



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

## Research and Information Service Research Paper

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12 May 2016

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# Election Report: Northern Ireland Assembly Election, 5 May 2016

**NIAR 141-16**

This paper provides an analysis of the Northern Ireland Assembly elections held on 5 May 2016, and compares the outcome with the 2011 election. The paper also includes an analysis of voter turnout and results by party and constituency. The statistics were extracted from figures published by the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland.

Paper

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## Key Points

- The 2016 Northern Ireland Assembly election left the parties with the following number of seats:

Democratic Unionist Party	38
Sinn Féin	28
Ulster Unionist Party	16
Social Democratic and Labour Party	12
Alliance Party of Northern Ireland	8
People before Profit Alliance	2
Green Party	2
Traditional Unionist Voice	1
Independents	1

- In terms of seats, the 2016 election resulted in gains in favour of the People before Profit Alliance (2) and the Green Party (1). Losses were incurred by the SDLP (2) and Sinn Féin (1).
- The Democratic Unionist Party had the highest share of first preference votes, (29.2% compared with 30.0% in 2011), followed by Sinn Féin (24.0% - down from 26.9% in 2011); Ulster Unionist Party (12.6% - down from 13.2% in 2011) and the SDLP (12.0% - down from 14.2% in 2011). The Alliance Party share of the vote decreased from 7.7% in 2011 to 7.0% in 2016.
- Of the 108 MLAs elected in 2016, 31 are new Members <sup>1</sup> and 30 are women (compared with 20 in 2011).
- Turnout <sup>2</sup> in the election was 54.9 per cent (compared with 55.7% in 2011).
- A total of 276 candidates contested the election (compared with 218 in 2011).

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<sup>1</sup> i.e. did not have seats on 28 March 2016 when the Assembly was dissolved.

<sup>2</sup> Votes polled expressed as a percentage of total eligible electorate.

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## 1 Introduction

The current Northern Ireland Assembly<sup>3</sup> was established under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement<sup>4</sup> and was first elected on 25 June 1998. Legislative powers and executive authority for the Northern Ireland Government Departments<sup>5</sup> were devolved to the Assembly from 2 December 1999.

Since devolution, the Assembly has been suspended on four occasions<sup>6</sup>, 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<sup>7</sup>. 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 took place on 12 May 2011. The fifth Assembly election took place on 5 May 2016, and the first meeting of the new Assembly took place on 12 May 2016.

## 2 The Electoral System

The Single Transferable Vote (STV)<sup>8</sup> system of proportional representation is used to elect Members of the Assembly. This system is also used in the Northern Ireland Local Government and European Parliament elections and in elections in the Republic of Ireland.

STV has a number of advantages over the simple 'first past the post' system used in the Westminster elections:

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<sup>3</sup> 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>).

<sup>4</sup> Also referred to as the 'Belfast Agreement' (see <http://www.nio.gov.uk/agreement.pdf>).

<sup>5</sup> See <http://www.northernireland.gov.uk> for list of Departments and their functions.

<sup>6</sup> 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>).

<sup>7</sup> Information on the St. Andrews Agreement and more information on the background and politics of Northern Ireland can be found at the following websites:  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Politicsofnorthernirelandlogo.svg>  
<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/politics/politics.htm>

<sup>8</sup> See R.A. Newland & F.S. Britton "How to Conduct an Election by the Single Transferable Vote", Electoral Reform Society, London: 1973, for a detailed description of STV.

- It increases voter choice (voters can vote for more than one candidate and can choose between candidates as well as between parties);
- It ensures that more voters have an effect on the outcome (over 80% of all valid votes are used in the determination of the six seats in each constituency<sup>9</sup>); and
- It ensures an outcome that is more representative of the views of the electorate (the overall share of seats will better reflect overall share of the vote, i.e. voters will be proportionately represented).

STV works as follows:

- At the count, the number of votes which candidates need in order to be elected (the '**quota**') is calculated by dividing the total number of valid ballot papers by the number of people to be elected plus one, then add one. For example, with 100 valid ballot papers and 3 places to be filled, the quota would be 26 (i.e.  $100/4 + 1$ ).
- The ballot papers are sorted into piles according to the first preferences – the '1's. If any candidate has more first preference votes than the quota, they are immediately elected.
- The next stage is to transfer any **surplus votes** for these elected candidates, i.e. the difference between their vote and the quota needed to be elected. To avoid the problem of deciding which of the votes are surplus, all ballot papers are transferred but at a reduced (fractional) value so that the total adds up to the number of surplus votes.
- After the surpluses of the successful candidates have been transferred, a check is made to see whether all the seats to be elected have been filled. If they have not, then the candidate with the fewest votes is **excluded** and his or her votes are transferred to the voters' **second preferences**.
- This process of transferring surpluses and excluding candidates continues until enough candidates have reached the quota to fill all the places to be elected.

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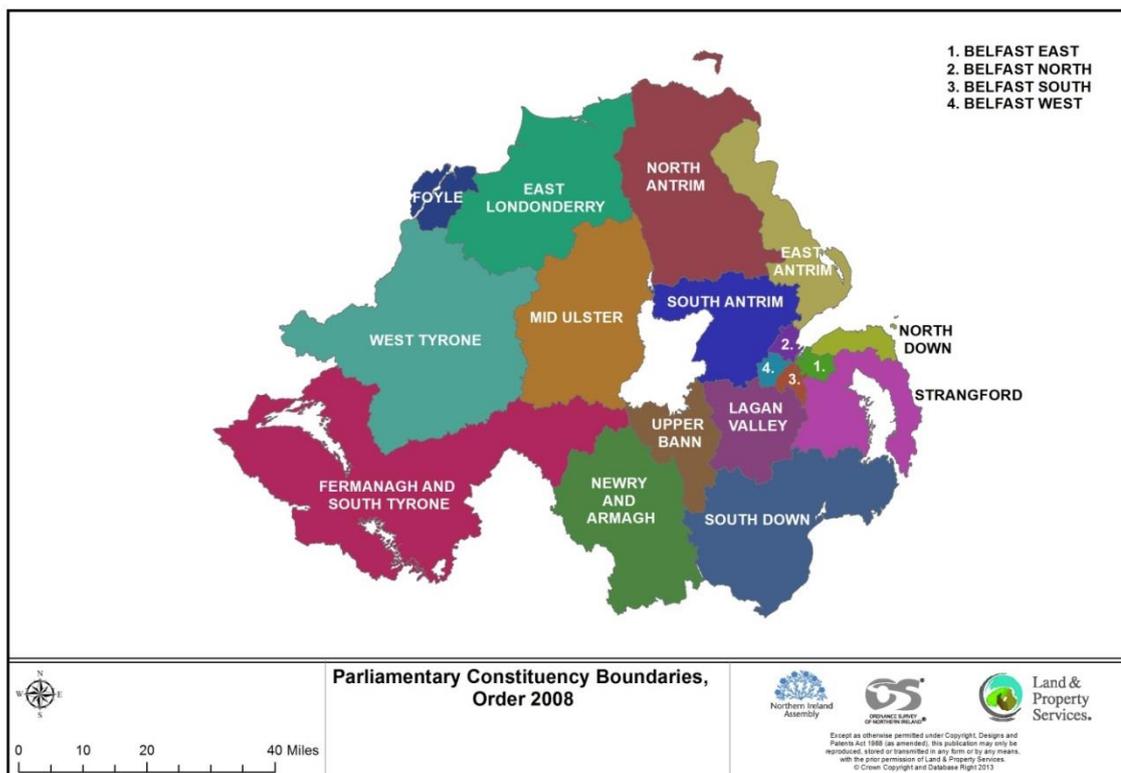
<sup>9</sup> See note 8 - if all successful candidates make the quota then six quotas will be used i.e. 6/7 of all valid votes = 86%.

This procedure has been used to elect six Members for each of the 18 constituencies in all Assembly elections since 1998.

### 3 The Constituencies

The 18 Westminster Parliamentary Constituencies (WPCs)<sup>10</sup> are used for the Assembly elections (see Map 3.1 below). Six seats are allocated to each constituency, giving a total of 108 seats. Revised Parliamentary Constituency boundaries, which were created in 2008, and initially adopted in the General Election of 6 May 2010, were used for the first time in the 2011 Assembly elections<sup>11</sup>.

**Map 3.1 Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries**



<sup>10</sup> 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/>

<sup>11</sup> In practice, the new Assembly Areas / WPCs are not very different from their predecessors, the 1992 Parliamentary Constituencies. As before, there are 18 constituencies, all retaining the same name. In the main, the boundary amendment process has simply involved the re-assigning of existing Electoral Wards from one constituency into a neighbouring constituency. The one exception concerns the Derriagh Ward, which was split into two new wards, namely: Derriagh (North) and Derriagh (South). The former has been transferred to the Belfast West constituency, while the latter remains where it was in the Lagan Valley constituency.

## 4. The Candidates

A total of 276 candidates stood for the 2016 election, compared with 218 in 2011, an increase of 27 per cent (Table 4.1). The DUP had the largest number of candidates (44), followed by Sinn Féin (39), UUP (33), SDLP (24), and Alliance (23). The Green Party fielded 18 candidates, followed by the TUV (15), UKIP (13), and the Conservatives (12).

**Table 4.1 2016 Election Candidates by Party and Gender**

Party	Male	Female	Total	% Female
Democratic Unionist Party (DUP)	36	8	44	18.2
Sinn Féin (SF)	24	15	39	38.5
Ulster Unionist Party (UUP)	26	7	33	21.2
Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP)	16	8	24	33.3
Alliance Party (APNI)	15	8	23	34.8
Green Party	9	9	18	50.0
Traditional Unionist Voice (TUV)	13	2	15	13.3
UK Independence Party (UKIP)	12	1	13	7.7
Conservative	12	0	12	
NI Labour Representation Committee	4	4	8	50.0
Progressive Unionist Party (PUP)	5	1	6	16.7
Cannabis is Safer than Alcohol	4	0	4	50.0
The Workers Party	2	2	4	
Cross Community Labour Alliance	2	1	3	33.3
People before Profit Alliance (PBPA)	2	1	3	33.3
Animal Welfare Party	0	1	1	100.0
Democracy First	1	0	1	
Northern Ireland First	1	0	1	
South Belfast Unionists	1	0	1	
Independents	15	8	23	34.8
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>27.5</b>

The number of female candidates doubled, from 38 in 2011 to 76 in 2016, representing an increase of 10 percentage points, from 17 per cent in 2011 to 27 per cent in 2016. Of the main parties, Sinn Féin had the largest percentage of female candidates (38%), followed by the Alliance Party (35%), SDLP (33%), UUP (21%) and the DUP (18%).

## 5. Turnout

The total eligible electorate was 1,281,595 (compared with 1,210,009 in 2011). The official turnout <sup>12</sup> was 703,744, or 54.9 per cent of the eligible electorate. Turnout for the 2016 election was highest in Fermanagh and South Tyrone (64.6%) and lowest in North Down (49.6%) – see Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1 2016 Election Turnout by Constituency**

	Eligible Electorate	Poll	Valid Votes	Invalid Votes	% Turnout
Belfast East	65,740	37,623	37,175	448	57.2
Belfast North	70,872	37,193	36,574	619	52.5
Belfast South	68,469	37,147	36,723	424	54.3
Belfast West	63,993	36,990	36,268	722	57.8
East Antrim	64,194	32,744	32,411	333	51.0
East Londonderry	68,600	34,848	34,399	449	50.8
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	74,257	47,934	47,177	757	64.6
Foyle	71,759	40,187	39,702	485	56.0
Lagan Valley	73,746	39,227	38,853	374	53.2
Mid Ulster	70,430	41,381	40,748	633	58.8
Newry & Armagh	81,756	48,498	47,715	783	59.3
North Antrim	78,337	41,464	40,998	466	52.9
North Down	65,760	32,597	32,229	368	49.6
South Antrim	69,680	35,544	35,133	411	51.0
South Down	77,409	41,645	41,075	570	53.8
Strangford	65,695	33,014	32,639	375	50.3
Upper Bann	85,204	46,383	45,686	697	54.4
West Tyrone	65,694	39,325	38,809	516	59.9
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>1,281,595</b>	<b>703,744</b>	<b>694,314</b>	<b>9,430</b>	<b>54.9</b>

Compared with 2011, overall turnout in 2016 fell by 0.8 of a percentage point. (Table 5.2 overleaf). At the constituency level, turnout increased in eight Assembly Areas and declined in ten. In broad terms, turnout rose in the eastern constituencies, particularly in Belfast and the Greater Belfast area, and fell in the rest of Northern Ireland, notably

<sup>12</sup> Turnout is calculated by taking the total number of votes cast (including invalid votes) and dividing by the eligible electorate.

the West and South. The largest falls were recorded in Mid Ulster (6.6 percentage points), Fermanagh and South Tyrone (4.4) and West Tyrone (4.1), while the highest increases were observed in North Down (3.7 percentage points) and Belfast East (3.6). Map 5.1 shows the difference in turnout between 2011 and 2016 (in percentage points). The darker shaded areas of the map illustrate the constituencies where the fall in turnout was most pronounced.

**Map 5.1 Turnout 2016 (%) – Comparison with 2011**

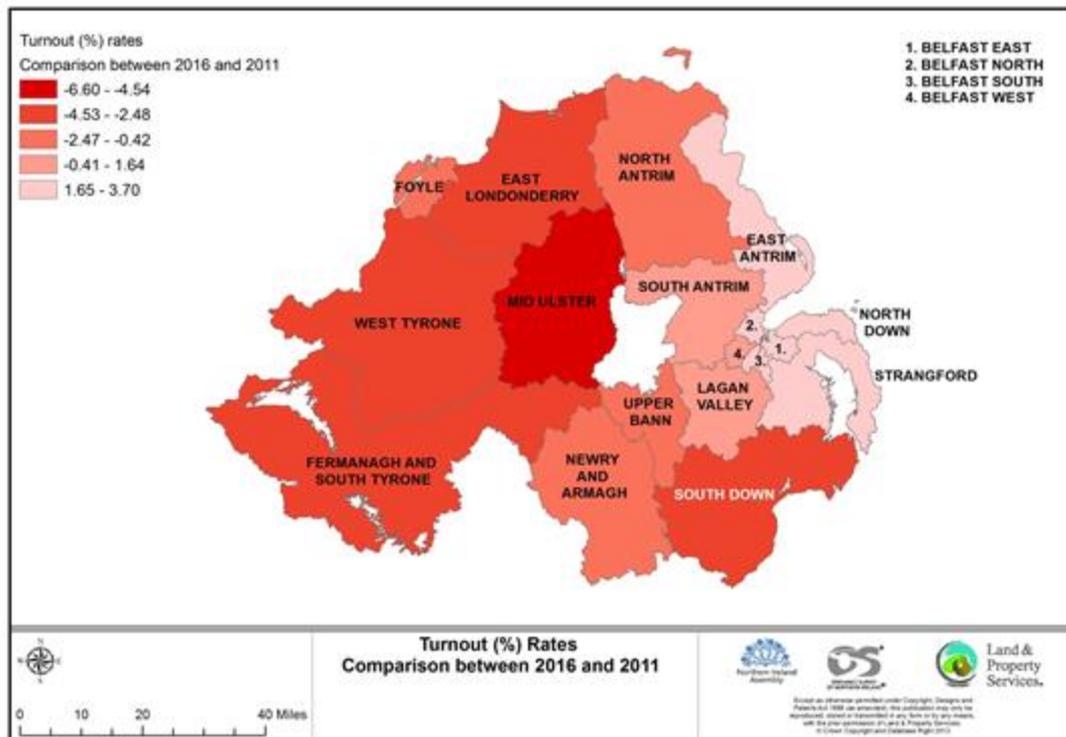


Table 5.2 shows that overall turnout has continued a downward trend at every election since 1998, when a peak rate of 70 per cent was recorded.

**Table 5.2 Turnout – All Assembly Elections <sup>1</sup>**

Constituency	1998 %	2003 %	2007 %	2011 %	2016 %
Belfast East	66.6	60.7	60.0	53.6	57.2
Belfast North	67.3	62.3	60.9	50.3	52.5
Belfast South	67.4	62.6	62.4	52.4	54.3
Belfast West	70.5	65.9	67.4	57.9	57.8
East Antrim	60.9	56.5	53.5	47.8	51.0
East Londonderry	67.7	61.8	60.9	54.1	50.8

Constituency	1998 %	2003 %	2007 %	2011 %	2016 %
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	79.4	72.9	71.2	69.0	64.6
Foyle	72.0	63.5	63.9	57.8	56.0
Lagan Valley	65.7	61.4	60.0	53.1	53.2
Mid Ulster	84.4	74.9	73.1	65.4	58.8
Newry and Armagh	77.3	70.2	70.8	61.3	59.3
North Antrim	69.0	63.3	61.3	54.8	52.9
North Down	60.2	54.5	53.8	45.9	49.6
South Antrim	64.2	59.5	58.6	50.1	51.0
South Down	73.7	65.6	65.0	58.1	53.8
Strangford	61.6	57.1	54.5	48.6	50.3
Upper Bann	72.3	64.2	61.1	55.3	54.4
West Tyrone	79.4	73.2	71.7	64.0	59.9
Northern Ireland	70.0	64.0	62.9	55.7	54.9

Source: Electoral Office for Northern Ireland (1998 – 2016)

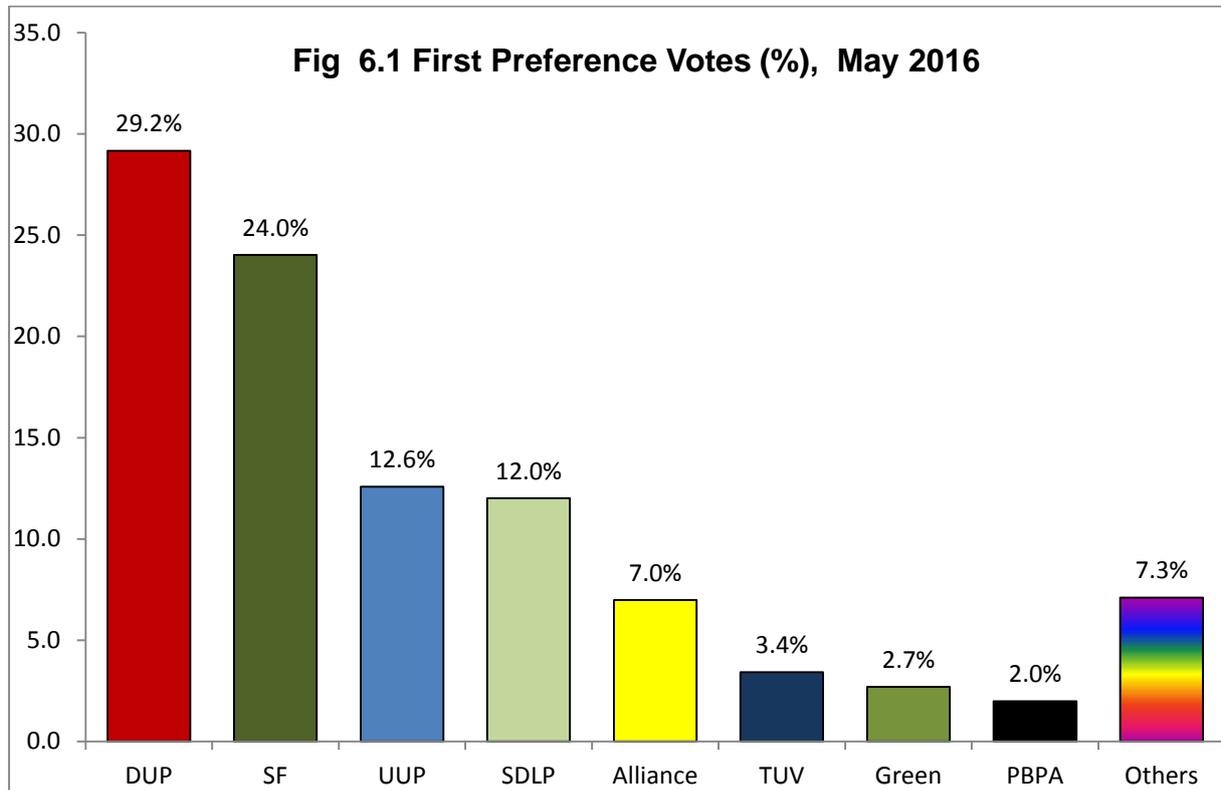
## 6 Overall Results

Table 6.1 and Fig 6.1 (overleaf) present the overall results of the 2016 Assembly Election. Compared with 2011, there was no net change for the unionist parties in terms of seats, while the nationalist parties lost three seats (SDLP, one; Sinn Féin, two). Each of the five main parties experienced a fall in their respective share of first preference votes, which was most marked for Sinn Féin (2.9 percentage points) and the SDLP (2.2).

**Table 6.1 Assembly Election 2016 – Overall Results**

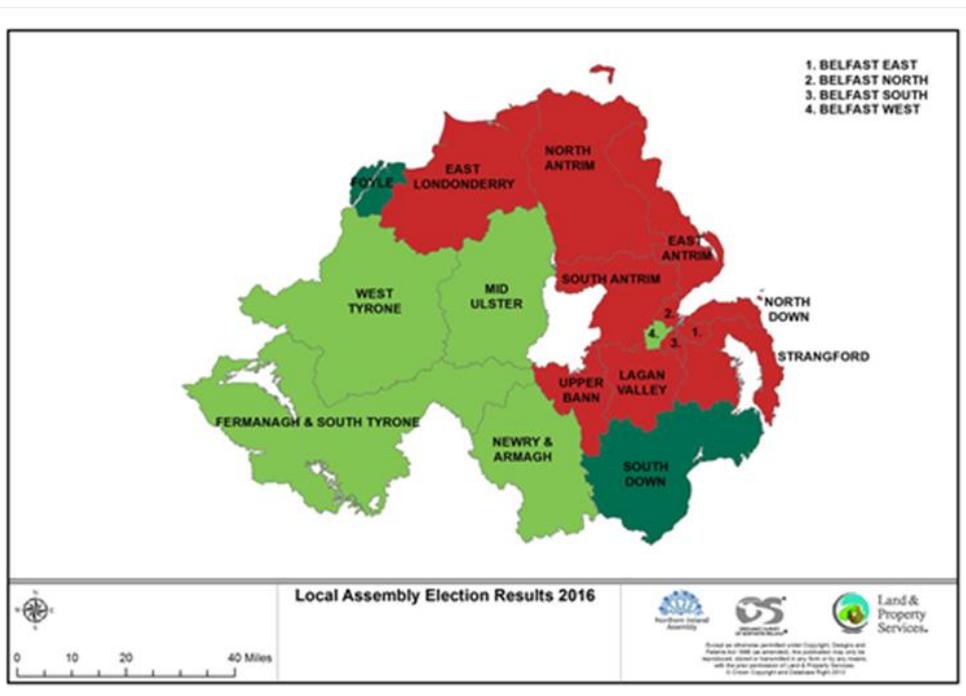
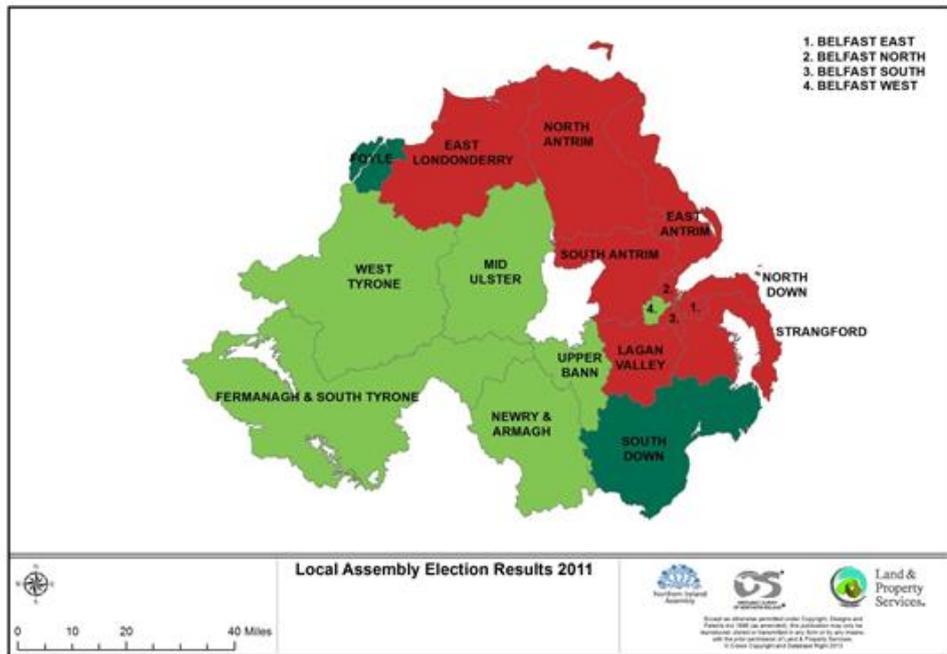
Party	Seats	+/- %	First Preference Votes	Vote Share (%)	+/- %
DUP	38		202,567	29.2	-0.8
Sinn Féin	28	-1	166,785	24.0	-2.9
UUP	16		87,302	12.6	-0.7
SDLP	12	-2	83,364	12.0	-2.2
Alliance Party	8		48,447	7.0	-0.7
TUV	1		23,776	3.4	0.9
Green	2	1	18,718	2.7	1.8
PBPA	2	2	13,761	2.0	1.2
UKIP	0		10,109	1.5	0.8
PUP	0		5,955	0.9	0.6

Party	Seats	+/- %	First Preference Votes	Vote Share (%)	+/- %
Conservative	0		2,554	0.4	0.4
Independent	1		22,650	3.3	0.9
Others	0		8,322	1.2	
Totals	108		694,310	100.0	0.9



## 7 Results by Constituency

**Maps 7.1 and 7.2: Party with highest share of first preference votes by Constituency, 2011 and 16**



Maps 7.1 and 7.2 (above) show the party with the highest share of first preference votes by constituency in 2011 and 2016. Relative to 2011, the sole change in 2016 was in Upper Bann, where the DUP became the largest party at the expense of Sinn Féin.

The DUP took the largest share of first preference votes in 11 of the 18 constituencies. The 2016 election resulted in a number of changes to the Northern Ireland political map, with gains for the PBPA (two seats) and the Green Party (one seat), and losses for the SDLP (two seats) and Sinn Féin (one seat).

Table 7.1 shows the distribution of seats by party for each constituency (with 2011 in brackets). The party shares of first preference votes are presented separately for each constituency in the charts that follow (pp 15-23). A fall in the five main parties share of the vote is evident in many constituencies, but the effect is most marked for the nationalist parties (Sinn Féin and the SDLP).

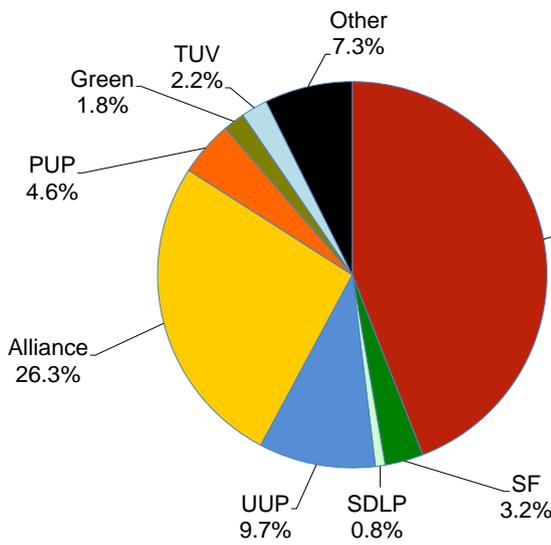
A summary of the performance of each party is provided in Section 8 of the report, while an analysis of first preference votes by party and constituency is presented in Annexes A and B.

**Table 7.1 Seats by Party and Constituency: 2016 (v 2011)**

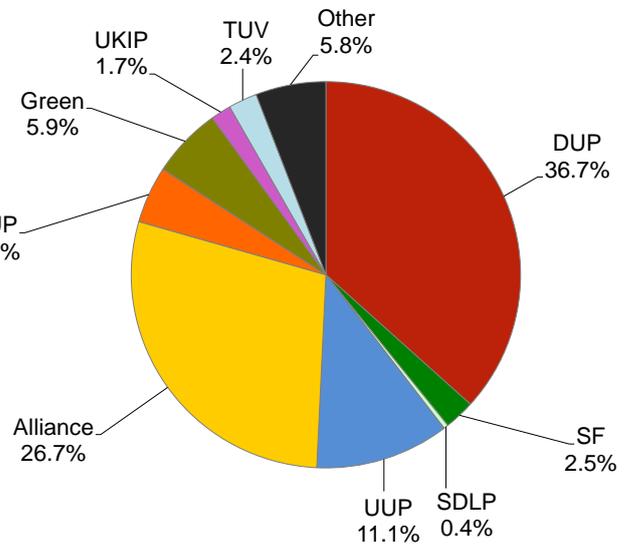
Parliamentary Constituency	DUP	UUP	SF	SDLP	APNI	TUV	PBPA	Green	IND
Belfast East	3 (3)	1 (1)			2 (2)				
Belfast North	3 (3)		2 (2)	1 (1)					
Belfast South	2 (1)	- (1)	1 (1)	1 (2)	1 (1)			1 (-)	
Belfast West			4 (5)	1 (1)			1 (-)		
East Antrim	3 (3)	1 (1)	1 (1)		1 (1)				
East Londonderry	3 (3)		1 (1)	1 (1)					1 (1)
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	2 (2)	1 (1)	2 (3)	1 (-)					
Foyle	1 (1)		2 (2)	2 (3)			1 (-)		
Lagan Valley	3 (4)	2 (1)			1 (1)				
Mid Ulster	1 (1)	1 (1)	3 (3)	1 (1)					
Newry and Armagh	1 (1)	1 (1)	3 (3)	1 (1)					
North Antrim	3 (3)	1 (1)	1 (1)			1 (1)			
North Down	3 (3)	1 (1)			1 (1)			1 (1)	
South Antrim	3 (3)	1 (1)	1 (1)		1 (1)				
South Down	1 (1)	1 (1)	2 (2)	2 (2)					
Strangford	3 (3)	2 (2)			1 (1)				
Upper Bann	2 (2)	2 (2)	2 (1)	- (1)					
West Tyrone	1 (1)	1 (1)	3 (3)	1 (1)					-
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>38 (38)</b>	<b>16 (16)</b>	<b>28 (29)</b>	<b>12 (14)</b>	<b>8 (8)</b>	<b>1 (1)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2 (1)</b>	<b>1 (1)</b>

### Belfast East

**2011 Share of Vote**



**2016 Share of Vote**

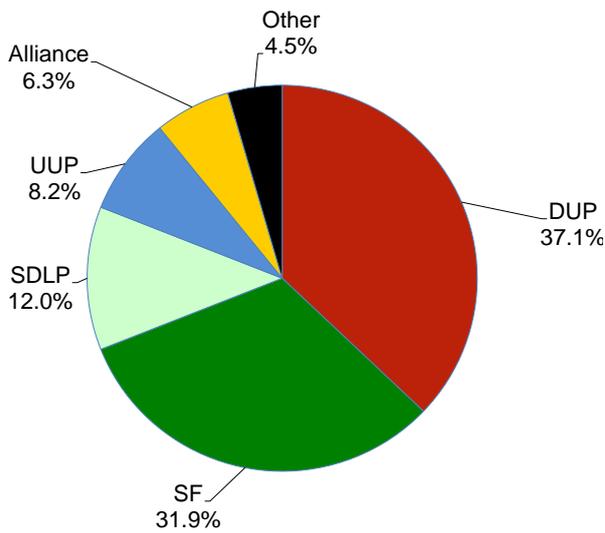


### 2016 Result

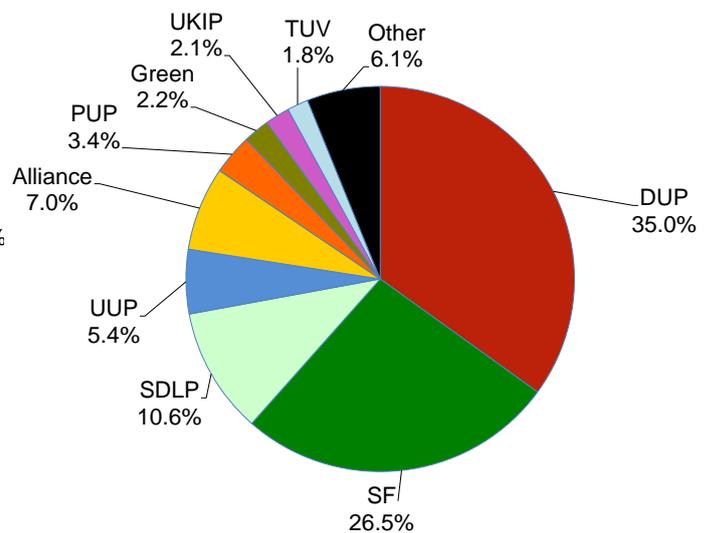
Seats Won: DUP 3, Alliance 2, UUP 1

### Belfast North

**2011 Share of Vote**



**2016 Share of Vote**

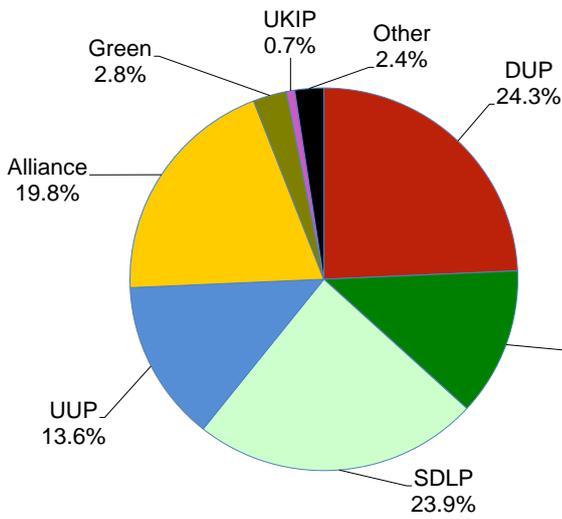


### 2016 Result

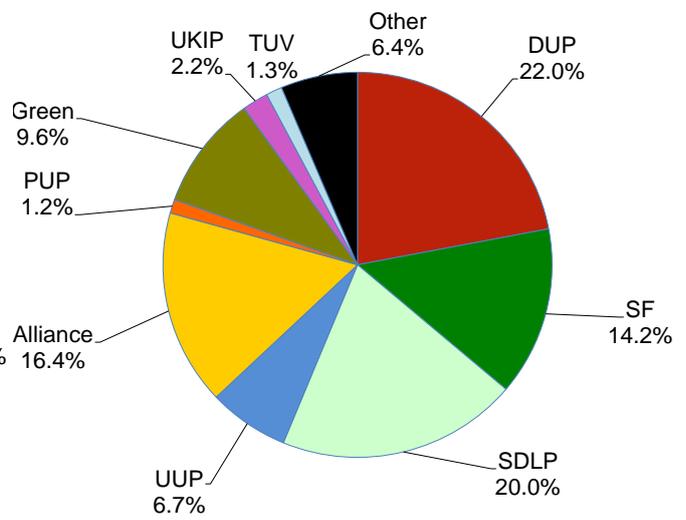
Seats Won: DUP 3, Sinn Féin 2, SDLP 1

### Belfast South

2011 Share of Vote



2016 Share of Vote

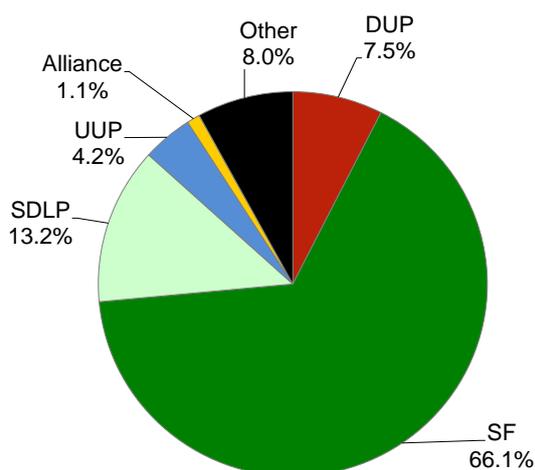


#### 2016 Result

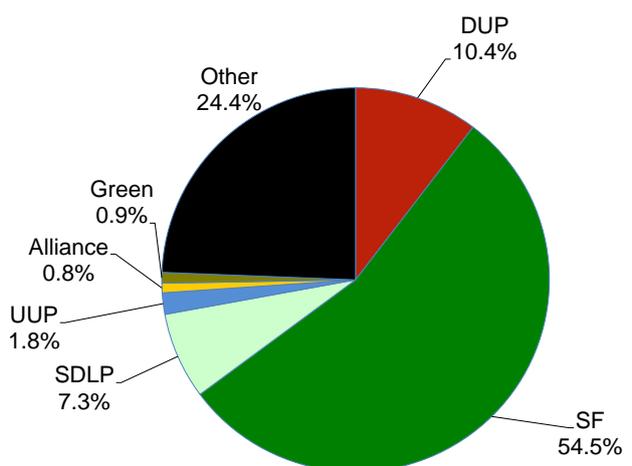
Seats Won: DUP 2, Sinn Féin 1, SDLP 1, Alliance 1, Green Party 1

### Belfast West

2011 Share of Vote



2016 Share of Vote

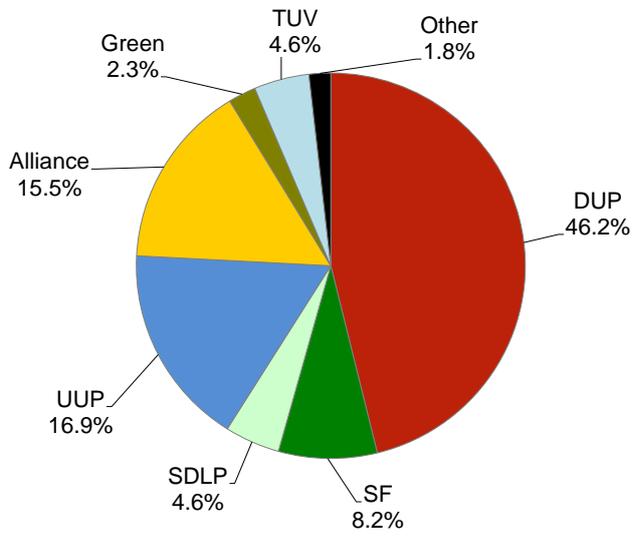


#### 2016 Result

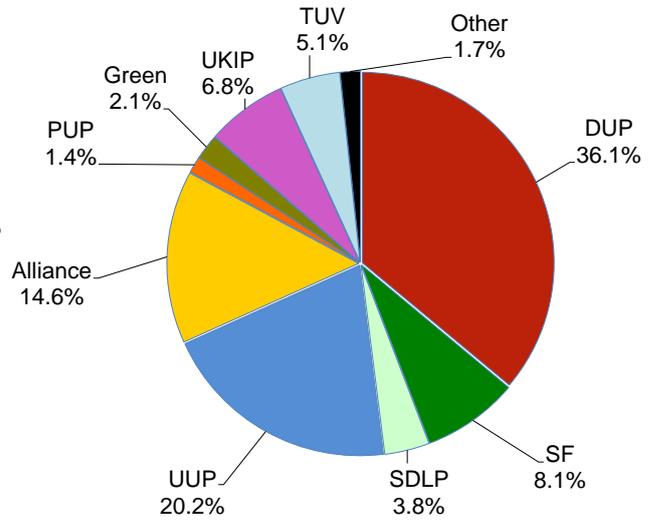
Seats Won: Sinn Féin 4, SDLP 1, PBPA

### East Antrim

**2011 Share of Vote**



**2016 Share of Vote**

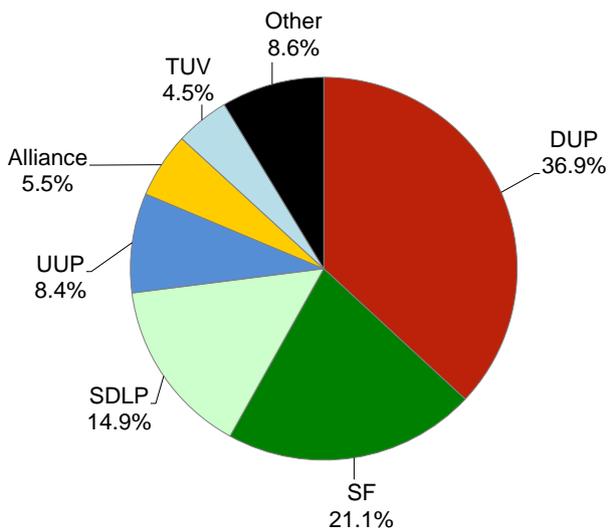


**2016 Result**

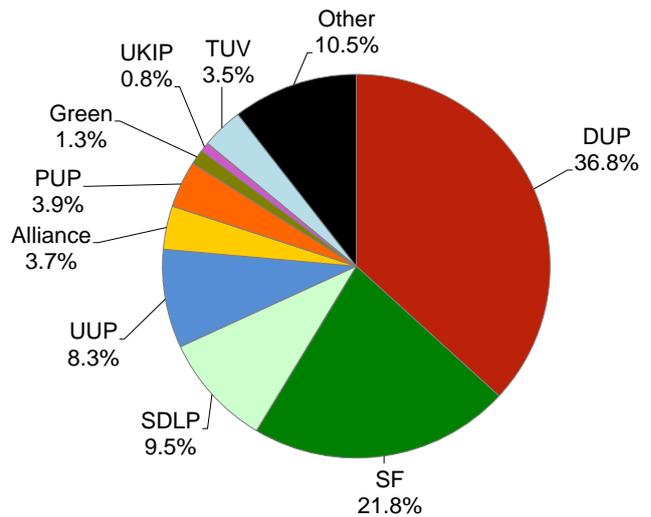
*Seats Won:* DUP 3, UUP 1, Sinn Féin 1, Alliance 1

### East Londonderry

**2011 Share of Vote**



**2016 Share of Vote**

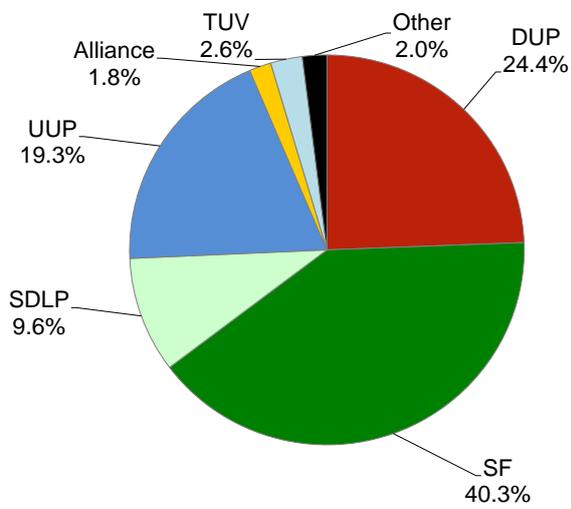


**2016 Result**

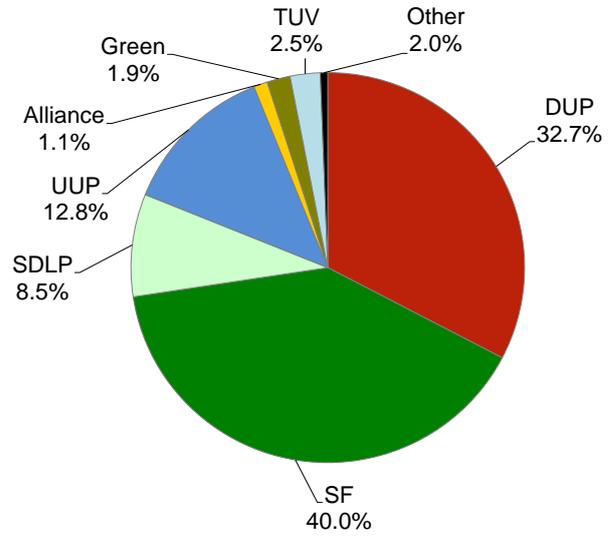
*Seats Won:* DUP 3, Sinn Féin 1, SDLP 1, Independent 1

### Fermanagh & South Tyrone

**2011 Share of Vote**



**2016 Share of Vote**

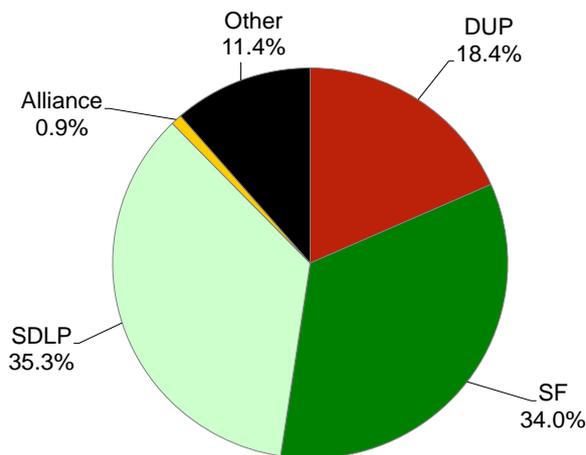


**2016 Result**

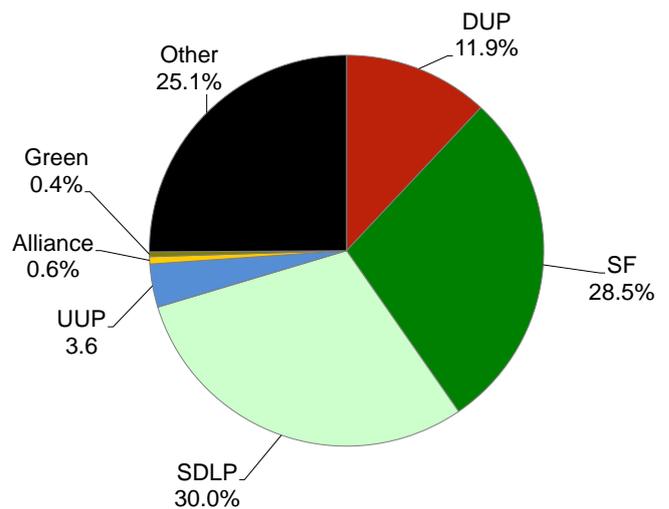
*Seats Won:* DUP 2, UUP 1, Sinn Féin 2, SDLP 1

### Foyle

**2011 Share of Vote**



**2016 Share of Vote**

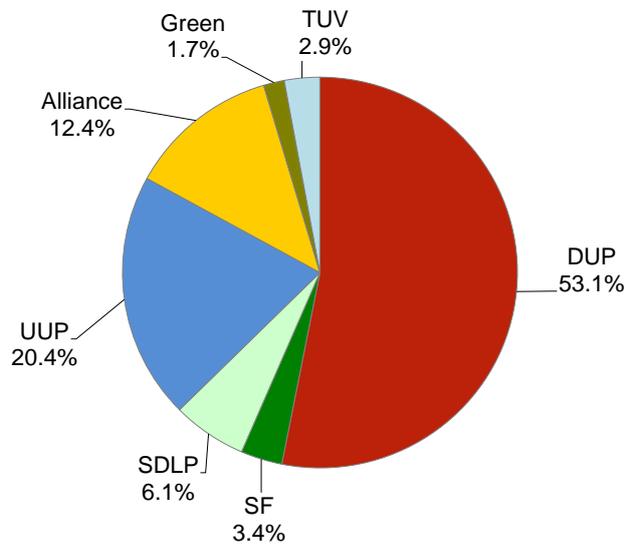


**2016 Result**

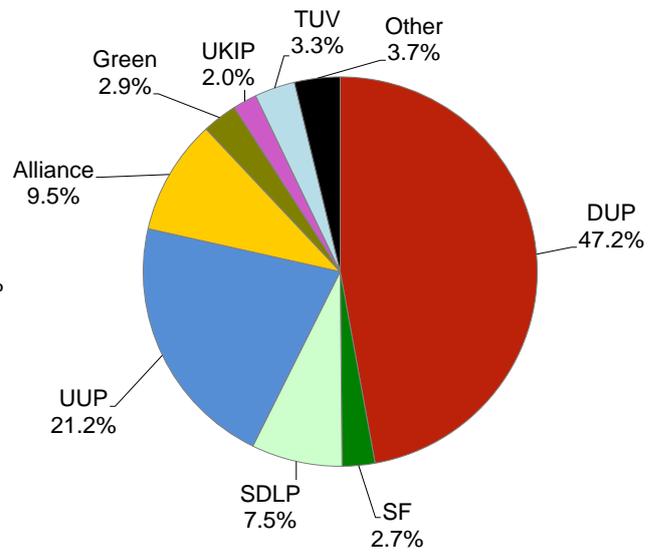
*Seats Won:* DUP 1, Sinn Féin 2, SDLP 2, PBPA 1

### Lagan Valley

**2011 Share of Vote**



**2016 Share of Vote**

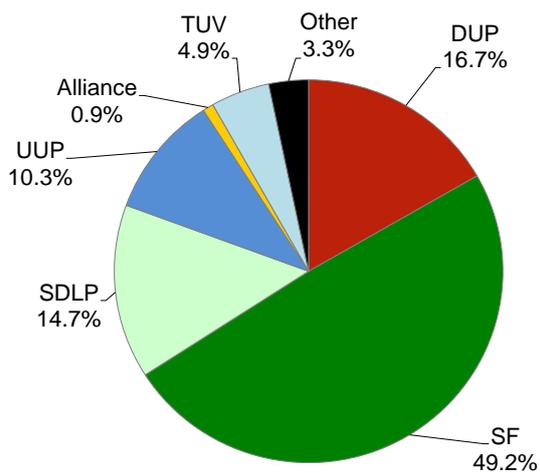


**2016 Result**

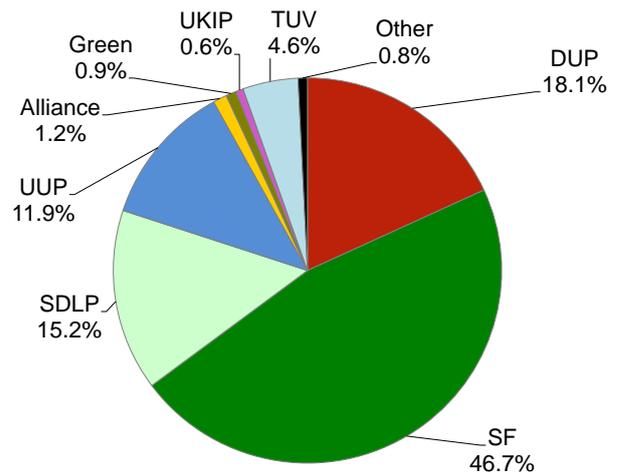
*Seats Won:* DUP 3, UUP 2, Alliance 1

### Mid-Ulster

**2011 Share of Vote**



**2016 Share of Vote**

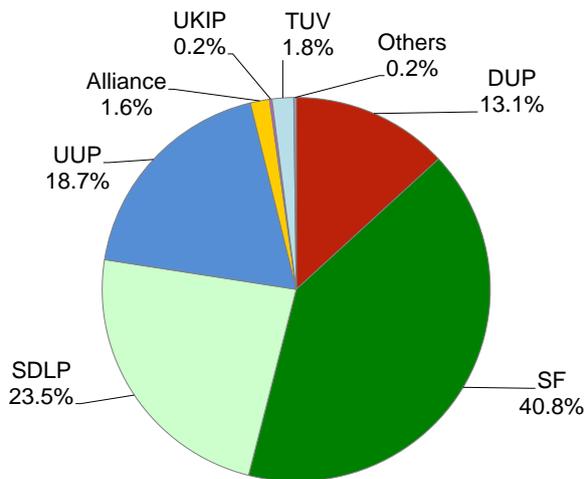


**2016 Result**

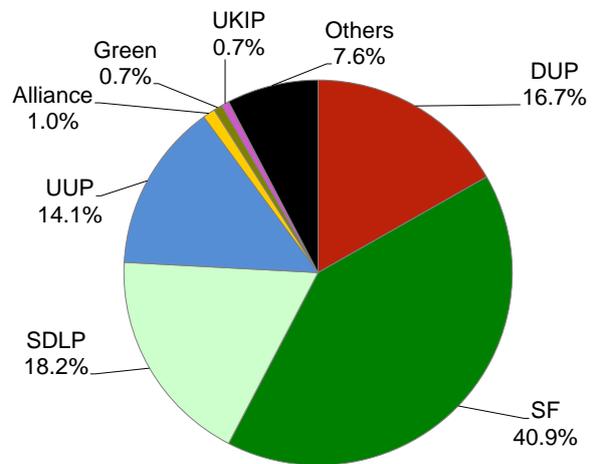
*Seats Won:* DUP 1, UUP 1, Sinn Féin 3, SDLP 1

### Newry & Armagh

**2011 Share of Vote**



**2016 Share of Vote**

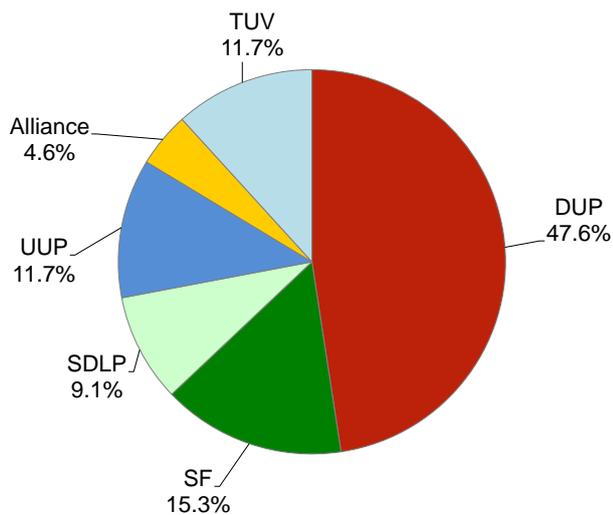


**2016 Result**

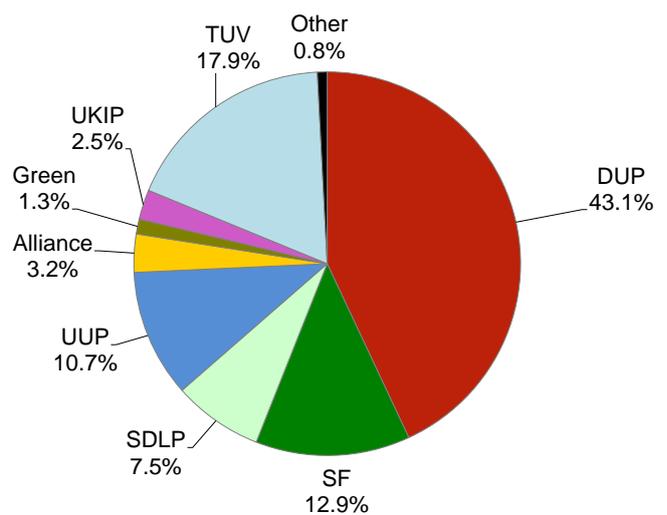
*Seats Won:* DUP 1, UUP 1, Sinn Féin 3, SDLP 1

### North Antrim

**2011 Share of Vote**



**2016 Share of Vote**

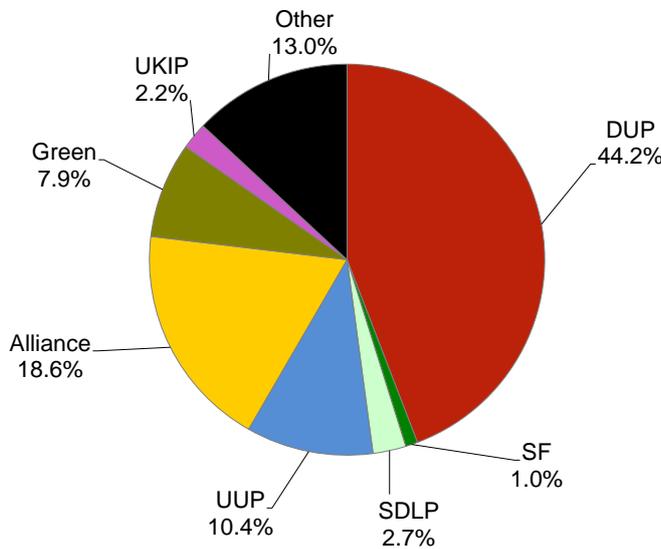


**2016 Result**

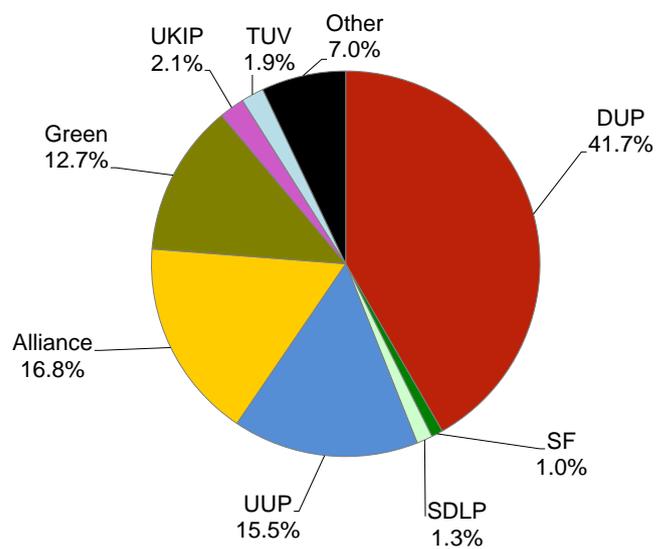
*Seats Won:* DUP 3, UUP 1, Sinn Féin 1, TUV 1

### North Down

**2011 Share of Vote**



**2016 Share of Vote**

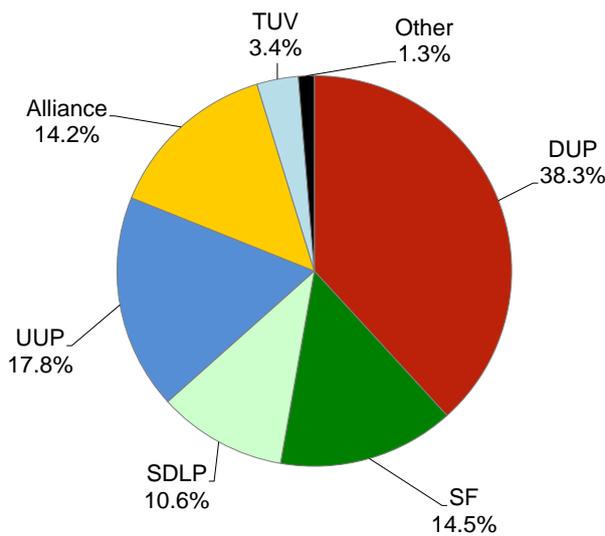


**2016 Result**

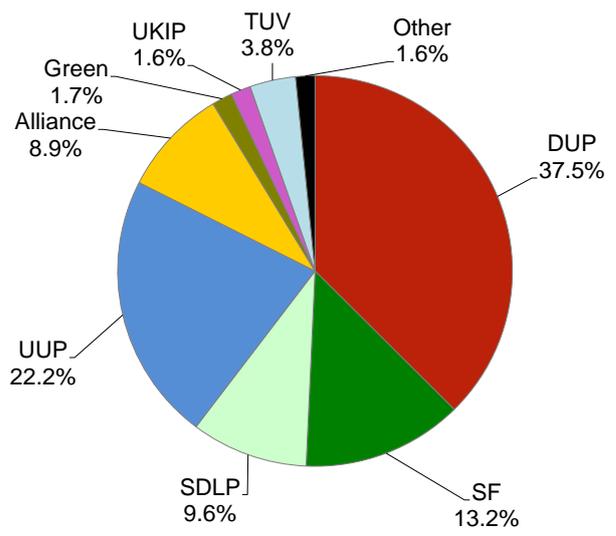
*Seats Won:* DUP 3, UUP 1, Alliance 1, Green Party 1

### South Antrim

**2011 Share of Vote**



**2016 Share of Vote**

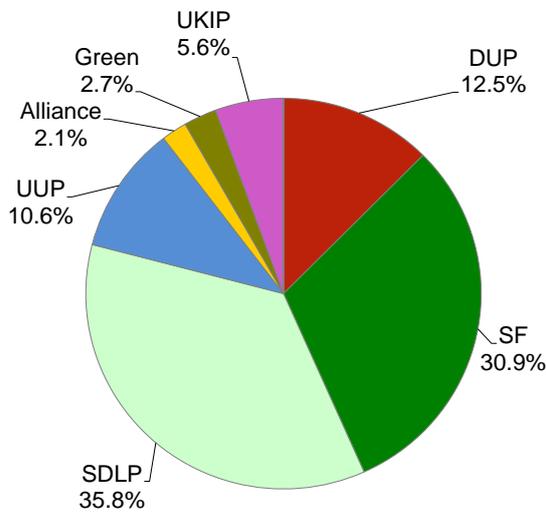


**2016 Result**

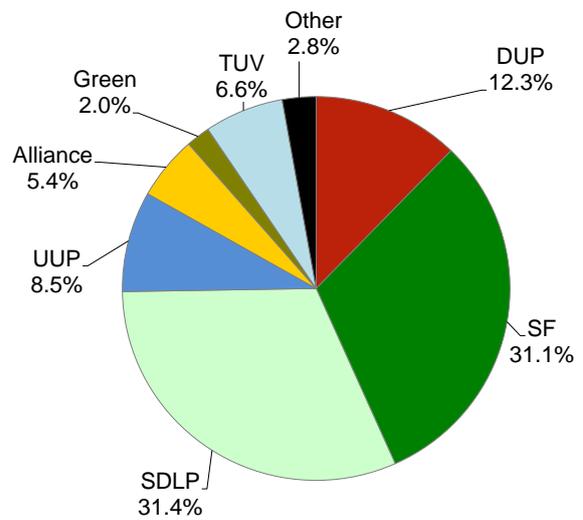
*Seats Won:* DUP 3, UUP 1, Sinn Féin 1, Alliance 1

### South Down

2011 Share of Vote



2016 Share of Vote

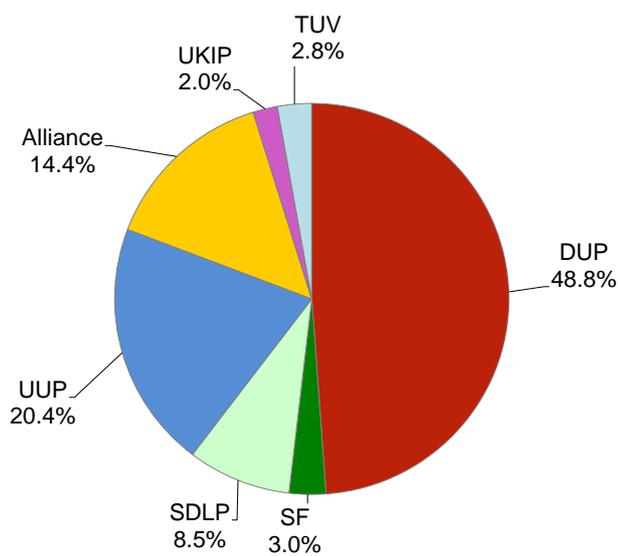


#### 2016 Result

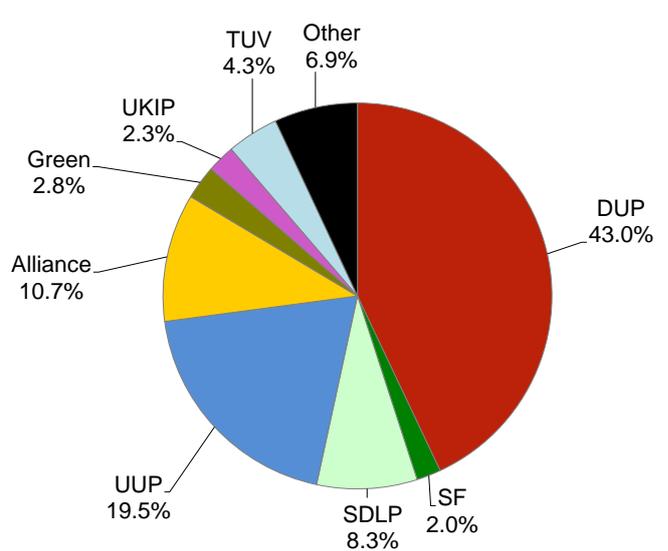
Seats Won: DUP 1, UUP 1, Sinn Féin 2, SDLP 2

### Strangford

2011 Share of Vote



2016 Share of Vote

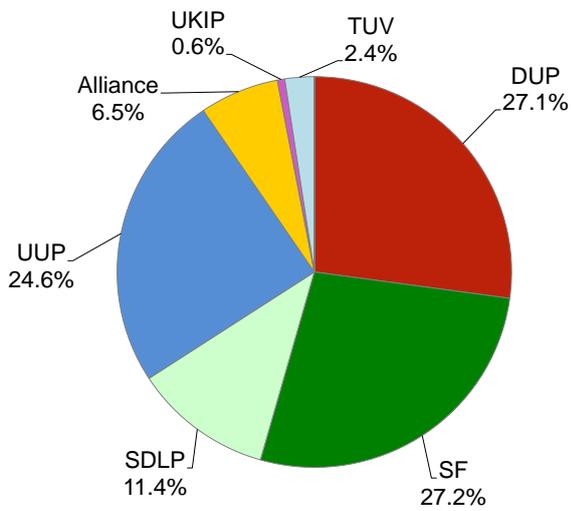


#### 2016 Result

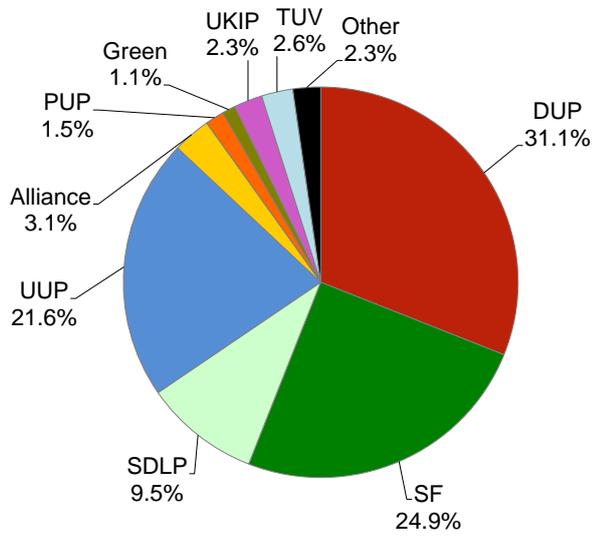
Seats Won: DUP 3, UUP 2, Alliance 1

## Upper Bann

**2011 Share of Vote**



**2016 Share of Vote**

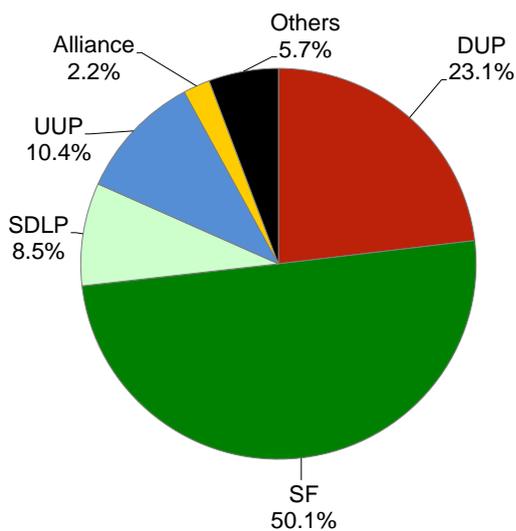


### 2016 Result

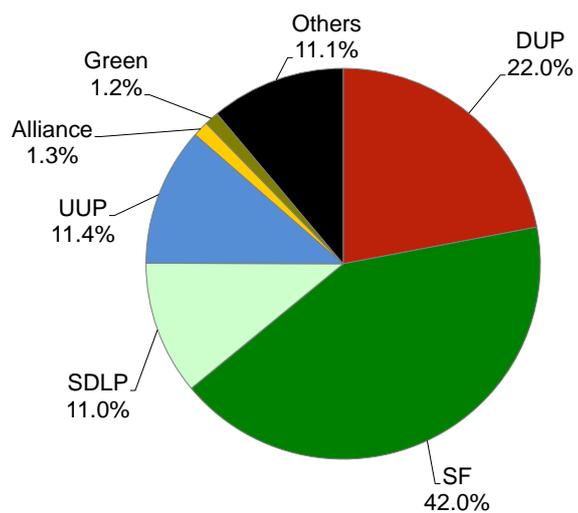
*Seats Won:* DUP 2, UUP 2, Sinn Féin 2

## West Tyrone

**2011 Share of Vote**



**2016 Share of Vote**

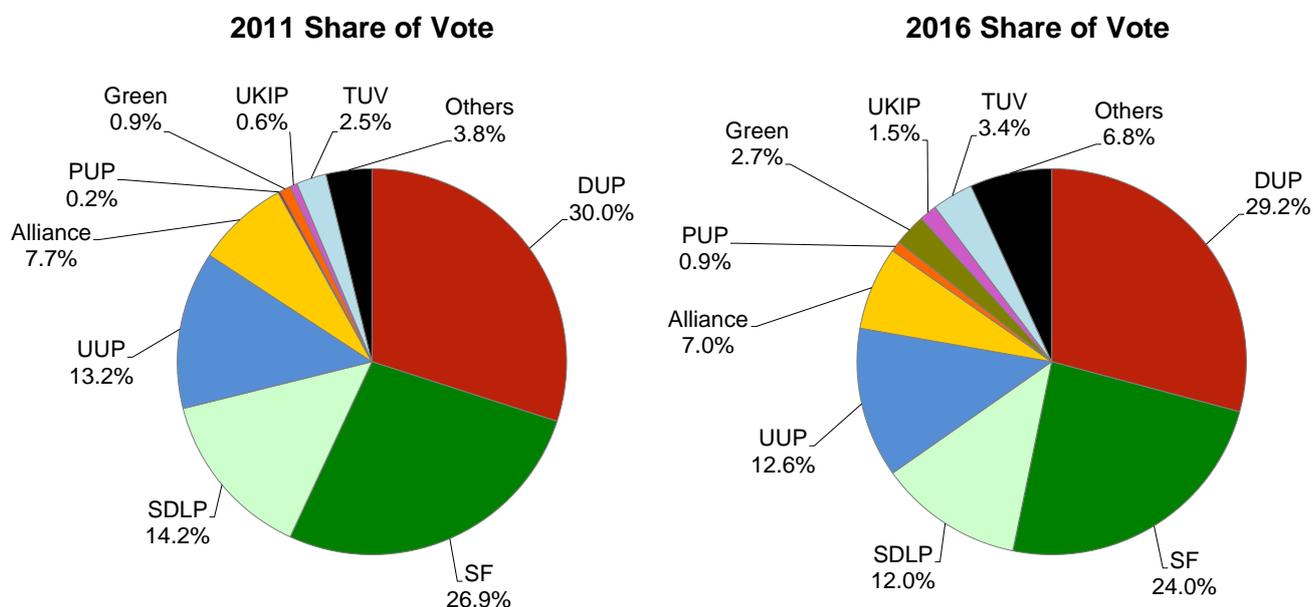


### 2016 Result

*Seats Won:* DUP 1, UUP 1, Sinn Féin 3, SDLP 1

## 8 Party Performance, 1998 – 2016

This section analyses the performance of the main political parties. While the main emphasis is on comparisons between 2016 and 2011, Tables 8.1 and 8.2 also contain data on the three preceding polls (i.e. 1998, 2003 and 2007).



In terms of seats, the 2016 Northern Ireland Assembly election resulted in net gains in favour of the Green Party and PBPA, and net losses by the SDLP and Sinn Féin (Tables 8.1 and 8.2).

**Table 8.1 Seats by Party**

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

**Table 8.2 Share of First Preference Votes by Party**

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

The **Democratic Unionist Party** returned to the Assembly with its number of seats (38) unchanged from 2011. The party gained an additional seat in Belfast South, and lost one in Lagan Valley. This was against a background of a reduced share of first preference votes (29.2% compared with 30.0% in 2011).

**Sinn Féin** lost one seat overall, and its share of first preference votes fell from 26.9% in 2011 to 24.0%. The party lost a seat each in Belfast West and Fermanagh and South Tyrone, and gained one in Upper Bann.

The **Ulster Unionist Party** retained all its 16 seats against a decline in its share of first preference votes (falling from 13.2% in 2011 to 12.6%). A loss in Belfast South was balanced by a gain in Lagan Valley.

The **SDLP** lost two seats overall and finished the election with 12 Members (losses in Belfast South, Foyle, and Upper Bann and one gain in Fermanagh and South Tyrone). The party's share of first preference votes fell from 14.2% in 2011 to 12.0%.

There was no net change in seats for the **Alliance Party** (8 seats). The Party's share of first preference votes fell from 7.7% in 2011 to 7.0%.

The **Traditional Unionist Voice**, which was fighting an Assembly election for the second time, received 3.4% of first preference votes (2.5% in 2011) and retained its seat in North Antrim.

The **Green Party's** rise in their overall share of first preference votes (from 0.9% in 2011 to 2.7%) was reflected in an extra seat gained by the party (Belfast South).

The **People before Profit Alliance** fielded only three candidates yet gained two seats (Belfast West and Foyle). Their share of first preferences rose from 0.8% in 2011 to 2.0% in 2016.

There was only one seat won by an **Independent**. Ms Claire Sugden retained her previously co-opted seat in East Londonderry.

Of the 108 MLAs elected, 31 are new Members.

## 9 Women in the 2016 Assembly Election

A total of 30 female Members were elected to the Assembly on 5 May 2016 (Table 9.1). This is a 50 per cent increase on the number elected in 2011 (20), and represents the largest number of female MLAs elected since 1998, when 14 women were elected to Stormont. Seventy six female candidates stood for election in May 2016 (27% of candidates).

**Table 9.1 Seats by Party and Gender**

Party	Male	Female	Total	% Female
DUP	30	8	38	21.1
SF	18	10	28	35.7
UUP	12	4	16	25.0
SDLP	9	3	12	25.0
APNI	5	3	8	37.5
TUV	1	0	1	
GREEN	1	1	2	50.0
PBPA	2	0	2	
IND/OTHERS	0	1	1	100.0
Totals	78	30	108	27.8

Twenty eight per cent of Members in the new Assembly are female. This compares favourably with Dáil Éireann, where 22 per cent of TDs are female (February 2016 election). Sinn Féin, with 10 female Members (36%), has the largest number of women MLAs, followed by the DUP (8, 21%) and the UUP (4, 25%). A quarter of SDLP Members are female (3), while three of the eight Alliance representatives are women (37%). Belfast South has the largest number of female representatives, with four of the six MLAs women.

## 10 Summary

The DUP consolidated its position as the largest party in Northern Ireland with the return of its 38 Members to the new Assembly. The UUP and Alliance also ended up with the same number of seats as before (16 and 8 respectively). The nationalist parties, however, experienced reverses, with the loss of two seats by the SDLP and one by Sinn Féin. The election also saw the emergence of the People before Profit Alliance with two seats, one in Belfast West and the other in Foyle. The Green Party improved its position with the gain of a seat in Belfast South. Finally, a feature of the election was the fall in voter turnout (54.9%), which has continued to drop at every election since 1998. While turnout actually increased in the Belfast and Greater Belfast constituencies, significant falls were recorded in Assembly Areas in the West and South of Northern Ireland.

### Annex A. First Preference Votes by Party and Constituency

	DUP	SF	UUP	SDLP	Alliance	TUV	Green	PBPA	UKIP	PUP	Others	Totals
Belfast East	13,643	946	4,142	141	10,659	887	2,183		631	1,772	2,171	37,175
Belfast North	12,783	9,704	1,972	3,866	2,569	644	796	1,286	751	1,238	965	36,574
Belfast South	8,081	5,207	2,466	7,361	6,023	495	3,521		794	430	2,345	36,723
Belfast West	3,766	19,752	654	2,647	291		327	8,299			532	36,268
East Antrim	11,701	2,633	6,552	1,229	4,747	1,643	693		2,207	455	551	32,411
East Londonderry	12,674	7,495	2,856	3,265	1,257	1,191	434		274	1,356	3,597	34,399
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	15,403	18,847	6,028	4,014	539	1,164	897				285	47,177
Foyle	4,737	11,297	1,420	11,897	238		157	4,176			5,780	39,702
Lagan Valley	18,325	1,045	8,247	2,899	3,707	1,291	1,118		768		1,453	38,853
Mid Ulster	7,393	19,015	4,862	6,209	471	1,877	349		256		316	40,748
Newry & Armagh	7,980	19,514	6,745	8,698	493		335		315		3,635	47,715
North Antrim	17,655	5,297	4,406	3,093	1,318	7,354	513		1,027		335	40,998
North Down	13,446	307	4,987	426	5,399	610	4,109		681		2,264	32,229
South Antrim	13,188	4,632	7,792	3,366	3,119	1,318	589		574		555	35,133
South Down	5,033	12,756	3,481	12,911	2,200	2,718	820				1,156	41,075
Strangford	14,037	661	6,367	2,724	3,499	1,407	924		759		2,261	32,639
Upper Bann	14,188	11,373	9,884	4,335	1,424	1,177	495		1,072	704	1,034	45,686
West Tyrone	8,534	16,304	4,441	4,287	494		458				4,291	38,809
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>202,567</b>	<b>166,785</b>	<b>87,302</b>	<b>83,368</b>	<b>48,447</b>	<b>23,776</b>	<b>18,718</b>	<b>13,761</b>	<b>10,109</b>	<b>5,955</b>	<b>33,526</b>	<b>694,314</b>

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

	DUP	SF	UUP	SDLP	Alliance	TUV	Green	PBPA	UKIP	PUP	Others	Totals
Belfast East	36.7	2.5	11.1	0.4	28.7	2.4	5.9		1.7	4.8	5.8	100.0
Belfast North	35.0	26.5	5.4	10.6	7.0	1.8	2.2	3.5	2.1	3.4	2.6	100.0
Belfast South	22.0	14.2	6.7	20.0	16.4	1.3	9.6		2.2	1.2	6.4	100.0
Belfast West	10.4	54.5	1.8	7.3	0.8		0.9	22.9			1.5	100.0
East Antrim	36.1	8.1	20.2	3.8	14.6	5.1	2.1		6.8	1.4	1.7	100.0
East Londonderry	36.8	21.8	8.3	9.5	3.7	3.5	1.3		0.8	3.9	10.5	100.0
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	32.7	40.0	12.8	8.5	1.1	2.5	1.9				0.6	100.0
Foyle	11.9	28.5	3.6	30.0	0.6		0.4	10.5			14.6	100.0
Lagan Valley	47.2	2.7	21.2	7.5	9.5	3.3	2.9		2.0		3.7	100.0
Mid Ulster	18.1	46.7	11.9	15.2	1.2	4.6	0.9		0.6		0.8	100.0
Newry & Armagh	16.7	40.9	14.1	18.2	1.0		0.7		0.7		7.6	100.0
North Antrim	43.1	12.9	10.7	7.5	3.2	17.9	1.3		2.5		0.8	100.0
North Down	41.7	1.0	15.5	1.3	16.8	1.9	12.7		2.1		7.0	100.0
South Antrim	37.5	13.2	22.2	9.6	8.9	3.8	1.7		1.6		1.6	100.0
South Down	12.3	31.1	8.5	31.4	5.4	6.6	2.0				2.8	100.0
Strangford	43.0	2.0	19.5	8.3	10.7	4.3	2.8		2.3		6.9	100.0
Upper Bann	31.1	24.9	21.6	9.5	3.1	2.6	1.1		2.3	1.5	2.3	100.0
West Tyrone	22.0	42.0	11.4	11.0	1.3		1.2				11.1	100.0
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	29.2	24.0	12.6	12.0	7.0	3.4	2.7	2.0	1.5	0.9	4.8	100.0

## **Annex C: List of Parties and Abbreviations**

<b>APNI</b>	Alliance Party of Northern Ireland
<b>AWP</b>	Animal Welfare Party
<b>CCLA</b>	Cross-Community Labour Alliance
<b>CSA</b>	Cannabis is Safer than Alcohol
<b>DF</b>	Democracy First
<b>DUP</b>	Democratic Unionist Party
<b>GP</b>	Green Party
<b>IND</b>	Independents
<b>NIF</b>	Northern Ireland First
<b>NILRC</b>	Northern Ireland Labour Representation Committee
<b>NIWC</b>	Northern Ireland Women's Coalition (1998 and 2003)
<b>PBPA</b>	People Before Profit Alliance
<b>PUP</b>	Progressive Unionist Party
<b>SBU</b>	South Belfast Unionists
<b>SDLP</b>	Social Democratic and Labour party
<b>SF</b>	Sinn Féin
<b>TUV</b>	Traditional Unionist Voice
<b>UKIP</b>	United Kingdom Independence Party
<b>UKUP</b>	United Kingdom Unionist Party (1998 - 2011)
<b>UUP</b>	Ulster Unionist Party
<b>WP</b>	Workers' Party