

Materials for teachers 3C

Suggestions for extensions and follow-ups

1. How do parties reflect social cleavages?

✍ Student handout 3.5 and discussion

- What cleavages exist in our society?
- How do the parties in our country reflect these cleavages?
- What decisions and compromises have been made?

2. Pluralism

- What interest groups and NGOs are present in politics?
- Which interests are well organised? Which are not?

3. Compromise

In democracies, pluralism generates the necessity for compromise. Different views are held on this:

1. From the individual player's point of view: compromise is the price to pay for power. Good ideas are watered down to a second best solution.
 2. From a general point of view: pluralism generates competition; the players keep each other in check and ensure that none of them becomes too powerful. Pluralism in society has the same effect as checks and balances do in a constitution.
 3. Viewed from the output perspective: pluralism generates the necessity to compromise. Decisions that go to extremes are rare. This supports social cohesion.
- Which of these views are confirmed by a reality check in your country, e.g. a case study?

4. Comparing democracy and dictatorship

✍ Student handout 3.4

- How do democracies and dictatorships handle diverse interests and views?
- What decisions are made? (Criteria for comparison: inclusion of interests, efficiency, articulation of criticism, role of the media.)

5. The two dimensions of politics

Max Weber:¹³

1. "Politics may be compared to slowly and strongly boring holes through thick planks, both with passion and good judgment."
 2. "Whoever is active in politics strives for power."
- How did we experience the two dimensions of politics in this unit?
 - How do political actors balance these two dimensions in our country?

13. Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation", pp. 2, 34 (www.sscnet.ucla.edu/polisci/ethos/Weber-vocation.pdf); quotations edited by the author.