

LUXEMBOURG

Date of Elections: December 15, 1968

Characteristics of Parliament

The Luxembourg Parliament consists of a single House: the Chamber of Deputies. Its 56 members are elected for 5 years in a ratio of 1 deputy per 5,500 inhabitants and per additional fraction of at least 4,000 inhabitants.

The December 1968 elections were rendered necessary as a result of the prématuré dissolution of the Chamber, a year before the normal expiry of its mandate, which automatically followed an announcement that the Constitution was to be amended.

Electoral System

All Luxembourg citizens of both sexes, at least 21 years of age, who are in possession of their civil and political rights, resident in the Grand Duchy, registered on the electoral rolls — revised in April each year — and who have not been convicted in a criminal court or declared bankrupt, are entitled to vote.

Voting is obligatory, non-compliance being punishable by a fine.

Registered voters at least 25 years of age are eligible for election to the Chamber of Deputies.

However, Article 54 of the Constitution stipulates that the mandate of deputy is incompatible with the functions of member of the Government, member of the Council of State, magistrate of the judicial order, member of the Chamber of Accounts, district commissioner, receiver or accountant of the State, career soldier on active service, assistant councillor to the Government, religious

minister remunerated by the State, civil servant and primary school teacher.

The country is divided into 4 constituencies — North, Centre, East and South. The number of électorat seats in each constituency is determined by ministerial decree on the basis of a 5-yearly population census.

In each constituency, deputies are elected under the party-list System, with preferential vote and vote-splitting, as follows:

Political groups submit lists of candidates whose number must not exceed the number of seats to be filled in the constituency. Any isolated candidature is considered as forming a list by itself.

Each elector has as many votes as there are seats to be filled in his constituency. Thèse he casts :

— either by voting for a list, in which case he fills in a square corresponding to the list of his choice ; the list is then deemed to hâve received a number of votes equal to the number the elector was entitled to cast;

— or by voting by name, in which case he marks one or more crosses in the squares corresponding to the candidates of his choice who may belong to différent lists. The number of crosses must not exceed the number of deputies to be elected in the constituency.

Seats are distributed in each constituency according to proportional représentation and the électorat quota method.

The total number of valid votes cast is divided by the number of seats to be filled plus 1. The smallest whole number that exceeds the figure obtained is the électorat quota.

Each list receives a seat each time this quota is contained in the number of nominal and list votes it has obtained.

If seats remain to be filled, then the number of votes obtained by each list is divided by the number of seats it received in the first distribution plus 1. The next seat is attributed to the list which obtains the highest quota, the same procédure being repeated until ail the seats are filled.

The seats obtained by each list are then attributed to the candidates who won most votes; those who fail to receive a seat are considered as substitutes in the event of subsequent vacancies arising.

General Political Considérations and Conduct of the Elections

In October 1968, a financial crisis resulted in the *résignation* of Mr. Pierre Werner as *Président* of a coalition Government comprising his own Christian Social Party and the Socialist Worker Party. A *déclaration* which was then adopted regarding an amendment of the Constitution led automatically to the holding of *prématuré gènerai élections* on December 15, 1968.

Five political groups took part in the *électoral* campaign: the Christian Social Party, to which every Prime Minister had belonged since 1918; the Socialist Workers' Party, frequently associated with the Government alternately, or occasionally together, with the *Démocratie Party*; the Communist Party; and the Party of National Solidarity.

The first 4 of these submitted candidatures for every seat, while the Party of National Solidarity, a new comer to the Luxembourg political scene, put up only 5 candidates, but covering all 4 constituencies. One of these candidates was one of the 2 deputies who had represented the People's Independent Movement in the previous legislature, a group which merged with the *Démocratie Party* prior to the elections.

The results of the poll show that, whereas the Christian Socials maintained their group, the same cannot be said of the Socialist Workers' Party, the other "great national party" in Luxembourg terminology. The Socialists lost 3 seats, probably as a result of the split which had been taking place for some time between the moderate "intellectual" wing, which retained a majority in the party, and the *extrême* left-wing trade unionists.

The *Démocratie Party*, united again, won 11 seats as against 6 in the 1964 elections, benefiting from the votes of the moderate

electorate, alarmed by the demands of the trade unions which, on the day before the poll, had *inter alia* proposed the introduction of a tax on direct inheritance.

Finally, the Communists obtained 15.6 per cent of the votes, thereby earning an extra seat.

Statistics

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

Number of registered voters.	192,601
Voters.	170,569 (88.6%)
Void or blank ballot-papers.	5,320
Valid votes.	2,596,726

Political Group	Votes obtained		Number of Seats in the Chamber of Deputies *
Christian Social Party . . .	915,944	35.2	21 (-1)
Socialist Workers' Party .	837,555	32.3	18 (-3)
Démocratie Party	430,262	16.5	11 (+5)
Communist Party	402,610	15.6	6 (+1)
Party of National Solidarity	10,355	0.4	— (did not exist)

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* As regards gains and losses, the merger with the Démocratie Party of the Popular Independent Movement, which had had 2 representatives in the previous legislature, should be noted; one of the 2 representatives, however, stood as a candidate of the Party of National Solidarity on December 15.

2. *Distribution of Deputies according to Professional Category*

Agricultural and wine-growing professions	4	
Handicraft, commercial and industrial professions	7	
Légal and libéral professions.	7	
Médical professions.	5	
Wage-earners		
retired civil servants.	31	
public and private employées.	20	29
workers.	6	
Others.	4	
		56

3. *Distribution of Deputies according to Sex*

Men	54
Women	2
	56

4. *Average Age of Deputies : 52*