



The non-partisan advocacy group All In Together has teamed up with Lake Research and Emerson College Polling to explore what is motivating people as we look forward to the 2022 Midterms. This survey looked at 1,000 registered voters nationwide from September 22-24, 2021, with a +/-3.1% margin of error. The survey also oversampled 200 Black women, 200 Latina women, and 200 Asian American/Pacific Islander women. The oversamples were weighted down to reflect their actual proportion of women. The survey was conducted using a mixed-method: IVR, online, and SMS-to-web.

Motivation and certainty to vote are low among young voters, despite record levels of political engagement. While COVID is the major issue across the electorate, there are generation gaps on other issues of importance. New abortion laws may increase motivation, especially among young women and pro-choice voters.

Enthusiasm Gap in Voting Among Young Voters

AIT's new polling shows a massive enthusiasm gap between generations - younger voters are the least motivated age group to vote, **only 35%** of 18-29 year old voters are very motivated to vote, and **only 28% are almost certain to vote next year** (compared to 52.9% and 51.2% respectively for the overall electorate). This is after record youth voter turnout in the 2020 Election. Turnout was up 10% from 2016 to 2020, with just over 50% of young voters casting a ballot in 2020.¹ This engagement gap could be a major concern for Democrats - data from [CIRCLE](#) shows young voters were instrumental in securing the swing states of Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, and Pennsylvania for Joe Biden. The 18-29 year old voters in our survey are the most likely to support Democrats of any age group (51% vs 45% overall). They are 55% Democrat, 25% Republican, and 20% Independent in party registration. Among all age groups there is a gender gap in party preferences, with women having stronger support for Democrats than men. Of all age groups, **18-29 year old voters are the only group where both genders favor Democrats on the generic Congressional ballot in the 2022 elections.**

Young Voters on the Issues

As Millennials and Gen-Z become a larger share of the voting population, understanding their policy preferences is crucial for both parties. This comes at a time when the average age of Congress is higher than it has ever been, 58.4 for the House and 64.3 in the Senate.² Voters under 30 made up 17% of the voters in the 2020 elections and voters under 50 made up 40% of the electorate.³ While these numbers might appear small, data from the

¹ <https://circle.tufts.edu/latest-research/election-week-2020#youth-voter-turnout-increased-in-2020>

² <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R46705>

³ <https://www.cnn.com/election/2020/exit-polls/president/national-results>



[Harvard Youth Poll](#) shows that political engagement among young people is up more than 10% from 2010.

% Most Important Issue	Women 18-29	Men 18-29	18 - 29 Combined	Overall Electorate
Taxes	9.3%	9.9%	9.5%	8.3%
Crime	3.7%	4.4%	3.5%	3.9%
Abortion	13.1%	4.4%	9.5%	7.2%
Healthcare costs and prescription drug prices	11.2%	9.9%	10.5%	14.9%
Child care, elder care, paid leave	2.8%	3.3%	3%	3.4%
Jobs	9.3%	7.7%	8.5%	6.9%
National security	8.4%	5.5%	7.5%	12.6%
Rising prices	11.2%	17.6%	14	12.9%
Climate change	6.5%	16.5%	11	8.9%
COVID-19	24.3%	20.9%	22.6	21%

Like the overall electorate, **COVID-19 is the most important issue** in the midterms for voters under 30 (24.3% for women, 20.9% for men), followed by **abortion for women (13.1%)**, and **rising prices and climate change for men (17.6% and 16.5%)**. Both the climate change and abortion gaps are notable - only 9% of adults overall said climate change was their most important issue in the midterms, and only 7% of adults and 8% of women said abortion was most important to them. Just two weeks ago, Fridays for Future registered over 1,300 youth-led global climate marches with millions of marchers⁴, and groups like the Sunrise Movement are continuing to put pressure on the Biden Administration to keep climate provisions in the infrastructure and reconciliation bills. The April 2021 Harvard Youth poll found that 55% of 18-29 year old's agree with the statement "the government should do more to curb climate change, even at the expense of economic growth".⁵ Our poll also found **generation gaps on the issues of jobs (10% vs 3%) and national security (8% vs 18%) between voters under 50 and voters over 50.**

⁴ <https://fridaysforfuture.org/what-we-do/strike-statistics/>

⁵ <https://iop.harvard.edu/youth-poll/spring-2021-harvard-youth-poll>



Abortion in particular, is a major factor in motivating young people to vote, especially young women. SB 8, the Texas abortion ban makes women under 30 more interested to vote (**72.5% more interested**, 36.7% much more interested) than women overall (57.7% more interested, 35.8% much more interested). Young men and women are also more pessimistic about the continued existence of Roe v. Wade, with **64.9% of men under 30 and 47.2% of women under 30** (compared to 51.4% of men overall and 37.5% of women) believing that it is very or somewhat likely that the Supreme Court will overturn the case. The idea of Roe v. Wade getting overturned is not as motivating as the Texas bill when it comes to young voters. Among women ages 18-29, 57% are more interested (30% are much more interested) in voting in the 2022 elections if Roe v. Wade is overturned. Young voters (18-29) are the most pro-choice group across both genders, so the possibility of additional state level bills may increase the turnout of young voters.

The hundreds of women's marches and rallies against the Texas abortion ban saw tens of thousands of women of all ages, many of them young voters, gathered and galvanized around the political moment. As we continue our polls throughout the midterm election season, the issues that will motivate young voters and young women is something we will continue to analyze.