

PORTUGAL *

Date of Elections: October 28, 1973

Purpose of Elections

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

Characteristics of Parliament

The bicameral Parliament of Portugal comprises the National Assembly and the *Cdmara Corporativa*./.

The National Assembly is composed of 150 Deputies elected for 4 years. This total increased by 20 since the previous 1969 elections.

The *Cdmara Corporativa* is made up of approximately 200 members designated by the Government for a term of 4 years to represent social interest groups on the basis of their administrative, moral, cultural and economic functions.

Electoral System

Portuguese citizens, of either sex, who have reached the age of majority or are emancipated and who can read and write Portuguese are entitled to vote, unless they have been convicted of crime or advocate a view jeopardizing the security of the State.

Members of the electorate are eligible for the National Assembly provided they are Portuguese by birth and have been resident in the country during the 5 years preceding the elections. No person may be a member of both parliamentary Chambers simultaneously.

The elections are held in Portugal's 22 metropolitan constituencies and her overseas territories by majority party list system, whereby the list which receives the greatest number of votes is awarded all the seats; provision is made for the elector to cross out certain names on the list. Each list must contain as many names as there are seats to be filled in the constituency.

By-elections are held should at least one-fifth of the seats in the National Assembly become vacant.

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

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

The increased membership of the Assembly (from 130 to 150) was consequent to a constitutional amendment of 1971*.

The electoral campaign officially lasted for one month prior to the elections. Already starting in spring, however, lively activity prevailed within the clandestine or semi-clandestine Opposition. In April, left-wing groups assembled at the Aveiro Congress in the first public gathering of the Opposition authorized since 1969; there, the views of younger members of the Communist Party were particularly felt, and representatives vowed to make a renewed effort to struggle on the political level. The dangers to the country presented by too strong an Opposition were, in turn, stressed by Prime Minister Marcello Caetano at the ruling *Accao Nacional Popular* (ANP)'s Congress in early May. Dr. Caetano emphasized that the Government aimed for national economic development and granting autonomy for the overseas provinces without undue delay.

In an effort to discourage the Opposition's past practice of withdrawing candidacies immediately prior to the elections — thus leaving the ANP unchallenged — the Prime Minister, on September 11, announced that any candidate who so withdrew or recommended voter abstention would be deprived of his civil rights for the next 5 years. (This deprivation would effectively bar candidacy in the next elections also.) Despite the warning, 66 candidates who had figured on the opposition Democratic Electoral Commission (CDE) list that contained a cross-section of political trends (socialist, communist, Christian), pulled out on October 25, claiming prejudice during their campaigns.

Nationwide participation in voting, as compared with 1969, rose although it was low in the cities of Lisbon and Setubal. With ANP the overwhelming victor, Prime Minister Caetano — in power since 1968 a successor to Dr. Ant6nio Salazar — continued in office.

Statistics

1. *Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats in the National Assembly*

Metropolitan Portugal	I	number of registered voters	2.096,020
	B	\ Voters.	1,393,294 (66.5 %)
Overseas Territories		Voters.	962,854

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

Political Group	Number of Seats
150

2. *Distribution of Deputies according to Age Group*

30-40 .	20
Over 40	<u>130</u>
	150