

The Development of Civic Values among Young People and the Effect of Education

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Renewed interest in young people's civic values

- Rise of populist anti-immigrant parties
- Radicalisation among some minorities
- Growing pressure on liberal democracy more generally

How can education promote civic values?

Civic values and dispositions: what are they?

Scholars broadly agree on the following:

- Political engagement
- Tolerance
- Equal treatment
- Freedom of speech
- Generalised trust

According to the government “fundamental British values” include (1) democracy, (2) rule of law, (3) individual liberty and (4) tolerance

At what stage in life are they formed?

Early childhood

- Tolerance
- Generalised trust

(Adorno 1969; Milner 1983;
Uslaner 2002)

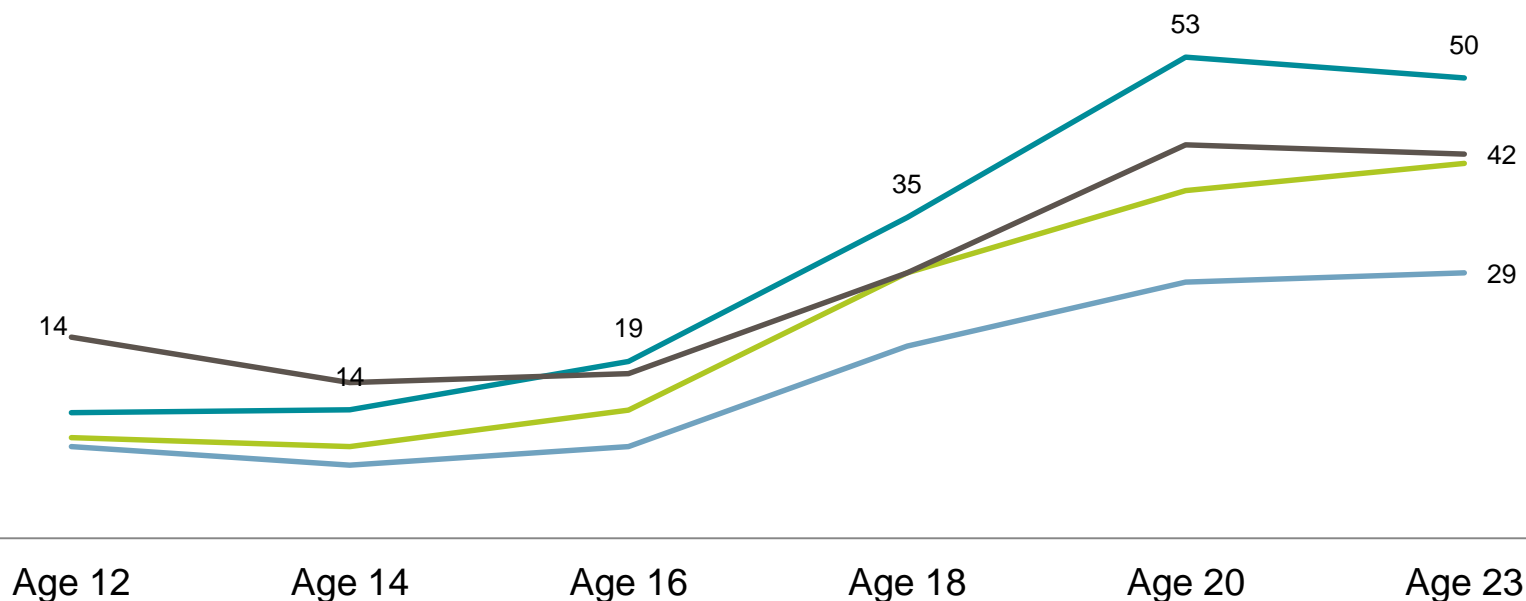
Early adulthood

- Political participation
- Interest in politics
- Support for democracy

(Flanagan and Sherrod
1998; Costa and McCrae
1994)

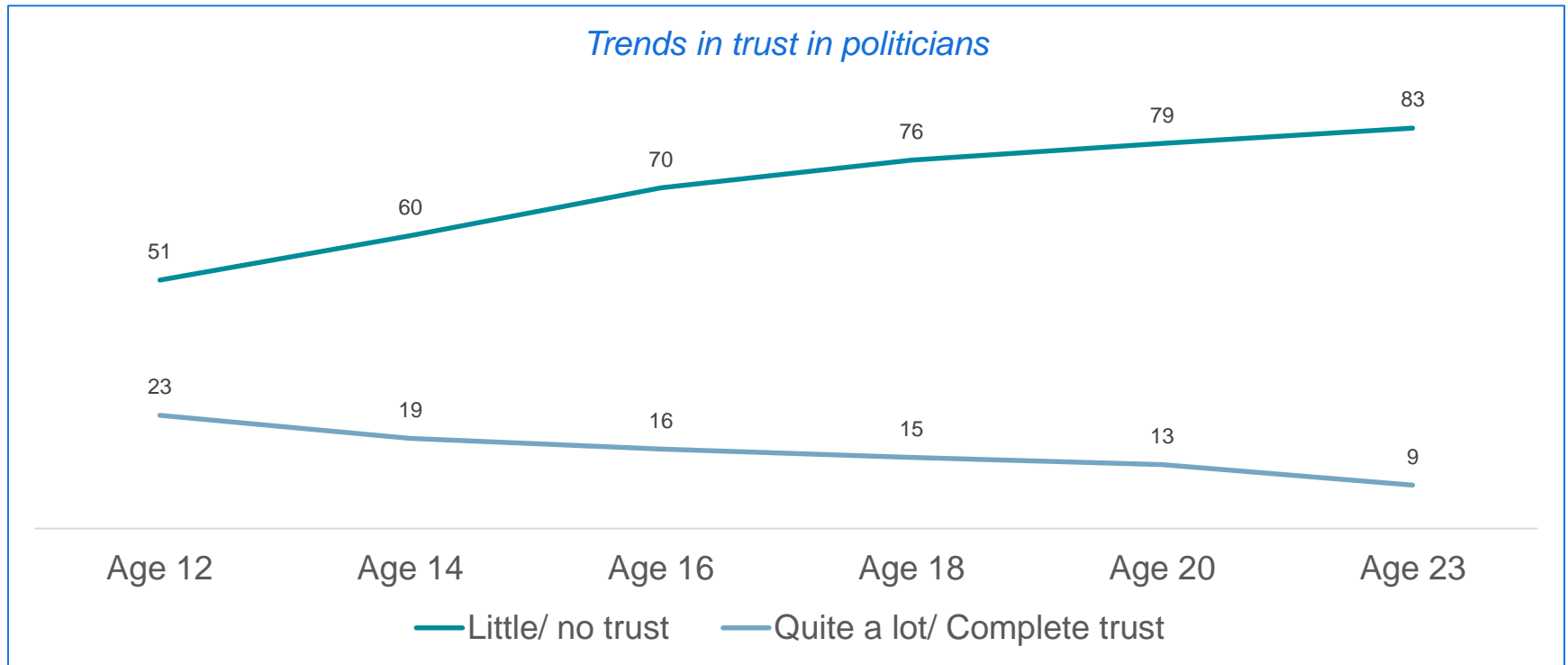
Political engagement increases from age 16 among young people in England

Youth attitudes towards voting and politics from adolescence to early adulthood

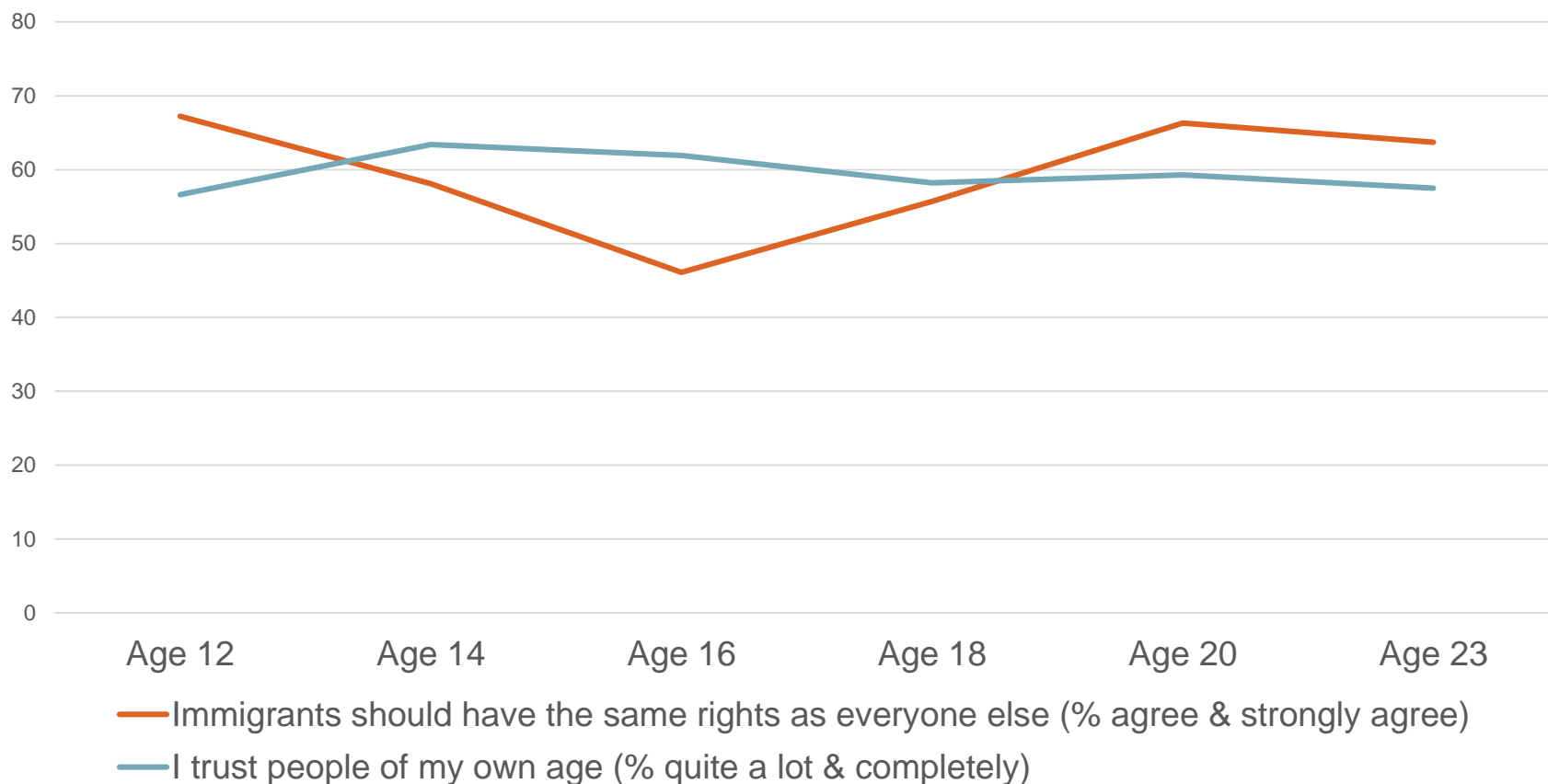


- In the future I will vote in future elections
- I am very interested in politics
- I often discuss politics with other people
- People like me can have a real influence on government if they get involved

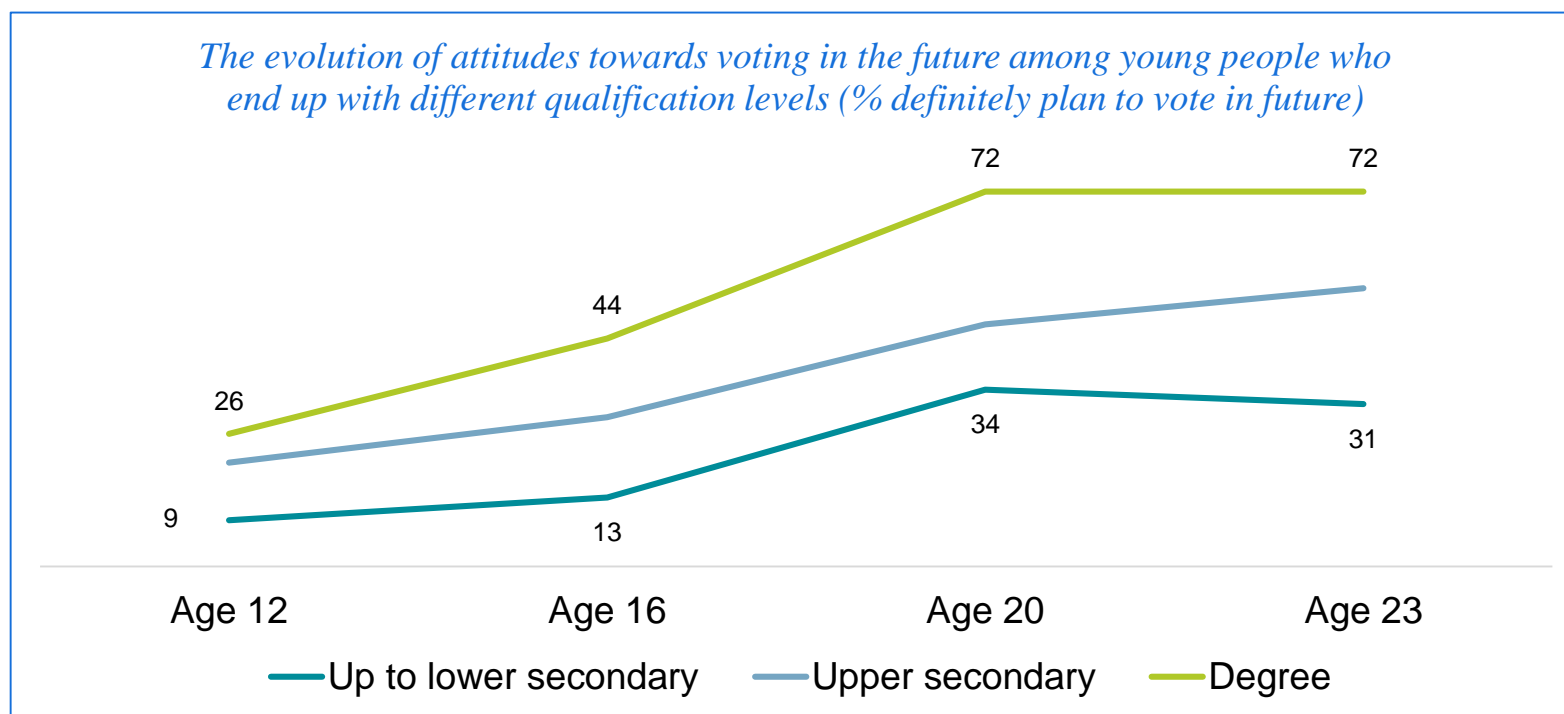
But political trust declines markedly...



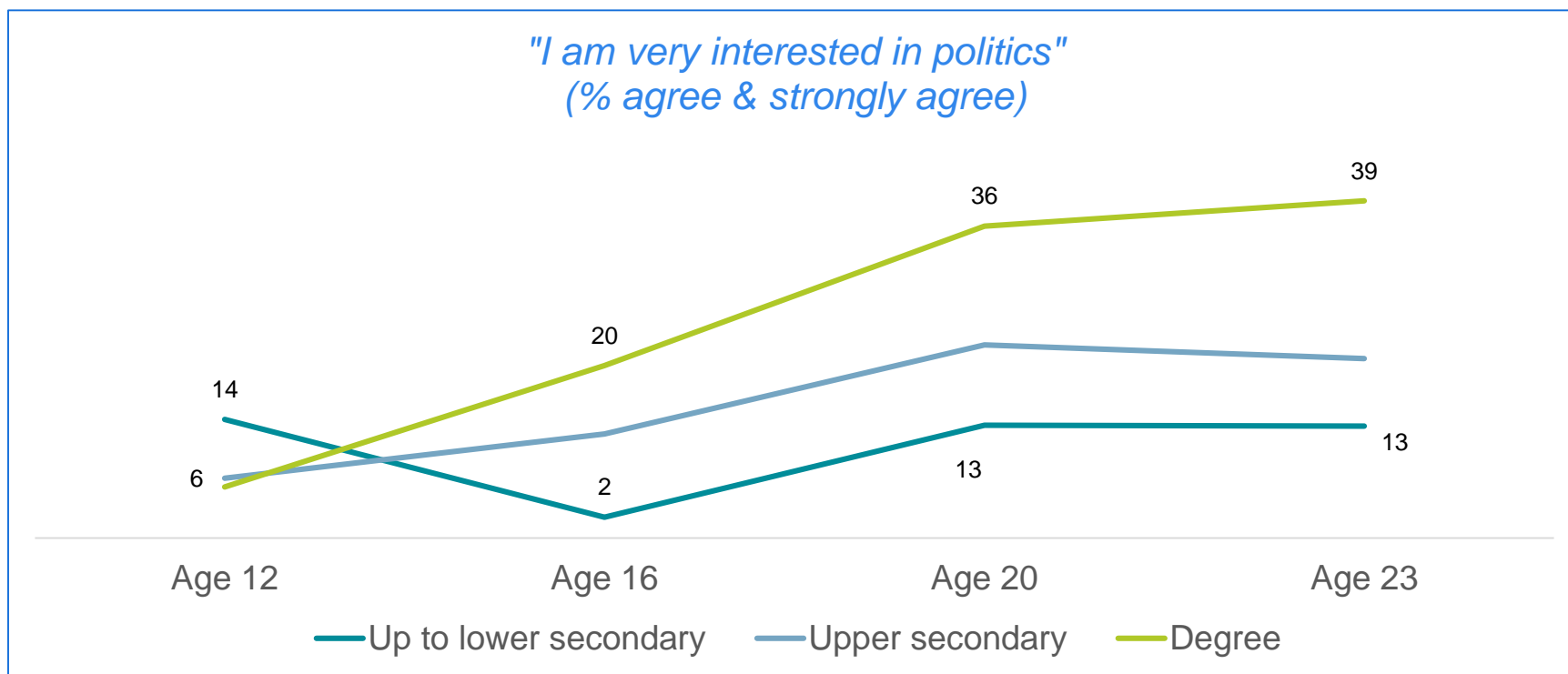
No upward trends in tolerance and generalized trust



Growing interest in voting, but also growing inequalities

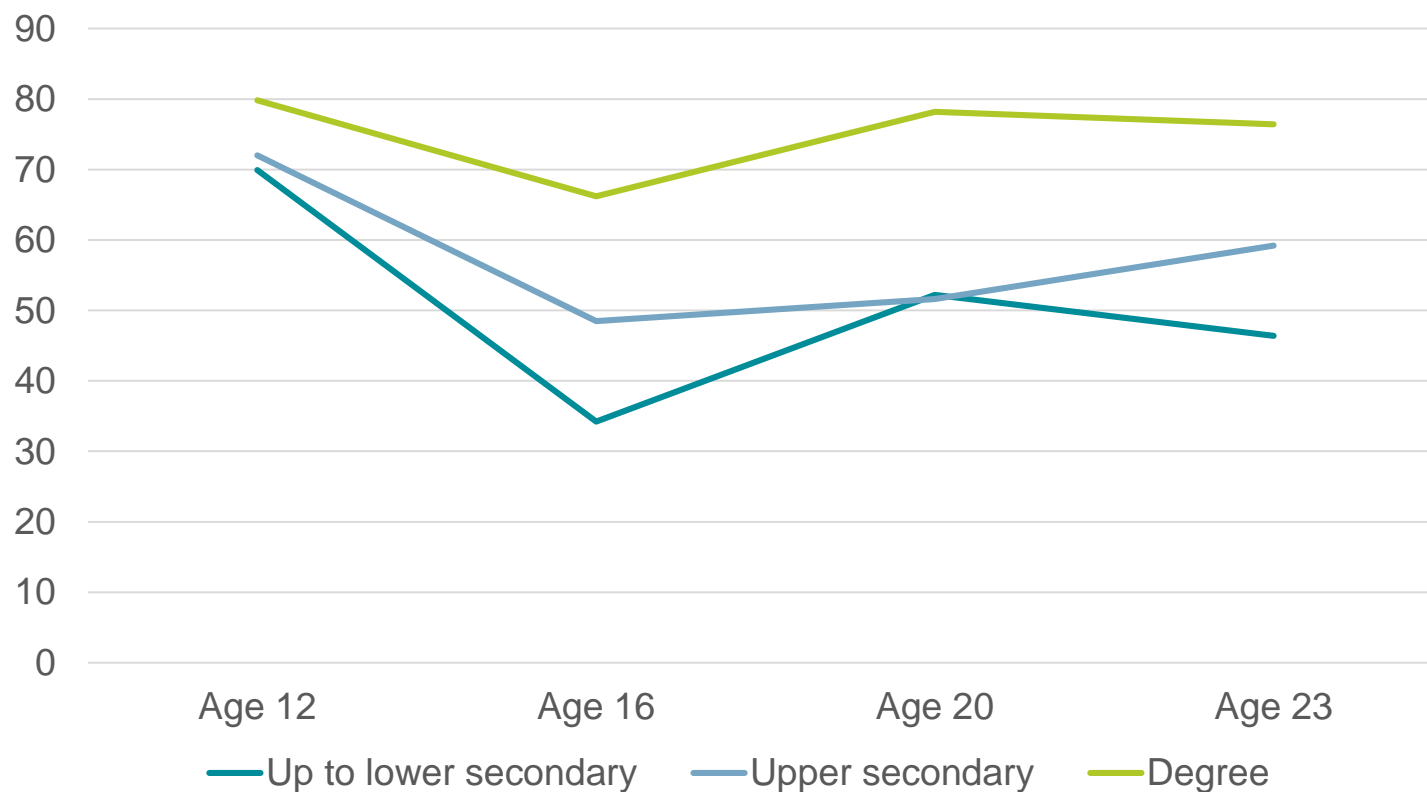


At age 12, interest in politics is actually higher among students who end up leaving school at 16. But the engagement gap emerges by age 16.



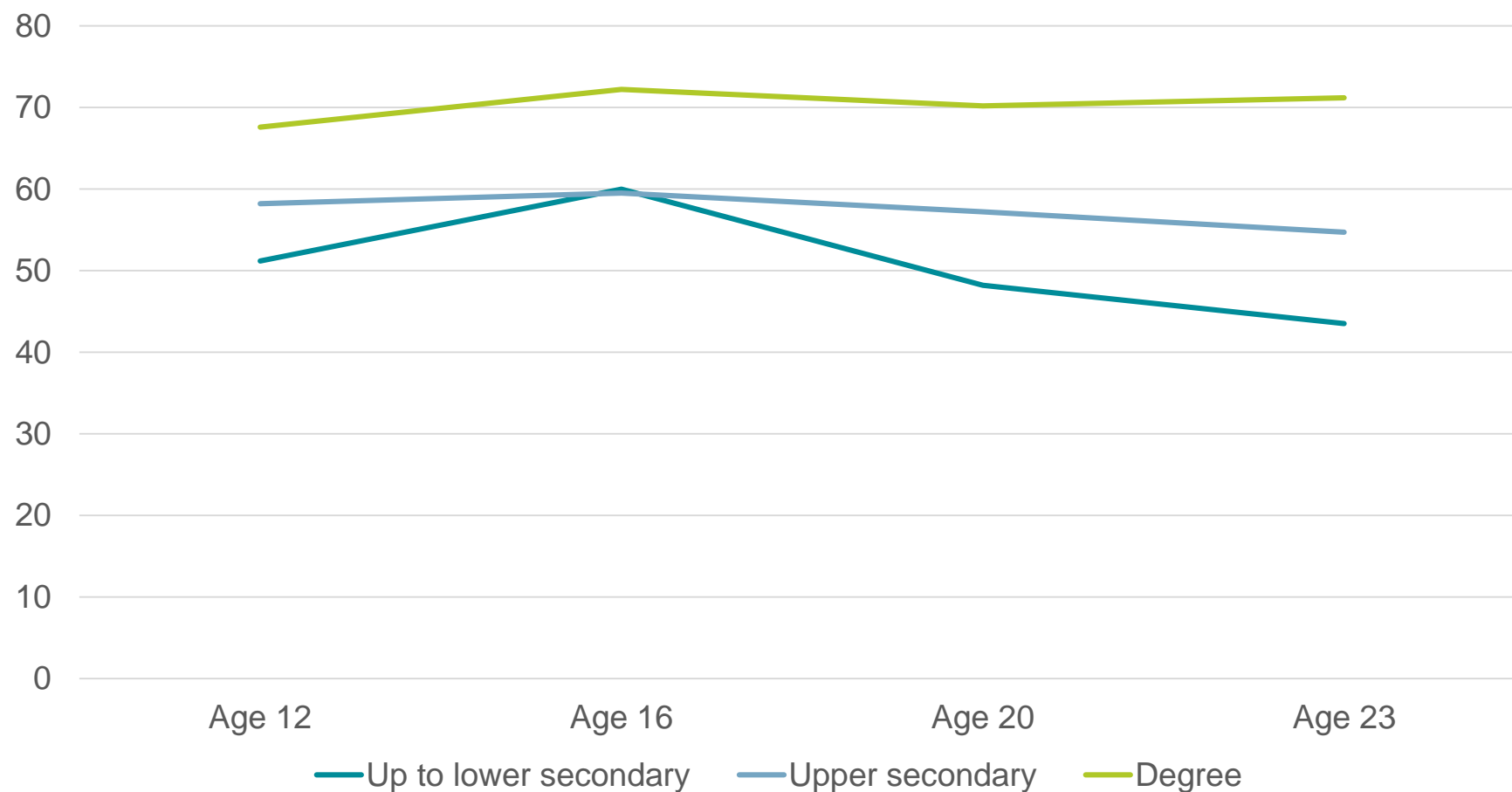
A widening gap emerges for tolerance as well

"People who were not born in Britain, but who live here now, should have the same rights as everyone else"
 (% agree & strongly agree)



... and also for social trust

*"How much do you trust people of your own age?"
(% quite a lot & completely)*



How can education foster civic values?

Mechanisms

Educational actions and conditions

| | Cognitive sophistication | Values socialization | Learning by doing | Social status |
|--------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Attainment | x | x | | x |
| Curriculum | x | x | x | |
| Teaching practices | x | x | x | |
| Mixed classes | x | x | | |

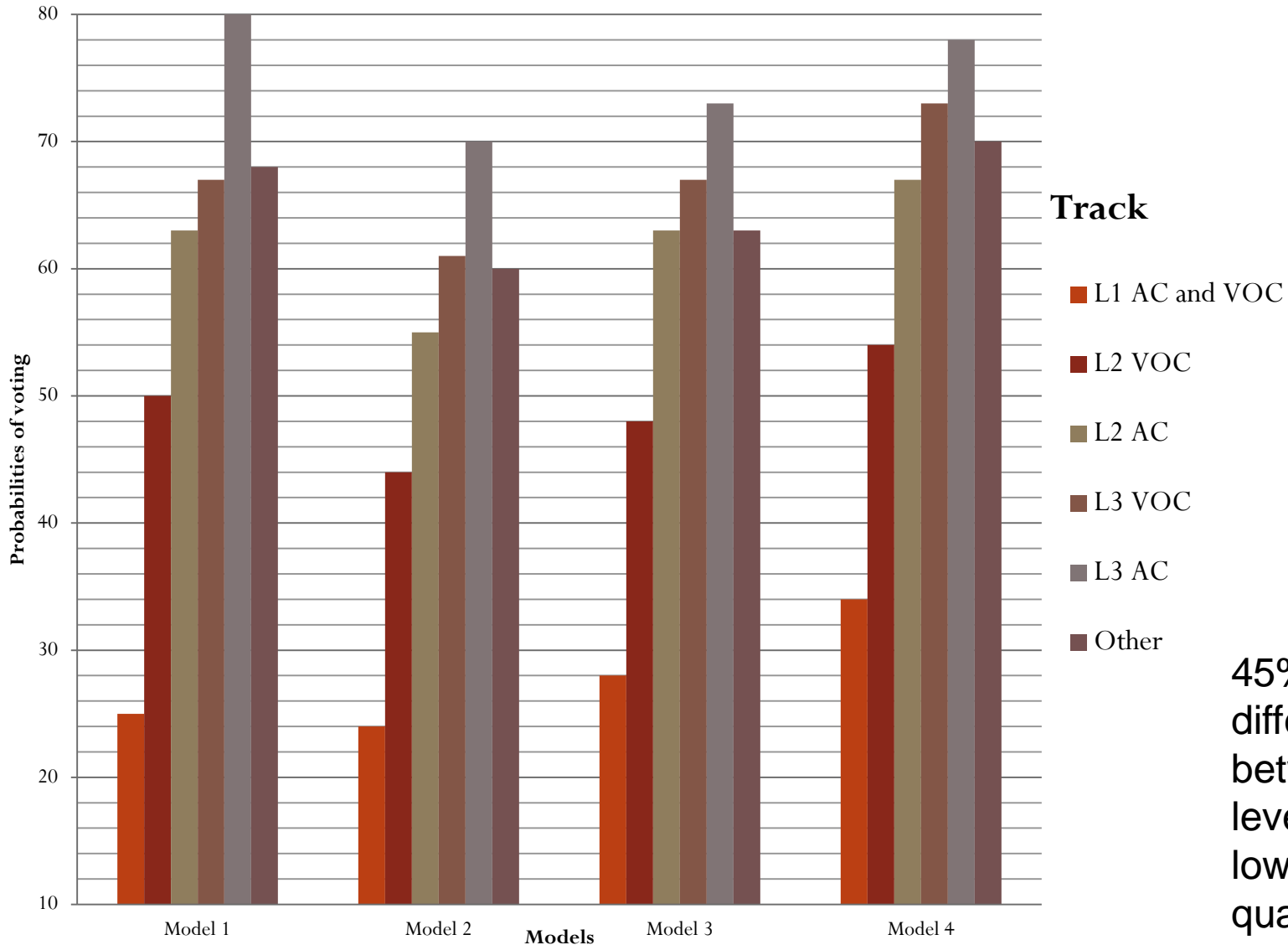
Educational tracking

- Definition: allocation to a vocational or academic track on the basis of ability
- Prepares for specific positions in the labour market
- But creates *inequality* of civic engagement through
 - The curriculum
 - Teaching practice
 - Peer effects
 - Feelings of failure

Tracking in England and Wales

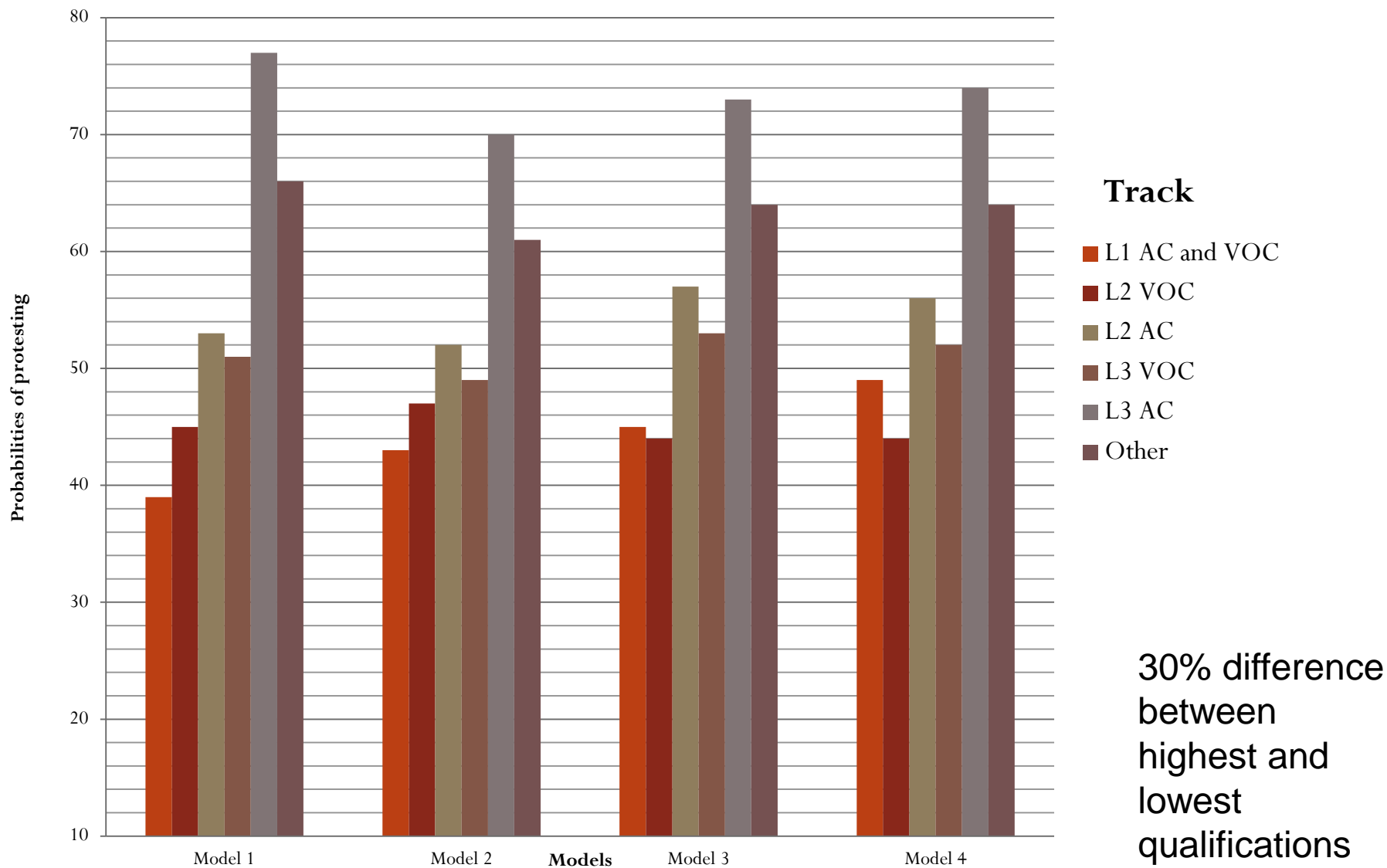
- Some specialisation already in lower secondary
- Sharp separation between the vocational and the academic track in upper secondary
- Vocational track has low prestige

Voting at age 19 by track

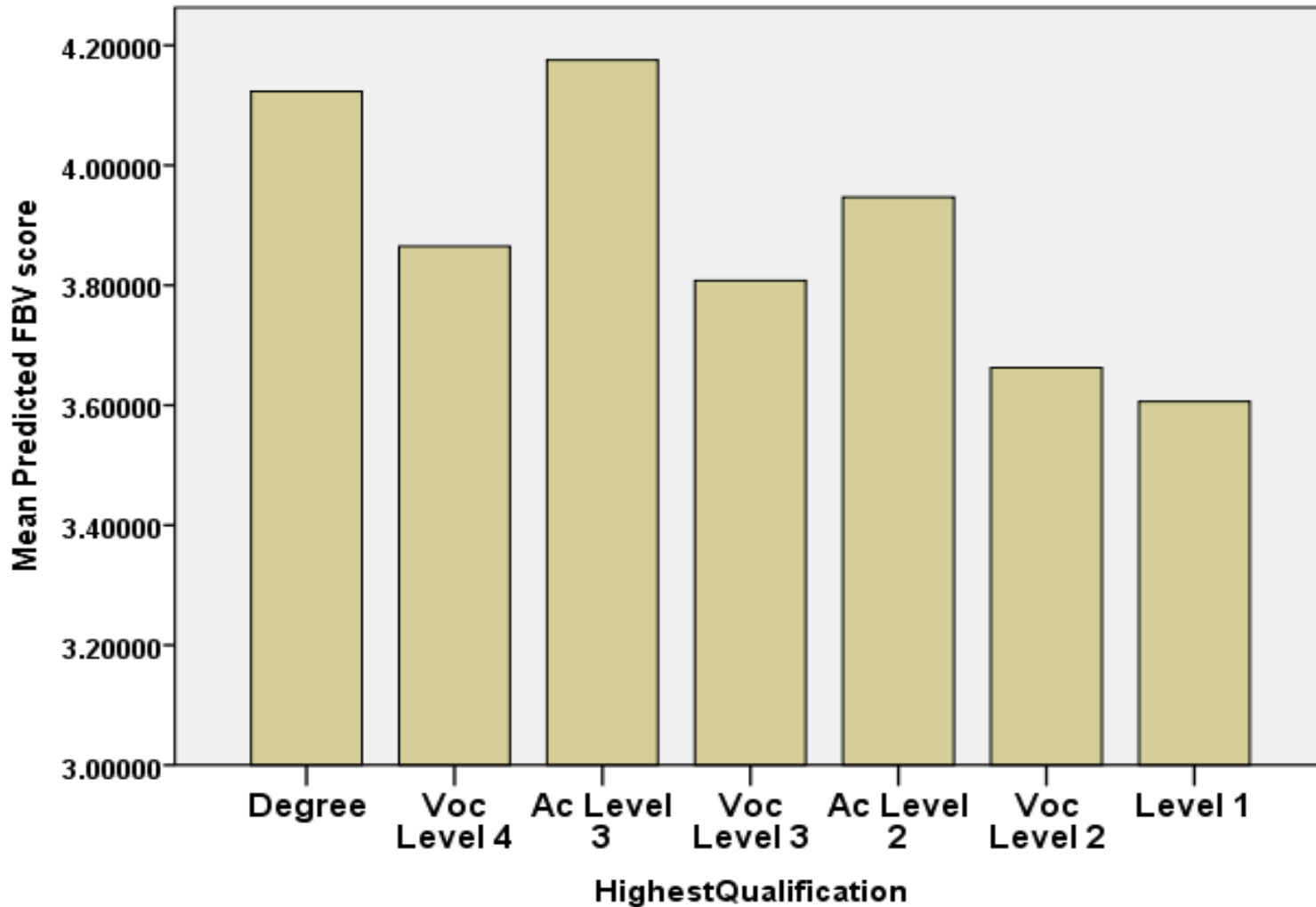


45%
difference
between A
levels and
lowest
qualification

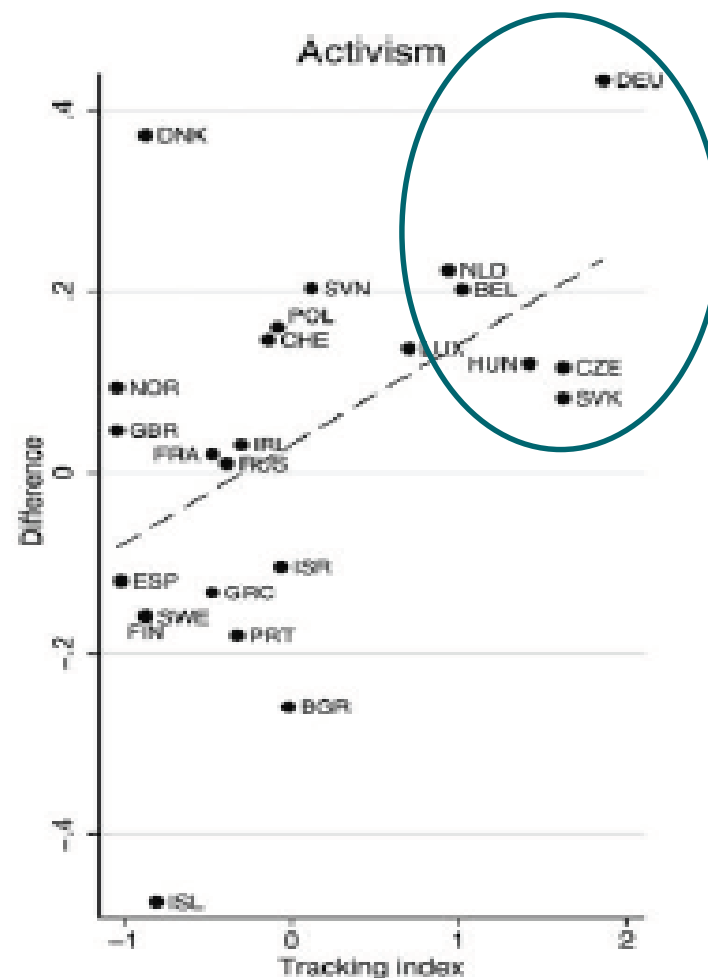
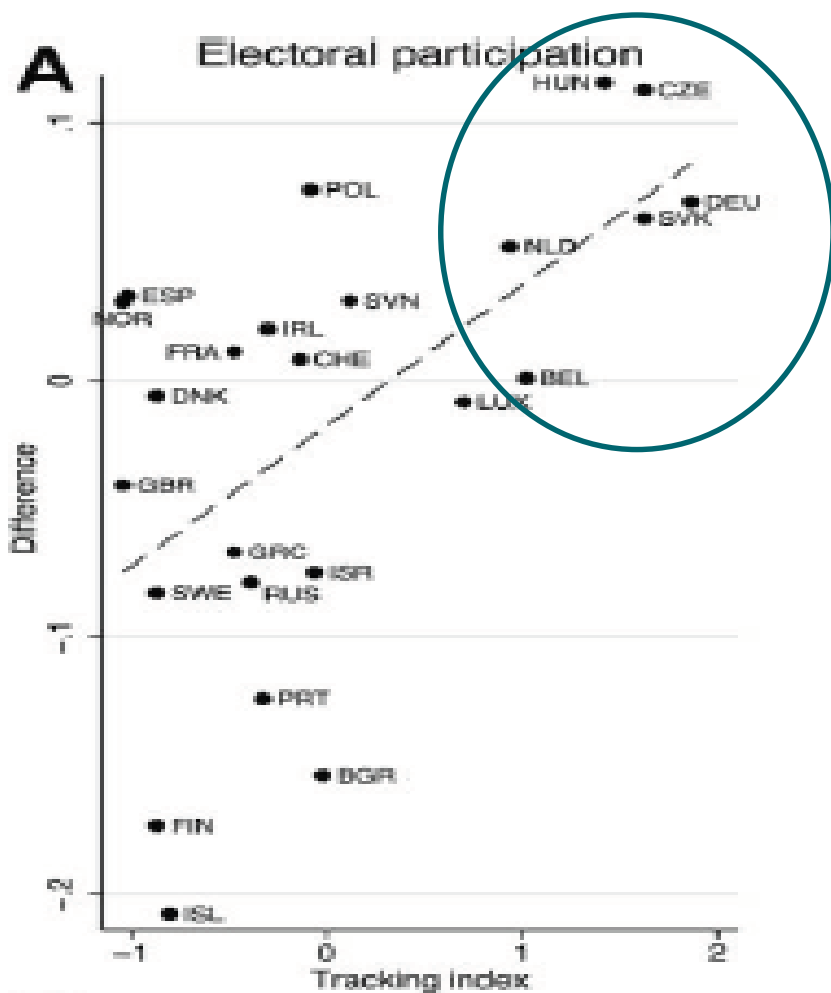
Protesting at age 19 by track



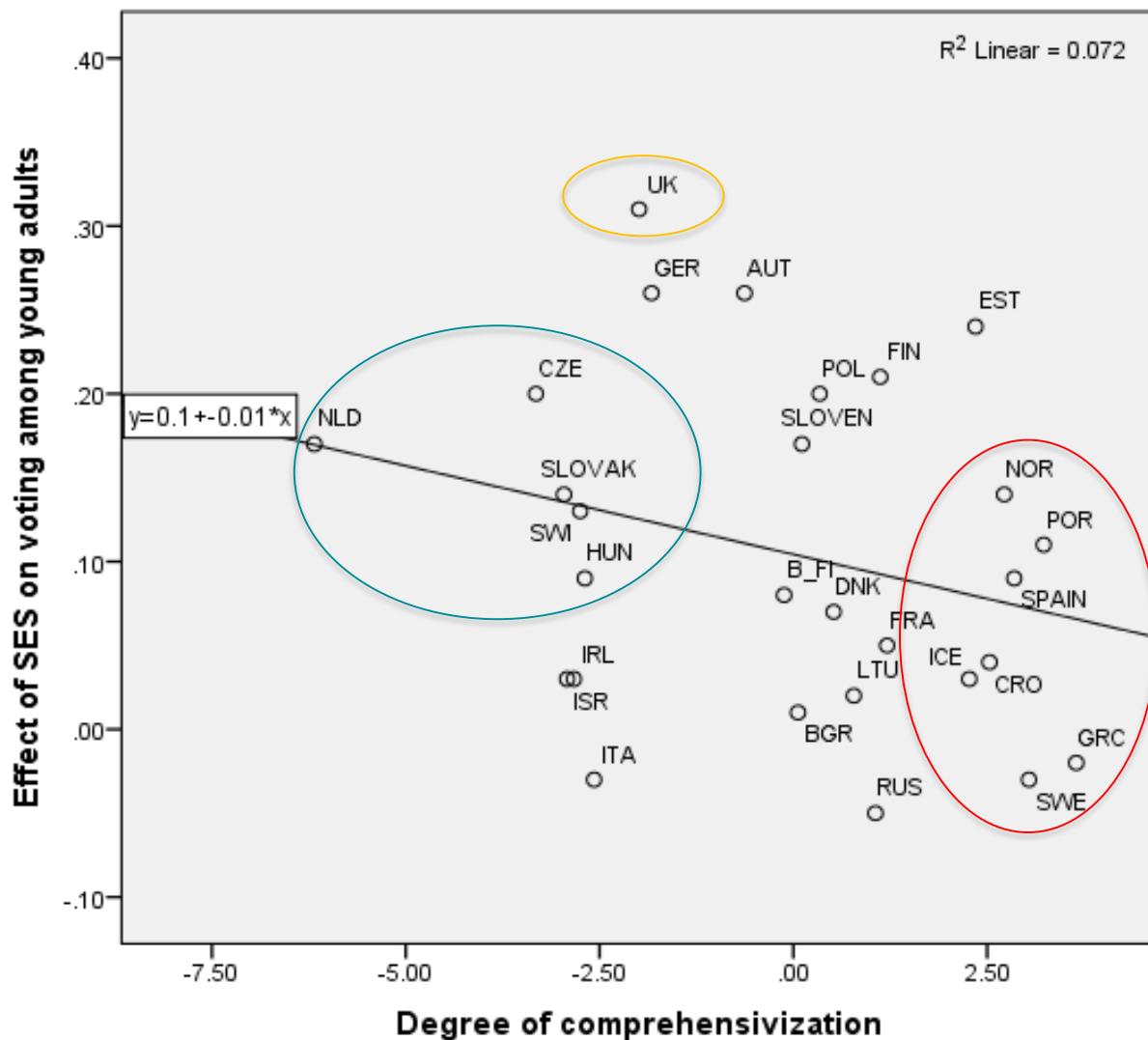
Predicted FBV score by highest qualification at age 23



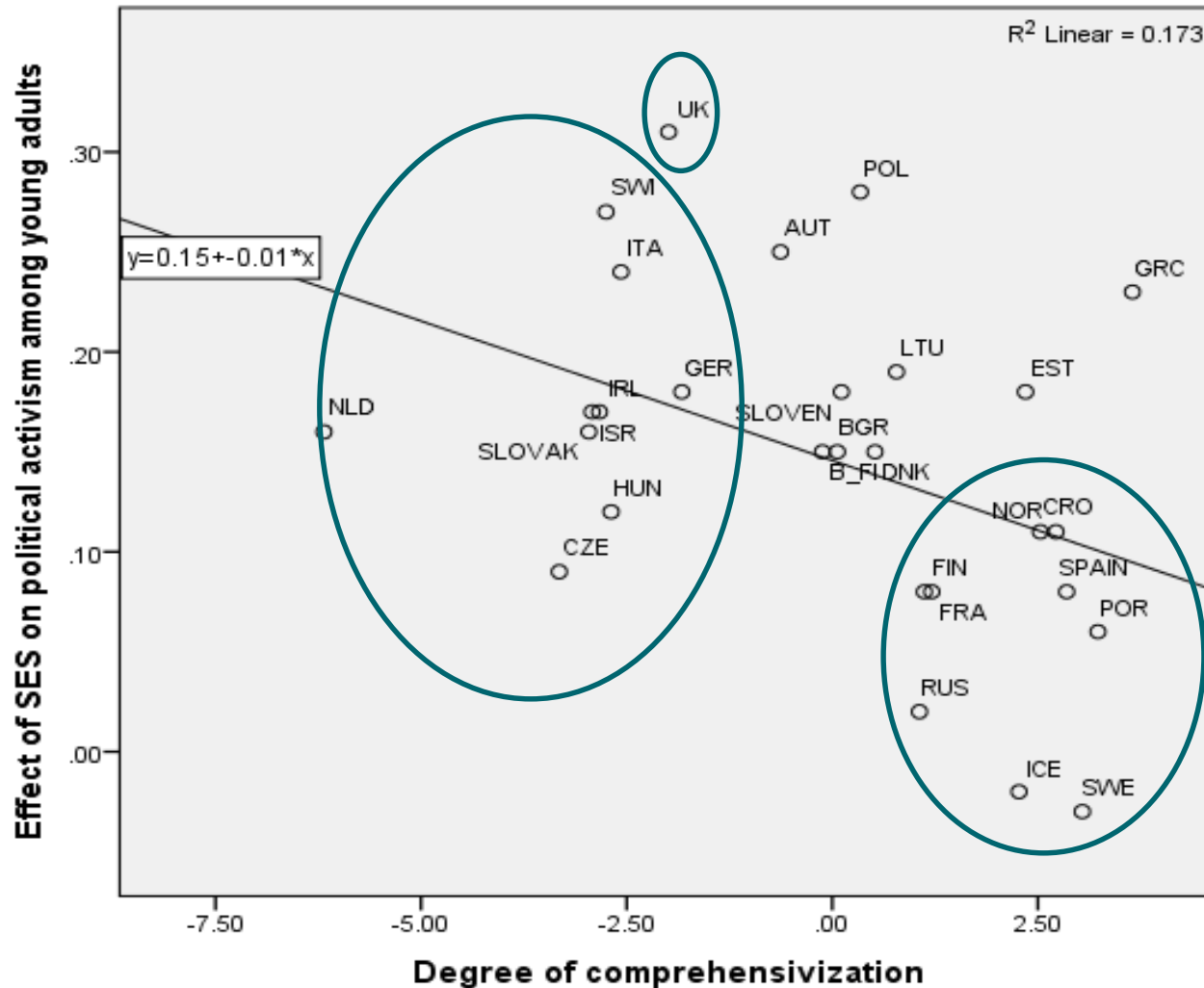
Early tracking and the engagement gap (vd Werfhorst 2017, CER)



Comprehensive education is linked to smaller social gaps in voting



... and even more so in political activism



Conclusions

- Civic values do not develop in the same way among young people
 - Political engagement increases in late adolescence
 - Political trust goes down
 - Trust and tolerance are fairly stable during adolescence
- But inequalities are increasing for all values during adolescence
- Tracking plays a key role in exacerbating inequalities
- Social gaps in political engagement are alarmingly high in the UK
- Diminishing track differences or providing *extra* citizenship education for vocational tracks are likely to help in reducing these gaps