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## Who cares about Asian American voters?

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The McCain and Obama campaigns should.

More than a third of Asian American likely voters were undecided about their choice for the U.S. President as recently as two weeks ago, according to new data from the 2008 National Asian American Survey. A national sample of 4,394 found 41 percent support Barack Obama while 24 percent say they will vote for John McCain.

Which presidential candidate will win the largest share of undecided Asian American likely voters? Much of that will depend on mobilization efforts, which could make the difference in battleground states where a few thousand votes can tip the balance.

Asian Americans are among the fastest-growing groups across the nation – in red states as well as blue states. They make up 5 percent of the U.S. population and live in growing numbers in battleground states including Florida, Georgia, Nevada, North Carolina, and Virginia. They are 13 percent of the population in California, 8 percent in New Jersey, 8 percent in Washington, and 7 percent in New York.

A majority of Asian American likely voters favor ending the war in Iraq and providing health care for all Americans – their positions are closer to the Democratic platform this year.

And yet, many remain unattached to either of the two major political parties. Like the immigrants at the turn of the last century – Irish, Italians, Jews – Asian Americans are open and poised to adopt partisan identifications that, once set, will tend to be passed from one generation to the next.

That's why anyone who wants to win elections in an increasingly diverse America should care about Asian American voters.

**Editor's note:** *Click here to see the full 2008 National Asian American Survey, co-directed by Jane Junn (Rutgers University), Taeku Lee (UC-Berkeley), Karthick Ramakrishnan (UC-Riverside), and Janelle Wong (University of Southern California). Jane Junn is a professor of political science at the Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University.*

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Truong Diep, left, speaks with Vietnamese-American women Nguyen Thanh, 72, as Diep campaigns for Sen. John McCain Wednesday, in the Little Saigon area of Westminster, CA.

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