



## [The Possible Impact of the Gaza War on Upcoming U.S. Elections in November](#)

Following the completion of this year's Republican National Convention (RNC) in mid-July and Democratic National Convention (DNC) late last week, both major party tickets have now been cemented, as we approach the two-month marker before Election Day in the United States. The upcoming November 5th election will of course include the 2024 U.S. presidential race, in addition to other important federal, state, and local ones as well. Since it is a presidential election year, any voter shifts at this top level will have more repercussions in an array of non-presidential races than in off years. Analysts are expecting a tight race in the impending presidential election between sitting Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump, and as a result, there are several key factors which could end up playing a determinant role in its outcome and consequently that of some other anticipated close down-ballot races for U.S. Congress, governorships, and state legislatures.

One of these notable aspects is voter perception regarding the handling of the Gaza War – something that might prove to be particularly momentous in battleground states where the margin of victory is likely to be very small and yet impactful to the overall end result. Throughout the past nearly eleven months since the onset of the Gaza War, we have seen opposition to it and concern with the handling of the conflict manifest itself into a large-scale anti-war movement. This has also prompted a considerable number of 'uncommitted' protest votes across the country, including in pivotal swing states like Michigan and Wisconsin, with these members of the electorate having the potential to sway race outcomes in either direction. A drop-off in turnout for any electoral candidate may very well have a weighty effect, and many races will likely come down to whether or not this outweighs those who end up casting their votes regardless.

In critical battleground states such as the aforementioned two, Pennsylvania, and others, seemingly minor changes in voter turnout or voting preferences could ultimately have a gigantic impact. This is due to a couple of reasons. Firstly, the margin of victory in these states – as they were in recent presidential election years – is certain to again be extremely small and thus susceptible to any type of electoral shift. In Michigan for example, former President Trump's win total back in 2016 was less than 11,000 votes, while President Biden carried the state in 2020 by less than 155,000 votes. Additionally, in Wisconsin, Trump won the state by less than 23,000 votes in 2016, and Biden by less than 21,000 votes in 2020.

Secondly, the issue of the Gaza War specifically has proved itself to be salient in these states as well. During the 2024 presidential primary process, more than 100,000 'uncommitted' protest votes were cast in Michigan, and nearly 50,000 in neighboring Wisconsin. Therefore, in the various upcoming November general elections in these states and others like Georgia, Arizona, North Carolina, and Nevada, the outcomes may be determined by how many of these same primary voters cast ballots for an independent candidate or abstain from voting altogether. In the last U.S. presidential election, Biden won six swing states by narrow margins – three of these by less than 21,000 votes. With Biden having of course dropped out of the 2024 race, Democratic nominee Harris will have to try and garner the support of those who felt dissatisfied with his Gaza War policy or risk losing tight states that were essential to the Biden-Harris triumph back in 2020.

When analyzing the potential impact of a subject like the Gaza War on U.S. elections in November, it is also necessary to juxtapose the significance of foreign policy considerations such as this with domestic-related ones. While it is undoubtedly a vital area of concern for enough voters to have a determining effect on some electoral outcomes, at the same time, for others, it might not be the principal factor in influencing their voting decision. Ordinarily, surveys show that domestic policies hold more weight than foreign policy issues for many American voters. Recent polls for this electoral cycle conducted by reputable sources like *Pew Research Center* and *Gallup* have found that inflation, housing, health care, and immigration are the top high-priority issues for voters, with foreign policy sitting a bit below in the list at around number ten. However, even if domestic issues are of the most relevance to a majority of the American electorate; in totality, the Gaza War does have the potential to play a determinant role on the overall outcome of a host of 2024 elections due to the sheer narrow margins expected.