The Overlooked Power of the Other Swing Voter

In 2022, the Center for Antiracist Research, GenForward at the University of Chicago, and Black Voters Matter collaborated on a research project to explore how young people—and young people of color in particular—are thinking about our political system, voting, and power. This fact sheet represents findings from GenForward’s quarterly survey with an oversampling of young adults of color.

Young people are feeling frustrated and disillusioned by our political system.

**People are frustrated**

Among those who said they did not plan to vote in the midterms, 27% stated that they are “frustrated with the current political system.”

This view is held most strongly by people in the 18-26 age group.

**Black voters are more frustrated than others**

- The candidates do not represent or align with my political beliefs and ideas: 13.7% Overall, 15.4% Black
- I do not think my vote matters: 15.7% Overall, 24.5% Black

**People feel that their rights are under attack**

- Reversal of Roe v. Wade was a targeted attack on women: 23.6% Disagree, 14.9% Agree
- Jan 6th was an attack on multiracial democracy: 25.7% Disagree, 16.6% Agree

**People still think the 2022 midterms are important despite frustrations**

- 54.5% of respondents said that voting in the 2022 midterms is more important than in past midterm elections.

Other Swing Voters are a critical group that if authentically engaged and represented in our political system have the power to transform our democracy.

**Who are the other swing voters?**

- I always vote for the Democratic party: 28.9%
- I always vote for the Republican party: 51.2%
- I choose between the Democratic or Republican party: 19.9%
- I choose between the Republican party or not voting (or voting third party): 5.6%

**Who are more likely to be the other swing voters?**

- Latinx: 13.10%
- Black: 9.51%
- AAPI: 9.51%
- 18-26: 18.8%
- 27-40: 12.9%

**The power of the other swing voters**

- Out of 435 house elections in 2020, 68 seats (15.6%) of house elections were decided with a Margin of Victory of less than 8%.
- Out of the 33 senate seats up for re-election in 2020, 8 seats (24.2%) of the senate were decided with a Margin of Victory of less than 8%.

**Other swing voters value civic engagement**

- 62.7% of Other Swing Voters agree with the statement “My individual vote matters for political change.”

*This question was shown to half the respondents, who were selected randomly. We did this to examine whether differences in how questions are worded affect responses. Data Source: The Genforward July 2022 Survey*
THE OVERLOOKED POWER OF THE OTHER SWING VOTER

Black voters matter for political change

MOST PEOPLE AGREE THAT BLACK VOTER TURNOUT MATTERS FOR POLITICAL CHANGE

76.2% of respondents agreed with the statement “Strong voter turnout among Black voters matters for political change.”

- Strongly agree: 39.1%
- Somewhat agree: 37.1%
- Somewhat disagree: 14.8%
- Strongly disagree: 5.6%

BLACK AMERICANS WERE RANKED SECOND HIGHEST IN TERMS OF THEIR POLITICAL POWER

- 74.4% think White Americans have the most political power
- 44.2% think Black Americans have the second most political power

TOP FIVE MOST EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR BLACK COMMUNITIES TO BUILD POLITICAL POWER*

- Voting in national elections: 50.2%
- Voting in state and local elections: 48.9%
- Organizing in communities: 45.2%
- Changing people's hearts and minds: 44.9%
- Advocacy and policy change: 44.4%

HOW PEOPLE THINK ABOUT THE GEORGIA SENATE RACE RESULTS

- Strongly disagree or disagree: 11.0%
- Agree or strongly agree: 88.2%

54.6% of respondents agreed with the statement: "The 2021 Georgia senate race results (Raphael Warnock and Jon Ossoff victories) are a result of the deepening political power of Black communities."

People believe in the importance of engaging at the local level in order to make change

TOP FIVE CHOICES FOR THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAYS TO MAKE CHANGE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- Voting in state and local elections: 22.0%
- Changing people's hearts and minds: 19.5%
- Organizing in communities: 14.4%
- Community service and volunteering: 9.9%
- Advocacy and policy change: 8.4%

PEOPLE BELIEVE IN ORGANIZING IN THEIR COMMUNITY

72.8% of the respondents agree or strongly agree that: “I believe that I can make an important difference in society by organizing in my community.”

I believe that people have the collective power to impact policy.

80.9% of the respondents agree or strongly agree with this statement.

* This question was shown to half the respondents, who were selected randomly. We did this to examine whether differences in how questions are worded affect responses.

Data Source: The GenForward July 2022 Survey.