



CIRCLE

The Center for Information & Research
on Civic Learning & Engagement

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Over Three Million Citizens Under the Age of Thirty Participate in Super Tuesday Primaries

Young Voters Support Obama and Huckabee and McCain

Youth Voter Experts Available for Interviews
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Washington, DC – More than 3 million eligible citizens under the age of 30 participated in the Super Tuesday contests, according to preliminary estimates by CIRCLE (The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement). Over 2 million young people participated in the Super Tuesday Democratic contests compared to roughly 900,000 in the Republican contests. (See Table 2.) Of the eight states that were also part of Super Tuesday in 2000, seven saw increases in youth turnout, and in some of these states, youth turnout tripled or quadrupled. In the Democratic contests, Obama won the largest share of the youth vote in ten Super Tuesday states. Clinton won the youth vote in three states (MA, CA, and AR). In the Republican contests, youth support varied by state. (See Table 3.)



Table 1 – Super Tuesday Presidential Primary Participation in 2008
18-to-29-Year-Old Citizens

Super Tuesday Primary	Youth Turnout Rate	Youth Turnout Rate in 2000	Turnout Rate of Age 30 and Over	Overall Turnout Rate	Number of Youth Who Voted	Youth as Share of All Voters
AL	19%	N/A	36%	32%	135,597	13%
AR	11%	N/A	29%	25%	48,112	9%
AZ (17-29)	7%	N/A	25%	21%	59,267	7%
CA	17%	13%	32%	29%	873,508	14%
CT	12%	7%	22%	20%	51,436	10%
GA	21%	7%	34%	31%	281,724	14%
IL	18%	N/A	37%	32%	377,996	13%
MA	25%	11%	40%	37%	231,022	14%
MO	21%	7%	35%	32%	190,863	14%
NJ	18%	N/A	32%	29%	187,889	11%
NY	12%	12%	20%	18%	311,833	13%
OK	14%	4%	33%	29%	82,609	13%
TN	15%	3%	30%	27%	139,831	12%
UT	15%	N/A	29%	25%	66,248	16%
TOTAL					3,037,935	

Source: The share of primary voters is obtained from the states respective Republican and Democratic National Election Pool exit polls conducted by Edison/Mitofsky. The numbers of votes cast are obtained from the CNN.com (2/ 6 /2008; vote counts represent at least 95% of precincts reporting.) Estimated voter turnout is obtained by taking the estimated number of votes cast and dividing it by the estimated population of 18-to 29-year-old citizens and citizens over the age of 30 from the Current Population Survey (2007). ID, KS, MT, WV and NM are not included in Table 1 because they only held a Democratic or a Republican contest. AK, CO, ND, and DE are not included because they did not have exit polls for both races. MN was not included because no vote tally was available.

"Young Americans have been turning out to vote at remarkable rates in these primaries. This reflects their deep concern about the critical issues at stake and the impact of this election on our country's future," said CIRCLE Director, Peter Levine. "Since 2000, young people have been volunteering at high rates and are becoming more interested in news and public affairs.

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Now they are ready to consider voting as a way of addressing major problems. The Millennials are beginning to make their distinctive and lasting mark on American politics."

The results from the Super Tuesday contests punctuate the findings of national focus groups that CIRCLE conducted last fall. The research showed that college students are deeply concerned about issues, involved personally as volunteers, and ready to consider voting. But they want political leaders to be positive, to address real problems, and to call on all Americans to be constructively involved.

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. "Closed" primaries and caucuses tend to depress turnout since Independents cannot participate.

Because there is no actual count of the number of votes cast by young people in the primaries, we can only estimate their level of participation. Our turnout estimates are based on early vote tallies reported by the media, the share of voters who are young calculated by the National Election Pool exit/entrance polls, and an estimate of the eligible voting population obtained from the Census Current Population Survey (CPS). The 2008 voter turnout rate may rise as more votes are tallied. (The early vote tally does not include such votes as absentee ballots and provisional ballots.) As a result, our 2008 turnout rate likely underestimates the level of participation in the 2008 Super Tuesday primaries. The following table provides estimates of youth participation in the each primary by party.



**Table 2 – 2008 Super Tuesday Presidential Primary Participation
By Party
18-to-29-Year-Old Citizens**

State	Democratic Primaries		Republican Primaries	
	Number of Primary Participants	Share of Primary Participants	Number of Primary Participants	Share of Primary Participants
AL	71,574	13%	64,023	12%
AR	26,517	9%	21,595	10%
AZ	31,201	8%	28,066	6%
CA	645,965	16%	227,543	10%
CT	34,929	10%	16,507	11%
GA	176,948	17%	104,775	11%
IL	290,660	15%	87,337	10%
MA	168,863	14%	62,159	13%
MO	114,863	14%	75,870	13%
NJ	143,497	13%	44,392	8%
NY	257,719	15%	54,114	9%
OK	36,149	9%	46,451	14%
TN	79,663	13%	60,366	11%
UT	20,847	17%	45,401	16%
TOTAL	2,099,395		938,599	



**Table 3 – Super Tuesday Youth Vote Choice
by Party**

State	Democratic Candidates			Republican Candidates		
	Clinton	Obama	Huckabee	McCain	Paul	Romney
AL	32%	64%	51%	22%	4%	24%
AR	56%	43%	68%	16%	6%	7%
AZ	37%	59%	15%	32%	9%	43%
CA	51%	47%	22%	34%	8%	31%
CT	39%	58%	11%	51%	18%	9%
GA	23%	75%	43%	23%	8%	24%
IL	29%	69%	28%	30%	13%	22%
MA	49%	48%	4%	36%	7%	52%
MO	30%	65%	43%	27%	9%	18%
NJ	39%	59%	8%	46%	17%	19%
NY	43%	56%	15%	43%	11%	21%
OK	n/a	n/a	38%	26%	3%	28%
TN	44%	53%	38%	25%	14%	15%
UT	25%	70%	2%	6%	4%	88%

Source: www.cnn.com

This increase in youth turnout in the early primary season continues a trend observed in other elections since 2000. In the 2006 congressional elections, the voter turnout rate among 18-to-29-year-olds increased by three percentage points compared to the previous congressional election of 2002. And in the 2004 presidential election, the national youth voter turnout rate rose 9 percentage points compared to 2000, reaching 49 percent. In 2004, under-30-year-olds were registered to vote at the highest rate in 30 years.

Definitions

Youth: For the purpose of the Super Tuesday primaries, we define “youth” as citizens between the ages of 18 and 29 on February 5, 2008.

Number of youth who voted: An estimate of how many youth participated.

Youth share primary participants: An estimate of the number of young people who participated in the primaries as a percentage of the number of *all people* who participated in the primaries.

Youth turnout rate: An estimate of the number of young people who participated in the primaries as a percentage of the total number of young people who were eligible to participate in either primary.

The youth turnout rate is the best indicator of how young Americans are engaging in the political process. The other statistics—the sheer number of youth participants and the youth share of the electorate—can change because of factors unrelated to youth engagement.

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. Since 2001, CIRCLE has conducted, collected, and funded research on the civic and political participation of young Americans. CIRCLE is based in the University of Maryland’s School of Public Policy and is funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts, Carnegie Corporation of New York and several other foundations.