

Virginia (VA) (13 votes)

Capital: **Richmond**
 Area: **42,774 sq mi. / 110,785 sq km**
 Population: **8,715,698**
 Nickname: **"Old Dominion"**
 State motto: **"Thus Always to Tyrants"**
 Governor: **Glenn Youngkin (R)**
 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 2020 election, most political pundits and polls before Election Day accurately estimated that Democratic candidate Joe Biden would receive more votes than the Republican candidate and former President Donald J. Trump. However, Biden's victory in the Electoral College was narrower than predicted because the polls overstated Biden's support relative to Trump.

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?

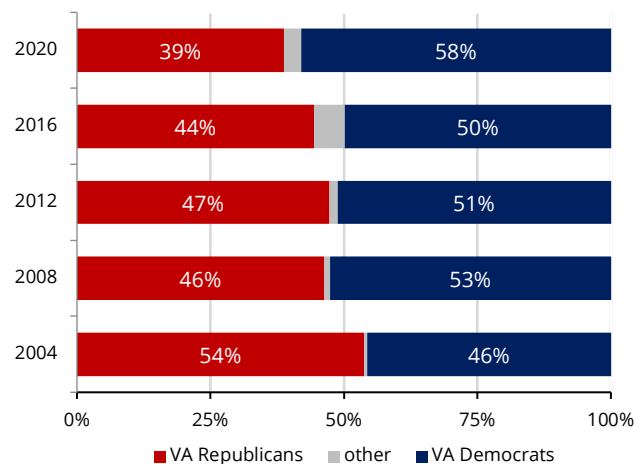


Voting history ^[2]

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. In 2020, Joe Biden defeated Donald Trump by a 58% to 39% margin.

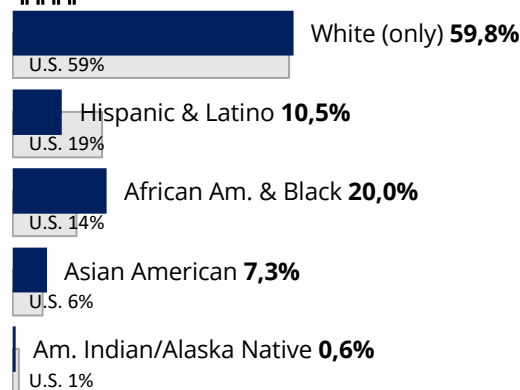
Election results in Virginia (2004–2020): ^[2]



Voter turnout 2020:



Ethnicity ^[3]



(U.S. average in grey)

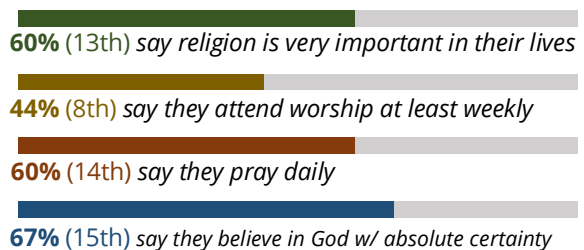


Religion ^[4]

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



Economy ^[5]

10.6% (39th highest)
poverty rate

3.0% (14th lowest)
unemployment rate



Income inequality ^[6]

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

(U.S. average: 21%)

1% of the families



15% of the income

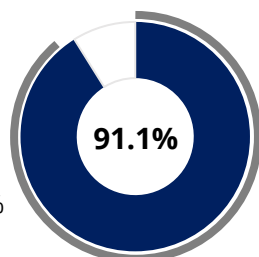


Education ^[3]

High school degree or higher

persons 25+ yrs. old

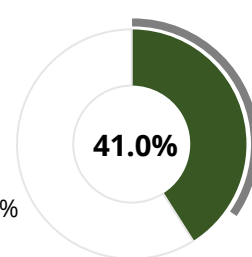
U.S. average (grey): 89.1%



Bachelor's degree or higher

persons 25+ yrs. old

U.S. average (grey): 34.3%



More information on Virginia *



State information

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



Media



Virginia Political News

<https://www.politico.com/news/virginia>



Virginia Politics Podcasts:

https://podcasts.feedspot.com/virginia_political_podcasts/



Democrats and Republicans in the state

Democratic Party



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



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



<http://twitter.com/vademocrats>



<https://www.instagram.com/vademocrats/>



no official site

Republican Party

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

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

http://twitter.com/va_gop

<https://www.instagram.com/virginia.gop/>

no official site

* 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 270towin.com
3. Ethnicity, economy, and education data: [U.S. Census Bureau](#)
4. Religion data: [Pew poll: How religious is your state?](#)
5. Poverty and unemployment rate: [Poverty Rates by State & Unemployment Statistics Map](#)
6. Wealth and income inequality data: [Economic Policy Institute – The Unequal States of America](#)