

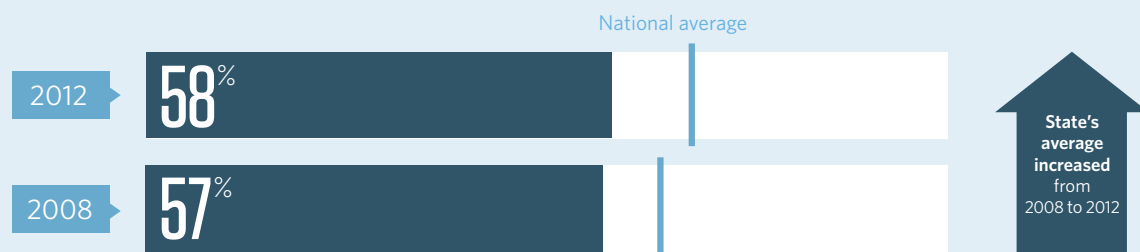


# New York

## Elections Performance Index

This profile reports important trends for New York 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
Data completeness	0%	83.8%
Online registration available	No	Yes
Provisional ballots cast out of all ballots	Incomplete data	6.9%
Turnout	59.6%	53.6%
Voting information lookup tools	2 of 2	2 of 5

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

## Beyond the numbers

New York was one of the lowest-performing states in 2008, 2010, and 2012 and was one of only six states in the bottom 25 percent in all three years. Recent investigations into the New York City Board of Elections, which serves more than half the state's voters, found poor poll-worker training, problems with voter lists, and inadequately maintained voting systems.<sup>1</sup> In one positive step, the state added online voter registration in 2012.

## Room for improvement

Although New York provided more data in 2012 than it did four years earlier, the large increase in that category is somewhat misleading. In 2008, New York was the only state that did not provide any county-level data, and

in 2012, it still performed among the bottom 25 percent of states on the data completeness indicator. This means that New York does not have enough data to provide a reliable measurement on three 2012 indicators: mail ballots unreturned, mail ballots rejected, and registrations rejected. The state can work with local election officials to establish or improve collection and reporting of the key performance data measured in this index, a change that was also recommended by the [Presidential Commission on Election Administration](#).

Of five possible online voting information lookup tools, New York provided only two. Ten states offered all the online tools, which provide voters with the information they need about an election where they are most likely to look for it: online.

The state also had one of the highest rates of provisional ballots issued and the highest rate of provisional ballots rejected, but this was probably due at least in part to Hurricane Sandy. Voters displaced by the storm were allowed to cast provisional ballots at any polling place in the state. Because New York did not submit adequate county-level data in 2008, it is impossible to determine whether the state has ongoing systemic problems with provisional ballots or whether the high 2012 rates simply resulted from the hurricane. More data and research in future years should help to answer this question.

Upgrading voter registration lists by participating in data-sharing agreements such as the Electronic Registration Information Center can help address these issues, allowing states to get more accurate and up-to-date information on voters who move or die and to reduce the rate of provisional ballot use.<sup>2</sup> Participating in data-sharing agreements is also a recommendation of the Presidential Commission on Election Administration.

## Endnotes

- 1 Rose Gill Hearn, *New York City Department of Investigation Report on the New York City Board of Elections' Employment Practices, Operations, and Election Administration*, December 2013, <http://www.pewstates.org/research/analysis/investigation-reveals-problems-recommends-reform-in-new-york-city-elections-85899533308>.
- 2 Gary Bland and Barry C. Burden, *Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC): Stage 1 Evaluation Report to The Pew Charitable Trusts*, 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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