

# CALIFORNIA CIVIC PARTICIPATION:

ADDRESSING THE CALIFORNIA VOTER PARTICIPATION GAP



**Data For Social Good Foundation**

September 24, 2024



**DATA for SOCIAL GOOD**

*Addressing the needs of a diverse electorate.*

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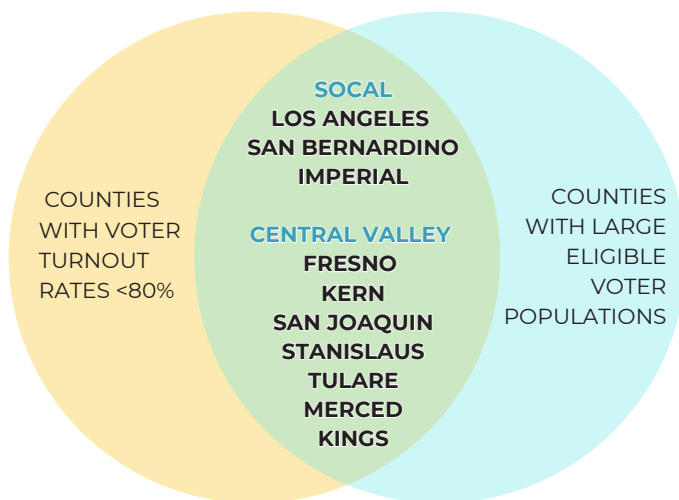
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# SECTION 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This study identifies the top 10 counties in California that experienced the lowest voter turnout in the 2020 Presidential Election as a proportion of the total registered voters in the county (Table 1). Delving into the demographics of the eligible voting population (i.e. Citizen Voting Age Population, or CVAP), we find significant racial disparities in terms of who is registered and who casts a ballot. We find that 18-44 years olds and non-white voters trail behind 45+ year olds and Whites in voter registration and participation. By simultaneously increasing registration among underperforming groups and working to mobilize newly registered and previously registered voters, participation gaps across age and ethnoracial groups can be diminished, while increasing overall voter participation. The counties listed below would greatly benefit from additional resources from the state to increase civic engagement, especially among voters of color and young voters who have historically been underrepresented in elections and who, as a result, require additional outreach and mobilization in order to shift their voting behavior:

1. Los Angeles County
2. San Bernardino County
3. Fresno County
4. Kern County
5. San Joaquin County
6. Stanislaus County
7. Tulare County
8. Merced County
9. Imperial County
10. Kings County



*\*USING 2020 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION VOTER PARTICIPATION ESTIMATES*  
(More information on this graphic on page 7)

Although these participation gaps exist within all California counties, we recommend focusing on these 10 counties because they have the greatest need, and, shifting their voting patterns will have a larger impact on registration and participation rates statewide. To increase civic engagement in the 10 priority counties, we recommend implementing a state-level partnership between the Secretary of State (SoS) and the Governor's Office of Community Partnerships and Strategic Communications (OCPSC) for standardization of processes, reporting, and budgeting. Their efforts should be complemented at the county level through partnerships between county elections officials and local community-based organizations (CBOs) to develop and implement jurisdiction-specific voter outreach and education programs.

# SECTION 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

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There are two steps an eligible voter must take before their vote can be counted: registration and voting. California has relatively high registration rates; however, even with the important electoral reforms that have been implemented, not all eligible California voters are registered. Moreover, many Californians who are registered to vote have not engaged in the second step by casting a ballot. We believe that realizing true democracy requires full participation of all eligible voters and that the state needs to ensure that all of California's eligible voters cast a ballot, regardless of their demographic background.

The size of California's eligible voter population, and its continual growth, is unprecedented in the United States. From US Census, ACS one-year estimates, we know that from 2019 to 2023, 455,883 and 255,183 new eligible Latinos and Asians, respectively, entered the electoral system. These include individuals entering the electorate by turning 18, becoming citizens, or becoming a new state resident. We will need to continually educate these newly eligible voters about the process and importance of voting. Given that California has not reached 100% registration among its eligible voters, the state needs to continually invest in education and outreach in order to achieve this goal.

- Eligible Unregistered Voters (2020): This group requires broad efforts, including education about the importance of voting and ensuring that registering and voting is easy for them. As of 2020, there were **3,043,069 eligible and unregistered voters** in the state of California. We used an internet marketing model as a frame, to approximate the cost of educating and registering these eligible voters. Using that frame, we concluded that it would cost \$8.58 to register each eligible unregistered voter. Given the size of the eligible unregistered voter population, the annual cost for this effort would be **\$26,109,532**.
- Registered Non-Voters (2020): These are eligible and registered voters who, for whatever reason, feel that engaging in voting is not going to make a difference in their lives. Changing their perspective requires more intentional and deeper engagement. A meta-analysis that we conducted reviewing over 300 experimental studies evaluating voter turnout efforts among non-white voters showed that meaningful, in-person engagement, either at the door or on the phone, with a message that connects to the target voter's day-to-day life, is most effective in shifting these voters' sense of political efficacy. People who have registered but choose to sit out during an election are *behaving rationally*. They do not feel: they have enough trusted information to be confident in their choices; the candidates are trustworthy; they have information in their preferred language they can understand; or that the candidates are speaking about issues they face on a day-to-day basis.

Disengagement among these voters is a *rational response* to how they have been socialized into politics. Re-socialization is what is necessary. That cannot be done by a mailer, a text, or a postcard.

# SECTION 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

To shift the behavior of registered voters who have not turned out to vote, we recommend an investment of **\$20.25** per voter, for a total of **\$86,311,514** (see funding formula below).

For these two activities, the suggested total annual budget recommendation is **\$112,421,046**.

We propose that the majority of the resources go to 10 counties we identified, which have the greatest need for these sorts of investments. These **10 counties** contained **35.5% of the Eligible Unregistered Voters** and **52.1% of Registered Non-Voters** in California in the 2020 General Presidential election. The total for the 10 counties set aside would be **\$54,273,031**.

## STATEWIDE FUNDING FORMULA

### Eligible Unregistered Voters Statewide (2020)



3,043,069 eligible and unregistered voters



\$8.58 per voter



\$26,109,532 for continued registration & education

### Registered Non-Voters Statewide (2020)



4,262,297 registered and did not vote in 2020



\$20.25 per voter



\$86,311,514 funding for participation

## 10 COUNTY FUNDING FORMULA

### Eligible Unregistered Voters 10 Counties(2020)



1,079,867 eligible and unregistered voters



\$8.58 per voter



\$9,265,259 for continued registration & education

### Registered Non-Voters 10 Counties (2020)



2,222,606 registered and did not vote in 2020



\$20.25 per voter



\$45,007,772 funding for participation

(More information on this graphic on page 21)

# SECTION 2: DATA & METHODOLOGY

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## CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE (SOS)

The California Secretary of State (SoS)<sup>1</sup> works to ensure that government actions regarding elections, business, political campaigning, legislative advocacy, and historical records are made accessible to the public. Part of their role includes providing annual voter registration statistics as well as primary and election results across the state. We leverage this data by analyzing the county-level registration and election results for the 2020 General Presidential Election.<sup>2</sup> It is important to note that this election was chosen because, at the time this research was conducted, this was the most recent General Presidential election that had occurred in California.

## AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY (ACS) 1-YEAR REPORTS

The American Community Survey (ACS)<sup>3</sup> is an annual survey (distinct from the decennial Census survey) that is conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau and provides demographic estimates of educational attainment, employment, homeownership, and more, at the local (city and county), state, and national levels. The ACS provides annual estimates of the eligible electorate (i.e. Citizen Voting Age Population, or CVAP) at the state and county levels that captures those who are 18 years old and citizens. In this report, estimates of the eligible electorate (CVAP) of a county were derived from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) 1-Year reports.<sup>4</sup> Although the SoS also includes estimates of eligible voting populations in their voter participation reports, they are generally not as descriptive as ACS reports and thus they limit our ability to explore CVAP breakdowns by demographic characteristics. We also considered using the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (CPS), but ultimately selected ACS because the survey is more comprehensive and provides data for all 58 California counties.

## L2 REGISTRATION AND VOTING DATA

L2<sup>5</sup> is a nationwide database that provides registration and voting data for all states, broken down by political jurisdiction. For both registration and election results, L2 provides imputed age, ethnoracial, and gender breakdowns that allows us to determine if there are registration and participation disparities in California. For registration, we focused on those who were registered on or before the November 3, 2020 Presidential Election.

Though frequently updated and arguably considered one of the more reliable data providers, we acknowledge that L2, like any imputed data source, has shortcomings. L2 provides information about registered voters, not CVAP. As is true of any study comparing eligible, registered, and active voters, we are therefore using distinct data sources, each with its strengths and weaknesses, to try to determine what gaps exist.

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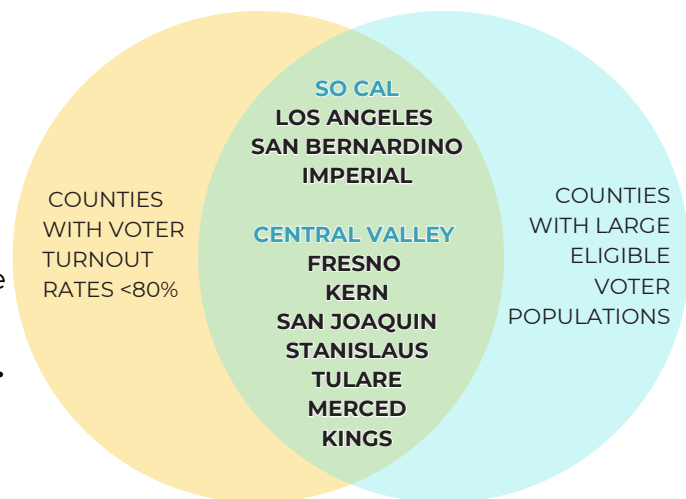
1. [California Secretary of State](#)  
2. [California 2020 General Presidential Results](#)  
3. [American Community Survey](#)  
4. [2019 CVAP ACS 1-Year Estimates](#)  
5. [L2](#)

# SECTION 2: DATA & METHODOLOGY

## HOW 10 COUNTIES WERE IDENTIFIED AS GREATEST NEED

To identify the counties in need of targeted outreach we:

1. Ranked all 58 California counties by the percentage of **voter turnout** (turnout  $\div$  total registered  $\times 100$ ) for the 2020 Presidential General election
2. Compared these proportions against the state average turnout (80.67%). There were 16 counties that had **under 80% turnout in 2020**.
3. **Sorted the counties by their eligible voting population size** (or CVAP) from largest to smallest. Using this methodology, 10 counties were identified as presenting the greatest need for targeted state investment.



USING 2020 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION VOTER PARTICIPATION ESTIMATES

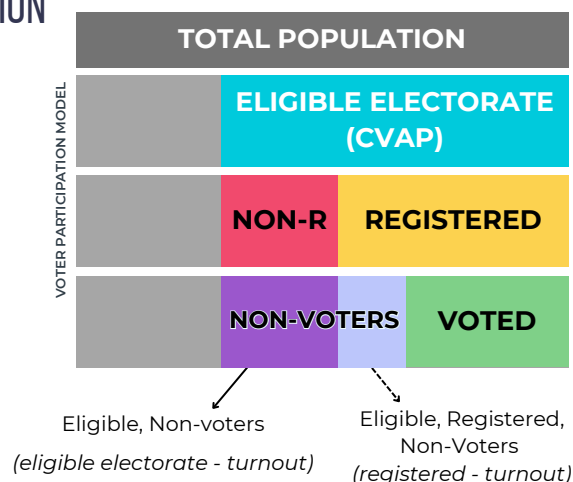
## CVAP ESTIMATES USING ACS 1-YEAR REPORTS FOR COUNTY-LEVEL COMPARISONS

After identifying the 10 counties with the lowest participation in the 2020 Presidential Election and the highest eligible voter population, we analyze the demographics and trends of the eligible electorate in each to highlight the gaps in registration and voting. We leverage this data by:

1. Determining what proportion of the eligible electorate for each demographic group (using ACS 2019 1-year CVAP data) are registered to vote (using L2 data);
2. Calculating what proportion of the eligible electorate for each demographic group (using ACS 2019 1-year CVAP data) actually voted in 2020 (using L2 validated vote data).

## 2-STEP APPROACH TO OPTIMIZING VOTER PARTICIPATION

To minimize California's voter participation gaps and ensure more representation of California's diverse electorate at the polls, the state and county elections officials must take steps to increase the number of voter registrations (gold box) and the number of ballots returned (green box) from eligible voters. To do that, we need a better understanding of registration rates among eligible voters, which we discuss below.





# SECTION 3: REGISTRATION OF ELIGIBLE ELECTORATE

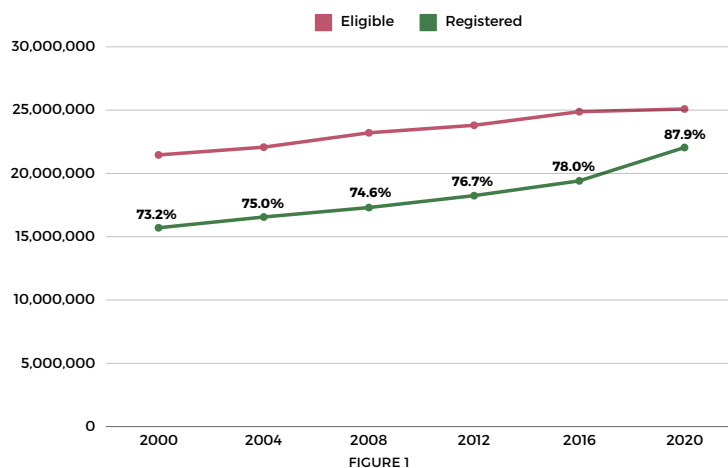
## OVERVIEW OF CALIFORNIA VOTERS

Since the implementation of the 1993 National Voter Registration Act, also known as the **Motor Voter law**, **voter registration rates in California have gradually increased as a proportion of the CVAP.** **Figure 1** summarizes this increase, with the largest spike in registration from 2016 to 2020, an increase of 9.9 percentage points. From 2000 to 2020, voter registration rates increased by 14.7 percentage points, but there is still room for improvement. As of 2020, 12.1% of eligible California voters was not registered to vote.

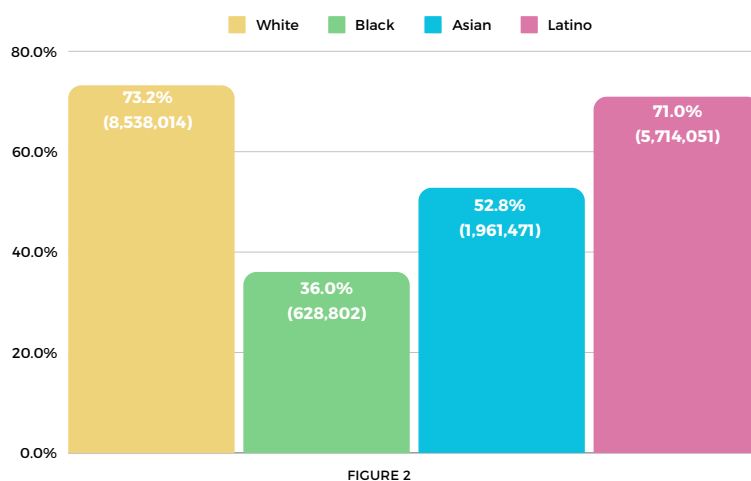
**Figure 2** shows how these registration rates vary by ethnorace. California's passage of automatic voter registration seems to have minimized registration disparities between White and Latino voters. More work needs to be done to ensure that eligible Black and Asian voters register to vote at rates proportional to their CVAP share.

**Figure 3** shows voter registration by age. 65+ Californians have the highest registration rates, which is in line with national registration and turnout rates for this age group. **18-29 year olds have the lowest registration rate**, underscoring the need to for the state to increase outreach and encourage political engagement among younger Californians.

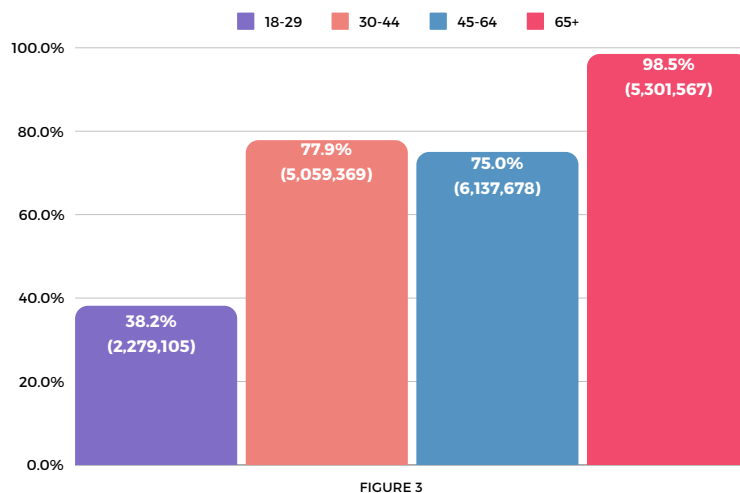
REGISTRATION OVER TIME



PERCENT OF REGISTERED CVAP FOR EACH ETHNORACIAL GROUP



PERCENT OF REGISTERED CVAP FOR EACH AGE GROUP





# SECTION 4: TURNOUT & TARGETED 10 COUNTIES

## OVERVIEW OF 2020 CA VOTER TURNOUT

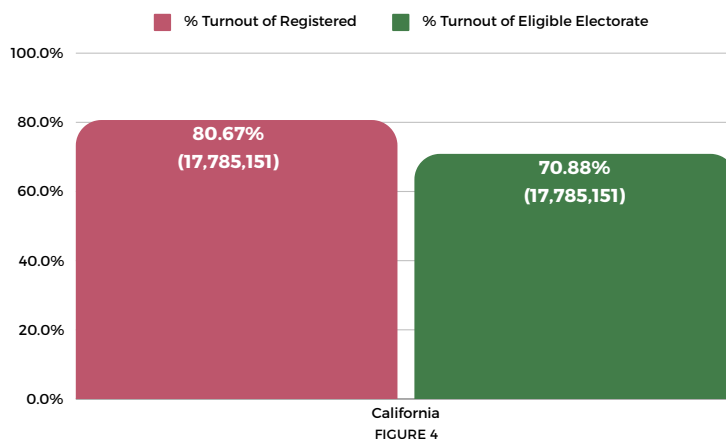
Focusing on voter turnout, **Figure 4** makes clear why it is important to consider eligible voter engagement, rather than just turnout among the registered. Registered voter turnout was relatively high, at just under 81%. However, in term of California's eligible voters, **only ~71% of those eligible cast a ballot**. That means that **nearly one-third of California's eligible voters did not vote in 2020**, demonstrating the need for more intentional efforts to increase voter turnout in California.

**Figure 5** considers how gender affects political engagement. Women make up a larger share of voters (50.9% women vs. 49.1% men eligible to vote ).

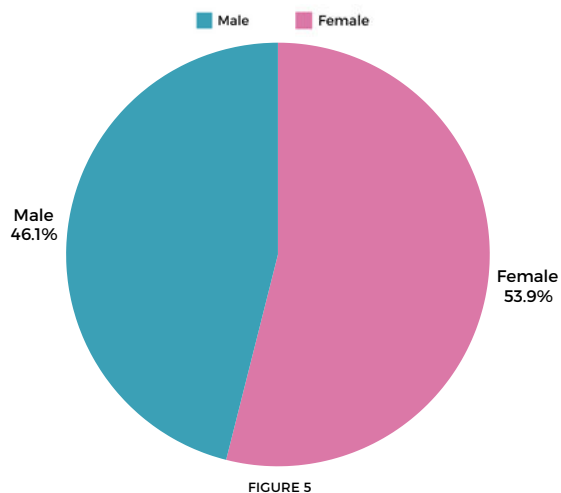
In **Figure 6** we see that White voters made up the largest share of voters, while Black voters were the smallest.

**Figure 7** demonstrates that 45-64 year olds were the largest share of voters and 18-29 year olds were the smallest. These figures show big differences in voter participation among certain groups that will require additional investments to increase their civic engagement.

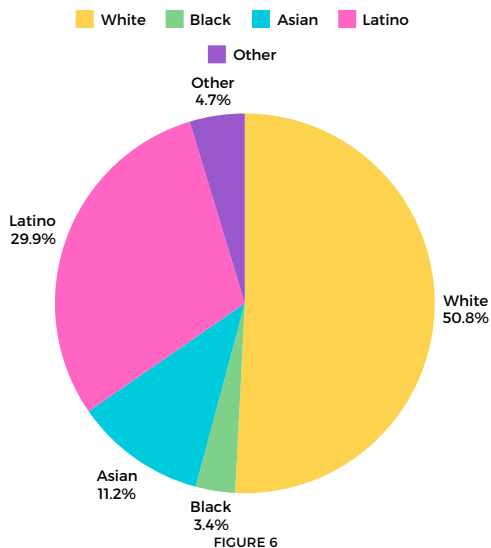
## 2020 STATEWIDE VOTER TURNOUT



## GENDER MAKEUP OF 2020 STATEWIDE VOTER TURNOUT



## ETHNORACIAL MAKEUP OF 2020 STATEWIDE VOTER TURNOUT



## AGE MAKEUP OF 2020 STATEWIDE VOTER TURNOUT

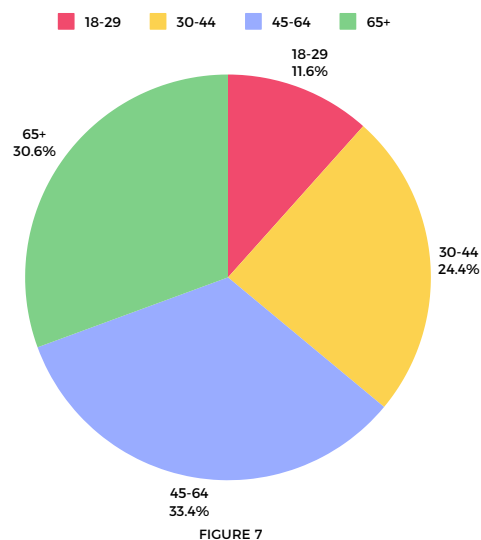


FIGURE 4: 2023 CA SoS Registrations: "Turnout Registered" & "Turnout Eligible"  
FIGURE 5, 6, 7: L2

# SECTION 4: TURNOUT & TARGETED 10 COUNTIES

## 2020 TURNOUT: LOWEST BY COUNTY

**Table 1** summarizes the **10 California counties with the lowest voter turnout in the 2020 Presidential Election, based on the number of registered voters and their eligible voting population size.** As an example, of the 10 counties, Los Angeles has the highest percentage of registered voters (91%) based on their eligible voter population, yet had one of the lowest turnout rates in California in 2020 (74%). Overall, as a proportion of their total registered voters, Imperial County had the lowest turnout (67%).

The “Non-Voters” column captures those who are eligible to vote and not registered to vote, and as a result did not vote in the 2020 Presidential Election. Overall, **as of 2020, across the 10 counties, there were 3.6 million Californians that needed to be registered and/or encouraged to vote.** These counties require the most outreach and efforts to increase voter registration and participation.

TABLE 1: OVERVIEW 10 COUNTY VOTER PARTICIPATION

County	2020 Presidential Turnout % of Registered		Eligible, Non-Voters
Los Angeles	4,338,191	74%	2,051,162
San Bernardino	852,636	77%	547,014
Fresno	370,068	74%	239,140
Kern	309,143	72%	227,173
San Joaquin	292,818	79%	186,695
Stanislaus	217,517	77%	131,256
Tulare	148,677	74%	125,346
Merced	92,424	78%	60,521
Imperial	57,366	67%	47,524
Kings	44,442	73%	49,698
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8,945,888</b>		<b>3,665,529</b>

TABLE 1

The counties with the lowest turnout are in the Central Valley and Southern California. **Figure 8** highlights the regions where voter participation is the lowest compared to the rest of the state, and where additional resources and mobilization are most needed.

Importantly, these counties’ eligible voting populations **include significant numbers of non-white voters**, who require **targeted and culturally competent outreach** to ensure their civic participation. An overview of voter participation within these 10 counties by age and ethnorace is provided below.



FIGURE 8

TABLE 1: 2023 CA SoS Registrations

# SECTION 4: TURNOUT & TARGETED 10 COUNTIES

## 2020: TURNOUT & AGE

The share of **eligible voters**<sup>7</sup> who are 18-29 ranges from 22% in Los Angeles to 28% Merced and Kings County, as a proportion of the total CVAP.

The share of **registered voters**<sup>8</sup> who are 18-29 range from ~13% in Los Angeles to ~16% in Merced County, as a proportion of registered voters.

**Figures 9 and 10** highlight turnout by age for the **2020**

**Presidential Election**, where 18-44 year olds had the lowest turnout rates relative to their registration totals. 45+ year olds had the highest turnout rates as a proportion of the total registered voters. These findings indicate a clear disparity in civic engagement between young and older voters, signaling the need for more targeted efforts to mobilize voters who are 18-44 years old.

2020 TURNOUT OF REGISTERED BY 10 COUNTIES & AGE (1 OF 2)

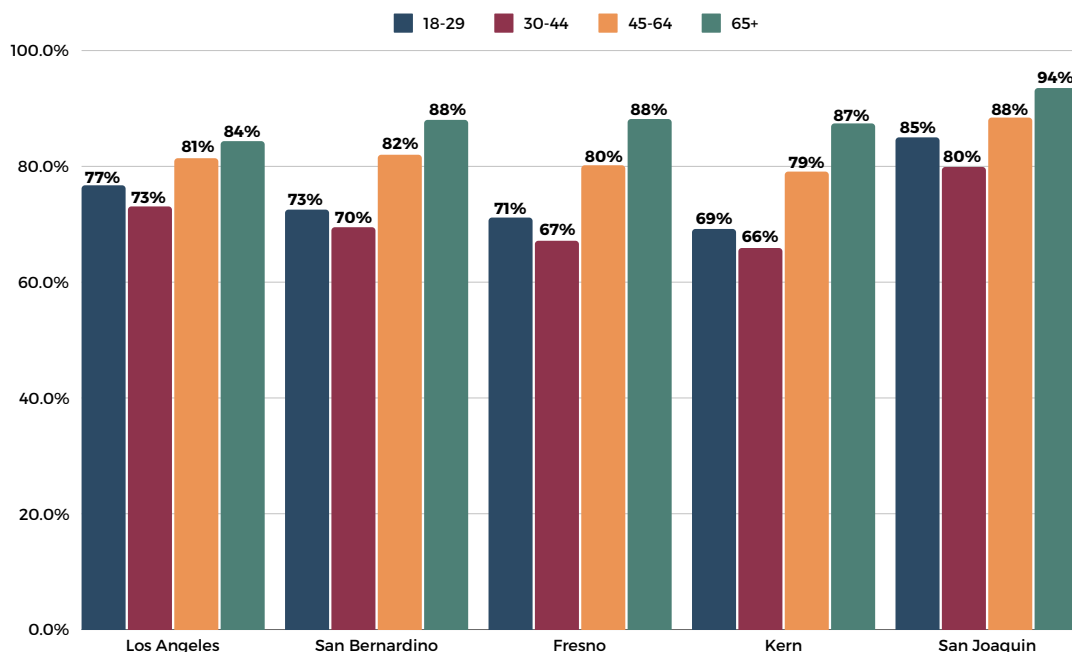


FIGURE 9

2020 TURNOUT OF REGISTERED BY 10 COUNTIES & AGE (2 OF 2)

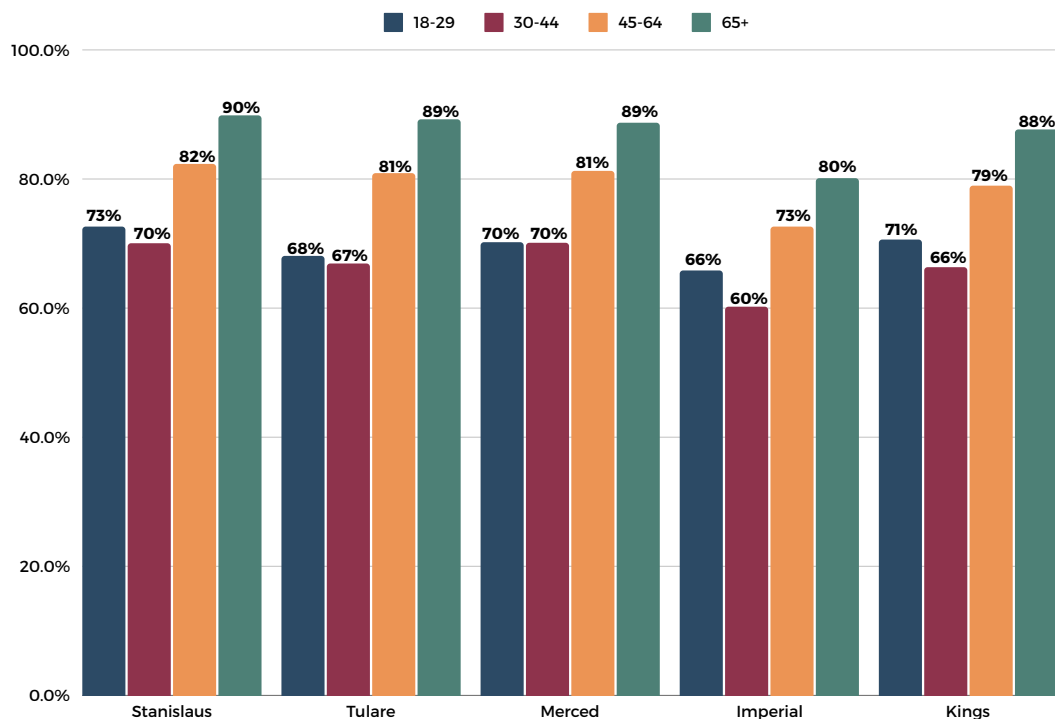


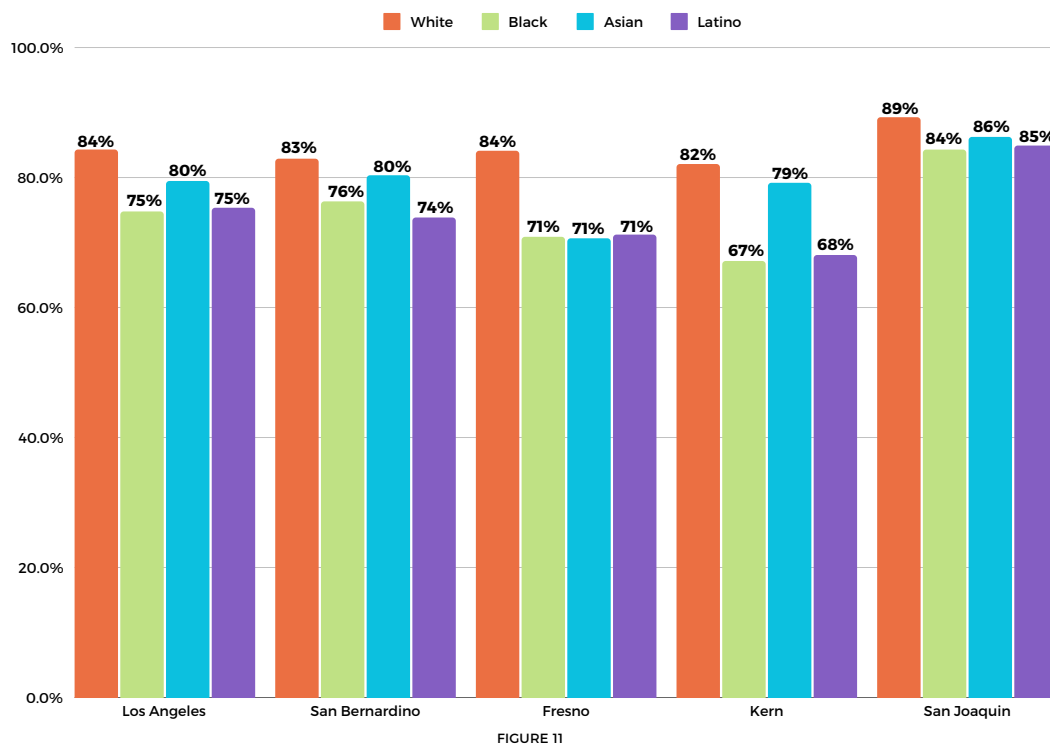
FIGURE 10

# SECTION 4: TURNOUT & TARGETED 10 COUNTIES

## 2020: TURNOUT & ETHNORACE

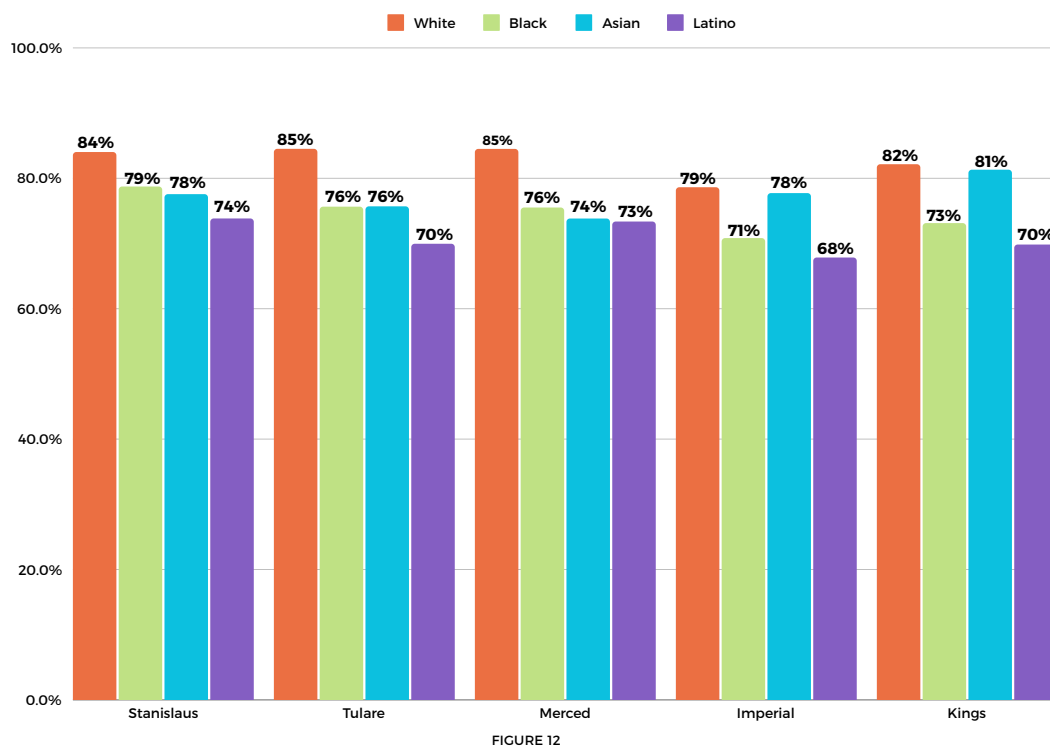
Across the 10 counties, Latinos make up sizeable shares of the **eligible electorate**<sup>9</sup>, ranging from 34% in San Joaquin to 81% in Imperial. Black and Asian eligible voters make up smaller shares within these counties, ranging from 2% Asian in Imperial to 17% in San Joaquin, and 5% Black in Fresno to 9% in Los Angeles. White eligible voters make up the second largest share, ranging from 30% in Los Angeles and San Bernardino and 46% in Stanislaus.

## 2020 TURNOUT OF REGISTERED - ETHNORACE



Despite Latinos making up sizable shares of the eligible electorate, their **registration rates**<sup>10</sup> do not reflect this. In San Joaquin County, for example, Latinos make up only 32.6% of registered voters.

**Figures 11 and 12** summarize the **2020 Presidential Election turnout**, where White registered voters had the highest turnout across all 10 counties. Although Latinos made up the majority of eligible voters and registrants in most of these counties, they had the lowest turnout rates in 8 of the 10 counties (tied in 2).

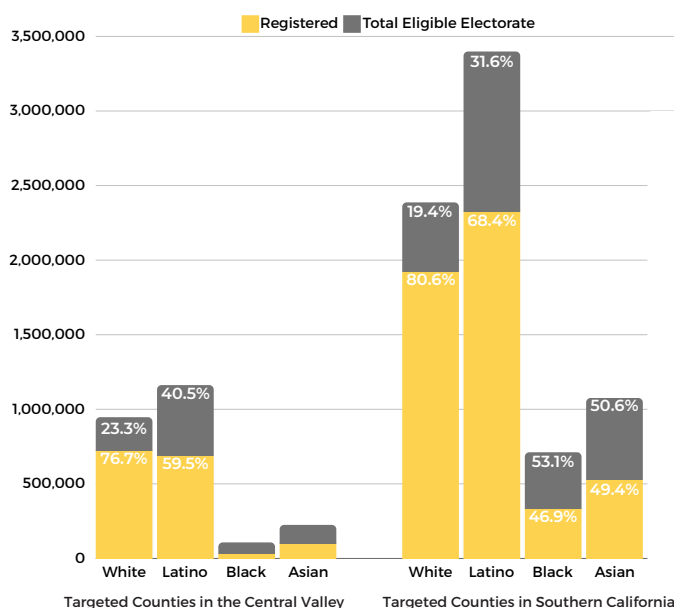


9: 2022 ACS 1-Year Estimates, L2  
10: L2  
FIGURES 11 & 12: L2

# SECTION 4: TURNOUT & TARGETED 10 COUNTIES

## 2020 VOTER REGISTRATION AS A SHARE OF ELIGIBLE ELECTORATE (TARGETED COUNTIES, GROUPED BY REGION)

FIGURE 13: REGIONAL REGISTRATION OF ELIGIBLE ELECTORATE BY **ETHNORACE** AND NUMBER OF REGISTERED AND NON-REGISTERED, ELIGIBLE ELECTORATE



### Key Takeaways by Ethnorace

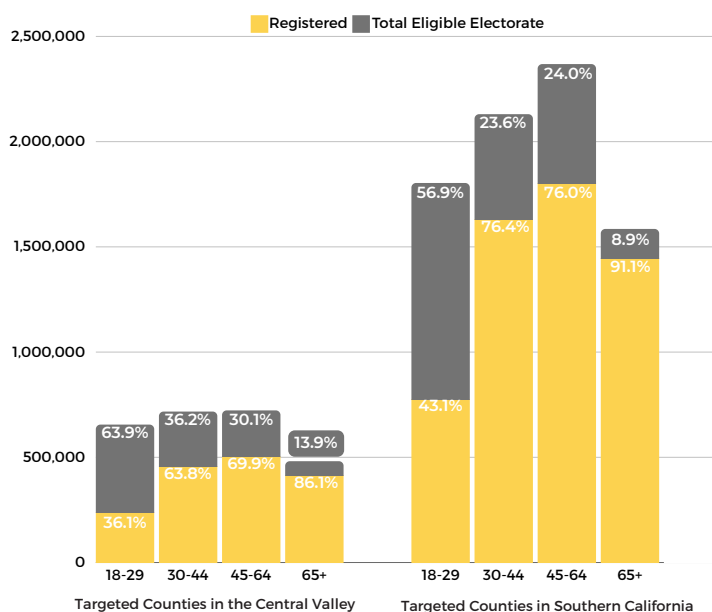
#### • Central Valley

- 76.7% of White eligible voters were registered
  - 726K were registered
  - 220K were eligible but not registered
- 59.5% of Latino eligible voters were registered
  - 691K were registered
  - 471K were eligible but not registered
- 43.1% of Asian eligible voters were registered
  - 96K were registered
  - 128K were eligible but not registered
- For Black voters, 28.2% were registered
  - 30K were registered
  - 77K were eligible but not registered

#### • Southern California

- 80.6% of White eligible voters were registered to vote
  - 1.9M were registered
  - 461K were eligible but not registered
- 68.4% of Latino eligible voters were registered
  - 2.3M were registered
  - 1.1M were eligible but not registered
- 49.4% of Asian eligible voters were registered
  - 530K were registered
  - 544K were eligible but not registered
- For Black voters, 46.9% were registered
  - 333K were registered
  - 377K were eligible but not registered

FIGURE 14: REGIONAL REGISTRATION OF ELIGIBLE ELECTORATE BY **AGE GROUP** AND NUMBER OF REGISTERED AND NON-REGISTERED, ELIGIBLE ELECTORATE



### Key Takeaways by Age Group

#### • Central Valley

- 36.1% of eligible 18-29 year olds were registered
  - 236K were registered
  - 418K that were eligible but not registered
- 63.8% of eligible 30-44 year olds were registered
  - 457K were registered
  - 259K were eligible but not registered
- 69.9% of 45-64 eligible voters were registered
  - 504K were registered
  - 217K were eligible but not registered
- 86.1% of 65+ eligible voters were registered
  - 414K were registered
  - 66K were eligible but not registered

#### • Southern California

- 43.1% of eligible 18-29 year olds were registered
  - 777K were registered
  - 1.0M were eligible but not registered
- 76.4% of eligible 30-44 year olds were registered
  - 1.6M were registered
  - 502K were eligible but not registered
- 76.0% of 45-64 eligible voters were registered
  - 1.7M were registered
  - 569K were eligible but not registered
- 91.1% of 65+ eligible voters were registered to vote
  - 1.4M were registered
  - 141K were eligible but not registered

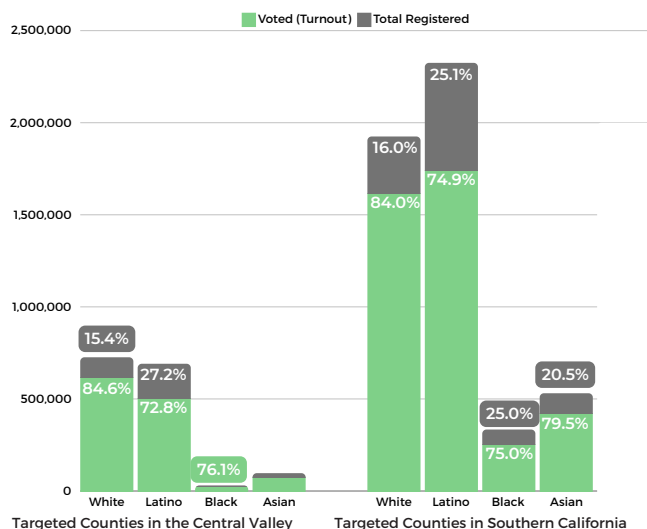
FIGURES 13 & 14: L2

\*NB: CVAP Estimates are from Census American Community Survey data and multiple counties show missing data for Black eligible voters; 2020 voter registration and turnout estimates are from L2 data

# SECTION 4: TURNOUT & TARGETED 10 COUNTIES

## 2020 GENERAL ELECTION VOTER TURNOUT AS A SHARE OF REGISTRATION (TARGETED COUNTIES, GROUPED BY REGION)

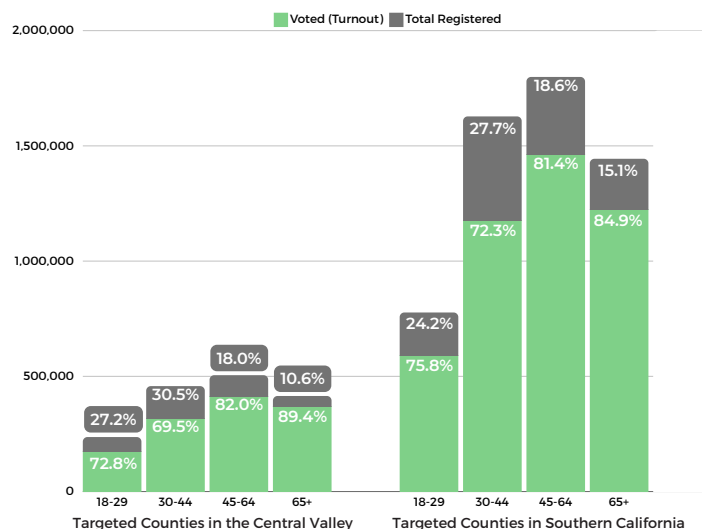
FIGURE 15: REGIONAL TURNOUT OF REGISTERED VOTERS BY **ETHNORACE**



### Key Takeaways by Ethnorace

- **Central Valley**
  - 84.6% of White registered voters voted in 2020
    - 614K voted
    - 112K were registered to vote but did not
  - 72.8% of Latino registered voters voted in 2020
    - 503K voted
    - 187K were registered to vote but did not
  - 77.3% of Asian registered voters voted in 2020
    - 74K voted
    - 22K were registered to vote but did not
  - 76.1% of Black registered voters voted in 2020
    - 23K voted
    - 7.2K were registered to vote but did not
- **Southern California**
  - 84.0% of White registered voters voted in 2020
    - 1.6M voted
    - 308K were registered to vote but did not
  - 74.9% of Latino registered voters voted in 2020
    - 1.7M voted
    - 583K were registered to vote but did not
  - 79.5% of Asian registered voters voted in 2020
    - 422K voted
    - 108K were registered to vote but did not
  - 75.0% of Black registered voters voted in 2020
    - 250K voted
    - 83K were registered to vote but did not

FIGURE 16: REGIONAL REGIONAL TURNOUT OF REGISTERED VOTERS BY **AGE GROUP**



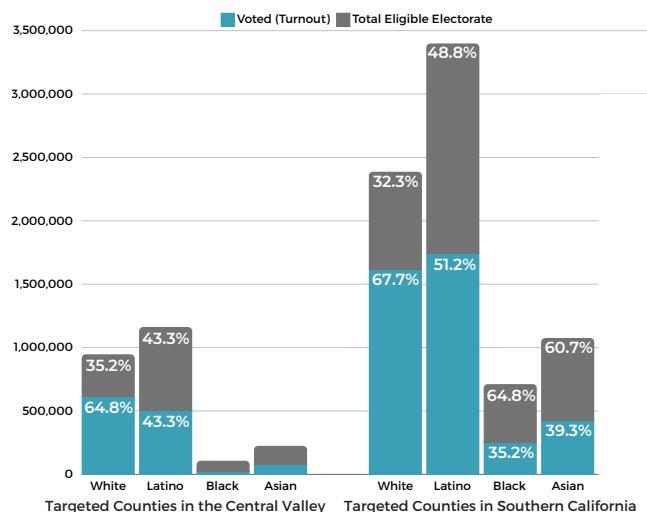
### Key Takeaways by Age Group

- **Central Valley**
  - 72.8% of registered 18-29 year olds voted in 2020
    - 172K voted
    - 64K were registered to vote but did not
  - 69.5% of registered 30-44 year olds voted in 2020
    - 317K voted
    - 139K were registered to vote but did not
  - 82.0% of registered 45-64 year olds voted in 2020
    - 414K voted
    - 90K were registered to vote but did not
  - 89.4% of 65+ year olds voted in 2020
    - 370K voted
    - 43K were registered to vote but did not
- **Southern California**
  - 75.8% of registered 18-29 year olds voted in 2020
    - 589K voted
    - 187K were registered to vote but did not
  - 72.3% of registered 30-44 year olds voted in 2020
    - 1.7M voted
    - 450K were registered to vote but did not
  - 81.4% of registered 45-64 year olds voted in 2020
    - 1.4M voted
    - 334K were registered to vote but did not
  - 84.9% of registered 65+ year olds voted in 2020
    - 1.2M voted
    - 218K were registered to vote but did not

# SECTION 4: TURNOUT & TARGETED 10 COUNTIES

## 2020 GENERAL ELECTION VOTER TURNOUT AS A SHARE OF ELIGIBLE ELECTORATE (TARGETED COUNTIES, GROUPED BY REGION)

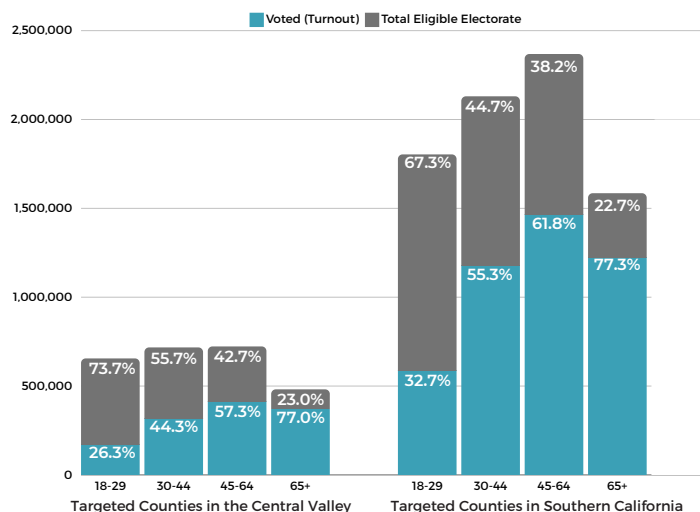
FIGURE 17: REGIONAL TURNOUT OF ELIGIBLE ELECTORATE BY RACE / ETHNICITY



### Key Takeaways by Race / Ethnicity

- **Central Valley**
  - 64.8% of White eligible voters voted
    - 614K voted
    - 332K were eligible but were not registered and did not vote
  - 43.3% of Latino eligible voters voted
    - 503K voted
    - 658K were eligible but were not registered and did not vote
  - 33.3% of Asian eligible voters voted
    - 74K voted
    - 150K were eligible but were not registered and did not vote
  - 21.5% of Black eligible voters voted
    - 23K voted
    - 84K were eligible but were not registered and did not vote
- **Southern California**
  - 67.7% of White eligible voters voted
    - 1.6 million voted
    - 770K were eligible but were not registered and did not vote
  - 51.2% of Latino eligible voters voted
    - 1.7 million voted
    - 1.6 million were eligible but were not registered and did not vote
  - 39.3% of Asian eligible voters voted
    - 422K voted
    - 653K were eligible but were not registered and did not vote
  - 35.2% of Black eligible voters voted
    - 250K voted
    - 461K were eligible but were not registered and did not vote

FIGURE 18: REGIONAL TURNOUT OF ELIGIBLE ELECTORATE BY AGE GROUP



### Key Takeaways by Age Group

- **Central Valley**
  - 26.3% of eligible 18-29 year olds voted
    - 172K voted
    - 483K were eligible but were not registered and did not vote
  - 44.3% of eligible 30-44 year olds voted
    - 317K voted
    - 399K were eligible but were not registered and did not vote
  - 57.3% of eligible 45-64 voters voted
    - 414K voted
    - 308K were eligible but were not registered and did not vote
  - 77% of eligible 65+ voters voted
    - 370K voted
    - 110K were eligible but were not registered and did not vote
- **Southern California**
  - 32.7% of eligible 18-29 year olds voted
    - 589K voted
    - 1.2 million were eligible but were not registered and did not vote
  - 55.3% of eligible 30-44 year olds voted
    - 1.1 million voted
    - 953K were eligible but were not registered and did not vote
  - 61.8% of eligible 45-64 voters voted
    - 1.4 million voted
    - 904K were eligible but were not registered and did not vote
  - 77.3% of eligible 65+ voters voted
    - 1.2 million voted
    - 359K were eligible but were not registered and did not vote

FIGURE 17 & 18: L2

\*NB: CVAP Estimates are from Census American Community Survey data and multiple counties show missing data for Black eligible voters; 2020 voter registration and turnout estimates are from L2 data



# SECTION 5: HOW TO ACTIVATE NON-WHITE VOTERS

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## BACKGROUND

### EXISTING ACADEMIC RESEARCH ON EFFECTIVE APPROACHES:

- Reviewed over 300 experiments and 20 additional studies
- Conducted a meta-analysis of these studies, spanning 20 years of research

### CONSIDERATIONS & FRAMEWORK:

- Non-white voters are not a monolith
- Power and trust are key parts of the equation; individuals have to feel that they have the power and capacity to engage



## HOW TO DESIGN A SUCCESSFUL VOTER ENGAGEMENT PLAN FOR NON-WHITE VOTERS

1

### BUILDING TRUST AND RELATIONSHIPS ARE NECESSARY BEFORE MOVING PEOPLE TO ACTION

Organizers should:

- be similar to the target voter (i.e. from the same neighborhood, similar background, etc.)
- engage in deep, active listening
- meet target voters where they are, talking about the issues they care about in a way that is sensitive to the local history and context

2

### CULTURALLY COMPETENT POLITICAL (RE)EDUCATION IS REQUIRED

People need to be taught:

- why politics, particularly at the local and state levels, is relevant to their lives
- that people like them have the power to make positive change
- what government does (especially at the local level) and that people “like them” can win

3

### FEEDBACK/ACCOUNTABILITY LOOPS ARE KEY

Canvasser feedback from the field should:

- be collected systematically and used to refine/adjust the script(s), the substantive focus of the effort (i.e., policy areas), and the targeting approach
- create opportunities for additional engagement

# SECTION 5: HOW TO ACTIVATE VOTERS OF COLOR

## ANALYZING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DIFFERENT APPROACHES ON NON-WHITE VOTERS

**Door-to-door canvassing is the most effective approach** for mobilizing low propensity non-white voters. It works best when it is carried out by **local canvassers** from **trusted organizations** who meet voters where they are.

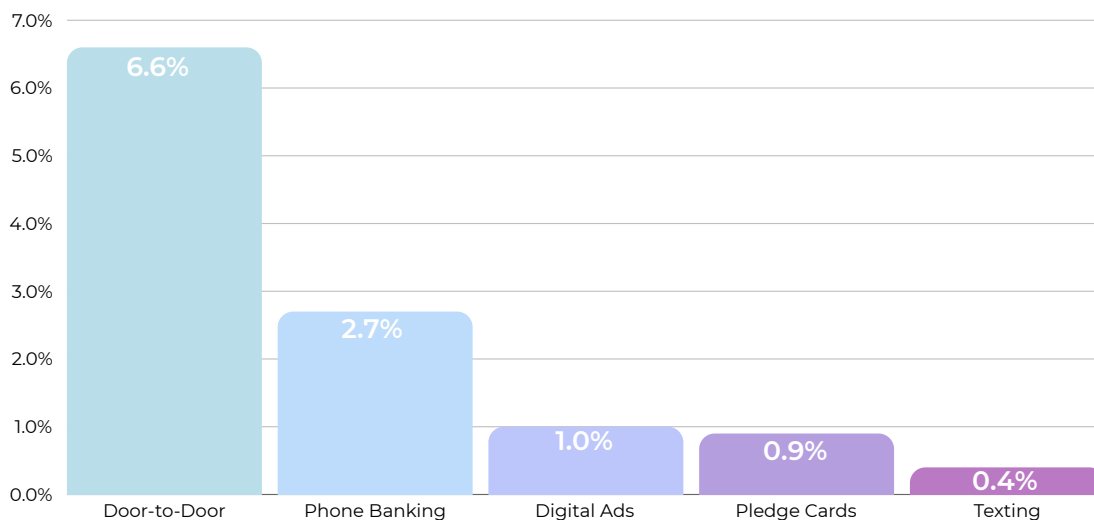


FIGURE 19

Research shows, independent of other factors like **cost and time**, that door-to-door canvassing is the most effective tool for mobilizing low propensity, non-white voters. It allows for organizers to have longer and more meaningful conversations, which allows entrenched behavior to be modified. It assumes that canvassing is implemented by trusted CBOs who use local canvassers who have similar backgrounds to target voters and who speak in the target voters' preferred language. **As an example, the low propensity voters of color mobilized through the California Votes Initiative using door-to-door contact or live phone banks from June 2006 to June 2008 were twenty-three percentage points more likely to vote in November 2008, even without direct mobilization during that election. Thus, although the initial cost of moving a non-habitual voter may be higher using an in-person approach, the subsequent benefit needs to be an important part of the calculus. The key is to find how to make in-person interactions more efficient.**

Door-to-door canvassing is then followed by phone banking as the next most effective tool for mobilizing voters of color. This method works best when combined with strong canvasser feedback loops to continually improve the scripts and outreach strategies.

Digital Ads and texting are best for mass deployment of specific messaging. These methods are best used as reminders for recently contacted targets and/or habitual voters.

All of these methods can have a positive effect on turnout. Their impact is best when used in coordination and depends highly on the targeted segments of population. For CBOs, organizers, and those who want to increase civic participation, **a mix of these methods** will have maximum effectiveness in local communities. What the right mix is depends on the particular community.

# SECTION 5: HOW TO ACTIVATE VOTERS OF COLOR

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## SUMMARY: STRATEGIES TO PURSUE

Each CBO will have its own set of tools, targets, and capacity. Each CBO should develop localized strategies that incorporate these 5 elements in a way that best fits their specific time and cost constraints:

### 1 USE LOCAL CANVASSERS FROM A TRUSTED LOCAL ORGANIZATION

- This will lead to a more successful effort
- Build local capacity
- Tap their social networks

### 2 USE SOCIAL NETWORKS TO RECRUIT CANVASSERS AND ACCESS VOTERS

- Creative and effective ways to contact voters are needed
- Canvassers who are local community members can utilize pre-existing social networks to reach target voters



### 3 MEET VOTERS WHERE THEY ARE

- Align goals with the needs of the target voters
- Understand the community and its needs
- Have non-transactional conversations and deep listening
- Plan for a long-term investment, engagement, and a data collection process
- Train canvassers to be your eyes and ears
- Focus on continuous improvement during your campaign

### 4 (RE)EDUCATE VOTERS

- Education is the key to transformative change
- We need to shift voters' sense of power, trust, and place
- Stories of success, particularly those led by similarly-situated people, can be very effective parts of a voter (re)education program

### 5 CONTINUE TO (RE)EDUCATE AND ENGAGE VOTERS BETWEEN ELECTORAL CYCLES

- Showing them the results, which will lessen voter cynicism, ensures electoral accountability and that voters will be engaged during the next election
- Don't start from zero; continue to build on the momentum from earlier efforts in order to reach scale and enhance impact
- Use the appropriate tools for the job

# SECTION 6: VOTER OUTREACH BUDGETS

## OUTREACH FOR COUNTIES WITH LOW TURNOUT

The Voter's Choice Act (VCA) requires participating counties to establish an Election Administration Plan (EAP) utilizing public input.<sup>11</sup> This plan must outline how the county will create education, outreach, and transparency for voters, and must be translated into languages covered under state and federal law for each specific county. As of April 2024, of the 10 counties with the lowest turnout in the 2020 Presidential Election, 5 are VCA counties:

- Los Angeles
- Fresno
- Stanislaus
- Merced
- Kings

**Table 2** includes a summary of voter outreach costs that the 5 VCA counties planned to spend for the primary and general elections. **Table 3** summarizes 2022 spending for the non-VCA counties.

**Figure 20** provides a snapshot of King County's EAP. The snapshot shows how the county allocated its spending for voter outreach for the 2022 primary and general elections.

### VCA VOTER OUTREACH

Counties	# of Registered Voters (2022)	Budgeted on Outreach	Budgeted per voter	VCA County?
Los Angeles	5,601,835	\$2,700,000 (FY 22-23)	\$0.48	YES
Fresno	500,076	\$500,000 (est. 2024)	\$1.00	YES
Kings	61,535	\$47,250 (est. 2024)	\$0.77	YES
Merced	124,659	\$111,700 (est. 2024)	\$0.90	YES
Stanislaus	282,393	\$151,102 (est. 2024)	\$0.54	YES

TABLE 2

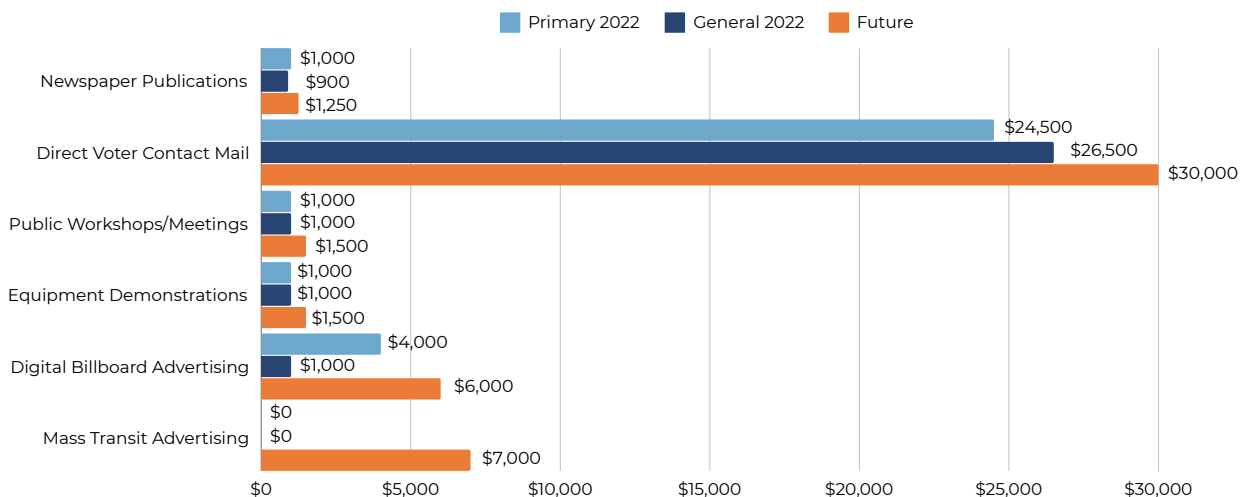
### NON-VCA VOTER OUTREACH

Counties	# of Registered Voters (2022)	Budgeted on Outreach	Budgeted per voter	VCA County?
Tulare	208,863	\$11,000	\$0.48	NO
San Bernardino	1,138,818	\$600,000	\$1.00	NO
San Joaquin	388,635	\$260,000	\$0.67	NO
Kern	435,872	-	-	NO
Imperial	86,942	-	-	NO

NB: Kern and Imperial Counties have not reported budget information relating to voter outreach.

TABLE 3

### KINGS COUNTY 2022 ELECTION ADMINISTRATION PLAN (EAP)



NB: This county is considering budgeting TV and Radio PSAs in the future, but has yet to confirm an amount.

FIGURE 20

11: [Secretary of State VCA County: SoS 2022 Voter Participation](#)  
FIGURE 20: [Kings County EAP](#)

# SECTION 7: POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

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## FUNDING

### Appropriate new funding for registration and voter outreach

We recommend that the state appropriate additional funding for these critically-needed efforts, focused on registering eligible voters and turning out infrequent voters. The first aligns with the SoS and Department Education's ongoing work to educate new entrants to our voting process. We see this as a long-term necessary investment in our democracy that should be added at the state budgeting process. Accountability would take place under the normal budget review process, with publicly-stated goals and accountability against those goals. To support turnout, the Office of Community Partnerships and Strategic Communications (OCPSC) could receive funding and establish goals for regional bodies to distribute grants on the local level. Accountability again would take place via a public process locally, regionally, and ultimately back to the OCPSC.

### Funding formula

In our research, we found that there is little funding going to voter outreach and it varies greatly by county. Where we have found spending for outreach, it has ranged between \$0.01 per registered voter to \$1.00. The lack of investment helps explain low voter participation during presidential elections and abysmal results during midterm elections. If California wants full civic participation, it needs to provide the resources necessary to ensure all eligible voters participate.

Increased canvassing efforts will be key to integrating voters into the political process and have to be part of the solution. By all accounts, this is an expensive proposition, but one where we have seen good results. The cost will vary for each CBO given that each uses a mix of volunteers and paid staff and the cost of outreach varies by geography, voter density, and other contextual factors.

While voters are not products, the private industry approach to acquiring a targeted individual is nonetheless instructive. In general, marketers use an ATR model (Awareness, Trial, Repurchase) to get consumers to try and continue to use their product.<sup>12</sup>

**Awareness:** Typically, it costs marketers an average of \$0.58 to \$2.32 to get a consumer to click on their ad, depending on the Google network, with a median of \$0.87 per click.<sup>13</sup> This is similar to what it would cost to get a voter to engage via digital means. Another example is a cost-per-signature approach. In 2022, the cost per signature in California was \$16.18. This is not accounting for cost increases since then. Acquiring a signature for a ballot initiative is somewhat analogous to what it takes to register someone to vote, so we are using it as another point of information. While neither is a perfect measure, they allow us to begin to estimate the costs. Averaging the signature cost and median click cost gives us an estimated cost of **\$8.58** per voter registration ( $\$16.28 + \$0.87/2 = \$8.58$ ).<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> ATR Model  
<sup>13</sup> Advertising Cost  
<sup>14</sup> Cost per signature

# SECTION 7: POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

## FUNDING (CONTINUED)

**Trial:** is what it takes to get someone to try the product. Marketers estimate this costs \$18.68 to \$59.18 per consumer, with a median cost of \$20.25. We are using these costs as a proxy for what it takes to get voters out to vote.

We found disparities across the state in registration and voter participation by region, gender, and ethnorace. California leads the country in its electoral reform efforts. Those changes are critically important, but are not enough. Closing these participation gaps will require the ongoing state investment needed to reach unregistered eligible voters, including the newly eligible, and move the infrequent registered voters to vote.

We estimate a cost of \$8.58 per voter to make unregistered voters aware of the voting process. Statewide, there are ~3M unregistered voters, bringing the total cost to register Californians to ~\$26M. We estimate a cost of \$20.25 per voter to get registered voters who did not cast a ballot in 2022 to cast a ballot now and in the future. Getting low-propensity voters to change their behavior may be more expensive because it will likely take in-person contact to get them to become a regular voter. While not perfect, as the cost for canvassing may be higher, the \$20.25 figure provides a metric to start discussions about what it will take to ensure California's democracy is as participatory and healthy as possible.

### Eligible Unregistered Voters, Statewide (2020)



3,043,069 eligible and unregistered voters



\$8.58 per voter



\$26,109,532 for continued registration & education

### Eligible Unregistered Voters, 10 Counties (2020)



1,079,867 eligible and unregistered voters



\$8.58 per voter



\$9,265,259 for continued registration & education

### Registered Non-Voters, Statewide (2020)



4,262,297 registered and did not vote in 2020



\$20.25 per voter



\$86,311,514 funding for participation

### Registered Non-Voters, 10 Counties (2020)



2,222,606 registered and did not vote in 2020



\$20.25 per voter



\$45,007,772 funding for participation

## Total funding

Moving to a full participatory democracy will take ongoing state investment. Here we have identified two segments that will help close California's participation gaps. We recommend that the state make available **\$112,421,046** annually for such purposes to register and engage voters statewide. Were the state to focus on the target 10 counties, we recommend the state appropriate **\$54,273,031** annually for such purposes. That would address the needs of roughly half of the state's unregistered, unengaged eligible voters.

# SECTION 7: POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

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## DISTRIBUTION MECHANISM AND ACTIVITIES

Moving to a fully participatory democracy will take continued funding for ongoing and new activities. Here we identify the distribution mechanisms that will help the state manage these investments and close California's participation gaps.



The Secretary of State (SOS) and the Office of Community Partnerships and Strategic Communications (OCPSC) have the ability to intake, distribute, monitor, and oversee funds for counties and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs).

SOS and OCPSC carry out these responsibilities as part of their normal duties. They can serve as centralized hubs of official information and can use their statewide reach to negotiate more favorable cost arrangements with broadcast and media outlets.

Counties can continue to enhance their local outreach, working with CBOs. Meanwhile, CBOs would use their standing in the community to effectively communicate with targeted eligible voters about the importance of civic engagement.



# Appendix

# GLOSSARY

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Term	Definition
CVAP or Eligible Electorate	Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP) is the total population over 18 years old and who is a legal citizen in the United States. The CVAP captures the total number of eligible voters.
Registered	The total number of registered voters in a given county. The percentage associated with this value indicates the percentage of registered voters divided by the CVAP.
Turnout % of Registered Voters	This percentage captures the total voter turnout divided by the total number of registered voters.
Turnout % of CVAP	This percentage captures the total voter turnout divided by the total CVAP.
Eligible, Non-Voters	This captures the number of eligible voters who did not vote in the 2020 Presidential Election, regardless of their registration status. <i>Calculated by subtracting CVAP - Turnout</i>

# DATA APPENDIX

## 2020 VOTER PARTICIPATION STATISTICS FOR THE 10 SELECT COUNTIES

County	2020 CVAP	2020 Voter Registration	2020 Voter Turnout		2020 Registered, Non-Voters	
Los Angeles	6,389,353	5,813,167	4,338,191	74.6%	1,474,976	25.4%
San Bernardino	1,399,650	1,102,687	852,636	77.3%	250,051	22.7%
Fresno	609,208	496,482	370,068	74.5%	126,414	25.5%
Kern	536,316	425,839	309,143	72.6%	116,696	27.4%
San Joaquin	479,513	366,394	292,818	79.9%	73,576	20.1%
Stanislaus	348,773	279,644	217,517	77.8%	62,127	22.2%
Tulare	274,023	199,725	148,677	74.4%	51,048	25.6%
Merced	152,945	117,174	92,424	78.9%	24,750	21.1%
Imperial	104,890	84,676	57,366	67.7%	27,310	32.3%
Kings	94,140	60,100	44,442	73.9%	15,658	26.1%
Total	10,388,811	8,945,888	6,723,282	75.2%	2,222,606	24.8%

SOURCES: 2019 ACS 1-YEAR CITIZEN, VOTING-AGE POPULATION, CA SOS VOTER PARTICIPATION STATS BY COUNTY

# DATA APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

## 2020 VOTER PARTICIPATION STATISTICS FOR THE REMAINING 48 COUNTIES, SORTED BY NUMBER OF REGISTERED, NON-VOTERS

County	2020 CVAP	2020 Voter Registration	2020 Voter Turnout		2020 Registered, Non-Voters	
San Diego	2,328,508	1,950,545	1,627,753	83.45%	322,792	16.55%
Orange	2,099,774	1,772,700	1,546,570	87.24%	226,130	12.76%
Riverside	1,639,146	1,241,552	1,016,896	81.91%	224,656	18.09%
Alameda	1,112,472	966,809	785,215	81.22%	181,594	18.78%
Santa Clara	1,184,434	1,019,309	863,964	84.76%	155,345	15.24%
Sacramento	1,068,900	884,247	729,569	82.51%	154,678	17.49%
Contra Costa	775,500	703,021	591,143	84.09%	111,878	15.91%
San Francisco	662,741	521,771	449,866	86.22%	71,905	13.78%
Ventura	572,857	500,442	429,922	85.91%	70,520	14.09%
San Mateo	502,997	442,988	380,193	85.82%	62,795	14.18%
Solano	314,933	259,161	209,002	80.65%	50,159	19.35%
Monterey	236,671	206,917	165,976	80.21%	40,941	19.79%
Santa Barbara	281,506	235,198	203,506	86.53%	31,692	13.47%
Placer	293,465	270,599	239,315	88.44%	31,284	11.56%

# DATA APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

## 2020 VOTER PARTICIPATION STATISTICS FOR THE REMAINING 48 COUNTIES, SORTED BY NUMBER OF REGISTERED, NON-VOTERS

County	2020 CVAP	2020 Voter Registration	2020 Voter Turnout		2020 Registered, Non-Voters	
<b>Sonoma</b>	361,748	300,840	272,244	90.49%	28,596	9.51%
<b>Santa Cruz</b>	198,382	170,831	146,857	85.97%	23,974	14.03%
<b>Butte</b>	167,905	124,793	103,635	83.05%	21,158	16.95%
<b>San Luis Obispo</b>	222,201	183,746	162,615	88.50%	21,131	11.50%
<b>Yolo</b>	153,604	119,218	99,040	83.07%	20,178	16.93%
<b>El Dorado</b>	147,487	135,554	118,133	87.15%	17,421	12.85%
<b>Shasta</b>	138,373	111,243	94,084	84.58%	17,159	15.42%
<b>Marin</b>	186,536	175,192	158,103	90.25%	17,089	9.75%
<b>Humboldt</b>	106,177	85,183	69,932	82.10%	15,251	17.90%
<b>Napa</b>	96,519	84,845	73,269	86.36%	11,576	13.64%
<b>Mendocino</b>	63,220	53,697	44,135	82.19%	9,562	17.81%
<b>Sutter</b>	63,493	52,096	43,264	83.05%	8,832	16.95%
<b>Nevada</b>	79,852	74,299	65,800	88.56%	8,499	11.44%
<b>San Benito</b>	37,706	35,359	29,207	82.60%	6,152	17.40%

# DATA APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

## 2020 VOTER PARTICIPATION STATISTICS FOR THE REMAINING 48 COUNTIES, SORTED BY NUMBER OF REGISTERED, NON-VOTERS

County	2020 CVAP	2020 Voter Registration	2020 Voter Turnout		2020 Registered, Non-Voters	
Siskiyou	34,368	29,240	23,796	81.38%	5,444	18.62%
Tuolumne	42,620	35,042	30,829	87.98%	4,213	12.02%
Calaveras	35,949	31,364	27,524	87.76%	3,840	12.24%
Amador	27,210	25,605	22,620	88.34%	2,985	11.66%
Glenn	19,242	14,279	11,455	80.22%	2,824	19.78%
Plumas	14,751	13,655	11,422	83.65%	2,233	16.35%
Colusa	12,388	9,807	8,050	82.08%	1,757	17.92%
Mariposa	14,893	11,918	10,410	87.35%	1,508	12.65%
Inyo	13,707	11,016	9,624	87.36%	1,392	12.64%
Mono	9,232	7,831	6,828	87.19%	1,003	12.81%
Modoc	7,293	5,338	4,403	82.48%	935	17.52%
Sierra	2,609	2,261	1,964	86.86%	297	13.14%
Alpine	924	869	749	86.19%	120	13.81%

SOURCES: 2019 ACS 1-YEAR CITIZEN, VOTING-AGE POPULATION, CA SOS VOTER PARTICIPATION STATS BY COUNTY

# DATA APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

Data	Source	Notes
<b>2020 Eligible Electorate Macro Level Statistics</b> (Statewide and County-level totals)	<b>CA SoS Voter Participation Stats by County:</b> <a href="https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/sov/2020-general/sov/03-voter-participation-stats-by-county.pdf">https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/sov/2020-general/sov/03-voter-participation-stats-by-county.pdf</a>  <b>2019 ACS 1-Year Citizen, Voting-Age Population:</b> <a href="https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST1Y2019.S2901?q=S2901:%20Citizen,%20Voting-Age%20Population%20by%20Selected%20Characteristics&amp;g=040XX00US06\$0500000">https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST1Y2019.S2901?q=S2901:%20Citizen,%20Voting-Age%20Population%20by%20Selected%20Characteristics&amp;g=040XX00US06\$0500000</a>	<p><b>Why SoS?:</b> CA Secretary of State voter participation statistics report the total number of voters within a political geography (in this case, counties in California). Since these are official statistics provided by the state government, we prioritize these numbers when analyzing state and county voter participation statistics or trends that do not necessitate looking at specific demographic features.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>How we use it:</b> It is important to note that this particular election was chosen given that at the time this research was conducted, the 2020 Presidential general election was the most recent general Presidential election available to analyze. In our study, we look at the total “Registered Voters” as a proportion of the eligible electorate in each of the 58 California counties. This data allowed us to identify the 10 counties that presented the greatest need for additional voter outreach resources. Additionally, when we were comparing only macro-level voter participation statistics (be it statewide or county totals), the CA SoS statistics for the 2020 general election were utilized for the eligible electorate, registration, and voter turnout statistics.</li></ul> <p><b>Why ACS?:</b> The U.S. Census’ American Community Survey (ACS) reports annual population estimates for many political geographies and by various metrics. We were interested in looking at the eligible electorate for all 58 counties in California at a macro level while also being able to look at their breakdowns by various demographic features (age, ethnicity, etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>How we use it:</b> Since ACS was the primary source for CVAP/eligible electorate estimates by demographics, we also relied on using ACS for the macro estimates when we wanted to determine the rates/proportions of these breakdowns.</li></ul>

Data Appendix continues on the next page.



# DATA APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

Data	Source	Notes
<b>2020 Eligible Electorate by Ethnorace and Age</b>	<b>2019 ACS 1-Year Citizen, Voting-Age Population:</b> <a href="https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST1Y2019.S2901?q=S2901:%20Citizen,%20Voting-Age%20Population%20by%20Selected%20Characteristics&amp;g=040XX00US06\$0500000">https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST1Y2019.S2901?q=S2901:%20Citizen,%20Voting-Age%20Population%20by%20Selected%20Characteristics&amp;g=040XX00US06\$05000000</a>	<p><b>Why ACS?:</b> In order to determine where voter registration gaps exist among ethnoracial and age groups, we look at the 2019 ACS 1-Year Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP) estimates. This data captures the number of people in a given county who are 18 years or older, and eligible to vote by selected characteristics as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau.</p> <p><b>How we use it:</b> Taking the estimates provided for each county, we couple this data with L2 voter registration and voter turnout data in an effort to best calculate the percentage of registered voters based on their eligible electorate totals.</p> <p><i>Note:</i> We look at 2019 1-Year estimates to best analyze the demographics leading up to the 2020 Presidential Election year. ACS 2019 1-Year estimates were collected from January 1st 2019 through December 31st 2019.</p>
<b>2020 Voter Registration Macro Level Statistics</b> (Statewide and County-level totals)	<b>CA SoS Voter Participation Stats by County:</b> <a href="https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/sov/2020-general/sov/03-voter-participation-stats-by-county.pdf">https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/sov/2020-general/sov/03-voter-participation-stats-by-county.pdf</a>	<p><b>Why SoS?:</b> The California Secretary of State (SoS) provides macro voter registration and participation statistics at the county level. We leverage this data by analyzing the county-level registration and election results for the 2020 General Presidential Election.</p> <p><b>How we use it:</b> As mentioned before, in our study we look at the total “Registered Voters” in all of the 58 California counties as of the 2020 Presidential General Election. This data allowed us to determine the 10 counties with the greatest need for additional resources.</p>

Data Appendix continues on the next page

# DATA APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

Data	Source	Notes
<b>2020 Registration by Ethnorace and Age</b>	L2 Database (License required)	<p><b>Why L2?:</b> L2 is a nationwide database that provides local and statewide registration and election result data. Registration breakdowns are provided by various demographic factors, including ethnorace, gender, and age.</p> <p><b>How we use it:</b> We utilize this data to determine by ethnorace, gender, and age:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Of the eligible electorate, what percentage are registered to vote,</li><li>2. Of those registered to vote, what percentage turned out to vote.</li></ol> <p><b>Note:</b> L2 does not report information at the same granularity as the U.S. census for eligible voting populations. For this reason, our comparisons for registration and turnout as percentages of the eligible electorate utilize two different data sources, each with its own methodology, and thus may lead to potential differences in reporting for certain metrics when compared against other data publications.</p>
<b>2020 Voter Turnout Macro Level Statistics</b> (Statewide and County-level totals)	<b>CA SoS Voter Participation Stats by County:</b> <a href="https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/sov/2020-general/sov/03-voter-participation-stats-by-county.pdf">https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/sov/2020-general/sov/03-voter-participation-stats-by-county.pdf</a>	<p><b>Why SoS?:</b> The California Secretary of State (SoS) provides macro voter registration and participation statistics at the county level. We leverage this data, by analyzing the county-level registration and election results for the 2020 General Presidential Election.</p> <p><b>How we use it:</b> In our study, we look at the “Total Voters” in all of the 58 California counties in the 2020 Presidential General Election and compare the 10 identified counties by region (Southern California and Central Valley).</p>

Data Appendix continues on the next page

# DATA APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

Data	Source	Notes
<b>2020 Voter Turnout for the Presidential General Election by Ethnorace and Age</b>	L2 Database (License required)	<p><b>Why L2?:</b> Voter turnout data for all 58 counties was not easily (publicly) accessible in a standardized format. As a result, we utilized our access to L2's database to get statistics for each county's voter turnout for the 2020 election by ethnicity and age so that we could have comparisons as accurate as available.</p> <p><b>Why not Census data?:</b> Unfortunately, Census ACS does not report registration or voting by the demographic features we were interested (in this case, ethnorace, gender, and age). Additionally, while the Census Current Population Survey (CPS) does have some ethnic data for voter participation statistics, that data is self reported and not validated voter data, which L2 provides. In addition, CPS data was not available for all 58 counties, making it impossible to use it as a source for county-level numbers.</p>
<b>ACS 1-Year vs ACS 5-Year Estimate, what is the difference?</b>	<b>Census:</b> <a href="https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/guidance/estimates.html">https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/guidance/estimates.html</a>	<p><b>Note:</b> While Census ACS 5-Year estimates are preferred since they are most reliable, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, they were not available for the 58 counties at the time we began our research. As a result, we relied on the ACS 2019 1-Year estimates.</p>

**Data Calculations for Select Figures available upon request**



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**A special thank you to the Voter Education and Outreach Coalition Advisory Committee**

*Not all perspectives or recommendations in this report are necessarily endorsed by every single member of the Voter Education and Outreach Coalition Advisory Committee.*

