



Falkland Islands — Va-PoReg Country Report

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01/02/1833 Start Direct Rule Colonial Regime [of United Kingdom]: At various times, the islands have had French, British, Spanish, and Argentine settlements. Britain reasserted its rule on 01/02/1833,¹ but Argentina maintains its claim to the islands. In 1840, the Falklands became a Crown colony and Scottish settlers subsequently established an official pastoral community. In the first half of the 20th century, the Falklands served an important role in Britain's territorial claims to subantarctic islands and a section of Antarctica.²

03/04/1949 End Direct Rule Colonial Regime [of United Kingdom]/Start Indirect Rule Colonial Regime [of United Kingdom]: On 03/04/1949 the Islands got a new constitution creating a new Legislative Council. Election with universal suffrage took place the same year. The Council consisted of three ex-officio members, namely the Colonial Secretary, the Senior Medical Officer and the Agricultural Officer, two members selected by the Governor, three nominated members and four elected members. Due to a lack of meaningful domestic legitimization of the council, with only four elected members and the limited means of authority granted to these members, this does not mark a regime change. On 12/15/1951 an amendment of the constitution reduced the number of nominated members from three to two. Another amendment on 09/02/1964 reduced the number of ex-officio members from three to two and the nominated members were renamed independent members.³

07/21/1977 End Direct Rule Colonial Regime [of United Kingdom]/Start Indirect Rule Colonial Regime [of United Kingdom]: On this date, the Falkland Islands (Legislative Council) (Amendment) Order 1977 came into effect, as proclaimed by Governor James Roland Walter Parker in the Falkland Gazette on 07/19/1977.⁴ Through this order, the remaining two appointed members were replaced by elected members, leading to a majority of the elected members. General elections were held on 10/06/1977 to elect six councilors, one for each constituency.⁵

04/02/1982 End Indirect Rule Colonial Regime [of United Kingdom]/Start Direct Rule Occupation Regime [by Argentina, Military Autocracy]: On this date, Argentina's military forces invaded the islands. This act started the Falkland Islands War, which ended two months later with the surrender of the Argentine forces at Stanley to British troops who had forcibly reoccupied the islands.⁶

06/14/1982 End Direct Rule Occupation Regime [by Argentina, Military Autocracy]/Start Indirect Rule Colonial Regime [of United Kingdom]: British administration was restored at the end of the Falklands War. And as a result to the 1981 'British Dependent Territory Act', the status was changed from Crown Colony to Dependent Territory. The islanders had full British citizenship restored in 1983. Their quality of life improved through investments made by the UK after the war and by economic liberalization that had been stalled for fear of angering Argentina. LIED does not treat the Falkland Islands during its colonial time.

04/18/1985 End Indirect Rule Colonial Regime [of United Kingdom]/Start (Monarchical) Liberal Democracy [semi-sovereign, external affairs under United Kingdom, Liberal Democracy]: On this date, a new constitution was enacted, promoting self-government which has continued to devolve power to the islanders.⁷ The politics of the Falkland Islands takes place in a framework of a constitutional monarchy and parliamentary representative democratic dependency as set out by the constitution. In 2002 the remaining British Dependent Territories were renamed as British Overseas Territories. In 01/2009 a new constitution came into effect that strengthened the Falklands' local democratic government and reserved for the islanders their right to

determine the territory's political status. Executive power is exercised on behalf of the King by an appointed Governor. Legislative power is vested in both the government and the Legislative Assembly. The judiciary is independent of the executive and the legislature. The military defense and foreign policy of the islands is the responsibility of the United Kingdom. No political parties exist on the islands currently and so Members stand as independents, however the governmental and legal proceedings very closely resemble British standards.⁸ In a 2013 sovereignty referendum, almost all Falklanders voted in favor of remaining a UK overseas territory.⁹ Based on our observations, multiparty executive and legislative elections were held during this period. FH, LIED and V-Dem do not provide data for the Falkland Island.

Liberal Democracy as of 07/01/2025 continued.

Notes

¹ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reassertion_of_British_sovereignty_over_the_Falkland_Islands_\(1833\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reassertion_of_British_sovereignty_over_the_Falkland_Islands_(1833))

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Falkland_Islands

³ <https://nationalarchives.gov.fk/jdownloads/Government/The%20Beginning%20of%20the%20Legislative%20Assembly.pdf>

⁴ <https://laws.gov.gs/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/1977.pdf>

⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1977_Falkland_Islands_general_election

⁶ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Falkland-Islands/History>

⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Falklands_War

⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politics_of_the_Falkland_Islands

⁹ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Falkland-Islands/History>