

FOR RELEASE JANUARY 19, 2016

Latinos in the 2016 Election: California

Factsheet

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Latinos in the 2016 Election: California

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 2014 American Community Survey.³

Hispanics in California's Eligible Voter Population

- The Hispanic population in California is the largest in the nation. About 15 million Hispanics reside in California, 27.1% of all Hispanics in the United States.
- California's population is 39% Hispanic, the second highest Hispanic statewide population share nationally.
- There are 6.9 million Hispanic eligible voters in California—the largest Hispanic statewide eligible voter population nationally. Texas ranks second with 4.8 million.

Population and Electorate in the United States and California, 2014

	U.S.	California	California state rank
Total population (all ages)			
All (thousands)	318,857	38,803	1
Hispanics (thousands)	55,251	14,991	1
Percent Hispanic	17.3	38.6	2
Eligible voter population (U.S. citizens ages 18 and older)			
All (thousands)	224,963	24,686	1
Hispanics (thousands)	25,486	6,919	1
Percent Hispanic	11.3	28.0	3
Eligibility of Hispanic population			
Percent of Hispanic population eligible to vote	46.1	46.2	24

Note: Percentages calculated before rounding.

Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of the 2014 American Community Survey (1% IPUMS sample)

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- Some 28% of California eligible voters are Hispanic, the third largest Hispanic statewide eligible voter share nationally. New Mexico ranks first with 40%.

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 2014 [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 2014 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](#).

- Some 46% 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, 81% 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, 26% are naturalized U.S. citizens, close to the 25% of Hispanic eligible voters in the U.S. Some 20% of all eligible voters in California—but just 9% 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 (82%) of Hispanic eligible voters in California are of Mexican origin, 2% are of Puerto Rican origin, and 16% 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 (23%) have not completed high school, about double the 12% of all California eligible voters who have not completed high school and similar to the 22% of Latinos nationwide who have not completed high school.
- **Homeownership.** Over half of Hispanic eligible voters in California (53%) live in owner-occupied homes, a little lower than the share of all Hispanic eligible voters nationwide (55%). Greater shares of all eligible voters in California (59%) and all eligible voters nationwide (67%) live in owner-occupied homes.

Characteristics of Eligible Voters in California and the United States, 2014

% of eligible voters (unless otherwise noted)

	U.S.		California	
	All	Hispanics	All	Hispanics
Total population (thousands)	318,857	55,251	38,803	14,991
Eligible voter population (thousands)	224,963	25,486	24,686	6,919
Age				
18-29	21.6	32.9	24.0	35.6
30-44	24.0	28.6	24.3	27.5
45-54	17.6	15.9	17.2	15.3
55-64	16.9	11.6	16.1	11.4
65 and older	19.8	11.0	18.4	10.2
Millennial (ages 18-33)	28.2	41.4	31.0	44.2
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	91.4	75.2	79.6	73.7
Naturalized citizen	8.6	24.8	20.4	26.3
Language				
Speaks only English at home	85.2	31.7	65.9	32.6
Does not speak only English at home	14.8	68.3	34.1	67.4
Speaks Spanish at home	8.5	67.8	20.0	67.0
Educational attainment				
Less than high school graduate	10.9	22.0	11.7	22.8
High school graduate	28.4	29.0	22.1	28.2
Two-year degree/Some college	32.7	33.5	35.4	36.2
Bachelor's degree or more	28.1	15.6	30.9	12.8
Marital status				
Married	49.6	42.5	47.0	41.7
Never married	29.9	40.1	34.3	43.4
Divorced/separated/widowed	20.6	17.4	18.7	14.9
With child younger than 18 in home	23.5	28.7	22.9	27.5
Homeownership rate	66.7	55.2	59.5	53.5
Hispanic origin				
Mexican	-	59.2	-	82.0
Puerto Rican	-	14.1	-	2.0
Cuban	-	4.6	-	0.8
Salvadoran	-	2.6	-	4.3
Dominican	-	3.4	-	0.1
Other	-	16.1	-	10.7
Household income (in 2014 \$)				
Less than \$30,000	20.7	22.8	17.2	18.6
\$30,000-\$49,999	17.2	19.6	14.7	18.8
\$50,000-\$74,999	18.7	20.1	17.0	20.2
\$75,000-\$99,999	14.0	14.4	13.9	15.7
\$100,000 or more	29.5	23.1	37.2	26.6

Note: Eligible voters are citizens ages 18 and older. Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. High school graduate includes GEDs or equivalent. Homeownership rate and household income excludes persons living in institutions, college dormitories and other group quarters.

Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of the 2014 American Community Survey (1% IPUMS sample)

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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, 20% of Asian eligible voters and 25% 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 23% of Hispanic eligible voters have not obtained a high school diploma, compared with 6% of white eligible voters and 11% of both Asian and black eligible voters.
- **Homeownership.** Hispanic eligible voters (53%) are more likely to live in owner-occupied homes than black eligible voters (38%) in California, but are less likely to live in owner-occupied homes than white (65%) or Asian (66%) eligible voters.

Characteristics of Eligible Voters in California, by Race and Ethnicity, 2014

% of eligible voters (unless otherwise noted)

	Hispanic	White	Asian	Black
Total population (thousands)	14,991	14,852	5,348	2,143
Eligible voter population (thousands)	6,919	12,000	3,269	1,628
Age				
18-29	35.6	17.6	20.1	24.6
30-44	27.5	21.4	26.9	24.9
45-54	15.3	17.9	18.2	19.0
55-64	11.4	19.0	16.4	16.3
65 and older	10.2	24.1	18.6	15.2
Millennial (ages 18-33)	44.2	23.7	27.1	31.7
Gender				
Male	49.2	49.6	46.5	48.8
Female	50.8	50.4	53.5	51.2
Type of citizen				
Citizen by birth	73.7	92.9	33.3	95.3
Naturalized citizen	26.3	7.1	66.7	4.7
Language				
Speaks only English at home	32.6	91.1	26.4	94.7
Does not speak only English at home	67.4	8.9	73.6	5.3
Speaks Spanish at home	67.0	1.8	0.5	1.5
Educational attainment				
Less than high school graduate	22.8	5.6	11.4	11.0
High school graduate	28.2	20.1	14.6	25.7
Two-year degree/Some college	36.2	35.6	27.6	43.2
Bachelor's degree or more	12.8	38.7	46.4	20.1
Marital status				
Married	41.7	50.5	56.1	29.2
Never married	43.4	27.8	30.2	47.1
Divorced/separated/widowed	14.9	21.6	13.7	23.7
With child younger than 18 in home	27.5	19.8	25.7	20.4
Homeownership rate	53.5	64.6	66.4	38.3
Household income (in 2014 \$)				
Less than \$30,000	18.6	15.6	13.6	29.2
\$30,000-\$49,999	18.8	13.1	11.8	15.8
\$50,000-\$74,999	20.2	15.8	14.2	18.0
\$75,000-\$99,999	15.7	13.3	12.9	12.0
\$100,000 or more	26.6	42.2	47.6	25.0

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. Homeownership rate and household income excludes persons living in institutions, college dormitories and other group quarters.

Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of the 2014 American Community Survey (1% IPUMS sample)

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