

GV205

Measuring Public Opinion

Putting it All Together

19 March, 2018

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Overview

- The 2015 Polling Miss:
 - Explanations
 - Links to GV205
- The 2017 Polling Miss:
 - Explanations
 - The bigger picture

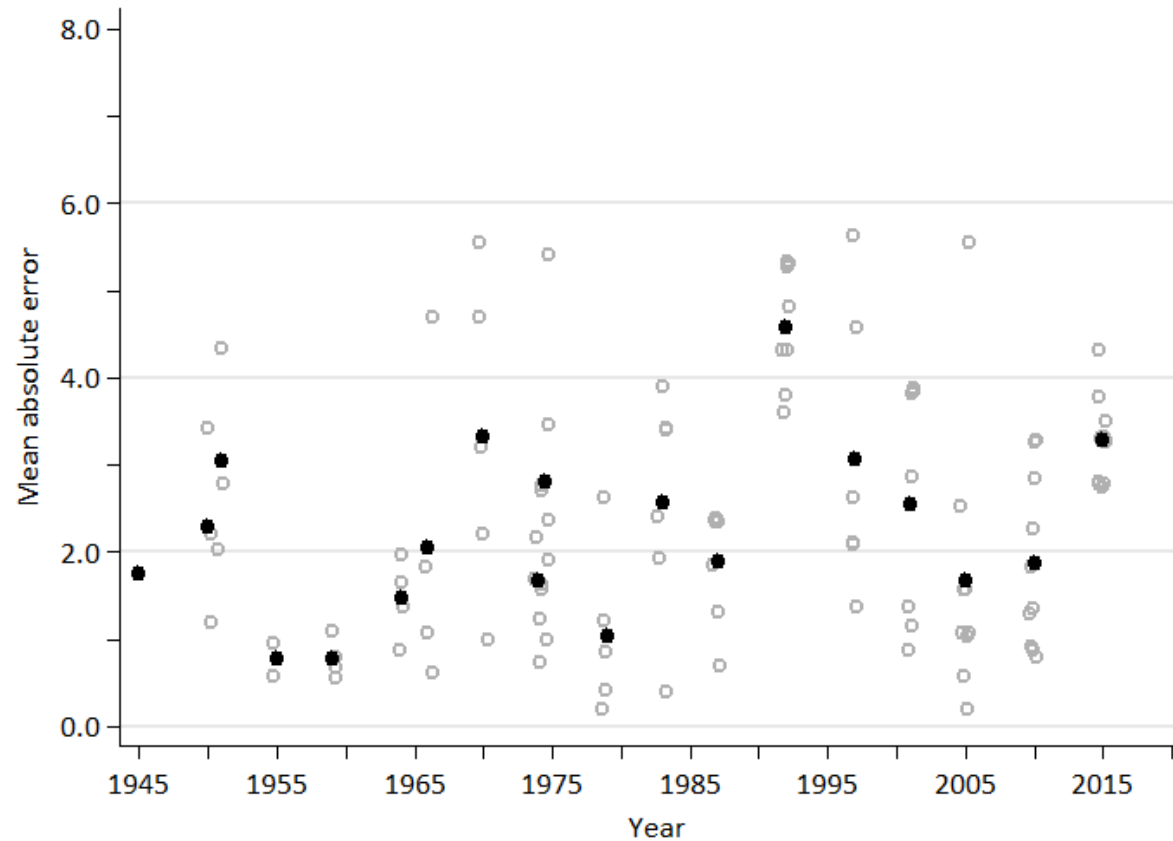


The 2015 UK Polling Miss in Numbers

Party	Final Poll Average	General Election Result	Mean Absolute Error
Conservative	33.7	37.8	4.1
Labour	33.1	31.2	2.5
Liberal Democrat	8.8	8.1	1.0
UKIP	12.8	12.9	1.4
Green	5.2	3.8	1.4
Other	6.5	6.3	0.9



The 2015 UK Polling Miss in Context



Figuring Out the Problem

- Research question
- Theory:
 - Survey mode and sample
 - Respondents answers
- Alternative hypotheses
- Gathered data
- Analysed data
- Wrote up



What Explains the 2015 Polling Miss?

- Not:
 - Flawed analysis or inaccurate weighting targets;
 - Accounting for postal, overseas, and unregistered voters;
 - Deliberate misreporting by respondents (e.g. 'Shy Tories');
 - Differential turnout (e.g. 'Lazy Labour');
 - Online or phone modes;
 - Deliberate herding.



Links to GV205

- Flawed analysis or inaccurate weighting targets:
 - Adjusting imperfect samples (week 23).
- Accounting for postal, overseas, and unregistered voters:
 - Samples and populations (week 19), and survey modes (week 20).
- Deliberate misreporting by respondents (e.g. 'Shy Tories'):
 - How people answer questions (week 18), especially sensitive ones (week 22).
- Differential turnout (e.g. 'Lazy Labour'):
 - Public opinion and ideology (week 17), knowledge and misperceptions (week 21).
- Online or phone modes:
 - Samples and populations (week 19), and survey modes (week 20).
- Deliberate herding:
 - Ethical considerations (this week), and knowledge and misperceptions (week 21).



What Explains the 2015 Polling Miss?

- Probably:
 - Minimal last-minute swing;
 - Unrepresentative sampling;
 - The narrative.



Links to GV205

- Minimal last-minute swing:
 - Public opinion and ideology (week 17).
- Unrepresentative sampling:
 - Samples and populations (week 19), and adjusting imperfect samples (week 23).
- The narrative:
 - Interpretation and reporting (more to come).



Attempted Solutions

- Polling companies attempted to improve their samples:
 - Significant investment in targeted recruitment
 - Updated turnout analysis methods
 - Development of a new seat estimation model
- The media changed the ways they reported polls.



The 2017 General Election

Surprise!



The 2017 Polling Miss in Numbers

Party	Final Poll Average	General Election Result	Mean Absolute Error (2017)	Mean Absolute Error (2015)
Conservative	43.5	43.5	1.3	4.1
Labour	36.0	41.0	5.0	2.5
Liberal Democrat	7.7	7.6	0.9	1.0
UKIP	4.4	1.9	2.5	1.4
Green	2.1	1.7	0.4	1.4
Other	1.9	1.2	0.9	0.9

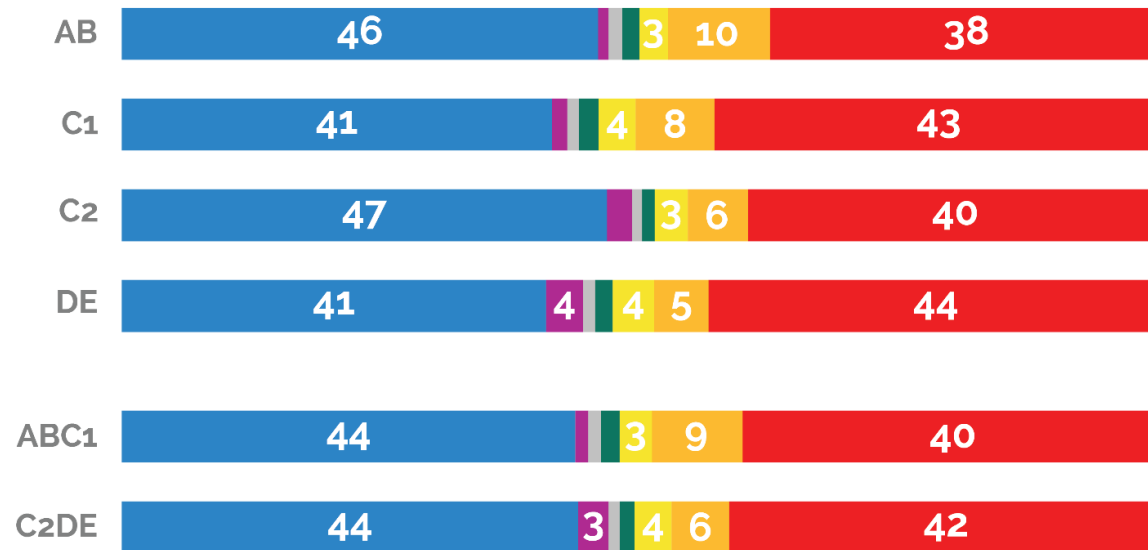


The World Turned Upside Down

Vote by socio-economic grade

Based on a survey of 52,615 GB adults about their vote in the 2017 general election

■ Conservative ■ UKIP ■ Other ■ Green ■ SNP ■ Lib Dem ■ Labour



YouGov | yougov.com

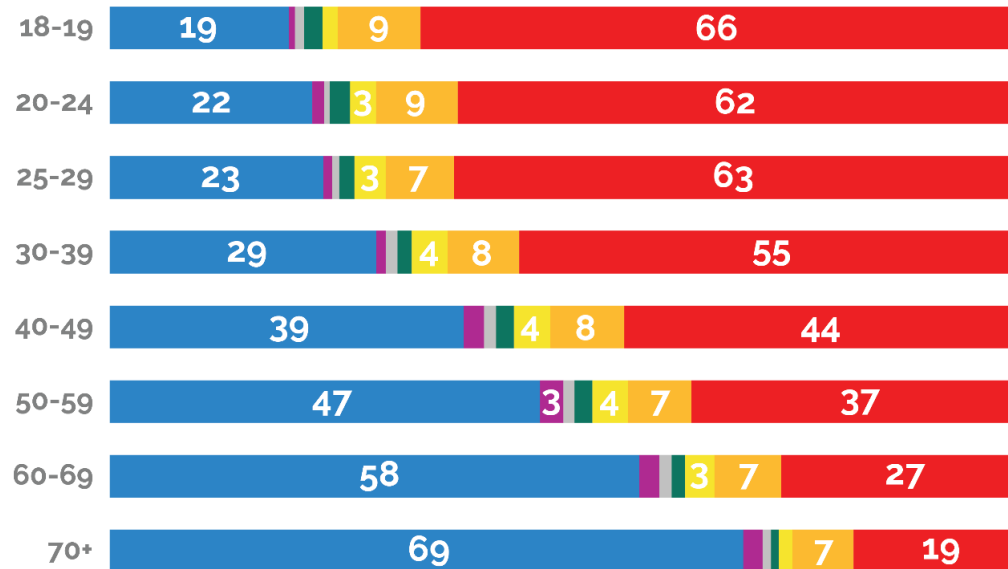
June 9-13, 2017

The World Turned Upside Down

Vote by age

Based on a survey of 52,615 GB adults about their vote in the 2017 general election

■ Conservative ■ UKIP ■ Other ■ Green ■ SNP ■ Lib Dem ■ Labour



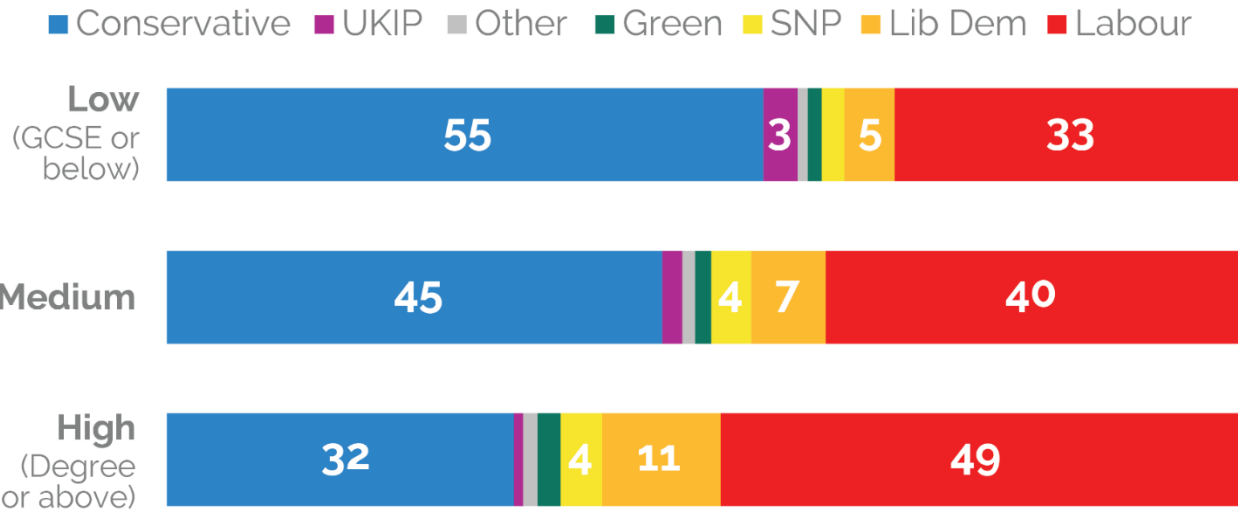
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The World Turned Upside Down

Vote by education level

Based on a survey of 52,615 GB adults about their vote in the 2017 general election

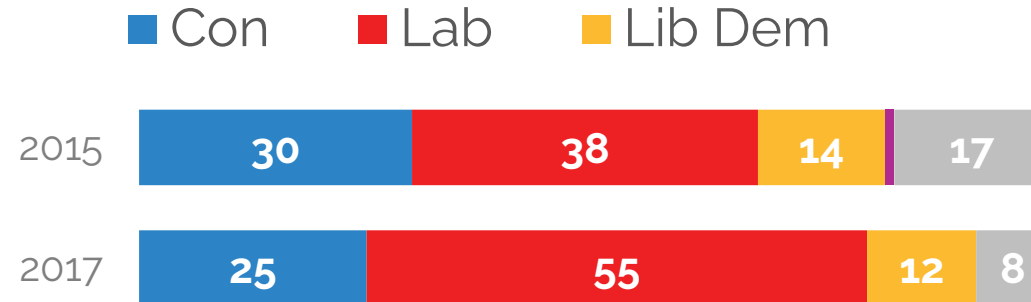


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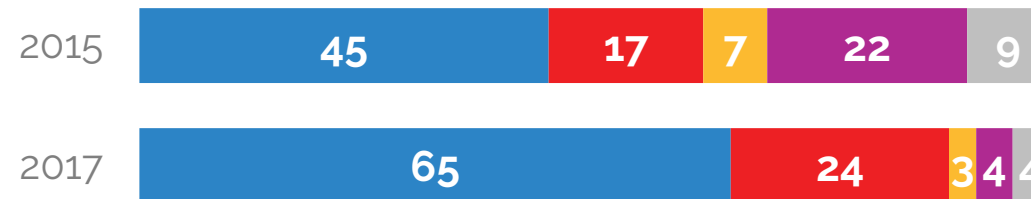
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The World Turned Upside Down

Remainers



Leavers



The Bigger Picture

- Ultimately:
 - Prediction is hard (let alone explanation);
 - Society is always changing, and the structure of public opinion is dynamic;
 - While we use scientific methods there is still, perhaps, an element of art to what we do.

