



Conservative Leadership Election 2022: Who will be our next Prime Minister and what will they do?

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Prepared by **DRD** PARTNERSHIP

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Introduction

The Conservative Party of the United Kingdom has a reputation for being ruthless when it comes to ousting their leaders. Boris Johnson is just the latest to fall victim to his party, perhaps as a result of karmic justice having been a leader in the revolt that ousted Theresa May in 2019. Sir Iain Duncan Smith lost a confidence vote while he was Leader of the Opposition in 2003, making him the first Tory leader not to fight a General Election. Even the late Margaret Thatcher wasn't immune to the Conservative duplicitousness, being forced out of office in 1990 after a Cabinet revolt.¹

This latest mutiny is perhaps more surprising, however, as it comes less than three years after the last one, for a leader who won a landslide majority at the last election and who hasn't had much time to get on with 'business as usual' due to a once in a century pandemic crisis. But, after a series of scandals, on 7th July 2022, Johnson was forced to resign as Prime Minister, triggering the start of a Conservative Leadership contest.

This report will look at what has happened so far, what happens next, who the final two candidates are and what policies they may introduce should they become the next Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

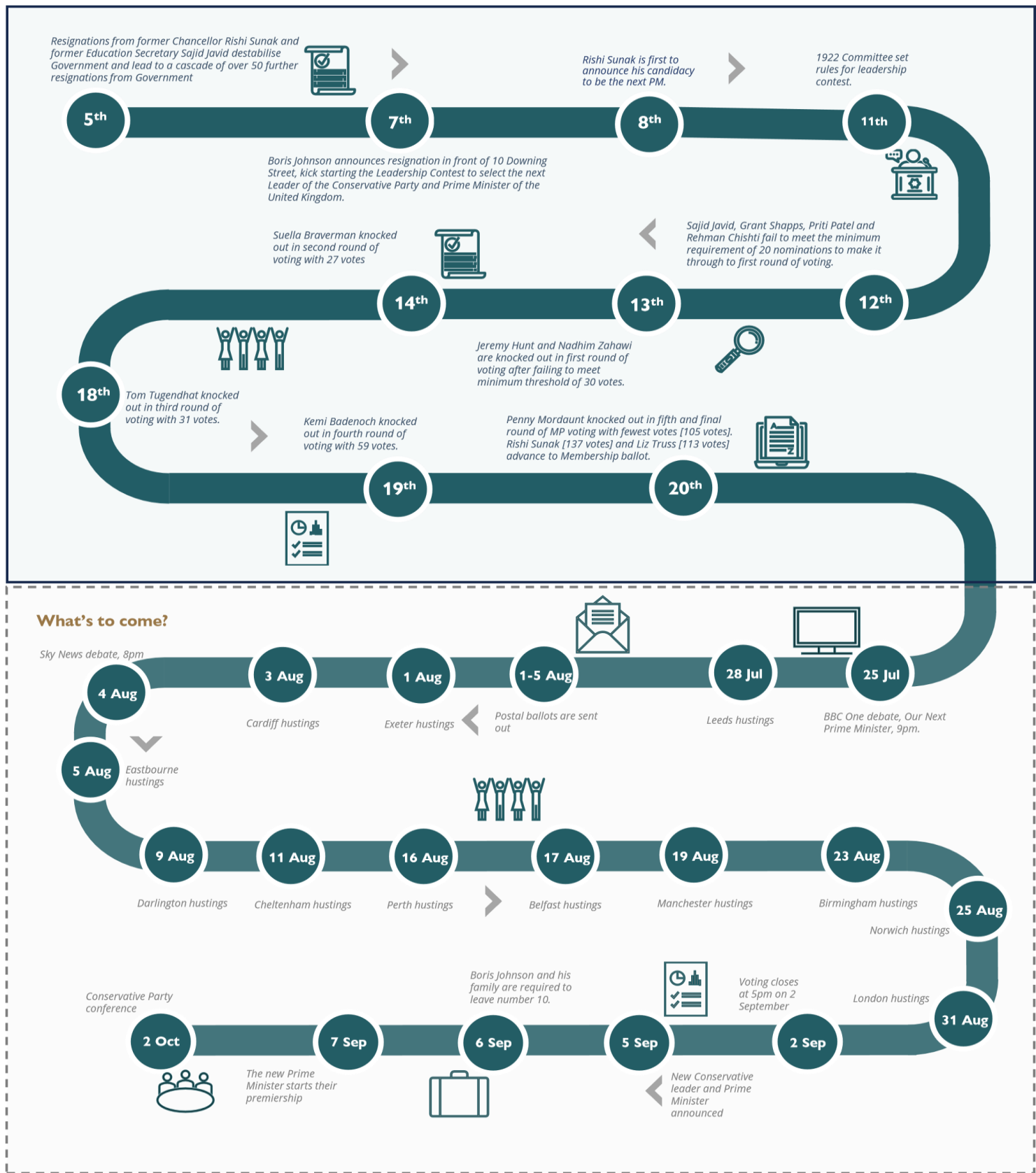
Timeline of Election

Now, the choice of which of these final two will take up residence in Number 10 Downing Street as the next Leader of the Conservative Party and Prime Minister of the United Kingdom will shift from the MPs of the Party to the Membership of approximately 200,000 individuals. Those with a Conservative Party Membership will receive their voting cards in the coming weeks, with voting closing on 2nd September and the new PM announced on 5th September. That means that Members and, by extension the general public, will have a summer of speeches, hustings, news features and, most likely, personal attacks on Sunak and Truss to look forward to, as the candidates lay out their plans for their vision of the next Government in their attempts to win over those crucial Member votes.

¹ [Leadership Elections: Conservative Party, House of Commons Library Research Briefing](#)

Leadership election timeline

JULY 2022- What's happened so far?



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Candidate 1: Rishi Sunak



Rishi Sunak was born in Southampton to parents of Indian descent, who had migrated to the UK as children from East Africa. His father was a GP and his mother was a pharmacist.

He had an affluent upbringing, attending Stroud School and then Winchester College. He was a high achiever throughout his education, becoming head boy at the prestigious independent school, then graduating with a first in Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE) from Lincoln College, Oxford. He also gained a Fulbright scholarship to Stanford University where he graduated with an MBA. After university he became an analyst for Goldman Sachs, then worked at a number of hedge fund

management firms.

Sunak was elected to the seat of Richmond in North Yorkshire in the 2015 General Election under David Cameron's leadership. When Sajid Javid resigned as Chancellor in 2020, despite the big step up, Sunak was considered the only clear choice for his replacement as a loyal Johnson supporter, early backer of Brexit, and with a suitable level of economic experience. Still relatively unknown to the public, he had quietly built up positive relationships with his fellow MPs, and a reputation as a classic Thatcherite, small-government Conservative.²

The question of privilege and wealth still follows him as a politician, having recently become the only frontline politician to feature in The Sunday Times Rich List,³ and facing suggestions that he is the richest man ever to be elected to the House of Commons.⁴

Strengths

Popularity

As Chancellor during the Coronavirus emergency, Sunak became personally associated with high-profile support schemes like Eat Out to Help Out, and the furlough scheme. His perceived generosity and easy-going demeanour at one point garnered him the nickname "Dishy Rishi".

Name Recognition

Once the Prime Minister became mired in the scandal surrounding Dominic Cummings' drive to Barnard Castle, Sunak solidified his position as the most popular figure in British politics, one he would hold for the best part of a year. Throughout his time as Chancellor, he became

² [The Telegraph. "Rishi Sunak Exclusive: I'll run the economy like Thatcher if I win Tory leadership."](#)

³ [BBC News. "Rishi Sunak and Akshata Murty Make Sunday Times Rich List."](#)

⁴ [Inews.co.uk. "What is Rishi Sunak's net worth? The Tory leadership candidate's family wealth explained."](#)

known for very polished media and PR campaigns, effectively building up a brand all of his own.

Weaknesses

Partygate Adjacency

Along with Johnson, Sunak was handed a fixed penalty notice by the Metropolitan Police over breaches of public health regulations during the second coronavirus lockdown. This means he has been tarnished with the same anger at government law-breaking and hypocrisy that continues to capture the public consciousness.⁵

Wealth and Privilege

Sunak's personal wealth and privileged upbringing has led to accusations that he is out of touch with the general public, especially during a cost of living crisis. He has also faced criticism for his wife's tax affairs and non-domiciled status.⁶

Internal Strife

It has become increasingly apparent that Sunak is less with the wider Conservative Party membership, where current polling has him trailing Liz Truss significantly.⁷ To the Johnson faithful, he is considered amongst the key betrayers of the Prime Minister, and has been persistently briefed against by Number 10 allies, leading to Johnson loyalists calling for MPs to "back anyone but Rishi".⁸

Leadership Style

As Chancellor, he was considered highly detail-oriented, and welcomed challenge and debate among Cabinet colleagues. Andrew Mitchell MP, a Conservative colleague and former Chief Whip, said of him: "[o]ne of the things I respect most about him is his willingness to be disagreed with, to listen to the views of others and engage in robust discussion and debate."⁹

On an individual level, he has been called personable and charismatic, and is renowned as a diligent administrator. Whether he has the political skills to keep a fractured party together is another matter.¹⁰

⁵ [Sky News. "Rishi Sunak's Partygate Fine Is Personally Wounding for a Chancellor Who Finds Himself in a Funk."](#)

⁶ [The Guardian. "Akshata Murty May Have Avoided up to £20m in Tax with Non-Dom Status."](#)

⁷ [The Guardian. "Tory MPs' Favourite Rishi Sunak Faces Challenge to Win over Party Members."](#)

⁸ [The Guardian. "'Back anyone but Rishi': that's the message behind No 10's hints at betrayal."](#)

⁹ [The Times. "I've disagreed with Sunak – but he's listened."](#)

¹⁰ [The Economist. "Who Will Be Britain's next Prime Minister?"](#)

Candidate 2: Liz Truss



The daughter of left-wing parents, Liz Truss spent most of her childhood living in Leeds and (unlike many of her Cabinet colleagues) attending a local comprehensive school. She read Philosophy, Politics and Economics at Merton College, Oxford. While at university, Truss was President of Oxford University Liberal Democrats and a member of the national executive committee of Liberal Democrat Youth and Students.

By the time Truss entered the working world in 1996, she had left her centrist principles behind and joined the Conservative Party, and in 2008, she was appointed as the full-time deputy director of the right-of-centre, think tank Reform. She was elected as the MP for South West Norfolk in 2010.

She declared before the Brexit referendum that she thought Britain would benefit economically from staying in the EU. She then acknowledged that she had altered her mind and that there had not been any economic issues as she had anticipated in 2017.¹¹

In the summer of 2019, she supported Boris Johnson's leadership nomination. She was rewarded by him with a full cabinet position as Secretary of State for International Trade, and two months later, following Amber Rudd's resignation, Truss expanded her portfolio to include Minister for Women and Equalities.

During the September 2021 reshuffle, she was appointed Foreign Secretary and kept her position as Minister for Women and Equalities. In December 2021, she also took over as the principal negotiator with the EU on the Northern Ireland Protocol.

Strengths

Experience

As a politician with a wide range of ministerial briefs, Truss has used her experience and knowledge as a stateswoman to hone her diplomatic and leadership skills. Truss is well-liked in the Party.¹²

Track Record

She is regarded as a top performer in Downing Street who completes the task at hand without generating unfavourable press. According to a No. 10 official, she received a promotion to Foreign Secretary after she did "a brilliant job as trade secretary, secured great deals and had been a fantastic representative for the U.K. around the world."¹³

¹¹ [Politics Home. "Liz Truss Says She Would Now Back Brexit."](#)

¹² [YouGov. "Conservative Members Think Both Mordaunt and Truss Would Make Good Leaders."](#)

¹³ [POLITICO. "Everything You Need to Know about Liz Truss."](#)

Weaknesses

Labour Threat

Truss also suffers politically against the Labour Party, more so than Sunak. While Keir Starmer may not be the ideal candidate for many as the next PM, polling suggests that voters would prefer his vision of the country¹⁴ to that of either candidate in the leadership election.

Internal Strife

While Truss is popular with the membership, the same cannot be said for some of her parliamentary colleagues. With both Kemi Badenoch¹⁵ and Tom Tugendhat supporters reported to be part of the 'anyone but Liz' campaign, it may be the case that a growing resistance to her impacts her premiership and her downfall is caused by an internal challenge. There are serious concerns in Scotland about her ability to undermine the Union.¹⁶

Credibility

Those in the investment community have also condemned her economic policy,¹⁷ describing it as the "greatest risk" to the UK.

Leadership Style

Despite the obvious fashion comparisons, it is unlikely that Truss will try to emulate the late Margaret Thatcher in her leadership style.¹⁸ A disciple of the Boris Johnson style of politics, Truss may lack the charisma of her predecessor but may copy his ability to delegate effectively. It may be the case that Truss' greatest asset is her Cabinet.

Labour may be hoping she falls flat at the despatch box as Labour sources believe her "wooden style"¹⁹ would make Keir Starmer look "less unexciting" and boost his chances of winning power, according to Labour sources.

¹⁴ [HuffPost UK. "Liz Truss Allies Reject She Is Boris Johnson 'Continuity' Candidate."](#)

¹⁵ [The Sun. "Liz Truss Is the Bookies' Favourite to Be Prime Minister after Race Narrows."](#)

¹⁶ [The National. "Liz Truss Least Favoured among Scottish Tories in Leadership Race."](#)

¹⁷ [Bloomberg. "Truss' Economic Policy Is 'Greatest Risk' to UK, Citigroup Says."](#)

¹⁸ [The Independent. "Liz Truss Copies Margaret Thatcher's Style 'down to Last Detail' at Leadership Debate."](#)

¹⁹ [The Independent. "Keir Starmer Wants 'Wooden' Liz Truss to Win Tory Leadership, Labour Insiders Say."](#)



Rishi Sunak

Economy

Sunak has called out fairytale economics, committing instead to telling hard truths on how Britain should navigate the cost-of-living crisis.²⁰ He has put forward a tax policy grounded in responsibility, in which the government must deal with debt now rather than pushing it further afield, fearing that tax cuts now could lead to sustained high inflation. Specifically, he will continue his planned corporation tax rise

from 19 percent to 25 percent in 2023, increasing the tax burden to the highest level in 70 years. In 2024, he is expected to bring a 1p cut in income tax. Sunak has been clear that tax cuts can only be made once inflation is brought under control.²¹ Sunak has not commented extensively about spending, saying only that the rising cost of the NHS is “unsustainable”.²²

Reflecting on his tenure as Chancellor of the Exchequer, he cites the Covid-19 pandemic to justify the high tax charge against him. His credentials as both Chancellor and businessman have made him more appealing among some backbench MPs, claiming he has an eye for “seeing the books”.²³ Yet, according to a recent YouGov poll, his economic policies will not be received very well by the Conservative Party membership, who resonate more with the promises of immediate tax cuts by his rival. Ultimately, Sunak claims to be running as a Thatcherite and says that he will govern as one, adding that Thatcher herself had to raise taxes in the face of high inflation in 1981.²⁴

Foreign Policy

Sunak has supported the current level of defence spending, stating that the 2 per cent GDP target set by NATO would be a “floor, not a ceiling”. However, he has not provided a specific figure that defence spending may rise to. On the War in Ukraine, he has promised that his first overseas trip will be to Kyiv and vowed to continue the British support of Ukraine in its ongoing conflict. For example, he promised to encourage the passage of legislation that would enable the seizure of properties owned by Russian oligarchs.²⁵ However, it has been noted that Sunak may take a softer stance on Vladimir Putin over Ukraine due to concerns about the economic impact of the war, a claim denied by his campaign team.²⁶

²⁰ POLITICO. “‘Red Rishi’: Is a Brexit-Backing Thatcherite Too Left-Wing for the UK Conservatives?.”

²¹ Bloomberg. “Truss vs Sunak where UK leadership contenders stand on economy.”

²² The Times. “How Rishi Sunak and Liz Truss Differ on Policies — and Personalities.”

²³ POLITICO. “‘Red Rishi’: Is a Brexit-Backing Thatcherite Too Left-Wing for the UK Conservatives?.”

²⁴ The Telegraph. “I Will Be the Heir to Margaret Thatcher.”

²⁵ The Sun. “Rishi Sunak Vows to Do All It Takes to Help President Zelensky Defeat Putin.”

²⁶ Financial Times. “Boris Johnson’s Allies Step up Their Attacks on Rishi Sunak.”

Brexit

Throughout his campaign, Sunak has capitalised on the fact that he has always been a supporter of Brexit, having voted to leave the EU in 2016. Writing in the Telegraph, he has pledged that he will have “scrapped or reformed all of the EU law, red tape and bureaucracy that is still on our statute book and slowing economic growth” by the time of the next election.²⁷ Additionally, within 100 days of his election, he will task a new Brexit Delivery Department with reviewing all EU retained law to determine whether each should be scrapped or reformed.

He has promised to replace all EU-derived GDPR data laws along with the EU’s Solvency II’s insurance rules.²⁸ Sunak has also raised concern over the economic impact of the current row with Brussels over the Northern Ireland protocol. He is planning to stick with overriding it, however, he is expected to push for a settlement deal with the EU that would mitigate any economic damage.²⁹

Justice

Sunak has promised to take a tougher stance on street crime, particularly cracking down on sexual exploitation. He has promised to create a new offence for belonging to or facilitating grooming gangs. Information on these groups would also be collated and stored on governmental databases. Furthermore, he would change the draft Victims Bill to the Victims and Sentencing Bill and create another new offence for “downblousing” - taking photographs down a women’s top without consent. Sunak also intends to introduce extended sentences for criminals who refuse to attend court to receive their sentences.³⁰

Immigration

On immigration, Sunak has expressed his support for the current policy of sending asylum seekers to Rwanda, one that has proven popular with both Conservative MPs and the wider Party membership and is intent on maintaining this.³¹

Housing

Sunak has vowed to improve Britain’s housing stock, claiming that Britain has the “worst houses in Europe” for energy efficiency. For example, England could copy the energy efficiency strategy of Northern Ireland.³²

²⁷ [The Telegraph. “Rishi Sunak Vows to Ditch EU Laws Holding Britain Back.”](#)

²⁸ [The Telegraph. “Rishi Sunak Vows to Ditch EU Laws Holding Britain Back.”](#)

²⁹ [Financial Times. “Sunak and Truss Line up for Final Showdown over Tory Leadership.”](#)

³⁰ [The Telegraph. “Tackle Street Crime Not Twitter Jokes, Rishi Sunak Tells Police Forces.”](#)

³¹ [The Times. “Tory Candidates All Support Rwanda Deportations.”](#)

³² [The Guardian. “Kemi Badenoch Backs Net Zero in Tory Leadership Climate U-Turn.”](#)

Environment

Sunak has committed to Britain's 2050 Net Zero target.³³ He has also promised energy self-sufficiency, branded as energy sovereignty, by 2045 along with pledging support for home insulation and electric vehicle charges.³⁴ Sunak has promised to scrap plans to permit the construction of new onshore wind farms, upholding the de facto ban on their construction, claiming that they are disruptive.³⁵ However, this has been accompanied by a vow to oversee a massive expansion in offshore wind. Additionally, Sunak has promised to re-establish a separate Department of Energy, having been incorporated into the Department of Business in 2016.³⁶

Levelling Up

Sunak has signed up to the demands of the Northern Research Group of Tory MPs on levelling up which include appointing a Minister for the North who attends cabinet, creating 'Voxbridge' – two vocational institutions in the North to rival Oxbridge, instituting the right to devolution for all areas in the UK and equalising levelling up spending to ensure that no areas neglected by Whitehall are left behind. He would also give Mayoral Combined Authorities greater flexibility on Business Rates, look further at the devolution of post-16 education and keep the Green Book under review.³⁷

The Union

Sunak has promised to tackle the question of Scottish independence early. He had pledged to rule out having a second independence referendum and has stated that nothing was more important to the Conservatives than "our precious union."³⁸ He has promised to be 'active' on the state of the Union. Specifically, this includes the use of the UK Internal Markets Act to spend more money directly in Scotland rather than handing it to the devolved government.

³³ [Twitter. "https://twitter.com/Cskidmoreuk/status/1547305522617110528."](https://twitter.com/Cskidmoreuk/status/1547305522617110528)

³⁴ [The Times. "How Rishi Sunak and Liz Truss Differ on Policies — and Personalities."](#)

³⁵ [Financial Times. "Sunak and Truss Line up for Final Showdown over Tory Leadership."](#)

³⁶ [The Telegraph. "Rishi Sunak Pledges Not to Build More Onshore Wind Farms."](#)

³⁷ [Chronicle Live. "Rishi Sunak's Levelling up Pledge as He Visits North East during Leadership Race."](#)

³⁸ [The Telegraph. "Rishi Sunak: I Would Stop the SNP Using 'Back Door' Deal to Break up the Union."](#)



Liz Truss

Economy

Liz Truss stated that she wants to achieve the “biggest change in our economic policy for 30 years”, believing that the best way to generate economic growth is “bottom up by creating those incentives for investment through the tax system, simplifying regulations”.³⁹

Truss has pledged £30bn of tax cuts and would pass an emergency budget to immediately reverse the Health and Social Care levy on National Insurance.⁴⁰ These cuts include temporarily suspending the green energy levy for two years to lower energy bills and axing the planned increase in Corporation Tax. Truss has also committed to a ten-fold increase in the marriage allowance to £12,570 and will maintain the Johnson policy of increasing public sector pay by 5%. She views business rates as hampering growth and has hinted that she would review them.

In a direct challenge to the Bank of England, she has said she would “look again” at the mandate agreed with government to ensure that it is tough enough on inflation, and set a “clear direction of travel” on monetary policy.⁴¹ To finance her tax cuts, Truss has rejected a return to Cameron-style austerity,⁴² and expects there to be excess headroom in this year’s Treasury tax revenue forecasts.⁴³ She plans to pay back the £311bn of Covid debts over a longer period and treat them akin to WWII loans.

Foreign Policy

Truss is committed to building a ‘network of liberty’ around the world to draw countries closer to major free-market democracies. As part of this, she has emphasised the importance of a stronger Foreign Office to relentlessly promote Britain, being ‘unashamedly commercial’ to pave the way towards new trade, tech and security agreements. She has criticised the West’s ‘strategic drift’ and sees the UK as being in prime position to lead change and end strategic dependency on energy, investment and technology.⁴⁴

As Prime Minister, Truss could prove to be a foreign policy hawk on Russia and China. Under her premiership, Britain will continue to stand side-by-side with Ukraine and she has called for the free world to collectively ‘bear down harder’ to cut Russia off from its sources of foreign income, including cutting off imports of Russian energy completely. She rejects any ‘sacrifice’ of Ukrainian land in any peace settlement.⁴⁵ She would increase defence spending to 3% by

³⁹ [The Telegraph. “Liz Truss: ‘I Want the Biggest Change in Economic Policy for 30 Years.’”](#)

⁴⁰ [Financial Times. “Liz Truss Promises Tax Cuts Worth £30bn in Bid to Win over Tory Rightwingers.”](#)

⁴¹ [The Telegraph. “Liz Truss: ‘I Want the Biggest Change in Economic Policy for 30 Years.’”](#)

⁴² [The Times. “Liz Truss Hits Back at Socialist Jibe with Plan for Small State.”](#)

⁴³ [Financial Times. “Liz Truss Promises Tax Cuts Worth £30bn in Bid to Win over Tory Rightwingers.”](#)

⁴⁴ [GOV.UK. “Building the Network of Liberty: Foreign Secretary’s Speech.”](#)

⁴⁵ [GOV.UK. “We Must Ignore the Defeatist Voices Who Propose to Sell out Ukraine: Joint Article by Liz Truss and Dmytro Kuleba.”](#)

2030 and bring the 2.5% target forward to 2026.⁴⁶ She has hinted that government plans to cut the size of the army may be up for review.

Truss would continue the Rwanda refugee policy and would like to open negotiations to send migrants to other third-party states, such as Turkey.⁴⁷

Brexit

Truss has vowed to tackle the impasse in Northern Ireland through the NI Protocol Bill. This would create a green and red lane system for goods destined for Northern Ireland, create a dual-regulatory regime, ensure that Northern Ireland can benefit from the same spending policies as the rest of the UK, and resolve disputes through independent arbitration and not the European Court of Justice.

Frustrated by a Strasbourg ruling which blocked a flight sending asylum seekers to Rwanda, Truss would seek reform of the European Convention of Human Rights. She is prepared to rescind membership as a last resort to avoid the Rwanda policy being ditched.

Truss is committed to accelerating regulatory divergence from the EU and will overhaul the EU's Solvency II rules to liberate more of the UK's pension funds to be able to invest in high-tech start-ups.

Gender and Women's Issues

Truss is opposed to self-determination for trans people who want to legally change their gender and is in favour of single-sex spaces. As Minister for Women and Equalities, she led a push for government agencies to withdraw funding from Stonewall UK. She will also reform the government's online safety bill to address concerns about limits on free speech.

In the push for gender equality, Truss has rejected 'pink-bus feminism' and indicated her support for companies publishing their wage ranges, automatic promotions based on performance and evidence-driven, open structured recruitment. She has rejected unconscious bias training, quotas and diversity statements. Truss would also lift the ban on new grammar schools.⁴⁸

Environment

Despite quipping that her main priority is 'making sure Alok doesn't resign', Truss has suggested that she would lift the fracking ban to be extracted in areas where there was local support to lower the cost of energy for consumers.⁴⁹ To help with the cost of living crisis, she is very supportive of using gas as a transition fuel. She is strongly committed to attending the

⁴⁶ [The Times. "Liz Truss Hits Back at Socialist Jibe with Plan for Small State."](#)

⁴⁷ [Financial Times. "Ankara Rejects Liz Truss's Plan to Send UK Asylum Seekers to Turkey."](#)

⁴⁸ [Sky News. "Tory Leadership Race Live: Poll Gives Clear Signal as to Who Is Likely to Be next PM; Truss Told 'this Is so Awkward' by Child; Sunak 'Very Loyal', Ally Insists."](#)

⁴⁹ [The Telegraph. "Liz Truss: I'll Put an End to 'Stalinist' Housing Targets."](#)

COP15 nature summit later this year in Montreal and wants to replace the EU habitat directive with a stronger British biodiversity target.

Levelling Up

Like Rishi Sunak, Truss has signed up to the demands of the Northern Research Group of Tory MPs on levelling up which include appointing a Minister for the North who attends cabinet, creating 'Voxbridge' – two vocational institutions in the North to rival Oxbridge, instituting the right to devolution for all areas in the UK and equalising levelling up spending to ensure that no areas neglected by Whitehall are left behind.

The Union

Truss has ruled out a second Scottish independence referendum.⁵⁰

Housing

Truss has pledged to amend the Levelling Up Bill to replace centralised targets with tax cuts and reduced red tape in "opportunity zones"/"investment and building zones" to make it easier and quicker for developers to build on brownfield land in those areas.⁵¹ She supports introducing a zonal planning strategy for new housing developments and in 2019, advocated for 1 million homes to be built on the Green Belt around London, as well as for villages to be allowed to expand by four or five houses a year without having to go through the planning system.⁵²

⁵⁰ [The Times. "Liz Truss: Do Scots Love Me? I Think Some Probably Do."](#)

⁵¹ [The Telegraph. "Liz Truss: I'll Put an End to 'Stalinist' Housing Targets."](#)

⁵² [Inside Housing. "Updated: Conservative Party Leadership Contest: What Do the Candidates Think about Housing?"](#)

Looking Ahead

A Sunak versus Truss race to the finish has been the long-anticipated outcome. The two represent different sides of the 'broad church' that is the Conservative Party, and their policies diverge in many ways.

Though she was a remainer and former Lib Dem supporter, Truss is seen to represent the more numerous and vocal Brexit supporting right of the party, while Brexiteer traditionalist Sunak is now representing the more moderate and centrist elements of the party.

The main area that the two differ in their policy proposals is economic – with one seeking to cut taxes immediately and the other taking a more cautious approach. In most other areas of policy, the direction of travel set out by both is similar with commitments to continuing with the levelling up and net zero agendas, as well as being tough on Russia.

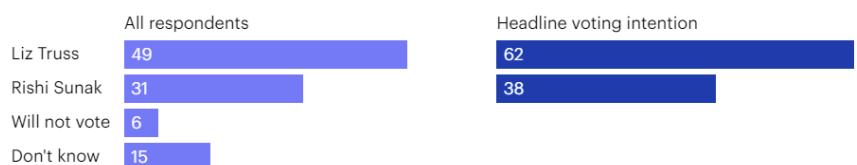
So who will win?

As things stand, Liz Truss is the bookies' favourite to win the Membership vote and become the next Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. Sunak's popularity with the Party faithful has waned in recent times due to his handling of the cost of living crisis and tax rises to pay for unprecedented levels of spending to support people during the pandemic.⁵³

Conversely, Truss has maintained her popularity and high ranking in the Cabinet league table, thanks to her tough stance on Russia and Brexit. However, she is generally seen to have performed poorly in recent televised debates and with a long summer of further debates ahead, she could find herself in trouble if this continues.

Liz Truss currently beats Rishi Sunak by 62% to 38% among Tory members

Thinking about the upcoming Conservative leadership election, who will you vote for? % of 730 Conservative party members



YouGov

20-21 July 2022

The outcome of the election may come down to the two candidates' economic policies and public performances. While Truss begins the two-candidate race ahead, she could still be undone if she performs poorly in hustings and

especially at the televised debate on Monday 25th July. However, in that event, it is unclear if Sunak would have enough time to overcome his starting deficiency, as ballots will be delivered to Conservative members from 1st August. It could prove an insurmountable task for him, but nothing can be ruled out.

⁵³ [Conservative Home. "Our Cabinet League Table: Johnson and Sunak in Negative Ratings as All Cabinet Members' Scores Fall \(except Wallace's\)."](#)

Fantasy Cabinet: Rishi Sunak

Cabinet Position	Member	Reasoning
Deputy PM/ Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster	Oliver Dowden	Close ally and former Party Chairman, his resignation after the by-election results was seen to be pivotal in Boris' downfall.
Chancellor	Steve Barclay	Extensive experience at the Treasury and respected by both sides of the party, his appointment as Chancellor could be a peace offering to Truss supporters.
Foreign Secretary	Liam Fox	Very early and vocal supporter of Sunak with experience as Trade Secretary.
Home Secretary	Dominic Raab	Early supporter of Sunak giving intro speech at launch event. Currently Justice Secretary and Deputy PM, would be looking for one of the Great Offices of State.
Defence Secretary	Tom Tugendhat	Made his stamp with his leadership campaign. Strong on defence given his military background.
Lord Chancellor and Justice Secretary	Alex Chalk	Former Solicitor General, resigned from Johnson's Cabinet and quickly announced his support for Sunak. Long seen as a rising star.
Levelling Up Secretary	Robert Jenrick	Close ally of Sunak, former MHCLG Secretary and Treasury Minister, East Midlands Constituency.
BEIS Secretary	Mark Harper	Early backer and former Chief Whip, he has held various other ministerial positions over the years.
Leader of the House	Gavin Williamson	Former Chief Whip, Defence Secretary and Education Secretary, has good knowledge of the Party.
Chief Whip	Mel Stride	Has been in charge of the whipping operation for team Rishi, despite having 5 other present and former whips onside. May also be in line for Chancellor, however has been marred by previous controversy ⁵⁴ (Loan Charge, IR35).

⁵⁴ [Contractor Tap. "IR35 Reform Advocate, Mel Stride, New Leader of the House of Commons."](#)

Fantasy Cabinet: Liz Truss

Cabinet Position	Member	Reasoning
Deputy PM / Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster	Kemi Badenoch	Another rising star, after an impressive performance during the leadership campaign, a tactical alliance to keep Kemi's supporters happy may prove to be mutually beneficial.
Chancellor	Kwasi Kwarteng	Strong personal relationship introducing Liz at her campaign launch, the former financial analyst has been the Business Secretary under Boris.
Foreign Secretary	James Cleverley	Close ally to Truss with experience as Foreign Office Minister and DEXEU Minister.
Home Secretary	Thérèse Coffey	Early supporter and current Work and Pensions Secretary. Supportive of deportation to Rwanda. No history of bullying accusations.
Defence Secretary	Ben Wallace	Though he hasn't been the most supportive of Truss' spending commitments, they do share views on how to handle Russia so continuity may be seen to be wise at the current moment.
Lord Chancellor and Justice Secretary	Sir Oliver Heald	Despite backing Jeremy Hunt, he worked with Truss when she was Justice Secretary. VP of the Society of Conservative Lawyers, and could be promoted within the Department due to experience and knowledge of the area.
Levelling Up Secretary	Simon Clarke	Close ally of Truss, formerly a Minister at the Treasury and MHCLG with a northern constituency.
BEIS Secretary	Ranil Jayawardena	Close ally, worked under Truss at DIT.
Leader of the House	Sir Iain Duncan Smith	Former Party Leader, his early and vocal support for Truss may see his return to the Cabinet table.
Chief Whip	Kelly Tolhurst	Currently the new Deputy Chief Whip, will know the inner workings of the party without being too much of a continuity candidate for the role.