



# The electoral rise of the BNP

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The BNP's vote has increased dramatically over the last two decades, to the point where they are now polling the highest votes ever for a fascist organisation in British history.

If the BNP vote is examined over a number of elections and over a number of years, the pattern becomes obvious.

In the 2004 European elections they polled their record highest vote with over 800,000 votes across Britain.

In the local elections the BNP vote has increased from 3022 votes in 2000 to 238,000 (their highest overall vote in local elections to date) in 2006.

In the general election, the BNP vote has increased from 7,005 votes in 1992 to 192,750 in 2005. The BNP's entrenchment in some areas is indicated by the increase in saved deposits in general elections. The BNP saved 3 deposits in 1992 and 34 in 2005.

In the London elections the BNP polled 130,714 votes (5.3%) in 2008, enough to secure a seat on the London Assembly, compared to 47,670 (2.7%) in 2000.

## The 2009 European elections

The European elections will take place on 4 June 2009. The BNP will be targeting Yorkshire & the Humber, the West Midlands and the North West. The table below shows the BNP vote in the 2004 European elections and how close they came to winning a seat.

There is a danger that following the implosion of UKIP, some of the votes that UKIP gained could go to the BNP. UKIP polled the third highest vote nationally in 2004 pushing the Liberal Democrats into fourth place, with over 2.5 million (16.1%) votes across the country. There was a surge in the UKIP vote following the high profile media campaign in 2004. Since then UKIP has imploded and will almost certainly not poll similar high votes in 2009. The UKIP vote was highest in regions where the BNP were not so strong. The regions with the highest UKIP vote were in the following order: the South East, East Midlands, South West and the Eastern region. However there is concern that in the regions where the BNP is strong

a small swing from UKIP to the BNP could get them elected.

The BNP can only be defeated by mobilising the millions of voters who oppose fascism, including the trade unions, Black, Asian, Muslim, Jewish, Sikh, Hindu, Lesbian and Gay communities, young people and students, and progressive opinion generally, especially focussing on the big cities such as Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield and Birmingham. The focus on the big cities is especially crucial in the Euro-elections as these are not generally the areas where the BNP are strong. The BNP's focus is on smaller towns and suburban areas. Therefore the working class, diverse and multicultural communities of the large cities may not be aware of the threat they pose in these elections. But their mobilisation to vote against the BNP will be crucial to the outcome.

Mobilising these voters will require large events and high profile media campaigns in addition to door-to-door leafleting. As these constituencies are so large, it will be impossible to mobilise voters solely by door to door leafleting and canvassing.

This is why UAF believes that events such as music carnivals are so crucial. In London the media coverage of the Love Music Hate Racism carnival before the London elections helped communicate the anti-BNP message to thousands of voters who attended and tens of thousands more who heard about it. It would not have been possible to communicate this message through leafleting alone in London. Music events, press conferences and rallies around the country will be an important part of the campaign, in addition to leafleting and distributing anti-fascist literature and work on the doorsteps.

Opposing and challenging racism and engaging the communities targeted by fascism will be critical to defeating the BNP.

## BNP vote in 2004 European elections

Region	BNP		Turnout	Target		Shortfall	
	Votes	%		Votes	%	Votes	%
North West*	134,958	6.4	41	167,532	8.0	32,574	1.5
Yorks & Humber	126,538	8.0	42	193,685	12.3	67,147	4.3
West Midlands*	107,794	7.5	36	130,979	9.1	23,185	1.6
East Midlands*	91,860	6.5	43	181,964	12.9	90,104	6.4
London*	76,152	4.0	37	155,528	8.2	79,376	4.2
Eastern	65,557	4.3	36	148,080	9.8	82,523	5.5
South East	64,877	2.9	36	169,171	7.7	104,294	4.7
North East	50,249	6.4	41	138,791	17.8	88,542	11.3
South West*	43,653	3.0	38	152,457	10.5	108,804	7.5
Wales	27,135	3.0	41	148,905	16.2	121,770	13.3
Scotland*	19,427	1.7	30	104,514	8.9	85,087	7.2
<b>National Total</b>	<b>808,200</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>38</b>				

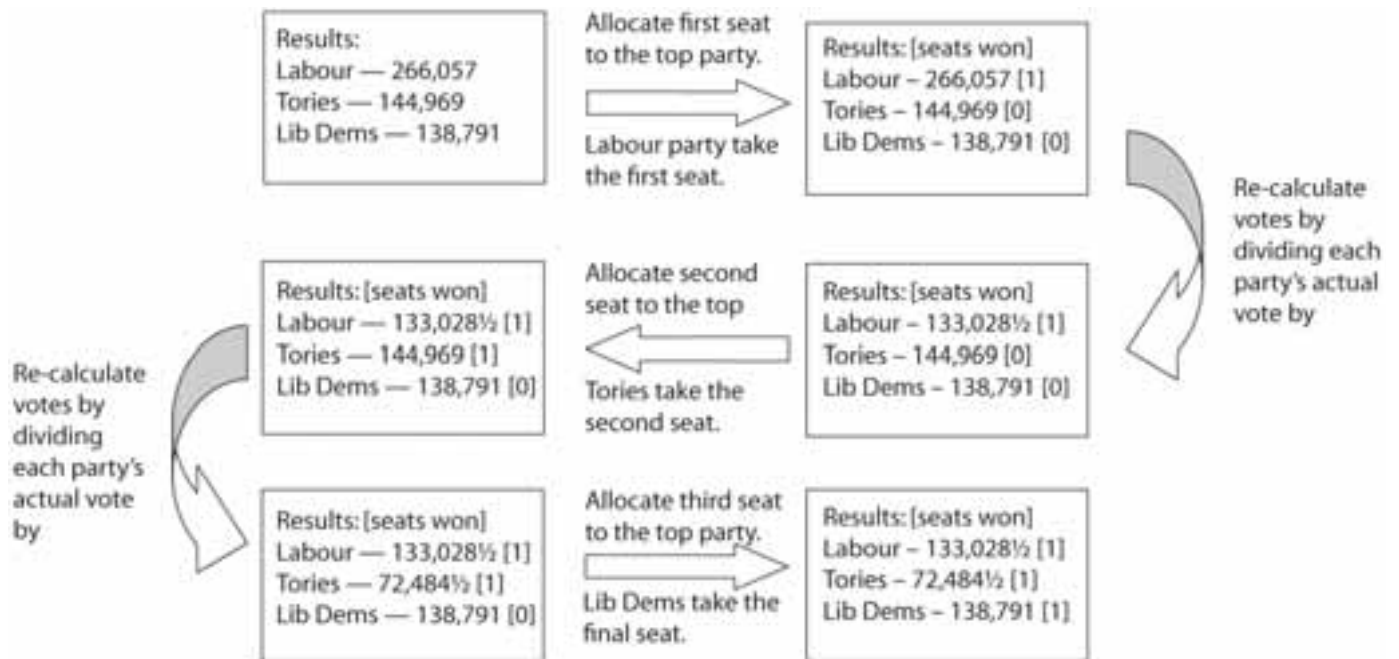
## BNP performance in 2004 European Parliamentary elections

Region	BNP result		Turnout (%)	Total Seats	Last seat		BNP shortfall		UKIP result			BNP+UKIP result	
	Votes	%			Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Seats	Votes	%
Yorks & Humberside	126,538	8.0	42	6	193,685	12.3	67,147	4.3	228,666	14.5	1	355,204	22.6
West Midlands	107,794	7.5	36	7*	130,979	9.1	23,185	1.6	251,366	17.5	1	359,160	25.0
East Midlands	91,860	6.5	43	6*	181,964	12.9	90,104	6.4	366,498	26.1	2	458,358	32.6
North East	50,249	6.4	41	3	138,791	17.8	88,542	11.3	94,887	12.2	-	145,136	18.6
North West	134,958	6.4	41	9*	167,532	8.0	32,574	1.5	257,158	12.2	1	392,116	18.6
Eastern	65,557	4.3	36	7	148,080	9.8	82,523	5.5	296,160	19.6	2	361,717	24.0
London	76,152	4.0	37	9*	155,528	8.2	79,376	4.2	232,633	12.3	1	308,785	16.4
South West	43,653	3.0	38	7*	152,457	10.5	108,804	7.5	326,684	22.6	2	370,337	25.6
Wales	27,135	3.0	41	4	148,905	16.2	121,770	13.3	96,677	10.5	-	123,812	13.5
South East	64,877	2.9	36	10	169,171	7.7	104,294	4.7	431,111	19.5	2	495,988	22.5
Scotland	19,427	1.7	30	7*	104,514	8.9	85,087	7.2	78,828	6.7	-	98,255	8.3
<b>National Total</b>	<b>808,200</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>30</b>					<b>2,660,668</b>	<b>16.2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3,468,868</b>	<b>21.1</b>

## Allocation of seats — how it works

The system used is called the D'Hondt method. It works on the principle that for each party the number of votes per seat allocated should be roughly equal for each party. In each region, the parties submit an ordered list of candidates to contest the election. Voters choose a party to vote for and cast their ballot. The total number of votes is counted and the D'Hondt method applied. Each seat won by a party leads to the election of the first, second, etc. candidate on their list.

Example (see image below):  
North East region 2004.  
There are 3 seats to be allocated.



Thus the seats were allocated as such: one each to the Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties