

duerchbléck!

Supplementary Material
A look at the elections

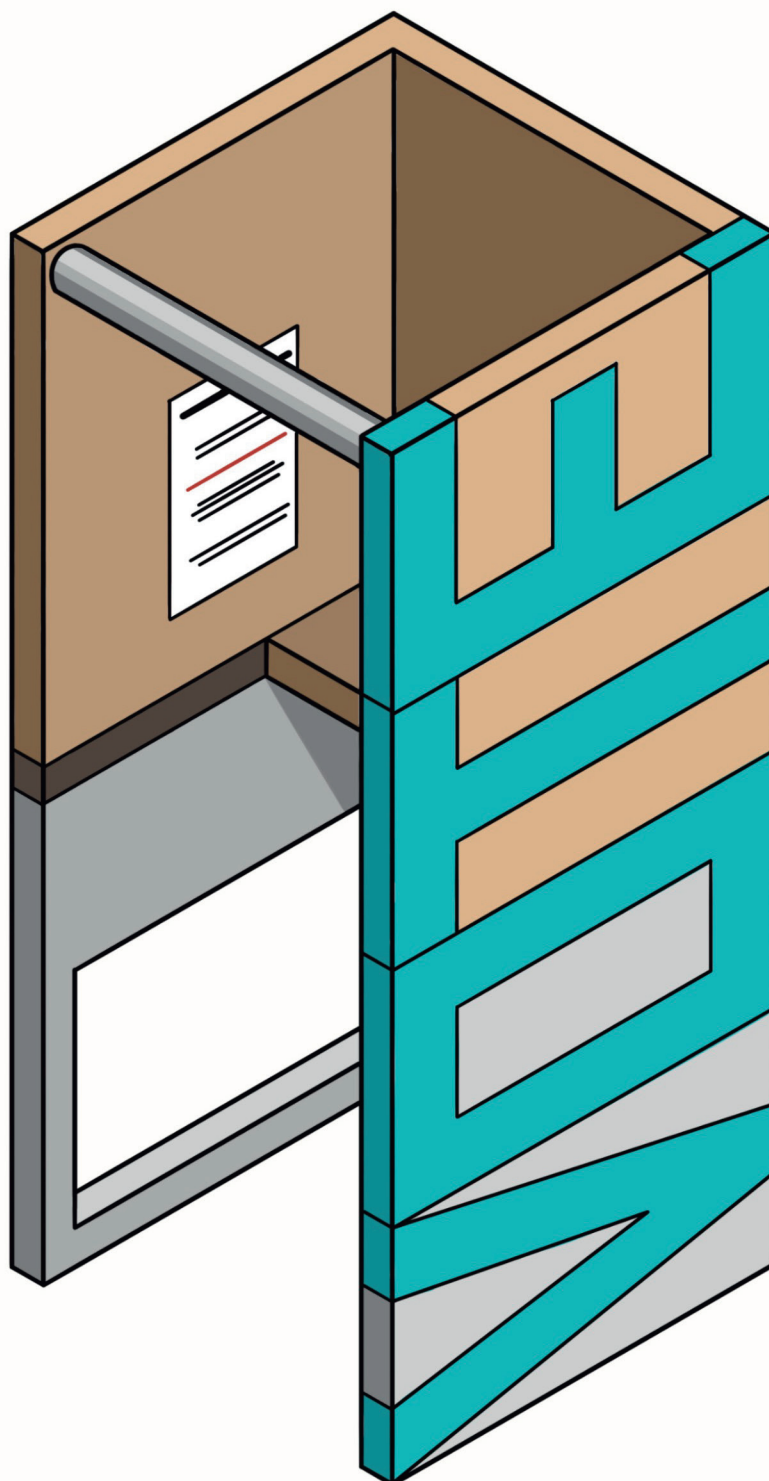


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Why vote?

Are you going to vote?

Is compulsory voting democratic?

Who represents me?

Participating in Politics

School project: *Mock elections*

Participation wanted! But how ...?

Voting at 16?

Political Communication

Understanding political communication

Political communication – Your turn!

Elections and Democracy

Democracy Bingo

Voting is just not the same

Elections alone do not constitute a democracy!

Voting differently



Teacher



Class

Cover design:
Leonie Thill
*Lycée classique
d'Echternach*



Are you going to vote?

Free and secret elections are an integral and fundamental part of a democracy, but many democratic countries are struggling with disinterest, disenchantment with politics and a lack of trust, which often is displayed through falling voter turnout. The aim of this exercise is to take a look at elections, compulsory voting and voter turnout, and to practise argumentation. The exercise prepares students for the following role play.

Procedure for the argumentation exercise:

Students take on the role of democracy activists and practise argumentation on the topic of voting in general. They deal with the following topic: Do you vote? Each person draws a comments card, stands in front of the class and reads it out loud. The class then reflects together about how democracy activists would react to this statement. Will they approve or disagree? What counter-argument, if any, can be formulated? Students can also do research to formulate a response.

Role play procedure:

Character cards are distributed to the class: There are two equal groups.

- People who are convinced of the meaning and purpose of municipal or legislative elections.
- Passers-by who are approached by the democracy activists. The passers-by should stick to their role during the conversations, but they can develop it.

The passers-by also draw one of the comments cards discussed in advance. They are asked to express this opinion during the conversation. They can also change their opinion if their counterpart brings up a good argument.

The teacher plays music. Students move around the classroom until the music stops. Everyone seeks out a conversation partner. When the music stops again, they all look for a new interlocutor.

Alternative discussion method - speed dating:

Set up chairs with an inner and an outer circle and an even number of seats. Discussion takes place in pairs. At the instructor's signal, the outer circle moves one chair to the right and the inner circle one chair to the left. The following questions help to evaluate the simulation:

- What problems have come up? Did the argumentation training help you?
- Which arguments do you remember or think are good? Gather them on the board or on a poster.



Note: The group should familiarise themselves with Luxembourg electoral law in advance. Also talk to the class about the responsibilities of a municipality so that they can address issues that may be of interest to passers-by. French and German worksheets can be found in the first (*Municipalities and Elections*) and second (*Legislative Elections*) editions of *duerchbléck!*.

PASSER
8

You are 27 years old in Luxembourg for 1 are not from the EU voted. There are elections in your home country, but only tick one name if are rigged anyway. I are not interested if really need or want asked for your opinion like to talk about politics know who is listening you say could be helpful your friend



<https://zpb.lu/duerchbleck/>



Opinion cards

“



I don't trust the election results. I'm sure they are falsified.

“

Everything is fine the way it is. I don't need to vote.

“

My freedoms are important to me, but elections do not affect me.

“

I think it's good that there is compulsory voting.

“

You can't say what you think anymore anyway. Therefore, I won't vote anymore.

“

I am powerless. I cannot change anything.

“

I don't want to get up on Sunday morning to vote.

“

I actually like to have a say in what happens in my neighbourhood/ community.

“

In a community, all members should help.

“

Everyone else is voting, I don't have to.



Opinion cards

“

Everyone for themselves.

“

Politics is a dirty business.

“

I'm only in Luxembourg temporarily. I expect to return to my home country. Voting should be for people who want to stay here forever.

“

Those in power do what they want anyway.

“

It is my right to not want to vote. Compulsory voting restricts my freedom.

“

Someone like me is not in charge here anyway. So why vote?

“

A lively democracy needs people who are committed to it.

“

It doesn't matter who you vote for. They're all the same.

“

I don't know the parties and the debates are in Luxembourgish. It's impossible for me to find out who to vote for.

“

I don't know any politicians. I don't know who to vote for.



Character cards



DEMOCRACY ACTIVIST

You are convinced that elections are the only way to change something without resorting to violence in your community or country. There are enough countries where there are no democratic elections, so you think that voting is not only a right but a moral duty. You have certain concerns that you want to raise, and areas where you also hope to see changes in politics. Of course, you are actively involved in the life of your community, neighbourhood or village, e.g. you are involved in associations.

List a few of the issues you care about and which you can use as examples in the conversation:

PASSER-BY

2

You are 29 years old, married, live in a village and work at a public administration in Luxembourg City. You have two children who go to primary school and childcare centres in your community.

Unfortunately, both facilities are in the neighbouring village, which is inconvenient. When reading the news, you are interested in topics like the economy, immigration and

security.

PASSER-BY

1

You are 21 years old, born in Luxembourg and live in a city in the North. You have not yet voted in any elections. You are a member of the volunteer fire brigade and active in the local basketball club. You are also interested in cycling, cinema and hiking. You are currently studying sports education in Cologne. You only come to Luxembourg City occasionally, on weekends. You are concerned about where you will work later and whether you will be able to afford a flat.

PASSER-BY

3

You are 20 years old and were born in France. You live with your family in a city in the Minett. You went to primary and secondary school in Luxembourg and you will complete your education here. Your parents never voted in an election in Luxembourg because they did not feel affected. Since they never really learned Luxembourgish, they felt excluded from political discussions in the media or even among neighbours. So far, you haven't thought about elections. Your mother always votes in French presidential elections. Maybe you want to do the same.



Character cards

PASSER-BY

4

You are 31 years old, single and work at a bank. You are from Sweden. You've lived in Luxembourg for five years,. You work in Kirchberg. You came to Luxembourg because the job pays well. You had hardly heard of the country before. You like living here, but you are not sure whether you will stay here or take a job in another country. You like to cycle to work and to explore bicycle paths in your free time. You are used to not needing a car for everyday life because it was like that in other cities. Apart from that, you are interested in going out, vegan food, theatre and art. You like shopping and you think there should be more small, independent shops instead of shopping malls on the outskirts.

PASSER-BY

5

You were born in Luxembourg and are a Spanish citizen. You are 28 years old, but you haven't participated in an election yet, either in Spain or in Luxembourg, apart from the elections for the student committee, which you were a member of at your school for four years. In your free time, you enjoy sports and cultural activities like going to museums and music festivals in your city. Together with your partner you are thinking about having a child. That's why concerns about your salary, working hours, childcare, job security, school and safety have been playing a bigger role in your life lately.

PASSER-BY

6

You are 18 years old, a Portuguese citizen and still at school. You are thinking about the future, whether you should study or pursue an apprenticeship. In general you doubt that politicians are seriously interested in fighting climate change. You ask yourself what you can actually do as an individual. You like to skateboard in your free time. You think it is a pity that there is no youth centre in your community and that there are hardly any other leisure activities.



Character cards

PASSER-BY

7

You live in Luxembourg City, are 48 years old and are in a stable relationship. You refused to vote in the last elections, in protest. What bothers you most is that you can never find parking spaces in the city centre. It was different in the past. Yet most flats in the centre today are not occupied, while housing prices continue to rise unchecked. And you don't really like the noise outside cafés and clubs on weekends, especially in good weather, late in the evening or even at night. You spend your free time walking your dog. Every year you help organise the neighbourhood festival in your neighbourhood.

PASSER-BY

8

You are 27 years old and have lived in Luxembourg for five years. You are not from the EU and have never voted. There are elections in your home country, but either you can only tick one name or the elections are rigged anyway. Those in power are not interested in what people really need or want. You are never asked for your opinion. You don't like to talk about politics. You never know who is listening and anything you say could be harmful to you or your family.

PASSER-BY

9

You are 19 years old, have dual citizenship and don't really want to get into politics. You have no idea what you want to do after school and you are not particularly interested in any subject. You don't think politics affects you personally. The main thing is to chill! You like your mobile phone, social media and meeting friends.



Is compulsory voting democratic?

The electoral systems in the various democratic states differ greatly. What democracies have in common, however, is that they only get infused with life and accepted through active participation, especially through the voter turnout of the citizens. In Luxembourg, Belgium, Liechtenstein and Australia, voting is compulsory for all citizens who have the right to vote. Neighbouring countries such as Germany or France, on the other hand, do not have compulsory voting.

What are the arguments for or against compulsory voting?

- Read the individual arguments and try to find examples to illustrate them.
- What other arguments are there? Think especially of the situation in Luxembourg.
- Tick the three arguments that are most important to you personally.

For compulsory voting

- All citizens should take responsibility for the state and democracy by voting.
- The more people vote, the more likely it will be that the future parliament will represent the wishes of the majority.
- People discuss important political issues before the election.
- High voter turnout makes extremist parties less influential.
- Not voting means supporting the opinion of active voters.

Against compulsory voting

- Voting is a civil liberty. Freedom also means being able to choose not to vote.
- People who do not vote often do so in protest against political decisions or the ruling parties. Compulsory voting kills this protest vote.
- Since elections are conducted with secret ballots, a person who does not actually want to vote can cast a blank or invalid ballot.
- Those who do not want to vote but still have to could vote randomly if voting were compulsory. This could distort the election results.

Source: Wahlrecht oder Wahlpflicht in einer Demokratie? | Politik für Kinder, einfach erklärt - HanisauLand.de (amended and shortened) (last access: 28.11.2022)

For experts:

- Preparation: Form groups of four (pro and con) and collect facts, figures and arguments for or against compulsory voting in democracies.
- Execution: You compete against each other in two teams. The other groups form the audience.
- Result: After the discussions, vote on whether you are for or against compulsory voting in Luxembourg. You can vote either online and anonymously or by lining up on a specific side in the classroom.



Who represents me?

Citizens elect representatives (deputies) who then pass the laws in parliament on their behalf. The right to vote and to stand as a candidate in parliamentary elections is linked to Luxembourg nationality and the age of majority for voters. According to the Constitution, the deputies represent the general public interest when voting.

Accordingly, they are expected to represent all people, not just those who elected them. At the same time, deputies are usually members of a political party and run for election in constituencies. So what does 'representation' mean in practice? Which characteristics are decisive in electing representatives?

M1

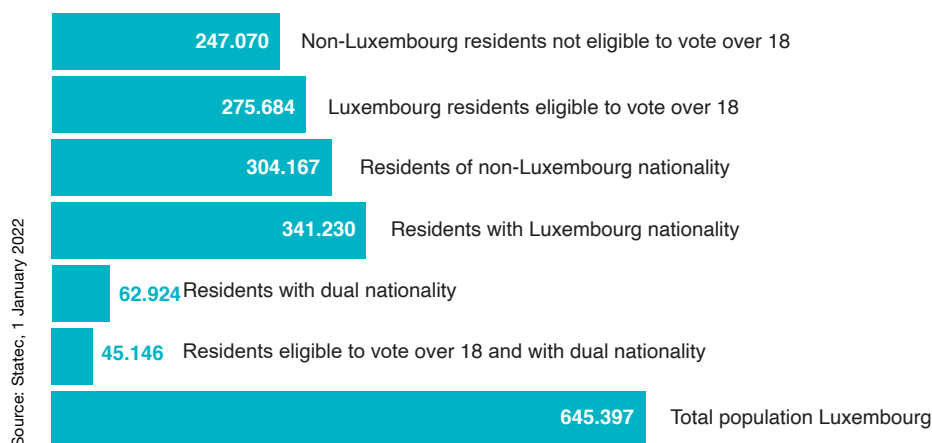
What is important to you in a deputy?	not at all important	very important
Gender	1 ————— 5 ————— 10	
Age	1 ————— 5 ————— 10	
Profession	1 ————— 5 ————— 10	
Education and training	1 ————— 5 ————— 10	
Family situation	1 ————— 5 ————— 10	
Sexual orientation	1 ————— 5 ————— 10	
Party affiliation	1 ————— 5 ————— 10	
Nationality	1 ————— 5 ————— 10	
High Profile	1 ————— 5 ————— 10	
Appearance	1 ————— 5 ————— 10	
Charisma	1 ————— 5 ————— 10	
Skills/education	1 ————— 5 ————— 10	
Knowledge of topics that are important to you	1 ————— 5 ————— 10	
Knowledge of all topics	1 ————— 5 ————— 10	
Eloquence	1 ————— 5 ————— 10	
Commitment	1 ————— 5 ————— 10	
Income	1 ————— 5 ————— 10	
Presence on social media	1 ————— 5 ————— 10	
...		

- Create an online vote on M1 (e.g. Forms).
- Which three characteristics get the most support amongst participants? Why?
- Research the gender, age, profession and career of deputies on the Chambre des Députés website (chd.lu). Do the elected representatives meet your expectations in these areas?
- Take a stand: Can only a person who is like me properly represent me? Explain.

The Luxembourg electorate in national elections is determined on the basis of nationality. Other criteria would be dividing the population up according to tax burden (all taxpayers, including cross-border commuters), place of residence (uniform electoral district), property (property tax), education (e.g. all residents with a degree, etc.) or interests. The distribution of seats in parliament could also be subject to quotas that would ensure that women and young or older citizens are represented fairly.

M2

The electorate in the national elections



M3

Debate on political representation

- Who are the deputies supposed to represent: everybody or those who elected them?
- What makes a deputy a good representative?
- Does party diversity in parliament ensure the representation of the diversity of interests in the population?
- Should some of the deputies be chosen by chance?
- As representatives of the people, do deputies represent their party or their opinion?
- To what extent should the Chambre des Députés reflect the composition of society?
- To what extent are quotas needed in elections (e.g. an age quota)?

- M2: What is the composition of the electorate in Luxembourg? Compare with the population structure. What influence does dual citizenship have on the number of eligible voters?
- M3: Form groups of four and discuss one of the issues for six minutes. The questions can also be divided into two rounds. Each small group then reports briefly on the results of their discussion. Write down a few notes to record the results of your discussion.



School project: *Mock elections*

Voters in elections in Luxembourg must be at least 18 years old. An attempt to lower the voting age to 16 was rejected in a referendum in 2015.

On the one hand, this project allows students to delve into the individual parties and election programmes. Questions raised include: Which party or candidates would the participants vote for? What aspects play a role in that decision? To what extent does it make a difference whether minors participate in referendums and national elections? The youth vote (minors and first-time voters) is compared with the actual election result.

Using the *convocation aux élections nationales*, teachers create a digital voting tool (e.g. using Microsoft Forms) with the candidates of the parties in the electoral district of their school.

Alternatively, the students could simply vote on the parties represented in national elections. The whole school community or an entire grade level should participate in the election. The more young people participate, the more meaningful the statistics become.

Preparatory checklist

- ☐ Which classes are participating?
- ☐ Which tool is needed?
- ☐ On what day (or by what day) must voting take place? (ideally before the real elections)
- ☐ How are the results made public?

Evaluation of the *Mock Election*

- How many students participated?
- What are the election results in the school community? Which party(ies) are ahead, which ones were not favoured by the participants?
- Are there differences compared to the real elections? If so, how can these be explained?



Participation wanted! But how ...?

Democracies thrive on participation and young people should also be able to get involved. The minimum age for voting in elections is set at 18, but there are other ways for minors to get involved socially and politically. After all, elections alone do not constitute a democracy. The following activities will help you find out how and where you can get involved.

- First, agree in small groups on three topics that are important to you. Example: We want more opportunities for outdoor sports.
- Research how young people can get involved in society or express their opinions on your three topics. You may also want to draw on your own experience. Which youth representatives, youth organizations of parties or non-governmental organizations are there? How can you get involved in associations, youth forums, etc.? In your small groups, make a poster with a mind map (M1).
- At the end of the process, each group presents their topics and specific options for action.

M1

How can I join in?

GET INVOLVED

In the community

Nationally

At school

In the European Union

Online

Internationally



Democracy means interfering in your own affairs.

Max Frisch (1911-1991, Swiss author)

For experts: How do you interpret the formulation 'your own affairs'? In your opinion, is there any value in speaking out or rather not? What would motivate you to get involved in a specific cause?



Voting at 16?

In Belgium, 16-year-olds were granted the right to vote in European elections in 2022; in Austria, they have been allowed to vote in elections for far longer already. In Luxembourg, voluntary voting rights for 16 year-olds were rejected in a referendum in 2015. What are the arguments in favour of or against voting rights at age 16? What are the prerequisites for being able to take a decision in elections?

- Read the following excerpts from newspaper articles and work out the arguments in favour of or against the right to vote at age 16.
- What other arguments would you list?

M2

Right to vote from the age of 16 in European elections in Belgium

“This is a decidedly positive decision for more democracy, for more Europe and for the young generation. Our wish is that young people who want to can get involved in the political discussions about their future and to launch a wide-ranging information and awareness-raising campaign to get them to sign up and participate”, stated Guillaume Defossé, Federal deputy of the Ecology party. (...) Belgium is thus the fourth EU country after Austria (16 years), Malta (16 years) and Greece (17 years) to allow young people to vote in European Parliament elections’

Source: In Belgium, Right to vote at age 16 in European elections - East Belgium Direct <https://ostbelgiendirekt.be/electoral-right-with-16-European-elections-319054> (translated, last access: 28.11.2022)

M4

Voting age in Luxembourg

1848	Census voting rights Men aged 25 and over
1919	Universal suffrage Men and women aged 21 and over
1972	Right to vote: 18 years and older
2003	Right to vote and stand for election: 18 years and older

M1

Bundestag votes to lower voting age for European elections

‘The current threshold of 18 years of age has barred many people from the right to vote “who can and want to take on responsibility in numerous places in society and participate in the political process”, the text of the law states. In particular, the younger generation is affected by political decisions - for example, in the protection of the climate or in developing social security systems - argue the coalition factions. Therefore, they should be given a say.’

Source: Bundestag votes to lower voting age for European elections <http://www.edulink.lu/uee6> - Der Spiegel (translated, last access: 10.2.2023)

M3

Voting from 16: pros and cons. Who wants electoral reform?

Already today, voter turnout among first-time and young voters is particularly low if they come from socially disadvantaged families. Critics of voting at 16 see mainly privileged children as winners of a lowered voting age. Mobilising first-time voters can improve voter turnout in the long run. However, researchers emphasise that voting at 16 is not a foregone conclusion. It is important that young people are prepared for their first election, understand the democratic processes and principles, and grasp the political background.

Source: Voting at 16: Pros and Cons Who wants electoral reform? (change-magazin.de) <http://edulink.lu/480y> (translated, last access: 28.11.2022)

Discussion: Voting from the age of 16? Voting up to age 75?

- Discuss the following question using the World Café method (<https://alass.lu/we-discuss-with/>): To what extent is age decisive for being able to vote in elections?
- Compare your results with those of your neighbouring tables.
- Vote in class: Should the voluntary voting age be lowered to 16?



Understanding political communication ①

Speeches, posters, leaflets, videos or posts on social media: politicians use language and non-verbal signals to convince people about their personalities and their opinions.

These five questions help to understand political communication:

?

1. Who is speaking?

What personality are you introduced to? What image is being conveyed? How do they try to create trust and credibility? Who is the publisher of the product and who distributes it? What interests are being pursued?

?

2. What is the context?

In what context does the communication take place: Where? When? Who is the audience? Which medium is being used (post, speech, video clip, etc.)?

?

3. How are feelings addressed?

What feelings are evoked? What mood is created? What non-verbal signals such as looks, gestures, images, music, symbols are used to evoke these feelings?

?

4. What content is conveyed?

What promises are made? What arguments are used? How concrete are the ideas?

?

5. Is that okay with me?

Are content and form morally and ethically compatible with my ideas?

Analyse the following examples (M1-M4) using the table:

	Responses	Personal comments
Who?		
Context?		
How?		
What?		
Ok?		

- Now look for your own examples of political campaign communication in various forms - domestic and international - and present them to the class using the five questions and the table.
- Are there rules of communication in the election campaign and what might they look like?
- Research which youth parties exist in Luxembourg and how they communicate online. Are there differences with the parent parties? Do you feel addressed? What aspects do you like? What do you think is missing?
- How should politicians address young people so that they feel their issues are being perceived and become interested in political issues? Draw up a list of important points for political communication with young people.

Related links

- What is political disinformation and how to counteract it?
<http://www.edulink.lu/39cq>
- Web tools and games on disinformation
<http://www.edulink.lu/jygs>
- How can I recognise propaganda?
<http://www.edulink.lu/yidw>



Understanding political communication ②

M1

Poster for the 2022 presidential election in France.

Source: https://twitter.com/mlp_officiel
(last access: 19.12.2022)



M2

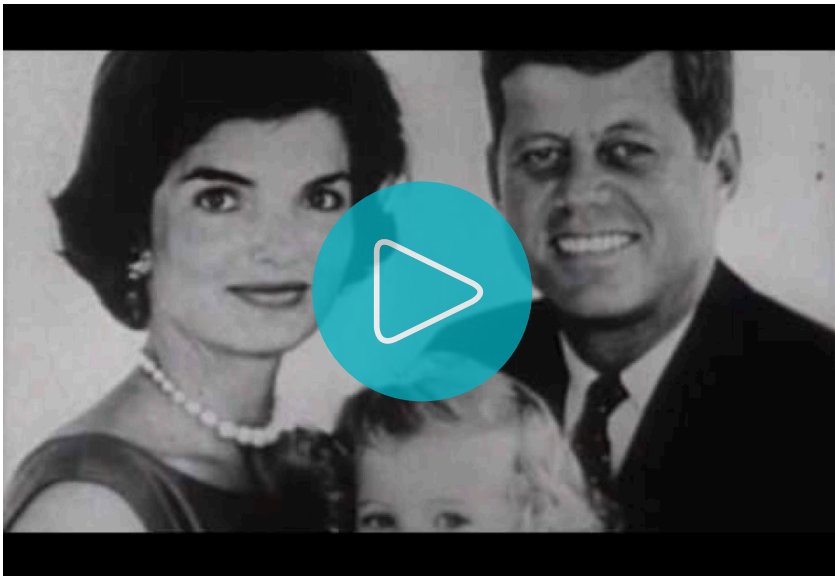
Barack Obama *Hope*, poster US presidential election 2008.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barack_Obama_%22Hope%22_poster
(last access: 19.12.2022)





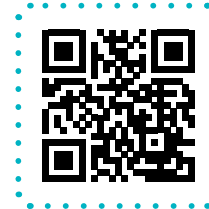
Understanding political communication ③



M3

Election spot, Kennedy for me,
US presidential election 1960

Source: Screenshot Youtube
(last access: 30.01.2023)



<http://www.edulink.lu/480y>



M4

Instagram post by the SPD on
the 2021 chancellor election in
Germany.

Source: Screenshot Instagram
(last access: 19.12.2022)2)



<http://www.edulink.lu/9pn7>



The rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer.

Spdde: More justice in this country! That's what Sabine Sommer wants from our candidate for chancellor.

Olaf says to Sabine: 'This is what the next federal election is all about. We can achieve more justice with more respect for each other. In concrete terms, that means: we need a minimum wage of €12, better collectively bargained wages and we need a rigid welfare state with a fair and just tax system.'

Political Communication – It's your turn! ①

Campaigning is about convincing voters of yourself and your ideas. Content plays a role, but so does visual presentation to a large extent. The following exercises allow students to strengthen their persuasive skills.

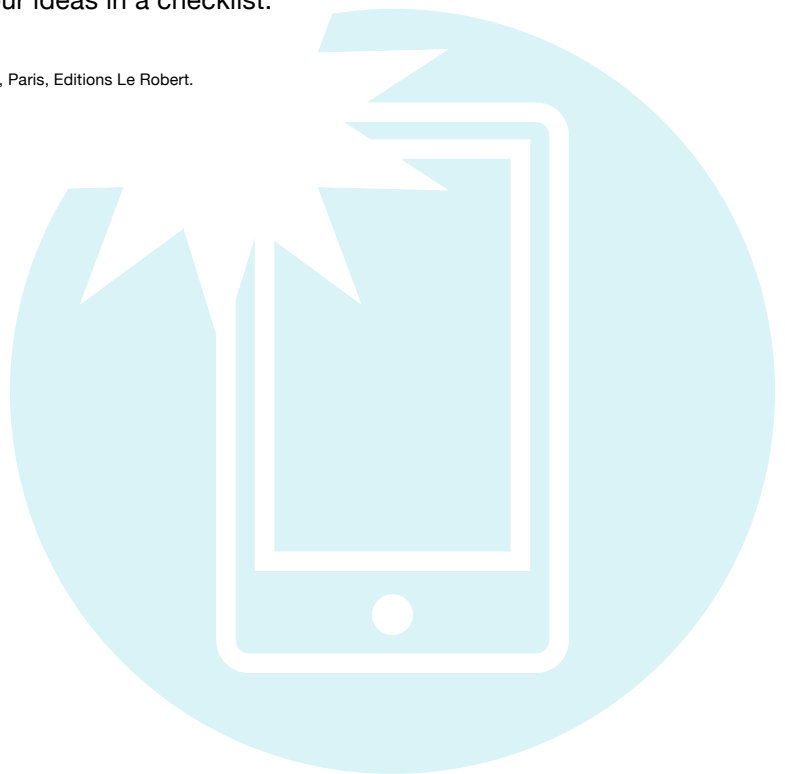


YOUR PHOTO FOR THE ELECTION POSTER

Elections are upcoming and you need portrait photos for the election posters. You want to be elected, so you need an official portrait that is appealing. Have yourself photographed in a pose that you think is standard for an election poster. Think about your facial expression, posture, clothing and charisma. What about the light and the background?

Share your photo with the class (padlet, teams or similar). Vote on whose picture is best. Then discuss what makes a portrait politically convincing. Note your ideas in a checklist.

Based on an idea by Stéphane de Freitas, 2018, Porter sa voix, Paris, Editions Le Robert.



Political Communication – It's your turn! ②



SUPERHERO TRAINING

Step 1 - Preparation

The aim of this exercise is to present yourself in the most positive light possible. The presentation of one's qualities should be exaggerated: Everything becomes an achievement, for example: 'I am the best cook of my generation' or 'I am the greatest female football player in the country'. In addition, persons can be asked to sell something 'banal', like an empty glass of water, or an invisible football. The students prepare their presentations.

Step 2 - Presentation (5 minutes)

Students give full rein to their imagination: give a simple speech, sing, or even rehearse a choreographed performance. The point here is not to find a valid argument, but to take everything to the extreme, beyond the meaning of the statements.

Step 3 – Feedback session (2 minutes)

The group gives feedback to the candidates, especially on whether the performance, gestures and facial expressions correspond to the quality that was highlighted. Sometimes it is unclear what that quality is. In this case, candidates should also be asked if they were aware of this and where they think they failed to highlight it.

Finally, the political and social aspect of this exercise can also be discussed, especially with regard to election advertising.

- Can a look, a gesture or slogan alone convince the public?
- Is exaggeration okay when you want to convince someone?





Democracy Bingo

Democracy is multifaceted and consists of many basic building blocks. The following activity allows an action-oriented introduction to the topic and to different aspects of a democracy.

Procedure:

Step 1: All students get a Democracy Bingo board. They go around the room and ask their partner one question. When they have received an answer, they change partners. There are two ways to play democracy bingo:

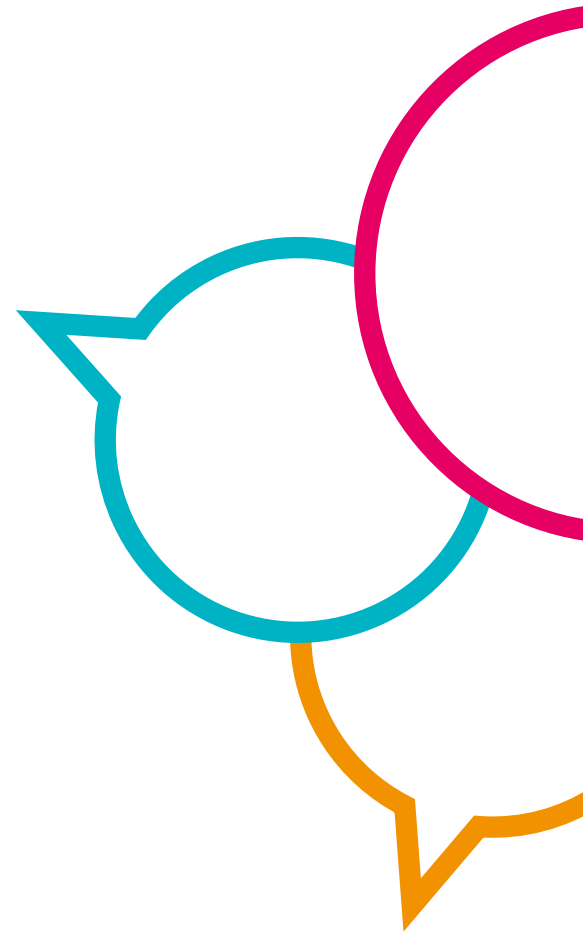
1. The winner is the person who records answers in four vertically, horizontally or diagonally adjacent boxes. Once you have filled a row, you call out 'Bingo'.
2. The winner is whoever receives the most answers within five minutes.

The activity can be followed by a discussion about democracy in general or elections. The bingo questions and their respective answers can also be discussed with the students.

Possible questions for a discussion:

- What problems did you have answering the questions?
- What does democracy mean for you? What characterises a democracy?
- What are ways to be active in society or to get involved in a cause?
- Who is active in an association or party? How do you benefit from it? How does it benefit society?
- What if there were no freedom of expression?
- What if there were no elections?
- How can you get young people interested in politics?

Step 2: The students try to match the four building blocks to the questions. To help them find more building blocks, you can also provide input such as photos, a video or a text.



What is democracy?



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8P_31RUvC8U

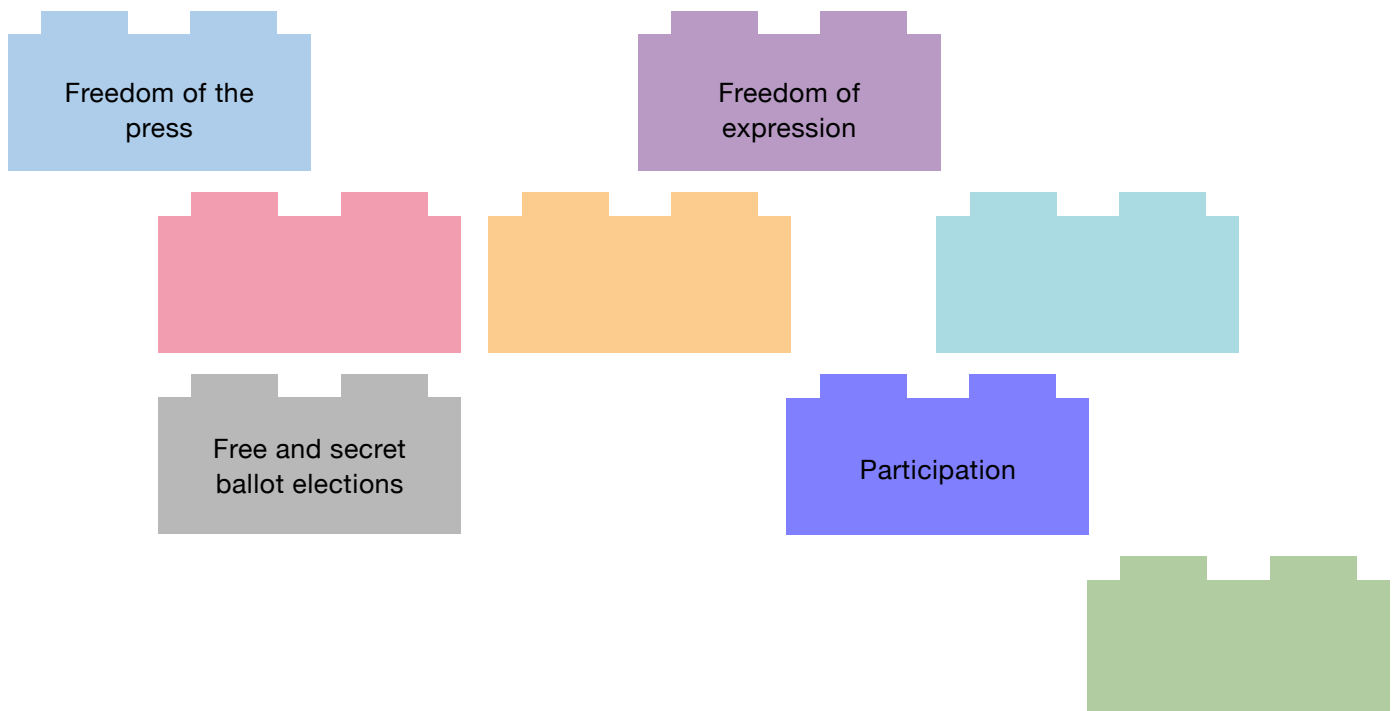




Democracy Bingo

Name two Luxembourg parties.	Is the head of state elected?	Name a politician you know through the media.	Have you ever voted in an election? (school, clubs, community, Parliament, EU Parliament)
At what annual interval do the legislative elections take place?	Name the Prime Minister.	Do you read or watch news about politics?	Is it important to you to be able to express your opinion?
Do you follow someone on social media who is politically active, or who makes political statements?	Have you ever been active in a student council as a class representative, in a student committee, etc.?	Name an artist or athlete who makes political statements.	Do you think elections are important?
Do you know anyone personally who is politically active?	Name 2 media entities from Luxembourg.	What is the name of the mayor of your municipality?	Are you active in a club? How do you get involved?

What makes a democracy?



- Which terms match which questions in Democracy Bingo? Colour the boxes in the corresponding colours and compare with a partner.
- Group work: Explain the terms in one sentence each.
- Which building blocks are still missing?



Voting just isn't the same thing

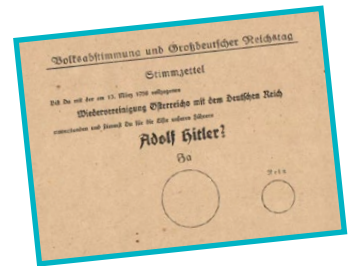
Free elections are an important feature of a democracy. The aim of this task is to teach students that the existence of an electoral process alone is not sufficient to describe a functioning democratic state. Indeed, the electoral process can be obstructed in various ways.

Procedure: The photos (M1-M5) are hung up in the room. Students go around the room in pairs, look at the different examples and discuss whether the democratic election process is restricted in each case and if so, how? They record their ideas by jotting them down under the respective examples.

Educational material regarding M1: Election rigging

1938 Referendum:

- Hitler gave the order to invade Austria on 12 March 1938. Wehrmacht troops met no resistance.
- Hitler's plan at the beginning: to unite Austria with Germany in a single union. The 'jubilation' of the Austrian population led him to decide in favour of the complete annexation of Austria. Corresponding laws were enacted on 13 March 1938.
- In a referendum on 10 April 1938, which was by no means conducted according to free and democratic principles, officially 99.73 percent of Austrians and 99.01 percent of Germans voted for 'reunification'.



Information material for M2 and M3: Representativeness of the electorate

2. Representativeness in social media surveys (non-state actor)

(...) 'The people have spoken', Musk wrote about his decision to unblock former President Donald Trump's profile on Twitter. However, the survey was not representative: around 15 million users took part in Musk's 24-hour poll, while the service has almost 238 million daily active users, according to the latest available data. A slim majority of 51.8 per cent were in favour of Trump's return. This corresponds to around 7.8 million users or just under 3.3 per cent of all Twitter users.



Source: <https://www.n-tv.de/politik/Elon-Musk-entsperrt-Twitter-Account-von-Donald-Trump-article23730038.html> (last access: 30.01.2023)

3. Representativeness in European elections

- A new European Parliament is elected every five years.
- The respective representatives are elected in each Member State.
- As an EU citizen, you vote in the EU country in which you currently live.
- As voting is not compulsory in most Member States, turnout varies from country to country.



Information material for M4:

Lack of political pluralism

- People's Republic of North Korea (DPRK)
- 687 seats in parliament
- 1 single candidate (per constituency)
- Labour Party: 100% of the votes
- Communist Workers' Party has been running the country under the leadership of the Kim family since 1945.
- The elected People's Assembly (five-year term) meets only once or twice a year to deal with policy guidelines and budget issues.
- 2019: Voter turnout 99.99%
- Compulsory voting: all North Koreans aged 17 and over
- Anyone who does not participate or votes against the official candidate is considered a traitor.

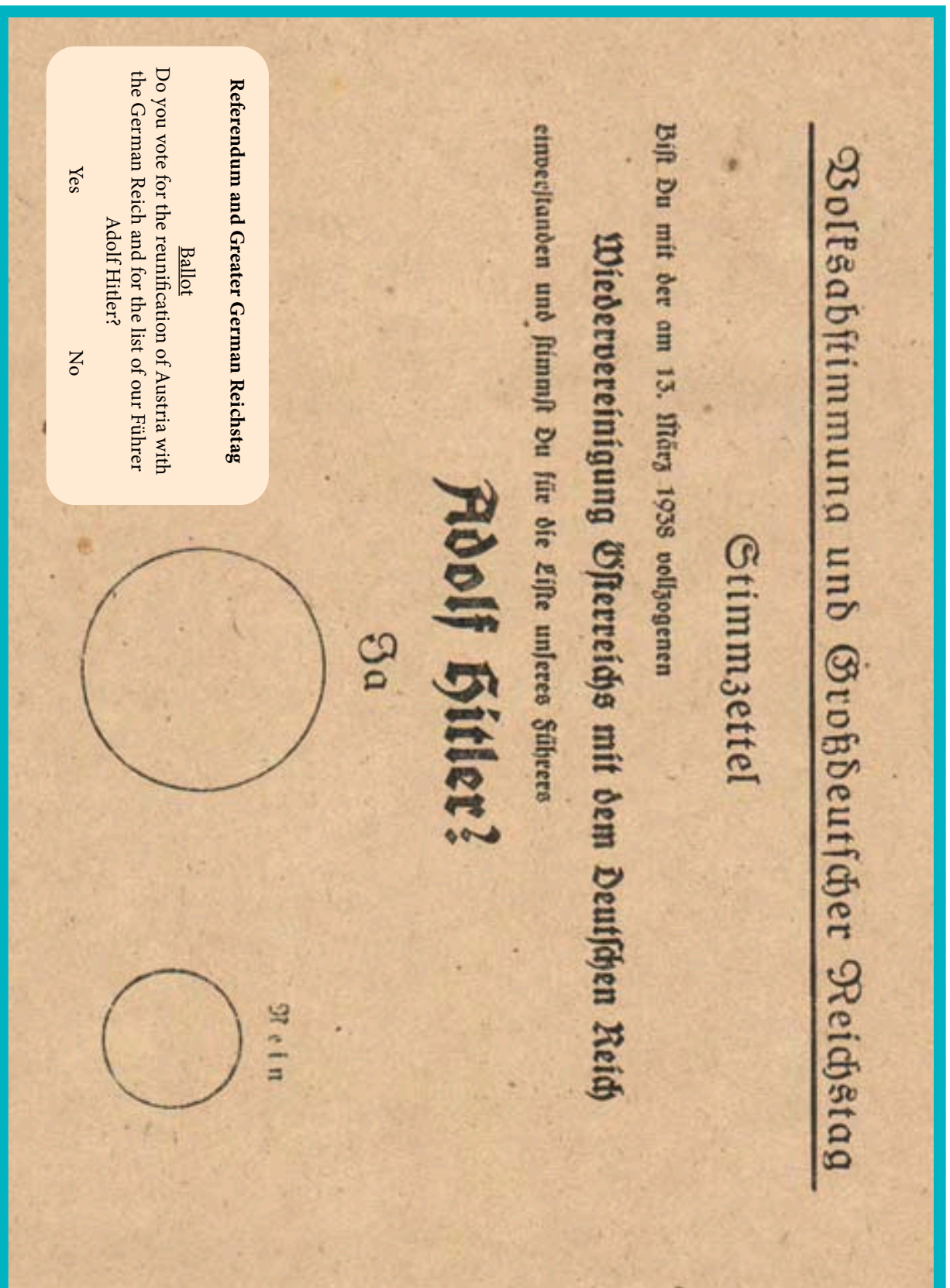


Information material for M5:

Sham referendum

- On 11 May 2014, the self-declared People's Republics in Donetsk and Luhansk held referendums on their independence.
- Organised by the pro-Russian separatists.
- Referendum in an area with civil war-like conditions; held in an environment characterised by a willingness to use violence and threats.
- No democratic standards in the electoral process: small number of polling stations, no voting booths, no matching of voters with electoral rolls; no independent observers.
- There were only a few days between the announcement of the referendum and the date on which it was held, meaning there was no social or political discourse.
- Election results: In Donetsk, with a turnout of 75%, a total of 89% are said to have supported independence. In Luhansk, with a turnout of 81%, this rate is said to have been as high as 96%.
- Vote not accepted internationally as it violated international law. The Ukrainian government in Kyiv as well as the EU, the USA and the OSCE stated that they did not recognise the referendum results because it was illegal.





Referendum on the reunification of Austria with the German Reich, 1938 Source: public domain

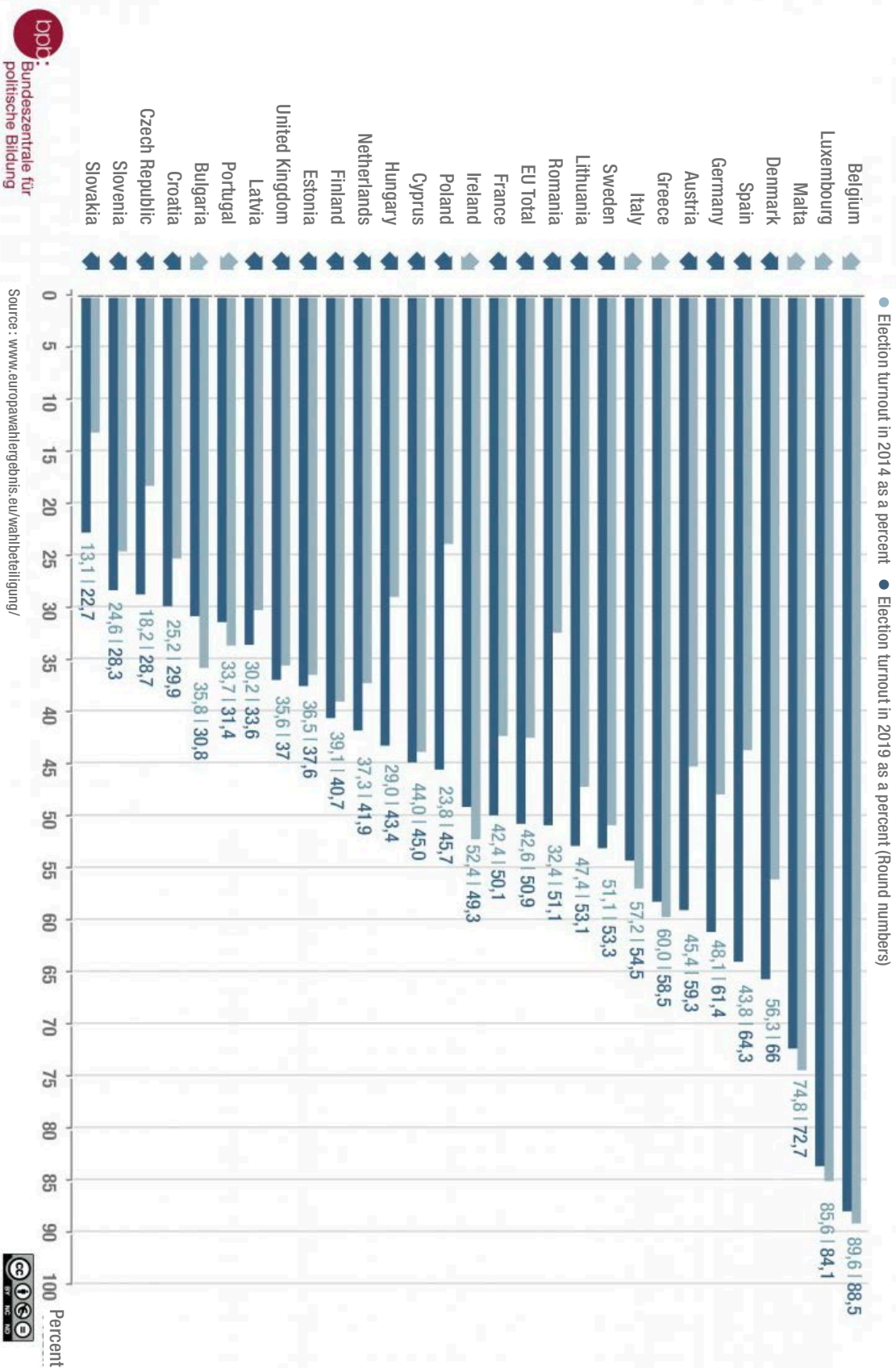
- Is the democratic electoral process affected? Give reasons.



Online survey. Source: Screenshot Twitter (last access: 20.11.2022)

➤ Is the democratic electoral process affected? Give reasons.

European Election turnout



➤ Is the democratic electoral process affected? Give reasons.



Elections in North Korea. Source: Screenshot On Demand News 'Crowds go wild in North Korea as Kim Jong-un casts election vote' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fdnodrLmcxg> (last access: 20.11.2022)

➤ Is the democratic electoral process affected? Give reasons.



Referendum in Russian occupied Eastern Ukraine, May 2014
Source: © EPA/Roman Pilipey

➤ Is the democratic electoral process affected? Give reasons.



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:

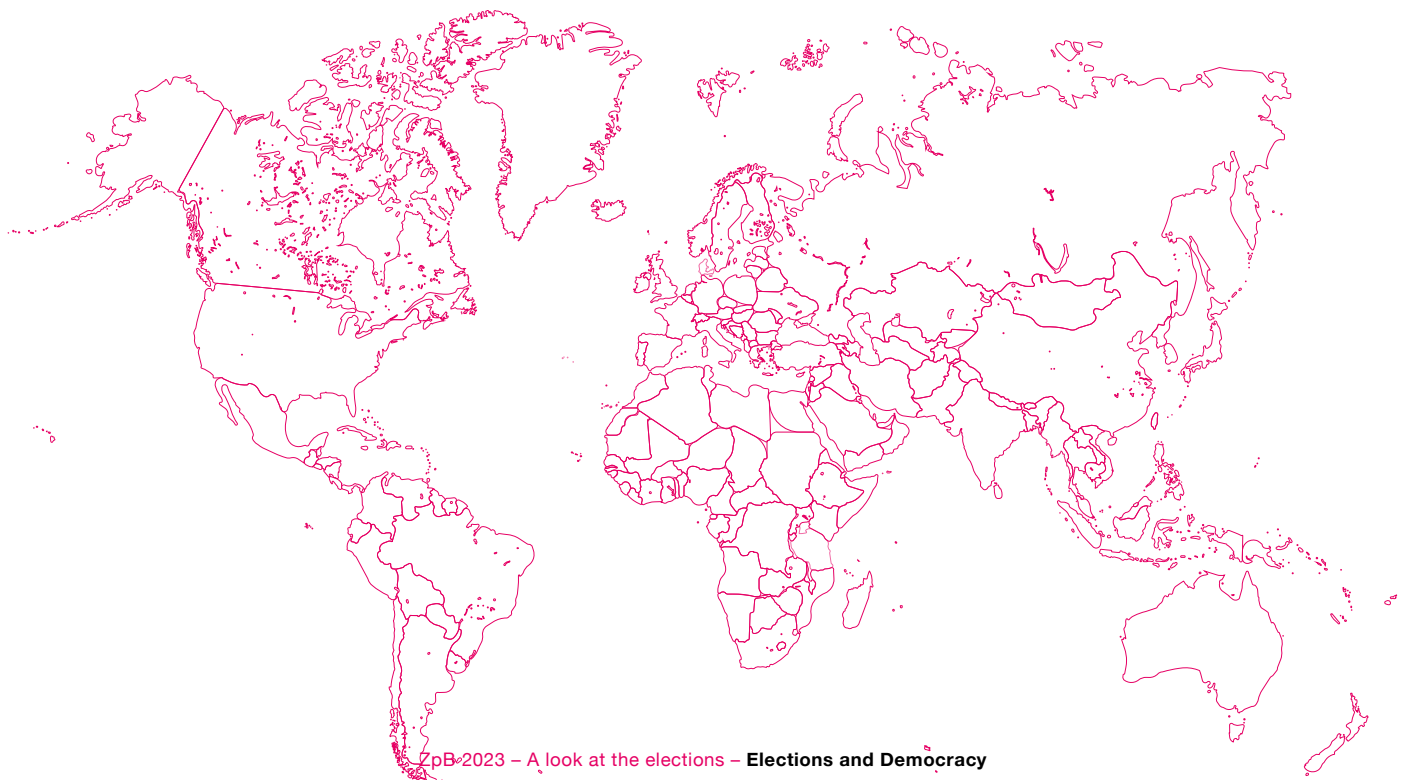


Elections alone do not constitute a democracy! ②

- Find an up-to-date map of the world's democratic and authoritarian regimes, e.g. freedomhouse.org or [economist.com](https://economy.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?

- 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"/>





Voting differently

Luxembourg is a representative democracy, i.e. citizens elect representatives (deputies) who pass laws on their behalf in the Chambre des Députés. But would another voting procedure also be conceivable? Let's do an experiment in class! We propose the following three election scenarios.

Procedure: The class is divided using the following models in order to subsequently vote on different topics.

1. **Class parliament:** Four students are elected by the whole class as representatives and cast their vote.
2. **Class leader:** One student is chosen at random and casts his/her vote.
3. **Class vote:** The rest of the class votes by show of hands. Each student has one vote.

Before each vote, each group is allowed to confer for five minutes. The results of the votes are recorded on the board and are then discussed in the class. Advantages and disadvantages of each voting method are discussed.

The following topics are up for a vote:

- Should Luxembourg introduce driving licences for 16-year olds?
- Should all residents of Luxembourg have the right to vote in parliamentary elections?
- Should a head teacher be elected by students?
- Should a head teacher be chosen by drawing lots among the teachers?
- Should classes be allowed to choose their own teachers?
- Should the school day last from 9am-5pm?
- Should an extra tax be introduced on sugary drinks (soft drinks)?

Evaluation

- In your opinion, which was the fairer method?
- Which method did you have more say in?
- How would you feel/have you felt about having your lot drawn to vote for the community?
- Which of these voting methods could be implemented best?

For experts:

Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the following ideas.

- Should people's representatives be chosen randomly?
- Should algorithms and likes in social media determine the will of voters and replace elections?