



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH  
Academy of Government

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**BRIEFING**

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**ELITE AND MASS ATTITUDES ON  
HOW THE UK AND ITS PARTS  
ARE GOVERNED –**

**VOTING AT 16 – WHAT NEXT?  
16-17 YEAR OLDS' POLITICAL  
ATTITUDES AND CIVIC  
EDUCATION**

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**JUNE 2015**  
**[WWW.AOG.ED.AC.UK](http://WWW.AOG.ED.AC.UK)**

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## Voting at 16 – what next? 16-17 year olds' political attitudes and civic education<sup>1</sup>

### *Voting at 16 in the referendum was successful*

The referendum on Scottish independence was remarkable for many reasons. Apart from its constitutional significance another aspect received a substantial amount of attention: the lowering of the voting age to 16. Following what most have seen as a positive experience, the Scottish Parliament is about to legislate on lowering the voting age for the elections to the Scottish Parliament generally.<sup>2</sup>

As survey research into this younger age group documented well<sup>3</sup>, worries about lowering the voting age could not be verified in the context of the Scottish independence referendum. Under-18 year olds showed similar average levels of political interest to adults, were not simply following their parents' lead (over 40% held a different view on the referendum question than a parent who was also interviewed) and were engaging with a wide range of diverse media and information sources, not just social media.<sup>4</sup>

Not only did the observations refute worries some held, the research also showed several positive consequences of the engagement of young people. Although the referendum was, it might be argued, less party-political than normal elections, after the referendum the number of under-18 year olds who did not feel close to any political party declined, suggesting that the relevance of political actors increased after the early enfranchisement experience.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, we were able to observe more confident attitudes in the understanding of and engagement with politics, and, crucially, saw the likelihood to vote in the referendum increase between 2013 and 2014 amongst youngest voters (who traditionally were the least likely to take part in any elections). The referendum actually saw 16-17 year olds turning out to vote in greater numbers than 18-24 year olds and at levels close to the overall population. Although a small gap remained (about 10% according to the figures from the Electoral Commission<sup>6</sup>), it was much smaller than the gaps we could observe for the respective youngest age groups (18-24) in every previous election.

However, crucially we need to investigate whether the positive effects seen in the referendum could be replicated in the context of normal electoral politics, in this case the 2015 General Election. In other briefings in this project we have already demonstrated that the gap in expressions of likely voter turnout for this election between Scottish respondents and others was particularly pronounced for younger age

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that some material presented in this briefing has been previously used in a submission of evidence by Jan Eichhorn to the Scottish Parliament Committee on Devolution (Further Powers) in May 2015.

<sup>2</sup> The report of the Devolution (Further Powers) Committee of the Scottish Parliament has recently outlined the steps in this process:  
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/89684.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> For details see:  
[http://politischepartizipation.de/images/downloads/dpart\\_Eichhorn\\_16VotingAge\\_Briefing.pdf](http://politischepartizipation.de/images/downloads/dpart_Eichhorn_16VotingAge_Briefing.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> For details see: <https://www.aqmen.ac.uk/node/1706>

<sup>5</sup> For details see: <https://www.aqmen.ac.uk/node/1707>

<sup>6</sup> For details see: [http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/179807/Scottish-referendum-Public-Opinion-survey-ICM-Report-WEBSITE.pdf](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/179807/Scottish-referendum-Public-Opinion-survey-ICM-Report-WEBSITE.pdf)

groups amongst the adult population (cf. Briefing on Democratic engagement and constitutional change, p.1 <sup>7</sup>). This means that young Scots were disproportionately more likely to say they would vote than their English, Welsh and Northern Irish counterparts. 65% of Scottish 18-19 year olds said they were certain to vote in February 2015, compared with only 34% of their English peers. While voting likelihood was greater for all age groups in Scotland, these findings suggest that we are not simply looking at an overall referendum effect, but an additional process in the younger age groups.

Having experienced 16-17 year olds taking part in the referendum, Scotland is distinctively the only part of the UK where giving 16-year olds the right to vote is now favoured by just over 50% of respondents who express a view on this issue (see table 1).

*Table 1: Views on 16-year old voting amongst adults (18+), by country (%)*

	England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland
16-year olds should be allowed to vote in all elections	30	50	33	34
16-year olds should be allowed to vote in all elections, except those for the UK parliament in Westminster	9	6	7	7
16-year olds should not be allowed to vote in any elections	61	44	60	59
Total (100%)	3749	1542	585	1135

“Don’t know” responses were excluded from this analysis; Percentages are weighted, sample size is unweighted; the level of ‘don’t know’ was similarly small in the four countries (respectively 7%, 5%, 4% and 6%).

In this briefing we will analyse the political attitudes of 16-17 year olds in the context of the lead up to the General Election to investigate whether the conclusions derived by the research cited above in the context of the referendum could be generalised and what conclusions we could derive for approaches to enhancing positive civic attitudes and participation in young people.

### **Details about approach and data**

As part of our survey project (conducted in February 2015, cf. Overview of project<sup>8</sup>) we recruited a boost sample of 810 respondents aged 16 and 17. Approximately half of the respondents in this age group were situated in Scotland and half of the

<sup>7</sup> The full briefing can be obtained here: [http://www.aog.ed.ac.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0011/172010/UPDATED\\_Briefing\\_-\\_Democratic\\_engagement\\_and\\_the\\_process\\_of\\_constitutional\\_change.pdf](http://www.aog.ed.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/172010/UPDATED_Briefing_-_Democratic_engagement_and_the_process_of_constitutional_change.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> An overview of the full project with methodological notes on sampling can be accessed here: [http://www.aog.ed.ac.uk/news/last\\_3\\_months6/presentations\\_and\\_briefings\\_from\\_new\\_research](http://www.aog.ed.ac.uk/news/last_3_months6/presentations_and_briefings_from_new_research)

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respondents were based somewhere else in the UK. This allows us to compare the young people in Scotland who had the experience of the referendum, and the context of a lowered voting age, to their age peers in the rest of the UK (RUK) who have not had the same experience. We can think of the analysis as a form of natural quasi-experiment.

The first step of the analysis is a comparison between 16-year old Scottish and RUK respondents on a range of 7 dependent variables that reflect different civic attitudes and behaviours. The comparison is conducted controlling for gender and occupational social class of the household the young person lives in: these controls allow us to say how Scottish and RUK responses would differ on the 7 civic variables if Scotland and the RUK respondents had the same distribution of gender and social class. Sampling weights are applied to all analyses (sample sizes are presented unweighted). The analyses are conducted as logistical or ordinal regressions.

The variables we compare respondents for are:

1. How likely they would be to vote in the 2015 General Elections, if they were allowed to vote at the age of 16;
2. Their belief as to the extent that it makes a difference who wins General Elections;
3. Their belief as to the extent that it makes a difference to their own lives how the UK is governed;
4. Whether 16-year olds should be given the right to vote in all elections;
5. Whether they consider politics difficult to understand;
6. Whether they have taken part in any form of non-electoral political participation (demonstrations, petitions, boycotts, writing to a member of the UK parliament);
7. How many different types of information sources they have consulted in the three months preceding the survey.<sup>9</sup>

In the second step, after establishing the descriptive differences, we investigate whether any variation we identified can be explained by differences in discussions about politics the respondents undertake, or by their school education. To do this we add four independent variables to our analysis and observe whether we still find significant differences between Scottish and RUK respondents subsequently (while we continue to control for gender and occupational social class of the household). The added variables are:

- a. Whether the respondent had discussed “how the UK is governed” with a family member in the three months preceding the survey
- b. Whether the respondent had discussed “how the UK is governed” with a friend in the three months preceding the survey

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<sup>9</sup> The choices offered were: Newspapers, Online news sites, TV, radio, social media and campaign materials

- c. Whether the respondent had been in a school class in the last three months in which current political issues were discussed
- d. Whether the respondent had ever taken a school class in which discussion was mainly about issues of politics and society (i.e. a civics-oriented class) and if yes, whether they had taken it by choice or as a mandatory class.

### **Identifying differences between 16-17 year olds in Scotland and RUK**

Table 2 summarises the comparisons between Scottish and RUK 16-17 year olds for the seven dependent variables outlined above. Indeed, we find that there are significant differences between Scottish and RUK respondents for all variables, except whether they found politics to be difficult to understand. For all other variables Scottish respondents show higher levels of civic attitudes or behaviour than their counterparts elsewhere in the UK.

*Table 2: Differences between Scottish and RUK 16-17 year olds*

Dependent variable	Significant difference in regression? (controlling for gender and social class)	Weighted descriptive results	Scotland	RUK
Hypothetical voting likelihood	Y	% saying 9-10 on 0-10 scale	67	39
Making a difference who gets elected	Y	% saying a great deal/quite a lot	58	50
Making a difference to own life how UK is governed	Y	% saying a great deal/quite a lot	47	40
16-year olds should be allowed to vote in all elections	Y	% approving	66	52
Politics is difficult to understand	N	% strongly agreeing/agreeing	57	60
Political participation	Y	% taken part in at least one form	57	40
Number of information source types used	Y	% used 3-6 (of 6)	60	43

For full details, please refer to the regression tables in the appendix.

The magnitude of these differences, however, varies. It is smaller for purely perception-based indicators. Scottish 16-17 year olds are slightly more likely to say that who gets elected makes a difference, and that how the UK is governed makes a difference to their own life. However, the differences are not as extensive as for other measures (with 8 and 7 percentage points difference in the descriptive percentages respectively).

We find much greater variation (adjusting for differences in gender and social class) for measures of actual political engagement. Nearly 6 out of 10 young Scots have

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taken part in some form of non-electoral political participation, compared to only 4 out of 10 in the rest of the UK. Similarly 60% of young Scots have used at least three types of different sources to gather political information in the three months preceding the survey, compared to 40% elsewhere. 16-17 year old Scots are also more confident in allowing them and their peers to vote in elections with 66% agreeing that they should be enfranchised in all elections, which only 52% percent in the same age group agree with elsewhere.

The biggest difference can be observed, however, for hypothetical voting likelihood. When asked how likely they would be, hypothetically, to take part in the General Election had they been allowed to do so, 67% of Scottish 16-17 year olds gave a very high rating of 9 or 10 on a 0 to 10 scale, compared to only 39% of their peers elsewhere in the UK.

We find that the positive levels of civic engagement and attitudes observed amongst 16-17 year olds in the context of the referendum have been sustained and can be seen even in the context of a General Election that is much more normal than the special circumstances surrounding a referendum. This finding is in agreement with research from Austria where the voting age was lowered for all elections in 2007 and where an initial engagement boost amongst young people could be observed, but also a long-term sustained effect in further elections.<sup>10</sup>

Furthermore, we can clearly see a significant difference on a range of indicators between Scottish respondents and their counterparts from the rest of the UK. In the following section we will analyse whether these differences can be explained by other factors, and to what extent they are genuinely attributable to the effect of early enfranchisement of younger voters in Scotland during the referendum and the commitment to do so in Scottish elections going forward.

### ***The significance of political education and discussing politics***

When we take into account whether respondents had talked to friends or family about politics and what their political engagement in schools was like, some previously identified differences between Scottish and RUK respondents become statistically insignificant (see table 3). The magnitude of the effect of living in Scotland was reduced for all dependent variables identified (see the full regression tables in the appendix for details). This suggests that part of the variation can be explained by the variables shown at the heads of the columns in table 3, and is not purely attributable to the early enfranchisement in the context of the referendum.

Specifically, the variables for which we observed a significant descriptive difference between Scottish and RUK respondents, but where the differences were rendered insignificant in the full models in table 3, were:

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<sup>10</sup> For details see: Zeglovits, E. and A. Aichholzer. 2014. Are People More Inclined to Vote at 16 than at 18? Evidence for the First-Time Voting Boost Among 16- to 25-Year-Olds in Austria. *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 24(3): 351-361.

Zeglovits, E. and M. Zandonella. 2013. Political interests of adolescents before and after lowering the voting age: the case of Austria. *Journal of Youth Studies* 16(8): 1084-1104.

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- the attitudinal ones that measured i. whether respondents felt that it mattered who was elected and ii. whether their own lives were affected by how the UK was governed
  - the number of information source types used.

This means that the differences between Scotland and the rest of the UK in these variables could be explained by knowing about respondents' civic education and whether they discussed politics recently.

However, for some dependent variables, the differences between Scottish and RUK 16-17 year olds remained significant. Although there are influences of some of the added variables also on the dependent ones, differences remained robust for voting likelihood, non-electoral political participation and views on whether 16-year olds should be allowed to vote. All of these variables have to do with actual political participation or attitudes about participation and it seems that for this area a genuine Scottish referendum effect could be observed, beyond explanations based on basic controls, the education context and discussions with families and friends.

The most consistently influential factor that was positively associated with six of the seven dependent variables was whether respondents had recently discussed political issues in the classroom. As classroom agendas tend to be set by teachers, we can mostly assume that there would be a causal relationship in which discussions of political issues in a school class setting had a genuine impact on all variables except the understanding of politics (although it may also be the case that teachers could be responding to prior enthusiasm for political discussion by their classes, which would be less attributable to individual initiative only though in most cases). Otherwise 16-17 year olds who had discussed political issues in the classroom were more likely to vote, thought that who governed and how the UK was governed affected their lives more, were more likely to approve of 16-17 year olds voting, were more likely to have engaged in non-electoral forms of political participation, and tended to consult a greater range of information source types.

No other variable affected as many positive civic outcomes, emphasising the important and positive role of discussing politics in class and verifying previous findings in the context of the referendum.<sup>11</sup> The findings also confirm that, while important, it is not sufficient to merely teach "civics" to young people. There is a distinctive effect of being in a "civics" style class, in particular having a positive effect on the self-perceived understanding of politics, even when the class is taken as a mandatory one. However, taking a class in which politics is taught without discussing political issues does not achieve many of the positive civic payoffs identified above. Voting likelihood or attitudes about the importance of who governs and how people are governed are not greater for those who took a "civics" class per se. While such classes often can be the space where political issues are discussed, it is insufficient to only teach the political system, as the positive effect of classroom discussions suggests.

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<sup>11</sup> For details, see:

[http://politischepartizipation.de/images/downloads/2014.03.04\\_ScottishReferendum\\_Key%20Insights\\_vf.pdf](http://politischepartizipation.de/images/downloads/2014.03.04_ScottishReferendum_Key%20Insights_vf.pdf)

*Table 3: Differences between Scottish and RUK 16-17 year olds, full models including measures of discussion about politics (controlling for gender and occupational social class of the household)*

Dependent variable	Significant difference b/w Scot and RUK?	Discussed political issues in class	Taken 'civics' class as mandatory	Taken 'civics' as choice	Talked about politics with family	Talked about politics with friends
Hypothetical voting likelihood	Y	+	n.s.	n.s.	+	+
Making a difference who gets elected	N	+	n.s.	+	+	n.s.
Making a difference to own life how UK is governed	N	+	n.s.	n.s.	(+)	n.s.
16-year olds should be allowed to vote in all elections	Y	+	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Politics is difficult to understand	(Y)	n.s.	-	-	n.s.	-
Political participation	(Y)	+	+	+	+	+
Number of information source types used	N	+	(+)	+	+	+

For full details, please refer to the regression tables in the appendix. The results refer to models that include all the variables noted in the columns of the table.

+/- indicates a positive/negative, statistically significant relationship between the respective variable and the dependent variable of interest.

Results in parentheses, e.g. (Y), indicate marginally significant results at the 10% level.

n.s. indicates that there was no significant relationship between the two variables in the model.



Talking about political issues with friends and family is also associated with several positive civic outcomes, but not with as many as discussing politics in the classroom. Of particular interest is the confirmation of findings from research cited above in the context of the referendum: Those young people who talk about politics with their family are not more likely to say that they understand politics better. While there is a relationship between talking more about politics with one's family and several of the civic variables of interest, family discussions are not seen by young people as a source that enhances their knowledge or understanding – a role that civics education can take. It is important to note that it is more difficult to infer causality here. Although it is true that respondents may be more politically engaged because they have been talking about politics with family and friends, the reverse may also be the case – that they are talking more about politics with others because they are more engaged, interested and informed.

The findings tell us two essential things: There are some distinguishable Scottish effects that follow the early enfranchisement of 16-17 year olds in the referendum and, at least in early spring 2015, these effects have been lasting. In addition however, there are several mechanisms that can be used to explain the higher levels of civic attitudes and behaviour in young people in Scotland. Those factors identified as being positively influential are all more prevalent in the Scottish context compared to the rest of the UK (see table 4). This suggests that, while some of the differences between Scotland and England appear to be due to the early enfranchisement effect, some can be explained by greater amounts of political discussions in families and more political education in schools. Thus we know that there are certain instruments that could be used in order to enhance positive civic attitudes and behaviour in young people.

Table 4: Descriptives for independent variables

		Scotland (%)	Rest of the UK (%)	N
Have you ever taken a subject in school in which mainly issues about politics and society were discussed?	Yes, as a course I had to take	21	20	154
	Yes, as a course I chose to take, but didn't have to take	43	18	230
	Yes, but I don't know whether I had to take it	4	12	62
	No	32	50	310
Have you been in a class in school during the last three months in which current political issues were discussed?	Yes	64	54	462
	No	32	40	41
	Didn't have classes	4	6	267
Discussed how the UK is governed in the last three months with Family	Yes	63	39	397
Discussed how the UK is governed in the last three months with Friends	Yes	65	38	366

Don't know and refused responses are excluded from the analysis.

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## Conclusions

The reduction of the voting age in the Scottish independence referendum was successful. Many of the negative consequences some had expected did not materialise, and we can confidently assess that there have been many positive effects. Our research here shows that those effects were not just referendum-specific but have also been observable in the context of the 2015 General Election. Young Scots are more likely to display positive civic attitudes and political behaviour than their peers in other parts of the UK.

Some of these differences can be attributed to the different experience of young people in Scotland (since they remained robust after controlling for various experiences that might also be available to young people elsewhere in the UK). However, some of the variation between different 16-17 year olds can be explained by the extent to which they talk about politics with family and friends as well as their educational experience in school. These experiences offer an instrument that can be used to positive effect in developing the civic attitudes and behaviour of young people. For that, a combination of formal civics education and active discussions of political issues in a professional classroom setting are essential. Early voter enfranchisement, and enabling young people through schools, can lead to a much more enhanced early political socialisation that could help to overcome the problem that currently young people tend to be less likely to engage with classic forms of politics.

This has important implications for education policy. At the moment it is down to luck for many school students whether they get any civic education at all. Furthermore, it is also down to luck whether that education consists only of the teaching of formal knowledge or whether it includes the crucial discussions of political issues - in a moderated setting with a teacher - that cannot be replaced elsewhere. It is even more down to luck whether political issues are discussed in classes that are not formally about politics.

In the Scottish context local authorities decided what form of engagement with the referendum, if any at all, was permitted. Reflecting on our findings, that means we currently have a system in which there is a substantial amount of inequality in terms of access to political education, which may result in differential engagement with and participation in electoral and non-electoral politics.

The fears about young people not being able to handle the discussion of political content in the classroom or teachers exerting undue influence, even in such a highly politicised context as the independence referendum, have been brought into question by our earlier research cited above. While there are many other channels that affect young people, school is the only institution in which nearly all young people could receive informed support when they begin to discuss politics, and begin their life as voters and political participants.

**Appendix: Regression tables**

Table 1a: Base models (Scotland and Rest of UK comparison)																
	1b				2b				3b				4b			
Dependent Variable	Hypothetical voting likelihood				Making a difference who gets elected				Making a difference to own life how UK is governed				16-year olds should be allowed to vote in all elections			
Regression type	Ordinal				Logistic				Logistic				Logistic			
	Coeff.	s.e.	OR	Wald	Coeff.	s.e.	OR	Wald	Coeff.	s.e.	OR	Wald	Coeff.	s.e.	OR	Wald
Intercept					-0.100	(0.21)	0.91	0.23	-0.620	(0.23)**	0.54	7.55	0.395	(0.23) <sup>+</sup>	1.48	3.08
Social Class (Base: D/E)																
A	0.293	(0.18)	1.34	2.60	0.156	(0.28)	1.17	0.32	0.034	(0.29)	1.04	0.01	-0.438	(0.29)	0.65	2.34
B	0.402	(0.16)*	1.49	6.04	-0.126	(0.25)	0.88	0.26	-0.112	(0.26)	0.89	0.19	-0.115	(0.26)	0.89	0.19
C1	0.160	(0.14)	1.17	1.32	-0.032	(0.22)	0.97	0.21	0.337	(0.24)	1.40	2.05	-0.344	(0.24)	0.71	2.08
C2	-0.091	(0.16)	0.91	0.35	-0.169	(0.25)	0.84	0.45	-0.159	(0.27)	0.85	0.34	-0.427	(0.27)	0.65	2.54
Female	-0.008	(0.09)	0.99	0.01	0.276	(0.14) <sup>+</sup>	1.32	3.76	0.297	(0.15)*	1.35	3.98	-0.034	(0.15)	0.97	0.05
Scottish respondent	0.747	(0.10)***	2.11	59.1	0.343	(0.14)*	1.41	5.66	0.316	(0.15)**	1.37	4.39	0.533	(0.15)***	1.70	12.5
-2loglikelihood	682.7				1106.8				1014.8				1018.8			
(Pseudo) Nagelkerke R-Square	0.099				0.018				0.026				0.032			
N	810				810				748				769			
Descriptives for dependent	<i>9-10 on 0-10 scale</i>				<i>A great deal/quite a lot</i>				<i>A great deal/quite a lot</i>				<i>Allowed to vote in all elections</i>			
Scotland	67%				58%				47%				66%			
Rest of the UK	39%				50%				40%				52%			

Significance levels: \*\*\*p<0.001, \*\*p<0.01, \*p<0.05, +p<0.1  
 All calculations done using SPSS 22.  
 Ordinal regression for hypothetical voting likelihood (1b) uses a complimentary log-log function because of a concentration of scores at the higher end of the scale. The test result for parallelism was significant, so the effects should not be interpreted as uniform for each step on the scale.  
 All analyses are weighted using sampling weights. Sample sizes are unweighted.

Table 1b: Base models (Scotland and Rest of UK comparison)

	5b				6b				7b			
Dependent Variable	Politics is difficult to understand				Political participation				Number of information source types used			
Regression type	Logistic				Logistic				Ordinal			
	Coeff.	s.e.	OR	Wald	Coeff.	s.e.	OR	Wald	Coeff.	s.e.	OR	Wald
Intercept	0.450	(0.23)*	1.57	3.96	-0.569	(0.21)**	0.57	7.10				
Social Class (Base: D/E)												
A	-0.107	(0.29)	0.90	0.14	0.406	(0.28)	1.50	2.11	0.276	(0.24)	1.32	1.32
B	-0.432	(0.26)+	0.65	2.81	0.233	(0.25)	1.26	0.88	0.440	(0.22)*	1.55	4.19
C1	-0.189	(0.24)	0.83	0.62	-0.243	(0.23)	0.78	1.16	0.078	(0.19)	1.08	0.16
C2	-0.231	(0.27)	0.79	0.74	-0.107	(0.26)	0.90	0.18	-0.005	(0.22)	1.00	0.00
Female	0.274	(0.15)+	1.32	3.41	0.347	(0.15)*	1.41	5.75	0.154	(0.12)	1.17	1.55
Scottish respondent	-0.055	(0.15)	0.95	0.13	0.667	(0.15)***	1.95	20.9	0.615	(0.13)***	1.85	23.5
-2loglikelihood	1022.1				1080.7				567.3			
(Pseudo) Nagelkerke R-Square	0.013				0.066				0.047			
N	759				810				810			
Descriptives for dependent	<i>Strongly agree/agree</i>				<i>Taken part in at least one form</i>				<i>Used 3-6 (of 6)</i>			
Scotland	57%				57%				60%			
Rest of the UK	60%				40%				43%			

Significance levels: \*\*\*p<0.001, \*\*p<0.01, \*p<0.05, +p<0.1  
All calculations done using SPSS 22.  
The test result for parallelism in the ordinal regression (7b) was significant, so the effects should not be interpreted as uniform for each step on the scale.  
All analyses are weighted using sampling weights. Sample sizes are unweighted.

	1				2				3				4			
Dependent Variable	Voting likelihood				Making a difference who gets elected				Making a difference to own life how UK is governed				16-year olds should be allowed to vote in all elections			
Regression type	Ordinal				Logistic				Logistic				Logistic			
	Coeff.	s.e.	OR	Wald	Coeff.	s.e.	OR	Wald	Coeff.	s.e.	OR	Wald	Coeff.	s.e.	OR	Wald
Intercept					-0.269	(0.26)	0.76	1.06	-1.259	(0.28)***	0.28	20.9	0.049	(0.27)	1.05	0.03
Social Class (Base: D/E)																
A	0.231	(0.19)	1.26	1.43	-0.035	(0.30)	0.97	0.01	-0.037	(0.30)	0.96	0.02	-0.580	(0.30) <sup>+</sup>	0.56	3.76
B	0.318	(0.17) <sup>+</sup>	1.37	3.41	-0.409	(0.27)	0.67	2.35	-0.133	(0.27)	0.88	0.25	-0.196	(0.27)	0.82	0.51
C1	0.220	(0.15)	1.25	2.15	0.003	(0.25)	1.00	0.00	0.386	(0.25)	1.47	2.45	-0.310	(0.25)	0.73	1.54
C2	-0.083	(0.17)	0.92	0.24	-0.171	(0.28)	0.84	0.37	-0.216	(0.29)	0.81	0.57	-0.503	(0.28) <sup>+</sup>	0.61	3.13
Female	-0.076	(0.10)	0.93	0.56	0.129	(0.16)	1.14	0.66	0.323	(0.16) <sup>*</sup>	1.38	4.02	-0.083	(0.16)	0.92	0.23
Political issues in class (Base: No)																
Discussed in past 3 months	0.462	(0.11)***	1.59	18.2	0.620	(0.17)***	1.86	13.5	0.381	(0.17) <sup>*</sup>	1.46	4.80	0.524	(0.17)**	1.69	9.40
No classes in past 3 months	-0.387	(0.21) <sup>+</sup>	0.68	3.39	-0.761	(0.40) <sup>+</sup>	0.47	3.58	-0.215	(0.40)	0.81	0.29	-0.203	(0.38)	0.82	0.29
Ever taken 'civics' class (Base: No)																
Yes, had to	0.010	(0.14)	1.01	0.01	0.076	(0.21)	1.08	0.13	0.341	(0.22)	1.41	2.48	0.085	(0.22)	1.09	0.16
Yes, chose to	0.191	(0.14)	1.21	1.98	0.397	(0.20) <sup>*</sup>	1.49	3.89	0.137	(0.20)	1.15	0.46	0.160	(0.20)	1.17	0.42
Yes, not sure about choice/had to	0.008	(0.18)	1.01	0.00	-0.782	(0.31) <sup>*</sup>	0.46	6.23	0.380	(0.31)	1.46	1.51	0.044	(0.30)	1.05	0.88
Scottish respondent	0.482	(0.11)***	1.62	20.0	0.057	(0.17)	0.97	0.12	0.118	(0.17)	1.13	0.49	0.412	(0.17) <sup>*</sup>	1.51	5.95
Talked about politics with family	0.401	(0.11)***	1.49	13.5	0.370	(0.17) <sup>*</sup>	1.45	4.74	0.293	(0.17) <sup>+</sup>	1.34	2.95	0.229	(0.17)	1.26	1.82
Talked about politics with friends	0.411	(0.11)***	1.51	14.1	-0.026	(0.17)	0.97	0.02	0.430	(0.17)	1.54	6.24	-0.058	(0.17)	0.94	0.12
-2loglikelihood	2177.5				964.3				946.5				949.0			
(Pseudo) Nagelkerke R-Square	0.191				0.079				0.079				0.062			
N	742				742				708				722			

Significance levels: \*\*\*p<0.001, \*\*p<0.01, \*p<0.05, +p<0.1  
All calculations done using SPSS 22.  
Ordinal regression for hypothetical voting likelihood (1) uses a complimentary log-log function because of a concentration of scores at the higher end of the scale. The test result for parallelism was significant, so the effects should not be interpreted as uniform for each step on the scale.  
All analyses are weighted using sampling weights. Sample sizes are unweighted.

Table 2b: Full models

	5				6				7			
Dependent Variable	Politics is difficult to understand				Political participation				Number of information source types used			
Regression type	Logist				Logistic				Ordinal			
	Coeff.	s.e.	OR	Wald	Coeff.	s.e.	OR	Wald	Coeff.	s.e.	OR	Wald
Intercept	1.231	(0.28)***	3.36	18.4	-1.376	(0.27)***	0.25	25.4				
Social Class (Base: D/E)												
A	-1.81	(0.31)	0.83	0.34	0.404	(0.31)	1.50	1.75	0.126	(0.25)	1.13	0.25
B	-0.561	(0.27)*	0.57	4.19	0.123	(0.27)	1.13	0.21	0.350	(0.23)	1.42	2.42
C1	-0.345	(0.26)	0.71	1.83	-0.199	(0.25)	0.82	0.65	0.276	(0.21)	1.32	1.78
C2	-0.482	(0.29)+	0.62	2.76	0.062	(0.28)	1.06	0.05	0.158	(0.24)	1.17	0.45
Female	0.497	(0.17)**	1.64	9.05	0.283	(0.16)+	1.33	3.04	-0.057	(0.14)	0.94	0.18
Political issues in class (Base: No)												
Discussed in past 3 months	-0.137	(0.18)	0.87	0.59	0.396	(0.17)*	1.49	5.27	1.182	(0.15)***	3.26	62.1
No classes in past 3 months	-0.533	(0.39)	0.59	1.90	0.439	(0.38)	1.55	1.32	-0.024	(0.32)	0.98	0.01
Ever taken 'civics' class (Base: No)												
Yes, had to	-0.568	(0.22)**	0.57	6.62	0.487	(0.21)*	1.63	5.20	0.317	(0.18)+	1.37	3.00
Yes, chose to	-1.034	(0.21)***	0.36	25.1	0.942	(0.20)***	2.56	21.8	0.765	(0.17)***	2.15	20.0
Yes, not sure about choice/had to	-0.134	(0.31)	0.88	0.18	0.304	(0.30)	1.36	1.01	0.482	(0.26)+	1.62	3.54
Scottish respondent	0.335	(0.17)+	1.40	3.69	0.311	(0.17)+	1.36	3.43	0.040	(0.14)	1.04	0.08
Talked about politics with family	-0.197	(0.17)	0.82	1.29	0.370	(0.03)*	1.45	4.70	0.968	(0.15)***	2.63	43.2
Talked about politics with friends	-0.470	(0.18)**	0.63	7.25	0.445	(0.45)**	1.56	6.75	0.563	(0.15)***	1.76	14.9
-2loglikelihood	924.8				937.0				2026.7			
(Pseudo) Nagelkerke R-Square	0.111				0.172				0.280			
N	719				742				742			

Significance levels: \*\*\*p<0.001, \*\*p<0.01, \*p<0.05, +p<0.1

All calculations done using SPSS 22.

The test result for parallelism in the ordinal regression (7) was significant, so the effects should not be interpreted as uniform for each step on the scale.

All analyses are weighted using sampling weights. Sample sizes are unweighted.

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