
Provincial Council Elections 2014

Reading into the margins

Western and Southern Provinces

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Verité Research aims to be a leader in the provision of information and analysis for negotiations and policy making in Asia, while also promoting dialogue and education for social development in the region. The firm contributes actively to research and dialogue in the areas of economics, sociology, politics, law, and media, and provides services in data collection, information verification, strategy development, and decision analysis.

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Highlights

Sri Lanka's Western and Southern provinces went to the polls on 29 March 2014. The Western province (pop. 5,822,507), the largest by population, is also the most ethnically diverse. The Southern province (pop. 2,465,474) is the ruling UPFA's core constituency. Together, these provinces contain 40.9% of the island's population and account for over half its GDP.

UPFA

[Western -11.4%, Southern -9.8%] In contrast to last September's Central and North-Western province elections, in which the governing UPFA's vote share declined only marginally from its post-war 2009 high, the UPFA's vote share decreased substantially in this election. Western province UPFA vote share fell by 11.4%, a little more than the Southern province decline of 9.8%. The UPFA decline in eastern Colombo suburbs, including Maharagama and Homagama, is significant as this region is the core support base for its influential Sinhala nationalist JHU and NFF coalition partners.

UNP

[Western -3%, Southern +0.7%] Despite the overall opposition gain, the UNP's vote share fell by 3% in Western province compared to 2009. Interrogating the data, the UNP's core vote remains constant. The losses originate from the DPF contesting separately in this election. In Southern province, the UNP's position improved only marginally, largely in electorates represented by Sajith Premadasa and his allies.

DP & JVP

[DP: Western 8%, Southern 6.3%; JVP: Western +3.7%, Southern +2.9%] The Democratic Party, led by General Sarath Fonseka, and the JVP performed well. The Democratic Party contested independently in the province for the first time, gaining an impressive 8% of the Western vote and 6.3% of the Southern vote. After losing vote share in last year's provincial elections in the Central and North-Western provinces, the JVP tripled its vote share in the Western province, while also gaining ground in its traditional Southern base. Together the two parties well exceeded the DNA's 2010 vote share, of which they were the two main coalition members.

DPF, SLMC & ACMC

Minority parties performed well in this election. The ACMC, which is a UPFA coalition partner, and the DPF both performed strongly. The DPF won two seats and the ACMC, contesting for the first time, won one. The SLMC maintained its position - despite considerable criticism for remaining in government. ■

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Western Province

UPFA

Post-war, in 2009, the UPFA polled a record high 64.7% in the Western Province. Since then its vote share has gradually declined, falling to 58.6% in 2010 and 53.4% this year. UPFA vote share declined in all three Western province districts, but Colombo's decline was especially pronounced at 12.4% (almost 100,000 votes).

The UPFA campaigned on a nationalist platform, asking voters to demonstrate that they reject the UNHRC resolution on Sri Lanka by voting for the UPFA. This message, as analysed in Verité Research's Media Analysis, a weekly analysis of the Sinhala and Tamil press, is losing credibility, and in this election failed to galvanize voters in Colombo's Eastern suburbs – the core support base for the JHU and NFF, the UPFA's nationalist coalition partners. The UPFA decline in these polling divisions was greater than its 12.4% average decline across the district. Preferential data tells a similar story. Compared to 2009, the strongly Sinhala nationalist (UPFA coalition partner) National Freedom Front's Roger Seneviratne lost 8400 votes, a 15.9% decline. The JHU's second most popular candidate, Nishantha Sri Warnasinghe, was fourth from the bottom among the elected UPFA candidates.

The JHU's Udaya Gammampila was an exception to this trend. He was able to maintain his prefer-

ence vote share, losing less than a thousand votes compared to 2009.

The UPFA and UNP decline was greater in urban polling divisions than rural polling divisions. For details on the method used for urban/rural classification please see Annexure III.

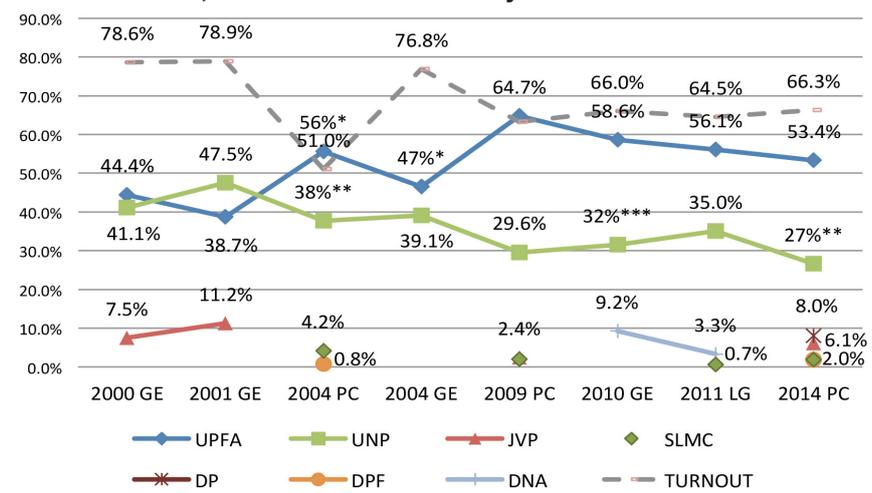
UNP

The UNP's vote share declined by 3%, leading to a loss of 4 seats. However, the actual decline in the UNP's core vote was marginal. Its

vote share only declined by 1% – the remaining 2% decline occurred as the DPF, its former coalition partner, contested this election alone.

The Western province, due to its affluence and Colombo district's ethnic diversity, has historically tended to favour the UNP. But the UNP was unable to capitalize on rising economic discontent, governance issues and the incumbency disadvantage to increase its vote.

UPFA decline, UNP core vote steady



Sinhala nationalists abandoning UPFA?

	UPFA %	UNP %	JVP %	DP %
Homagama	-13.8	+1.4	+5.8	6
Kaduwela	-12.9	-5.2	+7.2	10
Kesbewa	-16.4	+2.2	+6.1	7.3
Kotte	-14.3	-8.3	+7.4	11.8
Maharagama	-15.2	-5.8	+7.9	11.9
COLOMBO	-12.4	-6.5	-10	7.3

UPFA decline less in rural electorates

	UPFA %	UNP %	JVP %	DP %
Urban	-12.2	-5.3	+4.3	7.7
Rural	-9.6	-1.1	+2.4	8

JVP

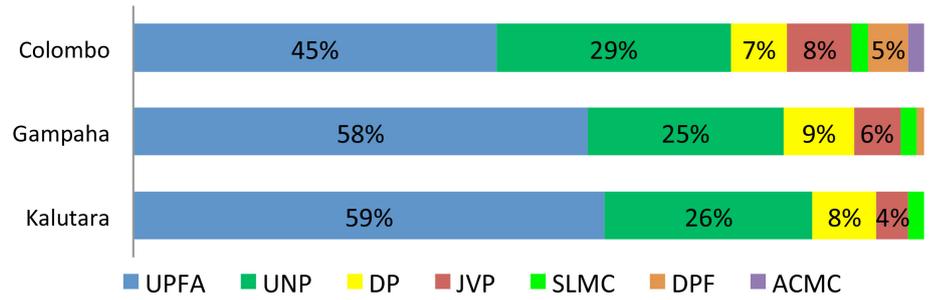
The last few years have been somewhat tumultuous for the JVP. The party experienced two major defections: the first led by the nationalist Wimal Weerawansa and the second by a group that formed the Frontline Socialist Party (which did not contest). Its vote share also declined in last year's provincial elections.

With an important leadership change and overall re-grouping, including fielding a chief ministerial candidate for the first time, the JVP won 6.1% of the vote in this election, 3.7% more compared to 2009. The +5.2% swing in Colombo district was particularly impressive – the JVP succeeded in gaining over 52,000 voters compared to 2009.

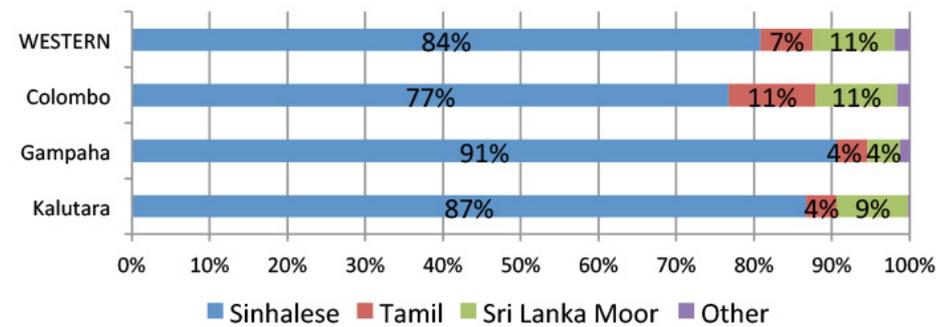
Outside Colombo, the JVP's success appears to have been greater in the suburbs and urbanizing provincial areas, where the UPFA's decline was the greatest. For example, in Gampaha, in the suburban and relatively industrial inland electorates of Kelaniya, Ja-Ela, Gampaha, Biyagama and Maharagama, the JVP averaged 4.7%, compared to its 2.5% average in the Attanagalla, Mirigama, Divulapitiya, Dompe and Minuwangoda electorates.

A similar pattern occurs in Kalutara district, where its vote share was highest in urbanizing, semi-urban electorates including Kalutara, Panadura and Horana polling divisions.

UPFA dominates outside Colombo



Ethnic composition 2012



DP

The DP's success is especially impressive as the DP received relatively little media coverage compared to other political parties. The party fared well in the strongholds of nationalist parties (JHU, NFF), gaining an average vote share of 9.4%. However, it underperformed in ethnically diverse inner-city polling divisions, gaining less than 3% in the Colombo North and Central polling divisions.

Quick examination of the data reveals a similar pattern in Gampaha and to some extent in Kalutara: Western Province DP vote share is below average in (usually ethnically and religiously diverse)

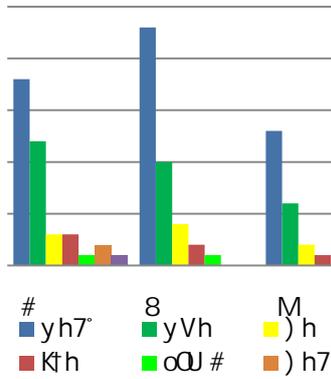
coastal divisions and above average in mostly Sinhala-Buddhist inland electorates.

DPF, SLMC, ACMC & CWC

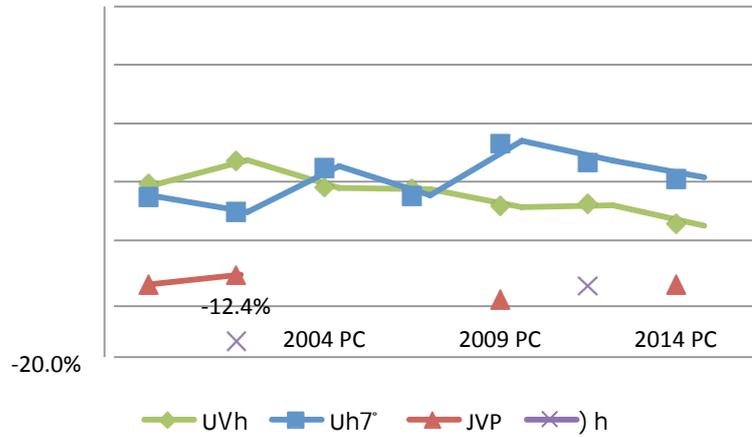
Parties with ethnic voter bases performed reasonably well in this election. The DPF, contesting provincial elections for the first time under its own banner since 2004, gained two seats and 2% of vote share. The SLMC, despite criticism of its tempered position on minority issues, maintained its position. Rishad Bathiudeen's ACMC, a UPFA coalition partner contesting in the Western province for the first time, gained one seat. Unlike at the Central province polls, the CWC performed poorly in this election.

Western Province Fact Sheet

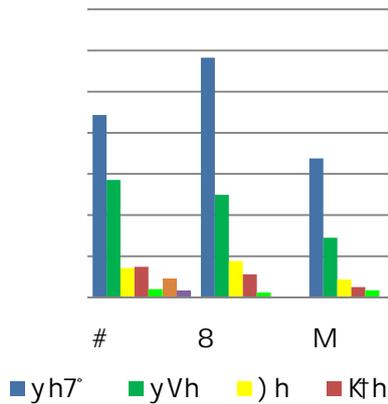
Seats 2014



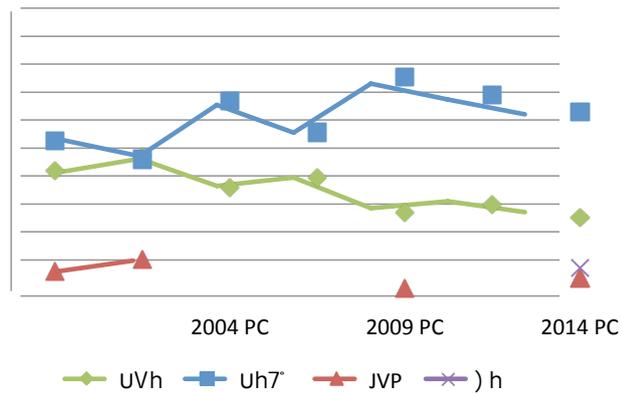
Colombo Vote Share 2004 - 2014



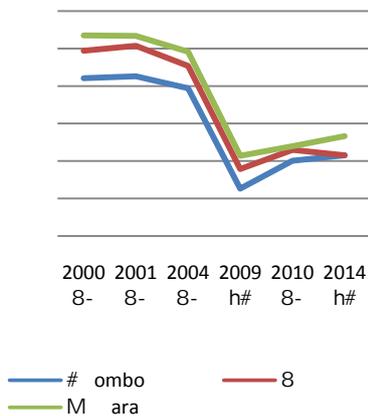
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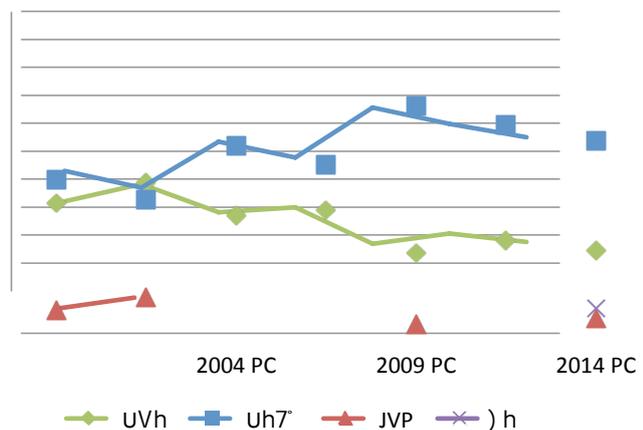
Gampaha Vote Share 2004 - 2014



Voter Turnout



Kalutara Vote Share 2004 - 2014



Southern Province

UPFA

Post-war, the UPFA polled a record high 67.9% in the Southern Province, 2009. Since then its vote share declined, falling to 65% in 2010 and 58.1% this year. It now has 33 of the provincial council's 55 seats, compared to 38 in 2009.

The UPFA's share in all three districts has declined between 9% and 11% between 2009 and now.

Overall, the UPFA performed better in poorer, monoethnic rural electorates than in more diverse, wealthy urban electorates. For example, the UNP won a plurality in the Galle polling division, but the UPFA won 59.1% in the rural, inland Baddegama polling division.

The overall 9.8% UPFA decline in the Southern province was not as steep as its 11.4% decline in the Western province, but was still close. The decline in the relatively urban Galle electorate was close to the 12% Western province fall.

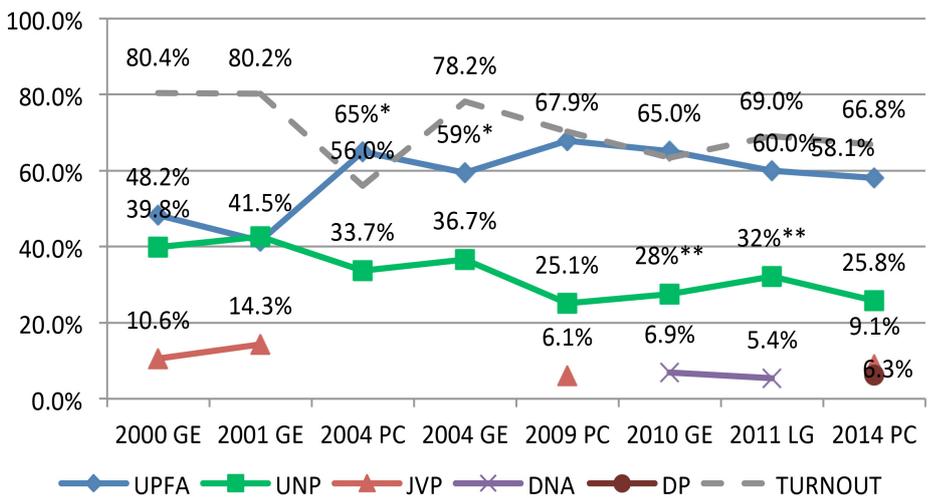
Interestingly, 'development' doesn't seem to be ensuring votes. In the Rajapaksa's home district, the site of significant infrastructure investment, UPFA vote share declined by 9.5%. Hambantota is still the district with the lowest UPFA vote share in Southern Province, 57.4%, compared to Matara's 59.2% and Galle's 57.6%.

UNP

The UNP fared better in the South than in the Western Province, increasing its vote share by 0.7%. Its performance in the Rajapaksa's Hambantota district was better than in the rest of the province, gaining 4.6%. In Galle and Matara, its vote share remained steady or decreased. In Hambantota, UNP

vote share declined in Beliatta and increased marginally in Mul-kirigala. However, in Tangalle and Tissamaharama, its vote share increased by 6.3% and 9.7% respectively. It is probably no coincidence that Sajith Premadasa MP's office and locus of operations is in Tissamaharama.

UPFA decline, JVP & DP gain



Vote Share Comparison: 2009 vs 2014

	UPFA %	UNP %	JVP %	DP %
Galle	-10.8	-0.7	+2.1	8.9
Matara	-8.8	-0.3	+4.6	5.2
Hambantota	-9.5	+4.6	+1.9	3.1

DP

The DP performed less strongly than in Western Province, winning 6.3% rather than 8%. Also, in contrast to the JVP the DP's support is less pronounced in the deep South. In Galle, Sarath Fonseka's home district, the DP won 8.9% of the vote, but in Hambantota it only won 3.1%.

The DP tends to perform poorly in electorates where the UNP and JVP do well. Southern province results in particular indicate that the DP and JVP are competing for the protest vote.

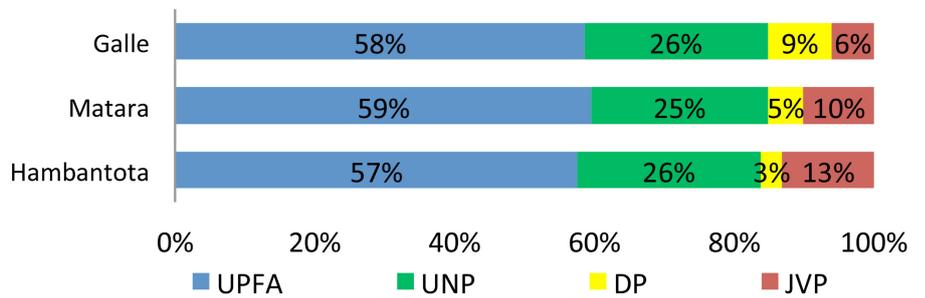
Preliminary correlation analysis between vote gains/losses by the DP, JVP, UNP and UPFA suggest that voter defection from the UPFA to the JVP was stronger than from the UNP to the JVP. And, conversely, that the defection from the UNP to the DP was stronger than from the UPFA to the DP.

In Galle district, the DP performed better in coastal electorates e.g. Ratgama, Habaraduwa, than in inland electorates e.g. Hiniduma, Bentara-Elpitiya. One possible explanation is that the DP led by the non-*Govigama* caste Fonseka, was better able to mobilize non-*Govigama* voters, who comprise a greater share of voters in coastal electorates compared to inland electorates.

Hambantota District 2009 - 2014

	UPFA %	UNP %	JVP %	DP %
Beliatta	64.9 (-2.4)	19.4 (-1.8)	11.1 (0)	4.4
Mulkirigala	61 (-3.2)	25.4 (+0.6)	10.3 (-0.1)	3
Tangalle	56.2 (-13.9)	23.1 (+5.5)	16.3 (+4.5)	4
Tissamaharama	51.9 (-13.5)	33.5 (+9.7)	13 (+2.4)	1.5

UPFA, UNP Steady | DP, JVP Inverse Link



JVP

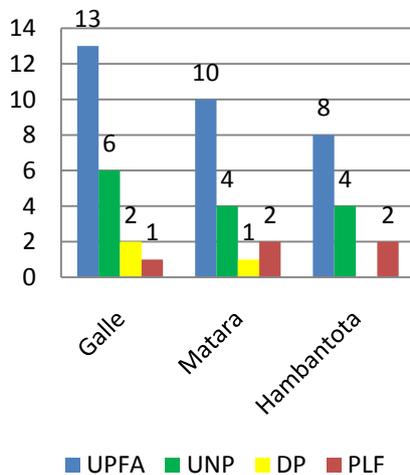
The JVP increased its vote share by a third compared to 2009 to win 9.1% of the vote, which translates into 5 seats.

JVP vote share changes varied from -1% to +8%. JVP gains were above average on the coastal belt south of Galle. With the exception of Akuressa, all the polling divisions where the JVP exceeded a 4% increase in vote share were on the coastal belt south of Galle.

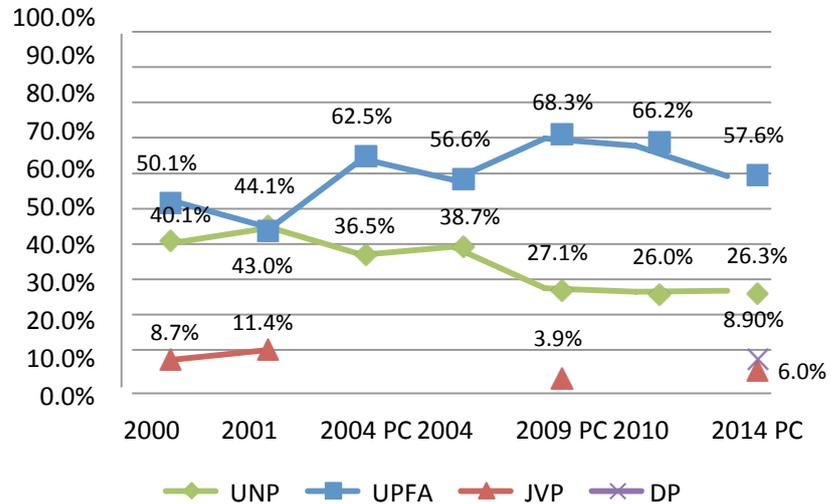
Taking a more long-term view, this election brings the JVP closer to its immediate postmillennial highs. Its results in this election are not only a substantial improvement on its 2009 performance but also its performance in the 2010 general election. The JVP's 9.1% alone is also greater than the results of the DNA, which was essentially a JVP and DP alliance, which polled 6.9% in 2010. ■

Southern Province Fact Sheet

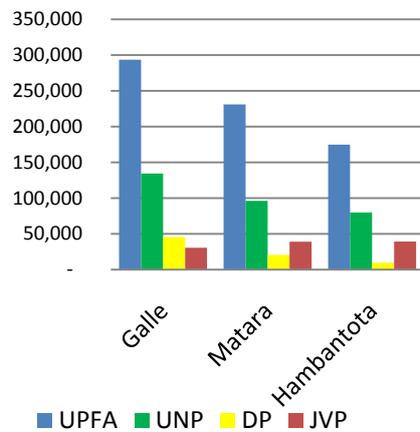
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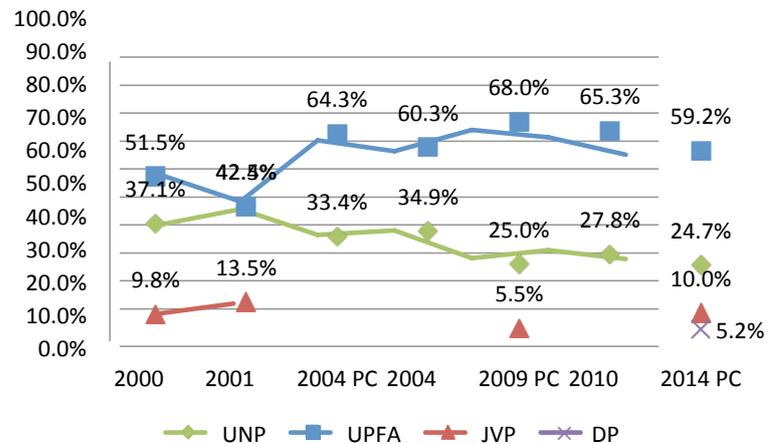
Galle Vote Share 2000 - 2014



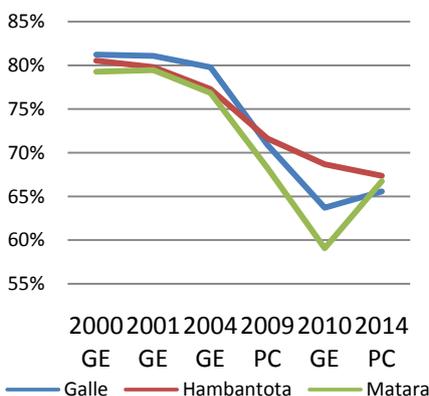
Votes 2014



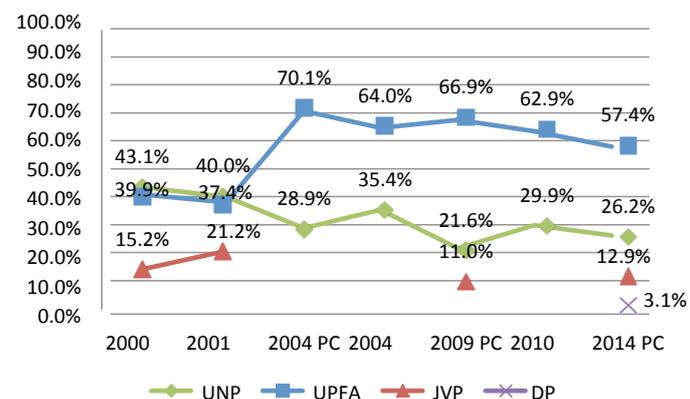
Matara Vote Share 2000 - 2014



Voter Turnout



Hambantota Vote Share 2000 - 2014



Princelings, Media & Governance

Princelings & Media

New entrants from political families did well both in the Southern and Western provinces. Hirunika Premachandra, Senal Welgama and Pasanda Yapa Abeywardene, all the children of prominent politicians won the highest number of preference votes in Colombo, Kalutara and Matara districts respectively. Further down the list there were also many others who had ‘inherited’ constituencies from politically successful relations.

S. M. Marrikar and Susil Kindelipitiya, Capital Maharajah media employees, topped the UNP and DP parties preference lists respectively in the districts they were contesting. Susara Dinal, another Capital Maharajah media employee, also performed well. As noted the UNP did well in Buddhika Pathirana MP’s Akuressa electorate, increasing its vote share by 3.9%. Buddhika Pathirana is a Capital Maharajah political programme host.

Governance

Governance issues appear to have played a role in this election. Consider the Borella and Kollonawa, Gampaha and Mahara polling divisions: these polling divisions are the site of the Wanathamulla and Weliweriya crises (see definitions section for details).

In Borella and Kolonnawa, the UPFA and UNP decline, and the JVP and DP increase were roughly equivalent to their district average change, indicating that the Wanathamulla issue may not have had a significant effect. However, the JVP, which was closely involved

in the Wanathamulla issue, did do unusually well in Borella and Kolonnawa, compared to surrounding electorates, which is perhaps an indication of discontent translating into JVP support.

In Gampaha and Mahara polling divisions, the results are a little more conclusive. The UPFA’s decline was greater than the district average decline of 11.1%. The JVP and DP both exceeded their average district gains, 3.2% and 8.9% respectively. This could indicate that the Weliweriya crisis did have some effect on UPFA voting, especially in the Gampaha district.■

Governance Matters: 2009 to 2014

	UPFA %	UNP %	JVP %	DP %
Borella	-11.8	-8.1	+6.2	4.9
Kollonawa	-13.8	-4.2	+6	7.3
Gampaha	-15.7	-1.5	+4.8	12
Mahara	-12	-2	+4	10

Definitions and Disclaimers

Data for this analysis was sourced from Sri Lanka's Elections Department. 2011 local government data was sourced online.¹ 2014 preference vote data was sourced from the News-First media network.

Party Abbreviations

ACMC	All Ceylon Makkal Congress	JHU	Jathika Hela Urumaya National Freedom Front
UPFA	United People's Freedom Alliance	DNA	Democratic National Alliance
UNP	United National Party	CWC	Ceylon Workers Congress
DP	Democratic Party	SLMC	Sri Lanka Muslim Congress
DPF	Democratic People's Front		

Definitions & Key Information

Polling Division, District and Province

The polling division is the smallest electoral unit – they do not correspond to administrative units. An electoral district is comprised of a number of polling divisions, electoral districts correspond to administrative districts.

Provincial Councils

Established in 1987, by the 13th Amendment to the Constitution. Minority Tamil community demands for decentralizing and devolving political power were the driving force for reform. Councils have a five year term limit.

Voting System

Preferential voting where electors first choose the party, and then select up to three candidates from the party.

Seat Assignment

Based on a system of proportional representation. Each party gets seats in proportion to the votes received. The party with the highest number of votes gets 2 bonus seats in addition.

Wanathamulla

The site of the abduction and release of a *watte* (urban low income housing) resident, allegedly for resisting urban renewal efforts. See <http://newsfirst.lk/english/2014/02/may-seen-happened-cardboard-hero-wanathamulla-susil-kindelpitiya/21562> for some background.

Weliweriya

The region where a significant environmental crisis led to protests and the Army shooting protestors. For further details see <http://www.thesundayleader.lk/2013/08/11/the-cry-for-water-at-weliweriya/>

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Results_of_the_2011_Sri_Lankan_local_government_elections_by_province,_district_and_local_authority page 9 | 15

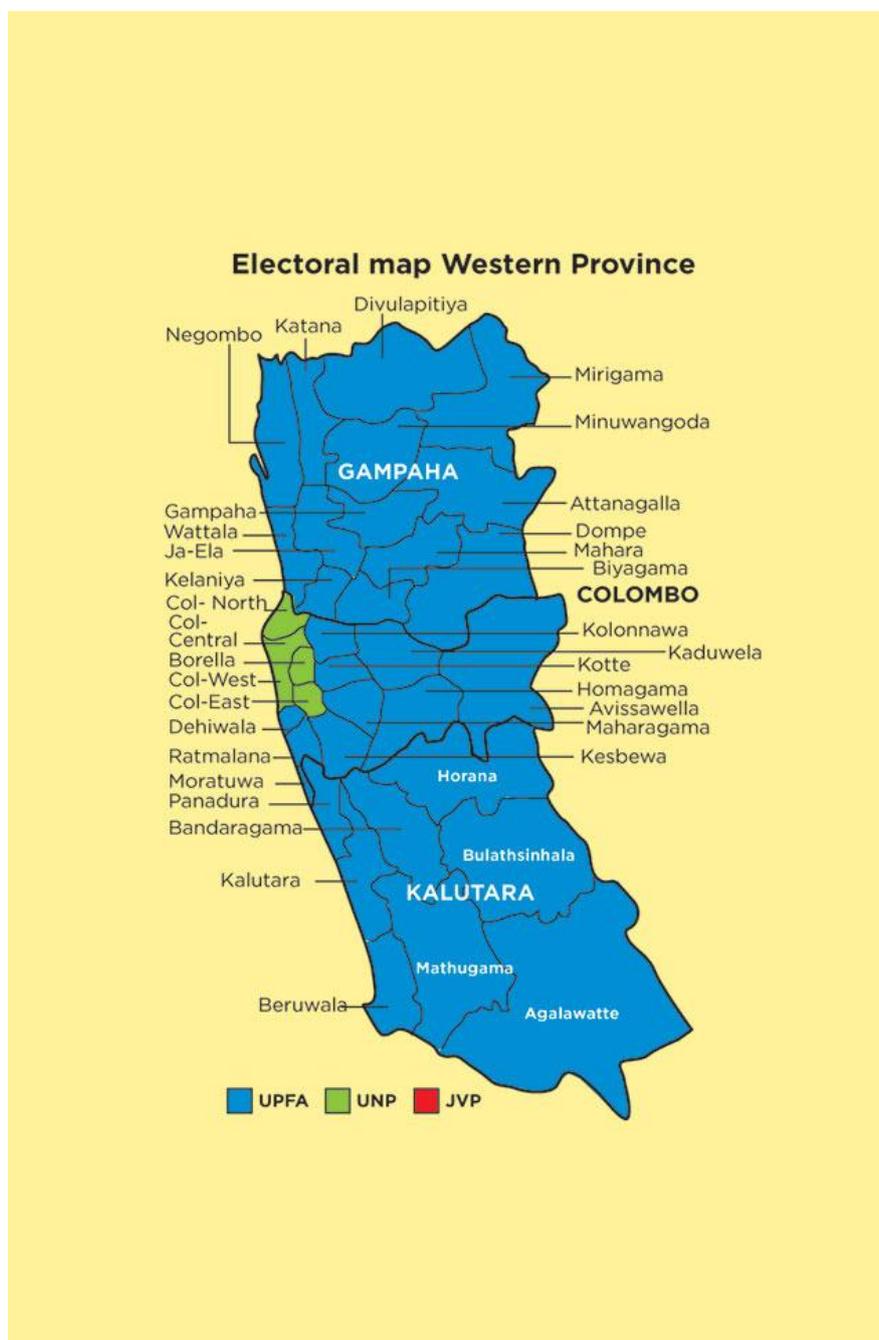
Annexure I: Vote share change 2009-2014

	UPFA %	UNP %	JVP %	DP %
WESTERN PROVINCE	-11.4	-4	+3.8	7.8
Agallawatta	-5.9	-1.4	+1.3	5.2
Attanagalla	-4.8	+0.2	+3.3	7.9
Avissawella	-8.6	-5.6	+3.7	6.1
Bandaragama	-9.8	-3.8	+1.5	10.6
Beruwela	-8.9	+10.1	+1.2	4.3
Biyagama	-12.5	-0.4	+4.3	9
Borella	-11.8	-8.1	+6.2	4.9
Colombo-Central	-10.1	-7.6	+1.8	2.5
Colombo-East	-11.5	-16	+5	6.2
Colombo-North	-10.7	-24.2	+1.4	2.6
Colombo-West	-5.3	-28.7	+2.8	5.1
Dehiwela	-15	-9.0	+4.8	9.6
Divulapitiya	-7.4	-1.5	+1.5	7.3
Dompe	-13	+3.4	+1.9	7.3
Horana	-13	-0.9	+3.5	7.4
Gampaha	-15.7	-1.5	+4.8	12
Homagama	-13.8	+1.4	+5.8	6
Ja-Ela	-11.5	-1.1	+4.1	8.5
Kaduwela	-12.9	-5.2	+7.2	10
Kalutara	-13.9	+3.2	+2.3	7.2
Katana	-13.1	-3.7	+2.6	10
Kelaniya	-11.6	-4.8	+5.2	10.6
Kesbewa	-16.4	+2.2	+6.1	7.3
Kolonnawa	-13.8	-4.2	+6	7.3
Kotte	-14.3	-8.3	+7.4	11.8
Matugama	-9.8	-1.8	+0.9	9
Mahara	-11.7	-2.4	+3.9	10.2
Maharagama	-15.2	-5.8	+7.9	11.9
Minuwangoda	-11.2	-0.8	+3.9	8.2
Mirigama	-6.9	-2.5	+2	7.8
Moratuwa	-11.1	-2.7	+4.1	7.9
Negambo	-13.2	+3.8	+2.3	5.3
Panadura	-15.2	+1.3	+2.9	9.1
Ratmalana	-13.2	-7.3	+6.4	10
Wattala	-7.8	-5	+2.6	7.4

Annexure I: Vote share change 2009-2014

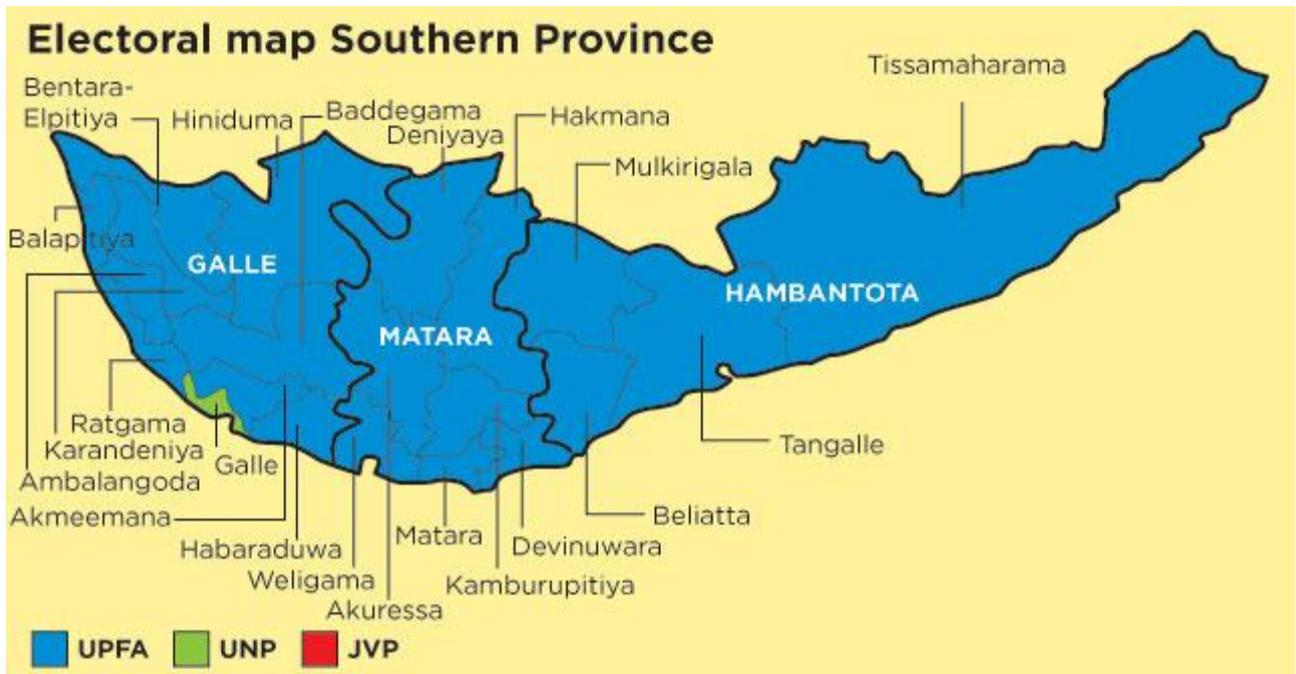
	UPFA %	UNP %	JVP %	DP %
SOUTHERN PROVINCE	-9.5	+0.1	+2.8	6.6
Galle	-12.6	-0.7	+8.2	8.9
Weligama	-10.2	+0.9	+8	5.3
Matara	-9.9	-4.4	+7.9	6.7
Akmeemana	-9.7	-9.1	+6.6	11.2
Akuressa	-11.7	+3.9	+5.5	2.5
Devinuwara	-5.3	-5.4	+5.1	5.8
Tangalle	-13.9	+5.5	+4.5	4
Hakmana	-9.3	+1.7	+2.5	5.2
Kamburupitiya	-6.4	-1.7	+2.5	5.9
Habaraduwa	-7.6	-7.3	+2.4	10.3
Tissamaharama	-13.5	+9.7	+2.4	1.5
Ratgama	-12.1	-2.4	+2.1	11.1
Ambalangoda	-12.8	-5.3	+1.4	16.1
Deniyaya	-7.8	+2.5	+1.1	4.2
Balapitiya	-15.9	+3.2	+1	11.2
Baddegama	-9.7	+1.9	+0.8	6.3
Bentara-Elpitiya	-11.2	+5.4	+0.6	4.9
Bulathsinhala	-5.8	-1.3	+0.4	5.2
Beliatta	-2.4	-1.8	0	4.4
Mulkirigala	-3.2	+0.6	-0.1	3
Karandeniya	-11.1	+3.2	-0.2	7.6
Hiniduma	-6.9	+4.3	-1.0	3.2

Annexure II: Electoral maps



Courtesy: Nation.lk

Annexure II: Electoral maps



Courtesy: Nation.lk

Annexure III: Western province geographic vote share change 2009-2014

Polling divisions are classified using the schema outlined in the Department of Census and Statistics Household Income and Expenditure Survey. The schema classifies geographical locations as urban or rural depending on the local government level the location comes under. Locations under municipal and urban councils are categorised as urban, and those under pradeshiya sabhas are categorized as rural.

Polling division were classified under this schema using data from the Ministry of Local Government and Provincial Councils to map polling divisions onto local government units. As polling divisions do not correspond to local government units perfectly, the mapping is an approximation.

Urban Polling Divisions

Polling Division	UPFA %	UNP %	JVP %	DP %
Avissawella	8.6	5.6	3.7	6.1
Beruwela	8.9	10.1	1.2	4.3
Borella	11.8	8.1	6.2	4.9
Colombo-Central	10.1	7.6	1.8	2.5
Colombo-East	11.5	16	5	6.2
Colombo-North	10.7	24.2	1.4	2.6
Colombo-West	5.3	28.7	2.8	5.1
Dehiwela	15	9	4.8	9.6
Horana	13	0.9	3.5	7.4
Gampaha	15.7	1.5	4.8	12
Ja Ela	11.5	1.1	4.1	8.5
Kaduwela	12.9	5.2	7.2	10
Kalutara	13.9	3.2	2.3	7.2
Kelaniya	11.6	4.8	5.2	10.6
Kesbewa	16.4	2.2	6.1	7.3
Kolonnawa	13.8	4.2	6	7.3
Kotte	14.3	8.3	7.4	11.8
Maharagama	15.2	5.8	7.9	11.9
Minuwangoda	11.2	0.8	3.9	8.2
Moratuwa	11.1	2.7	4.1	7.9
Negambo	13.2	3.8	2.3	5.3
Panadura	15.2	1.3	2.9	9.1
Ratmalana	13.2	7.3	6.4	10
Wattala	7.8	5	2.6	7.4
URBAN	-12.2	-5.3	4.3	7.7

Annexure III: Western province geographic vote share change 2009-2014

Rural Polling Divisions

Polling Division	UPFA %	UNP %	JVP %	DP %
Agalawatta	6	1	1	5
Attanagalla	5	0	3	8
Bandaragama	10	4	2	11
Biyagama	13	0	4	9
Divulapitiya	7	1	1	7
Dompe	13	3	2	7
Homagama	14	1	6	6
Katana	13	4	3	10
Matugama	10	2	1	9
Mahara	12	2	4	10
Mirigama	7	3	2	8
Bulathsinhala	6	1	0	5
RURAL	-9.6	-1.1	2.4	8



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