

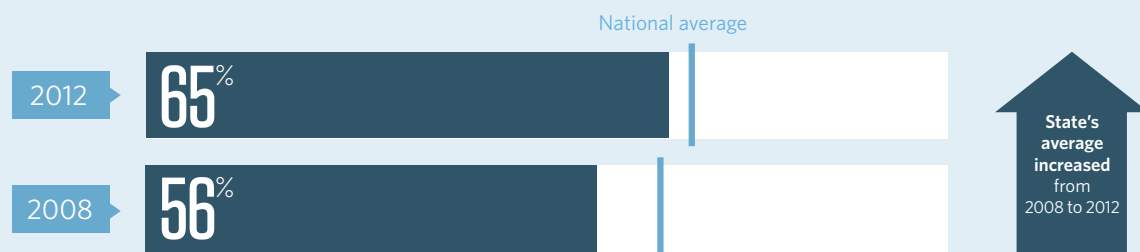


South Carolina

Elections Performance Index

This profile reports important trends for South Carolina 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.

Overall EPI Average*



Key indicators	2008	2012
Data completeness	88.0%	81.8%
Online registration available	No	Yes
Voter registration rate	80.7%	82.5%
Voting information lookup tools	1 of 2	4 of 5
Voting wait time	61.5 minutes	25.2 minutes

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

Beyond the numbers

South Carolina was one of the lowest-performing states in 2008 and 2010, but in 2012 the Palmetto State jumped almost 9 percentage points from its 2008 average, moving out of the bottom 25 percent of states for the first time.

This improvement was driven almost entirely by two metrics:

- The state adopted online voter registration before the 2012 election. This reform not only improved the state's performance on the online voter registration indicator, but it likely had a positive impact on other metrics, including registration rate, wait time, nonvoting due to registration and absentee ballot problems, and provisional ballots cast.

- South Carolina significantly reduced the average voter wait time. In 2008, the state had by far the longest average wait time in the country: more than one hour. In 2012, this dropped to just over 25 minutes, a marked improvement though still the fifth-highest nationwide.

Room for improvement

South Carolina can improve its overall EPI average in a number of ways. The state could require a postelection audit of voting equipment to ensure that vote totals match the votes cast and that any problems related to machinery are discovered and reported.

South Carolina is also providing less complete data than in 2008 and remains in the bottom third of states for this indicator. The state can work with local election officials to establish or improve collection and reporting processes for key performance data.

Additionally, the state can upgrade its voter registration lists by participating in data-sharing agreements, such as the Electronic Registration Information Center, that can help reduce nonvoting due to registration problems and reduce the rate of provisional ballot use by allowing states to get more accurate and up-to-date information on voters who move or die.¹

The [Presidential Commission on Election Administration](#) recommends postelection audits, thorough data collection, and participation in data-sharing agreements.

South Carolina had one of the highest rates of nonvoting due to a disability or illness in both 2008 and 2012. More research is needed to examine the causes and identify strategies to address the problem administratively.

Endnote

- 1 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.

For further information, please visit:

pewstates.org/epi

Contact: Stephanie Bosh, officer, communications
Email: sbosh@pewtrusts.org
Project website: pewstates.org/elections

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