

Race and Voting in California

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➤ **Voter turnout continues to lag among nonwhite Californians.**

Our surveys over the past year indicate that 45% of Latino adult citizens, 53% of Asian American adult citizens, and 57% of African American adult citizens are likely to vote, compared to 68% of non-Hispanic white adult citizens. The state's likely voter population is disproportionately white: according to US Census estimates, whites make up 42% of the state's adult population, but our surveys find that they comprise 58% of the state's likely voters. Latinos—California's largest racial/ethnic group—represent 35% of the adult population, but they account for only 19% of those most likely to vote. Asian Americans comprise 15% of the adult population and 13% of likely voters. The share of African American likely voters matches their representation in the adult population (6%).

➤ **Most African American and Latino likely voters are Democrats.**

An overwhelming majority of African American likely voters (72%) and a majority of Latino likely voters (58%) are registered as Democrats. Among Asian American likely voters, four in ten (43%) are registered as Democrats, 18% as Republicans, and 36% as independents (previously called “decline to state” and now called “no party preference” voters). Party registration among white likely voters is more evenly divided, with 40% registered as Democrats, 35% as Republicans, and 20% as independents.

➤ **Within racial/ethnic groups, likely voters are ideologically divided.**

Thirty-nine percent of Latino likely voters identify themselves as politically liberal, while 30% identify as middle-of-the-road and 31% identify as conservative. White likely voters are as likely to identify as liberal (36%) as they are to identify as conservative (38%); 26% call themselves middle-of-the-road. African American and Asian American likely voters are much more likely to be ideologically liberal (42% and 44%, respectively) than conservative (28% and 24%).

➤ **Asian American and Latino likely voters tend to be young; income and education levels vary.**

Asian American (76%) and Latino (70%) likely voters are more likely than African American (49%) and white (42%) likely voters to be younger than 55. Indeed, about one in three Asian American and Latino likely voters are younger than 35, compared to only 14% of African Americans and 12% of whites. About one in four Latino likely voters (26%) and three in ten African American likely voters (28%) are college graduates, compared to 43% of white and 61% of Asian American likely voters. Pluralities of Latino and African American likely voters (39% and 37%) have household incomes of less than \$40,000, while about three in ten earn \$80,000 or more (32% Latinos, 29% African Americans). In contrast, at least half of Asian American and white likely voters (53% and 51%) earn \$80,000 or more.

➤ **Most likely voters are native born, but more than half of Asian American likely voters are immigrants.**

Nearly all African American and white likely voters are native-born US citizens (93% and 93%), compared to 71% of Latino likely voters; Asian American likely voters are slightly more likely to be naturalized than native-born citizens (52% to 48%). In 2019 surveys, strong majorities of African American (90%) and Latino (70%) likely voters have disapproved of the way President Trump is handling his job, as have majorities of Asian American (68%) and white (56%) likely voters. Asian Americans (60%), African American (58%), and Latino (68%) likely voters are more likely to favor California making its own policies—separate from the federal government—to protect the legal rights of undocumented immigrants in the state (48% whites).



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<i>Likely voters only</i>		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	Other/ Multi-racial
Party registration	Democratic	72%	43%	58%	40%	38%
	Republican	6	18	15	35	22
	Independent	20	36	23	20	29
	Other	2	3	4	5	12
Political ideology	Liberal	42	44	39	36	32
	Moderate	31	31	30	26	38
	Conservative	28	24	31	38	29
Region	Central Valley	12	13	14	19	17
	Inland Empire	14	5	11	9	9
	Los Angeles County	40	26	41	19	24
	Orange/San Diego Counties	9	16	15	19	17
	San Francisco Bay Area	23	37	13	22	25
	Other	2	3	6	12	7
Age	18 to 34	14	34	35	12	25
	35 to 54	35	42	35	30	36
	55 and older	51	24	30	58	38
Gender	Men	42	51	48	47	46
	Women	58	49	52	53	54
Education	No college	23	11	35	14	18
	Some college	49	28	39	43	38
	College graduate	28	61	26	43	45
Income	Under \$40,000	37	24	39	22	28
	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	34	23	29	27	25
	\$80,000 or more	29	53	32	51	47
Own/Rent	Own	48	67	52	74	65
	Rent	52	33	48	26	35
Nativity	US-born	93	48	71	93	91
	Immigrant	7	52	29	7	9
Job approval for President Donald Trump (in 2019 surveys)	Approve	10	29	29	43	46
	Disapprove	90	68	70	56	53
	Don't know	1	3	2	2	2
Percent of all likely voters		6	13	19	58	4

Notes: “Likely voters” are registered voters meeting criteria on interest in politics, attention to issues, voting behavior, and intention to vote. For a full description of these criteria and regional definitions, visit www.ppic.org/wp-content/uploads/SurveyMethodology.pdf. For race and ethnicity, results are presented for non-Hispanic whites, non-Hispanic Asian Americans, non-Hispanic African Americans, and non-Hispanic “other race” and multiracial adults.

Sources: Nine PPIC Statewide Surveys from September 2018 to July 2019, including 9,651 likely voters. 2000 US Census; 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, US Census Bureau.

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