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DoD Releases New Estimates, Survey of Overseas Voters

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — Today the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) released a detailed analysis of American voters overseas that estimates the population of eligible voters and includes results of the first-ever representative survey of registered overseas voters who requested an absentee ballot.

“Accurately estimating and studying overseas U.S. citizens who are eligible to vote presents many challenges,” FVAP Director Matt Boehmer said. “I am proud that this innovative study will greatly increase our knowledge of and ability to serve this important group.”

FVAP estimates there are 2.6 million U.S. citizens who live abroad and are eligible to vote in U.S. elections. Based on this research, the voting rate for all eligible overseas voters in 2014 was 4 percent. “While we can expect to see an increase in the overall voting rates for the 2016 Presidential Election, we need to understand whether the overall rate for 2014 is due to low awareness of how to vote absentee or if it is related to other factors,” Boehmer said. “We will continue to leverage this new methodology following the 2016 General Election.”

FVAP used data from foreign countries, U.S. Government administrative sources and academic studies to estimate the number of Americans eligible to vote in countries around the world. Countries with the largest numbers of eligible U.S. voters (age 18 and older) are Canada, the United Kingdom, France, Israel, Japan and Australia.

To learn more about the registered voters among the broader population of eligible overseas voters, FVAP surveyed U.S. citizens who lived abroad and requested a ballot for the November 2014 election. Fifty-seven percent said they voted, which is more indicative of traditional calculations of voter turnout.

While there is no typical member of this diverse group, the average age is 49; two-thirds are working; and they are highly educated, with nearly half holding a graduate or professional degree and another third holding a bachelor’s degree. They last lived in the U.S. an average of 13.6 years ago, and nearly half (43%) are dual citizens.

Survey respondents included 8,078 U.S. citizens (excluding members of the Armed Forces and their spouses) who resided overseas for the November 4, 2014 federal election and



requested an absentee ballot. Conducted from September to December 2015, the survey used a probability-based sample and a mixed-mode design in which responses could be submitted online or mailed. Estimates are weighted, and the survey has a margin of error of $\pm 1.51\%$ at a 95% confidence level.

More information, including the full report and detailed methodology, can be found here: https://www.fvap.gov/uploads/FVAP/Reports/FVAP-OCPA_201609_final.pdf

Study summary available at: <https://www.fvap.gov/uploads/FVAP/Reports/FVAP-OCPAsummarybrief.pdf>

Infographic available at:

https://www.fvap.gov/uploads/FVAP/Reports/FVAP_OCPAinfographic.jpg

U.S. voters living overseas can visit FVAP.gov for their state's specific voter registration and ballot request deadlines, as well as tools and information for completing a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) — the voter registration and ballot request form — or the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) — the backup ballot. Voters can fill out the forms by hand or use the online assistant before they print, sign and send them to their election office.

For additional information, visit FVAP.gov, email vote@fvap.gov or call 1-800-438-VOTE (8683).

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Federal Voting Assistance Program

The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) is a Department of Defense (DoD) organization that works to ensure Service members, their eligible family members, and overseas citizens are aware of their right to vote and have the tools and resources to successfully do so — from anywhere in the world.

FVAP assists voters through partnerships with the Military Services, Department of State, Department of Justice, and election officials from 50 States, U.S. territories and the District of Columbia. State and local governments administer U.S. elections, including those for federal offices. FVAP supports state and local election officials by providing absentee voting information, materials, training and guidance.

Voters can contact FVAP's call center at 1-800-438-VOTE (8683), DSN 425-1584 or at vote@fvap.gov. Toll-free phone numbers from 67 countries are listed at FVAP.gov. Find FVAP on Facebook at [facebook.com/DoDFVAP](https://www.facebook.com/DoDFVAP) and follow @FVAP on Twitter.