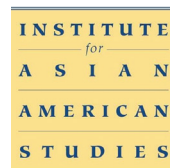


No Longer Invisible

2025 Massachusetts Asian and Pacific Islander American (APIA) Community Survey Report



UMass
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Islanders
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THE **ASIAN COMMUNITY** FUND
AT THE BOSTON FOUNDATION



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

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Note on Terminology:

In this report, the term “Asian and Pacific Islander American (APIA)” reflects two distinct groups—Asian Americans and Pacific Islander Americans—while aligning with widely used conventions. We use the term to refer to Massachusetts residents with heritage from Asian countries (e.g., China, India, Vietnam, Nepal, Korea) and Pacific Island nations (e.g., Samoa, Fiji, the Marshall Islands, Tonga, Hawai‘i). While we recognize that many organizations use the term Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI), we intentionally use APIA to affirm that Pacific Islanders are American as well. “American” is used inclusively, regardless of citizenship or immigration status. For more, see the “Who is APIA” section.

Recommended Citation:

Dhaurali S, Watanabe P. No Longer Invisible: 2025 Massachusetts Asian and Pacific Islander American (APIA) Community Survey Report. Boston (MA): Institute for Asian American Studies at UMass Boston; Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission. 2025 June 3.

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Introduction

Asian and Pacific Islander American (APIA) residents are the fastest-growing major racial group in Massachusetts, with the population rising by nearly 38% since 2012 to more than half a million (1).

However, this rapid growth has not been met with equal visibility or representation—APIA voices continue to be merged, undercounted, misunderstood, and largely absent from mainstream data, research, and policy conversations (2). This lack of accurate, disaggregated data has serious consequences: without it, the needs, experiences, and perspectives of our diverse communities are too often overlooked or mischaracterized.

For over 50 years, researchers have frequently been asked to provide insights into the political and social perspectives of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans. “What issues do they think are most important?,” “Do they turn out to vote at significant rates?,” “What are their partisan preferences?,” And, in light of the current national climate, “Who did they vote for in the recent presidential election?,” and, “What do they think about the torrent of orders, directives, and pronouncements on matters such as birthright citizenship, the mass deportation of immigrants, etc.?”

The absence of reliable data specific to Massachusetts has resulted in more assumptions than evidence-based conclusions about APIA communities here. This lack of accurate, locally grounded information has caused some observers to misinterpret or oversimplify the political behaviors and attitudes of APIA in the state and beyond. For example, the absence of Asian American voices in the political arena led a Georgia political operative, mentioned in a New York Times story, to advise an Asian American candidate that she shouldn’t “waste too much time talking to Asian voters. They don’t vote.” (3)*

*The article goes on to point out that Dr. Michelle Au, who ran for the state Senate in Georgia in 2020, the recipient of the operative’s advice, went on to win her race and become the first Asian American woman to be elected to the State senate with the Asian American vote in Georgia nearly doubling from the previous election. According to Dr. Au, “People really started to realize that there is a large and growing and quite powerful Asian electorate in Georgia, but one that people have, up until now, not been paying attention to at all because of this sensibility that the Asian population is too small to make a difference.”

The absence of credible data also contributes to the ongoing marginalization of APIAs in political life. In Massachusetts, for example, 56% of Asian American voters reported no outreach from the Democratic Party, and 66% reported none from the Republican Party in a recent survey (1). Nationally, the lack of polling on APIA perspectives has left a critical void in public opinion research. As one New York Times article observes, “Asian American

is itself a broad umbrella term... Polling such a diverse group while accurately reflecting differences in opinion within the community has traditionally been expensive... Without survey data, there's little information about what issues matter to Asian Americans" (3).

With this study, the voices of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans are heard through a state-wide survey conducted with a large sample of APIAs (n=1414). This allows for disaggregating some of the findings by major Asian subgroups (Chinese, Indian, and Vietnamese Americans) as well as by other socio-economic and demographic characteristics (gender, age, income, educational attainment, nativity, etc.). The survey instrument was made available in several Asian languages (Chinese, Vietnamese, Khmer) to increase accessibility.

Our ability to survey a large and diverse sample, disaggregate data by ethnic groups and other factors, and offer the survey in translation is critical to gaining a better understanding of the behaviors and attitudes of APIA residents across Massachusetts. The reporting of a single average score for APIAs can mask vital differences within the Asian diaspora. When data is disaggregated by major Asian ethnic groups, one can see some significant differences that an average figure does not account for adequately. By disaggregating by major Asian ethnic subgroups, for example, a clearer understanding of the complexity that exists behind the aggregated figure emerges. However, carrying out this work is an expensive task.

The urgency of this work is underscored by the rising tide of anti-Asian hate and discrimination. According to the 2025 STAATUS Index, nearly half of Asian Americans nationwide reported being insulted in the past year, 36% experienced harassment or threats, and 63% felt unsafe in at least one public space due to their race (2). Feelings of acceptance remain low: only 23% of Asian Americans say they completely feel accepted in the U.S., compared to 58% of white Americans. These social challenges are compounded by economic and structural inequities—such as 10.2% of Asian Americans and 16% of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders (NHPIs) living below the poverty line, and 24.1% of NHPIs lacking broadband access (1), limiting participation in health, education, and civic life. Previous efforts, like the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Community Health Equity Survey, have made important strides but have certain limitations (4). This underscores the need for more nuanced and community-informed research that captures the full diversity of APIA residents across the Commonwealth.

This project, therefore, represents an important commitment to give a voice to APIA communities, to fight against our invisibility, and to insist, as the Commonwealth's fastest growing major racial group and its largest immigrant community, that we be seen and heard. This project is a collaborative effort, dually led by the Institute for Asian American Studies (IAAS) at UMass Boston and the Massachusetts Asian American and Pacific Islander Commission (AAPIC). Outstanding, dedicated Asian and Pacific Islander

American-serving non-profits, including the Asian and Pacific Islanders Civic Action Network (APIs CAN), the Asian Community Fund (ACF), and The Boston Foundation (TBF), provided some of the financial resources and expertise to make this study possible. It is largely due to the extraordinary vision and willingness of the state's APIA community that this first step has been initiated in what we hope will become a regular and continually improving Massachusetts Asian and Pacific Islander American Community Survey.

Main Findings

Inflation/Economy/Cost of Living

Cost of living is a top concern across communities.

Roughly one-third (32%) of all respondents identified inflation, the economy, or cost of living as a top issue in Massachusetts—this concern was consistent across gender, ethnicity, and most age groups, demonstrating its widespread impact.

Housing

Housing affordability is a widespread and deeply felt concern.

While 27% of all respondents cited housing as the most pressing issue in Massachusetts, an even greater proportion (30%) reported personally struggling to afford housing—indicating that this issue is not just perceived but directly experienced across the state.

Healthcare

There's a major gap between public perception and personal healthcare burden.

While only 4% of respondents identified healthcare as a top statewide issue, far more reported personal financial strain—28% struggled to afford healthcare services and 26% struggled with insurance costs—revealing a disconnect between policy conversations and lived realities.

Political Identification

A majority of APIA respondents lean Democratic, but partisan affiliation varies by ethnic subgroup.

While most respondents in Massachusetts identify with the Democratic Party, there are significant differences across subgroups. Indian Americans showed the strongest Democratic affiliation (64%), Chinese Americans were more evenly split (55%), and Vietnamese Americans reported the weakest Democratic support (45%) and the highest relative support for Republicans. These distinctions emphasize the political diversity within the APIA community.

Voter Registration

High overall voter registration and turnout among APIA respondents, with clear age-related trends.

Despite facing structural barriers, 80% of APIA survey respondents reported being registered to vote in Massachusetts, and among them, 84% said they voted in the 2024

Presidential Election. Registration and turnout increased significantly with age—94% of respondents aged 60+ were registered, and 92% of them reported voting.

Vote Choice For President In 2024

Strong support for Kamala Harris among APIA voters in Massachusetts.

A clear majority (67%) of APIA respondents reported voting for Kamala Harris in the 2024 election, surpassing the statewide support she received (61%). This indicates a higher-than-average alignment with the Democratic ticket among APIA voters.

Other Types of Political Participation

Significant non-voting political engagement among APIA communities.

Many Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in Massachusetts reported participating in civic activities beyond voting: 23% signed petitions, 19% attended government meetings, 17% donated to campaigns, and 15% attended rallies. This underscores the broader political involvement of the community, including non-citizens who may not be eligible to vote.

Executive Orders

Strong opposition to ending birthright citizenship among APIA respondents.

Ending birthright citizenship drew the most opposition, with 45% strongly opposing it and overall 70% opposing (especially among younger respondents and Democrats). Opposition was highest among women, younger adults (18–44), Indian Americans, and those with birthright citizenship.

DEI initiatives rollback also faces significant resistance.

A majority opposed dismantling diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts (61% women, 54% men). Younger and working-age groups, Indian and Vietnamese Americans, Democrats, and citizens (birthright and naturalized) were more likely to oppose the rollback.

More divided views on increased deportation, but opposition still predominates.

While opposition to deportation of undocumented immigrants was less unanimous (majority opposed but with more varied opinions), women, younger respondents, Vietnamese Americans, and Democrats showed stronger opposition. Republicans and older adults showed less opposition. Citizenship status also correlated with opposition levels.

Anticipated Impacts of the Trump Administration

Broad Negative Impact Across Multiple Key Issues.

Over 60% of respondents anticipated negative effects from the Trump Administration and the Republican-controlled Congress on critical issues including LGBTQ+ rights (67%), immigrant rights (66%), racism (65%), reproductive rights (63%), climate change (63%), and immigration policy (61%). This reflects widespread concern across diverse policy areas that affect the APIA community.

Safety & Sense of Belonging

Persistent Racism Despite Success and Contributions.

Although Asian Americans are the fastest-growing ethnoracial group with high education and income levels, many still face racism, exclusion, and a conditional or limited sense of belonging. Only 39% strongly agree they feel they belong in the U.S., revealing a tension between outward success and internal experiences of discrimination and exclusion.

Discrimination is Common and Often Unreported.

Nearly a quarter of respondents (23%) experienced discrimination, 21% faced racial or ethnic slurs, and 14% experienced verbal harassment in the past year. However, 64% of those experiencing discrimination did not report it to any authority or organization, largely due to fear of retaliation or unwanted attention.

Methods

Questionnaire

Between March 2024, and July 2024, a collaborative team composed of representatives from IAAS, AAPIC, APIs CAN, and ACF worked intensively to design the survey questionnaire. Each partner brought distinct priorities and areas of interest to the table, resulting in a robust exchange of ideas and perspectives. The research team also drew inspiration from established questionnaires, including the previous Social Tracking of Asian Americans in the U.S. (STAATUS) Index reports by The Asian American Foundation (TAAF), the 2024 Kinder Houston Area Survey, and findings from the Massachusetts Community Health Equity Survey (CHES) specifically looking at APIA respondents. Over the course of multiple working sessions and seven initial drafts, the team considered approximately 40–50 potential questions spanning multiple topic areas.

By January 2025, with the guidance and expertise of MassINC Polling Group, the team refined and streamlined the content to a final set of approximately 35 questions, balancing depth, clarity, and accessibility for a diverse set of respondents.

Fielding

This report's findings are based on a comprehensive survey of 1,417 APIA residents across Massachusetts, conducted from March 5 to March 31, 2025. Data collection was carried out using a combination of live telephone interviews, text-to-web invitations, and online survey responses to ensure accessibility and broad participation. All respondents were given the chance to win one of fourteen \$100 gifts as an incentive for their participation.

To increase linguistic inclusivity, the survey was administered in four languages: English, Simplified Chinese, Vietnamese, and Khmer. Community partners and members helped provide language translations and were compensated for their services to ensure accuracy and cultural relevance.

Responses were then weighted by age, gender, ethnic and national origin, educational attainment, county of residence, political affiliation, and citizenship status. These weights were applied to align the sample with known and estimated demographic characteristics of the APIA population in Massachusetts, ensuring that the results accurately reflect the community's diversity and distribution.

Note on Data Disaggregation:

This report prioritizes disaggregating data to reflect the diversity within Asian and Pacific Islander American (APIA) communities. However, to ensure statistical reliability and protect respondent confidentiality, disaggregation was limited to groups with at least 100 respondents in the sample.

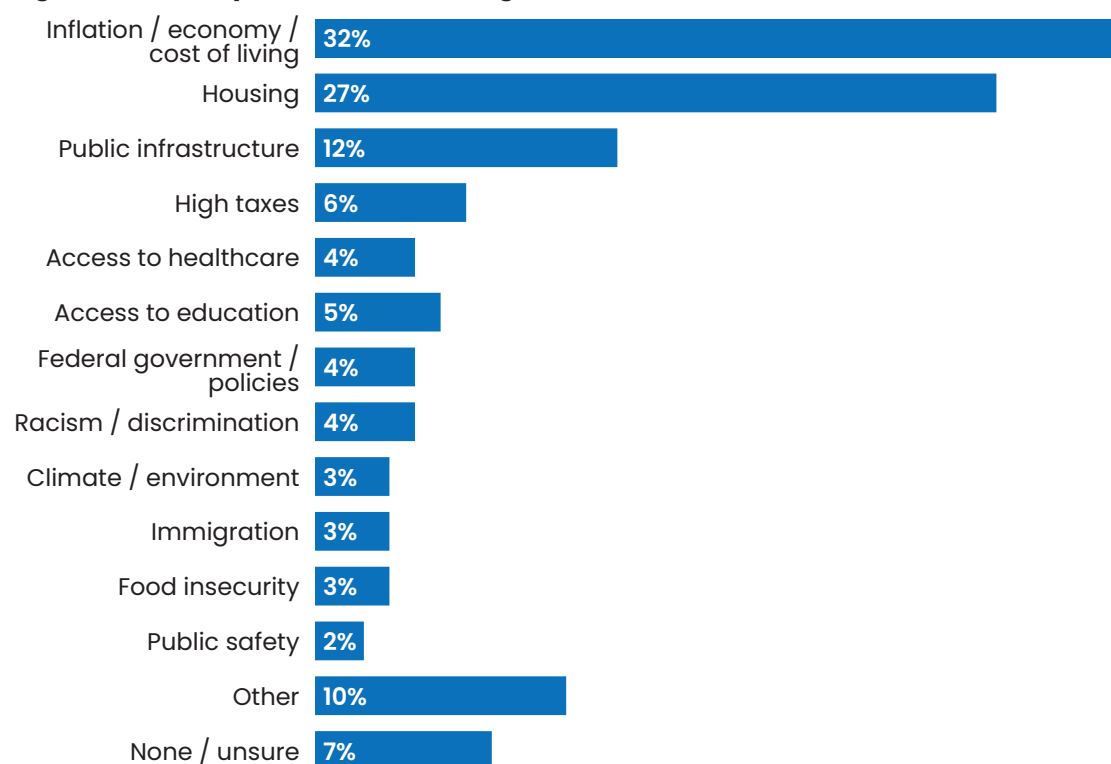
For ethnic and national groups, three populations met the threshold of at least 100 respondents: Chinese (32%), Indian (19%), and Vietnamese (8%). As a result, these groups were analyzed individually in this report. While many other communities were represented—including Japanese (5%), Korean (5%), Filipino (3%), Taiwanese (3%), Cambodian (3%), Native Hawaiian (2%), non-Hawaiian Pacific Islanders (2%), and Afghan (1%)—their sample sizes did not meet the disaggregation threshold. Additionally, a diverse range of ethnicities such as Bangladeshi, Bhutanese, Burmese, Hmong, Laotian, Nepalese, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Tibetan, and Singaporean were also included but each made up less than 1% of the sample to be eligible for disaggregation.

Economic Concerns

Survey respondents identified inflation, the economy, cost of living, and housing as the most reported issues facing Massachusetts.

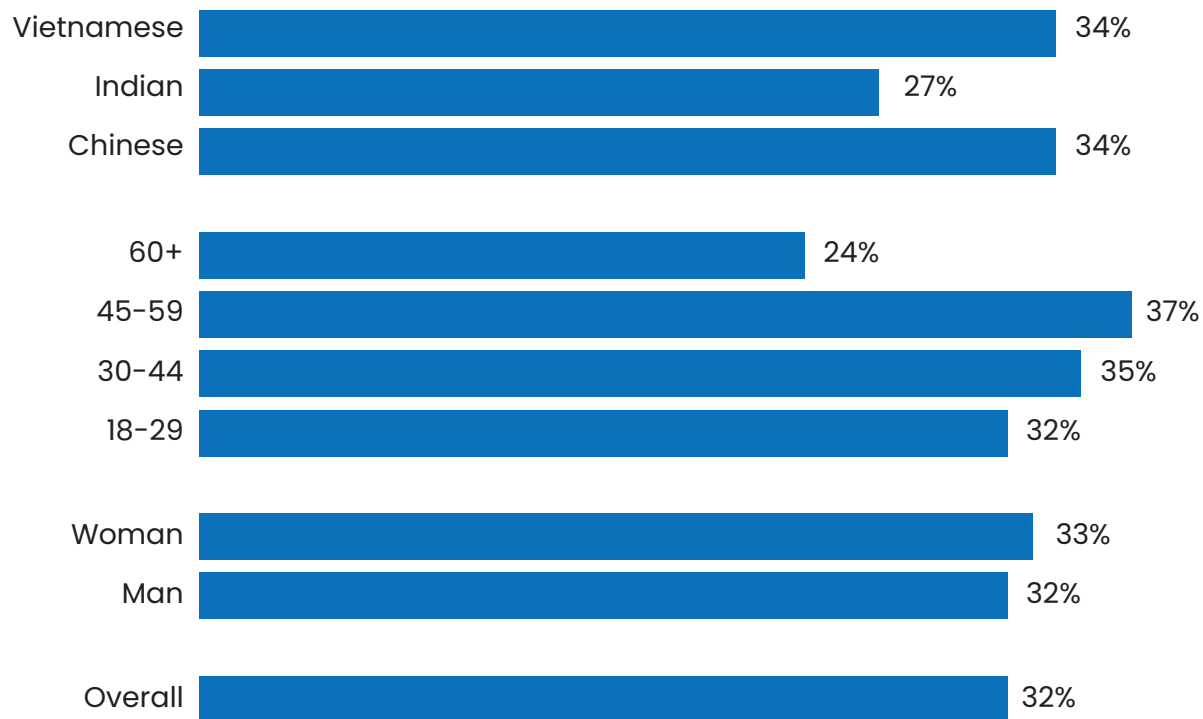
Concerns around access to healthcare and the adequacy of public infrastructure and policies were also frequently cited (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Most Reported Issues Facing Massachusetts Residents (n=1414)



Roughly one-third (32%) of survey respondents identified inflation, the economy, or the cost of living as a top issue facing Massachusetts residents. This concern was consistent across age, gender, and ethnic subgroups (Figure 2). Amongst age, those 60 and older (24%) did not report cost of living as high of an issue as other age groups (31%-37%). Similarly, 27% of Indian Americans reported inflation as an issue in comparison to 34% Chinese and Vietnamese Americans.

**Figure 2. Cost of Living/Economy Concerns by Nationality / Ethnicity, Age, and Gender
(n=1414)**



Cost of Living

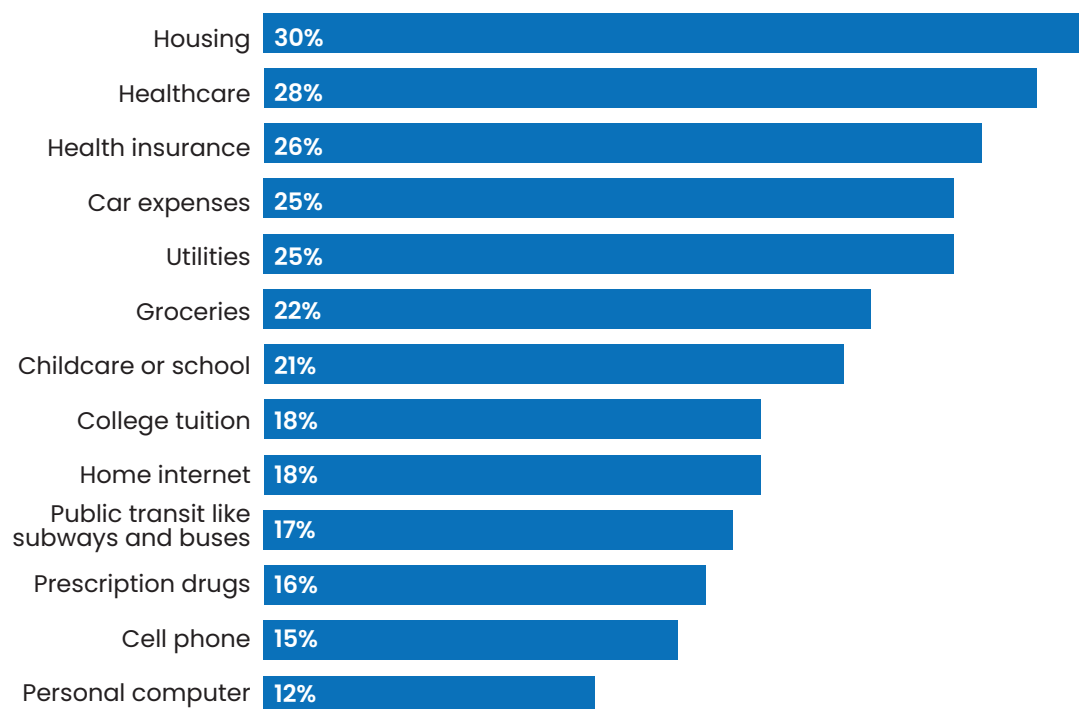
“The country’s high unemployment has also affected Massachusetts’ job inflation, which has affected high prices, and university tuition fees have been rising, and housing prices have become unattainable.” – Vietnamese male survey respondent between 18–29 years old

The cost of living and overall economic stability play a critical role in shaping the day-to-day experiences of individuals and families. When basic necessities—such as housing, food, transportation, and utilities—become unaffordable, it places significant strain on household budgets and limits opportunities for upward mobility. High living costs can restrict access to education, job opportunities, and community participation, making it harder for people to achieve long-term financial security (5).

Over 20% of respondents reported difficulty affording housing, healthcare, health insurance, car-related costs, utility bills, groceries, and childcare or school. While fewer respondents reported challenges with technology-related needs—such as home internet, cell phone service, and personal computers—a notable portion still indicated difficulty paying for these critical services in our modern-age (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Difficulty Paying for Everyday Expenses (n=1414)

% who said “yes” they had difficulty paying for each item



Q: In the past 12 months, have you had trouble paying for any of the following?

When breaking down responses by education level, household income, and parental status, respondents with children, those without a college degree, and individuals from lower-income households were significantly more likely to report difficulty affording basic necessities (Figure 4). These findings indicate that financial strain is strongly associated with both socioeconomic factors—such as education and income—as well as family responsibilities, with parents and less-educated residents facing heightened economic pressures.

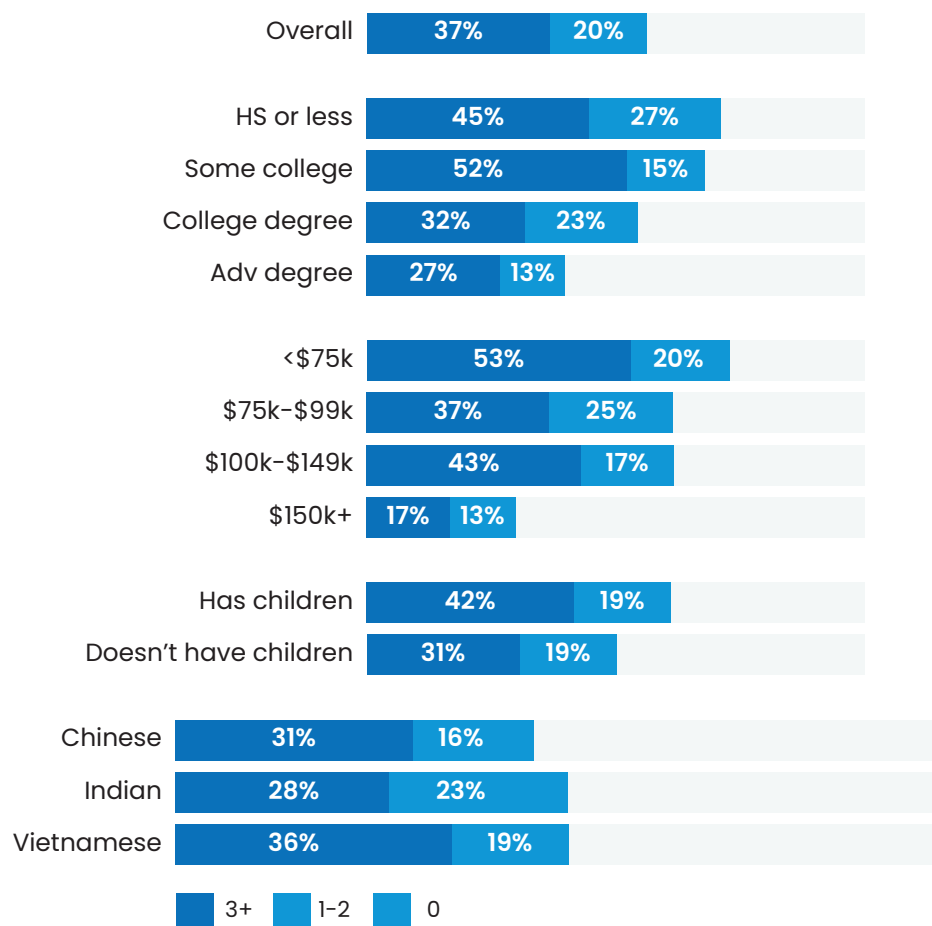
Levels of financial hardship varied significantly across ethnic groups and geographic regions, with some communities reporting disproportionately high difficulty meeting basic needs (Figure 4). Vietnamese American respondents reported the highest level of financial strain, with 36% indicating difficulty affording three or more basic needs. This compares to 31% of Chinese Americans and 28% of Indian American respondents.

Figure 4. Number of Basic Needs Hard to Pay for by Demographics (n=1414)

3+ means more than three basic needs hard to pay for

1-2 means one to three basic needs hard to pay for

0 means no basic needs hard to pay for, can afford them all



HOUSING

“I’ve lived in Massachusetts for 15 years, and I think the problem that exists is the high cost of housing and the cost of living, which has caused my quality of life to plummet.” – Chinese female survey respondent between 18–29 years old

Access to stable, affordable housing is a cornerstone of personal and community stability. Housing provides more than just shelter—it offers a sense of security, privacy, and a foundation for individuals and families to build their lives. Stable housing is also closely tied to both physical and mental well-being. When housing is unaffordable or unstable, it can negatively impact mental health and force households to make difficult trade-offs—such as reducing spending on food, delaying medical care, or living in substandard conditions. A lack of affordable options can also lead individuals and families to reside in housing with poor ventilation, overcrowding, or environmental hazards like lead exposure, all of which can further compromise health outcomes (6,7).

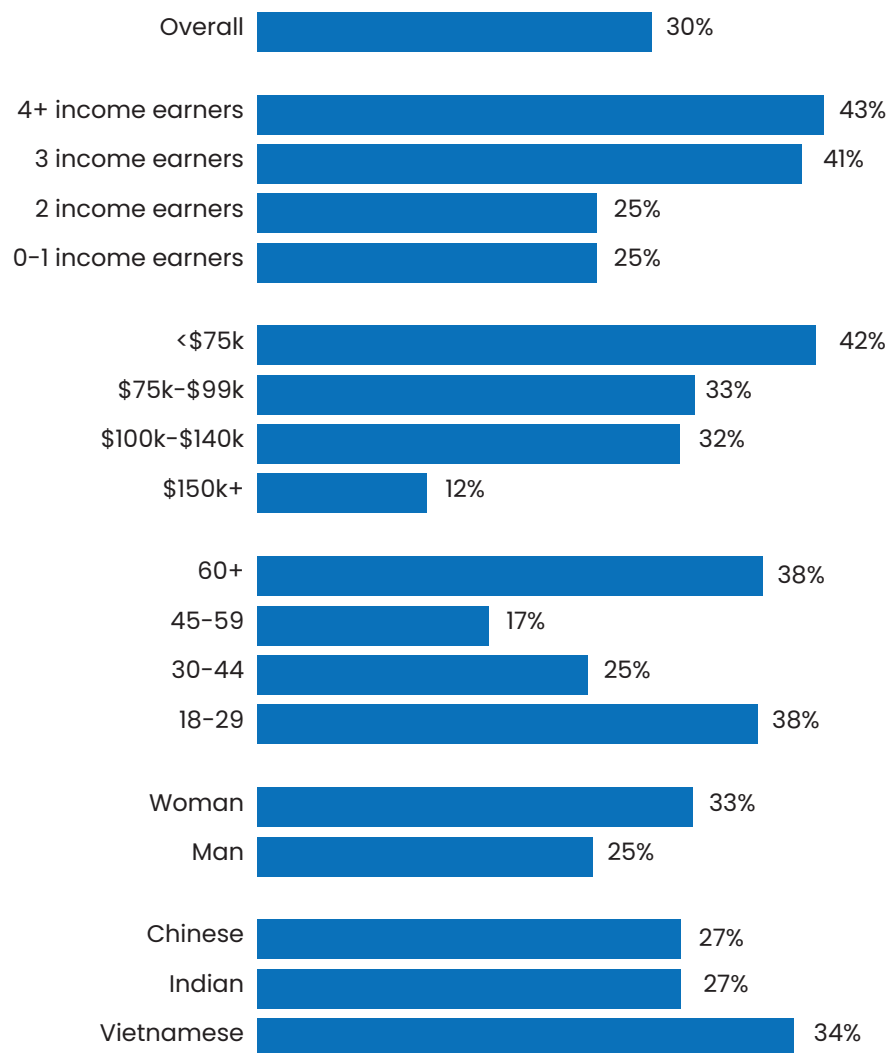
Housing affordability emerged as a prominent concern across demographic groups. While 27% of all survey respondents identified housing as the most pressing issue facing Massachusetts residents (Figure 1), 30% reported personally experiencing difficulty affording housing (Figure 5). This suggests that concerns about housing extend beyond general perceptions and reflect lived financial strain.

Households with more than three (41%) or four (43%) income earners were notably more likely to report difficulty affording housing, underscoring the severity of costs even among multi-earner households. Affordability concerns were reported across all age groups, with younger adults (18–29) and older adults (60+) expressing the highest levels of concern (both at 38%).

Financial stress related to housing was particularly acute among respondents with annual household incomes under \$150,000, with roughly one-third or more in this group citing housing expenses as a major burden. Gender differences were modest, though women were slightly more likely than men to report housing-related financial challenges.

Ethnic disparities were also evident. Vietnamese American respondents were the most affected, with 34% reporting difficulty affording housing, compared to 27% of both Chinese and Indian American respondents (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Housing Affordability by Demographics (n=1414)



Healthcare Costs and Accessibility

“Massachusetts has an abundance of healthcare resources, but the monthly cost of insurance and deductibles are stressing my family out, and I’m hoping that the state can make a difference in this area!” – Vietnamese female survey respondent between 30–44 years old

True access to healthcare goes beyond having insurance or a nearby clinic; it also includes the ability to schedule and attend appointments, communicate effectively with providers, and navigate the system to address and resolve health concerns. When individuals can obtain timely, appropriate, and culturally competent care, they are better positioned to manage their needs and maintain overall well-being. Ensuring that healthcare is accessible in all these ways reflects a broader commitment to fairness, dignity, and collective responsibility (8).

Despite relatively few calling it as a top concern, personal difficulties affording healthcare and insurance were common across demographic groups. Only 4% of survey respondents identified access to healthcare as a top issue facing Massachusetts residents (Figure 1), but a considerably larger proportion reported difficulty paying for their own healthcare (28%) and health insurance costs (26%) (Figures 6 and 7). This distinction highlights a gap between perceived statewide priorities and the lived financial burden of healthcare-related expenses.

Healthcare costs refer to direct out-of-pocket expenses for medical services—such as copayments, deductibles, and fees for clinical care—whereas health insurance costs refer to monthly premiums required to maintain insurance coverage.

Gender disparities were evident, with women more likely than men to report difficulty affording both healthcare (30% vs. 25%) and health insurance (29% vs. 23%). Age was also a significant factor: respondents aged 60 and older experienced the highest rates of financial strain, with 38% reporting difficulty paying for healthcare and 37% for insurance costs—both considerably higher than those reported by younger age groups. Families with children also reported more difficulties (29%) than those without children in the household (22%).

Ethnic differences in healthcare affordability were relatively modest, though Indian American respondents reported slightly lower levels of difficulty affording healthcare (20%) compared to Vietnamese American respondents (27%).

Figure 6. Difficulty Paying for Healthcare Costs by Demographics (n=1414)

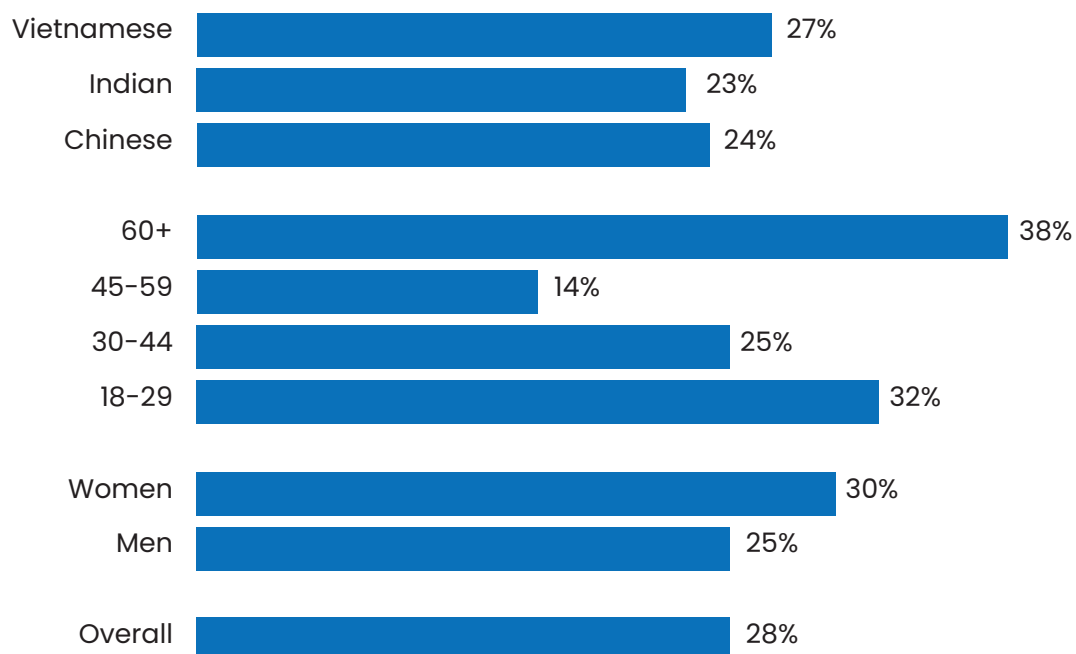
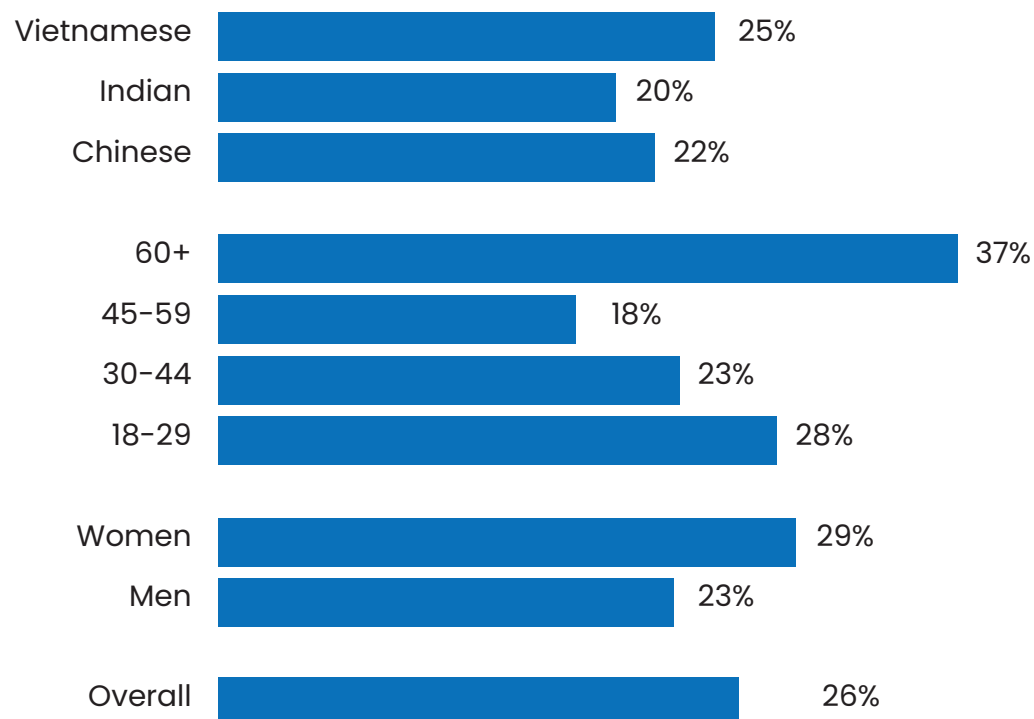


Figure 7. Difficulty Paying for Health Insurance Costs by Demographics (n=1414)



A closer examination of barriers to healthcare access revealed that scheduling appointments was the most frequently reported challenge among respondents. Specifically, 24% indicated they sometimes experienced difficulty scheduling appointments, while 15% reported this often and 8% always (Figure 8). Men aged 30-44 (14%) and 45-59 (11%) were

approximately twice as likely as women in the same age groups to report always having difficulty scheduling healthcare appointments. 6% of Chinese Americans reported always having difficulty in comparison to 10% of both Indian and Vietnamese Americans (Figure 9).

The second most common barrier involved cultural competency, with 19% of respondents sometimes, 13% often, and 9% always reporting difficulty finding providers who understood their cultural background. Other notable challenges included transportation to and from healthcare appointments, limited access to behavioral health services, and communication barriers arising from the lack of a mutually understood language between patients and providers (Figure 8). When looking across ethnic groups, Vietnamese Americans (16%) and Indian Americans (10%) were more likely to report difficulty in finding a healthcare provider who understood their cultural background than Chinese Americans (5%) (Figure 10).

Figure 8. Trouble Navigating Elements of Healthcare (n=1414)

APIA residents report a range of healthcare access challenges

% who said they always or often had trouble with each element of healthcare

Q: Over the past 12 months, how often have you experienced difficulty with each of the following when seeking medical or behavioral healthcare

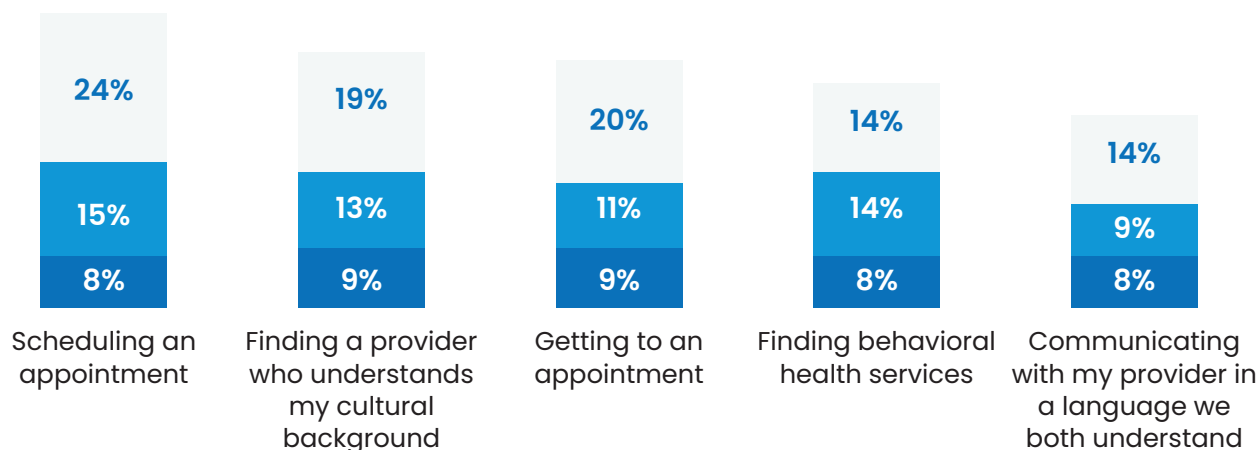


Figure 9. Trouble Scheduling Appointment by Age, Gender, & Ethnicity (n=1414)

APIA residents M30-59 report struggling more to schedule an appt

% who said they always or often had trouble scheduling a healthcare appt

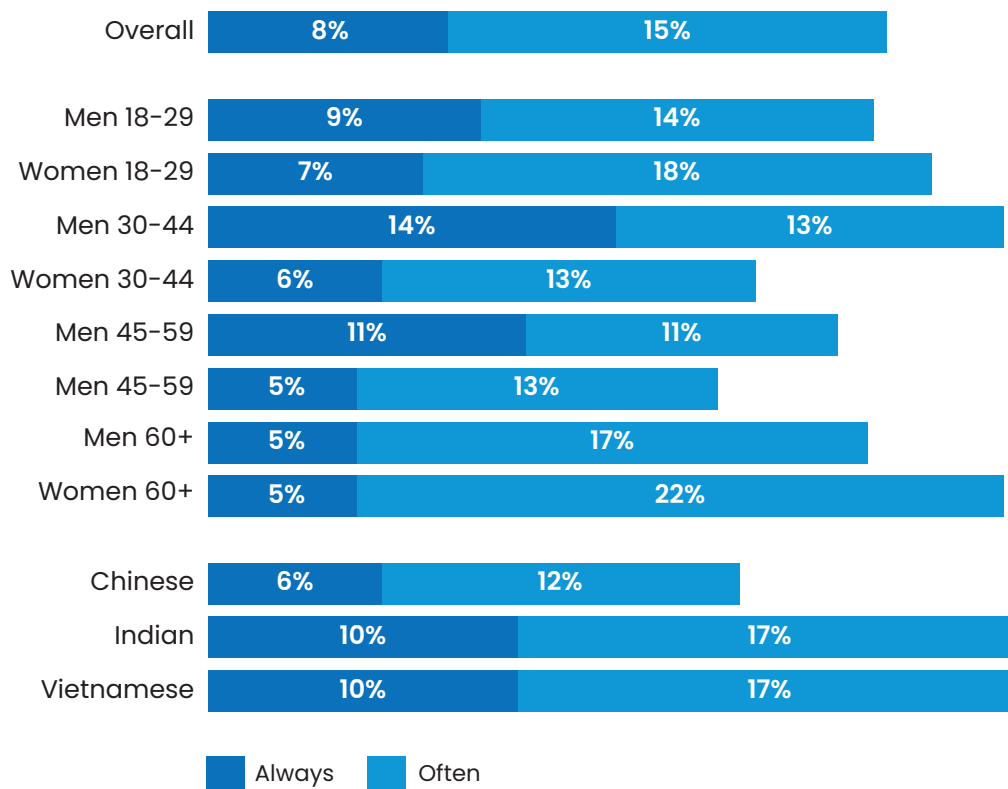


Figure 10. Trouble Finding Provider with Cultural Understanding (n=1414)

| | Overall | Chinese | Indian | Vietnamese |
|---------------------|---------|---------|--------|------------|
| Unweighted count | 1414 | 460 | 268 | 105 |
| Always | 9% | 5% | 10% | 16% |
| Often | 13% | 12% | 12% | 9% |
| Sometimes | 19% | 19% | 18% | 17% |
| Rarely | 14% | 12% | 14% | 17% |
| Never | 33% | 39% | 35% | 26% |
| Have not tried | 11% | 12% | 10% | 11% |
| Don't know/ refused | 1% | 1% | 1% | 4% |

Political Behavior

Partisan Identification

Political partisanship- “the sense of attachment or belonging that an individual feels for a political party” (9)- is the most reliable predictor of that individual’s choice for president and other high profile elected officials. The partisan identification of the APIA voting population reflects a strong affiliation to the Democratic Party (Figure 11).

Indian American respondents identify the strongest support for the Democratic party (64%) while another large group, the Vietnamese Americans, indicate a substantially weaker support for the Democrats (45%) and a relatively higher preference for Republicans compared to other respondents. Interestingly the Democratic Party preferences of the Chinese American community, 55%, lie between those of the Indian and Vietnamese Americans and closely match the Democratic preferences of the whole Massachusetts APIA community, 56% (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Partisanship Overall and by Major Asian Subgroup (n=1414)

| | Overall | Chinese | Indian | Vietnamese |
|----------------------|---------|---------|--------|------------|
| Democrat | 56% | 55% | 64% | 45% |
| Republican | 20% | 22% | 16% | 27% |
| Independent / other | 19% | 19% | 15% | 24% |
| Don't know / refused | 5% | 4% | 6% | 3% |

Voter Registration

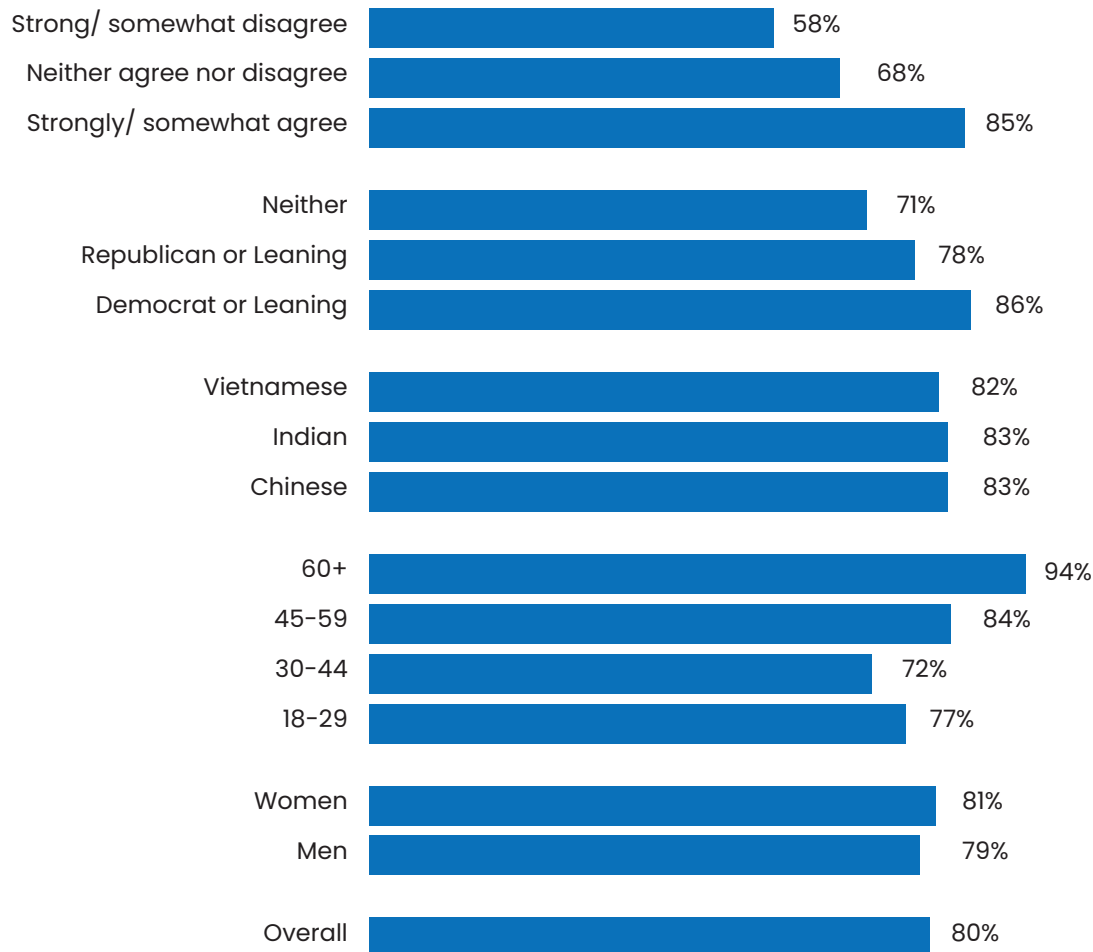
As the community in Massachusetts with by far the largest percentage of foreign-born residents, APIAs face several barriers to electoral participation. They must be 18 and older and American citizens. Those who are citizens must register to vote, and those who are registered must turn out and cast their ballots. Despite these steps, survey respondents reported some relatively high rates of voter registration (Figure 12) and turnout for the 2024 election (Figure 13).

In Massachusetts, 80% of eligible survey respondents indicated they were registered to vote (Figure 9). Reported ver registration rates were relatively consistent across ethnic groups, with minimal variation. However, registration increased with age: 94% of respondents aged 60 and older and 84% of those aged 45–59 reported being registered, compared to lower rates among younger adults aged 30–44 and 18–29.

Political partisanship also manifested differences in registration rates. Democrats reported

the highest registration rate (86%), followed by Republicans (78%) and respondents identifying with neither party (71%). Notably, voter registration was also associated with a sense of belonging in the United States. Among those who strongly agreed that they felt they belonged, 85% were registered to vote. In contrast, only 58% of those who strongly disagreed and 68% of those who were neutral on the question of belonging reported being registered (Figure 12).

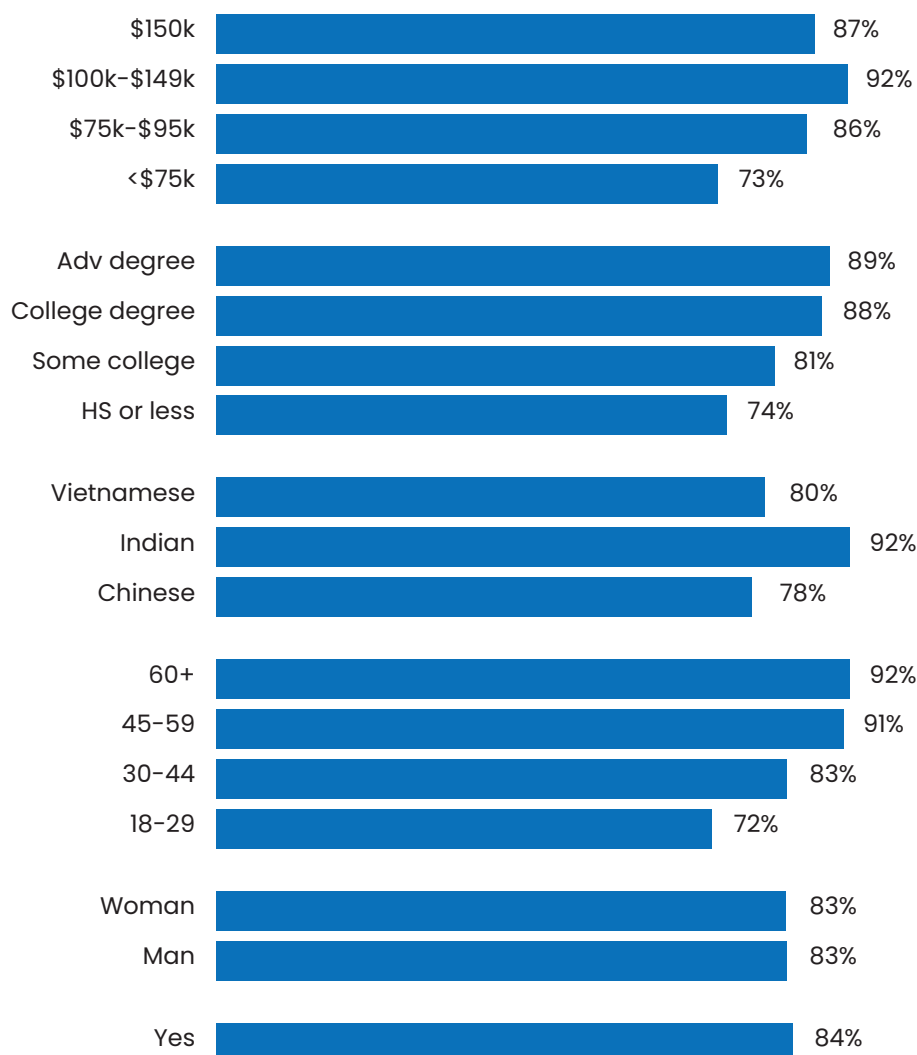
Figure 12. Voter Registration in Massachusetts (n=1,077)



Among citizen respondents who were registered to vote, 84% reported participating in the 2024 Presidential Election (Figure 13). 83% of both women and men reported voting. When asked to state whether they were registered and voted in the last election, respondents tend to indicate higher levels than what was the case (10). Consistent with patterns observed in voter registration, voter turnout for the election increased with age. Reported turnout was highest among those aged 60 and older (92%) and those aged 45-59 (91%), compared to 83% among respondents aged 30-44 and 72% among those aged 18-29. Voter turnout also varied across ethnic groups. Indian American respondents reported the highest participation rate at 92%, while 80% of Vietnamese and 78% of Chinese American respondents reported voting. Educational attainment and household

income were positively associated with voting behavior. Respondents with higher levels of education and income were more likely to report voting in the 2024 Presidential Election.

Figure 13. Voting Turnout in 2024 Election (n=861)



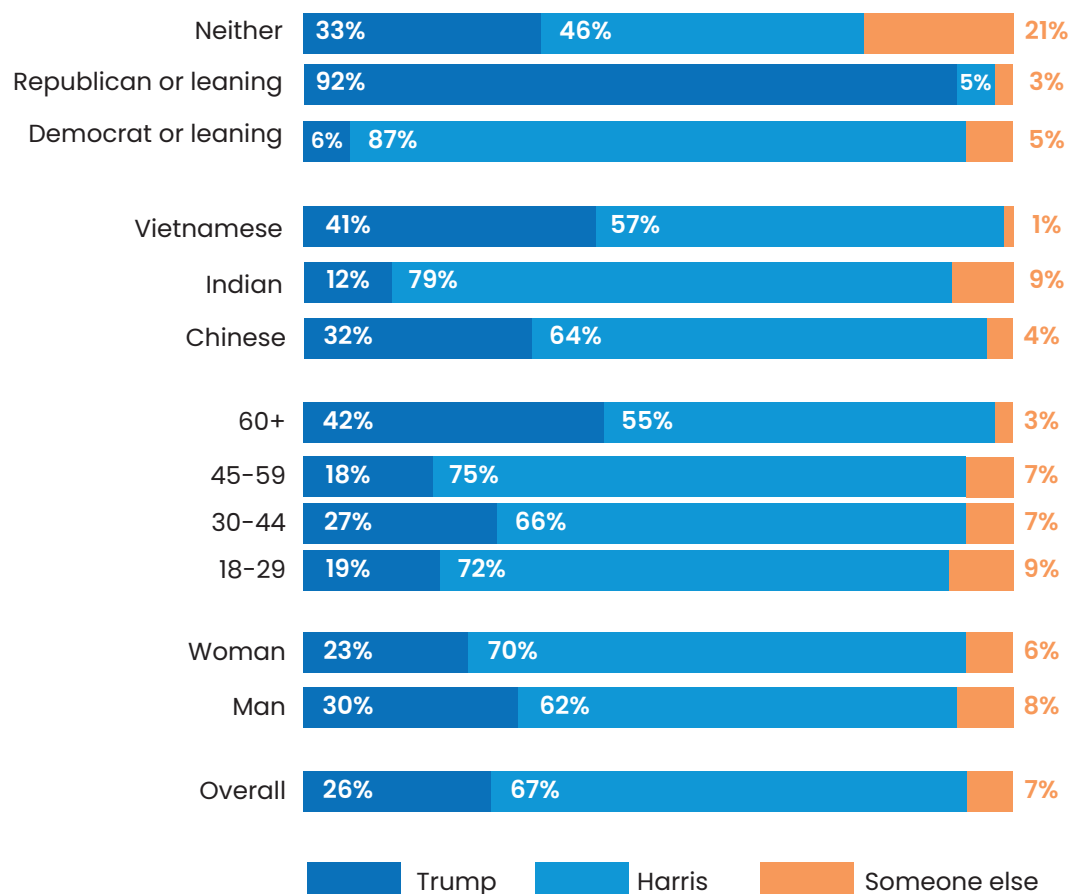
2024 Presidential Election

The majority of voters who turned out to cast a ballot (67%) reported voting for Kamala Harris in the recent 2024 election compared to Trump (26%) or someone else (Figure 14).

Women were more likely than men to report voting for Kamala Harris in the 2024 Presidential Election, with 70% of women and 62% of men indicating support for her. Older voters (aged 60 and above) were less favorable toward Harris, 55%, compared to younger voters with 72% (aged 18-29) supporting Harris. Trump's highest support was amongst the oldest age group. Among ethnic groups, Indian Americans were more likely to support Harris (79%) compared to Chinese (64%) and Vietnamese (57%) Americans.

As expected, respondents who identified with the political party of a given candidate were more likely to vote for that candidate over the other.

Figure 14. Voter Choice in the 2024 Presidential Election (n=634)

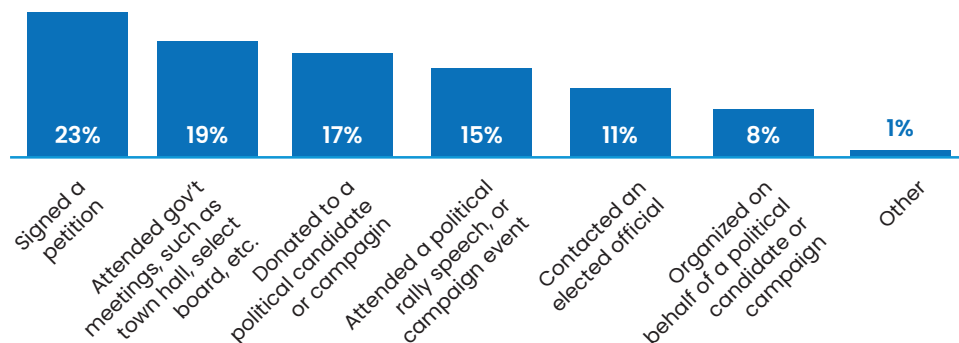


Other Types of Political Participation

In their well-known work on civic engagement in the United States, Sidney Verba and Norman Nie describe political participation as more than just voting—emphasizing its broader value, especially in a democratic society. They cite “the activities of private individuals that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions they take” (13).

Among Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in Massachusetts, a notable portion reported engaging in such activities: 23% signed petitions, 19% attended government meetings, 17% donated to campaigns, and 15% attended rallies (Figure 15). These non-voting forms of political engagement are especially important for APIA communities, which include many non-citizens (14,15).

Figure 15. Political Engagement Beyond Voting in the Past Two Years Among Respondents (n=1414)



Analysis of political participation beyond voting reveals that 37% of respondents reported engaging in one or two activities, while 11% participated in three or more (Figure 16). Women were more likely than men to report involvement in both one to two activities and in three or more. Political engagement was observed across age groups, with older adults slightly more likely to participate than younger adults.

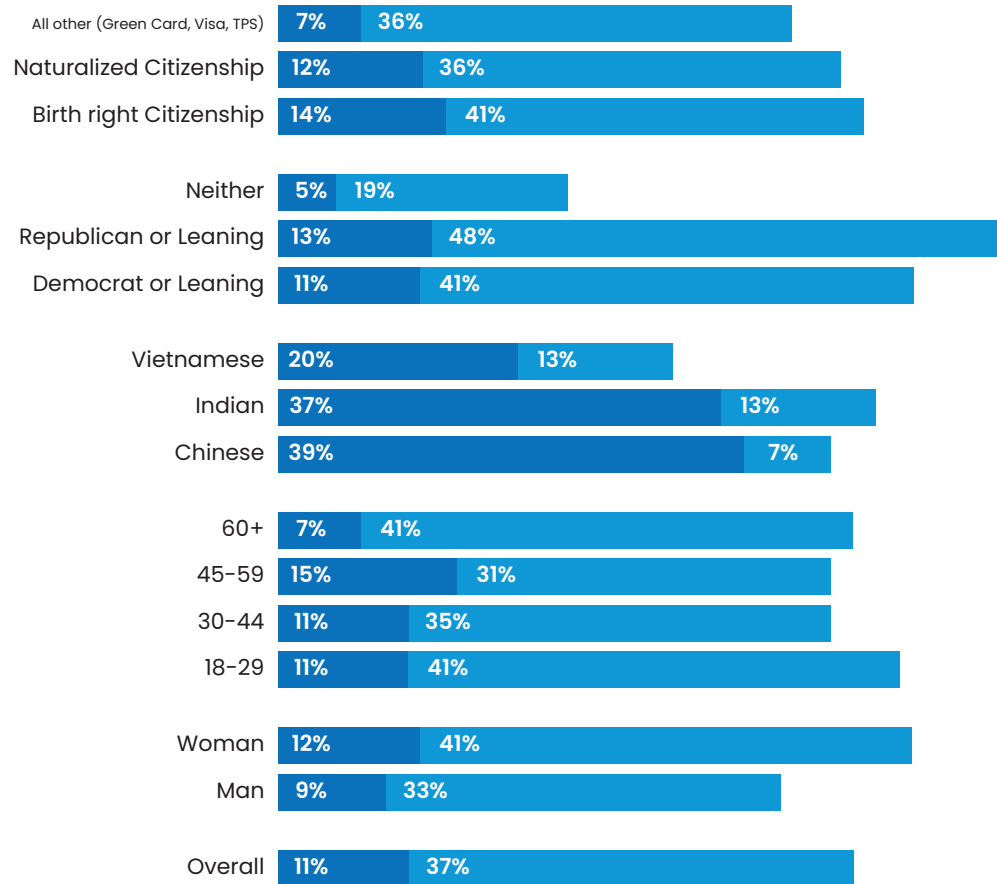
Among ethnic groups, Chinese Americans (39%) and Indian Americans (37%) were most likely to report involvement in three or more activities, compared to 20% of Vietnamese Americans.

Republican or Republican-leaning respondents (61%) reported slightly higher rates of participation in political activities than Democrats or Democrat-leaning respondents (53%).

When analyzing political participation by their naturalization status, respondents across all citizenship categories reported engaging in one to two political activities, indicating a baseline level of civic engagement even among non-citizens. However, individuals with birthright citizenship (14%) and naturalized citizenship (12%) were twice as likely to report involvement in three or more political activities compared to non-citizens, or those with other statuses—such as permanent residents, visa holders, Temporary Protected Status recipients, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients, or undocumented immigrants (7%).

These findings suggest that higher levels of civic and political participation are concentrated among citizens, however non-citizens also engage in non-voting political participation. The current climate may deter non-citizens from deeper engagement.

Figure 16. Number of Political Activities Beyond Voting (n=1414)



Executive Orders

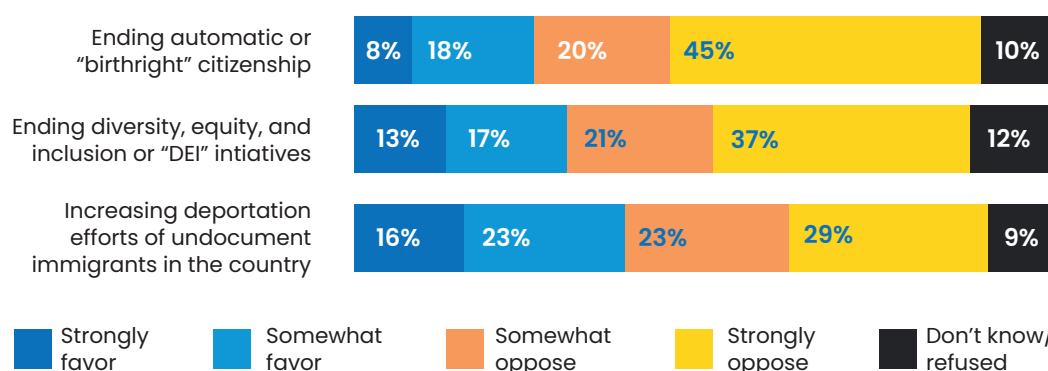
“Immigration is a big issue here. And high taxes, overcrowding in shelters, lack of access to resources due to the housing of these migrants. The crime rate. Affordable housing.” – Japanese/Korean/Vietnamese female survey respondent between 18–29 years old

Since January 2025, President Donald Trump has launched an unprecedented campaign to change the scope, norms, and values of the federal government. Immediately after his inauguration, President Trump moved swiftly to issue an extraordinary number of policy directives, executive orders, and actions (18).

This report was able to capture the views of APIA residents in Massachusetts to three of the earliest initiatives: 1) the proposal to end birthright citizenship, 2) the systemic rollback of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives, and 3) the increased deportation of undocumented immigrants. The majority of respondents expressed opposition to all three federal actions (Figure 17).

More specifically, 45% of respondents strongly opposed ending birthright citizenship, 37% strongly opposed dismantling DEI efforts, and 29% strongly opposed deporting undocumented immigrants. Among these, the proposal to end birthright citizenship drew the strongest opposition. Responses to enhanced deportation efforts, however, revealed more divided opinions. While opposition still outweighed support, it was less pronounced than for the other two executive orders.

Figure 17. Support & Opposition on Executive Orders (n=1414)

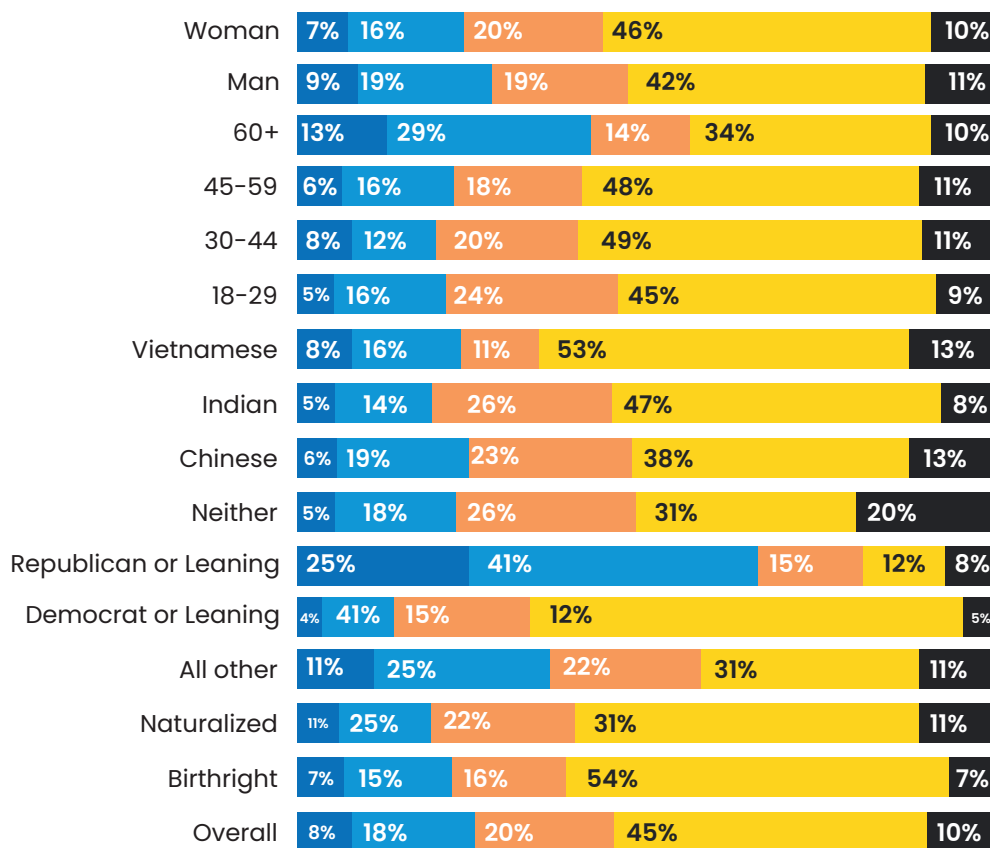


Attitudes toward birthright citizenship varied across gender, age, ethnicity, political affiliation, and citizenship status (Figure 18). Opposition to ending automatic birthright citizenship was higher among women (66%) than men (62%). Age played a notable role: younger respondents, particularly those aged 18–44, expressed strong opposition (~70%), whereas opposition declined among older adults, with only 48% of those aged 60 and above opposing the change. Although respondents aged 18–59 had comparable rates of strong opposition (45% v. 49% v. 48%) in comparison to those 60 and older (34% strongly opposed).

Opposition also varied by ethnic group. Nearly three-quarters of Indian American respondents opposed ending birthright citizenship (47% strongly), compared to 64% of Vietnamese Americans (53% strongly) and 61% of Chinese Americans (38% strongly). As expected, political affiliation was a strong predictor of attitudes: only 27% of Republican or Republican-leaning respondents opposed (12% strongly opposed) ending birthright citizenship, in contrast to 81% of Democrat or Democrat-leaning respondents (62% strongly opposed).

Respondents' citizenship status was also associated with their views. Those who were citizens by birth were slightly more likely to oppose ending birthright citizenship (71% overall, 54% strongly) compared to naturalized citizens (69% overall, 49% strongly) and those with other statuses (53% overall, 31% strongly).

Figure 18. Support & Opposition on Birthright Citizenship (n=1414)



Attitudes toward diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives revealed notable variation across demographic and political lines (Figure 19). As with views on birthright citizenship, men were less likely to oppose ending DEI initiatives (54%) compared to women (61%). Opposition was also higher among younger respondents and those of working age, while only 46% of those aged 60 and older (generally considered retirement age) expressed opposition. 44% of 18-29 year olds strongly opposed ending DEI followed by 42% of 45-59

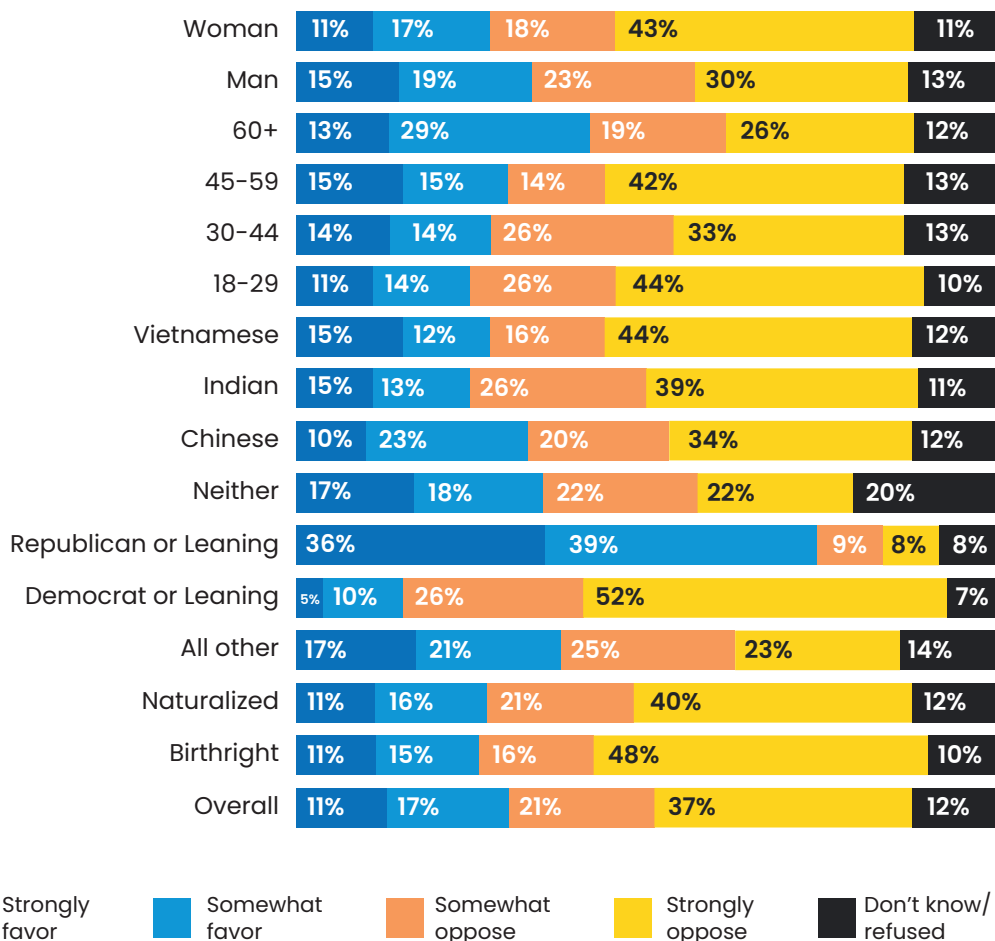
year olds, 33% of 30-44 year olds, and 30% of respondents older than 60.

Among ethnic groups, Indian Americans (64%) were more likely to oppose ending DEI initiatives than Vietnamese (60%) and Chinese Americans (55%). However, 44% of Vietnamese respondents strongly opposed ending DEI in comparison to 39% of Indians and 34% of Chinese respondents.

Political affiliation showed a stark divide: 78% (52% strongly) of Democrats or Democrat-leaning respondents opposed ending DEI initiatives, compared to only 18% (8% strongly) of Republicans or Republican-leaning respondents.

Citizenship status was also associated with respondents' views. Individuals with birthright citizenship (64%) and naturalized citizens (61%) were more likely to oppose ending DEI initiatives compared to those with other legal statuses, such as permanent residents, visa holders, or DACA recipients (48%). Birthright (48%) and naturalized (40%) strongly opposed ending DEI efforts in comparison to other status respondents (23%).

Figure 19. Support & Opposition on DEI (n=1414)



Attitudes toward the deportation of undocumented immigrants were more divided than views on ending birthright citizenship or DEI initiatives, although a majority still expressed

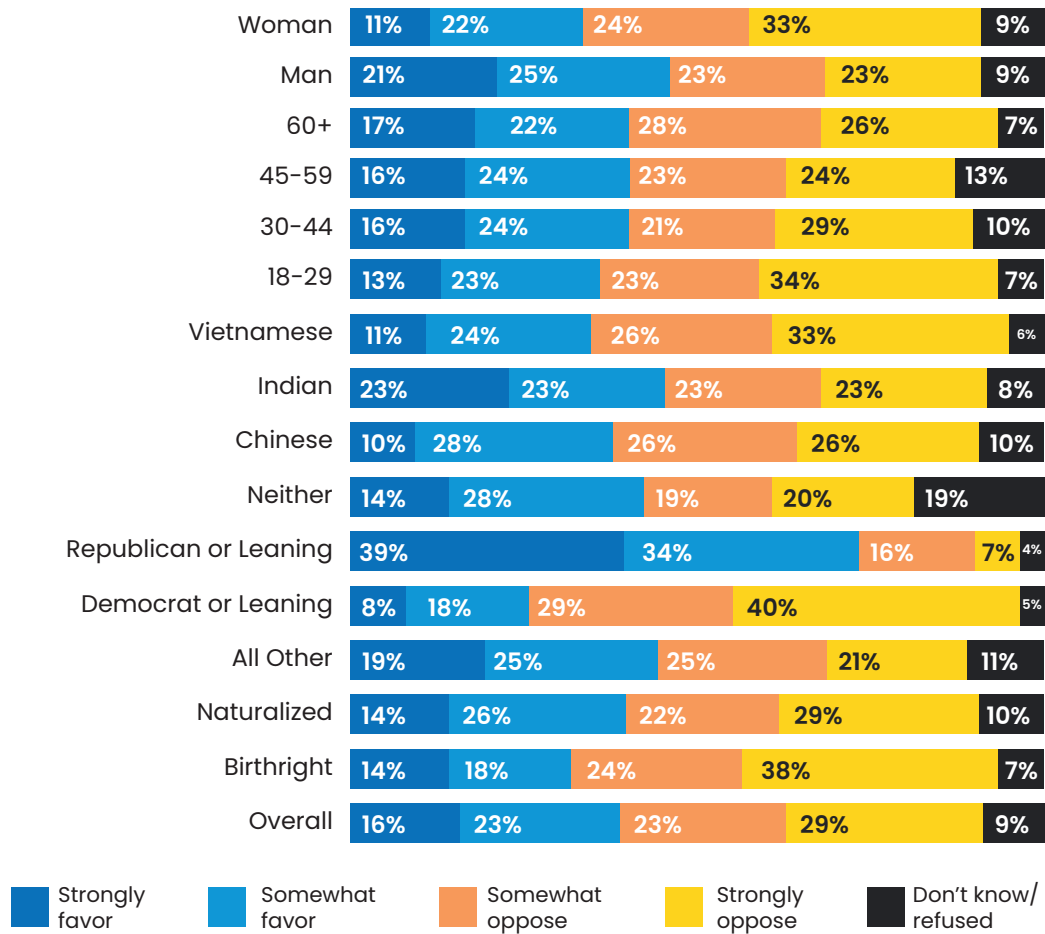
opposition (Figure 20). Compared to other executive orders, opposition to deportation was lower overall. Women (57%) were more likely than men (46%) to oppose deportation efforts. Age-based differences were less pronounced than in responses to birthright citizenship and DEI, but showcased the similar pattern of decreasing opposition with increasing age: 57% of respondents aged 18–29 opposed deportation, followed by 53% of those 60 and older, 50% of those aged 30–44, and 47% of those aged 45–59. This pattern was similar when observing rates of strong opposition (34% v. 29% vs. 24% vs. 26%).

Ethnic differences further illustrate the complexity of views on deportation. Despite a general Democratic lean in partisan identification, Indian American respondents were nearly evenly divided, with 46% opposed to increased deportation (23% strongly, 23% somewhat). Vietnamese Americans—often considered more politically conservative than other Asian American groups—showed the strongest opposition at 60% (33% strongly, 26% somewhat). Chinese Americans followed with 52% opposed (26% strongly, 26% somewhat).

Republican or Republican-leaning respondents had lower rates of strong opposition against deportation (7%) in comparison to Democrat or Democrat-leaning respondents (40%). Birthright citizens (38%) strongly opposed increasing deportation efforts of undocumented immigrants followed by naturalized citizens (29%) and all other statuses (21%).

These findings reveal an APIA community that, while broadly opposed to exclusionary policies, is far from monolithic—holding diverse and sometimes contradictory views that reflect its complex social, historical, and political experiences.

Figure 20. Support & Opposition on Deportation (n=1414)



Anticipated Impacts of the Trump Administration

“The federal government is attempting to instate martial law and we should stop sending funds to the federal government that gives it to the red states. We need to get ICE out of here and let the migrants feel safe.” – Chinese female survey respondent between 30–44 years old

When asked to assess whether the Trump Administration and the Republican controlled Congress will have a negative or positive impact on a dozen issue areas, the Massachusetts APIA respondents indicated negative outcomes on all of the areas (Figure 21). More than 60% of respondents believed that the administration would negatively affect LGBTQ+ rights (67%), immigrant rights (66%), racism (65%), reproductive rights (63%), climate change (63%), immigration policy (61%). Views on crime were comparatively less negative (45%).

Figure 21. Impact of Trump Administration on Current Issues (n=1414)

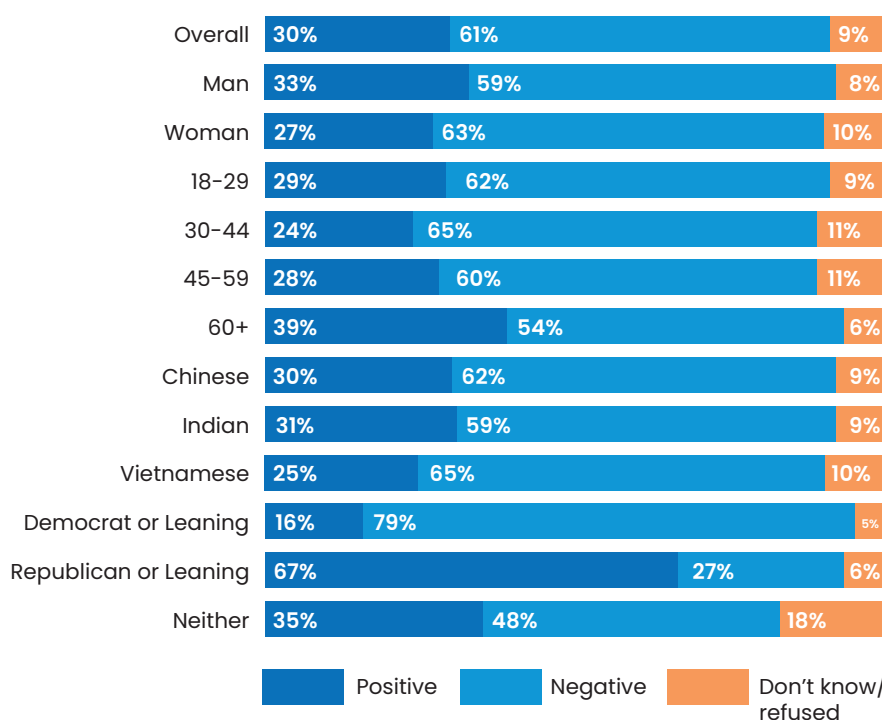
Respondents are broadly pessimistic on Trump administration’s impact on elements of American life

% who thought current administration would have positive or negative impacts on each element

| | Positive | Negative | Don't know/ refused |
|---------------------|----------|----------|------------------------|
| Crime | 35% | 45% | 20% |
| Education | 34% | 53% | 13% |
| Foreign policy | 31% | 59% | 10% |
| Housing costs | 30% | 54% | 16% |
| Immigration policy | 30% | 61% | 9% |
| Healthcare costs | 29% | 55% | 16% |
| Inflataion | 28% | 58% | 14% |
| Immigrants' rights | 23% | 66% | 10% |
| Reproductive rights | 22% | 63% | 15% |
| Climate change | 22% | 63% | 16% |
| Racism | 22% | 65% | 13% |
| LGBTQ rights | 18% | 67% | 15% |

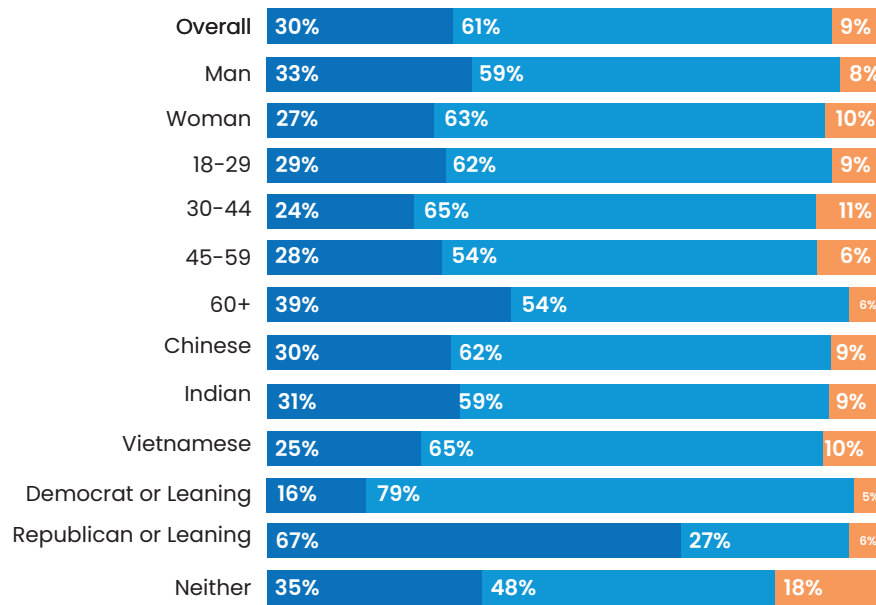
Expectations regarding the Trump administration’s impact on immigration policy revealed consistent concern across demographic groups, with notable differences by gender, age, ethnicity, and political affiliation (Figure 26). Slightly more women (63%) than men (59%) anticipated a negative impact. Younger respondents expressed greater concern, with 65% of those aged 30–44 and 62% of those aged 18–29 citing negative expectations, compared to 54% of those aged 60 and older. Vietnamese respondents (65%) were somewhat more likely to anticipate negative effects than Chinese (62%) and Indian (59%) respondents, though the differences were modest. As seen in other issue areas, political affiliation was a strong predictor: only 27% of Republican or Republican-leaning respondents expected a negative impact, compared to 79% of Democrat or Democrat-leaning respondents.

Figure 22. Impact of Trump Administration on Immigration Policy (n=1414)



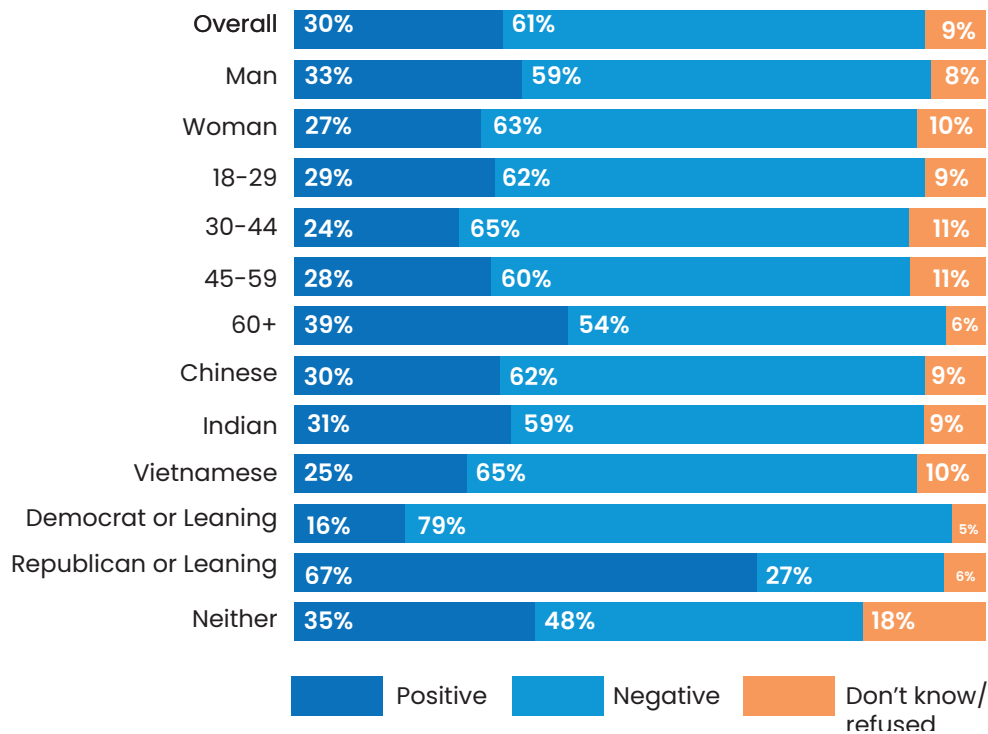
Concerns about the Trump administration’s impact on immigrant rights were widespread, with variation across gender, age, ethnicity, and political affiliation (Figure 23). As with other issues, more women (69%) than men (62%) anticipated a negative impact. This concern was consistent among younger age groups, with approximately 70% of respondents aged 18–59 citing a negative impact, compared to 55% of those aged 60 and older. Among ethnic groups, Indian Americans (73%) were more likely to report negative expectations than Chinese Americans (65%) and Vietnamese American (66%) respondents. 82% of Democratic or Democratic-leaning respondents cited a negative impact, compared to just 39% of Republican or Republican-leaning respondents.

Figure 23. Impact of Trump Administration on Immigrants' Rights (n=1414)



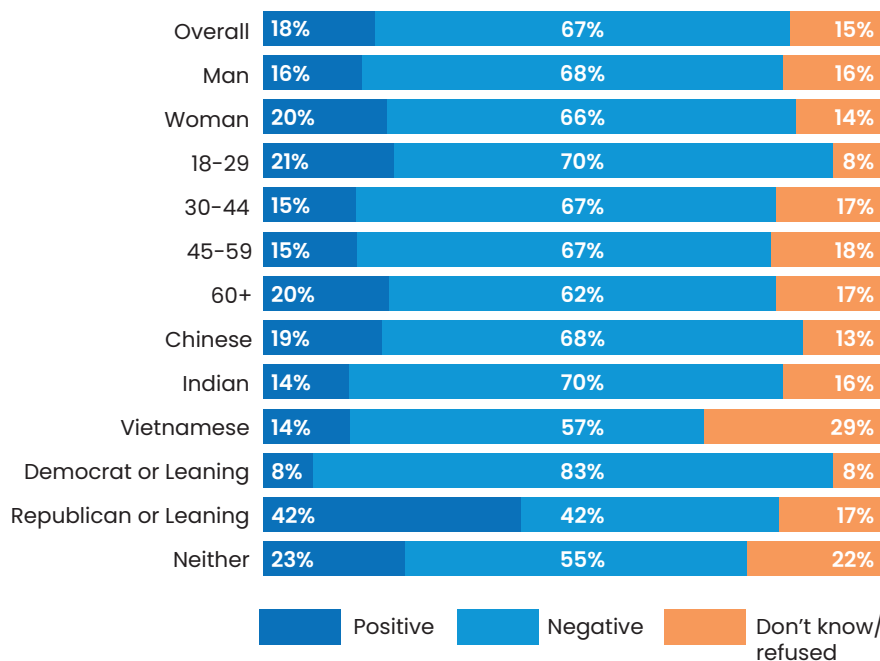
Concerns about the Trump administration’s impact on reproductive rights were pronounced across gender, age, and ethnic groups, with sharp differences by political affiliation (Figure 24). A greater proportion of women (67%) than men (59%) anticipated a negative impact, reflecting the administration’s record of targeting reproductive healthcare. This is unsurprising as many of the threats and targets Trump’s administration made during his first term in office were fulfilled through the revocation of *Roe v. Wade*, a 50 year precedent protecting the right to abortion (19,20). In fact, within six months of his second term, the administration has already reversed the Biden-era Executive Orders expanding reproductive healthcare, proposed funding cuts for women’s health research, and the removal of vital health information from government websites (21). Younger respondents were more likely to expect negative impacts than those aged 60 and older. Among ethnic groups, Chinese (68%) and Indian (67%) Americans expressed higher concern than Vietnamese Americans (58%). Political identity strongly influenced views: while 77% of Democrats or Democrat-leaning respondents cited a negative impact, only 37% of Republicans or Republican-leaning respondents shared that view.

Figure 24. Impact of Trump Administration on Reproductive Rights (n=1414)



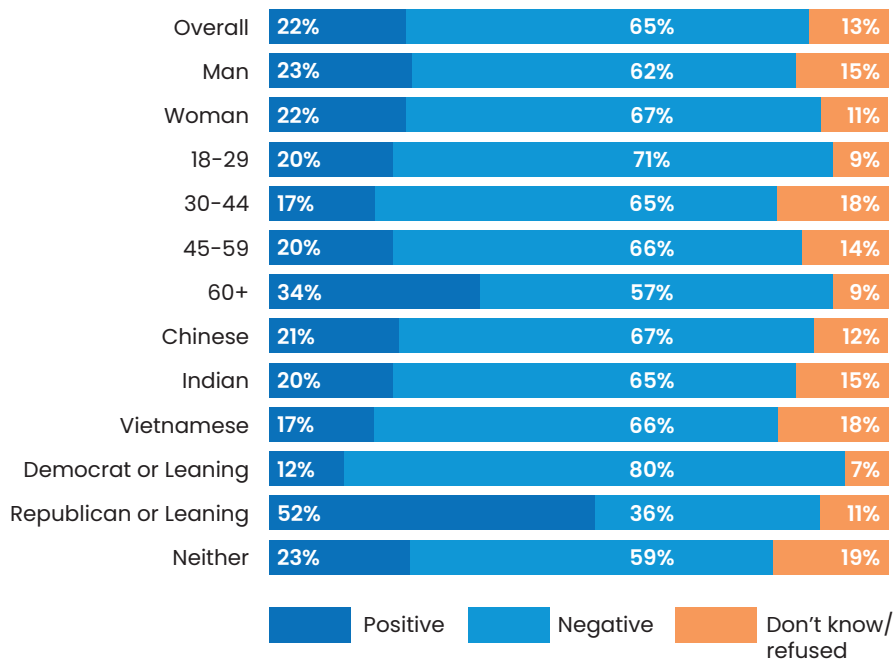
Public perceptions of LGBTQ+ rights under the Trump administration reveal notable trends across gender, age, ethnicity, and political affiliation within the APIA community (Figure 25). A majority of both women (66%) and men (68%) cited the Trump administration as having a negative impact on LGBTQ+ rights, with men reporting slightly higher concern in this area. This sentiment was consistent across all age groups. When examining ethnic subgroups, Vietnamese Americans were somewhat less likely to report a negative impact (57%) compared to Indian (70%) and Chinese (68%) Americans. Notably, 42% of respondents who identified as Republican or Republican-leaning cited a negative impact— the highest level of agreement among this group across all policy areas surveyed. Despite increasing societal acceptance of LGBTQ+ identities in the U.S., stigma remains prevalent within many Asian and Pacific Islander American (APIA) communities due to entrenched cultural, generational, and religious values (22,23). Therefore, it is especially noteworthy that even among individuals who may not fully understand or support LGBTQ+ rights, there is still a recognition of the harm posed by the Trump administration’s policies.

Figure 25. Impact of Trump Administration on LGBTQ+ rights (n=1414)



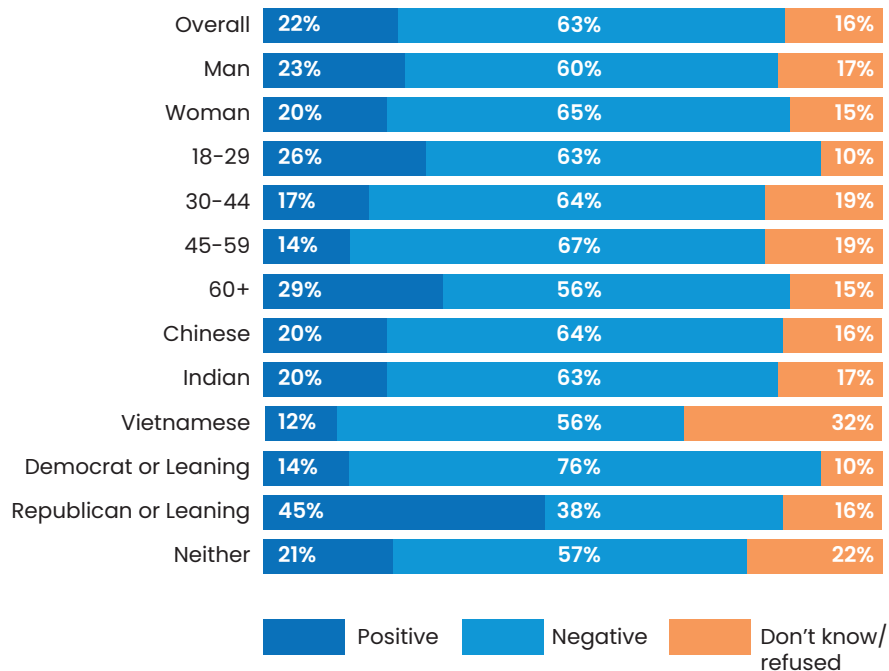
Perceptions of the Trump administration’s impact on racism in the U.S. show broad concern across gender, age, ethnicity, and political affiliation within the APIA community (Figure 26). More women (67%) than men (62%) believed the Trump administration would have a negative impact on racism. Younger respondents, particularly those aged 18–29, expressed the highest level of concern (71%), compared to 57% of those aged 60 and older. This negative perception was consistently shared among Chinese, Indian, and Vietnamese American subgroups. Political affiliation also revealed a stark divide: 80% of Democrats agreed with the negative impact, compared to just 36% of Republicans. While levels of agreement vary, the overall consensus indicates that many view the Trump administration as exacerbating racism and discriminatory attitudes against non-white populations. These findings are consistent with a 2017 Pew Research Center report which found that Trump’s first term worsened race relations in the United States (24). Today, many continue to cite his political agenda—marked by executive orders and inflammatory rhetoric—as primarily driven by racist ideologies (25).

Figure 26. Impact of Trump Administration on Racism (n=1414)



Climate change remains a significant concern among Asian and Pacific Islander American (APIA) communities, with varying perspectives shaped by gender, age, ethnicity, and political affiliation (Figure 27). According to a 2024 poll conducted by AAPI Data and the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, 84% of APIA adults believe that climate change is a real and pressing issue—10 percentage points higher than the national average of 74% (26). In our survey sample of Massachusetts APIAs, 63% of respondents indicated that they believe the Trump administration would negatively affect efforts to combat climate change. Women were slightly more likely to express this view (65%) than men (60%). Older respondents (ages 60 and above) were less likely to agree (56%) compared to younger age groups (ages 18–59). When disaggregated by ethnicity, Chinese (64%) and Indian (63%) Americans were more likely to cite a negative impact than Vietnamese Americans (56%). Political affiliation was a strong predictor: 76% of Democrats perceived a negative impact, in contrast to just 38% of Republicans.

Figure 27. Impact of Trump Administration on Climate Change (n=1414)



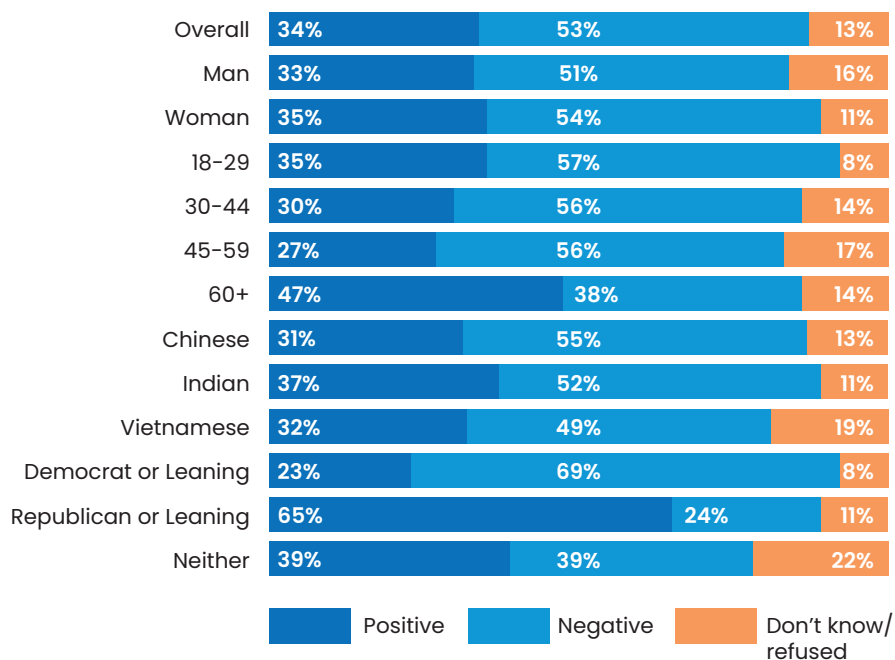
Perceptions of the Trump administration's impact on education varied notably by demographic and political affiliation (Figure 28). A majority of both men (51%) and women (54%) believed the administration had a negative effect on education. This view was particularly strong among respondents aged 18 to 59, with over half in each age group expressing concern. In contrast, only 38% of those aged 60 and older shared this view. Chinese American respondents (55%) were slightly more likely to perceive a negative impact than Indian (52%) and Vietnamese (49%) American respondents. Political affiliation strongly shaped attitudes: nearly 70% of Democratic or Democratic-leaning

respondents (68%) reported a negative perception of the administration's impact on education, compared to fewer than 25% of Republicans or Republican-leaning individuals.

These views are especially relevant given ongoing developments in which the Trump administration has taken active steps in dismantling the U.S. Department of Education. Through an executive order, he directed the Secretary of Education to initiate the department's disbandment, which would significantly weaken its ability to uphold civil rights protections, promote equity, and support underserved students (27). While these efforts signal a dramatic shift in federal education policy, the Department of Education remains intact as of now (28).

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Figure 28. Impact of Trump Administration on Education (n=1414)

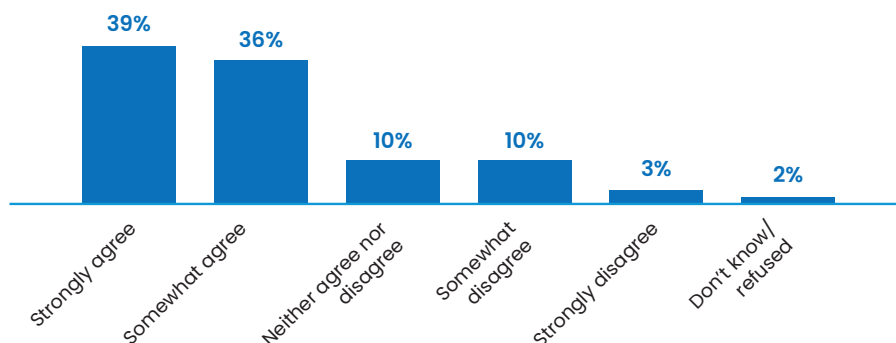


Safety & Sense of Belonging

“I feel unsafe at times in the U.S.” – Bangladeshi female between 18–29 years old

In this study, APIA respondents expressed at least some sense of belonging in the United States, with an overall 75% agreeing at least somewhat with the statement, “I feel like I belong in the United States.” However, only 39% strongly agreed, pointing to a more reserved or conditional sense of inclusion (Figure 29).

Figure 29. Feelings of Belonging in the USA (n=1414)



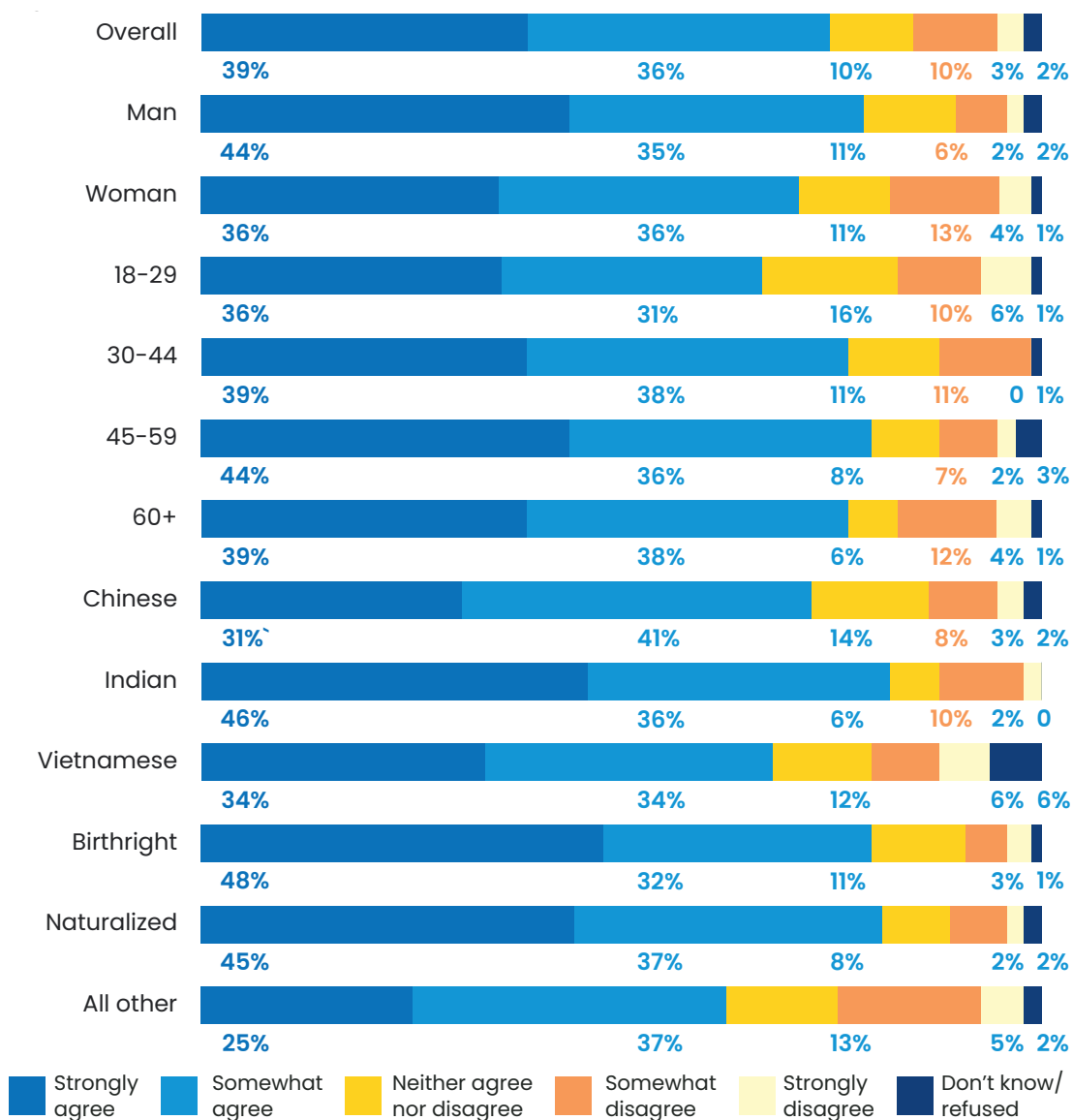
Anything short of a strong feeling of inclusion is problematic both for the individual and for the larger entity that should strive in every way for residents to feel accepted. The fact that less than 40% of APIAs report feeling a strong sense of belonging is troubling. In examining the sense of belonging by Asian ethnicity, Chinese Americans recorded the lowest figure, 31%, for those feeling that they strongly belong, followed by Vietnamese Americans, 34%. Just less than half of Indian Americans, 46%, indicated a strong sense of belonging in the United States (Figure 30).

Our findings align with trends reported in The Asian American Foundation’s (TAAF) national 2025 Social Tracking of Asian Americans in the United States (STAATUS) Index, which revealed 40% of respondents fully agreed that they felt a sense of belonging in the United States (2).

The STAATUS Index highlights age as a significant factor in feelings of belonging, with younger Asian Americans less likely than older generations to report feeling fully accepted or that they truly belong in the U.S. (2). Our findings reflect a similar trend. Feelings of belonging in the United States varied significantly by age, ethnicity, and citizenship status (Figure 30). Among respondents aged 18–29, 36% strongly agreed that they felt a sense of belonging, compared to 39% of those aged 30–44 and 60+, and 44% of those aged 45–59. Ethnic differences also emerged, with 46% of Indian Americans strongly agreeing, followed by 34% of Vietnamese Americans and 31% of Chinese Americans. Citizenship status showed a notable gap: only 25% of non-citizens strongly agreed they belonged in the U.S., roughly half the rate of native-born citizens (48%) and naturalized citizens (45%).

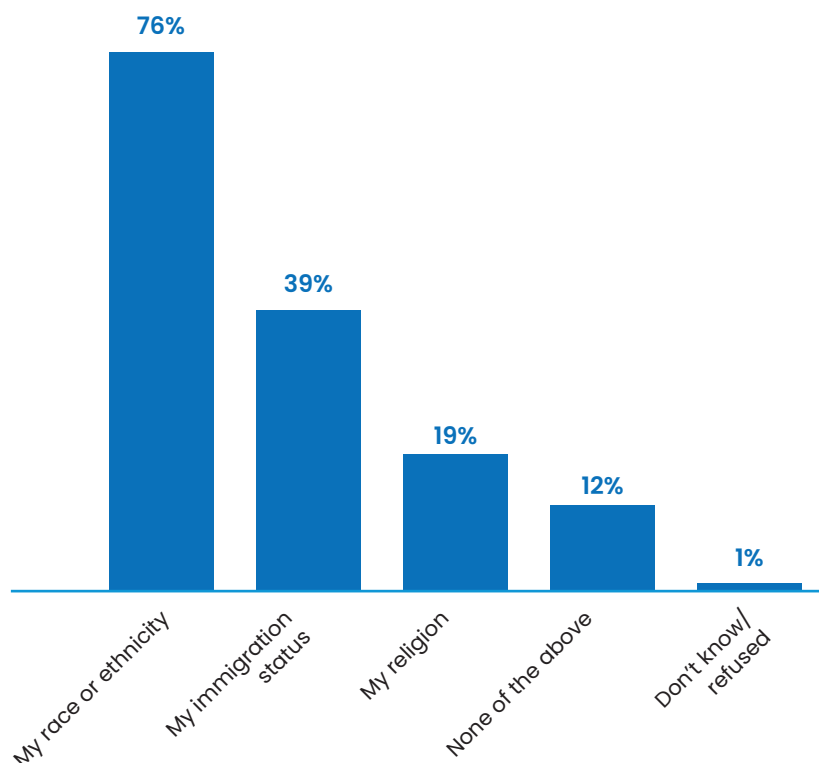
It is notable that another strong behavior that is related to sense of belonging is its relationship to voting registration. The finding is that those Massachusetts APIA respondents who strongly felt that they belonged in the U.S. were also significantly more inclined to be registered voters with 85% registered (Figure 12). Figure 30. Feelings of Belonging in the USA (n=1414)

Figure 30. Feelings of Belonging in the USA (n=1414)



Experiences of exclusion and marginalization continue to shape how APIAs perceive their place in the United States (Figure 31). Among respondents who reported not feeling a sense of belonging in the United States, 76% cited their race or ethnicity as a reason. Our results mirror the findings of the 2025 STAATUS Index, which found that a majority of Asian American respondents (59%) attributed their feelings of not fully belonging or being accepted in the U.S. to experiences of discrimination or violence based on their race or ethnicity ((2)). Additionally, we also found 39% of respondents cited their immigration status, and 19% of respondents cited their religion as contributing factors.

Figure 31. Reasons for Not Belonging in the USA (n=161)



When asked about experiences of discrimination or racially motivated incidents within the past year, 23% of respondents reported facing discrimination due to their identity, 21% said they had been subjected to racial or ethnic slurs, 14% experienced verbal harassment or abuse, and 10% faced or were threatened with physical abuse (Figure 32). These findings mirror patterns seen in the 2025 STAATUS Index, which reported that nearly half (49%) of Asian American respondents had been insulted or called derogatory names, 36% faced harassment or threats, and 15% experienced physical assault (2).

Experiences of discrimination and harassment varied significantly across ethnic and religious groups among respondents, highlighting important patterns in how different Asian American communities are targeted. About 21% of Vietnamese respondents reported being called a racial or ethnic slur in the past year, compared to 19% of Indian

and 18% of Chinese respondents. Verbal harassment or abuse was reported by 18% of Indian Americans, 12% of Chinese Americans, and 8% of Vietnamese Americans. Reports of discrimination based on identity were most common among Vietnamese respondents (29%), followed by Chinese (20%) and Indian (19%) respondents.

Figure 32. Incidents of Discrimination or Harassment Based on Race/Ethnicity (n=1414)

| | Overall | Chinese | Indian | Vietnamese |
|---|---------|---------|--------|------------|
| Someone called me a racial or ethnic slur | 21% | 18% | 19% | 21% |
| Someone verbally harassed or abused me | 14% | 12% | 18% | 8% |
| I faced discrimination based on my identity | 23% | 20% | 19% | 29% |
| Someone threatened to physically assault me | 6% | 8% | 6% | 2% |
| Someone physically assaulted me | 4% | 5% | 4% | 1% |
| Other | 2% | 1% | 2% | 2% |
| None of the above | 57% | 61% | 59% | 58% |
| Don't know / refused | 1% | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| Total | 1414 | 397 | 269 | 113 |

To better understand the environments in which APIAs experience discrimination, respondents were asked to identify where incidents related to their race or ethnicity had occurred in the past year (Figure 33). Public spaces emerged as the most frequently reported setting for discrimination, with 57% of respondents citing such experiences. This was followed by incidents on social media (29%) and in the workplace (25%). Vietnamese Americans were particularly likely to report discrimination in public places (75%), compared to 53% of Indian and 51% of Chinese respondents. On social media, Indian respondents (32%) reported the highest rates of discrimination, followed by Vietnamese (24%) and Chinese (19%) Americans.

Figure 33. Where Respondents Experienced Discrimination or Harassment Based on Race/Ethnicity (n=587)

| | Overall | Chinese | Indian | Vietnamese |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|--------|------------|
| On social media | 29% | 19% | 32% | 24% |
| In my neighborhood | 22% | 24% | 22% | 21% |
| In my workplace | 25% | 20% | 20% | 19% |
| At school | 14% | 17% | 8% | 6% |
| With law enforcement | 5% | 5% | 4% | 1% |
| In public places | 57% | 51% | 53% | 75% |
| In a healthcare setting | 10% | 9% | 5% | 2% |
| In personal relationships | 13% | 11% | 6% | 16% |
| From government officials | 5% | 7% | 2% | 1% |

According to AAPI Data, an estimated 2 million Asian Americans experienced hate crimes, harassment, or discrimination tied to COVID-19. But most of these incidents never made it to official channels. Many people held back out of fear: 62% said they were scared it might happen again, and 63% worried about drawing unwanted attention to themselves or their families (30). Stop AAPI Hate’s 2023 report cited nearly half (49%) of AAPI adults said they experienced an act of hate based on their race, ethnicity, or nationality, but 44% of those who went through hate incidents didn’t tell anyone—not even friends, family, or health providers. Just 10% went to criminal law enforcement, and even fewer—6%—reported it through civil legal channels (31).

Our study findings are similar to the above-mentioned references. Many respondents in our survey—64%—said they never reported the discrimination they faced to any organization or authority (Figure 34). Only about 1 in 5 (21%) said they went to the police, while 16% shared their experience with community groups like Stop AAPI Hate, and around 10% told the media or press.

Disaggregated data by ethnicity reveal notable variations: 59% of Chinese, 66% of Indian, and 67% of Vietnamese respondents reported not disclosing incidents of discrimination to any organization.

Among those who did report, 30% of Chinese American respondents disclosed incidents to the police, while 20% of Vietnamese American respondents reported to organizations such as Stop AAPI Hate.

Figure 34. Where Respondents Reported Incidents of Discrimination or Harassment (n=587)

| | Overall | Chinese | Indian | Vietnamese |
|--|---------|---------|--------|------------|
| The police | 21% | 30% | 18% | 15% |
| The press or news media | 10% | 18% | 12% | 2% |
| Asian American organization such as Stop AAPI Hate | 16% | 9% | 13% | 20% |
| Other | 2% | 3% | 1% | 6% |
| No I did not | 64% | 59% | 66% | 67% |
| Don't know / refused | 2% | 1% | 0 | 2% |
| Total | 587 | 151 | 108 | 47 |

A comparison between respondents' sense of belonging in the United States and their reported experiences of discrimination reveals a clear pattern (Figure 35). Among those who indicated that they did not feel a sense of belonging in the U.S., 31% reported experiencing two or more incidents of discrimination. This is notably higher than the 17% of respondents who reported a strong sense of belonging and the 18% who were neutral, but experienced the same frequency of discrimination. A similar trend was observed among those who reported experiencing a single instance of discrimination.

Figure 35. Number of Discrimination Incidents Relative to Sense of Belonging (n=1414)

| Number of experiences with discrimination | Overall | AGREE OR DISAGREE: "I feel like I belong in the US" | | |
|---|---------|--|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | | Strongly or somewhat agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Strongly or somewhat disagree |
| Unweighted Count | 1414 | 1119 | 136 | 139 |
| None | 59% | 64% | 57% | 28% |
| 1 | 22% | 19% | 25% | 41% |
| 2+ | 19% | 17% | 18% | 31% |
| Total | 1417 | 1059 | 149 | 185 |

Discussion

Limitations

While the survey employed a multimodal approach—including live telephone interviews, text-to-web, and online responses—and was offered in four languages (English, Chinese [Simplified], Vietnamese, and Khmer), certain limitations remain. The language offerings, while inclusive of several major Asian ethnic groups in Massachusetts, may have excluded residents who speak other Asian languages, limiting broader representation.

Although results were weighted by key demographics (age, gender, ethnic/national origin, education, county, political party, and citizenship status) to reflect the known and estimated population of APIA residents in the state, sampling and response biases may still be present—especially among harder-to-reach populations such as recent immigrants, non-citizens, and those with limited digital or phone access.

Moving Ahead & Looking Forward

As we reflect on the results of this survey, it's clear that there is much more work to be done. Moving forward, we hope to conduct these surveys on a biennial basis to ensure we continue capturing and understanding the evolving needs of the APIA community.

One of our key goals is to expand the sample size in future surveys, allowing us to disaggregate data further and provide a clearer understanding of the experiences and challenges faced by smaller ethnic populations within the APIA community. This will enable us to make more targeted, effective recommendations for policy and programming.

In addition, we recognize the importance of ensuring APIA voices are included in larger, ongoing surveys. We will advocate for the inclusion of APIA populations in regular state and national surveys to ensure their experiences are represented across broader datasets.

By continuing to prioritize their inclusion in future efforts, we hope to foster a more equitable and informed policy landscape that reflects the diverse realities of the APIA community in Massachusetts.

To sustain and expand this critical survey effort, we welcome new partners to join us—both in outreach and in funding. Collecting robust, community-centered data is resource-intensive, which is one reason that efforts like this are so rare. If institutions and stakeholders recognize the value of data such as these, we hope they will help amplify its significance and support its continuation. With more partners and financial backing, we can ensure this work is not just a one-time effort but a sustainable tool for change.

This survey marks a critical first step in amplifying the voices of APIA individuals, ensuring we are no longer voiceless, faceless, or invisible.

Sponsors

This survey would not have been possible without the generous funding and dedicated support provided by the Institute for Asian American Studies at the University of Massachusetts Boston, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission (AAPIC), the Asian Community Fund (ACF), The Boston Foundation, and the Asian and Pacific Islanders Civic Action Network (APIs CAN). Their investment of both resources and personnel was instrumental in bringing this project to life.

Acknowledgements

The 2025 APIA MA Community Survey was developed under the leadership of Shubhecchha Dhaurali, Program and Research Director at the AAPI Commission, in close collaboration with Dr. Paul Watanabe, Director of the Institute for Asian American Studies at UMass Boston, who provided critical academic insight and subject-matter expertise on the APIA community.

Key input and strategic support came from Shauna Lo (Assistant Director, Institute for Asian American Studies), AAPI Commissioners Saatvik Ahluwalia (Chair), Karen Chen, and Danielle Kim (also Executive Director of the Asian Community Fund at the Boston Foundation), as well as Yasmin Padamsee Forbes (Executive Director, AAPI Commission), Jennifer Best (former Policy Director, AAPI Commission), Jaya Savita (Director, APIs CAN), and Dr. MyDzung Chu (Executive Director, Tufts ADAPT).

Survey questionnaire finalization and fielding were led by Mahashraya Bowen (Research Director) and Steve Koczela (President) of The MassINC Polling Group. Survey translations were provided by Karen Chen (Simplified Chinese), Sreang Heng (Khmer), and Theresa Kim Nguyen (Vietnamese).

Report authorship was a collaborative effort by Shubhecchha Dhaurali and Dr. Paul Watanabe. Visual report design was completed by Joelle Riffle (freelance graphic designer). Critical feedback was provided by Shauna Lo, Danielle Kim, Leela Ramachandran, Steve Koczela, and Mahashraya Bowen..

We also acknowledge the following individuals for their vital contributions to survey communications, outreach, and impact: Catherine Drennan Lynn (Public Relations and Communications Strategy), Anne Lizette Sta. Maria, Monita Seng (Communications and Social Media), and Leela Ramachandran (Policy and Legislative Advocacy).

Contact Information

About Institute for Asian American Studies at UMass Boston

The Institute for Asian American Studies at the University of Massachusetts Boston conducts community-focused research on Asian American issues; provides data and information about Asian Americans to policymakers, service providers, educators and students, foundations, the media, and community groups; and contributes to the success of Asian American students and the enrichment of Asian American studies on campus. For more information, visit: www.umb.edu/iaas.

About the MA Asian American & Pacific Islander Commission

The Massachusetts Asian American & Pacific Islanders Commission (AAPIC) is the Commonwealth's only permanent, statewide body dedicated to addressing the needs and challenges of the AAPI community. The AAPIC provides programs, education, resources, and advocacy throughout Massachusetts. Learn more about the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' AAPI Commission at www.aapicommission.org.

About The MassINC Poling Group

The MassINC Polling Group is a nonpartisan public opinion research firm serving public, private, and social-sector clients. MPG elevates the public's voice with cutting edge methods and rigorous analysis. Based in Boston, MPG serves a nationwide client base. For more information, visit: www.massincpolling.com.

About Asian Community Fund at The Boston Foundation

The Asian Community Fund (ACF) at the Boston Foundation is the first and only philanthropic fund in Massachusetts dedicated to activating, convening, and supporting the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. Launched in 2020, ACF is a permanent resource designed to galvanize and unite the diverse ethnicities within the AAPI community, incubate new partnerships, and build a stronger advocacy voice. To learn more about ACF, check out our website: www.tbf.org/asiancommunityfund.

About APIIs CAN

The Asian Pacific Islander's Civic Action Network (APIIs CAN) is a statewide network in Massachusetts dedicated to advancing the interests of Massachusetts' Asian and Pacific Islander American communities through advocacy, coalition-building, and community engagement. To learn more about APIIs CAN's initiatives, partnerships, and impact, visit www.massapiscan.org.

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Appendix

Who is APIA?

The term “Asian and Pacific Islander American (APIA)” in this report refers to individuals of Asian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander descent, encompassing those who trace their origins or identities to the countries, territories, jurisdictions, and diasporic communities of the following geographic regions: East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Central Asia, and the Pacific Islands.

Among Asian American communities in Massachusetts, the largest ethnic groups include Chinese (excluding Taiwanese) at 198,039 individuals, followed by Asian Indian (137,333), Vietnamese (61,863), Korean (34,785), Cambodian (32,171), and Filipino (26,354). For Pacific Islander Americans, the most represented groups are Native Hawaiian (2,990), Chamorro (1,257), and Samoan (1,024) (APIA Vote, 2024).

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