

THE WISCONSIN SURVEY

Survey Information:

- Survey Sponsors: Wisconsin Public Radio and St. Norbert College
- Survey Methodology: Random statewide telephone survey of Wisconsin residents. The random digit dial method selects for both listed and unlisted phone numbers. Eight attempts were made on each telephone number randomly selected to reach an adult in the household.
- Survey History: the survey has been conducted biannually since 1984.
- Data Collection Time Period: 3/20/02 - 4/7/02
- N = 407
- Error Rate: 4.864% at the 95% confidence level. The margin of error will be larger for subgroups.

Key Findings:

- According to the Wisconsin Public Radio - St. Norbert College Survey Center poll, if the general election were held today, Governor McCallum would be ahead of Democratic or third party contenders in hypothetical election pairings of candidates. However, in the race between McCallum and Doyle, the percentage lead McCallum has over Doyle is within the margin of error of the survey. In other words, there is no statistically significant difference between the two candidates. In the hypothetical pairings of McCallum against the other Democratic Party candidates, McCallum appears to be well ahead.
- Another indicator of sentiment for the candidates is the "favorable" and "unfavorable" ratings. Here, Doyle rates the highest, with 36% of respondents saying they had a favorable impression of him, compared to McCallum's 31%. Similarly, only 18% of respondents said they had an unfavorable opinion of Doyle compared to 35% of respondents saying they had an unfavorable opinion of McCallum.
- So, why is there no significant difference in the polls between McCallum and Doyle when Doyle seems to be more highly esteemed?
 - More people have not heard of Doyle than McCallum and those who have not heard of Doyle are likely to vote for McCallum.
 - Party identification and political ideology also play a role. McCallum seems to be better at

drawing Independents and Moderates than Doyle (50% of Independents said they would vote for McCallum, versus 39% of Independents for Doyle). Similarly, 52% of Moderates said they would vote for McCallum compared to 39% of Moderates for Doyle.

- Doyle also seems to have more people who find him favorable but will vote for McCallum than vice-versa with McCallum (i.e., fewer people who view McCallum as favorable will instead vote for Doyle).
- Finally, those who feel they will be better off next than they are now are more likely to vote for McCallum, whereas those who feel they will be worse off next year are more likely to vote for Doyle. However, far more (54% of respondents) felt they would be better off next year than worse (15%). Pulling it closer though are the 22% of respondents who felt they would be the same financially this year as next. 52% of these respondents said they would vote for Doyle compared to 39% for McCallum (the rest said they would vote for either Thompson or Young).
- If the Democratic Party's primary were held today, of those who said they would vote in the primary, 43% said they would vote for Doyle, 36% for Barrett, 14% for Falk, and 7% for George.
- The lack of a balanced budget was by far the most important problem facing Wisconsin today according to survey respondents. 31% of all respondents said this was the biggest problem. 20% said the biggest problem was taxes, followed by education (11% of respondents), jobs and the economy (8%), government integrity and leadership (5%) and the environment (2%).
- Asking whether people thought they were better or worse off financially this year than last year, many more people in this year's survey said they were they were worse off now compared to responses from the last few years of the surveys (36% this year said they felt they were worse off now compared to 19% in last year's survey). Please bear in mind the survey was conducted this year in spring (near tax time) instead of its usual fall collection time (we asked about the 9/11 aftermath in the fall).
- Similarly, people seem to be fairly skeptical about next year's financial situation. Fewer people said they felt they would be better off next year than this year compared to survey responses in previous years. 54% said they felt they would be better off next year compared to 64% of respondents in last year's survey saying they felt they would be better off in the coming year.
- On questions concerning state budget imbalance solutions, there was overwhelming support (77% of respondents) for local government consolidation, followed by the elimination of sales tax exemptions (54% supported this).
 - Neither of the spending cut items had a majority of support, though more favored cutting other state programs than favored cutting local revenue sharing (45% favored cutting other state programs, while 31% said they favored cutting local revenue sharing).
 - The tax increases were the least popular, with an increase in local sales tax being the least objectionable (18% said they would support this type of increase compared to 13% support for a state income tax increase and 7% support for property tax increases).

Historical Comparisons

"What is the most important problem facing the State of Wisconsin today?"

	10/94	10/95	10/96	10/97	10/98	10/99	10/00	3/02
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Taxes	21	21	14	18	30	29	26	20
Education	5	7	12	11	20	13	14	11
Economy	1	1	5	1	3	5	9	3
Health Care	3	5	2	2	2	4	8	1
Environment	1	2	1	5	2	3	7	2
Welfare Issues	21	14	15	10	6	5	5	3
Farm Issues	1	2	1	2	1	3	4	<1
Jobs/Unemployment	6	4	6	4	2	1	4	4
Crime	26	9	10	11	5	7	3	1
Drugs	1	6	6	4	2	2	1	<1

"Would you say you are financially better off now than you were a year ago, or financially worse of now?"

	10/94	10/95	10/96	10/97	10/98	10/99	10/00	3/02
Better Off	38	36	47	47	45	55	57	35
Same	34	31	26	28	30	23	23	28
Worse Off	28	32	25	25	25	21	19	36
Not Sure	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1

"Do you expect that at this time next year you will be financially better off than now or worse off than now?"

	10/94	10/95	10/96	10/97	10/98	10/99	10/00	3/02
Better Off	50	46	56	54	56	63	64	54
Same	31	21	19	25	21	15	20	22
Worse Off	15	26	15	14	17	20	9	15
Not Sure	5	8	9	7	6	1	7	9

Frequency of Response for All Questions

- Wisconsin voters will elect a Governor in November. I'm going to read you a list of candidates and potential candidates for the Governor's office. Please tell me whether you have heard of the candidates or not. Have you heard of _____?

If respondent has heard of person ask: Please tell me whether you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of them.

	Favorable	Neutral	Unfavorable	Not Heard Of	Not Sure	Refused/NA
1a. Scott McCallum	31%	23%	35%	7%	4%	<1%

1b. Tom Barrett	19%	19%	12%	45%	5%	<1%
1c. Jim Doyle	36%	23%	18%	18%	5%	<1%
1d. Kathleen Falk	14%	17%	9%	57%	3%	<1%
1e. Gary George	8%	15%	18%	55%	3%	<1%
1f. Ed Thompson	12%	17%	31%	35%	4%	<1%
1g. Jim Young	2%	8%	3%	84%	2%	<1%

Frequency of favorable/unfavorable/neutral responses among those who had heard of the candidates (i.e., not heard of, not sure, and refused responses were left out of this calculation).

	Favorable	Neutral	Unfavorable
1a. Scott McCallum n=362	34%	26%	40%
1b. Tom Barrett n=202	38%	39%	23%
1c. Jim Doyle n=309	47%	30%	23%
1d. Kathleen Falk n=160	35%	42%	23%
1e. Gary George n=171	20%	36%	44%
1f. Ed Thompson n=243	19%	29%	51%
1g. Jim Young n=56	14%	61%	25%

2. There will be a primary election in September to determine the Democratic Party's candidate for Governor. If you were to vote in that primary today, which candidate would you be most likely to vote for?

Tom Barrett	17%
Jim Doyle	20%
Kathleen Falk	6%
Gary George	3%
I would no vote in another party's primary	17%

I do not plan to vote in any party's primary	18%
Not Sure	19%
Refused	1%

Recalculated frequencies for candidates for those who would vote in the Democratic Party's primary (i.e., another party primary, no primary, not sure and refused are all coded as system missing)

Tom Barrett	36%
Jim Doyle	43%
Kathleen Falk	14%
Gary George	7%

3. I'm going to read a series of hypothetical pairings of candidates from the different parties running for Governor. Please tell me whom you would vote for in each hypothetical slate if the general election were held today.

a. If the general election were held today and the race was between Scott McCallum (Republican), Jim Doyle (Democrat), Ed Thompson (Libertarian) and Jim Young (Green Party), who would you be most likely to vote for:

Scott McCallum	39%
Jim Doyle	36%
Ed Thompson	6%
Jim Young	4%
Not Sure	12%
Refused	3%

b. If the general election were held today and the race was between Scott McCallum (Republican), Tom Barrett (Democrat), Ed Thompson (Libertarian) and Jim Young (Green Party), who would you be most likely to vote for:

Scott McCallum	36%
Tom Barrett	29%
Ed Thompson	8%
Jim Young	6%
Not Sure	20%
Refused	2%

c. If the general election were held today and the race was between Scott McCallum (Republican), Kathleen Falk (Democrat), Ed Thompson (Libertarian) and Jim Young (Green Party), who would you be most likely to vote for:

Scott McCallum	39%
Kathleen Falk	23%

Ed Thompson	10%
Jim Young	5%
Not Sure	20%
Refused	3%

- d. If the general election were held today and the race was between Scott McCallum (Republican), Gary George (Democrat), Ed Thompson (Libertarian) and Jim Young (Green Party), who would you be most likely to vote for:

Scott McCallum	39%
Gary George	18%
Ed Thompson	9%
Jim Young	8%
Not Sure	23%
Refused	4%

4. What is the most important problem facing the state of Wisconsin today?

Taxes and Government Spending

57%

Budget problems/lack of balanced budget (31% of total responses)

High taxes (20% of total responses)

Income taxes

Business taxes

Property taxes

Government Spending (5% of total responses)

Should not have spending cuts

Don't cut revenue sharing

Government waste/Overspending/Need more cuts

Should cut revenue sharing

Misuse of cigarette tax

Education

11%

Class size

Funding (need more)

Quality

Retention rates

Keep vouchers

Safety

Should cut funding

Jobs and the Economy

8%

Cost of living

Lack of jobs/unemployment

low wages

Economy

Gas prices

Need more farm subsidies

<u>Government Integrity and Leadership</u>	<u>5%</u>
Politicians lack integrity	
Politicians lack leadership	
Political corruption	
Lack of trust/faith in government	
Soft money - campaign finance	
Governor McCallum	
Republicans	
Invasive liberalism/Democrats	
<u>Environment</u>	<u>2%</u>
Water pollution/non-point sources	
Deer (hunting and wasting disease)	
Sport fishing, walleye spearing	
Mining	
Mercury levels	
<u>Health Care</u>	<u>1%</u>
Prescription drug coverage	
Cost of care	
Cost of insurance	
<u>Crime</u>	<u>1%</u>
<u>Miscellaneous (each category below represents less than 1% of total response)</u>	<u>11%</u>
Drugs	
Urban Sprawl	
Transportation and need of more road building	
Justice System	
Too many prisons/judicial system problems	
Police are not doing there jobs	
Justice system biased against fathers in custody hearings	
Elderly and Handicapped	
Housing	
Poverty	
W-2	
Violence	
Domestic Abuse	
Abortion	
Immorality	
Prejudice	
Segregated neighborhoods >> segregated schools	
Minorities in the workplace	
Racist sentiments	
should lock up illegal aliens and deport them	
ethnic population is getting too high	
less focus on the Indians and we should give them less money	
Should have concealed carry gun laws	
Terrorism	
a lot	
better than Illinois	
lack of reality	

some sort of unity

<u>Don't Know, Not Sure</u>	<u>3%</u>
<u>None/Nothing</u>	<u>3%</u>
<u>Refused</u>	<u><1%</u>

5. The State of Wisconsin currently faces a billion-dollar budget deficit. I'm going to read a list of proposed solutions for handling the deficit. For each one, please tell me whether you are in favor or opposed to the particular proposed solution.

	Favor	Oppose	Not Sure	Refused/NA
5a. Cut revenue sharing with local governments	31%	62%	7%	0%
5b. Cut state programs other than revenue sharing	45%	42%	14%	0%
5c. Consolidate and coordinate local government services between neighboring communities to save money	77%	18%	4%	<1%
5d. Eliminate sales tax exemptions for all goods except food, farming and medicines, while at the same time lowering the state sales tax to 3.5% from the current 5%	54%	36%	9%	<1%
5e. Increase state income tax	13%	84%	3%	0%
5f. Increase local sales taxes	18%	79%	2%	0%
5g. Increase local property taxes	7%	91%	2%	0%

Now a few questions about you.

6. Generally speaking do you consider yourself to be a Democrat or Republican?

Democrat	34%
Republican	32%
Independent (volunteered)	27%
Other	4%
Not Sure	3%
Refused / NA	<1%

7. In terms of your views on issues, would you say that you are conservative, somewhat conservative, somewhat liberal, or very liberal?

Very conservative	11%
Somewhat conservative	52%
Moderate (volunteered)	8%
Somewhat liberal	23%
Very liberal	5%
Not Sure	2%
Refused / NA	0%

8. Would you say that you are financially better off now than a year ago or financially worse off now?

Better off now	35%
Worse off now	36%
Same (volunteered)	28%
Not Sure	1%
Refused / NA	<1%

9. Do you expect that at this time NEXT year you will be financially better off than now, or worse off than now?

Better off than now	34%
Worse off than now	15%
Same (volunteered)	22%
Not Sure	9%
Refused / NA	0%

10. Which of the following best describes your religious preference?

Protestant	37%
Catholic	38%
Jewish	1%
Muslim	0%
Other	16%
None	7%
Not Sure	<1%
Refused / NA	1%

11. Which of the following age categories would include you?

18 to 24	9%
25 to 34	17%
35 to 49	32%
50 to 64	24%
65 and over	19%
Not Sure	0%
Refused / NA	0%

12. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

8th grade or less	2%
Some high school	6%
Graduated from high school or GED	24%
Some college or technical school	33%
Graduated from college	36%
Not Sure	0%
Refused / NA	0%

13. What is your racial heritage? Is it...

White	92%
Black	3%
American Indian	<1%
Asian	<1%
Hispanic	2%
Arabic	0%
Other	1%
Not Sure	<1%
Refused / NA	<1%

14. What is your combined TOTAL FAMILY INCOME before taxes? Is it...

Under \$10,000	5%
\$10 to \$19 thousand	8%
\$20 to \$29 thousand	11%

\$30 to \$39 thousand	14%
\$40 to \$49 thousand	12%
\$50 to \$59 thousand	10%
\$60,000 or more	28%
Not Sure	3%
Refused / NA	10%

15. Respondent's gender.

Male	43%
Female	57%