To: Building America's Future

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Re: Importance of Immigration in the 2024 Election

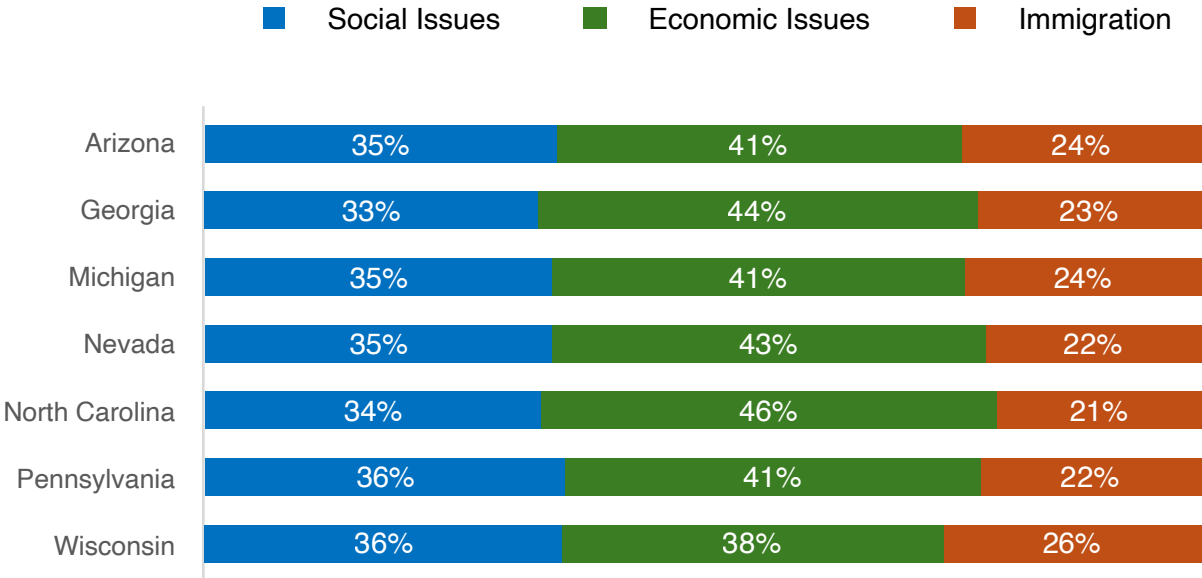---

Introduction

Throughout the 2024 election cycle, immigration was a defining characteristic of Trump's winning coalition. The vast majority of voters who cited illegal immigration as a major concern to them voted for President Trump, and their vote history prior to this election was weak to non-existent. The desire for safety brought low-propensity voters from all walks of life into the Republican fold, and the Trump campaign's emphasis on border security served as a key rallying point for voters dissatisfied with Biden and Harris's leadership.

Issue Matrix

Beginning in March of this year, our firm conducted surveys across the seven swing states on a monthly basis. The start of each survey would include a question of what voters believed was the most important issue facing the country…the one thing in America that would most influence their vote for President.
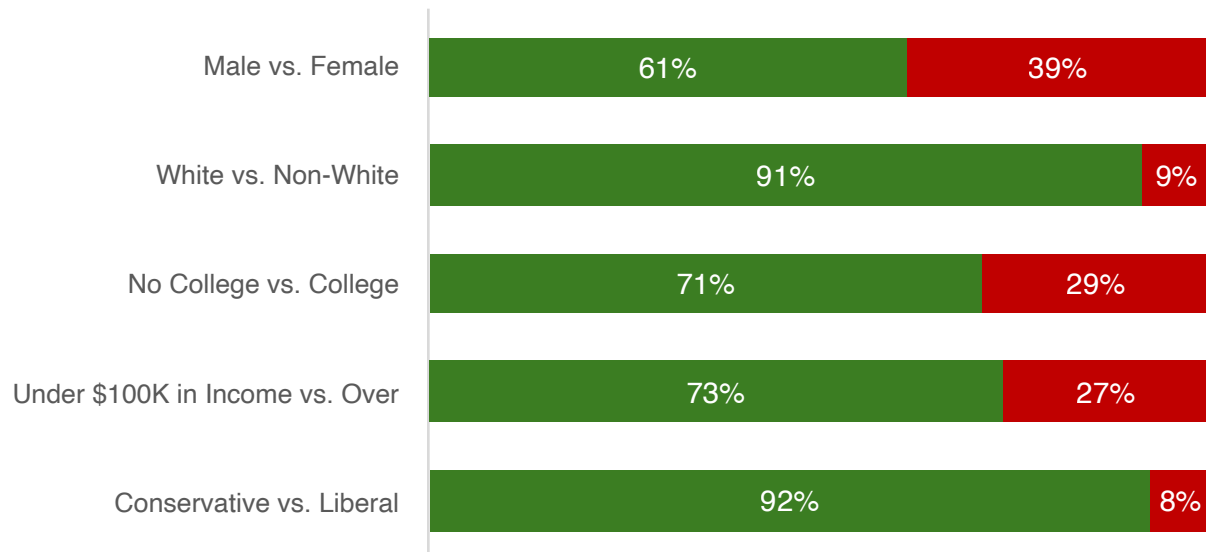
In our surveys from early October, roughly 20-25% of swing state voters stated that securing the southern border and fighting illegal immigration were their top issue. This was true in states near the border like Arizona and Nevada, as well as industrial Rust Belt states such as Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.

	Social Issues	Economic Issues	Immigration
Arizona	35%	41%	24%
Georgia	33%	44%	23%
Michigan	35%	41%	24%
Nevada	35%	43%	22%
North Carolina	34%	46%	21%
Pennsylvania	36%	41%	22%
Wisconsin	36%	38%	26%

Immigration-First Voters

Donald Trump's ballot share with immigration-first voters ranged from anywhere between 80 and 100%. That's because the profile of those voters is reflective of the electorate Trump worked so hard to cultivate: working-class men with little formal education who are concerned about losing their place in our society.

The chart below uses the immigration-first voters in Michigan to demonstrate their demographic makeup.

Category	Green	Red
Male vs. Female	61%	39%
White vs. Non-White	91%	9%
No College vs. College	71%	29%
Under $100K in Income vs. Over	73%	27%
Conservative vs. Liberal	92%	8%

What's more, election results from beyond the swing states suggest that Donald Trump's immigration rhetoric did not alienate minority voters. Trump had historic support among Hispanics for a Republican presidential candidate, including 55% of Hispanic men according to Edison Research's exit polls. He won Miami-Dade County by double-digits after losing it by nearly 30 points in 2016, and he flipped several of Texas's Hispanic-heavy border counties. All of this occurred as the Harris campaign tried (and failed) to turn a light-hearted joke about Puerto Rico into a meaningful closing argument for Hispanic voters.

Conclusion

Donald Trump's strong stance on illegal immigration proved to be a bedrock for his re-election. Not only was border security a major point of differention between Trump and Harris, but it attracted a certain group of voters towards the former President that allowed him to build a generational Republican bloc.

The Trump campaign's ability to use immigration as a vehicle for conversations on foreign policy, national identity, economic woes, and the future of the American Dream exemplified how important the issue is in this political moment, and there's no reason to think that it won't have staying power in future elections.