



Oct. 3, 2016

Clinton's lead in Virginia edges up after debate, 42-35, gaining support among Independents and Millennials

Summary of Key Findings

1. Clinton leads Trump 42-35 percent on the full five-candidate ballot, indicating a very slight 1 point debate bump.
2. Support for Clinton among Millennial voters increased by 7 percentage points, while their support for Trump was unchanged.
3. Independents significantly shifted support to Clinton from Trump and Johnson following the Sept. 27 debate.
4. Only 73 percent of Republicans indicate they plan to vote for Trump, a 5-point drop from the September survey. Clinton gained a point among Democrats, to 88 percent.
5. Among voters in military households, where Trump had a 7-point lead over Clinton in the September survey, Trump and Clinton are now within 1 percent (37-36 percent).

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Analysis

In the first statewide survey of likely Virginia voters since the September 27 presidential debate, Democrat Hillary Clinton has slightly increased her lead over Republican Donald Trump to a 7-point advantage (42-35 percent) according to a new Wason Center survey. The survey was conducted Sept. 27-30 among 892 likely Virginia voters, with an overall margin of error of +/- 3.7 % at the 95% level of confidence.

“Hillary Clinton’s debate performance has improved her position in Virginia slightly,” said Dr. Quentin Kidd, Director of the Wason Center. “Most significant is perhaps her improved support among younger voters, a critical part of the Obama coalition.” Millennial voters moved away from the Libertarian ticket and other third-party candidates and into Clinton’s camp. Among voters ages 18-34 Clinton has increased her support from 34 percent to 42 percent.

Although overall support for Clinton increased 3 points since September, moving from 39 percent to 42 percent, the spread between Trump and Clinton increased by only 1 point because Trump’s support grew from 33 percent to 35 percent. Changes in the overall complexion of the race are modest, but changes within particular demographic groups are significant, although the margin of error for subgroups is higher. “Following what was by most accounts a difficult first debate for Donald Trump, our survey finds significant shifts in support in a key voting group: Independents,” said Dr. Rachel Bitecofer, Assistant Director of the Wason Center. “Although Trump had an 11-point lead among Independents in our September survey, Clinton now leads that group by 6 points.”

Clinton’s striking gain from 21 percent to 34 percent among Independents came partially from Trump, but even more at the expense of Libertarian nominee Gary Johnson. Johnson’s support among Independents dropped 11 points, from 31 percent in September to 20 percent in this survey. The Libertarian lost ground in every demographic segment, and his overall support dropped from 15 percent to 12 percent.

Clinton has also grown her support among males (+4 points), voters surveyed in military households (+4 points), and regionally in Northern Virginia and Hampton Roads. Trump maintains his strength in Southwest Virginia, the only region he leads, and he has very slightly reduced Clinton’s lead in the Richmond-Central Virginia region.

The largest gaps between the candidates other than party identification continue to be gender and education. Clinton has an 18-point advantage over Trump among women. Although Clinton maintains a small lead among college-educated white voters, she trails Trump by 31 points among white voters who do not have a college degree – actually an improvement from the 39-point gap in the pre-debate survey. As with Independents, Clinton’s gains in this group in this survey came mostly from Libertarian Johnson.

The Wason Center will release four additional tracking surveys in Virginia among likely voters leading up to the November 8 election.

Tables

Q4: If the election for president were held TODAY and the candidates were [RANDOMIZE: “Hillary Clinton the Democrat,” “Donald Trump the Republican”, “Gary Johnson the Libertarian”, “Jill Stein the Green”, or “Evan McMullin the Independent”], for whom would you vote?

Overall	10/3	9/26
Clinton	42	39
Trump	35	33
Johnson	12	15
Stein	1	3
McMullin	2	3
Undecided	1	1
None	5	5
Dk/Ref	2	1

By party	10/3			9/26		
	Rep	Dem	Ind	Rep	Dem	Ind
Clinton	8	88	34	3	87	21
Trump	73	2	28	78	1	32
Johnson	10	3	20	9	4	31
Stein		2	2	2	2	4
McMullin	3	1	4	3		5
Undecided		1	1	1		1
Neither	5	3	7	4	5	6
Dk/Ref	1		3		1	

By sex	10/3		9/26	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Clinton	36	46	32	46
Trump	42	28	42	26
Johnson	13	10	15	15
Stein	1	2	4	2
McMullin	2	3	2	3
Undecided	1	1	2	
Neither	3	8	4	7
Dk/Ref	2	2		2

By age	10/3		9/26	
	18-34	35+	18-34	35+
Clinton	42	42	34	41
Trump	24	38	23	37
Johnson	24	7	27	10
Stein	2	1	4	3
McMullin	3	2	4	2
Undecided	1	1		1
Neither	4	6	7	5
Dk/Ref		3		1

By race	10/3		9/26	
	White	Black	White	Black
Clinton	32	74	30	74
Trump	44	7	41	4
Johnson	13	6	17	4
Stein	1	3	4	1
McMullin	3	1	2	4
Undecided	1	1	1	1
Neither	5	5	4	11
Dk/Ref	2	3	1	1

By white, sex	10/3		9/26	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Clinton	28	36	27	34
Trump	50	41	48	34
Johnson	12	8	15	20
Stein	1	1	4	3
McMullin	2	2	2	2
None	1	1	1	
Neither	4	8	3	5
Dk/Ref	2	2		2

By white, college degree	10/3		9/26	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Clinton	39	24	37	18
Trump	37	55	33	57
Johnson	13	7	17	17
Stein	2	1	4	3
McMullin	1	2	2	1
Undecided	1	1	1	
None	5	7	5	2
Dk/Ref	1	3	1	1

By military	10/3		9/26	
	Mil	Non-mil	Mil	Non-mil
Clinton	36	44	32	42
Trump	37	34	39	31
Johnson	13	12	19	13
Stein	1	1	2	3
McMullin	4	2	2	3
Undecided	1		1	1
Neither	7	5	4	6
Dk/Ref	1	2	1	1

By region	10/3				9/26			
	Nova	Rich	HR	S'west	Nova	Rich	HR	S'west
Clinton	50	41	40	31	45	42	38	29
Trump	27	35	34	46	27	31	31	47
Johnson	9	13	15	11	16	12	17	13
Stein	1	2	1	2	3	4	3	3
McMullin	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	4
Undecided	1		1	1	1	2		
Neither	9	3	4	4	5	6	8	3
Dk/Ref		4	2	3	1	1	1	1

Demographic Toplines

EDUC:		RELIG:	
High school or less	16	Protestant	31
Some college	22	Christian (non-specific) (vol)	18
Vocational or technical training	3	Catholic	15
College graduate	34	Jewish	1
Graduate study or more	23	Other	14
Dk/ref (vol)	1	None	18
		Dk/ref (vol)	3
HISPANIC:		IDEOL:	
Yes	4	Strong liberal	5
No	96	Liberal	12
		Moderate, leaning liberal	22
RACE:		Moderate, leaning conservative	19
White	70	Conservative	22
Black or African American	20	Strong Conservative	11
Other	10	Dk/ref (vol)	10
		REGION:	
AGE: (Recorded as exact year of birth)		Northern Virginia	33
18-24	11	Richmond/Central	21
25-34	16	Hampton Roads	24
35-44	16	South/Southwest	22
45-54	21		
55 & older	36		
		INCOME:	
MILITARY HOUSEHOLD:		Under \$25,000	7
Yes	27	\$25-\$49,999	13
No	72	\$50-\$74,999	19
Dk/ref (vol)	1	\$75-\$99,999	16
		\$100,000-\$149,999	15
PARTYID:		Over \$150,000	19
Republican	29	Dk/ref (vol)	11
Democrat	31	SEX: [INTERVIEWER CODE]	
Independent	34	Male	47
No preference (vol)	3	Female	53
Other party (vol)	1		
Dk/ref (vol)	2		
[IF OTHER THAN REP OR DEM ABOVE]			
PARTLEAN:			
Republican	31		
Democratic	34		
Independent	31		
Dk/ref (vol)	4		

How the survey was conducted:

The results of this poll are based on 892 interviews of likely Virginia voters, including 480 on landline and 413 on cell phone, conducted Sept 27-30, 2016. Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding. The margin of error for the whole survey is +/- 3.7 % at the 95% level of confidence. All error margins have been adjusted to account for the survey's design effect, which is 1.2 in this survey. The design effect is a factor representing the survey's deviation from a simple random sample, and takes into account decreases in precision due to sample design and weighting procedures. Sub samples have a higher margin of error. In addition to sampling error, the other potential sources of error include non-response, question wording, and interviewer error. The response rate (AAPOR RRI Standard Definition) for the survey was 18%. Five callbacks were employed in the fielding process. Live calling was conducted by trained interviewers at the Wason Center for Public Policy Survey Research Lab at Christopher Newport University. The data reported here are weighted using an iterative weighting process on sex, age, race and region of residence to reflect as closely as possible the demographic composition of likely 2016 voters in Virginia.