Voter turnout is shockingly low in elections for mayor and other local officials across the United States. For the most recent round of mayoral elections in America’s 30 largest cities, turnout of eligible citizens in 15 of them was less than 20%.

Turnout in Miami’s November 5, 2013 mayoral election was lower than in many cities, with less than one-eighth of the city’s eligible citizens casting a ballot. Miami neighborhoods where voter turnout exceeded the city average had a higher share of residents 65 years and older; a lower share of racial/ethnic minorities; and a higher percentage of owner-occupied homes.

VOTER TURNOUT RANKING

Miami ranked 24th for voter turnout among the 30 largest cities, with 12% of eligible citizens casting a ballot.

MIAMI RESIDENTS LIVING IN VOTING DESERTS

In Miami, 9.7% of residents lived in “voting deserts,” areas where turnout was half (or less) than the citywide average. Seventeen cities had a lower rate of voting deserts than Miami.

AGE GAP

The median age of those who voted in Miami was 68 while the median age of Miami’s adult population was 45. This “age gap” of 23 years ranks Miami 27th. The top city has the lowest age gap.

OLDER VOTERS HAVE MORE ELECTORAL CLOUT

A Miami resident over the age of 65 is 22 times more likely to cast a ballot than a younger resident between the ages of 18 and 34, giving older voters much more “electoral clout.”

All data refer to each city’s “determinative” mayoral election, which in most cases was either its only contest, or the second round or “run-off” election. However, in several cities (e.g. Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York City) the dominant party primary election was considered determinative.
Who’s voting in local elections in Miami?

Only 12% of eligible citizens voted in the last election

MEDIAN AGE OF VOTERS IN LAST ELECTION VS. ADULT POPULATION: MIAMI

Voters

Adult Population

68 yrs.

45 yrs.

MEDIAN AGE OF VOTERS IN LAST ELECTION VS. ADULT POPULATION: 30 LARGEST U.S. CITIES

Voters

Adult Population

57 yrs.

42 yrs.

TURNOUT OF REGISTERED VOTERS BY AGE GROUP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>65+</th>
<th>18-34</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 Largest U.S. Cities</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: Caution should be used in making city-to-city comparisons of registered voter turnout since cities vary widely in how frequently they update voter registration rolls.

Explore the data: Visit whovotesformayor.org for an in-depth look at who’s voting in local elections in Miami and other cities around the country, including maps comparing voter turnout with factors like age, race, and education.

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