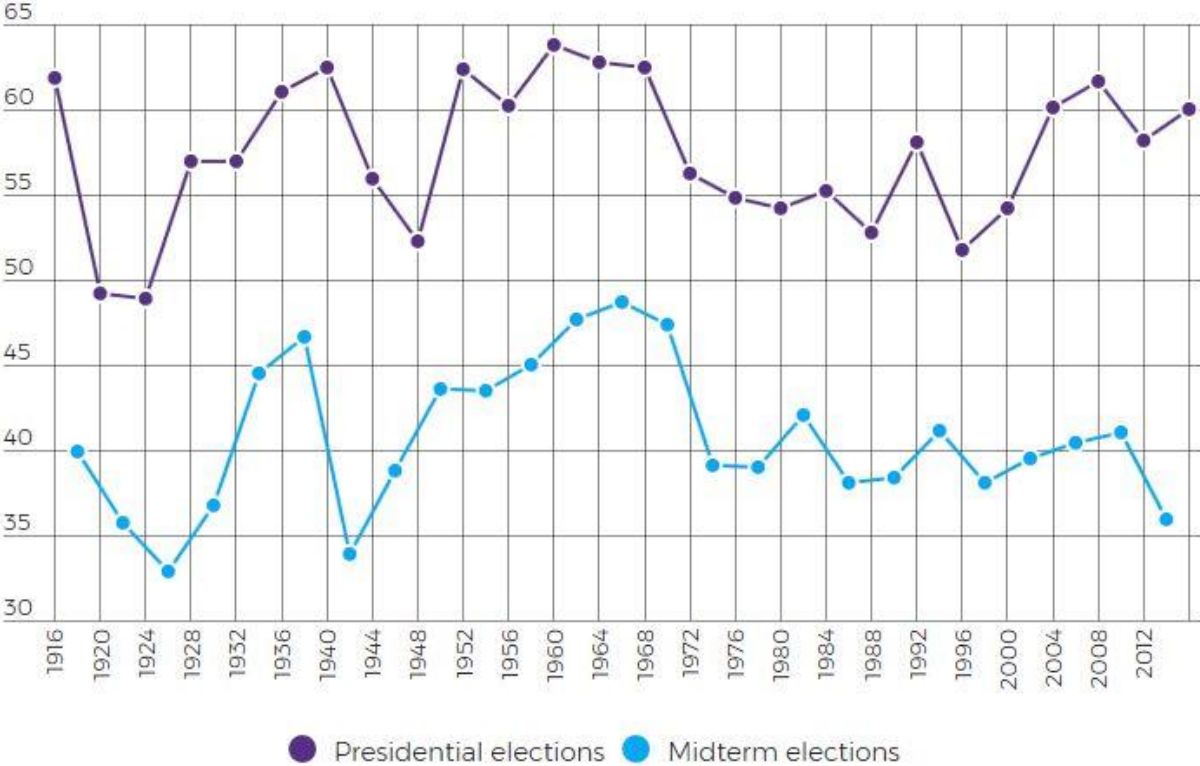


Voting Information and Statistics

Voter turnout in the United States fluctuates in national elections. In recent elections, about 60% of the voting eligible population votes during presidential election years, and about 40% votes during midterm elections. Turnout is lower for odd year, primary and local elections.¹

Voter Turnout Rates, 1916 - 2016



National estimates of voter turnout expressed as a percentage of the voting eligible population.

Source: United States Elections Project (<http://www.electproject.org/>)

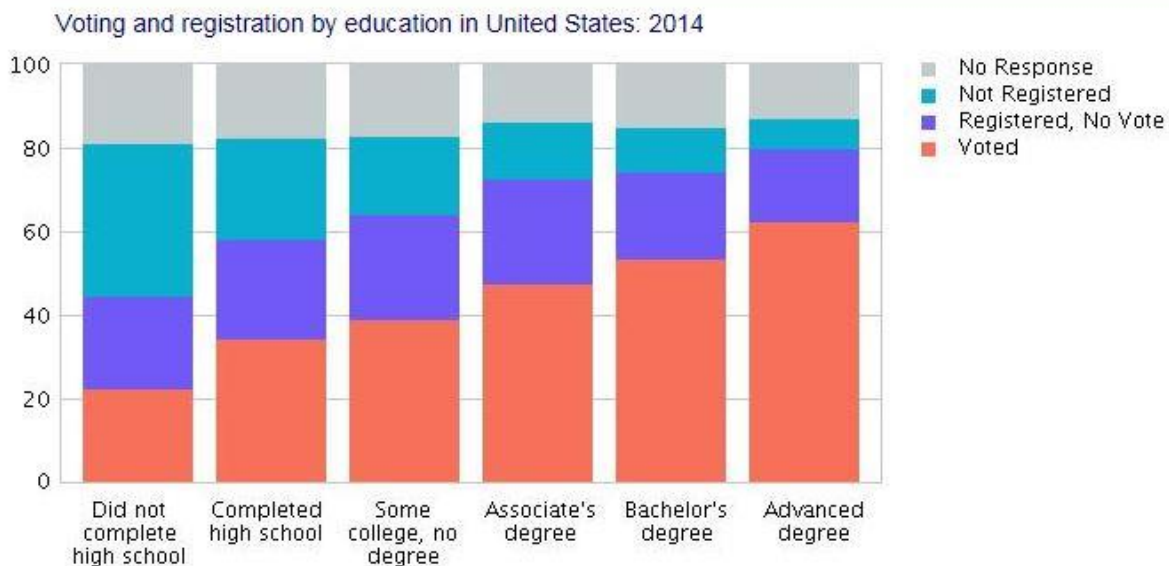
¹ FairVote http://www.fairvote.org/voter_turnout#voter_turnout_101 and United States Elections Project <http://www.electproject.org/>

What determines voter turnout?

- The level of education of state residents appears to be a relatively strong predictor of voter turnout. While there are a number of exceptions, states with higher college attainment rates tend to have greater voter participation. Of the 20 states with the lowest voter turnout, 16 have a bachelor's attainment rate below the national share of 30.6% of adults.² - U.S Census Bureau's 2014 American Community Survey
- One of the main predictors of voter turnout is whether the election is closely contested. When a candidate appears poised to run away with an election, turnout tends to be much lower. When polls appear to be heavily favoring one candidate, voters may feel they cannot make much of a difference.³
- On the other hand, turnout may be lower in this election because of the candidates. One recent poll conducted by the Pew Research Center showed that about 40% of eligible voters said they had difficulty choosing between the two major party candidates because neither was worthy of the presidency.⁴

Voting and registration rates tend to increase with education

Voting and registration rates tend to increase with education. In 2014 in the United States, the voting rate for citizens with at least a bachelor's degree was 56.3 compared to 22.2 percent for those who had not received a high school diploma.



Source: Current Population Survey, Voting and Registration Supplement

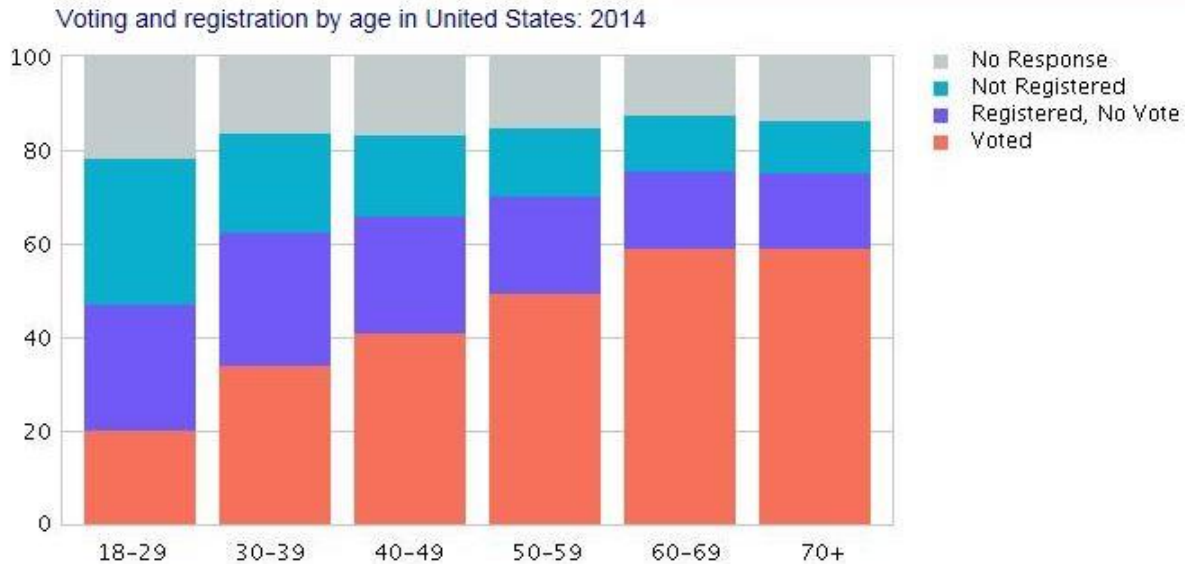
² The percentage of adults who have at least a bachelor's degree and poverty rates came from the U.S Census Bureau's 2014 American Community Survey. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/states-with-the-highest-and-lowest-voter-turnout_us_5813a3c5e4b096e87069653a

³ States with the Highest and Lowest Voter Turnout. Huffington Post, October 2016 http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/states-with-the-highest-and-lowest-voter-turnout_us_5813a3c5e4b096e87069653a

⁴ States with the Highest and Lowest Voter Turnout. Huffington Post, October 2016 http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/states-with-the-highest-and-lowest-voter-turnout_us_5813a3c5e4b096e87069653a

Voting and registration rates tend to increase with age

Voting and registration rates tend to increase with age. In the United States in 2014 only 17.1 percent of 18-to-24-year-olds voted, compared with 59.4 percent of those 65 and older.



Other Miscellaneous Election Information

- Other democracies around the world typically hold elections on the weekend or declare Election Day a national holiday. Presidential elections in the United States, however, are held during the work day. For this reason, individuals living in poverty are far less likely to vote than higher income individuals, at least in part due to lack of flexibility in the workplace. On the state level, however, the share of workers employed hourly did not appear to be the greatest single factor in voter turnout. – Huffington Post, States with the Highest (and Lowest) Voter Turnout, October 2016
- At least 51 million, or nearly 1 in 4 eligible citizens are not registered to vote. That's more than 24% of the eligible population. – PEW Charitable Trusts
- Online voter registration costs less – 3 cents per registration, compared to 83 cents paper form. – PEW Charitable Trusts
- 4 out of 5 registrations in state with online registration conducted electronically. – PEW Charitable Trusts
- 39% of adults do political or civic activities on social networking sites. – PEW Charitable Trusts
- Political engagement on social networking sites is especially commonplace among the youngest Americans, as two-thirds (67%) of all 18-24 year olds (and nearly three quarters of those young adults who use social networking sites) engaged in some sort of social network-related political activity in the 12 months preceding the PEW Research Center Survey.

Political engagement on social networking sites

60% of American adults use social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter; these are some of the civic behaviors they have taken part in on these sites:

	% of SNS users who have done this	% of all adults who have done this
"Like" or promote material related to political/social issues that others have posted	38%	23%
Encourage other people to vote	35	21
Post your own thoughts/comments on political or social issues	34	20
Repost content related to political/social issues	33	19
Encourage others to take action on political/social issues that are important to you	31	19
Post links to political stories or articles for others to read	28	17
Belong to a group that is involved in political/social issues, or working to advance a cause	21	12
Follow elected officials, candidates for office or other public figures	20	12
Total who said yes to any of the activities listed above	66%	39%

Contributing Factors to High Voter Turnout

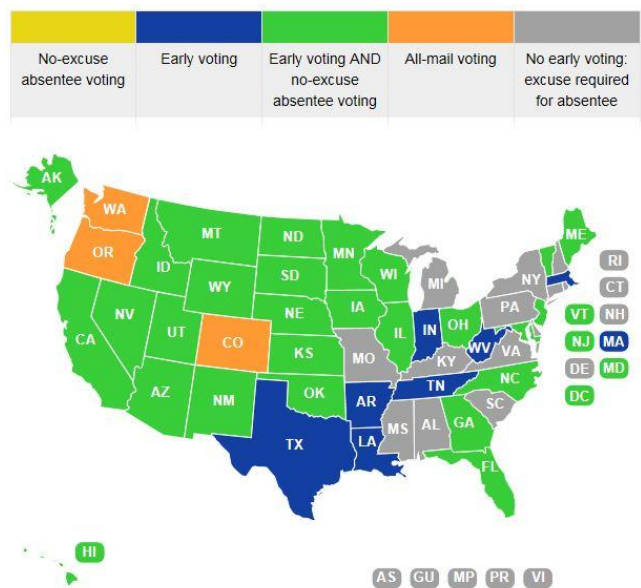
Wisconsin, Maine and Minnesota, who have higher than average voter turnout, attributes their success to allowing new voters to register and vote on Election Day. Same-day registration is the biggest factor in generating high voter turnout as it generates a possible voter increase of 10 percent.⁵

Minnesota Secretary of State Mark Ritchie attributes the state's consistently high rating to state policies and an emphasis on reducing barriers to voting access. The most effective policy is same-day registration, Ritchie says. Election officials also go to high school civics classes or assemblies, and they bring voting machines to the state fair to show people how easy it is to vote.⁶

Vote by mail is relatively new on our electoral landscape and advantages of this procedure has taken form in cost savings, increased voter participation, convenience for voters, and easier for election officials.

For example, between 1995 and 1997 in Oregon, counties saved over \$1 million on three vote-by-mail special elections. If, during that same period, primary and general elections had been conducted by mail, Oregon counties could have saved an additional \$3 million.

Since Oregon adopted a vote by mail system, they have continued to be in the top 10 states for voter turnout.



⁵ Eric Ostermeier, Ph.D., Research Associate at University of Minnesota, Department of Political Science

⁶ Project Vote. Voter Turnout: the 6 states that rank highest, and why by Allison Terry. And FairVote.org/turnout

Early Voting: What Works by the Brennan Center for Justice

Key benefits of early in person voting are:

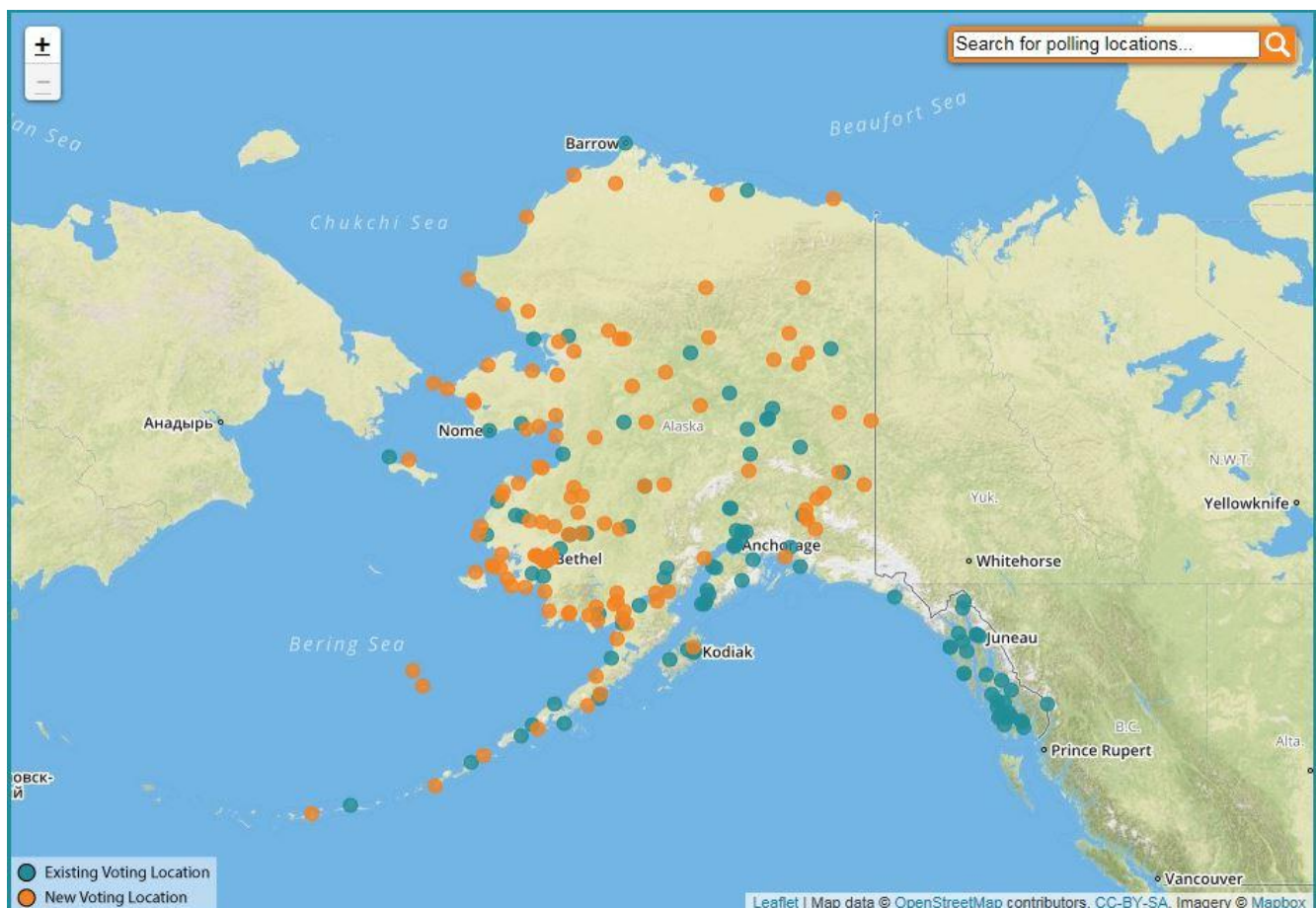
1. Reduced stress on the voting system on Election Day
2. Shorter lines on Election Day
3. Improved poll worker performance
4. Early identification and correction of registration errors and voting system glitches
5. Greater access to voting and increased voter satisfaction

Based on this research, the following policy recommendations for early in person voting:

1. Begin early in person voting a full two weeks before Election Day
2. Provide weekend voting, including the weekend before Election Day
3. Set minimum daily hours for early voting, provide extended hours outside standard business hours
4. Allow use of both private and public facilities
5. **Distribute early voting places fairly and equitably**
6. Update poll books daily
7. **Educate the electorate about early voting.**

Efforts to increase voter access in rural Alaska

To increase voter access across the state, particularly in rural areas, the Alaska Federation of Natives, ANCSA Regional Association, Get Out the Native Vote and numerous Native Corporations worked with communities to set up 128 new early voting locations in 2014.



Barriers to Equal Voting Rights in Alaska

Not all communities in Alaska have an early voting location.

Hospitals should also be included as early voting sights as many individuals travel from rural areas to receive medical care and are unable to be transported outside the hospital to vote.

Language barriers: Toyukak v. Treadwell case demonstrated the state was not adequately providing language assistance according to the Voting Rights Act.

Insufficient training for early voting officials.

Requirement to register to vote 30 days before election.

The Future of Elections

Technology and social media have been changing the face of voting:

- There are new innovation like electronic poll books that would bring benefits to voters and officials in polling places.⁷
- A study published in 2012 found that Facebook feeds have a significant impact on voting patterns. The findings indicate that certain messages increased turnout directly and indirectly by a total of 340,000 votes. Close ties were also found to be far more influential than weaker ties.⁸
- The Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) is a multistate partnership that uses a sophisticated and secure data matching tool to improve the accuracy and efficiency of state voter registration systems.⁹
- A number of states are reviewing or implementing new voting equipment. For example, Louisiana authorized the Secretary of State to develop and implement a piolet program for new voting equipment.

Another issue taking off now is the improvement of state voter registration systems and management. During the last five years, more than 30 states have made online voter registration available. Alaska implemented online voter registration in November 2015.¹⁰

At least 22 states have provisions allowing certain elections to be conducted entirely by mail. Oregon, Washington, and Colorado have implemented all-mail elections. California will be following vote by mail elections taking effect in 2018. Permanent absentee voting is available in 7 states and DC.¹¹

Hawaii approved electronic ballot transmission and return for permanent absentee voters. Louisiana, and Virginia approved electronic transmission for certain voters.¹²

⁷ National Conference of State Legislatures, The Canvass: States and Election Reform. Issue 75. January 2017

⁸ Robert Bond and James Fowler, et. al. "A 61 Million Person Experiment in Social Influence and Political Mobilization, September 2012.

⁹ PEW Charitable Trusts. Electronic Registration Information Center. <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/projects/election-initiatives/about/upgrading-voter-registration/eric>

¹⁰ National Conference of State Legislatures, The Canvass: States and Election Reform. Issue 75. January 2017

¹¹ National Conference of State Legislatures. Early Voting, Absentee Voting and Voting by Mail.

http://www.ncsl.org/documents/summit/summit2015/onlineresources/Stewart_Early_Voting_Absentee_Voting.pdf

¹² National Conference of State Legislatures. The Canvass, State and Election Reform. December 2016.