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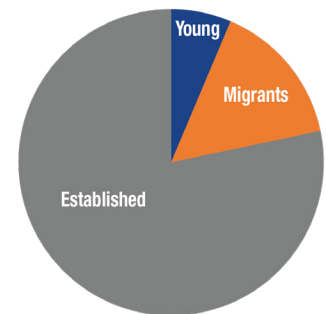
New Voters Will Influence Outcome in New Hampshire Primary

Kenneth M. Johnson, Dante J. Scala, and Andrew E. Smith

The New Hampshire primary often defies prognosticators, but one outcome already is certain: Many voters will participate in this event for the first time. More than 20 percent of potential primary voters this year were either not old enough to vote in 2016 or resided somewhere other than New Hampshire (Figure 1). New Hampshire’s population is among the most mobile in the nation: two-thirds of residents age 25 and older were not born in the state. Such migration, coupled with natural population change as young voters come of age and older generations of voters pass from the scene, has produced considerable turnover in the voting population. These younger voters and recent migrants may change the outcome of the primary. Both groups tend to be more liberal than voting-age residents who have lived here longer (Figure 2).

Another source of volatility is the state’s large pool of “undeclared” voters. Many of them are likely to ask for Democratic ballots, given the relatively uncompetitive Republican primary. In addition, the very large field of Democratic candidates, plus overall Democratic voter enthusiasm, will likely boost participation. Record Democratic turnout, eclipsing the 2008 mark, is quite plausible.

FIGURE 1. ESTIMATED YOUNG, MIGRANT, AND ESTABLISHED POTENTIAL VOTERS, 2020



Source: U.S. Census Population Estimates 2018 and American Community Survey 2013–2017 and 2018.

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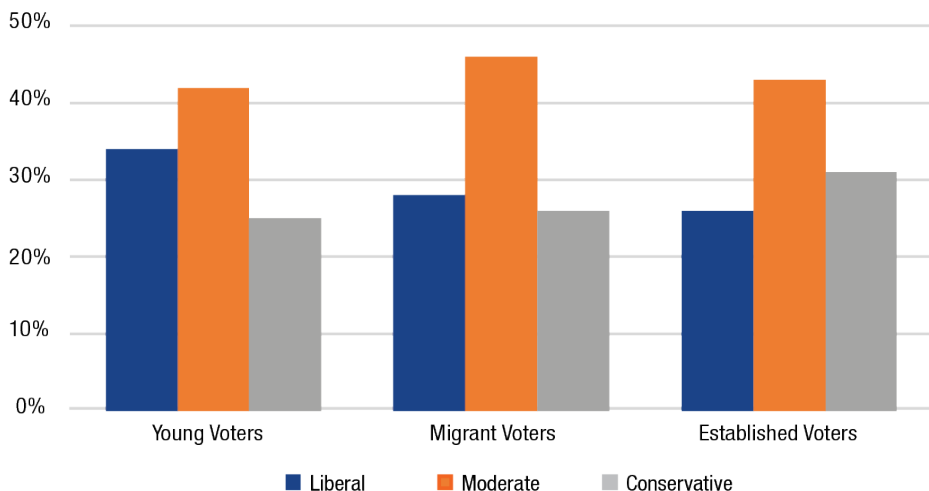
► *First in the Nation: New Hampshire’s Changing Electorate in Changing Times*, December 2019

► *First in the Nation: New Hampshire’s Changing Electorate*, January 2016

About the Authors

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FIGURE 2. POLITICAL IDEOLOGY OF YOUNG, MIGRANT, AND ESTABLISHED POTENTIAL VOTERS



Source: Granite State Polls, winter 2016 to fall 2019, University of New Hampshire.