



## Elections alone do not constitute a democracy! ①

Democracy is not a protected notion. The German Democratic Republic (GDR, 1950-1991), for example, was not a democracy even though the name of the state explicitly suggests this. The GDR was a dictatorship, an authoritarian regime. Political power was held by one party alone, the SED (Socialist Unity Party of Germany). Free elections, freedom of opinion and political opposition did not exist.



### **This is what characterises a democratic regime:**

- Free and fair elections
- Party diversity
- Free and equal access to political power
- Protection of minorities
- Tolerance of a political opposition
- Respect for the separation of powers (executive, legislative, judiciary)
- Respect for the rule of law
- Respect for fundamental rights and freedoms
- Impartial, fair, reliable public administration
- Strong civil society and opportunities for political participation
- Free press



### **That is what characterises an authoritarian regime:**



## Elections alone do not constitute a democracy! ②

- Find an up-to-date map of the world's democratic and authoritarian regimes, e.g. [freedomhouse.org](https://www.freedomhouse.org) or [economist.com](https://www.economist.com) (Economist democracy index). Take a close look at them.
  - How are democratic and authoritarian regimes dispersed on the world map?
  - What are possible explanations for this?
  - What are the prerequisites for a vibrant democracy?
  - How is Luxembourg classified? What might be the reasons?
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- Pick a nation! Find out how the electoral process works and who is involved by using the following questions.

Elections attributes	Yes	No
Are several parties/candidates eligible?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are the elections considered free?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are the elections conducted using secret ballots?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Can the individual parties/candidates express their opinions freely?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is there compulsory voting?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do the elections take place at regular intervals?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is there a regular change of power (changing governments/coalitions)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is political opposition tolerated?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Are all citizens of legal age in the population entitled to vote?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In terms of voter turnout: Is the election result representative?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

