The 2015 general election was the most unpredictable in decades. Opinion was fiercely divided, right up until the polls closed at 10 p.m. on 7 May, on who would form the next government. One thing everybody, including the pollsters, was agreed on was that it was highly unlikely that any party would win an outright majority. How wrong they were…

Multi-party politics?

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Labour loses the election

Ed Miliband resigned as the Labour Party leader after a ‘very disappointing night’. Shadow chancellor Ed Balls, the Scottish Labour Party leader Jim Murphy and Douglas Alexander (the Labour Party’s election strategist) all lost their seats. Labour did, however, manage to defeat the Respect candidate ‘Glorious George’ Galloway in Bradford West and the Conservative minister Esther McVey in Wirral West.

Just one seat

The Green Party leader Natalie Bennett failed to win her seat, but the Greens kept their one seat thanks to Caroline Lucas holding onto the constituency of Brighton Pavilion. The party significantly increased its share of the vote nationally.

Limited success

Nationalism in Wales was less successful with Leanne Wood’s Plaid Cymru only winning 3 seats, the same as in 2010, and only increasing its share of the vote by 1%.

Cameron’s Conservatives conquer

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The 2015–20 Parliament will comprise a record number of female MPs (now 28.8%, up from 22.8% in 2010) and ethnic minority MPs (now 6.3%, up from 4.2% in 2010).

Sturgeon and the SNP sweep Scotland

The SNP stole the show, winning 56 out of 59 of the seats available in Scotland, leaving Labour, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats with one seat each. Nicola Sturgeon was said to be ‘bursting with pride’. Twenty-year old Mhairi Black became the youngest MP since 1667 when she defeated Labour’s Douglas Alexander. Alex Salmond remarked that ‘the Scottish lion has roared’.

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