## PART 2 ELECTION DAY SURVEY RESULTS

Any discussion about the voting process must take into account several requirements that have been built into the American electoral system. First, not everyone can vote. Persons must have reached a certain age. The 26th Amendment, adopted in 1972, placed the minimum voting age at 18 years. Persons age 18 and older are commonly referred to as the voting age population (VAP). Second, being of voting age is not necessarily a guarantee of voting eligibility, because most states also require persons to be United States citizens. This smaller group of individuals is referred to as the citizen voting age population (CVAP). Third, in most states persons must also register to vote. Some states have made the registration process easier than others, such as the six states that have adopted Election Day Registration. The rural state of North Dakota has no registration requirement.

But registering is just another step in the voting process. People have to turn out and cast a ballot. The easing of absentee balloting restrictions and the adoption of mail-in ballots has increased voter turnout to a certain degree. But the fourth step of the process still comes down to people making the effort to vote. Fifth, the American electoral system is unique in that it presents voters with many decisions on Election Day. Not only are there contests among candidates for federal offices, but also for state and local offices. Many states and localities place referendums on the ballot as well. Each contest on the ballot presents voters with a choice of whether to participate.

At each step in the voting process, the demographic and political makeup of the electoral body changes. Individuals and various groups of individuals are affected differently. This study of the Election Day Survey analyzes data generated by election systems at each of the five steps. The data is presented in the following series of tables:

Table 1. Population Estimates
Table 2. Voter Registration
Table 3. Ballots Counted
Table 4. Turnout Source
Table 5. Absentee Ballots
Table 6. Provisional Ballots
Table 7. Drop-Off

Table 8. Overvotes and Undervotes
Table 9. Voting Equipment Usage
Table 10. Voting Machines
Table 11. Voting Equipment Malfunctions
Table 12. Poll Workers
Table 13. Polling Places
Table 14. Disability

Each table has a separate chapter that contains background information about survey questions, the historical context for interpreting the survey results, and stipulations about jurisdictional coverage and the applicability of data items. The survey results in each table are summed to the state level for 6,567 local election jurisdictions in the U.S. Election Assistance Commission dataset. The survey results are also subtotaled for each of the 18 cross-tabulation factors described earlier in Part 1. Each chapter provides an analysis of the survey results for each cross-tabulation factor. There is a separate chapter containing recommendations on future data collection.

## Chapter 1 Population Estimates

Table 1 presents estimates of the voting age population (VAP) and the citizen voting age population (CVAP) in the United States for the November 2, 2004, general election. The VAP is defined as all persons age 18 and older residing within a jurisdiction-a county, parish, or township, depending on where elections are administered. Estimated VAP for November 2004 is constructed from U.S. Census Bureau population estimates by age and jurisdiction for July 1 of a given year. (Census estimates are available at http://www.census.gov.)

As of this writing, the July 1, 2004,VAP estimates have not been released, but they are anticipated by the end of the summer of 2005. We constructed the November 2, 2004, estimated VAP used in this report by extrapolating forward the difference between the July 1, 2002, and July 1, 2003, census estimates. This method constructs the best approximation of the November 2, 2004, VAP for local election jurisdictions. But we recognize that the method may incorrectly estimate population for a jurisdiction, such as underestimating population growth, particularly for jurisdictions with small populations, such as townships. To construct the best VAP available estimate for townships, we assigned the ratio of the newly released Census Bureau July 1, 2004, total population estimate from the county to the township to apportion our November 2, 2004, county-level VAP estimate to the township.

It is important to understand that VAP is not a perfect estimate of those eligible to vote. VAP does not include estimates of voting-eligible persons living overseas. It includes persons who are ineligible to vote under state laws, such as noncitizens; ineligible felons, depending on state law; those determined by a court to be incompetent; those who are not registered to vote; and persons who might have moved recently. But obtaining uniform data for jurisdictions nationwide for each of these circumstances is impossible, and therefore, no possible adjustment can be made to the base data.

We can, however, account for noncitizens, the largest ineligible population, by estimating the CVAP. We constructed CVAP by applying the 2000 census estimate of CVAP (which was obtained by Election Data Services as a special tabulation from the Census Bureau) as a percentage of the 2000 census VAP to the November 2, 2004, population estimates described above. This method implicitly assumes that the April 1, 2000, report of the percentage citizens of VAP is equal to the November 4, 2004, percentage citizens of VAP.

Methods exist to estimate the other eligible and ineligible populations, such as accounting for the overseas eligible population and ineligible felons from Department of Justice reports (McDonald and Popkin 2001; McDonald 2002), but no sound methodology exists to apportion these populations to counties and townships. For consistency across reporting units, we do not further adjust CVAP to attempt to better measure the voting-eligible population.

## Applicability and Coverage

VAP and CVAP estimates were available for all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The Census Bureau did not produce post-2000 population estimates for Guam, American Samoa, and the Virgin Islands.

## Population Estimates

Table 1 presents population estimates for the analysis of the survey results. Table 1 provides estimates of the VAP and the CVAP, and calculates CVAP as a percentage of VAP. The column headings in Table 1 are as follows:

| Column Headings for Table 1. Population Estimates |  |
| ---: | :--- |
| Heading | Description |
| Code | State census code |
| Name | Respondent to Election Day Survey |
| Jurisdiction | Number of local election jurisdictions from survey question 22 |
| 2004 Estimated VAP | Estimated November 2004 voting age population (VAP) |
| Cases | Number of jurisdictions for which VAP estimates were constructed |
| 2004 Estimated. | Estimated November 2004 citizen voting age population (CVAP) |
| Citizen VAP |  |
| Cases | Number of jurisdictions for which CVAP estimates were constructed |
| Percent 2004 | Estimated November 2004 CVAP (col. 6) divided by estimated <br> Citizen of Total VAP <br> Cases |
| Number of jurisdictions for which VAP and CVAP estimates were <br> constructed |  |
| Cases > 100\% | Number of jurisdictions where estimated November 2004 CVAP is <br> greater than total November 2004 VAP |

## Analysis of Estimates

The following is our analysis of the data in Table 1 for each of the 18 cross-tabulation factors described earlier in this report. A description of each factor follows a general summary and statelevel summary of the population data.

1) Regions
2) Changed Voting Equipment since 2000
3) Urban to Rural
4) Size of Jurisdiction
5) Race and Ethnicity
6) Statewide Voter Registration Database
7) Election Day Registration
8) Median Income
9) High School Education
10) Section 203 Language Minority Requirements
11) Provisional Ballot Acceptance
12) No Excuse Absentee Balloting
13) Early Voting
14) Battleground States
15) Section 5 Preclearance of Voting Procedures
16) Presidential Margin of Victory
17) Type of Voting Equipment
18) Red versus Blue Jurisdictions

## Summary

The uneven distribution of noncitizens across jurisdictions underscores the importance of using CVAP in addition to VAP when drawing conclusions of survey results across jurisdictions. If VAP were used, rates would be underestimated for jurisdictions with high proportions of noncitizens relative to other jurisdictions. Jurisdictions with high proportions of noncitizens can be found in Western states, particularly California; in urban and small cities; and in Section 203 and Section 5 Voting Rights jurisdictions, among other categories.

## States

Nationally, the 2000 census reported that 92.4 percent of the U.S. voting age population are citizens. The distribution of VAP and CVAP across the states and within cross-tabulations is reported in Table 1. California has the largest voting-age population at 26.6 million. California also has the largest noncitizen population, with only 81.3 percent of the VAP classified as citizens in the 2000 census. West Virginia has the smallest noncitizen population as a percentage of the VAP, with 99.4 percent of the VAP classified as citizens.

## Regions

The largest proportion of non-citizens are located in the West, where only 86.8 percent of VAP are citizens. Jurisdictions located in the Midwest have the highest proportion of citizens, with 96.3 percent. Jurisdictions in the Northeast and the South fall in the middle with 91.8 percent and 93.8 percent citizens, respectively. In all, 224 jurisdictions were reported as having zero noncitizens among the VAP, primarily located in regions outside the West.

## Urban to Rural

Among urban to rural categories, urban jurisdictions have the lowest percentage of citizens, 87.1 percent. The remaining categories fall between 94.4 percent citizen in suburban to 97.3 percent citizen in rural jurisdictions.

## Size of Jurisdiction

The smallest jurisdictions have citizenship of 99.3 percent of VAP. For small- to medium-sized jurisdictions up to 250,000 VAP, citizenship is above 96.0 percent. For the 23 largest jurisdictions in the nation, those with $1,000,000$ or more, citizens are 82.6 percent of the VAP.

## Race and Ethnicity

Among racial and ethnic categories, predominantly Hispanic jurisdictions have the lowest percentage of citizens, only 75.7 percent. In predominantly non-Hispanic White jurisdictions, greater than 93.4 percent are citizens, and up to 98.0 percent are citizens in predominantly nonHispanic Native American jurisdictions.

## Median Income

Lower income jurisdictions tend to have higher citizenship rates. The percentage of citizens among the voting age population ranges from 89.7 percent to 96.6 percent.

## High School Education

Jurisdictions with lower percentages of the population completing high school have higher percentages of noncitizens. Jurisdictions with below a 60 percent high school completion rate have an 86.2 percent citizenship rate. Those above 90 percent high school completion report 94.0 percent citizenship among the VAP.

## Section 203 Language Minority Requirements

Jurisdictions covered under Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act have higher percentages of noncitizens. Section 203 jurisdictions are 85.4 percent citizen, while noncovered jurisdictions are 95.8 percent citizen.

## Section 5 Preclearance of Voting Procedures

Jurisdictions covered under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act have higher percentages of noncitizens. Section 5 jurisdictions are 90.3 percent citizen, while other noncovered jurisdictions are 93.1 percent citizen.

## Type of Voting Equipment

Jurisdictions that use hand-counted paper ballots have the highest proportion of citizens, 98.1 percent, which may be because paper ballots are primarily used by smaller jurisdictions. Crosstabulations with other types of voting equipment are in the low- to mid-90 percent range.

## Changed Voting Equipment since 2000

Jurisdictions that changed voting equipment from the 2000 election have a lower percentage of citizens, 88.7 percent, than other jurisdictions, 94.1 percent. The difference is partially a consequence of voting equipment changes in populous southern California and southern Florida counties with high noncitizen populations.

## Statewide Voter Registration Database

States with statewide voter registration databases have a slightly higher percentage of citizens, 95.3 percent, than those that do not, 91.6 percent.

## Election Day Registration

States with Election Day Registration (EDR) have higher percentages of citizens, 97.2 percent, than those that do not, 92.1 percent. This difference is primarily attributed to the number of EDR states in

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2004 Election Day Survey Report, Part 2 Survey Results
the Northeast and Midwest. The two Western states with EDR, Idaho and Wyoming, also have high levels of citizenship.

## Provisional Ballot Acceptance

States that allow provisional ballots to be counted if cast outside a voter's home precinct have a lower percentage of citizens, 90.5 percent, than those that accept ballots cast in home precincts only, 93.5 percent, or do not have provisional ballots, 97.0 percent.

No Excuse Absentee Balloting
States with no excuse absentee balloting have lower percentages of citizens than other states, 90.0 percent versus 93.9.

## Early Voting

States with early voting have a lower percentage of citizens, 89.7 percent, than states that do not have early voting, 94.6 percent.

## Battleground States

Battleground states in the November 2004 general election had a higher percentage of citizens than those that were not battleground states, 95.0 percent versus 91.0 percent.

## Presidential Margin of Victory

There is no pattern of citizenship among jurisdictions within states by presidential margin of victory. The percentage of citizens ranges from 90.7 percent to 96.3 percent among the categories.

## Red versus Blue Jurisdictions

Jurisdictions won by Bush tend to have higher percentages of citizens, from 92.9 percent to 95.9 percent, than jurisdictions won by Kerry, from 87.5 percent to 93.9 percent.

## REFERENCES

McDonald, Michael P. "The Turnout Rate Among Eligible Voters for U.S. States, 1980-2000." State Politics and Policy Quarterly 2 (2002): 199-212.

McDonald, Michael P., and Samuel Popkin. "The Myth of the Vanishing Voter." American Political Science Review 95 (2001): 963-74.

StateLevelSummary_Master_20051130.xls -- Population Estimates





