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Exclusive Analysis: Hillary Clinton and the Youth Vote in 2016

Young voters overwhelmingly favored Sanders in Democratic primary, but the general electorate offers more potential upside to Clinton than Trump; young women, black youth more likely to support Clinton

Medford/Somerville, MA – While she received weak support from young people in the Democratic primary process, the general election may be considerably more favorable to Secretary Hillary Clinton. Now that she is the Democratic party nominee, researchers at the [Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning & Engagement \(CIRCLE\)](#) – the preeminent, non-partisan research center on youth engagement at Tufts University’s [Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life](#) – today released an [analysis](#) of young people’s support and views of Secretary Clinton during this primary election cycle, exploring trends and implications for the general election.

Analyzing data from primary contests, as well as more recent polling, the [briefing](#) offers findings in response to several key questions:

How did Hillary Clinton perform among young people who voted in the primaries? And how did her youth support compare to that of previous Democratic nominees?

- Secretary Clinton won 20 of the 27 state primaries for which exit poll data are available, but won the youth vote (ages 17-29) in just two of those states—Alabama and Mississippi.
- In these 27 states, she averaged only 28% of young voters, lagging far behind recent Democratic presidential nominees.
- Secretary Clinton performed relatively better with young African Americans and she did better with slightly older youth (ages 25-29).
- Data from Super Tuesday primaries indicate that young women were more likely to support Secretary Clinton than young men; but young women still supported her at lower levels than did older women.

How do young people overall view Hillary Clinton? And which groups of young people are most likely to vote for her?

- At least half of young people have negative views of Secretary Clinton, and similar numbers do not find her honest and trustworthy.
- However, more youth report that they intend to vote for Secretary Clinton than for Donald Trump, who has even lower favorability numbers.
- Secretary Clinton may enjoy higher support from constituencies who have been especially supportive of other recent Democratic presidential nominees, such as young single women, young Black women, and young Latinas.

Is the general youth electorate more or less favorable to Hillary Clinton than the Democratic primary electorate?

- The youth electorate in recent general elections has been more diverse than this year's Democratic primary, which may benefit Secretary Clinton given her relative strength over Mr. Trump with young women and youth of color.
- Together, young people of color and young women comprise roughly 70% of youth eligible to vote, and young women have historically turned out at higher rates than young men.
- Voter outreach, always important, is especially critical with youth; our research has shown that young people who are contacted about voting are more likely to cast a ballot on Election Day.

“Now that a tough primary season is behind her and voters are focused on November, Secretary Clinton’s challenge is to reclaim the considerable ground she lost to Senator Sanders with young voters,” said [Kei Kawashima-Ginsberg, Director of CIRCLE](#). **“The data indicate this is possible, but much will depend on how effectively she wins trust from young people who want to believe in her leadership and the vision of future that her administration could help realize. Her success in doing so will have implications beyond 2016.”**

2016 Election

Hillary Clinton and Young Voters

For CIRCLE’s full briefing, please see [here](#) or click above

[CIRCLE's 2016 Election Center](#) will continue to offer data products and analyses providing a comprehensive picture of the youth vote, including a corresponding briefing on [Donald Trump and Young Voters](#) and the [Youth Electoral Significance Index](#), which offers insight into key states where young people have the potential to shape the 2016 general election.

CIRCLE youth vote experts are available for interviews and/or analysis.

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CIRCLE (www.civicyouth.org) is a nonpartisan, independent, academic research center that studies young people in politics and presents detailed data on young voters in all 50 states. CIRCLE is part of the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life.

The only university-wide college of its kind, the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life (<http://activecitizen.tufts.edu/>) offers transformational student learning and service opportunities, conducts groundbreaking research on young people's civic and political participation, and forges innovative community partnerships. Its work is guided by two core beliefs: that communities, nations and the world are stronger, more prosperous, and more just when citizens actively participate in civic and democratic life; and that higher education has a responsibility to develop the next generation of active citizens.

Tufts University (<http://www.tufts.edu/>), located on three Massachusetts campuses in Boston, Medford/Somerville and Grafton, and in Talloires, France, is recognized as one of the premier research universities in the United States. Tufts enjoys a global reputation for academic excellence and for the preparation of students as leaders in a wide range of professions. A growing number of innovative teaching and research initiatives span all Tufts campuses, and collaboration among the faculty and students in the undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs across the university's schools is widely encouraged.