

The next election

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What implications does the new electoral landscape have for the next General Election?

There will be another General Election within five years. Analysing 2010 General Election majorities at constituency level offers some insight into what may happen.

SWINGOMETER

Based on uniform national swings between Labour and the Conservatives:

- **Conservative majority:** a swing from Labour of about **2% points**
- **Labour majority:** a swing from the Conservatives of around **5% points**
- **Labour largest party in House of Commons:** a swing from the Conservatives of around **2% points**

However, calculations based on uniform two-party swings are increasingly being called into doubt. The electoral landscape is very different from that in the 1950s, when two parties dominated and the concept of swing took hold. The large variation in constituency swings at the 2010 election suggests that local factors are important. These are not accounted for in these calculations.

SAFE SEATS

The safest seat in percentage terms is Liverpool Walton, held by new Labour MP Steve Rotherham with a majority of 57.7%. The largest majority in terms of votes is 27,826 for Labour's Stephen Timms in East Ham.

Of the 200 safest seats, 106 are held by the Conservatives, 83 by Labour, four by the Liberal Democrats and seven by other parties.

MARGINAL SEATS

The seat with the smallest majority – four votes – is Fermanagh and South Tyrone, held by Michelle Gildernew for Sinn Fein. Labour's Glenda Jackson has the next smallest majority – 42 votes or 0.1% – in Hampstead and Kilburn.

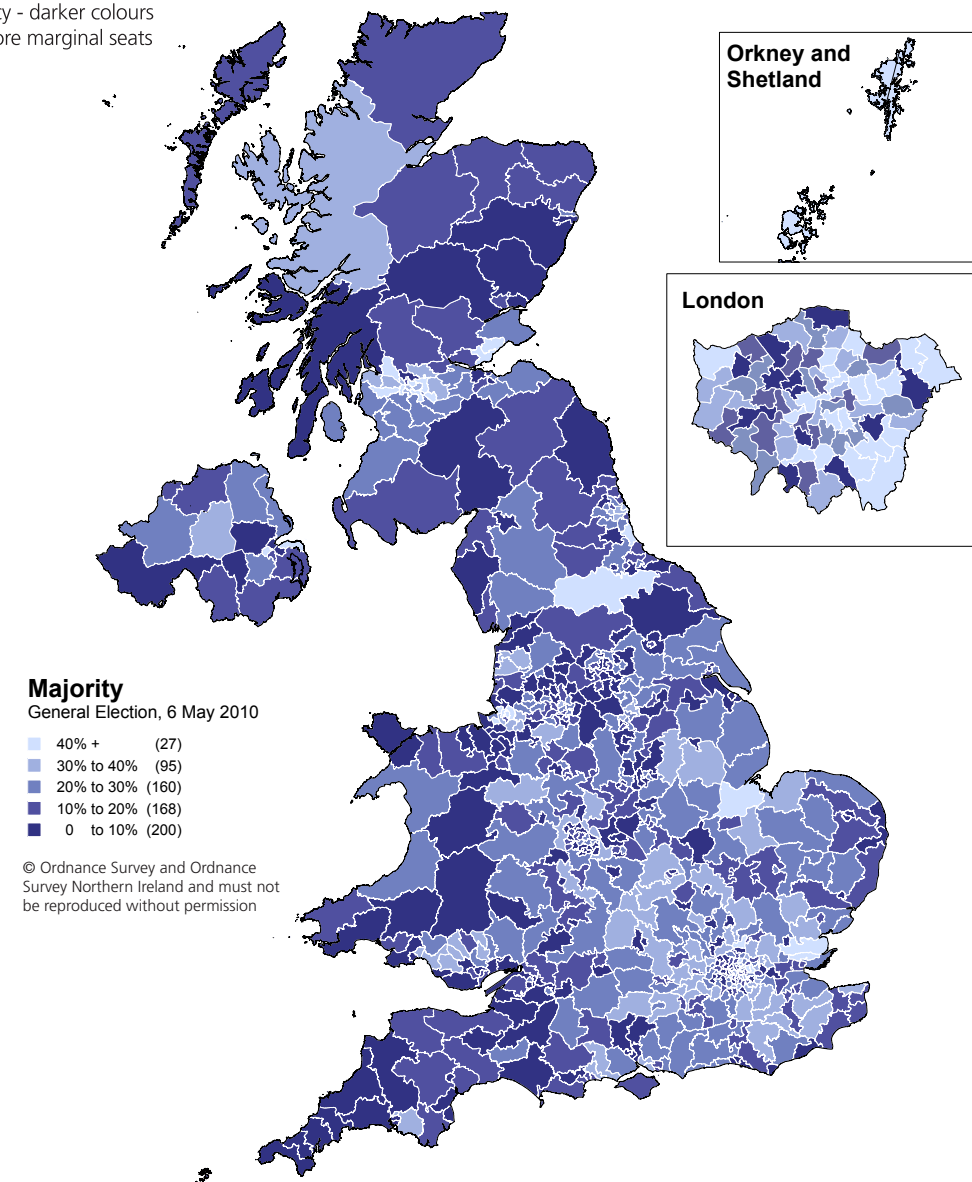
Of the 200 seats with the smallest majorities, the Conservatives hold 83, Labour 79, the Liberal Democrats 27, and other parties 11.

Looking at likely challengers for marginal seats, the Conservatives were second in 82 of the 200 most marginal seats, Labour were second in 73 seats, the Liberal Democrats in 39, and other parties in six.

All this, of course, assumes the next General Election will be fought using the same constituency boundaries and electoral system.

Battlegrounds for the next election

Percentage majority in each constituency - darker colours indicate more marginal seats



Liberal Democrat seats tend to be more marginal than Conservative and Labour seats

