

GV101 Week 07: Voting Behaviour **Questions to Consider**

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Office Hours (by appointment via the [Student Hub](#)):
Wednesdays, 10:30 – 11:30, CBG.4.13
Wednesdays, 14:30 – 15:30, CBG.4.13

Country Question:

- What do you think were the main drivers of voting behaviour, and thus of the outcome, in the last national election in your adopted country?
 - Do you think the electoral system in your adopted country lends itself to strategic voting? Why?

Essential Reading Questions:

1. How do Abramson et al. define *sincere* and *strategic* voting?
 - a) Do sincere and strategic considerations always point in the opposite direction?
 - b) Under what circumstances might a third party supporter who thinks strategically not switch to the first or second place party?
 - c) What three reasons do they identify for voters behaving strategically in a PR electoral system?
2. What are the four reasons that Evans, Curtice, and Norris identify for the rise in strategic voting in the 1997 UK general election?
 - a) Do you agree with their assessment regarding which of those reasons is more important? Why?
3. Based on Evans, Curtice, and Norris' article, how important do you think strategic voting was in influencing the outcome of the 1997 UK general election?
 - a) More generally, how important do you think strategic voting is in comparison to other influences on vote choice?
 - b) What do you think are the prospects for strategic voting to be a key influence in the 2019 UK general election?
4. Do you agree with Inglehart and Norris' conclusion that culture has been a more important factor in driving the rise of populism than previously recognised? Why?
 - a) How distinct do you think the populist-cosmopolitan dimension identified by Inglehart and Norris is from the historic authoritarian-liberal dimension?

Further Reading Questions:

5. Evans argues that the manner in which measures class is measured affects the extent to which a decline in class voting is observed. What do you think is the best way to measure social class?
 - a) What are the five possible reasons for the decline in social class-based voting (assuming there is one) that Evans identifies?
6. Gidron and Hall argue that subjective social status is a key driver of support for populism, and that it is 'likely to be conditioned both by material circumstances and by prevailing cultural beliefs about what is most valued in society.' Do you find this argument convincing? Why?
 - a) What do Gidron and Hall argue is the role of attitudes in the relationship between subjective social status and voting behaviour? Are there any other plausible accounts of this relationship that you can offer?

Essential Readings for Next Week:

- 'Social Cleavages and Party Systems' chapter in William Roberts Clark, Matt Golder, and Sona Nadenichek Golder, *Foundations of Comparative Politics* (London, Sage Publications, 2019), pp. 289-319.
- Matt Golder, 'Explaining Variation in the Success of Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe', *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 4 (May, 2003), pp. 432-466.
- Cas Mudde, 'The Populist Zeitgeist', *Government and Opposition*, Vol. 39, No. 4 (Autumn, 2004), pp. 541-563.

Further Readings for Consideration Next Week:

- Lawrence Ezrow, Catherine De Vries, Marco Steenbergen, and Erica Edwards, 'Mean voter representation and partisan constituency representation: Do parties respond to the mean voter position or to their supporters?', *Party Politics*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (2010), pp. 275-301.
- Jane Green and Sara B. Hobolt, 'Owning the issue agenda: Party strategies and vote choices in British elections', *Electoral Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (Sep., 2008), pp. 460-476.