



## **Definig Politics**

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## Defining Politics

- Politics, in the broadest sense, **is the activity through which people make, preserve and amend the general rules under which they live.**



## Defining Politics

"A political system can be designated as those interactions through which values are authoritatively allocated for a **society**."

(David Easton)

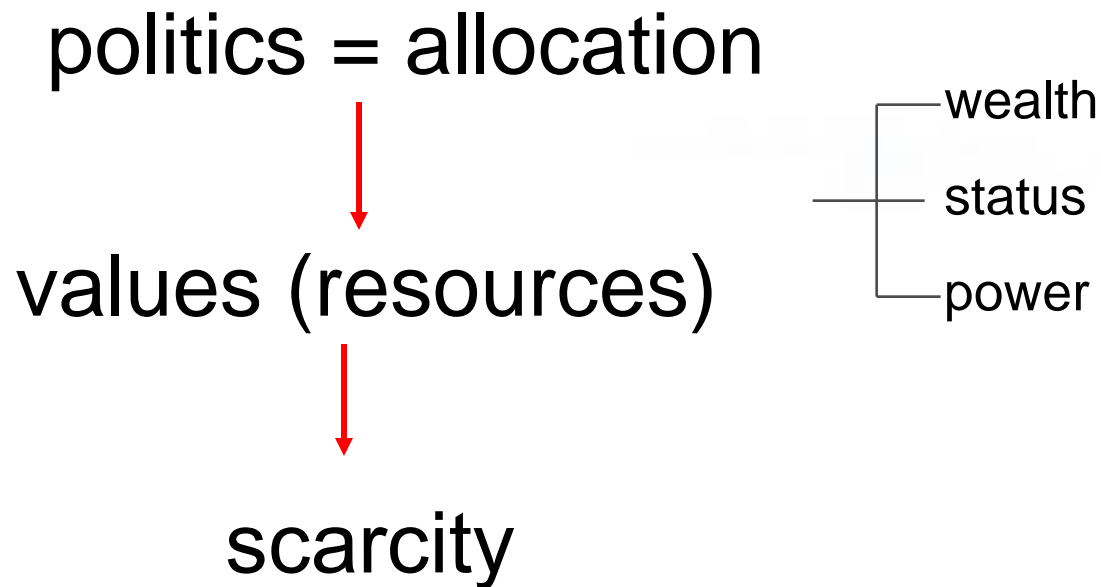
"A political association exists if ... the enforcement of its order is carried out continually within a given **territorial area** by the application and threat of physical force."

(Max Weber)

# COLLECTIVITY

# Lasswellian Definition

*"Politics is the process of who gets what, when, and how."*



Politics is a process of allocating scarce values.



# Defining Politics

"A political system is any persistent pattern of human relationships that involves ... **power**, **rule**, or **authority**."

(Robert Dahl)

# Defining Politics

- Politics is linked to the phenomena of **conflict** and **cooperation**.
- **Conflict**: Competition between opposing forces, reflecting a diversity of opinions, preferences, needs or interest.
- **Cooperation**: Working together, achieving goals through collective action.
- On the one hand, the existence of rival opinions, different wants, competing needs and opposing interest guarantees disagreement about the rules under which people live. On the other hand people recognize that, in order to influence these rules or ensure that they are upheld, they must work with others.
- Disagree: How they should live, Who should get what? How should power and other resources be distributed?



# Conflict and Cooperation

Many thinkers maintain that **conflict and integration are not two opposed faces but one and the same overall process** in which conflict naturally produces integration, and divisions, by their development, tend naturally toward their own suppression leading to the coming of the city of harmony.”

**Cooperation** and **conflict** are two basic modes of politics



- Some common definitions of politics:
  - Politics is the exercise of **power**
  - Politics is the public **allocation of values**
  - Politics is the **resolution of conflict**
  - Politics is the **competition** among individuals, groups, or states pursuing their interests





# Defining Politics

**The different views of politics examined here are as follows:**

- politics as the art of government
- politics as public affairs
- politics as compromise and consensus
- politics as power and the distribution of resources.

# 1 Politics as the art of of government

The word politics comes from ancient Greece. Its root is the word polis, which began to be used about 2,800 years ago to denote a self-governing city (city-state).

Ancient Greek society was divided into a collection of independent city-states, each of which processed its own system of government. The largest and the most influential was Athens.

- POLIS – **city-state**, classically understood to imply the highest or most desirable form of social organization.
- POLITY – A society organized through the exercise of political authority, for Aristotle, rule by the many in the interests of all.
- POLITES – **citizen**
- POLITIKOS – **politician**
- POLITIKE – **politics as the art of citizenship and government**
- POLITEIA – **constitution, rules of politics**

# Four categories of residents of the ancient Greek polis

1. **Citizens with full legal and political rights:**
  - Adult free men born legitimately of citizen parents. They had the right to vote, be elected into office, bear arms, and the obligation to serve when at war.
2. **Citizens with legal rights but no political rights:**
  - Women and underage children, whose political rights and interests were represented by their adult male relatives
3. **Foreigners (citizens of other city-states):**
  - Full legal rights, but no political rights. Could not vote, could not be elected to office, could not bear arms and could not serve in war. Subject to taxation.
4. **Slaves**
  - Property of their owners, any privileges depend on the owner's will

# Politics as the art of of government

Politics is often understood as: **the art and science of GOVERNMENT, as affairs of STATE**

But:

The state is rooted in society.

The state maintains a particular social order.

Politics outside the state is important.

Interactions between state and society are at the core of politics.

So, to understand politics, it has to be examined

as part of the entire fabric of **SOCIAL RELATIONS** – cooperation and conflicts between individuals, groups, classes

## 2 Politics as public affairs

- The distinction between „the political“ and „the nonpolitical“, public sphere and private sphere.
- The term **civil society** has been defined as a political community, a society governed by law, under the authority of state. More commonly, it is distinguished from the state, and the term is used to describe institutions that are private, that are independent from government and organized by individuals in pursuit of their own interests.
- **Autonomous groups-** businesses, trade unions, clubs,



## Politics as public affairs

- Aristotle declared that „man is by nature a political animal“, by which he meant that it is only within a political community that human beings can live“ the good life“
- Public- the state
- Private- civil society- autonomous bodies, trade unions, clubs, firms.....

### 3 Politics as Compromise and Consensus

- In the third conception, politics is seen as a particular means of resolving conflict: that is, by compromise, negotiation, rather than through force and naked power.
- **Consensus:** the term consensus means agreement, It implies, first, a broad agreement, Second, it implies an agreement about fundamental or underlying principles, as opposed to a precise or exact agreement. ....between political parties, or between government and interest groups.

## 4 Politics as Power

### What is Power?

An aspect of a relationship between 2 social actors where one actor “A” can induce or influence actor “B” to do something in line with A's preferences when B would not do that otherwise.

Adapted from Robert Dahl

An important distinction:

“Power over...”

and “power to...”



## 4 Politics as Power

- The fourth definition of politics, politics concerns the production, distribution and use of resources in the course of social existence.
- Politics is, in this essence, Power: the ability to achieve a desired outcome, through whatever means. This includes everything from the ability to keep alive to the ability of government to promote economic growth. More narrowly, power may be associated with the ability to punish or reward, bringing it close to manipulation.

## 4 Politics as Power

Power is the fuel of politics.

Political Science differs from other sciences in part because of its emphasis on power (Machiavelli)

Struggle for power

Distribution of power: how fair? how equal? How effective?

Balance of power

Great power, superpower, simple power, A powerful leader.....

What separate Political Science from other Social Science disciplines?

## 4 Politics as Power

- **Authority and Power** – authority can be most simply defined as „legitimate power“. Where as power is the ability to influence the behaviour of others, authority is the right to do so.
- **Influence** – use of power (or power exertion) with an uncertain outcome
- **Control** – use of power with a more or less certain outcome
- **Domination** – structured, stable use of power

# Sources of Power

## Force

- Physical Violence or the credible threat thereof

## Rewards

- Payment for good behavior
- Withholding benefits for bad behavior

## Legitimacy (authority)

- Established moral right to rule
- Moral obligation for followers to obey

**„David Easton“**

# Types of Power

## POLITICAL POWER

control of, or influence on, the state, ability to make, or influence, political decisions

## ECONOMIC POWER

control of economic assets

## MILITARY POWER

ability to wage war - or to compel others through intimidation or deterrence

These forms of power interact in many ways.

# 5 principal forms of power

1. **FORCE** – ability to detain and harm people and damage or confiscate their property to compel them to obey your orders
2. **PERSUASION** – ability to convince people to do what they otherwise would not have done by invoking their own interests and common sense
3. **AUTHORITY** – legitimate (just and lawful) power to control and direct people's activities
4. **COERCION** – controlling people by means of threatening use of force
5. **MANIPULATION** – controlling people without threats, by persuading them about the legitimacy of the existing power relationships, or by offering them benefits

# Legitimate Power

TYPES OF LEGITIMACY (*Max Weber, Politics as a Vocation*)

**TRADITIONAL** – based on tradition, established beliefs or values (example: rule of dynasties, power of the church)

**LEGAL- RATIONAL** – based on formal arrangements (rules, laws, constitutions). The main type practiced in contemporary politics

**CHARISMATIC\*** – based on the extraordinary personal qualities of a leader, or on the influence of an idea or a cause

\*from ancient Greek word “charisma”, meaning “gift”

The background of the slide features a collage of Euro banknotes. A prominent 100 Euro note is visible in the center, with its large '100' denomination clearly shown. Other notes, including a 50 Euro note, are partially visible in the upper and left portions of the frame. The notes are slightly out of focus, creating a sense of depth. A blue rectangular banner is overlaid at the top, containing the title text in yellow.

# Where Does Power Come From?

Power is produced by social cooperation. Ultimately, it is a collective product. **We create power by acting together.**

The problem is that this product is usually appropriated by the few and used at the expense of, or downright against, the many.





## Vertical Source of Power

- **Position** in the organization's structure.
  - It is independent of the person.
  - A person, “holds a position of power.”
  - The position “legitimizes” the power with formal authority.
- **Access to people** higher in the organization is also a source of power.
- **Control of Resource Allocation**
  - Others become dependent on persons or departments that control and allocate resources.

# Vertical Source of Power

- **CONTROL OF INFORMATION**
  - Information is a resource that reduces uncertainty
- **NETWORK CENTRALITY**
  - Another form of position that puts one at the hub of organizational activity.
  - Being connected with, or exposed to, the right people.
- **CONTROL OF DECISION PREMISES**
  - Being able to set the guidelines for decision making by others.
  - Controlling the decision-making constraints and parameters.
- These vertical sources of power become more prevalent the higher one goes in the organizational structure.



## Horizontal Source of Power

- **Dependency** on a department (or individual) by others for information, resources and/or assistance
- Ability to bring in money (Financial resources)
- Ability to reduce, prevent or absorb uncertainty for others. (Includes forecasting events and trends.)
- Degree to which a department or person is irreplaceable



# Empowerment

- **What is it?**
  - Making others more powerful
  - Sharing power and a downward spread of power.
  - There is a definite trend of empowerment in organizations.
- **Why Empowerment?**
  - To better deal with environmental uncertainty & change
  - Make an organization more flexible and responsive

## Empowerment versus Decentralization

- **Decentralization** is the delegation of decision-making authority.
  - Giving people more decision-making rights
- **Empowerment** requires more structural and process changes.
  - **Making people more influential by...**
    - **Giving people more information**
    - **Giving people greater roles** in interacting with others
    - Enriching their job **with more variety and responsibility**
    - Rewards and publicity for notable performance.



## Politics as Power

- **Faces of power:** Power can be said to be exercised whenever A gets B to do something that B would not otherwise have done. However, A can influence B in various ways.
- This allows us to distinguish between „faces“ of power.



## Faces of Power

- **A- Power as a decision-making:** This face of power consists of conscious actions that in some way influence the content of decisions.
- **B- Power as a agenda setting:** The second face of power, is ability to prevent decisions being made, that is, in effect, „non decision-making“
- **C- Power as thought control:** The third face of power is the ability to influence another by shaping what he or she thinks, wants, or needs.



# Politics involves two processes

## 1. **Decision Making**

- making resource allocations for the collectivity

## 2. **Rule or Enforcement**

- inducing members of the collectivity to accept resource allocations as binding.



The background of the slide features a collage of Euro banknotes. Visible denominations include 50, 100, and 500 Euros. The notes are slightly blurred and overlap each other, creating a sense of depth. A blue horizontal bar is positioned across the top, containing the title text in yellow.

# Four Related Concepts

Political System

Government

State

Nation



# Political System

A political system is the totality of social actions that in any way influence the making of binding value allocations for a collectivity.



# Government

"The collection of 'offices' in a political system is what constitutes the government of that system."

„Robert Dahl“

Government = Specialized institutions for allocating values.

# Why Government

Human life in the state of nature is “nasty, brutish and short.”

Thomas Hobbes

- Create Order
- Protect life
- Defend property rights
- Enforce contracts
- **Governance** is a boarder term than government. In its boardest sense, to govern means to rule or to control others.

The background of the slide features a collage of Euro banknotes, including 50 and 100 Euro notes, with a blue star visible. A blue rectangular box is centered at the top, containing the title text in yellow.

## The problem.....

- How does a nation create a government with enough authority and power **to keep order, protect property, and preserve life and** at the same time prevent that government's officials from using their power to **enrich themselves and persecute their rivals?**

The background of the slide features a collage of Euro banknotes, including 50, 100, and 500 Euro notes, with the numbers and colors of the bills visible. A blue rectangular box is overlaid on the top part of the image, containing the title text.

## Human nature and power

- Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely...
- “We have learned by sad experience that it is the nature and disposition of almost all men, as soon as they get a little authority, as they suppose, they will immediately begin to exercise unrighteous dominion.”

# The Solution

- **Divide power**
  - 3 branches
  - Federal and States,, central and regional
- **Check power with power**
  - Create a balance where each, by seeking his own power checks the power of others
- **Establish core rights and limits in the Constitution**
  - Entrust enforcement of those limits to the self interest of balancing powers



# State

"The state is any government that successfully upholds a claim to the **exclusive regulation of the legitimate use of physical force** in enforcing its rules within a given **territorial area**."

Max Weber

**State = sovereignty + territory**



# The state

“The state – and in a more general way, **organized power in any society** – is always and at all times both the instrument by which certain groups dominate others, an instrument used **in the interest of the rulers and to the disadvantage of the ruled**, - and also **a means of ensuring a particular social order**, of achieving some integration of the individual and the collectivity for the general good...

The two elements always co-exist, though the importance of each varies with the period, the circumstances, and the country concerned.....

„Maurice Duverger“



# Nation

A large group, or **community**, from which members derive their basic political identity and toward which they devote great loyalty.

# Nation versus State

## Nation

Definition: - political Community  
- Identity

## State

- territoriality  
- sovereignty

American



The United States

Czech



The Czech Republic



# Basic Terminology

- Nation
- State
- Nation- state
- Regime
- Government
- Power
- Authority
- Legitimacy
- Cleavage
- Command economy



## Liberty versus Order

- Politics essentially decides the tradeoff between Order and Freedom
- We like both but can't have maximum amounts of both
- Where this tradeoff lies is the central feature of any political system

# Public Policy

- Developing public policy is like squeezing a long balloon
- Public policy implementation reflects the structure and power flow of the state
- Formal and informal influences affect policy decisions
- Examine policy issues (especially persistent ones) and the impact of decisions made

## Formal influences

- Rival political parties
- Other branches of government
- Domestic and international organizations

## Informal influences

- Economic changes
- Grass roots movements
- Changes in social values/beliefs



## Politics - Two Views

- POSITIVE VIEW

A natural process for resolving differences among groups

Goal: To benefit the majority

- NEGATIVE VIEW

A self-serving activity to promote ones self.

Goal: To benefit a minority

# Guides to Successful Politicking

- **Build Coalitions** (Politics is a game of coalitions).
- **Networking:** Build a broader base of support that goes beyond your coalition group.
- **Enhance your legitimacy** through your expertise & skills.
- **Control decision premises**
  - Setting agendas, leading meetings, selective information
- **Make preferences explicit, but keep power implicit.**
  - *“Power works best when it is used quietly.”*
    - Be aggressively persuasive but not offensive.





*Thank You for your Attention*

# Literature

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