

Citizenship

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How does government work in a non-democratic nation? Case study: North Korea

Downloadable Resource

Mrs Barry



Features of a democratic and a non-democratic government

Democratic:

- Citizens have a **right to vote**
- Elections** are **open and fair**
- Citizens have a **right to free speech** and can speak out against the government
- There is a **free media** with access to a range of viewpoints.

Non Democratic:

- Often a **single or a small number of political parties** to represent people.
- Government **control the media**, limiting **freedom of information**
- Intimidation may occur during elections and **voters and are not free to cast a vote of their choosing** at polling stations.
- Citizens do not get the right to free speech** - they can not criticise the government



North Korea 2019 - information task

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“The authorities continued to impose severe restrictions on freedom of movement and access to information. Widespread and systematic controls over the daily lives of people and frequent pressing of the public into labour mobilizations severely affected the enjoyment of human rights. Foreign media reported several public executions. People in detention experienced torture and other ill-treatment and harsh conditions.”

“In his New Year's address, Kim Jong-un [President of North Korea] reiterated the importance of “self-reliance” and socialism but also discussed de-nuclearization and the peace process. Nuclear negotiations continued, including summits with China, the USA and South Korea, but little progress was made. Human rights received scant attention during the negotiations. From May to December, tensions rose as North Korea fired over 20 missiles in at least 13 different tests.

Image and extracts from Amnesty International; North Korea 2019



North Korea 2019 - information task continued

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Economic sanctions by the UN and individual states remained in place. According to foreign media, they negatively impacted the nation's economy and the standard of living for large numbers of people. North Korean workers returned from abroad as a result of sanctions. The economy experienced negative growth. In July, authorities rejected 50,000 tons of rice offered by South Korea despite the significant decline in agricultural productivity and the livestock industry.”

Investigate further

The full article is available at:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/asia-and-the-pacific/north-korea/report-korea-democratic-peoples-republic-of/>

Extracts from Amnesty International; North Korea 2019

