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NYU poll: Two-thirds of U.S. Jews back Obama over McCain

By Haaretz Service

A new poll commissioned by researchers at New York University reveals that American Jews favor Democratic presidential frontrunner Barack Obama over his Republic rival, John McCain, by a 67 - 33 percent margin.

The survey, which sampled the opinions of over 3,000 respondents - half of them being Jewish - also found that Jews as an ethnic group will support Obama by almost 30 percent more than other white, non-Hispanic voters.

The poll sought to gauge the importance Jewish voters attach to Israel as a consideration in whom they would vote for, with some surprising results. Of all the Jews surveyed who said that Israel is of "high" importance, 63 percent said they would vote for Obama. In contrast, only 42 percent of Jews who said Israel has "very high" importance said they planned to vote for Obama.

Not surprisingly, the Jewish vote swings heavily in McCain's favor among the Orthodox. According to the survey, the Arizona senator can count on support from 75 percent of Orthodox Jewish voters.

The poll was conducted this past September, when the gaps in poll numbers between Obama and McCain were smaller. Given the recent numbers favoring Obama, the survey's authors project that the ratio of Jewish voters backing the Illinois Democrat would swell from 2-to-1 to 3-to-1.

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