

• HOW BRITAIN'S ELECTION PROCESS WORKS •

British voters are heading to the polls for the third time in less than four years, after lawmakers backed Prime Minister **Boris Johnson's** call for a snap election just two weeks before Christmas

DECEMBER
6
1923

Britain last holds December election in 1923 when Conservative Prime Minister **Stanley Baldwin** (right) seeks to strengthen his grip on party leadership.



Baldwin takes most seats in **House of Commons** but is 50 short of majority – resulting in hung parliament

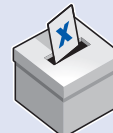
WHY AN ELECTION HAS BEEN CALLED NOW

Under **Fixed-Term Parliaments Act 2011**, next election is not due until 2022.

To pass his stalled **Brexit** deal – divorce from European Union – Prime Minister Johnson is gambling that early vote will give him **parliamentary majority** to enact his plan

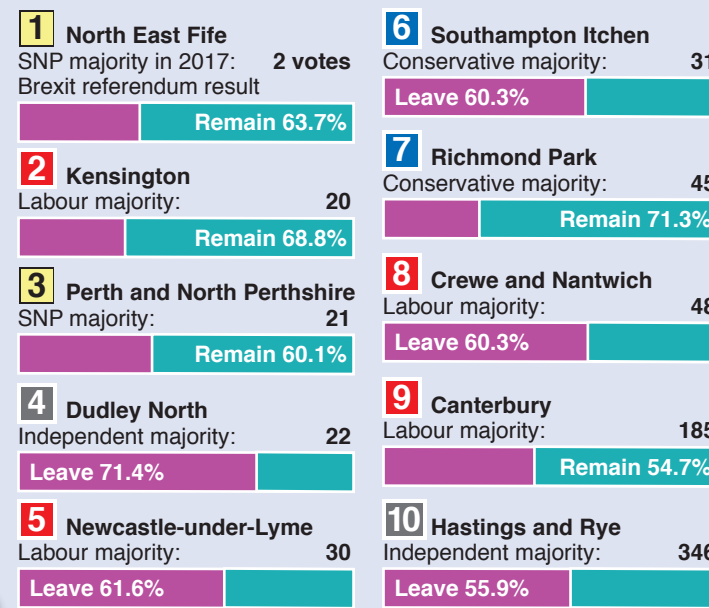


MARGINALS – BATTLEGROUND CONSTITUENCIES



Most hotly contested seats at December 12 ballot will be in **marginal constituencies**; places with winning majorities – number of votes between first and second placed candidates – of under **10%** or about **5,000 votes**. In 2017 **51 seats** were won with majority of **2%** or less of votes cast. Of these so-called **ultra-marginals**, eight seats had majority of under **50 votes**.

Campaigns will also focus on constituencies that voted strongly either to “Leave” or “Remain” in 2016 EU referendum



COST OF DEMOCRACY



WHERE THE MAIN PARTIES STAND ON BREXIT

Conservative and Unionist Party: **Boris Johnson** (left) wants UK to leave European Union with revised Brexit deal he agreed with EU. Agreement has yet to be approved by UK Parliament



Labour: **Jeremy Corbyn** wants to renegotiate Johnson's Brexit deal and put it to another public vote – all within six months



SNP: **Nicola Sturgeon** wants UK to stay in EU. Calling for second referendums on Brexit and Scottish independence



Liberal Democrats: Party leader **Jo Swinson** says Lib Dem majority government would cancel Brexit



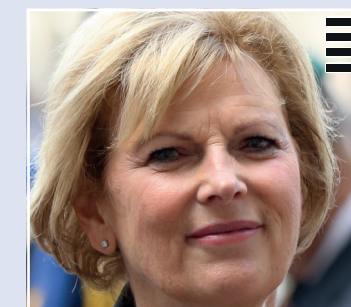
Democratic Unionist Party: Party leader **Arlene Foster** wants UK to leave EU but rejects Johnson's revised deal



Plaid Cymru: Leader **Adam Price** backs remaining in EU, despite Wales voting “Leave” in referendum



Green Party: Party's only MP, **Caroline Lucas**, believes UK should stay in EU – wants another referendum on Brexit



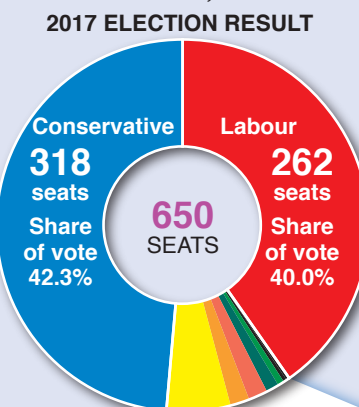
Change UK: Pro-EU party with three parliamentary candidates, led by **Anna Soubry** – supports People's Vote on Brexit



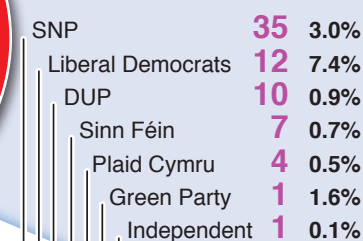
Brexit Party: Led by **Nigel Farage**, wants UK to leave EU with no deal, in what he calls “clean-break Brexit”

FIRST-PAST-THE-POST VOTING

Britain – like U.S., Canada and India – uses first-past-the-post (FPTP) voting system. **Leader of party that wins majority of 650 constituencies, 326 seats or more, becomes Prime Minister**



Critics of FPTP: Say it fails to give fair representation of voters' choices. Alternative is **proportional representation (PR)** – as used in many countries including Germany, Italy and Denmark



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Members of Parliament (MPs) in Chamber of House of Commons. Members of government are seated on left, with opposition on right

House of Commons Speaker Seated on chair at rear



Ceremonial mace on table at centre – Parliament cannot lawfully meet, debate or pass legislation without mace

CONSTITUENCIES

United Kingdom has 650 Parliamentary constituencies, representing communities roughly equal in size. **Each constituency elects one MP**

ELECTORATE

Voters must be 18 years old on polling day.

Many claim it is undemocratic to deny voting rights to 16-year-olds – they pay taxes, but cannot elect MPs who decide how to spend them

NORTHERN IRELAND

Constituencies

18

Average electorate

68,300

UK population

66.44m

Total electorate

(Dec 2018)

45,775,800

WALES

40

56,000

ENGLAND

533

72,200

SCOTLAND

59

Average electorate

67,200

Sources: Democratic Dashboard, House of Commons Library, Reuters
Pictures: Hulton Archive, Getty Images
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