

A conceptual image of a seesaw on a brick wall. The seesaw is tilted upwards on the right side, where a single person stands. On the left side, which is lower, a group of several people stands. The background is a cloudy sky.

# Education, Democracy & Inequality

Political Engagement & Citizenship Education in Europe

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# Education, Democracy & Inequality

- U.K. Longstanding & increasing socioeconomic inequalities in voice and power
- Democratic institutions lose responsiveness and legitimacy to groups who do not participate
- Feelings of alienation and distrust from political elite
- Can be mobilised by populists



# Social Inequalities in Political Engagement UK

## Turnout by social class in UK 2017 General Election

- Managerial (AB) 69% (+5 in EU Referendum)
- Administrative (C1) 68%
- Skilled manual (C2) 60%
- Manual & unemployed (DE) 53% (+5 in EU Referendum)
- Increase social inequalities in voter turnout from 2015 general election

<https://www.ipsos.com/ipsos-mori/en-uk/how-britain-voted-2017-election>

# Social Inequalities in Political Engagement UK

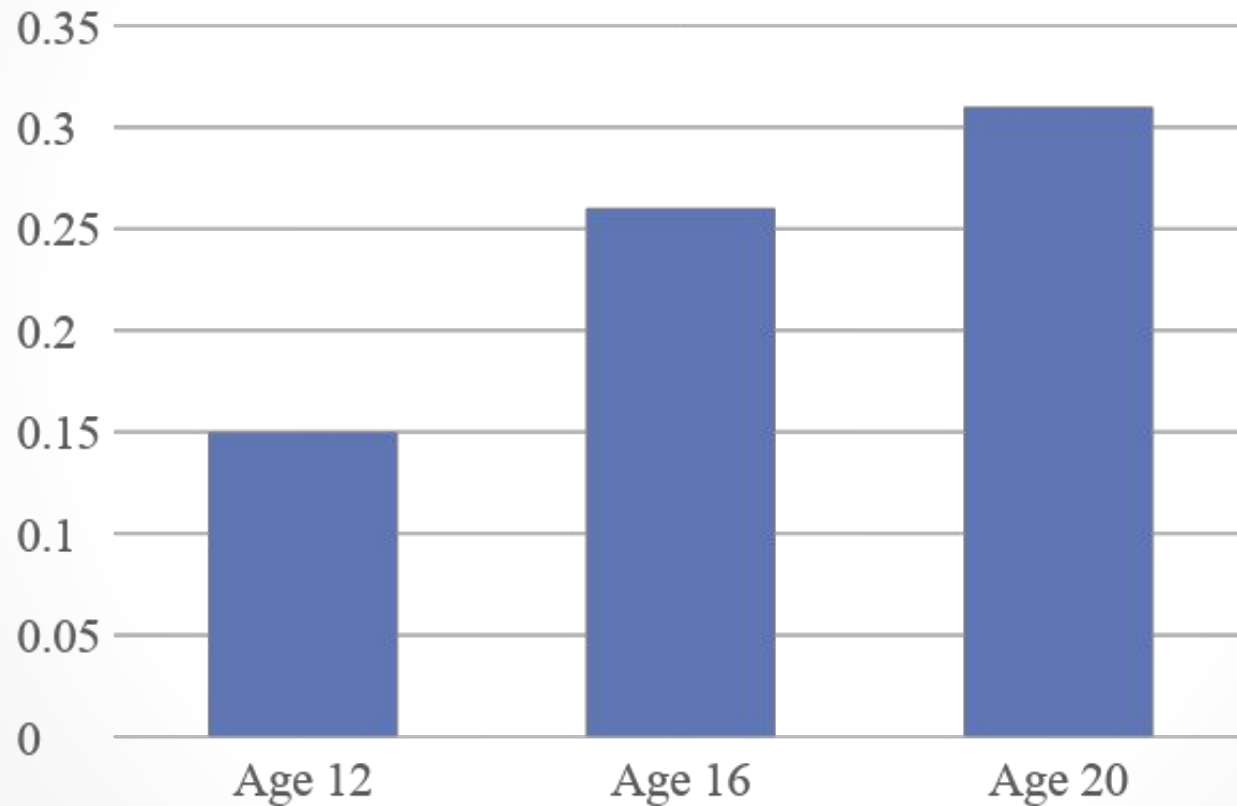
Turnout by social class for 18-34 age  
2017 election

	(Comparison with overall voter turnout for the particular social class)	(Comparison with EU Referendum )
• AB 61%	(-8)	(same)
• C1 64%	(-4)	(-9)
• C2 49%	(-11)	(+4)
• DE 35%	(-18)	(+3)

(Ipsos Mori 2017)

<https://www.ipsos.com/ipsos-mori/en-uk/how-britain-voted-2017-election>

## Relation between social background and intention to vote among young people (correlations)



Source: the Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study (CELS)

# Education, Democracy & Inequality

- Education has been one of the main contributors to social reproduction
- Lack of access to political learning for disadvantaged students
- Also holds the key to the reducing these inequalities
- There are methods that work



# Role of school in this process?

*Political learning happens in school in two forms;*

- 1) Participatory learning processes; School councils/parliaments, debates, mock elections and an open learning environment*
- 2) Knowledge acquisition; Citizenship education classes with specific learning outcomes and assessment*



# Role of school in this process?

*Contribution of school to social reproduction of inequalities in political engagement;*

## **1) Access to learning**

- I. *Barriers within the school*
- II. *Schools with lower social status offering fewer political learning opportunities*

## **2) Providing learning opportunities that benefit middle class more**





# Citizenship Education Longitudinal dataset

- **National representative sample** of young people in schools
  - R 1 11-12 2003
  - R2 13-14 2005
  - R 3 15-16 2007
- **N 7123 (38% attrition)**
- Contains **political learning opportunities at school**
- Contains political engagement items

# Methods & Variables

## Opportunities for learning political engagement

### Methods: OLS Regression and MLA

- Citizenship Education
- Open classroom climate
- Political activities inside school
  - Student councils, Debating, Electing council, Mock elections

## Mitigation or Acceleration effects

### Methods: OLS Regression

- **SES \*each of these learning methods**
- **Political engagement**
  - Voting intentions
  - Protesting intentions
  - Political parties

# Political Activities

	Year 7 11-12	Year 9 13-14	Year 11 15-16
Social Background	0.073***	.071**	0.107***
Gender*	-0.091***	-0.013	-0.007
Ethnicity (white British)	-0.06**	-0.007	-0.093***
Prior Round		0.139***	0.282***
R <sup>2</sup>	0.018	0.024	0.104

P < 0.05; \*\*P < 0.01; \*\*\*P < 0.001. Gender 1= male and 2=female

# Open Classroom Climate

	Year 9 13-14	Year 11 15-16 (M2)
Social Background	0.079***	0.066***
Gender*	0.074***	.047**
Ethnicity (white British)	-0.014	-0.028
Prior Round		0.363***
R <sup>2</sup>	0.011	0.145

P < 0.05; \*\*P < 0.01; \*\*\*P < 0.001. Gender 1= male and 2=female

# Citizenship Education

	Year 7 11-12	Year 9 13-14	Year 11 15-16
Social Background	-0.007	0.019	-0.005
Gender <sup>*</sup>	0.032	0.047*	0.025
Ethnicity	-0.024	-0.017	-0.031
Prior round		0.214***	0.194***
R <sup>2</sup>	0	0.048	0.039

P < 0.05; \*\*P < 0.01; \*\*\*P < 0.001. Gender 1= male and 2=female

# Access to learning

- Disadvantaged students report lower levels of participation in participatory forms of learning political engagement
  - Political activities in school
  - Open classroom climate
- Citizenship Education
  - Little evidence that it influences quantity

# School Composition

**School level** (social composition of school and learning experiences offered in England)

**Schools that have a higher disadvantaged intake;**

- **Offer fewer opportunities for participating in political activities**
- **Fewer experiences open classroom climate**

# Mitigating effects on voting

	Year 7 Age 11-12	Year 9 Age 13-14	Year 11 Aged 15-16
Gender	0.013	-0.04	-0.58***
Ethnicity (white British)	0.023	-0.025	0.029
Prior Round voting intentions		0.340***	0.411***
Social Background (SES)	0.142***	0.176***	0.157***
Citizenship Education	0.029	0.048	0.055**
SES x Citizenship Ed	0.016	-0.02	-0.038*
Political Activities	0.062*	0.064*	0.1
SES x PA	0.011	-0.029	-0.019
Open classroom climate		0.100***	0.107***
SES x OCC		0.002	0
R <sup>2</sup>	0.023	0.195	0.288



# Mitigating effects

Political outcomes	SES x Cit. Edu	SES x Political Activities	SES x Open Climate
Vote	Mitigating		
Parties	Mitigating		
Protest	Mitigating		

# Mitigating effects?

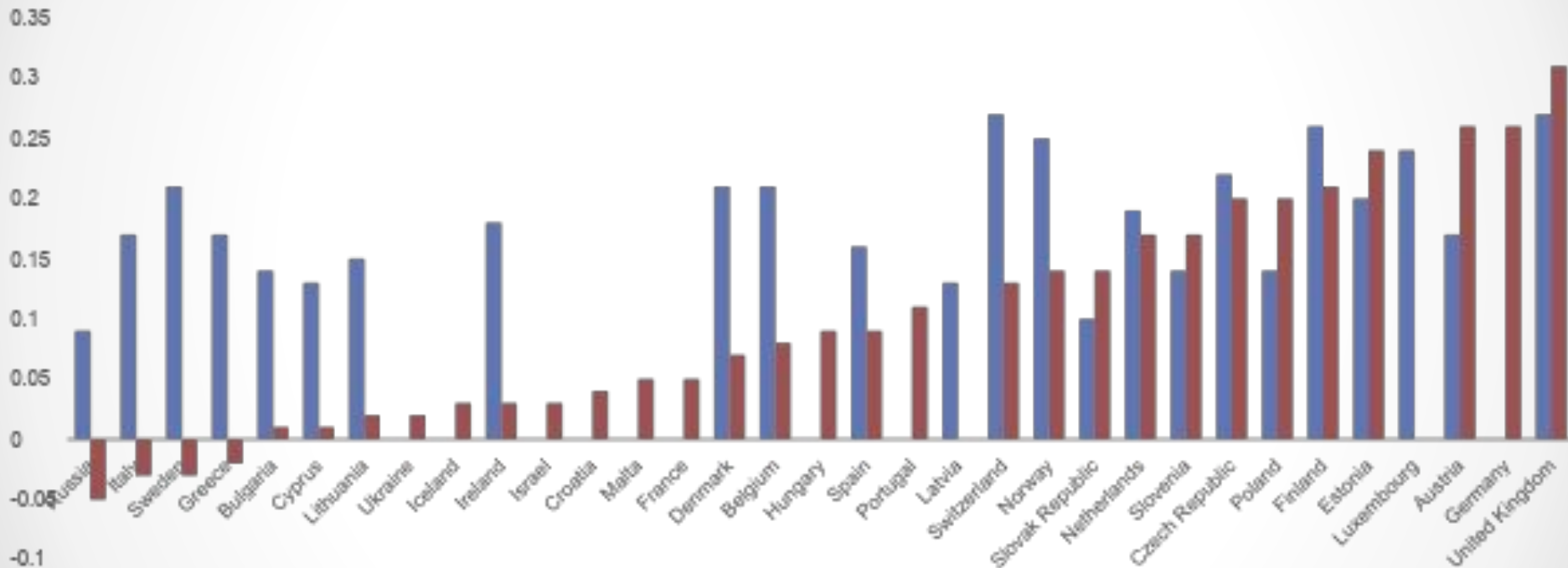
## Individual level

- No methods benefited middle class children more
- Citizenship Education found to benefit disadvantaged more

# Comparison with Europe

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# Relationship between social background & voting in Europe



■ 14 year olds ■ 18-30 year olds

European Social Survey (2008-2014)

ICCS 2009 for the 14 year olds;

SES measured parents education & occupation

# Relationship between social background & engagement in Europe

	Voting	Legal protest	Political parties	Illegal protest
England	0.31***	0.21***	0.07***	-0.13***
Switzerland	0.30***	0.21***	0.10***	-0.02
Ireland	0.25***	0.18***	0.07***	-0.12***
Sweden	0.24***	0.17***	0.07***	-0.11***
Italy	0.23***	0.15***	0.10***	-0.04*
Poland	0.16***	0.12***	-0.00	0.01

Correlations between SES and an engagement outcome using ICCS 2009 data

\* P=0.05;  
 \*\* P=0.01;  
 \*\*\* P=0.001.

# Social gaps in access to learning opportunities (correlations) (lower secondary)

	SES x civic participation	SES x Open climate
England	0.30***	0.17***
Switzerland	0.13***	-0.03
Ireland	0.17***	0.12***
Sweden	0.23***	0.12***
Italy	0.10***	0.09***
Poland	0.17***	0.04*

\* P < .05; \*\* P < .01; \*\*\* P < .001

# School social composition and access to learning opportunities

	Civic participation	Open climate
England		
SES	0.27***	0.10***
Classroom SES	0.10	0.24***
Switzerland		
SES	0.10***	-0.02
Classroom SES	0.05	-0.04
Ireland		
SES	0.16***	0.08***
Classroom SES	-0.01	0.20***
Sweden		
SES	0.18***	0.07***
Classroom SES	0.12*	0.15*
Italy		
SES	0.11***	0.11***
Classroom SES	-0.06	-0.08
Poland		
SES	0.17***	0.00
Classroom SES	-0.06	0.13*

What about the role  
played by *early selection*?

Does it enhance these  
gaps?



Social gaps in political engagement are larger in states with early selection systems at age 14

	<b>Comprehensive systems</b>	<b>Early selection systems</b>	<b>Correlation difference</b>
	Correlation with SES	Correlation with SES	Fisher Z
<i>Engagement Outcomes</i>			
Voting	.194***	.243***	6.43***
Legal protest	.120***	.149***	3.69***
Joining a political party	.027***	.031***	0.5

\* P < .05; \*\* P < .01; \*\*\* P < .001; Based on 18 states with comprehensive systems and 5 with early selection systems

They are also larger among *young adults* in states with early selection systems

The link between institutional characteristics and **electoral participation**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
SES	0.15**	0.13**	0.15**	0.15***	0.14***	0.15**
<u>Comprehensivization</u>	0.06			0.06		
Vocational orientation		0.17			0.18	
HE participation			0.02			0.02
SES x <u>comprehensivization</u>				-0.09*		
SES x Vocational orientation					0.12**	
SES x HE participation						-0.00

\* P < 0.05; \*\* P < 0.01; \*\*\* P < 0.001. N = 31233 at the individual level; N = 31 at the country level

# And this also applies for taking part in legal protest

The link between institutional characteristics and **participation in legal protest**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
SES	0.19***	0.21***	0.19***	0.20***	0.21***	0.20***
<u>Comprehensivization</u>	0.09			0.08		
Vocational orientation		0.25*			0.25*	
HE participation			0.21*			0.21*
SES x <u>comprehensivization</u>				-0.04*		
SES x Vocational orientation					-0.03	
SES x HE participation						-0.01

\* P < 0.05; \*\* P < 0.01; \*\*\* P < 0.001. N = 31233. | N = 31233 at the individual level; N = 31 at the country level

But social gaps in learning opportunities are

*smaller* in such states!

	<b>Comprehensive systems</b>	<b>Early selection systems</b>	<b>Correlation difference</b>
	Correlation with SES	Correlation with SES	Fisher Z
Civic participation	.150***	.134***	-2.04*
Open climate	.091***	.028***	-7.92***

\* P < .05; \*\* P < .01; \*\*\* P < .001

Possible reasons:

- Less competition from middle-class kids in class?
- Limited comparative horizon?

# What can schools do?

Increase access to political learning for disadvantaged students:

- **Greater focus on political learning activities in low SES schools**
- **Improve teacher training on including disadvantaged**

# What can schools do?

- **Citizenship Education**
  - **Compulsory until 18**
  - **In Vocational Education and Training**

# Education, Democracy &

## Inequality:

Political Engagement & Citizenship

Education in Europe

- **What is school for?**
- **Are we suffering the long term effects of neglecting social gaps in political engagement?**