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Misinformation and the 2010 Election A Study of the US Electorate

Dates of Survey: November 6-15, 2010
Sample Size: 848

Margin of Error: +/- 3.4%

Q1. Did you get a chance to vote in the recent election held on November 2 or were you unable to vote?

Did get a chance to vote.....	64%
Were unable to vote	36
Don't know/Refused	*

[ASKED ONLY OF THOSE WHO SAID “DID GET A CHANCE TO VOTE” IN Q1]

Q2a. For the race for the seat for the US House of Representatives, please select whether you

Voted for the Republican.....	31%*
Voted for the Democrat	28
Voted for the candidate of another party	3
Don't know/Refused	1

[ASKED ONLY OF THOSE WHO SAID “WERE UNABLE TO VOTE” OR “DON'T KNOW/REFUSED” IN Q1]

Q2b. Thinking about the race for the seat for the US House of Representatives, please select whether you preferred:

The Republican Candidate.....	11%†
The Democratic Candidate	15
Another candidate	8
Don't know/Refused	3

* Percent of total

† Percent of total

[ASKED ONLY OF THOSE WHO SAID “DID GET A CHANCE TO VOTE” IN Q1]

Q3a. If there was a US Senate election in your state, please select whether you voted for:

The Republican candidate.....	27%*
The Democrat candidate	25
The candidate of another party	4
There was no Senate election in my state	6
Don't know/Refused	2

[ASKED ONLY OF THOSE WHO SAID “WERE UNABLE TO VOTE” OR “DON'T KNOW/REFUSED” IN Q1]

Q3b. If there was a US Senate election in your state, please select whether you preferred:

The Republican candidate.....	10%
The Democratic candidate	14
Another candidate	7
There was no Senate election in my state	3
Don't know/Refused	3

Q4. Thinking back to the 2008 election for your member of Congress in the US House of Representatives, please select whether you:

Voted for the Republican.....	33%
Voted for the Democrat	37
Voted for the candidate of another party	2
Did not find time to vote.....	24
Don't know/Refused	3

[ASKED ONLY OF THOSE WHO DID NOT SAY “DID NOT FIND TIME TO VOTE” IN Q4]

Q5. Thinking back to the 2008 election for President please select whether you:

Voted for Barack Obama	38%†
Voted for John McCain.....	34
Voted for some other candidate	3
Don't know/Refused	2

* Percent of total

† Percent of total

Q7.

[PRESENTED ONLY TO THOSE WHO SAID “DID GET A CHANCE TO VOTE” IN Q1]

STATEMENT: Here are some things that some people say they thought about in deciding how to vote in the recent Congressional elections. Please select how important each of these things were for you in deciding how to vote. Please answer on a scale of 0 to 10 with zero meaning you thought it was not important at all and 10 meaning you thought it was extremely important.

[PRESENTED ONLY TO THOSE WHO SAID “WERE UNABLE TO VOTE” OR “DON’T KNOW/REFUSED” IN Q1]

STATEMENT: Here are some things that some people say they have been thinking about in assessing Congressional candidates these days. Please select how important each of these things are for you. Please answer on a scale of 0 to 10 with zero meaning you think it is not important at all and 10 meaning you think it is extremely important.

Q7a. The government bailout of banks and financial institutions, also known as TARP

Mean	6.8
Voted.....	7.0
Voted Republican.....	7.8
Voted Democratic	6.3
 Median	 7.0
Voted.....	7.2
Voted Republican.....	8.0
Voted Democratic	6.0

Q7b. The package of Congressional legislation designed to stimulate the economy, also known as the stimulus bill.

Mean	7.1
Voted.....	7.4
Voted Republican.....	8.0
Voted Democratic	7.0
 Median	 8.0
Voted.....	8.0
Voted Republican.....	8.0
Voted Democratic	7.0

Q7c. The bailout program for Chrysler and General Motors

Mean	5.9
Voted.....	6.1
Voted Republican.....	7.0
Voted Democratic	5.3
Median	6.0
Voted.....	7.0
Voted Republican.....	8.0
Voted Democratic	5.0

Q7d. The healthcare reform act passed by Congress

Mean	7.6
Voted.....	8.0
Voted Republican.....	8.7
Voted Democratic	7.6
Median	8.4
Voted.....	9.0
Voted Republican.....	10.0
Voted Democratic	8.0

Q7e. The proposed cap and trade bill designed to address climate change

Mean	6.0
Voted.....	6.2
Voted Republican.....	6.7
Voted Democratic	5.9
Median	6.0
Voted.....	7.0
Voted Republican.....	7.0
Voted Democratic	6.0

Q7f. The state of the economy

Mean	8.3
Voted.....	8.6
Voted Republican.....	8.9
Voted Democratic	8.3
Median	9.0
Voted.....	8.6
Voted Republican.....	10.0
Voted Democratic	9.0

Q7g. The unemployment rate

Mean	8.0
Voted.....	8.1
Voted Republican.....	8.3
Voted Democratic	8.0
Median	9.0
Voted.....	9.0
Voted Republican.....	9.0
Voted Democratic	9.0

Q7h. The size of the budget deficit

Mean	7.6
Voted.....	7.9
Voted Republican.....	8.9
Voted Democratic	6.8
Median	8.0
Voted.....	8.0
Voted Republican.....	10.0
Voted Democratic	7.0

Q7i. Large bonuses paid to executives by banks that received government bailouts

Mean	6.7
Voted.....	6.8
Voted Republican.....	6.7
Voted Democratic	6.9
 Median	 8.0
Voted.....	8.0
Voted Republican.....	8.0
Voted Democratic	8.0

Q7j. The amount of federal income taxes you pay

Mean	7.1
Voted.....	7.0
Voted Republican.....	7.8
Voted Democratic	6.4
 Median	 8.0
Voted.....	8.0
Voted Republican.....	8.0
Voted Democratic	7.0

Q7k. The possibility that large amounts of foreign money was being used by the US Chamber of Commerce to influence the election

Mean	6.0
Voted.....	5.8
Voted Republican.....	5.4
Voted Democratic	6.2
 Median	 6.0
Voted.....	6.0
Voted Republican.....	6.0
Voted Democratic	6.0

Q7l. The war in Afghanistan

Mean	6.6
Voted.....	6.7
Voted Republican.....	6.6
Voted Democratic	6.9
Median	7.0
Voted.....	7.0
Voted Republican.....	7.0
Voted Democratic	7.0

Q8. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama has been handling the situation in Afghanistan?

Approve.....	48%
Voted.....	50
Voted Republican.....	26
Voted Democratic	77
Disapprove	49
Voted.....	48
Voted Republican.....	72
Voted Democratic	23
Don't know/Refused	3

Q8b. What is your impression of what the Obama administration has done in regard to the number of US troops in Afghanistan?

Increased them	45%
Voted.....	55
Voted Republican.....	60
Voted Democratic	47
Decreased them.....	31
Voted.....	23
Voted Republican.....	21
Voted Democratic	26
Kept them the same.....	23
Voted.....	20
Voted Republican.....	18
Voted Democratic	25
Don't know/Refused	2

Q9. As you know, the American economy had a major downturn starting in the fall of 2008. Do you think that now the American economy is:

Still getting worse	56%
Voted.....	55
Voted Republican.....	72
Voted Democratic	36
Starting to recover.....	44
Voted.....	44
Voted Republican.....	27
Voted Democratic	64
Don't know/Refused	*

Q10. Do you think that the unemployment rate in your state is

Higher than the rate in the country as a whole	41%
Voted.....	44
Voted Republican.....	47
Voted Democratic	38
Lower than the rate in the country as a whole	23
Voted.....	24
Voted Republican.....	25
Voted Democratic	24
About the same as in the country as a whole	36
Voted.....	32
Voted Republican.....	28
Voted Democratic	37
Don't know/Refused	*

Q11. Since January 2009 have your Federal income taxes:

Gone up a lot.....	9%
Voted.....	10
Voted Republican.....	12
Voted Democratic.....	8
Gone up a little.....	30
Voted.....	28
Voted Republican.....	31
Voted Democratic.....	24
Stayed the same.....	48
Voted.....	48
Voted Republican.....	49
Voted Democratic.....	50
Gone down a little.....	8
Voted.....	9
Voted Republican.....	4
Voted Democratic.....	13
Gone down a lot.....	1
Voted.....	1
Voted Republican.....	3
Voted Democratic.....	*
Don't know/Refused.....	4

Q12 will be released separately.

Q13. Is it your impression that the government bailout of banks and financial institutions, also known as TARP, was passed and signed into law under:

President George W. Bush.....	52%
Voted.....	55
Voted Republican.....	57
Voted Democratic.....	53
President Barack Obama.....	44
Voted.....	40
Voted Republican.....	40
Voted Democratic.....	41
Don't know/Refused.....	4

[Randomly present both Q14a and Q14b on the same screen, include statement below]
Statement: When Congress voted on the bailout for banks and financial institutions in 2008, please select how you think the Democrats and Republicans voted.

Q14a. Choose one:

Democrats mostly favored it.....	55%
Voted.....	60
Voted Republican.....	80
Voted Democratic	38
Democrats mostly opposed it.....	10
Voted.....	9
Voted Republican.....	3
Voted Democratic	14
Democrats were divided	28
Voted.....	26
Voted Republican.....	11
Voted Democratic	42
Don't know/Refused	6

Q14b. Choose one:

Republican mostly favored it.....	29%
Voted.....	30
Voted Republican.....	20
Voted Democratic	40
Republicans mostly opposed it	31
Voted.....	33
Voted Republican.....	36
Voted Democratic	29
Republicans were divided.....	32
Voted.....	30
Voted Republican.....	40
Voted Democratic	22
Don't know/Refused	8

Q15. How do you think economists viewed the TARP bank bailout:

More thought it was necessary.....	40%
Voted.....	45
Voted Republican.....	38
Voted Democratic	54
More thought it was not necessary.....	22
Voted.....	20
Voted Republican.....	22
Voted Democratic	17
Views were evenly divided.....	35
Voted.....	32
Voted Republican.....	37
Voted Democratic	26
Don't know/Refused	3

Q16-17 will be released separately.

Q18. As you may know, in 2009, Congress passed a package of legislation to stimulate the economy, also known as the stimulus bill. Do you think this stimulus legislation was a good idea or a bad idea?

Good idea.....	54%
Voted.....	49
Voted Republican.....	18
Voted Democratic	82
Bad idea	44
Voted.....	50
Voted Republican.....	81
Voted Democratic	18
Don't know/Refused	1

Q19. Is it YOUR impression that the stimulus legislation:

Caused job losses	24%
Voted.....	26
Voted Republican.....	38
Voted Democratic	12
Saved or created a few jobs	64
Voted.....	61
Voted Republican.....	57
Voted Democratic	65
Saved or created several million jobs	9
Voted.....	11
Voted Republican.....	2
Voted Democratic	21
Don't know/Refused	3

Q20. Is it YOUR impression that the stimulus legislation

Included some tax cuts.....	45%
Voted.....	43
Voted Republican.....	31
Voted Democratic	53
Did not include any tax cuts.....	52
Voted.....	54
Voted Republican.....	67
Voted Democratic	42
Don't know/Refused	3

Q21. What is your impression of how ECONOMISTS viewed the idea of stimulating the economy in this way?

More thought it was a good idea.....	27%
Voted.....	27
Voted Republican.....	21
Voted Democratic	32
More thought it was a bad idea	27
Voted.....	29
Voted Republican.....	34
Voted Democratic	23
Views were evenly divided.....	44
Voted.....	42
Voted Republican.....	43
Voted Democratic	43
Don't know/Refused	3

Q22. Is it your impression that most ECONOMISTS who have studied it estimate that the stimulus legislation:

Caused job losses	20%
Voted.....	20
Voted Republican.....	30
Voted Democratic	7
Saved or created a few jobs	67
Voted.....	68
Voted Republican.....	63
Voted Democratic	74
Saved or created several million jobs	8
Voted.....	8
Voted Republican.....	3
Voted Democratic	13
Don't know/Refused	6

Q24-Q30 will be released separately.

Q31. Is it your impression that the bailout program for Chrysler and General Motors occurred under:

President George W. Bush.....	20%
Voted.....	16
Voted Republican.....	14
Voted Democratic	16
 President Barack Obama.....	48
Voted.....	53
Voted Republican.....	57
Voted Democratic	52
 Both presidents.....	30
Voted.....	28
Voted Republican.....	28
Voted Democratic	27
 Don't know/Refused	2

Q32. Is it your impression that in the bailout for Chrysler and General Motors:

The money was given to them to keep.....	18%
Voted.....	14
Voted Republican.....	13
Voted Democratic	14
 If they get back on their feet, the government Will get some or all of its money back	81
Voted.....	85
Voted Republican.....	86
Voted Democratic	86
 Don't know/Refused	*

[ASKED ONLY OF THOSE WHO SAID “IF THEY GET BACK ON THEIR FEET, THE GOVERNMENT WILL GET SOME OR ALL OF ITS MONEY BACK” OR “DON’T KNOW REFUSED” IN Q32]

Q32a. Do you think that, in the end, the government will recover:

None of the money	6%*
Voted.....	6
Voted Republican.....	7
Voted Democratic	7
 A little of the money	 33
Voted.....	35
Voted Republican.....	40
Voted Democratic	31
 Most of the money	 31
Voted.....	34
Voted Republican.....	34
Voted Democratic	34
 All of the money	 11
Voted.....	10
Voted Republican.....	5
Voted Democratic	14
 Don’t know/Refused	 1

* Percent of total

Q33. There is a system called “cap and trade” that is meant to reduce the emissions that cause climate change. Just based on what you know, do you favor or oppose the US adopting the cap and trade system?

Favor	53%
Voted.....	48
Voted Republican.....	25
Voted Democratic	69
Oppose	42
Voted.....	47
Voted Republican.....	72
Voted Democratic	24
Don't know/Refused	5

Q34. Do you think that MOST SCIENTISTS believe that:

Climate change is occurring.....	59%
Voted.....	54
Voted Republican.....	37
Voted Democratic	73
Climate change is not occurring	10
Voted.....	12
Voted Republican.....	18
Voted Democratic	5
Views are evenly divided.....	29
Voted.....	33
Voted Republican.....	44
Voted Democratic	21
Don't know/Refused	1

Q34A: As you may know, during the election campaign, some people said that the US Chamber of Commerce was spending large amounts of money it had raised from foreign sources to support Republican candidates and attack Democratic candidates. Is it your impression that:

This was proven to be true	33%
Voted.....	31
Voted Republican.....	9
Voted Democratic	57
This was not proven to be true.....	58
Voted.....	60
Voted Republican.....	81
Voted Democratic	33
Don't know/Refused	9

Q35. As you may know, some people have suggested that President Obama was not born in the United States. Do you think:

Obama was not born in the US	15%
Voted.....	15
Voted Republican.....	26
Voted Democratic	5
Obama was born in the US	55
Voted.....	56
Voted Republican.....	34
Voted Democratic	82
It is not clear whether Obama was born in the US or not	29
Voted.....	27
Voted Republican.....	38
Voted Democratic	12
Don't know/Refused	1

Q36. As you may know, a new health reform bill was signed into law earlier this year. Given what you know about the new health reform law, do you have a generally favorable or generally unfavorable opinion of it?

Generally favorable.....	44%
Voted.....	41
Voted Republican.....	7
Voted Democratic	78
 Generally unfavorable.....	54
Voted.....	56
Voted Republican.....	90
Voted Democratic	17
 Don't know/Refused	3

Q37. What effect do you think the health reform law will have on the federal budget deficit over the next ten years? Do you think it:

Will increase the federal budget deficit	71%
Voted.....	75
Voted Republican.....	90
Voted Democratic	58
 Will not increase the federal budget deficit	26
Voted.....	23
Voted Republican.....	8
Voted Democratic	41
 Don't know/Refused	3

Q38. Is it your impression that among ECONOMISTS who have estimated the effect of the health reform law on the federal budget deficit over the next ten years:

More think it will increase the deficit	49%
Voted.....	53
Voted Republican.....	73
Voted Democratic	31
More think it will not increase the deficit.....	13
Voted.....	13
Voted Republican.....	7
Voted Democratic	21
Views are evenly divided.....	34
Voted.....	29
Voted Republican.....	16
Voted Democratic	42
Don't know/Refused	4

Q39-B143: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as president?

Strongly approve.....	16%
Voted.....	16
Voted Republican.....	4
Voted Democratic	33
Somewhat approve.....	33
Voted.....	29
Voted Republican.....	5
Voted Democratic	51
Somewhat disapprove	18
Voted.....	16
Voted Republican.....	19
Voted Democratic	11
Strongly disapprove	33
Voted.....	38
Voted Republican.....	71
Voted Democratic	5
Don't know/Refused	1

Q40 will be released separately.

Q41. In the election that just took place on November 2nd how often did you encounter information that seemed misleading or false?

Never.....	5%
Voted.....	2
Voted Republican.....	3
Voted Democratic	2
 Rarely.....	6
Voted.....	6
Voted Republican.....	5
Voted Democratic	7
 Sometimes.....	38
Voted.....	35
Voted Republican.....	38
Voted Democratic	33
 Frequently	50
Voted.....	56
Voted Republican.....	53
Voted Democratic	57
 Don't know/Refused	2

[ASKED ONLY OF THOSE WHO SAID “RARELY”, “SOMETIMES”, OR “FREQUENTLY” IN Q41]

Q42: Do you think that the level of misleading or false information was:

Higher than usual	48%*
Voted.....	54
Voted Republican.....	48
Voted Democratic	62
Lower than usual.....	5
Voted.....	3
Voted Republican.....	2
Voted Democratic	6
The same as usual	41
Voted.....	39
Voted Republican.....	47
Voted Democratic	29
Don't know/Refused	*

Q43 will be released separately.

* Percent of total

DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender

Male	48%
Female.....	52

Age

18-29	21%
30-44	27
45-59	28
60+	24

Education

Less than high school.....	12%
High school	31
Some college.....	29
BA+.....	29

Race/Ethnicity

White, Non-Hispanic	69%
Black, Non-Hispanic.....	12
Other, Non-Hispanic	6
Hispanic	12
2+ Races, Non-Hispanic	1

Region (based on state of residence)

Northeast.....	19%
Midwest.....	22
South	37
West	22

D1. Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a:

Republican	28%
Independent.....	21
Democrat.....	31
Other	2
No preference.....	16
Refused/Don't know	1

[ASK ONLY IF INDEPENDENT, OTHER OR NO PREFERENCE ON D1]

D1a. Do you think of yourself as closer to the:

Republican Party	13% *
Democratic Party	11
Neither.....	17
Refused/Don't know	*

D1-D1a. Overall party identification combined

Republican Party/Lean Republican.....	41%
Democratic Party/Lean Democrat.....	42
Independent.....	17
Refused/Don't know	*

D2. How sympathetic are you to the Tea Party movement?

Very sympathetic	20%
Somewhat sympathetic	32
Somewhat unsympathetic	17
Very unsympathetic	24
Refused/Don't know	7

D3. Please select how often you get news and opinion from the following sources.

D3a. Newspapers and news magazines (in print or online)

Almost every day	25%
About 2-3 times a week	14
About once a week.....	16
Rarely	24
Never.....	18
Refused/Don't know	3

* Percent of total

D3b. Public broadcasting (NPR or PBS)

Almost every day	8%
About 2-3 times a week	7
About once a week.....	13
Rarely	26
Never.....	43
Refused/Don't know	4

D3c. Network TV news broadcasts

Almost every day	32%
About 2-3 times a week	18
About once a week.....	12
Rarely	21
Never.....	16
Refused/Don't know	3

D3d. CNN

Almost every day	10%
About 2-3 times a week	11
About once a week.....	14
Rarely	29
Never.....	34
Refused/Don't know	2

D3e. Blogs

Almost every day	2%
About 2-3 times a week	2
About once a week.....	5
Rarely	20
Never.....	68
Refused/Don't know	4

D3f. Fox News

Almost every day	17%
About 2-3 times a week	15
About once a week.....	14
Rarely	23
Never.....	28
Refused/Don't know	2

D3g. MSNBC

Almost every day	7%
About 2-3 times a week	9
About once a week.....	12
Rarely	27
Never.....	41
Refused/Don't know	4