

# PENNSYLVANIA STATE PROFILE

# NEWAMERICAN VOTERS 2020

SEPTEMBER 2020



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The increasing number of voters of color will have a critical impact on how Pennsylvania shapes or even determines the outcome of the 2020 presidential election. One of the rising groups within this potential voting bloc are newly naturalized citizens, almost 60% of whom are originally from Asian and Pacific Island and Latin American countries and over a quarter of whom are originally from African, Middle Eastern, and Caribbean countries. Newly naturalized citizens in Pennsylvania from 2014 to 2018 are alone almost double the margin of victory during the 2016 presidential election and the number of naturalized citizens from 2014 to 2020 are estimated to almost triple that margin.<sup>1</sup>

The impact that these new citizens will have on the 2020 elections will largely depend on the efforts of the Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Coalition and other grassroots campaigns to encourage the newly naturalized to vote, despite issues like a lack of language access and familiarity with the voting process. There are also issues or barriers faced by efforts to encourage newly naturalized citizens to vote, including backlogs and processing delays of citizenship applications before U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), which serves as a voter suppression tactic that limits the growing number of new voters in Pennsylvania and throughout the country. According to the latest data from USCIS, as of March 31, there were 18,623 immigrants in Pennsylvania who applied but are in the backlogs and their applications have not been efficiently adjudicated, they have not been able to naturalize, and, thus, they have not been able to register to vote.<sup>2</sup> And processing delays are longer in USCIS offices in Pennsylvania than the national average and range from 11 to 18 months in the Philadelphia office and 8 to 15.5 months in the Pittsburgh office.<sup>3</sup> Despite this infringement on the fundamental right to vote and other challenges to getting all out to vote, there are incredible opportunities for realizing and showing the power of newly naturalized citizens at the polls in 2020.

In Pennsylvania, 2020 will be the first time the state's residents will have the option of sending in a mail-in ballot.<sup>4</sup> Despite issues with the Post Office, this means that there will be expanded opportunities for voting by new citizens, who the majority in Pennsylvania are originally from India, the Dominican Republic, China, Bhutan, Vietnam, Mexican, Liberia, Jamaica, and the

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<sup>1</sup> "Immigration and Citizenship Data," U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, accessed August 12, 2020, <https://www.uscis.gov/tools/reports-and-studies/immigration-and-citizenship-data>; "Pennsylvania Results," New York Times, August 1, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/elections/2016/results/pennsylvania-president-clinton-trump>.

<sup>2</sup> "Number of Form N-400, Application for Naturalization By Category of Naturalization, Case Status, and USCIS Field Office Location, January 1 - March 31, 2020," U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, accessed August 13, 2020, [https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/data/N400\\_performancedata\\_fy2020\\_qtr2.pdf](https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/data/N400_performancedata_fy2020_qtr2.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> "Check Case Processing Times," U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, accessed August 13, 2020, <https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-times/>; "Historical National Average Processing Time (in Months) for All USCIS Offices for Select Forms By Fiscal Year," U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, accessed August 13, 2020, <https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-times/historic-pt>.

<sup>4</sup> "Governor Wolf Signs Historic Election Reform Bill Including New Mail-in Voting," Governor Tom Wolf, October 31, 2019, <https://www.governor.pa.gov/newsroom/governor-wolf-signs-election-reform-bill-including-new-mail-in-voting/>.

Philippines. Almost two-thirds of them are under the age of 45 and they have a slight majority of men. While there are large numbers of naturalized citizens in the counties surrounding Philadelphia and Pittsburgh (Philadelphia and Allegheny, respectively), there are a significant number of naturalized citizens in the counties of Montgomery, Bucks, and Delaware, all of which have over 30,000 naturalized citizens each. Lehigh and Chester counties have over 20,000 naturalized citizens each and the counties of Lancaster, Berks, Northampton, Monroe, and Dauphin all have over 10,000 naturalized citizens each. In a state where the presidential election was determined by 44,292 votes, the number of naturalized citizens throughout the state, are significant and can, if they vote, tip the scales in Pennsylvania, and, subsequently, the national outcome.

## WHY PENNSYLVANIA IS SO IMPORTANT IN 2020

Pennsylvania's recently naturalized citizens will play a critical role in the November presidential election. Pennsylvania ranks ninth as the state in which new citizens can have the greatest influence, according to the New American Voters Impact Model, created by the National Partnership for New Americans (NPNA) and based on factors like the 2016 presidential election margin of victory; the margin of victory average during the last three presidential elections; the number and concentration of new citizens in the state; and the occurrence of a senatorial, gubernatorial, or state legislative election and their competitiveness.<sup>5</sup>

The numbers of new citizens are based on USCIS data on naturalizations that occurred from Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 through FY 2018 and naturalization applications that the agency approved in FY 2019.<sup>6</sup> The estimates for naturalizations during FY 2020 is based on previous spikes in naturalizations in FY 2016, before that calendar year's presidential election.<sup>7</sup> "Newly naturalized citizens" or "recently naturalized citizens" are defined as those who have naturalized since FY 2014. "New American Voters" are defined as those who have naturalized since FY 2014 and can subsequently register to vote.

These estimates of new citizens were made in NPNA's report, *The Power of Newly Naturalized Citizens in the 2020 Elections*, released in June 2020. The report calculated that from FY 2014 through FY 2020, there would be 5.3 million new citizens who naturalized, the majority of which, 3.1 million, naturalized since the election of Donald Trump to President. Since the report's

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<sup>5</sup> Iñiguez-López, Diego, "The Power of Newly Naturalized Citizens in the 2020 Elections," National Partnership for New Americans, June 2020, [newamericanvoters2020.org/assets/2020/06/NAV-REPORT-2020-UPDATED.pdf](https://newamericanvoters2020.org/assets/2020/06/NAV-REPORT-2020-UPDATED.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> See "Naturalizations," U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, accessed August 12, 2020, <https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/naturalizations>; "Immigration and Citizenship Data," U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, accessed August 12, 2020, <https://www.uscis.gov/tools/reports-and-studies/immigration-and-citizenship-data>.

<sup>7</sup> See Iñiguez-López, Diego, "Naturalize Now, Vote Tomorrow: New Americans Vote 2020," National Partnership for New Americans, February 2020, [https://partnershipfornewamericans.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Naturalize\\_Now\\_Vote\\_Tomorrow\\_FINAL.pdf](https://partnershipfornewamericans.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Naturalize_Now_Vote_Tomorrow_FINAL.pdf).

release, USCIS has released data indicating that around 290,000 naturalization applicants awaiting their interview will not be naturalized in time to register to vote, meaning that NPNA's original estimates of 5.3 million will be reduced to around 5 million new citizens.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, USCIS mismanagement will not hold back the approximately 5 million new citizens, including their large numbers in Pennsylvania.

From 2014 to 2018, there were 82,052 citizens who naturalized, which is almost double the 2016 presidential margin of victory (44,292 votes).<sup>9</sup> From 2014 through 2020 in Pennsylvania, an estimated 128,672 citizens will have naturalized, which is nearly three times more than the 2016 margin. Of the more than 450,000 naturalized citizens in Pennsylvania, more than one quarter are new citizens. Since the release of NPNA's previous report, The Power of Newly Naturalized Citizens in the 2020 Elections, which utilized American Community Survey (ACS) data from 2017, ACS released 2018 data, which this report uses.<sup>10</sup>

TOTAL POPULATION	REGISTERED VOTERS	ALL NATURALIZED	NATURALIZED 2014-2020
12,791,181	8,653,774	454,876	128,672

## WHO ARE PENNSYLVANIA'S NEW AMERICAN VOTERS

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders represent 39% of new citizens, 19% are Latin American, 16% are European, 12% are African, 8% are Middle Eastern and North African, and 6% Caribbean. The chart below provides totals for 2014-2018.

ASIAN AMERICAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER	31,916	39%
LATIN AMERICAN	15,907	19%
EUROPEAN	13,261	16%
AFRICAN	9,600	12%
MIDDLE EASTERN & NORTH AFRICAN	6,280	8%
CARIBBEAN	5,088	6%
<b>TOTAL 2014-2018</b>	<b>82,052</b>	
<b>TOTAL 2014-2020</b>	<b>128,672</b>	

<sup>8</sup> See Rampell, Catherine, "The 'Missing' Immigrant Voters Whose Absence Might Swing the Election," Washington Post, August 27, 2020, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-missing-immigrant-voters-whose-absence-might-swing-the-election/2020/08/27/db144c16-e897-11ea-97e0-94d2e46e759b\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-missing-immigrant-voters-whose-absence-might-swing-the-election/2020/08/27/db144c16-e897-11ea-97e0-94d2e46e759b_story.html); "The Fix Is In — Nearly 300,000 Immigrants Won't Become U.S. Citizens In Time For the 2020 Election," Boundless, September 3, 2020, <https://www.boundless.com/blog/immigrants-citizenship-vote-2020/>.

<sup>9</sup> "See Pennsylvania Results," New York Times, September 13, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/elections/2016/results/pennsylvania>.

<sup>10</sup> "Nativity and Citizenship Status in the United States," United States Census Bureau, accessed September 11, 2020, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=B05001%3A%20NATIVITY%20AND%20CITIZENSHIP%20STATUS%20IN%20THE%20UNITED%20STATES&g=0400000US39&tid=ACSDT5Y2018.B05001&moe=false&tp=false&hidePreview=true>.

Like the majority of states in the country, Asian American and Pacific Islanders in Pennsylvania represent the largest numbers of newly naturalized citizens.

The following map represents the top 20 countries of origin for newly naturalized citizens.



The following chart represents the top 20 countries of origin for newly naturalized citizens.

RANK	COUNTRY	TOTAL
1	INDIA	8,464
2	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	6,500
3	PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA	4,960
4	BHUTAN	3,799
5	VIETNAM	2,896
6	MEXICO	2,497
7	LIBERIA	2,335
8	JAMAICA	2,246
9	PHILIPPINES	2,009
10	UKRAINE	1,908
11	SOUTH KOREA	1,798
12	HAITI	1,670
13	PAKISTAN	1,591
14	UNITED KINGDOM	1,441
15	BANGLADESH	1,410
16	COLOMBIA	1,266
17	EGYPT	1,151
18	RUSSIA	1,132
19	NIGERIA	1,097
20	POLAND	998



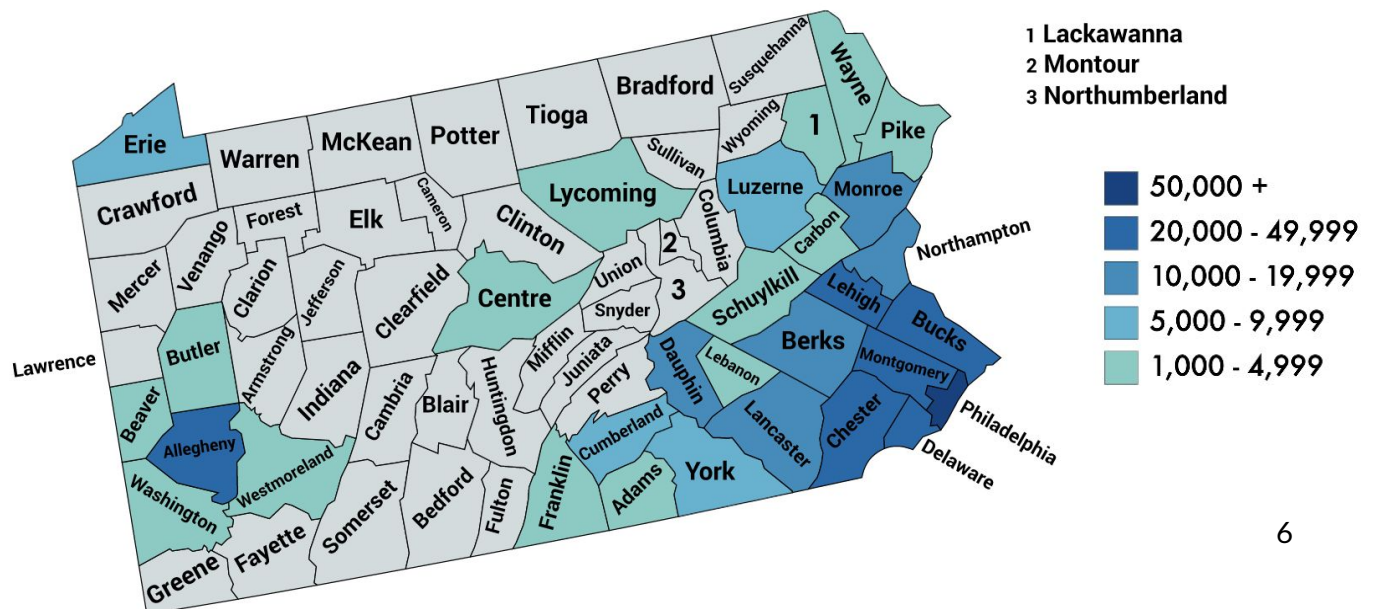
The most represented countries of origin nationwide are also represented in Pennsylvania, including India, the Dominican Republic, China, Vietnam, Mexico, Jamaica, and the Philippines, but there are also countries of origin that are less represented nationwide that have large concentrations in the state, such as Bhutan, Liberia, and Ukraine.

Nearly two-thirds of newly naturalized citizens in Pennsylvania were below the age of 45 when they naturalized. The full breakdown by age and gender is shown in the following table:

AGE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	%
18-24 YEARS	4,270	3,810	8,080	10%
25-34 YEARS	11,988	10,155	22,143	27%
35-44 YEARS	11,779	10,612	22,391	27%
45-54 YEARS	7,722	7,091	14,814	18%
55-64 YEARS	4,592	4,214	8,806	11%
65 YEARS AND OLDER	3,237	2,727	5,964	7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>43,588</b>	<b>38,609</b>	<b>82,198</b>	

## WHERE ARE PENNSYLVANIA'S NATURALIZED VOTERS

The following table shows counties with 1,000 or more naturalized citizens. Philadelphia County has over 104,000 naturalized citizens, followed by Montgomery with 49,332. Bucks, Allegheny and Delaware counties each have more than 30,000 naturalized citizens. While naturalized citizens have large numbers in the counties surrounding Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, they are much more dispersed throughout the state. Lehigh and Chester counties have more than 20,000 naturalized citizens each and the counties of Lancaster, Berks, Northampton, Monroe, and Dauphin each have over 10,000 naturalized citizens.



COUNTY	TOTAL	LATIN AMERICAN	ASIAN	AFRICAN	EUROPEAN	OCEANIA	NORTH AMERICAN
Philadelphia	104,357	28,386	43,431	9,798	22,032	75	635
Montgomery	49,332	7,106	26,205	2,654	12,443	168	756
Bucks	35,255	4,831	14,130	2,147	13,365	55	727
Allegheny	32,087	3,875	13,748	2,294	11,389	152	629
Delaware	31,244	4,910	13,616	5,356	6,753	43	566
Lehigh	22,281	9,877	8,522	788	2,863	35	196
Chester	20,664	4,040	9,710	1,256	5,090	73	495
Lancaster	14,461	4,484	5,147	1,489	3,025	25	291
Berks	14,422	8,188	2,792	576	2,665	79	122
Northampton	13,345	4,178	4,191	467	4,171	35	303
Monroe	12,073	5,604	1,773	1,501	3,126	0	69
Dauphin	10,117	1,850	4,915	1,141	2,089	17	105
York	9,043	2,677	2,958	639	2,529	12	228
Luzerne	8,780	4,952	1,903	81	1,762	34	48
Cumberland	7,478	550	3,673	1,042	1,980	66	167
Erie	5,809	510	1,897	631	2,507	21	243
Lackawanna	4,971	1,384	2,059	133	1,283	52	60
Centre	4,044	461	2,284	114	907	39	239
Westmoreland	3,728	529	1,638	74	1,241	13	233
Pike	2,973	1,183	249	35	1,481	0	25
Lebanon	2,877	907	1,031	203	666	14	56
Franklin	2,337	745	822	33	654	0	83
Washington	2,303	366	856	164	847	8	62
Butler	2,236	438	898	45	695	24	136
Beaver	1,984	386	431	155	884	22	106
Adams	1,455	509	327	91	497	0	31
Schuylkill	1,243	448	344	82	345	0	24
Wayne	1,102	183	203	36	661	13	6
Carbon	1,098	292	179	5	576	0	46
Lycoming	1,042	170	391	61	309	0	111

# TESTIMONIAL



**PAPA MOUSSA FAYE**

I came to the United States in 2010 on the diversity visa lottery with my wife and my children. As a permanent resident, I was eligible to naturalize after five years in the United States. Naturalization was a bridge between a non-citizen and a citizen. Naturalizing makes me feel safe and confident to live in this country.

I will vote because it is my right and my power to participate in the destiny of the nation that I now feel a part of. Working as a community organizer at AFRICOM has increased my understanding that voting is the key to change. We need a nation where social, economic, and justice equality prevail.

# RESOURCES

To find out more information, visit:

- Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Coalition: [www.paimmigrant.org](http://www.paimmigrant.org)
- Keystone Votes: [www.keystonevotes.org](http://www.keystonevotes.org)



# ABOUT US

THIS REPORT WAS CREATED BY THE NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP FOR NEW AMERICANS AND PENNSYLVANIA IMMIGRANT AND CITIZENSHIP COALITION



The National Partnership for New Americans is a national multiethnic, multiracial partnership. We represent the collective power of the country’s 41 largest regional immigrant and refugee rights organizations in 37 states. Our members provide large-scale services—from Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals application processing to voter registration to health care enrollment—for their communities, and they combine service delivery with sophisticated organizing tactics to advance local and state policy. We exist to leverage their collective power and expertise for a national strategy.

To learn more about the National Partnership for New Americans, visit [partnershipfornewamericans.org](http://partnershipfornewamericans.org).



The Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Coalition (PICC) is a diverse coalition of over 60 member organizations and hundreds of individual supporters. Our membership includes community groups, social, health, and legal service providers, advocacy organizations, labor unions, and faith communities. PICC plays a unique role as the only organization in Pennsylvania that brings together organizations and individuals representing different ethnicities, immigration statuses, faiths, and other backgrounds, to work collectively on immigrant rights in Pennsylvania.

To learn more about Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Coalition, visit [paimmigrant.org](http://paimmigrant.org).