LeRoy Collins INSTITUTE

Florida Election Study 2024

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Executive Summary

The 2024 Florida Election Study (FES) is the third biennial report examining the condition of elections and election administration in Florida. Its purpose is to provide a comprehensive, data-driven assessment of election outcomes, voter participation, voter experiences, and public confidence in the state's electoral system. The study integrates multiple sources of information, including the Florida Voter Registration File (FVRF), official election returns from the Florida Department of State, the Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS), federal and state campaign finance data, and an original post-election survey of Florida voters conducted by Florida State University.

Together, these sources allow us to evaluate not only electoral outcomes, but also how Floridians experienced the 2024 election and how they perceive the integrity and functioning of the state's election system.

Overview of the 2024 Florida General Election found in Chapter 1

- In the 2024 general election, 11,004,209 Floridians cast ballots out of 14,257,135 registered voters, representing 77.1 percent turnout among registered voters. When measured as a share of the voting-eligible population (VEP), turnout reached 67 percent.
- The composition of the voting electorate reflects continued partisan shifts in the state. Of all voters:
    - 32 percent were registered Democrats,
    - 43 percent were registered Republicans,
    - 25 percent were registered with No Party Affiliation (NPA) or minor parties.

- County-level results further illustrate the state's current partisan alignment. Only three counties — Leon, Gadsden, and Alachua — met the threshold for a Democratic landslide (defined as a margin exceeding 20 percentage points). In contrast, 50 counties produced Republican landslide victories.

- Compared to the closely contested 2020 presidential election (Trump 51%, Biden 48%), the 2024 results reflected a substantial expansion in the Republican margin. President Donald Trump won Florida with 56 percent of the vote, marking the largest Republican presidential margin in the state in recent decades.

- Down-ballot results were similarly favorable to Republicans. In the U.S. Senate race, incumbent Rick Scott defeated Democratic challenger Debbie Mucarsel-Powell by approximately 12 percentage points (55% to 43%). Scott raised and spent approximately $47 million, while Mucarsel-Powell raised and spent approximately $36 million.
    - Voting methods also continued to evolve. Early voting reached its highest level in recent election cycles, while vote-by-mail usage continued to decline from its pandemic-era peak. In 2024,
        - 49 percent of voters cast ballots through early in-person voting,

- 27 percent voted by mail,
- 24 percent voted on Election Day.

Summary of Voter Experiences from the 2024 Post-Election Survey Findings

The Florida Election Study includes responses from 2,728 Florida voters surveyed online following the general election. The survey assesses voter experiences, satisfaction, and confidence in the election system.

Vote-By-Mail (VBM) Voters

- Among voters who cast ballots by mail:
  - 60 percent cited convenience as their primary reason for choosing this method.
  - 11 percent cited work or school conflicts.
  - Other reasons included being out of town (9%), physical disability (8%), military or overseas status (3–4%), and other scheduling considerations.
- Returning mail ballots was most commonly accomplished through the U.S. Postal Service. Approximately:
  - 30 percent had ballots collected from their home mailbox,
  - 27 percent dropped ballots at USPS locations,
  - 4 percent used secure drop boxes,
  - 1 percent delivered ballots directly to a vote center or Supervisor of Elections office.
- Instructions were widely viewed as accessible. Ninety-eight percent reported that voting-by-mail instructions were either very easy (77%) or somewhat easy (21%) to follow.
- Roughly 70 percent of mail voters tracked their ballot status electronically — a notable increase from 2022.

In-Person Voters

- In-person voters reported short wait times and positive polling place experiences:
  - The average time to cast a ballot was 13 minutes for early voters and 9 minutes for Election Day voters.
  - Ninety-two percent completed the process within 30 minutes.
  - Ninety-eight percent agreed their voting location was easy to find.
  - Eighty-eight percent said it was easy to find parking.
  - Ninety-nine percent agreed poll workers were helpful.
  - Ninety-nine percent agreed their ballot privacy was protected.
- Identification requirements were widely met with a driver's license or state-issued ID (94%). Small percentages presented passports, alternative forms of identification, or multiple forms to satisfy statutory requirements.

Voter Confidence and Attitudes

- Confidence in ballot counting remained high:
    - 76 percent reported being "very confident" their ballot was counted correctly.
    - 20 percent were "somewhat confident."
    - Overall, 96 percent expressed at least some confidence.
- Support for photo voter identification requirements was strong:
    - 87 percent expressed support,
    - 7 percent opposed,
    - 6 percent were unsure.
- At the same time, voters expressed concern about certain election vulnerabilities:
    - A meaningful minority believes certain forms of election irregularities occur at least occasionally.
    - Fifty-six percent believe ballots are "never" or "hardly ever" tampered with.
    - Approximately one-third believe non-citizen voting occurs at least occasionally.
    - Sixty-two percent prioritize protecting the voting system from fraud over expanding voter access.
- Voters demonstrated strong support for post-election audits, with 92 percent either strongly or somewhat agreeing that every state should have a post-election auditing process. Additionally, 84 percent prefer machine counting of ballots over hand counting.

Beliefs About Ballot Privacy, Election Fraud, and Attitudes Toward Election Reform

- Confidence in ballot privacy is high.
    - Vote-by-mail voters: 92% said their ballot privacy was maintained when their vote was counted (57% strongly agree, 35% somewhat agree).
    - In-person voters: 99% said their ballot privacy was protected (69% strongly agree, 29% somewhat agree).
- Few voters report personally observing election fraud or irregularities in the 2024 election.
    - 4 percent reported witnessing voter intimidation at a polling place, 2 percent reported seeing someone bribing or paying for votes, and 1 percent reported seeing someone attempt to vote using a false identity.
    - However, about one-third of voters believe non-citizen voting occurs at least occasionally, indicating that a substantial minority perceive some forms of election fraud to occur.
- Florida voters tend to prioritize election security over expanding voter access when evaluating election reforms.
    - 62 percent say protecting the voting system from fraud is more important than making voting easier.
- Voters express strong support for several election administration practices.
    - 92 percent support having a post-election audit process in every state.
    - 84 percent prefer ballots to be counted by voting machines rather than by hand.

- Same-day registration is supported by 54 percent of voters overall, but support varies sharply by party: 84 percent of Democrats, 61 percent of independents, and 33 percent of Republicans support the policy.
- Attitudes toward vote-by-mail deadlines are similarly divided. 73 percent of Democrats support counting ballots postmarked by Election Day even if they arrive later, while only 21 percent of Republicans support this approach; most Republicans prefer ballots to arrive by or before Election Day to be counted.

Broader Patterns and Implications

The cumulative evidence from presidential margins, legislative control, voter registration trends, and county-level results indicates that Florida currently leans reliably Republican at the presidential level. However, substantial numbers of voters remain registered with No Party Affiliation, suggesting that partisan alignment in the state may continue to evolve over time.

Operationally, the 2024 election appears to have been administered efficiently. Voter experiences were overwhelmingly positive across voting modes. Confidence in personal ballot counting remains high, though perceptions of broader election integrity vary across specific reforms and fraud-related questions.

The 2024 Florida Election Study provides empirical grounding for ongoing conversations about election administration, voter confidence, and reform priorities in one of the nation's largest and most politically significant states.

Preface: Study Rationale, Background & Methodology

The 2024 Florida Election Study (FES) is the third biennial report assessing the state of elections and election administration in Florida. The first followed the 2020 general election, and the second followed the 2022 general election. This report examines federal election outcomes, trends in voter turnout and registration, changes in Florida's partisan and demographic landscape, and voters' experiences with the electoral process. As part of this effort, we conducted a post-election survey of Florida voters to assess political attitudes, perceptions of election security, confidence in election outcomes, and preferences regarding election reforms.

Historical Context

Evaluating the performance of electoral systems has long been a core concern of researchers and policymakers. Florida became a focal point for election administration reform following the 2000 presidential election, which exposed weaknesses in voting technology and procedural uniformity. Although Florida received national attention, similar issues were present across many states.

In response, Congress passed the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) in 2002. HAVA established minimum national standards for election administration, including provisional voting requirements, statewide voter registration databases, updated voting equipment standards, and clearer compliance procedures. The legislation also created the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC), providing federal guidance and funding for modernization of election systems.

Since 2000, Florida has remained nationally significant as the third-most populous state, characterized by demographic diversity and a historically competitive electoral environment. While Florida was long considered a presidential battleground, recent electoral outcomes suggest a shift toward consistent Republican advantage at the presidential level.

Contemporary Context

Although the 2024 election in Florida proceeded without major administrative controversy, national discourse surrounding election integrity remains salient. Both the 2016 and 2020 presidential elections heightened public debate over election security and access.

In 2016, Republican candidate Donald Trump repeatedly raised allegations of election "rigging" and voter fraud, while Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton raised concerns about foreign interference following the Russian hacking of Democratic National Committee (DNC) email servers. These events heightened attention to election system vulnerabilities.

During the 2020 election cycle, concerns about election integrity intensified. Pandemic-related changes in voting procedures — including expanded vote-by-mail options — prompted heightened partisan scrutiny. Democratic leaders emphasized concerns about voter suppression, while President Trump and many Republican officials raised concerns about mail ballot fraud.

The January 6, 2021, certification of the Electoral College further elevated these tensions as members of Congress formally objected to certification in multiple states and the Capitol riots took place.[1] These events reflect a broader national climate in which public confidence in electoral processes has become increasingly polarized.

Election Irregularities and Public Perceptions

High-profile election controversies in recent years have also shaped public perceptions. These include the 2018 North Carolina 9th Congressional District race,[2] a 2020 municipal election in Paterson, New Jersey, [3] and a 2023 mayoral primary in Bridgeport, Connecticut.[4] All of them required corrective action or new elections.

The North Carolina 9th Congressional District case is particularly notable.[5] Following allegations of absentee ballot fraud across two counties, the State Board of Elections declined to certify the results and subsequently ordered a new election.[6] Investigations uncovered unlawful ballot collection practices and vote tampering.[7] The case also resulted in additional fraud convictions related to earlier contests.[8]

While such cases are rare relative to the total number of ballots cast nationally, their visibility contributes to public skepticism regarding election integrity.

Democratic Legitimacy and Public Confidence

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[1] See Zhou, Li. Jan. 7, 2021. "147 Republican lawmakers still objected to the election results after the Capitol attack: Congress has certified President-elect Joe Biden as the winner of the election — but some Republicans still objected.," *VOX*, available at: https://www.vox.com/2021/1/6/22218058/republicans-objections-election-results, accessed February 25, 2022.

[2] Graff, Michael and Nick Ochsner, November 29, 2021, "'This Smacks of Something Gone Awry': A True Tale of Absentee Vote Fraud, *Politico*, available at: https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2021/11/29/true-tale-absentee-voter-fraud-north-carolina-523238, accessed June 20, 2022.

[3] Sturla, Anna, August 20, 2020. "Judge Invalidates Paterson, NJ city council election after allegations of mail-in voter fraud, CNN, available at https://www.cnn.com/2020/08/20/politics/paterson-new-jersey-city-council-voter-fraud/index.html, accessed June 20, 2022.

[4] Andrew Brown, Jose Luis Martinez, Katy Golvala, and Dave Altimari, December 17, 2023, ""How the Battle for Absentee Ballot Defined the Bridgeport Election," CT Mirror, available at: https://ctmirror.org/2023/12/17/bridgeport-mayoral-primary-election-2023/.

[5] Michael C. Herron, 2019 , "Mail-In Absentee Ballot Anomalies in North Carolina's 9th Congressional District," *Election Law Journal* 18(3), https://doi.org/10.1089/elj.2019.0544 available at: https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/10.1089/elj.2019.0544.

[6] Leigh Ann Caldwell, and Dartunorro Clark, February 21, 2019, "New Election Ordered in North Carolina House District after possible illegal activities," NBC News, available at: https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/congress/republican-candidate-mark-harris-calls-new-election-north-carolina-disputed-n974176?cid=public-rss_20190221.

[7] Leigh Ann Caldwell, February 18, 2019, "Key Witness testifies to tampering with absentee ballots in N.C. House race, available at: https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/elections/key-witness-testifies-tampering-absentee-ballots-n-c-house-race-n972896;

[8] Caldwell, *Ibid.*

Free and fair elections are foundational to democratic governance. However, effective election administration requires more than accurate vote tabulation. Public trust in electoral integrity, accessibility, and fairness is essential.

A healthy democratic system depends on transparent procedures, accurate vote counting, equitable access, and institutional legitimacy. Voters must believe not only that elections are properly administered but also that outcomes are determined without partisan bias, technological failure, or systemic irregularity.

For these reasons, the LeRoy Collins Institute (LCI) has produced the Florida Election Study following each federal general election since 2020. The FES provides a comprehensive overview of Florida's electoral system and electorate, combining administrative data analysis with survey-based assessments of voter experiences, confidence, and reform preferences.

2024 Survey Methodology

The 2024 post-election survey was conducted online between November 8, 2024, and February 8, 2025. A random sample of likely voters — with targeted oversamples of historically underrepresented groups — was invited to participate via email or postcard recruitment.

A total of 2,728 voters completed the survey.

Survey data were weighted to reflect the demographic and partisan composition of Florida's electorate based on the Florida Voter Registration File. Weighting variables include age, gender, race, and party registration. Additional post-stratification weights incorporate education (based on the Current Population Survey voter supplement) and the joint distribution of presidential vote choice and ballot initiative votes (Amendments 3 and 4).[9]

A Look Ahead

Chapter 1 examines the macro-level characteristics of Florida's electorate in the 2024 general election. It situates current turnout patterns, party registration trends, demographic composition, and electoral outcomes within a broader historical context. Particular attention is given to shifts across the last three presidential elections (2016, 2020, and 2024), which collectively suggest meaningful changes in the state's partisan alignment and geographic voting patterns.

Chapter 2 draws on original survey data collected by the LeRoy Collins Institute at Florida State University to assess voters' experiences with the 2024 election. This chapter evaluates the mechanics of voting — whether by mail, early in person, or on Election Day — and examines voter satisfaction, perceived accessibility, wait times, interactions with poll workers, identification requirements, and overall confidence in ballot counting.

Chapter 3 uses the same survey data to explore voter attitudes toward ballot privacy, perceived risks of fraud or irregularities, and preferences regarding election reforms. It analyzes how voters

[9] These data come from our collection of statewide cast vote records, which represented over 70% of voters statewide.

balance concerns about election security and access, and documents levels of support for policies such as voter identification requirements, same-day registration, vote-by-mail regulations, and post-election audits.

Appendix A provides a detailed explanation of the methodology used in the 2024 Florida Election Study Survey, including sampling procedures, fieldwork timelines, and weighting protocols. Appendix B includes a complete top-line frequency report of all survey items.

Together, these sections provide a comprehensive account of Florida's electoral environment in 2024 — combining administrative data, voter behavior, and public opinion to assess both the performance and perception of the state's election system.

Project Funding

This project was funded by the LeRoy Collins Institute at Florida State University, the Election Law Center at Florida State University College of Law, and the Institute for Governance and Civics at Florida State University.

Chapter 1: 2024 Florida Presidential General Election Overview

1.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 situates Florida's 2024 election within long-term demographic and partisan trends to evaluate whether recent electoral shifts reflect temporary political dynamics or structural realignment. Specifically, we examine various facets of voting behavior, including turnout and voter registration, over multiple elections, and geographic areas, especially counties and Congressional Districts. We examine data on party registration, vote mode, and key demographic variables such as age, race, and gender. We rely mostly on administrative data from the Florida Department of State such as the Florida Voter Registration File (FVRF) and Florida Voter History Files, as well as election results data. We also use other state and national data sources. At times, we also utilize data from non-governmental organizations, including the United States Elections Project at the University of Florida and opensecrets.org.[10]

1.2 Voter Turnout

According to the Florida Department of State's Division of Elections, a total of 11,004,209 Floridians voted in the 2024 general election out of 14,257,135, registered voters – or 77.1%.[11]

Figure 1.1 shows the rapid growth in the number of Floridians voting in elections between 2000 and 2024, with the dashed lines indicating the average number of voters across presidential and midterm elections.[12] Presidential elections mobilize more voters than midterm elections, but the number of ballots cast in the last two presidential elections have been well above the long-term average, nearly 1.5 million higher. This is due, in part, to Florida's rising population. The number of voters has drastically increased over the last 20 years, from 7.6 million voters in the 2004 presidential election to 11 million voters in the 2024 presidential election. This represents a 36% increase in the number of voters over a 20-year period.

[10] See https://election.lab.ufl.edu/2024-general-election-turnout/ and opensecrets.org

[11] Data available at: https://results.elections.myflorida.com

[12] Data available at: https://www.electproject.org/election-data/voter-turnout-data

Figure 1.1. FL Total Votes Cast in Elections from 2000-2024

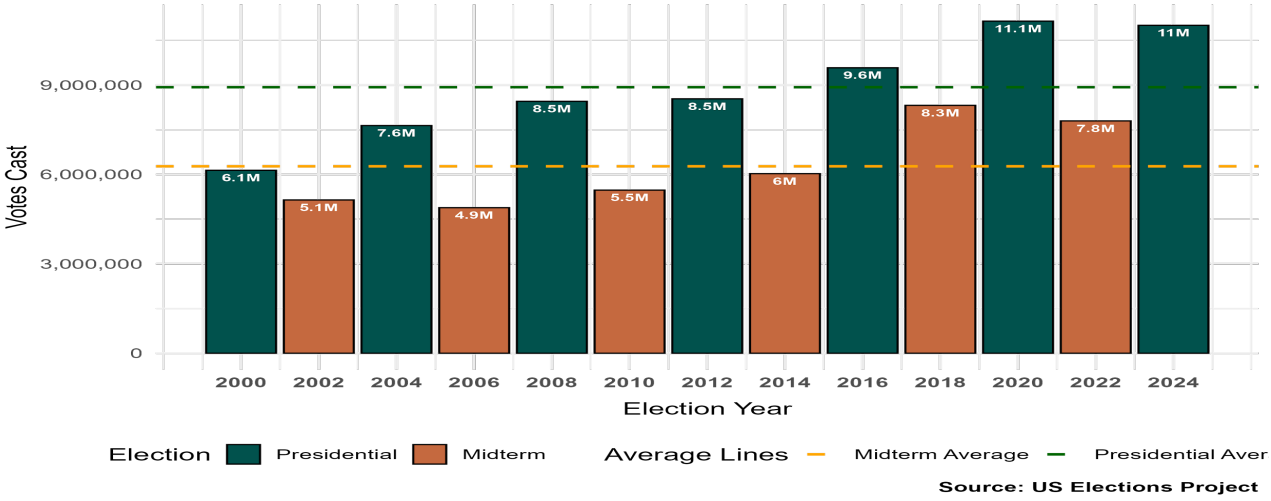


Figure 1.2 presents turnout as a percentage of eligible voters from 2000 to 2024. Eligible voters are US citizens who are Florida residents at least 18 years old by the time of the election, barring restrictions due to criminal action or mental incapacitation. The figure includes the entire voting-eligible population (VEP) regardless of their registration status.[13]

As Figure 1.2 shows the 2020 presidential general election had the highest turnout Florida has seen in over 20 years, with 72% of voting-eligible Floridians participating in this historic election. The next highest VEP turnout is tied between the 2008 and the 2024 elections, with 67% of the voting-eligible participating. Each of these elections were presidential contests with substantial campaign activity, with two of them against a backdrop of major economic and social crises (the Great Recession and COVID-19, respectively). Despite the similarities in turnout, Florida was considered a battleground state in 2008, 2012, 2016, and 2020 but not in 2024. Florida appears to no longer be a swing state and is considered a leaning red state.

[13] VEP data comes from https://election.lab.ufl.edu/voter-turnout/

Figure 1.2. FL Voting-Eligible Turnout Rate in General Elections

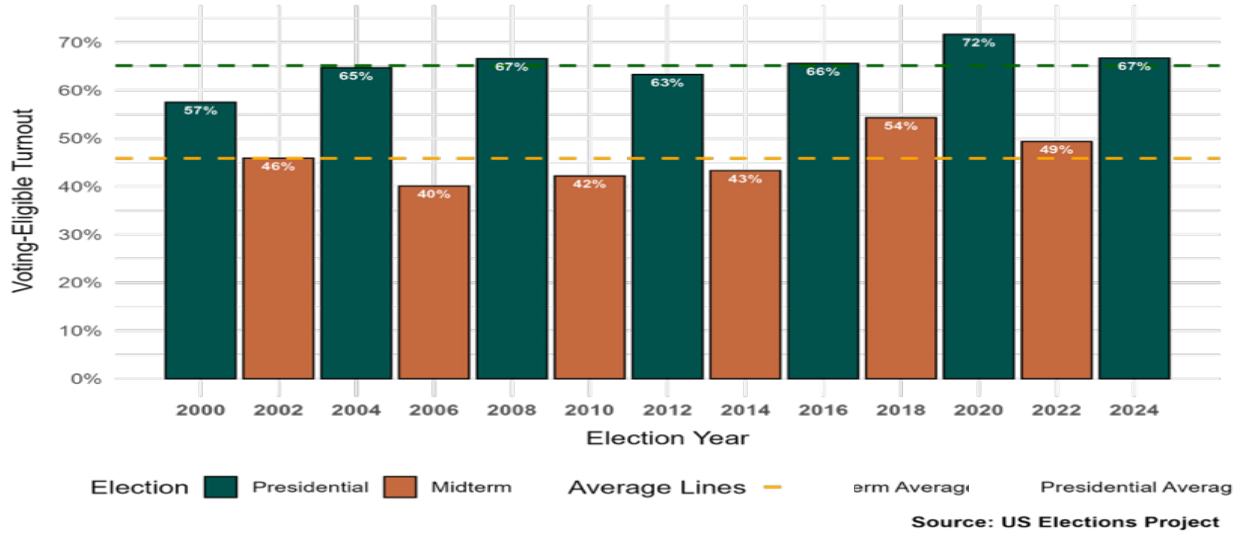
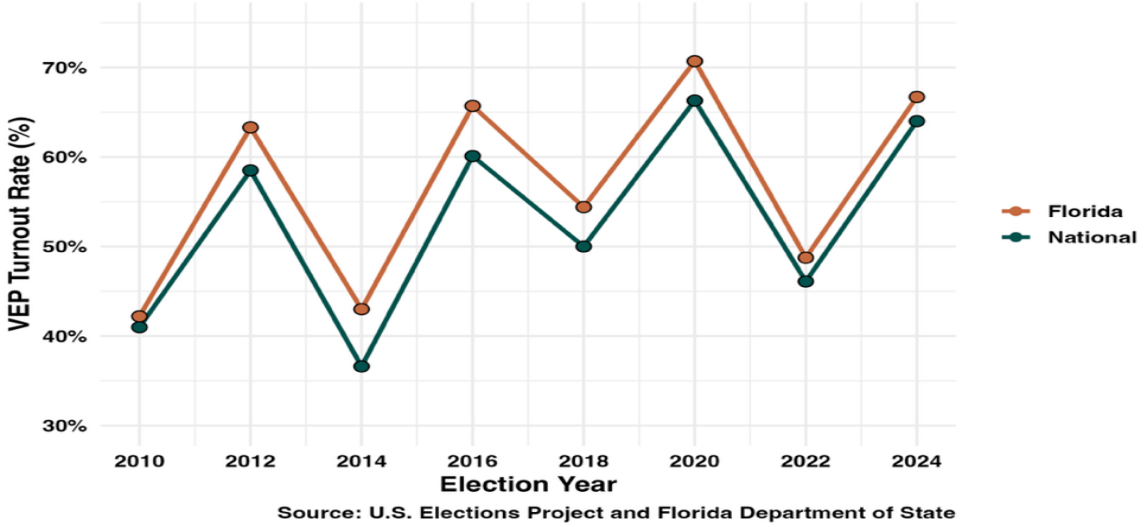


Figure 1.3 compares Florida's VEP turnout rate against the US average between 2010 and 2024. The red line represents Florida's turnout rate, and the green line is US turnout, while the bottom blue line shows the difference between Florida's turnout rate and that of the US, with positive values indicating turnout was higher in Florida for that election. Florida consistently had higher VEP turnout rates in comparison to the rest of the United States. This difference likely reflects Florida's history as a competitive two-party state in statewide elections — especially presidential elections — a state with many electoral votes and Congressional representatives at stake, and an older electorate.

Figure 1.3. Difference in Voting-Eligible Turnout Rates (FL–US) 2010-2024

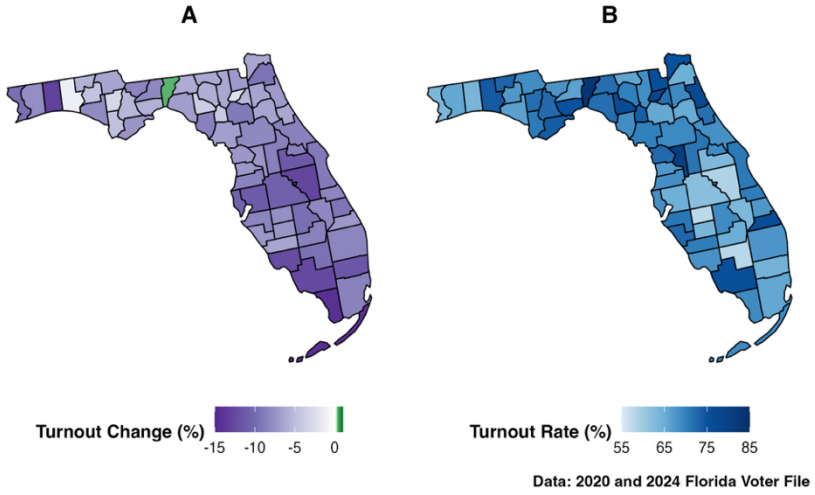


The reduction in turnout from 2020 to 2024 was not distributed equally across the state, with only one county, Jefferson in the panhandle, seeing an increase in voter turnout and then by only a very small amount (.37%). Figure 1.4A presents a map that reflects the change in the turnout rate from 2020 to 2024 for each of Florida's 67 counties. Jefferson County saw an increase in

voter turnout, which is in green, while counties who saw a decrease in voter turnout are in shades of purple. There are some notable points that can be concluded from this map. Every county in Florida except one saw a decrease in voter turnout, ranging from a decrease of 1.3% (Walton County) to 14.4% (Monroe County). Monroe was followed by Okaloosa County at 13% and then Osceola County at 12.8%. There appears to be no geographical explanation for the overall decrease in voter turnout, such as between north and south, or coastal and inland counties. In 2020 turnout was up across the country, likely due to factors related to the pandemic, and turnout was much lower in 2024 across the country as it returned to more typical election activity. Florida's turnout decline is consistent with other states.

Figure 1.4B looks at the overall turnout rate for Florida by county,[14] where the darker shades of blue represent higher levels of voter turnout within the county. There are several notable points that can be drawn from this map. North and Northwest Florida, particularly in Florida's panhandle, saw some of the highest turnout rates in comparison to the rest of Florida. Jefferson County saw the highest turnout rate in the state, with 84% of its registered voter population turning out to vote. Followed by Sumter County at 80% and then Union County at 78%. Central and South Florida, especially along the coast of Southwest Florida, show lower voter turnout rates. Hardee County saw the lowest turnout rate at 57.6%, just over half of registered voters. Closely followed by Hendry County at 58% and Osceola at 58.7%.

Figure 1.4. FL Voter Turnout Rates in Florida by County



1.3. Registration Versus Turnout

Florida residents have a multitude of methods through which they can register to vote. These include online through the Florida Department of State website, via mail using the National Voter Registration Form, in person at their county Supervisor of Elections office, at a local library, or through any entity authorized by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to issue fishing, hunting, or trapping permits. Would-be voters may also register when accessing the services of the Florida Driver License Office, Tax Collector's Office, or any other voter registration agency. Additionally, Floridians can submit voter registration

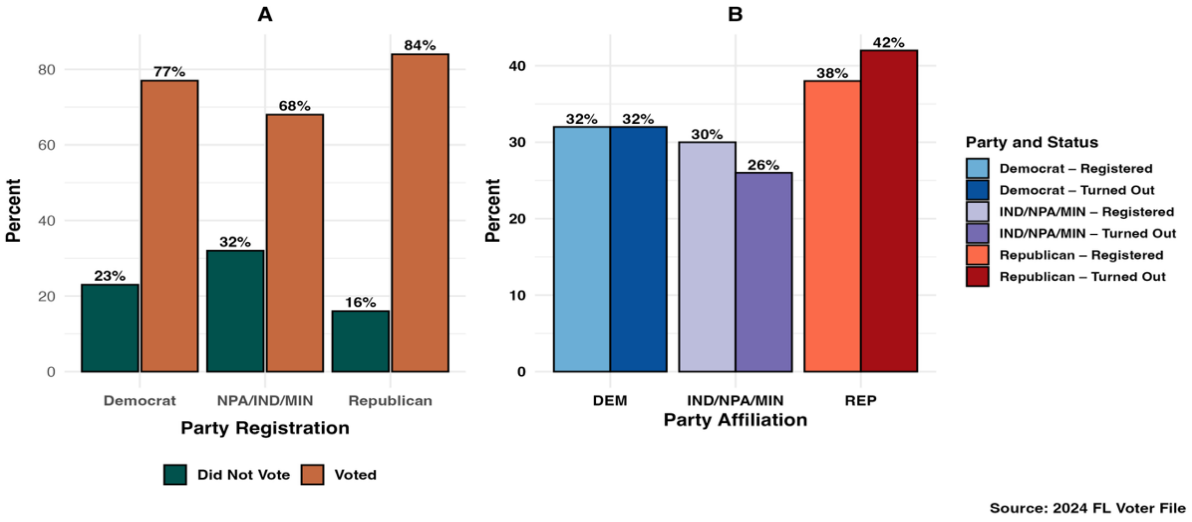
[14] Voter turnout rate was calculated by dividing the number of voters by the number of active registered voters.

information when renewing driver's licenses online or in-person through the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles' online renewal system.[15] Registered Florida voters can also change their voter registration during an election if they have moved. Florida does not, however, offer Same-day or Election Day registration. Only Floridians whose applications are received at least 29 days before Election Day are eligible to vote

Figure 1.5 presents the percentage of registered voters and actual 2024 general election voters by political party. Whereas registered Democrats form the same percentage of the electorate as their actual voters, and Republicans turnout at much higher rates than their registration numbers would suggest, NPA voters were underrepresented relative to their registration numbers – with 27% of registered voters identifying as NPA but a lower 23% general election turnout rate.

This reflects a longstanding finding that individuals attached to one of the two major political parties in the US are significantly more likely to show up to vote than are those who identify as Independent or with a minor party.[16] This is due to both individual factors such as interest and education and mobilization factors. Parties prefer to mobilize their supporters over uncertain supporters.[17]

Figure 1.5. Composition of FL Registered Voters and General Election Voters in 2024 by Party Registration



1.4. Is Florida Purple?

Presidential elections in Florida have been notoriously close, with no presidential contender winning by more than 5% of the vote in recent history until 2024. The state was also seen by

[15] https://dos.myflorida.com/elections/for-voters/voter-registration/register-to-vote-or-update-your-information/

[16] See Rosenstone, S. J., & Hansen, J. M. (1993). Mobilization, participation, and democracy in America. New York: Macmillan.

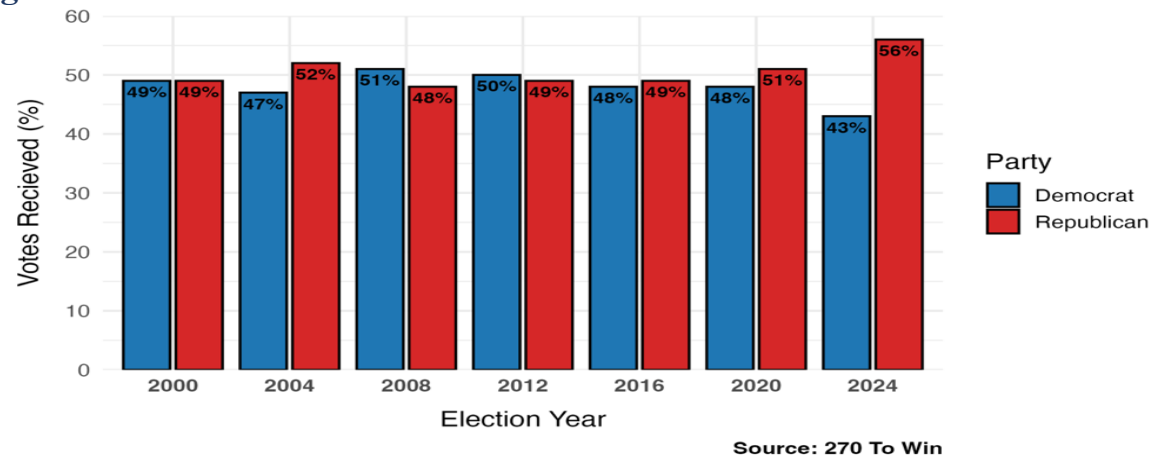
[17] Barry Burden, David T. Canon, Kenneth R. Mayer and Donal P. Moynihan, 2014, "Election Laws, Mobilization and Turnout: The Unanticipated Consequences of Election Reform," American Journal of Political Science 58(1): 95-109.

many as a bellwether state[18] that, for a century, predicted who would win the presidency. Florida voted for the winning candidate in 22 of the 24 elections between 1928 and 2024 — the last two times the state's voting electorate supported the losing presidential candidate was in 1992 and 2020.

The cumulative evidence from presidential margins, voter registration trends, county-level shifts, and legislative control suggests that Florida has transitioned from a competitive battleground state to one that currently leans reliably Republican at the presidential level.

Compared to the last presidential election, in which the race was close with a 51%-48% split, 2024 represented a substantial change, with President Donald Trump winning with 56% of the vote, and above the 5% competitive threshold. This electoral signal suggests that Florida is perhaps a reliably red state. Figure 1.6 shows how prior presidential elections were much closer, within 1 to 3 points of each other. [19] Indeed, if we average the Republican and the Democratic two party vote share from 2000-2020, we find that the average is margin-thin, 49.6% for Republican candidates and 48.8% for Democratic candidates.

Figure 1.6. Presidential Outcomes 2000 – 2024



Another indicator that Florida is reliably Republican is the frequency of single-party control of the governorship and both chambers of the Florida State Legislature, known as a "trifecta." During the 2024-2025 cycle in the US, there are 38 trifectas: 23 Republican trifectas, 15 Democratic trifectas, and 12 divided governments. Not only was Florida one of the 23 Republican trifectas in 2024, but it has been so every year since 1998.[20]

The GOP has also had control of both US Senate seats for the last 6 years, since 2018, after long-time Democratic Senator Bill Nelson lost his re-election bid to former GOP Governor Rick Scott. In 2020, before the latest round of redistricting, Republicans controlled 52% of the US

[18] For example, see https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/10/1/florida-is-the-uss-true-presidential-election-bellwether

[19] See https://www.270towin.com/states/florida#google_vignette

[20] Technically in 2010, Governor Charlie Crist changed his party affiliation from Republican to Independent. This is a trivial point and was in the final year of his term in office.

House seats. This was consistent with their statewide margin of 52.5%. Population changes gave Florida one more seat for a total of 28 after the 2020 US Census. After redistricting, the state increased the percentage of GOP House seats to 71%. Unlike in 2020, however, this represents a huge gap from statewide US House margins, which showed 57.9% of voters in these contests voting Republican and 42.1% voting Democratic.

Additionally, all of Florida's down-ballot statewide offices are currently held by Republicans. These include the Attorney General, Chief Financial Officer, and Agriculture Commissioner, though the Agricultural Commissioner was a Democrat from 2019-2022.

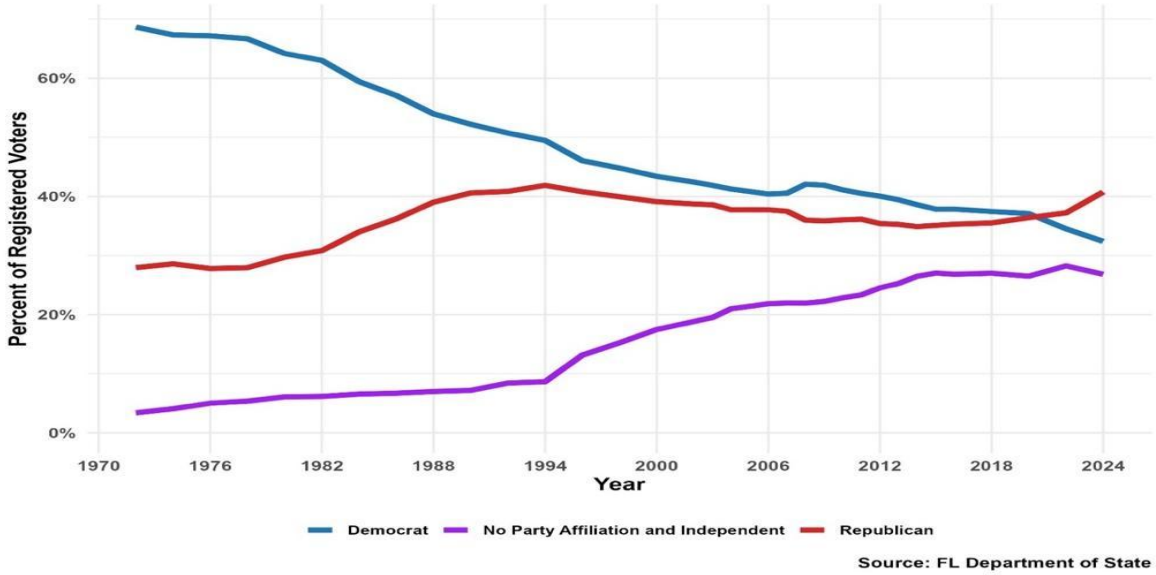
Voter registration data also helps us to understand how state partisanship is changing. Florida electoral systems incentivize voters to identify with one of the two major parties by restricting who can vote for specific candidates in primaries.[21] Figure 1.7 presents the partisan composition of Florida's registered voters going back 50 years. Of note, the proportion of registered voters who are Democrats has declined every year since 1972 — a time when Democrats represented almost 7 in 10 registered voters (69%) and Florida was seen as a one party, Democratic state. By 2024, Democrats made up only 32% of registered Floridians.

From the 1970s to the mid 1990s Democratic shrinkage led to major increases in Republican identification. However, the share of Republican identifiers shrunk a few points after 1994 only to return to about its apex in 2024.

Since 1994, however, the biggest change has been a substantial rise in the number of Floridians who choose not to identify with either of the two major political parties. Over the 30 years from 1994 to 2024, the share of these registered voters has jumped from almost one-in-10 (9%) to nearly three-in-10 (29%). The changing nature of state partisanship, particularly the sharp rise in NPAs, suggests that Florida is not necessarily a deep red state, especially for statewide offices. By nature of their large numbers and looser partisan affiliations, NPAs have the capacity to act as swing voters in critical elections, potentially changing party outcomes in the future.

[21] In a closed primary state, registered voters are permitted to cast a ballot in the primary only for a candidate who shares their party identification. As such, NPA and other minority parties are ineligible to vote in Democratic and Republican primary contests, but they can participate in nonpartisan contests at the local level, which varies across cities and counties in the state.

Figure 1.7. FL Party Affiliation 1972 – 2024



1.5. Changes in Voting Patterns during the Trump Elections

President Trump's candidacy is novel for multiple reasons, including the fact that he ran three times with distinctly different outcomes. In 2016 he won the electoral college but lost the popular vote, in 2020 he ran as the incumbent and lost, in 2024 he won nationally in a very tight contest with 49.8% of the vote compared to 48.3% for Harris. In the 20th century only 2 major party candidates ran three or more times for the presidency.[22] That includes Franklin Delano Roosevelt who ran and won four times (1932-1944), and Democrat William Jennings Bryan who ran three times (1896, 1900, and1908) and lost to Republicans. In the 18th century Henry Clay ran as the candidate for the Whig Party (1824,1832, 1844) and lost all three times. Trump has also presided over a great deal of change in Florida politics with substantial increases in support in the Southern part of the state and among the Hispanic population.

Figure 1.8 compares the overall vote share between Florida and the nation for both the Democratic and Republican presidential candidates from the last three general elections.[23] The red lines represent Republican support, blue lines represent Democratic support, dashed lines represent national support while straight lines represent Florida support. It shows how the state has become increasingly Republican and less competitive over time.

Every year in Florida, Republican support is higher than Democratic support, and it has increased each year. Nationally, there was greater support for Democratic tickets than in Florida. In Florida, Trump's support was at about 49% in 2016, increasing to 51% in 2020, and to 56% in 2024.

[22] Several third-party candidates have run three or more times.

[23] See https://www.270towin.com/historical-presidential-elections/

Figure 1.8. Trump Vote Share in Florida versus the Nation

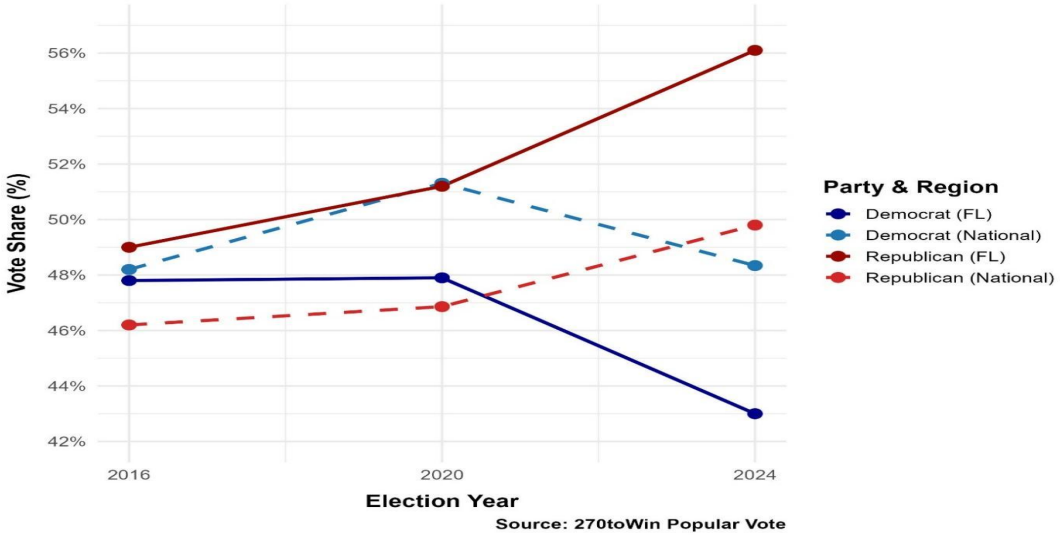
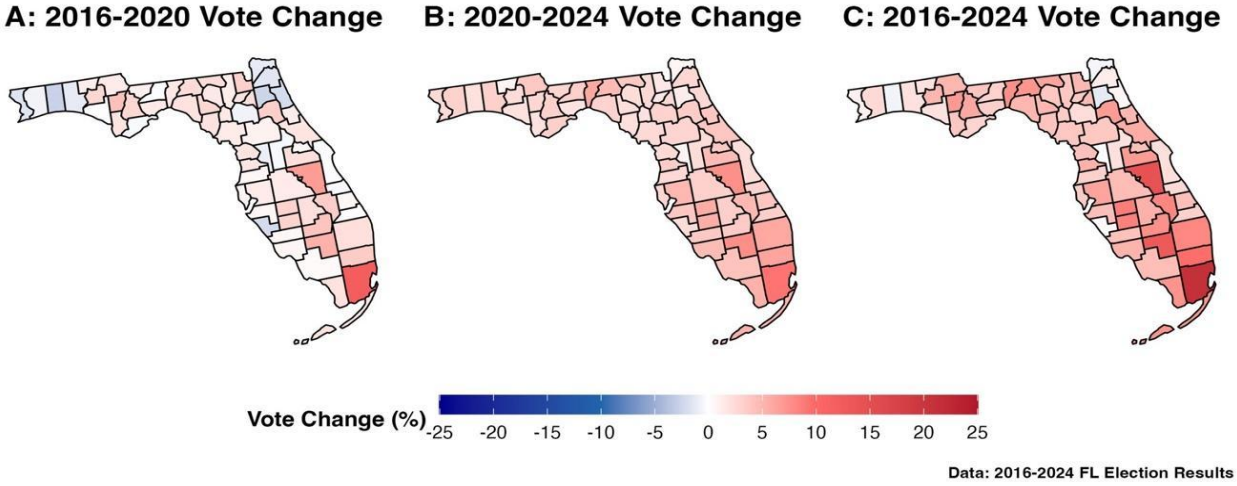


Figure 1.9 breaks down the change in Trump support at the county level from 2016-2024. Focusing first on the change from 2016-2020, in Figure 1.9A, we see that Trump gained support in much of Florida, notably in parts of Central Florida and South Florida. Eighteen counties got more blue, 39 counties got more red, and 10 counties did not substantively change their vote totals. Miami-Dade County saw the largest increase of votes for Donald Trump from 2016 to 2020. There are several blue counties in Northwest Florida indicating that there was a loss of support for Trump since 2016. Okaloosa County, in the panhandle of Florida, saw the greatest shift towards Joe Biden, with several other counties in Northwest and Northeast Florida also trending more blue.

In Figure 1.9B, which shows the change between 2020 and 2024, the map mostly gets more red, with 0 counties turning more blue and only 3 counties remaining about the same. Most counties fall within the 1–7% range of increased support for President Trump, suggesting a consistent expansion of Trump's electoral base across the state. Unlike the 2016–2020 period, Figure 1.9B, shows no blue areas on this map, indicating that the Democratic candidate Joe Biden did not gain any support relative to Hillary Clinton, the previous Democratic candidate. Miami-Dade County continued its strong trend of showing vote change in favor of Republicans, followed by Osceola County.

Finally, Figure 1.9C shows the overall shift to support for Trump and the Republican Party over the entire eight year period (2016-2024). Most counties in the state are a shade of red, which signals that there was an increase in the support for Donald Trump. According to the map, only four counties had a shift in support away from Donald Trump and toward the Democratic candidate, Kamala Harris. Clay County had the biggest shift away from Donald Trump, followed by Okaloosa, Nassau, and then Sumter County. These four counties are located mostly in North Florida, with Sumter being closer to Central Florida. On the opposite end, Miami-Dade County had the largest shift in support for Donald Trump, with the largest county increase at 22%. Notably, Osceola County changed by 14% and Hendry by 13%.

Figure 1.9. FL Vote Change from 2016 – 2024



Landslide Counties

Figure 1.10 helps to further illustrate the shift, showing which Florida counties were considered landslide victories. To determine whether a county saw a landslide victory for the presidential candidate, the winning candidate must have earned a margin of 20 percentage points or more. The map highlights the deepening partisan divide across the state.

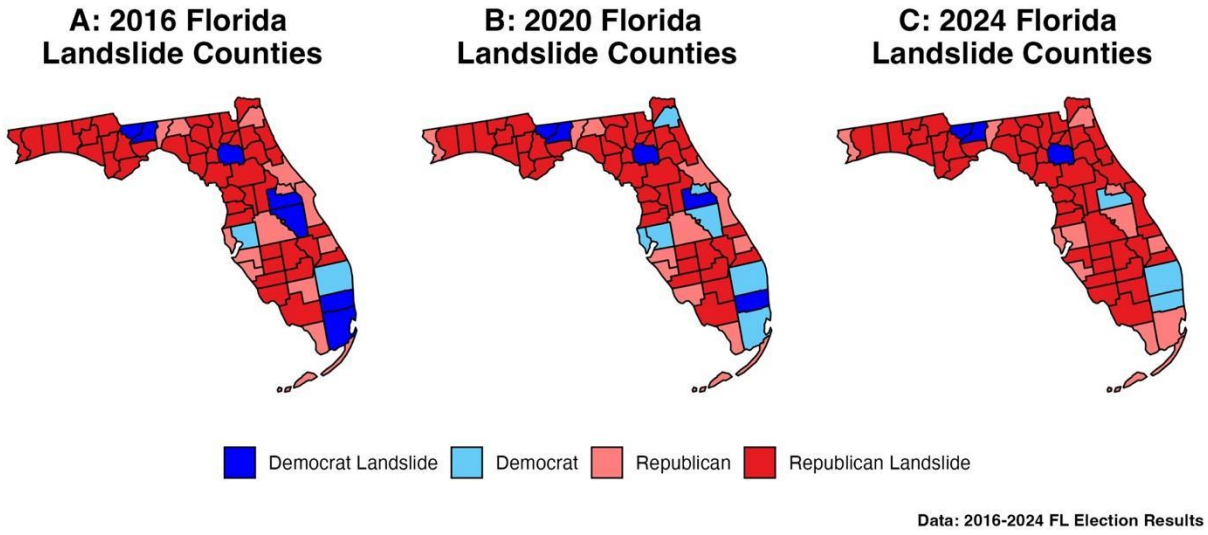
In 2016, indicated by Figure 1.10A, a vast majority (67%) of counties are shaded in red, which indicates Republican landslide wins, particularly throughout the Panhandle, North Florida, and much of Central and Southwest Florida. Whereas only 19% of Florida's counties (13) had a Republican victory but were not landslides. These areas reflect entrenched conservative support and point to the GOP's continued strength in rural and exurban regions. In contrast, the counties that are shaded in blue or light blue represent Democratic landslides or victories respectively. Only 10% of the counties (7) were Democrat landslide counties, with 2 counties being Democrat victory counties. These victories are concentrated along the Atlantic coast and in key urban centers, such as Miami-Dade, Orange, and Alachua counties.

Figure 1.10B reaffirms the shift that Florida is becoming a stronger Republican and more reliable red state. While the Republican Party continues to dominate the state, this map reveals that their dominance grew stronger in 2020, with 65% of Florida counties defined as landslides, followed by 16% of the counties having a Republican victory. Two counties, Miami-Dade County and Osceola County, which showed a landslide victory for Democrats in 2016 weakened into a non-landslide Democratic victory in 2020. Pinellas County was a non-landslide Democratic County in 2016 but flipped to a Republican non-landslide county in 2020. Lastly, Seminole and Duval County flipped from a non-landslide Republican victory to a non-landslide Democrat victory.

Lastly, Figure 1.10C shows the landslide victories for the most recent general election. The Republican Party and Donald Trump dominated the Florida landscape, with six counties flipping from a Democrat to a Republican County. These six counties are: Duval County, Seminole County, Osceola County, Pinellas County, Hillsborough County, and Miami-Dade County. 74%

of the counties mark a strong Republican landslide victory, with another 16% being Republican victory counties, 5% marking Democrat landslides victories, and lastly 5% being Democrat victories. There were also two counties that shifted from a Democrat landslide to just a Democrat victory, Broward County and Orange County. Six counties in Florida turned into Republican landslide victories: Madison County, Volusia County, Brevard County, Polk County, Manatee County, and then Lee County.

Figure 1.10. FL Landslide Counties from the 2016 to 2024 General Elections



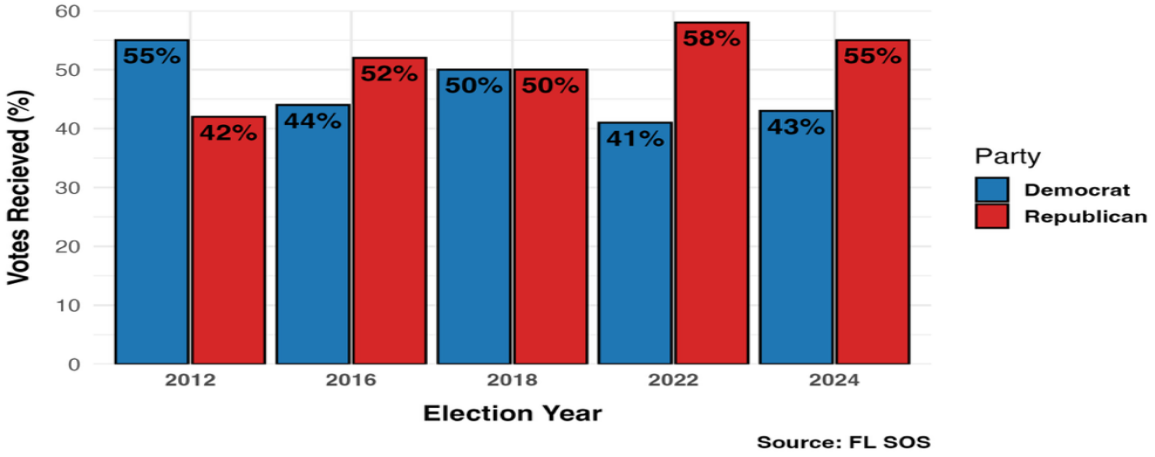
Taken together, the evidence from voter registration trends, county-level shifts, federal representation, and presidential margins indicates that Florida's political landscape has undergone substantial Republican realignment since 2016.

1.6. Federal Contests in Florida

The US Senate Contest

Like the gubernatorial contest, outcomes in the US Senate election also represented a substantial change in competitiveness (see Figure 1.11), with incumbent Senator Rick Scott's vote totals suggesting he might have a safe seat given his 12-point lead, 55% to 43%, against Democratic challenger Debbie Mucarsel-Powell in 2024. Scott was also on the ballot in 2018, when he beat Democratic incumbent Bill Nelson by an extremely thin margin, 50.1% to 49.9%. That victory marked a party shift for Florida and away from a split party Senate delegation to a one-party Senate delegation.

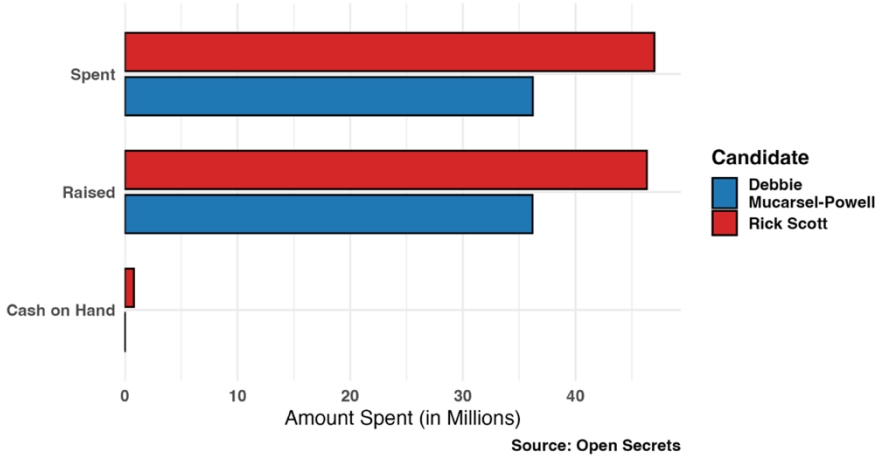
Figure 1.11. FL Electoral Outcomes for US Senate 2012 - 2024



Campaign Finance: Senate Contest

In 2024 Democratic challenger Debbie Mucarsel-Powell raised and spent about $36 million, while incumbent Republican Senator Scott raised and spent substantially more at about $47 million, as shown in Figure 1.12.

Figure 1.12. Money Raised, Spent, and Remaining by US Senate Candidates after 2024 Election



Florida US House Contests

As a result of reapportionment following the 2020 Census, Florida gained a seat in the US House of Representatives, bringing its total to 28 Congressional seats. Consequently, the state redrew its Congressional maps.

Table 1.1 shows the number of Congressional seats, and their party split over the last four federal elections. In 2018, there was close to parity between the two parties, with 14 Republican and 13 Democratic members of Congress. In 2020, and before redistricting, Florida Democrats lost and

Florida Republicans gained two seats, making the totals 16 Republican seats and 11 Democratic seats. After the redistricting in 2022 occurred, there were 9 seats held by Democrats, 16 held by Republicans, and 2 empty seats. Following the 2022 election, Democrats held 8 seats and Republicans held 20 seats. With the 2024 election, there was 1 open seat, 9 contested Democratic primaries and 21 contested Republican primaries.

Table 1.1. Florida Party Congressional District Control, 2018-2024

	GOP	GOP %	DEM	DEM%	Change
2024	20	71%	8	29%	0
2022	20	71%	8	29%	R+3+1 (new)
2020	16	59%	11	41%	R+2
2018	14	52%	13	48%	

This distribution of seats remained after the 2024 election, with 20 Republican seats (71%) and 8 Democratic seats (29%). This represents a dramatic change in party representation in Florida over a relatively short period of time. According to FiveThirtyEight, the new Florida Congressional District (CD) map created 18 Republican-leaning districts, 8 Democratic-leaning districts, and 2 competitive districts, which closely tracks with what we show here.[24] Figure 1.13 showcases the differences between the vote shares and state legislative seat shares. Figure 1.13A displays the percentages of the total number of votes cast for the respective candidate in the contest. It is clear from the total number of votes cast that the Republicans have a slight majority over the Democrats. When viewing Figure 1.13B, the total percent of seat share for the Florida House of Representatives and Florida Senate is shown. While the vote share between the two parties shows a slight majority, Republicans hold a clear majority in both of Florida's legislative chambers.

Figure 1.13. Florida Vote Share and Legislative Seat Share by Party

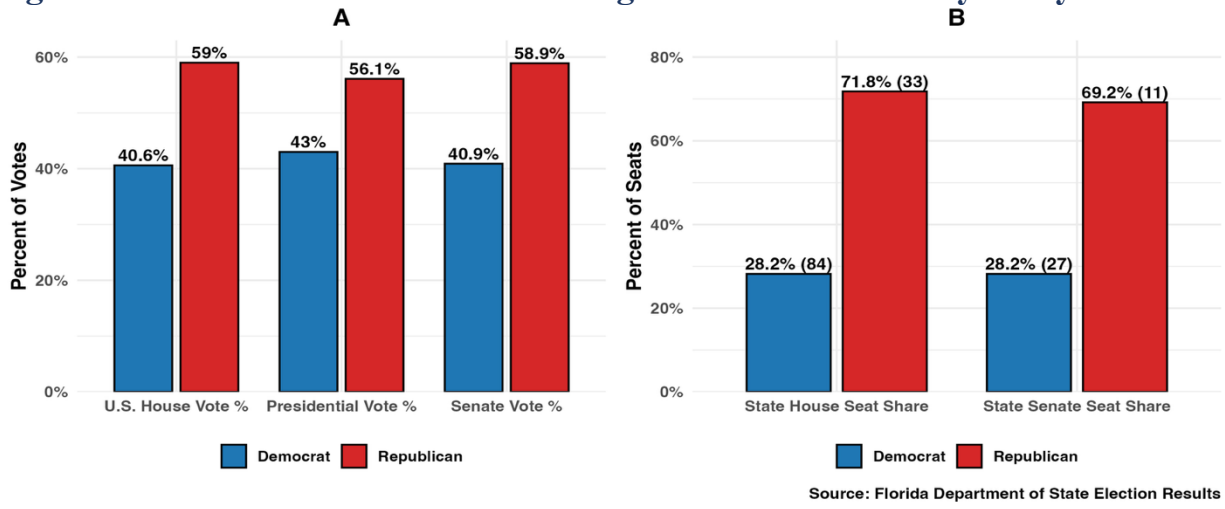


Figure 1.14 presents the 2024 federal election results, comparing the partisan vote share across each Congressional district, the U.S. Senate race, and then the presidential race. The horizontal

[24] See https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/redistricting-2022-maps/florida/ for a discussion.

bars show the percentage of votes that are received by Republican and Democratic candidates, which helps to offer a clear visual of the partisan competition that occurs across the districts.

One important note is in CD 20, where the election was cancelled. Incumbent Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick was the only candidate to make the ballot, causing the cancellation of the election.[25] Florida is one of 4 states that allow unopposed federal, state, and local candidates for certain offices to be declared the winner without appearing on the ballot.[26]

Several Congressional districts across the state are dominated by Republicans, where they are winning a super majority, defined as 60% or more, of the votes in comparison to Democratic candidates. Notably, several Republican-held districts show little to no Democratic opposition, such as CD6 and CD18, where no Democratic candidate qualified, leaving only a Republican and a third-party challenger. Only a handful of districts, CD9, CD10, CD14, CD22, CD24, and CD25 each showed competitive or Democratic-leaning outcomes, as seen by blue-majority bars. There is a large disparity in the number of competitive versus lopsided races. Indeed, only 5 Congressional Districts were within a 5-point margin and potentially competitive, while the majority of districts were safe incumbent seats.

Figure 1.14. Vote Margin Federal and Congressional Districts Contests

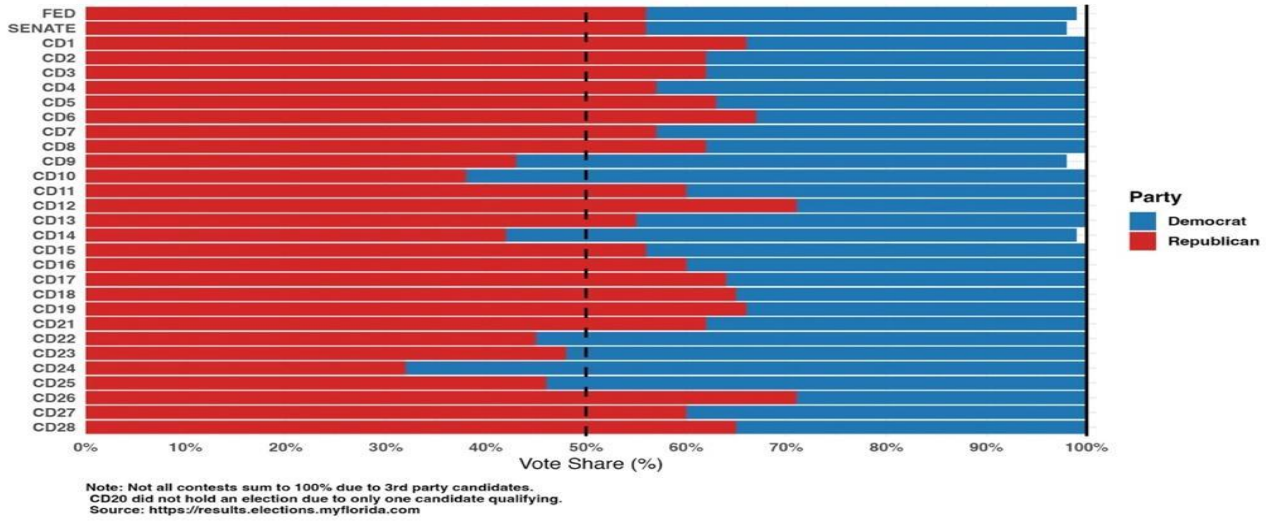


Figure 1.15 presents the results for the U.S. House election in Florida, broken down by Congressional district. Figure 1.15A showcases which districts were Republican or Democrat. Democratic candidates won in CD9, CD10, CD14, CD20, CD22, CD23, CD24, and CD25.Of the 28 congressional seats that Florida holds, only 8 are held by Democrats, leaving the remaining 20 held by Republicans. Figure 1.15B shows the vote margins for each district, which ranged from -36% to 42%. CD12 and CD26 had the largest margin of victory for Republicans, at 42% representing very safe Republican seats. Followed by C24 and C10 having the highest margin of victory for Democrats, at -36.40 and -24.80 respectively, also representing very safe seats.

[25] https://ballotpedia.org/Florida%27s_20th_Congressional_District_election,_2024

[26] https://wlr.law.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1263/2017/11/Lindell-Final-1.pdf

Figure 1.15. U.S. House Vote Margin by Congressional Districts (Republican – Democratic Support)

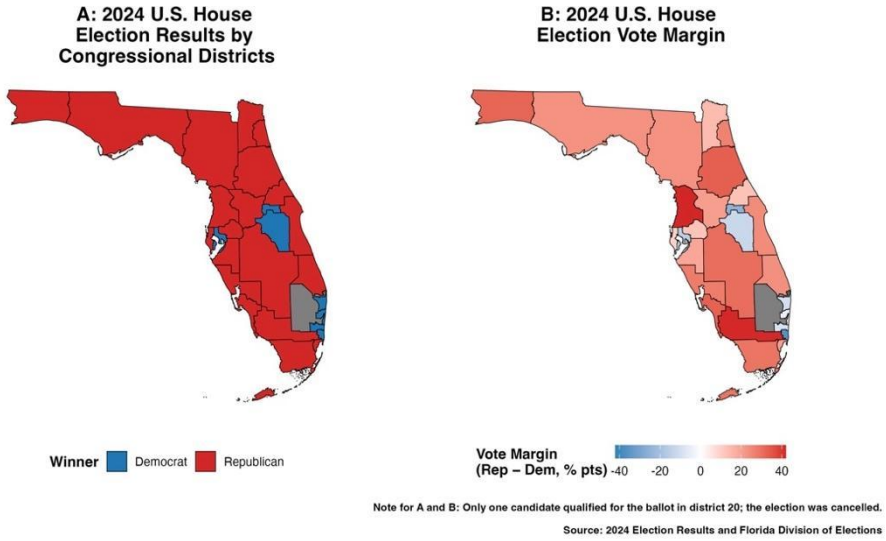
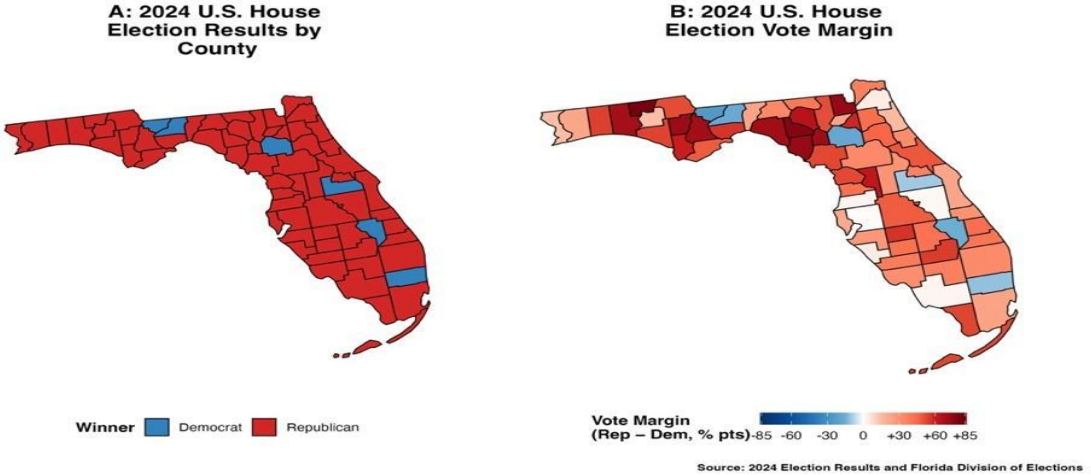


Figure 1.16 shows the results for the U.S. House election in Florida by County. Figure 1.16A shows which party candidate won the election. Whereas Figure 1.16B shows the vote margin between Republican and Democratic candidates across the counties. Looking at the election results by county can help see how Congressional Seat changes impacted representation.

During redistricting, counties were combined within larger Congressional districts where their Democratic vote totals were outweighed by Republican vote totals elsewhere in the district. Leon County and Gadsden County both had a majority of their votes favor the Democratic Congressional candidate but were all placed in a contiguous district (FL-CD2). Previously, parts of Leon County and all of Gadsden County were a part of CD5, which placed them in a Democratic Congressional District, and which offered them greater federal representation. Figure 1.16B, showing the darker red counties near Leon, Gadsden, and Alachua County.

Figure 1.16. U.S. House Vote Margin by County



1.7. Voting Electorate 2024

Turnout by Party Registration Over Time

Table 1.2 presents a comparative analysis of voter turnout by party registration in the 2020 and 2024 general elections, known as a difference-in-differences.[27] The table includes both the percentage share and raw vote totals for Democrats, Republicans, and No Political Affiliation/other minor party members, which allows us to compute the change in turnout between the 2024 and 2020 election. Both data sets tell the same story.

- First overall turnout declined in 2024 by about 142,000 voters or about 1.3%.
- Over the past four years the percentage of Democrats in the voting electorate has declined and the percent of turnout for Republicans and the unaffiliated has increased. This shows that all the decline in turnout has come at the expense of Democratic voters.
- In 2020, Democrats made up about 37% of the voting electorate, but only 32% in the 2024 election — a rather large 5% decline.
- Republicans made up about 39% of the voting electorate in 2020, but almost 43% of it in 2024 — about a 4% increase.
- NPAs and other minor party members increased their share of the voting electorate 1.6% from 24% to 25.6%.

Table 1.2. Differences in Population and Percent of Voting Electorate between 2024 and 2020 by Party Registration

	DEM	NPA	GOP	Total
Population				
2024	3,482,739	2,815,299	4,702,730	11,000,768
2020	4,115,783	2,670,168	4,356,927	11,142,878
Difference	-633,044	145,131	345,803	-142,110
Percent				
2024	31.7	25.6	42.7	100
2020	36.9	24.0	39.1	100
Difference	-5.2	1.6	3.6	

1.8. Voting Mode

Florida statute allows voters to cast their ballot in one of three different ways, known as the voting mode. This includes voting in person on Election Day at the voter's assigned precinct, voting early at any of the early voting locations in a voter's county, and voting by mail. Mirroring trends across the country, Florida voters have increasingly cast their ballots prior to Election Day, either in-person or by mail.

[27] These numbers were taken from the recap voter registration file provided by the Florida Department of State.

Florida voters who request a mail ballot can change their minds and cast a regular ballot in-person. To do so, they turn their unvoted mail ballot in at the polls and instead cast a regular ballot. If the voter does not bring the mail ballot, the Supervisor of Elections office will attempt to confirm that the ballot has not already been submitted. If confirmed, the voter is allowed to vote a regular ballot. If the office finds that the absentee ballot has already been submitted, or cannot confirm either way, the voter will have to vote provisionally.

To be counted, a Florida vote-by-mail (VBM) voter's ballot must arrive by Election Day. A ballot may be dropped off at a ballot drop box when staff are present, returned by USPS, or dropped off at the election center. Florida mail voters whose ballots are rejected for signature mismatches can "cure" the problem up to two days after the election. The Supervisor of Elections is required to notify voters if their signature is missing or does not match the one on record. To rectify the discrepancy, voters are then able to complete a "Vote-by-Mail Ballot Cure" affidavit that includes a copy of their identification. This document is required to be returned by 5 pm on the second day after an election.[28]

As we entered the first general election since the COVID-19 pandemic began, questions remained about whether voters would revert to the mode they used pre-pandemic, or whether increasing VBM trends would continue. Figure 1.17 presents how Florida voters cast their ballot across the last 5 federal general elections from 2016 to 2024. In 2016 and 2024, early voting was the most popular vote mode with approximately 41% of voters in 2016 and almost 49% in 2024. In 2018, each method of voting was used about the same by all Florida voters. Due to the pandemic, election day voting saw huge declines with only 16% of voters choosing this mode, whereas voting by mail spiked to approximately 44%, leaving almost 40% of voters choosing the early in-person option. In 2024, VBM continued to decline from its 2020 highs to approximately one-quarter (27%) of voters.[29] Indeed, since 2020, voting by mail's popularity has decreased precipitously with a smaller percentage of voters voting by mail in 2024 than in either 2016 or 2018. In-person Election Day voting was the least favored option, but much higher than in 2020, with about one-quarter (24%) choosing this mode.

[28] https://dos.myflorida.com/elections/for-voters/voting/vote-by-mail/

[29] See Atkeson, Lonna Rae, Wendy Hansen, Maggie Toulouse Oliver, Cherie Maestas, and Eric Weimer, 2022, "Should I vote-by-mail or in-person? The impact of COVID-19 risk factors and partisanship on vote mode decisions in the 2020 presidential election, *PLoS ONE* 17(9): Scheller, Daniel. 2021. "Pandemic Primary: The Interactive Effects of COVID-19 Prevalence and Age on Voter Turnout." *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 31(1): 180-190. Also, see Atkeson, Lonna Rae, Wendy L. Hansen, Cherie D. Maestas, Maggie Toulouse Oliver, Eric Weimer. 2023. "The Pandemic and Vote Mode Choice in the 2020 Election," *Hindsight is 2020: Lessons Learned from the 2020 US Presidential Election,* edited by Joseph Coll and Joseph Anthony, Palgrave Macmillan.

Figure 1.17. Percent of Votes Cast by Vote Method from 2016-2024

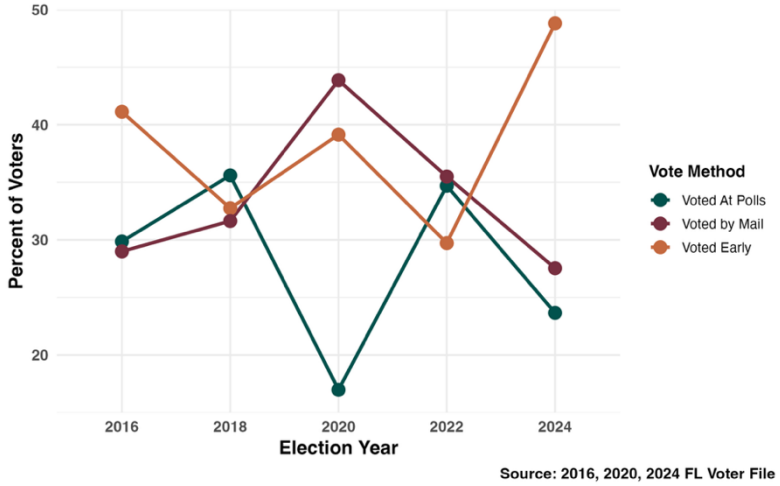


Figure 1.18 compares rates of vote by mail, early in-person voting, and in-person Election Day voting across party registration for the four most recent elections in Florida (2018–2024).

In 2018, party registration differences across vote modes were relatively small, clustering together in each mode. In 2020, all partisan groups increased their VBM, but Democratic voters increased the most, Republicans the least, and independents were in between. Since 2020, VBM has declined for all partisans. In 2024, it was the least popular mode for Republicans (32%). The most popular mode for Republicans was early voting (54%), followed by Election Day (34%). For Democrats the most popular mode was also early voting (43%), followed by VBM (37%) and Election Day voting (20%). For Independents, early voting is also the most (46%), followed by Election Day (29%), and VBM (25%).

Figure 1.18. Florida Vote Method by Party Affiliation from 2018-2024

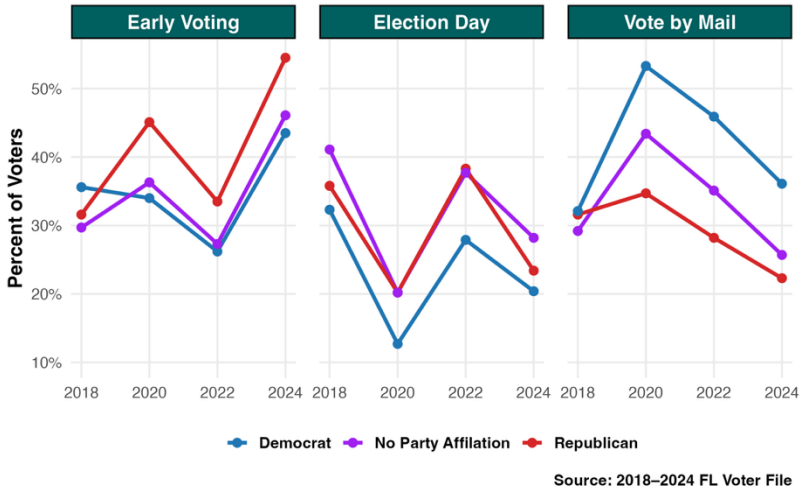


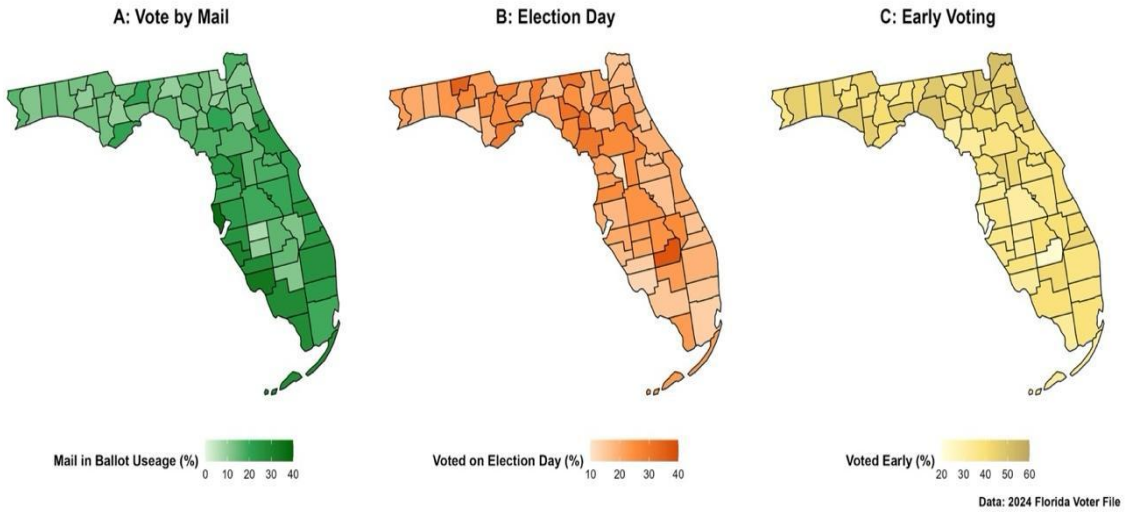
Figure 1.19 looks at vote mode by county. First, 1.19A shows the percentage of votes that were cast via mail in ballots across Florida counties. In Florida, the average percentage of VBM

ballots was 18%. Pinellas County (37%) had the highest proportion of VBM ballots, followed by Lee County. On the other end, Hardee County had the lowest percentage of VBM ballots cast at 7%, followed by Baker County at 9%.

1.19B shows the percentages of election day voting broken down by county. Across the state, the average percentage of votes cast on election day is 22%. Where Glades County had the highest proportion of voters who cast their vote on election day, at 37.1%, followed by Holmes County at 35%. Sumter County had the lowest percent of votes cast on election day, at 11%, followed by Lee County at 13%.

Lastly, seen in 1.19C, Nassau County had the highest number of votes cast through early voting at 51%, followed by St. Johns County had 51%. Glades County saw the lowest percent of votes cast early, at 23% followed by Pinellas County at 24%.

Figure 1.19. 2024 Vote Mode by County



Turnout and Registration by Demographics

We now compare the composition of voters by party, race/ethnicity, age category and gender. This helps to provide useful insights into who many of the players are among the electorate, and how changes in the relative size of groups can help explain election outcomes.

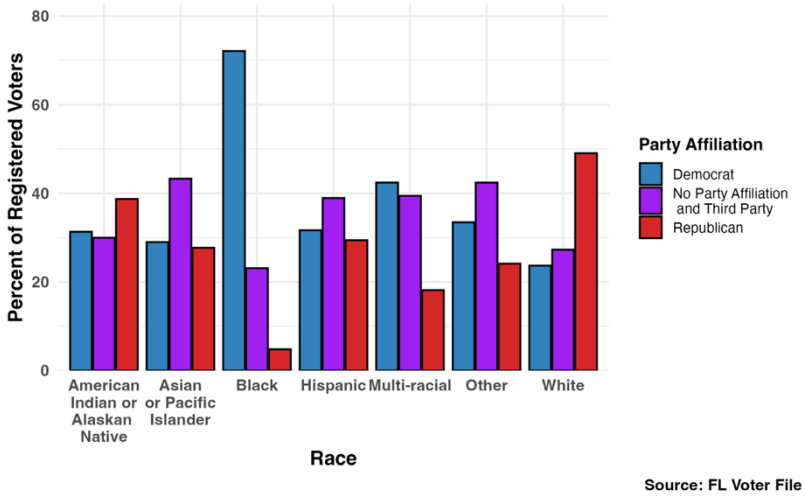
Turnout & Registration by Demographics: Race

- White voters made up 66% of the voting electorate in Florida, followed by Hispanic voters at 17%, Black voters at 12%, and voters who were Asian, Native American, multiracial, or another race at 5%.
- These percentages were largely the same in 2020.

Figure 1.20 presents the percentages of voters affiliated with the different political parties broken down by race.

- For white voters, 49% are registered Republicans, 24% are Democrats, and then 27% are NPA.
- 72% of blacks are registered as Democrats, 5% Republicans, and followed by 23% NPAs.
- A plurality of Hispanics, 39%, choose not to affiliate with a major political party, while 32% are registered as Democrats and 29% registered as Republicans.

Figure 1.20. Registered Voters by Race and Party, 2024

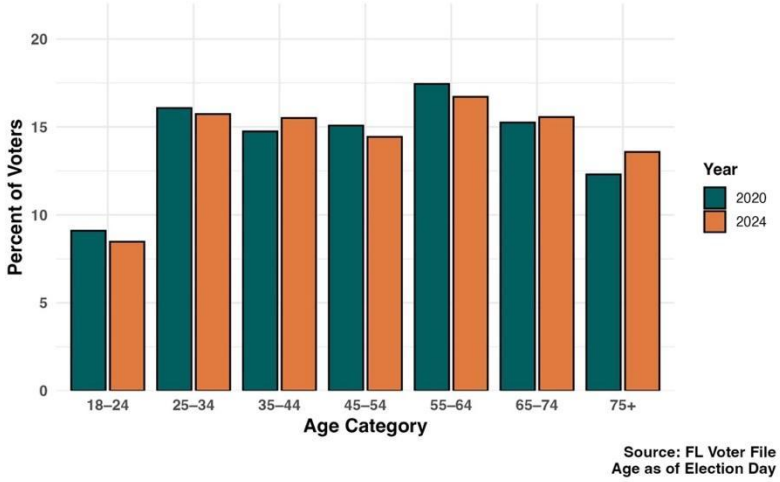


Turnout and Registration by Demographics: Age

Figure 1.21 shows the composition of voters in the 2020 and 2024 general elections by age category.

- While there is a lot of similarity between the years, older voters were a greater part of the voting electorate in 2024 than in 2020. The average age for a voter in 2020 was 51, while in 2024 it was 52.
- Voters 55-64 make up the largest part of the voting electorate in 2024, accounting for approximately 16.7% of all votes cast.

Figure 1.21. Composition of Voters by Age Category in 2020 & 2024



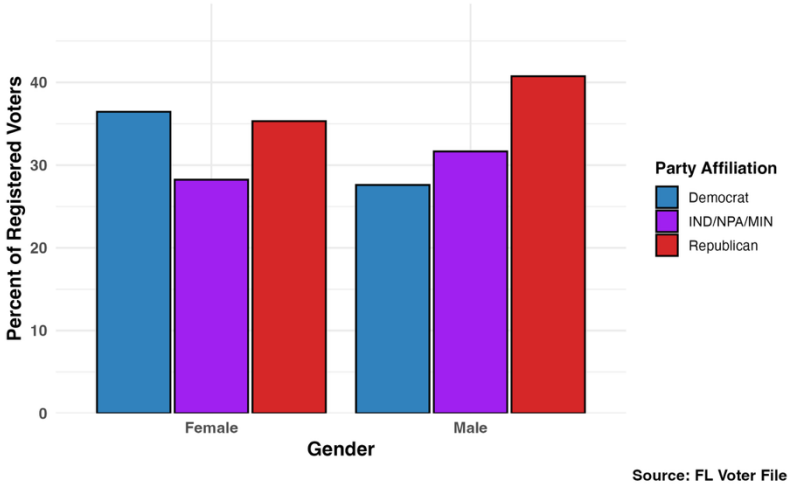
Turnout by Demographics: Gender

Gender also plays a significant role in understanding how changes in the voting electorate may have influenced election outcomes. Women make up a larger share of the voting electorate than men, accounting for 54.6% of voters compared to 45.4% for men. This distribution is the same turnout pattern we observed in 2020.

Figure 1.22 presents the distribution of party affiliation among registered voters. This figure reveals distinct patterns among Floridians.

- First, women tend to be split almost evenly between the Democratic (36%) and Republican Party (35%), and 29% NPA or other party.
- While 41% of men are registered with the Republican Party, they are roughly evenly split between NPA and other (31%) and Democrats (28%).

Figure 1.22. Registered Voters by Gender and Party, 2024



Chapter 2: Voter Experiences with the Voting Process and Voter Confidence

A democratic system alone is not enough to sustain democracy. It requires voters to participate and feel confident in their electoral process. Assessing voter experience and their attitudes towards the election process is vital to understanding the effectiveness and efficiency of election administration procedures. This assessment includes experience with ballot delivery, interactions with poll workers, wait times, parking availability, experience in the polling place and experience with the ballot.[30]

Data discussed in this chapter comes from the Florida Election Study Survey discussed in the preface. The Florida Election Study Survey consisted of 2,728 Florida voters interviewed online after the election. A representative sample of Florida voters were invited to participate in our survey through an email or by a postcard delivered to their home.

When discussing survey results using party identification, we follow the common practice in political science and use a branching question that probes respondents who select "Independent" to identify with a party. These so-called "leaners" are partisans of their selected party, and only those who choose not to lean toward either party are labeled as true independents, which represents about 11% of the sample. It is important to note the difference in definition here because in Chapter 1, we used party registration as reported in the voter registration file. There, party is a descriptive category that defines whether or not a voter receives a party primary ballot or is only allowed to vote in nonpartisan election contests.

Background on Florida's Election Ecosystem

In 2008, Florida switched from the touch-screen ballot system with no verifiable paper trail to a paper ballot system. The previous system had received criticism for failing to provide a paper trail if a recount is needed. After the transition to the paper system, all votes would come with a paper record.[31] Federal law requires that paper ballots be kept for 22 months following Election Day, after which they are destroyed.

Florida requires an identification process for all voters. Mail voters are authenticated through signature matching, while in-person voters are authenticated using a valid photo ID that includes a signature.

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[30] See Lonna Rae Atkeson and Kyle L. Saunders, 2007, "Voter Confidence: A Local Matter?" *PS: Political Science & Politics* 40(October):655-660; Thad E. Hall, J. Quin Monson, and Kelly D. Patterson, 2007, "Poll Workers and the Vitality of Democracy: An Early Assessment," *PS: Political Science and Society*, 647-654; Thad E. Hall, J. Quin Monson, and Kelly D. Patterson, 2009, "The Human Dimension of Elections: How Poll Workers Shape Public Confidence in Elections," *Political Research Quarterly* 62(2): 507-522; Sances, Michael and Stewart III, Charles, Partisanship and Voter Confidence, 2000-2010 (April 5, 2012). Midwest Political Science Association, 2012, MIT Political Science Department Research Paper No. 2012-12, Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=2035513.

[31] Terry Aguayo and Christine Jordan Sexton, 2007, "Florida Acts to Eliminate Touch Screen Voting System," *New York Times*, available at: https://www.nytimes.com/2007/02/02/us/02voting.html, accessed June 24, 2025.

Florida statutes provide that early voting in Florida must begin at least 10 days before Election Day and cannot end prior to the third day before Election Day. Therefore, there is some discretion for early voting dates and consequently early voting varies by county. However, because the general election season overlaps with hurricane season, executive orders in response to hurricanes sometimes alter the early voting timeline, as well as early and election day voting locations. In 2024, due to Hurricane Helene and Hurricane Milton, the early and possibly election day voting process varied in Pinellas, Indian River, St. Lucie, Taylor, and 19 other counties.[32] Governor Desantis' Executive Order 24-234 and 24-212 expanded flexibility of voting locations, allowed ballots to be mailed to a different address than was listed in the voter file, and allowed voting at any supervisor of elections office. For example, Taylor and Pinellas Counties extended their early voting period through election day to afford more opportunities for voter participation.

This chapter includes the following sections:

- Section 2.1 examines voters' experiences with voting by mail.
- Section 2.2 discusses voters' experiences with voting in-person, either early or on Election Day
- Section 2.3 discusses voters' experiences with photo ID requirements
- Section 2.4 examines voter confidence at various levels, including confidence in their own ballot and ballots at the county, state, and federal levels.

2.1. VBM

In 2024, VBM voters made up over one-quarter (27%) of voters. Over 9 in 10 (92%) of these voters had used this method previously, with only 8% stating this was their first time voting by mail. While this number is similar to the 6% who stated the same in 2022, it is much lower than the 33% of 2020 vote-by-mail voters who were new to the process. Of course, in 2020 a pandemic caused chaos, and mail voting was the most popular way to vote across the country, including Florida.

We asked voters to indicate why they chose VBM. Approximately 6 in 10 voters (60%) stated that convenience was their primary reason for voting by mail. Work or school conflicts was the second most popular reason, cited by 11% of voters. Other reasons chosen by voters were being out of town (9%), physical disability (8%), military or overseas voters (3%), and other scheduling conflicts (6%). An additional 3% were election officials or poll workers and could not vote in a physical location.

These voters were also asked whether they completed their ballot alone or with someone else. Approximately 87% of vote-by-mail respondents indicated that they completed their ballot alone, while 13% indicated they completed their ballot with someone else.

Respondents who indicated that they completed their ballot with someone else were asked to indicate all those who completed their ballots with them. A majority of absentee voters (75%)

[32] Florida. Office of the Governor. *Executive Order 24-234: Emergency Management – Tropical Storm Milton – Emergency Voting Measures*. Tallahassee, FL: November 6, 2024. https://files.floridados.gov/media/708473/eo-24-234.pdf.

stated that they completed their ballot with a spouse or partner. Another 16% stated it was with another family member, 12% with a child or children, 10% with their parents, and 4% with a friend.

Returning VBM Ballots

In Florida, voters may return their VBM ballots either by mailing them via the USPS or dropping them off at their county Supervisor of Elections Office, polling location, or designated ballot drop boxes. Mail voters tend to return their ballot early to ensure it will be counted. We found that about 6% of VBM voters returned their ballot sometime in September, while almost 2 in 5 (39%) returned them the first two weeks of October and more than one-third (36%) returned them the last two weeks of October. Almost 1 in 5 (18%) returned their ballot a few days before the election and about .5% returned the ballot on Election Day. Any voter who has requested a VBM ballot can track the status of his or her ballot online through the county Supervisor of Elections' website.

In our survey, we asked respondents "How did you return your ballot?" The results are shown in Table 2.1. We find that 30% of voters had their ballot picked up from their mailbox by the USPS. Another 27% of voters dropped off their ballot at a post office box at a USPS location. Just 4% of voters used a ballot drop box and only 1% dropped it off on Election Day at a vote center or the election supervisor's office. We also found that 2% of voters sent their ballots from outside of the country, which is permitted under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizen Absentee Voting Act.

Table 2.1. How did you return your absentee ballot?

It was picked up by the postal worker who delivers mail to my home.	30%
At a post office box at a U.S. Postal Service location	27%
I dropped it off at an early voting center	14%
I dropped it off at the Supervisor of Elections Office during early voting	11%
At an official post office box not at a U.S. Postal Service location	11%
A drop box only used for ballots	4%
Faxed or mailed from overseas	2%
I dropped it off on Election Day at a vote center or the election supervisor's office	1%

We asked voters who chose to drop off their ballot themselves why they chose to do so. A total of 48% of voters stated they wanted to be certain that it arrived, and 29% stated that it was very convenient to do so. Another 16% stated that they did not trust the USPS to deliver it on time, which is an increase from the 9% who stated the same in 2022, but was a decrease from 2020 when 46% indicated they did not trust the USPS to deliver it on time. Trust in the postal survey appears to fluctuate over time, and with different elections.

We also asked voters who returned their ballot if they returned other people's ballots. These are separate questions because someone could return their own ballot and also return someone else's ballot. Voters in Florida are allowed by statute to return an immediate family member's ballot and may return up to two additional ballots not belonging to an immediate family member, such

a friend.[33] These responses are shown in Tables 2.2 and 2.3. Approximately 9 in 10 voters (89%) returned their own ballot, while almost one in ten (9%) had an immediate family member return it. About 1% of Florida voters had their ballots returned by a friend and only about 1% indicated that a member of a political party or interest group did.

Table 2.2. Who returned your ballot?

I did	89%
A member of my immediate family did	9%
A friend of mine did	1%
A political party or interest group member did	1%

Voters who indicated that they returned someone else's ballot were then asked whose ballot they returned. Results are shown in Table 2.3. Approximately 70% of these respondents reported returning their spouse's ballot, almost 1 in 5 returned a parent (9%) or child's (12%) ballot and a mere 1% returned a friend's ballot.

Table 2.3. Whose ballot(s) did you return?

Spouse	70%
Parent (s)	9%
Child or children	12%
Other family member	9%
Friend	1%

Voters were also asked how many ballots in total they returned, including their own. Approximately 84% of voters indicated they returned 2 ballots and an additional 14% returned 3 ballots. Only 1% of voters stated they returned 4 ballots.

We asked voters to rate the job performance of the staff at the place which they dropped off their ballot. Nearly all voters (98%) rated their performance as either "Excellent" (82%) or "Good" (16%).

Following Instructions and Ballot Tracking

To assess how respondents felt about voting by mail, we first asked: "Overall, how difficult was it to follow all the instructions necessary to cast your ballot and return it to be counted?" We found that nearly all voters (98%) saw the process as either very easy (77%) or somewhat easy (21%).

In Florida, voters can track their mail ballot either through an online voter portal or through email/text message. A large majority (70%) tracked their ballot, which was a 14% increase from 2022. Importantly, approximately almost half (46%) of respondents who did not track their ballot fully trusted that their ballot would be received and counted by the election and were not

[33] See Fla. Stat. §101.65, 104.0616.

concerned enough to track their ballot. Nevertheless, we still find that nearly one-third (see Table 2.4) of voters who did not track their ballot did not do so because they are unaware of its availability. Importantly, approximately almost half (46%) of respondents who did not track their ballot fully trusted that their ballot would be received and counted by the election and were not concerned enough to track their ballot. Given its popularity among voters, **we recommend Florida Election Supervisors educate the public about the opportunity to track their ballot, which helps to alert voters if a problem arises with their ballot**.

Table 2.4. Which of the following describes the reason you chose NOT to track your ballot?

I fully trusted my ballot would be received and counted by the election	46%
I was not aware that I could track my ballot	34%
I was worried my information would be used for non-election purposes	9%
I did not feel comfortable tracking my ballot information online or through text messages	4%
I dropped off the ballot myself	4%
I did not care if my ballot was rejected or did not arrive on time	2%
I was confused about the tracking process	1%

We asked VBM voters if they were contacted by their local election official because there was a problem with their ballot and it could not be counted. Approximately 98% of voters stated no and only 2% stated yes.

2.2. In-Person (Early and Election Day) Voter Experience

In-person voters could cast their ballot early at vote centers in their county between October 26 and November 2. In Pinellas and Taylor counties, the effects from Hurricane Helene and Milton prompted the counties to extend early voting through Election Day. In addition to these two counties, an additional 22 were allowed to utilize additional polling locations. Early voting is the most popular way to vote in Florida with nearly half (48%) of all voters choosing to vote with this mode.

Wait Times

The American Voting Experience: Report and Recommendations of the Presidential Commission on Election Administration[34] addresses the issues of wait times, recommending that voters wait no longer than 30 minutes to cast their ballot. Table 2.5 shows that over nine in ten Florida voters (91%) were able to vote within this 30-minute time frame.

Early voting resulted in slightly longer lines on average, about 13 minutes, and about 5 minutes more than election day voting. Not quite one-in-five voters (18%) waited essentially no time at all and another two in five voters (42%) waited on average only about 5 minutes.

[34] https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/GOVPUB-PR-PURL-gpo45379

Table 2.5. About how many minutes did you wait in the check-in line before you were able to vote?

Response	Early voting	Election Day	Overall
0 minutes	14%	25%	18%
1-5 minutes	40%	46%	42%
6-15 minutes	21%	17%	20%
16-30 minutes	13%	7%	11%
31-60 minutes	11%	2%	8%
Over 60 minutes	1%	3%	1%
Average	13 minutes	8 minutes	11 minutes

Polling Location Experience

While the integrity of the ballots and the machines are the most important considerations for election administrators, the voting experience is shaped by many different factors. Election administrators work with their staff, state officials, and poll workers to ensure that the process runs smoothly for voters.

- Nearly all in-person voters (98%) either agreed (16%) or strongly agreed (82%) that their voting location was easy to find.
- Only 4% of voters either agreed (3%) or strongly agreed (1%) that they had to go out of their way to reach their voting location.
- Overall, 84% of voters felt that it was easy to find a place to park.
- Overall, nearly all voters (98%) agreed that their poll workers were helpful, with just over 8 in 10 (83%) strongly agreeing and 15% agreeing.
- Nearly all in-person voters (98%) either agreed (29%) or strongly agreed (69%) that their ballot privacy was protected at their voting location.

2.3. Voter Identification for In-Person Voters

In Florida, in-person voting requires a valid and current photo ID with a signature, whether voting early or on Election Day. These do not have to be the same document. For example, these can include a Florida driver's license, Florida state ID (or passport), which contain both, or debit card or credit card with a signature, and another photo ID — such as a student ID or retirement center ID. If a voter forgets their ID, they can still vote using a provisional ballot, if they are eligible to do so and vote at the correct precinct. If the signature on the provisional ballot matches the voter registration record, the vote will be counted. Currently, Florida voters have 12 options to choose from for voter ID:

- Florida driver’s license
- Florida identification card issued by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles
- United States passport
- Debit or credit card

- Military identification
- Student identification
- Retirement center identification
- Neighborhood association identification
- Public assistance identification
- Veteran health identification card issued by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs
- License to carry a concealed weapon or firearm.
- Employee identification card issued by any branch, department, agency, or entity of the federal government, the state, a county, or a municipality

We asked voters, "What type of voter ID did you show when you went to the polls?" Virtually all voters showed some sort of required ID to vote. Table 2.6 shows the type of ID that voters used for authentication. Nearly all voters (94%) used a driver's license, while 1% used a passport and another 4% had to use two forms of ID.

Table 2.6. What type of voter ID did you show when you went to the polls?

Driver's license	94%
Passport	1%
I showed some other form of identification	1%
I didn't show any photo ID	0%
I showed 2 forms of ID. One ID had my signature on it, the other had my photo	4%

2.4. Attitudes Toward Voter Identification

In 2001, the Help American Vote Act established the first federal voter identification requirement, which requires first-time voters who did not verify their identity at the time of their registration to show proof of identification the first time they go to the polls. Since then, over 36 states have adopted voter ID policies, with 23 of them requiring a valid photo ID while another 13 accept non-photo IDs such as a bank statement or utility bill that includes a name and an address.[35] Fourteen states require no document to vote. In Florida, voters must show an ID with their signature and a valid photo.

We asked respondents, "Do you support or oppose requiring all people to show a photo ID when they vote?" We found that over four in five voters (87%) support photo voter ID requirements, with 7% opposing and 6% unsure. Partisanship is influential for support for voter ID laws, as seen in Table 2.7. Nearly all Republicans (99%) support voter ID policies, along with nearly all independents (93%). While about two-thirds of Democrats support voter ID policies, about one in five oppose them and another roughly one in six (16%) are unsure.

[35] See the National Conference of State Legislators for a good overview of voter ID laws, available at: https://www.ncsl.org/elections-and-campaigns/voter-id.

Table 2.7. Do you support or oppose requiring all people to show government-issue photo ID when they vote? (By party identification)

Response	Republican	Independents	Democrats	Total
Support	99%	93%	65%	86%
Oppose	0%	3%	19%	6%
Don't know	1%	4%	16%	8%

We looked at the relationship between support for voter ID and the respondent's race and ethnicity. We predicted that African American voters or other minority voters may oppose voter ID policies. But, the results, shown in Table 2.8 suggest this is not the case for black or minority voters in Florida. Regardless of race or ethnicity, voters support voter ID laws at roughly the same rate.

Table 2.8. Do you support or oppose requiring all people to show government-issue photo ID when they vote? (By Race and Ethnicity)

Response	White	Hispanic	Black	Other
Support	87%	87%	83%	87%
Oppose	7%	5%	10%	6%
Don't Know	6%	8%	6%	8%

We asked voters the follow-up question: "Florida's in-person voter ID requires voters to show a photo ID and a signature. Do you think this requirement is: too strict, just right, or not strict enough?" Overall, 84% of voters felt the requirements were just right, 7% felt that they were not strict enough, and 9% felt that they were too strict.

The 7% of voters who believed that the current requirements were not strict enough were asked a follow up question. They were asked the type of information they would require to verify the eligibility of the voter. Table 2.9 shows the percent of voters who indicated that they would require each type of additional information.

Table 2.9. What additional information would you require to verify the eligibility of the voter?

Signature match	14%
Driver's license number	39%
Social Security number	30%
Witness signature	14%
Fingerprint	3%

Next, we asked voters about their perception of the signature authentication requirement: "Florida's vote-by-mail law requires voters to sign their ballot envelope and poll workers' match the signature to those on file to verify their identity. Do you think this requirement is too strict, just right, or not strict enough?" A large majority (72%) felt that the requirements were just right, while 20% felt that they were not strict enough and 8% said that they were too strict.

We again asked those respondents who felt the requirements were not strict enough what additional information would they require to verify the eligibility of the vote-by-mail voter. Table 2.10 shows that a third of voters stated that they would require either a copy of a photo ID or a driver's license number. We also had 3% of respondents state outright that they are entirely opposed to VBM voting and they believed that there is no way to truly verify the eligibility of the voter with this mode.

Table 2.10. What additional information would you require to verify the eligibility of the vote-by-mail voter? Mark all that apply.

Include a copy of a photo ID	32%
Driver's license number	31%
Social Security number	19%
Witness signature	15%
I am entirely opposed to VBM	3%

2.5. Voter Confidence

In order for a democracy to function effectively, its voters must be confident in the electoral process even when their preferred candidate loses. Voter confidence represents a fundamental belief in the fairness of the electoral process and ultimately, the legitimacy of the government. Even if citizens are unhappy with the choices their leaders make, they should feel confident that the process that placed those individuals into power was fair and honest and that future elections can result in a change of leadership.[36] In 2020, voter confidence declined substantially especially at the state and national levels, so it is important to see how it changed in this presidential election year.

We asked voters four questions about their confidence in the electoral process. In each case responses options included "very confident," "somewhat confident," "not too confident," and "not at all confident."

- First, we asked, "How confident are you that YOUR vote in the General Election was counted as you intended?" The personal vote is the most crucial level of voter confidence because it represents how voters feel about their personal voting experience and its accuracy.
- The second level is confidence in the county's election system. A county is the primary election administrative unit in the state. It is responsible for all matters related to election administration, including poll worker training, logistics, accuracy testing of the tabulating machines, the counting of ballots, county canvass, etc. It is at this level that voters come closest with the electoral process and the administrators overseeing it. Within each county, an elected Supervisor of Elections oversees the implementation of state law.
- The third level is confidence in the process at the state level. Each state has a consistent set of laws that are used for all voters, even if they are administered at various levels of

[36] Atkeson, Lonna Rae, R. Michael Alvarez, and Thad E. Hall. "Voter Confidence: How to Measure It and How It Differs from Government Support." *Election Law Journal: Rules, Politics, and Policy* 14, no. 3 (June 18, 2015).

quality across each county. In Florida, the state's election system is overseen by an appointed Secretary of State. In 2024, Secretary Cord Byrd oversaw the general election.

- The fourth level is the confidence that all ballots were counted correctly nationwide. At this level, voters have relatively little knowledge of the election processes of other states.

We use three different methods to look at the confidence averages across levels of administration. First, we look across all voters to gain an understanding of how confident Florida voters are in their election. Then, we focus on vote mode because different ways of voting result in very different experiences. Finally, we focus on voting because we know there is historically a winner and loser effect on voter confidence. Voters who supported the winning candidate show higher levels of confidence and voters who supported the losing candidate have lower levels of confidence.[37] In this 2024 election, Trump voters are the "winners" because their party candidate won the Presidential election.

The variables are coded on a 4-point scale, from 1 to 4, so that a higher average indicates greater confidence. Tables 2.11 and 2.12, show the results. Overall, the results show a trend of decreasing confidence as the election administrative unit increases. For their personal vote, 96% of voters stated they were either "very confident" (73%) or "somewhat confident" (23%) that their vote was counted as intended. For the votes in their county, 94% of voters selected the top two options. At the state and national level, this amount was 90% and only 73% of voters respectively. Whereas 3 in 4 (73%) voters were "very confident" that their ballot was counted as intended, just 3 in 10 (30%) of voters said the same for the national level.

Table 2.11. Voter confidence that their ballot was counted as voters intended at each level

Confidence	Your Vote	Votes in your County	Votes in your State	Votes Nationwide
Very confident (4)	73%	64%	55%	30%
Somewhat confident (3)	23%	30%	35%	43%
Not too confident (2)	2%	5%	8%	19%
Not at all confident (1)	2%	1%	2%	8%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Both Tables 2.11 and Table 2.12 show that voters demonstrate highest confidence at the personal level, and lowest confidence at the national level. The average confidence in a voter's ballot being counted correctly is 3.67, while it is 3.56 at the county level and 3.44 at the state level. At the national level, the mean falls to 2.94, fully seven tenths of a point lower on our 4-point scale.

[37] See Atkeson and Saunders, 2007; R. Michael Alvarez, Thad E. Hall, and Morgan Llewellyn (2008), "Are Americans Confident Their Ballots are counted?" *The Journal of Politics* 70, 3: 754–66 and Atkeson, Lonna Rae, (2014) "Voter Confidence Ten Years after Bush V. Gore," in *Ten Years after Bush V. Gore*, edited by R. Michael Alvarez and Bernard Grofman, (Cambridge University Press), Charles Bullock and M.V. Hood III, (2005) "Punchcards, Jim Crow and Al Gore: Explaining Voter Trust in the Electoral System in Georgia , *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 5: 283-94; Betsy Sinclair, Steven S. Smith, and Patrick D. Tucker, (2018) "It's Largely a Rigged System": Voter Confidence and the Winner Effect in 2016," 2018, *Political Research Quarterly* 71(4):854-68.

Comparatively speaking, voters have very low evaluations of other states' election administration.

Table 2.12. Average confidence scores

Averages	Your Vote	Votes in your County	Votes in your State	Votes Nationwide
Overall Average	3.67	3.56	3.44	2.94
Early voters	3.68	3.55	3.46	2.95
Vote-by-Mail voters	3.66	3.58	3.41	3.01
Election day voters	3.67	3.55	3.41	2.85
Harris	3.56	3.51	3.25	3.05
Trump	3.79	3.62	3.60	2.83
Other	3.58	3.51	3.37	3.14

Voters of each voting method remained nearly as confident that their ballot was counted as intended, hovering just around the average of 3.67. Across all vote modes, we find a similar downward trend of confidence as we move further along the election administration level, but we find very little variation between modes in personal, county or state level confidence suggesting that mode, once an indicator of election confidence, is no longer the case. National voter confidence was fairly similar for early and vote by mail voters while election day voters national trust was significantly lower. Election day voters demonstrated the largest decrease of 0.82 point between their confidence in their personal ballot and the votes nationwide.

When voters were divided by self-reported presidential vote choice, there started to be greater variation in the average confidence scores. When asked about their personal vote, the votes in the county, and the votes in the state, Trump voters were the most confident among all levels. Republicans exhibited the highest confidence that their vote would be counted as intended, with the average being 3.79. At the national level, voters who cast a vote for neither of the major party candidates demonstrated the highest confidence. Their mean confidence score was 3.14, whereas Trump supporters had a mean confidence score of 2.85 and Harris voters had a mean of 3.05.

Finally, we looked at the correlation between voter demographics and voter confidence. In line with the previous two Florida Election Studies, gender, race/ethnicity, age, and education had small and insignificant correlations with voter confidence.

- Approximately 90% of voters ages 18-29 were either “somewhat” or “very” confident, as were 95% of voters ages 30 to 44. For voters ages 45 to 64, 97% of them were “somewhat” or “very” confident. Last, 97% of voters ages 65 or older were “somewhat” or “very” confident that their ballot was properly counted.
- For voters with a bachelor’s degree or higher, 95% of them felt somewhat or very confident compared to 96% of non-college-educated voters.
- Voter confidence was similar among different racial/ethnic groups: 97% of white voters reported feeling somewhat or very confident, compared to 96% of black and 93% of Hispanic voters.
- Men and women had near identical levels of confidence, with 96% of both men and women feeling somewhat or very confident.

Chapter 3: Beliefs About Ballot Privacy, Voter Intimidation, Election Fraud, and Attitudes Toward Election Reform

This chapter focuses on voters' attitudes about ballot confidentiality, election fraud, election anomalies, and election law reforms.

- Section 3.1 examines ballot privacy and voter's feelings towards the secrecy of their ballot
- Section 3.2 examines voters' beliefs about election fraud and other anomalies.
- Section 3.3 examines voters' attitudes toward election reforms.

3.1. Ballot Privacy

The right to vote anonymously is a core value of the United States electoral system. Ensuring voters' privacy prevents them from coercion and intimidation, allowing them to choose the candidate of their choice. Although neither election administrators nor poll works can connect individual ballots to specific voters, there remains a great deal of uncertainty around these facts.

Under Florida Law and the guidelines established by the Secretary of State, ballot privacy during in-person voting is protected in several different ways. Poll workers are trained to avoid looking at the ballot once it is in the hands of the voter. Voters themselves insert their own ballots into the vote tabulator while poll workers stand next to the tabulator. This ensures that the poll worker cannot see a voter's vote choices. The ballots contain no identifying marks or codes that could be connected back to a specific voter after being inserted into the tabulator. Ballots also do not fall into the tabulator neatly and get stuck and twist and turn when they fall so ballots are not in the order in which citizens voted.

If a ballot error is detected, the poll worker is trained to cover up the ballot and look at the readout on the machine to communicate the error to the voter. If the voter has to spoil her ballot and get a new one, the voter must put the ballot in the spoiled ballot envelope and stamp it void. Additionally, voters are encouraged to keep their ballots in a privacy sleeve. This oversized folder is used by voters when moving from check-in to the voting station, and then the vote tabulator. Approximately 84% of voters reported that they used a privacy sleeve while moving through their voting location, with 16% stating they did not.

Overall, 99% of in-person voters either strongly agreed (69%) or agreed (29%) with the statement, "My ballot privacy was protected." Only 5% of voters reported that a poll worker looked at their voted ballot and 2% stated that someone in line at the polling place asked who they were voting for.

We asked a set of similar questions about the privacy of VBM voters. The results in Table 3.1 shows that 70% of VBM voters strongly agreed (46%) or somewhat agreed (24%) that their ballot was kept private at home. This is significantly lower than in-person voters by nearly 30 points. VBM voters expressed lower perceived privacy than in-person voters.

An overwhelming 92% of VBM voters, however either strongly agreed (57%) or somewhat agreed that their ballot privacy was maintained when their vote was counted.

Table 3.1. Please mark how much you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your mail ballots

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
I kept my ballot and my ballot choices private at home	46%	24%	13%	16%
My ballot privacy was maintained when my vote was counted	57%	35%	4%	3%

Anonymous Ballots

According to the law, voter candidate choices are secret unless a voter decides to disclose their vote. We asked voters how hard it would be for someone to find out who they voted for even if they did not disclose their vote. The results are in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2. According to the law, which candidate you vote for is supposed to be kept secret unless you tell someone. Even so, how easy or hard do you think it would be for politicians, union officials, friends, family, or the people you work for to find out who you voted for, even if you told no one?

Impossible, my vote is secret	16%
It would be very hard, but not impossible	34%
It would be somewhat hard	16%
It would be somewhat easy	16%
It would be very easy	10%
Don’t know	8%

The 26% of respondents who selected “very easy” (10%) or “somewhat easy” (16%) was about the same as what we saw in the 2022 Florida Election Study Report. Interestingly, party identification correlates a bit with beliefs in secrecy. About 3 out of 10 of true Independents and Republicans responded it would be somewhat or very easy, while only about two out of ten Democrats responded the same. Republicans were also most likely to say they don't know (11%) compared to Democrats (4%) or Independents (8%).

We then asked voters, “Do you think elected officials can access voting records and figure out who a voter has voted for?”

- Responses were mixed, with 30% of voters stating yes and 27% stating no. The remaining 43% either didn’t know or were not sure.
- Once again, we saw that Republicans were the most likely to indicate they didn’t know (52%), compared to Democrats (37%) or independents (28%).

- Forty percent of true independents believe that election officials can access voting records and figure out who a voted for, while Republicans and Democrats were roughly similar at 27% and 29%, respectively.

Those who stated yes were asked a follow-up question, "Do you think election officials can more easily identify who you voted for when you use a vote-by-mail ballot, an in-person ballot, or are they about the same?" The majority of respondents (64%) stated that both were equally likely to be identified and approximately a third (32%) stated that VBM is easier to identify. Only 3% of respondents believed that in-person voters are easier to identify.

3.2. Beliefs about Election Fraud and Other Anomalies

We asked voters, "Which of the following situations did you personally observe in the 2024 General Election?" These results are detailed in Table 3.3 and suggest that voters perceived almost no voter fraud or intimidation.

Table 3.3. Which of the following situations did you personally observe in the 2024 General Election?"

Someone bribes a voter or pays for votes	2%
Someone using a false identity to vote illegally	1%
Voter intimidation at the polling place	1%
Someone filling out an absentee ballot for someone else	4%
Someone stuffing a lot of ballots into an official drop box	1%
Someone being improperly denied the chance to vote	4%
Someone helping someone fill out their ballot in the vote center	1%
None	87%

The most frequently chosen activity was voter intimidation, which 4% of voters indicated they personally observed. Other notable answers were bribery (2%) and someone helping another voter fill out their ballot (5%). However, 84% of voters stated that they did not personally see any of these activities.

Orphan Ballots

Voters become concerned about election integrity when they experience something that indicates gaps in the system. One place where this happens is with vote-by-mail ballots because the process entails a break in ballot custody. While these ballots are still authenticated to ensure integrity, voters may become concerned when ballots arrive at their home for a voter who does not live there.

We asked, "Did you receive a ballot in the mail that didn't belong to you or anyone in your household?"

- Approximately 4% of voters indicated they received a VBM ballot that did not belong to them or anyone in their household.

Of the voters who incorrectly received a ballot in the mail, 50% of them stated that they were very confident that ballots at the county level would be counted as intended. This was a 14% decrease when compared to voters who did not receive a ballot that did not belong to them. Given the strong effect of receiving a ballot that does not belong to someone in your household, **we recommend the Secretary of State or county Election Supervisors track these ballots and ask voters to alert them when such a ballot arrives at their home**. This will help increase confidence because voters will have made election administrators aware of the error and election administrators can use this information to identify problems in their delivery system including possible incorrect addresses in the voter registration file.

Beliefs in the Frequency of Types of Election Fraud and Voter Access

Even if voters have not personally witnessed unusual election activities, some may still believe these types of activities occur. We asked voters the following question, "Below is a list of possible illegal election activities that may or may not take place in Florida. How often do you think each event occurs in your state?" Voters could respond all or most of the time, some of the time, not much, hardly ever, or never. The results are located in Table 3.4.

Between one in ten and almost two in ten of voters believe that these types of illegal votes or voters never happen suggesting that 80 to 90% of voters believe these illegal activities may happen at least sometimes.

Table 3.4. Below is a list of possible illegal election activities that may or may not take place in Florida. How often do you think each event occurs in Florida?

Activity	All or most of the time	Some of the time	Not much	Hardly ever	Never
A non-US citizen vote	5%	29%	17%	31%	18%
Ballots are tampered with to change votes	3%	17%	29%	35%	16%
Eligible voters get mistakenly removed from the voter registration file during purges/clean up	8%	40%	26%	22%	4%
People submit too many ballots in drop boxes on behalf of others	6%	26%	26%	30%	12%
Someone being improperly denied the chance to vote	3%	32%	26%	28%	11%
Someone pretends to be another person and votes for them	3%	28%	26%	32%	11%
Voting machines fail to count votes accurately	2%	25%	29%	34%	10%

- Approximately 49% of voters believe that a non-US citizen never (18%) or hardly ever (31%) votes. However, 34% believe a non-US citizen either votes all or most of the time (5%) or some of the time (29%).
- Only 51% of voters believe that ballots are never (16%) or hardly ever (35%) tampered with to change votes.
- The activity that had the highest proportion of voters (8%) indicating that they believed happens all the time is eligible voters being mistakenly removed from the voter file during clean up.
- Just under 1 in 3 voters (32%) believed that people submit too many ballots in drop boxes on behalf of others all or most of the time or some of the time.
- Only 33% of voters stated that they believed someone is improperly denied the chance to vote hardly ever or never.

3.3. Attitudes toward Election Reforms

Voting access and election security are both integral in ensuring a successful election system. However, there is an innate tension between both concepts. Increasing access to the ballots could potentially increase the risk of fraud, while increasing election security could decrease voter access.

To assess the attitudes between this tradeoff, we asked respondents, "Thinking about elections and election reforms, which is more important?" A majority of voters (60%) favored protection over voter access. This represents a slight 5% increase from 2020.

Table 3.5 breaks down the question by presidential vote choice as we expect to find polarized attitudes on this issue between partisans. Trump voters (87%) overwhelmingly believe that protecting the voting system against fraud was most important, while Harris voters (73%) overwhelmingly believe ensuring that voter access was more important. As for those who did not vote for either candidate, a majority of these voters believed integrity was more important.

Table 3.5. Thinking about elections and election reform, which is more important? By presidential vote choice.

	Trump	Harris	Other	Overall
Ensuring that everyone who is eligible has the right to vote	13%	73%	43%	40%
Protecting the voting system against fraud	87%	27%	57%	60%

When it came to categorizing respondents by race, there was similar variation in responses. Approximately 67% of black voters believed that voter access was most important, but this not surprising given the historical fight to vote for this group. The majority of white voters (65%) and Hispanic voters (63%) were more supportive of protecting the system against fraud.

We also categorized voters based on their self-reported education. Across all levels, a majority of voters preferred integrity over access. However, the preference ranges in strength. The

preference for integrity is about 65% for high school graduates and those with some college but only 55% for those with college degrees.

Accuracy of Voter Rolls

Earlier, we asked voters how likely they believed that eligible voters were mistakenly removed from voter rolls during purges and clean-ups. Although voters thought it was likely that this occurred, they still strongly support file maintenance. We asked voters, "Thinking about election administration, how important or not is it to ensure accurate voter registration rolls, even if some eligible voters are removed and required to re-register for participation in future elections?" Two in three voters (68%) stated that this was very important and an additional 20% stated this was somewhat important.

Same Day or Election Day Registration

A total of 23 states and Washington, D.C. allow for same-day registration, which allows a voter to register and vote on the same day during early voting.[38] Voters in 20 of these states are also offered that same opportunity on Election Day. In Florida, voters must register 29 days before the upcoming election to be eligible to vote.

We asked voters, "Do you support or oppose allowing citizens to register and vote on the same day?" We found that 54% of voters supported same day registration and 46% opposed the measure. Compared to 2022, this is an increase of 14% in support for this policy.

This issue was highly polarized by party affiliation. Approximately 84% of Democrats support same-day registration, while only 33% of Republicans support it. Independents show a preference for same-day registration, with 61% supporting it and 39% opposing.

Table 3.6. Do you support or oppose allowing citizens to register and vote on the same day?

	Support	Oppose
Democrat	84%	16%
Independent	61%	39%
Republican	33%	67%

VBM Reforms

All-mail or universal vote by mail elections are defined as elections in which all eligible registered voters are sent a ballot via USPS. In 2024 eight states and Washington, D.C. conducted their elections by mail.[39] We asked Florida voters, "Do you support or oppose moving

[38] National Conference of State Legislatures, "Same Day Voter Registration," www.ncsl.org, October 31, 2023, https://www.ncsl.org/elections-and-campaigns/same-day-voter-registration.
[39] National Conference of State Legislatures, "Table 18: States with All-Mail Elections," www.ncsl.org, October 11, 2024, https://www.ncsl.org/elections-and-campaigns/table-18-states-with-all-mail-elections.

all state and local elections in our state to permanent vote-by-mail elections for all voters? This would eliminate all in-person voting."

Voters overwhelmingly oppose this idea, with 65% being strongly opposed and an additional 17% being somewhat opposed. Only 18% of voters were somewhat (11%) or strongly supportive (7%) of the measure.

States can also establish their own rules regarding when a ballot must arrive at the county election office to be counted. Thirty-three states require VBM ballots to arrive at the election office either on or before Election Day.[40] Seventeen states and Washington, D.C. will accept a mailed ballot if it is received after Election Day but postmarked on or before Election Day. In Florida, voters are required to return their mail ballot either in-person or by mail by the end of Election Day at 7:00 PM when the in-person polls close.

We asked voters, "When should a mail ballot have to arrive at the local election office to be counted?"

- Approximately 43% of voters believed that ballots should be counted as long as they are postmarked by election day and arrive within a certain number of days after the election.
- A similar proportion (42%) of voters believed that ballots should have to arrive on or before Election Day to be counted.
- An additional 14% stated that ballots had to arrive before Election Day to be counted.
- Thus, a majority of voters (56%) supported an election or preelection day VBM delivery.

Table 3.7 shows a strong correlation with these preferences and partisanship. Democrats overwhelmingly support (73%) counting ballots so long as they are postmarked by Election Day and arrive within a certain number of days after the election. In comparison, only 21% of Republicans have the same preference. The majority of Republicans believed that only ballots arriving on or before Election Day should be counted.

Table 3.7. When should a mail ballot have to arrive at the local election office to be counted? By party registration

	Only ballots that arrive before Election Day should be counted	Only ballots that arrive on Election Day or before should be counted	Ballots postmarked by Election Day should be counted as long as they arrive within a certain number of days after the election
Democrats	2%	25%	73%
Independents	10%	1%	49%
Republicans	23%	56%	21%

Securing the Vote

[40] National Conference of State Legislatures, "Table 11: Receipt and Postmark Deadlines for Absentee/Mail Ballots," Ncsl.org, 2024, https://www.ncsl.org/elections-and-campaigns/table-11-receipt-and-postmark-deadlines-for-absentee-mail-ballots.

In the aftermath of the 2020 election, members of President Trump's campaign suggested that vote tabulators were not counting votes correctly. Earlier in Table 3.4, we showed that 27% of voters believed "voting machines fail to record votes correctly" either all or some of the time.

Given the rhetoric surrounding voting machines, we asked respondents, "How much do you trust vote-counting machines to count the votes accurately?" We find in Table 3.8 that voters overwhelmingly trust vote tabulators. Overall, a plurality of voters (43%) stated that they somewhat trusted vote-counting machines and an additional 41% stating they trusted them a great deal.

When we factor in presidential vote choice, we still see a consensus of trust in vote machines. However, the strength of that trust varies. Only 26% of those who voted for President Trump stated they trusted vote machines a great deal, compared to 61% of those who voted for Vice President Harris.

Table 3.8. How much do you trust vote-counting machines to count the votes accurately? By presidential vote choice

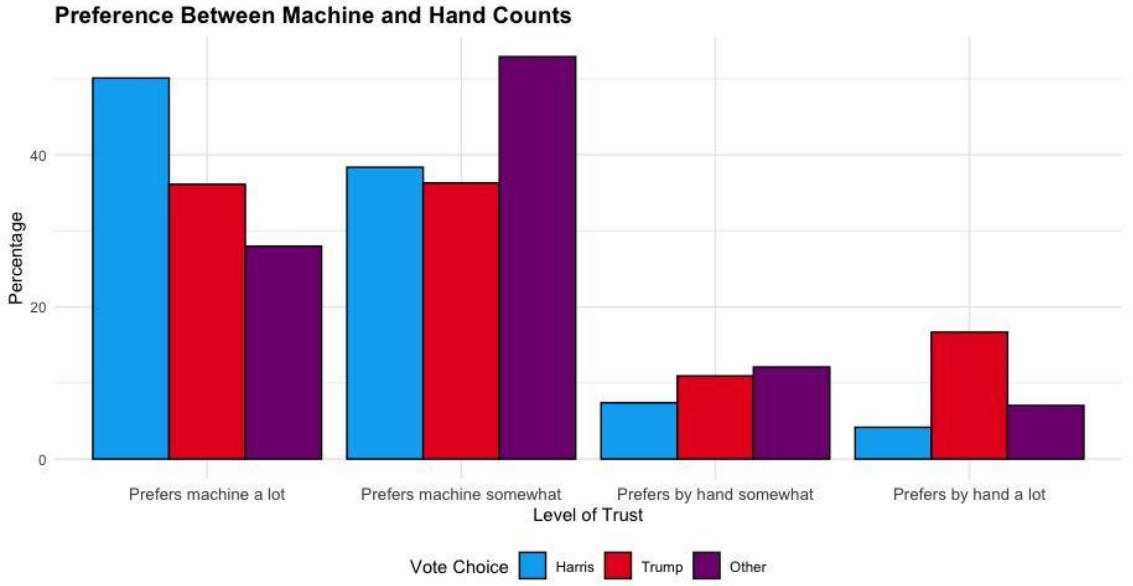
	Overall	Trump	Harris	Third Party
Trust a great deal	41%	26%	61%	31%
Trust somewhat	43%	50%	33%	53%
Distrust somewhat	10%	14%	5%	12%
Distrust a great deal	6%	10%	1%	4%

Therefore, we asked respondents, "Would you prefer ballots in your county to be counted by voting machines or by people by hand?"

- Approximately 42% of voters stated that they preferred machine counts to hand counts a lot, with an additional 38% stating that they preferred machine counts somewhat.
- Only 11% of voters stated that they preferred hand counts to machine counts a lot and an additional 9% stated that they preferred hand counts somewhat.

We looked at the same question but again divided respondents by their presidential vote choice. We still find a clear preference for machine counts for all partisan groups. Approximately 88% of Harris voters stated that they either preferred machine counts a lot (50%) or somewhat (39%). Among Trump voters, 36% of voters stated they preferred machine counts a lot and an additional 36% preferred machine count somewhat. Only 28% of Trump voters stated that they preferred hand counts somewhat (11%) or a lot (17%).

Figure 3.1. Would you prefer ballots in your county to be counted by voting machines or by people by hand?



Of course, most states, including Florida, have a check on the voting system in the form of a post-election audit to ensure that the vote count is accurate or demonstrates that the tabulators were counting correctly. Indeed, 45 states perform some sort of post-election audit.[41] Post-election audits help to ensure a fair and accurate election process, while also helping to minimize the potential for fraud.[42] Voters support post-election auditing very strongly as a measure to secure the vote. We asked, "How much do you agree or disagree that every state should have a post-election auditing process to ensure that votes were counted correctly?"

- We find that more than 2 in 3 voters (67%) strongly agree and another 1 in 4 (27%) somewhat agree.
- Only 6% indicate that they somewhat (5%) or strongly disagree (1%).

Despite the overwhelming support, only one-quarter (25%) of respondents were aware that every county in Florida has to complete a post-election audit. We found in our review of data on postelection audits that 64/67 counties completed a postelection audit correctly. But this data was not always available online and had to be requested and in some cases was incorrectly done. **We recommend greater transparency around postelection audits. We recommend counties join our postelection audit dashboard project (see https://www.voterdata.lci.fsu.edu/en).**

[41] NCSL, post-election Audits, available at: https://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/post-election-audits635926066.aspx#state%20reqs.

[42] See Huefner, Steven F., Daniel Tokaji, & Edward B. Foley. 2007. "From Registration to Recounts: The Election System of 5 Midwestern States," available at: https://cpb-us-w2.wpmucdn.com/u.osu.edu/dist/b/90788/files/2021/05/From-Registration-to-Recounts.pdf.

Appendix A. Florida Election Study Survey Methodology

The respondents in the 2024 Florida Election Study came from three samples: a postcard sample, an email sample, and a panelist sample from our 2022 Study. We collected the data from November 18, 2024 to February 27, 2025, with all but three responses collected before January 30, 2025. The total sample size for this study is 2,728.

For the postcard sample, we randomly selected 25,007 registered voters with valid USPS residential addresses in Florida. According to the probability distribution specified below, we sent each of them a postcard inviting them to participate in our study. The postcard sample consists of two components: a regular sample and an oversample. For the regular sample component, we selected 3,356 vote-by-mail (VBM) voters, 5,956 early in-person (Early) voters, and 5,593 potential in-person Election Day (ED) voters, uniform at random within each category.[43] We chose the proportions across vote mode categories based on the population vote mode distribution given county and party registration.[44] For the oversample component, selection into our sample was not uniform at random within each vote mode category, but rather inversely weighted by the expected response rate given age, gender, race/ethnicity, vote mode, and party registration.[45] With this calibration, 889 VBM voters, 2,921 Early voters, and 6,292 potential ED voters were in our oversample component. We included the oversample component to improve the representativeness of our overall postcard sample, as response rates vary widely across demographic groups. In total, of the 25,007 invited to participate, 482 started our survey, and 367 completed it. For this study, we restrict our attention to 340 validated voters from the postcard sample who either completed the survey, or dropped off after all the study-relevant questions.

For the email sample, we randomly selected 360,506 registered voters in Florida with valid email addresses, according to the probability distribution specified below, and sent up to two email invites to participate in our study. The email sample consists of two components: a regular sample component (151,842 invites) and an oversample component (208,664 invites).[46] For the regular sample component, we calibrated the probability of selection into our sample so that the number of expected voters, given age, gender, race/ethnicity, rurality, early voting, and party registration, matched the population proportions. For the oversample component, the selection into our sample was further inversely weighted by the expected response rate given age, gender, race/ethnicity, rurality, early voting, and party registration.[47] Once again, we included the

[43] Potential ED voters include all (active) registered voters who are not confirmed VBM or Early voters. Sampling uniform at random from all 2024 General Election voters in Florida was not feasible because confirmed ED voters were only known after our survey had concluded.

[44] To facilitate sampling without information on the turnout status of each potential ED voter, we obtained aggregate data on the number of VBM, Early, and ED voters by county and party registration. This data allowed us to calibrate the sampling of potential ED voters so that the expected numbers of actual ED voters in our sample given county and party registration match the population proportions.

[45] The expected response rate given individual characteristics is calculated based on the disposition data from a similar postcard survey.

[46] The sample also included a small pilot study in which 1,980 registered voters in Florida with valid email addresses were selected uniform at random, which resulted in a total of 18 complete responses.

[47] The expected response rate given individual characteristics is calculated based on the disposition data from a similar email survey.

oversample component to reduce the overrepresentation of demographic groups with higher response rates in our overall email sample. In total, of the 360,506 invited to participate, 1,715 started our survey, and 1,247 completed it. Again, we restrict our attention to 1,144 validated voters from the email sample who either completed the survey or dropped off after all the analyzed questions.

For the panelist sample, we sent up to two email invitations to all 2022 Study participants who were still registered to vote in Florida as of November 2024.[48] In total, of the 5,381 invited to participate, 1,427 started our survey, and 1,283 completed it. As above, we restrict our attention to 1,244 validated voters from the panelist sample who either completed the survey or dropped off after all the questions analyzed in this study.

[48] Among 5,959 participants in our 2022 study still registered to vote in Florida as of November 2024 with valid email addresses, 9 were included in the postcard sample and 569 were included in the email sample. The remaining 5,381 were include in the panelist sample.

Appendix B. Frequency Report

Q1. How did you vote in this fall's general election? (n=2728)

Absentee/Vote-by-mail (including dropping off a ballot that was mailed to you)	27%
Early in-person at a vote center	48%
Election Day in-person at a vote center or precinct	25%

Q2. How interested were you in this fall's general election? (n=2728)

Very interested	91%
Somewhat interested	7%
Not too interested	2%
Not at all interested	0%

Q3. How confident are you that **YOUR** vote in this year's General Election was counted as you intended? (n=2727).

Very confident	73%
Somewhat confident	23%
Not too confident	2%
Not at all confident	2%

Q4. Think about vote counting throughout your county and not just your own personal situation. How confident are you that votes in your county, in Florida, across the country were counted as voters intended in the 2024 general election?

	Very Confident	Somewhat confident	Not too confident	Not at all confident
County (n=2725)	64%	30%	5%	1%
The State of Florida (n=2724)	55%	36%	7%	2%
Nationwide (n=2724)	30%	43%	19%	8%

Q5. Thinking in political terms, would you say that you are: (n=2725)

Very liberal	10%
Somewhat liberal	13%
Moderate	24%
Somewhat conservative	27%
Very conservative	21%
Haven't thought much about it	4%
Don't know	1%

Q6. Do you consider yourself to be any of the following? (n=2728)

Libertarian	8%
Progressive	12%
Socialist Democrat	8%
Tea Party member	3%
Communist	1%
MAGA	24%
Anarchist	0%
Something else	16%
None of the above	40%

Mail Voting

Q7. Why did you request a vote-by-mail ballot? Please mark **all** that apply (n=1233)

I was going to be out of town for this election	11%
Voting by mail or absentee was just more convenient for me this election	72%
I could not get to the poll on Election Day because of my work or school schedule	13%
I am in the armed forces / a domestic out of state voter / an overseas voter	4%
I have a physical disability that makes it difficult for me to go to the polls	10%
I was an election official or poll worker	3%
Religious observances would have interfered with my going to the polls	0%
Other (please specify)	7%

Q8. Have you voted by mail in a previous election or is this your first time? (n=1233)

Yes, I have voted by mail in a previous election	91%
No, this is my first time voting by mail	9%

Q9. Did you track your mail ballot online or through text/email messages? (n=1231)

Yes	70%
No	30%

Q10. Which of the following describes reason you chose NOT to track your ballot? Please mark all that apply (n=318)

I was not aware that I could track my ballot	35%
I fully trusted my ballot would be received and counted by the election officials	48%
I did not feel comfortable tracking my ballot information online or through text messages	5%
I did not care if my ballot was rejected or did not arrive on time	2%
I was worried my contact information would be used for non-election purposes	11%
Other, please describe why you chose NOT to track your ballot	12%

Q11. Did you fill out your ballot with anyone else, such as a family member or friend, or did you complete your ballot alone? (n=1233)

Alone	87%
With someone else	13%

Q12. With whom did you complete your ballot? Please mark all that apply. (n=167)

Spouse or partner	75%
Parent or parents	10%
Child or children	12%
Roommate	0%
Friend	4%
Other family member(s)	16%
Party or campaign worker	0%
Nursing home or medical aid	0%
Other (please specify)	0%

Q13. When did you return your mail ballot? (n=1233)

After Election Day	0%
On Election Day	1%
A few days before Election Day	16%
Last two weeks of October	32%
First two weeks of October	36%
Sometime in September	5%
Don't remember	10%

Q14. Who returned your ballot or dropped it in the mail? (n=1233)

I did	88%
A member of my immediate family did	9%
My roommate did	0%
A friend of mine did	1%
A political party or interest group member did	0%
A stranger did	0%
Other (please specify)	2%

Q15. How did you return your ballot? (n=1094)

It was picked up by the postal worker who delivers mail to my home.	30%
At a post office box at a U.S. Postal Service location	27%
I dropped it off at an early voting center	14%
I dropped it off at the Supervisor of Elections Office during early voting	11%
At an official post office box not at a U.S. Postal Service location	11%
A drop box only used for ballots	4%
Faxed or mailed from overseas	2%
I dropped it off on Election Day at a vote center or the election supervisor’s office	1%

Q16. Why did you decide to drop off your ballot rather than mail the ballot back in? Please mark all that apply. (n=346)

It was very convenient to drop it off	43%
I didn't trust the USPS to deliver it on time	25%
I didn't have enough time to use the USPS for return delivery	9%
I wanted to be certain that it arrived	69%
Other (please specify)	2%

Q17. How difficult or easy was it to find the place where you dropped off your ballot? (n=347)

Very difficult	1%
Somewhat difficult	0%
Fairly easy	16%
Very easy	83%

Q18. Please rate the job performance of the staff at the place where you dropped off your ballot. (n=345)

Excellent	82%
Good	15%
Fair	1%
Poor	2%

Q19. Did you return anyone else's ballot? (n=1094)

No	78%
Yes	22%

Q20. Whose ballot(s) did you return? Please mark all that apply. (n=285)

Spouse or partner	81%
Parent or parents	11%
Child or children	13%
Roommate	0%
Friend	1%
Other family member	10%
Other (please specify)	0%

Q21. How many ballots did you return, including your own? (n=269) (Unweighted)

2	46%
3	31%
4	6%
5	17%

Q22. Please mark how much you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your mail ballot:

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
My ballot was too long (n=1216)	8%	26%	31%	35%
I kept my ballot and my ballot choices private at home (n=1218)	47%	24%	13%	16%
My ballot privacy was maintained when my vote was counted (n=1197)	58%	34%	5%	3%

Q23. Were you contacted by your local election official because there was a problem with your ballot and it could not be counted? (n=1233)

No	98%
Yes	2%

Q24. Overall, how difficult was it to follow all the instructions necessary to cast your ballot and return it to be counted? (n=1232)

Very easy	77%
Somewhat easy	21%
Somewhat hard	1%
Very hard	1%

In-Person Voting

Q25. Did you fill out a sample ballot before going to vote? (n=1494)

Yes	59%
No	41%

Q26. About how many **minutes** did you wait in the check-in line before you were able to vote? (n= 1489)

0 Minutes	18%
1-5 Minutes	41%
6-15 Minutes	20%
16- 30 Minutes	11%
31-60 Minutes	8%
Over 60 Minutes	2%
Average	10.0 Mins

Q27**.** Did you know any of the poll workers in the vote center or precinct you voted in? (n=1494)

Yes	6%
No	94%

Q28. When you got to your vote center, did you personally see any of the following events taking place near it? [Please mark all that apply.]
(n=1491)

Individuals or groups of people casting doubt on whether the election was fraudulent	2%
Individuals or groups of people seeming to challenge whether some people were properly dropping off ballots	1%
Individuals or groups, other than police officers, carrying a gun	1%
Someone taking pictures of voters or election workers who did not seem to be a reporter	2%
People peacefully holding signs or giving our literature in support of a candidate or ballot question	44%
Something else that seemed disruptive	4%
I did not observe any of these things	54%

Q29**.** What type of voter ID did you show when you went to the polls? (n=1495)

Driver's license	94%
Passport	0%
College ID	0%
I showed 2 forms of ID. One ID had my signature on it, the other had my photo	4%
I showed some other form of identification (Please indicate what you showed)	2%
I didn't show any photo ID	0%

Q30. Did anyone help you fill out their ballot (n=1492)

No, no one helped me.	99%
Yes, someone helped me	1%

Q31. Did you help anyone fill out their ballot (n=1493)

No, I didn’t help anyone	96%
Yes, I helped someone	4%

Q32. Please mark how much you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding the voting location where you voted:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The location was easy to find. (n=1493)	83%	16%	0%	1%
It was hard to find a place to park. (n=1475)	4%	12%	34%	50%
My ballot privacy was protected. (n=1483)	68%	30%	1%	1%
The ballot was too long. (n=1475)	3%	16%	56%	25%
I had to go out of my way to reach my vote center or precinct (n=1482)	1%	3%	33%	63%

Q33. How helpful were your poll workers? (n=1493)

Very helpful	83%
Somewhat helpful	15%
Not too helpful	1%
Not at all helpful	1%

Voting Experience/Non-Voting Experience

Q34. Please answer the following questions on ballot privacy:

	Yes	No
Did someone in line at the polling place ask you who you were voting for? (n=1492)	2%	98%
Did a poll worker look at your voted ballot? (n=1491)	5%	95%
Did you keep your ballot in a privacy sleeve while you were moving around the vote center/precinct (n=1486)	85%	15%

Q35. Were you contacted by a candidate, party, or interest group encouraging you to vote [mark all that apply] (n=2709)

By mail	60%
In-person early	20%
On Election Day	14%
Just to go vote	35%
I was not contacted by anyone about voting	24%

Q36. How much time did you spend searching for information (reading articles, watching debates, looking at websites) about local city or county candidates before you voted? (n=2727)

None	6%
Less than ½ an hour	9%
½ an hour to an hour	25%
Just over an hour to 2 hours	23%
Over 2 hours	37%

Q37. Were there any contests for which you looked for information, but you couldn't find much? Please mark all that apply: (n=2614)

No, I found enough information	53%
Yes, I found some information but not enough to decide	12%
Yes, but I did my best to decide anyway	35%
Yes, what I found was for paying subscribers only	3%
Yes, what I found was not trustworthy	5%
Something else	4%

Q38. How many contests did you vote on your 2024 ballot? (n=2724)

All contests	81%
Nearly all contests	10%
Most contests	4%
About 1/2 of all contests	1%
Just a few contests	1%
No contests	3%

Q39. How would you rate your voting experience overall? (n=2728)

Excellent	65%
Good	32%
Fair	3%
Poor	0%

Q40. Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or a member of another political party? (n=2713)

Republican	39%
Independent	30%
Democrat	26%
Other political party (please specify)	5%

Q41. Would you call yourself a strong Republican or not a very strong Republican? (n=942)

Strong	80%
Not very strong	20%

Q42. Would you call yourself a strong Democrat or not a very strong Democrat? (n=890)

Strong	75%
Not very strong	25%

Q43. Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or to the Democratic Party? (n=871)

Republican Party	40%
Neither	33%
Democratic Party	27%

Confidence

Q44. On a scale of 0 (no confidence) to 10 (highest confidence) how confident are you that no ballots are stolen or changed] (n=2728)

Lowest Confidence (0-3)	9%
Middle confidence (4-7)	30%
High Confidence	61%
Average 7.3	

Q45. On a scale of 0 (no confidence) to 10 (highest confidence) how confident are you that all eligible voters can vote in your state (n=2728)

Lowest Confidence (0-3)	9%
Middle confidence (4-7)	14%
High Confidence	77%
Average 7.6	

Election Reform

Q46. Thinking about elections and election reforms, which is more important? (n=2715)

Ensuring that everyone who is eligible has the right to vote	39%
Protecting the voting system against fraud	61%

Q47. Do you support or oppose requiring all people to show a photo ID when they vote? (n=2721)

Support	87%
Oppose	7%
Don't know	6%

Q48. Thinking about election administration, how important or not is it to ensure accurate voter registration rolls, even if some eligible voters are removed and required to re-register for participation in future elections? (n=2709)

Very important	69%
Somewhat important	19%
Not too important	9%
Not at all important	3%

Q49. Regardless of the laws in your state, what should the deadline be for a mail ballot to arrive at the Supervisor of Elections' office to be counted? (n=2719)

Only ballots that arrive before Election Day should be counted	14%
Only ballots that arrive on Election Day or before should be counted	42%
Ballots postmarked by Election Day should be counted as long as they arrive within a certain number of days after the election	41%
Other (please specify)	3%

Q50. Do you support or oppose allowing citizens to register and vote on the same day? (n=2708)

Support	54%
Oppose	46%

Q51. Do you support or oppose moving all state and local elections in our state to permanent vote-by-mail elections for all voters? This would eliminate all in-person voting. (n=2712)

Strongly support	7%
Somewhat support	11%
Somewhat oppose	17%
Strongly oppose	65%

Q52. Would you prefer ballots in your county to be counted by voting machines or by people by hand? (n=2705)

Prefer machine counts to hand counts a lot	42%
Prefer machine counts somewhat	37%
Prefer hand counts somewhat	10%
Prefer hand counts to machine count a lot	11%

Q53. How much do you trust vote-counting machines to count the votes accurately? (n=2721)

Trust a great deal	41%
Trust somewhat	43%
Distrust somewhat	10%
Distrust a great deal	6%

Q54. How much do you trust citizens to hand-count the votes accurately? (n=2711)

Trust a great deal	13%
Trust somewhat	52%
Distrust somewhat	27%
Distrust a great deal	8%

Q55. How much do you agree or disagree that every state should have a post-election auditing process to ensure that voters were counted correctly? (n=2715)

Strongly agree	67%
Somewhat agree	27%
Somewhat disagree	5%
Strongly disagree	1%

Q56. Were you aware that every county in Florida has to complete a post-election audit? (n=2725)

Yes	25%
No	75%

Election Security

Q57. Did you receive a ballot in the mail that didn't belong to you or anyone in your household? (n=2728)

Yes	4%
No	96%

Q58. How often do you think **local election officials** make rules or decisions that favor one party or another? (n=1055)

All or almost all of the time	19%
Most of the time	23%
Sometimes	39%
Rarely	12%
Never or almost never	7%

Q59. Which of the following situations did you **personally observe** in the 2024 General Election? [Please mark all that apply.] (n=1043)

	Yes	No
Some bribes a voter or pays for votes	2%	98%
Someone being improperly denied the chance to vote	1%	99%
Someone filling out an absentee ballot for someone else	1%	99%
Someone helping someone fill out their ballot in the vote center	4%	96%
Someone using a false identity to vote illegally	1%	99%
Voter intimidation at the polling place	4%	96%
Someone stuffing a lot of ballots into an official ballot drop	1%	99%
Other (Please specify)	3%	97%
None of these	87%	13%

Q60. Florida's in-person voter ID requires voters to show a photo ID and a signature. Do you think this requirement is: (n=1082)

Too strict	9%
Just right	84%
Not strict enough	7%

Q61. Florida's vote-by-mail law requires voters to sign their ballot envelope and poll workers match the signature to those on file to verify their identity. Do you think this requirement is: (n=1081)

Too strict	8%
Just right	72%
Not strict enough	20%

Q62. What additional information would you require to verify the eligibility of the vote-by-mail voter? Mark all that apply. (n=135)

Social Security Number	35%
Driver’s license number	60%
Include a copy of a photo ID	61%
Witness signature	27%
Something else	22%

Q63. According to the law, which candidate you vote for is supposed to be kept secret unless you tell someone. Even so, how easy or hard do you think it would be for politicians, union officials, friends, family, or the people you work for to find out who you voted for, even if you told no one? (n=2722)

Impossible, my vote is secret	16%
It would be very hard, but not impossible	34%
It would be somewhat hard	16%
It would be somewhat easy	16%
It would be very easy	10%
Don't Know	8%

Q64. Do you think elected officials can access voting records and figure out who a voter has voted for? (n=1059)

Yes	29%
No	27%
Don't know/Not sure	44%

Q65. Do you think elected officials can more easily identify who you voted for when you use a vote-by-mail ballot, an in-person ballot, or are they about the same? (n=247)

Vote-by-mail is easier to identify	33%
In-person is easier to identify	5%
Equally likely to be identified	62%

Q66. Below is a list of possible illegal election activities that may or may not take place in Florida. How often do you think each event occurs in Florida?

	All or most of the time	Some of the time	Not much	Hardly ever	Never
Voting machines fail to count votes accurately (n=1046)	2%	25%	29%	35%	9%
Ballots are tampered with to change votes (n=1047)	3%	17%	29%	35%	16%
Someone pretends to be another person and votes for them (n=1045)	3%	29%	25%	32%	11%
A non-US citizen votes (n=1049)	5%	30%	16%	31%	18%
Eligible voters get mistakenly removed from the voter registration file during purges/clean-up (n=1048)	8%	40%	26%	22%	4%
Someone being improperly denied the chance to vote (n=1048)	3%	32%	25%	29%	11%
People submitting too many ballots in drop boxes on behalf of others (n=1044)	5%	26%	26%	31%	12%

Thinking about Politics

Q67. For whom did you vote in the race for President? (n=2627)

Kamala Harris (Democrat)	42%
Donald Trump (Republican)	53%
A third-party candidate / other (please specify)	4%
Did not vote in this contest	1%

Q68. For whom did you vote in the race for U.S. Senate? (n=2629)

Rick Scott (Republican)	54%
Debbie Mucarsel-Powell (Democrat)	42%
A third-party candidate / other (please specify)	3%
Did not vote in this contest	1%

Q69. For whom did you vote in the race for U.S. House? (n=2620)

The Republican candidate	55%
The Democratic candidate	41%
A third-party candidate / other (please specify)	2%
Did not vote in this contest	2%

Q70. How did you vote on Constitutional Amendment No. 3, the amendment to legalize adult recreational use of marijuana? (n=2662)

Yes	56%
No	43%
Did not vote on this amendment	1%

Q71. How did you vote on Constitutional Amendment No. 4, the amendment to expand abortion rights? (n=2660)

Yes	55%
No	43%
Did not vote on this amendment	2%

Q72. What issue mattered **most** to you in this election? [Please select only one] (n=1055)

Inflation/the economy	27%
Abortion	11%
Immigration	13%
Threats to democracy	28%
Education	1%
Crime	1%
Climate Change	2%
Freedom of Speech	3%
National Security/Foreign Affairs/Wars	7%
Other (please specify)	7%

Q73. Compared to a year ago, how are each of the following doing economically?

	Much better	Somewhat better	About the same	Somewhat worse	Much worse
You and your family (n=2709)	7%	14%	36%	27%	16%
Florida's Economy (n=2676)	5%	17%	39%	26%	13%
National economy (n=2676)	6%	17%	19%	27%	31%

Q74. During the past year did you:

	Yes	No
Attend local political meetings (n=1081)	11%	89%
Put up a political sign (n=1074)	16%	84%
Work for a candidate or campaign (n=1082)	4%	96%
Attend a political protest, march, or demonstration (n=1078)	6%	94%
Contact a public official (n=1078)	27%	73%
Donate money to a candidate, campaign, or political organization (n=1081)	32%	68%
Donate blood (n=1074)	15%	85%

Q75. Do you support or oppose increasing fossil fuel production in the U.S.? (n=1038)

Support	60%
Oppose	40%

Q76. Do you support or oppose denying access to asylum for immigrants who cross the US-Mexico border illegally? (n=1053)

Support	49%
Oppose	51%

Q77. Please rate how you feel towards the following groups and individuals. A score of 0 means you are very cold to them, while a score of 10 means you are very warm to them, a score of 5 means that you are neither cold nor warm to them. (n=1079)

	0 to 3	4 to 6	7 to 10	Average
Democratic Party	42%	33%	25%	5.0
Republican Party	33%	28%	39%	4.0
President Joe Biden	56%	24%	20%	4.4
Vice President Kamala Harris	56%	20%	24%	4.6
President Donald Trump	41%	14%	45%	3.6
Governor Ron DeSantis	38%	13%	49%	4.2
Your Election Supervisor/County Clerk	5%	53%	42%	7.0
The Florida Legislature	27%	43%	30%	4.3
Florida State University	6%	54%	40%	6.4
The Florida Supreme Court	20%	47%	33%	4.8
Secretary of State Cord Byrd	14%	65%	21%	4.6

Demographics

Q78. Age of Respondents (n=2700)

18-24	7%
25-29	6%
30-39	10%
40-49	15%
50-59	17%
60-69	22%
70-79	19%
80+	4%

Q79. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (n=2724)

Less than high school	1%
High school graduate	9%
Some college	29%
Associate's degree	18%
Bachelor's degree	22%
Master’s degree	16%
PhD/MD/JD	5%

Q80. Which racial and/or ethnic groups do you consider yourself a member of? (n=2728)

White	66%
Hispanic or Latino	17%
Black or African American	12%
Other	5%

Q81. How would you describe your Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin? (n=254)

Cuban	27%
Mexican	6%
Spanish	3%
Puerto Rican	27%
Central American	6%
South American	21%
Dominican Republican	4%
Mixed	3%
Other	3%

Q82. Do you belong to a union? (n=2706)

Yes	6%
No	94%

Q83. Would you say you live in: (n=2709)

A city	31%
A suburban area	57%
A rural area	12%

Q84. What is your gender? (n=2695)

Male	46%
Female	53%
Other	1%

LeRoy Collins INSTITUTE

Established in 1988, the LeRoy Collins Institute is a nonpartisan, statewide policy organization which studies and promotes creative solutions to key private and public issues facing the people of Florida and the nation. The Institute is located in Tallahassee at Florida State University.

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