

Mauritius

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Mauritius is coded as a parliamentary democracy from independence in 1968 until the end of the observation period. Mauritius's first prime minister, Seewoosagur Ramgoolam of the Parti Travailiste¹ (PTr; also Mauritius Labour Party MLP), ruled until 1982; following the first elections after independence on December 20, 1976, Ramgoolam ruled in coalition with the Mauritian Social Democratic Party (Parti Mauricien Social-Democrate-PMSD) (Muller et al 2011, 920 Brautigam 1997, 49). There is no SOLS change at independence. There is however a minor SOLS change in 1976.²

On June 15, 1982 Anerood Jugnauth of the Mouvement Militant Mauricien (MMM) became prime minister in coalition with the Parti Socialiste Mauricien (PSM) (U.S. Department of State 2010; Europa World Yearbook 2004, 2854). This is a SOLS change. In 1983, Jugnauth left the MMM and formed the Mouvement Socialiste Militant (MSM). The Department of State says that: "In 1983, defectors from the MMM joined with the PSM to form the Militant Socialist Movement (MSM) and won a working majority." Thus the MMS is a splinter of MMM (Muller 2011, Europa World Yearbook).

The August 21 1983 elections returned a MSM victory, partnered with the PTR and the PMSD in a coalition called the "Alliance" (Brautigam 1997, 51). Jugnauth remained prime minister. This is a minor SOLS change.

In February 1984, the PTR split over the decision to withdraw from the coalition; parts of the PTR remained in the coalition (first as the Mauritanian Workers Movement – MWM and later as the Mauritanian Labour Rally – RTM), which is a minor SOLS change (Muller, 2011). Following a crisis as a result of a drug scandal, the PTR decided to rejoin the coalition in August 8 1986 (minor SOLS change - Muller 2011, Europa World Yearbook).

Following the August 30 1987 elections, the coalition continued largely unchanged; the RTM merged into the MSM and the Rodriguan People's Organisation (OPR) joined Jugnauth's coalition of MSM/PTR/PMSD/OPR, this a minor SOLS (Muller 2011, Europa World Yearbook). The PMSD withdrew from the coalition in August 1988 (Muller 2011). This is a minor SOLS change.

In July 1990, Jugnauth and the MMM agreed to jointly contest the elections. Thereafter in August the PTR almost fully withdrew from the government (leaving only a single PTR minister in government - Europa World Yearbook), after which the Mauritian Militant Movement (MMM) supported (August 20th) and later joined the Mauritian Socialist Movement (MSM)

¹ Note that Muller (2011) has Ramgoolam first as head of the Independence Party (IP) and only later as head of the PTr, which is a wing of the IP according to Muller. Though I did not (yet) find evidence of this, I suspect that the IP was an umbrella coalition of groups striving for independence from the UK. Many of the countries that we have coded that experience regime change start out with a broad coalition of groups that oppose the former regime. As the Europa World Yearbook has Ramgoolam heading the PTr from 1958, well before independence, I think we may simply code Ramgoolam as head of the PTr

² There is some indication (e.g. Europa World Yearbook) that Ramgoolam headed more than one coalition and therefore likely headed a different coalition in the post independence period.

minority coalition. Therefore, we code a minor SOLS change on August 20th 1990 (Muller 2011, Europa World Yearbook). The MSM/MMM alliance won the subsequent 1991 elections on 15 September and formed a coalition with the small Democratic Labour Party (Mouvement des Travailleurs Démocrates – MTD) (Europa World Yearbook, 2854).

A crisis within the MMM culminated in the split of the MMM and a government reshuffle in November 1993. This is a minor SOLS change. In August 1994, the pro-coalition MMM faction renamed itself into the Mauritanian Militant Renaissance (RMM - Europa World Yearbook).³ Moreover, the PMDS joined the MSM/MTD/OPR/RMM coalition on February 13 1995, which is another minor SOLS change (Muller, 2011).

On 21 December 1995 Navinchandra “Navin” Ramgoolam, PTR, son of the country’s first prime minister (Miles 1999, 93) became prime minister in coalition with the MMM.⁴ This is a SOLS change. On June 20, 1997 Ramgoolam dismissed his deputy prime minister, Paul Berenger of the MMM, rupturing the coalition but leaving PTR in power (Agence France Presse 1997), as Ramgoolam formed a new cabinet on July 2 consisting of the PTR, one ex-MMM, and one member of the OPR, which is a minor SOLS change (Muller 2011, Europa World Yearbook). Moreover, on September 26 1999, Xavier-Luc Duval of the Xavier-Luc Duval Mauritanian Party joined the coalition, which is a minor SOLS change (Muller 2011, Europa World Yearbook).

In 2000 Anerood Jugnauth of the MSM became prime minister in coalition with MMM. This is a SOLS change. This coalition was forged by an agreement between Jugnauth and Berenger. The alliance agreement was made official before the election. A key part of this agreement was that if the MSM and MMM won the elections, Jugnauth would step down after three years as prime minister in favor of Bérenger and become president; in keeping with this promise Bérenger of the MMM became prime minister in 2003. Because it was open and known before the elections it seems to be more than just an informal agreement (Piano et al 2006, 466; Europa World Yearbook 2004 2856; Muller 2011, E). Thus, this is a rotational agreement and not a SOLS change.

Following elections that were won by Navin Ramgoolam of the PTR heading an electoral coalition called the social alliance, consisting of “the Mauritian Labour Party (PTR), the Parti Mauricien Xavier Duval (PMXD), the Mouvement Militant Socialiste Mauricien (MMSM), the Mouvement Republicain, and Les Verts” (Verts - Yoon and Bunbwaree 2008, 16). From September 2006 the PMSD supported the government, but did not enter the cabinet.

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³ We code the RMM already in 1993 in order to indicate that is when the split of the MMM occurred.

⁴ Note that the OPR joined the coalition in a junior role (Muller 2011).

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