

A big political upheaval in Parliament as MPs realign

This Parliament has been characterised by a record number of Ministerial and Shadow Ministerial resignations, and by a large number of MPs deciding to resign from the party they belonged to during the election. Many of these resignations have been over differing approaches to leaving the EU, with a trend for MPs elected on platforms to leave moving over to stances and parties that wish to remain. It appears that UK politics is currently realigning on the basis of Leave or Remain, with the SNP and Liberal Democrats standing for Remain, the Conservatives for Leave, and Labour caught trying to straddle the two positions. The Deputy Leader has now declared for Remain, against his Leader who wants to be ambiguous.

The Conservative party has currently lost the most MPs, with 29 now resigning the whip or having the whip removed. Most have become independent MPs. Four left to join Change UK alongside 7 Labour founders of that brief movement. 3 have now joined the Liberal Democrats. Nick Boles resigned the whip to become an Independent Progressive Conservative.

Labour has lost 15 MPs. The issue of Mr Corbyn's style of leadership has been an important factor, as well as the party's changing and vague stance on the EU. Several have gone citing the party's lacklustre response to antisemitism charges. Some are now Labour Independents, whilst others are in the Lib Dems or joined Change UK when it was first set up.

The Lib Dems as the most pro EU national party has picked up 5 seats, whilst losing one of its original MPs to independent status. He had promised in the 2017 election to honour the referendum result and rightly thinks his party no longer offers that.

This unusually high turnover has occurred with none of them thinking they should test their new views and new party loyalty in a by election. Electors are understandably angry where their MP has switched from say Labour to Lib Dems from a party that claimed to support Brexit to one that fundamentally opposes it, without asking for electoral endorsement. An MP moving from his or her party to be an independent, if they say they are doing so while still sticking with their policy promises at the last election have a good case for saying no to a by election, in contrast to those shifting from a Leave party to a Remain party in order to support Remain.

Conservative 288 minus 29

Labour 147 minus 15

Lib Dem 17 plus 5

Change UK 5 plus 5

The Independents 3 plus 3

Independent 32 plus 31