

LUXEMBOURG

Date of Elections: May 26, 1974

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the members of Parliament upon the normal expiry of their term of office.

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of Luxembourg, the Chamber of Deputies, consists of 59 members elected for 5 years.

Electoral System

All citizens of Luxembourg, of either sex, at least 18 years of age, who are in possession of their civil and political rights are entitled to vote. Persons convicted of crime, condemned to imprisonment for theft, swindling or abuse of confidence, under guardianship or declared bankrupt or incapable of managing their own affairs are not granted suffrage.

To be elector, one must furthermore appear on the electoral registers; these are revised annually in April. Voting is compulsory.

Qualified voters of at least 21 years of age and domiciled within the country are eligible for election to the Chamber of Deputies. The office of Deputy is incompatible with membership in the Government, Council of State or Audit Office, as well as with the positions of judge, district commissioner, receiver or accountant of the State and career soldier on active duty.

Luxembourg is divided into 4 electoral constituencies — South, Centre, North and East. In each, one Deputy represents no less than 4,000 citizens and no more than 5,500.

Candidates figure on party lists, which are allotted seats according to proportional representation. In conformity with this system, political groups submit lists of candidates whose number may not exceed the number of seats to be filled in the constituency. Each candidate of a list must be supported by 25 electors of his constituency. Any isolated candidature is considered as forming a list by itself.

An elector may cast a preferential vote or split his vote between different lists. Accordingly, he can either vote for a list, in which case the latter is deemed to have received a number of votes equal to the number the elector

was entitled to cast; or for a particular name on any list, in which case his votes may not exceed the number of Deputies to be elected in the constituency concerned.

Each list receives as many seats as its total number of individual and list votes encompasses the electoral quota (valid votes divided by the number of seats to be filled, plus one). Any seats still to be filled after this first calculation are allotted pursuant to a division of each list's total votes by the number of seats it has already received, plus one. The remaining seat is allotted to that list having the highest quotient.

The " next-in-line " candidates — those of the same party list who received the highest number of votes short of being elected — fill a parliamentary vacancy affecting the list concerned which arises between general elections.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

Principal campaign issues for the 1974 elections included a moderate inflation, free abortion, farm problems and more women in Parliament. As Luxembourg enjoys virtually no unemployment and a high standard of living, these issues were not discussed. Nevertheless, on October 9, 1973, a rare general strike paralyzed the country, as a result of which wage increases were implemented.

The outgoing coalition Government of Christian Socials and Liberals, led by Prime Minister Pierre Werner, was mainly opposed by the Socialists who, in 1971, had split over ideological questions to form a new Social Democratic Party. A total of 340 candidates, including 28 women, ran for the 59 seats — an increase of 3 consequent to the enlarged electorate which initially comprised 18-year olds*.

Polling results proved surprising. The Christian Socials — who had participated in the Government for the past 50 years — lost seats to the Liberals.

On June 18, 1974, following extensive negotiations concerning the formation of the new Government, Mr. Gaston Thorn, head of the Democratic Party (Liberals) and former Foreign Minister, was sworn in as Premier of a centre-left coalition consisting of the Liberals and the Socialists. Due especially to the latter's large electoral gains, the coalition held 31 of the 59 seats.

* See *Chronicle of Parliamentary Elections VI (1971-1972)*, p. 11.

Statistics

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

Number of registered voters. 206,000

Political Group	% of votes obtained	Number of Seats in the Chamber of Deputies	Number of Seats held at Dissolution	Number of Seats won at Previous Elections
Christian Social Party.	29.0	18	21	21
Socialist Workers' Party.	28.0	17	12	18
Democratic Party (Liberals)	22.1	14	11	11
Communist Party	10.4	5	6	6
Social Democratic Party.	9.1	5	(i*)	
Others	1.4			
		59	56	56

* Held as a result of the 1971 split within the Socialist Party.

** 3 seats added since last elections.