

### The Citizen and Political Power in the UK



Presentation by Duncan Bunce

Read & Précis: Chapter 5, Issue 2, pages 226-252

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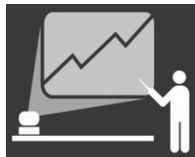
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### Welcome

- Ensure mobile phones are off.
- No eating in the classroom.
- You may take notes.



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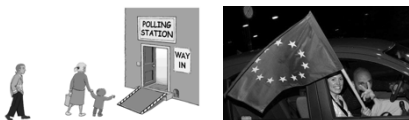
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### Topic Aims

- The nature of government and its impact on citizens.
- Local democracy.
- What is the impact of the European Union on life in the UK?



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### Extended Reading

The following textbooks and periodicals are in the College Library and will deepen your knowledge:

- AQA Citizenship AS. Watts, D. Nelson Thornes (Chapter 10).
- Citizenship and Participation. Firth, L. Issues, Volume 175 (page 16).
- Essentials of UK Politics. Heywood, A. Palgrave Macmillan (Chapter 10).

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### The nature of government

- Political power is held by the Houses of Parliament at Westminster (central government).
- A great deal of responsibility is delegated to local government, regional governments and national governments.
- **Copy the diagram on page 226.**

What is the difference between a single tiered and two-tiered authority?



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### National government (devolved)

- The United Kingdom consists of four countries. **Can you name them?**
- **Devolution** has meant some legislative and policy making powers have been transferred from Parliament and given to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- How did the citizens in these nations **decide** for these powers to be passed?



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**Regional government**

- England is separated into nine regional assemblies (unelected bodies with limited powers).
- **What issues do these assemblies advise on?**
- **Who appoints them?**
- **The nine regions are:** Northeast, Northwest, Yorkshire and Humberside, East Midlands, West Midlands, East of England, London, Southeast, Southwest. **Which one is unique and why?**

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**The Greater London Assembly**



London is the only region to have an electd assembly (London Assembly) and a directly elected Mayor.

**What is the role of its 25 elected members?**



**What is the role of the Mayor?**

Undertake **Activity 2** on page 229.

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**Local government**

Local government is structured in two ways:

- **Single tier** ‘all purpose council’ (responsible for local authority functions).
- **Two tier** (responsibilities divided between district and county councils).
- Citizens may have very different council structures depending on where they live in the UK.

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### Government impact on family life?



Undertake the **Activity** on **page 231**.

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### Local Government Reform Act 2000

Under the Local Government Reform Act all councils were required, after consultation with their local residents, to choose one of three systems.

**Group Activity: Research and present to class...**

- (1) Option 1 (inc. arguments for and against)
- (2) Option 2 (inc. arguments for and against)
- (3) Option 3 (inc. arguments for and against)

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### Public consultation

➤ The decision which model the council should adopt must be done in consultation with the public.

*E.g. By referendum, questionnaire, public meeting or focus group.*

**Write down** a list of advantages and disadvantages for each of these methods.

*Be prepared to share with the class.*



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### Devolved government

➤ **Create a mind-map** that illustrates the criticisms of devolved government (*be prepared to explain on the board*):

➤ Undertake **Activity 3** on **page 239**.

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### Role of local representatives

➤ Their role is to represent the views of those living in their local area to the local authority (e.g. building plans).

➤ Are councillors part-time or full-time?

➤ Once elected, how long does a councillor serve?

Consider the following in pairs and **write down** your reasons...

*"Councillors should be paid as if it were a full-time job."*

*"They should be active citizens and do the job voluntarily."*

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### Impact of the EU on life in the UK?

➤ The EU was created in the aftermath of the Second World War.

➤ **Objective?** – To bring peace, prosperity and security to Europe.

➤ The European Union now has **27** member states (countries).

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## European Union questions

### Answer the following questions...

- (1) Which countries established the European Economic Community (EEC)?
- (2) What was the name of the Treaty which created the EEC?
- (3) What changed in 1965 and why?
- (4) When did the UK join?
- (5) Which takes precedence for central government, national law or European Union law?

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## European Commission



- The **executive** arm of the EU.
- Consists of **27 Commissioners** (inc. a President appointed by the Council of Ministers).
- **Proposes new legislation** to the Council of Ministers and European Parliament (is the only institution that can do so).

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## The Council of the European Union



- The **legislative arm** of the EU – shared role with the European Parliament.
- **27 Government ministers** sit on the council and negotiate, debate and then vote on issues.
- Each member state takes it in turn to be **President** every six months (Treaty of Lisbon will change this how?)

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### European Parliament



- Only **directly elected** institution.
- Role is to **amend, approve or reject legislation** proposed by the Commission before it is passed into law (shared responsibility with the Council).
- Power to scrutinise Commissioners (even dismiss) and responsibility over the budget.

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### The impact of the EU

**Activity** (see pages 247-251):

- **Create a table** that illustrates the advantages and disadvantages of EU Membership.

Advantages	Disadvantages



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### Just to remind you...

- For the Unit 2 exam, you should be able to **know, understand** and **discuss**:
  - The concept of Central, National, Regional and Local government.
  - How devolution has altered national government.
  - Why the EU was created, how the institutions operate and the impact of EU Law on a citizen's life.

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