

Slido Check-In

- **Edit your profile** with your name (icon in top right corner)
- Answer the **poll questions**
- Feel free to type any questions you have at any point during the lesson in the **Q&A**



Democracy

- "**Rule** (krates) by the **people** (demos)"
- **Popular sovereignty**: final authority in the state belongs to the people – government is **only legitimate if based on the wishes or consent** of the people
- Full political rights typically restricted to adult citizens who meet certain conditions e.g. not mentally unsound or incarcerated

(Harris, 2001)

Types of Democracy

- **Direct vs. Representative**

(Democracy p. 5)

- **Westminster** (“majority”) vs. **consociational** (“consensus”)

(Governments, systems & regimes p. 34)

- **Liberal vs. Illiberal** (a.k.a. **flawed** or **hybrid**)

(Politics & government p. 7-8)

What Makes a Country Democratic?

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1. Citizens are **able to participate** in the political process and **hold governments accountable** through
 - **Voting** to choose representatives (elections) or decide on laws and policy issues (referendums) in a process that is **free and fair**
 - Forming and joining political parties and contesting the government by running for office (**political opposition**)
 - **Limiting government power** through separation of powers, checks and balances, and term limits (with regular elections)

What Makes a Country Democratic?

2. Citizens are **aware of their political reality** and **can make informed choices** because of
 - Protected **individual rights** (civil and political) that allow for the expression of political ideas
 - An **independent media** that is free from government control
 - A healthy **civil society** that allows for the articulation and pursuit of specific interests

Features of Democracy

- Elections
- Political opposition
- Limits on government power

PARTICIPATION

- Protected rights
- Independent media
- Civil society

INFORMATION

Elections

- Citizens can vote in **elections** to **choose political representatives** who make decisions on their behalf (e.g. parliamentary and presidential elections)
- Votes can also be directly cast on particular political questions/issues – **referendums** (e.g. merger, Brexit)

Elections

- In elections that are **free and fair**,
 - The **government does not interfere** (with fake ballots, deliberate miscounts, forced/bought votes etc.)
 - The **right to vote** is extended to as many adult citizens with as few legal restrictions as possible (i.e. **universal suffrage**)
 - There are **equal opportunities to contest** the election (running for office, campaigning, etc.)



Political Opposition

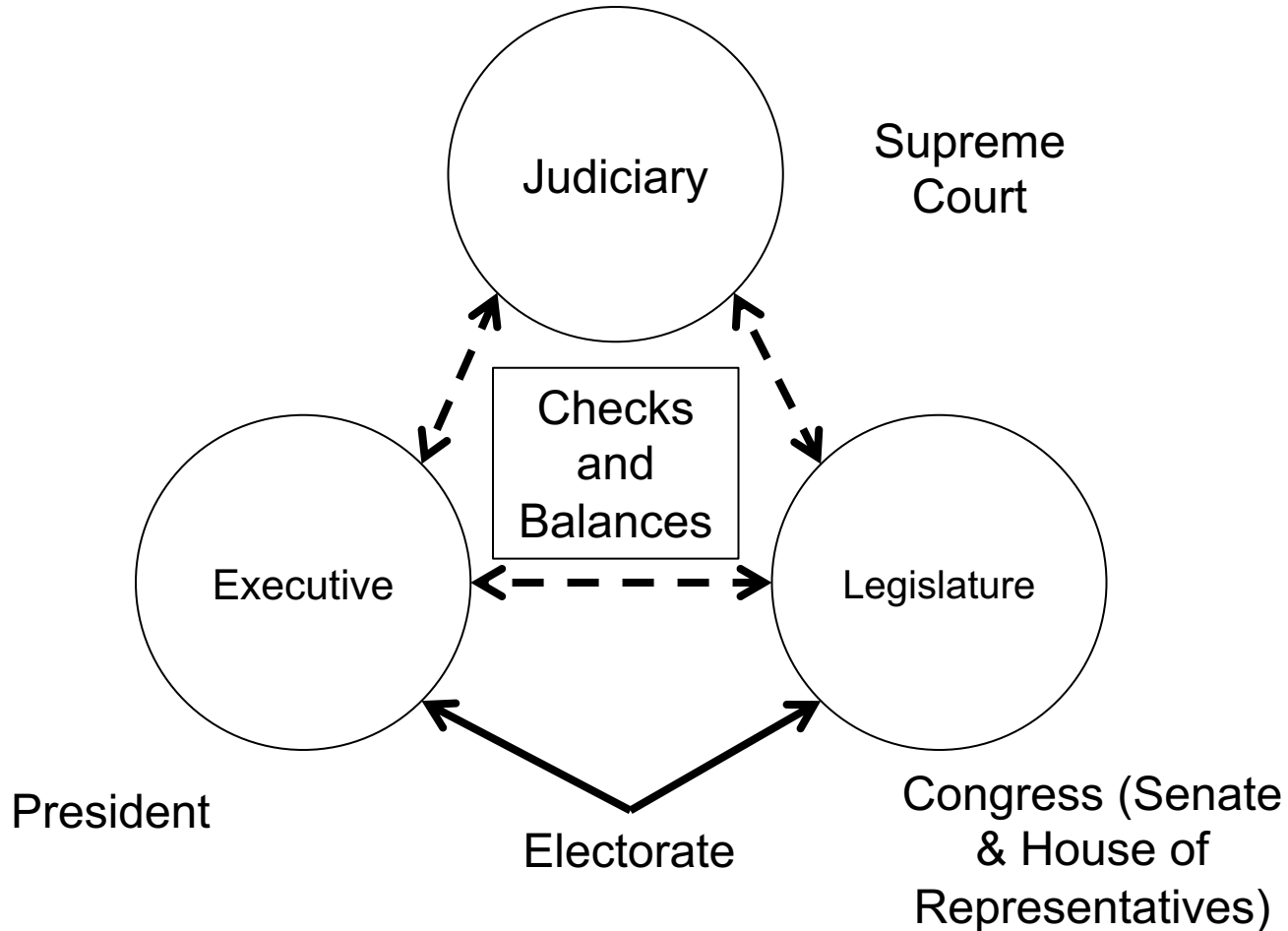
- Citizens are free to **join political parties** and **run for public office** subject to legal requirements (usually similar to voting eligibility)
- **Multiple political parties exist** to represent various political views in government



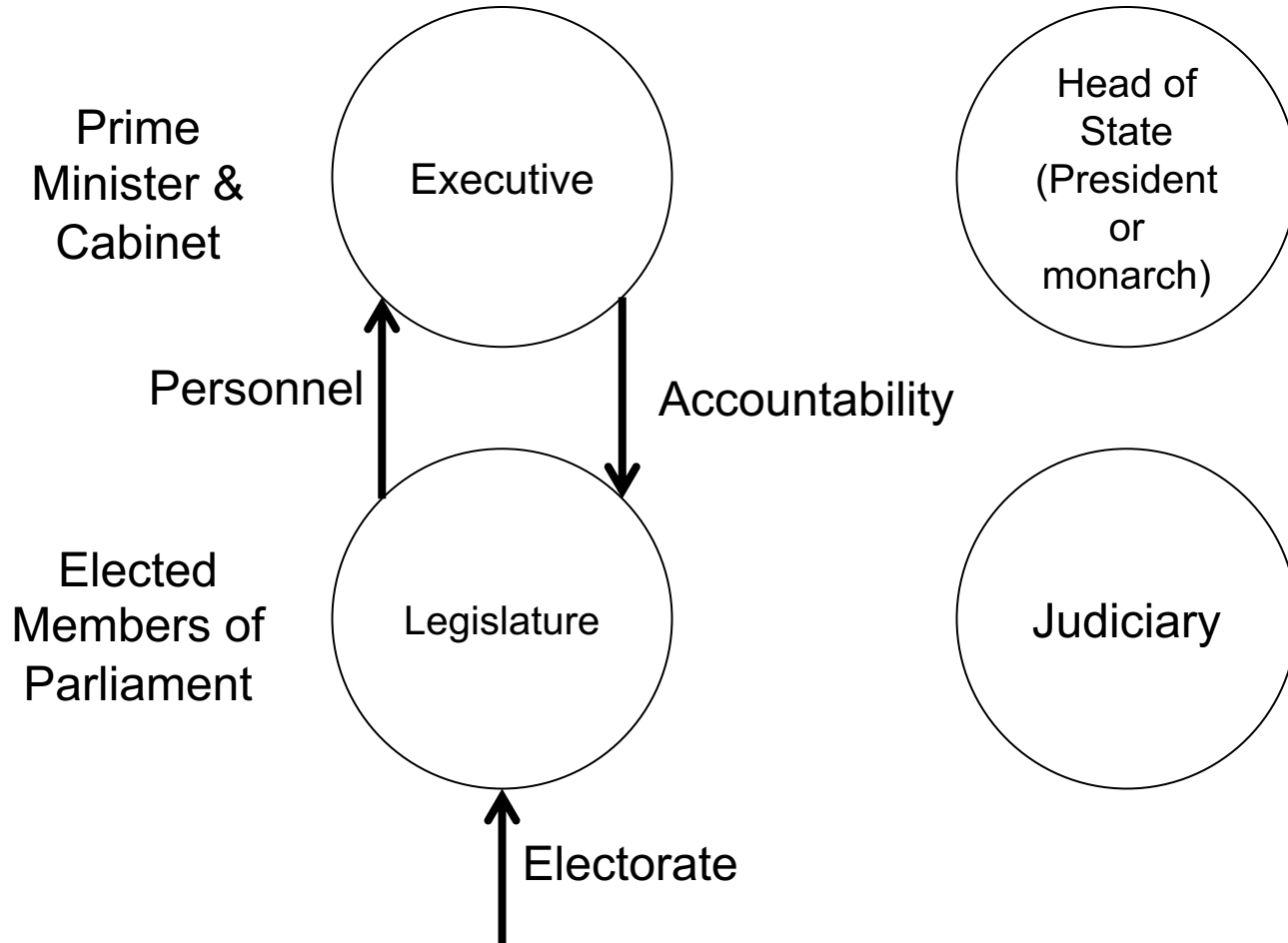
Limits on Government Power

- Different functions of government are entrusted to separate branches to fragment government power
- This **separation of powers** with accompanying **checks and balances** on each others' powers ensures that to and prevent any one individual or group from **gaining complete control** of the government
- **Term limits** (fixed or renewable) also ensure that elected officials **cannot remain in power indefinitely**

Presidential System of Government (e.g. USA)



Parliamentary System of Government (e.g. UK)



Protected Rights

- Civil and political **rights and freedoms** (freedoms of speech, assembly, movement, religion, etc.) are **protected by law**
- Citizens can **express** their political opinions (especially those critical of the govt.) and thus participate in the political process



Independent Media

- Mass media networks and outlets (newspapers, radio, TV, online news and social media) are **independent of the government and free to report** on politics and even criticize the government
- Citizens have **access to information** about their political reality from sources outside the government



Civil Society

- A social sphere separate from both the state and the market
- Includes all organisations that occupy the “social space” between the family and state, excluding political parties and firms
- Term may include certain businesses and for-profit associations

(WHO, 2014)

Civil Society

- A thriving civil society that is free from government control allows citizens to **take collective action** to **articulate their interests** – especially those of minority groups – and **pressure the government** to address them (e.g. climate change activism)



Next Lesson & Homework

- Next lesson
 - Comparing features of democracy – most essential?
- Homework
 - Go to **tinyurl.com/3ess190821**
 - Read and complete the instructions by the next lesson



Slido Check-Out

- Answer the poll question
- Write any questions you still have in the Q&A – answers will be given directly on this Slido event (open until end of term)

