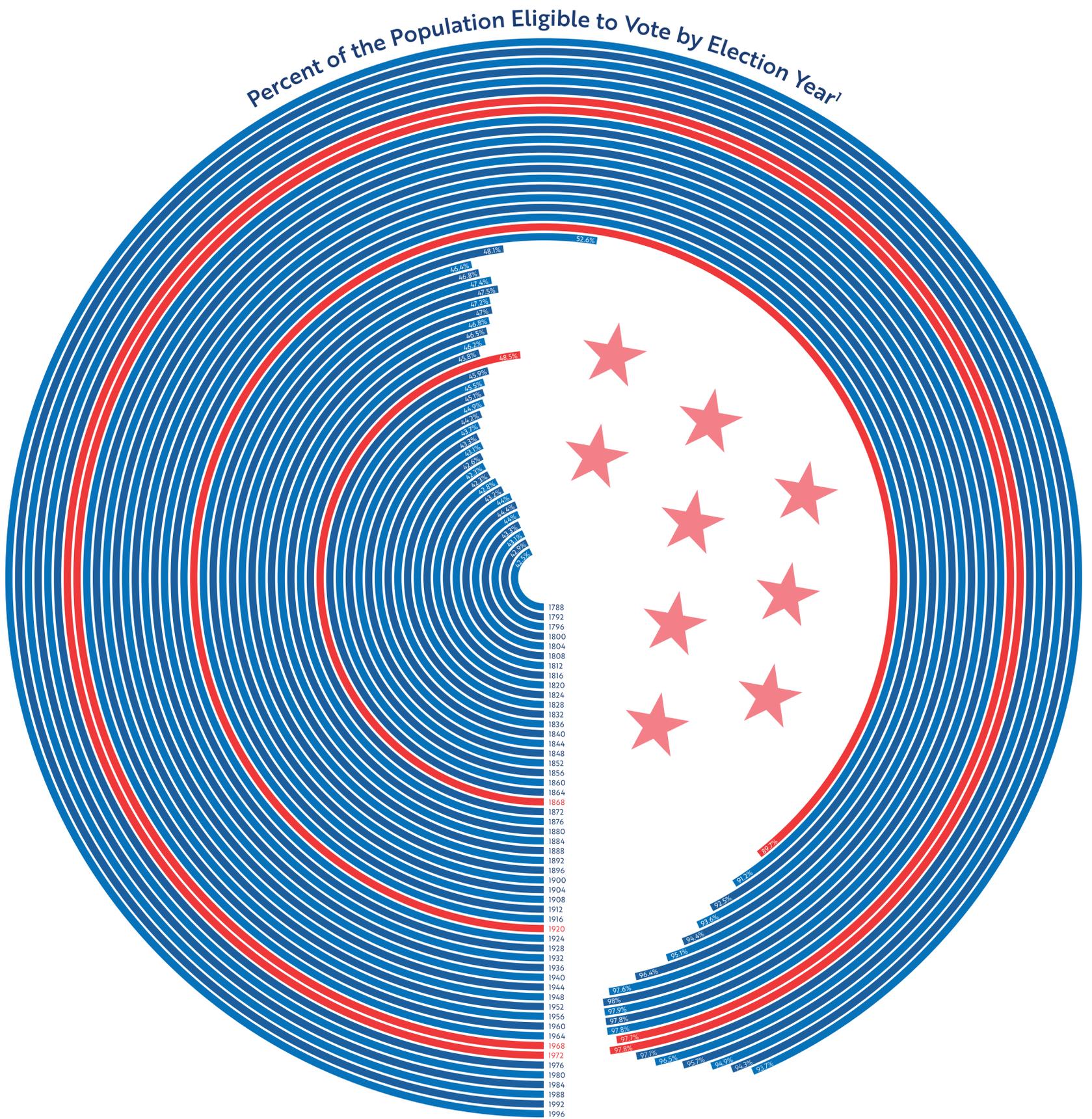


SUFFRAGE IN THE UNITED STATES

THE FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT TO VOTE



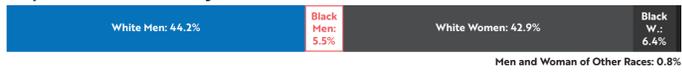
HIGHLIGHTED YEARS

Previously Eligible Voters | Newly Eligible Voters | Disenfranchised (Cannot Vote)

1868 Black Citizenship and the 14th Amendment

The 14th Amendment granted citizenship to former slaves. In 1870 the 15th Amendment passed, stating that the right to vote cannot be denied by the federal or state governments based on race. Some states began to enact measures such as voting taxes and literacy tests that restricted the actual ability of Black citizens to register to vote. Violence and other intimidation tactics were also used.

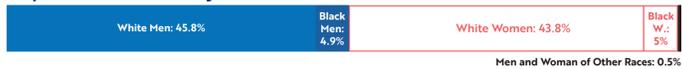
Population in 1870 by Race and Sex²



1920 Women's Suffrage and the 19th Amendment

Not long after the 15th Amendment passed, women around the country began the fight for women's suffrage. Finally passed in 1920, the 19th Amendment gave women the right to vote in both state and federal elections. Some states had passed full universal women's suffrage previously, explaining the increase in population eligibility for a couple elections prior.

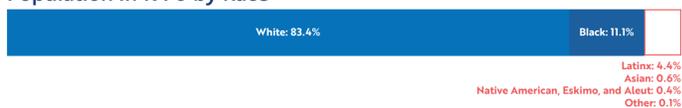
Population in 1920 by Race and Sex³



1968 First Election After the Voting Rights Act

The Voting Rights Act was a means to combat the legal barriers preventing Black citizens from voting. It banned discriminatory restrictions at the polls and provided legal oversight for polling places to be investigated for literacy tests, poll taxes, and voter registration. The act had an immediate impact and by the end of 1965 a quarter of a million new Black voters had been registered.

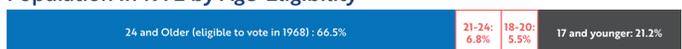
Population in 1970 by Race⁴



1972 The Draft and the 26th Amendment

The unpopular Vietnam War brought up the issue of national voting age, the argument being that those old enough to be drafted should be able to exercise the right to vote. The 26th Amendment passed in 1971, granting voting rights to 18-year-olds and older. The election in 1972 saw 25 million new voters, nearly 18% of the total voting population that year.

Population in 1972 by Age-Eligibility⁵



NOW

Disenfranchised: Who's Still Fighting to Vote?

Voters Convicted of a Felony

The United States remains one of the world's strictest nations when it comes to denying the right to vote to citizens convicted of felonies. In most states, felons are prohibited from voting while they are in prison or on parole. In some states, especially in the South, a person with a felony conviction is forever prohibited from voting in that state. These laws are a legacy of post-Civil War attempts to prevent Black Americans from voting. Ex-felons are largely poor and disproportionately of color.

Number of Disenfranchised People Due to a Felony Conviction⁶

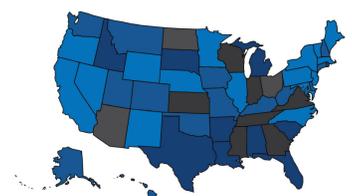


Despite significant legal changes in recent decades, over 6.1 million Americans remained disenfranchised in 2016, an entire class of citizens without a voice in changing laws.

Voters Without a Valid ID

Research has found that Black and Latinx citizens are more likely to lack qualifying identifications than white citizens. Even when these groups are eligible for free IDs through state programs, underlying documents - like birth certificates - often require a fee many low-income families cannot afford.

2020 Voter ID Laws by State and District⁷



Transgender people may be disenfranchised if the sex indicated on their identification documents (which some states require voters to provide) does not match their gender presentation, and they may be unable to update necessary identity documents.

Voter ID laws also impact the elderly, who are more likely to lack a valid birth certificate or the financial means to obtain one. An estimated 18% of American citizens age 65 and above lack state-issued photo IDs.

Undocumented immigrants - or any noncitizens - are banned from participating in the electoral process. Noncitizens' rights are a big issue currently, but without the right to vote they have little voice in their future, adding to the already tough time they face with negative social bias.

Disabled Voters

Failure to make adequate provision for disabled voters can result in the selective disenfranchisement of disabled people. Accessibility issues need to be considered in voter registration, provisions for postal voting, the selection of polling stations (many of which have physical impediments), the physical equipment of those polling stations and the training of polling station staff.

Accessibility of Polling Places⁸



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