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FAU Poll Finds Hispanics Turn to Internet for Political News, Use Determined by Several Factors

Results also Show Hispanics Remain Optimistic on Economy

BOCA RATON, Fla. (March 11, 2015) – Hispanics are turning to the Internet to get their political news, and more than four out of five younger Hispanics are using social media as their source for news, according to the latest survey conducted by the Florida Atlantic University Business and Economics Polling Initiative ([FAU BEPI](#)) in the College of Business.

The survey also shows a digital divide in the use of the Internet for news and politics. Hispanics with a college degree are more likely to use the Internet for their news source (52 percent to just 32 percent of Hispanics overall). More than 68 percent of the highest earning respondents in the survey (\$75,000 and above) check online for political news at least once per day.

Younger Hispanics (18-34) are most likely (84 percent) to use social media for their news. That contrasts sharply with 48 percent of those 55 and above who do not use social media for any of their news.

“Social media will have a huge impact on elections since it is an opportunity to be in touch with large number of voters quickly, constantly and at a low cost,” said Monica Escaleras, Ph.D., director of BEPI.

The survey also found that males are more than twice as likely as females (34 to 14 percent) to seek out opinions that conform to their ideology. Older people (55 and older) are more likely to seek out contrary opinions (26 percent), compared with just over 5 percent of those 18-34 and 11 percent of those 35-54.

“Anyone that wants to reach Hispanics, especially the younger generation, needs to recognize the growing role that the Internet and social media are playing,” said Kevin Wagner, associate professor of political science at FAU.

The Internet and social media poll was part of a monthly survey by BEPI of consumer optimism among Hispanics, which continued to stay strong at 98.1 compared to 100.7 in January, when the index reached its highest numbers since FAU started it in August 2014. The Current Conditions Index was down to 93 from 95.1, and the Consumer Expectations Index dipped to 101.4 from 104.3. The survey was conducted nationally from Feb. 1-28. The polling sample

consisted of 500 Hispanics with a margin of error of +/- 4.33 percent and a 95 percent confidence level.

For more information, contact Monica Escaleras at 561-297-1312 or BEPI@fau.edu or visit www.business.fau.edu/bepi.

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About FAU BEPI:

The Florida Atlantic University Business and Economic Polling Initiative Conducts surveys on business, economic, political and social issues with a focus on Hispanic attitudes and opinions at regional, state and national levels via planned monthly national surveys. The initiative subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research and is a resource for public and private organizations, academic research and media outlets. In addition, the initiative is designed to contribute to the educational mission of the University by providing students with valuable opportunities to enhance their educational experience by designing and carry out public opinion research.

About Florida Atlantic University:

Florida Atlantic University, established in 1961, officially opened its doors in 1964 as the fifth public university in Florida. Today, the University, with an annual economic impact of \$6.3 billion, serves more than 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students at sites throughout its six-county service region in southeast Florida. FAU's world-class teaching and research faculty serves students through 10 colleges: the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters, the College of Business, the College for Design and Social Inquiry, the College of Education, the College of Engineering and Computer Science, the Graduate College, the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College, the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing and the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. FAU is ranked as a High Research Activity institution by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The University is placing special focus on the rapid development of critical areas that form the basis of its strategic plan: Healthy aging, biotech, coastal and marine issues, neuroscience, regenerative medicine, informatics, lifespan and the environment. These areas provide opportunities for faculty and students to build upon FAU's existing strengths in research and scholarship. For more information, visit www.fau.edu.