

SECTION 1 — POLITICAL THEORY — 20 marks  
 Attempt Question 1 and EITHER Question 2 (a) OR 2 (b)

1. (continued)

SOURCE B

1. Study Sources A and B below (and opposite) then answer the question that follows.

SOURCE A

**The Case for Direct Democracy**

Direct Democracy is when citizens are expected to fully take part in the political process and take the decisions that affect their lives and the lives of the people in their country or state. Direct Democracy works best in small communities. The most referenced is in Ancient Greece in the city of Athens, although more recently the small cantons of Switzerland have allowed their citizens to regularly take part in Direct Democracy. In addition, it is used in a number of States in the USA. In some of these States, the members of local communities are given a direct say over key decisions whereas in others, such as California, voters have opportunities to directly make decisions through the frequent use of referenda. As a result, Direct Democracy is seen as being practical at a local level.

Where Direct Democracy is used, it is argued that it creates a more informed electorate and politically knowledgeable group of citizens. This can be seen in the recent Scottish referendum on independence. The Scottish electorate were keen to participate and a Guardian editorial piece claimed that the electorate were the most informed at any election in the UK since the Second World War. This interest in Direct Democracy has been seen before in other referenda such as the vote to separate Quebec from the rest of Canada and the vote for independence in Slovenia where 93.3% of the electorate voted.

Using Direct Democracy ensures that all decisions made are legitimate due to the direct participation of citizens. Consequently, the decisions are likely to be accepted as fair. Those who made the decisions are the same people who are affected by them. The outcome will be accepted and potential disputes or civil unrest will be avoided. This was the case in the 2011 United Kingdom Alternative Vote referendum where 67% of the UK voted not to change the electoral system. As a result, the issue was settled and the Liberal Democrat and Conservative coalition remained intact until the next election in 2015.

**The Case for Representative Democracy**

Representative Democracy is a limited and indirect form of democracy. Popular participation in government is infrequent and brief, most commonly participation is through voting in elections. This is how the electorate choose their representatives. The public do not exercise power themselves; they select who will govern on their behalf.

Using a representative democratic system has many advantages; this includes adding legitimacy to the decision making process. The decisions that are made by governments usually have a mandate given to the government through democratic elections. Voters legitimise the decisions made by representatives and if the people do not like the decisions that are being made then they can vote the party out at the next election. This mandate was clear in 2011 when the SNP won a majority government in the Scottish Parliament; the people had given them a mandate to hold a referendum on independence.

A positive division of labour is created when using a Representative Democracy. The electorate do not have to get bogged down in the intricate details of each piece of legislation. Most of the general public have no interest in spending time researching policy; many would not have the knowledge, time or capability to research complex issues. The elected representative acts on their behalf and votes on issues in parliament in the way that they believe their electors would want. This allows a better quality of legislation to be passed as it has been through adequate research, drafting and scrutiny processes by professional politicians.

In the majority of modern democratic countries regular Direct Democracy is not only seen as undesirable by many but seen as impossible by others. The size of countries today limits the effectiveness of Direct Democracy. Even a small country like Malta could not effectively run its affairs using Direct Democracy; it would take too long to make any decisions. As a result Representative Democracy is seen as the best system of government for today's countries as their size make this the most desirable system. Using Representative Democracy ensures that legislation can be made and passed effectively and practically in modern society.

Using only the information in Sources A and B above (and opposite):

Compare the cases for Direct and Representative Democracy.

In your answer you must make **three** points of comparison and reach an overall conclusion.

[Turn over