



**October 20, 2020**  
**2020 Presidential Election Survey**

**Summary:** Researchers at the University of South Florida conducted a statewide survey of 600 Floridians to measure attitudes and opinions regarding the 2020 Presidential election and the current political climate. The survey included a representative sample of the state's residents, fielded between October 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. Topline results are reported below with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error +/- 4.

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**Floridians See 2020 As a 'Very Important' Election.** Almost 90% of Floridians surveyed say that 2020 will be "Very Important" when "compared to recent Presidential elections". This sentiment is equally shared by both Republicans and Democrats.

**Presidential Election is a Significant Source of Stress and Worry.** Just over 80% agree that they are "worried about the outcome of the 2020 Presidential election, while 56% say that the election "is a considerable source of stress" for them. Republicans and Democrats report roughly equal levels of election-related stress.

**COVID-19 and the Economy Top the List of Important Issues.** More than half of Floridians identified either "Jobs and the Economy" (28%) or the "COVID-19 pandemic" (26%) as the most important factor in their "choice when voting for President". The only other issue identified by more than 10% of respondents was "Healthcare" (16%). Republicans were significantly more likely to identify "Jobs and Economy" as the most important issue (46%), while Democrats were more likely to say the COVID-19 pandemic (35%).

**Election Expected to Have Significant Impacts.** A plurality of respondents (45%) believe that their household finances will be "significantly impacted by the outcome of the Presidential election", while nearly a two-thirds majority (64%) says the same about the COVID-19 pandemic. Democrats are more likely than Republicans to believe that the outcome will affect the COVID-19 pandemic, though majorities in both parties believe that it will (75% and 53% respectively).

**A Large Move Toward Absentee Voting.** A plurality of respondents (43%) indicated that they would vote "by mail-in or absentee ballot", while one-third (34%) said they would vote "in-person on election day." (By way of comparison, according to FL Secretary of State data, in 2016 only 28.7% of general election voters cast ballots by mail.) Others plan on voting "in-person at an early voting location" (23%). Based on the responses, Democrats are significantly more likely to vote by mail/absentee ballot, and Republicans are significantly more likely to vote in-person on Election Day.

**Significant Concerns Over Foreign Interference.** Two-thirds of respondents indicated that they are either "Very Concerned" (27%) or "Somewhat Concerned" (40%) about the possibility of "foreign governments interfering in the 2020 Presidential election".

**Some Small Concerns Over Fairness.** A majority of Floridians are at least "Somewhat Confident" (49%) that "the 2020 election will be conducted fairly", though only 23% indicated that they are "Very Confident" of this, while just under a third (29%) were either "Not Very Confident" or "Not at All Confident".

**Summary of Responses**

*Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements: **I am worried about the outcome of the 2020 Presidential election.***

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	250	41.7
Agree	231	38.5
Neither Agree nor Disagree	80	13.3
Disagree	26	4.3
Strongly Disagree	13	2.2
<i>N=600</i>		

*Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements: **The 2020 Presidential election is a considerable source of stress for me.***

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	124	20.8
Agree	207	34.7
Neither Agree nor Disagree	152	25.5
Disagree	79	13.2
Strongly Disagree	35	5.8
<i>N = 597</i>		



***Compared to recent Presidential elections, how important do you think the 2020 Presidential election will be?***

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Very Important	522	88.8
Somewhat Important	52	8.8
Not Very Important	11	1.9
Not at All Important	3	0.5

*N=588*

***Do you believe that your household finances will be significantly impacted by the outcome of the Presidential election?***

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes	268	44.8
No	148	24.8
Unsure	182	30.4

*N=598*

***Do you believe that the COVID-19 pandemic will be significantly impacted by the outcome of the Presidential election?***

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes	384	64.1
No	125	20.9
Unsure	90	15.0

*N=599*

*How satisfied are you with your choice of candidates in the 2020 Presidential election?*

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Very Satisfied	214	35.7
Satisfied	174	29.0
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	105	17.5
Dissatisfied	63	10.5
Very Dissatisfied	44	7.3
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N=600		

*How are you most likely to vote in the Presidential election?*

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
In person, on election day	180	33.5
In person at an early voting location	124	23.1
By mail-in or absentee ballot	233	43.4
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N=537		



***Which of the following will be the most important factor in your choice when voting for President?***

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Jobs and the Economy	151	28.1
COVID-19 Pandemic	142	26.4
Healthcare	86	16.0
Policing and Racial Tensions	40	7.4
Climate Change/Environment	22	4.1
Immigration	19	3.5
Supreme Court	16	3.0
Education	13	2.4
Crime	11	2.0
Other	38	7.1

*N=538*

***When you consider your vote in the 2020 election, how much does a candidate's party affiliation matter?***

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
A Great Deal	206	38.3
A Lot	112	20.8
A Moderate Amount	126	23.4
A Little	46	8.6
Not at All	48	8.9

*N=538*



***Thinking about our elections, which one of the following outcomes regarding political parties best represents what you would like to see happen in the future?***

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
A continuation of the two-party system of Democrats and Republicans	232	38.3
Elections in which candidates run as individuals without party labels	193	32.3
The growth of one or more parties that could effectively challenge Democrats and Republicans	173	28.9

*N=598*

***How confident are you that the 2020 election will be conducted fairly?***

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Very Confident	137	22.9
Somewhat Confident	293	48.9
Not Very Confident	130	21.7
Not at All Confident	39	6.5

*N=599*

***How concerned are you about foreign governments interfering in the 2020 Presidential election?***

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Very Concerned	162	27.1
Somewhat Concerned	238	39.8
Not Very Concerned	138	23.1
Not at All Concerned	60	10.0

*N=598*

**Partisan Differences**

***Party Affiliation of Registered Voters in Sample***

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Democrats	255	45.8
Independents	105	18.9
Republicans	196	35.2

*N=557*

***Most important factor in your vote BY Party ID.***

*Reported as percentage of column totals*

	<b>Democrats</b>	<b>Independents</b>	<b>Republicans</b>
Jobs and the Economy	16.1	19.1	45.9
COVID-19 Pandemic	34.5	26.7	13.3
Healthcare	16.9	15.2	13.8
Policing and Racial Tensions	12.2	3.8	2.6
Climate Change/Environment	4.7	6.7	1.5
Immigration	1.2	1.9	7.1
Supreme Court	1.2	1.9	5.6
Education	3.1	1.9	1.5
Crime	1.9	0.9	2.6
Other/No Reply	8.2	21.9	6.1

***Do you believe that your household finances will be significantly impacted by the outcome of the Presidential election? BY Party ID.***

*Reported as percentage of column totals*

	<b>Democrats</b>	<b>Independents</b>	<b>Republicans</b>
Yes	43.7	36.2	54.4
No	26.0	17.1	28.2
Unsure	30.3	46.7	17.4

***Do you believe that the COVID-19 pandemic will be significantly impacted by the outcome of the Presidential election? BY Party ID.***

*Reported as percentage of column totals*

	<b>Democrats</b>	<b>Independents</b>	<b>Republicans</b>
Yes	74.8	65.7	53.1
No	11.4	16.2	33.7
Unsure	13.8	18.1	13.3

***How are you most likely to vote in the Presidential election BY Party ID.***

*Reported as percentage of column totals*

	<b>Democrats</b>	<b>Independents</b>	<b>Republicans</b>
In person, on election day	25.3	25.5	47.9
In person, at an early voting location	22.9	25.5	22.2
By mail-in or absentee ballot	51.8	49.0	29.9

***How confident are you that the 2020 election will be conducted fairly BY Party ID.***

*Reported as percentage of column totals*

	<b>Democrats</b>	<b>Independents</b>	<b>Republicans</b>
Very Confident	20.3	13.3	32.8
Somewhat Confident	56.1	50.5	40.0
Not Very Confident	16.5	30.5	22.1
Not at All Confident	7.1	5.7	5.1

***How concerned are you about foreign interference in the 2020 election BY Party ID.***

*Reported as percentage of column totals*

	<b>Democrats</b>	<b>Independents</b>	<b>Republicans</b>
Very Concerned	34.5	26.0	20.0
Somewhat Concerned	46.3	36.5	32.3
Not Very Concerned	14.9	30.8	29.2
Not at All Concerned	4.3	6.7	18.5



**Survey Information**

For this survey, 600 residents of Florida were surveyed via an online web-panel using Prodege MR, an industry leading market research provider. The survey was fielded from October 10<sup>th</sup> through October 17<sup>th</sup>, and the results are reported with a 95% confidence level and a margin of error of +/-4.

Survey respondents were selected via a stratified, quota sampling approach in order to ensure a representative sample of Florida’s population. Quotas for gender, age, race, and ethnicity were calculated based on population estimates provided by the Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) and the U.S. Census Bureau. Table A1 below summarizes the USF survey sample in comparison to BEBR’s 2019 population estimates.

**Table A1  
Sample Comparison**

	<b>USF Survey Sample</b>	<b>2019 BEBR Estimates</b>
<i>Gender</i>		
Female	51%	51%
Male	49%	49%
<i>Age</i>		
18-24	10%	11%
25-54	47%	47%
55-64	18%	17%
65+	25%	25%
<i>Race</i>		
Black/African American	17%	17%
White/Caucasian	75%	77%
Other	8%	6%
<i>Ethnicity</i>		
Hispanic	27%	26%
Non-Hispanic	73%	74%

The sample was also stratified by region of the state to ensure geographical representativeness: [Northwest Florida/Panhandle-8%; Northeast Florida-12%; Central Florida-24%; West Coast-22%; Southeast Florida-34%].

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### **About our Research Team**

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**Elizabeth Strom** is Associate Professor in the School of Public Affairs at the University of South Florida. She holds a PhD in Political Science from the City University of New York (1996), a Masters in City Planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1985), and a BA from Swarthmore College (1980). Dr. Strom has published on urban politics and development and affordable housing issues in such journals as the *Urban Affairs Review*, *Journal of Urban Affairs*, and *Housing Policy Debates*. She is also interested in the role of arts and tourism in urban development and more generally in local and state level policy and politics. She serves as co-leader of the Florida Chapter of the Scholars Strategy Network. Dr. Strom can be contacted by email at [estrom@usf.edu](mailto:estrom@usf.edu)