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Civic Learning & Engagement

Fast Facts about Young Voters

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Below are several facts about young voters ages 18 to 25 in the 2000 election. All estimates are from the 2000 Current Population Survey, November Supplement. Since some people inaccurately claim to have voted, the turnout estimates presented here are likely inflated. However, despite inflated reports of voter turnout, the Current Population Survey allows us to compare the participation rates across groups.ⁱⁱ

Population Estimates

Number of 18-25 year old American citizens eligible to vote:	26.9 million.
Number of people in this group who claim to have voted:	9.9 million (42.4%)
Percent of 18-25 year old American citizens who say they are registered to vote:	59.9%
Total number of American citizens eligible to vote:	166.8 million
Number of people in this group who claim to have voted:	110.8 million (66.4%)
Percent of American citizens who say they are registered to vote:	78.4%
Number of American citizens older than 25 eligible to vote:	143.5 million
Number of citizens over 25 who claim to have voted:	100.9 million (70.3%)
Percent of American citizens over 25 who say they are registered to vote:	80.8%

Among Eligible Young Citizens

44.3% of the women say they voted
40.3% of the men say they voted

44.0% of the white population say they voted
44.5% of African Americans say they voted
34.5% of Asian Americans say they voted
30.8% of Hispanics say they voted

68.2% of those who are college graduates say they voted
52.0% of those who have completed some college say they voted
28.8% of those who have never attended college say they voted

Among Registered Young Citizens

62.1% of the women said they were registered

57.5% of the men said they were registered

61.8% of the white population said they were registered

63.5% of African Americans said they were registered

47.2% of Asian Americans said they were registered

66.2% of Hispanics said they were registered

84.0% of those who are college graduates said they were registered to vote

70.4% of those who have completed some college said they were registered to vote

45.8% of those who have never attended college said they were registered to vote

Notes

ⁱ I thank Peter Levine, Carrie Donovan, Sara Mark, and Sue Ducat for comments on a previous draft of this fact sheet. All errors in fact or interpretation are my own.

ⁱⁱ It is unclear how much measurement error there is in voting and registration self-reports from the Current Population Survey, and whether that measurement error varies across groups. See "Youth Voter Turnout Has Declined by Any Measure" by Peter Levine and Mark Hugo Lopez (2002).