

National Assembly for Wales

European Parliamentary Election Results 2009 Research Paper

June 2009

This paper summarises the results of the European Parliamentary Elections held in Wales on 4 June 2009.

Figures are provided for votes, share of the vote and turnout in Wales. Some comparisons with countries across the EU are also included.

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National Assembly for Wales

European Parliamentary Election Results 2009 Research Paper

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Executive Summary

This paper is intended to provide a statistical overview of the European Parliamentary election results which took place across the European Union from 4 to 7 June 2009. The paper focuses in particular on results for Wales, for which voting took place on Thursday 4 June 2009.

The 2009 results for Wales were provided by the Regional Returning Officer. Information on turnout at the European elections from 1979 to 2009 and for individual EU Member States was obtained from the [European Parliament](#), as at 11 June 2009. The figures may have since been revised.

Summary of results

- Turnout across Wales was 30.5 per cent. Turnout in Wales was below that for the UK, 34.5 per cent, and was considerably lower than the turnout for the 2004 elections.
- In Wales, the Conservative Party secured the greatest share of the votes (21 per cent).
- The Conservatives, Labour, Plaid Cymru and the UK Independence Party each won one of the four seats in Wales.
- The four Members of the European Parliament elected to represent Wales were: Kay Swinburne, Derek Vaughan, Jill Evans and John Bufton.
- In Great Britain, the Conservatives won the greatest share of the vote (28 per cent) and secured 25 seats.
- Turnout across the European Union has fallen consistently since the first elections in 1979, from 62 per cent to 43 per cent in 2009. For the 2009 elections turnout in Wales was well below the EU average.
- Within Wales, turnout was highest in the constituencies of Carmarthen East and Dinefwr (38 per cent) and Brecon & Radnorshire (38 per cent). The constituencies with the lowest turnout were Swansea East (23 per cent) and Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney (24 per cent).

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European Parliamentary Election Results 2009

1 Introduction

Elections to the European Parliament took place across the European Union (EU) from 4 to 7 June 2009. In the United Kingdom voting was held on Thursday 4 June 2009. This paper provides a summary of the results of the election in Wales and includes some comparisons with results from the 2004 elections as well comparisons with the UK and across the EU.

2 History and role of the European Parliament

The European Parliament¹ is the European Community institution that represents the 492 million citizens of the 27 Member States of the EU.

The European Parliament is the only directly elected body of the EU. The Parliament has three main roles:

- **Legislative role:** makes decisions on new European laws, jointly with the Council of the European Union (also known as the Council of Ministers).²
- **Budgetary role:** adopts EU budget and monitors implementation of the budget, the Parliament and the Council also share authority over the annual budget of the EU.
- **Monitoring role:** monitors activities of the EU institutions, approves the appointment of President of European Commission and College of European Commissioners.

Over 80 per cent of EU legislation now goes through the Co-decision Procedure,³ which gives the European Parliament equal status alongside the European Council in passing legislation under this procedure.

Since 1958, the European Parliament has changed considerably, in part due to the progressive expansion of the EU. In this period, the number of Member States has grown from 6 to 27; the number of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) has risen from 142 to 736, and there are now 23 official languages of the EU compared to 4 in 1958. Furthermore, successive revisions of the Treaties have given the Parliament increased power, and it has moved from a mere consultative role in 1958, to co-decision with representatives of national governments on the majority of EU legislation.

Following the 2009 elections, the total number of MEPs is 736, in accordance with the Treaty of Nice,⁴ which is the legal basis for the elections. This number would have been

¹ [European Parliament](#) [accessed 11 June 2009]

² [Council of the European Union](#) [accessed 11 June 2009]. The Council is the main decision-making body of the European Union. The ministers of the Member States meet within the Council of the European Union. Depending on the issue on the agenda, each country will be represented by the minister responsible for that subject (foreign affairs, finance, social affairs, transport, agriculture, etc.). The presidency of the Council is held for six months by each Member State on a rotational basis.

³ European Commission, [Co-decision homepage](#) [accessed 16 June 2009]

⁴ [Treaty of Nice](#) [accessed 16 June 2009]

higher, 751 MEPs, had the Treaty of Lisbon⁵ been ratified on 1 January 2009. If the Treaty of Lisbon enters into force after the 2009 elections, the total number of MEPs will temporarily rise to 754 until the next elections due in 2014.

The UK is represented by 72 MEPs, covering 12 regions.

3 The electoral system

Elections for the European Parliament take place every five years. Members of the European Parliament are elected on a regional basis through a form of proportional representation, although differences exist between Member States in the methods used for this.

The UK is divided into 12 electoral regions, with between 3 and 10 MEPs representing each region. Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland each represent one region. England is divided into nine regions. In the 2009 elections, the English regions elected 59 MEPs, Scotland elected 6 MEPs, Wales 4 MEPs, and Northern Ireland 3 MEPs.

Each party puts forward a list of candidates, known as a regional list, which matches the number of seats to be filled in each region. An elector has one vote in which to elect all their MEPs. Electors vote for the political party (or an independent candidate not standing for a political party) they wish to represent their region. In each region the seats are allocated using a quota system, known as the d'Hondt system. Further details on the d'Hondt formula are provided in section 8 ([Sources and Notes](#)).

Each MEP represents the whole of their region rather than individual areas within it. Therefore, people living in any part of Wales are represented by all four MEPs.

⁵ [Treaty of Lisbon](#) [accessed 16 June 2009]

4 Results in Wales

Summary

The following section details how the four Welsh MEPs were elected. Table 1 shows the number of votes received by each of the political parties standing in the 2009 European Parliamentary elections in Wales. Figure 1 shows the vote share for each party.

- The turnout across Wales (measured as all votes cast as a percentage of the electorate) was 30.5 per cent. Turnout was lower than for the 2004 European Parliamentary elections.
- The Conservative Party secured the greatest share of the votes (21.2 per cent) and took one seat.
- The Labour party received the second most votes, 20.3 per cent, and also one seat.
- The remaining two seats in Wales were won by Plaid Cymru (18.5 per cent of the vote) and The UK Independence Party (12.8 per cent of the vote).
- The four MEPs elected to represent Wales were: Kay Swinburne, Derek Vaughan, Jill Evans and John Bufton.

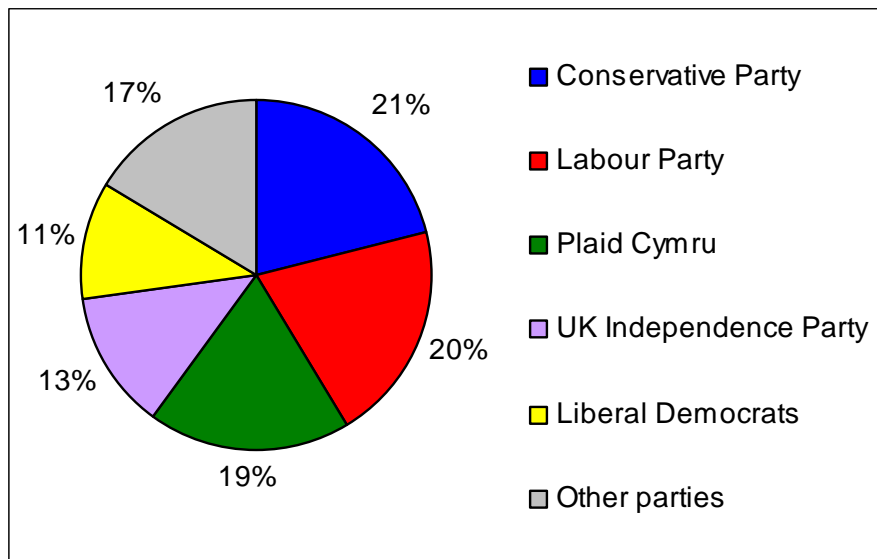
Table 1: Summary table, 2009 European Parliamentary elections in Wales

	Number of votes	Share of vote	Number of seats won	Elected Members
British National Party	37,114	5.4%		
Christian Party	13,037	1.9%		
Conservative Party	145,193	21.2%	1	Kay Swinburne
Green Party	38,160	5.6%		
Jury Team	3,793	0.6%		
Labour Party	138,852	20.3%	1	Derek Vaughan
Liberal Democrats	73,082	10.7%		
No2EU: Yes to Democracy	8,600	1.3%		
Plaid Cymru	126,702	18.5%	1	Jill Evans
Socialist Labour Party	12,402	1.8%		
UK Independence Party	87,585	12.8%	1	John Bufton
Total valid votes cast	684,520			
Turnout (a)	30.5%			

Source: Regional Returning Officer

(a) All votes cast (including spoiled papers) as a percentage of the electorate.

Figure 1: Share of the vote in Wales, 2009



The allocation of MEP seats takes place in rounds, with the first seat being allocated to the party with most votes. Further details on the allocation system are provided in section 8 ([Sources and Notes](#)). Table 2 shows the order in which each of the four seats in Wales were allocated.

Table 2: MEPs elected by round

Seat	MEP	Party
1	Kay Swinburne	Conservative
2	Derek Vaughan	Labour
3	Jill Evans*	Plaid Cymru
4	John Bufton	UK Independence Party

* Denotes existing Member of the European Parliament

Changes since 2004

Turnout for the European Parliamentary elections across Wales was considerably lower than in 2004. In 2009 turnout was 30.5 per cent compared with 41.9 per cent in 2004, a decrease of 11 percentage points.

Labour's share of the vote decreased by 12.2 percentage points compared with 2004. Of the parties that stood in both the 2004 and 2009 elections, Labour were the only party to see a decrease in their share of the vote, and won one less seat in 2009 compared with 2004. The biggest increase in the share of the vote was seen by the British National Party, with an increase of 2.4 percentage points.

Of the parties who stood in both the 2004 and 2009 elections only the Green Party and the British National Party saw an increase in the actual number of votes.

In 2009, the Conservatives and Plaid Cymru each won the same number of seats as in the 2004 elections. The UK Independence Party gained one seat in 2009 and was elected to represent Wales in the European Parliament for the first time. Labour won one seat in 2009.

Table 3: Results of 2004 and 2009 European election in Wales

	2009			2004			Change in number of seats	Change in vote share on 2004
	Number of votes	Share of vote	Number of seats won	Number of votes	Share of vote	Number of seats won		
British National Party	37,114	5.4%	0	27,135	3.0%	0	0	+2.4
Conservative Party	145,193	21.2%	1	177,771	19.4%	1	0	+1.8
Green Party	38,160	5.6%	0	32,761	3.6%	0	0	+2.0
Labour Party	138,852	20.3%	1	297,810	32.5%	2	-1	-12.2
Liberal Democrats	73,082	10.7%	0	96,116	10.5%	0	0	+0.2
Plaid Cymru	126,702	18.5%	1	159,888	17.4%	1	0	+1.1
UK Independence Party	87,585	12.8%	1	96,677	10.5%	0	+1	+2.3
Other parties	37,832	5.5%	0	29,528	3.2%	0	0	+2.3
Total valid votes cast	684,520			917,686				
Total votes cast (a)	687,648			928,775				
Turnout (b)	30.5%			41.9%				

Sources: Regional Returning Officer and [The Electoral Commission](#)

(a) Including spoiled papers.

(b) All votes cast (including spoiled papers) as a percentage of the electorate.

5 Results for Great Britain

In Great Britain 69 MEPs were elected. An additional 3 MEPs were elected to represent Northern Ireland. Results for Northern Ireland are not included in the figures below as it has a separate electoral system and political parties to the rest of the UK.

In Great Britain, the largest share of the vote and the most number of seats were secured by the Conservatives. They won 27.7 per cent of the vote and 25 seats.

Table 4: Summary of 2009 European Parliamentary elections in Great Britain

	Percentage of vote	Number of seats won
British National Party	6.2%	2
Conservative Party	27.7%	25
Green Party	8.6%	2
Labour Party	15.7%	13
Liberal Democrats	13.7%	11
Plaid Cymru	0.8%	1
Scottish National Party	2.1%	2
UK Independence Party	16.5%	13
Other parties	8.7%	0

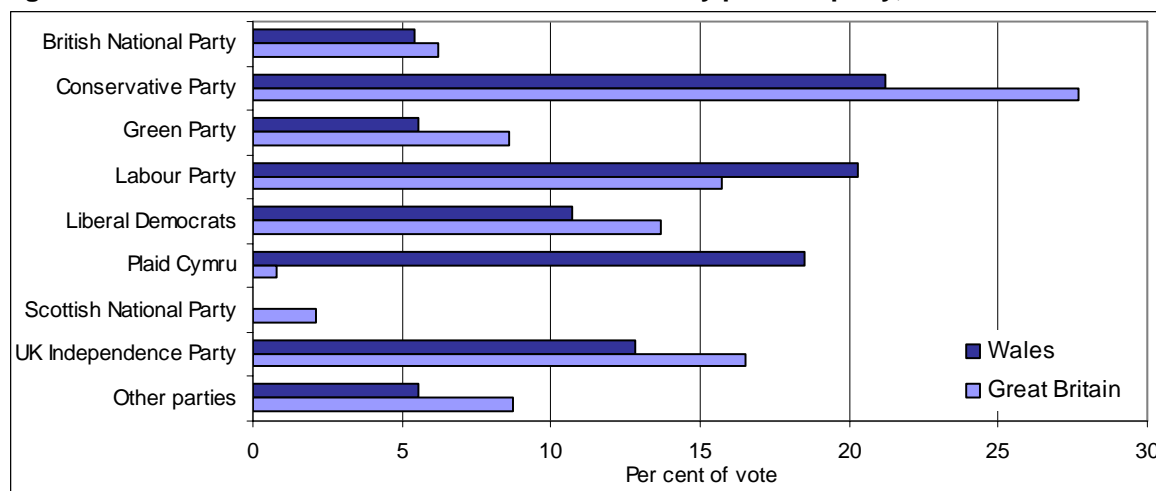
Source: [UK Office of The European Parliament](#)

Turnout across the UK was 34.5 per cent. This is a decrease compared with the turnout for the 2004 elections (38.5 per cent). Turnout was higher across the UK than in Wales. This is in contrast to the 1999 and 2004 elections, when Wales saw a higher turnout than the UK.

Share of the vote in Wales and Great Britain, 2009

Figure 2 shows that in Great Britain and Wales, the Conservatives won the greatest share of the vote. In Great Britain they won 27.7 per cent of the vote. The corresponding figure in Wales was 21.2 per cent. The UK Independence Party took the second largest share of the vote in Great Britain (16.5 per cent) and Labour the third largest share (15.7 per cent). In Wales, Labour took the second largest vote share (20.3 per cent) and Plaid Cymru the third largest share (18.5 per cent).

Figure 2: Share of the vote in Wales and Great Britain by political party, 2009

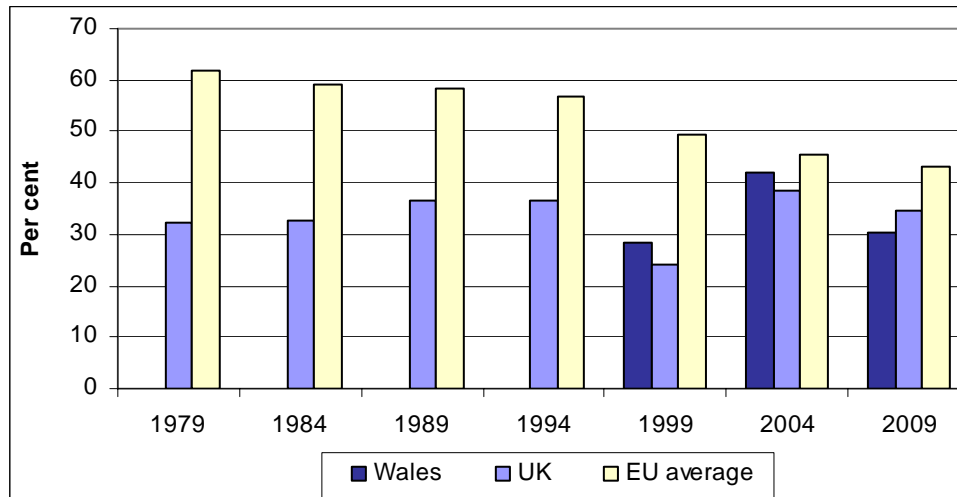


6 Turnout across the European Union

Turnout by Member States

Since the first European Parliamentary elections in 1979 voter turnout has decreased across the EU. In 1979 EU turnout was 62 per cent. By 2009 this had fallen to 43 per cent. The turnout in 2009 was around the same level as 2004, with only a slight decrease (from 45 per cent). Turnout for the elections in the UK has consistently been below the EU average. Although there have been fluctuations in voter turnout in the past three elections, this gap has narrowed.

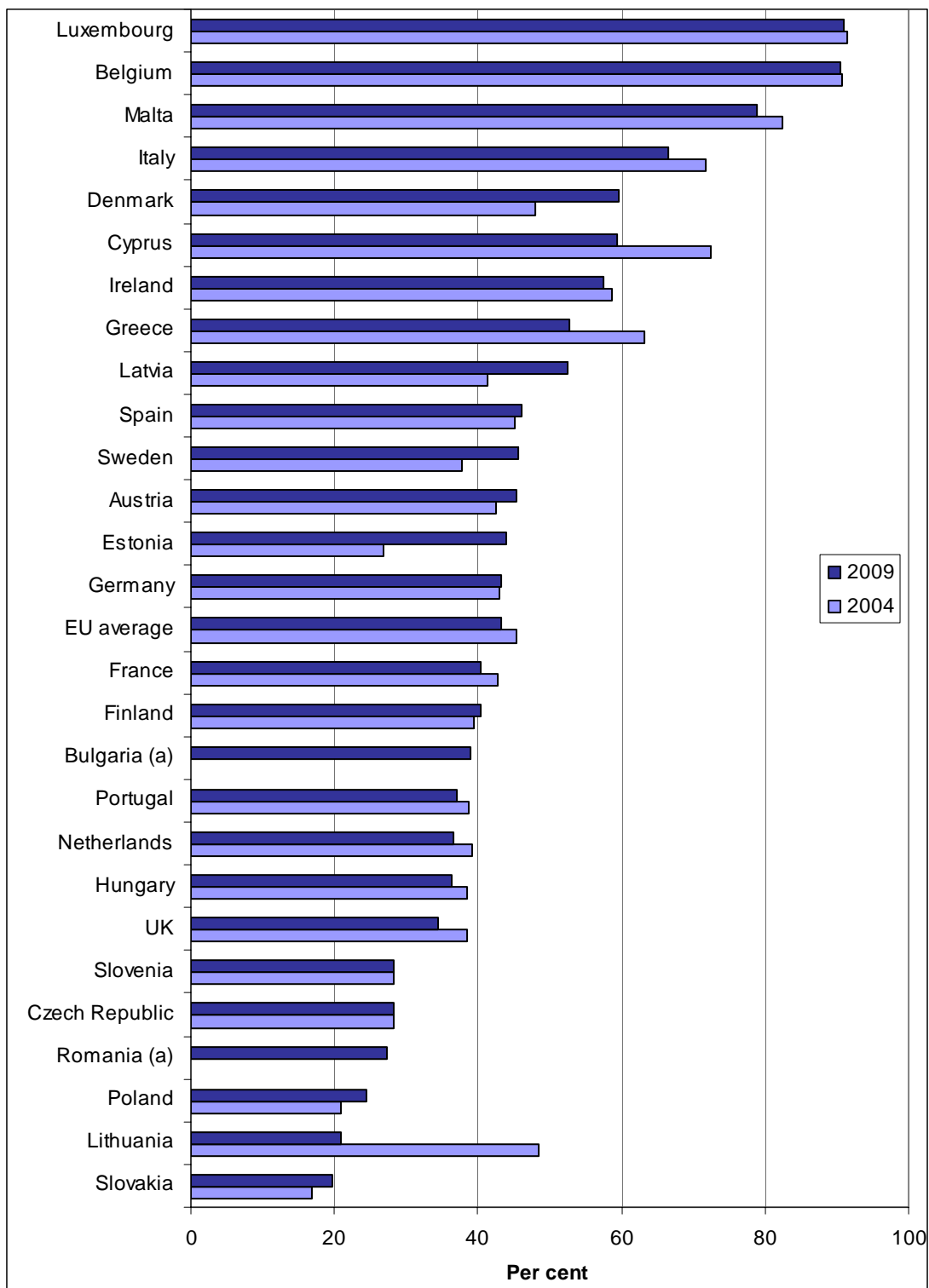
Figure 3: Turnout at European Parliamentary elections, 1979 -2009



Source: [European Parliament](#) and Wales Regional Returning Officer

Figure 4 shows that turnout to the European Parliamentary elections varied greatly across Member States. Turnout was in highest in Luxembourg with 91 per cent and Belgium with 90 per cent (where voting is compulsory). Turnout was lowest in Slovakia (20 per cent) and Lithuania (20 per cent). The biggest increase in turnout, compared with the 2004 elections was seen in Estonia, an increase of 17 percentage points. The biggest decrease in turnout was in Lithuania, a decrease of 27 percentage points.

Figure 4: Turnout at 2004 and 2009 European Parliamentary elections, ranked by level of turnout at 2009 elections



Source: [European Parliament](#)

(a) Romania and Bulgaria joined the EU on 1 January 2007.

7 Results for Welsh constituencies

The table below shows the number of votes for each political party broken down by parliamentary constituency. The coloured blocks on the left show which party won the largest number of votes in each constituency.

Table 5: Results of 2009 European Parliamentary elections, by Welsh constituency

	Number of votes											
	BNP	Christian Party	Con	Green	Jury Team	Lab	L Dem	No2EU	PC	Soc Lab	UKIP	Total
North Wales												
Alyn & Deeside	1,145	173	4,111	791	104	3,396	1,584	183	1,543	324	3,198	16,552
Caernarfon	457	187	1,871	843	53	1,578	913	122	7,135	112	1,138	14,409
Clwyd South	1,060	190	4,010	735	66	3,063	1,491	247	2,886	282	2,259	16,289
Clwyd West	827	227	5,609	776	109	2,242	1,324	183	3,979	235	2,595	18,106
Conwy	694	239	4,228	953	94	2,453	1,467	173	4,236	243	1,951	16,731
Delyn	974	222	4,636	716	109	3,189	1,762	144	2,398	332	2,440	16,922
Vale of Clwyd	815	207	4,959	628	59	2,798	1,070	161	2,314	251	2,292	15,554
Wrexham	1,092	175	3,199	525	68	2,712	2,078	173	1,972	233	2,037	14,264
Ynys Mon	763	186	3,553	712	80	2,148	974	197	5,813	199	2,071	16,696
Mid and West Wales												
Brecon & Radnorshire	615	267	6,135	1,511	82	1,965	4,858	191	1,623	218	2,818	20,283
Carmarthen East & Dinefwr	785	358	3,267	1,153	76	3,065	1,121	200	7,798	258	2,100	20,181
Carmarthen West & South Pembrokeshire	780	289	5,612	1,086	103	2,902	1,640	167	3,714	272	2,411	18,976
Ceredigion	519	299	2,869	1,481	91	1,329	3,644	194	6,726	173	1,755	19,080
Llanelli	831	415	2,063	632	103	4,052	946	177	5,990	308	1,846	17,363
Meirionnydd Nant Conwy	370	141	1,851	649	46	800	684	98	4,770	136	1,178	10,723
Montgomeryshire	884	188	4,247	1,362	63	994	2,757	134	2,016	178	2,993	15,816
Preseli Pembrokeshire	730	303	5,748	1,264	94	2,975	1,691	179	3,309	387	2,379	19,059
South Wales West												
Aberavon	994	307	1,664	611	97	5,197	1,132	239	2,573	404	1,586	14,804
Bridgend	1,072	424	4,695	1,024	124	3,991	2,138	321	2,512	356	2,606	19,263
Gower	952	412	4,760	1,308	126	3,889	2,058	260	2,971	275	2,425	19,436
Neath	1,230	413	1,984	762	106	5,419	1,275	309	4,175	417	1,963	18,053
Ogmore	917	286	1,719	551	72	4,690	1,147	210	2,428	455	1,556	14,031
Swansea East	1,317	338	1,577	615	82	4,004	1,642	252	1,905	329	1,821	13,882
Swansea West	928	334	2,926	1,129	95	3,534	3,199	229	1,869	235	1,913	16,391
South Wales Central												
Cardiff Central	568	363	2,995	1,533	115	2,819	4,603	175	1,485	240	1,580	16,476
Cardiff North	1,010	388	8,179	1,690	123	4,205	2,475	240	2,459	225	2,865	23,859
Cardiff South & Penarth	1,093	382	4,329	1,320	113	4,191	2,657	286	2,186	340	2,174	19,071
Cardiff West	862	295	4,012	1,432	109	4,236	1,725	233	3,142	309	1,974	18,329
Cynon Valley	814	296	1,158	570	57	4,145	812	162	3,007	358	1,241	12,620
Pontypridd	1,002	454	2,919	1,141	109	4,592	2,159	293	3,410	391	2,498	18,968
Rhondda	924	371	808	520	50	5,339	704	218	4,424	512	1,447	15,317
Vale of Glamorgan	1,171	357	7,611	1,357	174	4,025	2,002	265	3,275	353	3,718	24,308
South Wales East												
Blaenau Gwent	1,130	404	1,213	522	78	4,996	964	233	2,155	498	2,089	14,282
Caerphilly	1,377	542	2,495	853	100	4,449	1,204	225	3,899	450	2,149	17,743
Islwyn	1,106	621	1,527	646	88	4,100	789	201	2,584	355	1,943	13,960
Merthyr Tydfil & Rhymney	954	391	1,114	458	77	4,409	1,401	207	1,977	383	1,627	12,998
Monmouthshire	862	336	8,884	1,833	142	3,182	2,643	282	1,585	203	3,302	23,254
Newport East	1,020	328	2,966	609	101	3,198	3,022	233	1,152	322	2,473	15,424
Newport West	1,175	471	4,913	984	128	4,437	1,740	321	1,309	382	2,502	18,362
Torfaen	1,295	458	2,777	875	127	4,144	1,587	283	1,998	469	2,672	16,685
Wales	37,114	13,037	145,193	38,160	3,793	138,852	73,082	8,600	126,702	12,402	87,585	684,520

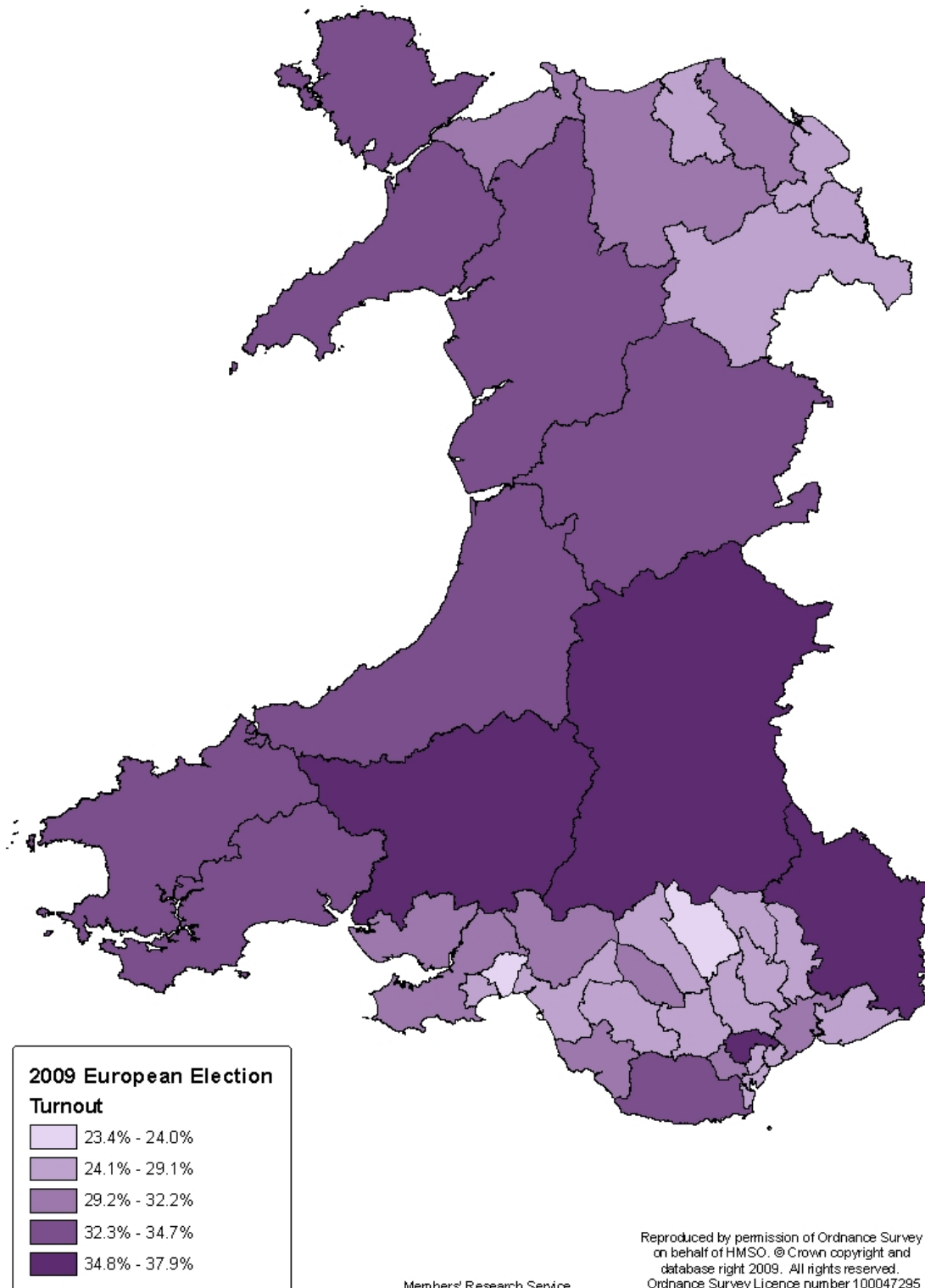
Source: Regional Returning Officer

Note: Results are presented in relation to the Westminster Parliamentary Constituencies.

Turnout by parliamentary constituency in Wales

The map shows the turnout in each Westminster Parliamentary constituency. Within Wales, turnout was highest in the constituencies of Carmarthen East and Dinefwr (37.9 per cent) and Brecon & Radnorshire (37.8 per cent). Turnout was generally lower in South Wales areas. The constituencies with the lowest turnout were Swansea East (23.4 per cent) and Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney (24.0 per cent).

Figure 5: Turnout at the 2009 European Parliamentary elections, by constituency



Source: Regional Returning Officer

8 Sources and Notes

Data sources

A number of data sources have been used to produce the statistics in this paper. Statistics for results for the 2004 European Parliamentary elections were taken from *The 2004 European Parliamentary Elections in the United Kingdom*⁶ published by The Electoral Commission.

Results for Great Britain in 2009 were taken from the [UK Office of The European Parliament](#). Results for Northern Ireland were not included in the vote share or figures for the number of seats won as it has a separate electoral system to the rest of the UK. However, results for Northern Ireland were included in the turnout figures for the UK.

For the 2009 elections the UK's allocation of seats in the European Parliament was reduced from 78 to 72. Therefore results for the UK vote share and number of seats won in 2004 were not included as they would not be on a comparable basis.

Information on turnout at the European elections from 1979 to 2009 and for individual EU Member States was obtained from the [European Parliament](#). The website was accessed 11 June 2009 and results were as at 11 June 2009. The figures may have since been revised.

Key to party abbreviations

Party abbreviations and colours

Code		Party name
Con		Conservative Party
Lab		The Labour Party
LDem		Liberal Democrats
PC		Plaid Cymru
UKIP		UK Independence Party
Other parties:		
BNP		British National Party
Christian Party		Christian Party "Proclaiming Christ's Lordship"
Green		The Green Party
Jury Team		Jury Team
No2EU		No2EU: Yes To Democracy
Soc Lab		Socialist Labour Party

Operation of the electoral system

MEPs are elected on a regional basis through a form of proportional representation. In Great Britain, and the majority of EU Member States, seats are allocated using a quota system, known as the d'Hondt quota system. This method allocates the number of seats using a mathematical formula and is done in stages, or rounds, and is illustrated in the following table.

In each round, votes cast for each party are divided by the number of seats the party has already been allocated in the region plus 1. The party with the highest remaining total in the round wins the seat.

⁶ [The 2004 European Parliamentary Elections in the United Kingdom](#) [accessed 11 June 2009]

This means that the more seats a party has already won, the harder it is to gain extra seats, so the overall allocation of seats is more proportional to the number of votes received. The first seat that a party wins goes to the first name on its candidate list, the second seat to the second candidate, and so on, until the party has either not won any more seats or has run out of names on its list. An independent candidate is treated as though he or she were a party with only one name on its list.

Example of how the system works for a 3-party, 4-seat contest:

Round	Number of votes			Explanation
	Party A	Party B	Party C	
1	7,000	4,000	3,000	Party A wins their 1 st seat so their total is divided by seats won (1) +1
2	3,500 (7,000/2)	4,000	3,000	Party B wins their 1 st seat so their total is divided by seats won (1) +1
3	3,500	2,000 (4,000/2)	3,000	Party A wins their 2 nd seat so their total is divided by seats won (2) +1
4	2,333 (7,000/3)	2,000	3,000	Party C wins their 1 st seat

The first seat is allocated to the party with the largest number of votes (Party A in this example). For the second round, the party with the largest number of votes see its total divided by the number of seats it has already won plus one. In the second round, with the largest party's total now reduced, the results are compared and the party with the most votes in this round wins the next seat (Party B in this example). This party then finds its total number of the votes divided by the number of seats it has already won plus one. In the third round, with the largest two parties total's now reduced, the results are compared and the party with the most votes wins the next seat (Party A here). This party has its total votes divided by the number of seats it has won (two) plus one. This process continues until all the seats have been allocated.

Once the number of seats won by each party has been calculated seats are allocated to individuals. The order in which the party candidates are elected is set in advance of the election.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the Regional Returning Officer for Wales for providing results for Wales and Welsh constituencies.

