



Gibraltar — Va-PoReg Country Report

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04/14/1713 Start Direct Rule Colonial Regime [of United Kingdom]: During the War of the Spanish Succession, Gibraltar was captured by Anglo-Dutch from Spain in 1704. The territory was then ceded to Great Britain in perpetuity under the Treaty of Utrecht, signed on 04/14/1713.¹ It became an important base for the Royal Navy, particularly during the Napoleonic Wars and World War II. In the 1950s, Franco renewed Spain's claim to sovereignty over Gibraltar.

05/30/1969 End Direct Rule Colonial Regime [of United Kingdom, Liberal Democracy]/Start (Monarchical) Electoral Democracy [semi-sovereign, external affairs under United Kingdom, Liberal Democracy]: On this date, the Gibraltar Constitution Order 1969 entered into force, establishing a system of responsible government with an elected legislature and expanded internal self-government, while the United Kingdom retained sovereignty and responsibility for external affairs and defense.² The reform followed the 1967 referendum, in which Gibraltarians had voted overwhelmingly to remain under British sovereignty.³ On this date Gibraltarians voted overwhelmingly to remain under British sovereignty, with democratic local institutions and with the United Kingdom retaining its present responsibilities. The referendum led to the passing of the Gibraltar Constitution Order in 1969. As a result of the British Nationality Act 1981, Gibraltarians were made British Overseas Territories citizens. Under its current constitution from 2006, Gibraltar has almost complete internal self-governance through a parliament. The head of state is the British monarch, King Charles III, who is represented locally by the Governor of Gibraltar. The Governor is not the political government of Gibraltar but the representative of the Crown. In areas not reserved to the United Kingdom, he acts on the advice of the elected Government of Gibraltar. Executive authority in domestic matters is exercised by the Government of Gibraltar, led by the Chief Minister and drawn from the elected Gibraltar Parliament. This government is responsible for internal affairs, including economic, fiscal, social, and administrative policy. The Governor remains responsible to the British government for defense, external affairs, certain aspects of internal security, and the constitutional responsibility for good governance. Gibraltar is not a member of the Commonwealth of Nations in its own right and is represented by the United Kingdom.⁴ Gibraltar conducts regular free and fair elections under universal suffrage with peaceful transitions in government.⁵ Based on our observations, multiparty executive and legislative elections were held during this period. FH, LIED and V-Dem do not take Gibraltar in consideration.

(Monarchical) Electoral Democracy as of 07/01/2025 continued.

Great Britain see United Kingdom

Notes

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peace_of_Utrecht

² <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gibraltar>

³ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/sep/11/gibraltar-votes-to-remain-with-britain-archive-1967>

⁴ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gibraltar>

⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elections_in_Gibraltar