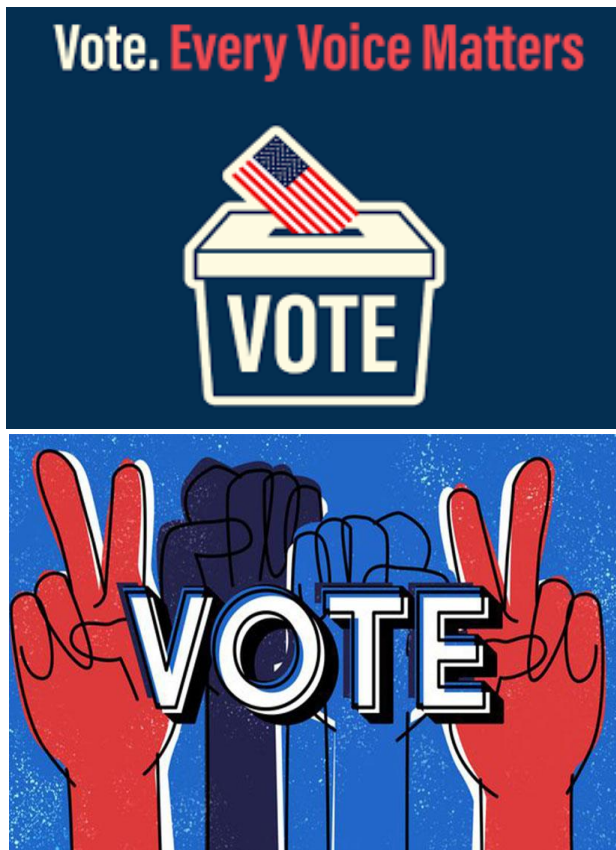


Election 2022: An Interactive Dialogue on Voting Rights, Responsibilities, Civic Duty

University of New Hampshire

Hosted by: Communication and Deliberation Across Differences

November 7th, 2022



Ground Rules:

- Be authentic, inclusive, and respectful in your engagement
- Listen to appreciate another's perspective
- Practice gracious and constructive disagreement
- Share speaking time so everyone has an opportunity to participate
- Maintain confidentiality and avoid generalizing
- Uphold and appreciate the participatory process

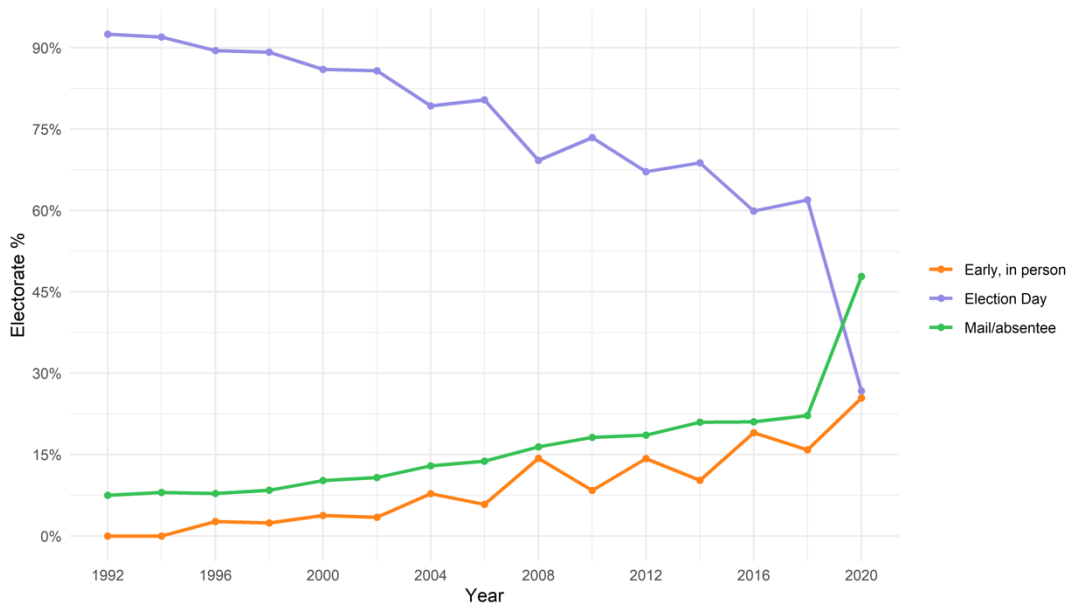
Page Index:

- 1) What We Vote For and How We Vote
- 2) Why Don't We Vote?
- 3) Language Matters: Building a Shared Vocabulary
- 4) How are U.S. Elections Run?
- 5) Voting as a Right
- 6) Voting as a Privilege
- 7) Voting Laws as of October 2022
- 8) What is Voter Fraud?
- 9) Preparing to Vote
- 10) Moving Forward: How Should We Engage People in Elections?
- 11.) References
- 12.) References
- 13) Voting in New Hampshire?



What We Vote For and How We Vote

Ballots cast by modes of voting over time



Ways to Vote

Absentee
Mail In
Early In-Person
In-Person
Election Day

Who We Vote For

President

Every four years, limit two terms

US Senate

Every 2 years

Term limit- 6 years

US House of Representatives

Every 2 years

Term limit- 2 years

State Legislature (House & Senate except Nebraska)

Senate: 24 seats elected every 2 years (no limit)

House: 400 seats elected every 2 years (no limit)

State Governor

Varies by state, NH elects every two years

Local Town/City Council/Board

Varies by ordinance

Executive Council (NH only)

Every two years

Four Levels of Voting

General- Presidential

Every 4 years (alternating with midterm elections)

Midterm Election

Every 4 years (alternating with presidential)

Primary-State Level

Every 2 years

Local

Most states now offer some form of early voting, either by mail or in person. The rules vary by state. Mail-in ballots are available in all 50 states, but voters in some states are required to submit a valid excuse to receive one. Since the 2000s or earlier, voting by mail is the method in eight states.

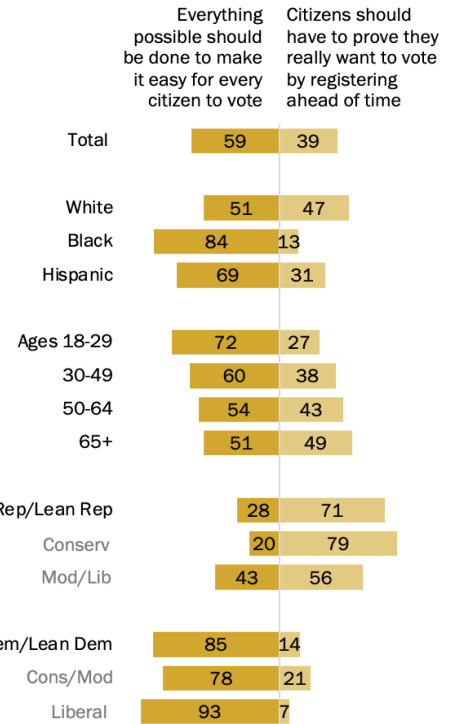
Why Don't We Vote?

Why do so few Americans vote?

What are some of the challenges that discourage you from participating?

Sizable majorities of Black and Hispanic adults say 'everything possible' should be done to make it easy to vote

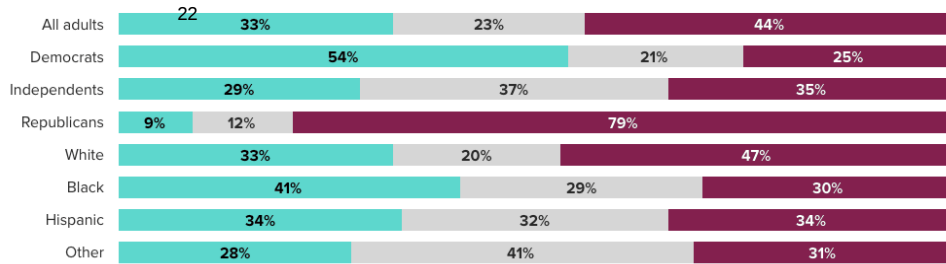
Which statement comes closer to your own views – even if neither is exactly right? (%)



Only One-Third of Americans Think It's Too Difficult for Eligible Citizens to Vote

Share of U.S. adults who said the rules around voting...

... make it too difficult for eligible citizens to vote
 Don't know/No opinion
 ... are not strict enough to prevent votes from being cast illegally



"I think the system is cumbersome. There is a process for proving identity, citizenship, and age that could be streamlined and made less confusing for voters." Deputy Town Clerk, Durham NH.

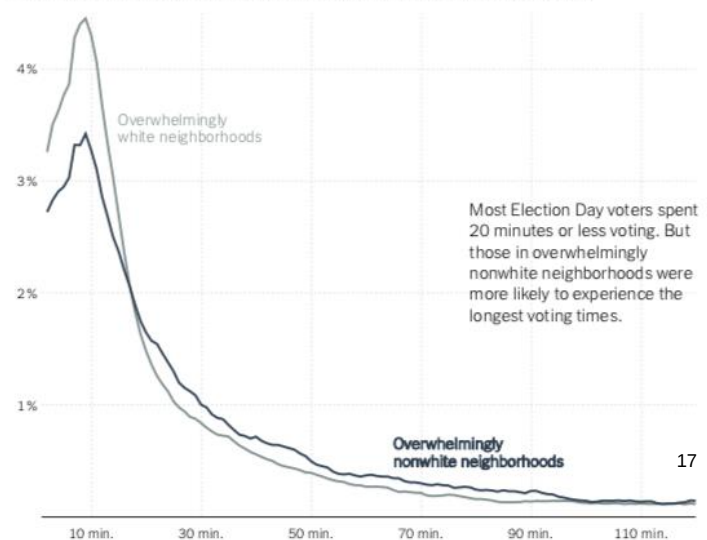
Q: What obstacles have you faced when trying to vote?

Notes: No answer responses not shown. White and Black adults include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanic adults are of any race.
 Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted March 1-7, 2021.

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16

Distribution of voting times in white and nonwhite neighborhoods



17

Language Matters

Building a Shared Vocabulary

Electoral College

Ballot Theft

Turnout

Popular Vote

Gerrymandering

Voter Fraud

Voting Rights Act

Jim Crow

Literacy Test

Civic Duty

Voter
Suppression

Foreign
Interference

Suffrage

Democracy

Reform

Ballot Boxes

Felon Disenfranchisement

National Election
Day

Voter Roll Purge

Stolen Election

Voter ID

Voter Identification Laws in Effect in 2021

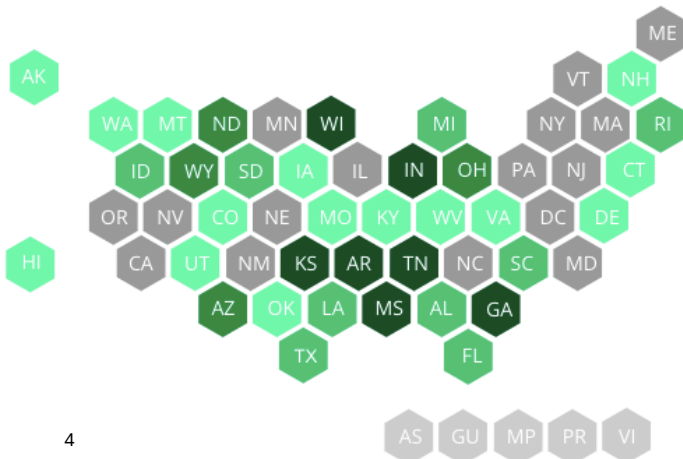
Strict Photo
ID

Strict Non-
Photo ID

Photo ID
requested

ID requested;
photo not
required

No document
required to vote



New Hampshire

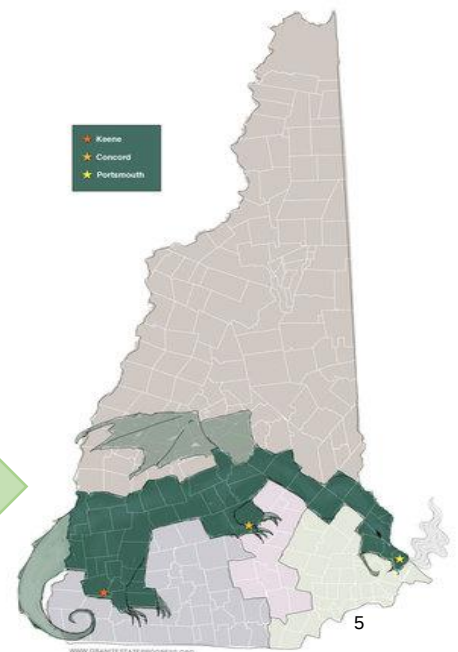
If ID is not presented, the voter signs a challenged voter affidavit and votes a regular ballot. After the election a mailing is sent and the voter must sign and return it; if it is not returned, the voter will be investigated for voter fraud.

Which terms
are less familiar
to you?

What are your feelings
about these terms and
phrases and where have
you encountered them?

NH Executive Council District 2

This district includes the cities Keene, Concord, and Portsmouth to create a Democratic majority. It is the only district with a Democrat Executive Councilor.

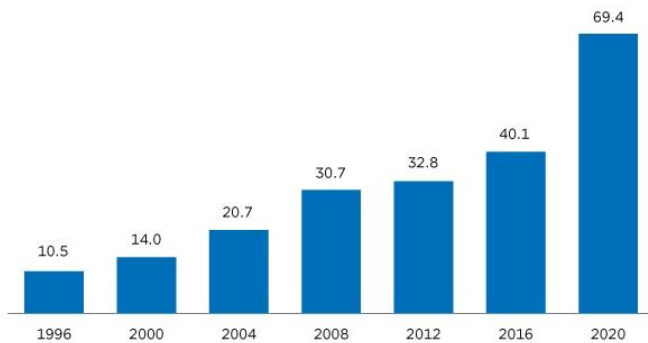


How Are U.S. Elections Run?

“The U.S. is characterized by a highly **decentralized election administration** system. The entities that do the rubber-meets-the-road functions of running an election are typically on the county or city/town level. . . . Each state’s election administration structure and procedures grew organically, as times changed and administering an election became an increasingly complex task.” 2

There are more than **10,000 election administration jurisdictions** in the U.S. The size of these jurisdictions varies dramatically, with the smallest towns having only a few hundred registered voters and the largest jurisdiction in the country, Los Angeles County, with more than 4.7 million. 2

Figure 1:
Nontraditional Voting, Presidential Elections: 1996-2020
(In percent)



Note: Nontraditional voting includes those who voted early and/or by absentee ballot. The estimates presented are only for individuals with valid responses to both the method and timing questions.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 1996-2020.

“A representative democracy is a system of government where citizens elect representatives to vote on laws on their behalf. A direct democracy is one where citizens vote on every issue themselves. The key difference between the two systems is *who* is voting on laws, elected officials or the citizens” 3

“Critics say the level of local control can lead to mismanagement and inconsistent application of the law. This often comes into focus in large federal elections especially, when the media and the public focus on how different the voting experience can be depending on where a voter lives. On the other hand, this decentralization allows individual jurisdictions to experiment and innovate—to see how elections might best be run for the state and the locality’s particular circumstances.” 2

Should elections be controlled at the local or national level?

What are pros/cons to our current system?

Voting as a Right

Voting as a **RIGHT**

Something that does not need to be earned, it is assumed to be yours

Something that cannot be taken away



15th Amendment (1869):

“The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.”

7

19th Amendment (1920):

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

8

Who can't vote?

- Non-citizens, including permanent legal residents
- Some people with felony convictions (laws vary by state)
- Some people who are mentally incapable (laws vary by state)
- For presidential elections: US citizens residing in US territories
- Indigenous People living on tribal reservations

Voting Rights Act of 1965:

This act aimed to overcome legal barriers at the state and local levels that prevented African Americans from exercising their right to vote as guaranteed under the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

10

Jim Crow was a racial caste system which operated mainly in southern/border states from 1877 to the mid-1960s. This system consisted of anti-Black laws that relegated the status of African Americans to second-class citizens. This led to the legitimization of anti-Black racism.

6

National Voter Registration Act (1993):

The right to vote is a “fundamental right” that the federal, state, and local governments must all uphold. This includes reassessing and rectifying registration laws that harm voter participation due to discriminatory and unfair practices.

9

Voting as a Privilege

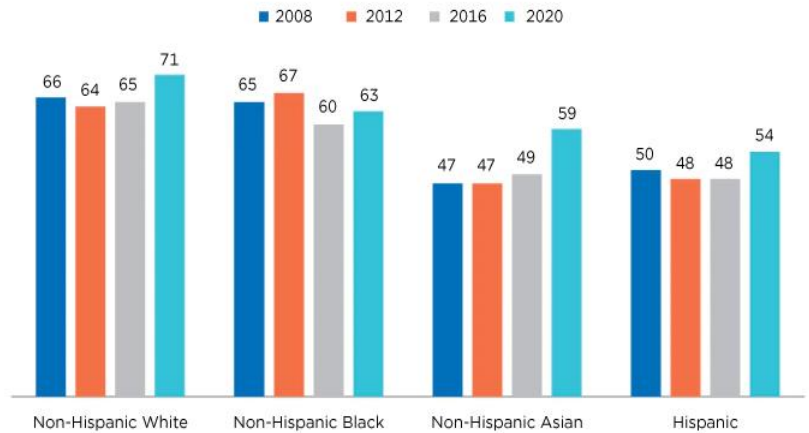
Voting as a **PRIVILEGE**

Something that can be taken away or limited just as easily as it can be given

Something that is earned

Figure 2.

Voter Turnout by Race and Hispanic Origin, Presidential Elections 2008-2020
(Percentage of citizens 18 and over)

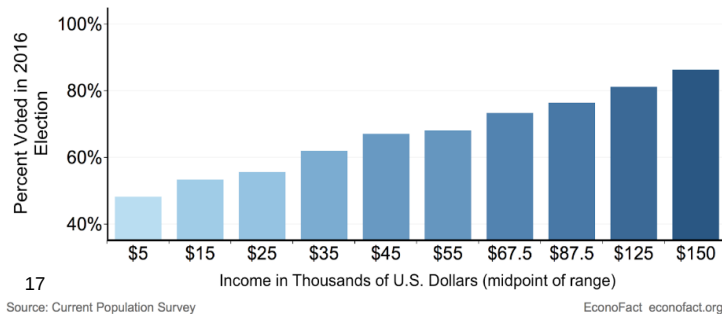


11

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November supplement, 2008 to 2020.

Who does vote?

Voter Turnout by Family Income 2016 Election



Source: Current Population Survey
EconoFact econofact.org

Which concerns you more, voting as a right or a privilege? Why?

How have these terms shaped how people think about voting?

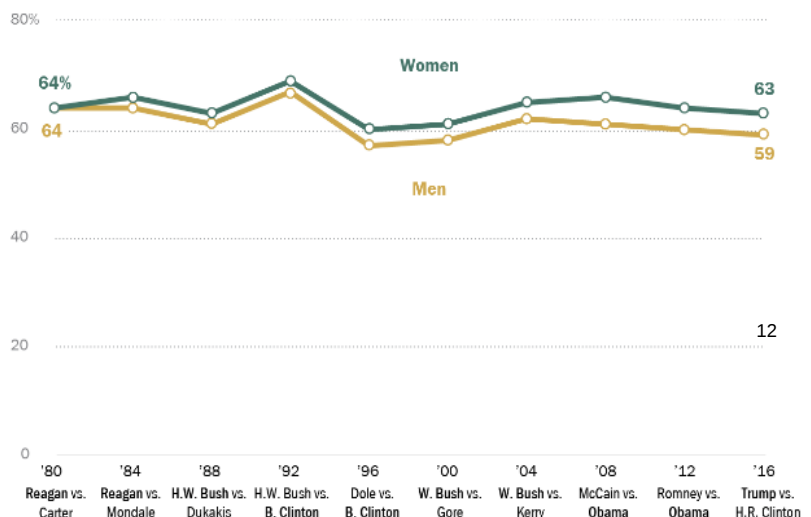
Voting Statistics 2020:

- 155 million people turned out for the 2020 presidential election
- Had the highest voter turnout of the 21st century, with 66.8% of citizens
- Asian voter turnout was at an all-time high of 59.7%
- Voter turnout was highest among those ages 65 to 74 at 76.0%
- Percentage was lowest among those ages 18 to 24 at 51.4%
- Overall voter turnout increased as age increased
 - Exception of 75+, which had a voter turnout rate that was below 65-74 year olds

14

Historically, women have had slightly higher rates of voter turnout than men

% of eligible voters who say they voted, by gender



12

A map of the United States where states are shaded in two colors: dark blue and light gray. The dark blue states, representing the highest frequency of the 100 most common surnames, include Montana, Wyoming, Arizona, Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, and Florida. The light gray states, representing lower frequency, include Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, Idaho, Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, and Florida.

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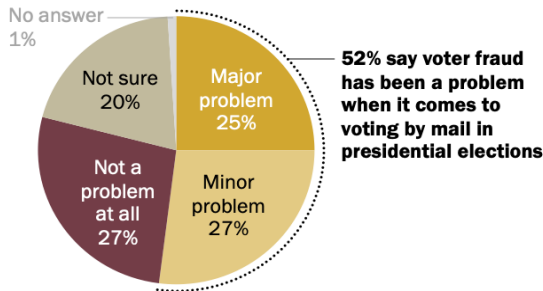
- 15



What is Voter Fraud?

One-in-four Americans think voter fraud has been a major problem with voting by mail, contrary to evidence

% of U.S. adults who say voter fraud has been a _____ when it comes to voting by mail in U.S. presidential elections



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 31-Sept. 7, 2020. "Political Divides, Conspiracy Theories and Divergent News Sources Heading Into 2020 Election"

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Q: How do you define voter fraud?

Q: How secure do you think our elections are?

The risks of committing voter fraud

Each act of voter fraud in a federal election will result in:

- 5 years in prison
- \$10,000 fine

How many cases have been committed in the last few decades?

- A Brennan Center for Justice study found 31 cases of "intentional" voter fraud from 2000-2007
- The Heritage Foundation has found 1,334 cases of different types of voter fraud, ranging from duplicate votes, fraudulent use of absentee, impersonation fraud at the polls, ineligible voting, altering the vote count, etc... from 1982-2001
- A study for nonprofit, Electronic Registration Information Center, "identified 372 possible cases of double voting or voting on behalf of deceased people out of 14.6 million votes cast by mail in 2016 and 2018". That is roughly .0025% per 14.6 million. (Washington Post) ²⁴

24

THE "MOST SECURE" ELECTION

After the 2020 presidential election, a coalition of federal cybersecurity and election officials along with state election officials and representatives from voting machine companies issued a statement calling it the "most secure in American history."

The group said there was "no evidence that any voting system deleted or lost votes, changed votes, or was in any way compromised." ²⁵

25

Claims that depend on unseen evidence in 2020

There is no evidence that foreign actors somehow changed votes over the internet, as MyPillow CEO Mike Lindell has repeatedly claimed.

There is no evidence that nonprofits collected illegal ballots that were then distributed to drop boxes by paid staffers, as alleged in the film "2000 Mules." The purported evidence that *was* presented in that film is either false, contrived or misleading.

Various audits of electronic voting machines have found no evidence of improprieties. In fact, swing-state counties in which Dominion Voting Systems machines were used mostly voted for Trump. ²⁴

24

Claims that have already been debunked or explained in 2020

Inaccurate vote totals in Antrim County, Mich., were a function of improperly configured voting machines.

There were no rampant irregularities in Maricopa County, Ariz., just a pattern of observers not understanding voting systems and tools.

Vote totals in states such as Pennsylvania or Wisconsin were not dependent on more people voting than were registered.

There was no uncaught double-counting of mail-in ballots in Georgia. ²⁴

24

Preparing to Vote

Q: What are the political issues you are concerned about?

Social Media

Algorithms- Designed to increase user participation and time spent on these apps. Unfortunately, some side effects of these algorithms include informational echo chambers, the spread of **false information**, or even introducing users to communities with very extreme, potentially harmful ideologies.

Filter Bubbles- Algorithms create filter bubbles and silos shaped by corporate data collectors; they limit people's exposure to a wider range of ideas and reliable information and eliminate alternate perspectives.

19

Social Sphere

Groupthink - A process of flawed decision making that occurs as a result of strong pressures among group members to reach an agreement

21

Q: Where do you get information about important public or political issues?

Q: What is the relationship between social media and political engagement?

News

Propaganda- Use of information specifically created to affect individual people's beliefs and ultimately to influence major events such as political elections.

20

Echo Chambers- Created by algorithms that result in major political divides as people lose the ability to converse with others of different political opinions.

19

Bias- According to some critics, the media can employ an elaborate and sophisticated array of techniques that allows reporters and media owners to slant news stories in favor of particular groups or interests.

20

Slacktivism- People "support a cause by performing simple measures" but "are not truly engaged or devoted to making a change." Slacktivism typically means turning to social media. It encompasses things like retweeting words of hope after a national disaster, liking a charity's Facebook page, sharing political slogans, memes, or news items.

22

Why Do People Choose Not to Vote?

- Voter apathy or lack of interest
- Do not feel connected to the issues
- Confused about the process
- No good choices for candidates
- Vote will not matter/make difference
- Difficult to find quality information

18

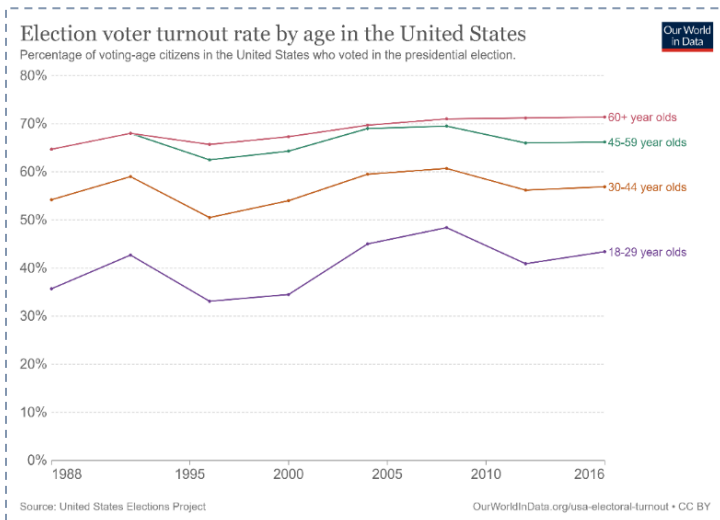
Moving Forward: How Should we Engage People in Elections?



What have you learned tonight that changed how you think about elections and your participation in them?



- Funding and curriculum for our public schools
- All laws governing town, county and state workers
- Minimum wages and hours of work
- Full access to health care
- Decisions that impact our taxes at the state and local level.



23

Who else should be part of this conversation?

Helpful Resources

All In Campus Democracy Challenge

American Democracy Project

Rock the Vote

All In for Voting (Stacey Abrams)

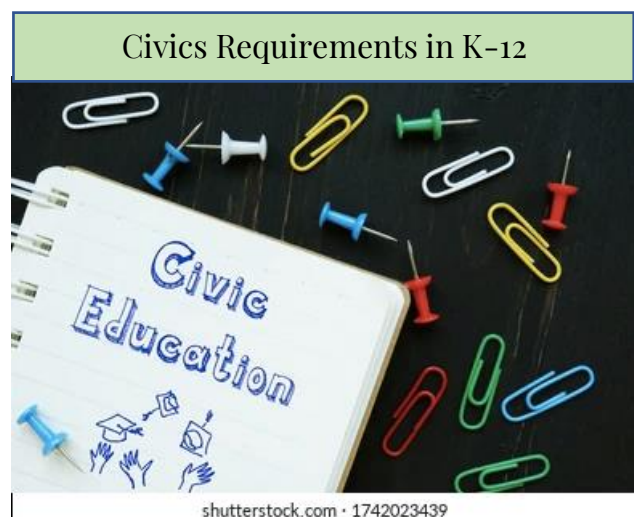
League of Women Voters Vote 411

Voting and Elections USA.gov

Vote.org

usa.gov/election-office

Ballotready.org/nh



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Voting in New Hampshire?

What if I want to vote in tomorrow's election?

It is not too late to express an interest in voting! If you are not already registered to vote in NH, please refer to the steps below to start the process. The nearest polling location from UNH is Oyster River High School (55 Coe Dr, Durham, NH 03824). Voting hours are between 7:00 am to 7:00 pm.

Registering to vote

“Registering to Vote in New Hampshire is easy! Register to vote at your town hall before the deadline or register to vote the day of the election at your polling place.” -sos.nh.gov

Out-of-state NH students are eligible to vote in NH

What is required for voting registration?

- Proof of age, identity, domicile, and citizenship
- Full list of documents can be found on sos.nh.gov

Absentee (mail-in) voting eligibility in NH

- Voter will be absent from his or her polling location on the day of the election.
- The voter is unable to visit the polls because of the observance of a religious commitment.
- The voter is unable to visit the polls because of a physical disability.
- The voter is unable to visit the polls because of an employment obligation.
- The voter is unable to visit the polls due to military service.

What if I want to vote in my home state?

You can vote absentee for your state of permanent residence. Rules for eligibility vary by state; some require an excuse, some do not, and some need be requested only if being mailed to a new address.

