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## Only 12.3 Million Young People, 18-29, Voted for President Obama in '12; Down from 14.8 Million in '08

### *CIRCLE Releases Full 2012 Youth Vote Analysis from Census Population Survey Data*

**MEDFORD/SOMERVILLE, MA** – With this week's release of the Census Current Population Survey November Supplement, or CPS, the [Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning & Engagement \(CIRCLE\)](#) today published final estimates of how young people voted in the 2012 election. CIRCLE is the preeminent youth research center based at Tufts University and one of the leading analysts of young voters during last year's election.

Using the CPS turnout data and National Election Pools exit poll statistics, CIRCLE exclusively estimates that approximately 14.8 million voters under 30 cast their votes for Barack Obama in 2008. Only about 12.3 million young voters chose Obama in 2012 -- a drop of close to 2.4 million votes. Obama received about 3.7 million fewer total votes from all age groups in 2012 than he had in 2008. Voter turnout in 2012 was 45% for people between the ages of 18-29, down from 51% in 2008.

In addition to the final estimated vote totals for Barack Obama, CIRCLE's new fact sheet released today, "[The Youth Vote in 2012](#)," also analyzes CPS data to present a detailed portrait of young adults' turnout over time and in the last election. Among the additional findings:

- **Young Women Have Become More Likely to Vote than Young Men:** Although in the 1972 general election, men and women were equally likely to go to the polls, over the past thirty years, a gap has emerged in presidential election turnout. By 1992, 54 percent of women ages 18-29 voted while only 50 percent of men did so. In 2012, the gender gap in turnout was 7.1 points (with women ahead).
- **2012 Youth Voter Turnout Highest in Battleground States, Regardless of Whether they Leaned Democratic or Republican:** In general, competition among candidates and parties raises youth turnout. Turnout amongst young voters was higher in competitive ("battleground") states in 2012 than in other states.
- **Participation of Young African Americans was Strong in 2012:** African American youth turnout was 53.7% for 18-29s in 2012, much higher than the average rate for young Americans and indeed higher than the rate posted by young White people in almost all elections between 1976 and 2012. However, African American youth turnout was down by 4.5 percentage points compared to the record-setting rate in 2008.

**CIRCLE's fact sheet, "[The Youth Vote in 2012](#)," which also contains state-by-state voter turnout data, can be viewed in its entirety here: <http://www.civicyouth.org/?p=5603>**

Later this year, CIRCLE, with support from the Spencer Foundation, the S.D. Bechtel, Jr., Foundation, the McCormick Foundation, the Youth Engagement Fund, and the Chicago Community Trusts, will release the findings of their blue-ribbon [Commission on Youth Voting](#)

[and Civic Knowledge](#). The Commission will consider the data released today, as well as other research on the 2012 election, to develop its recommendations on how to enhance young people's informed voting for future elections.

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*CIRCLE ([www.civicyouth.org](http://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. CIRCLE's reputation for reliable, independent, timely research has been hailed by experts in the field of civic partnership, such as Harvard University professor Robert Putnam who said CIRCLE has brought "the best and most serious research to one place."*

*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.*