

# What is Democracy?

In **D**ependent judiciary

**E**lected representatives

Com **M**unity

**O**pposition

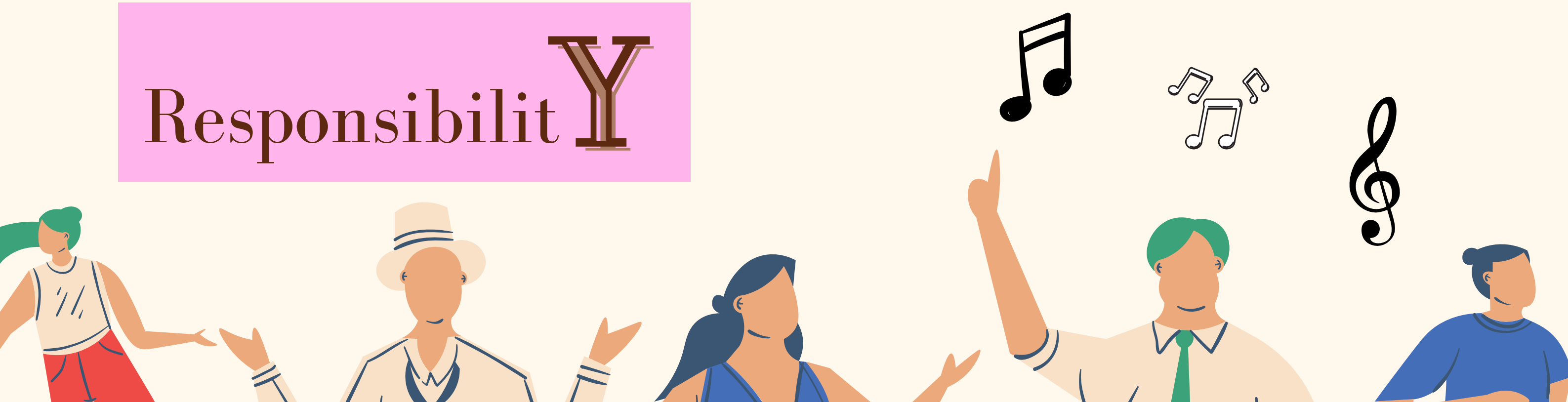
**C**ivil liberties

**R**ule of law

Soci **A**l diversity

Edu **C**ation

Responsibilit **Y**

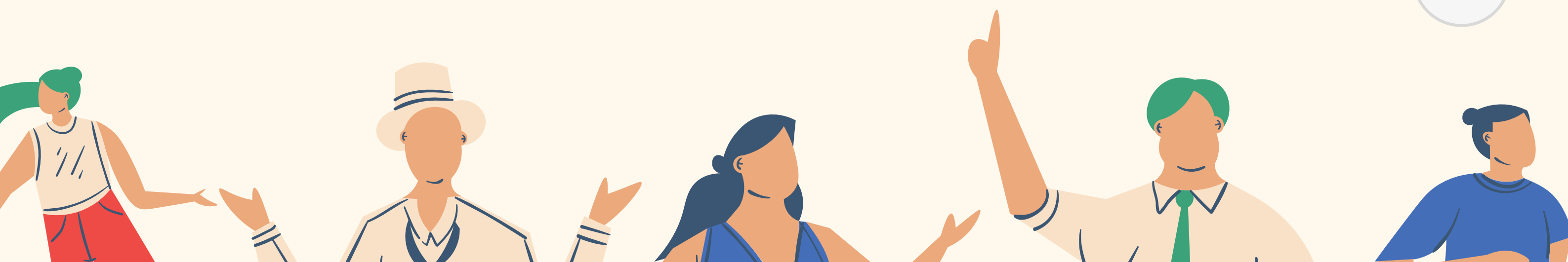
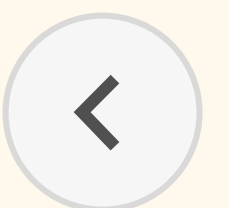


# What is Democracy?

Democracy is a government system which involves, either directly or indirectly, all citizens through popular consultations tools.

Democracy's concept has been evolving over time, it is referred not only to a State form but also to a community of people and the way they decide the improvement or their lifestyles. Cornerstones of democracy include freedom of assembly, association and speech, equality, the right to life, citizenship, voting and the other vital rights.

It is a form of society which favours equal rights, freedom of speech and a fair trial and tolerate the views of minorities. A healthy civil society requires responsible and active citizens who value the system of government and work towards a shared vision of civil life.

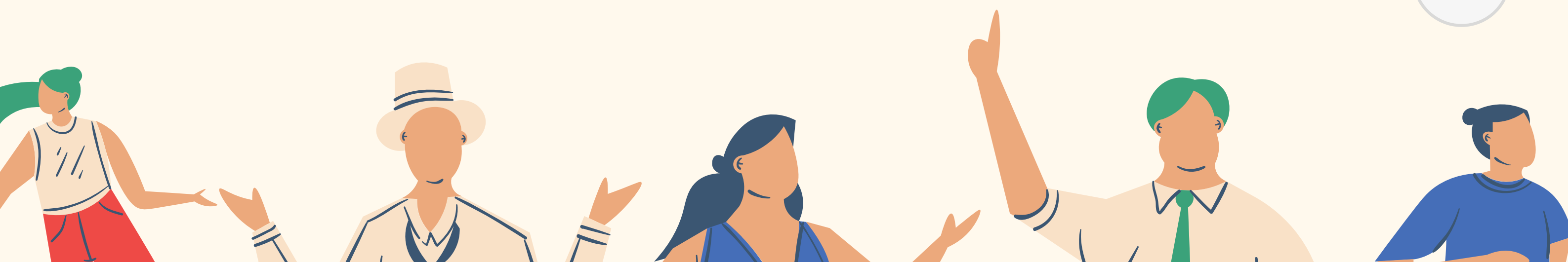
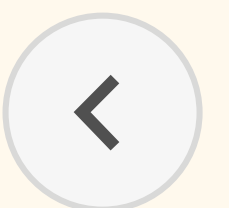


# Independent judiciary

What is a judge? Its most important function consists of expressing a judgment upon a conflict of interests between two different parts. The result of this function is the sentence.

Judiciary independence means that: Every single judge is and must be independent from powers and interests that have nothing to do with his judging.

In Italy judiciary independence is guaranteed by the CSM (High Council of the Judiciary), a self-governing tool that prevents other branches (such as the executive branch) from interfering with the judiciary power, as made explicit by the 104th article of the Italian Constitution.



# Elected representatives

Democracy grants sovereignty to the citizens who have the right and the duty to take part. It would be impossible to elaborate and deal with the opinions of millions of people. The collectivity is delegated to elect some representatives because freedom is participation. Representatives will show their ideas and their purposes: in this way the state will concede a popular sovereignty.



# Community

Given the value of inclusivity that characterizes a democratic society, developing a profound sense of community comes naturally to citizens.

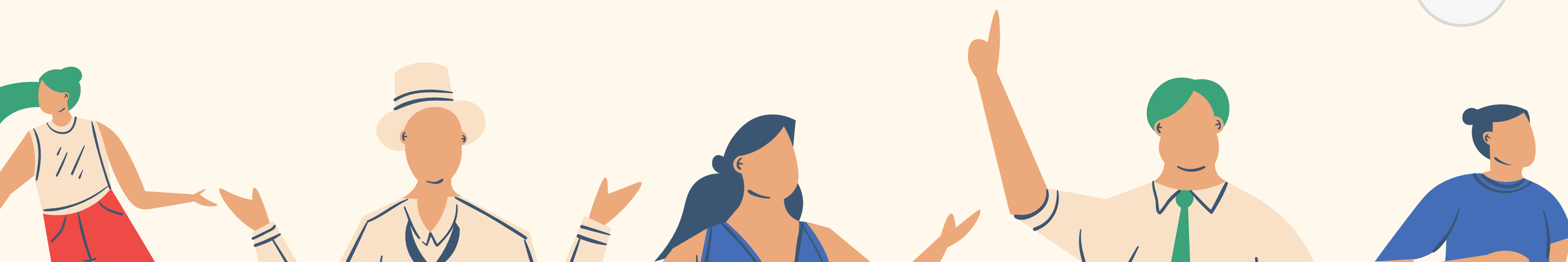
Everyone is free to express themselves, have their own faith, opinions and beliefs without having to worry about what other people could think or say about them. These two things combined - freedom and respect - lead to an inclusive and open-minded group of people. Furthermore, thanks to the equality of rights and opportunities, everyone feels nothing more and nothing less than the other components of the society. This is the meaning of community, a group of people with equal rights and duties where diversity is a resource and not a means of exclusion.





# Opposition

Opposition represents one of the main foundations of a democracy, and the granting of a minority to express their thoughts without the fear of being prosecuted for it. The main means of the opposition is the referendum, whereby all citizens express their preferences in the form of a vote. Unlike a dictatorial regime in which a single man can decide the entire course of his own state, democracy allows confrontation between different parties and their ideas, which will lead to a majority and a minority, and those who will have the most of votes will have the role of making public decisions.



# Civil liberties

The civil liberties put limits on governments so that they can't abuse their powers and interfere with the freedom of their citizens.

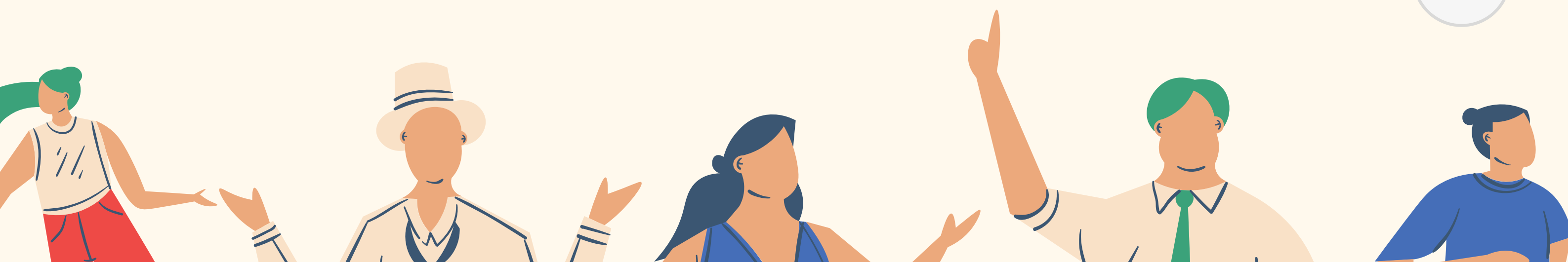
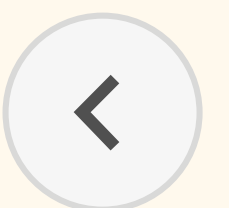
Among civil liberties we can find freedom of association, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, freedom of expression, right to defense, right to an equal process and right to privacy.

The first concepts of civil liberties date back to the time of the Magna Carta Libertatum, in 1215.

Both republican and democratic countries have a Constitution and some, like the United States, also have a Bill of Rights.

The protection of civil liberties is a responsibility of democratic states, and by that they can distinguish themselves from authoritarian ones.

In some extreme cases, like in the case of a war or a state of emergency like a pandemic similar to COVID-19, civil liberties could be temporarily suspended or changed.

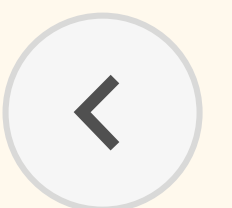
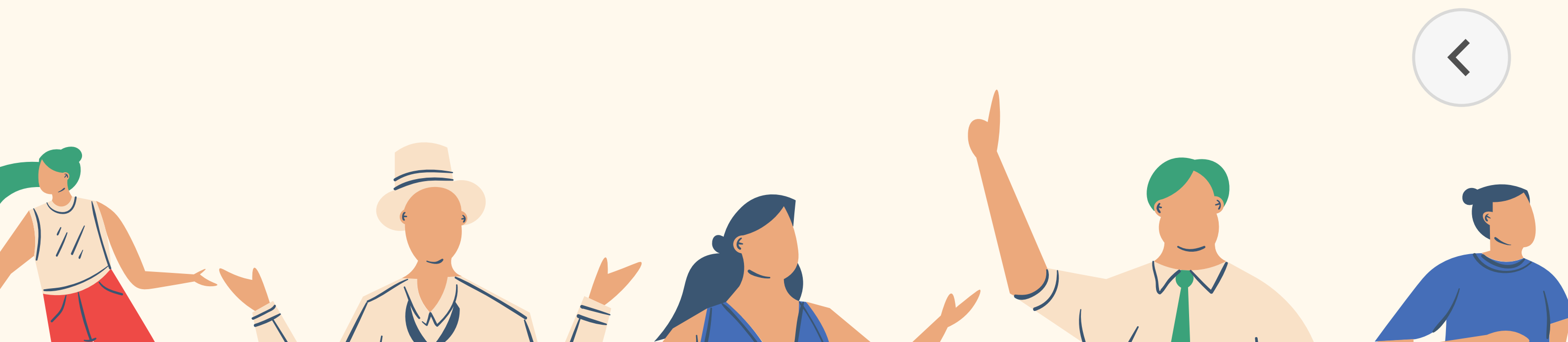


# Rule of law

A democratic state under the rule of law is a state where citizens elect their own leaders, and the government itself is bound by the law, while also helping to ensure that the law is respected among the citizens of the state.

Democratic stability depends on a self-enforcing equilibrium: political officials must respect democracy's limits on their actions, particularly regarding the rights of citizens.

In a stable institution all conflicts are solved according to the institutional rules, and therefore, the Rule of Law stabilizes the democratic society.





# Social diversity

One of the most important features of democracy is the fact that this kind of government respects and tolerates the differences among different religious, political or cultural groups. This statement is true due to two conditions:

- The majority always needs to work with minorities;
- The rule by majority means that in case of every election, different people and groups may be a form of majority.  
However democracy remains democracy.

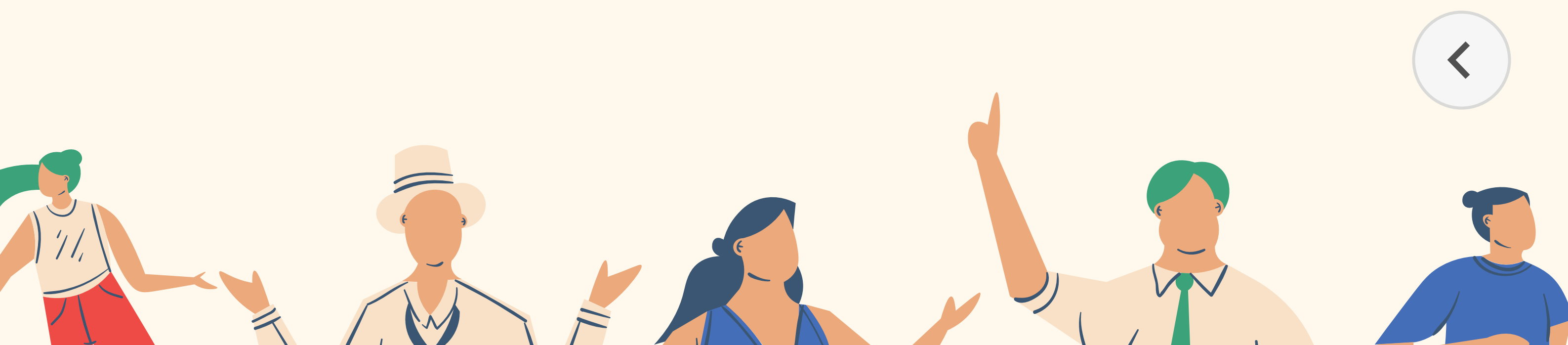
Democracy promotes dignity and freedom of the individual. Every human being deserves respect from the others.



# Education

Education can change the society. It can make it better. Education is the foundation of democracy: it is necessary for life and is needed to increase individual experience. Personal growth is the base for the creation of democracy. This all is needed to understand the cooperation value, which encourages the pacific resolution of both domestic and foreign conflicts.

Equity's value is essential because it promotes equality and consequently provides the creation of a society based on equity and justice. Equality and democracy are closely linked: political equality is the quality of a society where all members are equal.



# Responsibility

Citizens have not only rights but also duties. Citizenship means also carrying out the duties and responsibilities of a member of a particular society. With the power they are given of being able to play a fundamental role in the political system, comes their responsibility to participate actively in their country's political process. Every citizen is free to vote whoever they want without any constraint. Each opinion – therefore each vote – matters within democracy.

