National Federation of the Blind 2020 Blind and Low-Vision Voter Survey

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First survey following 2008 general election

We also conducted surveys following the 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2020 general elections
Two separate surveys for 2020 general election
  - In-person voters
  - Absentee/by-mail voters
Total of 524 blind and low-vision voters completed the survey
  - 333 completed in-person survey
  - 191 completed absentee/by-mail survey
64% of survey participants voted at their polling place
36% of survey participants voted absentee
Results of 2020 In-Person Blind Voter Survey

- Were you offered or did you request an accessible voting machine?
  - In 2020, 92% answered yes
  - Highest value: 92% in 2020 and 2016
  - Lowest value: 63% in 2008
Results of 2020 In-Person Blind Voter Survey

- Was the accessible BMD up and running when you arrived at the polls?
  - In 2020, 68% answered yes
  - Only a slight improvement from the 66% reported in the 2016 and 2018 surveys
  - Highest value: 87% in 2008
  - Lowest value: 63% in 2012
Results of 2020 In-Person Blind Voter Survey

- Did poll workers have problems setting up or activating the accessible voting machine?
  - 24% answered yes in 2020
  - Highest percentage that responded yes was 33% in 2018, 2016, and 2012
  - Lowest value: 19% in 2008
Results of 2020 In-Person Blind Voter Survey

- Were you able to vote privately and independently using an accessible voting machine?
  - 77% said yes in 2020
  - Highest reported value: 86% in 2008 and 85% in 2016
  - Lowest value: 75% in 2012 and 2018
Results of 2020 In-Person Blind Voter Survey

- Percentage of blind and low-vision voters who voted at the polls with assistance:
  - 2020: 25%
  - 2018: 29%
  - 2016: 17%
  - 2014: 21%
  - 2012: 32%
  - 2008: 37%
Results of 2020 Absentee/By-Mail Blind Voter Survey

- Methods used to mark absentee ballot:
  - 37% marked paper ballot with assistance
  - 35% used an accessible electronic ballot delivery system to privately and independently mark their ballot
  - 20% independently hand marked a paper ballot
  - 8% used a Braille ballot or plastic template
Results of 2020 Absentee/By-Mail Blind Voter Survey

- Reasons for choosing to use an electronic ballot delivery system:
  - To avoid risk of exposure to COVID-19 at the polling place: 42%
  - Paper ballot is inaccessible to me: 40%
  - I wanted to try it: 24%
  - I voted in an all vote by mail state: 6%
Results of 2020 Absentee/By-Mail Blind Voter Survey

- Reasons for choosing to use a traditional paper ballot:
  - To avoid exposure to COVID-19 at the polls: 49%
  - I used a paper ballot for previous election(s): 28%
  - There is not an accessible way to vote absentee in my state: 18%
Results of 2020 Absentee/By-Mail Blind Voter Survey

- Access technology used to mark absentee/by-mail ballot:
  - Screen reader: 35%
  - CCTV: 7%
  - Screen magnification: 5%
  - Refreshable Braille display: 3%
  - Other technology (hand-held magnifier, smartphone magnifier app): 13%
- Did not use access technology to mark ballot: 48%
Results of 2020 Absentee/By-Mail Blind Voter Survey

- 85% of survey respondents who used an electronic ballot delivery system said they found it easy to use.
- 7% said they encountered problems when printing the ballot or that printing the ballot was difficult.