



The History, Evolution, and Future Directions of the Election Administration and Voting Survey

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Introduction



21st Century Election Data Over Time

The U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) was established by the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002 and is charged with conducting comprehensive research on various aspects of election administration, including voting accessibility, voter registration, voting for overseas citizens and members of the armed forces, and absentee voting.¹ To assist in fulfilling this duty, the EAC has collected election administration data following each federal general election since 2004. Currently, these data are collected as part of the Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS). The 2024 election will be the 11th time these data have been collected.

To increase the usability of the data, the EAC has published comprehensive time series data files that include data from 2004 to 2022 for the EAVS and its companion survey, the Policy Survey. Previously, these data sets had been available for only one election at a time, which made it difficult to track election trends over time. The time series data files will allow users to better explore election changes and understand how election administration in the United States have evolved. The year-specific EAVS project data files provide a snapshot of each individual election, and the time series data files show the story of election administration in the United States over time. The time series data files and documentation may be found at <https://www.eac.gov/research-and-data/eavs-retrospective>.

To supplement the time series files, this report provides a retrospective on the history of the EAVS project. It highlights why the data are collected, how the survey questions and data collection practices have changed over time, how the project data are used, and what could be in store for the EAVS in the future. In its history, the EAVS have distinguished itself as the most comprehensive source of data on U.S. elections and has played an important role in strengthening election administration practices across the country.

----- ¹ 52 U.S.C. § 20981

What Is the EAVS and Why Are the Data Collected?

Before the EAVS project was established in 2004,² there was a lack of standardized data that could be used to understand how elections were administered. After the presidential election of 2000, several federal laws were passed or amended to establish federal standards surrounding how elections were run, including:

► **The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002.**

This law made many reforms to voting processes in the United States, including establishing provisional balloting, requiring states to keep centralized databases of all registered voters within their state, and establishing the first voting system certification program in the nation. In addition, this law established the EAC as an independent federal agency and charged it with, among other functions, serving as a national clearinghouse and resource for the compilation of information and review of procedures with respect to the administration of federal elections. This includes conducting studies to promote the effective administration of federal elections under topical areas such as methods of voter registration, methods of conducting provisional voting, poll worker recruitment and training, and such other matters as the EAC deems appropriate.

► **The National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) of 1993.**

This law made several important changes to the methods individuals use to register to vote and how states managed their lists of registered voters. It also established a federal responsibility to collect data on the impact of the NVRA's changes to voter registration and to provide regular reports to the U.S. Congress. This responsibility originally rested with the Federal Election Commission (FEC), but HAVA's passage transferred that responsibility to the EAC.

► **The Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) of 1986 and the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act of 2009.**

Together, these two laws establish important absentee voting protections for Americans casting ballots in federal elections from overseas, including members of the military and their families, as well as U.S. citizens residing outside the United States.³ These laws also require the federal government to collect data on voting by citizens covered by UOCAVA. The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP), a division of the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), is the presidential designee under the UOCAVA law.

“

EAVS has been described as the gold standard of election research in the past and is the most comprehensive and regular survey of state and local elections officials who run elections in the United States. ”

EAC Commissioner Donald Palmer



² In its first iteration in 2004, the data collection effort was called the “Election Day Data Survey.” The project was re-titled to the “Election Administration and Voting Survey” beginning with the 2006 data collection.

³ The following types of voters are covered by UOCAVA and the MOVE Act: U.S. citizens who are active members of the Uniformed Services, the Merchant Marine, and the Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), their eligible family members and dependents, and U.S. citizens residing outside the United States.

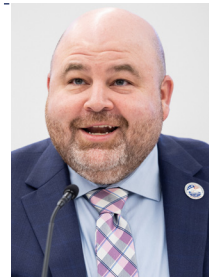
Together, these laws charge the EAC with the important responsibility of collecting data to better understand the nature of election administration across the United States. The most prominent of these data collection efforts is the EAVS project. Although the exact data collected in this project has changed over time, the EAVS has generally covered the following topics:

- ▶ **Voter registration and list maintenance**
- ▶ **Participation by voters covered by UOCAVA⁴**
- ▶ **Mail and absentee voting**
- ▶ **In-person voting**
- ▶ **Provisional voting**
- ▶ **Voter participation**
- ▶ **Equipment used to support elections**
- ▶ **State policies governing election administration^{5,6}**

The EAVS data collection project is unique for a variety of reasons. Aside from their breadth and longevity, the EAVS and Policy Survey cover all states and territories as well as the District of Columbia, collecting data on 56 state-level entities.⁷ Furthermore, the EAVS data are collected at the local jurisdiction level, which, depending on the state, may be a county or parish, independent city, town, township, or municipality.⁸ Because most election management activities take place at the local level, the EAVS yields important insights that are unavailable through other data sources. Furthermore, since the beginning of the survey in 2004 the EAC has made the EAVS project data available to the public and publishes an in-depth report of its findings after each federal general election.

“ This data is compiled directly from the trusted sources who administered our elections. ”

EAC Commissioner
Benjamin Hovland



Overall, the EAVS project is the most comprehensive, longest running, and accessible source of information on election administration in the United States. It is an invaluable resource for election officials, policymakers, journalists, researchers, and members of the public to better understand the state of U.S. elections and how election trends have changed over time.

⁴ In 2014, the EAC and FVAP established a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to jointly collect data from jurisdictions on UOCAVA participation in federal general elections. Previously, each agency had separately conducted its own data collection, resulting in duplicative efforts and a higher survey burden for election officials. As a result of the 2014 MOU, efforts were undertaken to combine and streamline the data collection efforts and to share data between the two agencies.

⁵ The quantitative data produced by EAVS must be understood within the interpretive context of the election laws and procedures used by each state. The Statutory Overview was first introduced as a component of the EAVS in 2008, collecting open-ended, qualitative data on state statutory requirements, election procedures, and practices followed to implement federal and state election laws. In 2018, the Statutory Overview was replaced by the Policy Survey, which used closed-ended questions to capture states' broad policies, allowing greater ease of interpretation and direct comparison across states.

⁶ For ease of reference, the term “state” in this report can be understood as referring to the 50 states, the U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia.

⁷ Coverage of the U.S. territories has expanded over time. Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands have participated in the project since its inception in 2004, although Puerto Rico generally only participates in presidential election years because the territory does not hold federal general elections in midterm years, and the U.S. Virgin Islands did not participate in 2010 and 2012. American Samoa began regularly participating in the data collection in 2006, and has participated every year since, except in 2016. Guam began regularly participating in 2008. And the Northern Mariana Islands participated in the project for the first time following the 2020 general election.

⁸ The territories, the District of Columbia, and Alaska each tend to report their EAVS data as a single jurisdiction. Maine has been reporting its UOCAVA data as a separate jurisdiction since 2014 because this information is only collected at the state level. Michigan has usually reported its data at the county level, but most election administration activities take place in the 1,520 local election jurisdictions in the state. Elections for Kalawao County in Hawaii are administered by Maui County; although Kalawao is listed as a jurisdiction in the EAVS data, Kalawao's data are included with Maui's data. Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont have reported their EAVS data at the township level in the EAVS except for 2006. Wisconsin reported their EAVS data at the township level in 2004, and since 2012 to the present.



How Has the EAVS Project Evolved Since 2004?

The type of project data collected and the structure of the two surveys have changed significantly over the project's lifecycle. The first inception of the project—the Election Day Survey in 2004—consisted of 24 questions on voter registration, election results, voting equipment, poll workers, voting jurisdictions, and the sources of information used in assembling the state's data submission. The first survey to use the EAVS name was collected in 2006 and was expanded to 58 questions on voter registration and election results, with policy-related questions intermingled with data questions. About half of the survey questions requested responses at the state level and half asked for both state- and county-level responses.

Beginning in 2008, the structure of the project was significantly revised. The data-oriented questions were organized into six sections and the policy-related questions were moved to a separate survey—the Statutory Overview—which collected qualitative information on state definitions, laws, processes, and procedures to provide better context to the quantitative EAVS data (the Statutory Overview was revised into the Policy Survey in 2018). This same general format is used in 2024.

Some of the evolution in the survey questions can be attributed to the necessary process of seeking approval from the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) before each election's data collection begins. Beginning with the 2006 EAVS, each year's survey has been reviewed and revised by the EAC to clarify instructions and questions, accommodate new election practices and areas of interest in the election administration field, and remove questions that are no longer relevant or necessary to collect.



EAVS Reports over time

The EAVS Questionnaire, 2008–2024

The 2008 version of the EAVS was the first iteration to collect data focused entirely on the jurisdiction level rather than collecting both state- and jurisdiction-level responses. The 2008 EAVS marked the first year in which the survey questions were split into six sections—a basic structure that has been kept intact since then, although some survey questions have periodically been revised and updated. The data collected through the 2008 EAVS included:

- ▶ **Section A (voter registration and list maintenance):** Number of registered voters in a jurisdiction and how that number was calculated; information on same-day registration (SDR); information on registration forms for all types of registration transactions (successful and unsuccessful) received by a jurisdiction; the sources of the registration forms received, both in total and broken down according to whether the registration form was new, duplicate, or invalid/rejected; information on removal notices sent under NVRA Section 8(d) 2; and the number of voters removed from the voter registration rolls and the reason for their removal.
- ▶ **Section B (UOCAVA voting):** Information about the number and type of UOCAVA absentee ballots transmitted; number and type of UOCAVA ballots (including both regular UOCAVA ballots and Federal Write-in Absentee Ballots [FWAB]) returned and submitted for counting; types of UOCAVA ballot returned by type of UOCAVA voter (uniformed services, overseas civilian, or other); number and type of UOCAVA ballots counted; information on the type of UOCAVA ballot counted by type of UOCAVA voter; number and type of UOCAVA ballots rejected; reasons why UOCAVA ballots were rejected; types of UOCAVA ballots rejected by type of UOCAVA voter; whether ballots transmitted to UOCAVA voters for the general election were transmitted in response to a one-time request or as part of a multiyear ballot request; and the status of ballots automatically transmitted to UOCAVA voters.
- ▶ **Section C (domestic civilian absentee voting):** Information about absentee ballots transmitted and the status of the transmitted ballots; voters registered as permanent absentee voters; status of absentee ballots returned and submitted for counting; and information on reasons why absentee ballots were rejected.
- ▶ **Section D (election administration):** Information on the number of precincts in a jurisdiction; the number and type of polling places in a jurisdiction; and information on poll workers who assisted with the election.
- ▶ **Section E (provisional ballots):** Information on the number and status of provisional ballots submitted; and information on reasons why provisional ballots were rejected.
- ▶ **Section F (Election Day activities):** Turnout figures for the election and the source of that data; number of first-time voters who registered to vote by mail and, under HAVA 303(b), were subject to provide identification; information on electronic poll books or electronic lists of voters that may have been used; information on printed poll books or printed lists of voters that may have been used; type of primary voting equipment used (including direct-recording electronic [DRE] equipment with no voter-verified paper audit trail [VVPAT], DRE equipment with VVPAT, electronic systems that print voter choices on an optical scan ballot, optical/digital scan, punch card machines, lever machines, hand-counted paper ballots, and other types of equipment); and additional comments regarding Election Day experiences.

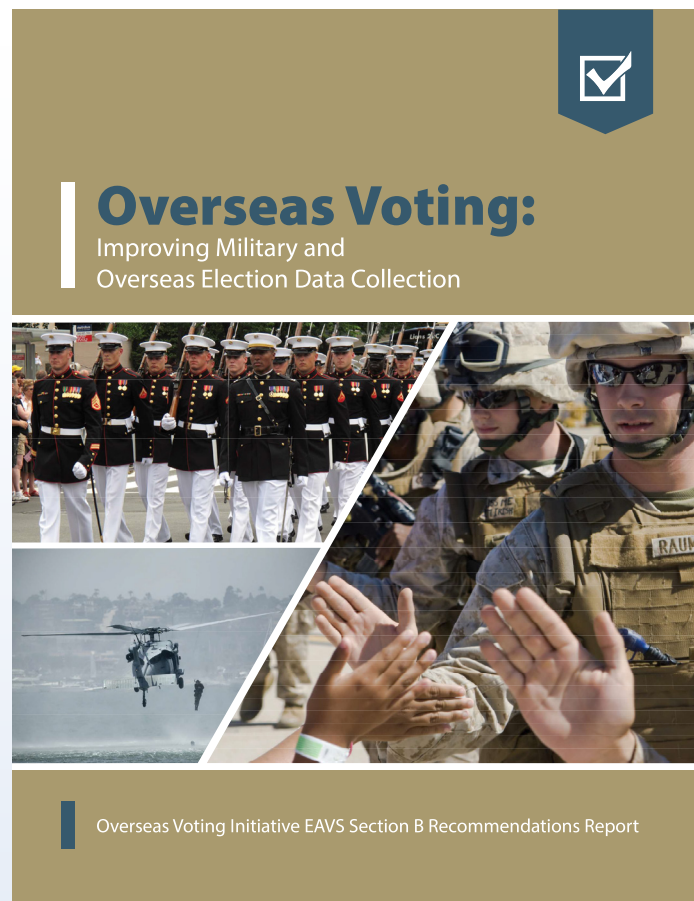
For the next four EAVS cycles, some minor changes were made to these questions. In 2010, Section B was revised based on changes to election law pursuant to the MOVE Act, and Section F collected data on the number of ballots cast by voters in all-vote-by-mail states or jurisdictions for the first time. In 2012, the terminology in Section A was updated from using “removal notices” to refer to notices sent to voters who may no longer have been eligible to be registered to vote in their jurisdiction to use “confirmation notices” instead; further updates were made to this question in 2014 to outline situations in which confirmation notices would be sent.

Another significant change made in 2014 was the addition of questions from FVAP’s Post-Election Voting Survey of Local Election Officials (also known as PEVS-LEO Quant) to Section B of the EAVS in order to streamline the collection of UOCAVA data and avoid election officials needing to report the same data across multiple government surveys. Because of this change, questions were added to Section B to collect data on registered and eligible UOCAVA voters, Federal Post Card Applications [FPCA], the date of transmission for UOCAVA ballots, UOCAVA ballots by mode of transmission,

transmitted ballots returned as undeliverable, UOCAVA ballots returned by voters, UOCAVA ballots rejected and counted, and to separate data on FWABs into a set of questions separate from regular UOCAVA absentee ballots.

The goal of combining the two surveys was to ease the survey burden on election officials by asking them to answer a single set of questions. Although the questions from the two surveys differed in phrasing and level of specificity, they captured many of the same data points. In order to streamline and improve Section B, FVAP and the EAC worked with the Council of State Governments’ (CSG) Overseas Voting Initiative (OVI) to create a working group consisting of state and local election officials that could identify redundant questions and make recommendations to clarify wording for

questions that created confusion or challenges for respondents. The working group identified nine redundant questions that were flagged for removal, and several questions with subitems asking for data not regularly recorded by states. In 2016, EAVS respondents were instructed to skip these questions when responding to Section B; and beginning in 2018, changes were formally implemented within the EAVS instrument.



► For 2018, the EAVS questions underwent their most significant revision since 2008.

The general topics were unchanged, but many questions were reformatted to improve the survey's flow and to aid in interpreting the data collected from states and local jurisdictions. Policy-based questions on use of the active/inactive registered voter designation and use of permanent absentee voting status were removed from the EAVS, and clear missingness codes were incorporated throughout the survey to signify when a respondent was unable to report information because the data was not tracked ("Data not available") or because the state or jurisdiction did not have the relevant election policy in place ("Does not apply"). Other changes to the sections included renaming Section D from "election administration" to "total votes cast and in-person voting" to better signify the type of data collected, clarifications of survey terms and definitions throughout, reducing the number of "other" categories available within questions, full implementation of the recommendations of the CSG OVI Section B Working Group, addition of questions in Section D to collect more data on poll workers, the removal of questions from Section F on the number of first-time voters asked to provide identification, and the revision of the Section F questions that collect data on the use of poll books and the voting machines used in the general election. For the first time, the EAC introduced the use of closed-ended answer options for most types of voting equipment, resulting in more usable data (e.g., see Khan et al., 2020).

► 2018

Additions

- **Section B:** Full implementation of the recommendations of the CSG OVI Section B Working Group.
- **Section F:** Use of closed-ended answer options for most types of voting equipment.
- **Entire Survey:** Clear missingness codes were incorporated to signify when a respondent was unable to report information.

Modifications

- **Section D:** Renamed section title from "election administration" to "total votes cast and in-person voting."
- **Section F:** Revised questions that collect data on the use of poll books and the voting machines used in the general election.
- **Entire Survey:** Clarified survey terms and definitions; Reduced the number of "other" categories available within questions.

Removals

- **Section F:** Questions on the number of first-time voters asked to provide identification.
- **Policy Survey:** Questions on use of the active/inactive registered voter designation and use of permanent absentee voting status.

► 2020

Additions

- **Section A:** Sub-questions on when SDRs were received.
- **Section B:** Question on FWABs rejected for other reasons.

Modifications

- **Section F:** Clarified that data on total turnout in the election should include ballots "cast and counted," not just ballots cast.

Removals

- **Section D:** Redundant question on the number of total votes cast.

► 2022

Additions

- **Section C:** Questions on the number and location of drop boxes used for the general election; Question on mail ballots returned via drop boxes; Question on mail ballots successfully cured by voters.
- **Section D:** Total number of physical polling places used and the total number of first-time poll workers for the general election.
- **Section E:** Question on the number of provisional ballots cast according to the reasons why they were cast.
- **Section F:** Sub-questions on using electronic and paper poll books to assist with SDR and checking a voter's mail ballot status.

Modifications

- **Section C:** Changed the name and terminology of section title to "mail voting."

Removals

- **Section D:** Redundant questions on the total number of in-person voters during early and Election Day voting.
- **Section F:** Questions that asked for information on punch card and lever voting machines used.

For 2022, updates included changing the name and terminology of Section C to "mail voting" and the addition of questions on the number and location of drop boxes used for the general election, mail ballots returned via drop boxes, and mail ballots successfully cured by voters.

In Section D, questions were added on the total number of physical polling places used for the general election and the total number of first-time poll workers. Redundant questions on the total number of in-person voters during early and Election Day voting were removed. Section E included a new question on the number of provisional ballots cast according to the reasons why they were cast. Section F removed the questions that asked for information on punch card and lever voting machines used (as no jurisdiction had reported using this equipment in several EAVS cycles) and added new sub-questions on using electronic and paper poll books to assist with SDR and checking a voter's mail ballot status. In addition, further clarifications and instructions were added throughout in response to technical assistance questions received during the 2020 data collection.

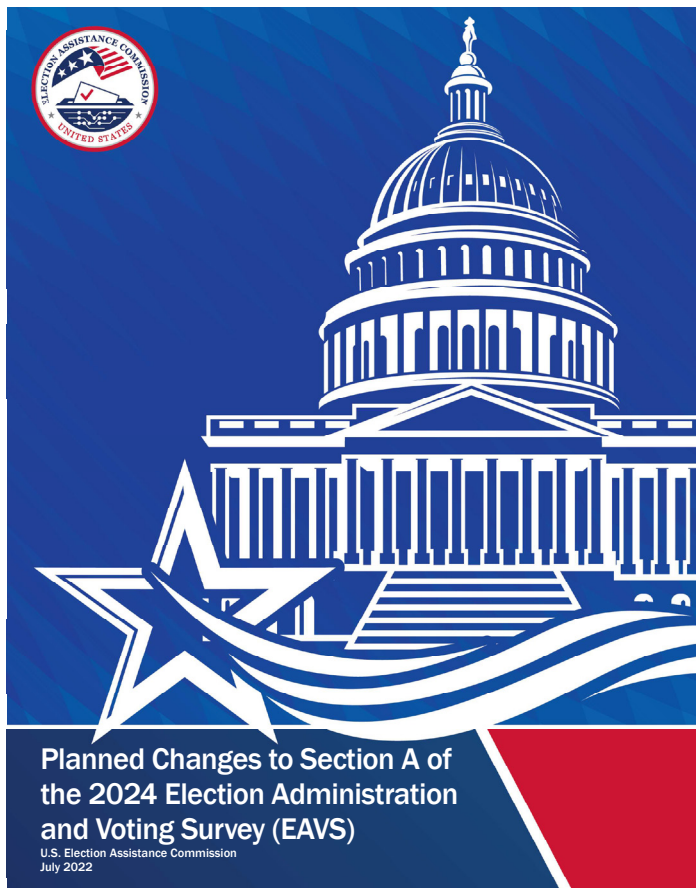
The EAC has made further additions and clarifications to the 2024 survey instrument to improve the quality of the data collected. With this survey, several significant changes in Section A (which collects data on voter registration and list maintenance) are taking effect as a result of a working group of election officials that the EAC convened between April 2019 and February 2022. Prior to the working group, the EAC had received feedback from state and local election officials that the questions in Section A were confusing, did not track important data, and did not align with current voter registration practices. After reviewing Section A issues with the members of the working group and evaluating the effect of potential questionnaire changes, the EAC released a report in July 2022 outlining planned changes that would take effect with the 2024 EAVS;⁹ this two-year advance notice was provided because most of the questions in Section A cover the period from

Less significant changes were made to the survey questions for the 2020 EAVS, including new sub-questions on when SDRs were received, a new question in Section B on FWABs rejected for other reasons (aside from being late or the voter's regular UOCAVA absentee ballot being received and counted), and the removal of a redundant question from Section D on the number of total votes cast. Revisions were made throughout the questions to clarify instructions and definitions—the most significant of which was the clarification in Section F that data on total turnout in the election should include ballots "cast and counted," not just ballots cast.

⁹ U.S. Election Assistance Commission, "Planned Changes to Section A of the 2024 Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS)." Available at [https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/EAVS%202024/Planned_Changes_to_2024_EAVS_Section_A_\(Final%20Text\)_508c.pdf](https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/EAVS%202024/Planned_Changes_to_2024_EAVS_Section_A_(Final%20Text)_508c.pdf).

the close of registration for the previous federal general election to the close of registration for the general election for which EAVS data are sought. The changes to Section A for the 2024 EAVS include updated definitions of the terms “same-day voter registration,” “registration transaction,” “automatic registration program,” and “confirmation notice;” the addition of a sub-item to collect information on other types of registered and eligible voters aside from those designated as active or inactive; combining two sub-items that previously tracked data on two different types of registration updates; the addition of two new items to collect data on the

modes by which updated registration transactions and other types of registration transactions were submitted; the addition of automatic registration programs and polling places as modes of registration; a new sub-item for respondents to report data on the number of confirmation notices returned by voters confirming that the individual is still eligible to be registered but providing an updated address within the same jurisdiction; a new question reporting data on the number of confirmation notices sent according to the reason why they were sent; and a new question on the number of duplicate voter registration records merged together rather than removed from the voter registration database.



In addition to the Section A changes being made for 2024, other updates are taking effect as part of the regular process of reviewing and updating EAVS questions. These other changes include the introduction of fax and online ballot delivery portals as modes of UOCAVA ballot transmission and return in Section B; new sub-items in Section C to collect data on the total number of mail ballots that entered the curing process and that were unsuccessfully cured; a new sub-item in Section E to collect data on the number of provisional ballots cast because the voter registered to vote on the same day they cast their ballot; a new item in Section F to collect data on the makes, models, and number of electronic poll books deployed in an EAVS jurisdiction; another new item in Section F to collect data on voter registration systems (VRS) deployed in polling places to assist with voting; a sub-item to collect data on whether electronic poll books were used to encode BMD cards during early voting; and updates to instructions throughout the survey.

The Statutory Overview and Policy Survey Questionnaire, 2008–2024

As the EAC administered the 2004 and 2006 EAVS surveys, the need for more rigorous collection of information on states' election laws and policies became apparent. States have a variety of election practices in place and often use different terminology to describe similar policies. Knowing what a state's election laws are is vital to accurately interpreting the EAVS data the state provides. For instance, if two states with similar numbers of registered voters report very different numbers of mail ballots transmitted to voters in an election, then this difference could very well be attributed to different policies on which voters within the state are eligible to vote using a mail ballot (e.g., whether the state automatically sends mail ballots to all registered voters, or whether voters must provide an excuse to be able to request a mail ballot for an election).

To address this need, the EAC collected the Statutory Overview for the first time in 2008. This survey asked states to report on their laws, definitions, and procedures related to elections. Each state and territory were asked to complete an open-ended questionnaire that provided definitions of key terms as well as legal or statutory language related to key policy areas. Similar to the EAVS, the Statutory Overview was organized into several sections:

- ▶ **Section A** collected legal citations that defined election terms (over-vote, under-vote, blank ballot, void/spoiled ballot, provisional/challenged ballot, absentee, early voting, active voter, inactive voter, and other terms) and citations for significant policy changes since the previous election.
- ▶ **Section B** collected information on registration, including the type of voter registration database, how often local jurisdictions transmitted registration information to the state voter registration list, the process of moving voters

between active and inactive statuses and whether this process was different for UOCAVA voters, the process of removing voters from registration rolls and whether this process was different for UOCAVA voters, whether the state's voter registration system shared information electronically with the state's motor vehicles agency or other state and federal agencies, how the state used National Change of Address (NCOA) data, voting eligibility requirements for individuals with felony convictions, and the use of the internet to facilitate voter registration.

- ▶ **Section C** collected information on election administration, including how votes cast at a place other than the voter's precinct of registration were tabulated (e.g., centrally vs. at the precinct), whether an excuse was required for absentee voting, the state's definition for early voting and how early voting ballots were counted and reported, if any jurisdiction within the state used a vote-by-mail system to replace in-person voting, situations that require a voter to cast a provisional ballot, whether the state counted provisional ballots that were cast in the wrong precinct and the process used to determine whether to count a provisional ballot, laws regarding post-election audits, and state requirements for poll worker training.
- ▶ **Section D** collected information on Election Day activities, including the process for capturing over-vote and under-vote counts; identification required for voters to register to vote, cast a vote in person, cast a mail or absentee ballot, cast a UOCAVA ballot, or other stages of the registration and voting process that required identification; and state laws about access to the polling place for election observers.
- ▶ **Section E** collected information on other aspects of elections, including revisions to the state's administrative complaint procedures since they were first implemented under HAVA Section 402 and additional comments to aid the EAC's interpretation of the state's data.


After the first version of the Statutory Overview was fielded in 2008, there were only minor changes made to the questions for the next several cycles. In 2010, a question was added to Section E about the state’s processes and procedures for implementing the MOVE Act and its plans to capture data about registration materials and ballots transmitted to UOCAVA voters. In 2012, a definition of post-election audit and instructions on what information to report if post-election audits took place in the state were added to Section C, and the MOVE Act question was removed from Section E.

Each of the Statutory Overview questions required an open-ended text response. Given the decentralized nature of election administration, the Statutory Overview essentially encouraged states to copy and paste relevant statutes and regulations on election policy. This approach had limitations because it then made it difficult to classify states into broad categories for comparison purposes.

To address this, the EAC reorganized the Statutory Overview into the Election Administration Policy Survey, more commonly called the Policy Survey, starting with the 2018 election cycle. The goal of the Policy Survey was to introduce more structure into the inquiry into state election policies by improving standardization of responses. This enabled more direct comparisons of policies used across states and more explicit contextual information related to EAVS topic areas. The Policy Survey preserved many of the topics that had been addressed in the Statutory Overview, but reorganized the questions into closed-ended items, with state respondents encouraged to select the answer option(s) that best reflected their state’s policy or practices. The Statutory Overview questions on terminology definitions, use of the NCOA, procedures for moving voters between active and inactive designations, ballot tabulation procedures, poll worker training, tracking of over- and under-votes, polling place access for election observers, and administrative

Section B

U.S. ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION



2008 Election Administration & Voting Survey

Statutory Overview

In order to better understand state laws governing federal elections, the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, as part of its biennial Election Administration and Voting Survey, is collecting information on state election laws and procedures. These answers will help us to better understand the quantitative data relating to the 2008 general election that we are collecting from all U.S. states and territories.

We understand that responding to this Statutory Overview may require significant staff time on the part of your office. Please be assured that we have attempted to minimize the burden, and we appreciate your cooperation in this very important project.

Information Supplied By	
Name	
Title	
Office/Agency Name	
Address 1	
Address 2	
City	
State	
Zip Code	
Email Address	
Telephone (area Code and number)	
Fax Number (area code and number)	

2008 Statutory Overview data collection form

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Voter Registration and List Maintenance

Q3. For the November 2022 general election, is your state's voter registration database system best described as a bottom-up system, a top-down system, or a hybrid of both?

(Note: A bottom-up system generally uploads information retained at the local level and compiles it at regular intervals to form the statewide voter registration list. A top-down system is hosted on a single, central platform or mainframe and is generally maintained by the state with information supplied by local jurisdictions. A hybrid is some combination of both systems described above.)

☐ Top-down system

☐ Bottom-up system

☐ Hybrid system

Q3 Comments:

Back

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Expiration Date 4/30/2025

2022 Policy Survey online data collection template

complaint procedures were removed from the Policy Survey. Several additional topics were added when the Policy Survey was revised so that the data could better be used to provide context to EAVS data, including how states collected the data for each of the six sections of the EAVS, automated voter registration processes, SDR, permanent absentee voting, mail ballot deadlines (for non-UOCAVA and UOCAVA mail ballots), vote centers, methods available for UOCAVA voters to submit an FPCA, length of time that FPCA and UOCAVA designations remain in force, election recount circumstances, and an expanded question on audits performed.

Over the next several data collection cycles, the Policy Survey questions continued to be updated to improve the clarity of the questions and instructions, collect additional data to validate and provide context to EAVS responses, and collect data on other important EAC priorities. In 2020, the topics covered by the Policy Survey expanded to include pre-registration of voters under the age of 18, voting information lookup tools on state election office websites, use of active/inactive voter distinctions, state and local jurisdiction responsibilities for updating voter registration records, procedures for sending confirmation notices, data sources used to identify potentially inactive voters, testing and certification processes for voting equipment and electronic poll books, mail ballot postmark requirements, electronic transmission of ballots to domestic civilian voters, circumstances under which provisional ballots are offered, and election certification deadlines. In 2022, questions were added on drop boxes for returning mail ballots and curing of mail ballots, accessible absentee voting for individuals with disabilities who are eligible to receive a ballot online, the availability dates of in-person early voting, and modes by which states allow UOCAVA ballot transmission and return. The 2024 Policy Survey, which is being fielded at the time this report is published, adds several questions designed to directly map onto the new EAVS Section A questions (including whether a state uses other registered voter distinctions besides active

Q31. What counts in your state as satisfying the postmark requirements for mail ballots? (Select all that apply.)

- ☐ Does not apply; no postmark is required.
- ☐ Physical U.S. Postal Service (USPS) postmark
- ☐ Orange USPS postal processing marks
- ☐ USPS hand cancellation/round stamp
- ☐ USPS intelligent mail barcode data
- ☐ Private express delivery service date stamp
- ☐ Private express delivery service data/intelligent barcode data
- ☐ Date on the voter affidavit
- ☐ Other (please describe): _____

Q32. For the November 2024 general election, under which circumstances will domestic civilian (non-UOCAVA) voters be able to receive their ballots through an electronic format, such as email, fax, online via your state's online voter registration portal or other web-based system, or through a mobile phone app? (Select all that apply.)

- ☐ Domestic civilian voters cannot receive their ballots electronically under any circumstances.
- ☐ During an emergency situation (such as a natural disaster) that hinders normal in-person voting or mail voting
- ☐ When a replacement ballot is needed
- ☐ Voters with a specific disability (please describe): _____
- ☐ Voters with any disability
- ☐ Voters may receive a ballot electronically for any circumstance.
- ☐ Other (please describe): _____

If Q32 = Voters with a specific disability or Voters with any disability, proceed to Q32a
If Q32 = any other option, skip to Q33

Q32a. What terminology does your state use to describe the process whereby a voter with a disability may access a ballot online, mark it privately and independently, and return it to election officials?

- ☐ Accessible absentee voting
- ☐ Remote access vote by mail
- ☐ Remote ballot marking
- ☐ Other (please describe): _____

[Survey continues on next page]

OMB Control No. 3265-0006

Expiration Date 04/30/2027

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2024 EAVS Policy Survey Instrument

and inactive, whether a state tracks registration data as forms or transactions, whether a state tracks data on duplicate and/or invalid registrations, registration modes available in states, whether a state makes voters declared mentally incompetent ineligible to vote, and how duplicate voter registration records are handled). The 2024 Policy Survey also adds new questions on electronic ballot return options, details on how poll workers are trained, how states determine which voters are covered by UOCAVA, and whether states have instituted security policies to protect election workers.

Data Collection Practices


Just as the EAVS and Statutory Overview/Policy Survey questionnaires have changed over time to adapt to survey respondents' needs, so have the ways that the EAC has collected the survey data from state and local election officials. Although the data have consistently been collected through spreadsheet-based formats, the usability of the data collection tools, the data validation capabilities of the tools to increase data quality, and the technical support provided to survey respondents has continuously improved.

For the Election Day Survey in 2004, the data responses were collected through a spreadsheet-based format that was sent to local election administrators to complete. The staff who coordinated the 2004 project noted that the lack of common election terminology among states and jurisdictions led to differing interpretations of survey items, data entry errors, and "uneven reporting" of some data. The 2004 spreadsheet data collection tool was altered by some states and jurisdictions, which led to issues compiling the data. The project staff also noted that election officials were not given sufficient advance notice to compile their submissions. The authors of the 2004 Election Day Survey report recommended that real-time, interactive quality assurance checks be incorporated in the data templates to avoid these issues and improve the quality of the survey data.¹⁰

Starting with the 2006 project, the EAC began soliciting feedback from members of the election community, including

Alabama EAC Election Day Survey - Jurisdiction Level Registration 2004 General Election						
Code	Name	Fips	Jurisdiction Name	Departure From Total Registration	Reported Total Registration	Active Registration
01	AL	01001	Autauga County	0	28,100	28,100
01	AL	01003	Baldwin County	0	91,049	91,049
01	AL	01005	Barbour County	0	16,125	16,125
01	AL	01007	Bibb County	0	11,880	11,880
01	AL	01009	Blount County	0	28,018	28,018
01	AL	01011	Bullock County	0	7,272	7,272
01	AL	01013	Butler County	0	11,905	11,905
01	AL	01015	Calhoun County	0	48,696	48,696
01	AL	01017	Chambers County	0	20,995	20,995
01	AL	01019	Cherokee County	0	13,455	13,455

2004 EAVS Data Collection Template



UNITED STATES
ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

2014 Election Administration & Voting Survey

The ongoing process of improving America's election systems relies in part on having accurate data about the way Americans cast their ballots. In 2002, Congress chartered the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) to collect information on the state of American elections and make it widely available to policy makers, advocates, scholars, journalists and the general public. Since 2004, the Commission has sponsored a biennial survey as its primary tool for fulfilling that mission. We are pleased to present the 2014 Election Administration and Voting Survey, and we ask for your help in making it the most complete and accurate survey in its history.

The questions below ask for information about ballots cast, voter registration, overseas and military voting, Election Day activities; voting technology, and other important issues. The section concerning the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Voting Act (UOCAVA) serves as the EAC's standardized format for State reporting of UOCAVA voting information as required by 42 U.S.C. §1973ff-1. States that complete and timely submit this section to the EAC will fulfill their UOCAVA reporting requirement under 42 U.S.C. §1973ff-1(c). Additionally, EAC is mandated by the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) to collection information from States concerning the impact of that statute on the administration of Federal elections. With this information, EAC is required to make a report to Congress and provide recommendations for the improvement of Federal and State procedures, forms, and other NVRA matters. States that timely respond to all questions in this survey concerning voter registration related matters will meet their NVRA reporting requirements under 42 U.S.C. § 1973gg-7 and EAC regulations.

The EAC recognizes the burden that asking for these data places on State and local election officials, and we have worked to minimize that burden as much as possible.

In advance, we thank you for your cooperation and look forward to answering any questions you might have.

Select your State: FL

Update Error Check: Last Error Check Run: 03-04-2015 14:13

2014 EAVS Data Collection Template

 UNITED STATES ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION								
Local Jurisdiction Identification				Information about the number of registered voters in				
Error Check				Registered Eligible Voters	Comments	How Registered Eligible Voters Are Reported	How Registered Eligible Voters Are Reported (Other)	
N/A = Data Not Available Not Applicable = Not Applicable				Enter Number or N/A	optional	See pull down for options	Other Specify (Text)	
FIPS Code	Jurisdiction Name	Name	Title	Agency	A1a	A1Comments	A2	A2c_Other
0500100000	ARKANSAS COUNTY							
0500300000	ASHLEY COUNTY							
0500500000	BAXTER COUNTY							
0500700000	BENTON COUNTY							
0500900000	BOONE COUNTY							
0501100000	BRADLEY COUNTY							

2016 EAVS Data Collection Template

¹⁰Kimball W. Brace and Michael P. McDonald. "Final Report of the 2004 Election Day Survey." Released September 27, 2005. Available at <https://www.eac.gov/research-and-data/2004-election-administration-voting-survey>.



The 2023 EAC Data Summit. From left to right: J. Scott Wiedmann (FVAP), Robert Sweeney (EAC), Dr. Lindsay Nielson (Fors Marsh), Dr. Raymond Williams (EAC), and Jamie Shew (County Clerk, Douglas County, KS)

election officials, researchers, members of the EAC Standards Board and Board of Advisors, and other interested parties, to refine the survey instrument and data collection strategy. The questionnaire was also submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review under the PRA and received approval, which has been renewed each year since 2006. This project was also the first to incorporate formalized reviews of data submissions before they were finalized.

Although a web-based survey application was piloted in 2006 to assist with data collection, the 2008 project went back to using Microsoft Excel-based data collection solutions. However, in that year, the EAC introduced a separate template intended to collect data from local jurisdictions to supplement the flat-file format that had been used previously. In 2008, a project website was also introduced as a centralized place for respondents to submit their completed data collection templates.

Further improvements were made to the Excel-based data collection templates starting with the 2010 project, when error-checking tools were incorporated directly into the spreadsheets. This allowed survey respondents to assess their submissions for potential errors before submitting their draft data to the

EAC for review. The year 2010 also marked the first time the EAC published *A Guide to the Election Administration and Voting Survey* to provide information to election officials responsible for providing EAVS and Statutory Overview data. This document established formal processes for revising the survey instruments, providing technical assistance to respondents, submitting draft data and working with states to make corrections, addressing errors in the published data, and standardizing the expected data submission dates. This survey was also the first time that the EAC asked state chief election officials to certify their submissions as final after all data reviews were complete.

► **From 2010 to 2014, the survey became more stable over time (as the contractor at the time noted in 2014, “achieved maturity”) and largely went unchanged.**

In 2014, Section B of the EAVS used questions from FVAP’s PEVS-LEO Quant survey for the first time, marking the formal collaboration of the EAC and FVAP on collecting data on participation by voters covered by UOCAVA. Furthermore, in response to increasing interest in the EAVS data by election

officials, academic researchers, and other election administration stakeholders, the EAC hosted its first Election Data Summit following the release of the 2014 EAVS report. This summit generated useful feedback on the EAVS, data collection procedures, and how this valuable data source might continue to improve. The EAC has continued the tradition of hosting a data summit commemorating the release of the newest EAVS report and data to this day.

Among the most frequently cited challenges for EAVS respondents was the Excel template. Needs assessment interviews with state points of contact (POC) and a systematic usability analysis conducted ahead of the 2016 survey launch revealed many limitations with the Excel template. Although the template worked well for local jurisdictions responding to the survey item by item, macros prevented copying and pasting large amounts of data, making it difficult for states to aggregate data provided by local jurisdictions or enter data reports generated from a centralized state system. Moreover, by the 2016 EAVS, cybersecurity was a central focus for many election offices, and system security procedures prevented many respondents from enabling the macros necessary to run validation checks, which led to frequent crashes. To improve usability and reduce the reporting burden, the EAC introduced in 2016 the data aggregation template to supplement the existing data

entry template. This template allowed states to more easily aggregate responses from local jurisdictions that had been entered into the Excel template and enabled top-down states to more seamlessly populate EAVS data directly from their centralized databases. Additionally, aggregated data could be submitted through a newly redesigned EAVS portal website, which served as a centralized project resource and repository for all EAVS documents and training materials.

Beginning in 2016, the EAC also improved and expanded the support resources available to EAVS respondents. The EAC conducted direct outreach to each state POC, beginning with an initial needs assessment interview, which helped to build relationships, trust, and a foundation of knowledge necessary for successful data collection. The agency hosted two webinars that provided state and local elections staff with information about the EAVS process, an overview of the data required for reporting, the importance of the EAVS data, and the timeline for completing the EAVS. The EAC also hosted informational “boot camps” focused on using the data templates and reviewing data required to answer each question in the EAVS.¹¹ Technical assistance support was also enhanced, with dedicated support staff undergoing rigorous training about the EAVS process and background for



EAC Commissioners at 2023 EAC Data Summit. From left to right: Commissioner Thomas Hicks, Chairwoman Christy McCormick, Vice Chair Benjamin Hovland, and Commissioner Donald Palmer

¹¹ These videos can be found in the EAC's YouTube page: <https://www.youtube.com/@u.s.electionassistancecomm2110/videos>

each state. The EAC also developed a process to systematically log technical support inquiries so they could be more easily referenced and used for future improvements to the survey and data collection process.

Another new addition in the 2016 EAVS was the release of an online data visualization tool and state data briefs after the publication of the EAVS. The online data visualization tool allowed the general public to access a webpage where EAVS data was displayed in map format and users could select which numeric EAVS items they wanted to be shown, select between state and jurisdiction level, and compare jurisdictions based on EAVS items. State data briefs were released as one-page “factsheets” that displayed main EAVS rates (e.g., registration sources, turnout methods) for each state in graphic form to make them easier to interpret. Similar jurisdiction-level data briefs were also available using the online data visualization tool.¹²

In 2018, larger changes were made to the EAVS survey instrument and process. Recommendations for Section B identified by the OVI working group were fully implemented. Rather than relying on definitions and instructions within a separate Supplemental Instruction Manual, all question instructions were incorporated directly into the survey instrument. Most significantly, an online template was created to support the Excel data entry template, so that jurisdictions could enter their EAVS data in an online survey, and their responses would be automatically uploaded to an Excel template that the state could

A1. Total Number Registered and Eligible Persons, Active and Inactive

For question A1, report the total number of people (not votes or ballots) who were registered and eligible to vote in the November 2018 general election. If your jurisdiction differentiates between active and inactive voters, report the number of active voters in A1b and inactive voters in A1c. If your state does not make this differentiation, report your total number of registered voters again in A1b and select “does not apply” as the response to A1c.

		Data not available	Does not apply
A1a. TOTAL number of registered and eligible voters: Do not include any persons under the age of 18 who may be registered under a “pre-registration” program or registered after the 2018 deadline for registration.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A1b. TOTAL number of active voters: Fully eligible voters who have no additional processing requirements to fulfill before voting.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A1c. TOTAL number of inactive voters: Voters who remain eligible to vote but require address verification under the provisions of the National Voter Registration Act.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2018 EAVS Online Data Collection Template

[Back to Section A Menu >>](#) [Back to Main Menu >>](#)

Total Registrations: Questions A1 and A2

Questions A1 and A2 ask about individuals who were registered and eligible to vote in the 2022 general election. This includes all individuals who were registered to vote and included on the final voter registration rolls for the election. For states with Election Day voter registration, include all individuals who registered to vote through the close of the polls on Election Day.

Please do not include:

- Individuals who registered to vote after the close of registration for the 2022 general election and who were not eligible to vote in the 2022 election, or
- Persons under the age of 18 registered under a pre-registration program.

If your jurisdiction's number includes any special groups or situations that we should be aware of, please use the A1 Comments box to explain.

A1. Total Number Registered and Eligible Persons, Active and Inactive

For question A1, report the total number of people (not votes or ballots) who were registered and eligible to vote in the November 2022 general election. If your jurisdiction differentiates between active and inactive voters, report the number of active voters in A1b and inactive voters in A1c. If your state does not make this differentiation, report your total number of registered voters again in A1b and select “Does not apply” as the response to A1c. The sum of active voters in A1b and inactive voters in A1c should equal the total number of registered voters reported in A1a.

		Data not available(?)	Does not apply(?)
A1a. TOTAL number of registered and eligible voters: Do not include any individuals who registered after the 2022 deadline for registration or individuals under the age of 18 who may be registered under a pre-registration program.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A1b. TOTAL number of active voters: (?) Fully eligible voters who have no additional processing requirements to fulfill before voting.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A1c. TOTAL number of inactive voters: (?) Voters who were eligible to vote but required address verification under the provisions of the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA).	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2022 EAVS Online Data Collection Template

¹² Links to the data visualization tool and the state-level data briefs are available at the EAC's website in: <https://www.eac.gov/research-and-data/studies-and-reports>

review and then send to the EAC when completed. Continuing with improvements to technical support resources, in 2018 the EAC expanded its EAVS help desk assistance, introduced regular newsletters with information about key aspects of the EAVS, distributed user guides for the data entry templates, and published a crosswalk that detailed how the EAVS items had changed from the previous EAVS. Building on the success of the Section B working group, the EAC formalized the process of testing possible questionnaire updates with state and local election officials.

As mentioned above, a major change for 2018 was the introduction of the Policy Survey, which replaced the Statutory Overview and improved the means to collect election policy and procedural information needed to contextualize EAVS responses in a manner that standardized responses and direct comparisons of policies across states. Additionally, Policy Survey responses were used to validate EAVS responses after a state's first data submission to ensure there were no conflicts between them (e.g., if a state reported not allowing online registration in the Policy Survey and any jurisdiction within the state recorded online registrations in EAVS, then these responses would get flagged for review). In this line, during the 2018 EAVS, processes for post submission data reviews were enhanced and additional external validations and logic validations were included, resulting in improvements in data quality.

For the 2020 EAVS, the EAC enhanced and increased the resources available for POCs to complete the

EAVS and the Policy Survey. For the first time, the EAC made available a help desk not only for the EAVS but also for the Policy Survey to assist POCs during the fielding period. Additionally, the EAC conducted pre-survey outreach calls the summer before the surveys were administered with some new POCs to inform them about the process of the EAVS data collection and the resources at their disposal, and with some returning POCs that had requested to follow up on conversations that had taken place the previous year with the aim of discussing questions about the upcoming surveys. The year 2020 was also the first year that usability testing of the online versions of the EAVS and Policy Survey was conducted with state and local POCs to gather insights in how to improve the online survey instruments. The EAC also updated the EAVS Policy Guide, published in August 2020, that provided information to POCs on how data would be collected, the process and timeline for data submissions, and other relevant information to complete the EAVS.

The EAC implemented additional steps to improve data quality for the EAVS. For the first time, responses from the Policy Survey were used to validate users' responses in the online and Excel versions of the EAVS instrument during data collection. Additionally, Policy Survey responses were used to pre-fill some EAVS items in states' data collection templates to reduce the survey burden for respondents and avoid misuse of missingness codes like "Does not apply" and "Data not available." Pre-population was also offered for the online template for states that requested that

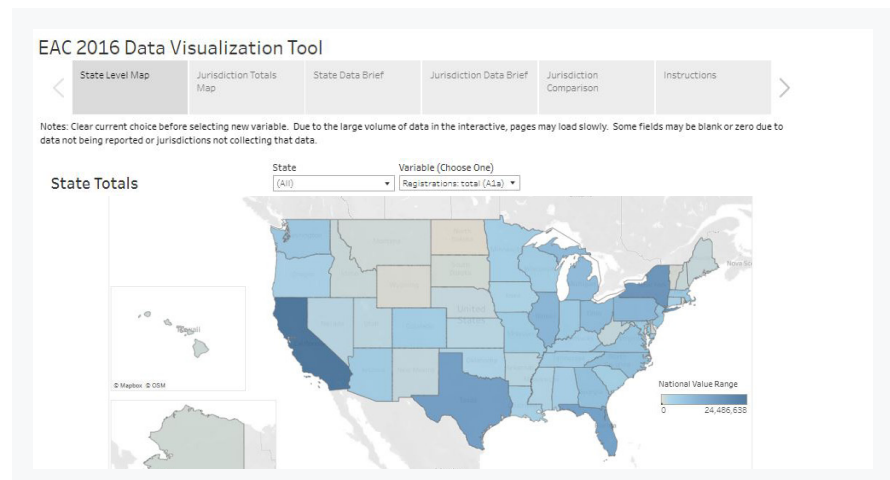
“

It's the only data set that gives jurisdiction-level statistics about all aspects of election administration. There is no other data set that does it. It is indispensable for policymaking and academics [...] EAVS asks questions and gathers data that are not even available at the state-level. [...] The other really important thing that sometimes gets overlooked is that the very existence of the EAVS project has led many states to pay attention to their data gathering and reporting [...] It has an infrastructure building role that is unseen, but I think is enormously valuable, as valuable as the data itself. ”

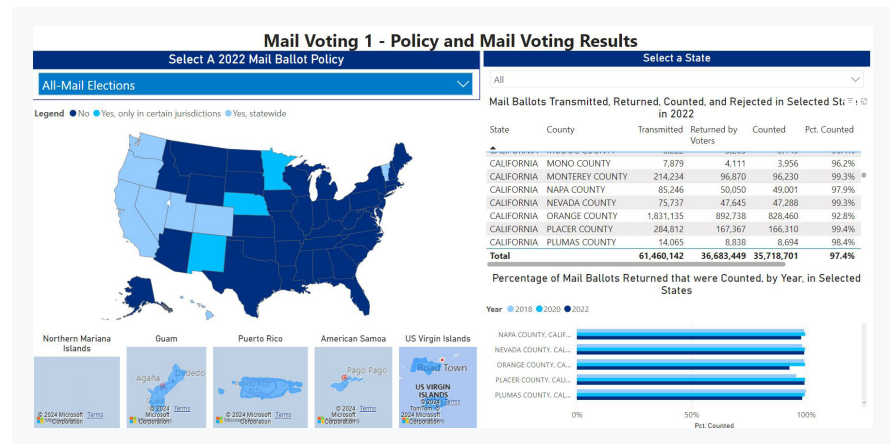
Charles Stewart III, PhD, MIT Kenan Sahin Distinguished Professor of Political Science

some fields were pre-populated so their jurisdictions could confirm the data when completing the survey and did not have to manually enter it, reducing the response burden for local election officials. In 2020, the EAC transitioned from Tableau to MS Power BI as the software used to publish the online data visualization tool, which allowed the EAC to host the visualization tool on its website. The new visualization tool also changed the focus from displaying all EAVS variables (like in previous versions) to only displaying the most commonly used variables (e.g., total registration, by-mail voting, turnout), but providing the data over time for comparison with previous elections, and displaying charts other than maps allowing for between-year, states, and jurisdiction comparisons and an improved user experience.

In 2022, the EAC released an EAVS Glossary, which contained over 130 terms and phrases used in EAVS and Policy Survey questions. The goal of the glossary was to assist respondents in understanding the survey questions and providing data that is accurate and comprehensive, as well as to establish data consistency across states and jurisdictions. Additionally, the EAC further improved and updated the supporting materials for POCs such as webinars, newsletters, and user guides to help with the completion of the EAVS and the Policy Survey. Survey validations were also updated and enhanced, and a new functionality was added to the Excel template that automatically generated commonly used EAVS rates (e.g., percentage of registrations received in-person, percentage of ballots cast by mail) at the jurisdiction and state levels to allow states to review their responses and outliers flagged in the Excel template before submission. The EAC also introduced a two-phase review of draft EAVS data for the first time in 2022, where states were given the opportunity



EAVS Online Data Visualization Tool 2016



EAVS Online Data Visualization Tool 2022

to review their data as it would be reported in the EAVS appendix tables before certifying their submission. This allowed states to conduct additional corrections or provide notes to be included in the EAVS report that provide further background on their states' results. Additionally, the EAC fielded for the first time a post-EAVS customer satisfaction survey for POCs after they certified their 2022 data submission to learn about processes that worked and those that could be improved in future iterations of the survey. Finally, the EAC continued enhancing the online data visualization tool by including results from the Policy Survey (e.g., maps with states allowing mail ballot curing) and expanding the metrics available in the visualization tool.



How Are EAVS Project Data Used?

EAVS data are invaluable to the election community because they represent a definitive primary source of information on the administration of federal general elections. As such, they have a variety of uses for administrators and other community members alike, as stated in more detail below.

Time Series Results

For the first time, the EAC has combined all EAVS and Policy Survey data collected over the years—from 2004 to 2022 for the EAVS, and from 2008 to 2022 for the Statutory Overview and Policy Survey—and merged the data into a unique data set.¹³ This effort required the EAC to review all the data and survey instruments from the 10 iterations of the EAVS and the eight iterations of the Statutory

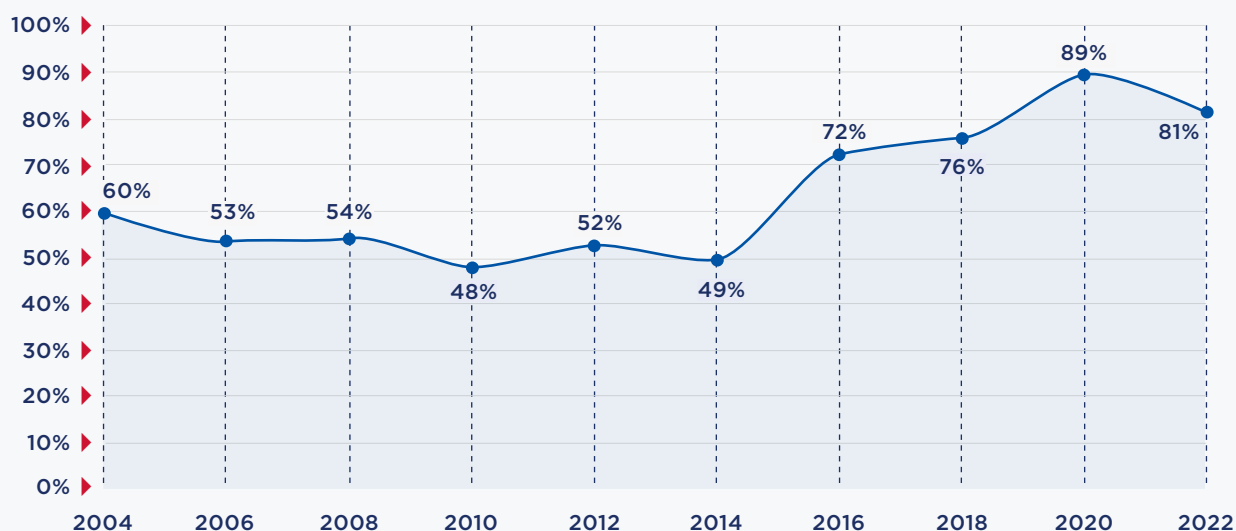
Overview/Policy Survey to track which items are consistent over time. Data quality has varied over time and has improved as the jurisdictions and states gained experience on reporting election administration data, and the EAC improved the data collection methods and the resources available to facilitate data collection.

FIPSCode	State	Jurisdiction_Name	Year	A1a	A1b	A1c	A1Comments	A2a	A2b	A2c	A2Comments	A3a	A3b
0200000000	AK	ALASKA	2004	472160	472160		ITEM NOT COVERED IN EAVS YEAR	-66	-66	-66	ITEM NOT COVERED IN EAVS YEAR	-66	-66
0200000000	AK	ALASKA	2006	466258	466258	-99	ITEM NOT COVERED IN EAVS YEAR	-66	-99	-66	ITEM NOT COVERED IN EAVS YEAR	235249	50487
0200000000	AK	ALASKA	2008	495731	495731	74935		21433	-66	-66		271546	64971
0200000000	AK	ALASKA	2010	560146	494876	65270		-99	-66	-66		234426	48331
0200000000	AK	ALASKA	2012	579304	506432	72872	Alaska law maintains voters who w	4828	-66	-66	Alaska allows for same day registrat	249863	55183
0200000000	AK	ALASKA	2014	574441	509011	65430		-88	-66	-66	Alaska law allows for same day regi	276213	60273
0200000000	AK	ALASKA	2016	587303	528671	58632		4809	-66	-66	ALASKA LAW ALLOWS FOR SAME DA	259227	51083
0200000000	AK	ALASKA	2018	624467	571851	52616		-88	-66	-66	ALASKA ALLOWS FOR SAME DAY REC	620224	80446
0200000000	AK	ALASKA	2020	646093	595647	50446		3028	-99	-99	ALASKA DOES NOT TRACK SAME DA	1079008	69208
0200000000	AK	ALASKA	2022	648790	601795	46995		-88	-88	-88	ALASKA ONLY ALLOWS FOR SAME DA	1028887	45400
0100100000	AL	AUTAUGA COUNTY	2004	30720	28100	2620	ITEM NOT COVERED IN EAVS YEAR	-66	-66	-66	ITEM NOT COVERED IN EAVS YEAR	-66	-66
0100100000	AL	AUTAUGA COUNTY	2006	29652	26108	3544	ITEM NOT COVERED IN EAVS YEAR	-66	-99	-66	ITEM NOT COVERED IN EAVS YEAR	-99	-99
0100100000	AL	AUTAUGA COUNTY	2008	33536	32669	867			-66	-66		8471	5260
0100100000	AL	AUTAUGA COUNTY	2010	34727	29298	5429		-88	-66	-66		7524	3264
0100100000	AL	AUTAUGA COUNTY	2012	37170	32494	4676	Information contained herein was	-88	-66	-66	Information contained herein was p	9296	6032
0100100000	AL	AUTAUGA COUNTY	2014	33806	33203	603	Information contained herein was	-99	-66	-66		4494	2895
0100100000	AL	AUTAUGA COUNTY	2016	38187	37055	1132		-88	-66	-66		14750	10311
0100100000	AL	AUTAUGA COUNTY	2018	39770	36391	3379		-88	-66	-66	ALABAMA DOES NOT HAVE SAME DA	21117	8739
0100100000	AL	AUTAUGA COUNTY	2020	43695	41088	2607		-88	-88	-88		18148	11507
0100100000	AL	AUTAUGA COUNTY	2022	43488	39027	4461		-88	-88	-88		13703	8510
0100300000	AL	BALDWIN COUNTY	2004	100594	91049	9545	ITEM NOT COVERED IN EAVS YEAR	-66	-66	-66	ITEM NOT COVERED IN EAVS YEAR	-66	-66
0100300000	AL	BALDWIN COUNTY	2006	97858	90178	7680	ITEM NOT COVERED IN EAVS YEAR	-66	0	-66	ITEM NOT COVERED IN EAVS YEAR	-99	-99
0100300000	AL	BALDWIN COUNTY	2008	112329	104926	7403			-66	-66		64253	17848
0100300000	AL	BALDWIN COUNTY	2010	114952	104416	10536		-88	-66	-66		29285	10687
0100300000	AL	BALDWIN COUNTY	2012	126703	114239	12464	Information contained herein was	-88	-66	-66	Information contained herein was p	28280	16734
0100300000	AL	BALDWIN COUNTY	2014	123477	110024	13453	Information contained herein was	-99	-66	-66		19359	8766
0100300000	AL	BALDWIN COUNTY	2016	146824	135535	11289		-88	-66	-66		79748	35732
0100300000	AL	BALDWIN COUNTY	2018	155127	141301	13826		-88	-66	-66	ALABAMA DOES NOT HAVE SAME DA	86974	33913
0100300000	AL	BALDWIN COUNTY	2020	176668	165925	10743		-88	-88	-88		89152	37695
0100300000	AL	BALDWIN COUNTY	2022	189028	164133	24895		-88	-88	-88		70837	35046

EAVS Time Series Dataset

¹³ Policy data from 2008 to 2016 were collected using the Statutory Overview. Because the Statutory Overview consisted of open-ended questions, only a few were feasible to be recoded and aligned with the Policy Survey. The coded responses from the Statutory Overview included in the time series cover the following: type of registration database, recurrence of registration information transmission, online registration, requirement of an excuse to vote by mail, in-person early voting, and all-mail voting policies.

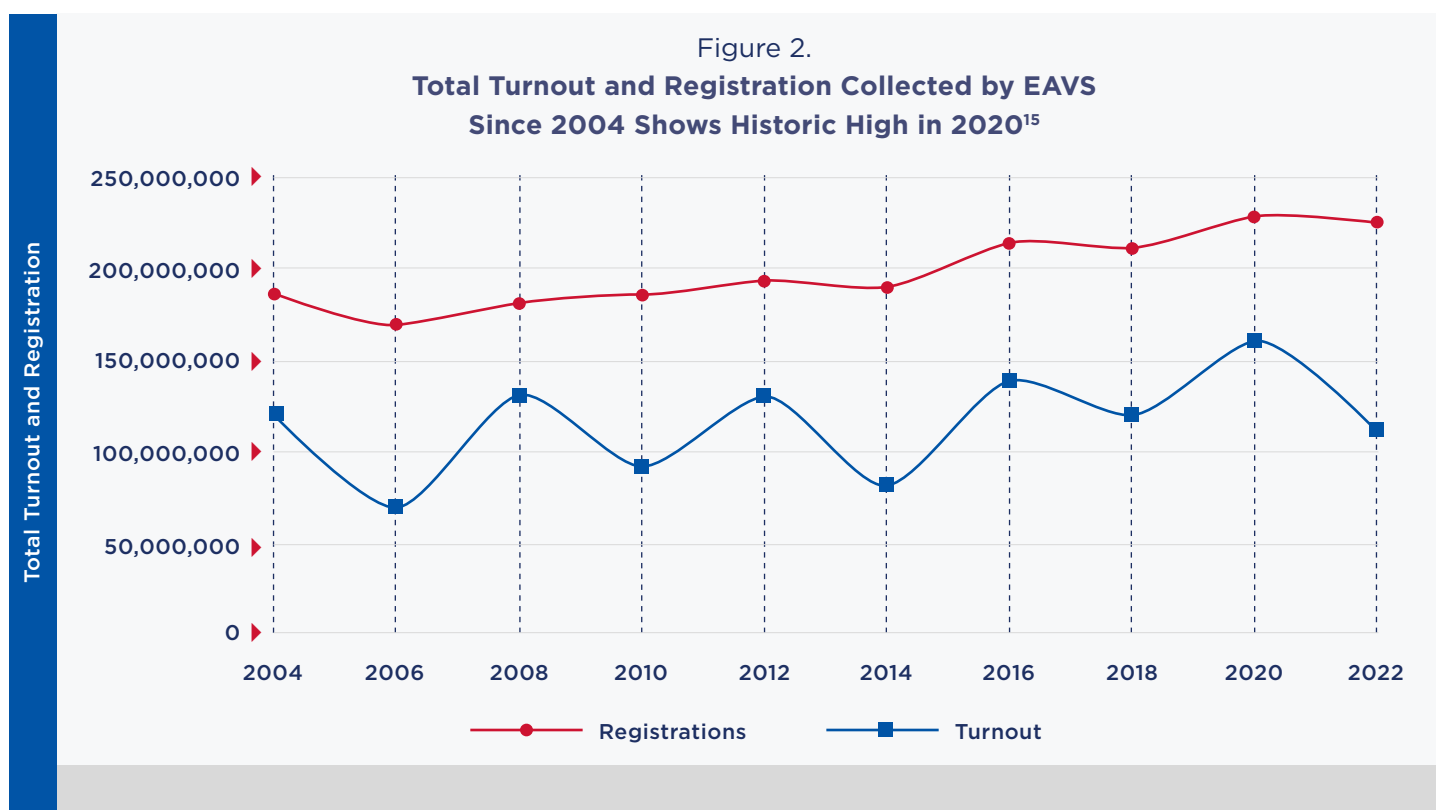
Figure 1.
EAVS Mean Item Valid Response Rates by Election



Note: Item response rates are calculated for numeric questions only.

Figure 1 shows the evolution of the mean valid item response rate for all numeric questions in the EAVS by election, where a valid response is one which is neither blank nor given an explicit non-response code (e.g., -99, -99999). Earlier iterations of the EAVS show lower levels of item response rate and thus a higher proportion of blank items. Blank items could be interpreted as a 0, a valid skip, as “Does not apply,” as “Data not available,” or simply a non-response. Over the years, as discussed in the previous section, the EAC has made a concerted effort to mitigate these non-response and interpretational issues through the use of clearer

survey instructions, logic checks for consistency between item responses, and contacts with states and local jurisdictions for discussions about data reports. As a result, the EAVS for the 2016 and beyond benefits from explicit non-response codes, which makes the final data set easier to interpret. Due to changes in jurisdictional coverage and the survey instrument, the trend displayed in Figure 1 should be interpreted with caution; however, the results are consistent with an increase in the interpretability of quantitative information contained within the EAVS following the 2016 general election.



The analysis of the data collected from 2004 to the present provides insights into the changes in federal elections over the past decades. Figure 2 displays the evolution of registrations and turnout as collected in the EAVS since 2004. It shows the differences in turnout between presidential and midterm elections and the continuous growth of registered voters since 2006. It also displays how 2020 was the election with the highest number of registered voters and ballots counted in EAVS history—and likely in U.S. history.¹⁴

These historical data also bring insights on how election administration, election policies, and voter behavior has changed over the last two decades. An example of these changes is the use of online

registration as a form of registering to vote fully online without the need of using or submitting any paper forms. Arizona was the first state to implement this policy in 2002 and was followed by Washington in 2007. Data collected in the Statutory Overview and the Policy Survey show that the number of states allowing online voter registration increased from two in 2008 to eight in 2010 and 12 states in 2012, and then jumped from 19 in 2014 to 34 in 2016, and continued growing until 2020 when this registration method was allowed in 43 states.¹⁶ As state policies evolved, so did the EAVS questionnaire, as it first included an item collecting data on registrations received online in 2008, while data on other sources of registration started to be collected in 2006.

¹⁴ The EAVS item collecting turnout data has changed over time. It collected data on ballots counted in 2004 and 2006, and then changed to ballots cast for 2008 to 2018. Since 2020, it returned to collect data on ballots counted.

¹⁵ Turnout uses the following EAVS items: 2b for 2004; q34total for 2006; and F1a for 2008 to 2022. Registration uses the following EAVS items: sum of 1a and 1b (active and inactive registrants) for 2004; q022006total for 2006; A1 for 2008; and A1a for 2010 to 2022.

¹⁶ Data for policy on online registration were obtained from item B7 of the Statutory Overview from 2008 to 2016, and from item Q7 of the 2020 Policy Survey.

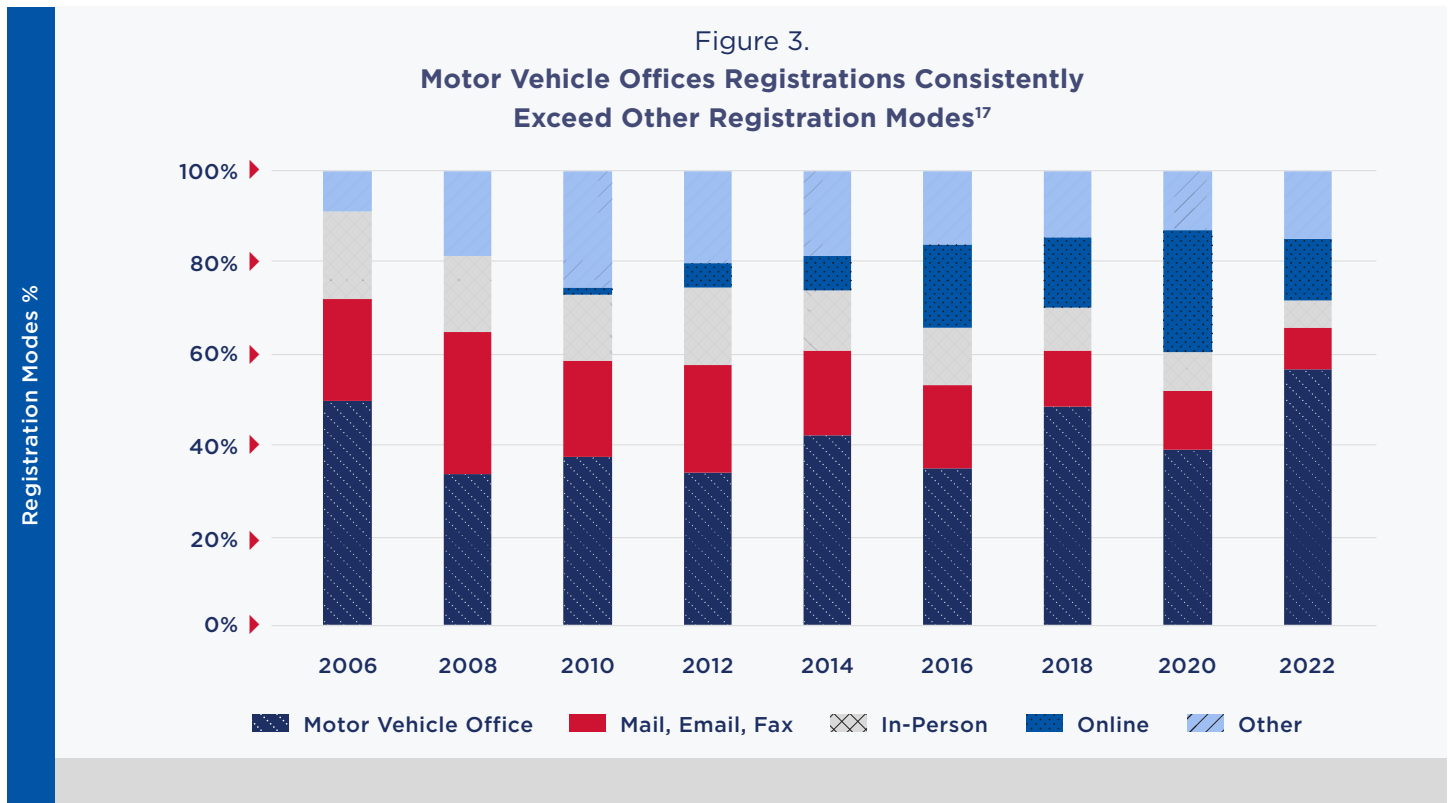
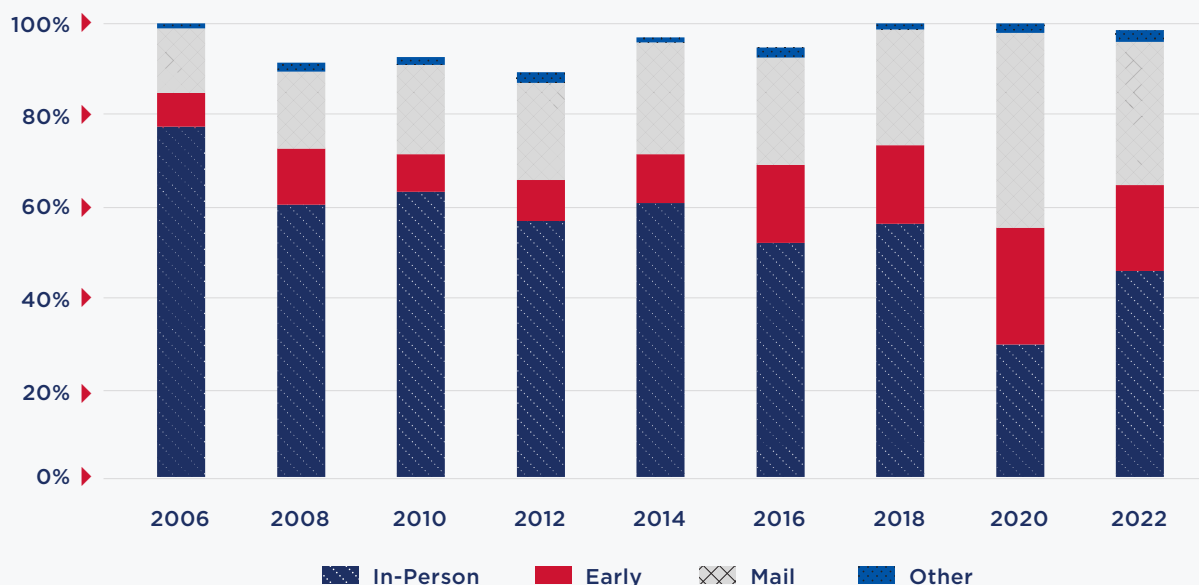


Figure 3 shows the sources that Americans have used to register to vote since 2006. Registrations processed by a state's motor vehicle offices have accounted for a higher percentage of registrations of any source during EAVS history. It is also interesting to observe the evolution of other sources of registration captured by EAVS, showing how in-person registrations and registrations received by mail, email, and fax accounted for nearly half of the registrations received in 2008 and have declined over time until accounting for just 15.2% in 2022. On the other hand, the expansion of the use of online registration policies over the past two

decades is also apparent in the figure as there is a notable increase in the percentage of online registrations received over time. The sharp increase in states allowing for online registration between 2014 and 2016 discussed above is followed by a marked increase in the percentage of online registrations received between 2014 and 2016. Also, it is notable that 2020 was the year with the highest percentage of online registrations received by far, which aligns with the highest number of states allowing for online registrations and the surge of COVID-19 that favored remote options for voter registration and other transactions.

¹⁷ The total registrations received represented in the graph were obtained from the sum of registrations by source. The following items were used for the calculations: motor vehicle office registrations (q7a for 2006; A6d for 2008 to 2016; and A4d for 2018 to 2022), mail, email and fax registrations (q5total for 2006, A6a for 2008 to 2016; and A4a for 2018 to 2022), in-person (q6total for 2006, A6b for 2008 to 2016; and A4b for 2018 to 2022), online (no item in 2006; A6c for 2008 to 2016; and A4c for 2018 to 2022); other (sum of q7b to q7e for 2006; sum of A6e to A6o for 2008 to 2016; and sum of A4e to A4l for 2018 to 2022). 2004 is not present in the graph because data on registration sources were not collected.

Figure 4.
Voting Before Election Day Exceeded Election Day Voting in 2020 and 2022¹⁹



Changes in election policy and voter behavior are also apparent when analyzing how Americans cast their ballots over the last nine federal general elections. For example, the number of states with policies that allow for early voting or in-person absentee voting increased from 36 in 2008 to 55 in 2022, and the number of states that required an excuse to vote by mail decreased from 28 in 2008 to 17 in 2022.¹⁸ The impact of the changes in these voting methods over time, as depicted in Figure 4. Although in-person voting on Election Day was used by more than 50% of Americans until 2020,

the aforementioned expansions on convenience voting policies (i.e., voting methods that allow to cast a ballot before Election Day) added to the surge of COVID-19—which led states to pass policies to facilitate voting options that limited in-person contact to reduce the risk of infection—can explain to a large extent the vast increase of mail and early voting in 2020. However, the fact that in 2022 these options accounted for more ballots cast than in-person voting when COVID-19 was not perceived as such a big health threat as in 2020 may point to a shift in the preference of Americans on how they cast their ballots.

¹⁸ Data for policies on early voting and in-person absentee voting were obtained from item C3 of the 2008 Statutory Overview and from item Q25 of the 2022 Policy Survey. Data for excuse requirements to vote by-mail were obtained from item C2 of the 2008 Statutory Overview and from item Q16 of the 2022 Policy Survey.

¹⁹ The total turnout used as the denominator for the graph calculation uses the following EAVS items: 2b for 2004; q34total for 2006; and F1a for 2008 to 2022. The numerator uses the following EAVS items: in-person (q34a for 2006; F1b for 2008 to 2022), early voting (q34e for 2006; F1f for 2008 to 2022), mail (q34dc for 2006; F1d for 2008; F1d+F1g for 2010 to 2022), other (q34dm+q34f+q34oc+q34om+q34p for 2006, F1c+F1e+F1g+F1h+F1i for 2008, F1c+F1e+F1h+F1i+F1j for 2010 to 2016, F1c+F1e+F1h for 2018 to 2022). Because not all states can break down turnout by mode for each year, and the sum of turnout by mode does not always align with total turnout, percentages do not add up to 100% for all years. The year 2004 is not present in the graph because data on method used to cast a ballot were limited and had high levels of missingness.

Election Officials

Most importantly, state and local election offices use EAVS data as a source of background information on how their jurisdiction compares to others across the nation. These insights are valuable for tracking performance, identifying areas of improvement, and especially making decisions about election policy and/or voting technology.

In a January 2024 working group meeting, participants stressed the key role that EAVS data play in their overall operations. They observed that the most valuable information collected by the EAVS and Policy Survey include policy information, provisional ballot data, data on modes of casting ballots, mail voting, and other performance metrics across jurisdictions. They noted that the project data can be used to provide comparisons between states, compare how elections evolve in states and jurisdictions over time, and identify anomalies between jurisdictions within a state.

Given the importance of this information, participants stressed that EAVS data and data sets should move toward the most interactive models available and that the EAC should work to help foster more data standardization between states, including creating guides for basic use that would be accessible to jurisdictions of all sizes.

The working group also revealed some other key uses of EAVS data:

- ▶ **Comparing local data (e.g., provisional ballots) to that of other jurisdictions across the state as a check to make sure the numbers generally align;**
- ▶ **Exposing officials to data that may not have seemed as important previously (e.g., poll worker recruitment) to assist in future planning and administration;**
- ▶ **Offering insight into voting technology usage in other jurisdictions;**
- ▶ **Serving as a source of support for rebutting local misinformation; and**
- ▶ **Providing a basis for election budget discussions with local policymakers.**

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Data is crucial to this endeavor. The EAVS report reflects voting trends and provides benchmarks for election directors. ”

EAC Commissioner Thomas Hicks



Media

In essence, EAVS data are the first official draft of history for every federal general election. As such, it is a crucial source of information for media coverage of elections and critical to ensuring that stories about the election reflect the actual reality of what happened on and before Election Day.

A few examples:

► **Pew Research Center**, “Key facts about U.S. poll workers,” July 2024 (cites 2020 and 2022 EAVS data on poll workers) <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/10/24/key-facts-about-us-poll-workers/>

► **CNN**, “2022 data shows pandemic shifted Americans toward voting by mail,” July 2023 (cites 2022 EAVS as evidence that voting by mail stayed higher post-COVID) <https://www.cnn.com/2023/07/20/politics/2022-midterm-vote-by-mail/index.html>

► **ProPublica**, “Reporting Recipe: How to Report on Voting by Mail,” September 2020 (cites EAVS as a way to investigate local preparedness for vote-by-mail) <https://www.propublica.org/article/reporting-recipe-how-to-report-on-voting-by-mail>

Given the importance of EAVS to election reporting, the data should be accessible in ways that are convenient and user-friendly for journalists and editors alike.

2022 data shows pandemic shifted Americans toward voting by mail

By Molly Gahagen, CNN

🕒 2 minute read · Published 12:28 PM EDT, Thu July 20, 2023



EAVS in the news. CNN article using EAVS data in 2023

Academics

Data from the EAVS is commonly used by researchers and academics studying election administration. The nature of the EAVS—as the only official survey collecting data from all election jurisdictions in the United States and its territories—makes it a valuable source of information for academics and researchers in the field.

In a survey of scholars and researchers who use EAVS data, results show that these data are used heavily in research and publishing. Additionally, academics reported commonly using EAVS data in teaching and student assignments. EAVS data were also reported as very valuable to assist in fielding other surveys (e.g., by using EAVS registration data for survey sampling purposes), and in other public scholarship (see Table 1).

Table 1.
How Do Scholars Use EAVS Data?

▶ Application of Data	▶ Percentage Reporting Application
Journal articles, conference papers, and books	85%
Non-peer-reviewed reports	42%
Teaching or student assignments	39%
Projects working with election offices	39%
Model for personal surveys and research	36%
Op-eds, blog posts, or social media posts	33%
Incorporated data in creating measurements or rankings	33%
Assist in drawing samples for surveys fielded	18%
Other	9%

Notes: Survey was fielded between November 27, 2023, and January 26, 2024, and had 27 responses. “Written papers and books” includes respondents who selected the options for “Peer-reviewed journal article(s),” “Book(s) or book chapter(s),” “Conference paper(s),” or “Unpublished working paper(s).” Respondents who selected “Other” cited using EAVS project data for dissertations, journalism, or expert witnessing.

“

Elections and election administration have been identified as critical infrastructure. The EAVS is the most comprehensive and reliable source we have to help monitor performance, gauge how our system is coping with change, stress, and inevitable growth as the eligible voting population becomes larger and more diverse. ”

Paul Gronke, PhD, Professor of Political Science at Reed College



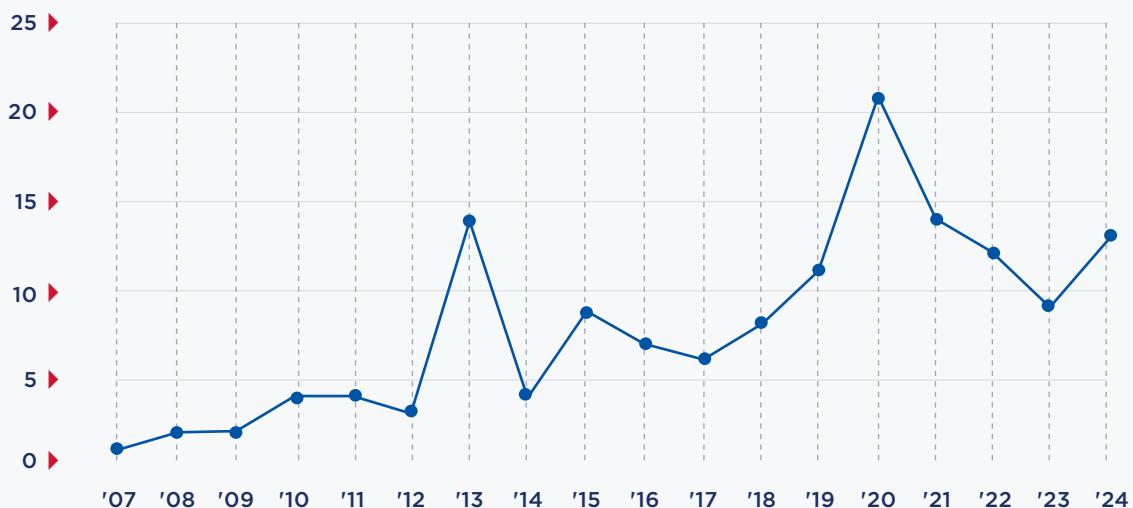
The use of EAVS data in research has grown notably in the last few years. A look at peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and other research shows that the EAVS rarely appeared in academic research until 2013, but has increased its presence over time, particularly starting in 2018 (see Figure 5). Additionally, EAVS data have been used in research not only in the United States, but also abroad discussing different topics related to election administration.

Some examples of journal articles using the EAVS:

- ▶ **Burden, B. C., & Neiheisel, J. R. (2011).** Election administration and the pure effect of voter registration on turnout. *Political Research Quarterly*, 66(1), 77–90. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912911430671> (uses data from the 2008 EAVS to calculate the number of precincts and polling places per capita in Wisconsin)
- ▶ **Lamb M. (2021).** The “costs” of voting: The effects of vote-by-mail on election administration finance in Colorado. *Social Science Quarterly*, 102(4), 1361–1379. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ssqu.13012> (uses data from the 2014 and 2016 EAVS on number of early and Election Day voting centers and number of poll workers)
- ▶ **Kuhlmann, R., & Lewis, D. C. (2022).** Making the vote (in)accessible: Election administration laws and turnout among people with disabilities. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, 12(1), 107–123. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2022.2137049> (uses data from the 2008 to 2020 EAVS to calculate the proportion of ballots cast by mail at the state level)
- ▶ **James T. S., & Garnett H. A. (2023).** The determinants of electoral registration quality: A cross-national analysis. *Representation*, 60(2), 279–302. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00344893.2023.2207194> (cites state-level registration rates from the 2018 EAVS)

Figure 5.

EAVS Citations in Academic Research Over Time²⁰



²⁰This review used academic research citations found over time by the EAC, as well as a Google Scholar search that required the appearance of the terms “EAVS” and “Election Administration.” Appearances in multiple chapters of the same book were counted as a single appearance. Results are likely not a comprehensive record of all the EAVS data use in academic research.



How Could the EAVS Project Change In the Future?

One key characteristic of the EAVS is that while its *mission*—to collect primary data on federal elections pursuant to HAVA—remains the same, the *nature* of the effort has been constantly evolving as elections have changed. That is why it is important for the EAVS to keep pace with developments in the field while still enabling comparisons between elections over time. Based on conversations with stakeholders, this can happen in a variety of ways. The three key avenues are listed below.

1. Keeping up with changes in policy and practice in the field of election administration.

There was a broad consensus across election officials and researchers alike that elections are much different today than when EAVS was first fielded in 2004:

- a. **Early voting:** EAVS data show the percentage of voters who cast a ballot outside of an in-person polling place on Election Day (including through in-person early voting and mail voting) has increased notably since 2004, as seen in the analysis above in the section *Time Series Results*.
- b. **Vote centers:** The number of states that reported using vote centers in some capacity in the Policy Survey increased from 17 in 2018 to 20 in 2020 to 32 in 2022.
- c. **Vote by mail:** The number of states offering all-mail elections (either statewide or in

certain jurisdictions) increased steadily over time from 4 in 2012, peaked at 14 in 2020 as states sought to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic, and then decreased slightly to 12 in 2022.²¹

- d. **Drop boxes:** Data on drop boxes and ballot curing were only collected for the 2022 EAVS and Policy Survey, but the data shows that a majority of states allow for each policy (39 use drop boxes and 41 allow ballot curing). Of states able to report EAVS data on drop boxes for 2022, nearly 13,000 drop boxes were reported used and more than 11 million mail ballots were returned at a drop box (about 40% of all mail ballots reported returned in those states and one-fifth of all ballots cast in those states). The 25 states that tracked data on number of ballots successfully cured reported that curing allowed nearly 170,000 ballots to be counted for the 2022 general election that otherwise would have been rejected.

“

The EAC is continually looking for more ways the EAVS can be a better resource for officials, legislators, voters, advocates and all users of this data. ”

EAC Commissioner Christy McCormick



²¹For the purposes of considering that a state is all-mail in certain jurisdictions they need to have all-mail voting in full EAVS jurisdictions. Over time, there have been states that allow some small precincts or townships under a certain number of residents or registered voters to run all-mail elections. However, the election at the jurisdiction level is not conducted entirely by mail.

- e. **Voter registration:** No aspect of election administration has changed more since 2004 than voter registration. States have continued to upgrade the voter registration systems that were implemented immediately after HAVA. In addition to improvements in the registration experience for voters such as automated registration and on-site registration at polling places, this also allows for better tracking of registration and list maintenance data by election officials. See, for example, Challenges in Voter Registration (2020) https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-14947-5_5.

There are other trends in the field that are not yet reflected in EAVS (cybersecurity, physical security of election offices, accessibility for voters with disabilities, etc.) that may eventually find their way into the survey much in the same way the above topics have done.

2. Exploring and implementing innovations in the way EAVS data are collected.

In light of developments in the field, EAVS is already changing. For example, to accommodate new voter registration practices and data-tracking methods, in 2024, Section A will collect data on registration transactions, not forms.²²

This is being done in recognition of the fact that many voter registration processes do not require paper forms at any point, instead using data collected electronically, and that voter registration databases are increasingly able not only to track information about what changes were made to a registration record but also when they were made.

Just as EAVS content evolves, so have the methods used to collect the data. The EAC has continued to investigate ways to lessen survey burden, including:

- ▶ **Making data collection more straightforward using online surveys, electronic templates, and other tools like dashboards and data portals to track survey progress and completeness;**
- ▶ **Improving standardization of responses, such as the transition from the Statutory Overview to the Policy Survey;**
- ▶ **Where available, assisting respondents by pre-populating some EAVS responses based on their Policy Survey responses; and**
- ▶ **Investigating adoption of transactional data standards, such as the one currently in use for military and overseas voting data by a small group of jurisdictions in conjunction with FVAP.**

3. Expanding EAVS's set of analytical tools for state and local officials and the election community.

Finally, once the data are collected, stakeholders (especially election officials) continue to seek new ways to harness the data to assess and improve their operations while maintaining the ability to look at trends over time. In particular, election officials mentioned the need to further standardize data to facilitate inter-jurisdictional comparisons as well as access to more visual depictions of the data at various levels to identify both areas of commonality as well as potential outliers.

²² A registration transaction, as defined in the 2024 EAVS, is a unit of work performed to a voter registration record within a voter registration database. Transactions may involve adding a new registration record, updating the record of an existing registered voter (such as updating the voter's name, contact information, or address), or removing a record if the individual is no longer an eligible voter.

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