

Learn the words and expressions and their definitions below

1. Institutions & Structures

- **Parliament / Congress:** the main law-making body (UK / US).
 - **A parliamentary system:** a democratic form of government in which the party (or a coalition of parties) with the greatest representation in the parliament (legislature) forms the government, its leader becoming prime minister or chancellor.
 - **The executive branch:** part of government that carries out laws (the President, Prime Minister, ministers).
 - **The legislature / the legislative branch:** part of government that makes the laws (Parliament, Congress...)
 - **The judiciary / the judicial branch:** the system of courts that interprets the law.
 - **Checks and balances:** system ensuring no branch of government has too much power.
 - **Constitution:** a country's set of fundamental laws and principles.
 - **Monarchy:** a system where a king/queen is head of state.
 - **Republic:** a state where power rests with elected representatives.
 - **To exercise power:** to influence or control actions, decisions, and policies within a governance framework
 - **An absolute monarchy:** a system where all powers are held by the monarch
 - **A constitutional monarchy:** a political regime where the monarch holds a symbolic power, while actual power belongs to democratic institutions.
 - **Direct democracy:** a form of government in which policies and laws are decided by a majority of all those eligible rather than by a body of elected representatives.
 - **Representative democracy:** political system in which citizens of a country or other political entity vote for representatives to handle legislation.
 - **Oligarchy:** a small group of people having control of a country or organization
 - **Authoritarianism:** the enforcement or advocacy of strict obedience to authority at the expense of personal freedom
 - **Totalitarianism:** the extreme form of authoritarianism, wherein all political power is held by a dictator.
 - **The governance of a country:** the action or manner of governing a state, organization, etc.
 - **A bicameral legislature:** a political system where the legislative branch is composed of two chambers, usually an "upper" and a "lower" one.
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2. Political Actors

- **Lawmakers / MPs / Representatives:** people elected to make laws.
 - **Constituents:** the citizens who elect a representative.
 - **Lobbyists:** people who try to influence politicians on behalf of groups.
 - **Civil servants:** people working for the government (but not elected).
 - **Opposition leader:** head of the party not in power.
 - **Candidate:** a person running for election.
 - **Grassroots movement:** political movement starting from ordinary people, not leaders.
 - **The head of state:** the chief public representative of a country, such as a president or monarch, who may also be the head of government.
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3. Political Processes

- **To pass a bill:** to officially make a new law.
 - **To veto:** to reject a proposed law. => **to override a veto:** for a legislative body, to cancel the veto pronounced by the executive chief.
 - **A draft legislation:** the preparation, project of a new law.
 - **To cast a vote:** to vote officially.
 - **Turnout:** the percentage of people who vote in an election.
 - **Campaign:** organized effort to win an election.
 - **Ballot box:** the container where people put their votes.
 - **Referendum:** direct vote by citizens on a specific issue.
 - **Impeachment:** official process to remove a leader from office.
 - **Gerrymandering:** manipulating voting districts to favor one party.
 - **A policy:** a course or principle of action adopted or proposed by an organization or individual.
 - **To run for office:** to campaign to be elected to an office or a position.
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4. Ideologies & Political Concepts

- **Left-wing / Right-wing:** progressive vs conservative political positions.
- **Bipartisan:** supported by two main parties.
- **A multi-party system:** a political system where multiple political parties compose the political landscape.

- **Populism:** appealing to ordinary people vs. elites.
 - **Sovereignty:** authority of a state to govern itself.
 - **Rule of law:** principle that everyone, even leaders, must obey the law.
 - **Separation of powers:** division of power among different branches of government.
 - **Nationalism:** belief in promoting one nation's interests above others.
 - **Welfare state:** system where government provides support for citizens' well-being.
 - **Conservatism / to be conservative:** the holding of political views that favour free enterprise, private ownership, and socially traditional ideas.
 - **Liberalism / to be liberal:** a political and social philosophy that promotes individual rights, civil liberties, democracy, and free enterprise.
 - **Progressivism / to be progressive:** support for or advocacy of social reform.
 - **The political spectrum:** the range of political positions or opinions that exist from the progressive left wing to the conservative right wing.
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5. Current Issues & Expressions

- **Polarization:** when opinions become very divided between groups.
- **Fake news / Misinformation:** false or misleading information presented as news.
- **Accountability:** responsibility of politicians to explain their decisions.
- **Transparency:** openness in government actions and decisions.