

CALIFORNIA'S 2024 GENERAL ELECTION: Who Voted and Which 2020 Voters Stayed Home?

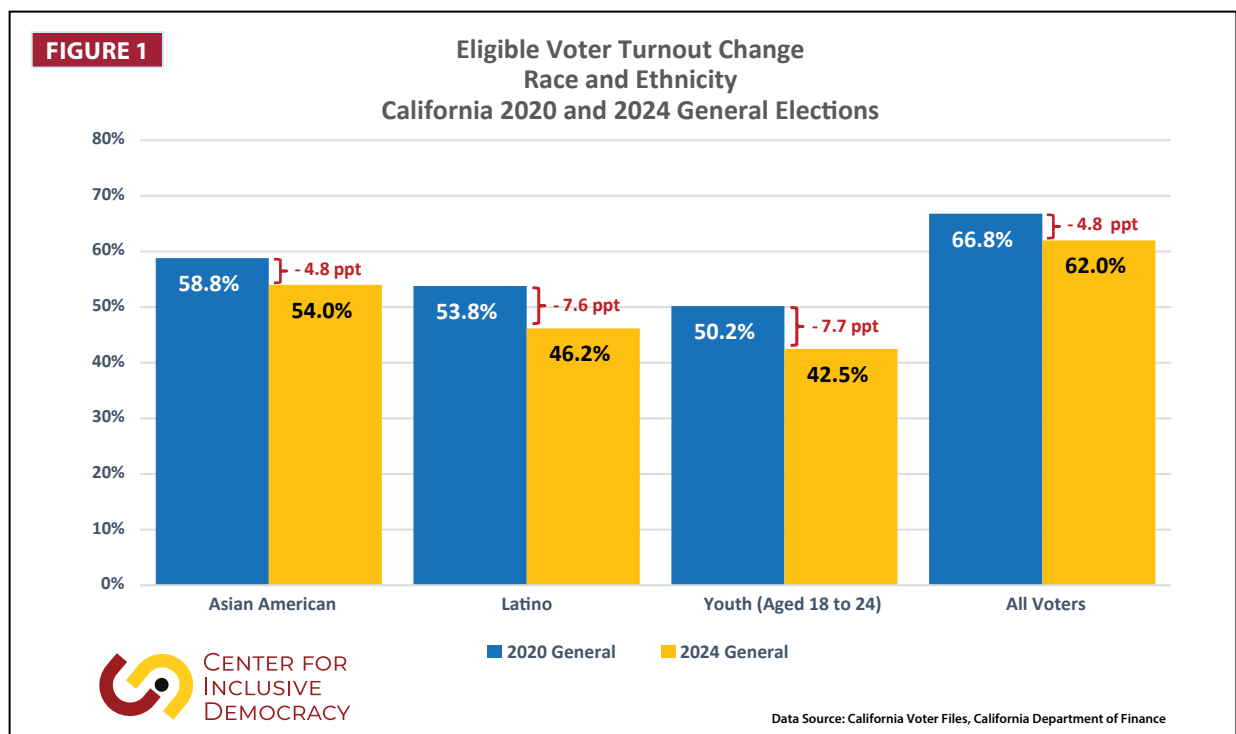
RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS • JULY 2025

This brief of selected findings is a companion to the full research report, [CALIFORNIA'S 2024 GENERAL ELECTION: Who Voted and Which 2020 Voters Stayed Home?](#) by the Center for Inclusive Democracy (CID), a statewide analysis of voter participation in the 2024 general election.

After a historically high turnout in the 2020 presidential election amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2024 presidential election saw a decline in turnout across California. Despite hopeful expectations of many that voter behavior seen in 2020 would become the new normal, a notable number Californians who participated four years earlier did not participate in November. To better understand who voted in the 2024 presidential election, and who didn't, USC's Center for Inclusive Democracy examined voter turnout in 2024. The following findings about participation in the state's elections can help policymakers, advocates and researchers better focus their efforts to broaden voter turnout and achieve more representative elections.

Eligible Voter Turnout Decline Between the 2020 and 2024 Presidential Elections

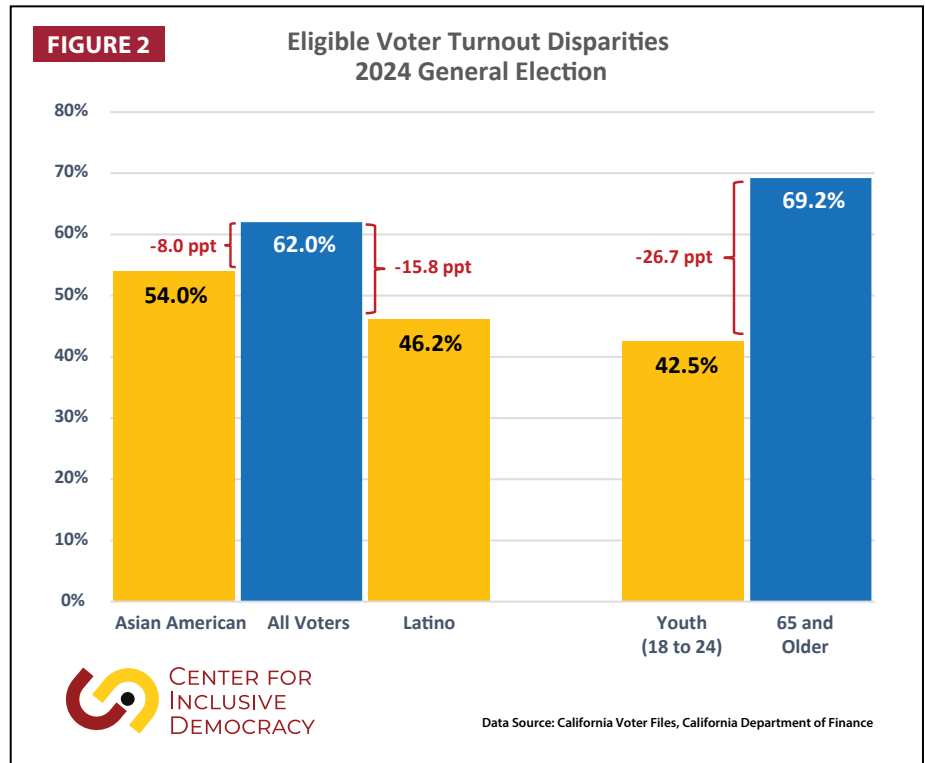
Voter turnout rates dropped among all eligible voters between the 2020 and 2024 presidential elections, especially among historically underrepresented Californians. After unprecedented turnout rates in 2020, eligible voter turnout rates (percentage of adult citizens who voted) dropped among all groups examined in the 2024 general election, particularly among Latinos, as well as youth aged 18 to 24 (Figure 1). While the total eligible voter turnout rate dropped 4.8 percentage points between presidential elections, the Latino eligible voter turnout rate declined 7.6 percentage points from 53.8% in 2020 to 46.2% in 2024. Similarly, the youth eligible voter turnout rate also dropped by 7.7 percentage points, falling from 50.2% in 2020 to 42.5% in 2024. Asian American eligible voter turnout dropped 4.8 percentage points, matching the overall total eligible voter turnout decline.



Eligible Voter Turnout Disparities in the 2024 General Election

Eligible voter turnout rates were lowest among those historically underrepresented, such as eligible voters of color and young Californians.

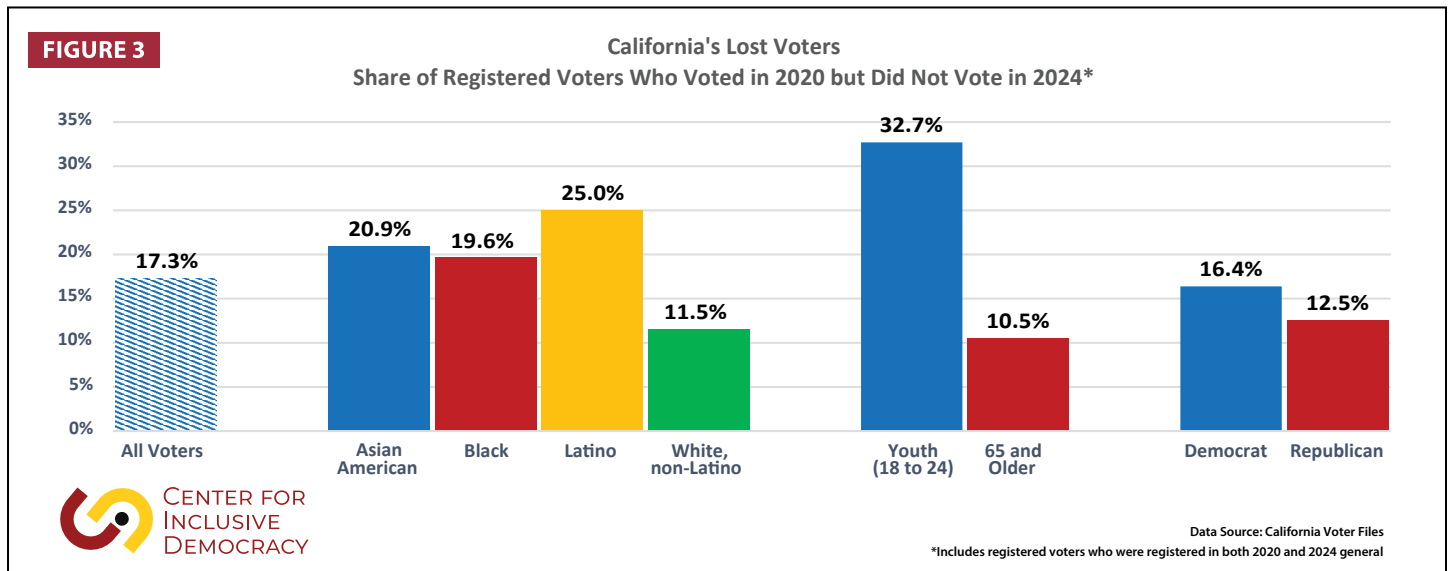
Approximately 62% of all eligible Californians voted in the 2024 general election, and just 46.2% of Latino eligible voters did the same (15.8 percentage points lower, Figure 2). Asian American eligible voter turnout (54%) was also notably lower than the general population, which was eight percentage points lower than all voters in the state. Less than 43% of young eligible voters aged 18 to 24 cast a ballot in 2024, nearly 27 percentage points lower than their counterparts aged 65 and older.



Lost 2020 General Election Voters

More than one-sixth of 2020 general election voters did not cast a ballot in 2024, with voter loss highest among registered voters of color and youth. Among Californians who were registered to vote in both 2020 and 2024, 17.3% of those who voted in the 2020 presidential election did not participate in 2024 (Figure 3). The share of voter loss was even higher among historically underrepresented Californians.

One-quarter of Latino 2020 voters did not vote in 2024, while 19.6% of Black 2020 voters and 20.9% of Asian American 2020 voters didn't cast a ballot in 2024. Nearly one-third of 2020 youth voters (aged 18 to 24) didn't vote in the 2024 general election, more than three times the rate of those aged 65 and older (10.5%). Lastly, registered Democrats had higher voter loss (16.4%) than their registered Republican counterparts (12.5%).



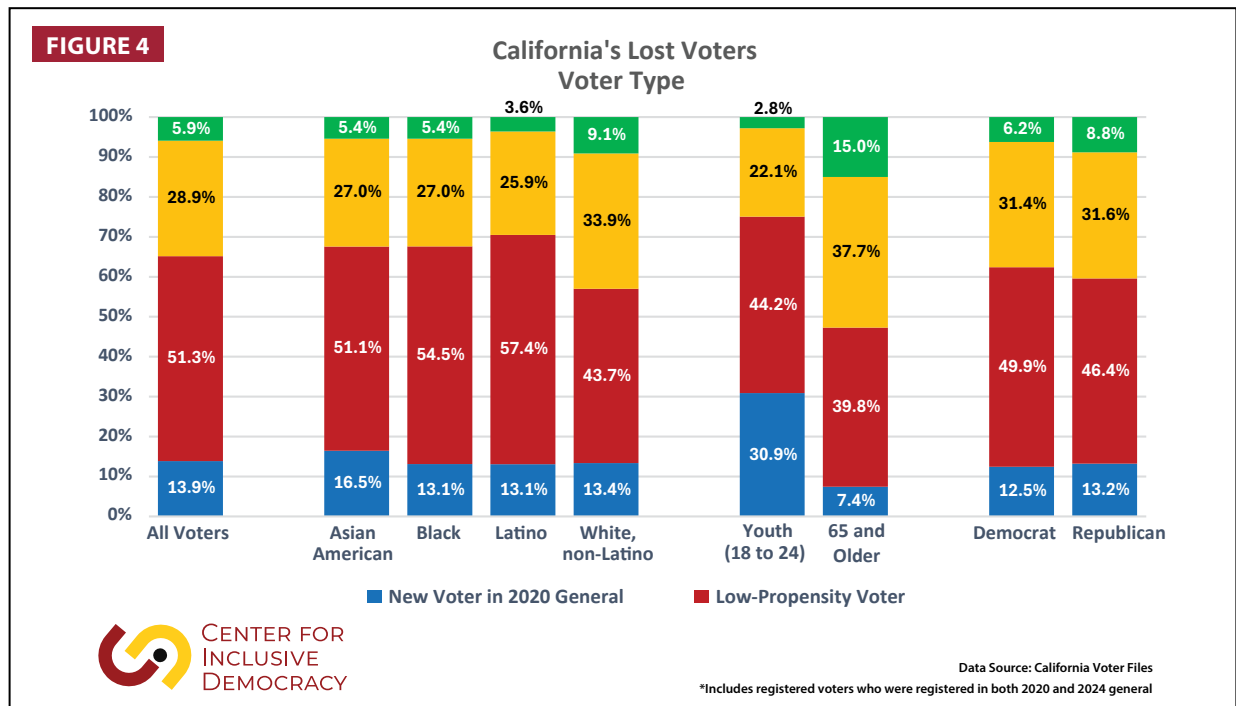
Lower Propensity Voters

Lost 2020 voters were largely low-propensity voters (those who voted just once or not at all in the past five major elections). Over half of lost 2020 voters were low-propensity voters, while another 28.9% were medium-propensity voters, meaning they voted in two or three of the last five major elections (Figure 4).

The rate of low-propensity voters was highest among voters of color, with approximately 55% of Black lost 2020 voters and 57.4% of Latino lost 2020 voters being low-propensity. Asian American lost 2020 voters (16.5%) included more high-propensity voters,

meaning they cast a ballot in at least four of the past five major elections, compared to their Black, Latino and white, non-Latino counterparts (all approximately 13%). Lost voters aged 18 to 24 had notably higher rates of being new voters (30.9%) in the 2020 general election, as many became eligible to vote for the first time.

For an examination of the barriers to voting that Black, Latino and Asian American voters experience in California, see CID's previous report: [Voter Messaging in California: Challenges and Opportunities in an Inequitable Election Landscape](#).



For more information about the findings presented in this brief, as well as the detailed methodology (including the limitations of identifying race and ethnicity of voters), see the full CID report [California's 2024 General Election: Who Voted and Which 2020 Voters Stayed Home?](#)

This brief presents data on eligible voter turnout. An analysis of registered voter turnout is available in the appendix of full report above.