

# San Marino

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# Introduction

The Republic of San Marino is one of the smallest states in the world and the most ancient republic still alive, being independent since the XIII century. It has a peculiar political structure, having two head of states, named Captains. San Marino kept an oligarchic structure of power for most of its existence, but it changed in 1906 when the assembly of all householders (Arengo) voted to introduce democratic rule. The Grand and General Council became elective and was partially renewed every 3 years. San Marino declared neutrality during World War One, but a few volunteers joined the Italian forces in the war efforts. One of them was Giuliano Gozi, who then came back to San Marino and was elected as Secretary for Foreign Affairs, the de facto head of government of San Marino. In August 1922, Gozi founded the Fascist Party of San Marino and then in October of the same year imposed dictatorial rule over the small republic.

## Elections

Between 1918 and 1922, San Marino held two general elections, in 1918 and 1920, with by-elections for the latter in 1921. Every adult male had suffrage (Nohlen and Stöver, 2010: 1669-1698). In the 1918 elections, no parties were allowed to participate and every candidate presented himself as an independent. These elections renewed only 20 of the 60 seats in the Grand and General Council with a first-past-the-post system. In 1920, an electoral reform introduced political parties, proportional representation, and the election of the whole Council at once. It also changed the length of the legislature to 4 years (Consiglio Grande e Generale, 1920). In the subsequent elections, 3 parties competed (Nohlen and Stöver, 2010: 1669-1698). Since all elected officials from the Socialist Party refused to take their posts, by-elections were held in April 1921 (Authors, 2006).

### 9 June 1918

During the 1918 elections, every candidate was listed as independent (Nohlen and Stöver, 2010: 1669-1698). The **Socialist Party of San Marino** claimed that, after the elections,

candidates affiliated with the party held 14 seats (Authors, 2006). These were the last elections held with the old system introduced by the reforms of 1906. This legislature introduced the political reforms that allowed proportional representation and parties to take part in the elections.

## 14 November 1920

The first elections to include political parties were won by the centrist Catholic **People's Party of San Marino**. They won 29 seats out of 60, with 47.75% of the votes. The leftist **Socialist Party of San Marino** was second, with 18 seats and 29.58% of the votes. Lastly, the right-wing **Democratic Union of San Marino** gathered 22.67% and thus obtained the remaining 13 seats (Nohlen and Stöver, 2010: 1669-1698). The socialists refused to recognize the elections and attempted to take power through revolution. This increased violence in the small republic, with red forces frequently clashing with white Catholic militias (Casale, 2002).

## 10 April 1921

Since the **Socialist Party of San Marino** refused to participate in the newly elected council to avoid collaborating with the other parties, their seats were declared vacant and a by-election became necessary. The only parties to participate in these elections were the **People's Party of San Marino** and the **Democratic Union of San Marino**. They respectively won 10 and 8 seats (Authors, 2006). On 10 August 1922 Secretary of Foreign Affairs Gozi exited the **Democratic Union of San Marino** to create the **Fascist Party of San Marino**. When in October elections for the Captains were held, two fascist captains won the posts, and a crackdown on socialist activities started. Soon, all parties except the fascist one were declared illegal (Casale, 2004).

## Parties

The party system in San Marino had mostly mirrored the one emerging in Italy. The 3 competing parties in 1920 had different views on the future of the small republic. The socialists wanted to emulate the Russian revolution, the conservatives wanted to restore the pre-1906 oligarchic republic, and the Catholics wanted to defend the recently established democracy. The influence of Italian politics became evident when in 1922 Gozi created the **Fascist Party of San Marino**. In a matter of months, Gozi managed to centralize his power, crack down on the socialists, and force the other parties to join a common "Patriotic Bloc", effectively ending democracy in San Marino (Casale, 2004).

### Socialist Party of San Marino

The **Socialist Party of San Marino** was the oldest party in the republic. The leftist party had a revolutionary ideology, that led to its abandonment of the Grand and General Council of 1920 in order to take power by force. After two years of clashes and strikes, the movement was eventually crushed by the fascist crackdown and its members and leaders went into exile or hide (Casale, 2002).

Original Name	Partito Socialista Sammarinese
Other Names	Socialist Party of San Marino
Abbreviation	PSS
Factions	

### People's Party of San Marino

The **People's Party of San Marino** was a centrist Catholic party modeled after its Italian counterpart. It reached almost 50% of the votes in the 1920 elections. From 1920, its members frequently clashed with the socialists. The growing influence of Italian politics in San Marino first forced the party to join the fascist "Patriotic Bloc" and then it was dissolved by the authorities in 1925 (Casale, 2002).

Original Name	Partito Popolare Sammarinese
Other Names	People's Party of San Marino
Abbreviation	PPS
Factions	

## Democratic Union of San Marino

The **Democratic Union of San Marino** was a conservative party with the aim of restoring the pre-1906 political order. It was the smallest party in the Grand and General Council after the 1920 elections, but it was highly influential due to Gozi being the Secretary of Foreign Affairs. In 1922, a secession created the **Fascist Party of San Marino**. Aligned with the latter, it dissolved itself in 1925 (Casale, 2004).

Original Name	Unione Democratica Sammarinese
Other Names	Democratic Union of San Marino
Abbreviation	UDS
Factions	

## Fascist Party of San Marino

The **Fascist Party of San Marino** was a fascist party created as a splinter party of the **Democratic Union of San Marino** in August 1922. With the support of its Italian counterpart, it quickly increased its power, ending democracy in San Marino in 1922. It forced the other parties to join a common list in 1923 to assure itself the majority of the Grand and General Council and then it became the sole legal party of the republic in 1925 (Casale, 2004).

Original Name	Partito Fascista Sammarinese
Other Names	Fascist Party of San Marino
Abbreviation	FPS
Factions	

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