

North Carolina data-net

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JULY 2011, ISSUE 51

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THE PROGRAM ON PUBLIC LIFE

is a non-partisan organization devoted to serving the people of North Carolina and the South by informing the public agenda and nurturing leadership. The Program on Public Life is part of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

North Carolina's 'Big 15' in Voter Turnout

FERREL GUILLORY

Director, Program on Public Life

This issue of DataNet lives up to its name: It is chock-full of data. This issue also returns to a recurring theme of the Program on Public Life: That the robust "metropolitanization" of North Carolina increasingly shapes our state's economy, culture and politics.

The 2010 Census counted 9.54 million people residing in North Carolina, up from 8.05 million in 2000. Of the approximately 1.5 million population increase, one-third came in only two counties — Wake grew by 273,000 people, Mecklenburg by 224,000. No other county had population increase of six digits.

Still, several counties in the metropolitan orbits of the state's two mega-counties had population growth well above the state rate of 18.5 percent. Union County grew by more than 77,000 — a stunning 62.6 percent increase. Johnston County grew by 38 percent, Cabarrus 35 percent, Iredell 30 percent.

To continue assessing the political implications of these population shifts, we focus on the 15 counties with the highest voter-turnout totals in the 2008 presidential and statewide elections. These 15 counties accounted for 53 percent of total votes cast in North Carolina.

Why use the 2008 general election rather than the most recent 2010 general election? Because the 4.35 million voter-turnout in 2008 far exceeded the 2.7 million turnout in 2010. Why rank counties by voters rather than by residents for this analysis? Because voting matters, and it signifies a county's political strength. Orange ranks in the top 15 in voting, but not in the top 20 in population. Davidson is 14th in population but ranked 17th in 2008 voters.

Of course, the 47 percent of the votes cast in the other 85 counties also count, and can make a difference in a tight race for public office. In our democracy, every person's vote counts the same. And yet, the drawing of legislative and congressional districts, as well as statewide

campaign strategies, bend toward places with the highest concentration of people and voters.

Here, then, are some observations drawn from the collection of data in this issue:

- The big 15 can be arrayed in three tiers: Wake and Mecklenburg, both with more than 400,000 voters, constitute the first tier. The second tier, consisting of counties with more than 100,000 votes cast, includes, in order, Guilford, Forsyth, Durham, Cumberland, Buncombe, and New Hanover. In the third tier are Union, Gaston, Cabarrus, Pitt, Orange, Iredell and Johnston.
- Several counties — notably Johnston, Buncombe, Cumberland and Guilford — had markedly higher growth rates in registered voters than in population over the past decade. In contrast, Forsyth, Durham and Orange had voter-registration gains much lower than their overall population gains.
- Even as the big 15 have accumulated political power through population growth, the exercise of their power is restrained by their partisan divisions. Look at the straight-ticket ballots cast, and you see certain counties with a distinctly Democratic tilt and others with a distinctly Republican tilt. Metropolitan areas combine core cities and sprawling suburbs, plus outlying exurbs and patches of rural land. Metro areas have their internal frictions, differences of interests and viewpoints sometimes defined by old jurisdictional boundaries. Metro areas send both Republicans and Democrats to Raleigh where they often divide along city-suburb, Democratic-Republican lines.
- Even as metro North Carolina has become partisan battleground, all of the big 15 counties have had substantial growth in voters registered as unaffiliated. In most of these

counties, one-fourth or more of the voters registered unaffiliated rather than as a Democrat or a Republican.

- Metro counties tend to have a much higher percentage of Hispanic residents than of Hispanic registered voters. For example, Hispanics comprise 10 percent of Union County’s population — nearly 21,000 people — but only 2 percent of them — 2,300 — are registered to vote. Similarly, Johnston County has 21,800 Hispanics, but only 1,303 are registered. Of course, many Hispanics are too young to vote, or have not established residency. And yet, the data point to the potential of significant gains in Latino voting from strong registration and get-out-the-vote drives by candidates and political parties.

One more observation, derived from an analysis I wrote earlier this year at the invitation of the North Carolina Metropolitan Mayors Coalition: I divided all current legislative districts (pre-redistricting) into two categories: metro and non-metro. House and Senate districts with territory completely or partially in the top 15 counties were categorized as “metro.” Districts outside the top 15 were listed as non-metro.

I acknowledge that this process produces anomalies: House District 96, totally within Catawba County, becomes non-metro, while House District 92 that stretches across Iredell, Surry and Yadkin becomes “metro.” Overall, I think, the anomalies mostly wash out.

By this general calculation, the current Senate has 30 metro and 20 non-metro districts. Republicans hold 16 of the metro and 15 of the non-metro districts. Democrats now hold 14 metro and only 5 non-metro Senate districts.

The House, with more compact districts than the Senate, has 64 metro districts that include some or all of the top 15. It has 56

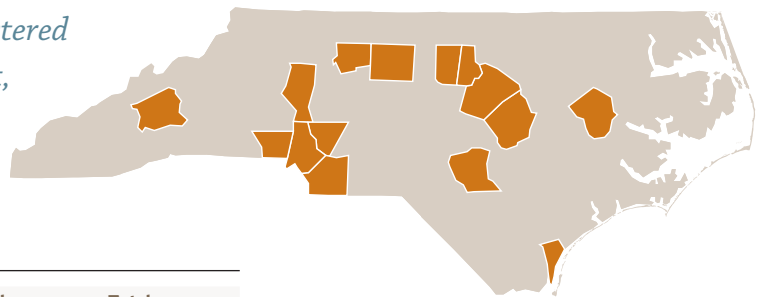
non-metro districts that do not include the top 15. In the House, the GOP has 29 metro and 38 non-metro districts. Democrats have 35 metro and 17 non-metro districts. An unaffiliated legislator represents a non-metro district.

Out of this rather crude — but, I think, telling — construct arise several general findings about the characteristics of metropolitan representation. The 2010 elections have highlighted an emerging trend, potentially another shift away from long-standing North Carolina patterns. The Republican Party has picked up rural and non-metro legislative seats that used to serve as bastions of Democratic legislative strength. Yes, Republicans maintain a strong presence in metro areas, especially suburbs and exurbs, but the GOP now has more of a non-metro tilt than the Democrats.

The center of gravity in the Democratic Party, meanwhile, now appears in the core counties of the state’s major metro areas. The Democratic legislative minority has a more of a metro than a rural tilt. ☒

For their work in gathering, displaying and helping me analyze this data, let me thank: 1) Eliza Kern, a rising UNC senior, a budding political analyst, who took two courses of mine in the 2010–11 academic year; Todd Brantley, who recently earned a master’s degree from the School of Journalism and Mass Communication and is now associate communications director at MDC, a non-profit research organization in Chapel Hill; and Lauren Broeils-Norwood, a designer at UNC Creative, a division of the Office of University Relations, who for several years has contributed her talents to displaying data and text in our publications, NC DataNet and Carolina Context, in attractive and readable formats.

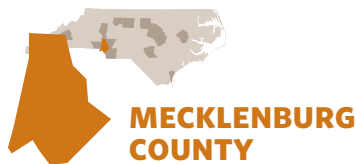
Several counties — notably Johnston, Buncombe, Cumberland and Guilford — had markedly higher growth rates in registered voters than in population over the past decade. In contrast, Forsyth, Durham and Orange had voter-registration gains much lower than their overall population gains.



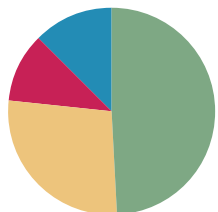
North Carolina Registered Voters*

County	White	Black	American Indian	Hispanic	Other	Total
Mecklenburg	372,205	183,363	1,585	12,286	16,024	602,947
Wake	422,110	117,674	1,274	10,111	16,658	585,719
Guilford	220,986	112,340	921	3,536	5,594	350,018
Forsyth	155,492	61,617	402	3,268	3,875	227,005
Cumberland	97,897	78,568	2,008	7,568	9,925	196,392
Durham	96,616	71,288	425	3,132	3,934	183,330
Buncombe	158,426	10,308	334	1,364	2,947	176,441
New Hanover	121,183	19,667	287	1,178	1,631	146,639
Gaston	105,293	18,973	263	1,319	1,305	128,441
Union	103,791	14,780	292	2,369	2,576	124,180
Cabarrus	88,419	16,470	240	1,726	1,628	110,026
Pitt	65,928	34,216	223	843	1,719	104,183
Iredell	86,835	12,170	158	1,185	1,072	102,832
Orange	80,814	12,523	247	1,668	2,657	102,170
Johnston	81,654	15,891	283	1,303	1,821	101,553
Total	2,257,649	779,848	8,942	52,856	73,366	3,241,876
State Totals	4,531,720	1,337,923	48,351	78,525	106,433	6,195,310
% of State Totals	50%	58%	18%	67%	69%	52%

*As of October 30, 2010

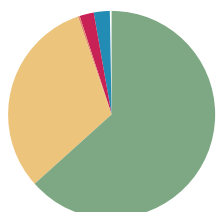


2010 POPULATION



White 508,946
Black 282,804
Hispanic 111,944
Other* 127,878

2010 REGISTRATION



White 372,205
Black 183,363
Hispanic 12,286
Other 16,024
American Indian 1,585

POPULATION

	2000	2010	Percent Change
Total	695,370	919,628	32%
Registered to Vote	460,144	602,947	31%



REGISTRATION

Year	Total Registered	Registered Dems	Percent Dem	Registered GOP	Percent GOP	Registered Unaffiliated	Percent Unaffiliated
2000	460,144	200,210	44%	168,625	37%	90,565	20%
2010	602,947	275,581	46%	171,560	29%	154,886	26%



PARTICIPATION

Year	Total ballots cast	Percent turnout of registered voters	Straight Dem ballots cast	Percent ballots straight Dem	Straight GOP ballots cast	Percent ballots straight GOP
2008	415,268	66%	148,381	36%	81,729	20%
2010	228,929	38%	65,290	29%	51,763	23%

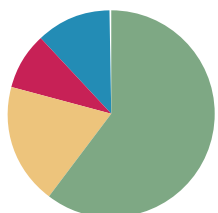
PERFORMANCE



Year	President	Senate	Governor
2000	51% Bush - R 48% Gore - D	N/A	48% Easley - D 51% Vinroot - R
2004	48% Bush - R 52% Kerry - D	44% Burr - R 54% Bowles - D	59% Easley - D 40% Ballantine - R
2008	62% Obama - D 37% McCain - R	62% Hagan - D 35% Dole - R	49% Perdue - D 49% McCrory - R
2010	N/A	52% Marshall - D 46% Burr - R	N/A

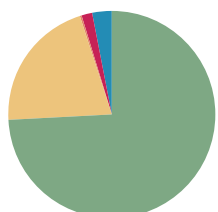


2010 POPULATION



White 597,546
Black 186,510
Hispanic 87,922
Other* 116,937

2010 REGISTRATION



White 422,110
Black 117,674
Hispanic 10,111
Other 16,658
American Indian 1,274

POPULATION

	2000	2010	Percent Change
Total	627,866	900,993	44%
Registered to Vote	399,849	585,719	47%



REGISTRATION

Year	Total Registered	Registered Dems	Percent Dem	Registered GOP	Percent GOP	Registered Unaffiliated	Percent Unaffiliated
2000	399,849	177,211	44%	141,291	35%	85,887	21%
2010	585,719	245,252	42%	177,860	30%	161,437	28%



PARTICIPATION

Year	Total ballots cast	Percent turnout of registered voters	Straight Dem ballots cast	Percent ballots straight Dem	Straight GOP ballots cast	Percent ballots straight GOP
2008	444,013	75%	129,316	29%	83,870	19%
2010	279,946	48%	71,869	26%	64,676	23%

PERFORMANCE



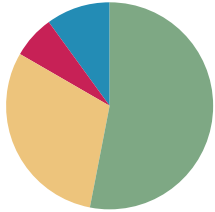
Year	President	Senate	Governor
2000	54% Bush - R 46% Gore - D	N/A	55% Easley - D 43% Vinroot - R
2004	51% Bush - R 49% Kerry - D	47% Burr - R 51% Bowles - D	59% Easley - D 40% Ballantine - R
2008	57% Obama - D 43% McCain - R	56% Hagan - D 41% Dole - R	51% Perdue - D 45% McCrory - R
2010	N/A	49% Burr - R 48% Marshall - D	N/A

*Includes American Indian and Alaskan Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian, Other race, Two or more races



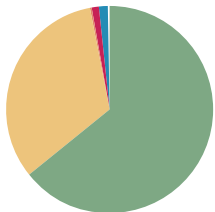
GUILFORD COUNTY

2010 POPULATION



White 278,525
Black 158,899
Hispanic 34,826
Other* 50,982

2010 REGISTRATION



White 220,986
Black 112,340
American Indian 921
Other 5,594



POPULATION

	2000	2010	Percent Change
Total	421,048	488,406	16%
Registered to Vote	283,206	350,018	24%



REGISTRATION

Year	Total Registered	Registered Dems	Percent Dem	Registered GOP	Percent GOP	Registered Unaffiliated	Percent Unaffiliated
2000	283,206	144,413	51%	96,826	34%	46,390	16%
2010	350,018	173,063	49%	101,528	29%	74,941	21%



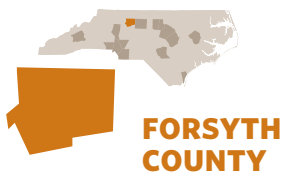
PARTICIPATION

Year	Total ballots cast	Percent turnout of registered voters	Straight Dem ballots cast	Percent ballots straight Dem	Straight GOP ballots cast	Percent ballots straight GOP
2008	243,764	69%	91,996	38%	48,258	20%
2010	140,251	41%	37,203	27%	33,993	24%

PERFORMANCE

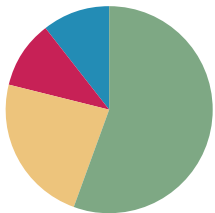


	President	Senate	Governor
2000	51% Bush - R 49% Gore - D	N/A	56% Easley - D 42% Vinroot - R
2004	50% Bush - R 50% Kerry - D	45% Burr - R 54% Bowles - D	61% Easley - D 38% Ballantine - R
2008	59% Obama - D 41% McCain - R	62% Hagan - D 36% Dole - R	57% Perdue - D 40% McCrory - R
2010	N/A	50% Burr - R 48% Marshall - D	N/A



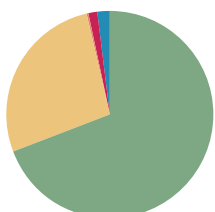
FORSYTH COUNTY

2010 POPULATION



White 218,517
Black 91,227
Hispanic 41,775
Other* 40,926

2010 REGISTRATION



White 155,492
Black 61,617
American Indian 2,008
Other 3,875



POPULATION

	2000	2010	Percent Change
Total	306,063	350,670	15%
Registered to Vote	208,173	227,005	9%



REGISTRATION

Year	Total Registered	Registered Dems	Percent Dem	Registered GOP	Percent GOP	Registered Unaffiliated	Percent Unaffiliated
2000	208,173	97,834	47%	77,823	37%	32,225	15%
2010	227,005	103,312	46%	74,788	33%	48,570	21%



PARTICIPATION

Year	Total ballots cast	Percent turnout of registered voters	Straight Dem ballots cast	Percent ballots straight Dem	Straight GOP ballots cast	Percent ballots straight GOP
2008	167,871	76%	55,684	33%	32,870	20%
2010	96,583	43%	20,112	21%	23,636	24%

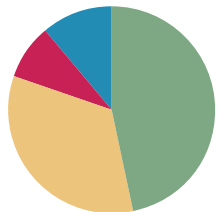
PERFORMANCE



	President	Senate	Governor
2000	56% Bush - R 43% Gore - D	N/A	52% Easley - D 46% Vinroot - R
2004	54% Bush - R 46% Kerry - D	53% Burr - R 46% Bowles - D	56% Easley - D 42% Ballantine - R
2008	55% Obama - D 44% McCain - R	57% Hagan - D 40% Dole - R	55% Perdue - D 42% McCrory - R
2010	N/A	55% Burr - R 43% Marshall - D	N/A

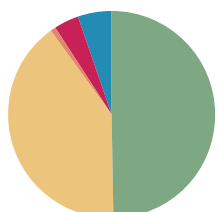


2010 POPULATION



White 164,064
Black 117,117
Hispanic 30,190
Other* 38,250

2010 REGISTRATION



White 97,897
Black 78,568
American Indian 2,008
Other 9,925

POPULATION

	2000	2010	Percent Change
Total	302,967	319,431	5%
Registered to Vote	164,347	196,392	20%

REGISTRATION

Year	Total Registered	Registered Dems	Percent Dem	Registered GOP	Percent GOP	Registered Unaffiliated	Percent Unaffiliated
2000	164,347	87,363	53%	45,180	27%	31,531	19%
2010	196,392	101,585	52%	48,479	25%	46,047	23%

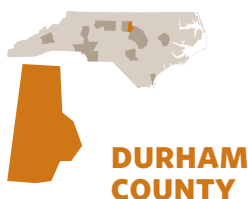
PARTICIPATION

Year	Total ballots cast	Percent turnout of registered voters	Straight Dem ballots cast	Percent ballots straight Dem	Straight GOP ballots cast	Percent ballots straight GOP
2008	128,878	62%	51,151	40%	21,832	17%
2010	69,644	36%	21,061	30%	11,750	17%

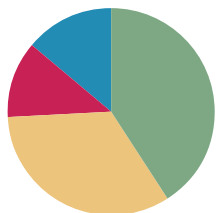
PERFORMANCE



	President	Senate	Governor
2000	49% Bush - R 50% Gore - D	N/A	59% Easley - D 39% Vinroot - R
2004	52% Bush - R 48% Kerry - D	46% Burr - R 52% Bowles - D	63% Easley - D 37% Ballantine - R
2008	59% Obama - D 41% McCain - R	61% Hagan - D 37% Dole - R	62% Perdue - D 36% McCrory - R
2010	N/A	53% Marshall - D 45% Burr - R	N/A

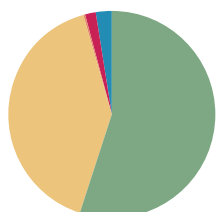


2010 POPULATION



White 124,274
Black 101,577
Hispanic 36,077
Other* 41,736

2010 REGISTRATION



White 96,616
Black 71,288
American Indian 425
Other 3,934

POPULATION

	2000	2010	Percent Change
Total	223,314	267,587	20%
Registered to Vote	162,339	183,330	13%

REGISTRATION

Year	Total Registered	Registered Dems	Percent Dem	Registered GOP	Percent GOP	Registered Unaffiliated	Percent Unaffiliated
2000	162,339	97,819	60%	35,714	22%	28,431	18%
2010	183,330	111,512	61%	28,279	15%	43,267	24%

PARTICIPATION

Year	Total ballots cast	Percent turnout of registered voters	Straight Dem ballots cast	Percent ballots straight Dem	Straight GOP ballots cast	Percent ballots straight GOP
2008	137,358	77%	58,469	43%	12,523	9%
2010	81,477	49%	23,702	29%	5,966	7%

PERFORMANCE

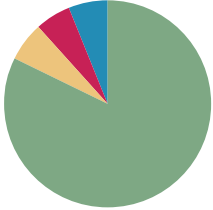


	President	Senate	Governor
2000	63% Gore - D 35% Bush - R	N/A	69% Easley - D 29% Vinroot - R
2004	68% Kerry - D 32% Bush - R	70% Bowles - D 29% Burr - R	73% Easley - D 25% Ballantine - R
2008	76% Obama - D 24% McCain - R	74% Hagan - D 24% Dole - R	71% Perdue - D 25% McCrory - R
2010	N/A	71% Marshall - D 27% Burr - R	N/A

*Includes American Indian and Alaskan Native, Asian, Native Hawaiiin, Other race, Two or more races

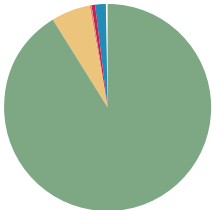


2010 POPULATION



White 208,192
Black 15,211
Hispanic 14,254
Other* 14,915

2010 REGISTRATION



White 158,426
Black 10,308
American Indian 334
Other 2,947



POPULATION

	2000	2010	Percent Change
Total	206,289	238,318	16%
Registered to Vote	141,686	176,441	25%



REGISTRATION

Year	Total Registered	Registered Dems	Percent Dem	Registered GOP	Percent GOP	Registered Unaffiliated	Percent Unaffiliated
2000	141,686	69,118	49%	46,687	33%	25,585	18%
2010	176,441	76,961	44%	48,118	27%	51,020	29%



PARTICIPATION

Year	Total ballots cast	Percent turnout of registered voters	Straight Dem ballots cast	Percent ballots straight Dem	Straight GOP ballots cast	Percent ballots straight GOP
2008	124,791	71%	38,905	31%	21,521	17%
2010	80,565	46%	20,918	26%	13,747	17%

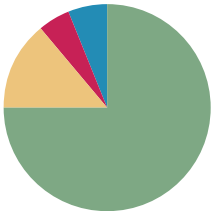
PERFORMANCE



	President	Senate	Governor
2000	54% Bush - R 45% Gore - D	N/A	51% Easley - D 46% Vinroot - R
2004	50% Bush - R 49% Kerry - D	46% Burr - R 51% Bowles - D	58% Easley - D 40% Ballantine - R
2008	56% Obama - D 42% McCain - R	58% Hagan - D 38% Dole - R	57% Perdue - D 39% McCrory - R
2010	N/A	50% Marshall - D 47% Burr - R	N/A

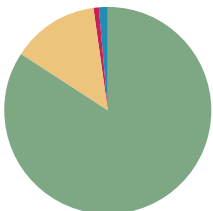


2010 POPULATION



White 160,298
Black 29,907
Hispanic 10,716
Other* 12,462

2010 REGISTRATION



White 121,183
Black 19,667
American Indian 287
Other 1,631



POPULATION

	2000	2010	Percent Change
Total	160,327	202,667	26%
Registered to Vote	116,602	146,639	26%



REGISTRATION

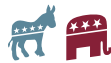
Year	Total Registered	Registered Dems	Percent Dem	Registered GOP	Percent GOP	Registered Unaffiliated	Percent Unaffiliated
2000	116,602	50,101	43%	46,121	40%	22,284	19%
2010	146,639	54,765	37%	50,052	34%	41,453	28%



PARTICIPATION

Year	Total ballots cast	Percent turnout of registered voters	Straight Dem ballots cast	Percent ballots straight Dem	Straight GOP ballots cast	Percent ballots straight GOP
2008	101,398	70%	23,736	23%	18,474	18%
2010	64,704	44%	9,038	14%	10,807	17%

PERFORMANCE



	President	Senate	Governor
2000	55% Bush - R 44% Gore - D	N/A	56% Easley - D 42% Vinroot - R
2004	56% Bush - R 44% Kerry - D	52% Burr - R 46% Bowles - D	53% Easley - D 45% Ballantine - R
2008	50% McCain - R 49% Obama - D	54% Hagan - D 42% Dole - R	49% Perdue - D 46% McCrory - R
2010	N/A	59% Burr - R 39% Marshall - D	N/A



POPULATION

	2000	2010	Percent Change
Total	190,316	206,086	8%
Registered to Vote	115,213	128,441	11%

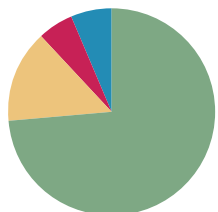
REGISTRATION

Year	Total Registered	Registered Dems	Percent Dem	Registered GOP	Percent GOP	Registered Unaffiliated	Percent Unaffiliated
2000	115,213	50,654	44%	45,733	40%	18,751	16%
2010	128,441	48,184	38%	50,006	39%	30,073	23%

PARTICIPATION

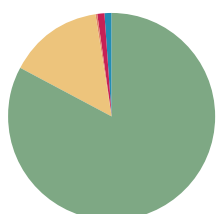
Year	Total ballots cast	Percent turnout of registered voters	Straight Dem ballots cast	Percent ballots straight Dem	Straight GOP ballots cast	Percent ballots straight GOP
2008	85,184	67%	18,124	21%	22,405	26%
2010	50,057	39%	8,176	16%	13,545	27%

2010 POPULATION



White 161,166
Black 31,431
Hispanic 12,201
Other* 13,489

2010 REGISTRATION



White 105,293
Black 18,973
American Indian 263
Other 1,305
Hispanic 1,319



PERFORMANCE

	President	Senate	Governor
2000	67% Bush - R 33% Gore - D	N/A	59% Vinroot - R 39% Easley - D
2004	60% Bush - R 40% Kerry - D	63% Burr - R 36% Bowles - D	53% Ballantine - R 45% Easley - D
2008	62% McCain - R 37% Obama - D	55% Dole - R 42% Hagan - D	63% McCrory - R 35% Perdue - D
2010	N/A	66% Burr - R 31% Marshall - D	N/A

2010 Census

County	Total Population	White	Black or African American	American Indian and Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	Some Other Race	Two or More Races	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)
Mecklenburg	919,628	508,946	282,804	4,261	42,352	668	57,113	23,484	111,944
Wake	900,993	597,546	186,510	4,503	48,553	387	40,928	22,566	87,922
Guilford	488,406	278,525	158,899	2,594	19,176	235	17,675	11,302	34,826
Forsyth	350,670	218,517	91,227	1,457	6,495	223	25,167	7,584	41,775
Cumberland	319,431	164,064	117,117	5,140	7,090	1,225	9,943	14,852	30,190
Durham	267,587	124,274	101,577	1,339	12,278	172	21,094	6,853	36,077
Buncombe	238,318	208,192	15,211	948	2,417	289	6,266	4,995	14,254
Gaston	206,086	161,166	31,431	850	2,478	63	6,315	3,783	12,201
New Hanover	202,667	160,298	29,907	1,005	2,410	130	4,852	4,065	10,716
Union	201,292	158,954	23,558	815	3,271	63	10,760	3,871	20,967
Cabarrus	178,011	134,149	27,219	659	3,513	65	8,664	3,742	16,767
Johnston	168,878	125,349	25,546	939	1,021	51	12,653	3,319	21,814
Pitt	168,148	99,075	57,257	582	2,613	97	5,136	3,388	9,202
Iredell	159,437	128,646	19,047	547	2,922	43	5,348	2,884	10,844
Orange	133,801	99,495	15,928	570	9,023	41	5,341	3,403	11,017
Total	4,903,353	3,167,196	1,183,238	26,209	165,612	3,752	237,255	120,091	470,516
State Total	9,535,483	6,528,950	2,048,628	122,110	208,962	6,604	414,030	206,199	800,120
% of State Total	51%	49%	58%	21%	79%	57%	57%	58%	59%

*Includes American Indian and Alaskan Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian, Other race, Two or more races

Young Adult Voting: 2010 falls short of 2008

BY ELIZA KERN

In the fall of 2008, my roommate registered students to vote on the campus of UNC at Chapel Hill. She carried around a huge sign that said, "Ask Me About Voting," mounted on a six-foot long piece of PVC piping. She totes it everywhere and was merciless in asking students if they had registered for the historic election. She joined scores of Young Democrats and somewhat fewer College Republicans on the campus in flooding students with messages of democracy and civic duty. It was hard to avoid registration.

But in the fall of 2010, it was a different scenario. My roommate's PVC pipe voting sign was gone, as were the flocks of voting-minded activists on campus. There were the occasional supporters of U.S.

of the 967,804 new voter registrations in the state between January and November, according to data compiled from the State Board of Elections by Democracy NC. CNN exit polls found that voters 18-29 accounted for 17 percent of the vote in 2008 (as compared to 14 percent in 2004), and overwhelmingly chose Barack Obama to John McCain, 72 to 28 percent. That amounts to about 500,000 votes for Obama, significant considering he won the state by only about 14,000 votes.

"If not for young people, North Carolina would still be a red state," John Della Volpe, director of polling at the Institute of Politics at Harvard University, told the Triangle's Independent Weekly in 2008.

But 2010 was a different story. Despite predictions that the Millennial generation had finally arrived in politics, 18-25 year-olds composed 11 percent of registered voters for the 2010 midterm election, and made up only 5 percent of the population who voted. They had a turnout rate of only 17 percent (as compared to a 60 percent turnout rate for citizens older than 66).

According to the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) at Tufts University, young voter turnout rates in 2010 nationwide returned to typical levels for midterm elections after an unprecedented year in 2008. And because only about 13 percent of youth voters in 2010 were casting ballots for the first time, the 2010 youth electorate was mainly a subset of 2008 voters, as opposed to newly-registered participants.

Most significantly, a segment of the population typically known for supporting liberal candidates for office turned out in much greater numbers for Republicans than for Democrats in North Carolina. Registered Republicans ages 18-25 year-olds enjoyed a turnout rate of 24 percent, as compared to a 17 percent rate for registered Democrats in the same age bracket in 2010.

While this age group represents a relatively minority portion of the electorate, and certainly did not hand Republicans a victory in 2010, it does raise questions as to the depth of young Democrats' commitments to their party and their President that was so widely-touted after the 2008 election. This question of their commitment will remain highly relevant in the upcoming 2012 re-election campaign.

While that race will likely see greater turnout among all age groups by its nature as a presidential year, Democrats will need to work to convince their young 2008 supporters to return to the voting booth if they hope to keep Obama in the White House, and Republicans must convince their 2010 supporters to keep coming back.



Senate candidates, Democrat Elaine Marshall or Republican Richard Burr, attempting to convince students to pick a side, but the impetus to register wasn't nearly what it was in 2008.

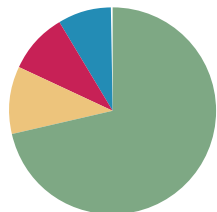
And the trend on the Chapel Hill campus was not unusual — after a historic election in 2008, in which large numbers of young citizens ages 18-25 registered to vote and cast ballots, 2010 saw a predictable but significant drop in political participation among voters in this age group. And interestingly, the majority of those who cast ballots were not the Democrats who brought President Obama to office in 2008, but young Republicans, who in 2010 brought their party to power in both houses of the state legislature for the first time since 1898.

In 2008, there is no doubt that young voters played a significant role in the outcome of the election in North Carolina. Young adult citizens between the ages of 18 and 25 accounted for about a third



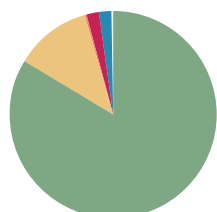
UNION COUNTY

2010 POPULATION



White 158,954
Black 23,558
Hispanic 20,967
Other* 18,780

2010 REGISTRATION



White 103,791
Black 14,780
Hispanic 2,369
American Indian 292
Other 2,576



POPULATION

	2000	2010	Percent Change
Total	123,772	201,292	63%
Registered to Vote	79,121	124,180	57%



REGISTRATION

Year	Total Registered	Registered Dems	Percent Dem	Registered GOP	Percent GOP	Registered Unaffiliated	Percent Unaffiliated
2000	79,121	31,122	39%	33,817	43%	14,090	18%
2010	124,180	37,969	31%	54,349	44%	31,631	25%



PARTICIPATION

Year	Total ballots cast	Percent turnout of registered voters	Straight Dem ballots cast	Percent ballots straight Dem	Straight GOP ballots cast	Percent ballots straight GOP
2008	86,949	72%	16,863	19%	27,975	32%
2010	50,302	40%	7,211	14%	14,578	29%



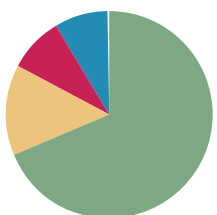
PERFORMANCE

Year	President	Senate	Governor
2000	67% Bush - R 31% Gore - D	N/A	62% Vinroot - R 36% Easley - D
2004	70% Bush - R 30% Kerry - D	66% Burr - R 33% Bowles - D	58% Ballantine - R 41% Easley - D
2008	63% McCain - R 36% Obama - D	58% Dole - R 39% Hagan - D	69% McCrory - R 29% Perdue - D
2010	N/A	69% Burr - R 28% Marshall - D	N/A



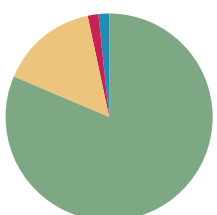
CABARRUS COUNTY

2010 POPULATION



White 134,149
Black 27,219
Hispanic 16,767
Other* 16,643

2010 REGISTRATION



White 88,419
Black 16,470
Hispanic 1,726
American Indian 240
Other 1,628



POPULATION

	2000	2010	Percent Change
Total	131,063	178,011	36%
Registered to Vote	87,673	110,026	26%



REGISTRATION

Year	Total Registered	Registered Dems	Percent Dem	Registered GOP	Percent GOP	Registered Unaffiliated	Percent Unaffiliated
2000	87,673	35,147	40%	36,835	42%	15,600	18%
2010	110,026	38,557	35%	43,827	40%	27,452	25%



PARTICIPATION

Year	Total ballots cast	Percent turnout of registered voters	Straight Dem ballots cast	Percent ballots straight Dem	Straight GOP ballots cast	Percent ballots straight GOP
2008	78,667	72%	16,010	20%	17,919	23%
2010	48,143	44%	6,090	13%	7,966	17%



PERFORMANCE

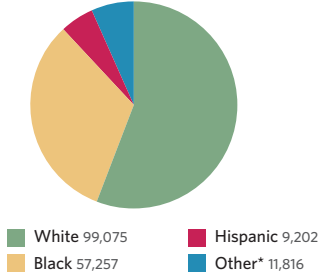
Year	President	Senate	Governor
2000	66% Bush - R 33% Gore - D	N/A	59% Vinroot - R 39% Easley - D
2004	67% Bush - R 33% Kerry - D	62% Burr - R 37% Bowles - D	50% Ballantine - R 48% Easley - D
2008	59% McCain - R 40% Obama - D	52% Dole - R 44% Hagan - D	63% McCrory - R 35% Perdue - D
2010	N/A	64% Burr - R 33% Marshall - D	N/A

*Includes American Indian and Alaskan Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian, Other race, Two or more races

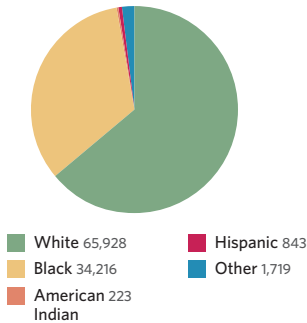


PITT COUNTY

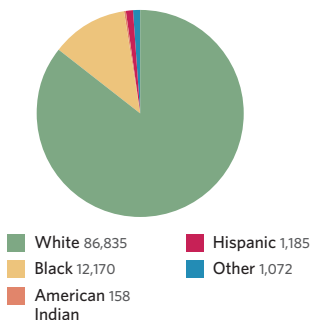
2010 POPULATION



2010 REGISTRATION



2010 REGISTRATION



POPULATION

	2000	2010	Percent Change
Total	133,719	168,148	26%
Registered to Vote	82,715	104,183	26%



REGISTRATION

Year	Total Registered	Registered Dems	Percent Dem	Registered GOP	Percent GOP	Registered Unaffiliated	Percent Unaffiliated
2000	82,715	46,100	56%	23,381	28%	12,180	15%
2010	104,183	54,717	52%	27,571	26%	21,722	21%



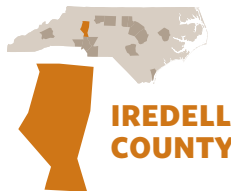
PARTICIPATION

Year	Total ballots cast	Percent turnout of registered voters	Straight Dem ballots cast	Percent ballots straight Dem	Straight GOP ballots cast	Percent ballots straight GOP
2008	75,392	71%	28,164	37%	14,709	20%
2010	41,812	40%	13,911	33%	9,221	22%



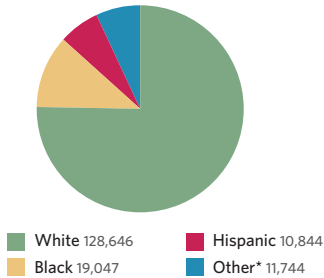
PERFORMANCE

	President	Senate	Governor
2000	54% Bush - R 46% Gore - D	N/A	60% Easley - D 39% Vinroot - R
2004	53% Bush - R 47% Kerry - D	50% Burr - R 49% Bowles - D	58% Easley - D 41% Ballantine - R
2008	54% Obama - D 45% McCain - R	56% Hagan - D 42% Dole - R	59% Perdue - D 39% McCrory - R
2010	N/A	51% Burr - R 48% Marshall - D	N/A

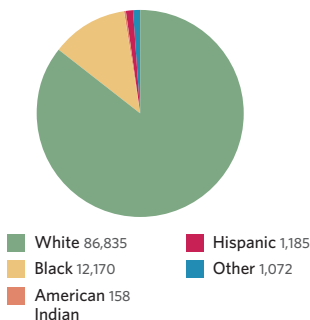


IREDELL COUNTY

2010 POPULATION



2010 REGISTRATION



POPULATION

	2000	2010	Percent Change
Total	122,660	159,437	30%
Registered to Vote	79,762	102,832	29%



REGISTRATION

Year	Total Registered	Registered Dems	Percent Dem	Registered GOP	Percent GOP	Registered Unaffiliated	Percent Unaffiliated
2000	79,762	33,792	42%	32,709	41%	13,172	17%
2010	102,832	34,000	33%	42,598	41%	26,090	25%



PARTICIPATION

Year	Total ballots cast	Percent turnout of registered voters	Straight Dem ballots cast	Percent ballots straight Dem	Straight GOP ballots cast	Percent ballots straight GOP
2008	73,696	73%	13,755	19%	18,415	25%
2010	43,258	42%	5,600	13%	10,338	24%



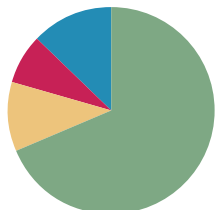
PERFORMANCE

	President	Senate	Governor
2000	65% Bush - R 34% Gore - D	N/A	58% Vinroot - R 41% Easley - D
2004	68% Bush - R 32% Kerry - D	63% Burr - R 36% Bowles - D	52% Ballantine - R 47% Easley - D
2008	62% McCain - R 37% Obama - D	55% Dole - R 41% Hagan - D	65% McCrory - R 33% Perdue - D
2010	N/A	67% Burr - R 30% Marshall - D	N/A



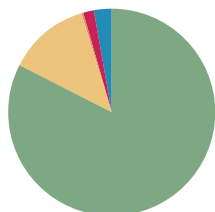
ORANGE COUNTY

2010 POPULATION



White 99,495
Black 15,928
Hispanic 11,017
Other* 18,378

2010 REGISTRATION



White 80,814
Black 12,523
Hispanic 1,668
American Indian 247
Other 2,657



POPULATION

	2000	2010	Percent Change
Total	115,537	133,801	16%
Registered to Vote	94,899	102,170	8%



REGISTRATION

Year	Total Registered	Registered Dems	Percent Dem	Registered GOP	Percent GOP	Registered Unaffiliated	Percent Unaffiliated
2000	94,899	51,733	55%	22,444	24%	20,391	21%
2010	102,170	53,502	52%	18,512	18%	29,907	29%



PARTICIPATION

Year	Total ballots cast	Percent turnout of registered voters	Straight Dem ballots cast	Percent ballots straight Dem	Straight GOP ballots cast	Percent ballots straight GOP
2008	75,194	71%	30,412	40%	8,972	12%
2010	46,127	45%	16,016	35%	4,188	9%



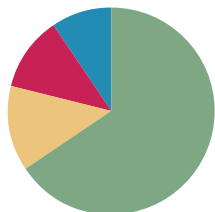
PERFORMANCE

Year	President	Senate	Governor
2000	63% Gore - D 36% Bush - R	N/A	67% Easley - D 31% Vinroot - R
2004	67% Kerry - D 33% Bush - R	68% Bowles - D 31% Burr - R	72% Easley - D 26% Ballantine - R
2008	72% Obama - D 27% McCain - R	70% Hagan - D 27% Dole - R	65% Perdue - D 30% McCrory - R
2010	N/A	68% Marshall - D 30% Burr - R	N/A



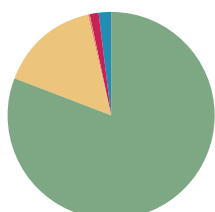
JOHNSTON COUNTY

2010 POPULATION



White 125,349
Black 25,546
Hispanic 21,814
Other* 17,983

2010 REGISTRATION



White 81,654
Black 15,891
Hispanic 1,303
American Indian 283
Other 1,821



POPULATION

	2000	2010	Percent Change
Total	121,900	168,878	39%
Registered to Vote	68,737	101,553	48%



REGISTRATION

Year	Total Registered	Registered Dems	Percent Dem	Registered GOP	Percent GOP	Registered Unaffiliated	Percent Unaffiliated
2000	68,737	33,562	49%	25,200	37%	9,886	14%
2010	101,553	39,130	39%	38,544	38%	23,721	23%



PARTICIPATION

Year	Total ballots cast	Percent turnout of registered voters	Straight Dem ballots cast	Percent ballots straight Dem	Straight GOP ballots cast	Percent ballots straight GOP
2008	71,466	71%	15,280	21%	16,596	23%
2010	47,998	47%	7,529	16%	13,073	27%



PERFORMANCE

Year	President	Senate	Governor
2000	66% Bush - R 33% Gore - D	N/A	51% Easley - D 48% Vinroot - R
2004	68% Bush - R 32% Kerry - D	62% Burr - R 37% Bowles - D	51% Ballantine - R 48% Easley - D
2008	61% McCain - R 38% Obama - D	55% Dole - R 42% Hagan - D	56% McCrory - R 42% Perdue - D
2010	N/A	66% Burr - R 32% Marshall - D	N/A

*Includes American Indian and Alaskan Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian, Other race, Two or more races



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at CHAPEL HILL

North Carolina
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