

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

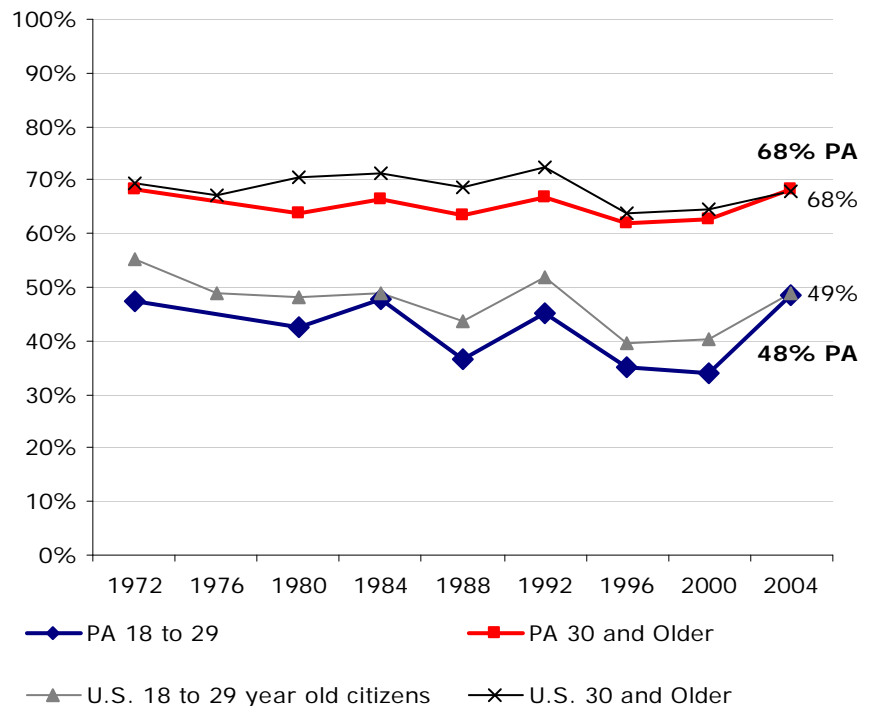
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This year's general election follows a primary season in which more than 6.5 million young people under the age of 30 participated. At least 14 percent of Pennsylvania citizens under the age of 30 participated in the state's Democratic primary.

In 2004, turnout among 18-to-29 year-olds in Pennsylvania ranked 32<sup>nd</sup> among all states and the District of Columbia in 2004, and was up 14 percentage points over 2000. Whether the voter mobilization momentum of 2008 primary season—which nationally witnessed an eight percentage point increase in youth voter turnout from nine percent in 2000 to 17 percent in 2008—continues into the general election remains unpredictable.

This fact sheet reports the characteristics of young voters for the state of Pennsylvania, 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: Pennsylvania 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 PA.

**Table 1: Summary of Young Voters in the Pennsylvania Primary, 2008 and 2000  
Youth Turnout, Vote Count, and Vote Share**

	Turnout Rate	Number of youth who voted	Youth as Share of All Voters
2008	14 percent	276,065	12 percent
2000	***	***	***

**Youth Vote Choice by Party**

Democratic Choice

Clinton	39 percent
Obama	61 percent

**Estimates of Eligible  
Young Voters, 2008**

In 2008, a Presidential election year, there are an estimated 1.9 million young people in Pennsylvania who are eligible to vote in U.S. elections. Table 2 shows voting statistics for the years 2004 and 2000.<sup>2</sup> Pennsylvania's youth voter turnout rate was near the middle of all states in 2004, but it had the 45<sup>th</sup> highest turnout rate among youth in 2000 among all 50 states and the District of Columbia.<sup>3</sup>

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

	Young People 18 to 29	Adults 30 and Older
<b>2008</b>		
Number of Citizens	1.9 million	7.4 million
Eligible to Vote in 2008		
<b>2004</b>		
Number of Votes Cast	808 thousand	5.0 million
Voter Turnout Rate	48 percent	68 percent
Share of all Voters	14 percent	86 percent
<b>2000</b>		
Number of Votes Cast	539 thousand	4.4 million
Voter Turnout Rate	34 percent	63 percent
Share of all Voters	11 percent	89 percent

Source: Author's 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 Pennsylvania. 2004 was a year of high voter turnout for all youth groups in Pennsylvania relative to 2000. But relative to the nation as a whole in 2004, youth in Pennsylvania were less politically engaged.

**Table 3 – Pennsylvania 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
PA Youth Rate	48 percent	34 percent
PA Registered Voter	83 percent	66 percent
<b><i>Race/Ethnicity<sup>4</sup></i></b>		
White NH	49 percent	34 percent
Black NH	48 percent	38 percent
Hispanics	***	***
Asian NH	***	***
Native American NH	***	***
<b><i>Gender</i></b>		
Women	52 percent	36 percent
Men	45 percent	32 percent
<b><i>Educational Attainment</i></b>		
Less than High School	23 percent	13 percent
High School	31 percent	25 percent
Some College	58 percent	39 percent
BA or more	71 percent	57 percent
<b><i>College Experience</i></b>		
No experience	29 percent	22 percent
At least some experience	63 percent	45 percent
<b><i>Marital Status</i></b>		
Single Men	42 percent	34 percent
Single Women	52 percent	34 percent
Married Men	58 percent	23 percent
Married Women	51 percent	39 percent

Source: Author's 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>2</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>3</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 2002 Midterm Elections."

<sup>4</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.