

FT-Michigan Ross poll [US presidential election 2024](#)

Donald Trump takes lead over Kamala Harris on US economy in final FT poll

FT-Michigan Ross survey shows most Americans think they will be better off if Republican wins



Forty-nine per cent of voters say Kamala Harris, left, better represented the interests of the middle class, while 37% said they were represented better by Donald Trump © AP

Lauren Fedor in Washington and Eva Xiao in New York 3 HOURS AGO

Donald Trump has overtaken Kamala Harris as the candidate Americans trust with the economy, according to a new Financial Times poll that underlines the Democratic party's struggle to convince voters they are better off now than they were four years ago.

The final monthly poll for the FT and the University of Michigan Ross School of Business found 44 per cent of registered voters said they trusted Trump more to handle the [economy](#), versus 43 per cent for Harris.

The findings, which come less than two weeks before the [election](#), mark the first time Trump has led Harris on the issue in the FT-Michigan Ross poll.

The poll also found Trump with a wider lead among voters on the question of which candidate would leave them better off financially. Forty-five per cent picked the Republican former president — a five-point improvement from the previous month — compared with 37 per cent for Harris, the Democratic vice-president.

The results suggest [Harris's economic pitch](#) has run out of momentum in the final stretch of an increasingly tight race with Trump. The FT's [poll tracker](#) now shows the candidates in a virtual dead heat in the swing states that will decide the election.

Erik Gordon, a professor at the Ross School of Business, said Harris's economic policy proposals had "stirred up as much disappointment as enthusiasm".

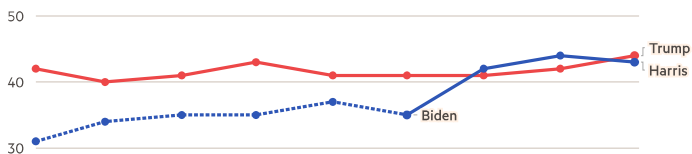
"If she is going to win the election, she is going to have to win it on other issues," he said.

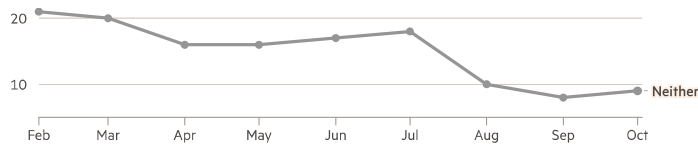
Voters' stubborn refusal to give Harris and her boss President Joe Biden credit for strong economic growth and low unemployment has been a persistent feature of the FT-Michigan Ross poll since the first survey in November 2023.

Harris briefly overtook Trump on the economy after she replaced Biden on the Democratic ticket this summer, but that advantage has been erased.

Trump overtakes Harris on the economy

% respondents on who they trust more to handle the economy by survey month





Source: FT-Michigan Ross poll • Poll of 1,000 registered voters conducted February - October; margin of error ±3.1pp. Those who said they trust both equally or were not sure were not included
FT graphic: Eva Xiao

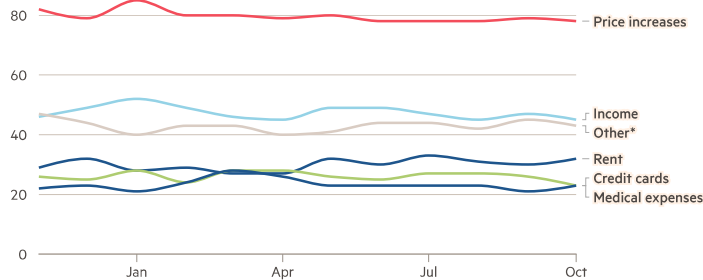
With less than two weeks to go until election day on November 5, the poll highlights the big hurdle facing Harris. The survey has consistently found voters rank “economic issues, like jobs and the cost of living” as the “most important issue” in deciding their votes for president.

Although Harris has polled better on economic issues than Biden did when he was the Democratic candidate, the party has struggled to convince voters they have been capable stewards of the economy. Asked if they were better off financially under Trump’s presidency or Biden’s, 51 per cent said they were “much” or “somewhat” better off under the Republican. Just 28 per cent said they were better off under Biden.

Voters still lament the high cost of living left by the surge in inflation in 2022, which has left prices high and continues to weigh heavily on consumer sentiment.

US voters consistently say price increases are their top financial stressor

% of respondents by survey month answering: ‘Over the past month, which three of the following have been the biggest sources of financial stress for you?’



Source: FT-Michigan Ross pol • Poll of 1,000 registered voters conducted Nov 2023 - Oct 2024; margin of error ±3.1pp. Note: Other* includes less popular categories, such as mortgage costs. It does not include respondents who chose ‘something else’ as an answer.
FT graphic: Eva Xiao

FINANCIAL TIMES

More than three-quarters of voters cited price increases as one of their biggest sources of financial stress, a number that has remained broadly consistent in the 12 months since the survey launched.

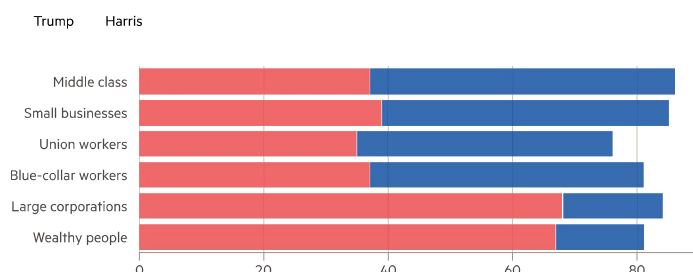
Trump has insisted he will bring down living costs by slashing energy prices and taxes such as those on tips and overtime for hourly workers and benefits for senior citizens.

Harris — who often describes her experiences growing up in a “middle class”, or middle-income, household — has pitched an “opportunity economy” focused on less-well-off families that would include a federal crackdown on price gouging and subsidies for first-time home buyers and small businesses.

The poll suggested some of Harris’s message on that score is resonating, with 49 per cent of voters saying she better represented the interests of the middle class, while 37 per cent said they were represented better by Trump. Voters also thought the vice-president better represented the interests of small businesses, blue-collar workers and union members.

Harris's messaging on helping the middle class may be resonating with voters

% respondents on who does a better job of representing the interests of various groups



Source: FT-Michigan Ross poll • Poll of 1,007 registered voters conducted Oct 17 - 21; margin of error ± 3.1 pp. Those who said neither, both or not sure were not included
FT graphic: Eva Xiao

FINANCIAL TIMES

Trump — who has vowed to further cut the corporate tax rate from 21 per cent to 15 per cent — was seen as better representing the interests of large corporations and wealthy people.

But the Republican has also made protectionism central to his economic pitch, vowing to impose steep tariffs on everything from cars to consumer products made overseas.

The poll showed that while a plurality of voters agreed tariffs on goods from China should be increased either “significantly” or “somewhat”, the largest share of voters disagreed tariffs should be increased on imports from other countries.

The FT-Michigan Ross poll was conducted online by Democratic strategists Global Strategy Group and Republican polling firm North Star Opinion Research from October 17-21. It reflects the opinions of 1,007 registered voters and has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points.

[Copyright](#) The Financial Times Limited 2024. All rights reserved.
