

TYPES OF DEMOCRACIES – 1

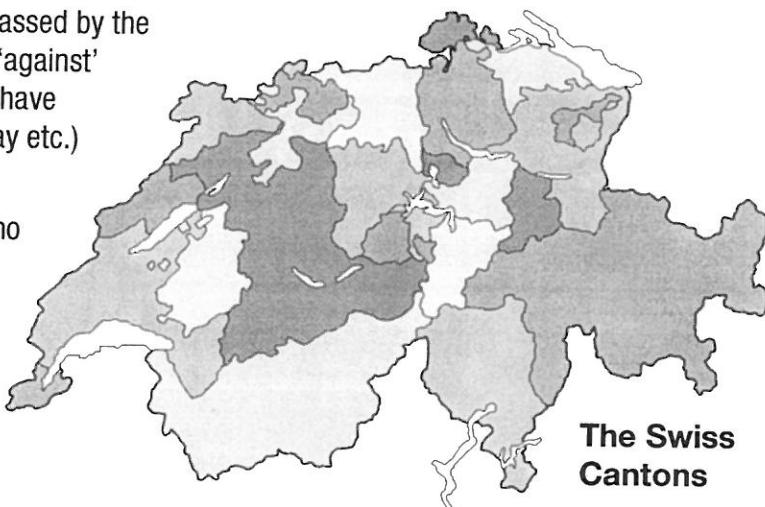
Although the term 'democracy' is used to describe one form of government, a democracy can actually take many different forms. Some of these include direct democracy, representative democracy and liberal democracy.

A **direct democracy** is a system where ALL the people who want to be involved can vote on the important decisions which must be made. It is the simplest or purest form of democracy. It is called 'direct' because there are no representatives involved—all the decisions are made directly by the people.

Direct democracies are usually smaller communities or city-states as larger electorates would make voting difficult. Modern direct democracies have three main structures to strictly control representatives:

- **initiatives** (ideas can be suggested by any person),
- **referendums** (an idea is suggested or passed by the government and the people vote 'for' or 'against' the suggestion; for example, whether to have daylight savings or shops open on Sunday etc.) and
- **recall** (the people can recall a person who has been elected).

Direct democracies can be found in the 26 cantons (or states) of *Switzerland*, in civic organisations or in towns with populations of under 10 000 people.



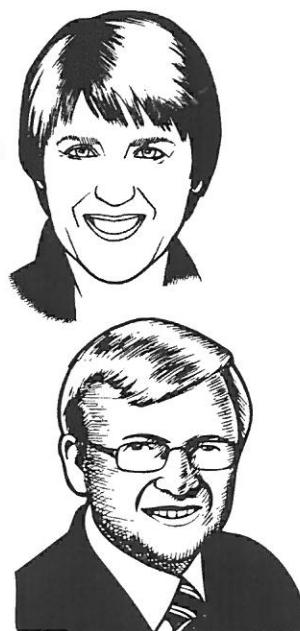
A **representative democracy** is a form of government where the people elect representatives to a governing body to act in their interest. Representatives are elected by a majority vote of the people and may represent the electorate as a whole or a district or constituency. The representatives have the power to elect other representatives such as a president, leader or other officials.

The power of elected representatives in a representative democracy is limited by a constitution or other measures such as a judiciary body (Supreme Court), Royal Commission, referendum, initiative, recall election or 'Upper House' body.

Germany and the United Kingdom are two examples of representative democracies.

A **liberal democracy** is a form of representative democracy. The power of elected representatives is limited by a constitution which protects individual liberties and the rights of minority groups.

These rights may include freedom of speech and assembly, freedom of religion, the right to own private property, the right to privacy, and to be treated fairly under the law.



Some countries which have a liberal democratic system include Australia, the United States of America, New Zealand and Canada.

TYPES OF DEMOCRACIES – 2

Use the text on page 7 to complete answer the questions.

1. What are three different types of democracy?

- _____
- _____
- _____

2. What is a direct democracy?

3. What are the three main structures which control representatives in a modern direct democracy?

- _____
- _____
- _____

4. What is the definition of:

(a) an initiative? _____

(b) a referendum? _____

(c) a recall? _____

5. What is a representative democracy?



6. What means are in place to limit the control of the power of elected representatives in a representative democracy? Name at least four.

7. What is one form of representative democracy?

8. What are the two main parts of a liberal democracy?

- _____
- _____

9. What is one example of a country which has:

(a) a **direct democracy**?
