

In November 2024, Ipsos completed Phase 2 of a qualitative research project in partnership with Galvanize Action. This included two full days of online diaries. See October 2024 memo for the [Phase 1 Executive Summary](#).

## METHODOLOGY & TARGET SPECIFICATIONS

### 2-DAY Online Boards

We recruited 42 women from the group of [Phase 1](#) participants. They reside in Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Ohio; 38 women completed Phase 2 activities.

### Target Audience Specifications

- All participants were moderate white women (defined as somewhat conservative, moderate, or somewhat liberal using attitudinal statements to gauge core traits)
- Mix of rural, suburban, and small towns in each state
- Mix of marital and parental status
- Household incomes <\$100k
- Mix of educational attainment, but primarily less than graduate degree

## KEY FINDINGS

### 1. Pre-Election Predictions & Feelings

- Pre-election predictions were split, with 18 anticipating a Harris win, 15 a Trump win, and 5 unsure.
  - i. Those who predicted a Harris win often referenced pre-election projections (polls), a desire for her victory, or hope for change and a new perspective.
  - ii. Those who predicted Trump's victory cited reasons such as his loyal base, perceived missteps by Harris, and a sense of strong Republican support. Some also mentioned a feeling or gut instinct.
- Emotions were a mix of anxiety, nervousness, cautious hope, and anticipation.

### 2. Deciding Factors & Internalized Sexism

- Policy issues ultimately emerged as the dominant stated factor in determining their voting preferences. The issues that affected their voting decisions the most included: the economy/inflation, immigration, women's rights/abortion, democracy, and healthcare.
- Notably, respondents said Kamala Harris being a woman did not affect their voting preferences, but some responses suggested there was unconscious bias (internalized sexism) that may have been a factor.
- Trump voter motivations:
  - i. Concerns about the country's direction under Democratic leadership
  - ii. Dislike of Kamala Harris and the Biden administration
  - iii. Belief that Trump would improve the economy
  - iv. Fear of potential negative consequences if Harris won
  - v. General dissatisfaction with the last four years
  - vi. Illegal immigration
- Harris voter motivations:
  - i. Concerns about the future of democracy, racial justice, gender justice, and human rights
  - ii. Dislike of Trump and fear of Trump returning to office
  - iii. Alignment with Harris's views

iv. Belief that the Trump administration was incompetent and harmful

### 3. Social Influences

- Social influences played a varying role in shaping the participating women's political views and voting decisions.
- More women said social influence on them was “minimal,” emphasizing their independent decision-making process and underscoring their reliance on personal research and critical thinking.
- Others acknowledged the impact of their community, citing the influence of respected individuals and shared values in guiding their choices.

### 4. Reactions to the Outcome & Anticipated Impacts

- Post-election feelings ranged from elation and relief among Trump voters to despair and fear for Harris supporters.
- Both sides grappled with anxieties surrounding the economy, social cohesion, women's rights, and immigration. These findings underscore the deep polarization characterizing our country today.
- As the dust settled on the election, women expressed both strong positive emotions and strong concerns about the result and the potential impact (both personally and as a community).
  - Personal: Women expect an impact on their finances, healthcare, and women’s rights/bodily autonomy.
  - Community: Community impacts center on the economy, social cohesion, immigration, and marginalized groups.

## ADDITIONAL DETAILS: SOCIAL INFLUENCES & INTERNALIZED SEXISM

### The Dual Paths of Social Influence

Most of the respondents (24) participated in self-reporting their level of social influence: 18 said they were minimally influenced by their social circles (rated low on the scale, 1-4) and 6 said they were highly influenced (rated high on the scale, 7-10). Self-reported level of influence is difficult to measure but provides insight on what they value. The primary difference between the two groups was their approach to decision making and the importance of community and bonding in their lives.

Minimally Influenced	Highly Influenced
<p><b>Independent Decision-Making:</b> Many women in this group emphasized their capacity for independent thinking and decision-making. They often highlighted their reliance on personal research and critical evaluation rather than social influences.</p> <p><i>"My opinion was not at all affected by my surroundings. I was surrounded by Trump supporters but still could not understand what they see in him." – 68yrs, MI, Somewhat Conservative, Married</i></p>	<p><b>Community and Shared Values:</b> Women in this category often cited the influence of respected individuals and shared values within their community as critical factors in shaping their voting decisions.</p> <p><i>"I'd say a 9/10. While I try to form my own opinions, the people I respect—especially those in industries like finance and small business—were supporting Trump, and that definitely reinforced my decision." – 63yrs, WI, Moderate, Married</i></p>
<p><b>Skepticism Toward Social Influence:</b> Some respondents expressed skepticism about the reliability of social influence, choosing instead to rely on their personal judgment.</p> <p><i>"I do my own research and fact finding. Even if I like what someone said, I still check it out to</i></p>	<p><b>Desire for Belonging and Consensus:</b> A desire to belong and align with the consensus of their social groups was a strong motivator for their political choices.</p> <p><i>"8 - It was extremely hard for me to vote for Trump. I would have never thought I would ever</i></p>

*confirm accuracy because there is so much propaganda from what many people think of as trusted sources." – 65yrs, MI, Somewhat Conservative, Married*

*vote for him, especially as a woman. My family members really convinced me as they explained his record with Israel, and gave me hope for the future of the Middle-East." – 24yrs, PA, Moderate, Single*

*"10/10. I know that those in my life and my community affected my vote. The truth is, I could not have voted, and I would be okay. I don't think my life will drastically change from this election. But the lives of those around me will." – 31yrs, WI, Somewhat Liberal, Married*

### Internalized Sexism

Respondents said gender did not impact their vote choice, however some comments hinted at potential unconscious gender bias (e.g., doubts about a woman's ability to handle the presidency).

In [Phase 1](#) of this qualitative research project, there were also a few indications that internalized sexism and racial resentment may have contributed to some respondents favoring Trump over Harris.

- Harris was frequently described as "inexperienced," "underqualified," and benefitting politically from being a woman and minority without strong qualifications. This suggests an underlying bias against her credentials and an assumption that her race and gender are being leveraged for political gain rather than legitimate assets.
- Despite major reservations about Trump's character and behavior, many still felt he was the leader America needs. This indicates a willingness to overlook his sexist and racist rhetoric and policies.
- When describing ideal presidential qualities, traits associated with traditional masculinity were emphasized, like strength on the world stage, which they felt Trump embodied more than Harris.

So while overt sexism and racism were not necessarily cited as top reasons for preferring Trump, the language used to describe Harris's qualifications and electability suggests potential gender and racial biases. These findings are consistent with Galvanize Action's [October-November 2024 survey](#) of 1,200 moderate white women examining how racial resentment and internalized sexism shaped civic choices. The analysis of this data suggests that unconscious biases played a significant role in shaping vote choice and perceptions of presidential candidates among moderate white women.

### Other Factors Related to Gender

- **Desire for a female president:** Several respondents expressed disappointment that a woman wasn't elected, indicating a desire for female leadership.

*"My whole circle was for Kamala Harris and they wanted to see her win because she was for the women and she was willing to work with both parties." – 61yrs, WI, Somewhat Liberal, Married*

- **Concerns about Trump's impact on women:** Some participants voiced anxieties about the potential negative consequences of a Trump presidency on women's rights and equality. These concerns focused on Trump's policies, not Harris's qualifications.

*"Having no rights as a female scares me with Trump as president." – 37yrs, MI, Moderate, Single, Parent*

*"I'm afraid that he's going to take his power too far and women, LGBTQ+ people, the elderly and children are going to suffer the most. Women are going to lose more rights and we barely have any as it is." – 34yrs, MI, Moderate, Single, Parent*

- **But in the end, they say it came down to policy:** Despite the undercurrent of gender-related comments, the dominant theme remained policy. Respondents consistently cited policy disagreements with Harris and the Biden administration as their primary reasons for voting for Trump.

## ADDITIONAL DETAILS: ANTICIPATED IMPACT

### Anticipated Impact

On a personal level, women feel Trump's win may affect their finances, healthcare, and women's rights/bodily autonomy.

- **Financial**

Responses about financial effects were split. Some expressed concerns about the economy and personal finances, while others said they are hopeful and anticipate lower prices on goods and services.

- *"My 401K value will go up." – 48yrs, MI, Moderate, Single*
- *"I also work for tips so if he quits tax on that then I would definitely benefit from extra money in my pocket." – 39yrs, WI, Moderate, Living with Significant Other, Parent*
- *"I just don't think Trump will fix the problems we're currently experiencing." – 32yrs, MI, Moderate, Married, Parent*
- *"I am worried that Trump may do something negative with Social Security which will impact my husband and me since we are retired." – 68yrs, MI, Somewhat Conservative, Married*

- **Healthcare**

- *"I'm afraid that Trump winning could affect my healthcare as well as my rights as a woman. I'm also concerned that Trump winning could affect loan forgiveness in the future." – 41yrs, WI, Moderate, Single*

- **Women's Rights/Bodily Autonomy**

- *"Thankfully, I personally cannot get pregnant but I know plenty of people that can and I feel the fact that Trump wants to do away with all abortion including rape and incest and I don't think that should be an option in its entirety. I feel under certain circumstances like if a woman is right or if an active incest has been committed and she gets pregnant I feel that it's her right to want to have an abortion." – 45yrs, OH, Moderate, Divorced*
- *"He's taken all our (women's) rights away ... It's definitely affecting me horribly." – 37yrs, MI, Moderate, Single, Parent*

The expected community impacts are economic, social, and related to immigration. The responses were split within each of these categories regarding if the impacts would be positive or negative.

- **Economic Impact**

Many respondents anticipated economic changes in their communities. Some hoped for a stronger economy, lower prices, and increased business profitability. Others worried about the potential negative effects on the economy and social programs.

- *"Everyone will relax and hopefully prosper." – 52yrs, MI, Somewhat Liberal, Married, Parent*
- *"Housing prices, gas prices, taxes, etc. will stabilize hopefully. It has gotten out of control." – 62yrs, MI, Moderate, Divorced*
- *"It will (negatively) affect things like school funding, access to healthcare, social norms about racism and sexism." – 31yrs, WI, Somewhat Liberal, Married*

- **Social Impact**

Some respondents expressed concerns about social division and potential negative impacts on marginalized groups. Others hoped for increased community unity and strength.

- *"Hate & scape-goating will increase: immigrants will be scape goated, then transgenders, then gays, definitely Democrats ... I want to leave before it's hard to leave, I want out: our nation is going to be ruined." – 64yrs, PA, Somewhat Conservative, Married*

- *"The outcome will affect my local community by bringing them together and making us stronger. We will hold our heads up high, come together, and be brave through any storm that comes our way." – 33yrs, PA, Somewhat Liberal, Living with Significant Other*
- *"I think it's entirely possible that the destruction of the planet will accelerate, teachers will be bringing guns to school and shooting up their classrooms, more people will be pushed into poverty, Covid-19 will continue to disable and kill people, abortion will be outlawed, immigrants will be deported by the dozen, and so much more. Basically anything could go wrong." – 32yrs, PA, Somewhat Liberal, Single*

- **Immigration**

Mentions of proposed immigration policies and their impact on local communities (both positive and negative) were also included.

- *"I want the immigrants to go away. If they can't follow our rules and jeopardize our American people they need to be removed permanently." – 39yrs, WI, Moderate, Living with Significant Other, Parent*
- *"We have a lot of immigrants who do landscaping in our community. If Trump is cracking down on immigration, that could affect them ... If they get deported, that will affect our friends." – 65yrs, PA, Somewhat Liberal, Divorced, Parent*
- *"I live in Philadelphia, a sanctuary city, this may change if illegal immigration is challenged and changed." – 55yrs, PA, Moderate, Single, Parent*
- *"He promised that illegal immigrants will no longer receive benefits which means that Americans may be able to gain more benefits after the immigrants benefits are stopped. He plans to deport the immigrants that are currently taking shelter in Springfield, OH. This affects me personally because I only live 20 minutes away and I visit Springfield regularly." – 33yrs, OH, Somewhat Liberal, Married*