

AP Comparative Government and Politics

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Essential Information

Firstly, before approaching AP Comparative Government and Politics, there's some essential information that you need to know.

- There are 5 units to the official AP Comparative Government course framework. These are essentially the topics you should be aware of when taking this course. This is also the basis for the study guide. However, there is an additional Unit 6 here, with information on the core countries. Either way, the units are the following:
 1. Political Systems, Regimes, and Governments
 2. Political Institutions
 3. Political Culture and Participation
 4. Party and Electoral Systems, and Citizen Organizations
 5. Political and Economic Changes, and Development
 6. The Core Countries
- **Core countries** are the 6 main countries discussed in the AP exams. To take the AP exam, or even to take an AP Comparative Government and Politics course, you'll need to be aware of these countries, their systems, and some current political issues in these countries. The table below will provide some essential information on these countries, and Unit 6 will elaborate on these countries a little bit more.

- Additionally, it's useful to know the 5 big ideas that will be a recurring theme in comparative politics.
 1. Power and Authority
 2. Legitimacy and Stability
 3. Democratization
 4. Internal and External Forces
 5. Methods of Political Analysis

Comparative Politics as a Social Science

Fundamental Methods

- Studying comparative politics as a science is important to researchers. They want to establish a difference between social *studies* and social *sciences*. Therefore, they adopt methods from science.
- In comparative politics, different types of information can be used to gather conclusions about the political scheme.
 1. **Quantitative** information is presented in numbers, and in comparative politics, they serve as a way to compare different countries and draw conclusions.
 2. **Qualitative** information is typically presented in statements.
- Also, when observing a set of data, it's critical to distinguish correlation from causation.
 1. **Correlation** is when two sets of data are related.
 2. **Causation** is when one variable influences another.
 - Causation is difficult to establish in comparative politics because it's impossible to isolate different variables in lab settings like in natural sciences. Furthermore, the variables don't have a one-to-one relationship, and they influence each other.

- This information can be found in many sources. However, there are a select number of data collection resources that make relationships in core countries. You should be able to read data from these sources when taking the AP exam.
 1. Human Development Index (HDI)
 2. Gross Domestic Product (GDP)
 3. GDP Per Capita
 4. GDP Growth Rate
 5. Gini Index/Coefficient
 6. Freedom House
 7. Transparency International
 8. Failed States Index

The Comparative Method

- What does “comparative” mean in AP *Comparative* Government and Politics? Well, it’s a nod to the method with which researchers approach this subject, called the **comparative method**.
- Comparing different countries is an essential aspect of comparative politics.
- Comparison is an essential part of studying politics because it provides a certain standard. What defines a poor country? Or a corrupt one? Well, looking at just one country can’t provide a good answer, so addressing different ones is a good approach.
- The purpose of comparison;
 1. Identify social and political problems
 2. Recommend a course of action, or promote a reform
- When comparing different countries, you could say one of the following statements.
 1. **Empirical statements** simply state facts.
 - “The United Kingdom’s GDP per capita in 2020 was \$39800.” would be an empirical statement, because it’s merely stating a fact.

2. **Normative statements** include value judgments.

- “Nigeria should change its economic policies.” would be a normative statement, because what Nigeria *should* do is a matter of opinion.
- Just because normative statements include value judgments, doesn’t mean that they are inherently not scientific. Both are essential to the study of comparative politics.

The Systems Theory

- **The systems theory** is a model, or an example, of a political system that can be generalized to most systems. It explains the factors that influence public policy during its creation and maintenance.

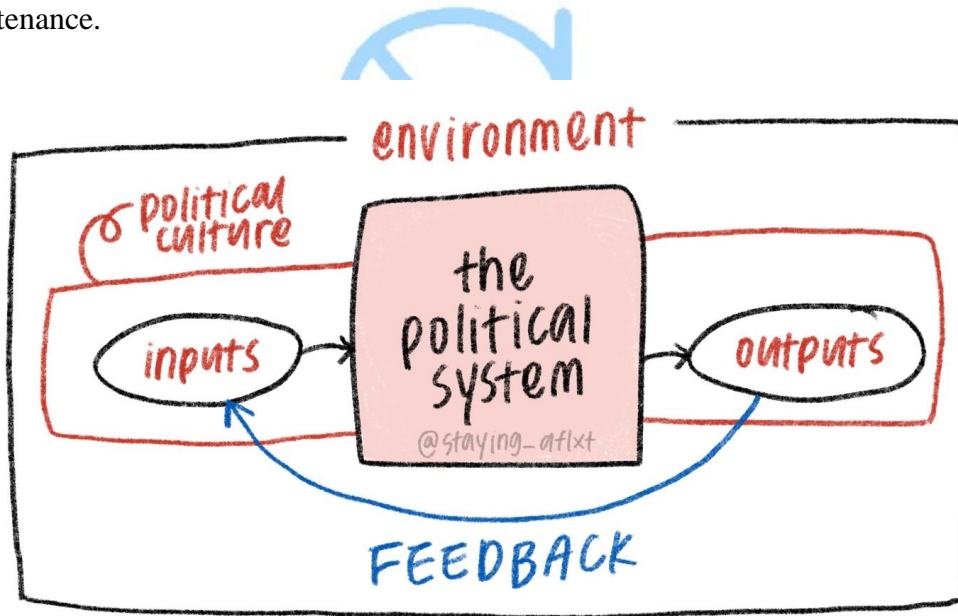


IMAGE BY @STAYING_AFLXT

- In comparative politics, an **environment** is what surrounds a political system. Certain aspects of the environment can influence political systems. There are a number of aspects to the environment.

- **Political culture** is what people regard to be normal and expected in a society, usually developed through historical traditions. It essentially sets the stage for political behavior.
- **Inputs** are demands, support, and suggestions exercised to the political system. Inputs could be made through different political parties and interest groups.
- **Outputs** are what the political system produces, such as decisions, actions, and policies.
- Once an output is created, a number of inputs respond to them in a process called “feedback.” Feedback can be provided by different sources, including:
 - One of the most common sources is news media, which can influence public opinion.
 - **Linkage institutions** are institutions that can connect people to policy making.
 - Linkage institutions include elections, political parties, and different interest groups, as well as the media, as mentioned above.
- Within the political system, there are **state institutions**, which are formal institutions that are most directly involved with policymaking. It includes many elements of the state.
 - Branches of government, like legislative, executive, and judicial, are state institutions.
- It is in both linkage institutions’ and state institutions; interests to act within what is appropriate within the boundaries of the political culture. This ensures that they don’t stand against the public, which would prevent them from exerting influence on politics.
- These different factors (thoughts, laws, and official procedures) make up a **political system**, and, in turn, influence both who has influence and how much of it they have.

States and Their Components

Defining States

What is a State?

- **States** are political organizations.
 - In day-to-day terms, you may be more familiar with the term “countries.” Although states and countries differ in terms of definition, knowing that they are similar will give you an advantage in understanding what states are.
 - A state must have four distinct factors, which are:
 1. A permanent population
 2. Governing institutions
 3. (Control over) A defined territory
 4. International recognition
 - States also have **sovereignty**, which means that they are essentially “at the top of the ladder” when making decisions for the people.
 - Much like CEOs that oversee a company, they do not have to confer with another person when making choices (although this doesn’t mean that they can do whatever they want).
 - Today, it is customary to understand states as the fundamental unit of political systems.

Measuring States

Strong, Weak, and Failed States

- When looking into strong, weak, and failed states, you look at the state's **capacity**, which is essentially how well it functions. In other words, a state should be able to make, enact, and enforce different policies.
- A **strong state** is any state that is able to execute these functions well.
- On the other hand, a **weak state** is a state that doesn't have the capacity to do the things that strong states do.
 - Weak states may have a hard time providing legal guidelines for enacting different policies. Sometimes, they may be severely underfunded, leading to the same result.
- Then, there are **failed states**, which are states that fail to provide basic necessities, like law and order, to their people.
 - Oftentimes, in failed states, it's nearly impossible to resolve internal issues like crime and mortality, because the state lacks the ability to do so. Hence, people who ruin the social order (like criminals) are able to easily get away with something that's disruptive to society.
 - Currently, some failed states include Yemen, Somalia, and South Sudan.

Legitimacy

- **Legitimacy** is how much people accept and believe the state's right to rule the state.
 - Legitimacy is critical for a state to maintain its control over the people. Without the people to believe and support them, a state essentially has no power. Therefore, they need to gain a form of legitimacy.
- You can measure and compare different states' degree of legitimacy. A state that is trusted and accepted by its people regarding its policies would be more legitimate than a state where everyone thinks that it is bad at, and doesn't deserve the right to, policymaking.
- Another thing that you can measure is *how* different states derive their legitimacy.

- **Traditional legitimacy** is when a ruler is accepted because that's how it has always been.
 - For example, monarchies often maintain traditional legitimacies for hundreds of years because power has always just been passed on from one generation of a certain family to the next.
- **Charismatic legitimacy** (also related to the term **personality cult**) is when one person is the central part of a state's legitimacy.
 - Thinking in a historical context, it's very easy to see that charismatic legitimacies happen after significant revolutions. After success, a central person in the revolution will rise to power and will be praised by the public as a sort of "national hero."
- **Rational-legal legitimacy** occurs when official and legal rules are the foundation of the state's legitimacy. These rules determine who rules, when they do, and what they can do then. Because leaders accept and follow these rules, the people trust the state.

Centralization vs. Decentralization

- Different states employ different strategies to rule nations. One of these strategies is where the power is located in a state, i.e. whether it is concentrated, or dispersed throughout the territory.
- **Unitary states** choose to concentrate most (or all) of their power in one level of government. (Remember, in this context, level equates to central and regional.)
 - Among the core countries, the United Kingdom, China, and Iran are unitary states.
 - However, just because a state is unitary doesn't mean that it can't employ federalist policies. **Devolution** occurs when the central government gives certain important powers to regional governments.
- **Federal states** maintain an official (and constitutional) division of power between the central and regional governments. The regional governments are established as a part of the regime and conduct different essential activities.

- A prominent example would be the United States of America. Among the core countries, Russia (although debatable in recent days), Mexico, and Nigeria are federal states.

Related Information

Institutions

- You'll probably remember that there are two types of institutions.
 - **State institutions** carry out policy making tasks.
 - In most states, there will be a military, a legislature, an executive, and bureaucracies.
 - **Linkage institutions** connect the people to the policymaking process.
 - Examples include political parties, voting, the media, and different interest groups.
- The sovereignty of a state, as well as its capacity, can be seen in different institutions.

Nations, Regimes, and Governments

- Although these can be used interchangeably in some contexts, it's critical to differentiate between them when taking this course.

Term	Definition
<u>Nation</u>	<p>A group of people who share commonalities, like race, religion, language, political identity, ethnicity, and most importantly, the desire for sovereignty.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nations are not identical to states. Some states have a stronger sense of nationality than others, and some nations don't have states at all. • <u>Stateless nations</u> occur when nations are wrongly distributed into different states and their political systems.
<u>Regime</u>	<p>The rules that oversee a political system's operations. A regime determines the acquisition and practice of political power.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regimes can be determined by law (or <u>constitution</u>), as well as the person(people) who run the country. • Regimes can change for multiple reasons. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Reforms</u> are gradual and evolutionary changes. 2. <u>Revolutions</u> are sudden and extreme changes. 3. <u>Coup d'états</u> are when the military seizes political power.
<u>Government</u>	<p>The people who currently hold political power in official positions of authority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Therefore, when the president changes, there would be a change in government. • Government change can happen through regular political actions (such as an election), or with actions that also change the regime.

The Rise of Supranational Organizations

- **Supranational organizations** are organizations that involve many states (through their representatives) in order to make decisions for the states involved.
- Examples of supranational organizations include:
 - The European Union (EU)
 - The World Trade Organization (WTO)
 - The United Nations (UN)
- Supranational organizations' decisions are not *obligations* for the states to follow. However, they could use political pressure from member states or threaten to revoke the benefits from being a member state to “enforce” their policies and decisions.

Political Identity and Society

Differentiating Terms

- **Race** is distinguished by shared physical features, and not addressed in the AP Comparative Government and Politics exam.
- **Ethnicity** is essentially a cultural identity shared by a group of people.
 - These are based on different features (like heritage, history, language, location, theology, and more).
 - People who share these features are given the identity by the original group.
 - Ethnicity and national identity need not coincide. Within one nation, there could be a variety of different ethnicities.
- **Nations** share political aspirations (as mentioned in unit 2).
 - **Nationalism** will be a prevalent term in the course, and it is related to nations, in that they are a sense of pride in the nation. It can also refer to the confidence that the *people* can achieve the nation's political aspirations.

- **Citizenship** is a formal identity that establishes who is involved in the state. Citizenship also comes with certain legal rights and responsibilities
 - The equivalent to nationalism in states is **patriotism**, in terms of citizenship. Patriotism is a belief in the state's capabilities.

Social Cleavages

Different Types of Cleavages

- **Cleavages** are the basis for political conflict, in that they separate different people into their interests.
- There are some common forms of social cleavages.

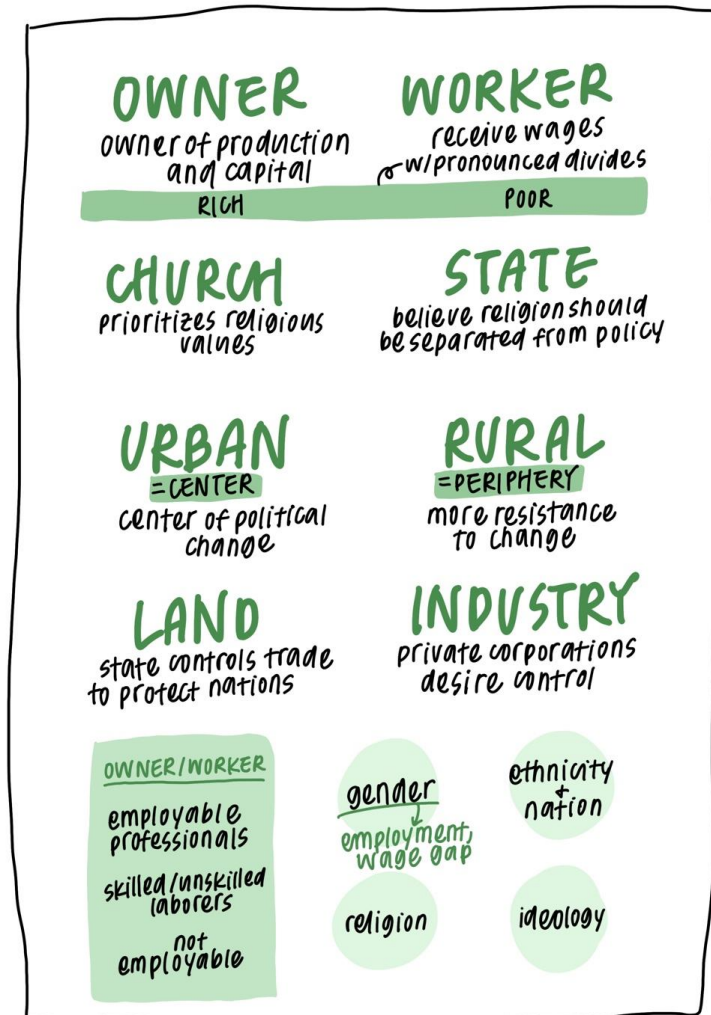


IMAGE BY @STAYING_AFLXT

- Cleavages conflict with each other, and occasionally (though rarely) threaten the integrity of the state.

Cleavages' Effect on Society

- **Cross-cutting cleavages** occur independently of each other. Therefore, they divide people into their individual interests.
- **Coinciding cleavages** (also called **reinforcing cleavages**) have a strong relationship with others.
 - If owners were in favor of the church, lived in rural areas, and were in favor of industry control, and were majority male, those would be coinciding cleavages.
- Coinciding cleavages can create an unstable society. When people's identities can be divided into a small number of groups, there can be several problems.
 - The majority would always hold power, although the rest also account for a large part of the population.
 - People would divide and be pitted against each other, and neither would be satisfied with the political status quo.
- Cleavages could be **centrifugal forces** for a state, which contribute to division and polarization.
- On the other hand, **centripetal forces** unify the people of a state.

Political Attitude

- Political attitude is distinguished by what an individual believes an acceptable rate of change is.
 - **Radicals** prefer dramatic and revolutionary change and believe that completely new institutions must be established.
 - **Liberals** prefer progressive change through legal reforms.
 - **Conservatives** believe there is very little or no need for social change and are often critical for proposed changes in the system.

	<u>radical</u>	<u>liberal</u>	<u>moderate</u>	<u>conservative</u>	<u>reactionary</u>
direction of change	forward			no change	backward “good old days”
nature of change	revolutionary new regime	evolutionary existing regime	slow and gradual		differs
violence	willing	unwilling	unwilling	unwilling	sometimes willing

Political Ideology

- **Political ideology** is what an individual believes the goal of politics is.

<u>Fascism</u>	<p>Fascism guarantees neither equality and freedom. They praise the state and their people’s apparent superiority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hitler’s Germany and Mussolini’s Italy are prominent examples of past fascist states.
<u>Communism</u>	<p>Communism believes that economic equality results in true freedom. They also believe that economic inequality undermines a state.</p>
<u>Social Democracy</u>	<p>Social democracy is also called <u>socialism</u>. They share communists’ beliefs on economic inequality. However, they oppose the strong state control that communism brings. Instead, they promote different policies for economic redistribution.</p>
<u>Liberalism</u>	<p>Liberalists believe that economic and personal freedom are important goals of a state. They disagree with state interference in their beliefs and actions.</p>
<u>Anarchism</u>	<p>They believe that a state is not essential to, and harms, the establishment of equality and freedom. Therefore, abolishing the state is the first step in realizing them, so that the people can cooperate and build a strong community.</p>

Political Culture

- **Political culture** is the norm and standard for political activity in a country.
- Typically, historical events go hand-in-hand with the development of political culture. In turn, political culture influences historical events as well.
- Political culture follows the trend of **globalization**, where the development of technology brings people from the globe together.
- It also follows **modernization**, which is a trend of development that nations start from valuing religion and tradition and go toward valuing scientific and economic development, as well as establishing human rights.
- **Democratization** states that states develop toward a democracy (and usually toward capitalism). This is seen in historical trends where democracies became the leading form of states after communism collapsed in Europe. Since then, other states have been following suit.
- However, this cannot be generalized past the present, as there are disputes about whether these trends will continue; some speculate that after this era, people will return back to a more enclosed society.

Political Economy

Defining the Political Economy

What is an Economy?

- The economy is a separate entity from politics, but they can influence each other.
- The economy involves multiple consumers and producers who act on their benefits.
- **Microeconomics** is related to people or a small group of individuals.
- **Macroeconomics** is often related to the public sector.

What is a Political Economy?

- The government and regime of a state can influence state involvement in the economy.
- A **market** is the “place” where supply and demand interact with each other.
 - In markets, different prices are determined. Generally, this is done without much interference. However, taxes and **subsidies** (a sum of money intended to help a certain product/industry from the government) can play a role in influencing politics as well.
 - Banning certain sectors often doesn’t end well. **Black markets**, which are markets that host illegal trades, have been a persistent part of human history, whether we’d like to admit it or not.
- **Property** is the ownership of goods and services.
 - Private property can be protected. The degree of this differs with the state’s capabilities, though. Oftentimes, in **Less Developed Countries (abbrev. LDC)**, states are not able to fully execute this function.
- **Public goods** are goods provided by the state to the citizens. Sometimes, these are free; they could be heavily subsidized as well.
 - The military and law enforcement are examples of essential public goods.

- **Social expenditures** are goods and services provided to people who are in need.
 - A related term is **welfare state**, which means that the state is taking care of its (weakest) people.
 - Pensions and low-income assistance, and certain fee waivers could be social expenditures.

The difference between public goods and social expenditures is that:

- 1. Public goods are provided to all people.*
- 2. Social expenditures are provided to certain people.*

- **Taxation** is a sum of money that must go to state revenue. Depending on the government and what it prioritizes, different tax policies can help or harm certain industries and people. Taxes can be collected and used in a number of different ways.
 - The left generally prefers that people with more income pay more tax, resulting in income distribution.
 - The right generally prefers that people pay equal rates of tax.
- **Money** is an interesting term, but what is most important to understand is that it's essentially a social construct. It is an item (or a concept) that society regards to have value. Money facilitates the exchange of goods and services without the need for direct trade.
 - Money is a **currency**, which is a system of money within a certain country (or, in cases like the European Union, different countries).
 - Currencies are printed in a **central bank**, which essentially decides how much value should circulate in the economy.
- **Inflation** means that goods and services are worth more money, thus devaluing currency. It occurs when prices increase, and, sometimes, when demand (the willingness to pay) increases.
 - During a **recession**, central banks will often print more money than usual. However, this can lead to inflation, so it's important to be careful.

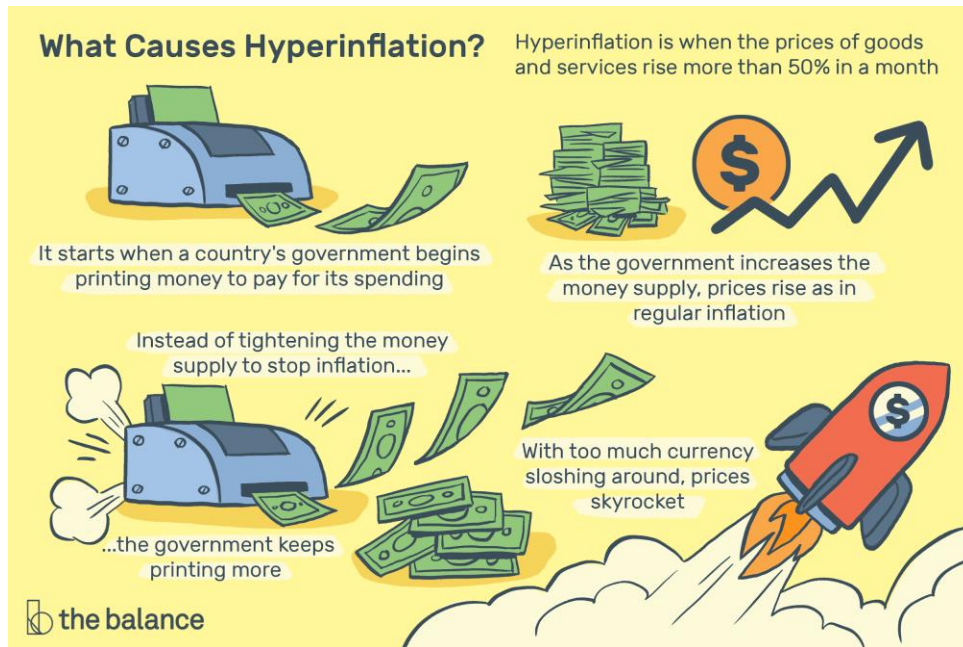


IMAGE BY THE BALANCE

- **Regulations** control people's and firm's activity in the market. They generally contribute to a more efficient or safer environment.
 - Sometimes, regulations are costly to implement, and they can increase the cost of production when applied to different firms.
- **Trade** is the exchange of goods and services. However, used in a more local meaning, it can refer to the exchange between different nations.
 - The left prefers **protectionism**, because they believe the government has an obligation to protect local workers, firms, and individuals.
 - The right prefers **free trade**, giving more freedom to corporations.
 - **Tariffs** are taxes on imports from other countries.
 - **Quotas** are a standard on how much of one good can be imported.
 - Free trade and protectionism have their respective costs and benefits. Therefore, there have been instances of conflict caused by these policies.
 - **Dependency theory** states that money and resources go from the periphery to the core. It said that colonies were dependent on their colonizers, and was a prominent debate in the late 1900s.

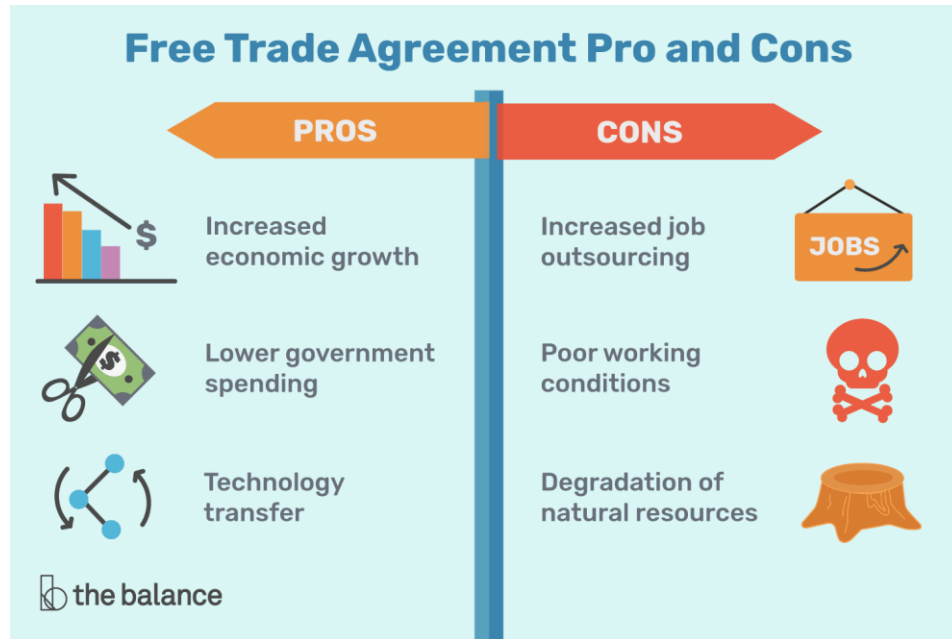


IMAGE BY THE BALANCE

Economic “Left” and Economic “Right”

<i>Economic Freedom</i>	<i>Economic Equality</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Economic freedom</u> measures how much individual choice is guaranteed for each consumer and producer. ● The state’s role is to set up a stage for political activity. ● High economic freedom incentivizes productivity and creating valuable goods and services. ● However, it is likely to end up with economic disparity and stratification of social class. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Economic equality</u> measures how equally economic values are distributed among different people. ● The state is actively involved in distributing resources. ● Different policies may help to increase economic equality. Alternatively, all production could be collectivized and state-owned. ● More economic equality means letting go of certain freedoms to get rid of inequality.

Different Political Economies

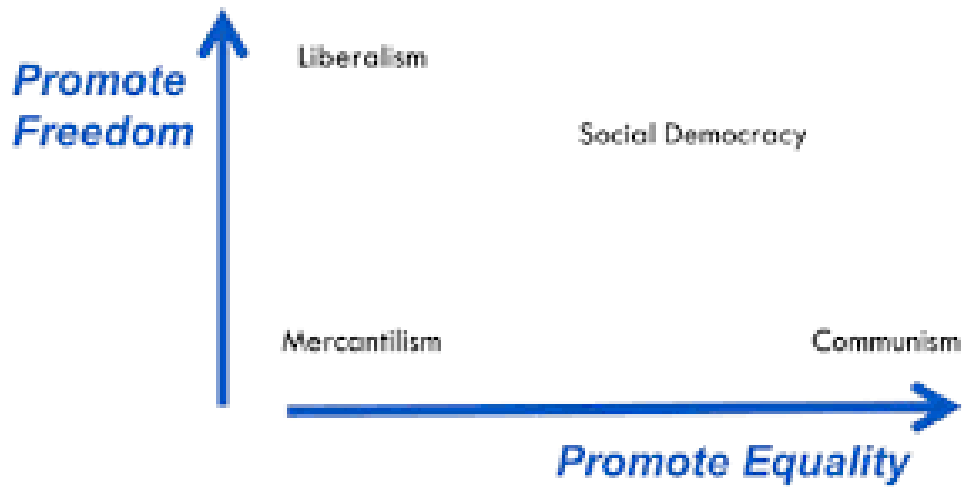


IMAGE BY STUDOCU

System	Freedom(Yellow) or Equality(Red)	
<u>Liberalism</u>	Freedom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state should have minimal control over economic policies. • There is less tax, and a majority of it goes to ensuring economic rights. • Property is private owned, not state owned. • Liberalism has been growing increasingly popular recently.
<u>Social Democracy</u>	Balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They believe in similar things as liberalism, but also concede that economic inequality needs to be resolved.

<u>Communism</u>	Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communism is largely influenced by <i>The Communist Manifesto</i> by Karl Marx. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All property should be owned by the <u>proletariat</u> (working class), who generate surplus value. Liberalism benefits the <u>bourgeoisie</u> (business owners), though they do not add very much value. <u>Democratic centralism</u> centralizes politics into a very small group of elites in order to distribute resources. Properties and industries are state owned, and economic activity is controlled.
<u>Mercantilism</u>	Neither	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mercantilism rose with absolute monarchies. Nowadays it is minimally present in its true form, but it has influenced the shape of many economies. Some large, state-owned (or protected) industries strengthen the power of the state, which is mercantilism's main goal. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Parastatal companies</u> (like the ones in Mexico) serve this purpose. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Russia takes property from private <u>oligarchs</u> to <u>siloviki</u> (military-related people, related to Putin) *However, Russia is primarily a Communist state.

The Measure of a Nation's Economy

- The **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** measures how much goods and services have been produced in a year.
 - Its drawback is that it can't capture some finer details like living standard or polarization, as it is only the sum of the whole. (Think about skewed averages.)
- **GDP per Capita** divides a country's GDP by the population of the country. This shows a standard of living or average income for the people, making cross-national comparison a little bit easier. However, it still retains GDP's drawbacks.
- The **Gini Index** measures income distribution. A value closer to 1 would represent higher inequality, whereas a 0 would represent perfect equality.
- **Extreme Poverty Rate** measures exactly what it sounds like; in this case, extreme poverty means living with less than 2 dollars a day.
- **Stages of development** looks at the distribution and stage of industries.
 - Generally, **subsistence agriculture** (farming to produce food for the family, not necessarily to sell) develops into industrial production.

Democracy

Defining Democracy

- A democracy is a political system where the citizens participate in making important decisions.

REQUIREMENTS FOR A DEMOCRACY

1. A political system supported by free and fair elections
 - In an **indirect democracy**, elected officials and representatives make decisions for people.
 - The **Member of Parliament** (also known as **MP**) and the **constituency** are examples of elected officials in the United Kingdom.
 - In a **direct democracy**, people are allowed to vote directly on a policy issue.
 - **Referendums** are citizen votes on essential policy changes.
2. Citizen participation
 - **Civil society** is a group formed by people that helps them define their interests.
 - **Pluralist** societies allow civil societies to form naturally.
 - **Corporatist** societies' civil societies are controlled by the state.
 - In other words, pluralist societies have **associational autonomy** (the ability to choose one's affiliation to a civil society), whereas corporatist societies do not.
3. Protection of the human rights of all citizens
 - **Liberal democracies** fully respect the rights of the people when it comes to policy making.
 - **Illiberal democracies** hold valid elections, but will not always guarantee said rights. (Take Russia as an example.)

4. An unbiased, impartial law

- **Rule of law** emphasizes the importance the law has on a country.
- The **Magna Carta** was the first document to separate the government from the regime.
- The government is limited by a **constitution**.
- The law must protect and persecute different groups of people on the same standard.

Components of a Democracy

A Political Party

- Although it is not entirely true to say that democracy requires political parties, all modern-day liberal democracies have political parties.
- A **political party** is an institution that is motivated by the desire to have political power. They represent goals that are shared in their members.
- Parties differ from civil societies because:
 1. Political parties provide candidates in elections.
 2. Political parties tend to cater to more general, broad interests.
- **Interest articulation** is a process of communicating a group's interests.
 - This is done by interest groups.
- **Interest aggregation** merges different interests and turns it into a policy program.
 - This is done by both interest groups and political parties.

Proportional Representation and Single-Member-District

- **Proportional representation** means that different parties' number of seats and how many votes they got will be equal.
 - After how many seats one party should have is determined, they grab the same number of representatives from the **party list**. For instance, if there are 10 seats given, the top 10 members of a party list will gain seats.
 - PR systems oftentimes result in a **coalition government**, which means that different political parties cooperate to form a government.
- **Single-member-district** systems will give seats to whichever candidate has the most votes in a given district.
 - SMD systems are based on **plurality**, or who got the most votes (not to be confused with the majority, which represents *over 50%* of something).
 - A related term is **first-past-the-post**. In the image below, there is a “post” in the middle, saying 270 electoral votes to win, which is a similar concept.

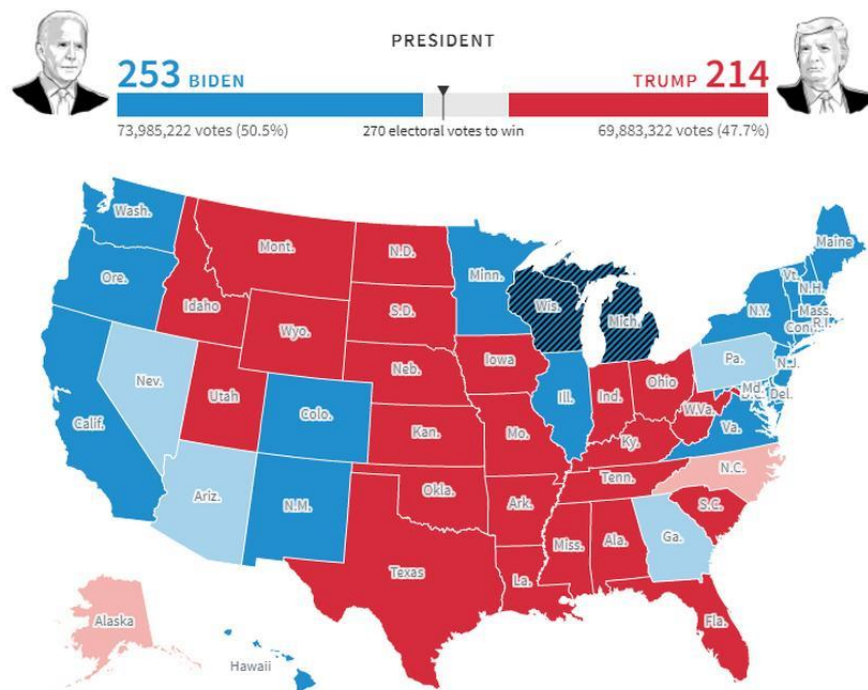


IMAGE BY GRAND FORKS HERALD

- SMD systems generally have **two party systems**, because the voting system promotes division to two main camps.

Presidential and Parliamentary

- In a **presidential system**, the voters directly vote for a leader.
 - The executive is a different branch of government from the legislature, leading to the **separation of powers**. When the two parties leading each differ, it is called a **divided government**.
- **Parliamentary systems** give power to the leader of the majority party.
 - They do not have separation of powers.
 - However, this does not mean that there can't be conflict; occasionally, a **vote of no confidence** is cast, indicating that the party no longer supports its leader.

Head of State and Head of Government

- **Head of state** has the responsibility to represent the power of a state in different situations.
- **Head of government** has responsibilities to administer different policies in the state.

Measuring Democracy

- Freedom house is a measure of democracy. It combines a political rights ranking, as well as a civil liberty ranking, to establish a total freedom ranking. It is given on a scale of 1 (most free) to 7 (not free).

Authoritarianism

Defining Authoritarianism

- What differentiates authoritarianism with democracy is that authoritarianism does not grant the people with rights to change the government. Instead, they have a small group of individuals in charge of this goal.
- This is different from totalitarianism, which entails state control in citizens' private lives.

Components of Authoritarianism

How Did Authoritarianism Come About?

- *Economy*: Many societies that have to worry less about money are liberal democracies, as a well off public results in a public that cares about, and can make informed decisions on, different political matters. With larger economic disparities, one group will likely seize control, resulting in authoritarianism.
- *Society*: Political culture can play an important role as well. For instance, **statism** (the tendency to trust the state's capacity) can influence the political landscape.
- *Religion*: Looking into history, different religions have ruled nations for many, many years. Similarly, religion can be used as a way to hold power in an authoritarian regime.

Control in an Authoritarian Regime

- **Coercion** means that the regime uses force to control the nation.
- States can also control the media and make it less independent from the state.
- Civil society could be restricted or obligated onto citizens.
- They could intimidate any opposing political forces to maintain power.

- They could use **co-optation**, which is establishing a beneficial relationship between the state and a group/person.
 - **State corporatism (corporatism)** essentially means that the state stands in between competing interests, like a judge or referee. Therefore, it is beneficial to an interest group to appeal to the state, because they are the ones making decisions.
 - **Patron-clientelism (clientelism)** occurs when rulers grant particular people different political positions for personal gain. This oftentimes happens in the level below as well, and the level below, and so forth, creating a pyramid of power associated with one person. This is a patron-client network.
 - This could lead to **corruption**, the abuse of **authority** --- or an official position --- for political gain. (Authority is not to be confused with **power**, the ability to influence people.
- **Personality cults** base power on one individual, who is often hailed as a hero.

Types of Authoritarian Regimes

- **Personal rule** means that the regime is controlled by an individual, without the power being limited or constrained.
- **Military rule** comes from a coup d'état that promotes the military to a position of power.
- **One-party rule (dominant-party system)** means that only one party is able to exercise political power.
- On the other hand, illiberal democracies institutionally protect elections but do not have other fundamental features of a liberal democracy.
- A **theocracy** means that the state relies on religion to support its rule, saying that it is their god-given right to rule the country.