

FORECASTING PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS: SOME DATA

YEAR	INC	GDP	UNEMP	Δ UN	PRES	STRK	PV	EV
1948	1	6.7	3.6	-	39	4	52	304*
1952	0	1.7	3.2	+0.1	32	5	45	89
1956	1	1.2	4.4	+0.4	69	1	58	457
1960	0	2.9	5.5	+0.4	49	2	50	303**
1964	1	5.7	4.9	-0.7	74	1	62	486
1968	0	6.2	3.7	+0.1	40	2	49	191***
1972	1	6.1	5.6	-0.4	56	1	62	520
1976	1	5.9	7.8	-0.9	45	2	49	241
1980	1	-1.8	7.8	+2.1	21	1	45	49
1984	1	7.9	7.5	-1.9	52	1	59	525
1988	0	4.8	5.4	-0.7	51	2	54	426
1992	1	3.3	6.9	-0.8	38	3	47	168
1996	1	4.2	5.5	-0.2	57	1	54	379
2000	0	4.9	4.0	-0.3	58	2	50.3	267
2004	1	3.1	5.5	-0.5	47	1	51.2	286
2008	0	0.4	5.8	+1.1	31	2	46.3	173
2012	1	2.6	8.3	-0.8	47	1	??	??

* 39 electoral votes were cast for States Rights Democrat candidate J. Strom Thurmond

** 14 “unpledged” electoral votes were cast for Harry F. Byrd.

*** 45 electoral votes were cast for American Independent Party candidate George C. Wallace.

YEAR is the Presidential election year.

INC is 1 if the incumbent President is running for re-election, and 0 otherwise.

GDP is real annualized GDP growth over the Fall, Winter, and Spring quarter preceding the election, e.g., from October 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012 (from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, <http://www.bea.gov/national/index.htm#gdp>).

UNEMP is the Unemployment Rate in July preceding the election (from U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, <http://data.bls.gov/timeseries/LNS14000000>).

Δ UN is the change in the Unemployment Rate from July of the year preceding the election to July of the election year.

STRK is “streak,” i.e., the number of consecutive elections won by the incumbent party.

PRES is the incumbent President’s approval rating in the first Gallup Poll taken after June 30 of the election year (Gallup Reports and <http://www.gallup.com/>).

PV is the percent of the two-party (i.e., excluding Perot, Nader, etc.) popular vote won by the incumbent party candidate.

EV is the number of electoral votes won by the incumbent party candidate (including “faithless electors”). The total number of electoral votes was 531 prior to 1960, 537 in 1960, and has been 538 since 1960.