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Latino Voting and Registration --- November 2012

[The NiLP Network on Latino Issues](#) (May 8, 2013)

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In a report released today by the Census Bureau, they found that Latino voting in US Presidential elections between 2008 and 2012 decreased from 49.4 to 48.0 percent of eligible voters while increasing in numbers by 1.4 million voters to a total of 11.1 million voters, making up 10.8 percent of the electorate in 2012. Overall, the percentage of eligible citizens who voted declined from 63.6 percent in 2008 to 61.8 percent in 2012. Both blacks and non-Hispanic whites had voting rates higher than Hispanics and Asians in the 2012 election.

Voter Turnout, by Race and Hispanic Origin

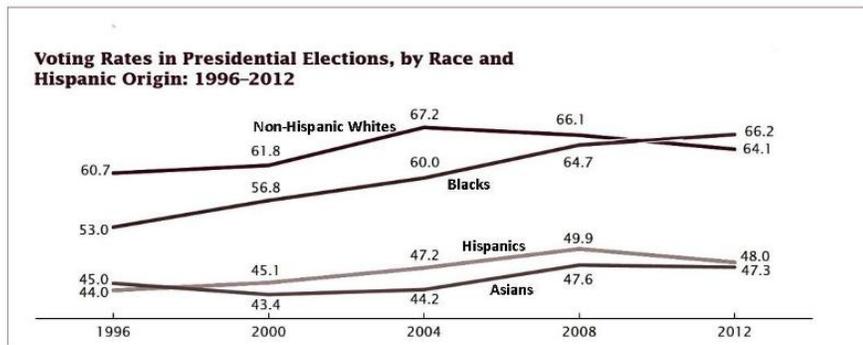
(Numbers in thousands)

Year and race and Hispanic origin	Total votes cast	Net change from previous presidential election
2012		
Total	132,948	1,804
White, non-Hispanics	98,041	-2,001
Blacks	17,813	1,680
Asians	3,904	547
Hispanics	11,188	1,443

About two in three eligible blacks (66.2 percent) voted in the 2012 presidential election, higher than the 64.1 percent of non-Hispanic whites who did so, according to a U.S. Census Bureau report released today. This marks the first time that blacks have voted at a higher rate than whites since the Census Bureau started publishing statistics on voting by the eligible citizen population in 1996.

Composition of the Voting Population and Eligible Electorate, by Race and Hispanic Origin

Year and race and Hispanic origin	Percentage of eligible electorate	Percentage of voting population
2012		
White, non-Hispanics	71.1	73.7
Blacks	12.5	13.4
Hispanics	10.8	8.4
Asians	3.8	2.9
2008		
White, non-Hispanics	73.4	76.3
Blacks	12.1	12.3
Hispanics	9.5	7.4
Asians	3.4	2.6



These findings come from [The Diversifying Electorate -- Voting Rates by Race and Hispanic Origin in 2012 \(and Other Recent Elections\)](#), which provides analysis of the likelihood of voting by demographic factors, such as race, Hispanic origin, sex, age and geography (specifically, census divisions). The report draws upon data from the November 2012 Current Population Survey Voting and Registration Supplement and looks at presidential elections back to 1996. Using the race definitions from 1968 and the total voting-age population, whites voted at higher rates than blacks in every presidential election between 1968, when the Census Bureau began publishing voting data by race, and 1992.

Blacks were the only race or ethnic group to show a significant increase between the 2008 and 2012 elections in the likelihood of voting (from 64.7 percent to 66.2 percent). The 2012 increase in voting among blacks continues what has been a long-term trend: since 1996, turnout rates have risen 13 percentage points to the highest levels of any recent presidential election. In contrast, after reaching a high in 2004, non-Hispanic white voting rates have dropped in two consecutive elections. Between 2008 and 2012, rates for non-Hispanic whites dropped from 66.1 percent to 64.1 percent. As recently as 1996, blacks had turnout rates 8 percentage points lower than non-Hispanic whites.

Between 1996 and 2012, blacks, Asians and Hispanics all had an increase in their shares of the voting population, with the Hispanic share increasing by about 4 percentage points and the black share by about 3 points.

The number of blacks who voted rose by about 1.7 million between the 2008 and 2012 elections. Likewise, the number of Hispanics who voted increased by 1.4 million and the number of Asians by 550,000. At the same time, the number of non-Hispanic white voters declined by about 2 million – the only such drop for any single-race group between elections since 1996. The figures for blacks and Hispanics are not significantly different from each other.

The report also shows that the "gender gap" in voting persists. In every presidential election since 1996, women have voted at higher rates than men. In 2012, the spread was about 4 percentage points. The gap was especially wide among black voters, among whom it reached 9 percentage points in 2012. Asians are the only race or Hispanic-origin group that showed no significant gender gap.

There were large declines in youth voting among all race groups and Hispanics in 2012. Non-Hispanic whites age 18 to 24 and 25 to 44 showed statistically significant voting rate decreases, as did young Hispanics 18 to 24 years of age. The only race/Hispanic-origin/age combinations showing voting rate increases

in 2012 were blacks ages 45 to 64 and 65 and older.

Other highlights:

* Voting rates increase with age: in 2012, the percentage of eligible adults who voted ranged from 41.2 percent for 18- to 24-year-olds, to a high of 71.9 percent for those 65 and older.

* Although blacks voted at higher rates than non-Hispanic whites nationally in 2012, this result was not uniform across the country. In the East North Central, East South Central, Middle Atlantic, and South Atlantic divisions, blacks voted at higher rates than non-Hispanic whites. In the Mountain and Pacific divisions, non-Hispanic whites voted at higher rates than blacks. In the New England, West North Central and West South Central divisions, voting rates for the two groups were not significantly different from each other.