



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday, November 17, 2016
CONTACT: Kristofer Eisenla, [LUNA+EISENLA media](mailto:kristofer@lunaeisenlamedia.com)
kristofer@lunaeisenlamedia.com | 202-670-5747 (mobile)

EXCLUSIVE ANALYSIS: In-Depth Look at Young Voters in the 2016 General Election

Half of eligible young people cast ballots; a diverse, divided youth electorate favored Clinton over Trump; young White men, moderates played key roles; major parties struggle to attract large base of youth votes

Medford/Somerville, MA –The [Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement \(CIRCLE\)](#)—the preeminent youth research organization at Tufts University’s Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life—this morning released [a comprehensive analysis of the youth vote in the 2016 election](#), providing a demographic breakdown of young people’s support for each major candidate and political party, while also considering the long-term implications of a youth electorate that is increasingly unlikely to identify strongly with either major party. The analysis also found that young people voted at a similar rate to 2012 – at or slightly above 50%.

“It’s not news that some young people are eschewing political parties, but it is a concern for building ongoing political engagement among youth,” said CIRCLE director Kei Kawashima-Ginsberg. **“We must remember that youth civic development and engagement is a year-round effort and multiple stakeholders in each community need to commit to engaging youth, including but not only campaigns and parties.”**

Major findings based on CIRCLE’s analysis of the national exit poll conducted by Edison Research include:

Youth candidate choice varied among demographic groups

- President-elect Donald Trump, while losing the youth vote overall by 55% to 37%, garnered support from segments of the youth electorate: Whites, evangelicals, and young people in rural areas.

- President-elect Trump also drew significant support from young people whose ideas and concerns tracked closely with the key themes of his campaign: the state of the country, an interest in stronger immigration controls, and a perceived untrustworthiness of his opponent, Hillary Clinton.
- While Secretary Clinton won by large margins among demographic groups like unmarried young women and youth of color, she lacked key support from young Whites, young men, and young White moderates, because of the size of these groups. Some of these groups previously backed President Obama by wide margins in 2008 and 2012.

Youth turnout held steady – was similar to 2012 with diverse youth electorate

- Based on currently available data, CIRCLE sees no evidence that the national youth turnout decreased in 2016. In fact, the analysis suggests that young people voted at a similar rate than in 2012 – around 50%.
- Youth turnout was higher (55%), in the aggregate, in eleven battleground states.
- While the youth electorate in 2016 closely mirrored the general population of young citizens and remained as racially and ethnically diverse as it has been since 2008 there were some important differences of note, including a surge of young, White men in the 2016 electorate.
- In addition, young people without college experience, already historically underrepresented, made up a smaller share of the young people who cast ballots than they have in recent elections.

Youth electorate is ideologically diverse and major parties struggle to attract large base of youth votes

- In the 2016 election, less than 4 in 10 young voters identified with the Democratic Party and less than 3 in 10 identified with the Republican Party, which suggests that America's two major political parties are having trouble attracting and growing a committed youth base.
- This year's youth electorate was also diverse in terms of party affiliation and political ideology. Young people who cast ballots in 2016 were more likely to identify as liberal than in recent elections (32% in 2008 to 37% in 2016), but they were less likely to identify as Democrats (45% in 2008 to 37% in 2016).
- While young people who identify as Democrats remained the largest group within this year's youth electorate, there were nearly as many young voters who identified as Independents or with other political parties (35%). This shift suggests that young people increasingly embrace a liberal ideology but may not necessarily see the Democratic Party as an institution that can represent and advance those ideas.

Read the [full analysis here](#) and visit our [Election Center](#) for more from CIRCLE on how many young people voted, which candidates they supported, and which segments of the

youth population cast their ballots in 2016 and previous elections.

CIRCLE youth vote experts also are available for interviews and/or analysis. Media outlets should contact: Kristofer Eisenla at kristofer@lunaeisenlamedia.com or 202-670-5747

###

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.