AP VOTECAST

2024 General Election Methodology

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Study Methodology

AP VoteCast was a survey of the American electorate conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago (NORC) for Fox News, PBS NewsHour, The Wall Street Journal, and The Associated Press (AP). The survey was funded by AP. The survey of 139,938 registered voters was conducted October 28 to November 5, 2024, concluding as polls closed on Election Day. Interviews were conducted via phone and web, with 4,767 completing by phone and 135,171 completing by web.

AP VoteCast combined interviews from a random sample of registered voters drawn from state voter files; with self-identified registered voters randomly sampled from NORC's probability-based AmeriSpeak® panel, which is designed to be representative of the U.S. population; and with self-identified registered voters selected from nonprobability panels. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. Telephone interviews were conducted using live interviewers. Respondents may have received a small monetary incentive up to $10 for completing the survey. Participants selected from state voter files were contacted by mail, phone, and text message and had the opportunity to take the survey by phone or online. AmeriSpeak participants could be contacted by email, mail, or phone, and had the opportunity to take the survey by phone or online. Participants selected from the nonprobability panels took the survey online.

Fewer than 1% of respondents were removed from the final sample of completed interviews prior to weighting due to quality control checks. Interviews removed for quality control include:

- Interviews from those registered to vote in the District of Columbia
- Interviews from respondents under age 18
- Interviews completed under a minimum threshold time or who responded don't know, skipped, or refused to answer three or more key demographic variables (party ID, education, race/ethnicity, gender, income, age)
- Interviews that triggered 3 or more quality flags: 1) Generated a high fraud risk probability score using RelevantID®[1] for fraud detection, 2) Had a mismatch between the state captured by Relevant ID in the metadata and the state reported by the respondent, or, 3) Met one of the following criteria:
    - Completed between 12AM – 4:59AM local time
    - Answered they are both a supporter of the Make America Great Again (MAGA) movement and very liberal

[1] More information on RelevantID can be found on their website here.

- Answered they are both a supporter of the MAGA movement and voted for Kamala Harris for president
- Answered they definitely will vote at the LVB question (see questionnaire) and they won't vote in the presidential race when asked for their presidential vote

AP VoteCast National Survey

The 2024 AP VoteCast survey of voters and nonvoters nationwide was compiled from results of 50 state-based surveys and a nationally representative survey. The state surveys included 43,413 probability interviews from state voter files completed online (38,924) and via telephone (4,489), and 93,022 nonprobability interviews completed online. The national survey included 3,503 registered voters from the probability-based AmeriSpeak panel (3,225 completed online and 278 via phone). The margin of sampling error[2] was plus or minus 0.4 percentage points for voters (n=121,059) and 1.2 percentage points for nonvoters (n=18,879),[3] including the design effect. Registered voters in the District of Columbia were not included. The overall weighted response rate for the probability sample drawn from the state voter files was 3.1%.[4] The overall weighted response rate for the AmeriSpeak panel sample was 12.2%.

For those who were screened into the survey as eligible based on being a registered voter in the state, the interview completion rates were 94.5% for the probability sample drawn from the state voter files, 97.8% for the AmeriSpeak sample, and 95.1% for the nonprobability sample.

AP VoteCast State Surveys

The target number of completed interviews varied by state. For the 44 states with probability interviews, the number of completed interviews from the probability sample ranged from 229 to 2,307 per state. The number of completed nonprobability interviews ranged from 170 to 4,092 per state. A full description of completed interviews by state is included in Appendix B.

[2] Although there is no statistically agreed upon approach for calculating the margin of sampling error for nonprobability samples, these margins of sampling error are estimated using a measure of uncertainty that incorporates the variability associated with the poll estimates, as well as the variability associated with the survey weights as a result of calibration. After calibration, the nonprobability sample yields approximately unbiased estimates. As with all surveys, AP VoteCast is subject to multiple sources of error, including from sampling, question wording and order, and nonresponse.

[3] Details on how respondents were classified as voters and nonvoters can be found in Appendix A.

[4] The unweighted response rate for the probability sample was 2.4%.

Sampling Details

Probability-based Registered Voter Sample

In each of the 44 states for which AP VoteCast included a probability-based sample, NORC obtained a sample of registered voters from Catalist LLC's registered voter database. This database included demographic information, addresses, and phone numbers for registered voters, allowing potential respondents to be contacted via mail, telephone, and text message. The sample was stratified by state, race/ethnicity, a four-level partisanship variable (based on Catalist LLC's vote choice index), and a five-level predicted response propensity variable[5]. In addition, NORC attempted to match sampled records to a registered voter database maintained by L2, which provided additional phone numbers. After the matching, NORC had phone numbers for 93% of sampled records, including cell phone numbers for 94% of records with a phone number.

Nearly all probability sample records were mailed a postcard inviting them to complete the survey either online using a unique PIN or via telephone by calling a toll-free number. Postcards were addressed by name to the sampled registered voter if that individual was under age 35; postcards were addressed to "[STATE] Registered Voter" in all other cases. Eight percent of probability sample records were not mailed a postcard but instead were sent a text message inviting them to complete the survey online. In addition, 25% of the probability sample records that were sent a postcard were also sent a text message. Outbound dialing was conducted for sampled records in the two lowest predicted response propensity quintiles who had not already responded online. Telephone interviews were conducted with the adult who answered the phone. Both online and telephone respondents provided confirmation of registered voter status in the state.

Nonprobability Sample

Nonprobability participants were provided by Dynata, Cint, Prodege, and RepData, including members of their third-party panels. Digital fingerprint software and panel-level ID validation was used to prevent respondents from completing the AP VoteCast survey multiple times. Nonprobability respondents confirmed they were a registered voter in the state. A response rate cannot be calculated for nonprobability samples. While there is no way to quantify the size of the non-covered population for an opt-in panel, the population least likely to be included was those without internet access. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish.

Dynata used router technology to recruit participants, and all available panelists age 18 and older in each state were recruited. Among the 37,690 panelists who started the pre-screener instrument, 27,881 went on to complete the full survey. Panelists recruited for a specific state were only allowed to complete the survey if they were registered to vote in that state. Dynata's system used built-in technology that uses digital fingerprinting, geolocation clues, and checks at enrollment to confirm

[5] In Maine and Nebraska, the probability samples were drawn to be representative of select Congressional Districts in the state.

identity and to identify suspicious behavior to prevent respondents from completing the survey more than once.

Cint's suppliers invited respondents to the survey using email invites and panelist recruitment. Before sending them into the survey, Cint targeted and pre-screened respondents age 18 and older. Among the 40,570 panelists who touched the pre-screener instrument, 27,427 went on to complete the full survey. Respondents recruited for a specific state were only allowed to complete the survey if they were registered to vote in that state. In order to ensure the final sample did not include any respondents who completed the survey more than once, Cint removed duplicates by IP address, participant ID, and cookies.

Prodege invited its members to the survey using invitations sent by email and through the panelist portal. Before sending them into the survey, Prodege targeted and pre-screened respondents age 18 and older on the basis of age, gender, education, income, race/ethnicity, state, and registered voter status. Among the 36,544 panelists who touched the pre-screener instrument, 27,711 went on to complete the full survey. Respondents recruited for a specific state were only allowed to complete the survey if they were registered to vote in that state. To prevent respondents from completing more than once, Prodege verified panelists using email double opt-in verification, physical address verification, device fingerprinting, mobile verifications, and CAPTCHA while continuously monitoring their users to avoid panelists duplication. From there, they managed how many surveys were sent to each user, and only allowed each user to enter the survey once.

RepData distributed the survey link to their network of panel providers and then respondents were recruited through the partner's survey app/website. RepData targeted and pre-screened respondents age 18 and older on the basis of age, gender, education, race/ethnicity, state, and registered voter status. Among the 23,728 panelists who touched the pre-screener instrument, 10,003 went on to complete the full survey. Respondents recruited for a specific state were only allowed to complete the survey if they were registered to vote in that state. To prevent fraud by bad actors, RepData uses Research Defender security software. This includes a number of quality checks done before the respondent enters the survey, including but not limited to device fingerprinting, IP checks, and open-ended checks to ensure that it's a real person taking the survey.

AmeriSpeak Sample

During the initial recruitment phase of the AmeriSpeak panel, randomly selected U.S. households were sampled with a known, non-zero probability of selection from the NORC National Sample Frame, supplemented by the USPS Delivery Sequence File, and then contacted by U.S. mail, email, telephone or field interviewers (face-to-face). The panel provided sample coverage of approximately 97% of the U.S. household population. Those excluded from the sample included people with P.O. Box-only addresses, some addresses not listed in the USPS Delivery Sequence File, and some newly constructed dwellings. AmeriSpeak panelists provided confirmation of registered voter status in the state.

A sample of registered voters was selected from the AmeriSpeak Panel using sampling strata based on age, race/Hispanic ethnicity, education, gender, and 2020 vote. Only panelists who had completed a survey within the last six months were eligible for sampling. The size of the selected sample per sampling stratum was determined by the population distribution for each stratum. In addition, sample selection took into account expected differential survey completion rate by group so that the set of panel members with completed interviews was a representative sample of the target population of registered voters. If a panel household had more than one active adult panel member, only one adult in the household was eligible for selection, using random within-household sampling.

Weighting Details

AP VoteCast employed a four-step weighting approach that combines the probability sample with the nonprobability sample and refined estimates at a subregional level within each state[6]. For national estimates, the 50 state surveys and the AmeriSpeak survey were weighted separately and then combined into a survey representative of voters in all 50 states.

State Surveys

First, weights were constructed separately for the probability sample (when available[7]) and the nonprobability sample for each state survey. These weights were adjusted to population totals to correct for demographic and geographic imbalances of the responding sample compared with the population of registered voters in each state. In 2024, the adjustment targets were derived from a combination of data from the U.S. Census Bureau's November 2022 Current Population Survey Voting and Registration Supplement, Catalist's voter file, and the Census Bureau's 2023 American Community Survey. The categories used for weighting were collapsed in some states based on the sample sizes and population distributions. The variables used were:

- Sex * Age (male, female * 18-29, 30-44, 45-64, 65+)
- Race/ethnicity (Hispanic, non-Hispanic white, non-Hispanic-Black, all other)
- Education (less than high school/high school grad, some college, 4-year college grad, post-graduate)
- Age * race/ethnicity (18-29, 30-44, 45-64, 65+ * NH-white, all other)
- Education * race/ethnicity (less than HS/HS grad, some college, 4-year college grad+ * NH-white, all other)

[6] In Maine and Nebraska, weights were constructed to be representative of select Congressional Districts in addition to state level weighting.

[7] In three states, HI, ND, and RI, the probability sample targeted a small number of completes which were treated as non-probability sample in the weighting.

- Housing tenure (owned, rented/occupied without payment)
- County grouping using AP's party grouping (variable "AP_PARTY_REGION")
- Rural-Urban Commuting Area (RUCA) code (collapsing of RUCA codes varied by state)
- Probability sample only: Catalist LLC's vote choice index by quintile.
- Probability sample only: Predicted response propensity by quintile.

Prior to adjusting to population totals, the probability-based registered voter list sample was base weighted to reflect the probability of record selection, and these weights were then adjusted for differential non-response within each state by a four-level partisanship variable (based on Catalist LLC's vote choice index), predicted response propensity quintile, and Catalist LLC voter file race/ethnicity.

Second, in addition to the demographic and geographic variables listed above, a self-reported partisanship variable was included in weighting for both the probability and nonprobability samples to ensure the responding samples were similar to the population for a variable that is predictive of vote choice but not fully captured through demographic and geographic adjustments alone.

- Additional calibration variable
    - Party ID * 2020 voter status (2020 voter and Democrat, 2020 voter and independent, 2020 voter and Republican, not a 2020 voter and Democrat, not a 2020 voter and independent, not a 2020 voter and Republican)

The calibration benchmarks were based on estimates from a combination of national and state models that made predictions for registered voters at the state-level for Party ID (Democrat, independent, Republican). The models for the calibration variables were run using an instrumental calibration approach. Models included the following individual level variables:

- Flag for interaction between sex (male, female), age (18-29, 30-44, 45-64, 65+), and race/ethnicity (non-Hispanic white, non-Hispanic Black, Hispanic, all other)
- Flag for interaction between sex (male, female) and education (less than high school/high school grad, some college, 4-year college grad, post-graduate)
- Flag for vote in the 2020 Presidential election (Biden, Trump, other)

Third, all respondents in each state were weighted to improve estimates for substate geographic regions. This weight combined the weighted probability sample (if available) and the nonprobability sample, and then used a small area estimation model to improve those estimates within the subregions of a state. We created between 2 and 20 regions (county groupings) for each state based on vote choice in previous elections and the number of expected survey completes in each county. We then

used these groupings to generate model-based estimates of race/ethnicity, age, gender, and presidential vote choice among likely voters.

The following variables were used as potential covariates in the models: 2020 Presidential election results, population density, median household income, percent below poverty line, percent unemployed, percent college degree, percent on public assistance, percent with health insurance coverage, percent of each racial/ethnic group (non-Hispanic white, non-Hispanic Black, Hispanic, all other) among adults, percent of each racial/ethnic group among registered voters, percent of each age group (18-29 years, 30-44 years, 45-64 years, 65+ years) among adults, percent of each age group among registered voters, percent of each gender group among registered voters, percent of each urbanicity group (rural, suburban), percent living in rented households, and percent who had not moved in the last year. The models used a mix of past vote choice, socioeconomic status, and demographic or geographic measures.

Fourth, the survey results were weighted to the certified vote count following the completion of the election. The President, Senate, governor, or House vote results were used as benchmarks for weighting respondents who were voters. This weighting was done in 2-20 sub-state regions within each state.

National Survey

The national survey was weighted to combine the 50 state surveys with the nationwide AmeriSpeak survey. Each of the state surveys was weighted as described. The AmeriSpeak survey received a nonresponse-adjusted weight that was then adjusted to national totals for registered voters derived from the U.S. Census Bureau’s November 2022 Current Population Survey Voting and Registration Supplement, the Catalist voter file, and the Census Bureau’s 2023 American Community Survey. The state surveys were further adjusted to represent their appropriate proportion of the registered voter population for the country and combined with the AmeriSpeak survey. After all votes were counted and certified, the national data file was adjusted to match the vote for President within each state as well as the vote for a secondary race (e.g. Senate or Governor or House).

Using Weights

AP VoteCast was designed to be analyzed using weighted data. The data file includes different weights for different types of analyses.

- To produce estimates at the state level (e.g., percent of California registered voters who cite the economy as the most important problem facing the country), the state weights should be used.
- To produce estimates at the national level (e.g., the percent of registered voters nationwide who think the country is on the right track), the national-level weights should be used.

Additionally, the data file includes weights that represent results at two different stages of data collection.

- The FINALVOTE weights should be used to produce estimates that are adjusted to reflect the final vote counts in addition to demographic, geographic, and calibration adjustments. Certified vote count data was provided by AP. AP VoteCast recommends using these weights for most analyses.
- The POLLCLOSE weights can be used to produce estimates prior to any adjustments to final vote counts. These weights are provided for transparency of the methodology to permit comparison of the survey's estimates using all interviews collected through poll close, but prior to adjusting the survey outcome to match the final vote count.

To reproduce estimates in AP's publicly available AP VoteCast crosstabs of voters and estimates of voter demographics nationwide, limit analysis to LIKELYVOTER=1 and cases where vote choice in the race of interest (PRESVOTE or HOUSEVOTE) is not missing. The FINALVOTE_NATIONAL_WEIGHT variable should be used for weights.

To reproduce estimates in each state, limit analysis to LIKELYVOTER=1, the state of interest (using either P_STATE or STATENUM), and cases where vote choice in the race of interest (PRESVOTE, SENVOTE, SENSPVOTE, GOVVOTE, HOUSEVOTE, BALLOT1_VOTE, BALLOT2_VOTE) is not missing. The FINALVOTE_STATE_WEIGHT variable should be used for weights.

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Appendix A – Likely Voter Models

Respondents were classified as voters based on the following criteria:

- The respondent said they definitely will vote to LVB; or
- The respondent said they probably will vote to LVB, and they voted in either the 2022 midterm election or they voted in the 2020 presidential election; or
- The respondent said they already voted to LVB

Appendix B – AP VoteCast State Surveys

State	Probability Interviews	Nonprobability Interviews	Number of Voters	Margin of Sampling Error for Voters (+/- pp)	Number of Non-Voters	Margin of Sampling Error for Non-Voters (+/- pp)
National	46,916[8]	93,022	121,059	0.4	18,879	1.2
Alaska	1,139	288	1,308	4.5	119	21.6
Alabama	-	1,073	827	3.9	246	8.2
Arkansas	694	1,925	2,039	2.7	580	5.9
Arizona	1,770	3,036	4,356	1.8	450	6.8
California	1,304	4,004	4,580	1.7	728	5.8
Colorado	1,314	2,586	3,467	2.1	433	6.9
Connecticut	689	1,914	2,217	2.6	386	7.2
Delaware	-	724	599	4.7	125	11.6
Florida	1,397	4,079	4,802	1.7	674	5.0
Georgia	1,479	3,193	4,095	1.8	577	5.4
Hawaii	275	439	650	5.0	64	20.4
Iowa	582	1,574	1,782	2.8	374	7.2
Idaho	-	775	581	5.0	194	12.1
Illinois	719	2,352	2,673	2.2	398	6.4
Indiana	804	2,284	2,534	2.4	554	5.5
Kansas	718	1,267	1,623	3.0	362	7.9

[8] The national probability total includes both the AmeriSpeak sample and the states' probability survey samples.

State	Probability Interviews	Nonprobability Interviews	Number of Voters	Margin of Sampling Error for Voters (+/- pp)	Number of Non-Voters	Margin of Sampling Error for Non-Voters (+/- pp)
Kentucky	600	2,072	2,119	2.7	553	6.3
Louisiana	636	2,241	2,302	2.5	575	6.7
Massachusetts	602	2,141	2,381	2.4	362	6.5
Maryland	1,372	2,912	3,724	2.1	560	7.7
Maine	1,364	745	1,972	3.1	137	13.5
Michigan	1,074	3,173	3,745	2.0	502	6.1
Minnesota	1,398	2,545	3,529	2.0	414	10.3
Missouri	633	2,092	2,251	2.6	474	6.1
Mississippi	-	1,040	799	4.1	241	10.8
Montana	847	516	1,254	3.7	109	18.9
North Carolina	1,201	3,096	3,700	1.9	597	5.1
North Dakota	485	296	718	4.7	63	22.7
Nebraska	1,184	819	1,809	3.3	194	11.4
New Hampshire	1,331	685	1,933	3.1	83	20.7
New Jersey	576	2,038	2,276	2.6	338	6.4
New Mexico	1,238	927	1,925	3.2	240	11.0
Nevada	2,307	1,759	3,632	2.2	434	7.4
New York	1,380	3,595	4,283	1.9	692	6.0
Ohio	1,072	3,430	3,793	1.9	709	4.9
Oklahoma	-	1,057	748	4.1	309	7.8

State	Probability Interviews	Nonprobability Interviews	Number of Voters	Margin of Sampling Error for Voters (+/- pp)	Number of Non-Voters	Margin of Sampling Error for Non-Voters (+/- pp)
Oregon	580	2,037	2,237	2.7	380	8.3
Pennsylvania	1,255	3,254	4,096	1.8	413	6.4
Rhode Island	229	420	564	4.8	85	14.7
South Carolina	720	2,125	2361	2.4	484	6.8
South Dakota	580	287	804	4.5	63	19.8
Tennessee	825	2,115	2,389	2.4	551	5.4
Texas	1,471	4,092	4,608	1.8	955	4.3
Utah	1,363	1,012	2,142	2.7	233	13.2
Virginia	1,081	2,121	2,790	2.3	412	6.3
Vermont	561	214	734	4.9	41	23.0
Washington	650	2,100	2,363	2.5	387	7.3
Wisconsin	1,220	3,235	3,965	1.9	490	6.3
West Virginia	-	1,148	812	4.1	336	7.9
Wyoming	694	170	826	5.2	38	23.3