

Doc. 10993
28 June 2006

Application to initiate a monitoring procedure to investigate electoral fraud in the United Kingdom

Motion for a resolution
presented by Mr Wilshire and others

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only the members who have signed it

Article 3 of the First Protocol, signed in Paris on 20 March 1952, to the European Convention on Human Rights places Member States of the Council of Europe under an obligation to “hold free elections ... which will ensure the free expression of the opinion of the people in the choice of the legislature”.

On 2001 the United Kingdom introduced postal and proxy voting on demand.

In June 2003 the UK's Electoral Commission (an independent body charged with ensuring that UK elections are free and fair and recommending improvements to the law) called on the British Government to introduce more robust security arrangements for absent voting.

In August 2004 the UK's Electoral Commission repeated its call (as the British Government had not acted on its previous proposals).

On 3 April 2005 the Chairman of the UK's Electoral Commission stated that the large increase in postal voting at the forthcoming General Election could be open to abuse.

On 4 April 2005 a judge hearing a case of alleged postal vote fraud declared the council elections in two wards in Birmingham void and stated that the evidence of electoral fraud “would disgrace a banana republic”.

On 8 April 2005 a Labour councillor in Blackburn was jailed of stealing 233 people's postal votes in 2002.

On 14 April 2005 the head of Birmingham's electoral services team was suspended after the discovery of 1,000 uncounted postal votes.

On 21 April 2005 a judge accepted that there were insufficient postal vote safeguards.

On 26 April 2005 the UK's Electoral Commission issued a statement stating that the postal voting process needs to be strengthened and that voter registration needs to be reformed (as the British Government had not acted on its 2003 and 2004 recommendations).

On 3 May 2005 the Court of Appeal upheld the decisions taken by the Election Court on 4 April 2005.

On 12 May 2005 it was revealed that the police were investigating 25 allegations of electoral fraud in 19 parliamentary constituencies.

On 27 April 2006 it was revealed that police were investigating postal vote fraud in Tower Hamlets (London).

On 28 April 2006 it was revealed that police were investigating postal vote fraud in six other London boroughs and in Birmingham.

On 5 May 2006 allegations were made of intimidation and mishandling of ballot papers in Surrey and of vote rigging in London and Birmingham.

On 5 June 2006 it was revealed that police were investigating allegations of postal vote fraud (and other offences) in Coventry.

In view of the growing body of evidence that widespread absent vote fraud is taking place in the United Kingdom, the Assembly resolves (as provided for in Resolution 1115, as amended by Resolution 1431) to initiate a monitoring procedure in respect of electoral fraud in the United Kingdom.

*Signed*¹:

WILSHIRE, David, United Kingdom, EDG
Baroness, HOOPER, Gloria, United Kingdom, EDG
Baroness, KNIGHT OF COLLINGTREE, Jill, United Kingdom, EDG
BOSAK, Krzysztof, Poland, EDG
CHOPE, Christopher, United Kingdom, EDG
EVANS, Nigel, United Kingdom, EDG
FRASER, Christopher, United Kingdom, EDG
HARVEY, Nick, United Kingdom, ALDE
KOLESNIKOV, Victor, Russian Federation, EDG
KOROBAYNIKOV, Anatoliy, Russian Federation, EDG
MALINS, Humfrey, United Kingdom, EDG
MESSERSCHMIDT, Morten, Denmark, EDG
RAU, Zbigniew, Poland, EDG
SKARGA, Dmitry, Russian Federation, EDG
TULAEV, Nikolay, Russian Federation, EDG
WOLDSETH, Karin S., Norway, EDG
ZACCHERA, Marco, Italy, EDG
ZINGERIS, Emanuelis, Lithuania, EDG

¹ SOC: Socialist Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democratic Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: not registered in a group