



U.S. ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION
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EAC Releases Comprehensive Data on Voting in the United States

SILIVER SPRING, MD – The U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) has released the results of its 2014 Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS). The report represents the most comprehensive set of data regarding election administration across the United States.

For the first time, EAC is presenting the information in one all-inclusive report that includes data on the ability of civilian, military and overseas citizens to register to vote and successfully cast a ballot. The 2014 survey is the sixth conducted by EAC and covers the 2-year period from the November 2012 elections through the November 2014 elections. It is based on the results of a survey of all States, the District of Columbia, and four territories.

The report offers a number of observations and recommendations, based on the data and experience of the states, regarding ways to enhance the efficiency with which elections are administered and to improve how the data regarding those elections are reported to the EAC. The full report and complete data sets are available at Eac.gov.

Broad Highlights

- According to the data submitted by the States and territories, **81,133,122 individuals participated in the 2014 election.**
- Of the more than 81 million people who turned out to vote in 2014, **over 60% voted at the polls, 17.5% voted a domestic absentee ballot, and 10.7% voted early (prior to Election Day).**
- **States reported counting 98.2% of the domestic absentee ballots submitted.** The most common reason for absentee ballot rejection was a missed deadline for returning the ballot, followed by invalid signatures.
- **A total of 892,202 provisional ballots were submitted** according to the States and territories. 80.3% of those ballots were counted in whole or in part. Of the 171,443 that were not counted, the most common reason was because the voter was not properly registered.
- **In 2014, States operated 178,636 precincts and over 114,000 physical polling places.** States employed almost 731,000 poll workers on Election Day. The largest number of poll workers ranged from 41 to 70 years of age.

The report has been well received by researchers and policy makers.

“I welcome the release of the 2014 Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS). EAVS is the only unified source of information about the state of election administration at the local level. It is an invaluable resource to all in the election administration community — state and local election administrators, policymakers, and academics — and a cornerstone of efforts to root the improvement of elections in data-centered metrics.” - Charles Stewart III, Kenan Sahin Distinguished Professor of Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

“I am delighted to have this report since the entire election community has come to rely on the information it provides. The data reported in this survey gets better with each election, and it helps to support good policy making across the country.” - Wendy Underhill, National Conference of State Legislatures.

National Voter Registration Report

The first section of the survey includes information provided by the states on the number of registered voters, the registration process and voter registration list maintenance. It contains data for a federally-mandated report on the impact of the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA).

The NVRA report includes several EAC recommendations as States are continuing to improve the processes and procedures they use for updating their voter registration systems and lists.

Recommendations are that States should: make the processes they use to modernize, update and maintain their voter registration lists a priority; continue to identify specific methods to improve the ways in which voter registrations and applications are sent and received by NVRA-mandated State agencies; review and consider some of the recent advances in voter registration and list maintenance; and continue to fully-meet the 1993 NVRA-mandated requirements. The full report and complete data sets are available at Eac.gov.

NVRA: Key Report Findings

- There were approximately **190 million total registered voters reported for the November 2014 midterm election**. The number of registered voters in 2014 represents an increase of approximately 3.2 million voters since the 2010 midterm election cycle.
- According to the responses to the survey and population estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, **84.7% of American citizens of voting age were registered to vote in the 2014 elections**.
- **33 States reported receiving voter registration applications over the Internet**.
- **Internet applications accounted for 6.5% of the total number received, up from 1.7% in 2010**.
- **There were 16.6 million new applications in 2014**, an increase in new applications as compared to the 2010 elections when there were 14.3 million new registrants.
- **States found invalid or otherwise rejected over 984,000 voter registration applications**, a decrease from the 1.3 million voter registration applications that were rejected in 2010. In addition, nearly 3.5 million applications were duplicates of existing registrations. Altogether, 9.0% of registration applications were invalid or duplicates, a decrease from the 9.4% of registration applications that were invalid or duplicates in 2010.
- **States removed over 14.8 million voters from voter registration lists**. The NVRA allows states to remove voters who have not voted in two consecutive federal general elections and failed to respond to a confirmation notice from an elections office. Other reasons include death, felony conviction, having moved from one jurisdiction to another, mental incompetence, or at the voter's request.

More comments.

“Without the EAVS, you’d have to go jurisdiction-by-jurisdiction across the entire stained glass window that is the American election map to get the latest information on election administration. This data is an absolute necessity for anyone who wants to know what is and isn’t happening in elections at the state and local level nationwide. – Doug Chapin, Director, Program for Excellence in Election Administration, University of Minnesota.”

Military and Overseas Citizens Report

The second section of the report includes data from all of the states on the ability of military and overseas citizens to successfully cast a ballot under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizen Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA). The report finds that 96.5% of ballots submitted by these voters were counted by the states in the 2014 federal elections. It presents information such as the number of ballots transmitted to military and overseas voters and the percentage of ballots submitted by these voters that were counted. The 2014 report is second data collection since the 2009 passage of the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act which provides UOCAVA voters with greater protections. The Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) mandates that for each regularly scheduled general election for federal office, EAC shall collect this data from the states. The full report and complete data sets are available at Eac.gov.

UOCAVA: Key Report Findings

- **States transmitted 420,094 ballots to UOCAVA-covered voters for the 2014 election**, with just over half (51.4%) going to civilian citizens living overseas. Another 46.0% went to uniformed services members.
- **Of the UOCAVA ballots transmitted, 34.6% (145,509) were returned and submitted for counting**, which is an increase from the 30.2% in 2010.
- **States reported counting 137,683 UOCAVA ballots, or 94.6%** of the total submitted for counting.
- **States reported rejecting 8,492 ballots**. The most common reason given for rejecting a UOCAVA ballot was that the ballot was not received on time; States reported that 48.9% of rejected ballots were rejected for this reason.
- **States reported that 1,934 voters submitted a Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot**, which is a sharp decrease from the 4,294 voters who submitted an FWAB in 2010.

More Comments

“The Election Assistance Commission’s Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS) is a key resource for election officials, local, state and federal policy makers, and scholars of election administration. In a country where states and localities have very different election practices, the EAVS is the one tool that can give us a true picture of overseas and military voting, voter registration, absentee ballots, polling places and other important features that make our American democracy function.” - John C. Fortier, Director, Democracy Project, Bipartisan Policy Center.

“With each new release of the EAVS the quality and quantity of jurisdictional data improves making it an increasingly valuable tool for scholars and policy makers. The overtime and panel nature of the survey provides a wealth of data on election administration and participation that informs our

understanding of public policy, voter turnout, and the overall health of our election eco-system.” -
Lonna Rae Atkeson, Professor of Political Science, University of New Mexico.

"All who care about the workings of elections welcome the latest EAVS report from the U.S. Election Assistance Commission. The report informs election officials, policymakers, activists, and scholars on the health of America's democracy and where voters' experiences may be improved." -
Dr. Michael P. McDonald, Associate Professor, University of Florida.

About the Combined Survey Instrument & Report

Since 2004, EAC has prepared three biennial reports using data from this survey: a federally-mandated report on the impact of the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA), a mandated report on the Uniformed and Overseas Citizen Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA), and a third report summarizing additional EAVS findings, including data on how Americans cast their ballots and how State and local administrators ran their elections. This year, for the first time, the three reports are consolidated into this single report. Information pertaining to the NVRA is presented first, followed by a UOCAVA section, and a final section summarizing the remaining EAVS findings.

EAC’s combined survey instrument was developed in response to requests from State and local officials to combine post-election survey collection efforts in order to reduce the overall burden placed on election officials. As a result, EAC worked with the Department of Defense Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) to develop a single survey instrument designed to meet the requirements of both the EAC and FVAP in collecting election-related statistics from local election officials. This product was the outcome of a mutual agreement reached by EAC, FVAP and the National Association of State Election Directors (NASED) in 2011.

EAC is an independent bipartisan commission created by the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002. HAVA was passed by the U.S. Congress to make sweeping reforms to the nation's voting process, address improvements to voting systems and voter access that were identified following the 2000 election, and to provide federal funding to states for new voting equipment. HAVA mandates that EAC test and certify voting equipment, maintain the National Voter Registration form, conduct research and administer a national clearinghouse on elections that includes shared practices, information for voters and other resources to improve elections. HAVA specifies that EAC’s four commissioners are nominated by the President on recommendations from the majority and minority leadership in the U.S. House and U.S. Senate. Currently, there is one vacancy on the commission. More information is available at EAC.gov.

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