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Top 8 Takeaways about Young Voters and the 2014 Midterm Elections

New CIRCLE Analysis Goes Beyond Usual Headlines to Dig Deeper into 18-29 Year Olds this Election Cycle

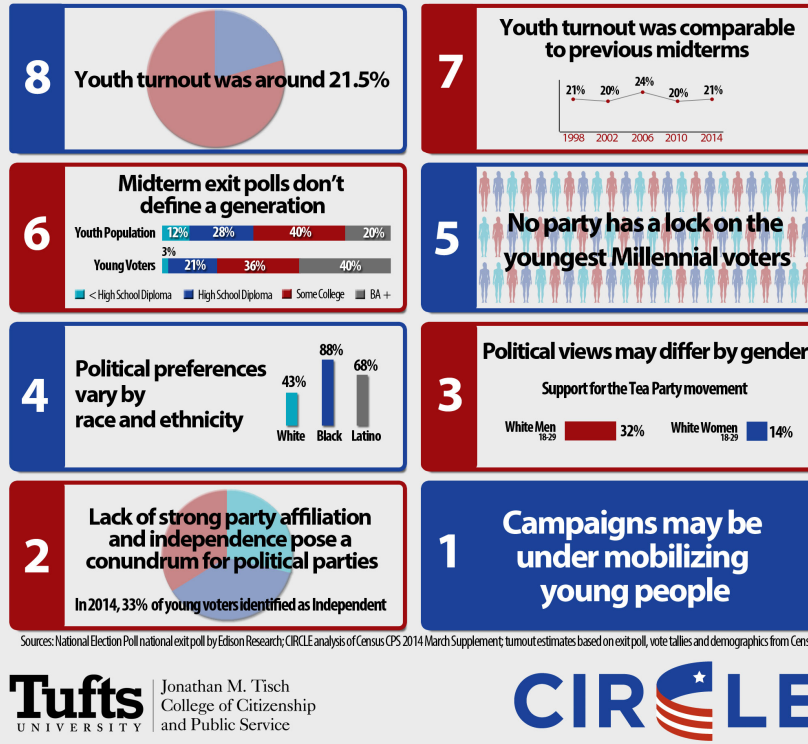
Medford/Somerville, MA – The votes have been counted, for the most part, and the armchair quarterbacking of the 2014-midterm elections is well under way, but now that the dust has settled: **what’s the real story on young voters, ages 18-29, this midterm election cycle?**

Today, youth vote experts from the [Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning & Engagement \(CIRCLE\)](http://CenterforInformationandResearchonCivicLearning&Engagement.org) – the preeminent, non-partisan research center on youth engagement based at Tufts University’s Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service – have released the [top eight takeaways about young voters and the 2014 midterm elections](http://top-eight-takeaways-about-young-voters-and-the-2014-midterm-elections). This new analysis by CIRCLE shows a much more complex view of young voters beyond the usual headlines of just simply voter turnout and vote choice.

“Each election year, the headlines about youth voters tend to be the same. The relatively low turnout rate is usually lamented, followed by analysis of which party benefited the most from youth support,” said Peter Levine, director of CIRCLE and Associate Dean of the Tisch College. **“We felt it was important to go beyond those headlines and dig deeper into the complexities and subtler lessons about young voters this election cycle.”**

Today’s analysis released by CIRCLE, [“Top 8 Takeaways about Young Voters and the 2014 Election”](http://top-8-takeaways-about-young-voters-and-the-2014-election) shows the story beyond the headlines regarding young people during the 2014-midterm elections.

Young Voters (18-29) and the 2014 Election

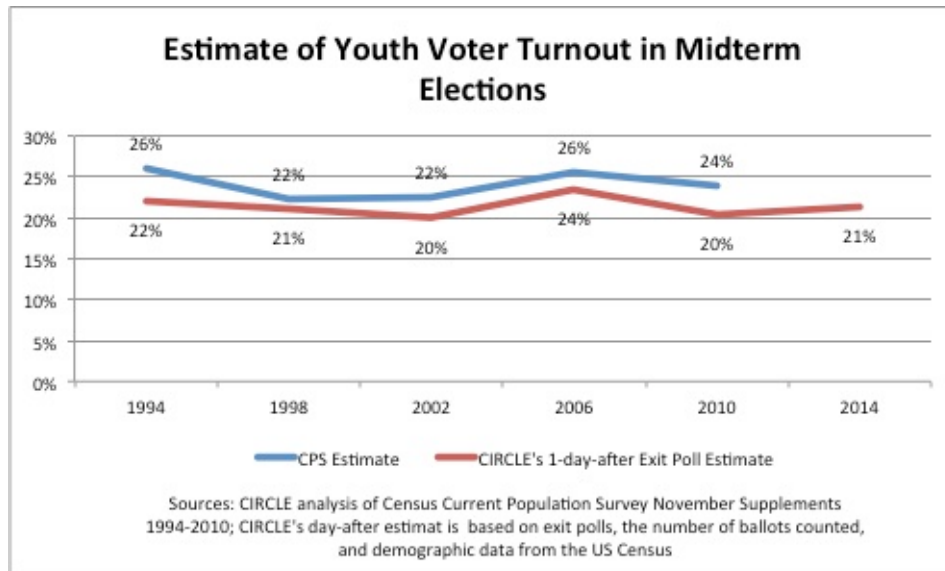


You can read the full analysis, along with additional data and graphs for each of the eight takeaways by going [here](#).

The top eight takeaways, include:

#8. Youth turnout in 2014 election was around 21.5%. CIRCLE's estimate of youth turnout in 2014 (based on the Exit Polls and the number of votes counted two days after the election) is 21.5% of youth. In other words, about one in five young adults who were eligible to vote did vote.

#7. Turnout of youth in 2014 was pretty standard, and comparable to previous midterms. Voter turnout among all age groups is lower in midterm elections when compared to presidential election years. The drop has been consistently more pronounced among young people. However, when comparing previous midterm elections 2014 was highly typical for turnout amongst young voters, right near the average for the last 20 years.



#6. Midterm exit polls don't define a generation. It is unwise to draw generation-wide conclusions based on 21.5% of youth. For example, young people with a bachelor's degree or higher make up 20% of the overall young citizen population, but made up 40% of voters in 2014.

#5. Neither party has a lock on 18-to-24 year olds. Small differences do emerge by age among the young voters who participated this year, but the differences indicate both more liberal *and* more conservative attitudes. There is no clear sign of a shift.

#4. More distinct differences emerge among youth by race and ethnicity. While 54% of youth (18-29) nationally voted for Democratic House candidates, significant differences consistently emerge by race and ethnicity. In both 2010 and 2014, Black and Latino youth were considerably more likely to choose Democratic House candidates than White youth were. White youth gave a majority to the Republicans in House races (54% to 43%).

#3. Gender also matters. Young White women largely split their vote between parties (50% for Republicans in House races, 47% for Democrats), while young white men overwhelmingly supported House Republican candidates (58% vs. 39%). Thirty-seven percent of young White men who voted in 2014 said that Secretary Clinton would make a good president, compared to 48% of young White women.

#2. Youth propensity for being independent poses a conundrum for political parties. In 2014, 33% of young people identified as Independents or "something else" (as compared to 37% Democrats and 31% Republicans). While these numbers differed by race and ethnicity, a significant minority of each sub-group did not identify with a major party. Young voters were split on their opinion of the

Democratic Party and slightly more were unfavorable to the Republican Party.

#1. Missing Mobilization? Research shows that outreach and mobilization of youth has an impact on turnout. Yet, in 2014, young people were the age group [least likely to be contacted](#), according to Pew Research data from October. The reason that youth turnout in 2014 was comparable to previous midterm years may be that there was no more outreach this year.

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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 Citizenship and Public Service at Tufts University.

The Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service (<http://activecitizen.tufts.edu/>) is a national leader whose model and research are setting the standard for higher education's role in civic engagement education. Serving every school of Tufts University, Tisch College creates an enduring culture that prepares students to be lifelong 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.

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