

The Political System of the United Kingdom

An introduction to the politics and parties
of Great Britain

Microteaching
Tuesday February 23rd, 2016

Christopher R. Marsicano

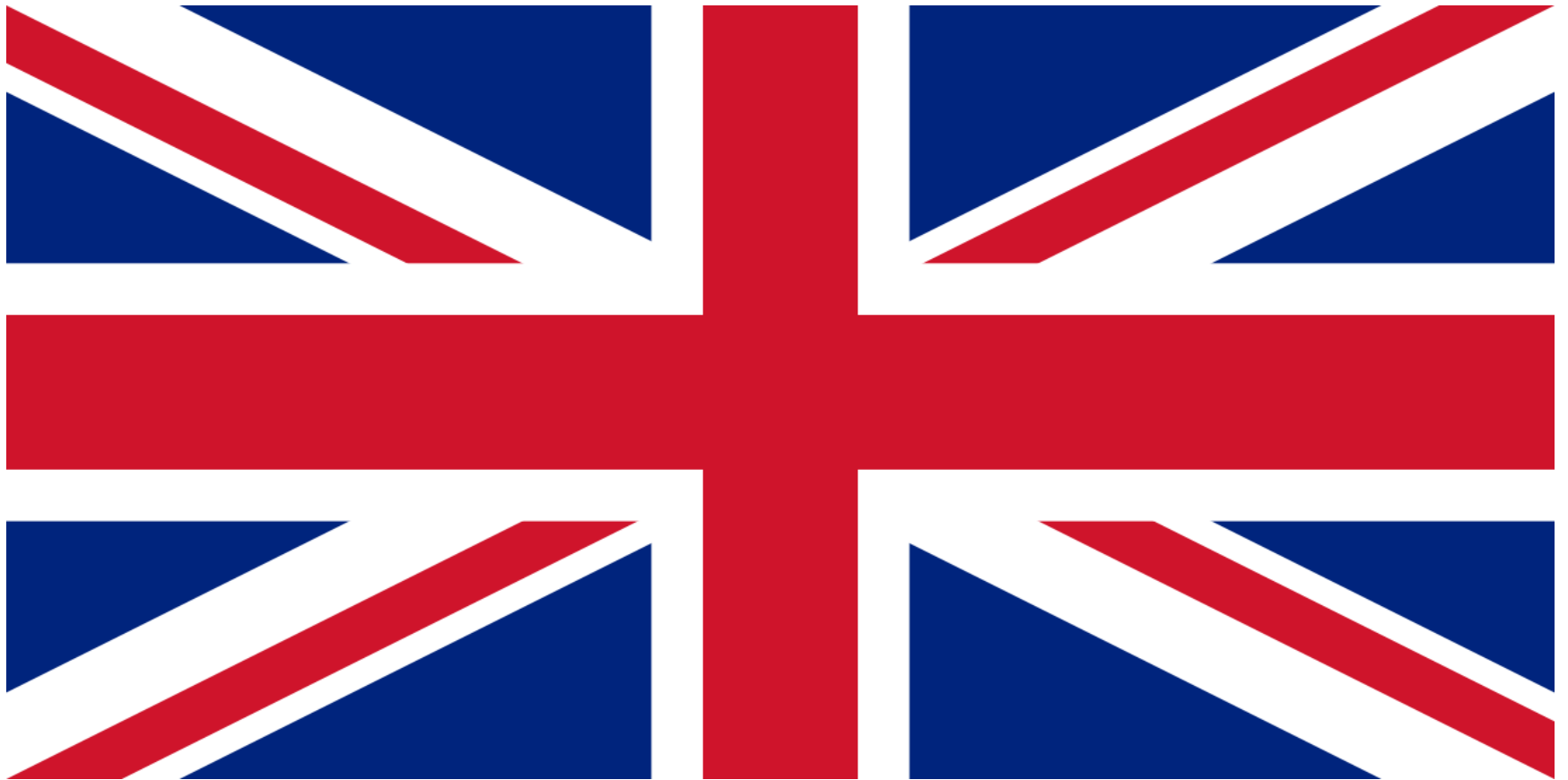


Link to today's slides, activities

<http://j.mp/UKPolitics>

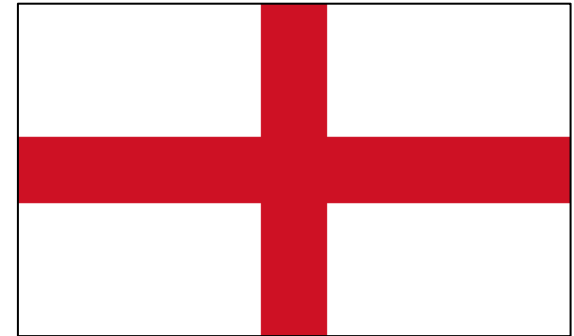


The United Kingdom



The United Kingdom

- One country, made up of four nations
 - England
 - Scotland
 - Wales
 - Northern Ireland



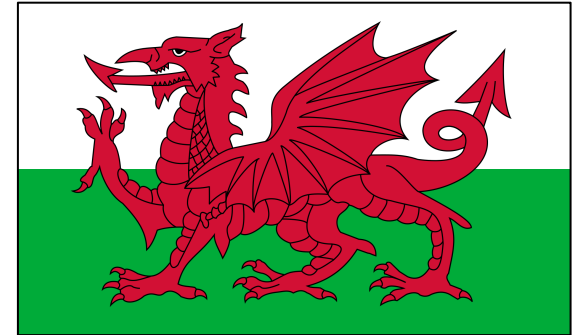
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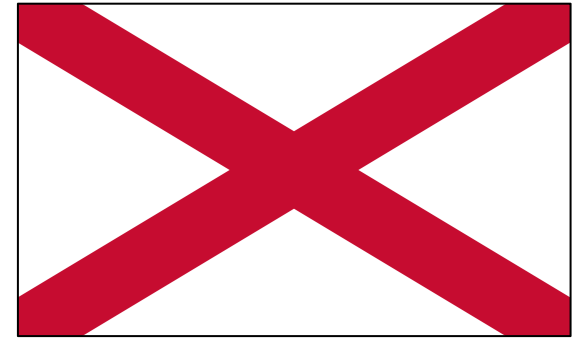
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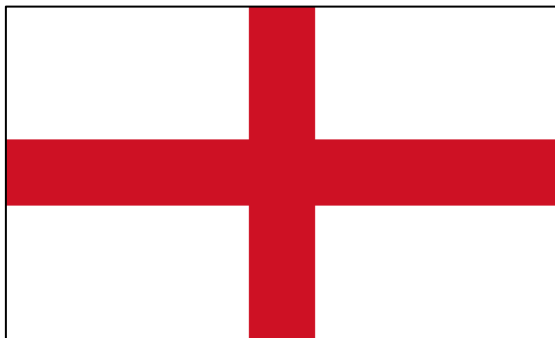
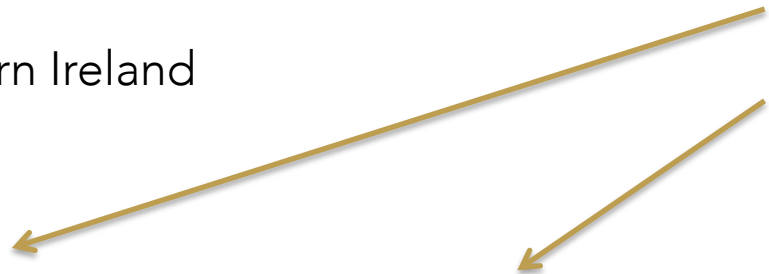
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- Constitutional monarchy - with limited federalism
 - Some of the nations have their own national assemblies



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



Northern Ireland
Assembly



The United Kingdom

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- Constitutional monarchy - with limited federalism
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- Parliament handles matters that pertain to England or whole UK

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The Regent

- Descendant of the Kings of medieval England
- Through royal prerogative:
 - Signs all legislation
 - Is the sole person who can declare War or Peace
 - Calls on majority party in the House of Commons to form a government in his or her name.



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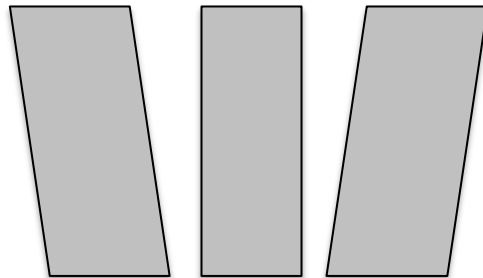
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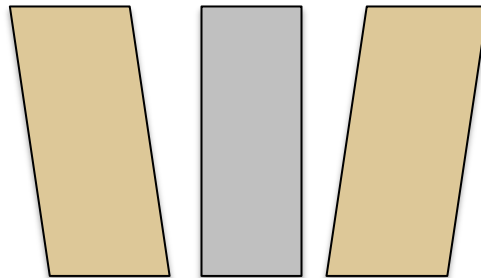
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- Why “Crossbenchers?”
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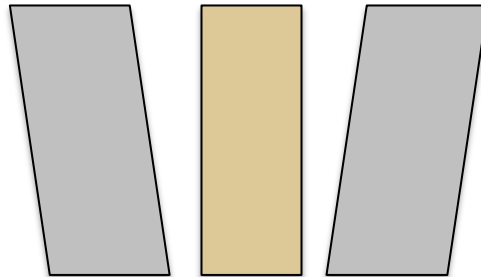
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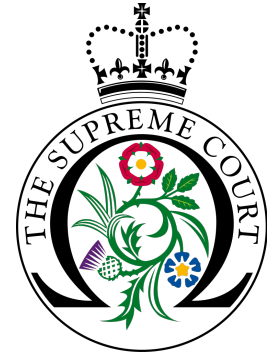
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 - Since 2009, that responsibility has fallen to the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom, which is not a part of Parliament



House of Commons

- Elected Representatives of the People of the UK
 - Elected through a “First past the post” electoral system – the person with the most votes wins... even if he or she does not have a majority.
- Responsible for day-to-day legislation and governance
- 650 constituencies with around 70,000 people in each constituency
- The majority party, or coalition of minority parties equivalent to a majority in number has the responsibility for governing.
 - This party is said to be “in government”



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 - The Prime Minister has the power to appoint cabinet ministers with each responsible for a set of political issues known as a “brief.”
- Maintaining a government can be difficult
 - In 2010, no party had an overall majority of the seats in the House of Commons
 - The Center-Right Conservatives and Centrist Liberal Democrats joined together to form a coalition government
 - In 2015, the Conservative Party won an outright majority.



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 - The current opposition is led by Jeremy Corbyn of the Labour Party
 - The leader of the opposition appoints a “Shadow Cabinet” to cover the same briefs as the government



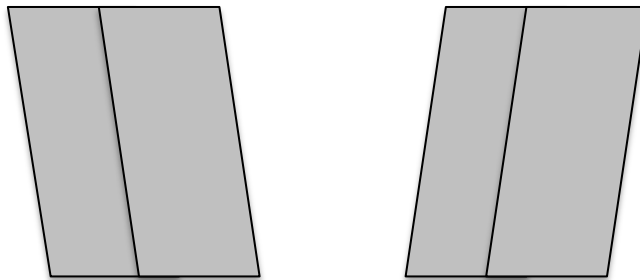
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- The Loyal Opposition gets the opportunity to ask questions of the Prime Minister every week on important policy issues.
 - It can become raucous and exciting.
 - [CHECK PMQS LINK ON WEBSITE](#)



House of Commons

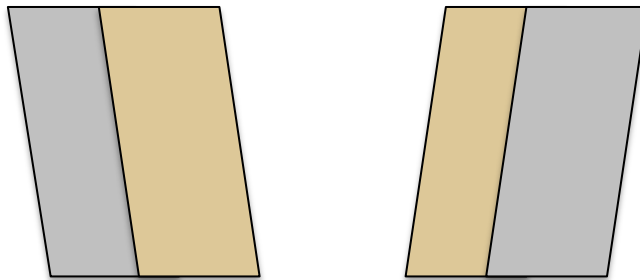
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- Like the House of Lords there are benches in the House of Commons
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 - Party members who are not in the leadership sit in the back benches
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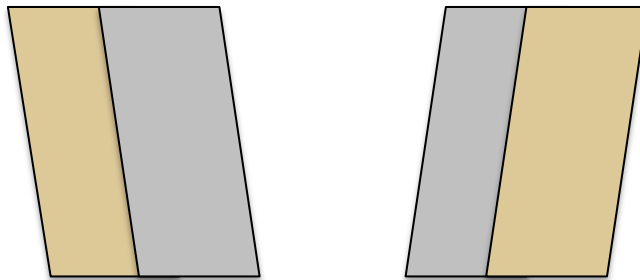
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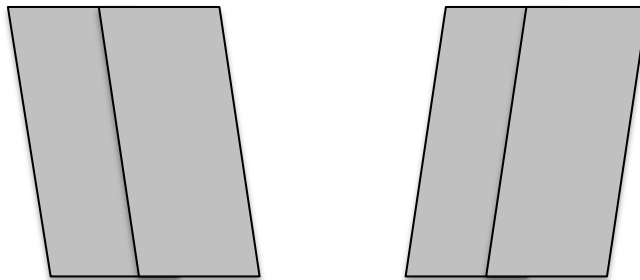
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Activity: Political Parties

<http://bit.ly/WhichParty>



Wrapping Up

<http://bit.ly/learnUK>

