

The Race for Mayor

The race to succeed Ed Rendell as Philadelphia's mayor remains extremely tight and shows no sign of widening. The latest survey of 606 likely Philadelphia voters finds Democrat John Street with a slim one-point lead over his rival, Republican Sam Katz, 39 percent to 38 percent, with nearly one in four (23%) voters still undecided.

Candidate support is best predicted by race, even when party affiliation is taken into account. Overall, two-thirds of white voters say they will support Sam Katz and two-thirds of African-American voters say they will support John Street. Perhaps the greatest problem for John Street is that nearly three in five (59%) white voters who are registered as Democrats say they will support Katz. The same proportion of white Democrats also supported Katz in the poll conducted earlier this month. As these numbers suggest, Katz is currently doing a better job than Street of holding onto his party's voters. Three in four (76%) Republicans say they plan to vote for Katz come election day, whereas only half (50%) of Democrats say they will vote for Street. The composition of the candidates' support among their party's registrants, too, is basically unchanged since earlier this month. In short, it appears that campaign activities have done little to change the basic structure of the candidates' support.

Although the vote choice has changed little during the past three weeks, the candidates' favorability scores have shown some change. As table 1 shows, Street's favorable scores have crept up and Katz's unfavorable scores have nearly doubled.

Table 1. Candidate Favorability Scores, January and October 1999

I'd like to ask you a few questions about some people involved in Philadelphia politics. Is your opinion of [INSERT NAME] favorable, not favorable, undecided, or haven't you heard enough about [INSERT NAME] the person the have an opinion?

	Street			Katz		
	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Oct 4-7</u>	<u>Oct 22-24</u>	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Oct 4-7</u>	<u>Oct 22-24</u>
Favorable	41%	34%	41%	29%	39%	39%
Unfavorable	27%	27%	29%	9%	12%	23%
Undecided	19%	28%	21%	18%	27%	22%
Don't Know	13%	11%	9%	45%	23%	15%

Undecided Voters

Obviously, the undecided voters are a key element in determining the election outcome. As Table 2 shows, the undecided voters are pretty closely divided along racial lines. In terms of both party and voting history, undecided voters are predominantly Democrats.

Table 2. Characteristics of the Undecided Voters

	<u>Percent of Undecided Voters</u>
Race	
White	39%
African-American	47%
Other	14%
Normal Vote*	
Straight Democrat	35%
Mostly Democrat	18%
A few more Democrats than Republicans	3%
About equally for both parties	29%
A few more Republicans than Democrats	1%
Mostly Republican	3%
Straight Republican	2%
Don't Know	10%
Party	
Republican	12%
Democrat	74%
Independent/Other	14%
Gender	
Men	35%
Women	64%

*Survey question : Thinking about the last few local, state and national elections, which best describes how you voted?

MARGINAL FREQUENCY REPORT

>Q1< Some people are registered to vote and many others are not. Are you currently registered to vote at your present address?

100% YES

>Q2< Are you currently registered as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or something else?

21% REPUBLICAN
71% DEMOCRAT
6% INDEPENDENT
2% OTHER

>Q3< Many people will vote in the upcoming primary election in May; however, many other people will NOT. What would you say are the chances of your voting in the upcoming election? Are you certain to vote; will you probably vote; are the chances 50-50 you will vote; or don't you think that you will vote in the election?

85% CERTAIN TO VOTE
15% PROBABLY WILL VOTE

>Q4< Some people don't pay much attention to political campaigns. How about you? Would you say that you have been very much interested, somewhat interested, or not very interested in following the political campaigns so far this year?

47% VERY MUCH INTERESTED
40% SOMEWHAT INTERESTED
12% NOT VERY INTERESTED
1% DON'T KNOW

>Int1< I'd like to ask you a few questions about some people involved in Philadelphia politics. Is your opinion of (INSERT NAME BELOW) favorable, not favorable, undecided, or haven't you heard enough about (INSERT NAME BELOW) the person to have an opinion?

>Q5< JOHN STREET

41% Favorable
29% Unfavorable
21% Undecided
4% Haven't heard
5% Don't know

>Q6< SAM KATZ

- 39% Favorable
- 23% Unfavorable
- 22% Undecided
- 9% Haven't heard
- 7% Don't know

>Q7< If the election for Philadelphia's mayor were being held today, would you vote for:
(READ LIST)

- 39% JOHN STREET, THE DEMOCRAT
- 38% SAM KATZ, THE REPUBLICAN
- 23% DON'T KNOW [GOTO Q10]

>Q8< Are you absolutely certain you will vote for (INSERT NAME OF CANDIDATE
SELECTED ABOVE) in the election, or are you still making up your mind?

- 81% CERTAIN
- 18% STILL DECIDING
- 1% DON'T KNOW

>Q9< What would you say is the main reason you are voting for (INSERT NAME OF
CANDIDATE SELECTED ABOVE)?

- 19% POSITIVE PERSONAL CHARACTERISTIC
- 17% OTHER
- 11% GENERAL IDEOLOGICAL POSITION
- 10% SPECIFIC ISSUE POSITION
- 9% PARTY
- 8% EXPERIENCE
- 7% NEGATIVE PERSONAL CHARACTERISTIC OF OPPONENT
- 5% RECORD
- 4% CHANGE
- 4% CHARACTER, INTEGRITY
- 4% DON'T KNOW
- 1% ADVERTISING
- 1% BEST KNOWN

>Q10< As of today, do you lean more to: (READ LIST)

- 21% JOHN STREET
- 17% SAM KATZ
- 62% DON'T KNOW

>Q11< Now I'd like to ask you to think for a moment about both candidates for Mayor. What is the first word that comes to mind when you think of John Street, the Democratic candidate for Mayor?

30% OTHER
22% EXTREMELY POSITIVE REMARKS
20% EXTREMELY NEGATIVE REMARKS
15% DON'T KNOW
5% EXPERIENCE
4% WOULD MAKE A GOOD MAYOR
2% DISHONEST
2% RELIABLE

>Q12< What is the first word that comes to mind when you think of Sam Katz, the Republican candidate for Mayor?

32% OTHER
25% DON'T KNOW
23% EXTREMELY POSITIVE REMARKS
14% EXTREMELY NEGATIVE REMARKS
2% WOULD MAKE A GOOD MAYOR
2% CHANGE
1% EXPERIENCE
1% RELIABLE
<1% DISHONEST

>Q13< Thinking about the last few local, state, and national elections, which best describes how you voted?

39% STRAIGHT DEMOCRAT
18% MOSTLY DEMOCRAT
4% A FEW MORE DEMOCRATS THAN REPUBLICANS
20% ABOUT EQUALLY FOR BOTH PARTIES
3% A FEW MORE REPUBLICAN THAN DEMOCRATS
5% MOSTLY REPUBLICAN
4% STRAIGHT REPUBLICAN
7% DON'T KNOW

>Q14< What was your age on your last birthday?

28% 18-34
38% 35-54
34% 55 AND OVER

>Q15< What was the last grade level of schooling you have completed?

9% NON HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE
40% HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE
18% SOME COLLEGE
9% TWO-YEAR OR TECH DEGREE
16% FOUR YEAR COLLEGE DEGREE
8% POST-GRADUATE DEGREE

>Q16< Politically speaking, do you consider yourself to be a liberal, a moderate, or a conservative?

30% LIBERAL
36% MODERATE
26% CONSERVATIVE
8% DON'T KNOW

>Q17< Do you consider yourself to be Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, or something else?

34% CATHOLIC
19% PROTESTANT
7% JEWISH
38% SOMETHING ELSE
2% DON'T KNOW

>Q18< Do you have any children under 18 who live in your home?

37% YES
63% NO

>Q19< What is your current marital status? (NOTE: IF SINGLE ASK, "HAVE YOU EVER BEEN MARRIED?")

34% SINGLE, NEVER MARRIED
37% MARRIED
4% SEPARATED
13% DIVORCED
12% WIDOW, WIDOWER

>Q20< Is your racial background white, African-American, or something else?

46% WHITE
44% AFRICAN-AMERICAN
10% OTHER

>Q21< Do you consider yourself to be of Hispanic origin?

7% YES
92% NO
1% DON'T KNOW

>Q22< Does any member of your household belong to a labor union?

28% YES
70% NO
2% DON'T KNOW

>Q23< And, just for statistical purposes, we just need to know if your total family income bracket is above or below \$30,000 per year?

5% UNDER \$10,000
12% \$10,000 - \$20,000
18% \$20,000 - \$30,000
24% \$30,000 - \$40,000
13% \$40,000 - \$50,000
23% OVER \$50,000
5% DON'T KNOW

>Q24< Sex of respondent:

38% MALE
62% FEMALE