

PRESS RELEASE

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Where could young voters make most difference in the 2017 general election?

According to new analysis by the Intergenerational Foundation (www.if.org.uk) first-time voters outnumber the incumbent MP's majority in 43 marginal constituencies in England and Wales in the forthcoming 2017 General Election.

The report identifies Croydon Central, the seat of Gavin Barwell, Minister of State for Housing and Planning, as the constituency where more than 2,500 first-time voters – voters who have turned 18 since the last election two years ago – could make most difference, as his majority is just 165. Of the 15 seats where “new” voters outnumber the incumbent's majority by the biggest margin, 11 belong to the Conservatives and 4 belong to Labour.

IF also identified 39 seats where the current MP's majority is less than 10% of the number of 18–34 year olds in that constituency. Plymouth, Sutton and Devonport is the seat where an increase in voting by the under-34s could make the most difference. Cambridge, Derby North, City of Chester and Croydon Central make it into the top five: Daniel Zeichner, Shadow Minister for Transport, is at risk in Cambridge. Amanda Solloway, first-time conservative MP is at risk in Derby North, with Christian Matheson's first-time seat in the City of Chester at risk for Labour. Of the 15 seats where this group outnumbers the incumbent MP's majority by the largest amount, 8 belong to the Conservatives and 7 belong to Labour.

The split between young and old, in terms of their likelihood to vote, is greater in the UK than in any other EU country. This has been put down to a combination of factors: disillusionment with political scandals (e.g. MP expenses); breaking manifesto pledges (e.g. tuition fees); a move towards informal social-media-led single-issue campaigning and away from formal party membership; the move to Individual Electoral Registration which removed thousands of young adults from the Electoral Register; and the disproportionate withdrawal of state support for the under-25s.

Angus Hanton, IF co-founder comments, “The raw power of Britain's grey vote has led politicians to take the views of young people less seriously. Our report shows the pinch points where young people can make a difference by voting.”

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Note to Editors:

- As there are no official estimates of the UK's eligible electorate IF estimated the number of eligible voters, aged 18–34 in each constituency in England and Wales, by cross-referencing ONS population estimates for the constituencies with a proxy measure for the proportion of citizens who are eligible to vote in each one.
- IF estimates that 1.25 million new voters have come of age in England and Wales in the 2015-17 parliament.
- For further press information or to arrange an interview please email liz@if.org.uk or call on mob: 07971 228823