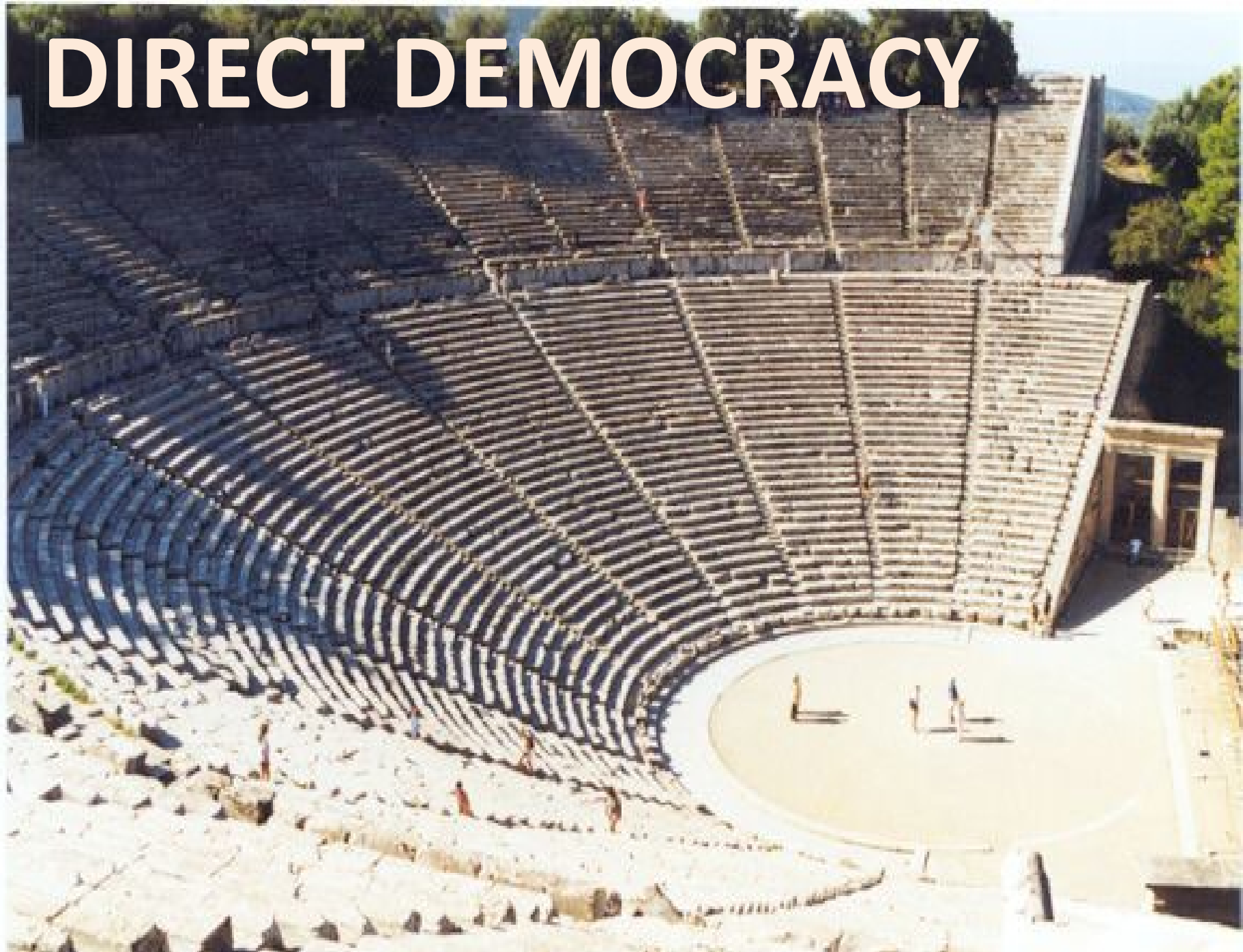


DIRECT DEMOCRACY



**Democracy describes a
political s_____ where
the g_____ is a _____
to the people and where the
people influence d_____.**

DIRECT DEMOCRACY

- What is direct democracy?
 - Based on what you've already learnt in previous weeks, can you identify 3 features?
 - 1...
 - 2...
 - 3...

ANSWERS

- *Direct Democracy* is a system where the public make decisions themselves, they do not act through others.
- Decisions are reached on a majoritarian basis meaning the decision reached is based upon which side wins, e.g. Brexit
- This process of decision making is continual, decisions are made regularly each year, not just every few years at a General Election.
- A historical example is Athenian Democracy
- A more contemporary feature of direct democracy are referendums.
- The UK also now has an option for citizens to Recall (sack) an MP who has been found guilty of serious wrongdoing
- It can also involve Citizens Assemblies, where a randomly chosen group of people are tasked with researching and debating a difficult issue, and then to come up with recommendations to put to the government, or to all the people in a referendum

REFERENDUMS



- Referendums can be seen as a form of d_____ democracy and have been used more frequently in recent years.
 - 2 examples: _____ and _____
 - Why? - People are better e_____ and the press and the internet have generated more opportunity for p_____ power.
 - And although political parties have declined in m_____ people are still interested in political issues.

REFERENDUMS

- Referendums and **initiatives** are common when important political and constitutional issues are at stake eg?
- They have either a yes or no answer and normally only one question is asked e.g? _____
- Parliament and government determine the question and if a referendum will be held.
- They can be binding upon a government but not in the UK, why? Because Parliament is sovereign so has the final say.

INTIATIVES

- This is in contrast to *INITIATIVES* which occur in several US states (e.g. California, Colorado, Florida and Michigan) where the people themselves call for a referendum. There is a minimum number of signatures required.
- In 2010, an initiative for the legalisation of marijuana in California was rejected. Can you find any other examples?
- **Why could this be problematic?**
- However we do have e-petitions (TGGS had one on climate change) - [Petitions - UK Government and Parliament](#)

RECAP of referendums

- They are a popular vote on an issue of public policy
- They are examples of direct democracy
- They may be either binding or advisory (in the UK they are affected by *Parliamentary Sovereignty*) which means that Parliament can.....

Referendums: Some examples

- In the UK we are increasingly becoming a consultative democracy (e.g. with e-petitions) but we do have aspects of *direct democracy* through referendums.
 - 1975 (UK and Europe) National
 - 1979 (Scotland and Wales Act) Regional
 - 1997 (Scottish Parliament / Welsh Assembly) Regional
 - 1998 (Northern Ireland Good Friday Agreement peace settlement) Regional
 - 2011 (Changing the voting system to AV) National
 - 2014 (Scottish independence) Regional
 - 2016 (EU referendum) National

Local referendums

- 1998 - London Mayor and Assembly
- 2000-2022 – many councils have held votes on whether to have a Mayor directly elected by their citizens e.g. 2002-4 - Torbay Mayor
- 2008 - Manchester congestion charge
- 2012 – Mayors for English cities, e.g. Bristol
- 2015-22 – 100s of very local referendums on village housing/development plans

WHY ARE REFERENDUMS HELD?

- Referendums have been held in the UK in under several circumstances, which include:
 - To fulfil pledges made in party manifestos. Labour in 1997 promised in their manifesto to hold a referendum on a Mayor for London
 - To provide legitimacy to major constitutional changes. Devolution of power 1997 to Scotland and Wales was such an event
 - To satisfy the terms for a coalition government between the Conservative and Liberal Democratic parties – AV 2011
 - To settle an internal party dispute over a contested issue. It was alleged that the national referendum in 1975 over continued EU (EEC) membership was more concerned with disputes inside the Labour Party than wider public concerns.
 - At local levels referendums are held for a multitude of reasons to solve issues ranging from planning proposals, locally elected mayors, schooling, and transport issues. At local levels some referendums can be triggered by petitions.
 - In response to pressure to hold a referendum, e.g. Cameron pressured by backbenchers and fear of UKIP.

Task 1 - Research Qs

- Why was a national referendum called for the first time in 1975?
- Why was 1997 significant in the history of referendums?
- What body regulates referendums and why is this important?
- What demands are there for a referendum at the moment? How likely is it this will happen?
- What would you hold a referendum on, if you had the power to decide what to put to the people?

Task 2 - Research 2 Referendums

Research one national and one regional referendum from the list on slide 9. For each:

- Why was the referendum called?
- What was the question?
- How many voted? Percentage turnout?
- How many voted yes/no? %s
- What happened as a result?

You can also use the Politics Review article on Brexit to help you as this has lots of helpful information -

[Week3 onwards Politics Review EU referendum explained.pdf](https://www.tggsacademy.org/Week3%20onwards%20Politics%20Review%20EU%20referendum%20explained.pdf)
([tggsacademy.org](https://www.tggsacademy.org))

Understanding the Brexit Referendum

- Task 3 – Watch this Channel 4 documentary on the Brexit Referendum - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b07wsg23/brexit-a-very-british-coup>



FINAL TASKS...

- Task 4: Read the Politics Review article on e-democracy - [Week3 onwards Politics Review digital and Edemocracy.pdf \(tggsacademy.org\)](#) and note how technological advances and the rise of e-democracy has allowed opportunities for more direct democracy? Use headings to help you and some specific examples from the article.
- Task 5: Read the debate article for and against the use of referendums - [Week3 onwards Politics Review Article on Referendums Debate .pdf \(tggsacademy.org\)](#) and create a visual billboard style page on the pros and cons, highlighting which side you most agree with.