

The  
Electoral  
Commission

# The Electoral Commission update

Sam Younger  
Chairman

AEA annual seminar 2006

# The Electoral Commission

## Looking back

- A fraught general election
- Introduction of Electoral Administration Bill

## Looking forward

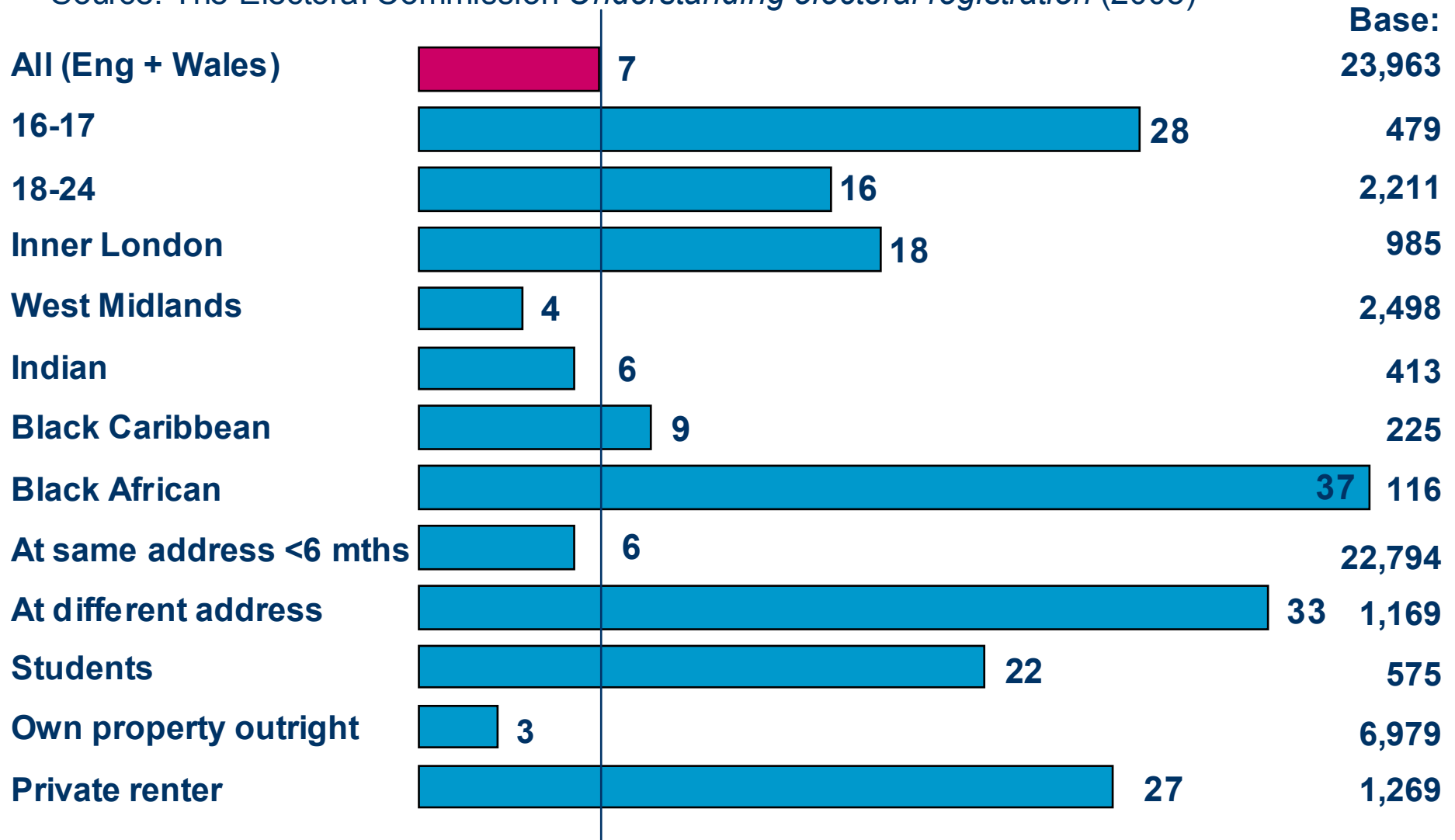
- May local elections in England
- Local government re-organisation ?
- New challenges in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- Implementing Electoral Administration Act

# Non-registration

The Electoral Commission

N.B. % estimated non-registration in 2000 (source: ONS)

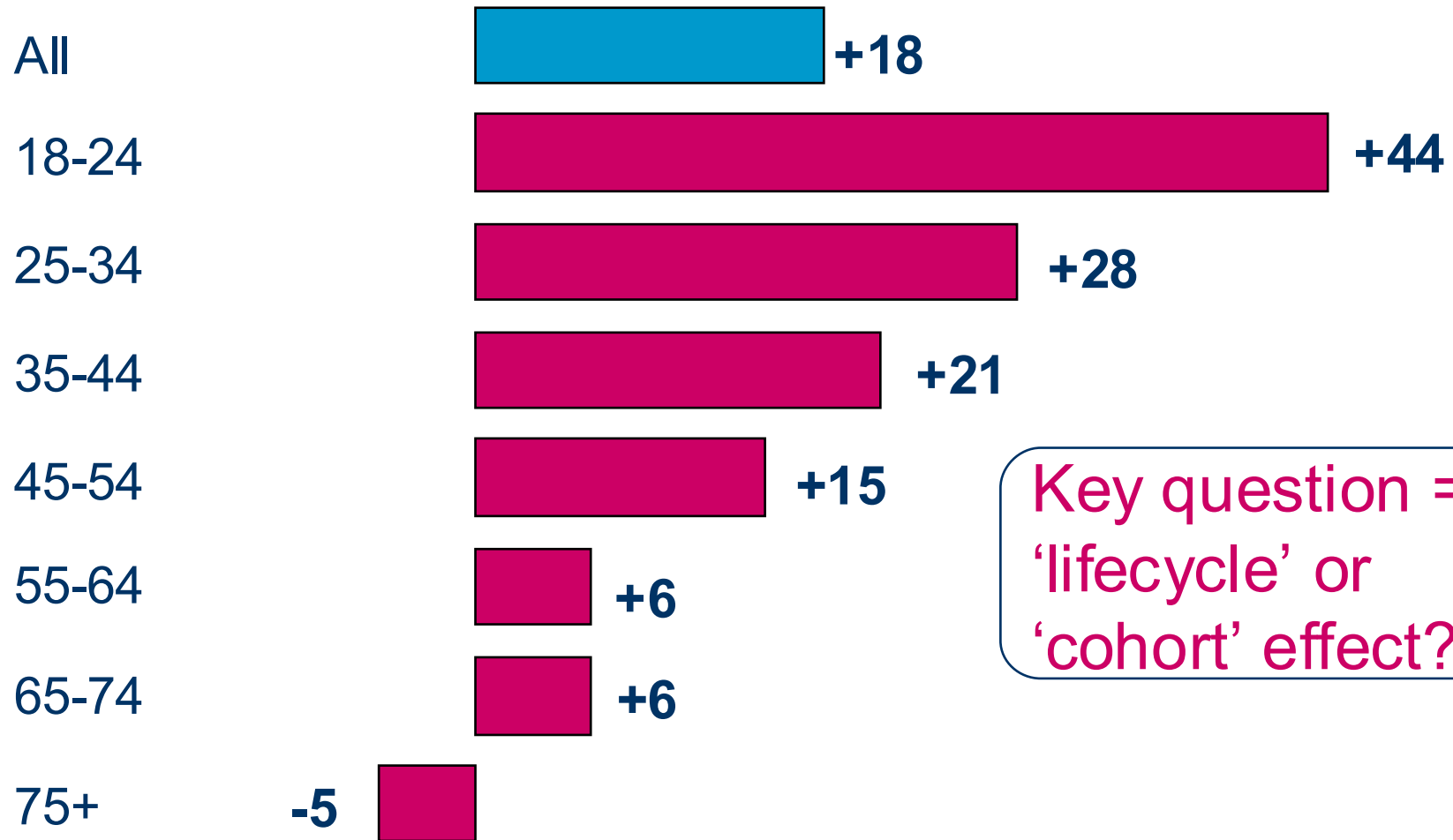
Source: The Electoral Commission *Understanding electoral registration* (2005)



# Non-voting

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Change in claimed **non-voting** by age group, 1964-2005



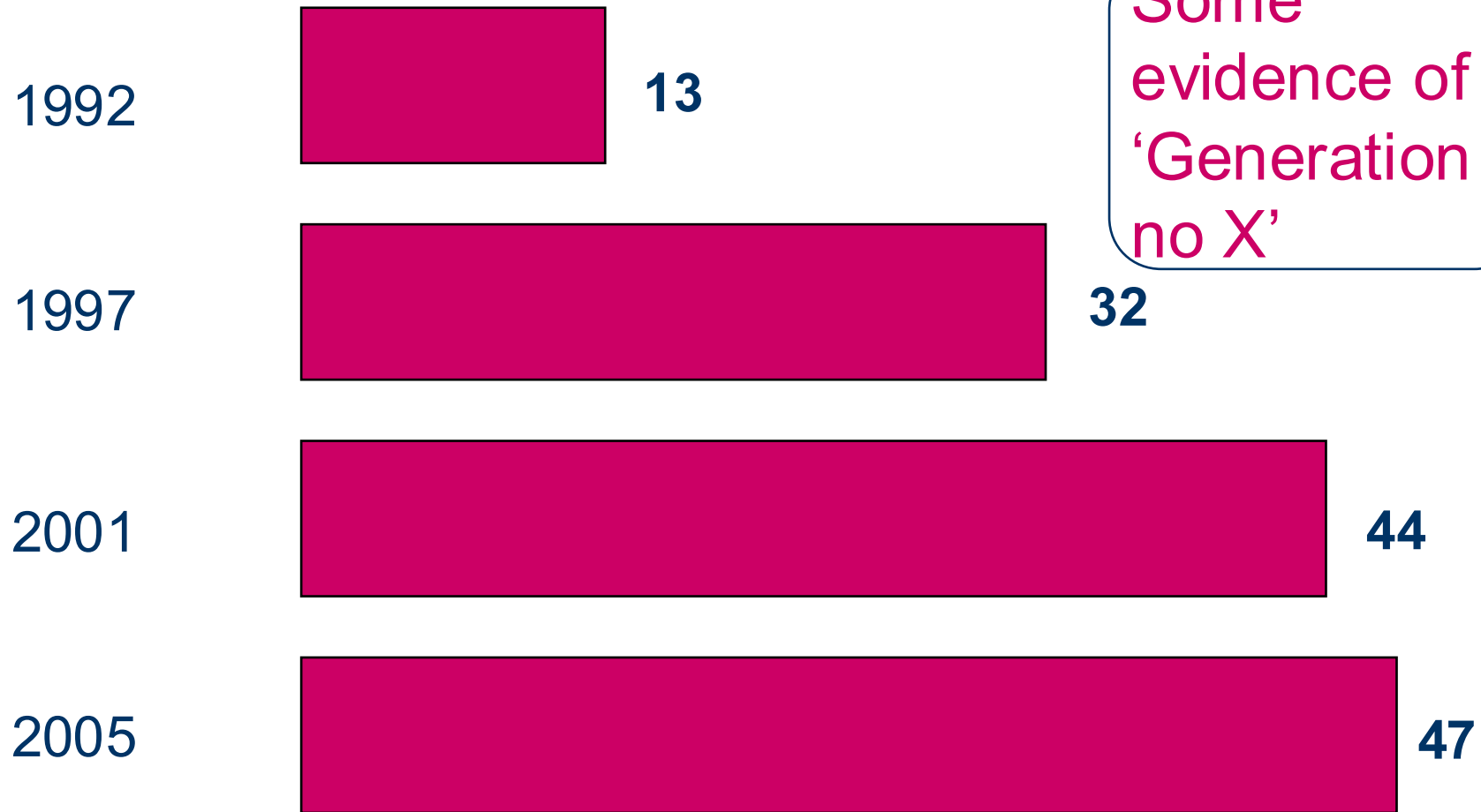
Key question =  
'lifecycle' or  
'cohort' effect?

Source: British Election Study (BES)

# Non-voting

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% claimed **non-voting** among 25-34s

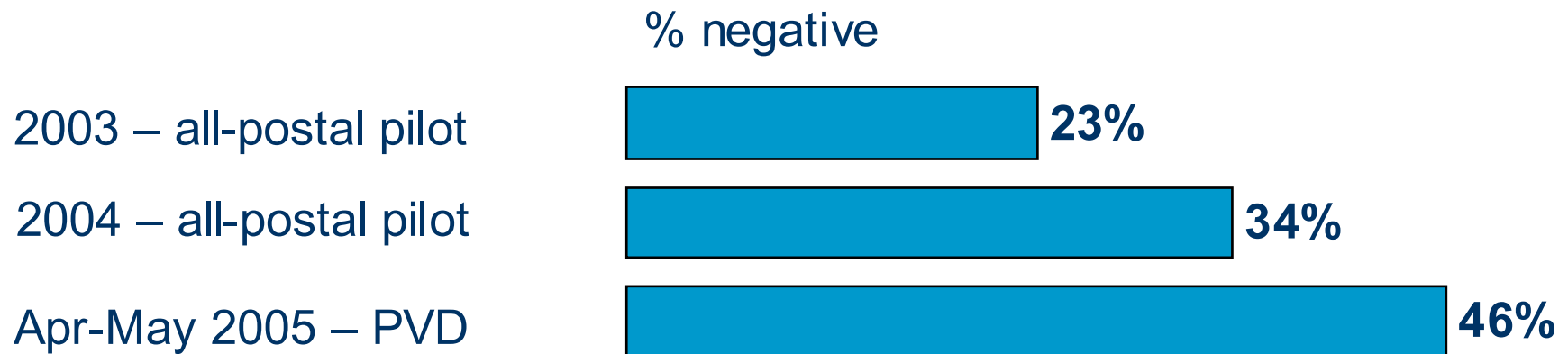


Some evidence of a 'Generation no X'

Source: British Election Study (BES)

## Postal voting – public confidence

**All adults** (voters and non-voters) who rated postal voting as very or fairly unsafe from fraud or abuse



# It's not 'apathy'

The Electoral Commission

Q How interested would you say you are in politics?

% not particularly/at all interested

% very/fairly interested

1973



Mar 1991



Apr 1997



May 2001



April 2005



Base: c.1,000-2,000 British/UK adults 18+

Source: MORI

# It's not 'apathy'

Table 4: Interest in 'politics' and 'issues'

How interested would you say you are in the following...?

	Politics %	Local issues %	National issues %	International issues %
(Base:)	(2,065)	(1,107)	(1,107)	(1,107)
Very interested	13	32	25	22
Fairly interested	40	49	52	44
Not very interested	28	14	17	26
Not at all interested	19	4	6	8
Don't know	*	0	0	0
Interested	53	81	77	66
Not interested	47	18	23	34

Note: \* denotes <0.5%

Base: UK adults 18+, December 2004

Source: MORI

Source: MORI for EC/Hansard Society *Audit of political engagement 2* (2005)

What we're  
here for

- We aim to gain public confidence and encourage people to take part in the democratic process within the UK

Our aims

We aim to promote:

- integrity
- involvement
- effectiveness

in the democratic process

## Participation

- Duty to maximise numbers on the register
- Returning Officer role in encouraging participation
- The multi-channel future

## Integrity

- What's happening already
- What's in the E A Bill
- The missing link: individual registration

## Effectiveness

- Performance standards
- Funding
- Organisation: Regional co-ordination and beyond

## At the Commission

- A new year 5 year UK Learning and development strategy
- A commitment to supporting the implementation and embedding of legislative change
- An internal structure to deliver results more effectively
- Partnership approach

## Our 10 year vision

- Multi-channel voting a reality
- A national electronic register in place underpinned by individual registration and personal identifiers
- Robust national standards
- Funding to enable local services to meet standards and allow local innovation

## Our 10 year vision

- A single elections act
- A well-resourced and effective AEA, lobbying effectively on behalf of the profession
- The Commission championing the public and monitoring standards