



BRIEFING PAPER

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Turnout at elections

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Summary

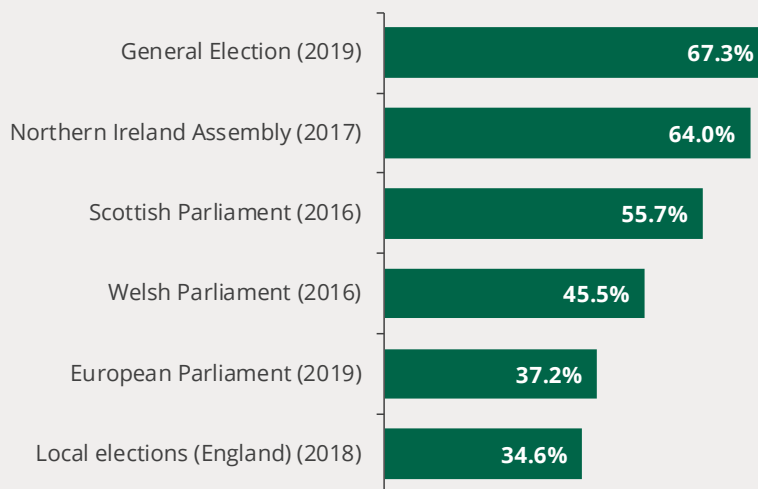
Democracies hold elections to enable citizens to vote for their representatives. Turnout at elections refers to the proportion of citizens who make use of this opportunity to vote. In this paper, turnout is calculated as the total number of votes as a proportion of all people registered to vote, unless stated otherwise.

In the UK, elections are held at different levels of governance. This paper covers the most important elections: those for the UK Parliament's House of Commons, the devolved administrations, local councils, and the European Parliament (up until 2019). It does not cover elections for Police and Crime Commissioners or local mayors.

Turnout is normally highest in UK Parliament (general) elections, followed by devolved administration elections, local elections and European Parliament elections. The chart below shows turnout at the most recent election of each type.

Turnout at UK elections, by type

Most recent election



Note: Turnout shown for Scotland and Wales is the highest of the two (constituency and list)

Sources:

[European Parliament, Election results 2019](#)

[Electoral Commission, past election results](#)

[Library Briefing Paper, General Election 2019: full results and analysis](#)

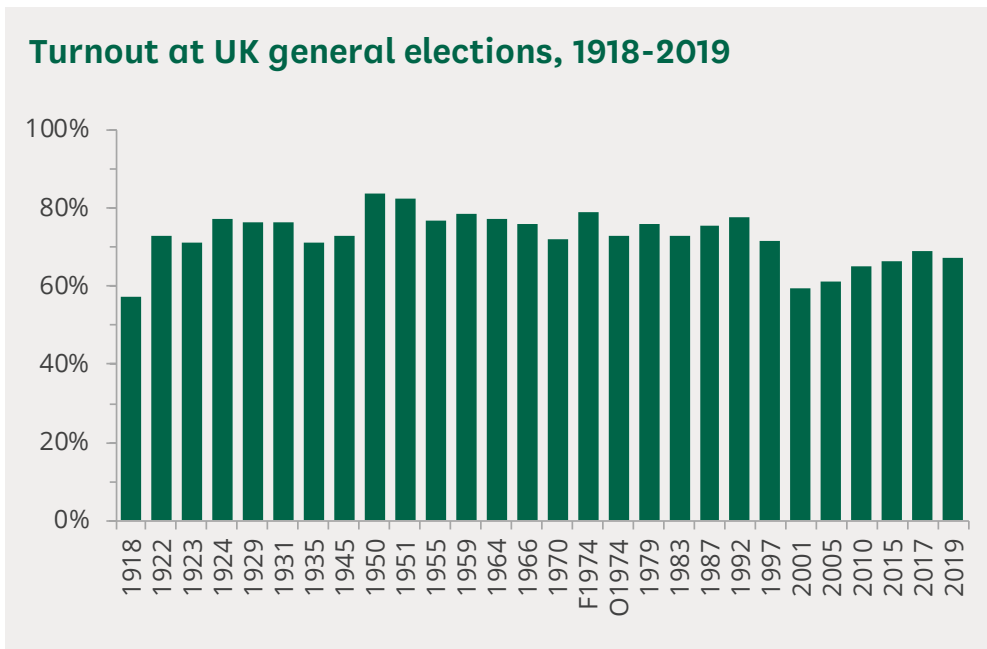
There is substantial variation, for all these elections, among the different countries, regions, constituencies and local authorities of the UK. Younger people are less likely to vote than older people at general elections.

1. National Parliament Elections

Voter turnout in the UK tends to be highest for elections to the UK Parliament's House of Commons, compared with other elections held in the UK. Turnout varies between different parts of the UK, and between different age groups.

1.1 UK General Elections

The 2019 General Election¹ broke a run of four successive elections in which turnout increased. Turnout was 67.3% across the UK, down by 1.5 percentage points compared with 2017 (68.8%). It was nevertheless the second-highest general election turnout since 1997 (71.4%). The highest turnout recorded at a UK general election over the last 100 years was in 1950, 83.9%. The chart below gives a general overview of the long-term trend in voter turnout at general elections.



Source: House of Commons Library, [UK Election Statistics](#)

Note: Turnout calculated as valid votes as a percentage of total electors.

Between 1922 and 1997, turnout at UK general elections remained above 71%, rising to over 80% in the general elections of 1950 and 1951. Turnout was only 57.2% in the 1918 General Election, although this was partly due to a low service vote and a large number of uncontested seats (107 out of a total of 707 seats).

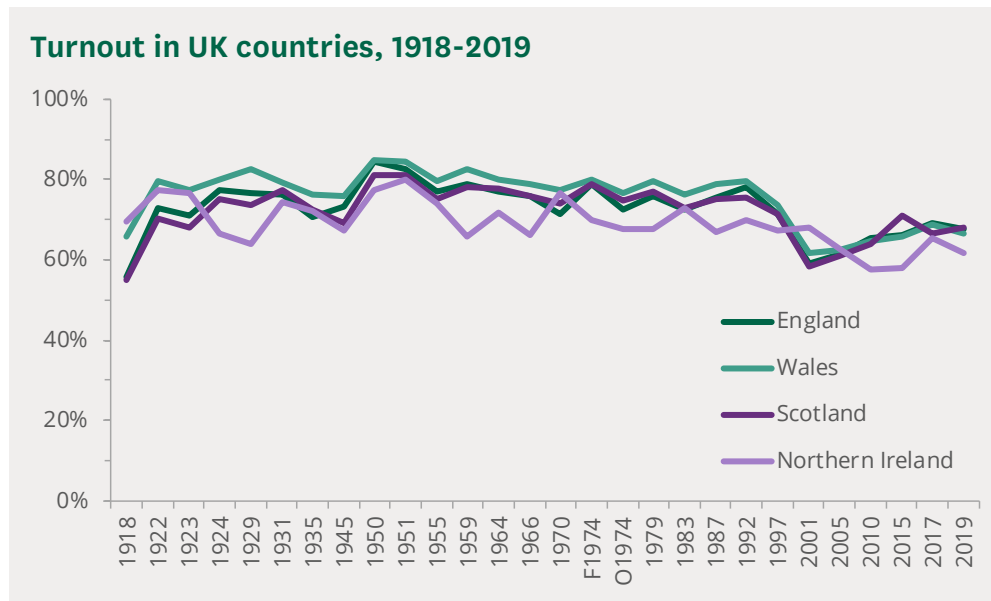
In 2001, turnout fell to 59.4%, its lowest level since 1918 and down 12 percentage points compared with 1997. Although turnout rose again between 2005 and 2017, before declining again slightly in 2019, it remained below its 1997 level.

¹ House of Commons Library, [General Election 2019](#)

Turnout variation among nations, regions and constituencies

There is some variation in turnout between different parts of the UK and between constituencies. Some of this may be due to geographical factors, such as the location of polling stations,² and demographic factors, such as the education and age (see below) of people in these places, may play a role too.

The chart below shows turnout in different parts of the UK since 1918 (also in Appendix 5.1).



Note: Prior to 1922, Northern Ireland data represents all of Ireland

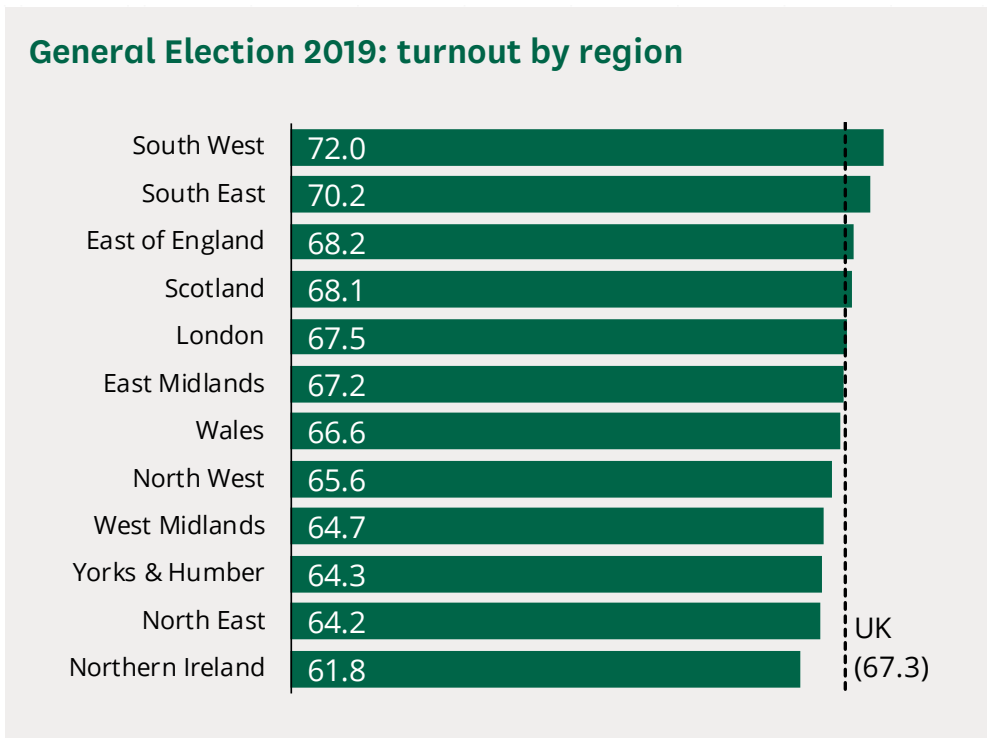
Source: House of Commons Library, [General Election 2019](#), House of Commons Library, [UK Election Statistics](#) and Colin Rallings and Michael Thrasher, *British Electoral Facts 1832-2012* (2012).

Turnout was usually lowest in Northern Ireland.³ The turnout in each of the countries of the UK in 2019 was below the 1918-2019 average for the UK, which was 72.7%. This is also true for all the electoral regions of the UK, shown in the table below.

Turnout was highest in the South West (72.0%) and lowest in Northern Ireland (61.8%), followed by the North East (64.2%).

² See S Orford, C Rallings, M Thrasher, G Borisjuk, 'Changes in the probability of voter turnout when resiting polling stations: a case study in Brent, UK', in [Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy](#), 2011, 29:pp149-169

³ Some people in Northern Ireland do not vote in UK Parliamentary elections given the complicated history and relationship between Ireland and Great Britain



Source: House of Commons Library, [General Election 2019](#)

Turnout at general elections varies considerably between constituencies. The highest and lowest turnouts in the 2019 General Election are shown in the table below, whilst the variation across the UK is shown in the map below.

The constituency with the highest turnout was East Dunbartonshire (80.3%), won by the Scottish National Party. In the 2017 General Election, Twickenham had recorded the highest turnout (79.5%). Eight of the ten constituencies with the highest turnout featured the Liberal Democrats in first or second place.

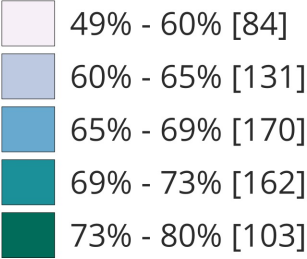
Eight of the ten constituencies with the smallest turnout were won by Labour, one by the Conservatives and one by the Speaker. Three of the ten constituencies with the lowest turnout in the UK were in Kingston upon Hull.

Turnout by constituency: top 10 highest and lowest

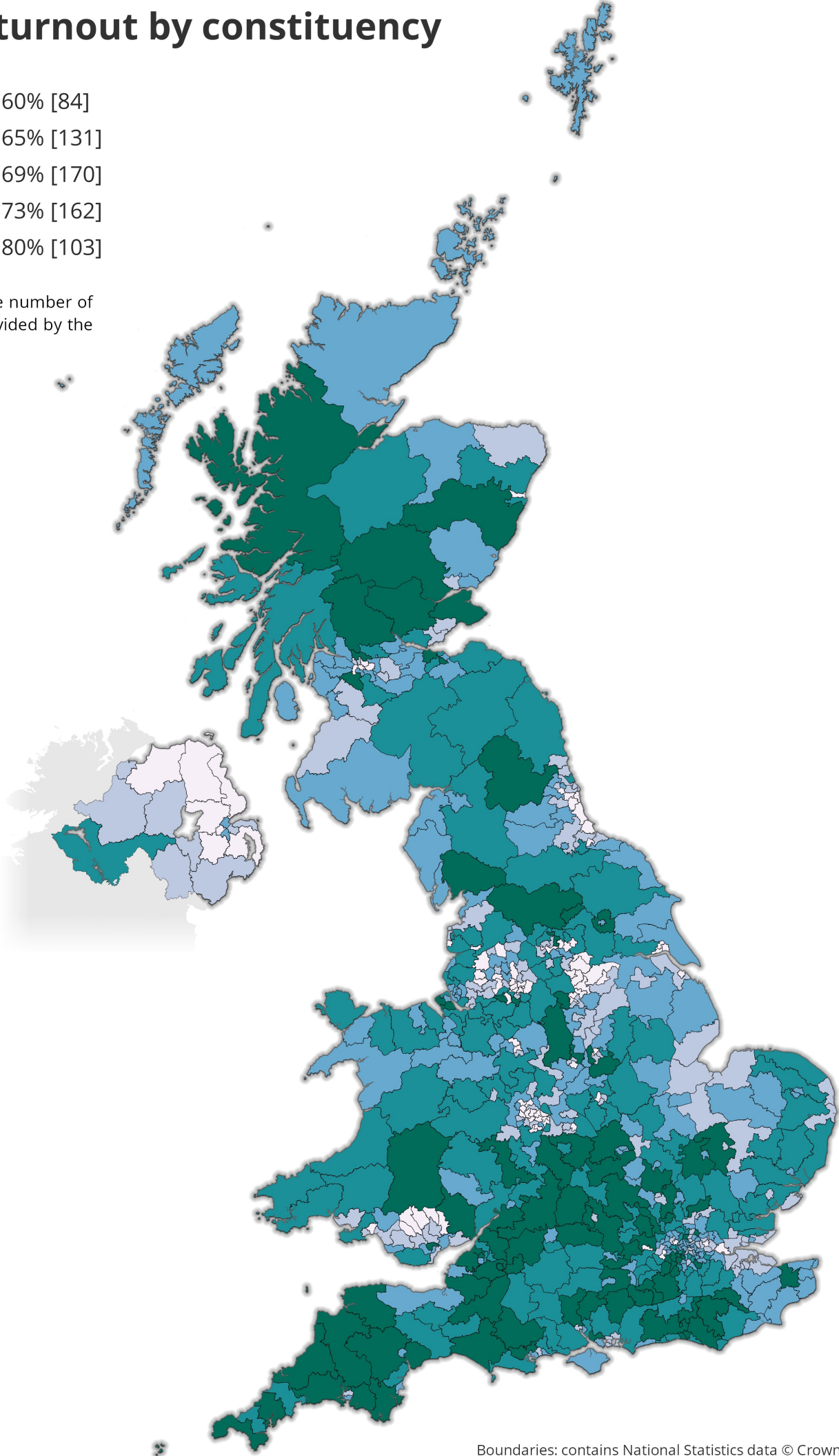
Rank	Constituency	Country/region	Winner/Result	Turnout
1	East Dunbartonshire	Scotland	SNP gain	80.3%
2	Richmond Park	London	LD gain	78.7%
3	Rushcliffe	East Midlands	Con hold	78.5%
4	Sheffield, Hallam	Yorks & Humb.	Lab hold	78.2%
5	St Albans	East of England	LD gain	78.1%
6	Stroud	South West	Con gain	78.0%
7	Winchester	South East	Con hold	77.9%
8	Westmorland and Lonsdale	North West	LD hold	77.8%
9	Wimbledon	London	Con hold	77.7%
10	Esher and Walton	South East	Con hold	77.7%
641	Leicester West	East Midlands	Lab hold	53.5%
642	West Bromwich West	West Midlands	Con gain	53.4%
643	Birmingham, Erdington	West Midlands	Lab hold	53.3%
644	Wolverhampton South East	West Midlands	Lab hold	53.2%
645	Nottingham North	East Midlands	Lab hold	53.1%
646	Blackley and Broughton	North West	Lab hold	52.6%
647	Kingston upon Hull North	Yorks & Humb.	Lab hold	52.2%
648	Kingston upon Hull West and Hessle	Yorks & Humb.	Lab hold	52.1%
649	Chorley	North West	Spk gain	51.0%
650	Kingston upon Hull East	Yorks & Humb.	Lab hold	49.3%

Source: House of Commons Library, [General Election 2019](#)

Voter turnout by constituency



Turnout is the number of valid votes divided by the electorate.



Turnout by age

In many Western democracies, younger people are less likely to vote than older people. There are no official figures for voting by age in the UK, but a long-running academic survey, the [British Election Study](#), provides reasonably consistent survey-based data for general elections since 1964. This type of data comes with a degree of uncertainty: it uses the survey responses of a relatively small sample of people to estimate the behaviour of the entire population. There is generally some variation between estimates and actual results.

The charts below show estimated turnout by age group at all general elections since 1964. Data for the 2019 General Election are not yet available.



Source: [British Election Study](#), various years

10 Turnout at elections

Notes:

Data for 1964 and 1966 refers to people aged 21-24 as the voting age was 21 not 18

British Election Study data has been adjusted for actual turnout (except for 2017)

2017 figures based on validated data (face to face study), not adjusted

IPSOS Mori produce estimates of how different age groups (and other groups) voted at each election. For the [2019 General Election](#), their estimates suggest that the same pattern shown above holds: people aged 18-24 were least likely to vote (47% turnout), with those over 65 most likely to vote (74%).⁴

Other factors such as education, socio-demographic factors, perceptions of how close the election is, and whether people identify with a political party may explain some of the differences between age groups.⁵

International comparison

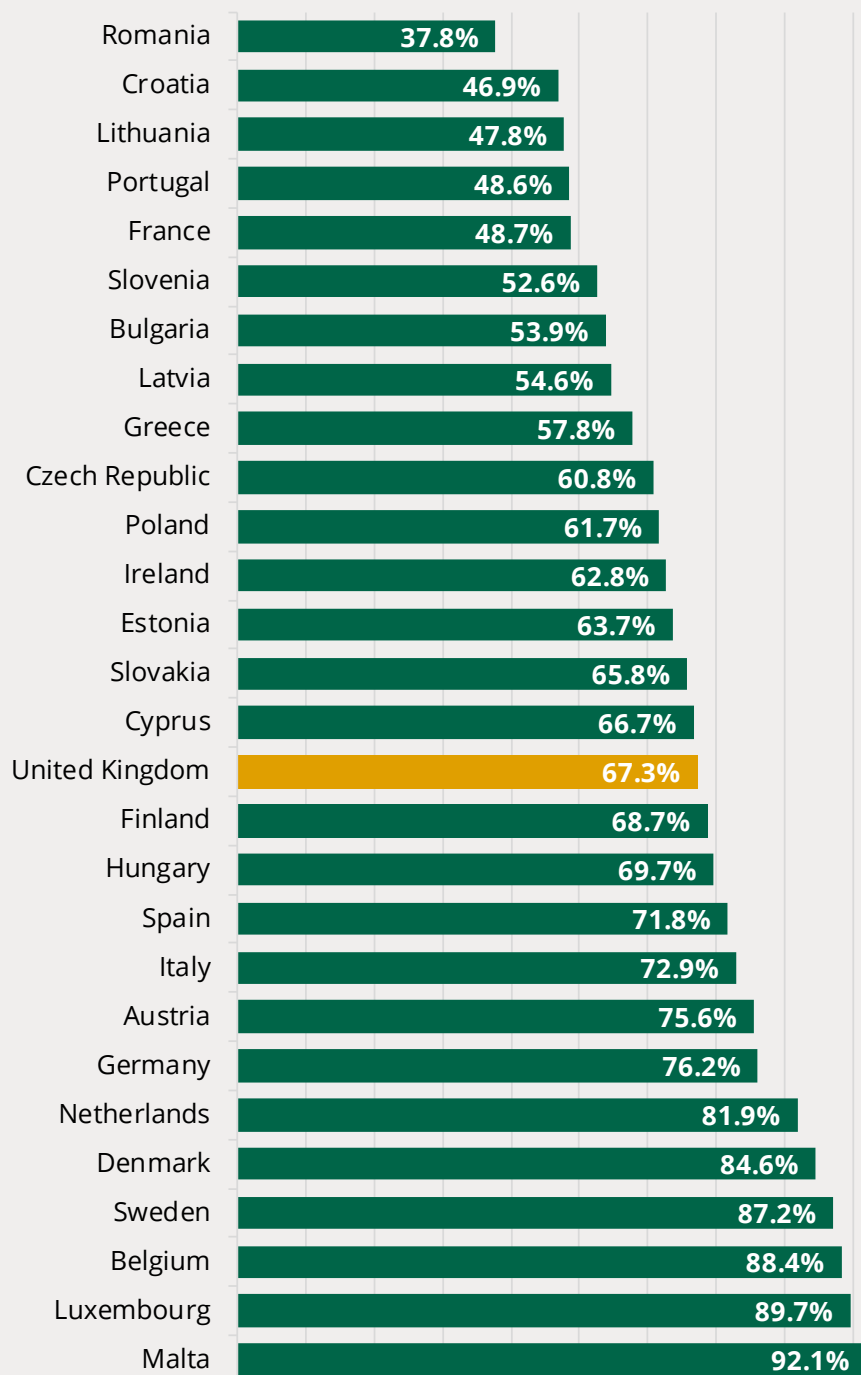
Comparisons between turnout in different countries should be made with some caution, because voting is compulsory in some countries (for example in Belgium and Luxembourg). More generally, differences in voter turnout between countries are often explained by reference to institutional differences such as the number of parties and the perceived differences between them, the electoral system, and how close the race is perceived to be.⁶ The chart below shows the turnout at the latest general elections in the UK and EU Member States.

⁴ These estimates are based on pre-election surveys. The methodology is different from the British Election Study so estimates are not directly comparable.

⁵ E.g. Daniel Rubenson et al, '[Accounting for the age gap in turnout](#)', in *Acta Politica*, 2004, 39:pp407-421; Jan Germen Janmaat and Bryony Hoskins, '[Voter turnout: how the education systems widens the social class gap](#)', Institute Of Education Blog (UCL), 10 December 2019

⁶ Andre Blais, '[What affects voter turnout?](#)', in *Annual Review of Political Science*, 2005, 9:pp111-125

International comparison: parliamentary election turnout



Source: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, [Voter Turnout Database](#), accessed 29 October 2020

Note: It is not stated whether this data is calculated with valid and invalid votes as a percentage of the electorate, or just valid votes. The figure for the UK has been adjusted to match House of Commons Library data.

Across the 27 EU states the average turnout for Parliamentary elections was 66.3%. Malta had the highest turnout, at 92.1% followed by Luxembourg and Belgium, where voting is compulsory.

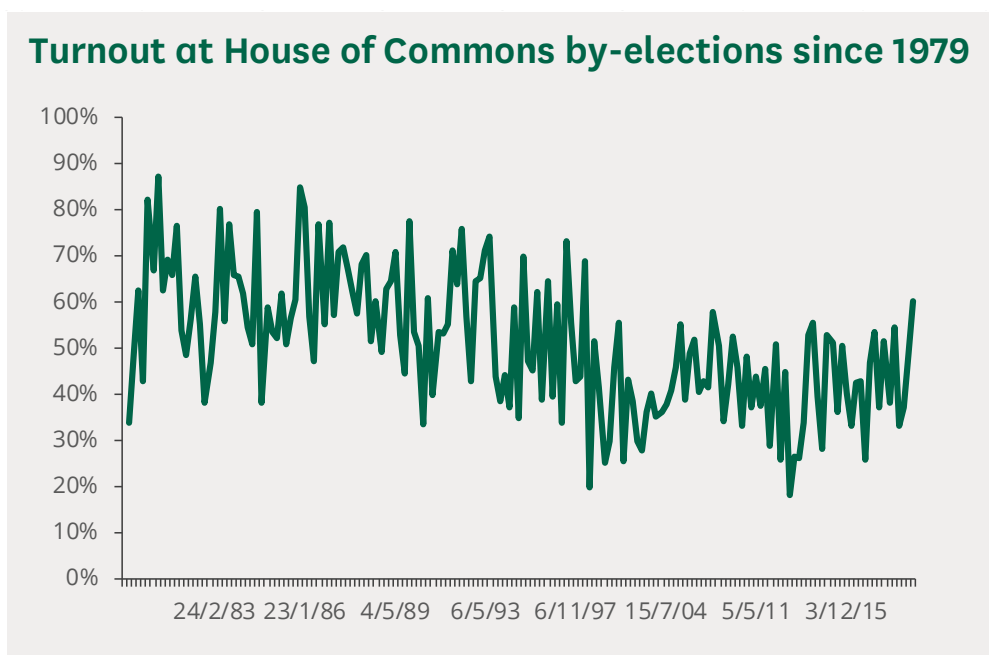
12 Turnout at elections

Following the 2019 General Election, the UK had the 13th highest turnout among the countries in the chart. Cyprus and France experienced the two largest falls in turnout, compared to their previous Parliamentary elections. In the case of Cyprus, turnout fell from 78.7% in 2011 to 66.7% in 2016, whilst turnout in French Parliamentary elections declined from 55.4% in 2012 to 42.6% in 2017. The largest increases from one Parliamentary election to the next, seeing rises of over 7%, were in Hungary (61.8% in 2014 to 69.7% in 2018), Poland (50.9% in 2015 to 61.7% in 2019) and the Netherlands (74.6% in 2012 to 81.9% in 2017).

1.2 House of Commons by-elections

When a seat in the UK House of Commons becomes free in between general elections, for example when an MP dies or resigns, a by-election is called. Turnout at by-elections varies considerably. For by-elections between 1979 and 2019, the lowest turnout was 18.2% (Manchester Central, 2012) and the highest was 87.1% (Fermanagh and South Tyrone, 1981). The highest turnout at by-elections outside of Northern Ireland was 80.0% (Darlington, 1983). On average, turnout at by-elections was 51.5%.

The chart below shows the variation in turnout at all by-elections since 1979.



2. Devolved Administrations

Elections for the devolved administrations are normally held every four to five years. Elections for the Scottish Parliament and the Welsh Parliament (previously the National Assembly for Wales) were first held in May 1999. Both countries use the Additional Member System, where voters have two votes: one to elect a constituency member and one for a party on a regional list. The first elections (1999) saw the highest turnout recorded in both countries. In Wales, turnout has tended to be around 40-45% and in Scotland 50-55%. The next elections are scheduled for May 2021.

Elections for the Northern Ireland Assembly elections first took place in 1998. These elections use the Single Transferable Vote system, where voters express their preference for candidates by ranking them. Turnout has tended to be higher than in Wales and Scotland, with most elections recording a turnout over 60%. The next elections are scheduled for May 2022.

The table below shows turnout at elections for the devolved administrations.

Turnout at elections: devolved administrations		
	Regional List	Constituencies
Welsh Assembly		
1999	46.3%	46.4%
2003	38.1%	38.2%
2007	43.4%	43.5%
2011	41.4%	41.5%
2016	45.3%	45.5%
Scottish Parliament		
1999	58.7%	58.8%
2003	49.4%	49.4%
2007	52.4%	51.7%
2011	50.4%	50.4%
2016	55.7%	55.6%
Northern Ireland Assembly		
1998	-	68.7%
2003	-	64.0%
2007	-	62.3%
2011	-	54.7%
2016	-	54.2%
2017	-	64.0%

Source: House of Commons Library, [UK Election Statistics](#)

3. Local Elections

Turnout at local elections is generally lower than at general elections, around 30%. This phenomenon is also seen in other countries and local elections, like European Parliament elections, are considered 'second-order' elections: voters see these are less important and are less likely to turn out to vote.⁷ Low turnout has also been explained by the lack of competition in these elections, with some seats uncontested and councillors often in place for long periods.⁸

Local elections were last held in England and Northern Ireland in 2019, and in Wales and Scotland in 2017.

The next local elections in Northern Ireland are expected in 2023. In England, local elections are held every year, because different local councils run different election cycles: there are some seats up for election in each year.⁹ The 2020 elections were postponed to 2021 due to the pandemic.

The next local elections in Scotland and Wales are scheduled for 2022, a year later than initially planned to avoid occurring on the same day as the elections for the Welsh and Scottish Parliaments.

The table below shows the turnout at local elections in the UK since 1973. Some of the variation between years is due to local elections being held on the same day as a general election (most recently in 2015).

⁷ E.g. Anthony Heath, Iain McLean, Bridget Taylor and John Curtice, '[Between first and second order: a comparison of voting behaviour in European and local elections in Britain](#)', in *European Journal of Political Research*, 35:5, 2003

⁸ Electoral Reform Society, [English Local Elections](#) (2011)

⁹ See Library Briefing Paper [Local elections 2019](#), p5, for an overview of different election cycles

Turnout at local elections

	England				District Councils	Welsh Unitaries ^a	Scottish Unitaries ^b
	London Boroughs	Unitary Councils	County Councils	Metropolitan			
1973	-	-	42.6%	33.4%	38.6%	55.0%	-
1974	36.3%	-	-	-	-	-	52.1%
1975	-	-	-	32.7%	-	-	-
1976	-	-	-	38.1%	44.3%	-	-
1977	-	-	42.3%	-	-	51.0%	48.2%
1978	42.9%	-	-	37.2%	42.4%	-	-
1979	-	-	-	74.7%	76.6%	-	-
1980	-	-	-	36.3%	38.9%	-	46.2%
1981	-	-	43.7%	-	-	48.6%	-
1982	43.9%	-	-	38.8%	41.8%	-	-
1983	-	-	-	42.0%	45.6%	-	-
1984	-	-	-	40.8%	40.2%	-	44.8%
1985	-	-	41.6%	-	-	45.2%	-
1986	45.5%	-	-	39.9%	41.9%	-	-
1987	-	-	-	44.7%	47.8%	-	-
1988	-	-	-	40.1%	41.5%	-	45.5%
1989	-	-	39.2%	-	-	44.2%	-
1990	48.1%	-	-	46.2%	48.6%	-	-
1991	-	-	-	40.8%	47.5%	-	-
1992	-	-	-	32.5%	37.8%	-	41.4%
1993	-	-	37.2%	-	-	38.8%	-
1994	46.0%	-	-	38.9%	42.6%	-	-
1995	-	39.7%	-	33.8%	41.0%	48.8%	44.9%
1996	-	34.6%	-	30.5%	37.2%	-	-
1997	-	69.7%	73.2%	-	-	-	-
1998	34.6%	27.8%	-	24.8%	30.8%	-	-
1999	-	31.5%	-	26.1%	35.8%	49.7%	59.4%
2000	-	28.5%	-	26.0%	32.2%	-	-
2001	-	57.6%	62.5%	-	-	-	-
2002	31.6%	30.2%	-	31.8%	35.4%	-	-
2003	-	36.8%	-	33.1%	35.8%	-	50.1%
2004	-	37.2%	-	41.3%	41.0%	43.2%	-
2005	-	61.3%	63.8%	-	-	-	-
2006	39.9%	33.7%	-	34.7%	37.0%	-	-
2007	-	36.0%	-	34.9%	38.0%	-	52.8%
2008	-	34.6%	-	34.2%	36.1%	42.1%	-
2009	-	41.5%	39.1%	-	-	-	-
2010	61.4%	60.8%	-	60.7%	66.0%	-	-
2011	-	40.4%	-	38.3%	43.9%	-	-
2012	-	29.5%	-	31.0%	31.3%	38.4%	39.8%
2013	-	31.6%	30.6%	-	-	-	-
2014	38.2%	33.7%	-	33.3%	36.6%	-	-
2015	-	62.5%	-	61.0%	66.4%	-	-
2016	-	33.3%	-	33.0%	34.6%	-	-
2017	-	37.3%	34.8%	29.2%	-	41.8%	46.0%
2018	38.9%	32.8%	-	31.8%	34.8%	-	-

Notes: a. Counties until 1995 b. Districts until 1995. In 2017 the only Metropolitan council to hold elections was Doncaster. 2019 data not yet available.

Source: Electoral Commission, [Local Election Results](#); Colin Rallings and Michael Thrasher, *British Electoral Facts 1832-2012* (2012).

3.1 Turnout in recent local elections, by authority¹⁰

There is variation in local election turnout between local authorities. The table below shows the local authorities with the highest and lowest turnout at the most recent local elections.

Local election turnout: top and bottom 5 local councils

Scotland (2017)		Wales (2017)	
Council	Turnout	Council	Turnout
Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar	56.1%	Ceredigion	53.3%
East Dunbartonshire	55.7%	Gwynedd	52.5%
Perth and Kinross	53.8%	Pembrokeshire	47.8%
Stirling	53.3%	Carmarthenshire	47.5%
East Lothian	52.0%	Powys	47.3%
North Lanarkshire	43.8%	Flintshire	38.2%
Orkney	43.4%	Swansea	38.2%
Dundee	42.0%	Merthyr Tydfil	38.0%
Shetland	41.2%	Newport	36.8%
Glasgow	39.0%	Caerphilly	36.5%
London (2018)		England (2018)	
Council	Turnout	Council	Turnout
Richmond upon Thames	51.4%	South Lakeland	47.6%
Kingston upon Thames	47.3%	Winchester	44.5%
Barnet	43.7%	Trafford	43.8%
Wandsworth	43.6%	Mole Valley	43.2%
Tower Hamlets	41.8%	South Cambridgeshire	43.0%
Greenwich	36.1%	Salford	26.2%
Newham	35.8%	Barnsley	25.5%
Lambeth	34.3%	Knowsley	25.3%
Southwark	33.6%	Kingston upon Hull	25.3%
Barking and Dagenham	29.5%	Hartlepool	24.2%

Note: turnout statistics for local elections in Northern Ireland are not available by local council

Source: Electoral Commission, [past election results](#)

¹⁰ Turnout calculated by Total vote turnout (incl. postal votes rejected and votes rejected at the count)

4. European Parliament Elections

4.1 Turnout in the United Kingdom

Elections to the European Parliament were held in the UK between 1979 and 2019. Turnout has been relatively low and these elections are often considered second-order elections, which voters see as less important than national elections so that they are less likely to vote.¹¹

Turnout in Northern Ireland, where a system of Single Transferable Vote has operated in all European elections, has been consistently higher than the rest of the UK. This was also the case in 2019, despite turnout in Northern Ireland falling from 51% to 45%. The largest increase in turnout in 2019 compared with 2014 was in Scotland, where turnout rose by 7%. Overall, 7 of the 12 electoral regions experienced a rise in turnout in 2019 compared to the previous election.

European Parliament elections: turnout by region

	2014	2019	Difference 2014-2019
Northern Ireland	51%	45%	-6%
London	40%	41%	1%
South West England	37%	40%	3%
Scotland	33%	40%	7%
South East England	36%	39%	3%
Wales	32%	37%	5%
East of England	36%	36%	0%
East Midlands	33%	35%	2%
Yorkshire & Humber	34%	33%	-1%
West Midlands	33%	33%	0%
North West England	33%	33%	0%
North East England	31%	33%	2%

Source: House of Commons Library, [European Parliament Elections 2019](#) and [BBC](#)

The highest reported turnout at a European Parliament election in the UK was 38.5% in 2004; this followed a record low of 24.0% in 1999.

In 2019, the highest local turnouts in Great Britain were in the Isles of Scilly (53.9%), the City of London (53.8%) and Richmond-upon-Thames (53.6%). The lowest local turnouts were in Knowsley (23.4%), Kingston-Upon-Hull (23.9%) and Hartlepool (25.4%). All of the top 20 turnout areas voted remain in the referendum of 2016, whilst the lowest 20 turnout areas all voted leave in 2016.¹²

¹¹ E.g. Anthony Heath, Iain McLean, Bridget Taylor and John Curtice, '[Between first and second order: a comparison of voting behaviour in European and local elections in Britain](#)', in *European Journal of Political Research*, 35:5, 2003

¹² House of Commons Library, [Analysis of the EU referendum results 2016](#); House of Commons Library, [European Parliament Elections 2019](#)

In 2014, 15 of the 20 highest turnout areas would vote remain in 2016, whilst 17 of the lowest turnout areas would vote to leave the EU in the referendum of 2016.¹³

4.2 Turnout across the EU

Turnout across the EU as a whole decreased at every European Parliament election between 1979 and 2014, including in countries such as Belgium and Luxembourg, where voting is compulsory. In 2019, turnout increased across the EU as a whole to 51.0%, the highest level seen since 1994. Poland and Spain saw turnout-levels of around 20 percentage points higher than 2014, and five further countries saw turnout between 10 and 15 percentage points higher in 2019 compared to 2014. Small falls in turnout, of between 1 and 3 percentage points were seen in 8 of the 28 countries.

Turnout for European Parliament Elections

EU Member States and UK

	1979	1984	1989	1994	1999	2004	2009	2014	2019
Austria	-	-	-	-	49.4%	42.4%	46.0%	45.4%	59.8%
Belgium	91.4%	92.1%	90.7%	90.7%	91.1%	90.8%	90.4%	89.6%	88.5%
Bulgaria	-	-	-	-	-	-	39.0%	35.8%	32.6%
Croatia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25.2%	29.9%
Cyprus	-	-	-	-	-	72.5%	59.4%	44.0%	45.0%
Czech Republic	-	-	-	-	-	28.3%	28.2%	18.2%	28.7%
Denmark	47.8%	52.4%	46.2%	52.9%	50.5%	47.9%	59.5%	56.3%	66.0%
Estonia	-	-	-	-	-	26.8%	43.9%	36.5%	37.6%
Finland	-	-	-	-	30.1%	39.4%	38.6%	39.1%	40.7%
France	60.7%	56.7%	48.8%	52.7%	46.8%	42.8%	40.6%	42.4%	50.1%
Germany	65.7%	56.8%	62.3%	60.0%	45.2%	43.0%	43.3%	48.1%	61.4%
Greece	-	80.6%	80.0%	73.2%	70.3%	63.2%	52.6%	60.0%	58.8%
Hungary	-	-	-	-	-	38.5%	36.3%	29.0%	43.4%
Ireland	63.6%	47.6%	68.3%	44.0%	50.2%	58.6%	58.6%	52.4%	49.7%
Italy	85.7%	82.5%	81.1%	73.6%	69.8%	71.7%	65.1%	57.2%	54.5%
Latvia	-	-	-	-	-	41.3%	53.7%	30.2%	33.5%
Lithuania	-	-	-	-	-	48.4%	21.0%	47.4%	53.5%
Luxembourg	88.9%	88.8%	87.4%	88.6%	87.3%	91.4%	90.8%	85.6%	84.1%
Malta	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	82.4%	78.8%	74.8%	72.7%
Netherlands	58.1%	50.9%	47.5%	35.7%	30.0%	39.3%	36.8%	37.3%	41.9%
Poland	-	-	-	-	-	20.9%	24.5%	23.8%	45.7%
Portugal	-	-	51.1%	35.5%	39.9%	38.6%	36.8%	33.7%	30.7%
Romania	-	-	-	-	-	-	27.7%	32.4%	51.1%
Slovakia	-	-	-	-	-	17.0%	19.6%	13.1%	22.7%
Slovenia	-	-	-	-	-	28.4%	28.4%	24.6%	28.9%
Spain	-	-	54.7%	59.1%	63.1%	45.1%	44.9%	43.8%	64.3%
Sweden	-	-	-	-	38.8%	37.9%	45.5%	51.1%	55.3%
United Kingdom	32.4%	32.6%	36.4%	36.4%	24.0%	38.5%	34.7%	35.6%	36.9%
EU	62.0%	59.0%	58.4%	56.7%	49.5%	45.5%	43.0%	42.6%	51.0%

Sources: EuroParl, [European elections: results](#), European Parliament, [European Election Results 2019](#) (accessed 10 June 2019); Colin Rallings and Michael Thrasher, *British Electoral Facts 1832-2012* (2012), House of Commons Library, [European Parliament Elections 2019](#)

¹³ Electoral Commission, [European Parliament Election 2014](#); House of Commons Library, [Analysis of the EU referendum results 2016](#)

5. Appendix

5.1 Turnout by country, UK

Turnout in UK general elections, by country					
	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	United Kingdom
1918	55.7%	65.9%	55.1%	69.5%	57.2%
1922	72.8%	79.4%	70.4%	77.2%	73.0%
1923	71.1%	77.3%	67.9%	76.5%	71.1%
1924	77.4%	80.0%	75.1%	66.7%	77.0%
1929	76.6%	82.4%	73.5%	63.8%	76.3%
1931	76.1%	79.3%	77.4%	74.5%	76.4%
1935	70.7%	76.4%	72.6%	72.0%	71.1%
1945	73.4%	75.7%	69.0%	67.4%	72.8%
1950	84.4%	84.8%	80.9%	77.4%	83.9%
1951	82.7%	84.4%	81.2%	79.9%	82.6%
1955	76.9%	79.6%	75.1%	74.1%	76.8%
1959	78.9%	82.6%	78.1%	65.9%	78.7%
1964	77.0%	80.1%	77.6%	71.7%	77.1%
1966	75.9%	79.0%	76.0%	66.1%	75.8%
1970	71.4%	77.4%	74.1%	76.6%	72.0%
F1974	79.0%	80.0%	79.0%	69.9%	78.8%
O1974	72.6%	76.6%	74.8%	67.7%	72.8%
1979	75.9%	79.4%	76.8%	67.7%	76.0%
1983	72.5%	76.1%	72.7%	72.9%	72.7%
1987	75.4%	78.9%	75.1%	67.0%	75.3%
1992	78.0%	79.7%	75.5%	69.8%	77.7%
1997	71.4%	73.5%	71.3%	67.1%	71.4%
2001	59.2%	61.6%	58.2%	68.0%	59.4%
2005	61.3%	62.6%	60.8%	62.9%	61.4%
2010	65.5%	64.8%	63.8%	57.6%	65.1%
2015	66.0%	65.7%	71.0%	58.1%	66.2%
2017	69.1%	68.6%	66.4%	65.4%	68.8%
2019	67.5%	66.6%	68.1%	61.8%	67.3%

Note: Prior to 1922, Northern Ireland data represents all of Ireland

Source: House of Commons Library, [General Election 2019](#), House of Commons Library, [UK Election Statistics](#) and Colin Rallings and Michael Thrasher, *British Electoral Facts 1832-2012* (2012).

5.2 Estimated turnout by age at UK general elections

Estimated turnout at general elections by age group, 1964-2019

	Age group						All
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	
1964 ^a	76.4%	70.7%	79.5%	79.1%	78.4%	76.7%	77.1%
1966 ^a	60.5%	70.8%	80.0%	79.8%	78.0%	75.9%	75.8%
1970	64.9%	66.5%	72.8%	74.9%	74.1%	77.2%	72.0%
F1974	70.2%	77.2%	78.7%	73.1%	82.2%	79.2%	78.8%
O1974	62.5%	69.0%	73.9%	76.6%	76.6%	76.0%	72.8%
1979	62.5%	72.4%	76.3%	81.2%	81.4%	77.7%	76.0%
1983	63.9%	67.6%	76.2%	77.6%	77.2%	73.1%	72.7%
1987	66.6%	74.0%	74.9%	79.9%	78.9%	76.0%	75.3%
1992	67.3%	77.3%	78.3%	81.8%	78.1%	79.2%	77.7%
1997	54.1%	62.2%	70.2%	76.4%	79.9%	77.7%	71.4%
2001	40.4%	45.0%	55.7%	63.2%	64.0%	70.1%	59.4%
2005	38.2%	47.7%	61.6%	65.5%	72.6%	74.3%	61.3%
2010	51.8%	57.3%	64.4%	67.5%	69.8%	74.7%	65.0%
2015	51.6%	51.8%	60.6%	70.1%	74.4%	79.3%	66.2%
2017	43.1%	56.6%	69.2%	66.4%	77.3%	82.1%	68.3%

Notes:

Data for 1964 and 1966 refers to people aged 21-24 as the voting age was 21 not 18

British Election Study data has been adjusted for actual turnout (except for 2017)

2017 figures based on validated data (face to face study), not adjusted

Source:

British Election Study, various years

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