

Labour has to turn hope into expectation to win - and t...

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As has been noted this morning by David Hough on Labour Left, Labour lost 53% of its vote in Bradford yesterday, the Lib Dems 75% of theirs, and the Tories 80%, which is probably why there seems little crowing this morning.

Now that's not to say that this wasn't a shock result. It was, but it's a shock that still hits the Coalition hardest, so they're not saying much.

That then means two questions need to be addressed. The first is how much of this is about Galloway? I think the answer is 'a lot of it'. I don't see this being replicated.

Second, is there a systemic issue? Oh yes is the answer to that - there are two of them.

First, voters are alienated - and we have to clean up politics to resolve that. All democrats have to commit to reform now - and that will include some state funding. Read [Martin Wolf](#) and [Polly Toynbee](#) this morning and realise how vital change is - even if the Tories are blocking reform and the unions need to change as well. We have to restore faith in politics - or we all lose, badly.

Second, there's got to be an economic message here. Bradford is a city of economic migrants whose hopes of a better life are being dashed. I come from a family of economic migrants - my children are substantially genetically Irish. I have some insight into this. Economic migrants have massive hope and aspiration, especially for their next generations. Parents in these situations sacrifice to give their children better lives in a way many don't understand. I see this so strongly in the lives of my in-laws. My grandfather was the same. But those hopes are being dashed - not just by comment on immigration, but much more seriously by the lack of hope there is in the economy.

I've said it before and I'll say it again - Labour has to talk jobs, jobs, jobs and nothing else to prove there is hope that can be vested in it. It can deliver this. It didn't in Bradford. It lost as a result. There aren't many Galloways (thankfully) but that doesn't change the hope issue. That's there with or without him. Labour has to turn hope into expectation to win. And only a plan to deliver jobs can do that.