



The Voters

from the Esri GeoInquiries™ collection for Government

Target audience – Government learners

Time required – 15 minutes

Activity	Examine factors affecting voting and registration in presidential and midterm elections.
Social Studies Standards	C3:D2.Civ.2.3-5. Explain how a democracy relies on people’s responsible participation, and draws implications for how individuals should participate. C3:D2.Civ.2.9-12. Analyze the role of citizens in the U.S. political system, with attention to various theories of democracy, changes in Americans’ participation over time, and alternative models from other countries, past and present.
Learning Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students will compare voter participation rates for presidential and congressional elections.• Students will examine reasons for not voting and characteristics of those who vote.

Map URL: <http://esriurl.com/govGeoInquiry9>

Ask

How does the percent voting vary by state?

- Click the link above to launch the map.
- Data were obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau and based on the voting-age citizen population.
- ? In 2016, which states have a high percentage of voter turnout? *[Maine, Wisconsin, Colorado, New Hampshire, Minnesota, and Virginia]*
- ? Where are these states generally located? *[Most are located along the northern or eastern borders.]*
- With the Details button underlined, click the button Show Content.
- Check the box to the left of the layer, Less Than 55% Voting.
- ? Which four states have less than 55 percent voting? Don’t forget to check HI and AK. *[Hawaii, West Virginia, Tennessee, and New Mexico]*

Acquire

How does voting vary by age?

- Click each of the four states with low percent voting, and examine the graphs.
- ? Which age group has the highest percentage of voters? Which has the lowest? *[65 and over, and 18 to 24, respectively.]*
- ? Does this trend hold true for the states with a high percent voting? *[Yes.]*
- Turn on the layer, Reasons For Not Voting. Click each symbol.
- ? How do the reasons for not voting differ by age group? *[Younger voters were too busy or out of town; older voters had health or transportation issues.]*
- ? Which reason did all age groups have in common? *[Dislike of candidates and issues]*
- Turn off the layer, Reasons for Not Voting.

Explore

How does voter turnout vary from election to election?

- Elections for the House of Representatives are held every two years, and every four years for the president.
- Turn on the layer, Voter Turnout, 2000.
- Turn off the layer, Voter Turnout, 2016.
- Examine the pop-ups for a few high- and low-turnout states. (See ToolTips on page 2.)
- ? What trend do you observe? *[The graph dips every two years; midterm election turnout is much lower.]*
- ? How many of the states with less than 55 percent in the 2016 election had a similar percent in 2000? *[All four states, plus five more]*
- In 2000, the most frequent reasons people gave for not voting were: people were too busy, had an illness or emergency or were out of town.

more ►

Analyze

How are voting and registration related?

- Turn off all available layers.
- Turn on the layer, % Registered, 2016.
- ? Which states have the lowest percent registered? [*Hawaii, West Virginia, Tennessee, California, New York, Florida, and New Mexico*]
- ? How are population and registration related? [*Some states with high populations have a low percent registered.*]

Act

How democratic is low voter turnout?

- Click the states on the layer, % Registered 2016. Examine the pop-ups.
- ? Generally, which factors seem to have a positive effect on registration and voting? [*Higher median income and a larger percent with degrees*]
- ? Which states do not follow the trend? [*Mississippi and California*]
- ? What could account for the difference? [*Registration drives, campaign promises, and voter apathy*]
- ? How does low voter turnout affect a representative democracy? [*Majority rule controlled by a few*]

ZOOM TO A BOOKMARK

- Click Bookmarks.
- Click a bookmark name to zoom to a map location and scale.

IDENTIFY A MAP FEATURE

- Click a feature on the map, and a pop-up window will open with information.
- Links and images in the pop-up are often clickable.
- An arrow icon in the upper right of the window indicates that multiple features have been selected.
- Click the button to scroll through the features.

Next Steps

DID YOU KNOW? ArcGIS Online is a mapping platform freely available to public, private, and home schools. A school subscription provides additional security, privacy, and content features. Learn more about ArcGIS Online and how to get a school subscription at <http://www.esri.com/schools>.

THEN TRY THIS...

- Use data enrichment for selected variables, like enriching data layers for variables like education and median income.
- Create an app using Web AppBuilder for ArcGIS to explore data from the % Registered layer, comparing the voter registration and voting for selected ethnicities.

TEXT REFERENCES

This GIS map has been cross-referenced to material in sections of chapters from these high school texts.

- *Civics and Economics by Holt — Chapter 10*
- *Magruder's American Government by Pearson — Chapter 10*