



California Assembly Committee on Elections Informational Hearing

Voter Participation and Engagement: Strategies for Bridging Gaps
and Ensuring Accurate Registration

November 16, 2023

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**We do not have a representative
voting electorate in CA**

1. Data Challenges

2. Registration and Turnout Disparities

3. Level of Voter Representation

Multi-Racial Democracy Requires Inclusive and Reliable Data

Data sources are limited – Current Population Survey and CA voter file

- Current Population Survey has methodological challenges for voters of color, state level only
- CA voter file allows for within state analysis, identifying race/ethnicity in the CA voter file is challenging

= We have a limited set of voter turnout research

Data Limitations

CA Voter File

- Only data source that provides a person's voting behavior, ballot type, and whether their ballot, if they cast a vote-by-mail ballot, was rejected and for what reasons
- Race, and ethnicity information are not present for most voters in the CA voter file
- Race/ethnicity data that is available is not representative of California's total registered voter population

= Researchers identify a voter's missing race and ethnicity information from voter records using a combination of the registrant's surname name and neighborhood characteristics (geocoding)

Data Limitations

Geocoding (with census block/tract population data) is limited for identifying Black voters in most CA communities because of small proportional population size (6.7%)

Commonly used to identify Latinos and Asian Americans – but not reliable for research on other groups/subgroups in CA

= limits data analysis for Black voters and Asian American subgroups in CA

Registration Rates

What was the registration rate in CA's 2022 General Election?

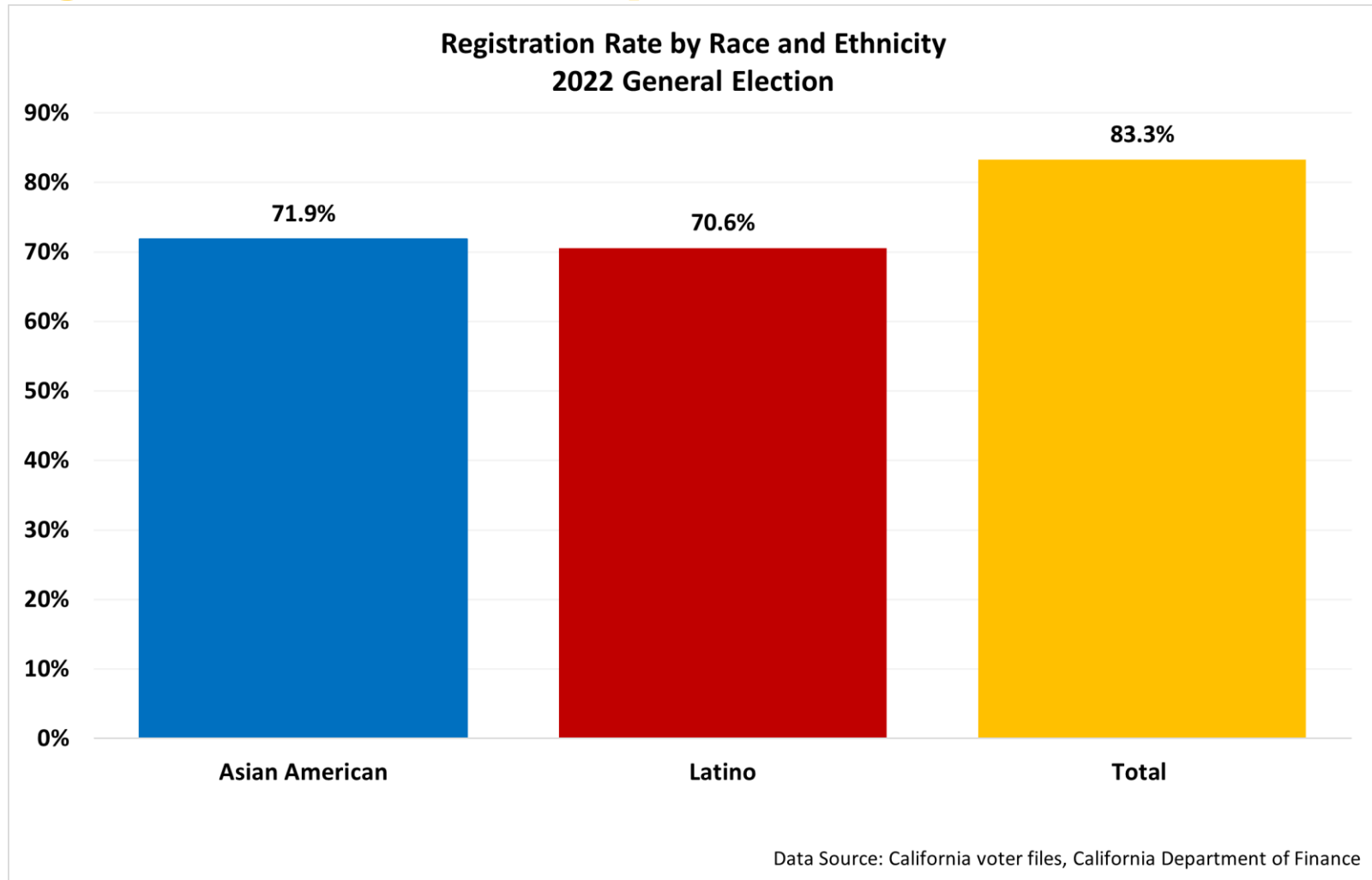
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What was registration rate in CA's 2022 General Election?

83.3%

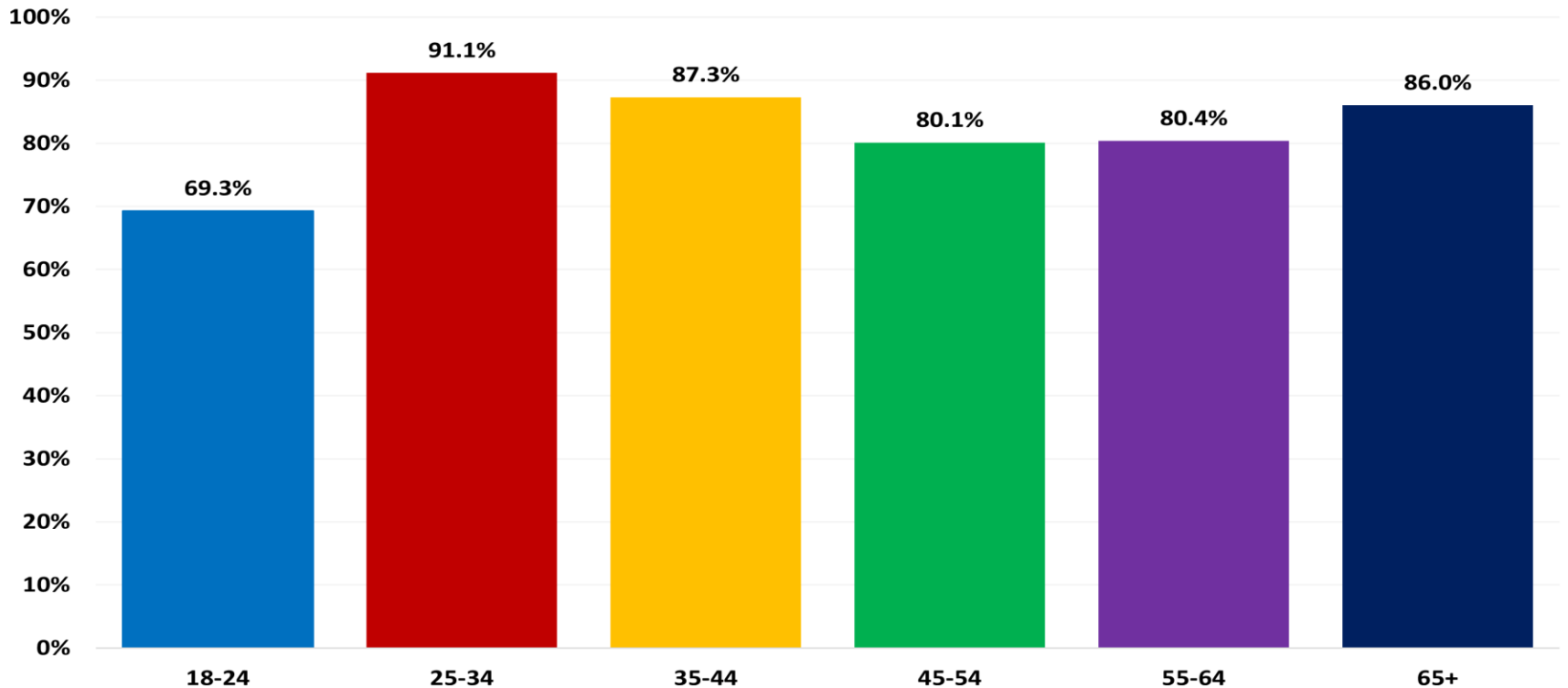
Data Source: California voter files, California Department of Finance

Registration rate disparities continued in 2022



Young voters had notably lower registration rates than their older counterparts

Registration Rate by Age Group
2022 General Election



Data Source: California voter files, California Department of Finance

Measuring Voter Turnout

Two ways to measure turnout....

1. Total Registered Voter Turnout
2. Total Eligible Voter Turnout

Eligible Voter Turnout Preliminary Numbers

Data Sources: California Secretary of State, California Department of Finance

What was eligible voter turnout in CA's 2022 General Election?

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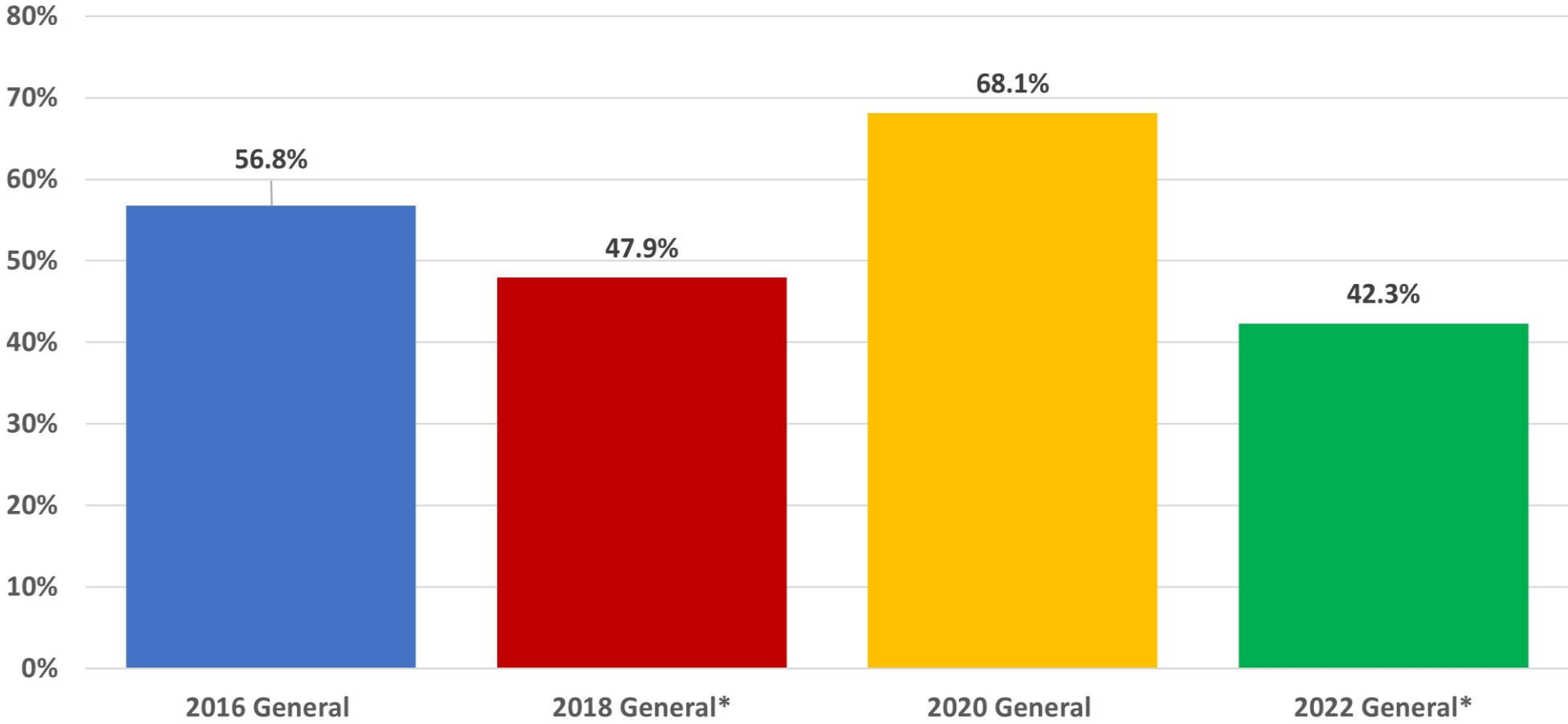
Data Source: CA Secretary of State, PDI

What was eligible voter turnout in CA's 2022 General Election?

42.3%

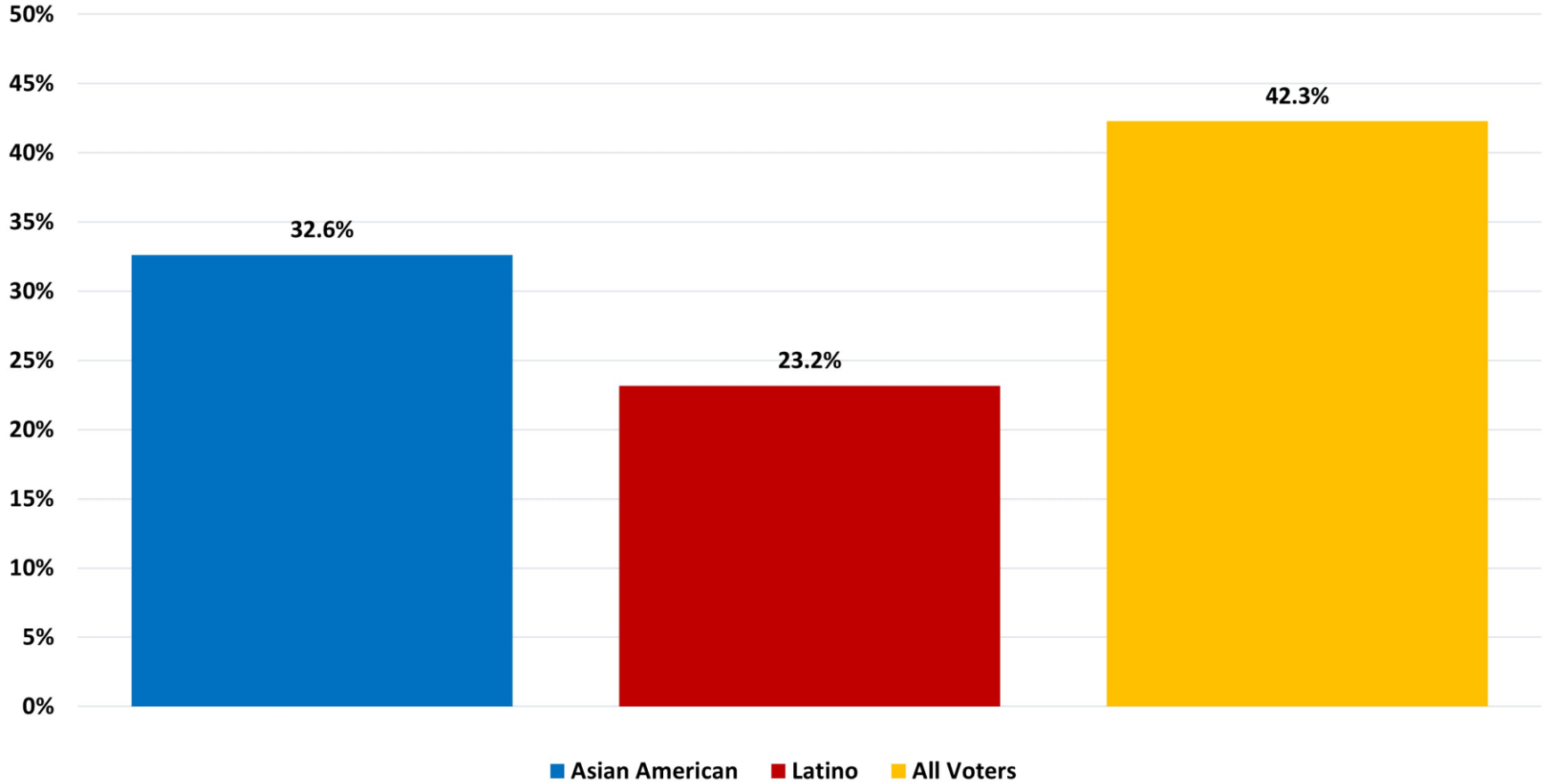
Data Source: CA Secretary of State, PDI

Eligible Voter Turnout 2016-2022 California General Elections



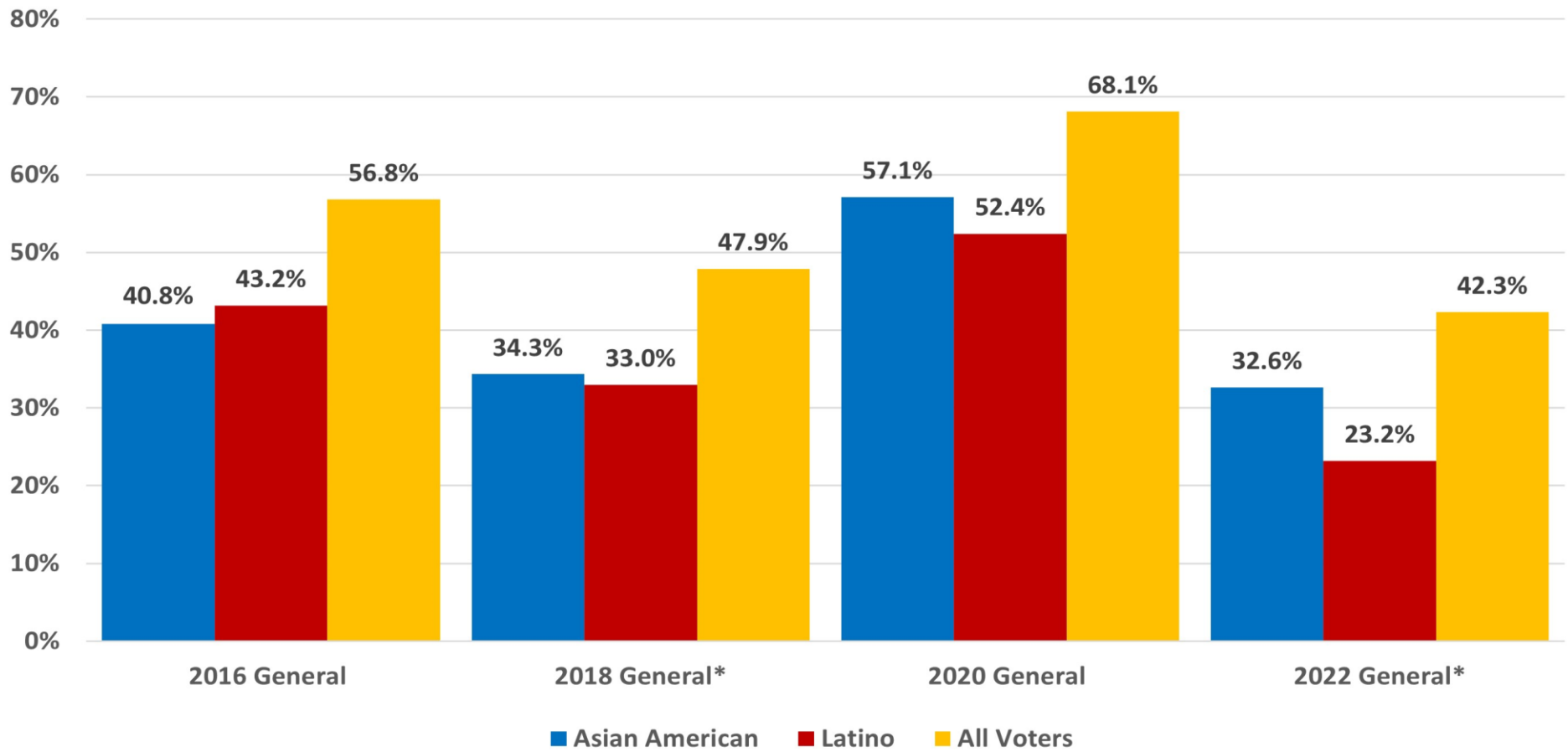
*Midterm Election
Data Source: California county voter files, California Department of Finance

Eligible Voter Turnout Race and Ethnicity California 2022 General Election



Data Source: County Voter Files, California Department of Finance

Eligible Voter Turnout Race and Ethnicity 2016-2022 California General Elections

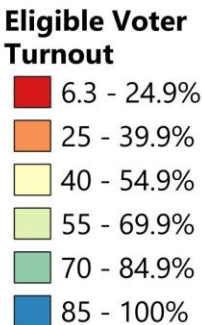
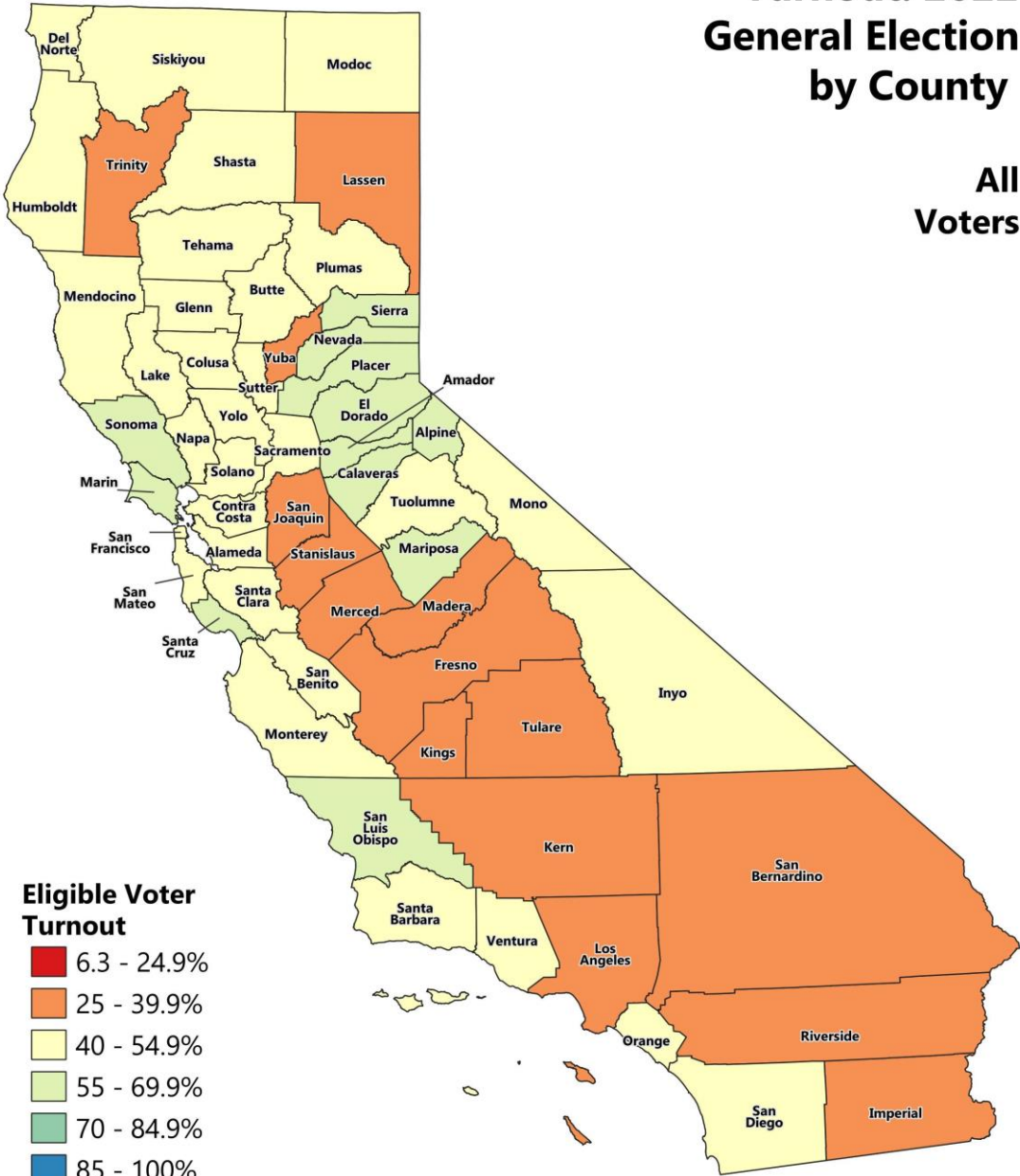


*Midterm Election

Data Source: California county voter files, California Department of Finance

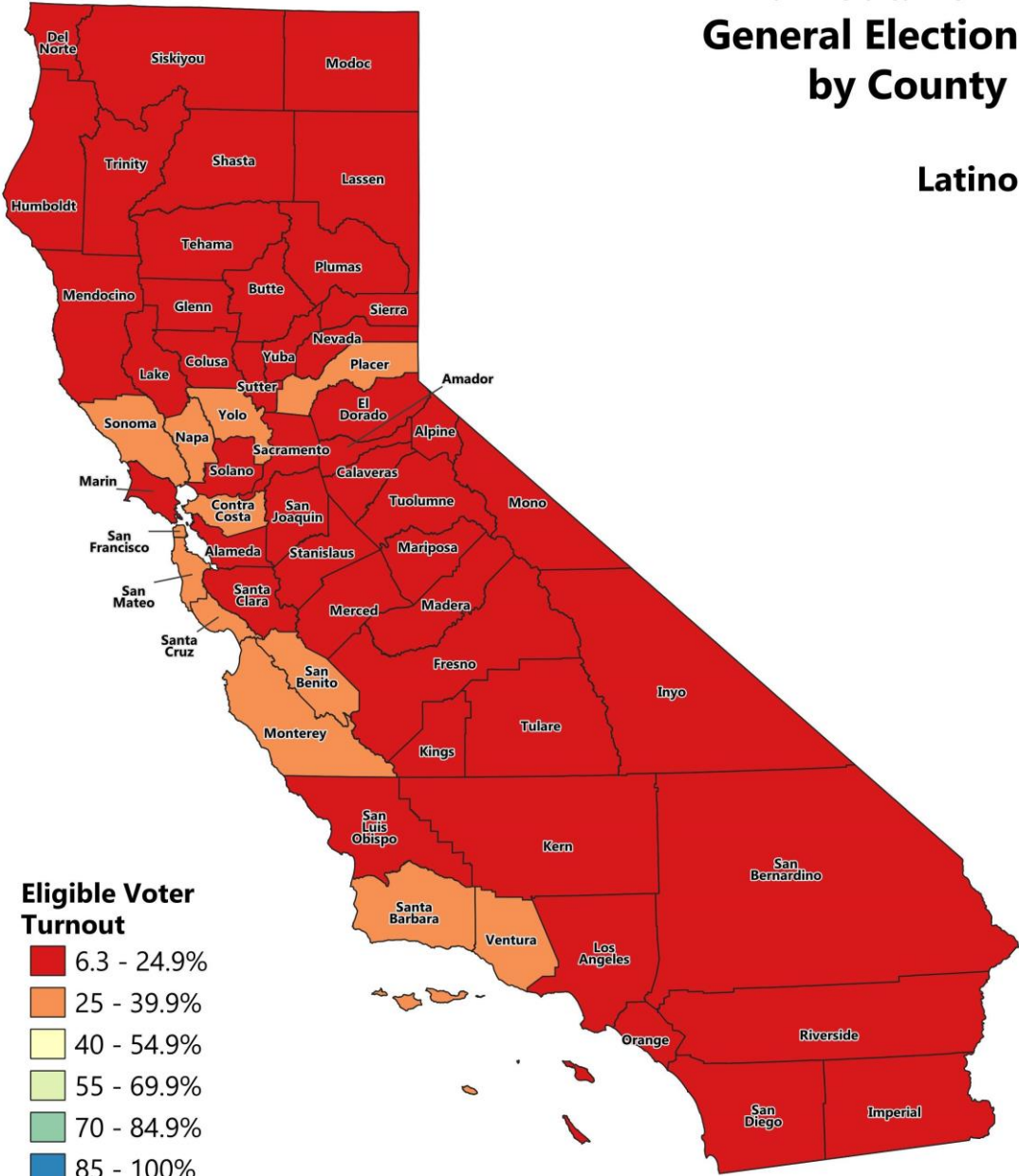
Eligible Voter Turnout: 2022 General Election by County

All Voters



Eligible Voter Turnout: 2022 General Election by County

Latino



Eligible Voter Turnout

- 6.3 - 24.9%
- 25 - 39.9%
- 40 - 54.9%
- 55 - 69.9%
- 70 - 84.9%
- 85 - 100%



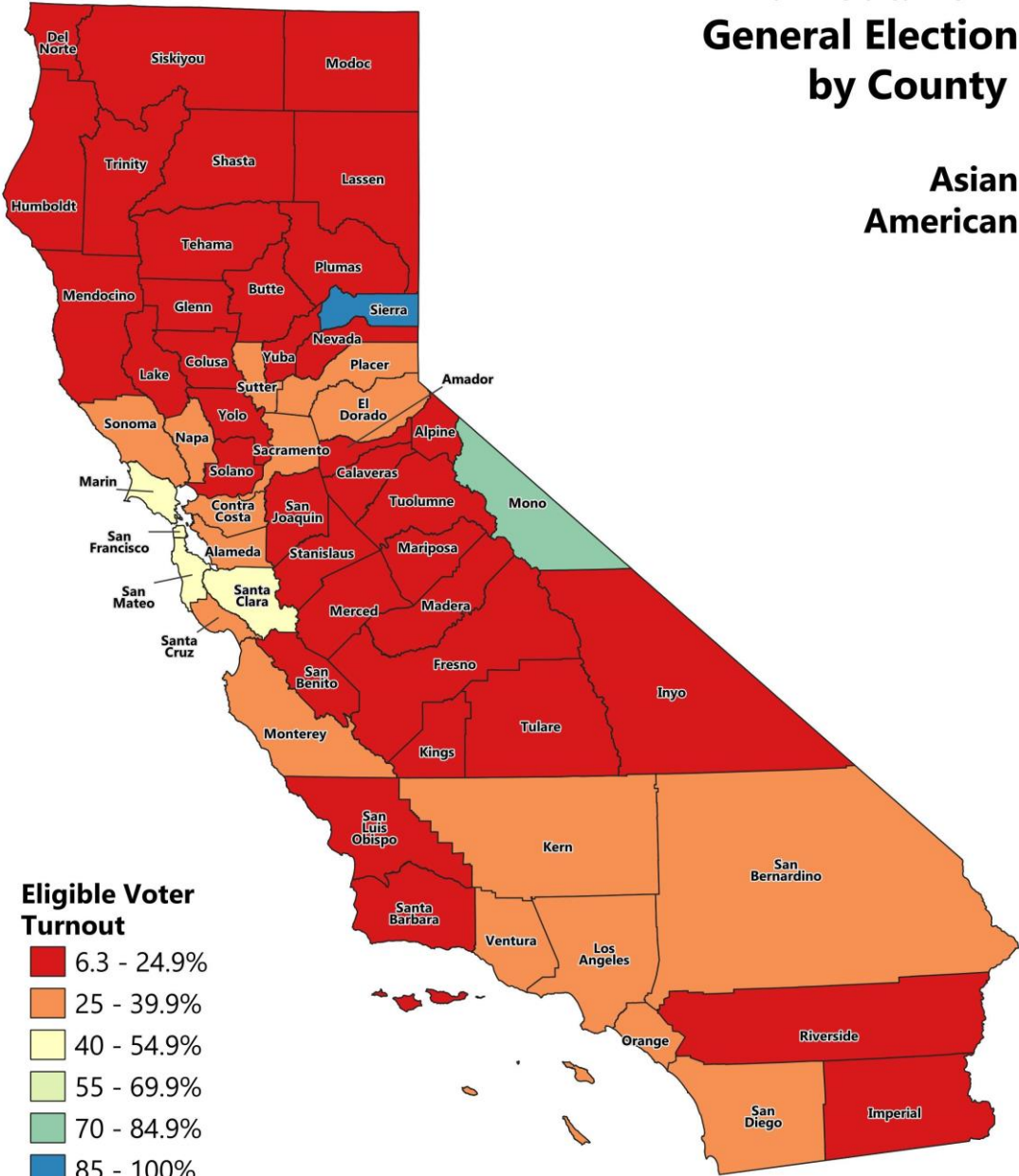
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Eligible Voter Turnout: 2022 General Election by County

Asian American



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Data Sources: County Voter Files, California Department of Finance

California Black Eligible Turnout Overview

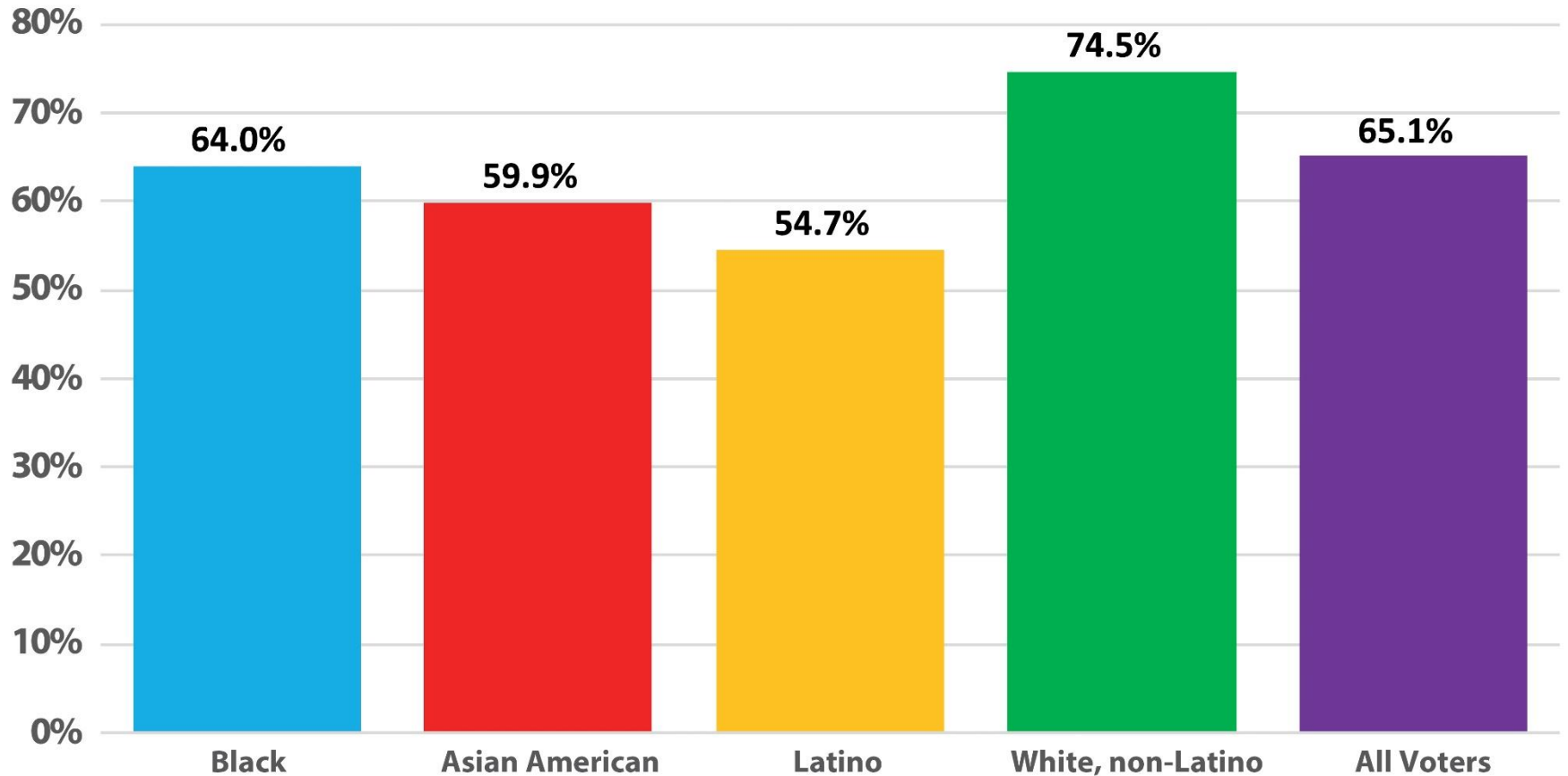
Turnout Gap Between Black and White, non-Latino Voters has been Widening in CA

According to the Current Population Survey (CPS)

- In the 2020 general election, 64.0% of Black eligible voters (adult citizens) cast a ballot
- 74.5% of white, non-Latino eligible voters casting a ballot
- There was a 10.5 percentage point turnout gap between Black and white, non-Latino eligible voters. This turnout gap has increased in recent general elections

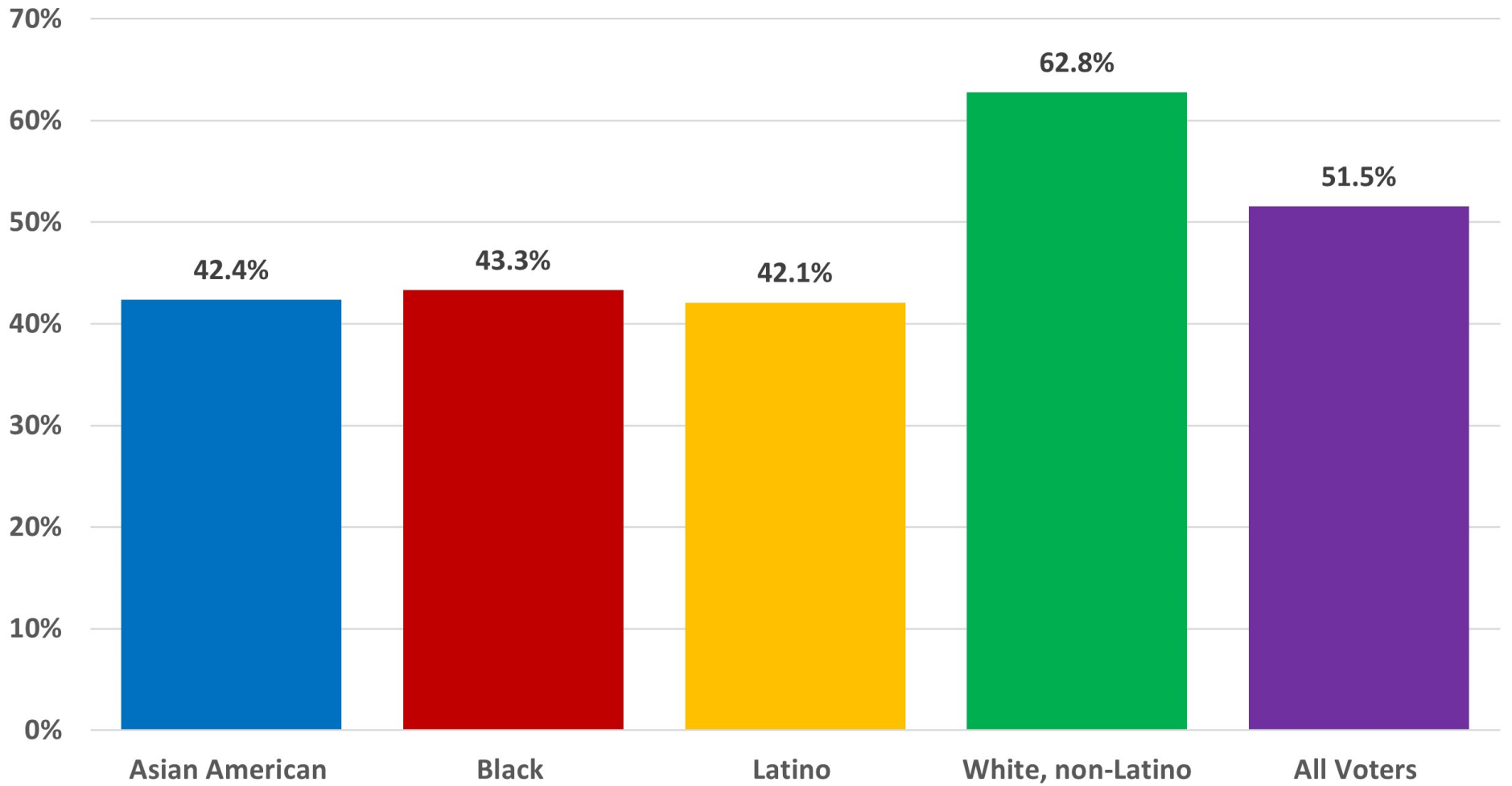
Eligible Voter Turnout - Race and Ethnicity

California 2020 General Elections



Data Source: Current Population Survey

Eligible Voter Turnout - Race and Ethnicity California 2022 General Election



Data Source: Current Population Survey

Turnout in California Black Communities

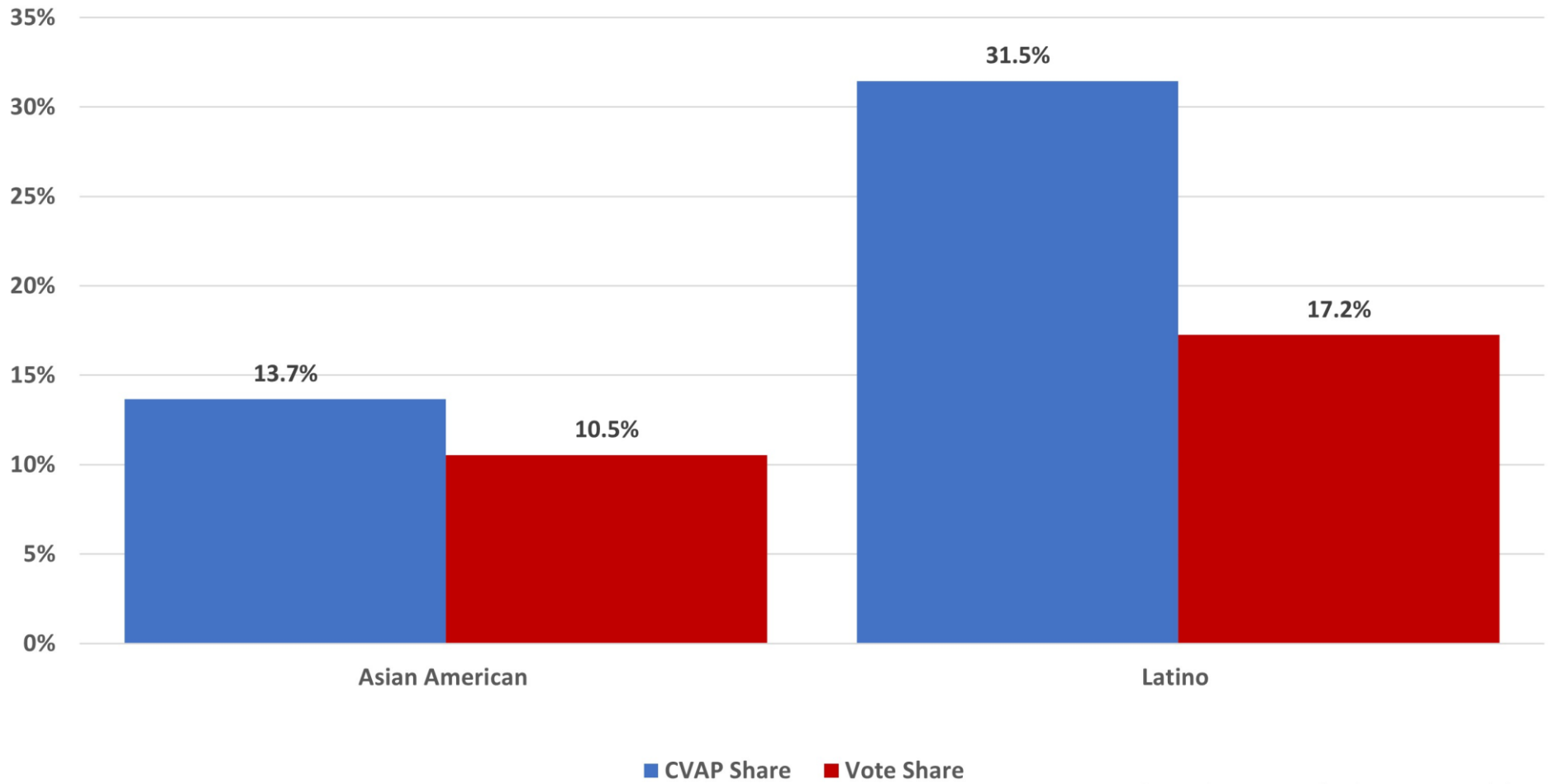
(Data Source: VoteCal voter file)

Census Tract Analysis: Highlights

1. Over Three-Quarters of Eligible Black Voters in Black Majority Census Tracts Cast a Ballot – higher turnout than all voters statewide
2. Black Majority Census Tracts Generally had Lower Total Eligible Voter Turnout when Compared to White, non-Latino Majority Census Tracts
3. Black Voters in Black Majority Census Tracts Utilized In-Person Voting Locations at Higher Rates than Voters in All Census Tracts In Black majority Census Tracts

Voter Representation

Share of Eligible Voters versus Share of Votes Cast Race and Ethnicity 2022 General Election



Data Source: County Voter Files, CA Department of Finance

Why so low?

What can be done?

Reasons for Lower Turnout

Disparities in registration

Disparities in outreach and mobilization

Historic and current disconnection from the political process

Demographics

Turnout even lower in primaries

Questions?

Thank you!

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