



FACT SHEET



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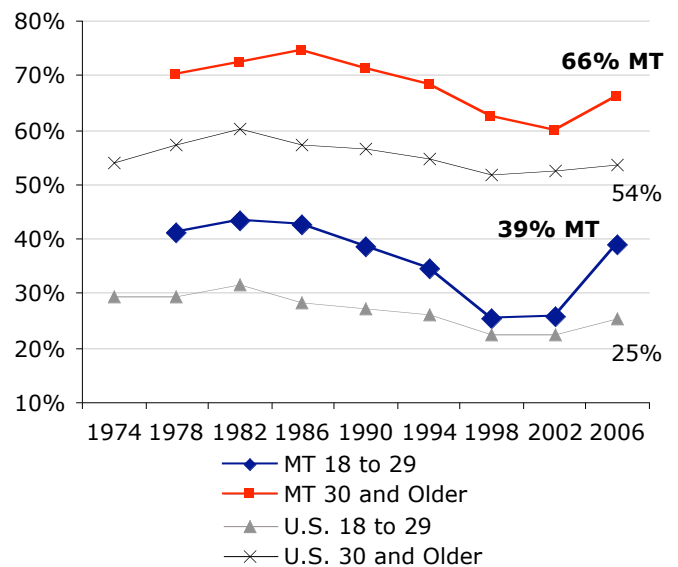
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Quick Facts about Young Voters in Montana: The Midterm Election Year 2006

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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 Montana, the youth voter turnout rate rose 13 percentage points from 26 percent in 2002 to 39 percent in 2006. Overall, Montana ranked 3rd among all states and the District of Columbia in 2006, up from 14th in 2002, and was 14 percentage points higher than the nation as a whole.

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



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

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

Youth Turnout Estimates, 2006

In 2006, a midterm election year, there were an estimated 124,000 young people in Montana who were eligible to vote in U.S. elections. Table 1 shows voting statistics for the years 2006 and 2002.

Voter Turnout Rates in 2006 and 2002 Among Eligible Young Citizens, Ages 18-29

Table 2 displays voter turnout rates for various groups of young people ages 18 to 29 in 2006 and 2002 in Montana. In 2006, voter turnout among many youth groups in Montana was up from 2002. Also in 2006 and 2002, relative to the nation as a whole, youth in Montana were more engaged electorally.

Partisanship Among Young Voters in 2006

The plurality of young voters identified as Democrat, regardless of how they voted, in the 2006 elections. See Table 3.

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

	Montana
Democrat	36 percent
Independent	21 percent
Republican	34 percent
Something Else	***

Source: Authors' Tabulations from the National Election Pool, Exit Poll Survey, 2006. (***) – Sample size was too small to produce reliable estimates.

Table 1 – Montana Voter Turnout Statistics, 2006 and 2002

	Young People 18 to 29	Adults 30 and Older
2006		
Number of Votes Cast	65 thousand	370 thousand
Voter Turnout Rate	39 percent	66 percent
Share of all Voters	15 percent	85 percent
2002		
Number of Votes Cast	30 thousand	333 thousand
Voter Turnout Rate	26 percent	60 percent
Share of all Voters	8 percent	92 percent

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

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

Voter Turnout Rate Among:	2006	2002
Gender		
Women	33 percent	23 percent
Men	44 percent	28 percent
Educational Attainment		
Less than High School	***	***
High School	31 percent	8 percent
Some College	47 percent	31 percent
BA or more	***	44 percent
Marital Status		
Single Men	38 percent	28 percent
Single Women	30 percent	17 percent
Married Men	***	33 percent
Married Women	41 percent	34 percent
Registered Voter	70 percent	54 percent

All Youth, Montana	39 percent	26 percent
All Youth, National	25 percent	22 percent

Source: Authors' Tabulations from the 2006 and 2002 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.