

# Key Terms

**Unitary System** - a system that concentrates all policy making powers in one central geographic place

**Confederal System** - a system that spreads the policy making power among many sub-units (such as states) and has a weak central government

**Federal System** - divides the policy making power between the central government and the sub-units

**Head of State** - a role that symbolized and represents the people, both nationally and internationally, and may or may not have any real policy making power

**Head of Government** - deals with the everyday tasks of running the state, and usually directs the activities of other members in the executive branch

**Liberal Democracy** - a political system that combines capitalis organization of the country with a democratic political system

**Illiberal Democracy** - a governing system which, although elections take place, citizens are cut off from knowledge about the activities of those who exercise real power because of the lack of civil liberties

**Authoritarian** - a political system in which a small group of individuals exercises power over the state without being constitutionally responsible to the public

**Cleavages** - a concept used in voting analysis and is the division of voters

**Bicameral** - two houses

**Unicameral** - one house

**Judicial Review** - ability of a court to overturn legislation or executive action

**Independent Court** - The ability of judges to decide cases as they think appropriate, regardless of what other people, and especially powerful officials or institutions, desire

**Common Law** - (case law) judicial decisions based on precedent (stare decisis); emphasis on judicial independence to interpret the law

**Code Law** - detailed statutes produced and interpreted by the government; code is authority, not previous judicial decisions

**Religious Law** - Sharia (Islamic Law)

**Rule of Law** - the extent to which agents have confidence in and abide by the rules of society, including the quality of contract enforcement and property rights

**Referendum** - a national ballot called by the government on a policy issue

**Initiative** - a vote on a policy that is initiated by the public

**Interest group pluralism** - autonomy from the state

**Corporatism** - state and interest group autonomy mixed