

kiron

Study Guide

PS_CP Comparative Politics



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Foreword

Purpose and Structure

This document is called a Study Guide. It is a written script to walk you through the topics within a study unit, called a Module, in your Kiron studies. It introduces the subjects in the module and links to the relevant parts in the online courses that you have to take in order to complete the module. It provides video lectures, written pieces, other kinds of enriching materials and suggested exercises from additional open educational resources to elaborate on the topics.

The purpose of this document is to accompany you while you are studying the online courses in the module. It is not a replacement of any course or content within the modules, thus completing this material only helps you progressing in an easier way in your module.

While you can share your thoughts and report errors on this material, your feedback and questions regarding the external contents should be addressed to the producers and owners of those materials. **Kiron uses third-party content and thus the opinions presented do not necessarily represent those of Kiron Open Higher Education.**

Iconography

Below are the meanings of the icons that are used in this document:



General hints, suggestions and other things to check



Video lesson or tutorial resource



Book, web page or other written material resource



Exercise or assessment resource



Discussion point in Kiron Forum, Google Classroom or Google Hangouts



Reference to the Kiron Campus or to a MOOC

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Introduction

Welcome to Introduction to Political Science, your first module in the Political Science study track at Kiron!

The purpose of this Study Guide is to support you as you work through the MOOCs and tutorials in this module. This is your ultimate guide to all things political theory and you should use it to further your understanding of the topics covered in your courses.

Learning Outcomes

Once you have completed this module, you will be able to:

- explain a number of political systems worldwide and their variations, using the concepts and methods of comparative politics
- apply the logic of the comparative method to a number of real-world cases
- describe the central theoretical concepts and research questions of comparative politics
- analyse current political events and come to well-founded conclusions, using the concepts and methods of comparative politics

Courses

This module is made up of **5 MOOCs**:

- 1) **Comparative Political Systems**
- 2) **EU Policy and Implementation: Making Europe Work!**
- 3) **America's Written Constitution**
- 4) **Political Governance and Public Policy in Russia**
- 5) **Chinese Politics Part 1 - China and Political Science**

Prerequisites

We recommend that you complete at least some of the courses in [PS Intro Introduction to Political Science](#) before starting this module. This will ensure you have a basic understanding of the discipline.

If only some of the mentioned topics and learning outcomes are not clear for you right now, do not worry. You will become more familiar with the terminology and have the possibility to check how you perform throughout the course.

Additional Resources

In this Study Guide, we will have links to additional video and text materials to enhance your understanding. Here is a list of the resources that we often refer to in this study letter:

- [Comparative Politics and Government Database](#)

Chapter 1 - Comparative Political Systems

The first MOOC in this module, '[Comparative Political Systems](#)', definition of the comparative method and a special focus on concept formation and historical and institutional approaches. It highlights the way in which democratic regimes are governed, and the way electoral rules impact not only on parties and the party system but also on citizens. You will study the different forms of government, their structure and role, leading to an understanding of the dynamics of governing coalitions and their rotation in office. The course will also teach you to evaluate the assets and liabilities of the different institutional structures and approaches.

Comparative Politics and Comparative Methods

The study of comparative politics involves **conscious comparisons in studying political experience, institutions, behaviour and processes** of the systems of government in a comprehensive manner. It includes the study of extra-constitutional agencies having their immediate connection, open or tacit, with formal governmental organs.

It is, therefore, concerned with significant **regularities, similarities and differences** in the working of political institutions and in the patterns of political behaviour. Put simply, Comparative Politics involves a **comparative study of various political systems** either as a whole or through a comparative analysis of their structures and functions.¹

Comparative Politics is as old as Political Science. Aristotle used the comparative method for comprehending and analysing principles, issues and problems of Greek City States of his times. He used the knowledge gained for building his theory of politics. In contemporary times, Comparative Politics is recognized as a primary and essential dimension of the study of politics. A large number of political scientists even regard it as an autonomous discipline because of its vast scope and importance for a comprehensive understanding of politics in all societies.²



Now complete [“Week 1, Lesson 1: Comparative Political Politics and Comparative Methods”](#)



Remember to complete the **reading segments** - there is a lot of extra content here!



[This](#) is a useful summary of the comparative method.

¹ Gianfranco Pasquino, '[Comparative Politics and Comparative Methods](#)'

² Tanvi Priya, 'Comparative Politics: Meaning, Scope and Its Evolution', <http://www.politicalsciencenotes.com/politics/comparative-politics-meaning-scope-and-its-evolution-political-system/1382>

Political Systems and Political Community

A political system is fundamentally made of **three major components**. There is a **political community**, ie. all those who are subject to the authoritative allocation of values; there is a **regime**, including the rules, institutions, and all those elements that contribute to the formation of a model; and there are **the authorities**, ie. those who have the right, the power to allocate values imperatively for their society. These three elements interact in a number of ways and they change through time. There cannot be a political system if there are no authorities, rules or institutions. Indeed, there cannot be a political system unless there is a political community.

The political community is made of all those individuals, groups, actors that are subject to the authoritative allocation of values. The political community, therefore, may change through time when **new individuals appear within the borders of the authoritative allocation of values**, or when older individuals disappear from the political community. Arguably, we are too accustomed to believe that once a political community has been created it will remain unchanged through time. This is not the case, not even in Europe. Indeed Europe provides very many cases in which the political community has changed through time in different ways producing obviously different outcomes, for example unification of a country such as in Italy and Germany.³



Now complete [“Week 1, Lesson 2: Political Systems and Political Community”](#)



Remember to complete the **reading segments** and **short quiz**.



[Here](#) is a detailed and informative source about political legitimacy.



[This](#) is an additional video lecture about definitions of political (system) legitimacy.

The Authorities, Recruitment, Selection, Circulation

There are two types of authorities: **institutional authorities** and **political authorities**. Institutional authorities are those authorities who hold office in the various institutions, starting from the head of state, from the head of government to ministers, to parliamentarians and even to local office holders; mayors and councillors.

Political authorities are fundamentally the **leaders of the parties and all those who occupy important positions within the party hierarchy**. Usually political leaders can transform themselves into institutional authorities winning elections and occupying therefore institutional offices. There are several elements to be analysed when we deal with the authorities. The recruitment process, the selection process and the way they change, that is, the **transformative process**, that is why authorities are selected is important. Usually this is done within the various parties. When it comes to institutional authority, elections are the mechanisms which produce institutional authorities and then the selection process is again in

³ Pasquino, [‘Political Systems and Political Community’](#)

the hands of the voters in very many cases or in the hands of party members when it comes to political authorities. And then of course the transformation, the circulation of political authorities and institutional authorities follows first of all its defeat in the elections or defeat within parties. It is important to stress the **role of the parties because all European political systems are, in fact, governed by the various bodies.**⁴

‘One of the central functions of local parties is the **recruitment and selection of candidates** for political offices – for offices on the local level such as candidates for councillors and mayors, and also for the local constituencies of regional and national legislators. However, in recent years, the **recruitment function of political parties has been challenged** (e.g. due to decreased party membership, changes in the local party system due to the emergence of local lists) or under profound changes (e.g. changing modes of political participation, increased volatility, introduction of directly elected mayors, democratization of selection methods).’⁵



Now complete [“Week 2, Lesson 3: The authorities, recruitment, selection, circulation”](#)



Remember to complete the **reading segments** and **short quiz**.



[Here](#) is a useful analysis of political authority.

Political Regimes and Parliamentary Democracies

The regime is fundamentally made of three elements: the rules, regulations and procedures; the “performance”, ie. what is being done to utilise the rules; and the institutions, ie. the structures which perform what is necessary. These three elements combined can be defined as a regime.

However, it is important to stress that there are a variety of rules and procedures. For example, there are different ways in which a “performance” can be produced or achieved, and there are different institutions that take on this task. There are, therefore, several different combinations of rules, “performance” and institutions, and together they indeed produce what we usually call regime. In fact, these combinations produce several regimes.

There is one other element that we should take into serious consideration, that regimes in order to endure, must enjoy some support from the political community. There are two types of support: support for the regime as such, ie. general support or diffuse support; and support for some policies or for the performance of a regime, which is, therefore, specific support. Indeed, very often it may be the case that there is a lot of diffuse support that allows the authorities to perform in a less than acceptable way for some time on some issues. But if there is lack of general support when the authorities are unable to perform they run the risk of being replaced very quickly and therefore performance here is the instrument that authorities

⁴ Pasquino, [‘The authorities, recruitment, selection, circulation’](#)

⁵ ECPR, ‘Local Parties and Political Recruitment’,
<https://ecpr.eu/Events/PanelDetails.aspx?EventID=5&PanelID=1126>

that are not highly legitimate and highly supported by the electorate or the political elite, can use in order to remain in office.

There are four types of regimes: parliamentarism, and presidentialism, semi-presidentialism and collegial or directorial. When considering parliamentarism, there is one major principal to be taken into consideration and never to be forgotten: in all parliamentary regimes the government exists only because it is capable of creating and maintaining a relationship of confidence with parliament. When the relationship of confidence is broken then the government will have to change - will have to be replaced - and a new government will come into being.⁶



Now complete [“Week 2, Lesson 4: Political regimes. Parliamentary democracies”](#)



Remember to complete the **reading segments** and **short quiz**.



[This](#) is a great summary of the role of parliamentary democracies.

Presidential Democracies

In parliamentary democracies, the Prime Minister and his/her ministers have to create a relationship of confidence with parliament. But ultimately power lies in parliament, elected by the electorate. The case of presidential governments is totally different. The **voters elect the president** of the republic and, in **a separate election, they elect the parliament**, usually known as Congress. The Founding Fathers of the US constitution set the groundwork for separate institutions sharing power. In other words, the **president cannot dissolve Congress** and Congress cannot vote to dismiss the president.

The central element of presidentialism is that the **form of government is relatively rigid**. It **cannot accommodate changes during a parliamentary period**, that is, throughout the period in which Congress has been elected. This means that if the president is not good, if the president is incompetent, if the president is in a way corrupted, it is **impossible to replace him/her** unless he/she has violated the constitution. **Impeachment** can be used against the president only in extreme cases, and specifically when a **violation of the constitution** has occurred. In most places with presidential democracies such as the US, but not only the US, the procedure is difficult to start, to continue, and to bring up to an end. It is true that the imitation of the United States has taken place in Latin America. Almost as soon as all **Latin American countries became independent** - from the colonial powers of Spain or Portugal - they introduced a **presidential republic**. But there are differences from the presidential republics of Latin America and the US, as well as differences between other presidential republics elsewhere, the Philippines, for instance, and the US.

⁶ Pasquino, [‘Political regimes. Parliamentary democracies’](#)

The **rigidity of presidential systems has been criticised**, specifically by Juan Linz, who argues that presidentialism is not a better form of government. It may guarantee stability but that **stability may become immobilism**, may become stagnation. He also claims that presidentialism produces a number of bad consequences.⁷



Now complete ["Week 3, Lesson 5: Presidential democracies"](#)



Remember to complete the **reading segments** and **short quiz**.



[This](#) is a very interesting comparison of presidential and parliamentary systems.



[Here](#) is an insightful article about Juan Linz's views on presidentialism in the US.

Semi-Presidential Democracies

Semi-presidentialism is **neither presidentialism nor parliamentarism** and it is **not a combination of both**. It is a form of government in itself and it has specific features that appear to be working, so much so that other countries have imitated the French semi-presidentialism. Finland has a system of its own that works according to some presidential criteria. But the popularity of semi-presidentialism increased rapidly after 1974 -75 when **the Portuguese, looking for a model of government after their transition to democracy, chose French semi-presidentialism**.

'The three main characteristics of a semi-presidential systems are that **"a popularly elected fixed-term president exists alongside a prime minister and cabinet who are responsible to parliament"**. Semi-presidentialism is unique in that it has a **"a twin-headed executive,"** unlike presidentialism and parliamentarism. This "bipolar executive," is a core criterion of a semi-presidential system which has many hybrid constitutional forms and is therefore a highly contested concept. It is possible to have a semi-presidentialist system that is dominated by the president, or by the prime minister or what is known as **'cohabitation'** when two opposing parties have leaders in the double executive.

An advantage of the French semi-presidential system is that it **relies on a chain of mutual dependence**. According to the French Constitution of 1958, one of the presidential powers is that they can appoint the prime minister, whose role as the head of government is to oversee the everyday running of state affairs such as "governmental, administrative, and information services." This means that as the head of state the president needs the cooperation of the

⁷ Pasquino, ['Presidential democracies'](#)

prime minister, and the **prime minister requires the cooperation of the president** in order for France to achieve an efficient government.⁸



Now complete [“Week 3, Lesson 6: Semi-presidential democracies”](#)



Remember to complete the **reading segments** and **short quiz**.



[This](#) is a useful article stating the advantages and disadvantages of mixed-presidential democracies.



[Here](#) is an interesting video explaining the French semi-presidential system.

Party Systems

As identified by the scholar Duverger, party systems can be divided into **three categories**. The single-party system, which obviously is not democratic, and that was represented by the Soviet Union, for instance, and by most communist regimes; the **two-party** systems and the **multi-party** systems.

Sartori suggested that, indeed, there are single party systems but there are differences among the single party systems according to the **type of party that exists**. There are a few cases in which there is only one party that exists and this is the case of the Soviet Union at the time of Sartori's writing (and today the case of China). Then there are single parties that can be defined as such but have to be analysed utilising other criteria, that is, whether they are **hegemonic in the sense that they allow other parties to exist**. Indeed, there have been examples of this, and where the hegemonic parties are either ideological or without an ideology.

Sartori defines the two party system as a situation where there may be more parties than two but only two parties can win an absolute majority of seats in Parliament. He also contends that the possibility of alternation between the two parties in elections means that the distance between the two parties competing is not great and **the gap can be filled by the voters** at any point in time. This means that party leaders know that alternation is possible and therefore they behave either in order to get it, or, if in power, in order to prevent it. This hands the **electorate a crucial role** in alternating the position of the two parties. Then obviously you must have alternation at one point in time and indeed, in all democracies, there have been periods of alternation.

⁸ UK Essays, 'Advantages and disadvantages of mixed-presidential systems', <https://www.ukessays.com/essays/politics/advantages-and-disadvantages-of-mixed-presidential-systems.php>

To summarise, two party systems may accommodate several parties but only two, and the always same two, are capable of governing. It is important to remember that it is wrong to speak of two party systems having **"two and a half parties"**. This is an inaccurate interpretation because if the so-called "half party" plays a meaningful role in government then it must be counted as such. And if the three parties can indeed produce a government, alternation and govern, for instance, in a coalition then the result is not a "two and a half" party system, but a multi party system. Indeed, Sartori refers to this as a "multi party system".⁹



Now complete ["Week 4, Lesson 7: Party Systems"](#)



Remember to complete the **reading segments** and **short quiz**.



[This](#) is a useful summary of multi party systems.



[Here](#) is an excellent Crash Course video on party systems.

Electoral Systems

It is important to analyse the various electoral systems in order to evaluate **how much, and what kind of power voters are given** in elections. 'The choice of electoral system is one of the most important institutional decisions for any democracy. The choice of a particular electoral system has a **profound effect on the future political life** of the country concerned, and electoral systems, once chosen, often **remain fairly constant** as political interests solidify around and respond to the incentives presented by them. However, while conscious design has become far more prevalent recently, traditionally it has been rare for electoral systems to be consciously and deliberately selected.

The global movement towards democratic governance in the 1980s and 1990s, which stimulated a new urgency in the search for enduring models of appropriate representative institutions and a **fresh re-evaluation of electoral systems**, has increased dramatically in the early years of this century. This process was encouraged by the realization that the choice of political institutions can have a significant impact on the wider political system. Electoral systems are today viewed as one of the most influential of all political institutions, and of crucial importance to broader issues of governance.'¹⁰



The picture below is taken from [The Electoral Reform Society's](#) analysis of the different electoral systems. Take a look at each system and think about which you think is the best for achieving an effective democracy.

⁹ Pasquino, 'Party Systems'

¹⁰ The Electoral Knowledge Network, 'Electoral Systems',
<https://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/es/onePage>

<h3>First Past the Post</h3> <p>First Past the Post is the name for the electoral system used to elect MPs to Westminster.</p> <p>Read more →</p> <p>WHERE IT'S USED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Westminster United States India <p>PROPORTIONALITY ★★★★★</p> <p>VOTER CHOICE ★★★★★</p> <p>LOCAL REPRESENTATION ★★★★★</p>	<h3>Single Transferable Vote</h3> <p>With the Single Transferable Vote, you get a Parliament where the strength of the parties matches the strength of their support in the country, and MPs have a strong local link.</p> <p>Read more →</p> <p>WHERE IT'S USED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ireland Scottish Local Elections Northern Irish Assembly Malta <p>PROPORTIONALITY ★★★★★</p> <p>VOTER CHOICE ★★★★★</p> <p>LOCAL REPRESENTATION ★★★★★</p>	<h3>Additional Member System</h3> <p>The Additional Member System uses a mix of first past the post constituencies and party lists.</p> <p>Read more →</p> <p>WHERE IT'S USED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scottish Parliament Welsh Assembly Germany New Zealand <p>PROPORTIONALITY ★★★★★</p> <p>VOTER CHOICE ★★★★★</p> <p>LOCAL REPRESENTATION ★★★★★</p>
<h3>Alternative Vote Plus</h3> <p>Recommended by the Jenkins Commission in 1998, the Alternative Vote Plus (AV+) system has not been used anywhere in the world.</p> <p>Read more →</p> <p>WHERE IT'S USED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nowhere <p>PROPORTIONALITY ★★★★★</p>	<h3>Two-Round System</h3> <p>The top two candidates go through to a second election and voters choose their favourite</p> <p>Read more →</p> <p>WHERE IT'S USED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presidents of many countries France <p>PROPORTIONALITY ★★★★★</p>	<h3>Alternative Vote</h3> <p>With the Alternative Vote (AV) your constituency gets an MP the majority support.</p> <p>Read more →</p> <p>WHERE IT'S USED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australia Irish President <p>PROPORTIONALITY ★★★★★</p>

Diagram credit: Electoral Reform Society,
<https://www.electoral-reform.org.uk/voting-systems/types-of-voting-system/>



Now complete [“Week 4, Lesson 8: Electoral Systems”](#)



Remember to complete the **reading segments** and **short quiz**.



[Here](#) is an informative Crash Course video about elections and electoral systems.

Authoritarian Regimes

Perhaps surprisingly, a **majority of contemporary political systems are non-democratic**, ie. authoritarian. It means that power is not attributed through the electoral process but has been acquired at different points in time with different means and it is exercised not in the interests of the people, of the voters but **in the interest of the rulers**.

‘The term ‘authoritarian regimes’ in its broadest sense encompasses all forms of **undemocratic rule**. Compared to democracies, an authoritarian regime **does not maintain the institutions and procedures of participation** and political competition, fundamental rights and control of power (separation of powers, parliaments, elections, plurality of parties, etc.) characteristic of a democracy, and thus does not possess democratic legitimacy. In a more

narrow view of the term, authoritarian regime represents a specific form of **autocratic rule** which has been especially distinguished from totalitarian regimes.

Juan Linz's frequently applied definition of authoritarian regimes names **three characteristics** through which authoritarian regimes can be differentiated both from democratic systems and from totalitarian regimes:

1. **limited pluralism** contrasted with the principally **unlimited pluralism of democracies** and monism of totalitarian regimes;
2. **limited political participation** (de-politicization) and (except for in limited phases) neither an extensive nor an intensive mobilization;
3. in contrast to totalitarianism there is **no legitimization of the system through a common and dominating ideology**, but rather through mentalities, psychological predispositions and values in general (patriotism, nationalism, modernization, order, etc.).¹¹



Now complete [“Week 5, Lesson 9: Authoritarian regimes”](#)



Remember to complete the **reading segments** and **short quiz**.



[This](#) is a useful overview of authoritarian regimes.



[Here](#) is a great video discussing whether or not the US is heading towards an authoritarian regime.

Democracy and Polyarchy

‘Polyarchy is the concept coined by the American political scientist Robert Dahl to denote the acquisition of democratic institutions within a political system that leads to the participation of a plurality of actors. Polyarchy, which means “rule by many,” describes the **process of democratization, in contrast to democracy itself**.

Central to any definition of democracy is **electoral representation** by means of **free elections** and **representative government**. The concept of polyarchy is Dahl's attempt to develop an empirical definition of democratization as well as to elaborate a set of normative criteria for deciding whether or not a political system can be counted as a democracy. Polyarchy, as presented by Dahl, should be understood as a process by which a set of **institutions that comes close to what one could call the ideal type of democracy** is developed. Therefore, public power is essential, and authority is effectively controlled by societal organizations and civil associations (e.g., interest groups and political parties). Hence, in Dahl's view, the extent

¹¹ Universität Bielefeld: InterAmerican Wiki, 'Authoritarian Regimes', https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/cias/wiki/a_Authoritarian%20Regimes.html

to which those societal actors can and do operate autonomously, as well as independently from the state, will enhance the democratic quality of a polity.

Dahl lists several institutions that are necessary for achieving democracy:

- Universal suffrage and the right to run for public office
- Free and fairly conducted elections for all adults
- Availability and observance of the right to free speech and protection to exercise it
- The existence of and free access to alternative information (not controlled by government)
- The undisputed right to form and to join relatively autonomous organizations - in particular, political parties (and, crucially, parties in opposition)
- Responsiveness of government (and parties) to voters
- Accountability of government (and parties) to election outcomes and government.¹²



Now complete [“Week 5, Lesson 10: Democracy and poliarchy”](#)



Remember to complete the **reading segments** and **short quiz**.



To consolidate what you have learnt about democracy, watch [this](#) short video.

¹² Hans Keman, 'Polyarchy', in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/polyarchy>

Chapter 2 - EU Policy and Implementation: Making Europe Work!

In [this course](#) you will learn how the European Union prepares and decides on policy, and how policy is transferred to member states and implemented by various authorities, including regional and local governments. You will discuss the challenges of the European multi-level governance structure. The course also focuses on the main causes of policy failure or success. You will look at actual policy and present the views of various experts: how easy is it to establish yourself in another EU-country? How do governments make sure that the air you breathe is clean? And who is responsible?

Understanding Policy and European Policy Making

Public policy refers to the actions taken by government; decisions that are intended to solve problems and improve the quality of life for its citizens. At the national federal level, public policies are enacted to regulate industry and business, to protect citizens at home and abroad, to aid state and city governments and people such as the poor through funding programs, and to encourage social goals. A policy established and carried out by the government goes through several stages from inception to conclusion. These are **agenda building, formulation, adoption, implementation, evaluation, and termination**.

In the specific case of the EU, before the European Commission proposes new initiatives it assesses the **potential economic, social and environmental consequences** that they may have. It does this by preparing 'impact assessments' which set out the advantages and disadvantages of possible policy options. The Commission also consults interested parties such as **non-governmental organisations, local authorities and representatives of industry** and civil society. Groups of experts give advice on technical issues. In this way, the Commission ensures that legislative proposals correspond to the needs of those most concerned and avoids unnecessary red tape. Citizens, businesses and organisations can participate in the consultation procedure via the website **public consultations**. National parliaments can formally express their reservations if they feel that it would be better to deal with an issue at national rather than EU level.



Now complete ["Week 2: What can go wrong with decision-making?"](#)



Remember to complete the **quizzes** and the **discussion point**.



[Here](#) is a useful resource for this course created by the European Union.

Decision Making in the EU and International Perspectives

International organizations such as the World Trade Organization, the Council of Europe, the United Nations and its agencies like the International Maritime Organization, the World Health Organization and the International Labor Organization also adopt agreements and many of

these **affect EU policy making**. For example, the Aarhus convention, proposed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. This agreement works at a local, regional, national, and international level. This means that the demands for EU policy not only come from member states, but it can also be **the result of demands from the international community** or global developments.

With regards to international agreements it is important to distinguish between the **exclusive competence of the EU** and **competences the EU shares with members states**. For exclusive competences, such as in the case of customs, competition rules and trade, the **EU may act independently**. This is also the case when an international agreement is needed to achieve one of the objectives referred to in a treaty or is provided for in a **legally binding union act** or is slightly to affect common rules or alter the scope. Member states in this case need to act together within the procedures set out by the treaty to **define the position of the union** during the international negotiations.

If an international agreement involves a shared competence, the member states will also be party to the negotiations, not only the EU. This implies that the agreement also need to be **ratified by these member states** in which the national parliaments play an important role. An interesting example of this is CETA, the newly negotiated trade agreement of the EU and Canada. Although the commission initially presented this agreement as a trade agreement, for which the EU has exclusive competence, the European Parliament insisted that it covers a broader range of issues, requiring that national parliaments also need to ratify it. This, therefore, makes CELTA much harder to ratify in the EU.



Now complete ["Week 3: Transpositions: What happens after legal measures have been adopted?"](#)



Remember to complete the **quizzes** and the **discussion point**.



[Here](#) is a 20-second video explaining the EU's decision making process.

The Role of the Commission

The European Commission is the executive body of the European Union and is led by **28 people**, or Commissioners, one from each member state. The Commission is headed by a president, currently the former Luxembourg prime minister, Jean-Claude Juncker.

The Commission's main purpose is to **propose new laws**, oversee the **EU budget**, manage **some key policies** – for example energy, agriculture and fisheries – and **represent** the European bloc in trade agreements, the biggest of which is TTIP, a bid to create a free trade zone with the US. It's also responsible for **ensuring that EU law is obeyed**.

The European Commission can propose new laws and decide on less important rules and regulations. But, it **cannot pass or make them law** on its own. Lawmaking and passing is done by the European Parliament, which consists of elected MEPs from each EU state, and the Council of the European Union, which is made up of representatives from each country's national government. The makeup of the latter changes depending on what topic is under discussion – if it's an agricultural matter, for instance, each member state's farming minister would attend.

The Council of the European Union is, confusingly, not the same as the European Council, which is made up of the heads of state of each country in the bloc. They are joined by the President of the European Council, currently Donald Tusk, and the President of the European Commission, who, as mentioned above, is Juncker. For a law to be passed, it needs **a majority in the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament**.¹³



Now complete [“Week 4: What can go wrong with implementation?”](#)



Remember to complete the **quizzes** and the **discussion point**.



[Here](#) is a useful overview of the role of the European Commission.



[This](#) is a great video showing examples of everyday things that are influenced by the European Commission and its different duties.

Complications in the Implementation Process

It is important to study the conditions under which EU law is successfully implemented. Research about this topic tends to focus on the process of legal transposition. We know much less about the question of how policies on paper are put into action – not least because data about these phenomena are often hard to obtain. Clearly, however, **EU policies change while being put into practice**. As a result, policy outcomes vary widely between member states and may not correspond with the original policy objectives. This has become apparent again as the asylum and austerity crises **challenge the EU's problem-solving capacity**.

It is useful to think of policy implementation as a **political process** during which member states, but also lower-level actors – such as regional governments, municipal administrations, and individual inspectors – **re-interpret and adjust EU rules to their specific contexts** and political priorities. For example, it is possible that, given the importance of the car producer industry for its economy, Germany puts less emphasis on a strict enforcement of EU emission targets than other countries would. More generally, in a multilevel system such as the EU,

¹³ Euronews, 'The European Commission explained',
<https://www.euronews.com/2016/09/12/the-european-commission-explained>

implementation faces two opposed forces: **Europeanisation on the one hand, domestication on the other**. Europeanization means that what the EU does – for example, the fact that it issues an environmental regulation – impacts on member states, such that they begin to adopt similar regulations which, over time, jointly reduce car emissions.

Conversely, domestication results from **domestic choices of non-prescribed or non-recommended policy options**. Sometimes, as in the Volkswagen affair, this means that member states **fail to comply with EU rules**; on paper, in action, or both. But often, domestication also means that actors implementing these rules, in the case of especially eager problem-solvers, “do things their way”. This can result in implementation strategies that address regulatory problems very effectively.¹⁴



Now complete [“Week 5: How to improve EU policy and policy process?”](#)



Remember to complete the **quizzes** and the **discussion point**.



[Here](#) is a useful academic analysis of implementation issues.



[This](#) video lays out the different stages of the policy process using some case study examples.

Redesigning EU Policy-making

On 19 May 2015, the European Commission published a very comprehensive, ambitious and innovative **Better Regulation package**, which contains new guidelines on various phases of the policy cycle and various documents setting out **the rules and functioning of entirely new consultation platforms** and a new body in charge of regulatory scrutiny. This Special Report presents some initial impressions on the content of this remarkable set of new documents, which will influence the way in which EU policies will be prepared, shaped, monitored and evaluated in the years to come.¹⁵

One of the priorities of the current President of the Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, critically assess the Commission’s policy making efforts. Preceding commissions had slightly different ambitions which go into the categories of better law making or better regulation. Better regulation focuses on the way the EU regulates and drafts legislation.

The better regulation agenda of the commission developed from a policy to improve the legal stages in the drafting process to ultimately improve policy making. This process is divided into

¹⁴ Thomann and Sager, ‘Why the implementation of European Union law is more than just a question of legal compliance’, in *EU Law Enforcement*, <http://eulawenforcement.com/?p=339>

¹⁵ Andrea Renda, ‘Too good to be true? A quick assessment of the EC’s new Better Regulation Package?’, <https://www.ceps.eu/publications/too-good-be-true-quick-assessment-ec%E2%80%99s-new-better-regulation-package>

four stages: improved legal drafting, simplifying European legislation, taking into account policy effects, and finally improving policy making. The first stages occurred between 1992 and 2002 and focused on forming a policy to improve the legal stages in the drafting process to ultimately improve policy making. In 2002, attempts were made to **simplify existing EU legislation**. The third stage was introduced in 2006, and points attention towards the possible effects of European regulation by **introducing impact assessments**. These evaluations focused on the socio-economic and environmental impact of new legislation. Moreover, the commission also introduced extensive consultation procedures which aim to stimulate an exchange of information on the proposed policy with stakeholders.

In the final stage the commission emphasized improving policy making by connecting the various stages of the policy life cycle. In making these connections, the commission aims to ensure that **policy delivers its intended benefits**. Furthermore, the commission also aims to add an implementation plan to a proposal for major legislation which increases the awareness of the actions that are needed to implement the proposed policy. The commission's better regulation policy has developed into a set of about **60 different requirements** or tools which should **guide, improve, and control** policy making in the Commission.¹⁶



Now complete [“Week 6: Redesigning EU policymaking”](#)



Remember to complete the **quizzes** and the **discussion point**.



[This](#) website is a useful resource for this course.

¹⁶ Bernard Steunenbergh, [‘Better regulation: Legislation that will deliver?’](#)

Chapter 3 - America's Written Constitution

In [this course](#) you will discover the inner workings of the American Constitution. This 34-page document - written in 1787 by a group of thinkers known collectively as the Founding Fathers - holds the instructions for constructing and maintaining the American state and government. In this module, you will discuss the main themes in the Constitution: popular sovereignty, separation of powers, federalism, and rights.

Preamble

The American Constitution begins with a section called the 'Preamble'. This section begins with the words

"We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

Before this sentence, **self-government and democracy existed almost nowhere on planet Earth**. To an extent the British had a form of democracy, for example the House of Commons. But there was also a hereditary monarch and an aristocratic House of Lords. So it was not exactly the type of democracy envisioned by the Founding Fathers of the American Constitution.

A remarkable part of the Constitution is that it **provided ordinary people up and down a vast continent of the United States with the opportunity to vote on the basic ground rules of their society**. Citizens got to decide whether they were going to adopt this constitution or not. Ordinary farmers got a chance to read this short document, short so that an ordinary farmer could read it, think about it, talk with his neighbors and decide whether he was for it or against it.

However, it is important to recognise that **not everyone** got this opportunity. The Constitution was written by **white, old, men** and it was **voted on only by property-owning men**, too. 'The United States Constitution was ordained and established by men. As a rule, **women did not participate in the conventions that framed and ratified the Constitution**. Women did not vote for convention delegates. And women-as women did not publicly participate in constitutional debates in the press, in pamphlets etc.'¹⁷ Furthermore, **African Americans** were not considered citizens in the 1780s and were as such **excluded from the democratic process**.¹⁸



Now complete ["Week 1: In the Beginning and New Rules for a New World"](#)



Do you think it is appropriate to describe the Constitution as "democratic" when only part of the population could vote on its content?

¹⁷ Akhil Reed Amar, 'Women and the Constitution', https://digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.de/&httpsredir=1&article=1964&context=fss_papers

¹⁸ ConstitutionFacts.com, 'Fascinating Facts about the US Constitution', https://www.constitutionfacts.com/content/constitution/files/Constitution_FascinatingFacts.pdf



Remember to complete the **quiz** at the end of this section.



If you'd like to know more about women's place in the US Constitution, [this 8-page academic article](#) is an interesting read.

Congressional Powers

At its creation in 1789, the legislative branch was the most innovative. Rule by kings and emperors was an old style of government, and the legislature in many ways represented the new. Almost certainly, the founders intended Congress to have more important powers than the President and the Supreme Court. However, they placed many **checks and balances** on the legislature that have prevented absolute power in the hands of one branch. Founders controlled power not only by checks from the other branches, but by **creating a bicameral, or two house, Congress** – the **Senate** and the **House of Representatives**. The powers of Congress, then, are both constitutional and evolutionary.

The Constitution specifically grants Congress its most important power – the authority to make laws. A **bill**, or proposed law, only becomes a law **after both the House of Representatives and the Senate have approved it** in the same form. The two houses share other powers, many of which are listed in [Article 1](#), Section 8. These include the power to **declare war, coin money, raise an army and navy, regulate commerce**, establish rules of immigration and naturalization, and establish the **federal courts and their jurisdictions**.

Section 2 of Article I of the Constitution states:

“The House of Representatives shall be composed of **Members chosen every second Year by the People** of the several States, and the Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.”

Section 3 of Article I states:

“The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the Legislature thereof [Modified by Amendment XVII that allowed the people of the state to vote for their Senate representatives, rather than the Legislature], for six Years; and **each Senator shall have one Vote.**”



Now complete [“Week 2: Congressional Powers”](#)



Remember to complete the **quiz** at the end of this section.



[This](#) article lays out all the sections of the Constitution that detail the role of Congress.



[Here](#) is a great Crash Course video about the bicameral Congress.

Presidential Powers

Article 2 of the United States Constitution creates the **executive branch** of the government, consisting of the **president**, the **vice president**, and **other executive officers** chosen by the president. Clause 1 states that “the executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his Office during the Term of four Years, and, together with the Vice President, chosen for the same Term, be elected, as follows.”

Clause 2 states the method for choosing electors in the **Electoral College**. Under the U.S. Constitution the president and vice president are chosen by electors, under a constitutional grant of authority delegated to the legislatures of the states and the District of Columbia. In other words, the Constitution lets the **state legislatures decide how electors are created**. It does not define or delimit what process a state legislature may use to create its state’s college of electors.

Perhaps the most important of all presidential powers is that of **commander-in-chief of the United States Armed Forces**. While the power to **declare war is constitutionally vested in Congress**, the president commands and directs the military and is responsible for planning military strategy. Congress, pursuant to the War Powers Resolution, must authorize any troop deployments longer than 60 days, although that process relies on triggering mechanisms that never have been employed, rendering it ineffectual. Additionally, **Congress provides a check on presidential military power** through its control over military spending and regulation. While historically presidents initiated the process for going to war, critics have charged that there have been several conflicts in which presidents did not get official declarations, for example the “wars” waged in Iran (2001) and Afghanistan since (2003) are officially called “military engagements” authorized by Congress. Officially, the U.S. was not at war with the governments of those nations, but fought non-government terrorist groups.

Along with the armed forces, the president also **directs U.S. foreign policy**. Through the Department of State and the Department of Defense, the president is responsible for the protection of Americans abroad and of foreign nationals in the United States. The president decides whether to **recognize new nations and new governments**, and **negotiates treaties** with other nations, which become binding on the United States when approved by a two-thirds vote of the Senate.



Now complete [“Week 3: Presidential Powers”](#)



Remember to complete the **quiz** at the end of this section.



[Here](#) is a Crash Course video on the powers of the US president.



[This](#) is a useful summary of the Constitution's clauses about presidential power.

Judges and Juries

'[Article 3](#) of the Constitution places the judicial power of the federal government in 'one supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts' as the Congress might decide to establish. The Constitution grants the **Supreme Court original jurisdiction** in cases in which states are a party and those involving diplomats, but leaves for **Congress to determine the size and responsibilities of the Court** that is the capstone of the federal judiciary. The Judiciary Act of 1789 established a Supreme Court with **one chief justice and five associate justices**. The act further defined the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court to include appellate jurisdiction in larger civil cases and cases in which state courts ruled on federal statutes. Congress required the justices of the Supreme Court to **preside with the local federal judges on the U.S. circuit courts** that met in judicial districts throughout the nation, thus ensuring that members of the highest court would participate in the principal trial courts of the federal judiciary and be familiar with the procedures of the state courts.'¹⁹

Section 1 of Article III is as follows:

"The Judicial Power of the United States shall be vested in one supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish. The Judges, both of the supreme and inferior Courts, shall hold their Offices during good Behaviour, and shall, at stated Times, receive for their Services a Compensation, which shall not be diminished during their Continuance in Office."

This section has been understood as the Founding Fathers giving power to interpret the law of the United States will be held by the U.S. Supreme Court, and the lower federal courts. **Inferior courts will be created by Congress** from 'time to time'. The Constitution itself created only the Supreme Court, but allowed Congress to create other, inferior (lower) courts over time. Thus as the **caseload of the Supreme Court grew**, Congress was able to create the **lower federal courts**.

Once they are appointed, federal judges remain in office during 'good behavior.' In effect, most federal judges **serve a life term** (since the Constitution does not state a time limit or number of years). Once appointed, their **salaries cannot be changed** in any way. This protects the judges from being manipulated through their salary.²⁰



Now complete ["Week 3: Judges and Juries"](#)

¹⁹ Federal Judicial Center, 'The Supreme Court of the United States and the Federal Judiciary', <https://www.fjc.gov/history/courts/supreme-court-united-states-and-federal-judiciary>

²⁰ Judicial Learning Center, 'Article III and the Courts', <https://judiciallearningcenter.org/article-3-and-the-courts/>



Remember to complete the **peer-graded assessment** at the end of this section.



[This](#) article provides an explanation of each section of Article III of the Constitution.



[Here](#) is an informative video about how cases reach the Supreme Court.

States and Territories

'[Article 4](#) deals with the relationship between states in the **federalist system** used in the USA. Federalism in the United States has evolved significantly since it was first implemented in 1787. The initial theory of federalism, **dual federalism**, holds that the federal government and the state governments are **co-equals**, each sovereign. In this theory, parts of the Constitution are **interpreted very narrowly**, such as the Tenth Amendment, the Supremacy Clause, the Necessary and Proper Clause, and the Commerce Clause. In this narrow interpretation, the **federal government has jurisdiction only if the Constitution clearly grants such**. In this case, there is a very large group of **powers belonging to the states**, and the federal government is limited to only those powers explicitly listed in the Constitution.

The second, **cooperative federalism**, asserts that the **national government is supreme** over the states, and the Tenth Amendment, the Supremacy Clause, the Necessary and Proper Clause, and the Commerce Clause have entirely different meanings. A good illustration of the wide interpretation of these parts of the Constitution is exemplified by the Necessary and Proper Clauses' other common name: the **Elastic Clause**. Dual federalism is not completely dead, but for the most part, the United States' branches of government **operate under the presumption of a cooperative federalism**.²¹

'In the Tenth Amendment, the Constitution also **recognizes the powers of the state governments**. Traditionally, these included the '**police powers**' of health, education, and welfare. So many states feared the expanded powers of the new national government that they insisted on amendments during the Constitution's ratification. The most popular of these proposed amendments, which became the Bill of Rights in 1791, was a protection of state power. The new Tenth Amendment stated:

"The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."²²



Now complete ["Week 4: States and Territories"](#)

²¹ U.S. Constitution, 'Constitutional Topic: Federalism',
https://www.usconstitution.net/consttop_fedr.html

²² Peter Sagal, 'State Powers',
<http://www.pbs.org/tpt/constitution-usa-peter-sagal/federalism/state-powers/>



Remember to complete the **quiz** at the end of this section.



[Here](#) is an informative Crash Course video about federalism.

The Law of the Land

This section focuses articles five, six and seven of the Constitution. [‘Article 5](#) of the Constitution says **how the Constitution can be amended** - that is, how provisions can be added to the text of the Constitution. One method - the one used for every amendment so far - is that **Congress proposes an amendment** to the states; the **states must then decide whether to ratify** the amendment. But in order for Congress to propose an amendment, **two-thirds of each House of Congress** must vote for it. And then **three-quarters of the states** must ratify the amendment before it is added to the Constitution. So if slightly more than one-third of the House of Representatives, or slightly more than one-third of the Senate, or thirteen out of the fifty states object to a proposal, it will not become an amendment by this route. In that way, a **small minority of the country** has the ability to prevent an amendment from being added to the Constitution.’²³

Article 6 is divided into two clauses: the [Supremacy Clause](#) and the [No Religious Test Clause](#). ‘Instead of giving Congress additional powers, the Supremacy Clause simply addresses the **legal status of the laws that other parts of the Constitution empower Congress to make**, as well as the legal status of treaties and the Constitution itself. The core message of the Supremacy Clause is simple: the Constitution and federal laws (of the types listed in the first part of the Clause) take priority over any conflicting rules of state law.’²⁴ After requiring all federal and state legislators and officers to swear or affirm to support the federal Constitution, Article 6 specifies that “**no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States**”. This prohibition, commonly known as the No Religious Test Clause, banned a longstanding form of religious discrimination practiced both in England and in the United States. In doing so, it provided a limited but enduring textual constitutional commitment to religious liberty and equality that has influenced the way Americans have understood the relationship between government and religion over the last two centuries.’²⁵

‘The text of [Article 7](#) declares that the Constitution shall become the official law of the ratifying states when nine states ratified the document. The controversies over Article VII that occurred during the ratification process were over the substance of the mandated ratification

²³ Michael B. Rappaport and David A. Strauss, ‘Common Interpretation: Article V’, <https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/articles/article-v/article-v-by-michael-b-rappaport-and-david-a-strauss/interp/22>

²⁴ Caleb Nelson and Kermit Roosevelt, ‘Common Interpretation: The Supremacy Clause’, <https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/articles/article-vi/the-supremacy-clause/clause/31>

²⁵ Alan E. Brownstein and Jud Campbell, ‘Common Interpretation: The No Religious Test Clause’, <https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/articles/article-vi/the-no-religious-test-clause/clause/32>

process, not over what the text actually mandated. Anti-Federalists and Federalists agreed on the meaning of “Ratification,” “nine” and “States.” Vermont did not count as a state much to the distress of Vermonters who declared independence in 1777, but were not represented in the Continental Congress under the Articles of Confederation.’²⁶



Now complete [“Week 4: The Law of the Land”](#)



Remember to complete the **quiz** at the end of this section.



[This](#) website is a great resource for information on each Article of the Constitution. It provides the Articles as they appear in the document, alongside interpretations written by academics.



[Here](#) is a video about Article 5. It is part of a series explaining the entire Constitution so have a look at the other videos too!

Making Amends

Some argue that it is odd to have the amendments to the Constitution tagged onto the **end of the document**, rather than interwoven into the original text as occurs in many other countries’ constitutions. However, this is a reminder of one hugely important truth about the Constitution: the US Constitution is an **inter-generational project**. It is not merely the achievement of a group of founders, but actually, a group of founders and amenders.

The first 10 amendments are known collectively as the **Bill of Rights**. Another cluster of amendments was passed following the Civil War and sought to **enshrine the rights of the newly freed slaves**. The United States Constitution now has **25 functioning amendments**. There have been 27 ratified in total, but one of these, the 18th, was Prohibition (of alcohol) and another, the 21st, was the repeal of Prohibition.

A summary of the Bill of Rights amendments are as follows:

1. Congress shall make no law respecting an **establishment of religion**, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the **freedom of speech**, or of the **press**; or the right of the people **peaceably to assemble**, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.
2. A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the **right of the people to keep and bear Arms**, shall not be infringed.
3. No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

²⁶ Mark A. Graber and Michael B. Rappaport, ‘Common Interpretation: Article VII’, <https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/articles/article-vii/article-vii-by-mark-graber-and-michael-rappaport/interp/24>

4. The right of the people to be **secure in their persons, houses, papers**, and effects, against **unreasonable searches and seizures**, shall not be violated [...]
5. No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a **presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury**, [...] nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be **deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law**; nor shall **private property** be taken for public use, without just compensation.
6. In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a **speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury** of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed [...]
7. In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy **shall exceed twenty dollars**, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved [...]
8. Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor **cruel and unusual punishments** inflicted.
9. The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.
10. The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are **reserved to the States respectively, or to the people**.



Now complete [“Week 5: Making Amends”](#)



Remember to complete the **peer-graded assessment** at the end of this section.



Do you think the Bill of Rights fully upholds the human rights of US citizens?



[This](#) video explains why and how the amendment process is so complex.

A New Birth of Freedom

The 12th Amendment was adopted in the era of **Thomas Jefferson**, the principal author of the Declaration of Independence and who later served as the third President of the United States from 1801 to 1809. The 12th Amendment was **ratified in 1804** and it cemented Jefferson’s vision of a more **democratic presidential election system**. And with that amendment, the founding era of those who actually lived through the American Revolution and had incorporated some of the ideas of the Revolution into the Constitution, came to a close. The 12th Amendment was the final addition to the Constitution for over half a century.

The 12th Amendment to the Constitution was introduced solely as a much needed **upgrade to the presidential and vice presidential** electoral system that was originally set out in Article 2. The presidential elections of 1796 and 1800 proved the original system to be severely flawed.

Therefore, Congress, on December 9, 1803, pursued a measure that would **simplify the system and strengthen its results**.²⁷

'The 13th Amendment, which **formally abolished slavery** in the United States, passed the Senate on April 8, 1864, and the House on January 31, 1865. **On February 1, 1865**, President Abraham Lincoln approved the Joint Resolution of Congress submitting the proposed amendment to the state legislatures. The necessary number of states ratified it by December 1865. The 13th amendment to the United States Constitution provides that'²⁸

"Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, **except as a punishment for crime** whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

'In response to the Emancipation Proclamation and the **13th Amendment**, many Southern states enacted laws known as **Black Codes** designed to continue to **deny African Americans certain rights and privileges enjoyed by white citizens**. Under the states' Black Codes, recently freed slaves were not allowed to travel widely, own certain types of property, or sue in court. In addition, African Americans could be jailed for not be able to repay their debts, leading to **racially-discriminatory labor practices** like the leasing of convicts to private businesses.'²⁹



Now complete ["Week 5: A New Birthday of Freedom"](#)



Remember to complete the **peer-graded assessment** at the end of this section.



Here you can read a summary of the 12th Amendment and answer a few questions in the "Quiz" section.



The Netflix documentary '**13th**' looks at the (unintended) consequences in recent decades of the specific wording of the 13th Amendment. [Watch the trailer here.](#)

Progressive Reforms

'The **14th Amendment** to the U.S. Constitution deals with several aspects of U.S. citizenship and the **rights of citizens**. Ratified on July 9, **1868**, during the **post-Civil War era**, the 14th, along with the 13th and 15th Amendments, are collectively known as the **Reconstruction Amendments**. Although the 14th Amendment was intended to **protect the rights of the recently freed slaves**, it has continued to play a major role in constitutional politics to this day.

²⁷ Study.com, '12th Amendment: Summary & Definition', <https://study.com/academy/lesson/12th-amendment-summary-definition-quiz.html>

²⁸ Our Documents, '13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution: Abolition of Slavery (1865)', <https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=40>

²⁹ Martin Kelly, '14th Amendment Summary', <https://www.thoughtco.com/us-constitution-14th-amendment-summary-105382>

Of the three Reconstruction Amendments, the 14th is the most complicated and the one that has had **the most unforeseen effects**. Its broad goal was to **reinforce the Civil Rights Act** of 1866, which ensured that "all persons born in the United States" were citizens and were to be given "full and equal benefit of all laws." The Civil Rights Act of 1866 protected the "civil" rights of all citizens, such as the **right to sue, make contracts, and buy and sell property**. However, it **failed to protect "political" rights**, like the right to vote and hold office, or "social" rights guaranteeing equal access to schools and other public accommodations. Congress had intentionally omitted those protections in hopes of averting the bill's veto by President Andrew Johnson.

When the Civil Rights Act landed on President Johnson's desk, he fulfilled his promise to veto it. Congress, in turn, overrode the veto and the measure became law. Johnson, a Tennessee **Democrat and staunch supporter of states' rights**, had clashed repeatedly with the Republican-controlled Congress. Fearing President Johnson and Southern politicians would attempt to undo the protections of the Civil Rights Act, Republican congressional leaders began work on what would become the 14th Amendment.³⁰ Subsequently, with its passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1875, Congress attempted to bolster the 14th Amendment. Also known as the "Enforcement Act," the **1875 Act guaranteed all citizens, regardless of race or color, equal access to public accommodations and transportation**, and made it illegal to exempt them from serving on juries.³⁰



Now complete ["Week 6: Progressive Reforms"](#)



Remember to complete the **quiz** at the end of this section.



[This](#) is an informative source about the 14th Amendment.



[Here](#) is a Crash Course video about the equal protection provisions of the 14th Amendment.

Modern Moves

The **16th Amendment** to the U.S. Constitution, which was **ratified in 1913**, allows Congress to **levy a tax on income** from any source without apportioning it among the states and without regard to the census. The text of the Sixteenth Amendment is as follows:

"The Congress shall have power to **lay and collect taxes on incomes**, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration."³¹

³⁰ Kelly, '14th Amendment Summary'.

³¹ Investopedia, 'Sixteenth Amendment',
<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/sixteenth-amendment.asp>

'The **17th Amendment** came about during the **Progressive Era**. During this time in American history, reformers were pushing to clean up health standards, improve moral standards, **elevate American education and fight corruption in state and local governments**. The push for popular election of Senators became part of that campaign. Prior to the 17th Amendment, the Senate was infamously known as "the millionaires' club". This was because the path to get into the Senate was through the state legislatures. And since state legislatures, like other political institutions, were **notoriously corrupt** at the time, the path to the Senate quickly became **who could buy their way in**.

The 17th Amendment of the Constitution tried to solve this problem. Prior to the 17th Amendment, **the Constitution specified that senators were elected by state legislatures**. The reason why the framers of the Constitution originally did this was because they wanted state governments to have some kind of role in the national government. But **widespread corruption made people lose faith in the system**. Furthermore, sometimes state legislatures just couldn't decide who should be senator. Consequently, the Constitution was changed with the 17th Amendment so that "the Senate of the United States shall be **composed of two Senators from each State, elected by the people thereof**, for six years...". This meant that senators would now be freely elected'.³²

'The **19th Amendment** to the United States Constitution **granted women the right to vote**, prohibiting any United States citizen to be denied the right to vote based on sex. It was ratified on August 18, **1920** after a long struggle known as the women's suffrage movement'.³³



Now complete ["Week 6: Modern Moves"](#)



Remember to complete the **quiz** at the end of this section.



[Here](#) is another Crash Course video about women's suffrage as a result of the 19th Amendment.

³² Study.com, 'What is the 17th Amendment? Definition, Summary & History', <https://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-the-17th-amendment-definition-summary-history.html>

³³ HistoryNet, 'Nineteenth Amendment', <http://www.historynet.com/nineteenth-amendment>

Chapter 4 - Political Governance and Public Policy in Russia

In [this course](#), study the features of the political structure of modern Russia. The course contains both general information on the institutional, procedural and value components of the political system and public policy in Russia, as well as a description of the problems, contradictions and prospects for the political development of the country.

Constitutional Principles of the Russian Federation

Contemporary Russian Constitution was adopted by **popular vote** on December 12, **1993**. It received 58.4 percent of votes of those who participated in the referendum. This constitution is **the fifth Russian Constitution**. It is important to remember that the Russian Constitution of 1993 was adopted after the [tragic events of October 1993](#) when the previous parliament, the Supreme Council, was **dismissed by President Yeltsin**. These events came as a result of the opposition between two main principles according to which state power in the country was to be organised. The first principle that the Supreme Soviet defended was the principle of the **sovereignty of the Soviets** that dates back to the Soviet time when the legislative and the executive power belonged to the representative bodies of power. This was of the former Soviet principle on which the functioning of the state was grounded in the Soviet era. The second principle enforced by the **democratic forces led by Boris Yeltsin**, was a principle of the **separation of power**, which suggested that no branch of power could dominate the state. The current constitution - although it contains a number of principles from the previous constitutions (for example, republicanism and federalism) - is radically different from the preceding documents. The 1993 constitution set the tone for a **new political and social system**.³⁴

'The 1993 constitution declares Russia **a democratic, federative, law-based state with a republican form of government**. State power is divided among the **legislative, executive, and judicial branches**. Diversity of ideologies and religions is sanctioned, and a state or compulsory ideology may not be adopted. The right to a **multiparty political system** is upheld. The content of laws must be made public before they take effect, and they must be formulated **in accordance with international law and principles**. Russian is proclaimed the state language, although the republics of the federation are allowed to establish their own state languages for use alongside Russian.'³⁵



Now complete ["Week 1: Constitutional Principles of the Russian Federation"](#)



Remember to complete the **practice quiz** and the **graded quiz** at the end of this section.



If you would like to read the chapters of the Russian Constitution for yourself, you can find it [here](#).

³⁴ Leonid Smorgunov, '[Week 1: Constitutional Principles of the Russian Federation](#)'

³⁵ CountryStudies, 'The Constitution and Government Structure', <http://countrystudies.us/russia/69.htm>



[Here](#) is a short explanation video about how the Russian Federation is organised.

State Institutions and Political Regime

When we talk about the political system, we should focus not only on the **institutional design**, but also on the **performance of these institutions**. The core aspect here is how institutions work. For instance, **democratic institutions may perform in a not very democratic way**. There are many different countries that can be used as an example for this statement. For example, Iran, Venezuela, and **also Russia**. There are different approaches to understand the political regimes in contemporary political science. However, there is a consensus amongst researchers that there are three basic types of the political regimes: **democratic, hybrid, and non-democratic**.³⁶

Under the new constitution, the **Federal Assembly became the country's legislature**. It consists of the **Federation Council** (an upper house comprising appointed representatives from each of Russia's administrative divisions) and the **State Duma** (a 450-member popularly elected lower house). The president's nominee for chairman of the government is subject to approval by the State Duma; if it rejects a nominee three times or passes a vote of no confidence twice in three months, the president may dissolve the State Duma and call for new elections. **All legislation must first pass the State Duma** before being considered by the Federation Council. A presidential veto of a bill can be overridden by the legislature with a **two-thirds majority**, or a bill may be altered to incorporate presidential reservations and pass with a majority vote. With a two-thirds majority (and approval by the Russian Constitutional Court), the legislature may remove the president from office for treason or other serious criminal offenses. The Federation Council must approve all presidential appointments to the country's highest judicial bodies (Supreme Court and Constitutional Court).³⁷

The status of the president is defined in Chapter Four of the Constitution of the Russian Federation. The president shall be the **head of the State** and the **guarantor of the Constitution** and civil and human rights and liberties. He/she shall take measures to protect the **sovereignty and integrity** of the Russian Federation, its independence and to ensure the **conservative functioning of all bodies** of state power. The president shall also define the basic policy guidelines. The president shall define the **basic foreign policy** guidelines. And he/she is the **Chief Commander** of the armed forces. The president also resolves issues of citizenship of the Russian Federation, awards state decorations and grants pardons. Many political scientists and specialists in constitutional law agree that **the institution of super presidential power was set by Russian constitution adopted in 1993**. For instance, the president has a lot of input on legislative process. Indeed, he/she has the right of legislative initiative. The president also has the veto right. The president can **issue decrees** that are obligatory for the government. These decrees are not laws but they function alongside legislative normative acts. In case governmental normative acts are in contradiction with the Constitution, federal laws or the decrees, the president has the right to revoke these acts.³⁸

³⁶ Alexander Sherbstobitov, '[Week 1: State Institutions and Political Regime in Russia](#)'

³⁷ Encyclopaedia Britannica, 'Russia: Government and Society', <https://www.britannica.com/place/Russia/Government-and-society>

³⁸ Sherbstobitov, '[Week 1: State Institutions and Political Regime in Russia](#)'



Now complete [“Week 1: State Institutions and Political Regime in Russia”](#)



Remember to complete the **practice quiz** and the **graded quiz** at the end of this section.



[Here](#) is a great summary of Russia’s political regime and government structure.

Stages of Party Politics Building

As we have discussed above, Russia’s constitution is based on the principle of **separation of powers** and since 1993 it has had **regular elections**. These are crucial criteria for determining accountability in a democratic regime. It could be argued that, at the present time, Russian citizens have got a **legal opportunity for institutionalization of group interests**. There are some **non-government organizations**, professional groups, public foundations and a local community network. Currently Russia is in the complicated process of **creating a multi-party system**. As a result, it is crucial to research democratic political forums and legal society in contemporary Russia in the context of fundamental challenges.³⁹

‘Party development in Russia has been chaotic, but can be explained in part by looking at the **interactions between Russian political parties**. The application of **Sartori’s scheme*** for classifying party systems* suggests that party competition in Russia shows signs of both **centrifugal*** and **centripetal*** pulls. This has several contradictory effects. **Anti-systemic** parties have their principled **opposition to Russia’s post-communist development** reaffirmed at one level, but are sometimes forced into cooperation with the more powerful executive. **Pro-systemic** parties have little incentive to cooperate because they and members of the political elite **do not face serious competition from anti-systemic parties**. In consequence, there is **unlikely to be a rapid streamlining** of the Russian party system.’⁴⁰

A number of changes took place in the early 1990s, before and after the ratification of the new constitution. **Privatization of property and land started in 1992** as well as the distribution of new management values in a post-Soviet society. Soviet society was mainly **unipolar and paternalistic so these shock reforms** at the beginning of the 1990s created the preconditions necessary for a **transition to multiple social systems**. Included in this are elites, low classes, and the middle class. The balance between these groups creates novel challenges for the new system of public administration in Russia.

There is a **connection between the democratization process and the changing of Russian civil society structure**. The process of democratization depends on the roles of the middle class. The terms **‘civil society’** and **‘the middle class’** are used to describe public policy and political science discussion whenever we use them for describing Russian society in the

³⁹ Anna Volkova, [‘Week 2: Stages of Party Politics Building’](#)

⁴⁰ Neil Robinson, ‘Classifying Russia’s Party System: The Problem of ‘Relevance’ in a Time of Uncertainty’, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13523279808415373?journalCode=fjcs20>

Soviet times because of Marxist ideology. Marxism uses the terms '**proletariat**', '**workers**', '**peasants**'. But the development of the middle class in Russia has three main stages. It began in the 1970s when the economic situation in Soviet Union was stable because of the steadily increasing oil price. At that time, many Soviet families suddenly had the opportunity **to buy their first televisions, fridges and cars**. All of these things were manufactured in the Soviet Union. **Education** was considered a great virtue in Soviet society. But as people became more educated, the demand for **human rights, international communication, freedom of speech and democratic values**, became more and more prominent.⁴¹

***You can find more detail about Sartori and his ideas in Chapter 1 of this Study Guide.**

***Centrifugal** - moving away from the center of the political spectrum.

***Centripetal** - moving towards the center of the political spectrum.



Now complete ["Week 2: Stages of Party Politics Building"](#)



Remember to complete the **graded quiz** at the end of this section.



[Here](#) is an article from just before the 2012 general election in Russia that explains the main features of each political party.



[This](#) is an interesting video discussing the seemingly endless reign of Putin's party.

Russian Mass Media and Politics

It is interesting to compare citizens' attitude to mass media in Soviet Russia with that of citizens in Western societies. Soviet societies were rather passive and ideological, meaning that most citizens were happy to gain and trust information from the state-run, official media outlets. The main Soviet information program, Vremya, that showed every evening, reported on **carefully selected internal and external problems**. Vremya very often criticized the international relations and foreign countries, for example the American and European political system, but **never criticized the Soviet party system** or Soviet public administration system. In fact, the state **propaganda dominated**. The role of media was to **maintain confidence and tranquility**.

⁴¹ Volkova, ["Week 2: Stages of Party Politics Building"](#)

All media, of course, were **financed by the state**. Soviet people never paid for the information. Western society is active and controversial, and the **media provide diverse information** and, in fact, **stimulate civil activity**. In the West it was considered important for people to get alternative information, and they got as much information as possible - and continue to do so in modern times, arguably to an even greater extent. A significant proportion of **Western media was and is privately owned**. Probably the best time for mass media in contemporary Russia was during the **perestroika** time, because during this period all Russian magazines, newspapers, and TV channels received money from the state, but they were also allowed to provide different perspectives because of **glasnost and freedom of speech**.

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the economic crisis in 1992, all Russians lost money and were forced to once again ask for support from the state. During the 1990s, the most powerful **oligarchs began using their own media outlets to influence authorities**. Boris Berezovsky, for example, owns the Kumaresan media group; Mark Friedman owns Alpha group. The late 1990s were a very interesting and **controversial time for Russian mass media**. It was a new experience and new work for journalists, for speakers, for political scientists working in the **context of the fall of Soviet rule and an end to the Soviet empire**.

Today, the situation with mass media is rather stable: the federal media (such as ORT, Russia Today and Rossiya) are under state control. But the rapid **development of the Internet** caused growth and expansion for new forms of media and information distribution. In fact, there are now **two coexisting realities: the official (TV, magazines, newspapers) and an oppositional realities (internet media and press)**.⁴²



Now complete [“Week 2: Russian Mass Media and Politics”](#)



Remember to complete the **graded quiz** at the end of this section.



[Here](#) is a Freedom House report about the status of freedom of speech in Russia in 2016.

Russia's Economy during Putin's First Term

The **economy stabilized and improved greatly under Putin**, who took office in 1999. Growth rates were high, salaries and pensions were increased and paid on time, IMF loans were paid back in some cases ahead of time, unemployment went down, and **foreign investment increased** (although overall investment was initially small compared to former Eastern bloc countries like Poland and Hungary).

Putin took office in the wake of his nation's 1998 financial crisis. Making economic stability a cornerstone of his leadership, **he lowered taxes, overhauled the judicial system, legislated private ownership of land and adopted new banking laws**. He wooed companies like ExxonMobile and United Technologies and proposed **reforms to fight poverty and help small**

⁴² Volkova, [‘Press and Media in Modern Russia. Limitations and Obstacles to Free Speech in Russia’](#)

and medium size businesses. Putin devoted much of his energy to cleaning up Soviet-era debts and creating new markets for Russia's nearly bankrupt heavy industries. Russia was helped immensely by **high oil prices** that rose around the time that Putin came into office. High oil prices had a bad side as well as a good side. They hide problems in other sectors of the economy and **raised concerns about inflation.**

Some described Russia's economic policy under Putin as "**fascist capitalism**" and "**the Chinese model**" in which economic growth is spurred by **exploiting natural resources, utilizing cheap labor and maintaining control over business** while the government remains in authoritarian hands. By the early 2000s, capital flight was no longer a serious problem and the economy was flush with cash from oil profits. By 2002 there was more money entering the country than leaving it. Russians had confidence in the ruble and were keeping their money at home rather than sending it abroad, and they were spending it too. In some places - notably the Moscow area - **growth was spurred by domestic consumption.** Growth was 5 percent in 1999, 8.2 percent in 2000, 5.2 percent in 2001, 4.6 percent in 2002, 7.2 percent in 2003 and 6.7 percent in 2004.⁴³



Now complete ["Week 3: Russian Stabilization Policy"](#)



Remember to complete the **graded quiz** and the **peer-graded assignment** at the end of this section.



[This](#) site has a lot of detailed information about the Russian economy under Putin.



[Here](#) is an interesting video discussing the future of Russia's economy.

Public Policy in Putin's Russia

Putin's domestic policies, especially early in his first presidency, were aimed at creating a strict "vertical of power". On 13 May 2000, he issued a decree dividing the 89 federal subjects of Russia between 7 federal districts overseen by representatives named by himself in order to facilitate federal administration. According to Stephen White, Russia under the presidency of Putin made it clear that it had no intention of establishing a "second edition" of the American or British political systems, but rather **a system that was closer to Russia's own traditions and circumstances.** Putin's administration has often been described as a "**sovereign democracy**". First proposed by Vladislav Surkov in February 2006, the term quickly gained currency within Russia and arguably **unified various political elites** around it. According to its proponents, the government's actions and policies are focused above all on gaining popular support within Russia itself and **not to be determined from outside the country.**

⁴³ Jeffrey Hays, 'Russian Economy Under Putin', http://factsanddetails.com/russia/Economics_Business_Agriculture/sub9_7b/entry-5172.html

During his first term in office, Putin moved to curb the political ambitions of some of the Yeltsin-era oligarchs, resulting in the exile or imprisonment of such people as Boris Berezovsky, Vladimir Gusinsky, Mikhail Khodorkovsky; other oligarchs soon joined Putin's camp. Putin presided over an **intensified fight with organised crime and terrorism** that resulted in two times lower murder rates by 2011, as well as significant reduction in the numbers of terrorist acts by the late 2000s. Putin succeeded in codifying **land law and tax law** and promulgated **new codes on labour, administrative, criminal, commercial and civil procedural law**. Under Medvedev's presidency, Putin's government implemented some key reforms in the area of state security, the Russian police reform and the Russian military reform.⁴⁴



Now complete [“Week 3: Public Policy in Putin’s Second Term”](#)



Remember to complete the **graded quiz** and the **peer-graded assignment** at the end of this section.



[Here](#) is an interesting article written in 2015 about the ways Putin has changed Russia since becoming president for the first time.

The Federal Executive Power

The Constitution of Russian Federation provides for a system of governance in which the President has been assigned a large number of real powers and functions.

Besides being the head of state, the President of Russia is virtually the **Chief Executive with several real powers**. As head of the state, he/she performs all ceremonial functions and represents the Russian Federation inside the country and in international relations. He/she **appoints Russian ambassadors** to other countries and accepts credentials of the ambassadors of other countries in Russia. Below you will find some other responsibilities of the Executive as laid out in the Russian Constitution.

- President as the Guarantor of the Constitution and Rights
- Determinator of Domestic and Foreign Policy of Russia
- Supreme Commander of Armed Forces

Executive and Administrative Powers

Article 83 of the Constitution defines the powers of the President in relation to the Government of Russia i.e. the executive or ministry.

(i) The President appoints the chairman of the Government of Russia with the consent of State Duma. The office of Chairman of the Government is **virtually the office of the Prime Minister of Russia**.

⁴⁴ Wikipedia, 'Domestic Policy under Vladimir Putin', https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Domestic_policy_of_Vladimir_Putin

(v) **Judges** of the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court and the Supreme Arbitration Court **are appointed by the Federation Council** upon the **recommendations made by the President** of Russia.

(vii) The President **forms and heads the Security Council** of the Russian Federation.

(viii) The President **endorses the military doctrine** of the Russian Federation.

Legislative Powers of the Russian President

The President enjoys several functions in the legislative sphere.

(i) He/she issues **orders for the elections** to the State Duma.

(iii) He/she **signs and publishes** all federal laws.

(viii) The President has the power to **issue decrees and executive orders** which are binding throughout the territory of Russia. However, no decree or executive order can violate the Constitution of Russia or any federal law.

Emergency Powers of the Russian President

The President has the power to **impose a state of emergency** in the **whole of Russia** or in any part of it. However, he has to immediately notify the emergency declaration to the Federation Council and the State Duma. The emergency notification can remain in force **only when approved by the two houses of the Federal Assembly**.

Miscellaneous Powers of the Russian President

(i) The President has the power to **resolve issues of citizenship** of Russia.

(ii) He/she can grant poetical asylum to migrants on Russian territory.

(iv) As the head of state, the President can **grant pardon, reprieve or amnesty** to any person in Russia.⁴⁵



Now complete [“Week 4: The Federal Executive Power”](#)



Remember to complete the **graded quiz** at the end of this section.



[This](#) is a great source for understanding the powers laid out for the President in the Russian constitution.

⁴⁵ YourArticleLibrary, 'Powers and Functions of the President in Russia', <http://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/countries/russia/powers-and-functions-of-the-president-of-russia/44254>

Russian Administrative Reform and Anti-corruption Policy

Since the mid-2000s, there have been a number of significant changes in the way Russia has dealt with corruption. President Dmitry Medvedev named corruption as one of the major threats for the future of the country. During his presidency, Medvedev implemented several **changes to the Russian legal system** which paved the way for **modern anti-corruption instruments** to be ingrained in Russian legal processes. Included in this are procedures for the **resolution of conflicts of interest, publication of income and assets declarations, freedom of information act**. However, opponents of the government argues that most of these changes have failed to affect rates of corruption in Russia.

In recent years there has been a **shift in public attitude**: corruption is now one of the main topics of mass demonstrations and [Alexei Navalny](#) - a popular opposition figure - has made his reputation by unveiling corruption in public procurement. The fight against corruption has without a doubt reached the **top of the political agenda**, but many contend that there is still a long way to go to achieve any significant change in this battle.⁴⁶

Transparency International, an anti-corruption charity, argued in 2013 - during a time where **civil society organisations were being targeted** by government raids on account of new anti-corruption policy - that 'although cracking down on government corruption is welcome, it is **no substitute for independent scrutiny**. That is why the crackdown on civil society is so counterproductive, and not just in the fight against corruption. It is **a blow against democracy** because if it forces civil society organisations to close - and this is likely - it will deny ordinary citizens a voice through independent organisations on issues that concern them.

In 2011 Russia signed the **OECD Anti-Bribery Convention** and the most recent report from the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) on Russia's anti-corruption efforts, shows the country is **making progress on fulfilling anti-corruption obligations**. The report concluded that that "out of the 26 recommendations issued to the Russian Federation, 15 of them have to date been implemented or dealt with in a satisfactory manner and 11 have been partly implemented." What GRECO called for in particular was a **strengthening of the independence of the judiciary and a reduction in the number of people protected by immunity**. Too many officials are able to act outside the law. Russia also needs better access to information on corruption offenses and **better whistleblower protection**.⁴⁷



Now complete ["Week 4: Russian Anticorruption Policy"](#)



Remember to complete the **graded quiz** at the end of this section.



[Here](#) is an interview with Alexei Navalny about the Russian government's approach to corruption and civil society organisations in 2015



For more up to date information about this topic, have a look at [Transparency International's Russia homepage](#). Here you'll find current news on Russia's anti-corruption processes..

⁴⁶ Ivan Ninenko (2012), *Russia's Anti-corruption Predicament: Reforms, Activism and Struggling Rulers*

⁴⁷ Transparency International, 'Two Sides of Fighting Corruption in Russia', https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/two_sides_of_fighting_corruption_in_russia

Russian Public Sphere and Civic Engagement

This is an extract from a presentation by Professor Grigori Kliucharev at Cardiff University, WALES. Professor Kliucharev is a researcher from the Institute of Sociology at the Russian Academy of Science. He and his colleagues conducted research from 2014 to 2016 about **how literacy levels affect civic engagement**.

‘Civic education in the Russian Federation is **part of public policy**. Our data suggests that Russian society today is facing a choice as to what type of citizen is ‘needed’ for what tasks. It is important, it seems, **not to oppose political ideologies** but to give people the freedom and capacity to **choose independently where, when, and how to realize their skills**, knowledge and experience. But **participation** in socially significant activities, privately, even anonymously or through routine, significantly **raises the self-esteem** of an individual as a citizen. The attitude towards personal responsibility and autonomy, of those we surveyed from various social groups, indicates that there is a **demand for this in contemporary Russian society**. This is shown primarily **by young people (66%)**, by those already well educated, such as with higher education, (56%), and with a high level of material security (69%), as well as **by users of social networks (61%)**.

However, this evidence of readiness to change, to show initiative, personal responsibility and independence by more than half of the country’s population (primarily youth) contrasts sharply with the **low level of civic engagement**. For instance, only 34% of Russians took part in several types of social activity, and only 57% in political activities.

The most **common forms of civic engagement were through homeowners’ associations and by participation in elections** as a voter. It is noteworthy that 26% of Russians believe that participation in public and political life will not change anything; while 31% cannot explain the reasons for their civil passivity. We should also say that **43% of respondents did not participate and are not going to participate** in public and political activities soon. However, it is also important to note that young people have a positive motivation for civic engagement, connected with **self-realization and self-expression**, gaining new experience and knowledge, and realizing the practical benefits of their actions. An example of such civic engagement, based on the possession of modern technology, is the **use of the Internet and the blogosphere**, which has seen a **sharp increase** in use recently, not only in Russia, but in other post-communist countries.

In conclusion, our surveys indicate that **Russian citizens, are shifting gradually from the formal loyalty to the state and its agencies** – which was typical for the former Soviet Union to a new form of civic knowledge and competence. This is a combination of **political knowledge** with the **practical skills** necessary for participation in public life.⁴⁸



Now complete [“Week 5: Russian Public Sphere”](#)



Remember to complete the **graded quiz** and the **peer-graded assignment** at the end of this section.

⁴⁸ WISERD, ‘Civic engagement in Russia’ (2017),
<https://blogs.cardiff.ac.uk/wiserd/2017/05/24/civic-engagement-in-russia/>



Watch [this interesting TEDx Talk](#) about civic engagement in the 21st century and have a think about how it relates to the situation in Russia.

Electronic Participation in Russia

Electronic participation is a **relatively new phenomena in all societies**, which means there is a limited amount of research on its impact and application. Electronic participation comes in many forms; the most commonly known and used is online petitions, or “**e-petitions**”. In recent years many governments have also looked into establishing **systems of online voting**. However, security concerns have prevented this being realised in most places.

‘The federal program “**Electronic Russia**” was designed to develop IT infrastructure in Russia. It was started in the beginning of 2000s. The key objectives were **implementation of information technology in public administration**, the development of **electronic government** and the construction of websites of governmental bodies and implementation of public services in electronic form. Finally, a crucial element for the democratic development and for making the regime more pluralistic and transparent: **implementation of transparency and accountability of the governmental bodies**. Development of electronic government was also one of the goals of administrative reform that was implemented at the same time. This administrative reform was started within the framework of Putin's reforms and there were several waves of implementation. Many researchers and experts agree that the administrative reform is still ongoing in Russia.

The most recent federal program to be implemented is the **Information Society**. This is the continuation of the previous federal program, and is divided into four sub-programs. These are, for example, **information and telecommunication infrastructure**, which is aimed to cope with the **digital gap** which still exists in Russia. Information environment, security information society, and finally **information state**. Nowadays, each citizen of Russia can get dozens of public services via Internet. The **Russian Public Initiative** is a web platform designed to **provide people with the opportunity to participate, at least with agenda setting**, at the very important stage of the **policy making process**. This was in some ways a response to the **productivity of Russian citizens and their electoral cycle 2011/2012**. Now anyone can upload their idea for social or political change onto this web platform. People who support this idea can then leave their signatures. The idea is that legislative initiatives can cover any kind of political or public policy issue at all levels of public administration and even municipal governance.⁴⁹



Now complete [“Week 5: Electronic Participation in Russia”](#)



Remember to complete the **graded quiz** and the **peer-graded assignment** at the end of this section.

⁴⁹ Alexander Sherstobitov, ‘[Electronic Participation in Russia](#)’



[This](#) video explains more about e-participation and e-democracy in general.

Social Policy in Russia

'Russia's difficult transition from communism has resulted in very significant social costs. Russian social policy was in **turmoil in the 1990s**. Problems of **poverty, inequality, unemployment and depopulation** have been compounded by a crisis of **social protection, the low effectiveness of social policy and the absence of deep structural changes in the welfare system**. The social impact of transition has taken different forms, some of which require urgent political action. Price liberalization in the early 1990s not only provoked gigantic price rises but also devalued the savings of most of the population - bringing about, in effect, the **large-scale redistribution of wealth in Russia**. Thus, the main outcome of the price liberalization process was not that people benefited from the flooding of the market with consumer goods but that they suffered a **fall in real incomes**, substantial polarization of society and a growth in poverty.

With the election of Putin as President in 2000, social policy issues have been **more widely and seriously discussed than before**. There has been a new '**social charter**' declared, in which the state proposes to keep away from business planning, and in return asks citizens to obey the law and pay their taxes in particular. Public commitment has been made to a **reduction of the very high income inequalities through better pensions**, the elimination of wages and benefit arrears, and the targeting of benefits on the poorest rather than the middle sectors. Similarly, there has been a recognition that **regional inequalities have grown rapidly** and should be tackled.

Unemployment in Russia has not expanded to the levels feared, or apparent in other transition societies. The official rate of unemployment as measured by registration **never exceeded 3-4 per cent**; the actual unemployment as measured by the International Labour Organisation was also low - 5% as a maximum by the end of 1990s. The problem here is that in starting to move towards a market economy, Russian reformers 'made allowances for' social effects as these applied to employment issues, but in a very particular way. On the macroeconomic level, they consciously **chose a strategy of supporting inefficient producers, in the aim of preventing mass redundancies**. This led to the formation of **high levels of hidden unemployment**. Practically no other country with an economy in transformation has seen anything develop on the scale of the hidden unemployment phenomenon in the Russian Federation.'⁵⁰



Now complete ["Week 6: Inclusive Economic Growth: Challenges for Public Policy"](#)



Remember to complete the **graded quiz** and the **final quiz** at the end of this section.

⁵⁰ International Encyclopedia of Social Policy, 'Russian Federation', <http://cw.routledge.com/ref/socialpolicy/russian.html>



[This](#) is a very informative source about the history of Russia's social policy since the collapse of the USSR.

The Future of Public Policy Governance

The challenges and risks require not just a response, but also an advanced treatment, that means, moving from a reactive to proactive policy. Reduction in social expenses, caused by financial crises, **should not be accompanied by a decline in the quantity and quality of public service**. Citizens are not only consumers of public services, but also **participants in public policy and co-producer of public services**. Moreover, an evaluation of government performance is an important tool that can serve as an **incentive for development**.

There are **three possible models of change**. All three models are based on the proposed strategies for economic growths. The first, the creation of the **state as a developmental institution**, aims to separate development management from administration of current functioning. To achieve this, a **Reform Headquarters** will be established, which should play the role of delivery unit, organizer, conductor and coordinator of the growth in the country. In addition, a system of **budget programming and indicative planning** will be implemented. New information technology based on **big data** should be used in strategic management to create an effective project management system for development to ensure the stability of financing priority state programs.

The second project, sees the state as a platform. The main idea here is that modern technologies will, in the near future, create an environment or a **high-tech digital platform for public administration**, that will ensure the minimization of the human factor and the attendant **corruption and mistakes in public policy** and administration. This links into the previous section about e-participation and e-democracy. The main principles of this approach are that goals are more important than functions; the customer (the people) defines the process of public policy.

The final project sees the state as a collaboration. The key principle of this concept is that public administration is the governance of people, more than of structures and systems. Governance based on the human factor, leadership and cooperation is the main factor of successful development. For this, Russia needs to look to **crowdsourcing for setting agenda** in public policy. **Trust and teamwork is the base for effective governance**. For example, Russia needs open governance, a plan to develop **citizen-government collaboration** in different fields of public policy and to construct **joint responsibility** through organizational network and other learning.

It is clear that the development of public administration, which will meet the challenges of justice development and improvement of the social welfare level, requires not only **participatory institutions, but also participatory culture**. In the era of international **economic markets and globalization**, the **role of the state** is more crucial than ever before. The Russian government must focus on creating the initial conditions for **capturing the benefits of globalization**, about managing the **process of integration** into the growth of economy - in terms of pace and sequences - about providing social protection and other issues. In sum, governments need to **regulate and compliment markets** in order to make them people

friendly. The reason is simple: **governments are accountable to people, whereas market are not.**



Now complete [“Week 6: Russian Governance of Public Policy”](#)



Remember to complete the **graded quiz** and the **final quiz** at the end of this section.



Using what you have learnt in this module, what do you consider to be the biggest hurdle for the development of Russian public governance?

Chapter 5 - Chinese Politics: China and Political Science

The [final course in this module](#) offers a conceptual framework for understanding China that highlights the intersection of politics and economics. It shows that rather than develop into a full blown market economy, state and party officials at all levels of the political system maintain significant influence in economic development. Such a “political” economy has had both positive and negative outcomes, which we will assess in detail. You will also look at the origins, views, backgrounds and relations among leaders, and how those leaders make decisions about public policy and try to get those decisions implemented down through the system. China has few formal institutions through which citizens can participate in politics, but we will study the strategies Chinese people use to try to influence their leaders’ decisions.

Models of the Chinese Political System and the Structure of the Chinese Party/State

‘Between 1993 and 1995, as Beijing further **liberalized markets**, the county government **privatized collective enterprises** en masse. Although the lack of private property rights had not prevented industrial production from taking off, it had hindered business expansion. By facilitating privatization and refraining from intervening directly in the economy, local officials supported the **emergence of the county’s first generation of private entrepreneurs**, several of whom went on to become globally competitive corporate titans. This second snapshot validates “the Washington Consensus,” the belief that private property rights and a limited government are the necessary preconditions for economic growth.

Moving into the first decade of this century, as **local industries flourished**, the county became congested and chaotic. This led private businesses to call for government intervention to **coordinate the zoning of various industries and provide urban planning**. To do so, the local leadership had to **relocate factories and residents**, sometimes through coercion. But this forceful step created a new business district in the heart of the county, where companies could congregate. This move stimulated the **spread of services such as financial management and marketing** that helped industries upgrade. It also vastly improved traffic and the quality of residential life. Such extensive measures took the county’s prosperity to a new level, not simply by increasing production but by **transforming the economy’s structure**. A snapshot from 2000 to 2010 provides evidence for the theory that **heavy-handed state intervention and planning can spur economic growth**.

In one small area of China with a population of less than a million people, it is possible to observe three radically different models of development, each of which played an important role in the area’s economic and social transformation.’⁵¹



Now complete [“Week 1: Models of the Chinese Political System and the Structure of the Chinese Party/State”](#)

⁵¹ Yuen Yuen Ang (2018), ‘The Real China Model: It’s Not What You Think It Is’, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/asia/2018-06-29/real-china-model>



Remember to complete the **readings** and **graded quiz** in this section.



[Here](#) is an article about the Chinese political system.

Elite Politics in China

'Every five years, the eyes of the world turn to China as the ruling Communist Party holds its congress. The event **determines who will lead the Party**. Those people will go on to lead the 1.3 billion people of China - most of whom don't get a say - and helm the world's second largest economy. The 19th congress was expected to see significant leadership changes but current Party leader and Chinese President Xi Jinping was widely expected to stay in the top job - which indeed he did.

What does the congress do?

The Communist Party of China (CPC) delegates from across China meet every five years at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. The party has **2,300 delegates** - although only 2,287 have been elected to attend, with reports suggesting the remaining 13 delegates were disqualified because of "improper behaviour". **Behind closed doors**, those CPC delegates will **elect the powerful Central Committee, which has about 200 members**. This committee in turn elects the Politburo and from that, the Politburo Standing Committee is chosen.

Those are China's real decision-making bodies. The **Politburo currently has 24 members**, while the **Standing Committee has seven**, although these numbers have varied over the years. While there is a vote, in reality many of these people have already been **handpicked by the current leadership**, and the committee just approves their edict. The Central Committee also elects the Party's top leader - the general secretary - who becomes the country's president. That is, and will most likely continue to be the current leader, Xi Jinping.⁵²



Now complete ["Week 2: Elite Politics in China"](#)



Remember to complete the **discussion prompts** and **graded quiz** in this section.



[This](#) is a short video about how the Chinese government works.

Policy Process in China

In many ways, policymaking in China is similar to that in other large countries. New policies are **proposed, drafted, distributed for consultation and vetted before implementation**.

⁵² BBC News (2017), 'Communist Party congress: How China picks its leaders', <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-41250273>

Additionally, **central-government policy initiatives frequently take on different characteristics at sub-national levels**, where local conditions and interest groups result in the creation of unique policy environments. Nevertheless, policymaking in China has several special characteristics:

- Full control of the Communist Party bureaucracy, which overlaps with the government bureaucracy;
- The leadership's tendency to take a back seat in policymaking and focus on decision making;
- A policy deliberation and consultation process that frequently lacks in transparency;
- A strong focus on achieving consensus before making policy announcements; and
- Continued reliance on official planning documents, such as five-year plans for policy guidance and benchmarking.

The three most important bodies in the policy-making process are:

Politburo Standing Committee (PSC)

- The ultimate decision-making body within the Communist Party of China (CPC)
- Includes the President, the Premier, the Chairman of the National People's Congress (NPC), the head of Party discipline and other senior CPC officials
- Technically not part of the government, although, through the Premier, it holds sway over the government bureaucracy, which is made up almost entirely of CPC members subject to Party discipline
- May set policy directions as well as debate and decide on key policy initiatives proposed by the government
- Makes consensus-based, non-transparent decisions.

State Council

- The highest body in the government bureaucracy
- Includes the Premier, Vice-Premiers, State Councilors, and the heads of China's ministries and commissions
- Initiates important policies and decides on key policy objectives, a power it shares with the NPC.

National People's Congress (NPC)

- China's highest legislative body
- Votes on important policy initiatives, such as government restructurings and national five-year plans
- Frequently overshadowed by the State Council in the policy-approval process.⁵³



Now complete [“Week 3: Policy Process in China”](#)



Remember to complete the **discussion prompts and graded quiz** in this section.

⁵³ Kreab Gavin Anderson, 'How Policies are "Made in China"', <https://facingchinadotme.files.wordpress.com/2013/06/policymaking-in-china.pdf>



[Here](#) is a video about the influence of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) on political policy.

Understanding Societal Engagement in Politics in China

'The current transformation of community governance in China. At present, the main problem that China's urban and rural communities are faced with is **governance transformation**. In order to form the cooperative governance structure of multiple participants, the critical path is **institutionalization, rule of law and ordering of citizen participation**. This report by [Fang Ning \(2016\)](#) explains these issues and new practices, including the **problems and challenges of communities' governance transformation**, the problems of **political participation in rural community governance**, the new development of governance participants in urban communities, the reform of urban management system at the basic level. In the end, it argues that **political participation is crucial to establish local governance system** and structure with multiple participants, which is an important part of **modernization** of national governance.

China's fundamental political system, and better **absorbing citizens' orderly participation**, has been one of the significant issues of current political participation in China. The report analyzes and explains some important practice of institution innovation and some important forms of participation, such as **improving the mechanism for deputies to maintain contact with the people**, practical exploration of citizen participation in local people's Congresses legislation, and so on. Then it is concluded that **innovation and practice of the system of people's congresses is the key to strengthen the institutionalized political participation** in China.

New forms of political participation such as **network political participation**, and new **participating groups such as rural migrant workers**, have been an essential part of Chinese **socialist democracy** development. This report has made a full and systematic review and analysis for these fresh forms and groups of political participation. It shows that it is **vital to enhance these newly emerged forms and participation of new social groups in accordance with the law**, in a systemic way by adopting due standards and procedures. And these are new features and new driving force of political participation in contemporary China.

The development and practice of **intra-party democracy and consultative democracy** is a significant part of **strengthening institutions'** development for political participation. Party members actively participate in the internal political activities of their party, and this is important source of creative vitality for the Communist Party of China. It is a project to **promote the implementation of party members' rights to participate** in the internal political activities or affairs of party, so this is related to many aspects of party building. **Consultative democracy is a modern form of democratic governance** and participation. **Deliberative democracy** may improve quality of legalization and policy, advance legalization of

decision-making, and cultivate civic spirit, which at present plays an active role to propel the development of China's socialist democracy.⁵⁴



Now complete [“Week 4: Understanding Societal Engagement in Politics in China”](#)



Remember to complete the **readings** and **graded quiz** in this section.



[This](#) is an interesting opinion article about the effect of China's political culture on the country's economy.

China's Domestic Political Economy

'Reforms in China **developed gradually**, starting in the rural areas with the **household responsibility system and township and village enterprises**. Steps to open the economy to foreign trade and investment only started to play a significant role in the **1990s**. Financial sector and **State-Owned Enterprises (SOE) reform was also gradual**, gaining momentum only in the mid-1990s. The country's motto was "Crossing the river by feeling the stones," denoting **partial reforms in an experimental manner**, often starting in a few regions, and expanding them upon proven success. A broader strategy emerged only in 1993, with the **Decisions of the 3rd Plenum of the 14th Central Committee**, but this too was implemented gradually.

In addition to being a means to find solutions suitable to China, **experimentation and gradualism was a means to circumvent political resistance against reforms**. Many in the Communist Party retained a deep suspicion of the market. Gradual experimental reform was also a pragmatic approach in a heavily distorted environment in which "first best" solutions were unlikely to apply. Experimental reforms, confined to specific regions or sectors, allowed the authorities to **gather information on the unanticipated effects of reforms**. They were also able to develop and test the administrative procedures and complementary policies needed to implement the reforms. Success meant the experiment could be expanded to other regions and sectors.

Finally, experimental reform also saved reformers from 'losing face'. **An experiment that did not work could be abandoned rather than condemned as a policy failure**. The strategy reinforced the credibility of reform over time. By making reforms one step at a time, and starting with those most likely to deliver results, the government built up its reputation for delivery. Every successful reform helped the next one. This also built up experience and skills for the design and implementation of reforms, gradually China to build up its "reform" capital. **Decentralization of authority** became a powerful tool. The provinces and local governments received **increasing authority over investment approvals, fiscal resources, and policies**. Provinces, municipalities and even counties were allowed, even encouraged, to experiment with reforms. Successful experiments became official policy and were quickly adopted throughout the country. By decentralizing, China turned the country into a laboratory for reforms.

⁵⁴ Fang Ning, 'Annual Report on Political Participation in China (2016)', http://www.ssapchina.com/ssapzx/c_00000009000200010008/d_1426.htm

A very effective hybrid institution was the **Township and Village Enterprise (TVE)**. This type of enterprise form operated outside the plan, but was owned and, to some extent, managed by local governments. These enterprises **expanded production and created jobs**. As private property was frowned upon and hardly protected by law, creating an **ownership form that aligned the interests of the local government with that of the enterprise was crucial**. Once private property became more acceptable, most of the TVEs were overtaken by private and foreign-invested companies as the main source of growth and job creation. Increasingly, TVEs are being turned into private companies.⁵⁵



Now complete [“Week 5: China’s Domestic and International Political Economy”](#)



Remember to complete the **reading** and **peer-graded assignment** in this section.



[Here](#) is a very interesting video about China’s apparent plan to re-route global trade. Do you agree with the arguments in the video?

China’s Political Future

‘The economic reforms China needs now **presuppose political reform**; but those reforms are hampered by fears of the social repercussions. If China is to avoid economic decline, it will have to **overhaul its governance system** - and the philosophy that underpins it - without triggering excessive social instability.

The good news is that China has a promising track record on this front. After all, it was a **fundamental ideological shift that enabled China’s 35-year-long economic boom**. That shift emphasized economic development above all else, with the champions of growth being protected, promoted, and, if necessary, pardoned.

A similar ideological shift is needed today, only this time **the focus must be on institutional development**. Sustainable **long-term growth** – based on efficiency improvements, productivity gains, and **innovation** – is possible only with an effective institutional framework, and that requires **fundamental changes to the political and regulatory systems**. Only by overcoming vested interests and building a **more efficient bureaucracy**, bound firmly by the rule of law, can the reforms China needs be pushed through.

Complicating matters further are **mounting social conflicts**, such as between **urban and rural populations**, among industries, and between the private and state sectors. The potential for mass protests and civil unrest is now **hampering the government’s determination to create change**. But with a concerted effort to create a **level playing field** that gives more people a bigger piece of the economic pie, not to mention more transparent governance and a stronger

⁵⁵ Bert Hofman (2018), ‘Reflections on forty years of China’s reforms’, <http://blogs.worldbank.org/eastasiapacific/reflections-on-forty-years-of-china-reforms>

social safety net, China's government could reinforce its legitimacy and credibility. That, in turn, would **strengthen the authorities' capacity to ensure stability**.⁵⁶



Now complete [“Week 6: China’s Future: Democratization or “Flexible Authoritarianism”](#)”



Remember to complete the **discussion prompt** and **graded quiz** in this section. Please also ensure that you complete the [final quiz](#) and **course evaluation**.



[Here](#) is an opinion article about what needs to change in Chinese politics, according to one academic.

**Congratulations! You have now completed
Kiron's Comparative Politics module!**

⁵⁶ Kenyu Jin Keyu (2016), 'Why China's economic future depends on political reform', <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/02/why-chinas-economic-future-depends-on-political-reform>

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