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UNPACKING PLANET ROMEO'S LGBTQ+ U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION SURVEY FINDINGS

Author
Yeshwant Naik

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Unpacking Planet Romeo's LGBTQ+ U.S. Presidential Election Survey Findings

A pre-election survey was conducted by Planet Romeo, a website primarily designed for gay dating. The survey results indicated a surprising lack of users in the U.S. The rationale provided by the pollsters was that due to a lack of sufficient users in the U.S. on their platform, they decided to reach out to all Romeo's globally, asserting that this is the election everyone is discussing.

In the Election poll conducted, a total of 59,712 participants from the U.S. and around the world cast their votes between October 18 and October 27. Kamala Harris received strong support with 72% of the overall vote, while Donald Trump garnered 25%.

Among international voters, Harris's highest support came from the Netherlands, where 82% of Dutch participants backed her and only 15% supported Trump out of 1,689 votes. Belgium followed closely, with 81% of 1,657 Belgian voters supporting Harris, while 17% chose Trump. Germany also showed significant backing for Harris, with 76% of 24,928 votes in her favour, as well as France with 75% of 4,473 votes, and Switzerland with 74% of 2,516 votes. In the U.S., out of 529 voters, 74% favoured Harris, while 21% supported Trump.¹

Other countries with high support for Harris included Spain, where she received 74% of 1,171 votes; Hungary with 72% of 470 votes; Italy with 72% of 4,667 votes; and Cuba, where she garnered 72% of 356 votes. In the United Kingdom, 68% of the 841 voters preferred Harris, while 29% chose Trump. Austria displayed similar support levels, with 68% backing Harris and 28% supporting Trump out of 2,738 votes.²

Trump's support was comparatively higher in Greece and Romania, where he received 31% and 33% of the vote, with 716 and 331 votes, respectively. Australia had a more balanced distribution, with 57% favouring Harris and 37% supporting Trump out of 323 votes. India showed the closest split, with 46% supporting each candidate out of 814 votes.³

In contrast to the above statistics, the actual election outcome on November 6 saw Donald Trump winning the election, effectively answering the million-dollar question posed by the pollsters. The survey report⁴ cautions against taking the poll results too seriously or using them as a basis for retaliatory actions against the community.

The report expresses a commitment to amplifying LGBTQ+ voices by gathering insights globally where Planet Romeo is well-established. The report claims to offer a broad perspective on LGBTQ+ political preferences. However, in doing so, it fails to explain its limited presence in the U.S. It includes mentions of lesbian, transgender, and other queer identities in its acronym, despite those groups not being represented in the survey. The survey was primarily conducted among gay men, raising questions about its true intentions. Additionally, the report states, "we do not offer any interpretation of the results," raising

¹ See <https://www.romeo.com/en/blog/us-elections-2024/>

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Hereinafter referred to as "report".

ambiguity around who "we" refers to—whether it's the management of Planet Romeo, specific members, or the user base.

Notably, the report did not address voting intentions or the age demographics of the respondents, leaving unclear which age groups participated and what motivations they had for their answers. Given the prevalence of fake profiles on the platform, where individuals can create multiple accounts, the reliability of the survey data is further compromised. As the report itself advises readers not to take the findings seriously, scepticism remains.

Examining the report, one could interpret that Planet Romeo is conducting these surveys to promote their own viewpoints and / or influence users, potentially advancing a concealed political agenda under the guise of supporting LGBTQ+ interests. One could further argue that if they genuinely cared about the broader LGBTQ+ community, they would have made more inclusive efforts to conduct a genuine survey that represents all identities and minorities despite being a dating site for gay men. Then this would display their inclusive attitude and action. However, this is not the case. So, the lack of transparency in the survey results prompts further questions about whether Planet Romeo seek to align with larger heteronormative political groups for undisclosed reasons. Ultimately, this raises concerns about the potential spread of biases, misinformation, and divisiveness through the platform.

A user who received the poll message in his inbox shared his opinion in the following words: "Instead of conducting and promoting this incomplete election survey, it might have been more straightforward to acknowledge that "We" exclusively support a left-wing agenda and presence in the world, rejecting the right wing, as "We" seek to dismantle everything in the name of the LGBTQ+."⁵

Another user expressed his disappointment in the following words: "These survey methods utilised by certain LGBTQ+ members in West Europe often do not resonate with the real-life experiences of the broader public, as they mainly reflect the current dynamics of identity politics in Europe. This focus on victimhood stifles constructive dialogue about important issues, particularly within the LGBTQ+ community. Those who adopt a victim identity often gain acceptance, whereas differing viewpoints may face exclusion. The West European LGBTQ+ community is becoming increasingly divided, and political correctness has shifted its focus."⁶

The most important questions that arise: Why is politics intertwined with the dating scene? What goals do website owners have in this context? Does the U.S. election influence the rights of sexual minorities globally, or is it responsible for the decriminalization of homosexuality in regions where it is still illegal? What accounts for the emphasis placed on the U.S.? Is this initiative part of a left-wing agenda in West Europe to advance identity politics on the grounds of morals or is it a manifestation of animosity towards right-wing conservatives? Or is it the fear or insecurity associated with the gradual rise of right-wing voices? Does it aim to convey the notion that the left wing is more progressive than the right wing in safeguarding LGBTQ+ rights or is it simply a genuine attempt to express the visibility and presence of LGBTQ+. Perhaps some of the questions could be more effectively addressed by the pollsters.

⁵ Conversation with interlocutor dated November 10, 2024.

⁶ Ibid.