

SAINT LUCIA

Date of Elections: 3 May 1982

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the seats of the House of Assembly following premature dissolution of Parliament on 6 February 1982. General elections had previously been held on 3 July 1979.

Characteristics of Parliament

The bicameral Parliament of Saint Lucia consists of a Senate and a House of Assembly.

The Senate is composed of 11 members appointed by the Governor-General: 6 on the advice of the Prime Minister, 3 on the advice of the Leader of the Opposition, and 2 on the basis of the Governor-General's "own deliberate judgement" after undertaking various consultations.

The House of Assembly comprises 17 elected members. All parliamentarians have 5-year terms of office.

Electoral System

Every citizen of the Commonwealth who is at least 18 years old and possesses the required qualifications relating to residence or domicile in Saint Lucia is, unless otherwise disqualified, entitled to vote.

All citizens of at least 21 years of age who were born in Saint Lucia and are domiciled and resident there at the date of their nomination (or having been born elsewhere, have resided there for a period of 12 months immediately before that date), as well as able to speak and—unless incapacitated by blindness or other physical cause—to read the English language with a degree of proficiency sufficient to enable them to take an active part in the proceedings of the House are qualified to be elected as members of the House of Assembly; the age and residence requirements for Senate candidates are 21 * and five years, respectively.

No person may be a member of Parliament if he is under allegiance to a foreign State, a minister of religion, an undischarged bankrupt, a person certified to be insane, or one under sentence of death or serving a term of imprisonment exceeding 12 months.

For House of Assembly elections, each constituency returns one member.

Assembly seats which fall vacant between general elections are filled through by-elections, whereas Senate vacancies are filled by appointment. Both are effected within three months of the occurrence of the vacancy.

• See *Chronicle of Parliamentary Elections and Developments XV* (1980-1981), p. 24.

General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

On 16 January 1982, Mr. Winston Cenac, who had formed a St. Lucia Labour Party (SLP) Government in May 1981, resigned following public protests against his Government and a nationwide general strike. An all-party interim coalition Government was then formed by Mr. Michael Pilgrim, deputy leader of the Progressive Labour Party (PLP). Parliament was dissolved on 6 February and a general election thus became due within 90 days.

On polling day, the United Workers' Party (UWP), led by Mr. John Compton, won 14 of the 17 Assembly seats, thus defeating the formerly dominant SLP; the PLP obtained one seat. Mr. Compton consequently returned to power as Prime Minister on 5 May after a three-year lapse.

Statistics

1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats in the House of Assembly

Number of registered electors	75,363
Blank or void ballot papers	49,590 (c. 5.80%)
Valid votes	1,093
	48,497

Political Group	Number of Candidates	Votes obtained	%	Number of Seats
United Workers' Party (UWP)	17	27,252	56.19	14 (+ 9)
Saint Lucia Labour Party (SLP)	17	8,122	16.74	2 (-10)
Progressive Labour Party (PLP)	17	13,123	27.06	[(+ 1)]
				17

2. Distribution of Members of Parliament according to Professional Category

Lawyers	8
Businessmen	5
Social workers	4
Farmers	3
Teachers	2
Insurance agents	2
Others	4

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3. *Distribution of Members of Parliament
according to Sex*

Men . .	25
Women	3
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4. *Distribution of Members of Parliament
according to Age Group*

30-50 years	17
51-75 . .	11
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