**Most Prevalent Forms of Government**

**Communist** - a system of government in which the state plans and controls the economy and a single -- often authoritarian -- party holds power

**Democracy** - a form of government in which the supreme power is retained by the people, but which is usually exercised indirectly through a system of representation and delegated authority periodically renewed.

**Dictatorship** - a form of government in which a ruler or small clique wield absolute power (not restricted by a constitution or laws).

**Federal republic** - a state in which the powers of the central government are restricted and in which the component parts (states, colonies, or provinces) retain a degree of self-government; ultimate sovereign power rests with the voters who chose their governmental representatives.

**Monarchy** - a government in which the supreme power is lodged in the hands of a monarch who reigns over a state or territory, usually for life and by hereditary right; the monarch may be either a sole absolute ruler or a sovereign - such as a king, queen or prince - with constitutionally limited authority.

**Oligarchy** - a government in which control is exercised by a small group of individuals whose authority generally is based on wealth or power.

**Parliamentary government** (Cabinet-Parliamentary government) - a government in which members of an executive branch (the cabinet and its leader - a prime minister, premier or chancellor) are nominated to their positions by a legislature or parliament, and are directly responsible to it; this type of government can be dissolved at will by the parliament (legislature) by means of a no-confidence vote or the leader of the cabinet may dissolve the parliament if it can no longer function.

**Republic** - a representative democracy in which the people's elected deputies (representatives), not the people themselves, vote on legislation.

**Socialism** - a government in which the means of planning, producing and distributing goods is controlled by a central government that theoretically seeks a more just and equitable distribution of property and labor

**Social democracy** - a political, social and economic philosophy that supports economic and social interventions to promote social justice, within the framework of a liberal democratic polity and a capitalist-leaning mixed economy**.**