

So You Think You Know Florida's Voters? A Fresh Look at Sunshine State Registrants

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Professional and amateur pundits alike agree that Florida is one of the nation's most important swing states in 2012, if not the most important. It is a tricky state to maneuver, with its 10 media markets and its large, ever-changing, and diverse population.

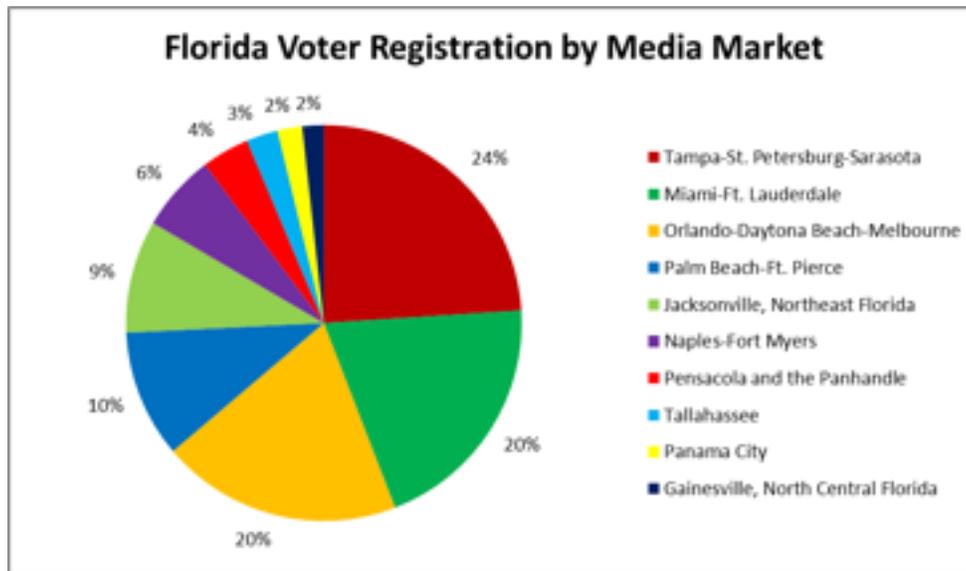
Strategists from both parties are already deeply immersed in analyses of how to craft political ads and orchestrate candidate visits with certain key demographics in mind: age, race/ethnicity, gender, and party affiliation. The name of the game is micro-targeting. At the heart of micro-targeting is dissecting the numbers in virtually every way possible in search of the winning campaign edge.

Using a series of graphs breaking down Florida's registrants (placed at the end of the column), we show how different pictures of our state's voters emerge, depending on how they are "sliced and diced." Even the most seasoned political junkies are sure to be surprised by what some of the numbers show. For example, bet you didn't know that:

- Voters living in I-4 corridor media markets are slightly younger and whiter than the state's registrants overall.
- 30-49 year olds are the plurality age group in the Sunshine State—not seniors (as is the image of Florida held by many)
- In the Orlando media market, the proportion of Hispanic and African American registrants is nearly equal—13% and 11% respectively (many think Latinos are much more dominant); statewide, the two minority groups are almost identical (13.26%—black; 13.22%—Hispanic).
- A majority of voters with No Party Affiliation or registered with a minor party are under age 50.
- A plurality of Asian voters are registered as No Party Affiliation.
- Asians and Hispanics are the racial/ethnic groups that are the most evenly divided across party affiliations.
- Males make up a larger share of voters registered with minor parties than women.
- Among racial/ethnic groups, females make up the largest share of African American voters, followed by Hispanics and Asians.

What follows is a detailed breakdown of what our analysis of Florida’s electorate (as it stood at the end of the first quarter of 2012) revealed:

Media Market Size



- Largest: Tampa: 24% of all registered voters
- Smallest: Gainesville: 2%
- I-4 Corridor (Tampa + Orlando): 44%
- Southeast (Miami + Palm Beach): 30%
- Southwest (Naples): 6%
- Panhandle (Jacksonville, Tallahassee, Panama City, Pensacola): 18%

I-4 Corridor Media Markets v. Florida At-Large (All Markets)

Party: More evenly divided (38% D, 37% R; state at-large (40% D, 36% R)
 Same proportion of independents (No Party Affiliation): 20%
 Slightly higher proportion of minor party affiliates: 5% v. 4%

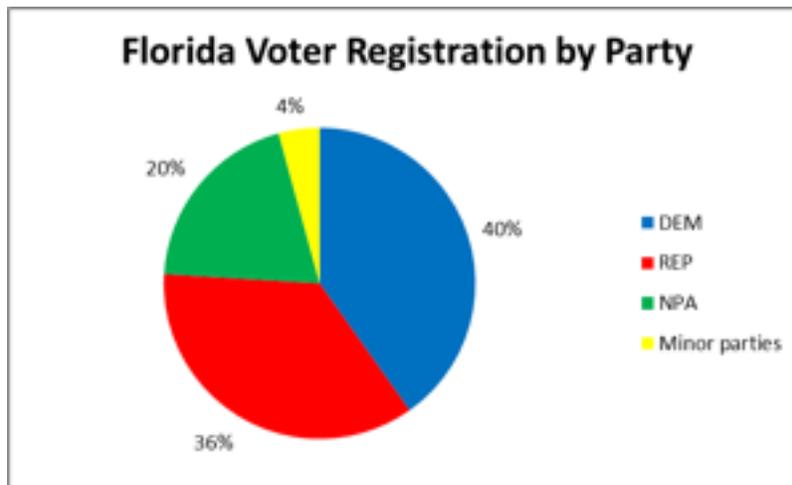
Race: More white (non-Hispanic) voters: 74% v. 68%
 Fewer black and Hispanic registrants: 10% v. 13%

Gender: Breakdowns same in each geography

Age: Younger; more under age 50 (59% v. 42%)
 More 30-49 year olds (47% v. 31%); age group is plurality in each
 Smaller share of Boomers 50-64 (12% v. 26%)

Larger share of seniors 65+ (30% v. 26%)

Party Affiliation



Media Market: (% party makeup within each media market)

- Most Democrats: Tallahassee (59%), Gainesville (50%), Miami (47%), Palm Beach (42%)
- Most Republicans: Naples (44%)
- Most Independents: Miami (27%), Naples (21%), Palm Beach (21%), Tampa (20%), Orlando (20%)
- Most Minor Parties: Tampa (5%), Orlando (5%), Palm Beach (5%), Naples (5%)
- Most Competitive (major parties): Tampa, Orlando, Panama City, Jacksonville

Race/Ethnicity (makeup within each party):

- Democrats: most diverse; largest share of black voters (27%)
- Republicans and Minor Parties: largest proportion of white voters (84% and 74%)
- Independents (NPAs): largest proportion of Hispanics (19%)
- Hispanic makeup of Democrats and Republicans is fairly similar: 13% v. 11%

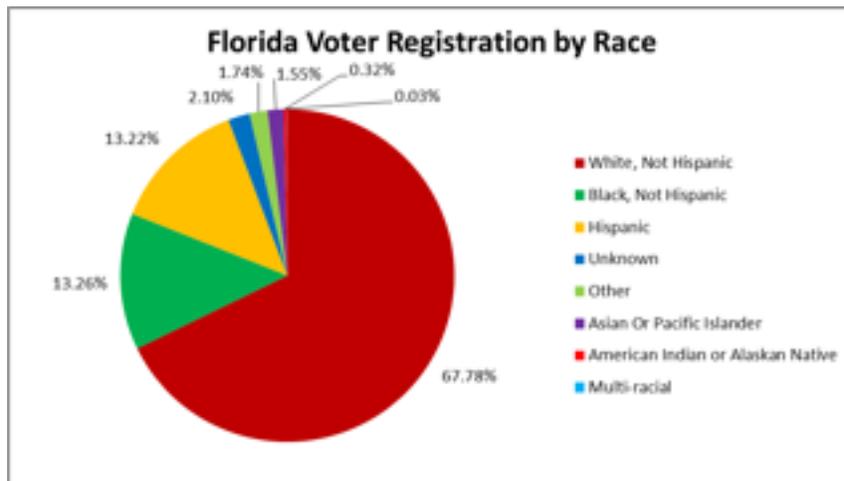
Gender: (Some voters do not report)

- Democrats: Highest proportion of females (58%)
- Republicans and NPAs: more evenly divided, but women largest share
- Minor parties: males are largest share

Age:

- NPAs and Minor: majority under age 50 (60% and 54%)
- Democrats: 54% over age 50; 27% 65 or older
- Republicans: 59% over age 50; 31% 65 or older

Race and Ethnicity



Media Market:

- Largest black share of voters: Tallahassee (28%)
- Largest Latino share of voters: Miami (35%)
- Largest white share of voters: Panama City (86%), Naples (84%), Pensacola (81%)
- Most minority voters (blacks + Hispanics): Miami (55%)
- More Latinos than black voters: Miami (35% v. 20%), Orlando (13% v. 11%), Naples (7% v. 5%)

Party: (party affiliation within each racial/ethnic group)

- African Americans: heavily Democratic (82%)
- Hispanics: plurality are Democrats (39%)
- Whites: plurality are Republicans (44%)
- Asians: plurality are No Party Affiliation (35%)

- Native American voters: plurality are Democrats (40%)
- Most evenly divided across party affiliations: Asians, followed by Hispanics

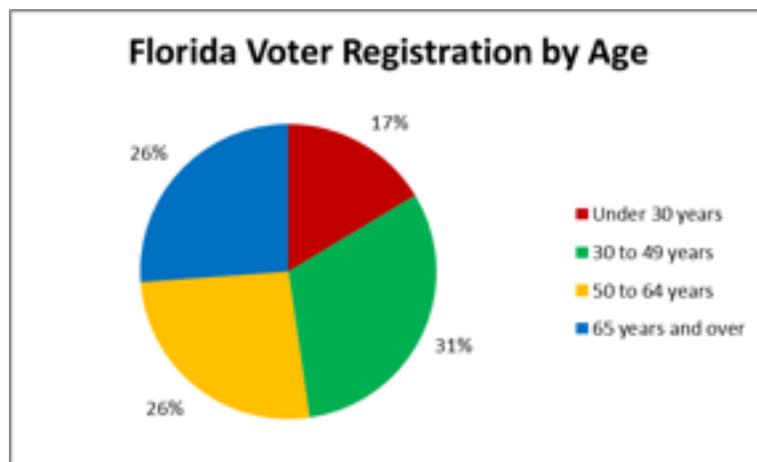
Gender (% female registrants within each racial/ethnic group)

- Blacks: the highest proportion of female registrants (58%)
- Hispanics and Asians: women make up 55% of each group of voters
- Whites, Native Americans, and multi-racial: women comprise 53% of each group

Age: (% of age cohorts within each racial/ethnic group)

- Multi-racial: largest share under age 30 (48%)
- Asian: largest 30–49 cohort, followed by Hispanic (38%) and black (37%)
- Whites, Native Americans: largest share of 50–64 year olds (Boomers) (28%)
- Whites: largest senior cohort—65 and older (31%)

Age



Media Market

- Largest share of 18–29 year olds: Gainesville (26%) and Tallahassee (25%)
- Largest share of 30–49: Jacksonville (35%) and Pensacola (35%)
- Largest share of 50–64: Panama City (28%) and Jacksonville (27%)
- Largest share of 65+: Naples (37%) and Palm Beach (33%)
- Most under 50: Gainesville and Tallahassee (56% each)
- Most over 50: Naples (63%)

Party

- Largest share of 18–29: Democrats (40%)
- Largest share of 30–49: Democrats (39%)
- Largest share of 50–64: Democrats (41%)
- Largest share of 65+: Republicans (42%)

- Most NPAs: 30–49 year olds (28%)
- NPAs outnumber Republicans: 18–29 year olds (28% v. 27%)
- Most minor party affiliates: 18–29 and 30–49 (5% each)
- Most partisan diverse: 18–29 year olds

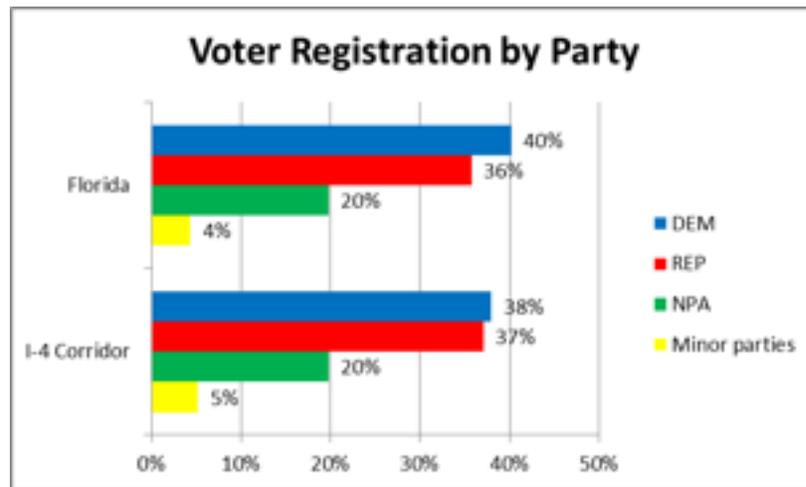
Race

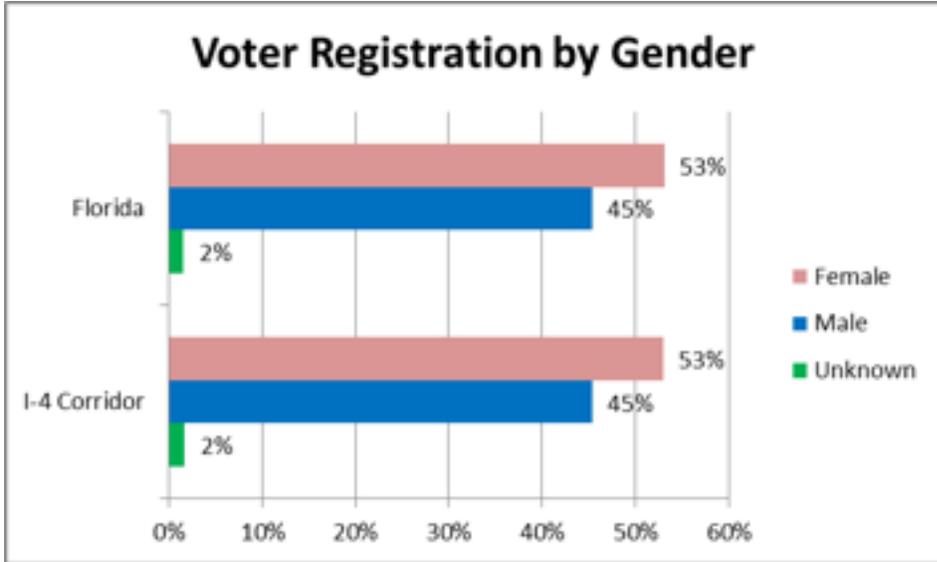
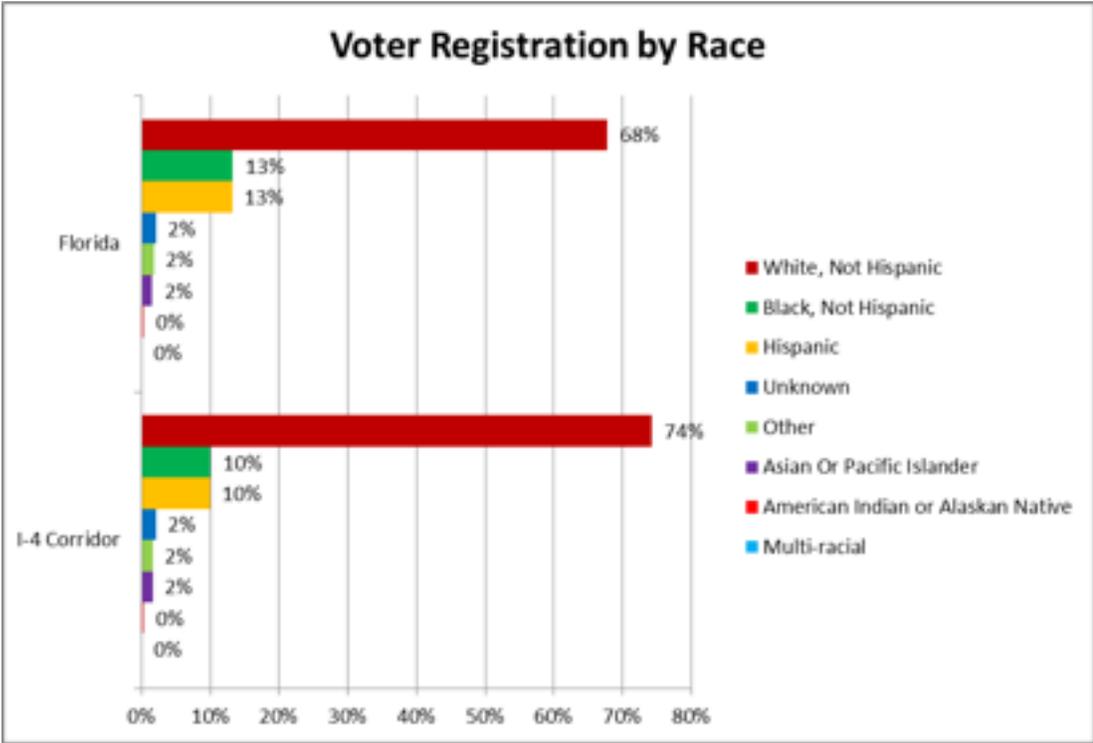
- Largest share of white voters: 65 and older (79%)
- Largest share of black voters: 18–29 (20%)
- Largest share of Latino voters: 18–29 (17%)
- Largest share of Asian: 18–29 and 30–49 (2% each)
- Most racially diverse: 18–29 (51%)

Gender

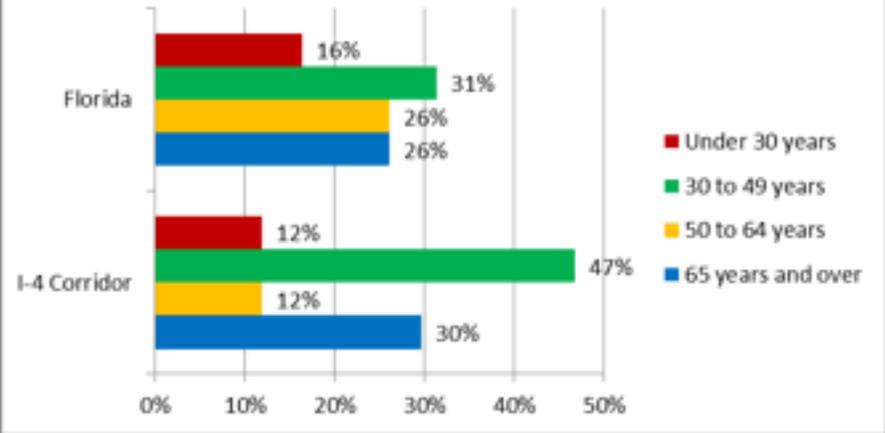
- Largest share of female voters: 65 and older (55%)
- Smallest share of female voters: 18–29 year olds

GRAPHICS: I-4 Corridor v. Florida At-Large

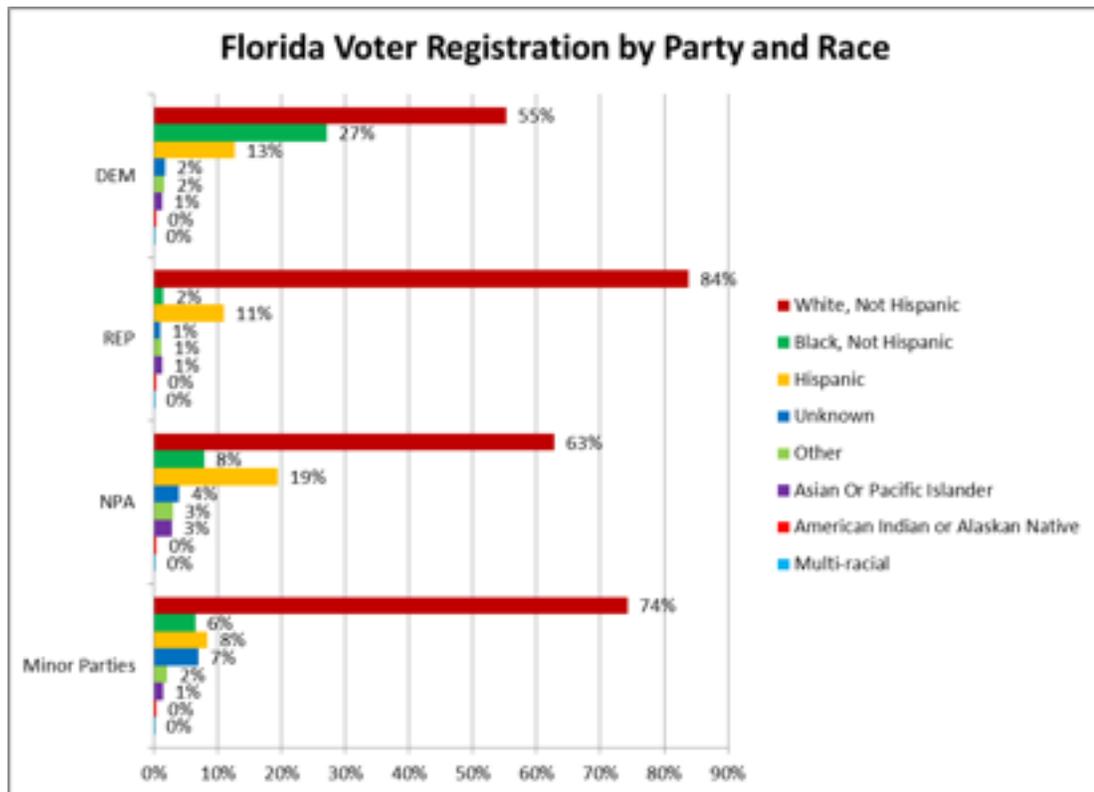
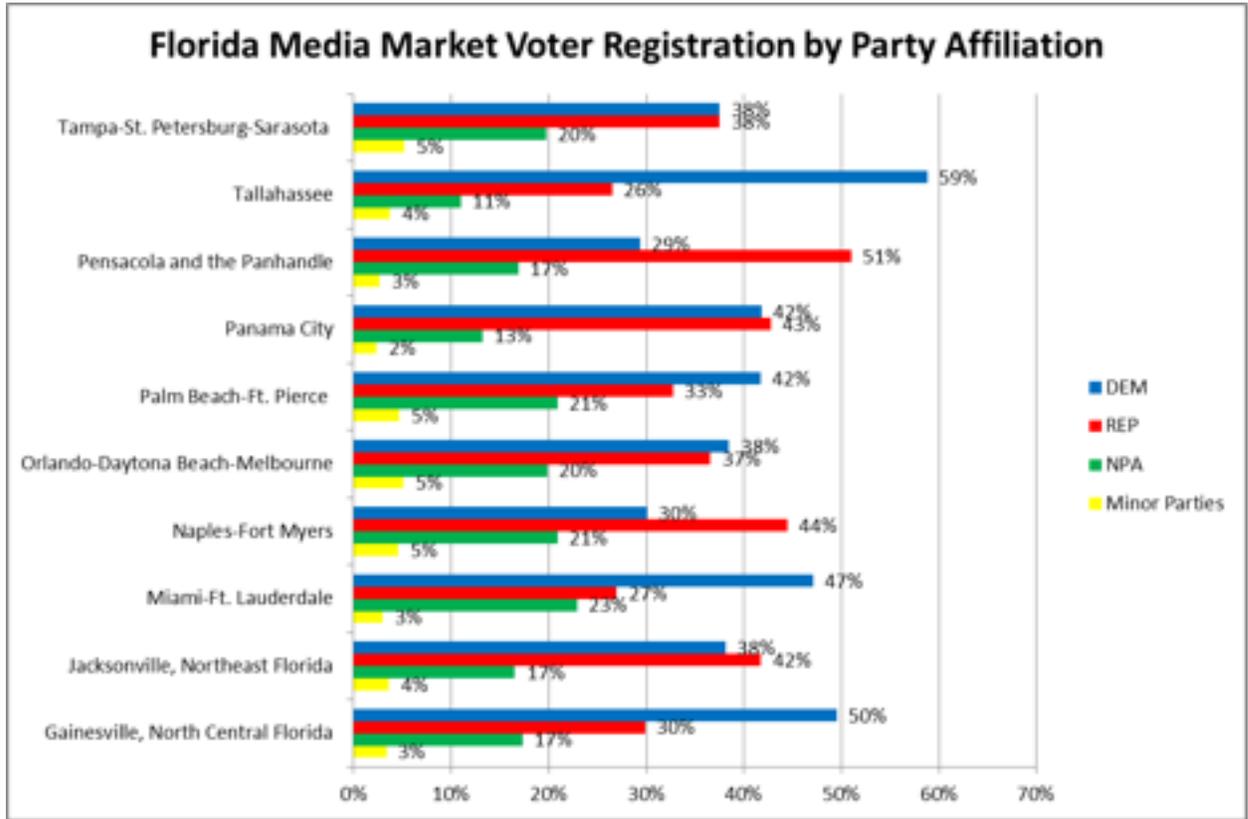


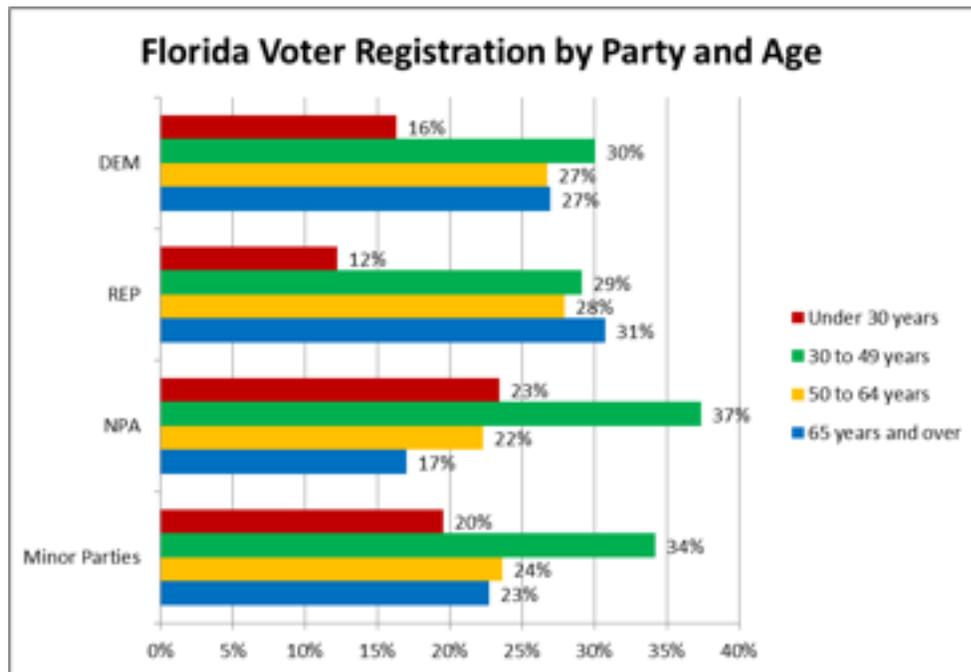
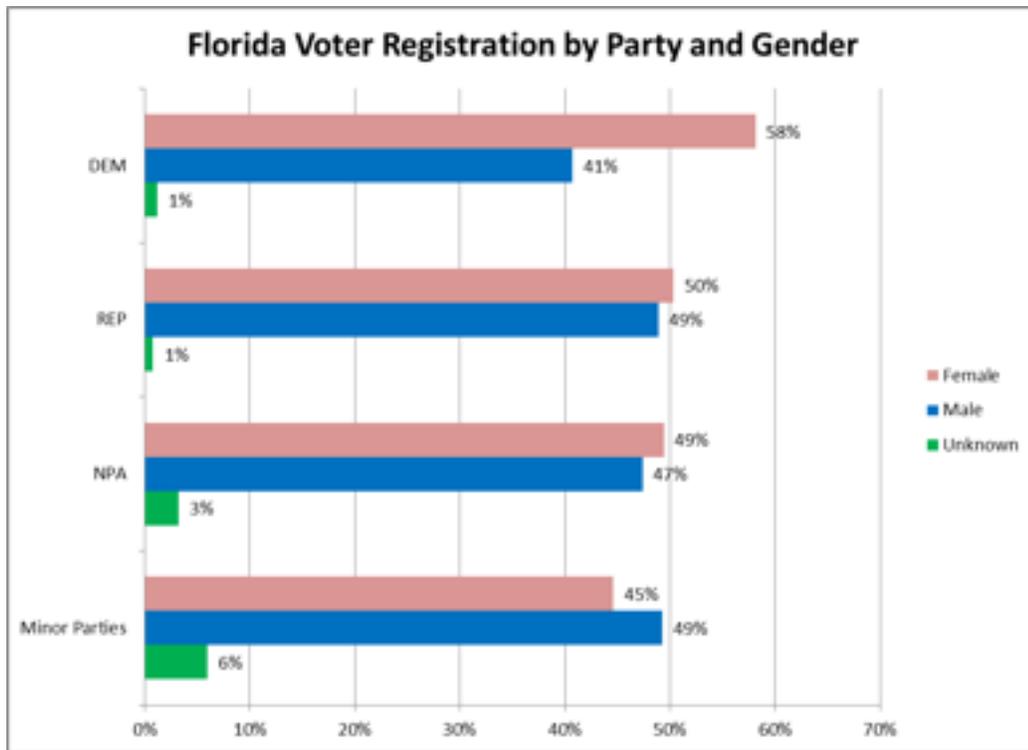


Voter Registration by Age

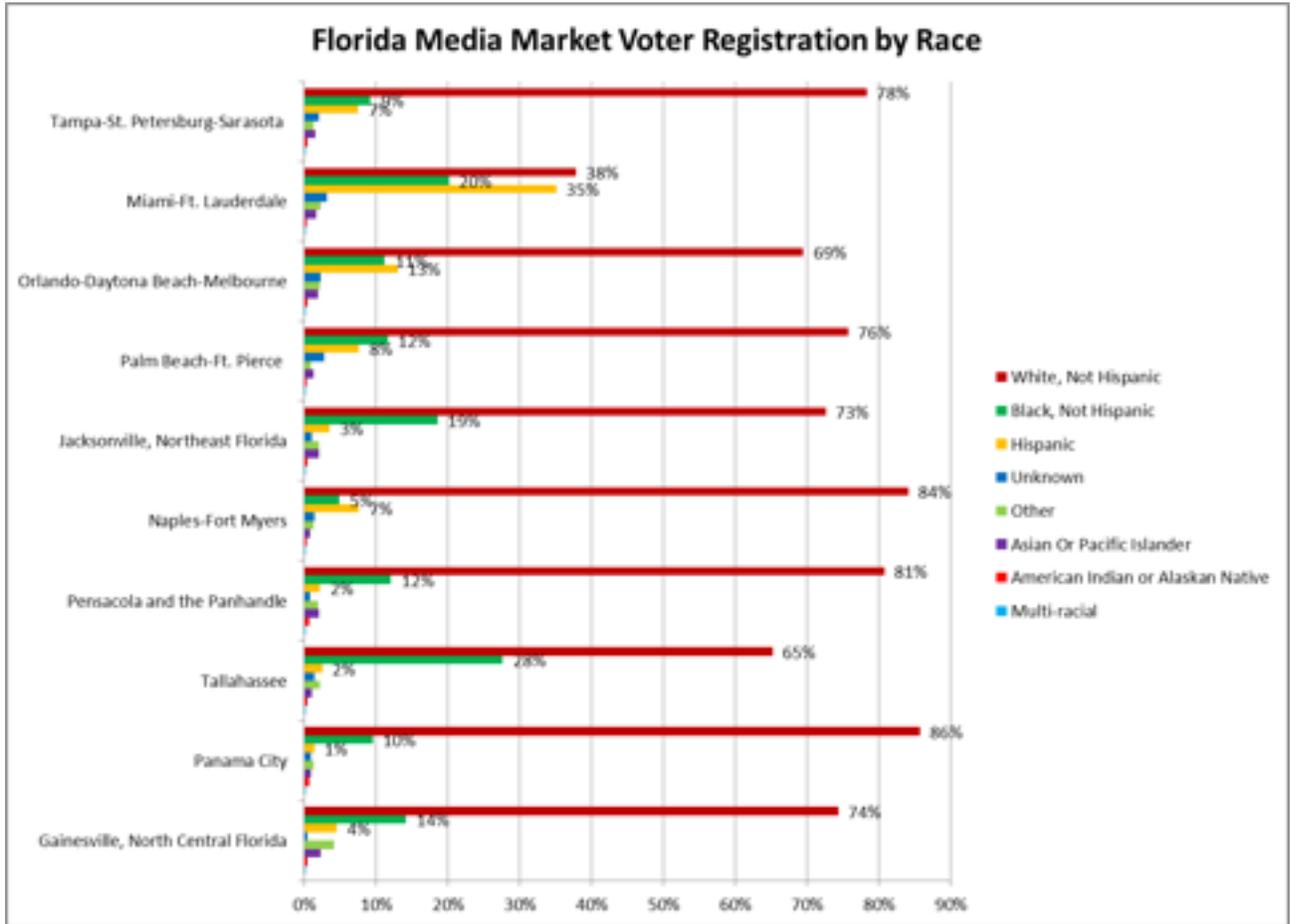


GRAPHICS: Party Affiliation

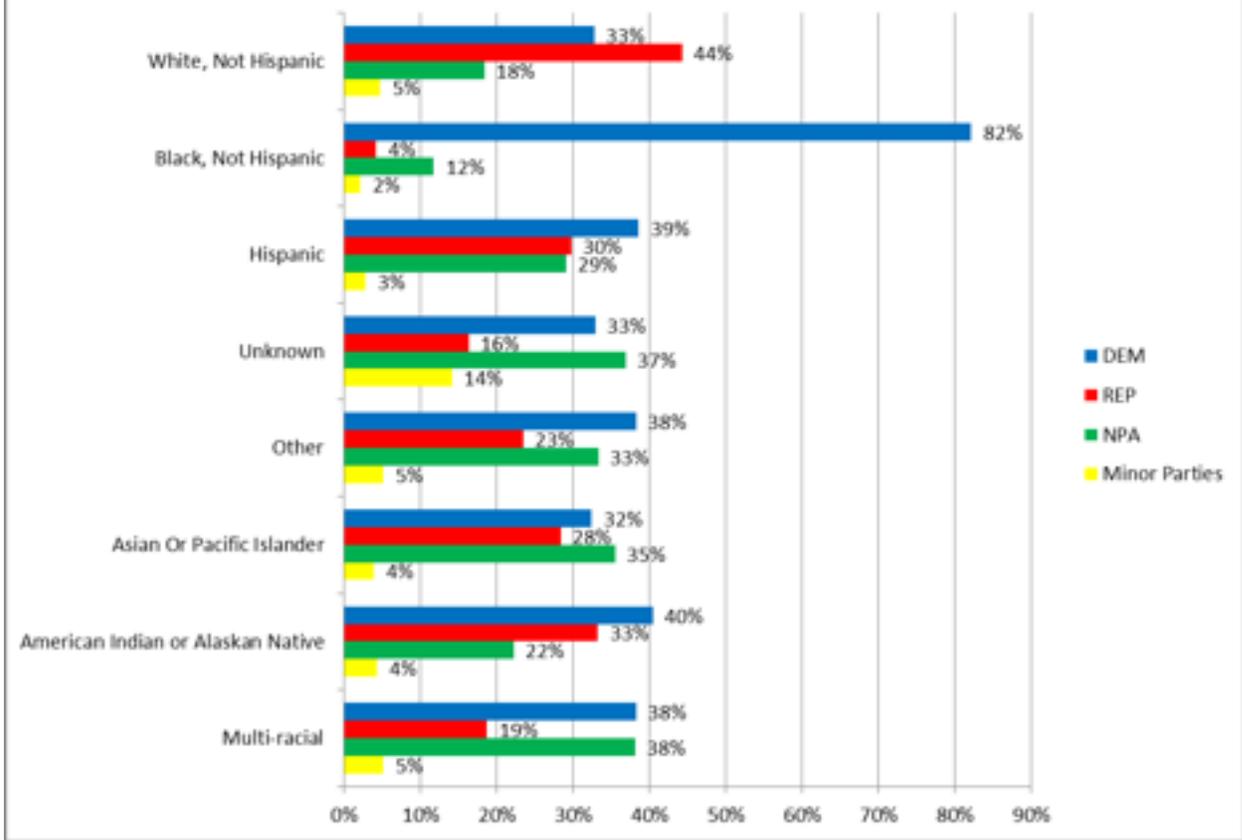




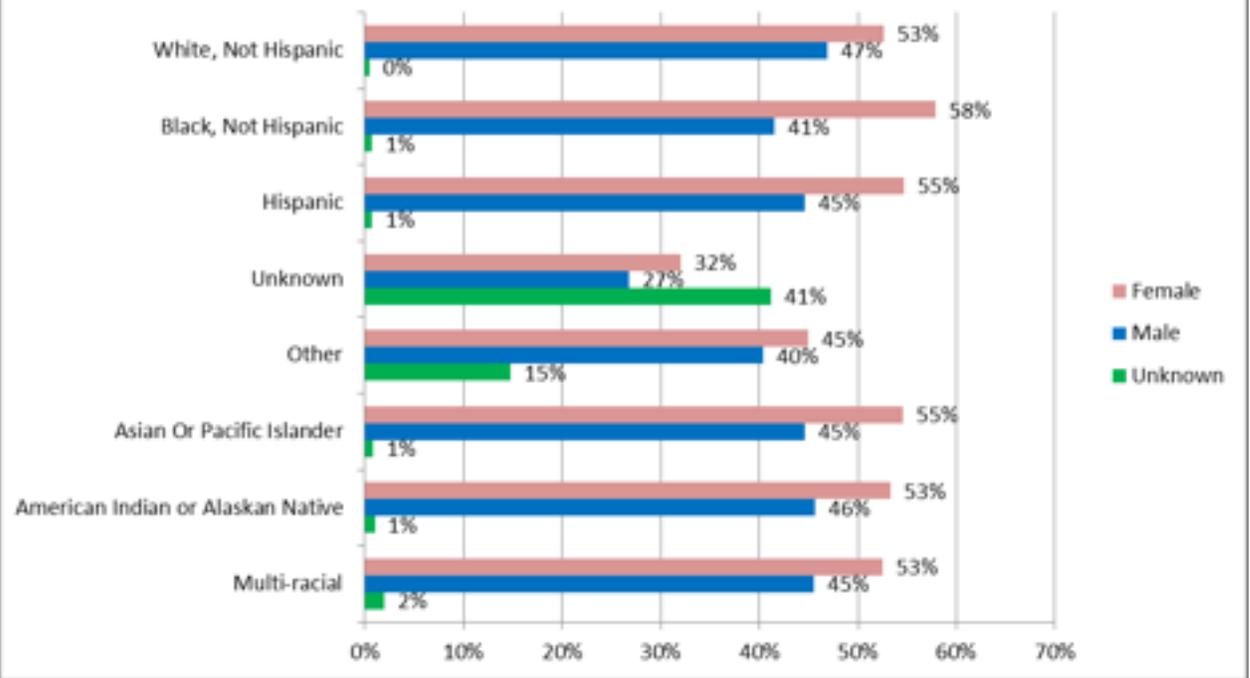
GRAPHICS: Race/Ethnicity

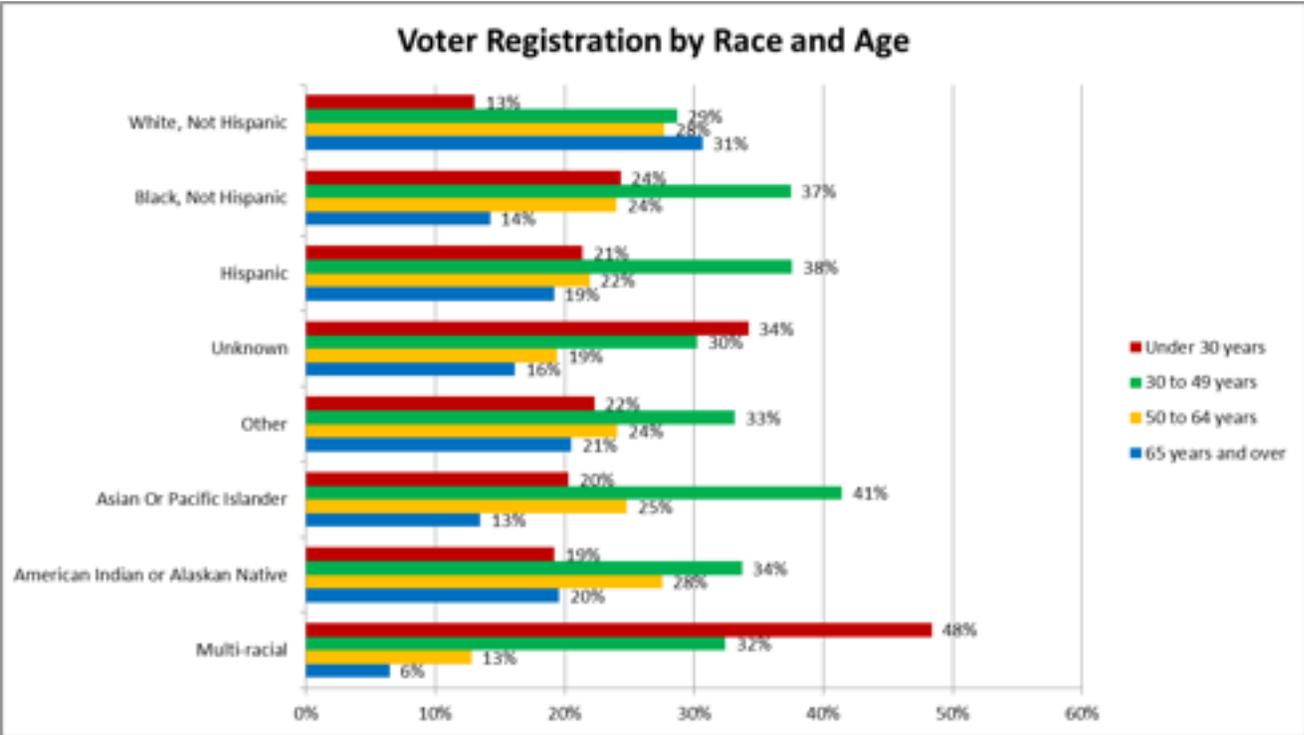


Voter Registration by Race and Party



Voter Registration by Race and Gender





GRAPHICS: Age

