

Vote rigging

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The forthcoming local elections are the first where people might be asked to prove their entitlement to vote by having to offer proof of identity. That will usually be a driving licence or passport. The claim is that this will prevent electoral fraud. But no one believes there is a serious issue with electoral fraud at British polling stations, and there is no evidence of it. So that is not true.

What is true is that this will, like previous attempts to get mobile young people off the electoral roll, reduce the likely size of the non-Tory voting electorate.

As the evidence of the Windrush generation proves, some are deliberately denied these proofs of identity.

But there are ample people who do not drive in this country and do not want to. And whilst I doubt there's a Tory MP without a friend with a holiday home in France, many in this country do not holiday abroad, or need to travel for work. They dream instead of a holiday. And work.

There are others denied driving licences. That may be for physical or mental health reasons. Very often their disability will mean a passport is a luxury they can easily do without.

But now all these reasons for not having government approved photo ID come at a price and it is a pretty fundamental one: it is disenfranchisement.

Ninety years after we supposedly introduced the universal franchise government has introduced new bars to voting. They operate on the basis of age, race, income and health. And because of the way our society distributes income all of the barriers bias against those with lower incomes who are less likely to vote Tory.

That is not chance.

That is deliberate.

That is vote rigging.

This is not just anti-democratic, although it is that. It is corrupt.

And it is as pernicious the Tories' very obvious racism.

I never imagined I would live in a country this depraved. But I do.