Andrew Aiton and Iain McIver

This briefing provides details of the European Parliament Election held in Scotland on 22 May 2014.
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KEY POINTS

- On 22 May 2014, voters in Scotland elected 6 candidates to be Scotland’s MEPs for the 2014 to 2019 European Parliamentary term.

- European Parliament seats in Great Britain are allocated using the d’Hondt system of proportional representation at regional level.

- The election resulted in 2 SNP, 2 Labour, 1 Conservative and 1 UKIP candidate being elected.

- The SNP won the most number of votes (389,503), with the Labour Party coming second (348,219).

- Compared with the 2009 European Parliament Election, 5 of the 6 main parties\(^1\) recorded an increase in the total number of votes they received.

- UKIP saw the biggest percentage rise in share of the vote with an increase of 5.2% compared with their 2009 result whilst the Labour Party recorded a 5.1% increase on their 2009 share of the vote. The Liberal Democrats’ share of the vote fell by 4.4% compared with 2009.

- Turnout in 2014 increased by 4.9 percentage points compared with 2009 – from 28.6% to 33.5%.

- The SNP won the most votes in 16 Local Authorities, the Labour Party in 10 local authority areas, the Conservative Party in 4 local authorities and the Liberal Democrats in 2 local authority areas.

\(^1\) Those parties with 5% of the vote or more.
SCOTLAND’S EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT REPRESENTATION

The European Parliament is the only directly elected body in the European Union (EU). It represents the people of the EU and shares legislative and budgetary power with the Council of the European Union. The European Parliament has been directly elected by the citizens of the member states since 1979. Elections take place every five years. For more details on the role of the European Parliament in European Union decision making see SPICe Briefing SB11/45 The European Union – The Institutions.

The Treaty of Lisbon stipulates that the European Parliament shall not exceed 750 members in number, plus the President so 751 in total. Of this total membership, the United Kingdom elects 73 members of which 6 come from Scotland.

At the last European Parliament Election in 2009, Scotland elected 2 Scottish National Party (SNP) Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), 2 Labour Party MEPs, 1 Liberal Democrat MEP and 1 Conservative Party MEP.
On 22 May 2014, voters elected 6 candidates to be Scotland’s MEPs for the 2014 to 2019 European Parliamentary term. The total votes cast for each party are provided below. The SNP secured the most number of votes (389,503) with the Labour Party coming second (348,219), the Conservative Party third (231,330), the UK Independence Party (UKIP) fourth (140,534) and the Scottish Green Party fifth (108,305). The Liberal Democrats received 95,319 votes with other parties collecting a total of 32,457 votes.

Compared with the 2009 European Parliament Elections, 5 of the 6 main parties recorded an increase in the total number of votes they received. The party who gained most votes compared with 2009 was the Labour Party which polled an extra 118,366 votes. UKIP recorded the second biggest increase in number of votes winning 82,746 more votes than in 2009. The SNP received 68,496 more votes, the Conservatives received 45,536 more votes and the Scottish Green Party secured 27,863 more votes compared with 2009. The Liberal Democrats saw its total number of votes fall by 31,719 compared with 2009.
SHARE OF THE VOTE

The SNP secured the largest share of the vote with 28.9% followed by the Labour Party with 25.9% and the Conservative Party with 17.2%. UKIP came fourth with a 10.4% share of the vote followed by the Scottish Green Party with 8% and the Liberal Democrats with 7.1%. Other parties received a total of 2.5% of the vote.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conservative Party</th>
<th>Labour Party</th>
<th>Liberal Democrats</th>
<th>Scottish Green Party</th>
<th>Scottish National Party (SNP)</th>
<th>UK Independence Party (UKIP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17.2%</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>28.9%</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UKIP saw the biggest percentage rise in their share of the vote with an increase of 5.2 percentage points compared with their 2009 result whilst the Labour Party recorded a 5.1 percentage points increase on their 2009 share of the vote. The Scottish Green Party and the Conservative Party recorded smaller percentage point increases (0.7 and 0.4 respectively) whilst the SNP saw a small drop of 0.2 percentage points. The Liberal Democrats share of the vote fell by 4.4 percentage points compared with 2009 resulting in the party losing its Scottish MEP. Other parties (including the British National Party which polled 2.5% in 2009) saw their combined vote fall from 9.3% to 2.5% - a 6.8 percentage point decrease.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conservative Party</th>
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<th>UK Independence Party (UKIP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+0.4</td>
<td>+5.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>+0.7</td>
<td></td>
<td>+5.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TURNOUT

As Figure 4 shows, turnout in 2014 increased by 4.9% compared with 2009 – from 28.6% to 33.5%. The increased turnout for the 2014 election was a contributory factor in 5 of the 6 main parties recording an increase in the number of votes they received – even where their share of the vote remained relatively stable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voter Turnout</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2009</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>28.6%</td>
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THE ELECTED CANDIDATES

European Parliament seats in Great Britain are allocated using the d’Hondt system of proportional representation at regional level. It operates as follows:

- Seats are allocated in successive rounds, with one seat allocated in each round
- In each round, total votes for each party are divided by the number of seats the party has already won, plus one
- The party with the highest remaining total wins the seat.

The 2014 election in Scotland resulted in 2 SNP, 2 Labour, 1 Conservative and 1 UKIP candidate being elected. Ian Hudghton and Alyn Smith were both re-elected for the SNP and David Martin and Catherine Stihler were both re-elected for the Labour Party. As a result of Struan Stevenson stepping down, the Conservative Party had a new representative with Ian Duncan being elected for the first time. The Liberal Democrats candidate and incumbent MEP George Lyon lost his seat and was replaced by David Coburn who becomes Scotland’s first UKIP MEP.

BIGGEST PARTY IN EACH LOCAL AUTHORITY AREA

European Parliament election results are collated by each local authority and then aggregated to provide a final result for the whole of Scotland. Using the figures provided by the Electoral Management Board for Scotland, the following map shows the largest party by each of Scotland’s local authorities. The SNP was the biggest party in 16 Local Authorities including Aberdeen, Dundee, Falkirk, Highland and Stirling. The Labour Party was biggest in 10 local authority areas including Edinburgh, Fife, Glasgow and Midlothian. The Conservative Party was biggest in 4 local authorities including in Dumfries and Galloway, the Scottish Borders and East Renfrewshire. The Liberal Democrats won the most votes in Orkney and in Shetland.
Party with highest share of vote by local authority

- Scottish National Party (SNP)
- Labour Party
- Conservative Party
- Liberal Democrats

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PARTY SHARE OF VOTE BY LOCAL AUTHORITY

The following maps show each of the six main parties share of vote percentage across Scotland by local authority area. Due to the wide range of different percentages of vote each party won across Scotland the maps are not directly comparable as a different voting range has been used for each one.

Share of vote by local authority:
Conservative Party
- Between 8.1% and 12.5%
- Between 12.5% and 17.2%
- Between 17.2% and 22.1%
- Between 22.1% and 33.1%
Share of vote by local authority:
Scottish Green Party

- Between 4.6% and 5.4%
- Between 5.4% and 8.0%
- Between 8.0% and 10.0%
- Between 10.0% and 16.1%

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Share of vote by local authority:
Labour Party

- Between 9.0% and 14.0%
- Between 14.0% and 25.9%
- Between 25.9% and 33.4%
- Between 33.4% and 40.0%
Share of vote by local authority:
Liberal Democrats

- Between 1.6% and 4.8%
- Between 4.8% and 7.1%
- Between 7.1% and 14.2%
- Between 14.2% and 35.2%
Share of vote by local authority:
Scottish National Party (SNP)
- Between 16.8% and 24.4%
- Between 24.4% and 28.9%
- Between 28.9% and 33.8%
- Between 33.8% and 43.0%
Share of vote by local authority:
UK Independence Party (UKIP)

- Between 7.7% and 8.8%
- Between 8.8% and 10.4%
- Between 10.4% and 11.7%
- Between 11.7% and 13.6%

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SOURCES


RELATED BRIEFINGS

SB 11-29 Election 2011 briefing
SB 11-44 The European Union - A Brief History briefing
SB 11-45 The European Union - The Institutions briefing
SB 11-46 The European Union - The Legislative Process briefing

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