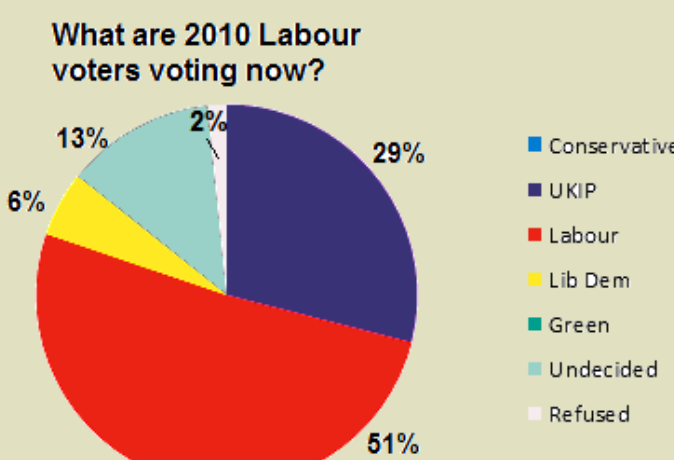
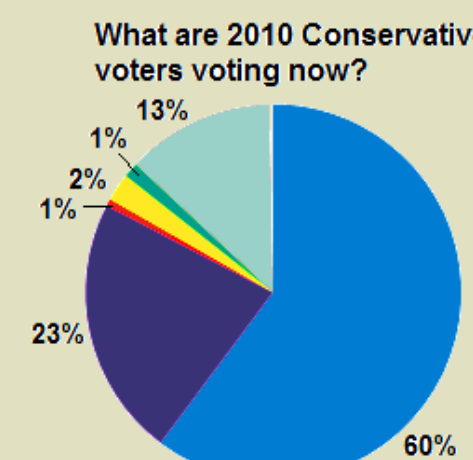
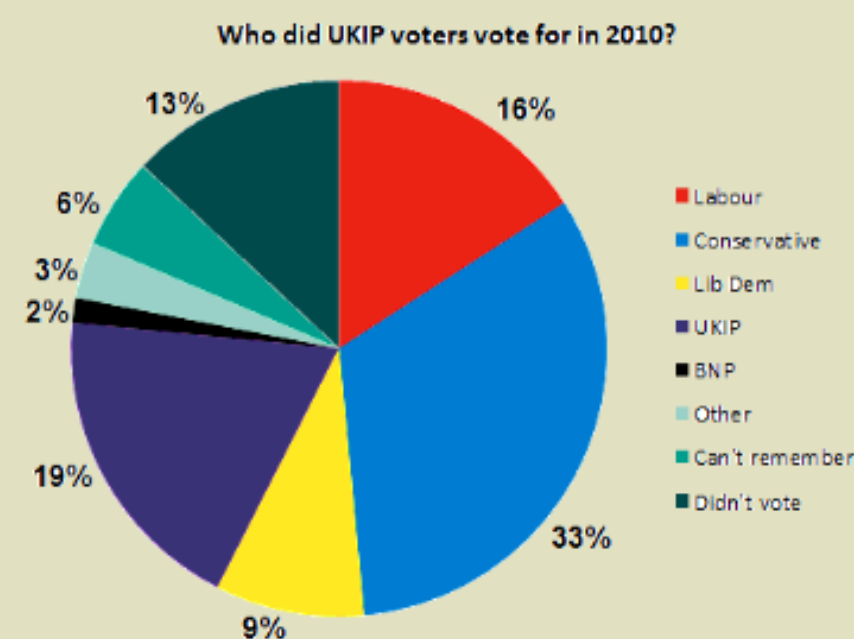


The growth and decline of insurgency political parties in contemporary British history.



Charts collected from <http://survation.com/a-seat-for-farage/>
Date: 07/10/2014

What is an insurgency political party?: Active participant in the strategic attack 'against the government' and the established elite of Westminster. UKIP are the epitome of a British insurgency party.

Insurgency politics is a revolt, originally stemming from a fringe movement preoccupied with a single issue. Successful parties develop a more cohesive message by broadening their manifesto.



UKIP was founded in 1993 as a reactionary party to the Maastricht Treaty.

- Stagnant domestic election ratings since 1997. Difficult predicament within a relatively two-party political landscape in Britain (although this is changing).
- UKIP have triumphed in the UK European Parliamentary elections. Holding zero MEPs in 1994, they gained 24MEPs in 2014.
- The UKIP or 'purple insurgency' has matured into a political force as they ventured away from a singular-policy stance, spearheaded by Farage.
- Why have UKIP risen over the past 21 years? Politically motivated policy changes aimed at alienated voters, a populist rhetoric, and the socio-economic pressures and changes occurring in the UK. UKIP have ballooned in popularity amongst disillusioned old-Labour working classes, vastly different from the Thatcherite Conservatives who are targeted by the brand of politics UKIP represent.

Impressive stats?
 European Parliament 1999—0MEPs, 696,057votes // 2009—12MEPs, 2,498,226votes.
 1999 (4th), 2004 (3rd), 2009 (2nd), 2014 (1st), 2019 (?)
 General Elections: 1997—105,722 votes (0.3%) // 2005— 605,973 votes (2.2%) // 2015 (?)

British National Party (BNP) was founded in 1982

- The BNP is an example of a failed insurgent attempt to gain Parliamentary representation.
- The Party has always been on the extreme right of British politics, their brand of nationalism has never sparked a nationwide momentum.
- 1987 General Election— 553 votes. By 2010 they had gained 1.9% of the voter share. Even though it focused on specific seats, they failed to win a majority in any.
- The BNP, like many smaller parties, has fared better in the European Parliamentary elections. Having stood no candidates in 1984/89/94, they polled 943,598 votes in 2009 to claim 2MEPs. However, the party has struggled internally since, losing both seats in 2014.
- Declining? UKIP having attracted the softer core of the BNP in recent years.

Green Party of England and Wales was founded in 1990

- Broadly seen as a localised political party with a single-issue ethos. Rarely threatened the established elite until recently, but is viewed as the alternative opposition to mainstream politics.
- 2010 General Election saw them gain their first MP, the first elected outside the main three parties. The Green Party has a loyal support base, dedicated to environmental policies.
- They have seen a steady voter percentage increase from 1994 onwards.
- In 2014 they came fourth, ahead of the Liberal Democrats, to win 3MEPs.
- The Greens, like UKIP, are increasingly threatening the established parties for voter share in important seats. The Green insurgency has not be as prevalent nationwide, however, their ability to damage Lib Dem seats is a key strength in the Greens gradual insurgency on Westminster.
- The potential to retain their seat. Bristol West could offer a second MP.

The SDP-Liberal Alliance lasted from 1981-1988, becoming the Liberal Democrats thereafter.

- The Alliance is regarded as the best example of what an insurgency political party/group can do to disrupt the balance of power, especially in an era of two-party politics. The Alliance gained defectors from the Labour Party.
- 1983 General Election—23MPs, 7,781,027— splitting the Labour vote by three million (8,456,934) and allowing the Tories to gain the biggest House majority since 1945.
- The Alliances' achievement was the first time in the history of Westminster an insurgency group penetrated into Parliament against the established political elite. No other insurgency party has matched this record, however, many say UKIP has the potential.
- Legacy? A successful blueprint to gain seats through a localised campaign. Splitting the nationwide voter share of an established Labour Party.