

Democracy developed in ancient Greece. A group of individuals elected by native people had political power and influence. This political system became a basis in further development of democracy movements.

Latvia became independent in 1991, when the Soviet Union disbanded. In last 20 years Latvia as an independent state has joined UN, NATO, EU. Joining these political organisations has granted peaceful and democratic future for Latvia's citizens. For the last 65 years there haven't been any major military conflicts in Europe, except for a few conflicts in ex-Yugoslavian countries like Kosov. All EU countries are partners in many ways and fields. How can you attack something if it has hugged you tight? Peace and democracy can be achieved only by working together, supporting and helping each other, that is how EU works. People have understood that past feuds must be left in the past, and that we need to look into future with hope to see further democratic movements and to live in a peaceful and democratic society.

Vitālijs Grišunovs, Class 12,

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Democratic country means that the people who live in this country have to be free and they haven't got rights to take away freedom of other people.

There are many democratic countries in the world. Democracy means that the people of this country have the rules. The parliament and the president must listen to the people and they should make decisions together. All people in a democratic country have the same human rights and everyone is equal.

Many countries respect the ideas of Greek democracy because these ideas are thousands years old and are as good as they were long time ago in Ancient Greece.

Today there are many organizations that take part in developing democracy ideas. These movements work in many countries and give the ideas of democracy to countries that start the way to being a democratic country only now.

Democracy in Latvia has its own history. Democracy in Latvia started with independence of Latvia in 1918. This was the year when Latvia was ruled by Russia no more until year 1940. At this time of independence Latvia was a democratic country with the parliament and the president.

But in 1934 Latvia got the dictator -Karlis Ulmanis and later in 1940 was occupied again by the USSR. Only in 1990 Latvia got a chance to become an independent and democratic country again and restore its democratic institutions.

I think that democracy is the only way for a country to be powerful and free because when the people of a nation are united and have equal rights to say what they want their country has hopes for the best future.

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I'll begin with a definition of the democracy. So, democracy is a form of government in which all the citizens have an equal say in the decisions, that affect their lives.

There are several variants of democracy, but only two of them are basic forms. One form of it is direct democracy and the other one is called representative democracy. Direct democracy — all citizens have direct and active participation in the decisions making of the government. And the representative democracy — all citizens remain the sovereign power, but the political power is exercised indirectly through elected representatives. So, that's the difference between those forms. In one democracy the power is held by citizens and in the other — by people, elected by the citizens.

A bit of history. Well, democracy first appeared in Ancient Greece, through political and philosophical thought in the city state of Athens. The underlying principle of democracy was freedom, since only in democracy the citizens can be free. It's not only about participating in elections. Basically it's a lifestyle.

About democracy in Latvia. Democracy in Latvia exists, because every 4 years we (Latvian citizens) are electing our parliament called Saeima. There are 100 members of Saeima. After that they elect 1 person as a president and together with the president they decide about The government and its Prime Minister. We have free, and fair elections.

Arvils Potjomkins, Class 12,

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The official definition says: "Democracy is a form of government in which all eligible citizens have an equal say in the decisions that affect their lives." Is it really truth? Is that the same model of democracy that was developed by ancient Greeks?

Nowadays we have a lot of countries with defined forms of government, and the most widespread is democracy. But when we are taking a look back in ancient world - democracy was something unheard, not logical, or even impermissible. On the one hand - democracy made the law-creating process longer, than it was in authoritarian regime, or monarchy. On the other hand - democracy made laws more friendly and tolerant to citizens, created some kind of freedom and rights, so they were no more afraid of slavery, unfair punishments and other terrible things that may occur in other forms of government.

Anyway, today's democracy has gone far away, from the idea that everyone can take part in discussion about acceptation of law or global events, like increasing some kind of taxes.

Nowadays we can elect a president, a parliament, but can we really trust them if there is no person that we would like to see as a leader? Will they make the right decision that will improve people's lives? Unfortunately, in many countries oligarchy, corruption and benefit to members of government have turned the ideas of democracy to nothing more than a cloud of smoke in the pink glasses of their citizens.

Aļona Tarasova, Class 11,

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*One of the best forms of governments was and is democracy. That form of government has come a long way of development, since ancient Greek times. We can look for its start in the ancient Athens in the 5th century B.C. At the beginning democracy in the ancient Athens was not a political form. It was like a popular culture. Only after long time people from Athens discovered democracy.*

*At the beginning democracy was perceived both positive and negative, but nowadays it is a widespread form of government. In many countries democracy has transformed both politics and public life. That affects us too, because Latvia is a democratic republic.*

*Latvia became a democratic republic at the time when Latvia became an independent country. That form of government is very well expressed. State power belongs to citizens, for example, we can mention free elections where anyone who is 18 years old can vote. None statesman can vote themselves. Latvia has its border, rights and constitution. In Latvia all people have freedom of speech. In my opinion, it is very significant, because all people can tell their opinion in friends' company or on the country scale.*

*In my opinion, democracy is a very good, strong form of government, because the best indication of democracy is people dominion, people who make their future themselves.*

*Linda Bankovska, Class 12,*

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Democracy isn't perfect, but it's the best thing that has been ever invented. It is a social arrangement in which human rights and responsibilities are understood and respected and people also have a chance to express their opinion, take part in making decisions. But does that happen in our days?

The democracy started in ancient Greece. The basic principles were elections. And every person who was 18 years old could vote.

The basics of democracy have changed. The main changes are religious freedom, right for opinion and every person has to respect the law.

Nowadays, democracy is the best way to rule, but there are some side effects. For example, many parties make lots of promises what before the elections, so that they just can get more votes from people.

I think that there is democracy in Latvia, but not everywhere the opinion of people is taken into account as it should be, however, everyone can express their opinion.

Many people don't trust politicians. And we can see it because every year there are less and less voters. Many people aren't involved in political life.

The best way to increase democracy is to change the old parties and politicians with new people and new parties.

So I think that there is democracy in Latvia, but it is not as good as it is in other countries. That is why we should care about us and our country more.

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