

# 2016 elections



On 'Super Thursday', 5 May 2016, elections took place across the UK. The Scottish Parliament elected 129 MSPs, the Northern Ireland Assembly elected 108 MLAs and the Welsh Assembly elected 60 AMs. In addition, there were London mayor and assembly elections taking place, local council elections across 124 local authorities and the election of 41 police and crime commissioners in England and Wales. The local elections, where 2,750 seats were available, were seen as Corbyn's first substantial electoral test. Labour was also hoping to oust the Conservatives from controlling the London mayor and stop Ruth Davidson from leading the Conservatives to second place behind the SNP in Scotland. So how did the parties fare?

## Labour loses in Scotland but wins two by-elections

Labour did not do as badly as predicted in the 2016 elections, despite achieving the worst set of local election results by an opposition party since 1985. Labour won 1,291 seats in the local elections, increasing its vote share by 4% since last year, and avoiding the loss of a number of key councils such as Derby and Crawley. It also won 12 seats on the London assembly, after taking one from the Conservatives.

Labour's share of the vote, however, was still 6% lower than in 2012 and it lost 23 seats at a time when opposition parties tend to gain hundreds of seats in local elections. The Conservatives did surprisingly well for a party in government, winning 828 seats and only losing 46.

Labour comfortably won the by-elections in Sheffield, Brightside and Hillsborough and Ogmere, south Wales, holding both seats. UKIP came second in both by-elections.

In Scotland, however, Labour was pushed into third place for the first time in 106 years and was left without any representation in its historical stronghold of Glasgow.

## Labour London mayor, Sadiq Khan

As expected, Labour candidate Sadiq Khan became London mayor after winning 56.8% of the vote to Conservative candidate Zac Goldsmith's 43.2% (Figure 1). Sadiq Khan became the first Muslim mayor of a major Western capital city. He looks set to challenge Jeremy Corbyn, offering the moderates in the Labour Party an alternative power centre, after receiving 1,310,143 votes (after the second votes were counted). This gives him the largest personal mandate of any elected politician in British history.

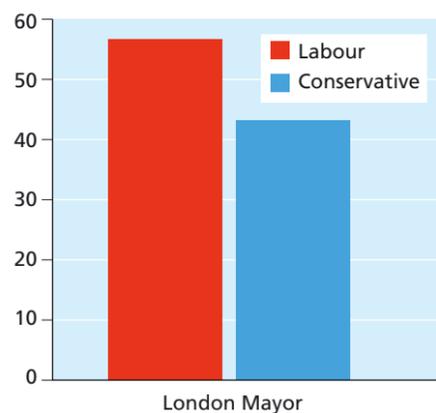


Figure 1 The final percentage of the vote the London mayor candidates received

## Scotland: Ruth rules and Labour loses

The big news story from the 2016 elections was the Scottish Conservatives becoming the second largest party in Scotland after achieving their best electoral performance since 1992 (Figure 2). Ruth Davidson became leader of the opposition after the Conservatives gained 16 seats, with an increased vote share of 8.1% since 2011, while Scottish Labour lost 13 seats and 9.2% of the vote share.

The SNP won a historic third successive term in office but lost 6 seats overall despite its vote share increasing by 1.1%. Willie Rennie, the Scottish Liberal Democrat leader, won his seat from the SNP but his party failed to make any gains. The Scottish Greens gained 4 seats after their vote share increased by 0.6%.

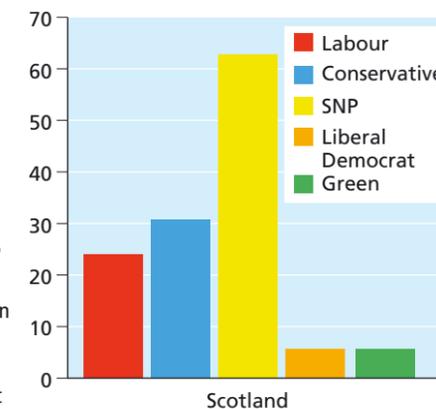


Figure 2 The number of MSPs elected in the Scottish Parliament

## Wales: Wood wins but UKIP triumph

UKIP increased its share of the vote by 12.5% since the last elections in 2012 and won its first seats on the Welsh Assembly with Nathan Gill, Mark Reckless and former Conservative MP Neil Hamilton three of the seven UKIP Assembly Members elected (Figure 3). Labour lost its Rhondda assembly seat to Plaid Cymru leader Leanne Wood. This was the only seat gained by Plaid Cymru which increased its share of the vote by 1.3%. Labour remained the largest party overall in Wales, despite losing one seat and 7.6% of the vote share.

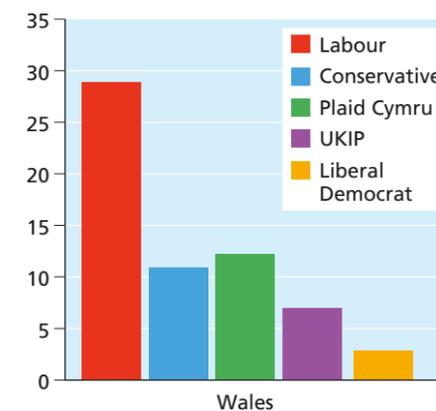


Figure 3 The number of AMs elected in the Welsh Assembly

## Northern Ireland: not much change

Sinn Féin lost its West Belfast seat to Gerry Carroll (People Before Profit), who won the PBP its first ever Stormont seat. The SDLP lost two seats, resulting in the DUP remaining the largest party in Stormont. Its leader Arlene Foster will continue as first minister. Turnout was 54.91%, down from 55.64% in 2012.

Table 1 Seats won in the Northern Ireland Assembly

DUP	SF	UUP	SDLP	Alliance	Green	PBP	Other
38	28	16	12	8	2	2	2

## Liberal Democrats: job done, John

The ousted Liberal Democrat MP for Manchester Withington, John Leech, won a seat on Manchester council in Didsbury West after securing 53% of the vote, beating his Labour rival by 702 votes. This ended Labour's total control of the 96 seats on Manchester City Council since 2014. The Liberal Democrats won a total of 370 seats in the local elections, a gain of 44, and won control of Watford council.

## The police and crime commissioner and mayoral elections

The Conservatives and Labour won nearly all of the 40 elections for the police and crime commissioners in England and Wales. Turnout in the elections was up from 15.1% in 2012 to 25.2%. In the mayoral elections, Liverpool mayor Joe Anderson was re-elected while Labour's Marvin Rees was elected as Bristol city's mayor and Paul Dennett for Labour was elected as the new mayor for Salford.

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Emma Kilheaney is a teacher of politics at Manchester Grammar School.