

New places, new politics: bifurcation in contemporary democracies

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Contemporary democracies are undergoing social and economic changes that are shaping new political attitudes and behaviours. Those changes reflect a dynamic of global economic development that leaves all countries experiencing uneven development and their citizens increasingly split between those who can access high skill jobs and those that cannot. As a result some citizens are living in cosmopolitan areas of growth and others in shrinking areas of decline. This bifurcation of experience and circumstances is already impacting political practice and will further reconfigure politics over the next two decades creating diverse political citizens and a complex array of challenges and dilemmas for governments, political parties, campaigners and political organisers.

To understand the emergence of this new politics it is necessary to do three things. Firstly, the social and economic dynamics that are driving change have to be identified. Crucially there are few grounds for seeing cosmopolitan areas leading a transformation that other areas will follow; the differences between growing and declining areas are likely to be sustained and even accentuate. Secondly, evidence of divergent political attitudes and practices from citizens needs to be sifted. Specifically, shrinking-cosmopolitan dynamics give rise to four types of politics; relating to divergence in (i) attitudes towards aspects of globalisation (e.g. immigration, European institutions), (ii) attitudes on social change, (iii) disaffection towards politics, and (iv) engagement in particular forms of political participation. Cosmopolitan citizens on average are more socially liberal, likely to engage in online and informal political participation, are open to change, immigration and global demands. Citizens in shrinking areas are not. They are more socially conservative, less interested in online and informal engagement and fear change, immigration and global dynamics. Thirdly, the dilemmas of political elites in responding to these new challenges need to be explored but are heightened by the explosion of sentiment against mainstream politics from citizens not only in declining areas but also in cosmopolitan areas too. The extent of “anti-politics” also frames the responses of citizens and the development of new political practices.

A global economic divide: cosmopolitan growth versus shrinking decline

There is a pattern of change that can be seen in contemporary democracies between cities and regions that are booming and creating high skill, high paid jobs and those that are declining and increasingly dominated by low skill, low paid jobs. The pattern of change is uneven but the trend is the same: high skill and low skills jobs are on the increase and routine, middle

ranking jobs are on the decline¹. Drawing together evidence on types of job creation, investment interest and education levels of populations reveals a wider picture of boom and bust. The impact on localities is seen in terms of uneven development. As Richard Florida argues for the United States the ‘economic landscape is being reshaped around two kinds of hubs—centers of knowledge and ideas, and clusters of energy production. Overwhelmingly, these are the places driving the economic recovery. Outside them, the economy remains troubled and weak’². The message is similar for the UK where Jeremy Cliffe argues economic dynamism is located around cosmopolitan cities with London at the core³. However alongside these kinds of cosmopolitan areas are other areas - such as Clacton or Rotherham - that show few signs of economic dynamism or social liberalism. The same observation applies in many other countries and has spawned a research interest in “shrinking” cities and regions. These are ‘towns, cities and entire regions are experiencing the outflow of capital and human resources, and are suffering from a lack of entrepreneurship and low levels of innovation and intellectual engagement’⁴.

Cosmopolitan centres are the gainers in a new system of global production, manufacturing, distribution and consumption that has led to new urban and regional forms made possible by the revolution in logistics and new technologies. These centres are marked by their intellectual assets, cultural strength and the capacity of their infrastructure to attract people, ideas and skills. These global urban centres are highly connected, highly innovative, well-networked, attracting skilled populations, often supported by inward migration, and display the qualities of cosmopolitan urbanism⁵. Simultaneously, other towns, cities and entire regions are experiencing decline or low key growth based on low pay and low skill employment. These shrinking urban locations are the other side of the coin; for them the story is of being left behind as old industries die or as old roles become obsolete, and as successive

¹ Craig Holmes (2014) Why is the Decline of Routine Jobs Across Europe so Uneven? SKOPE, Issues Paper 33 http://www.skope.ox.ac.uk/wordpress/wpcontent/uploads/2014/12/Skope_IssuesPaper33Holmes.pdf

² <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2013/10/the-boom-towns-and-ghost-towns-of-the-new-economy/309460/>

³ <http://www.policy-network.net/publications/4905/Britains-cosmopolitan-future>

⁴ MARTINEZ-FERNANDEZ, C., AUDIRAC, I., FOL, S. and CUNNINGHAM-SABOT, E. (2012), ‘Shrinking Cities: Urban Challenges of Globalization’ *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 36: 213–225. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2427.2011.01092.x

⁵ Brenner, N (1999) ‘Globalisation as Reterritorialisation: The Re-Scaling of Urban Governance in the European Union’ *Urban Studies*, 36:3, 431-451

governments have left them to fend for themselves. Populations may be declining, the skilled workers and the young are leaving in search of opportunity and these places are increasingly disconnected from the dynamic sectors of the economy, as well as the social liberalism of hyper-modern global cities in which the political, economic and media classes plough their furrow.

These developments are not temporary or transitional. Some places will not recover or become part of the boom. The scale of change is such that the processes that are in operation go beyond cyclical explanations of growth and decline, since the entire system of production, distribution and consumption is being restructured, generating new divides that have an air of solidity. The forces that are driving rampant cosmopolitanism are also driving the gradual withering of shrinking conurbations and they are difficult for public policy to direct or control. The result is that urban shrinkage needs to be viewed ‘as a durable, structural component of urban development’⁶.

New spaces, new political dynamics

The changing structures of economies, cities and regions are reshaping and fracturing politics in such a way that creates a major dilemma for political elites in the short- and longer-term: political attitudes and engagement are heading in opposed directions in the two types of area and that divergence creates new dilemmas. Parts of society may not be in the throes of great change but in cosmopolitan areas and shrinking urban arenas a dynamic has been unleashed that is pulling politics in opposite directions and challenging the role of political elites at all levels.

The idea that political outlooks are different in dissimilar geographical locations is hardly new or remarkable. Spatial clustering of political practices and perspectives could be expected for a variety of reasons. The most important factors are probably contextual where through shared experiences and regular interactions people come to see the world through similar lens. It might also be that people self-select into an area they think shares their outlook. The evidence of this point is difficult to assemble but careful studies suggest that self-selection is not made so much on political grounds but rather the processes work through

⁶ MARTINEZ-FERNANDEZ, C., AUDIRAC, I., FOL, S. and CUNNINGHAM-SABOT, E. (2012), ‘Shrinking Cities: Urban Challenges of Globalization’ : 218

the socio-economic standing, employment and parental status of individuals⁷; that is they self-select but on non-political grounds. In short, context and self-selection work together to produce location effects and it is the emerging patterns of contemporary democracies that are a focus of attention here.

The anecdotal evidence suggests that the terms of trade in politics are changing. In the US presidential elections some states are becoming “no-go” areas for the Republicans. Migration patterns are leading to areas where more diverse and ethnically-mixed populations come to dominate, providing a difficult terrain for Republicans. The demographics of economic change are also moving against the Republican Party as blue-collar strongholds are becoming less prominent. Some argue that the Republicans need to find a way of appealing beyond the Tea Party conservatives in order to win a presidential race⁸ but others note how leading populist candidates - for example Donald Trump - are exploiting issues of race and immigration⁹. Or take two contrasting UK locations¹⁰, Cambridge and Clacton, the former an expression of cosmopolitan Britain and the latter an urban area left behind by recent social and economic trends. Cambridge is a high-tech, high wage, with large numbers of immigrants and is an area of liberal and centre-left and green voting strength. Clacton is losing population, dominated by the elderly and largely without an immigrant population yet it is a stronghold of the right-wing and populist UK Independence Party. Cosmopolitan London, Norwich and south Manchester all seem to immune to the appeal of Ukip where it is the declining and decaying north and south of England that the party’s message of anti-immigration and anti-EU stance has a resonance.

In order to explore differences between the politics of cosmopolitan and shrinking areas more systematically we draw on data from the *2014-2015 British Election Study (BES) Internet Panel*, mainly using questions asked in the post-election survey, Wave 6 (some questions

⁷ Aina Gallego, Franz Buscha, Patrick Sturgis and Daniel Oberski (2014) ‘Places and Preferences: A Longitudinal Analysis of Self-Selection and Contextual Effects’. *British Journal of Political Science*, DOI: 10.1017/S0007123414000337

⁸ http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/the-gops-uphill-path-to-270-in-2016/2014/01/18/9404eb06-7fcf-11e3-93c1-0e888170b723_story.html

⁹ http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/with-trumps-rise-hard-line-immigration-ideas-take-hold-in-gop/2015/08/17/85dbbf3e-4506-11e5-846d-02792f854297_story.html

¹⁰ See <http://www.economist.com/blogs/blighty/2014/09/englands-cosmopolitan-future>

asked in earlier waves are used where these are available for the post-election survey). Each wave consists of a sample size of around 30,000 respondents. Using the Press Association constituency number identifiers in the BES data, we are able to identify respondents in two sets of fifty constituencies most closely resembling the geodemographic profiles of Clacton and Cambridge (consisting of around 5,000 respondents of the sample for each wave). We first used the Mosaic geodemographic segmentation classifications to identify the proportion of the population resident in each of the Clacton and Cambridge constituencies classified under each Mosaic type. We then refined these profiles based on the theoretical trajectories of cosmopolitan and shrinking destinations to develop general types, and calculated the top-50 scoring English constituencies across those Mosaic categories. (Full details of development of the classifications and the list of 14 “cosmopolitan” and 10 “shrinking” geodemographic categories is reported in Appendix 1, along with the list of 100 constituencies.) The BES Internet Panel has tracked the political preferences and behaviours of respondents over the period between February 2014 and May 2015, and provides a range of measures regarding social attitudes, engagement in different modes of political participation, trust in politics and satisfaction with democracy, as well as providing a demographic data about respondents.

Dimensions of Difference: Immigration, Europe and Social Change

Differences in the demographics and social and economic circumstances of the populations of cosmopolitan and shrinking areas would suggest that their residents might display substantial disparities in their social and political outlook. The survey evidence from the BES confirms that expectation. The two groups differ in their attitudes on the issue of immigration and on Europe. Descriptive statistics of responses for shrinking and cosmopolitan areas are presented in Table 1. As expected, cosmopolitans tend to have a more positive outlook on both fronts. In shrinking areas 45 percent of respondents believe that immigration is bad for the economy and 52 percent that immigration undermines cultural life in Britain; whereas the figures for cosmopolitan areas are 29 and 38 percent respectively. T-tests of the differences between the means of the two samples (controlling for survey weights) confirm that these are statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level. While residents in both types of urban context express high levels of dissatisfaction with EU democracy, the proportion in shrinking areas (82 percent) is still significantly higher than that for cosmopolitan areas (76 percent). The overall size of the gap between shrinking and cosmopolitan opinion is modest in absolute terms (and never exceeds 16 percent in Table 1), but the differences are systematic and of

importance. Cosmopolitans display a more outward-looking perspective on forces and institutions of the global economy (i.e. immigration and the EU), whereas residents of shrinking communities tend to be more negative about them.

Table 1: Political attitudes in Cosmopolitan and Shrinking settings¹¹

Attitudes	Cosmopolitan (%)	Shrinking (%)	T-Test
<i>Immigration/Europe</i>			
Immigration bad for the economy [W4]	29	45	81.13**
Immigration undermines cultural life [W4]	38	52	59.54**
Would vote to leave the EU	35	50	52.26**
Dissatisfied with EU democracy	76	82	8.19**
<i>Social Change</i>			
Equal opportunities for minorities gone too far [W1]	34	47	47.42**
Equal opportunities for women gone too far [W1]	13	13	0.07
Equal opportunities for gays and lesbians gone too far [W1]	25	36	33.54**

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$ (Note: Wave 1, N=4,775; Wave 4, N=5,106, Wave 6, N=4,862)

NB: Responses in all tables from Wave 6 unless specified otherwise

The pattern of divergence between cosmopolitan residents and residents of shrinking areas is also evident on issues of social equality with cosmopolitan populations more comfortable with attempts to give equal opportunities to ethnic minorities and gays and lesbians. In shrinking areas, 45 percent of people think these have gone “too far” for ethnic minorities, compared to 32 percent for the residents of cosmopolitan areas. Similarly, 34 percent of the respondents from shrinking areas think that attempts to give equal opportunities to gays and lesbians have gone too far, compared to 25 percent of cosmopolitans. Shrinking areas thus are more resistant to social change and trends of greater social liberalism, whereas cosmopolitan areas are more supportive of equal opportunities – specifically those relating to ethnicity and sexuality. This finding in part reflects the contrasting social contexts of these two types of places, but also hints at the sorts of politics that they might produce.

¹¹ Survey questions from the BES are taken from the post-election survey (Wave 6), unless indicated otherwise in the tables.

Political Participation

The survey evidence also suggests that citizens in cosmopolitan and shrinking areas engage in politics in distinctive ways. Table 2 reports the proportion of respondents indicating that they have participated in particular forms of expressive or instrumental political action. This evidence reveals – as might be expected – modest commitment to participating in politics beyond the formal act of voting among citizens in both types of area. These repertoires of participation reveal rather higher levels of mobilisation among people in cosmopolitan settings across a range of traditional offline methods (such as having done work on behalf of a political party or action group, having donated to a political party, organization or cause, having taken part in a demonstration and boycotted or purchased products for political or ethical reasons). This perhaps reflects the higher level of social and economic resources available to citizens from cosmopolitan areas, making them more likely to engage in different forms of political action. Overall the pattern of participation matches that long found in audits of political engagement¹² where low cost activities such as signing a petition or boycotting a good/service figure strongly. There are, however, some differences in levels of engagement in political activity that takes place online. In cosmopolitan areas 41 percent of respondents had signed a petition on the Internet within the past 12 months, compared to 36 percent for those from shrinking areas (with the T-test again indicating this is a significant difference). Similarly, cosmopolitans were more likely to have shared political content on Facebook or Twitter (as measured in the pre-election survey wave), and spent more time per day following news, politics or current affairs on the Internet for an hour or more compared to their counterparts in shrinking locales. Our findings therefore suggest that the cosmopolitan-shrinking schism extends to political engagement as well as social attitudes, and applies to both traditional and digital modes of political action. The potential long-term impacts of such a divide are further discussed later in the paper.

¹² <http://www.hansardsociety.org.uk/research/public-attitudes/audit-of-political-engagement/>

Table 2: Repertoires of Participation

Actions undertaken in last 12 months	Cosmopolitan (%)	Shrinking (%)	T-Test
<i>Traditional/Offline</i>			
Contacted politician, government, local government official	19	18	0.72
Signed petition (not on Internet)	9	9	0.03
Done work on behalf of political party or action group	8	5	6.18*
Donated to a political party, organization or cause	12	8	10.40**
Taken part in a demonstration	4	2	14.73**
Boycotted/purchased products for political/ethical reasons	19	13	20.48**
Gone on strike or taken industrial action	3	1	19.01**
<i>Online</i>			
Signed petition on Internet [W5]	41	36	5.47*
During last 4 weeks posted or shared any political content online			
Shared political content on Facebook [W5]	15	11	3.69+
Shared political content on Twitter [W5]	21	16	3.04+
Shared political content on e-mail [W5]	4	2	8.04**
Shared political content via instant messaging [W5]	2	1	0.84
During last seven days, time spent <i>per day</i> following news/politics/current affairs on the Internet (1 hour or more)	38	26	33.11**

+ $p < 0.1$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$ (Note: Wave 5, N=4,980, Wave 6, N=4,862)

Political Disaffection

Citizens in cosmopolitan and shrinking places tend to hold contrasting views about trends of social change and are developing their own distinctive repertoires of political engagement. Despite this, both sets of citizens are very doubtful about the politics that is currently on offer. As Table 3 indicates, widespread disaffection towards politics and politicians is common in both settings. A majority of both shrinking and cosmopolitan populations think

that politicians “only care about people with money” and “don’t care what people like me think”. Substantial numbers are dissatisfied with UK democracy and English democracy, with interestingly more cosmopolitans expressing dissatisfaction with English democracy than their counterparts in shrinking areas (this may reflect a slight effect of English nationalism in shrinking settings). There are considerable levels of distrust in MPs in general too (with 44 percent of people in cosmopolitan areas indicating little or no trust, and 47 percent of people in shrinking areas, and this difference being weakly significant). Both groups have little trust in politicians and feel that politicians don't care about them. Whereas it might be assumed that populations of declining areas have greater scope for disappointment with national and global elites, the patterns we observe are remarkably consistent across urban settings. While the status of shrinking “left behind” localities is used¹³ to explain their distrust of mainstream politics and their openness to various forms of populist challenge, we do not see distinctive expressions of anti-political sentiment. This finding leaves the question of what might be driving the negativity of cosmopolitan residents. It is possible to suggest that the answer is more likely to lie in the processes of politics rather than its failure to deliver. The evidence in Table 3 suggests it is the behaviour of politicians and conduct of politics that is the problem.

Table 3: Attitudes towards Politics and Politicians

Agreement with statement:	Cosmopolitan (%)	Shrinking (%)	T-Test
It doesn't matter which party is in power	14	15	1.06
Distrust in MPs	44	47	3.28+
Politicians only care about people with money [W4]	56	57	0.30
Politicians don't care what people like me think	53	55	1.51
Dissatisfied with UK democracy	49	46	1.94
Dissatisfied with English democracy	53	48	5.47*

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$ (Note: Wave 4, N=5,106, Wave 6, N=4,862)

¹³ R. Ford and M. Goodwin (2014) *Revolt on the Right* (London: Routledge)

Modelling Social and Political Attitudes in Cosmopolitan and Shrinking Contexts

The analysis to this point has highlighted differences between the attitudes and behaviours of citizens in cosmopolitan and shrinking areas. It is possible, however, that these differences are simply a product of demographic factors predicting attitudes and behaviour that are just as relevant elsewhere as reflect the composition of the local population alone. Even if this were the case, the pattern we observe would be important in revealing variation in the outlook and practice of politics in different places. But it is possible that citizens who live in cosmopolitan or shrinking areas might be significantly different from people with the same demographic profile who live elsewhere. Because the BES offers us a nationally representative sample, we are able to test standard demographic predictors of social and political attitudes alongside the effect of residing in either a shrinking or a cosmopolitan area. In the analysis that follows we do this in turn for social attitudes on (1) equal opportunities, (2) the EU, and (3) immigration.

Table 4 presents results for an ordinal logistic regression model of responses to the question asked in the BES (Wave 1) about whether equal opportunities have gone too far for ethnic minorities, women and gays and lesbians. (The possible response categories are “Not gone nearly far enough”, “Not gone far enough”, “About right”, “Gone too far” and “Gone much too far”, hence the use of ordinal logistic regression, with odds ratios reported instead of log odds.) We also estimate an ordinal logistic regression for the cumulative index of responses for the three survey items. The findings from the combined index suggest that in general it is younger, more educated, low income, female respondents living in cosmopolitan areas that tend to be more comfortable with social change. In contrast, the respondents from shrinking areas are more likely to think that efforts to give equal opportunities to certain groups have gone too far. Inspection of the models for attitudes towards each social group offers some interesting insights that merit discussion, in particular where the effects are in the opposite direction to the combined index. Notably, once education, gender, social class, distrust of politicians, household income and cosmopolitan context are controlled for, younger people are more likely to say equal opportunities for women have gone too far. The expression of distrust of politicians is associated with greater odds of believing that equal opportunities for ethnic minorities have gone too far, but reduced odds in relation to opportunities for women. Working class respondents are more likely to be resistant to equality for ethnic minorities, but more supportive of equality for women. Most of the effects are consistent with what would be expected concerning demographic predictors of social attitudes. What is notable is that the analyses show that the residents of cosmopolitan areas are consistently more socially liberal

in their attitudes on equal opportunities. Even after controlling for individual-level factors the effects of place on attitudes about social change remain.

Table 4: Concern about equal opportunities gone “too far”, ordinal logistic regression (odds ratios)

	Ethnic minorities	Gender	Gays and lesbians	Combined index
Age: 18-34	0.666 (0.042)**	1.170 (0.072)*	0.389 (0.023)**	0.590 (0.031)**
Education: Degree	0.587 (0.024)**	0.797 (0.032)**	0.732 (0.029)**	0.730 (0.027)**
Ethnicity: white	2.091 (0.187)**	1.062 (0.093)	0.940 (0.083)	1.274 (0.096)**
Gender: male	1.164 (0.043)**	1.950 (0.073)**	1.642 (0.061)**	1.750 (0.060)**
Social class: C2DE	1.129 (0.053)**	0.871 (0.039)**	0.943 (0.045)	0.922 (0.039)+
Household income: <£20,000	0.883 (0.041)**	0.797 (0.037)**	0.889 (0.041)*	0.829 (0.034)**
Shrinking	1.101 (0.067)	1.086 (0.066)	1.217 (0.073)**	1.194 (0.067)**
Cosmopolitan	0.793 (0.060)**	0.791 (0.055)**	0.711 (0.049)**	0.753 (0.049)**
Distrust of MPs	1.226 (0.045)**	0.881 (0.033)**	0.951 (0.035)	0.962 (0.033)
N	18,147	18,580	18,170	19,137
Pseudo R-squared	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.01

+ $p < 0.1$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$ (Note: cut-points of the ordinal logistic regression models are not reported.)

A very similar analysis can be offered in relation to dissatisfaction with the functioning of EU democracy and support for voting to leave the EU. This is reported in Table 5. The findings show that dissatisfaction with EU democracy (on a scale from “Very satisfied”, “Satisfied”, “Dissatisfied” to “Very dissatisfied”) and support for leaving the EU are strongly predicted by a similar set of demographic predictors. Older, less educated, white respondents who are distrustful of MPs and live in shrinking areas are both dissatisfied with EU democracy and would vote to leave the EU in a referendum. One point of difference is that men are more likely to be dissatisfied with EU democracy but less likely to vote for Britain to leave the EU. While citizens in cosmopolitan areas do not differ significantly from the general public, it is the population of shrinking areas that are substantially disillusioned with EU institutions and membership.

Table 5: Dissatisfaction with EU democracy and would vote to leave EU, ordinal logistic regression (odds ratios)

	Dissatisfied with EU Democracy	Would vote to leave EU in referendum
Age: 18-34	0.525 (0.033)**	0.580 (0.046)**
Education: Degree	0.824 (0.035)**	0.463 (0.022)**
Ethnicity: white	1.702 (0.159)**	1.307 (0.127)**
Gender: male	1.345 (0.054)**	0.813 (0.036)**
Social class: C2DE	1.050 (0.054)	1.352 (0.076)**
Household income: <£20,000	1.081 (0.057)	1.218 (0.068)**
Shrinking	1.255 (0.086)**	1.226 (0.094)**
Cosmopolitan	1.073 (0.093)	0.980 (0.091)
Distrust of MPs	1.800 (0.072)**	1.339 (0.060)**
N	17,221	16,302
Pseudo R-squared	0.03	0.06

+ $p < 0.1$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$ (Note: cut-points of the ordinal logistic regression models are not reported.)

Demographic and cosmopolitan-shrinking predictors of social attitudes on immigration are summarised in Table 6. Similarly as for attitudes on Europe, older, less educated, white, working class people are more likely to express negative attitudes on the economic and cultural impacts of immigration. Political distrust is also a significant predictor of concern about immigration. In contrast, residing in a cosmopolitan area substantially reduced the odds of people viewing immigration as being bad for the economy. Interestingly, the effect of residing in a shrinking urban area is not significant once other demographic factors have been controlled for.

Table 6: Attitudes on immigration, ordinal logistic regression (odds ratios)

	Immigration bad for the economy	Immigration undermines cultural life
Age: 18-34	0.641 (0.037)**	0.666 (0.038)**
Education: Degree	0.471 (0.018)**	0.507 (0.019)**
Ethnicity: white	2.463 (0.197)**	2.274 (0.177)**
Gender: male	0.744 (0.026)**	0.983 (0.035)
Social class: C2DE	1.355 (0.064)**	1.277 (0.058)**
Household income: <£20,000	1.044 (0.048)	1.020 (0.046)
Shrinking	1.037 (0.063)	1.067 (0.064)
Cosmopolitan	0.772 (0.059)**	0.899 (0.070)
Distrust of MPs	1.530 (0.054)**	1.396 (0.050)**
N	16,893	17,038
Pseudo R-squared	0.03	0.02

+ $p < 0.1$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$ (Note: cut-points of the ordinal logistic regression models are not reported.)

In further analyses, reported in Appendix 2, we confirmed that the impact of place is strongest on these social and political attitudes. In terms of engaging in both offline and online repertoires of political participation, levels of education, social class, and age tended to be the most substantial predictor, whereas effects of living in shrinking or cosmopolitan areas tended to be weak, although citizens from shrinking areas are less likely to spend time following politics on the Internet (see Table A3 in Appendix 2). A further difference is observed between engagement in “formal” (i.e. canvassing, donating, or contacting officials) and “informal” (i.e. boycotting goods/services, going on demonstrations), where cosmopolitans are more likely to use new, post-materialist forms of political expression. Distrust of MPs in general was also associated with a greater likelihood of engaging in informal repertoires of participation, whereas it reduced uptake of offline and formal activities, such as donating or volunteering to a political party or cause. The cosmopolitan-shrinking divide is thus manifested in subtle ways in favoured modes of political participation.

In Table 3 we saw little difference in the views of citizens in shrinking and cosmopolitan areas regarding the trustworthiness and conduct of politicians and the performance of the political system. Further analysis (see Table A4 in Appendix 2) suggests, however, that once household income, social class and education are controlled for, the citizens of cosmopolitan areas tend to be more positive in their views of the practice of politics

In summary, our analysis of survey data from the BES Internet Panel pre- and post-election surveys reveals powerful and significant impacts driven by the divide between cosmopolitan and shrinking areas. Even after standard demographic factors are accounted for it appears that those living in shrinking and cosmopolitan areas hold distinctive views and are on different political trajectories. Cosmopolitan residents are more open to social equalities and change, more supportive of membership of the EU, and more positive about both the economic and cultural impacts of immigration than people in shrinking areas and the general population. Citizens in shrinking areas in contrast are more inclined to feel that moves to give equal opportunities to certain social groups have gone too far and are strongly more disapproving of membership of the EU than cosmopolitans or the general population. The differences in terms of the repertoire of political engagement are more subtle. Most citizens of cosmopolitan and shrinking areas are unsurprisingly not political activists but when they do engage the residents of cosmopolitan areas appear more inclined to engage online and in more informal ways. The dynamics of global urban change are creating citizens who are marching to different tunes and in near polar opposite directions except in their shared negativity towards politics and the political system.

Discussion: Emerging political practices

New political citizens?

Changing patterns of location could be a source of new political practices but the choices open to citizens are still contingent on their values and preferences. Neither shrinking areas nor cosmopolitan areas will necessarily produce one type of new political outlook and practice among its residents, even among those who are exemplars of the differences between the areas. In that sense we would not assume that the “left behind army”¹⁴ of the low-skilled and low-educated in shrinking areas are inherently the natural voting fodder for right-wing populism. There could be a base there for a more left-wing populism. The strong emergence

¹⁴ Ford and Goodwin ‘Revolt on the Right’: 271

of left- and right-wing populism is a feature identified as part of the landscape in many contemporary democracies¹⁵. Equally although cosmopolitan citizens might be put into the camp of emerging critical citizens¹⁶ -educated, challenging to authority- reflecting the long-term trend of the rise of post-materialist values in advanced democracies we would also be keen to emphasise the potential heterogeneity of that group. Some will become standard-bearers for “oppositionalist” politics using the Internet and short-lived political movements to express their concerns on a range of issues of identity and culture that matter to them as well as broader moral stances of social and economic issues. These political actors may be unwilling to tie themselves to any political party or if they do may treat the party as part of a movement rather than with great institutional loyalty. Others may mix social liberalism but with a preference for mainstream economic management and find themselves backers of centre-oriented parties of right or left.

What evidence suggests at least in terms of the repertoire of participation is that many citizens in either cosmopolitan or shrinking locations will be relatively inactive when it comes to political actions beyond voting. That is not to say that they will be apathetic or non-participants. Following the work of Ekman and Amna¹⁷ it becomes possible to look beyond manifest participation and non-participation towards latent or “standby” participation where citizens are ready to engage even if not regularly doing so. They engage in a range of activities that might be called pre-political but could become political. They might express interest in politics and claim some knowledge of it. They may be active in their community in non-political organisations and will follow current affairs and talk about issues with family and friends or on the internet.

A difficult issue is to judge the impact of the repertoire of political participation associated with cosmopolitan areas. Will this make standby politics mixed with manifest participation more prevalent still as the cycle of dipping in and out of politics becomes easier and more effective in the world of internet based engagement? The higher levels of engagement using online tools in cosmopolitan areas tend to reflect demographic differences (and use of technology) rather than a more substantial change of political style (at least as far as our analyses enable us to discern). Old power is hoarded by the few, structured and ordered and

¹⁵ Cas Mudde <https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/cas-mudde/populism-in-europe-primer>

¹⁶ Norris, P (ed) (1999) *Critical Citizens* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)

¹⁷ Joakim Ekman and Erik Amna.2012.Political participation and Civic Engagement :Towards a New Typology *Human Affairs* 22, 283-300

leader-driven. It is an established model of political organising for parties, interest groups and campaigns. But new power is more open, participatory, and peer-driven. Above all it is about sharing power among the collective and it surges as spreads as it expands. New power finds expression in the online campaigns and protests that can be observed in cosmopolitan areas. The practice of politics becomes more fluid so ‘while people with a new power mindset are quick to join or share (and thanks to new power models, “joining” is easier than ever), they are reluctant to swear allegiance’¹⁸.

Challenges for national and global elites

The challenge for mainstream political elites is to respond to changes in the economy and society but that response is made harder by the anti-political sentiment expressed by the populations of both cosmopolitan and shrinking area. Yet the most common response from political elites and their advisors is we can adapt and survive. In this view the aim of the “smart” leader is to get the positioning and triangulation right by ‘embracing changes that are, by and large, good for the country without alienating or abandoning those who feel shut out by or hostile to them’¹⁹. Here the electoral strategy would be a variation of a long-established political practice: pitching policies aimed at both sets of voters. So right-of-centre parties will need to make sure they reach out to ethnic minorities and not pander too much to the fears about immigration expressed in shrinking areas, although they will need to address some those issues of concern about the impact of immigration. Left-leaning parties will need not to take their traditional support in shrinking areas for granted and work hard at mobilising the young cosmopolitan vote to their cause. All parties need to take on board the emerging strength of cosmopolitan areas and pitch themselves in a way that recognises the liberal, progressive outlook of many citizens in those areas but also adapt to the different style of doing politics.

Policy measures might be targeted at individuals (for example better education and training for those in shrinking areas) or place-based (for example giving priority to the environmental quality of life in areas left behind by the dynamic of urban development). Neither of these

¹⁸ Jeremy Heimans and Henry Timms, ‘Understanding New Power’ Harvard Business Review (December, 2014) <https://hbr.org/2014/12/understanding-new-power>

¹⁹ Cliffe, J (2015) *Britain’s Cosmopolitan Future. How the country is changing and why its politicians must respond*, London: Policy Network <http://www.policy-network.net/publications/4905/Britains-cosmopolitan-future>

measures is easy to deliver. People-focused policies may be difficult to resource both in terms of the finances required and in terms of getting the human resources (the skilled or professional support staff) in the right locations. Place-oriented strategies that mean giving up on growth and accepting decline are not easy policy options to sell. For growth-oriented cosmopolitan areas the most likely policy prescription is some greater degree of devolved power to these areas so that civic leaders and citizen organisations can adapt their new power capacity – flexible strategies and mobilisation – to the demands of old power of formal constitutional prerogatives and responsibilities. Again there are likely to be some dilemmas in terms of the degree of autonomy and the issue of redistribution of the wealth created in growing areas and their ongoing relationship with “left behind” areas.

There are other reasons for doubting that the bifurcation of politics between shrinking and cosmopolitan locations will involve only a modest shift in the behaviour and outlook of political elites. The first as already noted is that the divide between shrinking and cosmopolitan areas is unlikely to be resolved by shrinking areas catching up given the sustained and powerful nature of the global forces that are driving change. There is a material base to the concerns of different types of citizens about the direction of politics that is likely to be sustained for a number of decades, and may even accelerate. Winners and losers are being created by the dynamics of emerging shrinking and cosmopolitan areas and smarter, better politics by mainstream parties or other political actors cannot necessarily address that fundamental divide.

A second factor, as already demonstrated in Table 3, is that neither declining nor growing areas appear to have citizens who particularly trust politics. Voters are therefore alert to political games and from all sides view them with disdain. They are especially on the lookout for authenticity in politics. You cannot be against immigration and then expect those who live in economies that thrive on it to rush to vote for you. Equally for a mainstream party to trim on issues such as immigration ‘is a losing strategy as the votes that are potentially won by shifting closer to the populist position are balanced by those lost from more moderate voters, alienated by a move from the centre’²⁰. In addition anti-political sentiment makes mainstream

²⁰ Chwalisz, C (2015) *The Populist Signal*, London: Policy Network : 9. Available at <http://www.policy-network.net/publications/4918/The-Populist-Signal>

parties more vulnerable to sustained populist challenge. The evidence ²¹ we have thus far is that populists whether sharing power or effectively excluded from office retain their radical and distinctive policy positions and although larger mainstream parties can steal some of their policy positions they cannot move too far for fear of alienating other voters. Once a populist, always a populist; there is no point moving to the middle ground and if you do someone will take your place. Populism has a material base and although it may change its institutional expression it is unlikely to disappear as the material base remains and the political logic is always for some party or campaign group to attempt to represent themselves as carriers on those concerns.

A third reason for stressing the sustained challenge of new cleavages is that the increasingly fragmented and volatile issue agenda of national politics is driven in part by dynamics that are accentuating the divide between cosmopolitan and shrinking areas, leaving policy-makers with an increasing number of issues on which there is no middle ground. For example, higher levels of education are associated with a more diverse and unstable public agenda while the rise of post-materialist issues like the environment and niche issues such as immigration have displaced the traditional dominance of the economy, defence and foreign affairs as the focus of public concern. Yet the capacity of government to deal with issues has not increased at the same pace leaving pressure on the political agenda leading to more rapid turnover and reinforcing pressures towards greater volatility²².

A final challenge for national political elites is the mismatch between the complex and conflicting demands they face from their voters and the assumptions and worldview of the emerging global elite of economic and political actors with which they have to engage. Any national or regional political party or political organisation that wants to be part of the global elite (the Davos crowd) and the international worldview of the future will find it hard to appeal to left behind groups or be able to stand on populist anti-elite slogans. A national or urban political actor cannot situate themselves and their country as part of the modern economy and new global order and be seen to pander too much to the left behind places and

²¹ Akkerman, T and Rooduijn, M (2014) 'Pariahs or Partners? Inclusion and Exclusion of Radical Right Parties and the Effects on Their Policy Positions' *Political Studies* doi: 10.1111/1467-9248.121

²² A trend first identified by McCombs, M and Zhu, J-H (1995) 'Capacity, Diversity and Volatility of the public agenda: Trends from 1954 to 1994' *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 59(4): 495-525 doi:10.1086/269491

citizens. Yet to ignore those interests may dent their legitimacy and electoral standing of national leaders and so undermine their value to global actors. Global actors despite their own cosmopolitan outlook will find their vision challenged by these left behind communities and it is far from clear that those that live and work in cosmopolitan communities are strong supporters of the broadly neo-liberal world view that appears to emanate from global elites. The BES survey data examined here suggests that their political world view is more complex than that. A dynamic of polar change at the very least is likely to lead to a critical questioning of existing national political formulas and the solutions offered by global economic elites.

Conclusions

The new context of politics is of a bifurcated world. Politics is situated locally but also globally and the forces of change are being shaped by a divide between shrinking and growing cosmopolitan areas. New patterns of politics are emerging as a result. Citizens are poles apart in these two types of area in terms of their attitudes to the economic and social landscape. Cosmopolitan citizens on average are more socially liberal; open to change, and more positive about the impact immigration and global demands. Citizens in shrinking areas are more socially conservative and fear change, immigration and global dynamics. Weaker but still relevant differences in political repertoires and styles also exist with cosmopolitan citizens more inclined to engage and when they do more inclined to engage intermittently using online or more informal methods compared to the residents of shrinking locations. Both groups represent potentially powerful if substantially contradictory challenges to mainstream politics. A factor heightened in its impact because both groups have little trust in mainstream politics.

Political elites may argue they can adapt and survive as they have in the past to new political demands. The policy agenda can be twisted to meet diverse demands, they might argue. But citizens are alert for signs of lack of authenticity so there may be extreme limits to the capacity to offer contradictory policy positions. Tokenistic power-sharing is also likely to have limited impact. The institutional solutions so far trialled by political elites are based on engaging with citizens in new and different ways. Political parties are offering multi-speed memberships stretching beyond the traditional full form to trial periods, through supporter or funder roles to various types of cyber or Internet engagement.²³ Governments at local,

²³ Scarrow, S (2013) 'Beyond Party Membership: Expanding Views of Partisan Participation'

regional, national and supranational levels are experimenting with democratic innovations and new forms of political participation.²⁴ One issue is that most of these practices are tacked on to existing sets of political institutions, formulas and standard operating procedures that have not substantially changed. They provide window dressing to a political practice that remains fundamentally the same. Another issue is that the media often appear happy to play the role of defender of the traditional in politics and are sceptical about any new practices, making the task for would be reformers all the more challenging. The scale of the social, economic and culture changes outlined in our analysis suggests that more fundamental shifts in political practice by mainstream actors will be required.

The dynamics of the cosmopolitan versus shrinking fission will vary depending of the economic location, institutional inheritance and cultural characteristics of different countries and regions. It will be tempered by the large number of citizens that are not at the polar edges of the attitudinal cosmopolitan/shrinking political divide we identify. But it is far from clear that national political elites and actors will be able to rise to the challenge of the new economic and political context. The public disdain for their actions from both sides of the geo-economic divide limits their scope for action. The new fracturing of politics may be setting an agenda and a dynamic of political participation that creates irresolvable dilemmas for national leaders and a more uncomfortable policy environment for global elites.

APPENDIX 1

Constructing the shrinking-cosmopolitan scheme

We used Mosaic geodemographic segmentation classifications to first identify characteristics of each of the Cambridge and Clacton constituencies. This provided an estimate of the proportion of the populations of each constituency that was classified under each Mosaic type (e.g. ‘Creative professionals seeking involvement in local communities’, ‘Low income communities reliant on low skill industrial jobs’). Total proportions of Mosaic types can be useful in indicating the composition of the local population. While they do not account for the fact that some geodemographic groups tend to be less prevalent in absolute terms, they provide important information on the relative composition of communities compared to other places. We therefore then identified those types consistent with theoretical trajectories of cosmopolitan and shrinking destinations, both in their absolute composition and their composition compared to each other. This meant that we did not just select all Mosaic categories that registered the highest absolute proportions for Cambridge-Clacton, and also included some categories based on relative difference (between small proportions). This was an iterative process which enabled us to refine the scheme so that it effectively mapped onto our theoretical argument. The full list of the 14 cosmopolitan and 10 shrinking geodemographic types is reported in Table A1. Having generated this list we then calculated the top-50 scoring English constituencies across those categories. These types corresponded to 55 per cent of the population of the Cosmopolitan constituencies and 58 per cent of the shrinking constituencies. (Given that these categories amount to not more than 20 per cent of the full range of 69 possible types, this indicates a distinct group of characteristics that dominate these places).²⁵ The list of cosmopolitan and shrinking constituencies is reported in Table A2.

²⁵ There are more inductive methods of sampling (such as clustering methods) which might have been used to identify particular constituency types, but our approach is directly aligned with our theoretical argument.

Table A1: Mosaic Types in Cosmopolitan and Shrinking Parliamentary Constituencies

<i>Mosaic ID</i>	<i>Descriptor</i>
<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	
C10	Wealthy families in substantial houses with little community involvement
C11	Creative professionals seeking involvement in local communities
C12	Residents in smart city centre flats who make little use of public services
E17	Comfortably off suburban families weakly tied to their local community
F22	Busy executives in town houses in dormitory settlements
G26	Well educated singles living in purpose built flats
G27	City dwellers owning houses in older neighbourhoods
G28	Singles and sharers occupying converted Victorian houses
G29	Young professional families settling in better quality older terraces
G30	Diverse communities of well-educated singles living in smart, small flats
G31	Owners in smart purpose built flats in prestige locations, many newly built
G32	Students and other transient singles in multi-let houses
G34	Students involved in college and university communities
H36	Young singles and sharers renting small purpose built flats
<i>Shrinking</i>	
B6	Self-employed trades people living in smaller communities
B7	Empty nester owner occupiers making little use of public services
B8	Mixed communities with many single people in the centres of small towns
J45	Low income communities reliant on low skill industrial jobs
K51	Often indebted families living in low rise estates
L53	Residents in retirement, second home and tourist communities
L54	Retired people of modest means commonly living in seaside bungalows
M56	Older people living on social housing estates with limited budgets
M58	Less mobile older people requiring a degree of care
N61	Childless tenants in social housing flats with modest social needs

Table A2: List of constituencies sampled from the cosmopolitan/shrinking profiles

Rank	Constituencies – Clactons	Constituencies - Cambridges
1	<i>Clacton</i>	Cities of London and Westminster
2	Norfolk North	Chelsea and Fulham
3	Isle of Wight	Wimbledon
4	Totnes	Kensington
5	Louth and Horncastle	Richmond Park
6	St Austell and Newquay	Ealing Central and Acton
7	Norfolk North West	Twickenham
8	Suffolk Coastal	Hampstead and Kilburn
9	New Forest West	Finchley and Golders Green
10	Norfolk South West	Putney
11	St Ives	Battersea
12	Bexhill and Battle	Westminster North
13	Dorset West	Hammersmith
14	Thanet North	Enfield Southgate
15	Tiverton and Honiton	Bristol West
16	Christchurch	Kingston and Surbiton
17	Cambridgeshire North East	Brentford and Isleworth
18	South Holland and The Deepings	Tooting
19	Camborne and Redruth	Chipping Barnet
20	Norfolk Mid	Sutton and Cheam
21	Cornwall South East	Brighton Pavilion
22	Broadland	Manchester Withington
23	Great Yarmouth	Hornsey and Wood Green
24	Bognor Regis and Littlehampton	Holborn and St Pancras
25	Cornwall North	Beckenham
26	Bridgwater and Somerset West	Islington South and Finsbury
27	Boston and Skegness	Harrow West
28	Devon East	<i>Cambridge</i>
29	Waveney	Hove
30	Yorkshire East	Poplar and Limehouse
31	Lewes	Reading East
32	Devon North	Sheffield Central
33	Devon West and Torridge	Dulwich and West Norwood
34	Dorset South	Watford
35	Norfolk South	Islington North
36	Newton Abbot	Hendon
37	Folkestone and Hythe	St Albans
38	Dover	Bermondsey and Old Southwark
39	Thanet South	Brent North
40	Havant	Bath
41	Harwich and Essex North	Esher and Walton
42	Suffolk South	Lewisham West and Penge
43	Eastbourne	Streatham
44	Yeovil	Chingford and Woodford Green
45	Brigg and Goole	Bromley and Chislehurst
46	Berwick-upon-Tweed	Guildford
47	Scarborough and Whitby	Carshalton and Wallington
48	Wells	Ilford North
49	Hastings and Rye	Harrow East
50	Sleaford and North Hykeham	Vauxhall

Note: Welsh and Scottish constituencies excluded from the sampling exercise.

APPENDIX 2

Table A3: Attitudes on politics and politicians, ordinal logistic regression (odds ratios)

	Distrust of MPs in general	Politicians don't care what people like me think	Politicians only care about the rich	Dissatisfied with UK democracy
Age: 18-34	1.232 (0.060)**	1.012 (0.057)	1.141 (0.068)*	0.841 (0.049)**
Education: Degree	0.831 (0.030)**	0.786 (0.029)**	0.764 (0.030)**	0.813 (0.032)**
Ethnicity: white	0.954 (0.070)	0.848 (0.069)*	0.689 (0.056)**	1.060 (0.097)
Gender: male	0.951 (0.032)	1.001 (0.036)	0.882 (0.032)**	0.898 (0.033)**
Social class: C2DE	1.259 (0.056)**	1.394 (0.061)**	1.570 (0.071)**	0.896 (0.041)*
Household income: <£20,000	1.208 (0.054)**	1.442 (0.066)**	1.540 (0.071)**	0.700 (0.035)**
Shrinking	1.009 (0.057)	0.962 (0.059)	0.937 (0.056)	0.985 (0.058)
Cosmopolitan	0.870 (0.060)*	0.835 (0.059)*	0.799 (0.062)**	1.001 (0.081)
N	19,140	19,008	17,464	18,569
Pseudo R-squared	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00

+ $p < 0.1$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$ (Note: cut-points of the ordinal logistic regression models are not reported.)

Table A4: Engagement in forms of political participation, ordinal logistic regression (odds ratios)

	Offline	Online	Formal (e.g. stood for office, donate)	Informal (e.g. boycott, demonstrate)	Time follows politics on the internet (not including newspapers)
Age: 18-34	0.719 (0.049)**	1.408 (0.088)**	0.649 (0.050)**	0.878 (0.070)	2.157 (0.115)**
Education: Degree	1.916 (0.086)**	1.606 (0.067)**	1.887 (0.092)**	2.325 (0.138)**	1.715 (0.066)**
Ethnicity: white	0.817 (0.071)*	0.893 (0.074)	0.854 (0.080)+	0.663 (0.063)**	0.761 (0.051)**
Gender: male	1.247 (0.052)**	0.958 (0.038)	1.389 (0.062)**	1.000 (0.053)	1.715 (0.061)**
Social class: C2DE	0.777 (0.044)**	0.804 (0.041)**	0.748 (0.048)**	0.832 (0.062)*	0.829 (0.040)**
Household income: <£20,000	1.081 (0.057)	1.080 (0.053)	1.081 (0.063)	1.065 (0.075)	1.030 (0.047)
Shrinking	1.095 (0.077)	0.937 (0.063)	0.989 (0.075)	0.996 (0.091)	0.834 (0.051)**
Cosmopolitan	1.106 (0.086)	1.007 (0.076)	1.040 (0.086)	1.303 (0.122)**	1.072 (0.075)
Distrust of MPs	0.903 (0.038)*	0.999 (0.040)	0.827 (0.037)**	1.237 (0.066)**	0.716 (0.025)**
N	19,140	19,140	19,140	19,140	18,681
Pseudo R-squared	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.03

+ $p < 0.1$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$ (Note: cut-points of the ordinal logistic regression models are not reported.)

Where “formal” participation refers to having contacted a politician/government official, worked on behalf of a political party or action group, donated money to a party or cause, or taken industrial action, and “informal” participation refers to having boycotted/purchased goods or services for ethical or political reasons or having taken part in a demonstration.