

Unit 2: Democracy and fairness.

Objectives:

To explain the characteristics of free and fair elections.

To express obligation, necessity and suggestions in relation to conditions that help elections to be fair.

1. Warm-up:



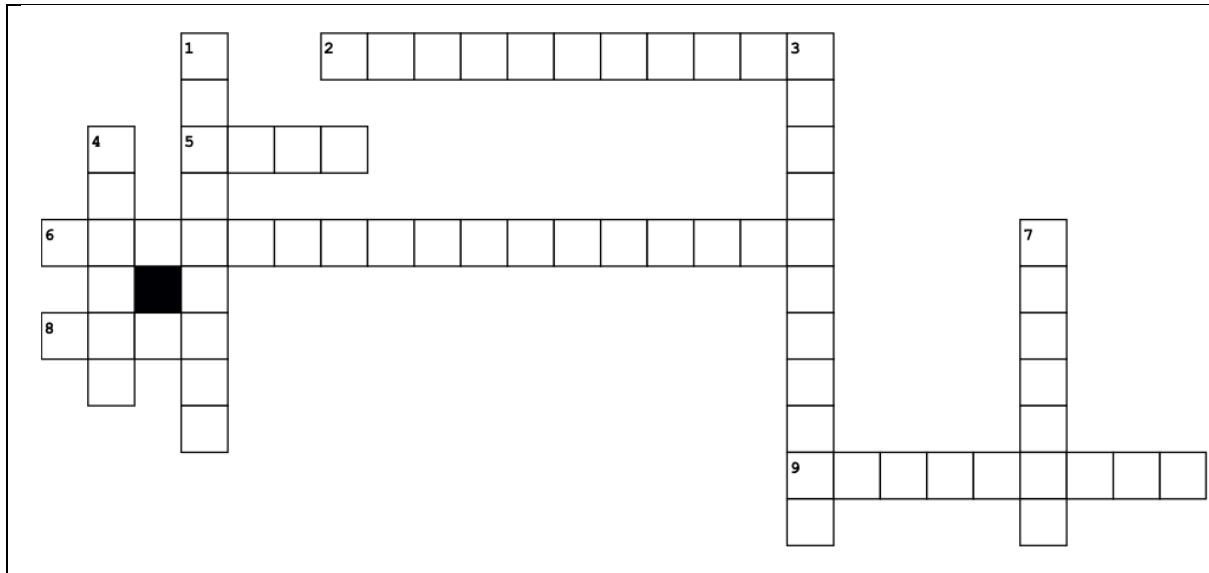
- Are elections always valid?
- What is a high stakes election?
- Who is in charge of validating elections in Chile? How do they do it?

2. Prepare to watch a video about Electoral Justice.

- a. **Before watching:** Complete the following crossword after you match the words from the box to the definitions in the columns across and down.

ballot - dispute - due process - effective -
efficient vote - electoral college - fair stakeholder

Across	Down
2. a course of formal proceedings (such as legal proceedings) carried out regularly and in accordance with established rules and principles.	1. something or someone that is able to do tasks successfully, without wasting time or energy.
5. something or someone that is reasonable, right, and just.	3. a person or group having a stake, or interest, in the success of an enterprise, business, movement, etc.
6. the system that is used in the United States in presidential elections. The electors in the electoral college act as representatives for each state, and they elect the president and vice-president.	4. a piece of paper on which you indicate your choice or opinion in a secret vote.
8. a choice made by a particular person or group in a meeting or an election.	7. an argument or disagreement between people or groups.
9. something that works well and produces the results that were intended.	



b. **Watch** the following video and **answer** the questions:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ihwCLQNSNs&t=9s>

1. What is an election? Define it according to the information given in the video.

2. When is an election considered *credible*? Name the two necessary conditions.

3. What is EDR? When do we need an EDR system?

4. Mention the consequences of the failure of any EDR

c. Discuss with a partner:

1. Is electoral justice important in Chile? Which organism or institution is in charge of keeping elections fair in Chile?

3. Read the following text about the eight crucial standards elections must meet to be considered free and fair.

a. Before reading:

1. Discuss with a classmate: Do you agree or disagree with the following quote?



"Free and fair elections are the foundation of democracy and allow for the free and just societies we want to live in. We all want to have a voice in determining the future of our country and in shaping the lives we live. And we want our voice to count exactly the same as everyone else's"

But...What makes an election *free* and *fair*?

Taken from: <https://www.liberties.eu/en/stories/free-and-fair-elections/43642>

b. Reading:

In English we can use modal verbs to express possibility, necessity, condition or/and even to make suggestions. Now:

1. look for the expressions in **bold** in the text and put them next to their respective meanings:

- Actions that are necessary:
- Actions that are not necessary:
- Actions that are mandatory:
- Actions that are not mandatory:
- Actions that are strong suggestions:

Underline the modal verb in each expression in bold.

Eight crucial standards elections must meet in order to be considered *free and fair*

1. Voters Registration

The first standard that defines free and fair elections is that citizens are able to register to vote. This does not mean that governments cannot place certain limitations on the right to vote. For example, countries limit the right to vote to citizens above a certain age. But in order for an election to be free and fair, all citizens who meet the eligibility requirements **need to be able to register** to vote.

Limiting the ability of eligible citizens to register to vote is one tactic some governments use to remain in power. A prominent example of this is in the United States, when southern states limited the ability of Black citizens to register and cast votes in elections in the decades following the American Civil War.

2. Voters have access to reliable information

In order for citizens to make informed choices at the ballot box, they **need to have** accurate information about the candidates and political platforms they're choosing between. This means that governments can't prevent the media from covering opposition candidates or parties, and it also means that parties don't intentionally spread misinformation. So, access to reliable information is a key requirement for free and fair elections.

It is also one of the standards most under threat today. Governments such as those in Hungary, Slovenia, Poland and others are attacking free media. Wealthy friends of the government buy independent media and make them represent the Government's interests. Also, the proliferation of social media allows government misinformation to be amplified.

3. Citizens can run

In a democracy with free and fair elections, governments exist for the people, are empowered by the people, and are made up of the people. A citizen who is eligible to vote **should also be eligible** to run for office. Governments cannot attack or prevent people who want to run for office, assuming they meet the same eligibility criteria as other politicians and candidates.

This standard is generally secure in the European Union, but in states with untransparent elections, like Russia, it is non-existent. And the violation is not just to the individual prevented from taking part, but to all voters, because depriving them of a valid option at the polls is to deprive them of their right to choose the leaders they want. Which, of course, is the foundation of democracy.

4. All voters are able to vote

Even if voters are given the right to vote, and are able to register to vote, an election is not free and fair unless they are then able to actually *cast their ballot*. Governments **need to make voting** reasonably possible for citizens. **They must be able to reach polling places**, and reasonable accommodation **should be made** to ensure that citizens with a disability or other health condition, or lack of transportation, are still able to vote.

5. Voters are not intimidated

Nobody **should be intimidated** or threatened at any point during an election. This includes outside and inside the polling station, but also before election day. The threat of violence can make people afraid to vote their preference.

The threat of violence also **does not need to be overt** to violate this standard. If the government staffs polling places with poll watchers who are intentionally intimidating looking, or even armed, this can intimidate voters. It is also important that people can observe the actual process of voting. This is why secret ballots are important to ensure that voters feel safe and secure while voting.

6. Voting is free from fraud

Every eligible voter **should be able to cast** one ballot, and it **should be counted** the same as every other ballot. When illegal ballots are counted along with legal ballots, the result does not reflect the will of voters.

7. Ballots are counted accurately and the correct results are reported

Counting all ballots and giving an accurate reporting of that count are essential parts of a free and fair election. **Ballots must not be altered or thrown out after they are cast**. And when a fair count is done, the government cannot refuse to release it, or release a different result.

Most true democracies have commissions and other bodies that ensure that this standard is respected as part of a free and fair election. Still, there have been troubling reports, for example in Hungary, of this and other standards being violated. And in countries without free and fair elections, this is another standard routinely ignored. In the last election in Belarus, poll workers claimed they were forced to change ballots to ensure that President Alexander Lukashenko remained in power.

8. The results are respected

This seems obvious, but it's one standard that's recently been tested even in the United States. In free and fair elections, the loser **must accept** the result. Especially if they're the one already in power. Peaceful transitions of power support democracy.

Last year, the sitting US president appeared to encourage violence to remain in power and continuously lie about the election result. It didn't work, but it showed that even the most straightforward standard of free and fair elections can come into doubt. As a result, candidates **should not oppose** the result of an election.

Taken and adapted from: <https://www.liberties.eu/en/stories/free-and-fair-elections/43642>






2. After doing the previous exercises complete the following sentences to summarize the rule behind these modal verbs:

- a. We use *must/must not* for _____
b. We use *need to* for _____
c. We use *should/should not* for _____

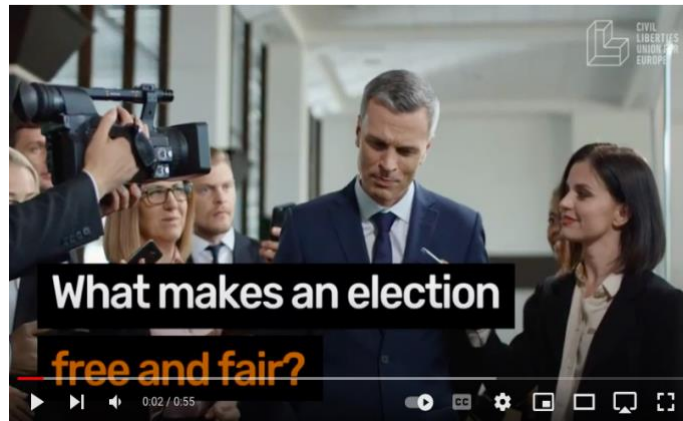
- b. **After reading** the text:

1. Create a list of conditions or actions that **MUST/NEED TO/SHOULD** exist in order to make an election free and fair. Write two sentences per standard:

 Voters Registration	a. b.
 Voters have access to reliable information	a. b.
	a. b.

Citizens can run	
 <p>All voters are able to vote</p>	<p>a.</p> <p>b.</p>
 <p>Voters are not intimidated</p>	<p>a.</p> <p>b.</p>
 <p>Voting is free from fraud</p>	<p>a.</p> <p>b.</p>
 <p>Ballots are counted accurately and the correct results are reported</p>	<p>a.</p> <p>b.</p>
 <p>The results are respected</p>	<p>a.</p> <p>b.</p>

2. Now, use those sentences to create a script and do a voice over for the following video:



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jc_KVILxbt4

4. Reflect and apply:

What do you think the government and citizens *must do* and *need to do* when there is an election/referendum in Chile? Name 4 things the government *must do* and 4 things citizens *need to do* before or during this day. Then, share your ideas with your classmates.

A. The government:

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.

B. Citizens:

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.

5. Self-evaluation:

- a. Can you talk about free and fair elections?

YES	NO
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b. If so, please, give an example:

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c. Did you learn new words in this unit?

YES	NO
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If so, write three words your learned:

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d. What is the difference between MUST and NEED TO? Explain it.

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e. Write a sentence where you use MUST and one sentence where you use NEED TO that shows something you learned in this unit.

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f. Why and when are modal verbs used?

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g. Do you have any questions about this unit? Write it/them down and ask your teacher.

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