

## Quick Facts about Young Voters in North Carolina: The Presidential Election Year 2008

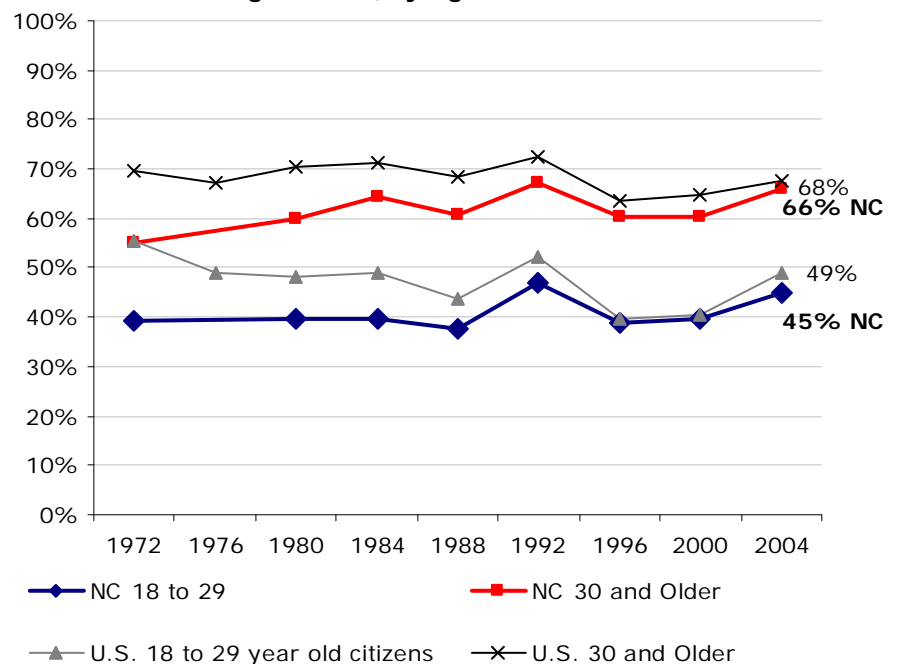
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October 2008

This year's general election follows a primary season in which more than 6.5 million young people under the age of 30 participated. At least 15 percent of North Carolina citizens under the age of 30 participated in the state's Democratic primary.

In the 2004 Presidential election, turnout among 18-to-29 year-olds in North Carolina ranked 40<sup>th</sup> among all states and the District of Columbia in 2004, and was up five percentage points over 2000. Nationally, the youth turnout for the 2008 primaries increased by eight percentage points, from nine percent in 2000 to 17 percent in 2008. However, whether the voter mobilization momentum of 2008 primary season continues into the general election remains unpredictable.

This fact sheet reports the characteristics of young voters for the state of North Carolina, including estimates of the number of young voters and voter turnout rates in 2004 and 2000 for various sub-groups of young people.

**Figure 1: North Carolina Voter Turnout in Presidential Years Among Citizens, by Age**



Source: Author's tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplements, 1972-2004. No 1976 data for NC.

**Table 1: Summary of Young Voters in the State Primary, 2008 and 2000<sup>2</sup>**  
**Youth Turnout, Vote Count, and Vote Share**

	Turnout Rate	Number of youth who voted	Youth as Share of All Voters
2008	15 percent	221,735	14 percent
2000	***	***	***

**Youth Vote Choice by Party**

Democratic Choice	
Clinton	25 percent
Obama	74 percent

**Estimates of Eligible Young Voters, 2008**

In 2008, a Presidential election year, there are an estimated 1.3 million young people in State who are eligible to vote in U.S. elections. Table 2 shows voting statistics for the years 2004 and 2000.<sup>3</sup> North Carolina's youth voter turnout rate was near the bottom of all states in 2004, but it had the 37<sup>th</sup> highest turnout rate among youth in 2000 among all 50 states and the District of Columbia.<sup>4</sup>

**Table 2 – State Voter Turnout Statistics, 2008, 2004, and 2000**

	Young People 18 to 29	Adults 30 and Older
<b>2008</b>		
Number of Citizens Eligible to Vote in 2008	1.3 million	5.2 million
<b>2004</b>		
Number of Votes Cast	600 thousand	3.0 million
Voter Turnout Rate	45 percent	66 percent
Share of all Voters	16 percent	84 percent
<b>2000</b>		
Number of Votes Cast	426 thousand	2.6 million
Voter Turnout Rate	40 percent	60 percent
Share of all Voters	14 percent	86 percent

Source: Authors' Tabulations, Current Population Survey, March Supplement 2008 and November Supplement 2004 and 2000.

## Voter Turnout Rates in 2004 and 2000 Among Eligible Young Citizens

Table 3 displays voter turnout rates for various groups of young people in 2004 and 2000 in North Carolina. 2004 was a year of high voter turnout for most youth groups in North Carolina relative to 2000. But relative to the nation as a whole in 2004, youth in North Carolina were less electorally engaged.

**Table 3 – State Voter Turnout Rates Among Young Citizens ages 18 to 29, 2004 and 2000**

<b>Voter Turnout Rate Among:</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2000</b>
National Youth Rate	49 percent	40 percent
NC Youth Rate	45 percent	40 percent
NC Registered Voter	73 percent	68 percent
<b><i>Race/Ethnicity</i><sup>5</sup></b>		
White non-Hispanic	45 percent	48 percent
Black non-Hispanic	49 percent	25 percent
Hispanics	***	***
Asian non-Hispanic	***	***
Native American non-Hispanic	***	***
<b><i>Gender</i></b>		
Women	50 percent	43 percent
Men	40 percent	36 percent
<b><i>Educational Attainment</i></b>		
Less than High School	14 percent	16 percent
High School	39 percent	27 percent
Some College	54 percent	46 percent
BA or more	60 percent	75 percent
<b><i>College Experience</i></b>		
No experience	31 percent	23 percent
At least some experience	56 percent	55 percent
<b><i>Marital Status</i></b>		
Single Men	44 percent	34 percent
Single Women	50 percent	41 percent
Married Men	***	***
Married Women	49 percent	51 percent

Source: Authors' Tabulations from the 2004 and 2000 November Supplements of the Current Population Survey. '\*\*\*' indicates a sample size is too small to produce a reliable estimate.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> We thank Mark Hugo Lopez for his 2006 fact sheet series on which this fact sheet is based. We also thank Peter Levine, Abby Kiesa, and Kei Kawashima-Ginsberg for comments on previous drafts of this fact sheet.

<sup>2</sup> The youth turnout rate present in Table 1 is the *overall* turnout rate for the state. Because no Republican exit polls were conducted in NC, the numerator for overall turnout rate includes **only** young voters who participated in the Democratic primary. The denominator includes ALL eligible young voters in the states of North Carolina (Democrats, Republicans and Independents). Thus the turnout rate does not reflect the full participation of young people in the state's primaries.

<sup>3</sup> For a full discussion of the different ways voter turnout can be calculated please see "CIRCLE Working Paper 35: The Youth Voter 2004: With a Historical Look at Youth Voting Patterns 1972-2004." All voter turnout estimates presented in this fact sheet are calculated for U.S. citizens only, and according to the "Census Citizen Method" described in CIRCLE Working Paper 35.

<sup>4</sup> For state-by-state comparisons of voter turnout rates, see the CIRCLE fact sheet "Youth Voter Turnout in the States during the 2004 Presidential and the 2002 Midterm Elections."

<sup>5</sup> We have defined racial/ethnic groups in the CPS November Supplements by defining anyone with Hispanic background as Latino; individuals who cite a single non-Hispanic race or ethnicity are identified as non-Hispanic white, African American, Asian American or Native American.