

Do the various voting systems in the UK produce different results?

Exercise

1. Note the voting system for each of the assemblies listed
2. Note how (un)proportional each set of results appears to be
3. Note as many different reasons why / how the voting system or other factors may have affected the results
4. Does this change your mind on which is the best voting system to use in the UK?

party	Candidates	Number of votes	elected	Seats gained	Seats lost	Net change in seats	% seats	% vote	% change in vote
Conservative	631 <small>(table 1)</small>	10,703,654	306 <small>(table 2)</small>	100	3	+97	47.1	36.1	+3.7
Labour	631	8,606,517	258	3	94	-91	39.7	29.0	-6.2
Liberal Democrat	631	6,836,248	57	8	13	-5	8.8	23.0	+1.0
UKIP	572	919,471	0	0	0	0	0	3.1	+0.9
BNP	338	564,321	0	0	0	0	0	1.9	+1.2
SNP	59	491,386	6	0	0	0	0.9	1.7	+0.1
Green	310	265,243	1	1	0	+1	0.2	0.9	-0.2
Sinn Féin	17	171,942	5	0	0	0	0.8	0.6	-0.1
Democratic Unionist	16	168,216	8	0	1	-1	1.2	0.6	-0.3
Plaid Cymru	40	165,394	3	1	0	+1	0.5	0.6	-0.1

FPTP

Welsh Assembly election, 2011

AMS

Parties	Constituency (First past the post)					Regional (Additional member system)					Total seats 60		
	Votes	%	+/-	Seats	+/-	Votes	%	+/-	Seats	+/-	Total	+/-	%
Labour	401,677	42.3	+10.1	28	+4	349,935	36.9	+7.2	2	±0	30	+4	50.0
Conservative	237,388	25	+2.6	6	+1	213,773	22.5	+1.1	8	+1	14	+2	23.3
Plaid Cymru	182,907	19.3	-3.1	5	-2	169,799	17.9	-3.1	6	-2	11	-4	18.3
Liberal Democrats	100,259	10.6	-4.2	1	-2	76,349	8.0	-3.7	4	+1	5	-1	8.3
UKIP	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	43,756	4.6	+0.7	0	0	0	0	0.0
Green	1,514	0.2	N/A	0	0	32,649	3.4	±0.0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Socialist Labour	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	23,020	2.4	+1.2	0	0	0	0	0.0
BNP	7,056	0.7	N/A	0	0	22,610	2.4	-1.9	0	0	0	0	0.0
Welsh Christian	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	8,947	0.9	±0.0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Communist	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	2,676	0.3	-0.1	0	0	0	0	0.0

Scottish general election, 2011

AMS

Parties		Additional member system										Total seats		
		Constituency					Region							
		Votes	%	+/-	Seats	+/-	Votes	%	+/-	Seats	+/-	Total	+/-	%
	SNP	902,915	45.39	+12.46	53	+32	876,421	44.04	+13.03	16	-9	69	+23	53.49
	Labour	630,461	31.69	-0.45	15	-20	523,559	26.31	-2.85	22	+13	37	-7	28.68
	Conservative	276,652	13.91	-2.69	3	-3	245,967	12.36	-1.55	12	-2	15	-5	11.63
	Liberal Democrats	157,714	7.93	-8.25	2	-9	103,472	5.20	-6.10	3	-3	5	-12	3.88
	Scottish Green	—	—	—	—	—	87,060	4.38	+0.33	2	+1	2	+1	1.55
	Independent	12,357	0.62	-0.62	0	±0	22,306	1.12	+0.08	1	±0	1	±0	0.78
	Scottish Senior Citizens	1,618	0.08	±0.00	0	±0	33,253	1.67	-0.23	0	±0	0	±0	0.00
	UKIP	2,508	0.13	+0.13	0	±0	18,138	0.91	+0.51	0	±0	0	±0	0.00
	Socialist Labour	—	—	—	—	—	16,847	0.85	+0.15	0	±0	0	±0	0.00
	Scottish Christian	1,193	0.06	-0.17	0	±0	16,466	0.83	-0.47	0	±0	0	±0	0.00
	BNP	—	—	—	—	—	15,580	0.78	-0.42	0	±0	0	±0	0.00
	Scottish Socialist	—	—	—	—	—	8,272	0.42	-0.21	0	±0	0	±0	0.00

Northern Ireland Assembly election 2011 STV

Party	Leader	Candi- dates	Seats won	Change from 2007	First Preference votes	First Pref. %	Change from 2007	Council 1st pref. %	Seats on NI Execu- tive	Change from 2010
Democratic Unionist	Peter Robinson	44	38 (37)	+2	198,436	29.3%	-0.1%	27.2%	4 (5)	—
Sinn Féin	Gerry Adams	40	29	+1	178,224	26.3%	+0.7%	24.8%	3 (4)	—
SDLP	Margaret Ritchie	28	14	-2	94,286	13.9%	-1.0%	15.0%	1 (1)	—
Ulster Unionist	Tom Elliott	29	16	-2	87,531	12.9%	-1.7%	15.2%	1 (1)	-1
Alliance	David Ford	22	8	+1	50,875	7.5%	+2.5%	7.4%	1 (2)	+1
Traditional Unionist Voice	Jim Allister	12	1	+1	16,480	2.4%	N/A	2.0%	-	—
Green (NI)	Steven Agnew	6	1	—	6,031	0.9%	-0.8%	1.0%	-	—
People Before Profit	N/A	4	-		5,438	0.8%	+0.7%	0.3%		
UKIP	Nigel Farage	6	-		4,152	0.6%	+0.4%	0.4%		
Progressive Unionist	Brian Ervine	1	0	-1	1,493	0.2%	-0.4%	0.6%	-	—
BNP	Nick Griffin	3	-		1,252	0.2%	N/A	0.1%		
Workers' Party	Mick Finnegan	4	-		1,155	0.2%	+0.1%	0.1%		
Socialist Party	N/A	3	-		819	0.1%	+0.1%	0.1%		
Procapitalism	Charles Smyth	1	-		29	0.0%	+0.0%	0.0%		
Independents	N/A	15	1	—	15,535	2.3%	-0.5%	5.1%	-	—
TOTAL		218	108		661,736				10 (13)	—

European Parliament Election 2009
Closed Party List Regional

Party	Votes	Vote %	% Change	Seats	Seats Change	Relative Seats Change	Seats %
Conservative	4,198,394	27.7%	+1.0	25	-2	+1	37.7
UKIP	2,498,226	16.5%	+0.3	13	+1	+1	18.8
Labour	2,381,760	15.7%	-6.9	13	-6	-5	18.8
Liberal Democrat	2,080,613	13.7%	-1.2	11	-1	+1	15.9
Green	1,223,303	8.1%	+2.4	2	0	0	2.9
BNP	943,598	6.2%	+1.3	2	+2	+2	2.9
SNP	321,007	2.1%	+0.7	2	0	0	2.9
Plaid Cymru	126,702	0.8%	-0.1	1	0	0	1.4
English Democrats	279,801	1.8%	+1.1	0	0	0	0
Christian/Christian Peoples Alliance (Joint Ticket)	249,493	1.6%	+1.6	0	0	0	0
Socialist Labour	173,115	1.1%	+1.1	0	0	0	0
NO2EU	153,236	1.0%	+1.0	0	0	0	0
Scottish Green	80,442	0.5%	0.0	0	0	0	0
Jury Team	78,569	0.5%	+0.5	0	0	0	0
UK First	74,007	0.5%	+0.5	0	0	0	0
Libertas	73,544	0.5%	+0.5	0	0	0	0
Jan Jananayagam (Independent)	50,014	0.3%	+0.3	0	0	0	0
Pensioners	37,785	0.2%	+0.2	0	0	0	0
Mebyon Kernow	14,922	0.1%	+0.1	0	0	0	0
Animals Count	13,201	0.1%	+0.1	0	0	0	0
Scottish Socialist	10,404	0.1%	-0.3	0	0	0	0
Duncan Robertson (Independent)	10,189	0.1%	+0.1	0	0	0	0
Total	15,072,325			69	-6	0	100

All parties with over 10,000 votes listed.

Scotland

mostly in the south

London assembly election 2008

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Constituency seats (FPTP)

Party	Candi- dates	Votes	Share (%)	Change (%)	Seats	Loss/ Gain
Conservative	14	900,569	37.4	+6.2	8	-1
Labour	14	673,855	28.0	+3.3	6	+1
Liberal Democrat	14	330,018	13.7	-4.7	-	-
Green	14	194,059	8.1	+0.4	-	-
UKIP	14	71,984	3.0	-7.0	-	-
Christian Peoples †	13	65,357	2.7	+0.3	-	-
English Democrats	14	37,171	1.5	N/A	-	-
National Front	5	34,840	1.4	N/A	-	-
Left List	14	33,438	1.4	N/A	-	-
Respect	1	26,760	1.1	-3.5	-	-
BNP	1	18,020	0.7	N/A	-	-
Independent	3	11,096	-	-	-	-
Free England	1	2,908	0.2	N/A	-	-
Animals Count	1	1,828	0.1	N/A	-	-
Socialist (GB)	1	1,588	0.1	N/A	-	-
Socialist Alternative	1	1,587	0.1	N/A	-	-
Communist League	1	701	0.0	N/A	-	-
Veritas	1	510	0.0	N/A	-	-



Top up seats (Party List)

Party	Votes	Share	Change	Seats	Loss/Gain
Conservative	835,535	34.05%	+6.2%	3	+3
Labour	665,443	27.12%	+2.7%	2	-
Liberal Democrat	252,556	11.22%	-5.3%	3	-2
Green	203,465	8.29%	-0.1%	2	-
BNP	130,714	5.3%	+0.6%	1	+1
Christian Peoples	70,294	2.9%	+0.0%	-	-
Abolish the Congestion Charge	63,596	2.6%	N/A	-	-
Respect	59,721	2.4%	-2.1%	-	-
UKIP	46,617	1.9%	-6.3%	0	-2
English Democrats	25,569	1.0%	N/A	-	-
Left List	22,583	0.9%	N/A	-	-
Unity for Peace and Socialism	6,394	0.3%	N/A	-	-
Rathy Alagaratnam	3,974	0.2%	N/A	-	-
One London	3,430	0.1%	N/A	-	-

- ⇒ 2010 HoC election - FPTP
- Conservatives 47.1% seats
36.1% votes
 - UKIP 3.1% votes
0 seats
 - Green Party 0.9% votes
0.2% seats

Raid Cymru, Sinn Féin etc. (smaller, local independence parties) get fewer votes but they won seats because they are in smaller countries who will vote for them; in Devon, SNP etc. - no chance
 → than UKIP for example
 → Scot/Wales/NI

- ⇒ Welsh Assembly - AMS - + Scottish / like in Scotland
- more proportional - parties with few votes get few seats.
 → than FPTP

LD won 176,608 votes overall but got 5 seats, whereas the Green Party got 34,163 votes and no seats.

NI Assembly - STV

~~votes~~ - Ulster Unionist 7000 fewer votes than SDP but ~~won~~ more seats - so not very proportional. 9 more seats to Democ. Union than Sinn Féin, with 3% more of vote; so, more proportional than FPTP than AMS.

EU Parliament: (Party List)

Concentrated vote in small area = seat won.
 (Only parties ~~over~~ with over 10,000 votes listed.)
 Percentage of votes \approx seats won.

internal workings complicated, but

Quick checklist of qualities of electoral systems

Instruction: first, put a tick if you think the statement is true for each voting system, and then decide on a rank order for each system in terms of each statement

Used where?	System	Voters select named candidates not parties	No wasted votes	Likely to produce a demographically representative parliament	Likely to produce representative parliament in term of seats for parties	Equality of status of MPs	No need for tactical voting	Effective local constituency representation	Simple to understand	Simple to analyse results	Likely to produce a strong majority / Government	Avoids safe seats	Likely to increase participation / turnout
	FPP simple straight count	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
	STV	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
	Party List proportional open	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
	closed	✗	✓	✗	✗			✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
	AV	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	
	AV+ best of both proportional	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓					✓	
	SV		✓		✓	✗					✓		
	AMS proportional	✓	✓		✓	✗		✗	✓	✗		✗	✗