

Quick Facts about Young Voters in Alaska: The Presidential Election Year 2008

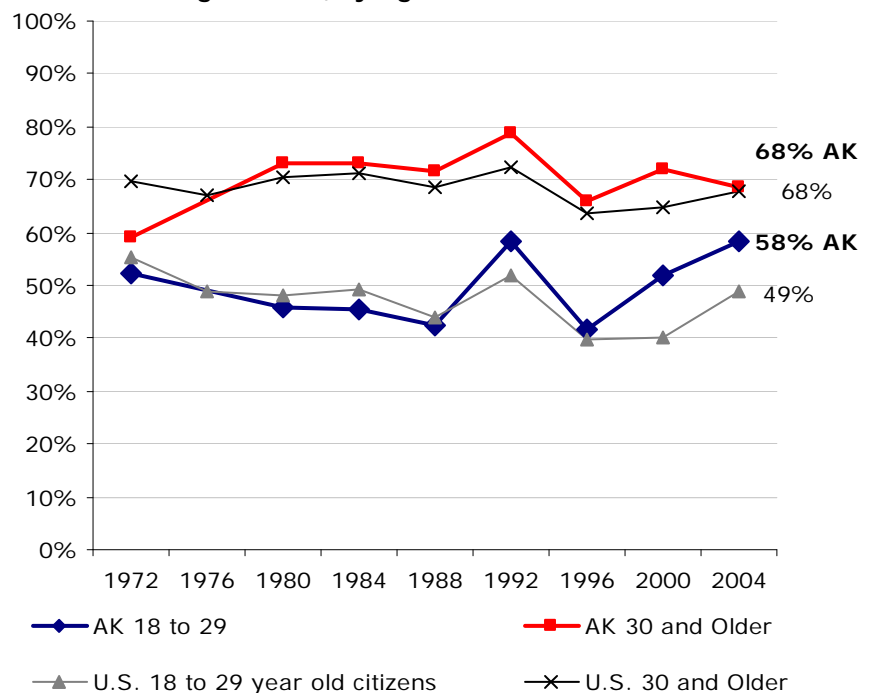
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This year's general election follows a primary season in which more than 6.5 million young people under the age of 30 participated.

In 2004, turnout among 18-to-29 year-olds in Alaska ranked 7th among all states and the District of Columbia in 2004, and was up six percentage points from 2000. The national youth voter turnout for the primary election increased from nine percent in 2000 to 17 percent in 2008. Whether the voter mobilization momentum of 2008 primary season continues into the general election remains unpredictable.

This fact sheet reports the characteristics of young voters for the state of Alaska, including estimates of the number of young voters and voter turnout rates in 2004 and 2000 for various sub-groups of young people.

Figure 1: Alaska Voter Turnout in Presidential Years Among Citizens, by Age



Source: Author's tabulations from the Current Population Survey, November (Voting) Supplements, 1972-2004. No 1976 data for AK.

Estimates of Eligible Young Voters, 2008

In 2008, a Presidential election year, there are an estimated 114 thousand young people in Alaska who are eligible to vote in U.S. elections. Table 1 shows voting statistics for the years 2004 and 2000.² Alaska's youth voter turnout rate was one of the highest among all states and the District of Columbia in 2004 and 2000.³

Voter Turnout Rates in 2004 and 2000 Among Eligible Young Citizens

Table 2 displays voter turnout rates for various groups of young people in 2004 and 2000 in Alaska. 2004 was a year of high voter turnout for all youth groups in Alaska relative to 2000. Compared to the nation as a whole in 2004, youth in Alaska were more electorally engaged.

Table 1 – Alaska Voter Turnout Statistics, 2008, 2004, and 2000

	Young People 18 to 29	Adults 30 and Older
2008		
Number of Citizens Eligible to Vote in 2008	114 thousand	358 thousand
2004		
Number of Votes Cast	57 thousand	226 thousand
Voter Turnout Rate	61 percent	69 percent
Share of all Voters	19 percent	81 percent
2000		
Number of Votes Cast	44 thousand	226 thousand
Voter Turnout Rate	52 percent	72 percent
Share of all Voters	16 percent	83 percent

Source: Authors' Tabulations, Current Population Survey, March Supplement 2008 and November Supplement 2004 and 2000.

Table 2 – Alaska Voter Turnout Rates Among Young Citizens ages 18 to 29, 2004 and 2000

Voter Turnout Rate Among:	2004	2000
National Youth Rate	49 percent	40 percent
AK Youth Rate	58 percent	52 percent
AK Registered Voter	85 percent	82 percent
Race/Ethnicity⁴		
White non-Hispanic	67 percent	58 percent
Black non-Hispanic	***	***
Hispanics	***	***
Asian non-Hispanic	***	***
Native American non-Hispanic	***	***
Gender		
Women	65 percent	51 percent
Men	57 percent	54 percent
Educational Attainment		
Less than High School	***	***
High School	45 percent	46 percent
Some College	71 percent	63 percent
BA or more	***	***
College Experience		
No experience	44 percent	44 percent
At least some experience	74 percent	62 percent
Marital Status		
Single Men	55 percent	49 percent
Single Women	63 percent	44 percent
Married Men	***	***
Married Women	67 percent	***

Source: Authors' Tabulations from the 2004 and 2000 November Supplements of the Current Population Survey. '***' indicates a sample size is too small to produce a reliable estimate.

Notes

¹ We thank Mark Hugo Lopez for his 2006 fact sheet series on which this fact sheet is based. We also thank Peter Levine, Abby Kiesa, and Kei Kawashima-Ginsberg for comments on previous drafts of this fact sheet.

² For a full discussion of the different ways voter turnout can be calculated please see "CIRCLE Working Paper 35: The Youth Voter 2004: With a Historical Look at Youth Voting Patterns 1972-2004." All voter turnout estimates presented in this fact sheet are calculated for U.S. citizens only, and according to the "Census Citizen Method" described in CIRCLE Working Paper 35.

³ For state-by-state comparisons of voter turnout rates, see the CIRCLE fact sheet "Youth Voter Turnout in the States during the 2004 Presidential and the 2002 Midterm Elections."

⁴ We have defined racial/ethnic groups in the CPS 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.