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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	i
List of Figures and Tables	iii
Trends in Youth Voter Turnout—More Participation	1
Rising Voter Turnout Among Young People	1
Participation is up for all groups	2
Voter Turnout Rates by Subgroup	4
Demographics of Young Voters	10
Young Voters More Diverse	10
Voters and Religion—Unchanged Since 2000	11
Politics of the Youth Vote	16
Vote Choice	16
Economy/Jobs and Iraq War are Top Issues for Young Voters	18
State-by-State Facts and Tables	19
Voter Turnout by State	20
Voter Registration by State	22
Presidential Vote Choice by State	24
Appendix	26
Methodology	27
Calculating Voter Turnout	27
Defining Race and Ethnicity	27
Data Sources	27
Polling Sources	28
About CIRCLE and Rock the Vote	29
Acknowledgements	29
References	30
Notes	31



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2008 elections are shaping up to be monumental for young voters. After increasing their turnout to the polls in 2004 and 2006, young adults have voted in record numbers in the primaries and caucuses of the 2008 cycle.

All eyes are now on young voters in 2008. But who is the “youth vote” and what is underlying this trend of growing electoral participation? This paper is a resource for policymakers, journalists, nonprofits, and political campaigns looking to better understand the political attitudes and behaviors of today’s 18- to 29-year-olds.

Today’s young adults differ from their counterparts in the 1990s. After steady declines in youth electoral participation since 1972 (save for a one-time surge in 1992), the last two election cycles (’06 midterm and ’04 presidential) saw increases in the young voter turnout rate, signaling a more engaged young adult population. This change, coupled with advancements in communications and Internet technology, and reinvigorated get-out-the-vote efforts targeted at young people, were early signs that young people would be more involved than ever in the 2008 election. Now, in 2008, evidence suggests that young people are paying attention to this election cycle at levels that are much higher than past elections and as high as their adult counterparts (Rock the Vote 2007), and the first several contests of 2008 bear this out as well. Compared to 2004, young adults’ turnout tripled in the 2008 Iowa caucuses and nearly tripled in the New Hampshire primaries.

There are many encouraging signs for the youth vote in the run-up to ’08. In addition to the surges in turnout in the last two election cycles, when looking more closely at this trend, we find that young voter turnout increased in 2004 for all demographics of young people over 2000. That means that young adults from all walks of life—from working college students to the unemployed, from Latinos to Asian-Americans—increased their turnout in 2004. To be sure, differences remain among sub-groups of young people, but the point here is truly remarkable—more young people, regardless of who they are, voted in 2004 relative to 2000.

This increase in youth electoral participation is the result of many factors. First, like any other voter demographic, the context around an election affects the youth vote. Highly interesting elections garner much attention in the media and among voters. Specifically, contested elections (at any level), ballot initiatives, and candidates focused on issues related to young people are three ingredients which make for interesting elections to young voters and subsequently lead them to the polls. Second, the increase in get-out-the-vote and registration campaigns aided the increases in the youth vote in 2004 and 2006, due in part to activities of political campaign, partisan groups, and non-partisan organizations. The result is that young voters and political candidates are engaging each other on the campaign trail and through the ballot box.



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## Key Facts About Youth Electoral Participation

- Young voter turnout rose in both 2004 and 2006.
- In the 2004 presidential election, voter turnout increased for all groups of young people.
- Economy/Jobs and the Iraq War are the top two issues for young voters.
- Young voters are more ethnically and racially diverse today than 30 years ago, and are more diverse than their adult counterparts.
- An estimated 44 million 18- to 29-year-olds will be eligible to vote in 2008, constituting one-fifth (21 percent) of the voting eligible population.

## Prospects for the 2008 Presidential Election

Young adults are on track to show up in strong numbers again in 2008. According to polling, approximately three quarters of young people were following the election back in the fall of 2007, when it was still a year away. Polling consistently shows that young people are expressing more interest in this election at this point in the cycle than in 2004 or 2000. Political campaign strategists are already beginning to recognize the importance of the youth vote in swaying elections and are increasingly creating programs specifically to persuade and mobilize young people.

While no one can predict what the young voter turnout rate will be in the 2008 election, the 2004 and 2006 turnout increases, combined with an exciting election year, are signs for optimism. Given that, campaigns and candidates would be smart to place significant resources into reaching out to young voters. Outreach from candidates in the 2008 early primaries and caucuses have born out that this is a successful strategy to win elections. In 2008, all eyes are on the youth vote and signs indicate that the candidates who successfully mobilize young voters this year will be the candidates on the victory podium come November.

*This report serves to educate policymakers, journalists, and political campaigns about the youth vote. In this report, specifically, we present information on trends in youth voter turnout, the demographics of young voters, the politics of the youth vote, and state-by-state facts.*



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## List of Figures

Figure 1a/b: Voter Turnout and Registration Rates	1
Figure 2: First-Time Voters	2
Figure 3: Percentage Point Change in Voter Turnout by Subgroup	3
Figure 4a/b: Voter Turnout Rates by Educational Attainment	4
Figure 5a/b: Voter Turnout Rates by Student Status	5
Figure 6a/b: Voter Turnout Rates by Race and Ethnicity	6
Figure 7a/b: Voter Turnout Rates by Gender	7
Figure 8a/b: Voter Turnout Rates by Region	8
Figure 9a/b: Voter Turnout Rates by Urbanicity	8
Figure 10a/b: Voter Turnout Rates by Marital Status	9
Figure 11a/b: Race and Ethnicity of Young Voters	10
Figure 12a/b: Voters' Choice	11
Figure 13a/b: Voters' Political Ideology	12
Figure 14a/b: Voters' Political Party Identification	16
Figure 15a/b: Voters' Religious Service Attendance	17
Figure 16a/b: Voters' Religious Identification	17

## List of Tables

Table 1: Votes Cast	1
Table 2: Voter Turnout by Age Group	2
Table 3: Demographics of 18- to 29-Year-Old Voters	14-15
Table 4: Top Ranked Issues for Youth	18
Table 5: Voter Turnout Rate by State	20-21
Table 6: Voter Registration Rates by State	22-23
Table 7: Presidential Vote Choice by State	24-25



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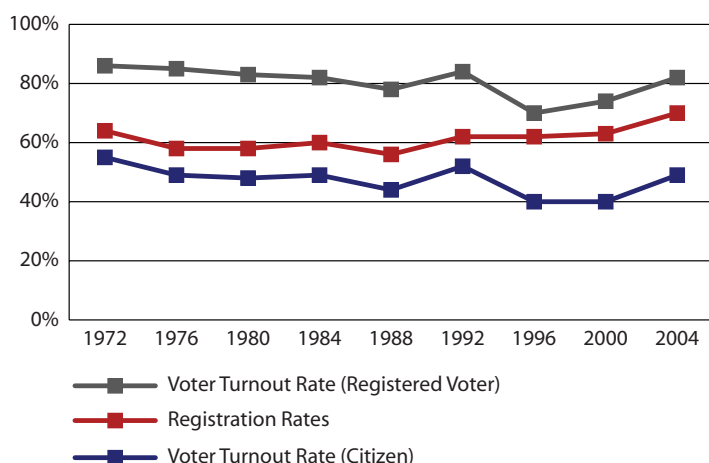
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# TRENDS IN YOUNG VOTER TURNOUT—MORE PARTICIPATION

## Rising Voter Turnout Among Young People

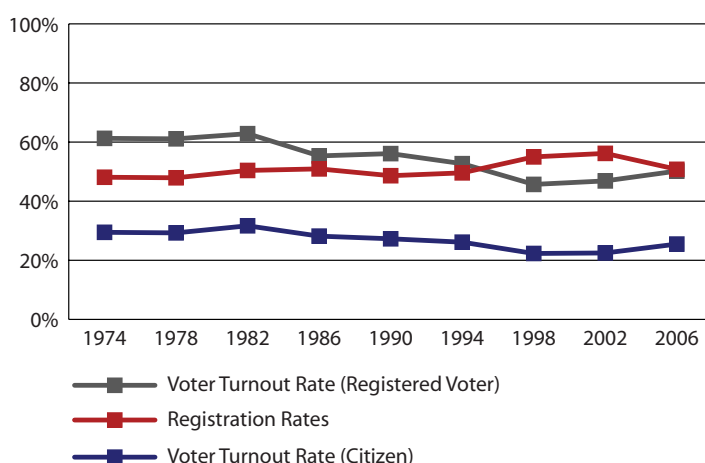
Since 1972 when 18- to 20-year-olds first won the right to vote, the voter turnout rate among 18- to 29-year-olds has fallen from a high of 55 percent to a low of 40 percent in 2000. This is true no matter how the voter turnout rate is measured (Levine and Lopez 2002).<sup>1</sup> However, for the past two election cycles (2004 and 2006), young voter turnout has gone up sharply, breaking with the declining trend since 1972. In 2004 an estimated 20.1 million young people voted (see Table 1), and the young voter turnout rate was up 9 percentage points from 2000 to 49 percent; similarly, turnout in 2006 was up 3 percentage points from 2002 to 25 percent (see Table 2). Furthermore, voter turnout among registered voters was up in 2004 and 2006 compared to the previous elections of 2000 and 2002, suggesting a greater amount of young voter mobilization than had been the case in past election cycles.

**Figure 1A: Voter Turnout and Registration Rates (Ages 18-29) in Presidential Elections, 1972-2004**



Source: Authors' tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, 1972-2004.

**Figure 1B: Voter Turnout and Registration Rates (Ages 18-29) in Midterm Elections, 1974-2006**



Source: Authors' tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, 1974-2006.

**Table 1 – Number of Votes Cast by 18- to 29-Year-Olds**

	Presidential Elections		Midterm Elections	
	2000	2004	2002	2006
Number of Votes Cast	15.9 million	20.1 million	8.9 million	10.8 million
Eligible Voters	39.3 million	41.1 million	39.6 million	41.9 million

Source: Authors' tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, 2000-2006.



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While all age groups in the past two election cycles have increased their voter participation, young people saw the sharpest increase in their voter turnout rates.

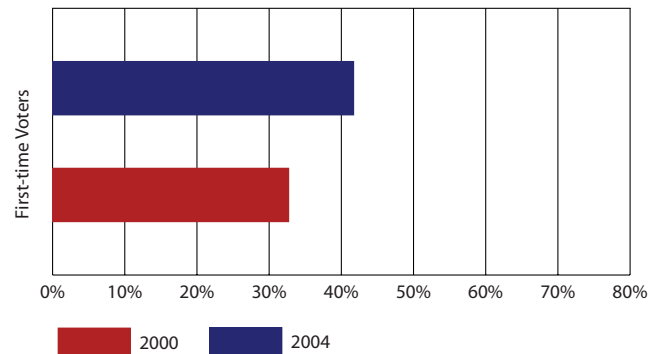
**Table 2 – Voter Turnout Among Citizens, by Age Group**

	Presidential Elections			Midterm Elections		
	2000	2004	% Point Increase (2000 to 2004)	2002	2006	% Point Increase (2002 to 2006)
Ages 18-29	40%	49%	9 % points	22%	25%	3 % points
Ages 30-44	59%	62%	4 % points	42%	43%	1 % point
Ages 45-59	67%	70%	3 % points	55%	56%	1 % point
Ages 60-74	72%	73%	1 % point	64%	64%	1 % point
Ages 75+	67%	69%	2 % points	60%	61%	1 % point

Source: Authors' tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, 2000-2006.

According to National Exit Polls, almost two-thirds of all first-time voters in the 2004 presidential election were young people, up from 62 percent in 2000. Empirical evidence suggests that once someone votes, returning to vote a second time is easier, and can lead to a lifetime habit of voting (Plutzer 2002). Naturally, a large proportion of young people are first-time voters because many of them are now eligible to vote at the age of 18. See Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Percentage of First-Time Voters in Presidential Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Old Voters**

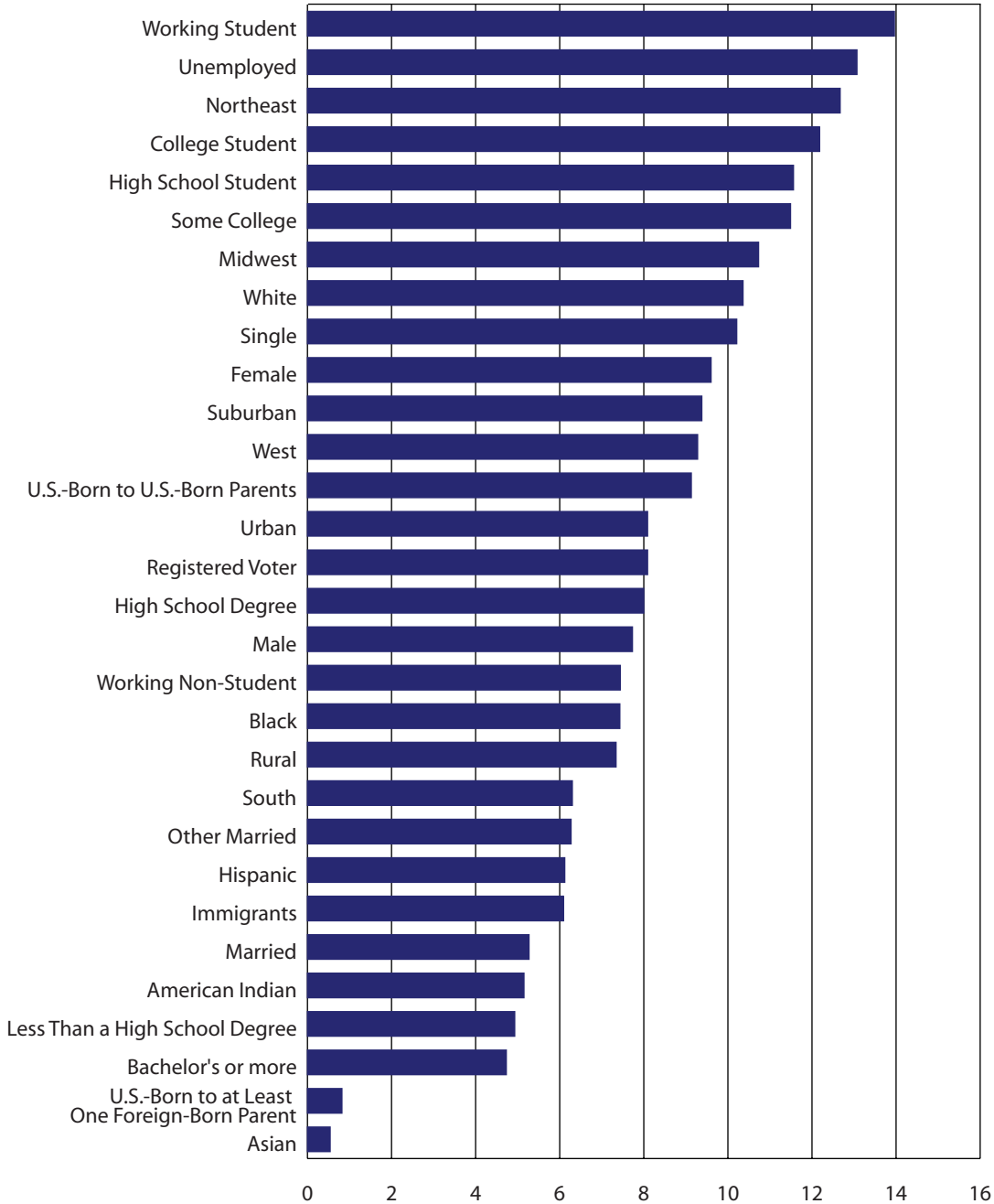


Authors' tabulations from the National Election Pool, Exit Poll, 2000 and 2004.

## Participation is up for all groups

Increased participation among young people in recent elections is not a phenomenon driven by a few demographics groups. Rather, electoral participation among young people was up for all demographic groups in the 2004 presidential election compared to 2000, and the same was nearly true in the 2006 midterm elections (only 4 out of the 34 subgroups showed a drop in turnout between 2002 to 2006). That means that no matter which way you slice the youth demographic, more young people, from all walks of life, participated in the 2004 and 2006 elections. As shown in Figure 3, young voter turnout was up among all groups, with working students, the unemployed, youth from the northeast, college students, and high school students leading all other subgroups. For example, working students increased their turnout rate by 14 percentage points in 2004 over 2000. The smallest increases in voter turnout rates between 2000 and 2004 were among Asian-Americans and U.S.-born youth born to at least one foreign-born parent.

**Figure 3: Percentage Point Change in Voter Turnout Among 18- to 29-Year-Old Citizens from 2000-2004, by Subgroup**



Source: Authors' tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, 2000 and 2004.



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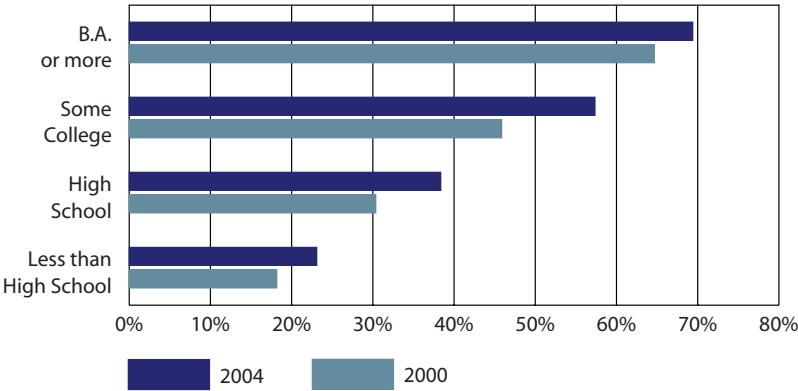


# Voter Turnout Rates by Subgroup

While all subgroups reported surges in voter turnout, there are substantial differences in voter turnout rates between groups. Below we present evidence that shows the many differences in electoral participation among groups of young people. Exact percentages for each group are listed in the appendix.

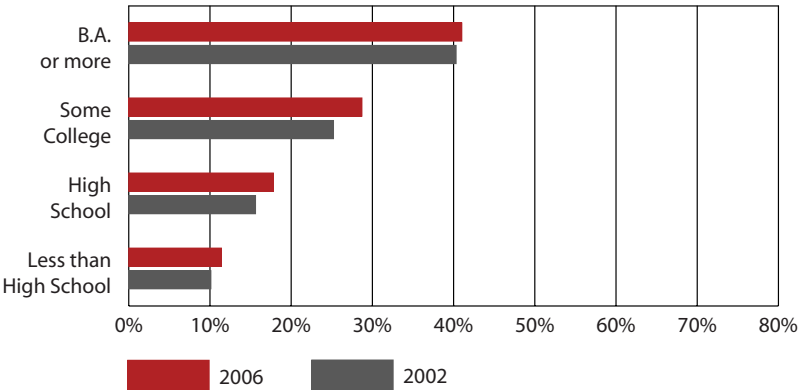
## Educational Attainment

**Figure 4A: Voter Turnout Rates in Presidential Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Old Citizens, by Educational Attainment**



Authors' tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, 2000 and 2004.

**Figure 4B: Voter Turnout Rates in Midterm Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Old Citizens, by Educational Attainment**

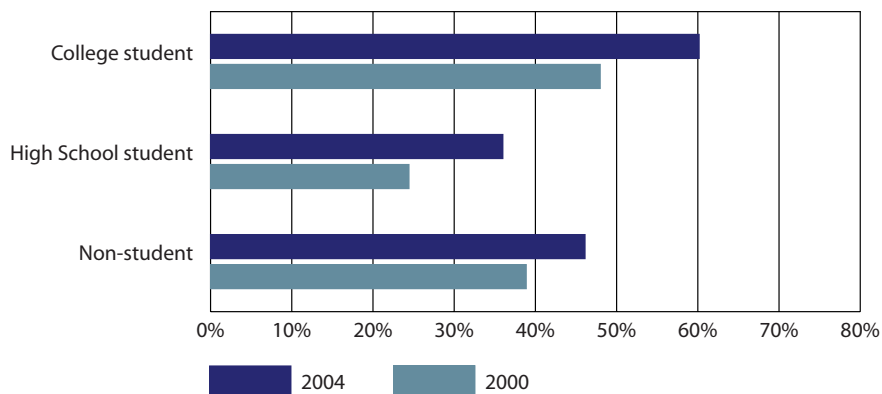


Authors' tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, 2002 and 2006.

Educational attainment is an important predictor of electoral participation. Young people with a bachelor's degree or more reported the highest turnout rates in both 2004 (69 percent) and 2006 (41 percent). At the opposite end, young people with less than a high school degree had the lowest voter turnout (23 percent in 2004 and 11.4 percent in 2006).

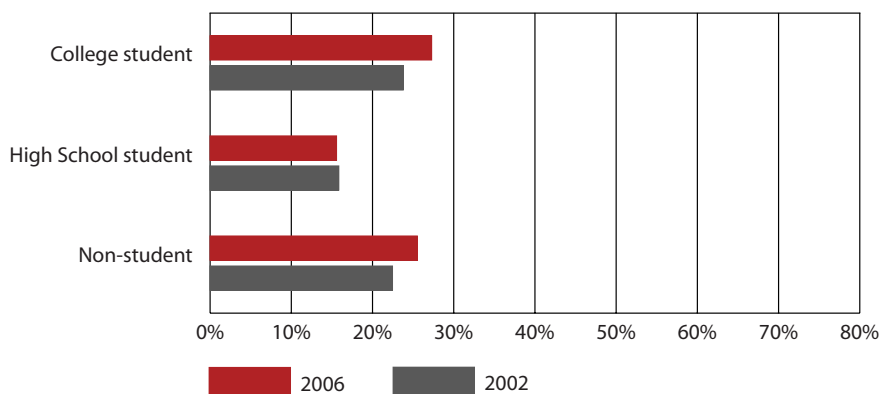
As shown in Figures 5a and 5b, current enrollment status is related to voter turnout rates. College students were more likely to vote than non-students. However, high school students had the lowest turnout rate across all groups.

**Figure 5A: Voter Turnout Rates in Presidential Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Old Citizens, by Student Status**



*Authors' tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, 2000 and 2004.*

**Figure 5B: Voter Turnout Rates in Midterm Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Old Citizens, by Student Status**

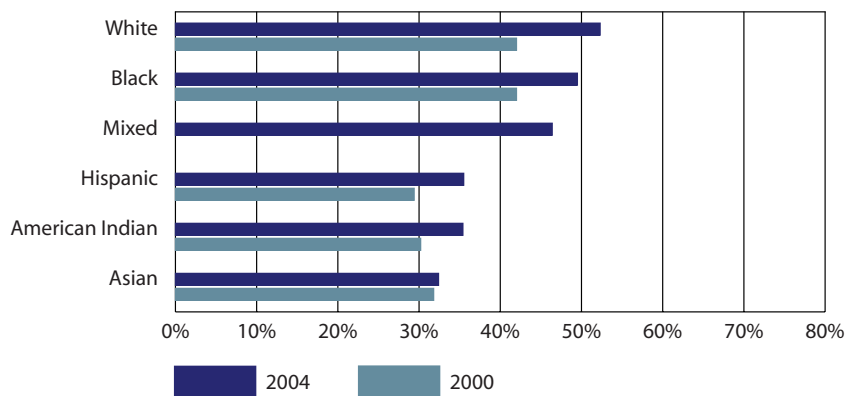


*Authors' tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, 2002 and 2006.*

## Race/Ethnicity

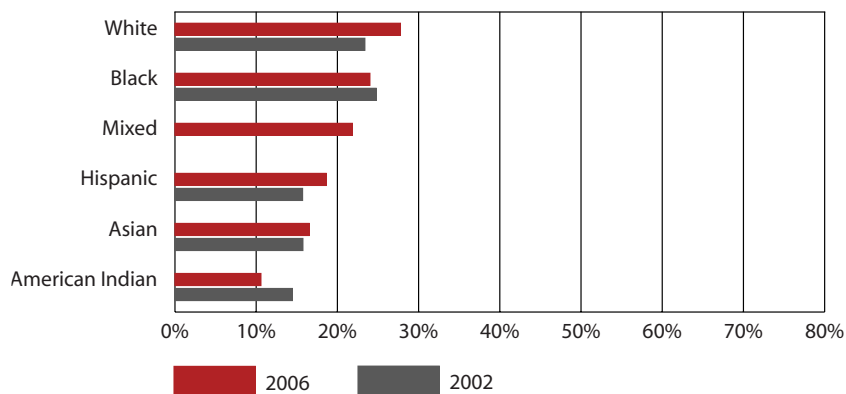
Figures 6a and 6b show the voter turnout rates of young people by race and ethnicity in presidential and midterm elections. Overall, young whites, blacks, and those of mixed race have the highest voter turnout rates. In presidential elections, all racial and ethnic subgroups increased their voter turnout rate from 2000 to 2004. In midterm elections, however, young African- and Native-Americans reported lower voter turnout rates in 2006 compared to 2002.

**Figure 6A: Voter Turnout Rates in Presidential Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Old Citizens, by Race and Ethnicity**



*Authors' tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, 2000 and 2004.*

**Figure 6B: Voter Turnout Rates in Midterm Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Old Citizens, by Race and Ethnicity**



*Authors' tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, 2002 and 2006.*



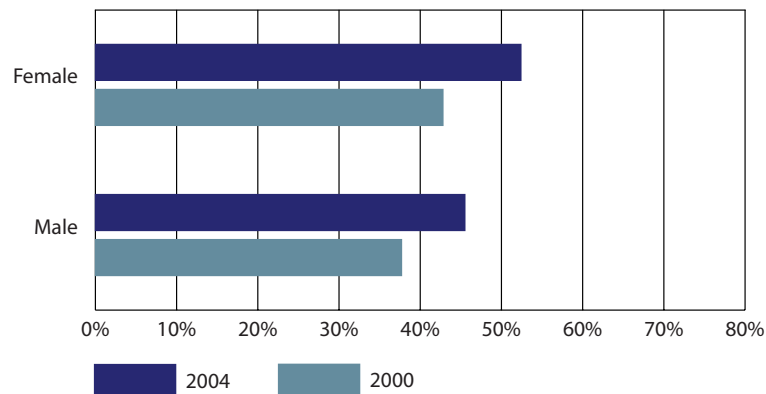
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## Gender Differences

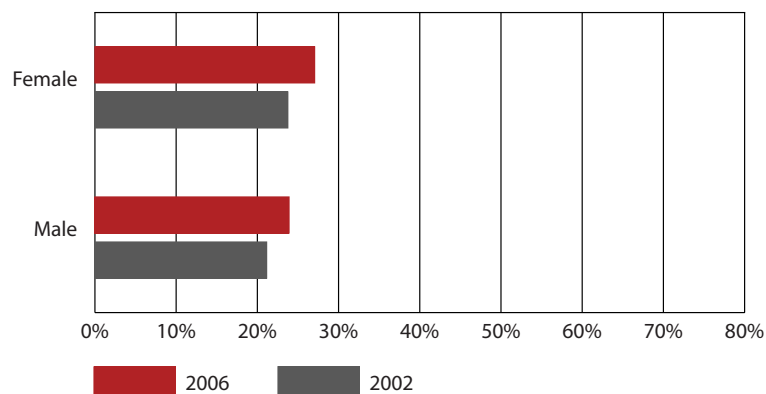
Differences by gender also exist. Figure 7a shows that the turnout rate of young women was nearly seven percentage points higher than that of young men in recent presidential elections. This difference has grown from around one percentage point in 1972. In the 1974 midterm elections, young men held a slight advantage of less than one percentage point over young women, but in 2006 the voter turnout rate of women was approximately three percentage points higher than that of men (see Figure 7b). Furthermore, among all groups of young people, young women participate at greater levels than young men. For example, among college graduates, 72 percent of young women voted in 2004, while 67 percent of young men voted. Similar patterns by gender are evident among young blacks, young Hispanics, and young immigrants.<sup>2</sup>

**Figure 7A: Voter Turnout Rates in Presidential Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Old Citizens, by Gender**



*Authors' tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, 2000 and 2004.*

**Figure 7B: Voter Turnout Rates in Midterm Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Old Citizens, by Gender**



*Authors' tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, 2002 and 2006.*



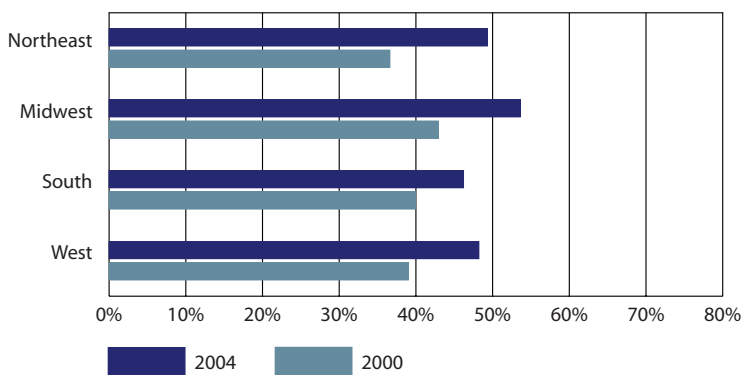
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## Geographic Differences

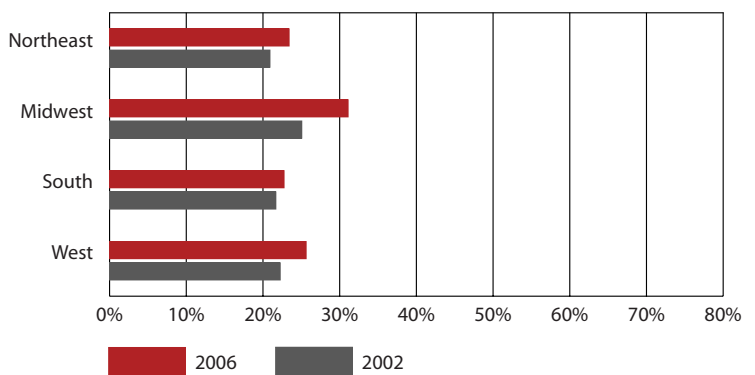
Geographically, the Midwest and non-rural regions report the highest voter turnout rates in 2006 and 2004. This is likely due to the many contested elections in the Midwestern states in 2006 and the focus on the battleground states in the Midwest in the 2004 presidential election. As Figures 8a-b and 9a-b demonstrate, youth in all four regions of the country and in each urbanicity (urban, suburban, and rural) increased their voter turnout from the previous election. Generally, among all states, Minnesota leads in youth voter turnout with rates of 71 percent and 43 percent in 2004 and 2006 respectively (Lopez, Marcelo, and Sagoff 2007; Donovan, Lopez, and Sagoff 2005).

**Figure 8A: Voter Turnout Rates in Presidential Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Old Citizens, by Region**



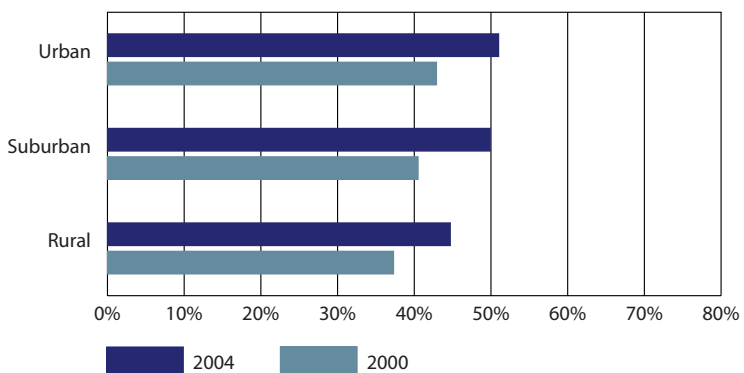
Authors' tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, 2000 and 2004.

**Figure 8B: Voter Turnout Rates in Midterm Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Old Citizens, by Region**



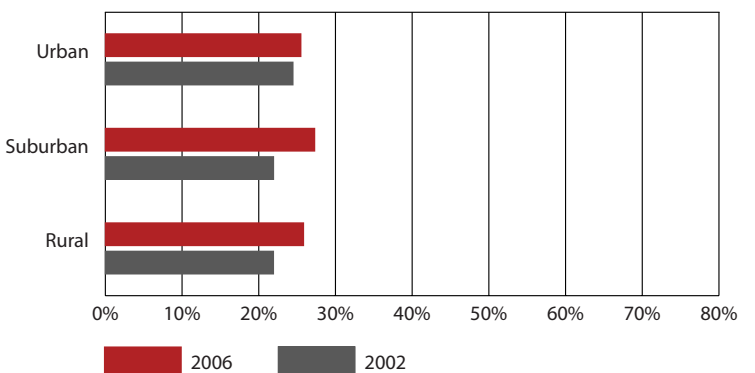
Authors' tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, 2002 and 2006.

**Figure 9A: Voter Turnout Rates in Presidential Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Old Citizens, by Urbanicity**



Authors' tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, 2000 and 2004.

**Figure 9B: Voter Turnout Rates in Midterm Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Old Citizens, by Urbanicity**



Authors' tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, 2002 and 2006.



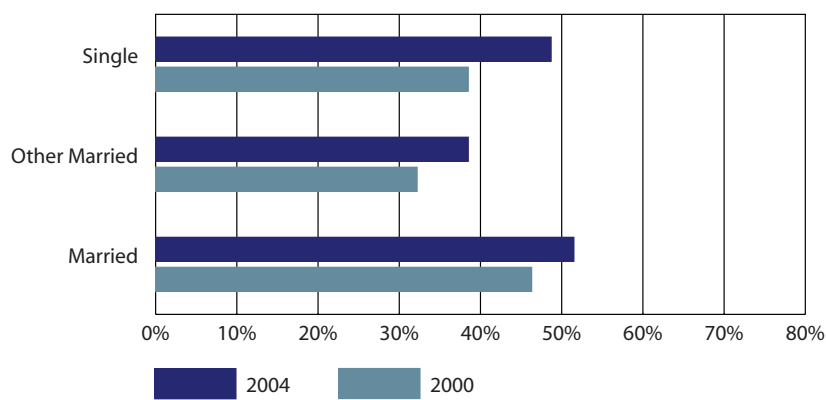
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## Marital Status

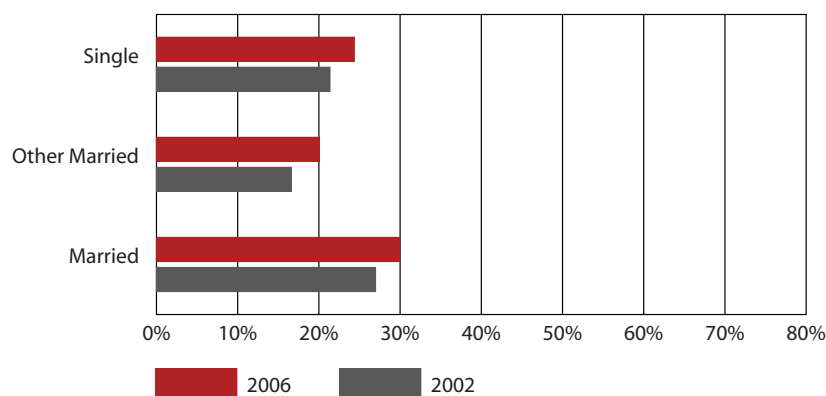
Young married people voted at higher rates than their single counterparts did, which mirrors the pattern by marital status among adults. This, however, is a recent change in the relative voter turnout rates of young single and married people. Over the last 20 years, single young people had surpassed their married counterparts (Munster 2007). It is only in recent elections (since 2000) that this pattern has been reversed. See Figures 10a and 10b.

**Figure 10A: Voter Turnout Rates in Presidential Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Old Citizens, by Marital Status**



*Authors' tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, 2000 and 2004.*

**Figure 10B: Voter Turnout Rates in Midterm Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Old Citizens, by Marital Status**



*Authors' tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, 2002 and 2006.*



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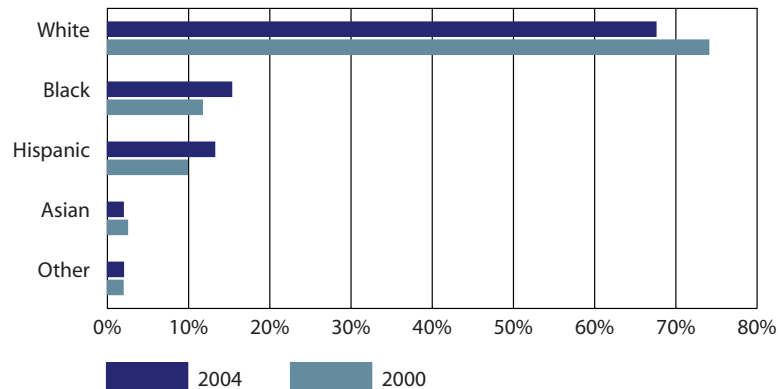
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## DEMOGRAPHICS OF YOUNG VOTERS

### Young Voters More Diverse

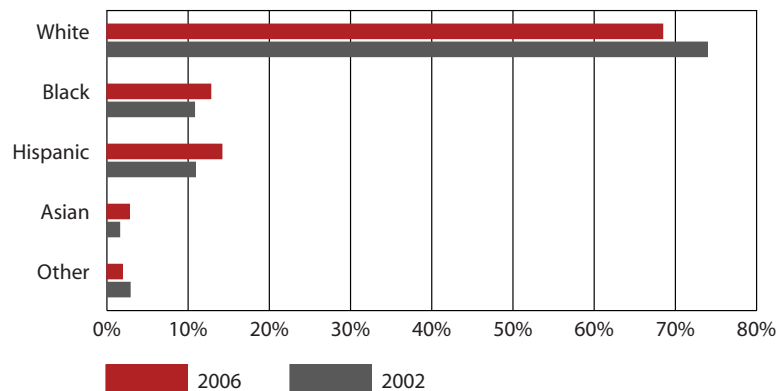
In the last two elections, the racial and ethnic composition of young voters has changed, reflecting a greater diversity among youth today than 30 years ago, and in comparison to adults. While white youth still represent the single largest racial/ethnic group among young voters, African Americans and Latinos have substantially increased their representation among young people generally and young voters specifically. In 2004, African-American voters were the largest minority voting bloc (15.3 percent of young voters); in contrast, Hispanics represented the single largest voting bloc in 2006 (14.2 percent of young voters). Together, Latino and African American youth represent almost 30 percent of young voters in recent elections, up from 13 percent in 1992, and 10 points higher than among all adults in recent elections.

**Figure 11A: Race and Ethnicity of Young Voters, Ages 18 to 29, in Presidential Elections**



*Authors' tabulations from the National Election Pool, Exit Poll, 2000 and 2004.*

**Figure 11B: Race and Ethnicity of Young Voters, Ages 18 to 29, in Midterm Elections**



*Authors' tabulations from the National Election Pool, Exit Poll, 2002 and 2006.*



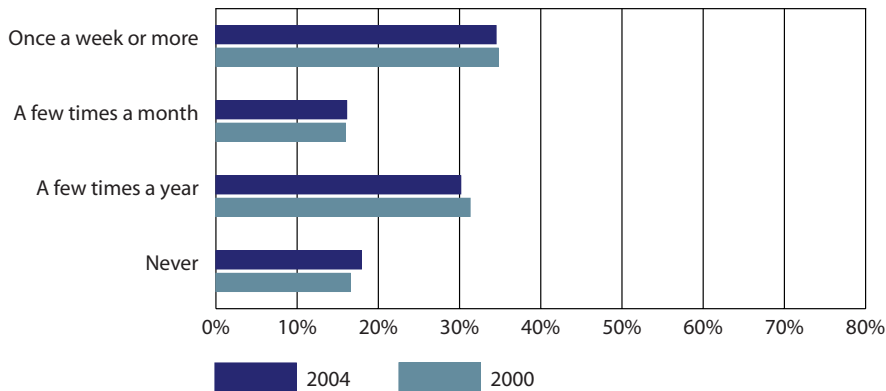
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## Voters and Religion—Unchanged Since 2000

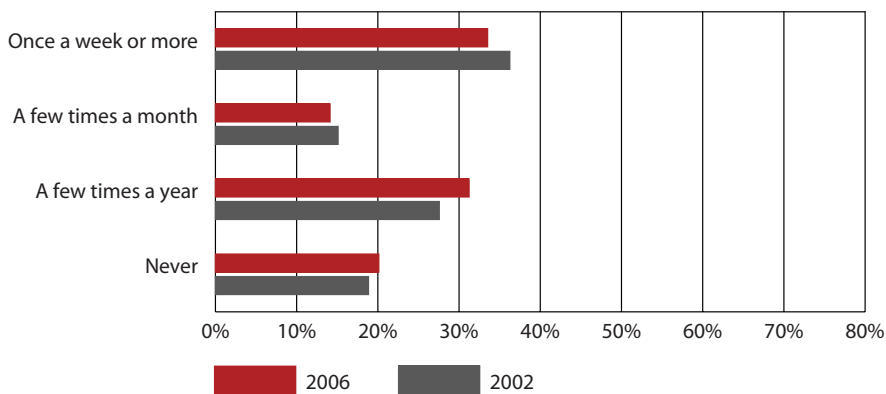
Religious service attendance is another indicator of political preference, because there is a correlation between attendance and partisanship. Those who more frequently attend religious services are more likely to identify as Republicans than Democrats. There was little change between the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections in terms of the religious service attendance of young voters. There was, however, a slight increase in the percentage of young voters that reported “never” attending a religious service. Unlike the presidential elections, the midterm elections witnessed a change in the religious service attendance of young voters. Fewer young voters reported attending religious services regularly.

**Figure 12A: Voters' Religious Service Attendance in Presidential Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Olds**



*Authors' tabulations from the National Election Pool, Exit Poll, 2000 and 2004.*

**Figure 12B: Voters' Religious Service Attendance in Midterm Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Olds**



*Authors' tabulations from the National Election Pool, Exit Poll, 2002 and 2006.*



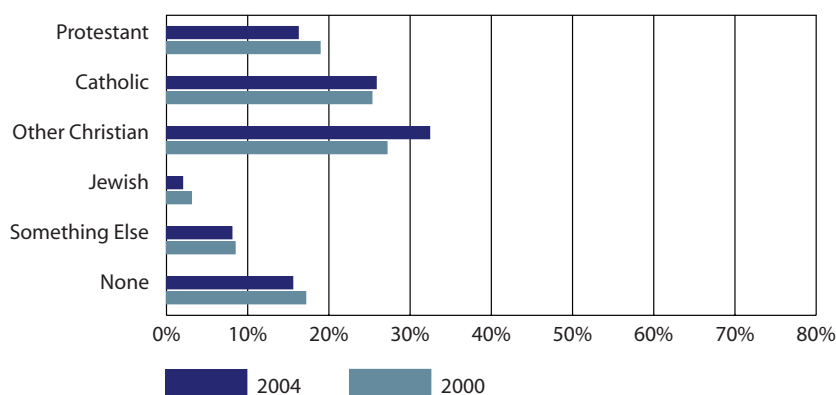
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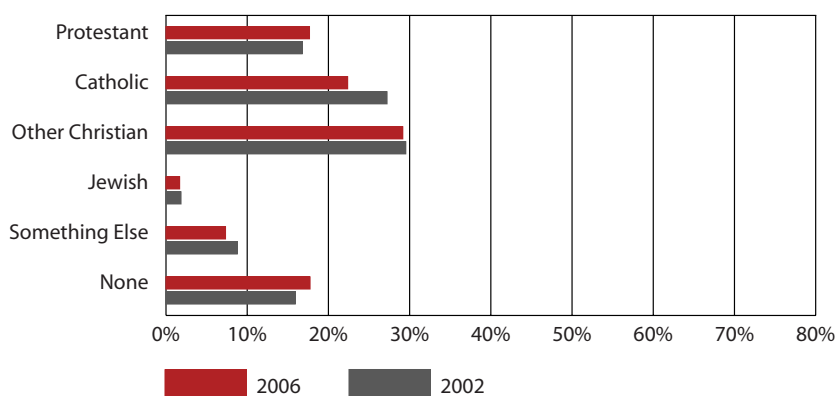
In the past six years religious identification has not changed in a systematic way—as of 2006, 18 percent are Protestant, 22 percent are Catholic, 29 percent are another Christian denomination (the most common choice), 2 percent are Jewish, 7 percent are another religion, and 18 percent are not religious. Each of these categories has varied by a few percentage points since 2000, but there does not appear to be a consistent shift in any direction—the overall ranking of the religious categories has remained the same since 2000.

**Figure 13A: Voters' Religious Identification in Presidential Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Olds**



*Authors' tabulations from the National Election Pool, Exit Poll, 2000 and 2004.*

**Figure 13B: Voters' Religious Identification in Midterm Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Olds**



*Authors' tabulations from the National Election Pool, Exit Poll, 2002 and 2006.*



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Table 3 displays the demographics of voters in four election cycles, displayed by presidential and midterm elections. In addition, Table 3 shows the percentage point change from one election cycle to another, which highlights the gains and losses in representation by subgroup.

In 2004, as Table 3 shows, young voters were most likely to be:

- Female
- White
- Not Married
- Southern
- Ideologically Moderate
- Affiliated with the Democratic Party
- Christian

The figures listed in Table 3 represent the percent of the 18-29 year old vote made up by the demographic groups listed on the left. For example, in 2000, men made up 46.5 percent of the youth vote and in 2004, men made up 46.3 percent of the youth vote. The figures do not represent the voter turnout rates for each group.



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**Table 3 – Demographics of 18- to 29-Year-Old Voters (2000-2006)**

	Presidential Elections			Midterm Elections		
	2000	2004	% Point Change (2000 to 2004)	2002	2006	% Point Change (2002 to 2006)
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	46.5%	46.3%	-0.2 % points	45.1%	47.7%	2.6 % points
Female	53.5%	53.7%	0.2 % points	54.9%	52.3%	-2.6 % points
<b>Race and Ethnicity</b>						
White	74.1%	67.6%	-6.5 % points	73.9%	68.4%	-5.5 % points
Black	11.7%	15.3%	3.6 % points	10.8%	12.8%	2.0 % points
Hispanic	9.9%	13.2%	3.4 % points	10.9%	14.2%	3.3 % points
Asian	2.5%	2.0%	-0.5 % points	1.6%	2.8%	1.2 % points
Other	1.9%	2.0%	0.1 % points	2.9%	1.9%	-1.0 % point
<b>Marital Status</b>						
Married	36.4%	30.2%	-6.3 % points	31.9%	29.5%	-2.4 % points
Not Married	63.6%	69.9%	6.3 % points	68.1%	70.5%	2.4 % points
<b>Region</b>						
Northeast	20.3%	23.3%	3.1 % points	19.2%	18.3%	-1.0 % point
Midwest	28.7%	28.4%	-0.3 % points	28.8%	31.3%	2.5 % points
South	30.9%	30.5%	-0.3 % points	32.4%	26.6%	-5.7 % points
West	20.2%	17.7%	-2.5 % points	19.6%	23.8%	4.2 % points
<b>Presidential Vote</b>						
Democrat	47.6%	53.6%	6.0 % points	***	***	***
Republican	46.2%	45.0%	-1.2 % points	***	***	***
Other	6.2%	1.2%	-5.0 % points	***	***	***
<b>Congressional Vote</b>						
Democrat	49.3%	52.0%	2.7 % points	48.7%	58.3%	9.7 % points
Republican	47.9%	41.6%	-6.2 % points	47.3%	37.5%	-9.7 % points
Other	2.8%	1.4%	-1.4 % points	4.1%	2.0%	-2.1 % points
<b>Political Ideology</b>						
Liberal	27.3%	30.8%	3.6 % points	26.4%	34.1%	7.7 % points
Moderate	48.3%	42.6%	-5.8 % points	45.5%	41.0%	-4.5 % points
Conservative	24.4%	26.6%	2.2 % points	28.1%	24.9%	-3.2 % points
<b>Political Party</b>						
Democrat	36.1%	36.9%	0.8 % points	36.7%	42.9%	6.3 % points
Republican	34.7%	34.5%	-0.2 % points	39.2%	31.1%	-8.1 % points
Independent	29.2%	28.6%	-0.6 % points	24.1%	18.7%	-5.4 % points

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**Table 3 – Demographics of 18- to 29-Year-Old Voters (2000-2006)**

(continued)

	Presidential Elections			Midterm Elections		
	2000	2004	% Point Change (2000 to 2004)	2002	2006	% Point Change (2002 to 2006)
<b>Religion</b>						
Protestant	18.9%	16.2%	-2.7 % points	16.8%	17.7%	0.9 % points
Catholic	25.3%	25.8%	0.5 % points	27.2%	22.4%	-4.9 % points
Other Christian	27.2%	32.4%	5.3 % points	29.5%	29.2%	-0.4 % points
Jewish	3.1%	2.0%	-1.1 % points	1.8%	1.7%	-0.2 % points
Other Religion	8.5%	8.1%	-0.4 % points	8.8%	7.3%	-1.5 % points
None	17.1%	15.5%	-1.6 % points	15.9%	17.7%	1.8 % points
<b>Religious Service Attendance</b>						
Once a Week or More	34.8%	-2.7%	-2.7 % points	-2.7%	-2.7%	-2.7 % points
A Few Times a Month	15.9%	-1.0%	-1.0 % points	-1.0%	-1.0%	-1.0 % point
A Few Times a Year	31.3%	3.7%	3.7 % points	3.7%	3.7%	3.7 % points
Never	16.5%	1.3%	1.3 % points	1.3%	1.3%	1.3 % points
Children Under 18 in Household	36.7%	34.9%	-1.8 % points	38.2%	32.5%	-5.7 % points
Part of Conservative Christian Movement	20.1%	***	***	25.3%	28.3%	3.0 % points
Better Off Today Than Four Years Ago	59.0%	35.2%	-23.8 % points	40.0%	34.8%	-5.2 % points
Work Full Time	67.9%	63.2%	-4.6 % points	65.1%	***	***
Union Member	14.4%	11.7%	-2.8 % points	10.4%	8.4%	-2.0 % points
First-Time Voter	32.7%	41.7%	9.0 % points	***	***	***
Gay/Bisexual/Lesbian	5.3%	5.8%	0.4 % points	***	4.7%	***

Source: Authors' tabulations from the Voter News Service General Election, Exit Poll, 2000, and National Election Pool, Exit Polls, 2002, 2004 and 2006.  
 \*\*\* means that data was not available.



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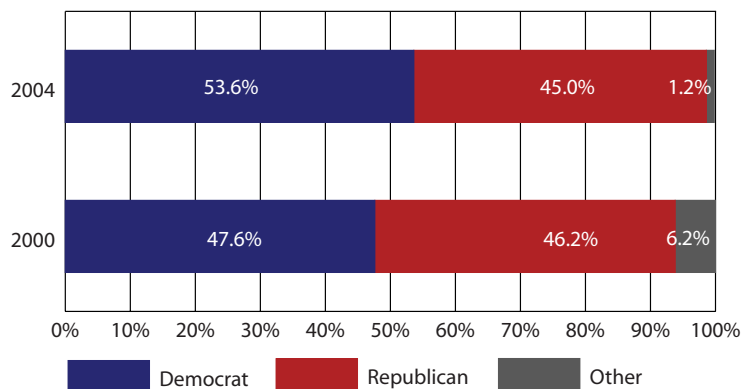
## POLITICS OF THE YOUTH VOTE

Young Americans are increasingly likely to be engaged politically, are shifting their votes in favor of Democrats, and express a liberal ideology more often in recent years. The partisan shift is particularly evident in Congressional voting, where the youth vote gave a 21-point advantage to the Democratic Party in 2006. That said, most young adults still profess a moderate ideology rather than liberal or conservative, and as recently as 2002 the Republican Party was on an equal footing with the Democratic Party in youth partisan identification among voters—it was not until 2006 that we saw a shift to the Democratic Party.

### Young Adults Are Voting For Democratic Candidates

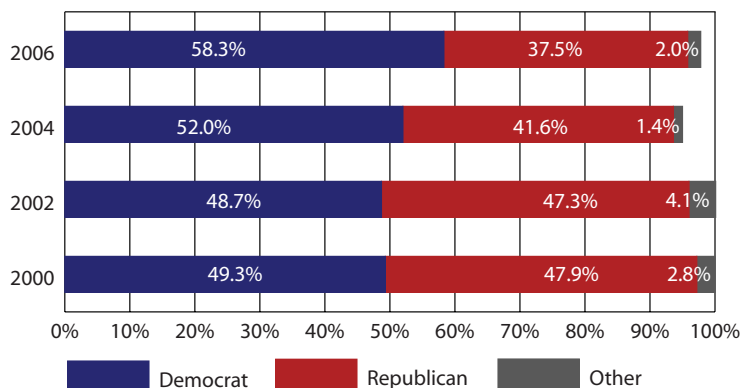
While political party identification among young voters has split across both parties, young voters' choice at the ballot box has showed a clear favorite. Young voters have opted for Democratic candidates in recent elections. In choosing the Democratic candidate in the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections, young voters expressed candidate preferences that were different from the general voting population. In every presidential election since 1972, young voters have preferred the candidate that ultimately won the presidential election, and the popular vote. In the last two presidential cycles, however, young people's candidate choice was different from that of their adult counterparts, choosing the Democratic candidates Al Gore in 2000 and John Kerry in 2004. This signals that today's young voters' preferences are diverging from older generations of voters.<sup>3</sup> This is a departure from previous election cycles where young people supported the same candidates as their adult counterparts, voting for the election winner, and may be partly driven by the growing racial and ethnic diversity among young people when compared to adults (Lopez and Marcelo 2006).

**Figure 14A: Voters' Choice in Presidential Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Olds**



*Authors' tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, 2000 and 2004.*

**Figure 14B: Voters' Choice in Congressional Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Olds**



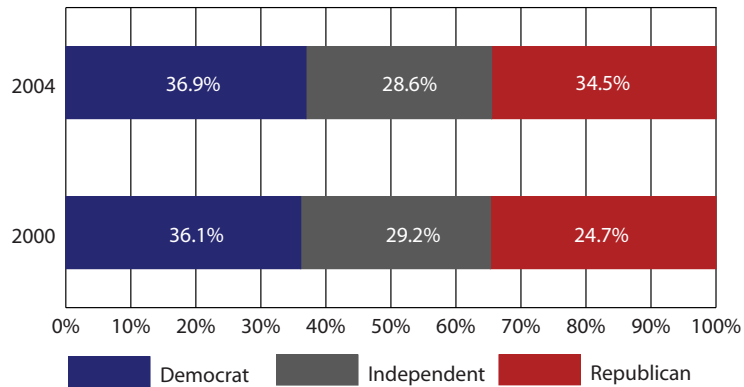
*Authors' tabulations from the National Election Pool, Exit Poll, 2000-2006.*

## Young Voters Increasingly Identify as Democrats

In the most recent election, 2006, fewer young people identified as Republican or Independent, and more as Democratic. Only 31.1 percent of young voters in 2006 were Republicans compared to 39.2 percent in 2002—an 8.1 percentage point drop. Recent polls also suggest that young people are leaning more Democratic. According to a survey by Harvard’s Institute of Politics, 35 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds identified as Democrats compared to 27 percent that identified as Republican. The 2004 presidential election saw little change in the partisanship of young voters relative to 2000. Over a third of young voters identified as Democrats (36.9 percent) and Republicans (34.5 percent), with Democrats holding a small edge.

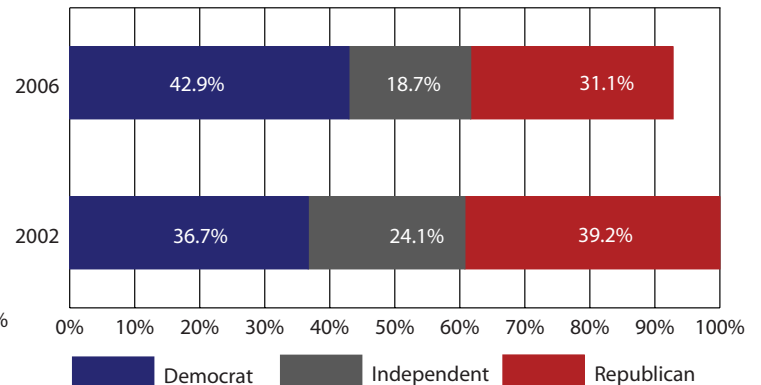
Another signal of this change is that fewer young people identified as moderate in the last two election cycles; in its place, more young people identified as liberal (30.8 percent) and conservative (26.6 percent) in 2004 compared to 2000. In the midterm elections, the drop in moderates was offset by a nearly 8-percentage-point surge in young people who identified as liberal.

**Figure 15A: Voters' Political Party Identification in Presidential Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Olds**



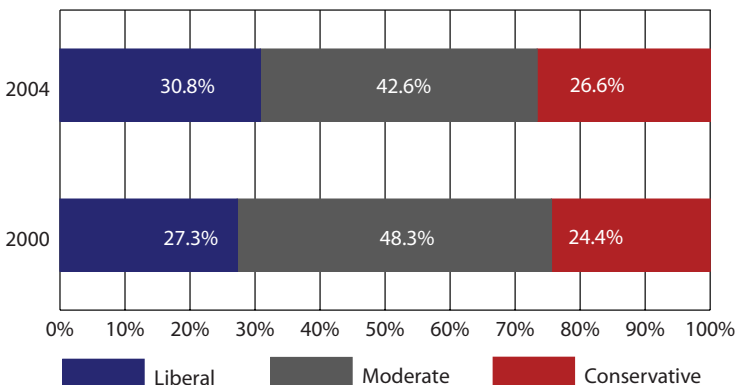
*Authors' tabulations from the National Election Pool, Exit Poll, 2000 and 2004.*

**Figure 15B: Voters' Political Party Identification in Midterm Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Olds**



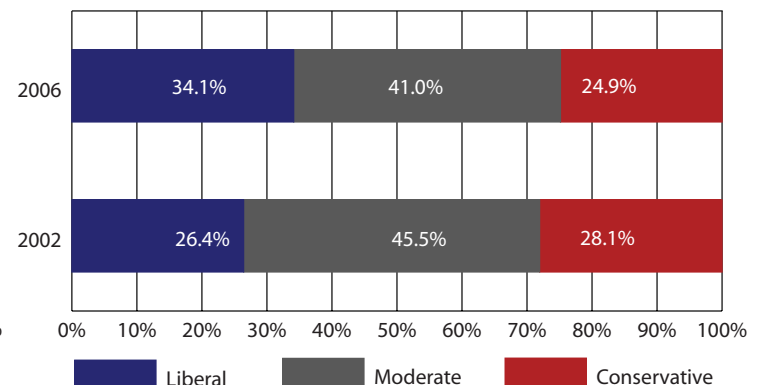
*Authors' tabulations from the National Election Pool, Exit Poll, 2002 and 2006.*

**Figure 16A: Voters' Political Ideology in Presidential Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Olds**



*Authors' tabulations from the National Election Pool, Exit Poll, 2000 and 2004.*

**Figure 16B: Voters' Political Ideology in Midterm Elections Among 18- to 29-Year-Olds**



*Authors' tabulations from the National Election Pool, Exit Poll, 2002 and 2006.*



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## Economy/Jobs and Iraq War are Top Issues for Young Voters

Young people are most concerned about education, Iraq, jobs and the economy, health care, and the environment (particularly global warming). Homeland security and immigration, though less often in the top five, also tend to be ranked highly among young adults. The exact ordering and percentages vary across polls due to slight differences in the question asked, but these issues remain the most frequently cited priorities for young adults. The table below shows the top issues for young adults as shown by ten polls conducted over the course of 2006 and 2007.

Differentiating by gender allows for more nuanced targeting of issues. In Lifetime Women's Pulse Poll (March 2007) young women were twice as likely as young men to list education as a top election issue (42 percent vs. 21 percent), whereas men were more likely than women to list jobs and the economy as a top issue (31 percent vs. 20 percent).<sup>1</sup> Rock the Vote's November 2006 poll of young adults found that the top issues for young women were the war in Iraq (47 percent), homeland security and terrorism (40 percent), health care (39 percent), and job creation (37 percent).

**Table 4 – Young Adults' Ranking of Top Issues, 2006-2007**

Poll	Date	Education	Iraq	Health Care	Economy and Jobs	Energy and Environment	Homeland Security	Immigration
Harvard IOP	Nov-07	3	1	2	3	3	4	5
Rock the Vote/SHU/WWE	Nov-07	2	2	4	1	8	5	7
GQR	Jun-07		1	5	6		2	3
MTV/NYT/CBS	Jun-07	3	2	6	1	4	5	7
Lifetime Women's Pulse	Mar-07	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Rock the Vote	Nov-06	5	1	2	3		4	
Pew Research	Aug-06	1	4	6	2	3		5
RT Strategies	Apr-06	3	1	6	2	4	7	5
GQR	Mar-06	2	4	3	1		5	6
Lake/Tarrance	Feb-06	2	4	6	3	1		5

We also find differences between young Republicans and Democrats. A poll conducted by Rock the Vote, WWE's Smack-down Your Vote, and Sacred Heart University in October 2007 found that young Republicans listed the economy (21 percent), the war in Iraq (17 percent), and terrorism (15 percent) as the issues they most cared about. Young Democrats, on the other hand, listed education and college affordability as their top issue (21 percent), along with the war in Iraq (20 percent), and health care (19 percent).

Polling from Rock the Vote (ibid) shows that young African-Americans rate health care as their top issue, which is higher priority than the general youth population; they also are more likely to rate homeland security as an important issue, but less likely to say that education or college affordability are top issues. Latinos, on the other hand, prioritize college affordability more than young adults overall.



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## STATE-BY-STATE FACTS AND TABLES

### Voter Turnout by State

State-by-state voter turnout numbers vary widely from a high of 71 percent in Minnesota to a low of 34 percent in Hawaii (2004 Presidential election). For one, contested elections vary by state (and certainly by district). Open seats and the strength of the incumbent are variables that depend on the national, state, and local political climate. In addition, battleground states usually witness a boost in voter turnout if it is a presidential election year. Second, easier registration and voting rules increase turnout. States with Election Day registration, such as Minnesota and Wisconsin, are examples of the power of voter-friendly laws, and their importance for young voters. Other voting rules also vary across states, such as voter identification laws; research by the Caltech/MIT Voting Technology Project suggests that stricter voter identification requirements reduce turnout (Alvarez, Bailey, and Katz 2007). Third, ballot initiatives, especially those amending the state's constitution, encourage voters with a keen interest in the ballot's outcome to show up to the polls (for example, consider the controversial ballot initiatives in Michigan and Virginia in 2006). Finally, the intensity and reach of get-out-the-vote and registration campaigns (both partisan and non-partisan) encourage electoral participation. See Table 5.



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**Table 5 – Voter Turnout Rates Among 18- to 29-Year-Old Citizens, By State (2000-2006)**

	Presidential Elections			Midterm Elections		
	2000	2004	% Point Change (2000 to 2004)	2002	2006	% Point Change (2002 to 2006)
<b>National</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>9% points</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>3% points</b>
Alabama	45%	47%	2 % points	31%	26%	-5% points
Alaska	52%	58%	6% points	34%	30%	-4% points
Arizona	29%	46%	17% points	14%	23%	9% points
Arkansas	41%	40%	-1% point	21%	21%	0% points
California	40%	46%	6% points	22%	25%	3% points
Colorado	37%	50%	13% points	29%	31%	2% points
Connecticut	45%	44%	-1% point	23%	22%	-1% point
Delaware	42%	50%	8% points	15%	25%	10% points
D.C.	55%	59%	4% points	32%	29%	-3% points
Florida	40%	49%	9% points	23%	18%	-5% points
Georgia	40%	49%	9% points	22%	29%	7% points
Hawaii	23%	34%	11% points	20%	21%	1% point
Idaho	40%	49%	9% points	24%	30%	6% points
Illinois	45%	50%	5% points	23%	23%	0% points
Indiana	35%	41%	6% points	19%	23%	4% points
Iowa	50%	60%	10% points	23%	27%	4% points
Kansas	38%	45%	7% points	23%	20%	-3% points
Kentucky	43%	60%	17% points	30%	28%	-2% points
Louisiana	50%	52%	2% points	28%	18%	-10% points
Maine	52%	59%	7% points	31%	32%	1% point
Maryland	40%	50%	10% points	24%	33%	9% points
Massachusetts	43%	51%	8% points	23%	34%	11% points
Michigan	41%	55%	14% points	25%	38%	13% points
Minnesota	51%	71%	20% points	45%	43%	-2% points
Mississippi	45%	52%	7% points	21%	25%	4% points
Missouri	39%	52%	13% points	26%	32%	6% points
Montana	42%	51%	9% points	26%	39%	13% points

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**Table 5 – Voter Turnout Rates Among 18-29 Year Old Citizens, By State (2000-2006)**

(continued)

	Presidential Elections			Midterm Elections		
	2000	2004	% Point Change (2000 to 2004)	2002	2006	% Point Change (2002 to 2006)
New Hampshire	46%	58%	12% points	24%	19%	-5% points
New Jersey	41%	51%	10% points	17%	22%	5% points
North Carolina	40%	45%	5% points	18%	21%	3% points
North Dakota	61%	56%	-5% points	33%	30%	-3% points
Ohio	41%	54%	13% points	21%	31%	10% points
Oklahoma	37%	45%	8% points	25%	25%	0% points
Oregon	48%	55%	7% points	30%	32%	2% points
Pennsylvania	34%	48%	14% points	21%	25%	4% points
Rhode Island	43%	44%	1% point	20%	35%	15% points
South Carolina	42%	46%	4% points	27%	24%	-3% points
South Dakota	31%	49%	18% points	36%	39%	3% points
Tennessee	30%	40%	10% points	21%	23%	2% points
Texas	35%	42%	7% points	17%	17%	0% points
Utah	40%	56%	16% points	22%	17%	-5% points
Vermont	40%	39%	-1% point	20%	26%	6% points
Virginia	47%	43%	-4% points	18%	32%	14% points
Washington	42%	53%	11% points	20%	30%	10% points
West Virginia	38%	49%	11% points	15%	16%	1% point
Wisconsin	51%	65%	14% points	24%	40%	16% points
Wyoming	47%	53%	6% points	30%	26%	-4% points

Source: Authors' tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, 2000-2006.



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## Voter Registration by State

Voter registration rates, much like voter turnout rates, vary widely by state. Moreover, the same reasons discussed above that affect the voter turnout rate apply to registration rates. One difference is the ability of the federal government to pass laws encouraging states to register their citizens to vote (i.e. “Motor Voter” and Help America Vote Act).

**Table 6 – Voter Registration Rates Among 18- to 29-Year-Old Citizens, By State (2000-2006)**

	Presidential Elections			Midterm Elections		
	2000	2004	% Point Change (2000 to 2004)	2002	2006	% Point Change (2002 to 2006)
<b>National</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>5% points</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>3% points</b>
Alabama	61%	59%	-3 % points	60%	62%	2% points
Alaska	63%	72%	9% points	57%	59%	2% points
Arizona	38%	58%	19% points	33%	45%	12% points
Arkansas	54%	54%	1% point	45%	48%	3% points
California	51%	55%	5% points	44%	45%	1% point
Colorado	55%	62%	7% points	53%	55%	1% point
Connecticut	50%	52%	2% points	48%	44%	-4% points
Delaware	49%	60%	11% points	49%	49%	0% points
D.C.	64%	68%	3% points	66%	60%	-6% points
Florida	55%	59%	4% points	48%	45%	-3% points
Georgia	57%	62%	4% points	50%	52%	2% points
Hawaii	33%	41%	8% points	29%	34%	5% points
Idaho	50%	58%	7% points	40%	45%	5% points
Illinois	59%	61%	2% points	47%	52%	5% points
Indiana	49%	53%	4% points	40%	49%	9% points
Iowa	63%	71%	8% points	50%	60%	10% points
Kansas	52%	58%	6% points	48%	42%	-6% points
Kentucky	63%	69%	6% points	54%	59%	6% points
Louisiana	66%	64%	-1% point	56%	47%	-9% points
Maine	64%	70%	6% points	58%	61%	3% points
Maryland	56%	58%	2% points	51%	57%	6% points
Massachusetts	60%	63%	3% points	46%	54%	8% points
Michigan	53%	66%	12% points	55%	63%	9% points
Minnesota	61%	77%	16% points	64%	62%	-2% points
Mississippi	59%	65%	6% points	48%	49%	1% point
Missouri	53%	68%	15% points	55%	59%	4% points
Montana	57%	60%	2% points	48%	55%	7% points

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**Table 6 – Voter Registration Rates Among 18- to 29-Year-Old Citizens, By State (2000-2006)**

(continued)

	Presidential Elections			Midterm Elections		
	2000	2004	% Point Change (2000 to 2004)	2002	2006	% Point Change (2002 to 2006)
New Hampshire	52%	64%	12% points	39%	47%	8% points
New Jersey	54%	63%	9% points	44%	43%	-1% point
New Mexico	44%	57%	14% points	37%	49%	13% points
New York	53%	57%	4% points	49%	45%	-4% points
North Carolina	59%	61%	3% points	43%	51%	9% points
North Dakota	89%	84%	-4% points	73%	74%	1% point
Ohio	53%	64%	10% points	48%	59%	11% points
Oklahoma	56%	54%	-2% points	48%	54%	6% points
Oregon	64%	63%	-1% point	56%	54%	-2% points
Pennsylvania	51%	58%	6% points	45%	49%	4% points
Rhode Island	58%	52%	-6% points	46%	58%	12% points
South Carolina	56%	61%	5% points	53%	48%	-5% points
South Dakota	52%	65%	13% points	53%	63%	10% points
Tennessee	44%	51%	7% points	41%	48%	6% points
Texas	58%	57%	-1% point	49%	51%	2% points
Utah	50%	66%	15% points	42%	39%	-3% points
Vermont	48%	58%	10% points	73%	49%	-25% points
Virginia	60%	52%	-8% points	52%	57%	6% points
Washington	55%	63%	8% points	47%	52%	4% points
West Virginia	55%	59%	4% points	42%	54%	11% points
Wisconsin	62%	70%	8% points	46%	54%	8% points
Wyoming	53%	61%	8% points	46%	47%	1% point

Source: Authors' tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, 2000-2006.



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## Presidential Vote Choice by State

In 2000, young adults split their votes between the Democratic candidate (Al Gore) and the Republican candidate (George W. Bush) 48 percent versus 46 percent. In the 2004 election, as President Bush stood for reelection, the gap in favor of the Democratic candidate grew to 9 percentage points, a clear majority (54 percent versus 45 percent). During the same period, support for Nader dropped from 5 percent in 2000 to less than half a percentage point in 2004 (rounded down to 0 percent). See Table 7.

**Table 7 – Vote Choice Among 18- to 29-Year-Old Voters in Presidential Elections, 2000 and 2004**

	2000 Presidential Election				2004 Presidential Election		
	Bush	Gore	Nader	Buchanan	Bush	Kerry	Nader
<b>National</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>0%</b>
Alabama	50%	50%	0%	***	57%	41%	0%
Alaska	59%	28%	9%	2%	58%	36%	2%
Arizona	50%	43%	4%	***	50%	48%	***
Arkansas	53%	44%	0%	1%	47%	51%	1%
California	40%	51%	7%	1%	39%	58%	***
Colorado	41%	46%	12%	***	47%	51%	0%
Connecticut	34%	56%	8%	1%	29%	69%	1%
Delaware	39%	53%	6%	1%	45%	54%	0%
D.C.	8%	82%	9%	***	8%	90%	2%
Florida	40%	55%	4%	0%	41%	58%	0%
Georgia	52%	43%	***	0%	52%	47%	***
Hawaii	30%	62%	8%	0%	39%	61%	***
Idaho	75%	22%	***	2%	64%	35%	***
Illinois	42%	53%	4%	1%	35%	64%	***
Indiana	64%	34%	***	***	52%	47%	***
Iowa	50%	46%	3%	1%	46%	53%	1%
Kansas	68%	28%	4%	1%	55%	44%	2%
Kentucky	62%	34%	3%	1%	54%	45%	1%
Louisiana	57%	38%	2%	2%	53%	45%	1%
Maine	45%	43%	11%	1%	50%	48%	1%
Maryland	38%	56%	6%	1%	35%	62%	1%
Massachusetts	29%	55%	16%	***	25%	71%	***
Michigan	44%	53%	1%	***	43%	55%	2%
Minnesota	48%	45%	5%	1%	40%	57%	1%
Mississippi	42%	58%	***	***	37%	62%	0%
Missouri	48%	48%	3%	1%	48%	51%	***
Montana	61%	28%	9%	0%	52%	43%	2%

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**Table 7 – Vote Choice Among 18- to 29-Year-Old Voters in Presidential Elections, 2000 and 2004**

(continued)

	2000 Presidential Election				2004 Presidential Election		
	Bush	Gore	Nader	Buchanan	Bush	Kerry	Nader
New Hampshire	38%	51%	8%	2%	43%	57%	1%
New Jersey	40%	54%	5%	0%	34%	64%	1%
New Mexico	42%	49%	7%	1%	50%	49%	0%
New York	30%	64%	5%	0%	25%	72%	2%
North Carolina	50%	48%	***	0%	43%	56%	***
North Dakota	58%	28%	13%	1%	68%	32%	***
Ohio	49%	45%	5%	0%	42%	56%	***
Oklahoma	63%	34%	***	1%	61%	38%	***
Oregon	46%	47%	6%	***	36%	61%	***
Pennsylvania	46%	50%	3%	1%	39%	60%	***
Rhode Island	26%	62%	10%	1%	29%	67%	2%
South Carolina	52%	46%	1%	0%	51%	48%	1%
South Dakota	63%	32%	***	4%	55%	43%	2%
Tennessee	46%	50%	3%	0%	53%	46%	1%
Texas	55%	37%	7%	0%	59%	41%	***
Utah	72%	16%	9%	1%	77%	18%	3%
Vermont	38%	49%	11%	1%	26%	69%	3%
Virginia	52%	41%	5%	0%	46%	54%	***
Washington	45%	48%	5%	0%	47%	50%	1%
West Virginia	57%	37%	4%	1%	48%	52%	0%
Wisconsin	44%	46%	10%	0%	41%	57%	1%
Wyoming	80%	17%	***	0%	72%	25%	2%

Source: Authors' tabulations from the National Election Pool, Exit Poll, 2000 and 2004.

\*\*\* means that data was not available.



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## APPENDIX

**Table A – Voter Turnout Rates Among 18- to 29-Year-Old Citizens**

	Presidential Elections			Midterm Elections		
	2000	2004	% Point Change (2000 to 2004)	2002	2006	% Point Change (2002 to 2006)
<b>National Turnout Rate</b>	<b>40.3%</b>	<b>49.0%</b>	<b>8.7 % points</b>	<b>22.5%</b>	<b>25.5%</b>	<b>3.0 % points</b>
Registered Voter	73.5%	81.6%	8.1 % points	46.9%	50.2%	3.3 % points
<b>Gender</b>						
Female	42.8%	52.4%	9.6 % points	23.8%	27.1%	3.3 % points
Male	37.7%	45.5%	7.7 % points	21.1%	23.9%	2.8 % points
<b>Race and Ethnicity</b>						
White	42.0%	52.3%	10.4 % points	23.4%	27.8%	4.4 % points
Black	42.0%	49.5%	7.4 % points	24.8%	24.0%	-0.8 % points
Hispanic	29.4%	35.5%	6.1 % points	15.7%	18.6%	2.9 % points
Asian	31.8%	32.4%	0.5 % points	15.8%	16.5%	0.8 % points
American Indian	30.2%	35.4%	5.2 % points	14.5%	10.6%	-3.9 % points
<b>Educational Attainment</b>						
Less Than a High School Degree	18.2%	23.1%	4.9 % points	10.1%	11.4%	1.3 % points
High School Degree	30.4%	38.4%	8.0 % points	15.6%	17.8%	2.3 % points
Some College	45.9%	57.4%	11.5 % points	25.2%	28.7%	3.5 % points
Bachelor's or More	64.7%	69.4%	4.7 % points	40.3%	41.0%	0.7 % points
<b>Marital Status</b>						
Married	46.3%	51.5%	5.3 % points	27.0%	29.9%	3.0 % points
Other Married	32.2%	38.5%	6.3 % points	16.6%	20.1%	3.5 % points
Single	38.5%	48.7%	10.2 % points	21.4%	24.4%	3.0 % points
<b>Student Status</b>						
High School Student	24.4%	36.0%	11.6 % points	15.8%	15.6%	-0.3 % points
College Student	48.0%	60.2%	12.2 % points	23.8%	27.3%	3.5 % points
<b>Labor Status</b>						
Working Non-Student	41.6%	49.0%	7.4 % points	24.3%	27.7%	3.4 % points
Working Student	49.2%	63.2%	14.0 % points	25.9%	29.8%	4.0 % points
Unemployed	27.9%	41.0%	13.1 % points	17.3%	20.3%	3.1 % points
<b>Region</b>						
Northeast	36.6%	49.3%	12.7 % points	20.9%	23.4%	2.5 % points
Midwest	42.9%	53.6%	10.7 % points	25.1%	31.1%	6.0 % points
South	39.9%	46.2%	6.3 % points	21.7%	22.7%	1.1 % points
West	39.0%	48.2%	9.3 % points	22.2%	25.6%	3.4 % points
<b>Urbanicity</b>						
Urban	42.9%	51.0%	8.1 % points	24.5%	25.5%	1.0 % point
Suburban	40.5%	49.9%	9.4 % points	21.9%	27.3%	5.4 % points
Rural	37.3%	44.7%	7.3 % points	21.9%	25.8%	3.9 % points
<b>Nativity Status</b>						
U.S.-Born to U.S.-Born Parents	41.2%	50.3%	9.1 % points	23.0%	26.5%	3.5 % points
U.S.-Born to at Least One Foreign-Born Parent	40.8%	41.6%	0.8 % points	31.1%	30.4%	-0.7 % points
Immigrants	31.0%	37.1%	6.1 % points	15.8%	16.5%	0.7 % points

Source: Authors' tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, 2000-2006.



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## METHODOLOGY

### Calculating Voter Turnout

All voter turnout estimates presented in this report are calculated for U.S. citizens only, according to the “Census Citizen Method” described in CIRCLE Working Paper 35 (Lopez et. al. 2005). With this method, we take the number of self-reported voters in the numerator and divide it by the number of self-reported citizens over age 18. All voter turnout estimates are weighted.

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.”

### Defining Race and Ethnicity

We have defined racial/ethnic groups in the Current Population Survey by defining anyone with Hispanic background as Latino; individuals who cite a single race or ethnicity and who are non-Hispanic as white, African-American, Asian-American or Native-American. In the National Election Pool, Exit Polls, the race and ethnicity categories are fixed. The respondents choose one category to represent their race/ethnicity.

### Data Sources

- U.S. Census Bureau and Bureau of Labor Statistics: Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement (2000, 2002, 2004, and 2006)
- U.S. Census Bureau and Bureau of Labor Statistics: Current Population Survey, March (Demographic) Supplement (2007)
- National Election Pool, Exit Poll (2000, 2002, 2004, and 2006)



## Polling Sources

- Harvard Institute of Politics. 13<sup>th</sup> Biannual Youth Survey on Politics and Public Service. Fall 2007.
- Rock the Vote, Sacred Heart University, and WWE's Smackdown Your Vote! Nationwide poll of 400 18- to 30-year-olds conducted October 5–15, 2007.
- Rasmussen Reports Survey, October 4, 2007.
- Rasmussen Reports Survey, September 4, 2007.
- Rasmussen Reports Survey, August 1–2, 2007.
- Rasmussen Reports Survey, July 16–17, 2007.
- Rasmussen Reports Survey, April 29–30, 2006.
- Pew Research Center for the People and the Press: A telephone survey of 1,503 adults, 18 years of age and older, conducted under the direction of Schulman, Ronca & Bucuvalas, Inc. from July 25–29, 2007.
- Democracy Corps Battleground Poll: A telephone survey of 1,600 swing district likely voters conducted by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research July 25–31, 2007. Total 18- to 29-year-old n=154.
- Democracy Corps Youth Poll: A multimodal survey of 1,017 18-29 year olds conducted by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research May 29–June 19, 2007. Survey methods included landline phone calls, cell phone calls, and online survey.
- RT Strategies National Omnibus Poll. "Young" = 18–34 years old. Nationwide survey of voters conducted Feb. 15–18, 2007.
- Rock the Vote's Battleground Poll III. A poll of 500 18- to 30-year-olds conducted by Lake Research Partners & The Tarrance Group, November 2–7, 2006.
- Rock the Vote's Battleground Poll I. A poll of 507 18- to 30-year-olds conducted by Lake Research Partners & The Tarrance Group, April 27–May 1, 2006.
- The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press Survey conducted June 14–29, 2006. Total 18- to 29-year-old n=128.
- The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press Survey conducted July, 2006.
- The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press Survey conducted August 9–13, 2006. Total 18- to 29-year-old n=112.
- RT Strategies National Omnibus Poll. Nationwide survey of voters conducted April 27–30, 2006. "Young" = 18–34 years old; 18–34 n=281.
- Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research Survey. A compilation of 18- to 29-year-olds' responses from polls conducted from March 29 to June 29, 2006 by GQR for Democracy Corps, for a total sample of 575.
- Lifetime Women's Pulse Poll, conducted by Lake Research Partners (Celinda Lake) and the WomanTrend division of The Polling Company, Inc (Kellyanne Conway). Nationwide survey of 500 18- to 29-year-old women and 200 18- to 29-year-old men, March 4–8, 2007.



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## ABOUT CIRCLE AND ROCK THE VOTE

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CIRCLE (The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement) promotes research on the civic and political engagement of Americans between the ages of 15 and 25. Although CIRCLE conducts and funds research, not practice, the projects that we support have practical implications for those who work to increase young people's engagement in politics and civic life. CIRCLE is also a clearinghouse for relevant information and scholarship.

CIRCLE was founded in 2001 with a generous grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts and is now also funded by Carnegie Corporation of New York. It is based in the University of Maryland's School of Public Policy.

[www.civicyouth.org](http://www.civicyouth.org)



Rock the Vote engages and builds the political power of young people in order to achieve progressive change in our country.

Rock the Vote uses music, popular culture and new technologies to engage and incite young people to register and vote in every election. And we give young people the tools to identify, learn about, and take action on the issues that affect their lives, and leverage their power in the political process.

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## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> In the United States there is no official measure of voter turnout. Often we must rely on surveys that ask participants to self-report electoral participation. As a result, this can lead to imprecise estimates of voter turnout. For more information on issues around calculating voter turnout rates see McDonald and Popkin (2001).
- <sup>2</sup> While young women report higher levels of voter participation, across other measures of electoral engagement, recent evidence suggests that young men are more likely to try to persuade others to vote, donate money to a political campaign, and volunteer for a political organization or group (Lopez et. al. 2006).
- <sup>3</sup> When compared to adults, young people have been more likely to favor the Democratic candidates in recent congressional and presidential races.

**Table E1 – Presidential Vote Choice Among Adults 30 and older**

	Democratic	Republican	Other
2004	47%	52%	1%
2000	49%	48%	3%

*Authors' tabulations from the National Election Pool, Exit Polls, 2000 and 2004.*

**Table E2 – Congressional Vote Choice Among Adults 30 and older**

	Democratic	Republican	Other
2006	51%	46%	2%
2004	46%	49%	2%
2002	45%	51%	2%
2000	49%	49%	2%

*Authors' tabulations from the National Election Pool, Exit Polls, 2000 and 2004.*



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