

To: Interested Parties

From: Sean McElwee, Ravi Mangla, and Alexandria Sousa

From: Data for Progress and The Justice Collaborative Institute

Re: Republican Voters Will Trust President Trump If He Declares Himself the Winner

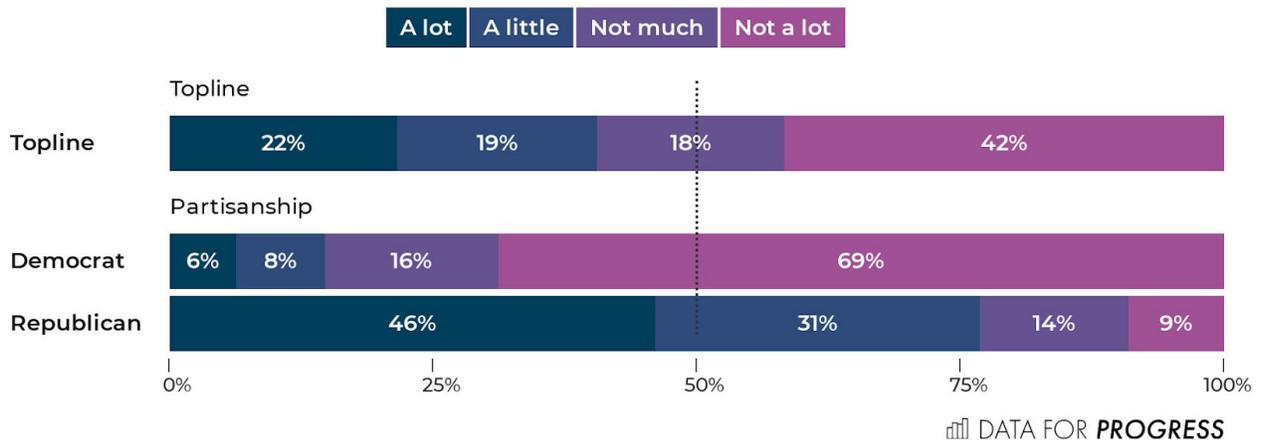
Date: 10/12/2020

A Data For Progress and The Justice Collaborative Institute poll shows extreme partisan polarization when it comes to who voters trust to call the results of the 2020 presidential election, including the presidential candidates themselves and the mainstream media.

Republican voters overwhelmingly trust President Donald Trump to call the results of the presidential election:

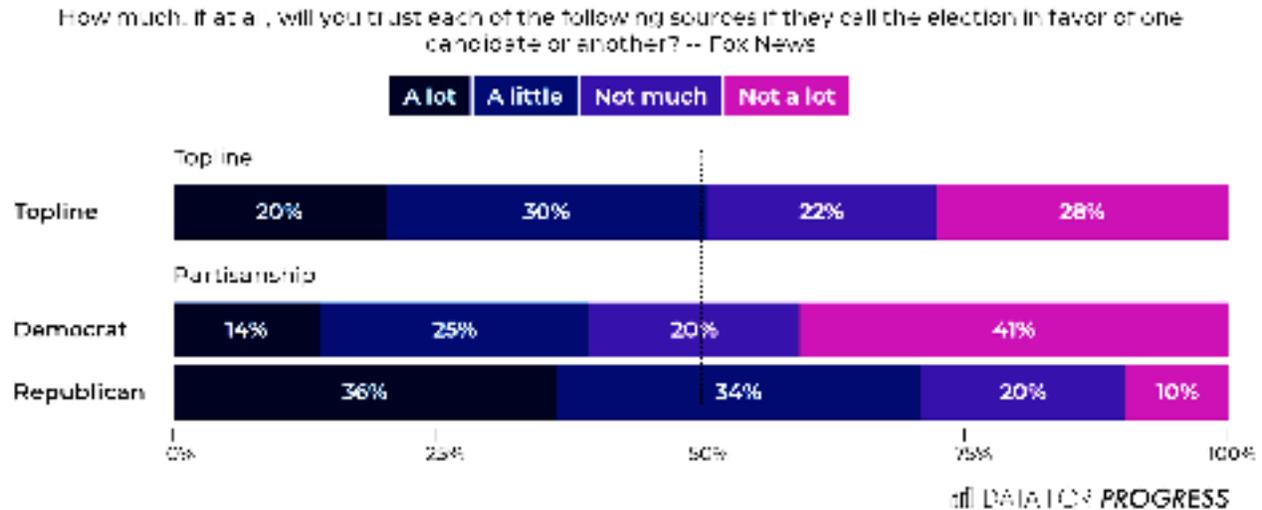
- 77% of likely Republican voters would trust President Trump if he calls the election in his favor (or for former Vice President Joe Biden); only 14% of Democrats would trust President Trump’s announcement of a winner in the contest.

How much, if at all, will you trust each of the following sources if they call the election in favor of one candidate or another? -- President Trump



Likely Republican voters overwhelmingly trust Fox News—but not the broadcast news networks, CNN, or MSNBC—to call the results of the presidential election:

- Fox News: 70% of likely Republican voters would trust Fox News to call the results of the election in favor of one candidate or the other; only 39% of likely Democratic voters would trust the Fox News call.



- Other Major Media Outlets: No other media outlet garners trust from a majority of likely Republican voters to call the election in favor of one candidate or the other: 50% for broadcast news stations ABC, NBC, and CBS; 42% for CNN; and 41% for MSNBC. By contrast, a strong majority of likely Democratic voters would trust broadcast news networks (79%), CNN (72%), and MSNBC (64%), but not Fox News (39%).*

Key Takeaway:

There is growing concern that President Trump will declare victory on election day, especially if there is a close vote margin in key swing states, in an effort to undermine the electoral process and steal the election.

President Trump has stated repeatedly that the winner of the presidential election will be known on election day, even though election officials and voting experts [believe it highly unlikely](#) this year due to the COVID-19 surge in mail-in-ballots. Trump also has [falsely claimed](#) that mail-in voting leads to voter fraud, using it as a rationale for why the winner must be declared on Nov. 3.

This scenario of President Trump calling the election before an accurate result would possibly be known is especially dangerous this year. The increased number of mail-in ballots (which will skew Democratic since Republicans are expected to disproportionately vote in person this year), many of which will be counted after Nov. 3,

heightens the possibility of what political scientists [call a “red mirage.”](#) This is where it appears on election night that President Trump is ahead in key swing states, even though once all of the ballots are counted, it becomes clear that Biden has won the election.

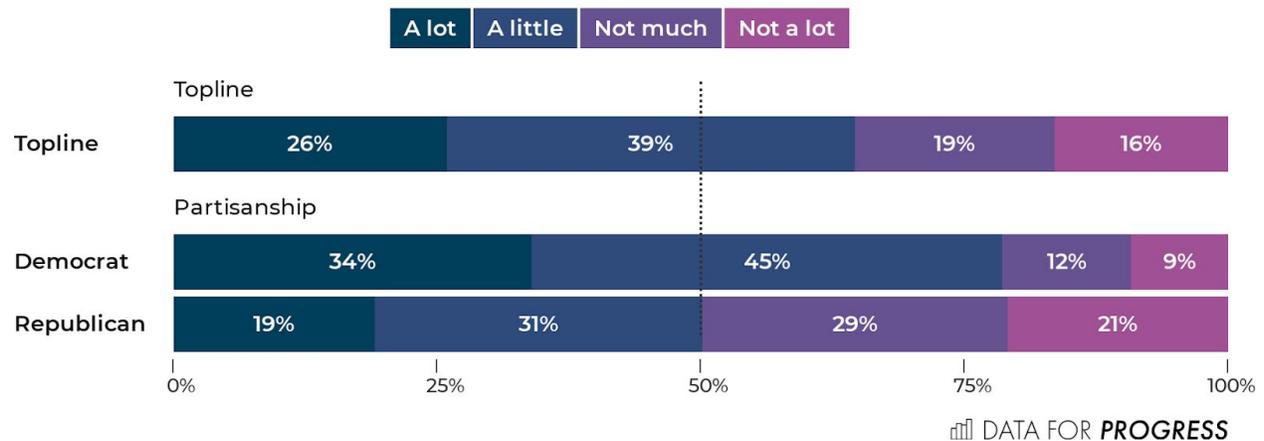
Our poll suggests that likely Republican voters will trust President Trump if he declares himself the winner on election day, especially if Fox News makes the same call.

Methodology:

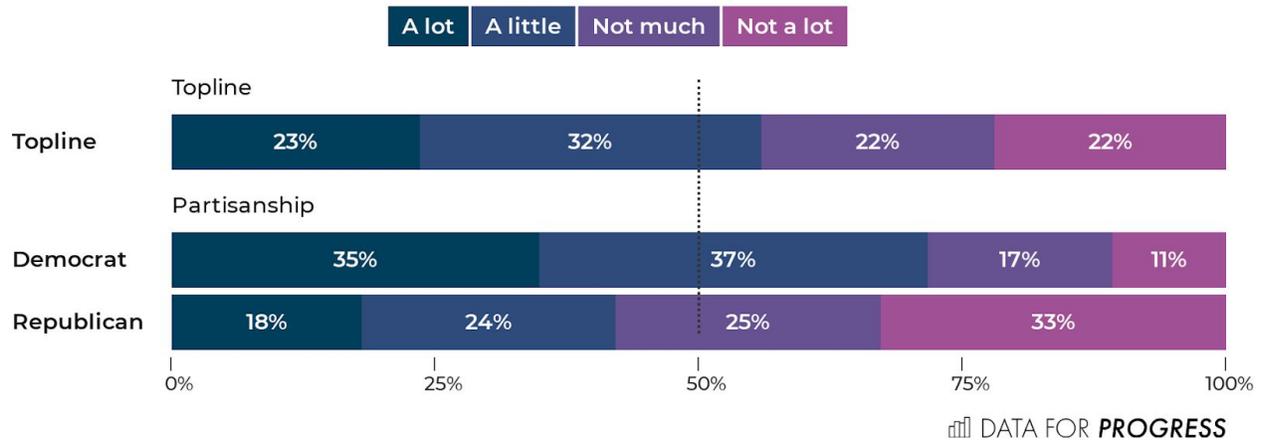
From 10/7/2020 to 10/8/2020, Data for Progress conducted a survey of 1,138 likely voters nationally using web panel respondents. The sample was weighted to be representative of likely voters by age, gender, education, race, and voting history. The survey was conducted in English. The margin of error is +/- 3 percentage points.

*Survey questions on non Fox News media outlets:

How much, if at all, will you trust each of the following sources if they call the election in favor of one candidate or another? -- Broadcast news networks - NBC, ABC, CBS



How much, if at all, will you trust each of the following sources if they call the election in favor of one candidate or another? -- CNN



How much, if at all, will you trust each of the following sources if they call the election in favor of one candidate or another? -- MSNBC

