

TRT World (Turkish news agency)

## US & CANADA

7 HOURS AGO

### **Are Arizona's Latino voters starting to question their Democratic loyalty?**

Many Latinos in the Grand Canyon state are likely shifting toward Trump, joining a multi-racial working-class bloc once dominated by white voters.



**SADIQ BHAT**



REUTERS

Trump recently visited the Arizona border, warning the country would “wither away and die” without border security reforms. / Photo: Reuters

**Washington, DC** — Raul Sanchez has spent two decades working as an electrician in the city of Glendale, Arizona, but these days, he is tackling a more pressing question than faulty circuits: Who can he trust to steer the country in the right direction?

For the 44-year-old, the upcoming election feels personal. "I voted for Biden in 2020 because we needed a change," he told *TRT World*.

"I think it is worse now. I mean, groceries, gas — everything around here is more expensive. Trump was not perfect, but at least there was the promise of a better economy in his time."

Raul's concerns reflect a significant shift unfolding across Arizona — a key swing state — where Latino voters, making up over a quarter of the electorate, are becoming a crucial factor in the 2024 race.



## OTHERS

More than 90 electoral votes across these seven swing states are expected to be pivotal in the White House race between Harris and Trump.

Analysts have [called](#) the resurgence of inflation under the current administration the “biggest economic story” of the Biden-Harris years.

Inflation remained remarkably subdued under the term of former US President Barack Obama, a trend that continued throughout Trump’s four years in the White House. It ranged between 2.9 percent in June 2018 and 0.2 percent in May 2020.

However, both Trump and Biden administrations pumped massive amounts of cash into the economy through two pandemic-related stimulus packages in 2020 and 2021. The

printing of excess money created a [steep rise](#) in consumer prices as inflation hit almost nine percent in June 2022.

### **Shift towards Trump**

Once thought to be a reliable voting bloc for Democrats, many Latinos are reconsidering their loyalties this time around.

"The Latino or the Mexican American vote is a crucial constituency in this state, and it is a rapidly growing percentage of the population (30.7 percent), so its importance is bound to increase over time," David N Gibbs, a history professor at the University of Arizona, told *TRT World*.

"There has been considerable movement of Latinos towards Trump, a matter of enormous concern to Democrats, who long assumed that this was a solid Democratic constituency, which it no longer is."

Inflation is hitting hard in capital Phoenix and its sprawling suburbs, home to nearly 60 percent of Arizona's voting population. Many voters feel overlooked despite the Biden administration's claims of job growth and infrastructure investments.

"Matters of the pocket are real," Sanchez said. "It's about whether you can fill your gas tank without thinking twice."

### **Immigration casts a long shadow**

Immigration also looms large in Arizona, home to the Grand Canyon, especially with its proximity to the Mexican border. This issue is particularly nuanced for Latino voters.

"A lot of people assume we're all for open borders," Sanchez said. "But not everyone feels that way. Some of us think there should be limits. It's about protecting jobs and keeping things safe."

This shifting political landscape reflects a broader trend. Trump's appeal now extends beyond white working-class voters to include a diverse coalition of Latinos who feel neglected by the political establishment.

"The shift isn't just about race. It's also about class," noted Gibbs, who is also the author of "Revolt of the Rich: How the Politics of the 1970s Widened America's Class Divide".

"One may question whether Trump's policies are likely to benefit working people — as opposed to the very wealthy — but his growing popularity among blue-collar workers is well established.

"When the Trump phenomenon first emerged in 2016, commentators often spoke about the 'white working-class voters' who supported Trump. But increasingly, it is multi-racial working-class voters who support him, no longer just whites," Gibbs added.



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[Trump says Harris 'destroyed our country' in New York rally](#)

### **A battleground state**

Once a Republican stronghold, Arizona is now a battleground state.

According to the [Marist Arizona Poll](#), Trump leads Harris among Latino voters in Arizona.

"Trump, though, carried white voters in 2020, and Biden carried Latino voters by more than twenty points. Arizona's gender gap is more than three times what it was in the 2020 Exit Poll."

According to the survey by the Marist Institute for Public Opinion, "Trump (53 percent) has opened up a 7-point lead against Harris (46 percent) among Latino voters. In 2020, Biden (61 percent) carried Latino voters by 24 points."

Aware of the challenge, Harris and her running mate Tim Walz are set to revisit Phoenix on Thursday, less than five days before the elections.

The Democratic ticket for president will be holding a *"When We Vote We Win"* rally in Phoenix on October 31, according to her campaign.

Adrian Palmer, a voter in Tucson, Arizona, shared his thoughts with *TRT World*: "I'm voting for Harris because, as a teacher, I see the pressing issues in our educational system every day.

"What truly appeals to me about Harris is her commitment to real change. I'm ready for a new approach in education."

Palmer said teachers in Arizona are underpaid and schools are chronically underfunded.

"While I believe Governor Katie Hobbs is doing a good job of engaging parents in their children's future, significant gaps exist. Harris, in my view, is best equipped to tackle these challenges head-on and bring about the solutions we desperately need," Palmer added.

Amid shifting political allegiances, concerns about economic stability remain at the forefront of voter sentiment.

"I suspect that the key issue driving this move towards Trump is the economy, the perception that living standards were higher during Trump's presidency than during the Biden-Harris presidency. So, Trump is getting credit for that," historian Gibbs said.

If the trend towards Trump holds, it may signal a reconfiguration of American politics — a shift in the Hispanic vote that will echo far beyond 2024.

"Many Latinos lean culturally conservative, and this, too, benefits Trump. The Democratic (party) tendency to emphasise culture war issues does not always play well in Latino communities," he added.

Sanchez remains uncertain about the outcome. "I suspect that Trump may win here," he said. "But who knows?"

**SOURCE: TRT WORLD**

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