



SNAPSHOT

October 12, 2023

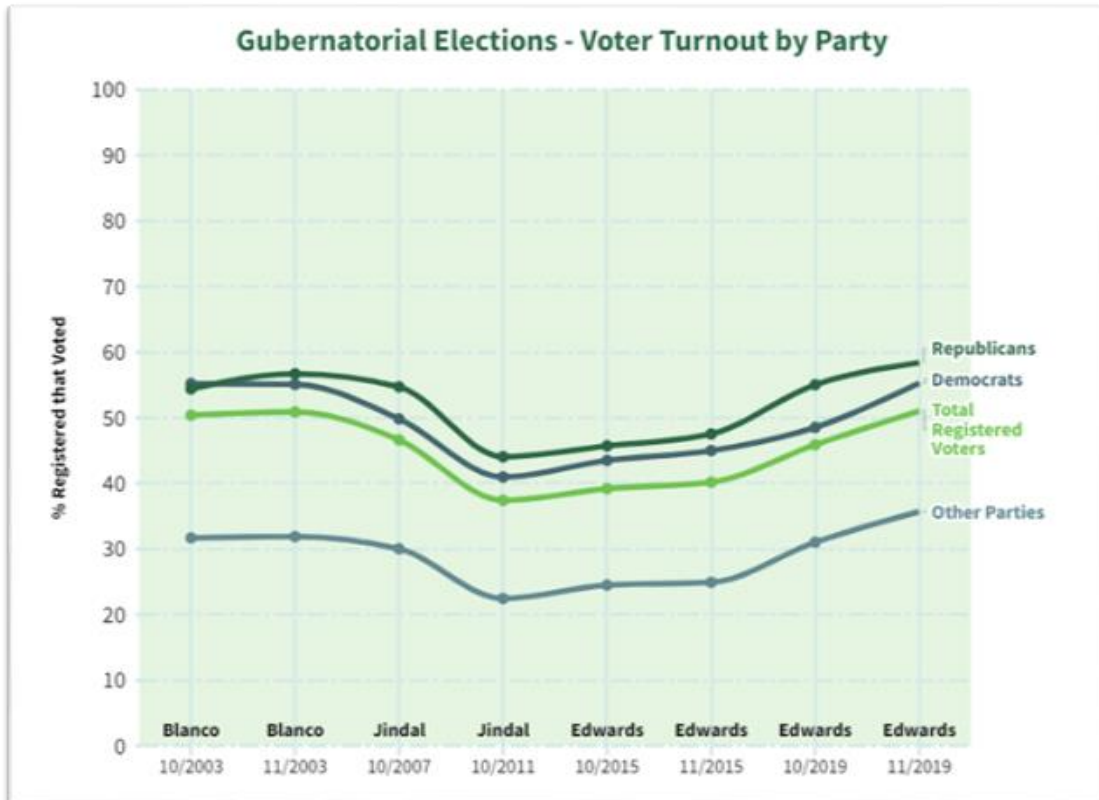
Voter Turnout in Governor’s Elections

With the end of Gov. John Bel Edwards’s second term, Louisiana voters head back to the polls Saturday for a gubernatorial primary that is expected to see lower turnout than some of the state’s prior governor’s elections over the last 20 years.

Louisiana’s last election for governor – the 2019 runoff between Edwards and businessman Eddie Rispone -- saw roughly 51% of registered voters casting ballots. This year’s election is expected to fall short of that level of turnout, with the Secretary of State’s Office predicting no more than 46% of voters will head to their polling places for Saturday’s primary.

Registration statistics from the Secretary of State’s Office reveal voter turnout demographics. A slightly higher percentage of registered Republicans tend to vote than Democrats. In the 2019 gubernatorial runoff, the voter turnout for Republicans was about 3% higher than Democrats.

That’s a largely consistent trend. Across the past 20 years, the average difference in voter turnout in gubernatorial elections between registered Republicans and Democrats was 3%.



Source: [Louisiana Secretary of State: Post Election Statistics – statewide](#)



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To provide context on these voter turnout percentages, the number of registered voters in Louisiana has increased from nearly 2.8 million to nearly 3 million since 2003, with the ranks of Republicans and no-party voters increasing while Democrats lost registrants, according to data from the Secretary of State's Office.

While about 1.6 million Democrats were registered for the 2003 governor's election, that number has fallen to fewer than 1.2 million.

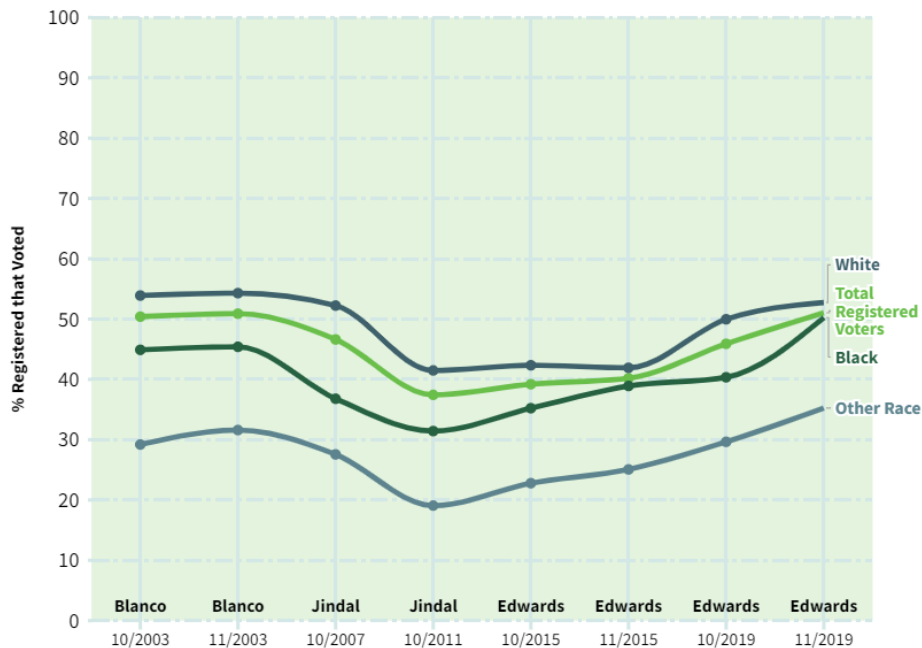
Across the aisle, the number of registered Republicans grew from 646,000 in 2003 to more than 1 million for the current election, according to the state registration data. Similarly, the number of voters not affiliated with a political party increased from about 543,000 in 2003 and to more than 815,000, making up 27% of registered voters.

Republicans comprise 34% of Louisiana's registered voters, and Democrats make up 39%.

While Louisiana has about 5% fewer registered Republicans than Democrats, information from the Secretary of State's Office shows a greater number of Republicans voted early for Saturday's election than Democrats. Nearly 155,000 GOP voters cast ballots in last week's early voting period, compared to 140,000 Democrats, the data shows.

About 40,000 fewer people overall voted early for this year's primary in the governor's race compared to 2019.

Gubernatorial Elections - Voter Turnout by Race



Source: [Louisiana Secretary of State: Post Election Statistics – statewide](#)



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A disparity exists between White and Black voter turnout across governor's races over the last two decades.

Since 2003, the average difference in turnout between registered White and Black voters in elections for governor was 8%. A notable exception to this trend was the 2019 runoff when the turnout of Black voters was only 2% lower.

Black voters constitute 31% of the total registered, while White voters make up 63%, and other races constitute 6% of the voter rolls. Of those who early voted last week, the vast majority were White, while 26% were Black.

Polls across the state will be open Saturday from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. Voters will be selecting candidates for governor, other statewide offices, seats in the Louisiana Legislature and local offices. They'll also be deciding proposed amendments to the Louisiana Constitution.

Runoff elections, as needed, as well as another round of constitutional amendments, will be on the Nov. 18 ballot.

Information about what's on the ballot is available online through the [Secretary of State's Office](#). Voter-specific election information can be found on the [Geaux Vote](#) website and app.

PAR has published several resources to help prepare voters for Election Day.

To make sense of the eight proposed amendments on the October and November ballots, check out the [PAR Guide to the 2023 Constitutional Amendments](#). Also be sure to watch PAR's [State Treasurer Candidate Forum](#) and [Secretary of State Candidate Forum](#) to learn more about these candidates. PAR's recently published [Statewide Elected Officials' Job Duties and Responsibilities](#) is also a useful source to read before voting on statewide officials.