Today, our population is spread among 196 independent countries. Yet, not every individual enjoys the country they live in. Those who do not want to follow the rules and government authority, create their own small country or state. They create a place that values their beliefs, which is called a micronation. According to Business Insider, “Reports put the number of current micronations at over 400.”

Individuals often create their own micronation for a variety of reasons. Often they are created for social, economic, or political simulations. In addition, they are created for historical recreations so that they can express themselves artistically. The location of a micronation ranges from islands, artificial sea structures, unclaimed land, deserted lands, underwater, underground, space, state bound micronations, micronations on borders, and even the Internet. When someone creates a micronation, they form their own kind of government, which is not recognized by the actual government of the country. It could range from being a democracy, a monarchy, or whatever they choose it to be. Yet, according to Starta Micronation information, “Micronations are entities that may claim to be independent nations or states or attempt to simulate ‘real world’ politics, but which are not recognized by world governments, nation-states or major international organizations. These nations often exist only on paper, on the internet, or in the minds of their creators.”

Micronations areas vary in shape and size. It can range from 29 square miles to 1.3 acres. Micronations can be physical places, as well as virtual spaces. A well-known example of a physical micronation is “The Principally of Sealand” which was developed in 1967 off the coast of Britain on an uninhibited World War II sea fort. It is only .0002 square miles wide. Sealand was formed by Paddy Roy Bates, a pirate, who needed a place to run his radio station Radio Essex. By 1975, Bates created currency, a flag, national anthem, and passports for his
micronation. It is not accepted as a legitimate nation, Sealand does not have any laws or regulations. Recently, it has been used as an offshore data hosting facility. Sealand has become a tourist attraction and also had a film produced about it that was released in 2010.

The Kingdom of Talossa is an example of a virtual micronation meaning that it exists on the Internet. To support a cause of interest, virtual micronations are formed to gain popularity with websites and blogs. Talossa was created by Robert Ben Madison from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, when he was 14-years-old. Madison, the leader of the constitutional monarchy Talossa, was known as “King Ben.” As the micronation grew, there were conventions planned around the Milwaukie area known as Talossafest. Talossa has its own national anthem and dictionary for its language of Talossan Tongue. It is interesting that Talossa began online. Like any nation, micronations have controversy.

The largest micronation convention in the world is called PoliNation. It happens around every 2 to 3 years. The conference brings together leaders of many Micronations. First started in 2010, by Dr. Judy Lattas and George Cruickshank (Cruickshank, 2015). The first conference made news around the world and had many micronation leaders come. In 2012, the second PoliNation Conference was the largest one yet, which was located in London. It brought together 40 micronation leaders and those with interest in starting their own micronation. The 3rd PoliNation conference will be held November 4th, 2015 at Perugia, which for the first time will take place within the borders of an actual micronation (Cruickshank, 2015).

Now that it has been explained what a micronation is and have provided some examples, let's move on to how to create/categorize a micronation. Creating your own micronation is very simple, all you need is a dedicated follower base and a website. In Erwin Strauss’ book, “How to Start Your Own Country” he breaks micronations down into five categories: traditional
sovereignty, ship under flag of convenience, litigation, vonu, and model country (Strauss, 1999). Many micronations are not built outside the internet. They are just supported through websites. Since these micronations do not actually own land for their nation, they would fall under the model country category because they never achieve sovereignty. These micronations are similar to the traditional sovereignty category in that they closely resemble actual nations minus the land base.

The next category would be the vonu micronations, which are usually ones that prefer to be extremely private. They are located in remote locations and usually stay away from contact with the outside world. Ships under flag of convenience are micronations that are usually part of a money making scheme. They usually stay off the coast of actual nations and take their flag, which is where the category name comes from.

The last category that is a micronation of necessity is known as litigation. When a group of people get upset with their current nation because of political reasons or any reason for that matter they form their own group (Strauss, 1999). Although, there is another way to categorize micronations and that is by their seriousness.

Overall, micronations are very complex and usually resemble sovereign nations. They have citizens, their own currency, symbols and usually their own land base. They have many reasons for starting and there are many examples. Those that are involved in micronations take themselves very seriously and expect that others do the same. Creating a micronation is difficult because you need a reason, a goal, and followers that believe in your reason and goal. If you can achieve the steps that it takes to form a micronation, that then you are well on your way to belonging to your own micronation.
• Micronations range in size from 29 square miles to 1.3 acres.

• Five categories: Traditional Sovereignty, Model Country, Litigation, Ships Under Flag of Convenience, and Vonu.

• Also categorized by seriousness.

• Talossa was founded as a kingdom on December 26, 1979 by Robert Ben Madison.
  ○ At that time the kingdom occupied Madison’s bedroom, and he adopted the name “Talossa” for it after discovering that the word means “inside the house” in Finnish.

• Freetown Christiania is a borough of Christianshavn in the Danish capital Copenhagen is a self-proclaimed autonomous neighborhood of about 850 residents, covering 84 acres.
  ○ The main reason this town declared independency is that they wanted to trade cannabis freely.

• The Conch Republic was founded to comically protest the United States checkpoint between the Florida Keys and the mainland, the mayor of Key West declared war on the United States but then immediately surrendered and applied for 1 billion dollars of foreign aid.

• The Principality of Sealand is a micronation that was a floating British base that was abandoned until a rogue DJ moved there.
  ○ Sealand withstood court challenges and remains an independent nation to this day.

• Rose Island was a platform that was founded by Giorgio Rosa in 1968 where he wanted to print his own currency.
  ○ The Italian government did not like that so they sent the navy out to destroy it with explosives.
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