

Polity IV Country Report 2010: United Kingdom

<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">Score:</td> <td style="width: 15%;">2009</td> <td style="width: 15%;">2010</td> <td style="width: 15%;">Change</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Polity:</td> <td>10</td> <td>10</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Democ:</td> <td>10</td> <td>10</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Autoc:</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Durable:</td> <td></td> <td>130</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tentative:</td> <td></td> <td>No</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Score:	2009	2010	Change	Polity:	10	10	0	Democ:	10	10	0	Autoc:	0	0	0	Durable:		130		Tentative:		No		
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SCODE	UKG	CCODE	200	Date of Report	1 June 2011																				
Polity IV Component Variables																									
XRREG	XRCOMP	XROPEN	XCONST	PARREG	PARCOMP																				
3	3	4	7	5	5																				
Date of Most Recent Polity Transition (3 or more point change)																									
End Date	28 April 1880		Begin Date	29 April 1880																					
Polity Fragmentation: No																									
Constitution	Unwritten																								
Executive(s)	Prime Minister David Cameron (Conservative); appointed as leader of majority party in Parliament, 11 May 2010																								
Legislature	Bicameral: House of Commons (650 seats; directly elected; most recent elections, 6 May 2010) Labour Party: 258 Conservative Party: 305 Liberal Democrats: 57 Other parties: 30 House of Lords (675 seats; 557 life peers and 118 hereditary members)																								
Judiciary	House of Lords																								

Narrative Description:¹

Executive Recruitment: *Competitive Elections (8)*

The British prime minister is elected through a competitive multiparty political system. The majority party (or majority coalition) in the House of Commons elects the chief executive. Members of the House of Commons are popularly elected.

Executive Constraints: *Executive Parity or Subordination (7)*

The parliamentary structure of government found in the United Kingdom places significant constraints on the autonomous actions of the chief executive. The prime minister is elected by, and is directly accountable

¹ The research described in this report was sponsored by the Political Instability Task Force (PITF). The PITF is funded by the Central Intelligence Agency. The views expressed herein are the authors' alone and do not represent the views of the US Government.

to, the legislature. Although Britain does not have a written constitution, historical conventions and norms, as well as legal precedents, serve as the foundations of horizontal accountability in this country. The judiciary, while weaker than in many OECD countries, is autonomous from executive interference.

Political Participation: Institutionalized Open Electoral Competition (10)

The United Kingdom is a competitive multiparty democracy dominated at the national level by two major parties: the Labour Party (center-left) and the Conservative Party (center-right). Smaller ideological-based and ethnolinguistic-based parties actively compete at both the national and regional (in Scotland and Wales) levels. Freedom of speech and assembly are constitutionally protected and the civil rights of citizens are generally respected.