

Population Characteristics

Series P-20, No. 172

May 3, 1968

CHARACTERISTICS OF PERSONS OF VOTING AGE 1964 TO 1968

Estimates prepared by the Bureau of the Census show that on November 1, 1968, there will be approximately 118 million civilians of voting age residing in the United States. This represents an increase of about 6 million persons (5 percent) since the last presidential election in November 1964. About 11 1/2 million civilians will be old enough to vote for President for the first time in this coming November. Almost two-thirds (63.0 percent) of the civilian resident population of voting age voted in the last presidential election (table 1).

In addition to estimates of the voting age population for November 1, 1968, this report presents data on the characteristics of the electorate and on voter participation in the elections of November 1966 and 1964. The generally higher voter participation in presidential elections than in congressional elections obtains for each of the population age groups, for white and nonwhite persons, for city dwellers and those living outside cities, for males and females, and for other groups of the population (tables 2 to 9). There is no implication in these figures about the rates of voter participation in 1968.

Projections of the voting-age population for States shown in this report for November 1968 are consistent with the projections for this age group in Current Population Reports, Series P-25, No. 375.

Estimates of persons "ineligible" to vote, shown in table 1, include aliens and such persons as citizens in correctional and mental institutions and those failing to meet State and local residence requirements for various reasons. The figures are rough estimates derived from a variety of sources of data including statistics on aliens from the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Department of Justice, institutional statistics from

the 1960 Census of Population, and migration statistics both from the 1960 Census of Population and the Current Population Survey. The estimates of those failing to meet residence requirements are rough approximations and are based on 1955-60 migration patterns and 1964 survey data on total interstate, intercounty, and intracounty movements. No allowances were made in the figures for those States which permit "newcomers" to vote for President or have less restrictive residence requirements for them.¹

The percent voting for President in 1964 shown in table 1 is based on statistics on the number voting in each State reported by official State sources. The data in tables 2 to 9 are based on information obtained in household interviews conducted by the Bureau of the Census in connection with its Current Population Survey program. The latter are based on sample data and they may differ from the figures that would have been obtained from a complete census. The sampling variation may be relatively large where the numbers shown are small. Furthermore, the overall number reported in the survey as voting in November 1964 differs somewhat from the "official" statistics used in table 1. A more complete statement on the variability due to sampling and the differences in the data from the two sources, as well as more detailed information about the subjects presented here concerning results of the 1964 Survey on voting are contained in Series P-20, No. 142. A forthcoming report on registration and voter participation in the November 1966 election will present a discussion on these subjects as well.

¹ See Meyer Zitter and Donald E. Starsinic, "Estimates of 'Eligible' Voters in Small Areas: Some First Approximations," American Statistical Association: Proceedings of the Social Statistics Section, Los Angeles, California, 1966.

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