

Who wins the British lavender vote? (Mostly) Labour

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Abstract

Does sexuality shape electoral behaviour in British elections? Relying on data from 10,290 individuals, this article provides the first empirical analysis of a sexuality gap between heterosexuals and self-identified lesbian, gay and bisexual voters in Britain. Testing the assumption that LGB voters are electorally incentivised to vote for socially liberal parties that advocate pro-LGBT+ positions, empirically I find that Britain's *lavender voters* are significantly more supportive of the UK's socially liberal parties. The sexuality gap is substantive with LGBs 9.65 percentage-points more likely to vote for Labour and 13.64 percentage-points more likely to vote for any socially liberal party via-à-vis their heterosexual peers. Importantly, the sexuality gap holds across the youngest cohort of the electorate who became of political age after the introduction of same-sex marriage. Finally, whilst there is strong amount of support for the Liberal Democrats who acted as entrepreneurial advocate of LGBT+ rights in the UK, evidence suggests that a lack of significantly increased support from LGBs at the ballot box may be the result of strategic concerns. The results are important as they highlight the substantive role of sexuality in shaping electoral choices which has hereto not been considered in models of British electoral behaviour.

Introduction

The voting behaviour of the lesbians, gays and bisexuals (LGB) is largely under-assessed in UK and European politics. To date there has yet to be a single publication that analyses the electoral and political behaviour of the LGB population as a case study in Britain. This is a substantial gap in the literature which signals the potential for an important omitted variable in models seeking to understand the voting behaviour of the British public. Beyond the confines of the UK, a large body of work signals that sexuality exhibits an important effect on individual-level preferences and voting behaviour. In the US, LGBs are, on average, more likely to identify as liberals (Worthen 2020; Hertzog 1996; Schnabel 2018; Cravens 2019), vote Democrat (Sherrill and Flores 2014), and support liberal policies like abortion rights, environmental protection measures or the prohibition of the death penalty (Egan 2012; Worthen 2020; Bailey 1999). Across Western Europe, we know that LGBs are more likely to support state efforts to tackle income inequality or vote for traditional left-leaning parties (Turnbull-Dugarte 2020b), and are also more likely to support pro-globalisation positions such as European integration and immigration (Turnbull-Dugarte 2020a).

In this paper, I provide the first empirical test of a sexuality gap in the individual-level voting behaviour between self-identified LGB voters and the heterosexual majority in Britain. Empirically, I rely on data from the UK's *Understanding Society* dataset (University of Essex 2019) to analyse the divergent electoral choices between those who self-identify as LGB and heterosexual among a sample of 10,291 individuals. Theorising that a sexuality gap can emerge as a result of diverging preferences brought about by group-based consciousness and

mobilisation (Kleiman, Spanierman, and Smith 2015; Sherrill and Flores 2014; Schnabel 2018; Egan 2012; Swank and Fahs 2019), as well as top-down partisan mobilisation aimed at recruiting LGB voters (Turnbull-Dugarte 2020b; Spierings 2020; Siegel, n.d.), the results show, in line with comparative findings from across Western Europe (Turnbull-Dugarte 2020b), that the British electorate is host to a sizeable sexuality gap between LGB and heterosexuals citizens, with the majority of the British LGB vote being banked by the Britain's largest left-wing Labour Party. The results, which show that LGB voters are 13.84 percentage-points more likely to vote for socially liberal parties than their heterosexual peers, which signals the important explanatory power of the hereto unconsidered effect of sexuality as a determinant of electoral choice in Britain. Of note is that the findings do not report any moderating effect of age. In other words, though young LGB citizens might be emerging into the electorate in a more tolerant and accepting environment towards LGBT+ rights and a political arena with low partisan conflict over the same, their preferences at the polls are *still* significantly distinct from their fellow heterosexuals. The implications of this signal that scholars of British voting behaviour should consider the explanatory role of sexuality-induced electoral preferences in their models of electoral support for parties in British elections.

The paper proceeds as follows. I first begin by providing a brief historical overview of the partisan-divide of LGBT+ politics in the UK and how this has evolved over time. This discussion informs the formation of the primary empirical tests which analyse: the extent to which British LGB and heterosexual voters' electoral choices divergence and the conditional effect of this sexuality gap across different age groups. Following a description of the theoretical

expectations, I provide a summary of the main Understanding Society data used in the empirical analysis and report the main findings before providing concluding remarks.

LGBT+ politics in the UK

Traditionally, positions on LGBT+ rights among British parties and voters have neatly coalesced within the left-right partisan divide (Clements 2014; Clements and Field 2014). The Labour party, the UK’s mainstream social democratic party, has been the main driver of public policies aimed at advancing the welfare of sexual minorities. This is evidenced most explicitly by the New Labour years during the premierships of Tony Blair (1997-2007) and Gordon Brown (2007-2010) under whom LGBT+ issues pushed through into the mainstream and during which time the UK made significant progress in the advancement of LGBT+ rights. The concrete and notable legislative achievements under New Labour are summarised in Table 1 and include important reforms that allowed openly LGB individuals to serve in the military, legalised same-sex partnerships and facilitated the legal recognition of gender changes, amongst other advances. The results of thirteen years of Labour government was a significant advancement in the provision of LGBT+ rights in the UK.

Table 1: LGBT+ rights policy advances in the UK

Year	Policy change	Government
2000	LGBs can serve in British military	Labour
2001	Equalised age of consent for sexual activity	Labour
2002	Same-sex adoption legalised	Labour
2003	Repeal of Section 28	Labour
2003	Anti-LGBT discrimination Law	Labour
2004	Civil Partnership Act	Labour

2004	Gender Recognition Act	Labour
2005	Sexuality-based attacks classed as “hate crime”	Labour
2010	Equality Act	Labour
2013	Same-sex Marriage Act	Conservative-LibDem coalition

NB: Devolution in the UK results in asymmetric jurisdiction of different policy reforms. Same-sex marriage only became legal in Northern Ireland as of 2020 for example.

The Liberal Democrats, Britain’s third largest party, has observed a strong leftist leaning over the last two decades, particularly on social and cultural policy where LGBT+ rights concerns fall, and the party is clearly well-positioned within the socially liberal political space (Cutts and Russell 2015; Russell and Fieldhouse 2005). The Liberal Democrats were one of the first national parties to advocate for same-sex marriage (SSM) in the UK in 2009 and the party’s MPs have consistently voted favourably to approve legislation aimed at advancing the legal recognition of LGBT+ rights. Examining the substantive representation LGBT+ policy concerns within the programmes of political parties in the post-war period, Chaney (2013) shows that the Liberal Democrats were the first party to incorporate explicit references on the promotion of pro-LGBT+ rights issues in their manifestos signalling their vanguard position on the issue vis-à-vis other parties in the UK, including Labour.

Until recently, the British Conservatives were very much against LGBT+ rights. The party introduced the highly controversial Section 28¹ and voted in large numbers against measures

¹ Section 28 prohibited the discussion of homosexuality in schools and by local authorities. The law aimed at stopping what the Conservatives viewed as the ‘promotion’ of homosexuality and was strongly opposed by gay rights proponents at the time. Thatcher stated that “Children who need to be taught

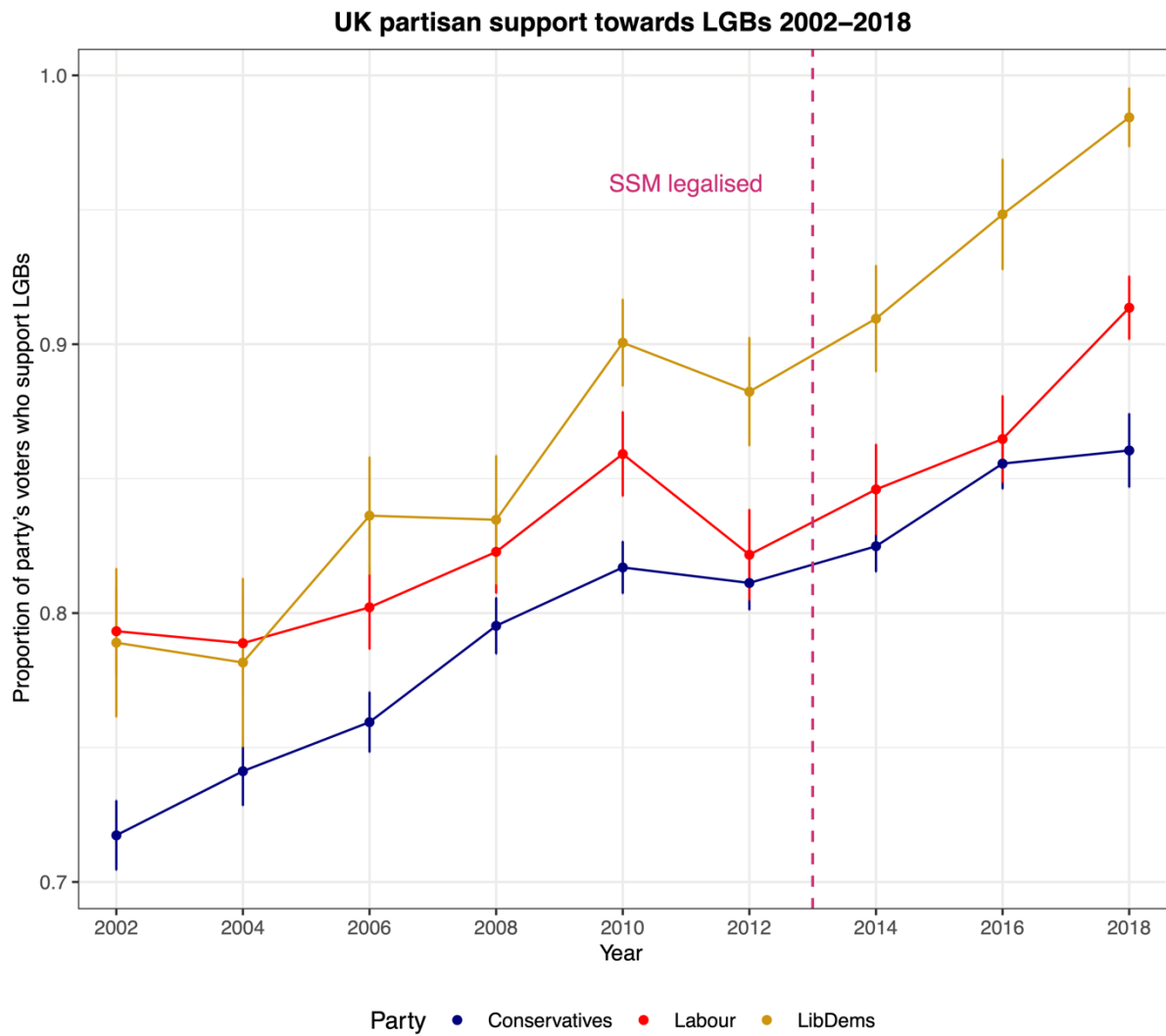
designed to expand LGBT+ rights during the years of Labour government. Once in opposition with the arrival of Blair to Downing Street, the Conservative party maintained its strong opposition to LGBT+ rights adopted during the Thatcher years. McManus argues that in opposition, the party, both in terms of its parliamentarians and members, was very much a homophobic organisation (McManus 2011) and that any suggestion betraying the moral conservatism promoted by their years in government was considered sacrilege and early modernisers within the party often voted against the Labour reforms, such as Blair's first attempt to repeal Section 28 in 1999 (McManus 2011, 223). However, unlike much of the rest of Western Europe (Siegel and Wang 2018), same-sex marriage was actually enacted by the Conservative-led coalition with the Liberal Democrats (2010-2015). Under the leadership of David Cameron, the Conservatives sought to modernise and "de-toxify" the party's "nasty" image (Hayton 2010; Dommett 2015) by promoting social liberalism and "due respect" (Bale 2010, 381-382) for homosexuals.

This move towards a more socially liberal position on LGBT+ issues is reflected among the voter bases of the Conservative party also. Relying on data from the European Social Survey, Figure 1 illustrates that the proportion of the Conservative Party's voters who hold tolerant views towards homosexuality² has grown over the last decade. Between the period of 2012 and

to respect traditional moral values are being taught that they have an inalienable right to be gay. [...]. All of those children are being cheated of a sound start in life." (Thatcher 1988).

² Response to question: "Please say to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements, 'Gay men and lesbians should be free to live their own life as they wish.'" Proportions reported indicate those who responded either "Strongly agree" or "Agree".

2016, during which the Conservatives and the British public were being led by the Coalition government, there was little divergence of significance between the proportion of Conservative and Labour voters who were accepting of homosexuality and the UK now has very high levels of (self-reported) public acceptance towards homosexuality. Of course, social desirability in responses to questions like that used in Figure 1 may bias results and mask respondents' *real* attitudes. That being said, work from Magni and Reynolds (2018) assessing whether LGB political candidates in the UK face an electoral penalty at the ballot box finds that there is no negative sexuality effect in candidates' electoral chances. This suggests that acceptability of homosexuality in the UK is in indeed high.



Data: European Social Survey Waves 1–9 | Confidence intervals at 95%

Figure 1: Party voter attitudes towards homosexuality (2002-2018)

Beyond the attitudes towards homosexuality of the two main parties' revenue of voters, however, significant divides remained between the parties' elected representatives. Whilst the legislation for SSM was brought forward by the Conservative-led coalition with the Liberal Democrats in 2013, more Conservatives voted against the bill than those who voted in favour (see Table 2). Support amongst Labour and Liberal Democrat MPs, on the other hand, was far greater and more monolithic: Conservative parliamentary support for SSM was split down

the middle, whereas support amongst Labour and the Liberal democrats was in surplus of 90%.

Table 2: Party MP support (First reading) for Same-Sex Marriage Bill for England & Wales (2013)

	% Voted for (<i>N</i>)	% Voted against (<i>N</i>)
Conservatives	48.29% (127)	51.71% (136)
Labour	90.8% (217)	9.2% (22)
Liberal Democrats	91.67% (44)	8.33% (4)
Democratic Unionist Party	0% (0)	100% (8)
Plaid Cymru	100% (3)	0% (0)

Note: Single-MP parties voting in favour of same-sex marriage in 2013 – Greens (Caroline Lucas); SDLP (Mark Durkan); Alliance (Naomi Long); Respect (George Galloway); Independent (Eric Joyce). There was no single-MP party vote against. The SNP did not vote on the introduction of same-sex marriage in England and Wales given the law did not affect Scotland. The devolved SNP government introduced same-sex marriage in Scotland.

As a result, whilst the Conservatives in government might have sought to present itself as a born-again advocate of LGBT+ rights (Bale 2010), illustrated in the case of same-sex marriage, this does not necessarily translate into sympathetic positions amongst the party’s MPs. Anecdotal evidence from those in government also suggest that the issue of SSM led to a sizeable amount of internal party conflict.³

³ Former Chief Secretary of the Treasury, David Laws, claims that Primer Minister, David Cameron, confessed that “Gay marriage has been an absolute disaster. It has absolutely split my party”, that legislating for SSM was a “big mistake” and that it played a role in the party’s losses to UKIP at the local elections that took place shortly afterwards (Laws 2016). This account is supported by D’Ancona (D’Ancona 2014) as well as comments from the former Deputy Prime Minister, Nick Clegg, during an interview for the BBC documentary “The Cameron Years” (2019).

Cameron's term as Conservative leader may have sought to modernise on the issue of LGBT+ rights (Bale 2010) and portray a new "One Nation" inclusionary brand (Dommett 2015), but the same is unlikely to be true of the party's image amongst the electorate. Voters' perceptions of party positions tend to be "sticky" (Walgrave, Lefevere, and Tresch 2012) and not that amenable to change. Parties after all are electoral brands that voters consume in the political marketplace, and these brand names bring with them ideological and positional associations that constrain the malleability of parties' policy changes and how these are viewed by voters (Lupu 2015). Having the party leadership claim that the party is pro-LGBT+ whilst at the same time observing the majority of the party's elected representatives vote against a core piece of legislation that would benefit the social and economic welfare of the LGBT+ community is unlikely to alter the homophobic reputation and historically negative LGBT+ rights record associated with the "nasty" party (McManus 2011).

The "golden years" of LGBT+ rights growth was marked, as discussed above, during the period of New Labour's hold in power. As a result, and as observed across most European states, social democratic parties, like Labour, and other left-leaning or socially liberal parties remain the parties that 'own' the pro-LGBT+ space (Siegel and Wang 2018), particularly in the eyes of LGB citizens (Turnbull-Dugarte 2020b). In the case of the SSM in the UK, the law was only past through parliament because of Labour and the Liberal Democrats' strong support (Plumb 2015). Voters are assumed to be rational welfare-maximisers that vote for

parties that are most likely to provide policy output that promotes their own welfare or that their group. Group-based mobilisation has been observed in the case of sexual minority voters, with shared grievances (Sherrill 1996), group-welfare enhancement (Schaffner and Senic 2006) and the expansion of LGBT+ rights (Turnbull-Dugarte 2020b) signalled as the theoretical drivers of the sexuality gap at the ballot box.⁴ If we assume that the UK's LGB population is motivated to vote for (against) pro (anti) LGBT+ parties, we would expect there to be an increased level of support for the UK's socially liberal parties and particularly Labour who, as the main socially liberal party with governing potential, has legislated to expand LGBT+ rights. Therefore,

H1: LGB voters will be more likely to support Labour and other left-wing parties vis-à-vis heterosexuals

The UK, with the exception of Northern Ireland, has now enjoyed the legal provision of SSM since 2013 and the divergence between attitudes on SSM amongst partisans has notably decreased over time (recall Figure 1). Expert evaluations also note the approximation of the Conservative Party away from an authoritarian position on questions of social liberalism towards a more centrist stance. Looking at the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES)⁵ data (Polk

⁴ This list of mechanisms is not exclusionary. Of note is that the lived experience of being “othered” and discriminated against by the heterosexual majority also plays an important role (Schnabel 2018; Egan 2012; Page 2018; Bailey 1999; Kleiman, Spanierman, and Smith 2015).

⁵ The CHES dataset (Polk et al. 2017) provides estimates of party positions on different ideological dimensions and policy issues from across different European countries. It includes data of expert

et al. 2017) in 2006 and 2019 (the first and final year experts were asked on parties' positions related to "social lifestyles"⁶) we see that the Conservatives have moved towards the liberal-leaning space previously monopolised by parties on the left.

estimates of party positions from 1999-2019. Reliability scores comparing expert positions provided by CHES to those captured in quantitative text analysis of party manifestos, finds CHES values to be valid and reliable source of party positions (Hooghe et al. 2010).

⁶ The CHES questionnaire explicitly uses the example of homosexuality to describe to expert respondents what the 0 "Strongly supports liberal policies" to 10 "Strongly opposes liberal policies" social lifestyle position scale is seeking to capture.

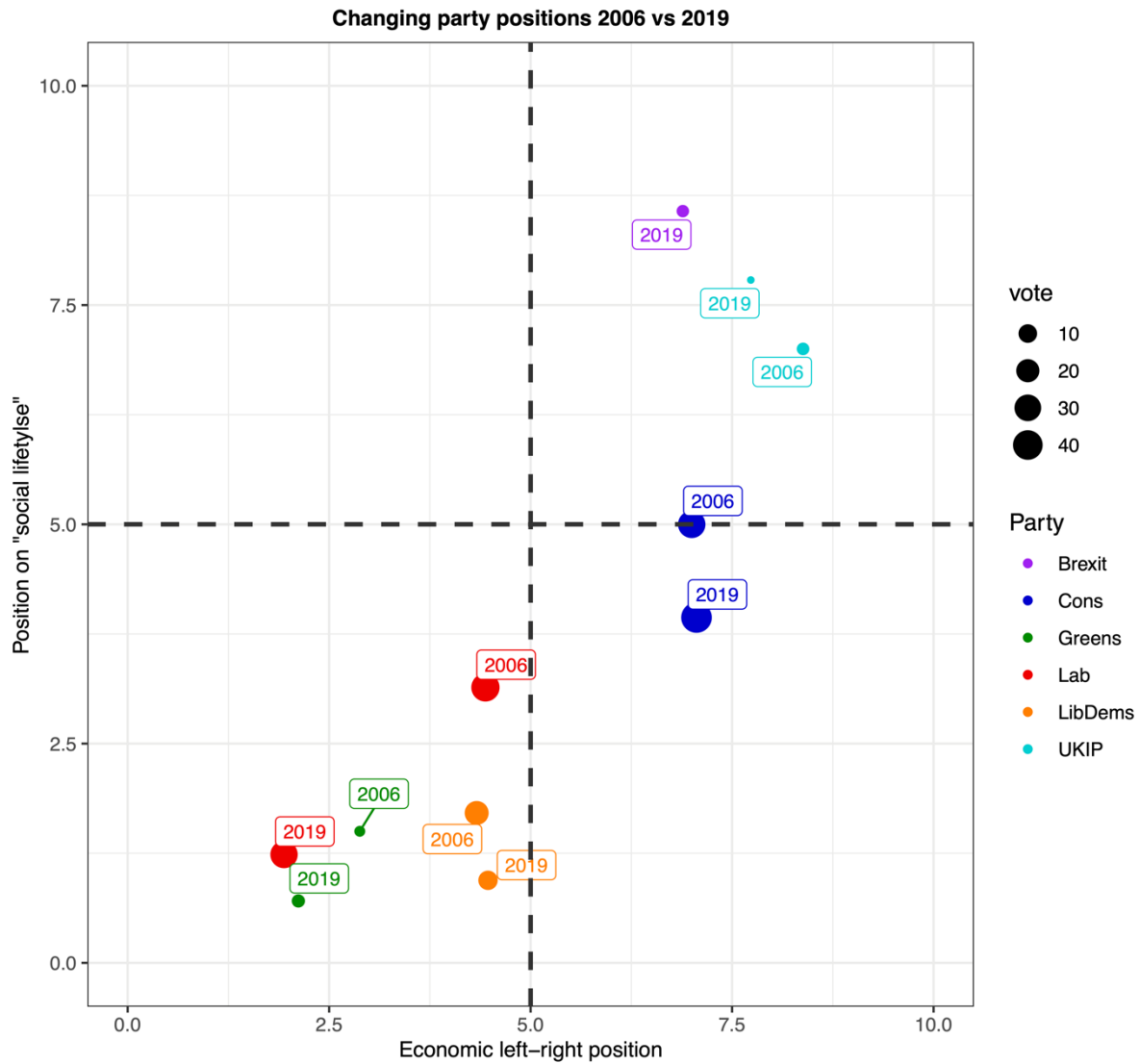


Figure 2: Political party positions on "social lifestyles"

If the mainstream Conservative Party now operates within the liberal space, as suggested by the expert evaluations of party positions provided by CHES, on questions related to social lifestyles which includes issues related to LGBT+ rights, then younger voters who have joined the electorate during a time of low partisan conflict over these issues may not possess the same perceptions of party issue ownership in relation to these issues in the same way that older voters may do. For example, if an LGB individual comes of political age and joins the electorate in a climate where SMM is legalised, public acceptance of homosexuality is high, and partisan

conflict over LGBT+ policy concerns is no longer salient, (s)he may not feel the pro-LGBT+ associational perception with left-wing parties to the same extent as voters who have been politically active when LGBT+ policy debates were more concretely associated with different political actors. We know, for example, that when LGB voters *perceive* higher levels of social acceptability, they are less (more) likely to identify with liberalism (conservatism) (Cravens 2019). Although younger voters are more generally likely to vote for the left, we may observe a reduction in the sexuality gap between the youngest cohort LGB and non-LGB voters who joined the electorate following the introduction of SSM. Thus,

H2a: younger LGBs who joined the electorate after SSM was legalised may be less inclined to vote for socially liberal parties than older LGBs

H2b: the sexuality gap may be smaller among those younger voters

Data and method

To model the effect of LGB status on the electoral vote choice, I rely on data from the Wave 9 *Understanding Society* survey (University of Essex 2019). The fieldwork was carried out between June 2017 and May 2018: self-reported vote recall therefore refers to the 2017 general election. The survey includes different samples including a general population sample of around 24,000 households, and ethnic minority boost sample including around 4,000 households and an additional immigration and ethnic minority boost sample of around 3,000 households. The general population sample is surveyed via a multistage stratified probability sample with

households as the primary sampling unit. Interviews were carried out face-to-face with the aid of computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) or online. At the end of the survey period, hard-to-reach respondents were contacted by telephone to complete their interviews.

Of the total sample included in the dataset, only a subsample was surveyed on their voting behaviour in the recent elections. This provides us with a smaller, yet relatively large, final sample of 10,291 observations with full data on the variables of interest. Of the 10,291 respondents, 47.86% ($N=4,925$) interviews were completed in-person, 52% ($N=5,351$) were completed online and the remaining 0.14% ($N=14$) were interviewed over the phone. Given the probabilistic sampling method applied, I apply the weights provided by the survey administrator that correct for the stratified probability sampling and panel attrition for the full combined sample to ensure representation of the population structure⁷.

Dependent variables

Empirically, I estimate two independent logistic regression models: the first models voting for socially liberal parties whereas the second specifically models support for the British Labour party. Voting for parties is measured by respondents' retrospective voting claims in the most

⁷ Detailed information regarding the technical administration of wave 9 and recommended weighting and clustering procedures are available on the Understanding Society webpage: <https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/documentation/mainstage/technical-reports>

Replicating the main models with unweighted analyses does not alter our main findings although likely produce estimates that are not reflective of the population. Adding a control variable survey mode does not alter the results (Figure A6).

recent general election. UK parties identified as being socially liberal include the Labour Party, the Liberal Democrats, the Green Party, the SNP and Plaid Cymru. These are the parties who fall on liberal side of the liberal-authoritarian cultural dimensions as defined by the CHES dataset (Polk et al. 2017). Note, however, that the SNP and Plaid Cymru are electoral options only available to Scottish and Welsh voters, respectively. As a result, there are asymmetric alternatives for voters to choose from when comparing voting behaviour at the national (British) level. Additional estimations subsampling on a population limited only to English respondents with symmetrical party options are provided in the online appendix (see appendix Table A6 and Figure A3). These additional analyses do not condition the findings reported below.

Main explanatory variable

The main explanatory variable of interest is the self-reported sexuality of individuals. *Understanding Society* asks respondents directly about their sexual orientation. Respondents are asked “Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?” and are able to respond, in addition to refusing to answer, by identifying as heterosexual, LGB or don’t know. Of those who responded, 2.95% ($N = 304$) of the sample self-identified as LGB with the remaining self-identifying as heterosexual. This proportion is comparable to the 2.2% of the population who identify as LGB according to data from the UK’s Office of National Statistics (2020). With this data we are able to dichotomously stratify the UK electorate between LGB (1) and heterosexual (0) individuals. Whilst Turnbull-Dugarte’s (2020) pooled

cross-national study, which includes UK voters, relies on household-inferred⁸ sexuality measures based on the identification of those in same-sex relationships, here I am relying on individuals' self-identification as LGB. This has the benefit of allowing us to test the role of sexuality across the wider LGB population, rather than only those in a relationship (Kühne, Kroh, and Richter 2019). This is important as research points towards identification as LGB exhibiting greater effects on political behaviour and voting preferences than engaging in same-sex sexual behaviour alone (Schnabel 2018; Swank and Fahs 2019). Whilst homosexuality is an ascriptive attribute that is randomly distributed across the population, identification as LGB is likely part of a political decision (Egan 2012, 2019) and as such the LGB coefficient in the models below signals the difference in voter choices associated with *identifying* with the LGB label rather than just sexuality alone. Unfortunately, there is no available survey instrument in the data that allows for the identification of transgender (T) or other sexual minorities (+). This means that the inferences presented here are not necessarily indicative of a gap between the political preferences of heterosexuals and all sexual minorities.

Controls

At the basic demographic level, I include indicators for gender (*Understanding Society* does not facilitate respondents the opportunity to identify beyond this male-female binary), age and race. In order to capture respondent's socioeconomic status, the models control for

⁸ This method is increasingly common given the lack of direct survey instruments that ask respondents about sexual orientation (Fischer, Kalmijn, and Steinmetz 2016; Black et al. 2000; Kühne, Kroh, and Richter 2019).

employment status and education. A dichotomous indicator measures those who are in paid employment (baseline), and those who are self-employed, unemployed, retired, in full-time education, or not in the labour force (NILF)⁹. Education is indicated via a categorical variable that signals those who have no qualifications (baseline), those with a university degree; upper secondary-school qualification (e.g. A-level); a lower secondary-school qualification (e.g. GCSE); and those with another type of qualification (e.g. vocational training).

Divides between the political beliefs of those who live in urban and rural locations has increasingly been observed to be a strong predictor of political behaviour across West European states including the UK (Jennings and Stoker 2016). In order to cater for the potential confounding role of the urban/rural divide, I include a dichotomous indicator of those who live in urban and rural areas. There is reason to believe, however, that including such an indicator may dilute the effect of the sexuality variable given the geographic clustering of LGB citizens in urban locations (Bailey 1999). As a sensitivity test, I re-estimate the models without this variable: the main findings remain unchanged.

Unfortunately, the data does not provide any appropriate survey instruments to control for ideology such as a respondent's self-identification on left-right space or other policy preferences which are likely to play a role in determining vote choice. Not having such controls should not affect the ability to isolate the independent effect of LGB identification on voting behaviour

⁹ Those identified as NILF include those who are unemployed but not actively seeking work, unenumerated domestic workers and carers, and those on long-term unpaid leave.

given that left-right ideological placement and other ideological measures are likely to be causally posterior (Acharya, Blackwell, and Sen 2016) to LGB identification. We know, for example, that LGBs in Europe are more likely to support government efforts to tackle income inequality (Turnbull-Dugarte 2020b) and are more supportive of socio-cultural concerns like EU integration and immigration (Turnbull-Dugarte 2020a). Including these variables, whilst helping us to understand how the sexuality gap is mediated by ideological preferences, would reduce our capacity to answer the main research question at hand which is to what extent a sexuality gap exists. Models with additional controls that might be considered causally posterior to LGB identification such as occupational sector, satisfaction with democracy as well as retrospective and prospective evaluations of the economy are reported in the appendix. Controlling for these additional confounders does not alter the main findings regarding the sexuality gap.

Finally, as the fieldwork for *Understanding Society* spanned a number of months, I add a fixed-effects time variable to control for spurious temporal effects that may impact responses over the fieldwork period. Given the binary structure of the dependent variable, I estimate logistic regression models and report robust standard errors. Descriptive statistics are reported in Table 3 and correlation matrix between the primary variables of interest is provided in Figure 3.

Table 3: Summary statistics

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Party vote	10290	1.753	1.610	0	9
Vote for a liberal party	10290	0.472	0.499	0	1
Vote for Labour	10290	0.351	0.477	0	1
LGB	10290	0.030	0.169	0	1
Gender (female)	10290	0.550	0.497	0	1
Age	10290	4.238	1.798	1	7
Income	10287	1.925	1.685	0.00	21.53
Education	10268	3.526	1.418	1	5
Employment status	10286	1.570	1.710	0	5
Urban/Rural	10290	0.740	0.439	0	1
Survey time fixed effects	10290	4.039	1.139	2	6
Interview mode	10290	2.041	0.999	1	3

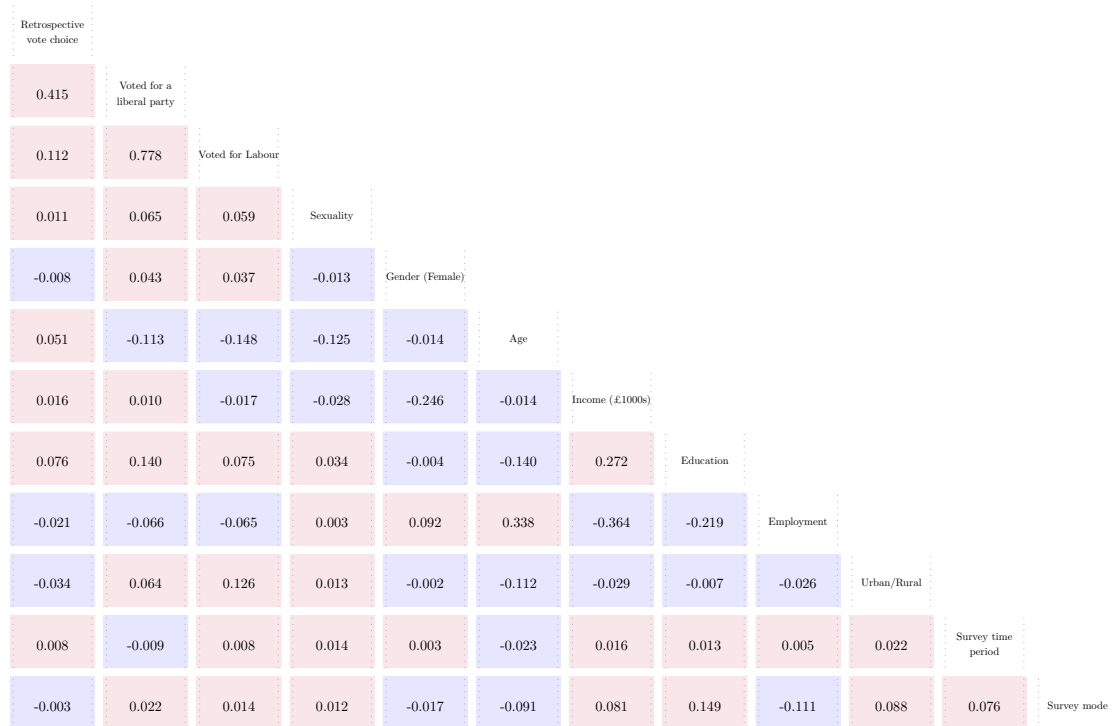


Figure 3: Correlation matrix of core variables

The UK lavender vote

Does the British LGB population vote more for the party(ies) that favour LGBT+ rights?

Before engaging in the discussion of the multivariate analysis, I first provide a descriptive summary of how LGB citizens and heterosexual individuals report to have voted. Figure 3 plots the distribution of self-reported partisan vote choice amongst voters in Britain (those from England, Scotland and Wales). The left hand-panel displays the percentage of the heterosexual population's vote that went to each of the different parties or abstained whereas the right-hand panel reports the same for the LGB population. There are large and substantive asymmetries in the voting preferences of the two sexuality groups.

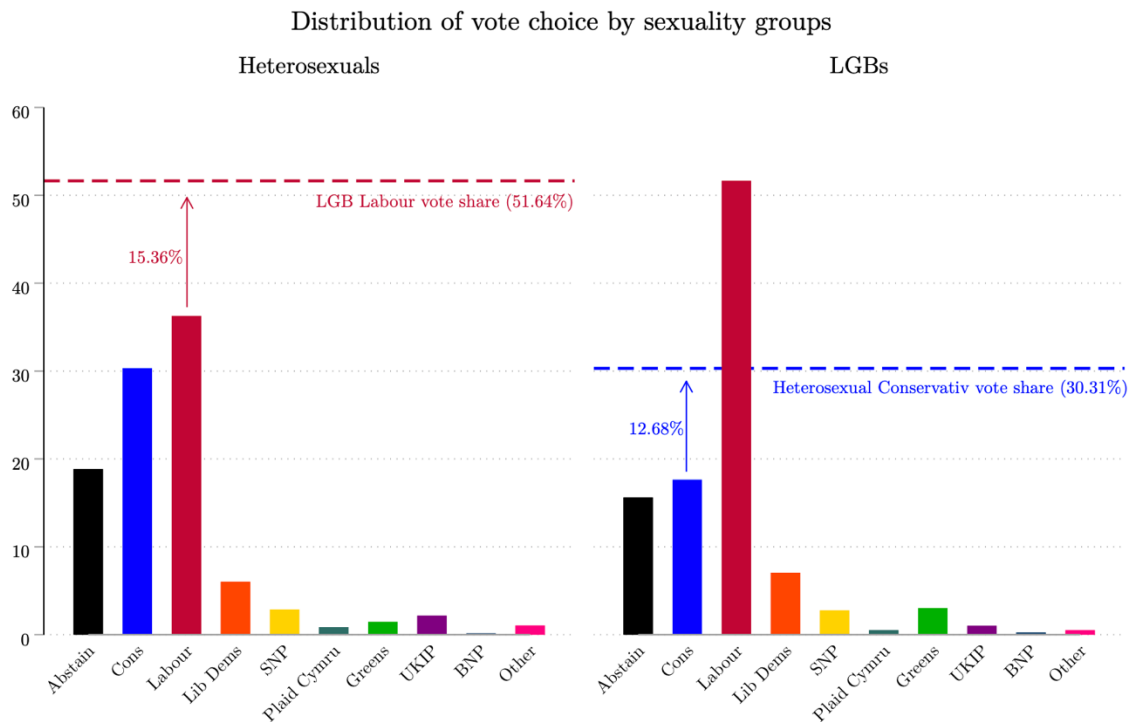


Figure 4: Sexuality gap in self-reported vote choice

Given the strategic voting incentives of the UK's majoritarian system that nourishes the historical dominance of the two main political parties (Fieldhouse, Shryane, and Pickles 2007; Alvarez, Boehmke, and Nagler 2006), it makes sense to first compare the voting revenues that Labour and Conservatives collected from the heterosexual and LGB populations. Just under a third of the heterosexual respondents (30.31 per cent) claimed to have voted for the currently governing Conservative party. This figure is significantly higher than that of the LGB voter population which only observed 17.53 per cent support for the UK's main right-wing party.

LGB voters in Britain are notably more supportive of the Labour party than their heterosexual peers. One in two LGB voters (51.64 per cent) reported to have cast their votes in the most recent election for the Labour party, which represents a non-trivial difference of 15.36 percentage-points over the level of Labour support observed among heterosexuals. Although not a monolith, the British LGB vote appears far more prone to support Labour than the Conservatives. Among the smaller parties, there are also heterogeneous levels of support across sexuality groups. The Liberal Democrats and the Green party respectively banked 7.05 and 3.02 per cent from the LGB population, whilst gaining only 6.02 and 1.44 per cent, respectively, from heterosexual voters. Descriptively, therefore, we observe an important gap in the retrospective voting claims between voters with different self-reported sexual identities.

Modelling the sexuality gap

The main findings are reported in Table 3 and Figure 3. Table 3 summarises the main regression models (full logistic regression output in appendix Table A1) and reports the LGB

coefficient without (M1 and M3) and with (M2 and M4) the full vector of control variables. To facilitate easily interpretable results, I focus on the average marginal effects (AME) reported in Figure 3. Each coefficient in the figure indicates the percentage-point change in the probability of voting for a socially liberal party (left-hand panel) or the Labour party (right-hand panel) associated with LGB identification.

Table 3: Logistic regression models

	Vote for a liberal party		Vote for Labour	
	M1:	M2:	M3:	M4:
	Binary Test	Main model	Binary Test	Main model
LGB	0.69*** (0.14)	0.58*** (0.14)	0.55*** (0.13)	0.43*** (0.14)
Vector of controls variables	X	✓	X	✓
Survey time fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Constant	-0.12 (0.09)	-0.47*** (0.17)	-0.66*** (0.09)	-0.75*** (0.18)
Observations	10,290	10,221	10,290	10,221

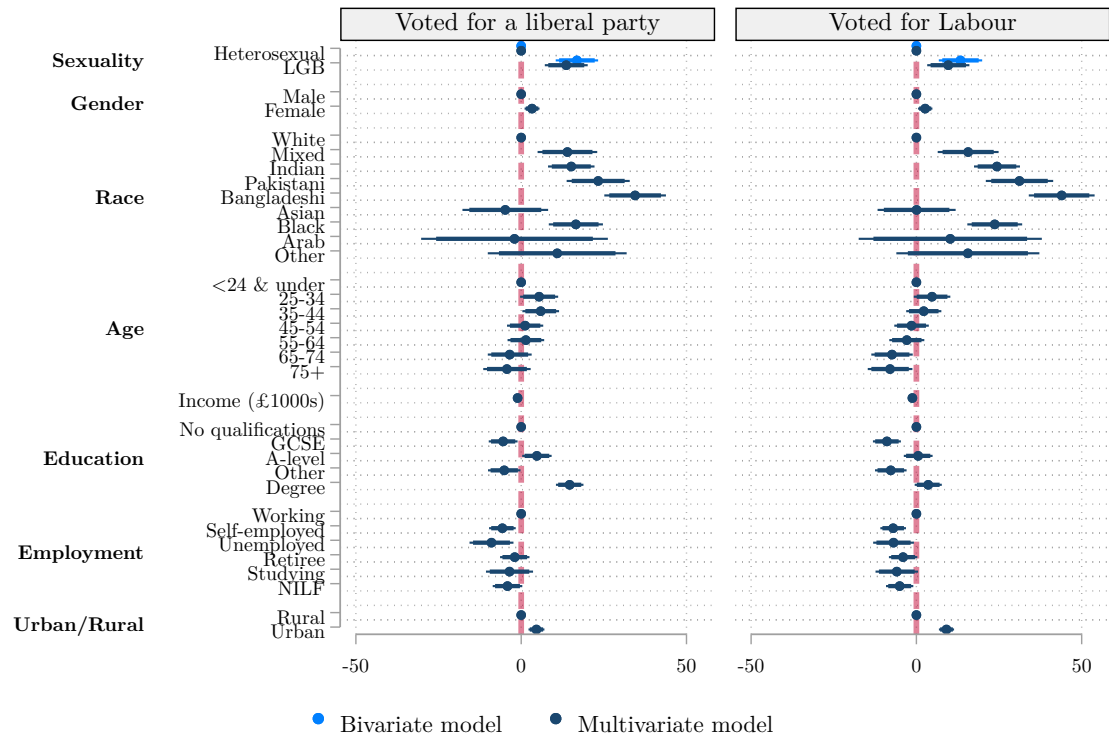
Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

As expected from the descriptive statistics, there is a significant and substantive sexuality gap in the party vote choice of the British electorate. Let us first consider the probability of voting for any of the UK's socially liberal parties. A bivariate comparison between the probability of voting for a social liberal party among LGB voters and heterosexuals demonstrates that LGBs are 16.86 percentage-points ($p=0.0001$) more likely to support socially liberal parties via-a-vis heterosexual voters. Incorporating controls for gender, age, race, education, employment status and urbanicity does little to reduce the sexuality gap, with LGB identification associated, on

average, with 13.64 percentage-point ($p=0.0001$) increase in probability of voting for a liberal party. Estimating the conditional effect of the sexuality gap on gendered subsamples confirms, as in the case of Turnbull-Dugarte's (2020b) comparative study, that there is no significant asymmetry between LB women and GB men. Whilst the effect of sexuality for men women is 9.7 percentage-points and for women it is 18 percentage-points ($p=0.003$) there is no significant difference between across genders (see Figure A1 & Table A2).

In the right-hand panel, the AMEs report in the increase in the probability related specifically to voting for Labour. The output from a bivariate comparison between LGBs and heterosexuals shows that the probability of voting Labour is 13.33 percentage-points ($p=0.0001$) higher for LGBs than it is for heterosexuals. Controlling for the vector of controls, the results show that there is a significant and sizeable sexuality gap between the probability of voting for Labour over and above these socio-demographic determinants. All else being equal, LGB voters are 9.65 percentage-points more likely to vote Labour vis-à-vis comparable heterosexuals. The effect of sexuality on voting in the UK is not only significant, but also politically important as it exhibits a sizeable change in the probability of electing between political alternatives. The controls largely perform as expected, although, as recommended by Keele et al. (2020), the interpretation of controls should be considered with caution.



Confidence intervals at 95% & 90%

Figure 5: Average marginal effects (percentage-points)

Given that the political salience of LGBT+ politics has not dominated British electoral politics for some time and that variation between parties' position on these issues is dwindling, there is a reasonable expectation that the sexuality gap between voters may be conditioned by voters' age. Those voters, for example, who were brought up during periods of polarised partisan positions on issues related to LGBT+ rights (older voters) may be more inclined to recognise the left as the guardian of pro-LGBT+ policies. Younger LGB voters, however, who have been introduced to politics during a period of high popular acceptance of homosexuality and low partisan conflict over the issue, may not experience sexuality as preference-shaping in the same way. To test this conditional effect, I re-estimate the main model of support for the socially liberal parties to include a multiplicative interaction term between LGB status and

different age categories. Figure 4 illustrates the predicted probability of voting for the left for different categorical values of the moderating (age) variable. An overlaid histogram is included in the figure to show the distribution of observed values of the moderator for the LGB population. An alternative specification modelling support specifically for Labour is reported in the appendix (see Table A3 & Figure A4) and mirrors the findings reported here.

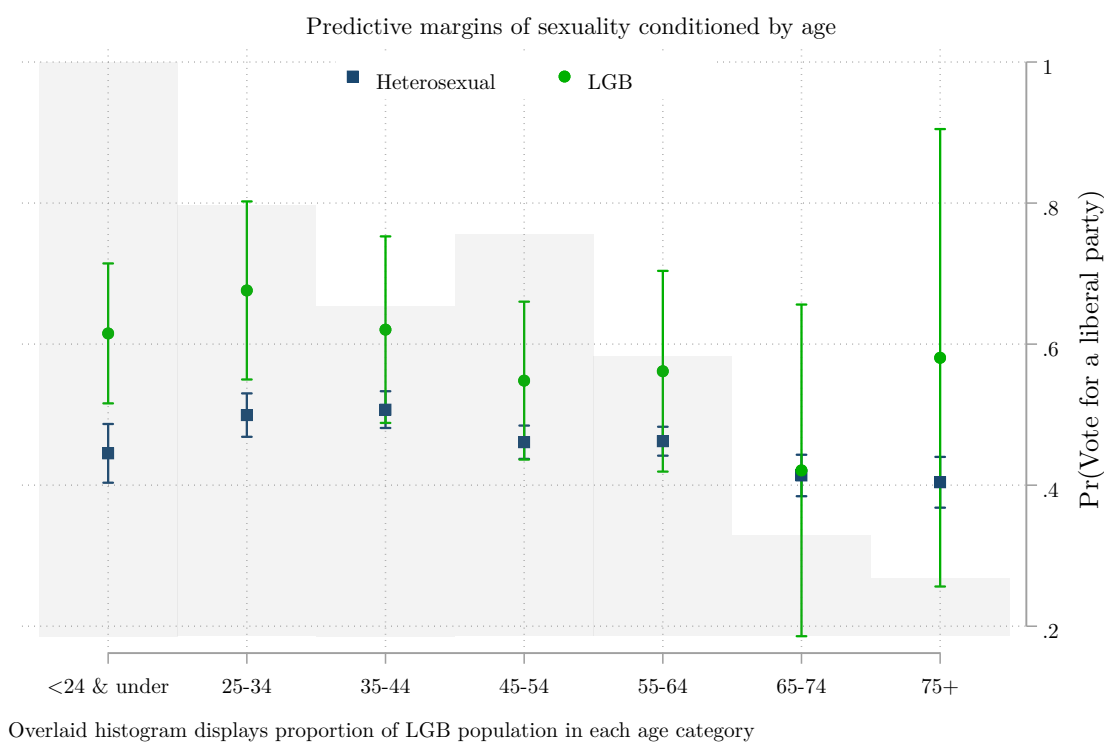


Figure 6: Sexuality gap conditioned by age

As Figure 4 shows, across all age values, the predicted probability of voting for the left is higher among LGBs than it is for heterosexuals. A heterosexual voter aged 24 and under, those who joined the electorate when SSM was legalised, has a predicted probability of voting for the a socially liberal party equal to of .445 whilst the predicted probability of a homosexual voter with the same age is 17 percentage-points ($p=0.006$) greater at .615. Across all categorical

age values, the predicted probability of voting for a socially liberal party is greater for LGB voters compared to that of heterosexuals. Note, however, that with the exception of those aged 65-74, the magnitude of the gap remains large even if the significance diminishes. The sexuality gap amongst those aged 25-34 (17.67 percentage-points) is also significant ($p=0.024$) but there is no statistically significant divergence for greater age groups. For example, amongst the oldest group of voters (those aged 75+), the sexuality gap equates to 18.5 percentage-points which is sizeable divergence in the probability, but this gap fails to comply with conventional levels of significance. It is worth noting, however, that this may be a function of the very low number of LGB individuals within this subsample leading to very large standard errors (and therefore confidence intervals).

Variation between socially liberal parties

Although strategic voting and the perceived viability of electoral success brought about by the UK's single-member plurality first-past-the-post electoral system may drive voters to view British electoral competition as a binary choice between the Conservatives and Labour, voters are presented with alternatives. As discussed above, these alternatives can be found on both the left (Liberal Democrats, Greens, SNP, Plaid Cymru) as well as on the right (UKIP, Brexit Party) and one of the most ardent advocates of LGBT+ rights (the Liberal Democrats) belongs to this collection of minor parties in the UK's dominating two-party system. As a final empirical test, I model the difference in the sexuality effect for different parties. To do this I estimate a multinomial discrete choice regression model. The dependent variable relies on individuals' self-reported vote choice (baseline: Conservatives) for any *national-level* political

party and abstention. Figure 3 reports the AME of sexuality on the probability of voting for i) Labour, ii) the Liberal Democrats, iii) the Green Party, iv) UKIP, or v) abstaining, *relative* to the Conservatives¹⁰.

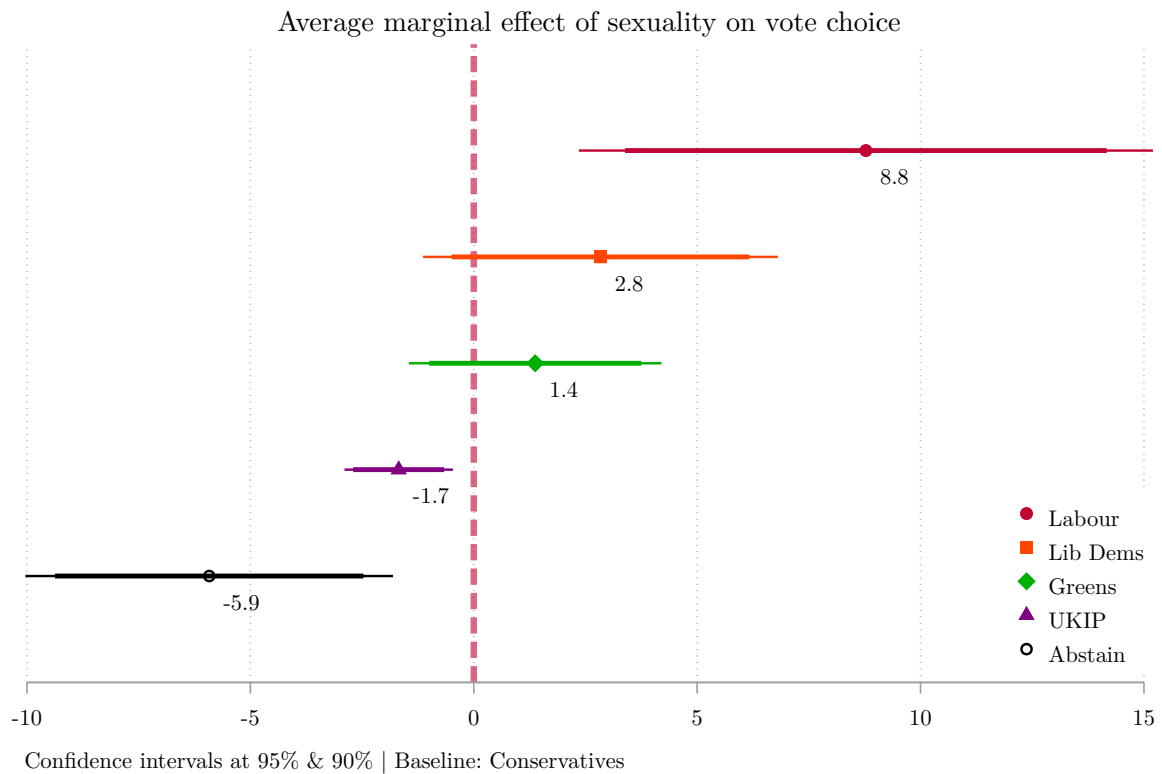


Figure 7: Multinomial model estimation

In comparison to the Conservatives, LGB citizens are 8.8 percentage-points ($p=0.007$) more likely to vote for Labour. Models using a subsample of England-only voters finds that the LGB support between the Conservatives and Labour is even greater, with English LGBs 14

¹⁰ The full regression output of the multinomial models, including alternative and additional party choices, is reported in the online appendix. Re-estimating the model using abstention as the baseline category, for example, does not alter the main conclusions. England-only models are also reported.

percentage-points more likely to vote Labour over Conservative (see Figure A3). The effect of sexuality on voting for both the Liberal Democrats and the Greens in our main model is also positive (2.8 and 1.4 percentage-points, respectively) but the magnitude of the effect is much smaller in comparison to that of Labour and the point-estimate fails to reach conventional levels of statistical significance. There is, however, a significant and negative change in the probability of voting for UKIP vis-à-vis the Conservatives equal to 1.7 percentage-points ($p=0.007$). In other words, British LGBs are significantly less likely to vote for the UK's main eurosceptic party compared to their heterosexual peers. This is not surprising given UKIP's promotion of social conservatism including traditional gender values and LGB voters' high levels of support for EU integration (Turnbull-Dugarte 2020a). LGBs also appear to be keen electoral participants. Compared to heterosexuals, they are 5.9 percentage-points ($p=0.005$) *less* likely to stay home on polling day. This is largely consistent with extant findings on LGBs and political participation (Page 2018).

Is Liberal Democrat support the victim of strategic voting?

The null findings in the case of the Liberal Democrats present something of a counter-intuitive expectation. As detailed above, the Liberal Democrats have exercised a vanguard role in support of LGBT+ issues and their support for the legalisation of SSM in 2013 was essential, alongside Labour, for the favourable vote on the bill in parliament. H1 posited that the sexuality gap would be observed across socially liberal parties, but the effect appears to be driven largely by increased support among LGBs for the Labour party. One likely reason for the Liberal Democrats' inability to bank more electoral support from LGB voters may be the

strategic dynamics of the single-member plurality electoral system that incentivises the electorate to vote for either of two dominant parties. Spatial understandings of political preferences assume that voters elect the party candidate that they feel closest to. Majoritarian systems can disrupt this assumption, as voters, perceiving that their preferred candidate enjoys a reduced probability of gaining a plurality of votes, instead cast their ballots for a party candidate that they support *and* has a chance of winning (Fieldhouse, Shryane, and Pickles 2007). The Liberal Democrats have, as a result, suffered from a “credibility gap” (Cutts 2012; Cutts, Russell, and Townsley, n.d.) and third party “squeeze” (Cain 1978) with voters unlikely to “waste” their ballot for a party that has a very low chance of winning a plurality of votes in certain constituencies or of winning an outright majority in the House of Commons.

An exploratory analysis of the data suggests that strategic considerations of the party’s credibility as a viable contender may explain the lack of higher levels of support for the Liberal Democrats from the LGB population despite the party’s vanguard support of LGBT+ rights issues (Chaney 2013). The left-hand panel of Figure 8 displays the probability that an individual’s reported vote choice was distinct from the party they identified as that which they felt closest to.¹¹ In line with expectations regarding the constrained electoral potential of small parties in the UK’s majoritarian system, those who felt closest to either the Liberal Democrats, the Greens or UKIP were significantly more likely to vote for a party other than their preferred

¹¹ Note, however, that whilst feelings of voter-party approximation help to identify the divergence between legitimate voter preferences for partisan alternatives and votes cast, it may be the case that voters also incorporate concerns over the credibility gap into their decisions on which party they feel closest too.

option. The probability of a mismatch between preference and choice is highest for supporters of the Greens (49.5%) who, having only ever achieved a single MP, remain a very small party. The gap is also notably high for those who support the Liberal Democrats: the probability they vote for a party other than their preferred choice is 25.11%, which is more than three times that of Conservative supporters (8.64%) and double that of Labour supporters (12.5%).

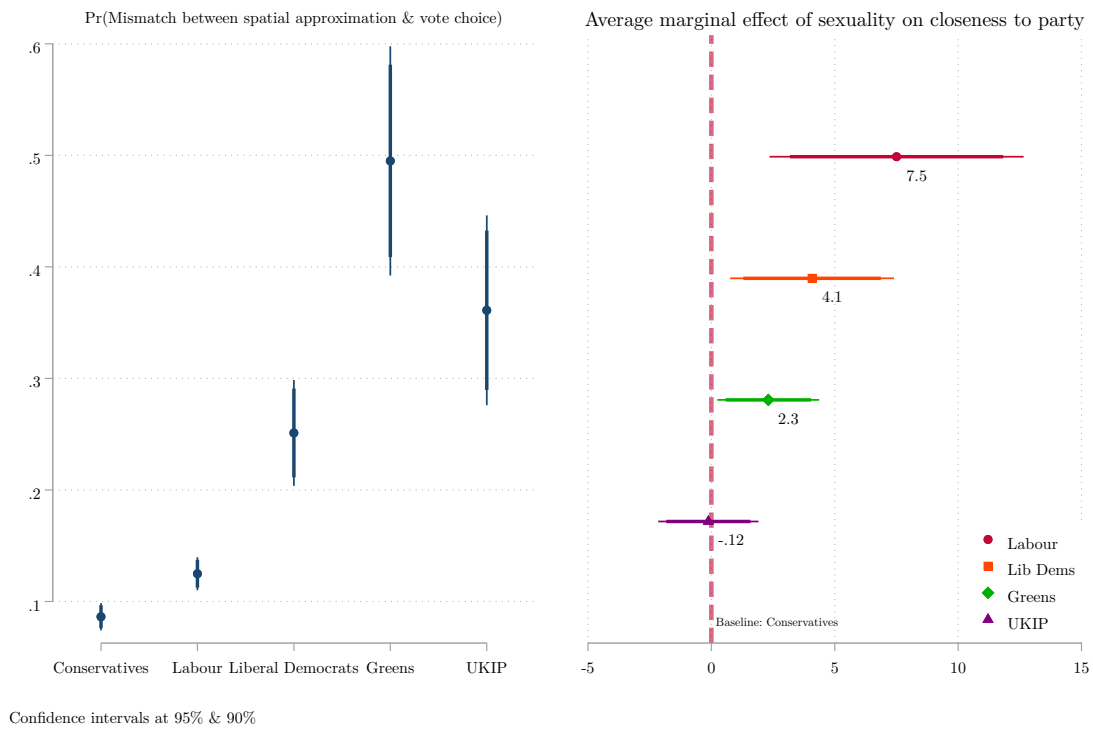


Figure 8: Strategic considerations & party preferences

The left-hand panel in Figure 8 assesses the existence of a sexuality gap between LGB and heterosexual voters' preferred party. The coefficients report the average marginal effect of sexuality from a multinomial model estimating the probability of feeling closest to i) Labour, ii) the Liberal Democrats, iii) the Greens or iv) UKIP, relative to the Conservative party. The

estimation includes the full vector of controls applied in the multinomial estimation of vote choice (full regression output available in Table A7).

The results show that, controlling for a number of sociodemographic determinants, there is a significant and independent sexuality gap in the probability that a voter feels closer to Labour, the Liberal Democrats and the Greens relative to the Conservatives. Compared to the Conservatives, LGBs are 7.5 percentage-points ($p=0.004$) more likely to feel closest to Labour, 4.1 percentage-points more likely to prefer the Liberal Democrats ($p=0.016$) and 2.3 percentage-points ($p=0.028$) more likely to feel closest to the Greens. Whilst there may not be a significant sexuality gap in voting at the polling station for the smaller socially liberal parties like the Liberal Democrats and the Greens, there is a significant gap in the voter-party spatial approximation, with LGBs being, on average and controlling for other factors, more likely to feel closest to these parties vis-à-vis heterosexuals. This suggests that the failure of these parties to bank an increased amount of electoral revenue from LGB voters at the ballot box is not indicative of a lack of LGB support, but rather the consequence of strategic voting calculations that constrains the opportunities of small parties with a “credibility gap” (Cutts 2012) and consolidates electoral support in favour of the two main parties.

Conclusions

LGB voters in Britain are not a monolith and there is variation within the sexual minority group’s preferences at the polls. However, much like their continental European peers (Turnbull-Dugarte 2020b), lavender voters in Britain are significantly more likely to vote for

socially liberal parties. LGB voters are 13.64 percentage-point more likely to vote for the liberal parties than their heterosexuals peers. This sexuality gap is greatest in the case of Labour, Britain's traditional social democratic party and advocate of LGBT+ rights, with LGBs being 9.65 percentage-points more likely to vote for Labour over any other alternative. In a discrete choice comparison between Labour and the Conservatives, LGB status correlates with a 8.8 percentage-point increase in the probability of voting Labour over the centre-right alternative.

The contribution I make here is largely empirical. Relying on self-reported sexual identity status, the results demonstrate that a sexuality gap exists in the electoral choices of the British electorate above and beyond that which can be explained by socioeconomic determinants. This work advances our knowledge of British electoral behaviour in two ways. Firstly, it leverages data from self-reported sexuality, as opposed to partnership-inferred measures used elsewhere (Turnbull-Dugarte 2020b), which allows for the inclusion of single (non-coupled) LGB individuals which have previously been excluded from European-wide assessments of LGB voting. Secondly, it accommodates to the multi-party options available to British voters by assessing the sexuality gap across multiple electoral alternatives by including specific tests of support for smaller parties. Whilst the point-estimates of the sexuality effect suggest LGBs are more likely to vote for smaller left-leaning parties like the Greens or the Liberal Democrats, the results suggest that the level of LGB support for these parties at the ballot box is likely a function of strategic incentives engendered by the majoritarian two-party system.

The limitations of this empirical work are twofold. First, whilst establishing that there is an important sexuality gap, our analysis cannot test the mechanisms that may explain LGB-heterosexual divergences at the ballot box. The extant arguments maintain that divergent political behaviour between sexual minority voters and the heteronormative mainstream occur because of both bottom-up group consciousness mobilisation as well as top-down partisan efforts. Future research should expand upon the findings presented here to test which of these mechanisms explain the UK sexuality gap. Given that we know European LGB voters are more inclined to support both leftist policies like state redistribution and liberal policies like EU integration (Turnbull-Dugarte 2020b, 2020a), these value positions, or similar, may serve as mediators to explain the divergent preferences of LGB and heterosexual voters. Second, we cannot rule out the potential endogeneity between ideological identification with socially liberal parties, like Labour and the Liberal Democrats, and self-identification as LGB (Egan 2019). Additional replications, therefore, should test whether the UK's sexuality gap is observed using measures of homosexual or bisexual sexual activity, as opposed to identification as LGB, also correlates with increased support for these parties.

When it comes to understanding the motivations behind voters' electoral choices at the ballot box in Britain, sexuality should not be ignored. Sexuality is a significant and strong determinant of vote choice for British voters and scholars would do well to consider the explanatory role of sexuality in their work on British electoral behaviour and outcomes. The sexuality gap is not a feature of older voting populations that were influenced by the partisan conflict over LGBT+ rights but it is very much alive within the youngest members of the

electorate who have joined Britain's voting population in a post-marriage world. This suggests that the sexuality gap may be a feature that we can expect to observe in future elections. Whilst the partisan divide over issues like SSM may have dissipated, reputational associations likely still play a role in shaping voters' perceptions of where parties stand on LGBT+ rights. The Conservative Party's current leader and the UK prime minister, Boris Johnson, who in 1999 described gay men as "tank-topped bumboys", in 2000 called Labour's desire to repeal Section 28 "appalling" and in 2001 compared SSM to bestiality, may do little to remedy the party's anti-LGBT+ image and attract the British lavender vote.

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Appendix file for “Who wins the UK lavender vote? (Mostly) Labour”

Table A 1: Main logistic regression models

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Voted for a liberal party		Voted for Labour	
LGB	0.69*** (0.14)	0.58*** (0.14)	0.55*** (0.13)	0.43*** (0.14)
Gender (1 female)		0.14*** (0.05)		0.13** (0.05)
Race (baseline: white)				
Mixed		0.59*** (0.20)		0.68*** (0.20)
Indian		0.64*** (0.16)		1.05*** (0.15)
Pakistani		1.01*** (0.23)		1.35*** (0.24)
Bangladeshi		1.63*** (0.30)		2.00*** (0.30)
Asian		-0.21 (0.29)		0.00 (0.28)
Black		0.70*** (0.18)		1.02*** (0.18)
Arab		-0.09 (0.62)		0.45 (0.60)
Other		0.46 (0.46)		0.68 (0.46)
Age (baseline: 25 & under)				
25-34		0.23* (0.12)		0.21* (0.13)
35-44		0.25** (0.12)		0.10 (0.12)
45-54		0.05 (0.12)		-0.07 (0.12)
55-64		0.06 (0.12)		-0.13 (0.12)
65-74		-0.15 (0.14)		-0.35** (0.15)
75+		-0.18 (0.16)		-0.38** (0.16)
Income		-0.05***		-0.06***

		(0.02)		(0.02)
Education (baseline: none)				
GCSE		-0.24**		-0.44***
		(0.10)		(0.10)
A-level		0.20**		0.02
		(0.10)		(0.10)
Other		-0.22**		-0.38***
		(0.11)		(0.12)
Degree		0.61***		0.16*
		(0.09)		(0.09)
Employment (baseline: employed)				
Self-employed		-0.24***		-0.33***
		(0.09)		(0.10)
Unemployed		-0.39***		-0.33**
		(0.15)		(0.16)
Retiree		-0.08		-0.19*
		(0.10)		(0.10)
Studying		-0.15		-0.28*
		(0.16)		(0.16)
NILF		-0.18*		-0.24**
		(0.10)		(0.10)
Urban area		0.20***		0.44***
		(0.05)		(0.06)
Survey time effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Constant	-0.12	-0.47***	-0.66***	-0.75***
	(0.09)	(0.17)	(0.09)	(0.18)
Observations	10,290	10,221	10,290	10,221

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Average marginal effects of sexuality by gender subsamples

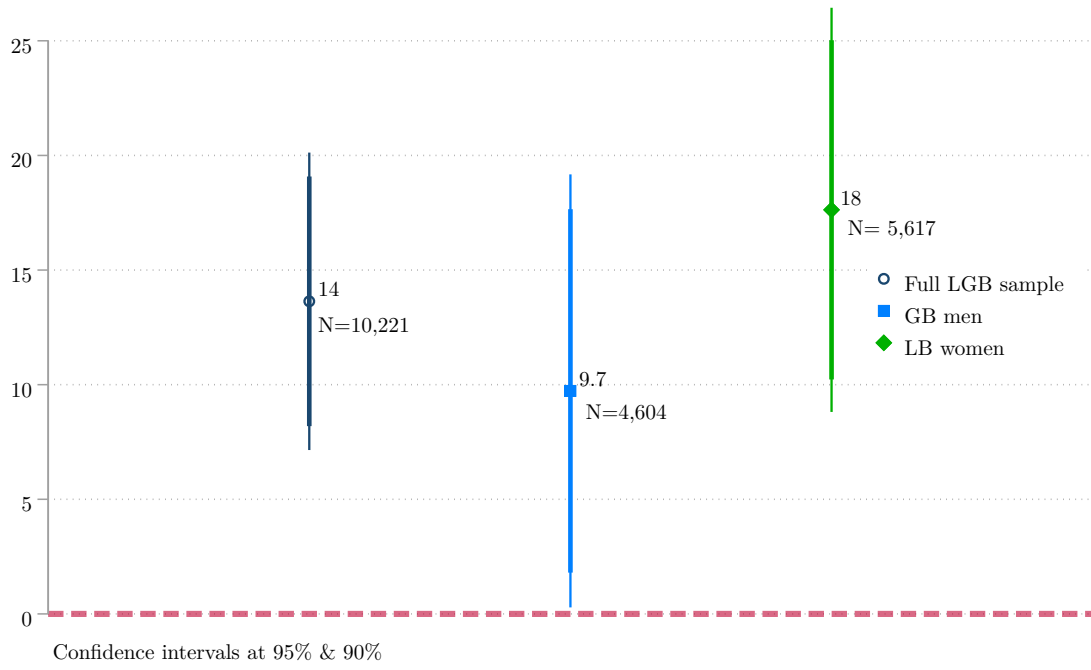


Figure A 1: Average marginal effects (Model 2) using gender subsamples

Table A 2: Replication of full model (2) using gendered subsamples

	(1) Full sample	(2) Male only subsample	(3) Female only subsample
LGB	0.58*** (0.14)	0.41** (0.20)	0.77*** (0.21)
Gender (1 female)	0.14*** (0.05)		
Race (baseline: white)			
Mixed	0.59*** (0.20)	0.53 (0.33)	0.64** (0.25)
Indian	0.64*** (0.16)	0.72*** (0.22)	0.56** (0.22)
Pakistani	1.01*** (0.23)	0.75** (0.31)	1.41*** (0.31)
Bangladeshi	1.63*** (0.30)	1.77*** (0.50)	1.56*** (0.38)
Asian	-0.21 (0.29)	-0.09 (0.45)	-0.31 (0.38)
Black	0.70*** (0.18)	0.73** (0.29)	0.68*** (0.24)
Arab	-0.09 (0.62)	-0.74 (0.77)	0.56 (1.08)
Other	0.46 (0.46)	0.54 (0.75)	0.33 (0.58)
Income	-0.05*** (0.02)	-0.05*** (0.02)	-0.03 (0.03)
Age (baseline: 25 & under)			
25-34	0.23* (0.12)	0.46** (0.18)	0.00 (0.17)
35-44	0.25** (0.12)	0.28 (0.18)	0.20 (0.16)
45-54	0.05 (0.12)	0.12 (0.17)	-0.03 (0.16)
55-64	0.06 (0.12)	0.16 (0.18)	-0.06 (0.16)
65-74	-0.15 (0.14)	0.13 (0.21)	-0.44** (0.20)
75+	-0.18 (0.16)	0.00 (0.23)	-0.40* (0.21)
Education (baseline: none)			
GCSE	-0.24**	-0.16	-0.31**

	(0.10)	(0.15)	(0.12)
A-level	0.20**	0.32**	0.05
	(0.10)	(0.14)	(0.13)
Other	-0.22**	-0.23	-0.23
	(0.11)	(0.17)	(0.14)
Degree	0.61***	0.69***	0.51***
	(0.09)	(0.14)	(0.12)
Employment (baseline: employed)			
Self-employed	-0.24***	-0.25**	-0.20
	(0.09)	(0.12)	(0.14)
Unemployed	-0.39***	-0.50**	-0.27
	(0.15)	(0.22)	(0.20)
Retiree	-0.08	-0.14	-0.03
	(0.10)	(0.15)	(0.13)
Studying	-0.15	-0.03	-0.26
	(0.16)	(0.24)	(0.21)
NILF	-0.18*	-0.08	-0.22*
	(0.10)	(0.20)	(0.11)
Urban area	0.20***	0.19**	0.20***
	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.07)
Survey time effects	✓	✓	✓
Constant	-0.47***	-0.64**	-0.14
	(0.17)	(0.25)	(0.23)
Observations	10,221	4,604	5,617

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

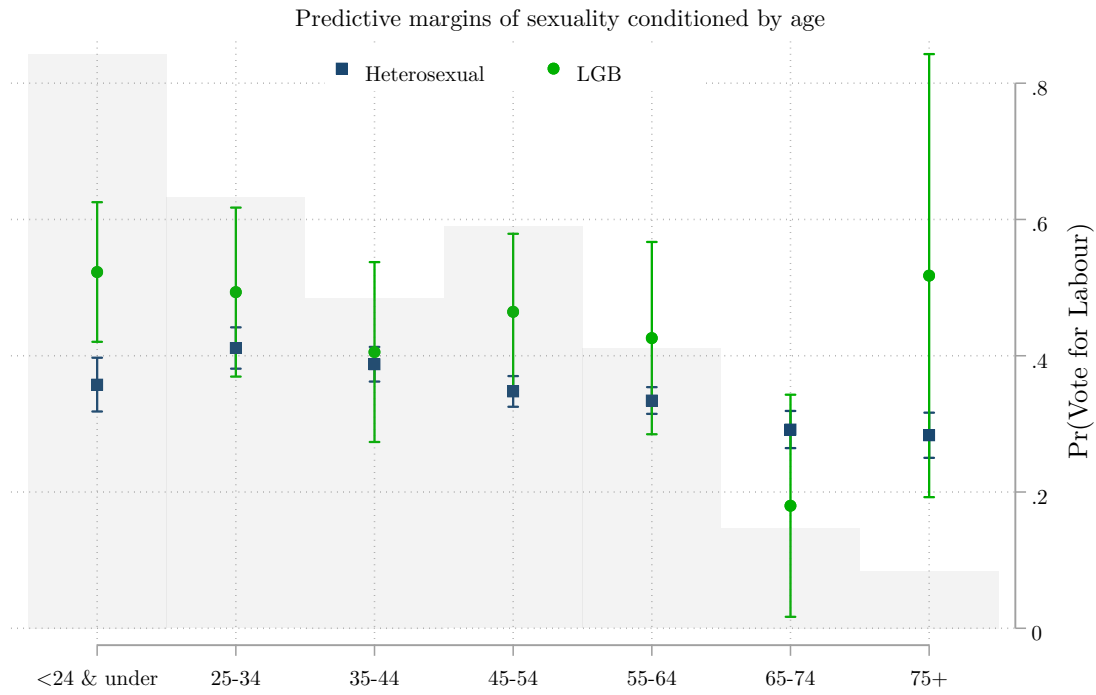
Table A 3: Age interaction models

Variables	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Vote for liberal party	Vote for liberal party	Vote for Labour	Vote for Labour
LGB	0.62** (0.27)	0.72*** (0.27)	0.48* (0.26)	0.71*** (0.27)
Age (baseline: 25 & under)				
25-34	0.25** (0.11)	0.23* (0.13)	0.20* (0.11)	0.24* (0.13)
35-44	0.26** (0.10)	0.26** (0.12)	0.06 (0.10)	0.13 (0.13)
45-54	0.00 (0.10)	0.07 (0.12)	-0.17* (0.10)	-0.05 (0.12)
55-64	-0.06 (0.10)	0.07 (0.12)	-0.33*** (0.10)	-0.11 (0.13)
65-74	-0.32*** (0.10)	-0.13 (0.15)	-0.62*** (0.10)	-0.32** (0.15)
75+	-0.40*** (0.11)	-0.18 (0.16)	-0.65*** (0.11)	-0.36** (0.17)
LGB*25-34	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
LGB*35-44	0.13 (0.45)	0.05 (0.46)	-0.13 (0.41)	-0.36 (0.42)
LGB*45-54	-0.09 (0.44)	-0.24 (0.45)	-0.37 (0.42)	-0.63 (0.44)
LGB*55-64	-0.18 (0.40)	-0.35 (0.40)	0.04 (0.39)	-0.20 (0.40)
LGB*65-74	-0.14 (0.46)	-0.30 (0.46)	-0.03 (0.45)	-0.30 (0.46)
LGB*75+	-0.43 (0.62)	-0.69 (0.67)	-1.02 (0.72)	-1.37* (0.75)
Gender (1 Female)		0.14*** (0.05)	0.56 (0.82)	0.34 (0.87)
Race (baseline: white)				0.12**
Mixed		0.59*** (0.20)		(0.05)
Indian		0.64*** (0.16)		0.68*** (0.20)
Pakistani		1.02*** (0.23)		1.05*** (0.15)
Bangladeshi		1.64*** (0.30)		1.36*** (0.24)
Asian		-0.20 (0.29)		2.01*** (0.30)

Black		0.71***		0.03
		(0.18)		(0.28)
Arab		-0.09		1.03***
		(0.62)		(0.18)
Other		0.46		0.45
		(0.46)		(0.60)
Income		-0.05***		0.68
		(0.02)		(0.46)
Education (baseline: none)				-0.06***
GCSE		-0.24**		(0.02)
		(0.10)		
A-level		0.20**		-0.44***
		(0.10)		(0.10)
Other		-0.22**		0.02
		(0.11)		(0.10)
Degree		0.61***		-0.38***
		(0.09)		(0.12)
Employment (baseline: employed)				0.16*
Self-employed		-0.24***		(0.09)
		(0.09)		
Unemployed		-0.39***		-0.34***
		(0.15)		(0.10)
Retiree		-0.08		-0.32**
		(0.10)		(0.16)
Studying		-0.16		-0.19*
		(0.16)		(0.10)
NILF		-0.17*		-0.29*
		(0.10)		(0.16)
Urban area		0.20***		-0.24**
		(0.05)		(0.10)
Survey time effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Constant	-0.06	-0.48***	-0.41***	-0.78***
	(0.12)	(0.17)	(0.12)	(0.18)
Observations	10,290	10,221	10,290	10,221

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1



Overlaid histogram displays proportion of LGB population in each age category

Figure A 2: Age interaction model predictive margins for Pr(Vote Labour)

Table A 4: Logistic model specifications with additional controls

Variables	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Vote for liberal party		Vote for Labour	
LGB	0.58*** (0.14)	0.54*** (0.14)	0.43*** (0.14)	0.41*** (0.14)
Gender (1 female)	0.14*** (0.05)	0.12** (0.05)	0.13** (0.05)	0.12** (0.05)
Race (baseline: white)				
Mixed	0.59*** (0.20)	0.65*** (0.22)	0.68*** (0.20)	0.70*** (0.21)
Indian	0.64*** (0.16)	0.74*** (0.17)	1.05*** (0.15)	1.12*** (0.16)
Pakistani	1.01*** (0.23)	1.18*** (0.25)	1.35*** (0.24)	1.49*** (0.25)
Bangladeshi	1.63*** (0.30)	1.74*** (0.32)	2.00*** (0.30)	2.09*** (0.32)
Asian	-0.21 (0.29)	-0.20 (0.31)	0.00 (0.28)	-0.02 (0.30)
Black	0.70*** (0.18)	0.63*** (0.19)	1.02*** (0.18)	0.92*** (0.19)
Arab	-0.09 (0.62)	0.18 (0.66)	0.45 (0.60)	0.76 (0.62)
Other	0.46 (0.46)	0.57 (0.51)	0.68 (0.46)	0.74 (0.52)
Age (baseline: 25 & under)				
25-34	0.23* (0.12)	0.11 (0.13)	0.21* (0.13)	0.10 (0.13)
35-44	0.25** (0.12)	0.16 (0.12)	0.10 (0.12)	0.00 (0.12)
45-54	0.05 (0.12)	-0.01 (0.12)	-0.07 (0.12)	-0.13 (0.12)
55-64	0.06 (0.12)	0.01 (0.13)	-0.13 (0.12)	-0.16 (0.13)
65-74	-0.15 (0.14)	-0.19 (0.15)	-0.35** (0.15)	-0.37** (0.16)
75+	-0.18 (0.16)	-0.18 (0.16)	-0.38** (0.16)	-0.37** (0.17)
Income	-0.05*** (0.02)	-0.04** (0.02)	-0.06*** (0.02)	-0.04** (0.02)
Education (baseline: none)				
GCSE	-0.24** (0.10)	-0.22** (0.10)	-0.44*** (0.10)	-0.42*** (0.11)
A-level	0.20**	0.23**	0.02	0.04

	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.11)
Other	-0.22**	-0.24**	-0.38***	-0.37***
	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.12)	(0.12)
Degree	0.61***	0.58***	0.16*	0.14
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.10)
Employment (baseline: employed)				
Self-employed	-0.24***	0.22	-0.33***	0.10
	(0.09)	(0.13)	(0.10)	(0.14)
Unemployed	-0.39***	-0.14	-0.33**	-0.10
	(0.15)	(0.18)	(0.16)	(0.19)
Retiree	-0.08	0.22	-0.19*	0.15
	(0.10)	(0.14)	(0.10)	(0.15)
Studying	-0.15	-0.03	-0.28*	-0.13
	(0.16)	(0.17)	(0.16)	(0.18)
NILF	-0.18*	0.03	-0.24**	-0.02
	(0.10)	(0.14)	(0.10)	(0.14)
Urban area	0.20***	0.19***	0.44***	0.45***
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Job sector				
Large employers		1.10		-0.45
		(0.74)		(1.09)
Large managers		0.20		0.29
		(0.18)		(0.19)
Small employers		-0.87***		-0.78**
		(0.32)		(0.37)
Small managers		0.23		0.13
		(0.15)		(0.16)
Professional self-employed		-0.08		-0.36
		(0.31)		(0.38)
Professional employee		0.64***		0.55***
		(0.18)		(0.19)
Industrial non-manual worker		0.50***		0.46***
		(0.13)		(0.13)
Industrial non-manual foreman		0.30		0.37
		(0.23)		(0.24)
Junior non-manual		0.31**		0.34**
		(0.13)		(0.14)
Personal services worker		0.31*		0.32*
		(0.18)		(0.19)
Foreman manual		0.11		0.39*
		(0.19)		(0.20)
Skilled manual		0.01		0.13
		(0.18)		(0.19)
Semi-skilled manual		0.19		0.23

		(0.15)		(0.16)
Unskilled manual		0.40*		0.42*
		(0.22)		(0.23)
Own account		-0.36**		-0.27
		(0.17)		(0.19)
Farmers – employers/managers		0.52		
		(1.01)		
Farmers – own account		-0.72		-0.96
		(0.52)		(0.67)
Agricultural worker		0.27		0.02
		(0.71)		(0.93)
Satisfaction with democracy		0.30***		0.22***
		(0.03)		(0.03)
Current financial situation				
“Doing alright”		0.16***		0.21***
		(0.06)		(0.06)
“Getting by”		0.20***		0.31***
		(0.07)		(0.08)
“Quite difficult”		0.22*		0.38***
		(0.13)		(0.13)
“Very difficult”		-0.40*		-0.13
		(0.22)		(0.22)
Prospective financial situation				
“Worse than now”		0.16*		0.06
		(0.09)		(0.09)
“About the same”		-0.01		-0.08
		(0.06)		(0.07)
Survey time fixed effects				-
Constant	-0.47***	-1.67***	-0.75***	-1.76***
	(0.17)	(0.23)	(0.18)	(0.24)
Observations	10,221	9,954	10,221	9,952

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table A 5: Multinomial regression model (baseline: Conservatives)

Variables	(1) Abstain	(3) Lab	(4) LibDems	(5) SNP	(6) Plaid	(7) Greens	(8) UKIP	(9) BNP	(10) Other
LGB	-0.27	0.38**	0.53*	-0.01	0.38	0.80	-1.00	0.10	-
	(0.25)	(0.19)	(0.28)	(0.37)	(1.01)	(0.53)	(0.75)	(1.22)	17.13***
Gender (1 female)	-0.09	0.07	0.07	-0.22	0.16	0.33	-0.66***	-1.21	-0.14
	(0.08)	(0.06)	(0.10)	(0.14)	(0.26)	(0.20)	(0.16)	(0.75)	(0.25)
Race (baseline: white)									
Mixed	1.03***	1.33***	0.96**	0.39	-	0.09	0.56	-	-0.27
	(0.35)	(0.30)	(0.43)	(0.83)	15.82***	(0.81)	(1.05)	(0.64)	(1.07)
Indian	0.24	0.91***	-2.37***	-2.23**	-	-0.35	-1.30	-	-
	(0.27)	(0.21)	(0.82)	(1.02)	16.49***	(0.63)	(1.02)	(0.56)	(0.25)
Pakistani	0.88**	1.85***	-1.91*	-	-	-	-	-	0.50
	(0.45)	(0.40)	(1.08)	16.44***	15.72***	16.28***	16.27***	14.73***	
Bangladeshi	1.07	2.64***	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.95*
	(0.68)	(0.62)	(0.60)	15.78***	15.92***	15.19***	15.88***	15.48***	13.44***
Asian	0.53	0.09	-0.38	-	-	0.31	0.13	-	-
	(0.52)	(0.44)	(0.57)	17.47***	16.81***	(0.75)	(0.83)	(0.67)	15.11***
Black	1.62***	1.85***	0.21	-	-	-0.14	-	-	-
	(0.30)	(0.27)	(0.55)	16.29***	15.70***	(0.76)	(0.27)	(0.48)	16.33***
Arab	2.06*	1.34	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	(1.22)	(1.18)	(1.04)	16.89***	16.68***	15.94***	16.78***	16.32***	13.28***
Other	0.04	0.77	-	-	-	1.88*	-	-	2.29*
	(0.78)	(0.54)	(0.44)	21.39***	21.44***	21.08***	21.37***	18.52***	(1.13)
Age (baseline: 25 & under)									
25-34	-0.22	0.03	0.05	0.20	0.31	-0.23	0.66	15.06***	-0.65
	(0.19)	(0.18)	(0.33)	(0.38)	(0.80)	(0.56)	(0.57)	(0.94)	(0.58)
35-44	-	-0.36**	0.26	-0.42	0.04	0.03	0.64	15.86***	-0.17
	0.92***	(0.19)	(0.17)	(0.31)	(0.37)	(0.73)	(0.49)	(0.53)	(0.71)
45-54	-	-	-0.19	-0.44	0.06	-0.73	0.35	16.20***	-0.65
	1.51***	0.77***	(0.31)	(0.37)	(0.73)	(0.50)	(0.52)	(0.40)	(0.49)
55-64	-	-	-0.10	-0.61*	0.47	-0.72	0.52	13.82***	-1.29**
	1.80***	0.91***	(0.31)	(0.37)	(0.70)	(0.49)	(0.52)	(0.97)	(0.50)
65-74	-	-	-0.30	-0.67	0.47	-0.97	0.38	13.67***	-0.89
	2.02***	1.22***	(0.34)	(0.43)	(0.81)	(0.61)	(0.58)	(0.53)	(0.54)
75+	-	-	-0.31	-0.87*	0.85	-1.30**	0.34	-2.32**	-0.38

	2.26***	1.32***							
	(0.26)	(0.21)	(0.35)	(0.46)	(0.84)	(0.65)	(0.62)	(0.96)	(0.64)
Income	-	-	0.00	-0.22***	-0.36***	-0.16**	-0.18***	-0.39*	-0.22**
	0.19***	0.12***							
	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.04)	(0.11)	(0.08)	(0.06)	(0.20)	(0.09)
Education (baseline: none)									
GCSE	-	-	0.23	-0.17	-0.53	0.70	0.01	-2.45***	-0.32
	0.74***	0.60***							
	(0.14)	(0.12)	(0.25)	(0.29)	(0.42)	(0.51)	(0.28)	(0.81)	(0.41)
A-level	-	-0.27**	0.41*	-0.09	-0.25	0.50	-0.01	-1.62**	-0.29
	1.15***								
	(0.14)	(0.12)	(0.24)	(0.29)	(0.42)	(0.50)	(0.29)	(0.76)	(0.43)
Other	-	-	0.47*	-0.48	-0.25	-0.12	0.06	-0.45	-0.36
	0.47***	0.49***							
	(0.15)	(0.13)	(0.27)	(0.36)	(0.45)	(0.62)	(0.29)	(0.95)	(0.48)
Degree	-	-0.15	1.18***	0.19	-0.29	1.37***	-0.66**	-4.09***	-0.30
	1.56***								
	(0.14)	(0.11)	(0.23)	(0.27)	(0.38)	(0.47)	(0.31)	(1.18)	(0.38)
Employment (baseline: employed)									
Self-employed	0.04	-	0.26	-0.63**	-1.92**	0.08	-0.20	0.39	-1.22**
		0.31***							
	(0.13)	(0.11)	(0.17)	(0.27)	(0.76)	(0.30)	(0.28)	(0.87)	(0.52)
Unemployed	0.57**	0.13	0.51	-1.18*	-1.21	-0.30	0.73	-	1.09*
								15.47***	
	(0.23)	(0.22)	(0.41)	(0.64)	(1.04)	(1.03)	(0.47)	(0.76)	(0.58)
Retiree	-	-	0.19	-0.40	-1.34***	0.01	-0.32	-0.62	-1.00***
	0.76***	0.32***							
	(0.16)	(0.12)	(0.18)	(0.25)	(0.47)	(0.37)	(0.32)	(0.81)	(0.38)
Studying	0.08	-0.13	0.97***	-0.56	-	-0.80	-	-	-2.87***
					17.08***		16.64***	13.32***	
	(0.24)	(0.23)	(0.36)	(0.53)	(0.56)	(0.76)	(0.44)	(0.91)	(1.09)
NILF	0.41***	0.08	0.39*	0.06	-0.02	0.22	0.14	0.62	0.27
	(0.14)	(0.13)	(0.23)	(0.28)	(0.48)	(0.35)	(0.34)	(0.98)	(0.37)
Urban area	0.22***	0.46***	-0.14	-0.24*	-1.12***	0.03	-0.06	0.56	0.15
	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.10)	(0.13)	(0.24)	(0.19)	(0.16)	(0.66)	(0.25)
Survey time effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Constant	2.04***	0.98***	-2.30***	-1.06**	-2.31***	-3.17***	-1.96***	-	-1.67***
								17.48***	
	(0.22)	(0.20)	(0.37)	(0.45)	(0.82)	(0.66)	(0.59)	(0.98)	(0.62)
Observations	10,221	10,221	10,221	10,221	10,221	10,221	10,221	10,221	10,221

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table A 6: Logistic regression models using England-only subsample

Variables	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Vote for a liberal party		Vote for Labour	
LGB	0.74*** (0.15)	0.63*** (0.16)	0.57*** (0.14)	0.46*** (0.15)
Gender (1 female)		0.16*** (0.05)		0.12** (0.06)
Race (baseline: white)				
Mixed		0.67*** (0.20)		0.74*** (0.20)
Indian		0.71*** (0.16)		1.03*** (0.16)
Pakistani		1.22*** (0.24)		1.45*** (0.24)
Bangladeshi		1.67*** (0.30)		1.97*** (0.30)
Asian		-0.11 (0.30)		-0.02 (0.29)
Black		0.76*** (0.19)		0.99*** (0.18)
Arab		-0.17 (0.65)		0.31 (0.64)
Other		0.57 (0.45)		0.66 (0.46)
Age (baseline: 25 & under)				
25-34		0.17 (0.14)		0.18 (0.14)
35-44		0.26** (0.13)		0.09 (0.13)
45-54		-0.01 (0.13)		-0.10 (0.13)
55-64		-0.04 (0.13)		-0.21 (0.13)
65-74		-0.25 (0.16)		-0.40** (0.16)
75+		-0.29 (0.17)		-0.43** (0.18)
Income		-0.04** (0.02)		-0.07*** (0.02)
Education (baseline: none)				
GCSE		-0.27** (0.11)		-0.45*** (0.12)
A-level		0.22**		0.06

		(0.11)		(0.11)
Other		-0.17		-0.35***
		(0.12)		(0.13)
Degree		0.69***		0.25**
		(0.10)		(0.11)
Employment (baseline: employed)				
Self-employed		-0.17*		-0.33***
		(0.10)		(0.10)
Unemployed		-0.29*		-0.35**
		(0.16)		(0.17)
Retiree		-0.04		-0.19*
		(0.11)		(0.11)
Studying		-0.04		-0.23
		(0.17)		(0.18)
NILF		-0.16		-0.25**
		(0.11)		(0.11)
Urban area		0.28***		0.44***
		(0.06)		(0.07)
Survey time effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Constant	-0.19*	-0.65***	-0.67***	-0.81***
	(0.10)	(0.20)	(0.11)	(0.21)
Observations	8,484	8,424	8,484	8,424

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

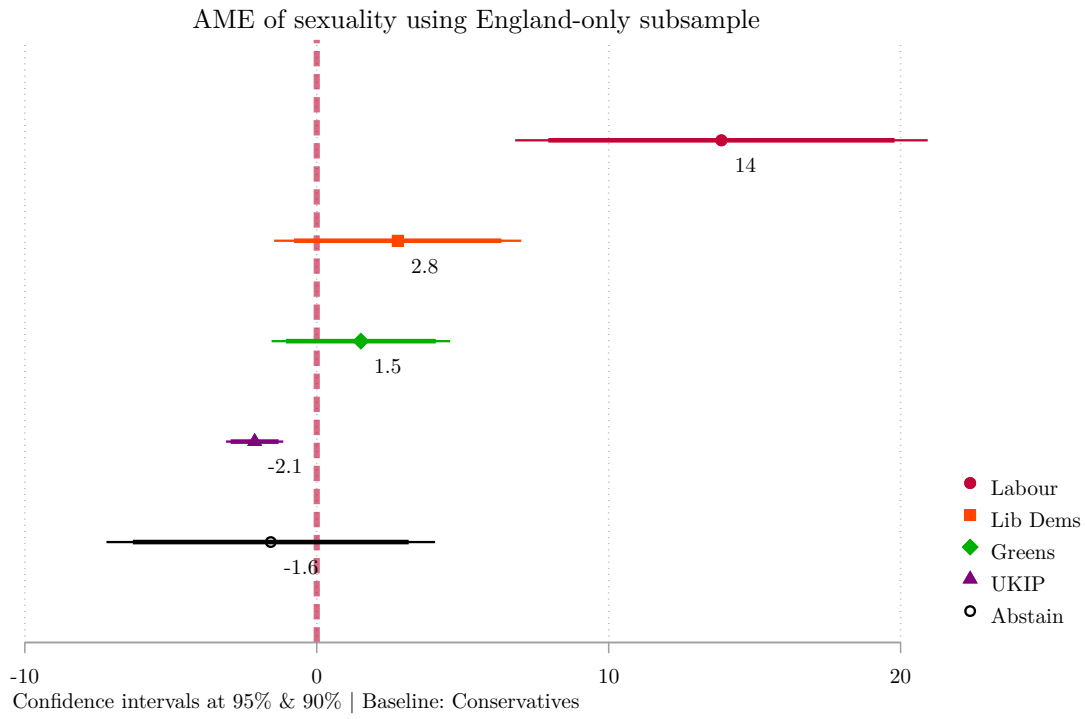


Figure A 3: England-only average marginal effects (AME) of multinomial model

Table A 7: Multinomial model of closeness to a political party (baseline: Conservatives)

Variables	(1) Labour	(2) LibDems	(3) Greens	(4) UKIP
LGB	0.59*** (0.15)	0.83*** (0.20)	1.10*** (0.27)	0.34 (0.41)
Gender (1 female)	0.00 (0.05)	-0.04 (0.08)	0.12 (0.14)	-0.97*** (0.13)
Race (baseline: white)				
Mixed	1.45*** (0.24)	0.97*** (0.37)	0.94** (0.48)	0.08 (1.00)
Indian	0.79*** (0.18)	-1.41** (0.62)	-16.86*** (0.19)	-16.57*** (0.18)
Pakistani	2.48*** (0.37)	0.31 (0.74)	0.43 (0.87)	-0.07 (1.07)
Bangladeshi	1.62*** (0.53)	-1.56 (1.13)	-16.35*** (0.53)	-16.15*** (0.59)
Asian	0.22 (0.39)	0.62 (0.45)	1.17** (0.52)	0.43 (0.74)
Black	2.07*** (0.25)	0.49 (0.49)	-0.05 (0.66)	-15.66*** (0.27)
Arab	17.79*** (0.38)	17.88*** (0.67)	-0.33 (0.25)	0.35 (0.30)
Other	1.03** (0.46)	-0.05 (0.81)	1.09 (0.75)	0.49 (1.10)
Age (baseline: 25 & under)				
25-34	-0.08 (0.15)	0.36 (0.29)	-0.33 (0.34)	-0.64 (0.42)
35-44	-0.38*** (0.14)	0.20 (0.27)	-0.48 (0.32)	-0.07 (0.35)
45-54	-0.62*** (0.14)	0.17 (0.27)	-0.68** (0.31)	-0.14 (0.33)
55-64	-0.68*** (0.14)	-0.04 (0.27)	-0.72** (0.31)	-0.26 (0.33)
65-74	-1.03*** (0.16)	0.01 (0.29)	-1.05*** (0.39)	-0.04 (0.40)
75+	-1.25*** (0.17)	-0.07 (0.30)	-1.98*** (0.50)	-0.66 (0.44)
Income	-0.16*** (0.02)	-0.05** (0.02)	-0.24*** (0.06)	-0.34*** (0.06)
Education (baseline: none)				
GCSE	-0.74*** (0.10)	0.17 (0.23)	-0.03 (0.43)	-0.08 (0.25)

A-level	-0.51***	0.71***	-0.22	-0.09
	(0.10)	(0.23)	(0.43)	(0.25)
Other	-0.53***	0.03	-1.16**	-0.10
	(0.11)	(0.28)	(0.57)	(0.27)
Degree	-0.27***	1.38***	1.00**	-0.54**
	(0.09)	(0.21)	(0.40)	(0.27)
Employment (baseline: employed)				
Self-employed	-0.39***	-0.12	0.10	-0.53**
	(0.09)	(0.14)	(0.23)	(0.27)
Unemployed	0.36*	0.29	0.40	0.71**
	(0.20)	(0.38)	(0.38)	(0.36)
Retiree	-0.36***	-0.05	-0.48*	-0.60**
	(0.09)	(0.15)	(0.27)	(0.27)
Studying	-0.01	0.31	0.41	-1.34**
	(0.17)	(0.33)	(0.33)	(0.61)
NILF	0.34***	-0.13	0.02	0.76***
	(0.12)	(0.22)	(0.30)	(0.25)
Urban area	0.50***	-0.04	-0.02	0.33**
	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.14)	(0.14)
Survey time effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Constant	0.96***	-2.36***	-1.69***	-0.54
	(0.17)	(0.35)	(0.53)	(0.40)
Observations	12,976	12,976	12,976	12,976

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

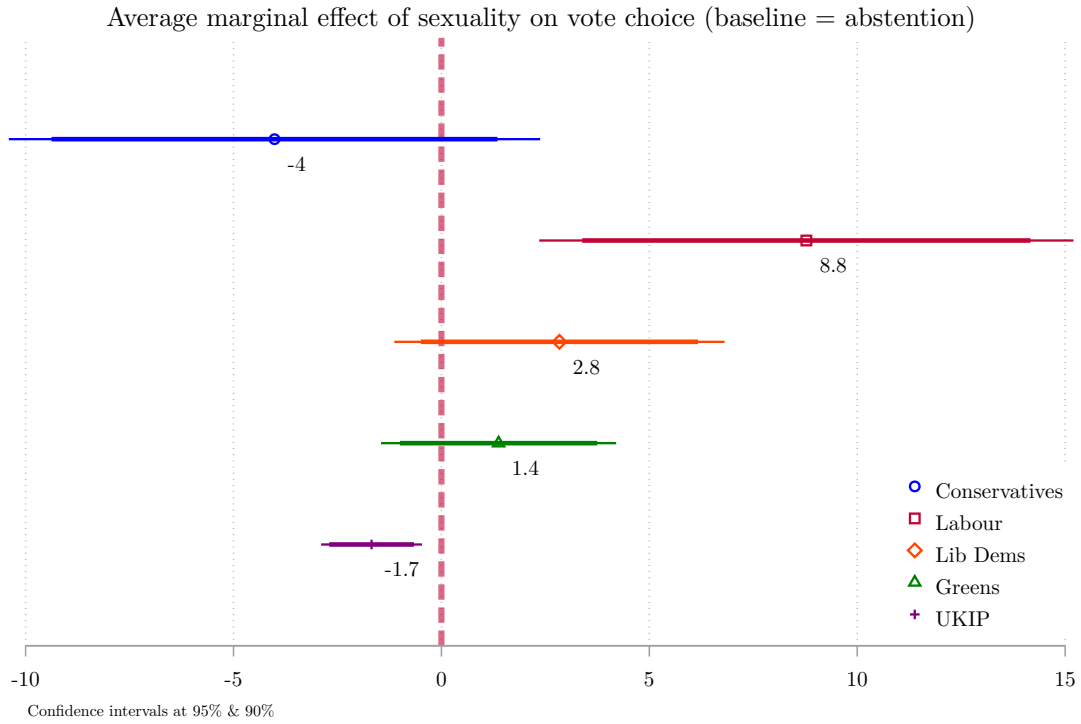


Figure A 4: Multinomial model with abstention as baseline category

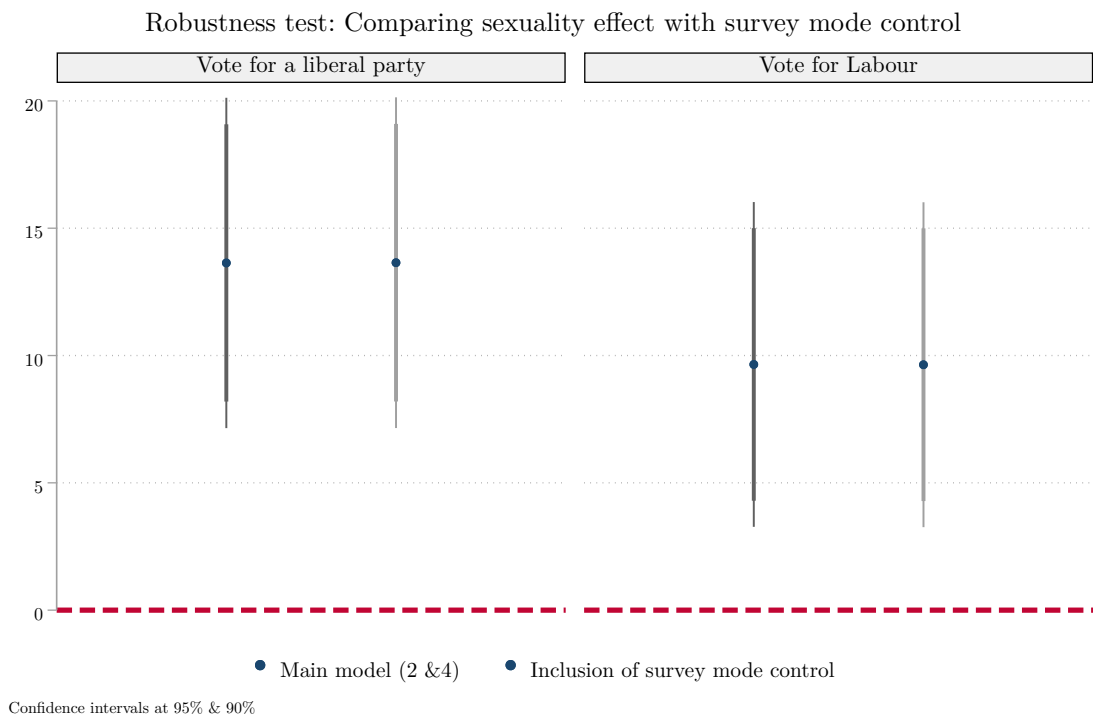


Figure A 5: Controlling for survey mode