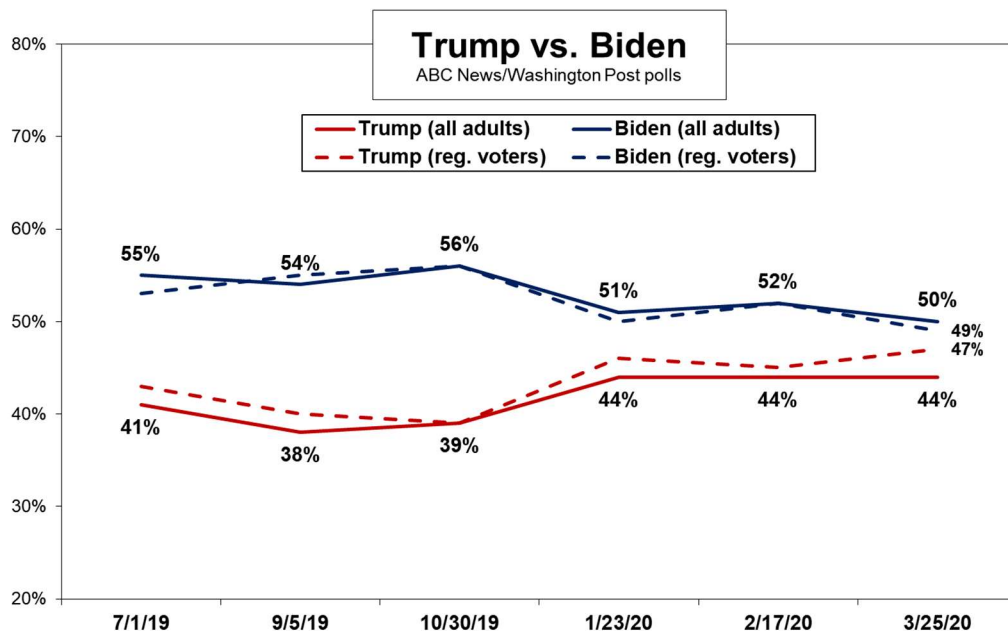


Biden Consolidates Support, But Trails Badly in Enthusiasm

Joe Biden has emerged as Democrats' top choice for the presidential nomination in a new ABC News/Washington Post poll, but with only bare majority support within his party and a massive enthusiasm gap in a November matchup against Donald Trump.

Indeed, strong enthusiasm for Biden among his supporters – at just 24 percent – is the lowest on record for a Democratic presidential candidate in 20 years of ABC/Post polls. More than twice as many of Trump's supporters are highly enthusiastic about supporting him, 53 percent.

Trump's still-strong rating on the economy is another challenge for Biden. So is this: Among Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents who prefer Bernie Sanders for the nomination, 15 percent say they'd back Trump over Biden in the fall.



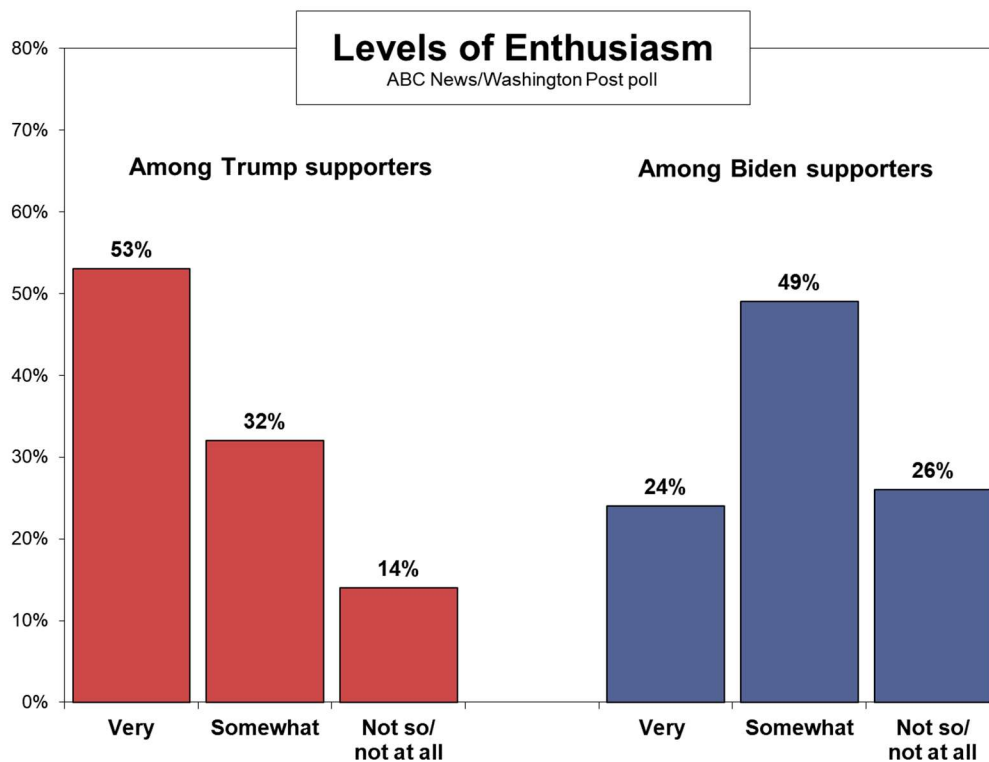
In the nomination contest, 51 percent of leaned Democrats now prefer Biden vs. 42 percent for Sanders. That's a vast 34-point gain for Biden since mid-February, with other candidates having left the race and endorsed him. Sanders gained 10 percentage points.

Yet even as he's advanced in his party, Biden's slipped against Trump in a November matchup. The two are locked into essentially a dead heat among registered voters, 49-47 percent, Biden-Trump, after a slight Biden lead, 52-45 percent, in February.

Biden does better vs. Trump among all adults (Democrats are less apt to be registered), 50-44 percent. That's a slight lead, but it was more solidly significant in February, 52-44 percent.

ENTHUSIASM – Perhaps the Democrats' biggest risk is under the surface, in Trump's big advantage in backers who are "very" enthusiastic about supporting him. Strong enthusiasm for a candidate can help boost turnout on Election Day, a must-have particularly for Democrats, who rely more on motivating less-frequent voters to come to the polls.

While trailing Trump by 29 points in high-level enthusiasm, Biden makes up some of the difference with those who are "somewhat" enthusiastic. But he still trails Trump by 12 points in the combined measure, 74 vs. 86 percent.



There's déjà vu in these results: Hillary Clinton found herself in largely the same position four years ago. She, too, had a slim lead among Democrats for the nomination and ran essentially evenly with Trump among registered voters. And she lagged in enthusiasm, with a low of 32 percent very enthusiastic in September 2016. Biden is 8 points under that mark now.

Bad as Biden's enthusiasm score is, we've seen worse: As few as 17 percent of John McCain's supporters were very enthusiastic about his candidacy in 2008, and Mitt Romney saw 23 percent in 2012. The poor omen for Biden is that Clinton, McCain and Romney all lost.

ISSUES – As noted, Trump is aided in this poll, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#), by his ratings on the economy. Despite deep economic impacts of the coronavirus crisis, 57 percent of Americans approve of his handling of the economy, a new high in ABC/Post data. And Trump leads Biden in trust to handle the economy, 50-42 percent. (As reported [Friday](#), 48 percent also approve of Trump’s handling of the job generally, another career high.)

Trump and Biden are even in trust to handle the coronavirus outbreak, 45-43 percent. Biden comes back to lead by 13 points in trust to handle health care more generally, 52-39 percent.

GROUPS – The clearing of the Democratic field hasn’t led to much change in the profiles of Biden and Sanders supporters, but there’s a magnitude shift for Biden. Seniors and blacks have been good for him in the past, but with significant shares interested in other candidates. They’ve coalesced: Eighty-three percent of Democratic and Democratic-leaning seniors prefer Biden over Sanders, up 63 points from February; two-thirds of blacks say the same, a 34-point increase.

Eighty percent of Sanders backers say they’ll vote for Biden against Trump; as noted, 15 percent say they’d back Trump. (This is familiar: Twenty percent of Sanders supporters said they’d vote for Trump in spring 2016.) For context, 15 percent of Sanders supporters is 6 percent of all leaned Democrats, and Trump won 8 percent of Democrats in 2016. Still, Biden wants all the in-party support he can muster.

Further, among Sanders supporters who say they’d vote for Biden in November, a mere 9 percent are very enthusiastic about doing so. More, but still only 49 percent, are “somewhat” enthusiastic.

Even among those who support Biden for the nomination, his very enthusiastic support against Trump is just 39 percent (with an additional 50 percent somewhat enthusiastic). That’s dwarfed by strong enthusiasm for Trump among his supporters, including a peak of 81 percent among strong conservatives and broad majorities of Republicans, seniors and rural residents.

On the issues, men favor Trump over Biden to handle the economy by an 18-point margin, 56-38, while women split between the two. Nearly all Republicans, three-quarters of conservatives, and 72 percent of white men who don’t have college degrees – core Trump groups – also pick him on the economy, but here they’re joined by 20 percent of liberals and a third of racial and ethnic minorities.

It’s essentially flipped with health care, with Biden leading Trump by a slight 8 points among men and 16 points among women. Outside the Democratic core, most seniors, 12 percent of Republicans, 28 percent of conservatives and three in 10 non-college whites pick Biden on health care.

Differences in trust to handle the coronavirus outbreak reflect customary partisan divides. Majorities of whites, conservatives and rural residents pick Trump on this issue; most racial and ethnic minorities, college graduates, urbanites and liberals go with Biden.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by landline and cellular telephone March 22-25, 2020, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 1,003 adults. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 3.5 points, including the design effect. Partisan divisions are 30-24-37 percent, Democrats-Republicans-independents.

The survey was produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#) of New York, N.Y., with sampling and data collection by Abt Associates of Rockville, Md. See details on the survey’s methodology [here](#).

Analysis by Sofi Sinozich. Christine Filer and Gary Langer contributed to this report.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com. Join our [mailing list](#) to get updates on all new poll releases.

Media contacts: [Van Scott](#) (212-456-7243) or [Caragh Fisher](#) (212-456-3437).

Full results follow.

1, 3, 9-31 previously released. * = < 0.5 percent.

2. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Trump is handling the economy? Do you approve/disapprove strongly or somewhat?

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
3/25/20	57	38	19	38	13	24	6
2/17/20	52	NA	NA	40	NA	NA	7
1/23/20	56	NA	NA	38	NA	NA	6
9/5/19	46	NA	NA	47	NA	NA	7
7/1/19	51	NA	NA	42	NA	NA	6
10/11/18	49	35	14	46	11	35	5
8/29/18	45	30	15	47	12	36	8
4/11/18	46	30	16	48	12	36	6
9/21/17	43	27	16	49	13	36	8
7/13/17	43	26	17	41	12	29	16

4. (ASK IF LEANED DEMOCRAT) Who would you like to see win the Democratic nomination for president this year - (Joe Biden) or (Bernie Sanders)? Would you lean toward (Biden) or (Sanders)?

	Joe Biden	Bernie Sanders	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opinion
	3/25/20	51	42	2	2
3/25/20 RV	55	39	2	3	1

Compare to:

I’ll read a list of candidates for the Democratic nomination for president in 2020. After I’ve read the full list, please tell me whom you’d vote for in the primary or caucus in your state. (IF NONE OR DK/REF) Which candidate would you lean toward? (ASK IF ALREADY VOTED) Which candidate did you vote for in the 2020 Democrat primary/caucus held in your state

Among Democratic-leaning adults:

	2/17/20	1/23/20	10/30/19	9/5/19	7/1/19
Bernie Sanders	32	24	19	19	23

Joe Biden	17	28	27	27	29
Mike Bloomberg	14	8	NA	NA	NA
Elizabeth Warren	11	11	21	17	11
Pete Buttigieg	7	5	7	4	4
Amy Klobuchar	6	3	1	1	2
Tom Steyer	2	*	1	*	NA
Tulsi Gabbard	1	1	2	1	1
Michael Bennet*	0	1	1	*	1
John Delaney*	0	0	1	1	0
Deval Patrick*	0	*	NA	NA	NA
Andrew Yang*	0	7	2	3	1
Bill de Blasio	NA	NA	NA	1	0
Cory Booker	NA	NA	2	1	1
Steve Bullock	NA	NA	*	*	*
Julián Castro	NA	NA	2	*	4
Kirsten Gillibrand	NA	NA	NA	NA	*
Kamala Harris	NA	NA	2	7	11
John Hickenlooper	NA	NA	NA	NA	1
Jay Inslee	NA	NA	NA	NA	1
Seth Moulton	NA	NA	NA	NA	0
Beto O'Rourke	NA	NA	1	3	2
Tim Ryan	NA	NA	NA	*	*
Eric Swalwell	NA	NA	NA	NA	0
Marianne Williamson	NA	NA	*	*	1
Other	1	*	1	*	*
None of these	1	4	2	3	1
Would not vote	1	1	1	3	*
No opinion	7	5	6	6	6

*2/17/20: Bennet, Delaney, Patrick and Yang were not named, but accepted for respondents who volunteered voting for them already.

Among Democratic-leaning registered voters:

	2/17/20	1/23/20	10/30/19	9/5/19	7/1/19
Bernie Sanders	32	23	17	19	19
Joe Biden	16	32	28	29	30
Mike Bloomberg	14	8	NA	NA	NA
Elizabeth Warren	12	12	23	18	12
Pete Buttigieg	8	5	9	4	4
Amy Klobuchar	7	3	2	2	2
Tom Steyer	2	*	1	1	NA
Tulsi Gabbard	1	1	2	2	1
Michael Bennet*	0	2	1	*	1
John Delaney*	0	0	1	*	0
Deval Patrick*	0	1	NA	NA	NA
Andrew Yang*	0	7	2	3	*
Bill de Blasio	NA	NA	NA	1	0
Cory Booker	NA	NA	2	1	1
Steve Bullock	NA	NA	0	*	*
Julián Castro	NA	NA	1	*	3
Kirsten Gillibrand	NA	NA	NA	NA	*
Kamala Harris	NA	NA	2	7	13
John Hickenlooper	NA	NA	NA	NA	1
Jay Inslee	NA	NA	NA	NA	1
Seth Moulton	NA	NA	NA	NA	0
Beto O'Rourke	NA	NA	1	3	2
Tim Ryan	NA	NA	NA	*	*
Eric Swalwell	NA	NA	NA	NA	0
Marianne Williamson	NA	NA	*	*	1
Other	1	1	1	*	*
None of these	1	3	2	3	1
Would not vote	*	0	1	2	1
No opinion	5	3	4	6	6

*2/17/20: Bennet, Delaney, Patrick and Yang were not named, but accepted for respondents who volunteered voting for them already.

5. If the 2020 presidential election were being held today and the candidates were (Donald Trump, the Republican) and (Joe Biden, the Democrat), for whom would you vote? Would you lean toward (Trump) or (Biden)?

	Trump	Biden	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Would not vote (vol.)	No opinion
3/25/20	44	50	*	2	1	2
3/25/20 RV	47	49	*	2	1	1
2/17/20	44	52	*	2	1	1
2/17/20 RV	45	52	0	2	1	1
1/23/20	44	51	*	2	2	1
1/23/20 RV	46	50	*	2	1	1
10/30/19	39	56	*	2	2	1
10/30/19 RV	39	56	*	2	2	*
9/5/19	38	54	*	4	3	1
9/5/19 RV	40	55	*	2	2	1
7/1/19	41	55	*	2	1	1
7/1/19 RV	43	53	*	1	*	1

6. (ASK IF NAMED TRUMP) Would you say you are very enthusiastic about supporting Trump, somewhat enthusiastic, not so enthusiastic or not enthusiastic at all?

	--- Enthusiastic ---			--- Not enthusiastic ---			No opinion
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not so	Not at all	
3/25/20	86	53	32	14	6	8	*
3/25/20 RV	86	55	31	13	6	7	*

7. (ASK IF NAMED BIDEN) Would you say you are very enthusiastic about supporting Biden, somewhat enthusiastic, not so enthusiastic or not enthusiastic at all?

	--- Enthusiastic ---			--- Not enthusiastic ---			No opinion
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not so	Not at all	
3/25/20	74	24	49	26	14	11	1
3/25/20 RV	74	28	46	26	14	11	*

8. Who do you trust more to handle [ITEM] - (Trump) or (Biden)?

3/25/20 - Summary Table

	Trump	Biden	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No op.
a. The economy	50	42	1	5	2
b. The coronavirus outbreak	45	43	1	6	5
c. Health care	39	52	*	5	4

*** END ***