



## Latino millennials could be major voting bloc — if turnout is high enough

BY **DANIEL BUSH** *January 20, 2016 at 2:34 PM EDT*



*Latino leaders and immigration reform supporters gathered at a voter registration rally in Colorado last October. The Latino electorate has the largest share of millennial voters of any racial or ethnic group, but turnout has been low in recent elections. Photo by Evan Semon/REUTERS*

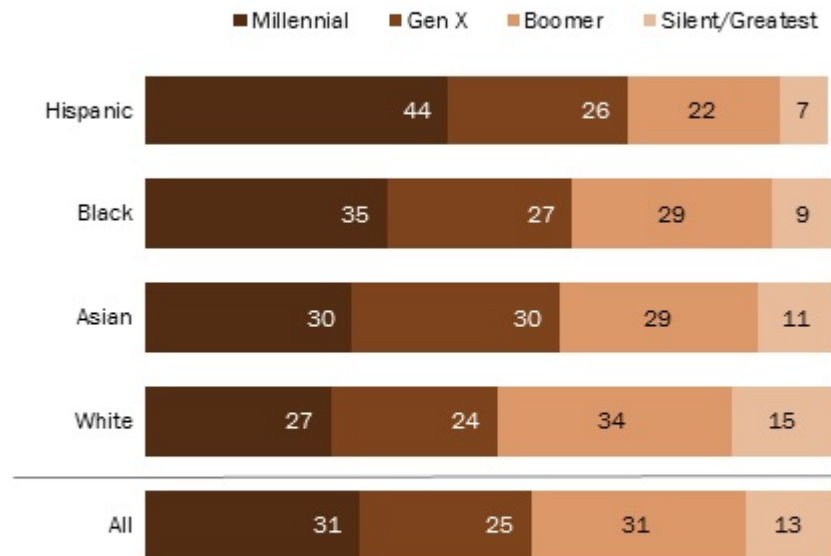
If all Latino millennials voted in 2016, they'd have major sway in the presidential race.

But that will depend on boosting turnout among young voters who make up almost half of the overall Hispanic electorate. This election, 44 percent of eligible Hispanic voters will be millennials between the ages of 18 and 35 years old, according to a [new Pew Research Center study](#).

That's a larger share of millennials than any other ethnic or racial voting group. The Pew survey found that 35 percent of eligible African American voters in 2016 will be millennials; among Asian Americans the figure is 30 percent, and among whites, 27 percent.

### Millennials Make Up a Larger Share Among Latino Eligible Voters than Other Groups in 2016

*% projected among eligible voters*



Note: Whites, blacks and Asians include only non-Hispanics. Hispanics are of any race. Eligible voters are U.S. citizens ages 18 and older. Millennials are adults born in 1981 or later. Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Source: See methodology for details on 2016 projection.

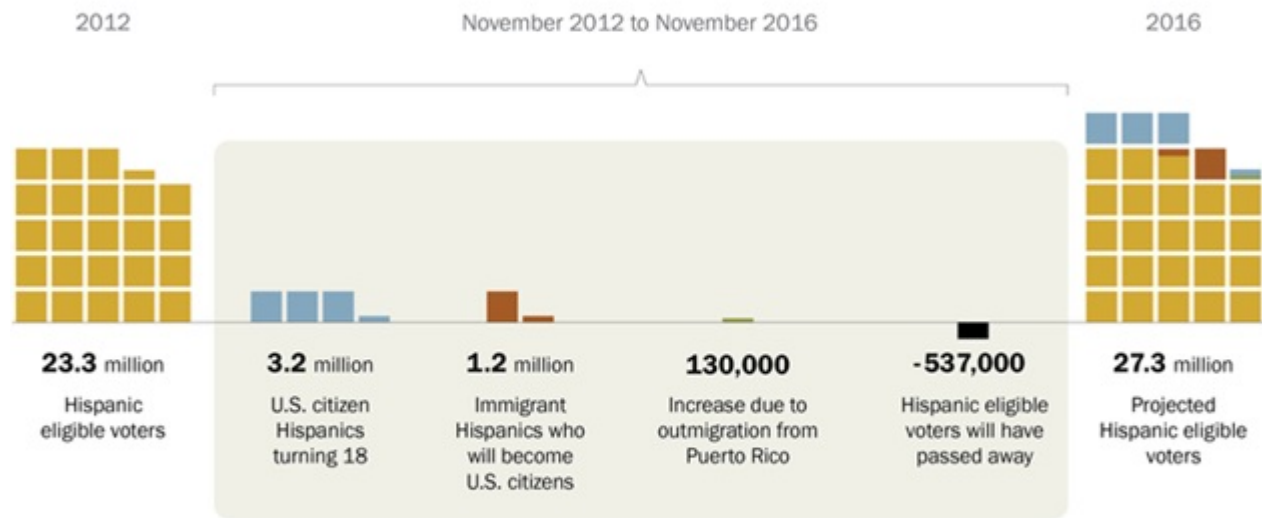
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Millennials represent the fastest-growing portion of the Latino electorate. Pew projects that 27.3 million Hispanics will be eligible to vote in 2016, up 17 percent from 2012.

Most of that growth — 3.2 million new eligible voters — turned 18 between the last election and this one, or will turn 18 this year before Election Day.

## Youth, Naturalizations Main Sources of Hispanic Eligible Voter Growth since 2012

Each block represents 1 million eligible voters



Note: Those born in Puerto Rico are U.S. citizens at birth.

Source: For 2012, Pew Research Center tabulations from the November Current Population Survey. See methodology for details on 2016 projection.

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Yet in recent elections, younger Latinos have had a lower voter turnout rate than black and white millennials. In 2012, 37.8 percent of Hispanic millennials voted, compared to 55 percent of young, black voters and 47.5 percent of white millennials.





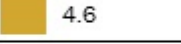
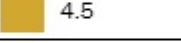
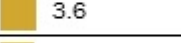
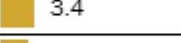
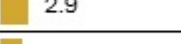
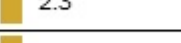
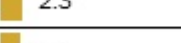
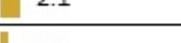

“Even though we’ve had all this growth, to some extent the group that is growing the most is the one that has had the lowest turnout,” said Mark Hugo Lopez, the director of Hispanic research at Pew and one of the study’s co-authors.

This discrepancy has a lot to do with geography. Nearly six in 10 eligible Latino voters live in New York, California and Texas — solidly blue and red states where Pew researchers say it’s harder to boost Latino turnout than it is in the battleground states that decide presidential races.

Hispanics make up 18 percent of the Florida electorate, but account for less than 5 percent of all eligible voters in key toss-up states, including Pennsylvania, Ohio, Virginia, Iowa, North Carolina, and New Hampshire.

## Hispanics Make Up Less Than Two-in-Ten of the Electorate in 13 States Likely to Have Key 2016 Races

*% of eligible voters who are Hispanic*

			States most likely to have close races for ...		
			President	Senate	Governor
Florida		18.1	X	X	
Nevada		17.2	X	X	
Colorado		14.5	X		
Illinois		10.5		X	
Virginia		4.6	X		
Pennsylvania		4.5	X		
Wisconsin		3.6	X	X	
North Carolina		3.4			X
Iowa		2.9	X		
Missouri		2.3			X
Ohio		2.3	X		
New Hampshire		2.1	X	X	X
West Virginia		0.8			X

Note: Based on states with likely tossup races as indicated by the Cook Political Report (using most recent predictions on the date of publication of this report). Latinos are of any race. Eligible voters are U.S. citizens ages 18 and older.

Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of 2014 American Community Survey (1% IPUMS)

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This could change over time, as more Latinos become eligible to vote and the share of Latinos in the U.S. who are foreign-born continues to decline. Pew found that 52 percent of Latinos living in the country are not U.S. citizens, or are still under the age of 18.

Turnout among Latino millennials and older Latino voters could also rise this year if the Republican Party nominates Senators Ted Cruz or Marco Rubio, both of whom are Cuban-American. Rubio put out a new ad yesterday [touting his support among millennials](#), though it didn't specifically target young Latinos.

But [Cruz and Rubio have not focused on their ethnic identity](#) on the campaign trail, despite the fact that both men stand a chance of becoming the nation's first Hispanic American presidential nominee of a major party.

Cruz and Rubio have also taken conservative positions on immigration reform that have angered Latino advocates pushing for a pathway to citizenship for undocumented workers.

On the Democratic side, Sen. Bernie Sanders has struggled to build support among nonwhite voters. Hillary Clinton leads among Hispanic voters, though her campaign [came under attack on social media last month](#) for publishing an article on its website that was originally titled “7 ways Hillary Clinton is Just Like Your Abuela.”

Outreach efforts to Latino voters — including millennials — will likely improve as the campaign goes on. If it doesn’t, candidates will lose out on a crucial voting bloc. Each year, more than 800,000 Latinos become eligible to vote.

“We have at least another two decades of growth like this,” Lopez said. “So this is not a one-time thing.”

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