



# EUROPEAN ELECTIONS BRIEFING

# 7

January 1979

This number of "European Elections Briefing" up-dates and summarises the information contained in Briefings 4, 5 and 6.

## At Community level

Article 138(3) of the EEC Treaty requires the present European Parliament "to draw up proposals for elections by direct universal suffrage in accordance with a uniform procedure in all Member States". The so-called "Patijn Convention" was adopted in January 1975.

The Treaty then requires the Council of Ministers to "lay down the appropriate provisions, which it shall recommend to Member States . . .". This was also achieved by the adoption, on 20 September 1976, of the Community Act. (Summarised on Page 2).

Finally, the Member States have to adopt these provisions "in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements". Appropriate legislation is now taking place, or has already taken place, in the nine Community countries.

The main provisions of the Community Act are:

### 1. Distribution of seats



### 2. Term of Parliament

The elected Parliament will have a fixed term of five years (give or take one month). This means that the second elections will be in 1984.

### 3. Dual mandate

It is neither forbidden, nor is it made compulsory, for elected MEP's to be members of their national parliaments as well.

### 4. System of voting

Initially, each country is deciding for itself the system of voting. England, Scotland, Wales and Greenland will be using "first-past-the-post". Everywhere else some kind of Proportional Representation will be used.

The Parliament itself is required to draw up proposals for a completely uniform system to be used in later elections.

### 5. Date of the Elections

The Act provides for polling to take place at the same time in all countries, within a period running from a Thursday to the following Sunday.

The Copenhagen "summit" of 7 April 1978 indicated the dates for the first elections should be 7 - 10 June 1979. These dates were formally enacted by the Council of Ministers, having secured the assent of the European Parliament, on 25 July 1978.

## In the UK

All the necessary arrangements have now been made at Westminster for the U.K. to take part in the first European Elections.

### The Elections Act

The European Assembly Elections Act received the Royal Assent on Friday 5 May 1978. Its main provisions are:

1. The distribution of the 81 seats within the U.K. should be (average number of votes per Member in brackets):

|           |    |           |
|-----------|----|-----------|
| England   | 66 | (516,436) |
| Scotland  | 8  | (473,256) |
| Wales     | 4  | (513,793) |
| N.Ireland | 3  | (344,413) |

2. The electoral system is to be: in England, Scotland and Wales, simple majority in single-member seats ("first-past-the-post"); and, in Northern Ireland, Single Transferable Vote in one 3-member seat.

### Boundaries

On 22 May 1978 the English and Welsh Boundary Commissions published their recommendations for the Euro-constituencies. The Scottish proposals were published on 5 June. As a result of representations, the English and Scottish Commissions published revised proposals on 22 November.

All the Euro-constituency boundaries were approved by the U.K. Parliament on 4 December 1978 (see pages 4, 5 and 6).

### Regulations

Draft regulations for the conduct of European Elections were published by the Government in February 1979.

# The position in other countries, January 1979

Table 1

| Country     | State of Legislation       | Voting System  | Franchise  | Polling Day | Other comments   |
|-------------|----------------------------|--|--|-------------|--|
| Belgium     | Passed 14 Nov. 1978        | PR in two linguistic "constituencies" (Flemings 13, Walloons 11)       | All Belgians domiciled in Belgium.   | 10 June     | Those in Brussels can choose which "constituency" to vote in. Voting compulsory. |
| Denmark     | Passed 2 Dec. 1977         | 1 seat for Greenland. Rest of Denmark PR on national lists.            | Votes for all Danes resident in the Community.   | 7 June      |  |
| Germany     | Passed 16 June 1978        | PR on national or <i>Land</i> lists (choice for parties.) 5% "hurdle". | Votes for all Germans resident in the Community.   | 10 June     | 3 seats for Berlin, filled by nomination from Berlin <i>Landtag</i> .            |
| France      | Passed 30 June 1977        | PR on national lists. 5% "hurdle".                                     | Votes for all French nationals in the world.   | 10 June     | Overseas departments and territories included.                                   |
| Ireland     | Passed 8 Dec. 1977         | Single Transferable Vote in 4 multi-member constituencies.             | Votes for all Community nationals resident in Ireland.   | 7 June      | £1,000 deposit for candidates.   |
| Italy       | Passed 19 January 1979     | PR in 5 constituencies.  | Votes for all Italian nationals.   | 10 June     | Italians in Belgium will vote on Saturday 9 June                                 |
| Luxembourg  | In parliamentary committee | PR on national lists but cross-party voting possible.                  | Votes for Luxembourgers resident in Luxembourg only.   |             | Compulsory voting. National elections on same day.                               |
| Netherlands | Passed 14 Dec. 1978        | PR on national lists.  | Votes both for Dutch resident in the Community and Community nationals resident in the Netherlands with no vote elsewhere. | 7 June      |  |

## The European Elections Act 1976

(Full text published by HMSO, Cmnd. 6623, price 22p)

The Council of Ministers' decision of September 20, 1976 falls into three parts:

1. **A brief formal text** announcing that the Council has "laid down the provisions annexed to this Decision which it recommends to the Member States for adoption in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements".

2. **The Act itself**, including a declaration by the German Government on the representation of Berlin. (Because of the special international status of Berlin, it will be impossible for European Parliament Members to be directly elected there).

3. **Three Annexes** to the Act, dealing with the position of Greenland; the Isle of Man and Channel Islands (to which the Act does not apply); and the details of a Parliament-Council conciliation procedure in the event of new measures to implement the Act becoming necessary.

### 1. The numbers of seats (Article 2)

Table 2.

| Country     | Members | (% of total) | Population (.000) | (% of total) | Population per Member |
|-------------|---------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Belgium     | 24      | ( 5.85)      | 9,772             | ( 3.77)      | 407,167               |
| Denmark     | 16      | ( 3.9)       | 5,052             | ( 1.95)      | 315,750               |
| Germany     | 81      | (19.76)      | 62,041            | (23.96)      | 765,938               |
| France      | 81      | (19.76)      | 53,780            | (20.77)      | 663,951               |
| Ireland     | 15      | ( 3.66)      | 3,086             | ( 1.19)      | 205,733               |
| Italy       | 81      | (19.76)      | 55,361            | (21.38)      | 683,469               |
| Luxembourg  | 6       | ( 1.46)      | ,357              | ( 0.14)      | 59,500                |
| Netherlands | 25      | ( 6.1)       | 13,450            | ( 5.19)      | 538,000               |
| UK          | 81      | (19.76)      | 56,056            | (21.65)      | 692,049               |
| Community   | 410     | (100)        | 258,955           | (100)        | 631,598               |

### 2. The term of the Parliament (Articles 3 and 10(2))

The Act provides for Parliaments with a fixed term of five years. There is no provision for dissolution before this

term; but under Article 10(2) the elections can be advanced or retarded by up to one month "should it prove impossible to hold the elections in the Community" on the due date.

### 3. The dual mandate (Article 5)

Membership of the European Parliament is compatible with membership of a parliament of a Member State" (i.e. the dual mandate is optional).

This is a matter quite separate from that of the formal link, if any, between the parliament of a Member State and the Members of the European Parliament from that State as a whole, which will be decided by each country separately.

### 4. Incompatibilities (Article 6)

The Act lists a number of positions which are to be incompatible with European Parliament membership. These include membership of the Commission, national governments, the Court of Justice, etc. and active employment in the Community's civil service.

### 5. Electoral system (Article 7)

The Act interprets the phrase "uniform procedure" in Article 138(3) of the Treaty flexibly, allowing each Member State, initially, to choose its own voting system, voting age, etc.

### 6. Electoral register (Article 8)

The Act makes no reference to the question of whether nationals of one Community country resident in another should vote in their place of residence or in their home country. It does envisage, however, that certain people might qualify to vote in more than one country (for example, if a voter were given a proxy vote by his home country and another by his country of residence). Voting more than once is therefore prohibited.

### 7. Timing of the elections (Article 9)

The Act provides for the elections to be

held simultaneously in all Member States. Each State can choose to poll on a day which "falls within the same period starting on a Thursday morning and ending on the following Sunday". The counting of votes "may not begin until after the close of polling in the Member State whose electors are the last to vote . . ."

### 8. The date of the first elections (Article 10)

Although the text of the Council of Ministers decision itself refers to a target date of "May-June 1978", this is not in the Act. Instead, provision is made for the Council of Ministers to take a final decision in consultation with the present European Parliament.

Following the elections, the Parliament will convene on the first Tuesday one month later.

## Arrangements in the United Kingdom

Preparations for European Elections in the United Kingdom have been slow but thorough. The major stages have been.

|      |             |  |
|------|-------------|--|
| 1976 | February    | "Direct Elections to the European Assembly" ( <i>Green Paper, HMSO Cmnd. 6399</i> )  |
|      | May         | House of Commons appoints Select Committee.  |
|      | June        | First Report of Select Committee ( <i>House of Commons Papers 489 and 462-1-1x</i> ) |
|      | August      | Second Report of Select Committee ( <i>House of Commons Papers 515, 515-1</i> )      |
|      | October     | Third Report of Select Committee ( <i>House of Commons Paper 715</i> )               |
| 1977 | April       | "Direct Elections to the European Assembly" ( <i>White Paper, HMSO Cmnd. 6708</i> )  |
|      | June        | European Assembly Elections Bill published   |
|      | 3 July      | Bill given Second Reading in Commons by 394 to 147 votes                             |
|      | November    | Bill re-published in slightly amended form.  |
|      | 24 November | Bill given another Second Reading in Commons by 381 to 98 votes.                     |
|      | 13 December | Commons rejects Proportional Representation by 321 to 222 votes.                     |
| 1978 | 26 January  | "Guillotine" passed in Commons by 314 to 137 votes.                                  |
|      | 16 February | Bill finally approved in Commons by 159 to 45 votes.                                 |
|      | 17 February | Revised Bill published and introduced in Lords.                                      |
|      | 7 March     | Bill given Second Reading in Lords.  |
|      | 4 May       | Bill approved by Lords.  |
|      | 5 May       | Royal Assent to European Assembly Elections Act.                                     |
|      | 4 December  | Euro-constituency boundaries approved.   |

The principal provisions of the Act are summarised on page 1. Other matters include:

#### Clause 4. Double voting

Voting more than once in an European election, "whether in the United Kingdom or elsewhere", is made an offence.

#### Clause 6. Powers of the Parliament

"(1) No treaty which provides for any increase in the powers of the Assembly shall be ratified by the United Kingdom unless it has been approved by an Act of Parliament."

"(2) In this section 'treaty' includes any international agreement and any protocol or annex to a treaty or international agreement."

This clause to the Bill was added by the House of Commons on 17 February 1978. It involves a major constitutional innovation for the United Kingdom — normally, treaties are ratified, under the Ponsonby rules, by Order in Council (either they are assumed to be agreed if no-one moves a negative resolution, or they are passed by affirmative resolution. No formal Act, with all its stages, is required).

#### Clause 7. Cost of election

The payment of returning officers, etc. will be made by the U.K. Exchequer. The cost of the elections is estimated in the Financial Memorandum to the Act "to be at least £10 million every 5 years".

Appended to the Act are two Schedules, dealing with some detailed electoral arrangements. The most important are:

#### The Franchise

The Bill does not accept the recommendation of the Commons Select Committee that U.K. nationals living abroad should be able to vote. Instead, only those on the normal register (which includes Peers for local government elections) will be voting. In this, the U.K. will probably differ from all other Community countries except Luxembourg (see table 1).

#### Candidates

Unlike elections to Westminster, it will be possible for Peers and ministers of religion to stand for the European Parliament.

#### Constituency Boundaries

Schedule 2 of the Act concerned the arrangements for drawing up the boundaries for the 78 "Euroconstituencies" in England, Scotland and Wales.

It established a number of criteria for the Boundary Commissions.

(a) The Euro-constituencies were to consist of two or more House of Commons constituencies, with no overlapping of boundaries.

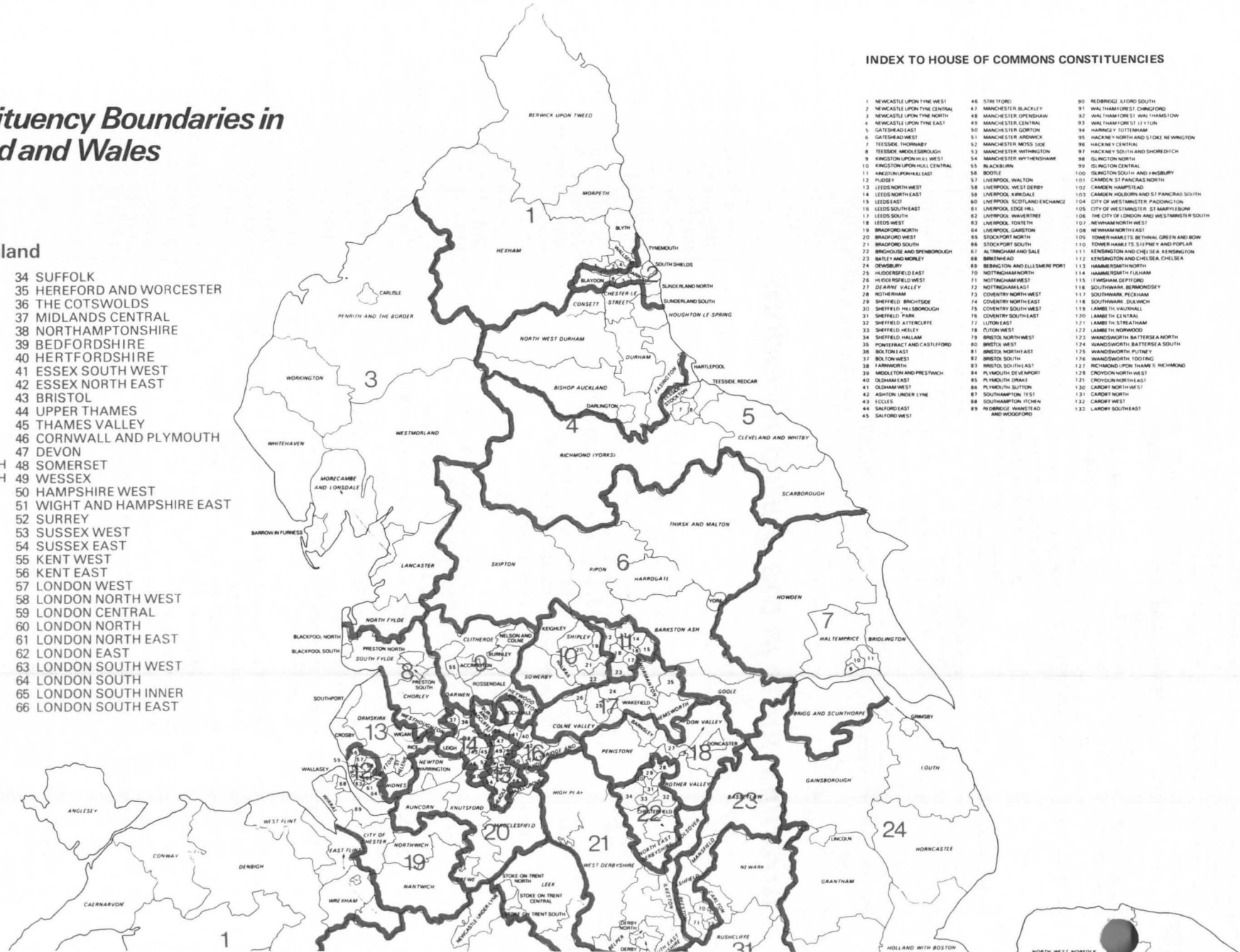
(b) The electorates of the Euro-constituencies were to be "as near the electoral quota as is reasonably practicable having regard, where appropriate, to special geographical considerations". The quota is the electorate divided by the number of seats for that part of Great Britain (see p. 1).

For the boundaries finally adopted see pages 4, 5 and 6.

# European Constituency Boundaries in England and Wales

## England

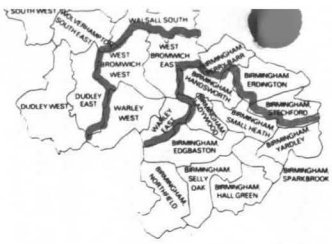
- |                             |                             |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 NORTHUMBRIA               | 34 SUFFOLK                  |
| 2 SOUTH TYNE AND WEAR       | 35 HEREFORD AND WORCESTER   |
| 3 CUMBRIA                   | 36 THE COTSWOLDS            |
| 4 DURHAM                    | 37 MIDLANDS CENTRAL         |
| 5 CLEVELAND                 | 38 NORTHAMPTONSHIRE         |
| 6 YORKSHIRE NORTH           | 39 BEDFORDSHIRE             |
| 7 HUMBERSIDE                | 40 HERTFORDSHIRE            |
| 8 LANCASHIRE CENTRAL        | 41 ESSEX SOUTH WEST         |
| 9 LANCASHIRE EAST           | 42 ESSEX NORTH EAST         |
| 10 YORKSHIRE WEST           | 43 BRISTOL                  |
| 11 LEEDS                    | 44 UPPER THAMES             |
| 12 LIVERPOOL                | 45 THAMES VALLEY            |
| 13 LANCASHIRE WEST          | 46 CORNWALL AND PLYMOUTH    |
| 14 GREATER MANCHESTER WEST  | 47 DEVON                    |
| 15 GREATER MANCHESTER SOUTH | 48 SOMERSET                 |
| 16 GREATER MANCHESTER NORTH | 49 WESSEX                   |
| 17 YORKSHIRE SOUTH WEST     | 50 HAMPSHIRE WEST           |
| 18 YORKSHIRE SOUTH          | 51 WIGHT AND HAMPSHIRE EAST |
| 19 CHESHIRE WEST            | 52 SURREY                   |
| 20 CHESHIRE EAST            | 53 SUSSEX WEST              |
| 21 DERBYSHIRE               | 54 SUSSEX EAST              |
| 22 SHEFFIELD                | 55 KENT WEST                |
| 23 NOTTINGHAM               | 56 KENT EAST                |
| 24 LINCOLNSHIRE             | 57 LONDON WEST              |
| 25 SALOP AND STAFFORD       | 58 LONDON NORTH WEST        |
| 26 STAFFORDSHIRE EAST       | 59 LONDON CENTRAL           |
| 27 MIDLANDS WEST            | 60 LONDON NORTH             |
| 28 BIRMINGHAM NORTH         | 61 LONDON NORTH EAST        |
| 29 BIRMINGHAM SOUTH         | 62 LONDON EAST              |
| 30 MIDLANDS EAST            | 63 LONDON SOUTH WEST        |
| 31 LEICESTER                | 64 LONDON SOUTH             |
| 32 CAMBRIDGESHIRE           | 65 LONDON SOUTH INNER       |
| 33 NORFOLK                  | 66 LONDON SOUTH EAST        |



## INDEX TO HOUSE OF COMMONS CONSTITUENCIES

- |                               |                                      |   |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1 NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE WEST    | 46 STRETHORD                         | 80 REDBRIDGE (EAST) SOUTH                       |
| 2 NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE CENTRAL | 47 MANCHESTER BLACKLEY               | 81 WALTHAM FOREST (S) CINGFORD                  |
| 3 NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NORTH   | 48 MANCHESTER (SPRINGFIELD)          | 82 WALTHAM FOREST (N) WALTHAMSTOW               |
| 4 NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE EAST    | 49 MANCHESTER CENTRAL                | 83 WALTHAM FOREST (E) WALTHAMSTOW               |
| 5 GATESHEAD EAST              | 50 MANCHESTER GORTON                 | 84 HARRINGEY (E) TOTENHAM                       |
| 6 GATESHEAD WEST              | 51 MANCHESTER (W) ANDRICK            | 85 HACKNEY NORTH AND (S) LOKE NEWINGTON         |
| 7 FEESIDE (THORNHAY)          | 52 MANCHESTER MOSS SIDE              | 86 HACKNEY CENTRAL                              |
| 8 FEESIDE (MIDDLEBROUGH)      | 53 MANCHESTER WITHINGTON             | 87 HACKNEY SOUTH AND SHOREDITCH                 |
| 9 KINGSTON UPON HULL WEST     | 54 MANCHESTER (W) HEDDERSHAM         | 88 GILGINGTON NORTH                             |
| 10 KINGSTON UPON HULL CENTRAL | 55 BLACKBURN                         | 89 GILGINGTON CENTRAL                           |
| 11 KINGSTON UPON HULL EAST    | 56 BOTTLE                            | 90 GILGINGTON SOUTH AND (S) GILGIBURY           |
| 12 FLEESBY                    | 57 LIVERPOOL (W) WALTON              | 91 CAMDEN (S) ST FRANCIS NORTH                  |
| 13 LEEDS NORTH WEST           | 58 LIVERPOOL WEST DERBY              | 92 CAMDEN HAMPTLEAD                             |
| 14 LEEDS NORTH EAST           | 59 LIVERPOOL (W) KIRKDALE            | 93 CAMDEN (S) HOLDINGS AND ST FRANCIS SOUTH     |
| 15 LEEDS EAST                 | 60 LIVERPOOL SCOTLAND EXCHANGE       | 94 CITY OF WESTMINSTER (P) DODDINGTON           |
| 16 LEEDS SOUTH EAST           | 61 LIVERPOOL (E) (S) FLEET           | 95 CITY OF WESTMINSTER (S) MARTYR BURM          |
| 17 LEEDS SOUTH                | 62 LIVERPOOL (W) WARTLEY             | 96 THE CITY OF LONDON AND WESTMINSTER (S) SOUTH |
| 18 LEEDS WEST                 | 63 LIVERPOOL (E) (S) TETH            | 97 NEWHAM NORTH WEST                            |
| 19 BRADFORD NORTH             | 64 LIVERPOOL (S) GARETON             | 98 NEWHAM NORTH EAST                            |
| 20 BRADFORD WEST              | 65 STOCKPORT NORTH                   | 99 TOWER HAMLETS (S) BETHNAL GREEN AND BOW      |
| 21 BRADFORD SOUTH             | 66 STOCKPORT SOUTH                   | 100 TOWER HAMLETS (S) SILVER AND POPLAR         |
| 22 BRIDGEHOLE AND SHIBBOROUGH | 67 ALTRINGHAM AND SALE               | 101 KENSINGTON AND CHelsea (S) KENSINGTON       |
| 23 BATLEY AND MORLEY          | 68 BRISTOL                           | 102 KENSINGTON AND CHelsea (N) CHelsea          |
| 24 DEWSBURY                   | 69 BRISTOL AND ELLISBURGH PORT       | 103 HAMMERSMITH NORTH                           |
| 25 HUDERSFIELD EAST           | 70 NOTTINGHAM NORTH                  | 104 HAMMERSMITH (S) ULSHAM                      |
| 26 HUDERSFIELD WEST           | 71 NOTTINGHAM WEST                   | 105 (S) WISHAM (S) DEPTFORD                     |
| 27 DEARBY VALLEY              | 72 NOTTINGHAM EAST                   | 106 SOUTHAMK (S) BERNHOLMSEY                    |
| 28 NOTTINGHAM                 | 73 COVENTRY NORTH WEST               | 107 SOUTHAMK (N) PECKHAM                        |
| 29 SHEFFIELD BRIGTSIDE        | 74 COVENTRY NORTH EAST               | 108 SOUTHAMK (S) DULWICH                        |
| 30 SHEFFIELD (S) BRIDGROUOH   | 75 COVENTRY SOUTH WEST               | 109 LAMETH (S) VANDERHILL                       |
| 31 SHEFFIELD PARK             | 76 COVENTRY SOUTH EAST               | 110 LAMETH CENTRAL                              |
| 32 SHEFFIELD ATTERCLIFFE      | 77 LUTON EAST                        | 111 LAMETH (S) STRATHAM                         |
| 33 SHEFFIELD HELEY            | 78 LUTON WEST                        | 112 LAMETH (S) NORWOOD                          |
| 34 SHEFFIELD HALLAM           | 79 BRISTOL NORTH WEST                | 113 WANDSWORTH (S) BATTERSEA NORTH              |
| 35 POTTERFRACT AND CASTLEFORD | 80 BRISTOL WEST                      | 114 WANDSWORTH (S) BATTERSEA SOUTH              |
| 36 BOLTON EAST                | 81 BRISTOL NORTH EAST                | 115 WANDSWORTH (S) PUTNEY                       |
| 37 BOLTON WEST                | 82 BRISTOL SOUTH                     | 116 WANDSWORTH (S) TOOTING                      |
| 38 FARNWORTH                  | 83 BRISTOL SOUTH EAST                | 117 RICHMOND (S) UPON THAMES (S) RICHMOND       |
| 39 MIDDLETON AND PRESTWICH    | 84 PLYMOUTH (S) DEVONPORT            | 118 CROYDON NORTH WEST                          |
| 40 OLDHAM EAST                | 85 PLYMOUTH (S) ORACLE               | 119 CROYDON NORTH EAST                          |
| 41 OLDHAM WEST                | 86 PLYMOUTH (S) BUTON                | 120 CARDIFF NORTH WEST                          |
| 42 ASHTON UNDER LYNE          | 87 SOUTHAMPTON (S) (S) (S)           | 121 CARDIFF NORTH                               |
| 43 ECCLES                     | 88 SOUTHAMPTON (S) (S) (S)           | 122 CARDIFF WEST                                |
| 44 SALFORD EAST               | 89 HAMBURG (S) WARTLEAD AND WOODFORD | 123 LONDON SOUTH EAST                           |
| 45 SALFORD WEST               |                                      |   |



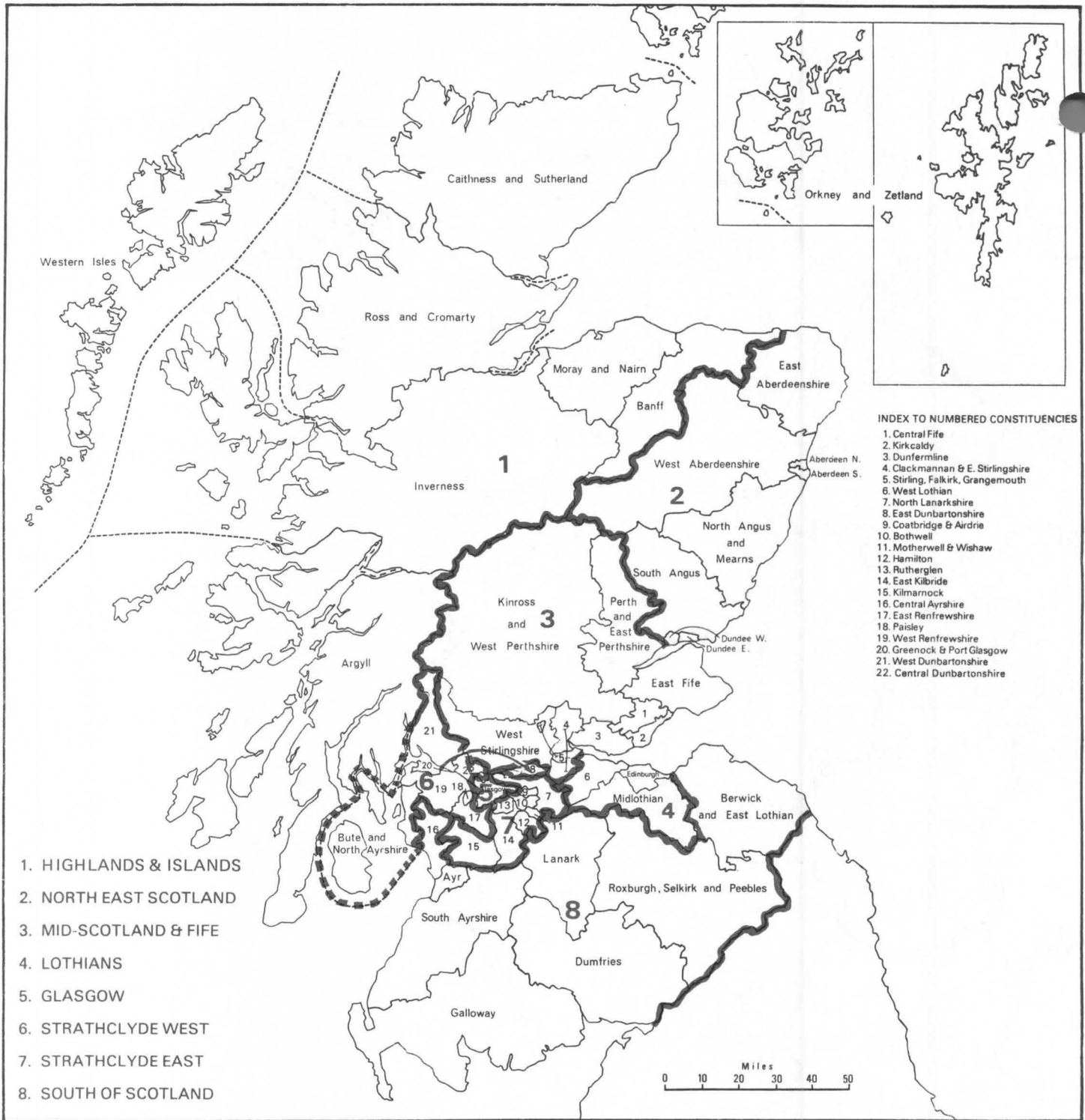


### Wales

1. NORTH WALES  
GOGLEDD CYMRU
2. MID AND WEST WALES  
CANOLBARTH A GORLEWIN CYMRU
3. SOUTH-EAST WALES  
DE-DDWYRAIN CYMRU
4. SOUTH WALES  
DE CYMRU



# European Constituency Boundaries in Scotland



Graphics Group S.O.O. January 1974

## Regulations for the conduct of the elections in the UK

Draft regulations for the conduct of European Elections in England, Scotland and Wales (HMSO, Cmnd 7323) and in Northern Ireland (HMSO, Cmnd. 7335) were published by the Government in August 1978. Discussions on these draft rules then took place with the political parties and other interested parties.

i) **polling districts and polling stations**, "in the absence of special circumstances", will be the same as for Westminster elections.

ii) The rules on obtaining **postal or proxy votes** will be the same as for Westminster elections, but Peers are included since they have the right to vote

in European Elections. Anyone applying for a postal or proxy vote for Westminster or local government elections before 21 May 1979 will be deemed to have applied for European Elections as well.

iii) **Limits on expenditure** by candidates and agents (see below) are to be roughly six times the amounts prescribed for Westminster elections. (Euro-constituencies are about eight times larger, but there should be economies of scale).

iv) **A declaration of secrecy** applies not only to the count proper, but to the verification (see ix below) as well. The draft regulations provide that, at the verification, no-one shall "express to any

person an opinion based on information obtained at that verification or count as to the likely outcome of that count". This should prevent "leaks" of the results on Thursday 7 June 1979.

v) Candidates will be entitled to one **free post** to each elector in their Euro-constituencies (as at Westminster elections).

vi) **Nomination papers** must be signed by a proposer and seconder and 28 other electors from the appropriate Euro-constituency.

vii) **The deposit** for each candidate is set at £600, to be lodged with the returning officer within the same time limits as the

nomination papers. (N.B. The deposit is forfeited if a candidate polls under 1/8 of the vote).

#### viii) Election timetable

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Publication of notice of election                                    | Not later than 25 days before polling   |
| Delivery or withdrawal of nomination papers, and lodging of deposits | Any day after publication of the notice of election and not later than 19 days before polling: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. weekdays<br>10 a.m. - 12 noon Saturdays |
| Polling day  | Between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. on Thursday 7 June 1979  |

ix) "As soon as practicable after the close of the poll" the ballot papers will be "verified". This will probably be carried out at Westminster constituency level, in the same way as at national elections. All the ballot boxes (including those containing the postal votes) will be opened and the number of ballot papers counted, face down. The total (including the unused or spoilt ballot papers in the returning officer's possession) will be checked against the record of ballot papers issued. On completion of the verification,

the ballot papers will be re-sealed in containers, which will be labelled with the area\* from which the particular ballot papers come.

x) The count will take place after "the close of polling in the Member State whose elections are the last to vote . . ." It will probably take place at a single location in each Euro-constituency. The returning officer will re-open the ballot boxes and mix the ballot papers from different areas together.

xi) The result of the election in each Euro-constituency will be declared by a single returning officer and notified to the Home Secretary or the Secretary of State for Scotland.

xii) Restrictions on broadcasting which normally apply when an election is "pending" (e.g. in the case of Westminster elections, when the dissolution of Parliament is announced), will apply as from five weeks before polling day.

All the normal rules at national elections — for example, on the use of premises for meetings, imprints on posters and election literature, bribery, treating, etc — will also apply at European Elections.

#### Election expenses

Although there is no limit on the sums

\* Probably the Westminster constituency or, in certain circumstances, the local authority district

which political parties as a whole can spend at elections, there are very tight rules on the amounts which can be spent in any single constituency on behalf of a particular candidate.

1. Only the candidate, his election agent or persons authorised in writing by the election agent (who thereby themselves become, in law, agents of the candidate) are entitled to incur expenses with a view to getting the candidate elected. To do so without authorisation is a "corrupt practice". (An individual is, however, entitled to incur expenses up to a certain sum — in the case of European Elections, £3 — provided it is not in pursuance of a plan concerted with others).

2. There is a maximum limit on the amount that can be spent for such a purpose, whether before, during or after elections: to spend more is an "illegal practice".

3. For the purpose of these restrictions, the election commences as soon as the candidate begins to take measures to promote his election (e.g. by announcing his candidature).

The regulations (see iv above) limit the election expenses for any one candidate in a Euro-constituency to £5,000 plus an additional 2p. for every registered elector. Thus, in a Euro-constituency of 500,000 electors, each candidate would be able to spend £15,000.

## The Report of the House of Lords Select Committee

During August 1978, the House of Lords Select Committee on the European Community published a report analysing some of the consequences "Relations between the United Kingdom Parliament and the European Parliament after Direct Elections" (*HMSO Vol. 1 80p.*).

The House of Lords Committee noted that the ending of the obligatory dual mandate will create certain problems. For all its disadvantages, its existence ensures direct links between the European and national Parliaments, and keeps the MEPs in the mainstream of national political life.

One important consequence of holding direct elections to the European Parliament is that the Members will no longer, in general, have a "dual mandate" — that is, also be Members of their national parliaments.

### A European Grand Committee

The "Grand Committee" solution was favoured by the bulk of evidence to the Select Committee. The report recommends that it should operate as follows:

a) The Grand Committee should be able to debate Community affairs in general; or particular issues, usually on the basis of a report from the Commons or Lords Scrutiny Committees, or a European Parliament Committee. It would also discuss relevant UK Government publica-

tions. Community Commissioners might attend to give evidence; and a UK Minister would normally attend discussions, and state the Government's views.

b) The Grand Committee would *not* take formal votes.

c) All 81 MEPS, and all members of the Commons and Lords Scrutiny Committees would sit on the Grand Committee. It would be possible for either Commons or Lords to appoint additional members.

d) The Grand Committee would meet regularly three times a year, and hold additional meetings when they were needed. The times and agendas would be regulated by the Grand Committee itself "to suit the convenience of members of both Parliaments".

e) The chair would be taken by either Scrutiny Committee Chairman; or, "if appropriate, by the Chairman or rapporteur of a specialist Committee of the European Parliament".

f) The calling of additional meetings, etc. would be the responsibility of a small "bureau" of the Grand Committee, consisting of the Scrutiny Committee Chairmen and one or more MEPs.

g) The Grand Committee would normally publish a verbatim report (like Hansard); and such other papers as it thought fit.

The existence of such a Grand Committee, the report states, would be of value to both the European Parliament

and Westminster. It would "strengthen MEPs' appreciation of the British factors in European policies". In addition, "it would make the Westminster parliament more aware of the EEC point of view when it considered European affairs". Since it would not have the power to take binding votes, it would challenge the constitutional power of neither Commons, Lords nor European Parliament.

### 'Swap' arrangements

The report also envisages contacts between MPs and MEPs through participation in each others' meetings, and through the exchange of documents.

a) UK MEPs might attend meetings of the Lords or Commons Scrutiny Committees. They would be able to speak but not vote (following the precedent of the Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional reform 1932-34).

b) The Lords Scrutiny Committee might invite any of the 410 MEPs, particularly rapporteurs, to give evidence.

c) Members of the Lords or Commons Scrutiny Committees might, in turn, be invited to take part in European Parliament Committee meetings.

d) UK MEPs should receive any Scrutiny Committee or other UK Parliamentary papers that might be of use to them. Arrangements should also be made for the regular exchange of Westminster and European Parliamentary documents.

# Political Parties

The Members of the present 198-strong European Parliament sit in six multi-national political groups (together with a few Independents).

## 1. Communists & Allies

Currently 18, from Italy, France and Denmark. French and Italian parties have prepared different policy statements for European Elections; but Parties in 7 or 8 Community countries are expected to sign a short common declaration.

## 2. Socialists

The largest group, with 66, from all nine Community countries. The 11 Socialist, Social Democrat and Labour parties in the "Socialist Confederation" of the Community adopted a common statement of aims at their Congress in Brussels on 10 and 13 January, 1979.

## 3. Christian Democrats (European People's Party)

53 Members from all countries except UK and Denmark. New Community-wide political party formed to fight elections on a common manifesto. This was adopted, in outline, in March 1978.

## 4. European Conservatives

Members only from UK (16) and Denmark (2). Election platform will contain some common elements with People's Party.

## 5. European Progressive Democrats

17 Members from France (Gaullists), Ireland and Denmark. Congress at Cork

in November 1978 adopted common strategy for the elections.

## 6. Liberals and Democrats

Has 23 in present Parliament, representing 13 parties from 8 countries (all except Ireland). Federation of these parties (ELD) has published comprehensive common policy document.

Table 3

Votes for parties supporting each European Parliament group at the last elections (figures in millions).

|                                      | Comm.       | Soc.        | CD          | EPD        | Con.        | Lib.        | Other       | Total        |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Belgium                              | 0.1         | 1.5         | 2.0         | —          | —           | 0.9         | 1.0         | 5.5          |
| Denmark                              | 0.2         | 1.1         | —           | 0.5        | 0.5         | 0.5         | 0.3         | 3.1          |
| France                               | 5.9         | 7.1         | 2.0         | 6.5        | —           | 4.0         | 2.1         | 27.6         |
| Germany                              | 0.1         | 16.1        | 18.4        | —          | —           | 3.0         | 0.3         | 37.9         |
| Ireland                              | —           | 0.2         | 0.5         | 0.8        | —           | —           | 0.1         | 1.6          |
| Italy                                | 12.6        | 4.8         | 14.2        | —          | —           | 0.5         | 4.5         | 36.6         |
| Luxembourg                           | 0.02        | 0.05        | 0.05        | —          | —           | 0.04        | 0.01        | 0.17         |
| Netherlands                          | 0.12        | 2.5         | 2.7         | —          | —           | 1.4         | 1.9         | 8.6          |
| UK                                   | 0.02        | 11.5        | —           | —          | 10.5        | 5.3         | 1.4         | 28.7         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                         | <b>19.1</b> | <b>44.9</b> | <b>39.9</b> | <b>7.8</b> | <b>11.0</b> | <b>15.7</b> | <b>11.6</b> | <b>149.8</b> |
| Possible seats in elected Parliament | 47          | 131         | 102         | 29         | 38          | 32          | 31          | 410          |

# Financial considerations

## The political parties

Each of the political groups in the European Parliament receives regular finance out of the Parliament's own budget for the employment of a secretariat, the publication of documents, the holding of group meetings, etc.

In addition, special sums of money were allocated to the groups in both the 1978 and 1979 Community budgets specifically for "information on direct elections". Some of this money is being spent centrally — for example, to finance the establishment of the People's Party or the ELD. Some is being re-distributed to the national parties.

Table 4

|                        | 1978<br>£m | 1979<br>£m |
|------------------------|------------|------------|
| Socialists             | 1.00       | 1.49       |
| People's Party         | .81        | 1.20       |
| Liberals and Democrats | .56        | .89        |
| EPD                    | .33        | .50        |
| Communists             | .33        | .50        |
| Conservatives          | .27        | .46        |
| (Independents)         | .015       | .015       |

## MEPs' pay

One aspect of the elections which is still not entirely settled is the pay and conditions of the elected Members.

The legal basis for any decision would appear to be Article 13 of the Community Act (see p.3); under this, the Council is required to act "unanimously on a proposal from the Assembly", and after "endeavouring to reach agreement with the Assembly in a conciliation committee".

So far, Parliament has made no official proposal, although an unofficial suggestion has been made based on Commissioners' earnings which would give a UK Member £13,244 gross, £8,960 net of tax.

However, in December 1978 the heads of national governments met in Brussels and reached an informal agreement that:

- MEPs should receive the same salaries as national MPs from the same country;
- these should be paid from national budgets; and
- be subject to national tax.

This proposal would give a UK

Member £6,887, or about £5,000 net. (see Table 5).

So far, no formal steps have been taken to reconcile these positions. Nor have any proposals been made on expenses, secretarial and research assistant allowances, pension schemes, etc.

Table 5

Relative MPs pay and tax  
(Source, Hansard 14 December 1978)

|             | Annual Salary<br>£ | Income* Tax<br>£ |
|-------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Belgium     | 23,009             | 2,768            |
| Denmark     | 12,932             | 5,629            |
| France      | 21,850             | 987              |
| Germany     | 24,000             | 6,545            |
| Ireland     | 6,755              | 1,420            |
| Italy       | 12,166             | 300              |
| Luxembourg  | 4,557              | Nil              |
| Netherlands | 21,520             | 5,577            |
| UK          | 6,897              | 1,643            |

\*paid by married man with 2 children (assuming no other allowances).



European Elections Information Programme, Tel. 727.8090 Ex. 260, 262 & 263

A public information campaign on the European Elections begins on 12 February. It will include:—

- 12 Large exhibitions and 56 small exhibitions
- Audio-visual aids (film, film strips, slides)
- Publications (e.g. booklet 'Your Voice in Europe', leaflet 'What's so special about 7 June')
- Posters and wall-charts

All material from P.O. Box 1979, London SE1 5JZ, Tel. 237.4921