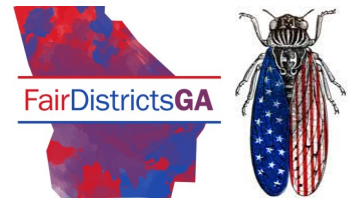


Fairness Benchmarks:

How to map a changing Georgia

Fair Districts GA &
Princeton
Gerrymandering
Project



The 2020 census shows major changes in Georgia since district maps were redrawn in 2011:

- Population grew from 9.7 million to 10.7 million people, a 10.6% increase,
- The diversity of the population increased significantly due to the growth in communities of color,
- Population shifted from rural to urban locations.

Though Georgia remains politically polarized, the overall partisan balance is more balanced; Georgia has become a swing state with close margins in statewide elections.

New district maps proposed by the Georgia General Assembly should reflect these changes in demographics and partisan balance.

Benchmarks should be used to achieve partisan balance, competitive districts, and minority representation

Working with Fair Districts GA, the Princeton Gerrymandering Project conducted a state-of-the-art analysis to create fairness benchmarks highlighted in these graphics that can be used to evaluate maps drawn by the General Assembly. These benchmarks are numeric ranges that can be used to assess the fairness of a specific district map.

It should be possible to draw maps near the midpoint of each benchmark's numeric range that meet all redistricting criteria, resulting in partisan balance, competitive districts and minority representation.

US Congress (14 Districts)



Georgia State Senate (56 Districts)



Georgia House (180 Districts)



Expected Competitive Districts

US Congress (14 Districts)



Georgia State Senate (56 Districts)



Georgia House (180 Districts)



Expected Influence Districts

* = At Least

How benchmarks were created

One way to separate the effects of gerrymandering from natural political geography is to compare each proposed map to a large collection of simulated maps drawn without political influence. Working with Fair Districts GA, the Princeton Gerrymandering Project used 2020 census data to create fairness benchmarks for the State House, State Senate, and Congress by drawing one million simulated maps per chamber and calculating the frequency of outcomes to plot a bell-shaped curve. The organization then measured partisan balance, competitive districts, and minority representation for each map to develop a numeric range for each test. Statistically, we can compare how closely a proposed map meets the benchmarks by calculating what percentage of the collection of simulated maps is similar to the proposed map. Ideally, proposed maps should closely resemble a significant number of the simulated maps.

The benchmarks presented here are a valuable tool for assessing the fairness of a specific district map, especially for determining when partisan advantage is due to natural political geography or gerrymandering. However, a computer analysis alone cannot ensure a fair map, which requires human value judgments and map-drawing intelligence. The role of benchmarking is rather to guide the map creation process by providing objective standards for comparison with proposed maps.

About Fair Districts GA and the Princeton Gerrymandering Project

Fair Districts GA is the sole non-partisan organization in Georgia focused exclusively on fighting gerrymandering, the practice of drawing legislative district lines to favor one group over another. Our ultimate goal is to reform Georgia's process for drawing state and federal electoral maps. We support stronger standards and a non-partisan, transparent, accountable redistricting process.

Operating at the intersection of law, math, and political science, the **Princeton Gerrymandering Project** is dedicated to reforming redistricting nationwide. The state-of-the-art analysis used existing maps and recent election results to estimate the true extent of gerrymandering in Georgia.

Visit the Fair Districts GA website, FairDistrictsGA.org, for the latest information and analysis.

Legislator Resource Page:

bit.ly/FDGALegislatorResources

Georgia Explorer Interactive Map:

bit.ly/FDGAExplorer