

ACTIVITIES WORKSHEET

A Comprehensive Overview of the UK Political Landscape in 2025

- (1) The British constitutional monarchy**
- (2) The two main parties and their leaders**
- (3) The history of UKIP and the rise of Reform UK**

A/ Right or Wrong? Justify using information from the lesson.

1. King Charles can make laws.
Wrong. The monarch's role is mostly ceremonial and King Charles does not have legislative power.
2. King Charles has no real political power.
Right. The UK is a constitutional monarchy; political power lies with Parliament and the Prime Minister.
3. The Commonwealth is linked to Britain's imperial past.
Right. The Commonwealth consists of former British colonies and maintains cultural and political ties.
4. Keir Starmer is a right-wing politician.
Wrong. Keir Starmer is leader of the Labour Party, which is centre-left.
5. Before Keir Starmer, a Labour Party member was Prime Minister.
Wrong. Boris Johnson and Rishi Sunak (Conservatives) held office before Keir Starmer.
6. Kemi Badenoch leads the Shadow Cabinet.
Right. Kemi Badenoch is the Leader of the Opposition, therefore the head of the Shadow Cabinet.
7. UKIP was a mainstream political party.
Wrong. UKIP was a minor party but influential in pushing for Brexit.
8. UKIP was seen as an electoral threat to the Conservatives, so David Cameron yielded to pressure and agreed to organise a British EU membership referendum.
Right. In 2013, David Cameron promised to hold a referendum on Britain's EU membership if the Conservatives were re-elected in 2015, in an attempt to stymie / thwart the rise of UKIP, which was taking votes away from his party / which was eating / siphoning off into Conservative votes.
9. Nigel Farage has become the main opposition figure.
Right / Wrong. Kemi Badenoch is still officially "Leader of the opposition" as head of the Conservative Party, as the UK system traditionally recognises the largest non-governing party as the official opposition. However, Farage appears to be the most effective opposition voice and political challenger to the Labour government, with Reform UK having overtaken the Conservatives as the primary opposition force in terms of electoral support and momentum. While Badenoch holds the formal title, Farage has become the de facto main opposition figure through Reform UK's electoral success and his ability to tap into "widespread disillusionment with the traditional parties."
10. In the 2025 local elections, the Conservative Party came second.
Wrong. In 2025 local elections, the Conservatives came third. The Liberal Democrats are a centrist party that had historic success in 2024 but remain third behind Labour and the rising Reform UK in 2025, holding 72 parliamentary seats whilst being overtaken by Reform in local elections.
11. It was a disaster for the Labour Party.
Right. Labour performed poorly in those elections. They took a hammering in the polls. Reform UK gave both mainstream parties a thrashing.
12. Londoners overwhelmingly voted for Brexit in 2016 and later supported Reform UK in local elections.
Wrong. London mostly voted to remain in 2016 and tends to support Labour or Liberal Democrats, not Reform UK.

B/ Describe the image and identify the politicians. Explain who they are, and why one of them appears to be shouting or rousing a crowd.

Nigel Farage is often pictured shouting or gesturing passionately to **rally supporters** due to his populist style and leadership of Brexit campaigns. Farage's core style is described as "witty, combative, grassroots" and he employs "MAGA-style rallies" with "MAGA-inspired slogans". Farage is dubbed populist because he claims to represent "ordinary people" **against the political establishment**, uses simple "common sense" messaging, and **positions himself as the voice of those left behind by mainstream politics**. His **crowd-rousing style** deliberately contrasts with conventional political discourse, **appealing directly to voters' emotions** and frustrations rather than through traditional policy debates.

C/ A Cabinet is the team of senior government ministers, chosen by the Prime Minister, each overseeing a specific department (like health, foreign affairs, or defence).

A **Shadow Cabinet** is formed by the main opposition party and comprises shadow ministers whose role is to mirror (or "shadow") government ministers—critiquing current policy and developing alternative proposals. They are often seen as a "government-in-waiting".

The concept works well in the UK due to its adversarial parliamentary system. In France, attempts to imitate this model (like "gouvernement fantôme") have not gained traction and remain largely symbolic.

- In August 2024: The Shadow Cabinet was headed by Rishi Sunak, who had become Leader of the Opposition (Conservatives) after losing the 2024 general election.
- Currently (as of mid-2025): Kemi Badenoch is the Leader of the Opposition and thus heads the Shadow Cabinet.

(4) The two-house system: The UK Parliament consists of two houses: the House of Commons (elected representatives) and the House of Lords (appointed members and hereditary peers). The Commons holds the primary legislative power.

(5) EU Brexit timeline and maps.

(6) A closer look at the 2025 UK–EU deal.

(7) A closer look at: "Brexit regret".

⇒ **Using information from the lesson, answer in one or two sentences.**

1. **How long did it take for Brexit to be enacted?**
It took nearly four years from the 2016 referendum until the UK officially left the EU in January 2020.
2. **Which cities and countries voted to remain in the EU?**
Major cities like London, Edinburgh, and Belfast, as well as Scotland and Northern Ireland, voted predominantly to remain.
3. **How was age a factor in the Brexit vote?**
Younger voters largely supported remaining, while older voters tended to support leaving the EU.
4. **To what extent is red tape (= la paperasse) going to be reduced by the new 2025 UK-EU deal?**
The 2025 deal aims to reduce some customs checks and paperwork but significant regulatory barriers remain.

⇒ **Circle the correct answer:** 55% of Britons wish the UK **hadn't** left the EU.

(8) Challenges facing the Labour party

(9) A closer look at the NHS crisis

A/ Right or wrong? Justify with an element from the lesson.

1. Keir Starmer may struggle to deliver on many promises due to strained public finances.
Right. The government faces budget constraints affecting policy implementation.
2. Keir Starmer is currently a popular politician.
Right. Polls show moderate popularity though with challenges.
3. Zarah Sultana is a Member of Parliament.
Right. She is a Labour MP.
4. Reform UK poses a threat to both mainstream parties.
Right. Reform UK attracts disillusioned voters from both Labour and Conservatives.
5. Reform UK fuels culture wars.
Right. The party often focuses on divisive cultural issues.
6. The 2012 Health and Social Care Act led to greater marketisation of the NHS.
Right. It increased private sector involvement.
7. The Labour government does not currently have the budget to fully restore the NHS.
Right. Funding remains insufficient for full NHS restoration.

B/ Explain who the demonstrators in the photo might be and why they are holding those banners.

They could be NHS workers (nurses and doctors belonging to a trade union) protesting underfunding or against privatisation, holding banners demanding better pay and conditions.

C/ Explain what the piggy bank and the stethoscope symbolise on this image. The piggy bank stands for money and funding. The stethoscope symbolises healthcare. Together, they highlight that the NHS depends on both funding and medical care. The piggy bank illustrates the issue of money and funding while the stethoscope conveys the idea of healthcare. Together, they show / point to the fact that the NHS needs both financial support and medical care.

(10) A closer look at “net zero” in the UK

⇒ **Answer these questions in one or two sentences.**

1. **When did the UK commit to reaching net zero carbon emissions?**
The UK committed to reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2050.
2. **Comment on the diagram and the bar chart. Why do UK carbon emissions appear as 1% in one and 3% in the other?**

The UK's cumulative CO₂ emissions, considering only emissions within its borders, represent approximately 3% of global cumulative emissions since 1850. However, if emissions from countries that were formerly part of the British Empire are also included, the UK's contribution rises to around 5.1%. This makes the UK one of the largest historical emitters, even though its current annual emissions are less than 1% of the global total.

The UK has over time emitted about 3% of the world total human-caused CO₂, with a current rate under 1%, although the population is less than 1%.

3. **What explains Rishi Sunak's U-turn on key green policies?**
Economic pressures and political backlash caused Sunak to reverse some environmental policies.

4. **Based on the diagram showing greenhouse gas emissions by sector, which area would you prioritise to reduce the UK's CO₂ emissions if you were Prime Minister?**
Transport (26%) and energy production (20%) should be prioritized due to their large share of emissions.
5. **What changes has Keir Starmer announced regarding onshore wind turbines?**
Starmer supports expanding onshore wind to boost renewable energy capacity.

(11) A closer look at immigration in the UK

A/ Right or wrong? Justify with an element from the lesson.

1. **The Windrush was the ship that brought the first group of Caribbean migrants to the UK to help rebuild the post-war economy.**
Right. The Windrush brought Caribbean migrants in 1948.
2. **Illegal immigration did not fall sharply after Brexit; in fact, small boat crossings increased.**
Right. Illegal crossings rose post-Brexit.
3. **Islam is the second largest religion in the UK.**
Right. Islam is the second most practiced religion after Christianity.
4. **The White British population has declined by around 25% compared to the post-war period.**
Right. There has been a significant demographic shift since the post-war era.
5. **In 2021, people from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds made up around 17% of the UK population.**
Right. BAME groups accounted for about 17% in 2021.
6. **In 2023, more than a third of the UK population was either BAME or foreign-born.**
Right. The combined proportion has risen above one-third.
7. **Non-EU legal migration did not decrease sharply in 2021/2022.**
Right. Legal migration boomed / surged/ reached a record high during that period.
8. **In 2017, a Pew Research Center report estimated the number of undocumented residents in the UK to be between 800,000 and 1.2 million—about 1.5% of the total population.**
Right. This is consistent with estimates.

B/ Analyse this photograph taken during a demonstration in April 2018. This is a photograph from a demonstration in April 2018, showing a person **holding protest signs referencing** the "Windrush Generation" with text **reading** "Here to stay" and mentioning deportations and the UK border.

The April 2018 timing is significant because this was **when the Windrush scandal broke** - it was revealed that many long-term UK residents from the Caribbean, who had lived legally in Britain for decades, were being **wrongly detained**, denied services, and in some cases deported due to the government's immigration policies. Many had been unable to prove their legal right to remain because they arrived as children on their parents' passports and the Home Office had destroyed landing card records.

The protest signs reflect the community's response to these deportation threats, asserting their right to remain in the country they had called home for decades. The scandal led to significant political controversy, **the resignation of Home Secretary Amber Rudd**, and eventually to compensation schemes for those affected.

(12) The British welfare state.

A/ Right or wrong? Justify with information from the lesson.

1. **The British welfare state was founded in 1945 after the Second World War.**
Right. It was set up after WWII, based on the 1942 **Beveridge Report**, with the creation of the NHS (1948) and expansion of social security.
2. **“Benefits” only means the advantages of something.**
Wrong. In everyday English *benefits* can mean “advantages,” but in the UK context it specifically means state financial support (unemployment benefits, child benefit, disability benefit, etc.).
3. **In a welfare state, when you retire, you receive a pension.**
Right. A pension is a key element of the welfare state: financial support for people who have stopped working.
4. **The Tories kept the welfare state well-funded.**
Wrong. Especially from 2010 onwards (Cameron, May, Johnson, Sunak), Conservative governments implemented austerity policies, reducing funding for welfare and public services.
5. **A lack of funding for the welfare state widens the gap between the rich and the poor.**
Right. If welfare (benefits, NHS, education) is underfunded, inequality increases because poorer people depend on these services most.
6. **The sugar tax is not effective at all.**
Wrong. Evidence shows it has been partly effective: soft drink companies reduced sugar content, and consumption dropped. It’s debated how much impact it has, but it is not totally ineffective.
7. **Keir Starmer decided to increase funding for the welfare state.**
Partly right. Since becoming Prime Minister in 2024, he promised more investment in the NHS and public services. But how much and how effectively is still debated.
8. **Keir Starmer succeeded in getting Parliament to pass a bill to overhaul the welfare system, and it was his original proposal.**
Wrong. He has not passed a full overhaul of the welfare system. Reforms and funding pledges are on the agenda, but not a sweeping, original bill entirely designed by him. The bill that was passed in July was watered-down to avoid a rebellion by more than 120 Labour backbenchers who thought there were too many welfare cuts. Under the new plan, people already receiving personal independence payments (Pip) or the health element of universal credit will keep getting them. However, the cuts will apply to future claimants. Disability rights campaigners say the changes create “a two-tiered” system, since only future claimants will be affected by the cuts.
9. **Compelling people to wear seat belts while driving is a good example often cited in the nanny state debate.**
Right. The law making seat belts compulsory in the UK came into force in 1983 for drivers and front-seat passengers, later extended to the back seats.
It is often brought up in the “nanny state” debate, because it raises the question: Should the government tell people what to do for their own safety (even if it limits personal freedom)? Or should people be free to decide, even if that means taking risks?
Supporters argue that the law saves thousands of lives and reduces NHS costs.
Critics say it is an example of the state treating adults like children, making decisions on their behalf rather than letting them choose.
This makes it a “classic” example: it clearly shows the tension between public health and personal liberty.
10. **A childminder looks after children.**
Right. A childminder is a registered professional who looks after children, often in their own home. It is a childcare provider/ a daycare worker.

(13) Tuition fees

1. Let's imagine you're fluent in English, you're broke, and you fail your exams next year. Where would be the ideal place for you to study?

Looking at the chart of average annual fees for public institutions in the OECD (2022/23):

- Countries with zero tuition fees for public institutions include Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden.
- Other low-fee countries: Germany (€200) and France (€300).

So, if you were broke and could study in English, the Nordic countries would be ideal. Among them:

- Finland, Norway, Sweden: low or zero fees, good English-taught programs.
- Germany: very low fees and many English-taught courses.

2. Are you in favour of tuition fees? How much should a student pay for higher education?

- UK public universities charge around £9,535 per year.
- US public universities: around \$9,600, private universities much higher.
- Many European countries charge little to nothing.

Personally, a fair system might be:

- A moderate tuition that covers a portion of costs but is affordable, e.g., €2,000–€3,000 / £1,700–£2,500 / \$2,000–\$3,000 per year.

I would favour moderate tuition with support for those who need it (Financial aid and scholarships should cover disadvantaged students)

3. Explain this headline from The Guardian, May 2024.

The headline likely refers to the UK government's announcement of a tuition fee rise for 2025-26.

- Tuition fees increased from £9,250 to £9,535, a 3.1% rise in line with inflation.
- Universities are under financial pressure; 72% may face deficits.
- The UK system has shifted from free education to student contributions over decades.

The Guardian headline probably reported that the UK government raised tuition fees for the first time in years due to inflation and financial pressures on universities, sparking debate about who should pay for higher education.

(14) A closer look at the British media landscape



1. Refer to the media section and explain the editorial stance of the BBC and The Independent on the riots that erupted after the Southport stabbings.

The BBC aims for impartiality and public service broadcasting, while The Independent tends to have a liberal and progressive editorial stance. Both The Independent and BBC headlines point to the role of social media in the unrest and violence that occurred in Southport.

The Independent - The headline, "How a few Twitter posts on Elon Musk's X helped fan the flames of unrest and rioting across the UK," makes a definitive statement. It explicitly attributes violence to social media and positions social media as a key driver of the events. and assigns a causal role to social media, specifically Twitter (X), in escalating the situation. The phrase "helped fan the flames" links the online activity to the real-world violence. The editorial line here is accusatory.

The BBC - The headline, "Did social media fan the flames of riot in Southport?," also focuses on social media's role and places social media at the centre of the narrative but it frames the link between social media and the violence as a question to be explored. By posing this question, the BBC suggests that social media is, at the very least, a significant factor that needs to be scrutinized in understanding the cause of the violence.

2. **Comment on these headlines from The Telegraph regarding the Southport stabbings.**



These three headlines from The Telegraph, when viewed together, present a consistent editorial line that is highly critical of the political left and mainstream political figures. They:

- Legitimize the grievances of protesters, framing them as concerned "local families" rather than "far-Right."
- Connect the violence to systemic "immigration failures", reinforcing a narrative of national instability.
- Use the event to attack political opponents, specifically Sir Keir Starmer, portraying him as a part of the problem.

The Telegraph's coverage, as reflected in these headlines, goes beyond simple reporting of the event and actively promotes a particular political viewpoint, using the Southport stabbings as a case study to criticize immigration policy and the Labour party.

3. **Do you expect to encounter articles from The Mirror or The Daily Mail in your examinations?**

No, even if both are widely read tabloids frequently cited in UK political discussions, your exam papers won't use the gutter press.

4. **Which news outlets are experiencing increased usage?**

Digital news platforms and social media outlets are seeing increased usage, especially among younger audiences.

5. **Explain how age significantly influences patterns of news consumption.**

Older people tend to consume traditional media like TV and newspapers, while younger generations prefer online and social media sources.

JUST FOR FUN! Fill in the gaps in the grid below.

COUNTRY	NOUN	ADJECTIVE
If you live in the UK	<p>“Briton” is more official but common in the press:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are a Briton. They are Britons <p>→ The government urged Britons to stay calm.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The British live in the UK = British people live in the UK. → <i>Les Britanniques habitent au Royaume-Uni.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are British. You are a British person/man/woman. <p>→ British politics is complicated.</p>
If you live in England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The English love football = English people love football. → <i>Les Anglais aiment le foot.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are English. You are an English person/man/woman. English people love football.
If you live in Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Irish are known for their hospitality = Irish people are known for their hospitality → <i>Les Irlandais sont connus pour leur hospitalité.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are an Irish person. You are Irish. You are an Irish man/woman. Irish people are known for their hospitality
If you live in Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Welsh are proud of their culture = Welsh people are proud of their culture → <i>Les Gallois sont fiers de leur culture.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are Welsh. You are a Welsh person. You are a Welsh man/woman. Welsh people are proud of their culture
If you live in Scotland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are a Scot = You are a Scottish person. The Scots are famous for their history = Scottish people are famous for their history → <i>Les Écossais sont célèbres pour leur histoire.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are Scottish. You are a Scottish person. You are a Scottish man/woman. Scottish people are famous for their history