



Population Estimates and Projections

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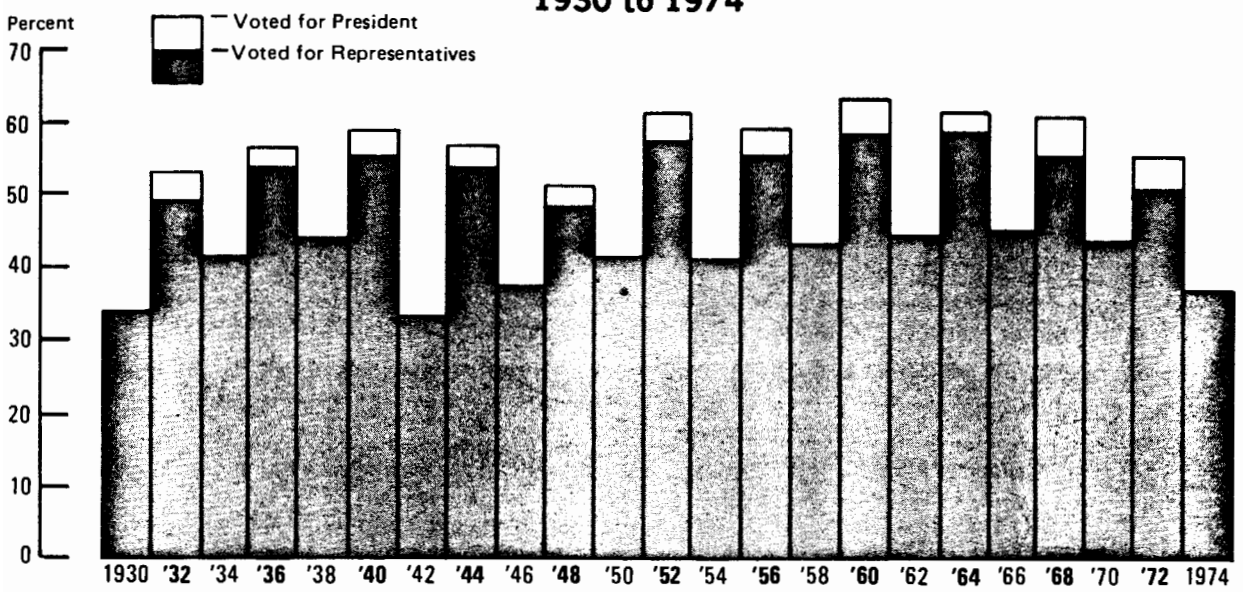
PROJECTIONS OF THE POPULATION OF VOTING AGE FOR STATES: NOVEMBER 1976

This report presents projections of the November 1976 population of voting age for States by race and broad age groups as a reference for the upcoming Presidential election. Included are estimates of the population of voting age and percent casting votes in Presidential and Congressional election years in each State since 1960 and in the United States since 1930. The information on number of votes cast for both Presidential and Congressional election years is published biennially by the U.S. Congress, Clerk of the House in either *Statistics of the Presidential and Congressional Elections* or *Statistics of the Congressional Elections*. Statistics on persons registered to vote are shown for

1972 in table 1 for those States where the information is available.¹ Also, an attempt is made to identify those components of the national voting-age population who are ineligible to vote and to illustrate their impact on voter participation rates in November 1972, the last Presidential election. Appendix tables show current residence requirements and selected voter information.

¹Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Registration data are shown in table 1 for comparison with data on the voting age population and number of voters. The Bureau of the Census does not normally maintain an inventory of registration data as part of its estimates program.

Figure 1. Percent Casting Votes for President and U.S. Representatives: 1930 to 1974



Source: Table 6.

Beginning in November 1972, the population of voting age includes all persons 18 years old and over as a result of the ratification of the 26th Amendment to the United States Constitution. The data shown in the tables of this report for November 1972 and 1974, relate to persons 18 years old and over in all States and the District of Columbia, including members of the Armed Forces stationed in each State. They exclude population overseas—currently about 500,000 Armed Forces and 50,000 civilian employees, plus their dependents of voting age—who would be eligible to vote by absentee ballot in their home State. All States and the District of Columbia permit members of the Armed Forces to register and vote by the absentee process. In 1968, the Congress amended the Federal Voting Assistance Act of 1955 to permit all other U.S. citizens temporarily residing overseas to register or vote. Thirty-seven States now permit these individuals to vote by absentee ballot.²

For elections prior to 1972, the voting-age population included persons 21 years old and over, except in Georgia and Kentucky (18 years old and over), Alaska (19 years old and over), and Hawaii (20 years old and over).

FINDINGS

There are now 150 million persons of voting age in the United States. Since the last Presidential election in 1972 the nation's potential electorate has increased by nearly 10 million persons. This is only half the increase that occurred between the 1968 and 1972 Presidential elections when the voting-age population grew some 20 million persons. Much of the growth during the earlier period, however, was attributed to the lowering of the

voting age requirement to age 18. Also contributing was the large number of persons born during the postwar years who reached the age of majority.

Differential patterns of growth between 1972 and 1976 in the voting-age population by age and region can be noted in table A. Although 44 percent of the voting age population is 45 years old or older, this proportion is declining. The middle-aged population (45 to 64) is now growing quite slowly compared with younger adults and the elderly. This group will continue to lag behind the growth of other ages for some years to come as it absorbs the small population cohort born during the 1930's. The number of persons 25 to 44 is now mushrooming as the post-war baby boom cohort begins to feed into this age group, and it can be expected to continue to grow quite rapidly.

Rates of growth for young people of voting-age (under 25) are still high nationally and are highest in the West. Older populations are showing substantial growth in the South and West, reflecting the traditional shift of older people to these regions of the country.

The black population of voting age is expected to number 15 million in November 1976 (table 2), an increase of 10 percent over the last Presidential election. The black population, which comprises 10 percent of the total electorate (table B) is considerably younger than the white population of voting age, due in large part to higher fertility rates among blacks.

In November 1976, a larger proportion of blacks of voting age (23 percent) will be under 25 years old compared with whites (18 percent). The black population constitutes a larger proportion of the South's population of voting age than any other region. In the District of Columbia, blacks are a majority of the electorate. In Mississippi, South Carolina, and Louisiana, they represent somewhat more than one-quarter of the voting-age population (table 3).

² See Federal Voting Assistance Program, 10th Report, September 1975, Department of Defense, Washington, D.C.

Table A. Percent Change in the Population of Voting Age by Region, by Age: 1972 to 1976

Age	United States	Northeast	North Central	South	West
All ages.....	7.1	3.4	4.3	10.5	10.8
Under 25 years.....	8.9	5.4	9.6	9.0	12.1
25 to 44 years.....	9.8	5.2	7.9	13.1	13.1
45 to 64 years.....	1.7	-1.0	-1.7	4.5	6.4
65 years and over.....	9.4	5.0	4.5	15.6	13.4

Table B. Blacks and Other Major Racial or Language Groups as a Percent of the Voting-Age Population by Region: November 1, 1976 and April 1, 1970

Race	United States	North-east	North Central	South	West
1976					
Blacks.....	10.3	9.0	7.8	16.4	4.8
Other races.....	1.6	0.9	0.7	0.7	5.1
1970					
Blacks.....	9.8	7.8	7.2	16.6	4.4
Other races.....	1.2	0.6	0.5	0.5	4.3
American Indian.....	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.9
Asian American.....	0.7	0.4	0.2	0.2	3.0
Spanish heritage.....	3.8	2.0	1.2	3.9	10.6

Other racial minorities (mostly American Indians and Asian Americans) comprise a very small proportion of the voting-age population of the country. The greatest proportion of American Indians and Asian Americans is found in the West, where they constituted, respectively, 1 percent and 3 percent of the voting-age population in 1970. Half of Hawaii's population 18 and over was Asian American in 1970. The largest proportion of American Indians in the voting-age population of any State was 5.7 percent in New Mexico.

Persons of Spanish heritage are concentrated in the West and South, where in 1970 they constituted more than 35 percent of the voting-age population in New Mexico and about 10 to 15 percent in Arizona, Texas, California, and Colorado.

An analysis of voting statistics has shown a great decline in voter participation since 1960, with voting in Presidential elections down from 63 percent in 1960 to 55 percent in November 1972. The Presidential election year of 1960 showed the highest participation rate recorded in the last 46 years (figure 1 and table 6).

Falling voter participation rates are evident throughout the United States since 1960, although there was a smaller decline in voter participation rates in the South than in any other region during the last four Presidential election years. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 encourages greater voting participation in the South, and its peak participation rates occurred in 1968. Voter participation is still well below the national average in most Southern States, however.

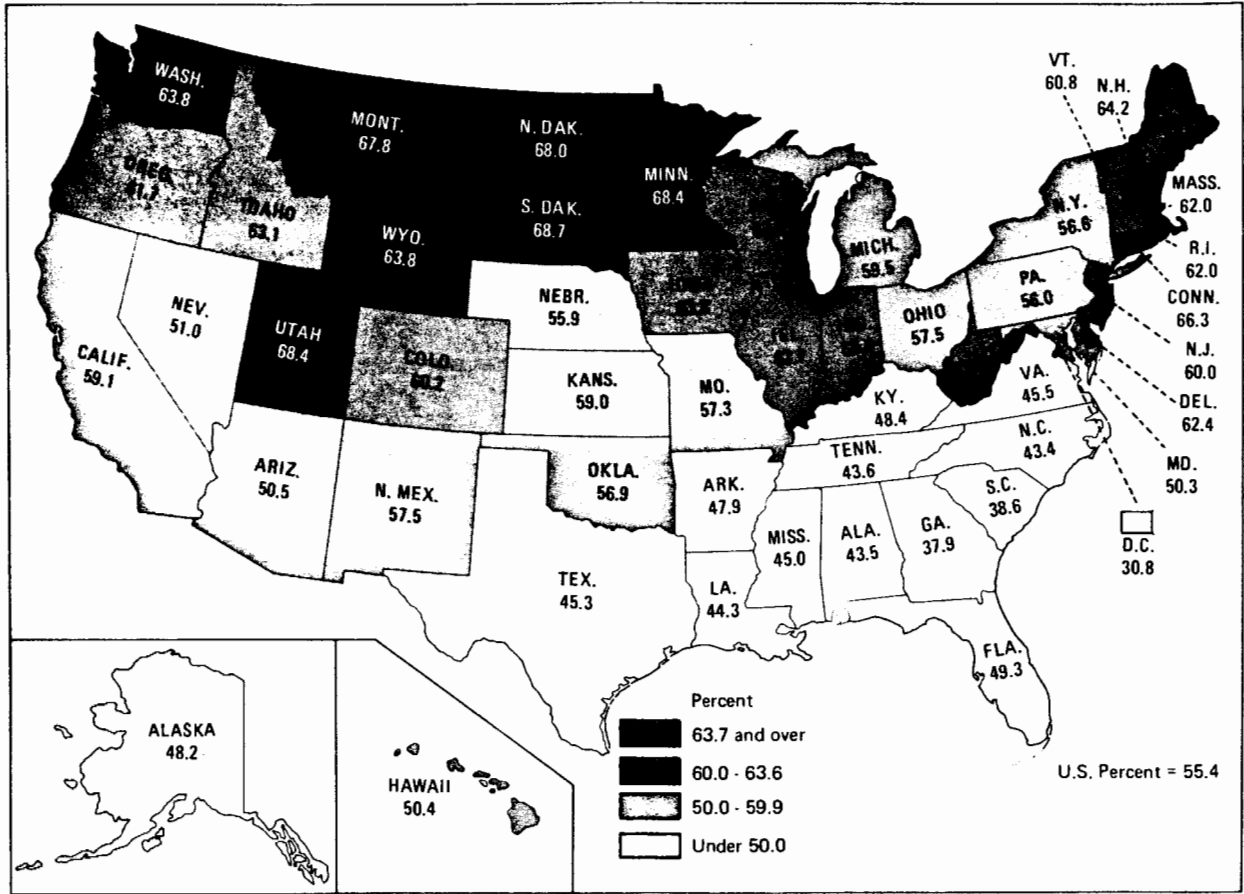
In the Presidential election of 1972, Minnesota, North and South Dakota, Montana, and Utah had the highest voter participation, with more than 67 percent of the voting-age population voting, more than 12 percentage points above the national average. At the other extreme, less than 31 percent voted in the District of Columbia, 38 percent in Georgia, and 39 percent in South Carolina. (See map).

The population of voting age includes a number of persons who meet the age requirement but cannot vote, although the number is appreciably smaller than in past elections. Aliens are the principle group of ineligible voting-age population. It is estimated that about 2.3 percent of the population residing in the United States in November 1976 will be aliens (table 1). In addition somewhat more than 500,000 persons will be disenfranchised because they have been committed to prisons, mental hospitals, and other institutions.

On a State-by-State basis, aliens are highly concentrated, and are found in appreciable numbers in only a few States. More than a quarter of the alien population is estimated to reside in California (918,000). Combined with New York (629,000), Florida (273,000), Texas (249,000), Illinois (229,000), and New Jersey (170,000), these six States account for 70 percent of the alien population in the United States.³

³The estimates for November 1972 of the citizen population of voting age for States contained in this report were not used for purposes of the 1975 Amendments to the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (Public Law 94-73). Estimates of the citizen population of voting age for States and Political Subdivisions covered under the Act Amendments for November 1972 will be published in **Current Population Report, Series P-25, No. 627.**

Figure 2. Percent of the Voting - Age Population Voting in 1972 Presidential Election



The length of residence required by all States to establish eligibility in general elections, which at one time was as much as two years in Mississippi, is no longer a legal requirement.⁴ Currently, States require a residence from 30 to 60 days to complete whatever administrative tasks are necessary to prevent election fraud. See appendix table A-1 for current State residence qualifications.

METHODOLOGY

The projections of the population of voting age by State for November 1976 by age and race were based on 1970 population counts by age and race published in

⁴ In March 1972, in the case of *Dunn v. Blumstein*, 405 U.S. 330, the United States Supreme Court abolished such requirements in State and local elections when it struck down Tennessee's one-year State and 3 month county requirements as unconstitutional. The Voting Rights Act Amendment of 1970 eliminated the residency requirement as a precondition to voting for President and Vice-President of the United States. See appendix table A-1.

table 19 of the 1970 Census of Population, Characteristics of the Population, for each State, and provisional July 1, 1975 estimates of the resident population by age, for States, published in *Current Population Reports*, Series P-25, No. 619. The census counts were adjusted slightly to agree with national and State totals used for apportionment purposes (U.S. total 203,235,298), and to correct for the overstatement of the "other races" population and for centenarians in the census.

The projections of the voting-age population for States, by age, for November 1976 were derived by extending the trend in the July 1, 1974 and 1975 estimates for one year and four months. The projections, by age, for States, obtained in this manner were adjusted to add to a national projection of the population by age.

The 1976 estimates by race for each State were based on July 1, 1973 estimates of the population by race, of which data for selected States were published in *Current*

Population Reports, Series P-23, No. 54, "The Social and Economic Status of the Black Population in the United States, 1974." To estimate the black population of each State in the above mentioned report, a component procedure was used, with each of the components of population change (births, deaths, and net migration) estimated separately. The migration component was estimated from the Social Security's One Percent Continuous Work History Sample.

The projections of the population, by race, were developed by extending the April 1, 1970 and July 1, 1973 estimated racial proportion to November 1976 on the assumption that the patterns of population change would continue into the decade.

The estimates of the resident population of voting age for each State for elections prior to November 1970, were based on intercensal estimates of the resident population of States published in **Current Population Reports, Series P-25, No. 460**. The proportion of the population of each State, which was 21 years and over (18 years and over in Kentucky and Georgia; 20 years and over in Hawaii; and 19 years and over in Alaska) in the two consecutive censuses, was derived. Linear interpolation between the 1960 and 1970 census proportions provided an estimate for each State for each of the election years. These proportions were then applied to the appropriate annual estimates of the intercensal population for States to yield estimates of the voting-age population. As a final step, these estimates were adjusted to an independent estimate of the voting-age population for the United States as a whole.

LIMITATION OF ESTIMATES

The procedure for developing the age estimates involves a short-term extrapolation of age trends beyond the estimates for July 1, 1975. The method used to develop the projections by race are substantially weaker than those used to prepare the overall age detail. The 1973 estimates of the total black population from which the projections are derived were based on experimental techniques and are subject to a yet untested level of error. The data are subject to revision pending completion of current research. The figures are designed primarily to provide very rough approximations of growth patterns and levels of the voting-age population by race. Small differences between figures as well as small changes over time, should be interpreted cautiously.

RELATED REPORTS

The estimates of the voting-age population for November 1976 are consistent with estimates of the population of States by age for July 1, 1975, published in **Current Population Reports, Series P-25, No. 619**. Related data from the Current Population Survey on reported voter registration in the election of November 1974, are published in **Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 275**.

ROUNDING OF ESTIMATES

The estimates presented in the tables for 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.