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# COMMENDABLE 75 DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES

From Around the World  
for Deliberations of MLAs & MLCs



# FOREWORD

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Atulya Bharat Foundation, MIT World Peace University's School of Government, and Bharatiya Chhatra Sansad (Indian Students' Parliament) through the National Legislators' Conference, represents a significant stride towards Bharat's bright and prosperous future as it celebrates 75 years of independence. With the participation of legislators from different states in impressive numbers, the conference fosters in-depth debates and discussions on strengthening Bharat.

The democratic values cherished by our nation and the continuous democratic process that we have been indulged in, possess a pivotal role in elevating Bharat as a formidable system that stands tall among other nations worldwide. In our pursuit of perfection, it is crucial to recognise the diverse democratic practices implemented across the globe. This compendium on "Commendable Democratic Practices" presents remarkable democratic practices in countries around the world for further discussions and deliberations. Based on extensive research and analysis of diverse democratic systems worldwide, the compendium presents an impressive collection of 75 democratic practices that foster meaningful operation of democracy.

By engaging in open debates and shedding light on these actions and processes, we can fortify and enhance our democracy, ultimately paving the way for a stronger future for Bharat. Embracing global democratic practices allows us to learn from the experiences of other nations, adopting successful strategies and adapting them to our unique socio-political landscape. Through these discussions, we can identify areas for improvement, fine-tune our democratic systems, and foster an environment that nurtures citizen participation, transparency, and effective governance. By embracing such practices, we empower our democracy to evolve and flourish, reinforcing Bharat's democratic foundations and propelling the nation towards a brighter and more resilient future.

In conclusion I would like to thank and congratulate Shri Dhiraj Singh and his team of faculty members and students for researching and curating this exhaustive compendium.

**Rahul V Karad**  
Convener, NLC Bharat

# INTRODUCTION



The creation of the Compendium on **Commendable Democratic Practices** serves the purpose of preserving documented evidence regarding the effective practices in legislative processes worldwide. As democracy has progressed globally, so has the evolution of legislative practices, policymaking, and the implementation of policies to ensure justice for the people. The compendium consists of 75 exemplary democratic practices from around the world, focusing on the legislative process, electoral procedures, participation, and the representation of marginalized groups, such as minorities, tribes, and the oppressed. Additionally, it explores the digitization of legislative and electoral processes.

By incorporating these 75 studies into global democratic discourse, with a particular emphasis on Bharat, the aim is to enhance democratic practices worldwide. These studies extensively utilize secondary literature sources, including books, book chapters, research articles, newspaper articles, policy documents, and parliamentary and legislative assembly websites.

In the end, the compendium aspires to provide a unique document that highlights commendable democratic practices available.

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## Chapter I

# Unveiling uniqueness in Parliamentary Procedures

# 1. Expert Committees in Denmark

Denmark has a unicameral parliamentary system. The Parliament is the center of power in the country's political system and is called the Folketing. Denmark has a multi-party system, with two or three major parties and a number of significantly minor parties. Since 1903, no party has achieved an absolute majority in the elections. Most of the time, multiple parties join together to form a ruling coalition. The current government is one such example, consisting of the Social Democratic Party, the Liberal Party and the Moderates.

The Monarch serves primarily in a ceremonial capacity as Denmark's official head of state. The government is elected by the voters while the monarch then appoints the Prime Minister from the majority party in the coalition. The leaders from the other parties also take up the role of important Ministers. There are three types of elections in Denmark:

**Parliamentary elections:** elections for the Folketing are held at least every 4 years, but the Prime Minister can call for an election anytime. During the election, 179 members are elected from different parties, with Greenland and the Faroe Islands each having two representatives in the Parliament.

**Local elections (to municipal and regional councils):** The election of members to local and regional councils is held every four years according to the Local and Regional Elections Act. These elections take place on the third Tuesday in November in the election year.

**Elections for the European Parliament:** Elections for the European Parliament are held every five years in member countries. The elections usually take place in May or June. Voting in Denmark is not compulsory, but an individual's choice.

## What makes the system stand out?

Though the heads of ministries prepare most bills, any member of the Folketing can propose legislation. **Ministers can also set up an expert committee to assess the need for legislation in a particular field. The committee operates within a timeframe, through a set of procedures based on standard committee rules of procedure. It monitors trends and developments, engages with the stakeholders to collect input and examine the details. Experts and interest groups related to that field are also allowed to take part in the committee meetings in order to ensure the accuracy of the impact assessment.** The process is usually conducted in between readings and results in a report (Kommissionsbetænkning) containing a draft bill, a detailed description of the bill, and a description of the background of the particular area. Explanatory notes may also be provided under the recommendations to ensure a smooth flow of the process. The committee's recommendations are considered soft laws and are thus not legally enforceable and more easily adaptable than hard laws. The Parliament then decides whether to enact the law or not. It is then signed by the Queen before being implemented by the Folketing itself.

## 2. Senators for Life in Italy

As per Article 59 of the Italian Constitution, individuals who have previously held the position of President of the Republic are granted automatic membership in the Senate for life, unless they choose to relinquish this privilege voluntarily. Additionally, the President of the Republic has the authority to appoint five exceptional individuals, who have made notable contributions to society, science, art, and literature, as life Senators.

In Italy, a parliamentary form of government is followed. It has a bicameral government with two houses- the Chamber of Deputies and the Chamber of Senates. In addition to the 200 elected senators, there are also a number of ex officio and appointed life senators.

According to the official government website of Italy, Life Senators are appointed by the President of the Republic "for outstanding merits in social, scientific, artistic and literary fields". The orchestral conductor Arturo Toscanini (who rejected his appointment), the poet Eugenio Montale, and the playwright Eduardo De Filippo are some of the names to mention who got appointed under these provisions. All former presidents of the Republic of Italy are ex officio life senators.

Mario Monti, Elena Cattaneo, Renzo Piano, Carlo Rubbia, and Lilians Segre are the currently serving life senators who were selected by the President of the Republic. Giorgio Napolitano is a former president of the Republic who is currently a senator.

The law provides a way to recognize Italian citizens who have made significant contributions to society in the fields of social, scientific, artistic, or literary achievement. The appointment of Senators for life is intended to honour these individuals for their outstanding patriotic merits.

This enables the Senate to benefit from the opinions and views of experienced individuals. It also gives stability and forms a rock-solid base, a cornerstone for the government to rely on. The appointment of Senators for life helps to provide a degree of stability to the Italian Senate, as they do not face re-election and are not tied to any political party. This can provide a counterbalance to the often-volatile nature of Italian politics.



### 3. Fast-Track Legislation of Scotland



The Scottish Parliament has the power to speed up the legislative process in an emergency. This process is called the **immediate payment process** or the **expedited process**. The process allows the government to speed up legislation by shortening the traditional legislative process, often in response to emergencies or problems.

As part of this process, the Scottish government may enact a bill that is passed sooner than usual as an emergency act. The emergency payment system allows invoices to be sent in as little as four days, rather than the weeks or months that the issuance process usually takes. The Emergency Act procedure only applies to special circumstances that require immediate action. Examples of situations in which this process can be used include public health emergencies, natural disasters, and national security concerns.

The process of introducing the emergency law involves seeking federal approval from the Scottish Government to expedite. If the Parliament accepts this, the legislation can be submitted, and all phases of the political process are completed in a compressed time.

This condensed process includes proposal submission, committee, discussion, and paper. It is important to remember that the emergency billing process does not mean bypassing the normal review process. Instead, it interrupts the process and removes some non-essential aspects of the traditional legal process. The committee still considers the bill and there is still time for discussion and debate before the law is passed.

An example of this is the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020, which was enacted by the Scottish Parliament to address various matters during the COVID-19 pandemic. The act extends and governs the utilization of emergency powers delegated to Scottish authorities under the Coronavirus Act 2020 enacted by the UK Parliament. This legislation, known as the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020, was swiftly enacted through fast-track legislation within a few weeks of the outbreak of the virus.



## 4. Prime Minister's Question in UK Parliament

Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs) is a significant event in the UK Parliament. It is a weekly session where Members of Parliament have the opportunity to question the Prime Minister directly. PMQs usually take place on Wednesdays and allow MPs to hold the government accountable, seek clarifications, and engage in debate on current issues.

During PMQs, MPs from both the government and opposition benches ask questions, which the Prime Minister must respond to. It is a lively and often combative session, serving as a platform for political discourse, scrutiny, and public engagement. PMQs receive extensive media coverage, making it an important avenue for the Prime Minister to communicate the government's policies and positions.



The Prime Minister's Questions in the UK Parliament exemplifies the democratic tradition and accountability inherent in the country's political system. It provides a platform for robust debate, scrutiny of government actions, and an opportunity for elected representatives to directly question the Prime Minister.



## 5. Switzerland Federalism Model

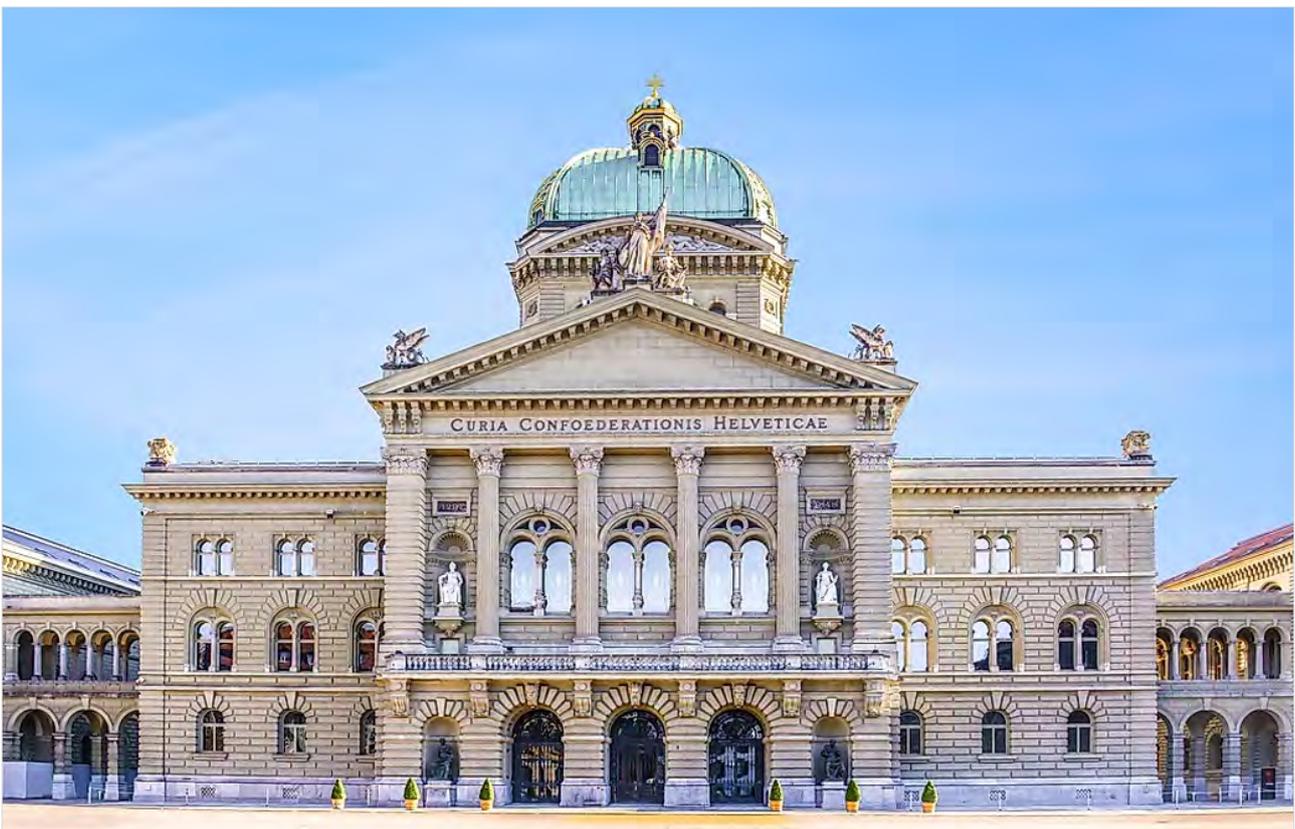
Switzerland is a federal parliamentary republic with a unique federalism model that makes it stand apart from other federal states. The Parliament of Switzerland is the federal legislative branch of the Swiss government, which is responsible for enacting federal laws and supervising the work of the government.

Switzerland's federalism model is unique in that it is highly decentralized and based on direct democracy. The country is divided into 26 cantons (states), each with its own constitution, government, and Parliament. The federal government has limited powers, with most of the decision-making authority residing within the cantons. This system of "subsidiarity" ensures that decisions are made at the lowest possible level, which allows for greater citizen participation and local control.

**The Swiss federalism model and its Parliament are highly valued for their democratic principles and citizen**

**participation. The use of direct democracy allows Swiss citizens to have a direct say in the political process, and the decentralized federal system ensures that decision-making is done at the local level. This system helps to promote citizen engagement, accountability, and transparency in the government.**

Swiss citizens have the right to initiate referendums and popular initiatives, which can be used to propose changes to the constitution or to block legislation passed by the Parliament. This gives citizens a direct voice in the political process and helps to ensure that the government remains responsive to the needs and desires of the people.



## 6. Ideal Drafting Procedures in Portugal

The drafting procedures in the legislature of Portugal are crucial for ensuring that bills and other legislative documents are clear, effective, and serve their intended purpose. Here are some ideal drafting procedures that could be followed by the legislature of Portugal:

**1. Establishing clear goals and objectives:** Before drafting a bill, the legislature should establish clear goals and objectives for the proposed legislation. This will help to ensure that the bill is focused and serves a specific purpose.

**2. Research and consultation:** The legislature should conduct research and consultation to ensure that the proposed legislation is based on sound evidence and best practices.

**3. Drafting:** The drafting process should be guided by clear and concise language that accurately reflects the intent of the proposed legislation.

**4. Review and revision:** Once a draft bill has been completed, it should be reviewed and revised by a committee or group of experts to ensure that it is clear, concise, and effective.



**5. Public consultation:** The proposed legislation should be made available for public consultation to allow citizens and stakeholders to provide feedback and suggestions for improvement. This can help to ensure that the legislation is widely accepted and effective.

**6. Voting:** Once the bill has been drafted, reviewed, and revised, it is presented to the legislature for a vote. Members of Parliament should be given adequate time to review the bill and discuss it with their colleagues before casting their votes.

**7. Implementation:** After the bill has been passed into law, it is important to ensure that it is effectively implemented. This may involve developing policies and regulations to support the implementation of the law, as well as providing training and support to those responsible for enforcing the law.



## 7. Biennial Session in Texas

The state legislature of Texas consists of two chambers: the House of Representatives with 150 members and the Senate with 31 members. The Texas Legislature convenes in biennial sessions, occurring every two years during odd-numbered years. As per the Texas Constitution, the regular session is constrained to a duration of 140 days. **Biennial sessions serve as a check against hasty and unseemly legislative activity. Since there is never enough time during a session to study proposed legislation, individual legislators and interim study commissions may benefit greatly from the time in between sessions. Legislators have more time under the biennial system to renew their bonds with voters, bridge political rifts, and engage in reelection campaigns.**

The regular session and the special session are the two distinct phases of the Texas legislative procedure. Legislators have the chance to propose, discuss, and pass bills on a variety of subjects during the regular session. It takes place every two years and covers subjects like taxes, healthcare, criminal justice, and education, etc. However, the governor of Texas has the authority to call for

special sessions. These special sessions are limited to 30 days, and focus only on the topics chosen by the governor. Laws regarding only the selected topics can be passed. The biennial session makes the argument that there are adequate laws. As opposed to passing new laws every year, more attention should be paid to properly implementing the ones that already exist and getting results. Annual sessions result in a soaring increase in legislative expenses because lawmakers and other assembly staff must meet twice as frequently.

Biennial session allows lawmakers to focus on important issues without burdened by a never-ending legislative cycle. Additionally, it gives elected officials a chance to interact with their constituents and learn about their issues and opinions regarding different policy proposals.



## 8. Federalism in the United States



Federalism in the United States refers to the constitutional distribution of power between the federal government and state governments. It is a system of political organization that seeks to both separate and unite states by granting different levels of decision-making authority, allowing for a degree of political autonomy within a broader framework. In the US federal system, both the federal government and the state governments possess their own spheres of authority and are considered sovereign within their respective areas.

The founders of the United States identified several reasons to establish a federalist government, aiming to strike a harmonious equilibrium between maintaining order and preserving individual liberties. These justifications included the desire to prevent the concentration of power and potential tyranny, encourage increased political participation, and utilize the states as experimental grounds for developing and implementing new policies.

The original founding document of the United States, the Articles of Confederation, gave the federal government little real power, leading to an ineffective national government. This political problem was solved when the Articles were replaced by the Constitution of the United States, which gave greater power to the federal government.

While federalism offers several advantages, it also presents certain disadvantages. One prominent challenge is the presence of economic disparities among states, which can result in inequalities. Additionally, federalism can foster a "race to the bottom" phenomenon, where states compete for businesses by lowering taxes and regulations, potentially compromising societal well-being. Another difficulty lies in addressing matters of national significance, as the coordination and implementation of unified actions can be challenging.

On the other hand, federalism has its merits. It encourages political engagement by involving citizens at multiple levels of government. It also provides states with the opportunity to experiment with innovative policies, serving as laboratories for novel approaches. Furthermore, federalism recognizes and accommodates diverse perspectives and interests across the nation.

Nonetheless, it is essential to consider the drawbacks of federalism. These may include disparities in economic and social conditions between states, the potential for detrimental competition among states, and the potential hindrance of federal initiatives aimed at addressing nationwide issues.



## 9. Grievance debate in Australian Parliament



The Australian House of Commons' long-standing financial practices are where the grievance issue began. The custom of beginning deliberation in the Committee of Supply with the resolution "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" embodied the Commons' longstanding emphasis on hearing complaints before approving supplies for the Crown. That grievances be noted is the question that has been put forth in the House of Representatives. **The grievance argument is published as an order of the day on the Notice Paper. It comes under government business rather than private members' business because of its procedural roots.**

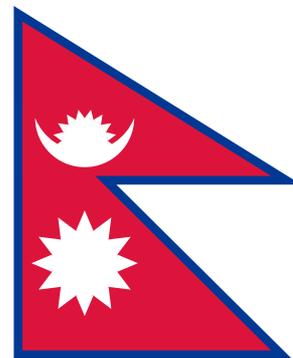
There is now a standing referral to the Federation Chamber for the motion "That grievances be noted. The grievance debate is the last item on the agenda in the Federation Chamber every Tuesday when it is in session. Any Member may address the Chair in response to the Chair's suggested inquiry, "That grievances be noted". The Chair ends the debate if consideration of the question has not been finished after an hour. The

discussion is then put on hold, with the next sitting's order of the day calling for its continuation.

Ministers rarely take the floor in order to allow more private members to speak. The allotted time for a member's speech is ten minutes, and it's customary to summon the opposition's first speaker first. Private members view the grievance discussion as a very helpful opportunity to bring up subjects in which they have particular expertise or to air grievances or concerns of constituents. The grievance debate offers a platform for Members of Parliament to voice the concerns and grievances of the people they represent. It enables them to draw attention to matters impacting their constituents' lives, ensuring that their voices are acknowledged during the legislative process. The issue mentioned need not actually constitute a "grievance".



## 10. Practice of non-government legislation in Nepal



A draft of proposed legislation is typically created by the government and then presented to Parliament by its minister. In accordance with the Constitution and the rules and procedures of the House of Representatives and the National Assembly, lawmakers may also propose legislation. Non-government law is what we refer to as such legislation. A non-government social security law was registered at the National Assembly by National Assembly member Prakash Pantha. Since the new Constitution went into force, this was the first piece of non-government legislation passed in parliamentary proceedings.

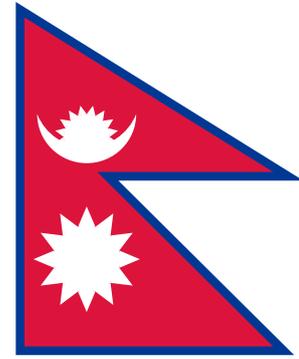
A fundamental right was connected to Pantha's legislation. The government was obligated by the constitution to enact basic rights legislation by a specific date. As a result, it hurried to register numerous laws pertaining to fundamental rights with the Parliament. Pantha describes the circumstances of the time as follows: "The government sent a barrage of legislations related to fundamental rights." He did discover a mistake in the Social Security Legislation, though: it had neglected to include pensions paid to people with 'B' category disability and to young, single women. Before the Act was enacted, the Government of Nepal decided how to distribute the social security payments. Pension payments made to those with

disabilities falling under the 'B' category and to single women under the age of 60 were immediately halted once the legislation was passed in September. Despite Pantha's correction of the blunder before Parliament, a majority of lawmakers approved the Act. To fix this mistake, he registered a non-governmental law. Pantha claims that his legislation has been idling without following the proper procedures.

Instead, the government passed an order to keep handing out the pensions that were overlooked. Non-government legislations are not often taken into account in Nepali legislative practice. However, Non-government legislation enables MPs with varying political affiliations and backgrounds to propose bills according to their knowledge and the concerns of their constituents. This facilitates the inclusion of diverse viewpoints and concepts during the legislative process, resulting in more comprehensive and inclusive laws. Only two similar laws have been passed since 1991. Such law does not pass unless the government wants it to because it has a majority in Parliament. As a result, lawmakers are not very inclined to propose such legislation.



## 11. Delegated legislation monitoring in Nepal



Legislation produced by entities other than legislative bodies is referred to as delegated legislation. The legislature frequently transfers jurisdiction to appropriate organizations or the government to craft legislation on procedural matters, since passing laws requires the Parliament to go through a laborious and time-consuming process that involves multiple laws. Legislation only includes the essential issues, punitive provisions, and broad ideas regarding implementation. But these matters alone are not sufficient to ensure the proper functioning of the law. Therefore, based on the Act, the government or other organizations develop the required rules, guides, instructions, formation orders, etc. These laws are referred to as complementing, secondary, or subsidiary laws.

In 1959, the House of Representatives Regulations included the first delegated management clause. Delegated legislation examination came under the jurisdiction of the National Assembly and the House of Representatives after 1992. Delegated legislation management was additionally delegated to committees throughout the Legislative Parliament of 2006 and the Constituent Assembly, which existed between 2007 and 2015.

The chairperson of the Delegated Legislation and Government Assurances Committee

said, “I have no knowledge of any other committee looking into delegated legislation. But the House of Representatives should be responsible for it. The House of Representatives can utilize all the powers of this committee, but it has not done it so far.”

The Delegated Legislation and Government Assurances Committee carries out regular discussions and debates with various entities. This has aided in drawing attention to inconsistencies in the management of delegated laws and in raising awareness among pertinent officials. Additionally, there is a stronger emphasis on carefully clarifying issues linked to delegated legislation in the main Act itself during theoretical addresses on the legislative process and during clause-by-clause discussions of delegated legislation. It has been established as a standard procedure to avoid abstract issues and incorporate all crucial topics into the main act itself. Delegated legislation grants specialized bodies or experts the authority to create regulations in their specific domains. This ensures that regulations are crafted with the essential technical knowledge and expertise, resulting in rules that are more efficient and well-informed.



## 12. Canadian Federalism

Canadian federalism refers to both the country's current federal structure and its historical evolution. **The federal government of Canada and 10 provincial governments make up the country's eleven constituent parts.** The Canadian Constitution serves as the legal foundation for all eleven of Canada's governments. According to the exhaustive distribution principle, all legal matters are delegated to either the federal Parliament or the provincial Legislatures for federal and provincial governments, respectively.

The federal-provincial division of powers, also known as the distribution of legislative authority, institute the national and provincial legislatures' domain. These have been noted as either being shared by all or being restricted to federal or provincial jurisdictions. One of the foundational tenets of Canadian federalism is the subsidiarity principle. According to this, choices should be taken at the lowest possible governmental level, with higher levels of government only getting involved when absolutely necessary. This idea makes sure that decision-making is decentralized and more accessible to those who will be impacted by it.

Canada has a tried-and-true system in place to settle disagreements between the federal and provincial governments. The Canadian Supreme Court is crucial in interpreting the



Constitution and settling disputes between branches of government. The federation's integrity is preserved through this process, which also guarantees that disagreements are settled amicably and in a way that respects the rule of law. A dedication to social and economic equality is a component of Canadian federalism. To ensure that provinces with lower levels of prosperity have access to enough funding for key services like healthcare and education, the federal government redistributes resources. This way of equal payments reduces regional inequalities.

**The federal structure of Canada places a strong emphasis on cooperative federalism, in which the federal and the provincial government collaborate to achieve common policy objectives. This cooperative strategy promotes exchange of information, cooperation within the government and decision making.** It makes it possible to combine resources and skills which improves policy outcomes and fosters more cohesion in government.



## 13. Regional Law Making in Italy

The regional government consists of several key components such as the regional council, an elected body with the command to pass laws and issue administrative regulations; the regional committee, an executive body composed of council members elected by the council itself; and the president of the regional committee. Should the committee and its president lose the confidence of the council, they are obliged to resign from their positions.

**One of the primary roles of regional councils is to actively participate in national governance. They can initiate parliamentary legislation, propose referenda, and appoint three members to contribute to presidential elections (except for the Valle d'Aosta region, which appoints only one delegate). Additionally, the regions have specific responsibilities in relation to regional law. The five special regions have exclusive jurisdiction over certain areas, such as agriculture, forestry, and town planning,**

**while the ordinary regions have jurisdiction within the boundaries set by state laws' fundamental standards.**

The state has the ability to regulate their own areas. The Constitutional Court reviews any regional laws that are said to be unlawful, and Parliament reviews any laws deemed to be ineffective. Administrative acts are governed by state supervision bodies presided over by commissioners selected by the government. Regional councils that have disobeyed the law or the constitution may be disbanded by the government. In such a situation, elections must be held within three months.



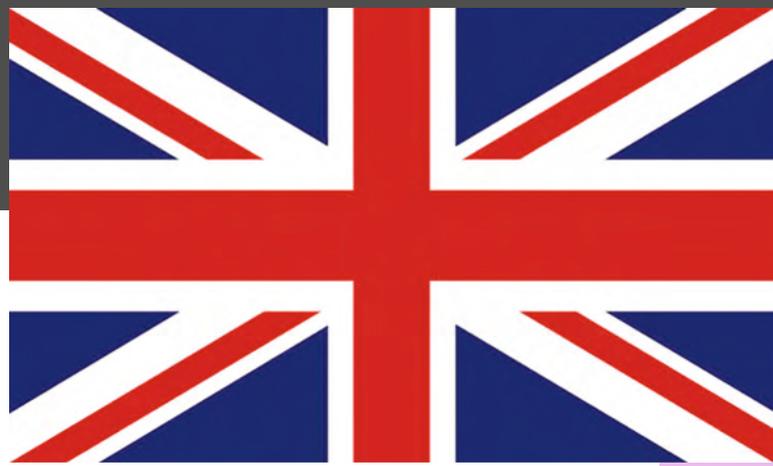
## The convention of “Once a speaker, always a speaker” in the UK

This case study discusses the unique attributes of the legislative procedures in the United Kingdom regarding the selection of the speaker. In the UK, a tradition exists known as “once a speaker, always a speaker.” The speaker is chosen from among the members of the House of Commons when a new Parliament begins. Upon assuming the role of speaker, the individual formally resigns from their political party. Nevertheless, the speaker continues to participate in general elections.

Notably, the major political parties abstain from fielding a candidate in the speaker's constituency, even if the speaker was originally affiliated with one of those parties. Consequently, the speaker's constituency remains uncontested during the elections. If the speaker from the previous Parliament seeks to retain their position at the commencement of a new Parliament, it has been conventionally accepted that they will stand unopposed. Typically, they can be re-elected for as many terms as they desire, irrespective of any changes in the governing political party.

**The Speaker stands above all political relationships and a certain set of political beliefs. They are frequently unopposed by the major political parties, which means they do not require any party's backing, involvement, and support. As a result, their extensive functions in administrative, judicial, and regulatory affairs are unaffected.**

The formal process of selecting the Speaker involves a motion being proposed, which is typically decided through acclamation, where Members of Parliament (MPs) express their support or opposition by shouting. In the event of audible opposition, a full division vote takes place, where MPs physically walk



through the voting lobbies. If the motion fails to pass, an open election for a new Speaker begins on the following day of the parliamentary session. A new Speaker is elected when the incumbent resigns, passes away, retires, or ceases to be an MP for any other reason.

The principle of “Once a speaker, always a speaker,” improves the quality of law-making and boosts people's confidence and trust in parliamentary democracy. With security in the continuity of office, the Speaker's dependency on their political party gets eliminated. This frees the Speaker from any impact or pressure their political party might put on them to hinder the conduct of the proceedings of the House. It also shuts down the claims of them being prejudiced and the problem of partisanship to a great extent. It allows the effective implementation of anti-defection laws. The persistent issue of defection gets addressed while maintaining the Speaker's credibility. Furthermore, their reluctance to take action against disruptive members may be minimized as they do not belong to any political party. It also increases the quality of discussion and that in turn will have a positive impact on the policies and law enactment. The convention ensures that relevant bills are referred to parliamentary committees for in-depth deliberations. The election of Deputy Speakers from parties other than the political party from which the Speaker was elected reinforces the position's politically neutral nature.



## Chapter II

# **Diverse Representation: Inclusion of various Categories in Parliament**

## 15. Sami Parliament in Norway

The Nordic countries of **Norway, Finland, and Sweden** have implemented a Sami Parliament system, with popularly elected assemblies representing their indigenous Sami minorities. These Sami parliaments are frequently cited in global discourse as **significant models for indigenous self-governance and participation in decision-making** and may serve as inspiration for the establishment of comparable institutions in other parts of the world. **This case study attempts to explain the different dimensions and implications of the Sami Parliament in Norway.**

The Sami Parliament, established in 1989, serves as the legislative body for the indigenous Sami people in Norway, with its headquarters located in Karasjok. Comprising 39 representatives who are elected every four years through a proportional representation system, the Sami Parliament holds legislative powers over specific domains of Sami life, such as language, culture, education, and land use.

The Sami Parliament lacks the authority to create new laws or modify existing ones. Funded by the Norwegian government with a budget of approximately 150 million Norwegian kroner (equivalent to \$18 million USD) annually, the Sami Parliament is presided over by a President who is elected by the Parliament, currently being held by Aili Keskitalo since 2017. Additionally, aside from its legislative functions, the Sami Parliament provides information and services to the Sami community, such as language courses, cultural events, and legal assistance.

### What Makes the System Stand Apart?

**Indigenous representation:** The Sami Parliament of Norway is the only parliamentary body in Norway that is specifically dedicated to representing the interests of indigenous people. Its members



are elected by the Sami people themselves, and the Parliament has the authority to make decisions and recommendations on issues that affect the Sami people.

### Recognition of cultural and linguistic rights:

The Sami Parliament of Norway plays a key role in promoting and protecting the cultural and linguistic rights of the Sami people. It has the power to regulate the use of the Sami language in official contexts and to promote Sami cultural activities and events.

### Consultation and negotiation:

The Norwegian government is required by law to consult with the Sami Parliament on issues that affect the Sami people, including matters related to land use, resource management, and cultural heritage. The Sami Parliament also has the authority to negotiate with the Norwegian government on issues related to Sami rights and interests.

### Autonomy:

The Sami Parliament of Norway has a high degree of autonomy and self-determination. It has its own budget and can make decisions and recommendations independently of the Norwegian government. This autonomy allows the Sami people to have a greater say in issues that affect their lives and well-being.

The subject of electoral research on Sami parliaments has only recently emerged, leaving us with a limited understanding of their functioning as democratic institutions. The crux of any democratic institution is the relationship between the institution and its voters, which is primarily manifested through the electoral process.

## 16. House of Chiefs in Botswana

One of the primary difficulties faced by the framers of numerous African governments is finding an appropriate role for traditional tribal leaders within a more inclusive and democratic political structure. In Botswana, a solution has been pursued both locally, through the delegation of significant power of chiefs to elected district councils, and nationally, by establishing a House of Chiefs to provide guidance to the Government and Parliament. This approach aims to accommodate traditional tribal rulers within the integrated political framework of the country.

The Ntlo ya Dikgosi, or "House of Chiefs," serves as an advisory body to the country's Parliament. It is not a House of Parliament, but rather a council of tribe chiefs. It is made up of 35 members, eight of which are hereditary chiefs (kgosi) from each of Botswana's eight major tribes namely, Bakgatla, Bakwena, Bamalete, Bamangwato, Bangwaketse, Barolong, Batawana, and Batlokwa.

Twenty members are elected indirectly and serve five-year terms. Two are picked from the North-East and Chobe districts. The remaining five members are appointed by the president of the country. To be eligible for consideration, individuals aspiring to become chiefs must meet specific criteria: they must be at least 21 years old, proficient in English, and have abstained from active political involvement in the preceding five years. Chiefs have the option to be affiliated or unaffiliated with a political party. The House of Chiefs operates solely in an advisory capacity to Parliament and does not possess legislative or veto powers. Any legislation impacting tribal organization, property, customary law, and the administration of customary courts must first pass through the House before undergoing debates in the National Assembly. Additionally, when the constitution is under review or subject to amendments, the council members are consulted. The council also holds the authority to summon government officials to appear before it for questioning.

As outlined in the Chieftainship Act, the responsibilities of a chief encompass several key functions. These include promoting the well-being of their tribe's members, carrying out instructions from the Minister, keeping the tribe informed about local development projects, organizing Kgotla (village assembly)

meetings to seek advice on their duties, making determinations regarding tribal membership, coordinating tribal ceremonies, and preventing the commission of offenses within their tribal territory. The House of Chiefs serves as a platform for chiefs to express their perspectives on matters discussed in Kgotla. Traditional leaders voice their opinions on issues of importance to them and their tribes. They engage in debates on how they can provide community leadership regarding development policies and their implementation, considering factors such as traditions, customs, and challenges arising from the modernization process. As recipients of public funds and possessing the authority to administer public offices, the chiefs and their staff are considered public servants.

This body presents an intriguing subject for study as it endeavors to harmonize indigenous and imported institutions while accommodating the interests and demands of hereditary rulers and their more conservative constituents who maintain strong ties to the tribal structure. Simultaneously, it aims to satisfy the aspirations of the new elite and their supporters who are eager for rapid modernization. Recognizing the enduring respect and faith that rural communities place in traditional systems, the government has formalized and preserved the institution of chieftainship, along with its associated traditional structures, through legislation. Irrespective of their political party affiliations, politicians advocate for the preservation of these traditional frameworks as they understand that dismantling them would provoke opposition from both the chiefs and the tribes, resulting in a significant decline in their own support base. Consequently, while political authorities have gradually curtailed the powers, authority, and functions of the chiefs since independence, the institution of chieftainship has been safeguarded, and tribal administration structures continue to fulfill specific roles within society and the broader public administration of the country.

## 17. Reservation for Women in Afghanistan

Between 1931 and 2021, the National Assembly, also known as the Parliament of Afghanistan, served as Afghanistan's legislative under numerous forms, including monarchy, republic, communism, and democracy. It was a bicameral body with two chambers:

**Meshrano Jirga or the House of Elders:** an upper house with 102 seats. **Wolesi Jirga or the House of the People:** a lower house with 250 seats.

The Afghan government signed the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) on August 14, 1980, however, the agreement was finally ratified in 2003 due to serious regional conflicts. During the 23-year conflict that cost an estimated one million deaths, Afghan women were the most vulnerable segment of society. Throughout this long battle, several sides attacked women based on their gender and nationality. Women were subjected to systematic human rights violations such as sexual assault, kidnapping, and forced marriage. After the downfall of the Taliban in 2001, a significant objective of the global community was to reintegrate Afghan women into public service. In pursuit of this goal, the government embraced both international and domestic policy frameworks, including the implementation of positive discrimination measures like quotas. A specific target was established to achieve a 30% representation of women in the civil service by the year 2020.

**Women were given 68 of the 249 seats in Afghanistan's Parliament. According to Article 83 of the 2004 Constitution, 68 of the 249 total seats (27%) in the Lower House (Wolesi Jirga) were reserved for women, with at least two women representing each of the country's 34 provinces.**

In its 2003 report on peace building after conflicts, the UN Commission on the Status of Women issued a number of recommendations, including the need to achieve gender balance in the composition of



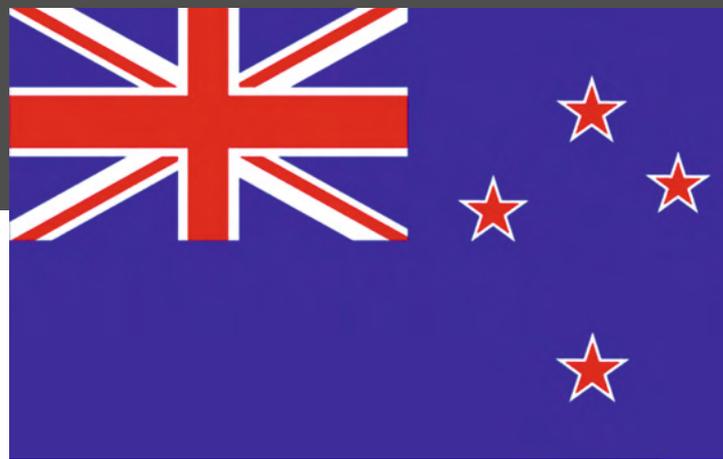
delegations in negotiations, as well as in appointments to senior government administration and judiciary positions. Afghanistan ratified CEDAW without reservation on March 5, 2003. CEDAW, a legally binding global pact, requires women to be afforded equal political participation to men. While the adoption of CEDAW alone did not resolve Afghanistan's challenges in ensuring women's participation in the reconstruction process, it did provide a framework and a set of internationally recognized obligations that helped guide the process. CEDAW obligations were especially crucial in encouraging Afghanistan to address women's issues and build appropriate mechanisms for future political involvement by women. Afghanistan enacted a new constitution and elected its first president in 2004. It suggested ways for Afghanistan to resolve gaps in women's involvement under the CEDAW framework.

In order to adhere to the provisions of the Afghan Constitution, which stipulates that the number of elected female candidates must be at least double the number of current provinces, the commission has established procedures that consider the population of each province. These procedures are aimed at determining the minimum number of female candidates to be elected from each province. As a result, there are 68 reserved seats in the lower house specifically designated for women. In instances where there is an insufficient number of women on the candidate list to fill these seats, the commission is responsible for taking necessary measures to ensure that the designated seats for women are not left vacant.

## 18. Maori representation in New Zealand

Māori electorates also referred to as the Māori seats, are a unique form of the electorate in New Zealand politics that grants reserved seats to Māori MPs in the New Zealand Parliament. There are seven Māori electorates as of 2020, and each region in New Zealand is serviced by both a general and a Māori electorate. The Māori people, the indigenous Polynesians of New Zealand's primary island, trace their ancestry back to the East Polynesian settlers who arrived in New Zealand in multiple waves between approximately 1320 and 1350.

During their isolation over several centuries, the Māori developed a unique civilization that differed from other eastern Polynesian societies in terms of language, mythology, crafts, and performance arts. The origins of the Māori seats may be found in this background, which includes the fight over land sales, the Māori people's alienation from the political system, and their desire to have political representation. The Māori Representation Act, formerly known as the



Native Representation Act, was a piece of legislation that established four Māori parliamentary seats in New Zealand in 1867, integrating the Māori people into the colony's political structure. Initially, it was planned for the Native Representation Act to be short-lived. The Māori were supposed to have registered to vote when their landholdings changed from tribal to individual ownership. However, the legislation was made permanent in 1876 due to the difficulty of splitting the Māori estates. The number of Māori electorates has varied over time, and the right to vote was extended to all Māori men and women in 1893 when New Zealand became the first country in the world to grant women the right to vote.



## 19. Gender Equality Initiatives in Ukraine's Parliament

Ukraine has been making efforts to promote gender equality and empower women in various fields, including politics. The Ukrainian Parliament, the Verkhovna Rada, has taken several initiatives to ensure gender balance and promote women's participation in parliamentary activities. In addition, the Verkhovna Rada has also adopted a Code of Conduct for MPs, which includes provisions on non-discrimination and equal opportunities for men and women. The Code of Conduct also encourages MPs to promote gender equality in their legislative work and to support policies that address gender inequalities. To further promote gender balance in the Parliament, the Verkhovna Rada has adopted a quota system, which requires political parties to have at least 30% women on their candidate lists. This measure has helped increase the number of women in Parliament from 9% in 2014 to 21% in 2019.

**The Verkhovna Rada has established a Gender Equality Committee, which is responsible for promoting gender equality and ensuring equal opportunities for women in parliamentary activities. The committee consists of members of Parliament from different political parties and meets regularly to discuss gender-related issues.**

Moreover, the Verkhovna Rada has also established a Women's Caucus, which is a group of female MPs from different political parties who work together to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. The caucus organizes events, discussions, and seminars to raise awareness of gender-related issues and advocate for policies that support women's rights.

### Impact of Gender Equality Initiatives:

The gender equality measures implemented by the Verkhovna Rada have had a positive impact on advancing women's involvement in politics and enhancing their empowerment. The increased presence of women in Parliament has resulted in greater representation of women's concerns and priorities in legislative affairs. The establishment of the Gender Equality Committee and Women's Caucus has played a significant role in raising awareness about gender issues and providing a platform for female Members of Parliament (MPs) to voice their perspectives and advocate for policies that uphold women's rights. These initiatives have also fostered a conducive environment for more women to engage in politics and pursue positions of leadership. Ukraine's gender equality endeavors within the Verkhovna Rada have proven successful in promoting women's political participation and empowering them. The establishment of the Gender Equality Committee, Women's Caucus, and implementation of party quotas have contributed to an increased representation of women in Parliament, ensuring a stronger presence of women's interests in legislative decision-making. These initiatives serve as a commendable stride towards achieving gender equality in Ukraine and offer valuable insights for other nations seeking to pursue similar paths.

## 20. Confessional System in Lebanon

A political and religious form of government known as confessionalism exists in law. It usually implies equally dividing institutional and political authority among confessional groupings. A congregation of people who share a common religion is known as a confessional community. Confessionalism in politics is prevalent throughout the world's many nations and regions, especially in the Middle East and North Africa. Politically, culturally, and religiously, Lebanon is diverse. The emergence of a stable political structure has been hampered by this diversity, which has also prevented the formation of one nation's identity.

The first amicable power-sharing agreement between Christians and Muslims in Lebanon was made possible by the shared desire to remove French colonial rule in 1943. This is known as the National Pact which states that

1) The Muslim leadership consented to give up trying to unite Lebanon with another Arab or Syrian state and accepted the limits of "Greater Lebanon".

2) The Christian leaders consented to give up turning to France or other nations in the West for security or military alliances.

The following guidelines must be followed while allocating seats:

1. Equal seats among Muslims and Christians.
2. Proportionate representation of the two faith communities' confessional groupings.
3. The regional representation that is proportionate.



## 21. Non- Muslim Representation in Pakistan

There are multiple religious minorities in Pakistan. The regions that became Pakistan in 1947 contained 5.9 million non-Muslims, according to an Indian census taken in 1941. Approximately 5 million Hindus and Sikhs immigrated to Pakistan after Pakistan gained its independence in 1947. These minority groups make up approximately 3% of Pakistan's population.

In recent years, Pakistan has demonstrated progress in safeguarding the rights of minority communities. A significant milestone was achieved in 2019 when the Supreme Court of Pakistan issued a ruling granting Christians the legal authority to solemnize and register their marriages. Another noteworthy development was the opening of the Kartarpur Corridor, which exemplified Pakistan's goodwill towards minorities by enabling Sikh pilgrims from around the world to visit Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, a revered Sikh temple. To ensure the protection of religious minority rights, the Pakistani government established the National Commission for Minorities. Moreover, reserved seats for non-Muslims were allocated in the national legislature and provincial assemblies, offering representation to these communities.

**Out of the 342 seats in the National Assembly, the lower house of Parliament in**



**Pakistan, a total of 10 seats are set aside for non-Muslim minorities. Based on their numbers, these seats are distributed among the various religious minorities.**

In the provincial assembly, for instance, out of the total 728 members, 23 seats are specifically reserved for non-Muslim minorities. The distribution of these seats is based on the population of each minority group in the province. However, it is important to note that while reserved seats provide a means for minority representation, they do not guarantee effective participation or full engagement. Further efforts are necessary to address the concerns of minority communities and ensure their comprehensive involvement in the political process. Barriers to political representation and power continue to impact minorities in Pakistan, necessitating ongoing action to address these challenges.



## 22. Rwanda - the country with the largest representation of women

Rwanda, a country located in East Africa, has the highest representation of women in politics.

After the genocide that took place in Rwanda during the Civil War in 1994, a new constitution was drafted in 2003. In Article 10 of this Constitution, it is stated that- “Building a state governed by the rule of law, a pluralistic democratic government, equality of all Rwandans and between men and women which is affirmed by women occupying at least thirty per cent (30%) of positions in decision-making organs”.

According to the Article 75 of the same constitution-

“Twenty- four (24) women elected by specific electoral colleges in accordance with the national administrative entities;”

In addition to this, Article 52, Constitution, Amendment 2 of 8 December 2005 states that, “Participate in the education of citizens on politics based on democracy and elections

and operate in such a manner as to ensure that women and men have equal access to elective offices”.

Following this, the recent elections of 2019 had the highest women representation in the government. Women candidates won 26 of the remaining 53 seats, including the youth seat and the 24 reserved seats, giving them a total of 51 seats in Parliament (or 64%). Women’s representation and participation in the politics of a country ensures that the problems of women are not overlooked and are given center stage. It ensures that women get more opportunities in various aspects of life and reduces oppression.



## 23. Expatriate Participation in the Lebanese Legislative Practices

The Lebanese diaspora refers to individuals of Lebanese descent who have migrated from Lebanon and currently reside in other countries. The number of Lebanese living outside of Lebanon exceeds the population within the country, with over 4 million Lebanese residing abroad compared to 4 million citizens within Lebanon. The emigration of Lebanese people began during the time of the Ottoman Empire, primarily driven by individual initiatives rather than organized work-contract arrangements. Lebanese emigrants often obtained the nationality of their adopted countries, leading to the lapse of their Lebanese citizenship. However, their presence has had a significant impact on Lebanese political, economic, and cultural spheres. Following Lebanon's independence, individuals of Lebanese origin residing abroad were granted the right to reclaim Lebanese citizenship upon returning to Lebanon.

Lebanon conducts parliamentary elections every four years, employing a power-sharing system that allocates seats to various sects within its fragile sectarian framework. The presidency is designated for a Maronite Christian, the premiership for a Sunni Muslim, and the Parliament speaker position for a Shia Muslim. In the recent election, a notable increase in participation was observed, with 244,442 registered Lebanese residing abroad, more than double the number of



expatriates who participated in the previous election in 2018.

**Non-resident Lebanese citizens are entitled to exercise their right to vote at designated polling centres in embassies, consulates, or other specified locations established in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants. To be eligible, their names must be registered in the personal status records, and they must face no legal impediments to their voting rights as stipulated by Article 4 of the current law.**

The result of the Lebanese diaspora participating in the parliamentary elections could include a potential shift in the balance of power in Parliament. The diaspora, which makes up a significant portion of the Lebanese population, may vote differently than those living within Lebanon, leading to a different outcome in the election. Additionally, the involvement of the diaspora in the election could bring attention to issues facing Lebanese citizens living abroad, potentially leading to changes in policies or initiatives aimed at supporting the diaspora community.



## Linguistic Division in Belgium's Parliament

Belgium operates under a federal, representative democratic system with a constitutional monarchy. The King of the Belgians serves as the head of state, while the prime minister holds the position of head of government in a multi-party system. The government exercises executive power, while legislative power is shared between the government, the Senate, and the Chamber of Representatives. The country is composed of language-based communities and territorial regions, forming a federation.

Belgium is characterized by two primary linguistic groups: the Dutch-speaking Flemish community, comprising approximately 60 percent of the population, and the French-speaking community, constituting around 40 percent of the population. The capital city of Brussels is recognized as a bilingual region, with a community proficient in both French and Dutch, and it serves as a hub for government and trade. In the southern part of Belgium, the Walloon dialect of French is spoken, while in the northern region, the language formerly known as Flemish, now recognized as Dutch, is predominant. Additionally, a small portion of the population in the eastern part of Belgium speaks German. The linguistic diversity of Belgium, along with the political conflicts it has engendered, has played a significant role in the country's political history and its intricate system of governance.

Following linguistic protests in the early 1960s, a formal linguistic border was established in 1962, accompanied by comprehensive measures to safeguard minorities in regions where languages intersect. In 1970, the Belgian Constitution underwent amendments, including Article 4, which outlines the division of the country into distinct linguistic areas. These linguistic areas serve as the foundation of Belgium's federal structure and include the French-speaking area, the Dutch-speaking area, the bilingual area of Brussels Capital, and the German-speaking area.



After several amendments to the constitution, now, in the Chamber of Representatives, the 150 seats are divided among the different parties based on the results of the federal elections. The linguistic division in the Chamber of Representatives is as follows:

- 87 seats for Dutch-speaking representatives
- 63 seats for French-speaking representatives

The Senate has 60 members, 50 of whom are elected by the different parliaments of the federal entities (regions and communities) and 10 of whom are co-opted by the other members.

The linguistic division in the Senate is as follows:

- 29 seats for Dutch-speaking representatives
- 20 seats for French-speaking representatives
- 1 seat for German-speaking representatives (elected by the Parliament of the German-speaking community)
- 10 co-opted members who can be from any linguistic group.

This division based on languages has granted clear and fair representation to all linguistic communities in Belgium, making it possible for their voice to be heard. Both communities have a large degree of autonomy within the Belgian federation, leading to a very democratic functioning of the government.

## 25. Participation of expatriates In Portuguese Election

Portuguese citizens who left the nation to work in foreign countries are called Portuguese expatriates. They constitute around 22% of the country's total population, and the Portuguese government has established various policies and institutions to support and protect their rights and interests abroad. The High Commission for Migration (ACM) is responsible for developing and implementing policies and measures aimed at promoting the integration of Portuguese expatriates and ensuring their protection and rights abroad.

Portuguese expatriates have the right to vote in Portuguese elections, both at the national and European levels. The government has established various policies and institutions to support and protect their rights and interests abroad, including the right to vote in national and European elections and the establishment of a constituency.



In recent years, there have been several initiatives aimed at improving the political representation of Portuguese expatriates. These initiatives include simplifying the voting process for expatriates and increasing the availability of information and support in their native language. The Portuguese government has also established several institutions and services to support expatriates, including the Consular Network, which provides assistance to Portuguese citizens abroad, and the Emigrant Support Centers, which offer information and support on legal, social, and administrative issues.



## 26. Constituencies for French Citizens living abroad

The National Assembly and the Senate make up the bicameral French Parliament, which is the legislative body of the French Republic. France divided the world into 11 constituencies which were represented by 11 MPs, each of whom are a member of the National Assembly. These constituencies were established as a result of the redistricting of French legislative constituencies in 2010, which had the dual goals of ensuring a more equal distribution of voters and allowing French citizens living abroad to be represented in the Parliament. The first National Assembly members representing French citizens living abroad were elected in the 2012 legislative election.

The 1st constituency is Canada and the United States, the 2nd is Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean and South America, the 3rd is Northern Europe and Greenland, 4th is the Benelux region, the 5th is Andorra, Monaco, Portugal and Spain, the 6th is Liechtenstein and Switzerland, the 7th is Central and Eastern Europe, the 8th Southern Europe, Israel, the Palestinian territories and Turkey, the 9th is Maghreb, the 10th is Central, Eastern and Southern Africa, much of the Middle East, and the 11th is Belarus, Ukraine, Russia, Moldova, Oceania and most of Asia.

The MPs of these constituencies are elected by French citizens living outside of France. The expats have the option to cast a ballot via mail or online, though they may also cast their ballots in person at their regional consulate. The elected deputies ensure that the opinions and perspectives of non-resident French citizens are discussed in the French Parliament.

The constituencies also assist overseas citizens with any issues or difficulties they may face as well as promote the French language and culture abroad. Additionally, they collaborate with other organizations and the French government to create policies and programmes that cater to the interests of these citizens. The deputies are in charge of defending their rights, including the ability to vote and take part in political affairs of the country. These international constituencies and MPs are essential in fostering the bonds between France and its expatriate citizens.



Reference - <https://media.gettyimages.com/id/172939561/photo/bourbon-palace.jpg?s=612x612&w=gi&k=20&c=LEyVHw-Slr3kLPrd7BWoghXGx77Amnbf343Zh8yWciE=>

## 27. Women Representation in Argentina

Argentina is a South American Country with a higher proportion of women than men. It has come a long way in terms of women's representation even though there have been significant obstacles and setbacks.

In 1947, President Juan Peron passed a law granting women the right to vote and to hold office. History was made when Argentina became the first country in Latin America to grant women's suffrage. This did not immediately translate into greater political representation for women but nevertheless was a huge step.

A law was passed in 1991 requiring political parties to reserve at least 30% of their candidate lists for women, another huge milestone for the country. This was later increased to 50% in 2017.

In 2007, Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner became the President of Argentina. Although she was not the first female President, she was the first directly elected female President, as her predecessor Isabel Peron came into power as a result of the death of Juan Peron, her husband, the then-president. Fernandez de Kirchner was also elected as vice-president in the year 2019.



As of 2023, Argentina ranks second in South America and 17th in the world for women's representation in the Parliament. The country has a bicameral Parliament which uses voluntary party quotas and legislated quotas for both the lower and the upper house and at the sub-national level. 45% of the seats of the lower house, Cámara de Diputados, and 43% of the seats of the upper house, Senado, belong to the women.

Despite these advancements, women are still underrepresented among subnational executives, in national and subnational cabinets and in party leadership. A report revealed that political women constantly face political violence arising as a result of gender. More reforms and efforts are required to tackle these problems and promote gender equality.



Reference - [https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/National\\_Congress\\_of\\_Argentina](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Congress_of_Argentina)

## 28. Youth Representation in the Legislative Process Kenya

The Kenyan constitution defines youth as people aged 18 to 35, and this age group accounts for over 75% of Kenya's population. According to the Constitution, it is mandatory for the state to undertake measures for the improvement of youth education and training. Likewise, it addresses ways in which the youth can participate in social, economic, and political processes of the country. A devolved system of government exists in Kenya which comprises the national government and 47 county governments. The functioning of both the orders of government are based on mutual cooperation and consultation.

All county governments in Kenya consist of two key bodies—the county assembly and the county executive. The county assembly assumes a vital role in formulating and approving legislation aimed at fostering the country's development. In line with the government's objectives as stated in Article 174, the youth have the opportunity to hold elective positions at the county level. To ensure their direct involvement in the decision-making process and representation of their interests in governance, each county is legally obligated to nominate two youth members to the assembly.

To support these endeavors, the Kenyan government has enacted a range of policies, notably the Kenya Youth Development Policy introduced in 2019 and the establishment of the National Youth Service in 1964. The latter initiative specifically aims to foster youth engagement in democratic processes, community involvement, and civic affairs. It places particular emphasis on creating programs that are centered around the needs and interests of young individuals, actively encouraging their participation and contribution.



The various objectives of the policy can be found below:

- To educate national decision-makers on the importance of identifying and including youth issues in the development of the country.
- To highlight, encourage, and collaborate with effective projects and programmes launched by associations and non-profit organizations that assist young people in fulfilling their needs and expectations.
- To create optimal conditions for ensuring that youngsters can realize their potential.
- To develop different strategies for empowering the youth.
- To promote a culture of volunteerism among the youth.
- To recommend methods of including young individuals in the process of economic development.
- To determine the obstacles discouraging Kenyan youth from reaching their full potential.
- To suggest strategies for mentoring the youth to be ethically responsible citizens.
- To encourage the youth to work productively and with sincerity.
- To ensure employment for those willing to work.



### Chapter III

# **Towards Inclusivity: Public Involvement in Legislative Procedures**

## 29. Citizen-Led Constitutional Referendum in Ireland

In Ireland, a constitutional referendum refers to a vote in which the public decides whether to modify the Constitution, which is Ireland's fundamental legislation enacted in 1937. To bring about a change in the Constitution, it must be approved by the Irish people through a referendum. It is worth noting that Ireland has two types of referendums: constitutional and ordinary, with the latter being held only if the President deems a Bill to be of significant national importance and thus requires the vote of the people to decide its outcome. To date, 38 constitutional referendums have been held, with 32 passing.

**The notable aspect of the Irish constitutional amendment process is its emphasis on public participation. Every citizen of the country is given the opportunity to express their opinion through a vote in a referendum, ensuring that the process is inclusive and democratic.**

The procedure for making amendments to the Irish Constitution is explicitly outlined in Article 46, while Article 47 establishes the fundamental guidelines for conducting referendums. To ensure fairness and transparency in the referendum process, a body of legislation, including a series of Referendum Acts, governs its implementation. To initiate a constitutional referendum, a Bill containing the precise wording of the proposed amendment is

introduced in the Dáil. If both the Dáil and the Seanad approve the Bill, the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage designates the polling day for the referendum through an official order. This comprehensive process ensures a transparent and democratic approach to constitutional amendments, involving the participation of both houses of the Oireachtas and the oversight of the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, thereby guaranteeing that the referendum adheres to established legal procedures.

On the day of the referendum, eligible voters go to their polling stations and cast their vote either for or against the proposed amendment. The referendum is decided by a simple majority, meaning that whichever option receives more than 50% of the votes is considered to have won. It's worth noting that the Irish Constitution can only be amended through a referendum, which means that the process of changing the Constitution is deliberately difficult and requires widespread public support.



Reference - <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/c8/StormontGeneral.jpg>

## 30. Randomly Selected Mini-Public Assemblies in Ireland

In recent years, many countries have been experimenting with new ways to involve citizens in political decision-making and increase representation. One method that has had a significant impact is the use of deliberative mini-publics.

**Ireland stands out as a unique case. It has held four consecutive citizens' assemblies that were randomly selected, and some of these processes have led to major political outcomes, including three successful referendums. No other country has such a record of success with this method.**

In Ireland, a randomly selected mini-public is a group of citizens who are chosen through a process of sortition (random selection) to participate in a deliberative process. These mini-publics are often convened to discuss and make recommendations on specific policy issues, and their recommendations are taken into account by policymakers. The Citizens' Assembly is an example of how random selection can be used to ensure that the views and opinions of a diverse range of citizens are taken into account when making important policy decisions. The process allows for a representative sample of the population to come together, learn about

complex issues, and deliberate on potential solutions in a structured and respectful environment.

One example of a mini-public in Ireland is the Citizens' Assembly, which was established in 2016. The Citizens' Assembly is made up of 99 citizens who are selected at random from the general population and invited to participate in a series of weekend meetings over several months. One example of the success of these deliberative processes was the Convention on the Constitution (CotC), which brought together 66 randomly selected citizens and 33 politicians. The CotC led to a referendum on marriage equality in 2015, which resulted in a change to the Constitution and the legalization of same-sex marriage. This outcome demonstrated how the opinions and recommendations of ordinary citizens can influence major political decisions.



Reference - - <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/c8/StormontGeneral.jpg>

## 31. People's Legislative Initiative in Spain

Spain's constitution includes a unique provision known as the **People's Legislative Initiative**, which enables citizens to actively participate in the law-making process.

The procedure involves proposing a new law, which is then debated and evaluated by the government for its significance. If approved, citizens can initiate the signature-gathering process, which can be conducted either electronically or using traditional Castilian Spanish sheets.

To collect the required signatures for the law-making process, a period of nine months is provided, which can be extended for an additional three months if necessary. The responsibility of managing the signature collection process falls under the General Electoral Board, and to ensure validity, each signature must belong to an individual registered on the Electoral Census and confirmed by a certificate. This process prevents multiple signatures by the same citizen and confirms their capacity to sign.



For an initiative to be adopted by the government, it must secure a minimum of 500,000 signatures, and this legislative mechanism is commonly referred to as the **Nicitiva Legislativa Popular (ILP)** in Spain.

Over the years, there have been several ILPs in Spain, one of them being, the **Ban on Bullfighting**. In 2010 Catalonia approved a ban on bullfighting. Jordi Casamitjana, who was involved in the voting success, reflected on how that happened and the failed revival attempts. Catalan bullfighting ban passed with 68 votes in favor, 55 votes against and 9 abstentions. However, this is not a general ban. It was not a ban proposed by politicians. The ban came from Catalans people, represented by the gallery's activists.



Reference - <https://thumbs.dreamstime.com/b/assembly-building-madrid-called-congreso-de-los-disputados-parliament-building-assembly-building-madrid-called-120115329.jpg>

## 32. Public Financing of political parties & Limited Campaign Spending in Uruguay

Financing for the campaigns of different political parties is all done by the public expenditure. This funding is distributed in proportion to the number of votes each party receives in the previous election.

The objective of public financing is to eradicate the influence of money donors and prevent wealthy people and corporations from having influence in the politics of the country. Financing by the public helps to promote greater transparency in campaign financing and reduce the risk of corruption. It also ensures that all political parties have access to the resources that they need to effectively compete in elections.

In Uruguay, the political parties as well as the candidates have a limit on the amount that can be spent on their election campaigns. These limits are created and applied to level political competition and prevent wealthier



candidates or rich political parties from gaining an unfair advantage over the ones who do not have significant sources of money. These limits on the money for campaigns vary in different elections.

By keeping limits on spending money, Uruguay targets to decrease the influence of money in its political matters and ensure that its candidates are elected on the basis of their ideas, proposals and dedication, instead of the privilege of raising money. This helps in promoting transparency in campaign financing and decreases the risk of corruption.





Chapter IV

# Expert Committees and Legislative Scrutiny

### 33. Office of Parliamentary Counsel, Australia



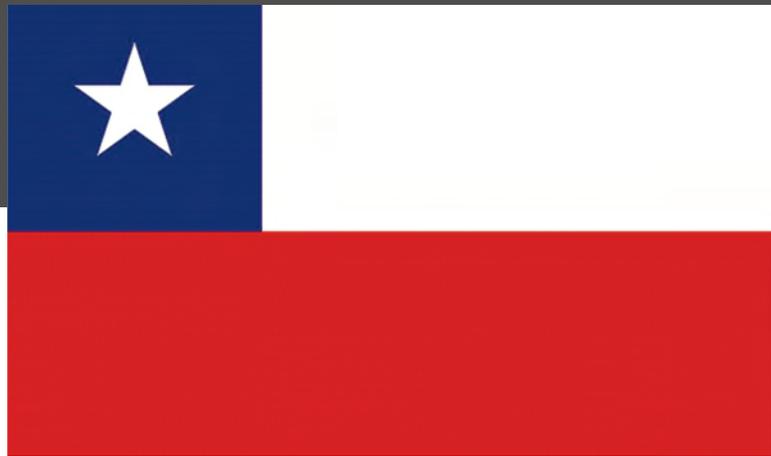
The present case study discusses the important practice of the Australian Parliament i.e., Offices of Parliamentary of Counsel (hereafter OPC). The Office of Parliamentary Counsel (OPC) is an agency of the Australian Parliament that provides high-quality legislative drafting services to support the work of the Australian Parliament and the Government. OPC has 3 statutory officers appointed by the Governor General under the Parliament Counsel Act, of 1970. Appointments are made for 7 years and office-bearers can be reappointed.

The work of OPC is governed by a range of legislation, such as the Parliamentary Counsel Act of 1970, the Legislation Act of 2003, the Acts Interpretation Act of 1901, and the Constitution. The OPC is responsible for preparing and drafting bills, regulations, and other legislative instruments in consultation with government agencies and stakeholders. The OPC holds a significant responsibility in upholding the consistency of legislation with the Australian Constitution and other legal obligations.

A staff of around 100 people are appointed under the Public Services Act of 1999. Among them, 50 are lawyers, 40 are publishing and editorial staff and 15 are corporate services staff who cover finance, administration, and IT Services.

It guarantees that the legislation is straightforward, succinct, and user-friendly for the general public. The OPC's members are legal professionals, including lawyers, policy advisors, and administrative staff, collaborating to provide comprehensive legislative drafting services. Apart from drafting laws, the OPC also provides legislative drafting advice, training, and support to government agencies and stakeholders. This includes administering training courses, rendering recommendations on legislative matters, and conducting research on legislative topics.





On December 21, 2010, the Law Evaluation Department (Departamento de Evaluación de la Ley) was established by the Chilean Parliament as part of the Commission on Internal Regime, Administration, and Regulations. The Commission, which operates under the administration of the Chamber of Deputies, has the authority to enact necessary reforms aimed at improving the efficiency of the lower house. This initiative was taken to develop a more systematic approach to ex-post evaluations. Chile's primary legislative body is the National Congress, consisting of the Senate as the upper house and the Chamber of Deputies as the lower house. **Both the executive and legislative branches of government can propose laws, which are then forwarded to the two chambers of the National Congress—the Chamber of Origin and the Revising Chamber. Only when approved by both chambers and the President of the Republic does a law become promulgated.**

The Law Evaluation Department is currently led by one head and supported by six permanent staff members, each highly experienced in their respective fields. **Their objective is to assess whether a given law has achieved its intended objectives, evaluated the efficiency of its implementation, and considered to what extent unforeseen outcomes were taken into account during its development.** The main responsibilities of the Department are as follows:

1. Analyzing the legal standards authorized by the National Congress in collaboration with the Secretary of the Commission, taking into account their impact on society. The Department may suggest corrective measures to improve the law implementation.
2. Establishing and maintaining a network of social organizations willing to participate in the evaluation process.
3. Informing the Secretary-General about their findings through the Commission on Internal Regime, Administration, and Regulations.
4. Proposing changes to existing legislation, if necessary.

The Department has proposed that the Table of the Chamber of Deputies select the laws to be evaluated from a list it presents, to determine which laws should undergo evaluation in the following year. The selection criteria, suggested by both parties, are as follows:

**A three-stage project has been developed to evaluate the effectiveness of the law which includes law analysis, citizens' perception, and**

### the final report.

In the current Chilean process, the various stages for law evaluation are the following:

1. Identification of the reason for the regulation of the issue and the legal significance of the subject.
2. Identification of the main goals intended to achieve with the law.
3. Identification of the resources employed to accomplish the objectives.
4. Identification of the public institutions that partake in the law's implementation and enforcement, as well as their responsibilities.
5. Identification of the various stakeholders and groups affected by the law.
6. Identification of the impacts the law has had.
7. Citizen's perception: An important component of this approach is perception of the citizens. The department is currently designing instruments, including an online platform called "Virtual Congress" which will facilitate the process of gathering opinions and expertise from the public.
8. The primary objective of the current methodology for evaluating laws is to produce a final report to be put forward to the Committee on the Law Evaluation. The Committee will evaluate the report and send it to the interested parties in the lower house for further discussion.

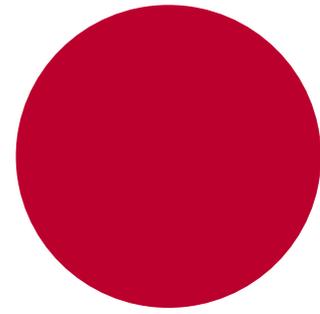
From 2011 to 2018, a total of 12 laws underwent evaluation. As part of a pilot project to assess the department's methodology, Law 20 413, which establishes the concept of a universal organ donor for transplantation, was examined. The analysis conducted during this evaluation uncovered several issues that were not adequately addressed when the law was initially proposed. These concerns encompassed the absence of a national policy pertaining to organ transplants, which included matters related to education, funding, and the establishment of a transparent information mechanism. Furthermore, insufficient infrastructure and a shortage of human resources were identified as contributing factors to the law's implementation falling short of the expected outcomes.

## 35. Subject Experts in Japan's Upper House

The National Diet of Japan serves as the country's national legislative body. It is comprised of two chambers: the House of Representatives, which serves as the lower house, and the House of Councilors, which acts as the upper house.

The House of Councilors comprises members who have expertise in different fields such as law, economics, education, international relations, etc. These subject experts use their knowledge and experience to contribute to the legislative process by providing informed opinions and proposing relevant policies.

The upper house also has several committees and subcommittees, each of which is composed of members with expertise in a particular field. These specialized committees focus on specific areas of policy.



For example, the Committee on Financial Affairs deals with matters related to finance and banking. They are responsible for conducting hearings, reviewing bills, and making recommendations in Parliament.

Subject specialists contribute significantly to the work of Japan's upper house by offering specialized knowledge and insight on a wide range of policy matters. Their contributions ensure that laws are rigorously examined and supported by professional analysis, resulting in improved national policies and outcomes.



Reference - [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/12/Diet\\_of\\_Japan\\_Kokkai\\_2009.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/12/Diet_of_Japan_Kokkai_2009.jpg)

## 36. Committee on public petitions in Sri Lanka

The Committee on Public Petitions consists of ten to fifteen members that are nominated by the Committee of Selection. This committee's responsibility is to review the petitions that Parliament has passed along to it for the public and to report back to Parliament on the appropriate course of action.

**This committee has the authority to call anyone in front of it for questioning, to request any paper, book, record, or another document for examination, and to get access to stores and property. It shall be the duty of the Committee on Public Petitions to consider the petitions referred to it under the provisions of paragraph (10) of Standing Order 30.**

The quorum of the Committee on Public Petitions shall be three members. In cases where the Committee on Public Petitions believes that a petition alleges that an authority figure or an officer of a public corporation, local authority, or another similar institution has violated a fundamental right or committed another injustice, the

Committee on Public Petitions may look into the petition. The Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration (Ombudsman) might even get a petition from the Committee and be requested to investigate and report.

When it becomes necessary, the Committee on Public Petitions will establish any Sub-Committees formed up of its own Members to review petitions or reports and report back to the Committee on Public Petitions. In order to carry out its tasks, the Committee on Public Petitions or any of its Sub-Committees shall have the authority to call anyone before it, question them, and request, examine, and gain access to any paper, book, record, or other document. At present the committee has been lapsed.



Reference - [https://www.xinhuanet.com/english/asiapacific/2020-08/20/139304839\\_15979979015061n.jpg](https://www.xinhuanet.com/english/asiapacific/2020-08/20/139304839_15979979015061n.jpg)

## 37. Post- Legislative Scrutiny in UK

Post-legislative scrutiny (PLS) is a process in the United Kingdom where the effectiveness and impact of a piece of legislation is evaluated after it has been enacted. The purpose of PLS is to assess whether the intended objectives of the legislation have been achieved and to identify any negative consequences or areas for improvement.

The practice of post-legislative scrutiny in the United Kingdom dates back to the 19th century, but it was not until the 20th century that it became a more formal process. The Parliament Act 1911, which reduced the power of the House of Lords, also introduced a requirement for all laws to be reviewed after five years to assess their effectiveness. In 1968, the Select Committee on the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration recommended that a system of post-legislative scrutiny be established. In 1986, the House of Commons Procedure Committee produced a report recommending that select committees be given the power to undertake post-legislative scrutiny. This led to the establishment of the first post-legislative scrutiny committee, 'The Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments'.

In the 1990s, there was a further increase in the use of post-legislative scrutiny, particularly in relation to regulatory and environmental legislation. The Regulatory



Reform Act 2001 introduced a requirement for all regulatory reform orders to be reviewed after three years, and another reformed act established a process for post-legislative scrutiny of corporate law.

PLS is conducted by select committees in Parliament or by independent bodies such as the Law Commission or the Independent Regulatory Reform Commission. The process involves gathering evidence from stakeholders, experts, and the public to evaluate the impact of the legislation. The findings are then reported back to Parliament, and recommendations may be made for changes to the legislation or for future legislative action. This process is important for ensuring that legislation is fit for purpose and is achieving its intended objectives. It allows for a more comprehensive evaluation of the impact of legislation beyond the initial policy intentions and can identify areas for improvement or repeal.



## 38. Sectoral Oversight Committees Sri Lanka

In Sri Lanka, within six weeks of its first session following an election, the Parliament shall appoint, by resolution, a sufficient number of Sectoral Oversight Committees as may be established by the Committee of Selection. However, there may never be more than twenty Sectoral Oversight Committees operating simultaneously. Even if Parliament is adjourned or prorogued, the Sectoral Oversight Committees will continue to work and conduct their investigations. The topics and duties that are decided by the Committee of Selection will be assigned to each Sectoral Oversight Committee.

The Sectoral Oversight Committees have the authority to review any Bill, any subsidiary legislation, including any Regulation, Resolution, Treaty, Report, or any other matter relevant to topics and functions under their purview. The Sectoral Oversight Committees will be in charge of general oversight duties to help the Parliament.

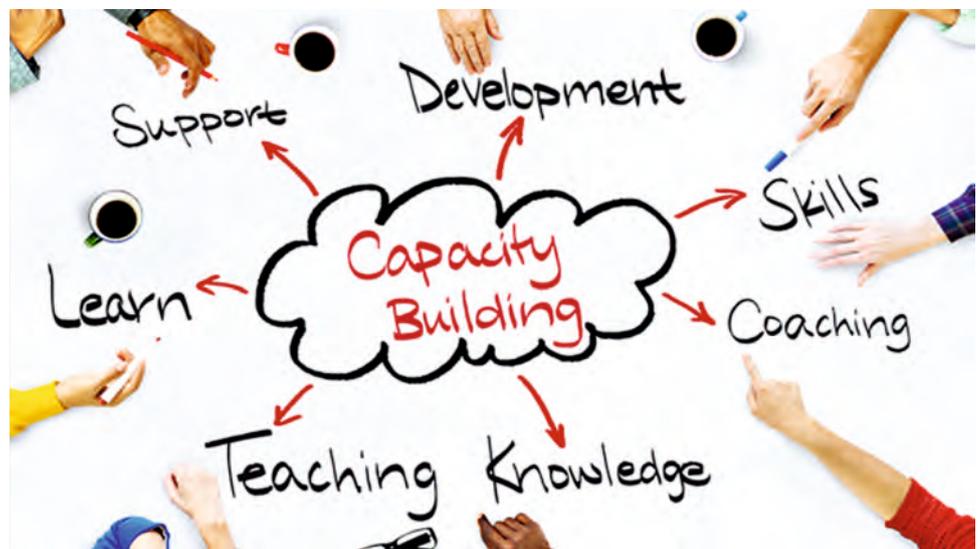
The committee's study, assessment, and evaluation of how legislation passed by Parliament is being applied, administered, carried out, and evaluated, as well as any situations or circumstances that would make it necessary or desirable to enact new or additional law. The creation, consideration, and adoption of any amendments to existing laws as well as any further legislation that may be required or appropriate is taken care of by the sectoral committee.

The Committee on Public Finance will consider any report or proposal made in accordance with this Standing Order that calls for the augmentation of budgetary resources. Each Sectoral Oversight Committee will examine and study on a continuing basis any law, project, or



programme pertaining to subjects within its purview to determine whether it is being carried out effectively and in keeping with the intent of Parliament and whether it should be continued, restricted or eliminated. Each Sectoral Oversight Committee must approve its oversight strategy for that Parliamentary Session no later than six weeks after being appointed. The Committee on Parliamentary Business shall receive this plan for review.

Any matter may be referred by the Parliament to any Sectoral Oversight Committee in a way that ensures, to the greatest extent practical, that each Sectoral Oversight Committee with jurisdiction over the issue at hand of a provision may examine that provision and report to the Parliament there on. Every month, each Sectoral Oversight Committee must meet for at least two days. Each Sectoral Oversight Committee's meetings must be called in line with the calendar or schedule or as the Chair may determine. Parliamentarians from all of the parties in the Parliament participate in these Sectoral Oversight Committees. The youth members will be chosen in relation to each Committee, in accordance with the rules of the amended rules of procedure passed by the Parliament, which allow the Chairperson of each Committee to call five youth delegates each to support the Committees with regard to investigations led by these Committees.



## Chapter V

# Empowering Members: Training and Capacity Building Programmes

## 39. Training Sessions of the Staff and Members of Parliament in Iran

The Islamic Republic of Iran represents a distinctive form of governance, blending aspects of Islamic theocracy, democracy, and authoritarianism. The country's legislative branch, known as the Islamic Consultative Assembly or Majles, plays a crucial role in shaping Iran's laws and regulations. Comprising 290 members, the Majles is elected by the Iranian population every four years. The electoral process entails a complex combination of constituency-based voting, incorporating elements of both first-past-the-post and proportional representation systems. Within the Majles, a speaker is elected by the assembly members to serve as its head. The speaker is chosen from among the ranks of the assembly and holds a prominent position in guiding its proceedings.

To effectively carry out its duties, the Majles organizes its work through various committees, each focused on specific areas of legislation and policy. These committees consist of assembly members with expertise in their respective fields. Their responsibilities involve analysing proposed bills, studying relevant matters, and providing recommendations to the assembly as a whole. In this manner, the Majles serves as the legislative engine of Iran, shaping the legal framework and contributing to the governance of the country within the unique context of its theocratic, democratic, and authoritarian elements.

The training sessions cover a wide range of topics related to the work of the Majles, including legislative processes, parliamentary procedures, policy analysis, public speaking, media relations, research methods, and communication skills. The sessions are conducted by experienced trainers, subject matter experts, and senior officials from the Majles, as well as other governmental and non-governmental organizations.

The training sessions are offered on a regular basis throughout the year, and they are mandatory for all staff and members of the Majles. The sessions are usually held in the Majles building or in other government facilities, and they may be conducted in person or online, depending on the circumstances. These sessions are evaluated and monitored by the Majles leadership and other relevant authorities, to ensure that they are effective and relevant to the needs of the staff and members. The feedback from the participants is also taken into account, and adjustments may be made to the training programs based on their suggestions and comments.



Reference - <https://images.indianexpress.com/2017/08/iran-parliament-759.jpg>

## Capacity Building of the Members in Mali

The Parliament of the Republic of Mali is a bicameral system of legislature comprised of the National Assembly and the Senate. These two bodies work together to form the country's legislature and oversee the government. The National Assembly has 147 members who are elected by popular vote for a term of five years. The National Assembly is responsible for passing laws and supervising the government's actions. Members of the National Assembly can propose bills, which are then debated and voted upon by the Assembly.

The Senate has 147 members, with 129 members elected by indirect suffrage and 18 members appointed by the President of the Republic. The Senate's primary role is to provide a forum for dialogue between different groups in society and to review and propose amendments to legislation. They also need to be able to represent the interests of their constituents and engage with them effectively to understand their needs and priorities.

**In Mali, capacity building is a key priority for the government and legislative bodies, as they seek to improve governance, promote economic development, and address the country's many challenges. These capacity building programmes are executed with a vision that members of the legislature need to have the skills and knowledge to draft and pass legislation that is responsive to the needs of their constituents and promotes the development of the country.**

### Training and Workshops

Training and workshops are a crucial part of capacity building for members of the Mali legislature. These activities provide members with the skills and knowledge they need to carry out their legislative duties effectively.

### Exchange Programs

These programs enable members to learn from best practices and experiences in other parts of the world. Exchange programs also provide members with the opportunity to build relationships with other legislators and develop a global perspective on issues affecting their constituents.

### Mentoring and Coaching

Experienced mentors and coaches can work with individual members to provide guidance and support in areas such as leadership, communication, and decision-making. Mentoring and coaching can also help members to develop the soft skills needed to be effective legislators, such as listening, empathy, and problem-solving.

### Research and Analysis

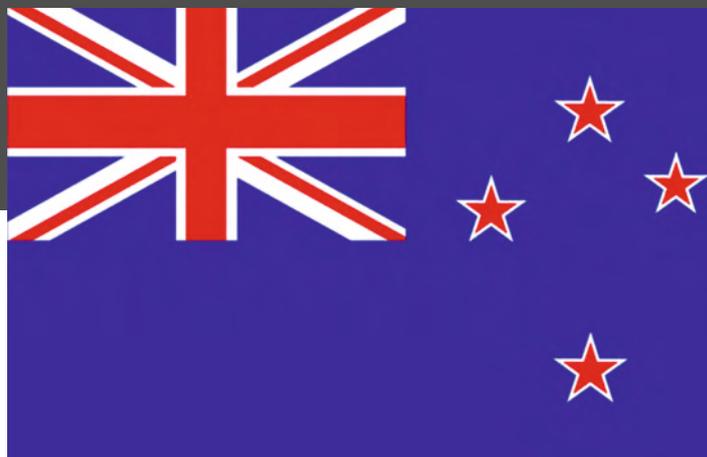
Research and analysis can be an important tool for providing capacity building to members of the Malian legislature. Research can provide members with evidence-based information to inform.



## Chapter VI

# **Distinctive Ministries and Innovative Policies: Uncovering Uniqueness in Governance**

## 41. Speaker-led diplomacy in New Zealand



In the New Zealand House of Representatives, the Speaker holds the highest elected position. Constitutionally, they rank third in importance, following the Governor-General and the Prime Minister. The Speaker plays a crucial role in overseeing the functioning of the House and must command the respect of all Members of Parliament (Mps). While maintaining affiliations with their political party, the New Zealand Speaker is required to chair proceedings in the House impartially, without displaying favoritism or disrespect toward any political party, the Government, or the Opposition.

**The Speaker leads the international diplomacy of the New Zealand Parliament. They represent Parliament on a global scale by attending diplomatic events and hosting foreign guests. The Speaker also actively engages with counterparts in Pacific parliaments and is involved in the Tai a Kiwa: Stronger Pacific Parliaments program of the New Zealand Parliament.**

In May 2019, the Clerk of the House of Representatives and the Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade established Tai a Kiwa through a Memorandum of Understanding. The purpose of Tai a Kiwa is to enhance and enhance the provision of technical assistance to Pacific parliaments. The program collaborates with Pacific legislatures to improve capability, capacity, and efficiency. It intends to improve Pacific regional interparliamentary connections and boost public understanding of democratic institutions. It also aims to promote the role and function of parliaments in order to increase public understanding and participation and encourage more female lawmakers in the region.

The Speaker's initiatives help to strengthen international parliamentary partnerships and advance New Zealand's interests. They lead delegations and call correspondence between speakers. They actively participate in worldwide speakers' conferences. The speaker holds the position of the President of the New Zealand branch of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. They also chair the New Zealand Inter-Parliamentary Relations Executive Committee. They aim to promote international communication and exchanges among members of Parliament, whether through delegations or virtually. They have regular interactions with members of the diplomatic community.

The Speaker's engagement with external affairs is significant as they do not advocate for any specific set of beliefs. They remain receptive to diverse ideas put forth by other national legislatures. In times of unprecedented challenges related to health, the environment,

and the economy, people rely on decision-makers to guide them. It is vital to have parliamentary scrutiny, executive accountability, and transparency to ensure that these decisions are strong and serve the public's best interests. Additionally, engaging with external affairs enables the Speaker to gain a deeper understanding of governance structures and policies of other countries, providing valuable insights into the domestic law and policy-making processes.

At the moment, **international relations of parliaments play an important and significant role in increasing mutual understanding and collaboration among parliaments.** This parliamentary diplomacy came about in response to developments in international relations, including the end of secret diplomacy and the blurring of the line between traditional foreign policy and domestic affairs. Development, environmental preservation, human rights, and other topics previously considered solely the responsibility of states have received the same weight in modern international relations as security, political, and military matters. It is therefore inevitable that the relevance of parliamentary diplomacy in formulating state foreign policies grows as the influence of international institutions grows. Hence, a speaker who holds an in-depth understanding of the neighboring countries can effectively guide the delegations in Parliament. For this reason, the Speaker's parliamentary diplomacy has become a powerful tool in shaping current international relations and initiating projects. International interactions of parliaments and speakers can also be viewed as another "track" of diplomacy that complements and supports national governments' efforts to promote cooperation and understanding. Parliamentary relations have an advantage in that they are not bound by diplomatic formalities and can have more open discussions. Bilateral or multilateral contacts and first-hand exchanges of views between speakers and other parliamentarians appear to be an excellent opportunity to discuss issues of concern and help to establish good relations and cooperation between different countries, in addition to the multilateral efforts to support newly established democracies. Their participation ensures greater inter-parliamentary understanding and good relationships between countries.

## 42. Term Limit in European Union

The European Union is a continent-wide political and economic organization that includes 27 European countries. The President of the European Council is allowed only two two-and-a-half-year terms each. The Council of the European Union does not have an elected president, but a presidency which changes every six months. It rotates among the member countries. The governance of this entity is primarily governed by the Treaty of the European Union. Article 15 (5) of the treaty specifies that the President of the European Council is elected by a qualified majority for a term of two and a half years, with the possibility of renewal once. In case of any hindrance or significant misconduct, the President's term can be terminated by the European Council through the same procedure. Similarly, the guidelines for the European Commission are outlined in Article 17 of the Treaty of the European Union.

**A feature unique to this organisation can be found in the guidelines of its electoral policies. While the MEPs serve a 5-year term and can contest elections any number of times, the rule differs for the people who lead them. The President of the European Commission has a term of 5 years but is only allowed to contest for elections two times in their lifetime.**

In countries like India, the electoral candidates don't have a limit on the number of times they can contest the elections. This results in an unchecked well of power that is accessible to only the politicians. This can



result in a corruption of power over time. To prevent this, measures such as the aforementioned limits have been put in place under European Union law. This ensures that the politicians and political leaders remain answerable to the citizens of the European continent. These measures also ensure that a larger number of people and countries are represented and allowed a chance to lead the European Union. It also promotes change and encourages fresh ideas to be implemented. This promotes growth in various sectors of society.

Furthermore, the term limits also reflect the importance of accountability and democratic representation within the EU. By ensuring that the President of the European Commission and the President of the European Council are subject to regular re-election or replacement, the EU aims to promote transparency and ensure that these leaders are accountable to the EU member states and to the European Parliament. While it's not uncommon for countries with democracies to implement limits on electoral practices, it helps keep the political environment of Europe healthy and in athletic competition.

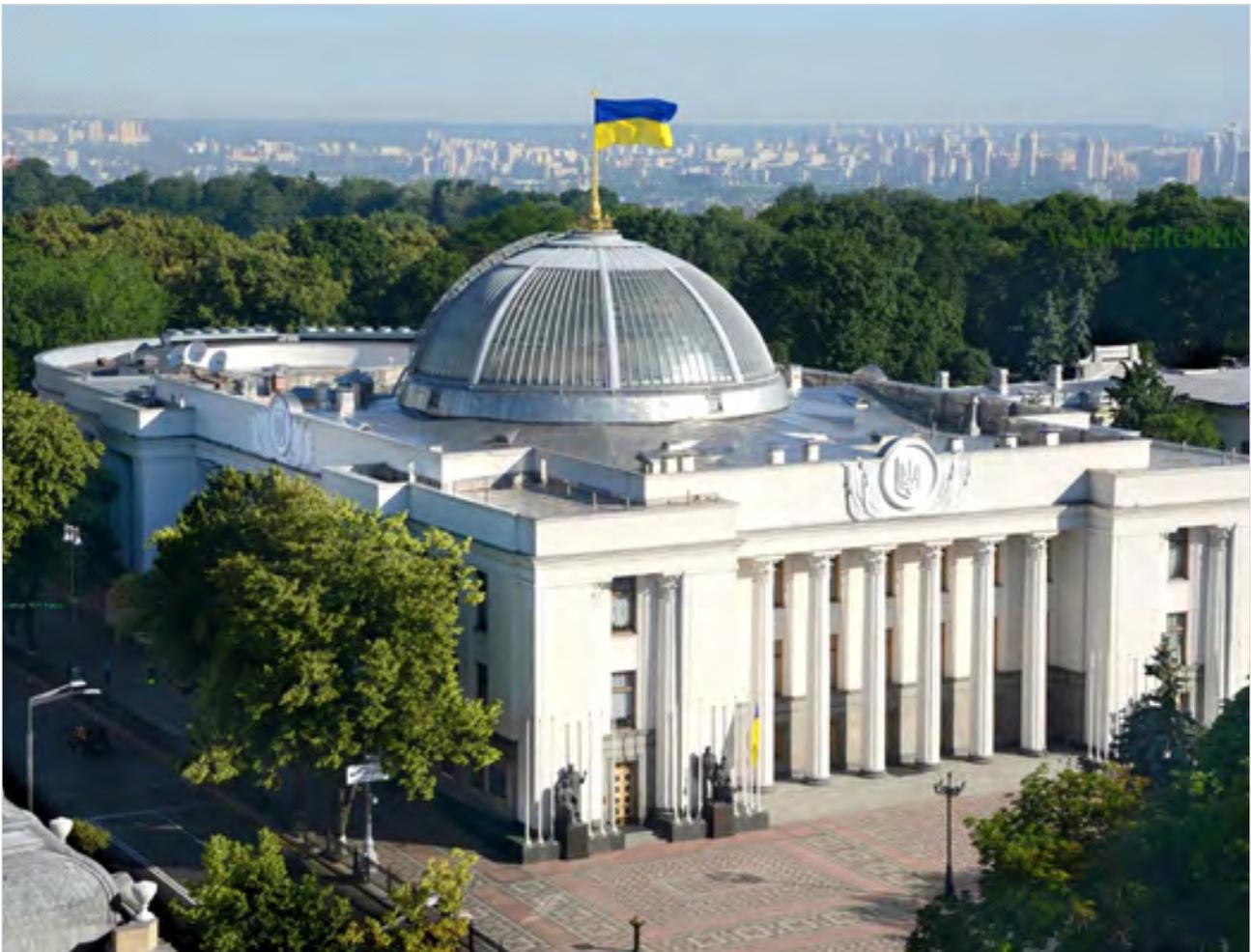


## 43. Ukraine's Open Data Legislation Policies

In Ukraine, the governmental system follows a semi-presidential model, wherein the President serves as the head of state and the Prime Minister holds the position of head of government. The country's legislative body is known as the Verkhovna Rada, comprising 450 members who are elected for a five-year term. The Verkhovna Rada operates as a unicameral Parliament, meaning it consists of a single chamber. Possessing extensive authority, the Parliament is responsible for enacting laws, approving the budget, and ratifying international agreements. Regular sessions of the Verkhovna Rada take place twice a year, from February to July and from September to December, while extraordinary sessions can be convened when necessary.

In 2015, the Parliament passed a law that requires government agencies to publish

their data in open formats. Ukraine has made significant strides in promoting open data in its legislative process. The law also established the position of the Commissioner for the Protection of State Data, who is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the law and ensuring that government agencies are complying with its provisions. Ukraine's commitment to open data in its legislative process demonstrates the country's dedication to transparency and accountability.

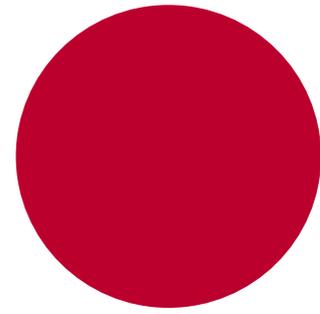


Reference - <https://www.jurist.org/news/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2018/11/ukraine-parliament.jpg>

## 44. Liberal Internationalism in Japan's Foreign Policies

Japan actively supports liberal internationalism, a foreign policy approach that emphasizes international collaboration, free trade, and the advancement of human rights and democracy on a global scale. Being one of the oldest democracies in Asia, Japan operates under a constitutional monarchy where the emperor serves as the head of state, while the government and Cabinet are led by the Prime Minister. The legislative authority resides in the National Diet, consisting of the lower House of Representatives and the upper House of Councilors. Judicial power, on the other hand, is entrusted to the Supreme Court and lower courts. Japan's constitution, established in 1947 with significant input from American officials during the post-war occupation, places sovereignty in the hands of the Japanese people.

Japan's increased participation in international organizations and efforts to promote global cooperation has been one of the most notable effects of its commitment to liberal internationalism. This approach has also influenced Japan's economic policy, with the country pursuing open trade and



economic cooperation with other nations. This commitment to economic liberalism has driven Japan's desire for growth and development, reflecting a broader dedication to the principles of free trade. The principles of liberal internationalism have also had significant domestic implications in Japan. By prioritizing democratic values and human rights, Japan has implemented reforms to increase political freedoms and civil liberties for its citizens. These reforms have included changes to the electoral system, as well as the introduction of greater protections for minority groups and marginalized communities. Overall, Japan's steadfast commitment to liberal internationalism has helped to promote a more peaceful, stable, and prosperous world order, with the country continuing to play a leading role in this regard.



Reference - [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/12/Diet\\_of\\_Japan\\_Kokkai\\_2009.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/12/Diet_of_Japan_Kokkai_2009.jpg)

## 45. The Polder Model of Decision making in the Netherlands

In the Netherlands, the political system operates under the principles of a parliamentary representative democracy, a constitutional monarchy, and a decentralized unitary state. It is often referred to as a consociational state, emphasizing its characteristic of power-sharing among different social and political groups. The Dutch political landscape is shaped by the Polder model, a consensus-based approach to decision-making. This model, which emerged in the 1980s and 1990s, influences economic and social policymaking, emphasizing the importance of reaching consensus among various stakeholders.

The polder model, also known as "polderen", is a unique approach to decision-making in the Netherlands, particularly in the realm of labour relations. The practice involves bringing together representatives from labour unions, business organizations, and government officials to negotiate and reach agreements on issues related to employment, wages, and other labour-related matters.

The origins of the polder model can be traced back to the 1980s when the Dutch government was faced with a major economic crisis. Rather than resorting to confrontational tactics, the government sought to engage with labour unions and

other stakeholders in a collaborative effort to address the crisis. This approach was successful and laid the groundwork for the polder model as it is known today.

One of the key elements of the polder model is its emphasis on cooperation and compromise. Rather than viewing labour relations as a zero-sum game, where one side must win at the expense of the other, the polder model seeks to find solutions that benefit all stakeholders.

Another important element of the polder model is the concept of "tripartite consultation". This refers to the practice of bringing together representatives from three key groups - labour unions, business organizations, and government officials - to negotiate and reach agreements on labour-related matters. By ensuring that all stakeholders have a voice in the decision-making process, the polder model seeks to promote fairness and balance in labour relations.



## 46. Open Government Policies of Canada

Making government more approachable for all people is the goal of open government. This entails granting the general public and business community in Canada better access to government data and information. Open government signifies a transformative shift in the mindset and practices of governments, public administrations, civil servants, citizens, and stakeholders involved in public policy. As defined by the OECD, it **embodies a governance culture that upholds the values of transparency, integrity, accountability, and stakeholder participation, all aimed at fostering democracy and inclusive growth.** This concept fundamentally redefines the relationship between the government and its constituents, emphasizing the importance of openness and collaboration in shaping public decision-making processes.

The government benefits from improving policy efficiency, effectiveness, and compliance. In Canada, there is a longstanding tradition of implementing changes aimed at strengthening the relationship between the government and its citizens.

The country is recognized for its advanced open data and open information initiatives, positioning it as a global leader in the open government movement. Canada has been actively working to broaden and deepen the concept of open government within the federal administration, expanding beyond open data and open information to encompass other important aspects, such as public and stakeholder engagement, as well as safeguarding and nurturing civic participation. **By enhancing inclusive and responsive policies, service design, and delivery over time, it can promote democracy and, in turn, increase public trust in governments and institutions.**

### National Action Plan on Open Government:

The National Action Plan on Open Government is a commitment made by the Canadian government to enhance accountability and transparency. The 2022-24 National Action Plan sets forth specific pledges and benchmarks that aim to promote greater openness, accountability, and transparency within the Canadian government. Through this plan, the



government aims to implement measures that foster increased public engagement, improve access to information, and strengthen governance practices. The plan has five themes -

1. Climate Change and Sustainable Growth
2. Democracy and Civic Space
3. Fiscal, Financial and Corporate Transparency
4. Justice
5. Open Data for Results

### Canada Open Government Working Group

A platform for cross-jurisdictional information exchange and collaboration on open government projects is the Canada Open Government Working Group (COGWG). It has members from federal governments, territories, provinces and national municipal organizations. The working group works with following terms of reference -

- Encourages the application of open data, open information, and public engagement concepts in their areas of responsibility and establishes a strategy plan to support national open government.
- Helps Canadian governments promote the accessibility of their data and information to Canadians by sharing, enhancing, and developing common tools, platforms, practises, and regulations.
- Promotes domestic open government forums, contributes to Canada's participation in the Open Government Partnership, and encourages the exchange of best practices to maximize the benefits of open government.

One of the working group's major outputs was the compilation of **multi jurisdictional open data use cases**, which was followed by the construction of a trial **federated open data search services** and the establishment of **criteria for selecting high value datasets**.

## 47. Gross National Happiness Index in Bhutan

The progress of a country is usually measured in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), but in Bhutan, a small country in South Asia, the development of the country is measured in Gross National Happiness Index or GNH. A comprehensive method of gauging people's happiness and well-being in Bhutan is the GNH index. It comprises nine domains and 33 indicators that support them. The index analyses each person's accomplishments in each indicator to determine the well-being of the country. It also recommends how policies might be created to further foster the survey's lower-scoring results. This term was first introduced in 1972 by the fourth King of Bhutan, King Jigme Singye Wangchuck. He declared the most important observation which led to the decision, that is happiness index is more important than GDP, in determining the progress.

**The Gross National Happiness has four pillars-**

1. Good Governance
2. Sustainable Socio-economic Development
3. Preservation and Promotion of Culture
4. Environmental Conservation



**These four pillars have further nine domains-**

1. Living standards
2. Education Health
3. Environment
4. Community
5. Vitality
6. Time-use
7. Psychological well-being
8. Good Governance
9. Cultural resilience and promotion

Bhutan became a democratic nation in 2008, and Article 9 of the Bhutanese Constitution further guaranteed the incorporation and persistence of the GNH ideal by stating that, “The State shall strive to promote those conditions that will enable the pursuit of Gross National Happiness”.



## 48. Ministry of Tolerance and Coexistence in UAE

The United Arab Emirates is home to the Ministry of Tolerance and Coexistence, a government entity responsible for overseeing and promoting religious tolerance and coexistence among diverse communities, both local and international, within the country. The establishment of this ministry in February 2016 aligns with the objectives of the National Tolerance Programme and draws inspiration from the leadership and vision of Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum, the ruler of Dubai.

The UAE appointed a Minister of State for Tolerance, and started the National Tolerance Programme, approved the Anti-Discrimination/Anti-Hate Law, and established centers to combat extremism in order to promote tolerance. Before the Cabinet's institutional reforms, the government of the United Arab Emirates had recently taken steps to create a tolerant society.

In 2016, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Prime Minister and Vice President of the UAE, as well as the Ruler of Dubai, introduced significant changes to the 12th Cabinet, underscoring the UAE's commitment to combatting ideological, cultural, and religious intolerance within

society. As part of these changes, the position of Minister of State for Tolerance was established for the first time.

Launched in June 2016, the program is built upon seven fundamental pillars, namely:

1. Islam
2. The UAE's Constitution
3. The legacy of Zayed and the ethical principles of the UAE
4. International conventions
5. Archaeology and history
6. Humanity
7. Common values

To ensure its successful implementation, the program involves cooperation between federal and local entities. It encompasses various initiatives, including 'Tolerance Week', 'The UAE Tolerance Centre', and 'The Tolerance Responsibility Programme'.

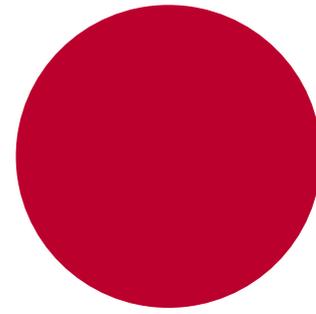


## 49. Minister of Loneliness in Japan

In 2021, the Japanese government took a significant step by creating a dedicated office within the cabinet to address pressing issues such as child poverty and suicide. Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga appointed Tetsushi Sakamoto as the inaugural Minister for Loneliness, recognizing the urgent need to tackle the increase in suicide rates due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, marking the first such appointment in eleven years. The primary objective of this ministry is to devise and implement measures that effectively prevent social isolation and promote social connectivity.

Japan experienced a concerning rise in suicides among young women, prompting the country to establish a dedicated ministerial post and office to address this issue. Japan has witnessed a gradual growth in the number of women's suicide cases from 2019 - 2022. In 2020, Japan reported a total of 6976 women's suicide cases, which is nearly a 15 percent increase from the suicide cases reported in 2019. These spike in suicide cases came in context of COVID-19 pandemic.

Due to the independent nature of Japanese women, they often find themselves facing challenging situations alone when they lose

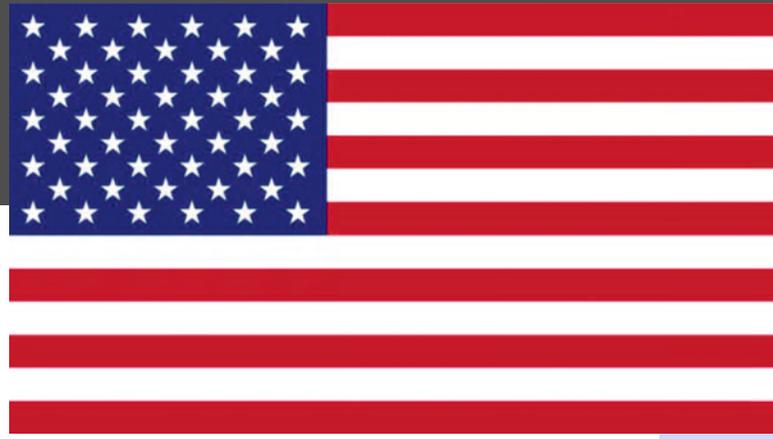


their jobs or encounter difficulties. Sadly, sources indicate that loneliness and sadness drive some women to choose suicide as a last resort. Recognizing the urgent need to address mental health issues and curb the alarming increase in suicide cases, the establishment of a ministry to tackle these challenges became imperative. The issue of loneliness and isolation is often overlooked on a global scale, but Japan has taken a significant step by becoming the second nation, after Britain in 2018, to appoint a minister specifically focused on this matter. Tetsushi Sakamoto, during a meeting on loneliness held at the prime minister's office on March 12, emphasized the importance of understanding the true nature of loneliness and isolation in Japan. He emphasized the need to establish a comprehensive plan-do-check-act cycle for policy measures across various administrative domains to effectively address this issue.



**THE WORLD**  
**JAPAN'S**  
**LONELINESS**

## Evidence Based Policy Making in USA



Evidence based policy making is the method of policy development that consults credible and relevant evidence to make political decisions. The approach that emphasizes the use of rigorous scientific research and data analysis to inform the development, implementation, and evaluation of public policies. The practice aims to ensure that policy decisions are grounded in objective evidence so that they are more likely to achieve desired outcomes.

The process typically begins with identifying policy questions that require attention. Research questions are then formulated, and evidence is gathered through various methods such as data analysis, experiments, or independent research. The evidence is carefully analysed to determine the effectiveness, efficiency, and potential consequences of different policy options.

**Policymakers work closely with researchers and experts to translate the evidence into feasible policy options. These options are designed to address the identified problem and achieve desired outcomes based on the evidence. Decision-making and implementation of the chosen policy option occur after considering the evidence alongside political considerations and public opinion. Policies are continuously evaluated to assess their impact and make necessary adjustments.**

The roots of evidence-based approaches can be found in various policy fields and initiatives throughout history. In the 1960s, the Johnson administration established the 'Office of Economic Opportunity' (OEO) as part of the War on Poverty. The OEO sought to address poverty through a range of programs and interventions. This era marked the beginning of a more systematic focus on evaluating the effectiveness of social programs, with a growing emphasis on evidence and research. During the 1970s and 1980s, the field of research and evaluation expanded, driven by the demand for evidence on program impacts and cost-effectiveness. "The Government Performance and Results Act" (GPRA) of 1993 further reinforced the need for agencies to assess program's effectiveness and present the results. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, evidence-based approaches gained greater attention with the emergence of the "What Works Movement". The establishment of the 'Coalition for Evidence-Based Policy' in 2001 further propelled the growth of evidence-based policy making.

In 2009, the Obama administration launched the 'Evidence-Based Policymaking Initiative' (EBPI). This initiative aimed to strengthen the use of evidence in policy making by promoting

the development of evidence-building plans, expanding access to data, and supporting the use of rigorous evaluations. It also led to the establishment of the 'Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking' in 2016, which made recommendations for improving data access and privacy protections. The passage of "The Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018" in January 2019 was a significant milestone. This legislation aimed to institutionalize evidence-based practices by requiring federal agencies to develop learning agendas, designate Chief Evaluation Officers, and prioritize the use of evidence in decision making.

The implementation of evidence-based policy making in the United States varies across different levels of government and policy domains. Various federal agencies, such as the 'Office of Management and Budget' (OMB) and the 'Office of Evaluation Sciences' (OES), promote evidence-based practices and support agencies in implementing them. Additionally, some states and local governments have established their own initiatives to encourage evidence-based decision-making processes.

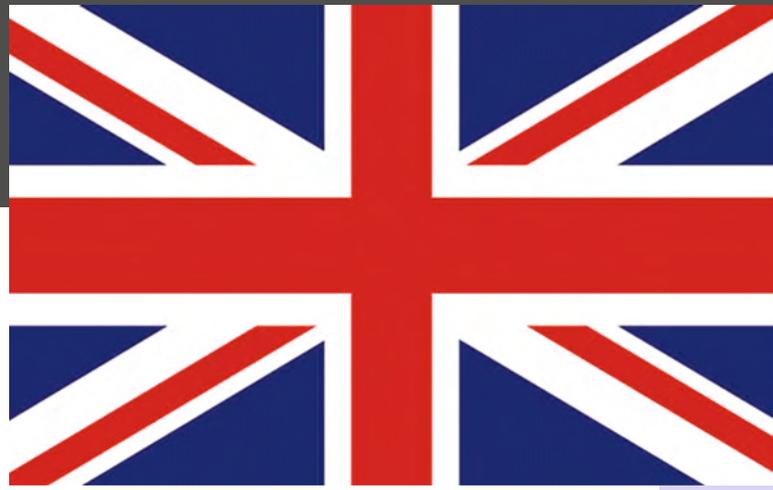
It is important to note that **the adoption of evidence-based policy making in the United States is not without challenges. Factors such as political considerations, limited funding for evaluations, and the complexity of social issues can influence the extent to which evidence informs policy decisions.** Nonetheless, there has been a growing recognition of the value of evidence in shaping effective policies and improving outcomes, leading to continued efforts to strengthen evidence-based approaches in the United States. In conclusion, evidence based policy making in the United States has a rich history spread over a span of several decades. the commitment to evidence-based policy making continues to grow. The evolving landscape reflects a better understanding that decisions made after gathering solid evidence are more likely to achieve desired outcomes and improve the well-being of individuals and communities. With ongoing efforts at the federal, state, and local levels, evidence-based policy making is destined to play an increasingly significant role in shaping policies and addressing complex societal challenges in the United States.

## 51. Parliament Week in UK

Every year, UK Parliament Week (UKPW) is held to raise awareness of what the Parliament is, what it does, and how anyone may get involved. Young people should be given the opportunity to participate in local and Westminster politics and utilise their voices for change. The House of Commons and House of Lords of the British Parliament have been organizing a week-long schedule of events and activities since 2011. They work with hundreds of other organizations across the nation, including charities, schools, museums, and community groups.

Participants get the chance to examine the effects of politics on society as well as learn about the legislative process and how laws are created through these activities. Numerous subjects, including democracy, representation, campaigning, and the value of voting, are frequently covered throughout this week.

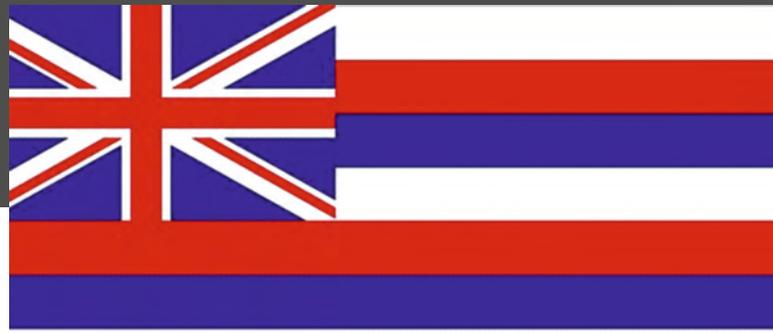
It inspires individuals of all ages and walks of life to become more politically conscious and



actively engage in determining the course of their nation. UK Parliament Week has utilized online channels more and more recently in an effort to reach a larger audience. This includes offering online materials and activities, holding webinars and virtual chats, and live-streaming events. Over the years, participation in UK Parliament Week has increased significantly, and thousands of activities have been held all over the nation. It has been successful in establishing among participants a sense of civic responsibility, political literacy, and conversation.



## 52. Sustainability measures in legislative procedures in Hawaii



Hawaii is one of the US states which has been on the forefront of addressing environmental concerns and issuing precautions for sustainable development through governmental action. These legislative goals and targets include:

**Standards for renewable energy:** Hawaii has set ambitious renewable energy goals. They aim to achieve 100% renewable energy by 2045. Legislative procedures have been used to support and promote the growth in the field of renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, water and geothermal power.

**Programs for energy efficiency:** Hawaii has implemented various energy efficiency programs to reduce energy consumption and promote sustainable practices. Necessary actions have been taken to incentivize energy-efficient buildings and appliances and to encourage the adoption of energy-saving practices.

**Making transportation sustainable:** Hawaii has been working towards promoting sustainable transportation. Legislation has been introduced to support electric vehicle infrastructure development, incentivize the purchase of electric vehicles, and encourage the use of public transportation, biking, and walking.

**Environmental protection and conservation:** Hawaii places a strong emphasis on protecting its natural resources and preserving its unique ecosystems. Legislative

procedures like the HEPA (Hawaii Environmental Protection Act) which was passed in the 1970s, have been implemented to safeguard environmentally sensitive areas, protect endangered species, and promote sustainable land and water management practices.

**Mitigation and adaptation of climate change:** Recognizing the impacts of climate change, Hawaii has taken steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to changing climactic conditions. Legislative measures have been introduced to promote climate resilience, reduce carbon emissions, and support the development of climate change adaptation strategies. For example: Act 234. The legislature passed Act 234 in 2017, which set a goal for Hawaii to be carbon neutral by 2045. This law requires the State of Hawaii to establish strategies, take measures and report progress to achieve carbon neutrality.

**The sustainable development goals initiative of 2017:** It is an example of sustainable measures taken by Hawaii. In 2017, the legislature passed Act 27, which established Hawaii State Sustainability Commission and the Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Plan.

From their instrumental contribution to the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights between 1947 and 1948 to their ongoing efforts at the United Nations, Canada has consistently emerged as a resolute advocate for safeguarding human rights and promoting democratic principles. A robust and efficient international system for human rights must include the United Nations treaty bodies. Additionally, Canada is dedicated to continuing a positive engagement with the UN and other international organizations to which they are a part.

Canada engages in Multilateral human rights institutions. By means of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), Canada provides valuable suggestions to states with the aim of enhancing the promotion and protection of human rights. Canada also actively seeks opportunities for collaboration, including engagement with human rights defenders, while ensuring the fulfillment of prior commitments made through the UPR process.

Canada participates in Bilateral Engagement. Canada interacts with local authorities through its network of missions abroad to emphasize the responsibility of states to safeguard everyone in their territory and under their control, including human rights defenders. **Since 2011, the Minister of Foreign Affairs has been responsible for bestowing the Human Rights Award on behalf of the Government of Canada. This prestigious award recognizes individuals or organizations from outside of Canada who have demonstrated exceptional courage and leadership in safeguarding freedom and human rights.** Canada is steadfast in its commitment to championing the protection and advancement of human rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, 2-spirit, and intersex (LGBTQ2I) individuals worldwide.

**Canada's new LGBTQ2I international assistance programme was unveiled in February 2019. The country's Feminist**

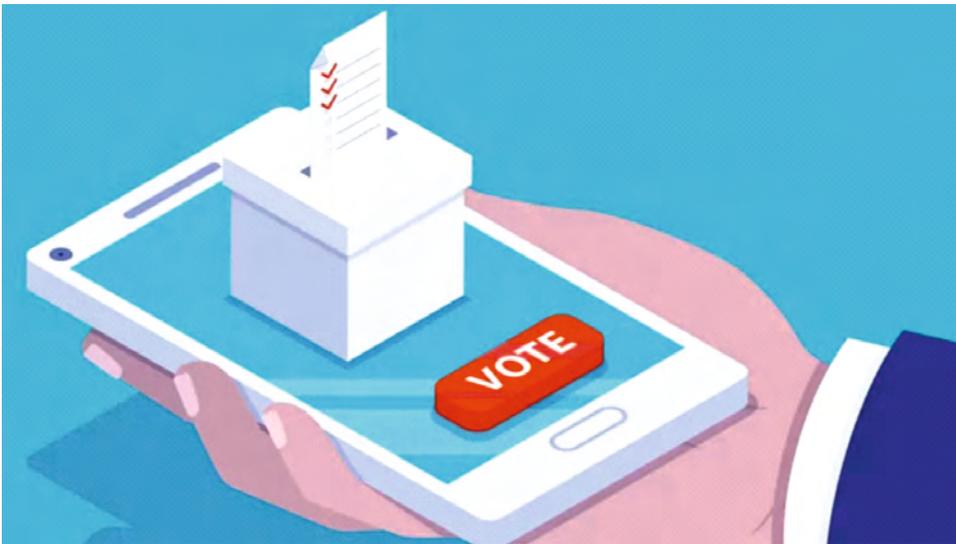


International Assistance Policy is furthered via this programme. The program will get \$10 million each year for the following five years, totaling \$30 million in dedicated funding. These funds support LGBTQ2I individuals in developing nations by enhancing socioeconomic outcomes and advancing human rights.

Canada upholds various policies to actively promote human rights. These policies encompass a wide range of areas, including:

- Empowering and supporting women and girls globally.
- Implementing comprehensive policies dedicated to the well-being and rights of children and youth.
- Addressing international indigenous affairs and working towards reconciliation.
- Safeguarding freedom of religion and beliefs for all individuals.
- Establishing inclusive policies and support systems for refugees and migrants.
- Ensuring equal rights and opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Recognizing the intersection of climate change and human rights and taking necessary actions.
- Upholding the principles of internet freedom and digital rights.
- Fostering pluralism and celebrating diversity within Canadian society.

Through these policies, Canada strives to create a more inclusive, equitable, and rights-based society, both domestically and on the international stage.



## Chapter VII

# Adapting to Changing World: Digitisation of Democratic Practices

## 54. The Digitization of Legislative Procedures in Estonia

Estonia, a Northern European nation, is known as the "Digital Republic" due to its remarkable advancement in e-Government services. What sets their digital democracy apart is the ability to vote for their next president online.

Since 2005, Estonia has been the pioneer of internet voting in national elections, allowing voters from anywhere in the world to cast their ballots using an internet-connected computer. The popularity of internet voting is evident from the fact that in the most recent Estonian elections (2019), nearly half of all ballots cast were done through this system, demonstrating its widespread acceptance and adoption.

Over the past 15 years, Estonian voters have embraced this system, casting their votes online in several national and European Parliament elections, as well as local elections. **Distinguishing remote internet voting from other types of electronic voting methods is crucial, including the utilization of standalone electronic voting machines (as employed in India) or kiosks, as well as the use of the internet solely for transmitting and tallying results.** The Estonian system of Internet voting distinguishes itself from other electronic voting systems by allowing voters to cast their ballot from a variety of locations, such as their homes, workplaces, cafes, hotels etc. This feature also means that **neither the physical environment nor the device used for voting is under the control of election officials.**

Internet voting (I-voting) provides numerous advantages that address traditional barriers to electoral engagement, such as geographical distance, transportation limitations, challenging terrains, and adverse weather conditions. This system enhances accessibility and promotes broader participation among all citizens, including individuals with health concerns or disabilities, those residing in remote areas, and those responsible for the care of dependents, be it young children or the elderly. The convenience of not requiring in-person visits to polling stations saves voters time and money, aligning well with contemporary mobile lifestyles characterized by travel, migration, and transnational activities. Furthermore, by eliminating the necessity for physical polling stations, I-voting reduces costs for electoral authorities while facilitating swifter tallying, tabulation, and delivery of voting results.

In addition to revolutionizing the way

Estonians participate in the democratic process, the country's digital resilience extends to higher education as well. **When the pandemic forced universities to switch to remote learning, the Estonian University of Tartu was able to make the transition in just one day** thanks to its existing infrastructure and technological preparedness. Almost all bureaucratic tasks can be performed online, and the country's digital transformation is based on the Estonian Information Policy Principles adopted by the Parliament in 1998. To enhance process efficiency and public service delivery, the government opted for two vital technologies known as "interoperability enablers," alongside ensuring comprehensive digital mobile phone network coverage and secure data exchange environments.

The Estonian government's digital transformation is supported by two key technologies, the first of which is the early generation of a digital identity number, or ID card. This identity is mandatory and serves as a means of verifying people's identities in the digital world, allowing for seamless integration between the physical and digital realms. Issued by the state, the ID card is also recognized as a mandatory document. Estonian banks are strong supporters of this initiative, investing heavily in e-banking and using the e-identity feature as a means of accessing their services. The Estonian government has launched various campaigns to encourage the shift from paper-based to digital processes, especially in the agricultural sector. These initiatives aim to educate farmers on the benefits of digitalization, such as quicker identification and error detection, and provide online forums for farmers to gather information. The system has proven popular among farmers, who have found that it reduces administrative burden and saves them time by enabling early detection and correction of data errors. Additionally, the digital system has made payment processing faster, further streamlining administrative procedures for farmers.

## 55. E-voting for referendums on policies in Switzerland

Direct democracy is well-known in Switzerland. All Swiss nationals over the age of eighteen are eligible to vote in both the active and passive elections for the National Council, which serves as the Federal Parliament's lower house. They may also vote in elections held by the general public. All Constitutional modifications and admission to some international institutions require a referendum.

A referendum refers to a direct vote by the general public on a proposition, law, or political issue, as opposed to representative voting. Electronic voting, on the other hand, involves the use of electronic tools to facilitate or manage the process of casting and counting ballots. Depending on the specific approach, electronic voting can employ standalone electronic voting machines (commonly known as EVMs) or computers connected to the internet (referred to as online voting).

In the Geneva canton, where electronic voting first began in 2003, inhabitants of Anières used the internet to cast their ballots. In the years that followed, numerous cantons adopted this method of voting, increasing electronic voter participation.

The Swiss government uses e-voting for a variety of reasons. It can save costs and expedite the voting process. Voting is more trustworthy for Swiss expats. Given that most people think voting online is easier, it might also assist in increasing voter turnout. It makes participation in elections and referendums easier.



Reference - [https://s3.amazonaws.com/participedia.prod/d1645146-5d2c-4c29-bab9-a863c075a29d\\_onlinevoting.jpg](https://s3.amazonaws.com/participedia.prod/d1645146-5d2c-4c29-bab9-a863c075a29d_onlinevoting.jpg)

## 56. Electronic Participation of Citizens in Legislative Procedures of Brazil

Brazil has a long history of democratic governance. Like India, Brazil has a multiparty democratic system, with a large number of political parties represented in the National Congress. This often leads to complex coalition-building and negotiations between parties in order to pass legislation. The Brazilian political system has made strides in recent years towards increasing transparency and citizen engagement in the legislative process, including the use of electronic participation tools.

Electronic participation of citizens in legislative procedures is a relatively new concept in Brazil, but there have been some initiatives aimed at increasing citizen engagement in the legislative process. One such initiative is the e-Democracia platform which was launched by the Chamber of Deputies in 2009. The platform provides citizens with access to legislative information, as well as tools for participating in public consultations, submitting proposals, and engaging in online discussions with lawmakers.

Another example is the use of social media by lawmakers to communicate with their constituents and share information about



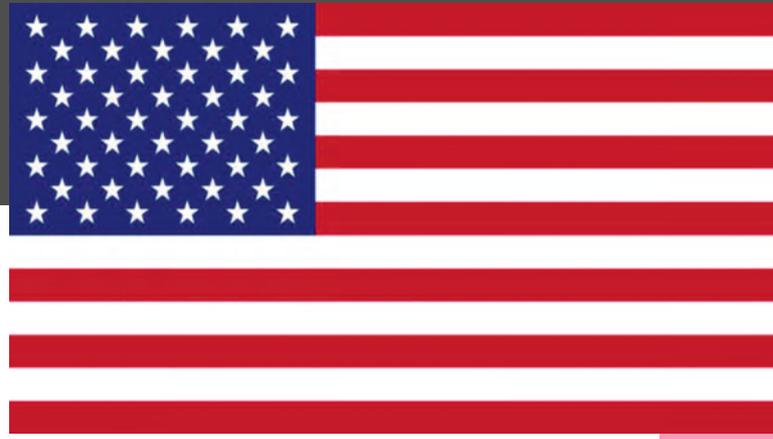
their work in the National Congress. Many members of Congress have active social media accounts on platforms such as Twitter and Facebook, which they use to engage with their followers and solicit feedback on various issues.

While there are challenges associated with the implementation of these tools, such as the digital divide and concerns about the security and privacy of online communications, there is great potential for these initiatives to increase citizen engagement and participation in the democratic process. As Brazil continues to navigate its complex political landscape, electronic participation may play an increasingly important role in promoting transparency, accountability, and civic engagement.



Reference - [https://images.adsttc.com/media/images/55f9/ba65/e58e/cec1/f800/035e/large\\_jpg/Filipe\\_Frazao\\_\\_Shutterstock.com.jpg?1442429518](https://images.adsttc.com/media/images/55f9/ba65/e58e/cec1/f800/035e/large_jpg/Filipe_Frazao__Shutterstock.com.jpg?1442429518)

## 57. Electronic Participation of Citizens in Legislative Procedures of USA



The United States of America, functioning as a federal republic, encompasses 50 states, a federal district, and various territories. Renowned for its robust democratic traditions, it is widely recognized as one of the oldest modern democracies worldwide. At the federal level, the legislative branch of government is known as the United States Congress, which consists of two chambers: the Senate and the House of Representatives. One notable feature of the United States Congress is its system of checks and balances, which is deeply embedded in the framework of the federal government. This system ensures that no single branch of government becomes excessively dominant and that each branch acts as a check on the others. Working collectively with the President and the Supreme Court, the Congress forms one of the three branches of government entrusted with maintaining this delicate balance of power.

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in electronic participation of citizens in legislative procedures in the United States. With the rise of digital technology and social media, there are now more opportunities than ever for citizens to engage with their elected officials and participate in the legislative process. **One of the most significant initiatives in this area is the Open Congress project, which was launched in 2007. This project provides citizens with access to information on bills, voting records,**

**and other legislative activities, as well as tools for contacting elected officials and sharing their opinions on various issues. The project has been successful in increasing transparency and public participation in the legislative process.**

Another example is the use of social media platforms by members of Congress to communicate with their constituents and share information about their work in Washington. Members of Congress use platforms such as Twitter and Facebook to provide updates on legislative activities, engage with their followers, and solicit feedback on various issues. The United States Congress is an essential institution in American democracy, and the electronic participation of citizens in legislative procedures has the potential to increase transparency and accountability in the legislative process. While there are challenges associated with the use of online tools and technologies, the United States has a long-standing tradition of citizen engagement in government, and electronic participation is just one way in which citizens can stay informed and engaged with their elected officials.



Reference - <https://images.indianexpress.com/2017/11/us-congress-759.jpg>

## 58. Remote Participation in Legislative Proceedings in California

In California, remote participation has taken on a particular significance, as the state has implemented a range of measures to promote transparency, accessibility, and inclusivity in its legislative process.

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of remote participation in California legislative proceedings, with the State Legislature adopting emergency rules to allow for remote attendance during the pandemic. Under these rules, lawmakers, staff, and members of the public were able to participate in legislative activities through videoconferencing and other electronic means, helping to maintain the continuity of the legislative process during a time of unprecedented disruption.

There are several reasons why remote participation is beneficial in California legislative proceedings. Perhaps the most obvious is the increased accessibility it provides for lawmakers, staff, and members of the public who are unable to attend in person due to distance, health concerns, or other reasons.

This can help ensure that a wide range of perspectives and voices are represented in the legislative process, even when physical attendance is impossible.

Another benefit of remote participation is that it can help to promote transparency and accountability in the legislative process. Additionally, remote participation can help to increase the efficiency of the legislative process, by allowing participants to attend meetings and other activities without the need for travel or other logistical considerations. This can help reduce the time and resources required to conduct legislative business, allowing lawmakers to focus on substantive issues.



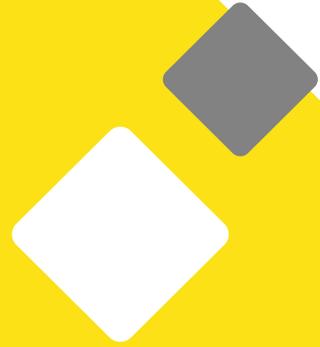
Despite these benefits, some challenges and limitations are associated with remote participation in California legislative proceedings. Perhaps the most significant of these is the potential for technical difficulties and communication issues, which can hinder effective participation and lead to confusion or misunderstandings. To mitigate these challenges, it is important to have clear guidelines and protocols in place for remote participation, including guidelines for appropriate conduct, communication, and technology use.

Another potential limitation of remote participation is the impact it may have on the quality of decision-making and deliberation in the legislative process. It may be more difficult to engage in substantive discussions and debates remotely, which can impact the quality of decision-making. To address this limitation, it is important to provide opportunities for lawmakers and other participants to engage in meaningful discussions and deliberations, both during meetings and outside of them. Despite these challenges and limitations, remote participation has become an increasingly important part of the legislative process in California, with lawmakers and other participants leveraging technology to stay connected and engaged in proceedings even when physical attendance is not possible.



## Chapter VIII

# Electoral Procedures: A Global Exploration

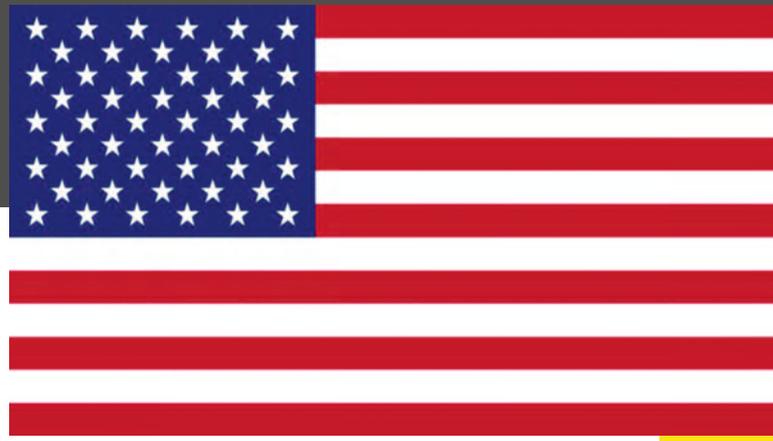


## Fixed Election Day in USA

The election day in the United States is the Tuesday, succeeding the first Monday in November. Any day between November 2 and November 8 is possible. On this day, federal, state, and local government elections are held, including the president.

Election days used to vary by state, but a statute establishing a single election day for the entire nation was established in 1845. The United States was still predominantly an agrarian culture at that time. Crop planting, care, and harvesting took up a large portion of the year for farmers, who constituted the majority of the labour force. As the harvest ended but the weather was still typically moderate in early November, it was an excellent time to cast ballots.

Legislation establishing set election dates is simple to operate. In essence, the law is written to guarantee that voters will go to the polls on a specific date in the future. A set election date gives the electoral process stability and predictability. It enables



candidates, political parties, and voters to organize and organize for elections far in advance. A fixed election day allows voters to arrange their participation in advance. They have plenty of time to register, comprehend the issues, research the candidates, and make wise decisions. This might result in more people casting ballots.

The likelihood that the ruling party will manipulate election scheduling for its own political advantage is reduced when election dates are set. Election authorities and governments may properly prepare and deploy resources thanks to fixed election dates. They can create a precise schedule for candidate nominations, voter registration, printing of ballots, and other issues.



## 60. The Best Loser System in Mauritius

The Mauritian electoral system developed a system for accommodating and safeguarding the interests of minorities called the Best Loser System (BLS). There are 70 elected members of Parliament in Mauritius. The 62 parliamentarians are elected in 20 three-member constituencies on Mauritius' main island, and two are elected from Rodrigues. The remaining eight parliamentarians are chosen through the Best Loser System. They are referred to as "Best Losers," and are elected by an impartial organisation called the Electoral Supervisory Commission. Seats for The Best Loser are assigned based on the 1972 census's communal division. For BLS reasons, the Constitution recognises four communities. These include Hindus, Muslims, the General Population (which includes inhabitants from the Mauritian Creole and Franco-Mauritian ethnic groups), and Sino-Mauritians. According to Mauritian law, candidates are required to declare their community of origin before the election.

**The "Best Losers" are entitled to the same privileges and rights as any other elected member of the Parliament. They are divided into two groups of four, the first of which is**

**chosen on the basis of community and votes, and the second of which is picked based on community, votes and political party.**

The most successful unreturned candidate who is a party member and a part of the relevant community, regardless of the party they belong to, is awarded the first four of the eight seats. The number of seats allocated to individuals from parties other than the most successful one is calculated once the first four seats have been filled. If there are any successful unreturned candidates from the relevant community who are also members of the most successful party, they are given that many seats from the second set of four seats, unless there are no successful unreturned candidates from the relevant community. In Mauritius, this system is utilised to guarantee that the minority ethnic groups are fairly and adequately represented in the legislature.



Reference - - <https://yuva.info/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Mauritian-Parliament.jpeg>

## 61. Compulsory Voting in Belgium

Belgium follows a unique and strict democratic legislative practice known as "compulsory voting." It means that eligible registered voters are required to participate in national and regional elections. This requirement was established in 1893, along with the plural vote and proportional representation.

It is important to note that compulsory voting does not necessarily mean that voters are obligated to choose a particular political party or candidate. Rather, they are simply required to show up and register at a polling station. In Belgium, every eligible voter is legally required to vote in all elections, whether they are municipal, regional, federal, or European. Those who do not comply with this rule are subject to fines or other penalties.

This practice ensures that all citizens have an equal opportunity to participate in the democratic process and that the government is truly representative of the people's will. Compulsory voting in Belgium aims at high levels of voter participation in the democratic process of election and makes sure that the elected government is the true representative of the citizens.



Reference - [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/a2/Palais\\_de\\_la\\_Nation\\_%28DSC01812%29.jpg/300px-Palais\\_de\\_la\\_Nation\\_%28DSC01812%29.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/a/a2/Palais_de_la_Nation_%28DSC01812%29.jpg/300px-Palais_de_la_Nation_%28DSC01812%29.jpg)

## 62. Advance Voting in Finland

According to the Election Act's Section 46, Subsection 1, in Finland general elections, advance voting is practiced. Every person who is eligible to vote has the right to cast an advance ballot at any general advance voting polling location in Finland or at any Finnish diplomatic mission abroad. Municipal offices and post offices in Finland that are chosen by the municipalities, as well as Finnish embassies overseas, are designated by decree as general advance polling places where anybody who is eligible to vote may do so.

In both Finland and abroad, the period for advance voting begins on the 11th day prior to the election day and concludes on the 8th day before the election day. Special advance voting locations are established in Finland, including hospitals, jails, and other institutions that exclusively provide medical care or accommodate inmates. Additionally, those whose mobility or functional limitations prevent them from visiting an early voting location or a polling location on election day may cast their vote in advance at home, in which case an election commissioner visits them to collect it. On

board a Finnish ship operating abroad, the crew may cast their votes in advance.

Early in the 20th century, Finland introduced advance voting, commonly referred to as early voting. An act permitting people who reside abroad to vote in advance was established by the Finnish Parliament in 1921. Later, the scope of this legislation was extended to cover voters who were unable to cast ballots on election day for valid medical or other reasons.

The first advance voting possibilities were made available for Finnish nationals residing abroad who couldn't come to Finland to vote on Election Day. The law was revised in 1970 to permit everyone who is entitled to vote to cast their ballots in advance, regardless of their motivation. Since then, Finland has seen a rise in the popularity of advance voting, with recent elections seeing about one-third of all votes cast in advance.



Reference - <https://www.euractiv.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/03/11333616-800x450.jpg>

## 63. Two-Round System in France

The Two-Round System (TRS), also known as a runoff voting or second ballot, is a voting method where voters choose only one candidate. This system is designed to ensure a majoritarian outcome rather than a simple-plurality outcome, as seen in First Past the Post (FPTP). The second round is triggered only if no candidate receives an absolute majority (usually over 50%) of the votes cast in the first round. It is often said that voters tend to vote with their hearts in the first round and with their minds in the second. This leads to less strategic voting in the first round, compared to other voting systems. While TRS has similar drawbacks as FPTP, such as wasted votes, it is considered slightly more representative at the constituency level.

During the first round, candidates from different political parties participate, and voters choose their preferred candidate. To win in the first round, a candidate must receive an absolute majority of the votes, which means over 50% of the total votes cast. If no candidate meets this requirement, the two candidates with the highest number of votes advance to the second round. In the second round, voters choose between the two remaining candidates, and the candidate who receives the highest number of votes is

declared the winner. This system ensures a majoritarian outcome rather than a simple-plurality outcome seen in other voting systems. It's worth noting that the rules and procedures may differ slightly between the presidential and parliamentary elections. In the presidential election, the winner of the second round becomes the President of France, while in the parliamentary elections, the candidates who win in the second round are elected to the National Assembly.

The Two-Round System (TRS) has been used in French parliamentary elections since 1958 and in French presidential elections since 1965. The system was introduced to ensure that the winning candidate or party has a broad base of support from the electorate, as it requires a candidate to receive an absolute majority of the votes in the second round. This system has been adopted by other countries for their elections, including Brazil, Chile, and Romania.



## Mixed- Member Proportional System in Germany

In Germany, the voting age is set at 18 years old (with the exception of local elections where it is 16), granting all adults the right to vote. The primary and significant election occurs every four years, aimed at selecting representatives for the Bundestag, also known as the National Assembly. During these elections, voters exercise their right to cast two votes. The first vote is dedicated to selecting a specific candidate who must secure the highest number of votes within their respective constituency. The second vote is for the party of their choice, known as the "party vote." These votes collectively ensure that the distribution of seats in the Bundestag aligns with the proportional representation of each party, based on their overall percentage of votes.

The first is a particular candidate who must get the most votes in each constituency. Another vote for "party names". These votes are used to ensure that the parties get seats equal to their percentage of votes. The Bundesrat is the "second assembly". If federal laws violate local laws, the Bundestag's job is to disapprove and block those laws.

More importantly, the Senate can still veto changes to the German constitution, a crucial part of the power of the Bundestag. The Bundestag is elected as a whole with greater powers. Members of the Bundestag from the German government, pass laws, prepare the budget and vote on foreign affairs such as declaring war. In Germany, the bill must have the support of a political party or 5 per cent of the currently 31 members of the Bundestag.

Germany is divided into 16 states. The citizens of Germany vote in the parliamentary elections, every four years.

### The citizens vote in two different ways:

**Constituency vote** - Citizens use one vote to elect the person who would represent the constituency from within their electoral district.

**Regional vote**- they vote for a political party to represent their region.

In Germany, candidates have the opportunity to participate in both single-member districts and the party list concurrently. Those who receive the highest number of votes in the single-member districts are elected as representatives. However, the allocation of seats in the Bundestag is determined by the second vote, which indicates the number of representatives each party will send. As there is a diverse range of political parties in Germany, no single party typically secures an absolute majority. Consequently, coalition building between different parties becomes essential for a functional Parliament. In such cases, Germany often adopts a grand coalition approach to ensure effective governance.

## 65. National Electoral Institute of Mexico



The Instituto Nacional Electoral (INE), is the autonomous public institution. It works to organise and carry out the federal elections in the nation of Mexico. INE also has the job of registering the political parties and ensuring that the regulations over these parties are not being violated. The financing of the political parties is also carried out by the Instituto Nacional Electoral. The main source of this funding is the federal budget, which is allocated to the INE. The INE then distributes the funds to political parties based on a formula established by law. The funding process is designed to ensure transparency, equity, and accountability in the distribution of resources among political parties. Apart from these functions, the INE has many more roles to play. Which are:

**1. Voter registration:** The INE is responsible for maintaining a national registry of eligible voters and ensuring that citizens have access to voter registration. This includes ensuring that citizens are able to register to vote, updating the voter registry with changes such as changes of address, and removing deceased or ineligible individuals from the registry.

**2. Monitoring electoral campaigns:** The INE monitors electoral campaigns to ensure compliance with electoral laws and

regulations. This includes monitoring the use of public and private resources in electoral campaigns, as well as ensuring that candidates and political parties adhere to campaign spending limits

**3. Providing information:** The INE provides information to the public about the electoral process, including information about candidates and their platforms. This includes providing information about the electoral calendar, polling places, and voter registration. The INE also works to promote civic education and awareness about the importance of participating in the electoral process. The INE is governed by a Council, which is made up of councilors appointed by the Mexican Congress. The Council is responsible for setting electoral policy and overseeing the implementation of electoral processes.



## 66. Independent Electoral Commission in South Africa

The legislative body of the Republic of South Africa is known as the Parliament. It consists of two chambers: the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces. Parliament's primary role is to enact laws that promote the well-being of South Africa and its citizens. The National Council of Provinces serves as the upper house, with 90 members elected by the provincial legislatures. The allocation of seats is based on each province's population size. The lower house, known as the National Assembly, comprises 400 members who serve a five-year term. Members are elected through a proportional representation system, where the number of seats a political party receives is determined by its share of the general election votes. The National Assembly is responsible for passing legislation and holding the executive branch accountable for its actions. **The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) is a constitutional body established in South Africa to ensure free and fair elections. The IEC is responsible for conducting national, provincial, and municipal elections, as well as referendums and by-elections.** The IEC was established in terms of Chapter 9 of the South African Constitution and operates independently of any political party, government department, or other group. The Commission comprises a Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, and several Commissioners appointed by the President of South Africa.

### The functions of the IEC are:

**Voter registration:** The IEC is responsible for maintaining a voters' roll, which lists all eligible voters in the country. This process involves registering voters who are eligible to vote, updating the voter roll to remove deceased persons or those who have moved, and ensuring that all eligible voters have access to the voting process. The IEC conducts voter registration drives ahead of major elections, which typically take place every five years. These drives involve setting up registration stations in communities and



providing information on how to register to vote.

**Conducting elections:** The IEC is responsible for conducting all national, provincial, and municipal elections in South Africa. This process involves preparing ballot papers, setting up polling stations, and counting votes. The IEC ensures that all polling stations have the necessary equipment and resources to conduct a fair and transparent election. Polling stations are typically set up in schools, community halls, and other public spaces. The IEC also oversees the process of counting votes, which typically takes place after the polls have closed on election day.

**Voter education:** The IEC is responsible for educating voters on any practice related to voting starting from registering for vote to the act of voting. Voter education enables them to take part in the democratic practices without any fail. The IEC conducts voter education campaigns ahead of major elections, which involve distributing information materials, hosting public meetings, and working with community leaders to spread the word about voting.

**Monitoring elections:** The IEC monitors elections to ensure that they are free and fair. This involves monitoring campaign spending to prevent corruption, ensuring that all parties have equal access to the media, and preventing voter fraud. The IEC also has the power to investigate complaints related to the election process and take action if any irregularities are found. Additionally, the IEC observes the election process to ensure that it is conducted in a transparent and impartial manner and that all eligible voters have equal access to the voting process.

## 67. Election committees in Norway

Norway operates under a constitutional hereditary monarchy system. The selection of the government, including the prime minister and the Council of State, is nominally carried out by the monarch with the approval of the Storting, which is the country's legislature. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development holds the overall responsibility for managing elections and handling matters related to local government and local democracy. Within this ministry, the Norwegian Directorate of Elections, a government agency under its authority, plays a crucial role. The primary objective of the Directorate is to maintain a high level of public confidence in the electoral system and ensure the fair conduct of democratic elections in the future.

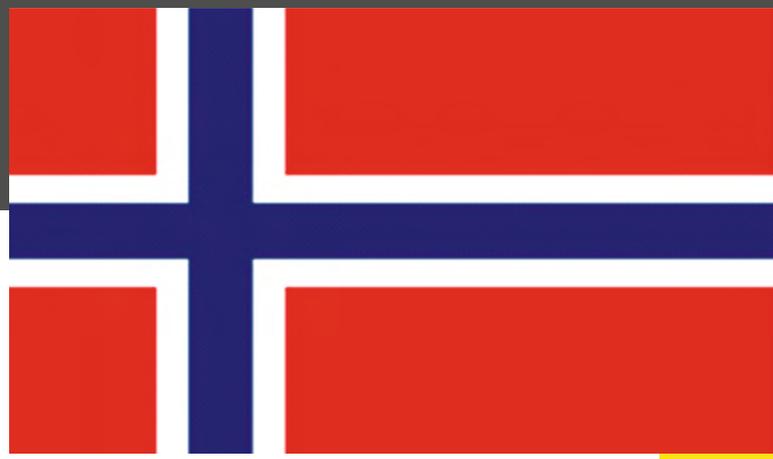
In terms of election administration, there is a hierarchical division of roles and responsibilities. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development bears the overarching responsibility for elections in Norway, while the Norwegian Directorate of Elections assumes operational responsibility at the state level. The ministry establishes the guidelines for conducting elections and shaping the electoral system, including the approval of trial initiatives.

Furthermore, the Norwegian Directorate of Elections provides assistance to the Sami Parliament and Longyearbyen in conducting their respective elections. The directorate's role encompasses advising municipalities and county authorities on electoral regulations, systems, and procedures, as well as informing voters about when, where, and how they can exercise their right to vote.

Special features of the committees while conducting elections:

**Composition:** Election committees in Norway are typically composed of individuals who are politically neutral and impartial.

**Duties:** The primary duty of election committees in Norway is to ensure that elections are conducted fairly and without bias. This includes overseeing the voting process, counting votes, and certifying the results. Election committees are also entitled to ensure that election laws and regulations are followed and for handling any disputes that arise during the election.



**Independence:** Election committees in Norway are designed to be independent from political parties and other organizations. To maintain their independence, election committees are given significant autonomy and are not subject to the direction of any other government body.

**Transparency:** Election committees in Norway operate with a high degree of transparency. This means that their proceedings and decisions are open to public scrutiny, and they are required to publish reports and other documents detailing their activities. This transparency helps to ensure that the election process is fair and that there is no attempt to manipulate the results.

**Training:** Members of election committees in Norway receive extensive training before they are appointed or elected. This training covers topics such as election laws, procedures, and ethics, and is designed to ensure that committee members have the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out their duties effectively.

**Accountability:** Election committees in Norway are accountable to the government and the public for their actions. Additionally, any complaints or disputes regarding the election process can be referred to the election committee, which is responsible for resolving them in a fair and impartial manner.

Through its work, the Norwegian Directorate of Elections ensures continued high confidence in the electoral system and the conduct of democratic elections in the future. The high level of independence, transparency, and accountability of the election committees helps to ensure that the election process is fair and that the results accurately reflect the will of the Norwegian people.

## 68. Voting Age as 16 in Scotland, Brazil and Austria

Before the outbreak of the Second World War (1939-1945), the majority of nations had set the voting age at 21 or above. In 1946, Czechoslovakia became the first country to lower the voting age to 18, and by 1968, a total of 17 nations, including eight Latin American nations and eight communist nations, had followed suit. In the early 2000s, several countries began considering further reductions in the voting age, with proponents advocating for a lowering to 16. As part of a recent movement, Austria, Nicaragua, Argentina, certain states in Germany, and a canton in Switzerland have all reduced their voting ages to 16. Additionally, South Sudan and Indonesia are among the nations that allow 17-year-olds to vote.

On 27 October 2007, during the Scottish National Party conference, a unanimous vote was cast in favor of a policy to lower the voting age to 16, aligning with the age of majority in Scotland. The conference also supported a campaign for the necessary powers to be devolved to the Scottish Parliament. In September 2011, announcements came in regarding the plan to lower the voting age from 18 to 16 specifically for the Scottish independence referendum. This decision was subsequently approved by the Scottish Parliament in June 2013. In June 2015, the Scottish Parliament voted unanimously to lower the voting age to 16 for elections pertaining to the Scottish Parliament as well as Scottish local government elections.

Granting individuals, the right to vote at an earlier stage in life appears to cultivate a



habit of voting. Analysing the behaviour of young voters during that specific occasion demonstrated their ability to express their beliefs and cast ballots based on their preferences. While their understanding of the political process may be slightly lower compared to older age groups, they seem confident about the democratic process and shows higher willingness to participate in the procedure. The rationale for reducing the voting age rests on the premise that individuals aged 16 and older possess the maturity to make decisions about their future. They are legally allowed to work, pay taxes, and join the military at this age; hence they should be granted the opportunity to vote and engage in political processes that directly impact their lives.

Furthermore, lowering the voting age can serve as an encouragement for young people to actively participate in politics. Although young individuals are sometimes perceived as apathetic towards politics, providing them with the right to vote at 16 may inspire greater involvement and political activism. This contributes to a more diverse representation of voices and perspectives within the political system, ultimately strengthening a country's democracy.

## 69. Instant Run-off Voting in Ireland

Instant-runoff voting (IRV) is a ranked preferential voting method employed in single-member districts with multiple candidates. It operates on a majority voting rule, aiming for a candidate to secure over 50% of the first-choice votes to win. In the event that no candidate achieves this majority, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated. The first-choice votes cast for the eliminated candidate are then redistributed to the remaining candidates based on the voters' subsequent choices. This iterative process, known as instant runoff voting, continues until a candidate surpasses the 50% threshold and emerges as the winner.

Ireland elects its president based on a national popular vote. It uses rank-order voting in the instant runoff format, upholding the majority rule in a single election without the need for a second runoff. After each round of counting, the candidate in the lowest position is eliminated, simulating a series of runoff elections. In each subsequent round of instant-runoff voting (IRV), the votes initially cast for the eliminated candidate are then

distributed to the candidates who remain in the list, but based on the preferences given in the ballot. The same method repeats until a candidate secures a majority of the votes in a round.

The implementation of IRV can provide moderate candidates with improved prospects of winning elections. By combining the primary and general election, there is potential for increased participation from republican voters and independents in selecting their party's representative. This integration helps reduce the likelihood of such scenarios occurring.

One of the advantages of IRV is that it allows voters to support their preferred candidate without fear of their vote being wasted. Even if their top choice does not succeed, their vote is not discarded but instead transferred to their next preferred candidate, ensuring their voice still contributes to the outcome.



## 70. Single transferable vote in Malta



In the single transferable vote (STV) multiple-winner election system, voters utilize a ranked-choice ballot to cast their vote. This system allows voters to rank the candidates in order of preference. If their top choice is either disqualified or elected with an excess of votes, their vote is transferred to their next preferred candidate. This feature enables voters to actively participate in choosing the winner among the competing candidates. The STV system aims to ensure that each vote holds roughly equal value by considering the proportional representation based on the votes cast in the respective district. The utilization of the Single-Transferable Vote (STV) in Maltese elections predates the nation's independence from Britain in 1964. Even after Malta transitioned to a republic and replaced the Governor-General, the STV system continued to be employed.

Partisanship is a significant aspect of political contests in Malta, despite the fact that STV can be used as a nonpartisan election technique. Although voters like the chance to rank candidates across party lines, they rarely take advantage of it. Because of this, a negligible number of votes (1%), transfer to candidates from other parties. The act of nominating far more candidates than could reasonably win in a district is practiced

by the two main political parties. The loyalty pattern in preference voting may help to explain this. Owing to the fact that preference votes cast for their less popular candidates would eventually be transferred to other party candidates, it appears that the parties do not worry about losing votes owing to over-nomination.

Malta can be seen as a lesson in caution. There are instances when particular conditions give rise to unexpected results, despite the fact that meaningful generalizations regarding the effects of election systems can be established. As can be seen from above, a highly proportional election system can also fall short in some circumstances. The way Malta handled the ensuing crisis, however, is reason for hope since it serves as an effective example of how constitutional engineering solutions can be developed to correct institutional flaws when they arise and how they can be put into practice through negotiation and compromise.



Reference - [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/1c/Malta%E2%80%99s\\_Parliament\\_building\\_in\\_Valletta\\_%28cropped%29.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/1c/Malta%E2%80%99s_Parliament_building_in_Valletta_%28cropped%29.jpg)

## 71. Elections on Sundays/ Holidays in Germany

As per the Federal Election Act and the Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany, federal elections in Germany are scheduled to take place on a Sunday or a federal holiday, unless there is a snap election, or a state of defense has been declared. These elections are typically held no earlier than 46 months and no later than 48 months after the first sitting of the previous session. The exact date of the election is determined by the German President.

There are several advantages to conducting elections on a Sunday or on any federal holiday. It saves a working day as there is no need to have a holiday in the name of election. Sunday is often considered a day when families spend time together. By scheduling elections on this day, it allows family members to engage in the electoral process together, fostering civic education and participation among younger generations.

Elections on Sundays and holidays allows a large portion of people to participate in the election which directly increases voter

turnout. People with long work hours, multiple jobs, or other commitments may find it easier to allocate time on a Sunday to exercise their right to vote.

Holding elections on a day when most people are off work can foster a sense of community and engagement. Citizens can discuss political issues, campaigns, and candidates more freely, leading to informed and lively discussions that contribute to a healthy democratic process. Elections are crucial for democracy, but they can also interfere with daily business. Since Sundays are a non-working day for many industries, the effect on businesses and the economy can be reduced by holding elections on that day.



## Electoral Threshold in Turkey

The Parliament of Turkey has a minimum percent of vote share for each political party's representation in the Parliament.

In Turkey, elections are held for six different types of public office: the president of the country (national), the Parliament (national), the mayor of a municipality or district (local), the members of a province or municipal council (local), and the muhtar (local). Referendums, in addition to elections, are held periodically. Every five years, there are parliamentary elections. The D'Hondt method of closed-list proportional representation is used to elect the 600 members of the Parliament (Meclis) for periods of five years.

Every five years, there are presidential elections. The President is elected for a five-year term and may be re-elected once. There is an exception when the Parliament decides to end the president's second term of office early. The president may then run for re-election for a third term. The electoral threshold in Turkey was originally set at ten

percent for political parties to enter the Turkish Parliament (Grand National Assembly). In 2022, this was reduced to seven percent. **This indicates that in order to be represented in Parliament, a political party must receive at least 7% of the national vote.** By forging an alliance with larger parties in which the combined number of votes of the coalition is sufficient to exceed seven percent, smaller parties can escape the electoral threshold. The electoral threshold does not apply to independent candidates.

**In Turkey, the electoral threshold is a point of debate and disagreement. Some claim that doing so prevents the representation of smaller political parties, while others claim that it preserves stability and prevents the political system from being fragmented.**



Reference - <https://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2017/12/turkeyreport.jpg>

## 73. Direct Democracy in Venezuela

Direct democracy is a form of democracy in which the public makes decisions on issues rather than electing candidates or parties to make them. This may happen through an assembly of citizens or through referenda and initiatives. Venezuela adopted a new constitution in 1999 under the presidency of Hugo Chavez which saw the implementation of direct democracy.

Venezuela has extensive direct democracy laws and a history of long-term democratization stability. According to Article 6 of its constitution, Venezuela is and will always be a democratic, participatory, and elected society, making the coexistence of participatory and representative systems of government clear.

Venezuelans have the right to initiate a referendum to recall the president and other elected officials, and the president has the power to call for a popular consultation. Referendums can be convened to decide on bills that are currently being debated in the

legislature as well as to decide on laws and presidential decrees. In the latter scenario, the referendum can be called by the people themselves. Venezuelan citizens may hold a referendum to propose constitutional amendments and endorse legislatively proposed constitutional reforms. A constituent assembly may be called, and new legislation may be proposed by citizens.

Venezuela's constitution has institutionalized the instruments of direct democracy. The system of direct democracy was created to increase public engagement in decision-making and give people more power over their government and serves to do so in Venezuela.



Reference - [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/24/PalacioLegislativo2\\_fixed.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/24/PalacioLegislativo2_fixed.jpg)

## The Superior Electoral Court of Brazil

In Brazil, the judicial system encompasses both ordinary and specialized courts that operate at the state and federal levels. Unlike many other countries where the electoral process is overseen by the executive and legislative branches, Brazil established an impartial judicial body called the Electoral Justice (Justiça Eleitoral) in 1932, which is responsible for supervising elections at various levels nationwide. Its mandate extends to making decisions on political matters, as well as administrative and criminal issues related to due process. The Electoral Justice is divided into two main components: the Superior Electoral Court and the Regional Electoral Courts, which are present in each state.

The Superior Electoral Court (TSE) stands as the highest authority within the Brazilian Electoral Justice system and is headed by a minister from the Federal Supreme Court. Currently, Justice Alexandre de Moraes serves as the president of the Court, with Justice Enrique Ricardo Lewandowski holding the position of vice president. According to Article 119 of the Brazilian Constitution, which governs the composition of the TSE, it consists of seven ministers:

- Three ministers are selected from the Supreme Court through a secret ballot.
- Two additional ministers are chosen from among the Justices of the Superior Court of Justice.
- The remaining two ministers are appointed by the President of Brazil from a list of nominated lawyers with exceptional legal expertise.
- Each minister is chosen for a two-year term, with reelection prohibited after two consecutive terms. The rotation of judges is done in such a way to maintain the apolitical nature of the courts and guarantee electoral equality.



The Superior Electoral court enjoys countrywide jurisdiction. Its goal is to overlook the smooth functioning of the electoral process and ensure people's rights. A broad variety of factors are taken into account while analyzing electoral governance. The Superior Electoral Court in Brazil incorporates all these sections under one roof. These factors can be grouped into three categories:

- Framing the rules and regulations of the electoral process.
- Implementing these rules.
- Handling the disputes and controversies arising within the due process.

The Court has also taken substantial decisions to contest the patterns of the traditional political and electoral competition. Electoral gender quotas have been established in the past 20 years. Federal law introduced quotas for women in politics in 1997. While the Elections Act of 1997 mandated a minimum percentage of women candidates in proportional representation elections. The aim is to achieve gender parity by determining the proportion of male and female candidates to be equal to 50% each of the total representatives. In case a political party fails to meet the criteria, the Court can also disqualify some candidates to ensure room for female candidates.

## Direct Democracy of France

Direct democracy is a form of popular sovereignty that enables citizens to make decisions directly and authoritatively on important matters without the need for representation. This approach can be symbolically significant, or it may be essential for legitimizing critical decisions, such as creating a new state or constitution.

Direct democracy has a long history in France, with its roots tracing back to the aftermath of the French Revolution. In 1958, France adopted its Fifth Republic Constitution through a referendum, which paved the way for a series of referendums under Article 11 of the Constitution. This article gives the French President the power to hold referendums on government bills dealing with the organization of public authorities or reforms related to the nation's economic or social policy. There are two types of direct democracy: referendum and citizen initiatives. France has a referendum type of direct democracy. France has held several referendums, including on the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, the length of the president's term in 2000, and the EU Constitutional Treaty in 2005. These referendums have given French citizens a direct say in important

decisions affecting their lives, and the system remains an important part of France's democratic process.

Direct democracy empowers individuals to participate in voting on significant matters that might be overlooked or not aligned with the agendas of representative political parties. This approach allows the popular majority to express their decision outside of representative processes, which can sometimes be distorted or favor the elite. In France, Charles de Gaulle, who served as the President from 1959 to 1969, was a prominent political figure associated with direct democracy. De Gaulle recognized referendums as a means to enhance democracy and provide citizens with a direct say in the political system. He effectively utilized referendums to drive constitutional reforms, including the successful adoption of a new constitution in 1958.



Reference - <https://cloudfront-us-east-2.images.arcpublishing.com/reuters/SFORA3UE4VP77HDMC5FG6QRP3M.jpg>

# WAY FORWARD

## Commendable Democratic Practices

As we bring this comprehensive compendium on Commendable Democratic Practices to a close, we acknowledge the immense capacity of these practices to foster favourable transformations within society. Through the extensive discussion and careful considerations, we extend a plea to all individuals involved in democratic systems worldwide, encouraging them to integrate these practices into their governance processes for heightened effectiveness. The compendium explored distinctive parliamentary protocols, the inclusion of marginalized segments of society in legislative bodies, and the empowerment of assembly and parliament members.

This compendium has delved into an in-depth exploration of parliamentary procedures across diverse countries, offering valuable insights into Bharat's remarkable progress. Despite Bharat's intricate cultural and geographical heterogeneity, it is understood that complete replication of foreign models is impractical. However, these models can serve as a catalyst to encourage Bharat's parliamentary advancement by exploring feasible options and incorporating elements that are compatible. Drawing inspiration from diverse representation and adapting to emerging technologies, Bharat can further fortify its position in the broader democratic landscape, ensuring a stronger and more inclusive democracy for its citizens.





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 ନୈସଲଲ ଲୈସିସଲେଟରସ ବାନ୍ଦରଂସ | ନୈସଲଲ ଲୈସିସଲେଟରସ ବାନ୍ଦରଂସ  
 தேசிய சட்டமன்ற உறுப்பினர்கள் மாநாடு | தேசிய சட்டமன்ற உறுப்பினர்கள் மாநாடு  
 राष्ट्रीय आमदार परिषद | राष्ट्रीय आमदार परिषद | राष्ट्रीय आमदार परिषद  
 قومي قانون ساز ڪانفرنس | قومي قانون ساز ڪانفرنس | قومي قانون ساز ڪانفرنس  
 జాతీय शसनसभ्युल समावेशं | जलतీय शसनसभ्युल समावेशं | जलतీय शसनसभ्युल समावेशं  
 राष्ट्रीय विधायक सम्मेलन | राष्ट्रीय विधायक सम्मेलन | राष्ट्रीय विधायक सम्मेलन  
 ନୈସଲଲ ଲୈସିସଲେଟରସ ବାନ୍ଦରଂସ | ନୈସଲଲ ଲୈସିସଲେଟରସ ବାନ୍ଦରଂସ  
 தேசிய சட்டமன்ற உறுப்பினர்கள் மாநாடு | தேசிய சட்டமன்ற உறுப்பினர்கள் மாநாடு  
 राष्ट्रीय आमदार परिषद | राष्ट्रीय आमदार परिषद | राष्ट्रीय आमदार परिषद  
 قومي قانون ساز ڪانفرنس | قومي قانون ساز ڪانفرنس | قومي قانون ساز ڪانفرنس  
 జాతీय शसनसभ्युल समावेशं | जलतీय शसनसभ्युल समावेशं | जलतీय शसनसभ्युल समावेशं



॥ विधानं राष्ट्र-धर्मः ॥

राष्ट्रीय विधायक सम्मेलन | बाह्यीय विधायक सन्धिलन | जातीय आइनसभार सन्धिलन |  
 राष्ट्रीय धारासभ्यो परिषद | तलसिरीय शलसकर सडललेश |  
 ദേശീയ നിയമസഭാംഗങ്ങളുടെ സമ്മേളനം |  
 േനാട്യാസഭാംഗ്ങളിന്ധാണി ങ്ങലഭാഢല || | राष्ट्रीय आमदार परिषद |  
 ନୈସଲଲ ଲୈସିସଲେଟରସ ବାନ୍ଦରଂସ | قومي قانون ساز ڪانفرنس |  
 தேசிய சட்டமன்ற உறுப்பினர்கள் மாநாடு | జాతీय शसनसभ्युल समावेशं