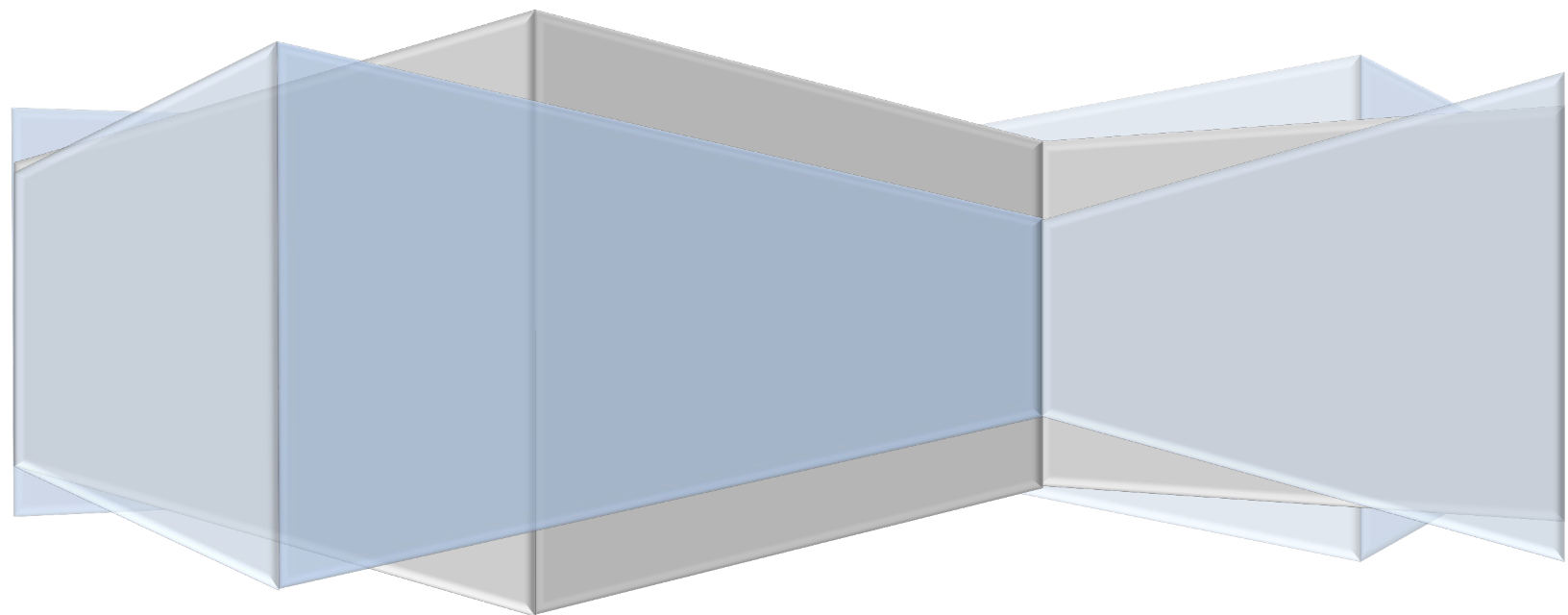


California Secretary of State

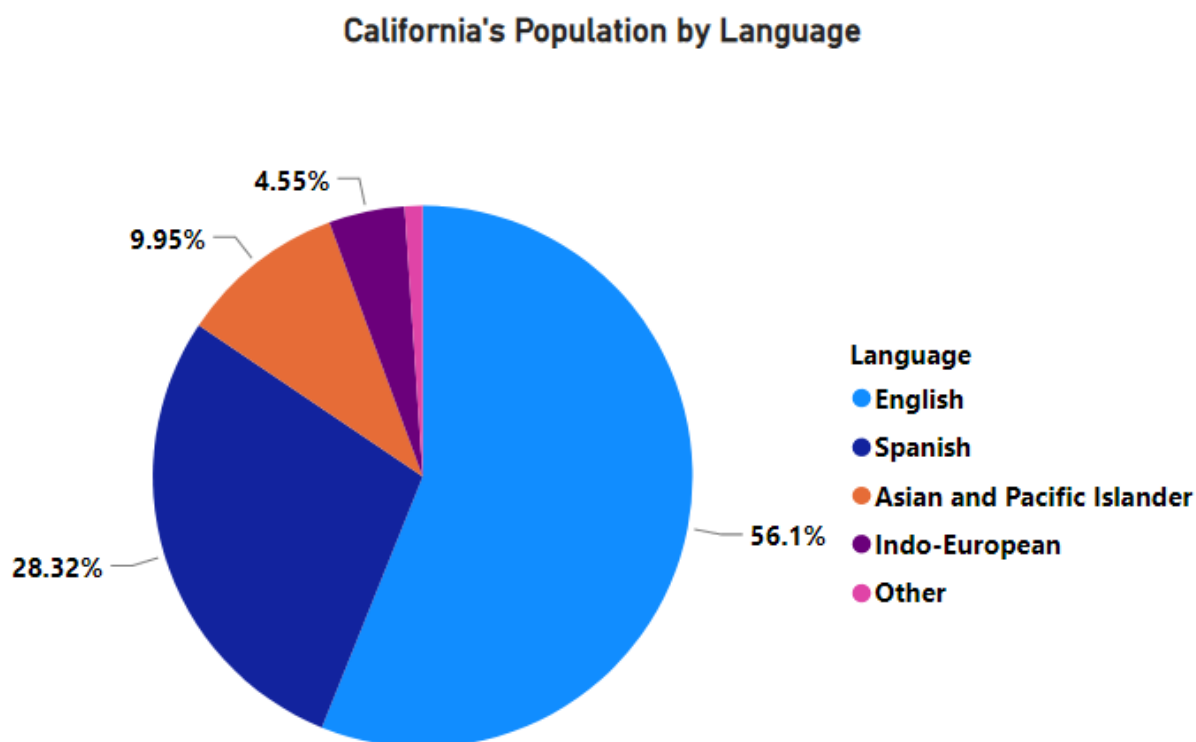
Bilingual Poll Worker Recruitment Report

November 3, 2020, General Election



Introduction & Methods

California is one of the most diverse states in the country. California ranks first in the United States for the number of voting age people that speak a language other than English. According to the 2020 U.S. Census data, California has over 16 million Californians who speak a language other than English, which is 43% of the total population in the state. Spanish accounts for over 10 million (28% total population), Asian and Pacific Islander languages account for 3.5 million (10% total population), Indo-European languages account for 1.7 million (4.5% total population), and other languages accounts for 400,000 (1.1% total population). According to this data, California has a multilingual population that is greater than the next nearest state, Texas, by 10 million speakers. Serving such a large multilingual population poses a unique challenge for California's elections officials each election.



*Shown above: Language by Population in California (source [Language Spoken at home](#), U.S. Census)

California's elections language access requirements are derived from both federal and state statute. State Elections Code section 14201 and the Federal Voting Rights Act Section 203 laws recognize and govern the supported languages for elections in each county. To measure the support for language access at the polls, the California Secretary of State provided a survey to county elections officials regarding their recruitment efforts of bilingual poll workers for the November 3, 2020, General Election. The survey, titled

“Bilingual Poll Workers,” captured the number of bilingual poll workers who were recruited by county officials, how many served on election day, the number of legal permanent residents that served, and the number of bilingual student volunteers. Additionally, the survey included a section for counties to provide details about other language access services provided at voting locations.

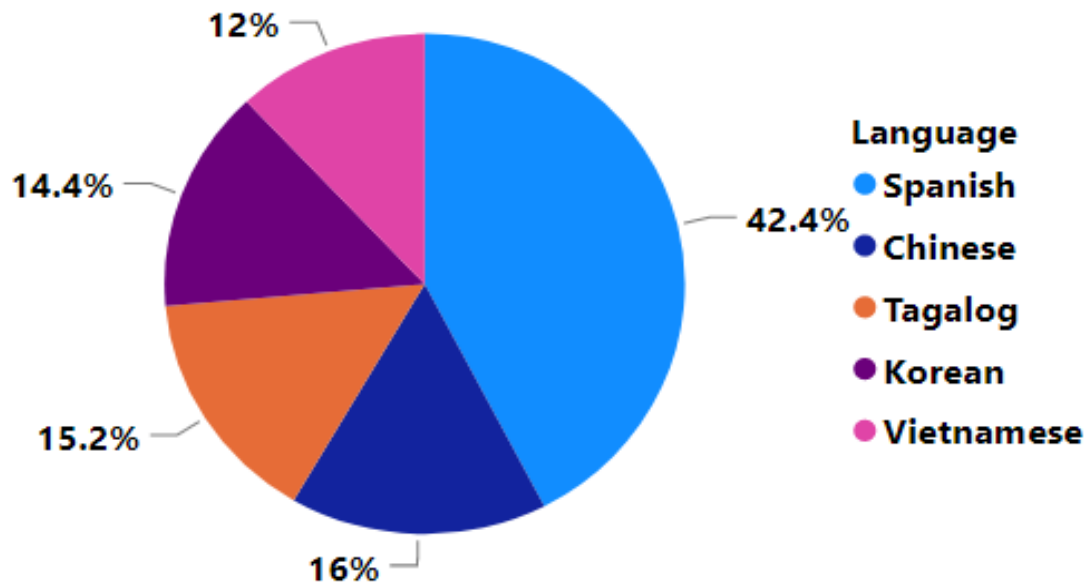
Survey Data

This report provides a summary analysis of answers provided by county elections officials in response to a survey conducted by the Secretary of State. In addition to releasing this report, the Secretary of State is releasing the survey responses provided by county elections officials. The survey may contain some blank fields. This is intentional as the survey was built to provide enough space to accommodate up to 12 languages per survey. This was adequate for all but Los Angeles and Santa Clara counties. Their answers were divided into languages they are mandated by law to serve and those they are not mandated to serve.

Bilingual Poll Worker Survey Results and Analysis

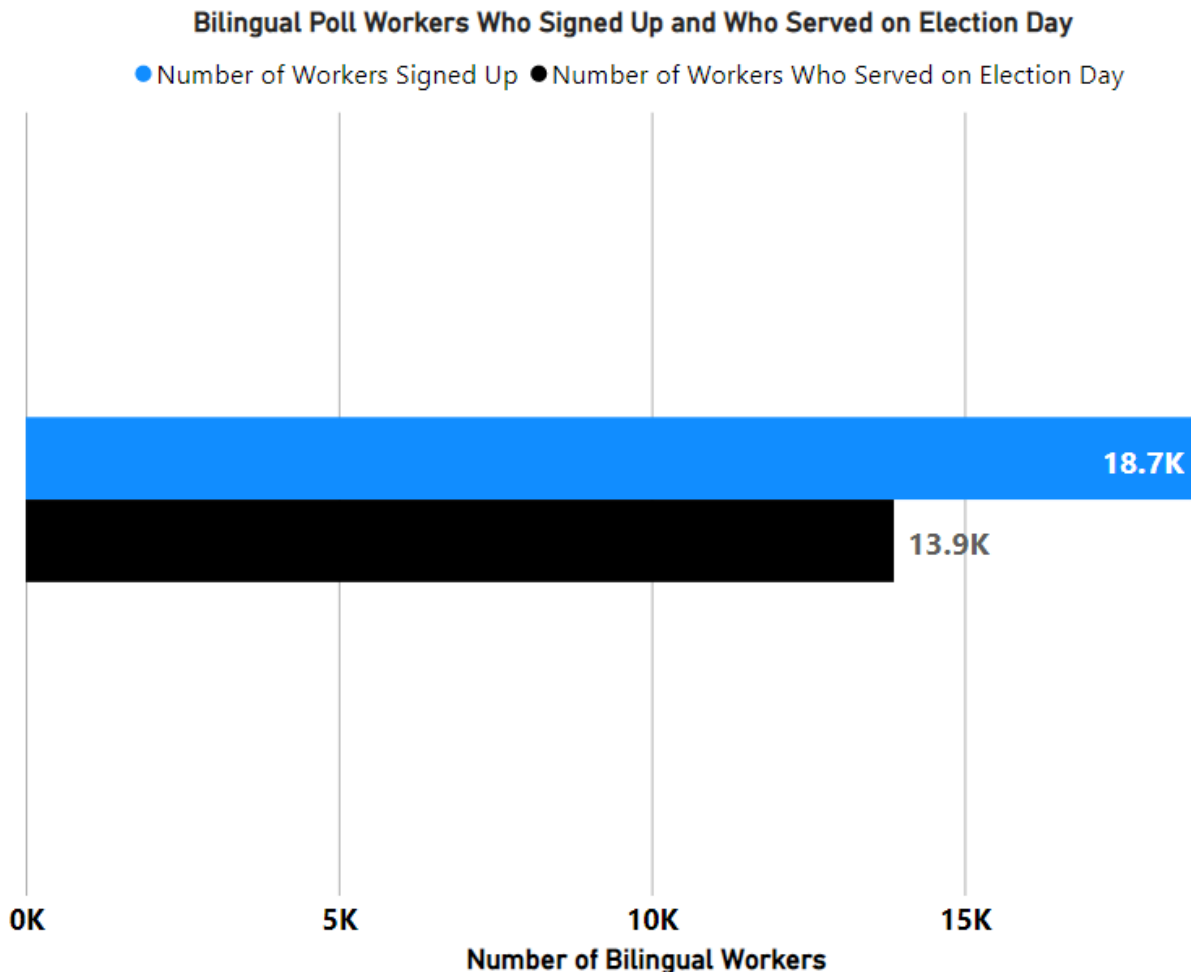
All counties were required to provide their bilingual poll worker survey response to the Secretary of State. The responses indicate that 53 counties provided support for over 30 languages at polling places. The remaining five counties communicated they identify as vote by mail only or were not under a mandate to provide such language support. The top 5 languages reported from all counties were the following: Spanish (53 counties), Filipino (Tagalog or Ilocano; 26 counties), Chinese (19 counties), Korean (18 counties), and Vietnamese (15 counties). Spanish was the top supported language; this can be attributed to California’s large Spanish-speaking population making up 28% of California’s overall population ([Languages spoken at home](#), US Census).

Top 5 Supported Languages



*Shown above: The top 5 languages supported throughout California

All 53 counties attempted to recruit bilingual poll workers to support voters at the polls. The responses indicate a total of 18,720 poll workers signed up to volunteer for Election Day. In addition, the survey requested counties to list the total number of bilingual volunteers who served on Election Day. The total number of bilingual volunteers who served on Election Day was 13,873. This means that 74% percent of the recruited bilingual poll workers who signed up ended up serving at the polls. Comparing the numbers from our previous Bilingual Survey report data in 2018, there was an 8% decrease in the number of volunteers who served as a poll worker after being recruited. Circumstantial evidence suggests that this may be due to concerns about COVID-19.



*Shown above: The total number of workers who signed up and who served.

In addition, the California Elections Code permits county elections officials to recruit bilingual legal permanent residents and students to volunteer as translators. The counties reported a total of 878 legal permanent residents who served in the election. Additionally, there was a total of 2,742 bilingual students who also served. From 2018, there was 984 legal permanent residents and 5,531 student poll workers who signed up to volunteer for the elections. In comparison, there is a slight 5% decrease from the number of permanent residents and a decrease of 51% of student poll workers. As aforementioned, this decrease may be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic.

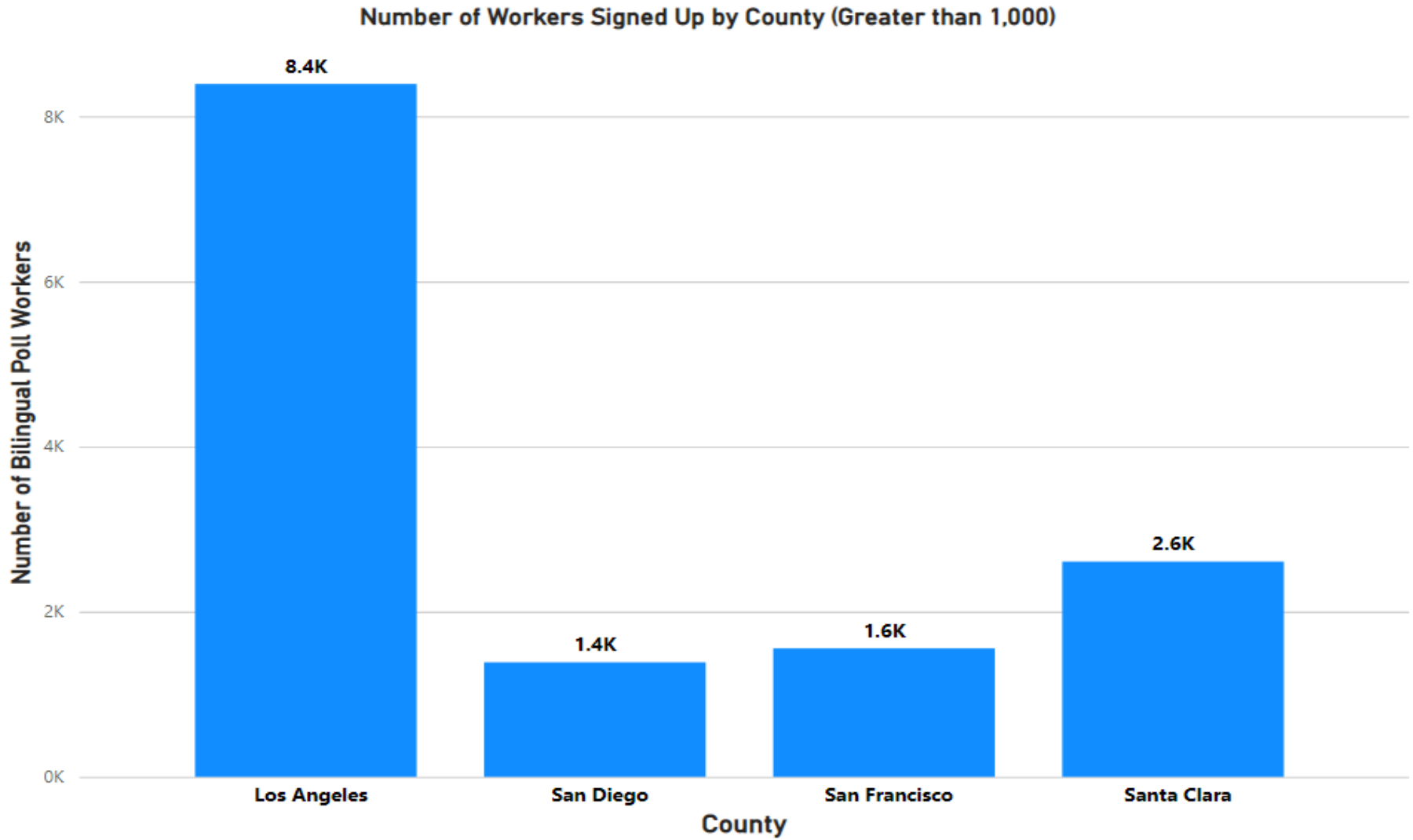
Lastly, the survey included a section for counties to provide details regarding the technology they deployed to help facilitate the verbal translation assistance. For example, counties reported using technology such as iPads that had a direct communication via FaceTime with a translator to assist non-English speaking voters. These tools helped voters connect to a 3rd party translator for assistance. As such, 22

county officials reported using telephonic translation technology to assist voters at polling locations. In 2018, there were a total of 18 counties who provided translation technology. By comparison, there was a 22% increase in counties who adopted translation technology to assist voters in 2020. In addition, the California Secretary of State also provides counties with translation assistance. From the responses gathered, 10 counties reported using the telephonic translation services provided by the state.

Footnotes

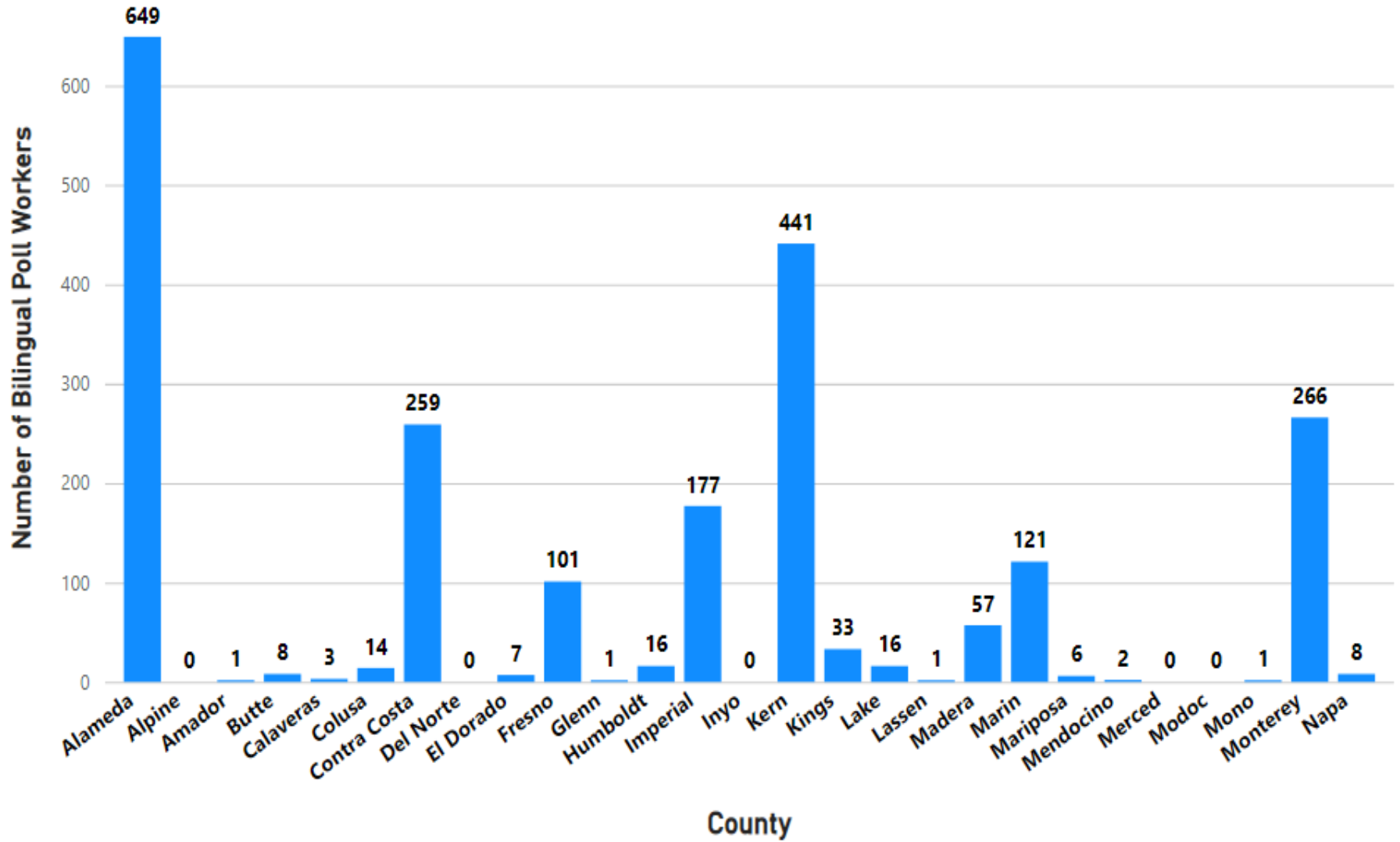
1. [Language Spoken at Home for California](#), United States Census Bureau
2. California Elections Code section 12303 (as amended by Stats. 1996, Ch. 725, Sec. 19)
3. Federal Voting Rights Act (VRA) Section 203 and California Elections Code section 14201
4. California Elections Code section 12302 (as amended by Stats. 2015, Ch. 150, Sec. 1)

Survey Responses Data Visualization

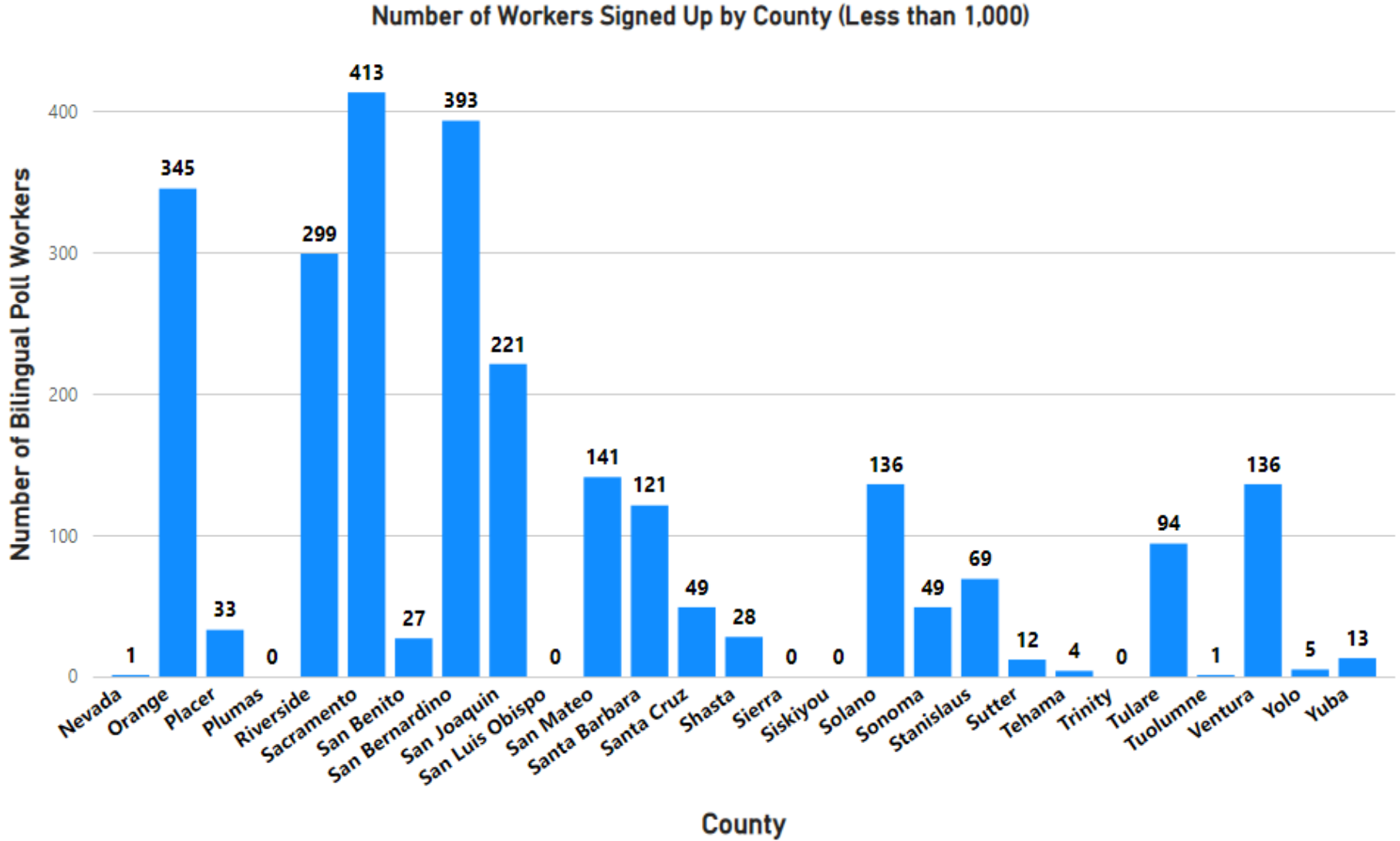


*Counties with less than 1,000 bilingual workers are located on pages 9 and 10.

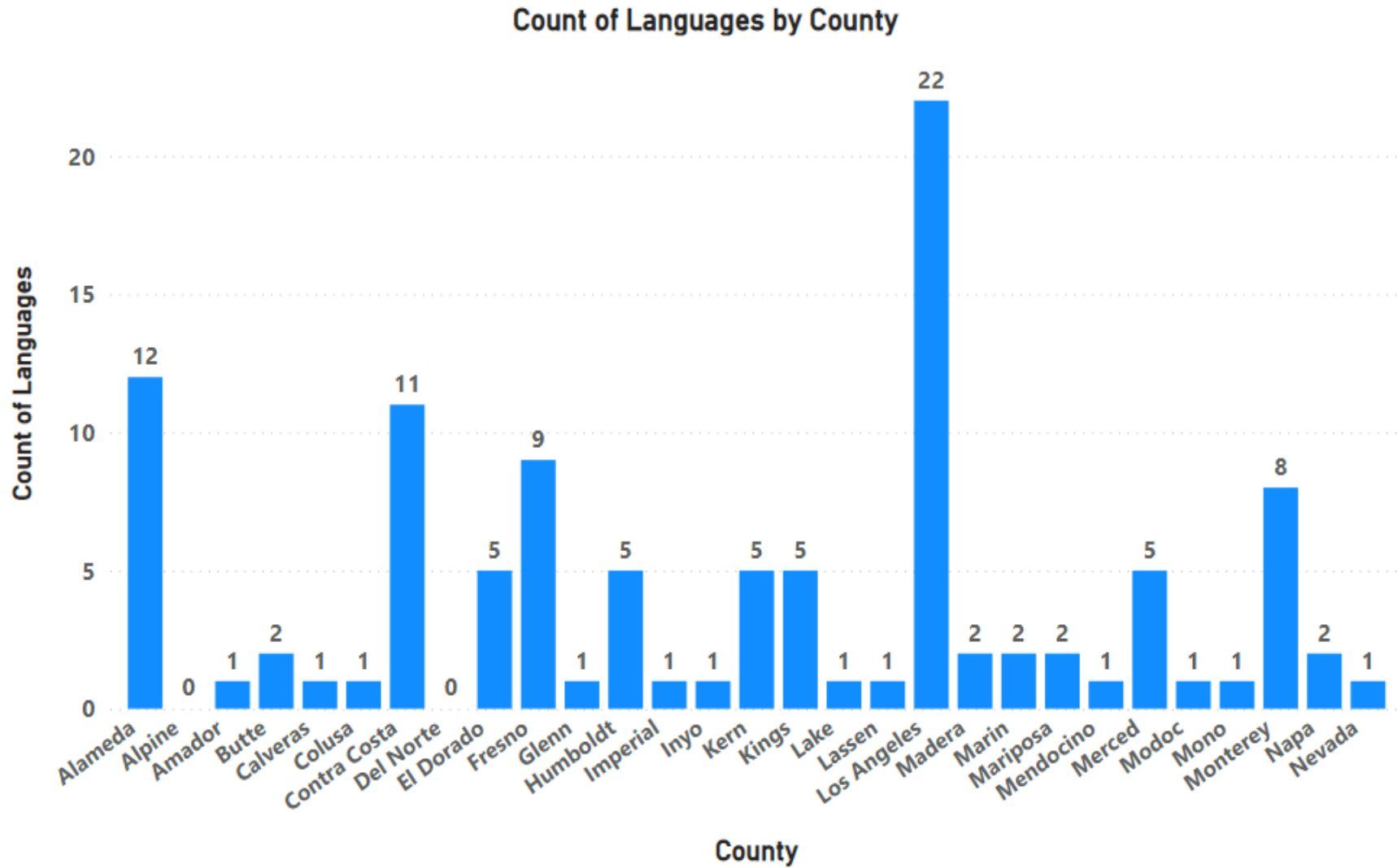
Number of Workers Signed Up by County (Less than 1,000)



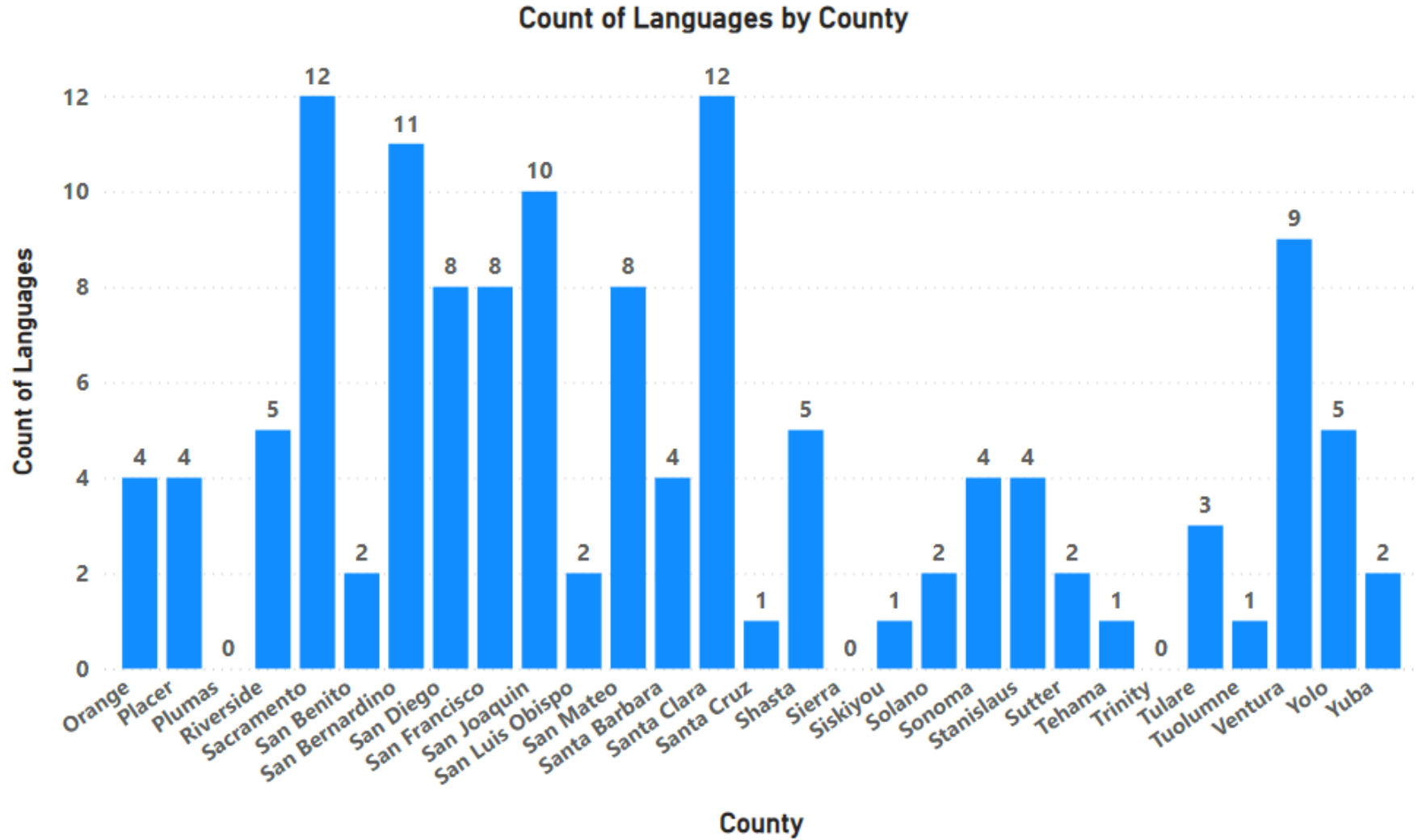
*Counties above 1,000 workers (Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, and Santa Clara) are listed on page 8.



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