

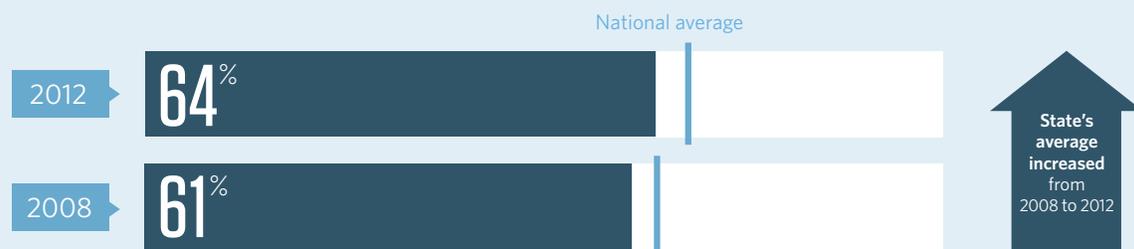


# Arizona

## Elections Performance Index

This profile reports important trends for Arizona that emerged from the 2012 update to The Pew Charitable Trusts' Elections Performance Index, or EPI. The EPI analyzes 17 key indicators of election administration and scores each state's performance by indicator and overall. For more information and to view the full interactive index, visit [www.pewstates.org/epi](http://www.pewstates.org/epi).

### Overall EPI Average\*



Key indicators	2008	2012
Mail ballots unreturned	6.4%	19.7%
Military and overseas ballots unreturned	36.6%	28.6%
Provisional ballots cast out of all ballots	6.5%	7.9%
Voter registration rate	82.9%	77.5%
Voting wait time	23.7 minutes	10.8 minutes

\*The overall EPI average is a simple average of all 17 indicators.

## Beyond the numbers

Arizona's overall EPI average increased more than 3 percentage points, just below the average improvement across the country.

This was due, in part, to Arizona's addition of four out of five online voter information lookup tools in 2012. In 2008, the state had zero of two possible tools, but four years later it offered tools for finding polling place, registration status, absentee ballot status, and provisional ballot status.

The state also improved its rate of unreturned military and overseas ballots, which fell from 36.6 percent (fifth-highest) to 28.6 percent, one of the largest decreases in the country from 2008 to 2012.

The average time that Arizona voters waited to vote also decreased, falling nearly 13 minutes, from more than 23 minutes in 2008 to just under 11 minutes in 2012, the fourth-largest drop in the nation.

The state was the first to offer online voter registration, which has been in place since 2002.

## Room for improvement

In 2008, Arizona had the highest rate of provisional ballots cast in the nation. In 2012, it continued to issue large numbers of these ballots; its rate rose from 6.5 percent to 7.9 percent, the third-highest. Maricopa County alone issued approximately 120,000 provisional ballots and counted nearly 100,000 at an estimated cost of \$635,000 in materials and processing. Almost 30,000 of the county's provisional ballots were issued because voters had moved within the county and their addresses were not up to date.<sup>1</sup>

Upgrading voter registration lists can minimize these kinds of issues. The [Presidential Commission on Election Administration](#) recommends participating in data-sharing agreements, such as the Electronic Registration Information Center, which can help address these issues, allowing states to get more accurate and up-to-date information on voters who move or die, and reduce the rate of provisional ballot use.<sup>2</sup>

Additionally, the state's rate of unreturned mail ballots skyrocketed in 2012, from 6.4 percent in 2008 to 19.7 percent (fifth-highest), the third-biggest increase of any state. In both years, Arizona had permanent mail voting, allowing any voter to request mail ballots for all future elections. Such a large jump could indicate a systemic problem and is worthy of further research to learn the cause and identify possibly remedies.

## Endnotes

- 1 "Cost of Provisional Ballots in Maricopa County, AZ," The Pew Charitable Trusts, Election Data Dispatches, Feb. 26, 2013, <http://www.pewstates.org/research/analysis/cost-of-provisional-ballots-maricopa-county-az-85899454045>.
- 2 Gary Bland and Barry C. Burden, *Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC): Stage 1 Evaluation; Report to The Pew Charitable Trusts* (Research Triangle Park, NC: RTI International), [http://www.rti.org/pubs/eric\\_stage1report\\_pewfinal\\_12-3-13.pdf](http://www.rti.org/pubs/eric_stage1report_pewfinal_12-3-13.pdf).

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## For further information, please visit:

[pewstates.org/epi](http://pewstates.org/epi)

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