

## Special Studies

U.S. Department of Commerce  
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

Series P-23, No. 74  
Issued September 1978

# Registration and Voting in November 1976 — Jurisdictions Covered by the Voting Rights Act Amendments of 1975

**Registration  
and Voting in  
November 1976  
— Jurisdictions  
Covered by the  
Voting Rights Act  
Amendments  
of 1975**



**U.S. Department of Commerce**  
Juanita M. Kreps, Secretary  
Courtenay M. Slater, Chief Economist

**BUREAU OF THE CENSUS**  
Manuel D. Plotkin, Director



**BUREAU OF THE CENSUS**  
**Manuel D. Plotkin, Director**  
**Robert L. Hagan, Deputy Director**  
**Daniel B. Levine, Associate Director for**  
**Demographic Fields**

**POPULATION DIVISION**  
**Meyer Zitter, Chief**

### **Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data**

United States. Bureau of the Census.

Registration and voting in November 1976 in jurisdictions covered by the voting rights act amendments of 1975.

(Current population reports : Special studies : series P-23 ; no. 74)

Supt. of Docs. no.: C 3.186:23/74

1. Voters, Registration of--United States--Statistics.  
2. Voting--United States--Statistics. 3. Elections--United States--Statistics. I. Title. II. Series:  
United States. Bureau of the Census. Current population reports : Special studies : Series P-23 ; no. 74.  
HA203.A218 no. 74 [JK1968 1976] 312'.0973s

[329'.023'73925] 78-11194

---

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, and U.S. Department of Commerce district offices. Postage stamps not acceptable; currency submitted at sender's risk. Remittances from foreign countries must be by international money order or by draft on a U.S. bank. Additional charge for foreign mailing, \$14.00. All population series reports sold as a single consolidated subscription at \$56.00 per year. Price for this report \$1.50.

# Contents

	Page
Introduction . . . . .	1
Voting and registration by place of occurrence . . . . .	1
Comparison of survey results and election returns . . . . .	1

## DETAILED TABLES

Table	
1. Number of citizens 18 years old and over reported voting and registered, by race and ethnic origin . . . . .	3
2. Percent of citizens 18 years old and over reported voting and registered, by race and ethnic origin . . . . .	12
3. Number of citizens 18 years old and over voting in the November 1976 election . . . . .	22
4. Adjusted percent of citizens 18 years old and over reported voting, by race and ethnic origin. . . . .	25

## APPENDIX

Definitions and explanations . . . . .	31
Source and reliability of the estimates . . . . .	31
Table A	
Effective sample sizes (number of interviewed households) in the sample portions of the surveyed jurisdictions . . . . .	33

# Registration and Voting in November 1976—Jurisdictions Covered by the Voting Rights Act Amendments of 1975

## INTRODUCTION

This report contains the final results of the 1976 Survey of Registration and Voting conducted by the Bureau of the Census in accordance with the requirements of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 1973aa-5), as amended in 1975 by Public Law 94-73. The purpose of the survey was to provide a count of citizens of voting age by race and national origin in selected political jurisdictions and to determine the extent to which they were registered to vote and have voted. The surveys were completed in 78 political subdivisions subject to section 4(a) of the Act, as well as in 9 States under statewide coverage. Personal interviews were conducted at all eligible units selected for the survey. The questionnaire was completed by obtaining the required information from a responsible adult household member for all related household members. Callbacks were made to obtain information for unrelated persons in a household.

Tables 1 and 2 provide information as reported in the 1976 Survey of Registration and Voting; table 3 compares the survey results with election returns for each of the States and political subdivisions. Table 4 shows the survey voting results adjusted to election returns (see appendix A for a description of the adjustment procedures). Estimates of sampling error are included in tables 1, 2, and 4 for all areas in which sample surveys were conducted. Table A shows the effective sample size for sampled jurisdictions.

## VOTING AND REGISTRATION BY PLACE OF OCCURRENCE

The tables show two voting and registration rates for each jurisdiction: (1) the total rate for all citizens of voting age living in the jurisdiction at the time of the survey, regardless of whether they voted or were registered in the jurisdiction or someplace else, and (2) the within-jurisdiction rate for citizens reporting that they voted or were registered in the jurisdiction in which they were surveyed. Generally, the within-jurisdiction and the total voting and registration rates are similar. In a few jurisdictions, however, the within-jurisdiction rate is substantially lower than the total rate. This situation occurs when a jurisdiction contains a large number of persons who maintain their voting residence elsewhere and who voted in that jurisdiction. These persons are usually military personnel living in barracks and college students in dormitories.

The data for Jackson County, N.C. illustrate the effect that a college population can have on the within-jurisdiction voting rate. For Jackson County, the survey shows a total voting rate of 58.9 percent and a within-jurisdiction rate of 50.1 percent, a difference of 8.8 percentage points (table 2). Reducing the number of citizens by an estimate of the number of college students living in dormitories (2,627)<sup>1</sup> and recomputing the rate yields a within-jurisdiction voting rate of 58.4 percent, only half a point below the 58.9 percent for the total county.

In a similar way, the results for Craven County, N.C. illustrate the effect of a large military installation (Cherry Point Marine Corps Base) on the voting rate. Survey results show a total voting rate of 43.6 percent and a within-jurisdiction rate of 36.1 percent. Reducing the number of citizens by the number of persons living in military barracks (4,802) and recomputing the rate results in a within-jurisdiction voting rate of 40.4 percent.

Not all jurisdictions contain large group quarters populations, and some that do, have large household populations as well. Where the number of votes cast outside the jurisdiction is a relatively small proportion of all votes cast, the total and within-jurisdiction voting and registration rates will be similar.

## COMPARISON OF SURVEY RESULTS AND ELECTION RETURNS

Table 3 of this report compares survey estimates of the number of voters with the election returns reported by local election officials in each of the surveyed jurisdictions. In the majority of both sample and census jurisdictions covered in the 1976 Registration and Voting Survey, the survey estimate exceeds election returns. Column (h) of table 3 shows the extent of overreporting in each jurisdiction. Similar overstatement of voting has been noted in surveys of voting behavior by other organizations and in the Current Population Survey conducted by the Bureau of the Census, in which the overstatement has varied between 5 and 10 percent of the total number of persons reported as having voted for

---

<sup>1</sup> The college dormitory population is used to estimate the number of students not eligible to vote in the jurisdiction. Nationwide, in 1976, approximately 38 percent of college students lived in dormitories. According to the U.S. Office of Education, 6,912 students were enrolled in Western Carolina University in Jackson County in the 1976-77 school year.

President.<sup>2</sup> Possible reasons for the differences include the following:

**1. Understatement of election returns.** In some jurisdictions the only count of election returns is the number of votes cast for President. In these jurisdictions, the election returns will be smaller than the total number of persons

---

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 322, "Voting and Registration in the Election of November 1976,"* U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1978. For a comprehensive discussion of the problem, including a comparison of the 1964 Bureau of the Census survey with that conducted by the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan, see Aage R. Clausen, "Response Validity: Vote Report," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. XXXII, No. 4, winter 1968-69, pp. 588-606.

who voted because (a) there are some valid ballots for which there was no vote cast for President and (b) some ballots are invalidated in the counting. Precise estimates of the size of these sources of error are not available.

**2. Overreporting of voting.** Some persons who actually did not vote may be reluctant to report what they view as a lapse in civic responsibility, and some respondents reporting on the voting behavior of other members of the household assumed the person in question had voted when, in fact, he or she had not. The results of the Census Bureau's attempts to measure the extent of and to correct for this overreporting are shown in table 4.