

New Act threatens post-election chaos

Under the Fixed Term Parliaments Act introduced in 2011 by the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition, Britain could end up with a minority “zombie” government, incapable of winning key votes



Fixed-term Parliaments Act 2011

FTPA sets period between elections at five years. An early election can be triggered only if two thirds of House of Commons – 434 of 650 MPs – vote for it, or Commons passes a precisely-worded ***motion of no confidence***

MAY 7 **General election**
If there is no majority winner, election results in “hung parliament”

JUN 5 **FTPA New Act**
specifically excludes votes of confidence on Queen’s Speech

■ **Caretaker convention**
Cabinet Manual stipulates that incumbent Prime Minister **David Cameron** (above left) is entitled to remain in office until it is clear whether he, or opposition leader

Ed Miliband (above right) can form coalition or minority government which commands confidence of House of Commons



■ **FTPA vote of confidence**
Opposition can table motion ***“That this House has no confidence in Her Majesty’s Government”***

■ **New government**
If motion is passed, 14-day period follows to attempt to form new government. Under FTPA rules, majority of MPs must pass resolution ***“That this House has confidence in Her Majesty’s Government”***

MAY 18 **House of Commons**
New Speaker elected.
New MPs are sworn in

MAY 27 **State Opening of Parliament**
Written by government, ***Queen’s Speech*** contains outline of its proposed legislation

JUL 30 **New election**
If confidence resolution fails, new election must be held 17 working days later – at height of summer holidays