



The U.K. election

Lesson code: 3CUQ-V7ID-BF9P

INTERMEDIATE +

1 Warm-up

What do you know about the recent U.K. election and the British political parties?

2 Key election vocabulary

Match the words on the left with the definitions on the right.

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1. a general election | a. a group of people with similar political beliefs that compete in elections |
| 2. an exit poll | b. an activity to ask how people voted when they leave a polling station |
| 3. a seat | c. an official position as a member of parliament |
| 4. a majority | d. a person who is competing in an election |
| 5. turnout | e. leader of a government |
| 6. a prime minister | f. more than half of the votes cast in an election |
| 7. a party | g. the number of people who vote in an election |
| 8. a candidate | h. the voting process in a country to choose who will be in government |

3 Find the information

You are going to read an article about the result of the recent U.K. general election. Guess the answers to the questions below and then check your answers by reading the text on the next page.

- How many people could vote in the U.K. general election?
a. 36.7 million b. 46.8 million c. 50.9 million
- How many MPs (Members of Parliament) are in the British parliament?
a. 650 b. 700 c. 750
- What percentage of the vote did the Labour Party win?
a. 37.3% b. 38.2% c. 40.0%
- How much did the pound fall by when the exit poll was released?
a. 0.5% b. 2% c. 4%



Conservatives lose majority in U.K. election

June 9th, 2017

- 1 Britain's Conservative party lost their majority after a surprise general election. They did not win enough seats to have control in parliament, so they are hoping to make a deal with the largest party in Northern Ireland (the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP)), to get an overall majority. Despite a negative reaction from some of her own MPs (Members of Parliament), the prime minister, Theresa May, visited Buckingham Palace on Friday to get the Queen's permission to form a government.
- 2 The leader of Labour (the main opposition party), Jeremy Corbyn, has said that she should resign, adding that he himself was 'ready to serve.' Senior Conservatives confirmed that she will not resign. Theresa May assured that her party will make sure that there will be fewer changes in Britain.
- 3 The turnout for the election was the highest in 25 years, around 70% voted of the 46.8 million people that could. A total of 650 MPs were elected, and 326 seats were needed to get an overall majority. The Conservatives won 318 seats, Labour 262. The Conservatives won 42.4% of the vote, Labour 40.0%, the Liberal Democrats 7.4%, the Scottish National Party (SNP) 3.0%, UKIP 1.8% and the Green Party 1.6%.
- 4 The result is a bad one for the prime minister, who decided that there should be a general election, and was hoping to get the support of the British public. However, with many young people voting and Jeremy Corbyn's positive campaign, the Conservatives didn't get the majority they aimed for.
- 5 Experts are now saying that Britain's exit from the EU has become much more uncertain. Theresa May didn't get the support that she wanted for her Brexit plan, making it more difficult for the government to continue Brexit talks without a new plan.
- 6 The EU Budget Commissioner told German radio he was not sure if Brexit talks could start later this month like they had planned. He said that discussions might go badly for everyone if they worked with a weak U.K. Brexit negotiator.
- 7 When the election exit poll was released, the pound immediately dropped by 2% as investors thought that no party would get a majority, wrote BBC's Economics Editor Kamal Ahmed. The fall occurred due to the fact that the government's Brexit plan is now less certain, and there will be more difficult negotiations ahead.
- 8 The nervous feeling in the financial markets is likely to increase, as investors could decide to move their money to more attractive places, such as the Eurozone. Growth has increased here and political risk has gone down, says Ahmed.
- 9 The other parties involved in the election had mixed fortunes. The DUP, who now have ten seats in parliament, are in a position to ask for more public spending in Northern Ireland, and will also try to make sure that they're not treated any differently than the rest of the U.K. when Brexit negotiations start.
- 10 The Liberal Democrats (who are traditionally the third largest party in the U.K.) won 12 seats, three more than in the last general election. However, their former leader, Nick Clegg, lost his seat.
- 11 The U.K. Independence party (UKIP), who are the party that pushed for Brexit didn't win any seats. Their leader, Paul Nuttall, then resigned.

Sources: BBC News, The Guardian, The Telegraph



4 Checking understanding

Put T (true) or F (false) next to each statement. Say why the 'false' statements are not true.

1. The Conservative Party wants to form a government with the support of the Democratic Unionist Party.
2. The election turnout was higher than it was at the last general election.
3. Not many young people voted.
4. The Green Party won a large percentage of the vote.
5. The Scottish National Party was unhappy about the number of seats they won.
6. The U.K. Independence Party's leader will keep his position.

5 Find the words

Find a word or phrase in the article which means ...

1. say officially that you are leaving a job (*verb, P.2*): _____
2. people who have a lot of knowledge about a subject (*noun - plural, P.5*): _____
3. not unsure (*adj., P.5*): _____
4. a person who helps people come to an agreement, usually as their official job (*noun, P.6*):

5. people who put money into something to make a profit (*noun - plural, P.7*): _____
6. an increase in the success of a country's economy (*noun - uncountable, P.8*): _____
7. money that a government spends on buying goods and providing services (*noun - uncountable, P.9*): _____
8. taking part in (*adj. phrase, P.9*): _____

6 Collocations

Match the adjectives on the left to the words on the right to form collocations from the text.

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. a negative | a. fortunes |
| 2. financial | b. majority |
| 3. political | c. markets |
| 4. mixed | d. negotiations |
| 5. an overall | e. reaction |
| 6. difficult | f. risk |

Now make your own sentences using the phrases.



7 Talking point

Discuss any of the questions below in pairs or small groups.

1. Has your country ever had a coalition government? If so, what did people think about it?
2. Do you think that coalition governments are a good or a bad idea? Why?
3. Do you think that the result of the U.K. election is positive or negative for Europe? Why?

