

Supplementary Documentation for the RAND Midterm 2014 Election Panel: Week One, Blog Post One

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Introduction

The RAND Corporation is surveying members of the American Life Panel (ALP) for five weeks leading up to the midterm elections in November 2014. The ALP is a nationally representative sample of more than 5,000 individuals age 18 and over (see www.rand.org/labor/alp.html). These RAND 2014 Midterm Election surveys ask ALP participants a range of questions, including their voting intentions, as well as their beliefs and opinions about a number of important current policy issues. For detailed information about the methodology of the RAND Midterm 2014 Election Panel, please refer to www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR854.html. A series of RAND Blog posts examining the results of each these surveys are posted at www.rand.org/labor/alp/2014-midterm-election-opinion.html.

This document presents the questionnaire items and supplementary descriptive tables relating to the October 9, 2014 RAND Blog post titled “With Midterm Elections Less Than a Month Away, New Survey Data Shows Many Voters Have Made Up Their Minds,” available at <http://www.rand.org/blog/2014/10/with-midterm-elections-less-than-a-month-away-new-survey.html>.

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Survey Questionnaire, Week One

Text in brackets are shown only for relevant states. Political parties and order of house and senate (where applicable) are randomized. Below are all of the questions asked in week one of our survey, not just the ones referenced in the analysis presented in the blog post referenced above.

1. There will be a general election in your state in November, including an election for the member of the US House of Representatives from your district [and the U.S. Senator from your state], plus other state and local offices. [There will also be an additional special Senate election in your state to fill a vacated position.]

What is the percent chance that you will vote for the following offices in the upcoming election?

_____ %

The percent chance can be thought of as the number of chances out of 100. You can use any number between 0 and 100. For example, numbers like 2 and 5 percent may be ‘almost no chance’, 20 percent or so may mean ‘not much chance’, a 45 or 55 percent chance may be a ‘pretty even chance’, 80 percent or so may mean a ‘very good chance’, and 95 or 98 percent chance may be ‘almost certain’.

- House _____ %
- [Senate _____ %]
- [Senate (Special) _____ %]

2. If you do vote in the elections for the U.S. House of Representatives[and U.S. Senate], what is the percent chance that you will vote for the Democratic candidate? And for the Republican? And for someone else? Please provide percent chances in the table below.

	Democrat	Republican	Someone else	Total
House	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %	calculated
[Senate	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %	calculated]
[Senate (Special)	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %	calculated]

3. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?

1. Republican
2. Democrat
3. Independent
4. Other, please specify

4. IF:

3=1

Would you call yourself a strong Republican or a not so strong Republican?

- Strong
- Not so strong

3=2

Would you call yourself a strong Democrat or a not so strong Democrat?

- Strong
- Not so strong

Else

Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or to the Democratic Party?

- Closer to Republican
- Closer to Democratic

ENDIF

5. Thinking about various sources of news available today, what would you say is your main source of news about current events in the U.S. and around the world? If there is a particular source, such as a television or radio station, website, or newspaper, please be specific.

[Open ended]

6. How many cars does your household own?

[Integer response]

7.

IF ANSWER TO 6 IS >0

Do you think of your car as a means of transportation, or as something special—more than just a way to get around?

- Means of transportation
- Something special—more than just a way to get around
- Don't know

IF ANSWER TO 6 IS =0

Do you think of a car as a means of transportation, or as something special—more than just a way to get around?

- Means of transportation
- Something special—more than just a way to get around
- Don't know

8. Some people think that the government in Washington ought to reduce the income differences between the rich and the poor, perhaps by raising taxes of wealthy families or by giving income assistance to the poor. Others think that the government should no concern itself with reducing this income difference between the rich and the poor. Here is a scale from 1 to 7. Think of a score of 1 as meaning that the government ought to reduce the income differences between rich and poor, and a score of 7 meaning that the government should not concern itself with reducing income differences. What score between 1 and 7 comes closest to the way you feel?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7
(Government should reduce differences) (No govt action)

9. The questions in this scale ask you about your feelings and thoughts during THE LAST WEEK. In each case, please indicate your response by selecting the [circle/however we display this] representing HOW OFTEN you felt or thought a certain way.

In the last week, how often have you felt...

	Never	Almost Never	Sometimes	Fairly Often	Very Often
...that you were unable to control the important things in your life?					
...confident about your ability to handle your personal problems?					
...that things were going your way?					
...difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them?					

Survey Results Data

As with all surveys, there is a margin of error associated with each of our results. We report the margin of error as 1.96 times the standard error, which is the margin of error that corresponds to a 95 percent confidence interval. This means that, if the survey were repeated multiple times, and the 95 percent confidence interval was calculated in each case, the true estimate would be within the 95 percent confidence interval in about 95 percent of the repeated surveys. The margin of error is a function of the sample size, with larger sample sizes leading to a smaller margin of error and therefore a more precise estimate. For example, results from our first survey indicate a margin of error of +/- 1.5% for estimates that respondents will vote for a Democrat or Republican in the upcoming House of Representatives election, but +/- 2.2% for the Senate election; the difference in the margin of error for these two results is driven by the fact that approximately half our respondents live in states that will hold a Senate election this year.

House and Senate Elections

House Elections

House, N=2743

		Democrat	Republican	Someone else
Percent of votes=		48.40%	44%	7.60%
Probability of voting for candidate if vote*probability of voting/total share expecting to vote = $Q1*Q2/70.6$		(+/- 1.6%)	(+/- 1.6%)	(+/- 0.7%)
Probability of voting in House election (Q1)	70.60%			
	(+/- 1.4%)			
Probability of voting for candidate if vote (Q2)		48.0%	39.8%	11.0%
		(+/- 1.5%)	(+/- 1.5%)	(+/- 0.8%)
Probability of voting for candidate if vote*probability of voting= (Q1*Q2)		34.3%	31.2%	5.4%
		(+/- 1.4%)	(+/- 1.4%)	(+/- 0.5%)

Note: Margin of error shown in parentheses and are equal to 1.96* the standard error

Senate Elections

Senate (N=1375)

		Democrat	Republican	Someone else
Percent of Votes=		47.8%	46.0%	6.2%
Probability of voting for candidate if vote*probability of voting/ total share expecting to vote = $Q1*Q2/69.6$		(+/- 2.4%)	(+/- 2.4%)	(+/- 0.9%)
Probability of voting in Senate election (Q1)	69.60%			
	(+/- 2.0%)			
Probability of voting for candidate if vote (Q2)		47.0%	42.0%	10.3%
		(+/- 2.2%)	(+/- 2.2%)	(+/- 1.2%)
Probability of voting for candidate if vote*probability of voting= (Q1*Q2)		33.5%	32.2%	4.3%
		(+/- 2.1%)	(+/- 2.1%)	(+/- 0.7%)

Note: Margin of error shown in parentheses and are equal to 1.96* the standard error

The 'Middle'

Compared with 2012 Presidential Election

	Strongly Supported One Party in 2012 Presidential Election	In the Middle in 2012 Presidential Election	Total
Strongly supports one party in 2014 House election	65.80% (+/- 5.6%)	7.90% (+/- 2.8%)	73.70% (+/- 5.4%)
In the middle in the 2014 House election	15.80% (+/- 4.6%)	10.50% (+/- 3.8%)	26.30% (+/- 5.4%)
Total	81.60% (+/- 4.5%)	18.40% (+/- 4.5%)	100.00%

Note: Margin of error shown in parentheses and are equal to 1.96* the standard error

Compared with 2014 Senate Election

	Strongly Supports One Party in 2014 Senate Election	In the Middle in 2014 Senate Election	Total
Strongly supports one party in 2014 House election	72.80% (+/- 5.4%)	0.90% (+/- 0.6%)	73.70% (+/- 5.4%)
In the middle in the 2014 House election	1.50% (+/- 0.7%)	24.80% (+/- 5.4%)	26.30% (+/- 5.4%)
Total	74.30% (+/- 5.4%)	25.70% (+/- 5.4%)	100.00%

Note: Margin of error shown in parentheses and are equal to 1.96* the standard error

Demographics

Characteristics of Likely Voters

Variable	2014 Likely Voters: Weighted by Sampling Weights and Probability of Voting	2012 Likely Voters: Weighted by Stratified Sampling Weights and Probability of Voting
	Mean (Std Dev)	Mean (Std Dev)
Age	49.78 (16.54)	49.43 (16.34)
Male	0.51 (0.5)	0.47 (0.5)
Race/Ethnicity		
Hispanic	0.14 (0.35)	0.13 (0.33)
White, Non-Hispanic	0.75 (0.43)	0.76 (0.43)
Black, Non-Hispanic	0.09 (0.28)	0.08 (0.27)
Other race	0.02 (0.14)	0.03 (0.17)
Work status		
Working	0.59 (0.49)	0.59 (0.49)
Unemployed	0.07 (0.26)	0.08 (0.28)
Retired	0.22 (0.42)	0.22 (0.42)
Out of Labor Force	0.13 (0.33)	0.13 (0.34)
Married	0.64 (0.48)	0.66 (0.47)
Education		
Less than high school	0.05 (0.22)	0.07 (0.25)
High school	0.31 (0.46)	0.30 (0.46)
Some college	0.19 (0.4)	0.20 (0.4)
Associate's degree	0.10 (0.3)	0.10 (0.3)
Bachelor's degree	0.19 (0.39)	0.19 (0.39)
Graduate degree	0.15 (0.36)	0.14 (0.34)
Sample Size	2576	2713

Note: Standard Deviations shown in parentheses.