The Broad Church

Long-term challenges for the progressive coalition

Charlie Cadywould and Patrick Diamond
June 2017
About the Authors

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Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Professor Andrew Gamble, Matthew Laza and Roger Liddle for their comments and feedback on early drafts. Colleagues at Policy Network, particularly Josh Newlove and Alex Porter, have also provided invaluable assistance.

This is one of two reports published as part of the launch of the Policy Network workstream: The Next Progressive Project for Britain. Accompanying this is another report marking the launch: Don’t Forget The Middle, which can be found here: http://www.policy-network.net/publications/6227/Dont-Forget-The-Middle
1. Introduction

The British left is in an uncertain, but vastly improved position since the June 2017 general election. Across Europe, mainstream social democratic parties have slumped to historic lows, losing voters to the centre right, populist right, populist left, as well as regional separatists. The British Labour party, no doubt helped by the first past the post system, has avoided such splits and – at least in England – appears to have succeeded in uniting opposition to the Conservative party across the centre left.

The recent gains of populist parties in Europe, along with Trump’s rise in the US, have opened up new dividing lines in politics. Some believed that the traditional left-right divide that has characterised political contests for the last hundred years had broken down, and was being replaced by a new dividing line.¹ In Britain, the Remain-Leave split at the EU referendum mirrored not only attitudes to related issues like immigration, international co-operation, national identity and globalisation, but also to a wider set of social issues: feminism, LGBT rights, multiculturalism, environmentalism, and a general sense of nostalgia about the past.

This divide in the electorate has been referred to as ‘open versus closed’, ‘globalists versus nativists’, ‘cosmopolitans versus communitarians’, the ‘anywheres versus the somewheres’, and more simply ‘liberal versus conservative’. After the 2016 referendum, many feared this divide would fragment the left’s electoral coalition. In fact, at the 2017 election Labour managed to unite a majority of Remainers behind them and gain new younger voters excited by Corbyn’s message, while the Conservatives failed to gain as many Leavers - particularly in traditionally Labour areas - as they had initially hoped.

Despite this, there are still serious challenges for the left in Britain. Labour did not win the 2017 election, and will have to gain three times as many seats at the next to form a working majority. While it would be foolish to make any electoral predictions so soon after June’s surprise result, it is important to point out that these divides have not gone away, and that there is every risk of them resurfacing as Labour goes into the next election when, as a serious contender for government, the party can expect vastly increased scrutiny of its detailed policy positions.

This short paper is being published in tandem with a second Policy Network paper – Don’t Forget the Middle – which analyses public attitudes and Labour’s position at the 2017 election, allowing for an evaluation of the more immediate challenges facing the party. This paper takes a longer-term view, looking at structural changes that have contributed to an uncertain future for the left. These include the erosion of class politics, changes in class identity, new divides in the UK electorate, and changing social and political attitudes. Taken together, the papers help to frame the thinking behind our new Policy Network work stream: the Next Progressive Project for Britain, chaired by Professor Andrew Gamble. The aim of the project is to be the focal point for working towards a popular and credible platform to enable Labour and the broader centre left to build on the 2017 result and deliver a new progressive majority for Britain.

2. Key findings

Class politics

Voting in Britain has become steadily less divided along traditional class lines in recent decades. Long-term party identification has weakened and is also less class-based.

However, class remains an important predictor of social and political attitudes: professionals are more socially liberal and pro-immigration but less in favour of redistribution than working-class voters.

Labour’s electoral coalition is particularly split along class lines, and may become harder to hold together as time goes on: there are larger attitudinal divides by class among Labour voters under the age of 45 than others in that age group.

There were clear class-based swings at the 2017 general election.

Class identity and class structure

Class is a less important component of people’s identity than it was in the 1980s, with more than half (55 per cent) of Britons no longer identifying with any class.

There is a declining traditional ‘blue-collar’ working-class base in the UK, as in many other countries.

New demographic divisions

Labour’s support base increasingly resembles the US Democrats’ coalition in certain key respects: higher levels of support among the young, women, university-educated, ethnic minorities and those on very low incomes.

However, the UK’s demographics, particularly its relative lack of ethnic diversity, mean a US-style progressive coalition is unlikely to deliver a governing majority without support from other groups.

Education was the key divide at the 2016 US election and the UK EU referendum, while age is increasingly the dominant split in voting behaviour at UK general elections.

Unless today’s young people continue to vote Labour later in their lives, the UK’s age structure is becoming less favourable to a US-style progressive coalition. Today there are roughly two people aged 65 and over for every 18-24 year old. By 2039, the ratio will be three to one.

While today’s young people are more socially liberal and more likely to vote for left-of-centre parties, they are less traditionally leftwing, for example on attitudes to redistribution, than previous generations of young people.

The trend for millennials to be less traditionally leftwing than baby boomers is particularly acute among Labour voters.
Changing attitudes and issue salience

Alongside generational differences, there has been a steady slide away from traditional leftwing values but towards social liberalism.

While the salience of immigration has fallen away since the EU referendum, there is good reason to believe this is a temporary blip.

The politics of debt, which has caused so much trouble for Labour over the last decade, appears to have subsided at least temporarily, but there is still a challenge for Labour in convincing voters of the economic credibility of progressive policies.
3. Class voting

Class was the fundamental voting divide in British politics for much of the second half of the 20th century. The role of class in electoral politics in Britain has gradually changed as other factors have gained in importance. In the 1964 general election, the Conservatives won by 40 points among ‘non-manual’ middle-class voters, while Labour won the vote of manual workers by 36 points. By the 2015 election, the gap was just 12 points among the non-manual middle classes, while manual working-class voters split evenly between the two main parties.\(^2\)

In addition, party identification has a shrinking class basis. The British Social Attitudes survey reveals that while more managers, professionals and self-employed people identified with Labour in 2012 than they did in 1984, fewer manual workers felt the same.

**Figure 1:** per cent identifying most with the Labour party, by occupational class\(^3\)

On the one hand, as Diamond argues, “support for social democracy has grown among the ‘salaried middle strata’ and the ‘educated and intellectual professions’”\(^4\). On the other, as the manual working class has eroded, voters on modest incomes, mostly in the private service-based sectors, are less loyal to Labour than those in the (largely unionised) manufacturing and mining sectors dominant in the postwar period.

Labour’s strength among working-class voters gave it a stable base of support to build from, just as the Conservatives built an electoral coalition from the higher social grades. The decline in class voting contributed to a ‘fragmentation’ of the two-party system where challenger parties were able to gain ground campaigning on issues that cut across class lines.

This continued up to the 2017 election, where England experienced a ‘defragmentation’ effect back to a largely two-party system, with former Ukip voters overwhelmingly moving to the Conservatives without any significant recovery for the Liberal Democrats. The resulting distribution is even less organised along traditional class lines, as many working-class voters moved to the


Conservatives, either directly from Labour or via Ukip, while many (particularly young) professionals opted for Labour.

Figure 2: combined share of the vote for Labour and the Conservatives, UK general elections since 1945

Figure 3: constituency swing from Conservative to Labour at the 2017 election, by per cent of working age population in routine and semi-routine occupations

The decline in class-based voting does not mean it is no longer an important dividing line in British politics. In terms of predicting voting behaviour, as shown below, age and other factors are now more important but class remains an important predictor of basic political values and policy preferences alongside these other demographic categories. For example, NatCen found in their 2015 British Social Attitudes survey that professionals and managers were more rightwing, more pro-immigration and more libertarian than those in routine and semi-routine occupations who were more leftwing, anti-immigrant and authoritarian. Moreover, as the graph above shows, if Labour were able to stem the tide of working class voters, they would be in a much better electoral position. In other words, the decline in class-based voting has occurred as a result of class-based shifts in voting behaviour.

**The left’s long-term class problem**

Analysis of British Election Study data reveals a deeper problem. Among younger people – not the small bloc of 18-24 year olds who vote – but among those aged 45 and under, the attitudes of the 2015 Labour voter coalition were more split along class lines than the rest of the population. Of course, Labour needs to worry about more than just its 2015 supporters if it is to regain power; but the fact that its recent voters are divided should be worrying at a time when it needs to build even further from that base. Here are just two examples: immigration policy preferences, and views on the basic leftwing idea that government should redistribute from rich to poor.

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6. Ibid.
When we examine the views of Labour voters in isolation, we can see that younger cohorts were more divided along class lines than baby boomers and the older portion of ‘generation X’. Whether this is a lifecycle effect or a cohort effect, class will, in all likelihood, continue to be an important factor shaping basic political values and policy preferences; this will continue to create problems for Labour, and any other party that seeks to win elections through a similar cross-class coalition of voters.

In recent elections Labour has retained a significant rump of its working-class support, as well as new, more professional groups. They have different values and policy preferences, and there are related, overlapping divides along the lines of age, education, income and geography. The EU referendum exposed a division along these lines across the country as a whole, but it affects Labour more because of the composition of its voter coalition.

The well-trodden narrative of the ‘Brexit divide’ has so far focused primarily on non-economic issues: nationalism, immigration, globalisation, multiculturalism and other social issues that map neatly onto
the split, such as attitudes to feminism, LGBT rights and environmentalism. The debate has therefore focused on how progressives can bridge the gap on issues like immigration and come up with a compromise on Brexit. However, as shown, there is another aspect to this class divide: economics. It has long been the case that the middle and upper-middle classes have been more economically rightwing. For example, they have been less keen on redistribution than working-class voters\textsuperscript{12}, but that didn't matter so much for Labour in the 1960s when its voter base was overwhelmingly working-class. More recently, a new generation of better educated young professionals has emerged as predominantly Labour voters, and members of this group tend to be less ‘leftwing’ on economic issues than working-class Labour voters. In fact, when placed on a composite left-right scale, young professional Labour voters are, on average, significantly closer to the average non-Labour voter than to Labour voters who are not young professionals.

Figure 9: mean score on the British Election Study composite left-right scale, ranging from 0 (left) to 10 (right)

![Figure 9: mean score on the British Election Study composite left-right scale, ranging from 0 (left) to 10 (right)](image)

This is the crux of Labour’s long-term strategic problem: if the party emphasises its support for immigration, globalisation and social liberalism, it risks alienating the more communitarian and generally working-class support base even further. If Labour changes tack to adopt a more conservative, globalisation-sceptic position to win back the voters it has gradually lost since the 1980s, it risks losing the new professional middle class. Alternatively, the recent strategy of focusing on traditional ‘left’ economic issues, is unlikely to work in the long term because the class divide is as strong on economics as identity politics.

4. Class identity and class structure

As the predictive power of class as an indicator of voting behaviour has declined, class remains relevant in determining political values and policy preferences. Given the latter, one strategy for the recovery of the left might be to focus even more directly on the politics of class. As opposed to recent rhetoric from the left, which has tended to focus on the elites versus the masses, or the 1 per cent and the 99 per cent, Labour could try to bring its working-class support back up to 1960s levels. After all, the advancement the interests of the industrial working class has traditionally been the British left’s – and the Labour party’s – primary reason for existence. There are difficulties with this approach, however. First, it could risk alienating the middle-class voters it has gained since the era of dominant class politics. Second, class identity and Britain’s actual class structure have changed significantly over the last 30 years, and not in Labour’s favour.

Surveys from the British Election Study and British Social Attitudes survey have asked a two-stage question on class in recent decades. First, do participants identify with any particular class (middle, working or other), and second, if forced to choose between working and middle class, which label would they identify with most?

When forced to choose between working and middle class, the proportion of the population identifying as working-class has not changed significantly since the 1980s – it remains at around 60 per cent – a very large pool of voters and potentially an election winning force. Moreover, in the 2015 BSA survey, 82 per cent of those who identified as working-class (and 77 percent of all respondents) felt there was either a very or fairly wide difference between the social classes. Those identifying as working-class were also more likely than those with a middle-class identity to think that class differences have grown wider. Overall, respondents were more likely to think class differences had grown wider than narrowed. When asked, people clearly still feel that class matters in the UK.

However, underlying this is a significant shift: in 1983, 35 per cent identified as working-class without the prompt. By 2015 that figure had fallen to 25 per cent. Class is clearly less of an integral component of people’s identity than it was in the 1980s, with more than half (55 per cent) of Britons no longer identifying with any class.
At the same time, 47 per cent of those in professional or managerial occupations now identify as working-class, and many in this group say they do not feel particularly close to other ‘working-class’ people. Instead, as the BSA study shows, much of people’s working-class identity is drawn from their parents’ occupational background.

Moreover, it is without doubt the case that the real occupational class structure of Britain has changed significantly in the postwar decades.

Figure 11: male labour force by occupational class, 1951-2016, Census and 2016 Annual Population Survey

14. British Election Study 1983; British Social Attitudes 33
The trend of a declining ‘traditional’ ‘blue-collar’ working-class base is hardly unique to the UK. The dominant trend across western Europe in recent decades has been towards what Diamond calls the ‘5-75-20’ society. Roughly 5 per cent at the top of society enjoy runaway success with inherited assets or top jobs in finance, while the vast majority represent a new middle class of both blue- and white-collar employees, in work but increasingly insecure and apprehensive about the future, and a marginalised bottom 20 per cent composed of those largely excluded from the labour markets and dependent on benefits.

As we chart in Don’t Forget the Middle, Labour had a problem with ‘C2’ voters and those on lower and middle incomes at the 2017 election, who still make up a sizable chunk of the electorate and who tend to identify as working rather than middle class. This group is in the ‘75’ middle in Diamond’s structure. They work in care, sales, leisure and hospitality as well as traditional skilled blue-collar jobs. As we argue in that paper, Labour must find a strategy that enables them to pick up these voters in the lower-middle, while holding on to its support among more affluent professionals and those at the bottom of the labour market – Diamond’s ‘20’.

16. Ibid.
17. Diamond, Endgame for the centre left?
5. New demographic divisions

While occupational class has diminished as a predictor of voting behaviour, other factors have become more important. This has given rise to the hope that a new ‘postindustrial progressive coalition’ – broadly similar to that which twice put Barack Obama in the White House – that could be replicated in other developed countries, including Britain.

Labour’s support base does increasingly appear to resemble the US Democrats’ coalition in key respects. It has higher levels of support among the young than the old, among women than men, and among the university-educated and those from ethnic minority backgrounds. The main problem here is that the UK does not have the demographic composition to deliver a progressive government along these lines; the main difference is that Britain is less ethnically diverse. Diversity in the UK is not projected to reach today’s US levels until the 2060s. Moreover, there is some evidence that as the UK BME community has grown, levels of Labour support at elections and long-term identification with the party has fallen. The gender divide is nowhere near US levels, most likely in part as the UK lacks salient ‘culture wars’ over women’s rights.

There is another crucial difference between the US and UK progressive coalitions: in the US, both age and education are strong indicators of voting behaviour independently of one another. In other words, college-educated pensioners were far more likely to support Clinton than non-college educated pensioners, and among both college and non-college educated groups, young people were far more likely to support Clinton than older people. Similar trends can also be seen in the EU referendum vote in the UK. UK voting behaviour, though, appears to be slightly different. Young voters are considerably more likely to vote Labour than older voters, but also much more likely to go to or have been to university. In 1950 the participation rate was just 3 per cent; now it is 48 per cent. At the 2015 election, the education gap was, in fact, effectively a proxy for age: voting intention within age brackets did not differ substantially by education. At the June 2017 election the within-age-group education gap re-emerged among older voters, but not among the young.

The figures here show similar groups by age and education across the US and UK according to how they voted in the US presidential election, the UK EU referendum, and how they intend to vote at a UK general election (fieldwork November-December 2016).

Figure 13: margin of leads in US and UK campaigns, 18-25 year-old whites with and without university education

Figure 14: margin of leads in US and UK campaigns, whites aged over 65 with and without college education

21. The sample is limited to white participants, as ethnicity is a strong factor in its own right, particularly in the US case, and the distribution of ethnic minority voters is not even across age and education, thus obscuring age and education effects. In a full regression analysis other confounding variables can be accounted for, but this is less easily presentable for the purposes of a quick illustration. Data taken from the US Co-operative Congressional Election Study (2016), the UK British Election Study (EU referendum and 2015 general election), and a Populus poll conducted for Policy Network (2017 general election - full details in P. Diamond & C. Cadywould (2017), Don’t Forget the Middle, Policy Network

22. Ibid.
6. Age

Age was the single biggest divide in pre-election polls at the 2017 general election. Conservative and Labour support were almost a mirror image of one another across the age range:

**Figure 15: Conservative and Labour support by age, 2017 general election**

While the extent of youth turnout was the big question in the run-up to 8 June, the longer-term issue is: what will happen to the young people who did vote in the coming years and decades? Is it a one off? Is the age divide a ‘lifecycle effect’, where each generation’s young people vote for the left and then become more right-wing as they get older; or is it a ‘cohort effect’, where the political attitudes of millennials are set at an early age and remain fairly constant throughout their lives?

If the latter, then Labour’s future looks bright as a new core vote emerges, this time based on generation rather than class. If it is indeed a lifecycle effect, demographic trends look bad for Labour: today there are around two people aged 65 and over for every person aged between 18 and 24; however, the ratio is projected to be three to one by 2039.
The evidence is mixed, and suggests there are both age and cohort effects at work. On the one hand, 18-24 year olds have been consistently more likely to vote Labour than Conservative since 1974. The age gap remained fairly consistent for the best part of four decades despite different cohorts entering and then leaving the 18-24 bracket, and despite the parties’ changing overall electoral fortunes.

On the other hand, Tilley’s 2002 study found that cohorts that came of age under periods of non-Conservative domination (the mid-1940s and mid-1970s) were consistently more supportive of Labour, while those coming of age in the late 1960s, early 1970s, the 1980s and 1990s (periods of

Conservative domination) were more supportive of the Conservatives.\footnote{27} This phenomenon exists alongside an age effect for older voters to be more Conservative. If Tilley’s analysis prevails to the present day, then the echoes of the excitement felt for Labour by many young people at the 2017 election could continue to be heard into the 2020s and beyond.

However, there is one other important caveat relating to young people’s increasing support for Labour. It runs counter to demographic trends on many core political values. Young people are considerably more socially liberal on issues such as immigration, feminism and LGBT rights, which fits comfortably with where Labour and other left-of-centre parties position themselves even as the Conservatives have modernised on certain issues (notably on same-sex marriage, for example).

Figure 18: per cent who disagree a husband’s job is to earn money; a wife’s job is to look after the home and family\footnote{28}

Source: Ipsos MORI Millennial study

They are more likely to vote for leftwing parties and identify as leftwing or left-of-centre. However, their policy preferences are notably less leftwing than previous generations in relation to key economic issues, notably redistribution and the welfare state.

Ipsos MORI’s 2017 report Millennial Myths and Realities, for example, found that millennials were less likely to support higher welfare spending on the poor, both compared to the rest of the population today, but particularly compared to the previous generation when its members were in their 20s and 30s.
Ipsos MORI also found that each generation has become successively less ‘proud’ of the welfare state, and are more likely to think unemployment benefit is too high. Grasso et al (2017) found that controlling for lifecycle and period effects, ‘Blair’s babies’ – those who entered adulthood between 1997 and 2010 – were even more rightwing on many measures than the generation who experienced Margaret Thatcher’s premiership in their formative political years. Research has also found that young women in particular tend to fall on the side of individual rather than state responsibility; for example, they tend to believe the unemployed should lose their benefits if they refuse to work.

The age gap on redistribution preferences also emphasises the importance of generational effects. The British Election Study (BES) asks a different question about whether the government should redistribute, rather than specifically mentioning welfare spending, and finds that young people are still slightly more supportive of government redistribution than older people. However, the age gap has shrunk since the 1980s.
Perhaps most worryingly for the Labour party, as with the class analysis above, its voters appear divided in a very different way to the rest of the population. In fact, even on the British Election Study’s wording, young Labour voters are less likely to support redistribution than older Labour voters, while the opposite (more traditional) trend can be seen among respondents who are not Labour voters.

Figure 21: support for government redistribution (per cent agree/strongly agree)\(^3\)

33. Note that the question asked in the 1983 and 2016 surveys were slightly different. In 1983 respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed that ‘income and wealth should be redistributed towards ordinary working people’, while in 2016 they were asked if they agreed or disagreed that ‘government should redistribute income from the better off to those who are less well off.’

34. British Election Study, 2014-18 internet panel wave 10
7. Changing social attitudes and issue salience

These cohort effects – each generation being more socially liberal but less traditionally leftwing than the previous one – have combined with period effects – a steady slide away from traditional leftwing values such as redistribution across all generations over time as shown in figure 19 above.

Sociologists such as Ulrich Beck and Anthony Giddens have chronicled how societies became increasingly individualistic in the latter stages of the 20th century. On the one hand, this has eroded traditional features of industrial societies that engendered solidarity – strong class and community ties – which in turn translated into support for collective self-help in the form of welfare states. On the other hand, this period also saw the rise of ‘post-materialist’ values that focus on goals such as environmental protection, civil rights and gender equality – issues that progressive parties have overwhelmingly embraced. One of the most stunning turnarounds of recent decades has been the shift in attitudes towards same-sex relationships, but similar trends towards greater tolerance and liberal values can be seen in attitudes towards gender equality and declining racial prejudices.

Figure 22: attitudes towards sexual relations between two adults of the same sex

The 2017 election, like the 2016 referendum, revealed a nation divided. As racial prejudice has declined in Britain, concern about immigration has risen. In the latest wave of the British Election Study survey, more people said they felt attempts to give equal opportunities to ethnic minorities had gone too far (31 per cent) than not far enough (21 per cent).

Attempts have been made to categorise these new divides in social attitudes beyond the simple binary ‘open versus closed’ narrative. Callaghan, for example, distinguished between 1) ‘traditionalists’ who were more pro-welfare and pro-trade union but also more anti-EU and sceptical of free movement; 2) ‘modernists’ who were more individualist and consumerist in their politics; 3) ‘post-materialists’ who prioritised quality of life as well as ecological concerns; and 4) ‘hedonistic postmodernists’ who stressed the importance of civil liberties, technology and markets. Painter and Lowles put around 25 per cent of the population into the most anti-immigration categories, 50 per cent in the middle, and around classify around 25 per cent as either ‘confident multiculturals’ or

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35. British Social Attitudes, various years
37. J. Callaghan (2009), The retreat of social democracy, Manchester: Manchester University Press
‘mainstream liberals’ who are pro-immigration.\textsuperscript{38} Cruddas, in his review of the 2015 election, placed the voters into three camps: socially conservative ‘settlers’; swing-voting or politically uninterested ‘prospectors’; and socially liberal ‘pioneers’.\textsuperscript{39} A full table summarising various schema from the literature is included as an appendix to this paper.

While concern about immigration has fallen away since the EU referendum, there is good reason to believe this is a temporary blip as the reality of Brexit fails to match expectations that leaving the EU will somehow ‘sort’ the issue, especially for the most immigration-sceptic leave voters. Given the strong divisions of the British public – and especially Labour voters – on the issue of immigration, triangulation on the issue may well become more difficult, even as it becomes the only option to keep together an unstable electoral coalition. \textit{Economics trumped culture at the 2017 election, but there is no guarantee this will be replicated next time around.} Labour can make the backlash against globalisation work for them if the debate shifts to the distribution of gains, but this is hard to engineer.

Similarly, there remains considerable uncertainty over whether and how much the ‘Overton window’ – the range of politically acceptable policy options at any given time – has opened or shifted in the left’s favour. The ‘debt politics’ of the last decade has made tax and spend – and even investment policies – difficult to sell. Signals from Theresa May’s team that austerity is coming to an end may suggest a positive shift, as do suggestions of a ‘softening’ of the approach to Brexit. If there is a Brexit-related hit to the economy in 2019 – or even simply a prolonged continuation of the squeeze on living standards in recent months – the debate could turn either way. It could provoke demand for an end to the public sector pay freeze, reversing benefit cuts and more redistribution, or could sharpen minds about long-term concerns about the credibility of progressive spending plans. After all, the national debt has continued to rise since 2010, and the deficit is unlikely to be eliminated in the lifetime of this parliament. Peter Taylor-Gooby has set out a ‘left trilemma’ of demonstrating economic competence, matching public opinion (including on welfare conditionality and immigration), and being progressive. It is unclear whether the conditions are right to break out of this trilemma. After years of failed Conservative austerity, do the voters yet believe progressive policies can be combined with economic competence, or will they continue to come up against concerns about their credibility?


8. Conclusion

In the face of such stark political divisions, it might seem only a ‘big tent’ approach has any hope of succeeding in British electoral politics. The pejorative equivalent to this, though, is ‘triangulation’: in politics-speak conceding some ground on certain issues to appeal to opponents in an attempt to win or retain a broad appeal. The clear danger with this strategy, however, as we have seen in the near total collapse of particular centre-left parties across Europe (which some have termed ‘Pasokification’ following the fate of the Greek socialists), is that by trying to appeal to everyone, social democrats end up appealing to no one. They adopt a few leftwing policies, but leftwing voters prefer the ‘real thing’ and vote for the far left or new leftwing populist parties; they adopt the tone of fiscal discipline, but economically conservative voters prefer the mainstream centre right; they project a tough position on immigration and integration, but the ‘nativist’ voters prefer the populist right. If there is a separate cosmopolitan, social liberal force as well, as in France and the Netherlands, the social democrats risk losing this group too.

Ultimately, British politics is increasingly characterised by instability, which lends itself to throwing up unexpected results. Long-term party identification has fallen, alongside a decline in voting according to traditional class lines. New divides have emerged, but as we saw at the 2017 election, the new issues can emerge during a campaign, while others decline in salience. As this paper has shown, the left’s electoral coalition remains particularly unstable, and there are considerable challenges ahead in keeping it together at future elections. If 2017 has taught us anything though, it is that we should stop being surprised by surprises.
## 9. Appendix: classifications of public attitudes

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Callaghan (2009)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Traditionalists</strong></td>
<td>More pro-welfare and pro-trade union but more anti-EU and sceptical of free movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Modernists</strong></td>
<td>More individualist and consumerist in their politics, prioritise individual achievement and aspiration. Wary of government spending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post-materialists</strong></td>
<td>Prioritise quality of life as well as ecological concerns, often tax rich and time poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hedonistic post-materialists</strong></td>
<td>Libertarian ‘pleasure-seekers’ stressing importance of freedom and civil liberties, pro-technology and markets</td>
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<tr>
<th>Painter and Lowles (2011)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Active enmity</strong></td>
<td>Open hostility to immigrants, intolerant of religious and ethnic difference, disengaged from formal politics</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Latent hostiles</strong></td>
<td>Less well-educated, fearful of immigration and globalisation, want parties to defend national identity and values</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Culturally integrationist</strong></td>
<td>Mainly older and more prosperous voters with immigration concerns around identity and integration, not public services</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Identity ambivalents</strong></td>
<td>Less optimistic outlook, ambivalent on immigration impact on public services</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mainstream liberals</strong></td>
<td>Well educated, sceptical about immigration but regard as net benefit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Confident multiculturals</strong></td>
<td>Centre-left cosmopolitan professionals, positive about diversity, cosmopolitanism and mass immigration</td>
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<th>Opinium/SMF (2016)</th>
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<td><strong>Our Britain</strong></td>
<td>Anti-immigration, broadly isolationist in outlook</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Common sense</strong></td>
<td>Don’t think of themselves as having strong political opinions, but support low tax economy and opposition to immigration</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Free liberals</strong></td>
<td>Strong faith in the market, little interest in social conservatism. Pro-business, anti-welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Britain</strong></td>
<td>Pro-immigration, pro-single market, supports low tax economy, internationalist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Swing Voters</strong></td>
<td>Mixture of views, supporting an equal society, internationalist outlook, hard stance on benefits and support low taxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Progressives</strong></td>
<td>Open, internationalist, pro-welfare state, balanced on tax and spend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community</strong></td>
<td>Pro-redistribution, sceptical of business, anti-immigration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Democratic socialists</strong></td>
<td>Pro-immigration, pro-welfare state, pro-redistribution, internationalist outlook</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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40. J. Callaghan, *The retreat of social democracy*  
41. A. Painter & N. Lowles, *Fear and Hope*  
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Settlers</strong></td>
<td>Social conservatives concerned with home, family and national security. Value safety, belonging, cultural identity and continuity of their way of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prospects</strong></td>
<td>Acquisitive and aspirational, low interest in politics, transactional approach to voting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pioneers</strong></td>
<td>Socially liberal, altruistic, value openness, creativity, self-fulfilment and self-determination</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>