

Polling

How polls work, and why they miss.

Political Science

Sources of error.

Sources of error

Sampling error, reported as a margin

Non-response correlated with vote choice

Turnout modelling assumptions

Question wording and order

Late swing after fieldwork closes

Reading polls well

Look at averages, not single polls

Check the fieldwork dates

Note the margin applies to each figure

Treat small subgroup figures cautiously

Educational reference. The margin of error covers sampling only. Non-response and turnout modelling errors are usually larger.