CURRENT POPULATION REPORTS

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ESTIMATES OF THE POPULATION OF VOTING AGE, FOR STATES: NOVEMBER 1, 1968

This report presents estimates of the population of voting age for the United States by age, sex, and race, and of the total voting-age population for each State for the Presidential election of November 1968. The population of voting age includes all persons 21 years old and over except in the States of Georgia and Kentucky (18 years old and over), Alaska (19 years old and over), and Hawaii (20 years old and over).

Also included are estimates of the number of persons in each State who will be old enough to vote for the first time in the Presidential election and of the number of persons who would be added to the voting-age population if the voting age were universally lowered to age 18. For the United States as a whole, figures on prospective new voters are shown separately for men and for women and for whites and Negroes. Estimates of the population of voting age and of the proportion casting votes in the election years since 1960 are also shown for States.

About 121.5 million persons (including Armed Forces abroad) will be old enough to vote in the 1968 general election (table A). This is by far the largest number of potential voters for any election in our Nation's history and represents a substantial increase over 1964 (up 7.1 million from 114.4 million). Also, in large part because of the baby boom years of 1946 and 1947, a record number of persons--12 1/2 million--will be old enough to vote for President for the first time in the upcoming election.

Females of voting age are expected to outnumber males by about 5 million, and whites will outnumber Negroes by about 10 to 1 (table A). The Negro population of voting age, which now numbers about 11.4 million, has grown at about the same rate as the corresponding white population since 1964--a 6.5 percent increase for the Negro population compared with 6.1 percent for the white population.

Of the estimated 12.4 million persons old enough to vote for President in November for the first time, 10.9 million are white and 1.3 million are Negro. Males eligible to vote for the first time will outnumber females by about 100,000 (6.3 million males and 6.2 million females).

The distribution of the total resident population of voting age by broad age groups, sex, and race is shown in table B. Slightly more than one-half of the voting-age population is 45 and over. Only 44 percent of the Negro population of voting age is in this group, as compared with 51 percent for the white population. One in 10 whites of voting age in the United States is under 25; for every 12 Negroes of voting age there is one under 25. Older whites (65 and over) outnumber older Negroes 13 to 1.

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Table A.--ESTIMATES OF THE POPULATION OF VOTING AGE AND NUMBER REACHING VOTING AGE, BY RACE AND SEX, FOR THE UNITED STATES: NOVEMBER 1964 AND 1968

(In thousands. Population 21 years old and over, except as follows: 18 years and over in Georgia and Kentucky, 19 years and over in Alaska, and 20 years and over in Hawaii)

Race and sex	Total population including Armed Forces overseas		Total resident population[1]		Civilian resident population[2]	
	1968	1964	1968	1964	1968	1964
POPULATION OF VOTING AGE						
Total	121,547	114,446	120,006	113,817	118,465	112,250
Sex:						
Male	58,295	55,217	57,119	54,609	55,618	53,079
Female	63,252	59,229	62,887	59,209	62,847	59,172
Race:						
White	108,960	102,706	107,525	102,141	106,132	100,707
Nonwhite	12,587	11,739	12,481	11,676	12,333	11,542
Negro	11,424	10,728	11,336	10,672	11,205	10,549
NUMBER REACHING VOTING AGE SINCE PREVIOUS PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION						
Total	12,493	10,535	12,104	10,272	11,323	9,623
Sex:						
Male	6,304	5,289	5,876	5,027	5,156	4,384
Female	6,189	5,246	6,228	5,245	6,167	5,238
Race:						
White	10,990	9,283	10,637	9,045	9,917	8,451
Nonwhite	1,503	1,251	1,467	1,227	1,405	1,172
Negro	1,384	1,147	1,355	1,125	1,300	1,075

[1] Includes Armed Forces stationed in the United States but excludes those stationed outside the United States.
[2] Excludes all Armed Forces.

Table B.--ESTIMATES OF THE TOTAL RESIDENT POPULATION OF VOTING AGE, BY AGE, RACE, AND SEX, FOR THE UNITED STATES: NOVEMBER 1968

(In thousands)

Age	Total resident population	Sex		Race		
		Male	Female	White	Nonwhite	
					Total	Negro
Persons of voting age	120,006	57,119	62,887	107,525	12,481	11,336
Under 25 years[1]	12,288	5,957	6,330	10,755	1,534	1,413
25 to 34 years	23,829	11,714	12,115	21,006	2,824	2,552
35 to 44 years	23,657	11,531	12,126	20,988	2,670	2,381
45 to 64 years	40,987	19,668	21,319	37,051	3,935	3,601
65 years and over	19,246	8,249	10,997	17,726	1,519	1,389

[1] Includes persons 18 to 20 years old in Georgia and Kentucky, 19 and 20 in Alaska, and 20 years old in Hawaii.

In 1968, both California and New York are expected to have more than one million persons who for the first time will be old enough to vote for President of the United States. Texas, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Illinois will each have more than half a million new voters.

In the 1964 Presidential election, voter participation was highest in Utah, where nearly 79 percent of the persons of voting age went to the polls, and lowest in Mississippi, where only 33 percent cast ballots (see chart). The fact that Mississippi has the most rigorous residence requirements (appendix table A-1) may be partly responsible for the low voter participation.

In 41 States, somewhat more than half the population of voting age voted in 1964 (table 1). Among the four regions of the country, the South showed the lowest voter participation, with 48 percent of the population of voting age voting. This compares with 67 percent in the Northeast, 70 percent in the North Central Region, and 66 percent in the West.

The total number of votes cast for President for the Nation as a whole in November 1964 was 70.7 million, or 62 percent of the total resident population of voting age.[1] On the basis of the percent casting votes in 1964, about 74 million voters would be expected to go to the polls this November.

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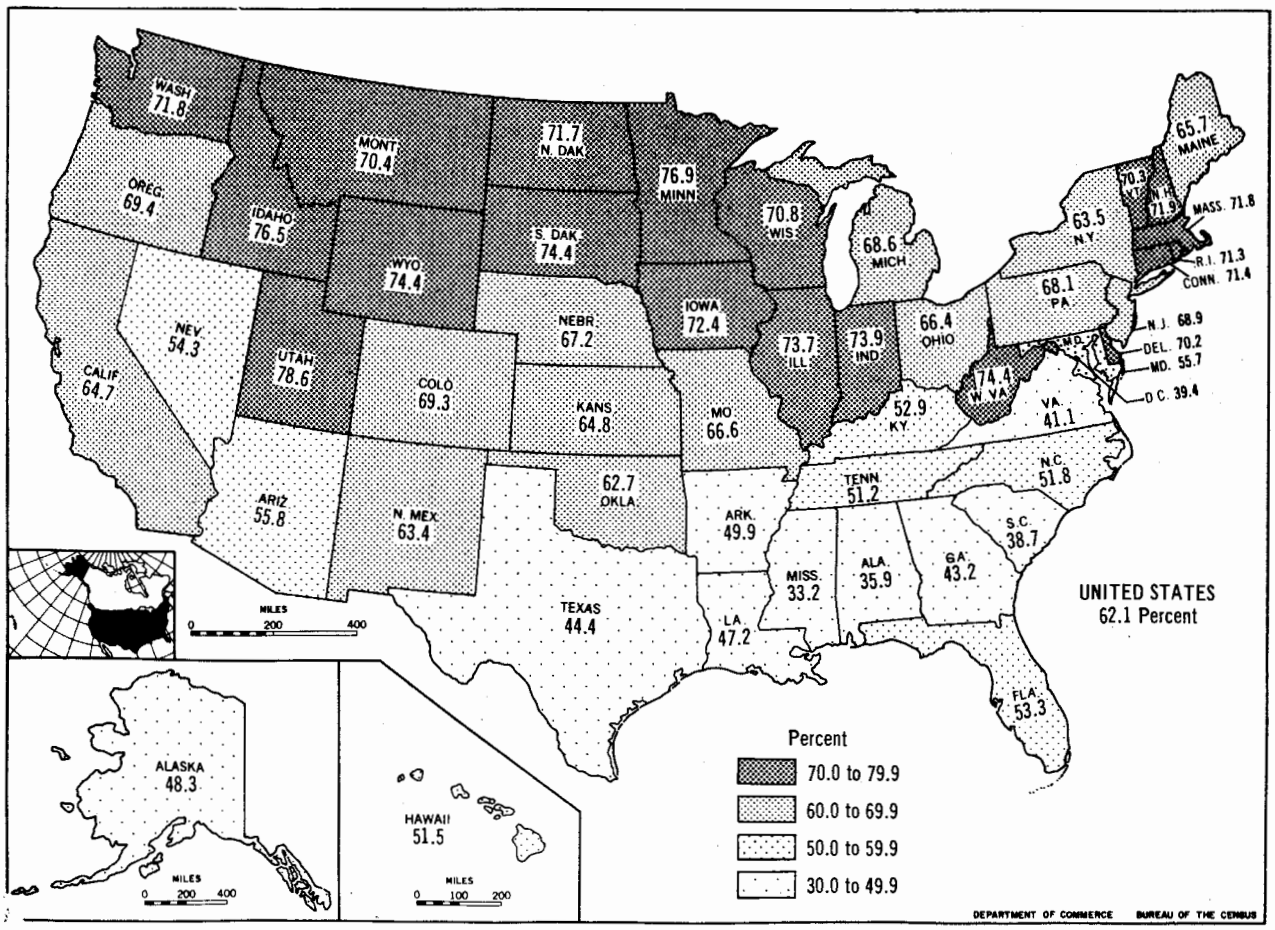
[1]In a survey of voter participation conducted two weeks after the 1964 national election, an estimated 69 percent of the civilian noninstitutional population of voting age said they voted in the 1964 election. See Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 143, "Voter Participation in the National Election: November 1964," October 1965. For data relevant to the election of November 1966, see Report No. 174 of the same series.

PERCENTAGE OF VOTING-AGE POPULATION VOTING IN 1964 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION



Note: Percentages are based on votes cast for President and the total resident population of voting age in each State.

The Congress of the United States is now considering lowering the voting age for national elections to 18 years of age in all States. The estimated effect of this would be to add 9.7 million more persons to the population of voting age (see appendix table A-2).

The population of voting age includes a great many persons who, although they are old enough to vote, cannot do so for many reasons. It is estimated that about 9 million persons will not meet statutory requirements for voting in 1968. Among these persons are the aliens. It is estimated that 2.7 million aliens of voting age will be residing in the United States on November 1968 (table 1).[2]

A large number of potential voters fail to meet State voting requirements. An estimated 5.6 million people cannot vote because they have changed their place of residence and have not lived long enough at their new location to meet residence requirements there.[2] Another 1.1 million inmates of prisons and mental institutions are also disfranchised.

Table 1 shows a second set of voter participation rates for the 1964 Presidential election which represents an attempt to adjust the base to more nearly reflect those persons who are actually entitled to vote. On the basis of these revised rates, 67 percent of the eligible voters in the United States went to the polls, and three States--Utah, Wyoming, and Idaho--had more than 80 percent of their eligible voters voting.

Every State allows servicemen the privilege of the absentee ballot and only one (Mississippi) does not allow temporarily absent civilians the same privilege. However, only 25 of the 49 States which require voter registration permit registration by mail, although some make exception for special categories.[3] The necessity of registering in person considerably limits the number who will be able to utilize the absentee ballot.

METHODOLOGY

The estimates of the voting-age population for November 1960 to 1966 were based on annual estimates of the population of States by age, July 1, 1960 to 1967, published in Report No. 384 of this series.

The July 1 estimates were developed by carrying forward 1960 Census data by age for each State allowing for births, deaths, net civilian international plus interstate migration, net exchange of persons moving between civilian life and the Armed Forces between April 1, 1960, and the estimate date, and the Armed Forces stationed in each State on the estimate date.[4]

The estimates of the voting-age population for November 1, 1968, were based on November 1966 estimates plus projections of net change for this age group between November 1966 and 1968, consistent with State projections in Current Population Reports, Series P-25, No. 375.

Procedures used to develop the estimates of the voting-age population for 1968 given in this report are somewhat simpler than those used to prepare the regular current population estimates. The figures are designed primarily to provide gross patterns and levels of the national electorate and of "new voters." Small differences between figures as well as small changes over time should be interpreted cautiously.

Estimates of the number of aliens by State of residence are derived from data as reported by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Statistics by age from the 1960 Census on the number of "foreign born" in the United States in 1960 who were living abroad in 1955 provided a means for estimating the proportion of this total that was of voting age.

Those persons failing to meet State residence requirements for participation in national elections constitute by far the largest component of all the ineligibles. To estimate this category, use was made of March 1967 national data on interstate, intercounty, and intracounty movements reported by the Current Population Survey for the previous year. Each of these was allocated to States on the basis of the 1955-60 State migration data from the 1960 Census. As a final step, an appropriate proportion of the movers and migrants were allocated as being ineligible on the basis of the voting requirements for each State as given in appendix table A-1.[5]

Estimates of the population in correctional and mental institutions were developed by applying the

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[2]By comparison, the Current Population Survey shows 2.3 million aliens and 5.6 million citizens not meeting residence requirements in the 1966 elections. See Series P-20, No. 174, op. cit., table 9.

[3]U.S. Department of Defense, Armed Forces Information Service, Voting Information, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1968.

[4]A more detailed description of the procedures used for deriving estimates of State population by age is given in the text of Series P-25, No. 384.

[5]See also, Meyer Zitter and Donald E. Starsinic, "Estimates of Eligible Voters in Small Areas: Some First Approximations," American Statistical Association: Proceedings of the Social Statistics Section, 1966, pages 368-378.

percent increase in the civilian resident population in each State to the 1960 Census count of these populations.

RELATED REPORTS

The estimates of the voting-age population are consistent with estimates of the population of States published in Series P-25, No. 384, and with the estimated national population by age published in Series P-25, Nos. 385 and 400.

Figures shown here for the total resident population of voting age are consistent with estimates of the civilian resident and civilian noninstitutional population of voting age for 1968 shown in tables 1 and 2 of Series P-20, No. 172, "Characteristics of Persons of Voting Age, 1964 to 1968." Detailed characteristics of persons reporting themselves as voters in the 1964 and 1966 elections and of nonvoters, are published in Series P-20, Nos. 143 and 174.

ROUNDING OF ESTIMATES

The estimates presented in the tables of this report have been rounded to the nearest thousand without being adjusted to group totals which are independently rounded. The percentages are based on unrounded numbers.