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PRIMARY ELECTION PROFILE

FLORIDA



**PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY
ELECTION:
TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 2024**

**PROJECTED HISPANIC VOTE
FOR NOVEMBER 2024:
2,035,933**

ELECTORAL COLLEGE VOTES: 30

**TOTAL POPULATION (2022):
22,244,823**

**HISPANIC POPULATION (2022):
6,025,039**



Between 2000 and 2016, Florida was a key battleground state with extremely competitive contests that had a significant impact on the outcome of the presidential race. The Hispanic vote has played a pivotal role in many of these elections. In November 2000 and 2004, Hispanic support for President George W. Bush (R) helped him carry the state and garner the Electoral College votes needed for his victories. During the 2008 and 2012 presidential contests, the [Hispanic vote](#) was also critical in helping President Barack Obama (D) win Florida with narrow margins and reverse the Republican trend of the previous two presidential races.

In Election 2016, the overall Florida vote was also extremely close, with the state swinging back to supporting Republican President Donald Trump (R), who had a one percent margin of victory over Hillary Clinton (D). In that election, Hispanic and white voter preferences appeared to differ.

According to the Latino Decisions 2016 Election Eve [poll](#), Hispanics supported Clinton over Trump by 67 percent to 31 percent. In contrast, according to CNN [exit polling](#), white voters supported Trump over Clinton by 64 percent to 32 percent.

In 2020, the Florida margin of victory for President Trump (R) was greater than 2016, with the former president obtaining 51.2 percent of the vote compared to 47.9 percent for President Joe Biden (D). While Hispanic voter preferences again appeared to differ from white voter preferences, Trump also appeared to gain ground with Latino voters from 2016. The Latino Decisions 2020 Election Eve [poll](#) showed Hispanics supporting Biden over Trump by 59 percent to 38 percent, and CNN [exit polling](#) showed whites supporting Trump over Biden by 62 percent to 37 percent.

The issues of importance to Florida Hispanics evolve with every election cycle. For example, according to the Latino Decisions 2018 Election Eve [poll](#), economic opportunity, immigration reform, and access to affordable healthcare were the most important issues that Hispanic Florida voters wanted politicians to address. Fifty-nine percent of Hispanic respondents disapproved of the job that President Trump was doing, and 72 percent agreed that Trump's statements and policies will cause a major setback to the progress made in recent years by Hispanics. Eighty-six percent of Florida Hispanics indicated that rhetoric attacking immigrants and the need for comprehensive immigration reform was an important reason to vote in the election. In [Election 2018](#), the Florida Hispanic vote increased significantly from Election 2014, growing from 892,000 to nearly 1.4 million, an increase of 56 percent from 2014. The turnout rate of Hispanic voting-age citizens grew from 36 percent in 2014 to 44 percent in 2018.

However, since 2018, there has been a shift in the issues Florida Hispanics view as important in midterm and presidential elections. According to the NALEO Educational Fund Election 2020 Weekly Tracking [Poll](#), more than half of Hispanics (53 percent) identified that responding to the COVID-19 pandemic was one of the most important issues they wanted the next president to address. Addressing racism and discrimination (29 percent), lowering healthcare costs (25 percent), and improving employment opportunities (25 percent) also ranked as more important issues for the state's Hispanics than immigration reform (16 percent). In [Election 2020](#), Hispanic Floridians turned out in record numbers for a presidential election, with nearly 1.8 million casting ballots, a 15.3 percent increase from 2016.

In Election 2022, the NALEO Educational Fund Election 2022 Weekly Tracking [Poll](#) revealed that more than half (54 percent) of Florida Hispanics named the rising cost of living as one of the most important issues in the election, with improving wages and employment opportunities (28 percent), women's reproductive and abortion rights (25 percent), and lowering the costs of health care (24 percent) ranking higher than protecting immigrant rights (16 percent).

However, immigration issues in Florida have gained significant prominence in the public dialogue, through such developments as the 2023 enactment of [SB 1718](#), which makes transporting undocumented immigrants into Florida a state felony, and prohibits undocumented immigrants

with out-of-state driver's licenses issued without proof of "lawful presence" from driving in the state, amongst other measures. Notably, several provisions of this measure are being challenged in court. In addition, Governor Ron DeSantis (R) has taken actions such as making arrangements to [send migrants](#) from states other than Florida to cities that self-declared themselves "sanctuary cities" for immigrants, as a criticism of the Biden Administration's immigration policies. It is unclear how issues like inflation, global instability, or the public policy debate around immigration issues will play a role in mobilizing the Florida Hispanic electorate.

Furthermore, the diversity of Florida's Hispanic population continues to grow, in part because of the migration of Puerto Ricans from the Commonwealth as well as other states to Florida, thereby increasing the diversity of Florida's Hispanic electorate. According to [Census 2020 data](#)¹, the number of Puerto Ricans in Florida (1.2 million) is approaching the number of Cubans (1.5 million), making Florida the new home of the largest Puerto Rican population on the U.S. mainland.² Florida is also home to the largest Cuban, Colombian, Peruvian, and Venezuelan populations in the nation. When assessing the impact of Florida's Hispanic vote on Election 2024, the increasing diversity of the state's electorate is a trend that bears watching.

¹ The Census 2020 data in this *Profile* should be understood in the context of the severe and historic undercount of the Latino population which occurred in that enumeration, where the Census Bureau's Post-Enumeration Survey estimated a 4.99 percent national net undercount of Latinos. This undercount raises significant concerns about potential undercounts of Latinos by state and in different subgroups, as well as the actual magnitude of growth of these subgroups between 2010 and 2020.

² In 2010, New York was the state with the largest Puerto Rican population.

CONGRESSIONAL RACES

U.S. Senate³

Incumbent U.S. Senator Rick Scott (R) is virtually certain to win the Republican primary, and is likely to face former U.S. Representative Debbie Mucarsel-Powell (D) in the general election, whom political observers see as the [frontrunner](#) in the Democratic primary. Given the state's Republican leanings, Mucarsel-Powell will have a competitive but tough battle to unseat Scott. Hispanics comprise 18 percent of the state's registered voters and will play a critical role in November's Senate contest.

U.S. House of Representatives³

All six of Florida's Hispanic incumbent U.S. Representatives are running for reelection and have good prospects of victory in the primary and general elections: Democrats Maxwell Alejandro Frost and Darren Soto, and Republicans Mario Diaz-Balart, Maria Elvira Salazar, Carlos Gimenez, and Anna Paulina Luna. Hispanics who will have tougher general election races include business owner Tatiana Fernandez (D) and cybersecurity engineer Allek Pastrana (D), who are among the 7th Congressional District contenders to unseat U.S. Rep. Cory Mills (R); Sarasota County Democratic Party Hispanic Caucus president Matthew Montavon and civic leader Manny Lopez (D), who are vying for the opportunity to run against 17th Congressional District U.S. Rep. Greg Steube (R); and Jesus Navarro, who hopes to win the Republican nomination to battle 24th Congressional District U.S. Rep. Frederica Wilson (D).

³ Florida's Congressional primaries are being held on August 20, 2024. The information in this profile is based on filings with the Florida Secretary of State, media reports, and other political sources as of March 2024. This information may change before the primary takes place.

FLORIDA HISPANIC VOTER PROJECTION FOR ELECTION 2024

NALEO Educational Fund projects that more than two million Hispanics will cast ballots in the November 2024 presidential elections in Florida. Our projection is based on trends in voter turnout in the past six presidential elections. Between 2016 and 2020, there was an increase of 15.3 percent in turnout. As described in more detail in NALEO Educational Fund’s [2024 National and State Hispanic Voter Projections](#), several factors may have contributed to this increase, including the political dialogue around issues including the COVID-19 pandemic and the economy. Considering these trends, we project the Florida Hispanic vote to increase 13.8 percent in November 2024 from 2020 turnout and represent a 31.2 percent increase from 2016.



FLORIDA

PROJECTED HISPANIC VOTE 2024	HISPANIC VOTE 2020	% CHANGE BETWEEN 2020 AND 2024	HISPANIC VOTE 2016	% CHANGE BETWEEN 2016 AND 2024
2,035,933	1,789,000	13.8%	1,552,000	31.2%

In addition, the Hispanic share of all Florida voters in 2024 is expected to be 20 percent, which mirrors the Hispanic share in 2020 and 2016.

Our Election 2024 projection is a floor, and the actual Hispanic vote could exceed the projection based on the political and policy environments leading into the November election. Furthermore, one of the factors contributing to Hispanic turnout in Election 2020 was candidate and party investment in Hispanic voter mobilization. This kind of investment will continue to be

crucial for the Florida Hispanic vote in Election 2024 to match or exceed the vote of 2020. More information about Florida Hispanic voter turnout can be found in the “Voter Turnout” section below and in NALEO Educational Fund’s [2024 National and State Hispanic Voter Projections](#).

FLORIDA HISPANIC POPULATION 2022

	POPULATION	SHARE OF TOTAL POPULATION
All Hispanics	6,025,039	27.1%
Hispanic Adults	4,651,139	25.9%
Hispanic Voting-Age Citizens	3,507,255	21.7%

FLORIDA HISPANIC ELECTORATE

(as of October 2023, from VAN voter file)

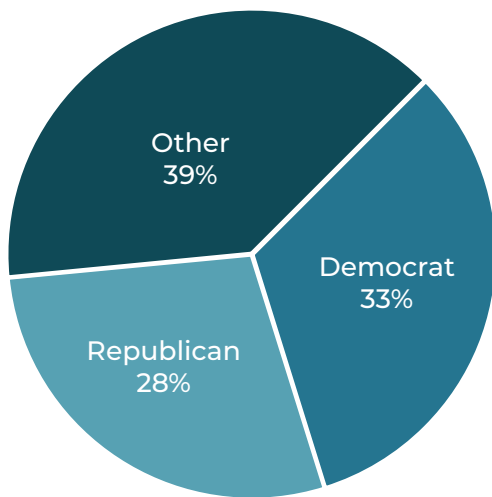
Total Registered Voters	13,310,060
Hispanic Registered Voters	2,438,559
Hispanic Share of Registered Voters	18.3%

Nearly one of every five (18.3 percent) Florida registered voters is Hispanic.

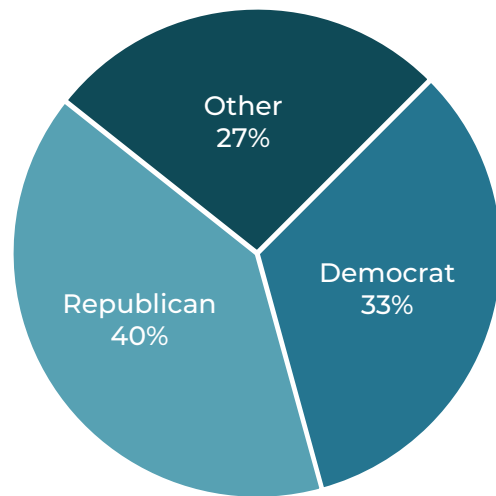
PARTY AFFILIATION

Hispanics and non-Hispanics are equally likely to be Democrats, with 33 percent of both groups affiliating with the Democratic Party. Hispanics are less likely to be Republicans than the non-Hispanic electorate and more likely not to be affiliated with either major political party. More than one of every four Hispanic registered voters (28 percent) is Republican, compared to 40 percent of non-Hispanics. More than one of every three Hispanic registered voters (39 percent) is not affiliated with either major party, compared to 27 percent of non-Hispanics.

H I S P A N I C



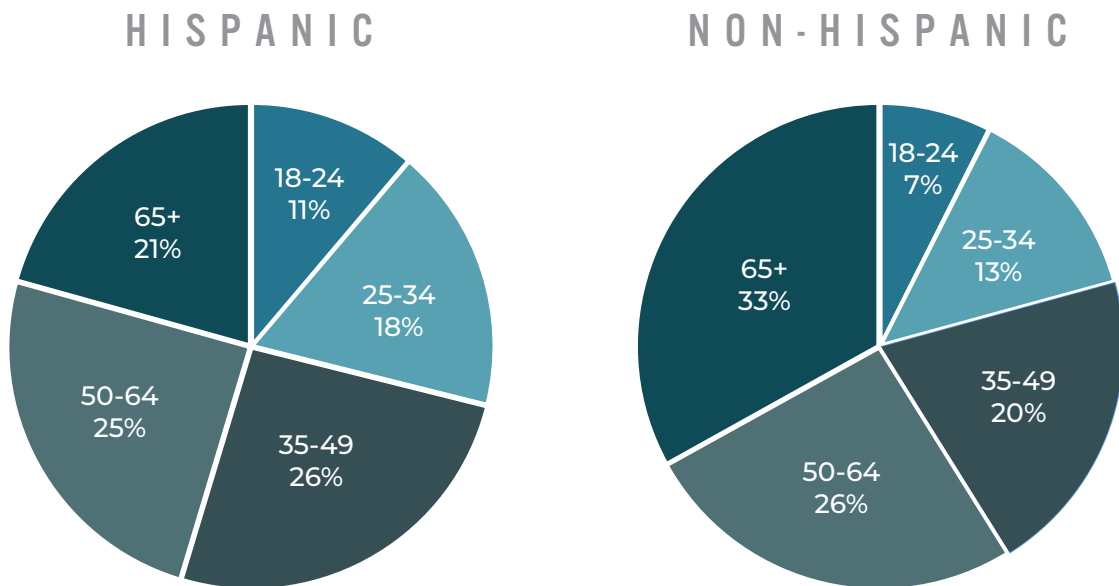
N O N - H I S P A N I C



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

AGE

Florida Hispanic registered voters tend to be somewhat younger than non-Hispanics, with 18–24-year-olds comprising 11 percent of registered Hispanics, compared to seven percent of non-Hispanics. Similarly, 18 percent of Hispanic registered voters are 25–34-year-olds, compared to 13 percent of non-Hispanics. In contrast, 59 percent of non-Hispanic registered voters are 50 and older, compared to 46 percent of Hispanics.

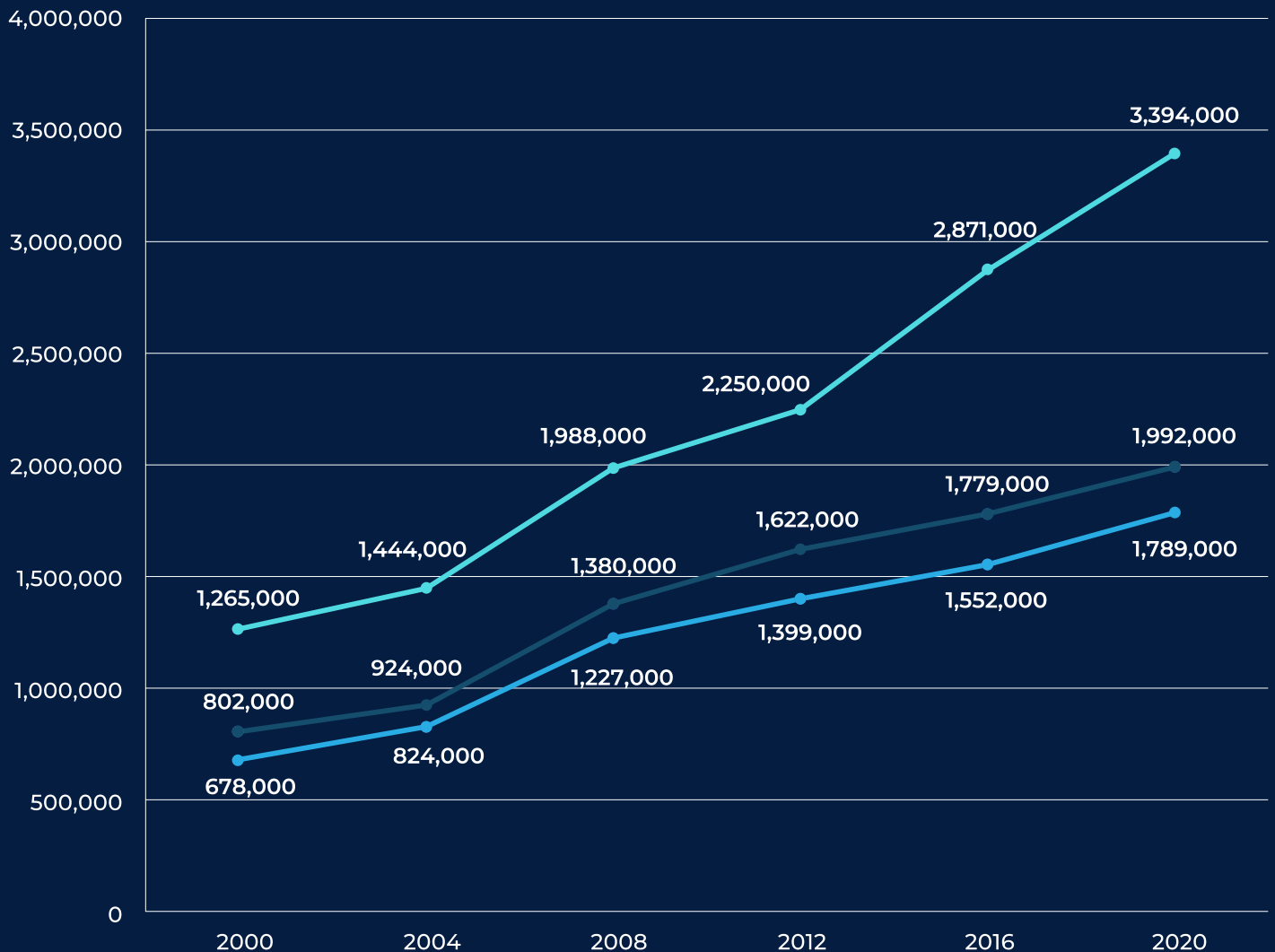


Totals may not add up to 100% because of rounding.

HISPANIC VOTER TURNOUT

Between 2000 and 2020, the Hispanic vote more than doubled, growing from 678,000 to 1.8 million, an increase of 164 percent. Hispanic registered voters also have consistently high turnout rates throughout these presidential elections. The Hispanic voting-age citizen population grew steadily during the same period, with particularly large increases in 2008 and 2016.

● VOTING AGE CITIZENS ● REGISTERED VOTERS ● ACTUAL VOTERS



HISPANICS IN FLORIDA ELECTED OFFICES 1996–2021

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

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
TOTAL	71	90	131	175	214

**As of this writing, there are six Hispanics serving in the U.S. House of Representatives and 20 serving in the Florida state legislature.*

SOURCES

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

This report uses data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2022 American Community Survey (ACS), 1-year estimates. The ACS is conducted every year and is an ongoing survey of a sample of the population, which produces estimates of various population characteristics.

Unless indicated otherwise, the source of the voting and registration data in the profile is from the Census Bureau’s Current Population Survey (CPS) and its *Voting and Registration in the Elections of November: 2000–2020* 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 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 subgroups is greater than the margin associated with the national population or larger population subgroups.

NGP Voter Activation Network (VAN) voter file data, August 2023: 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 Hispanic population or Election 2024, please contact Dorian Caal at dcaal@naleo.org or (213) 765-9450.