

Sources:

Voter turnout rates in the United States, 2002-2016 (total ballots cast expressed as a percentage of eligible voters) [hide]								
State	2016	2014	2012	2010	2008	2006	2004	2002
Alabama	59.30%	33.20%	N/A	43.30%	61.00%	N/A	57.40%	NA
Alaska	61.80%	54.80%	58.90%	52.90%	68.30%	51.20%	69.60%	54.50%
Arizona	56.20%	34.10%	53.00%	41.60%	57.40%	39.60%	54.80%	36.70%
Arkansas	53.10%	40.30%	51.10%	37.90%	52.90%	38.90%	54.40%	41.70%
California	58.40%	30.70%	55.70%	45.90%	61.70%	41.20%	59.60%	37.30%
Colorado	72.10%	54.70%	70.60%	51.70%	71.60%	48.10%	67.30%	46.60%

For complete list of turnout in all states, visit the website.

[https://ballotpedia.org/Voter turnout in United States elections](https://ballotpedia.org/Voter_turnout_in_United_States_elections)

2012

2012 ELECTION

Swing states: 64.2%

Non-swing states: 56.8%

Difference (in percentage points): 7.4

As recently as 1996, there was essentially no difference in turnout between the swing states and the other states plus the District of Columbia: 51.5% of eligible citizens in the battlegrounds voted; elsewhere, 51.4% did. In that campaign, the presidential candidates contested more states and their TV ads aired more broadly.

Differences in turnout have been steadily widening since then: 1.2 percentage points in 2000, 4.4 points in 2004 and 5.2 points in 2008. This year, 64.2% of eligible citizens went to the polls in the battlegrounds compared with 56.8% in the rest of the nation — a disparity of 7.4 points.

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2012/12/23/voter-turnout-swing-states/1787693/>

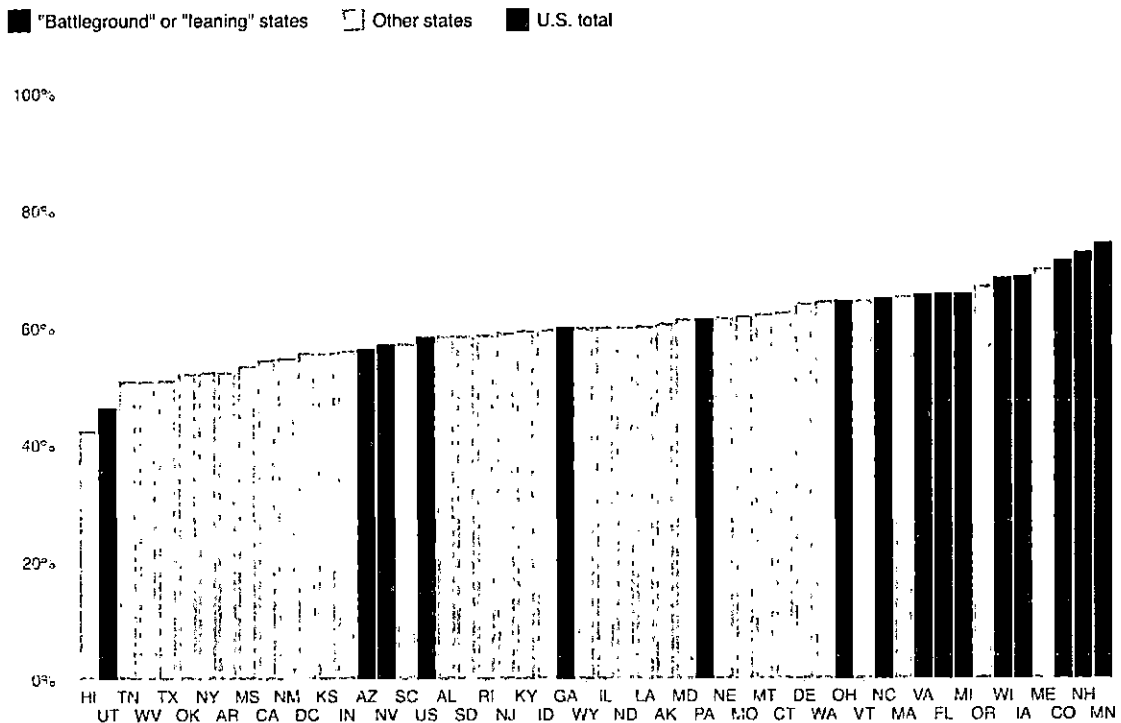
living in a battleground state encourages turnout, says Michael McDonald, associate professor of political science at the University of Florida, and who runs the U.S. Elections Project website.

"What's happening there in a state like in these battleground states it's the perception that the election is going to be close that's going to drive them to have a higher turnout," he said.

Not only that, but campaigns generally run robust get-out-the-vote operations in battleground states. So when door-knockers in Florida are encouraging people to get to the polls, it would make sense that the state would have a much higher turnout than Wyoming, where it doesn't really make much sense for either party to be too aggressive (Trump won it by more than 46 points).

Turnout Tended To Be Higher In Battleground States

In the states that NPR called "battlegrounds" or leaning states in its final battleground map, the majority had voter turnout rates far above the national rate (measured as the percentage of eligible voters who participated in the election).



Source: U.S. Elections Project, NPR Final Battleground Map

Credit: Danielle Kurtzleben/NPR

<https://www.npr.org/2016/11/26/503170280/charts-is-the-electoral-college-dragging-down-voter-turnout-in-your-state>

At a pragmatic level, everybody knows the individual presidential votes of people who live in "safe" red or blue states are worth very little; if you tell any politically aware American "I live in Massachusetts, so my vote doesn't matter", they will understand perfectly what you mean.

<https://www.economist.com/democracy-in-america/2012/01/24/the-loneliness-of-the-non-swing-state-voter>

New Report Ranks 2016 Voter Turnout for 50 States

Shows Turnout Advantage of States with Same Day Registration and Greater Competition

Boston MA- With election results finally certified by state election offices, Nonprofit VOTE and the U.S. Elections Project release “America Goes to The Polls,” a report that ranks all 50 states in voter turnout for the 2016 election and identifies policies that help contribute to higher turnout.

- **National turnout of eligible voters was 60.2%** - 1.6 percentage points above the 58.6% turnout in 2012, though slightly lower than 2008. Four in ten eligible voters did not vote.
- **The highest turnout states were Minnesota (74.8%), Maine (72.8%), New Hampshire (72.5%), Colorado (72.1%), Wisconsin (70.5%), and Iowa (69.0%).** All six offered same day voter registration, enabling voters to register or update their registration when they vote. Five were battleground states targeted by the presidential campaigns.

<https://www.nonprofitvote.org/documents/2017/03/agtp-2016-press-release.pdf/>

Colorado had nation's second-highest voter turnout rate in 2018 ...

<https://www.thedenverchannel.com/.../colorado-had-nation-s-second-highest-voter-tur...> ▼

Nov 13, 2018 - Colorado had the nation's second-highest turnout rate in the 2018 midterm election, according to the latest figures from the secretary of state's ...

“A smaller and smaller slice of the electorate are making decisions that are important,” he said.

Voter participation also depends on the state where you vote. According to a Wall Street Journal analysis on state participation, fewer Americans vote when their states are less competitive in races between Democrats and Republicans.

Many of the states with the lowest turnout are dominated by the Republican Party in the South, where restrictive laws can hamper participation. But two states known to be solid Democratic Party supporters – Hawaii and New York – also fall in the bottom 20 percent of turnout.

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/voter-turnout-united-states>

When voters don't exercise their franchise, by default they allow others to make decisions for them. They have to live with the decision of the small minority who voted. In the case of local elections in America where more elderly voters are turning out, older people are deciding the future for the younger generation when it is they who should actively engage to determine their own future.

<https://www.mccainstitute.org/blog/the-importance-of-high-voter-turnout/>