

Adults in Five Largest European Countries Believe Americans Electing an African American Would Have a Positive Effect on the US

ROCHESTER, N.Y. – October 27, 2008 – A new Harris Interactive/France 24/International Herald Tribune survey conducted online by Harris Interactive® among a total of 6,276 adults (aged 16-64) in France, Germany, Great Britain, Spain and the United States and adults (aged 18-64) in Italy between October 1 and 13, 2008 finds that:

- Majorities of adults in Germany (71%), France (66%), Italy (58%), and Spain (54%) as well as just under half of adults in Great Britain (46%) all believe that the Americans electing a person of colour as president for the first time would have a positive effect on the US. In the US itself, feelings are a little more divided as four in ten (39%) Americans believe this would have a positive effect, just under one in five say it would have an equally positive and negative effect, 14% believe it would have a negative effect and 18% say it would not have any effect;
- Two-thirds or more of French adults (78%), Germans (72%), Spaniards (72%) and Italians (66%) as well as just under half (48%) of Britons all say they would like to see Barack Obama elected. Much smaller numbers, from just 1% in France and 12% in Italy say they would like to see John McCain elected. In the U.S., feelings are split – 42% would like to see Barack Obama elected and 32% would like to see John McCain elect while 18% of Americans would like to see neither of these candidates elected;
- Majorities in France (65%), Spain (60%), and Germany (54%) as well as 41% of Italians and one-third (34%) of Britons believe that Barack Obama would have the best relationship with Europe if elected. One in ten or less of adults in these European countries say John McCain would. In the US, one-third of Americans say Barack Obama would (34%) while just under one-quarter (23%) believe John McCain would have the best relationship with Europe;
- Among those who would like to see Barack Obama elected, one of the top reasons in the five European countries is the capacity for change from the Bush administration. Over three in five Spaniards (63%), half of Germans (52%) and French adults (52%) 45% of British adults and 40% of Italians all say this is a reason they would like to see Obama elected. Just under half of Italians (47%) also cite his youth as a reason, while just under half of British adults (47%) cite the values he represents. In the US, three in five Americans (61%) say the reason is the change from the Bush administration while just over two in five (44%) cite his policies; and,
- Among those who would like to see John McCain elected, it is his experience that is cited as the main reason by French adults (61%), Germans (45%), Spaniards (42%), Italians (40%) and British adults (38%). In the US, his experience is also most cited (61%) as a reason for voting for John .McCain followed by the values he represents (43%) and his choice for Vice President (40%).

So What?

While Americans are currently voting and waiting for Election Day, the US election is not just something that impacts those within its borders. The next president will have to deal with the global perspective and it is clear that people in the five largest European countries all have a clear preference as to who they would like to see sitting in the White House – Barack Obama. And, across all of those five countries, there is one reason that does rise to the top for this preference – he isn't George Bush and his administration. It is also clear that people believe Barack Obama would have a better relationship with Europe and after the rock star like adoration he achieved on his European visit before the conventions, it is clear that he already starts with many fans in these five countries.

TABLE 1
ELECTING A PERSON OF COLOUR IN THE US

“For the first time in history, there is a real chance of Americans electing a person of colour as President (Barack Obama). In your opinion, what effect would it have on the USA?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
POSTIVE EFFECT (NET)	46	66	58	54	71	39
A very positive effect	24	31	40	32	49	24
A somewhat positive effect	22	35	19	22	22	15
An equally positive and negative effect	20	13	21	14	13	18
NEGATIVE EFFECT (NET)	7	2	5	5	3	14
A somewhat negative effect	3	1	2	4	2	6
A very negative effect	4	*	3	1	1	8
It would not have any effect	10	11	10	14	7	18
Not sure	18	8	6	12	6	10

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 2
PREFERENCE FOR US PRESIDENT

“What candidate would you like to see elected?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Barack Obama	48	78	66	68	72	42
John McCain	11	1	12	8	5	32
Neither of these candidates	14	5	8	12	9	18
Not sure	27	16	14	12	14	8

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 3
BETTER RELATIONSHIP WITH EUROPE

“Which candidate in the US election would have the best relationships with Europe?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Barack Obama	34	65	41	60	54	34
John McCain	5	1	10	6	3	23
Both could	17	8	19	9	19	19
Neither of them	9	6	5	7	6	7
Not sure	34	20	25	18	17	17

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

TABLE 4
REASONS WOULD LIKE TO SEE OBAMA ELECTED

“For which reasons would you like to see Barack Obama elected?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults who would like to see Obama elected

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
The capacity for change from the Bush administration	45	52	40	63	52	61
The values he represents	47	38	27	34	34	35
His personality	34	38	36	29	47	11
His policies (programs in general)	29	27	38	24	37	44
His youth	20	32	47	30	36	7
His ethnicity	17	14	21	24	18	3
His approach to Iraq	12	23	11	13	14	16
His approach to the economy	14	6	12	10	10	28
His approach to foreign affairs	12	9	10	13	11	15
His approach to health care	6	13	12	4	4	32
His approach to global warming	7	13	8	11	5	7
His approach to education	2	3	5	4	5	14
His choice for Vice President	2	4	3	3	4	11
His approach to crime	5	3	4	3	2	1
His experience	1	1	2	*	2	3
Other	3	3	6	5	4	3
Not sure	6	3	1	4	1	1

Note: * indicates 0.5%

**TABLE 5
REASONS WOULD LIKE TO SEE MCCAIN ELECTED**

“For which reasons would you like to see John McCain elected?”

Base: All EU adults in five countries and U.S. adults who would like to see McCain elected

	Great Britain	France	Italy	Spain	Germany	United States
	%	%	%	%	%	%
His experience	38	61	40	42	45	61
The values he represents	31	51	24	22	34	43
His choice for Vice President	17	10	31	29	14	40
His policies (his programs in general)	35	32	30	26	25	30
His maturity	32	6	20	33	33	19
His approach to foreign affairs	25	2	15	21	20	28
His approach to Iraq	13	12	19	4	11	22
His capacity for change from the Bush administration	13	4	17	22	30	11
His approach to the economy	17	5	17	7	11	15
His personality	6	48	20	20	35	3
His approach to crime	9	31	20	4	2	2
His approach to health care	1	-	7	2	-	5
His ethnicity	8	27	2	2	5	2
His approach to global warming	3	-	3	3	2	1
His approach to education	1	-	3	1	2	1
Other	1	9	4	10	8	6
Not sure	10	-	5	6	4	1

Note: Very small base sizes in Germany and France – please use with caution

Note: - indicates no response; & indicates less than 0.5%

Methodology

This **Harris Interactive/France 24/International Herald Tribune** study was conducted online by Harris Interactive among a total of 6,276 adults (aged 16-64) within France (1,075), Germany (1,063), Great Britain (1,046), Spain (1,006) and the United States (1,064), and adults (aged 18-64) in Italy (1,022) between October and 13, 2008. Figures for age, sex, education, region and Internet usage were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was used to adjust for respondents’ propensity to be online.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words “margin of error” as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult populations of the respective countries. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls and of the British Polling Council.

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