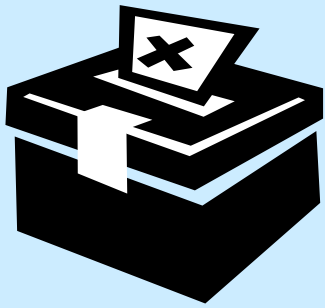


Standard Grade Revision



Living in a Democracy



Participation in a democracy

- Voting
- Joining a political party
- Campaigning for a party
- Standing as a candidate in an election
- Lobbying MSP/MPs etc
- Writing letters/emails or making phone calls to representatives
- Joining a pressure group and taking direct action

The Election Campaign

Candidates and their party members campaign at local and national level using the methods below:

Local

- Canvassing
- Putting up posters
- Handing out leaflets
- Organising/attending public meetings
- Taking part in media events e.g. interviews

National

- Party election broadcasts
- Appearing on political programmes such as Newsnight
- Taking part in national media interviews

The duties of my MP/MSP

In parliament:

- Ask questions at Prime Minister's Question Time (MP) or First Minister's Question Time (MSP)
- Debate
- Vote on Bills
- Sit on Committees

In the constituency:

- Hold surgeries
- Carry out fact-finding visits
- Visit local schools
- Attend fundraising events
- Working with councillors



Work of councillors

Councillors have many similar duties to MPs and MSPs. However, it is important to remember that a councillor's duties are carried out in his/her ward.



A councillor's duties include:

1. Debating
2. Committee work
3. Lobbying MPs/MSPs
4. Voting on issues
5. Holding surgeries
6. Attending meetings

Representation of Women and Ethnic Minorities

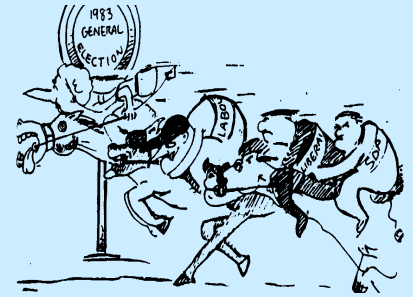
- Why women are under-represented:
 - Discrimination
 - Family commitments
 - Cost of childcare deemed to be too high
 - Politics is a male dominated profession
- Why ethnic minorities are under-represented:
 - Discrimination - both by political parties and the voters
 - Language problems
 - Lack of role models

First Past the Post: Advantages

- ✓ It is fair and easy to understand
- ✓ It is simple to operate - choose one candidate, quick to count
- ✓ Each constituency has only one MP
- ✓ Usually one party gains a clear majority and can form a government
- ✓ Avoids coalition government
- ✓ Tried and tested!



FPTP: Disadvantages



- × FPTP favours the bigger parties e.g. Labour and Conservatives
- × Many votes are wasted
- × Number of seats in HoC do not reflect the percentages of votes cast for each of the parties
- × Most governments have more people voting against them than for them
- × If a party comes in second in many constituencies they may gather hundreds of thousands of votes without winning any seats



Additional Member System: Advantages

- ✓ Delivers a more proportional result and therefore parties are represented more fairly
- ✓ The Scottish government has so far produced a stable and co-operative coalition
- ✓ The FPTP seats retain the link between the MSPs and their constituencies
- ✓ Due to the coalition the government is forced to take account of a broader range of views



AMS: Disadvantages



- × It is difficult for people to understand.
- × Some constituents appear to be confused between the role of the constituency MSP and the regional MSP
- × It could result in unstable coalitions.
- × One of the coalition parties may be quite small but it will have a lot of influence as it is part of the government

Methods Used By Pressure Groups

- Petitions
- Publicity campaigns e.g. posters and leaflets
- Publicity stunts to attract media attention
- Marches and Demonstrations
- Writing to MPs and MSPs
- Lobbying elected representatives



Shelter



Rights and Responsibilities of PGs

| Rights | Responsibilities |
|--|---|
| Hold demonstrations/marches | To do so in a peaceful manner and abide by the law |
| Phone or write to elected representatives to ask for support | Pressure groups must not try to intimidate or blackmail their representatives |
| Publish information about their cause | All information must be accurate |
| Collect signatures for a petition | Signatures must not be forged. |