Elections in the UK

Westminster - First Past the Post

London Mayor - Supplementary Vote

Scottish Parliament (Holyrood) and Welsh Assembly -
Additional Member System

Northern Irish Assembly (Stormont) -
Single Transferable Vote

European Union - List System

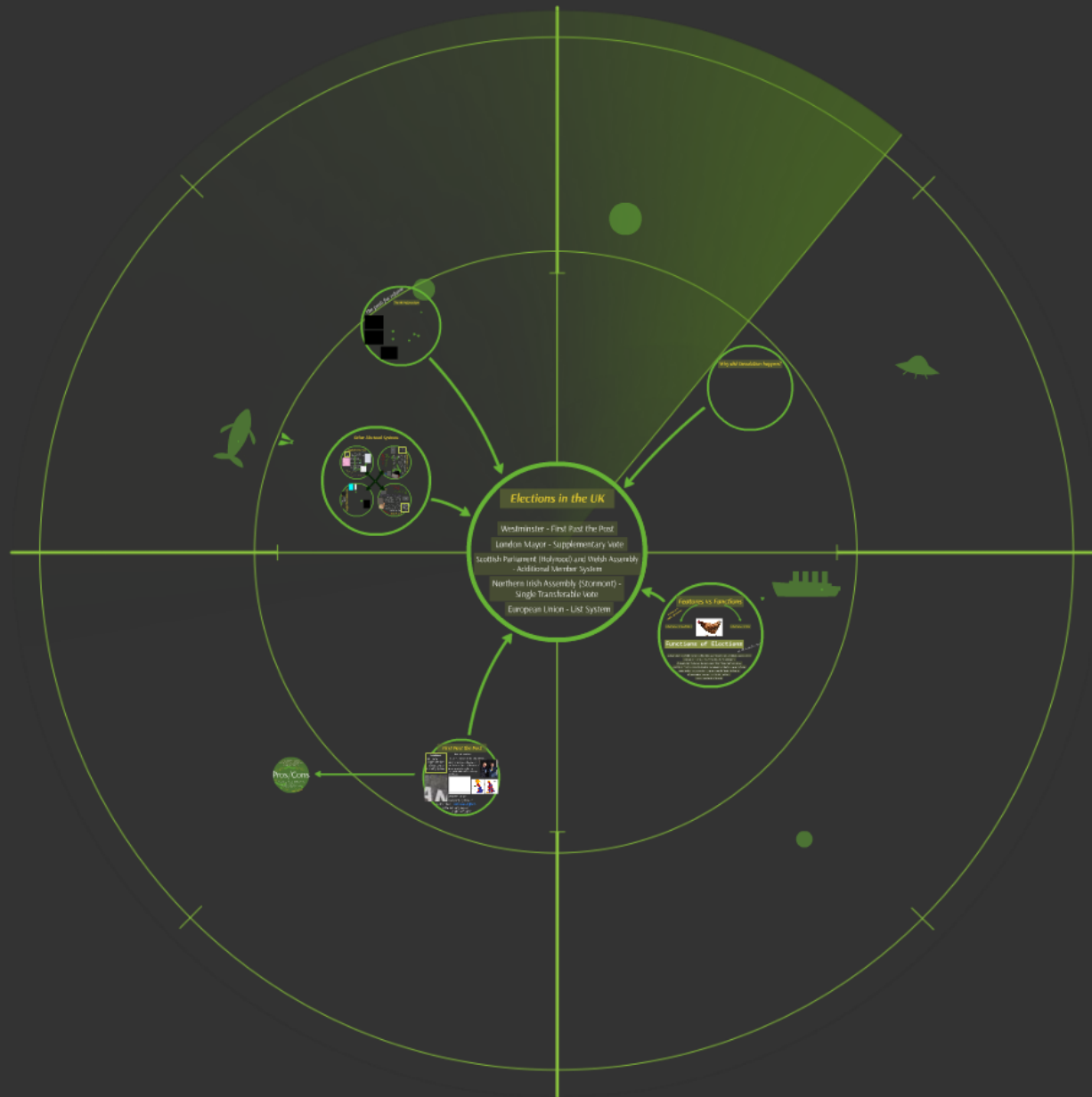Functions of Elections

Pros/Cons

UK ELECTORAL SYSTEMS

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Common 5 mark question

What does it

Func

Features vs Functions

Common 5 mark question!

What does it look like?

What does it do?

Functions of Elections

i.e. What are they for?

Representation - e.g. Nicky Morgan and Gay Marriage, Feb 2013 - 285 constituents against, 24 for

Participation - Turnout: 1992 77.7%, 2001 59.4%, 2010 65.1%

Education - Manifestos e.g. Conservatives and 2017 Referendum on Europe

Legitimation - Voting = consent. By voting, you accept the system we use to form govt

Accountability - e.g. Jacqui Smith, Expenses and the 'Rotten Parliament'

Choosing Govt - we elect PARLIAMENT, not GOVT

Mandate and Doctor's Mandate

Types of Electoral System

Majoritarian — 50%+1

Plurality — More than the next bloke

Hybrid — Mix of two systems together

Proportional (PR) — % of votes = (roughly) % of seats gained

This is NOT NOT NOT a system!! It is a **TYPE** of system

e.g. The Premier League is a type (level) of football, but the teams all have their own names, such as the mighty Tottenham Hotspur!

First Past the Post

Features
ONE vote
Single Member
constituency
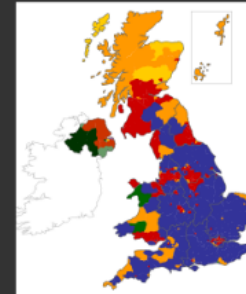Plurality System

How it works:

Place an 'X' next to your preferred candidate

Winning candidate is the one with most votes and goes to Westminster

Government is formed by the party with a MAJORITY of winning candidates

Winners bonus

Two party system...?

Labour bias   **Outcomes/Effects**

Little 3rd party impact

Single party govt

Pros/Cons

Simple - Morgan: 21, 971 (41.6%), Reed 18,227 (34.5%)
Clear outcome...mostly! Labour 179 seat majority in 1997
Strong & Stable Govt - Even Coalition e.g. Student Tuition Fees
Accountable Govt - Expenses: Maria Miller 2014 (jumped before pushed)
MP/Constit. Link - Nicky Morgan and ChAIn
Clear mandate - even the Coalition! e.g. HS2

This is easily debatable...the people did not vote based on the 'Coalition Agreement'

However, we did get what we voted for, not the end of a mathematical calculation

Arguably, the Coalition DO have a majority of the national vote! 59.1% of the vote collectively

Voter Value - 1 vote does not always = 1 vote   http://www.voterpower.org.uk/
Safe seats and electoral deserts - Henley on Thames (30,054, 56.2%, LD 13,466, 25.2%)
No majority - e.g. Nicky Morgan
Not proportional - Lab 29% = 258 seats, LD 23% = 57 Seats
Tactical voting - two party system encourages tactical voting
Wasted votes - 52.8% in 2010

Least bad, rather than best?
Adversarial politics

'Bite your lip'! Ed Balls
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/election_2010/8658694.stm

Other Electoral Systems

Supplementary Vote

<London Mayor>

Features
One vote
Two choices
Majoritarian
Single member constituency

How it works:

Record 1st and 2nd preference (if you wish)

Counts all 1st preferences

Does anyone have a MAJORITY?

NO   YES

Eliminate all but top 2   *Winner!*

For all eliminated votes, redistribute according to 2nd preference

Who has a majority now?

Winner!

Pros
Majority support - Boris 51.53%
Reduces wasted votes - 200,000 in 2012
MP Constituency link
Clear winner

Cons
'Fake' majority - more people wanted Ken 2nd pref?
Doesn't eliminate waste votes - 161,000 in 2012
Not proportional

Additional Member System

(Scotland - 129 MSPs)

Features

How it works

Step 1: Voters cast TWO votes
- One for a PERSON in their CONSTITUENCY
- One for a PARTY in their REGION

Step 2: 73 MSPs elected in 73 constituencies using FPTP from the constituency vote

Plurality bit

Step 3: Remaining 56 MSPs elected REGIONALLY using the D'Hondt formula and closed party list (see above)

This bit makes the whole thing more proportional

Proportionality bit

Pros
MP-Constituency link
More proportional - SNP 46% vote, 50% seats
More choice - Greens got 2 seats in 2007

Cons
Under representation of smaller parties - Greens 2007
Most complex - not down turnout
Two categories of MSP

2011

Scotland

Wales

Single Transferable Vote

P56

<Northern Ireland>

A power sharing executive

How it works:

Step 1: Northern Ireland is divided into 18 constituencies with 6 seats available in each

Step 2: Voters rank candidates in order of preference

Step 3: The droop quota is worked out

Step 4: All first preferences are added together.

If one or more people have reached the droop quota, they get a seat. Any votes above the droop quota, are redistributed by second preference to help other candidates get the droop quota too, until all seats are filled

If seats remain unfilled, but no-one else has reached the quota, the bottom chap is eliminated and his votes redistributed according to second preference

votes
_____
seats + 1

Pros
Highly proportional - droop quota
Choice between party candidates
Strong MP constituency link

Cons
Coalition - likely
Complicated
Party dominated

Features
One vote
Ordinal voting
Multi member constituencies
Highly proportional

List System

- European Elections -

How it works:

The country is divided into large multi member regions

Parties produce a list of candidates, most important at the top

Voters vote for a PARTY and their list

If a party wins, say, 25% of the vote, they get to fill 25% of the seats with candidates from the top of their list

Features
One Vote
Multi Member Constituencies
Vote for Party
Highly proportional

Open list - the same, but voters can express a preference for different candidates on the list. Therefore the list might be re-ordered before the seats are allocated

Pros
Highly proportional - UKIP 16.4% vote, 18.4% seats
Women/minority representation on lists

Cons
Coalition - likely
Reduced MP-Constituency link
Extremist / fringe parties given power
Fixed parties - UKIP

2009

Supplementary Vote
‹London Mayor›

Features
One vote
Two choices
Majoritarian
Single member
  constituency

Election of the Mayor

Vote once (X) in column one for your first choice
Vote once (X) in column two for your second choice

			column one first choice	column two second choice
	1	BARNBROOK, Richard — British National Party		
	2	BATTEN, Gerard Joseph — UK Independence Party		
	3	BERRY, Sian — Green Party		
	4	CRAIG, Alan — Christian Peoples Alliance and Christian Party		
	5	GERMAN, Lindsey Ann — Left List		
	6	JOHNSON, Boris — Conservative Party		
	7	LIVINGSTONE, Ken — The Labour Party Candidate		X
	8	McKENZIE, Winston Truman — Independent		
	9	O'CONNOR, Matt — English Democrats - "Vote Matt! Vote English"		
	10	PADDICK, Brian Leonard — Liberal Democrats	X	

`How it works:`

Record 1st and 2nd preference (if you wish)

↓

Counts all 1st preferences

↓

Does anyone have a **MAJORITY?**

↓   ↓

NO   YES

↓   ↓

Eliminate all but top 2   *Winner!*

↓

For all eliminated votes, redistribute
according to 2nd preference

↓

Who has a majority now?

↓

Winner!

Mayoral election - final result

Candidate	Party	Final total	%
Boris Johnson	Conservative	1,054,811	51.53
Ken Livingstone	Labour	992,273	48.47

Mayoral election - first round

Candidate	Party	1st pref votes	%	2nd pref votes	%
Boris Johnson	Conservative	971,031	44	82,880	44.74
Ken Livingstone	Labour	889,918	40.3	102,355	55.26
Jenny Jones	Green Party	98,913	4.5		
Brian Paddick	Liberal Democrats	91,774	4.2		
Siobhan Benita	Independent	83,914	3.8		
Lawrence Webb	UKIP	43,274	2.0		
Carlos Cortiglia	BNP	28,751	1.3		

AFTER 14 OF 14 CONSTITUENCIES
TURNOUT 7,236,471 (38%)

Pros
Majority support - Boris 51.53%
Reduces wasted votes - 200,000 in 2012
MP-Constituency link
Clear winner

Cons
'Fake' majority - more people wanted Ken 2nd pref!
Doesn't eliminate waste votes - 161,000 in 2012
Not proportional

Additional Member System

How it works (In Scotland):
(Scotland - 129 MSPs)

Features
- TWO votes
- Hybrid system - Part plurality (FPTP), part PR (D'hondt)
- Single AND multi member constituencies
- More proportional

Step 1: Voters cast TWO votes
- one for a PERSON in their CONSTITUENCY
- one for a PARTY in their REGION

Step 2: 73 MSPs elected in 73 constituencies using FPTP from the constituency vote

Plurality bit!

<Scotland>

<Wales>

Step 3: Remaining 56 MSPs elected REGIONALLY using the D'Hondt formula and closed party list (see sheet!)

This bit makes the whole thing more proportional

2011

Pros
MP-Constituency link
More proportional - SNP 45% vote, 54% seats
More choice - Greens got 2 seats in 2007

Cons
Over representation of smaller parties - Greens 2007
Complicated - can lower turnout
Two categories of MSP

List System

<European Elections>

Features
One Vote
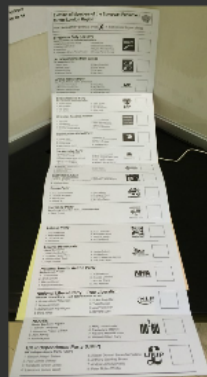
Multi Member
    Constituencies

Vote for Party

Highly proportional

How it works:

The country is divided into large multi member regions

Parties produce a list of candidates, most important at the top

Voters vote for a PARTY and their list

If a party wins, say, 25% of the vote, they get to fill 25% of the seats with candidates from the top of their list

Open list - the same, but voters can express a preference for different candidates on the list. Therefore, the list might be re-ordered before the seats are allocated

Pros

Highly proportional - UKIP 16.6% vote, 18.8% seats

Women/minority representation on Lists

Third parties - UKIP

Cons

Extremists can get in

Coalition likely

Reduced MP/Constituency link

Closed list - gives parties power

Turnout in Great Britain was 15,136,932, representing 34% of the electorate

Party	Votes	Vote %	% Change	Seats	Seats Change	Relative Seats Change	Seats %
Conservative	4,198,304	27.9%	+1.0	25	−2	+1	37.7
UKIP	2,498,226	16.6%	+0.3	13	+1	+1	18.8
Labour	2,381,760	15.8%	−6.8	13	−6	−5	18.8
Liberal Democrat	2,080,613	13.8%	−1.2	11	−1	+1	15.9
Green	1,223,303	8.1%	+2.4	2	0	0	2.9
BNP	943,598	6.3%	+1.3	2	+2	+2	2.9
SNP	321,007	2.1%	+0.7	2	0	0	2.9
Plaid Cymru	126,702	0.8%	−0.1	1	0	0	1.4

2009

Party divisiveness

<Northern Ireland>

A power sharing executive

P56

Single Transferable Vote

Features

One vote

Ordinal voting

Multi member
   constituencies

Highly
   proportional

How it works:

Step 1: Northern Ireland is divided into 18 constituencies with 6 seats available in each

Step 2: Voters rank candidates in order of preference
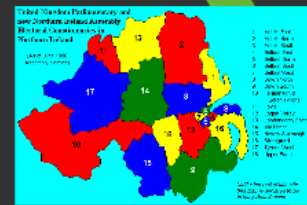
Step 3: The droop quota is worked out: ➡ $\left(\dfrac{votes}{seats+1}\right)+1$

Step 4: All first preferences are added together.

If one or more people have reached the droop quota, they get a seat.
Any votes above the droop quota are redistributed by second preference
to help other candidates get the droop quota too, until all seats are filled

If seats remain unfilled, but no-one else has reached the quota, the bottom chap is eliminated and his votes redistributed according to second preference

Pros

Highly proportional - droop quota

Choice between party candidates

Strong MP/constitutency link

Cons

Coalition likely

Complicated

Party divisiveness

Other Electoral Systems

Supplementary Vote
<London Mayor>

Features
One vote
Two choices
Majoritarian
Single member constituency

How it works:

Record 1st and 2nd preference (if you wish)

Counts all 1st preferences

Does anyone have a **MAJORITY**?

NO → Eliminate all but top 2

YES → *Winner!*

For all eliminated votes, redistribute according to 2nd preference

Who has a majority now?

Winner!

Pros
Majority support - Boris 51.53%
Reduces wasted votes - 200,000 in 2012
MP Constituency link
Clear winner

Cons
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This bit makes the whole thing more proportional

Plurality bit

Pros
More proportional - SNP 44% vote, 50% seats
Greater representation of smaller parties - Greens, 2007

Cons
Less proportional - Greens got 2 seats in 2007
Two categories of MSP?

2011

Scotland
Wales

Single Transferable Vote
<Northern Ireland>
P56

A power sharing executive

How it works:

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If seats remain unfilled, but no one else has reached the quota, the bottom chap is eliminated and his votes redistributed according to second preference.

$$\text{droop quota} = \frac{\text{votes}}{\text{seats} + 1}$$

Features
One vote
Ordinal voting
Multi member constituencies
Highly proportional

Pros
Highly proportional - closely mirrors
Choice between party candidates
Strong MP/constituency link

Cons
Coalition likely
Party disharmony

List System
<European elections>

How it works:

The country is divided into large multi member regions

Parties produce a list of candidates, most important at the top

Voters vote for a PARTY and their list

If a party wins, say, 25% of the vote, they get to fill 25% of the seats with candidates from the top of their list

Open list - the same, but voters can express a preference for different candidates on the list. Therefore, the list might be re-ordered before the seats are allocated.

Features
One Vote
Multi Member Constituencies
Vote for Party
Highly proportional

Pros
Highly proportional - UKIP 16.9% vote, 18.4% seats
Women/minority representation on Lists

Cons
Coalition likely
Reduced MP/Constituency link
Closed list - gives parties power
Fixed parties - UKIP

2009

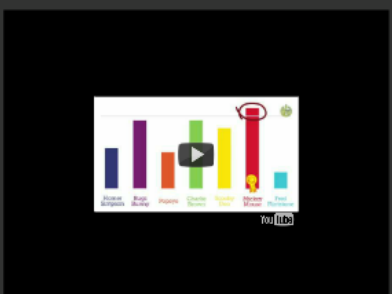Labour have done poorly - hoped to shore up votes in their heartland but have subsequently lost out to SNP

Nationalist parties have done better - worth voting for! SNP single party majority in 2011

Tories do better in Scotland & Wales:
Scotland 2011, 3 Constituency Seats, 12 Regional Seats (the PR bit)

D.U.P and Sinn Fein power sharing agreement means coalitions are guaranteed (Good Friday Agreement 1998)

The rise again of nationalist parties - D.U.P, U.U.P and Sinn Fein

Traditional 'English' parties do not run in N.I. - 'neutral peacebrokers'

‹Additional Member System›

‹Single Transferable Vote›

‹List System›

Common 5 mark Q!

Party Systems

A PARTY system is NOT a choice - it is a result of the electoral system a country has chosen to use

It is defined as 'the number of parties with a realistic chance of FORMING GOVERNMENT' in a system

For example, in FPTP:
Two party system - Only Labour and Conservative have a real chance of FORMING government

Distinguish between forming government and winning a seat or two...these are different!

Could FPTP now be argued to be a 2 1/2 party system?
Could FPTP now be argued to be a multi party system?

Types of party system:
One party system- Autocratic democracy
Two party system - FPTP, SV
   Two and a half party? Coalition...
Multi Party - STV, AMS, List

‹Supplementary Vote›

Major parties have faced challenge from 3rd parties - Labour came 3rd in 2009

Minor parties have had huge success -
2009 Con - 25, UKIP - 13, Lab - 13

Lib Dems get more proportional allocation of seats than in FPTP

Third parties eliminated - wasted vote for anyone else

Encourages two party system - Labour and Tories only winners (Ken and Boris!)

Effects of Electoral Systems on UK Parties

Common 5 mark Q!

Party Systems

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Two and a half party? Coalition...

Multi Party - STV, AMS, List

allenge from

d in 2009

The push for reform

The AV Referendum

YES!
More choice - UKIP
Wasted votes - 52% 2010
Voter value equalised - Henley
STV/Open list - choice within party
More proportional
Executive dominance - Tuition fees
Voter apathy - low turnout
Outdated with Europe
Trialled in Scotland, Wales and N.I.

It's simple - 65...
Strong & stable govt. - even...
Clear choice - manifestos
MP/Constituency Link - Nicky Morgan
Mandate democracy
FPTP works! Tradition
The people don't want it - AV Ref.
Adversary politics

Referendum on the voting system for United Kingdom parliamentary elections

At present, the UK uses the "first past the post" system to elect MPs to the House of Commons. Should the "alternative vote" system be used instead?

Vote (X) in one box only

YES	
NO	

Labour
Labour were unhappy about being out of power for so many years.

This was also driven by Scotland and Wales who, despite not voting for the Conservatives, had spent years under Tory rule.

They promised the Liberal Democrats electoral reform in return for votes from their voters in order to end the Conservatives.

Coalition Agreement
Following the 2010 elections, with no party winning an outright majority of seats, Conservatives and Lib Dems joined in coalition and hammered out the Coalition Agreement.

The Lib-Lab formula was on replacing FPTP with Alternative Vote, which would be held in May 2011.

Note: this was almost a lose-lose situation. The Tories did not support it because when not, while the Lib Dems did, they did not want AV they wanted STV.

Jenkins Commission
True to their word, Labour set up an investigation into alternative electoral reform.

This would be headed by Lord Jenkins - a Tory Peer.

He recommended AV Plus - most MPs being elected in single-member constituencies with 20% being elected as open-list regional seats, as top-up MPs.

1997

pre-1997   2010

Features
One vote
Ordinal voting
Majoritarian
Single-Member
Constituencies

How it works:

Voters rank the candidates in order of preference

⬇

Does anyone have a MAJORITY → Yes
of first preferences?   ⬇
⬇   **Winner**
No - eliminate bottom candidate
and redistribute his votes

Pros
Majority of support
MP/Constituency link
Broad support (2nd/3rd choice)

Cons
Least bad, not most good
Not proportional
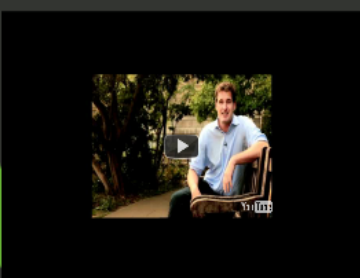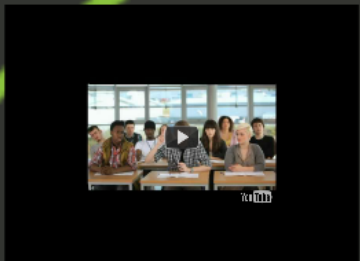
United Kingdom Alternative Vote referendum

At present, the UK uses the "first past the post" system to elect MPs to the House of Commons. Should the "alternative vote" system be used instead?

Results

Yes or no	Votes	Percentage
✓ Yes	6,152,607	32.1%
✗ No	13,013,123	67.9%
Valid votes	18,165,730	99.41%
Invalid or blank votes	113,292	0.59%
Total votes	19,279,022	100.00%
Voter turnout		42.2%
Electorate		45,684,501

Replace FPTP?

YES!

More choice - UKIP

Wasted Votes - 52% 2010

Voter value equalised - Henley

STV/Open list - choice within party

More proportional

Executive dominance - Tuition fees

Voter apathy - low turnout

Outdated with Europe

Trialled in Scotland, Wales and N.I.

NO!

More coalitions

It's simple - 65% turnout 2010

Strong & stable govt - even the Coalition

Clear choice - manifestos

MP/Constituency Link - Nicky Morgan

Mandate democracy

FPTP works! Tradition

The people don't want it - AV Ref.

Adversary politics

ndum

Representative democracy
Required by law
Legally binding
Range of choice
Multi-issue
5 years

Common 5/10 mark!

Elections vs. Referenda

One off
Single issue
Yes/No answer
Can be ignored
Called by Govt
Direct democracy

e.g: 1997 Scotland   2011 AV
1997 Wales   2011 Wales
1998 Ireland   2014 Scotland   2017 EU?

Why did Devolution happen?

Scotland

Scottish National Party (SNP) formed 1934

October 1974 - SNP win 11 seats in Westminster

1978 - Government defeated by backbenchers to get devolution

1979 - referendum fails to win enough support for devolution (Yes vote, but not enough of the electorate turned out, i.e. less than 40%)

1979-1997 - Conservative rule

    Scotland doesn't vote Conservative

    Thatcher tested Poll Tax on Scotland

    Economic confidence boosted - North Sea Oil

    Labour, trying to shore up vote for 1997, promise devolution

1997 - Referendum Q1 - Scottish Parliament - Yes 74.3%, No 25.7%
    Referendum Q2 - tax varying powers - Yes 63.5%, No 36.5%
    Turnout 60.4%

1997 Scotland Act   2014 Referendum...?

Wales

Plaid Cymru formed in 1925

October 1974 - PC win 3 seat

1978 - Government defeated by backbenchers to get devolution

1979 - referendum fails to win enough support for devolution (no vote)

1979-1997 - Conservative rule

    Wales doesn't vote Conservative

    Labour, trying to shore up vote for 1997, promise devolution

    If Scotland are getting it...

1997 - Referendum - Welsh Assembly (secondary legislative powers)? - Yes 50.3%, No 49.7%
    Turnout 50.1%

1997 Wales Act

2011 - Referendum - Primary legislative powers? Yes 63.5%, No 36.5%
    Turnout 35.6%

Ireland

Early 20th C - Home rule, Irish Rebellion 1916, partition of Ireland 1922, Republic of Ireland 1949

1922-1979 - Stormont Parliament governed Northern Ireland - dominated by Protestant Unionists

1960s - The Troubles - IRA takes up the grievances of the Catholic minority. British troops sent in 1969, culminating in Bloody Sunday in 1972

1972-1998 - Direct rule from London imposed on Northern Ireland

1998 - Good Friday Agreement
- creates Northern Ireland Assembly (108 members elected by STV)
- N.I. power-sharing executive - first and deputy first minister

1998-current - four suspensions:
    11 February – 30 May 2000
    10 August 2001 (24 hour suspension)
    22 September 2001 (24 hour suspension)
    14 October 2002 – 7 May 2007

'A place apart'

- N.I. in the Union depends on national support

- Usual UK parties rarely run, rather acting as neutral peacebrokers

- Security remains an issue:
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/northernireland/4956564/Antrim-barracks-shooting-Two-soldiers-murdered-in-Northern-Ireland.html

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1997 Wales Act

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  10 August 2001 (24 hour suspension)
  22 September 2001 (24 hour suspension)
  14 October 2002 – 7 May 2007

'A place apart'

- N.I. in the Union depends on national support

- Usual UK parties rarely run, rather acting as
neutral peacebrokers

- Security remains an issue:
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/
northernireland/4956564/Antrim-barracks-shooting-
Two-soldiers-murdered-in-Northern-Ireland.html

UK ELECTORAL SYSTEMS