



LOS ANGELES COUNTY

March 2005

➤ **Los Angeles County is the most populous county in the United States.**

With just over 10 million residents, LA County has almost twice as many people as second-place Cook County, Illinois, and almost three times as many as third-place Harris County, Texas. Its population exceeds that of 44 states.

➤ **LA County has one of the most diverse populations in the world.**

Latinos are the largest racial/ethnic group in the county, comprising 47 percent of the population in 2003. Whites comprised 30 percent of the population, Asians 12 percent, African Americans 9 percent, people of more than one race 1 percent, and all others 1 percent. In 2003, LA County was home to 3 percent of the nation's population, but 17 percent of the nation's Koreans, 14 percent of Mexicans (12% of all Latinos), 14 percent of Filipinos, 13 percent of Chinese, and 13 percent of Japanese. Over half of the county's residents (56%) speak a language other than English at home.

➤ **After a decade of slow growth, LA County population growth rates have rebounded.**

The county gained over 600,000 residents between 2000 and 2004, growing at an annual rate of 1.5 percent. In the 1990s, the county grew at an annual rate of less than 1 percent (0.7%), due primarily to large outflows of the county's residents. During that time, the Asian population had the fastest growth rates and Latinos the greatest numerical increase, while the non-Hispanic white population declined substantially. The 1990s were the first decade since the 1850s in which New York City experienced higher growth rates than Los Angeles.

➤ **Immigration and natural increase account for LA County's population growth.**

In 2003, more than one in every three LA County residents (36%) was foreign-born. The majority of those residents were not citizens of the United States (41% of the foreign-born were naturalized citizens). Between 2000 and 2004, natural increase – the excess of births over deaths – added 374,000 new residents to LA County, and immigration led to an increase of 366,000. The county continued to lose people to other parts of California and other states, with a net loss of 139,000 people due to domestic migration.

➤ **Poverty and income disparity are high in LA County.**

The county is home to 28 percent of California's population but 34 percent of California's poor. With 16 percent of its population living in poverty, LA County has substantially higher poverty rates than the rest of the state (12%). At the same time, 4 percent of LA County families have incomes of \$200,000 or more, a share similar to that of the rest of the state.

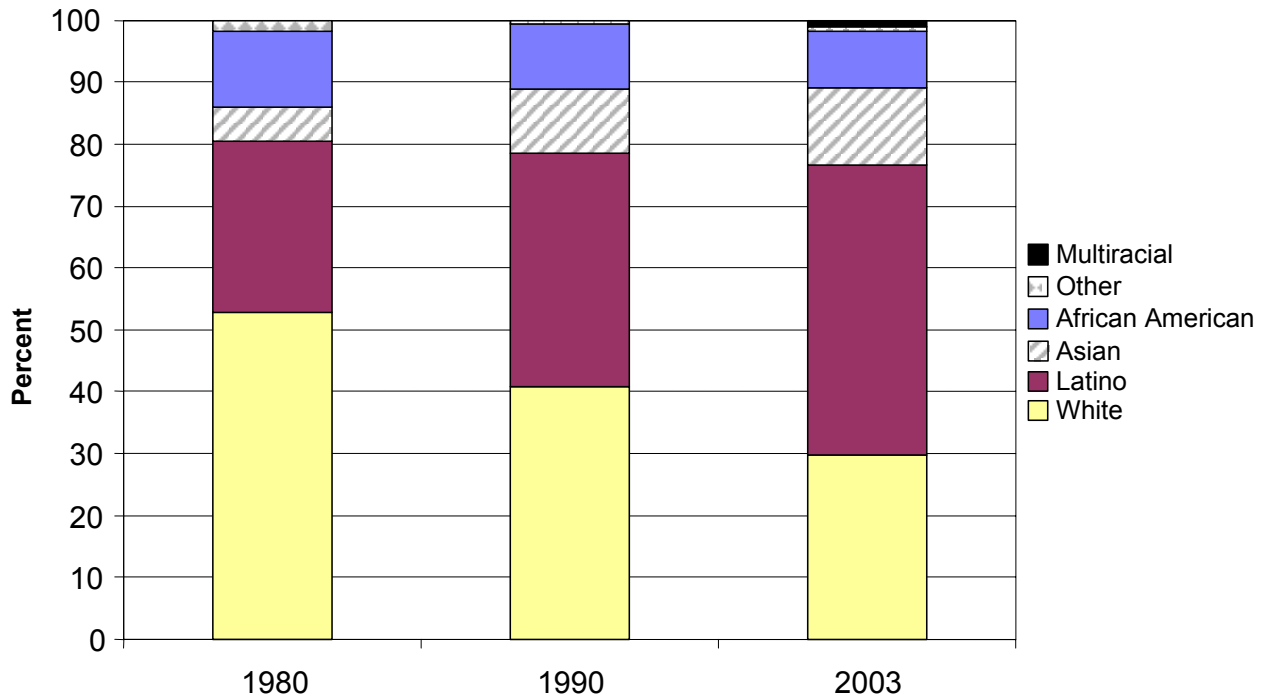
➤ **LA County has the most registered voters in the state but ranks average in voter turnout.**

Nearly 4 million of LA County adults are registered to vote – over 2.5 million more than the counties with the next largest numbers of registered voters (San Diego and Orange). Seventy percent of eligible adults in LA County are registered to vote. Among California's 58 counties, LA County's voter turnout in the November 2004 general election ranked 33rd as a percentage of registered voters (78%), a higher level of participation than in San Diego (76%) and Orange (73%) Counties.

➤ **LA County is one of the most Democratic in the state.**

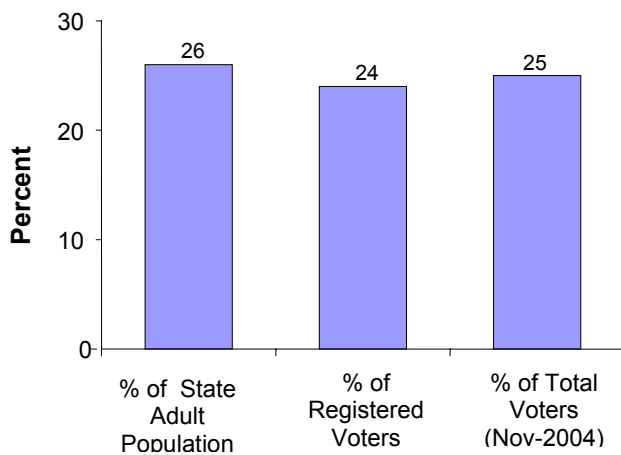
About half of registered voters (51%) are Democrats, 27 percent are Republicans, and 18 percent are decline-to-state. In November 2000, 53 percent were Democrats, 28 percent were Republicans, and 14 percent were decline-to-state. In the November 2004 general election, LA County voters favored Democratic candidate John F. Kerry over George W. Bush (63% to 36%), while voters in the rest of the state favored Kerry over Bush by a smaller margin (54% to 44%).

Racial and Ethnic Distribution of Los Angeles County's Population, 1980, 1990, and 2003

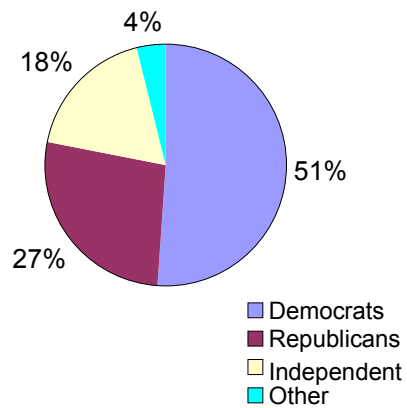


Note: Multiracial category unavailable prior to 2000.

LA County's Political Contribution



LA County's Party Registration



Sources: California Secretary of State, Elections Division; U.S. Census Bureau, including the 2003 American Community Survey; and California Department of Finance.