This course offers an introduction to the empirical study of the majority of political systems around the world. According to Freedom House, people live under unfree political conditions within 55 per cent of countries worldwide and there has been a rising trend of declining political and civil rights within all regions of the world for more than a decade. More specifically, the course will highlight the following aspects: First, main elements of the definitions and measurement strategies used in current research on authoritarianism will be summarised. Second, a brief overview will introduce recent trends and developments in researching authoritarian regimes. And, third, examples of GIGA research from the work of scholars in the Research Team “Authoritarian Politics” will be introduced in order to illustrate some of the main research strategies used by GIGA scholars in this important field of comparative politics.

About the lecturer

Dr. Thomas Richter is Senior Research Fellow at the GIGA Institute of Middle East Studies.