How to accurately predict voting intention in pre-electoral elections

Tracking Polling Method

GAD3 case analysis: 2015-2022

Sara Morais- CEO & WAPOR Spanish Representative

Beatriz Losada- Head of Research
The Polling Method solution in a VUCA context

2015-2022

The Tracking Poll Method
How to use it and when.

Index
Introduction

The social, political and polling context 2015-2022
The Polling Method - Challenges

– 2014, polls failure in European Elections.
  • GAD3 was the only polling firm who estimated results for the new party PODEMOS.
  • However, the bias was more than 3 points (3.5% estimated vs. 7.0% obtained)

– 2014, Method Review.
  • New parties, new voters. We could not reach new voters through landline phones...
  • New parties, new polling context.
    – We can no longer use historical data to analysis social and political behavior.
    – We cannot use elector past tendencies of vote to correct de bias anymore.
  • New parties, new political context: voting fragmentation leads to more volatility in voter’s decisions.

The Polling Method: polling context

–2015-2017, Context of economic crisis and the emerge of new parties...

• Exit polls were accurate, however pre-electoral polls were not anticipating voting results correctly, due to blackout periods.

Source: own elaboration from elections results web pages and Poll Base (by Mark Pack).

The criteria for the distance is: absolute difference from the estimation (without DA/DK) of the % of valid vote to the final results of the 6 main parties.

In the cases of Israel, UK and Netherlands the % of votes have been calculated from the seats estimations.
The Polling Method: polling context

- **POLITICAL FRAGMENTATION = VOTING VOLATILITY**

- **Main changes in voting decision occurs during the electoral campaign**, 15 days leading up to elections, and even the day of the elections.

Source: GAD3 tracking poll for RCN Channel, Colombia (2022).
The first week of electoral campaign, **Rodolfo Hernandez** was leading ahead of **Fico Gutierrez**.

However, media and pre-electoral polls were unable to anticipate that Rodolfo Hernandez was advancing and about to lead just before the blackout period began 21/05, and many of the polls were conducted "face2face".

**Do polls really fail?**
# The Polling Method: polling context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Polling organisation/client</th>
<th>Date(s) conducted</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
<th>Gustavo Petro (PHC)</th>
<th>Federico Gutiérrez (EPC)</th>
<th>Rodolfo Hernández (LIGA)</th>
<th>Sergio Fajardo (CCE)</th>
<th>Íngrid Betancourt (PVO)</th>
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<td>First round election[3]</td>
<td>29 May 2022</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>40.34%</td>
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<td>23%</td>
<td>16%</td>
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<td>CNC/Semana[17]</td>
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<td>12%</td>
<td>9%</td>
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<td>34%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
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<td>35.5%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>YanHaas[22]</td>
<td>14–19 March 2022</td>
<td>1,238</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2%</td>
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<td>CNC/Semana[23]</td>
<td>18–19 March 2022</td>
<td>2,143</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>3%</td>
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</table>

Only one polling firm anticipated Rodolfo Hernandez as the runoff candidate, before the blackout period started.

Do polls really fail?
Introduction (II): polling methodological context

How to cope in a VUCA polling context?

VOLATILITY
UNCERTAINTY
COMPLEXITY
AMBIGUITY
The Polling Method
solution in a VUCA context

The tracking poll method
The Tracking Poll Method - INSIGHTS

- **KNOW**: Electoral Campaigns move votes
- **MESURE**: the closer to election day, the better
- **SELL**: publish results the day of the elections

POLLING TRUST
The Tracking Poll Method - Study cases (Madrid)

Source: GAD3 tracking poll for Telemadrid
The Tracking Poll Method -

TRACING POLL RESULTS

ELECTIONS RESULTS

MM finally got the second position

Sara Morais - CEO & WAPOR Spanish Representative/ Beatriz Losada - Head of Research
The Tracking Poll Method- Study cases (Andalusia)

Source: GAD3 tracking poll for FORTA
The Tracking Poll Method - Importance of publishing

In Spain, GAD3 publishes results at 20:00h the D-day (at the closure of polling stations) in every single national or regional election.
Polling methodological solutions- The tracking Poll

In Colombia, GAD3 publishes results every day during the electoral campaign until the blackout period starts.
The Tracking Poll Method - Accuracy and Trust

Madrid Assembly Elections

- **GAD3 Telemadrid 4M**
- **Results 4M**

### Seats Estimated correctly

- **Accuracy**
  - 62-65
  - 65
  - 21-24
  - 24
  - 25-28
  - 24
  - 12-14
  - 13
  - 10-11
  - 10

- **Accuracy Rate**
  - 64/65

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Sara Morais - CEO & WAPOR Spanish Representative
Beatriz Losada - Head of Research
The Tracking Poll Method - Accuracy and Trust

Andalusian Regional Government Elections

- **GAD3**
- **Results 19J**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>GAD3</th>
<th>Results 19J</th>
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<tr>
<td>PP</td>
<td>58</td>
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<td>PSOE</td>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>VOX</td>
<td>13-15</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>Por Andalucía</td>
<td>4-5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adelante Andalucía</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Seats Estimated correctly: 108/109

WAPOR

Sara Morais - CEO & WAPOR Spanish Representative
Beatriz Losada - Head of Research
The Tracking Poll Method
How to use it and when
What is the Tracking Poll Method?

The *tracking poll* is a **continuous survey (CATI)** conducted during the electoral campaign, **15 days before the date of the elections**.

9,998 interviews
What is the Tracking Poll Method?

**Daily representative sample:** we conduct up to 1,000 interviews per day

Sample is reinforced during the last 5 days (56%)
What is the Tracking Poll Method?

Short and sharp questionnaire of 5-6 questions:

1. Introduction
2. Elector past vote behaviour
3. Current voting intention
4. Probability to vote in the next elections
5. Profile: sex, age, ideology.
What is the Tracking Poll Method?

On a scale 0-10, what is the probability that you are going to vote in the next Madrid Assembly elections on May 4th?

We consider as a valid Sample those who affirm that they are going to vote (10/10) and those who have already voted by post, 79% of the sample.
Advantages and conclusions

- **Our method is an alternative** to an exit poll → reduces costs down to 10% its costs (400k to 40k).

- **Size sample reduction** from 400,000 to 10,000-12,000 telephone interview.

- **Accuracy**: measures last minute changes → 30% of the electors decide their vote throughout the electoral campaign and 10% changes at last minute.
Advantages and conclusions

• **Increases trust** in public opinion polls.

• For **private sector**: change powerful strategies (make better decisions understanding the reality)

• It can be **used in any electoral process** around the world.