

RESEARCH ROUNDUP

The Research Roundup column highlights recent research findings commissioned or generated by CIRCLE. Also included is an update on new CIRCLE products such as Fact Sheets, Research Articles, Research Abstracts, Bibliographies, and Datasets.

CENSUS DATA CONFIRM INCREASE IN YOUTH VOTER TURNOUT

Nearly two million more young Americans under the age of 30 voted in the 2006 midterm elections as compared to the 2002 midterm elections, according to new Census data analyzed and released in a CIRCLE Fact Sheet "Youth Voter Turnout Increases in 2006." The data confirm early estimates by CIRCLE that 10.8 million young Americans voted in the 2006 midterm elections.

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"We have now seen two consecutive elections with substantial increases in youth turnout," said CIRCLE Director Peter Levine. "The increase in 2006 is particularly striking because the turnout of the whole adult population hardly rose at all. It seems likely that the Millennial generation is more involved in politics than Generation X, or that deliberate efforts to mobilize young voters are effective—or both. Given this trend and the magnitude and attention around the 2008 elections we expect record numbers of youth voters."

In the 2002 midterm election, 22.5 percent of young adults voted. However, the best comparison to the 2006 election may be the 1994 midterm, because it was the last midterm to follow a surge in youth voting in a presidential election year, comparable to the 11-point surge in 2004. In 1994, 26.1 percent of 18- to 29-year-olds voted.

TABLE 1: MIDTERM ELECTION YOUTH VOTER TURNOUT

	National Youth Voter Turnout Rate	Number of Youth Voters (ages 18-29)	Youth Share of Votes Cast
2006	25.5%	10.8 million	11.2%
2002	22.5%	8.9 million	10.2%
1994	26.1%	10.6 million	12.2%

Source: Authors' tabulations from the 2006, 2002, & 1994 November Supplements of the Current Population Survey.

TURNOUT VARIES BY STATE

In 2006, the three states with the highest level of youth voter turnout were Minnesota (43 percent), Wisconsin (40 percent), and South Dakota (39 percent). In contrast, the three with the lowest youth turnout rates were West Virginia (16 percent), Texas (17 percent) and Utah (17 percent). These differences are most likely driven by high profile gubernatorial and Senate races as well as statewide ballot initiatives in the higher turnout states.

CIRCLE has released state-by-state facts sheets which examine voter turnout rates from 1978-2006, turnout rates by subgroup, and partisanship (where available from the National Election Pool, Exit Poll surveys). Visit <http://www.civicyouth.org/?p=169> to download individual state fact sheets.

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VOTING TRENDS BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS

In many cases, 2006 voter turnout rates among young people of different demographic groups were similar to 1994 rates. However, between 2002 and 2006, turnout among African-Americans and Native-Americans declined by one point and 14 points, respectively. The Midwest region experienced an increase of six

percentage points in youth voter turnout between 2002 and 2006, leading all other regions in voter turnout in both elections. Visit www.civicyouth.org for more information on youth voter turnout in the 2006 midterm elections. *

CIRCLE FACT SHEETS

CIRCLE has produced numerous Fact Sheets, which are brief documents with basic information and graphs on various topics. The following Fact Sheets have been recently added to CIRCLE's Web site:

≡ **Quick Facts About Young Voters by State.** Using data from the 2006 Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplement, these facts sheets examine voter turnout rates from 1978-2006, turnout rates by subgroup, and partisanship (where available from the Election Pool, Exit Poll surveys) for all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

≡ **Youth Voter Turnout Increases in 2006.** This fact sheet uses new data from the 2006 Current Population Survey, November Supplement, to determine the youth voter turnout in the 2006 midterm election. Also, this fact sheet includes information on voter turnout trend lines, voter turnout by demographic variables, voter turnout by state, and partisanship.

≡ **Volunteering Among Young People.** Based on a variety of data sources including CIRCLE's 2006 Civic & Political Health of the Nation survey, Monitoring the Future data from 1976-2005, HERI data from 1984-2005, & NELS data from 1988. Compares youth volunteering with that of other generations, tracks high school and college student volunteering over time, and breaks down youth volunteering for organizations by organization type.

≡ **Youth Volunteering in the States 2002 to 2005.** Uses the Current Population Survey (CPS) September Volunteer Supplements from 2002-2005, administered by the Bureau of the Census and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Offers a breakdown of volunteer rates by states and age groups.

≡ **Civic Religious Attendance and Civic Engagement Among 15-to-25-Year-Olds.** This fact sheet reports that young people who attend religious services are more likely to vote and volunteer. The data also showed that those who attend religious services regularly are more likely than their counterparts to belong to groups involved in politics, display a campaign button or sign, and donate money to candidates or a party.