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Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc. Government policy is made by elected officials who are members of either the Democratic or Republican party, though occasionally members of smaller parties are also elected. Political parties are organizations that wish to achieve control of the process of government. They differ from interest groups that only want to have an influence on government by getting more of its candidates elected to office than its opposition parties do. In Great Britain, for example, more Conservative Party candidates won representation in Parliament in the elections of April 1992 than did Labour Party candidates. The Conservatives, therefore, were able to have their leader—John Major—continue in office as prime minister. They were also able to decide which programs the government should adopt, and they had enough votes in Parliament to pass their legislation. (See also cabinet government.) Political parties are the products of representative democracy. During the centuries when laws were made by kings and their advisers, parties could not exist because there were no elected officials. Parties began to emerge in Europe and North America in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, when elected legislatures became a dominant force in government. In the earliest decades in which political parties existed, their memberships were quite small. In the United States and England, for example, most citizens were not allowed to vote. of the nobility, factory owners, merchants, and other wealthy individuals (see suffrage). By the third decade of the 19th century, after women had gained the right to vote in most nations, political parties became more dependent upon mass support. In the early 21st century political parties have a risen throughout Africa. Many of these have a base of support in ethnic or tribal groups. In the Middle East party affiliation often depends upon membership in religious organizations. This is true in Israel as well as in Islamic countries, all of which may be represented in the government. Other countries function effectively with only two major parties. In some countries, most notably China, Cuba, and several African states, there are one-party systems. This does not mean that only two parties exist in Canada, the United States, and Britain—there are several in each country It means that only two parties have consistently been strong enough to contest effectively for control of government. In Germany, Belgium, Italy, and some other countries, there are several parties large enough to contest effectively. It is often necessary, therefore, for the biggest winners to form coalitions in order to govern. Some multiparty countries have adopted proportional representation in their legislatures. This is a device by which seats in the legislature are awarded to members of political parties based on the number of ballots cast for the parties within electoral districts. Various mathematical formulas are used to achieve the representation, but the results are the same: members of minority parties are able to get one or more candidates seated in a legislature. Proportional representation, but the results are the same: members of minority parties are able to get one or more candidates seated in a legislature. been an exception to the problems besetting most multiparty states. It had more than a dozen political parties, but since 1938 the government has been solidly controlled by the Institutional Revolutionary party. Most competition for elected office takes place within the party—not between parties. The chief reason for the existence of a large number of parties in a single nation is ideology—the adherence to fixed economic or political doctrines, such as Marxism or socialism. Strongly held beliefs are also the minor parties in the United States and other two-party nations, but such parties in the United States are never able to attract broad enough support to win elections. In addition, the major parties in Canada, the United States, and Britain are really broadly based coalitions that already represent a great diversity of views. By welcoming many different opinions, the major parties prevent themselves from becoming narrowly based ideological factions. In the United States the success of the two-party system has been based on freedom from ideological conflicts. Historically there have been three types of one-party governments: communist, fascist, and that found in developing countries. Communist leaders came to power in Russia in the October Revolution of 1917, with the success of Vladimir Lenin's Bolshevik wing of the Social-Democratic Workers' party. After World War II communist regimes were established in much of Eastern Europe. In 1949 Mao Zedong's Chinese Communist party came to power. All effective political power was in the hands of the party and the first secretary of the party was the regime's dominant figure. Most communist governments were totalitarian, but this did not imply perpetual conflict between people and party. In 1989 the face of Eastern European politics completely changed. Communists lost their political monopoly in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Yugoslavia. Even Albania overthrew its neo-Stalinist system by 1992. Multiparty elections were held in many Eastern European countries in 1990. In 1991 the Communist Party lost control in the Soviet Union and the country ceased to exist. Five years after the Russian Revolution the Fascist party, led by Benito Mussolini, came to power in Italy. Whereas communists contended that they spoke for the workers, fascists believed in the right of the elite to govern the masses. As a result, in Italy—as well as in Spain and Portugal later—the Fascist Party never played as dominant a role as did the Communist Party in the Soviet Union. Industrialists, bankers, and other powerful figures tended to dominate policy. The party's function was focused on policing the state, eliminating political opposition, and controlling the military. In Germany the National Socialist (Nazi) Party of Adolf Hitler, though fascist in outlook, exerted much greater control of the country than did the fascist parties in Italy or Spain. Germany under the Nazis differed from other fascist countries in that Hitler personally, not the party, was the government. There was no pretense at a rule of law. In the developing world the communist governments of North Korea, Vietnam, and Cambodia were similar to those that existed in the Soviet Union. In other developing countries, however, single-party governments tend to keep one-party system is proclaimed to keep one-party system. individual in power for life. Single-party governments in developing countries have generally proved to be inefficient and corrupt. They have rarely been able to oversee economic development successfully, since their chief aim is monopoly of political power. Great Britain and the United They do not operate in the same way, however. In Britain elections are held for members of Parliament as a legislator and in the Cabinet as an executive and policymaker. This individual thus serves both in Parliament as a legislator and in the Cabinet as an executive and policymaker. constitutional separation of powers. A president cannot serve in Congress by one party and the presidency by another has generally been the rule instead of the exception since World War II. The disadvantage of the American system is the deadlock that can develop between the president and the Congress over policy when each is in the control of a different party. Electoral politics in the United States has been dominated by two political parties since the administration of George Washington; but they have not always been the same two parties. The first opposition was between Federalists and Anti-Federalists—those who supported a strong federal government and those who did not (see states' rights). Leaders of the Federalists were Alexander Hamilton and John Adams. Both were from the Northeast where Federalists sentiment was strongest. Thomas Jefferson became the acknowledged leader of Anti-Federalist sentiment, and by the time of his election, mostly because of its opposition to the Federalist sentiment, and by the time of his election, mostly because of its opposition to the Federalist sentiment. one major party—but only for a short time. During the 1820s the Democratic Republicans. The conservative Eastern elements of the party favored a strong national bank. They called themselves National bank. They called themselves National bank. They called themselves National bank. tariff for revenue only, and an independent treasury. It took the name Democratic and elected its leader, Andrew Jackson, to the presidency in 1828 and 1832. The party of Jackson is today's Democratic Party.By the election of 1836 the National Republicans and other anti-Jackson factions had merged to form a new party, the Whigs. They lost to the Democrats that year, but in 1840 they succeeded in getting William Henry Harrison elected president. In 1844 the Whig candidate, Henry Clay, lost to James Polk, but four years later Zachary Taylor won for the Whigs. Meanwhile a social force greater than party loyalty was beginning to reshape American politics. The slavery issue, by the passions it aroused in the North and the South, gradually compelled a realignment of parties. The Whigs joined their party in 1852 by taking a compromising stand on slavery. During the next few years most Southern Whigs joined their party in 1854 small groups of men met in Ripon, Wisconsin, Jackson, Michigan, and elsewhere to urge creation of a new political party opposed to the extension of slavery. In 1856 this newly formed Republican Party chose John C. Frémont as its presidential candidate. He lost to the Democratic nominee, James Buchanan. By 1860 the Democrats were split on the slavery issue. Four candidates ran for the presidency, and Abraham Lincoln—the Republican nominee—was elected. The Republicans emerged from the Civil War with great political strength. The Democrats were marked as the party of slavery and secession. Republicans emerged from the Civil War with great political strength. Cleveland and Woodrow Wilson were in the White House. The Great Depression of the 1930s had a powerful influence on American politics. The economic disaster helped the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt, a Democrat, as president in 1932. His first administration forged what has been called the New Deal coalition. In response to New Deal social programs, millions of Americans were attracted to the Democratic column. This coalition continued to dominate the presidency for seven years after Roosevelt's death, and—except for two sessions in 1947-48 and 1953-54—it controlled Congress through 1980, when Ronald Reagan was elected president. In spite of the upheavals caused by slavery, the Civil War, and the Depression, the Depression of Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1952, the Republicans regained much of the public loyalty that was lost during the New Deal years. Unlike parties are very decentralized in structure and are marked by the absence of a rigid discipline and hierarchy. It is only a slight exaggeration to say that the United States does not have two parties but 100—two in each state. Each party can be viewed as a large pyramid. At the base are citizens who regularly vote for party candidates. The next level consists of local party officials. These officials choose the party's state officials choose the party officials. From this group members are selected to form an executive committee. The national committee is headed by the national committee. Elected officials from the local to the national level exert considerable influence on the operations of local, state, and national party machinery. The base unit of local organization is the precinct, or election district. The chief official is the committeeman, or precinct captain. This official is the precinct, or election district. The chief official is the committeeman, or precinct captain. and provides transportation to the polls on election day. The next higher level of leadership in cities is the ward committeeman and, in rural areas, the county chairman. Above these are organizations for the city, Congressional district, state, and national nominating convention, which is held every four years. The purpose of the convention is to select candidates for president and vice-president and vice-presid first national convention, also in Baltimore. Since then party conventions have always been held in the same year as a presidential election—in years that are evenly divisible by the number 4. In the spring of a convention year, delegates are selected to attend their party's national convention. They are chosen by state party conventions or are elected in presidential primaries. The national committee determines the number of delegates for each state. Each party uses a formula based on the state's population, party support, and votes cast to allot the number of delegates. Both the Democratic and Republican parties hold their convention in a large city in midsummer. The first convention is usually held by the party that does not control the White House. Each convention lasts four or five days. Despite the political dominance of Democrats and Republicans, there have been several other party movements. None has succeeded in winning the presidency or the control of Congress, but the positions they advocate are often later adopted by the major parties. This was especially true of Theodore Roosevelt's Progressive Party in 1912. Most of its platform has since become public policy. The first distinctive third party was the Anti-Mason—in opposition to the Masonic lodge and other secret societies. The Nullification and Anti-Jackson parties were South Carolina protests against federal authority. The American, or Know Nothing, Party of 1856 opposed immigration and Roman Catholicism. The Liberty and Free-Soil parties were pre-Civil War antislavery groups. In 1860 the Constitutional Union party tried to avoid the slavery issue. The Greenbacks of 1876 and the Populists of 1890 advocated easy credit. In 1920 the Farmer-Labor Party entered national politics. Its name survives in Minnesota's Democratic Farmer-Labor Party. Several Socialist and Communist parties have come into existence. The Prohibition party became active in 1869. In 1924 a Progressive party was launched in 1948 with Henry A. Wallace as its candidate for president. Southern Democrats rebelled against the party's civil rights policy in 1948 and formed the States' Rights Democratic, or Dixiecrats, party with J. Strom Thurmond as their presidential candidate. In 1968 the American Independent Party nominee, George C. Wallace, made a strong showing with more than 9 million popular and 46 electoral votes. John Anderson, a Republican member of Congress from Illinois, ran as an independent in the 1980 presidential election, finishing with more than 5 million popular votes. Independent in the 1980 presidential election, finishing with more than 5 million popular votes. win a single electoral vote. In 2000 Ralph Nader was nominated by the Green Party, an environmentalist political party, as its presidential candidate. He received only 2.7 percent of the national vote, but he may have aided Republican candidate. He received only 2.7 percent of the national vote, but he may have aided Republican candidate. otherwise might have gone to Gore, especially in the key state of Florida. Great Britain has had two successive two-party alignments: Conservative and Labour since 1935. The period from 1920 to 1935 constituted an intermediate phase between the two. Britain's Conservative Party is actually a Conservative-Liberal Party, resulting from a fusion of the essential elements of the two great 19th-century parties. Despite the name Conservative, its ideology corresponds to political and economic liberalism. A similar observative, its ideology corresponds to political elements of the two great 19th-century parties. British two-party system depends on the existence of rigid parties; that is, parties in which there is effective discipline regarding partiamentary voting patterns. In every important vote, all party members are required to vote as a bloc and to follow to the letter the directives that they agreed upon collectively or that were decided for them by the party leaders. A relative flexibility may at times be tolerated, but only to the extent that such a policy does not compromise the action of the government. It may be admissible for some party members to abstain from voting if their abstention does not alter the results of the vote. minister) is likely to remain in power throughout the session of Parliament, and the legislation he or she proposes will likely be adopted. There is no longer any real separation of power between the executive and legislation has no power other than to make its criticisms known. During the four or five years for which a Parliament meets, the majority in power is completely in control, and only internal difficulties within the majority party can limit its power. Since each party is made up of a disciplined group with a recognized leader who becomes prime minister if his or her party wins the legislative elections, these elections perform the function of selecting both the legislature and the government. In voting to make one of the party leaders the head of the government, the British assure the leader of a disciplined parliamentary majority. The result is a political system that is at once stable, democratic, and strong; and many would argue that it is more stable, more democratic, and stronger than systems anywhere else. This situation presupposes that both parties are in agreement with regard to the fundamental rules of a democracy. If a fascist party and a communist party were opposed to one another in Great Britain, the two-party system would not last very long. The winner would zealously suppress the opponent and rule alone. The British system, of course, does have its weak points, especially insofar as it tends to frustrate the innovative elements within the parties. But it is possible that this situation is preferable to what would happen if the more extreme elements within the parties were permitted to engage in unrealistic policies. In Australia two parties have tended to dominate federal elections: the Australian Labor Party and the conservative Liberal Party of Australian Country Party and the Nationals (formerly called the Australian Labor Party and the Nationals). Zealand. Canada also possesses what is essentially a two-party system: Liberals or Conservatives have usually been able to form a working majority without the help of small, regionally based parties. The country has, however, deviated from this pattern since the 1990s, with the election of the Bloc Ouébécois (1993) and the New Democratic I (2011) as the country's official opposition. Often students and young voters feel alienated by the political parties, and confused by the political parties, especially how they refer to students in their manifestos and policies. I have also written an article on why students' voting is so important in today's society, if you need persuading to have your voice heard. The Conservatives developed as an opposition to the Whigs (a dissolved political party) in 1834 and have since been one of two major players in UK politics. In recent years, the Conservatives have become a more progressive, centre-right party, aimed at achieving a "stronger Britain and a prosperous future". They are currently led by Prime Minister Boris Johnson and have been in power since 2010. How do they relate to students? The Conservatives feel that the younger generation are unfairly placed when trying to buy a home; this is one of their key points when referring to younger people, such as students. You can read the full Conservative and Unionist Party in the UK after the Conservatives. Formed in 1900, the party has been in government multiple times throughout its lifetime. Currently led by Jeremy Corbyn, it remains the Queen's official opposition in the House of Commons. This means that it currently plays the role of the scrutiniser and inspector of the Government. How do they relate to students? The Labour Party states that it wants "to build a Britain that works for the many, not the few." In their 2017 manifesto they say "Labour will reintroduce maintenance grants for university students, and we will abolish university students, and we will abolish university students, and we will abolish university students for university students." between the Labour Party and the Conservatives. Currently they are one of the most influential anti-Brexit campaign groups on the UK political scene. Led by Jo Swinson, they argue that Brexit undermines a university's ability to draw the best teaching staff and students from around the world. How do they relate to students? Much like the Labour Party, the Lib Dems plan to reinstate maintenance grants, but instead of a complete reinstatement, this will only be "for the poorest students, ensuring that living costs are not a barrier to disadvantaged young people studying at university." You can read the full Labour Party manifesto from 2017 here. The Greens have become more barrier to disadvantaged young people studying at university." popular as the call for a stronger stance on environmental protection and climate change has boomed. They are predicted to take around 4% of the UK's votes. How do they relate to students? The Green Sug they will "invest in opportunities for young people". The Green Sug they will "invest in opportunities for young their "promise to young their "promise to young people". people, starting with a guarantee of their right to study, work, live and travel in the EU." Much like the Labour Party, the Green Party wish to abolish tuition fees and "restore the Education Maintenance Grant" for future students. In addition, they wish to reduce the voting age to 16 and give young people "free local public transport." You can read the full Green Party manifesto from 2017 here. The Brexit Party With a predicted 10% of the vote, the Brexit Party emerged from the conflict we are seeing in the UK regarding Britain's exit from the European Union. The party is considered to be far right and often associated with anti-immigration and anti-European rhetoric. How do they relate to students? It is difficult to relate the Brexit Party to students, as they remain a "one issue party". This means that they have gained in popularity due to one issue - Brexit. Therefore, there is little of their literature that mentions students directly. However, if you are interested in the political situation regarding Brexit, this party's focus is only on this issue. You can read the full Brexit Party manifesto from 2017 here. Independent Candidates Here we find a complicated part of the political parties, and therefore do not have to follow the political party's mandate or manifesto. In this way, many independent candidates are able to express and follow their own opinions, beliefs and agendas. How do they relate to students? Independent candidates relate to students in different ways and to different ways and to different ways and to the candidates relate to students. policies on their own initiative. In conclusion... For students, the best advice I can give is twofold. Read my blog post on why it is important for students vote has you can understand the power of your voice. And read around the political situation of the UK, take an active interest in how political situation of the UK, take an active interest in how political situation of the UK, take an active interest in how political situation of the UK, take an active interest in how political situation of the UK, take an active interest in how political situation of the UK, take an active interest in how political situation of the UK are an active interest in how political situation of the UK are an active interest in how political situation of the UK are an active interest in how political situation of the UK are an active interest in how political situation of the UK are an active interest in how political situation of the UK are an active interest in how political situation of the UK are an active interest in how political situation of the UK are an active interest in how political situation of the UK are an active interest in how political situation of the UK are an active interest in how political situation of the UK are an active interest in how political situation of the UK are an active interest in how political situation of the UK are an active interest in how political situation of the UK are an active interest in how political situation of the UK are an active interest in how political situation of the UK are an active interest in how political situation of the UK are an active interest in how political situation of the UK are an active interest in how political situation of the UK are an active interest in how political situation of the UK are an active interest in how political situation of the UK are an active interest in how political situation of the UK are an active interest in how political situation of the UK are an active interest in how political site and the political situation of the UK are an act the potential to change the outcome of general elections and the general political climate. Whichever way you choose to vote, just get out and do it. Are you a student wanting to know more about the British political system but not sure where to start? You've come to the right place! Within this guide we'll be focusing on the different political parties, famous Political leaders from each party, who can vote in the UK, how our political system works and why, as a student, you should vote. We hope this is a useful guide for you and helps you find out a little more about UK politics. What Are The Different Political Parties? Labour and the Conservatives are the main UK political parties and have dominated the UK political landscape since the early 20th century. The Conservative party is the oldest political party in the UK, founded in 1834. The Labour Party, the other most significant political party in the UK, was founded in 1834. UK are The Liberal Democrats, The Scottish National Party , The Green Party and Reform UK. You can find out more below about the two dominant parties within British politics below! Conservative Party and Reform UK. You can find out more below about the two dominant parties within British politics below! Elections. The party, recently suffering a bout of political turbulence, with 5 different leaders in the last 6 years, is currently led by Rishi Sunak. The Conservatives are "right wing," or conservative, typically believing in Law and Order, Defence of Private property, Belief in natural inequality and natural hierarchy, Traditionalism and Patriotism These values have been the hallmark of the tenure of many Conservative Prime Ministers, of which the most famous and influential include Winston Churchill (1940-45,1951-55), Margaret Thatcher (1979-90) and David Cameron (2010-16). Labour Party The Labour Party The Labour Party Research (1979-90) and David Cameron (2010-16). Currently it is led by Kier Starmer, but it too has had many significant Prime Ministers since its inception. For example, Clement Atlee (1945-51) and Tony Blair (1997-2007). The Labour Party is "left wing" and has traditional values that are different from the Conservative party, however it is best to explain these using two categories. Simplified, pre and post-Blair. Pre-Blair, the traditional labour party values were redistribution of wealth, a role of the state in the economy, strong Trade Unions, and social liberalism. However, after Blair, these shifted slightly to a strong support for free-market capitalism. However, after Blair, these shifted slightly to a strong support for free-market capitalism. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland being given Devolved Parliaments). How Does The Voting System Work? The UK has a voting system called First Past the Post. But what does this mean? FPTP means whoever gets the majority of votes in an election, wins. It also means that the leader of the party that wins the most seats automatically become Prime Minister. This system usually leads to two parties dominating the political environment (this is seen in other countries and Labour parties in the UK. This is different to other political systems used around the world, such as Proportional Representation, which means the make-up of the Parliament reflects the popular vote exactly. Such as, if the UK had PR, then UKIP would have won 83 seats in the 2015 General Election, as they won 12.8% of the popular vote, instead of the 1 they won. So, the voting system a country greatly affects the popular vote, instead of the 2015 General Election, as they affects the popular vote exactly. worse. This brings us on to the next thing, who can vote... Who Can Vote & Why Should You Vote As A Student? In the UK we have control over how our country is run and who is in government, due to being a democratic society. If you're able to, you should vote and be active within politics whilst at university. If you want change to happen, the best way to do this is to vote for the party which aligns with your views. The next general election is scheduled for 2024 so there will be an increase in political campaigning by parties and their supporters from now until then, so get involved and use your vote! Every British citizen has the right to vote in UK elections as long as they have registered to vote, they are 18 or over on the day of the election and they are a British, Irish or qualifying Commonwealth citizen. Only if you're someone serving more than 12 months in jail is this right taken away from you. Whilst the vote, you have to register to vote, otherwise you will turn up at the polling Booth and they will not have you on record as a registered voter! If you have to Register to vote - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). One thing to mention here that's important is that, as of May 2023 you have to show ID cards when voting. However, you cannot use your student ID card for this, though for example, a pensioner's bus pass is allowed. The ID that is accepted is listed on the official GOV.UK website so make sure you take one of these with you when you go to the polling booth. Ways You Can Get Involved In Politics Voting isn't the only way to get involved politically as a student, there are many other ways to exercise your democratic right to participate in politics! To help you out, we've listed a few examples below. Join A Political Party and campaign on their behalf locally or nationally, join a politics society at your local area or even set up a group within your student accommodation. Many universities have societies and clubs through their student union, so check yours out and see what's on offer, and if there's nothing - make a society! Demonstrate Your Voice Another way you can get involved with politics whilst at university is by joining or creating a march or protest about a cause that is close to your heart. This is one of the most effective ways of demonstrating your voice and making it heard! Write To Your MP and tell them about the issues you would like them to support. After all, it's what they're elected for! If you want to find out who the local MP is for your area, head here - MPs and Lords - UK Parliament. However, politics isn't just about parties and Parliament; it's about parties and Parliament; it's about parties and Parliament; it's about parties and Parliament. that's why it is so important to know how it works as well as why your voice is important to it! We hope you found this little background information on UK political system in the UK as best as we can. Our politicians work for us, and if you want your views to be reflected in politics, you have to make your voice heard, in whichever way is best for you! Read next: Work Smarter, Not Harder: Study Strategies To Discover. Are you a student wanting to know more about the British political system but not sure where to start? You've come to the right place! Within this guide we'll be focusing on the different political parties, famous Political leaders from each party, who can vote in the UK, how our political system works and why, as a student, you should vote. We hope this is a useful guide for you and helps you find out a little more about UK political parties? Labour and the Conservatives are the main UK political parties? and have dominated the UK political landscape since the early 20th century. The Conservative party is the oldest political party in the UK, was founded in 1834. The Labour Party, the other political party in the UK, was founded in 1834. parties in the UK are The Liberal Democrats, The Scottish National Party and Reform UK. You can find out more below about the two dominant parties within British politics below! Conservative Party and Reform UK. You can find out more below about the two dominant parties within British politics below! General Elections. The party, recently suffering a bout of political turbulence, with 5 different leaders in the last 6 years, is currently led by Rishi Sunak. The Conservative, typically believing in Law and Order, Defence of Private property, Belief in natural inequality and natural hierarchy, Traditionalism and Patriotism. These values have been the hallmark of the tenure of many Conservative Prime Ministers, of which the most famous and influential include Winston Churchill (1940-45,1951-55), Margaret Thatcher (1979-90) and David Cameron (2010-16). Labour Party elected its first MPs (Kier Hardie & Richard Bell) in the election of 1900. Currently it is led by Kier Starmer, but it too has had many significant Prime Ministers since its inception. For example, Clement Atlee (1945-51) and Tony Blair (1997-2007). The Labour Party is 'left wing' and has traditional values that are different from the Conservative party, however it is best to explain these using two categories Simplified, pre- and post-Blair. Pre-Blair, the traditional labour party values were redistribution of wealth, a role of the state in the economy, strong Trade Unions, and social liberalism. However, after Blair, these shifted slightly to a strong support for free-market capitalism, weaker Trade-Unionism but legal safeguards for workers and constitutional reform (e.g., Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland being given Devolved Parliaments). How Does The Voting System Work? The UK has a voting system called First Past the Post. But what does this mean? 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To be able to vote, you have to register to vote, otherwise you will turn up at the polling Booth and they will not have you on record as a registered voter! If you haven't already registered to vote, it takes 2 minutes and is super simple so, head over to Register to vote. ONLUK (www.gov.uk). One thing to mention here that's important is that, as of May 2023 you have to show ID cards when voting. However, you cannot use your student ID card for this, though for example, a pensioner's bus pass is allowed. The ID that is accepted is listed on the official GOV.UK website so make sure you take one of these with you when you go to the polling booth. Ways You Can Get Involved In Politics Voting isn't the only way to get involved politically as a student, there are many other ways to exercise your democratic right to participate in political party and campaign on their behalf locally or nationally, join a politics society at your university, in your local area or even set up a group within your student accommodation. Many universities have societies and clubs through their student union, so check yours out and see what's on offer, and if there's nothing - make a society! Demonstrate Your Voice Another way you can get involved with politics whilst at university is by joining or creating a march or protest about a cause that is close to your heart. This is one of the most effective ways of demonstrating your voice is to write to your MP and tell them about the issues you care about or causes you would like them to support. After all, it's what they're elected for! If you want to find out who the local MP is for your area, head here - MPs and Lords - UK Parliament. However, politics is exciting, and anything is political, and anything can be changed through politics! UK politics is exciting, confusing, and dramatic - and that's why it is so important to know how it works as well as why your voice is important to it! We hope you found this little background information on UK politicians work for us, and if you want your views to be reflected in politics, you have to make your voice heard, in whichever way is best for you! Read next: Work Smarter, Not Harder: Study Strategies To Discover. Are you a student wanting to know more about the British political system but not sure where to start? focusing on the different political parties, famous Political leaders from each party, who can vote in the UK, how our political system works and why, as a student, you should vote. We hope this is a useful guide for you and helps you find out a little more about UK politics. What Are The Different Political Parties? Labour and the Conservatives are the main UK political parties and have dominated the UK political landscape since the early 20th century. The Conservative party in the UK, was founded in 1834. The Labour Party, the other most significant political party in the UK, was founded in 1834. The other political parties in the UK are The Liberal Democrats, The Scottish National Party and Reform UK. You can find out more below about the two dominant parties within British politics below! Conservative Party The Conservative Party could be argued as the most successful political party in the UK, having won a majority in 12 of the last 20 General Elections. The party, recently suffering a bout of political turbulence, with 5 different leaders in the last 6 years, is currently led by Rishi Sunak. The Conservative, typically believing in Law and Order, Defence of Private property, Belief in natural inequality and natural hierarchy, Traditionalism and Patriotism. These values have been the hallmark of the tenure of many Conservative Prime Ministers, of which the most famous and influential include Winston Churchill (1940-45,1951-55), Margaret Thatcher (1979-90) and David Cameron (2010-16). Labour Party elected its first MPs (Kier Hardie & Richard Bell in the election of 1900. Currently it is led by Kier Starmer, but it too has had many significant Prime Ministers since its inception. For example, Clement Atlee (1945-51) and Tony Blair (1997-2007). The Labour Party is "left wing" and has traditional values that are different from the Conservative party, however it is best to explain these using two categories. Simplified, pre- and post-Blair. Pre-Blair, the traditional labour party values were redistribution of wealth, a role of the state in the economy, strong Trade Unions, and social liberalism. However, after Blair, these shifted slightly to a strong support for free-market capitalism, weaker Trade-Unionism but legal safeguards for workers and constitutional reform (e.g., Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland being given Devolved Parliaments). How Does The Voting System Work? The UK has a voting system called First Past the Post. But what does this mean? FPTP means whoever gets the majority of votes in an election, wins. It also means that the leader of the party that wins the most seats automatically becomes Prime Minister. This system usually leads to two parties dominating the political environment (this is seen in other countries that use FPTP, such as the US with the Republicans and Democrats) as well as the Voral, such as Proportional Representation, which means the make-up of the Parliament reflects the popular vote, instead of the 1 they won 12.8% of the popular vote, instead of the 2015 General Election, as they won 12.8% of the popular vote, instead of the 2015 General Election as they are country greatly affects the popular vote exactly. country, for better or worse. This brings us on to the next thing, who can vote ... Who Can vote & Why Should You Vote As A Student? In the UK we have control over how our country is run and who is in government, due to being a democratic society. If you want change to happen, the best way to do this is to vote for the party which aligns with your views. The next general election is scheduled for 2024 so there will be an increase in political campaigning by parties and their supporters from now until then, so get involved and use your vote! Every British citizen has the right to vote in UK elections as long as they have registered to vote, they are 18 or over on the day of the election and they are a a British, Irish or qualifying Commonwealth citizen. Only if you're someone serving more than 12 months in jail is this right taken away from you. Whilst the voting age in England is 18, it is 16 for registered voters in Scotland and Wales. How You Can Vote? 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Within this guide we'll be focusing on the different political parties, famous Political leaders from each party, who can vote in the UK, how our political system works and why, as a student, you should vote. We hope this is a useful quide for you and helps you find out a little more about UK politics. What Are The Different Political Parties? Labour and the Conservatives are the main UK political parties and have dominated the UK political landscape since the early 20th century. The Conservative party is the oldest political party in the UK, was founded in 1834. The Labour Party, the other most significant political party in the UK, was founded in 1834. The other political parties in the UK are The Liberal Democrats, The Scottish National Party and Reform UK. You can find out more below about the two dominant parties within British politics below! 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This system usually leads to two parties dominating the political environment (this is seen in other countries that use FPTP, such as the US with the Republicans and Democrats) as well as the Conservatives and Labour parties in the UK. This is different to other political systems used around the world, such as Proportional Representation, which means the make-up of the Parliament reflects the popular vote exactly. Such as, if the UK had PR, then UKIP would have won 83 seats in the 2015 General Election, as they won 12.8% of the popular vote, instead of the 1 they won. So, the voting system a country greatly affects the political landscape of the country, for better or worse. This brings us on to the next thing, who can vote... Who Can vote & Why Should You Vote As A Student? In the UK we have control over how our country is run and who is in government, due to being a democratic society. If you're able to, you should vote and be active within politics whilst at university. 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Who's actually in charge of Britain?PRESENTER 2: Well, it's the UK Prime Minister, isn't it?PRESENTER 1: I've got a really important question to ask. Who's actually in charge of Britain?PRESENTER 2: Well, it's the UK Prime Minister, isn't it?PRESENTER 1: I've got a really important question to ask. Who's actually in charge of Britain?PRESENTER 2: Well, it's the UK Prime Minister, isn't it?PRESENTER 1: I've got a really important question to ask. Who's actually in charge of Britain?PRESENTER 2: Well, it's the UK Prime Minister, isn't it?PRESENTER 1: I've got a really important question to ask. Who's actually in charge of Britain?PRESENTER 2: Well, it's the UK Prime Minister, isn't it?PRESENTER 1: I've got a really important question to ask. Who's actually in charge of Britain?PRESENTER 2: Well, it's the UK Prime Minister, isn't it?PRESENTER 1: I've got a really important question to ask. 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We also have our own person in charge of Wales. There's the UK Prime Minister. PRESENTER 2: It's not as complicated as it sounds. As there are so many of us in the UK if we all tried to talk at once it would be chaos! So, we choose people to represent us, to talk on our behalf.PRESENTER 1: Ah, I get it. The people we vote for work on our behalf so they represent us in different people to represent us in different people we vote for work on our behalf.PRESENTER 2: Yes, and we have different people to represent us in different people we vote for work on our behalf.PRESENTER 2: Yes, and we have different people to represent us in different people we vote for work on our behalf. are usually in a party.PRESENTER 1: Wooo! Wooo! Wooo! Wooo! Wooo! Wooo! Wooo! Wooo! Wooo! PRESENTER 2: Not quite as fun as it sounds, sorry! A political party... This political party is a Group that have similar ideas and want to be in charge of the government.PRESENTER 1: Where do they do that?PRESENTER 2: Here, in Westminster. This building is called he Houses of Parliament. It's here they discuss things to do with the whole of the UK and laws and policies are passed.PRESENTER 1: So, they can do whatever they like once we vote them in?PRESENTER 2: Not exactly.There are two houses, the House of Commons and the House of Lords. The people in these houses challenge and examine everything the government is doing.PRESENTER 1: What's the Parliament and the Government? Is there a difference?PRESENTER 1: And the Government? Is there a difference?PRESENTER 1: That's why the leader of the government, the Prime Minister is always from the party that won!PRESENTER 2: Exactly.PRESENTER 2: No, we also have Local Government Elections where we get to elect councillors who make decisions about all the local stuff like bins, schools and parks.PRESENTER 1: Ah, OK.Can we get back to Wales now - i keep hearing this word, devolved. I actually don't have a clue what it means!PRESENTER 2: Devolved basically means we have some decision-making power on certain things separate from the UK Government.PRESENTER 2: Devolved basically means we have some decision-making power on certain things separate from the UK Government.PRESENTER 2: Devolved basically means we have some decision-making power on certain things separate from the UK Government.PRESENTER 2: Devolved basically means we have some decision-making power on certain things separate from the UK Government.PRESENTER 2: Devolved basically means we have some decision-making power on certain things separate from the UK Government.PRESENTER 2: Devolved basically means we have some decision-making power on certain things separate from the UK Government.PRESENTER 2: Devolved basically means we have some decision-making power on certain things separate from the UK Government.PRESENTER 2: Devolved basically means we have some decision-making power on certain things separate from the UK Government.PRESENTER 2: Devolved basically means we have some decision-making power on certain things separate from the UK Government.PRESENTER 2: Devolved basically means we have some decision-making power on certain things separate from the UK Government.PRESENTER 2: Devolved basically means we have some decision-making power on certain things separate from the UK Government.PRESENTER 2: Devolved basically means we have some decision-making power on certain things separate from the UK Government.PRESENTER 2: Devolved basically means we have some decision-making power on certain things separate from the UK Government.PRESENTER 2: Devolved basically means we have some decision-making power on certain things separate from the UK Government.PRESENTER 2: Devolved basically means we have some decision-making power on certain things separate from the UK Government.PRESENTER 2: Devolved basically means we have some decision-makin Education, Agriculture, Sport, Culture, Tourism, Transport, Housing, and Economic Development.PRESENTER 1: So, you're telling me that the Welsh Government?PRESENTER 1: So, you're telling me that the Welsh Government is responsible for all these things in Wales and not the UK Government?PRESENTER 1: The First Minister is the leader of the Welsh Government.PRESENTER 2: In the Welsh elections, we vote for our Members of Senedd and they debate and create laws here - in the Senedd!Again, here we have the Welsh Bovernment.It means here in Wales we can vote in three separate elections.PRESENTER 1: Great. But who can vote?PRESENTER 2: In the UK elections, you have to be 18 to vote but Wales has now made it legal for 16-year-olds to vote in the Welsh Elections, PRESENTER 2: In order to vote you have to register. You can do it by post or just go online to this link. Then once you register, you're ready to go. You can either vote in person at a polling station, or by post. Boom! It's that simple!PRESENTER 1: But then who should you vote for?PRESENTER 2: Ah, that's something I can't answer. Only you can decide that, but it's always good to have an idea about the person you're voting for. Why not check them out online and see what you think of their ideas. Every vote matters so get out there and use your voice and your vote.