

The Next United Kingdom General Election: will the Conservative hold continue?

Jay Bragg – Aug 2020

Our incumbent 58th Parliament of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is a Conservative majority (they currently hold 364 seats in the House of Commons), who form HM Government. HM Most Loyal Opposition is the Labour Party, who hold 202 seats in the Commons. There are also 76 other opposition MPs who are members of minor parties, 7 Sinn Fein MPs who refuse to deliver the oath, meaning they lack the right to vote in matters in Commons and the Speaker who acts as Presiding Officer of the Chamber.

Our incumbent government led by the Rt Hon Boris Johnson is gradually losing respect and popularity from all sides of the political spectrum due to their response to COVID-19, the high level of excess deaths, and the lack of accepting culpability from the Government.

However, prior to addressing the forthcoming election within the next 4 years, we must observe how the previous election was conducted. After 4 years of Brexit talks with the European Union leading to no deal passing through the Commons, it was clear this would be a major tactic used by the Conservatives to gain an advantage in the election. The Conservatives offered a solution to a problem they created, and this effectively 'stole' the election.

However, it was also the failure of other parties to offer the solution, the voting population wanted to hear. Labour and the Liberal Democrats both either wanted to prolong Brexit conversations, hold a second referendum or revoke Article 50, and remain in the Union. This contributed to a phenomenon within this election of previously opposition voters, "voting blue to get Brexit through". Voters were sick of the Brexit conversation, so elected the party who had the most likelihood of completing Brexit within their govt term.

The Labour leader Rt Hon Jeremy Corbyn was a weak leader which also contributed to the losses of previously "safe" seats for the party. Many had lost faith in him as a leader due to his failures to deal with the anti-Semitism within the Labour, whilst recently leaked reports suggest Corbyn's opponents led to delays in discipline, as leader he should have stood his ground in order to protect the integrity of the party.

Other parties presented a weak campaign, except for the SNP who within Scotland gained additional seats and became the third largest party in the House, overtaking the Liberal Democrats, who embarrassingly lost their leader after she lost her seat.

Moving into the next election, the Lib Dems will have a new leader, who will be taking the party further left in their 'progressive' programme, which will attract a crowd of voters especially those newly registered.

The Conservatives will most likely drop their majority as voters return to their regular voting patterns now that Brexit has come and gone. Whilst Conservatives may have the most members in the Commons, it is highly likely to be a minority government as the Conservatives will also struggle to find a coalition partner willing to work with them or big enough to be meaningful as the DUP has only 8 MPs in this Parliament. However Labour could work hand-in-hand with parties such as the Greens, the SNP and the Lib Dems and form either a 4 party coalition, which has been seen in recent history – although in a devolved executive - Northern Ireland formed a 5 party executive at the start of 2020 or a coalition with confidence and supply.

Whilst that too may not form a majority government, it makes way to overtake and defeat the Conservatives to form a government. At this current point in time, Keir Starmer is the more

popular candidate for PM but people do not believe him to be 100% ready yet, meaning if a snap election were to be called too soon it could cost Starmer a chance to have the first Labour premiership in 10 years.