



The local government system in Singapore

Key facts

POPULATION: (Census 2010) 5,076,700
AREA: 710 sq km
CAPITAL: Singapore
CURRENCY: Singapore dollar (SGD)
LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTION TO GDP: -
HEAD OF STATE: President Sellapan R. Nathan
HEAD OF GOVERNMENT: Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong
FORM OF GOVERNMENT: democratic parliamentary republic
PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM: unicameral
STATE STRUCTURE: city state
LANGUAGES: English (official) Malay (national language), Mandarin, Tamil (recognised)
NATIONAL ELECTIONS: last: general 2006; presidential 2005 **turnout:** -
next: 2012
LOCAL ELECTIONS: There is no elected local government in Singapore.

SUMMARY

Singapore is a democratic parliamentary republic with no local government.

1. CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Singapore is a democratic parliamentary republic city state. The head of state is the non-executive president who is directly elected for a term of six years. The head of government is the prime minister, who is the leader of the majority party and is appointed by the president. Cabinet is appointed by the president on the advice of the prime minister from amongst the unicameral parliament. Parliament consists of 84 popularly elected members, elected either from the nine single-member constituencies or the 14 group representation constituencies. A further six may be nominated to parliament with speaking rights and voting rights on all resolutions not pertaining to finances or the constitution. Elections are based on universal suffrage of those over 21 years of age.

2. LEGAL BASIS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

2.1 Constitutional provisions:

There is no constitutional provision for local government.

2.2 Main legislative texts:

There are no legislative provisions for local government.

Table 1. Distribution of urban planning boards and population

Region	No. of urban planning areas	Population* (Census 2010)
Central	24	929,082
East	6	692,280
North*	7	504,920
North-East	7	747,216
West*	11	893,739
Non-resident population	-	1,305,000
TOTAL	55*	5,076,700

*plus one water catchment area each

3. STRUCTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

3.1 Local government within the state:

There is no local government. There are however five community development councils (CDCs) that provide local administration. Each is governed by a board of between 12 and 20 members, including a mayor. They are responsible for initiating, planning and managing community programmes and encouraging regional civil society activity. The CDCs provide various community and social assistance services delegated from the ministries. Whilst it has no local government, Singapore does use two concurrent sets of sub-divisions: electoral divisions consisting of 23 constituencies and 84 wards, and administrative divisions

known as urban planning areas. Of the constituencies, five have six wards, nine have five wards and nine consist of a single ward. Table 1 shows the distribution of the population by region and urban planning areas.

References and useful websites

1. Singapore statistics office www.singstat.gov.sg
2. UN statistics <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dyb2008/Table03.pdf>
3. IMF statistics www.imf.org/external/data.htm
4. Government of Singapore website www.gov.sg
5. Gov. of Singapore e-government portal www.reach.gov.sg
6. UNDP Human Development Report 2010 <http://hdr.undp.org>
7. CLGF ministerial questionnaire www.clgf.org.uk