



Youth Vote Polling & **Research Summary**

Ahead of the November 2024 General Election, understanding and mobilizing young voters is paramount. With a survey conducted across pivotal states—Arizona, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Virginia—our polling data offers crucial insights into the attitudes and preferences of likely voters aged 18–35. This demographic holds immense potential to shape the electoral landscape. However, reaching young voters demands a strategic, surround sound, multi-faceted approach encompassing in-person engagement, digital outreach, paid media, traditional methods, and innovative organizing tactics.

Our findings reveal that while young voters may not exhibit overwhelming enthusiasm for specific political figures at the top of the ticket, their passion lies in the issues. Despite concerns with political leadership, they remain motivated to participate and advocate for causes they believe in. Recognizing the challenges ahead, NextGen is at the forefront of this effort. NextGen will leverage issue-focused campaigns to focus on key issues such as abortion rights, the economy, and climate change to target young voters on the ground and online, educating, registering, and activating young voters to ensure their voices are heard.

Election 2024

In partnership with

IMPACT
RESEARCH



The third-party vote is a significant challenge, with 20% of young voters opting for someone other than Biden or Trump. However, our research suggests that targeted messaging and adequate investment can sway these voters.

An interesting factor contributing to these sentiments may be that the youngest cohort of voters, 18-24 year olds, were as young as 10 years old when Trump was first elected. As such, they don't have the same memory of his hateful and harmful rhetoric and policies. Our research shows that newly eligible voters move from Biden being ahead by a net 4 points to Biden moving ahead by net 30 points after receiving Biden positive/Trump negative messaging. This 26 point shift illustrates a real opportunity to educate newly eligible voters about the contrast between the candidates.

Polls on the youth vote reveal some interesting nuance. While young voters tend to support Democratic candidates, they are also skeptical of the two-party system. A significant proportion of respondents, about $\frac{1}{3}$, qualified as "Double Haters." These voters, who are mainly non-college-educated, express dissatisfaction with both major parties. Despite this, a substantial portion voted for Biden in the 2020 election, with 58% recalling their vote for him, while 18% chose Trump. It's worth noting that 5% did not cast a vote, and 14% were newly eligible voters, indicating a diverse range of political beliefs within this group.

Our strategy moving forward is to leverage targeted messaging and education. This approach will focus on issues that are particularly relevant to young voters, including but not limited to abortion, a top concern across the board, the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) messaging, key concerns of Black and Latino men, and other pressing issues. We will also employ findings from our research that reveal we gain greater margins against Trump by highlighting the negatives about his policies and opinions. Our polling summary underscores the importance of understanding and engaging with the diverse perspectives and priorities of young voters. This understanding will be crucial in shaping the outcome of the upcoming election.

Key Findings

Young voters are down on everyone, and this translates directly to lost votes for Biden. They are intensely negative in their views of both Biden and Trump as well as Democrats and Republicans in Congress. Despite the overall Dem lean of this age group in party ID, this negativity is causing real issues for Biden – he leads by only 9 points in the full vote and 12 in the two-way across states, down significantly from his margins with this age group in 2020 and underperforming a generic Democrat.

Biden's age is a concern, but less so than the perceived threat of Trump. Most young voters across the states polled say Biden (or both Biden and Trump) are too old to serve effectively, but healthy majorities nearly everywhere say Trump being re-elected is a threat to the future of the country. Driving the "threat" perception is also key to our messaging.

The third-party vote (particularly RFK) is an obstacle, but third-party support is soft. Overall, 20% of young voters say they're picking someone other than Biden or Trump, half of whom say RFK. Fortunately, this vote is pretty soft – nearly half say they could change their mind and back Biden/Trump – but it's going to take work to get them there.

The IRA is in a good spot. Over two-thirds of young voters have heard of it, and views are largely positive. While we have strong positive messaging on the Inflation Reduction Act, there needs to be a clear connection made between the Biden Administration and the Inflation Reduction Act.

We have strong Biden positives and Trump negatives, but contrast is key. Both our strongest Biden positives and Trump negatives highlight implicit differences between the two (Biden fighting for abortion rights and health care, Trump being a threat to democracy/the future). Framing the election as a choice leads young voters back to Biden.

Additional Findings

Motivation to vote is high and consistent across states, though lower than we would see with 35+.

- Typically, with 35+ voters we'd see this come in at 80% or higher extremely motivated.

While young voters are united in disapproval of the way Biden has handled the Israel-Hamas war, they are divided on an alternative approach.

- A plurality backs aid restriction/ceasefire – driven by Democrats (67%) – but isolationist sentiment is strong among Republicans (45%) and independents (40%).

Voters across states are favorable towards the IRA by double digits.

- Favorability is highest in Virginia where 30% rate it “very favorably.”

Abortion does best as a negative among persuadable voters.

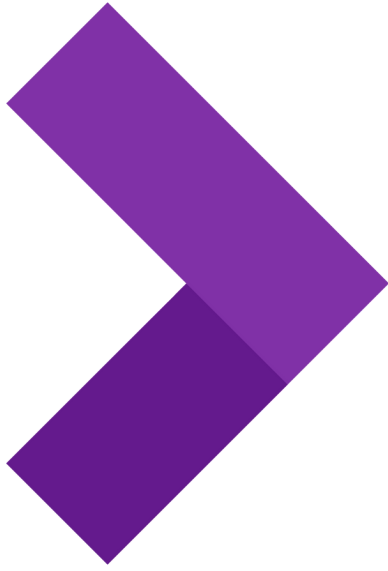
- Our human rights and Supreme Court messages—both of which also reference abortion—also stand out.

Younger Cohort possesses limited understanding of Trump's previous impact

- A sizable group of newly eligible, 18-24 year olds (especially men) who were minors when Trump was President and don't understand the threat he poses.

Methodology

- In partnership with Impact Research, NextGen conducted a text-to-web survey of likely November 2024 General Election voters aged 18-35 in Arizona, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.
- The sample includes N=1,500 voters with N=250 in each state.
- Interviews were conducted between March 5 - 12, 2024.
- The margin of error for the base sample is +/- 2.5 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence, the margin of error for each state is +/- 6.2 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence. The margin of error for subgroups varies and is higher.



Press inquiries

If you have additional questions, feel free to reach out to the NextGen team:

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