

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN SMALL AND VERY SMALL STATES: HOW DOES SMALLNESS AFFECT GOVERNANCE?

Max Everest-Phillips¹ & Samuel Henry²

Abstract

How far does the capacity of public administration differ according to a country's size? This paper examines the differences between small and very small states for insights in miniature into the capacity constraints in all states with weak governance. Smallness is only one dimension of statehood. But the challenges that 'micro-states' face appear particularly difficult and intractable. 'Extreme' smallness creates exacerbated and disproportionate resource constraints. Achieving public service delivery of the SDGs will therefore differ between small and very small states.

Key words: *SIDS, Smallness, Public Service, Governance, Insularity, Remoteness*

Introduction: Learning Small Lessons in Development

International development has only ever had limited interest in small states. Their insignificant population size is coupled with the sense that they are often “exotic” (such as holiday destinations like the Seychelles and the Maldives in the Indian Ocean) or city-states including Singapore, Dubai, the Vatican and the mountainous European micro-states: Andorra, Monaco, and San Marino. Such countries might appear not to be confronting problems of wider relevance, and the absence of data for many of the world's smallest countries has resulted in few efforts to study these states for transferable lessons. Yet, in governance and public administration at least, this is unfortunate. The nature of public service in the small (SDSs) and very small developing states (VSDSs) such as Belize and the (SIDSs) and very small island developing states (VSIDSs) of the Caribbean and the Pacific, Cape Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe in Africa offer rich insight in variation of development dynamics.

I. Typology of Smallness: Small and Very Small States

The Smallness of Small States³

Size is a defining characteristic of nations, in both the developed and developing world (Katzenstein, 2003). Ever since the different achievements of the city states in ancient Greece, there has been a debate about the optimal size for a country. Plato, Montesquieu and Rousseau suggested that citizen empowerment, good governance and democracy would flourish in states with, by modern standards, tiny populations of 5,000 and 20,000 respectively (Alesina & Spolaore, 2005). However, 19th Century colonisation and nationalist movements for unification swept away most small nations, because of their limited military capacity.

¹ *Max Everest-Phillips* was the Director of the United Nations Development Programme's Global Centre for Public Service Excellence in Singapore. He previously worked as Director of Governance at the Commonwealth Secretariat in London. He started his career in the British Diplomatic Service, serving in Finland, Japan and Washington; and was Senior Governance Adviser at the UK's Department for International Development. He holds a BA (Hons, 1st Class) from Oxford University, an MA from the University of Pennsylvania, and a MSc from Johns Hopkins. He has been a research fellow at the Overseas Development Institute in London.

² *Samuel Henry* worked as an intern at the United Nations Development Programme's Global Centre for Public Service Excellence in Singapore. He holds a MSc in Politics and International Cooperation from the University of the West Indies (Kingston, Jamaica), a MSc in Political Science from the Université des Antilles (Martinique, French West Indies) and a MSc in International Politics from the Bordeaux School of Politics (Sciences Po Bordeaux, France). He is a specialist in Small Island Developing States studies.

³ This article looks only at independent sovereign states, internationally recognised as such through membership of the UN.

Decolonisation in the second half of the 20th Century saw independence for many small countries, but their long-term survival at first seemed in doubt (Fox, 1959; Robinson, 1960; Vital, 1967; Blair, 1968; Vital, 1971; Plischke, 1977). Nevertheless, by the 21st Century, small states were apparently thriving: for example, all the top ten countries in the “Change Readiness Index” had populations of less than ten million people (Everest-Phillips, 2015). Singapore’s extraordinarily fast rate of sustained economic growth from self-rule in 1959 showed that size need not hold back development. For many, geographical isolation remains a challenge. Mauritius in the middle of the Indian Ocean has thrived; but the physical proximity of the Caribbean to the world’s biggest economy, the USA, has not enabled them to prosper.

More than half of low-income democracies are small states and tacit assumptions about de-centralisation, devolution, federalism and subsidiarity are based on an ideology that the ideal size for a democratic polity is small (Dahl & Tufte 1973; Newton 1981; Diamond 1999; Anckar 1999; Ott 2000; Smith 2009). However, size is only relevant when coupled with adequate political and administrative leadership.

Small countries have long been recognised as having distinctive characteristics (UNITAR, 1969). These are not, however, homogenous but divide into three basic types: [i] islands in the Caribbean, Indian Ocean and the Pacific, with the image of tourist paradises blessed with glorious sunshine and magical beaches; [ii] Europe’s remnants of a world before the nation state; and [iii] non-European, non-island states - Belize and Brunei.

The United Nations (UN), the World Bank (WB), the European Union (EU), the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Alliance for Small Island States (AOSIS), the Small States Forum (SSF), regional bodies such as the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the countries themselves accord international recognition to small countries as being different. Small States, Small Developing States (SDSs), Small Island Developing States (SIDSs),⁴ Very Small Island Developing States (VSIDSs), and mini- or micro-states are internationally used as categories of country classifications.⁵

Smallness defined – and perceived

Despite a sizeable literature on the topic, there is no universally agreed definition of “micro” “very small” or “small” - or indeed of “medium” or “large” (Maass, 2009). Dividing the UN’s member-countries into thirds by population, the “large” category are countries ranging from China and India, to Kazakhstan and Malawi with 17.5 million; “medium” sized countries from 17 to 4.25 million; and “small” those with under 4 million. Similarly, definitions by size and GDP can distinguish ‘large’, ‘medium’ and small countries, but these categories do not seem to define quality of governance. But ‘very small’ may be distinct in this regard.

As argued by the UN, in 1993, “small” is a comparative rather than as an absolute term (Bouayad-Agha & Hernandez, 1993). Scholars and organizations have suggested categorizing “small” as:

- Countries with a population of under 1.5 million (WB & Commonwealth Secretariat);

⁴ The Barbados Programme of Action (1994), the Mauritius Strategy of Implementation (2005) and the Samoa Pathway (2014) recognised that SIDS have their own unique characteristics.

⁵ At the UN Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, the UN now recognised 52 SIDSs in Africa, Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean.

- Countries with a population under 10 million (EU, Small States Forum and International Economics Association).

But exactly how significant is the degree of smallness?

The willingness of UN member countries to be classified as being “small” hints at some benefit accruing to such a status.⁶ Taglioni (2005) argues that “Insularism” has become a strategic stance in international politics for small island states to access trade and diplomatic benefits. Crowards (2002) pointed out the arbitrary nature of any definition of “small”, especially if smallness is based on only one parameter. Yet, his and other suggestions of composite alternative definitions have proved too complex to gain traction. For the concept of smallness is derived from the interplay of many factors affecting the characteristics of the state, including: military resources and alliances, economic weight, a minimum useable arable land area, remoteness, a narrow export base and exposure to environmental challenges and external economic shocks.

Geography and history shape perceptions of smallness. In addition, the phenomenon of the number of islands that make up the state affects its politics, economy, society and public administration.

Table 1: Geographic typology of Very Small Island States

Single islands	Pairs of Islands	Small consolidated groups of islands	Large Archipelagos	Regional Locality
Nauru, Dominica, St. Lucia	Antigua & Barbuda, St. Kitts & Nevis	Grenada & St. Vincent, the Grenadines	Seychelles (115 islands), Kiribati (3.5 million km ² , 33 atolls). Such distances between islands affect their capacity to provide services in all areas, especially remote territories.	<i>Caribbean:</i> Greater & Lesser Antilles, and the West Indies. <i>Indian Ocean:</i> widely dispersed with Mauritius in the middle, the Seychelles, and the Maldives. <i>Pacific:</i> including the most remote islands in the world.

Likewise, constitutions have proved problematic. The Westminster political tradition has proven its inadequacy in Caribbean SIDS, resulting in partisan divide, executive domination and entrenched one party rule (Ryan 1999; Duncan & Woods 2007; Clegg 2014). In the Pacific, formal institutions are newer and political parties less prominent (Rich 2008), resulting in executive instability (Meller 1990; Reilly 2001) and legislative weakness (Morgan & Hegarty, 2003). Yet in both regions, patronage, clientelism and money politics have thrived under political and economic elites rooted in the colonial era (Duncan & Woods, 2007; Duncan & Hassall, 2011). Geographical isolation has resulted in political leadership integrated with citizens (Dahl & Tufte, 1973). European small states have a much longer tradition of statehood, thanks to their lasting independence and to permanent interactions with neighbours as regards law-making and public administration. Monaco, whose public service strongly

⁶ The World Bank (WB) ranks countries by per capita income, as “Low income countries” (LICs), “middle income countries” (MICs), and “high income countries” (HICs). The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index (HDI) provides a composite categorisation by Low, Medium or High human development. The World Trade Organisation (WTO) recognises “Small and Vulnerable economies” for smallest shares of world trade.

resembles that of France, has allowed French citizens in its public service since 1930 to overcome the shortage of human resources (Gondeau, 2005).

On the other hand, the perception of smallness reflects beliefs: whether “small is beautiful”, “weak” and dependant on larger allies for security (in international relations) or “vulnerable” (in international development). Yet, extant small states are self-evidently “survivors” and often prove, individually or collectively, remarkably adept at exploiting the international arena for their own benefit (Taglioni, 2010). Internationally, small states achieve surprisingly strong influence through effective advocacy networks (Jaschik, 2014). One example is AOSIS: with a membership of 39 States, it was set up in 1991 as “a coalition of small island and low-lying coastal countries that share similar development challenges and concerns about the environment, especially their vulnerability to the adverse effects of global climate change”.

The Smallest States

The smallest countries, or “micro-states” may be ranked by smallness of territory, population or GDP. ‘Very small’ may be conveniently classified as having a population of under half million, a landmass of under 1,000 square kms, or an economy with a GDP less than USD 1 billion. The countries that fall into these categories are listed in Table 2, below.

In part reflecting rapid population growth, the defining demographic size of a “micro-state” expanded over time. Originally argued to mean countries with less than 150,000 (de Smith, 1970), the threshold grew to 300,000 (Plischke, 1977; Murray, 1981), while Ross (1997) identified three scales: [i] “small states” (between one and five million); [ii] “mini-states” between 100,000 and one million; and [iii] “micro-states” (below 100,000).

Other characteristics appear in Table 2. The nine countries under all three definitions of smallness are all islands: Grenada, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Palau, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Samoa, São Tomé and Príncipe, Tonga and Tuvalu. All the very small countries defined by the smallest GDPs and by landmass are also islands, except San Marino and Liechtenstein. 29 states, representing about 15 per cent of the UN’s membership have a population of less than half million.

There are 24 sovereign nations in the world with a landmass area less than 1,000 km² (386 square miles) of which 22 are also the smallest by population (with the exceptions being Bahrain and Singapore).⁷ The 24 smallest countries by territory are home to around 0.013 per cent of the world’s population. By territorial waters as “Blue Ocean” states, however, many of these countries, particularly in the Pacific, are enormous.

⁷ World Bank 2013 figures.

Table 2: Smallest Countries by: *Population* (under half million); *Landmass* (under 1,000 square kms); and *Economy* (GDP less than USD 1 billion)

Country	Population	Country	Landmass	Country	GDP ((USD million)
Vatican	842 (2015)	Vatican	0.40	Vatican	23
Nauru	11,288 (2015)	Monaco	0.78	Tuvalu	39.73
Tuvalu	11,052 (2017)	Nauru	8.11	Nauru	113.88
Palau	17,899 (2017)	Tuvalu	10.04	Kiribati	196.15
San Marino	33,344 (2018)	San Marino	23.56	Marshall Islands	199.40
Liechtenstein	37,810 (2016)	Liechtenstein	61.80	Palau	291.00
Monaco	38,400 (2015)	Marshall islands	69.91	Micronesia Federated States	336.43
Saint Kitts & Nevis	52,715 (2017)	Saint Kitts & Nevis	100.81	São Tomé & Príncipe	390.47
Marshall Islands	54,880 (2015)	Maldives	115.87	Tonga	426.06
Dominica	71,293 (2011)	Malta	122.05	Dominica	562.00
Andorra	77,794 (2017)	Grenada	132.87	St Vincent & Grenadines	789.63
Antigua & Barbuda	86,295 (2011)	Saint Vincent & Grenadines	150.25	Samoa	856.20
Seychelles	91,400 (2014)	Barbados	166.47	Vanuatu	862.88
Micronesia Federated States	102,800 (2015)	Antigua & Barbuda	170.72	Grenada	1,118.82
Tonga	103,252 (2011)	Seychelles	175.74	Seychelles	1,485.99
Grenada	103,328 (2011)	Palau	177.29	Antigua & Barbuda	1,532.40
Saint Vincent & Grenadines	109,991 (2012)	Andorra	468.00	San Marino	1,658.78
Kiribati	113,400 (2015)	Saint Lucia	234.07	Saint Lucia	1,712.00
Saint Lucia	186,000 (2016)	Singapore	265.35	Belize	1,838.00
São Tomé & Príncipe	187,356 (2012)	Micronesia Federated States	271.15	Andorra	3,012.91
Samoa	194,899 (2016)	Tonga	747.00	Maldives	4,597.08
Vanuatu	277,500 (2015)	Dominica	751.00	Barbados	4,796.00
Barbados	285,000 (2016)	Bahrain	765.00	Bahamas	12,162.10
Iceland	334,300 (2016)	Kiribati	811.00	Iceland	23,909.29
Maldives	344,023 (2014)	São Tomé & Príncipe	964.00	Total GDP	62,910.20
Belize	370,300 (2015)	Total land area	4,506.00		
Malta	425,384 (2013)				
Total population	4,652,161				

II. Why Extreme Smallness Does Matter in Governance

How different are “Very Small” States from “Small” States?

For the world’s fourth smallest state (by population), the Pacific atoll country of Tuvalu lays claim to a remarkably big ambition. Its Constitution declares that: *“the guiding principles of Tuvalu are agreement, courtesy and the search for consensus, in accordance with traditional Tuvaluan procedures, rather than alien ideas of confrontation and divisiveness”*. When Tuvalu gained independence in 1978, its civil service employed a grand total of 387 officials. With such limited human resources, many observers doubted that the country was viable. To run the functions of a sovereign state, such as a diplomatic service or defence agencies, inevitably implies disproportionately large public sectors and political establishments (Hughes & Gosarevski, 2004; Feeny & Rogers, 2008).

Size may be a mixed blessing (Veenendaal & Corbett 2015; Veenendaal 2014; Baldacchino 2012). Gondeau (2005) argued that European micro-states have relatively similar needs in terms of civil service human resources, representing approximately 15 per cent of their total population, close to the average percentage of civil servants in VSIDS (see Annex B). The smaller the state, the proportionately larger its public service (with the exception of Iceland, and Barbados, respectively 16 and 9 per cent), because of diseconomies of scale in the provision of public goods. A larger government sector also results from a general history of dependency on foreign aid and the smaller private sector given a limited domestic demand for labour.

Some VSIDSs in the Pacific ranked among the “poor performers” on the MDGs (Roberts & Ibitote, 2012). The common characteristics of VSIDSs have long been thought to pose specific development challenges (UNEP, 2014). These inevitably include extremely limited economies of scale and diversification, often with resultantly high dependence on foreign aid, a narrow resource base and exceptionally high need for international trade. Remoteness from large markets may be compounded by considerable communication, energy and transportation costs, creating volatility in national accounts and difficulties in changing world trade contexts. “Islandness” brought specific problems (Selwyn, 1978), while micro-states *“unilaterally depute certain attributes of sovereignty to larger powers in exchange for benign protection of their political and economic viability”* (Dumienski, 2014).

In VSIDSs, effective political leadership, political stability and legitimacy are particularly critical for economic growth and for withstanding external shocks. Limited capacity in the public and private sectors can constrain the ability to capitalise effectively on the goodwill of larger states, while the populations in very small states may disproportionately lack skills and employment opportunities. Environmentally, these countries may be particularly vulnerable to climate change, natural disasters and other external shocks. Combinations of these factors put very small states at further risk of marginalisation.

Government effectiveness and regulatory quality in very small states seems to be broadly associated with income per capita (Curmi, 2009). For example, Kiribati and Tuvalu, which have the lowest GDP per capita among the VSIDSs, perform the worst in government effectiveness and regulatory quality. However, there are also interesting outliers. Despite their significantly higher per capita incomes, the Maldives and Nauru have similar scores as Kiribati and Tuvalu on these dimensions.

Since independence, often comparatively late, regardless of scale politically contentious and administratively complex reforms, similar to the “Washington Consensus” sought to improve the investment climate, strengthen human resources and enhance regional cooperation (Briguglio et al, 2006; Chittoo, 2011). Irrespective of size, normative “fundamentalism”

override concern for whether administrative institutions, skills and processes to undertake basic functions – such as raising revenues, delivering services and developing policies – might differ by country smallness.

Research has offered a variety of models: Bertram and Watters' "MIRAB" (2005), based on Migration, Remittances, Aid and Bureaucracy, Baldacchino's "PROFIT" (2006), on People considerations, Resource management, Overseas engagement, Finance and Transportation and McElroy's "STID" or "SITE" stressing the role of labour-intensive tourism development with a prominent role of government. Similarly, Guthunz and von Krosigh (1996) pointed out the weight of tourism and aid in the "TOURAB" model. Pavlov and Sugden (2006) argue that funding a large public sector wage and salary bills at the expense of basic service provision is evidence of "capture" by elites. But this literature has not clarified whether very small states present a distinct category of development challenge.

Politics, political competition and public service in micro-states are inevitably strongly personalised and officials have little choice but to collaborate and co-create. Village mindsets can aggravate conflicts of interest, clientelism and nepotism. Informality in a context of close personal ties between citizens and their politicians might make it seem easier to demand accountability. Extreme smallness enhances citizens' political awareness and informal practices ensure broad participation in local decision making, with even the highest officials in the government made accessible and inequalities may be less extreme. But smallness also often ostracises discontent. Daniel (2015) emphasised how voters usually remained loyal to parties rarely rooted in substantive political policies but rather function as vehicles for politicians. Voting in exchange for work is common, as public sector jobs are sought after for secure employment. In micro-states, the independence and neutrality of media is questionable as strong personal ties span the media and government worlds lead to bias in coverage.

Small and Very Small Governance

Governance is critical for development outcomes, but is the art of governing very small countries different from that of the small and other larger nations? If so, does public administration also differ and in what ways? Very small countries may be subject to extremes, good or bad, in their governance characteristics. According to the World Bank's World Governance Indicators (WGI), small states, on average, perform well, notably on political stability, regulatory quality and rule of law. In 2015, small states scored a positive average (of 0.190 against 0.050, and -0.290 for medium and large states respectively). Countries with small populations appear, in general, to be better governed than larger countries (Curmi, 2009). The smallest countries have been declared to enjoy a more effective direct democracy than larger countries (Anckar, 2010). But the "micro-democratic miracle" of size and democracy is based on the Freedom House index, the only dataset that includes the world's smallest states. But the index over-emphasises formal aspects of democracy while failing to capture the informal aspects of real power relations (Erk & Veenendaal, 2014).

Smallness has undoubtedly positive attributes. Thaman (1995) argues that smallness and isolation offer great potential. AOSIS's 52 and FOSS's 107 members wield an influence and gain trade and other concessions out of proportion to their total population. Kiribati is notably self-reliant at a community level precisely because it is so small and isolated. As Baldacchino et al (2009) conclude: *"The citizens of small states tend to enjoy above average levels of Gross National Income per capita, as well as high levels of literacy, health and life expectancy. But they also enjoy what typically remains unmeasured: high stocks of social capital; family and community bonding; a disposition toward economies of scope and multi-functionality; vibrant democratic participation; a dynamic diaspora; political stability; and relatively large public sectors which promote more egalitarian*

societies". Perhaps for such reasons, small island states are nearly 40 per cent richer than other countries (Easterley & Kray, 2000), although small states have posted weaker economic growth relative to larger states between 1990 and 2015 (World Bank, 2016).

Size, geographical location and colonial legacy inter-weave; and some VSIDSs have had long tradition of formal public institutions (Barbados has had a parliament since 1639) while VSIDSs in the Pacific were colonised late (Tuvalu and Kiribati, as the Ellice Islands, in 1892). Smallness can foster either [i] strong social cohesion, albeit highly informal and lack of confidentiality needed to undertake difficult reforms; or [ii] deep political fragmentation, creating bitter ethno-linguistic divides and partisan politics, accompanied by widespread corruption. The smallest states may suffer less ethno-linguistic fragmentation, and bigger government not merely due to economies of scale in the provision of public goods, but because politicians in very small states have greater personal difficulty resisting pressures for public spending (UNDP GCPSE, 2014).

Furthermore, lack of data remains a major problem: for example, the World Bank only started covering the smallest Commonwealth state, Nauru, in 2016 when it finally became a member. In recent years, the Bank has tried to address this gap by bringing out a special report which covers the smallest states (eg. World Bank, 2011). The UN Human Development Index does not yet cover Nauru and Tuvalu.

Some contradictions existing in VSIDSs include the following:

Table 3: Contradictions in VSDSs/VSIDSs

Governance dimension	Benign potential of VSDSs/VSIDS status on public administration	Malign potential of VSDSs/VSIDS status on public administration
Sense of common national purpose	Easier co-ordination (on unitary island)	Limited institutional capacity to overcome social/ethno-linguistic divides; little co-ordination on scattered islands
State legitimacy	No 'irrational' colonial borders; too small to be contested	Stronger pressures for conformity to collective norms
Citizen participation	Highly democratic, closest to citizen	Power inequalities more exaggerated; stronger traditional social values favour gender inequalities
Security and order	Easier territorial control, more voluntary compliance, less coercion	Informality facilitates more infringement of civil liberties and intimidation
Leadership	Impact immediate and significant.	Quickly distorting as not enough checks and balances.
Political commitment	Party system less significant Greater freedom of opinion	Highly personalised; constantly revolving governments undermines long-term planning
Effective public authority	Stronger impact of social media as a tool for civil society	Too small to have independent media or civil society, so weak accountability oversight
Public administration	Highly motivated by proximity to problems; highly versatile, flexible;	Low skills; low morale; recruitment and promotion by social connections
Human Resources	High ratio of civil servants per capita	Low salaries and low incentives for skilled personnel
Public services	Highly responsive	Inadequate: high fixed costs / small scale
"Exaggerated personalism"	Public service responsive to ministers and senior public officials	Corruption, favouritism, and patronage flourish
Emigration	Political safety-valve; source of remittances	Brain drain of skilled personnel; foreign consultants implement inappropriate "scale-insensitive" practices

Despite limited capacity, small societies create varieties of government, inevitably shaped as much by personal relationships as by formal bureaucratic rules. As a result, VSIDS may on average enjoy a variety of strengths (Wace, 1980). Participatory democracy⁸, accountability, transparency and trust are all potentially easier in smaller countries; and even more so in a clearly distinct and isolated political unit. There are two possible reasons for this: one would be the lack of opportunity for undertaking corrupt activities in the smallest countries and the other, the operation of informal networks helping keep people honest (Barcham, 2007). More effective democracy may be possible than in larger states through greater legitimacy from perceived fairness and equity. Smaller states may enjoy more political freedom.⁹ Public services can build on strong social cohesion and community solidarity (Campbell & Hall, 2009). Public administration may be more responsive and faster to change and more flexible in policy-making. Co-ordination may be easier in the homogenous populations of some small island nations like Tonga. Smallness and “Islandness” may foster a collectivist ideal of community solidarity.

Being an island with a small population seems to be significantly associated with every measure of political democracy (Srebniak, 2004). The VSIDSs are predominantly parliamentary systems. The institutional quality of democracy then matters for the capacity “to achieve and sustain national consensus around a particular development strategy”. In very small societies, proximity with the government improves scrutiny and public authority accountability. Yet that is far from saying that political stability always predominates in the VSIDSs. The proximity due to social or family ties can also impede action and create conflicts of interest. For instance, in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, anti-government protests in 2000 shut down the capital of Kingstown, forcing CARICOM¹⁰, to broker early elections that brought the opposition to power. Political rioting occurred in the Maldives in 2004 and in the Seychelles and Tonga in 2006. Yet VSIDSs have relatively little history of armed conflict. Average scores for SIDS on the History of Armed Conflict Index is 1.35 (CIPF Conflict Database, 2000-2004)¹¹, far below the average for all states (Carment et al, 2004).

However, this also raises concerns regarding stretching the governance capacity of individual leaders, the concentration of power, creating a democratic tyranny. As Sir Arthur Lewis, a Nobel Prize economist from St. Lucia, observed:

“In a small island of 50,000 to 100,000 people dominated by a single party, it is difficult to prevent abuse. Everybody depends on the government for something, however small. The civil servants live in fear; the police avoid unpleasantness; the trade unions are tied to the party; the newspaper depends on government advertisements; and so on” (Benn & Hall, 2000).

Such democratic absolutism can allow officials to circumvent laws and use public resources for their personal gain: the party elected to power hampers the opposition through patronage, control of the media and legislative action.

How the legislature interacts with the executive is critical. In many of the VSIDSs, parliament’s accountability mechanisms such as the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), can be ineffectual because their parliaments lack a critical mass of experienced, independently minded MPs. For

⁸ However, “smallness” could go both ways, with accountability lines either becoming blurred, or contributing to more openness as argued by Corbett (2013).

⁹ The political rights index (Freedom House, 2005) for small states was 3.5 against 4.3 for large African states (decreasing numbers show greater rights in this index).

¹⁰ Formed in 1973, the Caribbean Community brings together 15 states in the Caribbean.

¹¹ <https://carleton.ca/cifp/conflict-risk-assessment/>

example, in Samoa, the 1994 audit report of the Controller and Chief Auditor (CCA) found rampant corruption within government departments. The report was shelved, the CCA sacked, and the constitution was changed to restrict the independence of the CCA. Vanuatu's former Ombudsman Marie-Noelle Ferrieux-Patterson said in May 2001 when referring to her many recommendations for action against alleged corruption among politicians: *"Nothing happens, no one resigns, no one was listening, no one was arrested except the rioters. No one was charged, no one was prosecuted ... The lack of consequences for wrongdoing is corroding our society"*.

The smaller the state, the more domestic politics seems characterised by governmental pervasiveness, "imposed" social harmony and pragmatic conservatism (Sutton, 1987). While the phenomenon is not restricted to VSIDSs, it is common in these states for a few political leaders to remain in office for a long time, ironically gaining legitimacy in the process. This "exaggerated personalism" is often in contrast to the high turnover in the remaining seats.

Many small states suffer from aspects of state "fragility" which would doubtlessly be labelled "state failure" in large States. For example, rampant political corruption in areas such as fisheries, mining and illegal logging can worsen environmental vulnerability drastically in smaller states without attracting the deserved international attention, embodied by the Nauruan phosphate crisis and bankruptcy (Coornaert, 2014).

Differences Within Very Small States

Distinguishing factors between VSIDSs can shape public administration. Difference in characteristics may affect all countries in the region, regardless of their size. For example, a Commonwealth study on the Caribbean concluded:

"Lack of political will is a recurrent and underlying theme of all studies and evaluations of reform and institutional development in the Caribbean. ... Linked to this is the absence, in most Caribbean jurisdictions, of consensus on the role of the state and, by extension, a clear vision of the kind of public sector that is "fit for purpose". Indeed, there is seldom any meaningful discussion on the role of the state at all in political and bureaucratic circles; Caribbean governments pride themselves on being "pragmatic". The upshot of this is that ... there is no demand for good governance from within Caribbean societies themselves" (Brown, 2009).

History also matters. Of the 14 VSIDSs, five are parliamentary regimes and two presidential; nine recognise the Queen as head of state. VSIDSs decolonised late at the end of the 1970s inherited public administration probably better prepared for independence than the larger countries decolonised during the first "winds of change" era of the late 1950s/early 1960s. Countries such as Samoa or Tonga, a monarchy still consolidating its recent democratisation, has succeeded in maintaining a strong national identity. Samoa has had universal suffrage only since 1990 and only allows traditional chiefs (*matai*) to contest for the elections.

There are other countries where tradition and history pose dilemmas. "Exaggerated politics" have been striking in the case of Nauru. Mismanagement, corruption and the exhaustion of phosphate reserves resulted in economic collapse in 2003. In recent years, income from Australia's Regional Processing Centre located there for refugee resettlement, and fishing license fees have allowed Nauru to bounce back. However, the government must establish a comprehensive fiscal framework to ensure that it can keep consumption expenditure sustainable, and invest in human capital and infrastructure, to prevent repeating history (ADB, 2016).

III. Challenges and opportunities in Very Small States' Civil Service

Very small public administration

In politics and administration, size does matter, probably both in its own right and in influencing other factors that shape the governance of small developing states. Today, the quality of public service is the decisive factor determining national competitiveness in the 21st Century. This is exemplified by city-states like Monaco, demographically small states like Finland, small island states like Malta, and the only small island city-state, Singapore. There, Lee Kuan Yew was determined to stamp out corruption, which enabled him to foster the politics of practical pragmatism and encourage merit-based bureaucracy.

The issue of optimal size for capacity in public administration is of practical significance. At what threshold in size can countries function effectively? Many governments have decentralised power, in an attempt to get closer to their citizens. But such politically-motivated reform lacks a theoretical underpinning on size: villages differ from towns or cities not just in smallness and capacity, but in potential and expectations. If size is a weakness, only good policy and effective planning can overcome the related challenges, but the smaller the country, the less able it will be to develop good policy and effective planning. This is the essence of the distinction between "small" and "very small" – the latter do not make policy and mostly borrow from others. Instead very small states may function effectively and efficiently by relying on regional or international political organisations or major donors (e.g. the judicial system in Nauru is dependent on magistrates and judges from Australia). But policy is the public administration key to development: public administration without policy formulation and implementation cannot deliver sustained growth and poverty reduction (Booth et al, 2015), only political posturing.

Small and very small states operate disproportionately through personal connections and participative decision making, which may promote inclusiveness and trust, while also being susceptible to delays in decision making and capture by vested interests (Chittoo, 2011). The degree of smallness thus hinders public administration capacity in developing new and innovative responses to emerging complexities. Effective public administration requires effective leadership by the cabinet. In VSIDSs formal constitutional theory and political reality often diverge, and experimentation is needed to scale down. Small effective cabinets may overcome the danger of feuding as one leader may hold several roles. It also helps that the small size pre-empts the rise of clientelist politics as it is more likely in societies where the transaction costs of organizing voters is high, where the ideological differences between parties is slight, and where it is difficult to provide credibility for the promises made to potential voters. Immediate vicinity offers greater understanding of the citizen's preoccupation and favours accountability.

The Professional Civil Service

Given its size relative to the total population (Annex B), the public service is frequently the largest employer in the very smallest states and public expenditure rises faster than its revenue. Simultaneously, salary levels and productivity remain low. The lack of alternative employment and appropriate training hinders public service motivation and creates a culture of merely following orders, lack of dedication, low job satisfaction and frequent absenteeism.

Many VSIDSs struggle to modernise an outdated public service, handicapped by rules and procedures that were inherited at independence. Reforms come at a higher political cost in VSDs, thus slowing down the process of streamlining its methods. This requires new attitudes

and behaviours towards the citizen, interaction with business and transparency of information and accountability.

The high degree of informality in very small states - by which social connections override professional government process - is the opposite to Weberian bureaucracy. State size can be in inverse proportion to the professionalism of the civil servant. Distinguishing between the domains of private and public life is difficult, if public officials operate professionally within a hierarchy of people, with whom they are all also socially connected. Professionalism is also challenging where public officials are personally identified with the consequences of their decisions. With so few skills a government of national unity works better than fragmentation by an official opposition. Fragmented politics makes civil service leadership difficult in contexts of constantly revolving governments.

Professional skills in the VSIDSs are always lacking, so the civil service often has over-extended personnel, small spare or reserve capacity, limited technical expertise, inappropriate training and low job satisfaction. Public sector human resource management in the VSIDSs confronts major challenges. A serious shortage of skilled, experienced, educated staff and “brain drain” is compounded by the difficulty of applying modern human resource development practices. Specialisms are difficult to acquire as key personnel must perform a broad range of functions.

Smallness may affect probity. An analysis of the ranking of ten VSIDSs in the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index 2011¹² shows that three of the five VSIDSs which had a rank above 50 (the larger the rank, the higher perception of corruption) were also the most populous ones. The only exception to this trend was St. Lucia which had the best rank despite being the fourth most populous country in the group.

For too long and in too many countries has the public sector been hampered by poor leadership and management, long-term under-investment, widespread corruption and flagrant political interference. This has resulted in inadequate public services in a manner that make little contribution towards progress to achieving the SDGs and generates a poor investment climate resulting in weak economic growth and insufficient job creation.

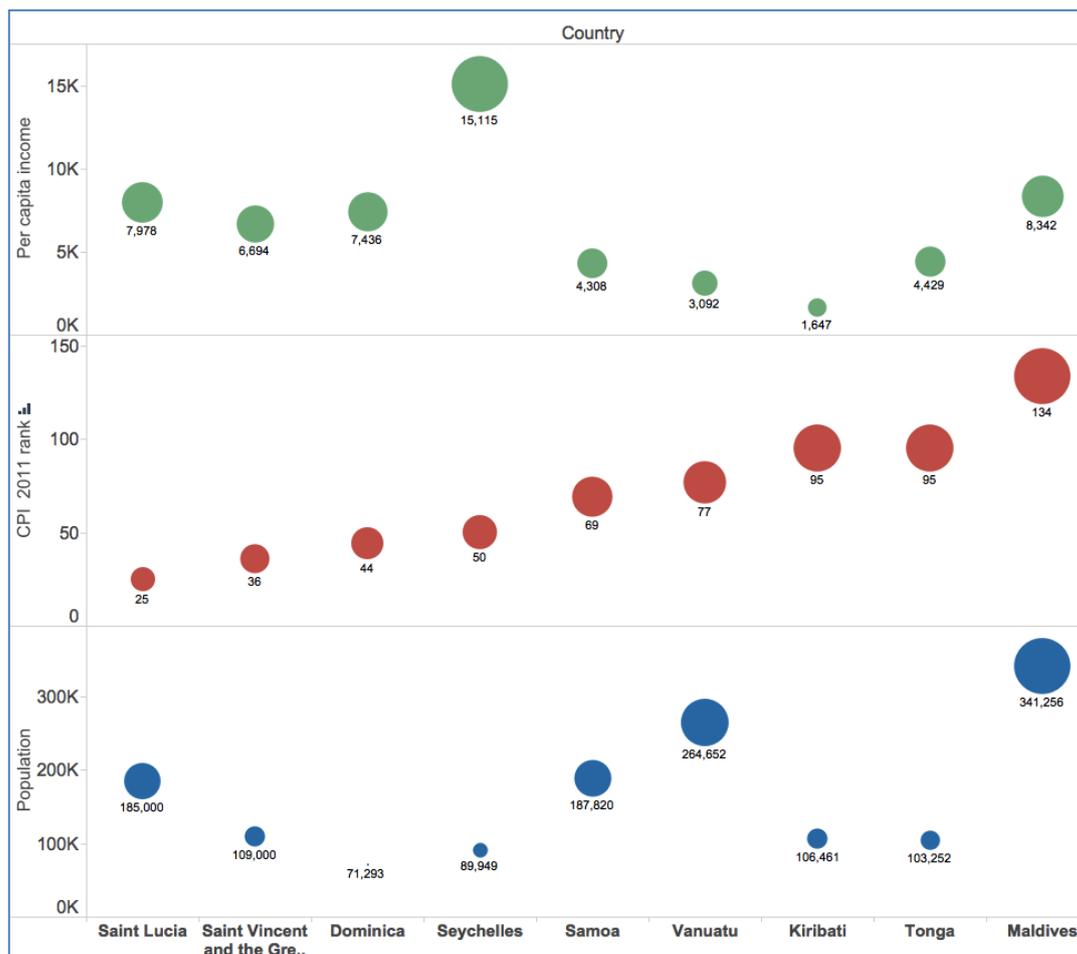
It is therefore essential that the UNDP facilitate building effective public administration and responsive and efficient public services in the VSIDSs. Reform is often politically sensitive, but the UNDP is well placed to make strategic and transformational efforts based on the special combination of highest-level access and the trust and confidence of member countries in the UNDP Secretariat.

Developing country contexts often work in ways that are significantly different from those of Western democracies, underlining the need to identify appropriate “international best practices” in governance and public administration for the smallest states.

A comprehensive review by the WTO (2002) secretariat on SIDSs observed: “conclusions in the empirical literature tend to be somewhat contradictory and inconclusive on a number of important points” not least because “each small economy is unique”. It was added that “small states do not perform badly in terms of GDP levels, growth rates, social, health and educational indicators, cohesion variables and greater flexibility in the decision-making process”. However, the review failed to lay out the importance of public administration in SIDSs to the economy and social development.

¹² 2011 results are the latest available data for the countries in question. For a country to be included in the ranking, it must be included in a minimum of three of the CPI’s data sources.

Figure 1: Relation between per capita income, population and perception of corruption



The rational-legal process of effective institutions impartially applying laws and processes is undermined in this context by obvious potential constraints. Personality trumps policy as nepotism and patronage politics flourish, creating deep political fragmentation often along ethnic lines. This has led to a situation where, politicians and, especially, members of parliament are under pressure to cater for the needs of their respective groups (family, community, church) rather than those of the entire population.

One example of a “*democracy surfeit*” is Nauru where there is one MP for every five hundred people (compared to one MP for every ninety-two thousand people in the UK). Another example is Palau (population of 20,000) which has a bicameral parliament with 25 MPs in total, while each of its 16 states also has a state legislature and a Council of Chiefs. One of Palau’s states, Hatohobei (or Tobi), has approximately 100 voters who elect a 9-member legislature.

In countries with small legislatures with a few MPs, most government MPs become ministers leading to conflicts of interest, difficulties with succession and preserving institutional memory. Even in very small states, cabinets often contain many ministerial posts to consolidate the support of elected representatives for government.

Public service excellence in very small country contexts

While all small states have limited institutional capacity, very small states experience exceptional pressures, a consequence of the tiny total size of their public sectors, lessens their resilience to shocks and sustainability. A small-scale public sector serving an often widely scattered and small population raises costs (Maignan, 2001), results in the under-provision of core services (health and education) yet still translates into a large public sector.

In many VSIDSs, post-independence public administration moved away from traditional bureaucratic procedures to “de-neutralise” public servants in an attempt to hasten change. Political advisers were inducted to provide alternative advice and the lines between politics and administration began to blur. Politicians felt that the bureaucracy was too powerful and independent and not focused on political needs. Public resources became controlled by politics rather than public policy. Politicians began involving themselves in administration, project management and senior appointments, frustrated by the proneness of colonial bureaucracy to conservatism.

Ethical standards in public life are challenged by localised loyalties and personality politics undermine the consolidation of trust in the impartiality of the national-level bureaucracies (Corbett, 2013). This undue political interference was due in part to the imprecise demarcation of political and administrative roles, but also to an unhealthy quest by some politicians for excessive administrative involvement or power. Costly and heavy bureaucratic structures of government were sometimes adopted. For example, prior to the restructuring of its government in 1997, Vanuatu had 34 ministries. The situation has improved since the late 1990s when, after severe fiscal crises, there have been serious attempts to professionalise the public service.

Many public administrations in VSIDSs still suffer from *bureau-pathology*, or the condition of anxiety and insecurity due to alienation, limited promotion prospects, less-than-adequate pay and conditions of work, pessimism, sense of powerlessness and the apathy of “muted frustration” over the erosion of its independence and professionalism with the blurring of roles between politics and bureaucracy.

New graduates can feel they “know it all”, wanting to be at the top without learning procedures and systems. Within departments, lines of authority and discipline may collapse, due to frequent changes in leadership, lack of direction on priorities and an increasing lack of accountability and transparency in the public administration system. As service delivery has been adversely affected, qualities such as honesty, trust, passionate dedication and the ethics of public service are no longer upheld. Policy development can be difficult to achieve in the face of the short-term concerns on close-knit communities.

Extreme smallness may generate the “*Aid Curse*”: For example, Nauru has the highest ratio of aid to GDP, at 116 per cent.¹³ In Nauru, aid dependency risks replacing phosphate as a source of a long-term resource curse, since states funded by aid rather than taxation are less accountable to their citizens and under less pressure to maintain legitimacy. They are therefore less likely to invest in effective public institutions (Everest-Phillips, 2011).

VSIDS politics revolves around the control of the nation’s capital, more so than in larger states and archipelagos. All very small states have a population density concentrated in the capital city without alternative major towns as centres of power.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, public administration is shaped by the “managed intimacy” of “enforced propinquity” of society in very small states. This physical proximity, kinship and similarity between people affects the impersonality of the bureaucracy without which a modern public service of strong adherence to rules is unlikely, or difficult to achieve. Therefore, the rational-legal, impersonal and objective Weberian model of public administration - with its focus on individual merit, neutrality and the rights of the individual - may be less applicable in the smallest developing states.

¹³ OECD data 2009, for 2007: the average for all developing countries is 0.9%.

For instance, the Constitution of Kiribati upholds the rights and freedoms of the individual, subject to “limitations designed to ensure that the enjoyment of the said rights and freedoms by any individual does not prejudice the rights and freedoms of others or the public interest.”

Classically, scholars have relied on the democratic experience of proximate equivalents, be they non-sovereign local governments or historically distant Greek city-states, to make this case. In this view, proximity between rulers and ruled heightens the responsiveness of leaders and generates a deepened sense of community cohesion and civic engagement among citizens, leading to long lasting democracy.

Small states are real world examples of small democracy in action, thus making the very small states “most likely” cases for the “small is beautiful” proposition. Taking the statistical correlation between country size and democracy, the number of small states has grown over the last half a century (Lake & O’ Mahony 2004).

Conclusion: Size is not Destiny, but very small does mean an absence of big ideas¹⁴

These examples show that there is substantial scope for peer learning between the good and poor SIDS performers, even for the smallest of them. The effectiveness of public administration matters for building state capacity to respond to immediate citizen needs as well as such wider challenges as climate change and economic growth. As none of the VSIDSs are low income, human development issues in VSIDSs are middle-income country issues such as tackling the challenges of unequal opportunities, gender-based violence and high rates of non-communicable, lifestyle diseases like diabetes.

However, strengthening the quality of public institutions to deal with these challenges requires improving leadership and strategic direction, public sector workforce capability and standards of operational efficiency. While personalised governance has its benefits, VSIDSs need to achieve the right balance between personal relations and impersonal rules. This transition enables political leaders to make tough choices necessary for the long-term development of the state because over this threshold, decision-makers rapidly become less likely to personally know people affected. CARICAD¹⁵ (1988) said over 20 years ago:

“Small countries provide a most interesting laboratory for the examination of the conventional wisdom of public administration in the context of scale. This is a valuable research agenda since the eventual gains may fall to the benefit of the entire population. The time for a real administrative break with the colonial past has come”.

Some of the key areas for VSIDSs to focus on include:

Trust and transparency between politics and public administration. The relationship between politicians and the bureaucracy is constantly evolving and still characterized by distrust. Both feel they have the requisite knowledge and experience and see each other as self-serving. All this has to be overcome by a sense of common purpose and mission, as well as by clearly defined roles and missions.

Strengthening Civil Service. The *rational-legal-impersonal* model of professional public administration may not be fully applicable in very small states. Suggested approaches to strengthening civil service include balancing both merit and experience anchored on a sound personnel system.

¹⁴ UN Secretary General, speech to FOSS Conference, 1 October 2012.

¹⁵ Caribbean Centre for Development Administration: <https://www.caricad.net/>

Careful management and strategic planning, performance measurement system, trained personnel and the development of local experts.

Make the most of the face-to-face nature of public life. Instead of working within the rigid hierarchies of the civil service, it might be more productive to look at more temporary, flexible and collective arrangements that bring people together to address nationally perceived priorities, as well as the on-going role of government (Baker, 1992).

Experimentation in administration appropriate to the circumstances of VSIDS/VSIDSs is needed. This will include finding ways to re-invigorate PACs, innovate and constitutional reform. Administrative problems and potential in small and very small developing states differ by practice that is appropriate irrespective of the size of the state and that may be due to smallness. The potential of leveraging ICT for public service may support initiatives from international and regional bodies (e.g. the Commonwealth, CARICOM, OECS, PIF, SPC) to improve public service human resources training and management. While VSIDS struggle to provide solutions on their own, there is potential for aggregating their capacities and maximizing gains.

References

- ADB (2016) Asian Development Outlook 2016: Asia's Potential Growth <http://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/182221/ado2016.pdf>
- Anckar, C. (1997). Dominating smallness: Big parties in Lilliput systems. *Party Politics*, 3(2), 243-263.
- Anckar, C. (1999). Homogeneity and smallness: Dahl and Tufte revisited. *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 22(1), 29-44.
- Anckar, C. (2002). Why Are Small Island States Democracies? *Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs* 91 (July 2002): 375-90;
- Anckar, C. (2008). Size, Islandness, and Democracy: a global comparison. *International Political Science Review*, 29 (4), 433-459.
- Anckar, C. (2010). Small Is Democratic, But Who Is Small? *Arts and Social Sciences Journal*, pp.1-16.
- Anckar, D.; and C. Anckar. (1995). "Size, Insularity, and Democracy," *Scandinavian Political Studies* 18: 221-22.
- Alesina, A. and E. Spolaore. (2005). "War, Peace, and the Size of Countries," *Journal of Public Economics*, July 2005.
- Baker, R. (ed.). (1992). *Public Administration in Small and Island States*. Connecticut: Kumarian Press.
- Baldacchino, G. and D. Milne (eds.). (2000). *Lessons from the Political Economy of Small Islands: The Resourcefulness of Jurisdiction*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.
- Baldacchino, G., Greenwood, R. and Felt, L. (2009). Geography, Governance, and Development: Challenges Facing the Small, Insular and Remote, in G. Baldacchino, L. Felt & R. Greenwood (eds.) *Remote Control: Governance Lessons for and from Small, Insular and Remote Regions*, St John's NL, ISER Press, pp. 1-16.
- Baldacchino, G. (2006) "Managing the Hinterland Beyond: Two Ideal-Type Strategies of Economic Development for Small Island Territories," *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, Vol. 47 (1): 45-60.
- Baldacchino, G. (2012). "Islands and Despots," *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* 50, 103-20.

- Barcham, M., 2007, Corruption in Pacific Island countries, UNDP Pacific Centre, http://www.undppc.org/fj/_resources/article/files/Corruption_in_PICs.pdf
- Benn, D. and Hall, K. (2000). *Contending with Destiny: The Caribbean in the 21st Century*. Ian Randle Publishers.
- Bertram, I. and R.F. Watters. (1985). 'The MIRAB Economy in South Pacific Microstates,' *Pacific Viewpoint* 6 (4), 497–519.
- Blair, P. (1968). *The Mini-State Dilemma*. Carnegie Endowment.
- Briguglio, L. (1995). 'Small Island Developing States and their Vulnerabilities,' *World Development* 23 (9), 1615–1632.
- Brown, D. (2009). *Institutional Development and Reform in Public Services: The Experience of Small Caribbean States*. Paper for the Small States and the 'State' conference, Estonia.p.19.
- Campbell, J.; and Hall, J. (2009). National identity and the political economy of small states. *Review of International Political Economy* 16, 4, pages 547-572.
- CARICAD. 1988. 'The Commonwealth Caribbean Small Island States and the CARICAD'
- Carment, D.; Prest, S.; and Samy, Y. (2004). *Assessing Small Island Developing State Fragility, in Economic Vulnerability and Resilience of Small States*. Edited by Lino Briguglio and Eliawony J. Kisanga.
- Chittoo, H. (2011). Public Administration in 'Small and Island Developing States': A Debate about the implications of smallness. *Global Journal of Management and Business Research*, September 2011.
- Charles, D.E. *et al.* (1997). *A Future for Small States, Overcoming Vulnerability*. London: Commonwealth Secretariat.
- Clarke, C.; and Payne, T. (eds.) (1987) *Politics, Security and Development in Small States*. London: Allen & Unwin.
- Commonwealth Secretariat. (1985) *Vulnerability: Small States in the Global Society*. Report of a Commonwealth Consultative Group. London: Commonwealth Secretariat.
- Commonwealth Secretariat. (2014). *Small States: Economic Review and Basic Statistics*. Volume 17.
- Connell, J. (1988). 'Sovereignty and Survival: Island Microstates in the Third World,' *Research Monograph No. 3*, Sydney: University of Sydney, Department of Geography.
- Connell, J. (2006). Nauru: The first failed Pacific State? *The Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs* 95 (383), 47 – 63.
- Corbett, J. (2013). Politicians and professionalization in the Pacific Islands: Revisiting self-regulation? *Politics & Policy*, 41, 852-876.
- Corbett, J. (2015) 'Everybody Knows Everybody': Practising Politics in the Pacific Islands. *Democratisation* 22 (1): 51 – 72.
- Coornaert, A. (2014). La viabilité des petits États insulaires en développement et le cas particulier de Nauru. *Géographie*.
- Crowards, T. (2002). Defining the category of 'small' states. *Journal of International Development*, 14(2), 143-179.
- Curmi, L. (2009). Governance and Small States. *Bank of Valletta Review*, No. 40, pp.46-64.
- Dahl, R. A.; & Tufte, E. R. (1973). *Size and Democracy*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Däniken, F.von (1998) Is the Notion of Small State Still Relevant. In: L. Goetschel (ed.) *Small States Inside and Outside the European Union: Interests and Policies*. Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, pp. 43–48.

- Daniel, Justin. (2015). Séminaire Institutions Politiques de la Caraïbe : Comportement électoral. Université des Antilles. Delivré le 5 Mars 2015.
- Deidda, M. (2016). Insularity and economic development: A survey. *International Review of Economics*, 63(2), 107-128.
- Diamond, L; and Tsalik, Svetlana. (1999). "Size and Democracy: The Case for Decentralization," in Diamond, L. ed., *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press)
- Dommen, E. (1985) What Is a Microstate? In: E. Dommen and P. Hein (eds.) *States, Microstates and Islands*. London: Croom Helm, pp. 1–15.
- Dumienki, Z. (2014). "Microstates as Modern Protected States: Towards a New Definition of Micro-Statehood" (PDF). Occasional Paper. Centre for Small State Studies.
- Easterly, W.; and Kraay, A. (2000). Small States, Small Problems? Income, Growth and Volatility in Small States. *World Development* 28: 2013-2027.
- Erk, J.; and Veenendaal, W. (2014). Is Small Really Beautiful? The Micro-State Mistake. *Journal of Democracy*, 25(3), 135-148.
- Everest-Phillips, M. (2011). Tax, Governance and Development. Discussion Paper 11. Commonwealth Secretariat.
- Fox, A.B. (1959) *The Power of Small States*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Gondeau, S. 2005. *La Fonction Publique dans les Micro-Etats Européens*. Ecole Nationale d'Administration. Dir. Hertzog, R.
- Guthunz, U.; and von Krosick, F. (1996) « Tourism Development in Small Island States : From MIRAB to TouRAB? », p. 18-35 in Briguglio, L., Arche, B., Wal, G., Jafar, J., Harris, D. and Leal Filho, W. (ed.) *Sustainable Tourism in Islands and Small States. Issues and Policy*, London & New York : Pinter. 226 p.
- Hein, P. (1985) The Study of Microstates. In: E. Dommen and P. Hein (eds.) *States, Microstates and Islands*. London: Croom Helm, pp. 16–29.
- Hein, P. (2004) *Small Island Developing States: Origin of the Category and Definition Issues, in United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Is a Special Treatment of Small Island Developing States Possible?* (New York and Geneva: United Nations).
- Huffer, E. (2005). Governance, Corruption and Ethics in the South Pacific. *Contemporary Pacific*, 17(1): 118-140. *Policy*, 20(2): 16-20. Centre for Independent Studies: Sydney.
- Keohane, R.O. (1969) Lilliputians dilemmas – Small states in international politics. *International Organization* 23: 291–310. [CrossRef](#)
- Kiribati Constitution. Ch.2, Article 3, of Constitution (Amendment) Act 1995.
- Kisanga, E.J.; and Dancie, S.J. (eds.) (2007) *Commonwealth Small States, Issues and Prospects*. London: Commonwealth Secretariat.
- Jaschik, K. (2014). Small states and international politics: Climate change, the Maldives and Tuvalu. *International Politics*, 51(2), 272-293.
- Kakazu, H. (1994). *Sustainable Development of Small Island Economies*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Katzenstein, P.J. (1985). *Small States in World Markets*, Cornell, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Katzenstein, P.J. (2003). 'Small States and Small States Revisited'. *New Political Economy*, Vol. 8, No. 1, pp.9-31.
- Lee, M. (2006). *How Do Small States Affect the Future Development of the E.U.* Nova Publishers.

- Magnan, A. (2001). «Les contraintes de la micro-insularité dans l'amélioration de l'offre de soins. Regard géographique à travers l'exemple des Maldives (Océan indien)», *Santé Publique* (Vol. 19), p. 67-80.
- McElroy, J.L.; and Mahoney, M. (1999). "The Propensity for Political Dependence in Island Microstates", *INSULA: International Journal of Island Affairs* 9 (1), 32–35.
- McKee, D.L.; and Tisdell, C.A. (1990). *Development Issues in Small Island Economies*, New York: Praeger.
- McLay, J. (2011). *Making a Difference: The Role of a Small State at the United Nations*.
- Maass, M. (2009). The Elusive Definition of the Small State. *International Politics*, 46: 65-83.
- Morgan M.; and Hegarty D. (2003). *Strengthening Pacific parliaments: Legislative reform program for Pacific Island countries. Suva, Fiji: United Nations Development Programme–Governance for Livelihoods and Development Project*.
- Murray, D. J. (1981). Microstates: Public administration for the small and beautiful. *Public Administration & Development (Pre-1986)*, 1(3), 245.
- Ott, D. (2000). *Small Is Democratic: An Examination of State Size and Democratic Development*. New York.
- Panapa, P.; and Frankel, J., 2008. The Loneliness of the Pro-Government Backbencher and the Precariousness of Simple Majority Rule in Tuvalu. In *State Society and Governance in Melanesia*. Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, ANU: Canberra.
- Plischke, E. 1977. *Mini-States in World Affairs*. American Enterprise Institute, Washington DC.
- Rapaport, J.; Muteba, E.; and Therattil, J.J. (1971) *Small States & Territories, Status and Problems*. United Nations Institute for Training and Research Study. New York: Arno Press.
- Richards, J. (1990). Micro-States: A Specific Form of Polity?. *Politics*, 10: 40–46.
- Roberts, J.; and Ibitote, I. (2012). *The Big Divide: A Ten Year Report on Small Island Developing States and the Millennium Development Goals*, Commonwealth Secretariat.
- Ross, K. (1997) *The Commonwealth: a leader for the world's small states? The Round Table (Small Statehood and the Commonwealth Reconsidered: Presented to Delegations at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, Edinburgh, October)*.
- Royal Commonwealth Society (2013). 'Commonwealth Compared 2013: Setting the Scene'. <https://thercs.org/assets/Research-/Commonwealth-Compared.pdf>
- Selwyn, P. (1978). *Small, Poor, Remote: islands at a Geographic Disadvantage*. IDS, Sussex.
- Smith, S. de. (1980). *Microstates and Melanesia*. OUP.
- Srebrnik, H. (2004). Small Island Nations and Democratic Values. *World Development*, Volume 32, Issue 2, pp.329-341.
- François Taglioni. (2010). *L'insularisme : une rhétorique bien huilée dans les petits espaces insulaires*. Olivier Sevin. Comme un parfum d'île, Presse Universitaire Paris-Sorbonne (PUPS), p. 421-435.
- Taylor, C. (1969) *Statistical typology of micro-states and territories: towards a definition of a micro-state*, in United Nations Institute for Training and Research, *Small States and Territories: Status and Problems* (New York).
- Zeljko Sevic. *Politico-Administrative Relationships in Small States*.
- UNITAR. (1969). *Status and Problems of Very Small Territories*. UNITAR, no. 3. United Nations, Public Administration Division. 1969. *Comparative Analysis of the Distinctive Public Administration Problems of Small States and Territories*. New York: United Nations.

- UNDP GCPSE (2014) 'Small, So Simple? Complexity in Small Island Developing States', http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/capacity-development/English/Singapore%20Centre/GPCSE_Complexity%20in%20Small%20Islands.pdf
- UNEP. (2014). Emerging Issues for Small Island Developing States: Results of the UNEP Foresight Process. United Nations Environment Program.
- Veenendaal, W.; and J. Corbett. (2015). Why Small States Offer Important Answers to Large Questions. *Comparative Political Studies*, vol. 48 no. 4, 527-549.
- Vital, D. (1967) *The Inequality of States, A Study of the Small Power in International Relations*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press.
- Vital, D. (1971) *The Survival of Small States. Studies in Small/Great Power Conflict*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Wace, N. (1980). Exploitation of the Advantages of Remoteness and Isolation in the Economic Development of Pacific Islands. In *The island states of the Pacific and Indian Oceans: Anatomy of Development*. R. T. Shand, ed. Pp. 87-118. Canberra: Australian National University
- World Bank. (2016). *Country Programme Evaluation for Small States*.
- World Bank. (2011). *Statistics for small states: A supplement to World Development Indicators*.
- World Trade Organization Committee on Trade and Development. (2002). *Small Economies: A literature Review*. WT/COMTD/SE/W/4, 23 July 2002.

Appendix

Annex A: Non-small States islands

Non-small States islands

The definition of Small States in this article excludes entities such as:

- i) The fourteen British Overseas Territories (BOTs) under the jurisdiction of the United Kingdom, or the overseas *collectivités d'outre-mer* of France, ;
- ii) States 'in free association' with another, such as the Niue or the Cook Islands with New Zealand;
- iii) Autonomous' areas, like Mount Athos within Greece, or the Faroe Islands and Greenland under Denmark;
- iv) Self-governing dependencies of the British Crown such as the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands, or Curaçao and Aruba of the Netherlands;
- v) The UN decolonisation committee's list of 16 territories around the world that have neither self-government nor independence, often having rejected both options, including ten of the BOTs, Guam and American Samoa, Western Sahara, New Caledonia and Tokelau;
- vi) Places like the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic or North Cyprus which have unilaterally declared independence but do not enjoy widespread international recognition.

Annex B: GDP per Capita, Proportion of Public Servants in the total population and Latest Public Service Reform in Very Small States

Country	Population	GDP per capita (USD)	Public Servants	Proportion of Public Servants (% of the total population)	Latest Public Sector Reform	Office in Charge
Nauru	11,288 (2015)	8,343.80	2,043 ¹⁶	2	2012 (NSDS)	Department of Chief Secretary
Tuvalu	11,052 (2017)	3,550.00	1,095 ¹⁷	11	2016 (Tuvalu Sustainable Development Policy)	Public Service Commission
Palau	17,899 (2017)	13,417.00	4,058 ¹⁸	22	2013 - (Strengthening Public Sector Management in the North Pacific with the ADB)	Bureau of Service Systems
San Marino	33,344 (2018)	49,664.00	3,766 ¹⁹	11		Shared competence
Liechtenstein	37,810 (2016)	-	3,698 ²⁰	10	N/A	N/A
Monaco	38,400 (2015)	-	4,192 ²¹	10	2016	Département de l' Intérieur
Saint Kitts and Nevis	52,715 (2017)	17,090.20	4,044 ²²	07	tbc	tbc
Marshall Islands	54,880 (2015)	3,753.30	6,374 ²³	11	2015 (National Strategic Plan)	Shared competence
Dominica	71,293 (2011)	7,609.60	4,175 ²⁴	06	2016 (Public Sector Investment Programme)	Public Service Commission

¹⁶ PPCM. 2015. Situational Analysis of Employment in Nauru.

¹⁷ Ministry of Finance of the Government of Tuvalu 2017 National Budget.

¹⁸ <https://www.doi.gov/oia/islands/palau>

¹⁹ Ufficio Informatica, Tecnologia, Dati e Statistica - Repubblica di San Marino. 2018. Employees of the public sector for corporate body of affiliation.

²⁰ Gondeau, S. 2005. La Fonction Publique dans les Micro-Etats Européens. Ecole Nationale d'Administration. Dir. Hertzog, R.

²¹ <http://www.imsee.mc/Actualites/Focus-Fonction-Publique>. 2013.

²² *The Department of Statistics & Economic Planning – 2015 Statistical Digest*

²³ <https://www.doi.gov/oia/islands/marshallislands>

²⁴ Cecillia Carr, Chief Personnel Officer. Government of Dominica. Personal Communications. 30 June 2018.

Country	Population	GDP per capita (USD)	Public Servants	Proportion of Public Servants (% of the total population)	Latest Public Sector Reform	Office in Charge
Andorra	77,794 (2017)	39,146.50	6,828 ²⁵	09	N/A	Ministry of Public Administration, Transports and Telecommunication
Antigua & Barbuda	86,295 (2011)	15,021.70	N/A	N/A	2018 (Public and Social Sector Transformation Project)	Public Service Commission
Seychelles	93,920 (2017)	15,504.50	8,906 ²⁶	09	N/A	Department of Public Administration
Micronesia Federated States	104,196 (2017)	3,187.60	8,086 ²⁷	08	N/A	Department of Finance and Administration
Tonga	106,479 (2017)	3,944.20	N/A	N/A	N/A	Public Service Commission
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	102,089 (2017)	7,185.20	4,932 (2000) ²⁸	05	N/A	Public Service Commission
Kiribati	108,145 (2018)	1,685.20	N/A	N/A	N/A	Public Service Office
Grenada	111,724 (2017)	10,376.20	5,230 (2000) ²⁹	06 (2000)	2006	Public Service Commission - Department of Public Administration
Saint Lucia	178,084 (2016)	9,574.30	5,982 (2000) ³⁰	04 (2000)	2012	Division of Public Sector Modernisation - Ministry of the Public Service, Information and Broadcasting

²⁵ Govern d'Andorra, Ministère des Finances, Département de Statistique. 2017. L'Andorre en Chiffres 2017.

²⁶ National Bureau of Statistics, Government of Seychelles. 2017. Seychelles in Figures 2017.

²⁷ <https://www.doi.gov/oia/islands/fsm>

²⁸ <http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/civilservice/countries/stlucia/surquesres.htm>

²⁹ <http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/civilservice/countries/stlucia/surquesres.htm>

³⁰ Ibid.

Country	Population	GDP per capita (USD)	Public Servants	Proportion of Public Servants (% of the total population)	Latest Public Sector Reform	Office in Charge
Samoa	194,899 (2016)	4,360.80	4,319 (2012) ³¹	02 (2012)	2014	Public Service Commission
São Tomé & Príncipe	199 910 (2016)	1,913.00	7,309 (2013) ³²	04 (2013)	N/A	N/A
Vanuatu	277,500 (2015)	3,123.60	N/A	N/A	2006	Public Service Commission
Barbados	285,000 (2016)	16,788.70	26,300 (2017) ³³	09 (2017)	2013	Office of Public Sector Reform -
Iceland	348,450 (2018)	70,056.90	55,000 (2017) ³⁴	16 (2017)	2013	
Belize	366,954 (2016)	4,905.50	18,069 (2017)	05 (2017)	PSR: Charting the Way Forward - 2000 and Beyond	Public Service, Energy and Public Utilities – Ministry of Labour, Local Government, Rural Development, Public Service, Energy and Public Utilities
The Bahamas	378,040 (2016)	30,762.00	N/A	N/A	2017	Ministry of Public Service
Maldives	378,114 (2017)	10,535.80	22,082 (2017) ³⁵	06 (2017)	2016 (Maldives Civil Service Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020)	Civil Service Commission
TOTAL	4,652,161	Average: 14,465		VSIDS AVERAGE:13		
UK	65,640,000		2,750,000 (2011) ³⁶	04		
France	66,900,000		5,200,000 (2011) ³⁷	08		
Ireland	4,700,000		317,000 (2017) ³⁸	06		

³¹ Public Service Commission, Government of Samoa. 2013. Samoa Public Service Workforce Plan 2013-2016

³² Ahodekon Jules. Projeto de Política Nacional do Emprego de São Tomé e Príncipe, Abril de 2015

³³ Barbados Statistical Service. 2017. Statistical Bulletin: Continuous Household Labour Force Survey January to March 2017

³⁴ Iceland Statistics. 2018. http://px.hagstofa.is/pxen/pxweb/en/Efnahagur/Efnahagur_vinumagnogframleidni_vinumagn/THJ11001.px/table/tableViewLayout1/?rxid=6e7eae8f-3dea-4a49-ade0-81dcf308942a

³⁵ Statistical Yearbook of Maldives 2018. National Bureau of Statistics

³⁶ Portail de la Fonction Publique. 2011. Fiche-Pays : Royaume-Uni. https://www.fonction-publique.gouv.fr/files/files/IMG/Royaume_uni.pdf

³⁷ Portail de la Fonction Publique. 2011. Fiche-Pays : France. <https://www.fonction-publique.gouv.fr/files/files/IMG/France.pdf>

³⁸ Department of Public Expenditure & Reform – Databank. http://databank.per.gov.ie/Public_Service_Numbers.aspx?rep=SectorHistory. Accessed 18/07/2018