

2023

Ivoted

# California State Voter Experience Survey Report

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# 2023 CA State Voter Experience Survey

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The survey was administered online based on randomly selected email addresses from lists of multi-racial/ethnic panel respondents. An online questionnaire was fielded throughout the month of July 2023, surveying California voters' views about the voting process and barriers they may face.

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A total of 1,350 Californians were interviewed. The research examined issues of voter engagement and access, voter knowledge and information, trust and confidence in voting systems, and knowledge about the Office of the Secretary of State.

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The survey included respondents from fifty-eight counties across the state, comprised of 380 Black respondents, 199 Asian-Americans, 332 Hispanic or Latinos (with 132 Spanish interviews), 200 Whites, and 78 Native Americans.

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MOE +/- 3%



# Survey Themes

The following main themes were examined across racial and ethnic groups:

1. *Voter Awareness*
  - a. *Voter knowledge and election information*
  - b. *Knowledge of the CA SOS*
2. *Voter Engagement*
  - a. *Voter engagement and access*
  - b. *Social media and sources of information*
3. *Voter Perceptions of Participation*
  - a. *Trust and confidence in systems of voting*



# Voter Awareness



# Results: Voting Awareness



22% of respondents believed that they currently lived in a VCA county, but of those respondents only 26% were correct.



The majority of respondents were “very aware” of common voting options (e.g. vote-by-mail, drop box returns, etc.); few were aware of resources such as conditional voting (29%), replacement ballots (29%), and language options (38%).



44% of respondents did NOT know the role of the SOS, and 31% could NOT identify the main services offered by the SOS (e.g. voter registration, ballot tracking).







# Voter Engagement





# Results: Voter Engagement

## Voter Registration

- 85% of respondents were registered to vote. Disparities across racial and ethnic groups were pronounced.

## Voted in Presidential Election

- 76% of ALL respondents reported voting in 2020, however, far more white Californians report voting than other racial and ethnic groups.

## Voting in Midterm Elections

- 69% of ALL respondents reported voting in the 2022 midterm elections, but, again, differences persist by racial and ethnic groups.

## Nonvoters?

- Of those who did NOT vote, a plurality (39%) reported a lack of interest in politics and the election as the most important reason.





# Voter Engagement: Racial/Ethnic Differences

## Voter Registration

Only white respondents reported significantly higher registration rates at 91% (when compared to all other groups).

## Voted in Presidential Election

Similarly, only white respondents reported significantly higher participation rates in the 2020 general election at 91% (when compared to all other groups).

## Voting in Midterm Elections

Again, of all racial/ethnic groups, only white respondents report significantly higher participation rates (at 83%) in the 2022 Midterm Elections.

## Nonvoters?

Black respondents were the largest proportion of nonvoters in both the 2020 General election (27%) and the 2022 Midterm Elections (35%).



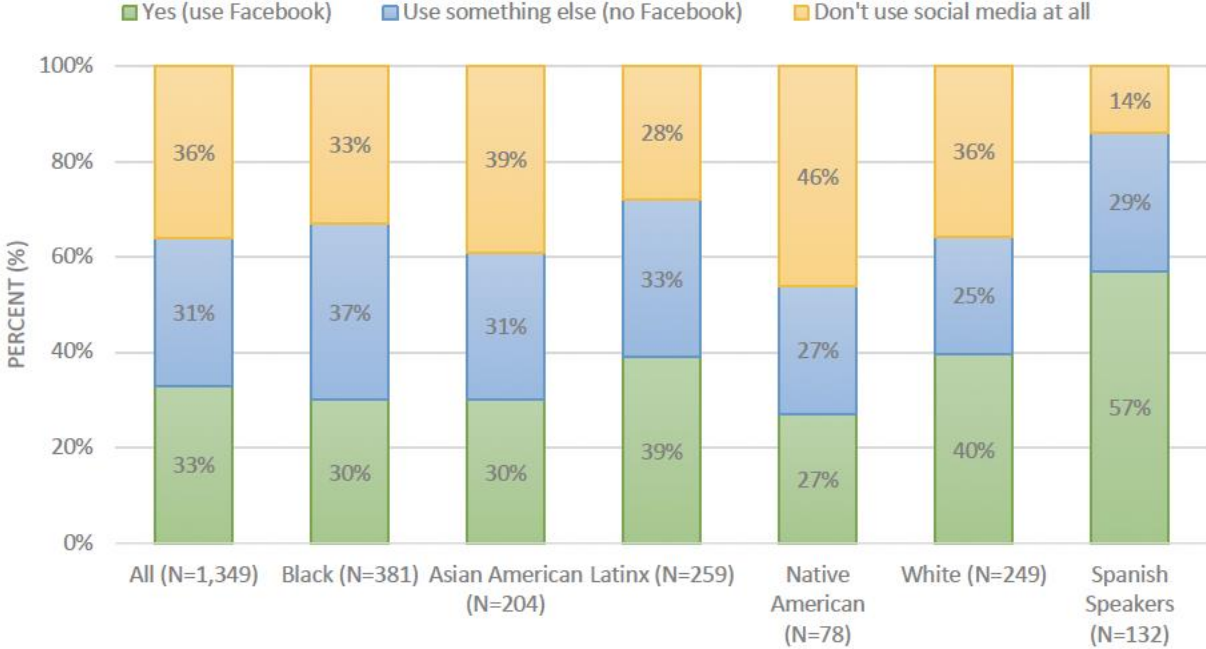
# Social Media & Sources of Information





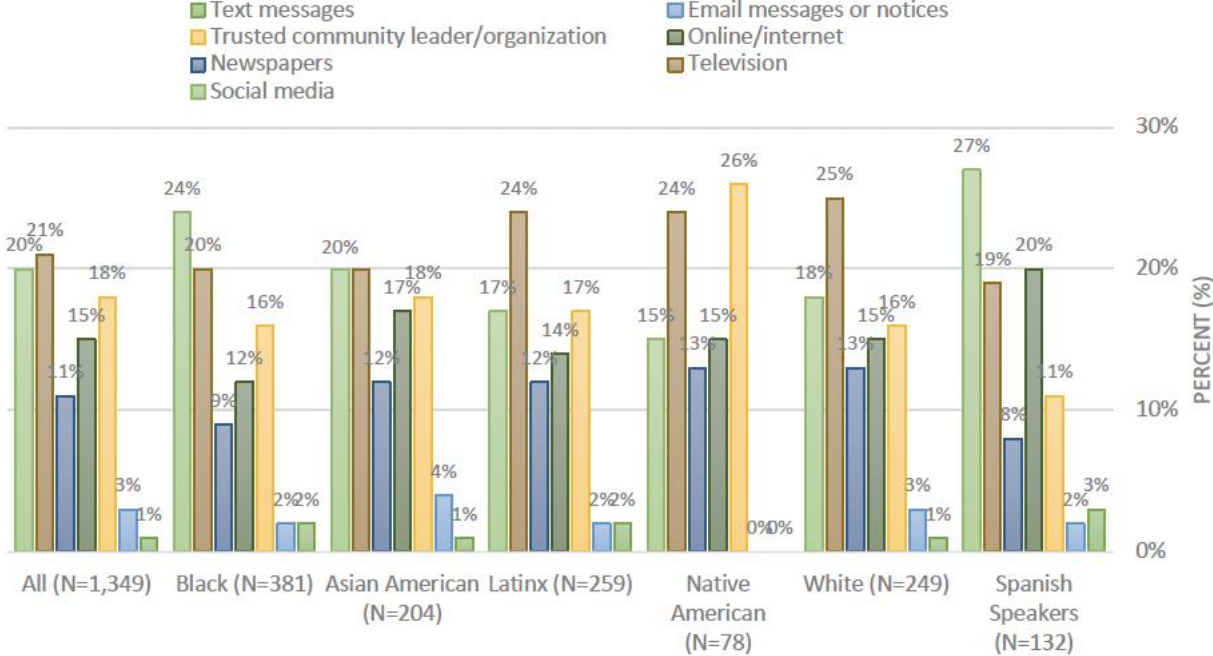
# Results: Social media and sources of election information

Social media use for election information



Social media sources used for election information, by race/ethnicity

What is the MOST trusted source of information?



Reported use of social media for election information, by race/ethnicity



# Media and information: Racial/Ethnic Differences

## Sources of Election Information

- A plurality of all racial/ethnic groups, aside from Black respondents, report getting their election information online (the internet); most Black respondents report Television (29%).
- Although findings for Native Americans are limited by sample size (N=78), significantly more than twice as many as any other racial/ethnic group (14%) report relying upon “other” sources for information, such as friends and family.

## Social Media Use

- A plurality of Asian American respondents (39%) say they do not use social media at all for election information (as well as Native Americans at 46%).

## Trust in Sources of Information

- Black, Asian American, and Spanish-speaking respondents actually report social media as their most trusted source of election information (24%, 20%, and 27%, respectively).
- Email messages and text messages remain the least trusted sources among ALL groups.



# Voter Perceptions: Trust & Confidence





# Results: Voter Perceptions of Participation - Trust & Confidence

## Ballot Counted?

- 45% of respondents reported that they are **NOT** concerned at all about their ballot being counted. Disparities across racial and ethnic groups persist.

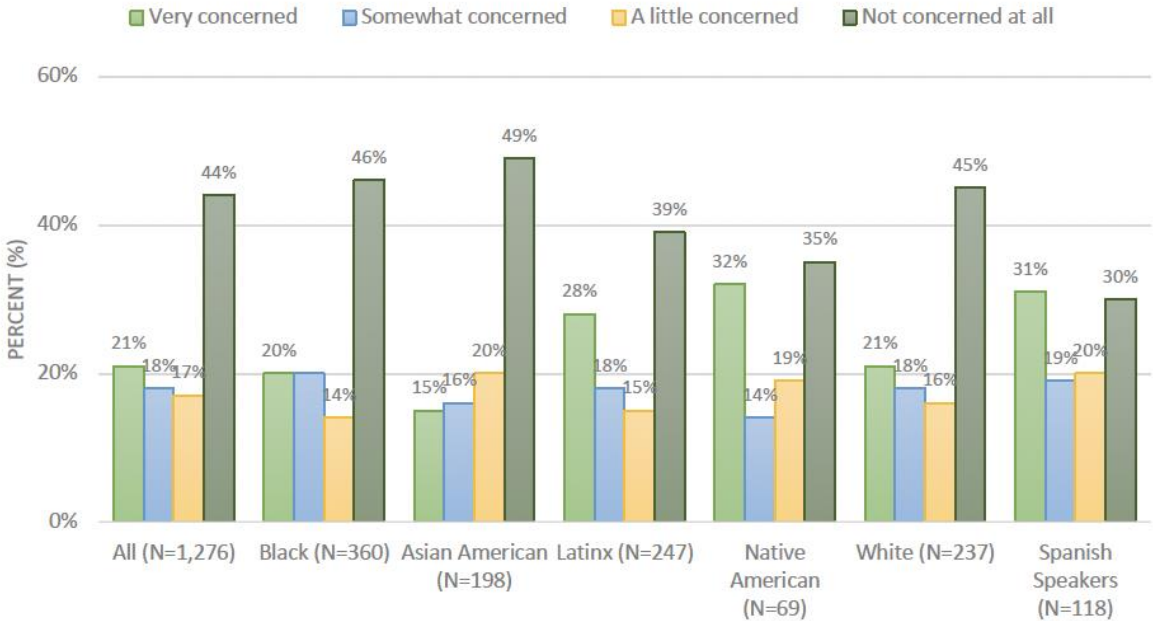
## Voting Process?

- 68% of respondents reported confidence in the voting process, but, again, differences persist by racial and ethnic groups.



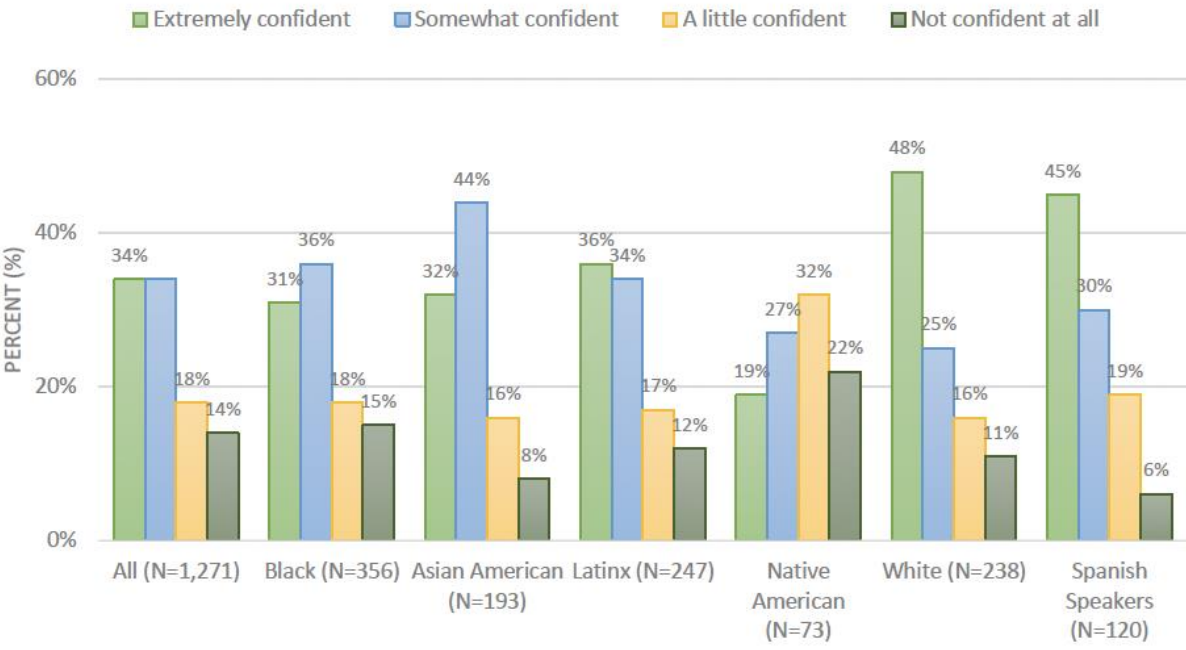
# Results: Voter Perceptions of Participation - Trust & Confidence

How concerned are you that your ballot will NOT be counted?



Concern about ballot being counted, by race/ethnicity

How confident are you in the voting process?



Reported confidence in the voting process, by race/ethnicity



# Results: Voter Perceptions of Participation - Trust & Confidence

## Ballot Counted?

- Significantly more Latinx (28%) and Spanish-speaking (31%) respondents are “very concerned” their ballots will not be counted (and Native American respondents at 32%).

## Voting Process?

- Compared to other racial/ethnic groups, significantly more white respondents (48%) report feeling “extremely confident” in the voting process; a similar amount of Spanish-speaking respondents (45%) feel the same.



# Conclusions & Final Recommendations



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# Conclusions

- An information gap exists such that fewer Black and Latinx respondents are knowledgeable about the Office of the SOS.
- Turnout disparities exist, with white respondents reporting higher turnout than other racial/ethnic groups (significantly more nonvoters are Black respondents).
- Online information is important for all racial/ethnic groups, and television is especially important for Black respondents.
- Television and social media are the MOST trusted sources of information, yet a significant number of Asian American respondents don't use social media at all.
- Email and text messages are not only the least used sources of information and the least trusted.
- Racial/ethnic disparities characterize trust in the voting process, with more Latinx and Spanish-speaking respondents concerned about their ballot being counted, and white respondents feeling significantly more confident in the voting process.



# Final Recommendations

Invest in voter outreach that utilizes social media and online platforms - especially for non-white voters

Focus on building trust within the election process to alleviate concerns - especially in the Latinx community

Increase voter education campaigns around the role of the Office of the SOS - especially when it comes to signature verification and tracking ballots.

Provide ample information on the VCA program & the benefits of living in a VCA county.

