The Rise of the No Party in England

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Disengagement with political parties in many old and new democracies.
Trend in identification with political parties

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Why do we care?

- **Disengagement** ⇒ exclusion and political inequality.

- **Political parties** ⇒ safety rails of democracy.

- ... ⇒ polarization, conflict and democratic backsliding.
Why the rise of the no party?
The potential drivers

- **Demographics (Age effects):** The political behaviour of an individual changes with age over the life-cycle.

- **Political generations (Cohort effects):** The lasting effect on a cohort’s political behaviour of shared experiences in the formative years.

- **Secular trend (Period effects):** The change that happen in the political behaviour of all individuals at a given point in time or period.
The Period Age Cohort problem
The Period Age Cohort problem

2000 = ??? + 1950
The Period Age Cohort problem

\[\text{Period} = \text{Age} + \text{Cohort}\]

\[2000 = ??? + 1950\]

\[2000 = 50 + ???\]
Our solution to the **Period Age Cohort problem**

1960 1990 2020

Amrita

Peter

Lis

Bo
Our solution to the Period Age Cohort problem

1960 1990 2020

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Our solution to the Period Age Cohort problem

Amrita

1960

1990

2020

Permanent party ID for Amrita

Peter

1960

1990

2020

Permanent party ID for Peter

Lis

Bo
What do we find?
Cohort effects for the ‘no party’

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The political age effect for the ‘no party’
Period effects: Secular trends for the ‘no party’.

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What did we learn from this?

1. **Secular disengagement**: secular trend, slowed down by age effects, but not related to cohort effects.
Is the ‘no party’ a stepping stone to a new political identity or a permanent destination?
Has the move to the no party become more persistent?

- **The party exit rate**: The movement from the main parties to the no party.

- **The party finding rate**: The movement from the no party to a main party.
Transition dynamics over the life-cycle

Party exit rate

Party finding rate

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1. **Secular disengagement**: secular trend, slowed down by age effects, but not related to cohort effects.

2. **Persistence**: ‘permanent state’, not a ‘stepping stone’.
What did we learn from this?

1. **Secular disengagement**: secular trend, slowed down by age effects, but not related to cohort effects.

2. **Persistence**: Persistence: ‘permanent state’, not a ‘stepping stone’.

3. **Next step**: What causes the secular trend? Who are the no party supporters? International comparative perspective?