

The Emerging Electorate: Projections of the Eligible Voting Population in the United States, 2016-2060

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ABSTRACT

In this research, we present a series of projections of the citizen population aged 18 years and over, the population used by the Census Bureau and others to represent the voting-eligible population. Projections are presented for 2016 and are then made for the future presidential elections of 2020 to 2060, and the future congressional elections of 2018 to 2058. In an effort to better understand what the next generation of eligible voters will demographically look like, projections are also presented by age, gender, race and Hispanic-origin. These projections rely on a series of assumptions concerning the percentage of foreign-born individuals who will become citizens in future election cycles. These subpopulation projections are compared and contrasted with breakdowns of recent eligible populations, specifically for the presidential elections of 2008 and 2012, and the congressional elections of 2010 and 2014. This research also includes a discussion of important demographic factors in recent election cycle turnout, and explores the possibility of projecting voting rate outcomes in future research.

¹ This paper is released to inform interested parties of ongoing research and to encourage discussion of work in progress. Any views expressed on statistical, methodological, or technical issues are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the U.S. Census Bureau.