

GREECE

Date of Elections: November 17, 1974

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the members of Parliament under the terms of the Constitution of 1952 which was reintroduced in August 1974. Previous general elections had been held in February 1964.

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of Greece, the Chamber of Deputies, comprises 300 members whose mandate is 4 years. Of these, 288 are directly elected and 12, called "honorary" or "State" deputies, are nominated by the most successful political parties from among the 'most prominent personalities' in their ranks.

Electoral System

All Greek citizens at least 21 years of age and in full possession of their civil and political rights are entitled to vote. Barred from voting are persons disfranchised pursuant to a court decision or specific regulations, persons (except bankrupts) deprived of the right to manage their property, and those convicted of crime or, under military law, for desertion or insubordination.

Electoral registers are compiled at the local level and revised annually. Voting is compulsory for all qualified electors aged between 21 and 70 and living within a specified distance (approximately 200 kilometers) of their constituencies.

All qualified electors at least 25 years of age may be elected to Parliament. If they are candidates, members of the armed and police forces, certain public officials or holders of public office, notaries, registrars of mortgages, and employees or directors of semi-governmental agencies or organizations all must resign from their posts at least 18 days before announcing their candidacy. All candidates must be supported by a minimum of 12 electors.

In conformity with the Electoral Law adopted on September 19, 1974 *, deputies are elected in 56 different constituencies in accordance with a system

* See section *Parliamentary Developments*, p. 14.

of "reinforced" proportional representation which discourages the proliferation of small parties. Under this system, seats are allocated to the different parties presenting lists of candidates on the basis of simple proportional representation, with those remaining to be allotted after this first allocation being distributed among those parties which have received more than a required minimum proportion of the vote (17 % of the national vote for a single party, 25 % for a two-party coalition, 30 % for a coalition of three or more parties).

By-elections are held to fill parliamentary seats which become vacant between general elections.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

The road to the elections was marked by the formation, on July 24, 1974, of a civilian Government to replace the military regime which had ruled the country since 1967. Mr. Constantine Caramanlis, the Prime Minister between 1955 and 1963, who had been asked to form this Government, promptly announced the rein traduction, in a slightly modified version, of the country's 1952 Constitution as a provisional measure until the adoption of a new Constitution.

After the adoption of a new Electoral Law, and of decrees authorizing the resumption of party political activities and legalizing the Communist Party, the date of the parliamentary elections was announced on October 2. Six days later a "caretaker" Government was formed since certain high governmental officials were required to resign if contesting the elections.

The election campaign was fought by some 1425 candidates representing a multitude of political groups. Major contending parties included the New Democratic Party, formed by Mr. Caramanlis, the former leader of the conservative National Radical Union, on September 28, 1974, to work for the establishment of "a healthy and viable democracy" through political, economic and social reforms; the liberal Centre Union Party, headed by Foreign Minister George Mavros, which merged on October 8, 1974 with the New Political Forces Party, comprised of a number of intellectuals, advocates of "democratic socialism"; the leftist Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), led by Mr. Andreas Papandreou, whose platform included a far-reaching social reform programme; the United Left, an alliance of the United Democratic Left (EDA) and the two factions of the Communist Party (KKE); and the right-wing National Democratic Union.

During the campaign, when televised political broadcasts were allowed, both the New Democracy and Centre Union-New Forces parties called for closer Greek ties with Western Europe and the EEC, whereas PASOK favoured a non-aligned foreign policy.

Polling day, like the campaign, was generally calm, and over 80 % of the nation's electorate cast ballots. Under the terms of the Electoral Law, only two parties — New Democracy and Centre Union-New Forces — won enough votes to qualify for a share in the second distribution of parliamentary seats.

Prime Minister Caramanlis, whose party obtained an absolute majority in Parliament, announced the formation of a new Cabinet on November 21.

Statistics

1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats in the Chamber of Deputies

Number of registered voters	6,090,210
Voters	4,963,558 (81.5 %)
Blank or void ballot papers	54,584
Valid votes	4,908,974

Political Group	Number of Candidates	Votes obtained	%	Number of Seats
New Democratic Party	288	2,669,133	54.37	220
Centre Union-New Forces Party	288	1,002,559	20.42	60
Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK)	282	66,413	13.58	12
United Left	275	464,787	9.47	5
National Democratic Union		54,162	1.10	—
Others		51,920	1.06	—
				300

2. Distribution of Deputies according to Sex

Men	293
Women	7
	300