

# Membership of UK political parties

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Section Social and General Statistics

There has been a large decrease in reported membership of UK political parties over the post-war period. Only about one per cent of the electorate is a member of one of the three main parties. Labour has about 193,000 members, the Conservatives between 130,000 and 170,000 and the Liberal Democrats 49,000. However in the early 1950s, the Conservatives claimed nearly three million members while Labour claimed more than one million members.

This note sets out available data on membership of the three main parties back to 1928, together with more recent figures for smaller parties. It also looks at membership of other organisations, including trade unions and pressure groups, and the decline in party membership in other European countries.

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### 1 Introduction

Membership of UK political parties has been in steep decline over recent decades. Only about one per cent of the electorate is currently a member of one of the main parties, compared with an estimated 3.8% in 1983. The UK has one of the lowest rates of party membership in Europe, but most Western European countries have also seen large falls in party membership over the past fifty years.

At the end of 2011, Labour had 193,300 members compared to reported Conservative Party membership of between 130,000 and 170,000. The Conservatives have, however, historically had the largest individual membership base. Reported Conservative Party membership peaked at almost 3 million in the early 1950s, when Labour membership reached a peak of 1 million.

The decline in membership numbers has not been uniform, with occasional increases temporarily offsetting the general downward trends.

Detailed analysis of trends is made difficult because parties are not obliged to publish membership figures. Furthermore, historical data are often patchy or unreliable which means the actual extent of the decline in membership is uncertain.

## 2 Trends in UK party membership

Political parties are not required to make membership figures publicly available and changing membership structures mean that the quality of available data varies considerably between parties. Following the *Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000*, all registered political parties have been required to submit annual financial statements to the Electoral Commission since 2002. Statements often include membership figures but some parties, including the Conservatives and Plaid Cymru, do not provide this information.

In many cases the historical data are only rough estimates and are likely to overstate membership. Conservative membership prior to 1993 appears to have been significantly exaggerated, as does Labour membership up to the 1980s. Now that political parties are required to publish their accounts, the figures (where given) are likely to be more reliable.

Labour has published figures for individual membership since 1928. Until 2004 figures were provided in the annual Conference Report published by the party's National Executive Committee, and total membership is now recorded in Labour's financial statements. Since the creation of the Liberal Democrats in 1988, membership data have been available from the party's internal leadership and presidential elections and more recently from its annual financial statements. The Conservative Party has never produced any systematic publication detailing its membership.

#### 2.1 Individual party membership, 1928-2011

Table 1 at the end of this note shows membership numbers for the three main parties since 1928. There has been a large fall in party membership from a peak in the early 1950s to the present day. Membership of the three main parties as a percentage of the total UK electorate decreased from 3.8% in 1983 to 1.0% in 2010, although the decline in membership has not been uniform.

#### **Conservatives**

Conservative Party membership climbed steeply after the Second World War, from about 910,000 in 1946 to a reported record high of 2.8 million in 1953. Andrew Thorpe suggests that the Conservative's heavy defeat by Labour in the 1945 General Election "produced a huge fillip to Conservative membership recruitment. Faced with the reality of a 'socialist' government, many lapsed members returned and new ones came in for the first time."1

The Conservatives had more individual members than any other party up to the mid-1990s, when there were about 400,000 Conservative Party members. Membership fell by more than half between 2000 and 2010, although the decline was temporarily reversed in the mid 2000s.

#### Labour

The Labour Party doubled its membership between 1928 (when membership figures were first reported) and 1937. Membership was down significantly during the Second World War but rose sharply in the immediate post-war period. In 1952 and 1953 the party claimed over a million members.

Reported membership in 1980 was 348,000 compared with 666,000 in 1979, but the large decrease was probably due to a change in reporting standards and suggests Labour's actual membership before 1980 was exaggerated. Andrew Thorpe comments that Labour's figures for individual party membership "have always been regarded as somewhat suspect, especially from 1956 when constituency Labour parties (CLPs) were forced to affiliate on a membership of at least 800, and still more from 1963 when that figure was raised to 1,000, at which point, in theory, an actual membership of zero would have been recorded as 618,000."2

Membership remained fairly constant throughout the 1980s before climbing in the mid-1990s as Tony Blair led a drive to recruit new members. There was a fall in membership during Labour's time in office between 1997 and 2009, but it increased again in 2010. At December 2011 membership was about 193,000, compared to 156,000 at the end of 2009.

#### Liberal Democrats and predecessor parties

Patrick Seyd and Paul Whiteley have estimated that the Liberal Party had over 243,000 members in 1960.3 They estimate the combined membership of the Liberal Party and the Social Democratic Party to have been approximately 145,000 in 1983 and 138,000 in 1987,4 although in 1988 the newly created Liberal Democrat party reported its membership to be much lower at about 80,000.

The Liberal Democrats claimed about 100,000 members in the early 1990s, falling to around 70,000 in the early 2000s. Membership showed a sharp fall in 2011, to about 49,000.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Andrew Thorpe (2009), "Reconstructing Conservative Party Membership in World War II Britain", *Parliamentary* Affairs, Vol 62 No 2, p236

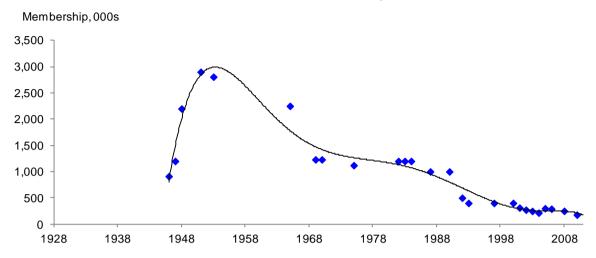
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Thorpe, p227

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Paul Whiteley and Patrick Seyd (2002), High-Intensity Participation: The Dynamics of Party Activism in Britain,

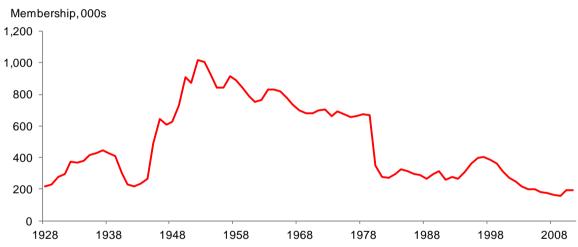
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Patrick Seyd and Paul Whiteley (2004), "British Party Members: An Overview", Party Politics, Vol 10 No 4, p357

Chart 1: Party membership, 1928-2010

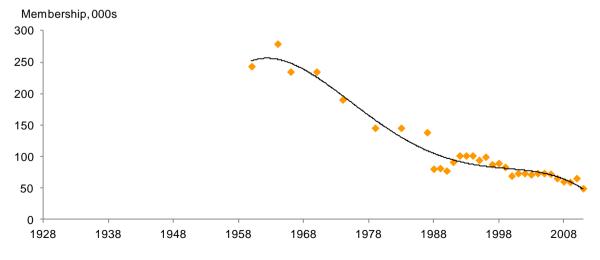
### Conservative membership



### Labour membership



# Liberal Democrat (and predecessors) membership



Membership of the three main parties fell from 3.8% of the UK electorate in 1983, to just 1.0% in 2010. Over this period the total electorate grew by 6.8%, or 2.9 million electors. Figures for party membership as a percentage of the electorate are provided in Table 2 at the end of this note.

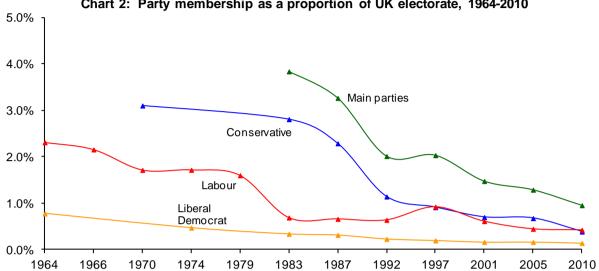


Chart 2: Party membership as a proportion of UK electorate, 1964-2010

#### Smaller parties

There has been a growth in the membership of smaller parties over the past decade, as shown in Table 3.

Increases in UK Independence Party (UKIP) and British National Party (BNP) membership have coincided with European Parliament elections. UKIP membership jumped from 10,000 in 2002 to a peak of 26,000 in 2004, but by 2006 membership had fallen back to 16,000, though there have been some increases since then. Membership of the Green Party grew in both European Parliament and general election years and increased gradually over the ten years 1998 to 2008 before rising more sharply in 2009 and 2010.

The Scottish National Party has seen its membership grow steadily since 2003. Plaid Cymru does not include membership figures in its annual financial statements.

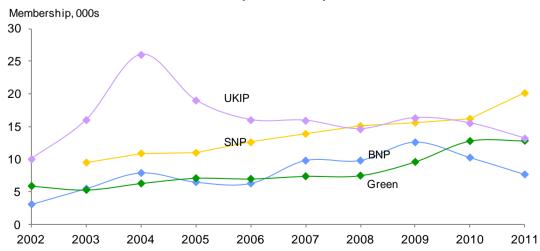


Chart 3: Membership of smaller parties, 2002-2011

## 2.2 Broader membership of the Labour Party

The broader Labour movement comprises members of affiliated trade unions (ATUs) and the Socialist and Cooperative societies alongside official party members (members of constituency Labour parties). ATUs have a 50% share of the vote at the Labour Party Conference and contribute affiliation fees. In 2011, the party received £8.0 million from affiliated groups compared with membership income of £5.2 million.<sup>5</sup>

The Labour Party Conference Report included membership figures for the ATUs and the Socialist and Cooperative (Soc&Coop) societies up to 1992. The figures are set out in Table 4 at the end of this note. ATU membership rose rapidly in the years immediately following the Second World War. It peaked at 6.5 million in 1979 but then fell steadily over the 1980s. In 1992 ATU membership was 4.6 million.

Individual party membership also increased in the immediate post-war period. In 1952, there were 1.0 million individual party members, representing about one sixth of broad Labour membership. The sudden decline in individual members as a proportion of broad membership after 1979 is attributable to the likely exaggeration of membership figures before 1980.

Socialist and Cooperative society membership has generally comprised a far smaller proportion of the Labour movement. Membership was about 51,000 in 1992, or 1.0% of broad Labour membership.

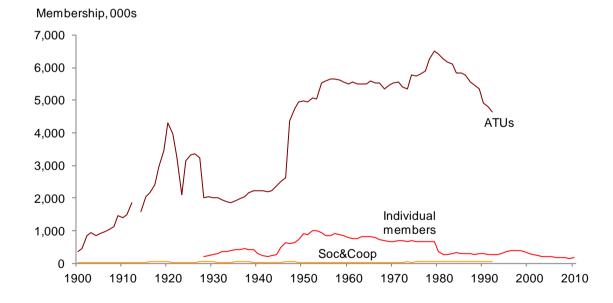


Chart 5: Membership of broader Labour movement

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The Labour Party, Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2011 page 9

#### 2.3 Membership revenues

The *Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000* requires that all registered political parties submit their annual financial statements to the Electoral Commission. The table below shows revenues obtained from membership and subscription fees since 2002. These figures do not include donations or party affiliation fees.

Labour membership income has been substantially larger than that received by other parties over most of this period. Labour received £5.2 million in 2011, compared with less than £1 million for the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats.

Membership and subscription fee revenues, 2001-2011  $\pounds$ . 000s

	BNP	CON	Green	LAB	LD	PC	SNP	UKIP
2001	36			3,399	590	15		
2002	60	665	78	3,093	680	42	136	119 <sup>1</sup>
2003	92	814	87	3,452	680	53	126	210
2004	129	814	100	3,492	710	86	169	199
2005	115	843	114	3,685	769	94	195	181
2006	145	1,191	118	4,376	832	82	244	148
2007	201	1,214	142	4,447	804	98	311	167
2008	166	1,229	140	3,930	808	88	367	194
2009	626	1,085	133	4,497	890	98	387	177
2010	305	1,031	170	4,927	1,028	116	408	170
2011	228	863	206	5,205	930	102	449	254

Notes: (1) UKIP revenues for 2002 refer to the sixteen month period 1 September 2001 to 31 December 2002.

Source: Electoral Commission

#### 2.4 Membership of non-party groups

The decline in party membership has been attributed both to a shortage of potential party members and to parties' decreasing need for members.<sup>6</sup>

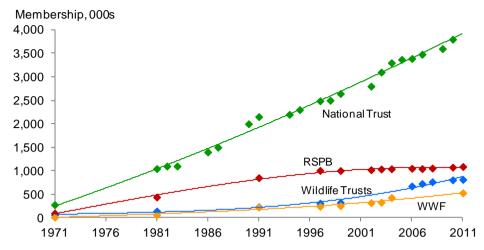
The argument that there is a reduced supply of potential members is based upon the emergence of other political or campaigning organisations that are competing with parties for members; increased pressures on people's time, whether from employment or leisure; or demographic changes including the decline of traditional working-class communities and growth of the suburbs.

On the other hand, parties are less reliant on a wide membership network as mass communications allow them to reach voters directly. Funds gathered from wealthy donors and the state make parties less dependent on individual members' subscriptions and small donations. Parties may even see a vocal membership as an electoral liability.

Non-party groups like the National Trust and RSPB have increased their membership since the 1970s. The National Trust's membership reached four million for the first time in 2011.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> A summary of explanations for decreasing party membership can be found in: Patrick Seyd and Paul Whiteley (2004), "British Party Members: An Overview", *Party Politics* Vol 10 No 4, pp355-366

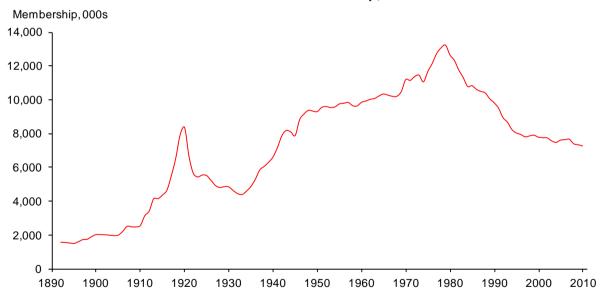
Chart 4: Large membership non-party organisations



Note: WWF figures for 2002-04 are for number of members and supporters Sources: Organisations' annual reports/reviews and websites

Trade union membership on the other hand peaked at 13.2 million in 1979 before declining during the 1980s and 1990s, to 7.8 million in 1997. There were 7.3 million trade union members in the UK in 2010/11.<sup>7</sup>

Chart 5: Trade union membership, 1892-2010



Notes: Data for 1999 onwards are for financial years 1999/00 etc; new coding was introduced in 1974. Source: BIS, *Trade union membership statistics 2011; Certification Officer Annual Reports* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Annual Report of the Certification Officer 2011/12

### 3 Other European countries

The decline in party membership levels is not just a UK phenomenon. Data gathered by Richard Katz, Peter Mair, Ingrid Van Biezen and other researchers show that there has been a marked decline in party membership since the 1980s in countries across Europe.<sup>8</sup>

About 1.1% of the UK electorate were party members in 2010, making membership levels in the UK among the lowest of Europe. Party membership as a percentage of the electorate is lower only in Poland and Latvia, where less than one percent of electors are party members. It is only slightly higher in France (1.9% in 2009) and Germany (2.3% in 2007).

Membership as a percentage of the electorate is highest in Austria (17.3% in 2008) and Cyprus (16.3% in 2009) but these are outliers – the next highest country is Finland, where party members comprised 8.1% of the electorate in 2006. The raw number of members is highest in Italy at about 2.6 million, about 5.6% of the electorate.

Almost all European countries have seen a fall in party membership since the 1980s. The UK has seen one of the largest decreases in membership. There has also been a steep decline in membership in Scandinavian countries, which had some of the highest levels of membership in the 1960s and 1970s. Greece and Spain are exceptional in that membership (as a proportion of the electorate) has actually increased since 1980.

Chart 6a shows the change in party membership in countries that have historically had high levels of membership. Chart 6b shows the trend in countries where membership has generally been low.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Data presented in this section, as well as data for other European countries, are taken from:

Richard Katz, Peter Mair et al (1992), *The membership of political parties in European democracies*, 1960-1990, European Journal of Political Research Vol 22 pp329-345

Ingrid Van Biezen, Peter Mair and Thomas Poguntke (2012), Going, going, ... gone? The decline of party membership in contemporary Europe, European Journal of Political Research Vol 51 pp24-56

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> In Poland, an estimated 0.99% of the electorate were party members in 2009. In Latvia, an estimated 0.74% of the electorate were party members in 2004.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Chart data are from Katz and Mair (1992) and Van Biezen, Mair and Poguntke (2012).

Chart 6a: Trends in party membership in Europe - high membership countries, 1960-2010

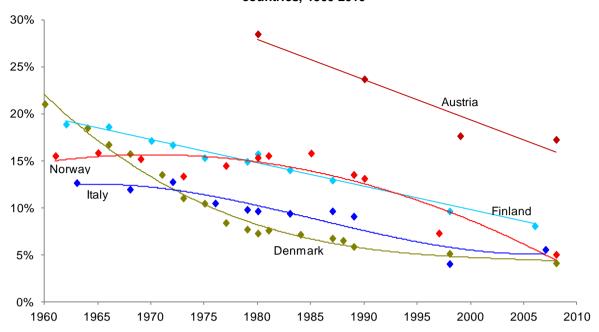
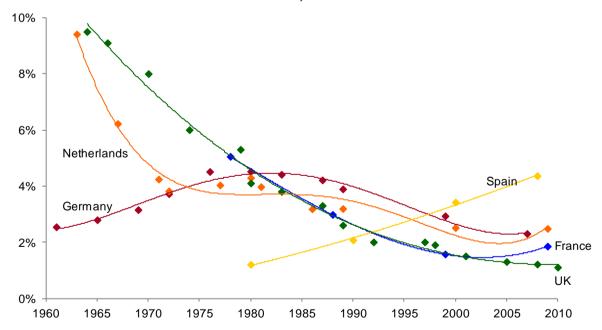


Chart 6b: Trends in party membership in Europe - low membership countries, 1960-2010



# 4 Reference tables

Table 1
Individual party membership: Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat 000s

	Conservative	Labour	Liberal Democrat
1928		215	
1929		228	
1930		277	
1931		297	
1932		372	
1933		366	
1934		381	
1935		419	
1936		431	
1937		447	
1938		429	
1939		409	
1940		304	
1941		227	
1942		219	
1943		236	
1944		266	
1945		487	
1946	911	645	
1947	1,200	608	
1948	2,200	629	
1949	,	730	
1950		908	
1951	2,900 <sup>1</sup>	876	
1952	,	1,015	
1953	2,806	1,005	
1954	,	934	
1955		843	
1956		845	
1957		913	
1958		889	
1959		845	
1960		790	243
1961		751	
1962		767	
1963		830	
1964		830	279
1965	2,250 <sup>1</sup>	817	
1966	,	776	234
1967		734	
1968		701	
1969	1,120 - 1,340	681	
1970	1,120 - 1,340	680	234
1971	.,,	700	201
1972		703	

	Conservative	Labour	Liberal Democrat
1973		665	
1974		692	190
1975	1,120	675	
1976		659	
1977		660	
1978		676	
1979		666	145
1980		348	
1981		277	
1982	1,200 <sup>2</sup>	274	
1983	1,200 <sup>1</sup>	295	145 <sup>5</sup>
1984	1,200 <sup>2</sup>	323	
1985		313	
1986		297	
1987	1,000 <sup>1</sup>	289	138 <sup>6</sup>
1988		266	80
1989		294	81
1990	1,000 <sup>1</sup>	311	77
1991		261	91
1992	500 <sup>1</sup>	280	101
1993	400 <sup>1</sup>	266	101
1994		305	101
1995		365	94
1996		400	99
1997	400 <sup>1</sup>	405	87
1998		388	89
1999		361	83
2000	401	311	69
2001	311	272	73
2002	272	248	73
2003	248	215	71
2004	215	201	73
2005	258	198	73
2006	290 <sup>3</sup>	182	72
2007		177	65
2008	250 <sup>4</sup>	166	60
2009		156	59
2010	177	193	65
2011	130-170 <sup>5</sup>	193	49

#### Notes

(1) Rough estimate; (2) Upper bound on membership figure; (3) Daily Telegraph estimate; (4) News of the World estimate; (5) Mid 2012 estimates reported in Independent and Daily Mail; (6) Includes Social Democratic Party; dotted line indicates when the Liberal Party and the Social Democratic Party merged.

#### Sources

David Butler and Gareth Butler (2010), *British Political Facts; Paul Webb, David Farrell and Ian Holliday (2002), Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies*; Paul Whiteley and Patrick Seyd (2002), *High-intensity participation: the dynamics of party activism in Britain*; Patrick Seyd and Paul Whiteley (2004), "British Party Members: An Overview", *Party Politics*, Vol 10 No 4, pp355-366; Andrew Thorpe (2009), "Reconstructing Conservative Party Membership in World War II Britain", *Parliamentary Affairs*, Vol 62 No 2, pp227-241; The Independent; Daily Telegraph; News of the World; Daily Mail; Electoral Commission; Liberal Democrat HQ; press reports from leadership contests.

Table 2

Party membership as a proportion of the electorate

	Party me	Electorate <sup>1</sup>			
	Conservative	Labour	Liberal	Main parties	000s
1964		2.3%	0.8%		35,894
1966		2.2%			35,957
1970	3.1% <sup>2</sup>	1.7%			39,615
1974		1.7%	0.5%		40,256
1979		1.6%			41,573
1983	2.8%	0.7%	0.3%	3.8%	42,704
1987	2.3%	0.7%	0.3%	3.3%	43,666
1992	1.1%	0.6%	0.2%	2.0%	43,719
1997	0.9%	0.9%	0.2%	2.0%	43,846
2001	0.7%	0.6%	0.2%	1.5%	44,403
2005	0.7%	0.4%	0.2%	1.3%	44,246
2010	0.4%	0.4%	0.1%	1.0%	45,610

Notes: (1a) Electorate at general election; (2) Takes the centre of the range specified in Table 2

Sources: Party membership figures from Table 1; electorate figures from Rallings and Thrasher, *British Electoral Facts* 1832-2006 and House of Commons Library RP10/36 *General Election* 2010

Table 3
Individual party membership: BNP, Green, SNP and UKIP

<i>I housands</i>				
	BNP	Green	SNP <sup>1</sup>	UKIP <sup>2</sup>
1998		5.0		
1999				
2000				
2001	2.2			
2002	3.1	5.9		10.0
2003	5.5	5.3	9.5	16.0
2004	7.9	6.3	10.9	26.0
2005	6.5	7.1	11.0	19.0
2006	6.3	7.0	12.6	16.0
2007	9.8	7.4	13.9	15.9
2008	9.8	7.5	15.1	14.6
2009	12.6	9.6	15.6	16.3
2010	10.3	12.8	16.2	15.5
2011	7.7	12.8	20.1	17.2

Notes

(1) The SNP introduced a centralised membership system in 2004. Membership as reported by the party's local branches w as 16,100 in 2002 and 13,400 in 2003. How ever sale of membership cards to branches by party headquarters totalled 9,500 in 2003, w hich suggests the figures from local branches over-estimated total membership. (2) UKIP figures are approximate for years up to 2007.

Sources: Electoral Commission

Table 4

Membership of Labour Party movement 000s

	Individual members		A7	U	Soc&	Соор	Total
	Members	% of total	Members	% of total	Members	% of total	Members
1900-01	-	_	353	93.9%	23	6.1%	376
1901-02	-	-	455	97.0%	14	3.0%	469
1902-03	-	_	847	98.4%	14	1.6%	861
1903-04	_	_	956	98.6%	14	1.4%	970
1904-05	_	_	855	98.3%	15	1.7%	870
1905-06	_	_	904	98.2%	17	1.8%	921
1906-07	_	_	975	97.9%	21	2.1%	996
1907	_	_	1,050	97.9%	22	2.1%	1,072
1908	_	_	1,127	97.7%	27	2.3%	1,154
1909	_	_	1,451	97.9%	31	2.1%	1,482
1910	_	_	1,394	97.8%	31	2.1%	-
	-	-					1,425
1911	-	-	1,502	98.0%	31	2.0%	1,533
1912	-	-	1,858	98.4%	31	1.6%	1,889
1913	-	-	4 ==0	07.00/	33	0.40/	4 00
1914	-	-	1,572	97.9%	33	2.1%	1,605
1915	-	-	2,054	98.4%	33	1.6%	2,087
1916	-	-	2,171	98.1%	42	1.9%	2,213
1917	-	-	2,415	98.1%	47	1.9%	2,462
1918	-	-	2,960	98.2%	53	1.8%	3,013
1919	-	-	3,464	98.7%	47	1.3%	3,511
1920	-	-	4,318	99.0%	42	1.0%	4,360
1921	-	-	3,974	99.1%	37	0.9%	4,011
1922	-	-	3,279	99.0%	32	1.0%	3,311
1923	-	-	2,120	98.3%	36	1.7%	2,156
1924	-	-	3,158	98.9%	36	1.1%	3,194
1925	-	-	3,338	98.9%	36	1.1%	3,374
1926	-	-	3,352	98.9%	36	1.1%	3,388
1927	-	_	3,239	98.3%	55	1.7%	3,294
1928	215	9.4%	2,025	88.4%	52	2.3%	2,292
1929	228	9.8%	2,044	87.7%	59	2.5%	2,331
1930	277	11.8%	2,011	85.7%	58	2.5%	2,346
1931	297	12.6%	2,024	85.8%	37	1.6%	2,358
1932	372	15.7%	1,960	82.6%	40	1.7%	2,372
1933	366	15.9%	1,899	82.4%	40	1.7%	2,305
1934	381	16.7%	1,858	81.5%	40	1.8%	2,279
1935	419	17.6%	1,913	80.5%	45	1.9%	2,377
1936	431	17.6%	1,969	80.5%	45	1.8%	2,445
1937	447	17.7%	2,037	80.6%	43	1.7%	2,527
1938	429	16.3%	2,158	82.1%	43	1.6%	2,630
1939	409	15.4%	2,130	83.1%	40	1.5%	2,663
1940	304	11.8%	2,214	86.6%	40	1.6%	2,571
1940	227	9.1%		89.7%	28	1.1%	
1941	219	8.9%	2,231 2,206	89.9%	29	1.1%	2,486
							2,454
1943	236	9.4%	2,237	89.4%	30	1.2%	2,503
1944	266	10.0%	2,375	88.9%	32	1.2%	2,673
1945	487	16.0%	2,510	82.6%	41	1.3%	3,038
1946	645	19.4%	2,635	79.3%	42	1.3%	3,322
1947	608	12.1%	4,386	87.0%	46	0.9%	5,040
1948	629	11.6%	4,751	87.6%	42	0.8%	5,422
1949	730	12.8%	4,946	86.5%	41	0.7%	5,717
1950	908	15.3%	4,972	84.0%	40	0.7%	5,920
1951	876	15.0%	4,937	84.4%	35	0.6%	5,848
1952	1,015	16.6%	5,072	83.0%	21	0.3%	6,108
1953	1,005	16.5%	5,057	83.0%	34	0.6%	6,096

000s

	Individual	members	ГА	U	Soc&	Соор	Total
	Members	% of total	Members	% of total	Members	% of total	Members
1954	934	14.4%	5,530	85.1%	35	0.5%	6,499
1955	843	13.0%	5,606	86.5%	35	0.5%	6,484
1956	845	12.9%	5,658	86.6%	34	0.5%	6,537
1957	913	13.9%	5,644	85.7%	26	0.4%	6,583
1958	889	13.6%	5,628	86.0%	26	0.4%	6,543
1959	845	13.1%	5,564	86.5%	25	0.4%	6,434
1960	790	12.5%	5,513	87.1%	25	0.4%	6,328
1961	751	11.9%	5,550	87.7%	25	0.4%	6,326
1962	767	12.2%	5,503	87.4%	25	0.4%	6,295
1963	830	13.1%	5,507	86.6%	21	0.3%	6,358
1964	830	13.1%	5,502	86.6%	21	0.3%	6,353
1965	817	12.7%	5,602	87.0%	21	0.3%	6,440
1966	776 734	12.2%	5,539	87.4%	21	0.3%	6,336
1967		11.7%	5,540 5,364	88.0%	21 21	0.3%	6,295
1968 1969	701 681	11.5% 11.0%	5,462	88.1% 88.6%	22	0.3% 0.4%	6,086 6,165
1909	680	10.9%	5,519	88.7%	24	0.4%	6,223
1970	700	11.1%	5,559	88.5%	25	0.4%	6,284
1972	703	11.4%	5,425	88.0%	40	0.4%	6,168
1973	665	11.0%	5,365	88.4%	42	0.7%	6,072
1974	692	10.6%	5,787	88.8%	39	0.6%	6,518
1975	675	10.4%	5,750	88.9%	44	0.7%	6,469
1976	659	10.1%	5,800	89.1%	48	0.7%	6,507
1977	660	10.0%	5,913	89.4%	43	0.6%	6,616
1978	676	9.7%	6,260	89.5%	55	0.8%	6,991
1979	666	9.2%	6,511	90.0%	58	0.8%	7,235
1980	348	5.1%	6,407	94.1%	56	0.8%	6,811
1981	277	4.2%	6,273	94.9%	58	0.9%	6,608
1982	274	4.2%	6,185	94.9%	57	0.9%	6,516
1983	295	4.6%	6,101	94.5%	59	0.9%	6,455
1984	323	5.2%	5,844	93.8%	60	1.0%	6,227
1985	313	5.0%	5,827	94.0%	60	1.0%	6,200
1986	297	4.8%	5,778	94.2%	58	0.9%	6,133
1987	289	4.9%	5,564	94.2%	55	0.9%	5,908
1988	266	4.6%	5,481	94.5%	56	1.0%	5,803
1989	294	5.2%	5,335	93.9%	53	0.9%	5,682
1990	311	5.9%	4,922	93.1%	54	1.0%	5,287
1991	261	5.1%	4,811	93.9%	54 51	1.1%	5,126
1992 1993	280 266	5.6%	4,634	93.3%	51	1.0%	4,965
1993	305						-
1995	365						_
1996	400						_
1997	405						_
1998	388						_
1999	361						_
2000	311						_
2001	272						-
2002	248						-
2003	215						-
2004	201						-
2005	198						-
2006	182						=
2007	177						-
2008	166						=
2009	156						-
2010	193						-
2011	193						-

Note: From 1993, party conference reports no longer included membership figures for affiliated groups. Sources: Butler and Butler, *Twentieth-Century British Political Facts*, 2000; Electoral Commission.