

# EUROPEAN ELECTIONS BRIEFING 5

June 1978

The European Elections Act received the Royal Assent on Friday May 5. Britain thus became the fifth Community country to complete the legislation for direct elections to the European Parliament.

Since then, the three Boundary Commissions for England, Scotland and Wales have published their proposals for the division of Great Britain into 79 "Euro-constituencies" (Northern Ireland is to be a single, three-Member constituency.)

Local authorities and other interested parties are now able to suggest amendments before the final boundaries are fixed.

## Boundary procedure

The English and Welsh Boundary Commissions published their recommendations on May 22 (see pp.2 and 3). In the case of England, the average electorate for the 66 constituencies is 516,436; in the case of the four Welsh seats the average is 513,783. Nearly all the suggested constituencies are within a bracket of 50,000 above or below these figures.

Representations had to be made within a month of the publication date to the appropriate Boundary Commission.

The Scottish Boundary Commission published its proposals on June 5 (see p.4). The average electorate for the 8 Scottish constituencies is 473,256; and there is a greater variation than in the case of England and Wales. The North of Scotland constituency, for example, would have 296,473 voters; the Lothians 594,758.

Representations to the Scottish Commission also have to be made within a month of the publication date.

## Party balance

Had a European Election taken place on the basis of these constituencies in October 1974, the result would had been:

<i>Labour:</i>	40
<i>Conservative:</i>	35
<i>SNP:</i>	3

The 3 Northern Ireland seats would probably have split:

<i>UUUC:</i>	2
<i>SDLP:</i>	1

## Positions of the Parties

All the major British political parties are now committed to participate in the European Elections next year.

The **Conservative Party** is already advanced in its preparations: a resolution in favour of European Elections was first passed at the Party Conference of 1976. Interviewing has been taking place to compile a European candidates list at Cental Office; and arrangements have been made to bring into existence European Constituency Councils and selection committees as soon as the boundaries are finalised.

## Where will Parliament meet ?

The European Parliament at present meets regularly in three places: Luxembourg, Strasbourg and Brussels. Plenary sessions, held on average for one week in the month, are divided between Luxembourg and Strasbourg. Most committee meetings are held in Brussels.

The existing Parliament has found this situation both inconvenient and expensive. Even more serious is the question of where the elected Parliament will meet.

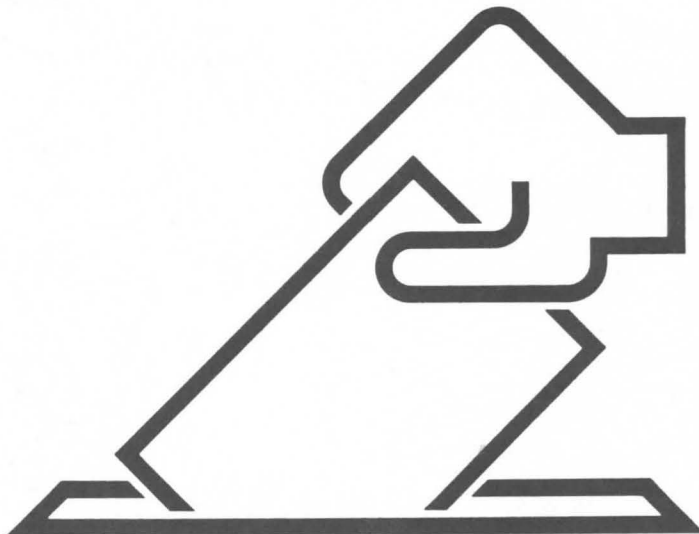
1. It is clear that facilities at none of the three present seats are adequate for a Parliament of 410. In the case of **Strasbourg**, the Chamber at the Palace of Europe is large enough, but accommodation for staff is inadequate. The Strasbourg local authority is therefore envisaging the construction in the next year of 500 new offices.

In the case of **Luxembourg**, where most of the Parliament's present staff of 1,700 are resident, the present Chamber is far too small. The Luxembourg Government has, however, proposed the construction of a large, new Parliament building: "Centre 300". This would also provide offices for

Members and their staff.

In the case of **Brussels**, the European Parliament itself is proposing to move to larger premises.

2. However, the European Parliament has on several occasions insisted that the proper solution is a single seat. Unfortunately, the power to decide on the meeting place does not rest with the Parliament. The relevant decision is that of "the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States on the provisional location of certain Institutions and Departments of the Communities", taken in April 1965. Any change would require a similar decision by the national governments.





## Wales

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



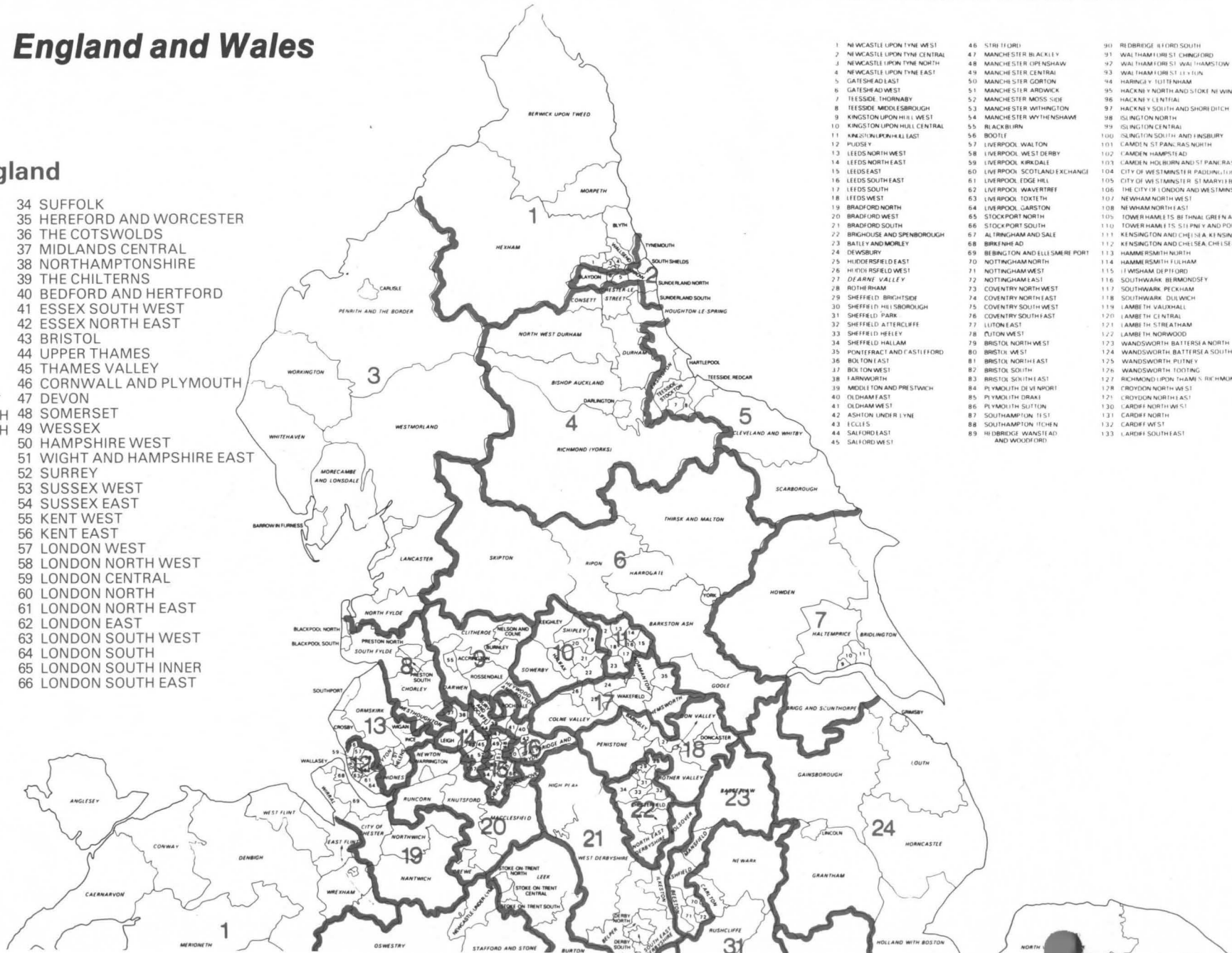
# Proposed European Constituency Boundaries in

## England and Wales

### England

- 1 NORTHUMBRIA
- 2 SOUTH TYNE AND WEAR
- 3 CUMBRIA
- 4 DURHAM
- 5 CLEVELAND
- 6 YORKSHIRE CENTRAL
- 7 HUMBERSIDE
- 8 LANCASHIRE CENTRAL
- 9 LANCASHIRE EAST
- 10 YORKSHIRE WEST
- 11 LEEDS
- 12 LIVERPOOL
- 13 LANCASHIRE WEST
- 14 GREATER MANCHESTER WEST
- 15 GREATER MANCHESTER SOUTH
- 16 GREATER MANCHESTER NORTH
- 17 YORKSHIRE SOUTH WEST
- 18 YORKSHIRE SOUTH
- 19 CHESHIRE WEST
- 20 CHESHIRE EAST
- 21 DERBYSHIRE
- 22 SHEFFIELD
- 23 NOTTINGHAM
- 24 LINCOLNSHIRE
- 25 SALOP AND STAFFORD
- 26 STAFFORDSHIRE EAST
- 27 MIDLANDS WEST
- 28 BIRMINGHAM NORTH
- 29 BIRMINGHAM SOUTH
- 30 MIDLANDS EAST
- 31 LEICESTER
- 32 CAMBRIDGESHIRE
- 33 NORFOLK

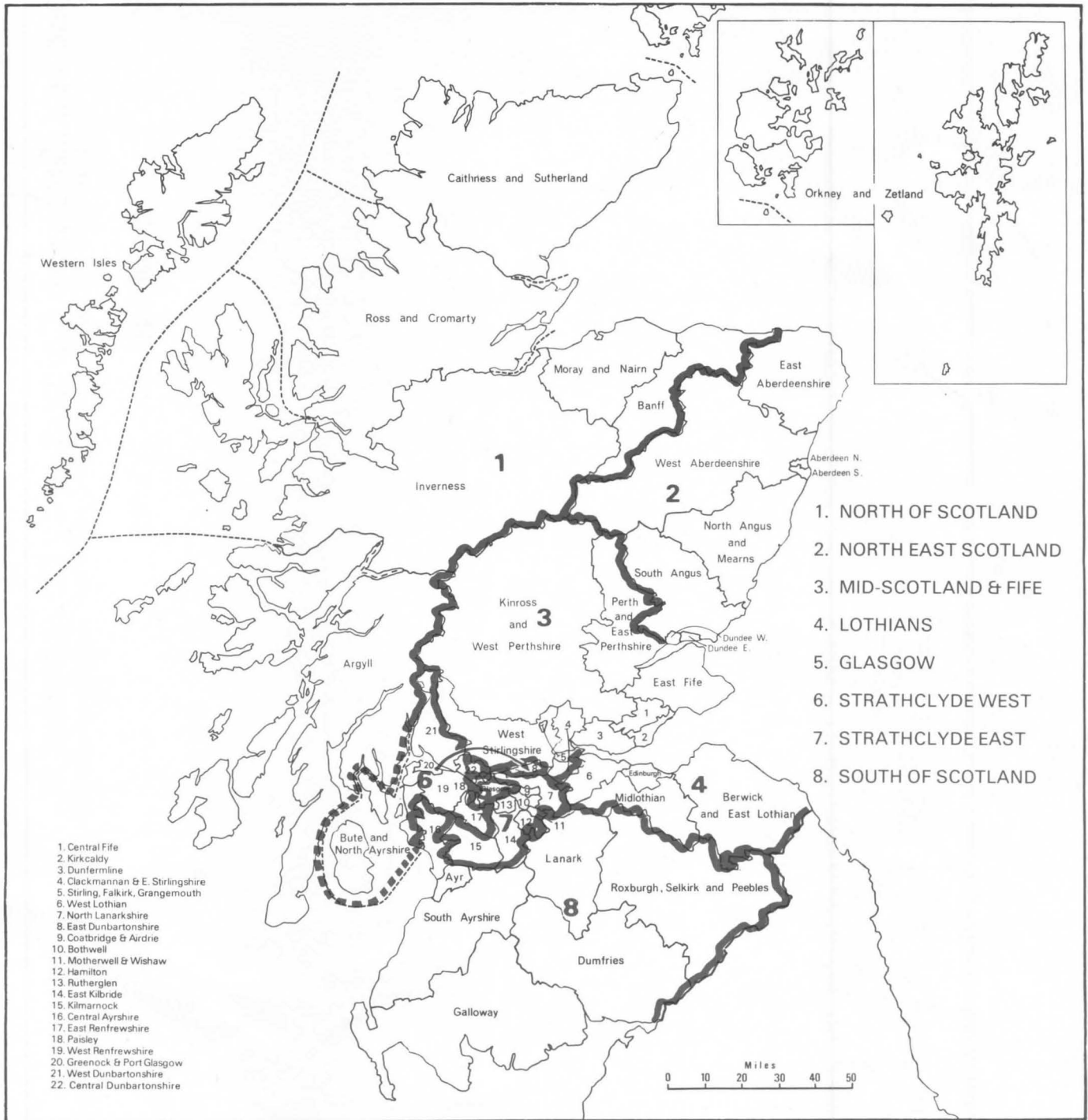
- 34 SUFFOLK
- 35 HERFORD AND WORCESTER
- 36 THE COTSWOLDS
- 37 MIDLANDS CENTRAL
- 38 NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
- 39 THE CHILTERN
- 40 BEDFORD AND HERTFORD
- 41 ESSEX SOUTH WEST
- 42 ESSEX NORTH EAST
- 43 BRISTOL
- 44 UPPER THAMES
- 45 THAMES VALLEY
- 46 CORNWALL AND PLYMOUTH
- 47 DEVON
- 48 SOMERSET
- 49 WESSEX
- 50 HAMPSHIRE WEST
- 51 WIGHT AND HAMPSHIRE EAST
- 52 SURREY
- 53 SUSSEX WEST
- 54 SUSSEX EAST
- 55 KENT WEST
- 56 KENT EAST
- 57 LONDON WEST
- 58 LONDON NORTH WEST
- 59 LONDON CENTRAL
- 60 LONDON NORTH
- 61 LONDON NORTH EAST
- 62 LONDON EAST
- 63 LONDON SOUTH WEST
- 64 LONDON SOUTH
- 65 LONDON SOUTH INNER
- 66 LONDON SOUTH EAST



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| 42 ASHTON UNDER LYNE          | 87 SOUTHAMPTON TEST                 | 131 CARDIFF NORTH                            |
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| 44 SALFORD EAST               | 89 HILDRIDGE WANDSTEAD AND WOODFORD | 133 CARDIFF SOUTH EAST                       |
| 45 SALFORD WEST               |                                     |  |

# Proposed European Constituency Boundaries in Scotland



Graphics Group S.D.O. January 1974

	<i>Comm.</i>	<i>Soc.</i>	<i>CD</i>	<i>EPD</i>	<i>Con.</i>	<i>Lib.</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
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

Votes for parties supporting each European Parliament group at the last elections (figures in millions). Corrected table from previous EEB 4, April 1978.