

THE GALLUP POLL - 8 GENNAIO 2008

Obama, Huckabee Surge in Latest National Poll

Obama ties Clinton; Huckabee has slight edge over Giuliani, McCain

by Lydia Saad and Jeffrey M. Jones

PRINCETON, NJ -- The political jolt created by the Jan. 3 Iowa caucuses is being felt well beyond the nation's heartland, causing a sea change in voter preferences in the New Hampshire Democratic primary, significant changes in the New Hampshire Republican primary, and transforming the national race as well.

The latest *USA Today*/Gallup poll of national adults was conducted in the days immediately following the Iowa caucuses, from Jan. 4-6. According to that survey, both winners out of Iowa -- Republican Mike Huckabee and Democrat Barack Obama -- now have pulled even or slightly ahead in their respective primary races among voters nationwide. Prior to Iowa, Obama was mired in second position behind Hillary Clinton and Huckabee was tied for second place with several Republicans behind then-front-runner Rudy Giuliani.

Obama Rising

The survey finds Obama tied with Clinton for first place, his best showing in months. Both candidates are now chosen by 33% of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents nationwide as the preferred candidate for the nomination. This is a major shift from mid-December, when Clinton led Obama by 18 points, 45% to 27%.

Much of the shift toward Obama is because of a 12-point decline in support for Clinton over that period. But not all of those voters have gone directly to Obama; some have shifted to John Edwards. Support for Obama has grown by 6 points since mid-December, while Edwards has picked up 5 points over the same period, going from 15% to 20%. This represents the highest level of support for Edwards in any Gallup election poll over the past year.

Democratic Trial Heat, National USA Today/Gallup Poll

Among Democrats and Democratic leaners

	Clinton	Obama	Edwards	Kucinich	Richardson	Gravel	Biden	Other	None/ No opinion
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
2008 Jan 4-6	33	33	20	3	1	--	n/a	1	8
2007 Dec 14-16	45	27	15	2	2	3	3	1	4

n/a = Not asked

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Obama's post-Iowa public image includes the important perception that he is the man to beat for the nomination. Forty-six percent of all Americans, including 42% of Democrats, believe Obama is the candidate most likely to win the Democratic nomination for president. Slightly fewer -- 35% of Democrats -- pick Clinton, while only 14% pick Edwards.

Just your best guess, which candidate do you think will win the Democratic nomination for president this year -- [ROTATED: Hillary Clinton, John Edwards, (or) Barack Obama], or another Democratic candidate?

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	Democrats
	%
Barack Obama	42
Hillary Clinton	35
John Edwards	14
No opinion	9

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This finding is no doubt because of the extraordinarily high publicity given to the events in Iowa over the past week, resulting in more than three-quarters of Americans, and 81% of Democrats, being able to correctly name Obama as the winner of the Iowa Democratic caucuses. When asked if they happen to know who won, most of those who don't name Obama say they don't know; only a small fraction (1% each) incorrectly name Clinton or Edwards.

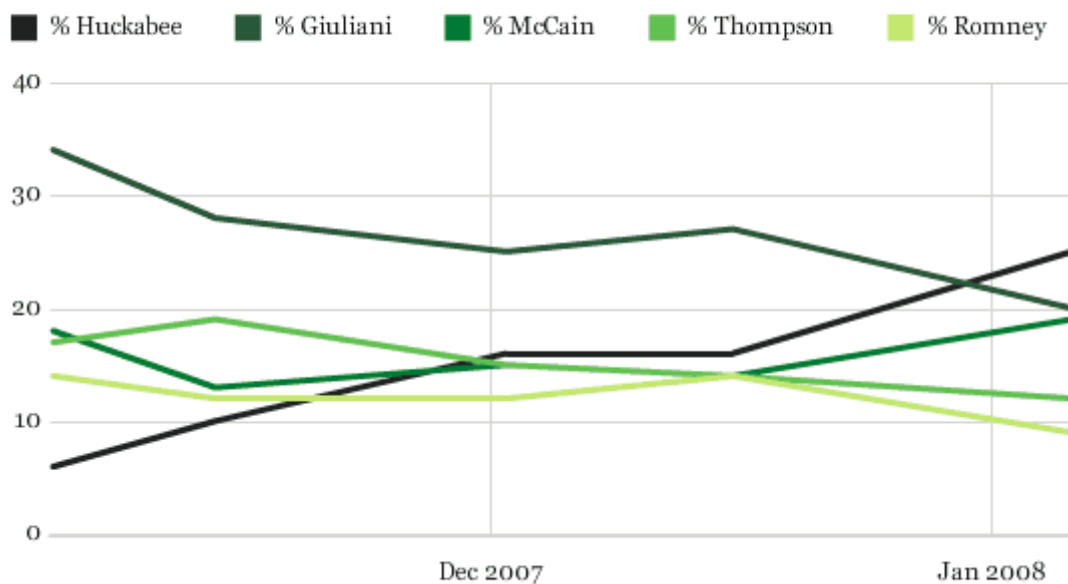
The Republican Picture

Following Huckabee's Iowa win, 25% of Republicans nationwide now rate him as their top choice for the 2008 Republican presidential nomination, up from 16% in mid-December. Sen. John McCain also saw his support increase during that time, from 14% to 19%. After losing the expectations game in Iowa by coming in second, Romney is now suffering a decline in national support, putting him well out of range for the lead. His current 9% of the vote is his worst showing in the race since early October.

Support for Giuliani, who chose not to compete in Iowa and has been shut out of the media spotlight, has also dropped, from 27% to 20%. Fred Thompson and Ron Paul are essentially holding steady at 12% and 4%, respectively.

Huckabee's five-point advantage over Giuliani and six-point edge over McCain still fall within the poll's margin of error, so from a strict statistical perspective, the three are essentially tied.

*National Republicans' Preference for 2008 Republican Presidential Nominee,
November 2007 to January 2008*



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The Jan. 4-6 poll marks the first time in nearly a year that Giuliani has not held a significant lead on the national ballot, though he clearly had been losing ground, slipping below the 30% mark in November and December. In late 2006 and early 2007, McCain and Giuliani were essentially running even. Then Giuliani surged into the lead in February, and had remained in first position ever since. The 20% support for him in the current poll also marks his low point since Gallup began tracking the national numbers in November 2006.

While Giuliani has reached his low point, Huckabee is now enjoying his highest level of national support since the campaign began. Huckabee's rise is reminiscent of other dark-horse candidates who rose from low single digits in the national polls during the early stages in the campaign to become real factors -- if not winners -- in previous nomination campaigns. Some of these candidates include Jimmy Carter in 1976, George H.W. Bush in 1980, Gary Hart in 1984, Michael Dukakis in 1988, and Bill Clinton in 1992. Carter, Dukakis, and Clinton all went on to win their party's nomination, while Bush and Hart seriously challenged their party's front-runners although both eventually lost the nomination. Huckabee was in the low single digits in the national polls throughout much of 2007. He did not reach double digits until mid-November.

Huckabee's current front-runner status is bolstered by the poll finding that 33% of Americans, including 36% of Republicans, think he will win the Republican nomination for president. Eighteen percent each believe McCain or Giuliani will prevail, while 14% believe Romney will emerge as the Republican nominee.

Which Candidate Do You Think Will Win the 2008 Republican Nomination?

	National adults	Republicans	Independents	Democrats
Huckabee	33	36	32	32
McCain	18	16	18	20
Giuliani	18	18	18	18
Romney	14	16	14	13
Thompson	2	3	2	1
No opinion	14	8	16	17

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The public's attention was not captured by Huckabee's Iowa win to the same degree it was by Obama's victory. Sixty percent of Americans correctly name Huckabee as the winner of the Iowa caucuses. Republicans (68%) are more likely to mention Huckabee as the winner than are independents (61%) or Democrats (54%).

Survey Methods

These results are based on telephone interviews with a randomly selected national sample of 1,023 national adults, aged 18 and older, conducted Jan. 4-6, 2008. For results based on this sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the maximum error attributable to sampling and other random effects is ± 3 percentage points.

For results based on the sample of 499 Democrats and independents who lean to the Democratic Party, the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 5 percentage points.

For results based on the sample of 423 Republicans and independents who lean to the Republican Party, the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 5 percentage points.

Interviews are conducted with respondents on land-line telephones (for respondents with a land-line telephone) and cellular phones (for respondents who are cell-phone only).

In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion polls.