

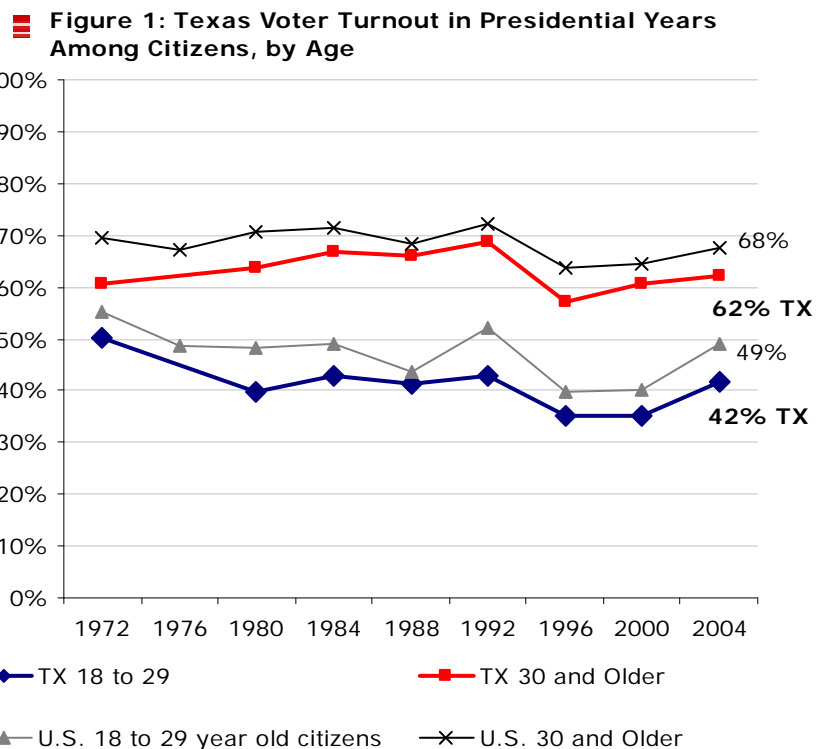
Quick Facts about Young Voters in Texas: The Presidential Election Year 2008

By Karlo Barrios Marcelo and Emily Hoban Kirby¹
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. Moreover, in the 2008 Texas primary youth voter turnout nearly tripled compared to the 2000 primary.²

In 2004, turnout among 18-to-29 year-olds in Texas ranked 46th among all states and the District of Columbia in 2004, and was up seven percentage points over 2000. Whether the voter mobilization momentum of 2008 primary season—which witnessed an eleven percentage point increase in youth voter turnout from six 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 Texas, including estimates of the number of young voters and voter turnout rates in 2004 and 2000 for various sub-groups of young people.



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

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

	<u>Turnout Rate</u>	<u>Number of youth who voted</u>	<u>Youth as Share of All Voters</u>
2008	17 percent	620,384	15 percent
2000	6 percent	172,228	9 percent

Young Voters by Party

		<u>2008</u>	<u>2000</u>
Democratic	Number of Primary Participants	449,173	70,820
	Share of Primary Participants	16 percent	9 percent
Republican	Number of Primary Participants	171,211	101,408
	Share of Primary Participants	13 percent	9 percent

Youth Vote Choice by Party

	<u>Democratic Choice</u>	<u>Republican Choice</u>
Clinton	42 percent	Huckabee 43 percent
Obama	58 percent	McCain 44 percent
		Paul 9 percent

Estimates of Eligible Young Voters, 2008

In 2008, a Presidential election year, there are an estimated 3.5 million young people in Texas who are eligible to vote in U.S. elections. Table 2 shows voting statistics for the years 2004 and 2000.³ Texas's youth voter turnout rate was near the bottom of all states and the District of Columbia in 2004 and 2000.⁴

Table 2 – Texas Voter Turnout Statistics, 2008, 2004, and 2000

	<u>Young People 18 to 29</u>	<u>Adults 30 and Older</u>
2008		
Number of Citizens Eligible to Vote in 2008	3.5 million	11.2 million
2004		
Number of Votes Cast	1.3 million	6.6 million
Voter Turnout Rate	42 percent	62 percent
Share of all Voters	17 percent	83 percent
2000		
Number of Votes Cast	1.1 million	5.9 million
Voter Turnout Rate	35 percent	60 percent
Share of all Voters	16 percent	84 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 Texas. 2004 was a year of high voter turnout for all youth groups in Texas relative to 2000. But relative to the nation as a whole in 2004, youth in Texas were less politically engaged.

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

Voter Turnout Rate Among:	2004	2000
National Youth Rate	49 percent	40 percent
TX Youth Rate	42 percent	35 percent
TX Registered Voter	72 percent	61 percent
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>⁵		
White NH	49 percent	37 percent
Black NH	46 percent	46 percent
Hispanics	30 percent	27 percent
Asian NH	***	***
Native American NH	***	***
<i>Gender</i>		
Women	47 percent	39 percent
Men	36 percent	32 percent
<i>Educational Attainment</i>		
Less than High School	18 percent	13 percent
High School	35 percent	25 percent
Some College	48 percent	42 percent
BA or more	66 percent	68 percent
<i>College Experience</i>		
No experience	29 percent	21 percent
At least some experience	53 percent	49 percent
<i>Marital Status</i>		
Single Men	38 percent	31 percent
Single Women	48 percent	40 percent
Married Men	32 percent	34 percent
Married Women	45 percent	40 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

¹ 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.

² Comparisons to other caucuses and primaries must be made with caution, because turnout is affected by the date of the primaries and by the nature of the Democratic and Republican Presidential campaigns, which are different in every state. In the case of Florida, the Democratic primary was not formally contested, and that fact may have lowered turnout.

³ 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.

⁴ 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."

⁵ 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.