TO WHAT EXTENT DOES BRITAIN RETAIN CLASS POLITICS IN NATIONAL ELECTIONS AND IRELAND NOT?

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Abstract

Great Britain has often been associated with having a strong class-based society and historically this has shaped voting behaviour. In contrast, its neighbour Ireland has had no class voting cleavages. This questions whether class-based voting behaviour can exist within an environment of a dominating national question? Analysis shows social class has become less influential in voter behaviour in Great Britain, while in Ireland more left parties have been elected to the Irish Parliament the Dáil Éireann and the shock rise of Sinn Fein as a third party from 2020 would suggest an emergence of class politics. While initial observations would suggest class dealignment and class alignment for the cases our analysis demonstrates that the situation is more complex than this. Both cases show a great level of voter volatility in recent election cycles and voters more prone to switching parties during elections. Such as the large Conservative win in 2019 and Sinn Fein receiving the most votes in 2020. While class-based voting is declining in Great Britain we still see evidence that it exists. What these two cases show is that the electoral volatility of voters in both countries, has obscured/eroded traditional voter patterns and cleavages thus, making predictions and analysing future elections in these cases much harder.

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Introduction

There is a void in comparative studies of the political systems of Ireland and Great Britain. Both countries are part of the European continent and have seen large-scale changes to their political landscapes in recent decades. Studies of the two countries have usually come about through the lens of 'The Troubles' in Northern Ireland, examining the complexities of divided communities and that of ethno-religious and ethno-national identities. Instead, this thesis examines their electoral politics. More specifically, it explores whether nationalism and having a 'nation question' inhibits class-cleavages of voting in elections. This would provide a plausible explanation for why the UK retains class-voting, although the extent is debated, and why Ireland has not unlike most of Western Europe.

Great Britain has seen a rapid decline of its manufacturing and traditional working-class and elements of class partisanship since the 1970s. Ireland had few, if any, cleavages of voter behaviour but its recent history has brought about a changed electoral landscape where we find some evidence that class-voting may be starting to contribute to a form of electoral politics that could reconstitute the Irish political system. Despite some differences, there are many broader cultural and economic similarities in both cases. The two countries share a common language, geographical border, complex and intertwined history and have bicameral systems of which Ireland's is loosely based on the Westminster model. The Gini Coefficients for Ireland are 32.8% and Great Britain 34.8%, where 0 personifies perfect equality and 100 maximum inequality (World Bank, 2016). They differ from Commonwealth countries such as Canada and Australia which use non-proportional voting systems. This shows that economic inequality within both countries are similar, albeit both countries share very different party systems and party structures. What seemingly brings the cases together is also the turbulence their political climates have seen since the economic crash of the 2000's with ever increasing

voter volatility. The aim is not to suggest that the two countries are the same but rather to compare and contrast them as neighbours and discover whether patterns, evidence and data in one country can help to explain broader patterns in the other.

In Great Britain (GB) the Labour Party's coalition of voters has been changing over time and there has been a long-term trend of partisan dealignment, albeit with some fluctuations under the early period of New Labour. (Ipsos Mori, 2010) Strategies in the 1990's were deployed to convert socially constructed 'archetypal voters' such as the Mondeo man (Maronitis, 2022). Alongside other Social Democratic Parties in Europe, Labour deployed strategies to bring more female voters into the fold in target seats, given that if women voted the same way as men in 1992 Labours Neil Kinnock would have been Prime Minister (Morgan, 2013). The most recent election in the UK in 2019 was significant because the result produced the largest Conservative majority since 1987 and the Labour Party's worst election performance in seats since 1935. There were indications from pundits that this result can be framed as the election that saw the end of the traditional social-class cleavage (Rokkan & Lipset, 1967) given the rise of terminology dubbed the red wall. This is because the Conservatives won a plurality of National Readership Survey (NRS, see Table 1) category DE voters for the first time and won the most votes among every other social grade (Ipsos, 2019). The Conservatives took 41% of DE voters to Labour's 39%. This is in stark contrast to 40 years prior in 1979, where Labour won the support of 57% of this demographic compared to the Conservatives' 22%. Therefore, the Conservatives have managed to double their vote share among working-class voters. This is significant because nominally the Labour vote would be dominated by the DE social grades and the Conservatives among the AB grades but the trend since 1979 is that more middle-class voters started voting Labour and working-class voters have trended towards the Conservatives, with the exception of

Blair's 1997 and 2001 landslides which saw increases from all social groups. Hence this result on a social-class demographic basis, is often portrayed as part of a long-term trend towards class de-alignment and arguably partisan de-alignment in voting and the 'pasokification' of many centre-left parties in Europe since the financial crash (Cox, 2019).

In Ireland, nationalism dominated its political environment and its history when eventually statehood was achieved in 1922 following armed conflict with the British state since 1916. Even before that, the struggle for independence had existed for centuries when Ireland was part of the British Empire. This led to various violent uprisings e.g. 1798, 1848, 1867, 1916 and political movements; Catholic emancipation, Young Ireland, The Irish Republican Brotherhood and in the early 20th century the movement for Home Rule. This sets the picture of the political landscape of Ireland focusing on nationalism through the lens of 'anti-imperialism' and thus differs from nationalist sentiment seen on the right from nativists. The foundation of the Irish Labour Party by James Connolly was not long after the foundation of its sister party in Great Britain. Connolly was influential within the Easter Rising as one of the 16 executed. What transpired in the aftermath was Sinn Fein's victory in the 1918 UK election winning 73 of 105 Irish seats, under Eamon De Valera, whose politics later within Fianna Fail can best be described as being based upon nationalism, religious conservatism and isolationism. The extended armed conflict that followed through guerrilla warfare by IRA, led to the creation of the Irish Free State which controversially partitioned the island. It was this partition and the Free State treaty that came to define the politics and party system, as this led to an internal civil war between pro-treaty and anti-treaty factions and a downward split within Sinn Fein.

Those leaders who accepted the treaty at the time, such as Michael Collins who was assassinated during the civil war, and notable others including William Cosgrave formed into

today's Fine Gael. While De Valera later left Sinn Fein and formed Fianna Fail in 1926 leading to the eventual collapse of Sinn Fein, remaining on the fringe of the political system until the start of 'The Troubles' in Northern Ireland (Bartlett, 2010). It was Fianna Fail who would come to dominate the Irish political system in the 20th Century with Fine Gael its main opposition whom has never formed a majority administration, only forming administrations by coalitions with Labour and other parties. De Valera introduced nationalist and socially conservative measures such as the 1937 constitution, much of which sought to protect the Irish identity, the Irish language and protect the Catholic Church while promoting its teachings. Fianna Fails policy under De Valera's of isolationism and neutrality meant Ireland did not participate in the Second World War or join the European Economic Community in the aftermath (Cronin & O'Callaghan, 2018).

Historical sociological analysis suggests that unlike in Great Britain where class has dominated parties and voting, Ireland has not been constructed in the same manner. As suggested by later scholars, the Irish party system is said to have 'no social bases' and class-cleavage is not existent (Whyte, 1974). Recent upheaval following the economic crash Fianna Fáil shared a fate in the 2011 election to that of PASOK in Greece. Following the financial crises between 2008 and 2011 has seen the Irish political system dramatically change. Fianna Fail is no longer the dominant party that it was for the whole of the 20th century and the Dáil, the Irish lower legislative chamber, has become ever more fragmented. The dominance of the national question in the founding of the country alongside that Fine Gael and Fianna Fail in Irish politics has obscured traditional cleavages of left and right voter patterns. Thus, diverging from other Western European democracies. Other parties have begun to emerge after the collapse of Fianna Fail and post the financial crisis of 2008 and this has the rise of Sinn Fein as the third party in a traditionally two and a half party system.

There are similarities between Ireland and Great Britain in the upheaval and heavy political turbulence that it has also experienced. In the Irish political system, it has been dominated by throughout the 20th century by two main parties Fianna Fail and Fine Gael. Following the recession in 2008 and Eurozone crisis Fianna Fail who had dominated Irish politics for over 100 years finished in third place in the 2011 General Election. The collapse of Fianna Fail led the way for Fine Gael and Labour to form the next government despite both parties promising very different economic agendas. The Liberal Democrat's economic pledges, just like Irish Labour's, had to be scrapped or altered in their coalition agreements and both governments implemented steep economic austerity measures. The time of the next election in both cases the junior partner in the coalition who had made most compromises was punished with the Liberal Democrats and Irish Labour suffering very heavy losses in the 2015 and 2016 General Elections. Both countries experienced bleak economic outlooks following the financial crisis and surrounding the issue of the British withdrawal from the European Union. In the British case the argument of class/partisan dealignment does not mean that working-class voters have now become Conservatives, the data will show that they are a less reliable and stable vote for the Labour party and electoral cycles show greater volatility. While we see some trends away from the Conservatives with more middle-class voters, in comparison to working class counterparts they have declined at a slower pace it this has been less volatile. The Irish case does show that there are patterns to suggest class voting is starting to take place there, but not in the same way as other European countries or our example of Great Britain. The data allows the argument that Sinn Fein is the party of the working-class, while fragmentation among the rest particularly between Fine Gael and Fianna Fail with middle class voters, albeit Fianna Fail maintains some of its working-class elements as a 'catch all party but no clear and obvious voter cleavages. While in the case of Fine Gael the data will

show is the most attractive with higher income and middle-class voters but is not as clear cut a case as the Sinn Fein models. What it does show is an upheaval of nearly a century of voter patterns but whether this means Ireland's politics is becoming more class based like the UK or just more volatile is unclear. Examples such as France since 2017 with the breakdown of the traditional centre-left and centre-right parties would be evidence of a decline of party affiliation.

While there has been strong evidence class politics exists in the UK particularly concerning voting behaviour, the case of Ireland is less clear. There is contention as to whether there are any voter cleavages at all, with others suggesting it has some social bases of class voting behaviour. The clear distinction between the two cases appears to be nationalism and more broadly an issue of having 'a national question' given Irelands political system stems from the Civil War. Some of the basis of this theory comes from Marxist theorists who suggest that class struggle is 'the motor of history.' However, highlighted in the piece by Blaut (1982) there remains debate as to whether nationalism can be viewed as a form of class politics or whether it is a distinct and autonomous motor. While he identifies nationalism as being part of a class struggle due to having conflict (Blaut, 1982), it underpins the question of whether nationalism would overshadow class-based allegiances at elections. Scholars such as Thomas Nairn believe over time the labour movement, particularly the UK, had become detached from its original obligations and objectives to the working class and alludes to this decline in the 'Nairn-Anderson theory' (Nairn, 2021: Campsie, 2021: Wickham-Jones, 2018). As will be shown below the labour movement was weak in Ireland and its voice was drowned out during the period before independence and its more so in its aftermath.

In the UK case I see the struggle in its political system has been dominated by the adversarial nature of class conflict. The evidence traces back to the struggles for emancipation and

representation, whether this was allowing property owning middle classes the vote in the 1832 Reform Act and the chartist movements up to the establishment of the labour party to represent the working-class and the trade union movement. The Irish case while having elements of class conflict its social class structure was very different and dominated by colonialism of the British Empire. The Irish emancipation and conflict has primarily existed against the British state based on independence and nationalism. Examples such as 18th/19th century rebellions, campaigns for home rule, until the establishment of the free state in 1922. Even after this point the free state's politics were dominated by 'the national question' the pro partition treaty parties Cumann na nGaedheal (later Fine Gael) and the smaller Irish Labour Party, versus the anti-treaty Fianna Fail.

The secondary question here is; if the first hypothesis holds is there evidence of these existing political systems waning. As will be shown there are long-established theories that Britain is and has been undergoing partisan dealignment in voting behaviour. To what extent does Britain retain class voting behaviour and are there signs that Ireland is moving away from its two-party politics based upon the national question. What is found is that both cases appear to have seen high levels of volatility that have restructured their political landscapes and voters have less loyalty to parties and candidates.

Literature Review

Great Britain

Since the Second World War there have been several periods of fluctuation in voting behaviour across Europe. This has ranged from the post-war consensus from the 1940's to 1970's, establishing Keynesianism as the dominant economic system, to the development of the New Right in the 1980's and Third Way liberalism in 1990's and 2000's. Dalton, Beck & Flanagan (1984) place these electoral periods into three main typologies; 'stable-alignments, realignments and dealignments (Dalton et-al, 1984:11).' In a stable alignment we predominantly see no significant changes in voting cleavage or the wider party system in relation to voting behaviour.

Class based schisms in voting have long been analysed and viewed through the prism of societies having class-based voting cleavages or experiencing a decline known as partisan dealignment. Lipset (1960) argued that across all established democracies those with lower incomes mostly voted for left-wing parties while those who have high income vote for right wing parties (Lipset, 1960) exemplifies a simplistic notion of class-voting. The notion of partisan dealignment in developed democracies and a weakening of the left-right, worker-employer, voting cleavage (Lipset & Rokkan, 1967) is not a new phenomenon. In 1962 Robert Alford sought to measure the association between social class and voting behaviour in two party systems. This was to be done by devising an index, namely measuring the percentage of manual workers voting for left parties minus non-manual workers voting for left-wing parties giving a difference known as the 'Alford Index' (Alford, 1962).

Due to de-industrialization of many parts of Western Europe manual occupations now account for a small percentage of the working population, instead many of the modern working-class occupy service sector jobs. Thus, arguably a large segment of working class is somewhat more akin to a precariat class; with less unionization and more insecure work, namely the rise of zero-hour contracts or the gig economy as examples but more mainstream being retail, warehouses, call-centres and hospitality work paying the minimum wage or just above sometimes relying on welfare payments to top-up wages (Savage, 2015). Social class is primarily measured by occupation in the UK and Ireland and often referred to by the National Readership Survey classifications (see table for definitions) which categorizes occupations into letter graded classifications.

There has been a downward trend in the C2DE classifications of occupations since 1968 from 65% of all workers making up these three categories, falling to 45% in 2008. While alongside this trend is the rise in AB occupation groups from 12% to 27% within the same time frame (Collis, 2009). This reflects the structural changes in employment with declines in traditional manual industries e.g., coal mining and the rise of service sector. The problem with occupation-based rather than income-based definitions are that manual work in the form tradesmen, C2 NRS classification, can find themselves earning more than their middle-class counterparts. Namely, an electrician in the United Kingdom earned an average salary of £33,495 in 2019 (ONS, 2019) while nurses, B NRS classification, earned an average £33,384 (Royal College of Nursing). The question that arises from this is whether social class is determined by occupation, income, the socialization/social culture and education of the individual (Savage, 2015). Therefore, measuring class can be much more difficult than at the height of post-World War Western Europe.

Table 1 NRS Classifications

Social Grade	Occupations
A	High managerial, administrative or professional
B	Intermediate managerial, administrative or professional
C1	Supervisory, clerical and junior managerial, administrative or professional
C2	Skilled manual workers
D	Semi and unskilled manual workers
E	Casual or lowest grade workers, unemployed with state benefits only

Source: Adapted from (Collis, 2009: 3) NRS 2008 (unweighted sample 37,359, estimated population 15+ (000s) 49,077

In the last decade across Europe there has been significant changes to who/whom working class people vote for in elections. In the UK and Ireland have seen significant changes albeit with different outcomes. In 2015 the UK Labour Party had a gap between the Conservatives for DE voters of +14%, for AB voters this was –21%, a sizeable difference (Mori, 2015). In the 2019 General Election Labour had a deficit of –2% with DE voters and –15% with AB voters, marking the first time since polling that a political party won the most votes with every social class grade (Mori, 2019). In Ireland, the Labour Party in 2011 had 22% of Working-Class voters the largest of any left-leaning political party but in 2020 this was just 5% (Gallagher & Marsh, 2020). The traditional working-class party, Labour, lost many of its voters to other left and Centre-left parties notably Sinn Fein who won 33% of working-class votes the most of any party at the election.

The Michigan model explains voting behaviour through the lens of psychological attachments to parties, voters being highly partisan with loyalty towards a particular party,

which is largely inherited from socialization and their parents. Campbell et-al (1960) also found that two thirds of voters still remain highly partisan to the party that they first ever cast a ballot for, only major crises such as the US civil war and great depression have the propensity to significantly alter partisan leaning. Social class was also shown to be somewhat of a predictor of voting intention with middle-class voters being more skewed towards Republican candidates and the working-class toward Democrats (Campbell, Converse, Miller & Donald, 1964). Historically the Michigan Model of Voting would explain why the working class had a greater disposition to vote for Labour Parties. This is because the trade union movement had significant control over the party, manual workers were likely in a trade union of a key industrial area e.g., dockworkers, coal miners, steel workers etc. Their parents also likely the same and may have had political socialization in the form of local labour clubs. Deindustrialization and neo-liberal economic policies have seen trade union membership fall dramatically, especially for working class voters. In 1979 the UK had 13.2 million trade union members which as a proportion of the whole population is 23.5%, in 2021 the number was 6.6 million, of which 4 million in public sector unions, counting for 9.7% of the population (Elliott, 2021).

The Columbia Studies' theory of sociological voting underscores the importance of social networks, communities and the role of opinion leaders in relying information to voters (Bartels, 2010). Thus, it follows the main theory of the two-step flow of communication put forward by Lazarsfeld & Katz (1944), the opinion leaders generally are of similar socio-demographic composition to the electorate that they are 'informing' through political cues, such as trade unionists for the working class (Bartels, 2010). Lazarsfeld found that media had little effect on voters' choice for the election as social class was deeply rooted to how a ballot was cast 'brand loyalty'. This provided evidence of class-voting as media arguably had

'minimal affects' on voter intention and emphasized the role of social groups and opinion leaders. Deindustrialisation in Europe from the 1970's onwards has arguably decreased community homogeneity which in turn weakens the influence of opinion leaders and may explain working-class 'volatility' in voting for social democratic parties (Dalton et-al, 1984).

One explanation of the declining significance of class voting is that of 'embourgeoisement' of the working class created a smaller 'traditional working class', while creating what can be considered a new lower middle-class or upper working class. In addition to the decline of traditional class typologies, new cleavages emerge that take on greater importance over class in construction of a person's identity such as ethnic background, education or age (Manza et-al, 1995: Halle & Romo 1991). The embourgeoisement theory explains somewhat why New Right parties made inroads with working –class voters across Europe and the US. For example, Thatcher's 'right to buy' was seen as one explanation for the party winning over 40% of the C2 the working class and the stereotypical 'Essex man' in the 1983 and 1987 elections (Haigron, 2009). While in the US there was the emergence of the Reagan-Democrats, the industrial white working classes who were slowly alienated by the Democrats, switched allegiance to the Republicans in the 1980's along with other ancestral Democrats (Riddle, 1998). The first argument would explain greater social mobility and reasons for a shrinking traditional working-class but fails to explain why remaining working class voters do not vote overwhelmingly for left/social-democratic parties. Secondly, these 'new' or emerging cleavages are not new and many Anglicized and European societies have differentiations in voting for decades such as protestant-catholic, age and education (Manza et-al, 1995). The example of Germany where Catholics tended to vote for Christian democratic parties and not the Social Democrats. There are other electoral changes such as,

following emancipation of women and universal suffrage, women were more likely to vote for Conservative parties which is often explained by most married women were housewives, today women are more likely than men to support liberal parties, especially in the US (Przeworski & Sprague, 1986: Giger, 2009).

In analyzing political behavior there argued to be more emphases on value centered voting between materialism and postmaterialism. Examples of postmaterialism can include environment, women's rights and social emancipation and present-day issues around minority rights and LGBT emancipation and such issues gain greater traction in influencing the voting behavior of individuals (Inglehart, 1977, 1984). Inglehart argues that those on high incomes when politically engaged and educated are more likely to support left-leaning parties that advocate for postmaterialism policies e.g., social democratic and green parties. While in contrast the working-class counter parts are more defensive of values on the materialist front such as 'military, law and order and economic growth' where parties on the right place greater prominence to such issues (Inglehart, 1984). Thus, such a divergence in the coalition of working-class parties to appeal to its base of working-class voters and maintain middle-class postmaterialists would undoubtedly create a schism. Therefore, this provides one explanation for why social class voting has declined and how social democratic parties may have lost appeal among their traditional voters.

In the U.K the personification of the trend of working-class voters abandoning Social Democracy can be seen through the prism of the "Red-Wall" seats that went from Labour to Conservative in 2019. The problem appears to be how these so called "Red-Wall" seats are defined as sites such as YouGov list historically marginal seats as 'red wall' which appears disingenuous to the phenomena of historic safe seats switching parties that is trying to be

explored. One definition of the "red-wall" gives 4 criteria of what constitutes a red wall constituency these were; large vote to leave the European Union in 2016, a high minority vote for the Conservatives, an increasing Conservative vote from 2010-2017 and a 'residual below the 75th percentile' (Kanagasooriam & Simon, 2021). While this definition does include what many would consider to be the 'red-wall' constituencies it appears to ignore other seats that can be classified as 'red-wall'. For instance, Doncaster, Pontefract & Castleford, all of the Sunderland seats, Wansbeck and Hartlepool which have been Labour held for decades and likely top target seats for the Conservatives, if they wish to increase their majority, and Defenses for Labour in 2023/24 given they are most vulnerable if they have a small swing to the Conservatives. Having an additional typology of former industrialized constituencies long held by Labour would have included a better range and give more focus on Labours historical working-class voter base and future battlegrounds given changing preferences/demographics. The Parliamentary by-elections in 2021 in Northern England demonstrated a continuation of these changes with the Conservatives gaining Hartlepool on a 16% swing from Labour to Conservative, followed by Batley and Spen where the Labour majority of 3525 was reduced to just 323 above the Conservatives (Halliday, 2021: Marris, 2021).

The analysis by Gavin Hart (2021) of the U.K. parliamentary constituency of Colne Valley, which is not widely considered to be a "red-wall" constituency but a marginal/swing seat, gave some interesting accounts of working-class voter's insights when voting Conservative in 2019. The broad thematic picture is that three key factors contributed to the Labour's loss; the leadership of Jeremy Corbyn and his shadow frontbench, the Labour Parties remain-leaning position on Brexit and hyper-leftwing economic policies (Hart, 2021). These factors are all regularly cited as key reasons across the U.K. for why voters did not choose Labour in

YouGov and Ipsos post-voting surveys (Ipsos & YouGov, 2019). However, what was not elaborated was that the decline of working –class voters voting Labour is part of a much longer-term issue beyond and before the leadership of Corbyn or Brexit, the latter factors may have only eroded remaining working-class support more quickly.

Howell (2001) identifies 'Fordism' as a key component of social democracy regarding the relationship between the Labour movement and social democratic parties. A key argument made is that following the decline of 'Fordism' and move to 'post-Fordism' economics after the 1970's altered the relationship between the parties and unions (Howell, 2001). The development of a new supranational level of politics in Western Europe complicates the picture as Howell states economic policy is no longer decided at national level especially after monetary union with the European Central Bank and the Euro. They no longer are in ideological cohesion with many unions remaining far to the left on economic policy while other Social Democratic parties try to appeal to the 'median' voter or adopt a 'third way' outlook.

Revisionists within the Labour Party from the 1950's argued that socialism need not be an economic model that that controlled the commanding heights of the economy through mass nationalization but rather adopt a mixed-economic approach. The Future of Socialism by Anthony Crossland (1956) was one key pillar of this and would eventually lead the way for the Blair-Giddens 'Third-way' approach to politics. The recognition that national industries were waning and the traditional working-class was slowly moving away from the Labour Party was the beginning of a 'partisan de-alignment' and for revisionists a realization to have wider electoral appeal. As Przeworksi & Sprague (1986) argue Social Democratic Parties have never exclusively relied upon 'working-class votes' rather they have always been a

coalition of majority working-class with a minority of liberal minded middle-classes as workers, particularly manual workers, would not reach a majority threshold of 50% relying the need to widen electoral appeal. Many of these Labour parties and social democratic parties emerged around the time of the second international with emphasis on 'parliamentary socialism'. Thus, they noted that by Social Democratic Parties putting less emphasis on social class e.g., 'workers' to more loose descriptions such as 'people' etc. then other cleavages can take greater precedent and social-class becomes less pronounced in voting (Przeworksi & Sprague, 1986). This would be an argument shared by Inglehart (2017) who emphasizes the decline of class-conflict and the rise of post materialism or increasing globalization with the winners and the left behind (Kriesi, 2008).

The Labour Party after the election of 1983 began a 'transformation' into center-ground party seeking to appeal to new middles-classes such as the 'Essex-man or Mondeo-men etc.' Evans and Tilly (2012) find that while there is decline in the association between social-class and voting, it can be hard to distinguish if moves by Labour for instance to the center-ground has blurred class lines. This would question whether the working-class voters moved away from the party or if the party moved too far away from its voters. Other explanations for realignment can be explained by the approaches of other European Social Democratic Parties, who also were seeking wider electoral appeal and broaden their electoral coalitions. For example, the targeting of middle-class female voters especially by New Labour in the 1990s, though this trend was seen across Western Europe including the Dutch Labour Party and the SPD in Germany (Hayes & McAllister, 2001: Morgan, 2013).

There are further theories that parliamentary democracies have become more 'presidential' and that this is having an impact on class voting. This being the emphasis upon who the party

leaders are and which candidate is best suited for the position of prime minister, thus mirroring presidential elections. This explanation applies most effectively with the narratives around several elections. These include negative personal ratings and public perceptions of Neil Kinnock in the 1992 election campaign contrasted with Tony Blair in 1997 appearing more 'statesmanlike' and a charismatic speaker (Fielding, 1994). More recent examples include Ed Miliband's style of speaking or inability to eat a bacon sandwich added to negative perceptions of the former Labour leader (Gaffney, 2014: Bratberg, 2017). In 2019 Jeremy Corbyn was recorded by Ipsos Mori as being the most unpopular Labour leader since surveys began in 1977 with a rating of minus 60 points. While Boris Johnson also deeply divided opinion he was seen more favourably than his predecessor Theresa May and Jeremy Corbyn (Armstrong, 2019).

The socio-demographic background of the elected representatives is also identified as a key variable in what may affect class support for the candidates. Namely, Labour MP's have become more middle-class with over 84% of Labour MP's attended university a higher percentage than the Conservatives while many other MPs are 'parachuted' into safe seats and represent areas who they have no connection with at all. The theoretical underpinning as examined by Heath (2011) is as the MP's no longer come from the same backgrounds as the working-class, they seek to represent, more working-class voters fail to vote at all or do not support Labour. The notion that social-class voting is becoming less relevant is rejected in the capacity that it is Labour who fails to appeal to the working-classes, instead favouring those middle-class voters in swing seats. It is this that has led to a declining association between labour and the working-class (Heath, 2011).

Trade union membership has fallen across Western Europe, with the traditional working class being hollowed out the most from deindustrialization and rising private sector service jobs. In 1979 the UK had 13.2 million trade union members which as a proportion of the whole population is 23.5%, in 2021 the number was 6.6 million, of which 4 million in public sector unions, counting for 9.7% of the population (Elliott, 2021). Many of these public sector unions represent professional industries such as nursing, teachers and doctors as examples, thus are more likely to be middle class. This is important for Anglospheric Labour Parties as the trade union link remains strong in influencing policies and financially bankrolls the parties (Howell, 2001). One perspective can be that the absence of the traditional working class or even modern minimum wage private sector workers, the Labour party's policy agendas focuses more heavily on these voters. An example would be of the Trade Unions affiliated to the Labour Party in the United Kingdom supporting a second referendum on leaving the EU knowing that 64% of working-class voters supported leaving (Ashcroft, 2016). Working Class voters who were a member of a trade union were significantly less likely to vote for right-wing parties in France (Mosimann, Rennwald & Zimmermann, 2019).

The combination of an ambiguous strategy on the EU, where many northern working-class voters believed that Labour sought to overturn the leave vote, combined with the record low approval ratings of Jeremy Corbyn proved to be a 'perfect storm' (Ford et-al, 2021). Former Home Secretary under New Labour Alan Johnson described Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn as being 'unable to lead the working class out of a paper bag' as the ITV exit poll was announced at 10pm (ITV, 2019). Labour MP's who lost their seats attributed a mixture of failing to honor the result of the referendum and failures of Jeremy Corbyn's leadership. Such as Caroline Flint who blamed the pro-remain position and attitudes of certain MP's, such as

her claim Shadow Foreign Secretary Emily Thornberry called Northern voters who switched from Labour to Conservative as 'stupid' (Elliott & Devlin, 2019).

Ireland

One theory for the lack of left-right party voting in Ireland can be explained by the approach and tactics used by the Irish Labour movement in its foundation. James Connolly the de facto leader of the Irish Labour Movement at the time of the Easter rising was seen as a radical Marxist-socialist with heavy nationalist sentiments and united many working-class socialists under this umbrella. His successor Thomas Johnson an English born protestant inherited a fractured Labour movement and was much more moderate than his more radical predecessor (Mitchell, 1969). Within the Labour coalition there were the working classes of the north such as Belfast in heavily unionized industries but many of the Protestants were not nationalists. In the southern regions beyond Ulster the working classes were predominantly catholic and arguably many militantly nationalist. This led to its leadership becoming much more pragmatic and ambivalent on the national question and was described by Anderson (1994) as 'looking both ways on the issue'. The party found itself divided upon its abstentionist policy in the run up to the 1918 election and thus failed to field candidates (Anderson, 1994). Working class voters flocked to Sinn Fein and Sinn Fein became associated with being the nationalist party of Ireland. The Labour movement continued to struggle beyond this and after partition after it sided with the pro-treaty factions and thus aligned with Cumann na nGaedheal (later Fine Gael) in the Dáil Éireann (Dunphy,1995). Fianna Fail founded by Eamonn De Valera out of the anti-treaty Sinn Fein movement remained opposed to partition and the nationalist party following the now collapse of Sinn

Fein from the mid 1920's. Fianna Fail remained pragmatic on domestic policy and adopted many of Labour's social welfare reforms such as the chronic issue of housing stock in the late 1920's and early 1930's (Dunphy, 1995). Therefore, this historical analysis can provide an explanation for how the Irish left never materialised into an electoral force.

Throughout its history, Irish political system has generally been regarded as a 'Two and a half party system' (Farrell, 1970, 485). The electoral cleavages in Ireland are more complex, with early scholars arguing there are none. Similarly, the Taoiseach has come from the two Centre-right parties Fianna Fail and Fine Gael for the last 100 years and are often equated as being 'two-sides of the same coin'. Literature that exists such as Whyte (1974) have equated Irish politics to having no social bases. However, what is notable the working class has typically been more nationalist in its sentiment and Fianna Fail for most of the 20th century captured a plurality of the working-class vote, while the less nationalistic party Fine Gael captured the plurality of middle-class votes despite little difference between the parties on the left-right index (Penniman & Farrell, 1987). Marsh (2021) states the middle class has grown since the 1970's and now occupies nearly half of the electorate which makes observing patterns more difficult if some social groups shrink and others enlarge (Marsh, 2021:4).

Laver (1986) produces evidence based upon opinion polling data that Ireland has 'some social bases' of voting. The dominance of the two main parties FF and FG still complicate the landscape in comparison to the UK, yet working-class voters are found to prefer FF over FG and middle-classes the reverse. One explanation for why Labour in the UK more successful captures the working-class vote in its constituencies compared to Ireland was the social concentration of working-class voters. Namely, the portions STV system produces

large constituencies often with large rural areas, while the UK has single FPTP constituencies with voters of a similar demographic living together and interacting, reinforcing class and voting behavior (Laver, 1986). While this is a plausible explanation given the country has far less coal and Iron than the UK and its heavy industry wasn't as dominant as North England (Leaver, 1986). In more recent elections from 2011-2016 Madden (2020) finds that voting in Ireland has some social bases, particularly on the socio-demographic basis of education and income. The main differences did transpire between Sinn Fein and Fine Gael the former now the more left-wing party and Fine Gael the more right-wing (Madden, 2018: Madden 2020).

Historically, there has been some evidence for social class playing a minor role in shaping electoral cleavages in Ireland particularly with working-class and trade union members supporting Labour but vote share often fluctuates depending on if the party had been in coalition. Yet when comparing to the 21st century onwards the Labour Party actually has much better traction with middle class voters (Marsh, 2008: Coakley & Gallagher, 2017). The two large parties with the biggest contrast on the left-right spectrum is Sinn Fein and Fine Gael and both hold the largest concentration of voters of the opposing social class. Namely, Sinn Fein with working-class voters and Fine Gael with middle class voters (Coakley & Gallagher, 2017: Gallagher, 2020).

The role of religion on the island of Ireland has been strong in the formation of its history and its recent past but has largely not been as significant in shaping the political system in the south as expected. The Republic of Ireland does not have a specific Christin Democratic party, though both Fine Gael and Fianna Fail have elements of this, despite in 1991 Catholics being 91% of the population and in the most recent census in 2016 this is still 78% and is largely religiously and ethnically homogenous in comparison to other North

Western countries such as the UK or France. Unlike in the United States issues deemed to concern that of morality and conscience such as abortion and same-sex marriage are not as polarising and split into ideological party lines. Fianna Fail performed better among religious voters over time. Voters who are more religious are more likely to vote for right wing parties and candidates while those who are less religious were much more likely to vote for candidates and parties on the left (Marsh, 2021).

As stated by Mair (1979) coalition choices in Ireland have obscured ideology and left-right positioning of governments. This is particularly notable for parties such as Irish Labour who when in government have been the junior partner to nearly always Fine Gael. Labour seen as more of a party that fits within the Irish centre-left on social issues and on economic policy within the context of the Irish political system. While Fine Gael has been more centre-righter and Conservative especially on economic policy. (Marsh, 2021). Such coalition formations are rarer within broader European contexts albeit instances of grand coalitions, Greens with Conservative and Christian Democratic parties, such as in Germany or Austria. The explanation here however, is better explained that prior to 2011 the party system can arguably be bets explained as Fianna Fail versus the others. Fianna Fail is the only party to ever govern alone or obtain a majority. Fine Gael has nearly always come to power with Labour and this has always been a coalition government.

In 2011 following the election wipeout of Fianna Fail following economic crash and the EU bailout, the party fell to third place and its lowest ever seat and vote share. The Labour Party finished in second place and attracted a large number of left-leaning and working-class Fianna Fail voters while those on the right put their first preferences for Fine

Gael (Coakley & Gallagher, 2017: Gallagher, 2011). As Fianna Fail positions itself to be a 'catch-all party', the argument put forward by Tilley & Garry (2017) shows that catch-all parties are more likely to be judged upon performance in government and are removed from power when they are perceived to be have had a poor performance in office. This is also claimed to be another reason why less cleavages exist in Ireland as Fianna Fail dominated most of the 20th century, campaigns focus on incumbent Fianna Fail job performance (Tilley & Garry, 2017). It is arguably 2016 that solidified Sinn Fein's rise to being the most prominent left wing-party in the Irish political system, with a large number of voters defecting from Labour following their decision to go into coalition with Fine Gael. Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams ran a 'leftist-populist' anti-austerity campaign and the Sinn Fein party manifesto opposed many of the austerity policies the coalition implemented and issues such as water charges in 2014 (Gallagher, 2016). This may have been key to Labour losing so many votes and seats as Tilley & Garry (2017) shows the Labour Party in 2011 had gained a lot of new working-class voters and its economic programme promised less austerity and no 'sell offs' (Tilley & Garry, 2017).

Klüver and Spoon (2020) argues that becoming a junior partner in a coalition hurts future electoral prospects as they are unable to deliver key manifesto promises and unable to differentiate themselves from the other government partner. One explanation for the Irish Labour Party is that its electoral performances are based upon whether they are in government as a junior coalition partner or not. The party has repeatedly acted as the King-maker in hung parliaments often forming coalitions with the leader taking the Tánaiste (Deputy Prime Minister) position evoking Downs theory that they are office seeking. The following election they normally lose significant vote share and seats in the Dáil from the coalitions. The party's electoral support has fluctuated many times following coalitions since

the late 1940's where it has mostly gone into coalition with Fine Gael. This can help explain why they are often punished given that ideologically Fine Gael is much more heavily pro-free market and more hostile to the trade unions. This undoubtedly links with research by Fortunato and Adams (2015) who find that voters for the niche party become disillusioned given that the party moderates its views towards the Prime Minister. Furthermore, these voters are more likely believe that the larger partner imposes its policy preferences on the junior partner. This makes the Prime Ministers party policies become 'mapped' with what the niche party will enact in coalition (Fortunato & Adams, 2015).

After the financial crisis of 2008, the election of 2011 arguably marks the turning point in the Irish political system. The collapse of Fianna Fail and the heavy losses suffered by Labour in 2016 following their coalition with Fine Gael has produced a fragmented and somewhat 'broken' political system. The political system is more fragmented with smaller parties and independents taking seats in the Dáil since the 2011 election (Farrell & Little, 2021). Left wing parties prior to the 1980's were seldom with the Irish Labour party occupying the left-wing ground on the Irish political spectrum (Marsh, 2021). While in the 2016 and 2020 elections we see much more fragmentation and more parties.

Data and Methods

The case selection of the two countries, Great Britain and Ireland was selected in part due to both countries' geographical proximity, shared linguistic and economic characteristics. The other factors are that the countries have both seen an upheaval in their political environments. This appears to be part of a wider pattern of volatility of voter patterns at elections in both cases. Such as in 2010 in the UK resulting in the first coalition government since 1940, Ireland in 2011 also had its own coalition government which at the following elections like punished the junior partners; The Liberal Democrats and Irish Labour. The two countries also suffered from the economic crash and both countries implemented strict austerity programmes to reduce public spending. What needs to be analysed is if the two cases share any characteristics or explanations for the changes they have seen. The rise of Sinn Fein also introduces the possibility that cleavages in Ireland were changing, while in the British case recent electoral turbulence has raised questions of whether this case has also seen changes to class cleavage.

In the Irish case it was not possible to collect robust data as much of it is not available in a format for academic analysis. After contacting several professors at UCD the ESS data appears to be the most widely used source but caution was given for the sampling of this data for smaller political parties. It was advised that Richard Sinnott was the best contact for Irish datasets but has now sadly died and he was widely known to have used ecological data and had data sets for political analysis. However, the very few sets I could obtain these did not really overlap with the time periods I was exploring given a more focused view of post-2008 politics, these datasets also did not run in R or SPSS.

I have collected and added to the data from the Pippa Norris election database comparing elections from the earliest data point of 1992 up until the 2019 election. To give a more focused picture of the elections we have omitted the 2001 and 2005 elections given they represent the Labour Party still under Blair's leadership and the New Labour branding. These election cycles are explored in depth as part of the individual level survey data from the ESS. We show how the election in 1997 of New Labour complicates the dealignment picture given a sharp rise in working class support but also saw changes in the support middle class voters gave to the party. The 2010 election is next used to show the last election that was held by New Labour and the party going from government into opposition. It is from this point that all three successive elections are compared that shows the party failed to regain any significant traction with working class voters except for the anomaly of the 2017 election but with Conservative vote increases in many Northern and Midland's Brexit voting constituencies. As well as social class, we compare a multitude of different factors to see if there any confounding variables or other sociodemographic characteristics that help explain patterns of voting along class lines. These extra variables are beneficial to conducting interaction models such as schisms within low income voters. For example, older low income and young low income.

The data used draw upon demographic data in each English constituency compared with the performance of the Labour Party vote share across each election. To give further context and enable greater comparative analysis of changes in voter coalitions, the Conservative Party vote share is also included albeit from only the first and last data points, 1992 and 2019. The issue with this is that there is potential for ecological fallacy to occur given extrapolations from the macro level are derived down to the micro level. This is less likely to occur given smaller single member constituencies and many data points such as surveys and polls that have questioned voting intention at the individual level gives extra reference points to ensure

accurate representations of the findings. Using constituency level findings also enables analysis of patterns in constituencies over time

Ecological data was also collected in Ireland for the 2016 and 2020 elections using demographic data from the Oireachtas Library and Research Service and manually calculating party vote shares from candidates who stood in each constituency. However, the data was not as robust as the English level data given it was lower in its timeframe and lacked the amount of data points, given they are larger proportional constituencies. Therefore, it was decided this data would not be included within the main body but is available for reference in the appendix.

To corroborate the findings of the ecological data on a constituency level, there is also individual level survey data using logistic regression analysis. This was using the European Social Survey waves 1-9 plotting support among the various parties based on income, education, geographical location and one religious variable of 'Muslim'. This was not ideal given the ESS data did not allow occupational filtering allowing the sorting of social class in the same way as the constituency level data. Instead the variable of income was used as a proxy given this was the next best available measure of 'class'. After this the data was sorted by four income groups based upon the income brackets for given by ESS, we ranged these from low income to high income. As income was given in ranges and individual level income was not given these groups had to be placed into as equal as possible groups. Such as low income was used to describe people earning below the median income, lower middle above the median and so forth. We then used income alongside the measure of education to make further inferences to occupation. Given how education is recorded in ESS and how it varies over time on different surveys, it was opted that a simple graduate versus non-graduate level (or equivalent) would be the most effective way to measure the regression values given the survey constraints.

The survey also did not record ethnicity, a further weakness, so there was no way to use ethnicity except for the religious category of 'Muslim', while there exists some white Muslims most in the UK are not from a white ethnic background. This measure also adds another interesting dimension as working-class Muslim voters were less-likely to support Labour after the Iraq invasions under New Labour which our data below shows. The rise of the Respect Party in 2004 and George Galloway's election victories in Bethnal Green (2005) and Bradford (2012) also showed evidence Muslim communities were turning away from the Labour Party.

The logistic regression on its own was also deemed to be too thin on detail so further in-depth analysis was needed. Thus, the study was expanded to include interaction models particularly around income and age given they appear in both types of data to show opposite trends for the British cases at least. Thus, the interaction models allow the combination of two independent variables against vote share for the parties to be explored to see if variable of income is stronger than the other competing variables. This allows for a more holistic picture and profile of voting behaviour over the longitudinal period of the 21st century that is being explored.

The data for the ESS is less reliable than post-election surveys as ESS is asking respondents to 'recall' how they voted in the previous election which may not be how they actually voted. The ESS survey as well as asking respondents to recall how they voted in the last election, it also asks if they feel closer to one particular party. It was felt that this measure would not be useful in the form that ESS presented given it had a lower response rate than how they actually voted. For the Irish political system which is multi-party with proportional ranked voting of the Single-Transferable-Vote means closeness would likely only measure first choice votes. The data for the 2007 election for Ireland also is slightly confounded as given the recall is from 2010 at the height of the economic crisis the wages of respondents likely

differed from 2007, as the median income fell, with more respondents falling into the lower income categories.

Results

Great Britain

TABLE 1.1 ***- Labour Logistical Regression Model***

	Dependent variable:				
	Labour Vote				
	2001	2005	2010	2015	2017
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Low income	0.924***	0.524***	0.679*	1.374***	0.569*
	(0.302)	(0.200)	(0.406)	(0.341)	(0.311)
Lower middle income	0.461	0.278	0.765**	0.393	0.512
	(0.307)	(0.205)	(0.383)	(0.367)	(0.337)
Upper middle income	0.380	0.078	0.425	0.632**	0.427
	(0.280)	(0.166)	(0.379)	(0.319)	(0.290)
Urban	0.450**	0.689***	1.031***	1.367***	1.160***
	(0.225)	(0.158)	(0.351)	(0.276)	(0.256)
Suburban	0.447**	0.430***	0.506	0.844***	0.587**
	(0.207)	(0.150)	(0.344)	(0.259)	(0.241)
University graduate	-0.529**	-0.200	0.133	0.034	0.142
	(0.207)	(0.133)	(0.277)	(0.241)	(0.221)
Age = 40-59	-0.786***	-0.063	-0.151	-0.131	-0.408
	(0.224)	(0.151)	(0.298)	(0.298)	(0.257)
Age = 60+	-0.525**	-0.432**	-0.914***	-0.916***	-0.967***
	(0.225)	(0.169)	(0.352)	(0.306)	(0.261)
Unemployed	-----	-0.763***	-0.228	-0.479	0.498
		(0.261)	(0.513)	(0.481)	(0.356)
Muslim	1.475**	0.320	0.505	1.455***	1.587***
	(0.591)	(0.662)	(0.513)	(0.540)	(0.536)
Constant	-0.499	-0.606***	-1.763***	-1.913***	-1.350***
	(0.326)	(0.214)	(0.468)	(0.417)	(0.377)
Observations	641	1,238	369	554	643
Log Likelihood	-411.720	-827.267	-205.732	-298.580	-365.977
Akaike Inf. Crit.	843.440	1,676.534	433.465	619.159	753.954

Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)
Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted.

$^{*}p<0.1$; $^{**}p<0.05$; $^{***}p<0.01$

There is a mixed narrative since the 2001 election when observing voter patterns for those on the lowest incomes over time for Labour in tables 1.1 and 1.3. In 2001 we can see that income is a strong predictor of voting behaviour for Labour given the model regression value of 0.924, this being another landslide election like that of 1997 for Tony Blair and New Labour producing a 167-seat majority (BBC, 2001). Following on from this election, we can see a decline from in 2005 to 0.524 and very modest changes in the 2010 election under Gordon Brown. The election where class was seen as the best predictor of voting behaviour this century for Labour was that of 2015. In 2015 low income voters were significantly more likely to vote Labour than high income voters, this model showing the regression value at 1.374. While under Ed Milibands leadership, between 2010 and 2015, the party abandoned some of the New Labour platform it did not significantly alter its ideology compared with after 2015 under Jeremy Corbyn's leadership. Thus, this may appear to be perplexing but given the economic situation following the 2008 financial crisis, austerity policies likely hit the lowest income groups hardest. Research by David Gordon (2015) provides some evidence that may suggest this as different indicators such as ability to make ends meet, in rent arrears, participate in leisure activities less etc. all were said to have increased from 2009 until 2013 under Cameron's first term (Gordon, 2015).

In 2017 we see a decline from 2015 with low-income voters post the 2016 EU referendum down to 0.569 but this does not deviate much from the elections of 2005 and 2010. Furthermore, there shows some degree of relationship and the values are all statistically significant across all the election cycles. Thus, the decline over time does not appear to

equate to the any eradication of voting based upon income, given low income groups are still a stronger predictor of voting labour than higher income groups. Our linear regression model shows a similar pattern but there are variations. According to Table 1.3 we can see that the linear regression is strongest for low income voters for Labour in 2001 with a strong relationship at 0.795, while the weakest was seen to be the following election in 2005. This differs to the other model as 2015 was the strongest predictor of income-based voting. In this model we also see general decline in the strength of the relationship between income and voting Labour but a lesser relationship still remains even in 2017.

Interestingly, for the religious variable of Muslim in 2001 the likelihood of voting Labour was 1.475 but in both 2005 and 2010 following the invasion of Iraq this disappeared. It is only after the New Labour period ended and the election in 2015 does it appear that Muslim voters swung back to Labour. This fits with events at these times of the rise of the Respect party in 2005 with George Galloway winning Bethnal Green and Bow a heavily working-class constituency with a large Muslim population (BBC News, 2005). Similarly, the by-election in Bradford West in 2012 saw one of the biggest swings from Labour at a by-election in modern electoral history of 36.6% to the Respect Party (Bradford Council, 2012), only for this to be overturned in 2015 by Labour. In 2017, under Corbyn's leadership of Labour we see the strongest likelihood of Muslim voters supporting Labour at 1.587 and the lowest for the Conservatives at -1.668 (see table 1.2) both of which are statistically significant at 99%. This also adds another complex dynamic to landscape, albeit further analysis could not be undertaken e.g. interaction variables given the small sample size in ESS for the UK of Muslim respondents.

TABLE 1.2 - Conservative Logistical Regression Model

	Dependent variable:				
	Conservative Vote				
	2001	2005	2010	2015	2017
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Low income	-1.856***	-1.096***	-1.250***	-1.224***	-0.906***
	(0.317)	(0.225)	(0.364)	(0.291)	(0.285)
Lower middle income	-1.015***	-0.932***	-1.023***	-0.359	-1.079***
	(0.302)	(0.233)	(0.341)	(0.298)	(0.315)
Upper middle income	-0.878***	-0.424**	-0.649**	-0.541**	-0.581**
	(0.267)	(0.179)	(0.328)	(0.267)	(0.264)
Urban	-0.293	-0.495***	-0.922***	-0.591**	-0.696***
	(0.237)	(0.171)	(0.305)	(0.237)	(0.230)
Suburban	-0.082	-0.370**	-0.550**	-0.527**	-0.493**
	(0.215)	(0.159)	(0.278)	(0.208)	(0.203)
University graduate	-0.254	-0.191	0.001	-0.302	-0.374*
	(0.215)	(0.149)	(0.259)	(0.215)	(0.209)
Age = 40-59	0.682***	0.167	-0.057	0.259	0.292
	(0.249)	(0.182)	(0.299)	(0.293)	(0.270)
Age = 60+	1.116***	1.151***	0.696**	0.723**	1.056***
	(0.262)	(0.196)	(0.328)	(0.292)	(0.266)
Unemployed		-0.495	0.216	0.279	-0.745*
		(0.347)	(0.517)	(0.425)	(0.408)
Muslim	-0.493	0.022	-1.270	-0.708	-1.668**
	(0.657)	(0.811)	(0.781)	(0.578)	(0.758)
Constant	-0.220	-0.466**	0.696*	0.373	0.443
	(0.329)	(0.233)	(0.402)	(0.363)	(0.350)
Observations	641	1,238	369	554	643
Log Likelihood	-374.351	-696.443	-229.418	-356.842	-406.214
Akaike Inf. Crit.	768.703	1,414.885	480.837	735.684	834.427

Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)

Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted.

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

In comparison in table 1.2, the Conservatives appear to have had the reverse where higher income groups have voted for the party much less strongly and more lower income groups. In

2001 high income groups were the most likely to vote Conservative given our regression model showed that low income voters had a value of -1.856 which dissipated as the income bands rise for that election. The model shows each election cycle the negative values decrease albeit for 2010 and 2015 under David Cameron's leadership where the party's appeal appears to have stagnated with low income groups. The 2017 election where Labour has one of its lowest values for low income being a predictor of voting for them, the Conservatives have reverse. While -0.906 is still a negative value it shows a trend away from Labour and a slow trend towards the Conservatives when we compare both parties and these regression outputs side by side overtime.

Education when factored into the equation for most elections has not produced a statically significant result, particularly whether a voter is a graduate. It can be understood from the model that in 2017 being a graduate was negatively correlated with voting conservative. This supports the other narratives and findings of shifts by educated middle classes away from the Conservatives, particularly following the EU referendum vote in 2016 but also of the reverse of more working-class voters (Berry, 2017: Evans & Mellon, 2020). The patterns we see on the bivariate model within table 1.4, also matches with what is shown within the logistic regression model, that of a slow decline in the negative relationship between low income and voting Conservative. This being from -1.009 in 2001 down to -0.402 in 2017 and like the previous model, across all elections (2001-2017) the low-income variable is statistically significant.

TABLE 1.3 - *Labour Bivariate Regression Model*

	Dependent variable:				
	Labour Vote (Bivariate models)				
	2001	2005	2010	2015	2017
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Low income	0.795***	0.294*	0.508***	0.630***	0.332**
	(0.186)	(0.165)	(0.179)	(0.179)	(0.169)
Lower middle income	0.504**	0.155	0.145	0.075	0.318*
	(0.201)	(0.189)	(0.192)	(0.213)	(0.189)
Upper middle income	0.316*	0.066	0.022	0.345*	0.290*
	(0.188)	(0.162)	(0.207)	(0.186)	(0.171)
Constant	-0.553***	-0.409***	-1.018***	-1.012***	-0.823***
	(0.156)	(0.127)	(0.151)	(0.146)	(0.138)
Observations	1,187	1,243	1,275	1,166	1,352
Log Likelihood	-810.700	-848.084	-786.478	-736.269	-883.040
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,629.399	1,704.167	1,580.957	1,480.538	1,774.079

Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)

Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted.

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

TABLE 1.4 - Conservative Bivariate Regression Model

	Dependent variable:				
	Conservative Vote (Bivariate models)				
	2001	2005	2010	2015	2017
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Low income	-1.009***	-0.437**	-0.607***	-0.573***	-0.402**
	(0.196)	(0.178)	(0.169)	(0.171)	(0.160)
Lower middle income	-0.523**	-0.402*	-0.355**	0.037	-0.566***
	(0.206)	(0.207)	(0.177)	(0.191)	(0.182)
Upper middle income	-0.553***	-0.302*	-0.035	-0.309*	-0.289*
	(0.191)	(0.171)	(0.185)	(0.173)	(0.161)
Constant	-0.340**	-0.658***	-0.285**	-0.251*	-0.040
	(0.152)	(0.131)	(0.134)	(0.130)	(0.127)
Observations	1,187	1,243	1,275	1,166	1,352
Log Likelihood	-692.790	-732.685	-820.267	-762.303	-909.996

Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,393.581	1,473.369	1,648.534	1,532.607	1,827.992

Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)

Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted.

$^{*}p<0.1$; $^{**}p<0.05$; $^{***}p<0.01$

To test the data further another logistic regression model with interaction variables was introduced to see combined socio-demographic variables with income. Two logistic regression interaction models were created one for the Conservative and the other for Labour. The other sociodemographic variable that is a strong predator of voting behaviour is age and so the model seeks to see if there are variations on voter behaviour for low income voters as we look at the ages of this group. In Table 1.5 the interaction model for the Conservatives, the regression values of the interaction variables are not statistically significant except for the 2017 election. For low income voters aged 40-59 we saw a positive relationship with a regression value of 1.475 and for voters age over 60 this was higher at 1.507. The significance being that this provides evidence that the decline in the overall regression values for low income voters appears to be driven by older low-income voters voting Conservative. This also aligns with data from YouGov (2016) that showed in the EU referendum older voters were more likely to vote to leave the EU and 2017 post-election data from YouGov showed that those who voted leave were likely to support the Conservatives in addition to winning older voters by large margins over Labour. These results would suggest that age is the stronger variable for predicting Conservative vote. While for Labour the interaction, model produced fewer statistically significant results except for 2015 where lower-middle income voters aged 40-59 were negatively correlated with voting labour at -1.607. While this is not in the same year as 2017, the previous interaction model for the Conservatives, it does show that Labour does worse among older low-income voters after the New Labour period, which is strongly in line with age as a variable being negatively associated with voting Labour. Given the interactions produce different samples due to individuals answering the

ESS survey having to complete both questions, the values of logistical regression changes but given the sample in reduced compared with those discussed earlier, these latter model values will not be taken into serious consideration, with the focus purely upon the interaction outputs.

TABLE 1.5 - Conservative Interaction Regression Model

	Dependent variable:				
	Conservative Vote				
	2001	2005	2010	2015	2017
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Low income	-2.463***	-1.572***	-1.191*	-2.005**	-2.212***
	(0.789)	(0.569)	(0.658)	(0.837)	(0.819)
Lower middle income	-1.743***	-1.414***	-1.907***	-0.391	-1.184*
	(0.611)	(0.512)	(0.735)	(0.629)	(0.656)
Upper middle income	-0.866***	-0.422**	-0.641*	-0.545**	-0.529**
	(0.267)	(0.179)	(0.327)	(0.269)	(0.265)
Urban	-0.293	-0.494***	-0.937***	-0.596**	-0.694***
	(0.237)	(0.171)	(0.307)	(0.238)	(0.232)
Suburban	-0.094	-0.369**	-0.580**	-0.529**	-0.512**
	(0.215)	(0.159)	(0.282)	(0.209)	(0.204)
University graduate	-0.256	-0.198	-0.007	-0.308	-0.420**
	(0.216)	(0.150)	(0.263)	(0.216)	(0.210)
Age = 40-59	0.418	0.034	-0.171	0.111	0.100
	(0.294)	(0.202)	(0.375)	(0.364)	(0.326)
Age = 60+	0.871**	1.021***	0.258	0.600	0.692**
	(0.354)	(0.252)	(0.487)	(0.386)	(0.344)
Unemployed	----	-0.501	0.246	0.272	-0.751*
		(0.356)	(0.527)	(0.439)	(0.426)
Muslim	-0.465	0.094	-1.232	-0.666	-1.678**
	(0.663)	(0.826)	(0.786)	(0.588)	(0.766)
Low income and 40-59	0.994	0.699	0.151	0.957	1.475*
	(0.875)	(0.654)	(0.776)	(0.914)	(0.868)
Low income and 60+	0.633	0.513	0.079	0.802	1.507*
	(0.835)	(0.604)	(0.785)	(0.867)	(0.839)

Lower-middle income and 40-59	0.870	0.666	0.624	0.063	-0.426
	(0.694)	(0.623)	(0.836)	(0.729)	(0.833)
Lower-middle and 60+	0.921	0.557	1.546*	0.014	0.406
	(0.696)	(0.573)	(0.858)	(0.705)	(0.711)
Constant	-0.033	-0.373	0.848*	0.491	0.652*
	(0.343)	(0.240)	(0.438)	(0.400)	(0.377)
Observations	641	1,238	369	554	643
Log Likelihood	-372.679	-695.285	-226.921	-356.201	-403.235
Akaike Inf. Crit.	773.359	1,420.570	483.842	742.402	836.470

Note: Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)

Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted.

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

TABLE 1.6 – *Labour Interaction Regression Model*

	Dependent variable:				
	Labour Vote				
	2001	2005	2010	2015	2017
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Low income	0.632	0.204	1.272**	2.301***	0.865
	(0.469)	(0.354)	(0.635)	(0.712)	(0.570)
Lower middle income	0.895*	0.509	1.053*	0.333	0.339
	(0.476)	(0.341)	(0.615)	(0.684)	(0.595)
Upper middle income	0.440	0.095	0.450	0.668**	0.444
	(0.281)	(0.167)	(0.379)	(0.323)	(0.294)
Urban	0.475**	0.679***	1.042***	1.397***	1.128***
	(0.227)	(0.158)	(0.352)	(0.277)	(0.258)
Suburban	0.493**	0.427***	0.509	0.872***	0.593**
	(0.210)	(0.150)	(0.345)	(0.261)	(0.243)
University graduate	-0.531**	-0.199	0.163	0.040	0.178
	(0.209)	(0.133)	(0.279)	(0.243)	(0.225)
Age = 40-59	-0.599**	-0.025	0.185	0.185	-0.305
	(0.287)	(0.179)	(0.408)	(0.391)	(0.334)
Age = 60+	-0.876**	-0.625**	-0.735	-0.862*	-0.981***

	(0.363)	(0.254)	(0.636)	(0.461)	(0.377)
Unemployed	-----	-0.609**	-0.205	-0.331	0.675*
		(0.268)	(0.518)	(0.496)	(0.373)
Muslim	1.461**	0.422	0.450	1.522***	1.714***
	(0.590)	(0.663)	(0.524)	(0.550)	(0.544)
Low income and 40-59	-0.400	0.018	-0.993	-1.607**	-0.797
	(0.571)	(0.418)	(0.746)	(0.792)	(0.629)
Low income and 60+	0.920*	0.628	-0.555	-0.718	-0.099
	(0.541)	(0.414)	(0.863)	(0.774)	(0.612)
Lower-middle income and 40-59	-0.537	-0.295	-0.459	0.148	0.716
	(0.574)	(0.439)	(0.707)	(0.790)	(0.725)
Lower-middle and 60+	-0.265	-0.142	-0.228	0.147	0.007
	(0.591)	(0.437)	(0.860)	(0.828)	(0.693)
Constant	-0.580*	-0.606***	-1.997***	-2.146***	-1.419***
	(0.345)	(0.224)	(0.517)	(0.462)	(0.410)
Observations	641	1,238	369	554	643
Log Likelihood	-406.818	-824.931	-204.800	-295.784	-362.974
Akaike Inf. Crit.	841.636	1,679.862	439.600	621.567	755.949

Note: Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)

Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted.

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Ecological Analysis

Table 2 – Ecological data analysis (England Constituencies)

Measurement	Deprivation (2 Dimentions)	Black Population	Muslim Population	Non-White Population	White Population	Rent	Own	Leave Vote	Working Class (Occupation)	Middle Class (Occupation)	Under 45	Over 45	Graduate	No-Qualifications	Bad Health	Child Poverty	Share of LSOAs in most deprived decile	Unemployed/Disabled
Labour Vote Share 2019	.593**	.552**	.606**		-.590**	.715**	-.703**	-.278**	-.101*	-.497**	.671**	-.705**	.114**	.236**	.489**	.627**	.533**	.695**
Labour Vote Share 2017	.659**	.504**	.548**		-.567**			-.177**					.035.	.329**				
Labour Vote Share 2015	.695**	.481**	.522**		-.501**	.686**	-.640**	-.121**	..050	-.565**	.567**	-.617**	-.002.	.383**	.620**			.786**
Labour Vote Share 2010	.726**	.420**	.420**		-.404**	.629**	-568**	.012**	.165**	-.596**	.488**	-.541**	-.112**	.460**	.657**			.790**
Labour Vote Share 1997	-	-	-	.209**	-.337**	.413**	-.405**	-	.594**	-.535**	.387**	-.478**	-	.508**	-	-	-	-
Labour Vote Share 1992	-	-	-	.325**	-.331**	.668**	-.631**	-	.632**	-.673**	.328**	-.532**	-	.651**	-	-	-	-
Swing Labour to Conservative 2019	.499**	-.206**	-.212**		.292**	-.039.	.127**	.663**	.670**	-.489**	-.256**	.216**	-.601**	.631**	.502**			.306**
Conservative Vote Share 2019	-.372**	-.536**	-.560**		.591**	-.725**	.731**	.533**	.322**	.280**	-.704**	.705**	-.379**	..008	-.339**	-.461**	-.445**	-.541**
Conservative Vote Share 2017	-.543**	-519**	-.553**		.574**			.368**					-.210**	-177**				
Conservative Vote Share 2015	-.732**	-.383**	-.444**		.416**			.062.						-.459**				
Conservative Vote Share 1992	-			-.256**	.310**	-.713**	.648**	-	-.615**	.681**	-.307**	.418**	-	-.618**	-			
UKIP Vote Share 2015	.378**	-.398**	-.329**		.449**			.842**					-761**	.661**				

(Norris, 2019 & 2005)

The ecological data on the constituency level goes back 10 years further than the data from the ESS surveys and so allows a longer time frame to analyse the election results. The limitations of the pandemic also meant the 2019 election data is omitted as the ESS wave was due for 2020 and is to date no finalised. However, on the constituency level we do have data for 2019 that we can analyse.

We can see from the 1992 general election there was moderate positive association between the Labour Party vote share and the number of working-class voters within a constituency given the correlation of 0.632. This aligns with the data that the post-election survey by Ipsos Mori found where 49% of working-class voters supported the party. In comparison we can see the Conservatives had a moderate negative correlation between working class in a constituency and the share of the vote that they obtained of -0.615. While we do not have constituency data prior to 1992, Labour vote capture of working-class voters remained very

stable since 1979 and would likely yield stronger correlations given smaller middle-class support during the 1970's and 1980's. The election of Tony Blair in 1997 saw a marked increase in the support working class voters gave to Labour, the highest since 1974. Yet when we analyse the association we saw a slight decline of 0.594 down from 0.632. The plausible explanation is that Labour won the election by a landslide margin and took many previously safe Conservative seats and attracted new middle-class voters to the fold. This undoubtedly diversified the electoral coalition and makes any increases with working class voters not be as strongly correlated given higher vote shares by Labour in middle class constituencies. It is from 1997 onwards that we then see a gradual trend downwards in support for Labour by working class voters and moderate increases for the Conservatives.

Education

The level of education can be used as a proxy for social class and income that individuals earn, given the association of increasing education yields greater income and being a graduate is a pre-requisite for many middle-class occupations such as accounting, teaching, nursing and social workers etc. The data over time shows a large shift in education and support for Labour but also for the Conservatives in opposite directions. The 1992 election shows Labour performed strongly in constituencies with higher numbers of individuals with no educational qualifications with a correlation of 0.651, in comparison the Conservatives -0.618 effectively the reverse. The caveat being the 1997 general election where again because of the broadening of the electoral coalition any increases with no qualification demographic is overshadowed by greater numbers of more educated voters coming into the fold. The data for 1992 and 1997 did not give the ability to siphon only graduates so comparisons over time are

no possible for this category. The period from 1997 to 2010 under New Labour shows some decline in the strength of the association between no qualifications and voting Labour but is very gradual over the 13-year period declining from 0.508 in 1997 to 0.460 in 2010. It is from 2010 to 2019 that sees a greater decline in those who have no qualifications and increasing numbers of graduates switching from Conservative towards the Labour Party. The decline for Labour from 2010 from 0.460 to 0.236 in 2019 and from -0.112 to 0.114 over the same period shows the shift that the party is performing better in better educated areas as time transpires. This corroborates with data from exit polls, though YouGov or Ipsos did not ask education before 2015, 2015 shows the two parties virtually tied. The Conservatives on 35% of the graduate vote to Labours 34% and for low or no qualifications this was 38% for Conservatives with 30% for Labour though this is complicated by UKIP also capturing 20% of this vote (YouGov, 2015). In 2019 graduates supported Labour 43% to Conservatives 29% and for low or no qualifications the Conservatives led 58% to Labours 25% (YouGov, 2019).

Housing Tenure

The voting cleavage based upon housing effectively proxies several socio-demographic components together and actually shows some of the sharpest polarisation in voter choice. In modern context of the UK those who rent are more likely to be younger, urban and financially less secure or stable. In comparison, homeowners are much older with more financial security due to being more likely to earn higher income. We can see a fairly strong correlation of 0.668 from our earliest data point of 1992 for those who rent compared with Labours vote share. When juxtaposed with those who own their property we see the reverse, a negative correlation -0.631. We see a similar pattern for the Conservatives who performed

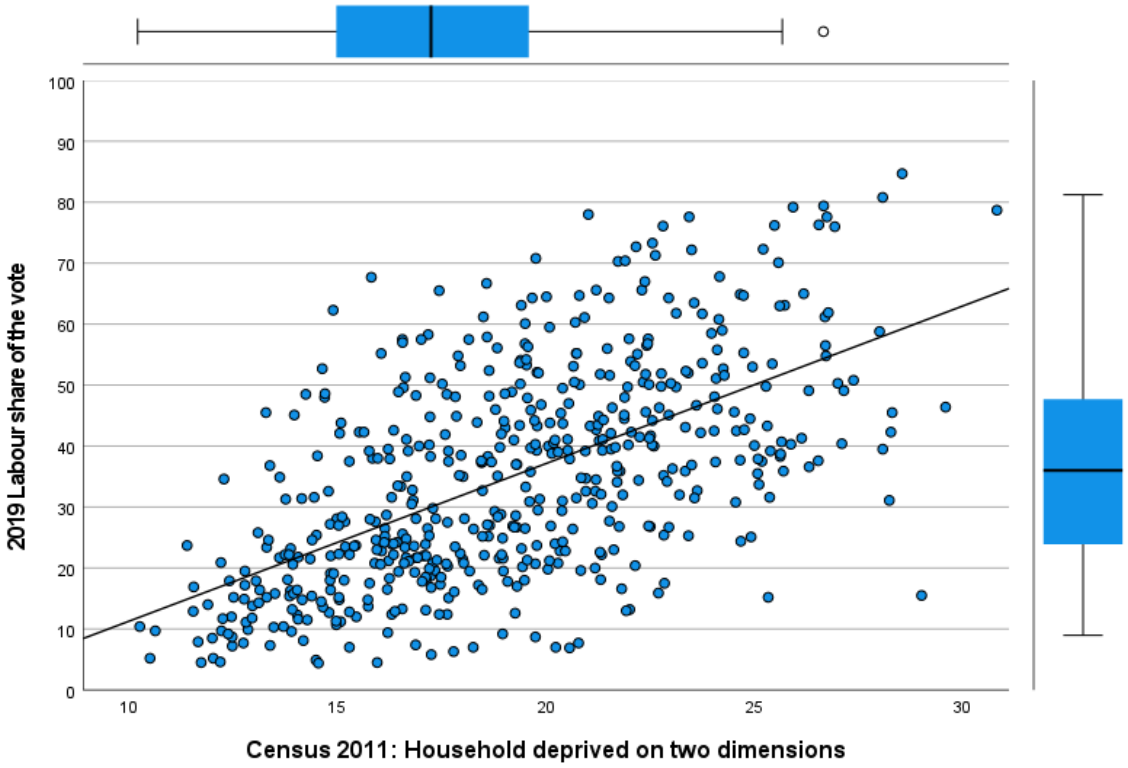
poorly in constituencies with more renters given a strong negative correlation of -0.713 and a strong positive correlation with those who owned their property. These trends are confirmed by the post-election survey by Ipsos Mori in 1992 that showed home owners supported the Conservatives 53% to 27% for Labour, while renters (council + private renters) supported the party 47.5% to the Conservatives 28.5% (Ipsos, 1992).

In 1997 under New Labour our data would at first sight appear to show Labour performed worse with renters and better with homeowners however, this is not the case the party did much better among both groups. The New Labour landslide meant constituencies with large numbers of homeowners were won by Labour or marginally held by the Conservatives. Despite a correlation for renters supporting Labour at 0.413 and -0.405 for owners the party actually won 32% of homeowners up from 27% in 1992 and 56% of renters up from 47.5% in 1992. This voting cleavage has remained one of the steadiest of all the socio-demographic traits given that the Conservatives have never won renters as a group and Labour has never won at least a plurality of homeowners. Labour is seen to have performed better with renters and worse with homeowners over time given by 2019 we see strong positive correlation for renters and strong negative for homeowners. This is borne out by some of the polling figures that shows since New Labour, Labour has performed worse with homeowners with 22% support in both 2015 and 2019 and 45% support in the same period for those who rent (Ipsos, 1992). This is still very similar to the level of support seen in 1992 but combined with other polling data of higher graduate and younger support, constituencies in London and metropolitan areas with high house prices see stronger concentrated levels of support for Labour providing one explanation for why the correlation has grown stronger for renters while support remains similar over time.

Deprivation

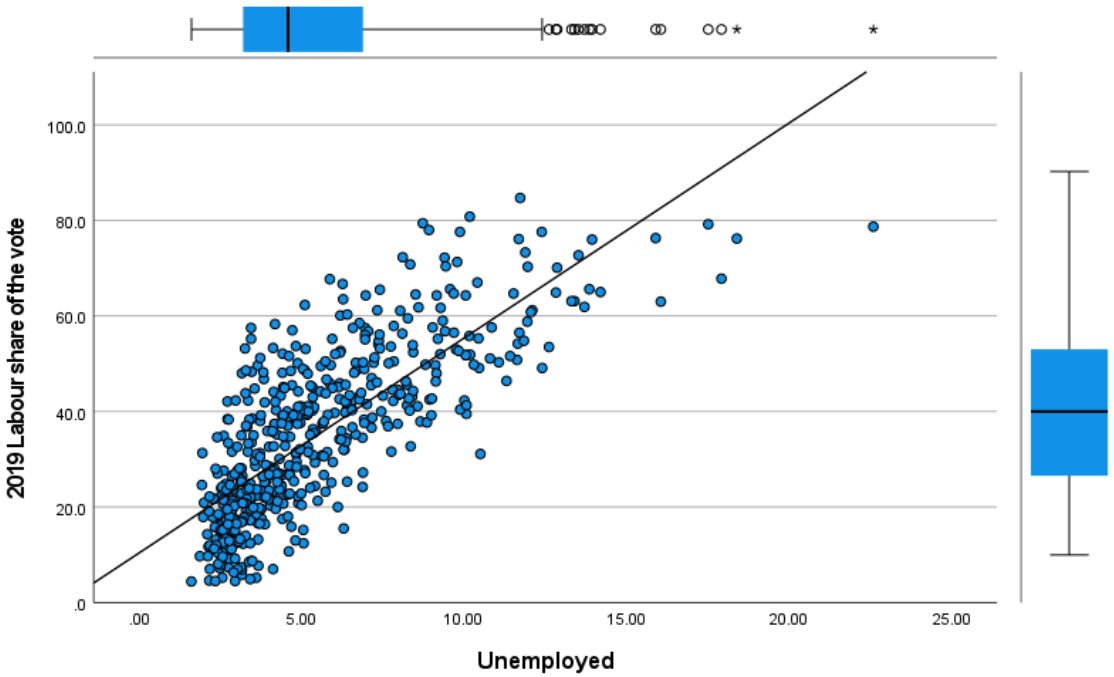
Theories of partisan dealignment suggest that working class voters that are more upwardly mobile are likely to switch parties and/or become 'swing voters' (Stacey, 1966: Graaf, Nieuwbeerta & Heath, 1995). A different measure of performance can be used to correlate the performance of the Labour Party and those at the bottom of the social strata, deprivation. We have several indicators available from the 2011 census to measure deprivation at a parliamentary constituency level. Including; percentage of LSOA's in the poverty per constituency, percentage of households deprived on 2 dimensions as per governments Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), percentage of individuals who classify as having bad health or worse, percentage of children living in child poverty, percentage of those being long term disabled and unemployed. This is a comprehensive list of indicators that measures deprivation and allows for greater comparative analysis if any indicator is potentially confounded by another variable.

Figure 1A – Labour Vote Share by Deprivation



Firstly, deprivation measured by the number of households deprived on 2 dimensions shows that since 2010 Labour has performed strongly in constituencies with higher levels of deprivation. The 2010 Labour vote correlated with this measure at 0.726, the figures however decline to more moderate correlations in 2015 and 2019 at 0.695 and 0.593 respectively. The Conservatives vote share in 2019 were moderately negatively correlated at -0.372 showing a schism between the two parties.

Figure 1B – Labour Vote Share by Unemployment



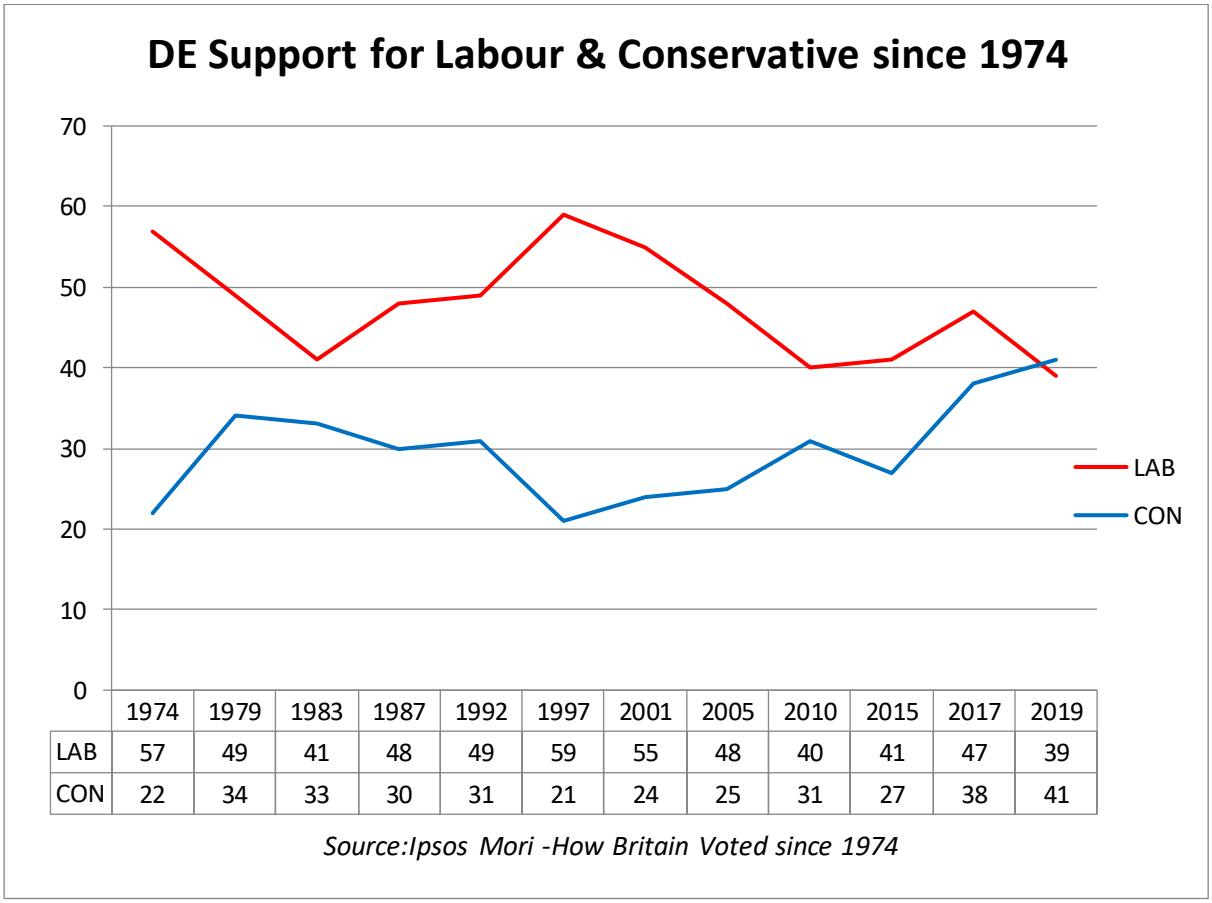
LSOAs are a measure of deprivation that can be mapped to small neighbourhood areas within ward level. The indicator is used here to measure the percentage of LSOAs living in relative poverty and how strongly this correlates with the Labour vote share. This was done only for the 2019 election given each year the measurement per ward and constituency changes and so would not be a reliable measure across time unless such data was re-inputted for each election year. The 2019 results suggest a very similar outcome to the two-dimensional deprivation seen above as Labour also moderately correlated stronger performance in areas of higher relative poverty, 0.533. The Conservatives conversely have negative correlation -0.445.

The level of long-term unemployment and disability in a constituency is also used as an indicator of deprivation. Here we have combined the two data entries from the census into one category and find that Labour performs very strongly with this indicator. The 2010 election after the 2008 financial crash saw unemployment, the economy and jobs at the forefront of the election campaign (Ipsos, 2010) and the Labour vote correlated to this

measure at 0.790. The strength of this correlation does decline but aggregate level unemployment does also fall during this period and Labours electoral coalition arguably changes after 2015.

While Labour still performs strongly on all deprivation indicators, the caveat to the decline in correlation from 2010 to 2019 may be confounded by the increases in middle class support and winning or coming close in constituencies that have affluent areas such as Canterbury, Putney and Kensington. Thus, this skews the data to take account of increases in affluent voters supporting the party particularly in 2019 where such voters were more likely to be motivated to support Labour over the conservatives on issues such as the European Union.

Figure 1C - DE Support for Labour & Conservative since 1974

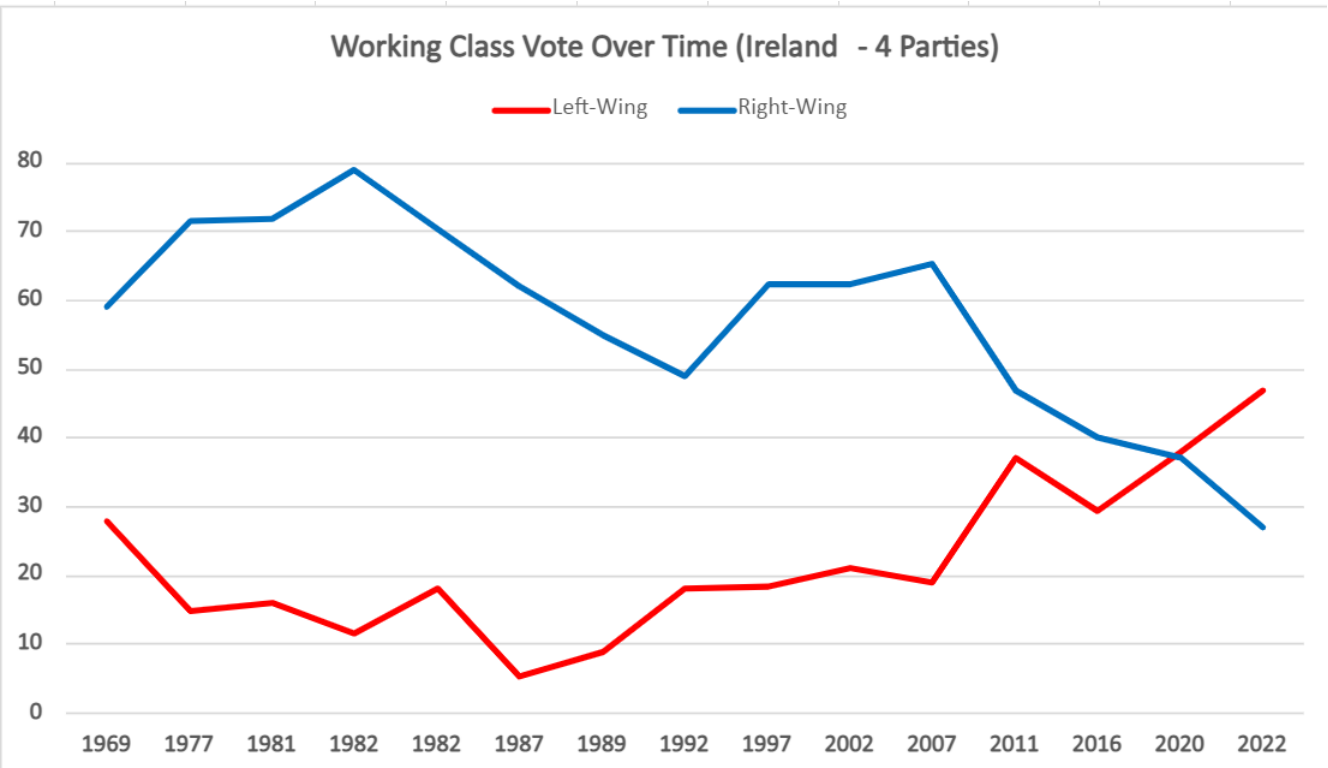


	1974	1979	1983	1987	1992	1997	2001	2005	2010	2015	2017	2019
LAB	57	49	41	48	49	59	55	48	40	41	47	39
CON	22	34	33	30	31	21	24	25	31	27	38	41

Source:Ipsos Mori -How Britain Voted since 1974

Ireland

Figure 2.3 – Working Class Vote Over Time (Ireland 4 Parties)



*Source (Penniman & Farrell, 1987:70) Politics in the Republic of Ireland Szerkesztette: John Coakley, Michael Gallagher p447 & RTE Exit Polls 2007-2020, *Opinion poll*

Table 2.1 – Sinn Fein Regression Model

	Dependent variable:			
	Sinn Fein Vote			
	2002	2007	2011	2016
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Low income	0.653	2.433**	1.622***	0.627*
	(0.432)	(1.033)	(0.547)	(0.349)
Lower middle income	0.570	2.188**	1.257**	0.482
	(0.413)	(1.038)	(0.545)	(0.348)
Upper middle income	-0.005	1.750*	0.498	0.057

	(0.421)	(1.055)	(0.564)	(0.356)
Urban	0.944***	0.081	0.722***	0.696***
	(0.308)	(0.282)	(0.219)	(0.237)
Suburban	0.017	0.909***	0.436*	0.127
	(0.412)	(0.255)	(0.231)	(0.266)
University graduate	-0.823	-0.452	-1.376***	-1.166***
	(0.544)	(0.389)	(0.371)	(0.299)
Age = 40-59	-0.010	-0.472**	-0.508**	-0.888***
	(0.306)	(0.237)	(0.210)	(0.275)
Age = 60+	-0.674*	-1.595***	-1.515***	-1.341***
	(0.405)	(0.333)	(0.250)	(0.277)
Unemployed	0.359	0.918***	0.449**	1.331***
	(0.462)	(0.243)	(0.218)	(0.308)
Constant	-3.634***	-4.306***	-2.796***	-1.656***
	(0.416)	(1.042)	(0.564)	(0.374)
Observations	1,410	1,127	1,257	1,069
Log Likelihood	-230.702	-304.368	-413.674	-339.277
Akaike Inf. Crit.	481.404	628.736	847.348	698.553

Note: Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020) *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted

Sinn Féin

The Sinn Fein models show the clearest voter pattern of the main parties analysed and appears to have a more clear-cut archetypal voter i.e. working-class and low income. This corroborates the findings of Marsh (2021) where left-right voter patterns more found to be more significant following the financial crisis in Ireland. The 1997 election was the first time Sinn Fein had returned a TD to the Dáil since the 1950's in a general election but winning

just one seat. The 2002 election the first of the elections in our model returned a delegation of 5 with a 6.5% vote share. This is still a low share of the vote and the party having only just started seriously competing in elections its voter patterns may be harder to identify. In our regression model in table 2.1 the figure of 0.653 shows that there was some association between voting Sinn Féin and being on a low income but due to sample size it is not statistically significant. For 2007 however, we see a clear-cut pattern that low-income voters were more likely to vote for Sinn Fein than any other income group and had the highest regression output for low income voters of any of the political parties for this group (see below) at that election. The 2007 election in our interaction model despite showing strong evidence that low income voters were more likely to vote Sinn Fein, when age was taken into consideration the results were reversed. We see in the interaction variable of low income and over 60 that there is a negative relationship in voting for Sinn Féin. The main theoretical basis for rejection of the party when taking into consideration age is the image of Sinn Fein during the period of 'The Troubles', where they were depicted as the political wing of the Provisional IRA.

In 2011 but under different political backdrop. The collapse of Fianna Fail, Labour rising to second place in the election and several centre-left and left-wing parties vying for votes could explain a slight drop in 2011 for Sinn Fein in its regression value. For 2016, Sinn Fein became the 3rd biggest party but this time Labour collapsed in a similar manner to that of the junior coalition partners in the UK the Liberal Democrats. Many left-leaning voters had more choices given Labour had split, with new parties such as the Social Democrats and increased support for far-left anti-austerity parties such as People Before Profit (Marsh,2021: Muller,2021).

Table 2.2 – Sinn Fein Bivariate Regression Model

	Sinn Fein Vote (Ireland, bivariate model)			
	2002	2007	2011	2016
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Low income	0.513	2.627***	1.836***	0.972***
	(0.390)	(1.014)	(0.524)	(0.311)
Lower middle income	0.551	2.259**	1.518***	0.575*
	(0.400)	(1.025)	(0.530)	(0.323)
Upper middle income	0.047	1.840*	0.760	0.156
	(0.416)	(1.045)	(0.553)	(0.342)
Constant	-3.449***	-4.543***	-3.367***	-2.565***
	(0.306)	(1.005)	(0.509)	(0.268)
Observations	1,423	1,132	1,263	1,076
Log Likelihood	-240.638	-350.191	-453.132	-372.866
Akaike Inf. Crit.	489.276	708.381	914.264	753.733

Note: Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)

Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Even in 2020 following Sinn Fein's rise in the polls and after changing its leader from Gerry Adams, who lead the party from 1983-2018 and a controversial figure to some during The Troubles, to the more moderate Mary Lou McDonald, the party still struggled to appeal to in some polls, 40% of Irish voters, who said they would never vote Sinn Fein. The explanation being many of whom were older and associate the Sinn Fein brand with recent political violence (Early,2020). To reiterate it is unfortunate that ESS did not have the 2020 data available given this would have given key data the trajectory of the trends seen particular for Sinn Fein. This is because Sinn Fein arguably has rebranded itself as 'New Sinn Fein' under Mary Lou McDonald, she has been more moderate than her predecessor Gerry Adams and in the 2020 election hyper focused upon domestic issues particularly that of the housing crisis in

Ireland with constitutional questions relegated to the background in its messaging at the 2020 election. This parallels Labour in the 1990's under Tony Blair, and arguably the Starmer project of the 2020's, when he launched New Labour to win over an electorate that was sceptical of the party and its programme of government. The 2020 election and Sinn Féin's position as the opposition in the 2020's seeks to do the same in order to propel itself into government, particularly as it seems it would be unlikely to rely upon either Fianna Gael or Fianna Fail to form a government.

Fianna Fail

The results of the regressions for Fianna Fail show a mixed picture and no obvious voter patterns unlike the Sinn Fein models. Income is scarcely seen as a predictor in elections for Fianna Fail, the exception being for 2016 where the logistical regression model produced statistically significant results the 2016 election showing a positive relationship of 0.383 (see Table 2.4). The results are also corroborated by the bivariate model (table 2.5) showing a result of 0.445 but the results are only significant for that one election. Possible explanations for the results are the unpopularity of the Enda Kenny administration as the incumbent party Fine Gael lost over 10% of first preference votes from 2011. Labour lost two-thirds of its vote and Fianna Fail gain nearly 7%. Given the political climate and debates centred around the economy, like it did in 2015 for the UK, would not be implausible to suggest these voters were from the lower income strata who switched. Exit poll data from 2016 supports this (RTE, 2016:8) as it showed 22.5% of C2DE voters chose Fianna Fail as their first choice second only to Sinn Fein.

When the models are enhanced to account for other variables such as the interaction regression models Fianna Fail does not produce any statistically significant results for

income. Fianna Fail showed some strengths in the regression models with older voters and votes situated in rural constituencies. This data is also supported by exit poll data from RTE (2016) where it showed the party significantly outperformed in rural areas in comparison with urban constituencies. However, the combination of both locality and age as an interaction with income did not produce significant results even for the 2016 election. The caveat remains that the sample size is not large but the findings do seem to suggest the party has no clear-cut class cleavage. This would also support the notion that it tries to remain a more centrist catch-all party but this is somewhat a lacklustre explanation as to why there are no economic cleavages.

Fine Gael

The results for Fine Gael also appear to be mixed but there are more apparent findings than in the Fianna Fail case. For the multivariate logistical regression model for low income voters casting a first-choice ballot for Fine Gael has a coefficient of -0.610 and for the bivariate model -0.650 and both are significant to 99.9% (see Table 2.6 & 2.7). This shows there is a much lower probability of low-income voters voting Fine Gael which is the opposite of Sinn Fein's results. In 2007 the party also appears to have had similar appeal to voters with higher incomes but this does show some inconstancy with 2002 and 2011 not yielding such results. There is some cross-over with Fianna Fail that its voter demographic has some similarities that they both have over the 4 election cycles been broadly more popular in rural areas and appealed to older voters (Table 2.16). Interestingly, Fine Gael appears to have done better in urban areas in 2016 than previous elections but without data that appears statistically significant. This again echoes the exit poll that showed the party attained 23% of the urban vote (RTE, 2016:8).

In the interaction models there are no significant findings that would suggest income is a predictor of voting Fine Gael. The combination of locality and income in table 2.16 does not show noteworthy findings. The only data of interest appears to come from the 2002 election where there is a stronger association of urban low-income voters voting Fine Gael with one statistically significant result of 0.707 (table 2.16). In table 2.17 the combined variables of age and income also have no statistically significant results, while age in itself is a strong predictor of voting in the model and income somewhat in 2007 and 2016 negatively associated we find noting noteworthy.

Irish Labour

The results of the regression models for Irish Labour do not indicate low income/working class support being a key constituent of Irish Labour. Instead Labour's data shows a high propensity of high-income voters to support the party in elections and suggests urban liberal middle classes voting for Irish Labour in contrast to Sinn Fein's working-class low-income voter coalition. In the bivariate models we see a consistent negative relationship with low-income voters, except for 2002 where the data is not statistically significant. In the multivariate models a similar pattern emerges even in 2011 when it recorded its highest vote share and number of seats. As mentioned the as part of delving deeper into potential schisms of class voting the 2011 election does show some interesting patterns in the interaction model (see table 2.10). These being that voters over the age of 45 and on the lowest income were more likely to vote Labour at that election with the regression values recording 1.529 and 1.492 for voters aged 40-59 and voters over 60 respectively. Prior to 2011 no such patterns could be found for Irish Labour among this subgroup of the low-income voters and following its coalition with Fine Gael and the subsequent election we see an evaporation of this, thus it

is not inconceivable that such voters helped propel the party in 2nd place in the 2011 election. The patterns that do also show that urban voters are the key constituent of Irish Labour at every election cycle and the other interaction model of low income and urban (see appendix table 2.8) also found in 2011 a positive relationship with this subgroup within low income voters at 0.798.

The Irish Labour Party has always had the middle classes as a key constituent of its electoral coalition and the nature of the Irish system and the data from ESS cannot show if Sinn Fein voters whom are working-class are likely to give second preferences to Labour and vice versa. Such information may have enabled a more holistic analysis of Irish Labour.

Table 2.10 – Irish Labour Interaction Regression model

	Dependent variable:			
	Labour (Ireland) Vote			
	2002	2007	2011	2016
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Low income	-0.916	0.380	-1.746***	-1.063
	(0.583)	(0.458)	(0.602)	(1.114)
Lower middle income	-0.086	0.177	-0.140	0.103
	(0.392)	(0.505)	(0.397)	(0.750)
Upper middle income	0.064	0.510	-0.059	-0.523
	(0.215)	(0.366)	(0.286)	(0.346)
Urban	0.750***	0.911***	1.224***	1.063***
	(0.198)	(0.209)	(0.205)	(0.315)
Suburban	0.433*	0.466*	0.619***	0.878***
	(0.231)	(0.249)	(0.225)	(0.336)
University graduate	0.132	0.304	0.148	0.170
	(0.230)	(0.244)	(0.220)	(0.287)
Age = 40-59	0.247	-0.267	-0.307	0.096
	(0.227)	(0.360)	(0.291)	(0.472)

Age = 60+	-0.593	-0.158	-0.139	0.460
	(0.391)	(0.422)	(0.345)	(0.492)
Unemployed	0.783**	-0.289	-0.365	-0.468
	(0.328)	(0.275)	(0.288)	(0.648)
Low income and 40-59	0.058	0.232	1.529**	0.939
	(0.672)	(0.488)	(0.668)	(1.224)
Low income and 60+	1.107	-0.780	1.492**	0.032
	(0.718)	(0.551)	(0.652)	(1.194)
Lower-middle income and 40-59	-0.736	0.177	-0.320	-0.026
	(0.527)	(0.559)	(0.485)	(0.867)
Lower-middle and 60+	0.767	0.044	0.125	-0.792
	(0.606)	(0.620)	(0.492)	(0.845)
Constant	-2.373***	-2.422***	-2.038***	-3.159***
	(0.252)	(0.425)	(0.357)	(0.518)
Observations	1,410	1,127	1,257	1,069
Log Likelihood	-486.290	-425.217	-481.435	-252.122
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,000.579	878.435	990.869	532.243

Note: Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted

Analysis

The data for Great Britain shows that there is a class-cleavage in voting behaviour. The trajectory of the data points towards the strength of class-voting to be declining over time and confirms what has been said throughout that this is evidence of partisan dealignment but also of increased volatility. One key point to make from this is that while there is strong evidence of partisan dealignment over time, working-class voters are not now 'Conservatives'. Some of the narrative surrounding terms such as the red wall constituencies could be misconstrued as voters permanently changing allegiance. The findings we have shown this is not exactly the case. Low income voters on the survey level regression models indicate that they still remain most likely to vote Labour and ecological data shows higher deprivation is still more heavily correlated with casting a ballot for Labour. What recent British elections show is that there is more turbulence and volatility in voter behaviour. It is also uncertain if events have helped cultivate the political environment in the past few elections and if those same issues will continue to do so, for example when the issue of the European Union dissipates from the political agenda, will those leave voters still vote more heavily towards the Conservatives. While there is evidence that such high-profile events can shape voters' opinions for lengthy periods of time such as the Vietnam draft lottery in the US (Erikson & Stoker, 2011). Whether the issues around Brexit will remain highly important to voters is likely to wain eventually from the political landscape and there are indications that this is already transpiring.

Aside from its sub-regions Great Britain lacks a 'national question' the closest to this was the EU referendum question which for many reasons isn't highly comparable to Irish nationalism. Even still given such a question did to a small extent break class allegiance to political parties; such as some traditional working-class leave constituencies eventually

turning Conservative in 2017 and 2019 and some remain constituencies for Labour or the Liberal Democrats. The evidence as shown above indicates that the class cleavage as a whole was stronger than the issues here. There was a large focus on the red-wall as they became the bellwether constituencies that decided the 2017 and 2019 elections but even still class remained a strong voting predictor of voting behaviour, albeit less strong than previous elections.

For Ireland there is much less evidence of class voter cleavages existing but there are some patterns that seem to suggest this may be changing. The rise of Sinn Fein particularly has broken the two-party system and attracts its voters from lower income voters seen from our ESS survey findings. The problem lies with the other parties where there appears to be no real pattern except for Fine Gael appealing somewhat more to higher income voters than Fianna Fail. There are several competing explanations as to why this may be changing such as the impacts of the financial crisis of 2008 and the later Eurozone crisis. Moreover, there are some sociological explanations such as 'generational changes.' This meaning political socialisation has become weaker over time i.e. a reduction of Fianna Fail or Fine Gael exclusive voters, as well as some voters now having an affinition towards more than one party. As outlined by Marsh, Farrell & McElroy, (2017) this provides one explanation as to why there could be higher vote switching and thus more volatility in recent Irish elections.

While we see these patterns, they are at an early stage and the lack of ESS data being published due to the pandemic for the 2020 election in Ireland we cannot make the same comparative data analysis as with the other elections this century. The data that is shown does show that there is evidence of cleavages i.e. by age and geographical area and somewhat by social class, these are much weaker than the case of Great Britain. It would appear that the hypothesis holds that class politics struggles to thrive in this political system based on the national question albeit recent political developments appear to be undermining this. Future

research should explore this in much more depth with more robust socio-economic and demographic data combined with a more detailed and tailor-made survey to explore political attitudes and partisanship of voters. This will be particularly pertinent given the narrative around the build up to next Irish General election scheduled for 2025.

Conclusion

The theoretical framework appears to have held in that class politics still exists and retains an analytical purpose for elections in Great Britain. While the best explanation for Ireland not developing class-politics is due to nationalism and its broader national question, this has structured the foundations of its political system around the civil war. There is evidence within our analysis of this changing slowly for the Irish case and it starting to develop some class voting behaviour. While for Great Britain the trend of class partisanship appears to slowly weaken it remains viable explanation for voter patterns in elections, but both cases show high voter-volatility.

The rise of Sinn Fein as the prominent party on the left, while on the centre-right Fine Gael has portrayed itself as the party of fiscal responsibility following the run up to and beyond the 2011 election. The data we find shows Fine Gael being slightly more favoured by high income voters than Fianna Fail but the centre-right association with attracting a middle-class vote in the same way the British Conservatives do is not apparent here. While the Irish Labour party does not appear to attract working class votes and instead was constantly throughout the analysis I conducted favoured by higher income voters in urban areas. While the trajectory is one that shows class becoming prominent in Irish elections, it does not constitute a fundamental pillar or form an overarching explanation to voter behaviour in its elections. Beyond explaining Sinn Fein's vote, income and class do not adequately explain how voters' cast ballots in Ireland.

The datasets show different results for the two countries but a pattern of volatility in voter behaviour in both cases does appear to be quite striking. This also is evidence in both cases voters have lower levels party affiliation meaning voters switching parties more often at elections and thus making future predictions harder. The political upheaval post-New-Labour

and post-Brexit in the UK fragmented party politics with some working-class voters switching to the Conservatives in 2017 and 2019 and middle-class voters moving from the Conservatives to Labour and Liberal Democrats. While in Ireland the traditional two-party system has made way for a third-party Sinn Fein as a likely contender to lead a government with a sharp rise in other smaller parties and independent politicians being elected as part of a wider pattern of a breakdown in political loyalties to parties.

The data for GB does show that working class voters have become less partisan to Labour and in the past several elections have trended towards the Conservatives, it does not signal such voters have permanently changed allegiance and have not completely abandoned the Labour Party. The time period since the 2010 election has had significant upheavals such as Brexit, the rise and collapse of UKIP, the disintegration of the Liberal Democrats, SNP dominance in Scotland, the rise and fall of Corbynism and an international pandemic. The current period from the mid 2010's to the mid 2020's is arguably one of the most tumultuous of the post war period. So, it can be expected that these events and issues did play a part in shaping voters' electoral behaviour. Despite this there was throughout all the elections in our analysis, those on lower incomes, and by proxy working class, there was a greater probability of voting Labour. As recent history shows voter groups who seemed unreachable and gone from party coalitions such as Regan Democrats in the US and working-class Tories under Thatcher both came back into the Fold under both Clintons New Democrats and Blair's New Labour. This means these voters could vote Labour under the right circumstances as priorities and political landscapes change. As shown by the ecological dataset, these aspects raise an interesting question of whether the key voters of middle England have now shifted towards Northern England and if it's there that holds the key to parties winning elections in the UK over the next few election cycles. Therefore, it would be unwise to ring the death knell on

class politics for Great Britain just yet, as it retains some utility for psephology at general elections.

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Appendix

Table 1.7 Conservative Interaction Regression Model (Income & Age)

	Dependent variable:				
	Conservative Vote				
	2001	2005	2010	2015	2017
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Low income	-2.352***	-1.597***	-0.815	-2.170**	-1.678*
	(0.826)	(0.588)	(0.718)	(0.886)	(0.869)
Lower middle income	-1.633**	-1.439***	-1.528*	-0.562	-0.646
	(0.658)	(0.533)	(0.789)	(0.696)	(0.717)
Upper middle income	-0.682	-0.466	0.002	-0.864	0.389
	(0.482)	(0.319)	(0.588)	(0.625)	(0.536)
Urban	-0.292	-0.495***	-0.990***	-0.613**	-0.704***
	(0.238)	(0.171)	(0.313)	(0.240)	(0.234)
Suburban	-0.092	-0.370**	-0.600**	-0.529**	-0.537***
	(0.216)	(0.159)	(0.283)	(0.209)	(0.206)
University graduate	-0.249	-0.199	-0.028	-0.307	-0.410*
	(0.217)	(0.150)	(0.265)	(0.216)	(0.212)
Age = 40-59	0.598	0.002	0.325	-0.056	1.019**
	(0.461)	(0.300)	(0.560)	(0.522)	(0.505)
Age = 60+	0.929	0.964**	0.922	0.292	0.889
	(0.682)	(0.443)	(0.779)	(0.599)	(0.600)
Unemployed	_	-0.501	0.243	0.274	-0.736*
		(0.357)	(0.530)	(0.439)	(0.428)
Muslim	-0.443	0.088	-1.166	-0.680	-1.644**
	(0.663)	(0.827)	(0.786)	(0.589)	(0.767)
Low income and 40-59	0.815	0.730	-0.343	1.121	0.550
	(0.943)	(0.689)	(0.880)	(0.987)	(0.950)
Low income and 60+	0.577	0.569	-0.585	1.105	1.313
	(1.019)	(0.703)	(0.992)	(0.977)	(0.972)
Lower-middle income and 40-59	0.690	0.698	0.128	0.228	-1.351
	(0.779)	(0.661)	(0.936)	(0.819)	(0.919)
Lower-middle and 60+	0.864	0.614	0.883	0.320	0.206
	(0.907)	(0.679)	(1.050)	(0.839)	(0.863)
Upper-middle and 40-59	-0.306	0.057	-0.873	0.311	-1.640**
	(0.598)	(0.403)	(0.747)	(0.728)	(0.660)

Upper-middle and 60	-0.117	0.088	-1.110	0.524	-0.493
	(0.799)	(0.537)	(0.999)	(0.784)	(0.721)
Constant	-0.148	-0.347	0.497	0.666	0.128
	(0.422)	(0.284)	(0.511)	(0.502)	(0.474)
Observations	641	1,238	369	554	643
Log Likelihood	-372.543	-695.269	-226.033	-355.977	-399.576
Akaike Inf. Crit.	777.086	1,424.538	486.065	745.954	833.153

Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)
Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 1.8 Liberal Democrat Bivariate Regression Model

	Dependent variable:				
	Liberal Democrat Vote (Bivariate models)				
	2001	2005	2010	2015	2017
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Low income	-0.027	-0.268	-0.126	-0.688**	-0.280
	(0.252)	(0.213)	(0.194)	(0.286)	(0.276)
Lower middle income	-0.075	0.093	0.084	-0.713**	-0.271
	(0.277)	(0.233)	(0.201)	(0.348)	(0.314)
Upper middle income	0.352	0.136	0.084	-0.007	-0.091
	(0.246)	(0.198)	(0.214)	(0.260)	(0.271)
Constant	-1.721***	-1.426***	-1.183***	-1.985***	-2.193***
	(0.209)	(0.158)	(0.157)	(0.198)	(0.211)
Observations	1,187	1,243	1,275	1,166	1,352
Log Likelihood	-527.437	-605.852	-692.251	-351.888	-397.398
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,062.873	1,219.704	1,392.501	711.775	802.796

Note: Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)
Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 1.9 UKIP Logistical Regression & Bivariate Models

	Dependent variable:	
	UKIP Vote 2015	
	Bivariate model	Full model
	(1)	(2)
Low income	0.324	-0.202
	(0.298)	(0.617)
Lower middle income	0.166	0.493
	(0.348)	(0.606)
Upper middle income	-0.136	-0.964
	(0.330)	(0.756)
Urban		0.532
		(0.527)
suburban		0.516
		(0.464)
university		-0.956
		(0.585)
Agegroup40-59		0.602
		(0.810)
Agegroup60+		0.827
		(0.785)
Unemployed		0.392
		(0.784)
Muslim		-14.535
		(800.925)
Constant	-2.512***	-3.546***
	(0.245)	(0.947)
Observations	1,166	554
Log Likelihood	-332.495	-108.496
Akaike Inf. Crit.	672.990	238.992

Note: Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020) *Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted*

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 1.10 Liberal Democrat Regression Model

	Dependent variable:				
	Liberal Democrat Vote				
	2001	2005	2010	2015	2017
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Low income	0.991**	0.248	0.890**	0.356	-0.186
	(0.404)	(0.256)	(0.427)	(0.501)	(0.447)
Lower middle income	0.711*	0.471*	0.578	-0.989	-0.447
	(0.405)	(0.251)	(0.417)	(0.700)	(0.516)
Upper middle income	0.704**	0.251	0.746*	0.287	-0.255
	(0.351)	(0.203)	(0.406)	(0.452)	(0.413)
Urban	-0.016	-0.370*	0.276	-0.399	0.140
	(0.278)	(0.197)	(0.354)	(0.463)	(0.375)
Suburban	-0.492*	-0.079	0.453	0.257	0.050
	(0.273)	(0.179)	(0.329)	(0.362)	(0.338)
University graduate	1.124***	0.583***	-0.004	0.979***	0.557*
	(0.252)	(0.160)	(0.288)	(0.369)	(0.327)
Age = 40-59	0.353	0.063	0.417	0.088	0.224
	(0.280)	(0.180)	(0.333)	(0.561)	(0.483)
Age = 60+	-0.397	-0.461**	0.234	0.531	0.785*
	(0.307)	(0.213)	(0.366)	(0.542)	(0.464)
Unemployed		0.017	-0.305	-0.811	-1.145
		(0.312)	(0.560)	(1.048)	(1.043)
Muslim	-1.764*	0.089	0.098	-15.032	-0.611
	(1.059)	(0.807)	(0.571)	(800.231)	(1.053)
Constant	-2.472***	-1.647***	-2.279***	-3.189***	-2.790***
	(0.435)	(0.262)	(0.506)	(0.688)	(0.587)
Observations	641	1,238	369	554	643
Log Likelihood	-267.802	-587.268	-200.275	-143.084	-189.330
Akaike Inf. Crit.	555.603	1,196.536	422.549	308.169	400.660

Note: Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)

Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 2.1 – Working Class Vote By Party Since 1969 (Ireland)

WORKING CLASS VOTE	FIANNA FAIL	LABOUR	SINN FEIN	FINE GAEL	LEFT-WING	RIGHT-WING
1969	41.5	28	-	17.5	28	59
1977	50.5	15	-	21	15	71.5
1981	45.5	13	3	26.5	16	72
1982	48.5	8	3.5	30.5	11.5	79
1982	41	12.5	5.5	29.5	18	70.5
1987	43	5.5	-	19	5.5	62
1989	38	9	-	17	9	55
1992	34	18	-	15	18	49
1997	41.5	13.5	5	21	18.5	62.5
2002	44	14	7	18.5	21	62.5
2007	43.5	11	8	22	19	65.5
2011	15	23	14	32	37	47
2016	22.5	6	23.5	17.6	29.5	40.1
2020	23	5	33	14	38	37
2022*	14	6	41	13	47	27

*Source (Penniman & Farrell, 1987:70) Politics in the Republic of Ireland Szerkesztette: John Coakley, Michael Gallagher p447 & RTE Exit Polls 2007-2020, *Opinion poll*

Data shows the percentages of working-class voters casting a first-choice preference for each of the four main parties over time with a separate left-right split. Fianna Fail and Fine Gael were considered more Conservative and aligned as right while Sinn Fein and Labour being more politically left. Some election periods and party data are missing given lack of available data.

Table 2.3 – Sinn Fein Interaction Regression Model

	Dependent variable:			
	Sinn Fein Vote			
	2002	2007	2011	2016
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Low income	0.783	2.350**	1.609***	0.717
	(0.644)	(1.070)	(0.610)	(0.570)
Lower middle income	0.390	1.995*	1.099*	0.822
	(0.613)	(1.096)	(0.618)	(0.548)
Upper middle income	-0.030	1.655	0.502	0.042
	(0.422)	(1.057)	(0.565)	(0.355)
Urban	0.946***	0.069	0.736***	0.702***
	(0.309)	(0.283)	(0.221)	(0.238)
Suburban	0.010	0.876***	0.440*	0.129
	(0.412)	(0.256)	(0.231)	(0.267)
University graduate	-0.827	-0.512	-1.383***	-1.145***
	(0.545)	(0.388)	(0.371)	(0.300)
Age = 40-59	0.067	-1.113	-0.595	-0.749*
	(0.432)	(0.716)	(0.425)	(0.412)
Age = 60+	-1.423	-0.353	-1.790**	-1.089**
	(1.057)	(0.720)	(0.777)	(0.468)
Unemployed	0.408	0.869***	0.434**	1.343***
	(0.470)	(0.245)	(0.221)	(0.312)
Low income and 40-59	-0.511	0.740	0.134	-0.149
	(0.770)	(0.774)	(0.533)	(0.659)
Low income and 60+	0.753	-1.684**	0.079	-0.188
	(1.232)	(0.846)	(0.845)	(0.665)
Lower-middle income and 40-59	0.176	0.675	0.095	-0.336
	(0.733)	(0.848)	(0.555)	(0.649)
Lower-middle and 60+	0.937	-0.855	0.724	-0.602
	(1.298)	(0.944)	(0.877)	(0.670)
Constant	-3.614***	-4.153***	-2.740***	-1.783***
	(0.447)	(1.064)	(0.590)	(0.426)
Observations	1,410	1,127	1,257	1,069
Log Likelihood	-229.856	-301.104	-412.604	-338.844
Akaike Inf. Crit.	487.711	630.208	853.209	705.687

Note: Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income;
Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted

Table 2.4 – Fianna Fail Regression Model

	Dependent variable:			
	Fianna Fail Vote			
	2002	2007	2011	2016
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Low income	0.108	-0.004	0.056	0.383*
	(0.166)	(0.316)	(0.299)	(0.226)
Lower middle income	-0.026	-0.485	-0.153	0.124
	(0.162)	(0.329)	(0.292)	(0.220)
Upper middle income	-0.195	-0.487	-0.284	0.003
	(0.149)	(0.338)	(0.292)	(0.214)
Urban	-0.166	-0.288	-0.783***	-0.638***
	(0.127)	(0.176)	(0.186)	(0.169)
Suburban	-0.012	-0.573***	-0.428**	-0.300*
	(0.142)	(0.222)	(0.176)	(0.168)
University graduate	-0.573***	-0.154	0.128	-0.028
	(0.166)	(0.254)	(0.215)	(0.172)
Age = 40-59	-0.148	-0.009	0.066	-0.135
	(0.127)	(0.217)	(0.201)	(0.215)
Age = 60+	-0.024	0.615***	0.491**	0.066
	(0.150)	(0.212)	(0.198)	(0.210)
Unemployed	-0.351	-0.141	0.052	-0.360
	(0.237)	(0.240)	(0.210)	(0.302)
Constant	0.227	-1.235***	-1.263***	-0.733***
	(0.150)	(0.337)	(0.321)	(0.261)
Observations	1,410	1,127	1,257	1,069
Log Likelihood	-963.708	-534.390	-599.913	-631.124
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,947.416	1,088.780	1,219.826	1,282.248

Note: Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income;
Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted

Table 2.5 – Fianna Fail Bivariate Regression Model

	Dependent variable:			
	Fianna Fail Vote (Bivariate model)			
	2002	2007	2011	2016
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Low income	0.224	0.289	0.236	0.445**
	(0.150)	(0.281)	(0.258)	(0.202)
Lower middle income	0.088	-0.249	-0.050	0.234
	(0.156)	(0.308)	(0.267)	(0.204)
Upper middle income	-0.163	-0.283	-0.232	0.046
	(0.146)	(0.326)	(0.276)	(0.207)
Constant	-0.062	-1.453***	-1.439***	-1.086***
	(0.106)	(0.262)	(0.232)	(0.159)
Observations	1,423	1,132	1,263	1,076
Log Likelihood	-982.456	-554.210	-617.954	-646.250
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,972.912	1,116.419	1,243.908	1,300.501

Note: Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020) *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted

Table 2.6 – Fine Gael Regression Model

	Dependent variable:			
	Fine Gael Vote			
	2002	2007	2011	2016
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Low income	0.015	-0.713***	-0.175	-0.610***
	(0.206)	(0.253)	(0.237)	(0.214)
Lower middle income	-0.049	-0.379	-0.148	-0.402**
	(0.205)	(0.254)	(0.228)	(0.201)
Upper middle income	0.175	-0.405	-0.018	-0.280
	(0.183)	(0.257)	(0.224)	(0.190)
Urban	-0.920***	-0.425***	-0.590***	0.009
	(0.173)	(0.142)	(0.143)	(0.154)
Suburban	-0.277	-0.004	-0.050	-0.172

	(0.170)	(0.162)	(0.141)	(0.165)
University graduate	0.509***	0.125	0.009	0.246
	(0.192)	(0.186)	(0.166)	(0.158)
Age = 40-59	0.062	0.207	0.104	0.407*
	(0.162)	(0.157)	(0.151)	(0.208)
Age = 60+	0.317*	0.474***	0.215	0.673***
	(0.186)	(0.166)	(0.156)	(0.208)
Unemployed	-0.391	-0.385**	-0.277	-0.497
	(0.342)	(0.186)	(0.175)	(0.312)
Constant	-1.257***	0.296	-0.145	-0.742***
	(0.187)	(0.266)	(0.251)	(0.248)
Observations	1,410	1,127	1,257	1,069
Log Likelihood	-698.089	-759.245	-837.635	-680.472
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,416.178	1,538.489	1,695.271	1,380.943

Note: Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020) *Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted*

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 2.7 – Fine Gael Bivariate Regression Model

	Dependent variable:			
	Fine Gael Vote			
	2002	2007	2011	2016
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Low income	0.103	-0.649***	-0.115	-0.650***
	(0.186)	(0.225)	(0.209)	(0.191)
Lower middle income	-0.021	-0.332	-0.092	-0.364*
	(0.197)	(0.238)	(0.213)	(0.186)
Upper middle income	0.136	-0.367	0.056	-0.274
	(0.180)	(0.250)	(0.215)	(0.185)
Constant	-1.411***	0.318	-0.302	-0.268*
	(0.133)	(0.208)	(0.185)	(0.139)
Observations	1,423	1,132	1,263	1,076
Log Likelihood	-723.053	-776.157	-855.211	-692.738
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,454.105	1,560.313	1,718.423	1,393.475

Note: Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)
Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 2.8 – Irish Labour Regression Model

	Dependent variable:			
	Labour Vote (Ireland)			
	2002	2007	2011	2016
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Low income	-0.546*	0.304	-0.581*	-0.675
	(0.280)	(0.368)	(0.315)	(0.411)
Lower middle income	-0.227	0.357	-0.224	-0.265
	(0.255)	(0.372)	(0.293)	(0.359)
Upper middle income	0.090	0.585	-0.070	-0.489
	(0.214)	(0.363)	(0.285)	(0.344)
Urban	0.757***	0.918***	1.186***	1.057***
	(0.197)	(0.208)	(0.204)	(0.314)
Suburban	0.429*	0.516**	0.601***	0.879***
	(0.230)	(0.248)	(0.225)	(0.335)
University graduate	0.128	0.362	0.160	0.141
	(0.229)	(0.243)	(0.217)	(0.287)
Age = 40-59	0.117	-0.127	-0.158	0.202
	(0.193)	(0.213)	(0.214)	(0.374)
Age = 60+	-0.043	-0.514**	0.204	0.179
	(0.243)	(0.239)	(0.216)	(0.379)
Unemployed	0.708**	-0.210	-0.381	-0.313
	(0.322)	(0.271)	(0.284)	(0.630)
Constant	-2.385***	-2.504***	-2.158***	-3.110***
	(0.240)	(0.397)	(0.344)	(0.471)
Observations	1,410	1,127	1,257	1,069
Log Likelihood	-490.362	-427.631	-486.183	-253.511
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,000.724	875.261	992.366	527.022

Note: Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)
Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 2.9 – Irish Labour Bivariate Regression model

	Dependent variable:			
	Labour Vote (Ireland, bivariate model)			
	2002	2007	2011	2016
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Low income	-0.602**	-0.178	-0.793***	-0.762**
	(0.251)	(0.327)	(0.278)	(0.358)
Lower middle income	-0.321	-0.028	-0.375	-0.409
	(0.245)	(0.345)	(0.271)	(0.326)
Upper middle income	0.079	0.317	-0.241	-0.522
	(0.210)	(0.349)	(0.272)	(0.335)
Constant	-1.862***	-1.842***	-1.386***	-2.197***
	(0.155)	(0.299)	(0.228)	(0.230)
Observations	1,423	1,132	1,263	1,076
Log Likelihood	-505.473	-444.168	-508.262	-264.428
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,018.946	896.335	1,024.523	536.856

Note: Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020) *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted

Table 2.11 – Irish Left-Wing Vote Regression Model

	Dependent variable:			
	Left Wing Vote Ireland			
	2002	2007	2011	2016
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Low income	-0.325	0.852***	0.005	0.031
	(0.226)	(0.326)	(0.259)	(0.254)
Lower middle income	-0.003	0.714**	0.091	0.001
	(0.205)	(0.330)	(0.250)	(0.246)
Upper middle income	0.007	0.773**	-0.121	-0.220
	(0.182)	(0.330)	(0.250)	(0.237)
Urban	0.884***	0.777***	1.231***	0.981***
	(0.158)	(0.172)	(0.156)	(0.186)
Suburban	0.173	0.848***	0.632***	0.493**

	(0.194)	(0.188)	(0.165)	(0.204)
University graduate	0.081	0.205	-0.380**	-0.455**
	(0.195)	(0.214)	(0.187)	(0.196)
Age = 40-59	0.040	-0.252	-0.334**	-0.573***
	(0.156)	(0.170)	(0.160)	(0.217)
Age = 60+	-0.472**	-1.066***	-0.637***	-0.940***
	(0.204)	(0.201)	(0.171)	(0.222)
Unemployed	0.793***	0.558***	0.348*	0.849***
	(0.266)	(0.194)	(0.182)	(0.285)
Constant	-1.700***	-2.057***	-1.131***	-1.079***
	(0.194)	(0.345)	(0.278)	(0.280)
Observations	1,410	1,127	1,257	1,069
Log Likelihood	-660.381	-578.113	-712.601	-513.838
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,340.762	1,176.225	1,445.202	1,047.676

Note: Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020) *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted

Table 2.12 – Irish Left-Wing Vote Bivariate Regression Model

	Dependent variable:			
	Left Wing Vote (Ireland, bivariate model)			
	2002	2007	2011	2016
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Low income	-0.501**	0.542*	-0.003	0.124
	(0.199)	(0.291)	(0.227)	(0.219)
Lower middle income	-0.141	0.424	0.097	-0.091
	(0.194)	(0.307)	(0.230)	(0.223)
Upper middle income	0.030	0.555*	-0.129	-0.203
	(0.176)	(0.317)	(0.236)	(0.227)
Constant	-1.291***	-1.597***	-0.887***	-1.299***
	(0.129)	(0.274)	(0.201)	(0.168)
Observations	1,423	1,132	1,263	1,076
Log Likelihood	-695.346	-628.921	-760.245	-547.719
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,398.692	1,265.842	1,528.490	1,103.438

Note: Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)
Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 2.13 – Irish Conservative/Right-Wing Vote Regression Model

	Dependent variable:			
	Right Wing (Conservative) Vote Ireland			
	2002	2007	2011	2016
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Low income	0.106	-0.826***	-0.112	-0.264
	(0.198)	(0.291)	(0.243)	(0.220)
Lower middle income	-0.091	-0.795***	-0.236	-0.318
	(0.185)	(0.293)	(0.234)	(0.210)
Upper middle income	-0.088	-0.822***	-0.179	-0.300
	(0.166)	(0.294)	(0.231)	(0.199)
Urban	-0.843***	-0.715***	-1.085***	-0.558***
	(0.143)	(0.152)	(0.143)	(0.157)
Suburban	-0.320*	-0.415**	-0.381**	-0.465***
	(0.167)	(0.173)	(0.149)	(0.164)
University graduate	-0.173	0.027	0.095	0.227
	(0.176)	(0.199)	(0.169)	(0.161)
Age = 40-59	-0.039	0.192	0.137	0.261
	(0.141)	(0.159)	(0.151)	(0.194)
Age = 60+	0.457**	1.030***	0.564***	0.713***
	(0.179)	(0.180)	(0.160)	(0.196)
Unemployed	-0.773***	-0.484***	-0.251	-0.704***
	(0.247)	(0.184)	(0.174)	(0.267)
Constant	1.388***	1.423***	0.806***	0.692***
	(0.175)	(0.305)	(0.258)	(0.245)
Observations	1,410	1,127	1,257	1,069
Log Likelihood	-781.794	-675.231	-800.847	-672.455
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,583.588	1,370.463	1,621.693	1,364.910

Note: Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)
Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 2.14 – Fianna Fail Vote Interaction Regression Model (Urban & Low income)

	Dependent variable:			
	Fianna Fail Vote			
	2002	2007	2011	2016
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Low income	0.215	-0.033	0.106	0.382
	(0.181)	(0.337)	(0.310)	(0.243)
Lower middle income	-0.018	-0.490	-0.148	0.124
	(0.162)	(0.329)	(0.292)	(0.220)
Upper middle income	-0.194	-0.491	-0.277	0.003
	(0.148)	(0.338)	(0.292)	(0.214)
Urban	-0.076	-0.331	-0.705***	-0.639***
	(0.141)	(0.253)	(0.225)	(0.194)
Suburban	-0.008	-0.572***	-0.428**	-0.300*
	(0.142)	(0.221)	(0.176)	(0.168)
University graduate	-0.581***	-0.151	0.125	-0.028
	(0.166)	(0.255)	(0.215)	(0.172)
Age = 40-59	-0.149	-0.009	0.061	-0.135
	(0.128)	(0.217)	(0.201)	(0.215)
Age = 60+	-0.035	0.615***	0.488**	0.066
	(0.151)	(0.212)	(0.198)	(0.210)
Unemployed	-0.307	-0.139	0.054	-0.360
	(0.239)	(0.240)	(0.211)	(0.302)
Urban and low income	-0.440	0.081	-0.221	0.003
	(0.296)	(0.335)	(0.369)	(0.356)
Constant	0.196	-1.218***	-1.284***	-0.732***
	(0.152)	(0.344)	(0.323)	(0.262)
Observations	1,410	1,127	1,257	1,069
Log Likelihood	-962.592	-534.361	-599.733	-631.124
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,947.183	1,090.723	1,221.465	1,284.248

Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)

Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 2.15 – Fianna Fail Vote Interaction Regression Model (Age & Low Income)

	Dependent variable:			
	Fianna Fail Vote			
	2002	2007	2011	2016
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Low income	0.288	-0.206	-0.491	-0.003
	(0.313)	(0.443)	(0.457)	(0.496)
Lower middle income	-0.267	-0.593	-0.075	-0.272
	(0.255)	(0.504)	(0.412)	(0.469)
Upper middle income	-0.182	-0.474	-0.265	0.010
	(0.149)	(0.342)	(0.293)	(0.214)
Urban	-0.167	-0.289	-0.770***	-0.634***
	(0.128)	(0.176)	(0.186)	(0.170)
Suburban	-0.009	-0.558**	-0.414**	-0.297*
	(0.142)	(0.223)	(0.177)	(0.169)
University graduate	-0.575***	-0.145	0.132	-0.031
	(0.166)	(0.255)	(0.216)	(0.173)
Age = 40-59	-0.261	-0.166	-0.080	-0.347
	(0.161)	(0.375)	(0.302)	(0.277)
Age = 60+	0.102	0.424	0.260	-0.127
	(0.223)	(0.420)	(0.344)	(0.293)
Unemployed	-0.390	-0.123	0.070	-0.342
	(0.240)	(0.244)	(0.213)	(0.306)
Low income and 40-59	0.006	0.230	0.620	0.295
	(0.368)	(0.498)	(0.500)	(0.565)
Low income and 60+	-0.443	0.324	0.757	0.507
	(0.383)	(0.512)	(0.495)	(0.531)
Lower-middle income and 40-59	0.462	0.240	-0.057	0.699
	(0.317)	(0.583)	(0.468)	(0.533)
Lower-middle and 60+	0.133	0.129	-0.053	0.362
	(0.379)	(0.606)	(0.483)	(0.511)
Constant	0.253	-1.134***	-1.161***	-0.576**
	(0.161)	(0.380)	(0.345)	(0.291)
Observations	1,410	1,127	1,257	1,069
Log Likelihood	-961.514	-534.072	-598.128	-629.534
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,951.029	1,096.143	1,224.256	1,287.068
Note: Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)				*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted

Table 2.15 – Sinn Fein Vote Interaction Regression Model (Urban & Low Income)

	Dependent variable:			
	Sinn Fein Vote			
	2002	2007	2011	2016
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Low income	0.273	2.395**	1.411**	0.566
	(0.526)	(1.043)	(0.564)	(0.390)
Lower middle income	0.543	2.184**	1.260**	0.472
	(0.412)	(1.039)	(0.545)	(0.349)
Upper middle income	-0.009	1.747*	0.485	0.056
	(0.420)	(1.055)	(0.564)	(0.355)
Urban	0.705**	0.013	0.451	0.643**
	(0.355)	(0.396)	(0.282)	(0.281)
Suburban	0.015	0.911***	0.438*	0.131
	(0.411)	(0.255)	(0.230)	(0.266)
University graduate	-0.803	-0.458	-1.353***	-1.162***
	(0.543)	(0.389)	(0.371)	(0.299)
Age = 40-59	-0.009	-0.472**	-0.481**	-0.886***
	(0.307)	(0.237)	(0.211)	(0.275)
Age = 60+	-0.642	-1.598***	-1.510***	-1.337***
	(0.407)	(0.333)	(0.251)	(0.277)
Unemployed	0.258	0.920***	0.442**	1.330***
	(0.475)	(0.243)	(0.219)	(0.308)
Urban and low income	0.809	0.123	0.592	0.154
	(0.604)	(0.497)	(0.380)	(0.442)
Constant	-3.505***	-4.282***	-2.707***	-1.635***
	(0.419)	(1.046)	(0.565)	(0.378)
Observations	1,410	1,127	1,257	1,069
Log Likelihood	-229.802	-304.338	-412.459	-339.216
Akaike Inf. Crit.	481.604	630.676	846.919	700.432

Note: Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted

Table 2.16 – Fine Gael Vote Interaction Regression Model (Urban & Low Income)

	Dependent variable:			
	Fine Gael Vote			
	2002	2007	2011	2016
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Low income	-0.110	-0.695***	-0.138	-0.673***
	(0.219)	(0.270)	(0.248)	(0.236)
Lower middle income	-0.061	-0.376	-0.146	-0.409**
	(0.206)	(0.255)	(0.228)	(0.202)
Upper middle income	0.174	-0.402	-0.015	-0.281
	(0.184)	(0.257)	(0.224)	(0.190)
Urban	-1.067***	-0.402**	-0.545***	-0.038
	(0.195)	(0.183)	(0.167)	(0.172)
Suburban	-0.284*	-0.005	-0.050	-0.172
	(0.170)	(0.162)	(0.141)	(0.165)
University graduate	0.525***	0.124	0.007	0.249
	(0.192)	(0.186)	(0.166)	(0.158)
Age = 40-59	0.065	0.206	0.101	0.411**
	(0.162)	(0.157)	(0.151)	(0.208)
Age = 60+	0.331*	0.474***	0.213	0.678***
	(0.186)	(0.166)	(0.156)	(0.208)
Unemployed	-0.447	-0.387**	-0.275	-0.502
	(0.343)	(0.186)	(0.175)	(0.312)
Urban and low income	0.707*	-0.052	-0.145	0.215
	(0.389)	(0.265)	(0.285)	(0.339)
Constant	-1.222***	0.286	-0.158	-0.729***
	(0.188)	(0.270)	(0.252)	(0.248)
Observations	1,410	1,127	1,257	1,069
Log Likelihood	-696.530	-759.225	-837.505	-680.272
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,415.061	1,540.450	1,697.010	1,382.545

Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)

Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 2.17 – Fine Gael Vote Interaction Regression Model (Age & Low Income)

	Dependent variable:			
	Fine Gael Vote			
	2002	2007	2011	2016
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Low income	-0.033	-0.748**	-0.120	0.053
	(0.418)	(0.339)	(0.330)	(0.476)
Lower middle income	0.191	-0.501	-0.482	-0.433
	(0.322)	(0.361)	(0.325)	(0.474)
Upper middle income	0.184	-0.363	0.003	-0.267
	(0.184)	(0.259)	(0.225)	(0.191)
Urban	-0.913***	-0.420***	-0.585***	-0.004
	(0.174)	(0.142)	(0.143)	(0.155)
Suburban	-0.283*	0.015	-0.045	-0.181
	(0.170)	(0.163)	(0.142)	(0.166)
University graduate	0.513***	0.142	0.008	0.230
	(0.192)	(0.187)	(0.167)	(0.159)
Age = 40-59	0.111	0.218	0.061	0.627**
	(0.202)	(0.266)	(0.223)	(0.261)
Age = 60+	0.438*	0.176	-0.084	0.662**
	(0.264)	(0.324)	(0.268)	(0.280)
Unemployed	-0.386	-0.350*	-0.268	-0.472
	(0.344)	(0.188)	(0.177)	(0.317)
Low income and 40-59	0.002	-0.123	-0.200	-0.794
	(0.489)	(0.367)	(0.369)	(0.550)
Low income and 60+	0.021	0.370	0.174	-0.634
	(0.486)	(0.401)	(0.371)	(0.514)
Lower-middle income and 40-59	-0.217	0.146	0.328	-0.493
	(0.399)	(0.400)	(0.359)	(0.546)
Lower-middle and 60+	-0.570	0.385	0.709*	0.323
	(0.476)	(0.451)	(0.386)	(0.511)
Constant	-1.306***	0.312	-0.075	-0.837***

	(0.202)	(0.295)	(0.269)	(0.279)
Observations	1,410	1,127	1,257	1,069
Log Likelihood	-697.238	-758.203	-835.447	-676.691
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,422.476	1,544.406	1,698.895	1,381.381

Note: Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020) *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted

Table 2.18 – Irish Labour Interaction Regression Model (Urban & Low Income)

	Dependent variable:			
	Labour (Ireland) Vote			
	2002	2007	2011	2016
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Low income	-0.541*	0.101	-0.949**	-0.671
	(0.324)	(0.411)	(0.369)	(0.487)
Lower middle income	-0.227	0.332	-0.226	-0.265
	(0.255)	(0.370)	(0.292)	(0.359)
Upper middle income	0.090	0.560	-0.084	-0.489
	(0.214)	(0.362)	(0.284)	(0.345)
Urban	0.759***	0.756***	0.977***	1.058***
	(0.211)	(0.255)	(0.227)	(0.335)
Suburban	0.429*	0.530**	0.600***	0.879***
	(0.230)	(0.249)	(0.226)	(0.335)
University graduate	0.128	0.361	0.167	0.140
	(0.229)	(0.242)	(0.216)	(0.287)
Age = 40-59	0.117	-0.125	-0.140	0.202
	(0.193)	(0.213)	(0.214)	(0.374)
Age = 60+	-0.044	-0.518**	0.212	0.178
	(0.243)	(0.240)	(0.215)	(0.379)
Unemployed	0.709**	-0.193	-0.404	-0.313
	(0.324)	(0.272)	(0.286)	(0.630)
Urban and low income	-0.012	0.399	0.798**	-0.009
	(0.467)	(0.363)	(0.383)	(0.651)
Constant	-2.386***	-2.411***	-2.070***	-3.111***
	(0.243)	(0.402)	(0.344)	(0.473)

Observations	1,410	1,127	1,257	1,069
Log Likelihood	-490.362	-427.026	-483.988	-253.511
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,002.723	876.051	989.976	529.022

Note: Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)

Omitted categories for regression - Income is compared with High Income; Terrain is compared against Rural, Age 18-39 is omitted

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

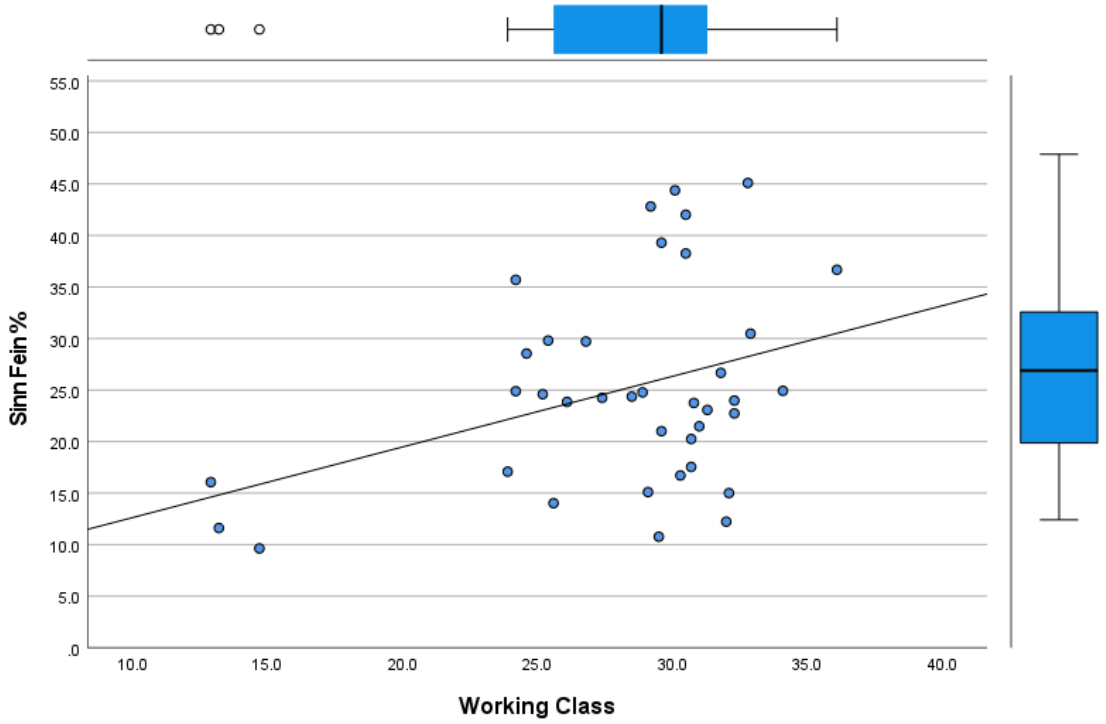
Ireland Ecological Voting Data 2016-2020

Measurement	White Population	Rent	Own	Working Class (Occupation)	Middle Class (Occupation)	Under 45	Over 45	Graduate	Bad Health	Unemployed/Disabled
Labour Vote Share 2016	-.300.	.223.	-.218.	-.194.	.120.	.327.	-.327.	.206.	-.198.	-.018.
Labour Vote Share 2020	.024.	.065.	-.056.	.089.	.107.	.103.	-.103.	.058.	-.090.	.006.
Sinn Fein Vote Share 2016	-.229.	.264.	-.279.	.347*	-.520**	.212.	-.204.	-.312.	.339*	.549**
Sinn Fein Vote Share 2020	-.232.	.197.	-.209.	.367*	-.507**	.209.	-.209.	-.366*	.366*	.560**
Labour Vote Share Change 16-20	.330*	-.085.	.097.	.156.	-.092.	.151.	-.151.	-.162.	.219.	.146.
Sinn Fein Vote Change 16-20	-.219.	.132.	-.125.	.166.	-.287.	.188.	-.188.	-.236.	.328*	.407*
Fianna Fail Vote Share 2020	.477**	-403*	.403*	.330*	-.095.	-.300.	.300.	-.282.	-.018.	.027.
Fine Gael Vote Share 2020	.190.	-.244.	.251.	-.260.	.444**	-.145.	.145.	.298.	-403*	-470**
Left-Wing Vote 2016	-.548**	.554**	-544**	-.117.	-.156.	.541**	-541**	.103.	.138.	.259.
Left-Wing Vote 2020	-.455**	.441**	-.435**	-.001.	-.225.	.431**	-431**	-.026.	.243.	.338*
Right-Wing Vote 2016	.542**	-498**	.509**	.250.	.072.	-.306.	.306.	-.188.	-.182.	-.069.
Right-Wing Vote 2020	.429**	-.412**	.416**	.063.	.203.	-.285.	.285.	-.008.	-.203.	-.263.
Left-Wing Vote Change 2016-2020	.126.	-.167.	.161.	.240.	-.176.	.162.	-.162.	-.271.	.254.	.213.
Right-Wing Vote Change 2016-2020	-.289.	.237.	-.250.	-.356*	.202.	.094.	-.094.	.332*	-.080.	-.306.

Source: For all constituencies in Ireland [2020-02-09_kerry-constituency-profile_en.pdf (oireachtas.ie)]

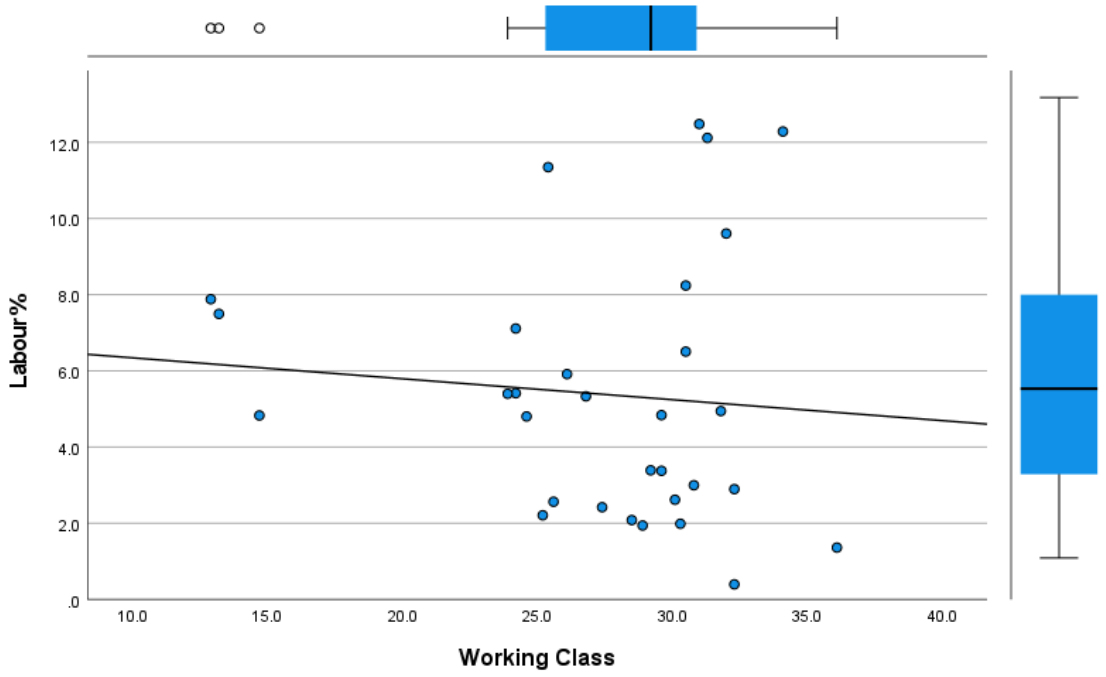
The above table shows ecological data that was calculated for the study of the 2016 and 2020 elections. Given the data is limited longitudinally and in the number of data points it was not included in the main body of the text. What was interesting was that data for Sinn Fein did confirm some of the findings of the survey data and the strongest correlations were for housing tenure and age. There was no real pattern for social class expect that Sinn Fein was seen as the more working-class party and Fine Gael more middle class but this does match what the body of the text affirms.

Figure 2.1 – Sinn Fein vote in 2020 election by percentage of working-class voters in constituency



Source: Ireland Ecological Voting Data 2016-2020

Figure 2.2 Irish Labour vote in 2020 election by percentage of working-class voters in constituency



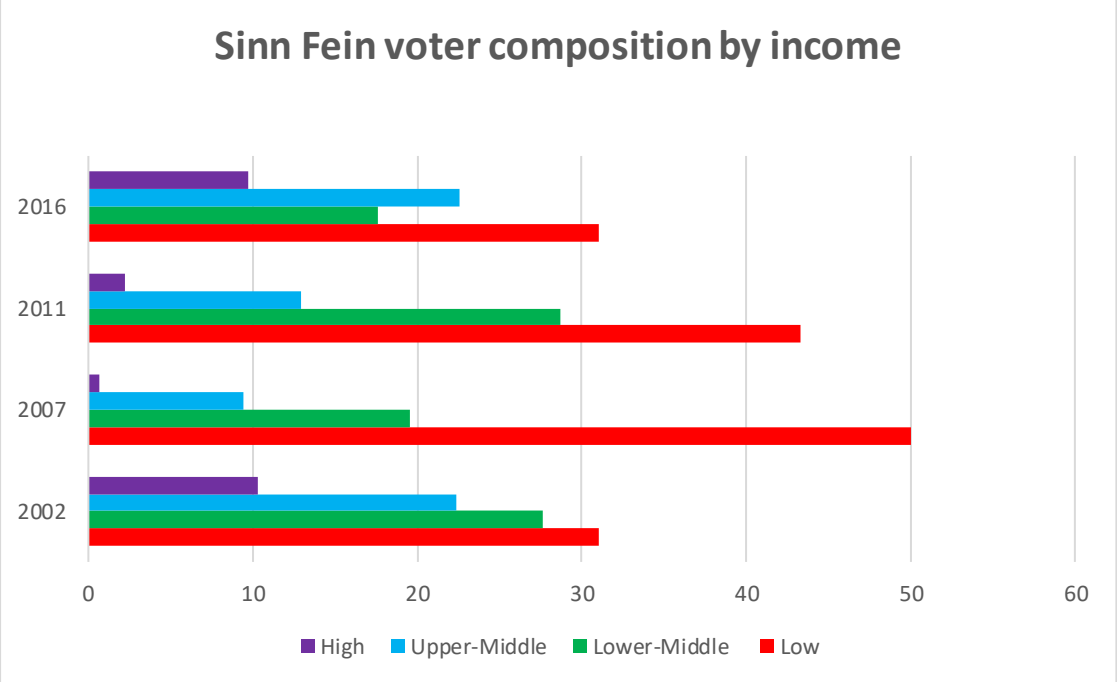
Source: Ireland Ecological Voting Data 2016-2020

The following four tables and bar charts show the voter composition of the four Irish parties studied. The composition is according to the sample provided by the ESS surveys from the 2002 election until the 2016 election.

Table 2.19 Sinn Fein voter composition by income

Sinn Fein	2002	2007	2011	2016
Low	31	50	43.3	31
Lower-Middle	27.6	19.6	28.7	17.6
Upper-Middle	22.4	9.4	12.9	22.6
High	10.3	0.7	2.2	9.7
Total Low	58.6	69.6	72	48.6
Total High	32.7	10.1	15.1	32.3
Alford Index	25.9	59.5	56.9	16.3

Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)



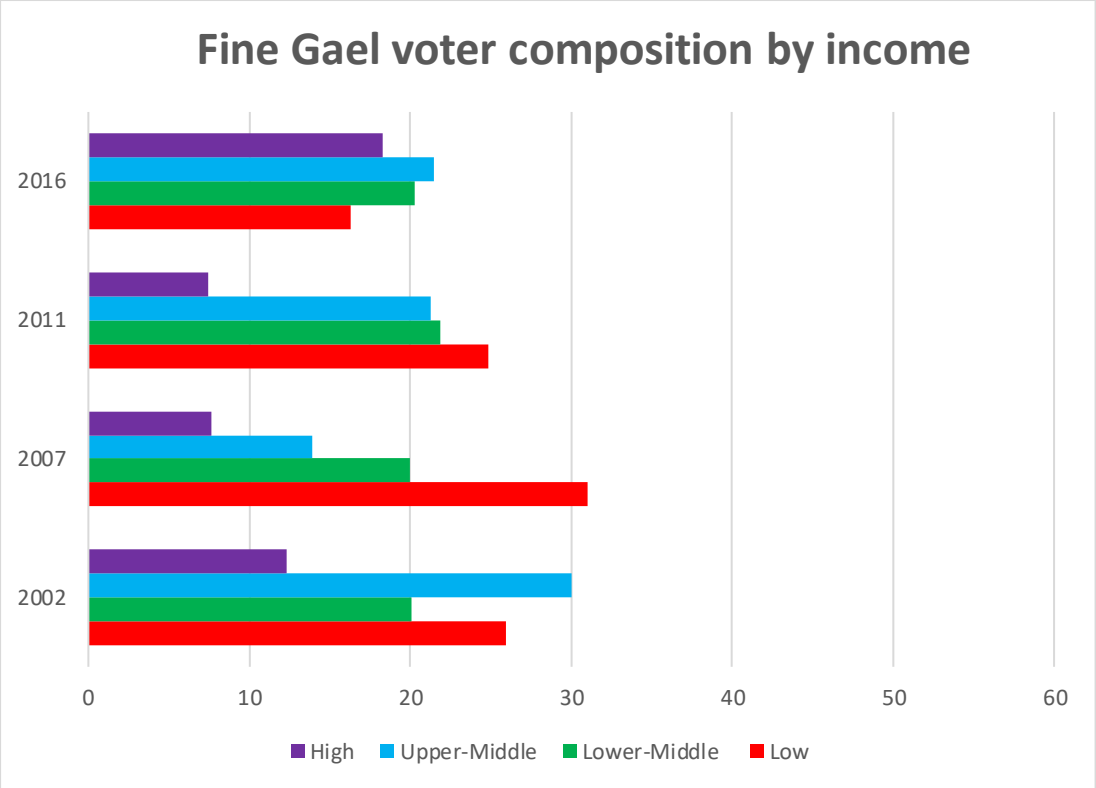
Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)

As shown by the main text we see that those on the lowest incomes have always made up more than 50% of the voter coalition, while the very lowest has always been in the plurality.

Table 2.20 Fine Gael voter composition by income

Fine Gael	2002	2007	2011	2016
Low	25.9	31	24.9	16.3
Lower-Middle	20.1	20	21.9	20.3
Upper-Middle	30	13.9	21.3	21.5
High	12.3	7.6	7.4	18.3
Total Low	46	51	46.8	36.6
Total High	42.3	21.5	28.7	39.8
Alford Index	3.7	29.5	18.1	-3.2

Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)



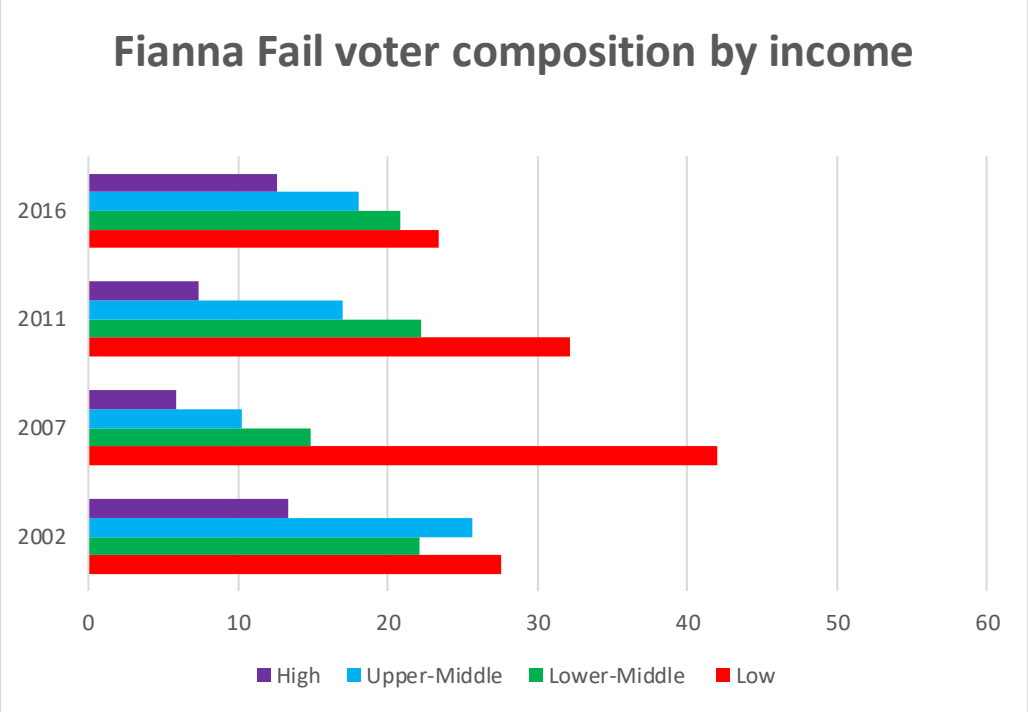
Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)

Table 2.21 Fianna Fail voter composition by income

Fianna Fail	2002	2007	2011	2016
Low	27.6	42	32.2	23.4
Lower-Middle	22.1	14.8	22.2	20.8

Upper-Middle	25.6	10.2	17	18.1
High	13.4	5.9	7.4	12.6
Total Low	49.7	56.8	54.4	44.2
Total High	39	16.1	24.4	30.7
Alford Index	10.7	40.7	30	13.5

Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)



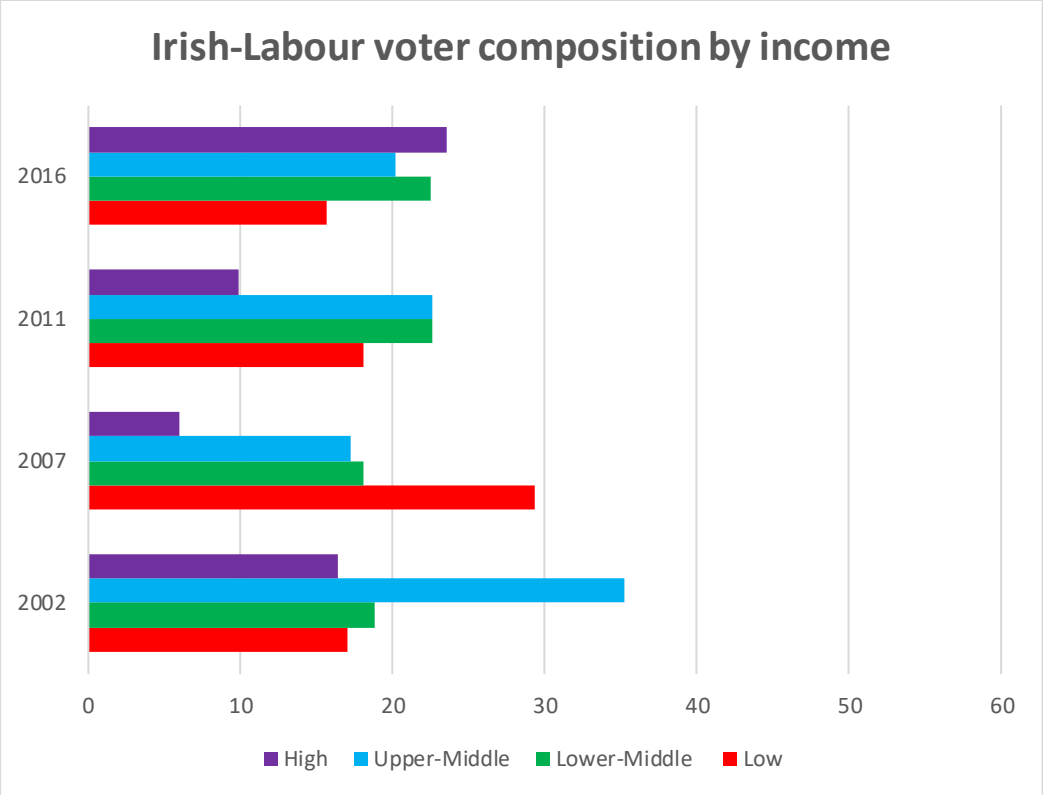
Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)

Table 2.22 Irish Labour voter composition by income

Labour	2002	2007	2011	2016
Low	17	29.3	18.1	15.7
Lower-Middle	18.8	18.1	22.6	22.5
Upper-Middle	35.2	17.2	22.6	20.2
High	16.4	6	9.9	23.6
Total Low	35.8	47.4	40.7	38.2

Total High	51.6	23.2	32.5	43.8
Alford Index	-15.8	24.2	8.2	-5.6

Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)



Source: European Social Survey Cumulative File, ESS 1-9 (2020)