

Some voices worried about the perspectives of democracy in a 2nd Trump term

Ruth Ben-Ghiat

“Trump has been conditioning Americans throughout this campaign to see American democracy as a failed experiment,” said Ruth Ben-Ghiat, a historian and author of “Strongmen: Mussolini to the Present.”

By praising dictators like President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia and President Xi Jinping of China, she said, “he has used his campaign to prepare Americans for autocracy.”

She cited his adoption of language from Nazi and Soviet lexicons, such as branding opponents as “vermin” and the “enemy from within” while accusing immigrants of “poisoning the blood of our country,” and suggesting that he might use the military to round up opponents. “A victory for Trump would mean that this vision of America — and the recourse to violence as a means of solving political problems — has triumphed,” Ms. Ben-Ghiat said.

Paul Krugman NYT Nov. 4, 2024

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/11/04/opinion/trump-cheney-kennedy-kelly.html>

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The [guardrails](#) that constrained him (DJT) last time (2017-2020) are gone. If he regains power, this could very easily be America’s last more or less free and fair election for a long time.

Then what? Some have suggested that we may be heading for a “[soft autocracy](#)” like that in Viktor Orban’s Hungary, in which the ruling party has a lock on power maintained by rigging elections, controlling the courts and muzzling the media rather than through violent repression.

We should be so lucky.

There are plenty of reasons to think that Trump and his most ardent supporters are itching to deploy violence against their opponents:

- Nearly four years ago, a violent mob descended on the United States Capitol and tried to overturn the results of the last presidential election.
- More recently, Trump, who has called his political adversaries “[vermin](#),” suggested using our military against “[the enemy from within](#).”

It’s also important to realize that Trump wouldn’t need to use the military against American citizens to create a **climate of fear and repression**. All he would have to do is tacitly grant permission, to the many extremists who are among his supporters, to go vigilante.

Still, you may imagine that even if America becomes MAGAfied, you won’t personally be at risk. If that’s what you believe, you might want to think again.

In the end, it won’t matter if you aren’t undocumented or Puerto Rican or a vocal Democrat.

Do you work for a news organization? Unless your outlet has been an all-out cheerleader for him and his agenda, Trump considers you an “[enemy of the people](#).” And the cheerleading had better have been loud; Trump has even accused Fox News of being “[weak and soft on the Democrats](#).”

Do you work at a government statistical agency? Bogus claims that numbers MAGA doesn’t like are fraudulent are now [standard Republican](#) practice. If, as [surveys of economists](#) suggest, Trump’s policies prove highly inflationary, I would not be at all surprised if there’s a purge at the Bureau of

Labor Statistics, with professional civil servants forced out and replaced with loyalists who will produce more favorable numbers.

Are you a librarian? We don't need to speculate here: Once universally beloved members of their communities, many librarians have already faced [harassment and threats](#) from right-wingers who want to ban books they don't like. Expect it to get much worse if Trump takes power.

Are you a doctor? Now that Trump says he'll give Robert Kennedy Jr. a key role in health policy — "I'm going to let him go wild on health," he [said](#) — at some point you may be putting yourself at risk if, say, you administer vaccines or even give patients advice based on the best medical science.

Are you a billionaire? You may think that your wealth will protect you. Actually, however, it makes you a target, and an easy one, given the breadth of your business interests. Some of the ultrawealthy seem to be realizing this; my sense is that at least some have gone straight from greed (Trump will cut my taxes) to fear (better not criticize him, or he may retaliate).

Finally, are you a longtime Trump supporter? Radical movements that take power often end up eating their own. Sometimes that's because they weren't radical enough — they were like John Kelly, who was one of Trump's secretaries of Homeland Security and one of his White House chiefs of staff but now [describes](#) Trump as "an authoritarian" who "certainly falls into the general definition of fascist." Sometimes, however, erstwhile supporters end up punished simply because they were on the wrong side of an internal power struggle.

In sum, America may be about to become a very grim place. And those imagining that their lives would simply go on as before, untouched in any major way by the potential fear and chaos, are making a big mistake.

Charles M. Blow NYT July 17, 2024

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/07/17/opinion/trump-republican-minority-outreach.html>

Two points which Republicans have learned since 2020

Portray Immigrants as a Threat to Minorities

Republicans have realized that an anti-immigrant message doesn't just appeal to xenophobes and white nationalists. It also appeals to some people of color, including some relatively recent immigrants, who worry about what Republicans portray as the negative effect of new arrivals on their socioeconomic status.

That's why, for instance, during last month's debate, Trump said of new immigrants, "They're taking Black jobs, and they're taking Hispanic jobs." The line was roundly and appropriately mocked, but there's no question that it landed with some voters.

Make Patriarchal Appeals to Minority Men

For some men of color, the perquisites of the patriarchy are a stronger draw than racial oppression is a repellent. Trump has tapped into that. He has crafted a persona that sends the message that toxic masculinity can be flaunted unapologetically and without consequence.

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If Republicans can shave a few percentage points away from Democrats, it may not only mean that they're slowly gaining ground philosophically, it may also be enough for them to win this year.

<https://edition.cnn.com/interactive/2024/politics/2020-2016-exit-polls-2024-dg/>

Anatomy of three Trump elections: How Americans shifted in 2024 vs. 2020 and 2016 Exit polls reveal a divided country

By [Zachary B. Wolf](#), [Curt Merrill](#) and [Way Mullery](#), CNN

Published: November 6, 2024

Data updated November 6, 2024 at 8:34 PM ET

President Donald Trump is [projected to win](#) the presidency for a second time in a historic comeback. There are some key takeaways in how the country's politics have shifted over three straight elections with Trump on the ballot.

CNN's exit poll results from [2016](#), [2020](#) and [2024](#) reveal how a sour economy was a drag on Vice President Kamala Harris, how she failed to drive an uptick in support among women even though there was an uptick in support for abortion rights, and how Latino men, in particular, gravitated toward Trump.

[CNN's exit polls for the 2024 general election](#) include interviews with thousands of voters, both those who cast a ballot on Election Day and those who voted early or absentee. That scope makes them a powerful tool for understanding the demographic profile and political views of voters in this year's election. And their findings will eventually be weighted against the ultimate benchmark: the results of the election themselves. Even so, exit polls are still polls, with margins for error — which means they're most useful when treated as estimates, rather than precise measurements. That's particularly true before the exit poll numbers are adjusted to match final election results.

Exit poll data for 2024 will continue to update and will automatically reflect in the charts below.

MP: The exit polls below suggest,

- that **gender was the decisive criteria for the election outcome, not economy**
 - o The drastic punishing / rewarding economic pattern (- 60% resp. +60% see page 6) is not visible for the white or black population (page 4). If it occurs, then both patterns seem to equalize each other by same numbers. This would mean that the number of households which are better off than 4 years ago equal the number of households, which are in a worse situation than 4 years ago.
- that the white population voted stronger for Harris in 2024, then for Biden in 2020,
 - that white men voted in 2024 as they voted in 2020, not contributing to the difference of election results,
 - that white women supported DJT slightly less in 2024 than Biden in 2020, giving a small advantage to Harris,
 - that white men without college degree voted in 2024 almost as in 2020
 - that white women without college degree voted in 2024 almost as in 2020
- that the victory of DJT was brought about by minorities especially Hispanics,
 - Latino men caused the largest loss for Harris compared to 2020 (-35%), now giving the GOP a 12% lead
 - Latino women caused a severe loss for Harris compared to 2020 (-17%), still giving a lead of 22% for Democrats
 - Black men give a lead for Democrats over the GOP by 60% in 2020, only 56% in 2024 (- 4%)
 - Black women give a lead for Democrats over the GOP by 81% in 2020, and 84% in 2024 (+ 3%)
 - a black female candidate seems not to gain an advantage in the black community

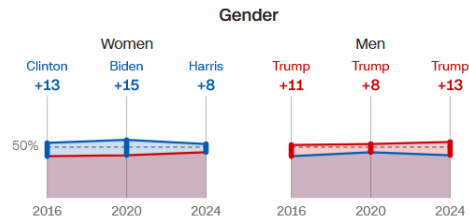
A relevant number of Black men (not Black women), Latino men and Latino women seem to have a problem with a black woman leading the country.

This would mean, that the republican strategy of

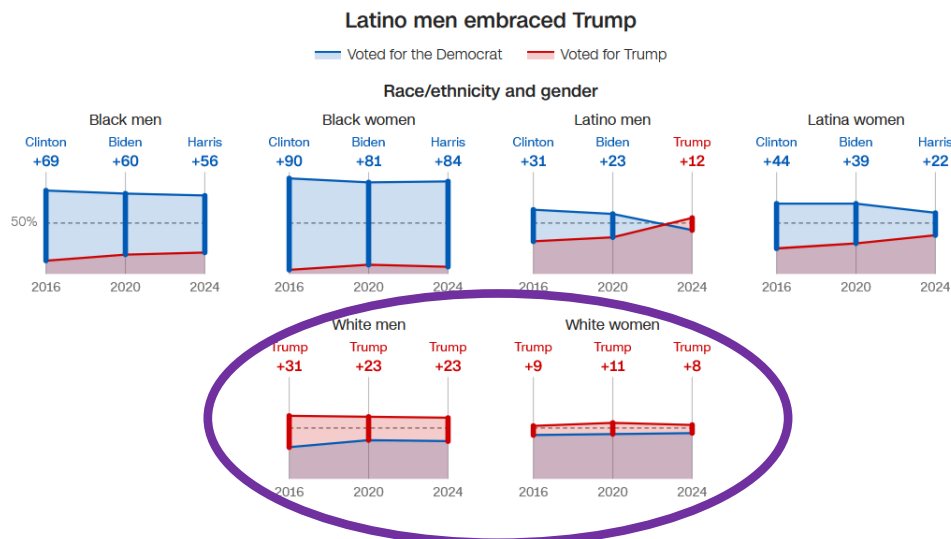
Make Patriarchal Appeals to Minority Men and Divide Minorities

worked.

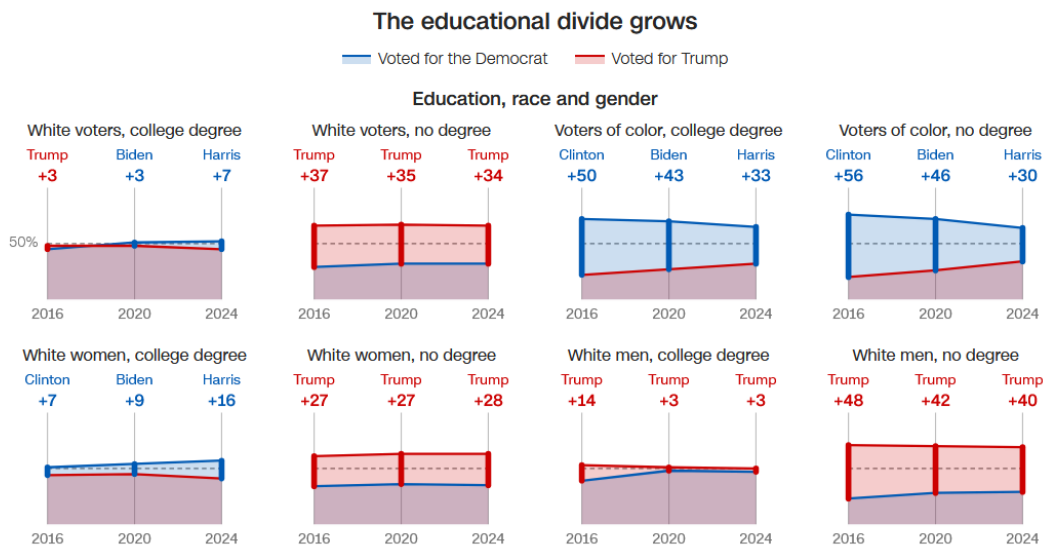
2024 US-Presidential Election



Harris' edge among women this year did not exceed either President Joe Biden's or former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's, a troubling sign for the vice president given that she tried to mobilize female voters on the issue of abortion. Trump maintained an edge among men.



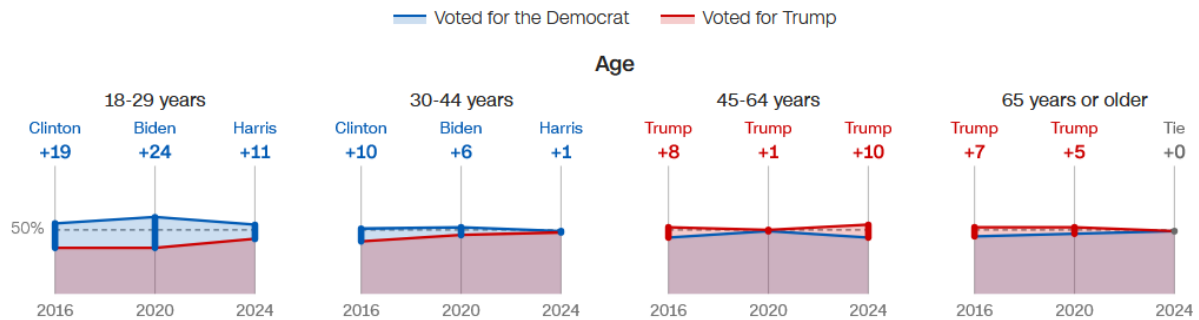
Latino voters, and men in particular, have been moving toward Trump since 2016. This year, Latino men broke in his direction for the first time. Biden won their support by 23 points in 2020 and Trump won them in 2024. Latina women still favored Harris, but by smaller margins than they supported either Clinton or Biden.



White voters without college degrees have long represented Trump's base of support, something that has remained constant. A shift has occurred among White college-educated voters. They narrowly backed Trump in 2016, but Harris won them in 2024, a split driven by both men and women. Harris won White women with a college degree by about 15 points — an improvement over both Biden and Clinton. Meanwhile, Harris lost some support among voters of color of all education levels.

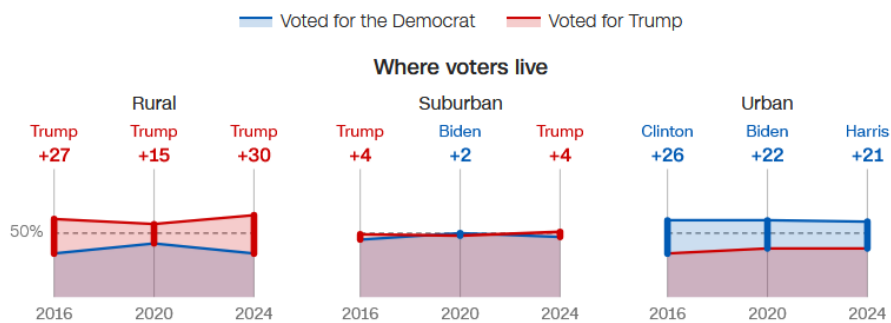
2024 US-Presidential Election

Younger voters shifted toward Trump, while he lost ground with senior voters



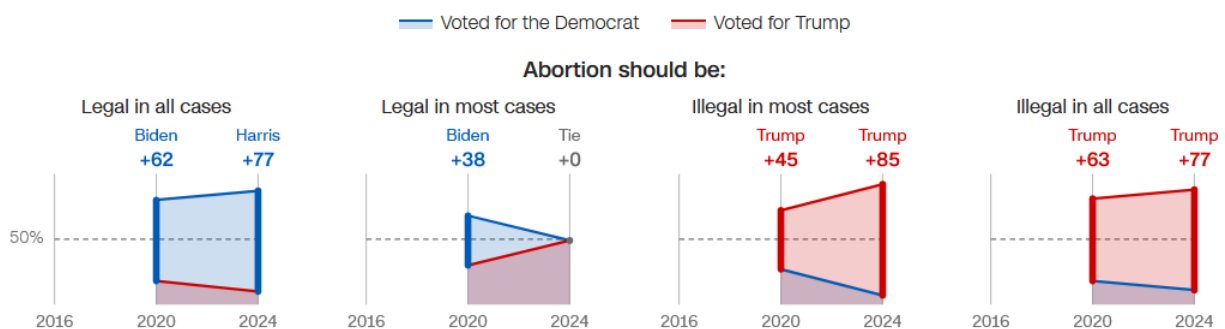
Democrats lost some support among the youngest voters, a group that overwhelmingly votes for them. But Harris also made gains among the oldest voters, a group that traditionally leans Republican. It's an interesting shift.

Trump regained power in rural America



While Trump lost some support in rural areas in 2020, he returned to full strength there in 2024. Cities remained solidly Democratic. The suburbs stayed the evenly split battleground that decides elections.

More Americans support abortion rights

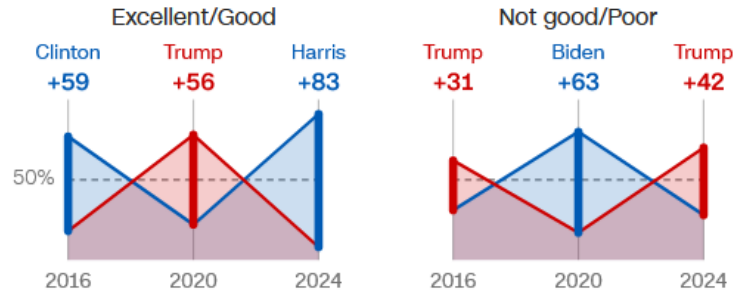


One story these charts don't fully tell is how the abortion conversation has changed. In 2016, *Roe v. Wade* guaranteed every American woman a constitutional right to an abortion. In 2024, that federal right is gone, taken away by a conservative majority Trump helped seat on the Supreme Court. In 2020, about half of Americans said abortion should be legal in all or most cases. In 2024, it's about two-thirds of Americans who say abortion should be legal in all or most cases. But they didn't necessarily tie that support to their vote for president. About half of people who say abortion should be legal in most cases supported Trump.

Voters are sour on the economy

— Voted for the Democrat — Voted for Trump

View of the economy

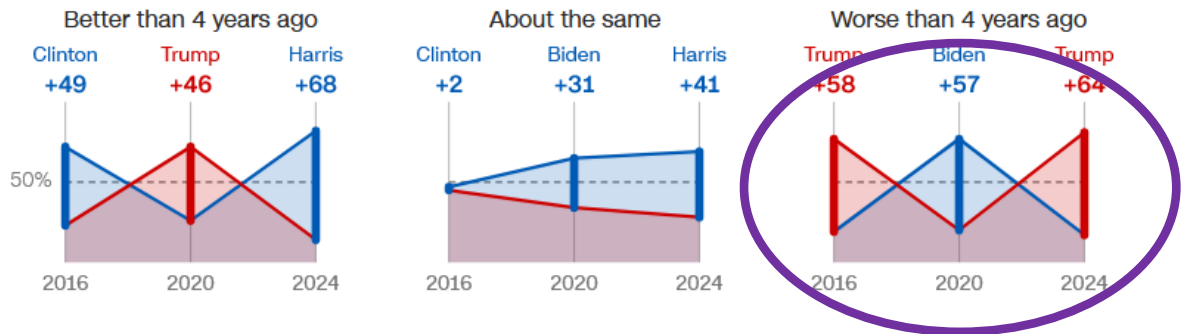


Voters were about evenly split in 2020 on whether the economy was in good shape or not, an incredible thing given the raging pandemic that was affecting Americans' lives that year. In 2024, about two-thirds of voters said the economy was in bad shape. That shift in sentiment benefited Trump.

More people report their family has fallen behind

— Voted for the Democrat — Voted for Trump

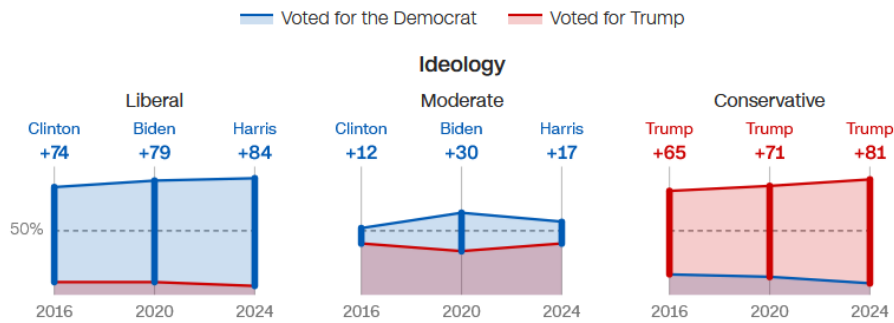
Family's financial situation today



It makes sense that partisans would say their position has or has not improved based on whether the person they support is in the White House. This year, there's a big shift. In 2020, just about one-fifth of voters said they were doing worse than four years before. This year, it's nearly half of voters who say they are doing worse than four years ago. Trump won them overwhelmingly.

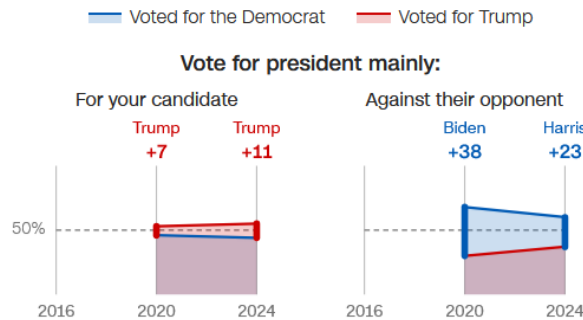
2024 US-Presidential Election

Trump made inroads with moderates



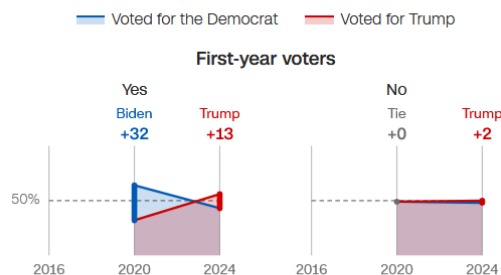
Liberals and conservatives have moved even further into their partisan corners during the Trump years. Moderates still favored the Democratic nominee in 2024, but by a smaller margin than in 2020.

Trump is the dominant figure in the election



People who say they cast their vote more in support of their chosen candidate than against their opponent split for Trump, a signal of his popularity among his supporters. Those motivated more by opposition were largely in Harris' camp. Overall, roughly three-quarters of voters said they were mostly voting to support their candidate, not to oppose their rival.

Trump engaged new voters



Trump's campaign strategy was built around motivating low-propensity voters who don't usually take part in the political process. That paid off because there was a dramatic swing between 2020, when Biden won first-year voters, and 2024, when Trump won them. But there's important context in the fact that a smaller portion of voters reported casting their first ballot in 2024 than in 2020.

CNN exit polls are a combination of in-person interviews with Election Day voters and in-person interviews, telephone and online polls measuring the views of early and absentee by-mail voters. They were conducted by Edison Research on behalf of the National Election Pool. In-person interviews on Election Day were conducted at a random sample of 279 polling locations. The results also include interviews with early and absentee voters conducted between October 24 and November 2, in person at 27 early voting locations, by phone or online. Results for the full sample of 22,914 respondents have a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percentage points; it is larger for subgroups.