

Political System in Britain

Reading

Britain is a parliamentary democracy in which the country is governed by the representatives of the people. Democracy guarantees the equality of citizens' rights and freedom in all aspects of public and private life. Britain is also a monarchy. The queen is the official head of state, the head of the legal system, the commander-in-chief of all armed forces and the head of the Church of England. The queen participates in the summoning of Parliament. Her official approval (so-called royal assent) is needed before any bill (the draft of an Act of Parliament) becomes law. The making of laws is done by Parliament consisting of the House of Commons, the House of Lords and the sovereign (at present Queen Elizabeth). The speaker presides over the House of Commons which is the lower house of the British Parliament, consisting of 650 elected Members of Parliament. Elections must be held every five years maximum. The House of Lords is the upper house of the British Parliament, consisting of about 1.200 non-elected members (Lords Spiritual and Lords Temporal). Most peers (members of the House of Lords) have the right to sit in the House of Lords because of their aristocratic origin. Their titles are hereditary. There are also some life peers who were given a title as a reward for their achievements. The House of Lords is presided over by the Lord Chancellor. The executive branch is represented by the Prime Minister who is the head of the government. He presides over the Cabinet (a group of ministers chosen by the Prime Minister). The Cabinet is responsible for all Government decisions. Usually, the Prime Minister is the leader of the Party which has the majority in the lower house. The major political party that is opposed to the government is called "the opposition" and its members sit opposite the government front benches. The most important parties in England nowadays are the Conservative Party, Liberal Party and Labour Party.

You can see the whole lesson from your teacher, please ask them to send it to you before the class.

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