

Northeast Ohio Voter Advocates Voter Turnout Analysis 2022

Published June 2023

Northeast Ohio Voter Advocates

Northeast Ohio Voter Advocates (NOVA) is a grassroots, non-partisan nonprofit that works to expand voter participation so that all voices are heard in our democracy. NOVA volunteers register and engage voters at social service agencies, schools, food pantries and correctional facilities.

A Note From our Board President:

NOVA volunteers accomplished a lot in 2022. We resumed most of our in-person voter registrations and had the opportunity to engage in meaningful conversations with voters. We hired our first full-time organizer and developed new partnerships. We are grateful to our volunteers and Board Members for all of their donated time and energy.

Data Processing and Cleaning

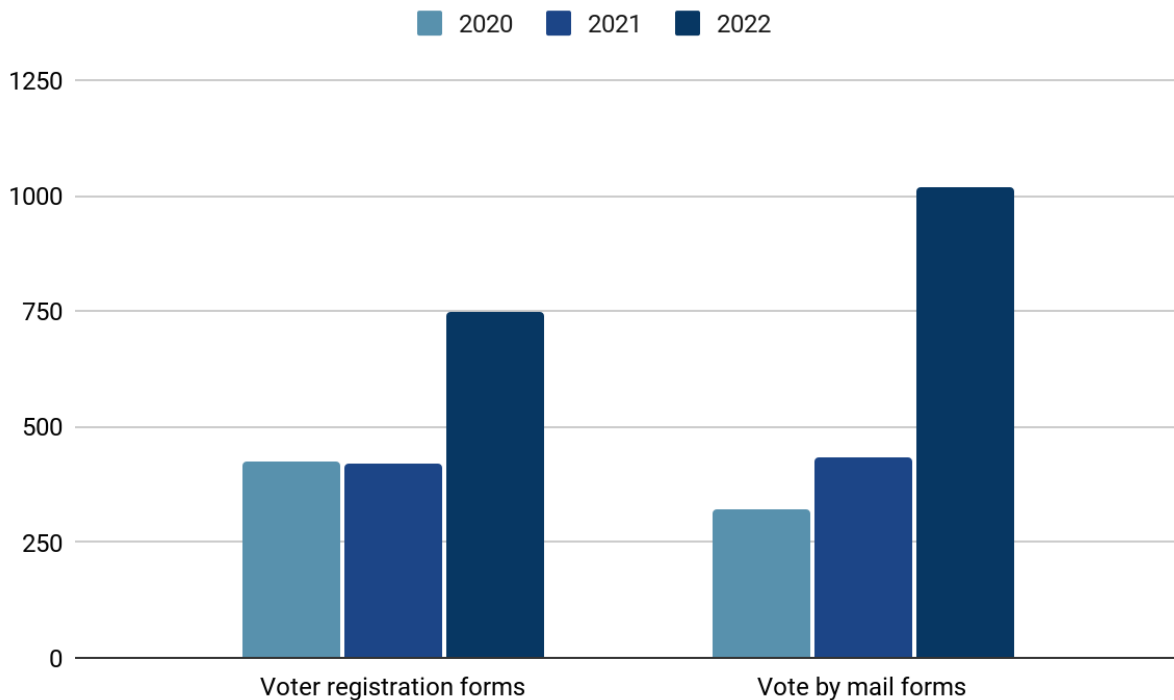
All voter registration (VR) and vote-by-mail (VBM) forms completed by NOVA volunteers were scanned and entered into NOVA's database. Analysis on these forms was limited to Cuyahoga County. In addition to data from the NOVA database, we accessed publicly available data from the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections (BOE) for turnout and mail-in ballots.

NOVA clients who registered in Cuyahoga County but could not be matched to a BOE record were excluded. Given the NOVA focus of increasing vote-by-mail (VBM) registration, clients who requested but did not receive a VBM ballot were excluded. Numbers and percentages of this population are presented in Appendix A.

Forms Completed

In 2022, NOVA volunteers assisted 1,332 voters complete either a VR form, a VBM form, or both forms ahead of the November 2022 General Election. Overall, we were able to complete 748 voter registration forms and 1018 VBM forms.

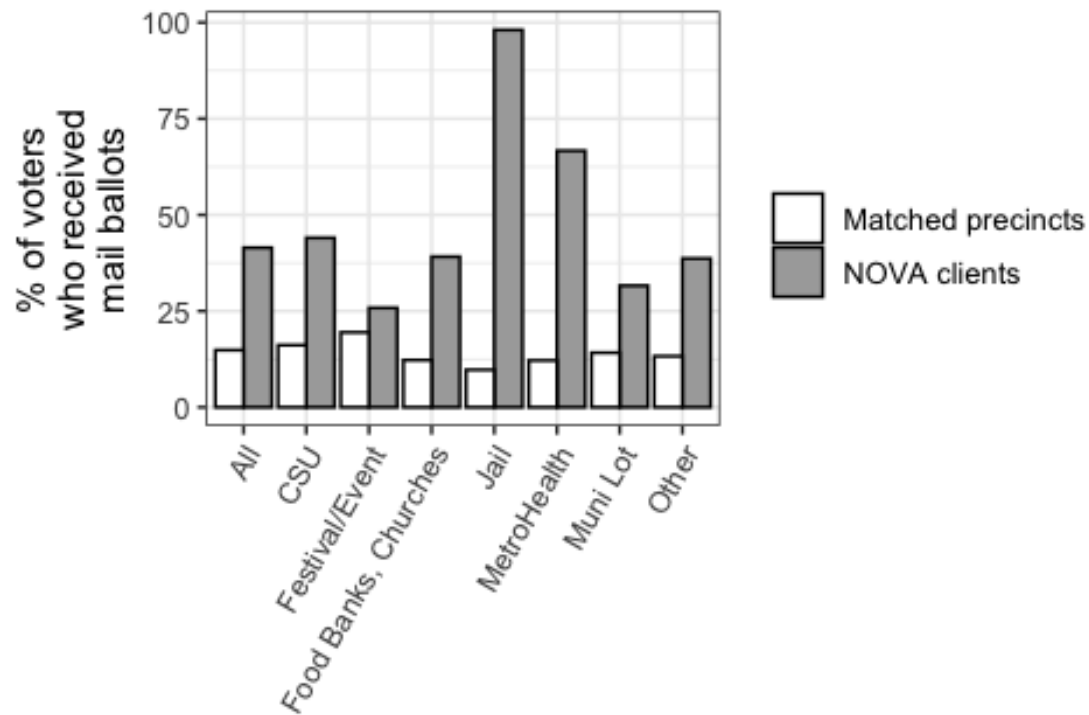
Chart 1: Total VR and VBM collected by NOVA (2020-2022)



VOTER TURNOUT

Full turnout results from BOE data were summarized at the precinct level, calculating overall turnout, turnout among those who received a VBM ballot, and turnout among those who did not receive a VBM ballot. This precinct data was merged to NOVA data by the precincts of NOVA clients. The weighted average of the turnout among registered voters in the home precincts of NOVA clients was then calculated. These precinct-weighted turnout rates offer a comparison for the turnout of NOVA clients.

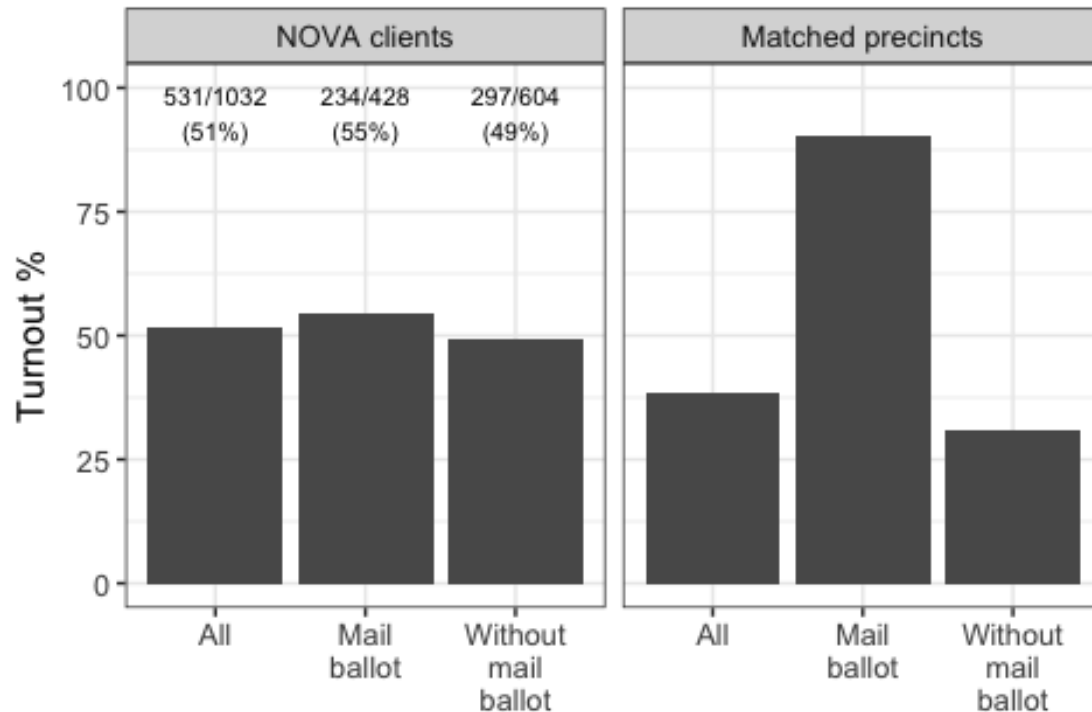
VBM vs. VR



Overall and across all event types, NOVA voters received VBM ballots at higher proportions than a precinct-matched population. This result is slightly artificial in the jail subset because voting in jail requires a VBM ballot. In 2022, neither the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections nor the Ohio Secretary of State proactively mailed vote-by-mail applications to voters as they do in Presidential Election years. However, some voters will receive vote-by-mail applications from political parties or other organizations.

Overall Turnout

Chart 4: Percentage of NOVA and precinct-matched voters who voted



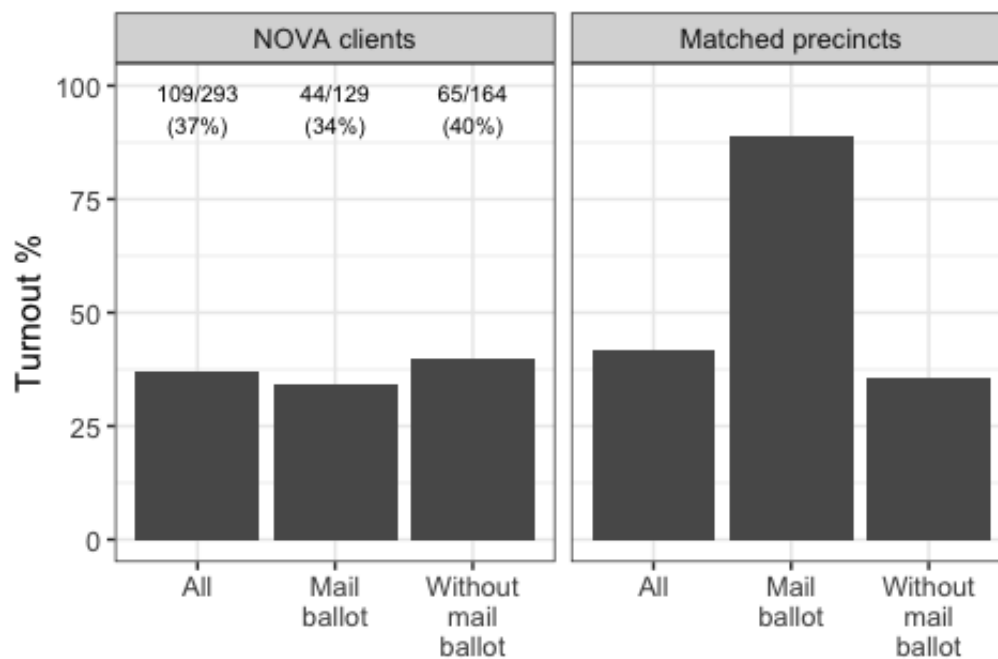
Among NOVA voters, the overall turnout rate was 51%, exceeding the weighted average turnout rate of 38% in the home precincts of NOVA voters.

In the home precincts of NOVA voters, the turnout rate of voters who received a VBM ballot greatly exceeded that of voters who did not (90% vs. 31%, respectively). However, a much smaller proportion of voters received a VBM ballot than among NOVA voters. Among NOVA voters, there was a marginal difference between voters who did and did not receive a VBM ballot (55% vs. 49%).

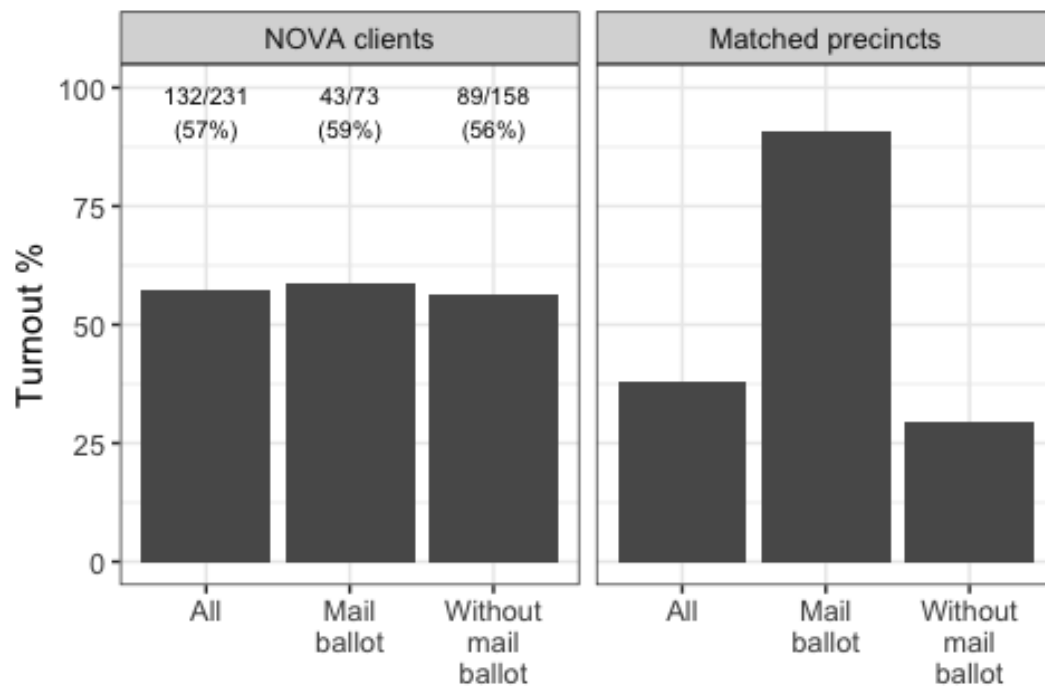
With the exception of CSU, this same general trend was observed across all event types. Among NOVA voters registered at CSU, the turnout among those with a VBM ballot was not greater than those without.

By Event Category

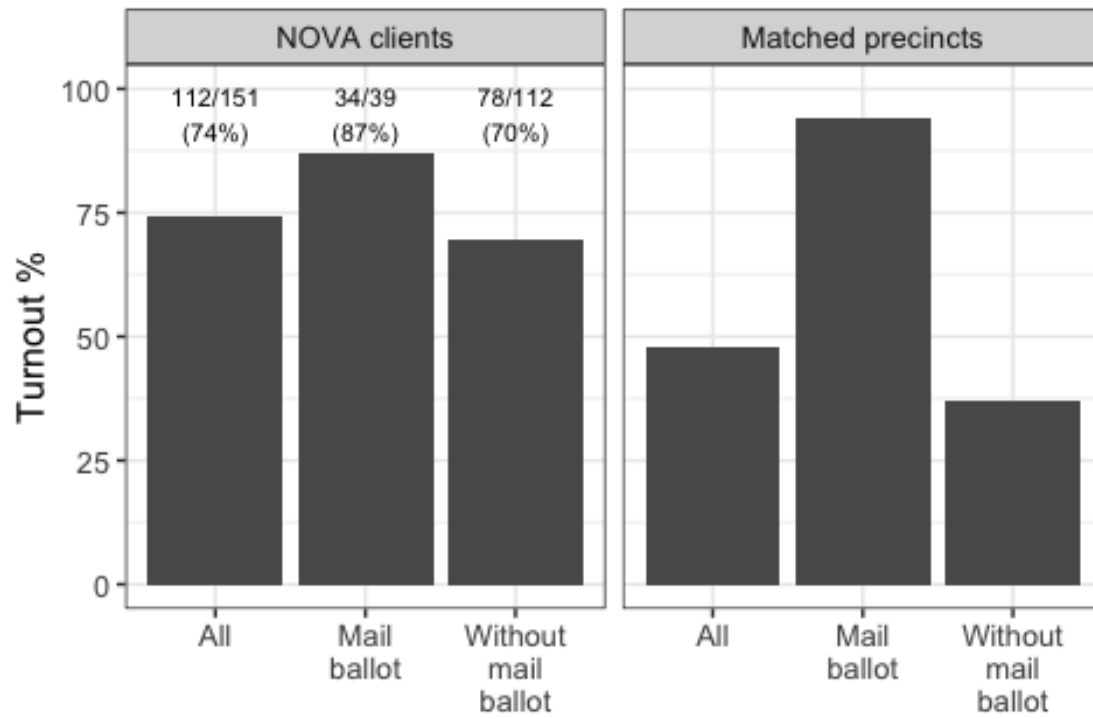
CSU



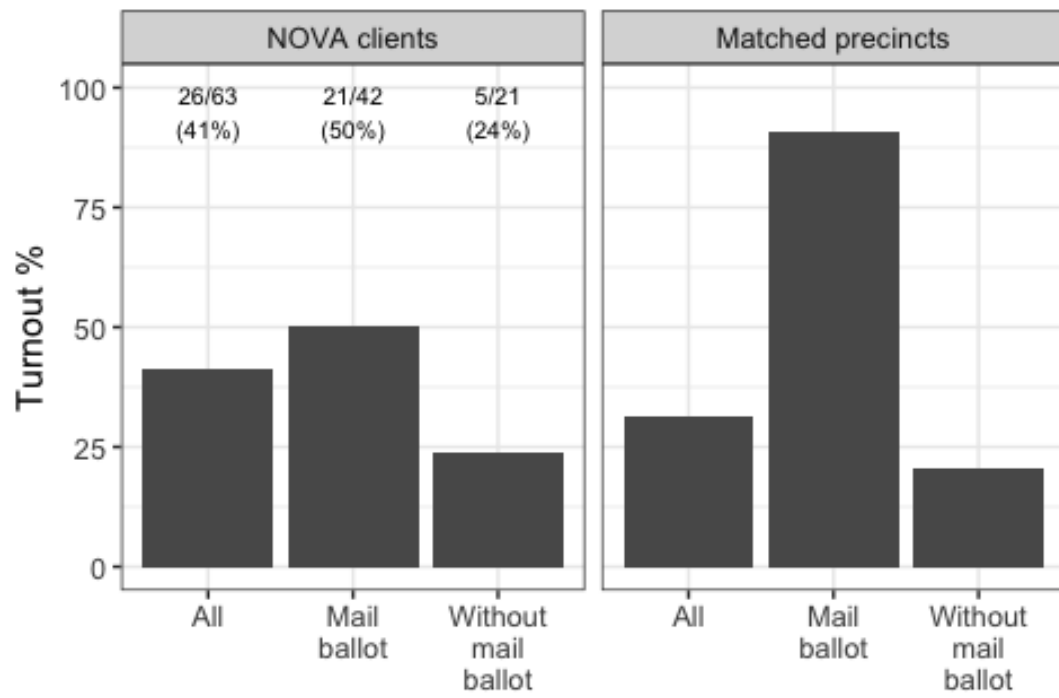
Muni Lot Food Distribution



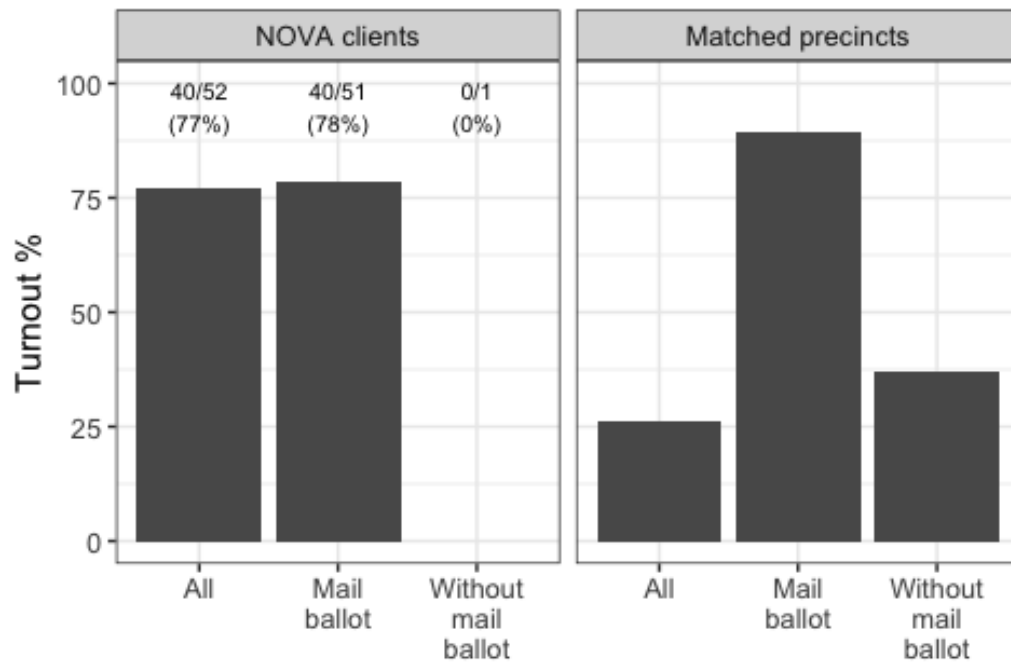
Festival/Event



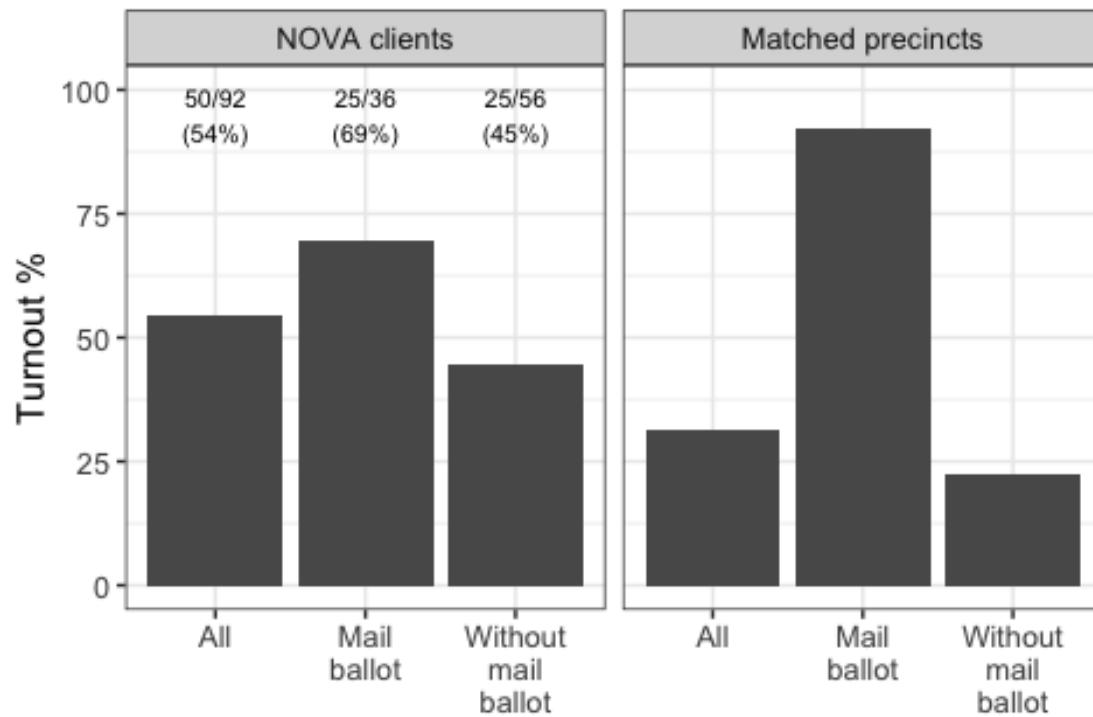
MetroHealth



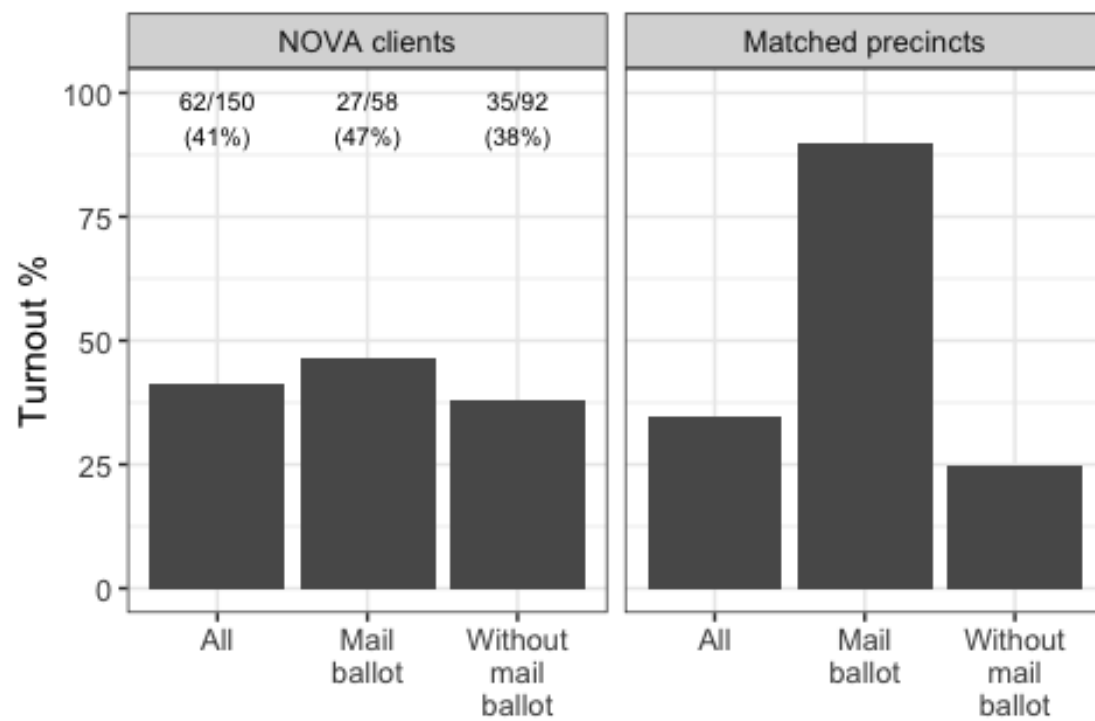
Jail



Food Pantries, Churches



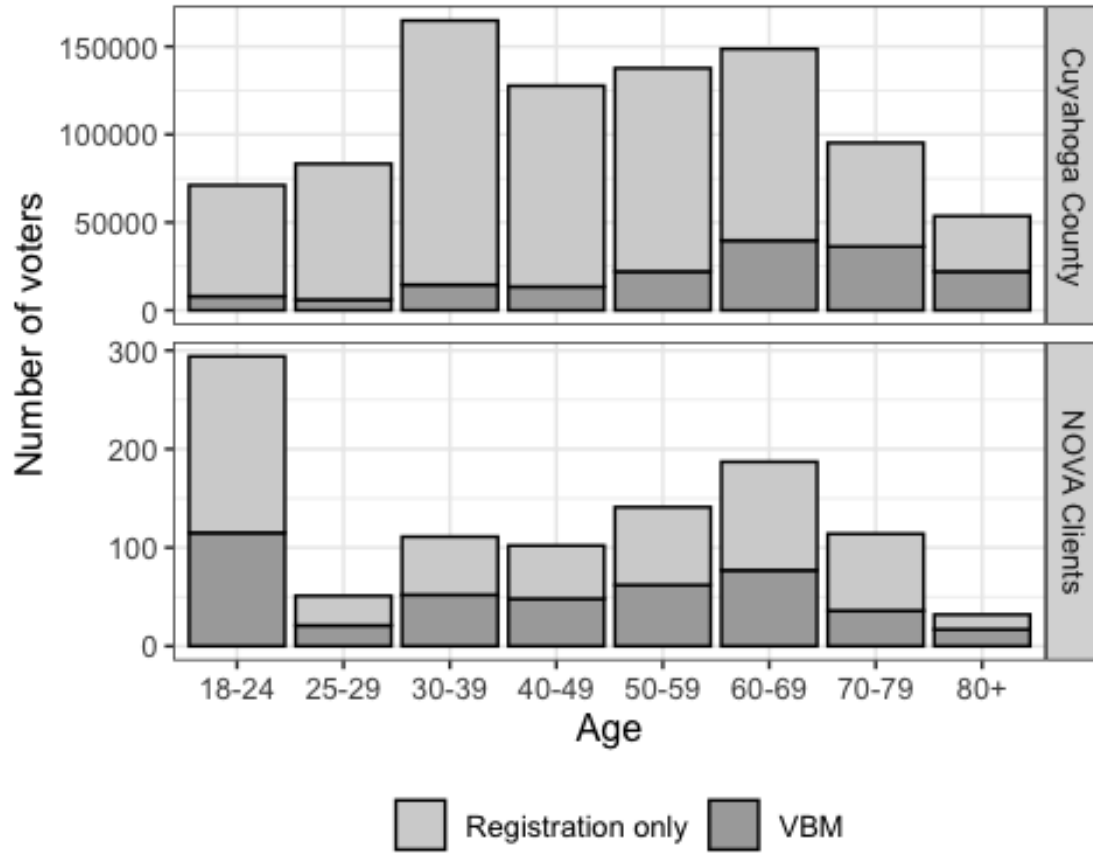
Other



VOTER AGE

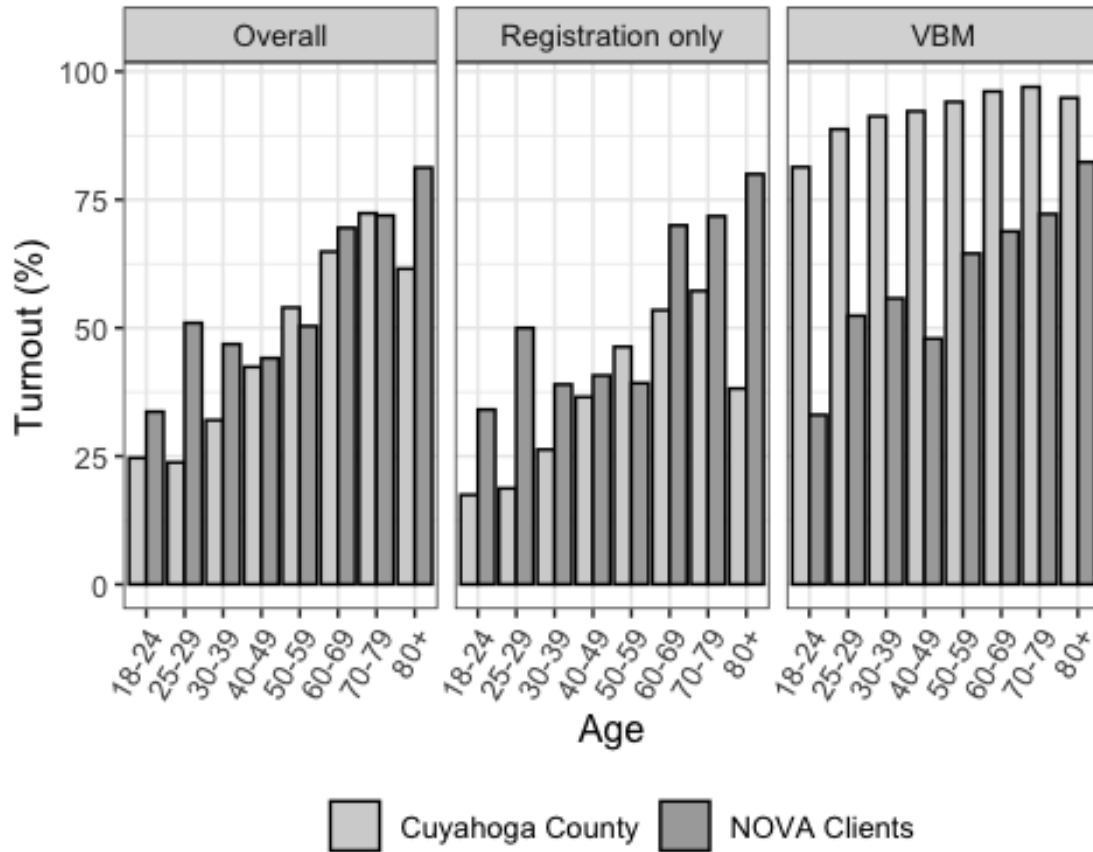
Ages of voters

Ages of all registered voters and NOVA voters were calculated. Age distributions of voter populations, their rates of VBM, and age-specific turnout rates were compared.



NOVA vs. Cuyahoga County Turnout by Age

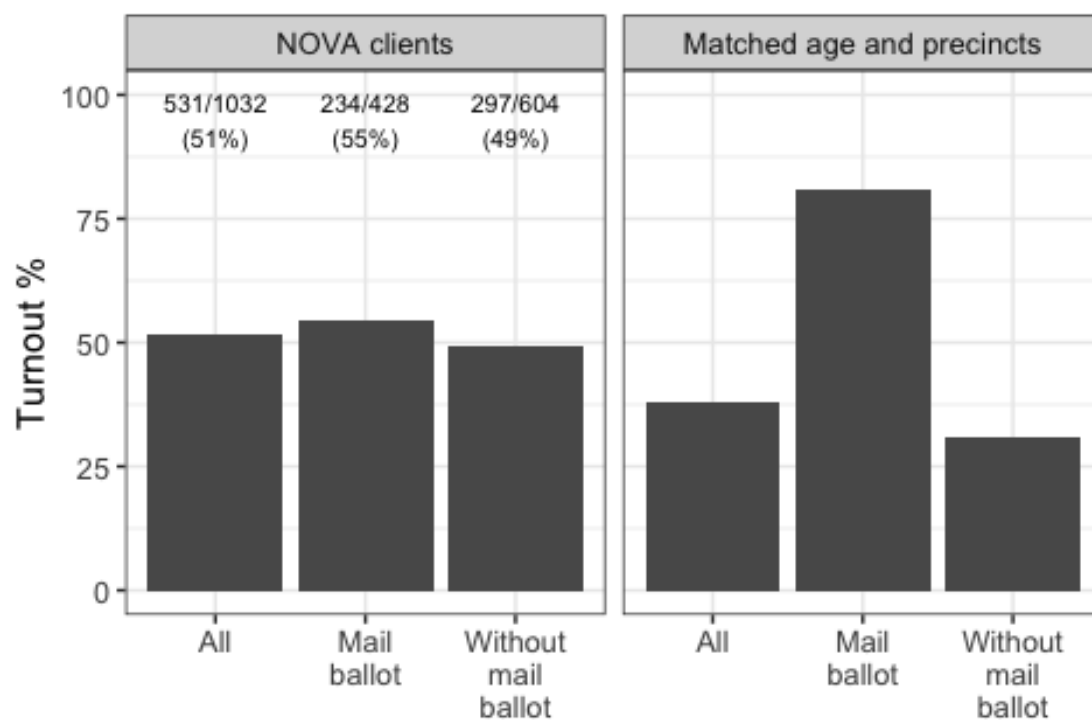
NOVA clients under 40 and over 80 had higher turnout rates than Cuyahoga County registered voters in the same age bracket.



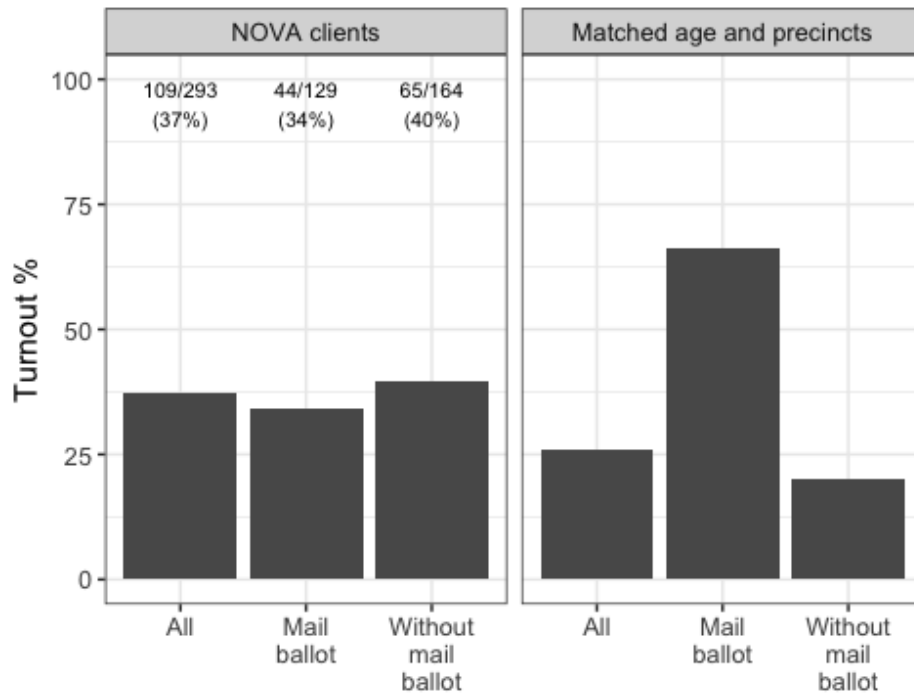
Voter Turnout, Age- and Precinct-Matched

Using age brackets above, age-specific turnout was calculated for each precinct. NOVA clients were then matched to those in their precinct of the same age bracket and turnout was compared. While the overall age- and precinct-matched results were similar to the precinct-matched, there were some sites where the NOVA turnout was much higher than the age- and precinct-matched turnout (CSU, Jail) and other sites where this age adjustment diminished the turnout difference between NOVA and precinct-matched voters (Muni Lot Food Distribution, Food Pantries/Churches).

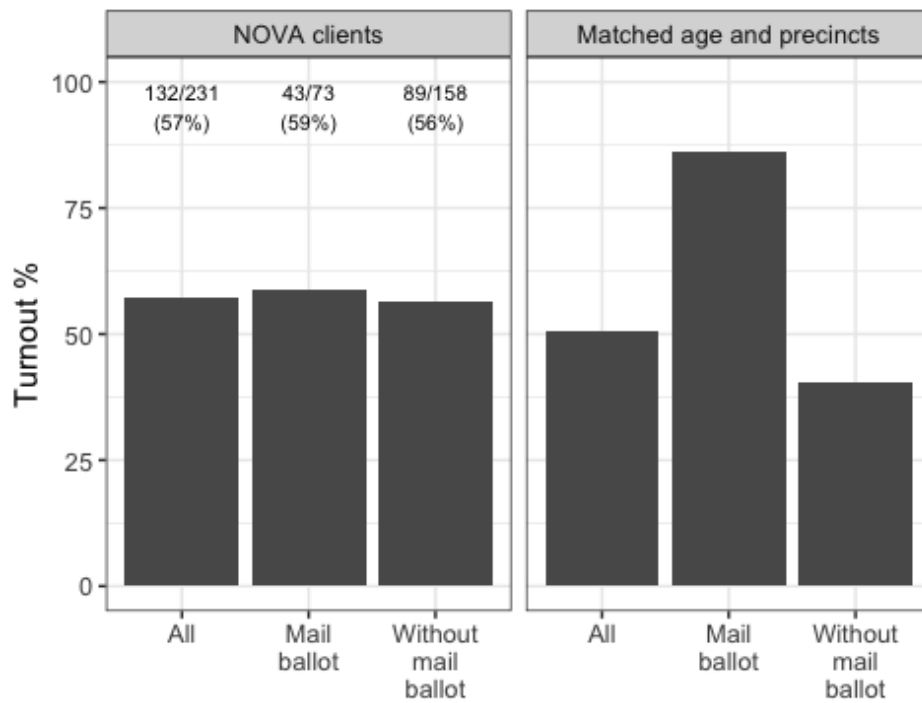
Overall Turnout



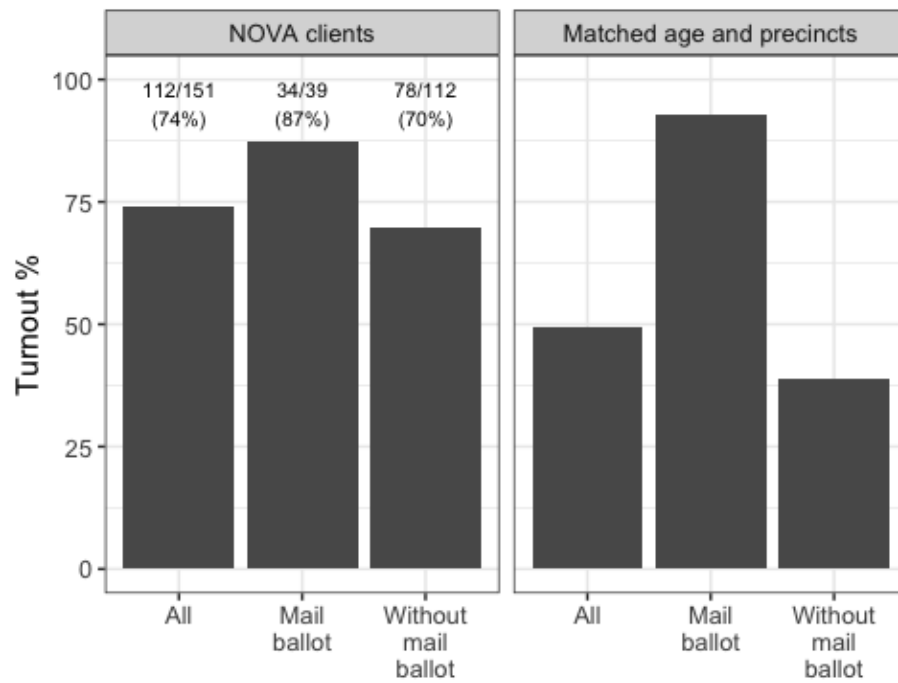
CSU



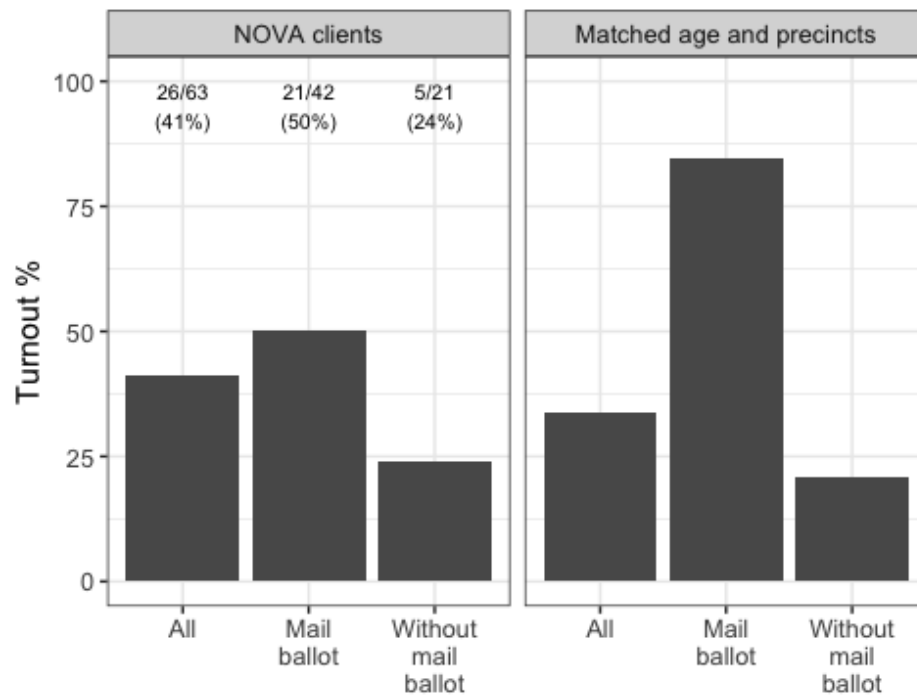
Muni Lot Food Distribution



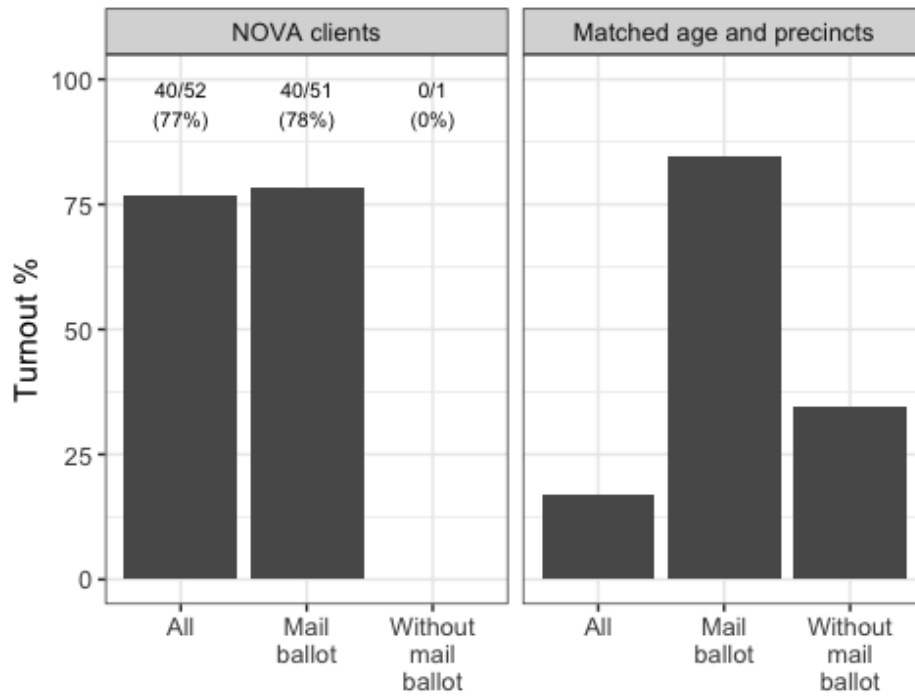
Festival/Event



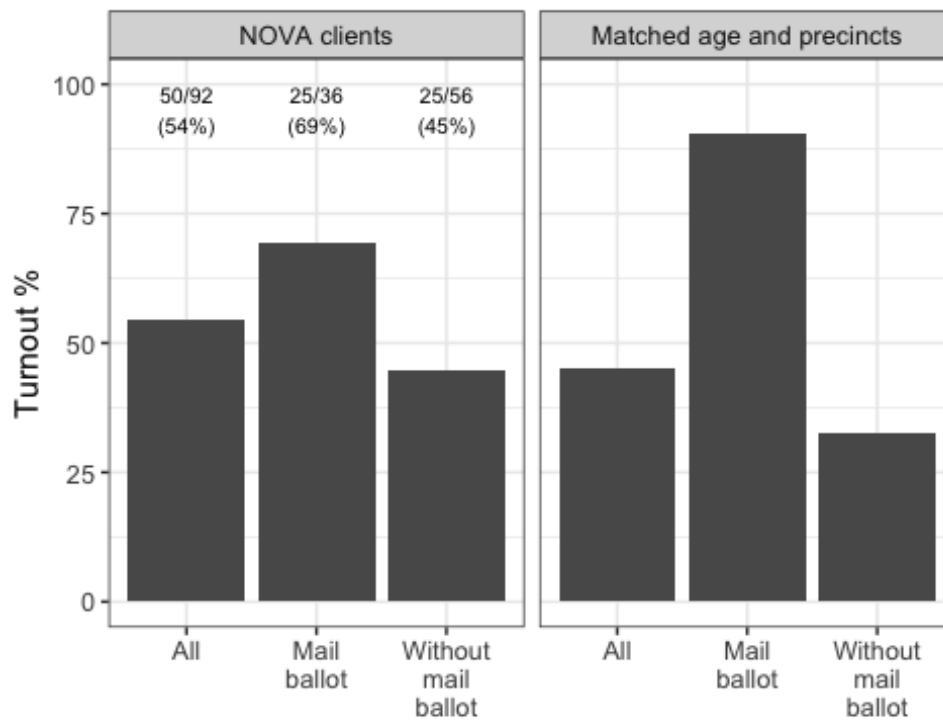
MetroHealth



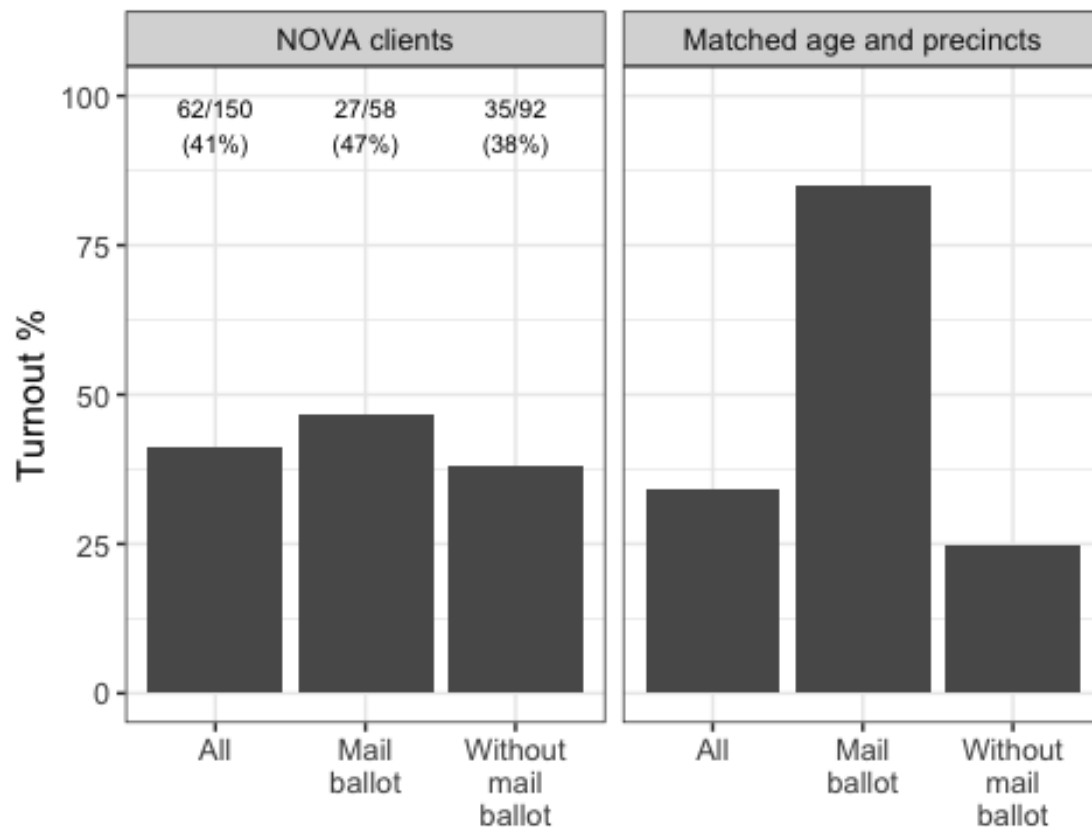
Jail



Food Pantries, Churches



Other



SUMMARY

When NOVA registers voters or assists them with vote-by-mail applications, their turnout is 13% higher than their peers. NOVA wishes to thank our volunteers, board, and staff for their dedication to increasing voter turnout, and the non-profit organizations who gave us access to the clients they serve to increase civic engagement. We also want to express our appreciation to the Cuyahoga County Board of Election for their expertise for the data they so ably organize and provide to the public.

APPENDIX A

Voters Excluded vs. Included

294 forms were not included in this analysis due to either (1) the voter does not reside in Cuyahoga County (205 forms), (2) the VBM form was rejected by the BOE (50 forms), or (3) the VR form could not be matched with a BOE record (39 forms). The number and relative proportion of these exclusions presented below.

Consort diagram

The number of voters excluded in each of these steps is presented below.

