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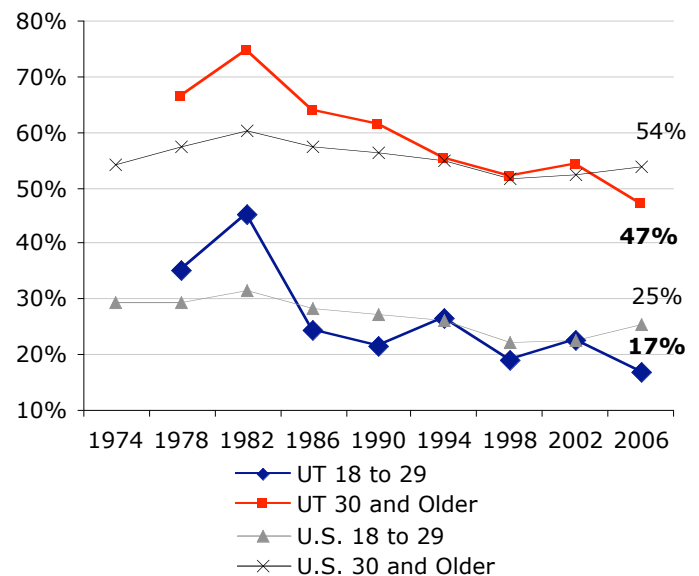
The Center for Information & Research on  
Civic Learning & Engagement

## Quick Facts about Young Voters in Utah: 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.<sup>2</sup> However, while youth electoral participation improved between 2002 and 2006 nationally, in Utah, the youth voter turnout rate fell 5 percentage points from 22 percent in 2002 to 17 percent in 2006. Overall, Utah ranked 49<sup>th</sup> among all states and the District of Columbia in 2006, down from 29<sup>th</sup> in 2002. This low level of youth electoral participation is in stark contrast to Utah's high level of youth volunteer activity. In 2005, among all 50 states and the District of Columbia, Utah ranked among the top five states in youth volunteering.<sup>3</sup>

**Graph 1: Utah 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 Utah, 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 are an estimated 534,000 young people in Utah who are eligible to vote in U.S. elections. Table 1 shows voting statistics for the years 2006 and 2002.<sup>4</sup>

### 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 Utah. In 2006, voter turnout among many groups shown was down over 2002.

### Partisanship Among Young Voters in 2006

According to Election Pool, Exit Poll data, the plurality of young voters identified as Republican (49 percent), regardless of how they voted, in the 2006 elections.

**Table 1 – Utah Voter Turnout Statistics, 2006 and 2002**

	Young People 18 to 29	Adults 30 and Older
<b>2006</b>		
Number of Votes Cast	93 thousand	509 thousand
Voter Turnout Rate	17 percent	47 percent
Share of all Voters	15 percent	85 percent
<b>2002</b>		
Number of Votes Cast	103 thousand	515 thousand
Voter Turnout Rate	22 percent	54 percent
Share of all Voters	17 percent	83 percent

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

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

Voter Turnout Rate Among:	2006	2002
<b>Gender</b>		
Women	17 percent	24 percent
Men	17 percent	21 percent
<b>Educational Attainment</b>		
Less than High School	***	11 percent
High School	5 percent	12 percent
Some College	23 percent	27 percent
BA or more	35 percent	43 percent
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single Men	11 percent	17 percent
Single Women	13 percent	22 percent
Married Men	30 percent	27 percent
Married Women	22 percent	27 percent
Registered Voter	43 percent	54 percent
All Youth	17 percent	22 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

- <sup>1</sup> Research Director, Research Associate, and Research Assistant, respectively. We also thank Peter Levine, Emily Kirby, Abby Kiesa, and Deborah Both for comments on previous drafts of this fact sheet.
- <sup>2</sup> 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.
- <sup>3</sup> Utah's youth volunteer rate in 2005 was 46 percent. For more information on state-by-state volunteer rates, see "Youth Volunteering in the States: 2002 to 2005" by Sara Helms and Karlo Barrios Marcelo, April 2007.
- <sup>4</sup> 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.