Canolfan Llywodraethiant Cymru

Wales Governance Centre

Understanding General Election 2017

Prof Roger Scully

5th July 2017

Outline of Session

1. **Introduction: What We Know About Elections**

2. General Election 2017: the Results

3. The Parties in Wales

4. Why? Understanding General Election 2017

5. Q & A

What We (thought we) Know About Elections...

- The official campaign period sees little change in party support

- Divided parties don't prosper in general elections

- Labour doesn't do well when led from the left

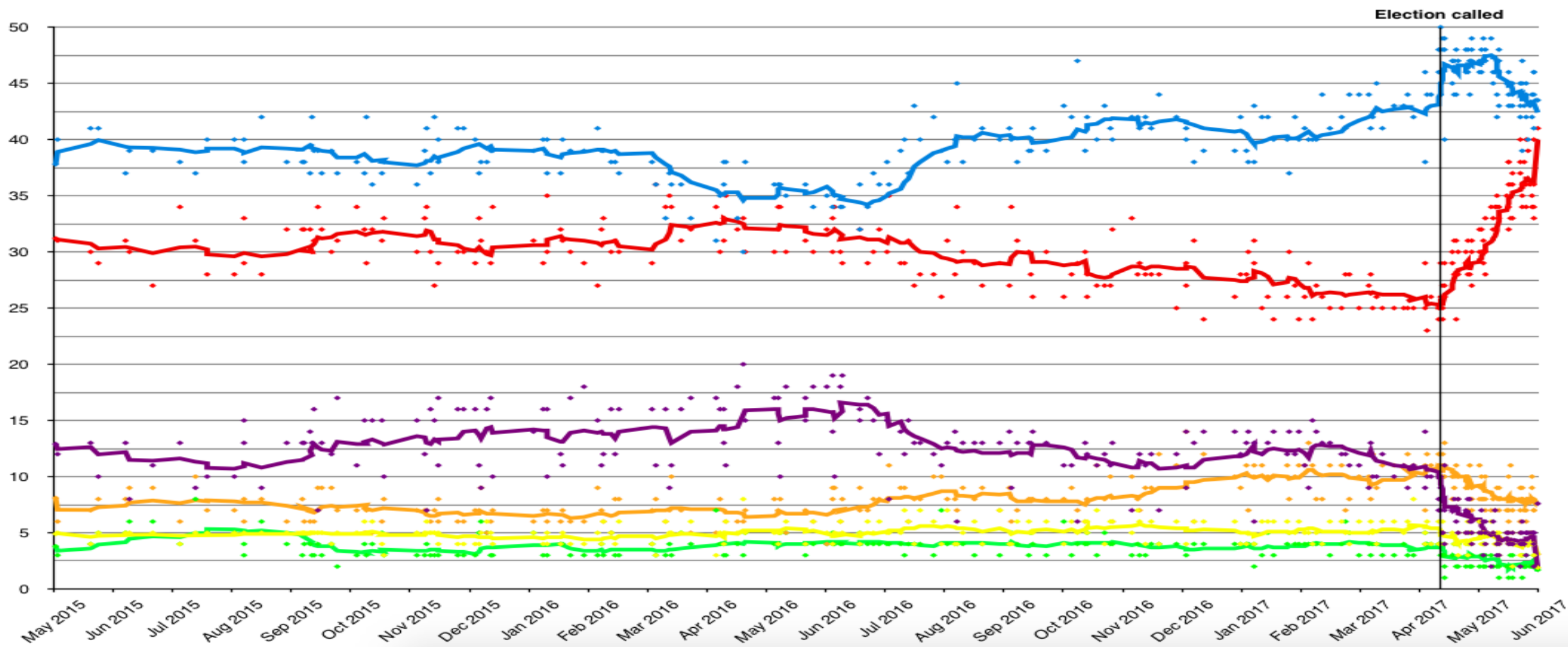- Two-party politics is in long-term decline

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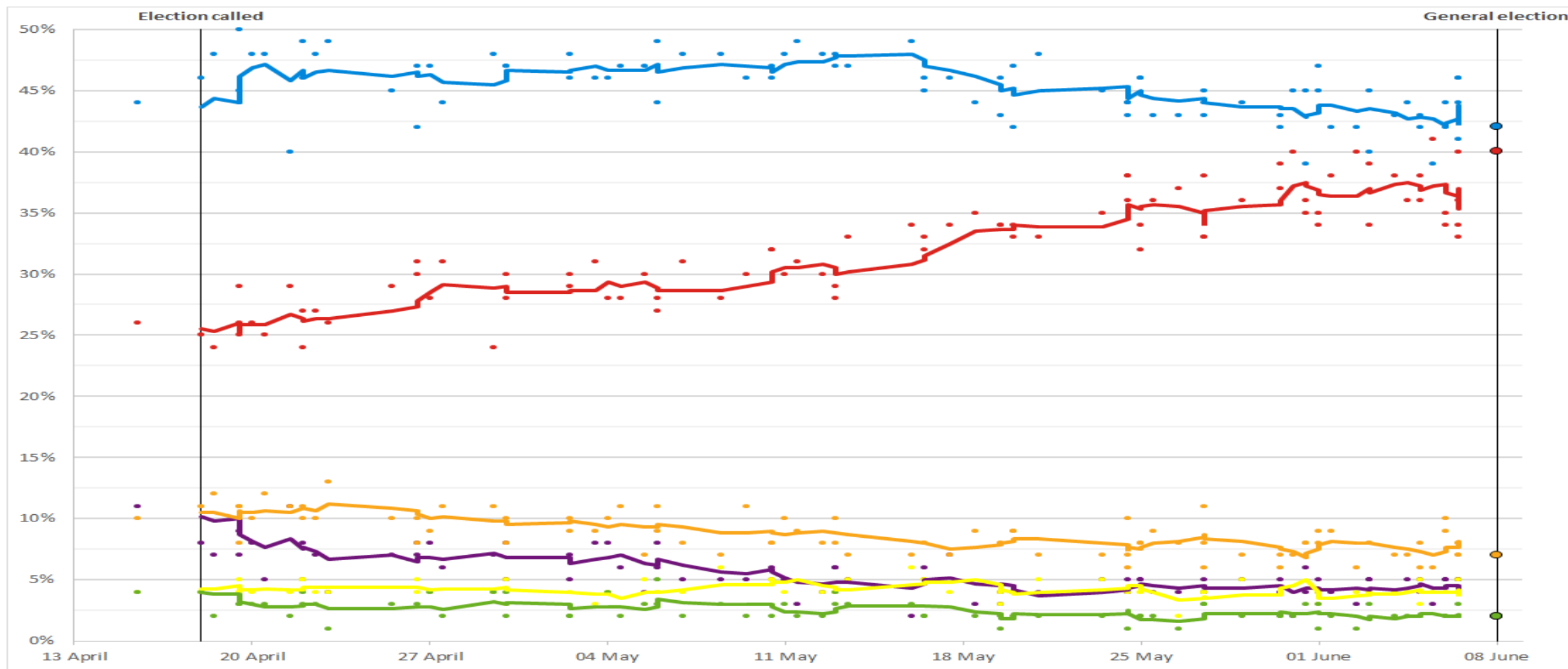4. Why? Understanding General Election 2017

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Opinion Polls, 2015-17, GB

2017 Campaign Period Polling, GB

The Results: 2017 General Election: UK

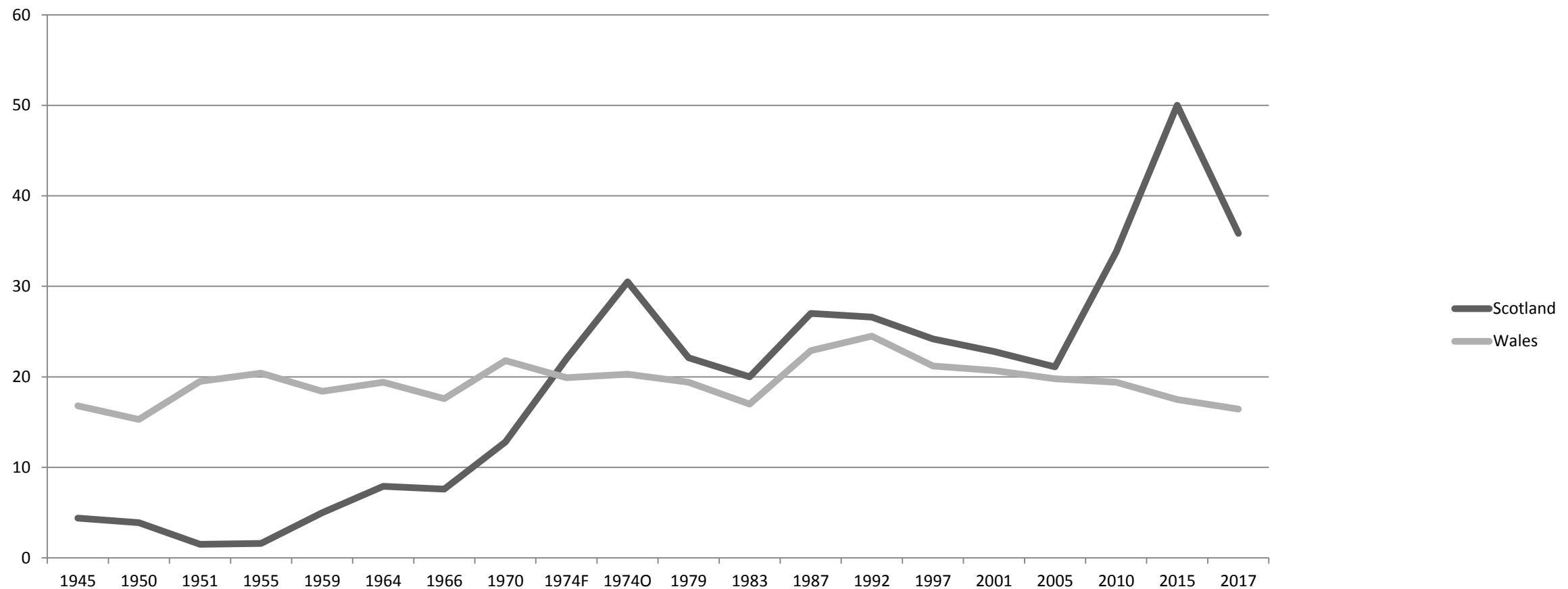| Party	Vote Share (Change on 2015)	Seats (Change on 2015)
Conservative	42.3% (+5.5)	317 (-13)
Labour	40.0% (+9.6)	262 (+30)
SNP	3.0% (-1.7)	35 (-21)
Liberal Democrats	7.4% (-0.5)	12 (+4)
Plaid Cymru	0.5% (-0.1)	4 (+1)
Greens	1.6% (-2.1)	1 (-)
UKIP	1.8% (-10.8)	0 (-1)
Others	3.4% (+0.4)	19 (-)

The UK Results: Key Points

- Decline of British Party Politics? Second successive election where four different parties came first in UK's four nations (had never occurred before 2015); but modest convergence in electoral behaviour (though not campaigning)

- Sharp reversal of two-party decline: highest Con/Lab joint vote share since 1970

- Steep decline in *disproportionality* of election outcome: closer match between % votes and % seats
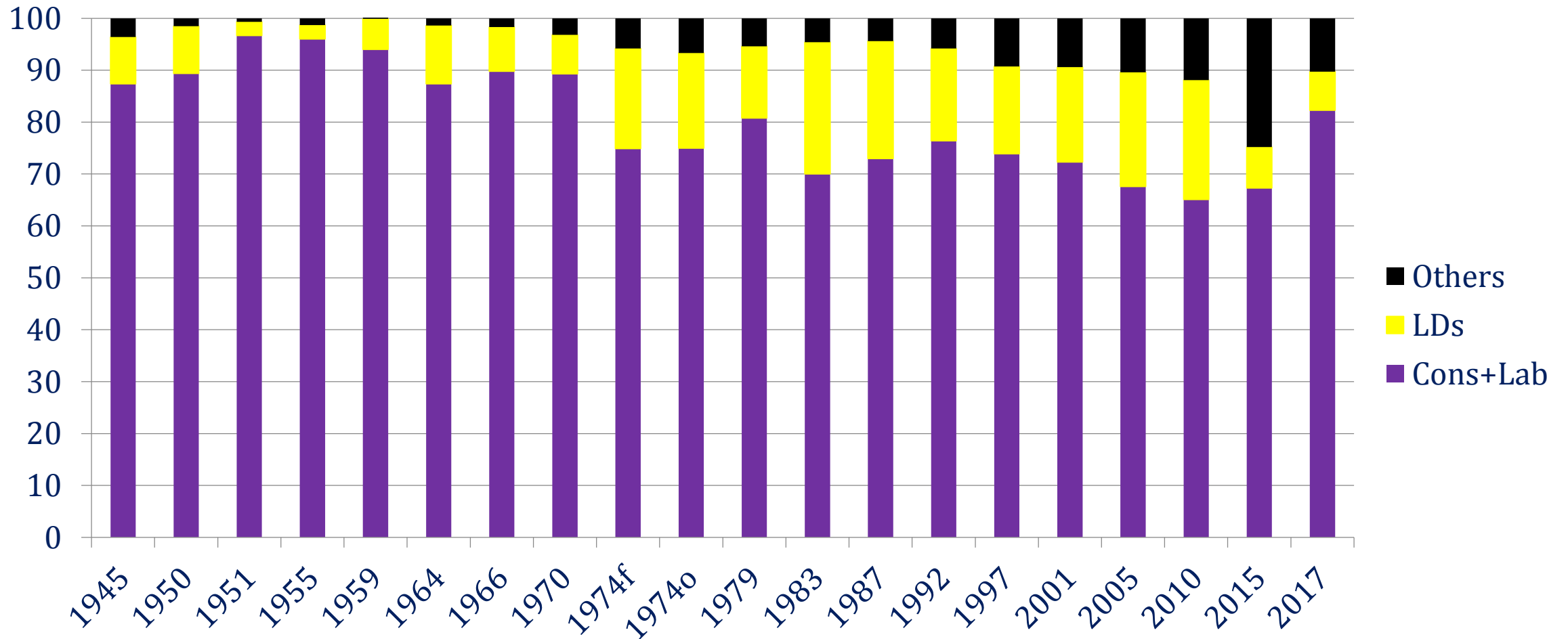
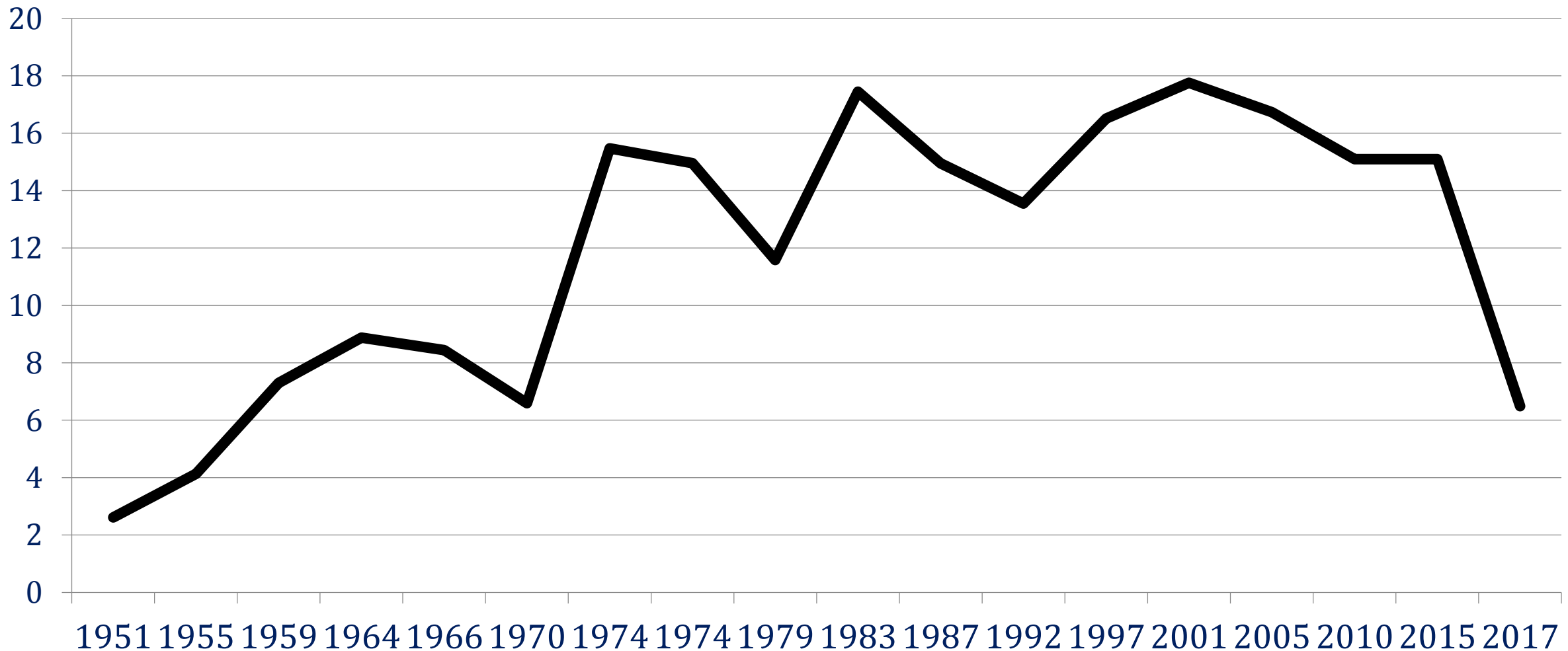Dissimilarity From England: Election Results Scotland & Wales, 1945-2017

How the UK has voted, 1945-2017

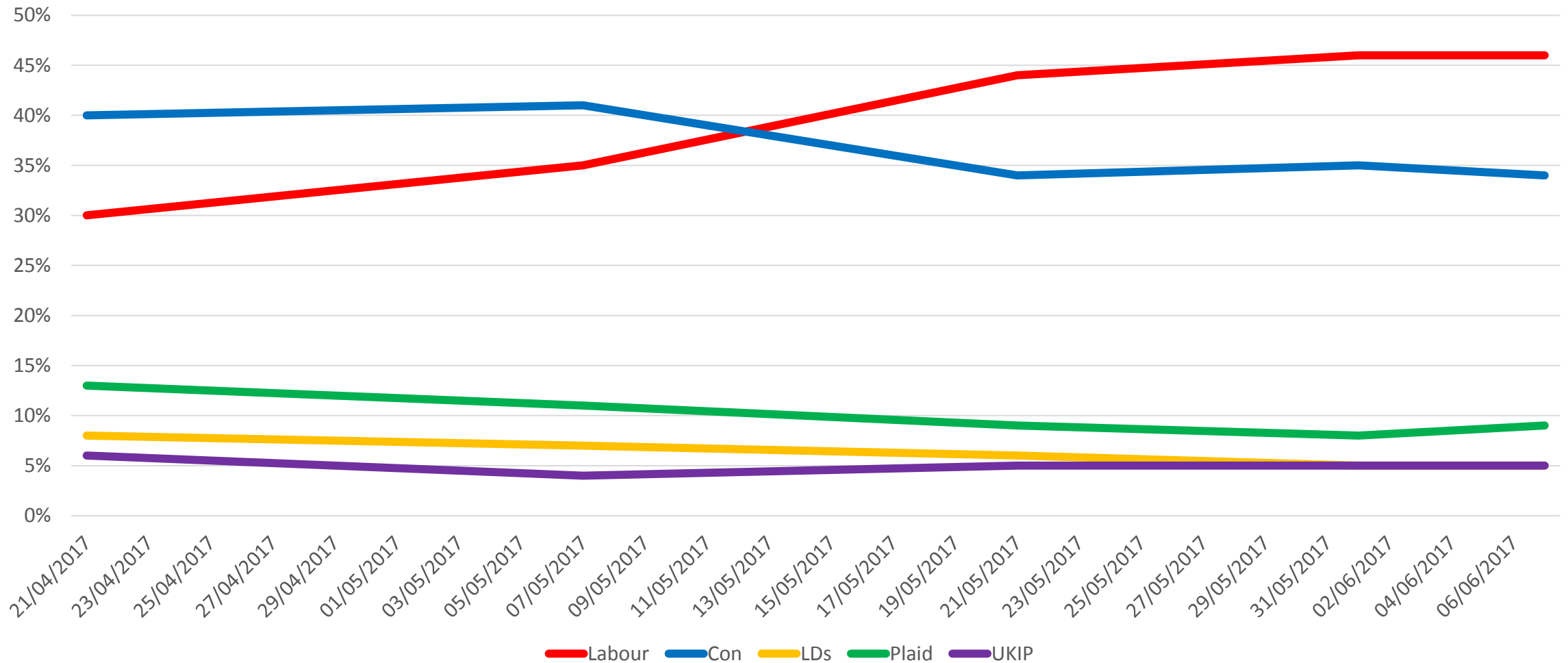Gallagher Index of Disproportionality, UK 1951-2017

2017 Polls, Wales

The Results: 2017 General Election: Wales

Party	Vote Share (Change on 2015)	Seats (Change on 2015)
Labour	48.9% (+12.1)	28 (+3)
Conservative	33.6% (+6.3)	8 (-3)
Plaid Cymru	10.4% (-1.7)	4 (+1)
Liberal Democrats	4.5% (-2.0)	0 (-1)
UKIP	2.0% (-11.6)	0
Greens	0.3% (-2.2)	0
Others	0.2% (-0.1)	0

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The Results: Labour

- Won most votes and seats for 26th successive general election in Wales (1922 onwards)

- Highest vote share since 1997; and vote share decline in 0 seats in Wales

- Lost 0 deposits

- Highest Vote Share: Aberavon: 68.1%

- Lowest Vote Share: Montgomeryshire: 15.9%

Best Vote Share Changes From 2015

- Cardiff Central: +22.4%
- Aberavon: +19.2%
- Swansea West: +17.2%
- Cardiff South & Penarth: +16.7%
- Cardiff West: +16.0%

Worst Vote Share Changes from 2015

- Blaenau Gwent: +0.0%
- Brecon & Radnor: +3.3%
- Carmarthen East & Dinefwr: +5.6%
- Dwyfor Meirionydd: +7.2%
- Ogmore: +9.5%

The Results: Conservatives

- Highest Welsh vote share since 1935

- Vote shared declined in only one seat in Wales

- Lost 0 deposits

- Highest Vote Share: Monmouth: 53.1%

- Lowest Vote Share: Rhondda: 10.1%

Best Vote Share Changes From 2015

- Islwyn: +12.1%
- Wrexham: +12.0%
- Swansea East: +10.7%
- Clwyd South: +8.7%
- Caerphilly: +8.6%

Worst Vote Share Changes from 2015

- Cardiff North: -0.3%
- Vale of Glamorgan: +1.4%
- Preseli Pembrokeshire: +3.0%
- Carmarthen West & South Pembs: +3.1%
- Aberconwy: +3.1%

The Results: Plaid Cymru

- Lowest vote share since 1987

- Vote shared increased in only six seats

- Lost 16 deposits

- Highest Vote Share: Dwyfor Meirionydd: 45.1%

- Lowest Vote Share: Newport East: 2.4%

Best Vote Share Changes From 2015

- Blaenau Gwent: +12.3%
- Dwyfor Meirionydd: +4.3%
- Ceredigion: +1.6%
- Carmarthen East & Dinefwr: +0.9%
- Montgomery: +0.4%

Worst Vote Share Changes from 2015

- Swansea East: -5.6%
- Rhondda: -4.7%
- Llanelli: -4.7%
- Cardiff West: -4.4%
- Neath: -4.2%

The Results: Liberal Democrats

- Vote share down 2.0 points on dreadful 2015 result

- Lowest vote share in Wales ever; lower than in Scotland or England

- Vote share increased in only two seats

- Lost 36 deposits

- Highest Vote Share: Brecon & Radnor: 29.1%

- Lowest Vote Share: Rhondda: 0.8%

Best Vote Share Changes From 2015

- Brecon & Radnor: +0.8%
- Preseli Pembrokeshire: +0.7%
- Carmarthen East & Dinefwr: -0.1%
- Carmarthen West & South Pembs: -0.1%
- Arfon: -0.4%

Worst Vote Share Changes from 2015

- Cardiff Central: -13.7%
- Pontypridd: -8.0%
- Ceredigion: -6.9%
- Swansea West: -5.6%
- Montgomery: -4.1%

The Results: UKIP

- Lost more than five-sixths of 2015 vote share in Wales

- All 32 Welsh candidates lost deposits; in 2015, stood 40 candidates and all retained deposit

- Highest Vote Share: Islwyn: 4.4%

- Lowest Vote Share: Cardiff Central: 0.8%

Best Vote Share Changes From 2010

- Cardiff Central: -5.6%
- Cardiff North: -6.6%
- Brecon & Radnor: -6.9%
- Arfon: -8.5%
- Preseli Pembrokeshire: -8.5%

Worst Vote Share Changes from 2010

- Delyn: -16.4%
- Caerphilly: -16.3%
- Wrexham: -15.5%
- Newport East: -15.2%
- Torfaen: -15.1%

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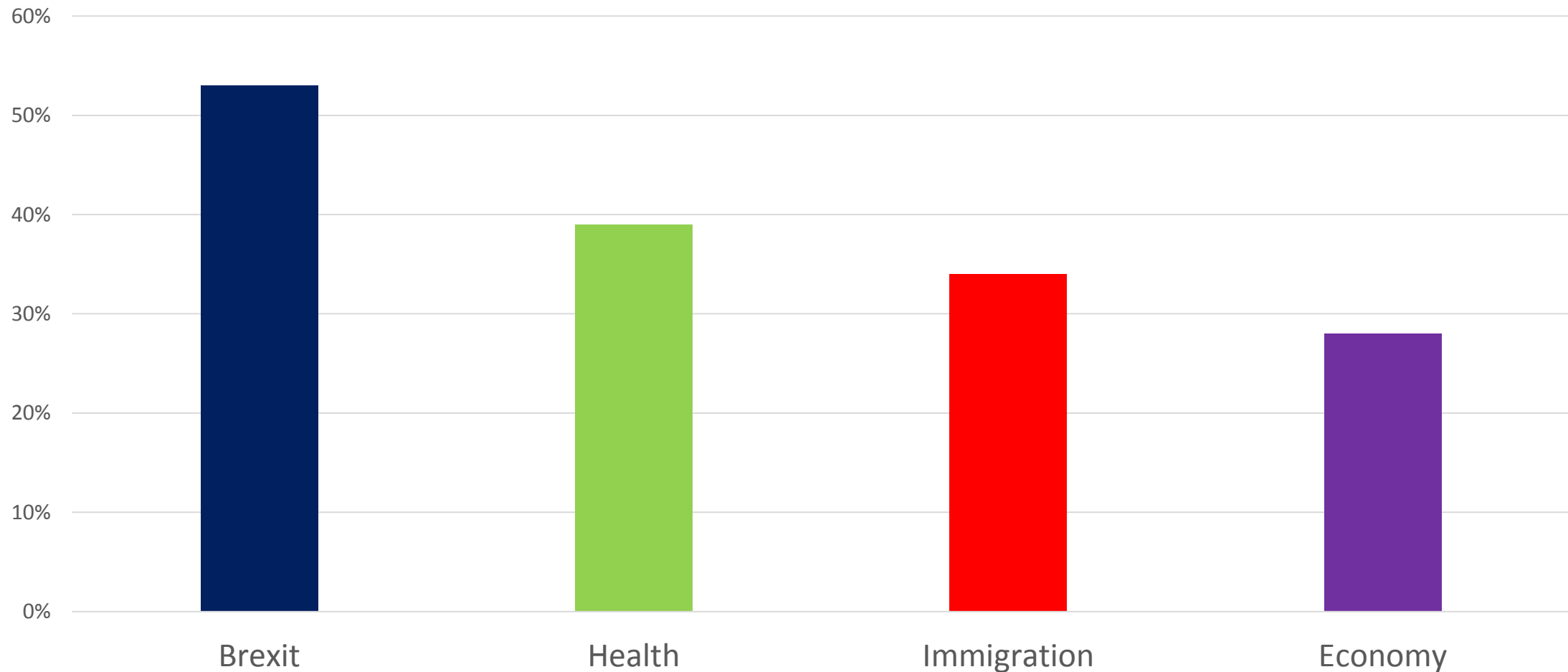
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Factors Shaping the Election Outcome

- The Brexit Election:
  - The Salience of Brexit: How Important Was It?
  - Ratings of the Parties on Brexit

- Leadership: the Ups and Downs…

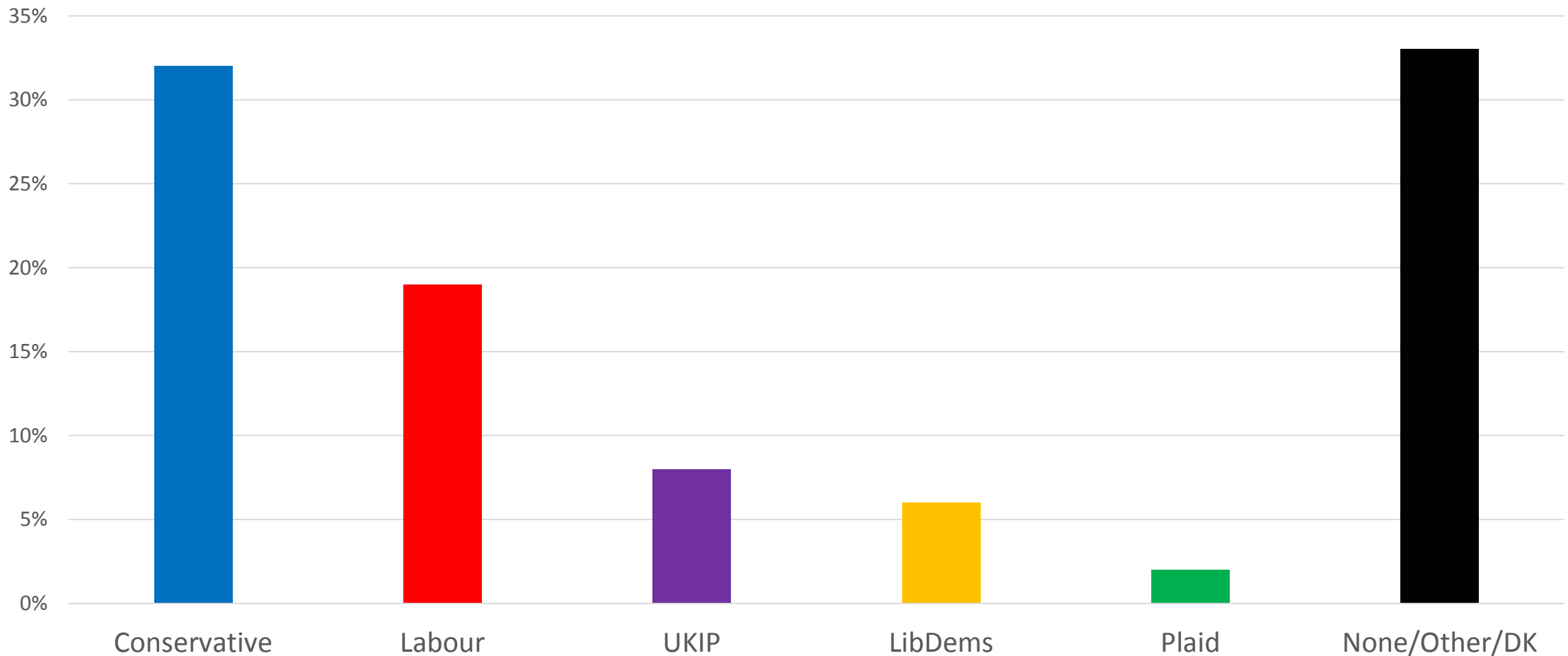- The Decline of British Party Politics? Four nations and four campaigns?

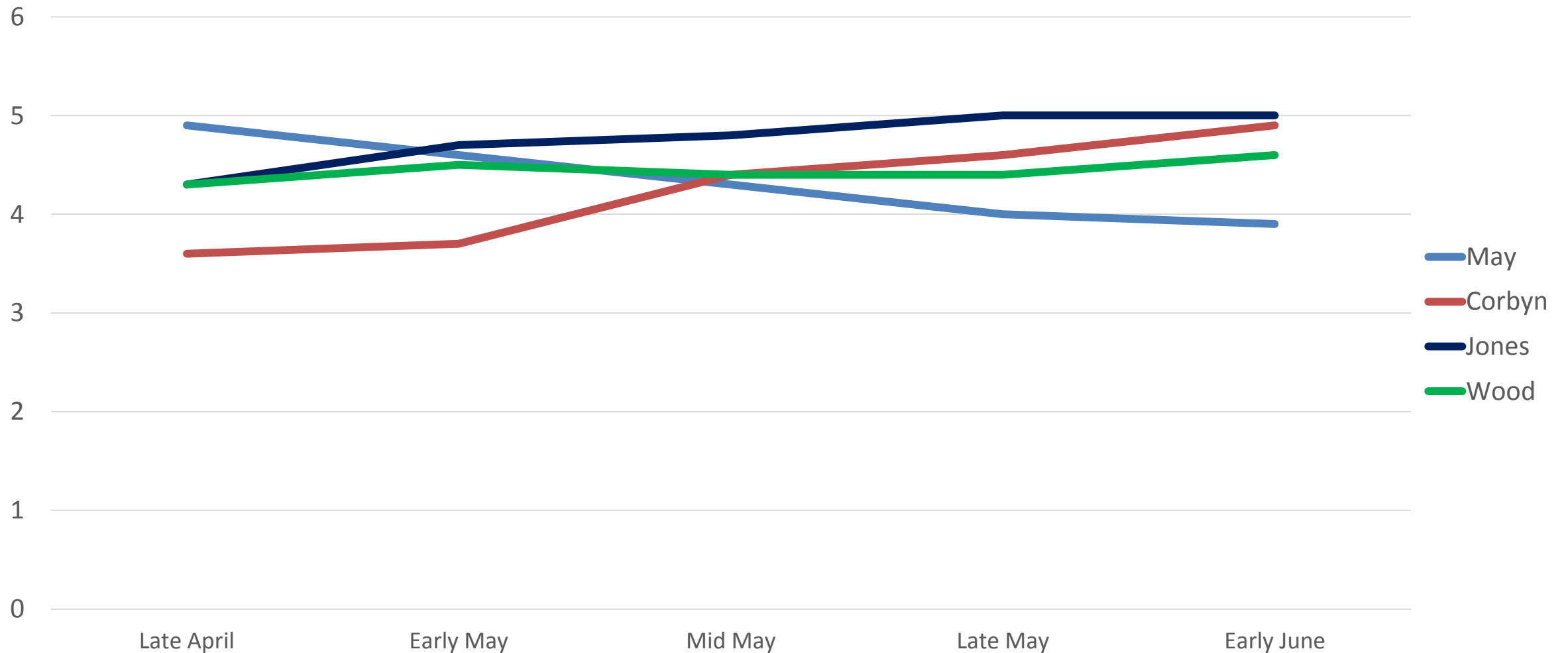Most Important Issues in Election, Final Welsh Poll, June 2017

Party Best Able to Handle Brexit, End-May Welsh Poll, 2017

Average Party Leader Ratings, Wales, April-June 2017

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Diolch / Thanks

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http://blogs.cardiff.ac.uk/electionsinwales/

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