

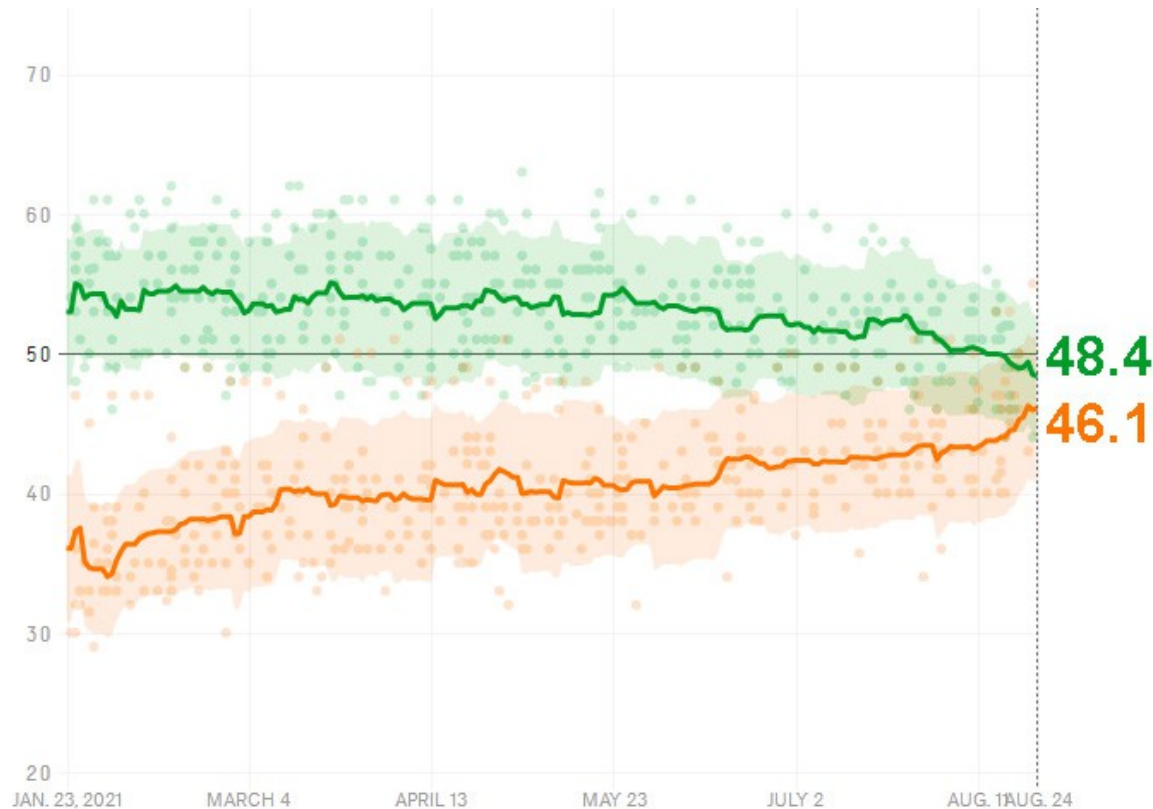
# Perspective on Biden's Approval Polling

By Steve Max

Democrats have been concerned with the recent drop in the President's approval rating. For example, the Rasmussen Poll of August 23 shows Biden's approval at 44% and disapproval at 55%. This has produced two reactions among Democrats: great hand wringing by some, and many others saying, "don't worry, the polls are always wrong."

Three Parks has long urged members and friends to click the [2021 Polling Data](#) link on our [web page](#) for a more in-depth view of polling data. The polling organization FiveThirtyEight, in particular, applies many statistical techniques to correct for typical polling errors. For example, it is always better to average several polls instead of looking at just one. FiveThirtyEight

takes this a step further and weights each poll in the average according to such things as sample size, past accuracy and partisanship, among others. The chart below shows the result with Biden looking more popular than unrefined poll results indicate. The small dots on the chart show the results of all the individual polls that go into the average. The closer the dots are to the average line, the more reliable the results are likely to be.



Having determined the weighted average of all the polls, FiveThirtyEight goes a step further and analyses the past results of each individual polling company to see if there is pattern of that company reporting consistently above or below the average. If it appears that the methodology of a company tends to skew the result, FiveThirtyEight make an adjustment as shown below.

DATES	POLLSTER	GRADE	SAMPLE	WEIGHT	APPROVE / DISAPPROVE		ADJUSTED
AUG. 19-23	Rasmussen Reports/Pulse Opinion Research	B	1,500 LV	1.26	44%	55%	47%
AUG. 20-22	HarrisX	B+	2,846 RV	1.84	49%	43%	45%
AUG. 18-20	YouGov	B+	2,142 A	1.29	50%	50%	52%
AUG. 17-20	American Research Group	C+	1,100 A	1.11	49%	46%	48%
AUG. 18-19	Ipsos	B-	1,002 A	0.57	46%	49%	45%

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KEY • = NEW A = ALL ADULTS RV = REGISTERED VOTERS V = VOTERS LV = L

An accuracy grade is shown for each poll along with the sample size, who was polled, the weight in the overall average, the poll's results and the adjusted results.

Besides offering historical comparisons to past Presidents and more about statistical methods than anyone could read, FiveThirtyEight also presets analysis of polling trends such as this piece on the [decline of Biden's ratings](#) .

Of course, none of this is to say that anyone has figured out a way to guarantee the accuracy of polling. Your own hunches or conversations with neighbors may be better, but what you can learn from FiveThirtyEight is how to look behind the raw polling data that appear in the media.