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Numbers Hold Up

Exit poll shows attacks didn't change result

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The results of yesterday's delayed primary vote appear about the same as what was expected on the eve of the World Trade Center catastrophe, exit polls suggested.

Boosted by the vote of Latinos, blacks, the poor and a base in his home borough, Bronx Borough President Fernando Ferrer appeared to be headed into an Oct. 11 runoff against Public Advocate Mark Green, the predicted front-runner.

Green drew higher numbers among better-educated New Yorkers and among Jews, voters under 30 and self-described liberals, according to interviews with 1,097 Democrats and 205 Republicans conducted as of 8:30 p.m. by Edison Media Research. The polls closed at 9 p.m.

Ferrer grabbed 70 percent of Latinos and 52 percent of blacks citywide but garnered only 6 percent of the white vote, according to the exit polling. Green — who won among Jewish respondents, with 50 percent — got 35 percent of the black vote and drew 16 percent of the Latino vote.

Trailing the front-runners, City Council Speaker Peter Vallone won among white Catholics with 53 percent of that group, according to the exit poll.

Vallone won only 3 percent of blacks and Comptroller Alan Hevesi, a fourth Democratic candidate, appeared to have 8 percent in that group.

Based on a statistically small sample of Queens voters, Vallone and Green appeared to lead the borough. In their respective strongholds, Ferrer got 65 percent in the Bronx, which made up about 17 percent of the citywide primary vote, while Green got 49 percent in Manhattan, where he was backed by the county organization. Vallone appeared to have as much as 30 percent of the Democratic vote in Queens.

If the results seemed to reflect a lack of change due to the Sept. 11 attack, one reason might be that voters stood by their earlier emphasis on education and the economy as main concerns. Thirty-one percent said education was the most important issue yesterday, 21 percent said the economy, and 12 percent said crime, while 15 percent said it was "preventing future terrorist attacks."

Of those who named education the priority, 36 percent supported Green and 35 percent supported Ferrer, according to the exit poll. They were divided the same way among respondents who said of their candidate, "He understands the city and its problems."

Rebuilding the city appeared to be at the bottom of the issues list.

As expected, media mogul Michael Bloomberg appeared to soundly trounce veteran politician Herman Badillo.

The polls showed strong support for outgoing Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, with 40 percent of Democrats saying they'd have voted for him had he been able to appear on the November ballot. Giuliani could not be a candidate due to term limits.

Three-fourths of voters from both parties said they were "very confident" the city would recover fully from the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center.

Two percent of Democrats and 16 percent of Republicans said they submitted write-in votes. Many were presumed last night to be for Giuliani, who on Monday advised voters against write-ins for him.

Exit-poll results for Democrats had a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percent and for Republicans, plus or minus 7 percent.

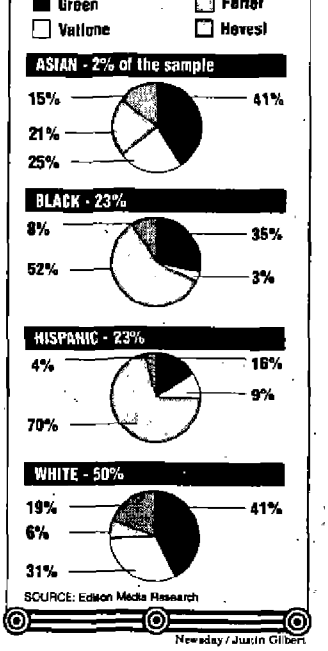


Photo by Mitch Jacobson

Michael Bloomberg after casting his vote in the primary at an Upper East Side school.

The Breakdown

How the major Democratic candidates for mayor fared among racial and ethnic groups, according to an exit poll of 1,097 voters.



SOURCE: Edison Media Research

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