

CALIFORNIA'S LIKELY VOTERS

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▶ Voter registration has grown since 2010, but it is down for both of the major parties.

At the close of registration for the June 2014 primary election, 17.7 million of California's 24.2 million eligible adults were registered to vote. Since 2010, the last gubernatorial primary year, the share of eligible adults who are registered has grown from 72.4% to 73.3%. The share of voters registered with the Democratic Party (43.4%) is down slightly from 44.5% in 2010, as is the share registered with the Republican Party (30.8% to 28.4%). The percentage of voters without a party preference is up from 20.2% in 2010 to 21.2%.

▶ Likely voters, infrequent voters, and unregistered adults lean Democratic and are ideologically mixed.

Among likely voters in our surveys, 44% are Democrats, 32% are Republicans, and 19% are independents (also known as decline-to-state or no party preference). Of those we consider infrequent voters, 44% are Democrats, 30% are independents, 22% are Republicans, and 5% are registered with other parties. Among independent likely voters, 40% lean toward the Democratic Party, compared to 29% who lean toward the Republican Party and 31% who volunteer that they lean toward neither major party or are unsure. Among unregistered adults, 47% lean toward the Democratic Party and 21% toward the Republican Party; 32% lean toward neither party or are unsure. Ideologically, 34% of likely voters are politically liberal, 29% are moderate, and 38% are conservative. Identical shares of infrequent voters consider themselves conservative, moderate, or liberal (33% each). Unregistered adults are also ideologically mixed: 35% are conservative, 33% are liberal, and 32% are moderate.

▶ Likely voters are disproportionately white.

Whites make up only 44% of California's adult population but represent 62% of the state's likely voters. In contrast, Latinos comprise 34% of the adult population but just 17% of likely voters. Asians make up 14% of the population and 11% of likely voters, while blacks comprise 6% of both the population and likely voters, and "other race" and multiracial adults make up 3% of both the population and likely voters. More than a third (37%) of infrequent voters are white, and 31% are Latino. Sixty percent of unregistered adults are Latino; fewer are white (23%), Asian (13%), or black (3%).

▶ The regional distribution of likely voters echoes that of the state's adult population distribution.

The share of likely voters in each region mirrors the region's share of the state's overall adult population: Los Angeles County (27% of adults, 25% of likely voters), the San Francisco Bay Area (20% of adults, 22% of likely voters), Orange/San Diego Counties (17% of adults, 18% of likely voters), Central Valley (17% of adults, 16% of likely voters), Inland Empire (11% of adults, 9% of likely voters). The largest shares of infrequent voters (30%) and unregistered adults (27%) live in Los Angeles County.

▶ Likely voters are older, more educated, more affluent; they are homeowners and born in the U.S.

Californians age 55 and older represent 31% of the state's adult population but constitute 45% of likely voters. Young adults (18 to 34) make up 32% of the population but only 18% of likely voters, while adults ages 35 to 54 are proportionally represented. Among likely voters, 41% are college graduates and 41% have at least some college education; 18% have no college education. Forty-one percent of likely voters have annual household incomes of \$80,000 or more, while 30% earn between \$40,000 to under \$80,000 and 29% earn \$40,000 or less. The vast majority (72%) of likely voters are homeowners (28% are renters). In contrast, 67% of unregistered adults and 63% of infrequent voters are renters. Eighty-three percent of likely voters were born in the U.S. (17% are immigrants). Women (51%) and men (49%) make up similar shares of the likely voters in California.



California's likely voters

		Registered voters		
		Likely voters	Infrequent voters	Not registered
Party registration	Democratic	44%	44%	–
	Republican	32	22	–
	Independent	19	30	–
	Other	6	5	–
Major party leanings among independents and those not registered to vote	Democratic Party	40	40	47
	Republican Party	29	22	21
	Neither/Don't know	31	38	32
Political ideology	Liberal	34	33	33
	Moderate	29	33	32
	Conservative	38	33	35
Race/Ethnicity	White	62	37	23
	Latino	17	31	60
	Asian	11	18	13
	Black	6	10	3
	Other/Multiracial	3	4	1
Region	Los Angeles County	25	30	27
	San Francisco Bay Area	22	18	19
	Orange/San Diego Counties	18	14	15
	Central Valley	16	18	19
	Inland Empire	9	12	13
	Other	9	7	7
Gender	Men	49	47	50
	Women	51	53	50
Age	18 to 34	18	46	43
	35 to 54	37	31	42
	55 and older	45	22	16
Education	No college	18	48	66
	Some college	41	30	20
	College graduate	41	23	15
Income	Under \$40,000	29	53	70
	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	30	24	18
	\$80,000 or more	41	23	12
Own/Rent	Own	72	37	33
	Rent	28	63	67
Nativity	U.S.-born	83	77	36
	Immigrant	17	23	64

Note: "Likely voters" are registered voters meeting criteria on interest in politics, attention to issues, voting behavior, and intention to vote; "infrequent voters" are registered voters who do not meet these criteria. For full description of this criteria and regional definitions, visit www.ppic.org/content/other/SurveyMethodology.pdf.

Sources: Seven PPIC Statewide Surveys from September 2013 to July 2014, including 7,525 likely voters, 2,292 infrequent voters, and 2,007 unregistered adults. California Secretary of State, Report of Registration, February 2014. U.S. Census, 2010–12 American Community Survey.

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