

JAPAN

Date of Elections: 6 July 1986

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the seats in the House of Representatives following premature dissolution of this body on 2 June 1986. Polling took place simultaneously for one-half (126) of the seats in the House of Councillors on the normal expiry of the members' term of office.

Characteristics of Parliament

The bicameral Parliament of Japan, the Diet, consists of the House of Representatives and the House of Councillors.

The House of Representatives is composed of 512 members elected for 4 years.

The House of Councillors comprises 252 members, elected for 6 years, half of whom are renewed every 3 years.

Electoral System

All Japanese citizens who are at least 20 years old are entitled to vote if their domicile has been recorded in a constituency for at least three months and unless they have been adjudged incompetent or have yet to complete or start a sentence of imprisonment or more severe punishment. Any person who has been sentenced to punishment for electoral offences has neither voting rights nor electoral eligibility for a period fixed in accordance with the punishment.

Electoral registers are revised annually. Voting is not compulsory.

Qualified electors who are 25 years of age or over are eligible for the House of Representatives; the age qualification for the House of Councillors is 30. A member of the Diet cannot concurrently hold any official post in the Government or in any local public entity, or any post as executive or member of the staff of a public corporation. However, a member may, during his term of office, be appointed as a member of a commission, advisor, counsellor or other functionary of similar nature in any executive branch of the Cabinet, on a concurrent decision of both Houses. The office of member of the Diet is compatible with the post of Prime Minister, State Minister, Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary, Parliamentary Vice-Minister or where otherwise provided by law.

A candidate for the House of Representatives must make a monetary deposit of 2,000,000 *yen*, which is forfeited if he does not obtain at least one-fifth of the number resulting from division of the total of valid votes by the number of seats in the constituency concerned.

House of Councillors candidates must deposit 2,000,000 *yen* if running in local electoral districts or, for any political party or group, 4,000,000 *yen* multiplied by the number of candidates registered on its list under the proportional representation system. In the former

case, the deposit is refundable if the candidate obtains at least one-eighth of the number resulting from the division of valid votes by seats in the constituency concerned. In the latter case, there is a refund if the result obtained by doubling the number of the elected from the party or group submitting the nominal list reaches the number of candidates on this same list.

For election of Representatives, Japan is divided into 130 districts. The number of members to be elected in each varies from three to five, with the exception of one single-member district.

Each elector votes for only one of the candidates in his district. Depending on the number of seats to be filled, those candidates are declared elected who have obtained the most votes, provided that this total is equivalent to at least one-fourth of the number resulting from division of the total of valid votes cast in the constituency by the number of seats to be filled.

Of the 252 members of the House of Councillors, 152 members are elected from 47 local electoral districts formed on a metropolitan or prefectural basis, according to the same system as that established for the election of Representatives, with the difference that, to be elected, the leading candidates must receive a number of votes equal to or greater than one-sixth of the total of valid ballots cast, divided by the number of seats to be filled from the constituency. The remaining 100 Councillors are elected under the proportional representation party-list system, from a single constituency covering the whole country, in accordance with the d'Hondt method.

A Representative's or Councillor's seat which falls vacant within three months of an election, as well as a Councillor's proportional representation seat, is filled by the "next-in-line" candidate of the same party, provided that he had obtained the statutory number of votes. A by-election is held in other cases or if several seats become vacant in the same constituency.

General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

The general elections for the Lower House were called 18 months ahead of schedule in order that voting could coincide with the required triennial polling for the House of Councillors. The ruling Liberal-Democratic Party (LDP), headed by Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone and in coalition with the small New Liberal Club, thus hoped to regain the absolute majority of Representatives' seats it had lost in 1983. Mr. Nakasone, for his part, aimed for an unprecedented third two-year term in his post.

A total of 838 candidates for the 512 Representatives' seats and 506 candidates for the 126 Councillors' seats at stake participated in the 15-day campaign. While generally devoid of outstanding questions, it centered on economic issues and national defense. Prime Minister Nakasone, campaigning to "set Japan on the road to the 21st century", defended his policy of an active pro-Western diplomacy, called for economic restructuring and market-opening measures, and advocated a boost in military spending. The main opposition Japan Socialist Party (JSP), led by Mr. M. Ishibashi, opposed this last point, as well as the LDP's plan of tax reform, and advocated, *inter alia*, an increase in social security programmes.

Voting day was marked by a high turnout, as happens in such cases of "double voting". In a landslide victory, the conservative LDP, though split into five major factions, scored

a record House of Representatives triumph in its 31 years of power. This success, which observers attributed in no small part to the personal popularity of Mr. Nakasone, came mainly at the expense of the JSP and the centrist Social-Democrats. LDP also easily retained its majority in the Upper House, capturing 72 seats.

On 22 July, the new Diet met and re-elected the outgoing Prime Minister, who announced the make-up of 21-member Cabinet the same day. On 11 September, the LDP approved the extension of Mr. Nakasone's term as its leader, and consequently as head of Government, by one year.

Statistics

1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats
in the House of Representatives

Number of registered electors.	86,426,845	
Voters.	61,707,654	(71.4%)
Blank or void ballot papers.	1,259,044	
Valid votes.	60,448,610	

Political Group	Number of Candidates	Votes obtained	%	Number of Seats	Number of Seats held at Dissolution	Number won at Previous Elections
Liberal-Democratic Party (LDP).	138	29,875,501	49.42	300	249	250
Socialist Party of Japan (JSP).	138	10,412,584	17.23	85	110	112
<i>Komeito</i> (Clean Govern- ment Party).	11	5,701,277	9.43	56	59	58
Japanese Communist Party (JCP).	11	5,313,246	8.79	26	27	26
Japan Democratic Socialist Party (DSP).	11	3,895,858	6.44	26	37	38
New Liberal Club (NLC)	12	1,114,800	1.84	6	8	8
United Socialist Democratic Party.	1	499,670	0.83	4	3	3
Other groups.	15	120,627	0.20	—	—	—
Independents.	100	3,515,043	5.81	9	7	16
				512*	500"	511

- One seat added since previous (1983) elections, pursuant to court-ordered revision of parliamentary constituencies.

** Plus 11 vacancies.

The strength of political parties in the House of Representatives as of 22 July 1986, the day of convocation of the 106th (special) session of the Diet, was as follow:

Political Group	Number
Liberal Democratic Party - New Liberal Club	309
Socialist Party of Japan	87
<i>Komeito</i>	57
Japan Democratic Socialist Party	28
Japanese Communist Party	27
Independents	4*
	512

* Among the independents are the Speaker and the Vice-Speaker.

*2. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats
in the House of Councillors*

Number of registered electors	86,426,845	
Voters	61,667,543	(71,35%)
	(local seats)	
	61,633,236	(71,31%)
	(proportional seats)	
Blank or void ballot papers	3,729,306	
	(local seats)	
	4,270,494	
	(proportional seats)	
Valid votes	57,938,237	
	(local seats)	
	57,362,742	
	(proportional seats)	

Political Group	Proportional representa- tion seats won	Local district seats won	Total Seats won in 1986 Elections	Total Number of Seats
LDP	22	50	72	140 (+ 9)
JSP	9	11	20	41(=)
<i>Komeito</i> . .	7	3	10	24 (-1)
DSP	3	2	5	12 (-1)
JCP	5	4	9	16 (+ 2)
Other parties	4		4	10(+1)
Independents		_6	<u>6</u>	<u>8(=)</u>
	50	76	126	251*

* Plus one vacancy; there were 11 vacancies at dissolution.

3. Distribution of Members of the Diet according to Professional Category

	Representatives	Councillors
Officers of political parties . . .	161	71
Executives of associations or organizations	134	S3
Members of executive boards of corporations	77	12
Lawyers	29	II
Ministers and Parliamentary Vice-Ministers, etc.	22	
Agriculture, forestry, fishery . .	18	2
Doctors	9	3
Education	8	8
Writers	5	1
Others	31	87
No profession	_18	<u>3</u>
	512	251*

4. Distribution of Members of the Diet according to Sex

	Representatives	Councillors
Men	505	229
Women	7	22
	512	251*

5. Distribution of Members of the Diet according to Age Group

	Representatives	Councillors
25-29 years .		
30-34 »	•b	~
35-39 » .		
40-44 »	40 \	22
45-49 »	66f	
50-54 »		
55-59 »	iS)	
60-64 »		
65-69 »	S>	•»
70 and over	<u>48</u>	<u>40</u>
	512	251*

* Plus one vacancy.