

Sleeping with the enemy.

Partners' political attitudes and risk of separation

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Abstract

Does politics conflict with love? We aim at answering this question by examining the effect on union dissolution of partners' (mis)match on political preferences, defined as self-reported closeness, intention to vote, or vote for a specific party. Previous studies argued that partners' heterogamy may increase risk of union dissolution because of differences among partners in lifestyles, attitudes, and beliefs, and/or because of disapproval from family and community members. We posit that similar arguments can apply to political heterogamy and test the effect of this new heterogamy dimension using UK data from the British Household Panel Study (BHPS) and the UK Household Longitudinal Study (UKHLS). The data offer a unique opportunity to disentangle the role of heterogamy by political preferences from the effects of heterogamies in other domains (e.g., ethnicity and religiosity) and from that of other partners' characteristics, while also covering a long period of time (from 1991 to 2021). The data also allow to implement a more specific analysis about the referendum on UK's permanence in the European Union (known as the Brexit referendum). We find a positive effect of political preferences heterogamy on union dissolution. In addition, diverging opinions on the Brexit referendum is associated to higher chances of partnership break-up.

Keywords: union dissolution; divorce; separation; heterogamy; homogamy; political preferences; United Kingdom.

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INTRODUCTION

Social scientists have identified several factors that influence union survival (see the reviews by Lyngstad and Jalovaara 2010; Mortelmans 2020), including partners' (mis)match on several dimensions, such as socio-economic status (Musick et al. 2020; Schwartz and Mare 2012; Theunis et al. 2018; Qian 2017), social origin (Henz and Mills 2018), religion (Wright et al. 2017), race/ethnicity (Feng et al. 2012; Wong 2016; Smith et al. 2012; Zhang and Van Hook 2009), age (England et al. 2016), health (Torvik et al. 2015), personality traits (Arpino et al. 2022). Usually, these studies find that couples with partners that hold different characteristics (heterogamous) are at higher risk of breakup compared to homogamous partnerships and, more specifically, the risk of union dissolution for heterogamous couples tend to be similar to those of homogamous couples with the highest breakup rates (Schwartz 2013).

We contribute to this strand of the literature by focussing on an overlooked potentially relevant dimension of heterogamy: a mismatch of partners on political preferences. In increasingly divided times (see e.g., Layman et al. 2006, Duffy et al. 2019, Hobolt et al. 2021, PEW Research 2014, 2019), it is important to understand how politics and union dissolution intersect. Several recent studies have considered partners' mating in terms of political ideology or preferences (e.g., Alford et al. 2011; Klofstad et al. 2013; Hersh and Ghitza 2018; Horwitz and Keller 2022), but no study has examined the consequence of partners' political heterogamy on union dissolution. This is unfortunate given the important role that politics has in people's life. Politics, in fact, is a salient dimension in the life of many individuals and is often a topic of conversation or a joint activity for partners (Daenekindt et al. 2020). Even people who are not directly interested in politics are often confronted with the need or opportunity to take on political positions. Even individuals who do not actively search for political news are exposed to them e.g. via (social) media (Fletcher and Nielsen 2018).

People may feel passionate about political issues and conversations about politics often become heated. Opposing political views can lead to difficult interactions. While political arguments can be avoided at work or with friends, it is much more difficult, and exhausting, to constantly side-step hot topics at home. Research that examined partners' matching on political attitudes and preference seems to support the idea that people try to avoid forming a union with partners with different views (Alford et al. 2011; Klofstad et al. 2013; Hersh and Ghitza 2018), which may indicate that individuals foresee risks of conflicts from political heterogamy. Although homogamy on other traits (e.g., ethnicity)

is stronger, couples tend to show also a considerable degree of political homogamy (Huber & Malhotra, 2017). In the US, for example, it has been found that 70% of married couples match on political affiliation (Hersh and Ghitza, 2018). In the UK, in up to three-quarters of couples both partners identify with the same party (e.g., Lampard 1997, Bélanger and Eagles 2007)

One may contend that, if an effect of political heterogamy on union dissolution was found, this may simply capture the effect of other partners' dissimilarities (e.g., in terms of socio-economic status or religion). Instead, we argue that political heterogamy may have an *independent* role in influencing union dissolution.

We focus on the United Kingdom, an interesting case study for the high level of political polarisation that characterises its political system dominated by few big parties (Conservatives, Labour, Liberal Democrats). Following prior research (Tilley 2015), we operationalize political homogamy (heterogamy) as match (mismatch) in party preference or vote. In addition, we do expand the representation of partners' political convergence using an emerging dimension – and increasingly more salient than the left-right positioning of parties (Hobolt et al. 2021) – in the current political debate in the United Kingdom: Brexit. Brexit identities have been shown to be prevalent, personally important and cut across traditional party lines (Hobolt et al. 2021). For partners with different opinions, the referendum may have triggered stress and conflict with consequential effect on partnership stability.

Our contribution to the literature about union dissolution is to investigate its association with three markers political homogamy. In this account, we divide couples between politically homogamous and heterogamous couples (*'political homogamy'*), we address partners' preference for specific political parties (*'party homogamy'*), or opinions on the 2016 Brexit referendum (*'Brexit homogamy'*).

We use data from two population-representative British surveys, British Household Panel Study (BHPS) and the UK Household Longitudinal Study (UKHLS), which allow us to directly measure the preferences for partners living in coresidential unions (marriage and cohabitation). The key advantage is that we observe a detailed range of political preferences and beliefs on a *yearly* basis along with fine-grained information on couple's other markers of homogamy and socio-demographic characteristics. We can therefore examine how political preference would predict a partnership dissolution with three *distinct* measures of political preference, *independently* of other dimensions of homogamy, such as age, education, ethnicity, religion and job class. We operationalize

‘political homogamy’ and ‘party homogamy’ based on yearly questions on “closeness to a party”, “intention to vote a party”, or “vote for a party”, while the indicator of ‘Brexit homogamy’ is drawn from a question in Wave 6 (2015/16) of UKHLS. We use two datasets. The first one is used to test to what extent ‘political homogamy’ and ‘party homogamy’ are consequential for a couple’s stability and features a remarkable 29-year window. The second dataset is used to inspect the role of ‘Brexit homogamy’ on the same outcome.

BACKGROUND

Partnerships and political views

This paper explores the consequences of homogamy and heterogamy along a surprisingly understudied dimension: partners’ political preferences. To understand the possible consequences of heterogamy by political preferences is worth first discussing the reasons why partners tend to share similar characteristics. In the literature on assortative mating, there are three main mechanisms that may explain why people associate with politically similar partners (McPherson and Smith-Lovin 1987; Kalmijn 2005; Huber and Malhotra 2017). In first place, people choose their partners based on their preferences along a given dimension (*choice homogamy*). A preference for politically similar partners may reflect a general tendency to prefer similarity for any given personal characteristic (McPherson et al 2001). Political homogamy, in this view, may mirror a preference for similar others, just as do other social identities for which sorting is widespread, such as ethnicity (Fu and Heaton 2008, Wimmer and Lewis 2010) or education (Skopek et al. 2011).

In second place, people choose their partners from a pool of similar candidates because of preexisting homogeneity in one’s social environment (*induced homogamy*; Liben-Nowell et al. 2005). For instance, individuals may form unions with likeminded partners because of politically segregated social networks. Also, individuals might form unions with partners with whom they share other characteristics, like religion or ethnicity, which are correlated with political views (Anderson et al. 2014). In this respect, shared political beliefs could be a byproduct of other commonalities (Hubert and Mahlotra 2017).

Finally, partners might influence each other's view while dating and living together (*convergence*) because political attitudes are malleable over time (Arránz Becker and Lois 2010). In romantic relationships, partners influence each other’s political beliefs

because of similar interests (e.g., sharing a socio-economic condition orientates support for specific political instances), common environments (e.g., living in the same area leads to sympathise with similar communities), or persuasion, because partners are the most frequent targets of political discussions (Stoker & Jennings 2005; Daenekindt et al. 2020). Partners' attitudes might converge over time also because partners experience the same life events, which in turn shape their political beliefs (Huber and Malhotra 2017).

Literature on political homogeneity identified more congruence between household members than in other social aggregations. Spouses tend to become politically like-minded not only because of the selection process that brings them together, but also through socialisation (Johnston et al. 2005b; Nickerson 2008; Stoker & Jennings 2005). When it comes to party preferences, estimates range between 40 and 75% of politically homogeneity in two-voter households (Zuckerman et al. 2005; Hersch and Ghitza 2018), also in the United Kingdom (Johnston et al. 2005a; Lampard 1997, Bélanger and Eagles 2007).

Recent research, however, has confuted the idea that spouses *only* reinforce each other beliefs, indicating that people are likely to have different political views (Daenekindt et al. 2020; Kan & Heath 2006). Politically interested individuals are more likely to discuss politics, because they simply enjoy political discussion (Huckfeldt and Mendez 2008), even though this increases the probability of political disagreement. Research in political psychology shows that political disagreement between individuals could be uncomfortable for some. Individuals are likely to avoid situations where political divergence occurs (Mutz 2002, Huber and Malhotra 2017), especially in close social relationships (Levinsen and Yndigegn 2015). Hence, it can be suspected that couples who do not converge in political views might be put their unions under strain (Arránz Becker and Lois 2010).

Couples' heterogamy and union dissolution

Our study is embedded within the social science literature on the consequences of couples heterogamy. Partners' similarity has been generally found to be associated with a higher relationship quality and lower risk of union dissolution. In general, in terms of relationship stability, heterogamous couples in race/ethnicity, nationality or religion are more likely to experience union dissolution, a pattern that is more pronounced in dating and cohabiting relationships than in marriages (e.g., Blackwell & Lichter, 2004; Hwang

et al. 2021; Wang et al. 2006). Partners' similarity on personal attributes, such as personality and attitudes, is theorized to be more pertinent to relationship satisfaction and stability than to other dimensions, but mixed evidence has been found in previous studies (e.g., Luo & Klohnen, 2005).

To the best of our knowledge, no study has investigated the association between partners' political homogamy and union stability. However, some evidence, albeit sparse and mainly focusing on the United States, addressed the association between couples' political views and relationship quality. Wang (2020) documented some lower relationship happiness among Republican-Democratic couples as opposed to homogamous Republican couples. Among individual-based studies, Wilcox and Wolfinger (2015) reported greater marital happiness among the Republican voters, while Wolfinger (2017) and Twyman (2016) found that right-wing voters report higher sexual intercourse frequency than the left-wing, in the US and the UK, respectively. Partially, the mechanisms explaining the consequence of heterogamy mirror those about assortative mating. According to *homogamy theory* (Kalmijn et al. 2005; Zhang and Van Hook 2009), two main mechanisms explain the positive association between heterogamy and union dissolution. The *cultural distance argument* posits that differences in religion, ethnicity, and other social characteristics, imply a divergence in tastes, values, and communication styles (Kalmijn 1998). Such differences are an obstacle to the formation of a common outlook for daily task and decisions (e.g., about children education), and limit the degree to which partners can confirm each other's values and worldviews, thus they make more difficult for the partners to understand each other, reduce the number of shared interests and activities between the partners (Mahoney et al., 1999; Waite & Lehrer, 2003). Heterogamous couples thus tend to experience more misunderstandings, more conflict and less intimacy than homogamous ones. In a specular way, and similarly to the choice homogamy argument mentioned above, homogamous couples are expected to be at lower risk of dissolution because of their shared characteristics that may proxy for similarities in the way they see the world. Sharing similar traits makes living with the partner, taking decisions about division of chores, children's education, etc. easier which, in turn, reduce stress and increase relationship satisfaction.

A second mechanism explaining why union dissolution may be more likely if couples are formed among individuals with different social characteristics refers to the *social boundary argument*. Forming a union with someone with different religion, ethnicity, nationality or social class implies crossing a social boundary in society.

Relationships outside the group are often normatively disapproved, thus heterogamous unions may receive less practical and emotional support from the social networks of the respective partners than other couples (Hohmann-Marriot and Amato, 2008; Killian, 2001).

Both previous theoretical arguments lead to the same prediction: heterogamy makes union dissolution more likely because of a higher probability of conflicts due to cultural distance and/or because of less support from the extended family or social network. The abovementioned theoretical arguments applied to heterogamy by political preferences lead to the expectation that *partners affiliated to different parties are more likely to split up than partners with the same political affiliation* (Hypothesis 1). Similarly, *union dissolution is expected to be higher for couples where one partner is not affiliated to any party as compared to homogamous couples in terms of political affiliation* (Hypothesis 2). In addition, because partners that express the same political preference are expected to more strongly share cultural values than partners that do not hold a political preference, *we expect union dissolution to be lower for couples where both partners are affiliated to the same party as compared to couples where both partners are not affiliated to any party* (Hypothesis 3).

Political heterogamy and union dissolution within the UK political context

In UK, divorce rates have reached the highest levels in the early 1990s and have slowly declined ever since (ONS, 2013; 2020). The risk of dissolution of marriage after five years is approximately 8% and approaches 20% after 10 years. Cohabitations are more unstable. One relationship in three ends within 5 years and about 40% dissolves by the 10th year (ONS, 2012).

Here we ask: What is the role of partners' political preferences in union survival in this country? UK has an electoral system that favours political polarization with a two-party dominance, which has persisted over the last thirty years. UK political system is characterised by a first-past-the-post system. The country is divided into constituencies, which elect the candidate with the most votes. This electoral system – used in general elections – has historically favoured two nation-wide parties: the Conservatives (also termed Tories in media jargon), a right-leaning party, and the Labour, a left-wing party. A third party, the Liberal Democrats (alternatively LibDems) occupying the political middle ground, had steadily increased its vote share until 2010, when it formed a coalition

government with the Conservatives until 2015. Although other parties exist (e.g., regional parties or the far-right-wing UKIP), within the period of observation covered by our data (1991-2021), the UK political arena has been dominated by the Tory-Labour dichotomy. Survey data from the UK show the existence of attitudes against politically heterogamous partnerships might have changed in today's increasingly partisan climate in the UK. In an article on *YouGov*, Ibbetson (2019) summarized a British poll on how parents would feel if their children married someone supporting a different party than their own. YouGov data showed that almost twice of Labour voters were as likely as they were in 2008 (39% vs. 19%) to disapprove of son- or daughter-in-law supporting the Conservatives. Another recent poll from *YouGov* documented that Labour supporters were less willing to date Conservatives than vice versa (35% vs 49%; Ibbetson, 2021).

The cultural distance and social boundary arguments presented above further lead to the expectation that the stronger the boundary of the two groups represented in the couple, the greater the risk of union dissolution (Zhang and Van Hook 2009). Thus, *the more ideologically distant 'Tory/Labour' unions (Kan and Heath, 2006) are expected to be at greater risk of dissolution than 'LibDem/Labour' or 'LibDem/Tory' unions (Hypothesis 4).*

In June 2016 the UK experienced one of the most consequential turning points in modern politics: the Brexit referendum about the permanence of UK in the European Union. This referendum has caused the emergence of a new political cleavage in the political debate, which represents an additional division in political opinions in this country (Hobolt et al. 2021; Sanders 2016). The June 2016 referendum, which produced a tight majority in favour of leaving the EU, has heavily marked the political debate and parties' platforms for the following years.

With respect to attitudes towards the EU, popular opinion has been volatile: from 2004 to 2016, approval rates ranged from a low of 34.7% in June 2011 to a high of 52.3% in June 2005, and outperformed disapproval by almost 2 percentage points on average (Janmaat et al. 2018).

The number of people who strongly identify with political party has declined in recent years. Instead, different studies showed that a larger share of the British population has identified as having a very strong Brexit identity (Curtice 2018, Duffy et al. 2019, Hobolt et al. 2021). In other words, the opinions about Brexit run beyond the traditional party-wise divisions and have catalysed a new set of political separation. This motivates our decision to include the opinion on Brexit as potential marker of

homogamy/heterogamy within couples. The already mentioned 2021 *YouGov* survey demonstrate the existence of negative attitudes for heterogamous partnerships with respect to the Brexit referendum opinions. Nearly 40% percent of parents who voted “Remain” in 2016 said they would be upset if their child married a “Leaver”. The above evidence and arguments lead to expect *a greater risk of dissolution for couples where partners hold different opinions on the Brexit referendum (i.e., ‘Remain/Leave’), as opposed to partnerships that share the same opinion* (Hypothesis 5).

METHOD

Data and analytical samples

Our analyses are based on two British annual face-to-face population-representative surveys that provide data on individuals and households: the British Household Panel Study (BHPS) and the UK Household Longitudinal Study (UKHLS), also known as ‘Understanding Society’. We combine data from BHPS (1991-2008) and UKHLS (2009-2019). These surveys mainly focus on household composition, labour market participation, and other economic and sociological aspects, including political opinions and voting behaviour.

We construct two couple-year datasets: one sample is used for the analysis of ‘political’ and ‘party homogamy’ and includes 28,173 heterosexual couples in a time window spanning from 1991 to 2021; another sample only displays couples who were asked opinions on Brexit (in Wave 6 of UKHLS) and consists of 14,857 partnerships from 2016 to 2021. We consider only couples in which both partners are older than 18 and at least one partner remains in the sample for at least two consecutive waves.

Dependent variable. Our outcome is the separation of couples who are cohabiting or married. Respondents report annually on the presence of a partner in the household. We consider a couple to be separated when one partner leaves the household. Couples are not considered dissolved if one partner passes away or if both partners drop out of the survey. Observations in these cases are right-censored.

Explanatory variables. In the absence of a clear left-right scale, in order to proxy the political orientation of respondents, political affiliation is based on partners’ party support. This is measured by three questions that are widely used to measure vote intention in the United Kingdom (Tilley 2015). The first asks whether respondents consider themselves as “supporter[s] of any political party”. If they say no, then they are

asked whether they think of themselves as “a little closer to one political party than to the others”. And if they say no again, they are asked “if there were to be a general election tomorrow, which political party do you think you would be most likely to support”. In essence, these questions are proxies of vote in years when there are no elections. In election years, these questions can be complemented by the question “which party did you vote in the last elections”. For example, an individual interviewed in 2010 – an election year – might be asked to recall her vote in May and her party supported in Autumn. If questions on political preference and vote are both asked, we gave priority to voting intention (and run robustness test with the alternative specification¹), in line with Tilley (2015). Ninety percent of respondent that voted Labour in May 2010 said that they supported the Labour a few months later. The same percentage for Conservative is 89, and the Liberal Democrats 84.

Our key independent variables concern political preferences. Following Huckfeldt et al. (2004), we conceptualise political homogamy (heterogamy) in terms of partisan agreement (disagreement) based on self-reported party preferences of each partner, thus reducing the systematic biases in respondents’ perceptions (Foos and de Rooij 2017; Frödin Gruneau 2020). In this framework, accord in political views is achieved when two people, a couple in our analysis, express the same preference for a candidate or a party. This scheme measures the absence of agreement whenever partners’ preferences differ, but it does not measure the extent to which partners disagree². For instance, two partners expressing preferences for the Labour and the LibDems, respectively, are ideologically closer than two partners supporting the Labour and the Tories. However, in our first operationalization, both couples are considered heterogamous.

The first variable (‘Political homogamy’) distinguishes whether partners have homogamous (“Same party”), heterogamous (“Different party”, “Non-affiliated & Some party”) or undefined (“Non-affiliated”) political view, if they reply ‘none’ or ‘don’t

¹ The British electoral system is based on the “First past the post” principle and generates some tactical voting. Voters are incentivized to vote for an ideologically “second-best” party that is stronger in their electoral college rather than for an ideologically “first-best” party that is less likely to win in their college. Tilley et al. (2019) argue that our measure of party support is essentially a measure of vote intention free of tactical concerns and is more representative of individuals’ preferences.

² This conceptualization differs from Mutz (2006), who proposed a method to measure the level of disagreement. Her approach is to create an index of disagreement that combines information from a large set of variables. Our study is data constrained as political preferences are only expressed as affiliation to a specific party with no possible indication of partisanship scale or gradient. However, see the robustness checks section.

know'. The second variable ('Party homogeneity') addresses more in detail partners' homogeneity at party level. Our sample covers England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, which display a variety of political parties. We separated out regional parties, given their linkage to specific national identities in the smaller countries of the UK. For simplicity, in the baseline specification we consider only three parties (Conservatives; Labour; Liberal Democrats) and label the other parties as "Other". The resulting categorical variable captures party-wise homogeneity ("Tory", "Labour", "LibDem", "Other"), heterogeneity ("Tory/Labour", "Tory/LibDem", "Labour/LibDem", "Other Mixed", "Some Party/Non-affiliated") or undefined preferences ("Non-affiliated"). Missing cases are also reported for both variables of 'political' and 'party homogeneity' in case at least one partner skips the question or reports no valid answer. More detailed categorizations have been considered in robustness tests (see the end of the Results section).

The third variable ('Brexit homogeneity') is based on respondents' reported vote in 2016 referendum and reflects partners' homogeneous ("Remain" or "Leave") or discordant ("Remain/Leave", "Remain/Don't know", or "Leave/Don't know") view on Brexit. Also in this case, missing reports on the Referendum vote are accounted for. The membership question was asked in Wave 6 (across 2015 and 2016) of the UKHLS. Because opinions expressed after the referendum might suffer from social desirability bias, we only considered interviews realized *before* the referendum date.

Figures 1 and 2 display the prevalence of couples' types by the three classifications. About a third of couple-observations are categorized as homogeneous according to our first measure ('same party'; Fig. 1). The most prevalent type of heterogeneous couple is represented by couples in which one member reports a party affiliation and the other does not (17.8% Fig. 1). Our second measure of homogeneity captures specific party affinities. In this case, the most prevalent type of homogeneous couple is represented by Labour couples (14.7% of the total of couples). Among couples where partners identify with different parties, the mode is represented by 'Tory/Labour' couples (3.4% of the total; 26.8% of the different-party couples; Fig. 1). As for Brexit homogeneity, 13% of couples reported different opinions on the Brexit referendum and in about 27% of cases a partner reported an opinion and the other did not (Fig. 2). Tables S.1 and S.2 in the Supplementary Materials show measure of (in)stability of political party preferences over time by illustrating the yearly transition probabilities for our two first outcomes. There is a certain degree of stability in political homogeneity: partners that report

the ‘Same party’ affiliation at any time point are about 70% likely to stay in the next year (Table S.1). This holds especially for Tory and Labour couples, while for LibDem couples this probability is lower (56%; Table S.2).

< Figures 1-2 about here >

Control variables. Previous empirical studies have examined the determinants of party identity (citation) and opinions on Brexit referendum (Hobolt 2016; Becker et al. 2017; Alabrese et al., 2019). When it comes to Brexit, support for the Leave was found more concentrated among older people, the less educated, low-skilled and poorest households, while the young and women were more in favour of Remain. We thus control for these variables, which are also among the determinants of union dissolution (Boertien & Härkönen 2018, Matysiak et al. 2014). More specifically, for age, education and job class we exploit information on both partners to build indicators of homogamy/heterogamy. We do the same for ethnicity and religiosity, which are among the dimensions of heterogamy most examined in previous studies on union dissolution (Wright et al. 2017; Wong 2016). This allows comparing the effect of the new heterogamy dimension, i.e. in terms of political preferences, with those of the previous studied ones.

Specifically, the baseline control variables (in Model 1) include both partners’ age (linear and quadratic) and cohort of birth (5-year groups), a function of union duration with a linear, a quadratic and a cubic term, and two partnership characteristics – the presence of children in the household and the marital status (cohabiting vs. married). We then complement the baseline specification with a step-wise approach, by adding other proxies of partners’ homogamy: partners’ age gap (Woman 2+ years older, Man 2+ years older, 2 year age difference maximum) in Model 2; the highest between partner’s education (Degree, Other higher, A-level etc, GCSE etc., Other qualification, No qualification) and education homogamy (Man is more educated, Woman is more educated, Same education) in Model 3; ethnicity homogamy (same ethnicity or different ethnicity) in Model 4; religion homogamy (same or different religion) in Model 5, partners’ occupational class (NSSEC-8: from ‘Upper management & professional’ to ‘Routine’) and occupational homogamy (same job class, man has higher job class, woman has higher job class, man has higher job class & woman is out of labour force, woman has higher job class & man is out of labour force, both are OLF) in Model 6. Missing cases are also reported in flag categories for each of the proxies of homogamy. All

regressors are measured with a 1-year lag. Table S.3 in the Supplementary Materials described the variables at couples' survey debut by partnership outcome and analysis sample.

Model

We estimate the association of partners' political views on a couple's risk of dissolution using a random-effect discrete-time event history logit model. The model looks as follows:

$$\log\left(\frac{p(Y)_{jt}}{1-p(Y)_{jt}}\right) = \gamma(t) + \beta X_{jt} + \nu_j + \varepsilon_{jt},$$

where Y is a dichotomous indicator for the union status of a couple j (0 = intact; 1= dissolved) at time t and $p(Y)_{jt}$ is the probability of a union separation during the interval $(t, t + 1)$. t represents the time in the union and $\gamma(t)$ is a function of time, which in this model is the time elapsed since union formation (up to the cubic term). Our specification links the probability of dissolution in the interval $(t, t + 1)$ with control variables measured at t . X_{jt} is a vector of covariates that potentially vary across unions and time. ν_j captures unobservable couple-level characteristics and is assumed to be uncorrelated with the independent variables, normally distributed with zero mean and a variance to be estimated; ε_{jt} in the idiosyncratic error. Note that all our event history models take the right-censoring of data into account.

Although a fixed-effect model would have allowed to account for possible time-invariant confounders, we preferred to employ a random effect model for two reasons. First, as mentioned above, there is a quite high degree of stability in certain couple types over time. A fixed-effect model would have forced to exploit only within-couple changes over time. Second, we are interested in comparing different couple types, rather than focusing on changes in couple's preferences over time, which is an interesting avenue for future research. Nonetheless, as a robustness check, we have estimated fixed-effect models that gave consistent results with those we present here (results available upon request).

To better interpret the substantive significance of the results, we report estimated odds ratios and graphically display predicted yearly probabilities of separation by couple

types. The predicted probabilities are calculated averaging predictions obtained using observed values for the independent variables. Predicted probabilities are presented graphically together with confidence intervals for pair-wise comparisons at an approximate 5% level (Goldstein and Healy 1995). In this way, a non-overlap of the confidence intervals indicates that the corresponding predictions are significantly different (MacGregor-Fors and Payton 2013)³.

RESULTS

Tables S.4 and S.5 in the Supplementary Materials report the incidence of union dissolution by the categories of political homogamy. Couples who share the same party affiliation have an annual probability of dissolution that amounts to 0.71% (Table S.4). This figure increases to 0.97% if partners belong to different parties and to 1.08% in case one expresses a preference for a party while the other does not. Couples in which neither partner reports any affiliation show an annual probability of separation of 1.13%.

The three most frequent homogamous combinations of party affiliation (Tory, Labour & LibDem) feature an incidence of separation that never exceeds 0.84% (Table S.4). We also inspect heterogeneous combinations of political views which range from 0.94% to 1.08%. These descriptives suggest that couples with homogenous political beliefs tend to be less prone to separation. Also, partners who declare different political affiliations, and even more so those with one non-affiliated partner, tend to report higher incidence of separation. We further explore the incidence of separation by Brexit opinion for couples from Wave 6 of UKHLS onwards (Table S.5). The incidence of separation ranges from 0.77 (Remainers) to 1.69 (Remain/Leave), which hints at a wide difference in partnership stability.

Political homogamy and union dissolution

The association of political homogamy with the risk of union dissolution from multivariable event history logit models is displayed in Table 1, where we also report the results for the homogamy/heterogamy variables related to other dimensions for comparison (full estimates are displayed in Table S.6 in the Supplementary Materials). Political homogamy is consistently and positively associated with union dissolution independently of the set of controls included. Partners sharing the preference for the

³ The margin of error is calculated as 1.39 x standard error.

‘same party’ are less likely to experience a break-up than their counterparts with heterogamous preferences (‘Different party’, ‘Some party/No affiliation’), which does support *Hypotheses 1 and 2*. Specifically, estimates from the fully adjusted model (Model 6) indicate that the odds of union dissolution for both types of politically heterogamous couples are about 39% higher than those for ‘same party’ couples. Also, couples with no reported affiliation (‘No affiliation’) deviate from homogamous couples as they have heightened risk of union dissolution (odds ratio (OR) = 1.25), in line with *Hypothesis 3*.

The effects of the control variables go in the expected direction; in particular, all the other measures of partnership homogeneity (e.g., in terms of religiosity) are associated with reduced risk of dissolutions (Table S.6 in the Supplementary Materials). Note that the odds ratios of political heterogeneity are similar or bigger than those of the other well-studied heterogeneities. For example, odds of dissolution for couples with different religiosity are 34% higher than those of homogamous couples in terms of religiosity. Heterogamous couples by ethnicity show a higher odds of union dissolution (29% higher) compared to homogamous couples.

< Table 1 about here >

In Figure 3, we show the predicted probability of union dissolution on a yearly basis. Couples with homogamous political preferences (‘Same Party’) display a predicted probability (pp) of separation slightly below 0.8% yearly. This is significantly lower ($p < 0.05$) than the predicted probabilities for heterogamous couples, i.e. couples in which partners have diverging political preferences (either because they display favour for different parties or because one does not manifest any affiliation). For both types of heterogamous couples, the predicted probability of dissolution is about 1.1%. Couples where both partners are not politically affiliated hold an intermediate position with a predicted probability of union dissolution of 0.9%, slightly, but statistically significantly, higher than that for couples where partners identify with the same party. Figure S.1 in the Supplementary Materials shows predicted probability by the groups defined by the other dimensions of heterogeneity confirming that for all dimensions heterogamous couples tend to be at higher risk of dissolution than homogamous couples. For example, heterogamous couples by ethnicity or religiosity show predicted probabilities of dissolution of about 1.1% on an annual basis, i.e. similar values to those found for politically heterogeneity.

< Figure 3 about here >

Party homogamy and union dissolution. We proceed by investigating more in detail the combinations of party preference (Table 2; full estimates are presented in Table S.7 in the Supplementary Materials). We find that the probability of union dissolution for Conservative couples ('Tory') does not statistically differ from that of homogamous couples of 'LibDem' and 'Other' parties while Labour couples have a statistically significantly higher odds of dissolution than the Tory couples, but only at the 10% level in the fully adjusted model (OR = 1.19; model Model 6, Table 2). We do find higher odds of dissolution for heterogamous couples compared to the reference group, the 'Tory' couples. The 'Tory/Labour', 'Tory/LibDem', 'Labour/LibDem' and 'Other mixed' partnerships are statistically more likely to separate compared to the 'Tory' couples. However, the estimated odds ratio of union dissolution compared to 'Tory' couples is higher for 'Tory/LibDem' than for 'Tory/Labour' (OR = 1.54 vs 1.38 in the fully adjusted Model 6). When comparing the two groups directly (see also Figure 4 commented below), the odds of dissolutions for the two groups are not statistically significantly different. This finding is not in line with *Hypothesis 4* holding that more ideologically distant partners – such as those in 'Tory/Labour' are more prone to dissolution than other heterogamous, but less politically distant, couples, such as 'Tory/LibDem'.

< Table 2 about here >

Due to the more refined classification, estimates in Figure 4 are less precise than those in Figure 3, and thus several pair-wise comparisons are not statistically significant. Still, Figure 4 confirms that all types of heterogamous couples tend to be at higher risk of dissolution compared to all types of homogamous couples, as predicted by *Hypotheses 1 and 2*. However, due to the varying precision of the estimates by couple type, only 'Tory/LibDem' couples show statistically significantly higher predicted probability of dissolution compared to homogamous couples. Also, from Figure 4 it emerges that couples with at least one non-affiliated partner display statistically significantly higher probability of dissolution than homogamous couples (in line with *Hypothesis 3*) but the difference is statistically significant only when 'Tory' couples are considered. Finally, Figure 4 also shows that the predicted probability of union dissolution is higher for 'Tory/LibDem' and for 'Labour/LibDem' than for 'Tory/Labour', although the

differences are not statistically significant (i.e., it is confirmed that *Hypothesis 4*, which predicted the opposite pattern, is not supported).

< Figure 4 about here >

Brexit homogamy and union dissolution

We finally address the role of homogamy on Brexit views on union dissolution. The analyses concern a smaller sample of couples who reported their opinions on Brexit in Wave 6 of Understanding Society. We estimate the transition to union dissolution for the next four waves with the same set of control variables used in the first set of analyses. In keeping with the previous findings, we find that partners' agreement on Brexit is associated with smaller odds of union dissolution bringing support to *Hypothesis 5* (Table 3; full estimates are reported in Table S.8 of the Supplementary Materials). The effects of Brexit heterogamy are much stronger than those found above. In fact, the odds of dissolution for those who reported opposite opinion on the Brexit ('Remain & Leave') are 2.3 times those for Brexit homogamous couples. Couples where one member did not report an opinion ('Remain/Don't know or missing' and 'Leave/Don't know or missing') are even more likely to split compared to homogamous couples (OR equal to 3.36 and 3.15, respectively).

< Table 3 about here >

Homogamous 'Remain' and 'Leave' couples display a similar predicted probability of union dissolution as low as 1.1% on an annual basis (Figure 5). The couples who reported divergent views on Brexit all lay substantially above the homogamous partnerships: the predicted probability of union dissolution for the 'Remain/Leave', 'Leave/Don't know or missing' and 'Remain/Don't know or missing' couples all range between 1.8% and 2.3% annually.

Additional analyses

Here we briefly summarize the findings from some additional analyses and robustness checks we implemented focussing on our first two measures of homogamy (political and party homogamy). We did not implement the same analyses for the Brexit homogamy

because of the smaller sample and the shorter period of observation available for our third measure of homogamy.

We check the robustness of our results in different specifications (see Table S.9 in Supplementary Materials). We start by accounting for the consistency of partners' preferences (and couple type) over time. In the *Data and analytical samples* section, we noticed that couples' type tends to be rather stable. Still, our results may be driven by changes in partners' political preferences over time. We differentiate the couples who display consistent party preferences over time, with at least 2 consecutive waves reporting the same political affiliation ('Consistently same party'), from those who only do in a specific wave ('Occasionally same party'). By the same token, we identify the couples who display different affiliations on a regular basis ('Consistently different party') from those who deviate only in an isolated wave ('Occasionally different party'). Results show that heterogamy has a negative effect on union dissolution both in case of its stability over time and when couples are occasionally politically heterogamous (Panel A, Table S.9). We did not implement the same analysis for party homogamy because in this case we would have to consider too many categories. Instead, for this measure we assessed robustness of previous findings in a subsample of non-Scottish couples, as the prevalence of regional parties, such as the Scottish National Party (SNP), included in the group 'Other', has steadily increased since the early 2000s. Results are consistent with those presented previously: all heterogamous couples show a higher risk of union dissolution (Panel B, Table S.9).

We also considered a different measure of political heterogamy based on the left-right scale, a widely used measure of individuals self-reported political ideology (Jost et al. 2009). Prior research underlined that most of the heterogamous couples do not display strong political preferences (e.g., Daenekindt et al. 2020). We analysed an alternative measure of political identification –assigning a score to the left-right gradient – which enabled us to assess if the strength of party identification plays a role in partnership stability. More specifically, we built a continuous measure of political distance between partners by taking the absolute difference between partners' self-positioning on the left-right. The self-positioning on the left-right scale, however, is available only on subsample of Understanding Society's Innovation Panel. Figure S.2 describes the distribution of the left-right scale and political distance variables, and Table S.10 reports multivariable results where political distance is used as a measure of partners' political heterogamy. Results confirm that heterogamy is associated with increased union dissolution: each additional

point of distance on the left-right continuum among partners increases the odds of dissolution by 22%.

Finally, we account for gender when considering our party homogamy measure. For example, the ‘Tory/Labour’ group is detailed as ‘Man Tory/Woman Labour’ and ‘Man Labour/Man Tory’. This analysis is motivated by well-known gender differences in political preferences (e.g., Kaufmann, 2002) and by previous studies on differential effects of certain types of heterogamy (e.g., by education) depending on which partner holds which attribute (e.g., educational hypogamy vs hypergamy; Grow et al. 2017). Results show, again, that heterogamous couples, independently of the gender distinction, are at higher risk of dissolution, although for some groups estimated odds ratios are not statistically significant (Panel C; Table S.9). Interestingly, among the heterogamous ‘Tory/Labor’ couples, the risk of dissolution is higher when the woman identified with the Labor party and the men with the Tories than vice versa.

DISCUSSION

This work contributes to the literature on assortative mating and partnership dissolution (Kalmijn 1994; Schwartz and Mare, 2005, 2012) and, for the first time, it considers the extent to which a new dimension of partnership homogamy based on political preferences influences union dissolution. We analyse three indicators of political homogamy, related to party affiliation and opinion on Brexit, for up to 29,000 British couples. Our empirical approach allows us to show that partners’ political preferences have a substantial impact on partnership stability, independently of the effect of other dimensions of partnership homogamy. More specifically, our contribution is threefold.

First, we explore in detail an aspect of partnership homogamy that has been surprisingly understudied: partnership dissolution based on political views. We find that partners who share similar political views are less likely to separate as compared to partners who report different political affiliation, in line with *Hypothesis 1*. In addition, couples where one partner reports a political affiliation while the other does not are at higher risk of dissolution than homogamous couples, as predicted by *Hypothesis 2*. Conservative couples (‘Tory’) do not statistically differ from the homogamous couples of ‘Labour’, ‘LibDem’ and ‘Other’ parties in terms of risk of dissolution, suggesting that homogamy *per se* is a marker of partnership stability more than party-specific homogamy. We also find that union dissolution is lower for couples where both partners

are affiliated to the same party as compared to couples where both partners are not affiliated to any party, in agreement with *Hypothesis 3*.

The effects of political heterogamy are practically important and similar (and higher in some cases) to those of other types of heterogamy (by age, education, ethnicity, religiosity and job class). These findings run against prior evidence that found that ‘agreement on politics’ was considered important for a partnership’s success by a small minority of couples, and it was thought less relevant than other dimensions of homogamy such as a social background and religion (Lampard 1997). These findings might reflect the possible underestimation of public perception of political issues for a couple’s stability, despite the high levels of observed political homogamy.

Instead, we do not find support for *Hypothesis 4*. Our findings show in fact that the risk of union dissolution does not significantly differ by the type of heterogamous couple (‘Tory/Labour’, ‘Tory/LibDem’, ‘Labour/LibDem’), suggesting that heterogamy *per se* matters for union (in)stability rather than the political distance between the two partners’ parties.

Second, we show that punctual markers of political cleavage, such as the opinion on Brexit referendum, may matter for partnership instability. The evidence confirms *Hypothesis 5* that political heterogamy can manifest itself not only along the lines of party affiliation – hence identarian and long-term values –, but also according to an emerging dimension of the political debate. What is more, we find the effect of Brexit heterogamy to be even much stronger than that of general political heterogamy. Our results point to a demographically unintended effect of Brexit, i.e. an increased risk of dissolution for heterogamous couples.

Third, we contribute to the growing field of Political Demography (Goldstone et al. 2012) that has been focussing on the macro- and micro-level interrelations between demographic and political changes (Mogi and Arpino, 2022; Sommer, 2018; Vogl and Freese, 2020). In particular, our study on the intersection between political preferences and union dissolution, provides new insights on the contribution of marriage market’s dynamics on political polarization, which has mainly addressed the dynamics of relationship sorting (or partnership formation: Anderson et al. 2014; Huber and Malhotra 2017). We show that political sorting also takes place over the course of the relationship and couples who lack the ability or willingness to align in their political views, or deal with political divergences, are at higher risk of being selected out over time. Thus, political sorting is apparent not only in the formation of romantic partnerships (e.g.,

Anderson et al. 2014) but also in partnership opting out, which implies that contemporary patterns of family dynamics tend to strengthen cleavages also along the political dimension. Therefore, political homogamy could be another source of partnership sorting besides age (England et al. 2016), social stratification (Schwartz and Mare 2005), education (Schwartz and Mare 2012), ethnicity (Wong 2016).

Our findings can be interpreted based on theoretical arguments from the general *homogamy theory*. In line with the *cultural distance argument*, political homogamy can be considered a marker of cultural homogeneity of partners, which is correlated with partnership stability independent of other proxies for partners' homogamy. As a matter of fact, partners with shared political values appear to be bound, while couples in which at least one partner does not manifest any affiliation are comparable to heterogamous couples when it comes to partnership survival. Based on the *social boundary* argument, our results suggest that individuals who enter a union with a partner with different political preferences cross boundaries in society and this behaviour may be disapproved by family, friends and community. Future studies may attempt at adjudicate between the two mechanisms or assess whether both are at work.

Our study has limitations. The data did not allow us to measure the strength of party identification in the main analyses. However, we showed that a robustness check on a subsample where the self-positioning on the left-right scale is available confirmed the main results.

Another limitation is the lack of information of political preferences for all partners before they enter the relationship, as some of them joined the surveyed households only after becoming co-residential partners. Thus, we cannot rule out that one partner had an influence on the other partner's political preferences. Future studies must consider a behavioral change from entering a relationship and the phenomenon of convergence (Arránz Becker and Lois 2010). A couple's political similarity might increase over time even if the partners do not *actively* influence each other because partners might react to common experiences and shared influences (Stocker and Jenning 2005). Finally, as all studies on the association between couples heterogamies and union dissolution, our results may be affected by selection into union. In particular, the role of divergence in political preferences might be underestimated because some heterogamous partnerships are simply not formed to avoid political arguments. Despite this, our findings point to a relevant role of political heterogamy among those couples that are actually formed.

Our study has implications for the understanding of the dynamics of polarization in the society. Prior research has stressed the far-ranging consequences of union dissolution, such as the widening gap in wealth accumulation (Boertien and Lersch 2021). Also, as with growing stratification in partnerships along the socio-economic dimension, this study raises the possibility that partnership sorting amplifies differences in the distribution of resources, which are affected by the ability to affect the public sphere. For instance, if engaged people are more likely to sort and stay together, and political engagement is stronger among couples (Voorpostel and Coffé 2012), then politically engaged couples might affect policy outcomes more strongly than politically non-engaged couples and single people.

Further, political agreement within the household risks feeding political enclaves and, possibly, increase intergenerational transmission of political homogamy and polarization (Jennings and Niemi 1968; Jennings et al. 2009). Prior research suggested that political preference tends to pass to the next generation (Lampard 1997). This would imply that if there is any systematic survival advantage for homogamous partnerships along the lines of political affiliation, children from homogamous couples would be more likely to be stronger supporters of the party they identify with than those who grow up in heterogamous couples. The intergenerational reproduction of political preferences deserves more consideration in the light of increasingly fragmented democratic societies, as decision-making becomes more skewed towards the interest of the engaged and most polarised, and large shares of the population increasingly withdraw from the political arena (Janmaat and Hoskins 2021).

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Tables and figures

Table 1. Risk of union dissolution by political homogamy (and homogamy in other dimensions). Odds ratios.

	Models					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Political homogamy (<i>Ref = Same party</i>)						
Different party	1.36** (0.10)	1.36** (0.10)	1.38** (0.10)	1.38** (0.10)	1.38** (0.10)	1.39** (0.10)
No affiliation/some party	1.45** (0.10)	1.44** (0.09)	1.41** (0.09)	1.41** (0.09)	1.41** (0.09)	1.39** (0.09)
No affiliation	1.36** (0.11)	1.35** (0.11)	1.29** (0.11)	1.29** (0.11)	1.29** (0.11)	1.25** (0.11)
Some party/Missing	1.31** (0.10)	1.30** (0.10)	1.38** (0.11)	1.04 (0.09)	1.04 (0.09)	1.03 (0.09)
No affiliation/Missing	1.42** (0.15)	1.41** (0.14)	1.45** (0.15)	1.07 (0.12)	1.06 (0.12)	1.03 (0.12)
Missing	1.50** (0.14)	1.50** (0.14)	1.51** (0.14)	1.29** (0.13)	1.27* (0.12)	1.26* (0.12)
Age homogamy						
Woman older		1.35** (0.11)	1.31** (0.11)	1.29** (0.11)	1.29** (0.10)	1.26** (0.10)
Man older		1.10 (0.07)	1.08 (0.07)	1.06 (0.07)	1.06 (0.07)	1.05 (0.07)
Education (<i>Ref = Homogamy</i>)						
Man more educated			1.23** (0.09)	1.23** (0.09)	1.23** (0.09)	1.17* (0.08)
Woman more educated			1.25** (0.09)	1.25** (0.09)	1.25** (0.09)	1.19* (0.09)
Ethnicity (<i>Ref = Homogamy</i>)						
Different ethnicity				1.28** (0.11)	1.27** (0.11)	1.29** (0.11)
At least one missing				2.32** (0.18)	2.17** (0.18)	2.16** (0.18)
Religion (<i>Ref = Homogamy</i>)						
Different religion					1.33** (0.10)	1.34** (0.10)
At least one missing					1.17** (0.06)	1.18** (0.06)
Job class (<i>Ref = Homogamy</i>)						
Man's job higher						1.37** (0.14)
Woman's job higher						1.07 (0.11)
Man's job higher/Woman OLF						1.11 (0.12)

Woman's job higher/Man OLF						1.23† (0.15)
At least one missing						1.53** (0.18)

Observations	231507	231507	231507	231507	231507	231507
Number of couples	28,173	28,173	28,173	28,173	28,173	28,173

** p<0.01, * p<0.05, † p<0.1.

OLF = Out of the labour force. In addition to the variables showed in the table, all models control for: Partners' age (linear and quadratic), cohort of birth (5-year groups), union status (cohabitation or marriage), presence of any dependent children, partnership duration (linear, quadratic, cubic). Robust standard errors (on the log-odds scale) are reported in parentheses. Full estimates are available in Table S.6 of the Supplementary Materials.

Table 2. Risk of union dissolution by party homogamy. Odds ratios.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Party homogamy (<i>Ref = Tory</i>)						
Labour	1.26* (0.13)	1.26* (0.13)	1.24* (0.12)	1.24* (0.12)	1.24* (0.125)	1.19† (0.119)
LibDems	0.97 (0.18)	0.97 (0.18)	1.01 (0.19)	1.02 (0.19)	1.02 (0.192)	1.00 (0.189)
Other	1.02 (0.15)	1.03 (0.15)	1.00 (0.148)	0.99 (0.15)	1.02 (0.151)	0.98 (0.145)
Tory/ Labour	1.40* (0.20)	1.40* (0.20)	1.39* (0.20)	1.39* (0.20)	1.39* (0.20)	1.38* (0.20)
Tory/LibDem	1.49* (0.25)	1.48* (0.25)	1.53* (0.26)	1.54* (0.263)	1.53* (0.26)	1.54* (0.26)
Labour/LibDem	1.57** (0.24)	1.57** (0.24)	1.61** (0.25)	1.62** (0.247)	1.63** (0.25)	1.59** (0.24)
Other mixed	1.62** (0.206)	1.62** (0.21)	1.61** (0.21)	1.60** (0.204)	1.61** (0.21)	1.55** (0.20)
Some party/No affiliation	1.63** (0.15)	1.62** (0.15)	1.57** (0.15)	1.56** (0.149)	1.58** (0.15)	1.52** (0.15)
No affiliation	1.53** (0.17)	1.52** (0.16)	1.44** (0.16)	1.43** (0.156)	1.45** (0.16)	1.36** (0.15)
Some party/Missing	1.47** (0.15)	1.46** (0.15)	1.54** (0.16)	1.15 (0.126)	1.16 (0.13)	1.12 (0.12)
No affil./Missing	1.60** (0.20)	1.59** (0.20)	1.62** (0.20)	1.19 (0.157)	1.19 (0.16)	1.12 (0.15)
Missing	1.69** (0.20)	1.68** (0.20)	1.68** (0.20)	1.43** (0.171)	1.43** (0.17)	1.37** (0.16)
Observations	231507	231507	231507	231507	231507	231507
Number of couples	28,173	28,173	28,173	28,173	28,173	28,173

** p<0.01, * p<0.05, † p<0.1. In addition to the variables showed in the table, all models control for: Partners' age (linear and quadratic), Cohort of birth (5-year groups), Union status (Cohabitation or marriage), presence of any dependent children, partnership duration (linear, quadratic, cubic). Robust standard errors (on the log-odds scale) are reported in parentheses. Full estimates are available in Table S.7 of the Supplementary Materials.

Table 3. Risk of union dissolution by Brexit homogamy. Odds ratios.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Brexit homogamy (<i>Ref = Remain</i>)						
Leave	1.06 (0.32)	1.04 (0.28)	1.07 (0.28)	1.07 (0.29)	1.07 (0.29)	1.04 (0.28)
Remain/Leave	2.36** (0.64)	2.43** (0.67)	2.23** (0.62)	2.38** (0.64)	2.36** (0.63)	2.33** (0.62)
Remain/Don't know or missing	5.47** (1.31)	5.79** (1.41)	3.87** (0.95)	3.65** (0.92)	3.47** (0.88)	3.36** (0.85)
Leave/Don't know or missing	5.16** (1.33)	5.34** (1.42)	3.59** (0.96)	3.40** (0.92)	3.23** (0.88)	3.15** (0.87)
Missing	3.77** (1.05)	3.80** (1.01)	3.07** (0.89)	2.98** (0.88)	2.86** (0.84)	2.80** (0.82)
Observations	50,898	50,898	50,898	50,898	50,898	50,898
Number of couples	14,857	14,857	14,857	14,857	14,857	14,857

** p<0.01, * p<0.05, † p<0.1

In addition to the variables showed in the table, all models control for: Partners' age (linear and quadratic), Cohort of birth (5-year groups), Union status (Cohabitation or marriage), presence of any dependent children, partnership duration (linear, quadratic, cubic). Robust standard errors (on the log-odds scale) are reported in parentheses. Full estimates are available in Table S.8 of the Supplementary Materials.

Figure 1. Percentage of couple types. ‘Political homogamy’ and ‘Party homogamy’.

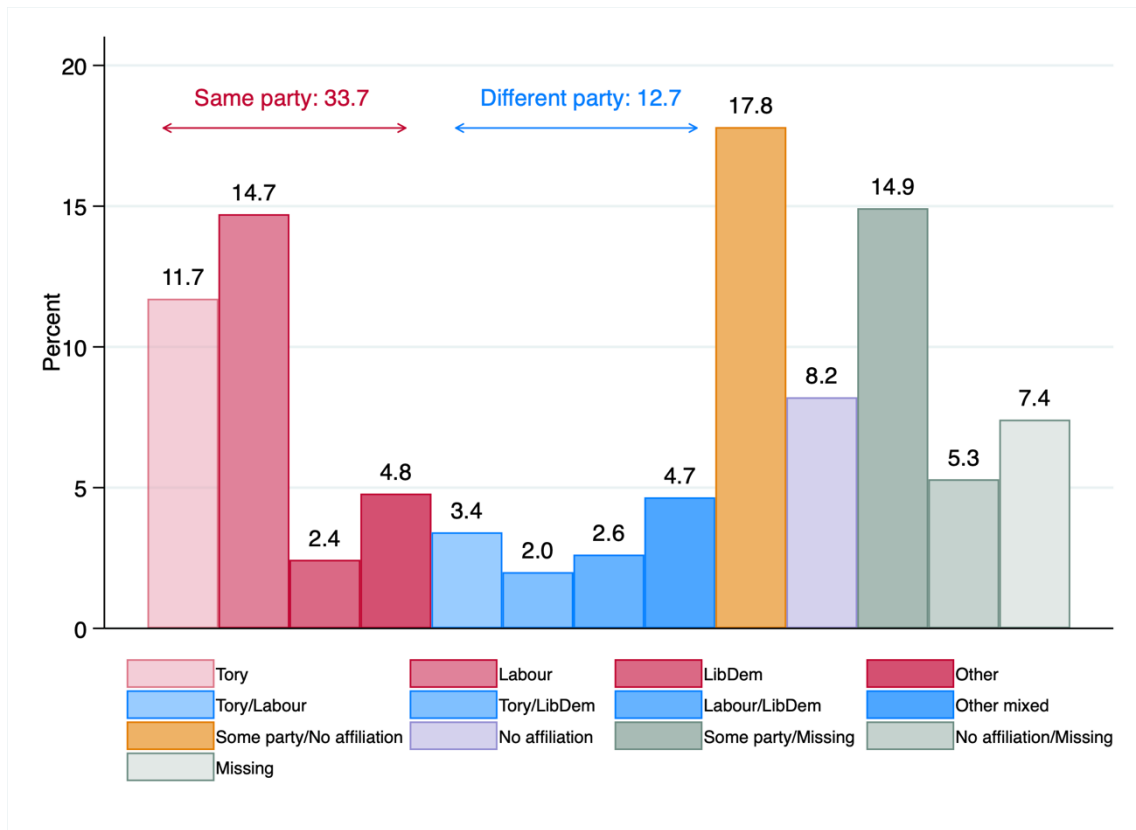


Figure 2. Percentage of couple types. 'Brexit homogamy'.

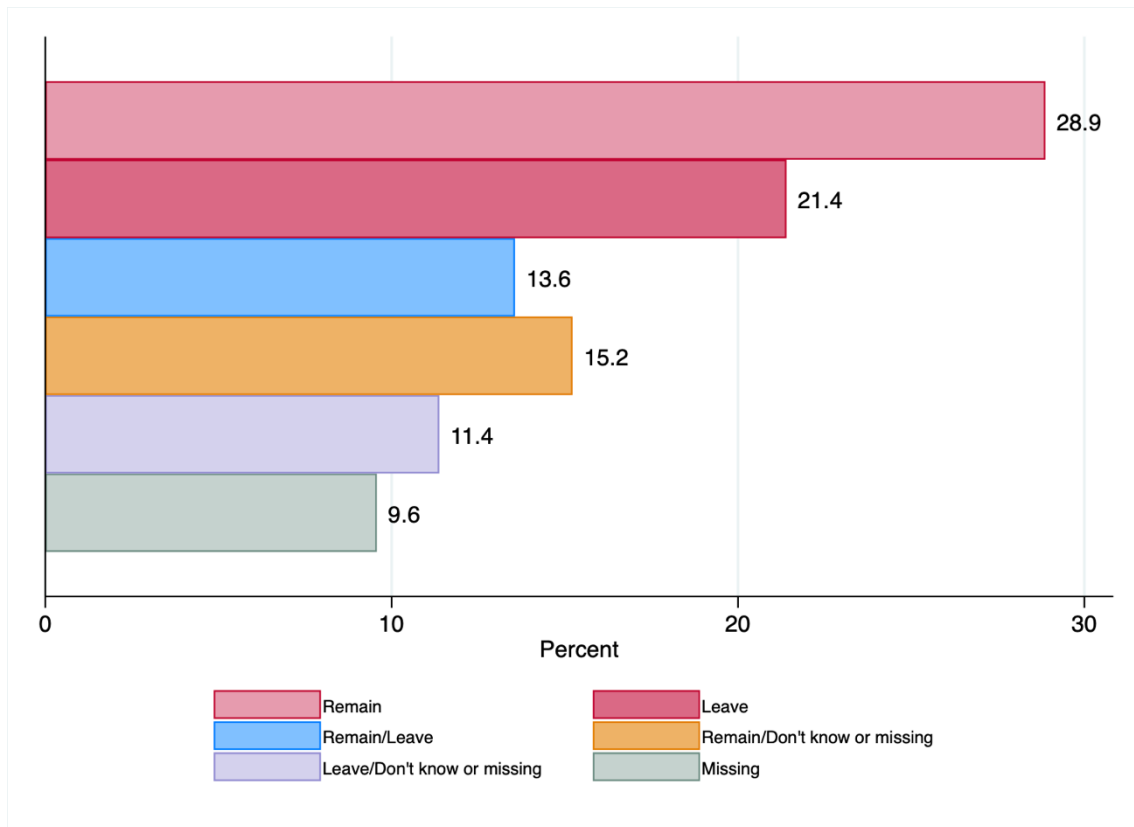
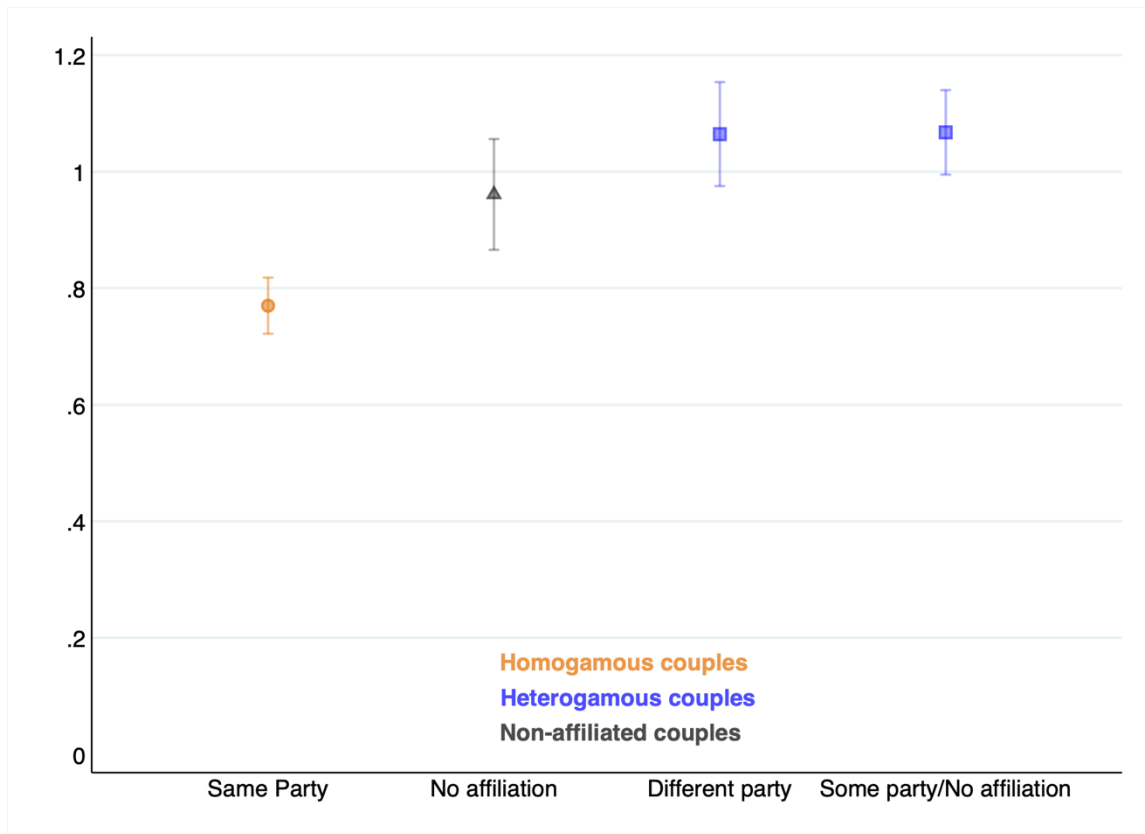
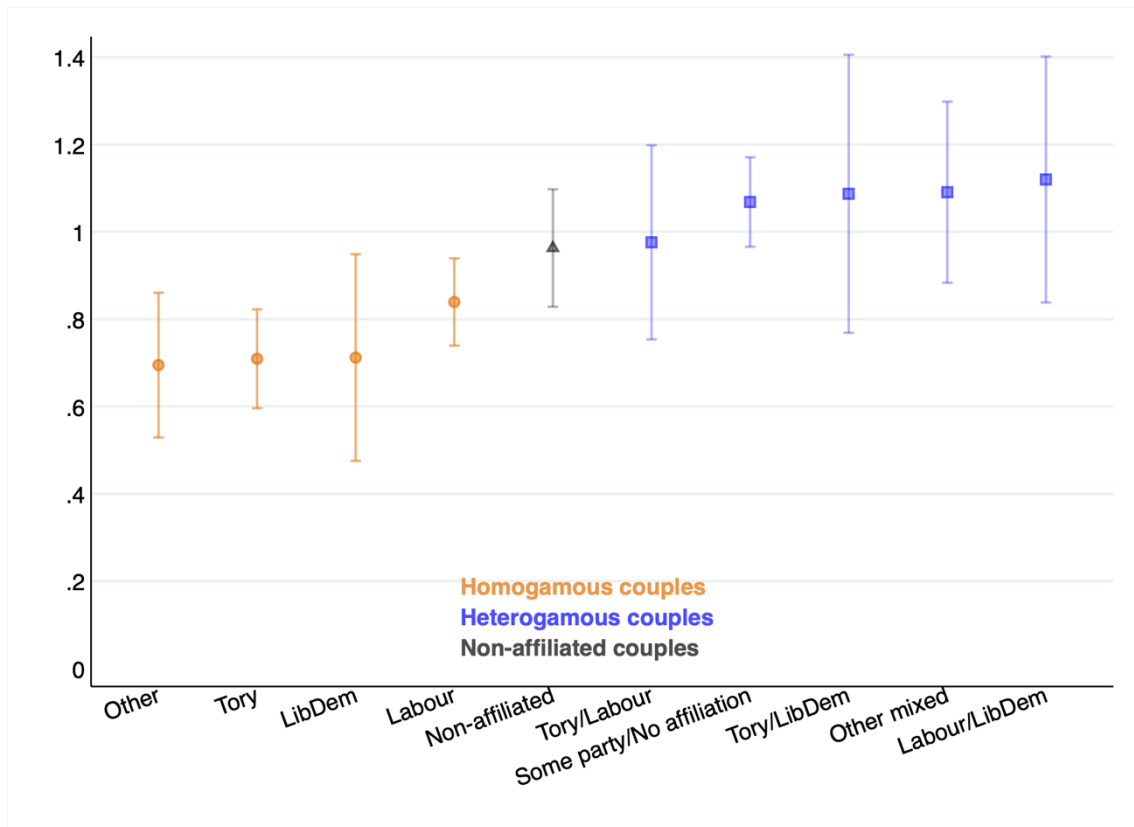


Figure 3. Predicted probabilities (%) of union dissolution by political homogamy with confidence intervals for 5%-level pair-wise comparisons.



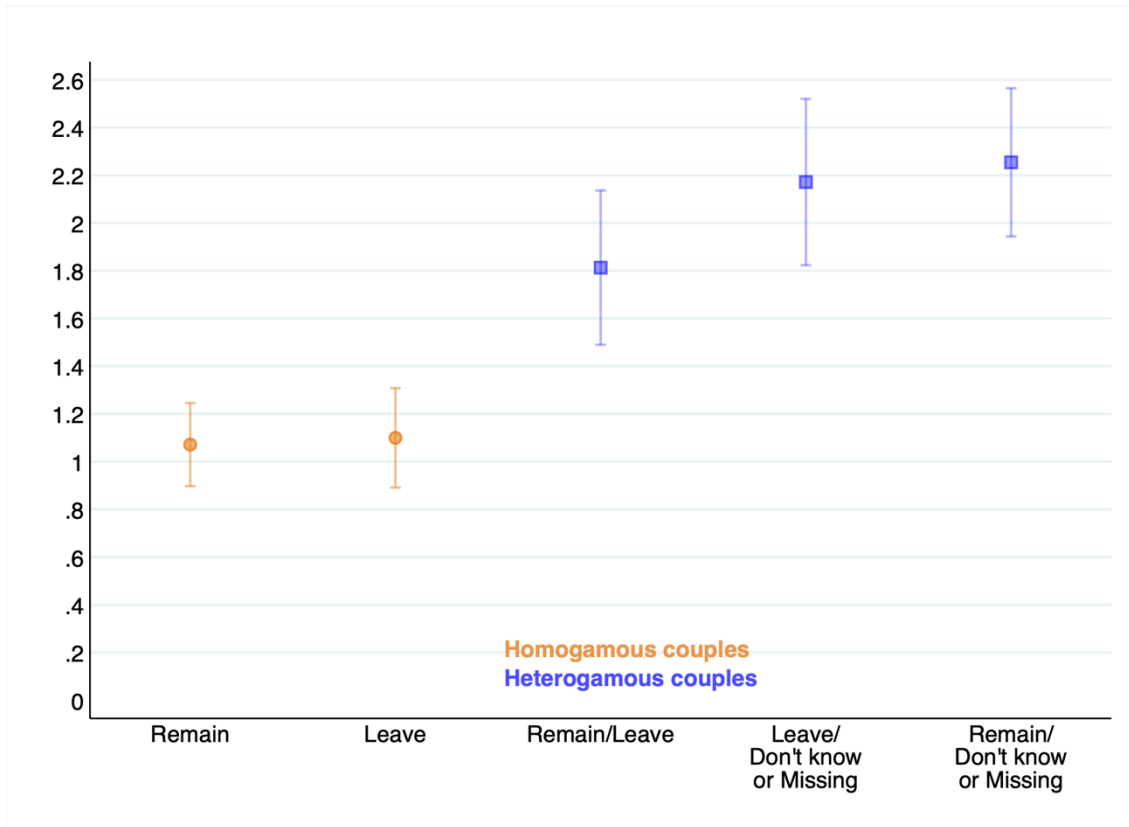
Note: The predicted probabilities are calculated averaging predictions obtained using observed values for the independent variables. Confidence intervals for pair-wise comparisons at an approximate 5% level are displayed (Goldstein and Healy 1995). A non-overlap of the confidence intervals indicates that the corresponding predictions are significantly different (MacGregor-Fors and Payton 2013).

Figure 4. Predicted probabilities (%) of union dissolution by party homogamy with confidence intervals for 5%-level pair-wise comparisons.



Note: The predicted probabilities are calculated averaging predictions obtained using observed values for the independent variables. Confidence intervals for pair-wise comparisons at an approximate 5% level are displayed (Goldstein and Healy 1995). A non-overlap of the confidence intervals indicates that the corresponding predictions are significantly different (MacGregor-Fors and Payton 2013).

Figure 5. Predicted probabilities (%) of union dissolution by Brexit homogamy with confidence intervals for 5%-level pair-wise comparisons.



Note: The predicted probabilities are calculated averaging predictions obtained using observed values for the independent variables. Confidence intervals for pair-wise comparisons at an approximate 5% level are displayed (Goldstein and Healy 1995). A non-overlap of the confidence intervals indicates that the corresponding predictions are significantly different (MacGregor-Fors and Payton 2013).

Supplementary Tables and Figures

Table S.1: Stability in couples types. Yearly transition probabilities. Political homogamy / heterogamy.

	Same party	Diff. party	No Aff. / Some	No aff.	Missing/ Some	Missing / No aff.	Missing	Tot.
Same party	71.27	7.26	9.79	1.96	3.56	0.38	5.78	100
Diff. party	19.89	51.94	16.17	2.89	3.26	0.49	5.37	100
Some party / No affil.	18.91	11.42	48.86	11.34	2.81	1.67	4.99	100
No affiliation	9.01	4.25	24.06	52.38	1.48	3.30	5.52	100
Some party / Missing	7.73	2.74	3.65	0.98	69.90	7.92	7.08	100
No affiliation / Missing	2.73	1.60	6.70	5.74	22.31	55.07	5.86	100
Missing	19.43	6.44	6.17	2.80	19.66	5.86	39.63	100

Table S.2: Stability in couples types. Yearly transition probabilities. Party homogamy / heterogamy.

	Tory	Labour	LibD.	Other	Tory/ Labour	Tory/ LibD.	Labour/ LibD.	Other Mixed	Aff./ None	No aff.	Aff./ Miss.	No aff./ Miss.	Miss.	Tot.
Tory	72.02	0.52	0.30	0.36	2.02	2.00	0.11	1.82	8.89	1.58	3.84	0.32	6.23	100
Labour	0.41	71.33	0.38	0.39	1.79	0.08	2.51	2.14	9.69	1.77	3.81	0.44	5.26	100
LibDem	1.48	2.88	55.77	0.66	0.55	4.58	7.59	3.46	14.11	3.20	2.36	0.45	2.91	100
Other	0.81	0.76	0.14	66.52	0.21	0.06	0.12	7.71	10.03	2.81	2.73	0.33	7.78	100
Tory/Labour	7.42	7.38	0.46	0.27	48.46	2.14	2.35	2.88	15.74	2.88	3.69	0.60	5.75	100
Tory/LibD.	12.44	0.91	5.37	0.35	5.08	43.53	2.01	2.98	16.78	2.93	3.00	0.37	4.24	100
Lab/LibDem	0.50	16.27	6.35	0.35	2.95	1.40	44.68	3.86	15.02	2.44	2.64	0.32	3.22	100
Other mixed	4.62	6.10	1.40	9.26	1.83	1.19	1.75	43.03	16.88	3.14	3.42	0.55	6.84	100
Aff./None	6.01	8.10	1.67	3.13	2.96	1.81	1.99	4.65	48.86	11.34	2.81	1.67	4.99	100
No affiliation	2.37	3.69	0.82	2.12	1.01	0.61	0.69	1.94	24.06	52.38	1.48	3.30	5.52	100
Aff./Missing	2.63	3.80	0.34	0.96	0.82	0.43	0.41	1.09	3.65	0.98	69.90	7.92	7.08	100
No aff./Miss.	0.74	1.42	0.19	0.38	0.50	0.19	0.15	0.75	6.70	5.74	22.31	55.07	5.86	100
Missing	7.23	9.03	0.82	2.35	2.03	0.86	1.03	2.53	6.17	2.80	19.66	5.86	39.63	100

Table S.3. Descriptive statistics (proportion or means and standard deviations) for the two analytical samples.

Variables	Political/party homogeneity		Brexit	
	No dissolution	Dissolution	No dissolution	Dissolution
	%	%	%	%
Age homogeneity				
Within -2 and 2 years	0.38	0.34	0.39	0.33
Woman 2+ years older	0.12	0.14	0.12	0.13
Man 2+ years older	0.50	0.52	0.49	0.53
Partnership status				
Cohabitation	0.40	0.50	0.43	0.66
Marriage	0.60	0.50	0.57	0.34
Any children	0.54	0.56	0.57	0.66
Union duration				
0-3 years	0.08	0.16	0.08	0.11
3-6 years	0.12	0.19	0.08	0.15
6-10 years	0.12	0.19	0.10	0.18
10-20 years	0.25	0.22	0.28	0.30
20+ years	0.44	0.24	0.44	0.23
Highest education				
Lower Secondary	0.27	0.30	0.21	0.23
Upper Secondary	0.33	0.39	0.30	0.33
Degree or higher	0.40	0.31	0.49	0.44
Education homogeneity				
Same education	0.35	0.33	0.34	0.32
Woman more educated	0.32	0.32	0.33	0.39
Man more educated	0.33	0.35	0.33	0.29
Ethnicity homogeneity				
Same ethnicity	0.76	0.74	0.78	0.72
Different ethnicity	0.07	0.08	0.08	0.10
Missing ethnicity	0.17	0.18	0.14	0.18
Religion homogeneity				
Same religion	0.32	0.36	0.33	0.37
Different religion	0.17	0.19	0.13	0.16
No/missing religion	0.51	0.45	0.54	0.48
Highest Job status (NS-SEC5)				
Management & professional	0.32	0.23	0.40	0.41
Intermediate	0.06	0.11	0.02	0.03
Small employers/own account	0.19	0.22	0.17	0.16
Lower supervisory/technical	0.06	0.09	0.05	0.08
Semi-routine/routine	0.10	0.11	0.10	0.13
N/A	0.27	0.23	0.26	0.19

Job homogamy				
Same job status	0.13	0.15	0.15	0.17
Both working: Male higher	0.12	0.14	0.14	0.20
Both working: Female higher	0.08	0.07	0.09	0.07
Man breadwinner/Woman Out-of-labour force	0.15	0.14	0.16	0.15
Woman breadwinner/Man Out-of-labour force	0.13	0.09	0.11	0.09
N/A	0.40	0.40	0.35	0.31
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Mean</i>
	<i>(sd)</i>	<i>(sd)</i>	<i>(sd)</i>	<i>(sd)</i>
Age Woman	50.42	44.72	49.97	46.12
	(16.15)	(17.41)	(15.05)	(14.97)
Age Man	52.94	47.38	52.43	43.00
	(16.39)	(17.90)	(15.25)	(14.52)
Woman's birth cohort	1962.90	1963.24	1966.04	1973.04
	(16.55)	(19.50)	(15.07)	(14.52)
Man's birth cohort	1960.38	1960.58	1963.58	1969.87
	(16.78)	(19.94)	(15.27)	(14.97)
Number of couples	26164	2090	13543	285

Note: proportions are reported for each category of the qualitative variables. For numerical variables the mean and standard deviation are reported.

Table S.4. Incidence of separation: political/party homogamy and heterogamy

Couple type	Couples-years	Yearly incidence (%)
<i>Homogamous</i>		
Same party	77,907	0.71
Tory	27,115	0.59
Labour	34,066	0.84
LibDem	5,640	0.62
Other party	11,086	0.62
<i>Heterogamous</i>		
Different party	29,372	0.97
Tory/Labour	7,903	0.94
Tory/LibDem	4,652	0.97
Labour/LibDem	6,066	1.00
Other mixed	10,778	0.99
Some party/No affiliation	41,231	1.08
<i>Other / missing</i>		
No affiliation	19,007	1.13
Some party/Missing	34,559	0.88
No affiliation/Missing	12,265	1.00
Missing	17,166	0.92
Total	231,507	

Table S.5. Incidence of separation by Brexit opinion. Wave 6.

Couple type	Couples	Yearly incidence (%)
<i>Homogamous</i>		
Remain	3,981	0.77
Leave	2,897	0.93
<i>Heterogamous</i>		
Remain/Leave	1,836	1.69
<i>Other / missing</i>		
Leave/Don't know	2,061	1.65
Remain/Don't know	1,540	1.30
At least one missing	1,296	0.88
Total	14,857	

Table S.6: Political homogamy. Risk of union dissolution. Odds ratios. Complete estimates.

	(1) Baseline	(2) +Age	(3) +Education	(4) +Ethnicity	(5) +Religion	(6) +Job class
Political homogamy (<i>Ref</i> = Same party)						
Different party	1.36*** (0.100)	1.36*** (0.100)	1.38*** (0.102)	1.38*** (0.102)	1.38*** (0.102)	1.39*** (0.103)
Some party/No affiliation	1.45*** (0.095)	1.44*** (0.094)	1.41*** (0.093)	1.41*** (0.093)	1.41*** (0.093)	1.39*** (0.092)
No affiliation	1.36*** (0.114)	1.35*** (0.114)	1.29*** (0.109)	1.29*** (0.109)	1.29*** (0.110)	1.25*** (0.107)
Some party/Missing	1.31*** (0.096)	1.30*** (0.096)	1.38*** (0.109)	1.04 (0.089)	1.04 (0.089)	1.03 (0.089)
No affiliation/Missing	1.42*** (0.145)	1.41*** (0.144)	1.45*** (0.154)	1.07 (0.120)	1.06 (0.119)	1.03 (0.116)
Missing	1.50*** (0.142)	1.50*** (0.141)	1.51*** (0.143)	1.29*** (0.125)	1.27** (0.124)	1.26** (0.123)
Man's age (linear)	0.94** (0.026)	0.95* (0.027)	0.95* (0.027)	0.95* (0.027)	0.96 (0.027)	0.96 (0.027)
Man's age (squared)	1.00 (0.000)	1.00 (0.000)	1.00 (0.000)	1.00 (0.000)	1.00 (0.000)	1.00 (0.000)
Woman's age (linear)	0.99 (0.028)	0.98 (0.028)	0.99 (0.028)	0.98 (0.028)	0.99 (0.028)	0.99 (0.028)
Woman's age (squared)	1.00 (0.000)	1.00 (0.000)	1.00 (0.000)	1.00 (0.000)	1.00 (0.000)	1.00 (0.000)
Children in the household	1.20*** (0.071)	1.20*** (0.071)	1.16** (0.069)	1.17*** (0.069)	1.17*** (0.069)	1.14** (0.068)
Union status (<i>Ref</i> = Married)						
Cohabiting	0.61*** (0.033)	0.62*** (0.034)	0.62*** (0.034)	0.63*** (0.035)	0.63*** (0.035)	0.64*** (0.035)
Union duration (linear)	1.00*** (0.001)	1.00*** (0.001)	1.00*** (0.001)	1.00*** (0.001)	1.00*** (0.001)	1.00*** (0.001)
Union duration (squared)	1.00*** (0.000)	1.00*** (0.000)	1.00*** (0.000)	1.00*** (0.000)	1.00*** (0.000)	1.00*** (0.000)
Union duration (cubic)	1.00*** (0.000)	1.00*** (0.000)	1.00*** (0.000)	1.00*** (0.000)	1.00*** (0.000)	1.00*** (0.000)
Age difference (<i>Ref</i> = -2 to 2--year difference)						

Woman 2+ years older	1.35*** (0.109)	1.31*** (0.106)	1.29*** (0.105)	1.29*** (0.104)	1.26*** (0.102)
Man 2+ years older	1.10 (0.069)	1.08 (0.067)	1.06 (0.067)	1.06 (0.066)	1.05 (0.066)
Education homogamy (<i>Ref</i> = Same education)					
Man higher education		1.23*** (0.087)	1.23*** (0.087)	1.23*** (0.087)	1.17** (0.084)
Woman higher education		1.25*** (0.088)	1.25*** (0.088)	1.25*** (0.088)	1.19** (0.085)
At least one missing		0.92 (0.079)	0.76*** (0.068)	0.71*** (0.066)	0.66*** (0.066)
Highest education between partners (<i>Ref</i> = Degree)					
Other higher		1.16* (0.097)	1.17* (0.098)	1.17* (0.098)	1.08 (0.092)
A level etc		1.41*** (0.099)	1.43*** (0.101)	1.43*** (0.101)	1.28*** (0.093)
GCSE etc		1.32*** (0.102)	1.33*** (0.103)	1.33*** (0.103)	1.13 (0.093)
Other qualification		1.56*** (0.166)	1.57*** (0.167)	1.58*** (0.168)	1.31** (0.144)
No qualification		1.59*** (0.172)	1.61*** (0.176)	1.62*** (0.177)	1.28** (0.147)
Missing		1.45*** (0.146)	1.37*** (0.139)	1.61*** (0.175)	1.21 (0.150)
Ethnicity (<i>Ref</i> = Same ethnicity)					
Different ethnicity			1.28*** (0.108)	1.27*** (0.107)	1.29*** (0.109)
Some missing ethnicity			2.32*** (0.184)	2.17*** (0.177)	2.16*** (0.177)
Religion (<i>Ref</i> = Same religion)					
Different religion				1.33*** (0.095)	1.34*** (0.096)
No/missing religion				1.17*** (0.062)	1.18*** (0.062)
Highest job class between partners (<i>Ref</i> = Upper management & professional)					
Higher professional					1.11 (0.183)

Lower management & professional						1.28*
						(0.189)
Intermediate						1.32
						(0.227)
Small employers & own account						1.47**
						(0.227)
Lower supervisory & technical						1.51***
						(0.239)
Semi-routine						1.81***
						(0.289)
Routine						1.81***
						(0.290)
Out of labour force (OLF) / missing						1.56***
						(0.246)
Job class homogamy (<i>Ref</i> = Same job class)						
Man's job higher						1.37***
						(0.139)
Woman's job higher						1.07
						(0.113)
Man's job higher - Woman OLF/missing						1.11
						(0.116)
Woman's job higher - Man OLF/missing						1.23*
						(0.153)
Both OLF / missing						1.53***
						(0.179)
Cohort groups (5-year categories)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Constant	0.07***	0.07***	0.04***	0.03***	0.02***	0.01***
	(0.025)	(0.024)	(0.013)	(0.012)	(0.009)	(0.006)
Observations	231,507	231,507	231,507	231,507	231,507	231,507
Number of couples	28,173	28,173	28,173	28,173	28,173	28,173

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table S.7. Party homogamy. Risk of union dissolution. Odds ratios. Complete estimates.

	(1) Baseline	(2) +Age	(3) +Education	(4) +Ethnicity	(5) +Religion	(6) +Job class
Party homogamy (<i>Ref</i> = Same party)						
Labour	1.26** (0.126)	1.26** (0.125)	1.24** (0.124)	1.24** (0.124)	1.24** (0.125)	1.19* (0.119)
LibDems	0.97 (0.182)	0.97 (0.182)	1.01 (0.190)	1.02 (0.191)	1.02 (0.192)	1.00 (0.189)
Other	1.02 (0.150)	1.03 (0.152)	1.00 (0.148)	0.99 (0.147)	1.02 (0.151)	0.98 (0.145)
Tory/Labour	1.40** (0.199)	1.40** (0.199)	1.39** (0.197)	1.39** (0.198)	1.39** (0.198)	1.38** (0.197)
Tory/LibDem	1.49** (0.253)	1.48** (0.252)	1.53** (0.261)	1.54** (0.263)	1.53** (0.262)	1.54** (0.264)
Labour/LibDem	1.57*** (0.239)	1.57*** (0.239)	1.61*** (0.246)	1.62*** (0.247)	1.63*** (0.248)	1.59*** (0.243)
Other mixed	1.62*** (0.206)	1.62*** (0.206)	1.61*** (0.205)	1.60*** (0.204)	1.61*** (0.206)	1.55*** (0.198)
Some party/No affiliation	1.63*** (0.154)	1.62*** (0.153)	1.57*** (0.149)	1.56*** (0.149)	1.58*** (0.150)	1.52*** (0.145)
No affiliation	1.53*** (0.166)	1.52*** (0.164)	1.44*** (0.157)	1.43*** (0.156)	1.45*** (0.158)	1.36*** (0.150)
Some party/Missing	1.47*** (0.147)	1.46*** (0.146)	1.54*** (0.160)	1.15 (0.126)	1.16 (0.127)	1.12 (0.123)
No affiliation/Missing	1.60*** (0.197)	1.59*** (0.195)	1.62*** (0.204)	1.19 (0.157)	1.19 (0.157)	1.12 (0.149)
Missing	1.69*** (0.196)	1.68*** (0.195)	1.68*** (0.197)	1.43*** (0.171)	1.43*** (0.170)	1.37*** (0.164)
Man's age (linear)	0.94** (0.026)	0.95* (0.027)	0.95* (0.027)	0.95* (0.027)	0.96 (0.027)	0.96 (0.027)
Man's age (squared)	1.00* (0.000)	1.00 (0.000)	1.00 (0.000)	1.00 (0.000)	1.00 (0.000)	1.00 (0.000)
Woman's age (linear)	0.99	0.98	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99

	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.028)
Woman's age (squared)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Children in the household	1.20***	1.19***	1.16**	1.16**	1.17***	1.14**
	(0.071)	(0.070)	(0.069)	(0.069)	(0.069)	(0.068)
Union status (<i>Ref</i> = Married)						
Cohabiting	0.61***	0.62***	0.62***	0.64***	0.63***	0.64***
	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.035)
Union duration (linear)	1.00***	1.00***	1.00***	1.00***	1.00***	1.00***
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Union duration (squared)	1.00***	1.00***	1.00***	1.00***	1.00***	1.00***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Union duration (cubic)	1.00***	1.00***	1.00***	1.00***	1.00***	1.00***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Age difference (<i>Ref</i> = -2 to 2--year difference)						
Woman 2+ years older		1.35***	1.31***	1.29***	1.29***	1.26***
		(0.109)	(0.106)	(0.104)	(0.104)	(0.102)
Man 2+ years older		1.10	1.08	1.06	1.06	1.05
		(0.069)	(0.067)	(0.067)	(0.066)	(0.066)
Education homogamy (<i>Ref</i> = Same education)						
Man higher education			1.23***	1.23***	1.23***	1.17**
			(0.087)	(0.087)	(0.087)	(0.084)
Woman higher education			1.26***	1.25***	1.25***	1.19**
			(0.088)	(0.088)	(0.088)	(0.085)
At least one missing			0.92	0.76***	0.71***	0.67***
			(0.079)	(0.068)	(0.066)	(0.066)
Highest education between partners (<i>Ref</i> = Degree)						
Other higher			1.16*	1.17*	1.17*	1.09
			(0.098)	(0.099)	(0.098)	(0.093)
A level etc			1.41***	1.43***	1.43***	1.28***
			(0.099)	(0.101)	(0.101)	(0.094)
GCSE etc			1.31***	1.33***	1.33***	1.14
			(0.102)	(0.103)	(0.104)	(0.093)
Other qualification			1.55***	1.56***	1.57***	1.31**
			(0.165)	(0.166)	(0.167)	(0.144)
No qualification			1.56***	1.59***	1.60***	1.28**
			(0.170)	(0.174)	(0.175)	(0.146)

Missing	1.45*** (0.146)	1.37*** (0.139)	1.60*** (0.174)	1.21 (0.151)
Ethnicity (<i>Ref</i> = Same ethnicity)				
Different ethnicity		1.27*** (0.108)	1.26*** (0.107)	1.28*** (0.109)
Some missing ethnicity		2.32*** (0.184)	2.17*** (0.177)	2.16*** (0.177)
Religion (<i>Ref</i> = Same religion)				
Different religion			1.33*** (0.095)	1.34*** (0.096)
No/missing religion			1.18*** (0.062)	1.18*** (0.062)
Highest job class between partners (<i>Ref</i> = Upper management & professional)				
Higher professional				1.55*** (0.243)
Lower management & professional				1.11 (0.182)
Intermediate				1.27 (0.188)
Small employers & own account				1.31 (0.224)
Lower supervisory & technical				1.46** (0.225)
Semi-routine				1.49** (0.236)
Routine				1.78*** (0.285)
Out of labour force (OLF) / missing				1.79*** (0.287)
Job class homogamy (<i>Ref</i> = Same job class)				
Man's job higher				1.37*** (0.139)
Woman's job higher				1.08 (0.113)
Man's job higher - Woman OLF/missing				1.11 (0.116)

Woman's job higher - Man OLF/missing						1.22 (0.152)
Both OLF / missing						1.52*** (0.179)
Cohort groups (5-year categories)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Constant	0.06*** (0.023)	0.06*** (0.022)	0.03*** (0.012)	0.03*** (0.010)	0.02*** (0.008)	0.01*** (0.005)
Observations	231,507	231,507	231,507	231,507	231,507	231,507
Number of couples	28,173	28,173	28,173	28,173	28,173	28,173

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table S.8. Brexit homogamy. Risk of union dissolution. Odds ratios. Complete estimates.

	(1) Baseline	(2) +Age	(3) +Education	(4) +Ethnicity	(5) +Religion	(6) +Job class
Brexit opinion homogamy (<i>Ref</i> = Remain)						
Leave	1.06 (0.281)	1.04 (0.285)	1.07 (0.283)	1.07 (0.290)	1.07 (0.288)	1.04 (0.280)
Remain/Leave	2.36*** (0.637)	2.44*** (0.674)	2.33*** (0.615)	2.37*** (0.640)	2.36*** (0.633)	2.33*** (0.624)
Remain/Don't know	5.48*** (1.305)	5.79*** (1.408)	3.87*** (0.954)	3.65*** (0.926)	3.47*** (0.876)	3.36*** (0.851)
Leave/Don't know	5.16*** (1.332)	5.34*** (1.411)	3.59*** (0.963)	3.40*** (0.940)	3.23*** (0.888)	3.12*** (0.868)
At least one missing	3.77*** (1.052)	3.80*** (1.088)	3.07*** (0.888)	2.98*** (0.882)	2.86*** (0.842)	2.80*** (0.825)
Man's age (linear)	1.39** (0.214)	1.50** (0.237)	1.45** (0.217)	1.47** (0.225)	1.45** (0.221)	1.48** (0.225)
Man's age (squared)	1.00 (0.001)	1.00 (0.001)	1.00 (0.001)	1.00 (0.001)	1.00 (0.001)	1.00 (0.001)
Woman's age (linear)	0.73** (0.107)	0.68** (0.104)	0.69*** (0.099)	0.69** (0.101)	0.69*** (0.100)	0.68*** (0.099)
Woman's age (squared)	1.00* (0.001)	1.00* (0.001)	1.00* (0.001)	1.00* (0.001)	1.00* (0.001)	1.00* (0.001)
Children in the household						
1	1.03 (0.276)	1.03 (0.284)	1.04 (0.269)	1.03 (0.277)	1.03 (0.273)	1.04 (0.275)
2+	1.27 (0.292)	1.26 (0.299)	1.29 (0.289)	1.31 (0.303)	1.31 (0.301)	1.32 (0.304)
Union status (<i>Ref</i> = Married)						
Cohabiting	5.15*** (0.953)	5.21*** (0.987)	4.57*** (0.833)	4.73*** (0.876)	4.59*** (0.846)	4.57*** (0.847)
Union duration (linear)	0.97	0.97	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98

	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.020)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.021)
Union duration (squared)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Age difference (<i>Ref</i> = -2 to 2--year difference)						
Woman 2+ years older		2.61***	2.48***	2.57***	2.51***	2.49***
		(0.714)	(0.640)	(0.683)	(0.661)	(0.654)
Man 2+ years older		0.79	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.79
		(0.177)	(0.169)	(0.173)	(0.171)	(0.169)
Education homogamy (<i>Ref</i> = Same education)						
Man higher education			0.68	0.68	0.68	0.67*
			(0.162)	(0.164)	(0.164)	(0.162)
Woman higher education			1.15	1.15	1.15	1.09
			(0.247)	(0.253)	(0.250)	(0.241)
At least one missing			1.82***	1.75***	1.52*	1.39
			(0.358)	(0.355)	(0.334)	(0.335)
Highest education between partners (<i>Ref</i> = Degree)						
Other higher			0.91	0.91	0.91	0.88
			(0.208)	(0.213)	(0.212)	(0.207)
A level etc			1.04	1.03	1.03	0.98
			(0.210)	(0.215)	(0.212)	(0.209)
GCSE etc			1.04	1.03	1.03	0.96
			(0.233)	(0.237)	(0.234)	(0.229)
Other qualification			0.82	0.81	0.82	0.79
			(0.290)	(0.295)	(0.296)	(0.291)
No qualification			0.93	0.9250	0.92	0.93
			(0.352)	(0.360)	(0.355)	(0.366)
Missing			0.56**	0.56**	0.68	0.80
			(0.152)	(0.155)	(0.220)	(0.287)
Ethnicity (<i>Ref</i> = Same ethnicity)						
Different ethnicity				0.97	0.96	0.97
				(0.263)	(0.258)	(0.261)
Some missing ethnicity				1.60**	1.57*	1.55*

	(0.376)	(0.364)	(0.362)
Religion (<i>Ref</i> = Same religion)			
Different religion		1.39	1.39
		(0.323)	(0.323)
No/missing religion		1.03	1.02
		(0.195)	(0.194)
Highest job class between partners (<i>Ref</i> = Upper management & professional)			
Higher professional			1.03
			(0.468)
Lower management & professional			0.94
			(0.448)
Intermediate			1.11
			(0.476)
Small employers & own account			0.94
			(0.497)
Lower supervisory & technical			0.88
			(0.424)
Semi-routine			1.04
			(0.527)
Routine			1.92
			(0.949)
Out of labour force (OLF) / missing			1.32
			(0.674)
Job class homogamy (<i>Ref</i> = Same job class)			
Man's job higher			1.20
			(0.356)
Woman's job higher			0.80
			(0.253)
Man's job higher - Woman OLF/missing			1.13
			(0.292)
Woman's job higher - Man OLF/missing			1.42

						(0.330)
Cohort groups (5-year categories)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Constant	0.00*** (0.000)	0.00*** (0.000)	0.00*** (0.000)	0.00*** (0.000)	0.00*** (0.000)	0.00*** (0.000)
Observations	50,898	50,898	50,898	50,898	50,898	50,898
Number of couples	14,857	14,857	14,857	14,857	14,857	14,857

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table S.9: Risk of union dissolution. Other specifications. Odds ratios. Fully adjusted model including all controls (Model M6).

<i>Panel A. Political homogamy: consistent or occasional.</i>												
<i>Ref = Consistently Same party</i>	<i>Occasionally Same party</i>	<i>Consistently Different party</i>	<i>Occasionally Different party</i>	<i>Some party/No affiliation</i>	<i>No affiliation</i>							
	1.30*** (0.124)	1.42*** (0.136)	1.60*** (0.165)	1.50*** (0.108)	1.35*** (0.122)							
Observations	231,507											
Number of couples	28,173											
<i>Panel B. Party homogamy without Scottish couples.</i>												
<i>Ref = Tory</i>	<i>Labour</i>	<i>LibDem</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Tory/Labour</i>	<i>Tory/LibDem</i>	<i>Labour/LibDem</i>	<i>Other mixed</i>					
	1.27* (0.137)	1.15 (0.224)	0.95 (0.160)	1.50*** (0.224)	1.70*** (0.304)	1.74*** (0.280)	1.53*** (0.224)					
Observations				208,128								
Number of couples				26,835								
<i>Panel C. Party homogamy by gender political preferences.</i>												
<i>Ref = Same party</i>	<i>Man Tory</i>	<i>Woman Labour</i>	<i>Man Labour</i>	<i>Woman Tory</i>	<i>Man Tory</i>	<i>Woman Other</i>	<i>Man Other</i>	<i>Woman Tory</i>	<i>Man Labour</i>	<i>Woman Other</i>	<i>Man Other</i>	<i>Woman Labour</i>
	1.52** (0.263)		1.22 (0.246)		1.35 (0.251)		1.31 (0.284)		1.95*** (0.285)		1.47** (0.240)	
		<i>Man Tory</i>	<i>Woman No affil</i>	<i>Man No affil</i>	<i>Woman Tory</i>	<i>Man Labour</i>	<i>Woman No affil</i>	<i>Man No affil</i>	<i>Woman Labour</i>	<i>Man Diff. affiliation</i>	<i>Woman affiliation</i>	
		0.98 (0.161)		1.34 (0.239)		1.66*** (0.208)		1.38** (0.202)		1.58** (0.320)		
Observations				231,507								
Number of couples				28,173								

Table S.10. Political distance. Risk of union dissolution. Odds ratios. Innovation Panel (Waves 8 to 12).

	(1) Baseline	(2) +Union	(3) +Education	(4) +Ethnicity	(5) +Religion	(6) +Job class
Political Distance	1.23** (0.126)	1.24** (0.129)	1.23** (0.126)	1.23** (0.126)	1.25** (0.129)	1.22** (0.122)
Political Distance (At least one "missing")	1.38 (0.512)	1.36 (0.514)	1.31 (0.486)	1.30 (0.484)	1.31 (0.495)	1.28 (0.473)
Political Distance (At least one "don't know")	2.13* (0.957)	2.21* (1.004)	1.99 (0.895)	1.99 (0.894)	2.03 (0.920)	2.04 (0.913)
Age (oldest partner)	0.93 (0.181)	0.95 (0.189)	0.97 (0.189)	0.97 (0.188)	0.99 (0.196)	1.00 (0.193)
Age squared	1.00 (0.004)	1.00 (0.004)	1.00 (0.004)	1.00 (0.004)	1.00 (0.004)	1.00 (0.004)
Age cubic	1.00 (0.000)	1.00 (0.000)	1.00 (0.000)	1.00 (0.000)	1.00 (0.000)	1.00 (0.000)
Union duration	0.96 (0.053)	0.96 (0.053)	0.96 (0.053)	0.97 (0.052)	0.96 (0.053)	0.96 (0.052)
Union duration squared	1.00 (0.001)	1.00 (0.001)	1.00 (0.001)	1.00 (0.001)	1.00 (0.001)	1.00 (0.001)
Union duration missing	0.51 (0.392)	0.50 (0.385)	0.54 (0.412)	0.54 (0.412)	0.53 (0.406)	0.55 (0.417)
Age difference (<i>Ref</i> = Between -2 and 2 yrs)						
Different age		0.83 (0.225)	0.84 (0.227)	0.84 (0.226)	0.82 (0.225)	0.82 (0.222)
Age missing		1.09 (0.431)	4.15 (5.202)	4.03 (5.060)	4.19 (5.462)	4.04 (5.297)
Education homogamy (<i>Ref</i> = <i>Same</i>)						
Different education			1.56 (0.515)	1.57 (0.517)	1.58 (0.522)	1.54 (0.507)
Missing			0.31 (0.395)	0.31 (0.388)	0.27 (0.357)	0.28 (0.363)
Highest Education between partners (<i>Ref</i> = <i>Higher</i>)						
Other higher			1.27	1.27	1.28	1.38

			(0.435)	(0.436)	(0.442)	(0.475)
A level etc			1.20	1.20	1.20	1.30
			(0.394)	(0.395)	(0.396)	(0.435)
GCSE etc			0.99	1.00	0.99	1.06
			(0.387)	(0.387)	(0.387)	(0.414)
Other qualification			1.29	1.29	1.28	1.43
			(0.729)	(0.727)	(0.728)	(0.808)
No qualification			2.71	2.73	2.78	2.93
			(1.762)	(1.768)	(1.812)	(1.910)
Ethnicity (<i>Ref = Same</i>)						
Ethnicity = 2, Different ethnicity				1.07	0.93	0.93
				(0.389)	(0.380)	(0.374)
Religion (<i>Ref = Same</i>)						
Different religion					1.50	1.48
					(0.787)	(0.759)
No/missing religion					0.84	0.85
					(0.239)	(0.240)
Job difference (<i>Ref = Same</i>)						1.25
						(0.206)
Current job - NS-SEC3 (<i>Ref = Managerial & supervisory</i>)						
Intermediate						0.59
						(0.260)
Routine						0.64
						(0.279)
Not defined						1.01
						(0.342)
Cohort groups (5-year categories)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Constant	0.47	0.33	0.19	0.19	0.12	0.17
	(1.640)	(1.168)	(0.664)	(0.668)	(0.432)	(0.594)
Observations	4,016	4,016	4,016	4,016	4,016	4,016
Number of couples	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Figure S.1. Homogamy by other dimensions. Risk of union dissolution. Predicted probabilities.

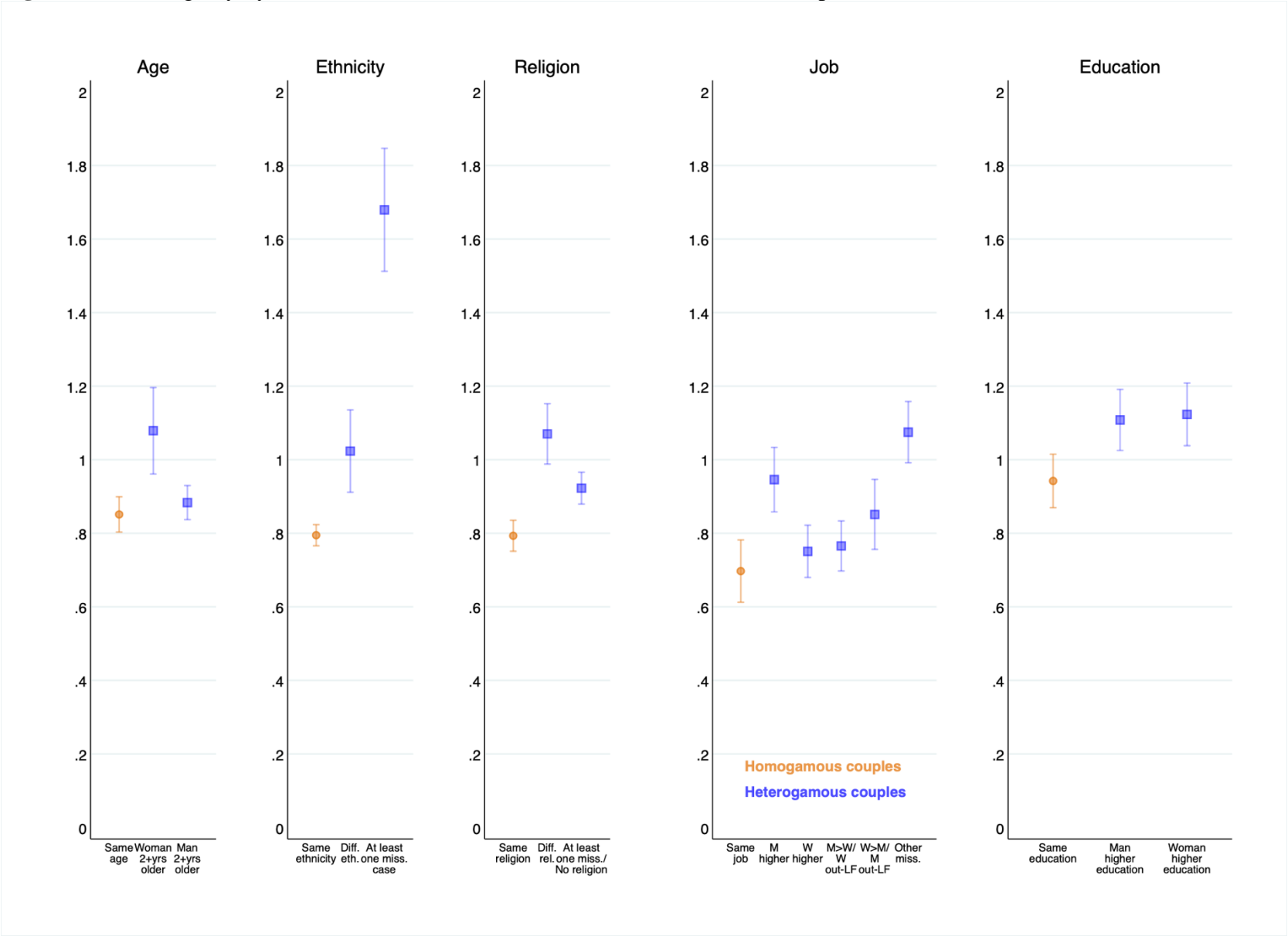


Figure S.2. Spectrum of political preferences (left) and distance of political preferences (right). Wave 8.

