

**Role Play**

**Augusta:**

Conservative Party

06/2024-6906

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The country of Augusta just held its national elections. **Four political parties attempted to win the votes of the public – the Labour party, the Liberal party, the Conservative party, and the Libertarian party.**

Here is some necessary background about the political system in Augusta:

* **The Parliament in Augusta is made up of 120 seats**
* **To form a coalition government, a 61-vote majority is required**
* **The government is formed by the parties in the coalition and consists of 6 ministers**
* **The 6 ministers are divided among the coalition parties as agreed by them in the coalition agreement**

**The policy decisions in the government are made by the ministers by way of majority voting**. If a party has 4 ministers it means it has complete control over the acts of the government. If a party has 3 ministers it has veto power over the decisions of the government. If a party has 1 minister it has a “voice” at the table, but limited power over the decisions made.

The previous government was led by the Conservative party, which has been the governing party in Augusta for the last three elections. The Liberal party also took part in the previous coalition, led by one of the most respected leaders in Augusta’s history – a real elder statesperson. The government was formed by 61 seats of the Conservative party and 35 seats of the Liberal party, and the Conservative party controlled 5 out of 6 ministers of the government. The Libertarian party is a new party, created by the former deputy and now political enemy of the head of the Conservative party in the last days of the previous coalition, due to a personal conflict among the two. The Labour party has not been in government for a long time, and is now led by a young, less experienced, but charismatic leader. The Labour party is the most left-wing party, the Liberal party is more in the centre-left of the political map, and the Conservative and Libertarian parties are more to the right of the centre.

**New Election Results**

The Election Results For the Augusta Parliament Are As Follows:

**The Conservative party**

**51 seats**

**The Liberal party**

**15 seats**

**The Labour party**

 **40 seats**

**The Libertarian party - 14 seats**

The day after the elections, the pundits summarize the key insights from the election results:

The Conservative party is the only party who can form a coalition with just one additional party.

The poor relationship between the head of the Conservative party and the Libertarian party may lead to difficulties in forming a coalition.

The Liberal and Labour parties, although unable to form a government alone, are in a good position to affect the composition of the final coalition.

Even though the Liberal party was reduced to the 3rd biggest political party, their leader is still a force that many voters respect and want to see in future coalition governments.

Although the most likely coalition is one led by the Conservative party, all pundits agree that there are various possible outcomes. The potential coalition governments are highly dependent on the alliances between the individual parties and the relationships their heads of party create during the negotiation process.

**The Negotiation Process**

At the end of the negotiation process, either the parties sign a coalition agreement, which ends the negotiation, or don’t sign, in which case new elections are announced immediately. Importantly, an agreement does not need to be signed by all 4 parties, only by parties that among themselves hold 61 or more seats in the Augusta Parliament. In other words, individual parties do not hold a veto power over the agreement and can be excluded from the governing coalition entirely.

**The four parties negotiate over the following two issues:**

1. **Who will be the members of the new coalition**
	* To have a viable agreement, parties that together represent a majority of seats in the Parliament (61) need to agree on a new governing coalition
	* If no agreement is achieved by the end of the time given, then a new election will be held
2. **How the 6 ministers of the government will be divided among the members of the coalition**

**One outcome form for the negotiation group should be filled out by the leader of the Libertarian party.**

Role of the Conservative Party

As usual in recent elections, your party has received the largest number of seats in the Augusta Parliament – 51 seats. However, you still do not have an outright majority in the Parliament and must form a coalition with at least one additional party in order to govern. Your former political deputy and ally, now the head of the new Libertarian party, somehow managed to receive 14 seats in the elections. This is far more seats than you expected, and a result obtained mainly through attacking you personally in TV ads and hateful public speeches.

Following the elections, you conducted a survey among your voters and obtained the following insights:

Given your recent history as the ruling party in Augusta for the last few elections, your voters expect you to lead the discussions and form a wide-consensus government with a stable and functioning coalition.

The voters of the Conservative party believe that the key to staying in power for a long time is to form coalitions that are wide as possible (i.e., includes many political parties), allowing the Conservative party to serve as the balancing factor within the government.

Given the number of seats you have obtained, your voters want to see you have control over the actions of the government, expressed through the number of ministers you will have. They will not reward anything less than 4 ministers.

After many years in power your voters will not tolerate a government that is formed without you, or a no agreement situation.

The voters are concerned about the possibility of your forming a governing coalition with only the Libertarian party. They believe that this limited coalition will not be able to govern successfully, leading you to lose power in the next election.

Going into the negotiations in a strong position, you remain concerned about the possibility of the other three political parties forming a government without you. Although unlikely, there is still a chance of that happening, and your advisors urge you to be active in the first round of the negotiations and form strong alliances.

Point System

As a professional politician, your success or failure in the negotiation is determined by public opinion of the actions you have taken and results you have obtained. Each party conducted a poll among their voters to gauge their opinions regarding possible results of the negotiation.

Your voters’ opinions are based on two factors:

1. Composition of the coalition formed (or not formed)
2. Number of ministers obtained by your party in the negotiation

The points below reflect changes in public opinion due to results achieved in the negotiation and are added or subtracted from your initial public opinion score of 100 points.

Composition Of The Coalition Formed

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Are you in the coalition**  | **Other parties in the coalition**  | **Points change due to public opinion**  |
| **Yes** | Labour, Liberal, Libertarian  | +20 points |
| Labour, Liberal | +12 points |
| Labour, Libertarian  | +10 points  |
| Labour | +3 points |
| Liberal | +3 points |
| Liberal, Libertarian  | +3 points |
| Libertarian  | -10 points |
| **No** | Labour, Liberal, Libertarian  | -50 points |
| **No Agreement**  | - | -50 points |

Number Of Ministers Obtained In The Negotiation

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Negotiation outcome** | **Points** |
| You are not in the coalition / no agreement achieved  | 0 points |
| 0 ministers | -25 points |
| 1 minister | -15 points |
| 2 ministers | -10 points |
| 3 ministers | +2 points |
| 4 ministers | +20 points |
| 5 ministers | +20 points |
| 6 ministers | +40 points |

*\*\*\* Points awarded reflect changes from your initial score of 100 points.*

*\*\*\* The points accurately reflect all voter sentiments and political support. No factors contribute to your final score in the exercise beyond the points-payoffs in the two scoring tables listed above.*

Example Scenarios

1st Example –

**Coalition**: Liberal, Conservative, Libertarian

**Ministers to your party**: 5

**Points** **calculation**- Initial points 100

 Public opinion +3

 Ministers +20

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 Overall 123 (+23 change from initial score)

2nd Example –

**Coalition**: Labour, Liberal, Libertarian

**Ministers to your party**: You are not in the coalition

**Points** **calculation**- Initial points 100

 Public opinion -50

 Ministers 0

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 Overall 50 (-50 change from initial score)

Calculation Sheet (optional)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Coalition**  | **# of ministers**  | **Points** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
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