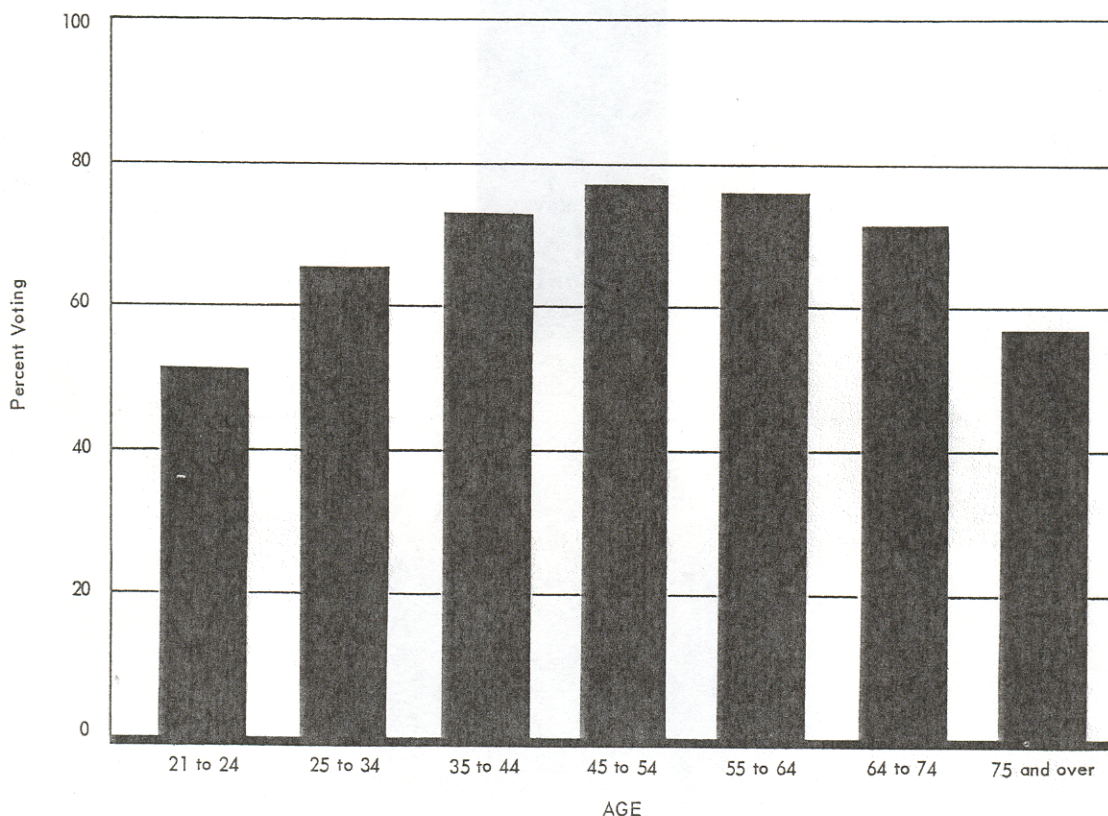# Population Characteristics

VOTER PARTICIPATION IN THE NATIONAL ELECTION NOVEMBER 1964

PERCENT OF THE POPULATION VOTING, BY AGE, FOR THE UNITED STATES: NOVEMBER 1964

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

A. ROSS ECKLER, Director

CONRAD TAEUBER, Assistant Director

Population Division
HOWARD G. BRUNSMAN, Chief

CONTENTS

TEXT TABLES

DETAILED TABLES

VOTER PARTICIPATION IN THE NATIONAL ELECTION: NOVEMBER 1964

An estimated 69 percent of the civilian non-institutional population of voting age[1] said they voted in the November 1964 national election according to the November 1964 Current Population Survey conducted by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. About 72 percent of all men and 67 percent of all women of voting age were reported as having gone to the polls to vote.   Statistics are based on answers to the question "Did (this person) vote in the national election held on November 3?" asked about 2 weeks after the election of a representative sample of approximately 33,000 households including 65,000 persons of voting age.[2] Participation in the national election varied by age, sex, and race, and by various social and economic characteristics.

Substantial differences in voter participation rates occurred by age. Persons under 25 years old had the lowest voter participation rate--about half of those eligible on the basis of age, voted. About two-thirds of the population 25 to 34 years old voted.   The rate increased to about three-fourths of those in each 10-year age group from 35 to 74 years old. At age 75 and over, however, the proportion voting dropped to a little more than half of all persons in that age group (table 1).

For persons of all ages combined, a smaller proportion of women than men were reported as having voted.   The difference between the proportion of voters among men and women increased with age.   At the younger adult ages, 25 to 44 years, 70 percent of the men and 68 percent of the women voted; corresponding percentages at ages 65 to 74 were 77 and 66 percent and at ages 75 and over, 66 and 49 percent, respectively (table 1).

Voter participation by race.--The proportion of voters was considerably higher for the white population than for either the total nonwhite or the Negro population; about 71 percent of the white population, compared with 58 percent of the total nonwhite and 59 percent of the Negro population, reportedly voted in the November 1964 national election (table 1).   The difference between the proportions of men and women voters was greater among white than among nonwhite persons. The difference between the voting rate of men and women was greater at age 65 and over than at the younger ages in both color groups.   Among white persons, the highest proportion of voters was found in the age group 45 to 64 years, and the lowest proportion in the population under 25 years of age. The lowest proportions of nonwhite voters were found in the population under 25 and 65 years and over.

Variation by region of residence.--Among the four regions, the South had the lowest proportion of persons reported as voters.   About 76 percent of persons 21 years old and over in the North Central Region were reported as voters, as were 74 percent in the Northeast, 72 percent in the West, and 57 percent in the South (table 2).

Whereas the participation of the nonwhite population generally was lower than that of the white population for the United States as a whole, it was higher in the North Central Region.   About 80 percent of the nonwhite population and 76 percent of the white population in the North Central Region reported voting in the November 1964 national election.   The great majority of nonwhite persons in the North Central Region live in metropolitan areas.

Residents of metropolitan areas showed a greater proportion of voters among those 21 years old and over than did residents of nonmetropolitan areas--71 percent and 67 percent, respectively (table A).   This comparison is affected by the relatively high proportion of nonmetropolitan residents who live in the South, where voting participation rates are relatively low. The metropolitan-nonmetropolitan difference was even sharper among nonwhites than among the white population; 65 percent of nonwhite persons 21 years old and over in metropolitan areas voted as compared with 41 percent in nonmetropolitan areas.   The percent of voters among the population 21 and over in central cities of metropolitan areas was slightly lower than that for the parts of metropolitan areas outside the central cities.

---

[1] Population 21 years and over except as follows: 18 years and over in Georgia (since 1944), 18 years and over in Kentucky (since 1956), 19 years and over in Alaska (since 1958), and 20 years and over in Hawaii (since 1958).

[2] The counts of persons who voted, cited in the following discussion, are the counts of persons who were reported either by themselves or by members of their households, as having voted.   Some of these persons may not have actually voted.   See discussion of accuracy of data beginning on page 4.

Table A.--PERCENT OF THE POPULATION 21 YEARS OLD AND OVER WHO VOTED IN THE 1964 NATIONAL ELECTION, FOR THE UNITED STATES, BY RESIDENCE: NOVEMBER 1964

(Excludes potential voters 18 to 20 years old in Alaska, Georgia, Hawaii, and Kentucky)

Age and color	United States	Metropolitan-nonmetropolitan residence				Regions	
		Metropolitan			Non-metro-politan	The South	Other regions
		Total	In central cities	Outside central cities			
TOTAL							
21 years and over...............	69.4	70.9	69.5	72.2	66.6	56.8	74.6
21 to 24 years.....................	51.3	53.2	54.8	51.5	47.6	37.0	57.6
25 to 44 years.....................	69.0	69.9	67.6	71.9	67.1	57.1	73.9
45 to 64 years.....................	75.9	78.1	76.2	80.0	71.8	63.2	81.1
65 years and over..................	66.3	67.4	67.4	67.3	64.6	53.8	71.0
WHITE							
21 years and over...............	70.7	71.6	70.4	72.7	69.1	59.6	74.8
21 to 24 years.....................	52.4	53.8	56.1	51.9	49.6	38.7	57.7
25 to 44 years.....................	70.1	70.5	68.0	72.3	69.3	59.4	74.1
45 to 64 years.....................	77.2	78.7	76.7	80.5	74.5	66.4	81.0
65 years and over..................	68.1	68.6	69.3	67.8	67.2	58.4	71.2
NONWHITE							
21 years and over...............	57.6	64.6	65.4	61.1	40.7	44.2	72.0
21 to 24 years.....................	43.2	48.7	49.7	44.7	29.2	30.1	55.8
25 to 44 years.....................	60.0	65.3	66.1	62.1	43.6	46.6	71.8
45 to 64 years.....................	63.5	72.6	73.6	68.3	43.7	49.1	81.4
65 years and over..................	45.1	52.5	52.7	(B)	34.6	34.7	62.3

B Base less than 150,000.

Voting and educational level.--More than 80 percent of persons 21 years old and over who had completed one or more years of college voted, compared with 69 percent of all persons 21 years old and over, and only 51 percent of those with less than an eighth grade education (table 3). Among both white and nonwhite persons, those with the highest educational attainment showed the greatest amount of voter participation. About 45 percent of the women and 57 percent of the men with less than an eighth grade education voted in the national election. Differences in voter participation by educational level were smallest among older persons. For example, the range in voting rates among persons in the various educational levels was half again as large for those 25 to 44 years old as for those 65 years old and over (table 3).

Education was not reported for about 4 percent of all persons 21 years old and over. Only about one-third of this group reportedly voted in the national election. If the relationship between voting and education described above holds for this group also, the implication is that the group includes disproportionate numbers of persons with low levels of educational attainment.

The same general relationship between education and voter participation existed for nonwhite persons as for the total population. Nonwhite persons with the least education had the lowest participation rate; only 43 percent of those 21 years old and over with less than an eighth grade education voted, compared with 82 percent of those with 4 years or more of college. Education was not reported for about 7 percent of the nonwhite population 21 years old and over. The voter participation rate (about one-third) was low among those with education not reported, as it was among those with low education.

Employment status and voting.--Unemployed men of voting age were reported as having voted to a significantly lesser extent than employed men--57 percent compared with 74 percent, respectively (table 4). Within the group of men who were unemployed, however, those who had been unemployed longest (5 weeks or more) had a higher voting rate than those who had been unemployed for a shorter period. Many of the recently unemployed persons may have moved to another locality in search of a job and have thereby disqualified themselves as voters on the basis of residence requirements. Among men who were not in the labor force, 71 percent of those 65 years old and over were voters, compared with only 56 percent of those under 65 years of age (table 4).

White-collar workers much more likely to vote.--Among employed men 21 years old and over, 83 percent of white-collar workers were reported as having voted as compared with 73 percent of service workers and 67 percent of nonfarm manual workers and farm workers (table 5). About 89 percent of white-collar workers among men over 45 years of age reportedly voted. Also, about 81 percent of the employed women 21 years old and over and 86 percent of those 45 years old and over who were white-collar workers reportedly voted.

Persons from high-income families more likely to vote.--Among persons in primary families a positive relationship existed between voter participation and family income level. Only one-half of all persons 21 years old and over living in primary families with incomes of less than $2,000 were reported as voters in the 1964 national election, but 85 percent of those from families with incomes of $10,000 or more reported voting (table 6). Family income was not reported for about 8 percent of persons 21 years old and over, 71 percent of whom were voters.

A similar relationship between income level and voter participation existed for nonwhite persons in primary families; only 39 percent of those in families with less than $2,000 family income voted, but 82 percent of those in families with incomes of $10,000 or more did so. Family income was not reported for about 8 percent of nonwhite persons 21 years old and over, 63 percent of whom reportedly voted.

At each level of family income, the voting rate for men 45 to 64 years old was higher than that for men 25 to 44. About 92 percent of all men 45 to 64 years old with family incomes of $10,000 or more voted, compared with 84 percent of those 25 to 44 in the same income class. Among men with family incomes of less than $3,000, 60 percent of those 45 to 64 voted, compared with 44 percent of those 25 to 44 years old.

Educational level within income groups.-- Within each income group, persons with high educational levels had substantially higher voting rates than persons with lower educational levels (table 7). As a standard of comparison, about 70 percent of all persons of voting age in primary families said they voted in the national election in November 1964, yet only 53 percent of those from families with incomes under $3,000 voted; within this income group, however, about 71 percent of those who had completed at least 1 year of college were voters, whereas only 51 percent of those who had no more than an elementary school education were voters. About 63 percent of all persons with family incomes of $3,000 to $4,999

reported voting; but within this income group the proportion voting was 76 percent for those with some college education, compared with 58 percent for those with 8 years or less of elementary school. At the upper end of the income range, about 85 percent of persons with family incomes of $10,000 or more were reported as voting in the national election; yet, within this income group 92 percent of those who were college graduates reportedly voted compared with only 74 percent of those who had completed 8 years or less of elementary school.

Education within occupation categories.--Educational level also modified the general relationship between occupation and voting. Over 80 percent of white-collar workers voted, compared with about 66 percent of those in all other occupational categories. Among white-collar workers, however, only about 76 percent of those who were not high school graduates reportedly voted, compared with 81 percent of high school graduates and 89 percent of college graduates (table 8). Among manual workers, approximately 80 percent of those with some college reported voting in the national election, compared with about 66 percent of all manual workers. Among farm workers, 82 percent of those with 4 years of high school or more voted, compared with 64 percent of all farm workers. Most of the better educated persons in farm occupations are farm owners and managers.

Less than one-third of all nonwhite persons in farm occupations were reported as voting in the national election. Of all the population groups identified here, this one participated least in the election.

Income level of occupational groups and voter participation.--Voter participation of persons within the broad occupational categories discussed above varied also by income level. For example, only about two-thirds of employed white-collar workers with family incomes under $3,000 reportedly voted in the national election, but nine-tenths of the employed white-collar workers with family incomes of $10,000 or more voted (table 9). Also, only about half of employed farm workers with less than $3,000 family income were reported as voters in the national elections as compared with nine-tenths of employed persons in farm occupations with family incomes of $10,000 or more. Among persons with family incomes of $5,000 or more, the rates of voter participation of white-collar workers and farmers more closely resembled each other than either voter rates of manual or service workers.

Voter participation of persons of voting age in the same family.--In primary families in which

the head voted, all other family members of voting age were far more likely to have been reported as voting than not voting in the November 1964 national election (table 10). In about 67 percent of husband-wife families with no other relatives of voting age, both the husband and wife voted. Neither voted in 20 percent of these same families, and in only 14 percent did the voter participation of husband and wife differ. As the educational level of the head of the household increased, the proportion with both husband and wife voting increased and the proportion in which neither voted decreased.

In about 43 percent of husband-wife families with other relatives of voting age, all persons were reported as voting. The head and some others voted in an additional 29 percent; in only 13 percent, no one was reported as voting; and in the small proportion of remaining husband-wife families, voter participation of the head and other members differed.

In 42 percent of primary families with male heads of "other marital status" (married, spouse absent; widowed; or divorced), all persons of voting age reportedly voted, and in 24 percent none reported voting. Among primary families with female heads, about 44 percent reported that the head and all other members of voting age voted in the November 1964 election. No voters were reported in 21 percent of the families with female heads.

All of the above relationships varied according to the educational level of the head of the household. Voter participation increased among all family members as the education of the head increased.

Persons in families with heads employed in white-collar occupations consistently showed the highest turnout. Both husband and wife were reported as voting in 78 percent of husband-wife families with no other persons of voting age where the head was employed in a white-collar occupation. This proportion declined to 66 percent in those families where the head was employed in a service occupation, to 62 percent where the head was in farming, and to 59 percent where the head was a blue-collar worker.

In husband-wife families with other relatives of voting age, all family members voted in 55 percent of white-collar families. Families headed by persons in service, farming, and manual occupations had significantly lower voting rates than that found in families headed by a white-collar worker. The comparable figures are 38 percent, 35 percent, and 39 percent, respectively. In an additional 30 percent of families headed by white-collar workers, at least one other person, in addition to the head,

reported voting. This proportion was 36 percent among families of service workers, 30 percent among families headed by manual workers, and about 26 percent among families where the head was in farming.

Evaluation of accuracy of data.--In the November 1964 Current Population Survey supplement on voting, 76.6 million of the 110.6 million persons of voting age in the civilian noninstitutional population were reported (by themselves or by members of their households) as having voted in the 1964 election. Official counts showed 70.6 million votes cast for President, or a difference of 6 million votes between the two sources. The population covered in the survey excluded members of the Armed Forces and institutional inmates. Since the proportion of voters in these two population groups is somewhat lower than in the rest of the population, their omission leads to a minor understatement in the size of the difference. This difference is far greater than can be accounted for by sampling variability. Factors other than sampling variability help to explain the difference, as pointed out in the following discussion.

The Bureau of the Census has not made a definitive investigation of the reasons for this difference.[3] Most of the other survey organizations that have studied voting behavior have had similar experiences in reporting higher voter participation than the official counts of presidential votes indicated. Some of these organizations have done limited studies on the reasons for the differences. Using the results of these studies together with facts known about the Current Population Survey, it is possible to list what appear to be the major sources of the difference.

1. Overreporting of voting.--The most obvious, and, in all probability, a substantial element in the difference, is the overreporting of voting. Some persons who actually did not vote were reluctant to report this lapse in civic responsibility and some informants reporting the voting behavior of other members of their households assumed the person in question had voted when indeed he had not. This bias has been noted in other surveys of voting behavior but both the methods of measuring it and estimates of its size

---

[3] As a check on the work of the interviewer, a subsample of the households in the survey were reinterviewed by the supervisory staff. This reinterview showed no net error in reporting on voting. However, since the reinterviewer usually talks with the same household respondent (or respondents) as originally interviewed the previous week, it is likely that an original reporting error of this type will go undetected during the reinterview.

have varied considerably.[4] On balance, it would appear that the overstatement might run between 5 and 10 percent of the total number of persons reported as having voted.

2. CPS estimating procedure.--A part of the difference is probably due to estimation procedures in the CPS which essentially attribute the characteristics of interviewed persons to persons in noninterviewed households of similar types--about 4 percent of the total. This procedure may have a substantial effect on the results of a survey of voting if the noninterviewed households can be assumed to have a higher proportion of nonvoting members than interviewed households. Such an assumption seems plausible on the basis of an unpublished study which matched interviewed households in one month with the noninterviewed file for the preceding and succeeding months. Data for the calendar year 1963 showed that, for each quarter, noninterviewed households identified in this way, had consistently higher proportions of female heads, persons of "other marital status" (married, spouse absent; widowed; or divorced), and persons over 65, than did interviewed households. These same groups tend to be lower than the average in voting participation. This matching procedure fails to include the "hard core" of noninterviewed cases; those who are perennially not interviewed. In the absence of concrete evidence, it is reasonable to assume that persons in these households (the complete refusals, the "never-at-home's," etc.) are substantially below average in their involvement in the community and therefore in their voting turnout.

A rough calculation based on the noninterview rate for the November 1964 CPS shows that the sample nonrespondents represented 4 million persons of voting age. If the assumption were made, for illustrative purposes, that only one-half of the number of nonrespondents of voting ages had voted, in contrast to approximately 70 percent for members of voting age in interviewed households, the estimated number of voters would be reduced by roughly 800,000. The maximum possible adjustment would result from assuming that all noninterviewed persons were nonvoters. This would subtract approximately 2.8 million from the estimated number of voters.

---

[4] Hugh J. Parry and Helen M. Crossley, "Validity of Responses to Survey Questions," Public Opinion Quarterly, XIV (1950), pp. 61-80; Mungo Miller, "The Waukegan Study of Voter Turnout Prediction," Public Opinion Quarterly, XVI (fall 1952), pp. 381-398; Helen Dinerman, "1948 Votes in the Making--A preview," Public Opinion Quarterly, XII, (winter 1948-49), pp. 585-598.

3. CPS coverage.--An additional factor in increasing the estimate of voters derives from the coverage of the CPS sample. There is evidence that the sample is less successful in representing certain groups in the population where nonvoting may be expected to be high; for example, nonwhite males 21 to 24 years of age. In addition, the Current Population Survey results are adjusted to independent population estimates based on the 1960 Census. Insofar as the 1960 Census was also subject to net undercounts in selected age groups,[5] these will be reflected in estimates from the Current Population Survey.

4. Understatement of total voters by presidential vote.--The only index of the total number of voters available on a nationwide basis is the number of votes cast for President. This number is short of the total number of persons who voted by (a) the number of ballots which were invalidated in the counting, and (b) the number of valid ballots on which there was no vote for President. Although the office of President usually attracts the largest number of votes, not everyone who goes to the polls casts a vote for President. Some persons may, for example, vote for a Senator or Congressman but not for President. A tally of the data from eight of the States which report information on the total number of voters shows that there were 1.75 percent fewer votes cast for the office receiving the highest number of votes (in every case, the President) than the total number voting in the election.

Despite the limitations of the data just discussed, the analysis presented in this report can be regarded as generally reflecting real differences in voting behavior among classes of the population. The tables in this report reveal substantial differences in the racial, social, and economic characteristics of voters and nonvoters. These differences cannot, in the judgment of the Bureau's analysts, be explained by the discrepancies cited above.

DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

Population coverage.--The data in this report were collected in conjunction with the November 1964 sample survey which covered the population of the 50 States and the District of Columbia. The figures shown relate to the civilian noninstitutional population. Although the statistics on

---

[5] See U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1960 Census of Population, Vol. I, Characteristics of the Population, page XXXIX, for a discussion of errors in age groups in the 1960 Census.

voting in this report relate primarily to the population 21 years old and over, the minimum voting age is 21 in 46 of the States and the District of Columbia, 20 in Hawaii, 19 in Alaska, and 18 in Georgia and Kentucky; all persons of voting age in the United States are represented in the voting age population shown in this report.

Metropolitan-nonmetropolitan residence.--The population residing in standard metropolitan statistical areas (SMSA's) constitutes the metropolitan population. Except in New England, an SMSA is a county or group of contiguous counties which contains at least one city of 50,000 inhabitants or more, or "twin cities" with a combined population of at least 50,000. In addition to the county, or counties, containing such a city or cities, contiguous counties are included in an SMSA if, according to certain criteria, they are essentially metropolitan in character and are socially and economically integrated with the central city. In New England, SMSA's consist of towns and cities rather than counties. The metropolitan population in this report is based on SMSA's as defined in the 1960 Census and does not include any subsequent additions or changes.

Voting participation.--The data on voting participation were obtained by tabulating replies to the question "Did (this person) vote in the national election held on November 3?" asked about 2 weeks after the 1964 election. The accuracy of these data is discussed beginning on page 4.

Age.--The age classification is based on the age of the person at his last birthday.

Race and color.--The term "race" refers to the division of the population into three groups-- white, Negro, and other races. The group designated as "other races" consists of Indians, Japanese, Chinese, and other nonwhite races. The term "color" refers to the twofold classification, white and nonwhite.

Household.--A household includes all of the persons who occupy a house, an apartment, or other group of rooms, or a room which constitutes a housing unit under the 1960 Census rules. A group of rooms or a single room is regarded as a housing unit when it is occupied as separate living quarters; that is, when the occupants do not live and eat with any other persons in the structure, and when there is either (1) direct access from the outside or through a common hall, or (2) a kitchen or cooking equipment for the exclusive use of the occupants.

Household relationship.

Head.--One person in each household is designated as the "head." The head is usually the person regarded as the head by the members of the group. The number of heads, therefore, is equal to the number of households.

A relative of the head is any household member who is related to the head by blood, marriage, or adoption.

Primary families and individuals.--The term "primary family" refers to the head of a household and all other persons in the household related to the head by blood, marriage, or adoption. If nobody in the household is related to the head, then the head himself constitutes a "primary individual." A household can contain one and only one primary family or primary individual. The number of "primary" families and individuals is identical with the number of households.

Years of school completed.--Data on years of school completed in this report were derived from the combination of answers to two questions: (a) "What is the highest grade of school he has ever attended?" and (b) "Did he finish this grade?"

The questions on educational attainment apply only to progress in "regular" schools. Such schools include graded public, private, and parochial elementary and high schools (both junior and senior high), colleges, universities, and professional schools, whether day schools or night schools. Thus, regular schooling is that which may advance a person toward an elementary school certificate or high school diploma, or a college, university, or professional school degree. Schooling in other than regular schools was counted only if the credits obtained were regarded as transferable to a school in the regular school system.

Employment status.--The civilian labor force comprises the total of all civilians classified as employed or unemployed in accordance with the criteria described below.

Employed persons comprise those who, during the survey week, were either (a) "at work"--those who did any work, for pay or profit, or worked without pay for 15 hours or more on a family farm or business; or (b) "with a job but not at work"-- those who did not work and were not looking for work but had a job or business from which they were temporarily absent because of vacation, illness, industrial dispute, or bad weather, or because they were taking time off for various other reasons.

Unemployed persons include those who did not work at all during the survey week and were looking for work. Also included as unemployed are those who did not work at all during the survey week and

(a) were waiting to be called back to a job from which they had been laid off, (b) were waiting to report to a new wage or salary job scheduled to start within the following 30 days (and were not in school during the survey week), or (c) would have been looking for work except that they were temporarily ill or believed no work was available in their line of work or in the community.

Labor force.--Persons are classified as in the labor force if they were employed as civilians, unemployed, or in the Armed Forces during the survey week.

Not in labor force.--All civilians 14 years of age and over who are not classified as employed or unemployed are defined as "not in labor force." Included are persons "engaged in own home housework," "in school," "unable to work" because of long-term physical or mental illness, retired persons, those reported as too old to work, the voluntarily idle, and seasonal workers for whom the survey week fell in an "off" season and who were not reported as unemployed. Persons doing only incidental unpaid family work (less than 15 hours) are also classified as not in the labor force.

Occupation.--Data on occupation are shown for the employed and relate to the job held during the survey week. Persons employed at two or more jobs were reported in the job at which they worked the greatest number of hours during the week. The major groups used here are mainly the major groups used in the 1960 Census of Population. The composition of these groups is shown in Volume I, Characteristics of the Population, Part 1, United States Summary.

Data are shown for 4 broad occupational groups (white-collar workers, manual workers, service workers, and farm workers), which represent combinations of the 11 major groups. All persons engaged directly in agricultural production are classified as farm workers in this report. This included farm proprietors, managers, foremen, and laborers. The nonagricultural group is subdivided into three groups. The white-collar group includes professional workers, proprietors, managers, and sales and clerical workers. The manual group includes craftsmen, machine operatives, and laborers (other than farm); and the service category includes private household workers and other service workers.

Class of worker.--The data on class of worker are for persons who worked in the previous year and refer to the job held longest during the year. Persons employed at two or more jobs were reported in the job at which they worked the greatest num-

ber of weeks. The class-of-worker classification specifies "wage and salary workers" and "self-employed workers." Wage and salary workers receive wages, salary, commissions, tips, pay in kind, or piece rates from a private employer or from a government unit. Self-employed workers have their own business, profession, or trade, or operate a farm for profit or fees. In the two-fold classification, wage and salary workers include government as well as private, and the self-employed include unpaid family workers.

Family income.--Income as defined in this report represents the combined total money income of the family before deductions for personal taxes, Social Security, bonds, etc. It is the algebraic sum of money wages and salaries, net income from self-employment, and income other than earnings received by all family members during the 12 months prior to the November 1964 survey. It should be noted that, although the family income statistics refer to receipts during the previous 12 months, the characteristics of the person, such as age, labor force status, etc., and the composition of families refer to the date of the survey.

Rounding.--The individual figures in this report are rounded to the nearest thousand without being adjusted to group totals which are independently rounded. Percentages are based on the rounded absolute numbers.

SOURCE AND RELIABILITY OF THE ESTIMATES

Source of data.--The estimates are based on data obtained in November 1964 in the Current Population Survey of the Bureau of the Census. The sample is spread over 357 areas comprising 701 counties and independent cities, with coverage in each of the 50 States and the District of Columbia. Approximately 35,000 occupied households are designated for interview in the Current Population Survey each month. Of this number, 1,500 occupied units, on the average, are visited but interviews are not obtained because the occupants are not found at home after repeated calls or are unavailable for some other reason. In addition to the 35,000, there are also about 5,000 sample units in an average month which are visited but are found to be vacant or otherwise not to be enumerated.

The estimating procedure used in this survey involved the inflation of the weighted sample results to independent estimates of the civilian noninstitutional population of the United States by age, color, and sex. These independent estimates were based on statistics from the 1960 Census

of Population; statistics of births, deaths, immigration, and emigration; and statistics on the strength of the Armed Forces.

Reliability of the estimates.--Since the estimates are based on a sample, they may differ somewhat from the figure that would have been obtained if a complete census had been taken using the same schedules, instructions, and enumerators. As in any survey work, the results are subject to errors of response and of reporting as well as being subject to sampling variability.

The standard error is primarily a measure of sampling variability, that is, of the variations that occur by chance because a sample rather than the whole of the population is surveyed. As calculated for this report, the standard error also partially measures the effect of response and enumeration errors but does not measure any systematic biases in the data. The chances are about 68 out of 100 that an estimate from the sample would differ from a complete census figure by less than the standard error. The chances are about 95 out of 100 that the difference would be less than twice the standard error.

The figures presented in tables B and C are approximations to the standard errors of various estimates shown in this report. In order to derive standard errors that would be applicable to a wide variety of items and could be prepared at a moderate cost, a number of approximations were required. As a result, the tables of standard errors provide an indication of the order of magnitude of the standard error rather than the precise standard error for any specific item.

Table B shows standard errors of the estimated number of persons in a given class who were reported as voting in the 1964 national election.

Table B.--STANDARD ERROR OF ESTIMATED NUMBER

(68 chances out of 100)

Size of estimate	Standard error	Size of estimate	Standard error
25,000.............	12,000	2,500,000..........	120,000
50,000.............	17,000	5,000,000..........	170,000
100,000............	24,000	10,000,000.........	230,000
250,000............	38,000	25,000,000.........	340,000
500,000............	54,000	50,000,000.........	420,000
1,000,000..........	77,000		

The reliability of an estimated percentage, computed by using sample data for both numerator and denominator, depends upon both the size of the percentage and the size of the total on which the percentage is based. Generally, estimated percentages are relatively more reliable than the corresponding absolute estimates of the numerator of the percentage, particularly if the percentage is high.

Table C shows standard errors of estimated percentages of persons in a given class who reportedly voted in the 1964 national election.

Table C.--STANDARD ERROR OF ESTIMATED PERCENTAGE

(68 chances out of 100)

Estimated percentage	Base of percentage (in thousands)								
	100	250	500	1,000	5,000	10,000	25,000	50,000	100,000
2 or 98...................	3.4	2.2	1.5	1.1	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.1
5 or 95...................	5.3	3.4	2.4	1.7	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.2
10 or 90..................	7.3	4.6	3.3	2.3	1.0	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.2
20 or 80..................	9.7	6.2	4.4	3.1	1.4	1.0	0.6	0.4	0.3
25 or 75..................	10.5	6.7	4.7	3.3	1.5	1.1	0.7	0.5	0.3
50........................	12.2	7.7	5.4	3.8	1.7	1.2	0.8	0.5	0.4

Illustration of the use of tables of standard errors.--Table 3 shows that 31,237,000 persons in the age group 25 to 44 years reportedly voted in the 1964 national election. Table B shows the standard error of 31,237,000 to be approximately 360,000. Chances are 68 out of 100 that a complete census would have differed from the sample results by less than 360,000. Chances are 95 out of 100 that the difference would have been less than 720,000.

These 31,237,000 voters comprised 69.0 percent of all persons 25 to 44 years. Table C shows that the standard error on an estimated 69.0 percent with a base of 45,296,000 is about 0.5 percent. Consequently, chances are 68 out of 100 that a complete census would have disclosed a figure between 68.5 and 69.5 percent, and 95 out of 100 that the figure would have been between 68.0 and 70.0 percent.