

# 58 Politics in practice

## A A referendum

In 2016 there was a **referendum** in the UK **concerning** membership of the EU: to remain in the EU, or to leave the EU. The **debate** **divided** the nation and created a huge amount of **conflict**, even within families. Eventually, in a very **closely-fought contest**, there was a **narrow majority** for 'leave' (51.9% versus 48.1%). The **turnout** was high (just over 72% of the **electorate** voted), but that still meant that the outcome was decided by only 37% of the total electorate, and some have questioned, therefore, to what extent the result really represents the democratic **will** of the people. The British government then spent three years trying to **negotiate** an agreement that the British parliament could support.

### GLOSSARY

<b>referendum</b>	an occasion when all the people of a country can vote on an important issue
<b>concerning</b>	about sth; involving sb/sth SYN <b>regarding</b>
<b>debate</b>	an argument or a discussion expressing different opinions
<b>divide</b>	cause disagreement <b>division</b> <i>n</i>
<b>conflict</b>	a situation in which people, groups or countries are involved in a serious disagreement
<b>closely</b>	used to indicate that two or more things differ by only a small amount: <b>a closely-fought contest</b> (= a contest won or likely to be won by a small amount)
<b>contest</b>	a struggle to gain control of sth
<b>majority</b>	the number of votes by which one party wins an election, a discussion, etc: <b>a narrow majority</b> , e.g. 52% OPP <b>a clear majority</b> , e.g. 66%
<b>turnout</b>	the number of people who vote in a particular election
<b>electorate</b>	the people in a country or an area who have the right to vote
<b>will</b>	what sb wants to happen in a particular situation: <b>the will of the people</b>
<b>negotiate</b>	try to reach an agreement by formal discussion <b>negotiation</b> <i>n</i>

### 1 Underline the stress on the following words. Use the APP to help you.

concerning      debate      conflict      divide      contest  
turnout      negotiate      referendum      electorate

### 2 Replace the underlined words with a word or phrase that keeps the same meaning.

- The politician refused to answer questions on the subject of his private life. ....
- They managed to get just over 50% of the votes. ....
- The issue has caused disagreement across the country. ....
- The result represented about 70% of the people who have a right to vote. ....
- The number of people who vote is often low in local elections. ....
- Both sides will have to discuss this to reach an agreement. ....

### 3 Complete the sentences.

- There was a ..... in the UK in 1973 on membership of the Common Market.
- If banning cars is the ..... of the people, politicians may have to go along with it.
- The two countries have been in ..... for months now, but nothing has been decided.
- There has also been a long ..... in the media in Scotland about Scottish independence.
- The two parties are very ..... matched, so it will be an interesting ..... between them.
- There has been serious ..... in England for decades over membership of the EU. People have very strong and different opinions.

### 4 What can you remember? Cover the text and answer the questions.

- What took place in June 2016 in the UK? .....
- What was it about? .....
- How did the people react to this event? .....
- What was the result? .....
- How many people voted? .....
- What happened after that? .....





## B Coalition government

In a parliamentary system, a **coalition** government is one in which two or even **multiple** political parties **cooperate**, thus reducing the **dominance** of any one party. Broadly speaking, there are two models. The first is to form a coalition before the election. The second is to form a coalition after the election, retaining a party's **core philosophy** and ideals, but then negotiating with other parties to form an administration that can **govern** the country. **Advocates** say that coalition government leads to **consensus**-based politics, which produces **compromise**, while opponents say that no-one gets what they voted for.

### GLOSSARY

<b>coalition</b>	a government formed by two or more parties working together
<b>multiple</b>	involving many different people or things
<b>cooperate (with sb)</b>	work together with sb else in order to achieve sth
<b>dominance</b>	the fact of being more powerful or important than sb else <b>dominant</b> <i>adj</i>
<b>core</b>	the most important or central part of sth
<b>philosophy</b>	a set of beliefs or an attitude to life that guides sb's behaviour
<b>govern</b>	legally control a country or its people and be responsible for laws, etc.
<b>advocate</b>	a person who supports or speaks in favour of sb/sth, especially a public plan of action <b>advocate</b> <i>v</i>
<b>consensus</b>	an opinion that all members of a group agree with
<b>compromise</b>	[C] an agreement made between two people or groups in which each side gives up some of the things they want so that both sides are happy at the end; [U] the act of reaching a <b>compromise</b> ; <b>compromise</b> <i>v</i>

- 5 Is the pronunciation of the underlined letters the same or different? Write S or D.  
Use the **APP** to help you.

1 coalition	coal	.....	5 philosophy	consensus	.....
2 govern	dominance	.....	6 cooperate	soon	.....
3 advocate <i>n</i>	advocate <i>v</i>	.....	7 compromise	consensus	.....
4 advocate	philosophy	.....	8 compromise	dominant	.....

- 6 Complete these words.

1 gov.....	4 comp.....	7 coal.....
2 coop.....	5 phi.....	8 dom.....
3 advo.....	6 mul.....	9 cons.....

- 7 Answer the questions.

- What is required for a **coalition**? .....
- If you reach a **consensus**, how many people agree with you? .....
- If you **govern** a country, how much control do you have? .....
- If you advocate something, are you **for it** or **against it**? .....
- Is dominance a fact of being **richer** or **more powerful** than others? .....
- If you reach a **compromise**, what are you prepared to do? .....

- 8 Complete the sentences.

- It's a complicated government policy and will involve ..... governmental agencies.
- It's not easy to give up certain things you want and accept certain things you don't, but in the end we all have to ..... sometimes.
- Whoever gets a majority will have the opportunity to ..... the country.
- The CDU (Christian Democratic Union) have been the ..... political party in Germany in recent years.
- If we don't ..... with other groups, we'll never achieve anything.
- The belief in democracy is at the ..... of their political and moral .....
- The prime minister has always been a strong ..... of personal choice and freedom.
- If no single party gets a majority, there will have to be some type of ..... to form a government.



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