democrat)	38%	44%	92%	7%	59%
Lean Phil Bredesen (Democrat)	3%	2%	2%	1%	4%
Lean Marsha Blackburn (Republican)	2%	2%	1%	3%	0%
Marsha Blackburn (Republican)	37%	47%	3%	86%	21%
Other/none	20%	6%	3%	3%	16%

9. Overall, do you approve or disapprove about the way Donald Trump is handling his job as President?

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Strongly approve	28%	32%	5%	55%	19%
Somewhat approve	17%	19%	4%	31%	12%
Lean towards approve	3%	2%	1%	2%	3%
Lean towards disapprove	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%
Somewhat disapprove	13%	12%	18%	9%	8%
Strongly disapprove	31%	33%	71%	3%	52%
Not sure	6%	1%	0%	0%	5%

10. From the list of candidates below, please indicate whether they are a traditional politician or a non-traditional politician?
    a. Phil Bredesen

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Traditional politician	51%	62%	58%	68%	48%
Non-traditional politician	23%	25%	35%	17%	32%
Don't know	26%	14%	8%	15%	20%

    b. Marsha Blackburn

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Traditional politician	54%	67%	67%	68%	70%
Non-traditional politician	20%	19%	20%	18%	15%
Don't know	27%	15%	13%	14%	15%

11. In your opinion, which candidate for Senate is better on each of the following issues?

    a. Unemployment, jobs

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Phil Bredesen (Democrat)	33%	40%	78%	12%	50%
Marsha Blackburn (Republican)	31%	40%	7%	69%	13%
Neither	11%	8%	6%	8%	18%
Don't know	24%	12%	9%	11%	19%

    b. Healthcare generally

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Phil Bredesen (Democrat)	34%	40%	81%	10%	49%
Marsha Blackburn (Republican)	30%	38%	4%	68%	12%
Neither	13%	10%	7%	9%	26%
Don't know	24%	12%	8%	13%	12%

    c. The environment

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Phil Bredesen (Democrat)	33%	40%	74%	15%	46%
Marsha Blackburn (Republican)	24%	30%	6%	51%	11%
Neither	13%	11%	6%	12%	29%
Don't know	29%	19%	14%	22%	15%

    d. Immigration

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Phil Bredesen (Democrat)	30%	34%	72%	8%	38%
Marsha Blackburn (Republican)	36%	46%	9%	78%	21%
Neither	11%	8%	8%	5%	27%
Don't know	23%	12%	12%	10%	14%

e.   Social issues like abortion and same-sex marriage

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Phil Bredesen (Democrat)	29%	34%	67%	10%	42%
Marsha Blackburn (Republican)	29%	37%	5%	65%	14%
Neither	13%	11%	11%	8%	23%
Don't know	29%	19%	17%	18%	21%

f.   The Supreme Court

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Phil Bredesen (Democrat)	29%	32%	66%	7%	37%
Marsha Blackburn (Republican)	32%	41%	5%	72%	21%
Neither	14%	13%	17%	8%	27%
Don't know	26%	14%	12%	13%	16%

12.   As you may know, President Trump nominated Judge Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court. Do you support or oppose Brett's Kavanaugh nomination?

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Support	42%	51%	10%	85%	33%
Oppose	36%	39%	81%	6%	54%
Don't know	22%	11%	10%	9%	13%

13.   As you may know, Brett Kavanaugh has been accused of sexual misconduct. Do you believe these allegations?

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Yes	32%	35%	71%	8%	42%
No	39%	48%	9%	81%	29%
Don't know	28%	18%	21%	12%	30%

14. Please indicate how much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: In general, when the U.S. charges taxes or fees on imported goods, it is good for me personally

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Strongly agree	10%	11%	7%	13%	17%
Somewhat agree	28%	30%	16%	42%	21%
Somewhat disagree	26%	28%	39%	21%	29%
Strongly disagree	14%	14%	25%	5%	20%
Don't know	23%	17%	13%	19%	14%

15. Overall, do you approve or disapprove about the way your Congressperson is handling their job as a Representative?

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Strongly agree	10%	14%	9%	19%	11%
Somewhat agree	34%	41%	29%	52%	37%
Somewhat disagree	22%	23%	29%	18%	34%
Strongly disagree	12%	14%	24%	6%	16%
Don't know	22%	8%	10%	5%	4%

16. Overall, do you approve or disapprove about the way the Congress as a whole is handling its job?

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Strongly approve	6%	5%	6%	4%	4%
Somewhat approve	23%	25%	14%	35%	14%
Somewhat disapprove	29%	32%	31%	34%	35%
Strongly disapprove	27%	34%	47%	23%	46%
Don't know	15%	4%	2%	3%	1%

17. What is the most important issue in determining your vote?

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Unemployment, jobs	5%	4%	7%	2%	4%
Deficit/budget	2%	3%	3%	3%	2%
Taxes	3%	3%	4%	2%	1%
Economy in general	12%	12%	9%	15%	9%
Healthcare generally	16%	17%	21%	14%	24%
Medicare/Medicaid	7%	7%	10%	3%	8%
The environment	3%	2%	4%	1%	6%
Energy, gas prices	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Social Security	8%	9%	9%	8%	11%
Education	4%	3%	4%	2%	0%
Crime, law & order	7%	7%	7%	6%	3%
Immigration	9%	13%	2%	22%	7%
International issues/conflicts abroad	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%
Social issues like abortion and same-sex marriage	5%	5%	3%	7%	5%
Gun laws	4%	2%	1%	3%	2%
The Supreme Court	3%	4%	3%	5%	5%
Other (specify)	9%	8%	10%	5%	12%

18. How motivated are you to vote for the following in the November midterm election?
   a. To vote for a candidate who agrees with me on major issues

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Very motivated	57%	68%	70%	69%	66%
Somewhat motivated	27%	27%	24%	28%	26%
Not very motivated	6%	2%	3%	2%	4%
Not at all motivated	11%	3%	3%	2%	4%

b. To vote for a candidate who will support President Trump

	All Adults	All Likely Voters	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Very motivated	30%	38%	10%	64%	17%
Somewhat motivated	17%	17%	5%	25%	22%
Not very motivated	14%	11%	16%	6%	12%
Not at all motivated	39%	34%	69%	6%	49%

c. To vote for a candidate who will oppose President Trump

	All Adults	All Likely Voter	Likely Voters: Democrat	Likely Voters: Republican	Likely Voters: Independent
Very motivated	25%	29%	60%	6%	39%
Somewhat motivated	18%	15%	25%	7%	20%
Not very motivated	15%	12%	10%	13%	18%
Not at all motivated	42%	44%	5%	75%	23%

Methodology

These are findings from an Ipsos poll conducted October 4 – 11, 2018 on behalf of Thomson Reuters and the University of Virginia Center for Politics. For the survey, a sample of 2,000 adults from Tennessee, including 1,108 likely voters, 386 likely voter Democrats, 608 likely voter Republicans, and 73 likely voter Independents ages 18+ were interviewed online.

The sample for this study was randomly drawn from Ipsos's online panel (see link below for more info on "Access Panels and Recruitment"), partner online panel sources, and "river" sampling (see link below for more info on the Ipsos "Ampario Overview" sample method) and does not rely on a population frame in the traditional sense. Ipsos uses fixed sample targets, unique to each study, in drawing sample. After a sample has been obtained from the Ipsos panel, Ipsos calibrates respondent characteristics to be representative of the U.S. Population using standard procedures such as raking-ratio adjustments. The source of these population targets is U.S. Census 2016 American Community Survey data. The sample drawn for this study reflects fixed sample targets on demographics. Post-hoc weights were made to the population characteristics on gender, age, race/ethnicity, region, and education.

Statistical margins of error are not applicable to online non-probability polls. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error and measurement error. Where figures do not sum to 100, this is due to the effects of rounding. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 2.5 percentage points for all respondents. Ipsos calculates a design effect (DEFF) for each study based on the variation of the weights, following the formula of Kish (1965). This study had a credibility interval adjusted for design effect of the following (n=2,000, DEFF=1.5, adjusted Confidence Interval=4.0).

The poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 3.4 percentage points for likely voters, plus or minus 5.7 percentage points for likely voters Democrats, plus or minus 4.5 percentage points for likely voters Republicans and plus or minus 13.1 percentage points for likely voters Independents.

For more information about conducting research intended for public release or Ipsos' online polling methodology, please visit our Public Opinion Polling and Communication page where you can download our brochure, see our public release protocol, or contact us.

How to Calculate Bayesian Credibility Intervals

The calculation of credibility intervals assumes that Y has a binomial distribution conditioned on the parameter θ\, i.e., Y|θ~Bin(n,θ), where n is the size of our sample. In this setting, Y counts the number of "yes", or "1", observed in the sample, so that the sample mean ($\bar{y}$) is a natural estimate of the true population proportion θ. This model is often called the likelihood function, and it is a standard concept in both the Bayesian and the Classical framework. The Bayesian [1] statistics combines both the prior distribution and the likelihood function to create a posterior distribution. The posterior distribution represents our opinion about which are the plausible values for θ adjusted after observing the sample data. In reality, the posterior distribution is one's knowledge base updated using the latest survey information. For the prior and likelihood functions specified here, the posterior distribution is also a beta distribution (π(θ/y)~β(y+a,n-y+b)), but with updated hyper-parameters.

Our credibility interval for ϑ is based on this posterior distribution. As mentioned above, these intervals represent our belief about which are the most plausible values for ϑ given our updated knowledge base. There are different ways to calculate these intervals based on π(θ/y). Since we want only one measure of precision for all variables in the survey, analogous to what is done within the Classical framework, we will compute the largest possible credibility interval for any observed sample. The worst case occurs when we assume that *a*=1 and *b*=1 and y=*n/2*. Using a simple approximation of the posterior by the normal distribution, the 95% credibility interval is given by, approximately:

$$\bar{y} \mp \frac{1}{\sqrt{n}}$$

For this poll, the Bayesian Credibility Interval was adjusted using standard weighting design effect 1+L=1.3 to account for complex weighting[2]

Examples of credibility intervals for different base sizes are below. Ipsos does not publish data for base sizes (sample sizes) below 100.

Sample size	Credibility intervals
2,000	2.5
1,500	2.9
1,000	3.5
750	4.1
500	5.0
350	6.0
200	7.9
100	11.2