

## An Analysis of Demographic Data for the 2024 Presidential Election

By: Devan Rindels

There is a saying by French philosopher and sociologist Auguste Comte, “Demographics is destiny”. While this is certainly not true in a totalizing sense, it is true that our demographic characteristics tend to play a major role in what kind of experiences we have. Those experiences in turn, then shape our opinions political and otherwise. So, I looked at some demographic data, trends, and narratives involving the upcoming 2024 presidential election and extrapolated some analysis from my research.

The first bit of demographic data that I looked at was the total registered voters and the difference in actual voting in Iowa looking at various elections from 2016-2022. The following numbers are the percentage of a population that was registered to vote followed by the percentage of actual voting participation in 2022. All voters: 71.5 to 50.2, 18-24: 51.3 to 22.8, 25-34: 67.2 to 35.7, 35-44: 71.3 to 41.0, 45-64: 78.0 to 59.8, 65+: 76.9 to 68.1. In Iowa at least 65 and up had a 8% difference between registration and voting, 45-64 had a 19% difference, then 35-44, 25-34, and 18-24 all had a roughly 30% difference. The total registered voters had a 20% difference. There is a known trend in political science, that older people tend to vote more than younger people. Something that is interesting though, older people (44-65+) voted at very similar rates in 2016 and 2020 but younger people’s turnout (especially the 18-24 cohort). For the 65+ 76.8% voted in 2016 and 76.5% voted in 2020. While 65% of the 45-64 demo voted in 2016 and 70.7% in 2020. In 2016 only 35.5% of the 18-24 demo voted. In 2020 that total was almost double at 60.5%. If we see a similar turnout of that age group in 2024 that's good for Democrats.

The next bit of demographic data that I looked at was Black voters in general as they are a key demographic in many elections. After the switch in candidate from Biden to Harris some polls have the same percentage of support at 77% (a Pew Research poll) or slightly for the new candidate at 82% (an NBC news poll). Black voters with college degrees have increasingly not

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identified with the Democratic Party 93% in 2012, 85% in 2020, and 79% in 2023. While generally older voters lean Republican the phenomena is actually switched with Black voters. Only 7% of older Black voters (over 50) support or lean Republican while 17% of younger than 50 Black voters support or lean Republican. So obviously Harris will be far and away more popular among Black voters, but I think any major difference between her support and Biden's might be overstated. Although there does seem to be much more enthusiasm about Harris than there was when Biden was the candidate. So, in theory even if the on-paper support is the same or similar, if people are more excited, they may be more willing to deal with subtle or outright voter suppression tactics Republicans are often accused of.

The next demographic group that I looked at was the White population, and more importantly some of the differences within the White population currently and over time. Republicans have a massive lead with Whites that don't have college degrees but that has been a declining demographic percentage of population wise. In 2008 they were a majority of voters now less than 40% of the voters are projected to be this demographic. This is largely why North Carolina has possibly become a swing state. In 2008 the White non-college cohort made up 51.3% of the eligible voters in North Carolina. While in 2024 they only make up 37.9% of the eligible voters. This went down because of growth in the Latino, AAPI (Asian and Pacific Islander), and Whites with college degrees demographics all grew in size. This is especially the case with Latinos who were only 1.8% of the voting population in 2008 but are 7.7% of it in 2024. Whites without college degrees are also down in percentage of population wise in all of the blue wall states. On the flip side though, while the percentage of eligible voters being non-college educated Whites has decreased. This demographic, in the 2020 election, turned out to vote. For example, in 2016 this demo was 42% of the electorate in Michigan, while in 2020

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they were 52% of the electorate. So, while Whites without college degrees are a declining demographic if they have an outsized effect like in Michigan in 2020, I could see one or more of the Blue Wall states going red (based on the population of Whites without degrees, especially Wisconsin). If something similar happens in North Carolina (a surprise swing state) then it is likely going red. This is because the White non-college cohort is gettable for Democrats in the Blue Wall states but far less gettable for Democrats in North Carolina.

The next chunk of demographic data that I looked at was Latino voters. In many of the swing states Latino voters are key to Democrats winning. For example, 28% of Arizona's eligible voters are Latino and 20% of Nevada's eligible voters. This is a marked increase from 2008 when Latinos made up 19% of voters in Arizona and 13% in Nevada. Although it is the case that not all Latinos vote and that while they make up 14% of the voting population it is projected, they will be 11% of the electorate. The past few years news has been made of Republicans making gains in the Hispanic community, and while this is true that trend may be flipping. In 2016 Latino support (support being registered Latino voters who are or lean Republican) for the Republicans was at its lowest in about ten years and then there was a steady incline in support during the Trump presidency that continued and peaked in 2023. Then there is a sharp decline in support (we don't know if it's steep yet) going into 2024. As expected, the inverse relationship is happening on the other side of the political aisle. So, if the Latino vote shows up in the states where they are a significant part of the electorate that's good for the Democrats.

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