



Japan Local Government Centre, London

Monthly Report for May 2010 (UK) – General Election 2010

Background

On May 6 Britain, as widely anticipated, held its general election. Elections were also held the same day for local councils in England. Also as widely anticipated, the government of Labour Prime Minister Gordon Brown (2007-2010) did not return to office and Brown tendered his resignation as prime minister and Leader of the Labour Party. The election result marks the end of the two Labour administrations formed since Tony Blair won the May 1997 general election, having won the 2001 and 2005 polls. Gordon Brown was replaced by Labour deputy leader Harriet Harman as Acting Leader of the Labour Party until a successor can be elected by the electoral college of the party's members, MPs/MEPs and affiliated trade unions at its September party conference.

However, in the general election no single party received the required 326 seats in the House of Commons in order to have a government majority and after five days of extensive coalition talks between the Conservative Party and the Liberal Democrats an agreement was reached on forming a government with David Cameron as Prime Minister and Liberal Democrat leader Nick Clegg as his deputy, with a further four cabinet posts for the Liberal Democrats (20 Liberal Democrat MPs in total will serve in the government). The two parties also negotiated a joint programme for government based on their election manifestos as well as a package of political reforms and economic stability measures. David Cameron received his commission to form a government from the Queen on the evening of May 11 and presented the government's legislative programme to Parliament at the State Opening on May 25.

Results

Seats/won lost at May 6 2010

Conservative	306	+97	10,706,647	36.1	+3.8
Labour	258	-91	8,604,358	29.0	-6.2
Liberal Democrat	57	-5	6,827,938	23.0	+1.0
Democratic Unionist Party	8	-1	168,216	0.6	-0.3
Scottish National Party	6	0	491,386	1.7	+0.1
Sinn Fein	5	0	171,942	0.6	-0.1
Plaid Cymru	3	+1	165,394	0.6	-0.1
Social Democratic & Labour Party	3	0	110,970	0.4	-0.1
Green	1	+1	285,616	1.0	-0.1
Alliance Party	1	+1	42,762	0.1	+0.0
Ulster Conservatives and Unionists - New Force	0	-1	102,361	0.3	-0.1
Respect	0	-1	33,251	0.1	-0.1

Source: BBC News

A postponed election took place on May 27 in the seat of Thirsk and Malton on account of the death of a candidate during the election campaign. The two coalition partners both contested the seat against each other but the seat was held by the Conservatives.

Local government under the Coalition

Eric Pickles MP, previously Conservative Party Chairman, was appointed Communities and Local Government Secretary. He is joined in the department by Minister of State for Housing and Local Government Grant Shapps MP and Minister of State for Decentralisation Greg Clark MP. They are supported by junior ministers Bob Neill MP, Andrew Stunell MP (Liberal Democrat) and Baroness Hanham.