

## Week 1

### 1. Introduction to International Relations (IR): 1919 branch of PS

- **Definition:** IR is the academic study of the relationships between countries, including the roles of states, international organizations (IGOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and multinational corporations (MNCs). It encompasses both theoretical and practical aspects.
- **Interdisciplinary Nature:**
  - IR draws on political science, history, economics, law, and philosophy to analyze global interactions.

Types:

Scientific: Diplomacy, interdependency

Systematic: Govt. officials, ambassadors (official means).

Scope of IR?

Before king and queens except war not active

### 2. Why Study IR? No isolation

- **Relevance to Everyday Life:** IR explains how nation-states influence policies like security, welfare, and trade. Example: Trade agreements shape prices and job availability.  
200 nation states
- **Global Impact:** From trade policies to environmental agreements and conflict resolutions, IR affects global citizens' lives, underlining the importance of studying these dynamics to understand global interdependence and the forces shaping contemporary society.
  - Modern challenges (e.g., climate change, pandemics) require international cooperation, making IR crucial to addressing such issues.
  - Example: The Paris Agreement demonstrates how states collectively tackle global warming.

### Historical Evolution of the State System

- **Early Political Organizations: Tribes**
  - **Empires:** The Roman and Ottoman empires were vast, centralized political entities but lacked clear territorial sovereignty.
  - **City-States:** Ancient Greece operated as a system of independent city-states like Athens and Sparta, where diplomacy and conflict shaped interactions.
- **Medieval Era: feudalism to monarchs**
  - Power was fragmented between overlapping authorities like the Catholic Church (pope) and monarchs.
  - Political boundaries were unclear, and local rulers often had semi-independent power.

- **Modern State System:**

- **Peace of Westphalia (1648):**

- Marked the birth of sovereign states, emphasizing principles like territorial integrity and non-interference.
    - States became the primary actors in global politics.

**Expansion Beyond Europe:** The concept of sovereign states spread globally through colonization and later decolonization, shaping today's international system.

#### 4. The Significance of Sovereign States:

- **Definition of Sovereignty:** Sovereignty refers to the authority of a state to govern itself without external interference. It is a cornerstone of the modern state system and IR theory.
  - **Nation-States:** Characteristics include defined borders, a permanent population, a central government, and the ability to engage with other states.
  - **Modern System:** Examples include the United Nations, where nearly 200 sovereign states are represented.

#### 5. Core Values Upheld by States:

- **Security:** Protection against threats, both internal (e.g., crime, civil unrest) and external (e.g., military aggression).
  - **Example:** NATO's role in defending member states from potential aggression.
- **Freedom:** Personal liberties and national independence. States are seen as protectors of citizens' rights and defenders against external domination.
- **Order:** Stability and predictability, achieved through international law, diplomacy, and conventions (Geneva Conventions) that regulate interactions between states.
- **Justice:** Upholding human rights and ensuring fairness in the application of laws. This includes adherence to international human rights standards.
- **Welfare:** Ensuring the economic and social well-being of citizens through policies that promote prosperity, healthcare, education, and infrastructure.
  - **Example:** Scandinavian countries excel in welfare provision, ensuring high living standards.

#### 6. Globalization and its Impact on the State System:

- **Economic Interdependence:** Globalization has increased economic connections among states, making them more interdependent. This interconnectedness affects national economic policies and necessitates cooperation on global issues like trade, environmental protection, and finance.
  - States are increasingly interconnected through trade, finance, and technology.

- Example: The 2008 financial crisis highlighted how economic instability in one region affects the entire world.
- **Non-State Actors:** The rise of NGOs, IGOs, and MNCs has challenged the traditional dominance of states in international affairs. These entities play significant roles in shaping international agendas and addressing issues beyond the capacity of individual states.
- **Non-State Actors:**
  - NGOs like Amnesty International influence human rights policies.
  - IGOs like the World Trade Organization (WTO) regulate global trade.
  - MNCs like Apple shape economic landscapes across multiple countries.
- **Anti-Colonialism and Decolonization:**

## Post Cold War

### 7. Diversity and Inequality Among States:

- **Juridical vs. Empirical Statehood:**
  - **Juridical:** Legal recognition of sovereignty (e.g., membership in the UN).
  - **Empirical:** Actual governance capacity and stability.
  - Example: Somalia has juridical recognition but struggles with effective governance.
- **Quasi-States:**
  - Legally recognized but lack strong governance or national unity.
  - Examples: Sudan and Libya.

### 8. Theoretical Approaches in IR:

1. **Realism:**
  - Focuses on power politics, security, and self-interest in an anarchic world.
  - Example: The arms race during the Cold War exemplifies realist competition.
2. **Liberalism:**
  - Highlights cooperation through institutions and shared goals.
  - Example: The EU fosters peace and economic growth among member states.
3. **International Society (English School):**
  - Examines shared norms, institutions, and rules that bind states.
  - Example: The UN promotes conflict resolution through diplomacy.
4. **International Political Economy (IPE):**
  - Analyzes wealth distribution and economic relations.
  - Example: Trade agreements like NAFTA showcase economic interdependence.

## Soft power- culture eco vs hard power – military, technology

### 9. Contemporary Challenges in IR:

- **Terrorism, Regional Conflicts, and Security:** Issues like the rise of terrorist organizations (e.g., ISIS), civil wars (e.g., Syria), and geopolitical tensions (e.g., Russia-Ukraine conflict) highlight ongoing security concerns.
- **Rise of New Powers:** Countries like China and India are reshaping global power dynamics, challenging the dominance of Western nations
- **Environmental Issues:** Global challenges such as climate change require international cooperation, showcasing the need for effective global governance mechanisms.
  - **Climate Change:**
  - Global warming requires unprecedented international cooperation (e.g., Paris Agreement).

### 10. Future of the State System:

- **Debates on Sovereignty:** As globalization deepens, the traditional concept of state sovereignty is being questioned. Issues like global governance, supranational entities (e.g., the European Union), and transnational problems may redefine state interactions.

**Potential for Transformation:** Some scholars envision a shift to new forms of governance, such as global federations or regional unions, to address interconnected challenges.

### Conclusion:

Studying IR provides the tools to understand and navigate the complexities of global politics. It reveals the evolving roles of states, the influence of non-state actors, and the challenges posed by globalization. By understanding IR, individuals can engage with issues like security, justice, and cooperation to contribute to a more stable, equitable, and prosperous world.