



# SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES



## KEY FACTS

**POPULATION (2017 estimate):**  
109,803

**AREA (UN 2006):** 389 sq km

**CAPITAL:** Kingstown

**CURRENCY:** East Caribbean dollar (XCD)

**HEAD OF STATE:** HM Queen Elizabeth II

**GOVERNOR-GENERAL:** Sir Frederick Ballantyne

**HEAD OF GOVERNMENT:** Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves

**FORM OF GOVERNMENT:** constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy

**PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM:** unicameral

**STATE STRUCTURE:** unitary

**LANGUAGES:** English (official)

**NATIONAL ELECTIONS:** last: 2015, turnout: 73.3%; next: 2020

**WOMEN IN PARLIAMENT (2017):** 13.0%

**LOCAL ELECTIONS:** there is no elected local government

**WOMEN COUNCILLORS:** there are no elected local councillors

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE as a percentage of total government expenditure 2016/17:** na

## SUMMARY

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is a democratic constitutional monarchy but has no elected local government. There is no constitutional provision for local government and local administration is governed by the Local Authorities (Termination of Dissolution) Act of 1981. The local administration may charge fees for services such as markets and cemeteries and is responsible for maintaining minor roads, garbage disposal, cemeteries and markets.

### 1. NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is a democratic constitutional monarchy with a unicameral parliament.<sup>36.1a</sup> The head of state is HM Queen Elizabeth II, represented by a governor-general. A referendum in 2009 proposing to replace the monarch with a non-executive president was defeated. The parliament, called the House of Assembly, comprises 21 representatives (known as members of parliament or MPs), 15 of whom are elected from single-member constituencies and six of whom are appointed senators. The senators are appointed by the governor-general: four on the advice of the prime minister and two on the advice of the leader of the opposition. The term of office for all members is up to five years. Following the 2015 national election, 13.0% (3/23) of MPs were women.<sup>36.1b</sup> The cabinet is appointed by the governor-general on the advice of the prime minister from the members of the House of Assembly, with no more than two members being drawn from the appointed senators.

### 2. LEGAL BASIS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

#### 2.1 Constitutional provisions

There is no constitutional provision or protection for local government.<sup>36.2a</sup> A

proposal to include local government in the constitution failed when the draft constitution did not receive the support of the public in a referendum held in 2009.

#### 2.2 Main legislative texts

The Local Authorities (Termination of Dissolution) Act of 1981 provides for either wholly elected or partly elected and partly nominated local authorities.<sup>36.2b</sup> In practice however, the authorities continue to be administered by clerks appointed by national government.

#### 2.3 Proposed legislative changes

No known legislative changes proposed.

#### 2.4 National urban policy

A draft National Physical Development Plan was commissioned by the government in February 2017.<sup>36.2c</sup>

### 3. STRUCTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

#### 3.1 Local government within the state

There is no elected local government in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. In 1973 elected local government was dissolved and currently the six parishes are administrative units of national government and are responsible for only a limited number of services.

**Table 36.1a Distribution of councils and population**

Parish	Town boards	District boards	Village councils	Special services	Total	Population* (2012 Census)	Population (2017 estimate)	% rural (2010)
<b>Saint Vincent</b>						98,954		
Charlotte	1	2	1	1	5	na	na	na
St Andrew	1	0	0	0	1	na	na	na
St David	1	0	1	1	3	5,756	na	na
St George	2	0	0	1	3	na	na	na
St Patrick	1	1	0	0	2	na	na	na
<b>The Grenadines</b>								
Grenadines	0	2	0	1	3	10,234	na	na
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>109,188</b>	<b>109,803</b>	<b>50.7</b>

\* Census divisions are not sub-divisions of parishes and so it is not possible to present accurate figures for the parishes other than St David, and the Grenadines. Source: Local government department, MTWUD&LG and 2012 Census<sup>36.5a</sup>



### 3.2 Ministerial oversight

Oversight is provided by the department of local government within the Ministry of Transport, Works, Urban Development and Local Government (MTWUD&LG).<sup>36.3b</sup> A local government officer is appointed as the head of this department and is responsible for the supervision of 17 local government entities including town boards and village councils.

### 3.3 District authorities

The country is divided into districts, and each district is served by a local authority. Each is administered by a clerk who reports to the local government officer. Both officers work in close collaboration with the local MP and hold consultations with local citizens.

**3.3.1 The Kingstown Board**, which serves the capital, has a unique administrative arrangement. It is headed by a warden who reports directly to the permanent secretary of the MTWUD&LG.

## 4. ELECTIONS

### 4.1 Recent local elections, 4.2 Voting system and 4.3 Elected representatives

There is no elected local government.<sup>36.4</sup>

### 4.4 Women's representation

No information available.

## 5. SYSTEMS FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

### 5.1 Legal requirement and

### 5.2 Implementation

The local government department holds regular community consultations through town hall meetings.

### 5.3 ICT use in citizen engagement

No information available.

## 6. ORGANISED LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There are no associations of local government authorities.

## 7. INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

The mechanisms for intergovernmental interaction are informal but exist at all levels. Village and town clerks work in close collaboration with the local representatives of the National Emergency Management Organisation, MTWUD&LG, the Ministry of Health and other agencies which are responsible for disaster mitigation, infrastructural development, sanitation and related services. At the management level, the local government officer works in close collaboration with the senior technical staff of these ministries, as well as local MPs and government ministers. S/he also represents MTWUD&LG on inter-ministerial committees with respect to rural development interventions. Where necessary, the permanent secretary schedules special meetings of senior staff across the public service to address issues of conflict or collaboration.

## 8. MONITORING SYSTEMS

The director of audit and the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Assembly, which is headed by the leader of the opposition, have oversight of public services, including local government. The Ministry of Finance and the Office of the Accountant General also have administrative responsibility for budgetary approvals, monitoring revenue collection and expenditure, and ensuring that government resources are efficiently used in accordance with legal requirements. The ministry also provides an internal audit function for local government authorities.

## 9. FINANCE, STAFFING AND RESOURCES

### 9.1 Local government expenditure

There is no information available.

### 9.2 Locally raised revenue

Local authorities charge low rates for using community markets and a small fee for the use of cemeteries. Service fees can be waived for the indigent on application to the social welfare division of the Ministry of National Mobilisation. Property taxes collected by the Kingstown Board are retained by the board for the financing of its operations.

### 9.3 Transfers

The budget-setting process is as follows: following an annual budget call by the Ministry of Finance, an advance proposal on behalf of local government is submitted by MTWUD&LG. This proposal is determined after consultation with clerks, area representatives and residents of each community and is submitted to the permanent secretary by the local government officer, revised in senior management discussion and then submitted to the Ministry of Finance for consideration. Tax levies and rates are determined by national government and local authorities collect taxes on its behalf. All taxes are paid into a consolidated fund, except property taxes collected by the Kingstown Board.

### 9.4 Loans

No information is available.

### 9.5 Local authority staff

All local authority staff are part of the national civil service.

## 10. DISTRIBUTION OF SERVICE DELIVERY RESPONSIBILITY

Services provided by local authorities include: construction and maintenance of minor/village roads, footpaths, drains, walls and other infrastructure; sanitation services, including the cleaning of public places and disposal of garbage in the district (with the exception of Kingstown); management of public cemeteries,

community/rural markets and other facilities; and the collection of property taxes on behalf of national government. The services provided are determined primarily by law, policy and resource availability.

### 10.2 ICT use in service delivery

No information is available.

### 10.3 The role of local government in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Ministry of Economic Planning, Sustainable Development, Industry, Information and Labour is responsible for developing the country's development plans in line with its international commitments.<sup>36.10</sup>

## REFERENCES AND USEFUL WEBSITES

- 36.1a Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines [www.gov.vc](http://www.gov.vc)
- 36.1b Inter-Parliamentary Union (2017) 'Women in national parliaments' [www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm](http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm)
- 36.2a Constitution of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines [www.gov.vc/images/stories/Gov\\_images/docs/1979\\_constitution.pdf](http://www.gov.vc/images/stories/Gov_images/docs/1979_constitution.pdf)
- 36.2b Local Authorities (Termination of Dissolution) Act of 1981 - no link
- 36.2c Terms of reference for a draft National Physical Development Plan [http://planning.gov.vc/planning/images/stories/pdf/terms\\_of\\_reference\\_development\\_of\\_draft\\_national\\_physical\\_development\\_plan\\_final.pdf](http://planning.gov.vc/planning/images/stories/pdf/terms_of_reference_development_of_draft_national_physical_development_plan_final.pdf)
- 36.3a 2012 Census [www.stats.gov.vc/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=SYGGWVvrmc%3d&tabid=60](http://www.stats.gov.vc/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=SYGGWVvrmc%3d&tabid=60)
- 36.3b Ministry of Transport, Works, Urban Development and Local Government [www.transport.gov.vc](http://www.transport.gov.vc)
- 36.4 Electoral office [http://security.gov.vc/security/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=197&Itemid=231](http://security.gov.vc/security/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=197&Itemid=231)
- 36.5-9. No reference for these sections
- 36.10 Ministry of Economic Planning, Sustainable Development, Industry, Information and Labour [www.planning.gov.vc](http://www.planning.gov.vc)
- 36.11a UN statistics surface area <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dyb2006/Table03.pdf>
- 36.11b CLGF Knowledge Hub [www.clgf.org.uk/resource-centre/knowledge-hub](http://www.clgf.org.uk/resource-centre/knowledge-hub)
- 36.11c Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Public Administration Profile 2004 <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan023203.pdf>
- 36.11d UNDP HDR country profile <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/VCT>



**Annex 36a Summary of service provision in different spheres of government in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**

Services	Delivering authority			Remarks
	National government	Parish/district	Town/village	
<b>GENERAL ADMINISTRATION</b>				
Police	■			
Fire protection	■			
Civil protection	■			
Criminal justice	■			
Civil status register	■			
Statistical office	■			
Electoral register	■			
<b>EDUCATION</b>				
Pre-school (kindergarten and nursery)		■	■	
Primary	■	■	■	
Secondary	■			
Vocational and technical	■			
Higher education	■			
Adult education	■			
<b>SOCIAL WELFARE</b>				
Family welfare services	■			
Welfare homes	■			
Social security	■			
<b>PUBLIC HEALTH</b>				
Primary care	■			
Hospitals	■			
Health protection	■			
<b>HOUSING and TOWN PLANNING</b>				
Housing	■			
Town planning	■			
Regional planning	■			
<b>TRANSPORT</b>				
Roads	■	■	■	
Transport	■			
Urban roads	■			
Urban rail	na			
Ports	■			
Airports	■			
<b>ENVIRONMENT and PUBLIC SANITATION</b>				
Water and sanitation	■	■	■	
Refuse collection and disposal	■	■	■	Local authorities have responsibility for garbage disposal except in Kingstown
Cemeteries and crematoria	■	■	■	
Slaughterhouses	■			
Environmental protection	■			
Consumer protection	■			
<b>CULTURE, LEISURE and SPORTS</b>				
Theatres and concerts				
Museums and libraries	■			
Parks and open spaces	■	■	■	
Sports and leisure facilities	■			
Religious facilities				
<b>UTILITIES</b>				
Gas services	■			
District heating	■			
Water supply	■	■	■	
Electricity	■			
<b>ECONOMIC</b>				
Agriculture, forests and fisheries	■			
Local economic development/promotion	■	■	■	
Trade and industry	■			
Tourism	■	■	■	

■ sole responsibility service ■ joint responsibility service ■ discretionary service