**Despite Minnesota’s high voter turnout, youth and minority participation lagged behind**

As Minnesota and the rest of the country look toward cascades of upcoming off-year political races and midterm elections, the most recent presidential contest’s aftermath is still revealing new data about who voted – and who didn’t.

Minnesota saw noticeable lags in participation among young voters and minorities compared to other demographic groups, despite being known for its high voter turnout and <a href="http://www.startribune.com/minnesota-had-the-nation-s-highest-voter-turnout-again-here-s-one-reason-why/416247753/" target="new\_">leading the nation again in 2016</a>.

Nationally, there were stark declines in turnout among black voters, according to the <a href="https://www.census.gov/newsroom/blogs/random-samplings/2017/05/voting\_in\_america.html" target="new\_">Voting in America survey from the U.S. Census Bureau</a>, particularly in important battleground states where thin margins helped propel President Donald Trump’s historic electoral victory in November.

Black voter turnout nationwide declined about 7 percentage points compared to the 2012 iteration of the survey, while Hispanic voting held relatively steady between elections, despite immigration being a hot topic during the campaign.

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In Minnesota, white voters had a 70 percent turnout, while the voting rates were 66 percent for blacks, 52 percent for Asians and 37 percent for Hispanics.

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Additionally, gaps between the youngest and oldest voters in Minnesota were very pronounced, with turnout among those aged 18 to 24 only reaching about 55 percent compared to roughly 73 percent of those 45 or older.

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In short, the survey shows older, white voters outpaced younger and more diverse populations at the ballot box.

Because of high margins of error for the state-level results from this survey, those findings for Minnesota could be slightly higher or lower than what was reported. Unfortunately, this survey is among the only public data sources to shed light on voter demographics.

It also makes year-to-year comparisons a dicey proposition, though given the margins of error, the 2012 and 2016 trends were fairly similar.

Minnesota is about 75 percent white with a median age of 37, so youth and non-white voters make up a minority of the electorate. Though every vote especially counted this past year, and Sec. Hillary Clinton (D) barely won historically blue Minnesota by about two points.

And with 2018 midterms on the horizon, along with local and off-year races yet to come in 2017, it’s worth noting Minnesota’s midterm election turnout has dropped about 14 points since 2002, suggesting the voting rates among millennials and minorities could be even lower next year.

<div class="embed"><iframe src="http://elections-dev.startribune.com/2016elections/20170607-voter\_demographics/builds/development/?chart=midterms" border="0" frameborder="0" scrolling="no" width="100%" height="400"></iframe></div>

Whether the youth and minority votes can close the gap in 2018, 2020 and beyond is uncertain, but the picture of what happened this past November gets a bit clearer as more data emerges.