

# Realignment

*How did the Tories win, why did the Red Wall fall, and what does it mean for the future?*

ONWARD >

## Onward's General Election study

This is an Onward study of how and why people voted in the 2019 General Election. We conducted two polls, one on the first weekend of the campaign and one at the end of the campaign, with the same sample across both polls.

Onward is a campaigning thinktank whose mission is to renew the centre right for the next generation by coming up with bold new policy ideas and reaching out to new groups of people.

Onward's advisory board, chaired by Lord Finkelstein, includes leading members of recent intakes, including Neil O'Brien, Tom Tugendhat, Gillian Keegan, Rachel Maclean and John Lamont. Please visit our website at [www.ukonward.com](http://www.ukonward.com).

Hanbury Strategy is a leading political strategy firm and member of the British Polling Council. Hanbury conducted a telephone poll of 4,003 people in a representative GB sample on 9-11 November. The second poll was of 8,114 people on 6-8 December. The results were weighted to the profile of all adults aged 18+. Full results are available at [www.hanburystrategy.com/polling](http://www.hanburystrategy.com/polling).

# Ten things to know

*The factors that underpinned the Conservative victory*

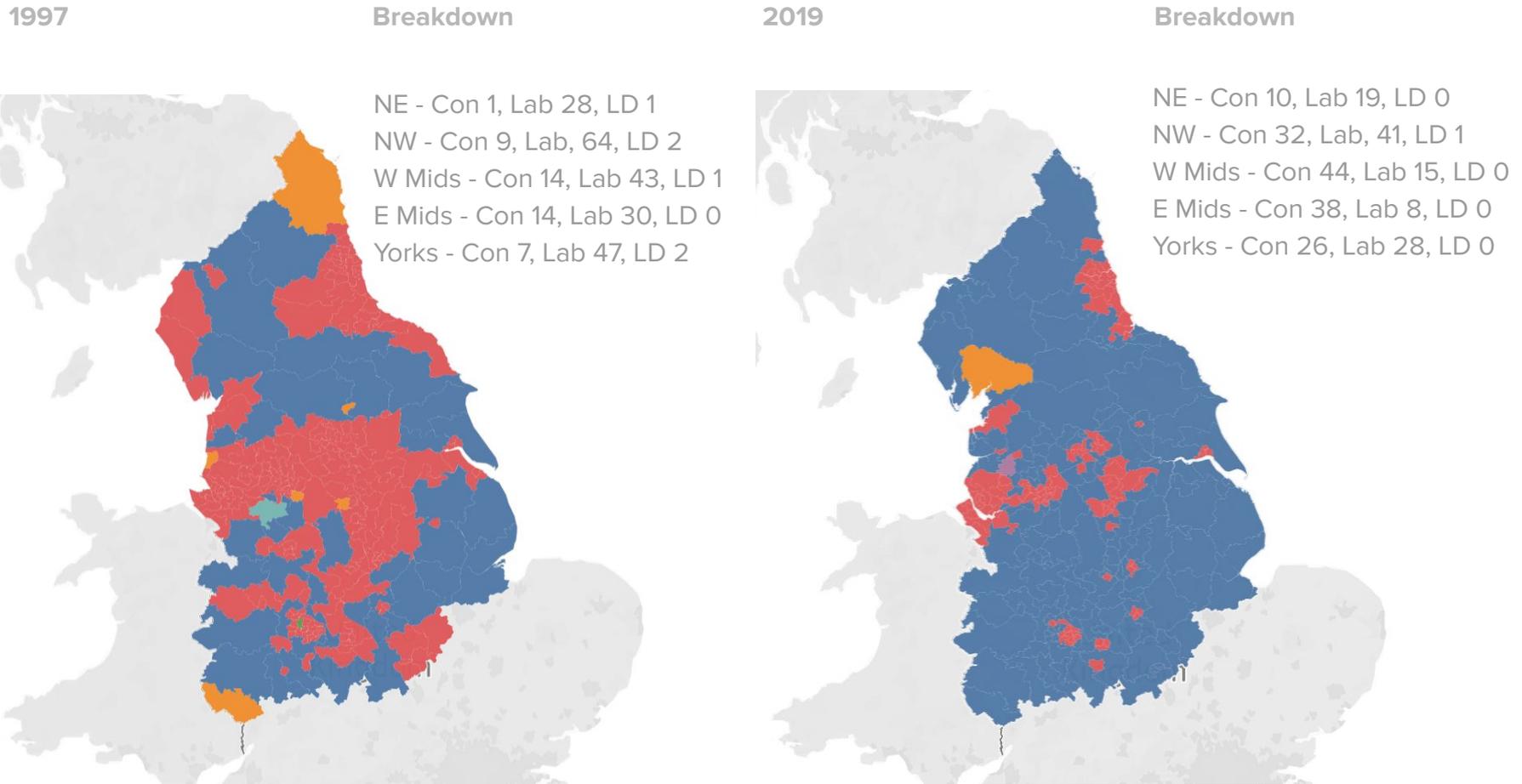
# 1. 'Workington Man' swung behind Boris Johnson

- 77% of 'Workington Man' voters - White, non-university educated men aged 45 and over, supported Leave and live in the North and Midlands - voted for the Conservatives in 2019, compared to 42% of the same group in 2015.
- 93% of Workington Men and 51% of Labour Leavers thought that Boris Johnson was the best Prime Minister.
- 32% of 2015 Labour Leavers supported the Conservatives. The Conservatives lost 33% of Remainers who voted Conservative in 2015.

	<b>Workington Man</b>	<b>Labour Leavers</b>	<b>Tory Remainers</b>
How they voted in 2019	Con 77%, Lab 11%, BXP 8%	Con 32%, Lab 56%, BXP 5%	Con 67%, Lab 8%, LD 21%
How they voted in 2015	Con 42%, Lab 23%, UKIP 20%	Lab 100%	Con 100%
Best Prime Minister	Johnson 93%, Corbyn 7%	Johnson 51%, Corbyn 49%	Johnson 90%, Corbyn 10%
Most important 3 issues	Brexit 65%, Health 10%, Immigration 8%	Brexit 32%, Health 24%, Economy 8%	Brexit 33%, Economy 22%, Health 14%

## 2. ... And the 'Red Wall' is now a pile of rubble

### Constituencies in the North and Midlands, by winning party

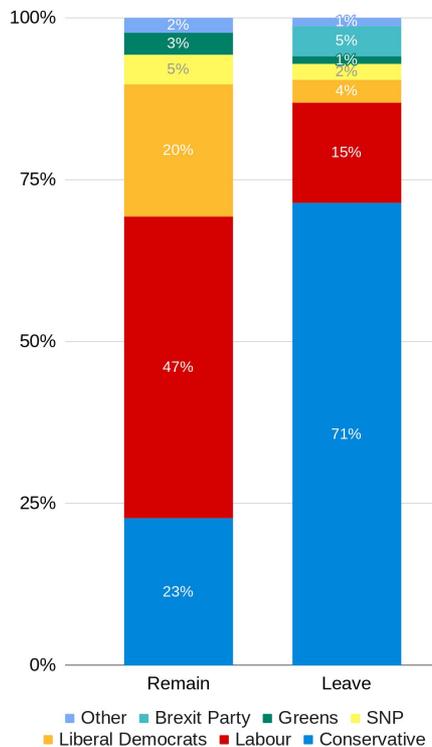


### 3. Leavers went to the Tories, Remainders shunned Labour

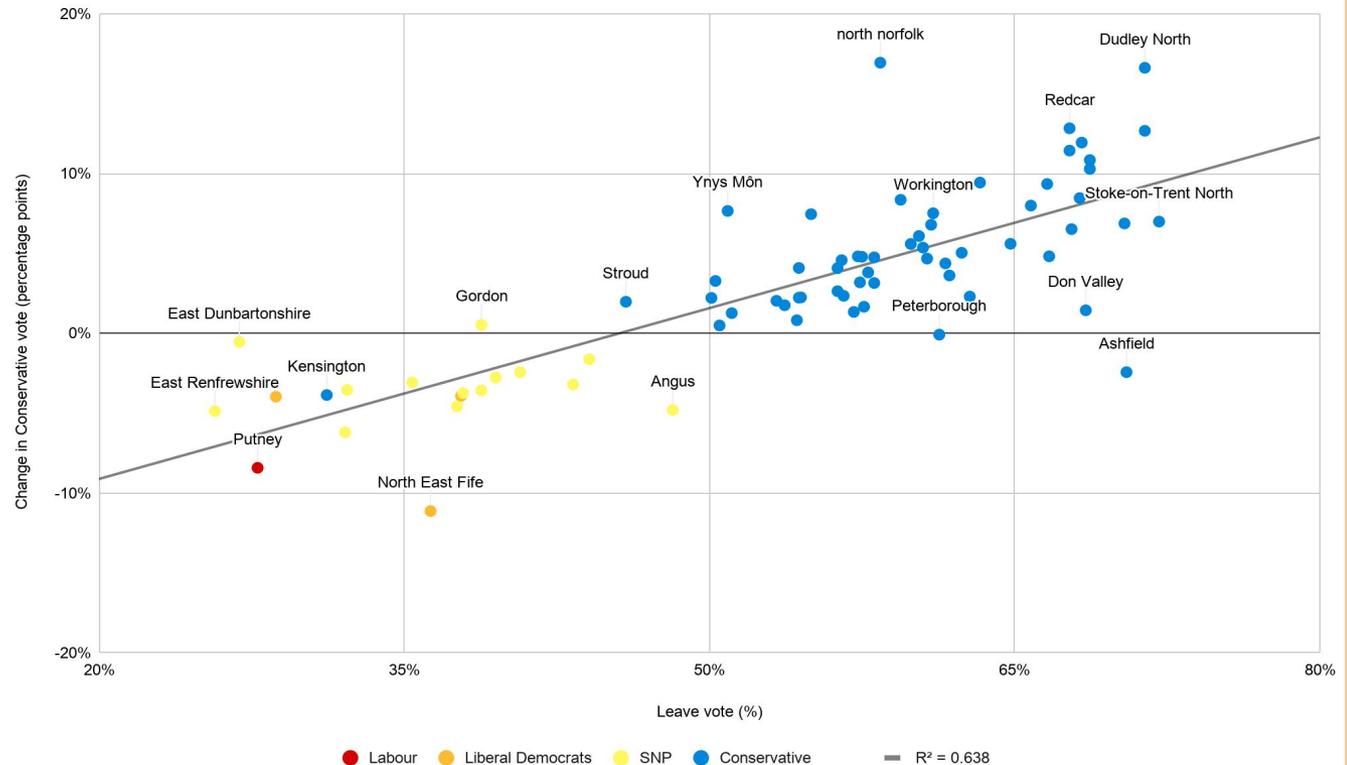
71% of Brexiteers voted for the Conservatives and Conservative seat gains were almost exclusively (excl. two) in Leave-voting areas.

But the Tories retained Remainers: 11% of total turnout was CON Remain voters

How Leave and Remain voted



Increase in Conservative vote share and Leave vote, seats that changed hands

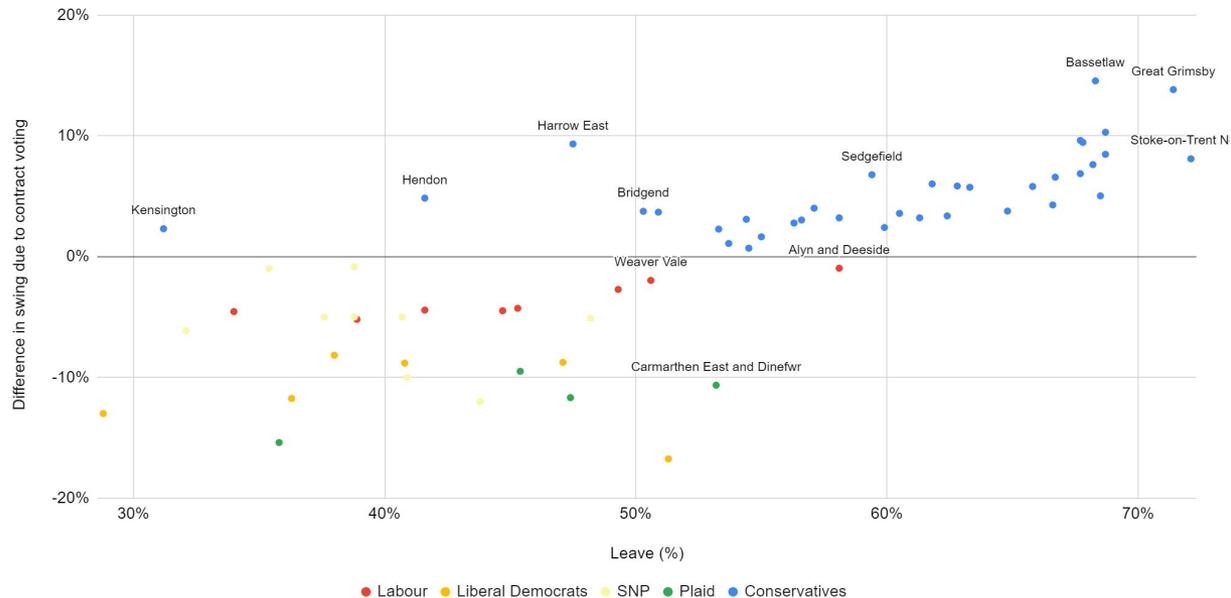


## 4. “Contract voting” helped the Tories in Leave areas

Slightly different to normal tactical voting, “contract voting” is for a party other than your ideal party if local seat and candidates are disregarded.

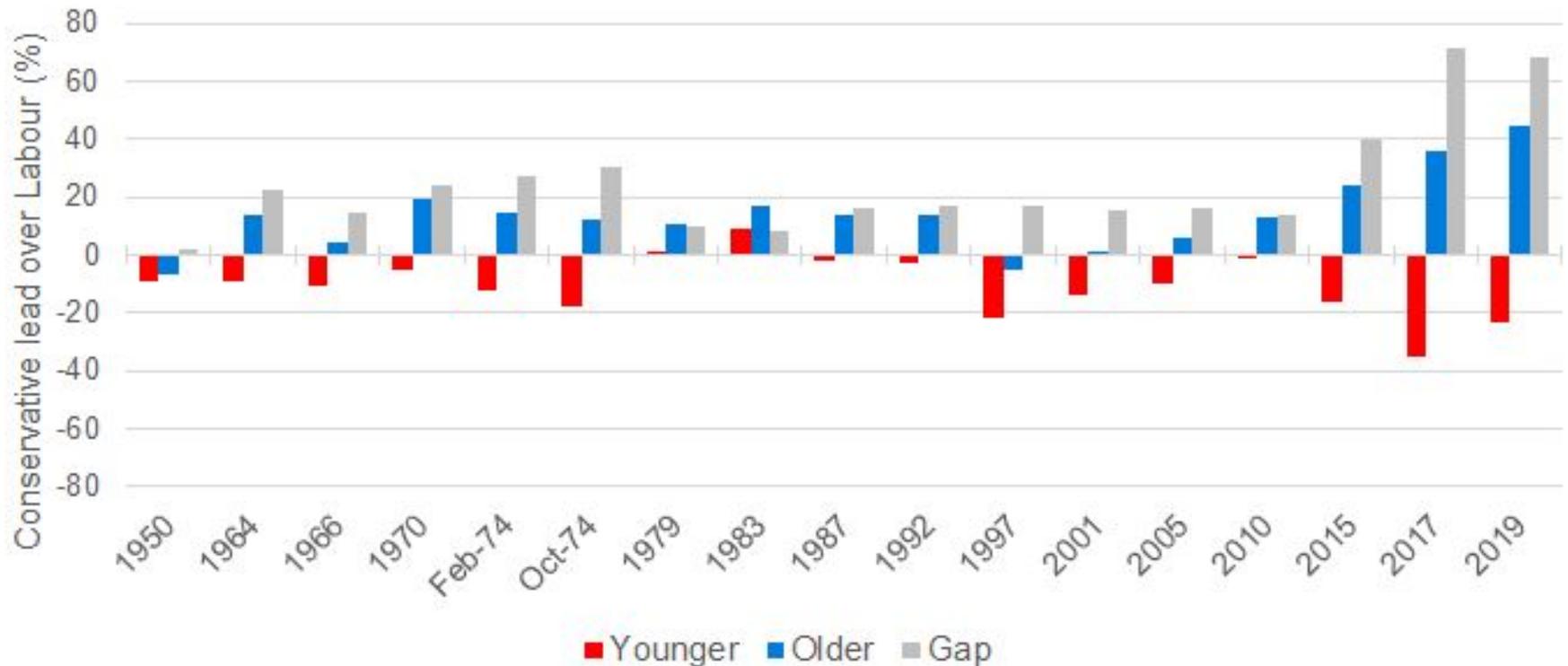
22% of votes were “contract votes”. In areas that voted strongly to Leave, contract voting changed the swing by 10%, compared to 6% in areas that voted strongly to Remain. It was strongest in the Conservatives most notable seat gains.

**Additional swing as a result of contract voting share and Leave vote, seats that changed hands**



## 5. Age remains a crucial dividing line in the electorate

Conservative lead over Labour by younger and older voters, and the gap in between

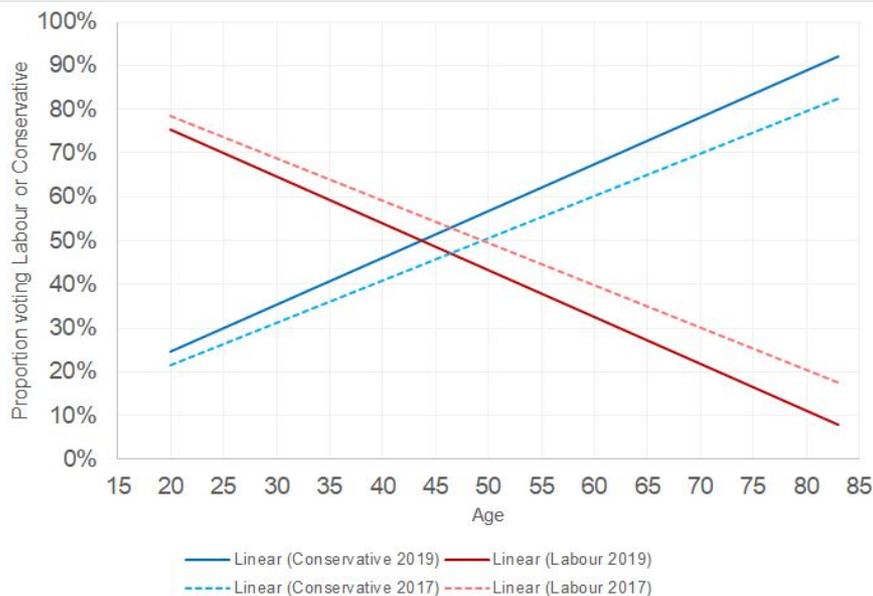


Due to breaks in the series and the lowering of the voting age in 1970, “younger” means 18–24 after 1970, 21–24 in 1964 and 1966, and 21–29 in 1950 and “older” means 65+, except in 1979 and 1983 where it is 55+.

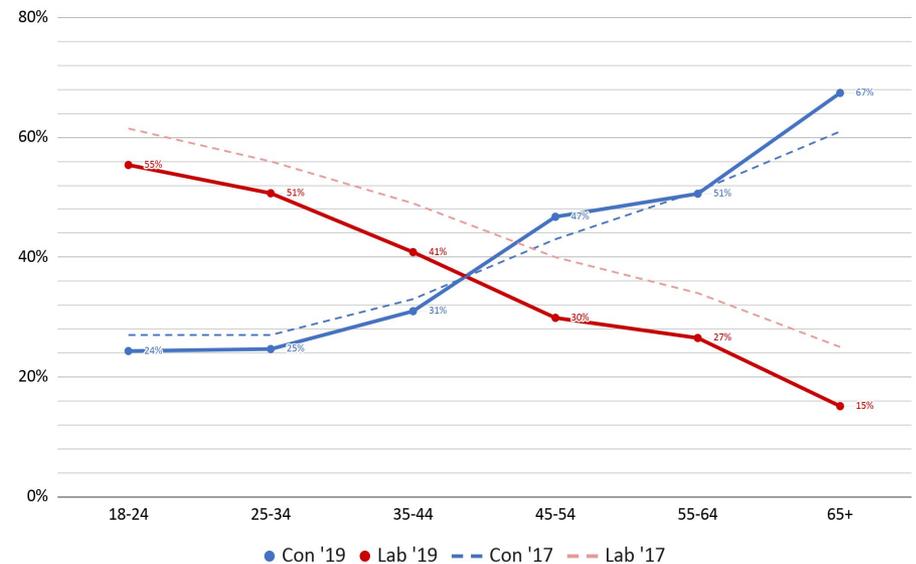
## ... the tipping point fell, but the age curve steepened

- The tipping point was 43 years old, compared to 47 in 2017 and 51 years old in Onward's *Generation Why?* study conducted last December.
- The Conservatives did worse than 2017 among under-45 year olds, but much better among 45-54s and over-65s - Blair and Wilson's voters.
- Labour underperformed across every age group compared to 2017 by a considerable margin.

Likelihood of voting Con and Lab by age, '17 and '19



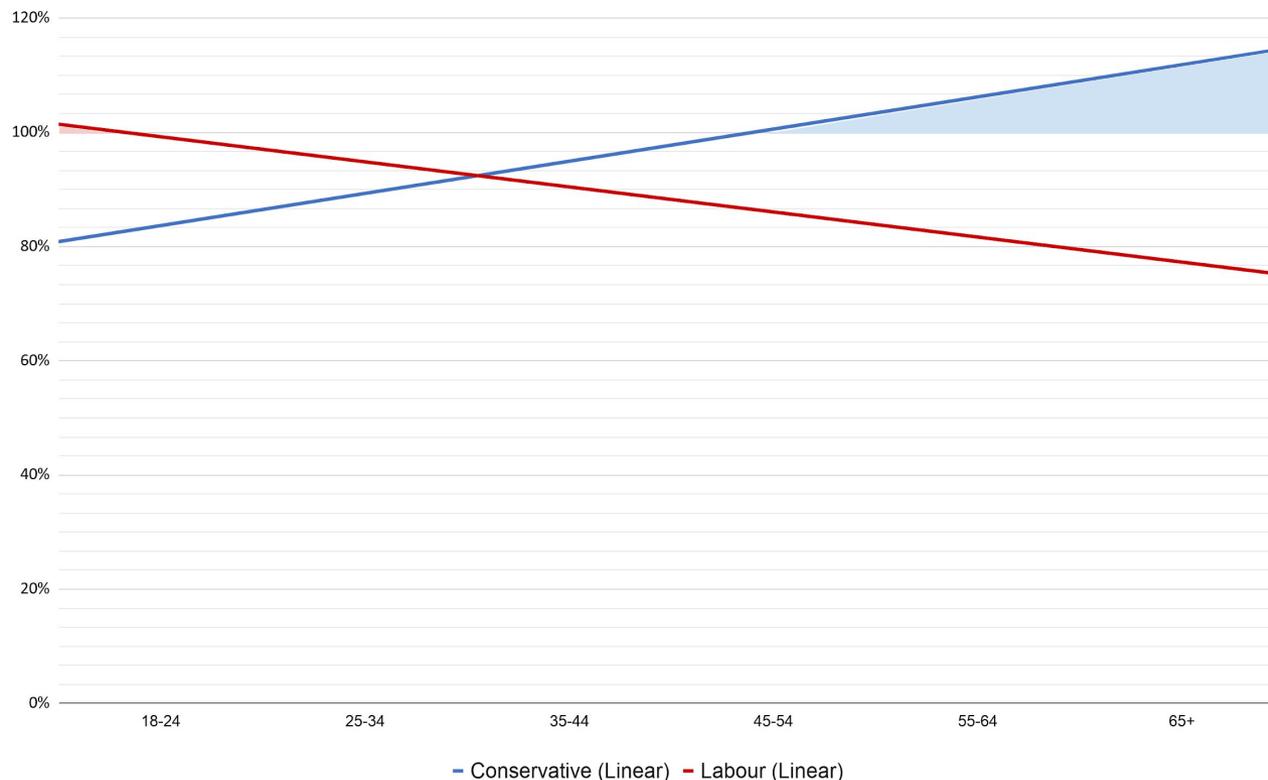
Vote intention and consideration by age group



## ... partly due to high conversion among older voters

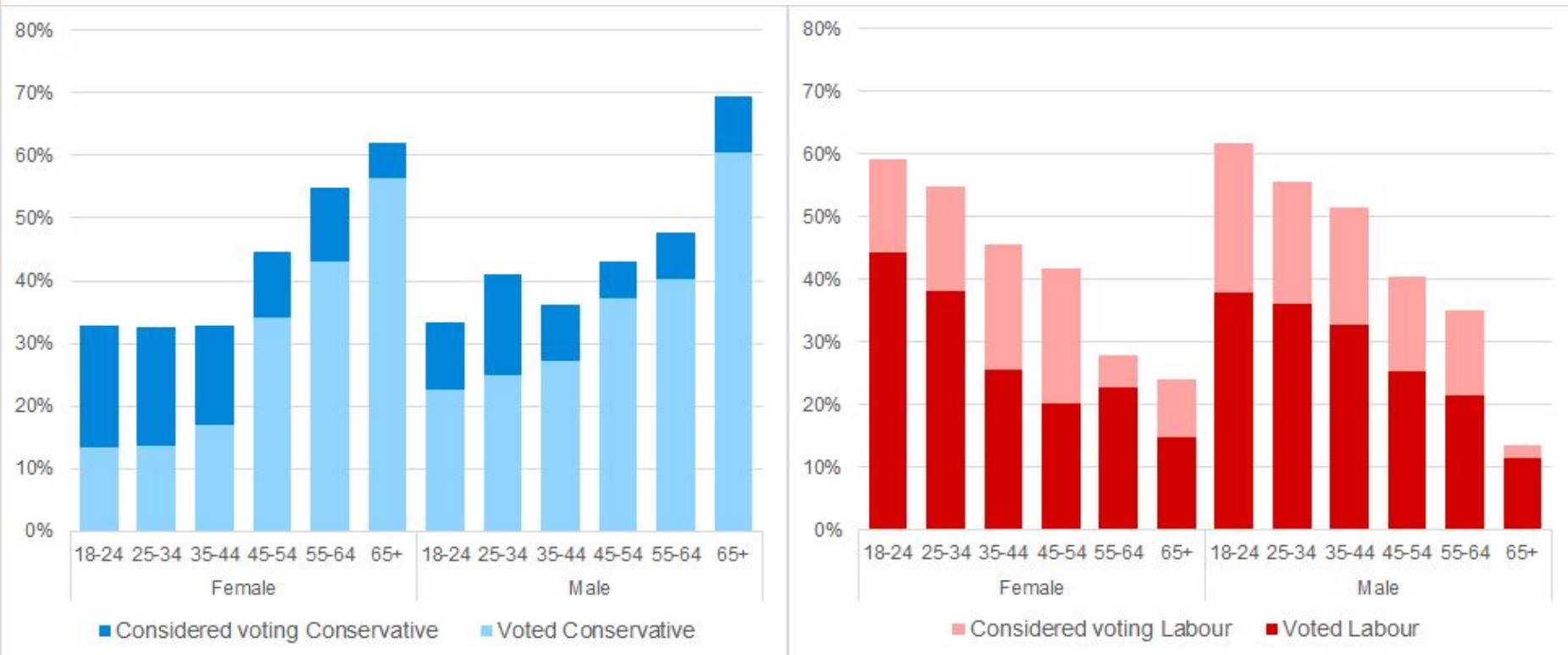
A greater number of older voters voted for the Conservatives than said they would even **consider** voting Tory at the start of the campaign.

The proportion of respondents who said they would consider voting for a party at the beginning of the campaign who eventually voted for that party



## 6. Both parties have an interlinked age gender problem

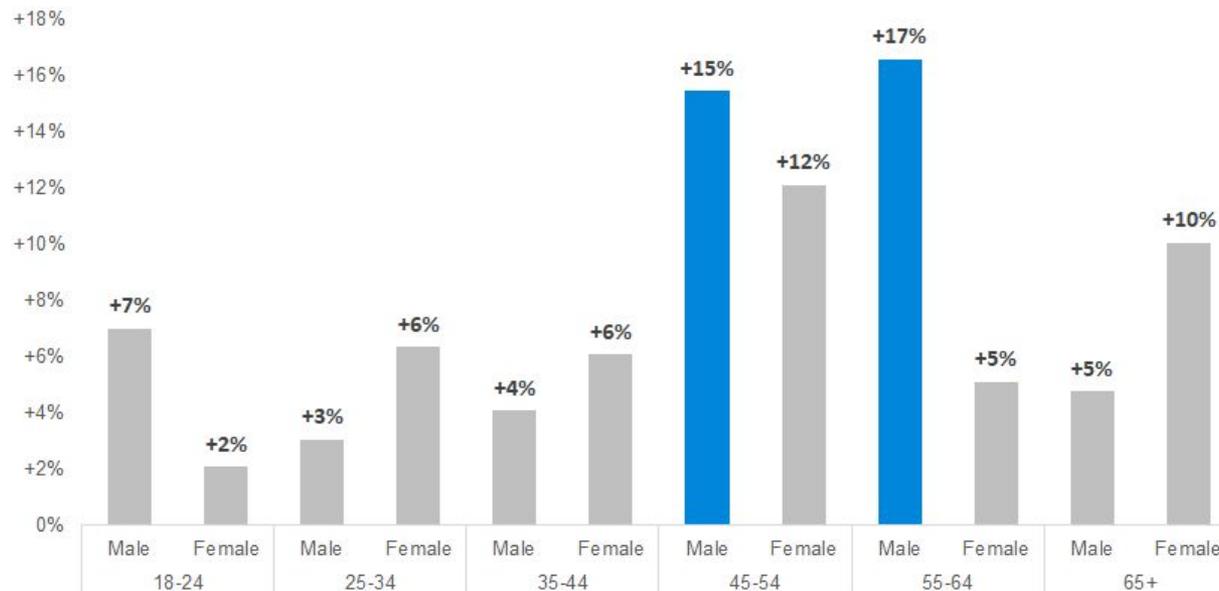
- 13% of 18-24 year old women voted Conservative, whereas 33% considered voting for the Conservatives. 23% of young men voted Tory.
- 12% of over-65 year old men voted Labour, compared to just 14% who considered voting for them. 15% of women the same age voted for Labour.



## ... but Labour lost the 'centrist dads'

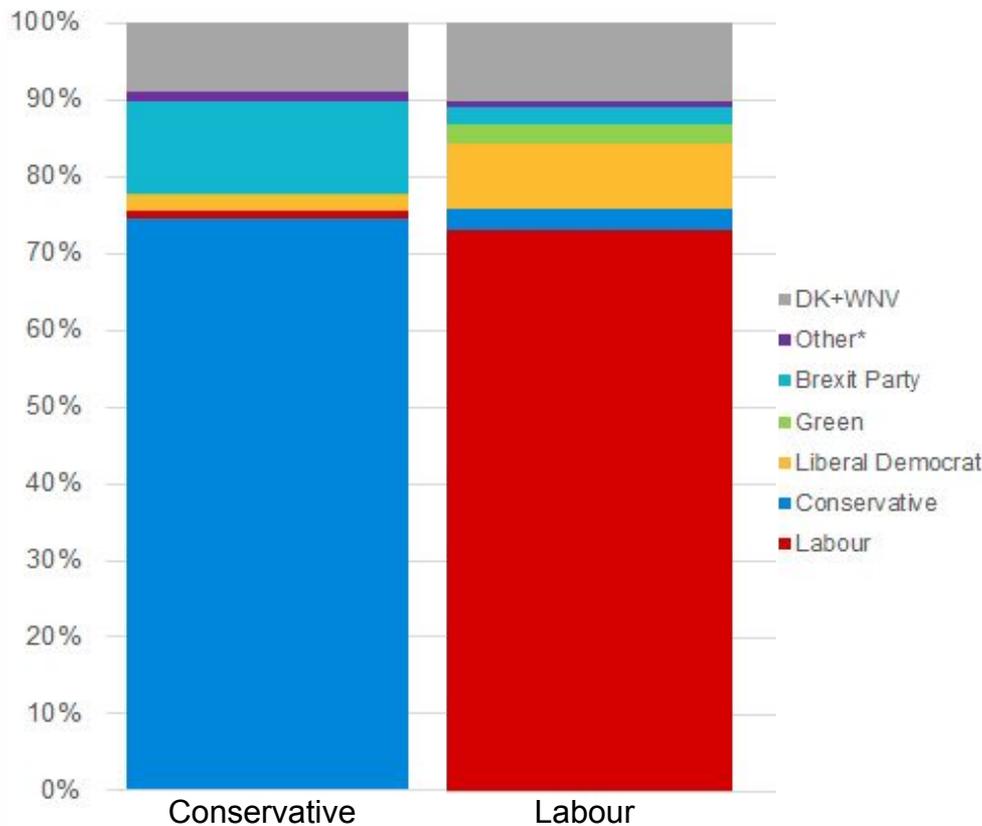
- At the beginning of the campaign under a third (31.9%) of 55-64 year old men were planning to support the Conservatives.
- By the end of the election nearly half were. The Conservatives led Labour by 23 percentage points amongst this group; an increase of 17 points.

Increase in Conservative support throughout the campaign, by age and gender

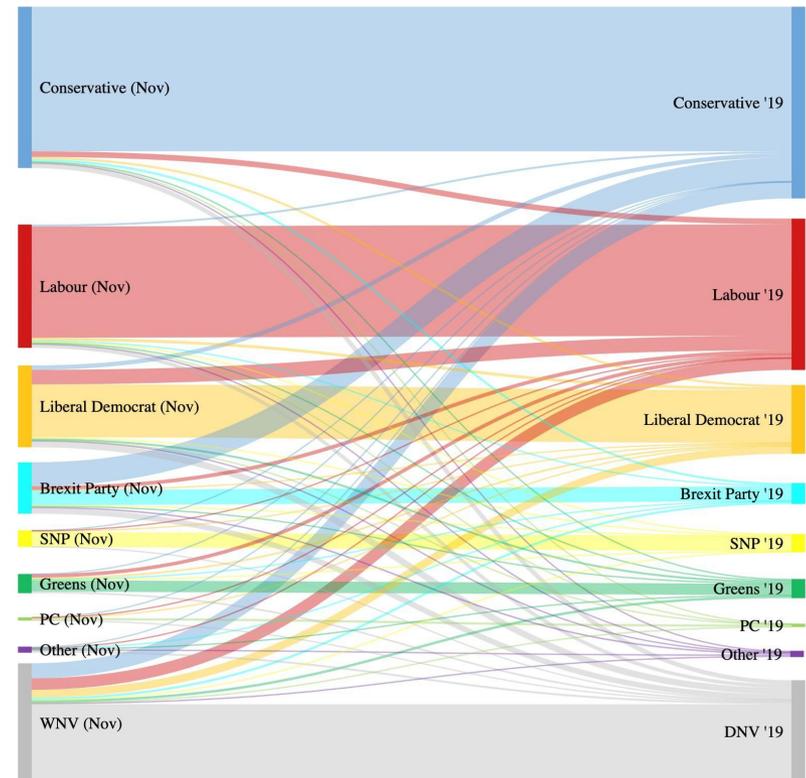


# 7. The campaign itself won over WNVs and BXP voters

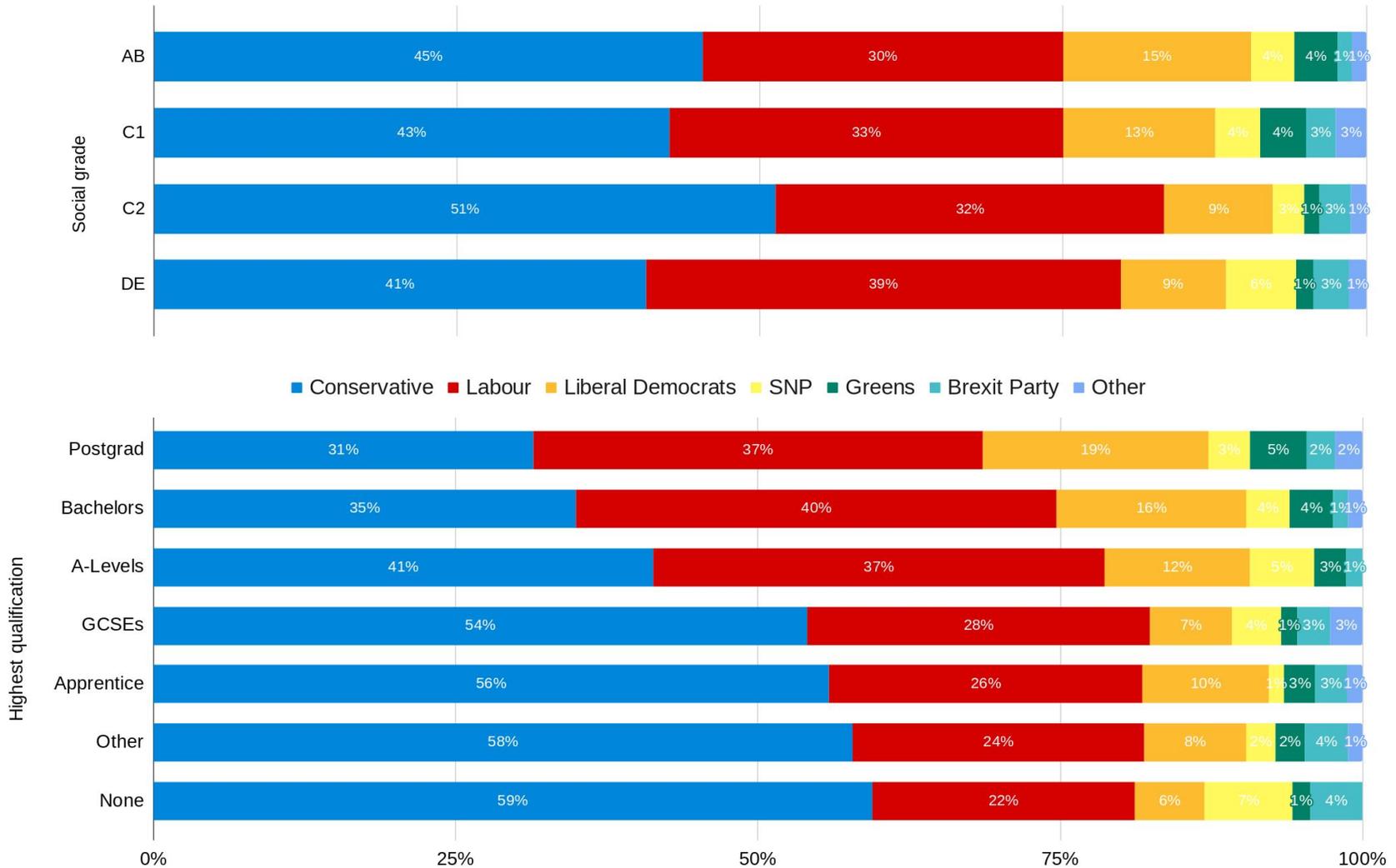
In terms of individual volatility, 37% of people switched vote from 2017, similar to 38% between '15 and '17. 28% of voters switched during the campaign itself.



Movement of voters during the 2019 GE campaign

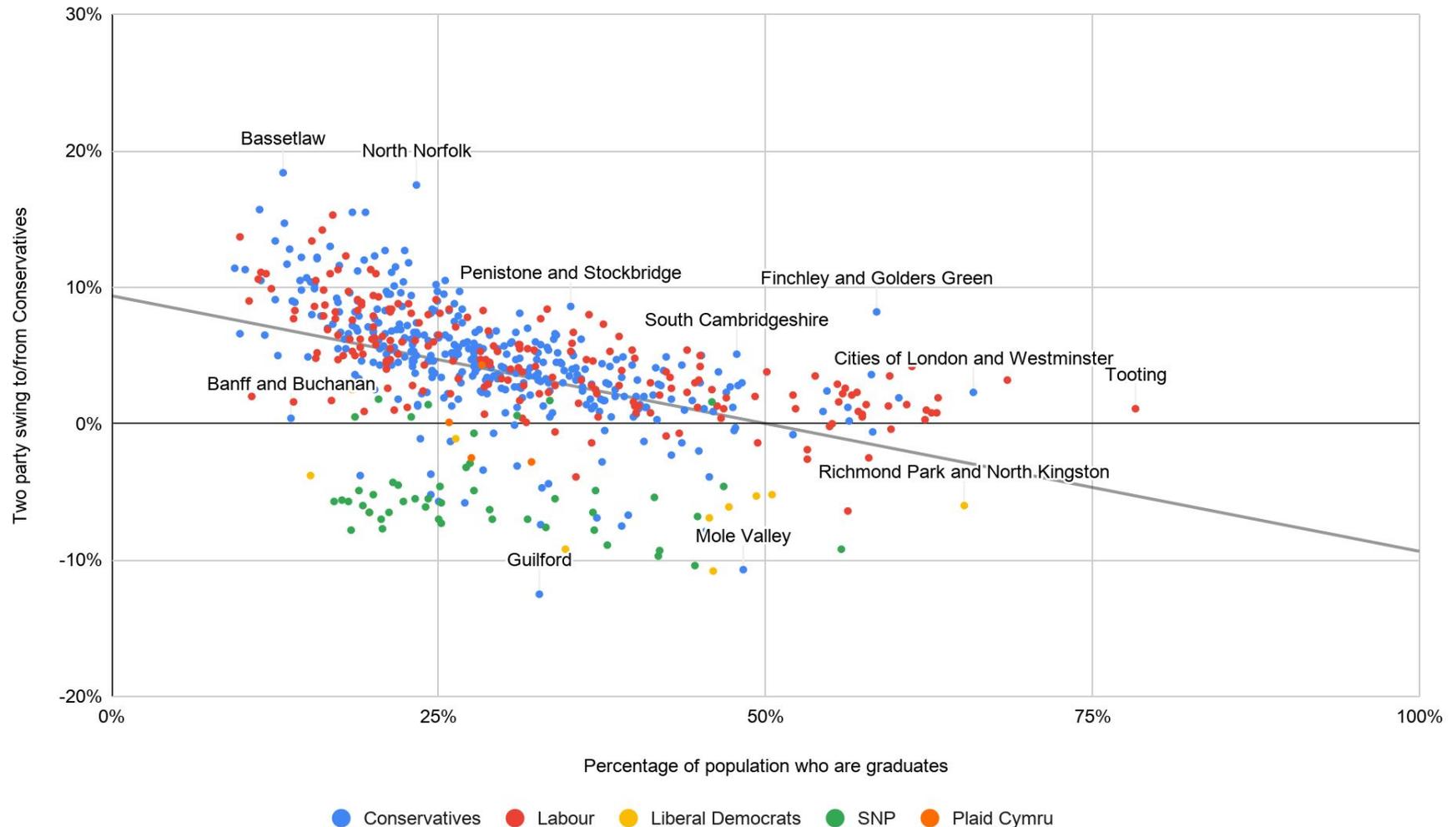


# 8. The Conservatives won over the skilled working class



## 9. Areas with low qualifications swung from Labour

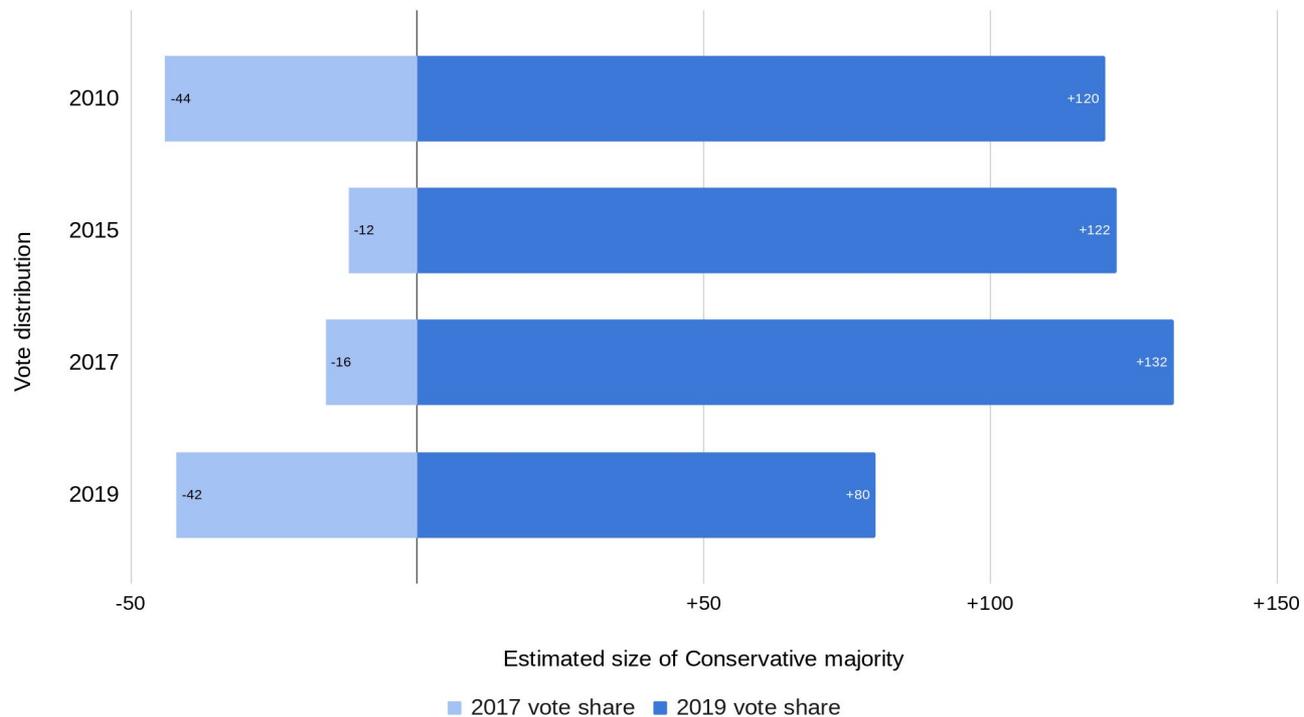
Swing away from or towards the Conservatives, by degree density of constituency



## 10. The gap between landslide and hung Parliament narrowed

The Tory campaign helped ensure a Labour collapse. If Labour had performed as well as in 2017 on the same vote distribution, the Tories would be on 304.

Put another way, if the 2017 campaign had held back the Labour surge to the same degree, Theresa May would have won 391 seats.

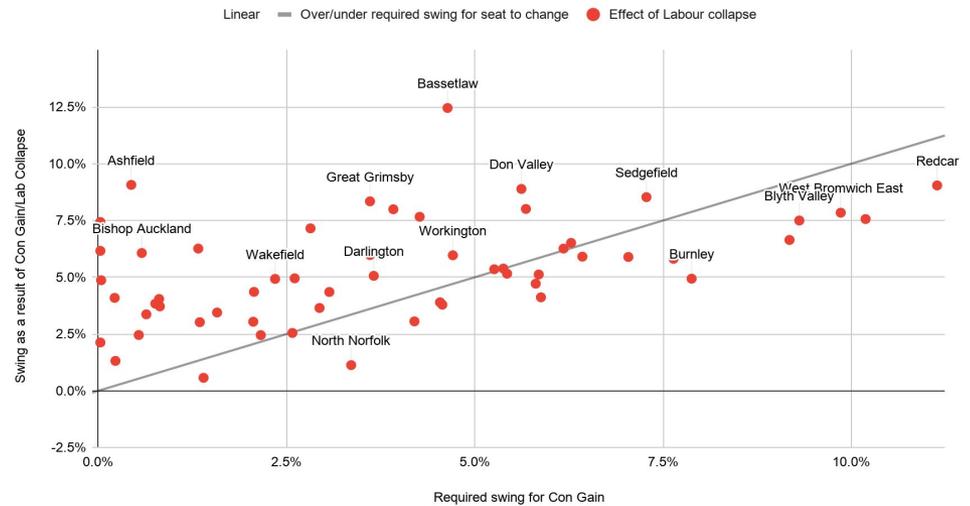


The seats that were won by virtue of Labour's collapse include:

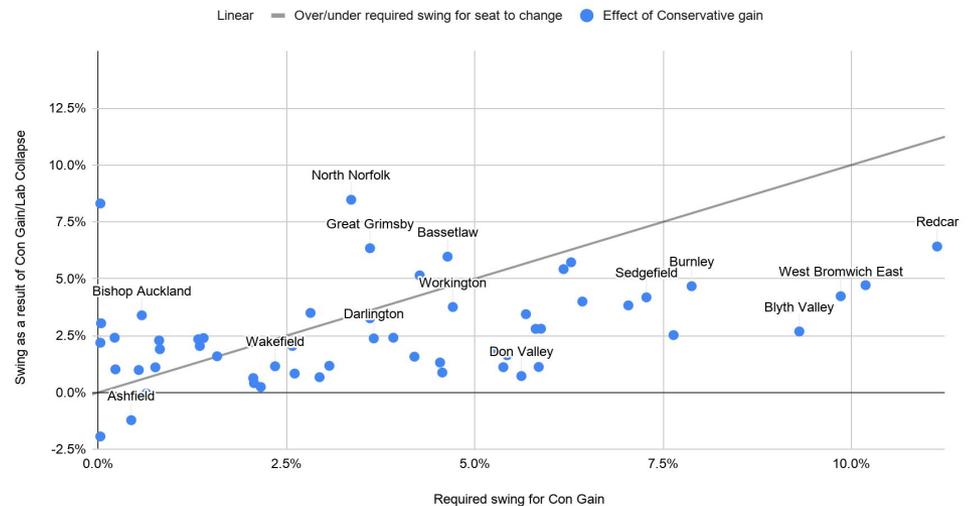
- Workington
- Darlington
- Don Valley
- Blyth Valley
- West Bromwich East
- Redcar
- Wakefield
- Sedgfield
- Burnley

**The point:** Conservatives need to deliver for these voters if the realignment we witnessed in 2019 is to become permanent.

Level of additional swing in Conservative gains as a result of Labour collapse



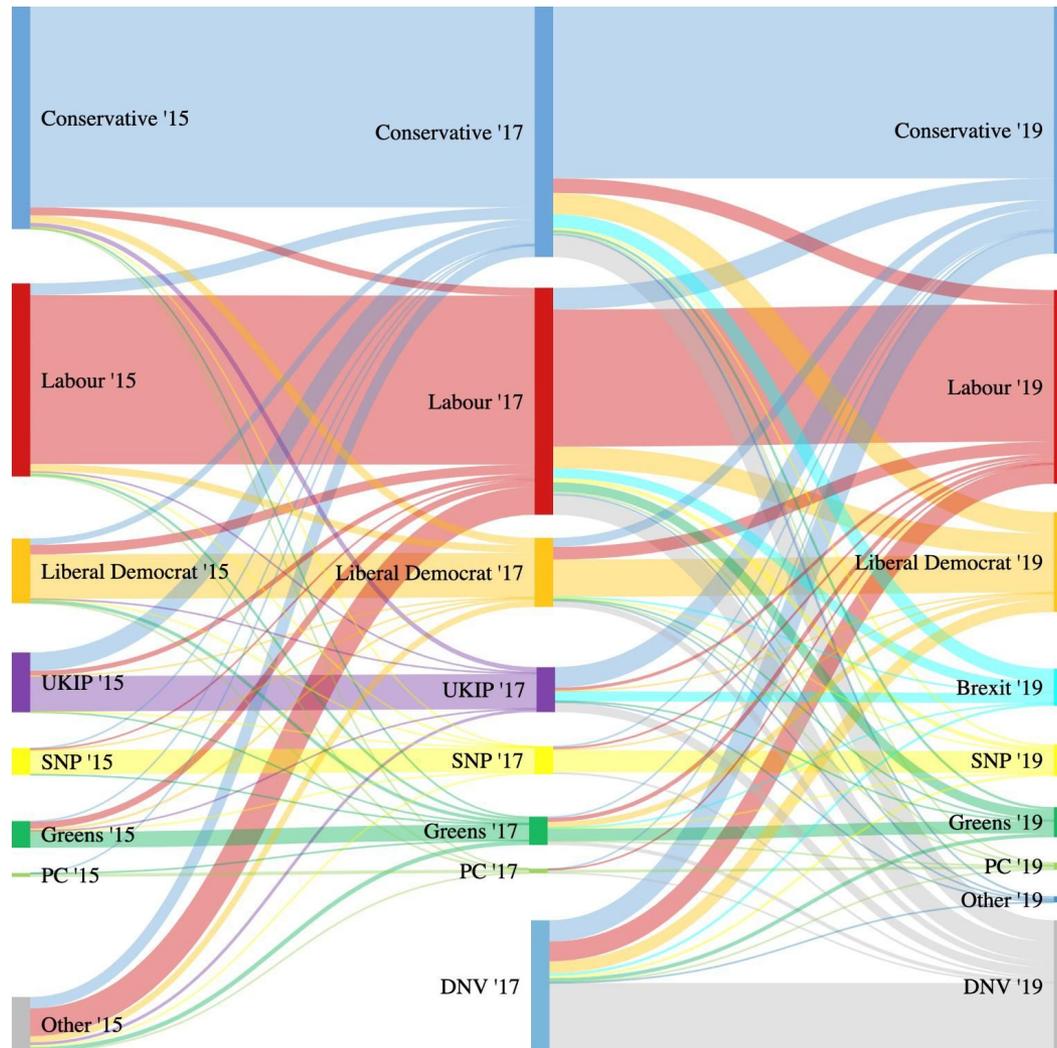
Level of additional swing in Conservative gains as a result of Tory swing



# What it means

*How historic was the result last week?*

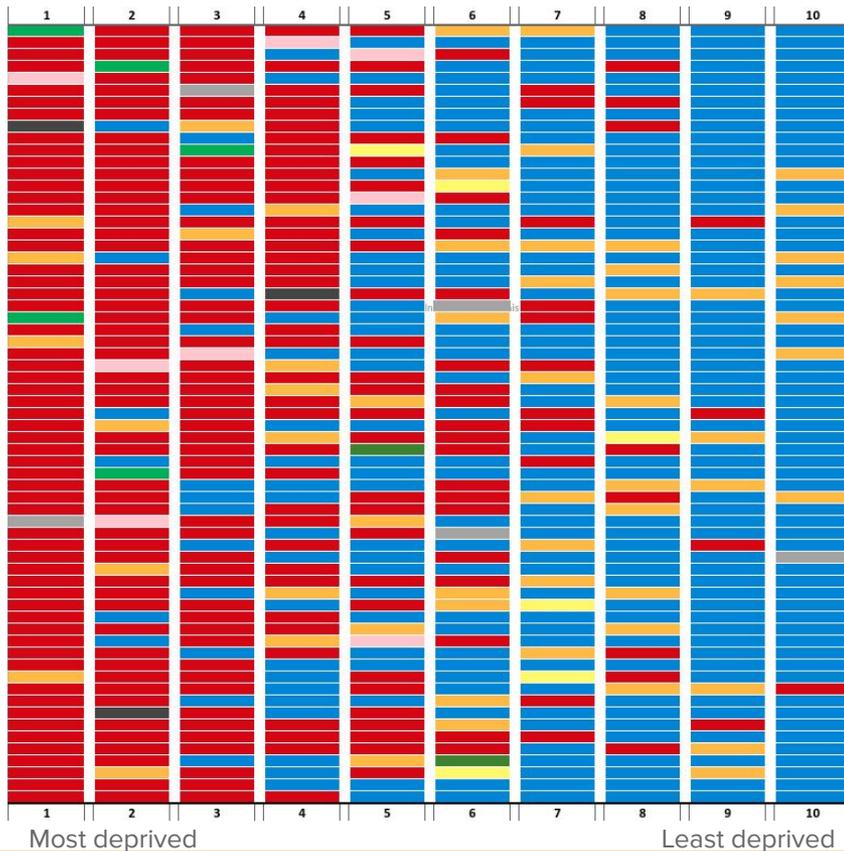
# Britain's political parties have changed since 2015



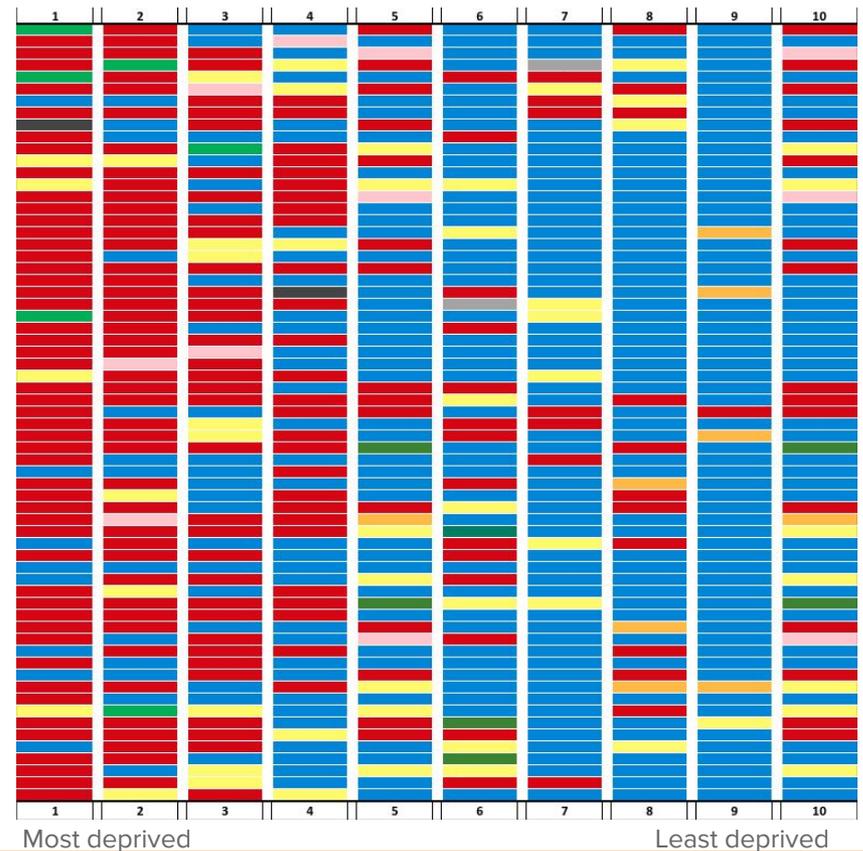
# Conservatives now represent much more deprived seats

In 2017, the average Tory seat was 470th in a ranking from most (1st) to least (650th) deprived. In 2019, the average Tory GAIN seat was 177th in a ranking from most (1st) to least (650th) deprived.

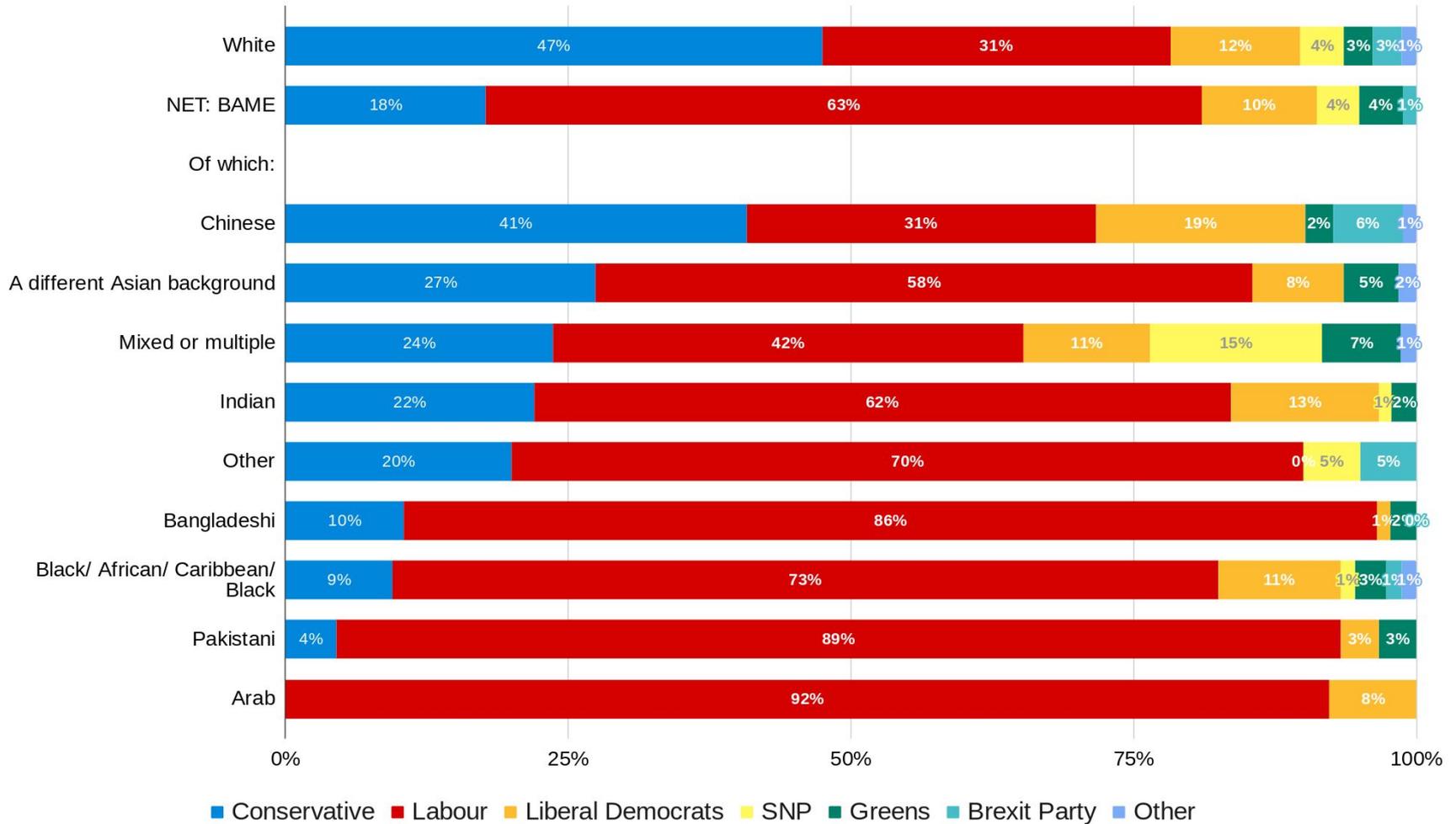
2010 constituencies by deciles of deprivation



2019 constituencies by deciles of deprivation



# Labour maintains a strong lead among BAME voters



## 3 in 4 Conservative voters are homeowners

- Nearly three in four Conservative voters own their own home. This compares to just over one in two Labour voters (52%) and Brexit Party (56%) voters.
- While Labour's voting coalition has the highest share of renters (20%) but the Brexit Party has the highest share of social tenants (24%).

Tenure mix of different political parties

