User Insights

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Boston Elections Team

Quantitative:

Voter turnout analysis

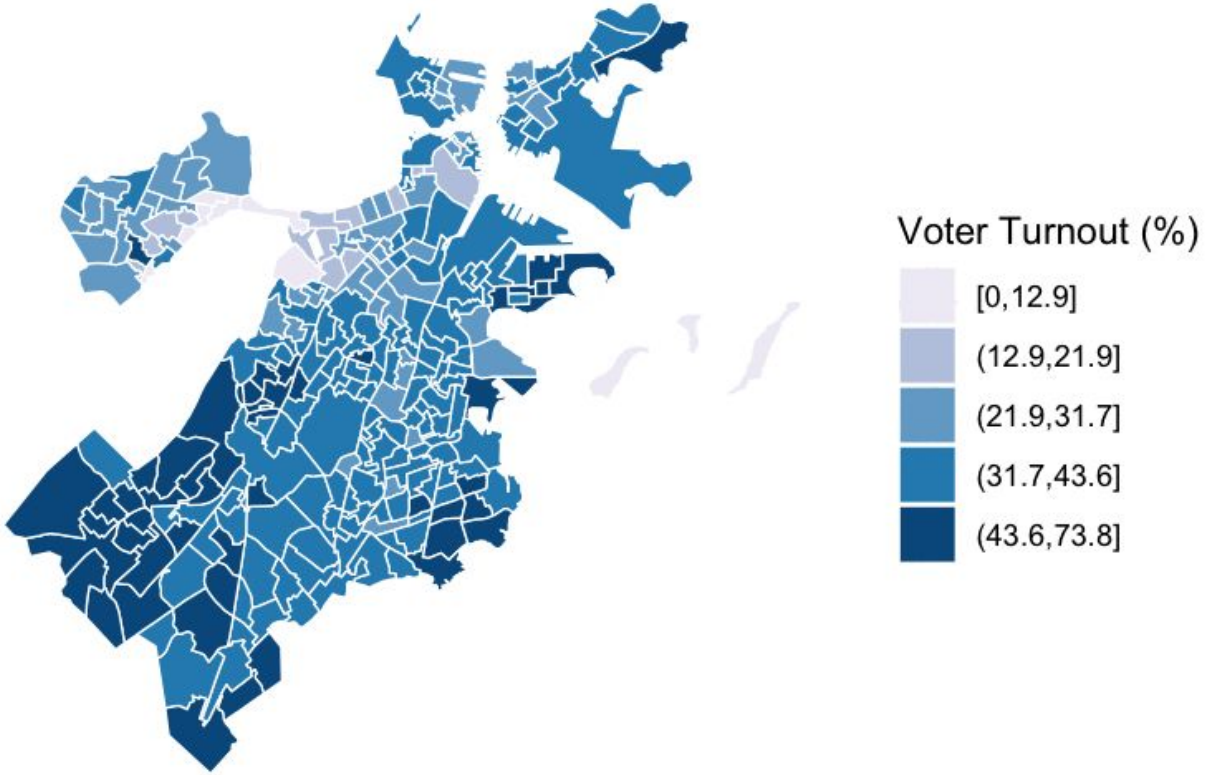
Qualitative:

Intercepts and interviews

Quantitative Insights

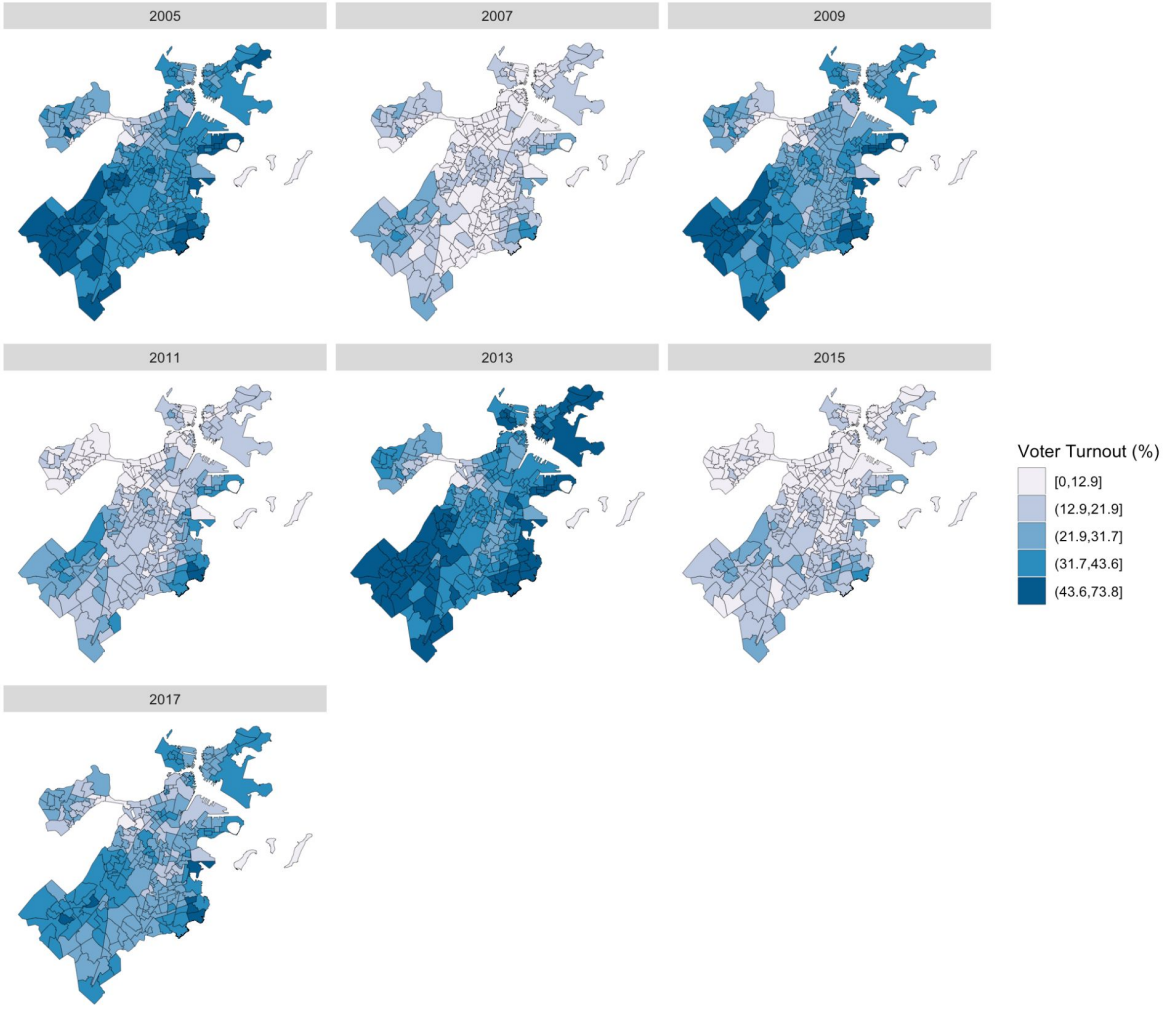
2005 Voter Turnout in Boston

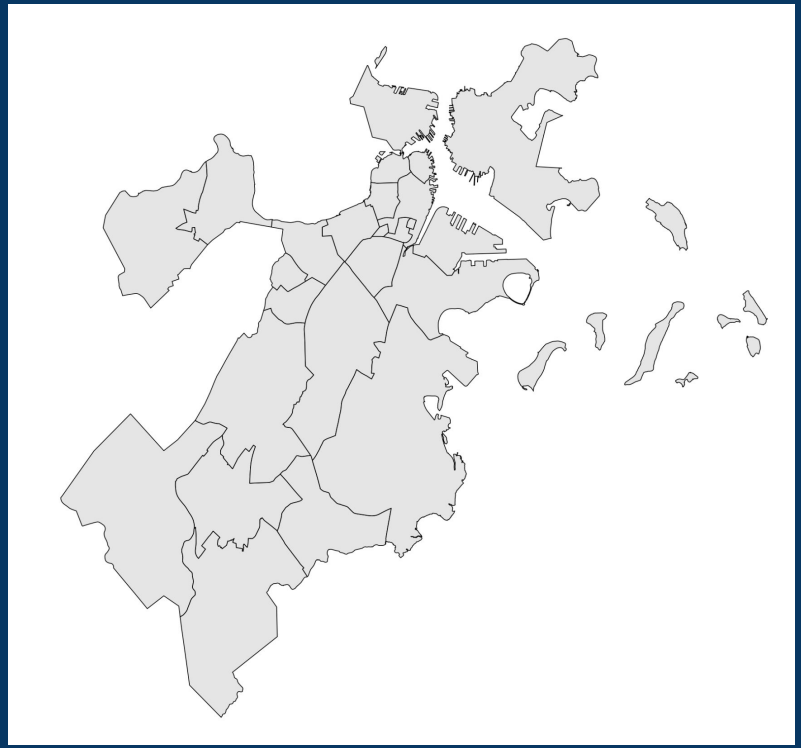
% of registered voters who voted in the municipal election



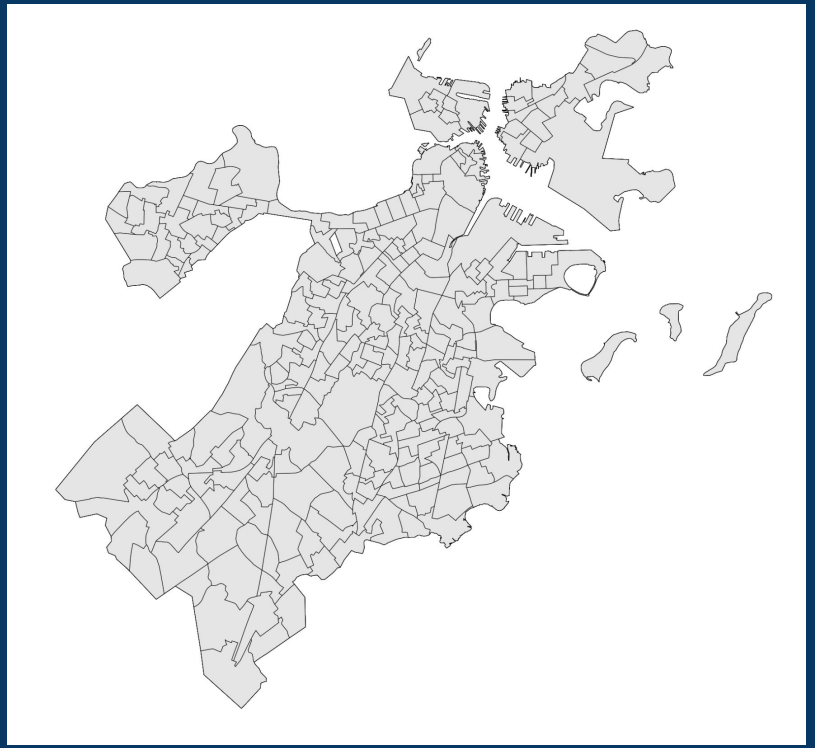
Voter Turnout in Boston

% of registered voters who voted in the municipal election





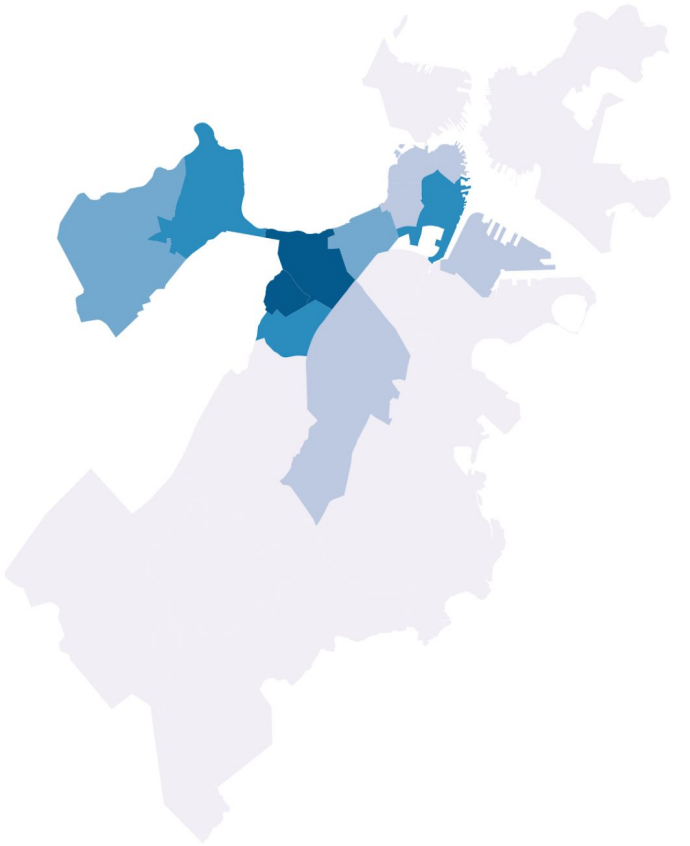
Neighborhoods



Wards & Precincts

Undergraduate Students in Boston

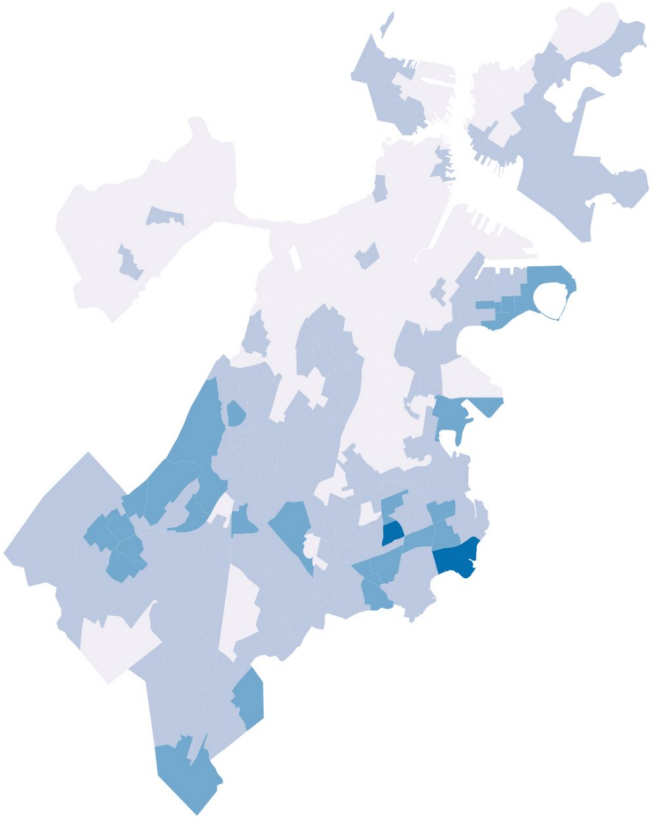
% of population enrolled in an undergraduate college program



Undergrad Students (%) [16,24.8] (24.8,36.3] (36.3,52.1] (52.1,64] (64,92]

2015 Voter Turnout in Boston

% of registered voters who voted in the municipal election



Voter Turnout (%) [0,12.9] (12.9,21.9] (21.9,31.7] (31.7,43.6]

Key takeaways:

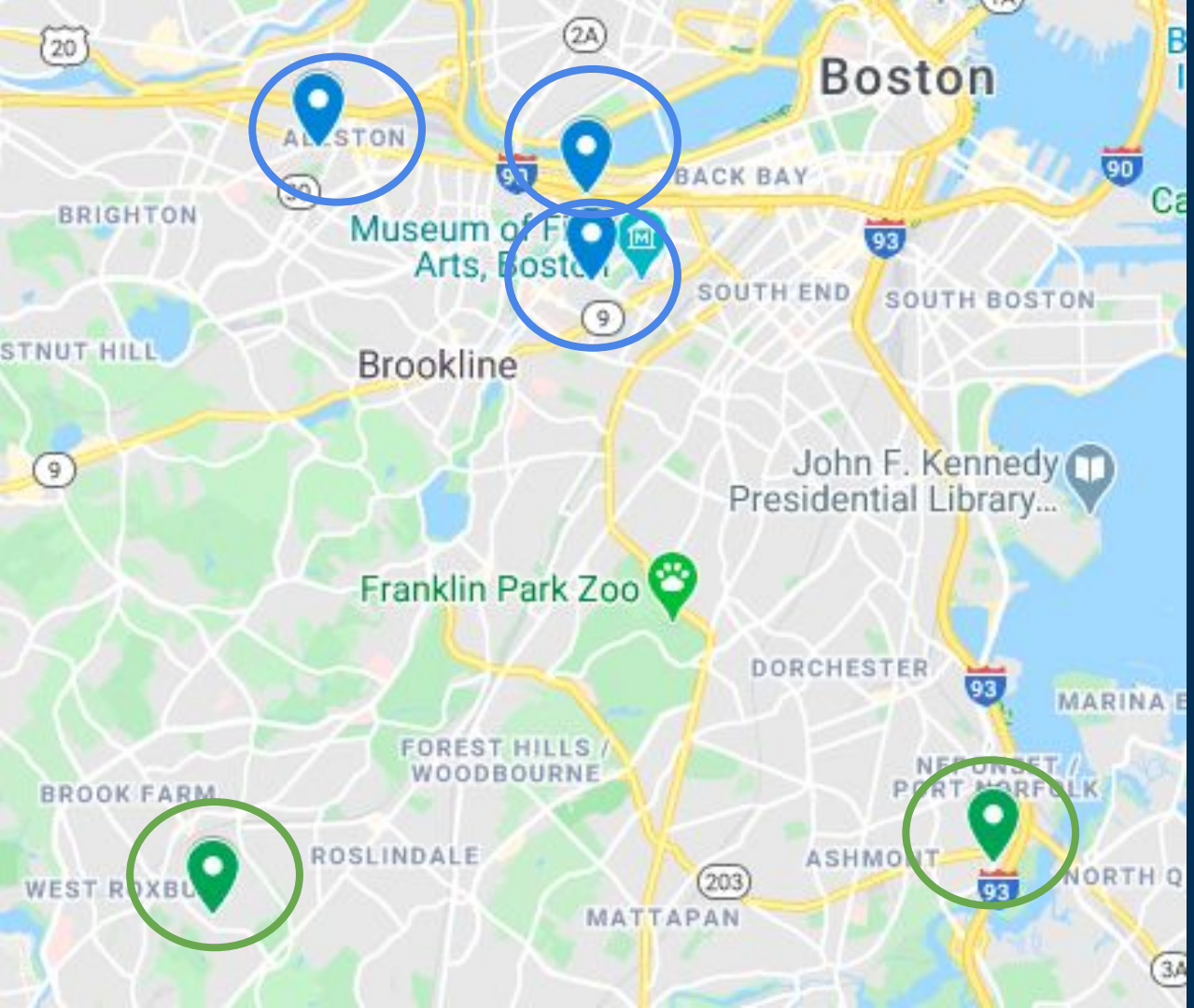
1. Overall turnout swings from high (mayoral elections) to low (other elections)
2. Turnout level within regions is consistent
3. Community demographics (e.g. age) likely matter

Qualitative Insights

40+ intercepts

MBTA, homeless shelter, HKS cafeteria, polling stations

1 min - 30 mins conversations



We visited the

lowest turnout precincts

and the

highest turnout precincts

VOTERS

NEWS JUNKIE

Always in the know about current events, both local and national

“ I vote to get the services we need. ”

ACTIVIST

Active community member; passionate about civic duty and engagement

“ People who look like me have died just for registering to vote. ”

BOSTONIAN

Longtime resident; family, friends, or community members always vote

“ Mom always says, ‘If you don't vote, you can't complain.’ ”

NON-VOTERS

STUDENT

Informed about registering and voting by school; unlikely to vote if inconvenient

“ We went to the wrong place. It’s not clear where we’re supposed to vote. ”

NEW RESIDENT

New to Boston; feels disconnected from the city and unsure of what it does for them

“ City government isn’t accessible to me. I don’t even know what they do. ”

BUSY BEE

Busy with work and life; doesn’t feel like voting in local elections is a priority

“ I’m trying to make ends meet. I don’t have time to vote. ”

Key takeaways

Regular voters

typically had at least one of the following reasons for voting:

(1) The people around them vote
(2) They tie their vote to a concrete impact
(3) They feel voting is a duty
(4) They've made voting a habit

Regular non-voters

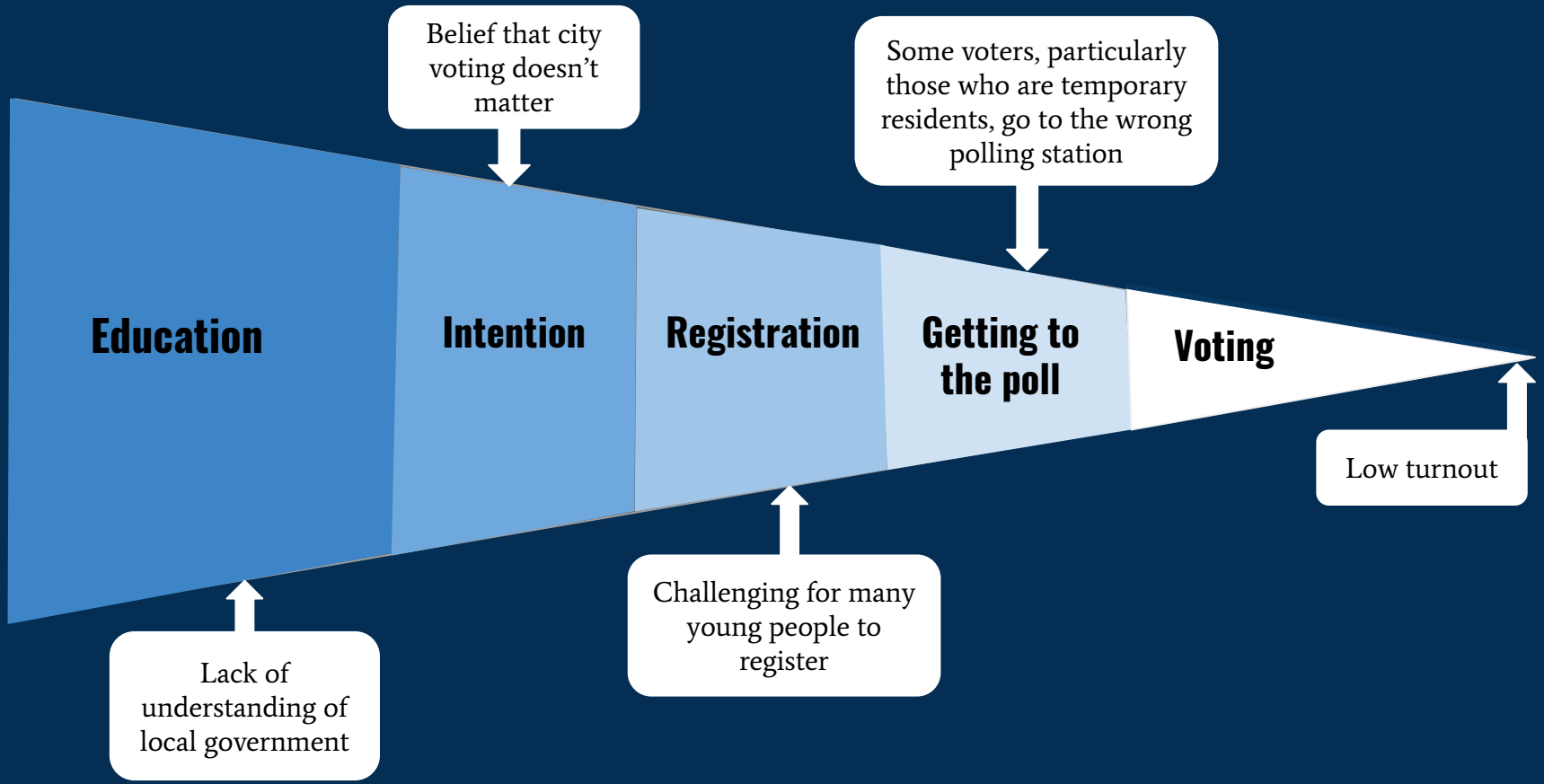
typically had at least one of the following reasons for NOT voting:

(1) They don’t think it’s important
(2) They feel voting is inconvenient
(3) They lack a connection with the city
(4) They’re missing information

Whether a resident is likely to vote depends on...

Awareness (do they know there's a election and how/where to vote?)
Convenience (do they feel voting is a hassle?)
Habits (do they consistently vote?)
Interest (do they care about the election itself or civic duty?)
Networks (do the people around them vote?)

Voter journey


Belief that city voting doesn't matter
Some voters, particularly those who are temporary residents, go to the wrong polling station
Education
Intention
Registration
Getting to the poll
Voting
Low turnout
Lack of understanding of local government
Challenging for many young people to register

What's next?

- Continuing data analysis
- Gathering more data through an online survey
- Refining our user journey: how can we make it even more detailed?
- Brainstorming solutions and creating prototypes

Thanks for listening!