

ITI 1202: Introduction to Global Politics

Unit 4: State & Governmental System

Traditional Typology of Political Systems

- Aristotle's Classification of Governments

Form	Rule By		
	One	Few	Many
Good	Monarchy	Aristocracy	Polity
Bad	Tyranny	Oligarchy	Democracy

Governmental System

- Great Britain - Constitutional monarchy
- The United States of America - Federal presidential constitutional republic
- France - Unitary semi-presidential republic
- India - Federal parliamentary constitutional republic
- Japan - Unitary parliamentary constitutional monarchy
- What are the difference?

Unitary System

- A unitary state is one in which all the sovereign power resides in the central or national government.
- There are smaller units of government such as states or provinces but they do not have the authority to make independent decisions.
- The central government commonly delegates authority to subnational units and channels policy decisions down to them for implementation.
- The legislature of the whole country “is the supreme law-making body in the country.”

Unitary System

- Features of the unitary government are as follows:
 1. Formal power and authority is located at the national center, other sub-units do not exercise any political powers independently of the central authority.
 2. The local or regional units of government exercise powers and authority that are delegated to them by the center and may also be withdrawn by it.
 3. The central government may at any time redraw or abolish the boundaries of local or regional units.

Unitary System

4. The actions and policies of the central government control and override the policies and actions of sub-national levels of government.
- **In sum** about 90 percent of all countries are categorized as unitary.
 - The distinctive feature of the unitary form of government is that, in such state, there is only one source of authority.

Unitary System

- The local units exist only as mere agents of the central authority. However, the freedom of initiative enjoyed by the governments at the grass roots varies from state to state.
- Unitary system vary greatly. **Great Britain**, for example, decentralizes power in practice though not in constitutional principle. Others grant varying degrees of autonomy to subnational units. Due to the fact that there are many ancient tribes, the law established British local governments permitted a large degree of local autonomy.

Unitary System

- In France, the classic example of a centralized administrative system, the chief local administrator and members are appointed and removed by central government, whereas others are elected.
- In the United States, all states have unitary governments with bicameral legislatures (except Nebraska, which has a unicameral legislature). Ultimately, all local governments in a unitary system are subject to a central authority.

Advantages of the Unitary System

- Suitable for countries that are culturally homogenous.
- The possibility of uniform application of laws and policies to all parts of the state.
- Provides relatively simple organization.
- There is no conflict of authority between different levels of governments.

Disadvantages of the Unitary System

- Alexis de Tocqueville – unitary government tends to leave the responsibility for deciding local affairs in the hands of the central government policy-makers and administrators, who are emotionally and physically distant from the locality.
- With delayed attention to local problems, the local population may feel neglect and alienated.
- This process lead to a loss of local initiative and of the desire to participate enthusiastically in politics.

Unitary System

Unitary Republic			Unitary Monarchy	
Bangladesh	Greece	Singapore	Bhutan	New Zealand
China	Indonesia	South Africa	Brunei	Norway
Costa Rica	Iran	South Korea	Cambodia	Saudi Arabia
Cuba	Ireland	Sri Lanka	Denmark	Spain
Czech Republic	Italy	Taiwan	Jamaica	Sweden
Egypt	Myanmar	Turkey	Japan	Thailand
Finland	Poland	Ukraine	Monaco	United Kingdom
France	Portugal	Uruguay	Netherlands	Vatican City

Federal System

- The word “federal” comes from the Latin foederis, meaning “league” (alliance of various units and people of a state).
- A federal state is one in which there exists at least two set of government, and there is a division of governmental powers between the national government and constituent units (states, provinces, republics, regions, or cantons).

Federal System

- Usually a constitutional division of power is established between the national government, which exercises authority over the whole national territory, and provincial governments that exercise independent authority within their own territories.
- Of the eight largest countries in the world by area, seven—Russia, Canada, the United States, Brazil, Australia, India, and Argentina—are organized on a federal basis.

Federal System

- Federalism has the following features:
 1. Two sets of governments. Each government is independent of the other within their own jurisdiction.
 2. There is a division of power between the central and regional governments. This division of power is clearly spelled out in the Constitution.
 3. The Constitution is the supreme law of the land and any legislation not in conformity with provisions of the constitution is deemed invalid.

Federal System

4. The courts has the power of **Judicial Review**. The courts should have the authority to interpret the constitution. The courts will decide disputes of jurisdiction arising between the central government and regional governments so that none may encroach upon the jurisdiction of the other.
- Individual State Supreme Courts have the power of judicial review over state laws and actions, charged with making rulings consistent with their state constitutions.

Advantages of the Federal System

- **Advantages**

- Very suitable for large countries or states with sectional diversities.
- The regional governments often produce a healthy local interest in politics.
- **Example** – A classic case of this type is Switzerland, where the people speak four different languages—German, French, Italian, and Romansh—and the federal system unites 26 historically and culturally different entities, known as cantons and demicantons.

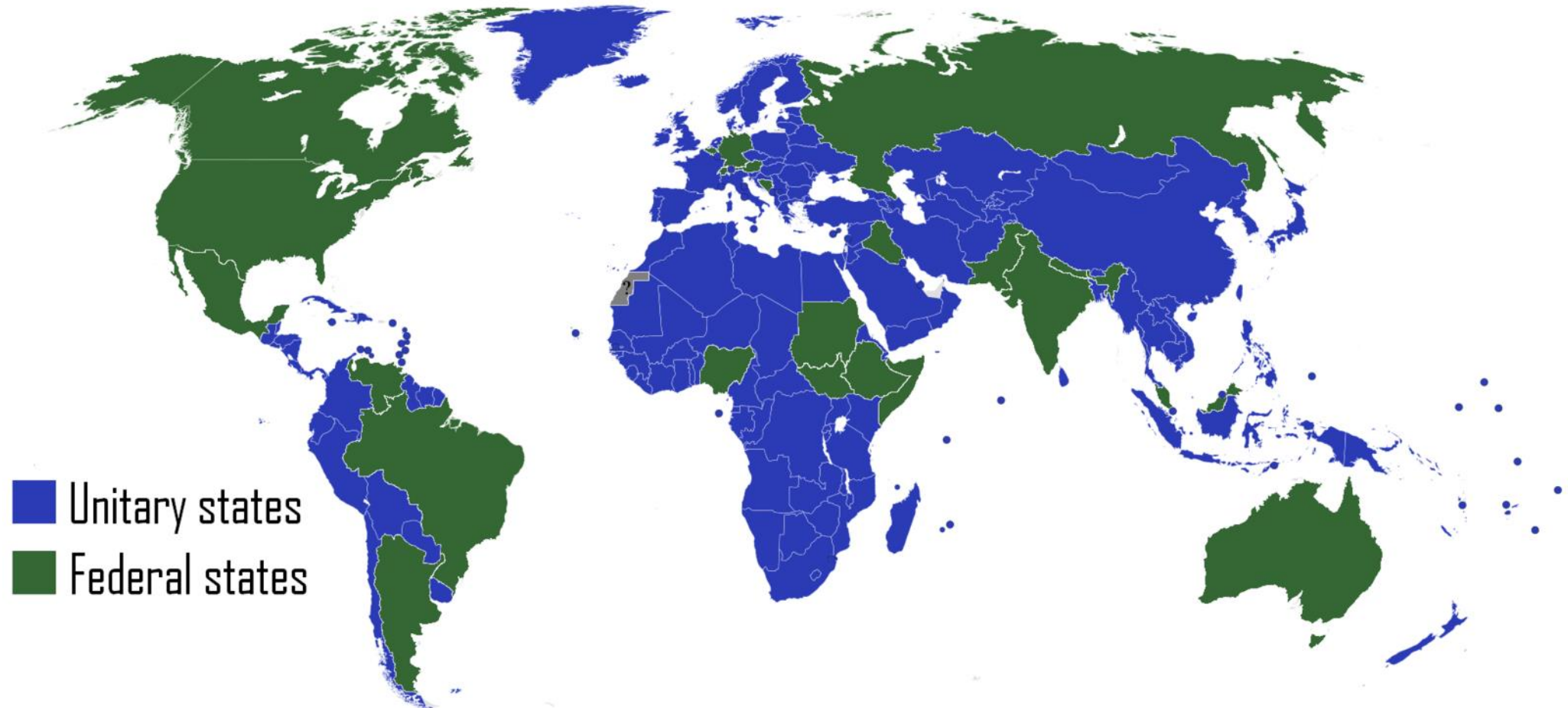
Disadvantages of the Federal System

- **Disadvantages**
- Duplication of services and offices at the regional and federal levels lead to a great expense in government.
- There is often an absence of uniform policy on issues of national interest.
- **Example** – In the United States, some states have recently legalized the use of both recreational and medicinal Marijuana (Alaska, California, Colorado, Maine, Massachusetts, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington) while others have not – meaning citizens are not given uniform rights across the states.

Federal System

Federation	Federating Units	Federation	Federating Units
Argentina	23 provinces	Iraq	18 states
Australia	6 states	Malaysia	13 states
Austria	9 Länder or Bundesländer	Mexico	32 federal entities
Belgium	3 communities, 3 regions	Pakistan	4 provinces
Brazil	26 states	Russia	46 oblasts, 22 republics, 9 krais, 4 autonomous okrugs, 3 federal-level cities, 1 autonomous oblast
Canada	10 provinces	Switzerland	26 cantons
Germany	16 Länder or Bundesländer	UAE	7 emirates
India	29 states	USA	50 states

Unitary and Federal States



Parliamentary & Presidential System

- **Parliamentary System** – can be defined as a representative system that features fusion rather than separation of executive and legislative institutions and powers.
- Citizens do not vote directly for a chief executive.
- Citizens vote for legislatives, or members of parliament, who are organized into one or more political parties.

Parliamentary System

- The chief executive is a prime minister (as Canada, Malaysia, and Great Britain) or a premier (as in Italy).
- He or she selects the other ministers of government, who constitute the cabinet.
- Each cabinet minister is responsible for administering a particular department of government – education, labor, foreign affairs, justice, defense, treasury etc.
- The cabinet (government) is voted into or out of executive office by a majority of the parliament.

Characteristics of Parliamentary System

1. The executive is divided into two parts: dignified and efficient (dignified = ceremonial leadership)
2. The head of state (Monarch or President) appoints the head of government.
3. The head of government (Prime Minister or Premier) appoints the ministry.
4. The system is based upon the principle of **fusion of powers** i.e., there is the concentration of all powers in the parliament.

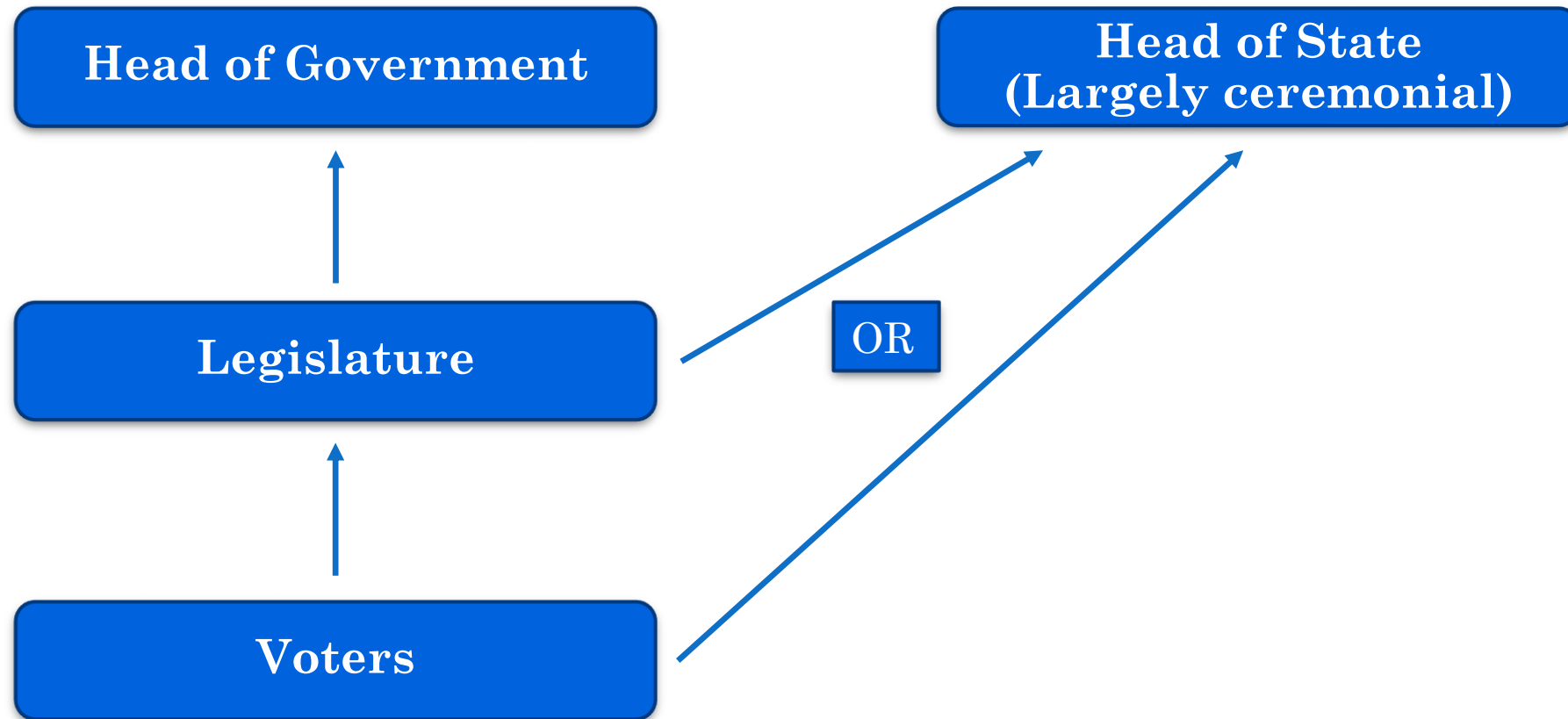
Characteristics of Parliamentary System

5. Ministers are usually members of parliament.
Parliament is the focus of power in the political system.
6. The head of government may advise the head of the state to dissolve parliament.
7. The government is a collective body and is responsible to the assembly.
8. The government as a whole is only indirectly responsible to the electorate.

Characteristics of Parliamentary System

9. The role of the monarchy is (mostly) now purely symbolic and ceremonial.
10. The government holds office just as long as it retains the confidence of the assembly. If that confidence is withdrawn, the government is expected to resign.
11. There is no clear separation of power exists and the executive is located primarily within legislature (head of the government also the leader of his party and, consequently, the leader of the majority party).

Parliamentary System



Parliamentary System

Parliamentary Monarchies		Parliamentary Republic	
Australia	Malaysia	Austria	Ireland
Belgium	Monaco	Bangladesh	Israel
Bhutan	Netherlands	Croatia	Italy
Cambodia	New Zealand	Czech Republic	Myanmar
Canada	Norway	Finland	Pakistan
Denmark	Spain	Germany	Poland
Jamaica	Sweden	Greece	Singapore
Japan	Thailand	India	South Africa*
Kuwait	United Kingdom	Iraq	Switzerland

*Executive president is elected by and accountable to a parliament

Presidential System

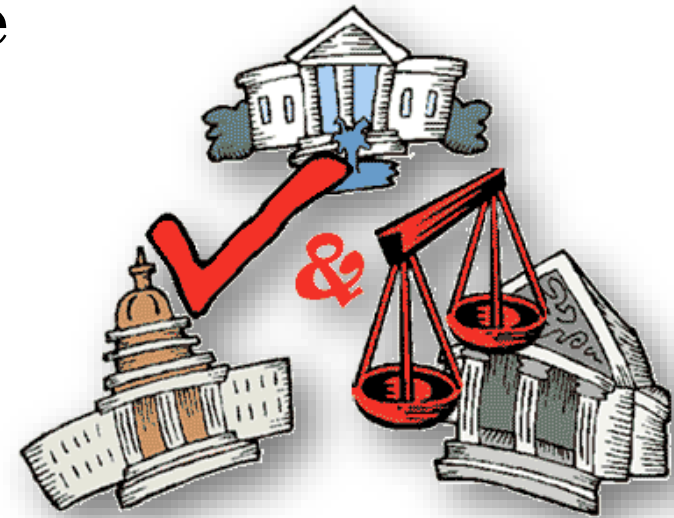
- A presidential system is organized according to the principle of **separation of powers**.
- In this system, the responsibilities of leadership are vested in the chief executive, the president, elected for a fixed term and independent of the legislature.
- A president is both the chief executive and head of state and is isolated from the legislature.

Characteristics of Presidential System

1. The executive is a president elected by the people for a fixed term (4 – 5 years).
2. The head of government is the head of the state.
3. The president appoints heads of departments who are responsible to the president. The president cannot dissolve or coerce the assembly.
4. The assembly is ultimately supreme over the other branches of government.

Characteristics of Presidential System

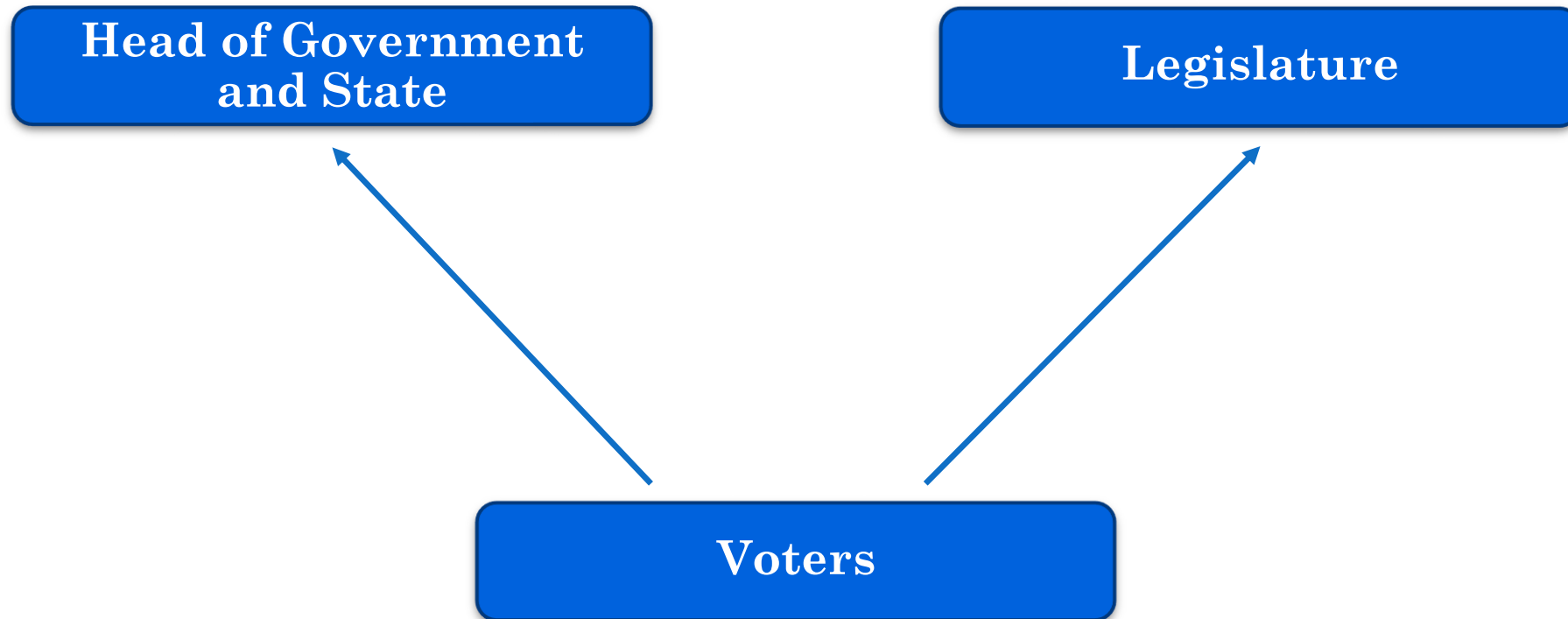
- The system is based on the principle of **separation and balance of powers** i.e., the division of government power among co-equal **executive, legislative and judicial** branches.
- The executive is directly responsible to the electorate.
- There is no focus of power in the political system.



Presidential System

- The differences between the parliamentary and presidential systems may be expressed in terms of the separation and balance of powers.
- Following Montesquieu's interpretation of the eighteenth-century British constitution, presidential systems not only divide the powers of government into legislative (law making), executive (law enforcing) and judicial (law interpreting) institutions, but seek to separate these in terms of personnel and balance them against each other.

Presidential System



Parliamentary VS. Presidential System

	Parliamentary System	Presidential System
Executive	Separate heads of state and government	Popular elected president
Head of Government	Appoint by head of state	Also head of state
Appointment of Government	Head of government appoints ministry	President appoints department heads
Responsibility	Government is collectively responsible to Assembly	President is responsible to people
Personnel	Ministers usually parliamentarians	Executive/legislative separation
Dissolution of Assembly	By head of state on advice of head of government	Not possible

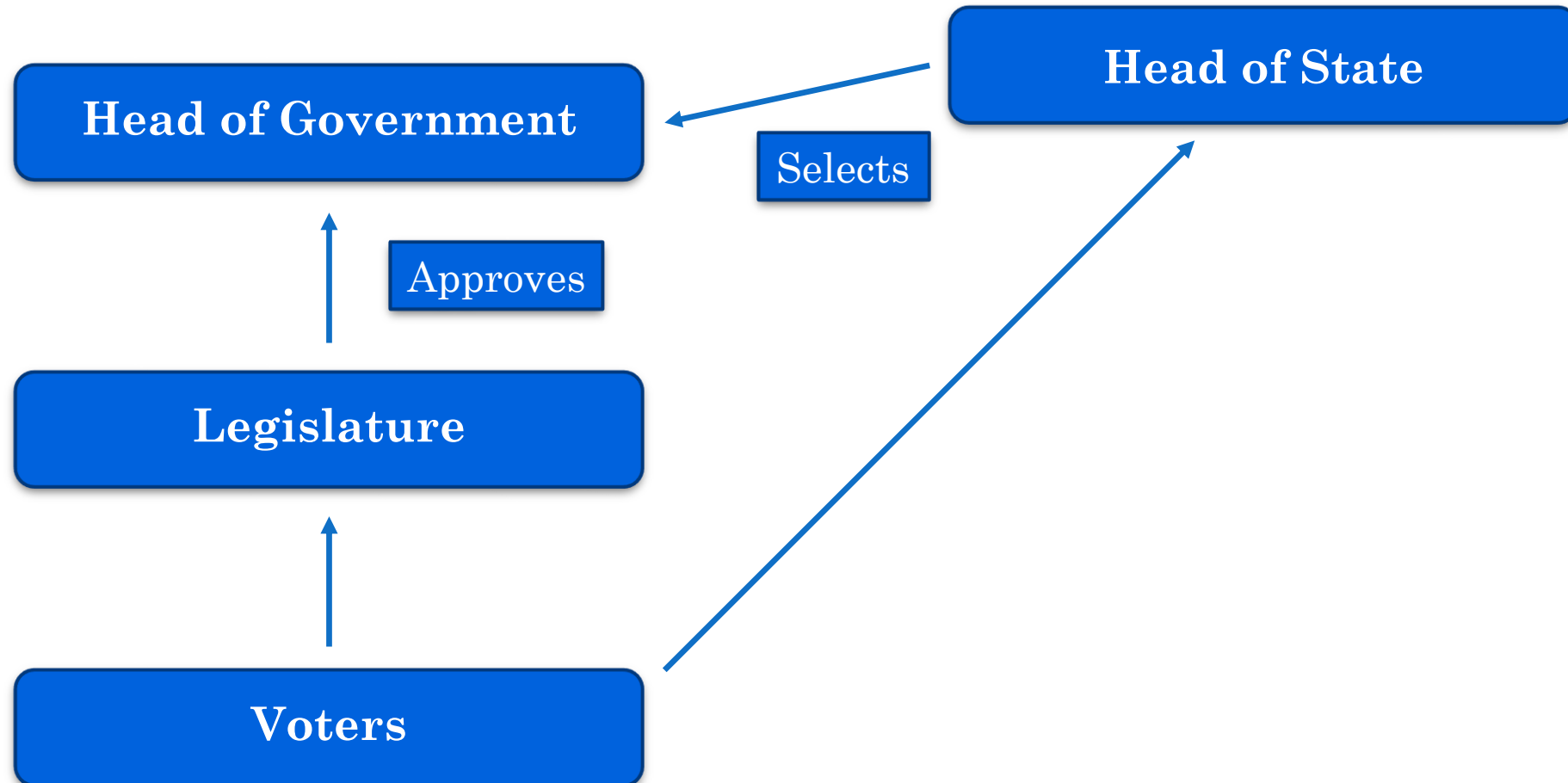
Semi-presidential System

- In an attempt to avoid the weakness of parliamentary and presidential systems, some newer democratic regimes, such as those of France and Russia, have adopted a third model of legislative-executive relations, called the semi-presidential system (hybrid system).
- This system includes a prime minister approved by the legislature and a directly elected president, both of whom share executive power.
- The head of the state is the President and the head of the government is the Prime Minister.

Semi-presidential System

- The cabinet, although named by the president on the suggestion of the Prime Minister, is responsible to the legislature, which may force the cabinet to resign through a motion of no confidence.
- **Cohabitation** is a system that occurs when the President is from a different political party than the majority of the members of parliament. It occurs because such a system forces the president to name a premier (prime minister) that will be acceptable to the majority party within parliament.

Semi-presidential System



Presidential and Semi-presidential System

Presidential System		Semi-presidential System
Argentina	Nigeria	Algeria
Brazil	Paraguay	Egypt
Chile	Philippines	France
Colombia	South Africa	Portugal
Costa Rica	South Korea*	Romania
Ghana	Turkey**	Russia
Indonesia	United States	Sri Lanka
Iran	Uruguay	Taiwan
Mexico	Venezuela	Ukraine

*The prime minister's roles are mostly to assist the president,

**System will be introduce in 2019

ASEAN Governmental System

Countries	Form of Government	System of Government
Brunei	Absolute Monarchy	Unitary Monarchy
Cambodia	Parliamentary	Unitary Monarchy
Indonesia	Presidential	Unitary Republic
Laos	Single-party Socialist Republic	Unitary Republic
Malaysia	Parliamentary	Federal Monarchy
Myanmar	Presidential	Unitary Republic
Singapore	Parliamentary	Unitary Republic
Thailand	Parliamentary	Unitary Monarchy
The Philippines	Presidential	Unitary Republic
Vietnam	Single-party Socialist Republic	Unitary Republic