

# Should Voting Be Mandatory?



## Discussion questions

1. What does being a citizen mean to you? Do you believe voting is part of being a citizen?
2. Do you believe that the political system would change if everyone was made to vote?
3. What are some reason someone would choose to not vote?
4. Should there be an age restriction on voting?
5. Do you believe that inmates should vote?
6. Does voting make a difference to your life?

## Statistics—True or false? (answers of the next page)

1. Australia enacted mandatory voting in 1924.
2. In May 2019, UK voter turnout went up to 50%
3. Voter turnout has increasingly gone down due to the current political climate.
4. In former socialist nations, there were not elections.
5. Australian voter turnout is at 69%
6. Women have cast almost ten million more votes than men in recent elections.
7. Nearly 30 countries employ compulsory voting.



## Useful vocabulary

1. Civic duty– (noun) Civic engagement or civic participation.
2. Candidate-(noun) a person who would like to be a politician.
3. Government– (noun) the governing body of a nation, state, or community.
4. Parliament– (noun) (in the UK) the highest legislature, consisting of the sovereign, the House of Lords, and the House of Commons.
5. Citizen - (noun) a legally recognized subject or national of a state or commonwealth, either native or naturalized.
6. Mandatory– (adj) required by law or rules; compulsory.
7. Ballot- (Noun) a process of voting, in writing and typically in secret.
8. Donkey votes– (noun) votes for a random candidate by people who feel that they are required to vote by law

## Reading – Mandatory Voting

Thirty countries are seeing an increased voter turnout due to **mandatory** voting. Some people say this goes against democracy itself and takes away the choice of whether or not to participate in any election. Other **citizens** and global leaders believe that a sense of **civic duty** and patriotism strengthen the case for compulsory voting.

When the Australian **government** made voting mandatory, they had an increased voting turnout. 89%-90% of Australians say they would still vote, even if they didn't have to. However, there was also an increase of "**Donkey votes**," made by people who were unsure which **candidate** to vote for or just plainly didn't want to participate in the **ballot**. **Parliament** says this is a side effect of forcing their citizens to vote. It's a sentiment that the American government also agrees with.

With a sharp and heavy political climate, more people are becoming voters than every before. However, is mandatory voting the next step?

## Answers

1. True
2. True
3. False, voter turn out in both the UK, the EU, and America has gone up at least 50%-60%
4. False, there were elections in socialist Eastern Europe. However, they weren't free.
5. False, it's 98%
6. True
7. True