

Independents Day 2012

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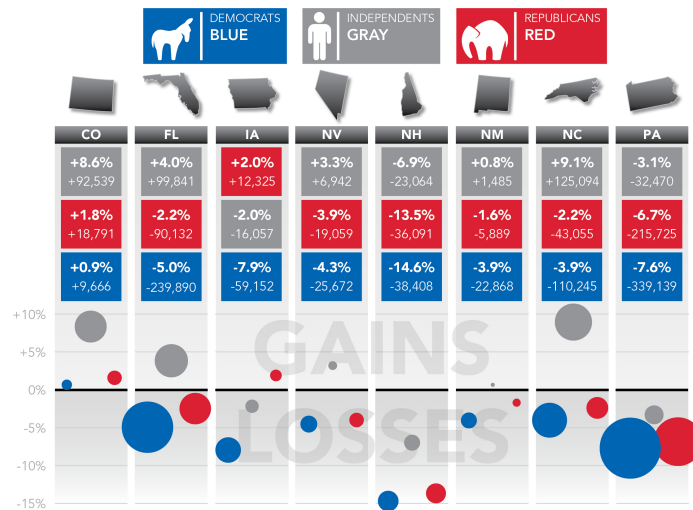
The number of registered Independents has increased since 2008 in many of the battleground states that will decide the 2012 election. Among 12 likely battleground states, 8 have partisan voter registration—Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania. In 7 of these 8 battleground states (all but Iowa), Independent registration gained ground relative to both parties in terms of voter registration between 2008 and 2011.

In each battleground state, Democratic registration fared worse relative to both Republican and Independent registration between 2008 and 2011. In all eight states, Republican registration gained relative to Democratic registration between 2008 and 2011.

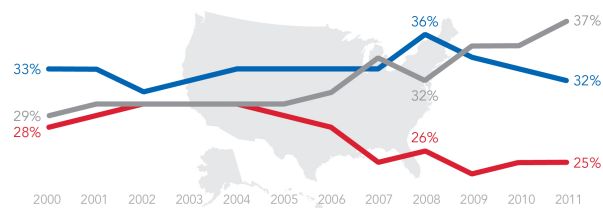
The importance of Independents has grown over time as voters are increasingly leaving the traditional two-party system. Based on the combination of this general trend and the rise in both registration and self-identification of Independents since 2008, the most likely scenario for 2012 is that Independents will make up a bigger portion of the electorate next year than in any election since 1976, based on national exit polls.

INDEPENDENTS DAY 2012

Voter Registration in 8 Battleground States: % and Actual Change Since 2008*



National Partisan Self-Identification



* The eight states represented are the only battleground states for which partisan voter registration is available (Michigan, Ohio, Virginia, and Wisconsin do not have partisan voter registration). Data compiled from secretaries of state office records. Based on data from the Third Way report "Independents Day 2012," available at: <http://www.thirdway.org/publications/470>. National electorate party self-identification data from Pew Research Center, May 4, 2011. © 2011 Third Way. Free for re-use with attribution/link. Visit Third Way at www.thirdway.org. Data visualization by Bill Rapp.



[JPG available via Flickr](#)

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