

Overcoming the Socio-Political and Economic Barriers faced by Young Persons in Accessing Nigeria's Political Space

– Samson Itodo



Key reflective questions

Part 1: What is the context for electoral politics?

Part 4: Are these barriers endogenous or exogenous?

Part 2: What is the outlook of youth access to the political space?

Part 5: What are the pathways for navigating or overcoming these barriers?

Part 3: What are these socio-political and economic impediments?

Part 1:

What is the context for electoral politics in Nigeria?



The context

- Valueless politics and the dearth of a leadership philosophy
- Political competition defined by ethnic and religious cleavages
- Flawed and cumbersome electoral process
- Commodification of politics
- The dissonance between regular elections and governance outcomes
- Electoral justice deficit
- Elite domination and centralization of political power

Outlook of youth participation and representation in politics



Key highlights

Young voters dominate Nigeria's voter register however, youth turnout for elections is extremely low

The increase in youth candidacy indicates an appetite to run office

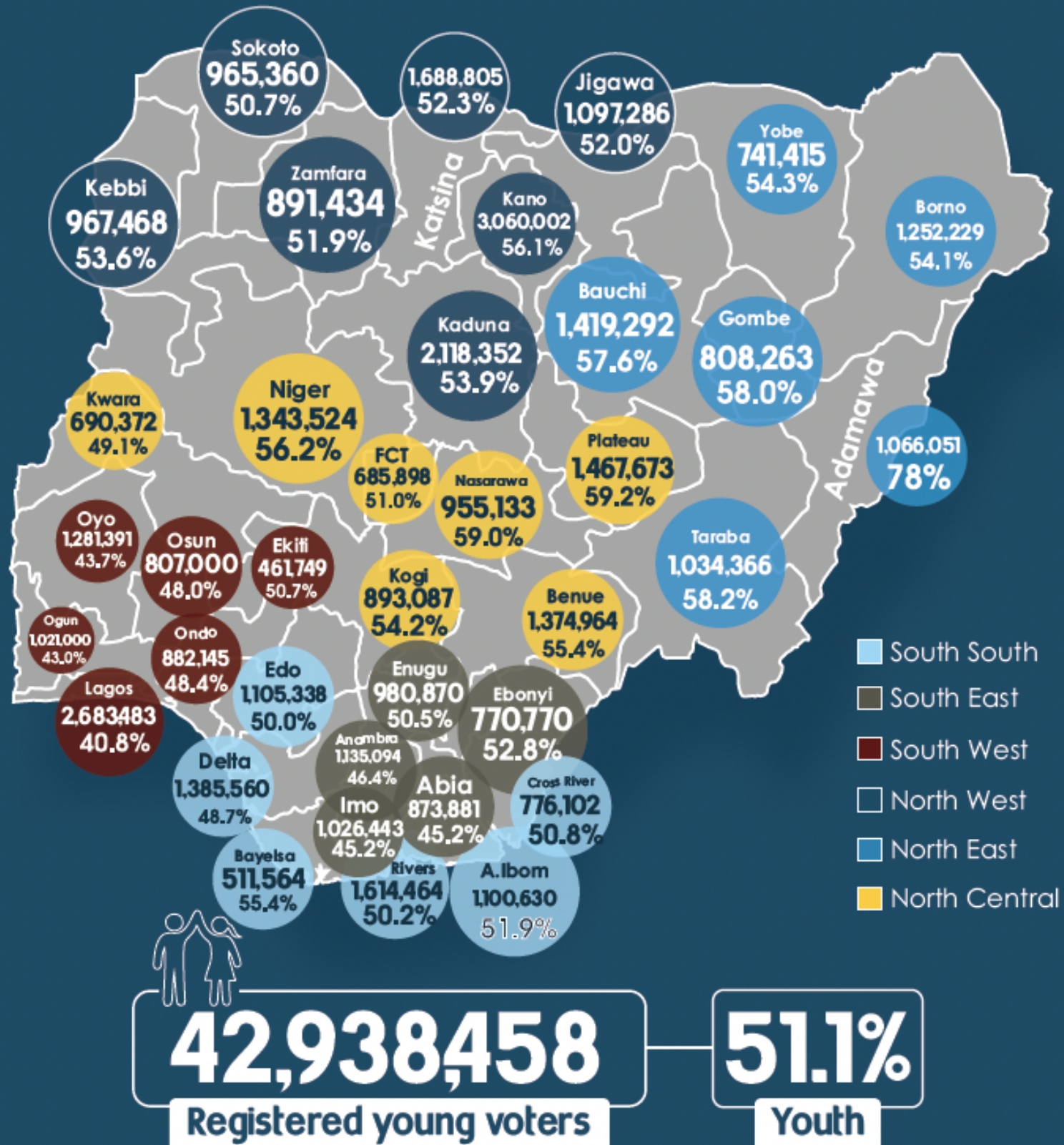
High levels of youth candidacy do not impact youth turnout for election substantially

Youth candidates nominated by established parties are more likely to win elections than their counterparts in less established parties

Parties are more likely to nominate youth candidates for legislative seats than executive positions

Young women participation and representation is abysmally low. Politics remains an old boys club

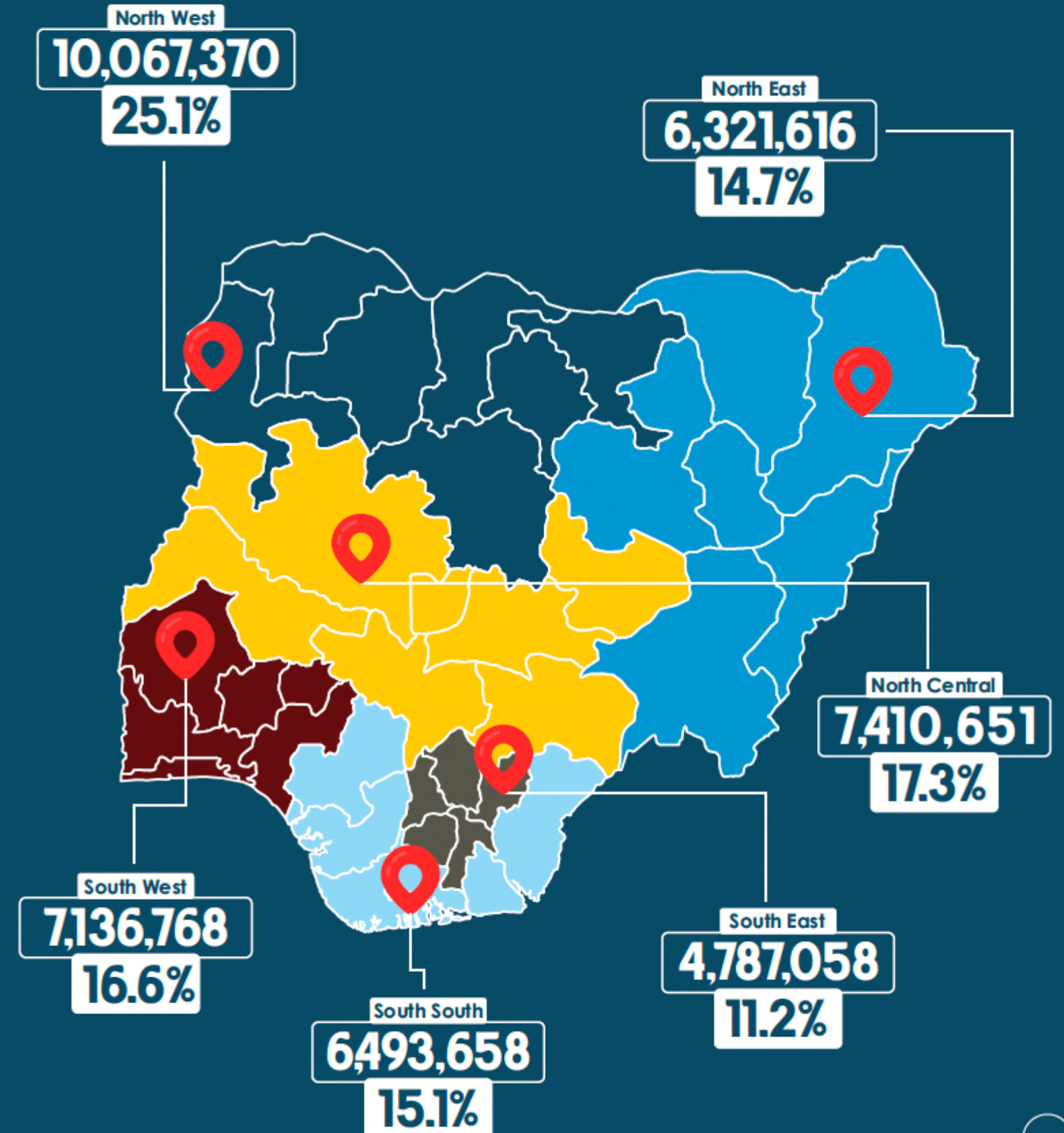
State distribution of registered young voters (18-35 years)



Source: Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)

2019

Zonal distribution of registered young voters (18-35 years)



Source: Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)

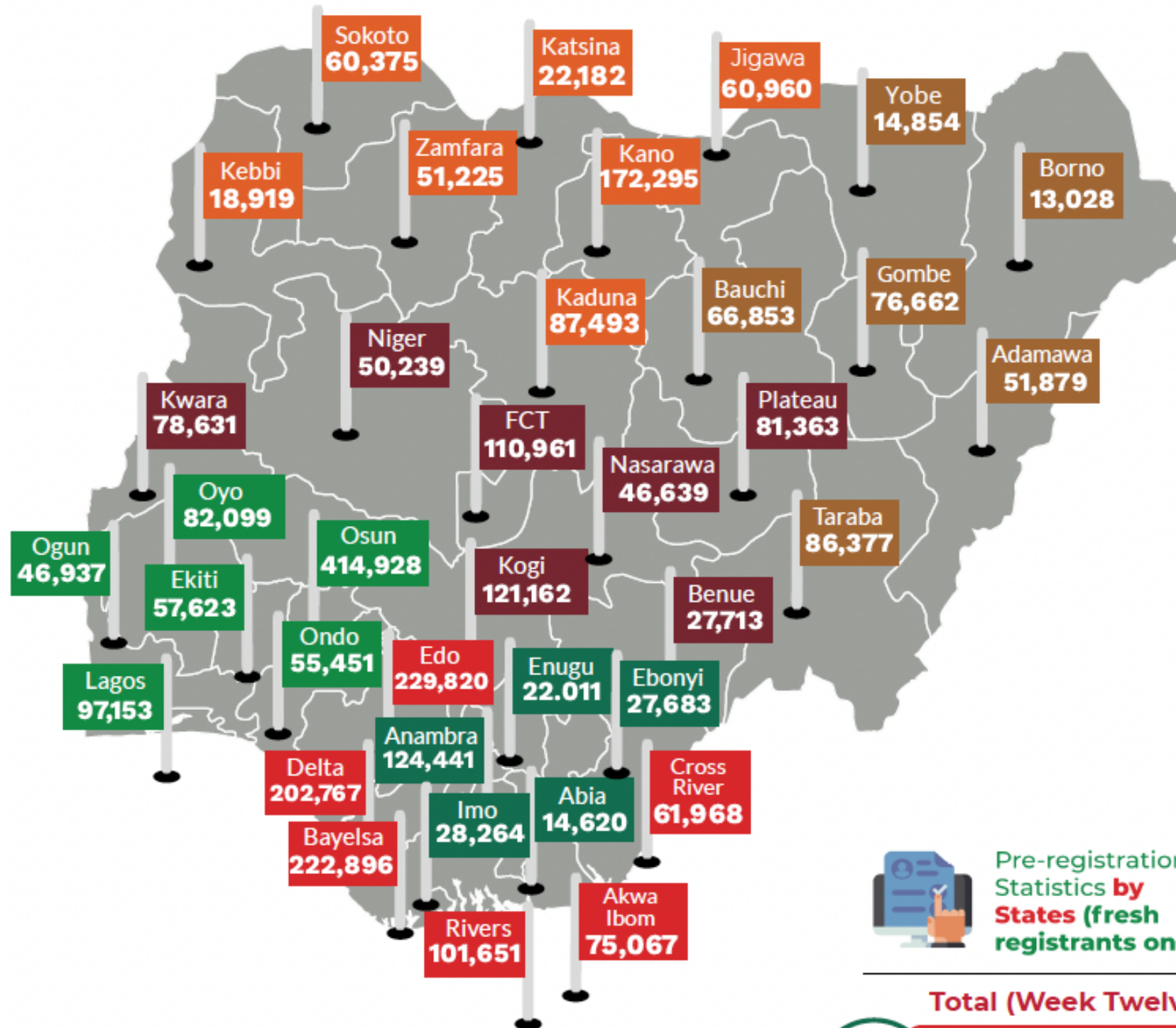


Weekly Update

No.12

Online Voter Registration

(As at 7am on Monday, 20th September 2021)



Pre-registration
Statistics by
States (fresh
registrants only)

Total (Week Twelve)

3,165,189



Weekly Update

No.12

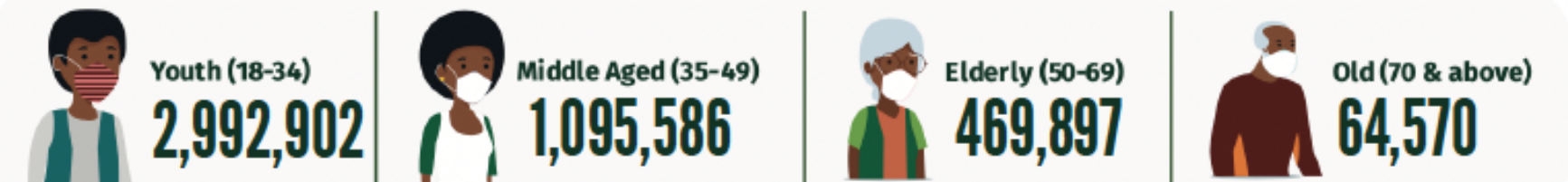
Online Voter Registration

(As at 7am on Monday, 20th September 2021)

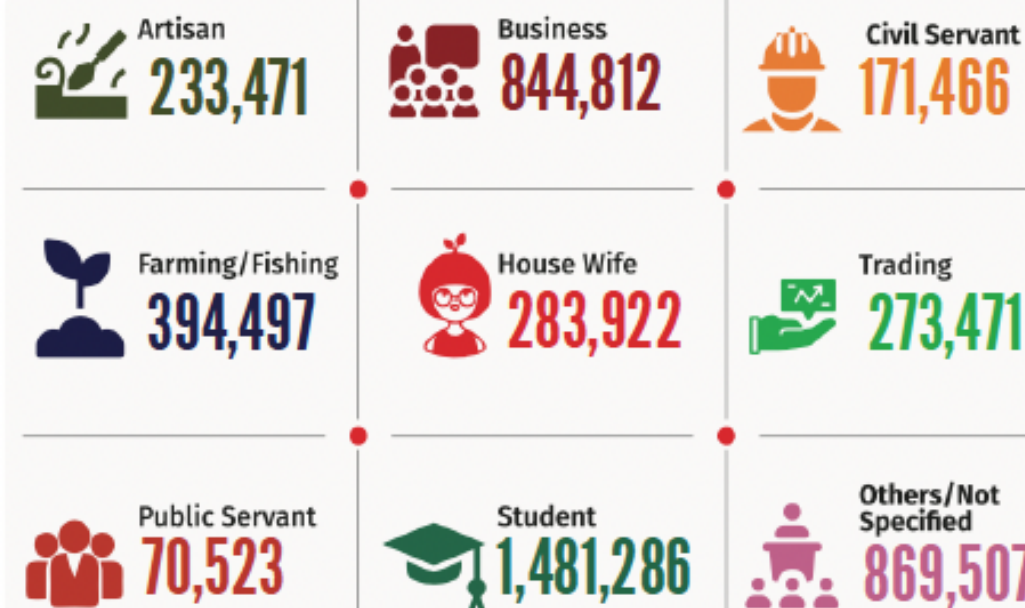


Age Group, Occupational, Gender and PWD Statistics

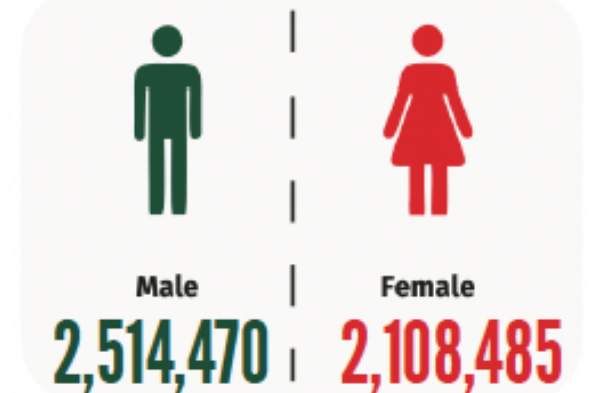
Distribution by Age Group



Distribution by Occupation



Distribution by Gender



Distribution
by Disability
(PWDs)
(across all categories)

54,226

Total (Week Twelve)

4,622,955

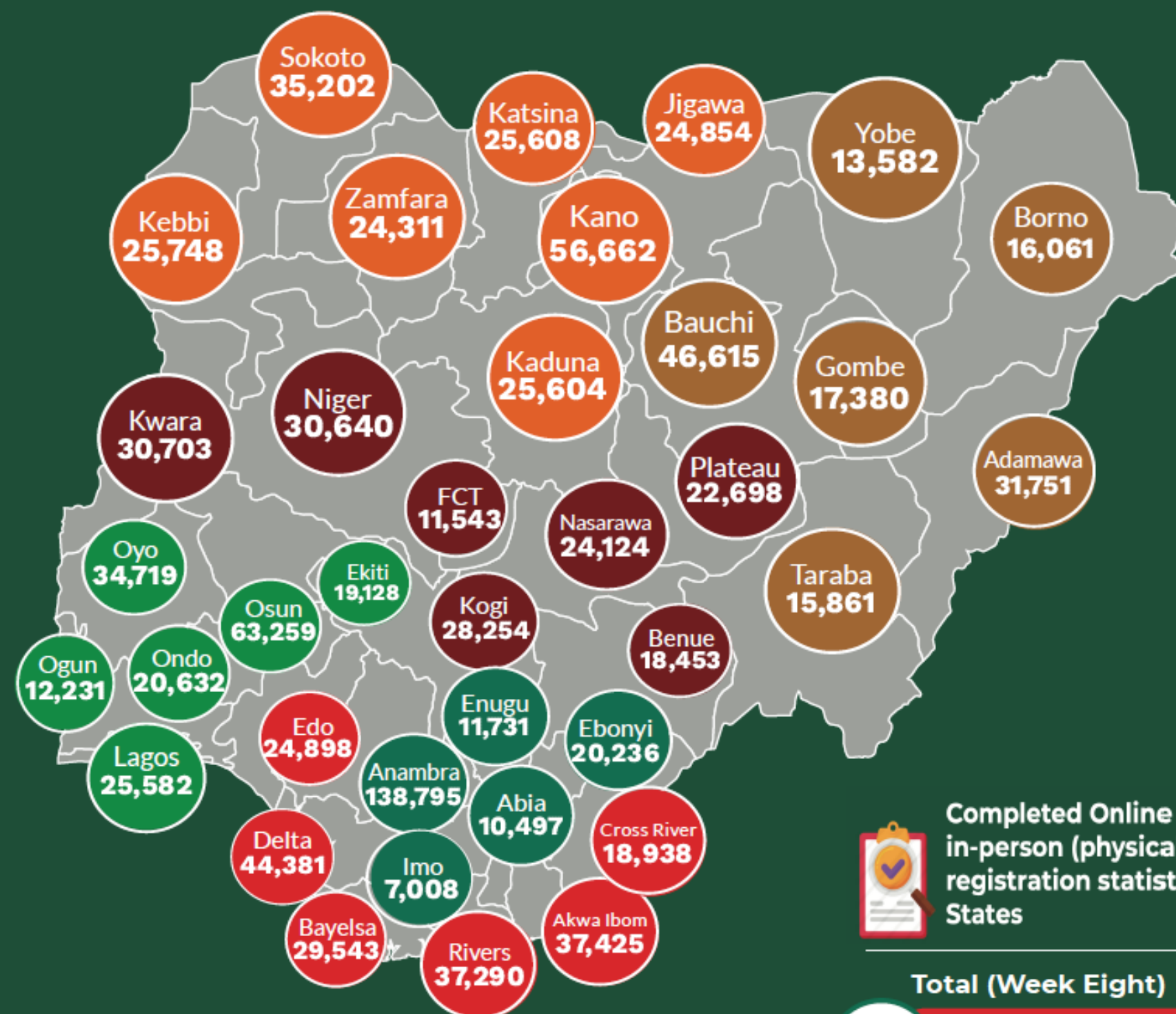
The total figure includes applications for voter transfer, requests for replacement of PVCs, update of voter information record, etc

Weekly Update

No.8

Completed Registration

(As at 7am on Monday, 20th September 2021)



Completed Online and
in-person (physical)
registration statistics by
States

Total (Week Eight)

1,081,947

Weekly Update

No.8

Completed Registration

(As at 7am on Monday, 20th September 2021)



Age Group, Occupational, Gender, Type of Registration and PWD Statistics

Distribution by Age Group



Youth (18-34)

771,770



Middle Aged (35-49)

207,963



Elderly (50-69)

90,188



Old (70 & above)

12,026

Distribution by Occupation



Artisan

63,278



Business

205,132



Civil Servant

49,145



Farming/Fishing

85,591



House Wife

105,176



Trading

66,982



Public Servant

14,249



Student

439,608



Others/Not Specified

52,786

Distribution by Gender



Male

555,872



Female

526,075

Distribution
by Disability
(PWDs)
(across all categories)



12,106

Type of Registration



Online

405,915



Physical

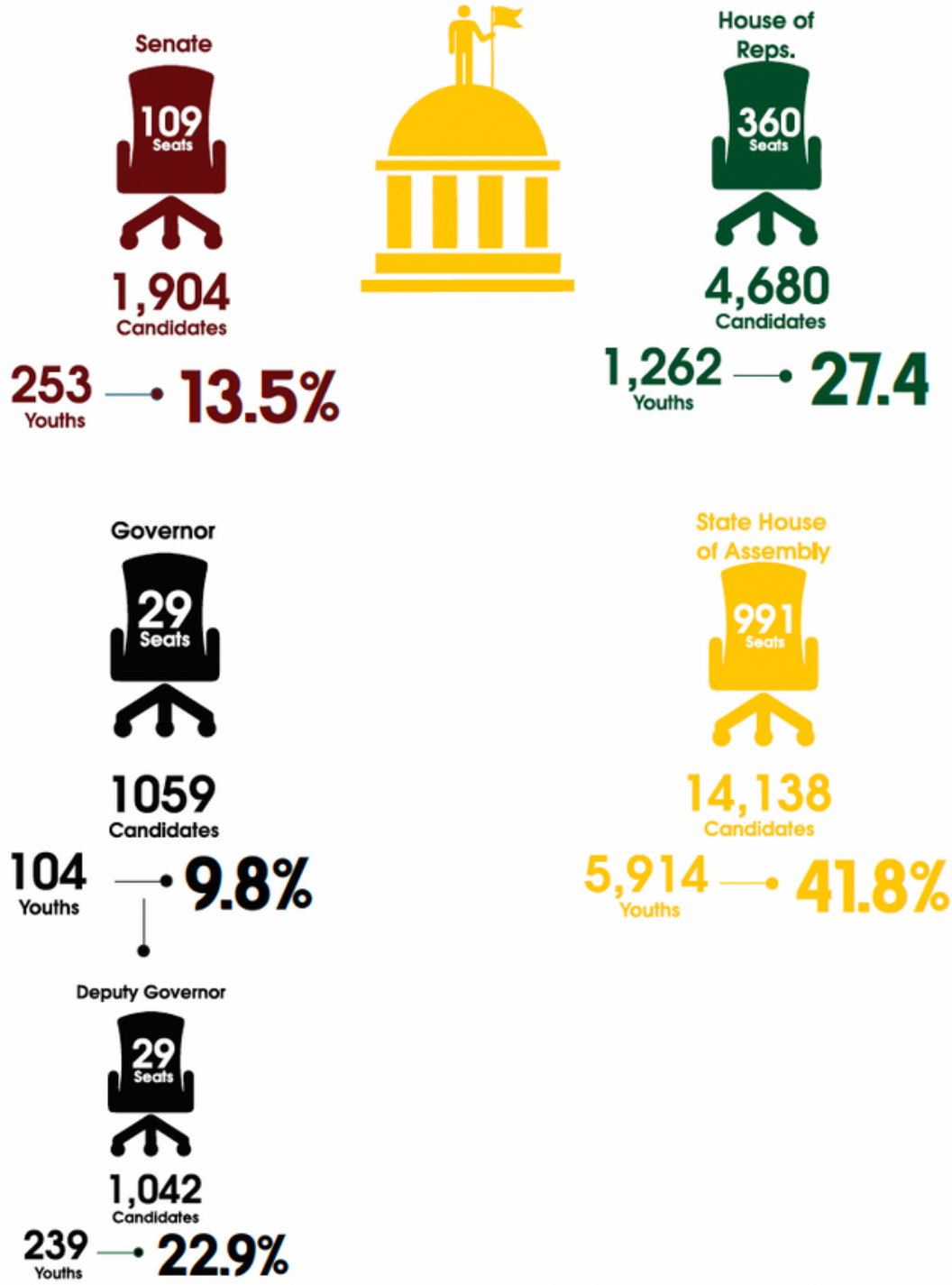
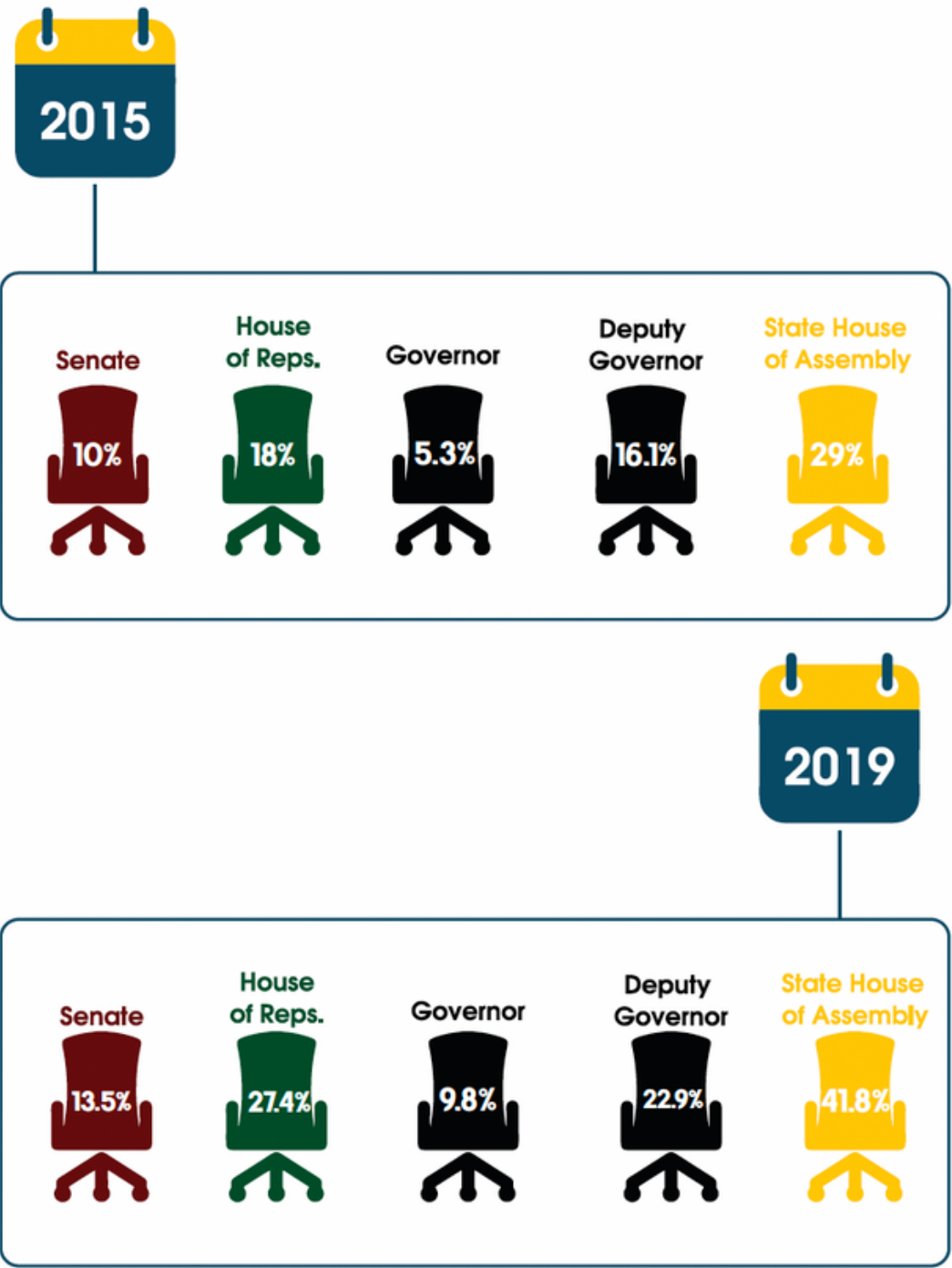
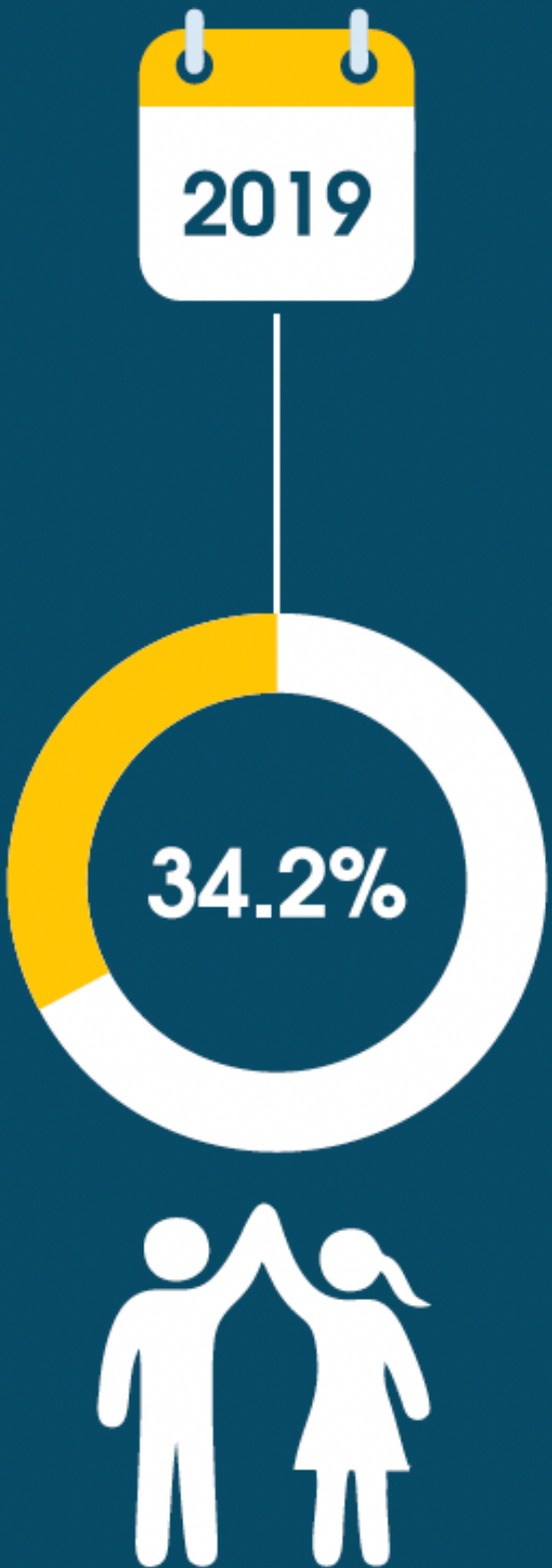
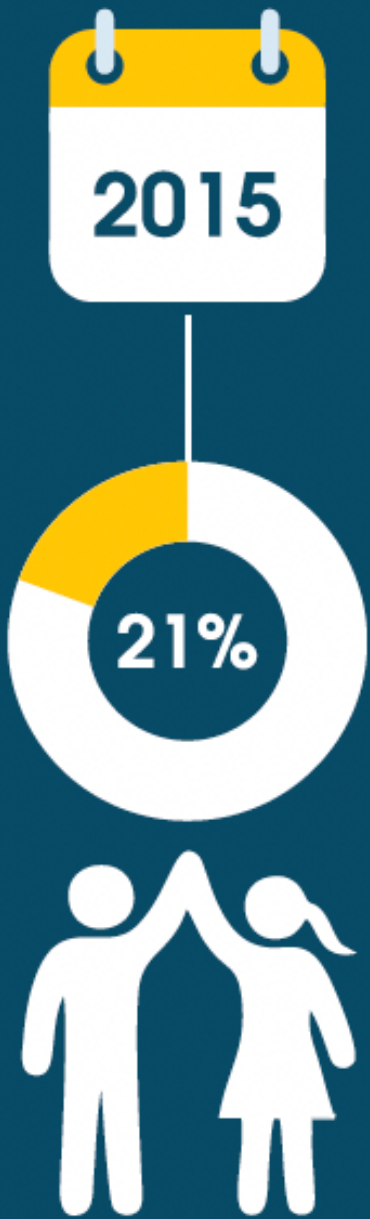
676,032

Total (Week Eight)



1,081,947

Overall youth candidacy in the 2015 and 2019 elections



Political party ranking on youth candidacy

S / N	Party	No of Youth Candidates for NASS Election	No of Youth Candidates for Gubernatorial Election	No of Youth Candidates for State House of Assembly Election	Total number of Youth Candidates	% of Youth Candidates	Rank
1	African Democratic Congress (ADC)	83	7	434	524	6.74%	1
2	Democratic Alternative (DA)	110	12	338	460	5.92%	2
3	Peoples Party of Nigeria (PPN)	94	10	303	407	5.24%	3
4	Social Democratic Party (SDP)	47	3	326	376	4.84%	4
5	Justice Must Prevail Party (JMPP)	45	16	217	278	3.58%	5
6	Labour Party (LP)	43	2	202	247	3.18%	6
7	Green Party of Nigeria (GPN)	52	8	180	240	3.09%	7
8	Accord	52	6	134	192	2.47%	8
9	Mega Party of Nigeria (MPN)	36	16	138	190	2.44%	9
10	People's Trust (PT)	48	2	131	181	2.33%	10
11	Action Democratic Party (ADP)	15	6	156	177	2.28%	11
12	Teeth Labour Party (TLP)	24	8	136	168	2.16%	12
13	National Rescue Movement (NRM)	46	10	109	165	2.12%	13
14	United Progressive Party (UPP)	43	8	104	155	1.99%	14
15	Advanced Congress of Democrats (ACD)	30	8	114	152	1.96%	15
16	CAP	28	7	111	146	1.88%	16
17	Alliance for Democracy (AD)	36	6	94	136	1.75%	17
18	Independent Democrats (ID)	30	6	92	128	1.65%	18
19	IO WA Party (KP)	22	3	102	127	1.63%	19
20	Peoples Redemption Party (PRP)	12	3	108	123	1.58%	20
21	National Concordance Party (NCP)	4	4	112	120	1.54%	21
22	People's Democratic Party (PDP)	8	0	109	117	1.51%	22
23	Providence People's Congress (PPC)	19	4	91	114	1.47%	23
24	Young Progressives Party (YPP)	15	5	92	112	1.44%	23
25	United People's Congress (UPC)	24	1	84	109	1.40%	25
26	All Progressives Congress (APC)	14	0	92	106	1.36%	26
27	Progressive People's Alliance (PPA)	25	6	75	106	1.36%	26
28	Alliance National Party (ANP)	20	4	81	105	1.35%	28
29	All Grand Alliance Party (AGAP)	29	9	62	100	1.29%	29

30	Democratic People's Party (DPP)	17	5	76	98	1.26%	30
31	Action Alliance (AA)	11	5	69	85	1.09%	31
32	All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA)	16	0	68	84	1.08%	32
33	Alliance of Social Democrats (ASD)	10	4	68	82	1.06%	33
34	Allied Congress Party of Nigeria (ACP/N)	21	3	54	78	1.00%	34
35	African Peoples Party (APP)	22	3	50	75	0.97%	35
36	Advanced Peoples Democratic Alliance (APDA)	14	2	58	74	0.95%	36
37	Democratic People's Congress (DPC)	19	8	42	69	0.89%	37
38	Advanced Allied Party (AAP)	14	6	46	66	0.85%	38
39	Alliance for New Nigeria (ANN)	5	2	57	64	0.82%	39
40	Allied Peoples Movement (APM)	13	3	43	59	0.76%	40
41	Sustainable National Party (SNP)	13	5	40	58	0.75%	41
42	African People Alliance (APA)	12	4	41	57	0.73%	42
43	Mass Action Joint Alliance (MAJA)	5	6	43	54	0.69%	43
44	People for Democratic Change (PDC)	15	2	37	54	0.69%	43
45	All Grand Alliance Party (AGAP)	4	1	47	52	0.67%	45
46	African Action Congress (AAC)	7	1	43	51	0.66%	46
47	New Progressive Movement (NPM)	9	0	42	51	0.66%	46
48	Hope Democratic Party (HDP)	20	5	25	50	0.64%	48
49	Youth Democratic Party (YDP)	6	5	39	50	0.64%	48
50	Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN)	12	5	32	49	0.63%	50
51	Agency Party of Nigeria (UPN)	7	2	37	46	0.59%	51
52	Nigeria People's Congress (NPC)	14	2	30	46	0.59%	51
53	All Blending Party (ABP)	10	2	33	45	0.58%	53
54	Grassroots Development Party of Nigeria (GDPN)	5	4	36	45	0.58%	53
55	Movement for the Restoration and Defence of Democracy (MRDD)	9	5	24	38	0.49%	55
56	Codition for Change (CAC)	13	3	20	36	0.46%	56
57	National Democratic Liberty Party (NDLP)	19	2	15	36	0.46%	56
58	Masses Movement of Nigeria (MMN)	9	3	23	35	0.45%	58
59	New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP)	5	2	28	35	0.45%	58
60	National Action Council (NAC)	10	5	18	33	0.42%	60
61	Nigeria Elements Progressive Party (NEPP)	7	5	21	33	0.42%	60
62	Nigeria for Democracy (NID)	14	3	16	33	0.42%	60
63	Restoration Party of Nigeria (RP)	3	5	24	32	0.41%	63

64	United Democratic Party (UDP)	1	0	30	31	0.40%
65	Yes Electoral Solidarity (YES)	4	2	25	31	0.40%
66	People's Progressive Party (PPP)	17	1	11	29	0.37%
67	Nigeria Community Movement Party (NCMP)	3	11	14	28	0.36%
68	Better Nigeria Progressive Party (BNPP)	8	7	11	26	0.33%
69	Advanced Nigeria Democratic Party (ANDP)	13	0	12	25	0.32%
70	Abundant Nigeria Renewal Party (ANRP)	1	0	22	23	0.30%
71	AUN	0	0	20	20	0.26%
72	Re-Build Nigeria Party (RBNP)	5	3	11	19	0.24%
73	Nation Unity Party (NUP)	3	3	12	18	0.23%
74	National Interest Party (NIP)	2	3	12	17	0.22%
75	Freedom and Justice Party (FJP)	4	3	9	16	0.21%
76	WTPN	0	4	12	16	0.21%
77	Alternative Party of Nigeria (APN)	0	1	8	9	0.12%
78	PCP	0	1	8	9	0.12%
79	Save Nigeria Congress (SNC)	0	2	7	9	0.12%
80	Fresh Democratic Party (FRESH)	4	1	2	7	0.09%
81	Youth Party (YP)	1	0	5	6	0.08%
82	Change Nigeria Party (CNP)	1	0	4	5	0.06%
83	Liberation Movement (LM)	1	1	2	4	0.05%
84	RAP	0	1	3	4	0.05%
85	Modern Democratic Party (MDP)	1	0	0	1	0.01%
86	Nigeria Democratic Congress Party (NDCP)	1	0	0	1	0.01%
87	New Generation Party of Nigeria (NGP)	0	0	1	1	0.01%
88	Peoples Democratic Movement (PDM)	1	0	0	1	0.01%
89	SPN	0	0	1	1	0.01%
90	United Patriots (UP)	0	1	0	1	0.01%
TOTAL		1515	343	5914	7772	

Youth Representation in Elective Office

Before the Not Too Young To Run Act



1,558
Elective seats in Nigeria
(Presidential, National and State Legislature)

60

↓ (5.1%) National Rate



House of Reps

3

↓ (0.8%)



House of Assembly

57

↓ (6%)

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Youth Representation in Elective Office (2019)



1,558
Elective seats in Nigeria
(Presidential, National and State legislature)

18 – 35 yrs

103

(6.6%) National rate



House of Assembly

991 Seats

25 – 30 yrs

22

(2.2%)

31 – 35 yrs

68

(6.8%)

36 – 40 yrs

125

(12.2%)



House of Representatives

360 Seats

30 – 35 yrs

13

(3.7%)

36 – 40 yrs

29

(8%)

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Young Elected Legislators in the State Houses of Assembly

Under 25 -30



KATSINA

Mustapha Sani Bello | 25
All Progressives Congress (APC)

KADUNA

Faisal Abbas | 30
All Progressives Congress (APC)

NIGER

Musa Suleiman Nasko | 30
All Progressives Congress (APC)

Abubakar Umar | 30
All Progressives Congress (APC)

KWARA

Abdulgafar Olayemi Ayinla | 29
All Progressives Congress (APC)

OYO

Yusuf Oladimeji Adebisi | 26
Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)

Okedoyin Femi | 30
Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)

Babalola O. Samson | 26
Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)

IMO

Njoku Michael Onyemaechi | 28
All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA)

ZAMFARA

Nasiru Muazu | 30
Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)

Shafiu Dama | 27
Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)

Shamsudeen Hassan | 28
Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)

Abdulnasir Ibrahim | 28
Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)

Mansur Mohammed | 24
Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)

YOBE

Mustapha Alhaji Abubakar | 30
All Progressives Congress (APC)

KANO

Mudassir Ibrahim | 30
Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)

GOMBE

Sadam Bello Sale | 28
All Progressives Congress (APC)

NASARAWA

Musa S. Iyimoga | 28
Zenith Labour Party (ZLP)

Sulaiman Abdulaziz Danladi | 29
Social Democratic Party (SDP)

BENUE

Dyako Cephas Tauershima | 27
African Democratic Congress (ADC)

EBONYI

Chukwu Arinze Lucas | 30
Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)

AKWA IBOM

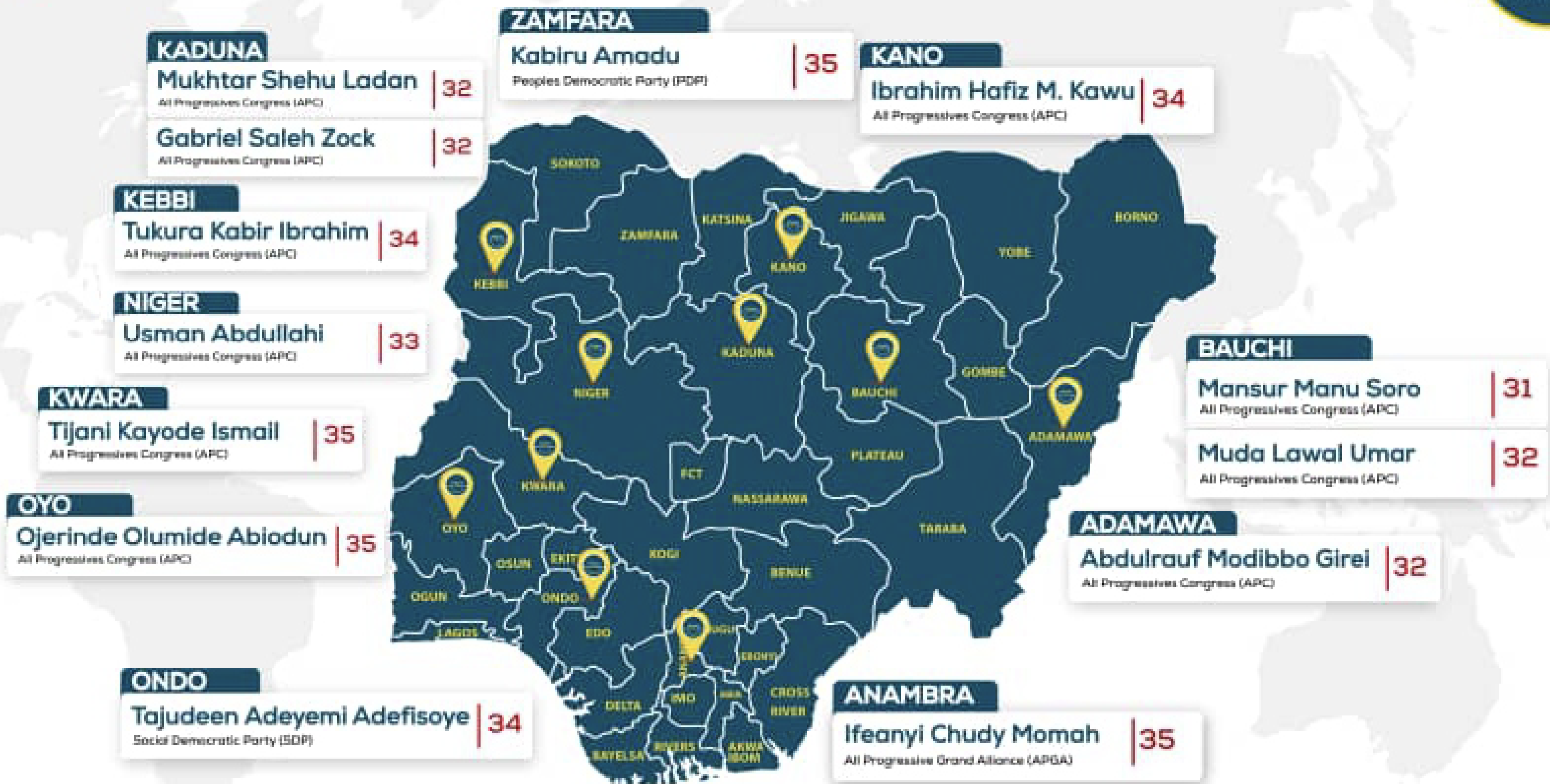
Otobong Effiong Bob | 26
Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)

Beneficiaries of Not Too Young To Run legislation

25 - 30 yrs = 22 Young Legislators

31 -35 yrs = 68 Young Legislators

Under 31 - 35



Youth turnout in the 2019 general election (18 – 35 years)

State	Total Registered Voters	% Youth turnout for Presidential & NASS election	% Youth turnout for Governorship/State Assembly election
Bauchi	2, 462, 843	23	25
Delta	2,845, 274	8.2	9.5
Enugu	1,944,016	7.2	7.6
Kaduna	3,932, 492	21	23
Kwara	1,406, 457	13.8	13
Lagos	6,750,291	4.9	3.9

Source: INEC, 2019



Organization Name



Part 2: What are these socio-political and economic impediments?

Socio-political barriers

1 Cultural beliefs

The wait-hood aphorism and proscription of electoral contest between a young person and an older person

4 Knowledge gap in politics

Limited knowledge of the nature, dynamics and power structures in the political system

2 Hierarchical structure of society

Strong culture of respect that strips youth of agency, aspiration and leadership

5 Electoral system design

First-Past-The-Post system promotes exclusion and it heightens the intensity of electoral contest negatively

3

Negativity bias against public leaders

If older leaders fail to perform in office why should a youth with less experience be trusted with leadership

6

Bureaucratic processes

Cumbersome electoral processes and procedures

7

Weak political parties

Institutional deficiencies, lack of internal democracy and unclear ideological bases

Economic barriers



Institutionalized
clientelistic and
charismatic
linkages



Economic
inequality and
poverty



High cost of
politics

Cost of Nomination Forms for Political Offices for Some Political Parties

Table 1: Cost of Nomination Forms for Political Offices for Some Political Parties ²

No.	Party	State House of Assembly	House of Reps	Senate	Governor	President
1	AA	₦200,000	₦300,000	₦500,000	₦1,000,000	₦5,000,000
2	AAP	₦50,000	₦150,000	₦150,000	₦250,000	₦500,000
3	ABP	₦262,500	₦525,000	₦1,050,000	₦2,625,000	₦5,250,000
4	ACCORD	₦500,000	₦1,500,000	₦2,000,000	₦4,000,000	₦6,000,000
5	AD	₦350,000	₦1,000,000	₦1,300,000	₦2,500,000	₦5,000,000
6	ADC	₦450,000	₦1,000,000	₦2,500,000	₦6,000,000	₦12,000,000
7	ADP	₦330,000	₦1,100,000	₦2,000,000	₦4,500,000	₦8,000,000
8	ANN	₦125,000	₦500,000	₦1,000,000	₦2,000,000	₦3,500,000
9	ANRP	₦220,000	₦430,000	₦790,000	₦1,060,000	₦1,580,000
10	APC	₦850,000	₦3,850,000	₦7,000,000	₦22,500,000	₦45,000,000
11	APGA	₦1,000,000	₦2,500,000	₦5,000,000	₦10,000,000	₦25,000,000
12	FRESH	₦150,000	₦200,000	₦250,000	₦500,000	₦1,000,000
13	JMPP	₦220,000	₦275,000	₦300,000	₦440,000	₦550,000
14	KOWA	₦150,000	₦250,000	₦400,000	₦500,000	₦1,000,000
15	LABOUR	₦600,000	₦1,500,000	₦3,000,000	₦7,500,000	N/A
16	NIP	₦300,000	₦300,000	₦300,000	₦300,000	₦300,000
17	PDM	₦150,000	₦300,000	₦1,500,000	₦3,000,000	₦15,000,000
18	PDP	₦600,000	₦1,500,000	₦3,500,000	₦6,000,000	₦12,000,000
19	SDP	₦500,000	₦1,000,000	₦2,500,000	₦5,000,000	₦11,000,000
20	UPP	₦50,000	₦200,000	₦500,000	₦3,000,000	N/A
21	YDP	₦120,000	₦255,000	₦605,000	₦3,000,000	₦6,000,000
22	YES	₦0	₦0	₦0	₦0	₦0
23	YP	₦220,000	₦440,000	₦880,000	₦1,100,000	₦2,200,000
24	YPP	₦250,000	₦500,000	₦1,000,000	₦3,000,000	₦7,000,000
25	ZLP	₦500,000	₦1,000,000	₦2,000,000	₦6,000,000	₦12,000,000

Source: Compiled by Yiaga Africa from circulars and press statements issued by parties in the 2019 general elections

Part 5:

Are these barriers
endogenous or
exogenous?

Self-inflicted barriers
due to indiscretion,
inertia and
dealignment

Externally imposed due to
structural inequities,
power imbalances market
failures and weak
democratic institutions





What are the pathways for navigating or overcoming these barriers?

Pathways

1 Legal pathway

Introduce strict campaign finance regulation; legal thresholds for nomination forms and sundry fees; youth quotas; democratize candidate selection and independent candidacy

3 Economic pathway

Promote and support youth enterprise with zero interest loans and micro-credits; facilitate market access for young entrepreneurs; regular trainings and capacity development opportunities

2 Political pathway

Robust and sustained voter registration drives targeted at disengaged young voters; Mobilize more young men and women to join political parties; encourage young people to contest party leadership positions other than youth leader position; build strong alliances between political society and civil society; strategic investment in youth leadership development, and active youth engagement in public policy design and implementation

Concluding reflective questions

Should access to the political space be determined by ideology, identity or financial war chest?

Can young people access public office without the support of moneybags and godfathers and godmothers?

How do we shift public perception to believe in the motivation, capacity, interests and leadership of young people?

How do we build a critical mass of highly politically conscious middle-class youth to engage the political process and run for public office?

How do we decommercialize politics especially candidate nomination, campaigns and Election Day expenditure?

A new political mobilization strategy



Build a critical mass of an informed and engaged youth in the political space



Ensures the intensity of online youth engagement is reflected in offline political activities



Prioritizes the mobilization of middle-class youth and young professionals in politics



Redefines and institutes a new public leadership philosophy based on values and ethics



Improved partnership between political society and civil society in the contest for political power

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