

## SAINT LUCIA

**Dates of Elections:** 6 and 30 April 1987

### **Purpose of Elections**

General elections were held on 6 April 1987 on the normal expiry of the Parliament's term, but the close polling results did not provide either one of the main contending parties with a clear mandate. The legislature was therefore dissolved on 14 April and new elections took place on 30 April.

### **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 insane, or one under sentence of death or serving a term of imprisonment exceeding 12 months.

Candidates for the House of Assembly need not necessarily belong to political parties but must each be supported by at least six registered electors and deposit a sum equivalent to approximately US\$ 93.—. This amount is reimbursed if the candidate obtains at least one-eighth of the votes cast in his constituency.

For House of Assembly elections, each constituency returns one member by simple majority vote. The Speaker may be elected from among persons who are not among the House's constituency membership.

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.

**General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections**

The regularly-scheduled elections of 6 April 1987 left the ruling United Workers' Party (UWP) with a House majority of only one seat (9 to 8) over the opposition Saint Lucia Labour Party (SLP) and thus without a clear mandate to govern. As a consequence, the newly-elected Parliament was dissolved after its formal opening on 14 April and a fresh poll was called for 30 April.

In the campaigns, the conservative UWP, led by outgoing Prime Minister John Compton, stood by its achievements since coming to power in 1982 while the socialist SLP, headed by Mr. Julian Hunte, criticized the Government's performance in the economic realm. The latter polling day was marked by a larger voter turnout but produced an identical distribution of House seats. On 5 May, Mr. Compton announced the composition of a slightly-altered Cabinet from the one he had earlier appointed.

Statistics

*1. Results of the 6 April 1987 Elections and Distribution of Seats in the House of Assembly*

Number of registered electors. . . . .	83,153	
Voters. . . . .	50,511	(60.74%)
Blank or void ballot papers. . . . .	1,158	
Valid votes . . . . .	49,353	

Political Group	Number of Candidates	Votes obtained	%	Number of Seats
United Workers' Party (UWP) . . . . .	17	25,892	51.26	9 (-5)
Saint Lucia Labour party (SLP)	17	18,889	37.40	8 (+ 6)
Progressive Labour Party (PLP)	12	4,572	9.05	- (- 1)
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*Saint Lucia*

*2. Results of the 30 April 1987 Elections and Distribution of Seats  
in the House of Assembly*

Voters 66% (approx.)

Political Group	Number of Candidates	Votes obtained	Number of Seats
United Workers' Party (UWP)	17	27,973	53.3
Saint Lucia Labour Party (SLP)	17	21,375	40.7
Progressive Labour Party (PLP)	5	3,175	6.1
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*Distribution of Members of Parliament  
according to Professional Category*

Farmers . . . .	7
Lawyers . . . .	6
Businessmen . .	5
Insurance agents	2
Trade unionists .	2
Engineers . . . .	2
Social workers	1
Teachers . . . .	1
Others . . . .	<b>2</b>
	28

*Distribution of Members of Parliaments  
according to Sex*

Men	<b>26</b>
Women	<b>J</b>
	28

*Distribution of Members of Parliament  
according to Age Group*

30-50 years	<b>17</b>
51-75 »	<b>11</b>