

# 82 Politics

## A Types of government

**Monarchy:** a state ruled by a king or queen. There are also countries that have a monarchy, but the monarch is not the ruler, e.g. The United Kingdom.

**Republic:** a state governed by **representatives** (= men or women chosen by the people) and a president, e.g. USA or France. People who believe in this system are **republicans**.

**Democracy:** a system of government in which leaders are chosen by the people, e.g. France or the UK. People who believe in this system are **democrats**.

**Dictatorship:** a system of government in which one person rules the country (= one person has total power). This person is called a **dictator**.

## B Political beliefs

*Abstract noun*

conservatism

socialism

social democracy

liberalism

communism

fascism

*Personal noun/adjective*

conservative

socialist

social democrat

liberal

communist

fascist

People who believe in social democracy are **social democrats**.

## C Political positions

What does it mean to be a **socialist** or a **conservative**? Often, it means different things in different countries, but in Britain we often talk about someone's political position like this:

**left-wing / on the left**  
(= socialist)

**middle of the road /  
in the centre** (= liberal)

**right-wing / on the right**  
(= conservative)

## D Elections

In a democracy, people **vote for** (= they choose in a formal way / **elect**) the **political party** (e.g. conservatives, liberals or socialists) that they want to **form** (= make) the government. They do this in an **election**, and in many countries elections **take place / are held** (= they happen) every four or five years.

42% **voted for** the socialists in the last **election** (= the socialists got 42% of the votes). The president was **elected** two years ago.

## E Government

Political systems are different all over the world. In the UK, when a political party wins a **majority** (= 51% or more) of **seats** (= official positions in parliament) in an election, they become the government of the country, their **leader** (= the head of the party / person in control) becomes **Prime Minister** and they are **in power**.

The government must have **policies** (= programmes of action) to **run** (= manage) the country. This means, for example, an **economic policy** (for the economy), and a **foreign policy** (for actions taken by the country in other parts of the world).

## B People and bodies involved in politics

**Member of Parliament (MP):** a representative of the people in Parliament

**politician:** someone for whom politics is a career

**statesman/woman:** someone who uses an important political position wisely and well

**Prime Minister:** the head of government or leading minister in many countries

**chamber:** hall used by a group of legislators; many countries have two chambers

**cabinet:** a committee of the most important ministers in the government

**President and Vice-President:** the head of state in many modern states

**Mayor:** head of a town or city council

**ambassador:** top diplomat representing his/her country abroad

**embassy:** the building where an ambassador and his/her staff are based

**ministry:** a department of state headed by a minister.

# Nouns: politics

There are 15 words connected with politics in the box below. Use them to complete the sentences — in some cases you will need to make them plural. The first one has been done for you as an example.

abstentions budget consensus constitution devolution houses leader leak  
legislation membership policy poll recess spokesman veto

1. Germany has a federal constitution.
2. A government \_\_\_\_\_ revealed that discussions had been concluded on the treaty.
3. According to the latest opinion \_\_\_\_\_ the Prime Minister is more unpopular than ever.
4. Austria's application for \_\_\_\_\_ of the EU was successful.
5. Many Scots would like to see more \_\_\_\_\_ of power from Westminster.
6. Parliament has introduced \_\_\_\_\_ to control the sale of drugs.
7. The bill was passed by both \_\_\_\_\_ and sent to the President for signature.
8. The crisis happened during the summer \_\_\_\_\_ and Parliament had to be recalled.
9. The government is investigating the latest \_\_\_\_\_ of documents relating to the spy trial.
10. The government is running a tight monetary \_\_\_\_\_ to try to control inflation.
11. The \_\_\_\_\_ of the opposition criticised the Prime Minister for his failure to act.
12. The motion was carried by 200 votes to 150; there were 60 \_\_\_\_\_.
13. The President has the power of \_\_\_\_\_ over bills passed by Congress.
14. There is a \_\_\_\_\_ between all the major parties about what we should do now.
15. The minister has put forward a \_\_\_\_\_ aimed at slowing down the economy.