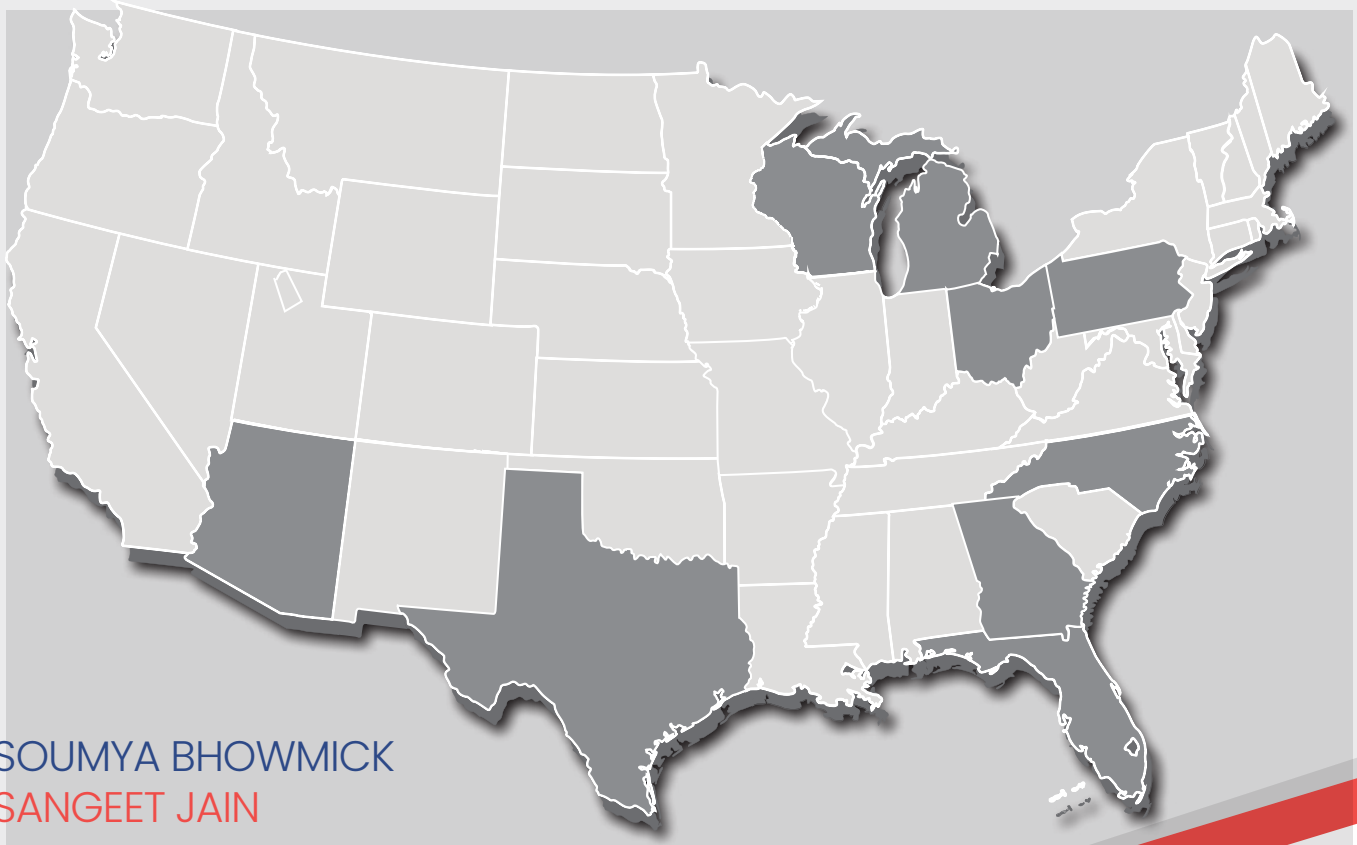




★ ★ ★ ★ ★
US ELECTIONS
2020

THE
BATTLEGROUND
STATES



SOUMYA BHOWMICK
SANGEET JAIN

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INTRODUCTION

The United States (US) is set to head into its 59th quadrennial Presidential Election in November. The 2020 race between Democrat Joe Biden and Republican Donald Trump was already being billed as one of the most politically fraught elections the country has seen yet, even without the help of a brewing health crisis which has upended state capacity and election processes. The incumbent, Trump, has hinted multiple times (without providing evidence) at the likelihood of fraud, indicating that he would not readily accept the results of the election. The polls will happen at a time when the country is grappling with heightened racial tensions, misinformation wars, and abounding conspiracy theories. The COVID-19 pandemic has compounded the polarisation, too, with the politicisation of health messaging around the pandemic.

This report is an exposition on the “battleground states” in the US election this year: the states that might ultimately decide the outcome of the November polls; where, by our reckoning, there are yet no clear allegiances nor evident leanings towards either party. These are Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas and Wisconsin—nine states with a combined 173 electoral votes between them. There are a total of 538 electoral college votes in a presidential election, of which a candidate requires 270 to win. These swing states therefore constitute a huge electoral haul, and both the Republican and Democratic parties are invested massively in campaigning in those areas.

The report aims to make two key contributions towards current analyses on the 2020 US elections. It outlines the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the battleground states and their economies, and captures the political dynamics and contestations around the pandemic in the states. It also provides a glimpse into the electoral history and electorate profile of each of the states, and offers a commentary on the main issues that matter to those electorates.

We also seek to break new ground in capturing the influence of the Indian-American community as an electoral constituency in these states. After all, this population has become a formidable political force in many parts of the US, due to their growing numbers and outsized impact. They are particularly high-skilled and mostly prosperous, even as they constitute a small two percent of the US electorate.¹ The community has now become a microcosm—a battleground itself as Indian-Americans, once a staunchly Democratic lot on the whole, are now believed to be swerving towards the Republican Party.

A survey by Indiaspora and the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) released in September 2020 has found that 66 percent of Indian-Americans across the US favour Democratic Party nominee Joe Biden, 28 percent are for Donald Trump, and six percent are undecided—this is a significant change from 2016 when 77 percent of the Indian-American community had voted for Democrat Hillary Clinton. Al Mason, chairperson of the Trump Victory Indian American Finance Committee,

has even gone to say that his own survey findings indicate that about 50 percent of Indian Americans will vote Republican this election.² Foreign-policy columnist columnist Seema Sirohi³ has written about a perceived “shift” among older-generation Indian-Americans, in response to Trump’s significant overtures towards a Modi-led India and a number of spectacular rallies with the prime minister which have caught the attention of these voters. Meanwhile, many Indian-Americans view Biden’s outreach towards the Muslim-American community and the Democrats’ opposition on Indian domestic issues such as the Citizenship Amendment Act as interference and unnecessary baiting.

Does the Indian-American community possess enough clout to enable it to play a role in the electoral fortunes of either party? This report highlights some interesting numbers. The nine battleground states are home to roughly 1.4 million Indian-American voters. In one of them, Wisconsin, the Republicans won in the 2016 election with a narrow margin of 21,000 votes; the state has 37,000 Indian-Americans. Meanwhile, in Florida, also in 2016, Indian-American voters constituted two-thirds of the margin garnered by the winner. The sheer mathematical significance of the Indian-American electorate, coupled with their apparently shifting attitudes, have caused both parties to woo the community assiduously. The Democratic Party has gone out of their way to court the community separately from the larger AAPI electorate.⁴

The pandemic has added considerable uncertainty to the American elections this year. The Wisconsin primaries in April served a taste of the chaos that can visit the November election, if it is not managed properly.

Analysts are anticipating long queues at polling places and potentially late results, and there has been an unusual amount of litigation with at least 200 cases pending in 43 states across the country regarding changes to voting rules due to the pandemic.⁵ The president has not helped by casting doubt on the reliability of mail-in ballots—the safest way to vote. Could the pandemic alter voter attitudes and turnout significantly? The report finds that a number of battleground states have been hit particularly hard by the virus, ranking in the top 10 states across the country with the highest death toll as of 30 September—Texas (16,132 deaths); Florida (14,317); Pennsylvania (8,224); Michigan (7,083); and Georgia (7,021). The report also gauges the impact of the pandemic on key industries in the battleground states. At present, only 38 percent of citizens approve of Trump’s handling of the pandemic, a sharp slide from the March numbers.⁶ The government response to COVID-19, and the political contestation around it is poised to become a key factor defining election outcomes this year.

The 2020 US election promises to be a political spectacle unlike anything the world has seen before, with far-reaching implications for the country’s domestic politics and the outlook for Indian and world foreign policy. It is the Observer Research Foundation’s endeavour to continue to provide in-depth analyses of developments in this space as they happen. This report is a contribution towards that end.

ARIZONA

Source - Nations Online⁷

A SNAPSHOT

The state of Arizona is situated in the southwestern part of the United States and borders with Mexico in the south.

CAPITAL
PHOENIX

*POPULATION
(ESTIMATED 2019)*
7,278,717

*INDIAN-AMERICAN
POPULATION*
48,120

*ELECTORAL
VOTES*
11

THE INDIA CONNECTION

Contribution of Indian industry to Arizona (in 2018-20):



Number of jobs created due to
Indian investments in Arizona⁸

1,579



Volume of goods and services
exported to India from Arizona⁹

\$440 million



Jobs supported by exports to
India in Arizona¹⁰

3,929



Indian visitor spending
in Arizona¹¹

\$274.2 million



Economic contribution of Indian
international students in Arizona¹²

\$134.7 million

Key personalities



Amish Shah: Shah is a member of the Arizona House of Representatives and represents District 24. His current term will end on 10 January 2021, and he is running for re-election.¹³ This Indian-American Democrat's platform includes improved education for children, universal healthcare, and transparent democracy.¹⁴



Satish Hiremath: Hiremath served as the Mayor of Oro Valley, Arizona for two terms and is currently practising as a dentist.¹⁵ He is engaged in philanthropic activities in the town as well.¹⁶



Dr. Hiral Tipirneni: An Indian-American physician and cancer research advocate, Dr Tipirneni won the Democratic Party primaries for the House of Representatives in Arizona, and she is running for Arizona's 6th Congressional District which has been traditionally Republican.¹⁷ Among her endorsers is Kamala Harris, the Democratic Party's vice-presidential candidate for the 2020 elections. Dr Tipirneni supports Second Amendment rights, women's reproductive health rights, and expanding choice in medicare.¹⁸

COVID-19 PANDEMIC'S IMPACT

Statistics (as of 4 October 2020)¹⁹

Total Cases
220,754

Active Cases
179,210

Total Deaths
5,706

Recovered
35,838

Arizona is one among the top ten states in the US in terms of the total number of COVID-19 cases. The state was sluggish in issuing stay-at-home orders and reopened the economy before it even witnessed a decline in the number of cases.²⁰

The state is also one of few which do not have a mask mandate, requiring masks only for employees and salon customers.²¹ Moreover, when the lockdown was lifted in late May, restaurants and bars were allowed to operate without proper social-distancing rules and limitations on seating capacity. Beginning in June, the number of cases started rising exponentially.²²

Economic impact²³

State GDP	\$297.2 billion GDP per capita - \$42,353
Pillar Industries: Real estate, professional and educational services, manufacturing, and tourism	Real estate contributes approximately \$54.2 billion to state GDP; other big earners are professional services (\$39.7 billion), manufacturing (\$28.9 billion), and tourism (\$24.7 billion)

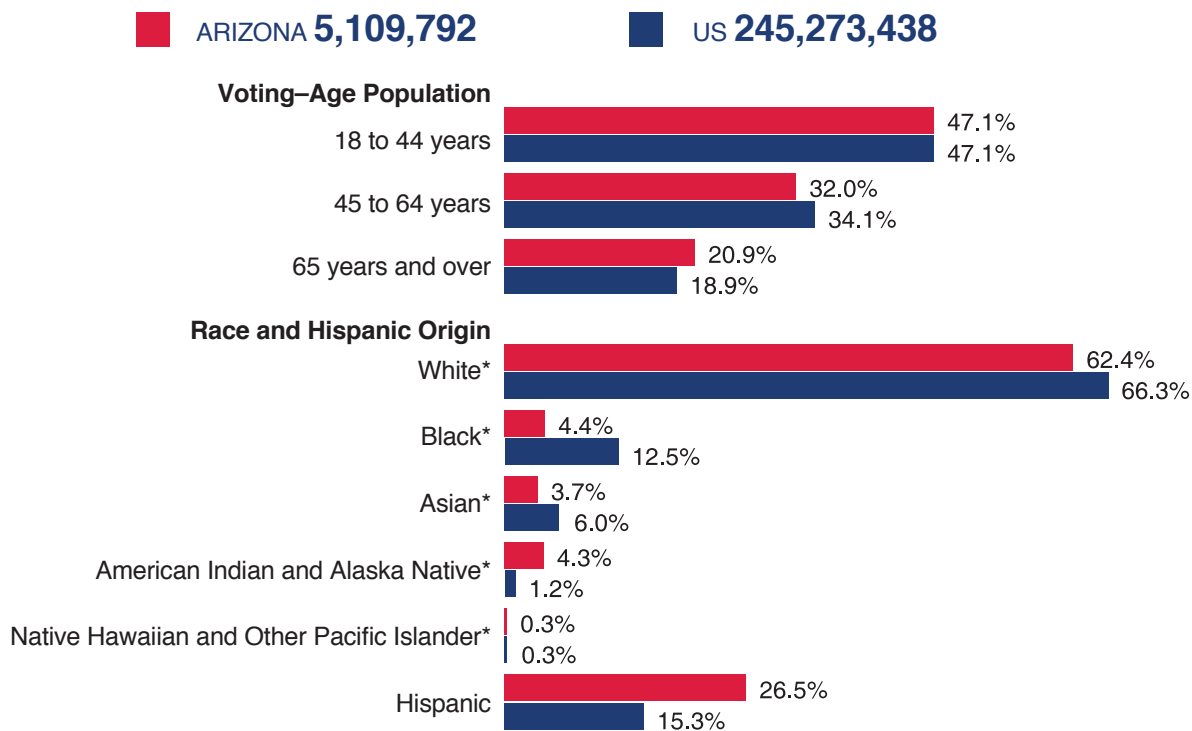
Arizona's industrial base is diverse, with the leading sectors being real estate, financial services, and manufacturing. The tourism industry had a record-breaking year in 2019, generating \$70.1 million per day across the state and employing 194,300 across the industry. The industry has taken a big hit with the pandemic: it has lost approximately \$7 billion so far and could take some years to recover, and only with solid infrastructure and policy framework in place.²⁴ Arizona's hospitality industry has been battered, and is expected to take the longest time to recover.²⁵

Before the pandemic, Arizona was seeing lower unemployment rates compared to the national average. Arizona's growth was being driven by industries like construction and remote retail, which have retained their momentum even during the pandemic. Almost five percent of Arizona's income in 2019 was injected into the economy through a number of initiatives such as increased unemployment benefits, and federal Paycheck Protection Program and Recovery rebates to support people who have lost their jobs due to the pandemic.²⁶

ELECTORATE ANALYSIS

Electorate Profile

Selected Characteristics of the Voting-Age Population



* Alone or in combination, non-Hispanic.

Notes: In combination means in combination with one or more other races. The sum of the ve race groups adds to more than the total population because individuals may report more than one race. This graphic shows the voting-age population. An estimate of the number of the state's eligible voters (i.e., citizens aged 18 and older) is available via 2014 American Community Survey Table B05003.

Sources: Vintage 2014 Population Estimates, 2014 American Community Survey <www.census.gov/acs>

Source - data: US Census Bureau²⁷

Indians are the second largest ethnic group in the state after Filipinos.²⁸ There is also a large population of undocumented Asian-American immigrants—23,099 people as of 2015, according to data from the Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI).²⁹ Over the years, Indian-Americans have become a prominent force in the state and are poised to play an important role in the 2020 elections.³⁰ Their vote will help determine whether the Republican Party will regain control of the state or the Democratic Party will score a victory.³¹

Indian-American voters in Arizona formed only one-fourth of the margin of voters in the 2016 election.³² However, interestingly, Democratic Party-leaning Indian-Americans numbered about as many as the independents in 2016, and therefore the Republicans will be watching this base closely in the run-up to the polls.

Religious composition of adults in Arizona³³

Christian	67%
Evangelical Protestant	26%
Mainline Protestant	12%
Historically Black Protestant	1%
Catholic	21%
Mormon	5%
Orthodox Christian	<1%
Jehovah's Witness	1%
Other Christian	<1%
Non-Christian Faiths	6%
Unaffiliated	27%
Nothing in particular	19%

ELECTORAL HISTORY

An erstwhile testing ground for anti-immigration laws, Arizona has seen a pronounced political shift in recent years. This is a result of certain demographic changes, including a growing migrant population from liberal states and an increasing number of Latino voters.³⁴ A decade-long backlash to the immigration law and Donald Trump's anti-immigration views have hurt the Republican Party's chances in the state for the upcoming elections.

Historically, Arizona has voted Republican since 1952 (except once in 1996). However, Trump's margin of victory in Arizona in 2016 was narrower than any other Republican nominees before him. During the mid-term elections in November 2018, the victory of Democrat Kyrsten Sinema from Arizona was the first in 30 years.³⁵ Such a reshaping of the state's political landscape has turned one of the last conservative bastions in the southwest into a significant battleground for the elections in November 2020.³⁶

According to *The Economist's* predictions as of 4 October, the gap between Joe Biden and Donald Trump is very narrow, and there is no clear indication of who would take Arizona. While the current polls are slightly in favour of Biden, it could still go either way.³⁷ Additionally, the latest polls by FiveThirtyEight as of 3 October predicts a win for Biden with 48.8 percent share of votes, while Trump is expected to receive 45.3 percent.³⁸

MAIN ISSUES FOR THE 2020 ELECTIONS

- **Police Reforms.** A law banning chokeholds was passed by Congress on the one-month anniversary of George Floyd's death.³⁹ A Democrat-backed police reform bill split Arizona's representatives: among the 200 co-sponsors of the Justice in Policing Act of 2020, three Arizona lawmakers were in support of reforming the relationship between law enforcement agents and the public. Joe Clure, the executive director of the Arizona Police Association has opposed the act, saying the bill was drafted without any inputs from law enforcement officials. Trump has also ruled out any demands to disband the police—this position could cost the Republicans in November.⁴⁰
- **Anti-immigration sentiments.** Arizona is a large base for immigrants who have historically voted Democrat—this could give a boost to Biden's campaign. In 2016, Trump received only 31 percent of the vote share among Hispanics, compared to 61 percent in favour of Hillary Clinton. In the mid-term elections in 2018, the Republicans lost more ground. Analysts attributed this loss to the anti-immigration positions and rhetoric of Trump and former Maricopa County sheriff Joe Arpaio. Heavily suburban and home to a growing population of immigrants, Maricopa County is one of the largest counties in the US and a defining constituency for Arizona; whoever wins the county usually wins Arizona.^{41,42}

FLORIDA

Source - Nations Online⁴³

A SNAPSHOT

The state of Florida is located in the southeastern part of the United States, between the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico.

CAPITAL TALLAHASSEE	POPULATION (ESTIMATED 2019) 21,477,737	INDIAN-AMERICAN POPULATION 158,630	ELECTORAL VOTES 29
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THE INDIA CONNECTION

Contribution of Indian Industry to Florida (in 2018-20)



Number of Indian companies
in Florida⁴⁴

21



Total volume of investment by
Indian companies⁴⁵

Approximately

\$915 million

(4.049% of total Indian investment in the US,
i.e. \$22.6 billion)



Number of jobs created due to
Indian investments in Florida⁴⁶

5,454



Volume of goods and services
exported to India from Florida⁴⁷

\$1.7 billion



Jobs supported by exports to
India in Florida⁴⁸

12,831



Economic contribution of
Indian international students
in Florida⁵⁰

\$175.8 million



Indian visitor spending in
Florida⁴⁹

\$860.2 million



Indian Companies in Florida
(2018-20)⁵¹

Information Technology and
Telecommunications

57.14%

Life Sciences, Pharmaceuticals
and Healthcare

28.57%

Aerospace and Defense

4.76%

Design and Engineering

4.76%

Financial Services

4.76%

Key personalities



Rakesh Gangwal: Born in Kolkata, Rakesh Gangwal is an American billionaire business tycoon based in Miami. In 2006, he co-founded Indigo airlines with Rahul Bhatia, and today owns close to 37 percent of the company.⁵²



Bharat Desai: Co-founder of Syntel, billionaire Bharat Desai is a Florida resident and serves on various corporate and academic boards across the country, including the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.⁵³

COVID-19 PANDEMIC'S IMPACT

Statistics (as of 4 October 2020)⁵⁴

Total Cases
717,874

Active Cases
338,268

Total Deaths
14,722

Recovered
373,146

Florida is the third most affected state in the US in terms of the total number of COVID-19 cases. On a single day, on 12 July, Florida reported over 15,000 cases, higher than the number in the whole of the European Union for the same day.

Anti-mask protests have been taking place across Florida.⁵⁵ It is one among a few states in the US that still do not mandate face coverings.⁵⁶ It has also decided to open up schools and bars at 50 percent capacity beginning 14 September, despite its high COVID-19 casualties.⁵⁷

Economic impact

State GDP

\$883.1 billion

GDP per capita - \$42,085

Pillar Industries: Real estate (\$172.5 billion), professional and business services (\$136.6 billion) and educational services and healthcare (\$100 billion)

Tourism constitutes 10% of Florida's GDP. Florida's south-east is the farming hub for the state.

Florida has a diverse industrial base, with services, tourism, agriculture and international trade driving the state’s economic growth. Home to Orlando—with one of the US biggest tourist destinations, DisneyWorld—Florida enjoys visitors from all over the world all throughout the year. In 2018, Orlando welcomed a record 75 million visitors.⁵⁸ The agriculture industry is also a significant part of Florida’s economy, employing two million people and producing a large share of the world’s citrus-based products.⁵⁹

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit Florida’s economy hard. During the period between April and June, it lost almost 20 million visitors compared to the same period last

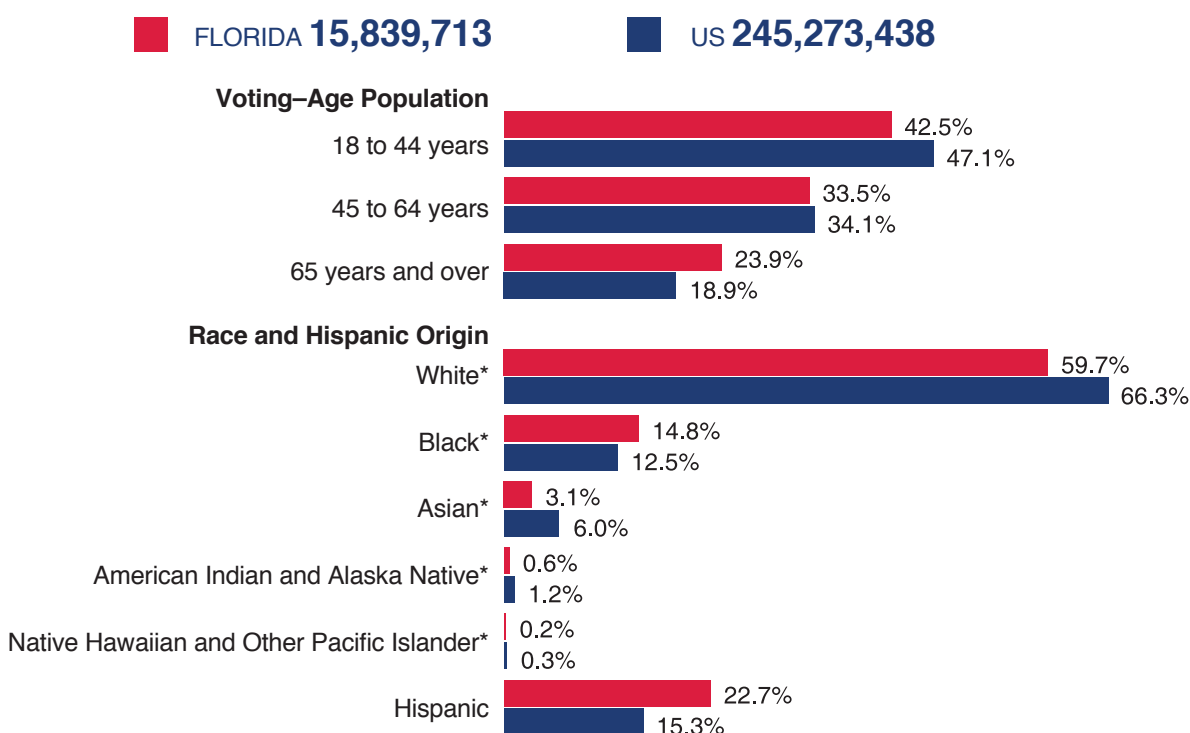
year. Sales tax revenues are projected to be down by \$1.6 billion for the period; this will have ramifications for the state economy, dependent as it is on sales and hotel tax revenues.⁶⁰

The unemployment rate increased during the pandemic to 11.3 percent in July (i.e., 1.125 million people)—which is more than the national average. There has been a marked decline in construction and manufacturing activities across the state, and the agriculture and marine industries have also felt the fallout. Among all sectors, leisure and hospitality have been most severely affected, losing some 254,400 jobs in the same period.⁶¹

ELECTORATE ANALYSIS

Electorate Profile

Selected Characteristics of the Voting-Age Population



* Alone or in combination, non-Hispanic.

Notes: In combination means in combination with one or more other races. The sum of the ve race groups adds to more than the total population because individuals may report more than one race. This graphic shows the voting-age population. An estimate of the number of the state’s eligible voters (i.e., citizens aged 18 and older) is available via 2014 American Community Survey Table B05003.

Sources: Vintage 2014 Population Estimates, 2014 American Community Survey <www.census.gov/acs>

Source - data: US Census Bureau⁶²

Indians comprise the largest Asian community in Florida. The Indian-American population in the state has grown over the past decade and has gained electoral prominence in recent years. Their population has increased by approximately 125 percent since 2000. There are estimated to be around 56,987 undocumented Asian-Americans in the state, according to AAPI data.⁶³

Florida's Indian-American community has the potential to swing the state's electoral outcomes. In 2016, the Indian-American voters made up two-thirds of the electoral margin, and although the Democrats are double the number of Republicans, there is a significant number of independent voters—enough to influence the result of the elections.⁶⁴ Al Mason, co-chair of the Trump Victory Indian American Finance Committee, expects 50,000 voters in the community to switch sides and lean Red this election.⁶⁵

Jacksonville has recently become a hub for the Indian population. The Indian Cultural Society in Jacksonville has been instrumental in bringing the Indian-American community together in the state.⁶⁶

Religious composition of adults in Arizona⁶⁷

Christian	70%
Evangelical Protestant	24%
Mainline Protestant	14%
Historically Black Protestant	8%
Catholic	21%
Mormon	1%
Orthodox Christian	<1%
Jehovah's Witness	1%
Other Christian	1%
Non-Christian Faiths	6%
Unaffiliated	24%
Nothing in particular	17%

ELECTORAL HISTORY

In recent years, parallel patterns have played out across the state: suburbanites are moving away from the Republican Party, and conservative Democrats who have stayed with the party for decades are changing sides. Indeed, the state has always had a chequered electoral history—swinging Republican in 2000 and 2004, Democrat in 2008 and 2012, and again Republican in 2016.⁶⁸ In the 2016 elections, the state swung red, as Trump overtook Clinton in picking up new voters, which ultimately paved the way for a narrow victory for Trump by 1.2 percent. In the upcoming elections, Republicans seem to have added more new voters than Democrats. Florida could thus be one of the swing states for the 2020 elections.⁶⁹

A model created by *The Economist* takes a close call: as on 4 October, the Democrats are expected to take Florida back from the Republicans in 2020, with Biden likely to command 46-57 percent of the popular vote share, and Trump likely to receive 43-54 percent of votes.⁷⁰ Additionally, the latest polls by FiveThirtyEight as of 3 October predicts a win for Biden with a 48-percent share of votes, while Trump is expected to receive 45.1 percent.⁷¹

MAIN ISSUES FOR THE 2020 ELECTIONS

- **Six Constitutional amendments.** For the 2020 elections, voters will decide whether to approve six constitutional amendments that include, among others, citizenship requirement to vote in Florida elections, and raising the minimum wage to \$15 per hour. The amendment to raise the minimum wage has drawn negative attention from the hospitality industry. The amendment seeking citizenship requirement for voting will revamp the state's primary election system.⁷²
- **Mail-in ballots.** During the primary elections, there was heavy use of mail-in ballots due to the COVID-19 pandemic across the state. To avoid any further outbreak of infections, many election officials are encouraging voters to use mail-in ballots in the general elections.⁷³ Since the turnout for general elections is heavier than the primaries, the efficiency of the postal service to deliver the mail-in ballots in time will be crucial. While Trump and other Republicans have cast suspicion over the process, arguing for strict signature matches, the Democrats are easing rules for the use of mail-ballots.⁷⁴

GEORGIA

Source - Nations Online⁷⁵

A SNAPSHOT

The state of Georgia is located in the southeastern mainland of the United States. It borders the Atlantic Ocean in the southeast and shares a border with North Carolina and Tennessee in the north.

CAPITAL
ATLANTA

POPULATION
(ESTIMATED 2019)
10,617,423

INDIAN-AMERICAN
POPULATION
118,043

ELECTORAL
VOTES
16

THE INDIA CONNECTION

Contribution of Indian Industry to Georgia(in 2018-20)



**Number of
Indian companies
in Georgia⁷⁶**

21



**Total volume of investment by
Indian companies⁷⁷
Approximately**

\$426 million

(1.886 percent of total Indian investment in
the US, i.e. \$22.6 billion)



**Number of jobs created due to
Indian investments in Georgia⁷⁸**

4,578



**Volume of goods and services
exported to India from Georgia⁷⁹**

\$975.6 million



Jobs supported by exports to
India in Georgia⁸⁰

6,610



Economic contribution of
Indian international students
in Georgia⁸²

\$117.2 million



Indian visitor spending in
Georgia⁸¹

\$381.7 million



Indian Companies in Georgia⁸³

Information Technology and
Telecommunications

72.73%

Manufacturing

13.64%

Life Sciences, Pharmaceuticals
and Healthcare

4.55%

Food and Agriculture

4.55%

Automotive

4.55%

Key personalities



Bikram Kumar Mohanty: Odisha-born entrepreneur Mohanty was the choice of former US President Barack Obama to contest Georgia's Senate elections as a candidate of the Democratic Party in 2012. Mohanty, who re-contested the elections in 2014, is the founder of Innovative Rehab Solutions, a healthcare company based in Georgia's Valdosta city.⁸⁴

COVID-19 PANDEMIC'S IMPACT

Statistics (as of 4 October 2020)⁸⁵



Georgia is among the top five states in the US in terms of infection numbers. State response has been lackadaisical: there is no state-wide mandate on the wearing of masks, and bars in areas with high transmission rates remain operational.⁸⁶

In July, the Mayor of Atlanta tightened the lockdown restrictions in an attempt to flatten the curve: he issued a directive making masks compulsory in public spaces in Atlanta. At the same time, however, the governor of Georgia refused to issue an order making the wearing of masks in public mandatory, and only went as far as launching a 'Wear A Mask' campaign. The governor also said: "If the Mayor actually wants to flatten the curve, she should focus on enforcing state restrictions."⁸⁷

Economic impact

State GDP	\$510.8 billion GDP per capita - \$55,668
Pillar Industries: Broadcasting (except internet) and telecommunications	The industry's GDP contribution is \$30.5 billion (6.5% of the state total) The industry's workforce is 57,493 (1.3% of the state total)

Georgia’s economy is driven by services, broadcasting and telecommunications, real estate, manufacturing, and agriculture. The broadcasting industry got an enormous boost from tax incentives passed in the state in 2007, which paved the way for the film and television industry to be more lucrative. Georgia is behind only New York and California in the industry, and is the third largest television and film production hub in the country.⁸⁸

The manufacturing industry is also a prominent area for output generation and employment for Georgia. In 2018, out of the total output in the state, manufacturing accounted for 10.98 percent and employed 408,000.⁸⁹

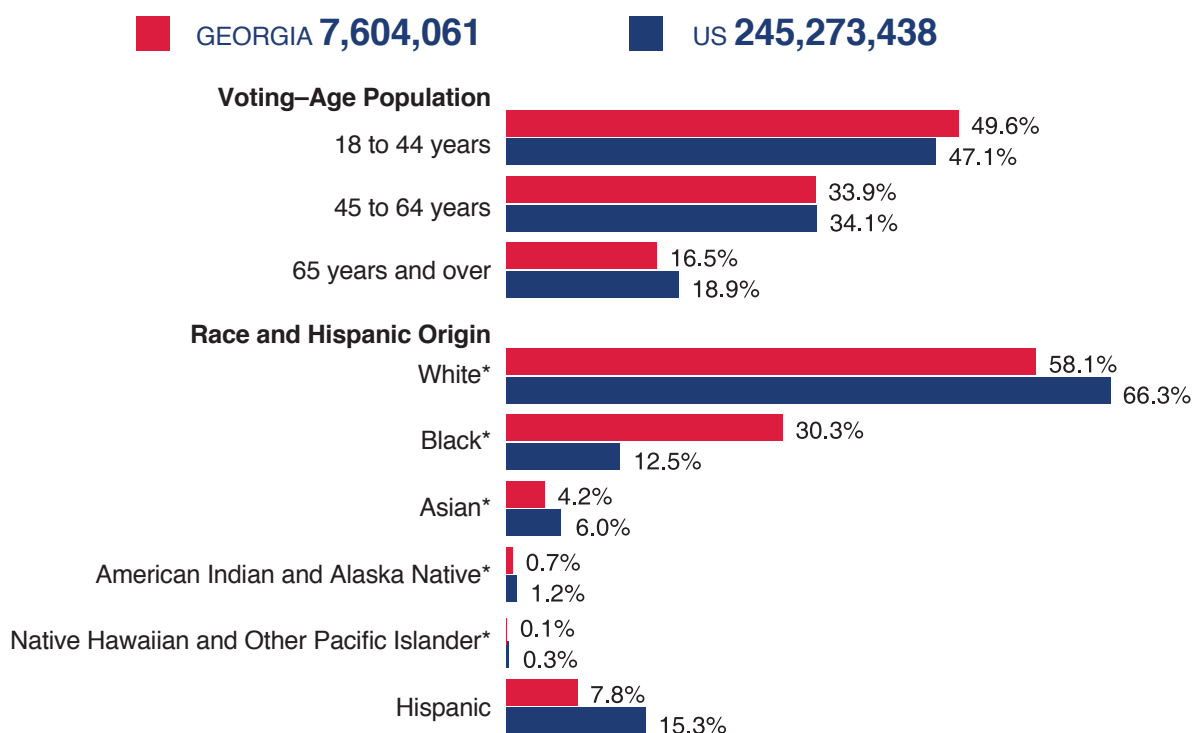
The agricultural sector is another important industry for Georgia, employing one in every seven workers in the state.⁹⁰

The pandemic has significantly affected many of Georgia’s industries. Lockdown orders have brought the state’s film industry to a halt. While no permanent production shutdown has been observed across the state, even a temporary cessation of production has been costly. With stay-at-home regulations expected to be in place up to early 2021 and most of the full-time jobs becoming more equipped with work-from-home standards, the demand for entertainment will only rise in the coming months.⁹¹

ELECTORATE ANALYSIS

Electorate Profile

Selected Characteristics of the Voting-Age Population



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Sources: Vintage 2014 Population Estimates, 2014 American Community Survey <www.census.gov/acs>

Source - data: US Census Bureau⁹²

Both the Democratic and Republican parties have begun paying more attention to the Indian-American population across the swing states. A huge Indian-American population in Georgia—representing a voter base of some 150,000—has given the community some notable clout.⁹³ Forsyth County, for example, has increasingly become a hub for the growing minority community and has had the fastest growing Asian population of all US counties, with more than 20,000 residents. This region also features a 60-acre cricket field complex and has multiple Asian-owned businesses, temples and religious retreats.⁹⁴

Religious composition of adults in Georgia⁹⁵

Christian	79%
Evangelical Protestant	38%
Mainline Protestant	12%
Historically Black Protestant	17%
Catholic	9%
Mormon	1%
Orthodox Christian	<1%
Jehovah's Witness	2%
Other Christian	<1%
Non-Christian Faiths	3%
Unaffiliated	18%
Nothing in particular	13%

ELECTORAL HISTORY

Georgia was primarily a Democratic state during the 20th century. From the late 20th century, however, the trend started to shift: since Bill Clinton's re-election as president in 1996, Georgia has been voting Republican for more than two decades.

For the 2020 elections, issues such as racial discrimination, economic slowdown, a deadly virus, and a polarising presidential election appear to be transforming Georgia into a swing state.⁹⁶ In the mid-term elections in 2018, Democrats garnered the highest share since 1990, winning 48 percent of the votes. Since 2000, the number of African-American voters in Georgia have increased from 25 percent to 33 percent of all registered voters. Moreover, there has been an increase in the number of white Americans with a college degree, putting them in the top half in the nation for the percentage of white American voters with a college degree. This is a significant reason for Georgia's transformation into a swing state.⁹⁷

According to modelling by *The Economist* as of 4 October, it is unclear whether Biden or Trump will capture Georgia. During the first half of 2020, Trump was way ahead of Biden in public opinion polls; from June onwards, the gap has narrowed, and the election could go either way.⁹⁸ Additionally, the latest polls by FiveThirtyEight as of 3 October predicts Biden to receive a 47.1-percent share of votes, while Trump, 46.6 percent.⁹⁹

MAIN ISSUES FOR THE 2020 ELECTIONS

- **Trade.** International trade through the ports of Savannah and Brunswick is of great importance to Georgia. However, as a fallout of the trade war with China, the imposition of tariffs on cotton, peanuts, pecans and soybeans has hit Georgia's agricultural industry. Moreover, as the nation's biggest poultry producer, Georgia has been massively affected by the ban on exports of chicken to China. Trade from the perspective of the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), a reboot of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), has created a divide among Georgian farmers. The growers of cotton and peanuts are in favour of the new trade proposal. Others, including farmers who grow seasonal produce such as blueberries, peppers, squash and tomatoes, are against it.¹⁰⁰
- **Gun ownership.** A bill was proposed by Governor Brian Kemp and supported by other Republican leaders that would allow Georgians to carry firearms without a permit. However, the bill made little headway in the General Assembly. In more recent times, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* polling has shown state voters in favour of new restrictions on gun owners.¹⁰¹

MICHIGAN

Source - Nations Online¹⁰²

A SNAPSHOT

Michigan is located in the Great Lakes and mid-western region of the United States.

CAPITAL LANSING	POPULATION (ESTIMATED 2019) 9,986,857	INDIAN-AMERICAN POPULATION 95,958	ELECTORAL VOTES 16
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THE INDIA CONNECTION

Contribution of Indian Industry to Michigan (in 2018-20)



Number of Indian companies
in Michigan¹⁰³

22



Total volume of investment by
Indian companies¹⁰⁴
Approximately

\$314 million

(1.39 percent of total Indian investments in
the US, i.e. \$22.6 billion)



Number of jobs created
due to Indian investments
in Michigan⁷⁸

105 3,118



Volume of goods and services
exported to India
from Michigan¹⁰⁶

\$726.2 million



Jobs supported by exports to
India in Michigan¹⁰⁷

5,732



Indian visitor spending
in Michigan¹⁰⁸

\$305.4 million



Economic contribution of
Indian international students
in Michigan¹⁰⁹

\$182.5 million



Indian Companies in Michigan ¹¹⁰

Automotive
36.36%

Information Technology and
Telecommunications
31.82%

Manufacturing
18.18%

Life Sciences, Pharmaceuticals
and Healthcare
9.09%

Energy
4.55%

Key personalities



Amul R. Thapar:¹¹¹ The US' first Article III Judge of South Asian descent, Amul Thapar was appointed to the US Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit by nomination from President Donald Trump and confirmed by the Senate in June 2017. He was previously nominated to the Districts Court by then President George W. Bush in 2007.¹¹² His candidature as the next Judge of the Supreme Court was also widely speculated when he was shortlisted and interviewed by Trump in July 2018.¹¹³

COVID-19 PANDEMIC'S IMPACT

Statistics (as of 4 October 2020)¹¹⁴



Of Michigan's total population, those 65 years or older constitute 16.2 percent of the population—a proportion that is higher than the national average of 15.2 percent. (Experts have called attention to Covid's higher mortality rates amongst the elderly populations.) The state has recorded the fifth highest COVID-19 death toll in the US, with Detroit suffering disproportionately.¹¹⁵ The state has introduced voting reforms this year like online voter registration, no excuse absentee voting, and early voting.¹¹⁶ It is one of 20 states in the US with a universal mask mandate.

Economic impact¹¹⁷

State GDP	\$458.8 billion GDP per capita - \$46,055
Pillar Industry: Manufacturing	The industry's GDP contribution is \$99.2 billion (ranking 7th among all states in the US for contribution towards manufacturing). Ann Arbor, home to the University of Michigan, is an investment hub for the state.

Michigan’s advanced manufacturing and production industry is globally renowned. Detroit, in particular, is a world leader in the automotive industry.

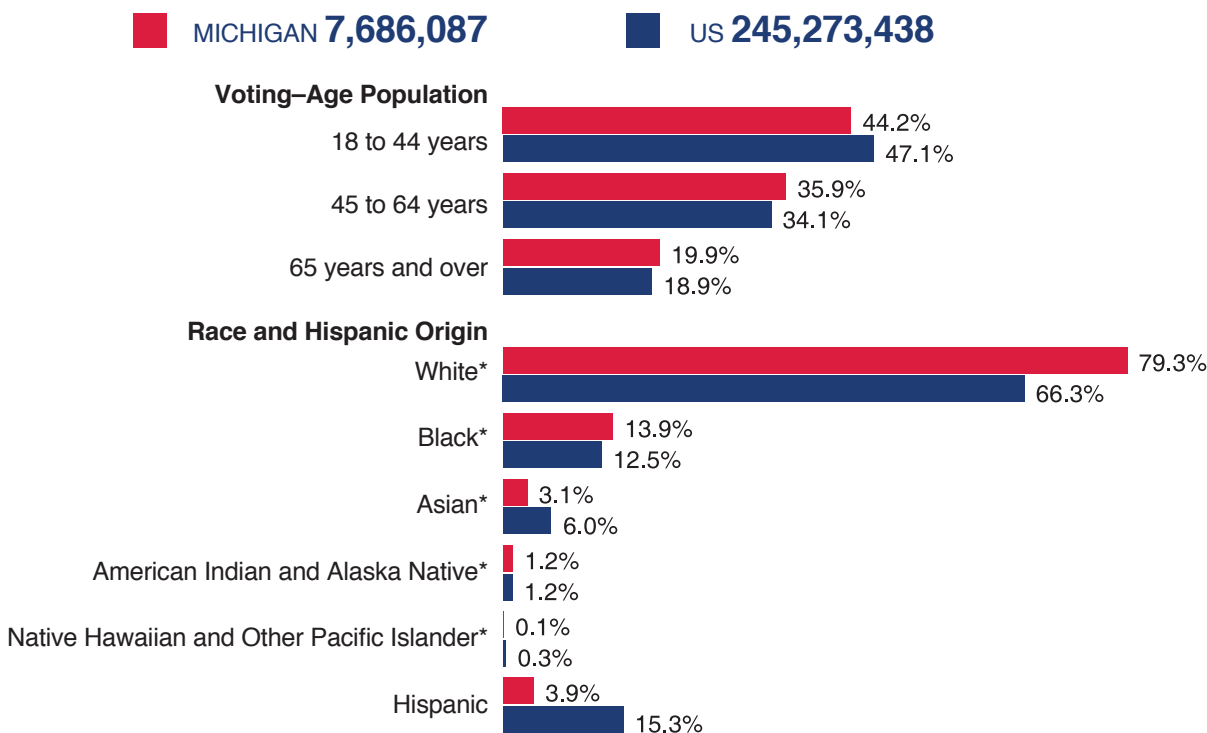
Michigan’s unemployment rate has generally been higher than the national average, but it spiked to an unprecedented 24 percent in April 2020.¹¹⁸ Due to the state’s dependence on manufacturing, COVID-19 has hit Michigan particularly hard and its economic growth is expected to be slower than that of other states through 2020. Michigan saw an armed protest from people against the pandemic-induced lockdown, demanding for businesses to reopen.¹¹⁹ Donald Trump has clashed on the subject with Governor Gretchen Whitmer.

Most other major industry sectors followed the same trend through April and May and picked up slowly after. Leisure and hospitality recorded the largest monthly industry job advance on both a numeric and percentage basis, up by 28,000, or 11.7 percent in July. The construction sector suffered the smallest over-the-year percentage drop in jobs since 2019, receding by 1.4 percent since July 2019. Total non-farm jobs in the state went down by 491,000, or 11.1 percent.¹²⁰ The mining and agricultural industries have been gravely affected due to the disruption in supply chains and transporters.¹²¹

ELECTORATE ANALYSIS

Electorate Profile

Selected Characteristics of the Voting-Age Population



* Alone or in combination, non-Hispanic.

Notes: In combination means in combination with one or more other races. The sum of the ve race groups adds to more than the total population because individuals may report more than one race. This graphic shows the voting-age population. An estimate of the number of the state’s eligible voters (i.e., citizens aged 18 and older) is available via 2014 American Community Survey Table B05003.

Sources: Vintage 2014 Population Estimates, 2014 American Community Survey <www.census.gov/acs>

Source - data: US Census Bureau¹²²

Although the Indian-American population in Michigan is considerably small, both the Republican and Democratic parties are reaching out to them ahead of the 2020 elections.¹²⁴ After all, in 2016, the Democrats lost Michigan by a margin of only 10,700 votes, and Michigan has around 125,000 Indian-American voters.¹²⁵ Al Mason, co-chair of the Trump Victory Indian American Finance Committee, predicts that 45,000 of Michigan's Indian voters will swing red this election.¹²⁶

Religious composition of adults in Michigan¹²³

Christian	70%
Evangelical Protestant	25%
Mainline Protestant	18%
Historically Black Protestant	8%
Catholic	18%
Mormon	<1%
Orthodox Christian	<1%
Jehovah's Witness	1%
Other Christian	1%
Non-Christian Faiths	5%
Unaffiliated	24%
Nothing in particular	17%

ELECTORAL HISTORY

Michigan has been a crucial swing state in previous presidential elections. It leaned Democratic from 1992 until Barack Obama's tenure in 2012. The Democrats lost Michigan to the Republicans in the 2016 election of Trump by a narrow margin of 0.23 percent.¹²⁷

The Economist predicts that the Democrats will take Michigan in 2020, with Joe Biden likely to command 48-59 percent of the popular vote share, and Donald Trump receiving 42-52 percent of the votes.¹²⁸ FiveThirtyEight polls predict that Biden is currently ahead in Michigan with a 50.1-percent approval rate, while Trump is at 43.2 percent.¹²⁹

MAIN ISSUES FOR THE 2020 ELECTIONS

- **Anti-Lockdown protests.** Democrat Governor Gretchen Whitmer faced severe backlash and violent protests against her order extending the statewide lockdown through April and May 2020.¹³⁰ Republicans across the state quickly called the quarantine and social distancing measures “contrary to people’s freedoms.” Popular polls, however, suggested that the Michigan people supported the governor’s decision.¹³¹ The situation has worsened due to the use of hate symbols, with Trump himself being accused of fuelling violent domestic rebellions because of his rhetoric.¹³²
- **Jobs decline.** Trump signed the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement in January 2020, fulfilling a campaign promise he made in 2016 to bring in manufacturing jobs to the state. As the statewide lockdown was imposed to mitigate the impact of COVID-19, most factories could not re-open for business as expected, leading to job losses particularly in the automotive industry.¹³³ Biden has promised to create one million new jobs in the automotive industry, domestic auto supply chains, and auto infrastructure. He has also vowed to protect workers’ right to join a union.¹³⁴
- **Mail-in ballots.** Trump created controversy when he threatened to hold up the allocation of federal funds to the state, as a reaction to Michigan’s plans to expand voting by mail because of the pandemic. He incorrectly claimed that Michigan’s “rogue secretary of state” was planning to mail ballots to all voters and called Michigan’s initiative “illegal”.¹³⁵

NORTH CAROLINA

Source - Nations Online¹³⁶

A SNAPSHOT

North Carolina is located in the southeast region of the United States.

CAPITAL RALEIGH	POPULATION (ESTIMATED 2019) 10,488,084	INDIAN-AMERICAN POPULATION 78,852	ELECTORAL VOTES 15
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THE INDIA CONNECTION

Contribution of Indian Industry to North Carolina (in 2018-20)



Number of
Indian companies
in North Carolina¹³⁷

19



Total volume of investments
by Indian companies¹³⁸

Approximately

\$88 million

(0.389 percent of total Indian investment
in the US, i.e. \$22.6 billion)



Number of jobs created due to
Indian investments
in North Carolina¹³⁹

4,565



Volume of goods and services
exported to India
from North Carolina¹⁴⁰

\$756.5 million



Jobs supported by exports to
India in North Carolina¹⁴¹

5,056



Indian visitor spending
in North Carolina¹⁴²

\$218.3 million



Economic contribution of Indian
international students
in North Carolina¹⁴³

\$123.1 million



Indian Companies in
North Carolina ¹⁴⁴

Information Technology and
Telecommunications

68.42%

Manufacturing

15.79%

Mining, and Materials

5.26%

Design and Engineering

5.26%

Life Sciences, Pharmaceuticals
and Healthcare

5.26%

Key personalities



Mohammed Mujtaba: Democrat Mujtaba's parents were immigrants from India. He represents the Mecklenburg County's 38th District in the North Carolina General Assembly. His advocacies are related to children and family rights, with an emphasis on indigent communities.¹⁴⁵



Swadesh Chatterjee: Long-standing North Carolina resident, Chatterjee is an Indian-American activist who has worked for the strengthening of relations between Americans and Indians in politics and business. He is a member of the Indian Prime Minister's Global Advisory Council of Overseas Indians and the chairperson and co-founder of the US-India Friendship Council.¹⁴⁶



Steve Rao: The first Asian-American elected official in North Carolina and the triangle region and At-Large Councilman for Morrisville, North Carolina. His work is in transportation, and he was able to bring large investments in the sector in Morrisville. He is also a part of the Indian Political Action Committee.¹⁴⁷

COVID-19 PANDEMIC'S IMPACT

Statistics (as of 4 October 2020)¹⁴⁸

Total Cases
217,496

Active Cases
29,440

Total Deaths
3,634

Recovered
184,422

North Carolina is among 20 states in the US that have issued a mask mandate. The state's Latino population have been hit disproportionately hard by the virus.¹⁴⁹ A vote-by-mail system is in place, and voting began in the state on 4 September. People can also choose to do in-person voting.¹⁵⁰

Economic impact

State GDP	\$484.3 billion GDP per capita - \$47,142
Pillar Industry: Chemical manufacturing	The industry's GDP contribution is \$22.4 billion (5% of the state total). The industry's workforce is 41,278 (1% of the state total).

One of North Carolina's biggest industries to have been severely affected by the pandemic is tourism. Travellers to North Carolina have spent, on average, 60 percent less than what they did last year. The losses that are associated with tourism-related taxes should also be considered since it was estimated that the state has lost around \$375,000 million in state and local taxes due to the pandemic. Many workers in the hospitality sector have been laid off. In response, the El Pueblo relief fund was set up to provide aid to those who needed it the

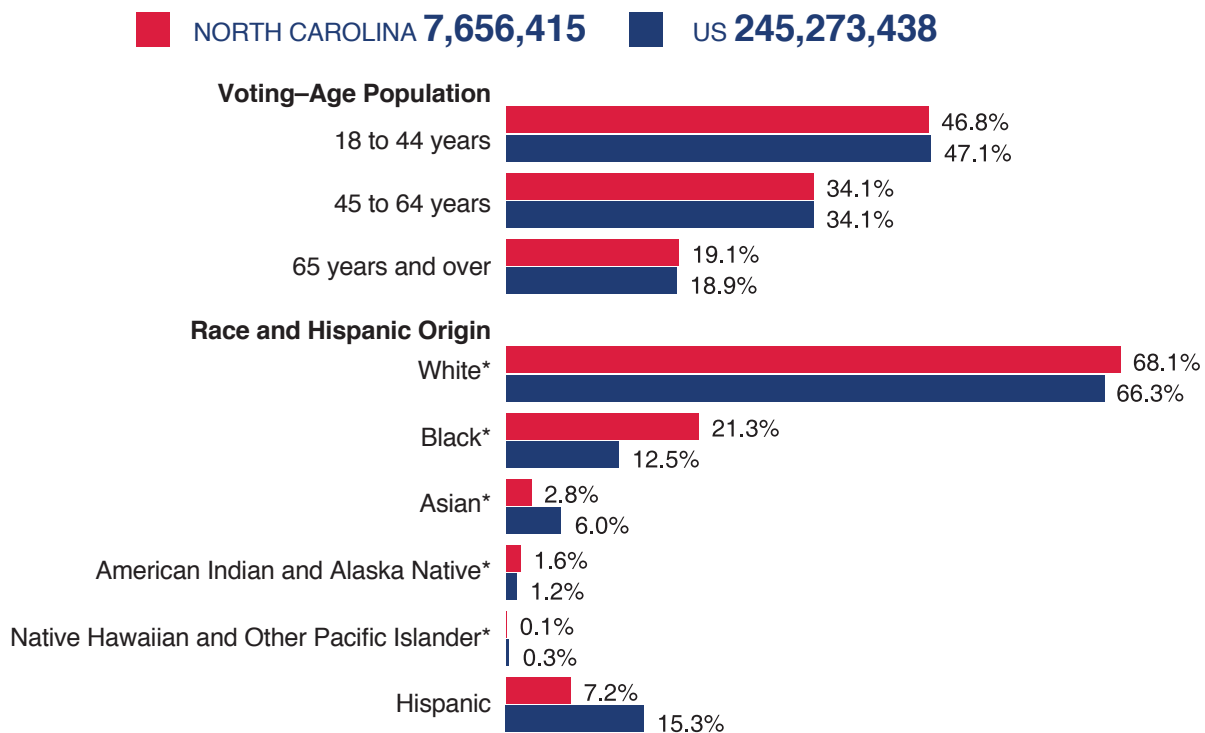
most.¹⁵¹ Jobs in the transportation industry declined by 26 percent from March to July; it is unlikely that these jobs will return any time soon.¹⁵²

The western region of North Carolina was hit hardest by the pandemic. However, beginning in May, there has been some dip in the rate of unemployment. Still, over 21,000 jobs will no longer be returning to the North Carolina economy any time soon, since the number of long-term layoffs has increased rapidly.¹⁵³

ELECTORATE ANALYSIS

Electorate Profile

Selected Characteristics of the Voting-Age Population



* Alone or in combination, non-Hispanic.

Notes: In combination means in combination with one or more other races. The sum of the ve race groups adds to more than the total population because individuals may report more than one race. This graphic shows the voting-age population. An estimate of the number of the state's eligible voters (i.e., citizens aged 18 and older) is available via 2014 American Community Survey Table B05003.

Sources: Vintage 2014 Population Estimates, 2014 American Community Survey <www.census.gov/acs>

Source - data: US Census Bureau¹⁵⁴

Religious composition of adults in North Carolina:¹⁵⁵

Christian	77%
Evangelical Protestant	35%
Mainline Protestant	19%
Historically Black Protestant	12%
Catholic	9%
Mormon	1%
Orthodox Christian	1%
Jehovah's Witness	1%
Other Christian	<1%
Non-Christian Faiths	3%
Unaffiliated	20%
Nothing in particular	15%

Indians form the largest Asian-American ethnic community in North Carolina,¹⁵⁶ comprising about 110,900 voters.¹⁵⁷ However, the community's vote share was only one-fifth of the 2016 victory margin, — therefore, not a share that is significant enough to swing the outcome of the polls.¹⁵⁸

ELECTORAL HISTORY

North Carolina was an exclusively Democrat state from 1876 to 1964, but in recent years, a larger proportion of the population has voted Republican. In the last 40 years, North Carolina has voted blue only twice. Donald Trump won in North Carolina in 2016 with a 3.66-percent margin. In that election, seven counties swung from Democratic to Republican, while only one shifted the other way. Indeed, prior to the polls, the possible outcome was heavily debated since North Carolina was considered widely to be a 'tossup' state.¹⁵⁹

The Economist predicts that the Democrats will take North Carolina in 2020, with Joe Biden likely to command 45-56 percent of the popular vote share, and Donald Trump, 44-56 percent of votes. There is a 53-percent chance of Biden winning the most votes.¹⁶⁰

FiveThirtyEight polls predict that Biden is currently ahead in North Carolina with a 47.9-percent approval rate, while Trump is at 46.5 percent.¹⁶¹

MAIN ISSUES FOR THE 2020 ELECTIONS

- **Healthcare.** In a study conducted by Elon University, out of the 1,400 North Carolina residents that were surveyed, only three percent said that the healthcare system is worthy of an A grade. Two-thirds of voters believed that a government-run healthcare system would benefit all Americans.
- **Economy.** According to the same Elon University survey, nearly 50 percent of North Carolina voters

thought that there has been a large improvement in the economy since 2017, under Trump. However, many believed that it was becoming increasingly difficult for most people to afford housing. There was a high degree of support for proposals to raise the minimum wage: 94 percent of respondents in the same survey agreed that it should be increased.

OHIO

Source - Nations Online¹⁶⁴

A SNAPSHOT

Ohio is located in the East North Central region of the Midwestern United States.

<i>CAPITAL</i> COLUMBUS	<i>POPULATION (ESTIMATED 2019)</i> 11,689,100	<i>INDIAN-AMERICAN POPULATION</i> 77,489	<i>ELECTORAL VOTES</i> 18
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THE INDIA CONNECTION

Contribution of Indian Industry to Ohio (in 2018-20)¹⁶⁵



Number of
Indian companies
in Ohio

16



Total volume of investment
by Indian companies¹⁶⁶
Approximately

\$48 million

(0.212 percent of total Indian investments in
the US, i.e. \$22.6 billion)



Number of jobs created due to
Indian investments in Ohio¹⁶⁷

3,094



Volume of goods and services
exported to India from Ohio¹⁶⁸

\$804.1 million



Jobs supported by exports
to India in Ohio¹⁶⁹

6,033



Indian visitor spending
in Ohio¹⁷⁰

\$267.1 million



Economic contribution of Indian
international students
in Ohio¹⁷¹

\$196.8 million



Indian Companies in Ohio¹⁷²

Information Technology and
Telecommunications

62.50%

Manufacturing

12.50%

Automotive

12.50%

Mining and Materials

6.25%

Life Sciences, Pharmaceuticals
and Healthcare

6.25%

Key personalities



Niraj J. Antani: Niraj Antani is representative for the 42nd district of the Ohio House of Representatives. He was the First Indian-American Republican to serve in the Ohio House. He is an advocate of gun rights—he is of the position that students over 18 years of age should be allowed to carry guns to school. He recently signed a bill that will protect businesses and healthcare workers in Ohio from lawsuits during the pandemic.¹⁷³



Jay Goyal:¹⁷⁴ Jay Goyal was a member of the Ohio House of Representatives from 2007-2013, for the 73rd District. He is a Democrat and was the first Indian-American in the Ohio House who served as the Majority Whip. Goyal advocated for the ‘Third Frontier Program’ which created thousands of jobs in Ohio.¹⁷⁵ He is president of Goyal Industries, a metal manufacturing firm in Ohio.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC’S IMPACT

Statistics (as of 4 October 2020)¹⁷⁶

Total Cases
158,959

Active Cases
16,991

Total Deaths
4,930

Recovered
137,038

Since early August, there has been a decline in the number of COVID-19 patients in hospitals in Ohio; the number of deaths per week has also declined. The state’s mask mandate took effect on 23 July and played a role in the slowdown of infections.¹⁷⁷

Additionally, the secretary of state has authorised the distribution of the federal CARES Act funding worth \$13 million. During Election Day, curbside voting options will be provided to anyone who is unable or does not wish to visit the polling location.¹⁷⁸

Economic impact

State GDP	\$590.7 billion GDP per capita - \$50,666
Pillar Industry: Insurance carriers and related activities	The industry's GDP contribution is \$26.4 billion (4.8% of the state total). The industry's workforce is 107,248 (2% of the state total).

When the stay-at-home order was enforced in March, many businesses in Ohio were forced to close and since the middle of that month, over one million unemployment claims have been made. The manufacturing, food services and entertainment industries have been hit hardest.¹⁷⁹

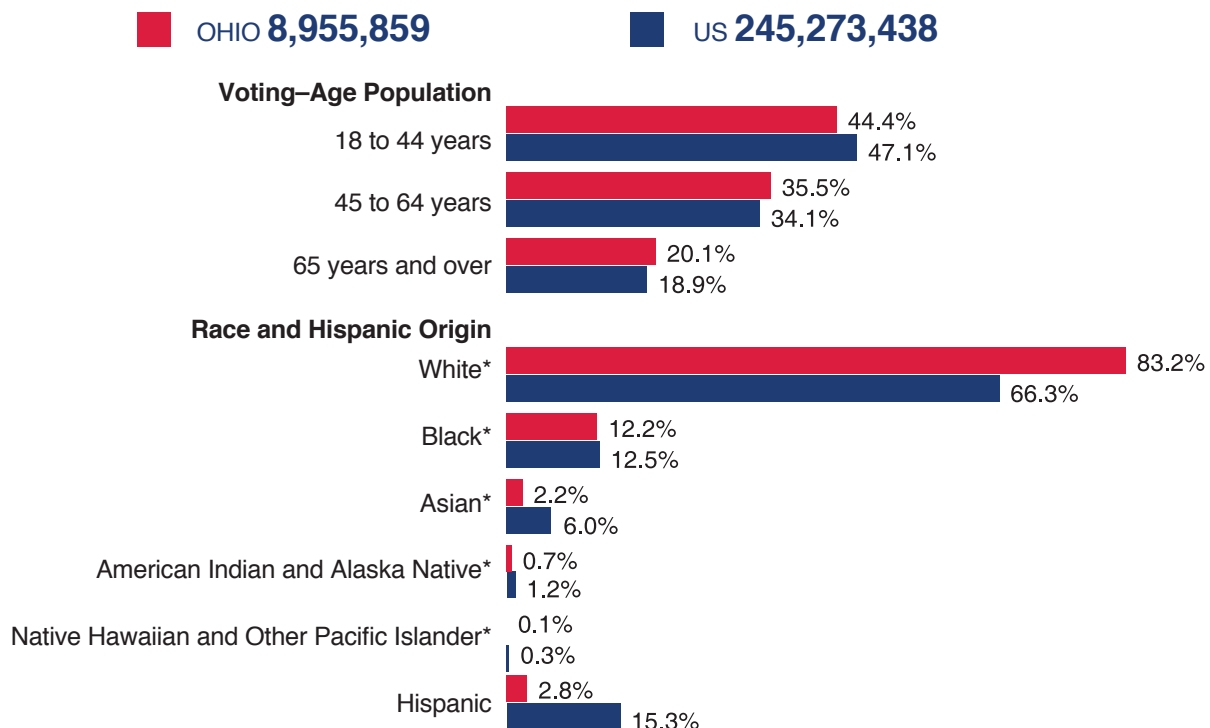
Since manufacturing accounts for 12.5 percent of all Indian companies in Ohio, there will likely be a large

impact on this industry.¹⁸⁰ However, there is an increase in the of Indian healthcare and pharmaceutical companies: what once stood at 6.25 percent has increased in recent months.¹⁸¹ Food production, badly hit by the pandemic, is also fundamental to the Ohio economy, accounting for 14 percent of all state jobs and contributing over \$105 billion to the total economic output (2010).¹⁸²

ELECTORATE ANALYSIS

Electorate Profile

Selected Characteristics of the Voting-Age Population



* Alone or in combination, non-Hispanic.

Notes: In combination means in combination with one or more other races. The sum of the ve race groups adds to more than the total population because individuals may report more than one race. This graphic shows the voting-age population. An estimate of the number of the state's eligible voters (i.e., citizens aged 18 and older) is available via 2014 American Community Survey Table B05003.

Sources: Vintage 2014 Population Estimates, 2014 American Community Survey <www.census.gov/acs>

Source - data: US Census Bureau¹⁸³

Religious composition of adults in Ohio¹⁸⁴

Christian	73%
Evangelical Protestant	29%
Mainline Protestant	17%
Historically Black Protestant	7%
Catholic	18%
Mormon	1%
Orthodox Christian	<1%
Jehovah's Witness	1%
Other Christian	<1%
Non-Christian Faiths	4%
Unaffiliated	22%
Nothing in particular	17%

The possible outcome of the polls in Ohio is uncertain.¹⁸⁵ Indian-Americans form the largest Asian ethnic community in the state, with a population of around 105,077. The community will hold a degree of influence in the outcome of the polls, though not large enough to swing the state.¹⁸⁶ There is tremendous potential here, as Asian-Americans in the state complain of having low voter contact: 50 percent of the community surveyed in 2018 received low/no contact from the Democratic Party and 60 percent reported the same from the Republicans.¹⁸⁷

ELECTORAL HISTORY

Ohio has always been a battleground state. No president has ever been elected without the party winning in Ohio; it was only once, in 1960, when Ohio voted for the losing candidate. At present, the Republicans outnumber the Democrats within the Ohio government and the Governor, Mike DeWine, is also a Republican. There are 24 Republicans and nine Democrats in the State Senate; however, the majority of mayors in Ohio are Democrats. Due to this split in party registration, Ohio is seen as a swing state: it has switched votes in favour of the Democrats and Republicans over the years.¹⁸⁸

The Economist predicts that the Republican Party will take Ohio in 2020, with Trump to command 46-57 percent of the popular vote share, and Biden, 43-54 percent. There is a 70-percent chance of Trump winning the most votes.¹⁸⁹ FiveThirtyEight polls predict that Biden is currently ahead in Ohio with a 47.7-percent approval rate, and Trump is at 47.1 percent.¹⁹⁰

MAIN ISSUES FOR THE 2020 ELECTIONS

- **Jobs.** The pandemic has had a detrimental effect on Ohio's employment rates (only five other states had higher unemployment rates than Ohio). More than 750,000 people are out of work, or one in every seven Ohioans. A large majority of the state's working-class population (and those who lost their jobs in the pandemic) feel connected to Trump's clarion call of bringing jobs back for the American people.
- **Healthcare.** Ohio has a relatively older population in comparison to the rest of America (17.1 percent of Ohio residents are 65 and above, compared to the national average of 16.1 percent). Ohio ranks 39th in overall quality of life and is the state with the 10th shortest life expectancy. The public is of the view that the government should spend more on healthcare.
- **Race.** The African American community in Ohio is made up of almost 1.7 million people, or around 14.3 percent of the country's population. The incarceration rate for African Americans in Ohio is five times that for White Americans.

PENNSYLVANIA

Source - Nations Online¹⁹⁴

A SNAPSHOT

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is located in the Northeast, Great Lakes and Appalachian, mid-Atlantic regions of the United States.

CAPITAL HARRISBURG	POPULATION (ESTIMATED 2019) 12,801,989	INDIAN-AMERICAN POPULATION 1,03,026	ELECTORAL VOTES 20
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THE INDIA CONNECTION

Contribution of Indian Industry to Pennsylvania (in 2018-20)



Number of
Indian companies in
Pennsylvania¹⁹⁵

18



Total volume of investments
by Indian companies¹⁹⁶
Approximately

\$539.6 million

(2.387 percent of total Indian investments in
the US, i.e. \$22.6 billion)



Number of jobs created
due to Indian investment in
Pennsylvania¹⁹⁷

2,921



Volume of goods and services
exported to India from
Pennsylvania¹⁹⁸

\$1.3 billion



Jobs supported by exports to
India in Pennsylvania¹⁹⁹

9,672



Indian visitor spending in
Pennsylvania²⁰⁰

\$426 million



Economic contribution of
Indian international students
in Pennsylvania²⁰¹

\$262.9 million



Indian Companies in
Pennsylvania²⁰²

Information Technology and
Telecommunications

50%

Life Sciences, Pharmaceuticals
and Healthcare

33.33%

Manufacturing

5.56%

Design and Engineering

5.56%

Automotive

5.56%

Key personalities



D. Raja: Born in Bangalore, Raja is a first-generation immigrant who came to the US on a student visa. He ran for the 37th District state Senate seat for the Republicans in 2019 and lost by a close margin to the Democratic candidate. Raja has been Commissioner, Mt. Lebanon, PA and radio show host between 2013 and 2016. He founded the Computer Enterprises Inc. and is chairperson of the Republican Committee of Allegheny County.²⁰³

COVID-19 PANDEMIC'S IMPACT

Statistics (as of 4 October 2020)²⁰⁴



Pennsylvania has made the wearing of masks mandatory, and the governor has repeatedly issued statements encouraging people to follow the order.²⁰⁵ Voting reforms have been announced for the 2020 elections to be conducted safely, through remote registration, postal ballots, and training provided to election officials.²⁰⁶

Economic impact²⁰⁷

State GDP	\$700.8 billion GDP per capita - \$54,725
Pillar Industries: Professional and business services	Industry GDP contribution is \$101.8.0 billion.

Pennsylvania's industrial base is sufficiently diverse, with services as key. The state is also known for its coal and steel manufacturing, which is its fourth largest industry, contributing \$91.5 billion to state GDP every year. The broadcasting and telecommunications

industry is productive as well, and has expanded by 39 percent in the last five years, generating six percent of Pennsylvania's output.²⁰⁸

The state government is expected to face a revenue shortfall over the next two years of almost \$5 billion due to the pandemic. An IFO Institute forecast suggests that 453,000 payroll jobs will be lost this year; indeed, the state has been among the hardest hit in the country

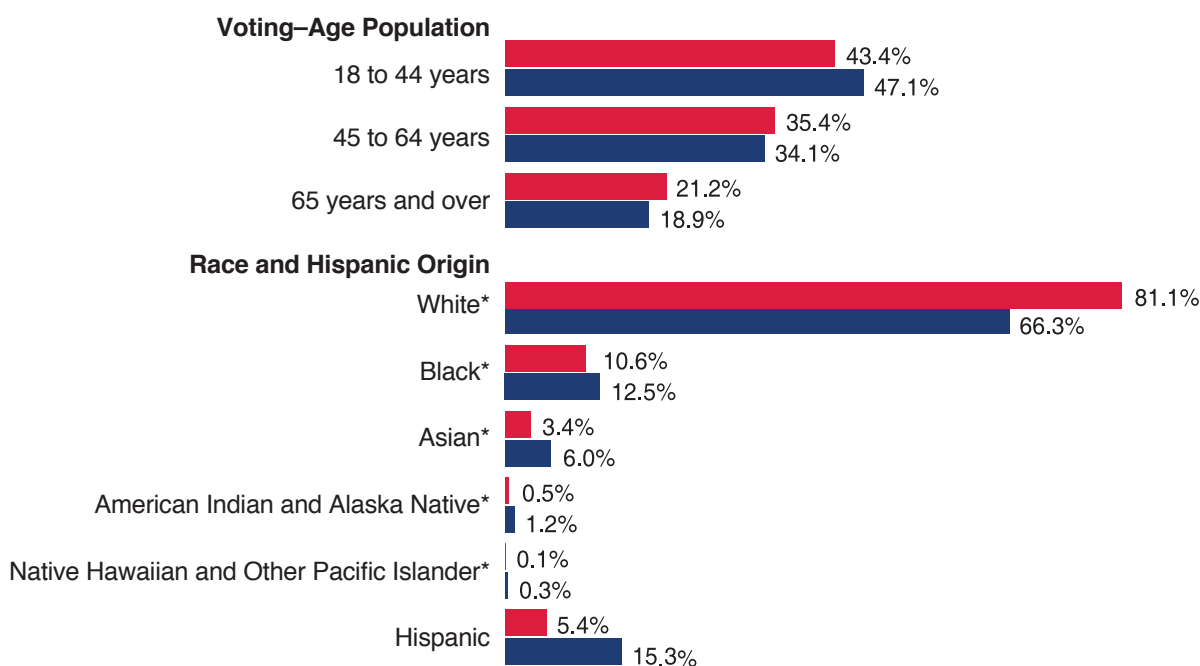
in terms of employment.²⁰⁹ The construction sector, as well as the food and accommodation service industries, have suffered the most severe fallout in terms of employment.²¹⁰

ELECTORATE ANALYSIS

Electorate Profile

Selected Characteristics of the Voting-Age Population

PENNSYLVANIA 10,086,316 **US 245,273,438**



* Alone or in combination, non-Hispanic.

Notes: In combination means in combination with one or more other races. The sum of the ve race groups adds to more than the total population because individuals may report more than one race. This graphic shows the voting-age population. An estimate of the number of the state's eligible voters (i.e., citizens aged 18 and older) is available via 2014 American Community Survey Table B05003.

Sources: Vintage 2014 Population Estimates, 2014 American Community Survey <www.census.gov/acs>

Source - data: US Census Bureau²¹¹

Religious composition of adults in Pennsylvania:²¹²

Christian	73%
Evangelical Protestant	19%
Mainline Protestant	23%
Historically Black Protestant	5%
Catholic	24%
Mormon	<1%
Orthodox Christian	<1%
Jehovah's Witness	1%
Other Christian	<1%
Non-Christian Faiths	6%
Unaffiliated	21%

The Indian-American population forms the largest ethnic community in the state and is a key voting constituency.²¹³ Pennsylvania has among the largest share of Indian-American population on the East Coast. In the recent years this population has grown tremendously, doubling in South Jersey and Southeast Pennsylvania and growing by nearly 200 percent in some counties in only a decade.²¹⁴ A majority of the registered Indian-American voters in the state are Democrats.

The Indian-American population in the state is large enough to swing the election.²¹⁵ In 2016, the Republican Party won the polls by a slim 42,000 votes. There are 156,000 Indian-American voters in the state.²¹⁶

ELECTORAL HISTORY

Pennsylvania will be a swing state for the 2020 polls. Although the state voted Democrat in all six elections before 2016, Trump won the race in 2016 by a small margin of 44,292 votes (out of more than 6,000,000 votes cast—or a 0.72-percent margin, which set a record margin for a presidential election in Pennsylvania in 176 years). Three counties swung the election in 2016, making the state one of the most interesting battlegrounds to watch this November.²¹⁷

The Economist predicts that unlike the last time, the Democrats will take Pennsylvania in 2020, with Biden likely to command 48-58 percent of the popular vote share and Donald Trump, 42-52 percent.²¹⁸ FiveThirtyEight polls predict similarly: Joe Biden will command 50.1 percent of the votes, and Trump, 44.1 percent.²¹⁹

MAIN ISSUES FOR THE 2020 ELECTIONS

- **Ballot issues.** Pennsylvania attracted controversy after its primaries in June as some absentee ballots went missing, and is therefore currently mired in chaos, unable to finalise its mail-in ballot process, even this late in the process.
- **Suburban voters.** The suburbs have received a fair share of the limelight in Pennsylvania this election season, especially from Trump who has reached out to what he called the “suburban housewives”. In a particularly divisive statement, he tried to create a scare around the Democrats’ low-income housing proposal.
- **Police reforms.** In the backdrop of the Black Lives Matter protests for racial justice in the US, Pennsylvania lawmakers have passed two police reform measures with an overwhelming majority. The new law requires officers applying for jobs to submit their employment records for scrutiny.

TEXAS

Source - Nations Online²²³

A SNAPSHOT

The Commonwealth of Texas is located in the South-Central region of the United States.

CAPITAL AUSTIN	POPULATION (ESTIMATED 2019) 28,995,881	INDIAN-AMERICAN POPULATION 326,558	ELECTORAL VOTES 38
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THE INDIA CONNECTION

Contribution of Indian Industry to Texas (in 2018-20)



Number of
Indian companies
in Texas²²⁴

40



Total volume of investments by
Indian companies²²⁵
Approximately

\$9.5 billion

(42 percent of total Indian investments in the
US, i.e. \$22.6 billion)



Number of jobs created due to
Indian investments
in Texas²²⁶

17,578



Volume of goods and services
exported to India
from Texas²²⁷

\$3 billion



Jobs supported by exports to India in Texas²²⁸

17,975



Indian visitor spending in Texas²²⁹

\$821.1 million



Economic contribution of Indian international students in Texas²³⁰

\$451.1 million



Indian Companies in Texas: ²³¹

Information Technology and Telecommunications

42.5%

Energy

25%

Automotive

7.50%

Manufacturing

7.50%

Design and Engineering

5.00%

Life Sciences, Pharmaceuticals and Healthcare

5.00%

Mining and Materials

2.50%

Financial Services

2.50%

Food and Agriculture

2.50%

Key personalities



R.K. Sandill:²³² American-born R.K. Sandill is a Democrat of Indian descent and is a judge of the Texas 127th District Court. He is running for re-election for judge of the Texas 127th District Court. He advanced from the Democratic primaries in March 2020 and will be up for election in November. Sandill is the first District Court Judge in Texas of South Asian descent. His motivation is to restore balance to the conservative-heavy Texan Supreme Court.²³³



Himesh Gandhi:²³⁴ This Indian-American holds a council seat in Sugar Land, Texas, first elected in 2012. He has served on numerous city council committees and was also a member of the task force that led the development of the Smart Financial Center at Sugar Land (an iconic entertainment landmark). He was named one of the region's '40 under 40 young leaders' by the *Houston Business Journal* in 2015.



Nandita Berry:²³⁵ Nandita Berry was the 109th Secretary of State for Texas and the first Indian-American to hold the office. She is a Republican and among the most distinguished attorneys in the state.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC'S IMPACT

Statistics (as of 4 October 2020)²³⁶

Total Cases
805,485

Active Cases
90,393

Total Deaths
16,505

Recovered
698,587

Texas is one of the US states most severely affected by COVID-19. In the initial days, state governor, Greg Abbott, was not in favour of imposing statewide mandates that would unnecessarily burden the parts of the state where the outbreak was less severe. However, as economic activity restarted, there was a significant rise in the number of COVID-19 cases. As a result, Texas issued a statewide mask mandate in early July that required people in counties with more than 20 coronavirus cases to wear a mask inside a public building as well as outdoor public spaces.²³⁷ Among the 11 exemptions to Abbott's executive order for a mask mandate are polling places.²³⁸ Two civil groups and two Texas voters filed a lawsuit to include a mask mandate in the state's in-person voting rules. The federal judge dismissed the suit, saying the court lacked jurisdiction.²³⁹

Economic impact

State GDP	\$1.6 trillion GDP per capita - \$57,077
Pillar Industry: Manufacturing	The Industry's GDP contribution is \$237.7 billion.

Texas is the top exporter in the US, and home to the headquarters of 48 in the Fortune 500 companies list, including AT&T and ExxonMobil. Texas' GDP is higher than Australia's.²⁴⁰

Activity in the service sector has been severely affected by the pandemic, hit worse than the manufacturing sector, precipitating downward pressures on wages and prices. The state's oil and gas sector—the largest in the United States—has also been affected. The housing market has slowed, too, as sellers and buyers take a wait-and-see approach. Consumer confidence in Texas plunged in

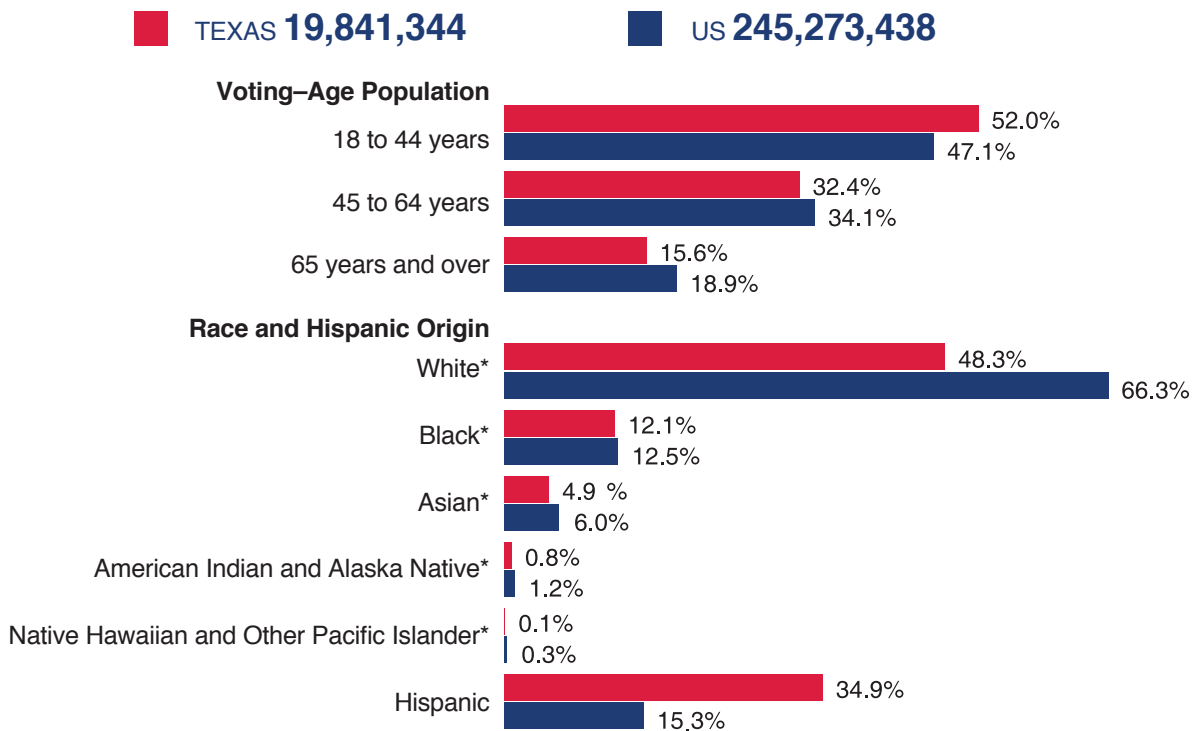
April to its lowest level in seven years, according to data from the Conference Board.²⁴¹

It is likely that Texas will underperform in terms of job and output growth this year compared to the US average, due to Texas' disproportionate share of vulnerable industries such as food services and air transportation, as well as prolonged weakness in the oil and gas sector. According to estimates by the Dallas Fed, employment will contract sharply through midyear, rebound in the second half of 2020, and end the year with a down of 7.6 percent.²⁴²

ELECTORATE ANALYSIS

Electorate Profile

Selected Characteristics of the Voting-Age Population



* Alone or in combination, non-Hispanic.

Notes: In combination means in combination with one or more other races. The sum of the ve race groups adds to more than the total population because individuals may report more than one race. This graphic shows the voting-age population. An estimate of the number of the state's eligible voters (i.e., citizens aged 18 and older) is available via 2014 American Community Survey Table B05003.

Sources: Vintage 2014 Population Estimates, 2014 American Community Survey <www.census.gov/acs>

Source - data: US Census Bureau²⁴³

Religious composition of adults in Texas²⁴⁴

Christian	77%
Evangelical Protestant	31%
Mainline Protestant	13%
Historically Black Protestant	6%
Catholic	23%
Mormon	1%
Orthodox Christian	<1%
Jehovah's Witness	1%
Other Christian	1%
Non-Christian Faiths	4%
Unaffiliated	18%

Indians in Texas are increasing in number and have a strong presence in the state. Indian students who go to Texas for studies eventually get sponsored by a company for a work visa.²⁴⁵ In a demonstration of the political importance of Texas' Indian community, Trump welcomed Prime Minister Modi to the US with a 'Howdy Modi' rally in Houston. During the 2016 elections, Trump won the elections in Texas by a margin of around 800,000 votes.²⁴⁶ In a state of 340,000 Indian-American voters, this community can play a pivotal role in swinging the elections in 2020.²⁴⁷

ELECTORAL HISTORY

It was 40 years ago when Texas last elected a Democrat candidate for president. In the 10 elections since then, the state has been a Republican stronghold. In 2016, Trump defeated Democrat Hillary Clinton in Texas by nine points.²⁴⁸ Political pundits have identified Texas as a key battleground state.²⁴⁹

The Economist predicts that the Republicans will take Texas again in 2020, with Trump likely to command 47-57 percent of the popular vote share and Biden to hold 43-53 percent.²⁵⁰ Similarly, FiveThirtyEight polls predict that Biden is behind at 45.7 percent, with Trump at 48 percent.²⁵¹

MAIN ISSUES FOR THE 2020 ELECTIONS

- **Race.** The divide between the Texans on issues of race is prominent. In a poll related to the Confederate memorials, 60 percent of African-American voters were in favour of the removal or relocation of Confederate memorials, whereas 64 percent of White American voters wanted to leave them in place. Moreover, 28 percent of African-American voters supported the building of a wall along the border with Mexico; 64 percent of White American voters support the border wall.²⁵² These divides were further heightened after the death of George Floyd, an unarmed black man killed in a particularly horrific episode of police brutality in Minneapolis. A new energy has flourished from East Texas, a centre of white supremacist activity in the past, in support for the Black Lives Matter movement.²⁵³
- **Gun Violence.** In 2015, Texas legislators enacted a law that allowed people to carry hidden, loaded guns in college campuses. In 2017, Texas had the 27th highest rates of deaths caused by guns. Although

Texas is a major importer of guns, of all the crime guns recovered for the year 2017, nearly 85 percent of them were locally bought. There are calls for the passing of gun reform laws to require background checks on all gun sales and the strengthening of laws that will either restrict or prohibit access to ammunition.²⁵⁴

- **Police Reforms.** The killing of George Floyd provoked protests for racial justice and police reform across major cities of Texas. Subsequently, a number of changes were implemented by police chiefs as they announced new restrictions in their ranks.²⁵⁵ Similarly, other policing changes were being introduced across the state, until recently when a major reform was passed by the Texas legislature. Subsequently, the George Floyd Act was passed by the African-American members of the state legislature, banning the use of chokeholds during arrests and requiring law-enforcement officers to either intervene or prevent an officer from using excessive force on the job.²⁵⁶

WISCONSIN

Source - Nations Online²⁵⁷

A SNAPSHOT

The Commonwealth of Wisconsin is located in the north-central, Midwest and Great Lakes regions of the United States.

CAPITAL
MADISON

POPULATION
(ESTIMATED 2019)
5,822,434

INDIAN-AMERICAN
POPULATION
30,369

ELECTORAL
VOTES
10

THE INDIA CONNECTION

Contribution of Indian Industry to Wisconsin (in 2018-20)



Volume of goods and services
exported to India from
Wisconsin²⁵⁸

\$369.5 million



Jobs supported by exports to
India in Wisconsin²⁵⁹

2,561



Indian visitor spending
in Wisconsin²⁶⁰

\$102.3 million



Economic contribution of Indian
international students
in Wisconsin²⁶¹

\$35.6 million

Key personalities



Satya Nadella:²⁶² Microsoft Corp. CEO Satya Nadella is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Originally from Hyderabad, India, Nadella came to Milwaukee as a graduate student of computer science. He then proceeded to work at Sun Microsystems’ Chicago office, while studying business at the University of Chicago. He joined Microsoft in 1992.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC’S IMPACT

Statistics (as of 4 October 2020)²⁶³



More than 50 people who voted in person or worked during the polls in Wisconsin’s presidential primaries contracted COVID-19.²⁶⁴ Wisconsin’s mask mandate came into effect only in August. As of 21 September, more than 100,000 people have tested positive for COVID-19 in Wisconsin.²⁶⁵

Economic impact

State GDP	\$292.3 billion GDP per capita - \$50,431
Pillar Industry: Manufacturing	The industry’s GDP contribution is \$63.1 billion, dominating the economy. The next biggest sector - real estate and rentals, contributes \$39.3 billion to state GDP. Dairy is a key agricultural industry in the state.

On 13 May 2020,²⁶⁶ the Wisconsin Supreme Court rejected the extension of the state's lockdown, in line with the position taken by Republican legislators. Tourism, retail and service businesses have suffered particularly massive losses. Agriculture and food/beverage, which have been identified as essential businesses, are seeking to mitigate supply-chain disruptions. Manufacturing and construction saw less immediate disruption but, in the long term, are expecting a slowdown, with falling

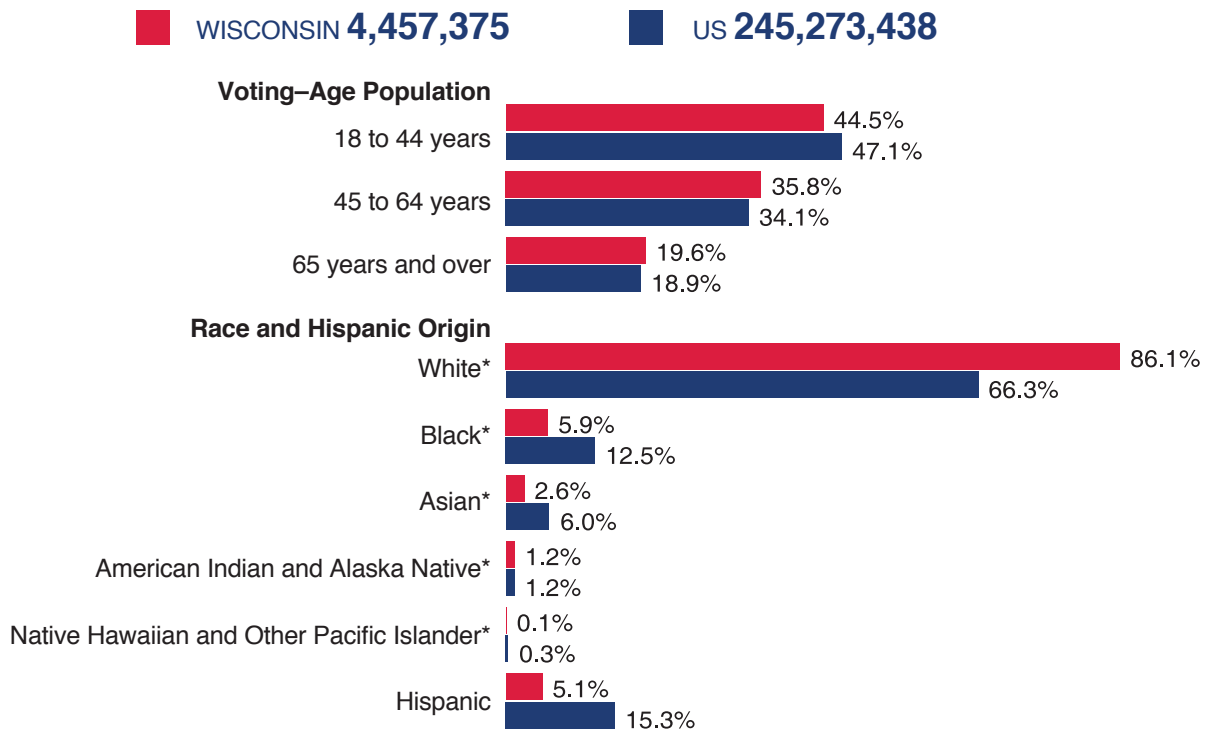
consumer spending and capital investment. Education and healthcare—both huge economic engines in the state—have also been disrupted or nearly brought to a halt by the pandemic.²⁶⁷

President Trump has announced \$13 billion in farm aid to Wisconsin, especially aimed at providing relief to the state's key agricultural industries of dairy, cranberry and ginseng farming.²⁶⁸

ELECTORATE ANALYSIS

Electorate Profile

Selected Characteristics of the Voting-Age Population



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Source - data: US Census Bureau²⁶⁹

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Historically Black Protestant	4%
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Mormon	<1%
Orthodox Christian	1%
Jehovah's Witness	1%
Other Christian	<1%
Non-Christian Faiths	4%
Unaffiliated	25%

Indian-Americans form the second-largest Asian ethnic community in the state.²⁷¹ The community is a key voting constituency, large enough to swing the state:²⁷² the Democrats lost Wisconsin by 21,000 votes in the 2016 election, in a state of 37,000 Indian-Americans.²⁷³ Both parties are therefore looking closely at Wisconsin.

ELECTORAL HISTORY

In 2016, it was Wisconsin and Pennsylvania that helped Trump's White House run. Democrats performed unexpectedly well in the 2018 midterms in the state and put up a strong showing in the local elections as well. The Democratic Party has won seven elections in a row in the state, from 1988-2012, all in close races, but Donald Trump unexpectedly took Wisconsin in 2016 by a small margin of 0.7 percent.²⁷⁴

The Economist predicts that the Democrats will take Wisconsin in 2020, with Biden likely to command 48-58 percent of the popular vote share and Trump, 42-52 percent.²⁷⁵ FiveThirtyEight polls predict that Biden comfortably leads the state with 50.6-percent approval, against Trump's 43.8 percent.²⁷⁶

MAIN ISSUES FOR THE 2020 ELECTIONS

- **Healthcare.** Healthcare was a key issue in the 2018 midterm elections in Wisconsin; it will be true for November 2020 as well. In Wisconsin, 993 likely voters were asked to choose their top priority: reducing the cost of healthcare and prescription drugs, or guaranteeing healthcare to all: reducing costs received 60 percent of the vote while universal coverage of healthcare was supported by 30 percent.²⁷⁷ Majority of the people accounted for in the poll supported the Democratic Party's stance on Healthcare.
- **Civil justice and Legal reforms.** Just a few years ago, Wisconsin's legal climate was rated among the worst in the country. However, Wisconsin has recently received a national award for tort and legal reform as a result of the bold legislation enacted over the past four years.²⁷⁸
- **Education.** Despite recent trends in above-average levels of unemployment, thousands of jobs in the state remain unfilled. Employers are struggling to find qualified, skilled workers to fill high-wage positions. Some initiatives to help provide employers with access to a pipeline of skilled workers that enables economic growth include reduction of information asymmetry between job opportunities and the workforce, and enhancing workforce training resources.²⁷⁹

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