

ASIAN AMERICAN VOTER ACCESS IN LA COUNTY

IN-LANGUAGE BALLOT USE, VOTER EXPERIENCES AND EFFECTIVENESS OF VOTER OUTREACH



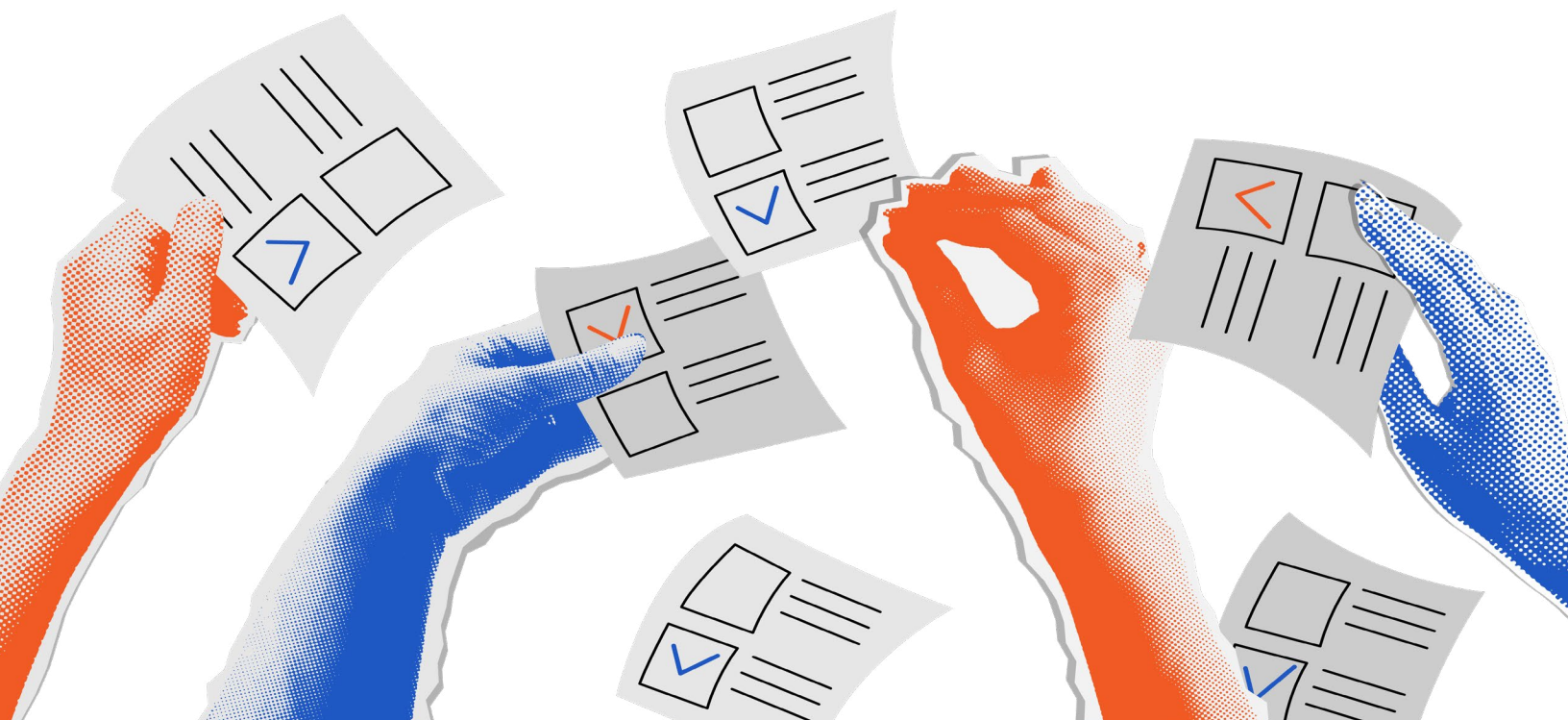
ASIAN AMERICAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER POLICY INITIATIVE



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study offers insight into what Asian American experiences are like when they cast a ballot in Los Angeles and the extent to which they find services to ease voting useful. We find that while Asian American respondents commend the government for trying to make it easy to vote, many report that it is still difficult to vote. In particular, we find that bilingual materials are not seen to make voting easier for Asian Americans. This study offers some evidence to suggest that language accessibility can be improved.

Description of study: Our research team collected 1,062 in-person surveys with Asian American adults attending community events held at various locations across Los Angeles County (San Gabriel Valley, Koreatown, Culver City and East Hollywood) between January 2024 and March 2024. Surveys were available in English, Chinese (traditional and simplified), Vietnamese, Thai and Spanish.



STUDY FINDINGS

Attitudes Towards Voting

1. Asian American respondents reported a high level of knowledge about how to cast a ballot in Los Angeles County, demonstrating that voter education campaigns have provided a solid understanding of voting
 - a. 90% of respondents who are registered voters are aware of universal vote by mail. 92% knew of availability of bilingual materials, and 84% knew of availability of vote centers
2. In-person modes of voting remain a preference among many in our survey, even with implementation of universal vote by mail
 - a. Among Asian American voters, 34.7% prefer to vote in-person, 26% prefer to drop off their ballot at a vote center and 32.9% prefer to vote by mail.
 - b. Older Asian American voters prefer in-person modes (45.9% prefer voting in-person) while young Asian American voters vary in their preference (See **Figure 1**).
3. Reasons for not voting varied by registration status
 - a. Among those who are registered reported the top reason for not voting was that they did not have time to vote (37%).
 - b. Among those who are not registered, the top reason was that they were unable to vote (26%).
4. The majority of regular voters (59%) strongly agree that the government makes voting easy, however, only 30% of low propensity voters strongly agree voting has been made easy.

Language Access and Voting

5. Bilingual materials are not making it easier for immigrant respondents to vote
 - a. 56.9% of Asian immigrant voters report that the Asian-language translated ballot is hard to understand. They also report that the English-language ballot is hard to understand. This suggests that those who likely need translated materials feel that these translated materials are not making it easier to vote. (See **Figure 2**).

Effectiveness of Outreach Efforts

The majority of the Asian American respondents in our sample do not recall being contacted about the election. Of those who have received contact, the largest number of respondents were contacted by a political candidate (41% of the sample). In contrast, 38% of the sample reported to be contacted by the LA County Registrar to vote and 33% reported to be contacted by a community organization.

6. Likely voters in our sample report the highest rate of voter outreach while low propensity voters receive little outreach. Since contact is reported to increase the likelihood of voting, targeting outreach to low propensity voters could yield higher rates of turnout. (See **Figure 3**)
7. The LA County Registrar of Voters is seen as a trusted messenger particularly among likely voters. 50.5% of likely voters said that outreach by the Registrar of Voters would increase their likelihood of voting. In comparison, only 33.2% of likely voters contacted by a political candidate said that this would make them more likely to vote. (See **Figure 4**)

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Evaluate the accuracy and translations used in bilingual voting materials so that voters see these resources as useful tools to better ease the voting process.

2

Increase opportunities for in-person voting among communities with high concentrations of Asian Americans, since it remains a preferred method of voting for many.

3

Encourage greater contact with Asian American communities by county registrar offices since these offices are seen as trusted messengers for voting.

FIGURES

Figure 1: Voting Mode Preference Among Asian American Voters

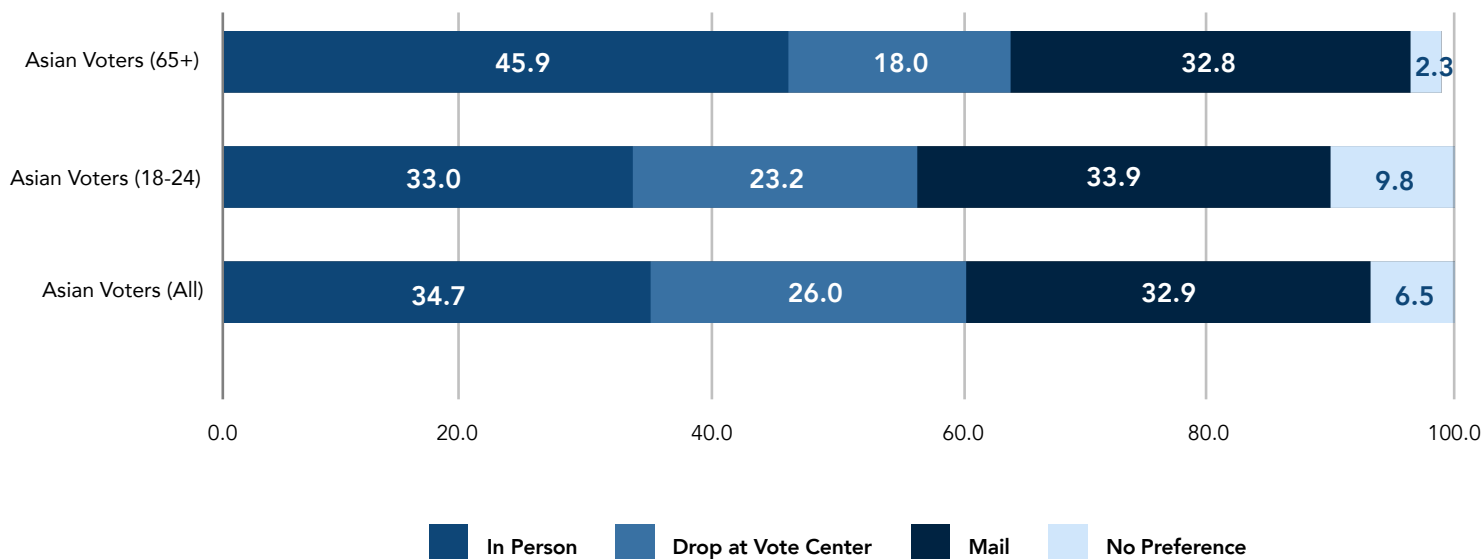


Figure 2: Difficulty Understanding the Ballot Among Asian American Voters

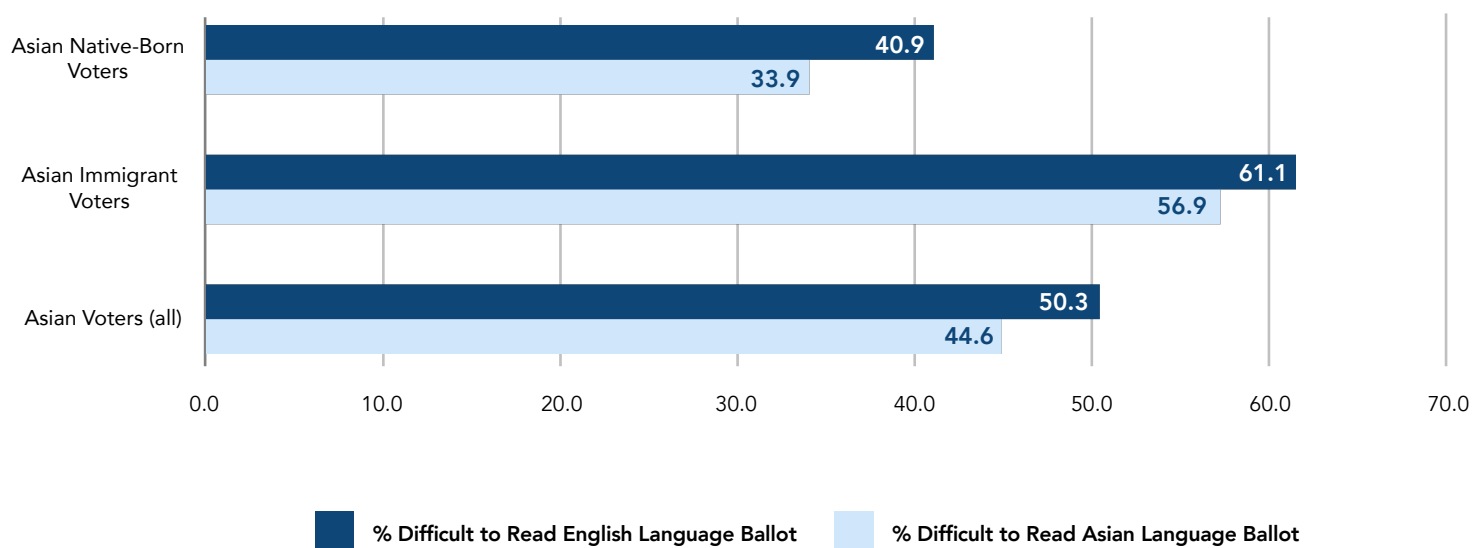


Figure 3: Received Outreach on Elections by Voter Type

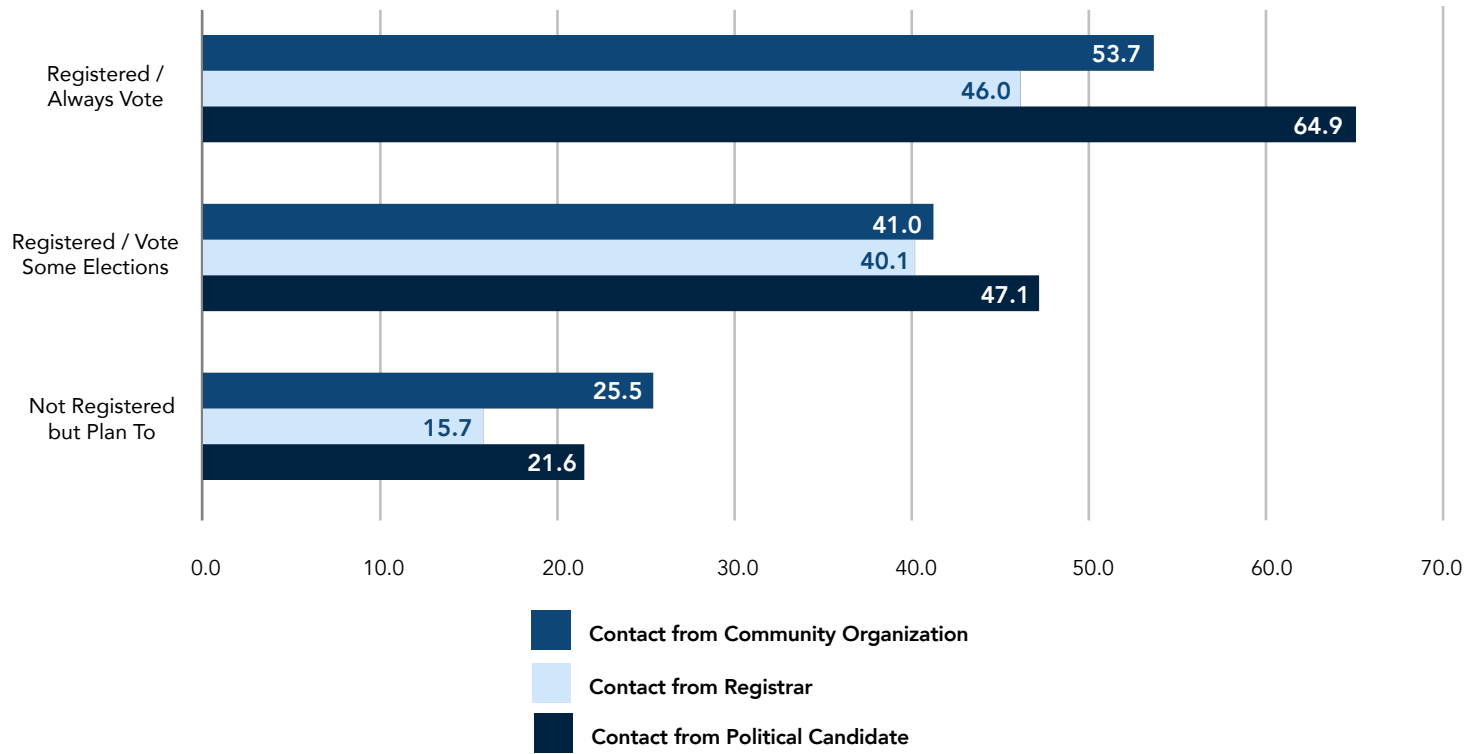
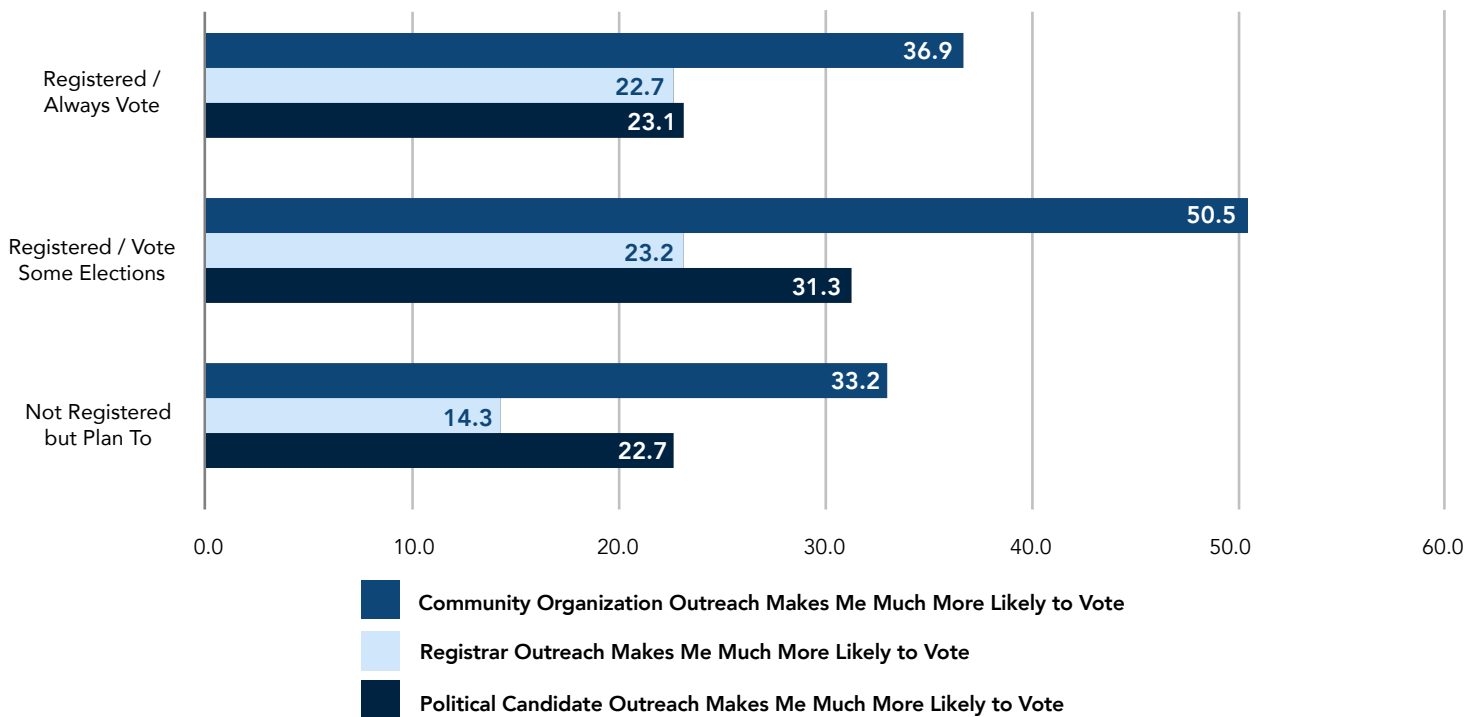


Figure 4: Percentage Who Report Outreach Increases Likelihood of Voting



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DISCLAIMER

The views expressed herein are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the University of California, Los Angeles. The authors alone are responsible for the content of this report.

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