

FINLAND

Dates of Elections: September 21 and 22, 1975

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the members of Parliament after the premature dissolution of this body in June 1975. General elections had previously taken place in January 1972.

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of Finland, the *Eduskunta*, is composed of 200 members elected for 4 years.

Electoral System

All Finnish citizens who have attained the age of 18 before the year in which the election takes place are entitled to vote, with the exception of those who have been convicted of vagrancy or certain corrupt practices connected with elections.

The electoral lists are revised annually at the constituency level. Voting is not compulsory.

Every member of the electorate who has reached the age of 20 before the election year is eligible to become a member of the *Eduskunta*, except persons under guardianship and those on active military service. The parliamentary mandate is incompatible with the posts of Chancellor of Justice and Ombudsman of Parliament, and with membership in the Supreme Court of Justice and the Supreme Administrative Court. Candidates are nominated by registered political parties.

Finland is divided into 15 electoral constituencies, which roughly correspond to the boundaries of the country's provinces. In 14 of them, 199 members of the *Eduskunta* are elected by proportional representation from party lists of candidates. Seats are distributed among the individual parties, or alliances of several parties, in accordance with the d'Hondt rule of highest average. For the distribution of seats within each list, candidates are classed according to the number of personal votes they have polled.

The province of Aland elects a single deputy by simple majority vote.

A vacancy arising in the *Eduskunta* between general elections is filled by the individual who is "next-in-line" on the list of the party which formerly held the seat.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

As a result of differences between the Social Democratic Party and its partners in the centre-left governmental coalition on the question of land utilization and transfer of land properties, President of the Republic Kekkonen ordered general elections to be held in September 1975. The four-party (Social Democrats, Centre Party, liberal People's Party and Swedish People's Party) coalition Cabinet, headed by Social Democrat Kalevil Sorsa and in power since September 1972, resigned on June 4, 1975, and a caretaker Government was appointed on June 13 with Mr. Keijo Liinamaa as Prime Minister. The Parliament terminated its work on the same day.

The election campaign dealt mainly with the country's economic problems, specifically the large foreign trade deficit, rising inflation rate and unemployment. Twelve parties and a total of 1,346 candidates were in the running.

Despite the fact that 18-year-olds cast ballots for the first time, the election turnout in percentage terms was the lowest since World War II. Voting results brought only slight changes in the balance between the left and the non-left parties. The latter won 106 seats against 94 of the left as compared to 107 and 93, respectively, in the 1972 general elections.

In this context, negotiations for forming a new governing coalition proved long and arduous. A five-party (Social Democrats, Centre Party, Swedish People's Party, Liberal People's Party and Communist Party) coalition Government was ultimately sworn in on November 30 with Mr. Martti Miettunen (Centre Party) as Prime Minister.

Statistics

1. *Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats in the Eduskunta*

Number of registered voters.	3,741,770	
Voters.	2,761,223	(73.8%)
Blank or void ballot papers.	11,405	
Valid votes.	2,749,818	

Political Group	Number of Candidates	Votes obtained	%	Number of Seats
Social Democratic Party.	224	683,590	24.9	54
Democratic League of the People of Finland (Communists).	209	519,483	18.9	40
National Coalition Party (Conservatives).	179	505,145	18.4	36
Centre Party.	151	484,772	17.5	39
Swedish People's Party.	40	137,693	5.0	10
Liberal People's Party.	63	119,534	4.4	9
Rural Party.	167	98,815	3.6	2
Christian League.	53	90,599	3.3	9
Unification Party of Finland*	93	45,402	1.7	1
Constitutional People's Party	107	43,344	1.6	1
Party Organization of the Entre- preneurs.	31	11,475	0.4	
Socialist Workers' Party.	29	9,457	0.3	
Others.	1	508	0.0	
				200

* Split from the Rural Party after the 1972 elections.

2. *Distribution of Members of Parliament according to Professional Category*

Municipal and civil servants.	35
Farmers.	27
Managers.	25
Teachers.	25
Party officials.	21
Manual workers.	10
Journalists.	10
Lawyers.	9
University professors.	6
Salaried clerks.	6
Doctors.	5
Engineers.	4
Nurses.	4
Clergymen.	3
Businessmen.	3
Others.	7
	200

3. *Distribution of Members of Parliament according to Sex*

Men.	154
Women.	46
	200~

4. *Distribution of Members of Parliament according to Age Group*

Under 30 years.	12
30-39.	38
40-49.	72
50-59.	60
Over 60.	18
	200