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# High Registration and Early Voting in 2022 Midterm Elections

## Voter Registration in 2022 Highest in 20 Years for Congressional Elections

May 02, 2023  
**Written by:** Jacob Fabina

More than half of the nation's citizen, voting-age population (CVAP) voted in 2022 — the second highest turnout for a congressional election in two decades.

The 52.2% voter turnout was just 1.2 percentage points lower than in 2018 (53.4%) and significantly higher than in 2014 (41.9%) and in 2010 (45.5%).

Despite lower turnout in 2022 than in 2018, the share of voting-age citizens who were registered to vote was 69.1% — the highest registration rate in a midterm election since at least 2002.

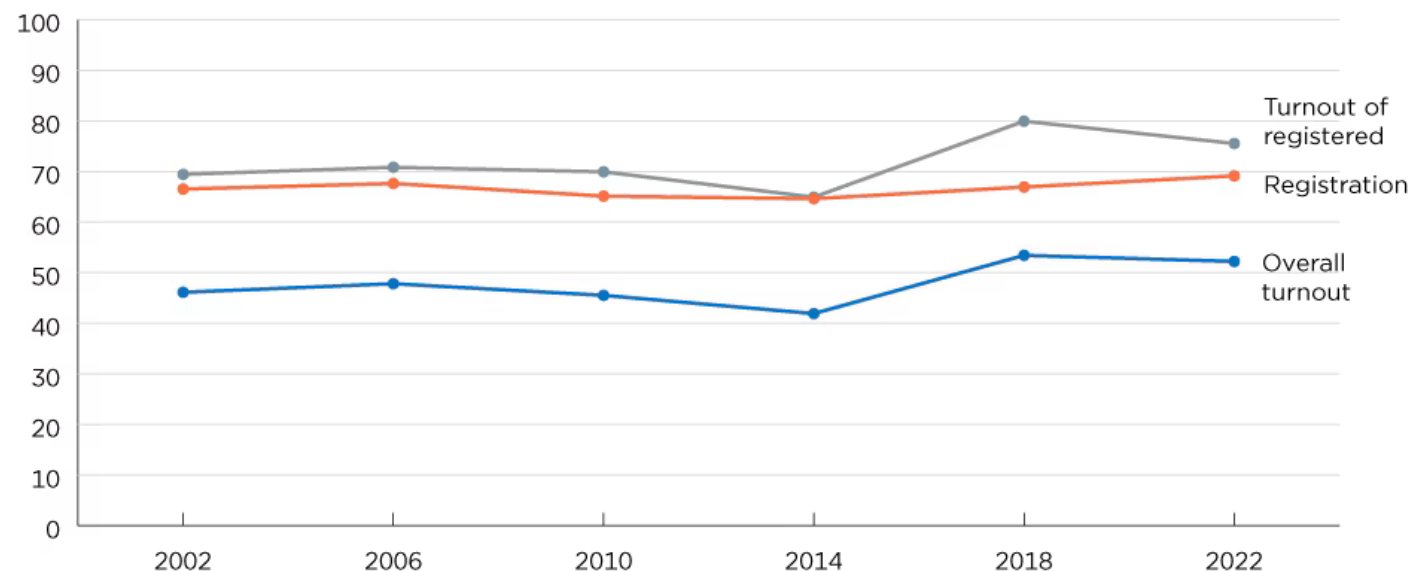
**The share of voters who voted early, by mail or a combination of both in 2022 remained high for a midterm election following record high rates in the 2020 presidential election.**

As a result, turnout as a share of those registered to vote in 2022 was down 4.4 percentage points from 2018 (Figure 1).

Figure 1.

## U.S. Congressional Election Voter Registration, Turnout: 2002–2022

(In percent)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November Voting and Registration Supplement: 2002 to 2022.

[/content/dam/Census/library/stories/2023/05/high-registration-and-early-voting-in-2022-midterm-elections-figure-1.jpg]

The data released today are based on the Voting and Registration Supplement [/[data/tables/time-series/demo/voting-and-registration/p20-586.html](#)] which surveyed non-institutionalized civilians about their voting and registration behavior in the 2022 congressional elections.

Due to the nature of survey responses, these estimates may differ from administrative reports and estimates from other data sources but provide a unique look at the characteristics of American voters.

## Why Did Many Who Registered Not Vote?

The most common reasons reported for not voting in 2022: “Too busy, conflicting work or school schedule” (26.5%); “Not interested, felt my vote wouldn’t make a difference” (17.6%); and “Illness or disability,” (12.5%) (Figure 2).

Figure 2.

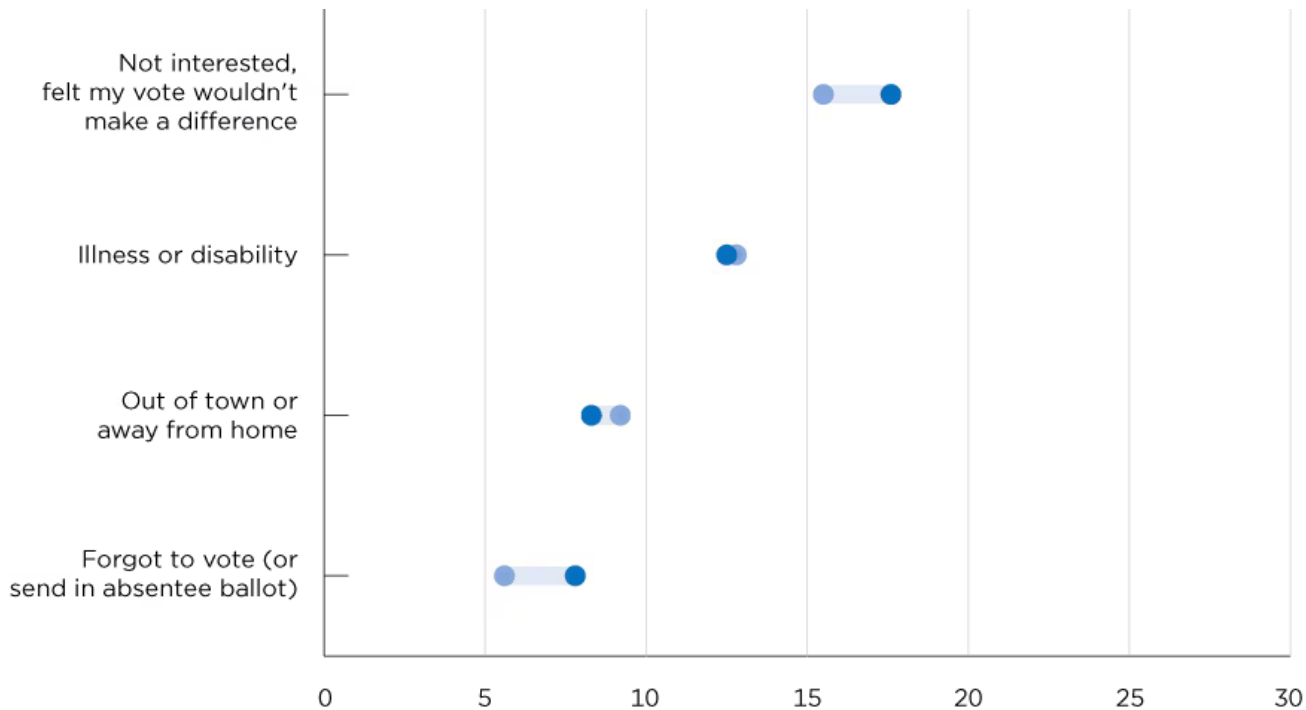
## Most Common Reasons Cited for Not Voting in U.S. Elections: 2018–2022

(In percent)

● 2018 ● 2022

Too busy,  
conflicting work or  
school schedule





Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November Voting and Registration Supplement: 2018 to 2022.

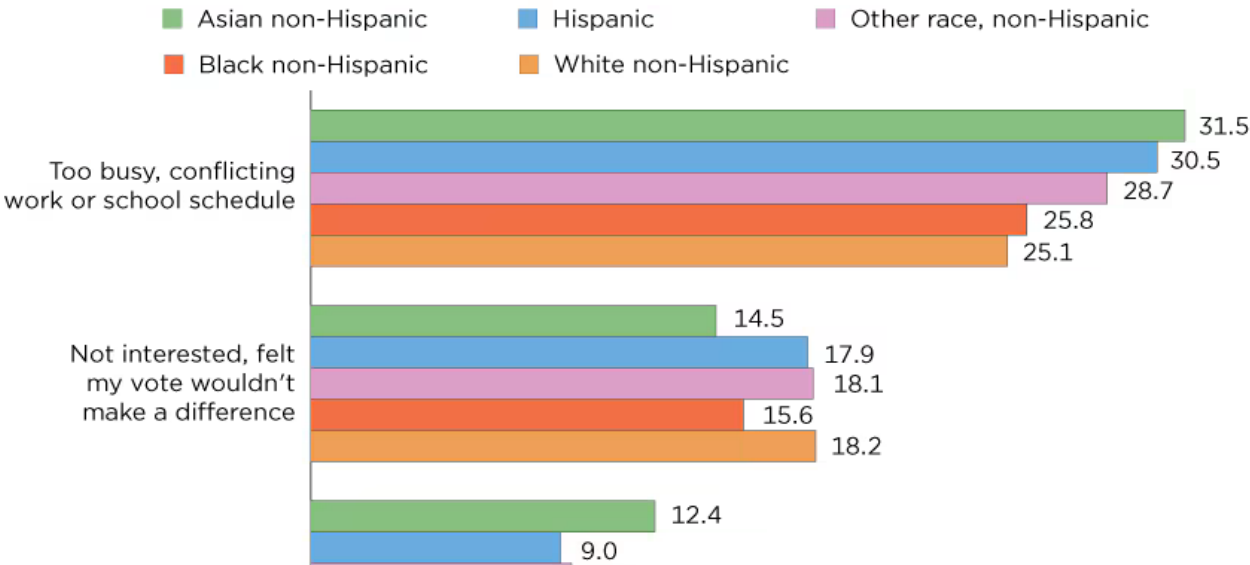
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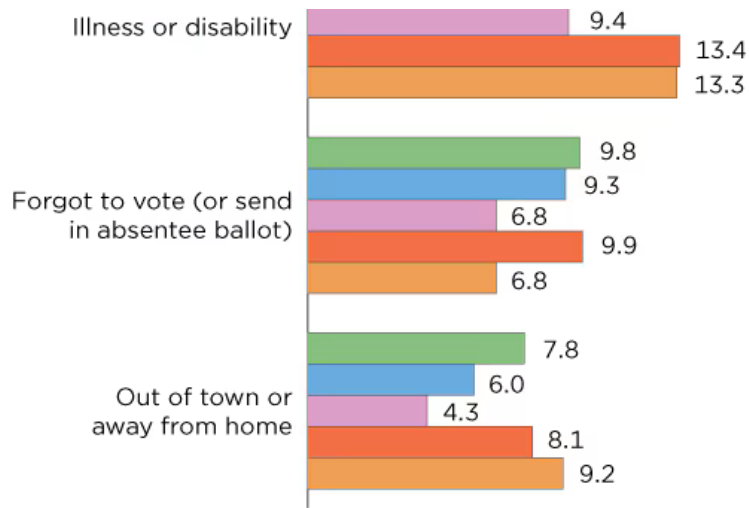
The share that reported being “too busy” to vote did not change significantly from 2018 (Figure 2). However, more registered nonvoters said they “forgot to vote” in 2022, up 2.2 percentage points from 2018. Those who said they were “not interested, felt my vote wouldn’t make a difference” also increased by 2.1 percentage points from 2018 to 2022. These increases did not differ statistically from one another.

The shares of White non-Hispanic and Black non-Hispanic registered nonvoters who were too busy to vote were not significantly different (Figure 3).

But these groups were less likely to report being “too busy” than Asian non-Hispanic and Hispanic nonvoters (these two groups’ rates also did not significantly differ). The share of “other race, non-Hispanic” voters who were too busy was not statistically different from any other group’s share.

Figure 3.  
**Most Common Reasons Cited for Not Voting in U.S. Elections by Race and Ethnicity: 2022**  
 (In percent)





Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November Voting and Registration Supplement: 2022.

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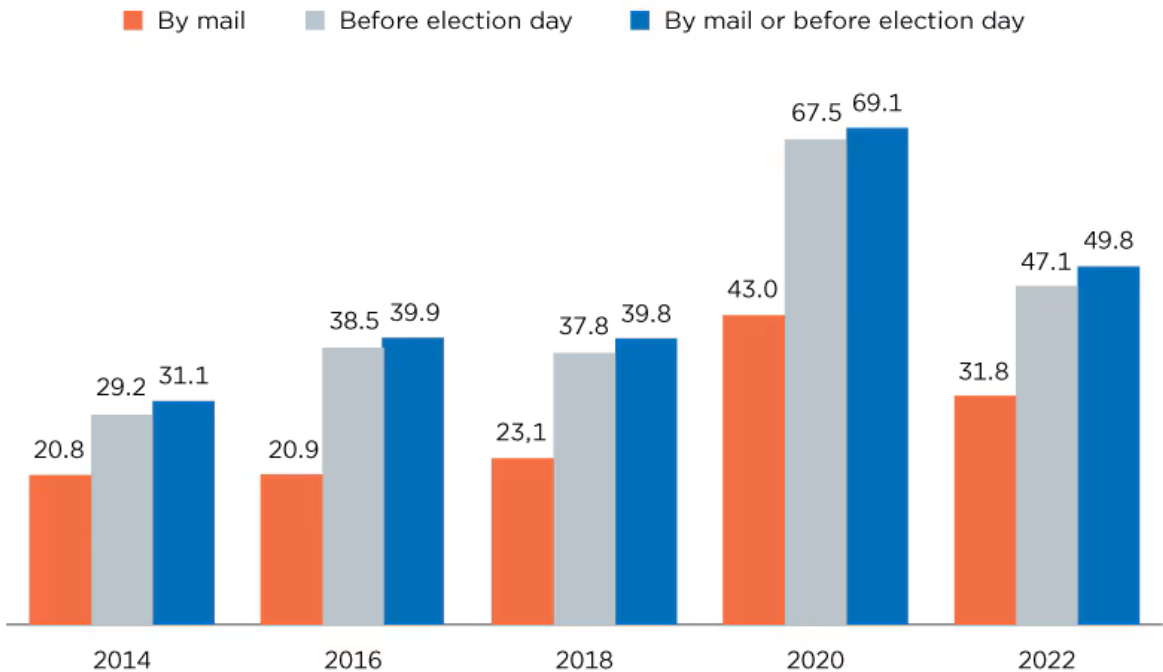
The Census Bureau has asked registered nonvoters why they did not vote after every election since 1996, and from 1972 to 1980 before that. A new voting supplement visualization, Questions on the Voting Supplement of the Current Population Survey (census.gov) [/library/visualizations/interactive/cps-voting-supplement.html] , shows how the survey questions have changed over time.

## How Did People Vote?

The share of voters who voted early, by mail or a combination of both in 2022 remained high for a midterm election following record high rates in the 2020 presidential election [/library/stories/2021/04/what-methods-did-people-use-to-vote-in-2020-election.html] (Figure 4).

Of those who voted, 49.8% used these voting methods — 10 percentage points higher than in 2018 (39.8%) and 18.7 percentage points higher than in 2014 (31.1%).

Figure 4.  
**Share of U.S. Voters Who Cast Ballots Early or by Mail: 2014–2022**  
(In percent)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November Voting and Registration Supplement: 2014 to 2022.

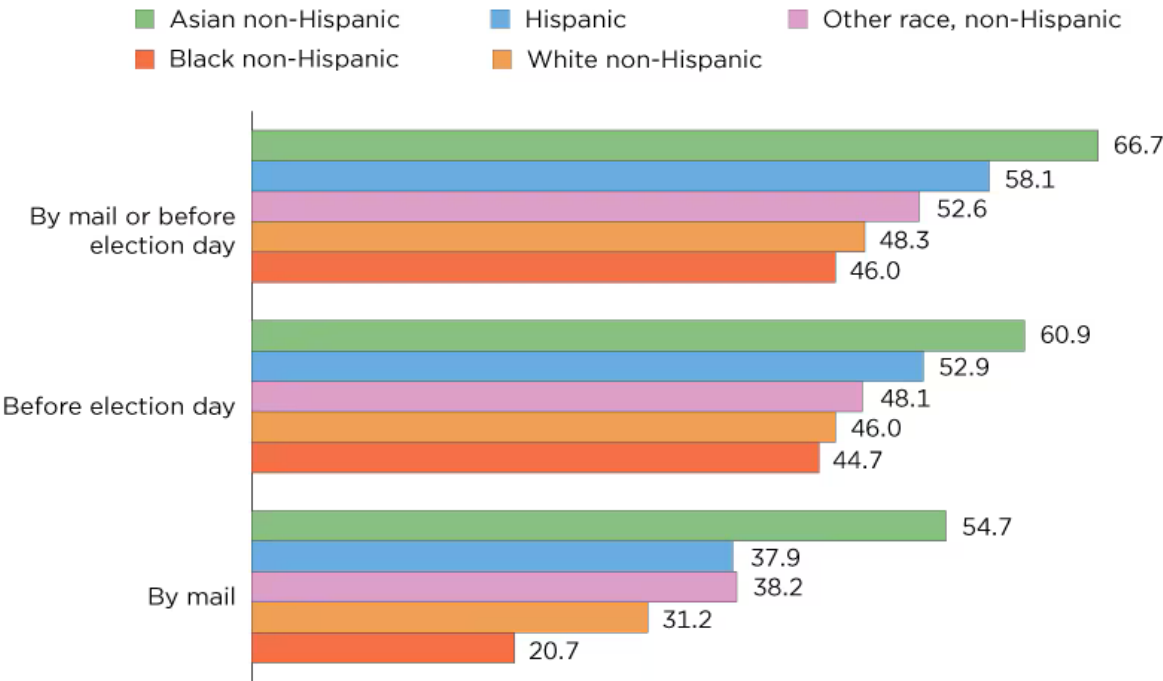
Nearly a third (31.8%) of all U.S. voters cast ballots by mail, up 8.6 percentage points from 2018 but down 11.2 percentage points from 2020.

Almost half (47.1%) of all voters voted early. While this was 20.4 percentage points lower than the early voting rate in 2020, it was 9.3 percentage points higher than the early voting rate in 2018.

The use of early and mail-in voting varied by race and ethnicity (Figure 5):

- Two-thirds (66.7%) of Asian non-Hispanic voters used these voting methods – the highest rate across race and ethnicity.
- A majority of Hispanic voters (58.1%) voted either early or by mail.
- White non-Hispanic (48.3%) and Black non-Hispanic voters (46.0%) – the lowest rates among all race/ethnic groups.

Figure 5.  
**Share of Voters Who Cast Ballots Early or by Mail by Race, Hispanic Origin: 2014-2022**  
(In percent)

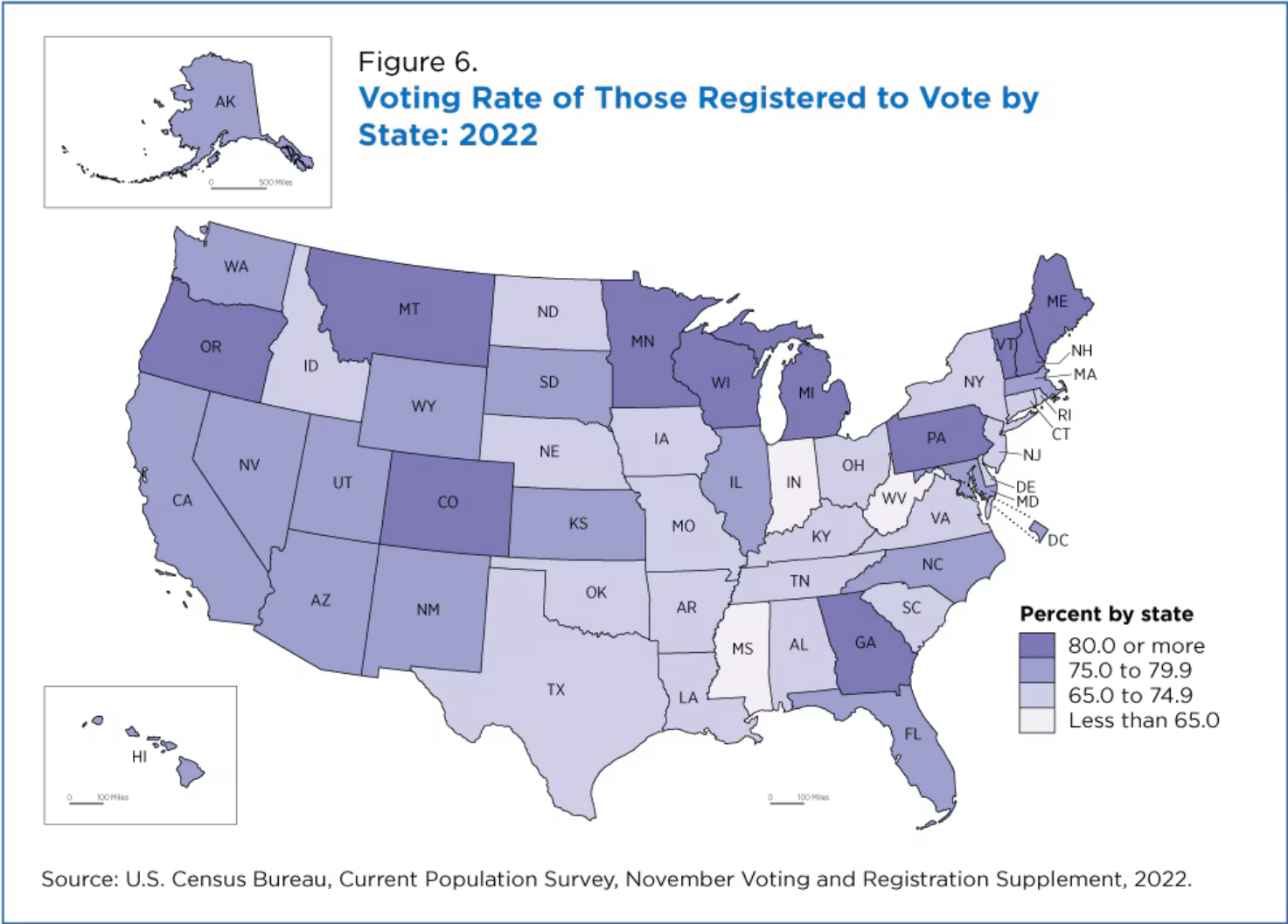


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November Voting and Registration Supplement: 2014 to 2022.

## Geography of Voting

There was significant variation in the 2022 turnout of registered voters at the state level (Figure 6).

For example, in Colorado 85.0% of registered voters cast their ballots, among the highest rates in the nation. In contrast, registered turnout in West Virginia was 61.4%.



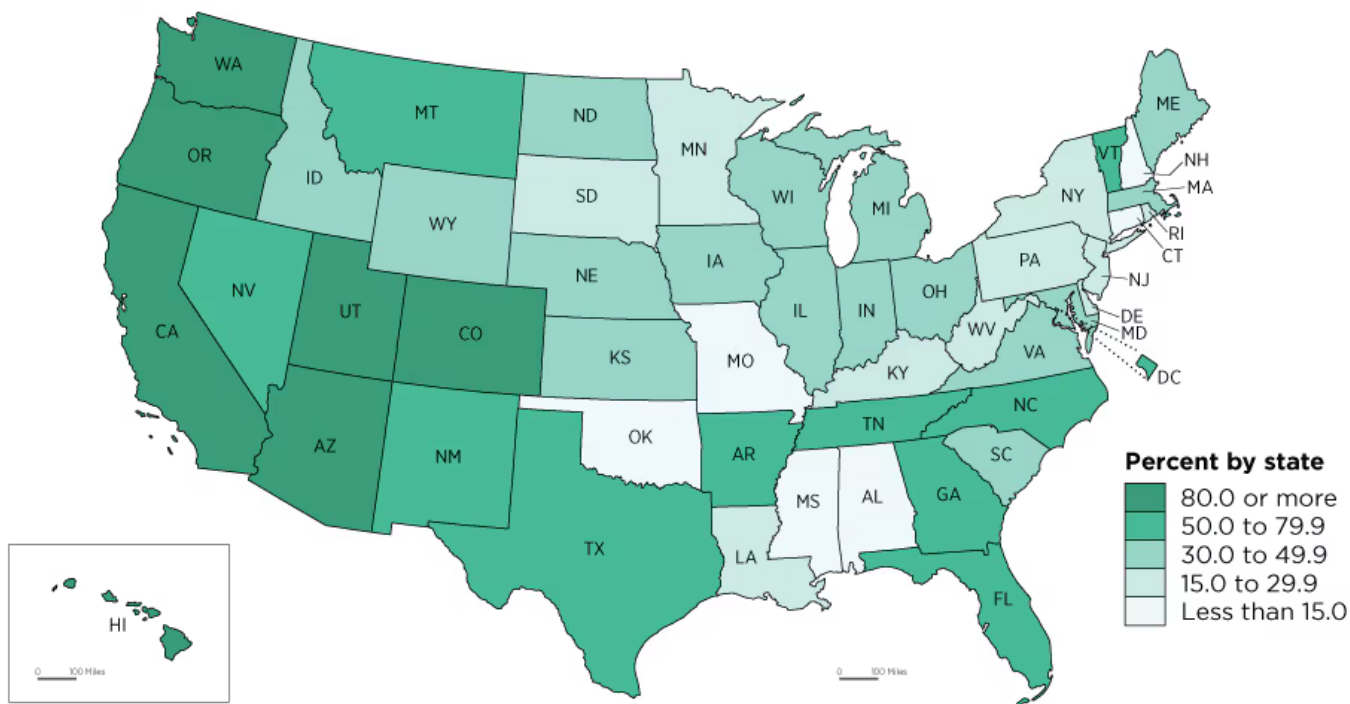
In the South, Georgia stood out with 82.0% of registered voters voting – the highest turnout in the region.

Voting method also varied greatly by state because state mail-in and early voting laws differ (Figure 7).

The highest rates of early and mail-in voting were in Colorado, Hawaii, Oregon and Washington, where 95% or more of those who voted did so by mail, before election day or both. (While rates were higher in Oregon and Washington, neither Oregon and Washington or Colorado and Hawaii differed statistically.)



Figure 7.  
**Rate of Voting Early or by Mail by State: 2022**



Note: 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 Voting and Registration Supplement, 2022.

[\[/content/dam/Census/library/stories/2023/05/high-registration-and-early-voting-in-2022-midterm-elections-figure-7.jpg\]](#)

The lowest rate of early and mail-in voting was in Alabama (3.6%). Other states with low (12% or lower) rates: Connecticut, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma and New Hampshire (rates in these states did not differ statistically).

Tables with additional information about voters are available [\[/topics/public-sector/voting/data/tables.html\]](#).

Note: More information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error and definitions is available in the technical documentation [\[/programs-surveys/cps/technical-documentation/complete.2022.html\]](#). All comparative statements in this story have undergone statistical testing, and, unless otherwise noted, all comparisons are statistically significant at the 10 percent significance level.

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This article was filed under:

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September 17, 2023

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[/newsroom/stories/constitution-day-citizenship-day.html]

Press Release

## 2022 Voting and Registration Data Now Available

May 02, 2023

Voter turnout for the 2022 U.S. congressional elections was the second highest for a nonpresidential election year since 2000.

[/newsroom/press-releases/2023/2022-voting-registration.html]