

2012 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Romney is Toughest Republican Foe for Obama in 2012 U.S. Election

The former Massachusetts Governor is connecting well with men and voters over the age of 55.

[NEW YORK – Jan. 19, 2012] - Mitt Romney performs better in electoral scenarios against incumbent U.S. President Barack Obama than the other four men still in the race to become the Republican Party's nominee in 2012, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 1,009 American adults, 49 per cent of decided voters would support Romney in a presidential election against Obama (47%).

President Obama holds a ten-point lead in a contest against Ron Paul (50% to 40%), and an 11-point advantage if the Republican Party nominates Rick Santorum (51% to 40%). The incumbent Democrat is clearly ahead of the two remaining contenders on the GOP side: Newt Gingrich (55% to 38%) and Rick Perry (57% to 34%).

Analysis

Romney is particularly popular among men (53%) and respondents over the age of 55 (56%). However, Obama is still supported by half of women (51%) and respondents aged 18-to-34 (51%). Middle-aged Americans are evenly divided when assessing this match-up.

KEY FINDINGS

- **With Romney, the Republican Party reaches 49% in a match-up against Barack Obama.**
- **Ron Paul and Rick Santorum would get 40% of the vote against the incumbent president**
- **Newt Gingrich (38%) and Rick Perry (34%) are the worst performers against Obama**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From January 17 to January 18, 2012, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 1,009 randomly selected American adults who are Springboard America panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 3.1%. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure a sample representative of the entire adult population of the United States. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

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It is important to note that the proportion of respondents who would back a third party candidate if Romney is the Republican nominee is considerably lower (4%) than with Paul (10%), Perry (9%) or Santorum (also 9%).

Paul's support is consistent across all demographics, with roughly two-in-four decided voters saying they would cast a ballot for him in a contest against Obama. Santorum actually leads Obama in a specific demographic, with a three-point edge among respondents over the age of 55 (48% to 45%).

Gingrich and Perry have serious trouble courting female voters and people aged 18-to-34, two demographics where Obama currently garners the backing of at least three-in-five decided voters.

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About Angus Reid Public Opinion

[Angus Reid Public Opinion](#) is a public affairs practice headed by Dr. Angus Reid: an industry visionary who has spent more than four decades asking questions to figure out what people feel, how they think and who they will vote for. A team of talented and experienced practitioners with a unique and profound understanding of global issues conduct high quality research throughout the world on a daily basis for corporations, governments, academic researchers, and non-profit organizations.

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**For more information, please contact
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Suppose that **Mitt Romney** was already the Republican Party's party nominee in 2012. Who would you vote for in the presidential election?

– Based on 710 respondents who expressed a preference in this scenario.

	All	Gender		Age		
		Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+
Mitt Romney	49%	53%	44%	43%	48%	56%
Barack Obama	47%	43%	51%	52%	47%	41%
A third party candidate	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%	3%

2012 U.S. Presidential Election

Suppose that **Ron Paul** was already the Republican Party's party nominee in 2012. Who would you vote for in the presidential election?

– Based on 662 respondents who expressed a preference in this scenario.

	All	Gender		Age		
		Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+
Barack Obama	50%	47%	53%	53%	49%	48%
Ron Paul	40%	42%	38%	38%	41%	42%
A third party candidate	10%	11%	9%	9%	10%	10%

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Suppose that **Rick Santorum** was already the Republican Party's party nominee in 2012. Who would you vote for in the presidential election?
– Based on 625 respondents who expressed a preference in this scenario.

	All	Gender		Age		
		Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+
Barack Obama	51%	49%	54%	61%	50%	45%
Rick Santorum	40%	45%	35%	33%	40%	48%
A third party candidate	9%	6%	11%	6%	10%	7%

2012 U.S. Presidential Election

Suppose that **Newt Gingrich** was already the Republican Party's party nominee in 2012. Who would you vote for in the presidential election?
– Based on 662 respondents who expressed a preference in this scenario.

	All	Gender		Age		
		Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+
Barack Obama	55%	51%	60%	63%	51%	50%
Newt Gingrich	38%	42%	34%	31%	40%	45%
A third party candidate	7%	7%	6%	6%	9%	5%

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Suppose that **Rick Perry** was already the Republican Party's party nominee in 2012. Who would you vote for in the presidential election?
– Based on 617 respondents who expressed a preference in this scenario.

	All	Gender		Age		
		Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+
Barack Obama	57%	53%	61%	69%	54%	48%
Rick Perry	34%	38%	30%	29%	33%	40%
A third party candidate	9%	9%	9%	2%	13%	12%

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