

The composition of the Fourth Assembly

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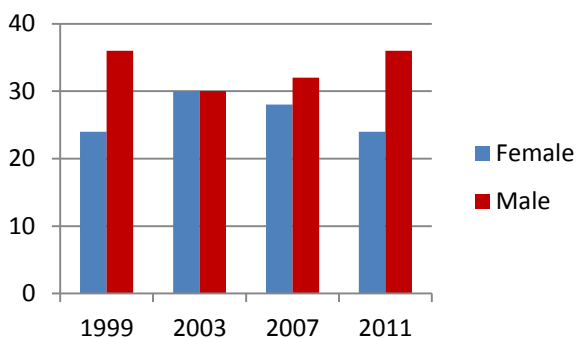
A quarter of Assembly Members did not seek re-election in the 2011 election, resulting in the largest turnover of membership since the Assembly was created in 1999. What changes has this brought to the make-up of the Assembly?

At the 2011 election, 15 Assembly Members in the Third Assembly – 25 per cent - did not seek re-election. This has contributed to the largest turnover of membership since the Assembly came into being. Further changes, arising from the election itself and seats changing hands between political parties, means that of the 60 Assembly Members, 23 are new members.

Gender and BME representation

In the first Assembly election in 1999, 24 women and 36 men were elected. This was seen as significant as women's political representation in Wales had been historically low in both the UK Parliament and at local government level. The 2003 election delivered an exact 50:50 split between women and men leading to the Assembly being hailed as the world leader in equal representation. The Third Assembly had 28 women and 32 men.

Male / Female split following each Assembly election



Source: Research Service

The Fourth Assembly has seen a fall in female representation to the same level as that of 1999 with 24 female and 36 male Assembly Members.

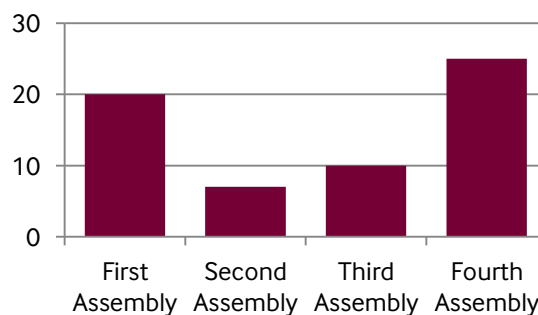
The estimated Black and Ethnic Minority (BME) population of Wales is around two per cent. The

first two Assemblies had no BME Assembly Members and the first BME Assembly Member was elected in 2007. In the Fourth Assembly there are two BME Assembly Members.

Political experience

There are 20 Assembly Members in the Fourth Assembly who were first elected in 1999. Seven Assembly Members were first elected in 2003 and ten in 2007.

Breakdown of when current AMs were first elected to the Assembly

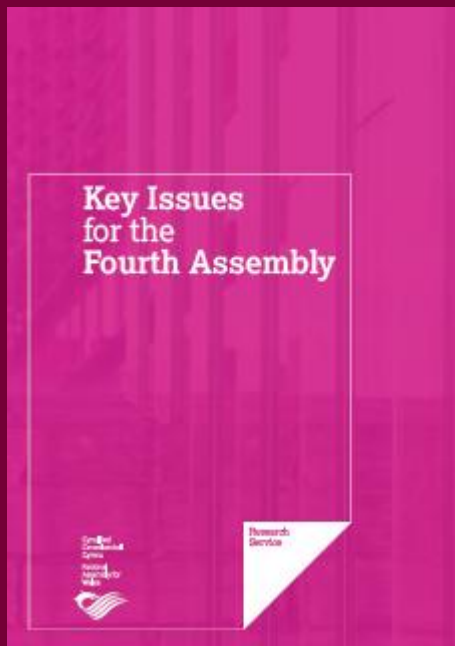


Source: Research Service

New Assembly Members bring political experience with them from other walks of life. Sixteen new Assembly Members are or have served as councillors, including three that have been council leaders. Other new Assembly Members include two former Members of Parliament and two who have worked as special advisers to Welsh Ministers.

Of significance, given the enhanced powers of the Fourth Assembly in respect of legislation, is an increase in Assembly Members with a legal background. There were four Assembly Members with legal expertise in the Third Assembly, this has risen to eight in the Fourth Assembly.

Article taken from Research Service publication



Key Issues for the Fourth Assembly

This document has been specially prepared for Assembly Members by the Research Service. It sets out some of the key issues likely to matter to Members during the Fourth Assembly.

[Key Issues for the Fourth Assembly](#)

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