



Northern Ireland
Assembly

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Election Report: Northern Ireland Assembly Election, 2 March 2017

NIAR 20-17

This paper provides an analysis of the Northern Ireland Assembly elections held on 2 March 2017, and compares the outcome with the 2016 election. The paper also includes an analysis of voter turnout and results by party and constituency.

Paper22/17

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Key Points

- The 2017 Northern Ireland Assembly election left the parties with the following number of seats:

Democratic Unionist Party	28
Sinn Féin	27
Social Democratic and Labour Party	12
Ulster Unionist Party	10
Alliance Party of Northern Ireland	8
Green Party	2
Traditional Unionist Voice	1
People before Profit Alliance	1
Independents	1

- The size of the Assembly has been reduced from 108 to 90 Members.
- In the context of a smaller Assembly, losses were experienced by the DUP (10 seats), UUP (six seats), Sinn Féin (one seat) and the PBPA (one seat).
- The DUP had the highest share of first preference votes, (28.1% compared with 29.2% in 2016), followed by Sinn Féin (27.9% - up from 24.0% in 2016); UUP (12.9% - up from 12.6% in 2016) and the SDLP (11.9% - down from 12.0% in 2016). The Alliance Party share of the vote rose from 7.0% in 2016 to 9.1% in 2017.
- Of the 90 MLAs elected in 2017, 27 are women (compared with 30 in 2016). Due to the reduced size of the Assembly, the proportion of female MLAs increased to 30 per cent (from 27.8% in 2016).
- Turnout ¹ in the election was 64.8 per cent (compared with 54.9% in 2016).
- A total of 228 candidates contested the election (compared with 276 in 2016).

¹ Votes polled expressed as a percentage of total eligible electorate.

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1 Introduction

The current Northern Ireland Assembly² was established under the terms of the Belfast / Good Friday Agreement and was first elected on 25 June 1998. Legislative powers and executive authority for the Northern Ireland Government Departments were devolved to the Assembly from 2 December 1999.

Since devolution, the Assembly has been suspended on four occasions³, with the latest of these suspensions occurring on 14 October 2002. Despite this, an election for the second session of the Assembly eventually went ahead on 26 November 2003.

The Assembly remained suspended, however, after the second election, although the Northern Ireland (St Andrews Agreement) Act 2006 provided for a Transitional Assembly to take part in preparations for the restoration of devolved government in accordance with the St Andrews Agreement. This Transitional Assembly helped to create the conditions for a third Assembly election, which took place on 7 March 2007. Restoration took place on 8 May 2007.

The fourth Assembly election took place on 5 May 2011, and the first meeting of the new Assembly transpired on 12 May 2011. The fifth Assembly election occurred on 5 May 2016, and the first meeting ensued on 12 May 2016. The Assembly was dissolved on 26 January 2017, and the sixth Assembly election took place on 2 March 2017.

2 The Constituencies

The 18 Westminster Parliamentary Constituencies (WPCs)⁴ are currently used for the Assembly elections (see Map 2.1 below)⁵. Until the present election (2 March 2017), six seats were allocated to each constituency, giving a total of 108 seats.

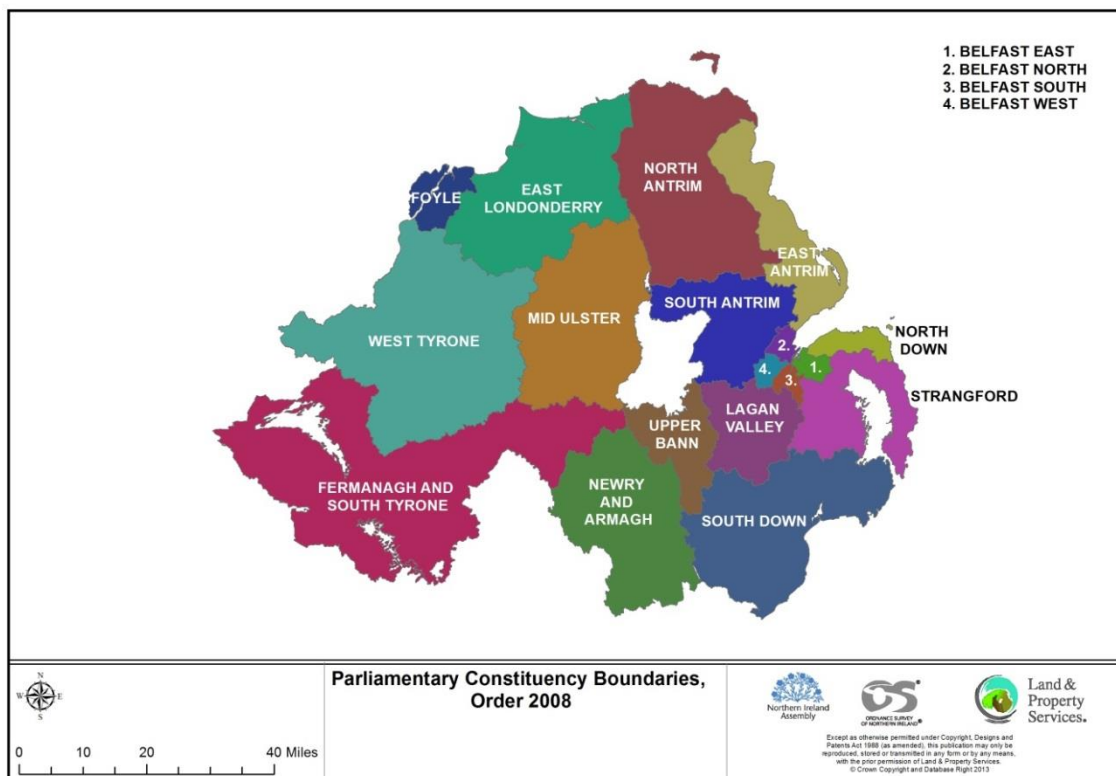
² Previous Assemblies were elected in Northern Ireland on 28 June 1973 and 20 October 1982 (see <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/politics/polit.htm>).

³ The first suspension took place on 11 February 2000, shortly after devolution, and lasted until 29 May 2000; two further one day suspensions took place on 11 August 2001 and 22 September 2001; the last suspension began on 14 October 2002 (see <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/politics/government.htm>).

⁴ Profiles of the 18 constituencies can be found on the Northern Ireland Assembly Website, at <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/assembly-business/research-and-information-service-raise/constituency-profiles/>

⁵ Parliamentary constituency boundaries are periodically reviewed by the Boundary Commission to take account of demographic change. In the most recent review (published on 6 September 2016), Northern Ireland was allocated 17 seats, one fewer than the current number. The proposals, which are subject to consultation and further revision, will not be finalised until 1 October 2018. Subject to final approval, the new constituencies will take effect at the next Westminster election, which is scheduled for May 2020. For further details, see: <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7700/CBP-7700.pdf>

Map 2.1 Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries



The *Stormont Fresh Start Agreement*, signed in November 2015, stated that a bill would be introduced in the Northern Ireland Assembly to reduce the number of Members per constituency from six to five, and have effect from the first "Assembly election after the May 2016 election". The Assembly Members (Reduction of Numbers) Act received Royal Assent on 22 July 2016. As the 2017 election was the first election since the Act became law, five MLAs were elected in each of the 18 constituencies, resulting in a reduction in the number of Members from 108 to 90.

3. The Candidates

Reflecting the reduction in the number of Members, a total of 228 candidates stood for the March 2017 election, compared with 276 in May 2016, a fall of 17 per cent (Table 3.1). The DUP had the largest number of candidates (38), followed by Sinn Féin (34), UUP (24), SDLP (21), and Alliance (21). The Green Party fielded 18 candidates, followed by the TUV (14) and the Conservatives (13). The number of UKIP candidates fell from 13 to one, while the PBPA nominated seven candidates compared with three in the previous election.

Table 3.1 2017 Election Candidates by Party and Gender

Party	Male	Female	Total	% Female
Democratic Unionist Party (DUP)	30	8	38	21.1
Sinn Féin (SF)	21	13	34	38.2
Ulster Unionist Party (UUP)	18	6	24	25.0
Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP)	13	8	21	38.1
Alliance Party (APNI)	11	10	21	47.6
Green Party	9	9	18	50.0
Traditional Unionist Voice (TUV)	12	2	14	14.3
Conservative	12	1	13	7.7
People before Profit Alliance (PBPA)	4	3	7	42.9
The Workers Party	3	2	5	40.0
Cross Community Labour Alliance	3	1	4	25.0
Progressive Unionist Party (PUP)	2	1	3	33.3
Citizens Independent Social Thought Alliance	3	0	3	0.0
UK Independence Party (UKIP)	1	0	1	0.0
Independents	16	6	22	27.3
Totals	158	70	228	30.7

Five of the smaller parties which stood in 2016, including the NI Labour Representative Committee and the Animal Welfare Party, did not put forward any candidates in 2017.

The number of female candidates fell from 76 in 2016 to 70 in 2017, reflecting the overall fall in candidate numbers. However, the *proportion* of female candidates actually rose, from 27 per cent in 2016 to 31 per cent in 2017. The increase in the proportion of female candidates continues the upward trend which has been evident since 2007, when only 47 women (18%) stood for election. Sinn Féin had the highest number of female candidates (13) of the five main parties, while the Green Party (50%) had the largest proportion, followed by the Alliance Party (48%), Sinn Féin and the SDLP (both 38%). A quarter of UUP candidates (25%) and one-in-five (21%) DUP candidates were women.

4. Turnout

Table 4.1 presents the voting statistics for Election 2017. The total eligible electorate in March 2017 was 1,254,709 (compared with 1,281,595 in May 2016), a fall of 26,886 (2.1%)⁶. The total number of votes polled was 812,783, which represented an increase of 109,039 (15.5%) on the May 2016 election. The official turnout⁷ was 64.8 per cent of the eligible electorate, an increase of 9.9 percentage points on the May 2016 figure (54.9%) .

Table 4.1 2017 Voting Statistics by Constituency

	Eligible Electorate	Poll	Valid Votes	Invalid Votes	% Turnout
Belfast East	64,788	40,828	40,357	471	63.0
Belfast North	68,187	42,119	41,486	633	61.8
Belfast South	67,953	43,465	43,053	412	64.0
Belfast West	61,309	40,930	40,344	586	66.8
East Antrim	62,933	37,836	37,424	412	60.1
East Londonderry	67,392	42,248	41,873	375	62.7
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	73,100	53,075	52,263	812	72.6
Foyle	69,718	45,317	44,616	701	65.0
Lagan Valley	72,621	45,440	45,069	371	62.6
Mid Ulster	69,396	50,228	49,678	550	72.4
Newry & Armagh	80,140	55,625	54,918	707	69.4
North Antrim	76,739	48,518	48,094	424	63.2
North Down	64,461	38,174	37,739	435	59.2
South Antrim	68,475	42,726	42,344	382	62.4
South Down	75,415	49,934	49,399	535	66.2
Strangford	64,393	39,239	38,785	454	60.9
Upper Bann	83,431	52,174	51,548	626	62.5
West Tyrone	64,258	44,907	44,325	582	69.9
Northern Ireland	1,254,709	812,783	803,315	9,468	64.8

⁶ A total of 60,433 names were removed from the Electoral Register on 1 December 2016. These were individuals who did not return an electoral registration form during the last canvass of electors in 2013. Anyone affected by this ruling and wishing to vote on 2 March 2017 could complete and return a fresh registration form by 14 February 2017 (source: Electoral Office for Northern Ireland).

⁷ Turnout is calculated by taking the total number of votes cast (including invalid votes) and dividing by the eligible electorate.

Compared with 2016, turnout increased significantly in every constituency and was the highest recorded since the first Assembly election in 1998. Even in North Down, which traditionally records the lowest turnout, the 2017 figure (59.2%) was almost ten percentage points higher than in May 2016 (49.6%)⁸.

Table 4.2 Turnout in Assembly Elections 1998 – 2017

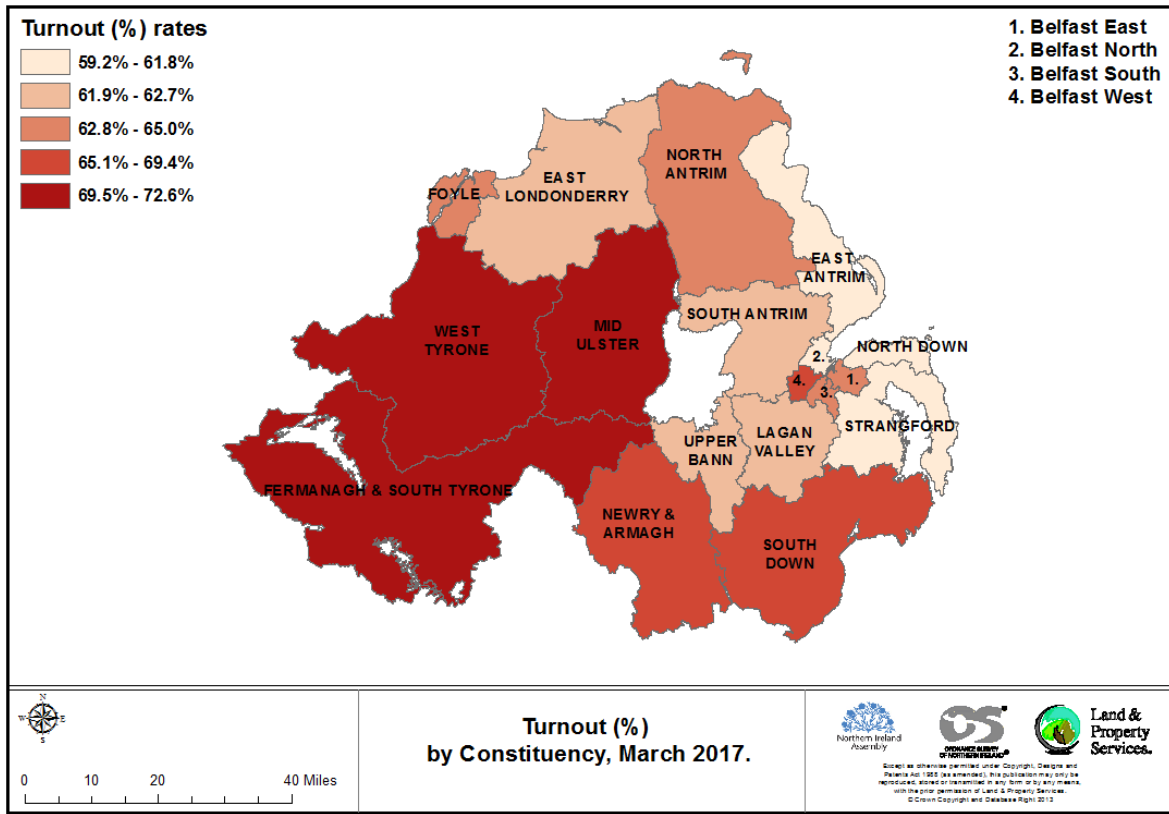
Constituency	1998 %	2003 %	2007 %	2011 %	2016 %	2017 %
Belfast East	66.6	60.7	60.0	53.6	57.2	63.0
Belfast North	67.3	62.3	60.9	50.3	52.5	61.8
Belfast South	67.4	62.6	62.4	52.4	54.3	64.0
Belfast West	70.5	65.9	67.4	57.9	57.8	66.8
East Antrim	60.9	56.5	53.5	47.8	51.0	60.1
East Londonderry	67.7	61.8	60.9	54.1	50.8	62.7
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	79.4	72.9	71.2	69.0	64.6	72.6
Foyle	72.0	63.5	63.9	57.8	56.0	65.0
Lagan Valley	65.7	61.4	60.0	53.1	53.2	62.6
Mid Ulster	84.4	74.9	73.1	65.4	58.8	72.4
Newry and Armagh	77.3	70.2	70.8	61.3	59.3	69.4
North Antrim	69.0	63.3	61.3	54.8	52.9	63.2
North Down	60.2	54.5	53.8	45.9	49.6	59.2
South Antrim	64.2	59.5	58.6	50.1	51.0	62.4
South Down	73.7	65.6	65.0	58.1	53.8	66.2
Strangford	61.6	57.1	54.5	48.6	50.3	60.9
Upper Bann	72.3	64.2	61.1	55.3	54.4	62.5
West Tyrone	79.4	73.2	71.7	64.0	59.9	69.9
Northern Ireland	70.0	64.0	62.9	55.7	54.9	64.8

Source: Electoral Office for Northern Ireland (1998 – 2017)

While turnout rose substantially in all areas, Table 4.2 reveals that the highest rates were recorded in the predominately nationalist constituencies of Fermanagh and South Tyrone (72.6%), Mid Ulster (72.4%), West Tyrone (69.9%) and Newry and Armagh (69.4%) – also see Map 4.1

⁸ Percentage points refer to the difference between two percentages, e.g. the difference between 60% and 55% is five percentage points.

Map 4.1 Turnout (%) by Constituency, March 2017



5 Overall Results

Table 5.1 presents the overall results of the 2017 Assembly Election. The DUP retained its position as the largest party in the Assembly with 28 seats, followed by Sinn Féin (27), the SDLP (12), and the UUP (10). Alliance (8 seats), The Green Party (2) and the TUV (1) returned with the same number of seats as before the election, while the People before Profit Alliance (PBPA) lost one seat. The Independent Member for East Londonderry (Claire Sugden) retained her seat.

Compared with 2016, the DUP lost ten seats and the UUP six, while Sinn Féin lost one seat. The PBPA lost a seat in Foyle.

Table 5.1 Assembly Election 2017 – Overall Results

Party	Seats	+/-	First Preference Votes	Vote Share (%)	+/- (pp)
DUP	28	-10	225,413	28.1	- 1.1
Sinn Féin	27	-1	224,245	27.9	3.9
UUP	10	-6	103,314	12.9	0.3
SDLP	12		95,958	11.9	- 0.1
Alliance Party	8		72,717	9.1	2.1
TUV	1		20,523	2.6	- 0.9
Green	2		18,527	2.3	- 0.4
Independents	1		14,407	1.8	- 1.5
PBPA	1	-1	14,100	1.8	- 0.2
PUP			5,590	0.7	- 0.2
Conservative			2,399	0.3	- 0.1
Others			6,122	0.8	-1.6
Totals	90		803,315		

The election resulted in significant changes to the composition of the Assembly which largely favoured the nationalist parties. As noted in Section 2, the size of the Assembly was reduced in the current election from 108 Members to 90, a loss of 18 seats. Unionist parties accounted for 16 of those losses, while the nationalist parties forfeited only one seat. The non-aligned PBPA accounted for the remaining seat.

As it currently stands (March 2017), the designated unionist parties have a combined total of 40 seats (including an Independent Member) out of 90, while the nationalist parties have 39. This is in marked contrast to the situation just before dissolution (January 2017), when the combined unionist representation was 56 out of 108 seats, with the nationalist parties on 40.

Table 5.2 presents the first preference votes obtained by the five main parties and a number of smaller parties, in 2016 and 2017. The table reveals that, in line with the increased turnout, the five main parties all recorded a substantial increase in the

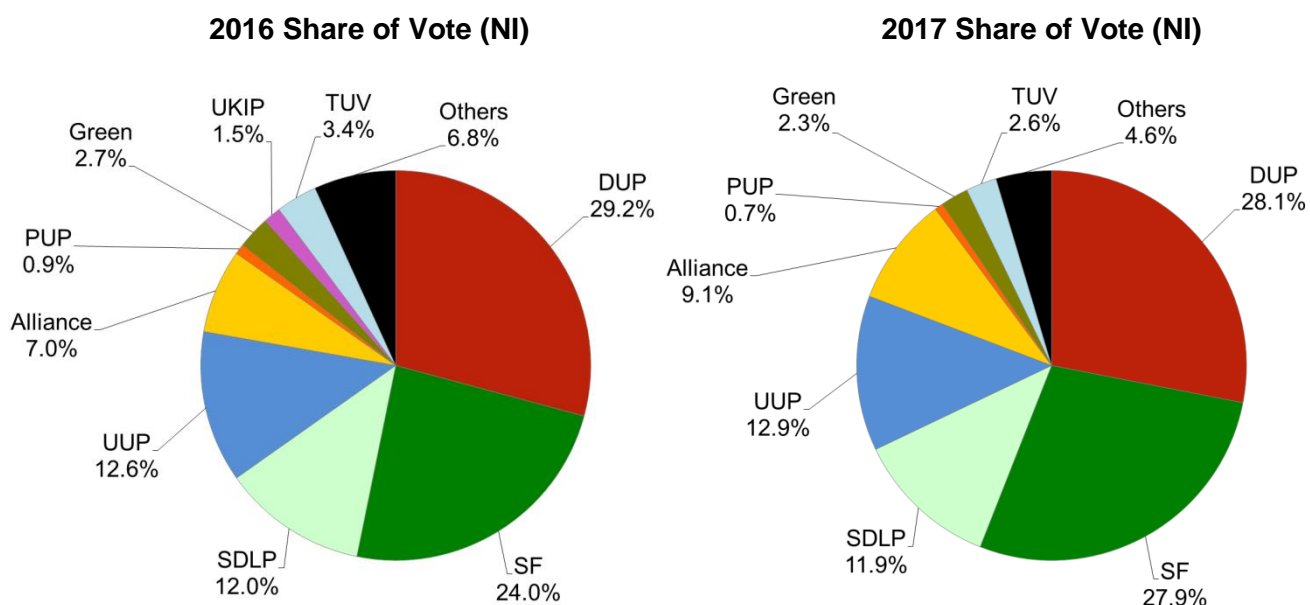
number of first preference votes. The Alliance Party saw the largest proportionate increase in first preferences, from 48,447 in May 2016 to 72,717, a rise of 50.1 per cent. Sinn Féin received an additional 57,460 first preferences, an increase of 34.5 per cent, while the SDLP vote rose by 15.1 per cent. The DUP received an additional 22,846 first preferences (11.3% rise) and the UUP 16,012 (18.3%).

Table 5.2 First Preference Votes – Comparison with 2016

	2016	2017	Difference	% change
DUP	202,567	225,413	22,846	11.3
Sinn Féin	166,785	224,245	57,460	34.5
UUP	87,302	103,314	16,012	18.3
SDLP	83,364	95,958	12,594	15.1
Alliance Party	48,447	72,717	24,270	50.1
TUV	23,776	20,523	-3,253	- 13.7
Green Party	18,718	18,527	-191	- 1.0
PBPA	13,761	14,100	339	2.5
PUP	5,955	5,590	-365	- 6.1
Independents	22,650	14,407	-8,243	-36.4

6 Individual Party Performance

This section analyses the performance of the main political parties. While the emphasis is on comparisons between 2017 and 2016, Tables 6.1 and 6.2 also contain data on all the preceding polls since 1998.



The **Democratic Unionist Party** (28 seats) returned to the Assembly with ten fewer Members than in 2016 (Table 6.1). This was against the background of a smaller Assembly. The party lost seats in 10 of the 18 constituencies with a reduced share of first preference votes (28.1% compared with 29.2% in 2016) – see Table 6.2.

Table 6.1 Seats by Party

	1998	2003	2007	2011	2016	2017
DUP	20	30	36	38	38	28
UUP	28	27	18	16	16	10
SF	18	24	28	29	28	27
SDLP	24	18	16	14	12	12
APNI	6	6	7	8	8	8
UKUP	5	1				
PUP	2	1	1			
NIWC	2					
Green			1	1	2	2
TUV				1	1	1
PBPA					2	1
Independent/Others	3	1	1	1	1	1
Northern Ireland	108	108	108	108	108	90

Table 6.2 Share of First Preference Votes by Party

	1998 %	2003 %	2007 %	2011 %	2016 %	2017 %
DUP	18.1	25.7	30.1	30.0	29.2	28.1
SF	17.6	23.5	26.2	26.9	24.0	27.9
UUP	21.3	22.7	14.9	13.2	12.6	12.9
SDLP	22.0	17.0	15.2	14.2	12.0	11.9
APNI	6.5	3.7	5.2	7.7	7.0	9.1
TUV				2.5	3.4	2.6
PUP	2.5	1.2	0.6	0.2	0.9	0.7
NIWC	1.6	0.8				
UKUP	4.5	0.8	1.5			
Green	0.1	0.4	1.7	0.9	2.7	2.3
PBPA				0.8	2.0	1.8
UKIP				0.6	1.5	0.2
Independent/Others	5.8	4.2	4.5	3.0	4.8	2.5
Totals	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Sinn Féin (27 seats) lost one seat overall, while its share of first preference votes rose from 24.0% in 2016 to 27.9%. The party lost seats in East Antrim and Upper Bann but gained one in Fermanagh and South Tyrone.

The **SDLP** became the third largest party in the Assembly with 12 seats, the same number as in 2016. Losses in Belfast West and Fermanagh and South Tyrone were balanced by gains in Lagan Valley and Upper Bann. The party's share of first preference votes fell marginally, from 12.0% in 2016 to 11.9%.

The **Ulster Unionist Party** (10 seats) lost six seats overall, while it saw a marginal increase in its share of first preference votes (up from 12.6% to 12.9%).

There was no net change in seats for the **Alliance Party** (8 seats). However, the Party's share of first preference votes rose from 7.0% in 2016 to 9.1%.

The **Traditional Unionist Voice** received 2.6% of first preference votes (down from 3.4% in 2016) and retained its single seat in North Antrim.

The **Green Party** held its two seats (Belfast South and North Down) against the backdrop of a slight fall in their vote share (from 2.7% to 2.3%).

The **People before Profit Alliance** lost one of its two seats (Foyle). Their share of first preferences fell from 2.0% in 2016 to 1.8%.

There was only one seat won by an **Independent**. Claire Sugden retained her seat in East Londonderry.

7 Women in the 2017 Assembly Election

A total of 27 female Members were elected to the Assembly on 2 March 2017 (Table 7.1). While this is three fewer than in 2016, the smaller Assembly means that it represents a larger proportion of Members (30% versus 27.8%) than in 2016. Seventy female candidates stood for election (30.7%).

The Assembly figures compare favourably with Dáil Éireann, where 22 per cent of TDs are female (February 2016 election). The National Assembly of Wales has the highest percentage of women representatives in UK parliaments (41.7%), followed by the Scottish Parliament (34.9%) and the House of Commons (29.4%).

Sinn Féin, with 11 female Members (40.7%), has the largest number of women MLAs, followed by the DUP (6, 21.4%). A third (33.3%) of SDLP Members are female (4), while three of the eight Alliance representatives (37.5%) are women. Belfast South has the largest number of female representatives, with three out of five Members.

Three out of the five main parties (DUP, Sinn Féin and Alliance) have a female leader.

Table 7.1 Seats by Party and Gender

Party	Male	Female	Total	% Female
DUP	22	6	28	21.4
SF	16	11	27	40.7
UUP	9	1	10	10.0
SDLP	8	4	12	33.3
APNI	5	3	8	37.5
TUV	1	0	1	
Green Party	1	1	2	
PBPA	1	0	1	
Independents	0	1	1	
Totals	63	27	90	30.0

8 Results by Constituency

Maps 8.1 and 8.2 (below) show the party with the largest share of first preference votes by constituency in 2016 and 2017. In both years, the DUP took the largest share of first preferences in 11 of the 18 constituencies. 2017 saw Sinn Féin move ahead of the SDLP as the largest party in Foyle and South Down, and are now the largest party in seven constituencies.

Table 8.1 (below) shows the distribution of seats by party for each constituency (with 2016 in brackets).

Maps 8.1 and 8.2: Party with highest share of first preference votes by Constituency, 2016 and 2017

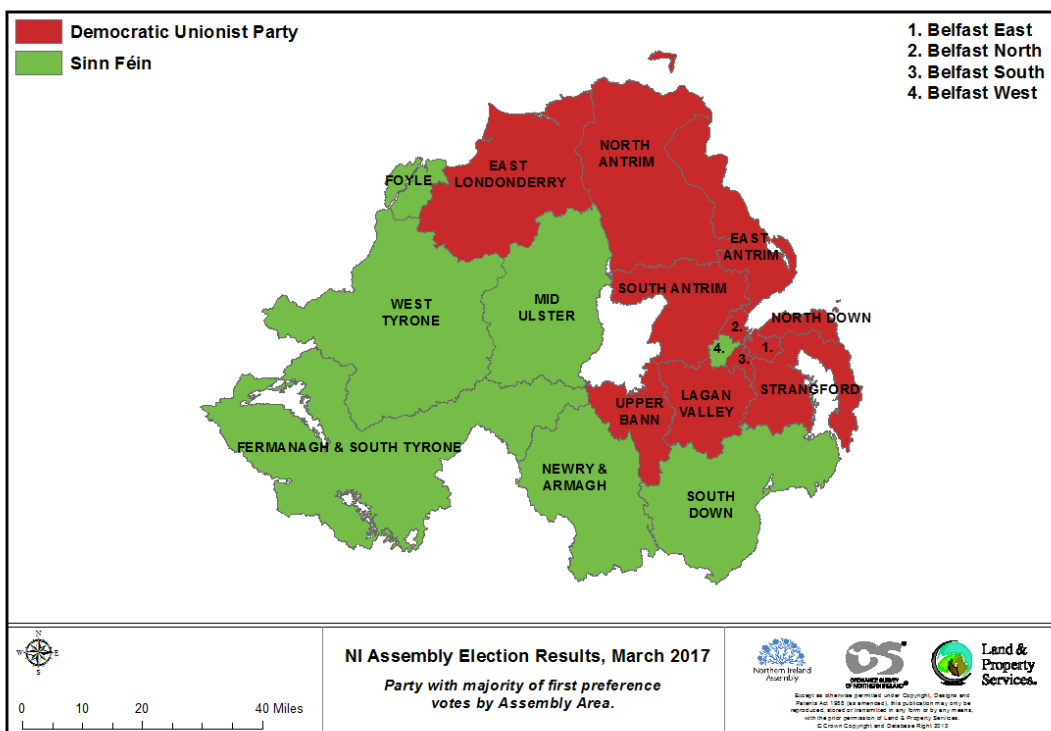
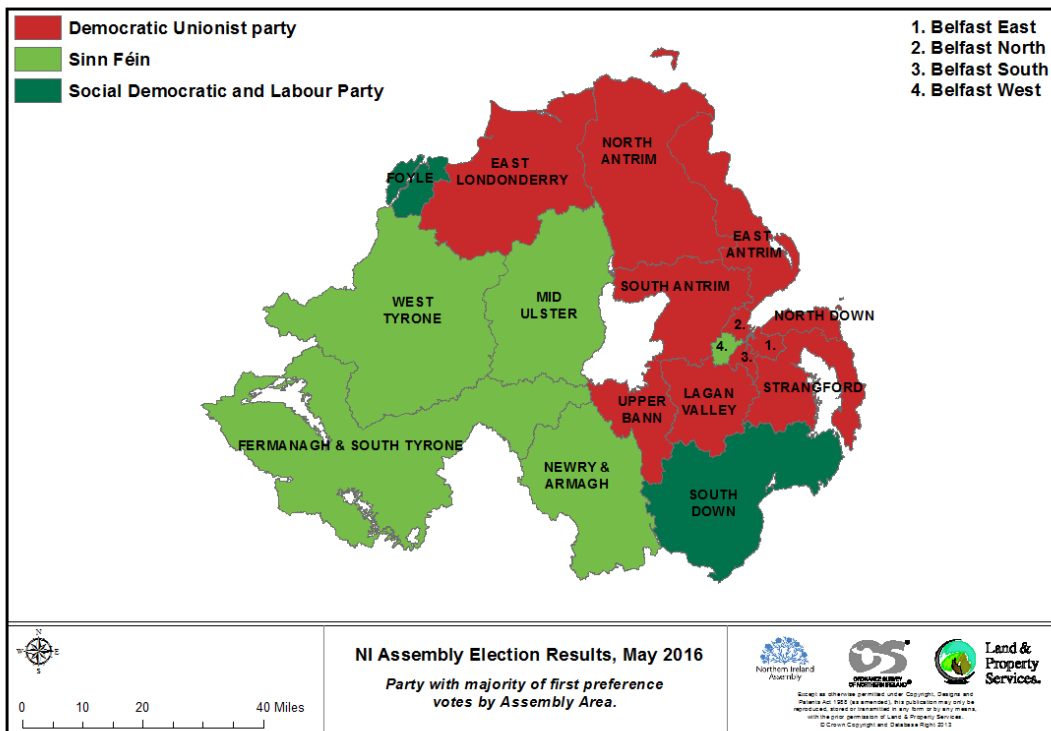


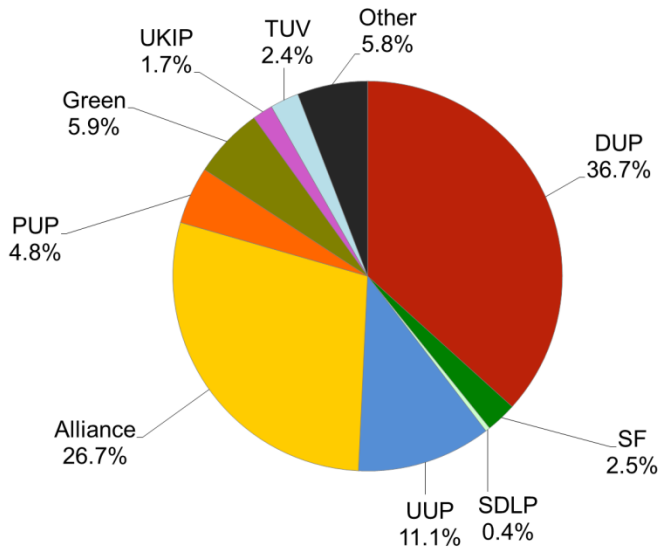
Table 8.1 Seats by Party and Constituency: 2017 (v 2016)

Parliamentary Constituency	DUP	UUP	SF	SDLP	APNI	TUV	PBPA	Green	IND
Belfast East	2 (3)	1 (1)			2 (2)				
Belfast North	2 (3)		2 (2)	1 (1)					
Belfast South	1 (2)		1 (1)	1 (1)	1 (1)			1 (1)	
Belfast West			4 (4)	- (1)			1 (1)		
East Antrim	2 (3)	2 (1)	- (1)		1 (1)				
East Londonderry	2 (3)		1 (1)	1 (1)					1 (1)
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	1 (2)	1 (1)	3 (2)	- (1)					
Foyle	1 (1)		2 (2)	2 (2)			- (1)		
Lagan Valley	2 (3)	1 (2)		1 (-)	1 (1)				
Mid Ulster	1 (1)	- (1)	3 (3)	1 (1)					
Newry and Armagh	1 (1)	- (1)	3 (3)	1 (1)					
North Antrim	2 (3)	1 (1)	1 (1)			1 (1)			
North Down	2 (3)	1 (1)			1 (1)			1 (1)	
South Antrim	2 (3)	1 (1)	1 (1)		1 (1)				
South Down	1 (1)	- (1)	2 (2)	2 (2)					
Strangford	3 (3)	1 (2)			1 (1)				
Upper Bann	2 (2)	1 (2)	1 (2)	1 (-)					
West Tyrone	1 (1)	- (1)	3 (3)	1 (1)					-
Northern Ireland	28 (38)	10 (16)	27 (28)	12 (12)	8 (8)	1 (1)	1 (2)	2 (2)	1 (1)

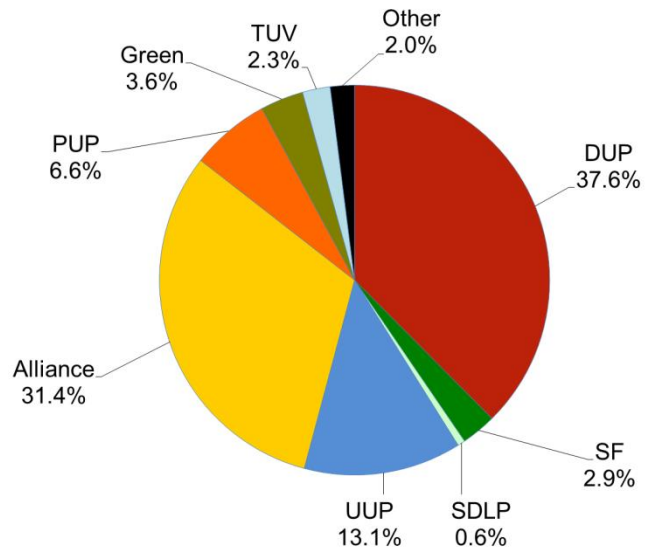
The individual constituency results, with each party's share of first preference votes, are presented as pie charts in the following pages.

Belfast East

2016 Share of Vote



2017 Share of Vote

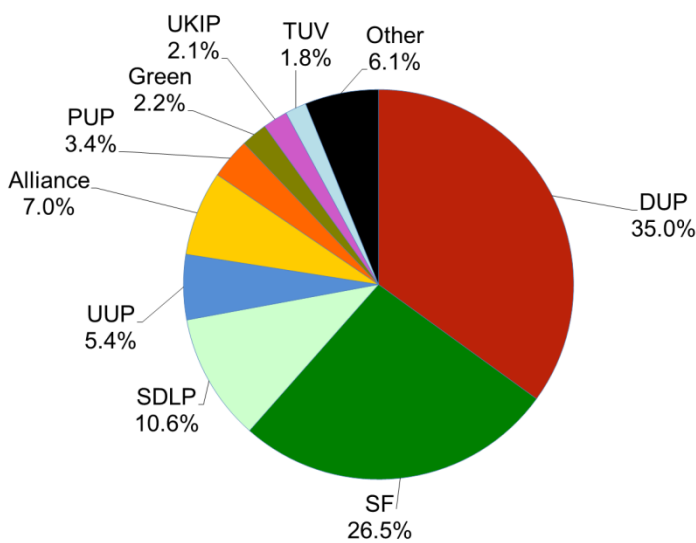


2017 Result

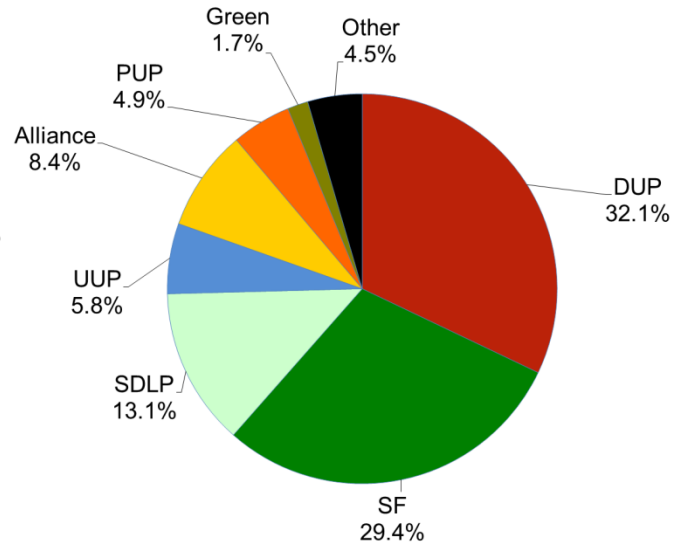
Seats Won: DUP 2, Alliance 2, UUP 1

Belfast North

2016 Share of Vote



2017 Share of Vote

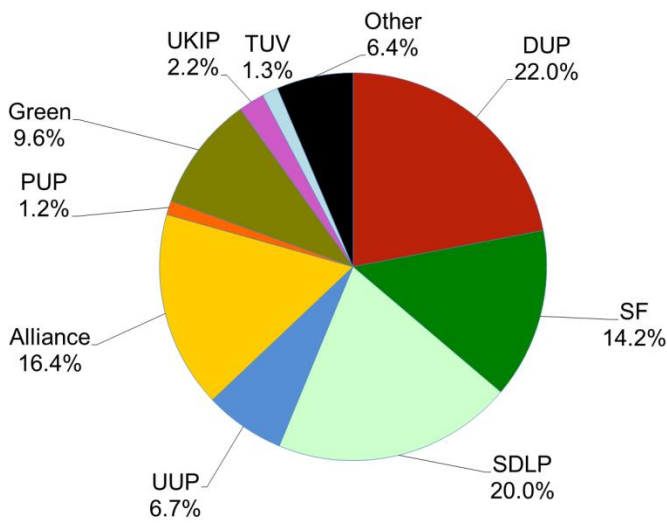


2017 Result

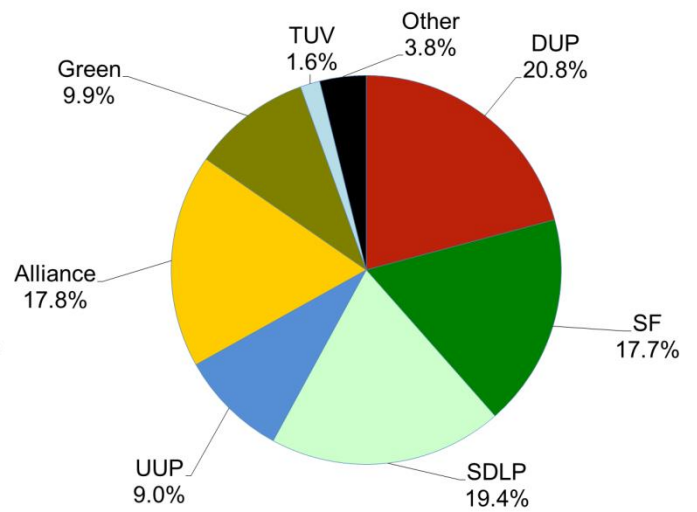
Seats Won: DUP 2, Sinn Féin 2, SDLP 1

Belfast South

2016 Share of Vote



2017 Share of Vote

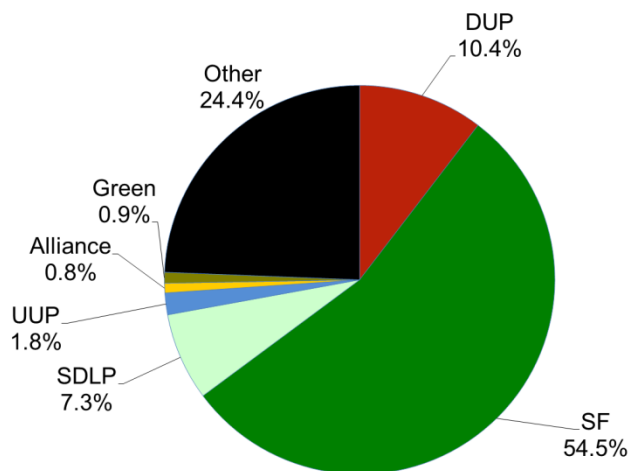


2017 Result

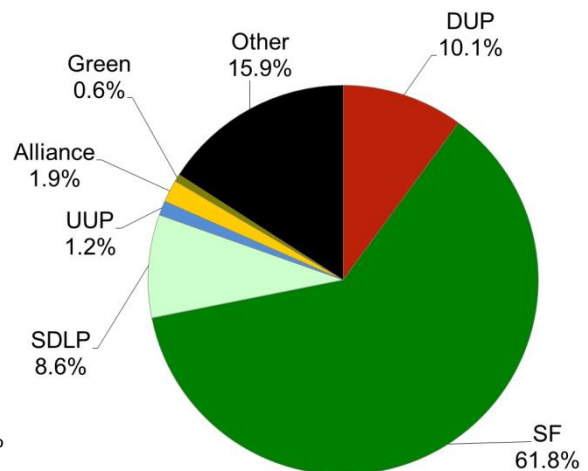
Seats Won: DUP 1, Sinn Féin 1, SDLP 1, Alliance 1, Green Party 1

Belfast West

2016 Share of Vote



2017 Share of Vote

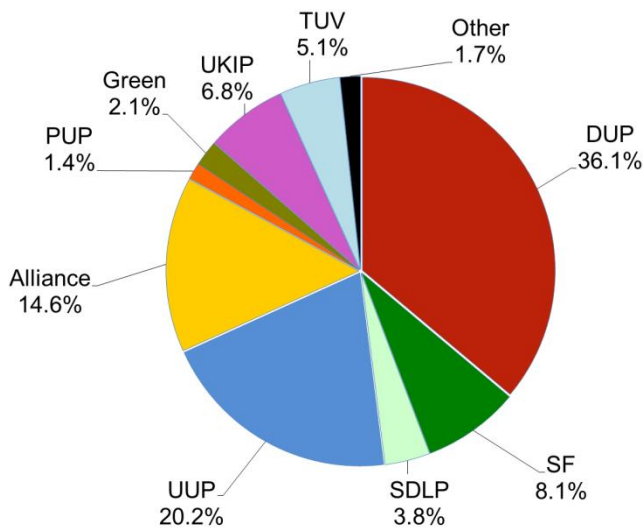


2017 Result

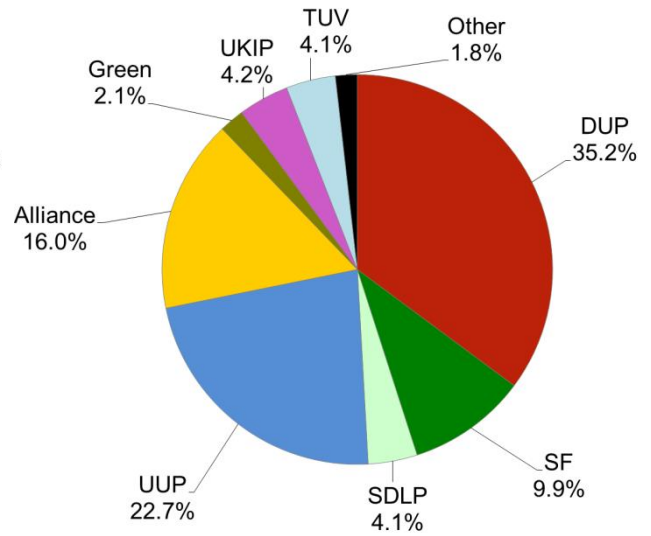
Seats Won: Sinn Féin 4, PBPA 1

East Antrim

2016 Share of Vote



2017 Share of Vote

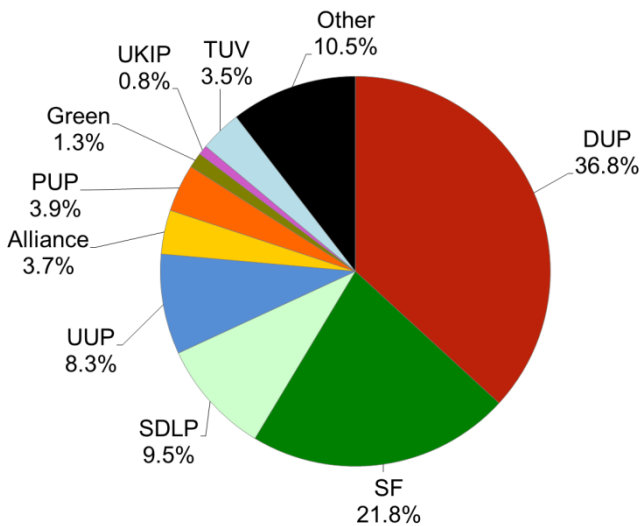


2017 Result

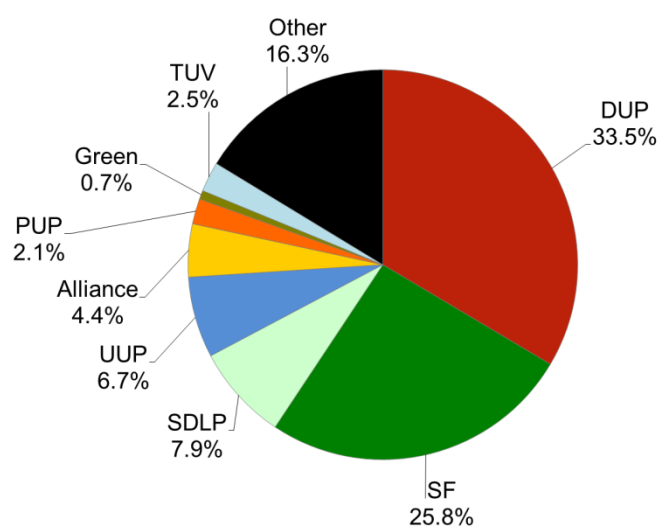
Seats Won: DUP 2, UUP 2, Alliance 1

East Londonderry

2016 Share of Vote



2017 Share of Vote

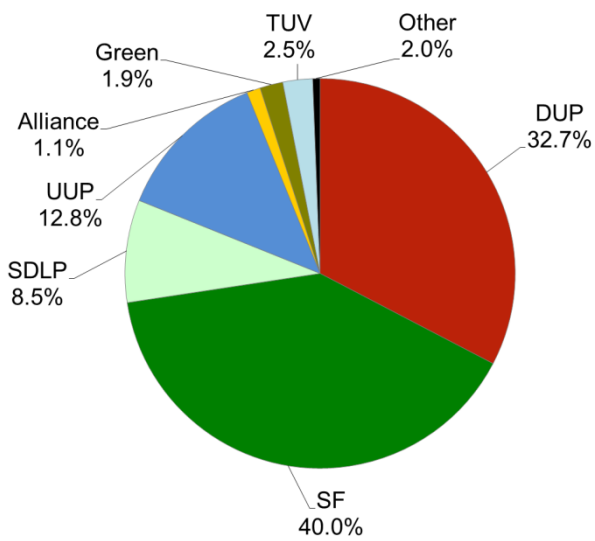


2017 Result

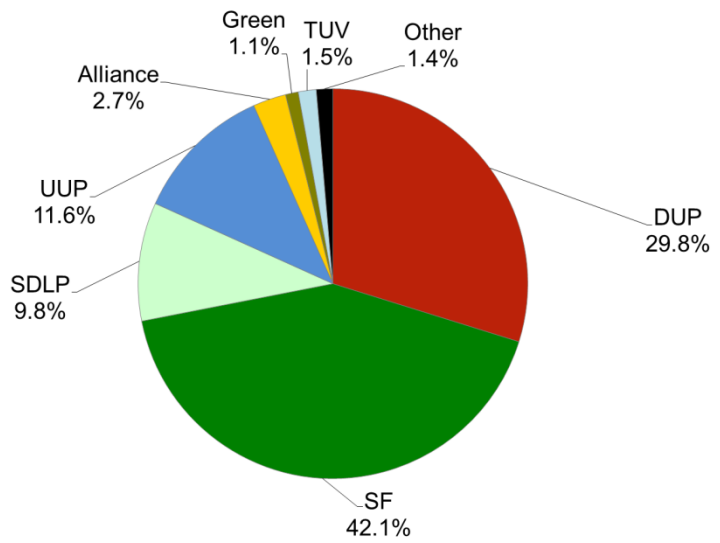
Seats Won: DUP 2, Sinn Féin 1, SDLP 1, Independent 1

Fermanagh & South Tyrone

2016 Share of Vote



2017 Share of Vote

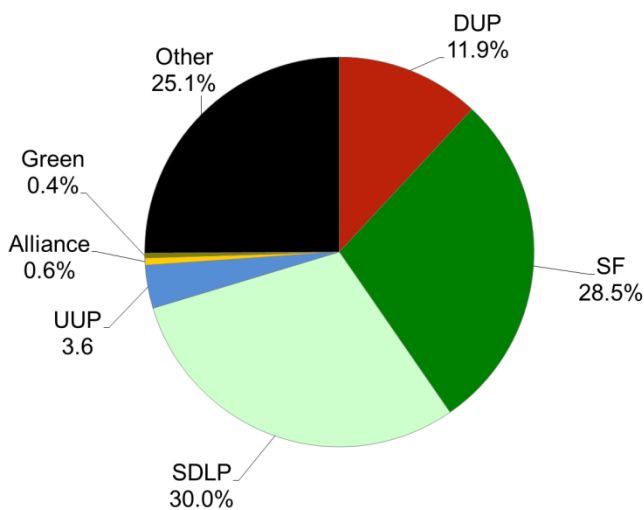


2017 Result

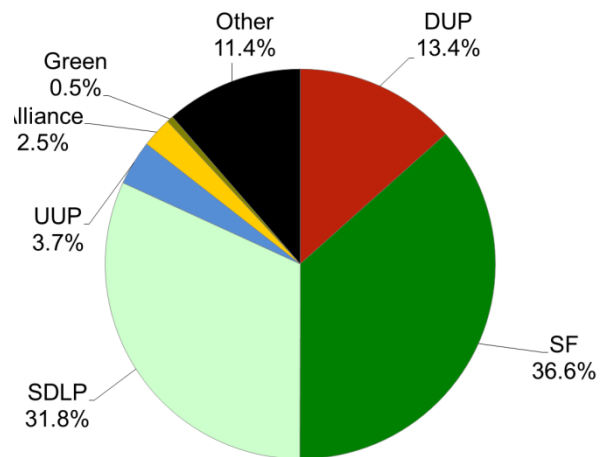
Seats Won: DUP 1, UUP 1, Sinn Féin 3

Foyle

2016 Share of Vote



2017 Share of Vote

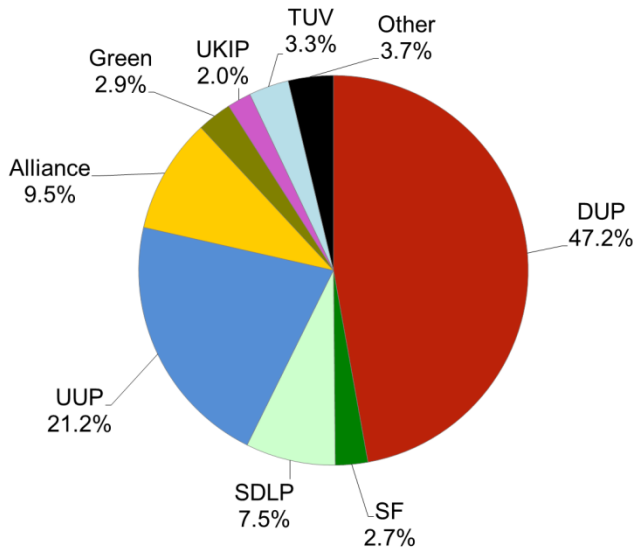


2017 Result

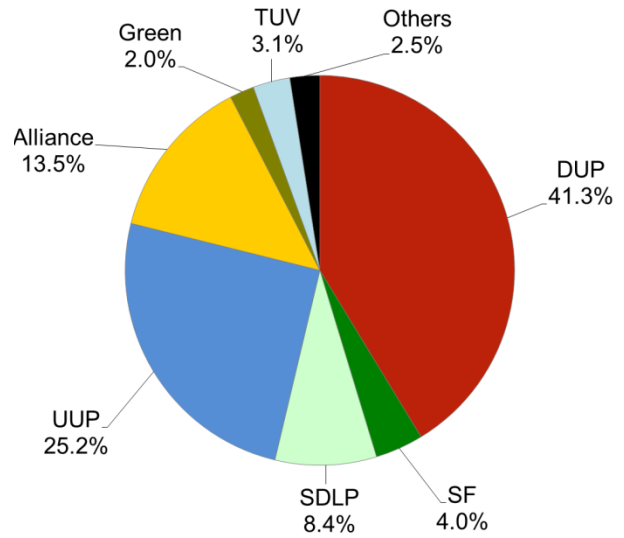
Seats Won: DUP 1, Sinn Féin 2, SDLP 2

Lagan Valley

2016 Share of Vote



2017 Share of Vote

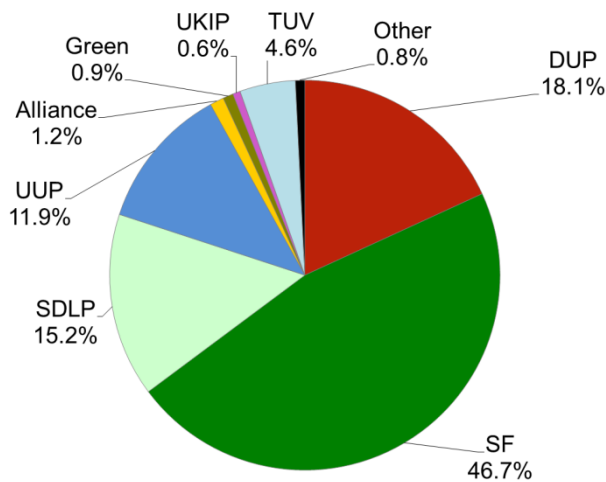


2017 Result

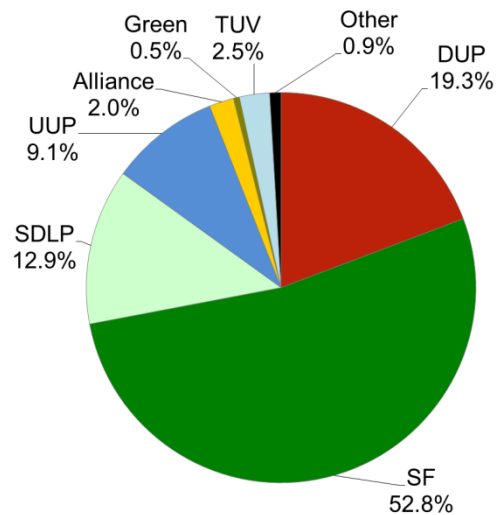
Seats Won: DUP 2, UUP 1, Alliance 1, SDLP 1

Mid-Ulster

2016 Share of Vote



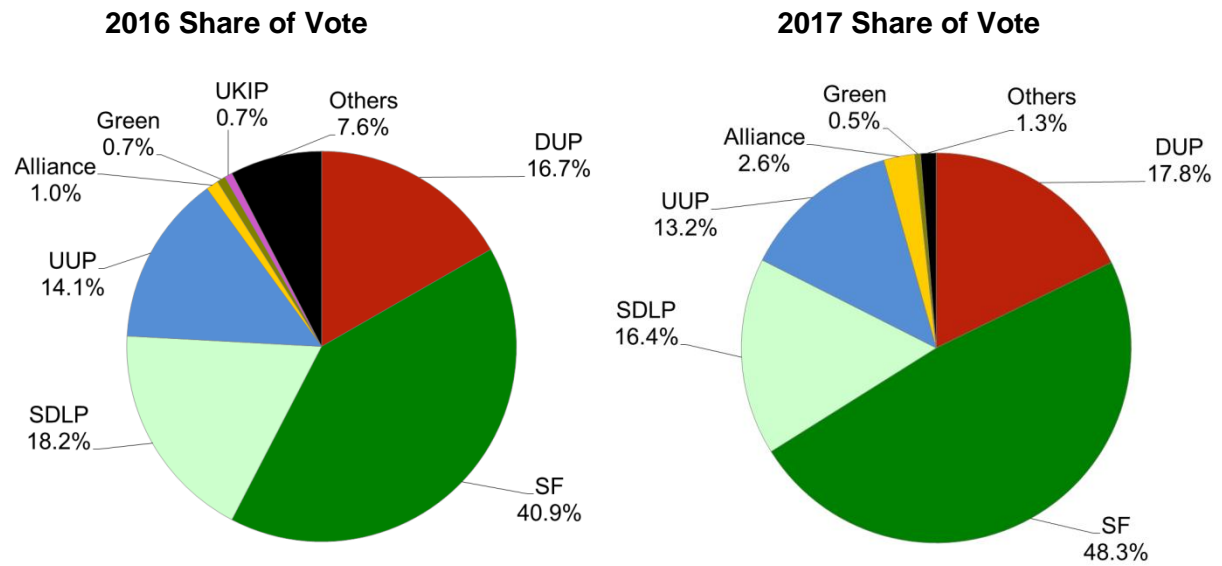
2017 Share of Vote



2017 Result

Seats Won: DUP 1, Sinn Féin 3, SDLP 1

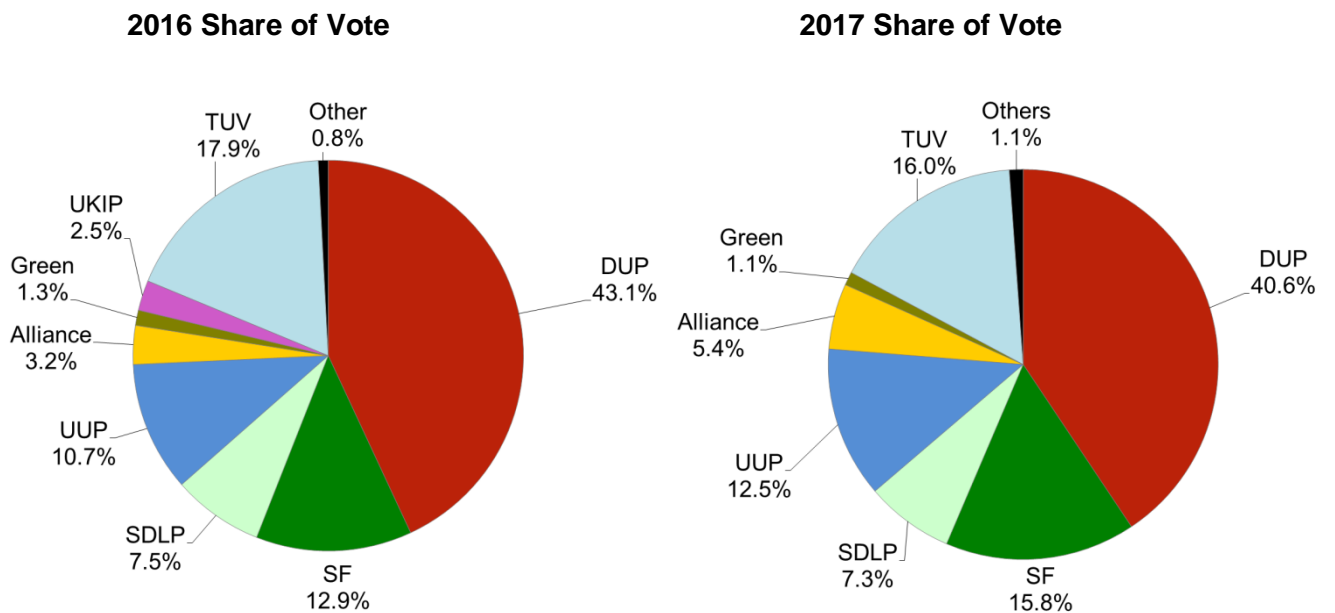
Newry & Armagh



2017 Result

Seats Won: DUP 1, Sinn Féin 3, SDLP 1

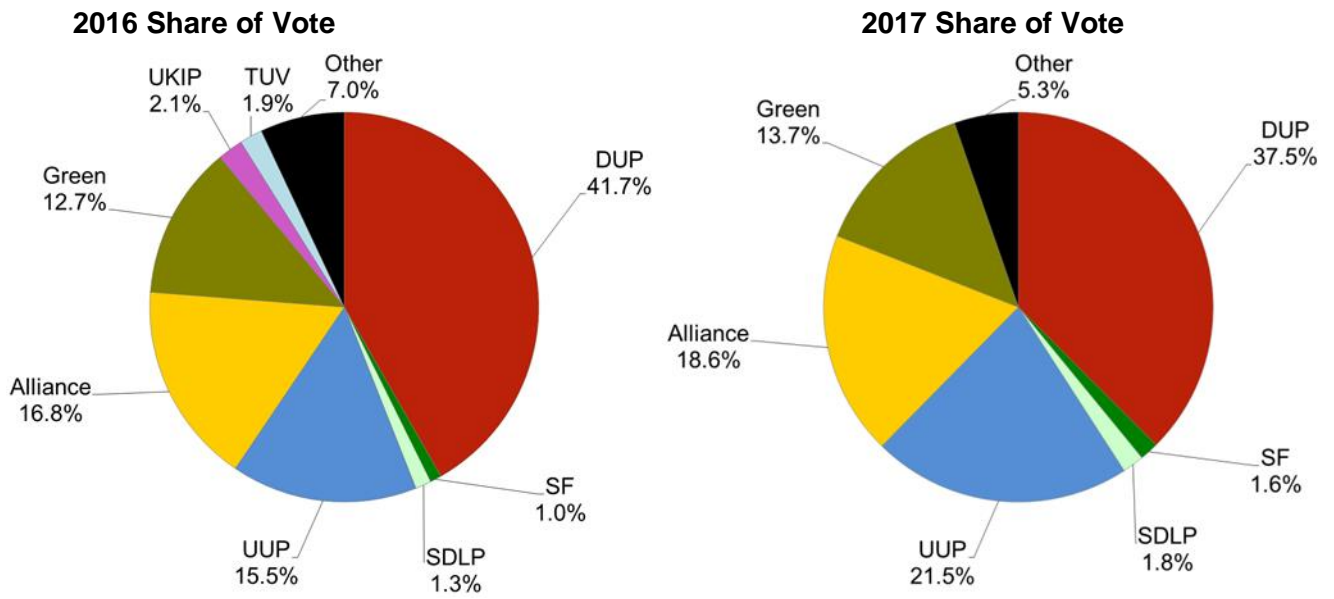
North Antrim



2017 Result

Seats Won: DUP 2, UUP 1, Sinn Féin 1, TUV 1

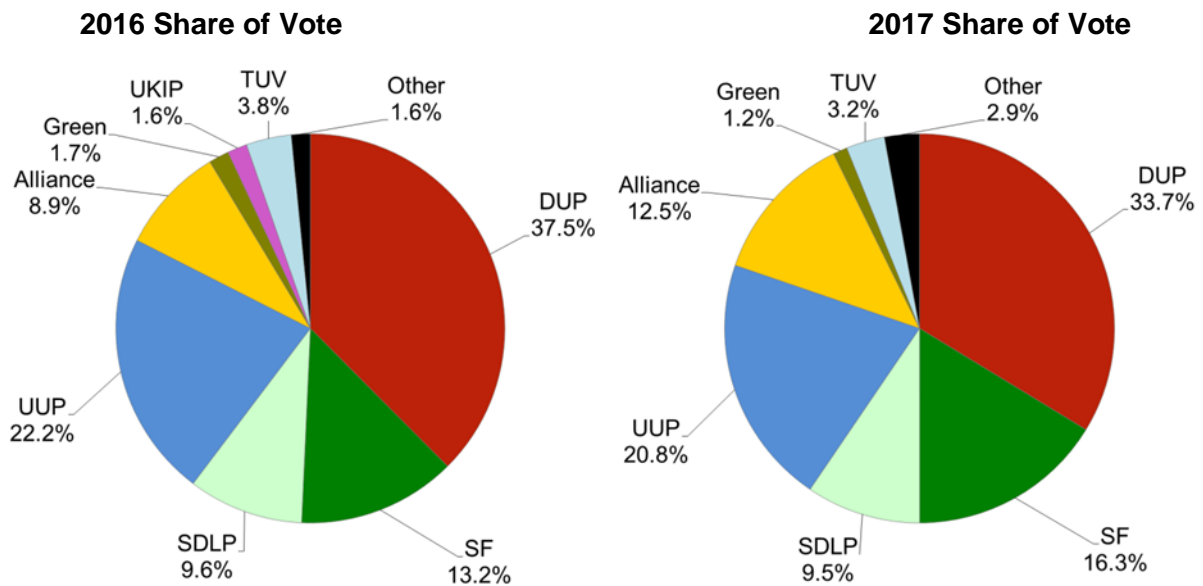
North Down



2017 Result

Seats Won: DUP 2, UUP 1, Alliance 1, Green Party 1

South Antrim

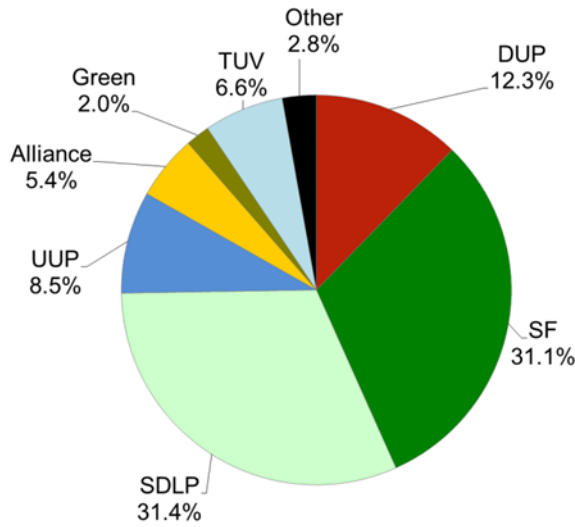


2017 Result

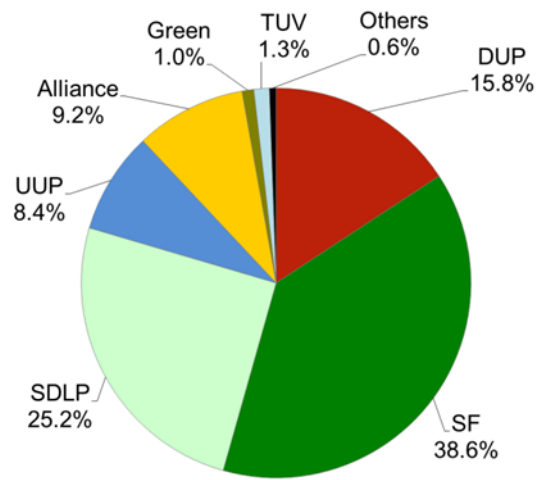
Seats Won: DUP 2, UUP 1, Sinn Féin 1, Alliance 1

South Down

2016 Share of Vote



2017 Share of Vote

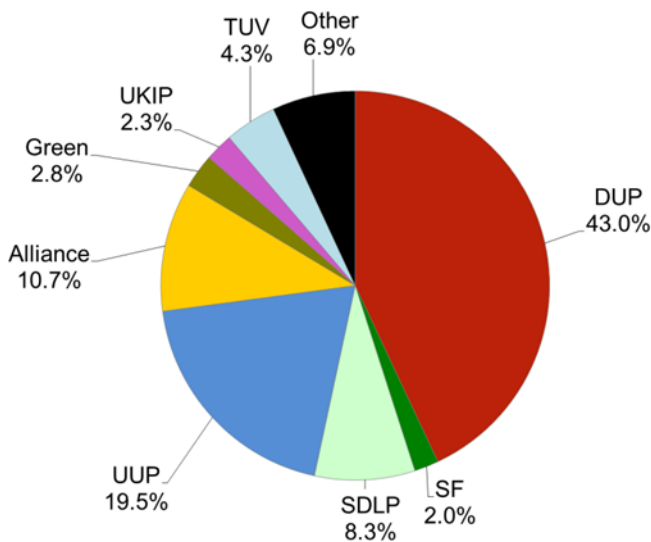


2017 Result

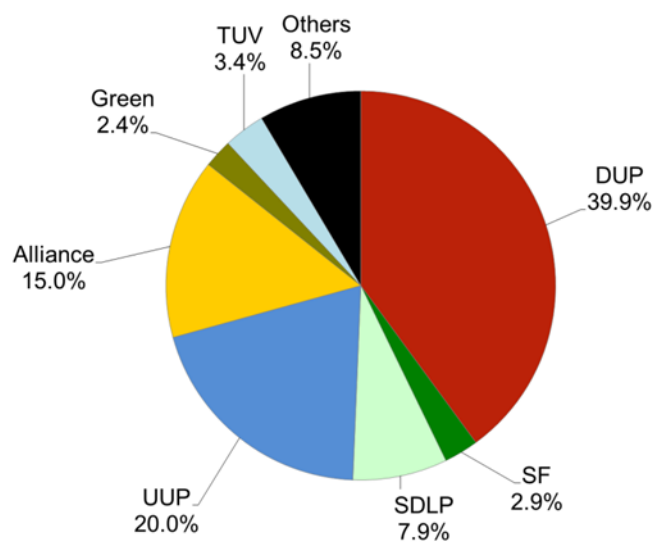
Seats Won: DUP 1, Sinn Féin 2, SDLP 2

Strangford

2016 Share of Vote



2017 Share of Vote

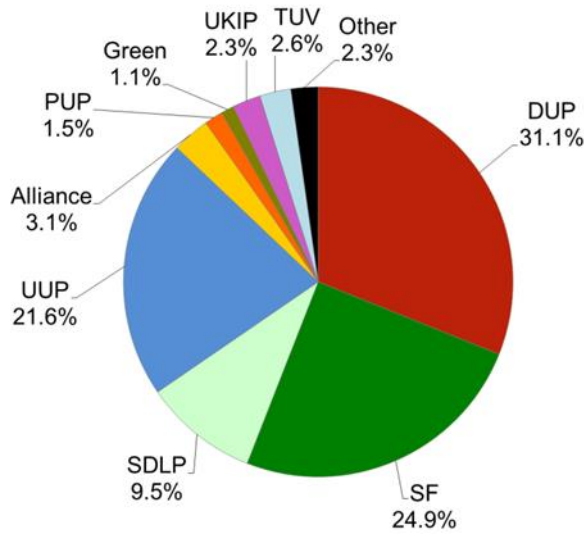


2017 Result

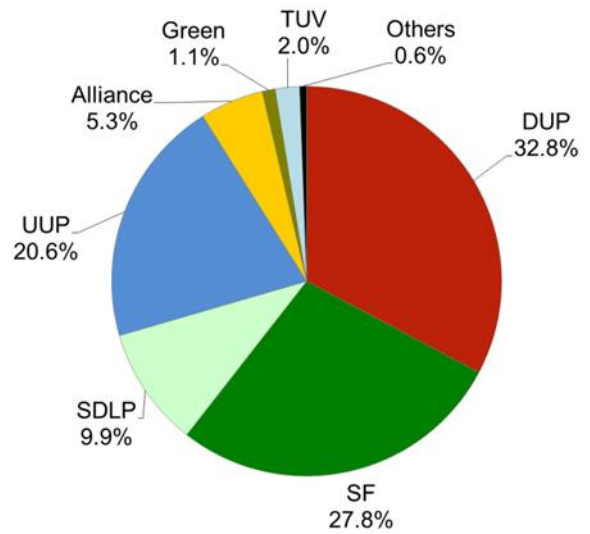
Seats Won: DUP 3, UUP 1, Alliance 1

Upper Bann

2016 Share of Vote



2017 Share of Vote

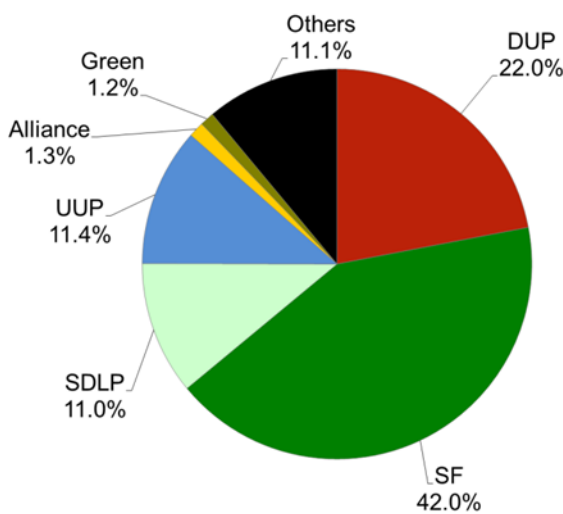


2017 Result

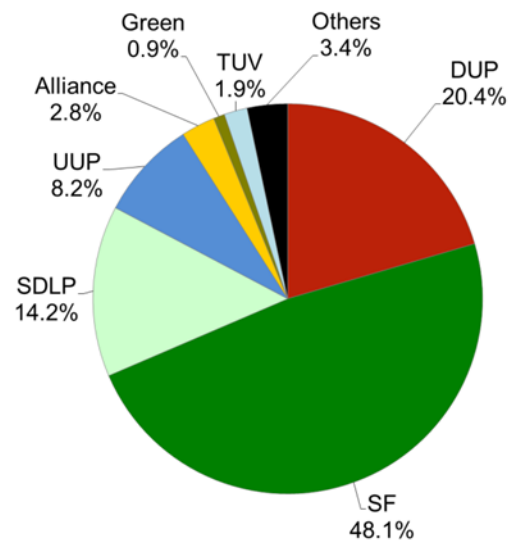
Seats Won: DUP 2, UUP 1, Sinn Féin 1, SDLP 1

West Tyrone

2016 Share of Vote



2017 Share of Vote



2017 Result

Seats Won: DUP 1, Sinn Féin 3, SDLP 1

9 Summary

In the context of a smaller Assembly, the 2017 election brought about a number of significant changes to the Northern Ireland political landscape, with the loss of 16 seats by the unionist parties and a strong surge in the nationalist vote.

While the DUP remained the largest party in Northern Ireland with the return of 28 Members to the new Assembly, it experienced the loss of ten seats, or almost a quarter of its former strength. In contrast, Sinn Féin managed to retain 27 of its former 28 seats and increased its share of first preferences by nearly 4 percentage points. A marginal increase in the UUP's voter share failed to yield additional seats. Instead, the party lost six. In contrast, the SDLP managed to hold 12 seats despite a slight fall in its share of first preferences.

The Alliance party enjoyed a 50 per cent increase in the number of first preference votes, and saw its voter share rise by over 2 percentage points. It retained all eight of its seats. The Green Party held its two seats while the People Before Profit Alliance lost one of its two seats (Foyle).

A striking feature of Election 2017 was the substantial increase in voter turnout, from 54.9 per cent in 2016 to 64.8 per cent. Turnout rose in every constituency without exception, but the increase was most marked in the predominately nationalist constituencies of the West and South of Northern Ireland where it returned to levels not seen since 2003. Overall, Election 2017 had a favourable outcome for the nationalist parties who managed to maximise their vote.

Annex A. First Preference Votes by Party and Constituency

	DUP	SF	UUP	SDLP	Alliance	TUV	Green	PBPA	CON	PUP	Others	Totals
Belfast East	15,167	1,173	5,275	250	12,669	917	1,447		275	2,658	526	40,357
Belfast North	13,309	12,204	2,418	5,431	3,487		711	1,559		2,053	314	41,486
Belfast South	8,975	7,610	3,863	8,353	7,648	703	4,247	760	200		694	43,053
Belfast West	4,063	24,931	486	3,452	747		251	5,999			415	40,344
East Antrim	13,164	3,701	8,498	1,524	5,996	1,534	777		152		2,078	37,424
East Londonderry	14,040	10,804	2,814	3,319	1,841	1,038	305	492	219	879	6,122	41,873
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	15,581	22,008	6,060	5,134	1,437	780	550		70		643	52,263
Foyle	5,975	16,350	1,660	14,188	1,124		242	4,760	77		240	44,616
Lagan Valley	18,614	1,801	11,338	3,795	6,105	1,389	912		183		932	45,069
Mid Ulster	9,568	26,207	4,516	6,419	1,017	1,244	243				464	49,678
Newry & Armagh	9,760	26,532	7,256	8,983	1,418		265				704	54,918
North Antrim	19,540	7,600	6,022	3,519	2,616	7,719	530				548	48,094
North Down	14,152	591	8,115	679	7,014		5,178		641		1,369	37,739
South Antrim	14,278	6,891	8,792	4,024	5,278	1,353	501	530	194		503	42,344
South Down	7,786	19,083	4,172	12,433	4,535	630	483		85		192	49,399
Strangford	15,492	1,110	7,776	3,045	5,813	1,330	918		195		3,106	38,785
Upper Bann	16,885	14,328	10,599	5,127	2,720	1,035	555		81		218	51,548
West Tyrone	9,064	21,321	3,654	6,283	1,252	851	412		27		1,461	44,325
Northern Ireland	225,413	224,245	103,314	95,958	72,717	20,523	18,527	14,100	2,399	5,590	20,529	803,315

Annex B. Share of First Preference Vote (%) by Party and Constituency

	DUP	SF	UUP	SDLP	Alliance	TUV	Green	PBPA	CON	PUP	Others
Belfast East	37.6	2.9	13.1	0.6	31.4	2.3	3.6	0.0	0.7	6.6	1.3
Belfast North	32.1	29.4	5.8	13.1	8.4		1.7	3.8		4.9	0.8
Belfast South	20.8	17.7	9.0	19.4	17.8	1.6	9.9	1.8	0.5		1.6
Belfast West	10.1	61.8	1.2	8.6	1.9		0.6	14.9			1.0
East Antrim	35.2	9.9	22.7	4.1	16.0	4.1	2.1		0.4		5.6
East Londonderry	33.5	25.8	6.7	7.9	4.4	2.5	0.7	1.2	0.5	2.1	14.6
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	29.8	42.1	11.6	9.8	2.7	1.5	1.1		0.1	0.0	1.2
Foyle	13.4	36.6	3.7	31.8	2.5		0.5	10.7	0.2		0.5
Lagan Valley	41.3	4.0	25.2	8.4	13.5	3.1	2.0		0.4		2.1
Mid Ulster	19.3	52.8	9.1	12.9	2.0	2.5	0.5				0.9
Newry & Armagh	17.8	48.3	13.2	16.4	2.6	0.0	0.5				1.3
North Antrim	40.6	15.8	12.5	7.3	5.4	16.0	1.1				1.1
North Down	37.5	1.6	21.5	1.8	18.6		13.7		1.7		3.6
South Antrim	33.7	16.3	20.8	9.5	12.5	3.2	1.2	1.3	0.5		1.2
South Down	15.8	38.6	8.4	25.2	9.2	1.3	1.0		0.2		0.4
Strangford	39.9	2.9	20.0	7.9	15.0	3.4	2.4		0.5		8.0
Upper Bann	32.8	27.8	20.6	9.9	5.3	2.0	1.1		0.2		0.4
West Tyrone	20.4	48.1	8.2	14.2	2.8	1.9	0.9		0.1		3.3
Northern Ireland	28.1	27.9	12.9	11.9	9.1	2.6	2.3	1.8	0.3	0.7	2.6

Annex C: List of Parties and Abbreviations

APNI	Alliance Party of Northern Ireland
CCLA	Cross-Community Labour Alliance
CISTA	Cannabis is Safer than Alcohol (2016) Citizens Independent Social Thought Alliance (2017)
CON	Conservative Party
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
GP	Green Party
IND	Independents
NILRC	Northern Ireland Labour Representation Committee
NIWC	Northern Ireland Women's Coalition (1998 and 2003)
PBPA	People Before Profit Alliance
PUP	Progressive Unionist Party
SDLP	Social Democratic and Labour party
SF	Sinn Féin
TUV	Traditional Unionist Voice
UKIP	United Kingdom Independence Party
UKUP	United Kingdom Unionist Party (1998 - 2011)
UUP	Ulster Unionist Party
WP	Workers' Party