

#AnalyzingData: Which states will define the US presidential elections?

By: M. Sc. Yuri Aguiar Luna

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Contrary to what the media narrative suggests, the US electoral process will be extremely boring and predictable. The truth is that the election format, which weights the decision of each state over the national vote —on which we could dig deeper further ahead— has shown in the last four presidential elections a trend in which around 80% of the states, built loyalty to the same party. It is, no doubts, an unprecedented level of consistency in the world.

From 2008 to the 2020 elections, only 10 states (Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin) voted for the Democratic and Republican candidates. The likelihood of recurrence of the contest between Democratic President Joe Biden and former Republican President Donald Trump next year presupposes less uncertainty and that many of the means and electoral variables behave in a similar way to what happened in 2020, even though it may not entail the same final result.

According to the records of previous elections, and of different surveys carried out in recent months, the electoral map towards 2024 shows a clear trend in 45 states, which yield 241 votes for the Democrats and 235 for the Republicans, although at least 20 of those tending to Democrats and 17 to the Republicans boast a slight edge of less than 5%, which is absolutely reversible. Meanwhile, five states (Pennsylvania, Georgia, Arizona, Wisconsin and Nevada), which add up to 62 electoral votes, project a technical tie between both parties.

If we take into account that the states with a clear tendency do not guarantee any of the contenders the 270 votes necessary to win the presidency, it is to be expected that the electoral battle will focus on the mentioned states. At this point, we must remember that Pennsylvania (19 electoral votes, EV), Georgia (16 EV), Arizona (11 EV) and Wisconsin (10 EV), were the most closely contested states in the 2020 presidential elections. All of them were won by Biden by a narrow margin, while Trump had won them in 2016.

In the case of Nevada (6 EV), it has been won by Democrats since 2008. This time, polls show a shift towards parity. The Democratic candidate will need 29 of those 62 votes, while the Republican will have to secure 35; in a range of variants that can point to an extremely close final result, which of course, will be questioned by the loser candidate.

In short, as I know you are living a hectic life and you want me to get to the core of matter, I suggest you not to focus on the US electoral process. Instead, take your attention into these five states which, barring a last-minute surprise, are the states that will define the next US president in the next term. Do you now understand why I had said before it would be very boring and predictable electoral process?

Translated by Sergio A. Paneque Díaz / CubaSí Translation Staff
