

## Introduction

**This report on the political demography and geography of three Midwest states**—Ohio, Michigan, and Missouri—is part of a series of reports on “purple” states in the 2008 elections. (Previous reports focused on Pennsylvania and Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico and Arizona in the West. A companion report will focus on Virginia and Florida in the South)

Purple states are states where the current balance of political forces does not decisively favor one party or the other, as it does in the solid red (Republican) and blue (Democratic) states. But demographic and geographic trends are constantly testing the balance in these purple states.

The three states focused on in this report are not only strongly “in play” in 2008, but they have the greatest electoral voting heft in the Midwest (aside from Illinois, the very blue state which is the home state of Democratic nominee Barak Obama). The significance of Ohio is well known, due to George W. Bush’s razor thin victory over John Kerry in 2004. But Michigan and Missouri are also seen to be “up for grabs.”

While Michigan has “gone blue” in each presidential election since 1988, its 2004 Democratic margin was only 4 percent. The underlying demographics of the state and the modest rate at which these demographics are changing suggest the state will once again be highly contestable.

Missouri voted for George W. Bush in the last two presidential elections and has a reputation for going with a winner. In every election since 1900 with the exception of one (1956 when it supported Adlai Stevenson), it has voted for the national victor. Bush’s 2004 victory margin was 7 percent in Missouri and recent statewide senatorial and gubernatorial elections have gone to both parties and by even closer margins.

From a demographic standpoint, these states are less “glamorous” than more dynamic battleground states like Colorado, Nevada, or Florida. In those states, the sheer growth and turnover in the electorate, accompanied Hispanic population gains, can stir up the pot enough to upend past election trends. However, in the slow-growing Midwest states examined in this report, the voting population is changing much more slowly, so any shift from the past will likely be less dramatic.

**Table 1. Growth by Race and Migration Components:  
Ohio, Michigan, Missouri, 2000-2007**

	Ohio	Michigan	Missouri
2007 Population (000s)	11,467	10,072	5,878
Growth Rate*			
Total	0.9	1.2	4.9
White**	-0.9	-0.5	2.9
Black**	4.1	0.7	6.1
Asian**	31.7	29.7	34.0
Hispanic	29.5	23.2	48.9
Migration Rate*			
Domestic Migration	-2.6	-3.6	0.7
Immigration	0.8	1.5	0.9
* rates per 100 populaton			
** non-Hispanic members of race			
Source: Authors' analysis of US Census estimates			

The demographic stagnation, particularly in Ohio and Michigan is evident from **Table 1**. Between 2000 and 2007, these two states grew only at about one percent. Each also exhibited a net loss of domestic migrants to other parts of the country which was not nearly equaled by immigrants from abroad. Missouri grew more briskly than these two states, but also below the national average.

Michigan and Ohio also exhibited declines in their nonfarm employment growth since 2000 by -8.9 percent and -3.6 percent respectively. Missouri showed a relatively modest gain of 1.7 percent

Compared to the nation as a whole, each of the three states varies on a number of attributes (**Table 2**). All three are whiter, older, and have residents who are more likely to be “homegrown”. They each have lower shares of college graduates and professionals, than the nation as a whole. They also have lower median household incomes. One area where they do rank above the U.S. total is their share of employees in manufacturing jobs. Here, Michigan and Ohio rank third and fourth nationally.

**Table 2. Demographic, Economic, and Political Indicators: U.S. and three states**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>U.S.</b>	<b>Ohio</b>	<b>Michigan</b>	<b>Missouri</b>
<i>Demographic Indicators / State Rank</i>				
% White	66.2	82.8 / 16	77.6 / 24	82.5 / 18
% Age 65+	12.4	13.3 / 15	12.5 / 30	13.3 / 15
% Born in Same State <sup>#</sup>	67.4	77.9 / 5	80.4 / 3	68.6 / 21
<i>Economic Indicators 2006 / State Rank</i>				
% College Grads*	27.0	23.0 / 39	24.5 / 35	24.3 / 36
% Professionals**	20.2	19.3 / 28	20.0 / 22	18.9 / 33
% Manufacturing**	11.6	17.0 / 4	18.9 / 3	12.5 / 19
Median HH Income	48,451	44,532 / 33	47,182 / 24	42,841 / 37
% Persons in Poverty	13.3	13.3 / 21	13.5 / 20	13.6 / 17
<i>State Political Indicators</i>				
<i>Dem/Rep House Members</i>		11R/7D	9R/6D	5R/4D
<i>Dem/Rep Senators</i>		1D, 1R	2D	1D, 1R
<i>Governor: Dem or Rep</i>		D	D	R
<i>Democratic Margin- 2004 Pres</i>		-2	-3	-7

<sup>#</sup> among native born residents

\*among persons age 25 and over

\*\* among civilian employed population age 16 and over

Source: Authors' analysis of 2006 American Community Survey and state election results

In sum, these states, especially Ohio and Michigan, maintain their old line industrial base profiles, despite the fact that this has not been a good decade for such economies. Yet in each of the three, there are demographic and political forces at work that are changing the profiles of these states. Growth in large cities, inner suburbs, and industrial regions has been modest at best, typically lagging behind growth in farther-out suburbs and smaller urban areas, with demographic shifts altering the composition of both growing and declining regions.

For each state in this report, we start by delineating our regions of analysis and discussing population growth patterns for the state as whole and each individual region. We then provide demographic and growth profiles for the state and each region, focusing particularly on the key

demographics of minorities, white working-age college graduates, the working-age white working class, and white seniors. We then describe the demographic voting patterns within the state, followed by an extensive discussion of how different regions within the state have trended politically since 1988. We conclude the analysis of each state with an assessment of the key trends and groups to watch as the 2008 campaign unfolds.

Together these analyses will show why these large Midwest states are especially competitive. The results of the 2008 election will reflect the final balance struck in each state between the diverse demographic and geographic trends identified below

## Data Sources and Definitions

**The demographic, polling, and voting statistics presented in this report are the latest available from authoritative sources.** The demographic profiles of states and their regions are drawn from U.S. Decennial Censuses through 2000, U.S. Census population estimates for states and counties through July 2007, and the Public Use Micro Sample of the Census Bureau's 2006 American Community Survey. Polling data are drawn from the CBS/New York Times (1988) and National Election Pool (2004 and 2006) state exit polls. Presidential and congressional election data are drawn from official county level election returns for the three states.

Our analysis of eligible voters—citizens age 18 and above—draws from the 2006 American Community Survey and the 2000 census. We examine these voters according to several social and demographic attributes. Special emphasis is given to four key demographic segments of eligible voters: (1) *minorities* - all persons stating something other than non-Hispanic white as their race-ethnicity; (2) *white seniors* - non-Hispanic whites ages 65+; (3) *working-age white college graduates* - non-Hispanic whites ages 18-64 with a four year college degree or more; and (4) *working-age white working class* - non-college-educated non-Hispanic whites ages 18-64

The sub-state regional definitions that we employ will be discussed in Part A and displayed on maps in each state-specific section. They are typically based on counties or groups thereof, comprising metropolitan areas or other regions that are strategically important in terms of their recent demographic shifts or voting trends. These regions will be used to identify sub-state trends drawn from U.S. census county population estimates and county level election returns. Regions delineated for the analyses of eligible voter demographics presented in Part B of each state-specific section, and in Appendix tables, will sometimes deviate slightly from the regional definitions presented in Part A. This is due to the geography limitations of data available with the 2006 American Community Survey Public Use Micro-Sample, which is used in these analyses. Details about these slight differences in regional definition are available from the authors.