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The U.S. Electorate's Changing Racial and Ethnic Makeup

The share of eligible voters who are White has declined since 2006, while the Hispanic and Asian shares have nearly doubled

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About Pew Research Center

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About this research

This Pew Research Center analysis describes the racial and ethnic makeup of the U.S. eligible voter population living in the 50 states and the District of Columbia, and how this population has changed over time.

Why did we do this?

Pew Research Center conducts high-quality research to inform the public, journalists and decision-makers. This analysis builds on a larger body of work that explores the racial/ethnic makeup of the population, as well as Americans' political attitudes.

Learn more about [Pew Research Center](#) and our research on [race and ethnicity](#) and [voters and elections](#) in the United States.

How did we do this?

Most of the data comes from the U.S. Census Bureau's [American Community Surveys](#) for 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, 2020, 2022 and 2024 provided through [IPUMS](#) from the University of Minnesota.

Pew Research Center projections for 2026 are based on the Census Bureau's [Vintage 2025 population estimates](#) by age and race/Hispanic origin for November 2026. Projections of U.S. citizen counts use the 2024 ACS and survival ratios by age, race/Hispanic origin and nativity from the Census Bureau's [2023 population projections](#).

In charts that show state rankings, differences between states might not be statistically significant.

Key terms

This analysis focuses on four racial and ethnic groups. **White, Black and Asian** adults are those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. **Hispanic** adults are of any race. Non-Hispanic U.S. adults who indicate two or more racial backgrounds are not shown in this analysis.

Eligible voters refers to people ages 18 and older who are U.S. citizens and live in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. People who are U.S. citizens at birth (also referred to as the U.S.-born population or U.S. natives), include essentially all people born in the 50 states and the District of Columbia, as well as those born in U.S. territories and those born in foreign countries to U.S. citizen parents. Our estimates of eligible voters do not take into account relatively small groups who have lost their voting rights, such as some adults disenfranchised due to felony convictions (whose eligibility varies by state). Our estimates also do not include U.S. citizens living abroad who may be eligible to vote, including members of the armed forces stationed overseas or other Americans living outside the United States.

As a group, eligible voters make up the **electorate**. The terms **eligible voters** and **the electorate** are used interchangeably in this report. Eligible voters differ from [registered voters](#) and [validated voters](#).

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.

People with a **college degree or higher** comprise those with a bachelor's degree or more education. People with **some college education** are those with an associate degree or those who attended college but did not obtain a degree. People with a **high school education or less** are those who have a high school diploma or its equivalent, such as a General Educational Development (GED) certificate, plus those who have less education.

The U.S. Electorate's Changing Racial and Ethnic Makeup

The share of eligible voters who are White has declined since 2006, while the Hispanic and Asian shares have nearly doubled

Roughly 250 million adult U.S. citizens are eligible to vote in the 2026 midterm elections.

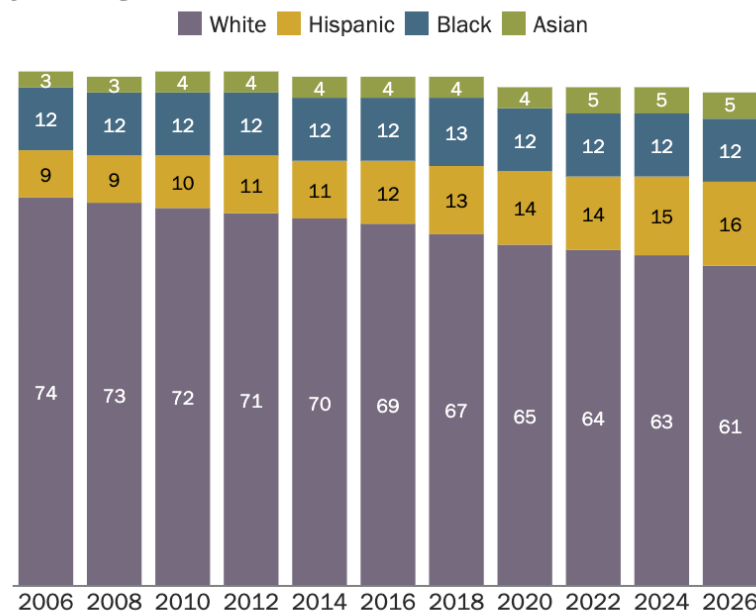
White Americans make up the majority of these eligible voters (61%), but their share has fallen markedly since 2006. Meanwhile, Hispanic (16%) and Asian (5%) eligible voters' shares have almost doubled in the past 20 years. The share of Black eligible voters (12%) has changed little over the same period.

(In this report, White, Black and Asian adults are those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanic adults are of any race.¹)

With the 2026 midterm elections approaching, here is a look at the racial and ethnic composition of the U.S. electorate. National counts of

The racial and ethnic composition of the U.S. electorate shifted between 2006 and 2026

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



Note: Eligible voters are U.S. citizens ages 18 and older. White, Black and Asian eligible voters are those who report only being one race and are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race. Columns do not total 100% because eligible voters who gave other answers, including those who chose more than one race, are not shown.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, 2020, 2022 and 2024 American Community Survey (IPUMS). Figures for 2026 are Pew Research Center projections based on Census Bureau estimates. "The U.S. Electorate's Changing Racial and Ethnic Makeup"

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¹ The shares of the electorate would change substantively for White adults if these categories were to include multiracial people (i.e., those who identify as White and at least one other race) or those who identify as both White and Hispanic. Shares would also change slightly for Black and Asian adults. In 2024, White adults (alone or in combination with other races and irrespective of Hispanic identity) would account for 76% of all eligible voters. The shares would be 14% for Black adults and 6% for Asian adults. Note that the shares for all racial and ethnic groups would sum to more than 100% since respondents would be allowed to choose more than one race and may therefore be counted more than once.

eligible voters for 2026 are Pew Research Center projections, based on Census Bureau estimates. State-level counts and demographic characteristics are based on 2024 American Community Survey data, the most recent detailed figures available.

Pew Research Center has previously published data about the ways that political preferences and voting patterns differ by race and ethnicity. For details, refer to recent publications covering [partisan identification trends since 2020](#); [voting patterns in the 2022 midterms](#); [voting patterns in the 2024 presidential election](#); and [2026 midterm voting intentions](#).

Who are eligible voters?

Pew Research Center defines **eligible voters** as U.S. citizens ages 18 and older who live in the 50 states or the District of Columbia. Our estimates do not account for relatively small groups who have lost their voting rights (such as people convicted of felonies) or U.S. citizens living abroad.

Registered voters are a subset of eligible voters – U.S. citizens who are registered to vote. **Voters** are an even narrower group – registered voters who have cast ballots in a given election. This report focuses on eligible voters, regardless of whether they are registered to vote or have voted.

Jump to the following for more about:

- [Growth and diversity of the U.S. electorate](#)
- [State-level changes in the electorate’s racial and ethnic makeup](#)
- [Why race and ethnicity in the electorate don’t mirror the U.S. population](#)
- [Demographic characteristics of eligible voters by race and ethnicity](#)

The U.S. electorate has grown and become more diverse since 2022

Since the 2022 midterm elections, the number of U.S. eligible voters has increased by 8.4 million to around 250 million (up 3%).

More than half of this growth came from Hispanics, who added 5.2 million eligible voters between 2022 and 2026 to reach 39.0 million (up 16%). Hispanic eligible voters are now the second-largest group after White voters. (Hispanic eligible voters surpassed Black eligible voters for the first time in 2018.)

Since 2022, Hispanics have added more eligible voters than any other group, while Asians have grown the fastest

U.S. eligible voters, by race and ethnicity

The Hispanic electorate's growth primarily stems from U.S.-born Hispanics reaching adulthood. Annually, around 1 million U.S.-born Hispanics become adults. The more than 4 million Hispanics who turned 18 between 2022 and 2026 accounted for about 80% of the growth among Hispanic eligible voters during those years. In addition, roughly 1 million Hispanic adults became naturalized citizens in the last four years.²

	2026	Change 2022-26	% change 2022-26
White	153,000,000	-2,600,000	-2%
Hispanic	38,950,000	5,250,000	16%
Black	30,650,000	1,650,000	6%
Asian	13,650,000	2,250,000	20%
All U.S. eligible voters	249,750,000	8,450,000	3%

Note: Eligible voters are U.S. citizens ages 18 and older. White, Black and Asian eligible voters are those who report only being one race and are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race. Estimates are rounded to the nearest 50,000. Percentages and changes are calculated from unrounded numbers. Subtotals do not add up to totals because eligible voters who gave other answers, including those who chose more than one race, are not shown.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2022 American Community Survey (IPUMS). Figures for 2026 are Pew Research Center projections based on Census Bureau estimates.

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The number of Asian voters also rose sharply between 2022 and 2026, by 2.3 million, to reach 13.7 million. That's a growth rate of around 20%, making Asian Americans the fastest-growing racial or ethnic group of eligible voters. The increase is about equally due to immigrants becoming naturalized citizens and U.S.-born Asians reaching voting age.

² In addition to U.S.-born Hispanics reaching voting age and immigrant naturalizations, movement of U.S. citizens from Puerto Rico to the 50 states and the District of Columbia contributes a small amount to change in the Hispanic eligible voter population. People born in Puerto Rico are U.S. citizens by birth.

The number of Black voters increased more slowly over the same period, growing by 1.6 million (6%) to 31 million.

By contrast, **the number of White eligible voters fell by 2.6 million between 2022 and 2026**, to 153 million (down 2%). This is the only racial or ethnic group with a falling number of eligible voters. The decline is largely due to the group's age structure, as deaths in the White population exceed the number of people turning 18 and being naturalized each year.

State-level changes in the electorate's racial makeup since 2006

Twenty years ago, the U.S. electorate was 74% White, 12% Black, 9% Hispanic and 3% Asian. At the time, White Americans made up the majority of all eligible voters in 48 states. They accounted for half of the electorate in New Mexico (50%) and less than half in the District of Columbia (37%) and Hawaii (28%).

As of 2024, **a majority of eligible voters are White in 46 states.** White eligible voters account for less than half of the electorate in Texas (46%), the District of Columbia (42%), New Mexico (41%), California (40%) and Hawaii (24%). Still, in Texas and California, they are the largest racial or ethnic group. In D.C., they are about on par with the Black eligible voter population, while in New Mexico, they're roughly on par with the Hispanic eligible voter population. In Hawaii, White eligible voters are the second-largest group after Asians.

(This section spans 2006 through 2024, the most recent year for which state-level data about the electorate's racial and ethnic makeup is available. Refer to "[Key terms](#)" for how we report on racial and ethnic groups.)

The nationwide decline in the White share of the electorate is playing out to varying degrees across the country, with some states experiencing particularly significant shifts.

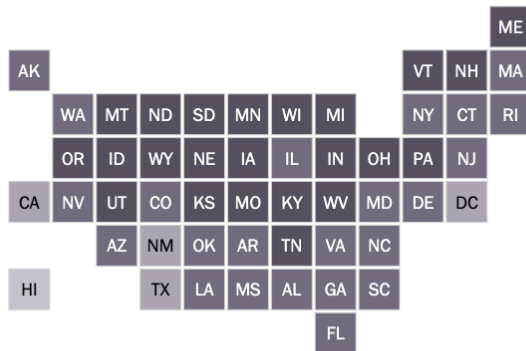
Between 2006 and 2024, a total of 16 states saw declines of 10 percentage points or more in the share of all eligible voters who are White. In Nevada, the White share of the electorate fell 20 points, the largest drop among all 50 states. California also had a sharp decline in the White share of the electorate, dropping 16 points in that period.

The District of Columbia is the only place where White voters *rose* as a share of all eligible voters, increasing 4 percentage points.

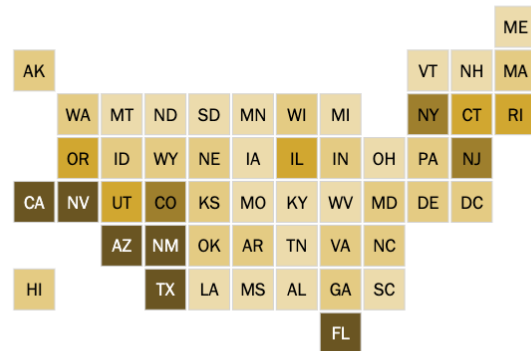
As reflected at the national level, **Hispanic eligible voters** have been the primary drivers of the racial and ethnic diversification of most states' electorates. Their share increased by 10 percentage points in California and Nevada between 2006 and 2024.

Black eligible voters have their largest shares in the mid-Atlantic and the South

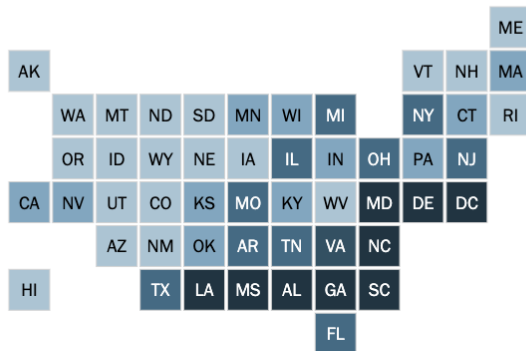
White



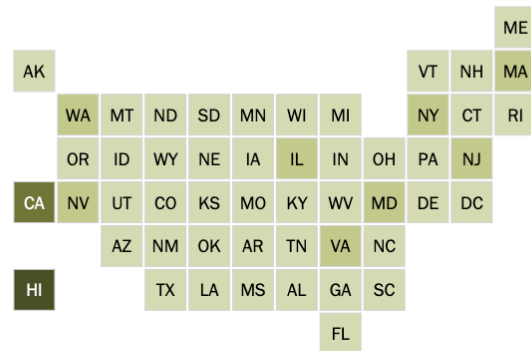
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more in California (33%), Texas (32%) and Arizona (25%). Their shares are smallest in Vermont, Mississippi, Maine and West Virginia, accounting for 2% of the electorate in each of those states.

Black eligible voters

do not make up the largest racial or ethnic share of any state's electorate, but they represent three-in-ten or more in the District of Columbia (41%), Mississippi (36%), Georgia (31%), Louisiana (31%) and Maryland (30%). They are 1% or less of the electorate in New Hampshire, Maine, Utah, Wyoming, Vermont, Idaho and Montana.

Asian eligible voters

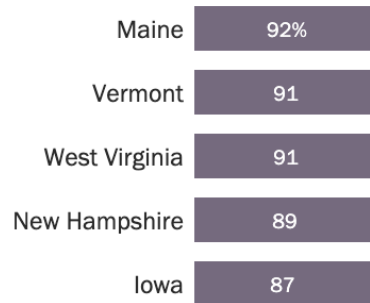
make up 37% of Hawaii's electorate – that state's biggest racial or ethnic share, and the highest

Asian share of any state. California comes second, with 15%. In all other places, their share is under 10%, including 40 states and D.C. where they represent less than 5% of the electorate.

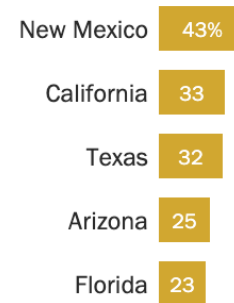
Hawaii has the largest share of Asian eligible voters

% of eligible voters who are ___, 2024

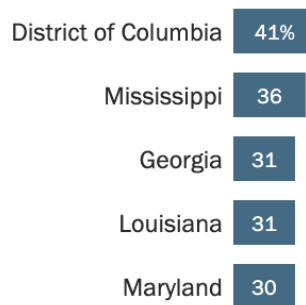
White



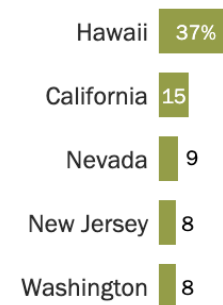
Hispanic



Black



Asian



Note: Eligible voters are U.S. citizens ages 18 and older. White, Black and Asian eligible voters are those who report only being one race and are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race. States shown have the five largest shares of each group. Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2024 American Community Survey (IPUMS).

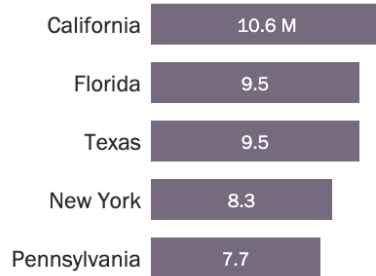
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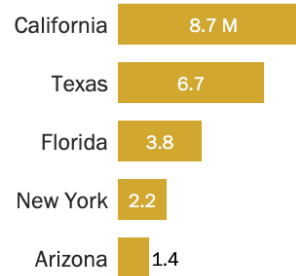
California has the most White, Hispanic and Asian eligible voters

Numbers of eligible voters in top states, 2024, in millions

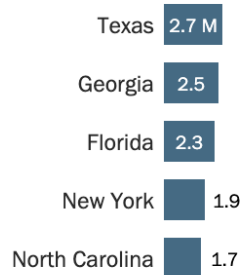
White



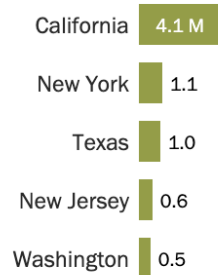
Hispanic



Black



Asian



Note: Eligible voters are U.S. citizens ages 18 and older. White, Black and Asian eligible voters are those who report only being one race and are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race. States shown are the five largest for each group. Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2024 American Community Survey (IPUMS).

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Why the electorate's racial and ethnic makeup does not mirror the overall U.S. population

Population growth does not immediately or automatically translate into growth of the electorate, as only U.S. citizens ages 18 and older are eligible to vote. As a result, groups can make up different shares of the electorate than they do of the nation's population.

A large majority of the White population is eligible to vote (81%), followed by smaller shares of the Black (74%), Asian (60%) and Hispanic (52%) populations.

Each of these percentages grew between 2006 and 2024, with the Hispanic population's figure increasing the most (12 percentage points), followed by Asian (9 points), Black (6 points) and White Americans (4 points).

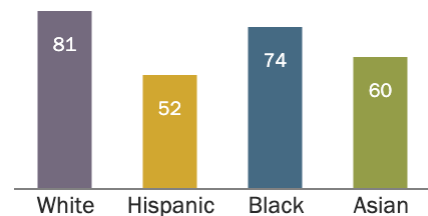
(The latest figures in this section are for 2024, the most recent year for which detailed population data is available. Refer to "[Key terms](#)" for how we report on racial and ethnic groups.)

The share of each population eligible to vote depends largely on two factors – the group's age distribution and citizenship rate.

- Very small shares of White (1%) and Black Americans (4%) are noncitizens. Hispanics (21%) and Asians (25%) have much larger shares of noncitizens.
- Relatively small shares of White and Asian Americans are under 18 (18% each). Hispanic and Black Americans have larger shares of people in that age group (29% and 23%, respectively).

White Americans have the highest share eligible to vote

% in each group who are eligible voters, by race and ethnicity, 2024



Note: Eligible voters are U.S. citizens ages 18 and older. White, Black and Asian eligible voters are those who report only being one race and are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2024 American Community Survey (IPUMS).

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Demographic characteristics of eligible voters by race and ethnicity

Here's a closer look at the demographic characteristics of eligible voters in each racial and ethnic group.

Age

On average, White eligible voters are the oldest group, with a median age of 52. Hispanic eligible voters are the youngest, with a median age of 39. Similarly, White eligible voters include the largest share of those ages 65 and older (28%), which is double the share of Hispanic eligible voters in the same age group (14%).

In contrast, Hispanic eligible voters have the largest share of adults under age 30 (30%), followed by Black (22%), Asian (19%) and White (17%) eligible voters.

Nativity

The vast majority of White eligible voters (97%) and Black eligible voters (91%) are U.S. born. A majority of Hispanic eligible voters also are U.S. born (77%). In contrast, most Asian eligible voters are naturalized citizens, while 35% are U.S. born.

Education

Compared with White and Asian eligible voters, Hispanic and Black eligible voters have lower levels of educational attainment. Similar shares of Hispanic (47%) and Black eligible voters (43%) have a high school diploma or less education – including 17% of Hispanic eligible voters who have

Demographic profile of U.S. eligible voters in 2024

% of eligible voters, by race and ethnicity, 2024

	All U.S. eligible voters	White	Hispanic	Black	Asian
Gender					
Men	49%	49%	49%	47%	47%
Women	51	51	51	53	53
Nativity					
U.S. born	90	97	77	91	35
Naturalized	10	3	23	9	65
Educational attainment					
Less than high school diploma	8	6	17	11	10
High school diploma	27	26	31	32	15
Some college	30	29	31	32	22
Bachelor's degree	22	24	15	15	32
Postgraduate degree	13	15	7	10	22
Age					
18-29	20	17	30	22	19
30-49	32	30	36	36	36
50-64	23	24	20	23	24
65+	24	28	14	19	21
Median age (years)*	48	52	39	45	47

* Median age is only for U.S. citizens who are 18 or older.

Note: Eligible voters are U.S. citizens ages 18 and older. White, Black and Asian eligible voters are those who report only being one race and are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race. Eligible voters of other races and ethnicities, including those who chose more than one race, are included in the "All U.S. eligible voters" column but are not shown separately.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2024 American Community Survey (IPUMS).

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not graduated from high school. White and Asian eligible voters have larger shares of adults with a bachelor's degree or higher (38% and 54%, respectively), including 22% of Asian eligible voters who have a postgraduate degree.

Acknowledgments

This report was written by Dalia Fahmy, senior writer/editor; Alexandra Cahn, research assistant; and Jeffrey S. Passel, senior demographer. It was edited by Mark Hugo Lopez, director, race and ethnicity research.

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