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Latinos in the 2014 Election: California

Factsheet

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
ON THIS REPORT:**

Anna Brown, Research Assistant
Eileen Patten, Research Analyst
Molly Rohal, Communications Associate

202.419.4372

www.pewresearch.org

Latinos in the 2014 Election: California

BY Anna Brown AND Eileen Patten

This profile provides key demographic information on Latino eligible voters¹ and other major groups of eligible voters in California.² All demographic data are based on Pew Research Center tabulations of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2012 American Community Survey.³

Hispanics in California's Eligible Voter Population

- The Hispanic population in California is the largest in the nation. About 14.5 million Hispanics reside in California, 27.5% of all Hispanics in the United States.
- California's population is 38% Hispanic, the second highest Hispanic statewide population share nationally.

TABLE 1

Population and Electorate in the United States and California, 2012

	U.S.	California	California state rank
Total population (all ages)			
All (thousands)	313,914	38,041	1
Hispanics (thousands)	52,932	14,540	1
Percent Hispanic	16.9	38.2	2
Eligible voter population (U.S. citizens ages 18 and older)			
All (thousands)	220,111	23,821	1
Hispanics (thousands)	23,632	6,415	1
Percent Hispanic	10.7	26.9	3
Eligibility of Hispanic population			
Percent of Hispanic population eligible to vote	44.6	44.1	24

Note: Percentages calculated before rounding.

Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of the 2012 American Community Survey (1% IPUMS sample)

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¹ Eligible voters are defined as U.S. citizens ages 18 and older. Eligible voters are not the same as registered voters. To cast a vote, in all states except North Dakota, an eligible voter must first register to vote.

² The terms "Hispanic" and "Latino" are used interchangeably. References to other races and ethnicities are to the non-Hispanic components of those populations.

³ This statistical profile of eligible voters is based on the Census Bureau's 2012 [American Community Survey](#) (ACS). The ACS is the largest household survey in the United States, with a sample of about 3 million addresses. The data used for this statistical profile come from the 2012 ACS Integrated Public Use Microdata Series ([IPUMS](#)), representing a 1% sample of the U.S. population. Like any survey, estimates from the ACS are subject to sampling error and (potentially) measurement error. More information is available on [ACS sampling strategy](#) and [associated error](#).

- There are 6.4 million Hispanic eligible voters in California—the largest Hispanic statewide eligible voter population nationally. Texas ranks second with 4.5 million.
- Some 27% of California eligible voters are Hispanic, the third largest Hispanic statewide eligible voter share nationally. New Mexico ranks first with 40%.
- Some 44% of Hispanics in California are eligible to vote, ranking California 24th nationwide in the share of the Hispanic population that is eligible to vote. By contrast, 80% of the state's white population is eligible to vote.

Characteristics of Eligible Voters

- **Age.** About one-third of Hispanic eligible voters in California (36%) are ages 18 to 29, slightly higher than the share of all Latino eligible voters nationwide (33%) and the share of all California eligible voters (24%) and of all U.S. eligible voters (22%) in that age range.
- **Citizenship and Nativity.** Among Hispanic eligible voters in California, 27% are naturalized U.S. citizens, higher than the 25% of Hispanic eligible voters in the U.S. Some 20% of all eligible voters in California—but just 8% of eligible voters in the U.S. overall—are naturalized U.S. citizens.
- **Hispanic Origin.** Hispanic eligible voters in California have a different Hispanic origin profile from Hispanic eligible voters nationwide. About eight-in-ten (81%) of Hispanic eligible voters in

TABLE 2

Characteristics of Eligible Voters in California and the United States, 2012

% of eligible voters (unless otherwise noted)

	U.S.		California	
	All	Hispanics	All	Hispanics
Total population (thousands)	313,914	52,932	38,041	14,540
Eligible voter population (thousands)	220,111	23,632	23,821	6,415
Age				
18-29	21.6	33.1	23.9	35.8
30-44	24.3	29.1	24.5	28.0
45-54	18.5	16.2	18.0	15.6
55-64	16.7	11.1	15.9	10.8
65 and older	18.9	10.5	17.7	9.8
Gender				
Male	48.4	48.9	49.0	49.2
Female	51.6	51.1	51.0	50.8
Type of citizen				
Citizen by birth	91.8	75.2	79.8	73.3
Naturalized citizen	8.2	24.8	20.2	26.7
Language				
Speaks only English at home	85.6	31.5	66.5	32.7
Does not speak only English at home	14.4	68.5	33.5	67.3
Educational attainment				
Less than high school graduate	11.5	23.0	12.1	23.9
High school graduate	28.6	28.5	21.8	27.6
Two-year degree/Some college	32.8	33.6	35.9	35.8
Bachelor's degree or more	27.2	15.0	30.1	12.7
Marital status				
Married	50.0	42.9	47.1	41.5
Never married	29.1	39.1	33.6	42.9
Divorced/separated/widowed	20.9	18.0	19.3	15.6
With child younger than 18 in home	24.2	29.9	23.7	28.6
Homeownership rate	67.5	56.0	60.1	53.8
Hispanic origin				
Mexican	-	58.9	-	81.1
Puerto Rican	-	14.0	-	2.3
Cuban	-	4.8	-	1.0
Salvadoran	-	2.6	-	4.3
Dominican	-	3.2	-	0.2
Other	-	16.5	-	11.1
Household income				
Less than \$30,000	22.2	25.1	18.5	20.5
\$30,000-\$49,999	17.9	20.2	15.5	19.2
\$50,000-\$74,999	19.1	20.5	17.7	21.3
\$75,000-\$99,999	13.8	13.6	13.9	14.6
\$100,000 or more	26.9	20.6	34.4	24.4

Note: Eligible voters are citizens ages 18 and older. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. High school graduate includes GEDs or equivalent.

Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of the 2012 American Community Survey (1% IPUMS sample)

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California are of Mexican origin, 2% are of Puerto Rican origin, and 17% claim other Hispanic origin. Among all Hispanic eligible voters nationwide, 59% are Mexican, 14% are Puerto Rican, and 27% are of some other Hispanic origin.

- **Educational Attainment.** About one-quarter of Latino eligible voters in California (24%) have not completed high school, double the 12% of all California eligible voters who have not completed high school and slightly higher than the 23% of Hispanics nationwide who have not completed high school.
- **Homeownership.** Over half of Hispanic eligible voters in California (54%) live in owner-occupied homes, a little lower than the share of all Hispanic eligible voters nationwide (56%). Greater shares of all eligible voters in California (60%) and all eligible voters nationwide (67%) live in owner-occupied homes.

Characteristics of Eligible Voters in California, by Race and Ethnicity

- **Number of Eligible Voters.** White eligible voters outnumber Hispanic eligible voters in California by about 2 to 1. Hispanic eligible voters outnumber Asian eligible voters by about 2 to 1 and black eligible voters by about 4 to 1.
- **Age.** Latino eligible voters are younger than white, Asian and black eligible voters in California. Some 36% of Latinos are ages 18 to 29, compared with 18% of white eligible voters, 21% of Asian eligible voters and 24% of black eligible voters.
- **Educational Attainment.** Hispanic eligible voters have lower levels of education than do white, black and Asian eligible voters in California. Some 24% of Hispanic eligible voters have not obtained a high school diploma, compared with 6% of white eligible voters and 12% of both Asian and black eligible voters.

TABLE 3

Characteristics of Eligible Voters in California and the United States, by Race and Ethnicity, 2012

% of eligible voters (unless otherwise noted)

	Hispanic	White	Asian	Black
Total population (thousands)	14,540	14,905	5,031	2,151
Eligible voter population (thousands)	6,415	11,974	3,005	1,606
Age				
18-29	35.8	17.8	20.7	23.9
30-44	28.0	21.6	27.3	25.6
45-54	15.6	19.0	18.1	20.5
55-64	10.8	18.8	16.3	15.5
65 and older	9.8	22.9	17.6	14.5
Gender				
Male	49.2	49.6	46.5	48.9
Female	50.8	50.4	53.5	51.1
Type of citizen				
Citizen by birth	73.3	92.8	31.6	95.7
Naturalized citizen	26.7	7.2	68.4	4.3
Language				
Speaks only English at home	32.7	90.7	23.9	94.3
Does not speak only English at home	67.3	9.3	76.1	5.7
Educational attainment				
Less than high school graduate	23.9	5.9	12.3	12.4
High school graduate	27.6	20.2	14.5	25.1
Two-year degree/Some college	35.8	36.5	28.3	43.1
Bachelor's degree or more	12.7	37.4	45.0	19.3
Marital status				
Married	41.5	50.8	56.0	29.8
Never married	42.9	27.3	29.9	45.3
Divorced/separated/widowed	15.6	21.9	14.1	24.9
With child younger than 18 in home	28.6	20.7	26.3	21.6
Homeownership rate	53.8	65.2	66.8	38.5
Household income				
Less than \$30,000	20.5	16.5	15.3	30.5
\$30,000-\$49,999	19.2	14.2	12.0	18.4
\$50,000-\$74,999	21.3	16.6	14.8	18.0
\$75,000-\$99,999	14.6	13.8	13.7	11.5
\$100,000 or more	24.4	38.9	44.2	21.6

Note: Eligible voters are citizens ages 18 and older. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. High school graduate includes GEDs or equivalent. Whites, Asians and blacks include only non-Hispanics. Hispanics are of any race.

Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of the 2012 American Community Survey (1% IPUMS sample)

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- **Homeownership.** Hispanic eligible voters (54%) are more likely to live in owner-occupied homes than black eligible voters (39%) in California, but are less likely to live in owner-occupied homes than white (65%) or Asian (67%) eligible voters.