



Socialisation disrupted

Intergenerational transmission of political engagement in immigrant families

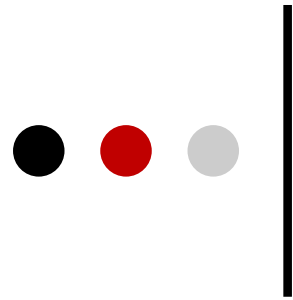
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Voice of the people?

- Major social inequalities in turn-out
 - Especially youth and those with lower education
 - Intergenerational influence of low education

“A large gap in political engagement between people with different social backgrounds is problematic for democracy as it skews democratic decision-making in favour of the privileged and undermines the public legitimacy of democracy”

[Janmaat et al 2022]



Consequences for 2024

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General elections

Low general election turnout likely with 'dull as dishwater' Sunak and Starmer

Polling expert says similarity between two main parties and clear Labour lead also likely to suppress voting numbers



Research and ideas Who we are Events Get involved



Next election is set to be most unequal for over 60 years, finds IPPR

11 Dec 2023

- New analysis of every election since 1964 finds rapidly growing turnout gap between the haves and the have nots
- High earners, university graduates, homeowners and older people all have more sway over policy making
- Unequal policy responsiveness risks stoking populism, warns IPPR

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Low millennial turnout will boost Conservatives at election, says Resolution Foundation

Voter apathy is rising among younger people who are yet to get on the property ladder



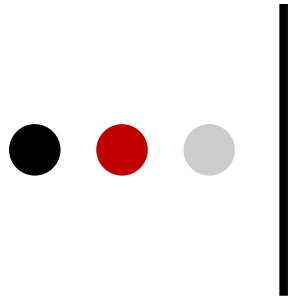
But the story isn't the same for everyone

- The British electorate is changing
 - 1 in 6 usual residents foreign born
 - 43% of these naturalised
 - 1 in 4 under 18 have FB parent
 - 1 in 3 born in England in 2022
- Political socialisation, and voter turn-out, differs for immigrant families
 - Decoupling of interest and voting
 - Weaker social background influence



Our research questions

- What drives differences in political interest and voting among immigrants and their children?
- How is political interest and voting passed down from parent to child in immigrant families?
- How might migration policy influence turnout among foreign born and their children?



Our evidence base

A) Individual Level Data

Understanding Society: the UK Household Longitudinal Study (UKHLS)

Young people 16-30 (1.5 and 2nd gen) with at least one foreign born parent who arrived after age 18, where both child and parent are observed

N = 1,502 All

(N=1,118 political interest models; N=452 voting models)

Note: 3rd Gen+ Comparison Samples Not Discussed (N= 4598 / 2454)

B) National origin data

“Quality of Government” (UoG) database used for measuring country-level variables for each COB present in Understanding Society; 10 year average measured when parent was an adolescent (8-18 years old); Census 2011 for co-ethnic concentration

N=81



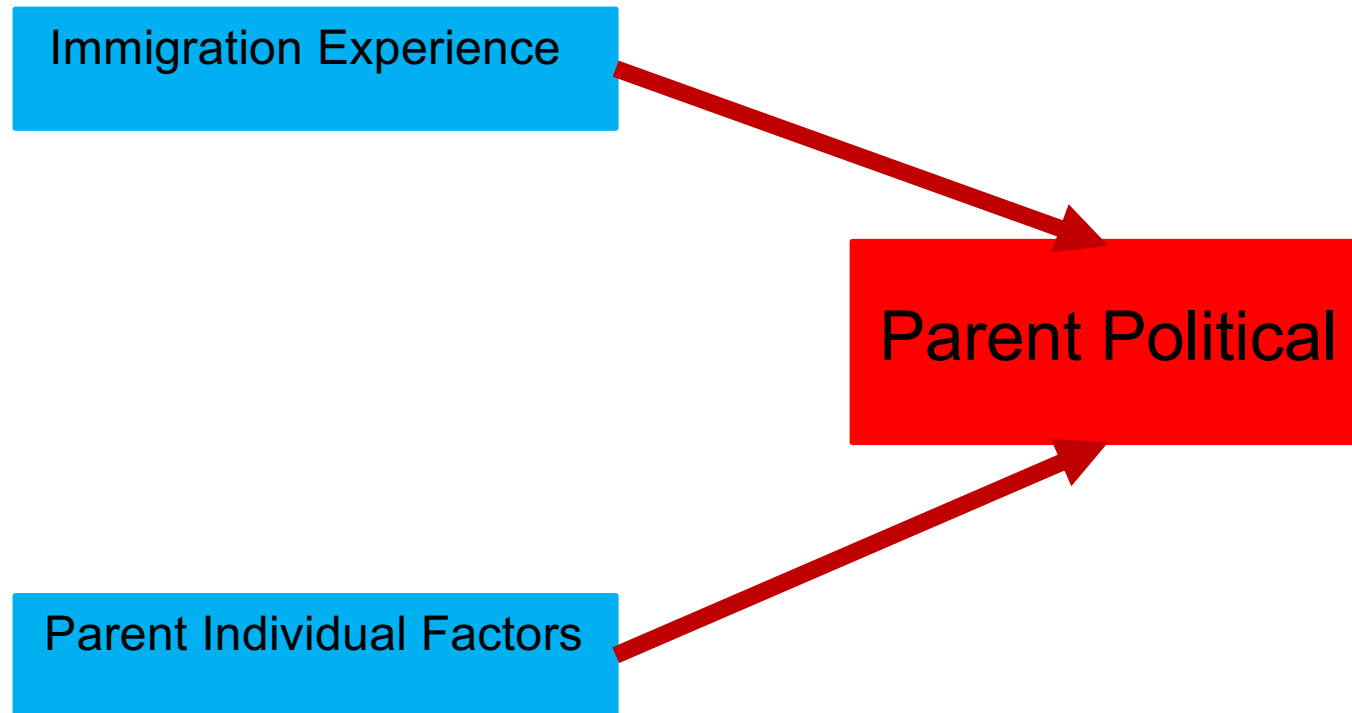
Political engagement



- For Immigrant Parents and their UK born / raised children:
 - Political interest (4 point Likert scale, from 'not at all interested' to 'very interested')
 - Whether voted in last GE (latest available: 2015, 2017, 2019)

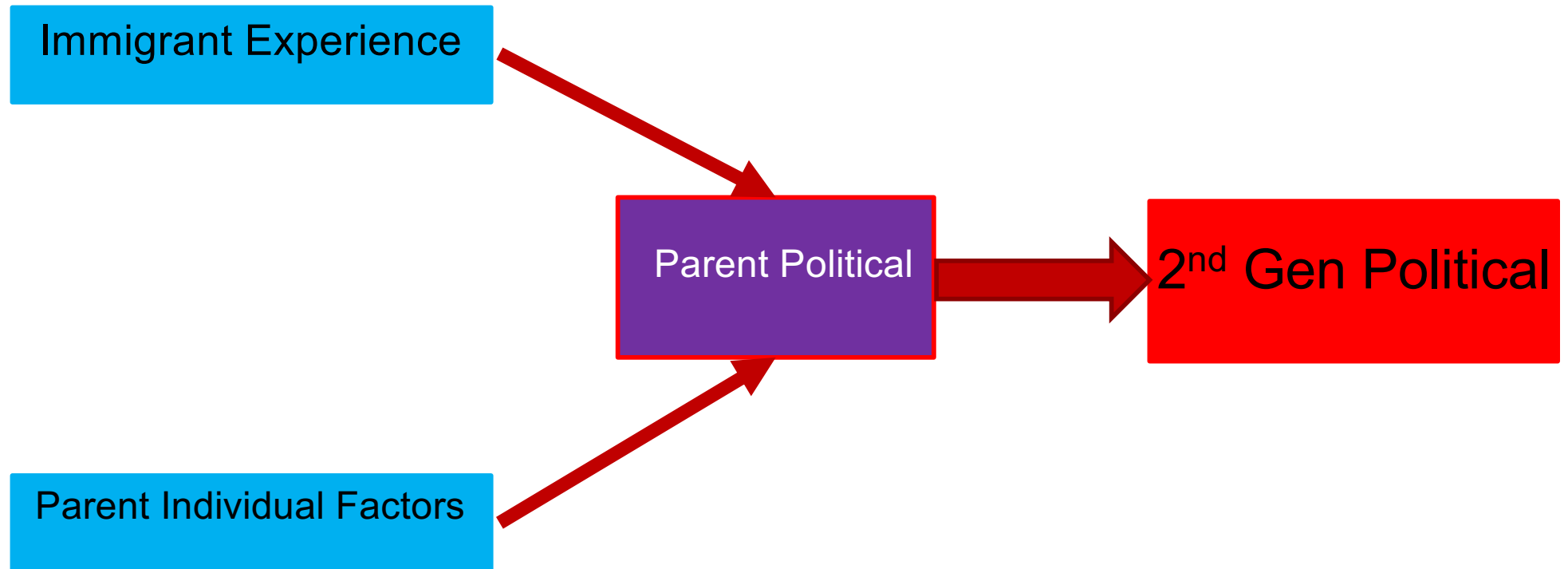


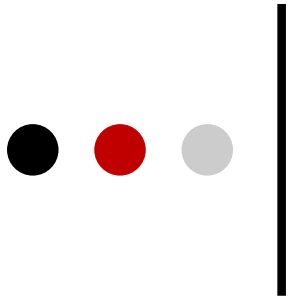
Political Socialisation





Political Socialisation





POLITICAL INTEREST

Inequality in Political Interest: Parents

- o Education
- o Gender
- o Age

Both immigrants and UK born parents are more likely to be interested in politics if they are more highly educated, men, and older





Role of immigration policy?

- **Commonwealth and EU immigrants more politically interested than other third country**

Immediate right to vote in local (EU) and national (Commonwealth) elections encourages interest



Inequality in Political Interest: Children

- o **Education**

- o **Gender**

- o **Age**

Both the **children of** immigrants and UK born parents are more likely to be interested in politics if they are more highly educated, men, and older

Family Transmission of Political Interest

- **Parent education and political interest**

Both the **children of immigrants** and UK born parents are more likely to be interested in politics if they have more educated parents and parents with higher levels of political interest





Intergenerational role of immigration policy?

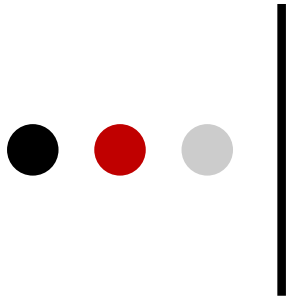
- o **Children of Commonwealth and EU immigrants, and whose parents naturalised, more politically interested**

Immediate voting rights, and naturalisation, positively influence interest even among UK born children



Key Takeaways

- Patterns of political interest similar in UK and foreign born families
- However migration policy matters
 - Immigrants with immediate voting rights are more interested
 - Intergenerational influence
- Naturalisation matters
 - Children of naturalised parents more interested

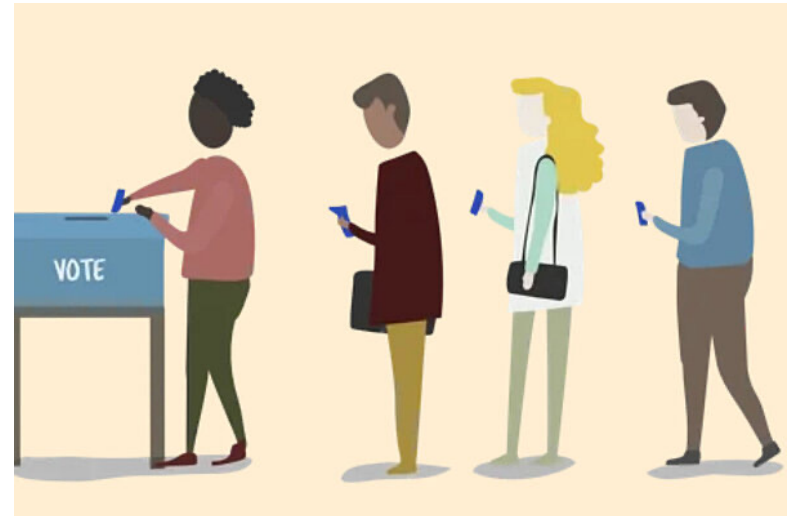


VOTER TURNOUT

● ● ● | Inequality in Voting: Parents

- Education
- Gender
- Age

Only UK born parents are more likely to vote if they are more highly educated, men, and older



No association for foreign born parents



Role of immigration policy?

- Only naturalised and Commonwealth can vote
- Naturalised more likely to vote



**Commonwealth more likely to vote,
and also more likely to naturalise,
leading to higher voting**



Inequality in Voting: Children

- o **Education**

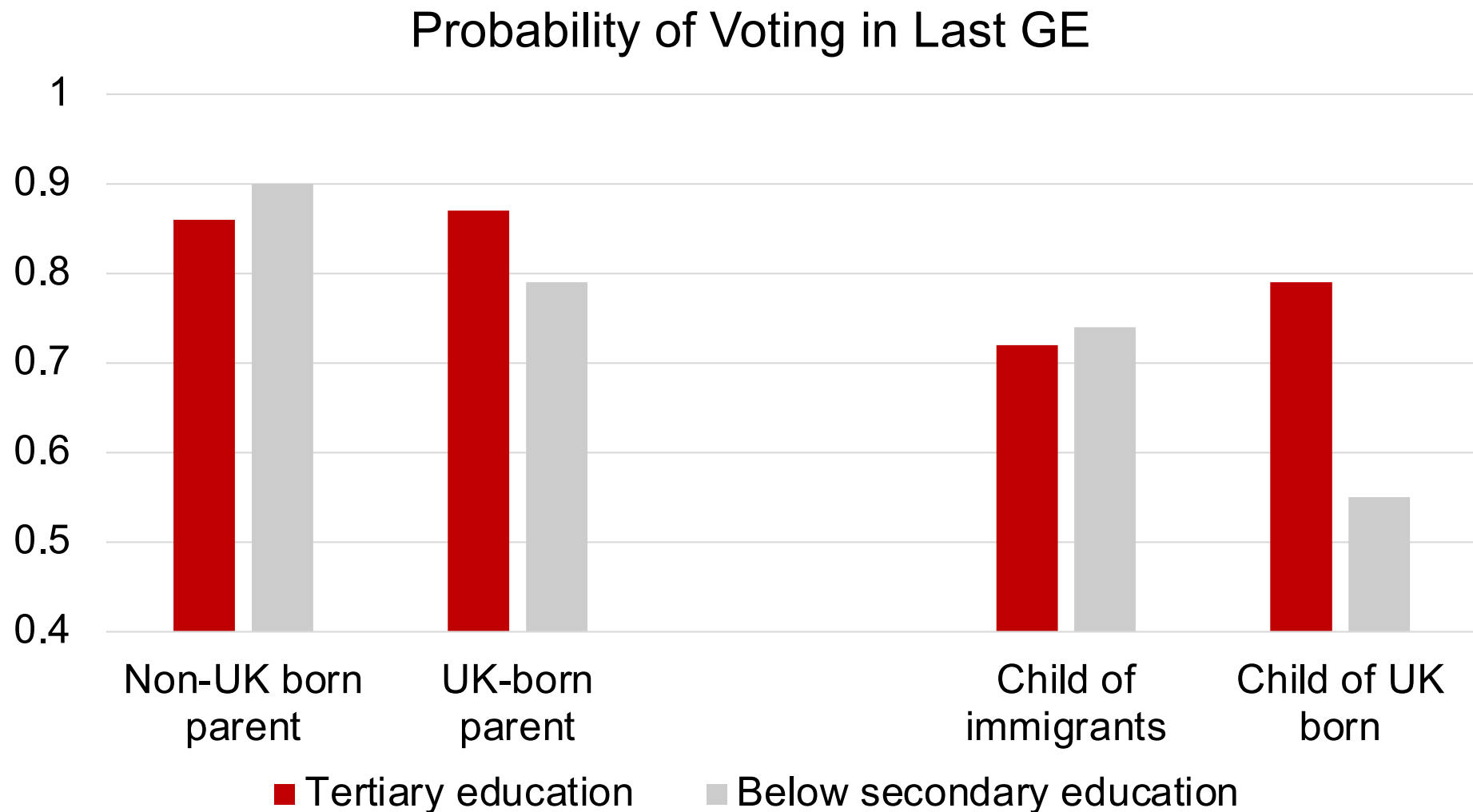
- o **Gender**

- o **Age**

Only children of UK born parents are more likely to vote if they are more highly educated

No association for children of foreign born parents

Inequality by Education: Voting





Family Transmission of Political Interest

- o **Parent education and voting**

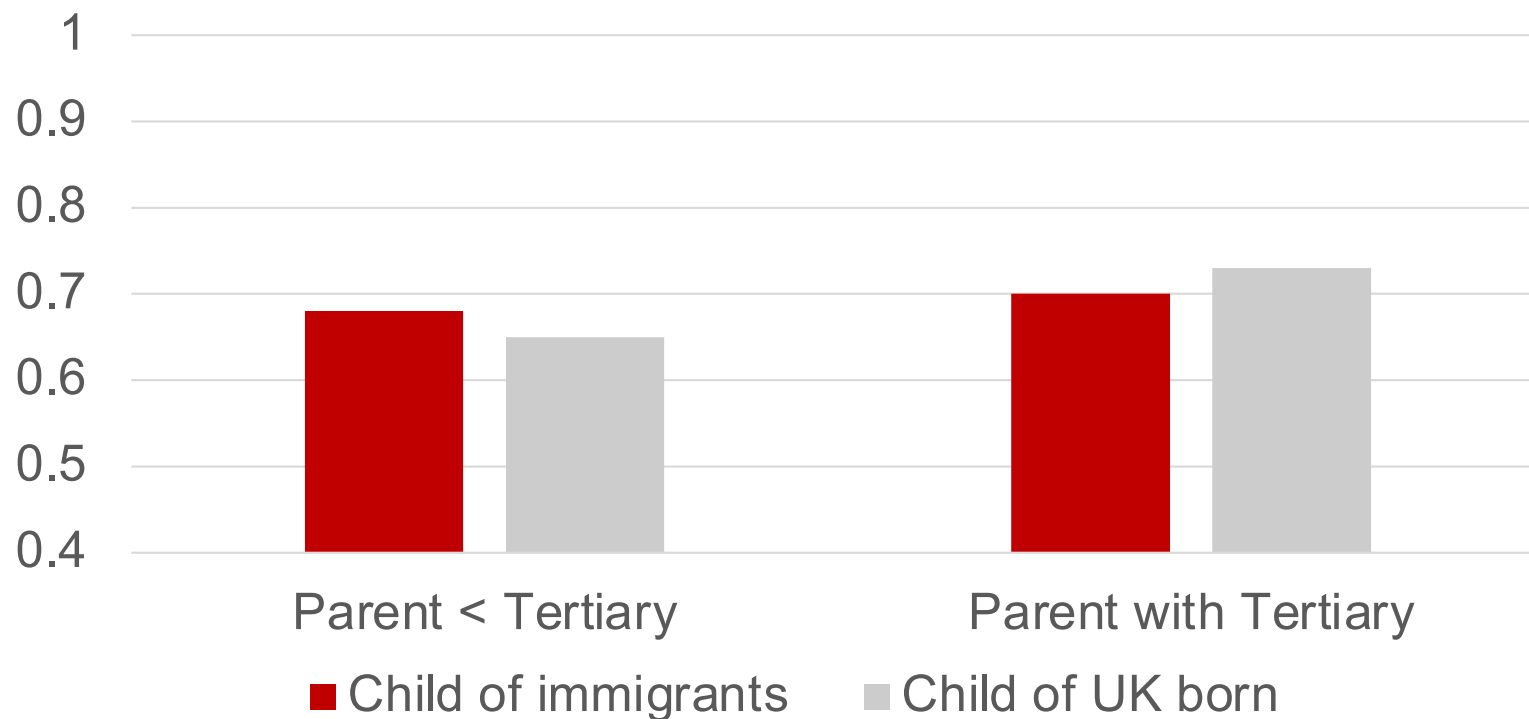
Only the children of UK born are more likely to vote if their parent is highly educated

Both the children of immigrants and UK born parents are more likely to vote if their parents voted



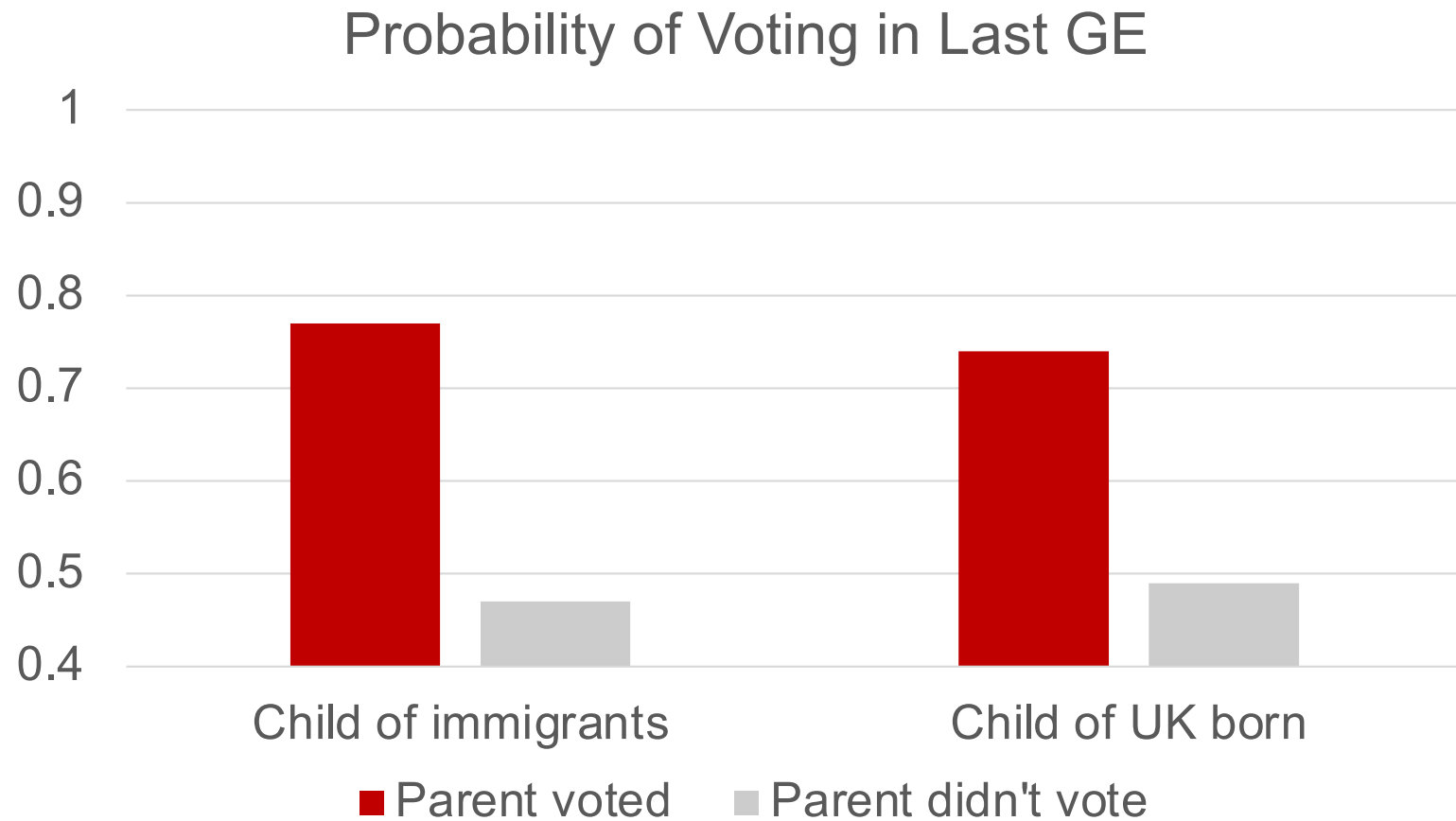
Intergenerational transmission?

Probability of Voting in Last GE
(controlling for own education)





Intergenerational transmission?





Role of immigration policy?

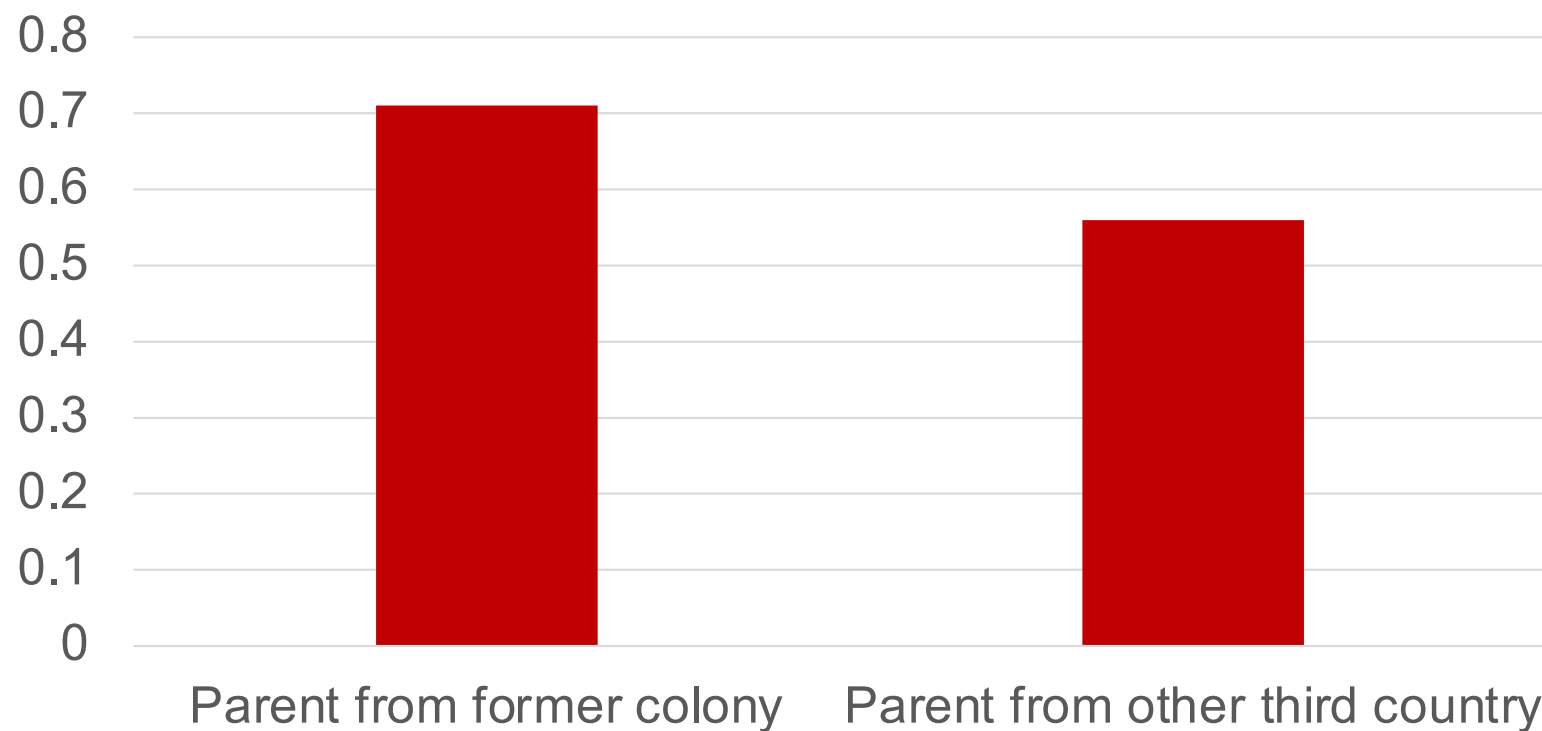
- o **Children of Commonwealth remain more likely to vote**

Commonwealth more likely to vote, and also more likely to naturalise, leading to higher voting for parents – **and their children**



Intergenerational Influence of Immigration Policy

Probability of Voting in Last GE for Children of Immigrants





Key Takeaways

- Patterns of voting very different in UK and foreign born families
 - Social background (education) has little influence in immigrant families
- Migration policy matters instead
 - Immigrants with immediate voting rights vote more
 - Intergenerational influence



Implications for Policy

- Immigrant families can teach us about overcoming inequality in turnout
- Facilitating voting rights early has long term, intergenerational influence on voter turnout
- Facilitating naturalisation increases turnout, with intergenerational effects



Thank you and
looking forward to
your questions!

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