

Appendix: An Analysis of the Results

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Introduction

As Chapter 1 set out, European elections have long struggled to fulfil the aims of their advocates. Relatively few voters go to the polls. Those who do vote appear inclined to use them as an opportunity to express their views about domestic politics, typically by recording their dissatisfaction with the incumbent government, rather than as a chance to say what kind of Europe they would like. They may also consider it an occasion to have an apparently harmless flutter with a minor party (Reif and Schmitt, 1980; Reif, 1985a). As a result of these characteristics, European elections have been dubbed mere ‘second-order’ contests.

Britain has not been immune from this pattern. Turnout has consistently been lower in European elections than it has in any of the country’s domestic contests. In four out of the five elections held between 1979 and 1999 it was also lower than in any other member of the European Union. With the exception of the 1979 election, which occurred just a month after the election of a new Conservative government, support for the governing party has always been lower than it was at the previous General Election. Meanwhile the Greens had unprecedented success in coming third in votes in the 1989 European elections, while in the 1999 election, the first to be fought under a system of proportional representation, nearly one in five votes were cast for parties not represented at Westminster.

Yet certain features of past European elections in Britain give some pause for thought. Why have the Liberal Democrats and their predecessors, always in opposition and relatively small but also the most pro-European of Britain’s political parties, averaged just 12% of the vote in European elections held between 1979 and 1999 when their average share of the vote in General Elections over the same period has been as high as 17% and in local elections as high as 28%? Why was it that the United Kingdom Independence Party, which wishes Britain to leave the European Union, emerged as the most successful of the non-Westminster parties in 1999? In short, parties with distinctive stances on Europe appear to have done particularly well or particularly badly in European elections. Perhaps attitudes towards Europe do matter to some degree in European elections, albeit perhaps it has been people’s views about Britain’s relationship with Europe that affect behaviour rather than any perception of what the European Parliament should be doing for Europe as a whole (Steed, 2002, 2004).

Meanwhile, low turnout can no longer be regarded as a peculiar feature of European elections. At the General Election in 2001 turnout was lower than at any previous contest since 1918, while recent local and devolved elections have also registered record low turnouts. Mindful of these figures, as well as the turnout of just 23.1% at the European elections in 1999, the government took two steps to try and encourage more voters to participate. The first was to hold an all-postal ballot in four of the eleven regions into which Britain is divided for the purposes of European elections; such ballots had already proved successful in raising turnout at recent local elections (Electoral Commission, 2003a). The second step was to postpone local and London

Mayoral and Assembly elections that were due to be held in May so that they coincided with the European vote. While low by most standards, turnout in local elections has usually been higher than in previous European elections; the measure also helped avoid any danger of voter fatigue as a result of being asked to vote twice in little more than a month.

This then leaves two important questions. To what degree did the 2004 European election register the public's mood about Europe, and to what extent did it reflect debates about domestic politics? In so far as it reflected either, what does it tell us about the British public's attitudes towards Europe or about the state of the country's domestic politics? How successful were the measures that were adopted at this election to increase turnout and what longer-term lessons can be drawn about their utility in future elections, either European or domestic? These are the basic questions tackled in this appendix. After introducing how we set about our analysis, there are three main sections. First we look at the pattern of turnout both to assess the impact of the government's attempts to increase turnout and to ascertain how inclined the public were to vote in these elections once the effect of those attempts are put to one side. Second, we look at the pattern of support for those parties not currently represented at Westminster in order to assess what appears to have motivated their supporters. Third, we then examine how we can best account for the fortunes of those parties that are currently represented at Westminster, including looking at the impact of the pattern of support for non-Westminster parties. After then briefly considering how the pattern of party support was rewarded by the electoral system, we finally consider what appear to be the answers to our two key questions.

Data and methods

As in 1999, Great Britain was divided into eleven separate regions for the purposes of allocating seats. With one minor exception – the addition of Gibraltar to the South West region – these regions were exactly the same as the ones used five years ago.¹ However, in England and Wales at least, the count was conducted local authority by local authority rather than, as in 1999, constituency by constituency. Only in Scotland was the count conducted once again by constituency. As local authority boundaries do not correspond to constituency boundaries, this makes it difficult to compare the pattern of voting at this election with either that at the last General Election in 2001 or the previous European election in 1999 at anything other than the level of the eleven regions.

The task is not, however, an impossible one. By following a rule that so long as there is a 95% or higher correspondence between the boundary of one or more local authorities and one or more constituencies, we have been able to delineate 164 separate 'areas' in England and Wales where we can compare the result at this election with that in previous elections. Much of our analysis is based on these areas together with the 72 Scottish constituencies.² As the size of these areas varies substantially, in all of our analyses every area has been weighted by the size of its electorate.

However, not all of our analyses look at how voting changed since 1999 or 2001. We are also sometimes simply interested in how a party's support or turnout varied in 2004. For this purpose we simply examine how voting varied across the 380 English and Welsh local authorities together with the 72 Scottish constituencies. These analyses too are weighted by the size of the electorate in each counting unit.³

Turnout

More people opted to vote in these European elections than had done in any previous European election in Great Britain. True, at 38.2%, Britain remained near the bottom of the turnout league: amongst the 15 longer-standing members of the European Union, only Sweden recorded a lower turnout.⁴ It nevertheless represented a stark contrast to the record low turnouts recorded in a number of domestic contests since 1997. Did this mean that the widespread concern that recent low turnouts indicated that Britain's voters were becoming increasingly disengaged from politics had in fact been misplaced? Or might it perhaps simply have been the result of the introduction of all-postal ballots and the holding of local elections on the same day?

There is no doubt that all-postal ballots and coincident local elections helped to increase the turnout. First, as we can see in Table A.1, turnout was just under 6 points higher where all-postal ballots were held than it was where a traditional ballot was held. Amongst those places where a traditional ballot was held, turnout was up to 4 points higher where a local election was also taking place than where it was not, though holding a local election appears to have made rather less difference where an all-postal ballot was conducted.

Table A.1 Turnout by type of ballot and presence/absence of local election^a

<i>Local Election^b</i>	<i>Type of Ballot</i>			
	<i>Traditional % voted</i>	<i>change since 1999</i>	<i>Postal % voted</i>	<i>change since 1999</i>
None	33.5	+7.9	41.3	+19.0
Some	36.9	+11.3	42.9	+20.4
Everywhere	37.8	+14.8	41.8	+23.5
All	36.4	+11.8	42.0	+21.7

^a Table based on 'areas' as defined above.

^b Local election: None = no local election held in any of the component local authorities in that area; Some = local election held in some local authorities but not in others; Everywhere = local election held in all of the component local authorities. The London Mayoral and Assembly election is regarded as a local election.

This, however, is to underestimate seriously the impact that all-postal ballots and local elections had on turnout. The four regions where all-postal ballots were held were amongst the five regions with the lowest level of turnout in 1999. Equally, those parts of England where local elections were held consisted disproportionately of the urban half of the country, where turnout is always lower. In short, both measures were deployed in those parts of the country where voters are usually less inclined to vote. To assess their impact properly we should therefore look at how much turnout increased since 1999 rather than simply at the level of turnout.⁵

By this measure, holding an all-postal ballot had a dramatic impact. Turnout rose by as much as 10 points more where such ballots were held than it did where traditional ballots were conducted. While this is a somewhat smaller gap than had been evident in many of the previous experiments with all-postal ballots in local elections (Electoral Commission, 2004a, p. 30), it still confirms the broad message of those experiments that all-postal ballots can make a significant difference to turnout in low-profile elections.⁶

Meanwhile, holding a local election appears to have added about 7 points to the turnout where a traditional ballot was held and nearly 5 points where an all-postal ballot was conducted. So local elections also proved to be an important added incentive that brought an extra 1 in 20 or so voters to the polls.

The apparent importance both of all-postal ballots and of coincident local elections in raising the turnout was starkly illustrated in the one region, Scotland, where no local elections were held anywhere and where a traditional ballot was held. Turnout rose by just 6 points, far less than in any region in England and Wales. In fact, this increase was markedly lower than what was manifest in those parts of England where there were no elections and a traditional ballot was held; here turnout rose by just under 10 points (9.8%).

Two rather contradictory implications could be drawn from this contrast. On the one hand, it might suggest that the existence of a more high-profile local election campaign in much of England had a spillover effect on the turnout in those English districts where local elections were not being held. In that case, the gaps in Table A.1 rather understate the impact of local elections on the turnout.

On the other hand, perhaps turnout in Scotland was depressed for other reasons; after all, there had been a relatively high profile Scottish Parliament election just twelve months earlier. In that event, the first column of Table A.1 might overstate the impact of coincident local elections on the turnout in those areas where a traditional ballot was held, while in addition the final row might overstate the impact of holding a postal ballot. If we exclude Scotland from the table, then amongst areas with a traditional ballot the difference between the turnout where local elections were held everywhere and those where they were held nowhere falls to 5 points, the same gap as in those areas where an all-postal ballot was conducted. At the same time, the apparent impact of holding an all-postal ballot also falls somewhat, though it still stands at as much as 9 points.

Whatever the exact size of the overall impact, holding local elections appears to have made more of a difference in certain kinds of areas than others.

First, it appears to have had more impact in urban areas than in rural ones. The difference in the increase in turnout between those areas with no elections and those with local elections everywhere was around 2 points higher in more urban areas than in more rural ones, irrespective of whether a traditional or an all-postal ballot was held.⁷

Second, local elections also appear to have had rather more impact in those areas where a relatively low proportion of the population had a degree. Here, too, there is a persistent gap in the increase in turnout of just over 2 points. Turnout tends to be relatively low in all kinds of elections both in urban areas and in those with a low proportion holding a degree. But their rather greater readiness to turn out where a local election was held suggests that the pulling power of European elections for people in these areas is particularly low.⁸

There is also some evidence that the impact of an all-postal ballot may have varied a little from one kind of area to another. These ballots appear to have had somewhat more impact on the turnout in those places with a relatively large proportion of routine workers than they did elsewhere. This can be seen in Table A.2 which indicates that the difference in the increase in turnout between those places where an all-postal ballot was held and those where a traditional ballot was conducted was a point or two more in those areas with a relatively large proportion of people in routine manual occupations.⁹ Still, this gap is undoubtedly small relative to the apparent impact of all-postal ballots in general and does not suggest that such ballots radically alter the kind of people who are more likely to vote in elections (see also Curtice et al., 2004). In particular,

despite claims during the campaign that those living in Asian communities may have been put under undue pressure to return their postal ballots, there is no evidence that turnout increased particularly markedly in those all-postal areas with a relatively large proportion of those who consider themselves to come from an Asian background.

Table A.2 The differential impact of all-postal ballots

	<i>Change in % voting since 1999</i>	
	<i>Proportion in routine occupations^a</i>	
	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>
<i>No local elections:</i>		
Traditional Ballot	+9.1	+6.2
All-Postal Ballot	+18.5	+19.2
<i>Difference</i>	<i>9.4</i>	<i>13.0</i>
<i>Some local elections:</i>		
Traditional Ballot	+11.3	+11.0
All-Postal Ballot	+20.3	+20.5
<i>Difference</i>	<i>9.0</i>	<i>9.5</i>
<i>Local elections everywhere:</i>		
Traditional Ballot	+14.7	+15.4
All-Postal Ballot	+22.3	+24.3
<i>Difference</i>	<i>7.6</i>	<i>8.9</i>

^a Proportion in routine occupations: High = more than 10% of those aged 16–74 in routine manual occupations; Low = more than 10%.

However, the use of all-postal ballots and the holding of coincident elections were not without partisan consequence. Both were held in areas that were disproportionately Labour in sympathies. The impact of the government's choice of where to hold all-postal ballots can be seen if we assume that turnout was 9 points lower in those regions where an all-postal ballot was held (as our analysis suggests would have happened if a conventional ballot had been held) but that the parties' share of the vote was the same as it actually was. Under this assumption, Labour's share of the national vote would have been 0.4 points lower, while that of the Conservatives' would have been 0.2 points higher.

Meanwhile, the additional impact of holding coincident elections can then be estimated by assuming that turnout would have been 5 points lower in those local authorities where local elections were held (including London), while the share of the vote won by each party was unchanged. This scenario reduces Labour's share of the national vote by another 0.3 points, and adds another 0.2 points to the Conservative tally.¹⁰ Thus, even if we reckon that they had no impact on the share of the vote won by each party in the places where they were used,¹¹ in combination all-postal ballots and coincident local elections helped add 0.7 points of the vote to Labour's national tally while costing the Conservatives 0.4 points, thereby easing Labour's difficulties a little.¹²

Nor were all-postal ballots and coincident local elections implemented without some apparent confusion. In the four all-postal regions, no less than 1.9% of ballot papers were rejected before being included in the count, while of those included in the count 0.35% more were deemed to be spoilt in these regions than were elsewhere. Spoilt votes were also more common where coincident local elections were held, and especially so where voters were being asked to place more than one cross on the ballot

paper in an all-out local council election at the same time as only putting one cross on their European ballot paper. While some people may well have only wanted to vote in their local elections – indeed, where both were held more people cast a valid vote in the local elections than did in the European election (Rallings and Thrasher, 2004b) – it is notable that the incidence of both spoilt and rejected papers was highest in places with relatively high numbers of young people and people without educational qualifications, groups who have less interest in and knowledge of politics (Bromley and Curtice, 2002; Norris, 2002; Parry et al., 1992) and thus are most likely to be confused by more complex voting arrangements.

While all-postal ballots together with local elections may have helped increase turnout, they were not solely responsible for the increase since 1999. As we have seen, turnout still rose by nearly 8 points where neither local elections nor all-postal ballots were held and, indeed, by 10 points where those circumstances pertained in England. If, as seems not unreasonable, these figures can be regarded as a measure of what would have happened across the country as a whole in the absence of local elections and any all-postal ballots, it would appear that turnout would still have been between 31% and 33%, in line with the 32% turnouts recorded in the first two European elections in 1979 and 1984, suggesting that the underlying propensity of the electorate to vote in European elections returned to a level that is normal or typical of European elections.¹³ While this hardly indicates a dramatic new interest in matters European amongst the British public, it does appear to signal that the recent marked decline in turnout in general may have begun to be reversed.

The outsiders

We now turn to the first of the two questions that we posed at the beginning of this appendix, that is, to what extent did attitudes towards Europe make a difference? One of the supposed symptoms of a second-order contest, voting for minor parties, was much in evidence. No less than a third of the vote was cast for parties that are not currently represented in the House of Commons, while the two parties that dominate the Commons benches, the Conservatives and Labour, between them won less than half the vote for the first time since the advent of the modern party system.

But the most successful of those parties not currently represented in the House of Commons, the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), was no ordinary minor party. Rather, it was a party for whom Europe, and in particular its wish that Britain should withdraw from the European Union, was its *raison d'être*. It won 16.2% of the vote, up 9.2% from its 7.0% in 1999. It not only beat the Liberal Democrats for third place but also surpassed the previous best performance by a non-Westminster party in a European election, the 14.9% won by the Greens in 1989.

As Table A.3 shows, the party tended to win a particularly high share of the vote in those local authorities where a large proportion of people are self-employed or are aged over 65 and which are located outside the country's urban centres. Even when we allow for this pattern, which operated throughout the country, the party still did particularly well in the southern half of England. Indeed, it did best of all in island and peninsular communities on the south and east coasts of England, areas traditionally popular with older people and where self-employment is relatively common; indeed, the party won no less than 28.8% across Devon and Cornwall, topping the poll. Past survey research suggests that these are just the kinds of patterns one would expect if those voting UKIP were expressing an antipathy towards the European Union.¹⁴ That antipathy is of course often rooted in a strong sense of feeling British or English,

sentiments whose relative weakness in Scotland and Wales helps explain UKIP's much lower vote there.

Table A.3 UKIP support, by region and social character of local authority

	% self-employed ^a		% vote UKIP		% in agriculture ^c	
	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High
Scotland/Wales	7.0	9.3	6.9	8.5	6.6	8.7
North of England ^d	12.7	14.6	12.7	13.9	12.6	13.9
South & Midlands	17.9	22.6	18.5	22.9	17.6	22.5

^a % self-employed: Low = less than 7.5% of those aged 16–74 in self-employment either as a non-professional small employer or own-account worker; High = more than 7.5%.

^b % aged 65 plus: Low = less than 16.5% of the population aged 65 or more; High = more than 16.5%.

^c % in agriculture: Low = less than 1% of those aged 16–74 employed in agriculture (urban); High = more than 1% (rural).

^d The North of England comprises the three northernmost regions of England. The South & Midlands comprises the rest of England.

The UK Independence Party's vote had displayed much of this character in 1999. But it was even more evident in 2004. As Table A.4 shows, not only was the party's vote higher in areas with more small businessmen, more older people and in more urban areas, but it also increased more in such places between 1999 and 2004. At the same time, as can be seen from Table 5.14 (p. 172), UKIP's strongest advance was in the South and Midlands of England outside London. UKIP's success was, it seems, founded on its ability to recruit those of a Eurosceptic disposition into its ranks even more successfully than it had done five years previously.¹⁵

Table A.4 UKIP support in 1999 and 2004, by social character of area^{ab}

	% self-employed		% vote UKIP		% in agriculture	
	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High
1999	5.8	8.7	6.2	8.0	5.7	8.0
2004	13.8	19.8	14.7	18.2	13.1	18.7
<i>Change</i>	<i>+8.0</i>	<i>+11.1</i>	<i>+8.5</i>	<i>+10.2</i>	<i>+7.4</i>	<i>+10.7</i>

^a For definitions see Table A.3.

^b This table is based on England only.

A key ingredient of that ability appears to have been the candidature of Robert Kilroy-Silk; that at least is the apparent implication of UKIP's performance in the region where he headed the party's list, the East Midlands. The party's vote rose there by 6.5 points more than it did anywhere else. In securing 26.1% of the vote, Mr Kilroy-Silk's list not only outperformed the party's list in the South West, the region where the party had done best in 1999, but came within a whisker of coming top in the region. It was a performance that provided an object lesson to Britain's other political parties, some

of which were still accommodating themselves to fighting elections under a multi-candidate list system; it showed how placing a well known popular candidate at the head of a party's list can increase its vote. Even in a closed party list system the popularity of individual candidates can still make a difference (Curtice and Steed, 2000b).¹⁶

UKIP was far from being the only party not currently represented at Westminster to make a significant advance. Although it failed to win any seats, with 4.9% of the vote, the British National Party secured the highest share of the vote ever won by a far right party in a nationwide election in Britain. It thus built on the success it had secured in some Pennine towns in the 2001 General Election and in subsequent local elections. But while the BNP, like UKIP, would like to see Britain withdraw from the European Union, its defining characteristic is antipathy to immigration, particularly by those from non-white and non-Christian backgrounds. The geographical character of its vote reflected this very different appeal. As can be seen from Table A.5, the party did best in working-class constituencies where many lack educational qualifications; the kind of characteristics associated with illiberal views on social issues. It did not share UKIP's success amongst small business communities and older people in shire England, though it shared its relative weakness in Scotland.

Table A.5 BNP support, by social character of local authority^a

	<i>% routine manual workers^b</i>	% vote BNP <i>% no educational qualifications^c</i>	<i>% employed in agriculture^d</i>
Low	3.8	3.8	5.7
High	6.4	6.7	4.0

^a This table is based on England only.

^b % routine manual workers: Low = less than 10% of those aged 16–74 in routine manual occupations; High = More than 10%.

^c % no educational qualifications; Low = less than 32% of those aged 16–74 have no educational qualifications; High = more than 32%.

^d % in agriculture: Low = less than 1% of those aged 16–74 employed in agriculture (urban); High = more than 1% (rural).

Table A.5 does not, however, adequately identify the areas where the BNP secured its strongest support. As in recent local elections this was in a number of towns and cities in the north of England where there is a substantial ethnic minority population. The BNP won no less than 9.0% of the vote in the 20 local authorities in the north of England with the highest non-white populations, and especially those with substantial Asian ones. Its largest share of the vote (16.7%) was achieved in Burnley, the site of its most significant local election successes. This pattern of higher support in areas of ethnic concentrations was also apparent in the West Midlands. But the BNP was particularly unsuccessful in places in the south of England with high ethnic minority populations, most notably in London where the party won just 4.0% of the vote. It appears that the politicisation of racial tensions in Britain is at present very much confined to one part of the country. At the same time the relative success of the BNP in the north of England indicates that getting more people to vote through the use of all-postal ballots is not an effective way of limiting its success.

In contrast to UKIP and the BNP, the Greens did not make any significant advance at all on their 1999 vote of 6%. This though was still enough to enable them to retain

their status as Britain's fifth largest party in European elections. The party did best where a relatively large proportion of the population had a degree as well as in local authorities with a relatively young population. This was if anything even more true than it was in 1999. Evidently the party continued to profit from the support of Britain's younger and better educated citizens, amongst whom concern about the environment and sustainability is greatest (Bryson and Curtice, 1998; Bromley and Curtice, 1999).

Much of the far left in England and Wales was brought together under the umbrella of the Respect coalition, led by the expelled Labour MP, George Galloway, and campaigning on a platform that emphasised opposition to Britain's involvement in the Iraq War. It made only limited headway, winning just 1.7% of the vote in England and Wales. In contrast, its nearest equivalent in Scotland, the Scottish Socialist Party, led by Tommy Sheridan, secured as much as 5.2% of the vote north of the border. But Respect's anti-war platform evidently had a strong appeal amongst the country's Muslim community. The larger the Muslim population, the more votes Respect secured; it won as much as 7.4% in those local authorities where over 10% of the population regard themselves as Muslim. The presence of other ethnic minorities also had a modestly positive impact on Respect's vote. As a result, the party's vote was far higher in the country's most ethnically diverse region, London; within London itself the party's highest votes were secured in the two boroughs, Newham (21.7%) and Tower Hamlets (20.8%), which between them have the largest ethnic minority and the largest Muslim population anywhere in Britain.

So if UKIP's advance was apparently an expression of views about Europe, votes cast for the other parties not currently represented at Westminster were less evidently a reflection of such views. Respect's advance, albeit a very limited one, was probably the product of discontent with the UK government's foreign policy. The BNP and the Greens meanwhile expressed the views of distinctive social and ideological communities that are largely not defined with reference to 'Europe'. The willingness of voters to vote for Respect, the BNP and the Greens might perhaps have been enhanced both by the use of a proportional electoral system and by a feeling that European elections do not matter. But even if this were the case, the distinctive social geography of their support suggests that their voters were not indulging in any ill-considered experimental whim, but rather were reflecting some important social and ideological divisions in British society.

The Westminster parties

A second classic symptom (if not a proof) of second-order elections, that governing parties lose votes, was very much in evidence at this election. With just 22.6% of the vote, Labour won a lower share of the vote than any previous British governing party had secured in a European election. Indeed, it was Labour's worst performance in a nationwide poll since it first started fighting elections on a widespread basis in 1918. Amongst governing parties across Europe, only the German Social Democrats and the Polish Social Democrats suffered a bigger reverse (-19.4%) compared with the last General Election.

Moreover, as in 1999, when the party won only 28.0% of the nationwide poll, Labour's vote fell most heavily in places where it usually had done relatively well (Curtice and Steed, 2000a). But there was also a striking difference between the pattern of Labour losses this time around and what happened in 1999. Then Labour's vote fell most heavily compared with the previous General Election in seats with a relatively large working class. It appeared as though 'traditional' Labour supporters were using

the election to protest against the apparently less than traditional character of Tony Blair's government. This time, in contrast, Labour lost ground just as heavily in places where middle-class voters are relatively common.

These points are illustrated in Table A.6 which shows the pattern of the change in Labour's vote in England since 1999 and 2001 according to, first, how well Labour did in 1999, and second, the class composition of an area. Compared with 1999, let alone 2001, Labour's vote clearly fell more in places where it had more 1999 votes to defend (doubtless in part because in some places where the party is weak it simply had few votes left to lose). Compared with 2001 this happened largely irrespective of the class composition of the area. But in contrast, compared with 1999, Labour's vote actually fell more heavily in relatively middle-class areas; that is, the kind of place where Labour's vote had held up rather better five years previously.

Table A.6 Change in Labour vote since 1999/2001, by past Labour vote and class character of area^a

% professionals and managers ^b	Labour % vote 1999			
	Less than 20%	20–30%	30–40%	More than 40%
<i>Change in % vote since 1999:</i>				
Low	-3.4	-5.5	-7.5	-10.2
High	-4.6	-7.2	-9.0	-11.5
All	-4.4	-6.9	-8.0	-10.6
<i>Change in % vote since 2001:</i>				
Low	-8.4	-20.9	-25.0	-27.5
High	-12.5	-19.2	-25.3	-24.7
All	-11.5	-19.5	-25.1	-26.7

^a This table is based on England only.

^b % professionals and managers: Low = less than 25% of those aged 16–74 in professional or managerial occupations, 2001 Census; High = more than 25%.

So it appears that Labour supporters in more working-class areas defected to an even greater extent than they had done five years earlier. But this time they were joined by those in more middle-class areas. These latter areas contain the kind of people to whom 'New Labour' rather than 'Old Labour' should have a particular appeal. It appears that their support for the party had now been significantly weakened.

If Labour found it relatively difficult to retain the support of one supposedly 'New Labour' constituency, it also had some particular difficulty in maintaining its support amongst a more traditional one. We have already noted the relative success of Respect in areas with large Muslim populations. It appears to have secured that support particularly at Labour's expense. As Table A.7 shows, even after we take into account Labour's prior strength, the party's vote fell rather more in those areas with a relatively high Muslim population. It is likely that some voters in these areas used the election as an opportunity to protest against the government's involvement in the war against Iraq.

Two parts of the country where Labour usually polls well, however, stayed relatively loyal to the party. In Wales, Labour's share of the vote was actually slightly higher than it had been in 1999. The 1999 election occurred just a month after the party received a severe drubbing in the Welsh Assembly election, a result that was then echoed in the outcome of the European election. The rather better Labour performance in the

principality this time confirmed the impression given by the outcome of the 2003 Assembly election that the party has now recovered from the adverse effect of the allegations made in 1999 that the Labour leadership in London had attempted to exercise undue influence on who was to be Labour's leader in the Assembly. Meanwhile, Plaid Cymru's vote fell by no less than 12 points compared with 1999, dropping most in the South Wales valleys where it had performed particularly well in the Assembly and European elections of 1999.

Table A.7 Change in Labour vote since 1999, by past Labour vote and Muslim composition^a

% Muslim ^b	<i>Change in % Labour vote since 1999</i>			
	<i>Labour % vote 1999</i>			
	<i>Less than 20%</i>	<i>20–30%</i>	<i>30–40%</i>	<i>More than 40%</i>
Low	-4.4	-6.8	-7.5	-9.2
High	-	-8.2	-8.7	-12.8

^a This table is based on England only.

^b % Muslim: Low = less than 5% of the population identify themselves as Muslim; High = more than 5%.

In Scotland, Labour's vote fell less than it did in any region of England. Here, too, the party seems to have profited from a decline in support for the nationalists. Indeed, the SNP's vote fell below 20% in a nationwide contest for the first time since 1987. Given that the nationalist parties have usually done relatively well in European elections this was a particularly disappointing result for the SNP; it was the first time that the party's European vote was lower than it had been in the previous Westminster election. Within days, the leader of the party, John Swinney, had decided to resign (see Chapter 6).

The Liberal Democrats have long been regarded as a party of protest (Alt et al., 1977). At this election their opposition to the war in Iraq arguably left them rather better placed than the Conservatives to profit from any antipathy to Britain's military involvement. Dissatisfaction with the government certainly seems to have been part of the explanation for the 2 point increase in the party's support compared with 1999. As Table A.8 shows, the party made most progress compared with 1999 in just those places where Labour lost most ground – in places where Labour won more votes in 1999, and especially in areas with a relatively large Muslim community.

Table A.8 Change in Liberal Democrat vote since 1999, by past Labour vote and Muslim composition^a

% Muslim ^b	<i>Change in % Liberal Democrat vote since 1999</i>			
	<i>Labour % vote 1999</i>			
	<i>Less than 20%</i>	<i>20–30%</i>	<i>30–40%</i>	<i>More than 40%</i>
Low	+1.0	+1.6	+1.2	+3.4
High	-	+1.9	+3.4	+5.8
All	+1.0	+1.7	+2.1	+4.3

^a This table is based on England only.

^b % Muslim: Low = less than 5% of the population identify themselves as Muslim; High = more than 5%.

Despite apparently profiting from anti-government protest, this election once again demonstrated that European elections are relatively difficult terrain for the Liberal Democrats. As at every previous European election, the party's share of the vote was lower than it had been at the previous General Election. As in 1999, the party's vote was particularly down on its General Election score in those areas where it had done best in Westminster contests, with Labour the principal beneficiary, a pattern that confirms the importance of local campaigning and tactical anti-Conservative support to the Liberal Democrats' ability to win seats at a General Election.

Even more remarkable, however, was the contrast between the Liberal Democrat performance in the European election with that in the local elections held on the same day. Although local elections might be considered to be just as much a 'second-order' election as a European election (but see Heath et al., 1999) and thus just as much an opportunity to cast a protest vote against the government, the Liberal Democrats fared far better in the local elections. For example, across 66 provincial English councils where most of the component local election contests were fought by all three main parties, the Liberal Democrat share of the vote was on average no less than 12.5 points lower in the European elections than it was in the local elections.¹⁷ While some of this difference reflects the fact that far more voters had the opportunity to vote for UKIP, the Greens, or some other smaller party in the European elections than they did in the local elections, the gap between the Liberal Democrats' European and local election performance was greater than that of the Conservatives (8 points) and Labour (a little under 4 points).¹⁸ Evidently, many a voter willing to vote for the Liberal Democrats in local elections was then reluctant to support the party in European elections. This suggests that there is antipathy amongst some Liberal Democrat supporters to the party's relatively pro-European stance.

Meanwhile, in contrast to the Liberal Democrats, Britain's other opposition party, the Conservatives, suffered a drop in support compared with the previous European election, falling by as much as 9 points. This was the first time that support for the principal opposition party was down on its performance at the previous European election. The pattern of the Conservative drop was striking. In 1999 and 2001 the party had performed relatively well in areas with a relatively large proportion of older people and relatively few with a degree. These were just the kind of places where the emphasis given by the party's then leader, William Hague, to opposition to adoption of the euro and to a relatively conservative stance on moral issues and on social questions such as asylum seekers would be expected to be particularly attractive (Curtice and Steed, 2000a; Curtice and Steed, 2002). At this election, as Table A.9 shows, these were just the kinds of places where Conservative support fell most heavily.

Table A.9 Change in Conservative share of the vote, by social composition of area^a

	<i>Change in % Conservative vote</i>					
	<i>% with a degree^b</i>		<i>% aged 65 plus^c</i>		<i>% self-employed^d</i>	
	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>
Since 1999	-11.1	-9.1	-9.1	-10.9	-9.5	-10.5
Since 2001	-7.2	-6.5	-6.0	-8.0	-5.4	-9.1

^a This table is based on England only.

^b % with a degree: Low = less than 17% of those aged 16–74 have a degree; High = more than 17%.

^c % aged 65 plus: Low = less than 16.5% of the population aged 65 or more; High = more than 16.5%.

^d % self-employed: Low = less than 7.5% of those aged 16–74 in self-employment either as a non-profession small employer or own-account worker; High = more than 7.5%.

We can see too from Table A.9 that support for the Conservatives also fell somewhat more in areas with relatively large numbers of people in non-professional self-employment. Meanwhile, as Table A.4 showed, such areas, together with those with relatively large numbers of older people, were just the kinds of places where UKIP was most successful. This clearly suggests that one key reason why the Conservative vote fell was because the party lost support to UKIP. Perhaps the latter's more avowedly anti-European stance had more appeal for a largely Eurosceptic Conservative electorate than did the Conservatives' own more measured criticisms of the operation of the European Union.

The UK Independence Party undoubtedly prospered most in areas where the Conservatives have usually polled relatively well. UKIP's share of the vote rose compared with 1999 by only 5.2 points where the Conservatives won less than 20% of the vote in 1999, but by as much as 12.0 points where the Conservative tally had previously been over 45%. But if this meant that UKIP was winning votes from the Conservatives it should also be the case that the Conservative vote fell most where UKIP performed best. Table A.10 shows that this was indeed the case. Compared with 1999, the Conservative vote decreased by 4.5 points more in those places where UKIP's vote rose by more than 10 points than it did where UKIP's vote rose by less than 6 points. A similar analysis of the fall in Conservative support since 2001 produces an equivalent gap of no less than 8.5 points. However, the same table also suggests that, contrary to what was assumed by many commentators, UKIP's success did not just damage the Conservatives but also damaged the Liberal Democrats. Compared with 1999, their vote increased by 3.6 points less where UKIP's vote rose most, compared with where it rose least, while there is also a 5.5 point gap in an equivalent analysis of change since 2001.¹⁹ In contrast, it is evident that a strong UKIP performance did not particularly hurt Labour at all.

Table A.10 Party performance, by UKIP performance

<i>UKIP</i>	<i>Con</i>	<i>Lab</i>	<i>Lib Dem</i>
<i>Change in % share of vote since 1999:</i>			
Up less than 6	-6.4	-7.1	+4.5
Up 6-8	-7.3	-5.6	+2.4
Up 8-10	-9.7	-6.0	+1.7
Up more than 10	-10.9	-6.7	+0.9
<i>Change in % share of vote since 2001:</i>			
Up less than 11	-1.0	-21.0	-1.1
Up 11-14	-4.9	-22.2	-2.4
Up 14-17	-7.7	-18.8	-4.7
Up more than 17	-9.5	-18.5	-6.6

The Conservatives suffered from the rise of UKIP, but so also did the Liberal Democrats, perhaps in not dissimilar measure. The latter's vulnerability to UKIP's Eurosceptic appeal would certainly appear to be consistent with its persistent difficulty in winning votes in European elections as compared with both local and General Elections. In any event, it looks as though we can conclude that both of Britain's main opposition parties lost some votes at least because of hostility towards Europe amongst those who might otherwise have been expected to support them.²⁰ In contrast, Labour's woes appear

to have little to do with Europe; it seems to have been vulnerable to mid-term protest voting, not least over Iraq.

The electoral system

As in 1999, the use of a regional d'Hondt method of proportional representation produced an outcome that could only be described as approximately proportional. This can be seen in Table A.11 which compares the proportion of the vote won by each party in Great Britain with the proportion of seats that each party won under the current system together with what would have happened if various alternative forms of proportional representation had been in place. As is typical of what happens when the d'Hondt divisor is used and the country is divided up into a number of different regions, the Conservatives as the largest party secured a substantially higher proportion (9.3%) of seats than it did votes. At the other end of the spectrum, the Greens were again under-represented, while the BNP failed to win any seats at all despite winning nearly 5% of the vote.

Table A.11 Outcome under alternative electoral systems

	% vote	Actual	% seats		National PR ^a	1999 seats
			Method of allocation			
			Modified Sainte-Laguë	Pure Sainte-Laguë		
Con	26.7	36.0	34.7	30.7	28.0	32.1
Lab	22.6	25.3	24.0	24.0	24.0	29.8
UKIP	16.2	16.0	17.3	17.3	17.3	16.7
Lib Dem	14.9	16.0	17.3	17.3	16.0	15.5
Green	6.2	2.7	2.7	5.3	6.7	2.4
BNP	4.9	0.0	0.0	2.7	4.0	0.0
Respect	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	0.0
SNP	1.4	2.7	2.7	1.3	1.3	2.4
PC	1.0	1.3	1.3	1.3	0.0	1.2
Others	4.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Deviation^b</i>	–	15.4	14.7	9.2	6.3	15.0

^a National PR assumes use of the d'Hondt method of allocation.

^b Deviation is the sum of the differences between % votes and % seats divided by two.

The reduction in the number of seats from 84 to 75 (leaving Northern Ireland's three seats to one side) together with their reallocation between the regions to bring them in line with their current electorates proved particularly costly for the Labour Party. Despite coming second in votes they were only slightly over-represented in seats. This was because Labour was unfortunate enough to be runner-up for the last seat in no less than seven of the eleven regions (a fate that in contrast did not befall the Conservatives anywhere). If, however, each region had had the same number of seats as it did in 1999, in six of these regions Labour would have secured the extra last seat, an outcome that, as the last column of Table A.11 shows, would have ensured that Labour was significantly over-represented. Nevertheless, as we would expect from

previous research on electoral systems (Lijphart, 1994), having more seats as in 1999 would still have resulted in a slightly more proportional outcome, as measured by the index of deviation (Loosemore and Hanby, 1971).

Even greater proportionality would, however, have been achieved if either a different system of allocating seats or a national rather than a regional list system had been used. In allocating seats to regions for this election, the Electoral Commission decided after a process of consultation to use the Sainte-Laguë (or Webster) method of allocation, the most proportional of the divisor methods of allocating seats (Electoral Commission, 2003b; McLean and Mortimore, 1992). If this same method had also been used to allocate seats to votes, the level of disproportionality would have been cut by just over a third. Meanwhile, as previous research would lead one to expect (Lijphart, 1994), changing from a regional to a national list system would have produced an even more proportional result than would switching the method of allocation.²¹

However, one of the criticisms that is sometimes levelled at highly proportional electoral systems is that they can make it too easy for extremist parties to secure representation (Hermens, 1941), though it might be noted that the BNP has been able to secure some representation under the plurality rule in recent local elections (Electoral Reform Society, 2004). Table A.11 indicates that the BNP would indeed have secured representation if either the Sainte-Laguë method of allocation had been used or if a national list system had been operating. However, as implemented in some Scandinavian countries, Sainte-Laguë has been modified to make it rather more difficult for a party to secure its first seat (Carstairs, 1980), and this modification²² would in fact have been sufficient to deny the BNP representation, albeit at the expense of losing almost all the increase in proportionality that the use of Sainte-Laguë would otherwise have produced. Equally, under a national list system, the introduction of a requirement that a party win 5% of the vote before being allocated any seats would also have been enough, albeit only just enough, to deny the BNP any representation.

Conclusion

We have addressed two main questions in this appendix. The first was to consider whether the outcome simply reflected domestic considerations or whether people's views about Britain's relationship with Europe also made a difference. The second was to assess the impact of the use of all-postal ballots and coincident local elections on the turnout.

People's views about Europe did appear to make a difference at this election. The success of UKIP was concentrated in just those kinds of places where the public is more likely to hold critical views about Europe. In securing this result the party appears to have been particularly successful in appealing to a section of the electorate that at the last European election had been attracted to the Conservatives by that party's Eurosceptical stance. At the same time, UKIP appears also to have won votes that might otherwise have been secured by the Liberal Democrats, who once again found European elections particularly difficult terrain; indeed, the party did much less well than it did in local elections held on the same day.

In short, this election served to register the significantly Eurosceptic mood of the British public at present (European Commission, 2004a; Evans, 2003). That same public also demonstrated its relative disinterest in matters European. Although more people voted than in any previous European election, once the impact of all-postal ballots and coincident local elections is allowed for, it appears that turnout simply returned to the norm for European elections, a norm that would still have left Britain at the bottom of

the turnout league amongst the 15 older member states of the European Union. Also, the fact that around 5% more people reckoned it was worth voting if a local election was held locally confirms that what happens in Brussels is still thought to be of less import by many people than what happens in their local town hall.

Domestic politics also played a role. The fall in Labour support appears to have had little to do with its stance on Europe and much to do with dissatisfaction with the performance of the government amongst its previous supporters. Part of that dissatisfaction appears to have been engendered by opposition to Britain's involvement in Iraq, most clearly demonstrated by Labour's losses and gains for both the Liberal Democrats and Respect in areas with a large Muslim population. And while people might be more willing to vote for smaller parties in European elections, especially now that a system of proportional representation is in place (albeit one that still discriminates significantly against smaller parties), at the same time the differences in the pattern of support for those parties suggests that each of them was mobilising distinct strands of domestic public opinion.

Moreover, the election has demonstrated two important developments in British domestic politics. The first is that dissatisfaction with the Labour government may no longer be concentrated amongst the party's more traditional working-class supporters but is now to be found amongst its more middle-class supporters as well. In contrast to 1999, Labour struggled to win votes in more middle-class areas as well as in more working-class ones. But defeat for Labour in 1999 was followed by a second large majority in 2001. Whether Labour's losses this time around again prove to be no more than a classic 'second-order' protest remains to be seen.

The second important development is that the decline in turnout that was first registered after the 1997 General Election appears for the time being at least to have been substantially reversed. After we take into account the use of all-postal ballots and coincident local elections, voters seemed as inclined to vote in this election as they had been in most European elections between 1979 and 1994. This would seem to corroborate the claim that recent low turnouts have been the product of political circumstance rather than any growth of apathy on the part of the electorate, a situation that in part at least may have disappeared with the vanishing of Labour's large opinion poll lead over the Conservatives (Bromley and Curtice, 2002).

At the same time the election confirmed that the use of all-postal ballots can increase turnout in low-profile elections substantially, although the effect was somewhat lower than in most previous local election pilots. The greater use of postal voting does come at some cost, that is, an increase in apparently inadvertently spoiled ballots, while the Electoral Commission detected some public antipathy to being required to vote by post, an antipathy that led the Commission to conclude that all-postal ballots of the kind deployed to date should not be held in future (Electoral Commission, 2004a). But it would appear that if politicians do wish to increase the turnout in low-profile elections, then they will still wish to introduce a procedure that makes it likely that most people opt to vote by post.

On the experience of this election they may also be inclined to ensure that future European elections coincide with local elections. Doing so also appears to result in rather more spoiled ballots, particularly when voters are asked to cast different numbers of votes on different ballot papers. But perhaps a more serious objection is that if a European election coincides with local elections in some places but not in others, one party could secure some partisan advantage. Measures that make it easier for all voters to vote may be thought desirable, but those that encourage some rather than others to do so are clearly more debatable.

Acknowledgement

We are deeply indebted to Philip Mitchell for assistance in developing the database of 'areas' used in this appendix.

Notes

1. Gibraltar is excluded from our analysis throughout. The outcome in Northern Ireland is also not included here.
2. Of these 164 areas, 40 comprise a single constituency, 62 comprise 2 or 3, and 62 comprise 4 or more. Only in 4 cases (Tyne & Wear, 13 constituencies; Birmingham, 11; Humberside, 10; and a group of 4 boroughs in the east of Greater Manchester, 10) do they comprise 10 or more seats.
3. It should also be noted that the outcome of the election in Scotland and Wales is sufficiently distinctive in a number of respects that our analyses of what happened in 2004 or of change since previous elections are sometimes confined to local authorities or areas in England. This is indicated in the relevant tables.
Information on the social characteristics of 'areas' and local authorities comes from the 2001 Census (Office for National Statistics, 2003a, 2003b).
4. Thanks to a 51.2% turnout in Northern Ireland, turnout in the United Kingdom as a whole was 38.9%, just enough in fact to overtake Portugal (38.7%) as well.
5. This appears to have been a point that was insufficiently appreciated by the Electoral Commission in its assessment of the impact of the all-postal ballots on turnout in 2004. Although it reported the difference between the change in turnout since 1999 in the four pilot regions and elsewhere as well as the level of turnout in 2004, more emphasis is given to the latter (Electoral Commission, 2004a, pp. 6, 29–30). Note that in contrast to the Commission, our figures for turnout exclude invalid votes.
6. One likely explanation for the lower impact was the fact that voters were required to return a countersigned declaration of identity, a requirement that had been dispensed with in a number of previous all-postal ballots.
7. Urban areas are defined as those with less than 1% of those aged 16–74 employed in agriculture. Rural areas are the remainder. Note that the results of this and other analyses in this appendix of differences between urban and rural areas are confirmed if, where it is possible, we use a measure of population density rather than percentage employed in agriculture. The findings reported in this paragraph are also supported by more formal multivariate analysis in which both percentage employed in agriculture and percentage with a degree are entered as interval level variables.
8. It might have been thought that turnout would have increased particularly sharply in those areas where an all-out local election was held, and thus overall control of the council was more evidently at stake. Of this, however, there is no sign.
9. As we might anticipate if we exclude Scotland from this table, the difference where no local elections were held falls to 10.0 in areas with a relatively high proportion of those in routine occupations, but this is still higher than the equivalent figure of 8.6 for those areas with a relatively low proportion of routine manual workers.
10. We have seen that all-postal ballots appear to have had a slightly greater impact in areas with relatively high numbers of people in routine occupations, while coincident local elections did so in more urban areas with relatively low proportions of people with a degree. All of these characteristics are associated with a higher

Labour vote, so the figures in this paragraph in fact probably slightly underestimate the advantage that Labour derived.

11. In practice we have been unable to uncover any systematic evidence that higher turnouts advantage one party over another.
12. Under our assumptions, the use of all-postal ballots could not of course have made any difference to the outcome in seats, as in each case postal ballots were held across a whole region. But in the regions in England outside London, coincident local elections were held in some parts of a region but not others. As coincident local elections differentially increased the turnout in predominantly Labour areas, their use could potentially have helped Labour win a seat. In practice Labour did not win the last seat in any region and so it is unlikely that holding coincident local elections helped Labour win any seats. But there evidently is some possibility that a party might derive a partisan advantage in seats if a future European election were to be held at the same time as local elections in some local authorities within a region but not in others.
13. We should note that this was the first European election at which, even in an area where a traditional ballot was being held, any voter could vote by post on demand. Early evidence suggests that nearly 1 in 10 voters were registered to vote by post, compared with 1.3% in 1999, and that such voters were around 30% more likely to have voted (Electoral Commission, 2004a; Rallings and Thrasher, 2000). If it were the case that in the absence of postal voting on demand the level of turnout amongst these voters would have been the same as that amongst the rest of the electorate, then this 30% increase could have been responsible for at least 2 points of the increase in turnout in places with a traditional ballot. This would then suggest that the underlying propensity of the electorate to vote is still not quite at the levels of 1979 and 1984. However, it seems likely that those who have made the effort to register by post consist disproportionately of those who are inclined to vote anyway, and thus the net contribution of postal voting demand to the level of turnout in places with traditional ballots was rather less than 2 points.
14. For example, according to the 2003 British Social Attitudes survey, 24% of those aged over 65 would like Britain to leave the European Union while only 7% of those aged under 35 take that view. Equally, 27% of those in non-professional self-employment want Britain to withdraw, more than any other occupational group. On the geographical distribution of attitudes towards Europe see Curtice (1996).
15. Indeed, the resulting geographical concentration of its support means that UKIP could well win seats in the Commons should it repeat its performance at this election in a UK General Election.
16. We might also note the relative success of two independent candidates. Martin Bell, a former television reporter who was elected Independent MP for Tatton in 1997, won 6.3% of the vote in the Eastern region, performing particularly well in the two counties on which his campaign was focused, Norfolk (9.3%) and Suffolk (8.2%). Meanwhile, Neil Herron, a greengrocer who was once convicted for refusing to use metric weights and measures, won 5.1% of the vote in the North East and no less than 16.5% in his home city of Sunderland. No doubt Mr Herron also tapped into Eurosceptic sentiment; it is certainly noticeable that UKIP's vote increased less in the North East than in any other region of Britain.
17. Note that in a minority of cases there was no local election in a small number of wards in the local authority.

18. A similar but much smaller difference can also be observed in London where the smaller parties did fight the 'local' Mayoral and Assembly election as well as the European election. The Liberal Democrats' share of the European vote was 1.6 points lower than on the Assembly list vote and 3.1 points lower than on the constituency vote. That these differences are smaller probably reflects the fact that the Liberal Democrats also find it more difficult to win votes in London Assembly elections than they do in local borough elections in the capital. The party won as much as 20.6% of the votes cast in the 2002 London Borough elections, nearly 4 points higher than on the London-wide Assembly vote, despite not fighting all the wards.
19. The impact of UKIP's success on the Conservatives' performance can also be seen if we compare the outcome in the local and the European elections. We can divide a set of 66 provincial English councils where most of the wards were fought by all three main parties, into two groups, those where UKIP's vote was at least 14 points higher in the European elections than in the local elections, and those where the gap was smaller. Amongst the former group, the Conservatives' share of the vote was as much as 12 points lower in the European elections than in the local elections, while amongst the latter it was only 5.2 points lower. Although at the same time this analysis only produces a 1.3 point difference in the Liberal Democrat performance in the two kinds of local authority, this appears to reflect the fact that those places where UKIP performed less well were often places where the Liberal Democrats are relatively strong in local elections; the local Liberal Democrat vote tended to fall off in the European elections in such places, irrespective of how well UKIP performed. We might also note that in London, where UKIP's share of the European vote was 3.9 points higher than its share of the list vote in the London Assembly election, the Conservatives' European tally was 1.7 points lower than its Assembly list vote, the Liberal Democrats' European vote 1.6 points lower, while Labour's share was just 0.3 points lower.
20. We should note, however, that the Conservatives in particular may also have suffered most from the advance of the BNP, whose appeal tapped into broader concerns about immigration rather than about Europe in particular. We have already seen that the BNP did particularly well and the Conservatives lost ground relatively heavily in places with high numbers of people with no educational qualifications. Meanwhile, the Conservative vote fell by 2.3 points more in areas where the BNP vote was up on 1999 by 3 points or more than it did in areas where the BNP advanced by less than that. The equivalent figure for Labour is only 0.6 points while the Liberal Democrats actually did slightly better where the BNP did relatively well.
21. Note that if both Sainte-Laguë and a national list system had been in place, the outcome would have been even more proportional. In particular, under this method of allocation Plaid Cymru would still have secured a seat.
22. This modification consists of using the divisors 1.4, 3, 5, and so on, rather than 1, 3, 5, and so on.

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