

Key Facts About a Rising Latino, Black and Asian-American Electorate

*This brief report of selected findings is a companion to the full report, **The New Electorate: The Strength of the Latino, Black and Asian-American Vote**, by the USC Center for Inclusive Democracy (CID) on its nationwide study examining changing demographics, racial and ethnic shifts in voter registration and turnout, persistent turnout gaps, and opportunities to broaden voter representation.*

Our U.S. democracy is more equitable and robust when those who vote in our elections are racially and ethnically representative of the nation’s adult population eligible to vote. When the populations of Asian-American, Latino, and Black citizens grow relative to white, non-Latino citizens, what changes do we see in the racial and ethnic composition of voters? The following findings highlight, in a context of demographic change, how voter registration and turnout shifted in recent presidential general elections and where improvements in voter representation are needed.

Changing Demographics

America is becoming more racially and ethnically diverse. Between 2010 and 2020, the U.S. population grew by 7.4% overall, but at different rates among different racial and ethnic groups. The white, non-Latino population decreased by over two percent while the Asian-American population grew by more than 35%, the Latino population grew by 23%, and the Black population grew by 6%. Of those eligible to vote (adult citizens), Latino, Asian-American, and Black population growth also outpaced that of white, non-Latinos. Population growth among communities of color is projected to continue over the next few decades.¹

Growth in Eligible Voters: 2016 to 2022 General Elections

The eligible voter population (adult citizens), among communities of color has also been increasing between cycles. Between the 2016 and 2020 general elections, the Asian-American eligible population increased more than three times the rate of the general population, while the Latino eligible voter population increased more than four times the rate of all eligible voters (Figure 1). Additionally, Black eligible voters grew at a slightly higher rate (4.4%) than the general population. In contrast, the white, non-Latino eligible voter population in the U.S. increased by less than one percent.

Similar growth trends in eligible voter populations were also seen between the 2018 and 2022 midterm elections.

Figure 1: U.S. Eligible Voter Population Growth: 2016 to 2022 General Elections

	Asian American	Black	Latino	White, Non-Latino	General Population
2016 to 2020 Presidential Elections	13.2%	4.4%	17.1%	0.7%	3.9%
2018 to 2022 Midterm Elections	13.0%	3.3%	16.3%	0.7%	4.0%

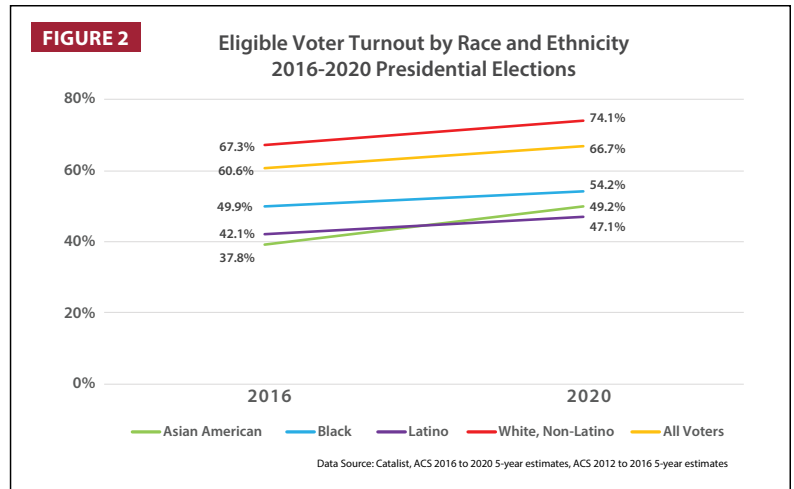
Data Source: ACS 2012 to 2016, 5-year estimates, ACS 2014 to 2018 5-year estimates, ACS 2016 to 2020 5-year estimates, ACS 2018 to 2022 5-year estimates

1 Data Sources: 2010 U.S. Census, 2020 U.S. Census, and U.S. Census 2023 National Population Projection Tables, Catalist.
2 CID’s full report, *The New Electorate: The Strength of the Latino, Black and Asian-American Vote*, also analyzes changes from the 2018 to 2022 midterm elections. See report for detailed study methodology.

Voter Turnout: 2016 to 2020 Presidential Elections

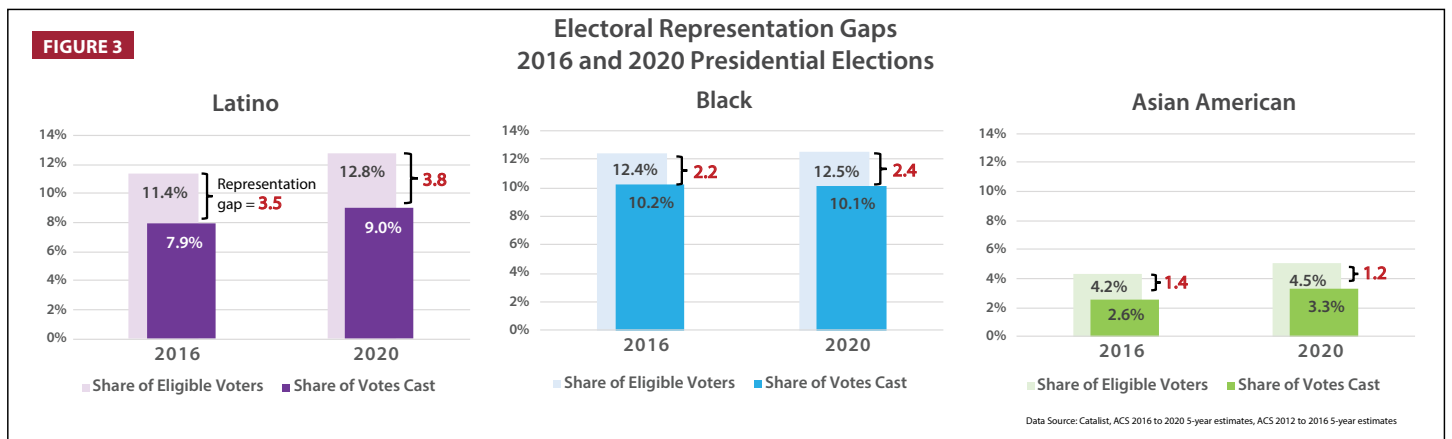
The 2020 presidential election drew historically high rates voter turnout. Between the 2016 and 2020 elections, voter turnout rose faster than the general population; thus, overall participation in the 2020 election was higher than in 2016.²

Voter turnout disparities by race and ethnicity continued in the 2020 election. The share of eligible voters of color who turned out to vote also increased from 2016 to 2020. All racial and ethnic groups, especially Asian Americans, voted in 2020 at higher rates than in the previous presidential election (Figure 2). However, the increases in voter turnout had mixed results in addressing persistent historical disparities. Although the turnout gap between Asian Americans and white, non-Latinos narrowed in 2020 (from about 29 to 25 percentage points), the turnout gaps between other voting groups of color and white, non-Latinos slightly widened, with gaps in 2020 ranging from 19.9 to 27.0 percentage points.



The Voter Representation Gap

Voters of color are underrepresented in the electorate, representing a smaller share of votes cast than their share of the eligible voter population. Figure 3 shows that the Latino and Black representation gaps widened from the 2016 to the 2020 presidential elections while the Asian-American representation gap narrowed. In 2020, Latinos represented 12.8% of all eligible voters in the U.S., but only 9.0% of all votes cast (a 3.8 percentage point gap), up from a 3.5 percentage point gap in 2016. The 2016 to 2020 comparison shows the Black representation gap widening from 2.2 to 2.4 percentage points, and the Asian-American representation gap narrowing from 1.6 to 1.2 percentage points.



Mobilizing a More Representative Electorate

Americans of color are underrepresented among voters, making all levels of government less accountable to the needs and priorities of our diverse population. Agencies, organizations, and funders supporting civic participation must focus on mobilizing over 34 million eligible voters of color (nearly 15% of all U.S. eligible voters) who did not cast a ballot in the 2020 presidential election.

Eligible voters who did not vote in the 2020 presidential election

