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Naturalized Citizens Make Up Record One-in-Ten U.S. Eligible Voters in 2020

*Since 2000, size of immigrant electorate nearly doubled
to 23.2 million*

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How we did this

For this report, we analyzed the detailed demographics and geographic distribution of immigrants who are eligible to vote in the 2020 presidential election. The term “eligible voters” refer to persons ages 18 and older who are U.S. citizens. The analysis is based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey and the 2000 U.S. decennial census provided through Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) from the University of Minnesota – and the November Voting and Registration Supplement of the Current Population Survey provided through the National Bureau of Economic Research.

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Terminology

Eligible voters refers to persons ages 18 and older who are U.S. citizens. They make up the **voting-eligible population** or **electorate**. The terms **eligible voters**, **voting eligible**, **the electorate** and **voters** are used interchangeably in this report.

Voter turnout refers to the number of people who say they voted in a given election.

Voter turnout rate refers to the share of eligible voters who say they voted in a given election.

The term **U.S. born** refers to people who are U.S. citizens at birth, including people born in the 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico or other U.S. territories, as well as those born elsewhere to at least one parent who is a U.S. citizen.

The terms **foreign born** and **immigrant** are used interchangeably in this report. They refer to people who are not a U.S. citizen at birth – in other words, those born outside the U.S., Puerto Rico or other U.S. territories and whose parents are not U.S. citizens.

Naturalized citizens are lawful permanent residents who have fulfilled the length of stay and other requirements to become U.S. citizens and who have taken the oath of citizenship.

The terms **Latino** and **Hispanic** are used interchangeably in this report.

References to **Asians**, **blacks** and **whites** are single-race and refer to the non-Hispanic components of those populations.

Naturalized Citizens Make Up a Record One-in-Ten U.S. Eligible Voters in 2020

Since 2000, size of immigrant electorate has nearly doubled to 23.2 million

CORRECTION (Feb. 26, 2020): An earlier version of this report incorrectly stated the U.S.-born eligible voter population in 2020, as well as its growth rate from 2000. This population grew by 18%, from 181 million in 2000 to 215 million in 2020.

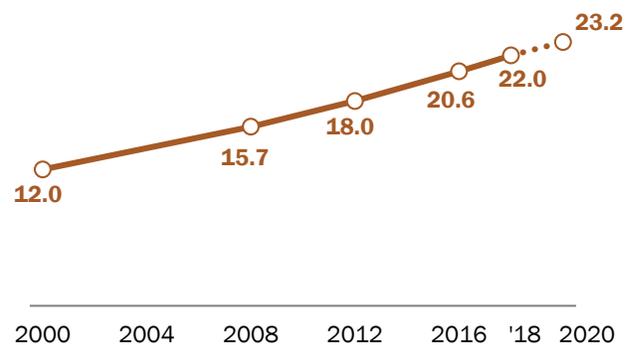
More than 23 million U.S. immigrants will be eligible to vote in the 2020 presidential election, making up roughly 10% of the nation's overall electorate – both record highs, according to [Pew Research Center estimates](#) based on Census Bureau data.

The number of immigrant eligible voters has increased steadily over the past 20 years, up 93% since 2000. By comparison, the U.S.-born eligible voter population grew more slowly (by 18%) over the same period, from 181 million in 2000 to 215 million in 2020.¹ (Immigrant eligible voters are those ages 18 and older born outside the United States who have gained U.S. citizenship through naturalization.)

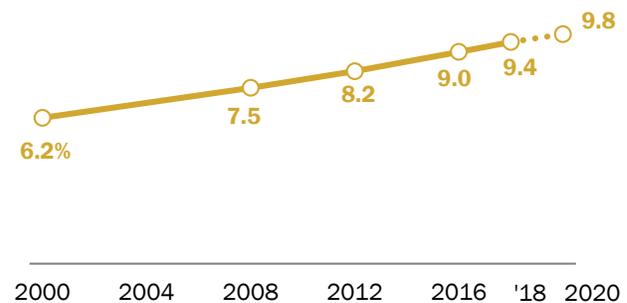
The nation's immigrant voters have diverse backgrounds. Most immigrant eligible voters are either Hispanic or Asian, though they hail from countries across the globe. Immigrants from Mexico make up the single largest group,

U.S. immigrant eligible voter population on track to reach new high in 2020

Foreign-born eligible voters, in millions



% of U.S. eligible voters who are foreign born



Note: Eligible voters are adult U.S. citizens. Figures are rounded to the nearest 100,000.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2018, 2016, 2012 and 2008 American Community Survey and 2000 decennial census (IPUMS). Data for 2020 from Pew Research Center projections based on U.S. Census Bureau population projections.

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¹ For 2020, immigrant population estimates are projections for November 2020. For more, see the Methodology in the Center's data essay "[An early look at the 2020 electorate.](#)"

at 16% of foreign-born voters. More than half (56%) live in the country's four most populous states: California, New York, Texas and Florida. Two-thirds have lived in the U.S. for more than 20 years and 63% are proficient in English.

Growth in the foreign-born eligible voter population reflects two broad U.S. population trends. First, the number of [immigrants living in the U.S.](#) has increased steadily since 1965, when the Immigration and Nationality Act became law. Then, the nation's 9.6 million immigrants made up just 5% of the population. Today, 45 million immigrants live in the country, accounting for about 13.9% of the population. Most are either from [Latin America or Asia](#).

Second, a [rising number and share](#) of immigrants living in the U.S. have naturalized in recent years. Between 2009 and 2019, 7.2 million immigrants naturalized and became citizens, [according](#) to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. In fiscal year 2018 alone, more than 756,000 immigrants naturalized.

For U.S. voters overall, immigration policy issues have [risen in importance](#) recently. Immigration also has risen as a priority the public thinks [Congress and the president](#) should address. This has been especially true for U.S. Latinos under Donald Trump's presidency. Many of the administration's [proposed policy changes](#), such as expanding the U.S.-Mexico border wall and limiting legal immigration, have generated strong, polarized [reactions from the public](#). These proposals may also affect how immigrants see their place in America and the potential role they could play in the 2020 presidential election.

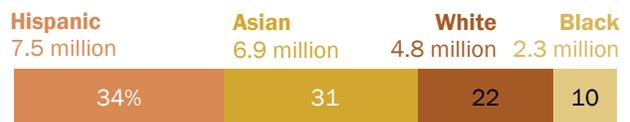
Most immigrant eligible voters are Hispanic or Asian

Collectively, Hispanics and Asians make up the majority of immigrants eligible to vote, according to Pew Research Center tabulations of the 2018 American Community Survey, the most recent data available for detailed demographic profiles of eligible voters.² At 7.5 million, Hispanics account for 34% of all immigrant eligible voters in 2018, slightly up since 2000. The 6.9 million Asian immigrant eligible voters make up 31% of the foreign-born electorate, also slightly up since 2000.

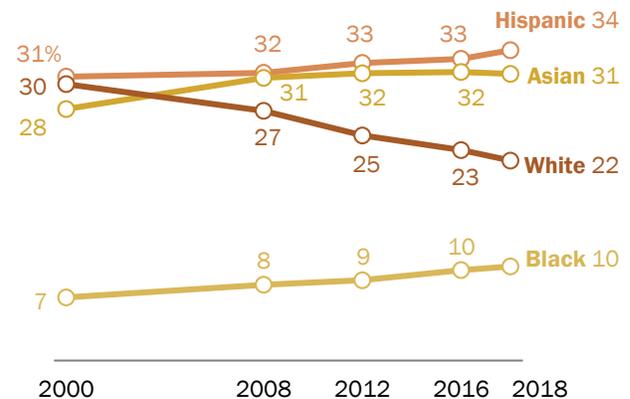
White immigrant eligible voters (4.8 million) are the third largest racial and ethnic group, making up 22% of the immigrant electorate. However, nearly two decades ago, white immigrants made up 30% of foreign-born eligible voters, a higher share than that of Asians and comparable to that of Hispanics at the time. Today, black immigrant eligible voters (2.3 million) make up the smallest share of the immigrant electorate included in this analysis, though this has grown from 7% in 2000 to 10% in 2018.

Most immigrant eligible voters are Hispanic or Asian

% of foreign-born eligible voters in 2018 who are ...



Shares in 2000-2018



Note: Eligible voters are adult U.S. citizens. Figures do not sum up to 100% because other single-race and multiracial are not shown. Figures are rounded to the nearest 100,000. Whites, blacks and Asians are single-race and include only non-Hispanics. Hispanics are of any race.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2018, 2016, 2012 and 2008 American Community Survey and 2000 decennial census (IPUMS).

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² In the American Community Survey and other U.S. Census Bureau data collections, foreign-born respondents self-report their racial and ethnic identity as well as their country of birth. This means that some immigrants born in Latin America may not self-identify as Hispanic.

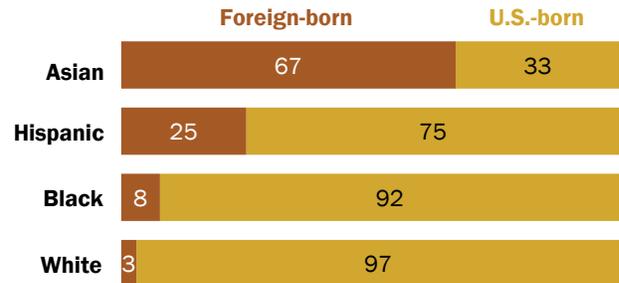
Immigrants make up sizable shares of Asian and Hispanic eligible voters

Immigrants make up far higher shares of Asian and Hispanic eligible voters than of white and black voters. Two-thirds (67%) of Asian eligible voters are immigrants, while a quarter of Hispanic eligible voters are immigrants. This somewhat reflects the overall populations of these two groups, as 77% of Asian adults and 46% of Hispanic adults are immigrants.

By contrast, immigrant shares among black eligible voters (8%) and white eligible voters (3%) are far lower. Immigrants are smaller in number among the adult populations of these groups, making up roughly 12% of black adults and 5% of white adults.

Two-thirds of Asian eligible voters are immigrants

% of ___ eligible voters in 2018 who are ...



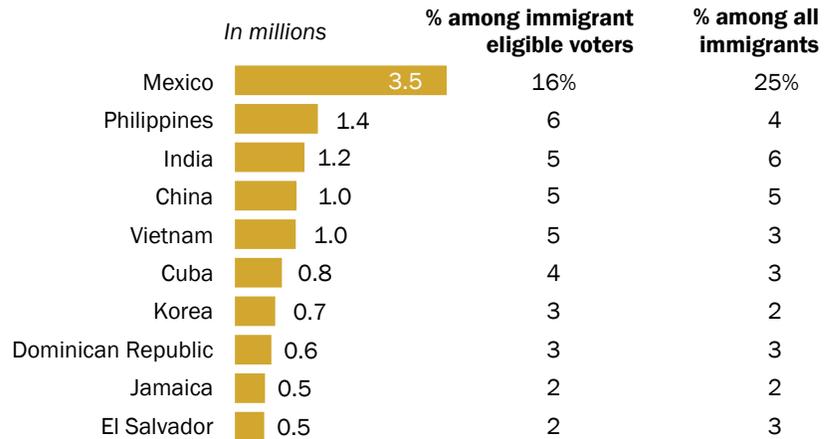
Note: Eligible voters are adult U.S. citizens. Whites, blacks and Asians are single-race and include only non-Hispanics. Hispanics are of any race. Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2018 American Community Survey (IPUMS). "Naturalized Citizens Make Up a Record One-in-Ten U.S. Eligible Voters in 2020"

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Mexican and Filipino immigrants are the largest groups among foreign-born eligible voters

The countries of birth of immigrant eligible voters are varied and highlight the group's diversity. There are 3.5 million immigrant eligible voters from Mexico, more than from any other country. Fewer immigrant eligible voters were born in the Philippines, India, China, Vietnam, Cuba, Korea, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica and El Salvador, in descending order. Including Mexico, these 10 birth countries account for about half of all immigrant eligible voters.

Highest share of immigrant eligible voters were born in Mexico



Note: Eligible voters are adult U.S. citizens. Korea includes immigrants from both North and South Korea.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2018 American Community Survey (IPUMS). "Naturalized Citizens Make Up a Record One-in-Ten U.S. Eligible Voters in 2020"

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The representation of countries of birth among immigrant eligible voters is different than that [among U.S. immigrants overall](#). For example, immigrant eligible voters born in Mexico account for 16% of all foreign-born eligible voters, far below their 25% share among all immigrants living in the U.S. By contrast, immigrant Filipino eligible voters make up 6% of foreign-born eligible voters but make up 4% of all U.S. immigrants. These gaps in representation among these immigrant populations reflect [differences in naturalization rates](#).

U.S. citizenship eligibility and requirements

When immigrants naturalize to become U.S. citizens, they are eligible to vote in federal elections. But **not all immigrants** are eligible to apply for citizenship, and even if they are, there are a **number of requirements and costs** associated with applying that may deter some.

To become a U.S. citizen, a lawful permanent resident in **most cases** must:

- Be at least 18 years old.
- Have lived in the U.S. continuously for five years prior to the date of application.
- Be able to speak, write, read and understand basic English.
- Answer questions that demonstrate knowledge of U.S. government and history.
- Be a person of good moral character.
- Demonstrate attachment to the principles and ideals of the U.S. Constitution.

Some of those requirements are waived for certain groups:

- Spouses of U.S. citizens can naturalize after three years of continuous lawful permanent residence, if the sponsoring spouse has been a U.S. citizen for all three years.
- Foreign-born minor children become eligible for citizenship when their parents naturalize.
- Foreign-born minor children who are adopted by U.S. citizens are eligible for citizenship.
- Military personnel, their spouses and foreign-born minor children are eligible for expedited and overseas citizenship processing with the possibility of having some of the eligibility requirements diminished or waived. Additionally, in the case of death as a result of combat while serving in active duty, citizenship may be granted posthumously to the military member and immediate family members.

For most applicants, the total fee of processing a citizenship request is \$725, which includes a \$640 filing fee and an \$85 biometric services fee for obtaining fingerprints. For a full list of benefits and responsibilities of U.S. citizenship, visit the [USCIS website](#).

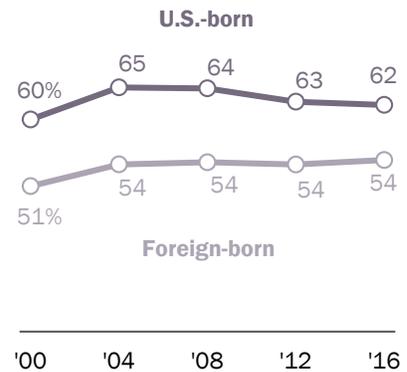
Immigrant voter turnout rates have trailed the U.S. born overall, but not among Latinos and Asians

As immigrant eligible voters have grown in number since 2000, their voter turnout rates in presidential general elections have lagged those of U.S.-born voters. In 2016, 62% of U.S.-born eligible voters cast a vote, compared with 54% of foreign-born voters.

However, this voter turnout pattern is reversed among racial and ethnic groups with the largest numbers of immigrants. Among Hispanic eligible voters in 2016, about half (53%) of immigrants voted, compared with 46% of the U.S. born, a pattern that has persisted since 2000. Among Asian eligible voters in 2016, 52% of immigrants voted, compared with 45% of the U.S. born. By contrast, in 2016 among black eligible voters, the voter turnout rate for immigrants was similar to that of the U.S. born. Meanwhile, U.S.-born white eligible voters have outpaced white foreign-born eligible voters in turnout rates, with the gap widening since the 1990s.

U.S. born have long had higher voter turnout rates than immigrants

% of ___ eligible voters who say they voted



Note: Eligible voters are adult U.S. citizens.
 Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012 and 2016 Current Population Surveys, November Voting and Registration Supplement.
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Among immigrant eligible voters, voter turnout rates of Hispanics and Asians trail those of white and black Americans, mirroring a pattern seen among [all voters](#). In 2016, 53% of Hispanic immigrants and 52% of Asian immigrants who were eligible to vote said they did so, compared with 61% of black immigrant and 56% of white immigrant eligible voters.

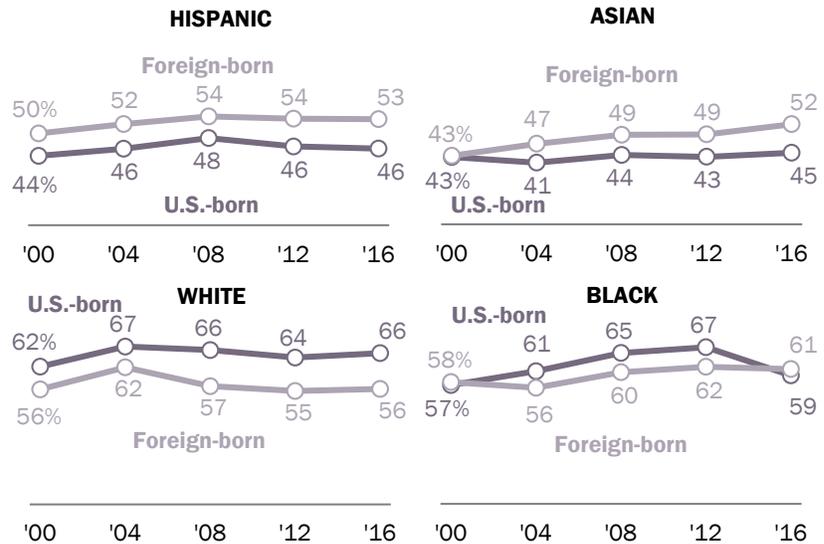
Immigrant voters and the 2020 Democratic primaries

Nearly half (46%) of the nation's immigrant eligible voters live in states with Democratic primaries or caucuses that take place on or before March 3, Super Tuesday.³ This is up from 21% in 2016, a change driven primarily by movements in the calendar of the Democratic Party's primaries and caucuses.

California will hold its Democratic Party primary on March 3, three months earlier than in 2016, bumping up the share of the nation's immigrant eligible voters that live in Super Tuesday or earlier states. Out of California's 25.9 million eligible voters, 21% (5.5 million) are foreign born, the highest share of any state through Super Tuesday and in the nation.

Hispanic and Asian voter turnout rates higher among foreign born than U.S. born in presidential elections

% and nativity of ___ eligible voters who say they voted



Note: Eligible voters are adult U.S. citizens. The 2000 November Voting and Registration Supplement of the Current Population Survey collapses Asians and Pacific Islanders into one category. Whites, blacks and Asians are single-race and include only non-Hispanics. Hispanics are of any race.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012 and 2016 Current Population Survey, November Voting and Registration Supplement.

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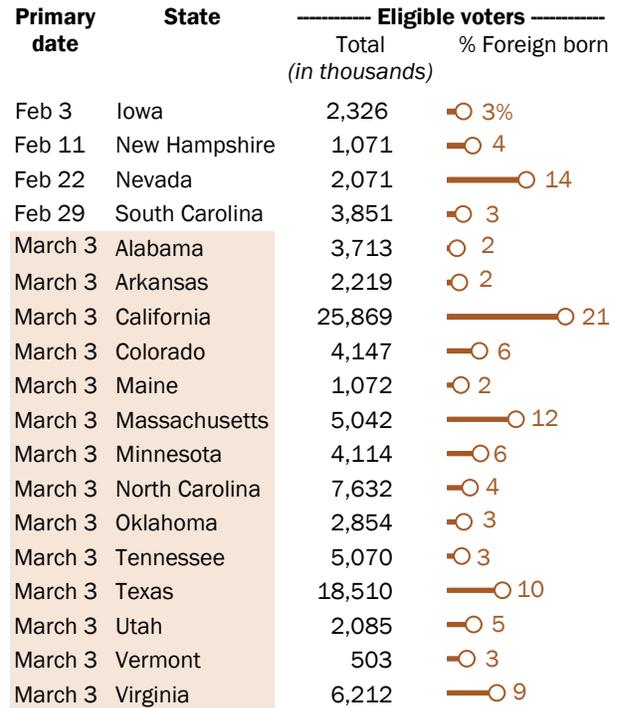
³ It's important to note that not all immigrant voters are democrats. For example, among Hispanic immigrants who are eligible to vote, 53% identify with or lean towards the Democratic Party, while 39% say the same about the Republican Party, according to a December survey of Hispanic adults by Pew Research Center. Recent data on party affiliation patterns among other immigrant groups is not readily available, since few surveys include representative samples of immigrants. In 2012, the Center's survey of Asian Americans found 50% of Asian registered voters identified with or leaned toward the Democratic Party, 28% said they were Republican and 22% said they do not lean to either party.

Other states with primaries or caucuses on or before Super Tuesday that have large immigrant populations include Texas (1.8 million immigrant eligible voters), Massachusetts (619,000), Virginia (550,000), North Carolina (307,000) and Nevada (293,000). These states, plus California, hold four-in-ten of the nation's immigrant eligible voters.

While the Democratic primary and caucus calendar through Super Tuesday features many states with large immigrant populations, 2008 included more states with large immigrant populations. Primaries or caucuses on or before 2008's "[Super Duper Tuesday](#)" consisted of states that contained 77% of immigrant eligible voters.

California has the most immigrant voters among states with Democratic primaries through Super Tuesday

■ Holds primaries Super Tuesday, March 3, 2020



Note: Eligible voters are adult U.S. citizens.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2018 American Community Survey (IPUMS).

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About half of immigrant eligible voters live in states with Democratic primaries or caucuses on or before Super Tuesday in 2020

% of ___ eligible voters residing in states with primaries on or before Super Tuesday

2020		2016		2012		2008	
Immigrant	46%	21%		28%		77%	
All	42%	29%		37%		61%	
Iowa*		Iowa*		Iowa*		Iowa*	
New Hampshire		New Hampshire		New Hampshire		New Hampshire	
Nevada*		Nevada*		Nevada*		Michigan	
South Carolina		South Carolina		South Carolina		Nevada*	
<i>Alabama</i>		<i>Alabama</i>		Florida		South Carolina	
<i>Arkansas</i>		<i>Arkansas</i>		Missouri		Florida	
<i>California</i>		<i>Colorado*</i>		Maine*		<i>Alabama</i>	
<i>Colorado</i>		<i>Georgia</i>		Arizona		<i>Alaska*</i>	
<i>Maine</i>		<i>Massachusetts</i>		Michigan		<i>Arizona</i>	
<i>Massachusetts</i>		<i>Minnesota*</i>		<i>Colorado*</i>		<i>Arkansas</i>	
<i>Minnesota</i>		<i>Oklahoma</i>		<i>Georgia</i>		<i>California</i>	
<i>North Carolina</i>		<i>Tennessee</i>		<i>Ohio</i>		<i>Colorado*</i>	
<i>Oklahoma</i>		<i>Texas</i>		<i>Massachusetts</i>		<i>Connecticut</i>	
<i>Tennessee</i>		<i>Vermont</i>		<i>Minnesota*</i>		<i>Delaware</i>	
<i>Texas</i>		<i>Virginia</i>		<i>Oklahoma</i>		<i>Georgia</i>	
<i>Utah</i>				<i>Tennessee</i>		<i>Idaho*</i>	
<i>Vermont</i>				<i>Vermont</i>		<i>Illinois</i>	
<i>Virginia</i>				<i>Virginia</i>		<i>Kansas*</i>	
						<i>Massachusetts</i>	
						<i>Minnesota*</i>	
						<i>Missouri</i>	
						<i>New Mexico*</i>	
						<i>New Jersey</i>	
						<i>New York</i>	
						<i>North Dakota*</i>	
						<i>Oklahoma</i>	
						<i>Tennessee</i>	
						<i>Utah</i>	

Italics indicate states holding primaries or caucuses on Super Tuesday.

* indicates states with caucuses.

Note: Eligible voters are adult U.S. citizens.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2018, 2016, 2012 and 2008 American Community Survey (IPUMS).

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1. U.S. immigrants are rising in number, but just half are eligible to vote

Not all immigrants are U.S. citizens, and as a result, not all immigrants are eligible to vote in federal elections.⁴

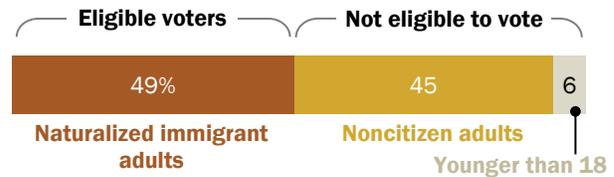
Between 2000 and 2018, over 10 million adult immigrants have gained citizenship and become eligible to vote, raising the share of the foreign-born population that can vote to about half in 2018. In 2000, just 38% were eligible to vote.

The share of immigrants who are eligible to vote varies considerably by race and ethnicity. Notably, fewer than half (38%) of Hispanic immigrants are eligible voters, but this share has increased since 2000, when only about one-quarter of Hispanic immigrants were eligible.⁵

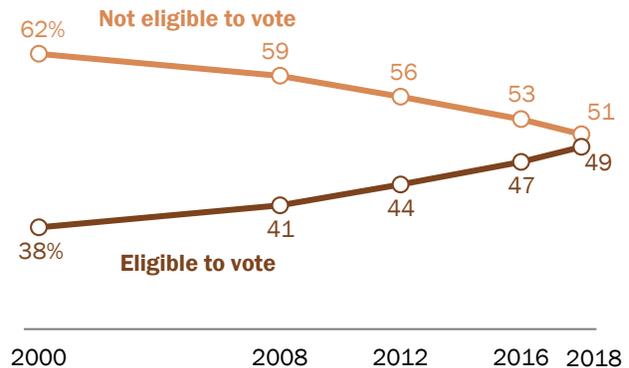
More than half of black and Asian immigrants (57% each) are eligible to vote. For Asians, majorities have been able to vote since 2008, while for blacks this has been true since 2016. About six-in-ten white immigrants are eligible voters. They are the only group in which more than half have been eligible since 2000.

Since 2000, a growing share of the U.S. immigrant population is eligible to vote

% of immigrants in 2018 who are ...



% among immigrants, 2000-2018



Note: Eligible voters are adult U.S. citizens. Immigrants not eligible to vote include those who are not naturalized U.S. citizens and those under the age of 18, irrespective of their legal status.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2018, 2016, 2012 and 2008 American Community Survey and 2000 decennial census (IPUMS).

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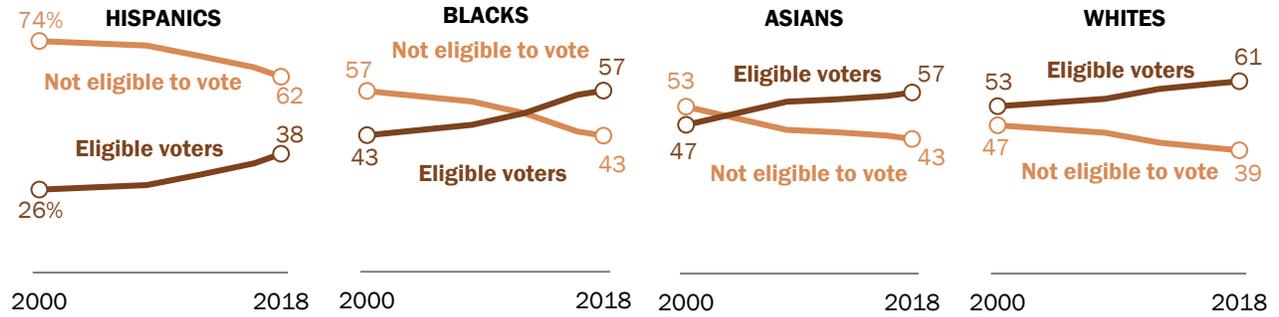
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⁴ While immigrants are required to hold U.S. citizenship to vote in federal elections, in some communities, adult noncitizen immigrants can vote in [local elections](#). For example, [Takoma Park](#), Maryland, has allowed noncitizen immigrants to cast ballots in city elections since 1992. Starting in 2018 and continuing in 2020 and 2022, [San Francisco](#), California noncitizen immigrants can vote in Board of Education elections if they are the parent or legal guardian of a child living in San Francisco Unified School District. This report focuses on immigrants eligible to vote in federal elections.

⁵ About [11.3 million foreign-born](#) Hispanic adults are not eligible to vote because they are not U.S. citizens. More than half are unauthorized immigrants.

Among U.S. immigrants, majorities of blacks, Asians and whites are eligible to vote

% among immigrants



Note: Eligible voters are adult U.S. citizens. Whites, blacks and Asians are single-race and include only non-Hispanics. Hispanics are of any race. Percentages are based on the full immigrant population residing in the U.S., including those under 18.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2018, 2016, 2012 and 2008 American Community Survey and 2000 decennial census (IPUMS).
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A demographic profile of the foreign-born electorate

The demographics of immigrant eligible voters differ from those of U.S.-born eligible voters in many ways: Immigrant voters are older, less proficient in English and live in households with higher incomes.

Age

Immigrant eligible voters are older than those who are U.S. born. The median age of immigrant voters is 52, compared with 47 for the U.S. born.

By generation, nearly half (47%) of all immigrant eligible voters are Baby Boomers or members of the Silent or Greatest generations. By comparison, 40% of U.S.-born eligible voters are members of those same generations. Additionally, Millennials make up only 18% of all immigrants who can vote, while among U.S.-born voters, the Millennial share is higher, at 28%.

English proficiency

Among immigrant eligible voters, nearly four-in-ten say they speak English less than very well, which is a far higher share than that among U.S.-born eligible voters (just 2%).⁶

Demographics of U.S. eligible voters by nativity

%

	All	U.S. born	Immigrant
Gender			
49	Male	49	46
51	Female	51	54
Generations and age			
7	Generation Z (18 to 21)	8	2
27	Millennials (22 to 37)	28	18
25	Generation X (38 to 53)	24	33
30	Boomers (54 to 72)	29	34
11	Silent/Greatest (73+)	11	13
Median age			
48	In years	47	52
Time in U.S.			
-	0 to 10 years	-	8
-	11 to 20 years	-	24
-	More than 20 years	-	68
English proficiency: Speaks...			
84	English only	91	20
11	English very well	8	42
5	English less than very well	2	37
Educational attainment			
10	Less than high school	9	19
28	High school graduate	28	22
32	Two-year degree/ Some college	33	24
30	Bachelor's degree or more	30	36
Annual household income			
\$75K	Median	\$74K	\$80K
10	< \$20,000	10	10
21	\$20,000 - \$49,000	22	20
30	\$50,000 - \$99,999	31	29
35	> \$100,000	34	40

Note: Eligible voters are adult U.S. citizens. Figures may not sum up to 100% due to rounding.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2018 American Community Survey (IPUMS).

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⁶ Proficient English speakers are those who speak only English at home or speak English at least "very well."

Household income

Immigrant eligible voters live in households with a median income of \$80,100, a higher amount than the U.S.-born eligible voter's household median of \$74,000. Among immigrant eligible voters, 40% have annual household incomes of \$100,000 or more, compared with 34% among U.S.-born families.

Educational attainment

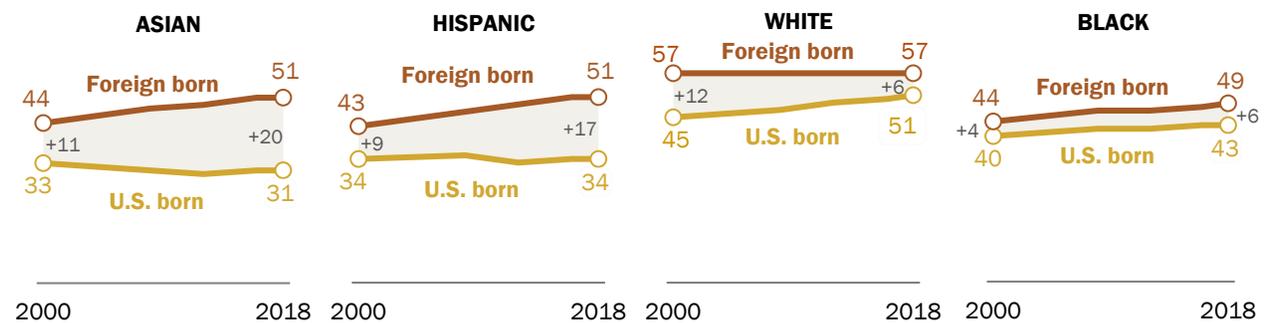
Another notable difference between immigrant and U.S.-born eligible voters is level of educational attainment. Among immigrant voters, 36% have at least a bachelor's degree, while among U.S.-born voters, the share is 30%.

Demographic differences between immigrant and U.S.-born eligible voters vary by race and ethnicity

Among all major racial or ethnic groups, immigrant eligible voters are older than U.S.-born voters. However, the differences in median age between immigrant and U.S.-born voters vary by racial and ethnic group.

Since 2000, the age gap between immigrant and U.S.-born eligible voters has widened among Asians and Hispanics

Median age of eligible voters, by racial and ethnic group



Note: Eligible voters are adult U.S. citizens. Whites, blacks and Asians are single-race and include only non-Hispanics. Hispanics are of any race. Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2018, 2016, 2012 and 2008 American Community Survey and 2000 decennial census (IPUMS). "Naturalized Citizens Make Up a Record One-in-Ten U.S. Eligible Voters in 2020"

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Among Asian and Hispanic eligible voters, immigrants are significantly older than the U.S. born. The median age of Asian immigrant eligible voters is 51, compared with 31 for Asian voters born in the U.S. Among Hispanics, immigrant eligible voters have a median age of 51, compared with 34 for the U.S. born. However, the gap between white and black eligible voters is not as wide. The median age of white immigrant voters is 57 while its 51 for the U.S.-born. As for black eligible voters, the median age of immigrants is 49, compared with 43 among those born in the U.S.

Since 2000, the median age gap between immigrant voters and U.S.-born voters has widened between Asian and Latino eligible voters but narrowed among white eligible voters and is little changed among black eligible voters. In the case of Asian eligible voters, the gap in median age between immigrants and the U.S. born is the widest of any group. It has grown from 11 years in 2000 to 20 years in 2018. For Latino eligible voters, the gap in median age between immigrants and the U.S. born has grown from nine to 17 years over the same period.

Meanwhile, the age gap between immigrant and U.S.-born white eligible voters has narrowed, falling from 12 years in 2000 to six in 2018. By contrast, the median age gap has changed little over the same period for black eligible voters.

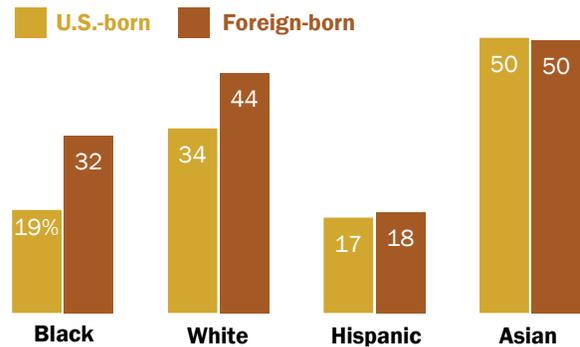
The widening age gap between Asian and Hispanic eligible voters is the result of [the changing demographics](#) and [naturalization rates](#) for both groups. Even though Asians make up the largest group of [new immigrant arrivals](#), not all immigrants from Asia become U.S. citizens. And those who have become citizens tend to be older and have lived in the U.S. for longer. Meanwhile, for Hispanics, immigration from Latin America has slowed sharply in the last decade. As a result, Hispanic immigrants with U.S. citizenship are aging. At the same time, U.S. births to Hispanic parents have been the principal driver of Hispanic [population growth](#) for nearly two decades. Young Hispanics born in the U.S. are now entering adulthood in [large numbers](#), bringing down the median age of U.S.-born Hispanic eligible voters.

When it comes to educational attainment, black and white eligible voters have the widest gaps between immigrants and the U.S. born. Among black voters, 32% of immigrants have a bachelor's degree or more, compared with 19% of the U.S. born. This 13 percentage point gap is the largest of the racial or ethnic groups included in this analysis.

Among white eligible voters, 44% of immigrants have a bachelor's degree or more, while 34% of the U.S. born do, a gap of 10 points. By contrast, there is little to no gap in educational attainment among Asian or Hispanic eligible voters.

Among black and white voters, a higher share of immigrants than U.S. born have a college degree

% of ___ eligible voters with a bachelor's degree or more



Note: Eligible voters are adult U.S. citizens.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2018 American Community Survey (IPUMS).

"Naturalized Citizens Make Up a Record One-in-Ten U.S. Eligible Voters in 2020"

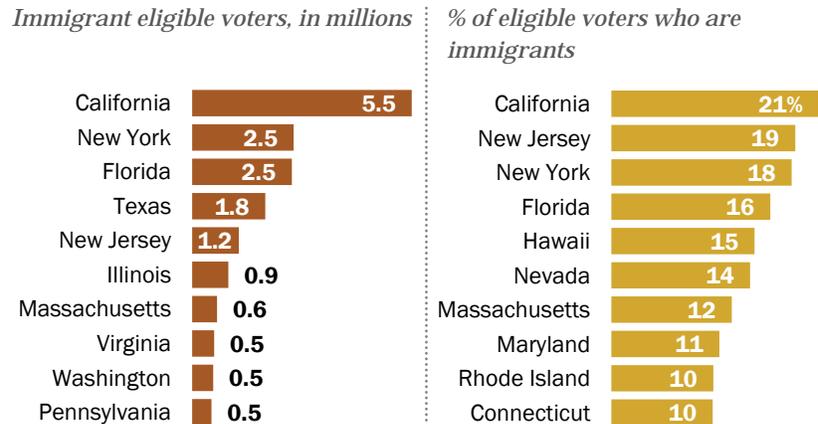
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2. The nation's most populous states are home to most immigrant voters

The four states with the largest eligible voter populations – California, New York, Florida and Texas – are also home to most *immigrant* eligible voters. Together, these states hold over half (56%) of the nation's immigrant voters.

California has the largest immigrant eligible voter population by a large margin. In addition, immigrants make up 21% of California's eligible voters, the highest of any state. New Jersey (19%), New York (18%) and Florida (16%) have the next highest shares.

Top 10 states with largest numbers and shares of immigrant eligible voters



Note: Eligible voters are adult U.S. citizens.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2018 American Community Survey (IPUMS).

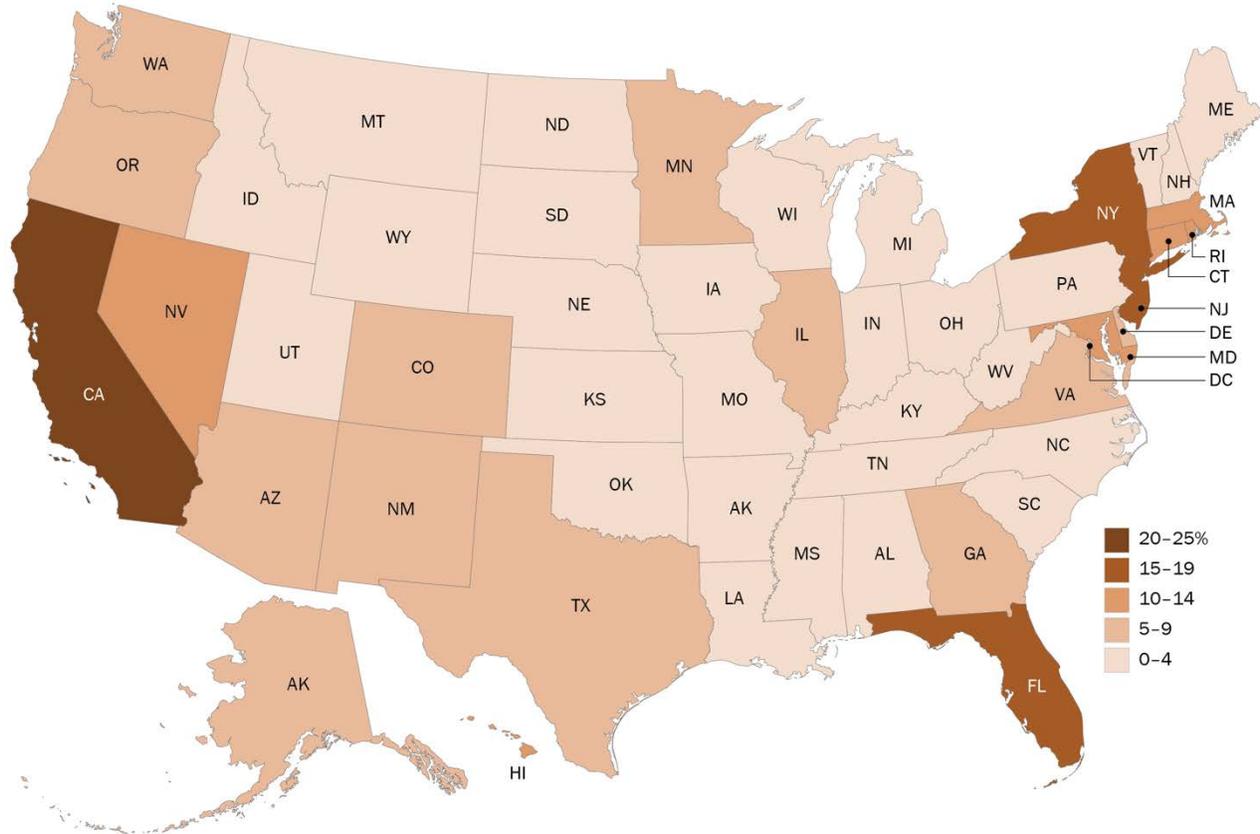
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Even so, immigrant eligible voters are dispersed across the nation. While California may have more immigrant voters than any other state, many states have substantial immigrant eligible voter populations (see Appendix).

Immigrants make up over 15% of eligible voters in California, New Jersey, New York and Florida

% of eligible voters who are immigrants, by state



Note: Eligible voters are adult U.S. citizens.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2018 American Community Survey data (IPUMS).
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Where the immigrant electorate is growing fastest

Since 2000, the states with the fastest growing immigrant eligible voter populations have been Georgia, Minnesota and North Carolina. All three have seen their numbers of immigrant eligible voters nearly triple between 2000 and 2018. Georgia increased by 193% during this time, the nation's fastest growth.

Meanwhile, the states with the largest immigrant eligible voter populations have grown too, though more slowly. For example, California's eligible voter population is up 63% since 2000. Moreover, the states with the three largest immigrant eligible voter populations (California, New York and Florida) together accounted for 43% of the U.S. immigrant electorate growth between 2000 and 2018.

In states with largest immigrant electorates, Mexico is often top country of birth

Top birth countries of immigrant voters in largest immigrant electorate states

Immigrant eligible voters by country of birth, in thousands

California		New York		Florida		Texas		New Jersey	
Mexico	1,503	Dominican Republic	264	Cuba	606	Mexico	736	India	122
Philippines	604	China	207	Colombia	190	Vietnam	130	Dominican Republic	103
Vietnam	430	Jamaica	143	Haiti	187	India	115	Philippines	63

Note: Eligible voters are adult U.S. citizens.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2018 American Community Survey (IPUMS).

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The states with the largest immigrant voter populations differ in where their immigrant electorates were born. Mexico, the top birth country among U.S. immigrant voters, is also the top birth country of immigrant voters in California (1.5 million) and Texas (736,000). But the next largest birth countries vary by state. In California, Filipino immigrant voters (604,000) and Vietnamese immigrant voters (430,000) are the second- and third-largest groups. Among immigrant eligible voters in Texas, Vietnam (130,000) and India (115,000) are the second- and third-largest birth countries.

The Dominican Republic (264,000) is the top birth country of immigrant eligible voters in New York, while those born in Cuba (606,000) are the largest group of immigrant eligible voters in Florida. In New Jersey, India (122,000) is the top birth country among immigrant voters.

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Methodology

In this report, we analyzed the detailed demographics and geographic distribution of immigrants who are eligible to vote in the 2020 presidential election. The term “eligible voters” refer to persons ages 18 and older who are U.S. citizens.

This report’s analysis is based on Pew Research Center tabulations and projections derived from the following U.S. Census Bureau data: the American Community Survey (2018, 2016, 2012 and 2008), the 2000 U.S. decennial census, the November Voting and Registration Supplement of the Current Population Survey (2000, 2004, 2008, 2012 and 2016), and 2017 National Population Projections from the U.S. Census Bureau.

2020 projections

Pew Research Center’s projections of the number of immigrant eligible voters for 2020 were created using the Census Bureau’s [2017 National Population Projections](#) as a base. Additional calculations used to create adjustments were made using Census Bureau vintage 2016 [National Population Estimates](#) for the U.S. resident population as of July 1, 2016. For more details about the projections, please visit the [Methodology](#) section of our data essay “[An early look at the 2020 electorate.](#)”

Detailed demographic and geographic data

Analysis of the detailed demographics and geographic distribution of immigrants eligible voters are from the [American Community Survey](#) (ACS), the largest household survey in the United States, with a sample of more than [3 million addresses](#). It covers the topics previously covered in the long form of the decennial census. The ACS is designed to provide estimates of the size and characteristics of the nation’s resident population, which includes persons living in households and group quarters. For more details about the ACS, including its sampling strategy and associated error, see the yearly American Community Survey’s [Accuracy Statement](#) provided by the U.S. Census Bureau.

The specific data sources used in this report are the 1% samples of the 2018, 2016, 2012 and 2008 ACS and the 5% sample of the 2000 decennial census, all provided through Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) from the University of Minnesota. IPUMS assigns uniform codes, to the extent possible, to data collected by the decennial census and the ACS from 1850 to 2018. For more information about IPUMS, including variable definition and sampling error, please visit the [“IPUMS Documentation and User Guide.”](#)

Voter turnout rates

The report's analysis of voter turnout rates in presidential elections is based on the November Voting and Registration Supplement of the [Current Population Survey](#) (CPS), a monthly survey of approximately 55,000 households that is the only nationally representative source of data on the proportion of the population and subpopulations that reported registering to vote and voting. The universe for the CPS is the non-institutionalized civilian population. For more details about the CPS, including the sampling strategy and associated error, download the series of [Technical Documentations](#) provided by the U.S. Census Bureau.

The specific data sources for this report are the 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012 and 2016 November Voting and Registration Supplements to the monthly CPS, downloaded from the National Bureau of Economic Research's [website](#).

Calendar of Democratic primaries and caucuses

To view detailed calendars of the 2020, 2016, 2012, 2008 and 2000 presidential primary elections, see [official documentation](#) provided by the Federal Election Commission.

Appendix: Immigrant eligible voters by state

Immigrant eligible voters by state

In thousands (unless otherwise specified)

State	Total pop.	Eligible voter (EV) pop.	Immigrant pop.	Immigrant EV pop.	% Immigrant among total pop.	% Immigrant among all EV	% EV among immigrants
Total U.S.	327,167	233,675	44,761	22,005	14%	9%	49%
Alabama	4,888	3,713	163	62	3%	2%	38%
Alaska	737	535	57	36	8%	7%	62%
Arizona	7,172	5,042	961	425	13%	8%	44%
Arkansas	3,014	2,219	147	47	5%	2%	32%
California	39,557	25,869	10,610	5,476	27%	21%	52%
Colorado	5,696	4,147	558	237	10%	6%	42%
Connecticut	3,573	2,614	522	270	15%	10%	52%
Delaware	967	721	90	40	9%	6%	45%
D.C.	702	527	99	44	14%	8%	45%
Florida	21,299	15,342	4,472	2,486	21%	16%	56%
Georgia	10,519	7,487	1,064	466	10%	6%	44%
Hawaii	1,420	1,018	265	149	19%	15%	56%
Idaho	1,754	1,254	106	44	6%	3%	41%
Illinois	12,741	9,059	1,806	902	14%	10%	50%
Indiana	6,692	4,933	359	135	5%	3%	38%
Iowa	3,156	2,326	181	66	6%	3%	37%
Kansas	2,912	2,100	208	83	7%	4%	40%
Kentucky	4,468	3,371	170	62	4%	2%	37%
Louisiana	4,660	3,464	191	75	4%	2%	39%
Maine	1,338	1,072	49	26	4%	2%	52%
Maryland	6,043	4,326	909	476	15%	11%	52%
Massachusetts	6,902	5,042	1,196	619	17%	12%	52%
Michigan	9,996	7,549	699	361	7%	5%	52%
Minnesota	5,611	4,114	481	243	9%	6%	51%
Mississippi	2,987	2,240	73	26	2%	1%	36%

Continued on next page

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Immigrant eligible voters by state (continued)

In thousands (unless otherwise specified)

State	Total pop.	Eligible voter (EV) pop.	Immigrant pop.	Immigrant EV pop.	% Immigrant among total pop.	% Immigrant among EV	% EV among immigrants
Missouri	6,126	4,638	262	122	4%	3%	46%
Montana	1,062	828	24	13	2%	2%	57%
Nebraska	1,929	1,381	138	51	7%	4%	37%
Nevada	3,034	2,071	592	293	19%	14%	50%
New Hampshire	1,356	1,071	83	48	6%	4%	58%
New Jersey	8,909	6,196	2,039	1,162	23%	19%	57%
New Mexico	2,095	1,509	198	77	9%	5%	39%
New York	19,542	13,770	4,457	2,530	23%	18%	57%
North Carolina	10,384	7,632	818	307	8%	4%	38%
North Dakota	760	569	36	15	5%	3%	41%
Ohio	11,689	8,871	553	283	5%	3%	51%
Oklahoma	3,943	2,854	235	83	6%	3%	35%
Oregon	4,191	3,108	428	193	10%	6%	45%
Pennsylvania	12,807	9,786	932	480	7%	5%	51%
Rhode Island	1,057	801	145	83	14%	10%	57%
South Carolina	5,084	3,851	256	107	5%	3%	42%
South Dakota	882	654	30	12	3%	2%	42%
Tennessee	6,770	5,070	355	129	5%	3%	36%
Texas	28,702	18,510	4,934	1,822	17%	10%	37%
Utah	3,161	2,085	266	98	8%	5%	37%
Vermont	626	503	30	17	5%	3%	58%
Virginia	8,518	6,212	1,066	550	13%	9%	52%
Washington	7,536	5,359	1,110	524	15%	10%	47%
West Virginia	1,806	1,433	26	14	1%	1%	52%
Wisconsin	5,814	4,396	294	128	5%	3%	44%
Wyoming	578	435	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Note: Full data are not available for Wyoming because there are too few cases to provide a reliable estimate. Eligible voters are adult U.S. citizens. The District of Columbia elects a nonvoting delegate to the House of Representatives.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2018 American Community Survey data (IPUMS).

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