

## MODULE 1: DEMOCRACY AND POLITICAL PARTIES

**Aim:** To provide participants with a comprehensive understanding of the principles, structures, and challenges of democracy, alongside the role and functions of political parties in democratic governance. This module seeks to equip participants with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to critically evaluate political ideologies, party systems, and their impact on democratization processes

### Learning Objectives

- Understand the principles and challenges of democracy and the role of political parties.
- Analyze the relationship between democracy and political ideologies.
- Explore democracy and its classification.
- Identify and assess challenges to democracy (e.g., populism, polarization).
- Examine the systems, ideologies, and functions of political parties.

### Skills Objectives

- Develop research, critical thinking, and advocacy skills.
- Enhance teamwork and leadership abilities.
- Build proficiency in research and analysis, monitoring, advocacy, and crisis management.
- Strengthen leadership, active listening, and problem-solving capabilities.
- Gain expertise in using digital tools, content creation, and information literacy.

### Attitudes Objectives

- Foster tolerance, respect for diversity, and a sense of responsibility.
- Build confidence and empathy to support inclusive civic participation.
- Encourage open-mindedness, pluralism, and trustworthiness.
- Promote engagement, civility, flexibility, and positive self-esteem.

## Methodology

- Lecture/Seminar: 20%
- Group Work: 25%
- Discussions: 20%
- Simulations: 5%
- Other (e.g., manifesto writing, movie screenings): 20%
- Assignments: 10%

## 1.1 Intro to Democracy

**Aim:** To provide participants with a foundational understanding of the concept of democracy, its historical evolution, key principles, and essential components.

### Objectives:

- Identify key principles of democracy.
- Understand democratic institutions.
- Explore the democratic decision-making processes, including elections, representation, and citizen participation.
- Emphasize democratic values such as freedom, equality, rule of law, etc.
- Lay the foundation for more advanced discussions on democracy by ensuring participants have a solid understanding of its basic principles and structures.
- Foster critical thinking skills by prompting participants to question assumptions, consider different perspectives, and engage in discussions on the challenges and advantages of democratic governance.

### Discussion topics:

- Definition of democracy.
- Basic concepts and principles.
- Variations in definitions and interpretations.
- Democracy and democratization.
- Historical evolution of democracy.
- Ancient roots of democracy.
- Waves of democracy.
- Challenges and advantages of democratic governance.

## 1.2 Classification and Typology of Democracy

**Aim:** To provide participants with a comprehensive understanding of the various forms and classifications of democratic systems and deepen participants' understanding of the diversity of democratic models, moving beyond a simplistic view of democracy as a universal concept.

### Objectives:

- Understand and differentiate between various types and models of democracies
- Explore historical context of democratization: Waves of democracy
- Understand the path to transition to democracy
- Investigate the strengths and weaknesses of various democratic models
- Engage in comparative analysis to identify commonalities and differences among democratic systems
- Understand concepts of democratization conditions
- Facilitate discussions to encourage participants to share insights, ask questions, and learn from each other's perspectives.

### Discussion topics:

- Direct and representative democracy
- Consensus democracy
- Liberal democracy
- Deliberative democracy
- Participatory democracy
- Pluralist democracy
- Elite democracy
- Polyarchy
- Democracy 'with Adjectives'
- Explanatory models for the emergence of democracy

### 1.3 Challenges to Democracy

**Aim:** To deepen understanding of democracy challenges and foster critical thinking and analytical skills.

#### Objectives:

- Deepen understanding of democracy challenges.
- Enhance critical thinking.
- Provide a platform for participants to enhance their communication skills, both in presenting arguments and responding to counter arguments.
- Develop effective strategies for preparing arguments and counterarguments.
- Cultivate public speaking skills.
- Create an environment that encourages open dialogue and respectful discussion.
- Enhance participants' awareness of diverse perspectives on democracy challenges.
- Encourage participants to connect theoretical discussions to real-world implications.

#### Discussion topics:

- Introduction to Challenges in Democracy.
- Civic engagement and participation.
- Populism.
- Polarization.
- Media and information challenges.
- Economic inequality.
- Globalization.
- Immigration.
- Challenge of sustaining multiethnic democracies.
- Abuse of freedoms and rights.

## 1.4 Measuring Democracy

**Aim:** To provide participants with theoretical and practical knowledge for a comprehensive understanding of the methodologies, tools, principles and issues involved in quantitatively assessing democratic processes.

### Objectives:

- Understand the concept of measuring and operationalization
- Investigate the methodologies employed in prominent democracy indices
- Develop research skills in data collection, analysis, and interpretation related to democracy indices
- Understand the interconnections between democracy and other areas and factors through the measurement
- Develop critical thinking through democracy assessment
- Understand cross-country and in-country democracy dynamics through the measuring
- Conduct case study analysis of EaP countries by collecting data, calculating indices and presenting results

### Discussion topics:

- What is an index?
- Why is the measurement and use of indices so important for research and analysis?
- Advantages and limitations of the index
- Operationalization as an important basis for indices
- Operationalization and dimensions of democracy
- Vanhanen's 'Index of Democracy'
- Cutright's Index of Political Development
- Freedom House Indices
- V-Dem
- Global Militarization Index
- Global Gender Gap
- Index of Democracy Level (IDL): Understanding of in-country analysis on the example of IDL (case of Armenia 2000-2022)

## 1.5 Political Ideology

**Aim:** To assess the significance and impact of political ideologies on democratic practices in contemporary Armenia.

### Objectives:

- Understand the characteristics of main classical and modern political ideologies.
- Differentiate between ideocratic and pluralistic societies.
- Explore the political spectrum and its relevance today.
- Discuss the relevance of political ideologies in the Armenian political landscape and their role in democratization.
- Debate whether parties need ideology or just ideas in context of contemporary Armenia.

### Discussion topics:

- In what ways can political ideologies influence or hinder democratization in Armenia?
- Share insights from the Self-Positioning Game. How do your political beliefs align with the ideologies discussed? How did your positions relate to others?
- What did the group discussion reveal about the manifestation of political ideologies in Armenian politics?

## 1.6 The Role of Political Parties in Democracy

**Aim:** To comprehend the pivotal role of political parties within democratic systems and their impact on democratization processes in Armenia.

### Objectives:

- Define political parties and their functions, emphasizing their role in addressing challenges and fostering democratization in Armenia.
- Examine the role of money in politics, explore party finance mechanisms and the importance of transparency and accountability of parties.

- Evaluate the significance and impact of political parties in the context of democratic governance, focusing on democratization processes in Armenia.
- Engage in discussions about the role of political parties in addressing specific issues and contributing to democratization in Armenia.

**Discussion topics:**

- How do political parties contribute to or hinder democratic practices in Armenia?
- Discuss findings from the "Assessing the Role of Political Parties in Armenia" group work.
- What strategies can political parties employ to contribute to democratization in Armenia?

## 1.7 Party System and Democracy

**Aim:** To explore the relationship between political regime and party system in the context of Armenia.

**Objectives:**

- Define and describe various party systems with a focus on how they relate to the political regime.
- Focus on the party system in Armenia and its implications for democratic processes in the country.

**Discussion topics:**

- In what ways does the party system contribute to or hinder democratization efforts in Armenia?
- What insights did the effective number of parties exercise provide about Armenia's party system?

## 1.8 Party types and Policies

**Aim:** To understand the impact of party types on their policies and democratic practices, with a focus on Armenia's democratization challenges.

### Objectives:

- Define and describe party types (Ideological vs. Catch-All, Mainstream vs. Populist) and explore how they manifest in the Armenian political landscape, impacting political processes.
- Analyze how the type of party influences its policies, especially concerning specific issues faced by Armenia.
- Discuss the impact of party types on democratic practices, emphasizing their relevance to Armenia's challenges.

### Discussion topics:

- Explore the connections between the movie's portrayal of populism and its relevance to political practice in Armenia.
- How do different party types influence policy-making in the Armenian context?
- What strategies can combat political populism, demagogue and other negative policies in Armenia, as suggested by the group work?

## 1.9 Political Parties and Polarization

**Aim:** To comprehensively understand political polarization and its types, causes, and consequences, with a focus on the Armenian case and its impact on its democratization.

### Objectives:

- Define and describe political polarization and its types, highlighting their manifestations in Armenian society and their impact on democratization.
- Analyze the causes and consequences of political polarization, emphasizing the Armenian case and its implications for democratization.

**Discussion topics:**

- How does political polarization manifest in the Armenian political landscape?
- What insights did the group work provide on combating polarization in Armenia?
- Reflect on the draft manifesto's key points and its potential impact on democratization in Armenia.