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## Hispanic Citizenship, Registration, and Voting Patterns: A Comparative Analysis of the 2000 and 2004 Presidential Elections

Debora Upegui

*Center for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies*

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# *LATINO DATA PROJECT*

## **Hispanic Citizenship, Registration, and Voting Patterns: A Comparative Analysis of the 2000 and 2004 Presidential Elections**

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**Hispanic Citizenship, Registration, and Voting Patterns:  
A Comparative Analysis of the 2000 and 2004 Presidential Elections<sup>1</sup>**

There has been much speculation about the role that the Hispanic/Latino population may play in future elections since the 2000 census estimated that Hispanics were the fastest growing minority in the United States, and had surpassed African-Americans in both absolute numbers and as a percentage of the population. (Suro, Fry and Passel, 2005) What this may mean for the future voting presidential landscape of the United States provides grounds for debate. An earlier study (Bergad, 2004) outlined voting patterns among the Hispanic population in the 2000 presidential elections. According to that study, Hispanic voters were the group of voters with the lowest voting registration and voting rates of all ethnic/racial groups. Only 45% of Hispanics potentially eligible to vote did so in the 2000 elections, compared to 56.9% for Blacks and 61.8% for Whites. In other words, over half of Hispanic citizens over the age of 18 did not register to vote and did not vote in the presidential elections of 2000 (See Table 5). This fact could potentially give an enormous advantage to any presidential, congressional, state or local candidate able to secure higher registration and voting rates among Hispanics citizens. Even though the 2004 presidential elections yielded similar results pertaining to turnout of voters by ethnic group with whites (67.2%) on top, followed by Blacks (60%), and Hispanics (47.1%), there was a slight increase in political participation of Hispanic citizens in the electoral process (See Table 5).

The Current Population Survey (CPS) Voting and Registration Supplement for 2000 and 2004 served as the basis for the data analyzed and presented in this report. The CPS survey represents a survey of non-institutionalized population in the United States, which doesn't include military personnel, U.S. citizens living abroad, or people living in institutionalized housing like correctional institutions, prisons and nursing homes. This survey is done routinely on a monthly basis. During election years, the November issue is added, with information about voting registration and voting behavior. The CPS Supplement survey is done anywhere from a day to 2 weeks after Election Day, by asking participants whether they voted or not, among other socio-economic variables. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006; Suro, et.al., 2005). Additional data was retrieved from the American Community Survey and the Census 2000 Summary File 4. It

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<sup>1</sup> Data Sources – Data on the 2004 Presidential Elections was gathered from the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 2004 , available at

<http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/voting/cps2004.html>

Additional population data for 2004 was obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. Data on the 2000 Presidential Elections was gathered from a report by Laird W. Bergad (2004) Hispanic Citizenship, Registration, and Voting Patterns in Comparative Perspective during the 2000 Presidential Elections for the Center for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies at the Graduate Center, The City University of New York and the Census 2000 Summary File 4.

should be noted that the data presented in this report represents estimates that differed from the actual voting counts by a margin of about 3% for the year 2004. This difference corresponds to people who may erroneously report voting when they didn't, or because of ballots that were invalidated. Despite these disparities, the CPS still offers the best estimate to help understand voting participation and political behavior at the polls because it includes a number of socio-demographic variables.

The additional information available in the CPS facilitates the process of discerning who the most likely voters within each group are. Some of the additional variables included in the November Current Population Survey Supplement are: citizenship status, educational attainment, family income and employment status, among others. Most analyses of voting patterns among U.S. citizens in 2000 and 2004 presidential elections focused on demographic characteristics such as sex, age, ethnic group, Hispanic origin. A recent census report on voting and registration for the 2004 elections (Holder, 2006) presents data on all demographic and socio-economic variables for the entire citizen population without disaggregating by ethnic groups. Yet another report by the Pew Hispanic Center (Suro, et.al.,2005) disaggregates the 2004 voting and registration data by Hispanic national origin but does not compare Hispanics to other groups on the socio-demographic variables. It only makes a comparison between ethnic groups on voter turnout, registration, and religious affiliation without comparing them on other important socio-demographic variables such as educational attainment, employment status, and family income.

The objective of this report is to provide a broad perspective of where Hispanics stand in relation to other ethnic groups when it comes to participating at the voting booths. In order to do so, this report addresses different variables available through the CPS: sex, educational attainment, family income, employment status, type of worker, citizenship status. It also adds comparative information by ethnic group on method of registration, as well as reasons for not voting. This information should prove useful for a number of organizations and individuals, so they may target their outreach efforts towards increasing voter registration and turnout. Additionally it places Asians as an ethnic group on the map of political participation, which has been omitted in other studies and reports.

First, this report begins by presenting a comparison between 2000 and 2004 voting and registration behavior among Hispanics. In order to understand whether there have been any major differences between the voting patterns of Hispanics in 2000 and 2004, the 2004 data was juxtaposed to data presented by Bergad's (2004) report on Hispanics voting behavior for the 2000 elections. In a second section, Hispanic voting behavior in the 2004 elections is compared to other ethnic groups voting patterns for the same elections. In addition, this section introduces comparisons among ethnic groups' voting behavior as it relates to differences on a number of variables: Sex, Educational Attainment, Family Income, Employment Status, Type of Worker, and Citizenship Status. This paper ends by analyzing differences among ethnic groups that may provide insight as to how to maximize voter registration efforts and turn out at the polls, such as method of registration and reasons for not voting.

## **Hispanics at the Polls: Voting Patterns 2000 and 2004**

There is no doubt that the Hispanic population in the United States has consistently grown in the last two decades and continues to be the largest growing minority group within the United States. According to the 2004 census, Hispanics outnumbered Blacks by almost five million persons. This fact gave way to a lot of discussion and optimism about the new importance and possible role of the Latino vote for the coming elections. Yet the numbers presented by the Current Population Survey (comparing 2000 and 2004) show a different picture. Despite continued growth in the Hispanic population, this has not translated into major political power. Some trends affecting Hispanics participation in the electoral system are:

- Despite major growth in the population of Hispanics, this growth is not mirrored in the number of citizens eligible to vote. Many of the children that have contributed to the growth of the population will not be eligible to vote within the next 10 years.
- Rates of voter registration for Hispanics remains consistently lower than that of whites and black voters. Although Hispanics are according to the CPS registering to vote in larger numbers than Asians.
- Once Hispanic citizens are registered to vote, they are most likely to vote on Election Day with over an over 80% participation rate.
- Although Hispanic voting political power may not be able to visibly affect the 2008 presidential elections, it may affect local elections according to changes in the demographics of particular geographical regions.

According to the CPS 2004, the 10 states with the largest Hispanic population within the United States are California, Texas, Florida, New York, Arizona, Illinois, New Jersey, Colorado, New Mexico and Georgia (in order of largest to smallest Hispanic population, see Table 1). These 10 states alone account for 83.6% of the Hispanics living within the United States. The Hispanic population growth between 2000 and 2004, was relatively the same in most of the states with largest Hispanic populations over the age of 18 and over. California, Arizona, Illinois, Colorado, and New Mexico presented relatively small percentage growth rates among their Hispanic populations. However, New Jersey and Georgia presented higher rates of Hispanic percent growth within their populations with 0.6%.

**Table 1. States with the largest Latino/Hispanic Population 18+ Years of Age for 2000 and 2004 (in thousands)**

	2000		2004	
	18 and over (in thousands)	18 and over (percent)	18 and over (in thousands)	18 and over (percent)
<b>California</b>	<b>6,514</b>	<b>30.2%</b>	<b>8,127</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Texas</b>	<b>4,414</b>	<b>20.4%</b>	<b>5,232</b>	<b>19.3%</b>
<b>Florida</b>	<b>2,162</b>	<b>10.0%</b>	<b>2,422</b>	<b>8.9%</b>
<b>New York</b>	<b>1,706</b>	<b>7.9%</b>	<b>1,976</b>	<b>7.3%</b>
<b>Arizona</b>	<b>910</b>	<b>4.2%</b>	<b>1,160</b>	<b>4.3%</b>
<b>Illinois</b>	<b>771</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>1,031</b>	<b>3.8%</b>
<b>New Jersey</b>	<b>583</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>906</b>	<b>3.3%</b>
<b>Colorado</b>	<b>478</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>2.1%</b>
<b>New Mexico</b>	<b>484</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>2.0%</b>
<b>Georgia</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>1.4%</b>
Subtotal	18,191	84.2%	22675	83.6%
<b>United States</b>	<b>21,598</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>27,129</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Source:** 2000 Data from Bergad's (2004) report and the U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000- Summary File 4. 2004 Data from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2004 American Community Survey.

\*In this table, as well as in all other tables, States are presented in order from largest to smallest Hispanic population 18 and over as of 2004.

In some states, there are some interesting patterns in the change of Hispanic populations from 2000 to 2004 (See Table 2 and Figure 1). For the most part, the percentage of Cuban citizens remained fairly stable in most states, but presented a decline in the states where they have traditionally settled like Florida (a 1.3% decrease) and New Jersey (a 0.8% decline). It appears that there was a reorganization of the distribution of national groups within the Hispanic population in Florida and New Jersey, which at the same time demonstrated increases in their Puerto Rican and Mexican populations. This may suggest an imminent decline in the political power of regular Cuban citizens to shape the agendas within these states. Yet Cubans in New Jersey and Florida have accrued enormous economical power that ensures to some extent their political survival within those states.

In general, the Mexican population grew in most of the 10 states listed in this report, with the exception of New Jersey. The Mexican population growth was the highest in Colorado (12.2%), New Mexico (9.8%), Texas (7.8%) and Arizona (6.9%). In New York State, the Mexican population percent growth was more modest, but still worth noting, at 1.8%, especially in comparison with the Puerto Rican and Cuban populations of the state which remained the same. Mexicans continued to make up the largest proportion of Hispanic population in the

United States especially in states like Arizona (90.5%), Texas (85.5%), California (82.2%), Illinois (78.3%), Colorado (74.6%), Georgia (67.8%) and New Mexico (54.4%).

The Puerto Rican population presented a small increase in its percentage growth in Florida, New Jersey and Colorado, but declined slightly in Illinois which has usually been a city of settlement for Puerto Ricans, and presented virtually no change in New York. The Puerto Rican population is concentrated in a few states like New York (36.9% of the Hispanic population), New Jersey (34.6%), Florida (20.2%), Illinois (8.4%) and Colorado (2.5%). Other Hispanic national groups represented a very small percent of the Hispanic population and therefore are less likely have any major impact in political elections, especially at the national level.

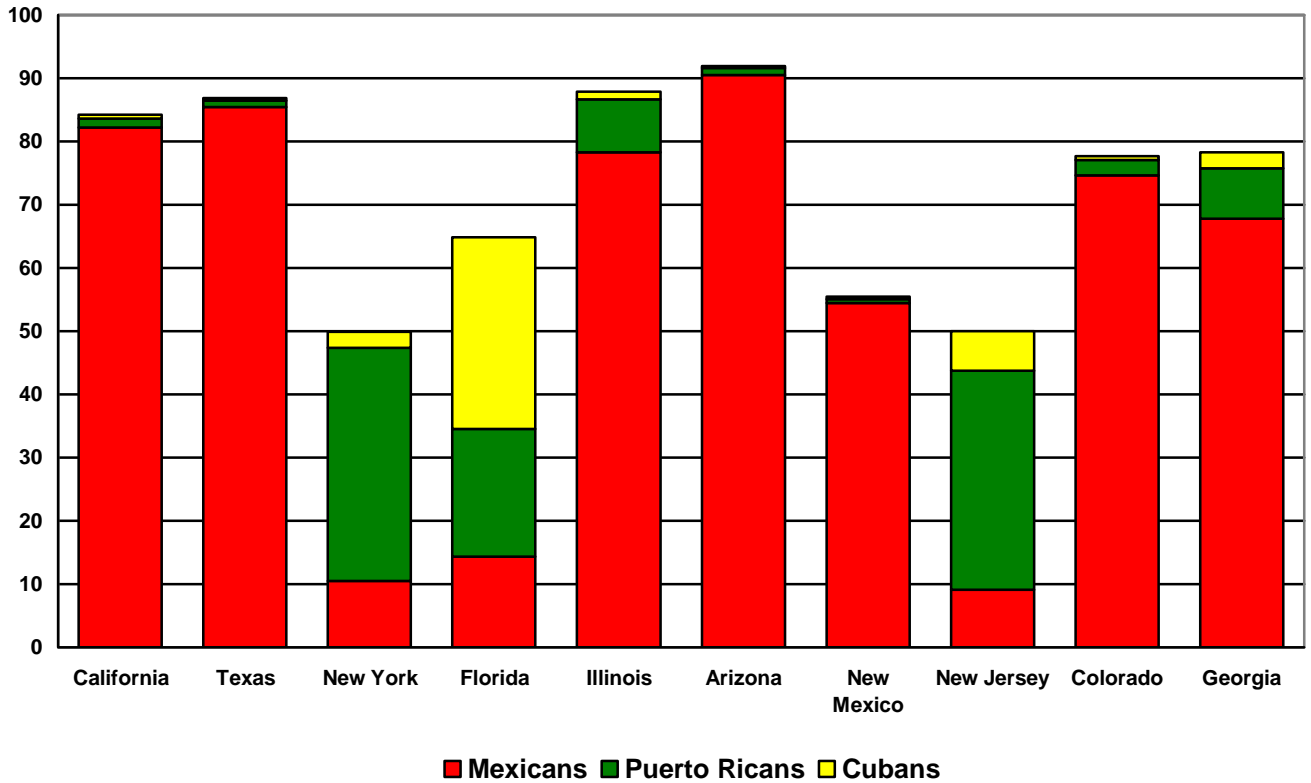
**Table 2. Latino/Hispanic Nationalities with the Largest Populations  
in the United States by State**

	Year	Hispanic	Mexican		Puerto Rican		Cuban	
		Population	Population	%	Population	%	Population	%
California	2000	10,969,132	8,600,581	<b>78.4</b>	137,111	<b>1.2</b>	70,623	<b>0.6</b>
	2004	12,246,122	10,069,145	<b>82.2</b>	165,661	<b>1.4</b>	72,696	<b>0.6</b>
Texas	2000	6,670,122	5,179,899	<b>77.7</b>	70,393	<b>1.1</b>	27,034	<b>0.4</b>
	2004	7,656,151	6,546,502	<b>85.5</b>	78,188	<b>1.0</b>	32,794	<b>0.4</b>
Florida	2000	2,680,314	358,123	<b>13.4</b>	481,337	<b>18.0</b>	846,080	<b>31.6</b>
	2004	3,250,768	465,706	<b>14.3</b>	656,299	<b>20.2</b>	985,334	<b>30.3</b>
New York	2000	2,865,016	250,217	<b>8.7</b>	1,047,866	<b>36.6</b>	62,756	<b>2.2</b>
	2004	3,003,572	315,265	<b>10.5</b>	1,109,645	<b>36.9</b>	74,457	<b>2.5</b>
Arizona	2000	1,295,317	1,083,524	<b>83.6</b>	18,364	<b>1.4</b>	5,100	<b>0.4</b>
	2004	1,584,217	1,433,823	<b>90.5</b>	17,945	<b>1.1</b>	5,259	<b>0.3</b>
Illinois	2000	1,529,141	1,154,552	<b>75.5</b>	155,328	<b>10.2</b>	18,742	<b>1.2</b>
	2004	1,739,870	1,361,997	<b>78.3</b>	145,452	<b>8.4</b>	20,720	<b>1.2</b>
New Jersey	2000	1,116,149	101,471	<b>9.1</b>	369,231	<b>33.1</b>	78,995	<b>7.1</b>
	2004	1,274,500	116,479	<b>9.1</b>	441,134	<b>34.6</b>	80,681	<b>6.3</b>
Colorado	2000	735,099	458,847	<b>62.4</b>	13,772	<b>1.9</b>	3,552	<b>0.5</b>
	2004	862,631	643,235	<b>74.6</b>	21,819	<b>2.5</b>	5,058	<b>0.6</b>
New Mexico	2000	765,610	341,313	<b>44.6</b>	4,150	<b>0.5</b>	2,759	<b>0.4</b>
	2004	808,693	439,746	<b>54.4</b>	5,868	<b>0.7</b>	2,998	<b>0.4</b>
Georgia	2000	429,976	270,688	<b>63.0</b>	34,989	<b>8.0</b>	12,439	<b>2.9</b>
	2004	576,113	390,672	<b>67.8</b>	46,017	<b>8.0</b>	14,622	<b>2.5</b>

Source: 2000 Data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000- Summary File 4. 2004 Data from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2004 American Community Survey.



**Figure 1. Percentage Distribution of Latino/Hispanic Nationalities with the Largest Population in the United States by State in 2004**



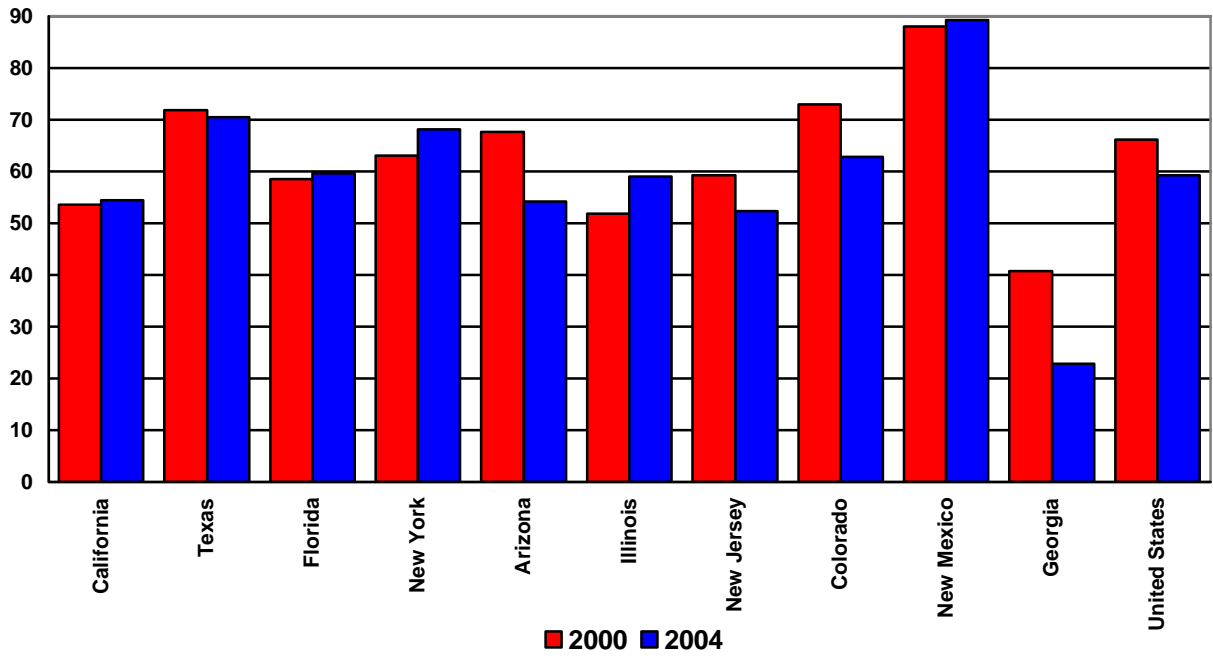
If we compare the percentage of Hispanics over 18 years who were citizens in 2000 and 2004, an interesting pattern is observed. It is not surprising the states that underwent the greatest redistribution or growth in their Hispanic population are the ones that present greater changes in their numbers of Hispanic citizens eligible to vote. In Arizona, the percentage of Hispanics eligible to vote decline from 67.7% to 54.2% (see Table 3), while at the same time the Mexican population within the state increase from 83.6% to 90.5% in the same years. The percentage of voting age Hispanic citizens in Colorado went from 73.0% in 2000 to 62.9% in 2004. At the same time, Colorado witnessed a growth of Mexican population from 62.4% to 74.6% and an increase in the Puerto Rican population from 1.9% to 2.5%. Georgia is perhaps the state that had the biggest decrease in the percentage of Hispanic voting population from 40.8% in 2000 to 22.8%, while the Mexican voting population grew from 63.0% to 67.8%. However New York and Florida, which are usually immigrant-receiving cities, experienced an increase in their Hispanic population eligible to vote from 63.1% to 68.1%, and from 58.5% to 59.6% respectively.

**Table 3. Citizenship Rates Among Hispanic Population 18+ Years of Age in the 10 States with the Largest Hispanic Population, 2000 and 2004 (in thousands)**

	2000			2004		
	Hispanic Population 18 + Years of Age (thousands)	Total Hispanic Citizens18+ (thousands)	Percent of 18 + Hispanics who are Citizens	Hispanic Population 18 + Years of Age (thousands)	Total Hispanic Citizens18+ (thousands)	Percent of 18 + Hispanics Who are Citizens
<b>California</b>	6,514	3,489	<b>53.6 %</b>	8,127	4,433	<b>54.5 %</b>
<b>Texas</b>	4,414	3,173	<b>71.9 %</b>	5,232	3,688	<b>70.5 %</b>
<b>Florida</b>	2,162	1,265	<b>58.5 %</b>	2,422	1,444	<b>59.6 %</b>
<b>New York</b>	1,706	1,077	<b>63.1 %</b>	1,976	1,346	<b>68.1 %</b>
<b>Arizona</b>	910	616	<b>67.7 %</b>	1,160	629	<b>54.2 %</b>
<b>Illinois</b>	771	400	<b>51.9 %</b>	1,031	608	<b>59.0 %</b>
<b>New Jersey</b>	583	346	<b>59.3 %</b>	906	475	<b>52.4 %</b>
<b>Colorado</b>	478	349	<b>73.0 %</b>	574	361	<b>62.9 %</b>
<b>New Mexico</b>	484	426	<b>88.0 %</b>	544	486	<b>89.2 %</b>
<b>Georgia</b>	169	69	<b>40.8%</b>	376	86	<b>22.8 %</b>
<b>All Hispanics in the United States</b>	21,598	14,301	<b>66.2%</b>	27,129	16,088	<b>59.3 %</b>

**Source:** 2000 Data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 2002 (Table 4a) and 2004 Data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 2004 (Table 4a).

**Figure 2. Percentage Change of Hispanic Citizens 18 + Years in the 10 States with the Largest Hispanic Population in the United States between 2000 and 2004**



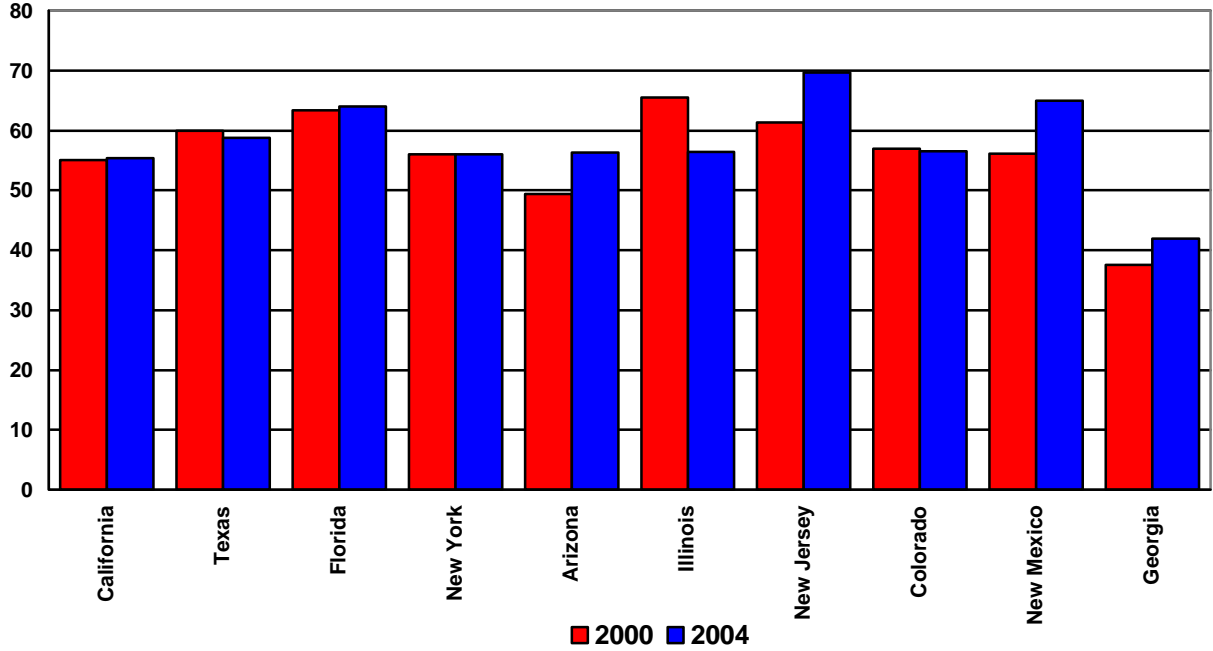
According to CPS, Hispanic citizens eligible to vote have about a 50% probability that they will register to vote. This means that 1 out of every 2 Hispanic citizens over the age of 18 are likely to be register to vote. This figure may not be very optimistic, yet once they are registered they are most likely to vote on Election Day. About 80% of registered Hispanic citizens will go out and vote once they are registered. In general, most of the states with the largest Hispanic populations experienced a slight increase in the number of registered Hispanic voters as well as in the number of Hispanics who actually voted. The states that experienced the largest increase in voter registration from 2000 to 2004 were: Georgia with 4.3%, Arizona with 6.9%, New Jersey with 8.4% and New Mexico with 8.9% (see Table 4). In 2004, Texas and Georgia were the two states with the lowest percent of registered Hispanics who actually voted, 70.6% and 72.2% respectively. Surprisingly, in Colorado, the percent of Hispanic population eligible to vote who actually voted in 2004 was much higher than that of 2000 (54.7% in 2000 to 76.5% in 2004, see Table 4). This represents an increase of over 20% while most other states experienced increases between 1% and 8%. The percentage of Hispanic citizens eligible to vote increased in 6 out the 10 states listed in this report (California, Texas, Florida, Arizona, New Jersey, Colorado, and New Mexico). However, New York, Illinois and Georgia experienced decreases of 1.1%, 6.1% and 7.4%,in the percentage of eligible citizens who voted.

**Table 4. Voting and Registration Rates among Hispanic Citizens 18+ Years for the 2000 and 2004 Presidential Elections (in thousands)**

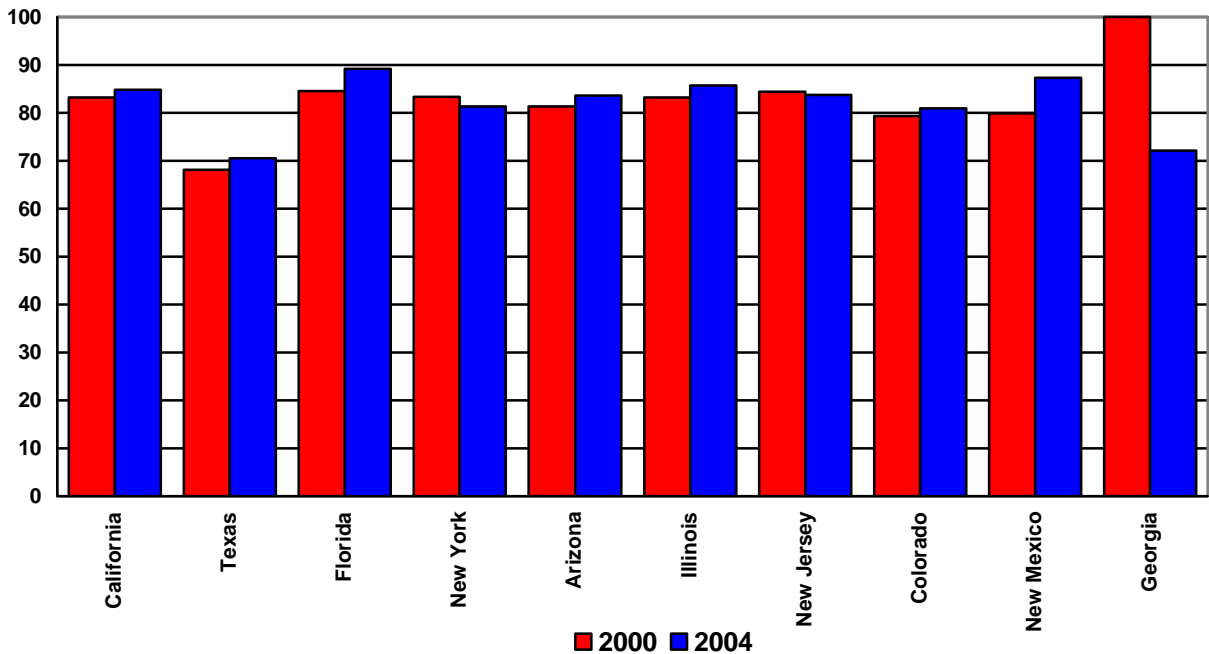
State	Election Year	Total Hispanic Citizens 18+	Total Hispanic Citizens 18+ Registered to Vote	Percent Hispanic Citizens 18+ Registered to Vote	Total Hispanic Citizens 18+ Who Voted	Percent Hispanic Registered Citizens 18+ who Voted	Percent Hispanic Citizens +18 who Voted
		(thousands)	(thousands)	( percent)	(thousands)	(percent)	(thousands)
<b>California</b>	<b>2000</b>	3,489	1,919	<b>55.0 %</b>	1,597	<b>83.2 %</b>	<b>45.8 %</b>
	<b>2004</b>	4,433	2,455	<b>55.4 %</b>	2,081	<b>84.8 %</b>	<b>46.9 %</b>
<b>Texas</b>	<b>2000</b>	3,173	1,905	<b>60.0 %</b>	1,300	<b>68.2 %</b>	<b>41.0 %</b>
	<b>2004</b>	3,688	2,170	<b>58.8 %</b>	1,533	<b>70.6 %</b>	<b>41.6 %</b>
<b>Florida</b>	<b>2000</b>	1,265	802	<b>63.4 %</b>	678	<b>84.5 %</b>	<b>53.6 %</b>
	<b>2004</b>	1,444	924	<b>64.0 %</b>	824	<b>89.2 %</b>	<b>57.1 %</b>
<b>New York</b>	<b>2000</b>	1,077	603	<b>56.0 %</b>	502	<b>83.3 %</b>	<b>46.6 %</b>
	<b>2004</b>	1,346	754	<b>56.0 %</b>	613	<b>81.3 %</b>	<b>45.5 %</b>
<b>Arizona</b>	<b>2000</b>	616	304	<b>49.4 %</b>	247	<b>81.3 %</b>	<b>40.1 %</b>
	<b>2004</b>	629	354	<b>56.3 %</b>	296	<b>83.6 %</b>	<b>47.1 %</b>
<b>Illinois</b>	<b>2000</b>	400	262	<b>65.5 %</b>	218	<b>83.2 %</b>	<b>54.5 %</b>
	<b>2004</b>	608	343	<b>56.4 %</b>	294	<b>85.7 %</b>	<b>48.4 %</b>
<b>New Jersey</b>	<b>2000</b>	346	212	<b>61.3 %</b>	179	<b>84.4 %</b>	<b>51.7 %</b>
	<b>2004</b>	475	331	<b>69.7 %</b>	277	<b>83.7 %</b>	<b>58.3 %</b>
<b>Colorado</b>	<b>2000</b>	349	199	<b>57.0 %</b>	158	<b>79.4 %</b>	<b>54.7 %</b>
	<b>2004</b>	361	204	<b>56.5 %</b>	165	<b>80.9 %</b>	<b>76.5 %</b>
<b>New Mexico</b>	<b>2000</b>	426	239	<b>56.1 %</b>	191	<b>79.9 %</b>	<b>37.1 %</b>
	<b>2004</b>	486	316	<b>65.0 %</b>	276	<b>87.3 %</b>	<b>34.0 %</b>
<b>Georgia</b>	<b>2000</b>	69	26	<b>37.6%</b>	26	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>37.6%</b>
	<b>2004</b>	86	36	<b>41.9 %</b>	26	<b>72.2 %</b>	<b>30.2 %</b>

**Source:** 2000 Data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 2002 (Table 4a) and 2004 Data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 2004 (Table 4a).

**Figure 3. Percentage Change of Hispanic Citizens 18 + Years who Register to Vote in the 2000 and 2004 Elections in the 10 States with the Largest Hispanic Population in the United States**



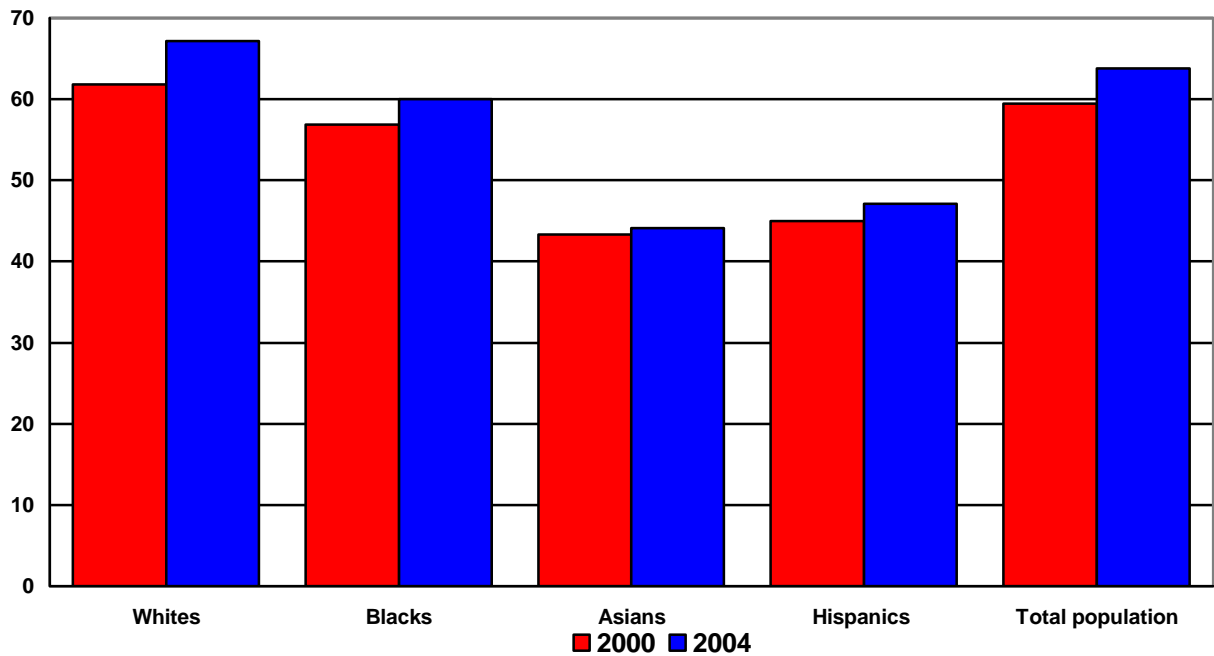
**Figure 4. Percentage Change of Hispanic Registered Citizens 18 + Years who Voted in the 2000 and 2004 Elections**



## Who is likely to be a voter? Demographic characteristics of 2004 voters

**Not surprisingly, voters are more likely to be white than from any other minority group.** As may be observed in Table 5, although all minority ethnic groups experienced increases in voter registration, Whites presented the greatest increase from 2000 to 2004. All ethnic groups presented a fairly high percentage of voter turnout at the polls once registered. That is more than 80% of those who registered to vote actually turnout at the polls. Yet, according to the data, Whites reached an almost 90% turnout rate compared to 81.5% of Hispanics in 2004. When compared to other groups, Hispanics ranked in third place behind Blacks and Whites in percent of citizens who actually voted. Yet Hispanics remained behind Blacks by almost 12.9% and behind Whites by 20.1%. Hispanics voting ratio (47.1%) remained far behind the national average of 63.8%. The same was the case for Hispanic citizens register to vote. While an average of 72.1% percent of the eligible population register to vote at the national level, among Hispanics only 57.9% of eligible citizens registered to vote.

**Figure 5. Percentage of Citizens +18 who voted in the 2000 and 2004 Elections by Ethnic Group**



**Table 5. Rates of Voting and Registration among Citizens 18+ Years for the 2000 and 2004 Presidential Elections (in thousands) by Race/Ethnic Group**

Ethnic Group	Election Year	Total Citizens 18+	Total Citizens 18+ Registered to Vote	Percent Citizens 18+ Registered to Vote	Total Registered Citizens 18+ Who Voted	Percent Registered Citizens 18+ who Voted	Percent Citizens +18 who Voted
		(thousands)	(thousands)	( percent)	(thousands)	(percent)	(percent)
Whites	2000	144,731	103,588	71.6%	89,469	86.4%	61.8%
	2004	148,158	111,318	75.1%	99,567	89.4%	67.2%
Blacks	2000	22,409	15,156	67.6%	12,749	84.1%	56.9%
	2004	23,346	16,035	68.7%	14,016	87.4 %	60.0 %
Asians	2000	4,718	2,470	53.5%	2,045	82.8%	43.3%
	2004	6,270	3,247	51.8 %	2,768	85.2 %	44.1 %
Hispanics	2000	13,159	7,546	57.3 %	5,934	78.6 %	45.0 %
	2004	16,088	9,308	57.9 %	7,587	81.5 %	47.1 %
Total	2000	186,366	129,549	69.5%	110,826	85.5%	59.5%
	2004	197,005	142,070	72.1 %	125,736	88.5 %	63.8 %

**Source:** 2000 Data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 2002 (Table 4a) and 2004 Data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 2004 (Table 4a).

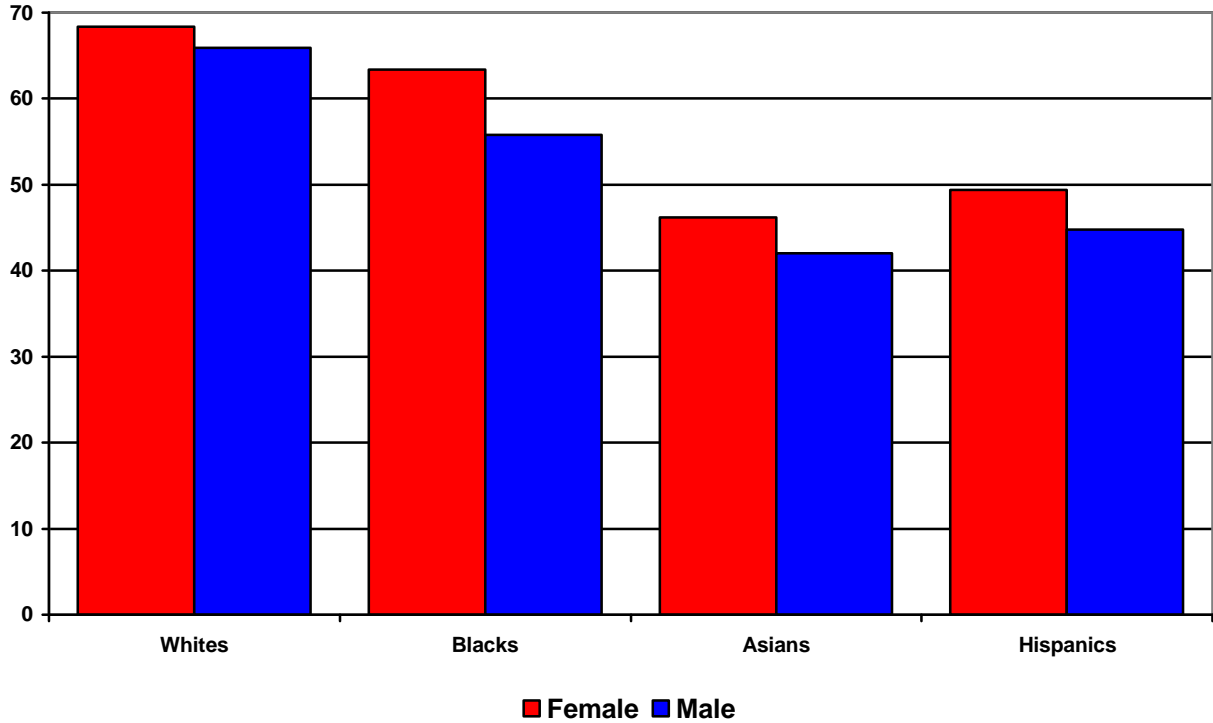
**Voters are more likely to be women regardless of their ethnicity.** An interesting finding is that women, regardless of their ethnic group are more likely to register to vote and actually vote than men. Across the board, women surpassed men in terms of percentages of citizens registered to vote and citizens who voted. At a first glance, this might be attributed to the fact that there were actually more women than men to begin with. However, the numbers used in the charts are percentages of population groups. This means that the reference group was women for women and men for men. By using the percentages, we expect to eliminate the differences that would be attributed to the difference in sample sizes.

Among Blacks, women surpassed men when it comes to registering to vote by the largest amount (7.3%) compare to Whites (2.2%), Asians (2.3%) and Hispanics (4.4%; see Table 6). This pattern was mirrored by the percentage of citizens who voted. Black women surpassed Black men by 7.6%, compared to White women (2.5%), Asian women (4.2%) and Hispanic women (4.6%). It should be noted that Hispanics, women as well as men, still remained far behind the average ratios of voting for the nation. In general, 63% of men and 66.4% of women



voted in 2004 compared to 44.8% of men and 49.4% of women. Further research should address the question of why men are not voting as much as women.

**Figure 6. Percentages of Citizens +18 who voted in the 2004 Elections by Sex and Ethnic Group**



**Table 6. Voting and Registration among Citizens 18+ Years for the 2004 Presidential Elections (in thousands) by Sex and Ethnic Group**

<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Total Citizens 18+ (thousands)</b>	<b>Total Citizens 18+ Registered to Vote (thousands)</b>	<b>Percent Citizens 18+ Registered to Vote (percent)</b>	<b>Total Registered Citizens 18+ Who Voted (thousands)</b>	<b>Percent Registered Citizens 18+ who Voted (percent)</b>	<b>Percent Citizens +18 who Voted (percent)</b>
Whites	<b>Male</b>	71,448	52,870	<b>74.0%</b>	47,101	<b>89.1%</b>	<b>65.9%</b>
	<b>Female</b>	76,710	58,448	<b>76.2%</b>	52,466	<b>89.8%</b>	<b>68.4%</b>
Blacks	<b>Male</b>	10,277	6,644	<b>64.6%</b>	5,736	<b>86.3%</b>	<b>55.8%</b>
	<b>Female</b>	13,069	9,391	<b>71.9%</b>	8,280	<b>88.2%</b>	<b>63.4%</b>
Asians	<b>Male</b>	3,045	1,542	<b>50.6%</b>	1,278	<b>82.9%</b>	<b>42.0%</b>
	<b>Female</b>	3,224	1,705	<b>52.9%</b>	1,491	<b>87.4%</b>	<b>46.2%</b>
Hispanic	<b>Male</b>	7,839	4,359	<b>55.6%</b>	3,510	<b>80.5%</b>	<b>44.8%</b>
	<b>Female</b>	8,249	4,949	<b>60.0%</b>	4,077	<b>82.4%</b>	<b>49.4%</b>
Total	<b>Male</b>	92,406	66,406	<b>71.9%</b>	58,455	<b>88.0%</b>	<b>63.3%</b>
	<b>Female</b>	101,252	75,663	<b>74.7%</b>	67,281	<b>88.9%</b>	<b>66.4%</b>

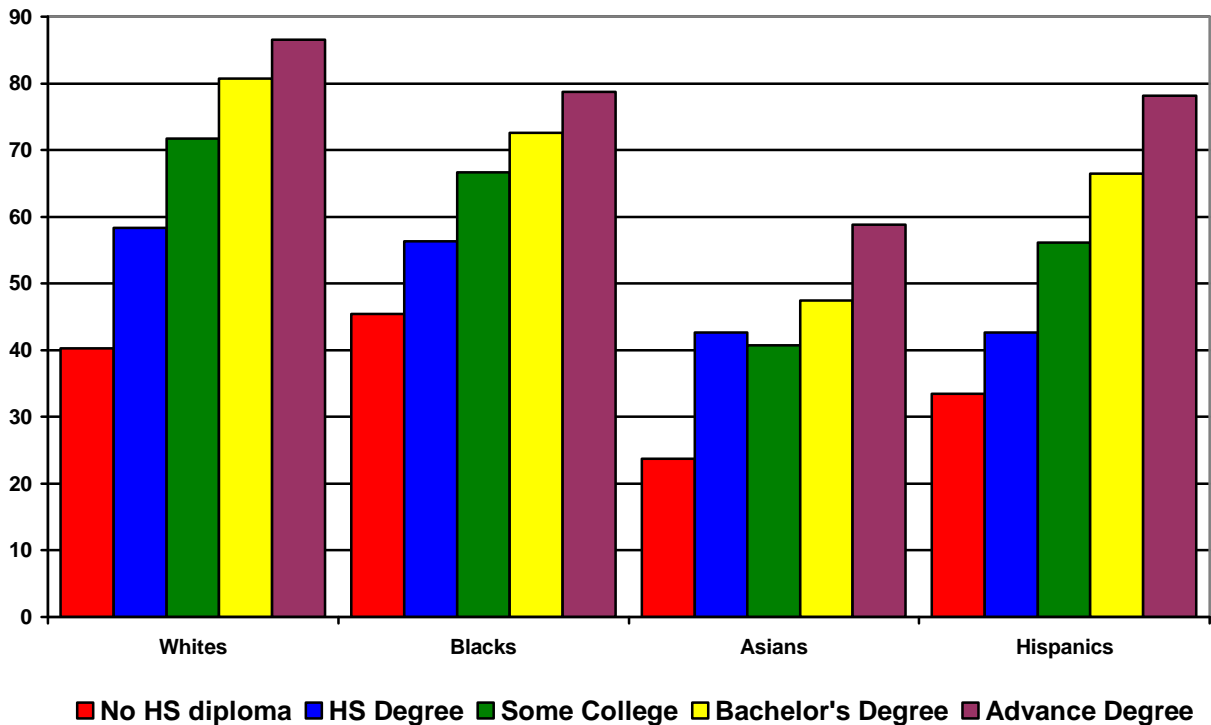
Source: the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 2004 (Table 2).

**Voters are more likely to have higher levels of educational attainment than not.**

When the level of education of voters is examined, it is evident that as people move up the educational attainment ladder they are more likely to register to vote and to vote. This trend holds across different ethnic groups. It is worth noting and perhaps troublesome, the wide gap between those who don't have a high school diploma and those who hold an advance degree. What this means is that people who have lower levels of education and are most affected by public policies changes, have the lowest participation levels in the electoral system and therefore little chance to have their needs addressed by the agenda of politicians. It also means that the highly educated portion of society has greater representation at the voting booth.

This pattern appears among all ethnic groups, but it has its worst effect among Asians and Hispanics who have the lowest voting turnout. For example, among Whites, 40.3% individuals without a high school diploma voted while 86.6% of individuals that held an advance degree went to the polls. Thus, those with advance education are almost twice as likely to vote, than those without a high school diploma. Educational level also had an effect on the percentage of registered citizens who actually voted. The higher the educational level, the more likely a person was to vote if already registered. For example, among Whites without a high school degree 74.1% of those who are registered actually turn out at the voting booth compared to 96.8% of those with advanced degrees. Among Hispanics and Blacks without a high school diploma, only 33.5% and 45.4% while 78.1% of Hispanics and 78.7% of Blacks who hold an advanced degree actually voted.

**Figure 6. Percentages of Citizens +18 who voted in the 2004 Elections by Education Level and Ethnic Group**



**Table 7. Voting and Registration among Citizens 18+ Years for the 2004 Presidential Elections (in thousands) by Education Attainment and Ethnic Group**

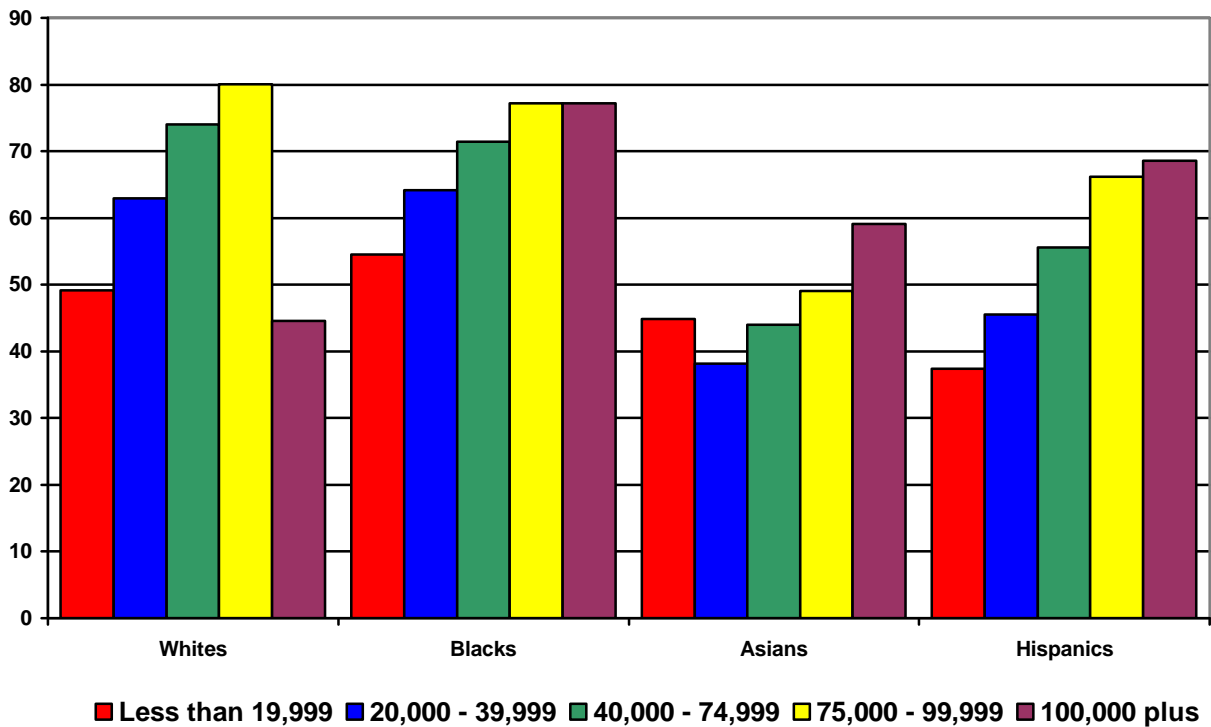
<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>Level of Attainment</b>	<b>Total Citizens 18+ (Thousands)</b>	<b>Total Citizens 18+ Registered to Vote (Thousands)</b>	<b>Percent Citizens 18+ Registered to Vote (Percent)</b>	<b>Total Registered Citizens 18+ Who Voted (Thousands)</b>	<b>Percent Registered Citizens 18+ who Voted (Percent)</b>	<b>Percent Citizens +18 who Voted (Percent)</b>
<b>Whites</b>	<b>No HS Diploma</b>	15,358	8,351	<b>54.4%</b>	6,192	<b>74.1%</b>	<b>40.3%</b>
	<b>High School Degree</b>	48,058	32,747	<b>68.1%</b>	28,014	<b>85.5%</b>	<b>58.3%</b>
	<b>Some College</b>	42,620	33,790	<b>79.3%</b>	30,541	<b>90.4%</b>	<b>71.7%</b>
	<b>Bachelor's</b>	27,998	23,795	<b>85.0%</b>	22,591	<b>94.9%</b>	<b>80.7%</b>
	<b>Advance Degree</b>	14,124	12,635	<b>89.5%</b>	12,229	<b>96.8%</b>	<b>86.6%</b>
<b>Blacks</b>	<b>No HS Diploma</b>	4,587	2,692	<b>58.7%</b>	2,083	<b>77.4%</b>	<b>45.4%</b>
	<b>High School Degree</b>	8,235	5,406	<b>65.6%</b>	4,635	<b>85.7%</b>	<b>56.3%</b>
	<b>Some College</b>	6,941	5,161	<b>74.4%</b>	4,631	<b>89.7%</b>	<b>66.7%</b>
	<b>Bachelor's</b>	2,526	1,929	<b>76.4%</b>	1,834	<b>95.1%</b>	<b>72.6%</b>
	<b>Advance Degree</b>	1,058	848	<b>80.2%</b>	833	<b>98.2%</b>	<b>78.7%</b>
<b>Asians</b>	<b>No HS Diploma</b>	675	220	<b>32.6%</b>	160	<b>72.7%</b>	<b>23.7%</b>
	<b>High School Degree</b>	1,275	599	<b>47.0%</b>	545	<b>91.0%</b>	<b>42.7%</b>
	<b>Some College</b>	1,468	738	<b>50.3%</b>	598	<b>81.0%</b>	<b>40.7%</b>
	<b>bachelor's</b>	1,867	1,042	<b>55.8%</b>	885	<b>84.9%</b>	<b>47.4%</b>
	<b>advance degree</b>	985	649	<b>65.9%</b>	579	<b>89.2%</b>	<b>58.8%</b>
<b>Hispanics</b>	<b>No HS Diploma</b>	4,533	2,074	<b>45.8%</b>	1,517	<b>73.1%</b>	<b>33.5%</b>
	<b>High School Degree</b>	5,143	2,767	<b>53.8%</b>	2,196	<b>79.4%</b>	<b>42.7%</b>
	<b>Some College</b>	4,354	2,906	<b>66.7%</b>	2,441	<b>84.0%</b>	<b>56.1%</b>
	<b>Bachelor's</b>	1,482	1,081	<b>72.9%</b>	985	<b>91.1%</b>	<b>66.5%</b>
	<b>Advance Degree</b>	575	479	<b>83.3%</b>	449	<b>93.7%</b>	<b>78.1%</b>

**Source:** the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 2004 (Table 6).

\*Educational level was divided in 6 levels originally: “Less than 9<sup>th</sup> grade”, “9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade, no diploma”, “Some college or associate degree”, “Bachelor’s degree” and “advanced degree”. “9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade, no diploma” and “High School graduate” were collapse into the category “No High School diploma” for the purpose of analysis.

**Those who earn above \$100,000 are more likely to actually vote than those who make less than \$19,000.** This is true for Blacks, Hispanics and Asians, but slightly different for White voters. While for Blacks, Hispanics and Asians, high earnings accompanied voting, for Whites who made more than \$100,000 seemed to be the least likely to go out and vote. This is problematic considering that the majority of the population falls below the earning bracket of \$74,999. Among individuals who make less than \$19,999, only 61.3% of Whites, 67.7% of Blacks, 53.1% of Asians, and 50.7% of Hispanics were registered to vote. According to the CPS 2004, the majority of the total population in the United States has a family income within the \$40,000-74,999 bracket. Within that income bracket, 81.6% of Whites were registered, 78.4% of Blacks, 53.7% of Asians and 66.8% of Hispanics.

**Figure 7. Percentages of Citizens +18 who voted in the 2004 Elections by Family Income and Ethnic Group**



**Table 8. Voting and Registration among Citizens 18+ Years for the 2004 Presidential Elections (in thousands) by Family Income and Ethnic Group**

<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>Family Income</b>	<b>Total Citizens 18+ (Thousands)</b>	<b>Total Citizens 18+ Registered to Vote (Thousands)</b>	<b>Percent Citizens 18+ Registered to Vote (Percent)</b>	<b>Total Registered Citizens 18+ Who Voted (Thousands)</b>	<b>Percent Registered Citizens 18+ who Voted (Percent)</b>	<b>Percent Citizens +18 who Voted (Percent)</b>
<b>Whites</b>	<b>less than 20,000</b>	8,625	5,289	<b>61.3%</b>	4,242	<b>80.2%</b>	<b>49.2%</b>
	<b>20,000 - 39,999</b>	19,765	14,365	<b>72.7%</b>	12,432	<b>86.5%</b>	<b>62.9%</b>
	<b>40,000 - 74,999</b>	31,602	25,789	<b>81.6%</b>	23,379	<b>90.7%</b>	<b>74.0%</b>
	<b>75,000 - 99,999</b>	14,298	12,254	<b>85.7%</b>	11,455	<b>93.5%</b>	<b>80.1%</b>
	<b>100,000 plus</b>	36,545	17,182	<b>47.0%</b>	16,313	<b>94.9%</b>	<b>44.6%</b>
<b>Blacks</b>	<b>less than 20,000</b>	3,847	2,605	<b>67.7%</b>	2,098	<b>80.5%</b>	<b>54.5%</b>
	<b>20,000 - 39,999</b>	3,911	2,912	<b>74.5%</b>	2,510	<b>86.2%</b>	<b>64.2%</b>
	<b>40,000 - 74,999</b>	3,754	2,943	<b>78.4%</b>	2,680	<b>91.1%</b>	<b>71.4%</b>
	<b>75,000 - 99,999</b>	1,153	922	<b>80.0%</b>	890	<b>96.5%</b>	<b>77.2%</b>
	<b>100,000 plus</b>	1,134	905	<b>79.8%</b>	875	<b>96.7%</b>	<b>77.2%</b>
<b>Asians</b>	<b>less than 20,000</b>	354	188	<b>53.1%</b>	159	<b>84.6%</b>	<b>44.9%</b>
	<b>20,000 - 39,999</b>	684	335	<b>49.0%</b>	261	<b>77.9%</b>	<b>38.2%</b>
	<b>40,000 - 74,999</b>	1,155	620	<b>53.7%</b>	508	<b>81.9%</b>	<b>44.0%</b>
	<b>75,000 - 99,999</b>	574	316	<b>55.1%</b>	282	<b>89.2%</b>	<b>49.1%</b>
	<b>100,000 plus</b>	1,226	802	<b>65.4%</b>	725	<b>90.4%</b>	<b>59.1%</b>
<b>Hispanics</b>	<b>less than 20,000</b>	2,296	1,165	<b>50.7%</b>	858	<b>73.6%</b>	<b>37.4%</b>
	<b>20,000 - 39,999</b>	3,361	1,921	<b>57.2%</b>	1,529	<b>79.6%</b>	<b>45.5%</b>
	<b>40,000 - 74,999</b>	3,373	2,252	<b>66.8%</b>	1,875	<b>83.3%</b>	<b>55.6%</b>
	<b>75,000 - 99,999</b>	988	727	<b>73.6%</b>	654	<b>90.0%</b>	<b>66.2%</b>
	<b>100,000 plus</b>	875	657	<b>75.1%</b>	600	<b>91.3%</b>	<b>68.6%</b>

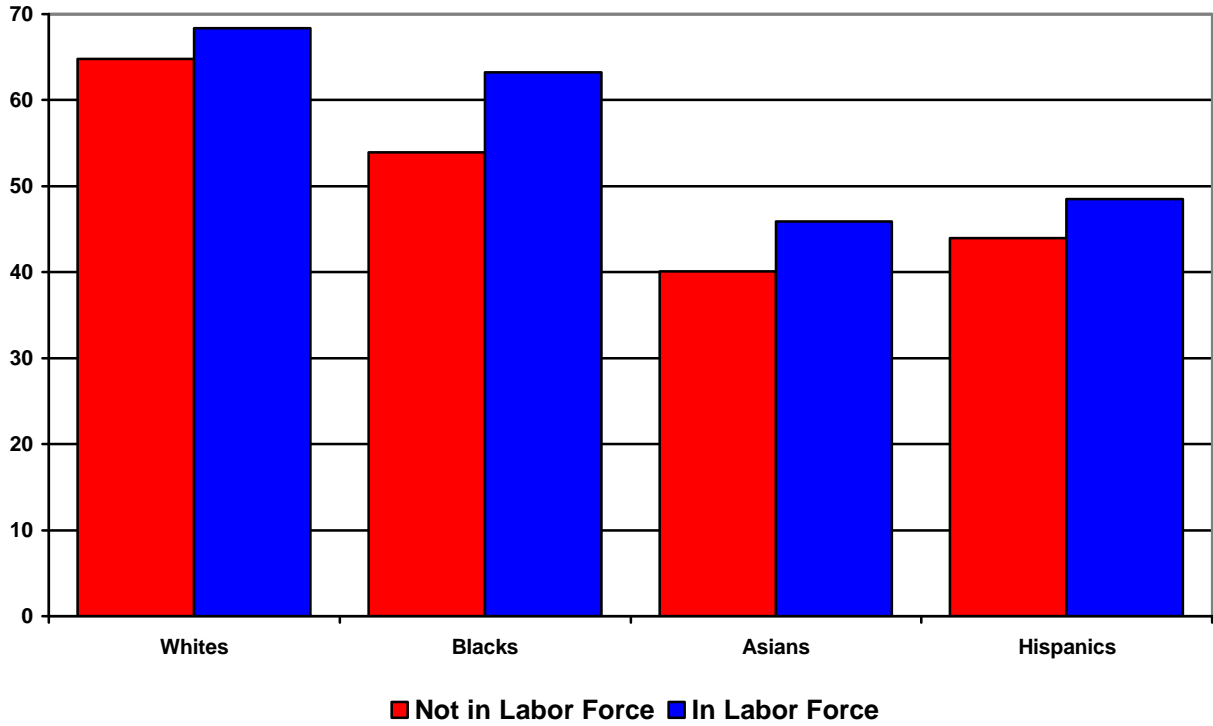
**Source:** the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 2004 (Table 9).

\*Family income data was divided in 11 levels originally: “Less than \$10,000”, “\$10,000 to \$14,999”, “\$15,000 to \$19,999”, “\$20,000 to \$29,999”, “\$30,000 to \$39,999”, “\$40,000 to \$49,999”, “\$50,000 to \$74,999”, “\$75,000 to \$99,999”, “\$100,000 to \$149,999”, “\$150,000 and over” and “Income not reported”, but they were collapse here for analytical purposes.

**Voters are more likely to be employed in the labor force than not.** This means that individuals who are part of the labor force reported higher levels of voter registration and subsequent voting than those who are not part of the labor force. Differences among ethnic groups were as follows: Whites had higher voting registration and voting among employed individuals (76% registered and 68.4% voted), followed by Blacks (70.7% registered and 63.2% voted), Hispanics (59.2% registered and 48.5% voted) and Asians (53.3% registered and 45.9% voted). As can be appreciated in Table 9, at least 30% of the population across ethnic lines was

not involved in the labor force and at least 30-50% of them were not registered to vote which represents a sizeable number of potential voters if they are convinced to register.

**Figure 8. Percentage of Citizens +18 who voted in the 2004 Elections by Employment Status and Ethnic Group**



**Table 9. Voting and Registration among Citizens 18+ Years for the 2004 Presidential Elections (in thousands) by Employment Status and Ethnic Group**

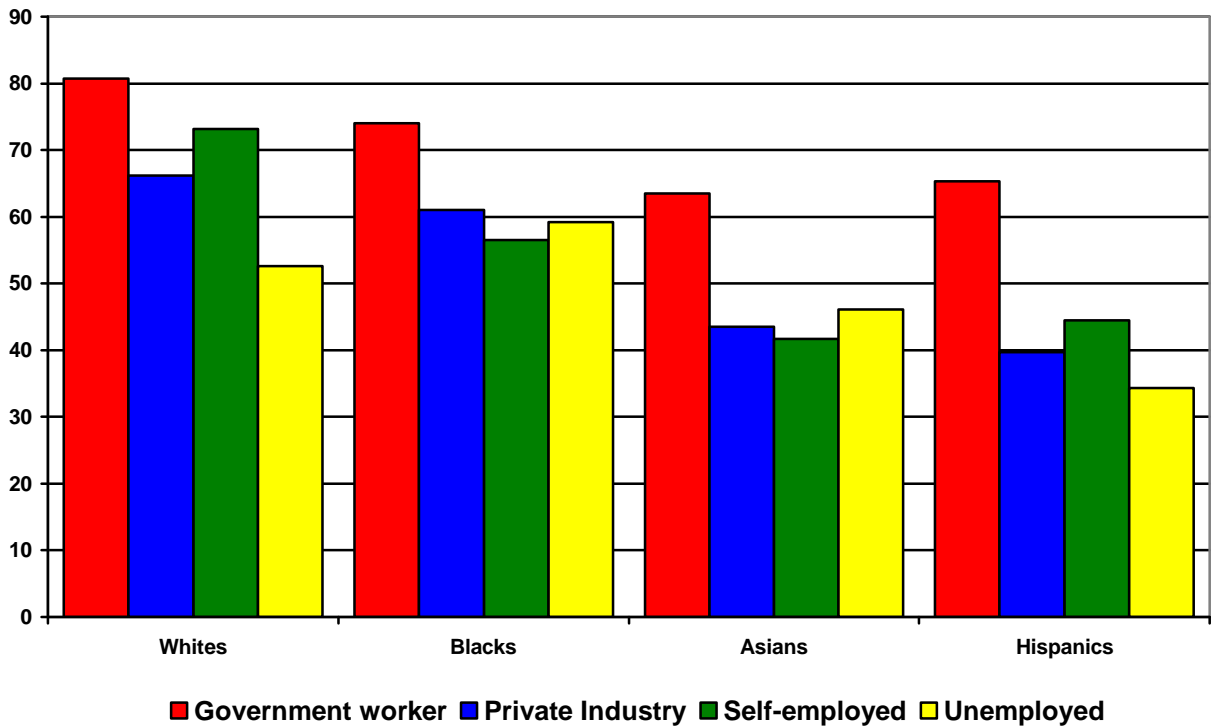
<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>Employment Status</b>	<b>Total Citizens 18+ (Thousands)</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>	<b>Total Citizens 18+ Registered to Vote</b>	<b>Percent Citizens 18+ Registered to Vote</b>	<b>Total Registered Citizens 18+ Who Voted</b>	<b>Percent Registered Citizens 18+ who Voted</b>	<b>Percent Citizens +18 who Voted</b>
<b>Whites</b>	<b>Not in Labor force</b>	48,560	<b>32.8%</b>	35,573	<b>73.3%</b>	31,456	<b>88.4%</b>	<b>64.8%</b>
	<b>Labor force</b>	99,599	<b>67.2%</b>	75,745	<b>76.0%</b>	68,110	<b>89.9%</b>	<b>68.4%</b>
<b>Blacks</b>	<b>Not in Labor force</b>	7,944	<b>34.0%</b>	5,140	<b>64.7%</b>	4,283	<b>83.3%</b>	<b>53.9%</b>
	<b>Labor force</b>	15,402	<b>66.0%</b>	10,895	<b>70.7%</b>	9,733	<b>89.3%</b>	<b>63.2%</b>
<b>Asians</b>	<b>Not in Labor force</b>	1,842	<b>29.4%</b>	879	<b>47.7%</b>	739	<b>84.1%</b>	<b>40.1%</b>
	<b>Labor force</b>	4,427	<b>70.6%</b>	2,368	<b>53.5%</b>	2,030	<b>85.7%</b>	<b>45.9%</b>
<b>Hispanics</b>	<b>Not in Labor force</b>	4,747	<b>29.5%</b>	2,595	<b>54.7%</b>	2,091	<b>80.6%</b>	<b>44.0%</b>
	<b>Labor force</b>	11,341	<b>70.5%</b>	6,713	<b>59.2%</b>	5,497	<b>81.9%</b>	<b>48.5%</b>

Source: the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 2004 (Table 7).



**Government workers are most likely to register to vote than other types of workers (private industry, self-employed or unemployed).** According to the data presented in Table 10, government workers were likely to register to vote and vote at higher rates than other types of workers. At least 86.2% of White workers, 77.6% of Black workers, 73.5% of Hispanic and 70.0% of Asian workers employed by the government registered to vote for the 2004 presidential elections compared to a lower 74.3% (Whites), 69.2% (Blacks), 49.0% (Hispanics) and 51.2% (Asians) among private industry workers. It is worth noting that among Whites, Hispanics and Asians, self-employed individuals registered at higher rates than private industry workers, 79.5%, 55.4% and 51.3% respectively compared to 74.3%, 49.0% and 51.2%. However among Blacks this pattern was reversed.

**Figure 9. Percentages of Citizens +18 who voted in the 2004 Elections by Type of Worker and Ethnic Group**



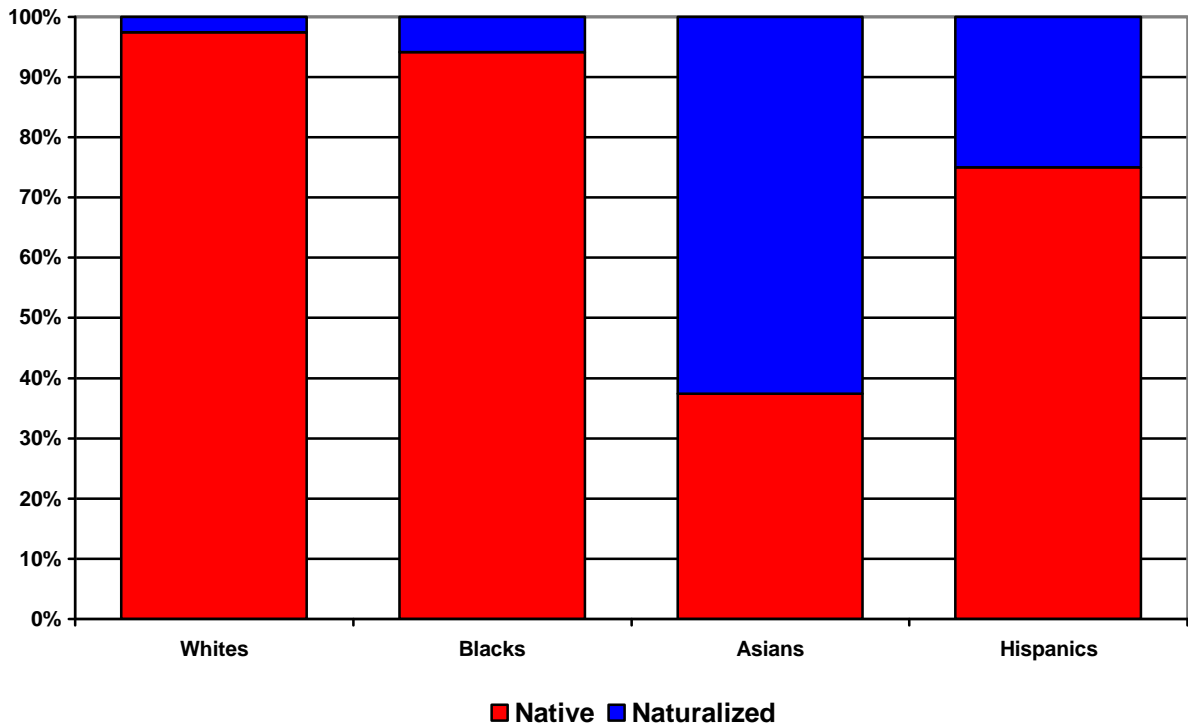
**Table 10. Voting and Registration among Citizens 18+ Years for the 2004 Presidential Elections (in thousands) by Type of Worker and Ethnic Group**

<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>Type of Worker</b>	<b>Total Citizens 18+ (Thousands)</b>	<b>Total (Percent)</b>	<b>Total Citizens 18+ Registered to Vote (Thousands)</b>	<b>Percent Citizens 18+ Registered to Vote (Percent)</b>	<b>Total Registered Citizens 18+ Who Voted (Thousands)</b>	<b>Percent Registered Citizens 18+ who Voted (Percent)</b>	<b>Percent Citizens +18 who Voted (Percent)</b>
<b>Whites</b>	<b>Government Workers</b>	14,329	<b>14.4%</b>	12,351	<b>86.2%</b>	11,565	<b>93.6%</b>	<b>80.7%</b>
	<b>Private Industry</b>	73,149	<b>73.4%</b>	54,372	<b>74.3%</b>	48,461	<b>89.1%</b>	<b>66.2%</b>
	<b>Self-employed</b>	8,285	<b>8.3%</b>	6,583	<b>79.5%</b>	6,066	<b>92.1%</b>	<b>73.2%</b>
	<b>Unemployed</b>	3,836	<b>3.9%</b>	2,438	<b>63.6%</b>	2,018	<b>82.8%</b>	<b>52.6%</b>
<b>Blacks</b>	<b>Government Workers</b>	2,996	<b>19.5%</b>	2,324	<b>77.6%</b>	2,216	<b>95.4%</b>	<b>74.0%</b>
	<b>Private Industry</b>	10,246	<b>66.5%</b>	7,086	<b>69.2%</b>	6,255	<b>88.3%</b>	<b>61.0%</b>
	<b>Self-employed</b>	572	<b>3.7%</b>	388	<b>67.8%</b>	323	<b>83.2%</b>	<b>56.5%</b>
	<b>Unemployed</b>	1,587	<b>10.3%</b>	1,096	<b>69.1%</b>	939	<b>85.7%</b>	<b>59.2%</b>
<b>Asians</b>	<b>Government Workers</b>	523	<b>11.8%</b>	366	<b>70.0%</b>	332	<b>90.7%</b>	<b>63.5%</b>
	<b>Private Industry</b>	3,409	<b>77.0%</b>	1,744	<b>51.2%</b>	1,483	<b>85.0%</b>	<b>43.5%</b>
	<b>Self-employed</b>	314	<b>7.1%</b>	161	<b>51.3%</b>	131	<b>81.4%</b>	<b>41.7%</b>
	<b>Unemployed</b>	180	<b>4.1%</b>	97	<b>53.9%</b>	83	<b>85.6%</b>	<b>46.1%</b>
<b>Hispanics</b>	<b>Government Workers</b>	1,545	<b>13.6%</b>	1,135	<b>73.5%</b>	1,009	<b>88.9%</b>	<b>65.3%</b>
	<b>Private Industry</b>	9,982	<b>88.0%</b>	4,894	<b>49.0%</b>	3,962	<b>81.0%</b>	<b>39.7%</b>
	<b>Self-employed</b>	587	<b>5.2%</b>	325	<b>55.4%</b>	261	<b>80.3%</b>	<b>44.5%</b>
	<b>Unemployed</b>	773	<b>6.8%</b>	359	<b>46.4%</b>	265	<b>73.8%</b>	<b>34.3%</b>

Source: the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 2004 (Table 7).

**Citizens who registered to vote and voted in 2004 were more likely to be born in the United States than to be a citizen through naturalization.** This was so overwhelmingly for Whites (97.4%), Blacks (94.2%) and Hispanics (75.0%). This pattern could undermine arguments that consider naturalization and legalization avenues for undocumented immigrants as threats to the political system. If anything, higher numbers of naturalized citizens would not have an immediate effect in the future elections and given their small percentage of the Hispanic population of citizens, they are more likely to matter in local elections than at national elections.

**Figure 10. Percentage of Citizens +18 who voted in the 2004 Elections who are Native or Naturalized by Ethnic Group**



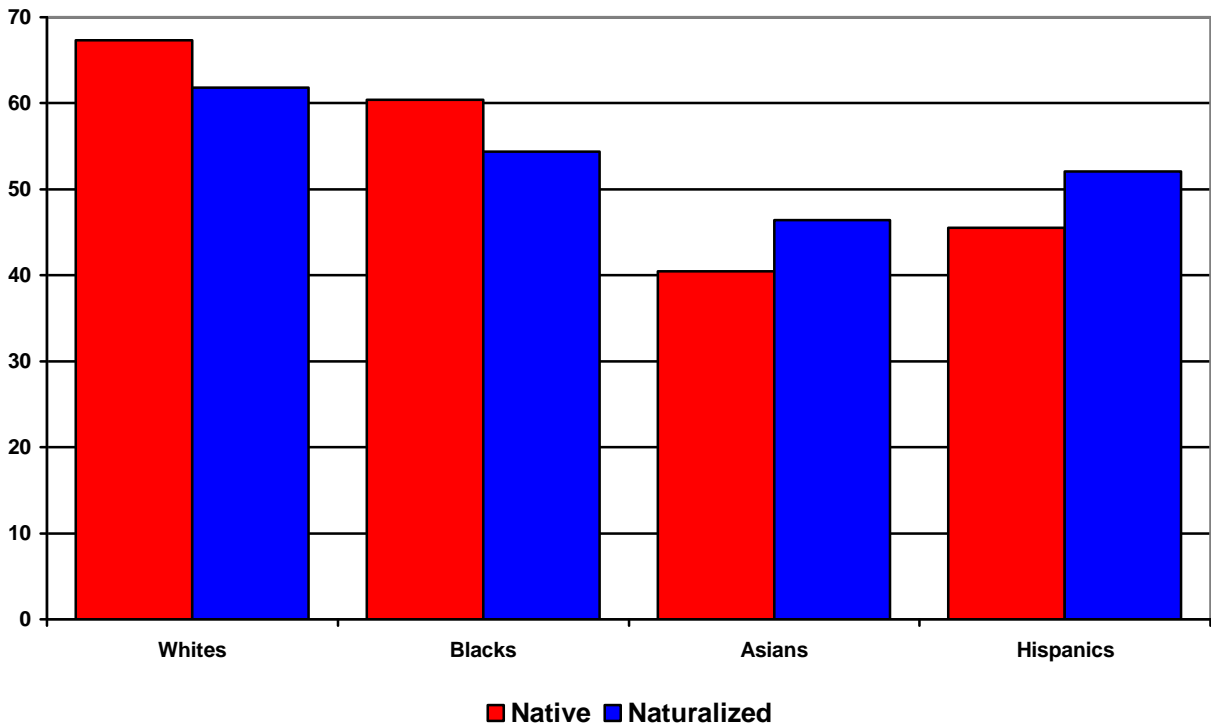
**Table 11. Native and Naturalized Citizens 18+ Years of Age for the 2004 Presidential Elections (in thousands) by Ethnic Group**

<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>Total Citizens (Thousands)</b>	<b>Native (Thousands)</b>	<b>Native (Percent)</b>	<b>Naturalized (Thousands)</b>	<b>Naturalized (Percent)</b>
<b>Whites</b>	148,159	144,302	<b>97.4%</b>	3,857	<b>2.6%</b>
<b>Blacks</b>	23,346	21,993	<b>94.2%</b>	1,353	<b>5.8%</b>
<b>Asians</b>	6,270	2,344	<b>37.4%</b>	3,926	<b>62.6%</b>
<b>Hispanics</b>	16,088	12,062	<b>75.0%</b>	4,026	<b>25.0%</b>
<b>Total</b>	197,005	183,880	<b>93.3%</b>	13,125	<b>6.7%</b>

**Source:** the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 2004 (Table 13).

**Hispanic and Asian Naturalized citizens are more likely to register and vote than their native counterparts.** This is an interesting finding, if we consider that only 25% of the Hispanic population is naturalized yet the remaining three-quarters of native Hispanic potential voters are registering and voting at lower levels. Among Hispanics, 60.0% of naturalized citizens registered to vote and only 57.1% of native citizens did. These numbers are still below the national average of 61.9% (naturalized) and 72.9% (native). This pattern is not present among Whites and Blacks where native citizens vote at higher rates ( 75.3% and 69.1%) than naturalized citizens (68.2% and 61.9% respectively, see Table 12.)

**Figure 11. Voting Percentages for Native and Naturalized Citizens +18 for the 2004 Elections by Ethnic Group**



**Table 12. Voting and Registration among Native and Naturalized Citizens for the 2004 Presidential Elections (in thousands) by Ethnic Group**

Ethnic Group	Type of Citizen	Total Citizens 18+	Total Citizens 18+ Registered to Vote	Percent Citizens 18+ Registered to Vote	Total Registered Citizens 18+ Who Voted	Percent Registered Citizens 18+ who Voted	Percent Citizens +18 who Voted
<b>Whites</b>	<b>Native</b>	144,302	108,690	<b>75.3%</b>	97,184	<b>89.4%</b>	<b>67.3%</b>
	<b>Naturalized</b>	3,857	2,629	<b>68.2%</b>	2,382	<b>90.6%</b>	<b>61.8%</b>
<b>Blacks</b>	<b>Native</b>	21,993	15,198	<b>69.1%</b>	13,280	<b>87.4%</b>	<b>60.4%</b>
	<b>Naturalized</b>	1,353	837	<b>61.9%</b>	736	<b>87.9%</b>	<b>54.4%</b>
<b>Asians</b>	<b>Native</b>	2,344	1,103	<b>47.1%</b>	949	<b>86.0%</b>	<b>40.5%</b>
	<b>Naturalized</b>	3,925	2,144	<b>54.6%</b>	1,820	<b>84.9%</b>	<b>46.4%</b>
<b>Hispanics</b>	<b>Native</b>	12,062	6,890	<b>57.1%</b>	5,489	<b>79.7%</b>	<b>45.5%</b>
	<b>Naturalized</b>	4,027	2,418	<b>60.0%</b>	2,098	<b>86.8%</b>	<b>52.1%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>Native</b>	183,880	134,039	<b>72.9%</b>	118,693	<b>88.6%</b>	<b>64.5%</b>
	<b>Naturalized</b>	13,125	8,030	<b>61.2%</b>	7,042	<b>87.7%</b>	<b>53.7%</b>

Source: the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 2004 (Table 13).

## **Can registration numbers be improved? Fantasy vs. Reality**

A first step towards answering this question requires understanding who, how and why people register to vote. The focus of this paper now turns to how could registration to vote be improved since 80% of registered voters actually vote.

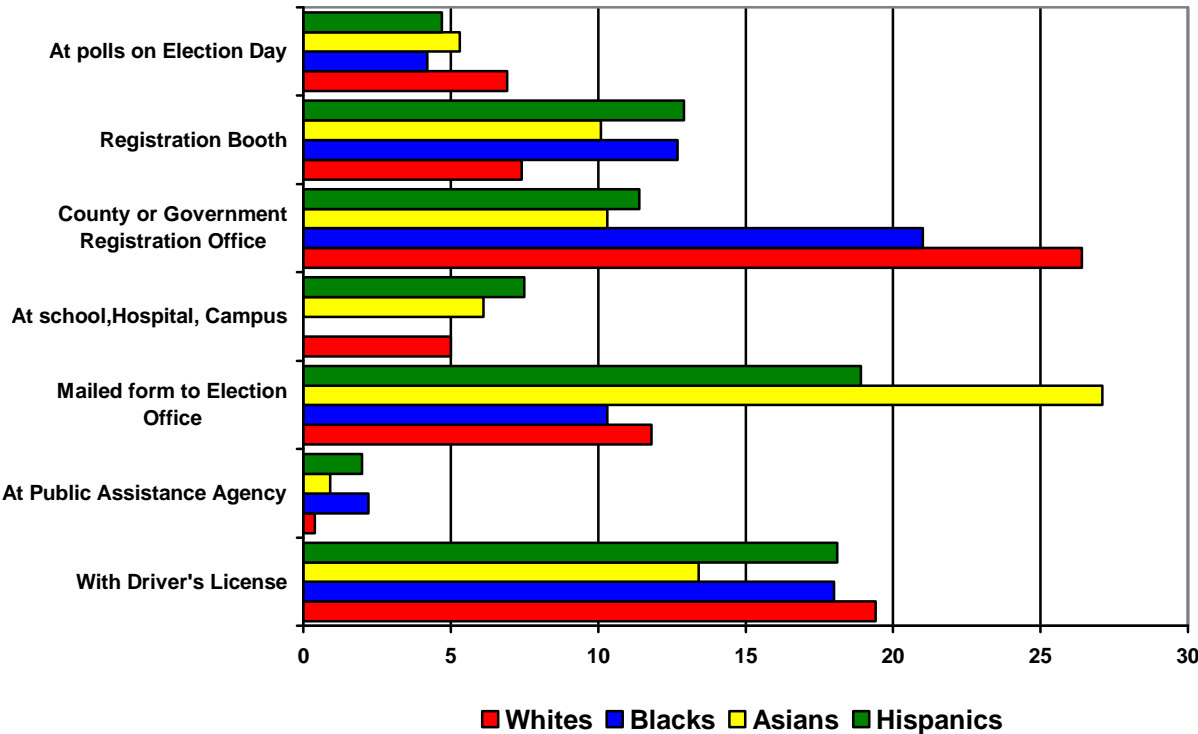
It is important to note (Table 13) that different ethnic groups are registering through different methods. This may indicate that some methods of approaching individuals to encourage them to vote may work well for some ethnic groups and not others, or it may well mean that some groups are being missed by certain methods of registration. For example, the highest percentage of Whites (26.4%) and Blacks (21.0%) registered at a county or government office, almost twice as frequent as Asians (10.3%) or Hispanics (11.4%). “With the driver’s license” was a very common method of registration across ethnic groups, Whites (19.4%), Blacks (18.0%), Asians (13.4%) and Hispanics (18.1%).

For Asians and Hispanics, the most common method of registration was through a “mailed form to election office.” Some 27.1% of Asian respondents and 18.9% of Hispanic respondents reported registering by sending a mailed form to the election office, twice as likely as Whites and Blacks. A smaller portion of participants reported registering at a registration booth, Asians (10.1%), Blacks (12.7%), and Hispanics (12.9%). Only 7.4% of White respondents reported doing so.

If we examine Native citizens vs. Naturalized citizens, we find different combinations of registration methods. Native citizens registered mostly with their driver’s license (19.5%) and at a county or government office (24.9%), while naturalized citizens were more likely to have mailed a form (22.5%) and at a county of government office (15.4%).

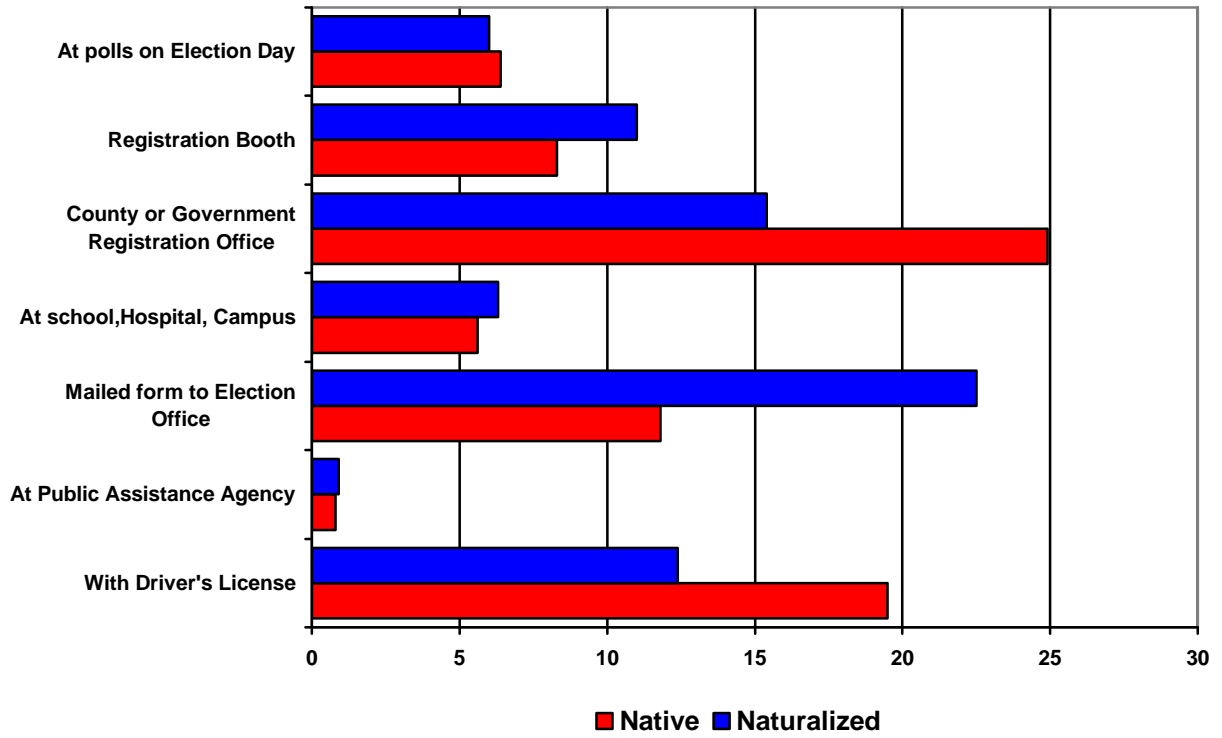
Small numbers of individuals actually registered at the polls on Election Day, perhaps because they didn’t know this was possible in certain states. However, Whites (6.9%) and Asians (5.3%) were more likely to register on Election Day than Blacks (4.2%) and Hispanics (4.7%). This may well be an untapped tool to gather possible voters up until actual elections.

**Figure 12. Method of Registration by Ethnic Group**





**Figure 13. Method of Registration by Type of Citizen**



**Table 13. Method of Registration for the 2004 Presidential Elections by Ethnic Group**

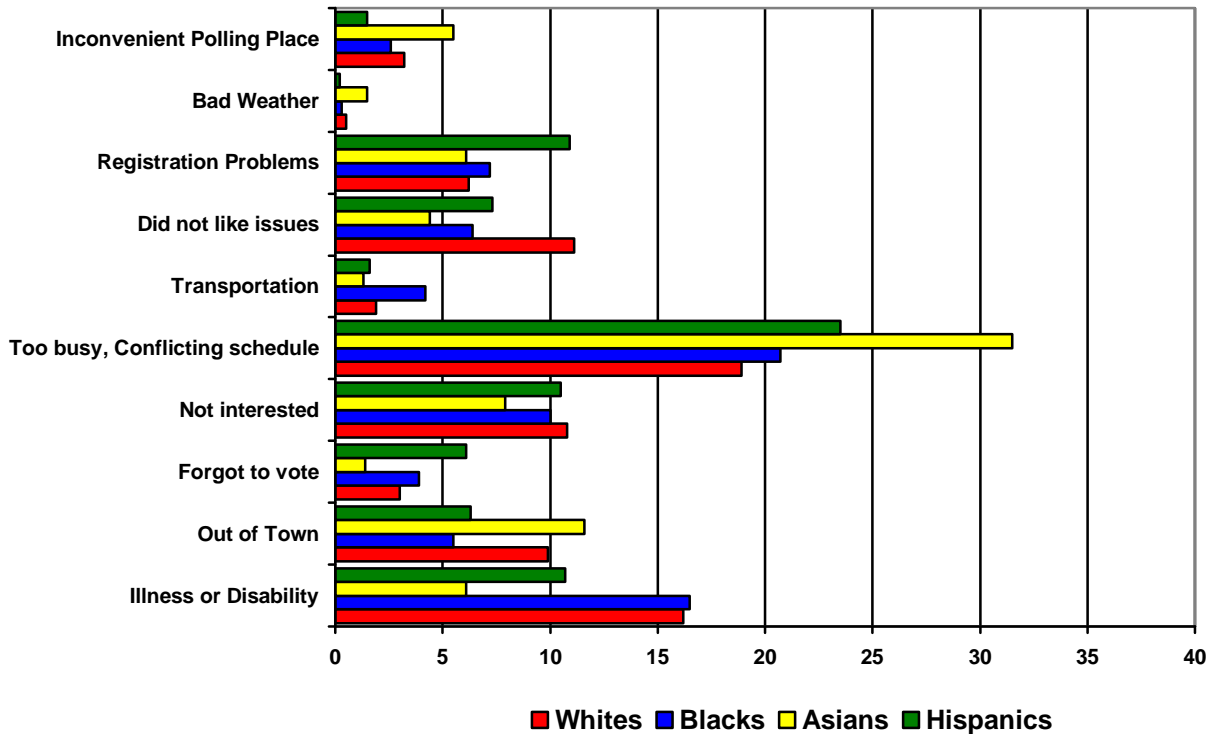
<b>Method of Registration</b>	<b>Whites</b>	<b>Blacks</b>	<b>Asians</b>	<b>Hispanics</b>		<b>Hispanics Native</b>	<b>Hispanics Naturalized</b>
<b>Total (Thousands)</b>	111,318	16,035	3,247	9,308		134,039	8,030
<b>With Driver's License</b>	19.4%	18.0%	13.4%	18.1%		19.5%	12.4%
<b>At Public Assistance Agency</b>	0.4%	2.2%	0.9%	2.0%		0.80%	0.90%
<b>Mailed form to Election office</b>	11.8%	10.3%	27.1%	18.9%		11.8%	22.5%
<b>At school, Hospital, Campus</b>	5.0%	8.8%	6.1%	7.5%		5.6%	6.3%
<b>County or Government Registration Office</b>	26.4%	21.0%	10.3%	11.4%		24.9%	15.4%
<b>Registration Booth</b>	7.4%	12.7%	10.1%	12.9%		8.3%	11.0%
<b>At polls on Election Day</b>	6.9%	4.2%	5.3%	4.7%		6.4%	6.0%
<b>Other Place</b>	6.1%	6.2%	7.7%	7.6%		6.1%	8.6%
<b>Don't Know</b>	16.5%	16.6%	19.1%	16.9%		16.6%	16.9%

Source: the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 2004 (Table 14).

Another important question that may help improve voter registration efforts is to understand why individuals who were registered to vote did not in the end vote on election day. It is worth noting that the single most recurring answer to this question across ethnic groups was “Too busy, Conflicting schedules”. In a country where presidential election days are not considered an official holiday, at least 18.9% of White voters, 20.7% of Black voters, 31.5% of Asian voters and 23.5% of Hispanic voters, did not vote for this reason despite being registered. This means that at least 1 out of 5 registered potential voters is being missed because they can not afford to lose work or other important appointments.

Illness and disability was the second largest reason for not voting for at least 16.2% of Whites, 16.5% of Blacks, 6.1% of Asians and 10.7% of Hispanics. A high percentage of Hispanics (10.9%) in comparison to other ethnic groups, reported having registration problems as the reason for not voting. At least 6.1% of Hispanics reported that they forgot to vote, compared to smaller 3.0% of Whites, 3.9% of Blacks and 1.4% of Asians.

**Figure 14. Reasons for Not Voting**



**Table 14. Reasons for Not Voting on the 2004 Presidential Elections by Ethnic Group**

<b>Reason for Not Voting</b>	<b>Whites</b>	<b>Blacks</b>	<b>Asians</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>
<b>Total (Thousands)</b>	11,752	2,019	479	1,721
<b>Illness or Disability</b>	16.2%	16.5%	6.1%	10.7%
<b>Out of Town</b>	9.9%	5.5%	11.6%	6.3%
<b>Forgot to Vote</b>	3.0%	3.9%	1.4%	6.1%
<b>Not Interested</b>	10.8%	10.0%	7.9%	10.5%
<b>Too busy, Conflicting Schedule</b>	18.9%	20.7%	31.5%	23.5%
<b>Transportation</b>	1.9%	4.2%	1.3%	1.6%
<b>Did not Like or Campaign Issues</b>	11.1%	6.4%	4.4%	7.3%
<b>Registration Problems</b>	6.2%	7.2%	6.1%	10.9%
<b>Bad Weather Conditions</b>	0.5%	0.3%	1.5%	0.2%
<b>Inconvenient Polling Place</b>	3.2%	2.6%	5.5%	1.5%
<b>Other Reason</b>	10.8%	9.8%	13.7%	11.6%
<b>Refused</b>	7.6%	13.0%	9.0%	9.8%

**Source:** the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 2004 (Table 12).

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