



Virginia (VA) (13 votes)

Capital:	Richmond
Area:	42,774 sq mi. / 110,785 sq km
Population:	8,517,685
Nickname:	"Old Dominion"
State motto:	"Thus Always to Tyrants"
Governor:	Ralph Northam (D)
U.S. Senators:	Mark Warner (D), Tim Kaine (D)



How will your state vote?

Predicting a vote is a challenging task. Political researchers have different opinions on how to predict an election outcome. Different formulas and methods are used, however none is perfect. Each prediction is a snapshot of the voters' opinion at a certain point in time. But with election issues and current events changing so fast, it is quite a challenge to have an accurate prediction of how the election will turn out. In the 2016 election, most political pundits and polls before Election Day had Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton in the lead. Yet, while Clinton won the majority of the popular vote, the Republican candidate Donald J. Trump won the Electoral College votes of key swing states and thus the Presidency.

What are the most common predictors to determine how citizens will vote? Socio-economic factors are among the most important ones. They include, but are not limited to, citizens' education, income, and ethnicity. While these are often mentioned as decisive, others are important to consider as well. For example, many Americans cast their vote based on a single issue like health care, women's reproductive rights, the economy, or the environment. These voters choose their preferred candidate based on the issue most important to their identity, their social network, or personal biography, for example religious affiliation, ideology, or health. Americans also often cast their vote in a local context and are influenced by political and social issues affecting their own state. Finally, calculating voter turnout is key to an accurate prediction.

Some key variables for predicting the election outcome



Voting history

How have people in the state voted in the past? Is the state solidly red, blue, or purple? What is the expected turnout?



Ethnicity

What ethnic group does a citizen belong to? What is the ethnic make-up of the state?



Religion

How important is religion to the citizens? How often do they pray or attend worship service?



Economy

What's the current economic situation in the state? How many citizens live in poverty? How many are without a job?



Income inequality

How wide is the gap between wealthy and poor people? How much income does the top 1% in the state take home?



Education

How many people graduate from high school in your state? How many have a college degree?

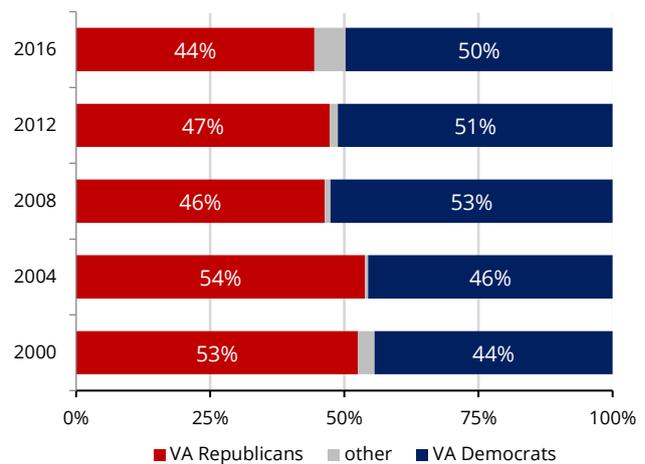


Voting history ^[2]

From the post-Civil War Reconstruction period through 1948, Virginians almost always sided with the Democratic Party in elections.

However, from 1952 through 2004, Virginia was reliably Republican. What changed? In the early 1950s, Virginia politics was controlled by Democratic Senator Harry F. Byrd, Sr., and his political machine. For the 1952 cycle, Byrd announced he would not be endorsing a candidate, saying "Silence is Golden." People knew this meant that it would be okay to vote for the Republican Dwight Eisenhower. Shifting demographics, including more rapid population growth around Washington D.C., have made the state a battleground in recent elections, perhaps one that now leans Democratic again. Barack Obama won here twice and Hillary Clinton made it three in a row for Democrats.

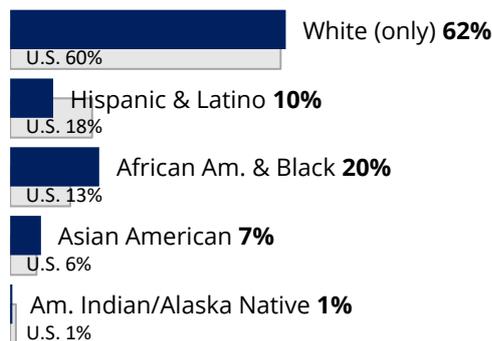
Election results in Virginia (2000–2016): ^[3]



Voter turnout 2016:



Ethnicity ^[4]



(U.S. average in grey)

Religion ^[5]

VA is the 14th most religious state overall

61% of adults in VA are "highly religious," based on an overall index

Religious profile of Virginia

- 60% (13th) say religion is very important in their lives
- 44% (8th) say they attend worship at least weekly
- 60% (14th) say they pray daily
- 67% (15th) say they believe in God w/ absolute certainty

Economy ^[4]

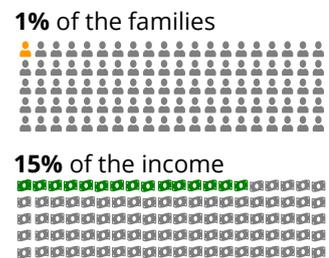
10.6% (41th highest) poverty rate

2.9% (8th lowest) unemployment rate

Income inequality ^[6]

The **top 1%** take home **15% of all the income in VA.**

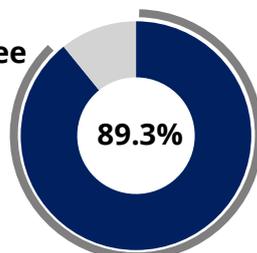
(U.S. average: 21%)



Education ^[4]

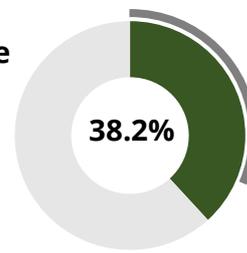
High school degree or higher

persons 25+ yrs. old
U.S. average: 87.7%



Bachelor's degree or higher

persons 25+ yrs. old
U.S. average: 31.5%





More information on Virginia *



State information

Infoplease.com: <http://www.infoplease.com/states.html>

Official state website: <https://www.virginia.gov/>



Government information:

Governor: <https://www.governor.virginia.gov>

State and Local Government on The Net: <http://www.statelocalgov.net/>

U.S. Senators from the state: <http://www.senate.gov/senators/contact/>

U.S. Representatives from the state: <https://www.house.gov/representatives>



Election 2020

270twin.com: <http://www.270twin.com/states>

Rock the Vote – voting information: <https://www.rockthevote.org/voting-information/>

Vote.org – voter registration rules: <https://www.vote.org/voter-registration-rules/>



Statistics

Quick Facts from the US Census Bureau (select state): <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/>

Economic Policy Institute – The Unequal States of America: <https://epi.org/108519>



Media



Media Collection by the U.S. Embassy:

<http://usa.usembassy.de/media.htm>



50states.com – Local newspapers:

<http://www.50states.com/news>



OfficialUSA.com – Local TV stations:

<http://www.officialusa.com/stateguides/media/television/states.html>



Democrats and Republicans in the state

Democratic Party



<http://www.vademocrats.org/>



<http://www.facebook.com/vademocrats>



<http://www.youtube.com/vademocrats>



<http://twitter.com/vademocrats>

Republican Party

<http://www.rpv.org/>

no official site

<http://www.youtube.com/VAGOPTV>

http://twitter.com/va_gop

* For most web-resources, you will have to select your state from a list or type in your state name in a search field. Please note, these are third-party resources, Teach About U.S. is not responsible for this content.

Sources: 1. State map: [Wikimedia Commons](#); 2. Voting history text: adapted from [270twin.com](#); 3. U.S. election history: [David Leip's Election Atlas](#); 4. Ethnicity, economy, and education data: [U.S. Census Bureau](#); 5. Religion data: [Pew poll: How religious is your state?](#); 6. Wealth and income inequality data: [Economic Policy Institute – The Unequal States of America](#).