

## Different forms of democracy

There are three forms of democracy:

1. Representative
2. Direct
3. Semi-Direct

Most of the 122 global democracies are representative democracies.



### Representative Democracy

- It is the **most widespread** form of democracy in the western world.
- Citizens **elect their representatives** (members of Parliament) to Parliament.
- Citizens **delegate legislative power** to them for a limited period (mandate).
- The government is formed from the political majority in Parliament.
- In some countries, the citizens also **elect** the Head of State (France, USA, Austria, Finland, Ireland, Portugal).

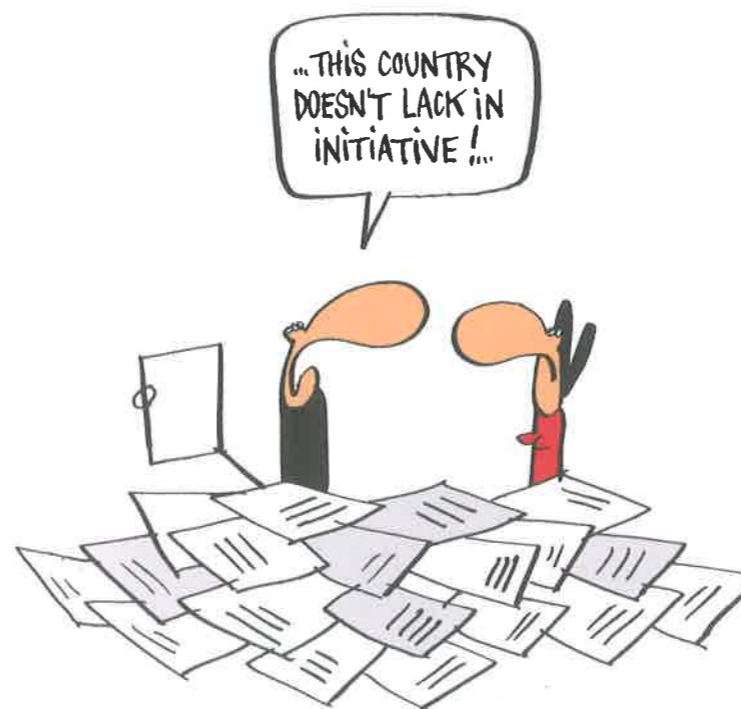
### Direct Democracy

- It is the **purest** form of democracy. It is extremely rare.
- Power is directly held **in the hands of the people**.
- In order to exercise legislative power, all of the citizens come together in assembly. This type of democracy only works in countries with small populations.
- Direct democracy exists only in two Swiss cantons: Appenzell Innerrhoden and Glarus where citizens vote by a show of hands (the "Landsgemeinde").
- Four-fifths of Swiss communes also take decisions using direct democracy at the **Communal Assembly** (called General Council in Vaud Canton).



### Semi-Direct Democracy

- Switzerland is the best example of this rare form of democracy.
- Citizens **elect their representatives** to Parliament (National Council and Council of States).
- Members of the federal government (Federal Council) are elected by Parliament and represent the majority political parties (magic formula → p. 64).



- Citizens have more power than in a representative democracy:
  - They can **propose** any changes to the Constitution (initiative).
  - They can **oppose** a law voted in by Parliament (referendum).
- Semi-Direct democracy is halfway between representative democracy and direct democracy.



Democracy is traditionally opposed to monarchy, but it can also join forces with it. It is then called a constitutional monarchy. This is the case of European monarchies that all have a Parliament elected by the people. Their sovereigns (king, queen, prince or grand duke) all have very limited power.