

## Government

Trinidad and Tobago has adopted a Westminster-style of parliament, inherited from the British. The new constitution of the twin island state, which became effective August 1, 1976, provides for the appointment of a president as head of state, and for the establishment of a Parliament consisting of a Senate and a House of Representatives.

The 36-member House of Representatives is elected every five years in general elections. The Senate consists of 31 members. Of these, 16 are appointed by the president upon the advice of the prime minister, six on the advice of the leader of the opposition and nine at the discretion of the president.

The president is elected for a five-year term by the Electoral College which is made up of both Houses of Parliament. The executive power rests with the prime minister and cabinet members.

The legal and judicial system, based on English Common Law and practice, is independent of the executive and legislative functions of the government. The chief justice is appointed by the president after consultation with the prime minister and leader of the opposition. Judges are appointed by the president upon advice of the Judicial and Legal Commission.