



2022

PRIMARY ELECTION PROFILE

# FLORIDA



**ELECTION DAY:**  
**TUESDAY, AUGUST 23, 2022**

**PROJECTED LATINO VOTE FOR NOVEMBER 2022: 1,426,000**

**TOTAL POPULATION (2020):**

**21,538,187**

**LATINO POPULATION (2020):**

**5,697,240**



The landscape for the 2022 midterm primary and general elections in Florida includes several policy and political developments that could affect Latino participation and political progress in the state. These elections will be the first to take place after the Census 2020 apportionment of congressional seats, where Florida state gained one congressional district, in part due to the increase of the Latino population. Florida’s redistricting involved contentious debates between the state legislature and Governor Ron DeSantis (R), and has resulted in litigation over the impact of the new lines on Black electoral opportunities. In 2021, the state enacted several restrictive voting measures that could detrimentally affect the ability of Latinos to register to vote and cast ballots, and although litigation is proceeding against the measures, they will be in effect for the August primary. In addition, given Florida’s reputation as a “swing state,” and with the balance of power in Congress at stake in Election 2022, there is national interest in several of the state’s primary and general election contests. Latinos comprise 18 percent of the state’s registered voters, and are poised to play a key role in the outcome of these races.

# REDISTRICTING

In Florida, the legislature is empowered to draw congressional and state district lines. The legislature approved new state legislative district lines in February 2022, and new congressional lines in March 2022. Governor DeSantis vetoed the Congressional map, [claiming it](#) violated the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution by using race as the predominant factor in configuring the state's 5th Congressional District. Political observers and advocates [believe](#) that DeSantis supported a map that would diminish Black and Latino electoral opportunities, and create more districts favorable to Republicans. During an April special session, the legislature approved a new congressional map proposed by DeSantis.

Civil rights groups challenged the new congressional map in court, claiming it violated the state's constitutional provisions, by diminishing Black electoral opportunities and unfairly favoring the Republican Party. A state lower court judge invalidated the map's configuration of districts in Northern Florida, because of the impact on Black voting rights, and ordered the state to adopt an expert-drawn map for Election 2022. An appellate court prevented the lower court's order from moving forward, and the congressional map proposed by DeSantis will be in effect for Election 2022. However, the litigation regarding the future of the congressional map is still pending before the trial court, and civil rights organizations are also challenging the map in federal court.

During the redistricting process, Latino voting rights advocates also contended that the proposed [congressional](#) and [state House](#) lines did not provide Latinos with enhanced electoral opportunities, although Latino population growth accounted for over half (54 percent) of the increase in the state's population between 2010 and 2020. Essentially, the number of districts where Latinos comprised close to or a majority of the voting-age population of the district remained unchanged after redistricting, which represents a stagnation of Latino voting strength. In addition, according to Census 2020 data, 5 percent of Florida's Latinos also identify as Black, and advocates note that the discrimination against Florida's Black population being challenged in court would detrimentally affect their electoral opportunities.

# RESTRICTIVE VOTING REQUIREMENTS

In May 2021, Florida enacted S.B. 90, sweeping legislation that would significantly impair the ability of Latinos and other underrepresented groups to cast ballots. S.B. 90 makes voter registration more difficult, creates administrative obstacles to obtaining vote-by-mail (VBM) ballots, imposes severe limitations on where VBM drop boxes can be located and when voters can access them, and places restrictions on the kinds of assistance voters can obtain in requesting and returning VBM ballots. Several civil rights and civic organizations immediately brought court challenges against the legislation, with LatinoJustice PRLDEF filing a suit on behalf of groups including UnidosUS, the Hispanic Federation and Poder Latinx. The Florida federal district court consolidated the cases for trial, and in March 2022, the court enjoined the state from enforcing most of the challenged provisions. However, after the state appealed the case, the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals allowed the state to move forward with implementing the provisions, pending that appeal. Thus, while the litigation against S.B. 90 will proceed, its provisions will be in effect for the 2022 primary.

# CONGRESSIONAL RACES

## U.S. Senate

Florida's Latino incumbent U.S. Senator Marco Rubio does not face opposition in the Republican primary. In the Democratic primary, small business owner Ricardo de la Fuente and former Special Counsel for the Department of Justice William Sanchez will have an uphill battle in their contest, where U.S. Rep. Val Demings is viewed as the frontrunner. Political observers believe that Demings will be a somewhat competitive challenger to Rubio in the general election.

## U.S. House of Representatives

All four of Florida's Latino incumbent U.S. Representatives are running for re-election, and three do not face any serious opposition in the primary or general election: Republicans Mario Diaz-Balart and Carlos Gimenez, and Democrat Darren Soto. In the 27th Congressional District, U.S. Rep. Maria Elvira Salazar has excellent prospects of winning the Republican primary. Salazar could face a somewhat competitive general election challenge from Democratic primary frontrunner State Senator Annette Taddeo, who pivoted from a bid for the gubernatorial nomination to run for a seat Congress. In the Democratic primary, Taddeo's most viable opponent is Miami City Commissioner Ken Russell.

In Florida's 3rd Congressional District Republican primary, investment firm founder Manuel Asensio will face an uphill battle to unseat U.S. Rep. Kat Cammack, who also is very likely to prevail in the general election. In Florida's 4th Congressional District, Navy veteran Erick Aguilar will face a tough bid for the Republican nomination, in a primary race where State Senate President Pro Tem Aaron Bean is seen as the frontrunner. Given the partisan leanings of this district, the Republican victor will likely win the general election as well.

In the 7th Congressional District, Latinos are running in a crowded field of candidates on both sides of the aisle. Business owner Tatiana Fernandez is in a competitive but difficult race in the Democratic primary, where contenders also include mediator Karen Green. In the Republican primary, former DeBary City Vice Mayor Erika Benfield and business owner Al Santos are facing tough competition from former Navy SEAL Brady Duke, Army veteran and business owner Cory Mills, and State Rep. Anthony Sabatini. Political observers believe the winner of the Republican primary is virtually certain to prevail in the general election.

In the 10th Congressional District Democratic primary, organizer and gun violence prevention advocate Maxwell Alejandro Frost is in a crowded field of contenders for the seat being vacated by U.S. Rep. Val Demings, who is running for U.S. Senate. Frost's most viable primary opponents include State Senator Randolph Bracy, Pastor Terence Gray, and former U.S. Rep. Alan Grayson. Given the partisan leanings of the district, the victor of the Democratic primary has excellent prospects of winning the general election.

In Florida's 13th Congressional District, Air Force veteran and non-profit advocate Anna Paulina Luna is the frontrunner in the Republican primary. If she wins, Luna has good prospects of prevailing in the general election, where the Democratic competitor is likely to be former Obama Administration Senior Advisor to the Secretary of Defense Eric Lynn. In Florida's 15th Congressional District, a new seat created after redistricting, financial institution executive Cesar Ramirez faces an uphill battle in the Democratic primary, where political observers believe the most viable candidates are former broadcast journalist Alan Cohn and former comedian Eddie Geller. State Rep, Jackie Toledo is running a competitive race against a crowded field of contenders for the Republican nomination. Election analysts believe the victor of the Republican primary will have an edge in the general election.

In the 21st Congressional District, Army veteran Corrina Balderramos Robinson has good chances of winning the Democratic primary, but she will face a tough general election contest against the likely winner of the Republican primary, U.S. Rep. Brian Mast. In the 24th Congressional District Republican primary, equipment supply worker Jesus Navarro has an uphill battle to prevail against cosmetologist Lavern Spicer. The winner of this contest will also have a difficult general election race against the likely Democratic primary victor, U.S. Rep. Frederica Wilson.

## STATEWIDE RACES

Governor De Santis is running for re-election, and his running mate is Florida's first Latina Lt. Governor Jeanette Nuñez. The DeSantis-Nuñez ticket is virtually certain to prevail in the Republican primary. The strongest contenders in the Democratic primary include Florida Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services Nikki Fried and U.S. Rep. Charlie Crist, who once served as a Republican governor of the state. The victor of this contest will have nine days after the primary to choose a running mate, and will also face an uphill battle to unseat DeSantis.

Florida Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services Nikki Fried is vacating that position to run for Governor, and business management firm owner Ryan Morales is running for the Democratic nomination for the seat. He is facing a difficult contest against business owner Naomi Esther Blemur. The victor of the primary will also encounter a very tough race in the general election against the likely winner of the Republican primary, State Senate President Wilton Simpson.

# FLORIDA LATINO VOTER PROJECTION FOR ELECTION 2022

NALEO Educational Fund projects that more than 1.4 million Latinos will cast ballots in the 2022 midterm Florida elections in November. Our projection is based on trends in voter turnout in the past five midterm congressional elections. Between 2014 and 2018, there was a dramatic increase of 56.2 percent in turnout. As described in more detail in NALEO Educational Fund's [2022 Latino Vote Projections](#), several factors may have contributed to this increase, including the political dialogue around such issues as the migrant caravan crisis along the border, a rise in anti-Latino measures, and comments about immigrants from then-President Trump. Therefore, considering the trends in the past five midterm elections, we project the Florida Latino vote in November 2022 to mirror 2018 turnout and represent a 59.9 percent increase from 2014.



## FLORIDA

PROJECTED LATINO VOTE 2022	LATINO VOTE 2018	% CHANGE BETWEEN 2018 AND 2022	LATINO VOTE 2014	% CHANGE BETWEEN 2014 AND 2022
1,426,000	1,393,000	2.4%*	892,000	59.9%

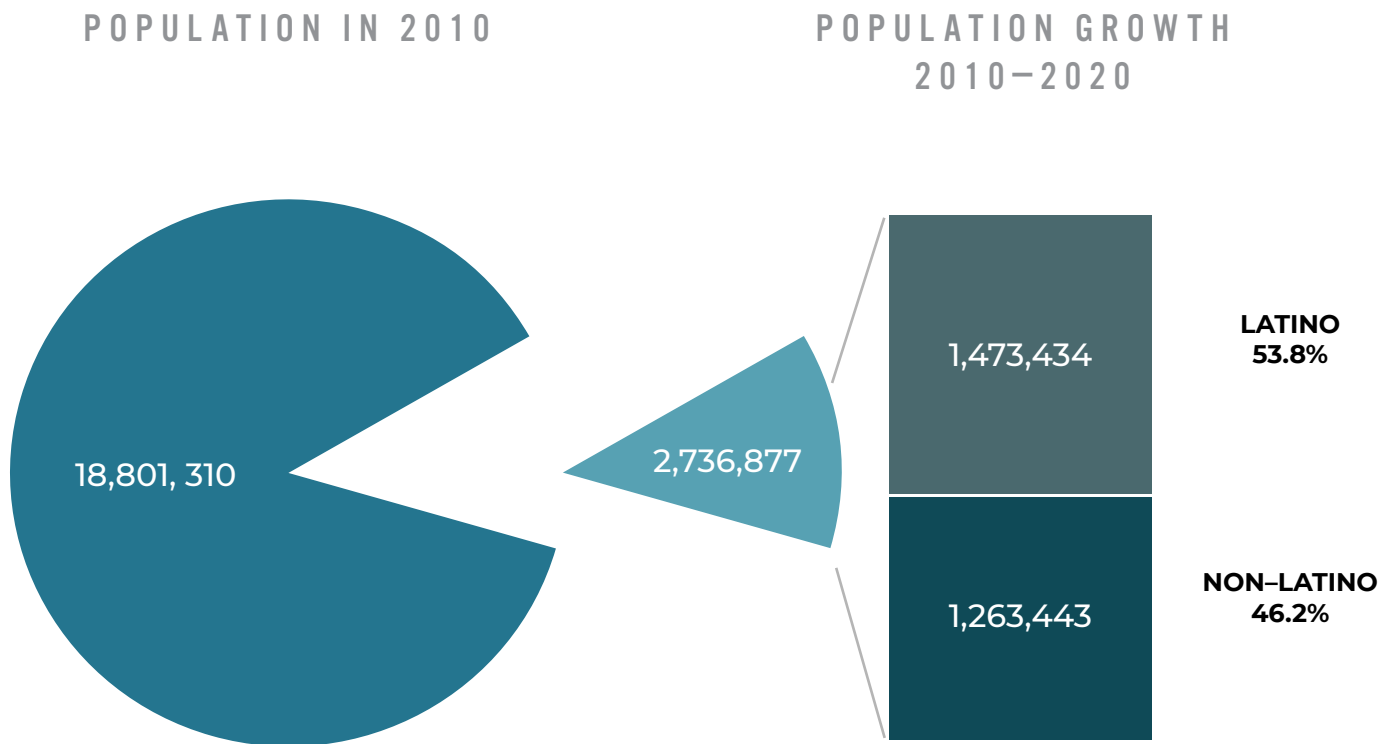
\* Not statistically significant

In addition, the Latino share of all Florida voters in 2022 is expected to be 18.1 percent, which mirrors the Latino share in 2018, and is a 26.0 percent increase from 2014.

Our Election 2022 projection is a floor, and the actual Latino vote could exceed the projection based on the political and policy environments leading into the November election. Furthermore, we note that one of the factors contributing to the groundbreaking turnout of Latinos in Election 2018 was the investment made by candidates and parties in Latino voter mobilization. This kind of investment will be crucial for the Florida Latino vote in Election 2022 to match or exceed the vote of 2018. More information about Florida Latino turnout can be found in “Voter Turnout” below and in NALEO Educational Fund’s [analysis](#) of national and state projected turnout in Election 2022.

# POPULATION GROWTH BETWEEN 2010 AND 2020

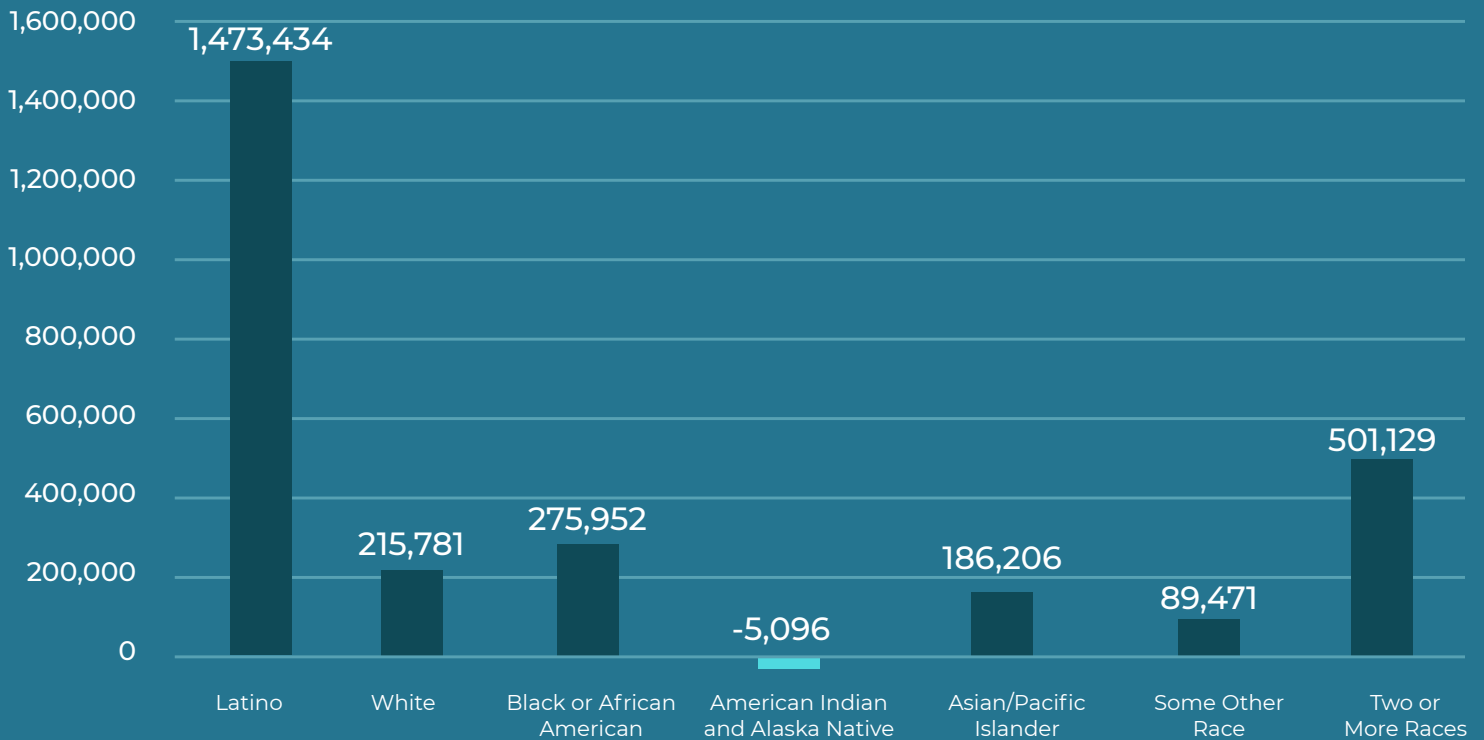
Between 2010 and 2020, Florida's total population grew from 18.8 million to 21.5 million, increasing 14.6 percent. During the same period, the state's Latino population grew from 4.2 million to 5.7 million, increasing 34.9 percent. By comparison, the state's non-Latino population increased by 8.7 percent. The increase in Florida's Latino population accounted for 53.8 percent of the state's population growth during the past decade.



See "Sources" at the end of this profile for information about the potential impact of the national net undercount of Latinos in Census 2020 on the data in this profile.

# GROWTH OF FLORIDA POPULATION GROUPS 2010-2020

The Florida Latino population increase between 2010 and 2020 exceeded the growth of other population groups.



## FLORIDA LATINO POPULATION 2020

	POPULATION	SHARE OF TOTAL POPULATION
All Latinos	5,697,240	26.5%
Latino Adults	4,332,685	25.0%
Latino Voting-Age Citizens	3,122,154	20.4%

See “Sources” at the end of this profile for information about the comparability of data sources for this table.



# FLORIDA LATINO ELECTORATE

(as of June 2022, from VAN voter file)

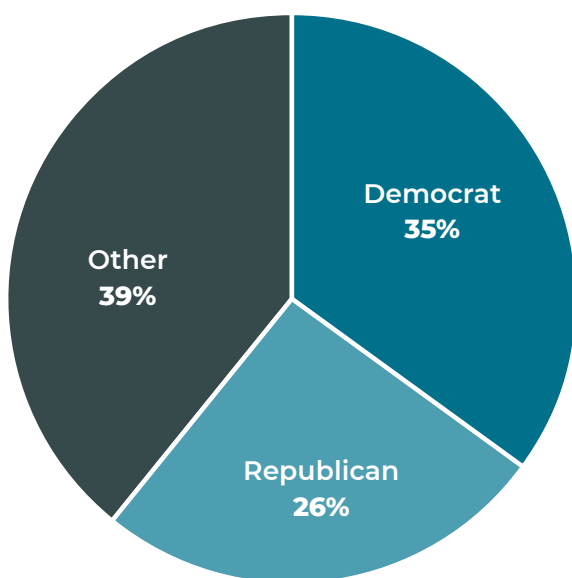
Total Registered Voters	13,885,746
Latino Registered Voters	2,544,638
Latino Share of Registered Voters	18.3%

Over 18 percent of Florida registered voters are Latino.

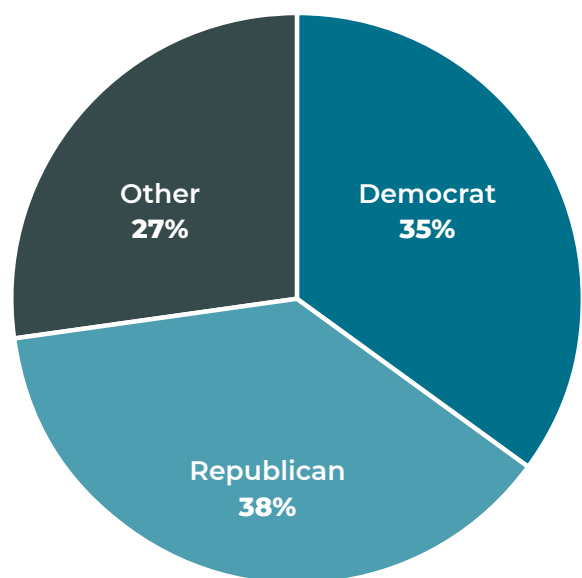
## PARTY AFFILIATION

Latinos and non-Latinos are equally likely to be Democrats, with 35 percent of Latinos affiliating with the Democratic Party, compared to 35 percent of non-Latinos. Latinos are less likely to be Republicans than the non-Latino electorate and more likely not to be affiliated with either major political party. More than one of every four Latino registered voters (26 percent) is Republican, compared to 38 percent of non-Latinos. Nearly two of every five Latino registered voters (39 percent) are not affiliated with either major party, compared to 27 percent of non-Latinos.

LATINO



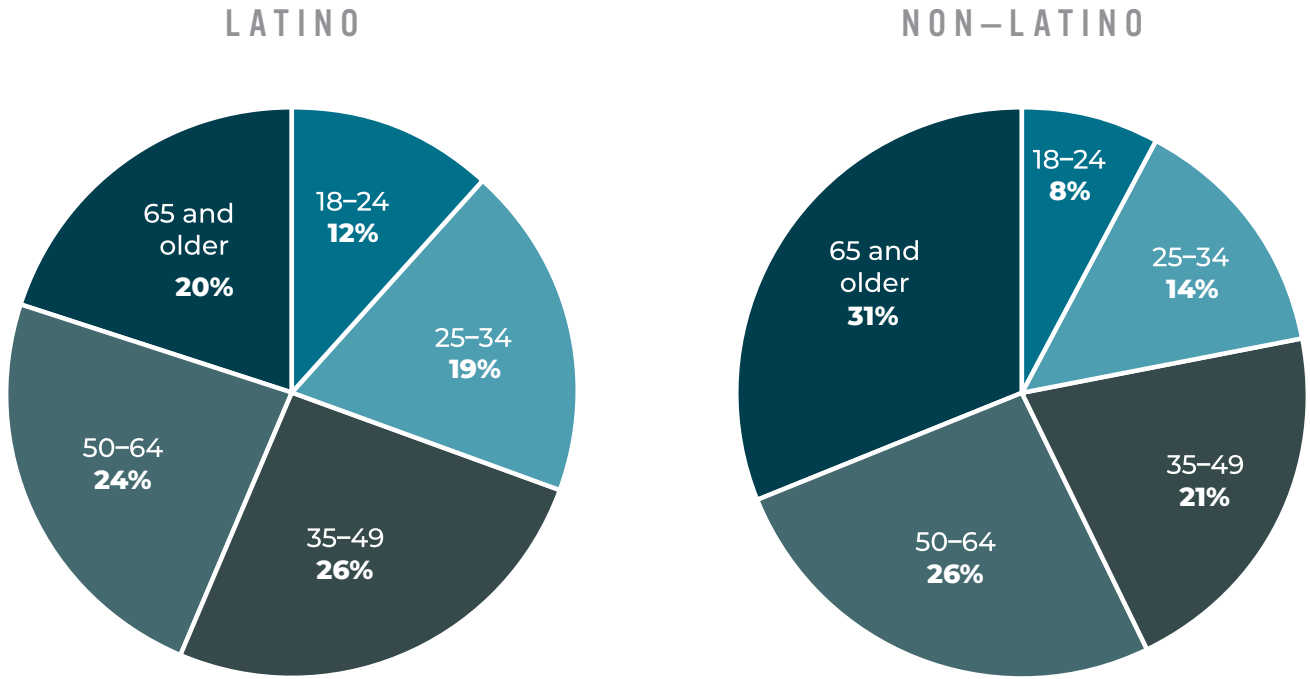
NON-LATINO



Totals may not add up to 100% because of rounding.

# AGE

Florida Latino registered voters tend to be slightly younger than non-Latinos, with 18–24-year-olds comprising 12 percent of registered Latinos, compared to 8 percent of non-Latinos. Similarly, 19 percent of Latino registered voters are 25–34-year-olds, compared to 14 percent of non-Latinos. In contrast, 57 percent of non-Latino registered voters are 50 and older, compared to 44 percent of Latinos.



*Totals may not add up to 100% because of rounding.*

# LATINO VOTER TURNOUT

Latino voter turnout in Florida midterm elections increased 3.4 percent from 863,000 in 2010 to 892,000 in 2014. Between 2014 and 2018, there was dramatic growth in the number of Latino voters from 892,000 to 1,393,000 — an increase of 56.2 percent.

● VOTING AGE CITIZENS ● REGISTERED VOTERS ● ACTUAL VOTERS



# LATINOS IN FLORIDA ELECTED OFFICES 1996–2021

In 2021, 214 Latinos served in elected office in Florida, with 88 percent serving at the local level, including county, municipal, school board, and judicial or law enforcement officials.

FLORIDA	1996	2001	2007	2013	2021
U.S. Senators	0	0	1	1	1
U.S. Representatives	2	2	3	3	4
State Officials	0	0	0	0	1
State Legislators	13	15	17	17	19
Local Officials	56	73	110	154	189
<b>TOTAL</b>	71	90	131	175	214

# SOURCES

NALEO Educational Fund, National Directory of Latino Elected Officials, 2016–2021.

Generally, data on the overall Florida and Latino populations for 2020 are from the 2020 Census Redistricting Data Summary Files. However, because these data do not include information on residents' citizenship, data on the 2020 citizen voting-age population of Florida overall and Latinos are from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2016–2020 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year data. Therefore, this should be taken into account when making comparisons between population data in this profile.

Additionally, in March 2022, the Census Bureau released its first official estimate of the accuracy of Census 2020, which revealed national net undercounts of the Latino population (4.99 percent), the Black or African American population (3.30 percent), and the American Indian and Alaska Native population living on reservations (5.64 percent). The national net undercount of Latinos raises significant concerns about an undercount of Latinos in Florida. In May 2022, the Census Bureau released state-level estimates of the accuracy of Census 2022 and determined that Florida was one of the six states that experienced a statistically significant statewide undercount (3.48%). NALEO Educational Fund is advocating that the Census Bureau provide disaggregated data by levels of geography lower than at the state level and that it conducts additional evaluation and assessments to enhance our understanding of the accuracy of the Census 2020 counts of Florida.

The source of the voting and registration data in the profile, unless indicated otherwise, is from the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (CPS) and its *Voting and Registration in the Elections of November: 2002–2020* report. The CPS data used in this profile and the survey from which they are derived are subject to certain limitations. First, actual voter turnout and registration may be overestimated by the CPS because individuals may tend to over-report electoral participation. Additionally, the CPS is a national survey, and estimates derived for smaller sub-groups within the national population may be based on relatively small sample sizes. Consequently, the margin of error associated with estimates of voting and registration for these sub-groups is greater than the margin associated with the national population or larger population sub-groups.

# PROJECTION METHODOLOGY

For Florida, NALEO Educational Fund derived its projection of the Latino vote in Election 2022 by using a statistical modeling approach that takes into account trends in Latino voter turnout over the past five midterm election cycles. We determined Latino voter turnout in those cycles from U.S. Census Bureau CPS data and *Voting and Registration in the Elections of November 2002–2018*. Because the projections are based on past voting trends, they do not take into account the potential increase or decrease in Latino turnout that could result from current circumstances, including challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, more robust voter engagement efforts, naturalization trends, changes in voter registration and voting laws and practices, or other factors.

NGP Voter Activation Network (VAN) voter file data, June 2022: VAN data are subject to some limitations regarding collecting, entering, maintaining, and analyzing voter file records. All estimates are of Registered Active Voters.

For more information about NALEO Educational Fund's publications about the Latino population or Election 2022, please contact Dorian Caal at [dcaal@naleo.org](mailto:dcaal@naleo.org) or (213) 765-9450.