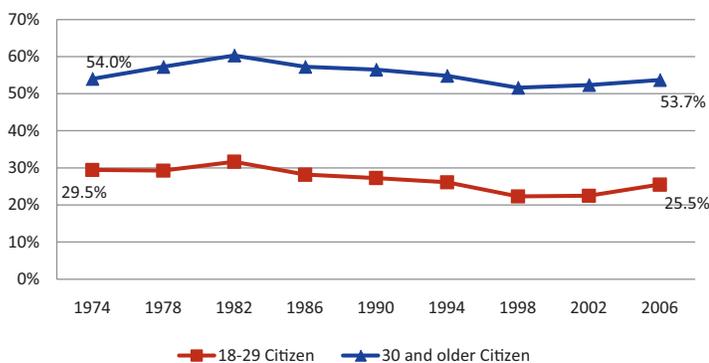


YOUNG VOTERS IN MIDTERM ELECTIONS

As we approach the midterm election of November 2010, CIRCLE is focusing on 2006, the most recent midterm election, as a comparison year. In 2006, turnout among 18-to-29-year-olds increased—up three percentage points from 2002, which broke a trend of declining electoral participation in midterm elections among young people since 1982. The youth voter turnout rate was highest in Minnesota (43 percent), Wisconsin (40 percent), and Montana (49 percent). The states with the lowest turnout were West Virginia (16 percent), Texas and Utah (tied at 17 percent). The metropolitan areas with the highest turnout in 2006 were the Twin Cities (Minneapolis-St.Paul, 47 percent), Milwaukee (39 percent), and Detroit (38 percent). Interested in learning more facts about young voters in the midterm elections? CIRCLE has a variety of fact sheets showing youth participation in past midterm elections. All fact sheets cited in this article can be downloaded from <http://www.civicyouth.org/?p=377>.

Figure 1: Voter Turnout Midterm Years Among Citizens, by Age



Source: Authors tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November Supplements, 1974-2006

YOUTH VOTER TURNOUT TRENDS IN MIDTERM ELECTIONS

The fact sheet “Youth Voter Turnout Increases in 2006” shows that the voter turnout rate among 18-to-29-year-olds increased by three percentage points between 2002 and 2006. The percentage point increase in turnout posted by the youngest voters, ages 18 to 29, was higher than any other age group for the second election in a row. Voter turnout among voters under 30 rose three points from 22.5 percent to 25.5 percent between 2002 and 2006. In contrast, for all voters the overall turnout rate grew by 1.7 percentage points from 46.1 percent to 47.8 percent (see Table 1).

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Tufts
UNIVERSITY

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and Public Service

OCTOBER 2010

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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.

Table 1 - Change in Voter Turnout Among Citizens, by Age, 2002 and 2006

Age Groups	2002	2006	Percentage Point Increase
18-29	22.5 percent	25.5 percent	+3.0 points
30-44	42.2 percent	43.0 percent	+ .8 points
45-59	55.0 percent	56.0 percent	+ 1.0 points
60+	62.4 percent	63.1 percent	+ 0.7 points
All Ages	46.1 percent	47.8 percent	+ 1.7 points

Source: Authors Tabulations from the 2006 and 2002 November Supplements of the Current Population Survey

Other highlights from the fact sheet include:

In 2006, young adults voted for the Democratic candidate over the Republican candidate in races for the House of Representatives (58% vs. 38%), the Senate (60% vs. 33%) and Governor (55% vs. 34%). Young voters were more racially and ethnically diverse than older voters. Eleven percent classified themselves as Hispanic/Latino (larger than the proportion in the electorate as a whole by six percentage points). Young Latinos increased their voter share by eight percentage points since 1992, more than any other minority racial/ethnic group. Thirteen percent of young voters self-identified as Black, compared to 10% of all the voters. Five percent identified as gay, lesbian, or bisexual, compared to three percent of the whole electorate. The share of young white voters has decreased from 84% in 1992 to 71% in 2006.

YOUNG LATINOS HAVE INCREASED THEIR VOTER SHARE BY EIGHT PERCENTAGE POINTS SINCE 1992, MORE THAN ANY OTHER MINORITY RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUP.

Young voters were the most likely age group to make their voting decision on Election Day. Forty-four percent of young voters decided for whom to vote in the U.S. House election within a week of Election Day, compared to 28% of the electorate as a whole.

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STATE BY STATE ANALYSIS OF YOUTH VOTING TRENDS IN THE MIDTERMS

“Quick Facts About Young Voters by State: The Midterm Election Year 2006” is a series of 50 fact sheets, based on data from the 2006 Census CPS, November Supplement, that examine voter turnout rates from 1978-2006, turnout rates by subgroup, and partisanship (where available from the National Election Pool, Exit Poll surveys).

Highlights from this series include:

- 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 were most likely driven by high profile gubernatorial and Senate races as well as statewide ballot initiatives in the higher turnout states.
- In 27 states the female youth turnout rate was higher than the male youth turnout rate.
- In nine states the male youth turnout rate was higher than the female youth turnout rate.
- In nine states the female youth turnout rate was the same as the male youth turnout rate.

YOUTH TURNOUT IN METROPOLITAN AND URBAN AREAS

“Quick Facts About Young Voters by Metropolitan Area: The Midterm Election Year 2006,” is a fact sheet that analyzes voter turnout rates by metropolitan area. “Young Urban Voters in the Midterm Election Year 2006” presents youth voter turnout data for the 2006 midterm elections by urban, suburban, and rural areas as well as information for select metropolitan areas.

Highlights from these two fact sheets include:

- The five metropolitan areas with the highest youth turnout in 2006 were: Minneapolis, MN (47%); Milwaukee, WI (39%); Detroit, MI (38%); Seattle, WA (38%); and Atlanta, GA (36%).

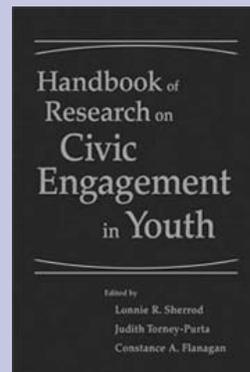
- Young people in rural areas had a slightly higher voter turnout rate, 27 percent, compared to 26 percent for young people who live in suburban and urban areas.

YOUNG LATINOS HAD THE HIGHEST VOTER TURNOUT RATES IN URBAN AREAS (22 PERCENT) AND LOWEST IN RURAL AREAS (11 PERCENT).

- However, for some subgroups of young people, there were larger differences in voter participation by type of community. For example, among black non-Hispanics, voter turnout rates were highest among those who resided in rural areas (30 percent). In contrast, the pattern of participation was reversed for Latinos. Young Latinos had the highest voter turnout rates in urban areas (22 percent) and lowest in rural areas (11 percent).★

NEW BOOK: HANDBOOK OF RESEARCH ON CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN YOUTH, EDITED BY LONNIE R. SHERROD, JUDITH TORNEY-PURTA, CONSTANCE A. FLANAGAN (JOHN WILEY & SONS, 2010)

Engaging youth in civic life has become a central concern to a broad array of researchers in a variety of academic fields as well to policy makers and practitioners globally. This book is both international and multidisciplinary, consisting of three sections that respectively



cover conceptual issues, developmental and educational topics, and methodological and measurement issues. Broad in its coverage of topics, this book supports scholars, philanthropists, business leaders, government officials, teachers, parents, and community practitioners in their drive to engage more young people in community and civic actions. Thirteen of the authors are present or former CIRCLE grantees, board members, or staff.

