



**2016 DEBATE VIEWERSHIP SURVEY**  
**N=869 Registered Voters**  
**Sept 19-20, 2016, Conducted Online**

**INTENT TO WATCH DEBATE**

- **Nearly two-thirds of registered voters likely to tune in to the debate.** 35% of Registered Voters intend to watch ALL of this Monday's Presidential debate. Another 21% say they plan to watch SOME of the debate, 9% say they will watch a LITTLE and 14% say they try to catch some of it on the news. 22% do not intend to watch at all.
- **We will likely break viewership records for this debate.** If we take the All/Some viewers and then the All/Some/Little viewers, it is likely debate viewership will be somewhere between 81 and 94 million. The first presidential debate in 2012 reached more than 70 million viewers and the highest rated debate in history was in 1980 between Carter and Reagan, during which 80.6 million people tuned in.
- **Trump voters are more likely to say they will watch the debate** - 48% of Trump voters intend to watch ALL of debate; among Clinton voters, 43% intend to watch all of the debate.
- **There is a significant opportunity for this debate to move voters' opinions:**
  - Nearly half of Undecided Voters plan to tune in: 47% of Undecided voters say they intend to watch all or some of the debates.
  - Republican ticket splitters more likely to watch than Democrat splitters: 33% of Reluctant Republicans say they will watch ALL of the debate; versus only 19% for Disaffected Democrats.

**DEBATE IMPORTANCE**

- **Potentially 1 out of 4 voters looking to debates for guidance:** 24% of Registered Voters say the debates will be either Extremely or Very important in their decision about who to support for President, while one third of voters say it won't be at all important.
- **But in reality, probably only about 1 out 10 voters truly open to change based on debate performance.** But when asked slightly differently, only 12% of Registered Voters say they are either Extremely or Very open to changing their mind about who they support for President based on their debate performance. 61% say they are not at all open to changing their mind.

- **About a quarter (26%) of Undecideds see the debate as Extremely or Very Important.** 77% of Undecided voters say the debates will be at least a little important to deciding who they will support. That leaves 23% of Undecideds that explicitly say the debates won't be at all important, presumably leaving their vote up to other factors.
- **Trump has more of an opportunity to convert Reluctant Republicans than Clinton does among Disaffected Democrats.** 39% of Disaffected Democrats are not at all open to changing their mind based on the debate, indicating a strong reluctance to come around to Clinton. That same number is 11 points lower among Reluctant Republicans at 28%.

## **DEBATE & SOCIAL MEDIA**

- **Almost one third of voters will follow along with the debate on social media.** 27% of Registered Voters plan to actively follow the debate through social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat. Among those that plan to watch ALL of the debate, nearly 4 out of 10 (38%) will be using social media at the same time.
- **Dual screening of the debate was much lower in 2012:** According to a Pew Research study following the first Presidential debate of 2012, among those who watched the debate, 11% were "dual screeners" that also followed digital coverage of the event.
- **Significant portions of key voter groups will be on social media during the debate.**
  - Nearly 1 out of 5 (19%) of undecided voters expect to be engaged on social media during the debate.
  - Reluctant Republicans are slightly more likely to actively follow the debate through social media platforms - 30% versus 27% of Disaffected Democrats.
  - Between Clinton and Trump voters there isn't a large difference: 33% of Clinton voters will actively follow the debate through social media platforms versus 29% of Trump voters.