



CRISIS

Simulation Guide of the Crisis Committee

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Status Quo

It is **24 July 2019**. The Conservative leadership contest has ended and Boris Johnson formally takes over as UK Prime Minister. No deal between Britain and the EU has been formally approved by the British Parliament and the default Brexit date is set to October 31st. Unless something changes, the UK is on track to leaving the European Union **without a deal**.

Seats in the British Parliament are currently distributed as follows:

311 seats - Tories

247 seats - Labour

35 seats - SNP

12 seats - Lib Dems

10 seats - DUP

7 seats - Sinn Fein

5 seats - Change UK

4 seats - Plaid Cymru

1 seat - Green Party

11 seats - Independents

5 seats - The Independents

1 seat - Vacant

1 seat - Speaker.

Note: The Conservatives currently have an effective voting majority of **2** in Parliament due to a confidence and supply agreement with the DUP. The effective voting majority is calculated by excluding vacancies, the Speaker and the two Deputy Speakers (one from Labour and one from the Conservatives), whose votes are constrained by certain tie-breaking conventions, as well as abstentionist members (from Sinn Fein).

The latest YouGov poll shows party support to be as follows:

25% - Tories

23% - Lib Dems

19% - Labour

17% - Brexit Party

9% - Green Party

4% - SNP

3% - other.

Specialists predict that, were a general election to be held right now, it would yield a **hung parliament** and roughly the following results:

267 seats - Tories

201 seats - Labour

83 seats - Lib Dems

25 seats - Brexit Party

1 seat - Green Party

48 seats - SNP

5 seats - Plaid Cymru

2 seats - other.

Note: There is a significant discrepancy between the percentage of popular support each party has and the number of seats it is likely to obtain in a general election due to the Single Member Plurality/First-Past-the-Post (SMP/FPTP) electoral system that is currently used for parliamentary elections in Britain. A useful elaboration on how this system works can be found [here](#).

Voters are deeply divided on the question of Brexit and what the best outcome would be. A breakdown of the electorate's preferences can be found [here](#).

Objectives

Every single personality has two sets of objectives that they have to bear in mind throughout the conference:

- **Collective objectives** - the entire cabinet wishes for these objectives to be fulfilled and all personalities should try in good faith to fulfill it
 - For the Tories:
 - Retaining power (i.e., being in government) by the end of the conference
 - Getting Brexit done (**Note:** there are different opinions within the Cabinet as to how this should be done)
 - For Labour:
 - Getting into power (i.e., being in government) by the end of the conference
 - Preventing a no-deal Brexit (**Note:** there are different opinions within the Shadow Cabinet as to what the best alternative to a no-deal Brexit is)
- **Individual objectives** - these vary from personality to personality and *need* to be pursued at the same time as the collective objectives
 - Obtaining one's preferred Brexit outcome
 - Obtaining one's preferred policy outcomes (on all other issues; ex. NHS, crime etc.)

Note: In some circumstances, the collective and individual objectives may well be at odds with each other. It is up to each participant to ensure that they do not fundamentally disregard either of them. The extent to which every participant works towards meeting both collective and individual objectives will be taken into account by the Chairpersons when evaluating their performance in the Committee and when handing out awards.

Directives

There are two types of directives in this Crisis Committee:

- **Party directives**

- Should have the form and structure of a regular MUN resolution, excluding the preambulatory clauses;
- Do not have sponsors/signatories and can be introduced by anyone in the cabinet; all amendments have to be put to a vote;
- In order to pass, both party directives and amendments have to incur simple majority support (more votes in favour than against). The Prime Minister/Leader of the Opposition has a veto;
- **For the party in Government**, they can be related to:
 - Establishing general government policy (**Note:** Party directives automatically apply for all areas of competence, regardless of the vote of the corresponding secretary of state.)
 - Establishing the party position on votes in the House of Commons
 - Making policy pledges in a general election manifesto
 - Directing the party apparatus to fulfil a certain objective;
- **For the party in Opposition:** can be related to:
 - Establishing the party position on votes in the Commons
 - Making policy pledges in a general election manifesto (**Note:** Policy pledges of Labour are constrained by decisions of the Labour Party Conference.)
 - Directing the party apparatus to fulfil a certain objective.

- **Personal directives**

- Will be submitted via a Google Form to the Crisis Manager;
- Should describe (in as much detail as possible) an action that the personality represented by the participant can/has the competence to take:
X: Personality: Home Secretary Priti Patel; **Action:** The Home Office has cut back on the restrictions present in police codes of conduct at a national level in order to enable the introduction of stop-and-search;
- Will be accepted/rejected by the Crisis Manager, depending on their reasonability, implementability, level of detail and accordance with the submitter's prerogatives.

Time Progression

Time progression in the Crisis Committee is dependent upon the speed with which both cabinets make decisions regarding the situation in the country. Time updates will be provided by the Crisis Manager and will regularly accompany Crisis Updates.

Crisis Updates

Crisis Updates are the main way in which participants will be notified of developments both in Britain and abroad. Some of the events included in the Crisis Updates occur independently of decisions taken by the two cabinets/the personalities within them, whereas some of the Crisis Updates will include events occurring in reaction to or as a consequence of the cabinets'/personalities' decisions. Crisis Updates are elaborated and released by the Crisis Manager; participants will be able to access them on the Instagram account of the Committee, @lazarmuncrisis.

The actions and reactions of stakeholders not represented in the Committee (rogue MPs of both parties, other UK parties, the Speaker, the electorate, celebrities, EU leaders, EU institutions and others) are all controlled by the Crisis Manager. They are designed to be realistic and in line with those stakeholders' real-life behaviour and will take into account both their history and current incentives. However, there will not be a complete match between the events included in the Crisis Updates and those that occurred in the real world after 24 July 2019.

Note: The underlying assumption of all Crisis Updates is that any action taken by either of the personalities/cabinets will have *some* impact on the behaviour of external stakeholders. This will mean that, for example, public statements/pledges that in real life may have a more modest (if not negligible) impact on public opinion will, for the purposes of this simulation, affect it in a more significant (yet proportionate) manner.

PMQs

Once every 2 Committee Sessions, there will be a 15-to-20 minute-long session of Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs).

Rules:

- The PMQs are presided over by one of the 4 Crisis Chairpersons or the Crisis Manager, who shall be, for the duration of the PMQs, addressed as 'Mr/Madam Speaker'.
- The right way to refer to participants during PMQs is 'right-honourable gentleman/lady/member/friend'; all answers and questions must be addressed to the Speaker, with the other participants being referred to in the third person.
- Both questions and answers must be no longer than 1 minute.
- Participants from both sides may ask questions to the Prime Minister; whenever a participant wishes to address a question, they must stand up and, if recognised by the Speaker, will be allowed to speak.
 - The role of questions from members of the Cabinet is to present the government in a positive light by highlighting its achievements, expressing approval of government policy and underlining key government priorities.
 - The role of questions from members of the Shadow Cabinet is to challenge and undermine government policy, to expose government failures and to underline key priorities of the opposition.
- The LO receives the right to ask two questions to the PM per PMQ session by default.
- The PMQs will be attended by members of the Press Corps, which will record, photograph and eventually write articles on the performance of all participants. Any slip-ups or memorable moments are likely to be reported on (and published on the Instagram account of the Committee, @lazarmuncrisis) and **will** affect the approval ratings of both parties and their leaders.
- The seating arrangement will be similar to that from the real-life PMQs, with the Cabinet and Shadow Cabinet seated in two lines, facing each other, with a 'dispatch box' between the two lines of seats, in front of which both the Prime Minister (PM) and the Leader of the Opposition (LO) will have to stand while making statements.
- Approval with the member currently speaking can be signalled by using the traditional cry of 'hear, hear'.

Likely Events

General Election

- The next general election in the UK is scheduled for 2022, under the Fixed-term Parliaments Act 2011 (FTPA).
- However, a snap election can be triggered earlier in one of the following ways, under the FTPA:
 - By passing a **motion of no confidence** in the House of Commons. This needs a majority in the House of Commons and leads to the resignation of the government. A general election is then automatically triggered unless an alternative figure is capable of gathering majority support in the House for forming a new government.
 - By passing a motion to hold an early general election in the House of Commons. Such a motion requires support from two thirds of the House's total membership (including vacant seats).
- In 2019, an Act of Parliament (the Early Parliamentary General Election Act 2019) was passed in order to allow for a general election to take place. Since it was a new Act, it only required a simple majority in the Commons in order to become law. It passed the Commons on 29 October 2019 with Opposition support. (**Note:** This has not yet happened in the simulation's timeline. The Act was passed under extraordinary circumstances that would not be easy to replicate in the Committee.)

Final Say/Scottish Independence Referenda

- A second referendum on the question of Brexit can be triggered through an Act of Parliament, as was done through the European Union Referendum Act 2015.
- Similarly, a referendum on Scottish independence could also be triggered through an Act of Parliament, as was done through the Scottish Independence Referendum Act 2013.
- In order to be passed, Acts of Parliament only require a simple majority in the House of Commons.