Ipsos Public Affairs

1146 19th St., NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 463-7300

Interview dates: August 24-27, 2012
Base: 857 registered voters (RV)
Base: 433 RV Democrats, 369 RV Republicans, 128 RV Independents
Base: 749 Likely Voters (LV)

Ipsos Poll conducted for Reuters
REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION DAY 1 (8.27.12)

These are findings from an Ipsos poll conducted for Thomson Reuters from August 24-27, 2012. For the survey, a sample of 857 American registered voters was interviewed online. The precision of the Reuters/Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll has a credibility interval of plus or minus 3.8 percentage points for all respondents. For more information about credibility intervals, please see the appendix.

The data were weighted to the U.S. current population data by gender, age, education, and ethnicity. Statistical margins of error are not applicable to online polls. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error and measurement error. Figures marked by an asterisk (*) indicate a percentage value of greater than zero but less than one half of a per cent. Where figures do not sum to 100, this is due to the effects of rounding.

POLITICAL AND ISSUES QUESTIONS

Q1. Generally speaking, would you say things in this country are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)
Right direction	24%	41%	8%	12%
Wrong track	64%	43%	87%	76%
Don't know	12%	16%	6%	12%

Q2. Generally speaking, would you say the following things are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?

		All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)
The national economy	Right direction	16%	27%	6%	9%
	Wrong track	75%	61%	92%	80%
	Don't know	8%	12%	3%	11%
Employment and jobs	Right direction	19%	30%	7%	16%
	Wrong track	75%	62%	91%	77%
	Don't know	6%	9%	3%	7%
Healthcare system	Right direction	31%	51%	11%	22%
	Wrong track	61%	39%	85%	66%
	Don't know	9%	10%	5%	12%
Immigration policy	Right direction	23%	34%	13%	15%
	Wrong track	56%	39%	75%	67%
	Don't know	21%	27%	12%	18%
National deficit	Right direction	11%	20%	3%	3%
	Wrong track	75%	60%	91%	87%
	Don't know	14%	20%	5%	10%
Education system	Right direction	24%	33%	16%	19%
	Wrong track	64%	53%	76%	68%
	Don't know	12%	14%	8%	12%

		All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)
National politics	Right direction	14%	21%	7%	6%
	Wrong track	70%	61%	81%	78%
	Don't know	17%	18%	12%	15%
American foreign policy	Right direction	27%	39%	14%	29%
	Wrong track	50%	33%	68%	59%
	Don't know	23%	28%	18%	13%
Fuel and gas prices	Right direction	10%	17%	4%	4%
	Wrong track	83%	75%	91%	92%
	Don't know	7%	8%	5%	4%
Your cost of living	Right direction	13%	18%	7%	13%
	Wrong track	79%	73%	88%	75%
	Don't know	8%	9%	5%	11%

Q3. If the 2012 Presidential Election were being held today and the candidates were [ROTATE] Barack Obama for president and Joe Biden for vice president, the Democrats, and [INSERT CANDIDATE BELOW AND ROTATE LIST] Mitt Romney for president and Paul Ryan for vice president, the Republicans [END ROTATE], for whom would you vote?

	All LIKELY Voters (LV)	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)
Barack Obama for president and Joe Biden for vice president, the Democrats	46%	45%	76%	9%	39%
Mitt Romney for president and Paul Ryan for vice president, the Republicans	42%	39%	11%	82%	23%
Wouldn't vote	2%	2%	1%	3%	1%
None / Other	3%	6%	4%	2%	18%
Don't know / Refused	7%	9%	8%	4%	19%

Q4. In your opinion, which candidate for President has a better plan, policy or approach to each of the following?

a.   Healthcare

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)
Barack Obama, Democrat	41%	68%	10%	45%
Mitt Romney, Republican	32%	9%	67%	24%
None	13%	10%	12%	16%
Don't know	13%	12%	11%	14%

b.   Medicare

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)
Barack Obama, Democrat	38%	64%	7%	36%
Mitt Romney, Republican	29%	8%	62%	20%
None	16%	12%	15%	28%
Don't know	17%	16%	16%	16%

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Q5. When you think about abortion, which of the following is closest to your personal opinion?

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)
Abortion should be illegal in all cases	14%	9%	19%	14%
Abortion should be illegal in most cases	27%	17%	45%	19%
Abortion should be legal in most cases	24%	27%	19%	29%
Abortion should be legal in all cases	26%	39%	12%	28%
Unsure	8%	9%	6%	10%

Q6. As you may know, the US federal budget has a significant deficit. Here are the main expenses for the government. In your view, which of the following areas can we afford to cut back on? (Select all that apply)

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)
Social Security	9%	7%	12%	10%
Medicare	9%	7%	15%	7%
Defense & the Military	40%	52%	26%	48%
Education	13%	5%	25%	14%
Alternative energy development	29%	15%	46%	30%
Law enforcement	10%	13%	7%	9%
Other	31%	23%	39%	37%
None	17%	19%	13%	17%

Q7. Would you say you are generally favorable or unfavorable towards these public figures?

a.   President Barack Obama

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)
Very favorable	24%	46%	4%	5%
Somewhat favorable	16%	21%	6%	26%
Lean towards favorable	14%	15%	9%	21%
Lean towards unfavorable	15%	7%	19%	24%
Somewhat unfavorable	6%	4%	10%	5%
Very unfavorable	25%	6%	53%	19%
Total favorable	54%	82%	19%	52%
Total unfavorable	46%	17%	82%	48%

b.   Vice President Joe Biden

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)
Very favorable	12%	24%	2%	3%
Somewhat favorable	16%	26%	5%	18%
Lean towards favorable	21%	27%	15%	19%
Lean towards unfavorable	19%	13%	21%	25%
Somewhat unfavorable	12%	7%	19%	9%
Very unfavorable	20%	4%	38%	25%
Total favorable	49%	77%	22%	40%
Total unfavorable	51%	24%	78%	59%

c. Republican Presidential Candidate Mitt Romney

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)
Very favorable	17%	2%	39%	10%
Somewhat favorable	15%	7%	27%	8%
Lean towards favorable	16%	14%	18%	16%
Lean towards unfavorable	16%	20%	8%	18%
Somewhat unfavorable	14%	20%	5%	17%
Very unfavorable	23%	36%	3%	31%
Total favorable	48%	23%	84%	34%
Total unfavorable	53%	76%	16%	66%

d. Republican Vice Presidential Candidate Paul Ryan

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)
Very favorable	16%	2%	36%	9%
Somewhat favorable	11%	5%	23%	6%
Lean towards favorable	21%	17%	26%	22%
Lean towards unfavorable	18%	22%	9%	22%
Somewhat unfavorable	10%	16%	4%	8%
Very unfavorable	24%	38%	2%	32%
Total favorable	48%	24%	85%	37%
Total unfavorable	52%	76%	15%	62%

CONVENTION QUESTIONS

Q8. In your opinion, which candidate for President is stronger on each of the following?

		All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)
Eloquent	Barack Obama, Democrat	51%	72%	29%	43%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	21%	6%	44%	14%
	Neither	14%	11%	11%	27%
	Don't know	15%	11%	15%	16%
Presidential	Barack Obama, Democrat	45%	71%	12%	43%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	36%	13%	72%	26%
	Neither	9%	9%	6%	22%
	Don't know	10%	7%	10%	9%
Understands people like me	Barack Obama, Democrat	39%	66%	9%	33%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	26%	7%	56%	14%
	Neither	22%	17%	25%	33%
	Don't know	13%	11%	10%	20%
Is a good person	Barack Obama, Democrat	47%	75%	16%	42%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	29%	7%	62%	20%
	Neither	8%	6%	6%	19%
	Don't know	16%	13%	16%	19%
Likeable	Barack Obama, Democrat	54%	78%	26%	52%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	26%	7%	56%	17%
	Neither	9%	7%	7%	20%
	Don't know	11%	7%	11%	11%
Tough enough for the job	Barack Obama, Democrat	41%	67%	12%	35%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	36%	12%	72%	28%
	Neither	11%	10%	6%	23%
	Don't know	13%	11%	10%	14%

		All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)
Represents America	Barack Obama, Democrat	43%	69%	13%	41%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	35%	11%	72%	26%
	Neither	12%	10%	8%	25%
	Don't know	10%	10%	8%	8%
Smart enough for the job	Barack Obama, Democrat	44%	72%	10%	46%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	36%	10%	74%	28%
	Neither	9%	7%	6%	19%
	Don't know	12%	11%	11%	8%
Has the right values	Barack Obama, Democrat	43%	74%	7%	40%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	34%	7%	74%	23%
	Neither	11%	9%	8%	23%
	Don't know	12%	10%	10%	15%
Will protect American jobs	Barack Obama, Democrat	36%	64%	5%	33%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	33%	9%	71%	24%
	Neither	16%	14%	11%	30%
	Don't know	14%	13%	12%	14%
A man of faith	Barack Obama, Democrat	28%	48%	8%	20%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	40%	19%	75%	27%
	Neither	13%	12%	7%	28%
	Don't know	18%	21%	10%	24%
Would be fun to meet in person	Barack Obama, Democrat	48%	75%	18%	44%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	21%	6%	43%	14%
	Neither	18%	11%	23%	26%
	Don't know	13%	8%	16%	16%
Can be effective in Washington	Barack Obama, Democrat	36%	62%	8%	24%
	Mitt Romney, Republican	33%	9%	68%	28%
	Neither	16%	16%	12%	28%
	Don't know	14%	13%	11%	20%

TO BE ACTIVATED AUG 28 ONWARDS
Q9. The Republican National Convention is currently under way [AUG 31 ONWARDS: CHANGE TO "was recently held"] in Tampa, Florida. How much, if anything, have you seen or heard or read about the Republican National Convention?

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)
A great deal				
Some				
A little bit				
Nothing at all				

ASK ALL WHO HAVE HEARD AT LEAST A LITTLE BIT
Q10. And what is your evaluation of the Republican National Convention so far?

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)
Excellent				
Good				
Average				
Poor				
Terrible				

TO BE ACTIVATED SEPT 4 ONWARDS

Q11. The Democratic National Convention is currently under way [SEPT 7 ONWARDS: CHANGE TO "was recently held"] in Charlotte, North Carolina. How much, if anything, have you seen or heard or read about the Democratic National Convention?

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)
A great deal				
Some				
A little bit				
Nothing at all				

ASK ALL WHO HAVE HEARD AT LEAST A LITTLE BIT

Q12. And what is your evaluation of the Democratic National Convention so far?

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)
Excellent				
Good				
Average				
Poor				
Terrible				

ASK ALL WHO HAVE HEARD AT LEAST A LITTLE BIT ABOUT EITHER CONVENTION. TO BE ACTIVATED AUG 28 ONWARDS

Q13. And where have you seen or heard or read about the Convention?

	All Registered Voters (RV)	Democrats (RV)	Republicans (RV)	Independents (RV)
Television				
Newspaper				
Social media like Facebook or Twitter				
Radio				
Blogs				
News websites				
Conversations with friends, family, or colleagues				
Other				

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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 (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 $\pi(\theta/y)$. 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]

Analysis Domain	Sample size	Credibility intervals
Registered voters (RV)	857	3.8
RV Democratic	433	5.4
RV Republican	369	5.8
RV Independent	128	9.9

[1] *Bayesian Data Analysis, Second Edition, Andrew Gelman, John B. Carlin, Hal S. Stern, Donald B. Rubin, Chapman & Hall/CRC | ISBN: 158488388X | 2003*

[2] *Kish, L. (1992). Weighting for unequal Pi . Journal of Official, Statistics, 8, 2, 183200.*