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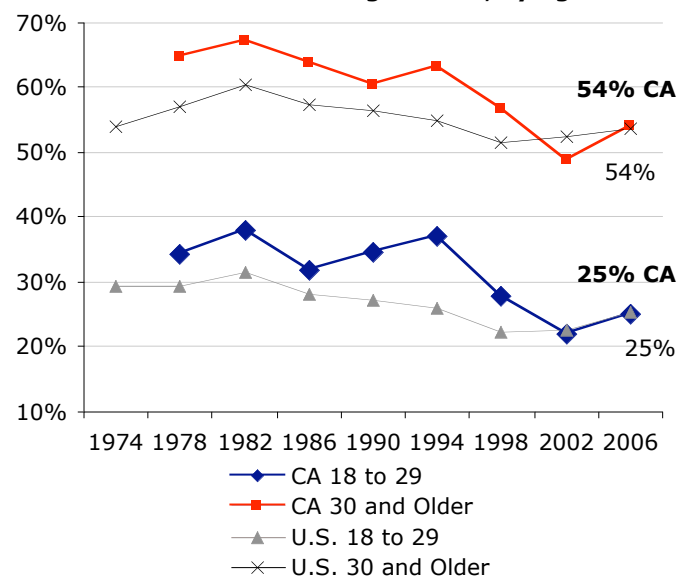
Quick Facts about Young Voters in California: The Midterm Election Year 2006

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The 2006 midterm election was the second major election in a row that saw an increase in the electoral participation of young people ages 18-29. Between 2002 and 2006, the percentage of eligible young people who voted increased by 3 percentage points to 25 percent, the single largest increase among all age groups nationally.² Similarly, while youth electoral participation improved between 2002 and 2006 nationally, in California, the youth voter turnout rate rose 3 percentage points from 22 percent in 2002 to 25 percent in 2006. Overall, California ranked 27th (tied with DE and MS) among all states and the District of Columbia in 2006, up from 29th in 2002.

This fact sheet reports the characteristics of young voters for the state of California, including estimates of the number of young voters, and voter turnout rates in 2006 and 2002 for various sub-groups of young people.

Graph 1: California Voter Turnout in Midterm Years Among Citizens, by Age



Source: Current Population Survey, November Supplements, 1974-2006.

Voter Turnout Statistics, 2006

In 2006, a midterm election year, young people in California who are eligible to vote in U.S. elections cast 1.1 million votes. Table 1 shows voting statistics for the years 2006 and 2002. California's youth voter turnout rate was in the middle of all states in 2002. In 2006, California's voter turnout rates mirrored those of the nation's rates.

Voter Turnout Rates in 2006 and 2002 Among Eligible Young Citizens

Table 2 displays voter turnout rates for various groups of young people in 2006 and 2002 in California. In 2006, voter turnout among many youth groups in California was very low with similar rates to 2002. Only among young people with a BA or more was the voter turnout rate at 40 percent or more.

Partisanship Among Young Voters in 2006

The plurality of young voters identified as Democrat in the 2006 elections.

Table 3 – Partisanship Among 18 to 29 year old Voters in 2006

	California
Democrat	39 percent
Independent	21 percent
Republican	28 percent
Something Else	13 percent

Source: Authors' Tabulations from the National Election Pool, Exit Poll Survey, 2006.

Table 1 – California Voter Turnout Statistics, 2006 and 2002

	Young People 18 to 29	Adults 30 and Older
2006		
Number of Votes Cast	1.1 million	9 million
Voter Turnout Rate	25 percent	54 percent
Share of all Voters	11 percent	89 percent
2002		
Number of Votes Cast	999 thousand	7.9 million
Voter Turnout Rate	22 percent	49 percent
Share of all Voters	11 percent	89 percent

Source: Authors' Tabulations, Current Population Survey, November Supplement 2006 and 2002

Table 2 – California Voter Turnout Rates Among Young Citizens ages 18 to 29, 2006 and 2002

Voter Turnout Rate Among:	2006	2002
Race/Ethnicity³		
White non-Hispanics	29 percent	25 percent
Black non-Hispanics	23 percent	23 percent
Latinos	22 percent	17 percent
Asian non-Hispanics	17 percent	16 percent
Native American non-Hispanics	***	***
Gender		
Women	26 percent	25 percent
Men	23 percent	19 percent
Educational Attainment		
Less than High School	12 percent	6 percent
High School	17 percent	11 percent
Some College	26 percent	25 percent
BA or more	40 percent	40 percent
Marital Status		
Single Men	23 percent	17 percent
Single Women	26 percent	24 percent
Married Men	25 percent	25 percent
Married Women	29 percent	28 percent
Registered Voter	55 percent	50 percent

All Youth, California	25 percent	22 percent
All Youth, National	25 percent	22 percent

Source: Authors' Tabulations from the 2006, 2002, and 1994 November Supplements of the Current Population Survey. '***' indicates a sample size is too small to produce a reliable estimate.

Notes

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² See “Youth Voter Turnout Increases in 2006” by Mark Hugo Lopez, Karlo Barrios Marcelo, and Emily Hoban Kirby for a longer discussion of youth voter turnout trends in 2006.

³ We have defined racial/ethnic groups in the Current Population Survey November Supplements by defining anyone with Hispanic background as Latino; individuals who cite a single non-Hispanic race or ethnicity are identified as non-Hispanic white, African American, Asian American or Native American.