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Politics and Democracy in Microstates

A Comparative Analysis of the Effects of Size on
Contestation and Inclusiveness

Cover

Front (top): Chelbacheb (Rock Islands), Koror State – Republic of Palau

Front (bottom): Anse Source d'Argent, La Digue – Republic of Seychelles

Back (top): Friars Bay, St. Kitts – Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis

Back (bottom): La Rocca or Guaita, San Marino Città – Republic of San Marino

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Politics and Democracy in Microstates

A Comparative Analysis of the Effects of Size on
Contestation and Inclusiveness

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As a senior scholar in the field once told me, being a microstate researcher takes you to places most people can only dream about. The obvious downside of this is that it arouses the jealousy of colleagues, friends, and family members, who accused me of first having selected my cases for field research, and then fitting these into an appropriate research design. However, although it is true that I have very much enjoyed San Marino's food, St. Kitts and Nevis' rum cocktails, Seychelles' beaches, and Palau's diving and snorkeling sites, during field research I actually had to work much harder than at home.

I owe the fact that I managed to obtain the information I needed within the short period of time that was spent in each of the four microstates first and foremost to my interview respondents, who were with few exceptions very eager and enthusiastic to discuss the details and peculiarities of their countries' political systems with me. In this sense, a great advantage of the smallness of the microstates that I studied is the great accessibility of even the most high-ranking officials, whom I could invite for interviews while encountering them in pubs, supermarkets, petrol stations, or even on the beach.

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