



NEWAMERICAN VOTERS2020

FLORIDA STATE REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2020



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Newly naturalized citizens in Florida, including large numbers of immigrants who are originally from Latin America as well as the Caribbean countries of Haiti and Jamaica, can sway the outcome of the 2020 presidential election and determine who will control the White House for the next four years.

Whether these newly naturalized citizens vote, however, will largely depend on the Florida Immigrant Coalition and other grassroots efforts to reach this rising demographic in languages and cultural ways that connect. The electoral scenario presents enormous challenges for new citizens, including a lack of language access, the need for immigrant rights organizations to adapt to the coronavirus pandemic as it is tearing through communities in Florida, a growing need for absentee ballots at a time when the Trump administration appears to be politicizing the Post Office, and ongoing efforts to limit access to the ballot. Another form of voter suppression is the current backlog of citizenship applications before U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), which according to the latest data from the agenda, is 67,075 applications in Florida.¹ That number of potential voters is over half of the margin of victory (112,911 votes) during the presidential election of 2016.² Processing delays exceed the national average in USCIS offices throughout Florida, including 10.5 to 31 months in Miami; 8 to 23.5 months in Oakland Park; 10.5 to 21.5 months in Orlando; 8.5 to 17 months in Fort Myers; 9 to 13.5 months in West Palm Beach; and 7 to 13.5 months in Kendall; among other offices.³

Despite these challenges and forms of voter suppression, there are incredible opportunities to increase voting throughout Florida. There are huge amounts of newly naturalized citizens, with those originally from Cuba who naturalized from 2014 to 2018 exceeding the 2016 presidential margin of victory alone, at 117,855. During that same time period, the total number of citizens who naturalized from Haiti, Colombia, Jamaica, Venezuela, and Mexico exceeded the margin. Nowhere in the country can Black immigrants from the Caribbean have more of an impact on the 2020 elections than in Florida. And nowhere in the country do naturalized citizens from Latin America, including Cuba, Colombia, Venezuela, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Peru, Brazil, and Nicaragua, have the potential to form a consequential voting bloc than in Florida. Almost 80% of new citizens are originally from Latin America and the Caribbean, they are 55% women, and the majority, 54 percent, are younger than 45 years old. New citizens, along with new developments like the ability of persons with a history of a felony to vote in 2020, present the ability for them to sway the outcome of 2020 and change the history of this nation.

¹ Number of Form N-400, Application for Naturalization By Category of Naturalization, Case Status, and USCIS Field Office Location, January 1 - March 31, 2020," U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, accessed August 13, 2020, https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/data/N400_performancedata_fy2020_qtr2.pdf.

² Florida Results, New York Times, August 1, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/elections/2016/results/florida>.

³ "Check Case Processing Times," U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, accessed September 10, 2020, <https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-times/>.

WHY FLORIDA IS SO IMPORTANT IN 2020

Florida's recently naturalized citizens will play a critical role in the November presidential election. Florida ranks first as the state in which new citizens can have the greatest influence, according to the New American Voters Impact Model, created by the National Partnership for New Americans (NPNA) and based on factors like the 2016 presidential election margin of victory; the margin of victory average during the last three presidential elections; the number and concentration of new citizens in the state; and the occurrence of a senatorial, gubernatorial, or state legislative election and their competitiveness.⁴

From 2014-2018, 415,468 new citizens naturalized, which is almost more than triple the 2016 margin of victory. From 2014-2020 in Florida, there will be an estimated 614,122 new citizens naturalized, which is more than five times the 2016 margin.⁵ The numbers of new citizens are based on USCIS data on naturalizations that occurred from Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 through FY 2018 and naturalization applications that the agency approved in FY 2019.⁶ The estimates for naturalizations during FY 2020 is based on previous spikes in naturalizations in FY 2016, before that calendar year's presidential election.⁷ "Newly naturalized citizens" or "recently naturalized citizens" are defined as those who have naturalized since FY 2014. "New American Voters" are defined as those who have naturalized since FY 2014 and can subsequently register to vote.

These estimates of new citizens were made in NPNA's report, *The Power of Newly Naturalized Citizens in the 2020 Elections*, released in June 2020. The report calculated that from FY 2014 through FY 2020, there would be 5.3 million new citizens who naturalized, the majority of which, 3.1 million, naturalized since the election of Donald Trump to President. Since the report's release, USCIS has released data indicating that around 290,000 naturalization applicants awaiting their interview will not be naturalized in time to register to vote, meaning that NPNA's original estimates of 5.3 million will be reduced to around 5 million new citizens.⁸ Nevertheless, USCIS mismanagement will not hold back the approximately 5 million new citizens, including their large numbers in Florida.

⁴ Iñiguez-López, Diego, "The Power of Newly Naturalized Citizens in the 2020 Elections," National Partnership for New Americans, June 2020, newamericanvoters2020.org/assets/2020/06/NAV-REPORT-2020-UPDATED.pdf.

⁵ Florida Results, New York Times, August 1, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/elections/2016/results/florida>.

⁶ See "Naturalizations," U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, accessed August 12, 2020, <https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/naturalizations>; "Immigration and Citizenship Data," U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, accessed August 12, 2020, <https://www.uscis.gov/tools/reports-and-studies/immigration-and-citizenship-data>.

⁷ See Iñiguez-López, Diego, "Naturalize Now, Vote Tomorrow: New Americans Vote 2020," National Partnership for New Americans, February 2020, https://partnershipfornewamericans.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Naturalize_Now_Vote_Tomorrow_FINAL.pdf.

⁸ See Rampell, Catherine, "The 'Missing' Immigrant Voters Whose Absence Might Swing the Election," *Washington Post*, August 27, 2020, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-missing-immigrant-voters-whose-absence-might-swing-the-election/2020/08/27/db144c16-e897-11ea-97e0-94d2e46e759b_story.html; "The Fix Is In — Nearly 300,000 Immigrants Won't Become U.S. Citizens In Time For the 2020 Election," *Boundless*, September 3, 2020, <https://www.boundless.com/blog/immigrants-citizenship-vote-2020/>.

In Florida, naturalized citizens are more than 4% of the total number of registered voters. Of the more than 2.3 million naturalized citizens in Florida, more than a quarter are new citizens. Since the release of NPNA's June 2020 report, which utilized American Community Survey (ACS) data from 2017, ACS released 2018 data, which this report uses.⁹

TOTAL POPULATION	REGISTERED VOTERS	ALL NATURALIZED	NATURALIZED 2014-2020
20,278,447	13,731,883	2,329,271	614,122

WHO ARE FLORIDA'S NEW AMERICAN VOTERS

Latin Americans represent 64% of new citizens, 15% are Caribbean, 8% are Asian American and Pacific Islander, 8% are European, 4% Middle Eastern and North African, and 1% African. The chart below provides totals for 2014-2018.

LATIN AMERICAN	266,187	64%
CARIBBEAN	62,494	15%
ASIAN AMERICAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER	34,613	8%
EUROPEAN	34,438	8%
MIDDLE EASTERN & NORTH AFRICAN	11,709	3%
AFRICAN	6,027	1%
TOTAL 2014-2018	415,468	
TOTAL 2014-2020	614,122	

⁹ "Nativity and Citizenship Status in the United States," United States Census Bureau, accessed September 11, 2020, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=B05001%3A%20NATIVITY%20AND%20CITIZENSHIP%20STATUS%20IN%20THE%20UNITED%20STATES&g=0400000US39&tid=ACSDT5Y2018.B05001&moe=false&tp=false&hidePreview=true>.

The following map represents the top 20 countries of origin for newly naturalized citizens.



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RANK	COUNTRY	TOTAL
1	CUBA	117,855
2	HAITI	33,030
3	COLOMBIA	32,377
4	JAMAICA	21,408
5	VENEZUELA	19,674
6	MEXICO	13,604
7	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	12,679
8	PERU	11,972
9	BRAZIL	11,514
10	NICARAGUA	10,037
11	PHILIPPINES	8,003
12	INDIA	7,315
13	ARGENTINA	6,823
14	HONDURAS	5,733
15	ECUADOR	5,562
16	UNITED KINGDOM	5,379
17	CANADA	4,717
18	VIETNAM	4,494
19	CHINA	3,965
20	TRINIDAD & TOBAGO	3,775

Compared to all other states, Florida ranks 1st for Caribbean new citizens, 2nd for new citizens from Latin America, 3rd for European, 6th for Middle Eastern and North African, 7th for Asian American & Pacific Islander, and 15th for African.

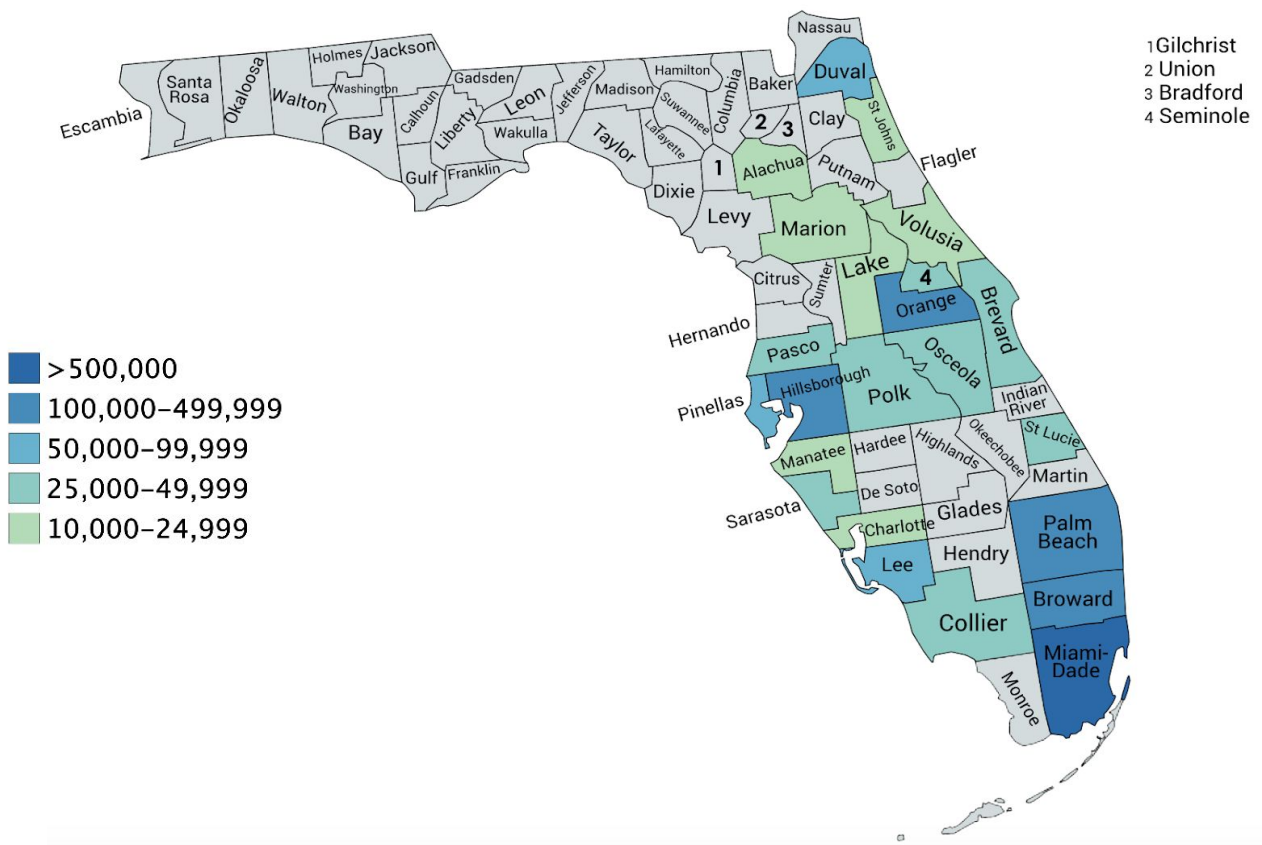
TOP 15 STATES BY REGION								
LATIN AMERICA			AAPI			EUROPE		
Rank	State	Total	Rank	State	Total	Rank	State	Total
1	California	314,645	1	California	302,467	1	California	69,325
2	Florida	266,187	2	New York	131,603	2	New York	55,372
3	Texas	155,321	3	Texas	80,503	3	Florida	34,438
4	New York	138,284	4	New Jersey	57,651	4	Illinois	31,056
5	New Jersey	69,942	5	Illinois	41,225	5	New Jersey	23,112
6	Illinois	36,444	6	Virginia	37,600	6	Massachusetts	20,328
7	Massachusetts	34,288	7	Florida	34,613	7	Washington	17,473
8	Arizona	32,893	8	Washington	32,572	8	Texas	16,685
9	Virginia	24,555	9	Pennsylvania	31,916	9	Pennsylvania	13,261
10	Georgia	23,826	10	Massachusetts	30,770	10	Michigan	12,689
11	North Carolina	19,581	11	Georgia	29,527	11	Connecticut	10,017
12	Nevada	18,049	12	Maryland	24,857	12	Virginia	9,860
13	Maryland	17,432	13	Ohio	21,848	13	Georgia	9,586
14	Washington	15,954	14	North Carolina	20,613	14	North Carolina	8,515
15	Pennsylvania	15,907	15	Michigan	19,099	15	Ohio	8,174
AFRICA			MENA			CARIBBEAN		
Rank	State	Total	Rank	State	Total	Rank	State	Total
1	Texas	25,907	1	California	62,108	1	Florida	62,494
2	New York	25,509	2	Michigan	21,860	2	New York	57,642
3	Maryland	24,438	3	New York	20,615	3	New Jersey	12,599
4	California	17,151	4	Texas	15,726	4	Massachusetts	12,447
5	Minnesota	15,555	5	New Jersey	13,128	5	Georgia	6,862
6	Massachusetts	15,493	6	Florida	11,709	6	Connecticut	6,477
7	Georgia	14,124	7	Illinois	10,536	7	Pennsylvania	5,088
8	Virginia	14,120	8	Virginia	10,007	8	Maryland	4,680
9	Ohio	11,910	9	Massachusetts	8,746	9	Texas	3,169
10	New Jersey	10,177	10	Pennsylvania	6,280	10	California	2,441
11	Pennsylvania	9,600	11	Ohio	5,710	11	Virginia	2,193
12	Washington	8,522	12	Arizona	4,917	12	North Carolina	1,912
13	Illinois	8,263	13	Tennessee	4,104	13	Illinois	1,653
14	North Carolina	7,879	14	North Carolina	4,055	14	South Carolina	1,448
15	Florida	6,027	15	Maryland	4,034	15	Ohio	919

55% of newly naturalized citizens in Florida are women and 54% were below the age of 45 when they naturalized. The full breakdown by age and gender is shown in the following table:

FLORIDA 2014-2018 NATURALIZED BY AGE AND GENDER				
AGE	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL	%
18-24 YEARS	17,842	16,173	34,016	8%
25-34 YEARS	49,791	40,067	89,860	22%
35-44 YEARS	54,066	45,488	99,555	24%
45-54 YEARS	44,127	38,094	82,225	20%
55-64 YEARS	31,371	26,242	57,614	14%
65 YEARS AND OVER	29,560	22,993	52,554	13%
TOTAL	226,757	189,057	415,824	

WHERE ARE FLORIDA'S NATURALIZED VOTERS

The following map and table show counties with 10,000 or more naturalized citizens. Miami-Dade has over 800,000 naturalized citizens, followed by Broward with 364,808. Palm Beach, Orange, and Hillsborough counties each have more than 100,000 naturalized citizens.



County	Total	Latin American	Asian	African	European	Oceania	North American
Miami-Dade	802,369	749,424	23,180	4,075	23,374	242	2,074
Broward	364,808	287,332	34,098	6,010	30,218	330	6,820
Palm Beach	181,557	123,641	21,435	4,236	26,949	471	4,825
Orange	133,898	89,284	27,830	4,254	10,304	126	2,052
Hillsborough	110,665	69,213	24,678	4,306	9,828	321	2,319
Pinellas	65,795	19,630	17,310	2,202	23,002	183	3,468
Lee	52,177	32,771	6,641	762	9,539	112	2,352
Duval	51,461	16,834	21,175	2,446	9,748	75	1,183
Collier	36,671	24,385	2,730	469	7,817	46	1,224
Seminole	34,398	17,308	9,352	1,919	4,780	65	974
Osceola	33,681	26,039	4,014	1,281	1,916	92	339
Brevard	30,667	15,087	6,619	1,040	6,519	53	1,349
Polk	28,082	17,081	6,635	533	2,750	50	1,033
Sarasota	27,679	9,063	3,817	768	12,288	71	1,672
Pasco	27,536	12,500	5,798	890	7,098	80	1,170
St. Lucie	27,492	19,520	2,512	352	4,047	0	1,061
Volusia	23,129	10,614	4,506	798	5,742	83	1,386
Manatee	19,710	8,499	4,023	726	5,431	42	989
Lake	16,593	10,256	2,774	395	2,408	0	760
Marion	15,254	8,784	2,603	186	2,952	34	695
Alachua	12,446	5,074	4,259	658	2,045	50	360
Charlotte	10,790	5,386	1,391	80	3,185	64	684
St. Johns	10,175	3,186	3,044	362	3,059	67	457

RESOURCES

If you are interested in becoming a citizen or have other questions about the process, we invite you to call our Hotline at [1-888-600-5762](tel:1-888-600-5762) to receive more information and connect with organizations providing free or low-cost services near you.

If you are interested in registering to vote or learning how you can vote this year, please visit FLIC.VOTE to make your plan to vote.



Attending a virtual Florida Immigrant Coalition workshop on citizenship, the Khan family (pictured above) was able to complete the process for all four members of the family.

ABOUT US

THIS REPORT WAS CREATED BY NPNA AND FLORIDA IMMIGRANT COALITION



The National Partnership for New Americans is a national multiethnic, multiracial partnership. We represent the collective power of the country's 41 largest regional immigrant and refugee rights organizations in 37 states. Our members provide large-scale services—from Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals application processing to voter registration to health care enrollment—for their communities, and they combine service delivery with sophisticated organizing tactics to advance local and state policy. We exist to leverage their collective power and expertise for a national strategy.

To learn more about the National Partnership for New Americans, visit partnershipfornewamericans.org.



The Florida Immigrant Coalition (FLIC) is a statewide coalition of more than 65 member organizations and over 100 allies, founded in 1998 and formally incorporated in 2004. We are led by our membership, including grassroots and community organizations, farmworkers, youth, advocates, lawyers, union members, and more.

More than an organization, FLIC has become a hub for a bold, agile, and strategic multi-racial, intergenerational social movement. We work together for the fair treatment of all people, including immigrants. With staff in six counties, and members throughout Florida, FLIC's leadership builds depth in local communities, breadth for statewide reach and national alignment.

To learn more about the Florida Immigrant Coalition, visit floridaimmigrant.org