



BRITISH SOCIAL ATTITUDES

**Why Turnout Increased in the 2017 General Election
And The Increase Did Not Help Labour**

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Authors

John Curtice,
Senior Research Fellow, The National
Centre for Social Research, and
Professor of Politics, University of
Strathclyde

Ian Simpson,
Senior Researcher, The National
Centre for Social Research

Winning over the support of those who had not previously voted was said to be central to the Labour leadership's strategy

Introduction

At 69%, turnout in the 2017 general election was higher than at any such election since 1997. At the same time, as compared with 2015 it increased particularly in constituencies with a relatively young age profile (Curtice et al., forthcoming). On its own such a pattern does not necessarily mean that younger people themselves were particularly more likely to have voted. However, coupled with the well documented evidence from opinion polls that Labour gained ground much more strongly amongst younger people than older people (Curtice, 2017), the pattern helped prompt speculation that one reason for Labour's (surprise) advance was success in securing the support of younger voters who had not previously voted (Whiteley and Clarke, 2017). Winning over the support of those who had not previously voted was said to be central to the Labour leadership's strategy for strengthening its position (de Quetteville, 2015), and it seemed as though that strategy had been vindicated.

However, there was an important piece missing from this jigsaw. Almost inevitably, political opinion polls are much more successful at securing the participation of those who are interested in politics and are highly likely to vote, than they are at obtaining the participation of those who have less interest in politics and who are less likely to vote. Polls are, after all, conducted amongst those who are willing and able to respond during what is typically a relatively short period of time. To obtain more reliable evidence on who voted in an election we have to turn to surveys in which an attempt is made to contact a randomly selected sample of the population over an extended period of time, and which, consequently, are more successful at securing interviews with those who have not voted. However, that requires us to be patient while the necessary time and effort is put into conducting such a survey.

One such survey is the British Election Study (BES), which, founded in 1963, is the principal survey based instrument for the academic study of voting behaviour in Britain (Fieldhouse, 2013). Another, however, is the National Centre for Social Research's (NatCen) British Social Attitudes (BSA) survey (Clery et al., 2017), an annual high quality survey of the adult population that covers a wide range of social as well as political attitudes, and which after all recent elections has asked its respondents whether and how they voted, together with some questions that help illuminate why people did or did not vote. In this paper, we report the initial findings of BSA on the pattern of turnout in the election in June 2017. We focus in particular on three questions:

- 1. Why did turnout increase (again) in the 2017 election?*
- 2. Was turnout markedly higher amongst younger voters as compared with previous elections?*
- 3. Was the increase in turnout particularly beneficial to the Labour party?*



Our Data

The 2017 British Social Attitudes survey was conducted between July and November 2017. A geographically stratified sample of addresses was drawn at random from the Postcode Address File. At each selected address where contact was made by an interviewer, a list of all those aged 18 or over was compiled and the name of one respondent to be interviewed was selected at random by a computer programme. In total, 3,988 people were successfully contacted and interviewed in this way, representing an estimated response rate of 45%. Four different versions of the questionnaire were administered to random one quarter subsets of the sample, and a question about whether or not the respondent had voted in the general election was included on three of those four versions. That means, the survey collected information on the turnout of 2,986 respondents, only five of whom failed to state whether they had voted or not.

In order to ascertain what was different about the 2017 election and, in particular, why turnout increased and amongst whom, we compare the findings of the 2017 survey with those of previous British Social Attitudes surveys, all of which were conducted in much the same way as the 2017 exercise. In a few instances, which are duly noted underneath the relevant table, we also make use of previous British Election Surveys.

Overall, 73% of our respondents said that they had voted, just four points higher than the officially registered tally of 69%. In so far as the latter contains some names that should no longer be on the register (for example, because someone has recently died) or contains (legitimately, because they live at more than one address) some people's names more than once, the official tally is likely to underestimate the real level of turnout. On the other hand, BSA is likely to have interviewed some people who are not registered (and in some cases, may not be entitled to be registered) to vote, and this may serve to reduce its estimate of turnout. Note also, that in contrast to the BES, no attempt has been made to verify the accuracy of respondents' reports of whether or not they had voted by checking the relevant entries on the marked electoral registers. However, at three percentage points, the increase in the reported vote between the 2015 and 2017 BSA surveys matches exactly the three point increase in the official turnout between 2015 and 2017, and thus it seems unlikely that any of these potential sources of bias will have had a material impact on our estimates of the changes in the level of electoral participation.¹

¹ Note that unlike Prosser et al. (2018), but in line with the practice of previous BSAs, we have not weighted our data to match the actual level of turnout. The same is also true of the vote choice of those who did vote. Readers may wish to note that our respondents were rather more pro-Labour as compared with the election result. Forty-four per cent said they voted Labour (41% did so in the election), 40% Conservative (43.5%), 8% Liberal Democrat (8%) and 8% for other parties (8%). However, there is little or no relationship between vote choice and the various measures to which reference is made in this paper, and thus there is no reason to believe that this discrepancy has a material effect on the results for 2017 that we report here.

 **The survey collected information on the turnout of 2986 respondents** 

The prevalence of both these potential influences seems to have changed in a way that made turnout more likely in 2017

Why Did Turnout Increase?

There are two main considerations that affect people's propensity to vote – the strength of their personal motivation to participate and the nature of the choice with which they are being presented. Voters are more likely to vote if they have a strong motivation to do so, and if they think there is an important and clear choice between the options on the ballot paper (and especially so if it looks as though the result might be close). The prevalence of both these potential influences seem to have changed in a way that made a higher turnout more likely in 2017.

Perhaps the most striking indication that more people now have a stronger motivation to vote comes from the pattern of responses when people are asked, as they are regularly on BSA:

How much interest do you generally have in politics?

... a great deal,

quite a lot,

some,

not very much,

or, none at all?

Until the 2015 election at least, the pattern of responses to this question were remarkably consistent from year to year. Almost every time, just under a third said that they had 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot' of interest, slightly more said 'some', while a similar proportion responded either 'not very much' or 'not at all'. In 2015 itself, the proportion who said they had 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot' of interest increased slightly to what was (just) an all-time high of 36%. Thereafter, however, in 2016, shortly after the EU referendum, the proportion increased noticeably to 42%, while the proportion who indicated that they had little or no interest fell to little more than a quarter. This reading has proven to be more than an exceptional blip, for the figures for 2017 are much the same as those for 2016 (for an alternative time series see Fox and Blackwell, 2017).

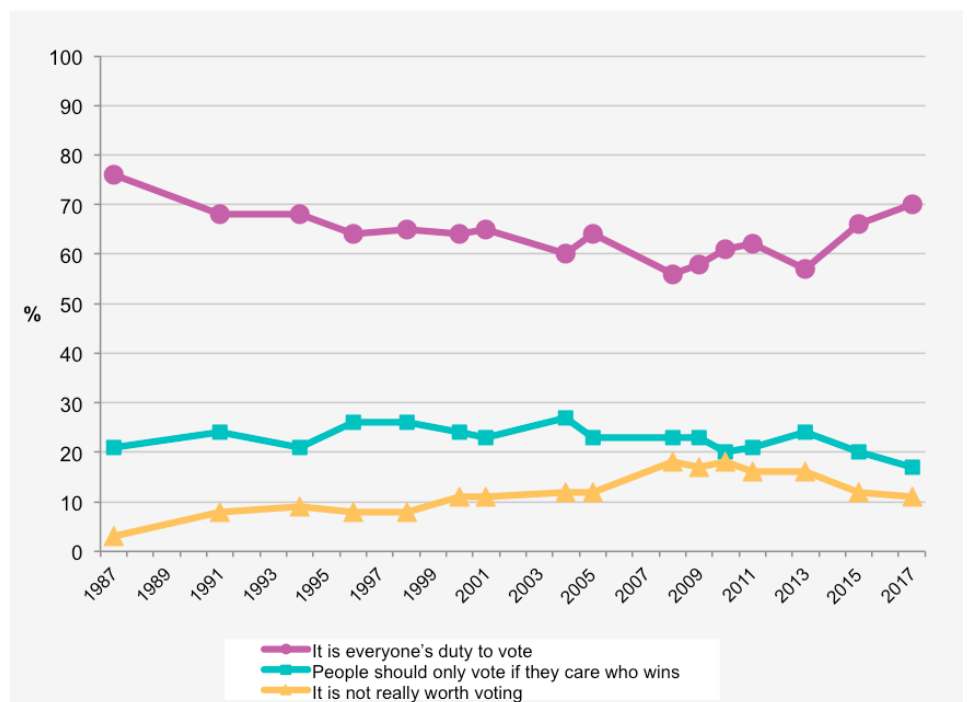
Table 1 Levels of interest in politics, 1991–2017

	1991	1994	1996	1998	2000	2001	2004	2005
How much interest in politics	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Great deal/quite a lot	32	32	31	29	32	31	31	33
Some	31	35	33	36	33	35	34	35
Not much/none at all	36	33	37	35	35	34	36	31
<i>Base</i>	1445	2302	3620	3146	2293	3287	3199	4268

	2008	2009	2010	2013	2015	2016	2017
How much interest in politics	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Great deal/quite a lot	35	31	31	32	36	42	43
Some	32	36	34	32	33	32	30
Not much/none at all	32	33	34	37	32	26	27
<i>Base</i>	1128	1143	1081	1063	4328	2942	3988

One possible explanation for this increase is, of course, that the advent of the debate about Britain’s relationship with the EU, attracted the interest and attention of some voters in the way that the routines of everyday party politics do not. The decision to leave the EU has certainly been described as one of the most important decisions that the country has taken since 1945. We cannot prove that this indeed is what has happened, but it certainly sounds like a plausible hypothesis.

Figure 1 Duty to vote, 1987-2017



The proportion who think there is a great deal of difference between the parties has risen to 45%

The data on which Figure 1 is based can be found in the appendix.

In any event, the increase in interest in politics is not the only indication that some voters may now be rather more strongly motivated to vote than they once were. In Figure 1, we report the distribution of answers that we have obtained when on various occasions during the last thirty years we have asked respondents:

Which of these statements comes closest to your view about general elections?

In a general election:

... It's not really worth voting

... People should vote only if they care who wins

... It's everyone's duty to vote

In the first decade of this century there were signs that fewer people felt they had a duty to vote in a general election. At one point, in 2008, only 56% supported that view, whereas at the beginning of the 1990s at least two-thirds had done so. But this drop has, for the time being at least, been reversed. The proportion saying that everyone had a duty to vote had already returned to two-thirds in 2015 and now it appears to have edged up yet a little further.

But it is not just that the motivation to vote is now rather more widespread. So also, it seems, is the perception that the choice with which voters are being presented these days matters rather more. This is apparent in Table 2, which shows how respondents have answered the following question after each election since 1964.

Now considering everything the Conservative and Labour parties stand for, would you say that ... READ OUT ...

... there is a great difference between them,

some difference,

or, not much difference?

The pattern of responses to this question have varied dramatically during the course of the last half century. In the early 1980s, when the Conservatives were led by Margaret Thatcher, who widely came to be seen as taking a radically different approach from that of her immediate Tory predecessors, and Labour were widely believed to have moved sharply to the left, there was a near consensus that there was a great deal of difference between the parties. But following the advent of New Labour under Tony Blair in the 1990s, the proportion holding that view plummeted to as low as 13%. Now, however, with Labour led by the long-time left-wing activist, Jeremy Corbyn, and the Conservatives embracing what some regard as a 'hard' Brexit, the proportion who think there is a great deal of difference between the parties has risen to 45%, while only one in five say that there is not much difference at all. Although not seen to be as far apart as they were in the early 1980s, Britain's two largest parties are, it seems, at least as likely to be regarded as far apart now as they were at any point during the 1960s and 1970s.

The proportion who say they have a great deal or quite a lot of interest in politics increased by almost exactly the same amount in all but one of our age groups

Table 2 Perceived difference between the parties, 1964-2017

	1964	1966	1970	Feb 1974	Oct 1974	1979	1983	1987
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Great difference	48	44	33	34	40	48	88	85
Some	25	27	28	30	30	30	10	11
Not much	27	29	39	36	30	22	7	5
<i>Base</i>	1699	1804	1780	2391	2332	1826	3893	3776

	1992	1997	2001	2005	2010	2015	2017
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Great difference	56	33	17	13	23	27	45
Some	32	43	39	43	43	42	35
Not much	12	24	44	44	34	31	20
<i>Base</i>	1794	2836	1076	1049	1035	2056	2854

Source: 1964-1997: British Election Study. Figures for 1964-1992 as quoted in Crewe et al (1995). Respondents saying "don't know" or who refused to answer have been excluded. Between 1964 and October 1974 the question read, 'Considering everything the parties stand for would you say there is a good deal of difference between them, some difference or not much difference?'

83% of those who thought there was a big difference between the parties voted

So, at the 2017 election voters were more likely to think they were being presented with a big choice, and at the same time reported stronger motivations to vote. Indeed, being presented with bigger choices at elections and referendums may well have persuaded some voters to take a closer interest in what is going on in politics. In any event, what is clear is that all three of our measures are strongly related to the likelihood that people voted in the election. For example, no less than 86% of those who say they have 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot' of interest in politics reported voting in the 2017 election, compared with 76% of those with 'some' interest and only 48% of those with little or no interest. Similarly, 85% of those who say that it is everyone's duty to vote cast a ballot in 2017, compared with 60% of those who say that people should only vote if the care who wins, and just 22% of those who feel that it is not really worth voting. Meanwhile 83% of those who thought there was a big difference between the parties voted in the election, while 74% of those who felt there was some difference did so, and only 59% of those who felt there was none.

Crucially, all of these figures for the level of turnout amongst those with different levels of motivation and perceptions of the distance between the parties are the same or very similar to the equivalent figures for the 2015 election. That strongly suggests that the increase in turnout was indeed underpinned by the fact that more people had a strong motivation to vote and/or thought there was a big difference between the parties (and not because of any change in the

relationship between these motivations and perceptions and whether or not people voted). At the 2017 election, more voters reckoned the parties were far apart, more voters were interested in politics and more felt a duty to vote, and between them these considerations helped bring more voters to the polls.

Was turnout markedly higher amongst younger people?

None of this, of course, directly addresses the proposition that turnout increased more amongst younger people at the 2017 election. It does, however, suggest that if turnout did increase more amongst younger people we should be able to observe that the motivation to vote amongst younger voters should have increased markedly and/or that they were particularly more likely than hitherto to feel that there was a great deal of difference between the parties. It is to these possibilities that we now turn.

The proportion who say they have a great deal or quite a lot of interest in politics increased

In the first two rows of Table 3 we report the proportion of people in each age group who in our 2015 and 2017 surveys said that they had a great deal or quite a lot of interest in politics, while in the third row we show (again, for each age group) the difference between the two figures. One key point immediately stands out. The proportion who say they have a great deal or quite a lot of interest in politics increased by almost exactly the same amount – by between seven and nine points – in all but one of our age groups. Only amongst those aged between 45 and 54 is a smaller figure recorded, a difference that could well have occurred simply as a result of the random variation to which all surveys are subject simply by chance. In short, while 18 to 24 year olds were indeed more interested in politics than were their predecessors two years previously, in this they were simply sharing in the increase in interest that was to be found across the electorate as a whole. As a result, the difference between younger and older people in their level of interest remained much the same as previously, with the former still markedly less likely to report a great deal or quite a lot of interest in politics.

Table 3 Proportion saying they have a Great Deal/Quite a Lot of Interest in Politics by Age Group 2015 and 2017

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	%	%	%	%	%	%
2015	24	29	35	39	41	42
<i>Base</i>	290	635	728	764	711	1193
2017	33	36	43	42	48	51
<i>Base</i>	223	591	650	729	653	1138
Change 2015-17	+9	+7	+8	+3	+7	+9

An only slightly different result is obtained if we look at how the proportion who say there is a duty to vote varied by age in 2015 and 2017. As Table 4 shows, amongst the under 55s, for the most part there was a slightly bigger increase in the proportion saying everyone has a duty to vote than there was amongst those aged 55 and over. But around three quarters of older people already believed there was a duty to vote, while there is no evidence that the increase was particularly high amongst those in the youngest age group. Instead what we observe is a familiar pattern whereby the perception that there is a duty to vote is rather more common the older somebody is.

Table 4 Proportion Saying It's Everyone's Duty to Vote by Age Group 2015 and 2017

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	%	%	%	%	%	%
2015	54	57	62	66	72	78
<i>Base</i>	121	255	296	343	295	499
2017	57	65	67	71	74	79
<i>Base</i>	127	355	376	442	403	704
Change 2015 -17	+3	+8	+5	+5	+2	+1

Younger people remained less strongly motivated to vote in 2017

So, younger people remained less strongly motivated to vote in 2017, maintaining what has long been a familiar pattern. But what of their perception of the extent of the difference between the parties? Is there evidence that this increased more amongst younger voters – as perhaps we might anticipate if Labour were particularly successful at mobilising young voters?

Certainly, as Table 5 shows, the perception that there is at least something of a difference between the parties is not particularly uncommon amongst younger voters. Indeed, in both 2015 and 2017 those aged under 35 were rather less likely to say that there was 'not much' difference between them, often preferring instead to say there was 'some'. Meanwhile, the proportion saying that there is a great deal of difference between the parties did increase more amongst those aged 18 to 24 than it did amongst those in any other age group. However, this increase was accompanied by a particularly sharp decline in the proportion saying there was 'some difference', while the pattern of change amongst 18-24 year olds is not replicated amongst those aged between 25 and 44. In short, we again appear to have little reason to expect that turnout should have increased particularly markedly amongst younger voters, broadly defined.

Table 5 Perceived Difference between the Parties by age group, 2015 and 2017

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	%	%	%	%	%	%
2015						
Great	22	26	25	22	29	34
Some	56	45	47	39	32	36
Not much	21	28	28	39	38	29
<i>Base</i>	125	290	348	381	337	570
2017						
Great	47	40	38	43	48	51
Some	39	44	39	34	31	29
Not much	14	16	22	23	21	20
<i>Base</i>	148	415	452	516	471	849
Change 2015-17						
Great	+25	+14	+13	+21	+19	+17
Some	-17	-1	-8	-5	-1	-7
Not Much	-7	-12	-6	-16	-17	-9

Indeed, if we compare the pattern of turnout in 2017 with that in 2015, we find little support for this expectation, much touted though it might have been. In Table 6 we show the reported level of turnout within each age group recorded by BSA after each election since 1997, together with the referendum on the UK's membership of the EU in 2016. We find that turnout was higher in 2017 than in 2015 in all but one of our age groups. True, the increase is – just – highest amongst those aged 18-24, but at five points is still no more than modest, and is almost matched by a four-point increase amongst those aged 45-54. In truth, the differences between our age groups in the increase in turnout since 2015 are no more than we might be expected to occur simply as a result of the chance variation to which all surveys are subject. To that extent our findings support Prosser et al.'s (2018) conclusion, based on the data collected by the BES, that there is insufficient evidence to support the claim that there was a particularly marked increase in turnout amongst younger voters between 2015 and 2017.

There is insufficient evidence to support the claim that there was a particularly marked increase in turnout amongst younger voters

Table 6 Turnout by Age, 1997-2017

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Voted in						
1997	61	68	78	85	89	87
2001	42	55	65	77	74	82
2005	40	56	66	76	80	85
2010	45	49	68	75	85	89
2015	56	55	64	75	80	84
2016 (EU referendum)	66	63	70	82	88	89
2017	61	57	65	79	79	87
Change						
2001-17	+19	+2	0	+2	+5	+5
2015-17	+5	+2	+1	+4	-1	+3

Bases for this table can be found in the appendix to this chapter.

Note: Those who said they did not know whether they voted or who refused to say are excluded from the denominator on which these figures are calculated.

Source: 1997: British Election Study

However, we might be thought to be adopting too narrow a focus by looking only at the difference in turnout between 2015 and 2017. After all, previous research has demonstrated that when turnout fell heavily at the 2001 election (from 71% to just 59%), it did so particularly heavily amongst the youngest cohort of voters (Bromley and Curtice, 2002; Phelps 2004). Since then, however, turnout has increased gradually from election to election, such that, at 69%, in 2017 it was almost once again at the level recorded in 1997. Perhaps this long-term increase in turnout has been accompanied by some reversal of the widening of the age differences in turnout, with participation increasing more noticeably amongst younger voters?

Table 6 suggests that there is evidence for this proposition. First of all, it shows that turnout had already increased rather more amongst younger voters in 2015 (Curtice, 2016). At that election participation increased (as compared with 2010) by 11 points amongst those aged 18-24 and by six points amongst those aged 25-34. In contrast, it fell by five points amongst those aged over 55. In other words, the age difference in turnout had already narrowed in 2015 (and indeed seemed to narrow a little bit more in the EU referendum in 2016). If we compare the level of turnout amongst 18-24 year olds in 2017 with that in the same age group at each of the elections between 2001 and 2010, we observe that in all three cases there is a markedly big increase in turnout (of between 16 and 21 points). In contrast, with one exception (25-34 year olds as compared with 2010 when, it should be noted, fewer than usual respondents were asked how they had voted), the level of turnout amongst the other age groups

was not very different in 2017 from what it had been at each of those elections.² Meanwhile, at 61%, the level of turnout amongst 18-24 year olds in 2017 was once again as high as it was in 1997 – while the difference between the level of turnout in this group and those aged 65 and over was also once again the same as before.

So, we cannot simply dismiss the proposition that more younger voters voted in 2017. But we have to define that proposition much more carefully than has typically been the case so far. It looks as though the particularly marked drop in turnout observed amongst the youngest cohort of voters at the beginning of this century may now have been reversed. But, if so, this was not a particular feature of the 2017 election or a consequence of the campaign fought by Labour at that election. Rather a narrowing of the age gap in turnout was already much in evidence in 2015 - and indeed in the 2016 EU referendum too. Meanwhile, despite the apparent long-term recovery in turnout amongst the youngest age group, it is still the case that younger voters are noticeably less likely to vote than older voters, as were previous generations of younger voters before them.

A narrowing of the age gap in turnout was already much in evidence in 2015

Did Labour Benefit From The Increase in Turnout?

In suggesting that there was no marked difference between younger and older voters in the increase in turnout in 2015 and 2017, we are implicitly casting some doubt over the proposition that Labour particularly profited from the fact that more voters made it to the polls. However, we can test this proposition more directly by comparing the level of turnout amongst Conservative and Labour 'identifiers'. On the BSA survey whether someone identifies with a party (and, if so, which) is ascertained by asking, first of all,

Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a supporter of any one political party?

If respondents do not say Yes to this question (and subsequently say with which party they identify), they are further asked:

Do you think of yourself as a little closer to one political party than to the others?

Only if the response to this question is also negative are respondents then asked:

If there were a general election tomorrow, which political party do you think you would be most likely to support?

Crucially for our purposes, this line of questioning means that we have available to us an indication of the party preference of respondents irrespective of whether they voted in the most recent election or not. Consequently, we can analyse turnout by party preference and thus ascertain whether one party's supporters were more or less likely to vote than those of another party.

² Indeed, the only age group in which there is a statistically significant difference between turnout in 2001 and that in 2017 is for those aged 18-24.

Those who say they identify with Labour have always tended to be less likely to vote than their Conservative counterparts

Table 7, which shows the level of participation by Conservative and Labour identifiers at each of the last five general elections, reveals that those who say they identify with Labour have always tended to be less likely to vote than their Conservative counterparts. In this the 2017 election did not prove to be an exception. True, the level of turnout increased by four points amongst Labour identifiers, and was, indeed, higher than at any other recent election. But it also edged up by a couple of points amongst Conservative supporters. Meanwhile, at eight points, the gap between the two groups was still bigger than that registered in both 2001 and 2010. So far as its relative effectiveness at getting the party's supporters to the polls is concerned, it seems that the Labour campaign of 2017 did not have anything particularly remarkable to commend it.

Table 7 Turnout Amongst Conservative and Labour Identifiers 2001-2017

	2001	2005	2010	2015	2017
	%	%	%	%	%
Party ID					
Con	77	84	82	86	88
<i>Base</i>	<i>743</i>	<i>1055</i>	<i>298</i>	<i>1416</i>	<i>933</i>
Lab	74	73	77	76	80
<i>Base</i>	<i>1480</i>	<i>1718</i>	<i>311</i>	<i>1246</i>	<i>1104</i>

Note: Those who said they did not know whether they voted or who refused to say are excluded from the denominator on which these figures are calculated.

This should hardly surprise us. As we noted earlier, Labour's share of votes cast did increase markedly amongst younger voters, that is, those aged 45 or less. But in so far as this meant that the party was gaining ground amongst a section of the electorate that remained relatively less likely to vote, this arguably made it more rather than less difficult for the party to mobilise its potential support. True, some of this disadvantage may have been offset by the fact that the party also advanced relatively strongly amongst graduates (Curtice, 2017), who are more likely to vote (as many as 82% did so in 2017), but overall the outcome of the 2017 election gives little reason to believe that the party has found a formula that enables it to make significant progress simply by mobilising those previously disinclined to vote.

Conclusion

After the collapse in turnout in the 2001 election (and, indeed, in local elections held at the same time) considerable concern was expressed about the apparent disengagement of voters from the electoral process. A particular source of worry for some was the marked decline in turnout amongst the latest generation of new voters who, it was feared, might now never adopt the habit of voting, thereby depressing turnout in the longer term.

A decade later, it appears that the picture is not as bleak as it sometimes was painted. Turnout has recovered considerably amongst the electorate as a whole, albeit not as yet back to above the 70% mark. Voters' motivation to vote seems to have strengthened, while the increased polarisation of political debate (most likely about Brexit as well as the differences between the parties about domestic policy, see Curtice, 2017) seems to have created a greater incentive to vote than was in place when New Labour moved to the centre and came to dominate the political scene. Meanwhile, although still relatively less likely to vote, the latest generation of young voters have not aped their predecessors in shunning the ballot box in unprecedented numbers.

What, however, this development seems to have had relatively little to do with was the particular appeal of Labour's campaign in the 2017 election. Much of the increased turnout amongst the youngest cohort of voters was in evidence in the 2015 election, and indeed the 2016 referendum. The 2017 election seems to have witnessed little more than the continuation of that pattern. Meanwhile, there is little evidence that Labour particularly benefitted from the increased turnout that did occur. In the event, Jeremy Corbyn struggled just as much as Tony Blair and Gordon Brown to persuade those who sympathised with the party to turn out to vote. The Labour leader would be unwise to presume that winning over the previously disengaged will prove a likely route to securing the keys to 10 Downing St. next time around.

Much of the increased turnout amongst the youngest cohort of voters was in evidence in the 2015 election, and indeed the 2016 referendum. The 2017 election seems to have witnessed little more than the continuation of that pattern

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Appendix

The data for Figure 1 are shown below.

	1987	1991	1994	1996	1998	2000	2001	2004
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
It is not really worth voting	3	8	9	8	8	11	11	12
People should only vote if they care who wins	21	24	21	26	26	24	23	27
It is every-one's duty to vote	76	68	68	64	65	64	65	60
<i>Unweighted base</i>	3413	1224	970	989	1654	2008	2795	2609

	2005	2008	2009	2010	2011	2013	2015	2017
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
It is not really worth voting	12	18	17	18	16	16	12	11
People should only vote if they care who wins	23	23	23	20	21	24	20	17
It is every-one's duty to vote	64	56	58	61	62	57	66	70
<i>Unweighted base</i>	1732	990	1017	921	1909	904	1812	2410

Source: 1987: British Election Study

The bases for Table 6 can be found below.

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
1997	316	579	566	518	386	531
2001	226	566	712	555	467	754
2005	330	625	866	712	730	993
2010	75	158	211	164	178	281
2015	289	635	727	764	711	1190
2016 (EU referendum)	168	419	470	501	491	846
2017	162	459	479	539	480	858