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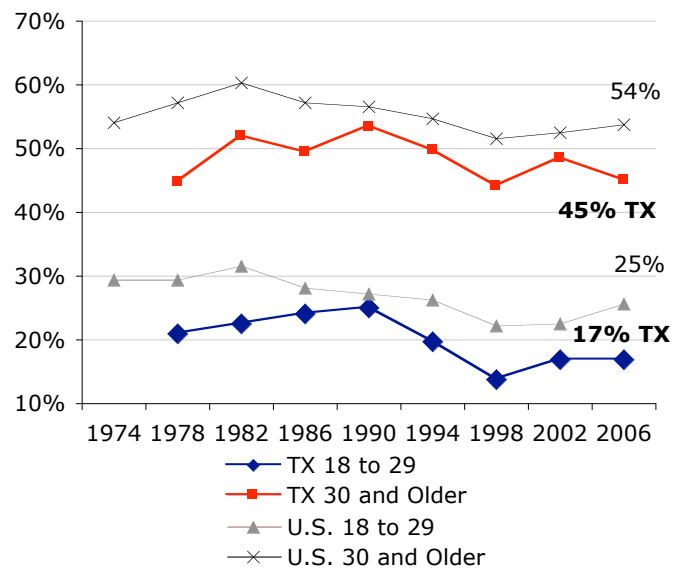
Quick Facts about Young Voters in Texas: The Midterm Election Year 2006

By Mark Hugo Lopez, Karlo Barrios Marcelo, and Jared Sagoff¹
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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 However, while youth electoral participation improved between 2002 and 2006 nationally, in Texas, the youth voter turnout rate remained unchanged in 2006 at 17 percent. Overall, Texas ranked 49th (tied with UT) among all states and the District of Columbia in 2006, down from 47th in 2002, and was 8 percentage points lower than the nation as a whole.

This fact sheet reports the characteristics of young voters for the state of Texas, 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: Texas Voter Turnout in Midterm Years Among Citizens, by Age



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

Youth Turnout Estimates, 2006

In 2006, a midterm election year, an estimated 3.1 million young people in Texas 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 Texas. In 2006, voter turnout among all youth groups in Texas was low. However, high school graduates (up 5 points) and married men (up 7 points) showed gains over their 2002 levels.

Partisanship Among Young Voters in 2006

According to Election Pool, Exit Poll data, the plurality of young voters identified as Democrat, regardless of how they voted, in the 2006 elections.

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

	Texas
Democrat	36 percent
Independent	24 percent
Republican	30 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 – Texas Voter Turnout Statistics, 2006 and 2002

	Young People 18 to 29	Adults 30 and Older
2006		
Number of Votes Cast	576 thousand	5.0 million
Voter Turnout Rate	17 percent	45 percent
Share of all Voters	10 percent	90 percent
2002		
Number of Votes Cast	518 thousand	4.9 million
Voter Turnout Rate	17 percent	48 percent
Share of all Voters	9 percent	91 percent

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

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

Voter Turnout Rate Among:	2006	2002
Race/Ethnicity³		
White non-Hispanics	17 percent	15 percent
Black non-Hispanics	26 percent	32 percent
Latinos	15 percent	13 percent
Asian non-Hispanics	***	***
Native American non-Hispanics	***	***
Gender		
Women	18 percent	17 percent
Men	16 percent	17 percent
Educational Attainment		
Less than High School	4 percent	10 percent
High School	15 percent	10 percent
Some College	18 percent	20 percent
BA or more	29 percent	32 percent
Marital Status		
Single Men	14 percent	19 percent
Single Women	18 percent	16 percent
Married Men	20 percent	13 percent
Married Women	16 percent	18 percent
Registered Voter	33 percent	34 percent

All Youth, Texas 17 percent 17 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.

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.