

Wisconsin Voter Experiences in the November 2008 General Election

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The overall experience for Wisconsin voters in the November 2008 general election was extremely positive. Not only did Wisconsin have one of the highest turnout levels in the country, but its residents were almost always able to vote quickly and without incident. Compared to voters in other Big Ten states and the rest of the country, Wisconsinites were more satisfied, experienced fewer problems, and expressed more confidence that their votes were counted fairly.

This brief report on the experiences of Wisconsin voters is based on a survey of voters in Wisconsin and other states immediately following the November 4, 2008 election. Respondents were asked about their means of voting, problems they faced, and other evaluations of the voting experience.

Data are drawn from the post-election wave of the Big Ten Battleground Poll. The statistical results are unweighted responses from telephone interviews conducted in November 2008 with 3,742 respondents nationwide. Of these respondents, 662 were in Wisconsin, 2,231 were in the other Big Ten Conference states (Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Pennsylvania), and 849 were located in other states. Percentages do not always sum to 100 due to rounding. More information about the survey is available at www.bigtenpoll.org.

Compared to other states:

- Wisconsinites were more likely to cast their ballots early in person and much less likely to vote absentee by mail.
- Voting in Wisconsin takes less time than in other states, with three-quarters of Wisconsin voters taking less than 10 minutes to vote.
- Wisconsinites were more likely to register at the polls.
- Very few Wisconsin voters encountered problems with their registration.
- Wisconsin voters were quite confident that their ballots were counted as they intended.
- Wisconsin voters were extremely satisfied with their voting experiences.

Did you vote in person on Election Day at a polling place, in person before Election Day, or absentee by mail?

	Wisconsin	Other Big Ten States	Rest of Nation
In person on Election Day	72%	69%	64%
In person before Election Day	16%	10%	16%
Absentee by mail	12%	21%	20%
Number of cases	623	2,123	812

From when you arrived at the polling station, how long did it take you to vote?

	Wisconsin	Other Big Ten States	Rest of Nation
0-10 minutes	75%	55%	66%
10-20 minutes	14%	24%	17%
20-40 minutes	7%	12%	9%
40 minutes to 1 hour	3%	4%	4%
More than 1 hour	1%	5%	4%
Number of cases	450	1,457	521

Did you register to vote before Election Day or at the polling place?

	Wisconsin	Other Big Ten States	Rest of Nation
Before Election Day	86%	92%	90%
At the polls	14%	8%	10%
Number of cases	377	230	81

Was there a problem with your voter registration when you tried to vote?

	Wisconsin	Other Big Ten States	Rest of Nation
No	99%	99%	99%
Yes	1%	1%	1%

How confident are you that your ballot was counted as you intended? Would you say that you are very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?

	Wisconsin	Other Big Ten States	Rest of Nation
Very confident	87%	82%	83%
Somewhat confident	11%	15%	15%
Not too confident	1%	1%	1%
Not at all confident	0%	1%	1%
Number of cases	619	2,095	803

Thinking about your overall experience at the polls when you voted, how satisfied are you with your voting experience?

	Wisconsin	Other Big Ten States	Rest of Nation
Very satisfied	90%	85%	86%
Somewhat satisfied	9%	13%	12%
Not too satisfied	1%	1%	1%
Not satisfied at all	1%	1%	1%