How did we get here? Poverty and the Brexit vote

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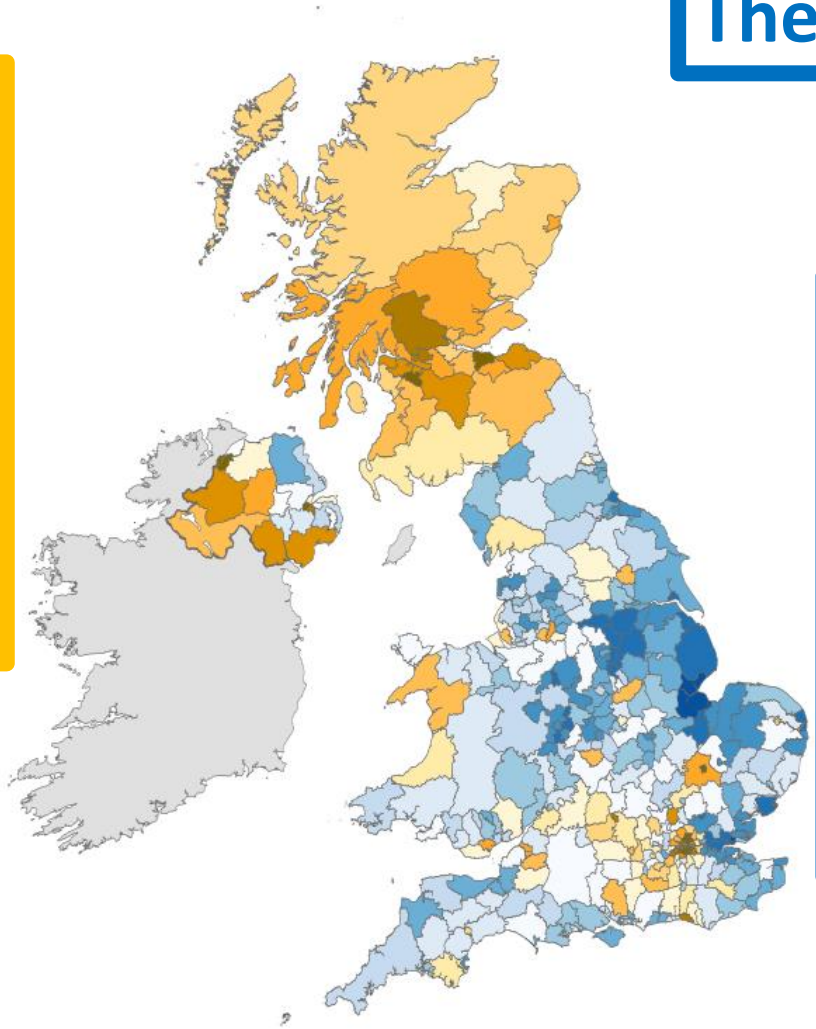
After the vote: Emerging narratives

Geography of the vote

Lambeth
Hackney
Haringey
City of London
Islington
Wandsworth
Camden
City of Edinburgh
East Renfrewshire
Cambridge

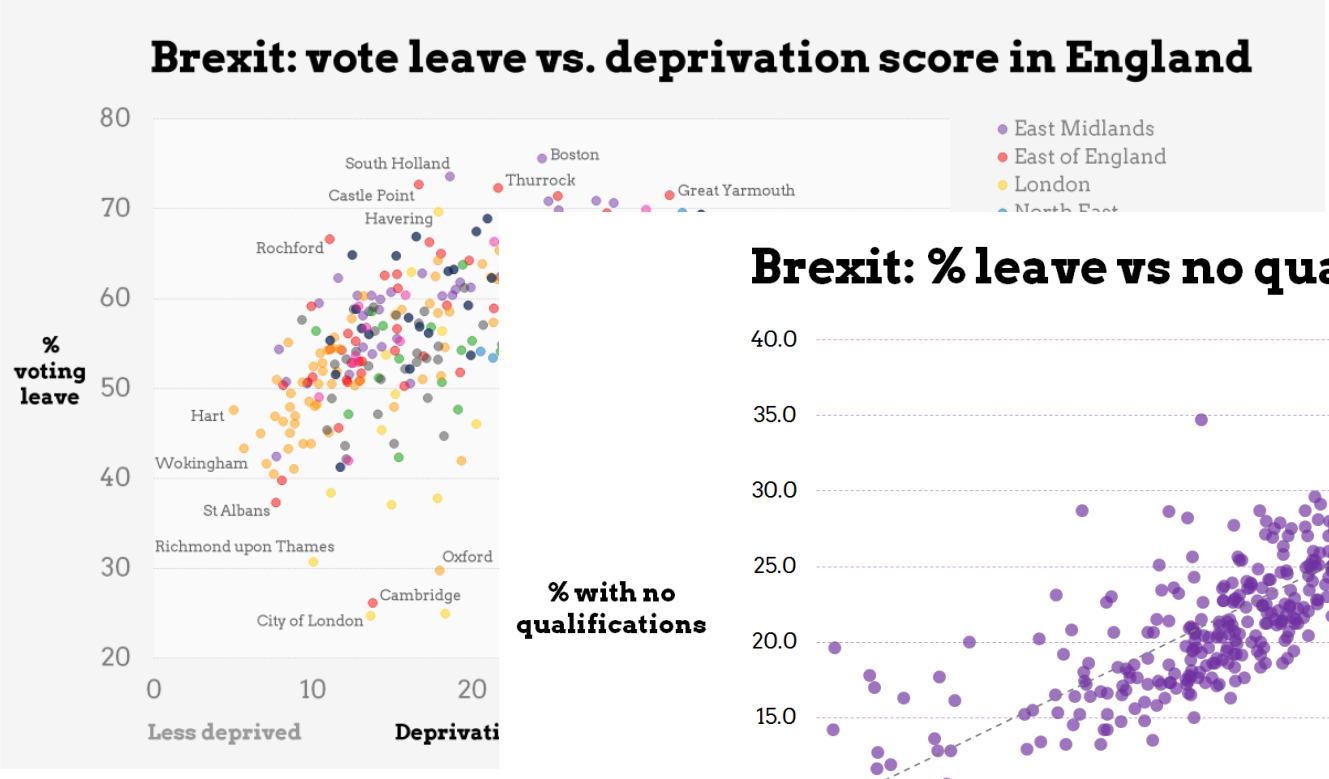


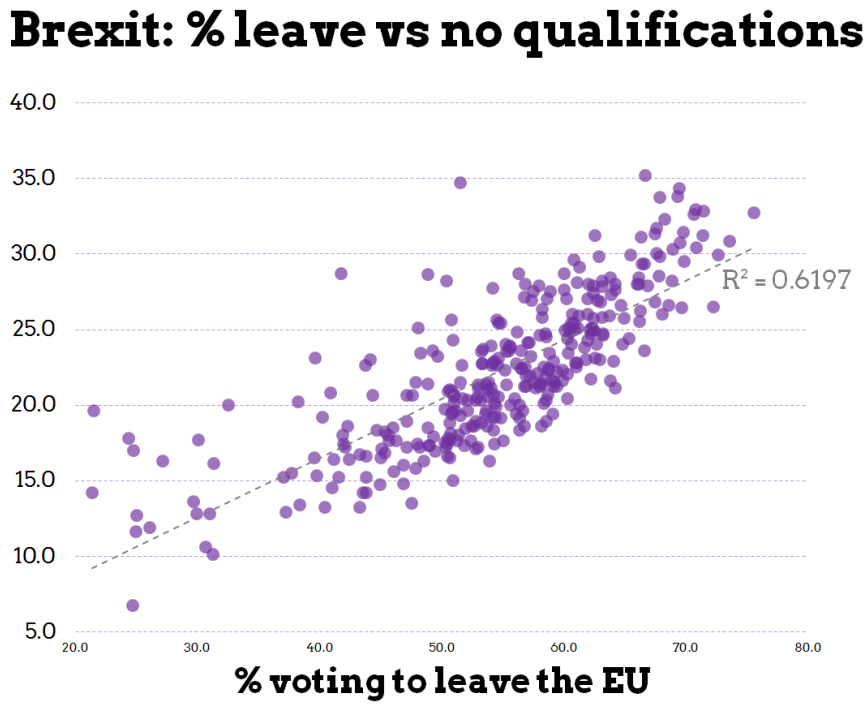
The ‘left-behind’

Boston
South Holland
Castle Point
Thurrock
Great Yarmouth
Fenland
Mansfield
Bolsover
East Lindsey
North East Lincolnshire

Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=47077445

Emerging findings: local authority analysis





Source: [Alasdair Rae (2016)]

Emerging findings: local authority analysis

- Comprehensive analysis by the Resolution Foundation:
  - No relationship between recent changes in an area's prosperity and how they voted
  - 'Long-term entrenchment' led to support for Brexit
  - Accounting for education and employment status, no relationship with pay or age

Motivations for JRF's work

- Need to look beyond area-level characteristics
- What was the role of poverty, place and individual characteristics in the leave vote?

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JRF's work

Brexit vote explained: poverty, low skills and lack of opportunities

Part of Solve UK poverty

Matthew Goodwin and Oliver Heath

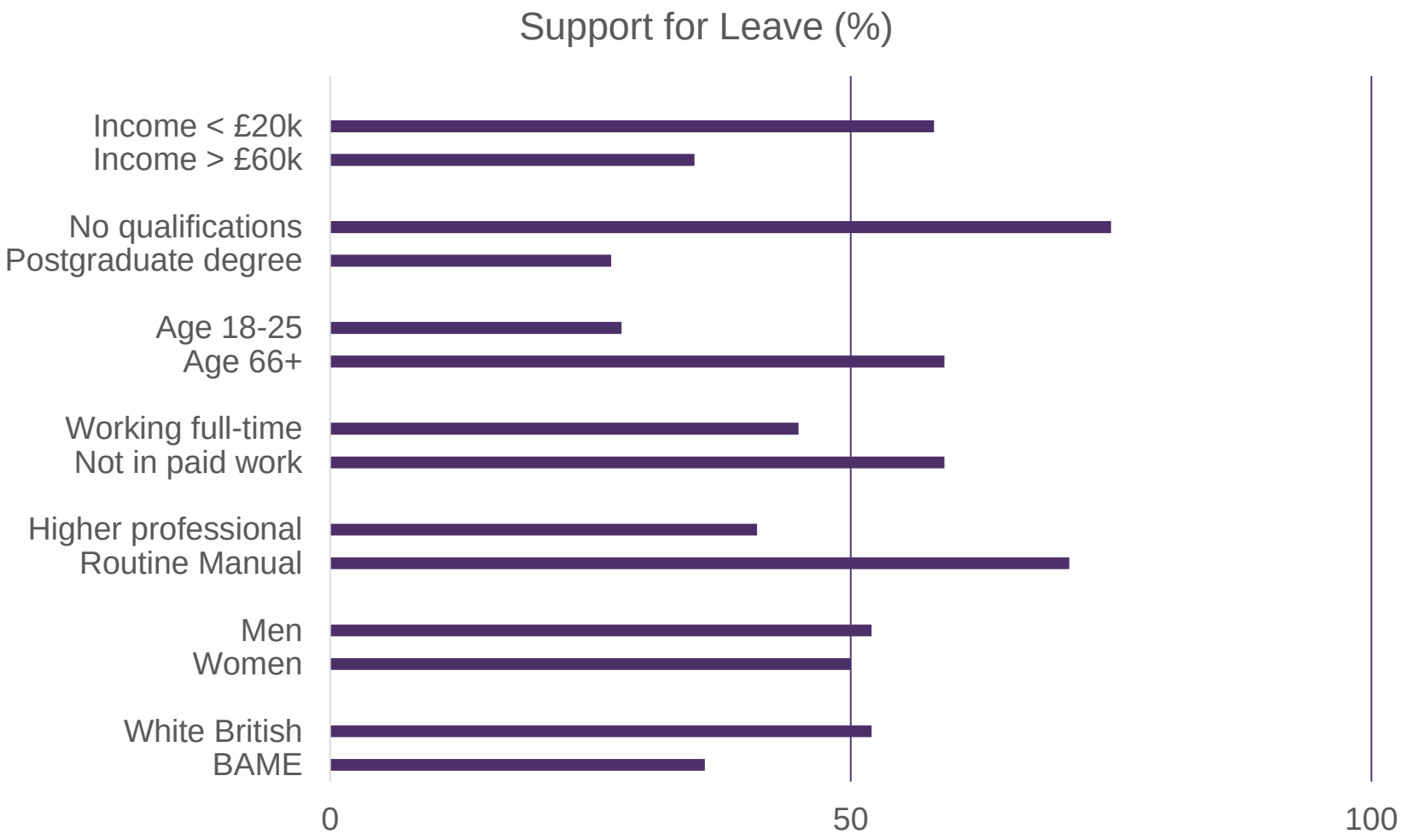
31st Aug 2016 | Related topics: Economic development and local growth Equality Living standards

This report provides unprecedented insight into the dynamics of the 2016 vote to leave the EU, showing how a lack of opportunity across the country led to Brexit.

British Election Study

- Internet survey, 31,000 respondents
- From just before the referendum, May and June 2016, and
- Includes attitudes, social and political values, demographic variables
- More detailed focus on place: parliamentary constituency rather than local authority

Divided support for leave



Source: Goodwin and Heath (2016)

Which factors matter most?

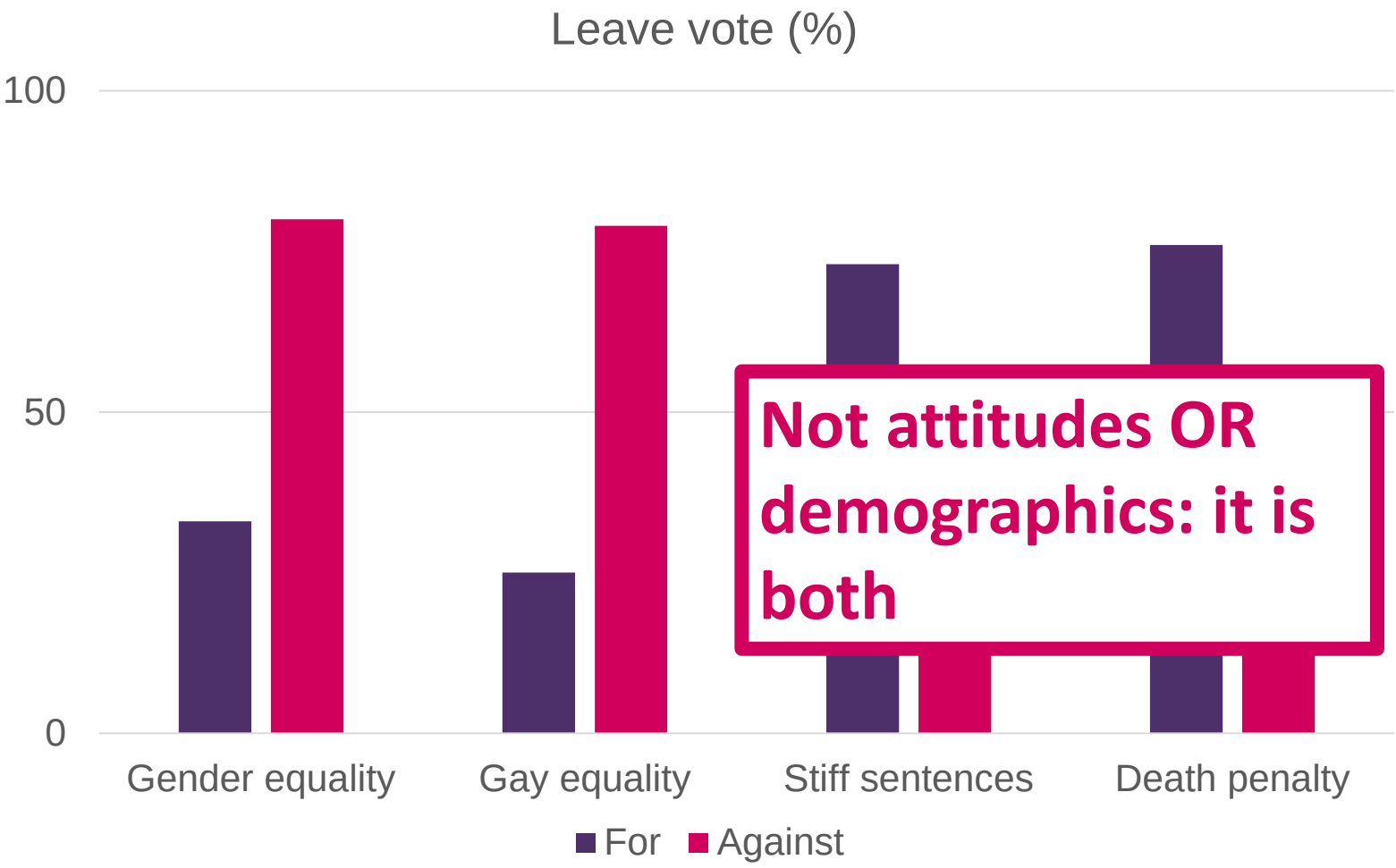
Individual Characteristics	Coefficient (log odds ratio)
Household Income	
£20-39,000	-0.12**
£40-59,000	
£60,000 plus	-0.39***
Education	
A Level	
University Education	
Age	0.02***
Female	-0.03
Ethnic Minority	-0.26**
White Other	-0.56***
Constant	-0.26
N	19,903

Income mattered

Education mattered most

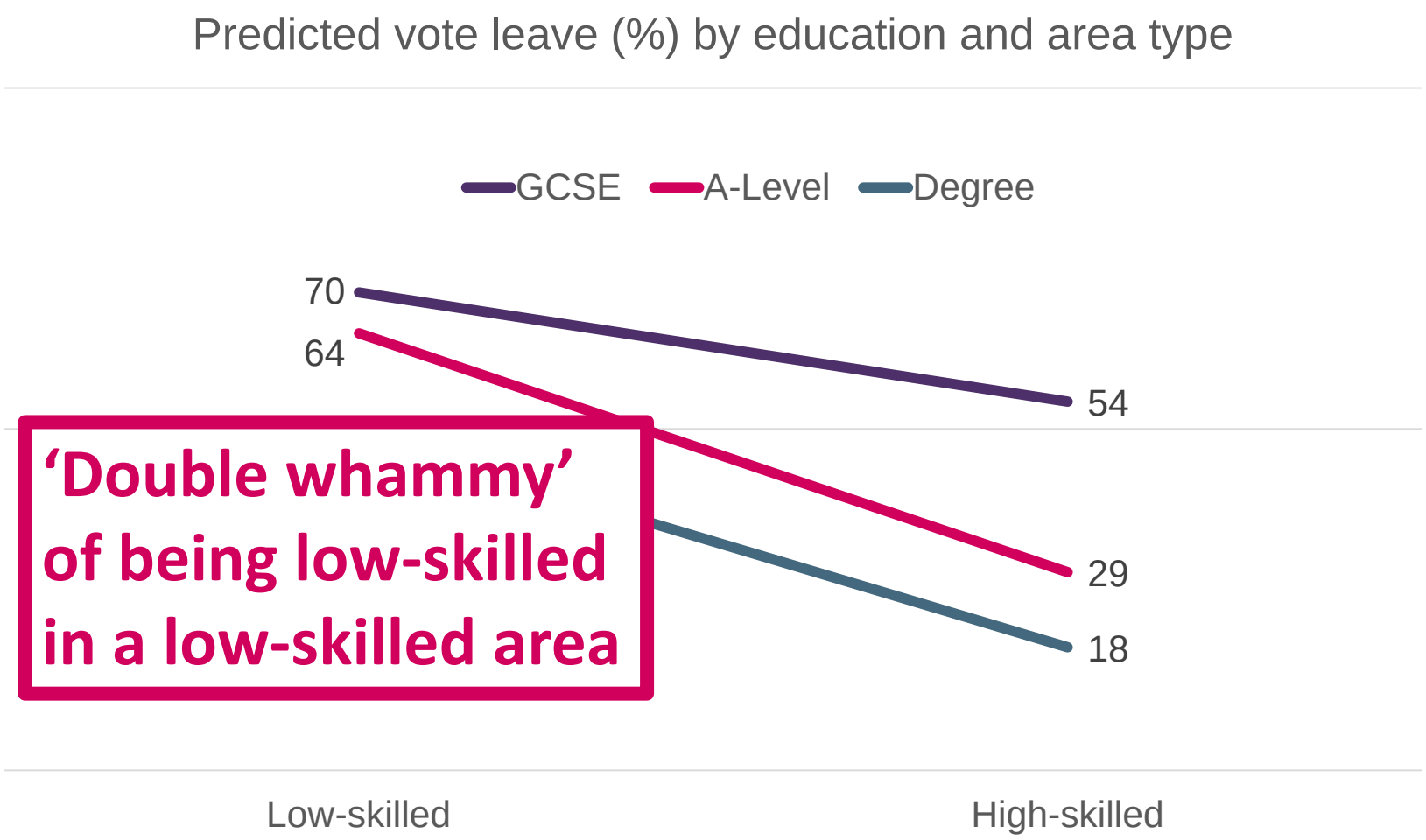
Source: Goodwin and Heath (2016)

Attitudes and values



Source: Goodwin and Heath (2016)

The importance of place



Source: Goodwin and Heath (2016)

Immigration

- Overall, higher migrant share associated with lower leave vote
- Other are characteristics equal, recent influx of migrants associated with higher leave vote (Goodwin and Heath 2016)

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Conclusion

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- Three key findings:
  - Poverty mattered
  - Educational divides mattered more
  - Place mattered: there is a ‘Double whammy’ of being low skilled in a low skilled area

The EU referendum highlights social and economic divides that need to be healed