

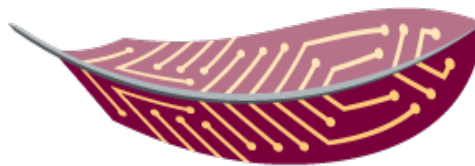
Town of Newmarket 2018 Municipal Election Survey Results

May 14, 2019

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Canadian Voting Technology Projects

● INTERNET
● VOTING
⊗ PROJECT



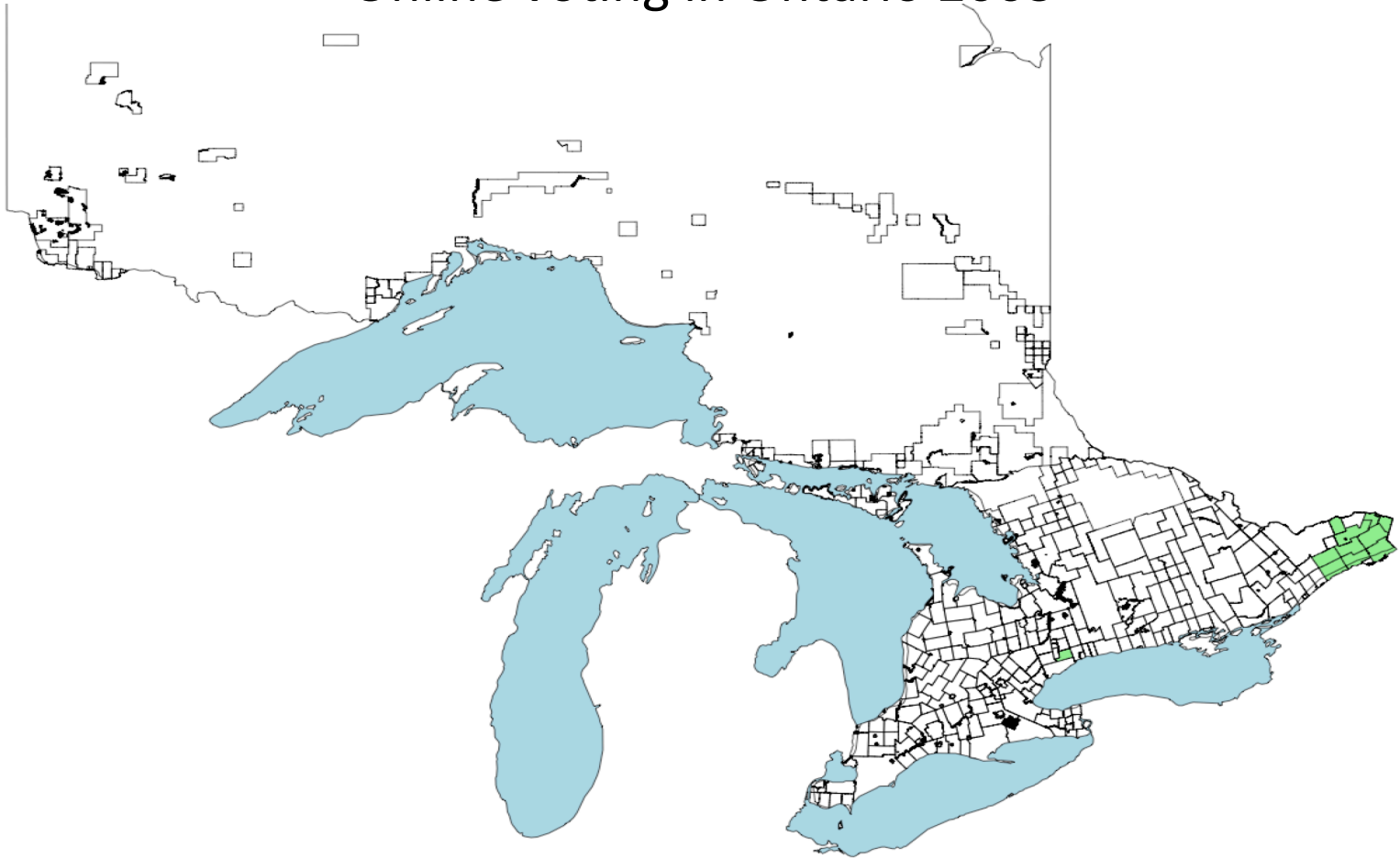
FN Digital
Democracy



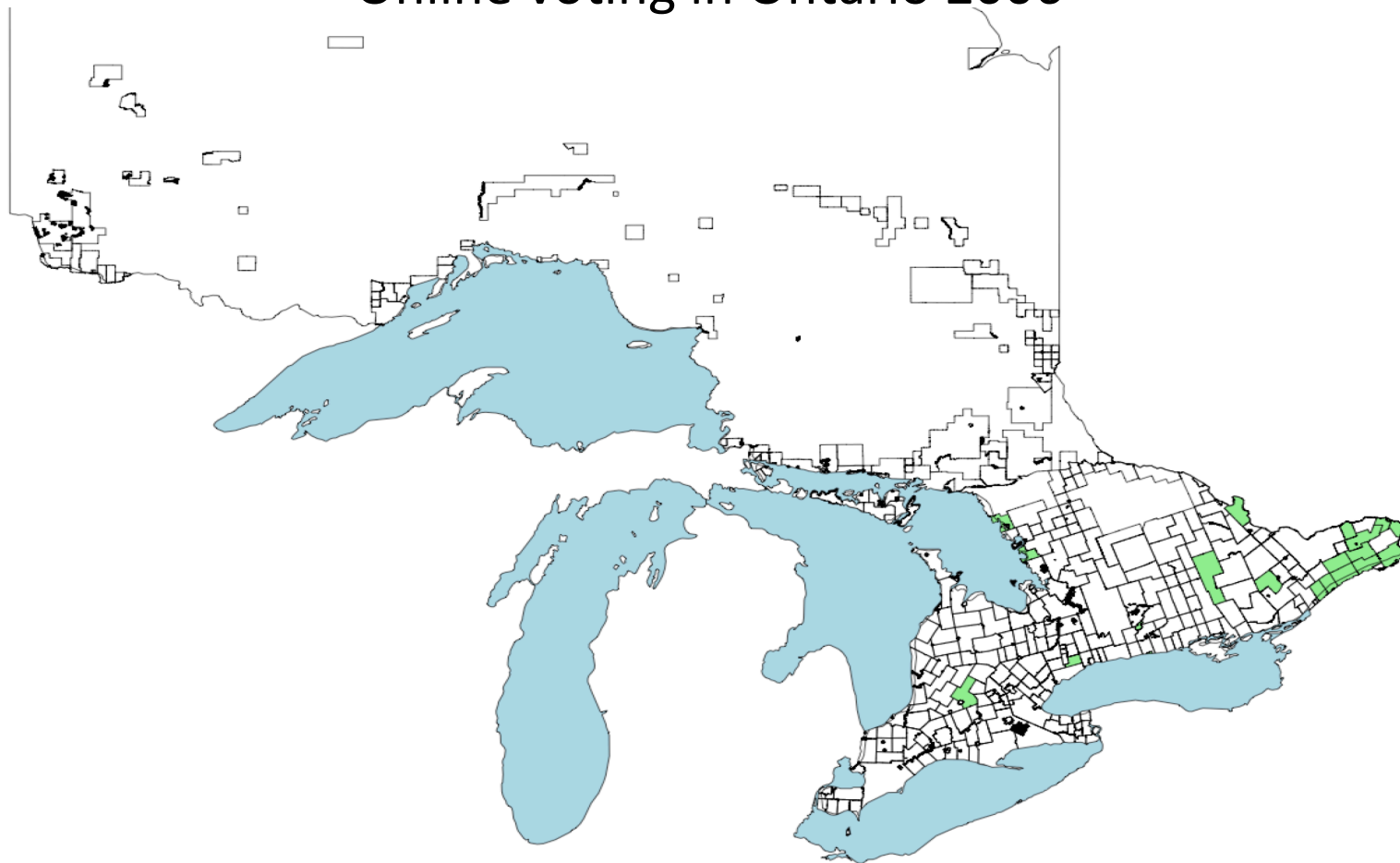
Municipal history

- Late 1990s push toward remote voting.
- Mail failure prompted interest in technology in 2000.
- First adoption in 2003.
- Markham was the first major municipality in Canada to use online voting.

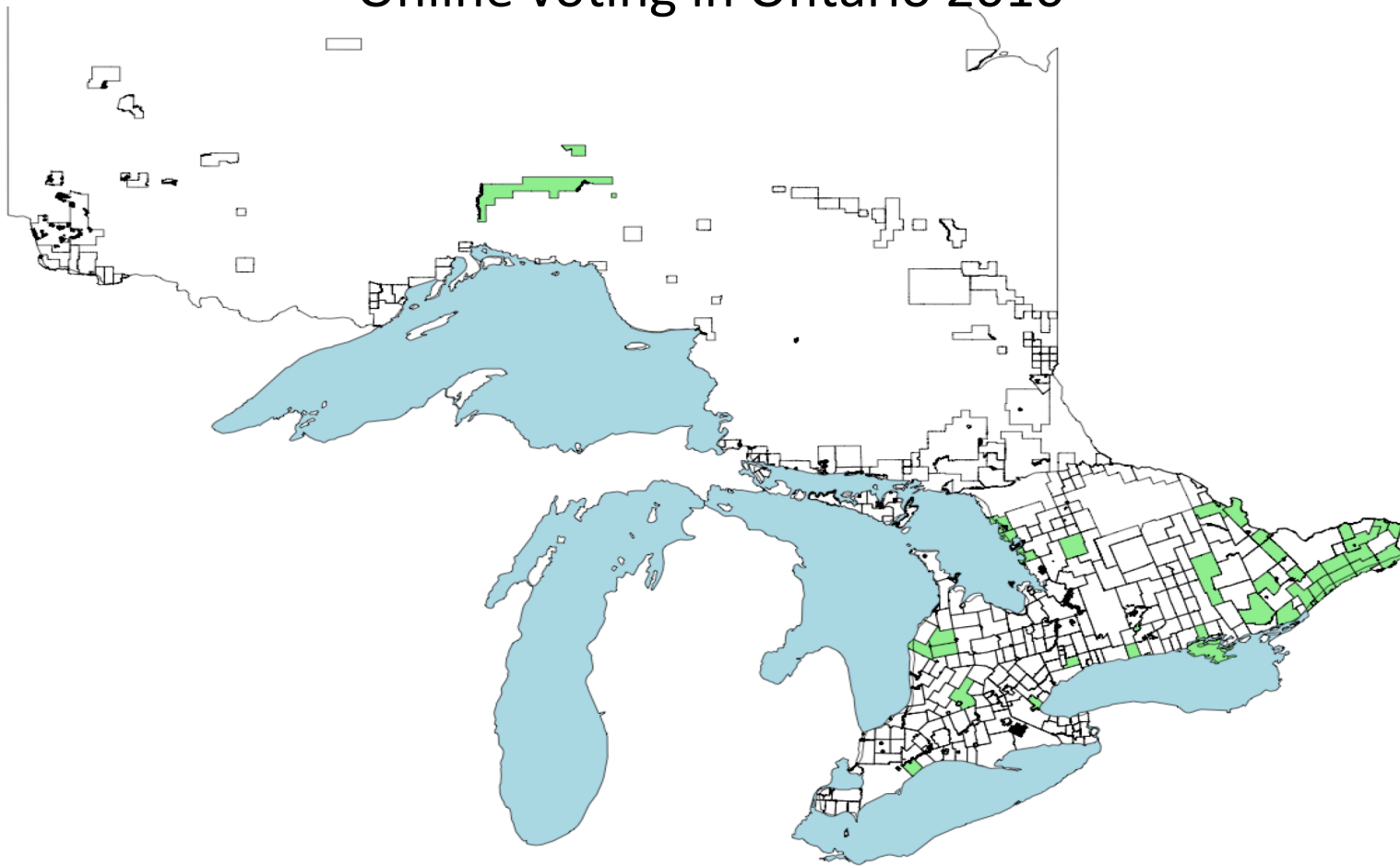
Online voting in Ontario 2003



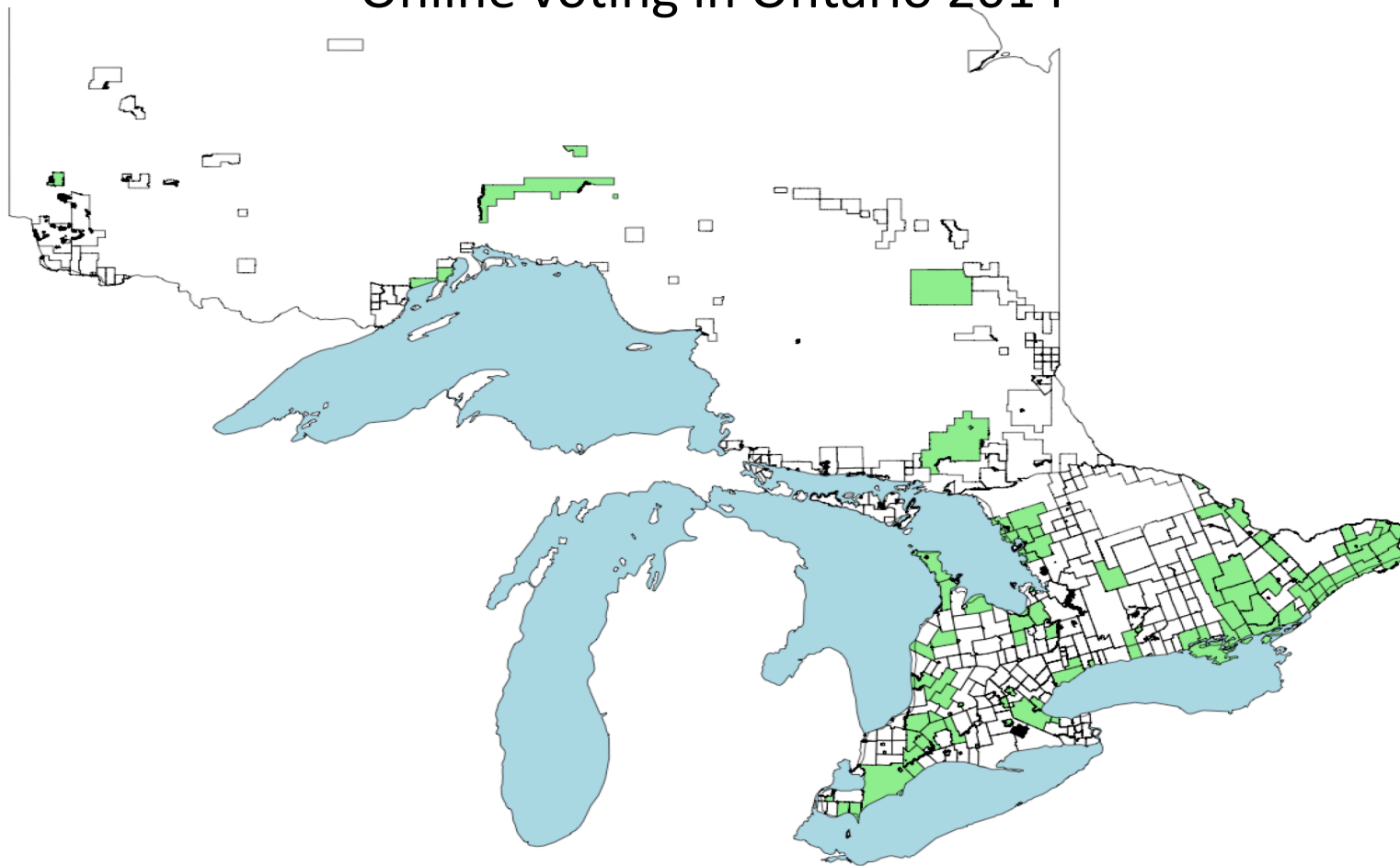
Online voting in Ontario 2006



Online voting in Ontario 2010



Online voting in Ontario 2014



Current context

- 209 municipalities used online voting in 2019.
 - 176 (179 before acclamations and unexecuted contracts)
- Many of them (100+) eliminated paper voting.
- Newmarket one of the early adopters of digital election model

Overview

This presentation presents the results of an exit survey of online voters in the Town of Newmarket during the 2018 municipal election.

The report proceeds as follows:

1. Information about the project & survey completion
2. Voter satisfaction
3. Vote information
4. Public attitudes
5. Voter profile & participation
6. Broader findings
7. Takeaways

Context

The October 2018 municipal election in the Town of Newmarket was conducted using a combination of online voting and telephone voting.

34.65% of eligible electors voted compared with 36.8% in the 2014 municipal election and 33% in 2010.

To better understand voter opinions and experiences, the City participated in the Internet Voting Study, which offered electors the option to complete a voluntary survey about their voting experience after voting online.

Context: Data

Where relevant, this report compares survey results with findings from two sources of data:

1. 2018 Internet Voting Study data from 31 municipalities.
2. The 2014 Internet Voting Project (IVP) surveys of online voters in 43 municipalities and paper voters in 4 communities.
 - 30,090 online voters completed a survey.
 - 1,766 paper voters completed surveys in the municipalities of Guelph, Markham, Springwater and Sudbury referred to as 'IVP data' in the report.

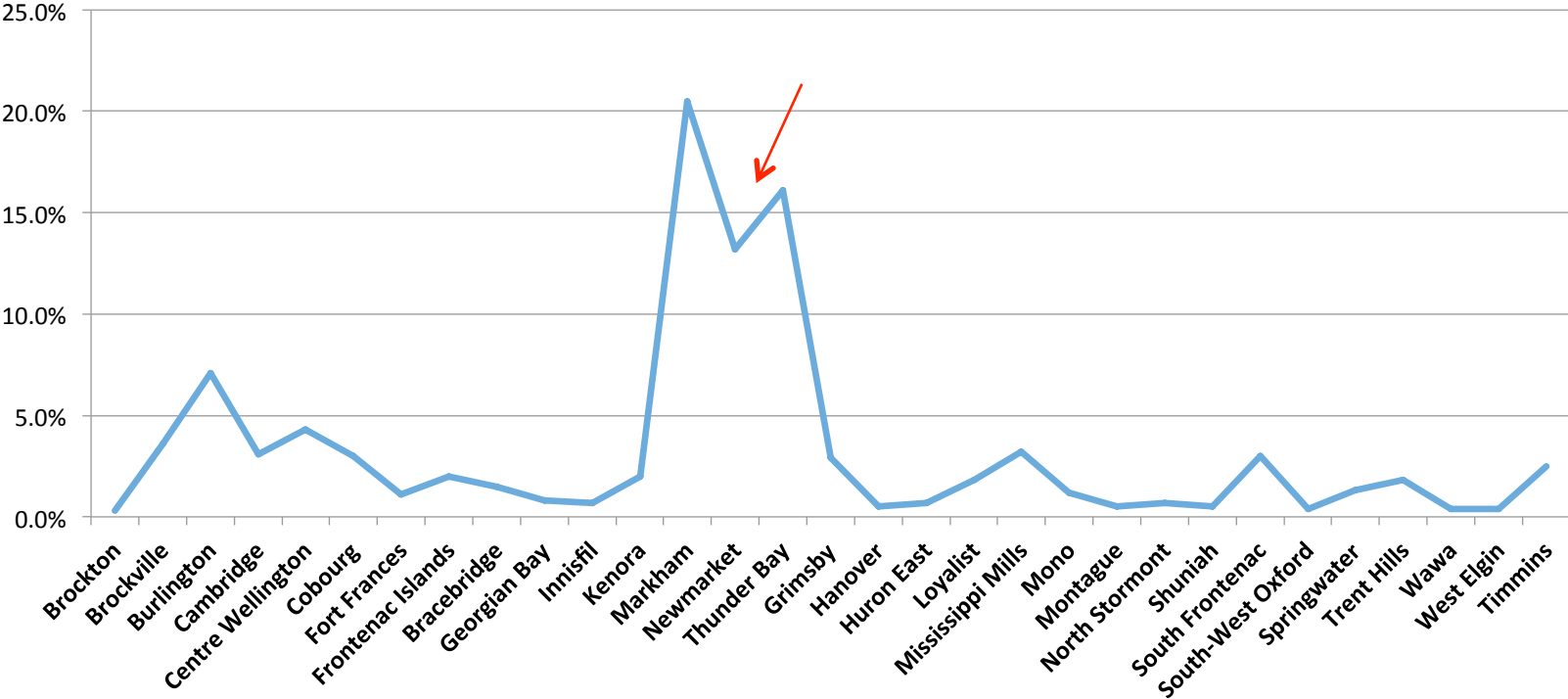
1. Information about survey completion

Participating municipalities

2018 Internet Voting Study Participants

Brockton	Grimsby	Newmarket
Bracebridge	Hanover	North Stormont
Brockville	Huron East	Shuniah
Burlington	Innisfil	South Frontenac
Cambridge	Kenora	South-West Oxford
Centre Wellington	Loyalist	Springwater
Cobourg	Markham	Thunder Bay
Fort Frances	Mississippi Mills	Timmins
Frontenac Islands	Mono	Trent Hills
Georgian Bay	Montague	Wawa
		West Elgin

Survey respondents by municipality



Information about survey completion

- 52,914 surveys completed.
 - Largest voting study ever carried out in Canada.
- 7,048 of these were completed in Newmarket out of 17,871 online voters.



- Extremely high response rate.
- Open for completion in Newmarket from October 13th to 22nd.
- Average length of time to complete a survey was 8 minutes.

2. Voter satisfaction & rationale for use

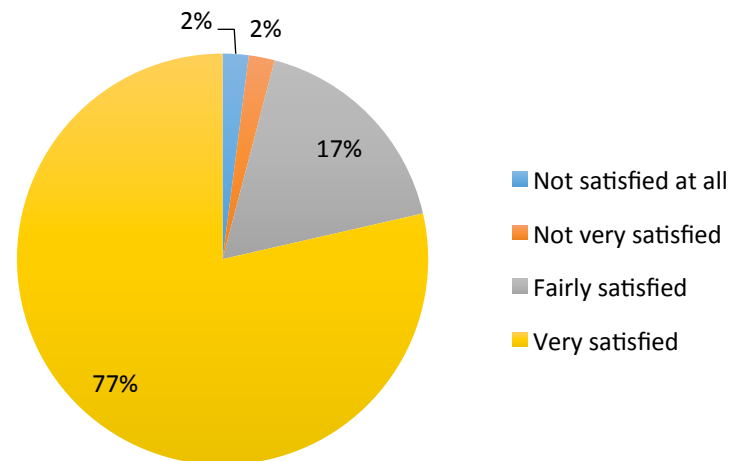
Voter satisfaction

94% of respondents in Newmarket are satisfied with online voting.

- 77% are 'very satisfied'

This is comparable to data from other Ontario municipalities.

Of the 31 communities that took part the 96% of voters report being satisfied.



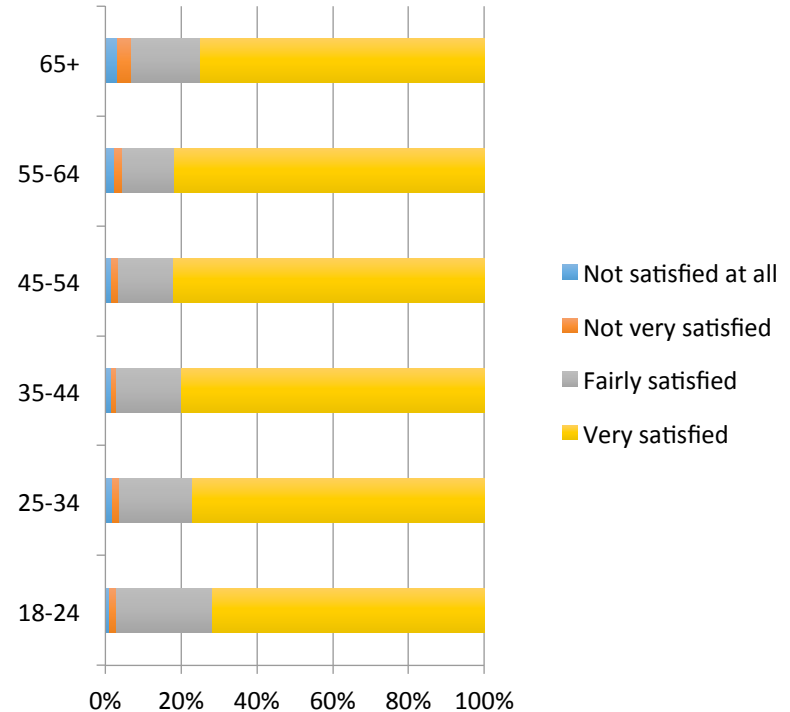
Voter satisfaction by age

There is strong satisfaction among all age groups.

It is highest among those aged 18-54, grouping 'fairly' and 'very satisfied'.

Voters 18 to 34 and 65+ are less likely to report being 'very satisfied'.

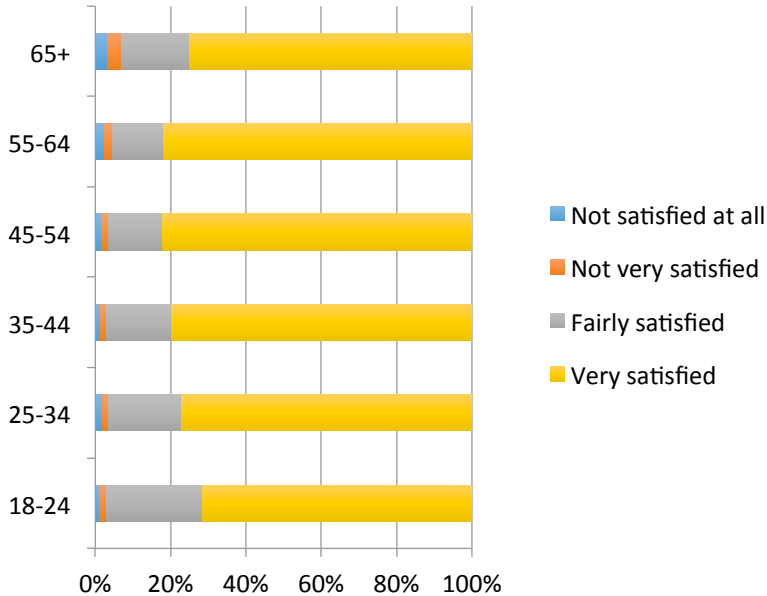
Those over 65 are least satisfied overall.



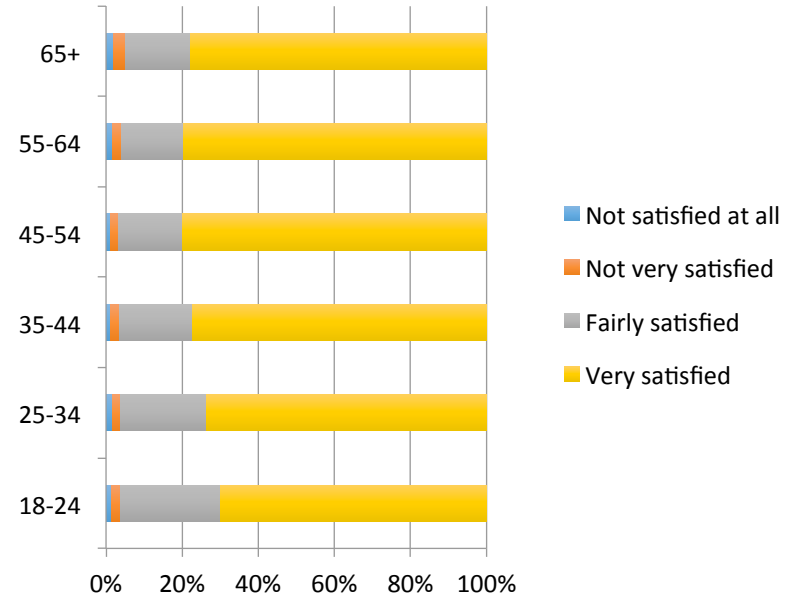
Comparing satisfaction with IVS data

Newmarket respondents under 64 report being slightly more satisfied than the rest of the sample.

Newmarket 2018



IVS data



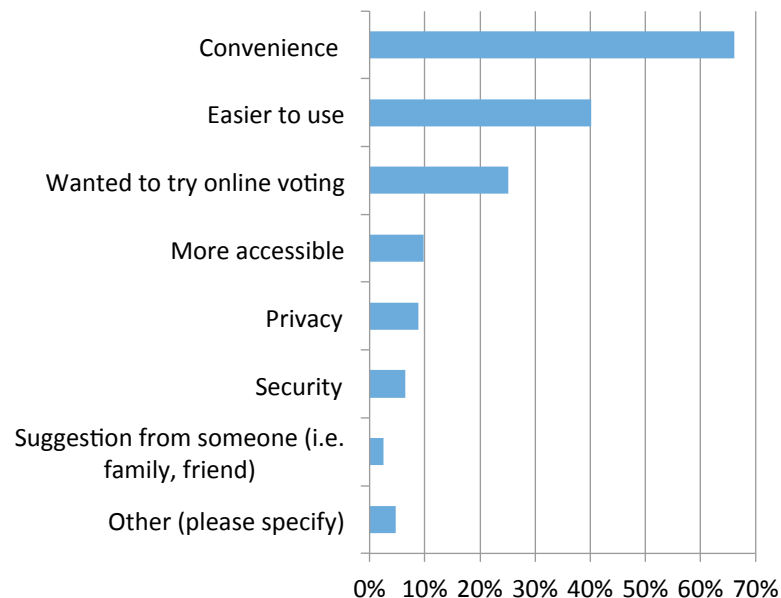
Rationale for use

Rationale	Newmarket 2018	IVS 2018
Convenience	64.71%	69.02%
Accessibility	5.58%	6.69%
Found it interesting/wanted to try something new	8.51%	6.78%
Suggestion from friend(s) or family member(s)	1.57%	1.09%
Suggestion from a candidate	0.34%	0.31%
Positive past experience with voting online	0.70%	2.07%
Privacy	1.73%	1.21%
Internet and telephone voting were my only choices	10.13%	7.27%
Internet voting was the only method offered in my municipality	3.58%	2.59%
Other (please specify)	3.15%	2.97%

Voter satisfaction & rationale

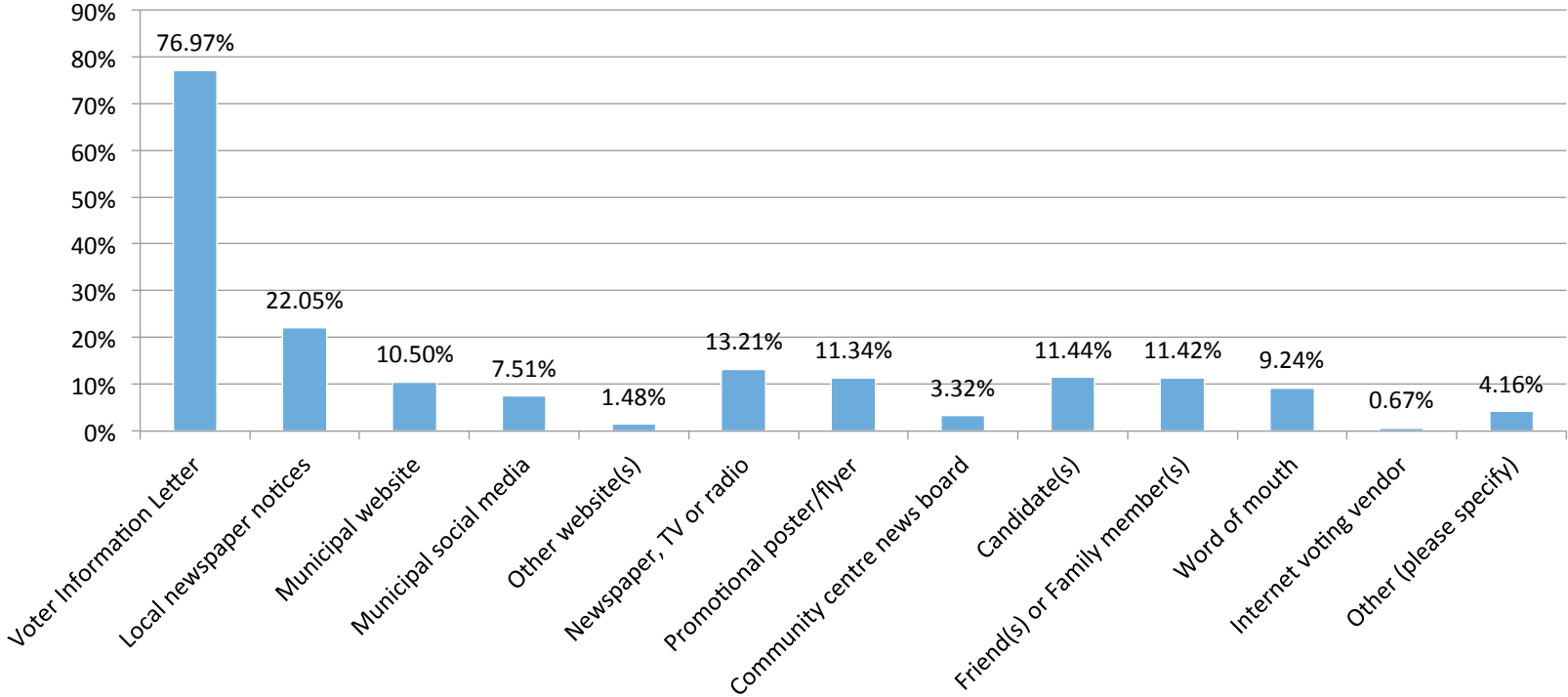
- Online voter satisfaction in Newmarket is strong.
 - Younger voters more satisfied than the IVS average.
- Online voting model changes well received by these voters.
 - There is a small group, 14%, who says this was their only option.
- Convenience main reason for use.
- Convenience, ease of use and interest main reasons for choosing online over telephone.

What made you decide to vote online instead of by phone?

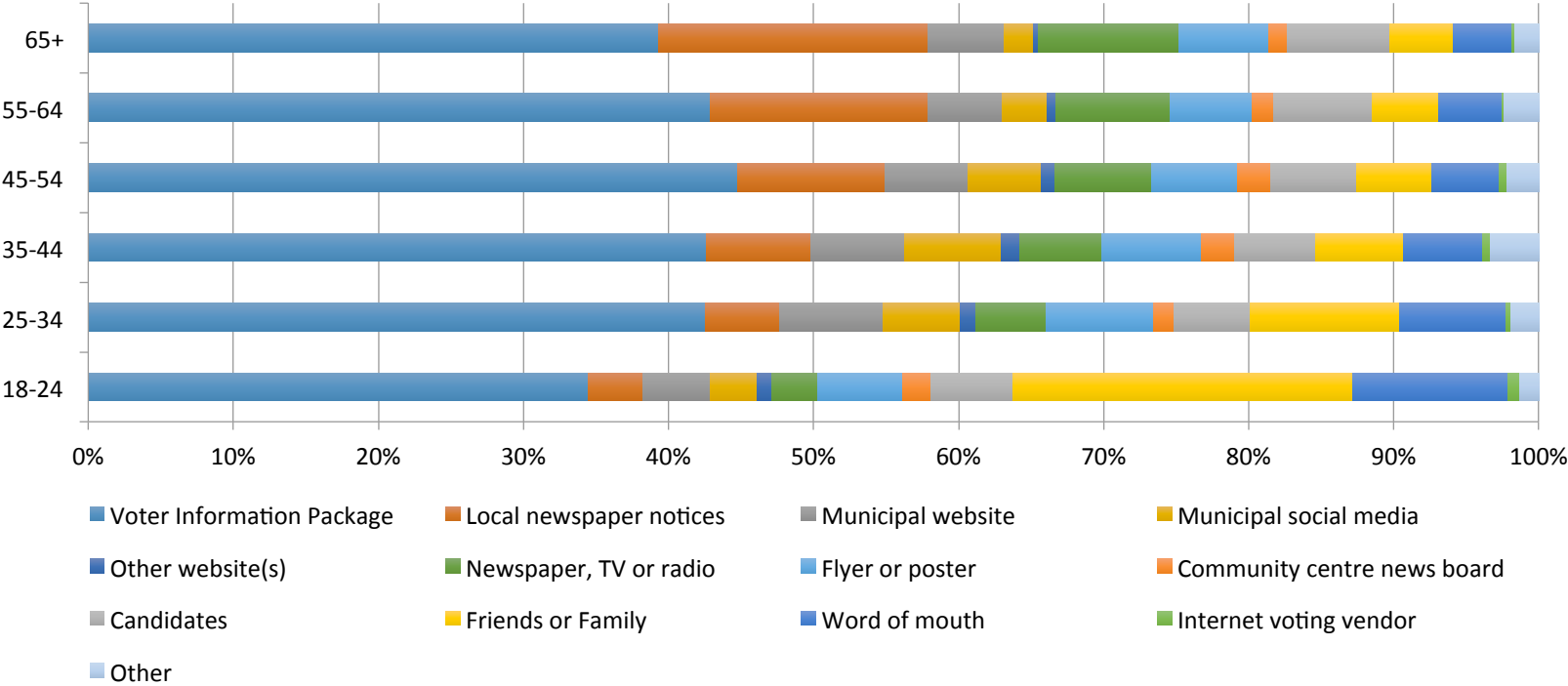


3. Vote information

Source of voting information



Source of voting information by age



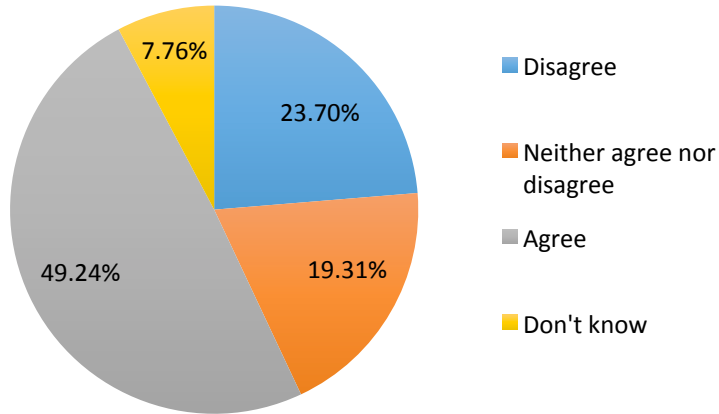
Vote information

- The Voter Information Package and newspaper notices are two consistently important sources to inform Newmarket electors.
 - News is an especially important source for those aged 45+.
- Voters 34 and under are more likely to be reached via friends and family and word of mouth.
 - This is especially true for those aged 18 to 24.
- Social media most effective for those aged 25 to 54.
- For these reasons a combination of information sources – traditional and newer, digital sources - would continue to work well to reach electors of all ages.

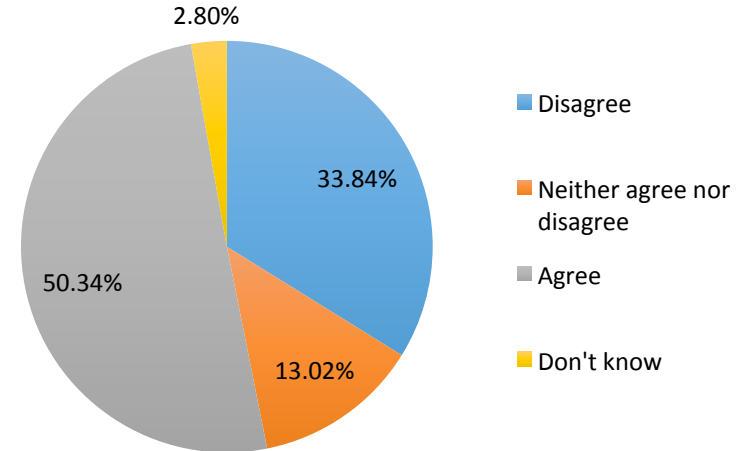
4. Public attitudes

Public attitudes

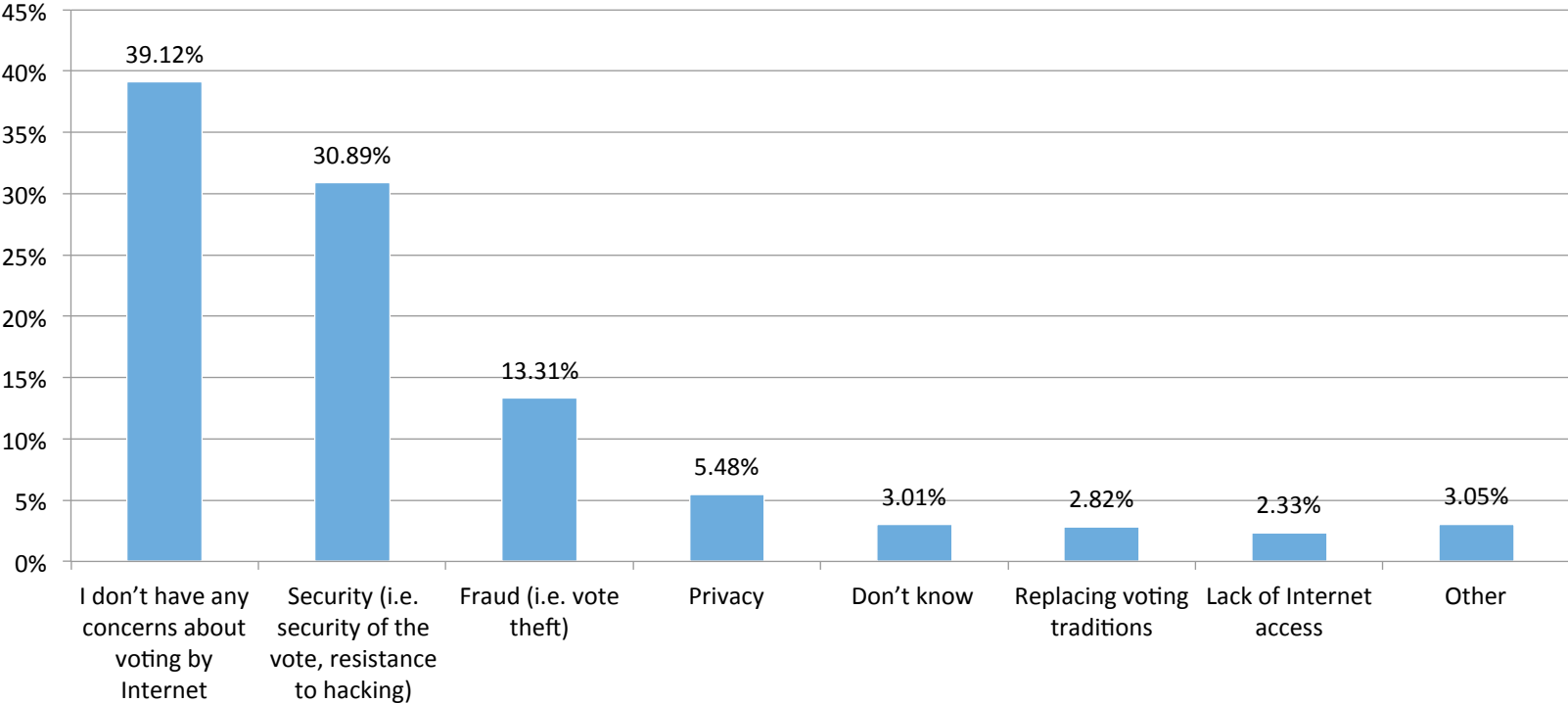
Elections with paper ballots are just as risky as elections where voting is electronic.



Paper voting is not needed in municipal elections where internet voting is available.



Concerns



Public attitudes

- Voters are accepting of electronic and online voting.
- The 2014 Internet Voting Project study showed that voters perceive online voting to be less risky than other remote forms of voting.
- While security is a concern, the largest proportion of online voters have no concerns.
 - Potentially standards could help offset these concerns.

5. Voter profile & participation

Voter profile

Profile	Characteristics	Online voter Newmarket, 2018	Paper voter IVP data, 2014
Socio- demographic	Age	52 years	44 years
	Annual household income	\$75,000 to \$99,999 before taxes	\$60,000 to \$79,999 before taxes
	Community density	Urban to Suburban	Urban to Suburban
	Education	Some university	Completed technical, community college
Attitudes	Voting history	Habitual	Very habitual
	Interest level in politics	Moderate	Moderate

Engaging infrequent and non voters

- 10% of respondents say they 'probably' or 'definitely' would not have voted without online voting.
- Those with less committed voting records are not as certain they would have voted.
- 10% of the sample say they did not vote in 2014.

Reasons for not voting in a past municipal election (2014)

Category	Newmarket	IVS
Everyday life issues (access)	46.7%	41.4%
Political issues (lack of interest)	43.9%	33.7%
Administrative issues	9.4%	6.76%
Newmarket N=572; IVS N=5640 Excludes Other and Don't know		

Voter profile & participation

- When both options are offered, online voters are older, more educated and higher income than paper voters but with less habitual voting histories.
 - Not so much an issue in Newmarket given the approach taken in 2018.
- Evidence to suggest online voting encourages the participation of some electors for reasons of accessibility.
- Brings occasional voters in the voting process more permanently.



6. Broader findings

Turnout

- Newmarket
 - 2018: 2 percent decrease from 2014
 - What does this mean?
- Ontario municipal elections, 2000-2014
 - 171 elections in 98 municipalities across 5 election time periods
 - Increase of 3.5 percentage points
 - 7 percentage points if voting by mail not in place beforehand
 - Increases effective voting population by 7%
 - **LARGER THAN ELECTORAL SYSTEM CHANGE**

Going all electronic?

- Still observe a turnout increase of 2 percentage points.
- Evidence that eliminating paper voting disenfranchises voters on the basis of digital literacy.
- Still a lot we don't know, but we will answer a lot of these questions in the coming months.



Policy considerations

- When there is no registration requirement 35% more people vote by internet.
- 9% less people use it when available in advance voting only.
- A regulation framework is something we are exploring.



7. Takeaways

Takeaways

- Newmarket online voters are satisfied.
 - Younger voters more satisfied than the IVS average.
- Mainly vote online for convenience
 - ‘Wanting to try it’ and ‘only option’ next highest responses.
- A majority of survey respondents seem pleased with the service offering. It is desired and well received by these voters.
- What about those that are left out?
 - Digital disenfranchisement and literacy should be a consideration for 2022.

Takeaways

- Voter Information Package, newspaper notices and TV and radio are top election information sources.
- Given key differences in information source by age a blended model is suggested, which combines traditional and non-traditional mediums.
- Public attitudes are supportive of online voting. Broader project findings suggest there is a positive effect on voter participation.
 - Lack of increase in Newmarket likely the result of other factors.
 - Also, given that paper ballots were not an option we would expect it to be lower.
- Newmarket still very much an early adopter based on municipal size and the model chosen.

Questions & bio



Dr. Nicole Goodman, Director at the Centre for e-Democracy and Assistant Professor at Brock University is recognized internationally as a leading expert on electoral modernization. She has co-authored reports for EMBs and governments across Canada and has provided advice to governments internationally about the modernization of elections. Dr. Goodman has led a number of projects studying elections in municipalities and First Nations across Canada. She currently represents Canada on the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance Board of Advisers.