

## PORTUGAL

**Date of Elections:** 6 October 1985

### **Purpose of Elections**

Elections were held for all the seats in Parliament following the premature dissolution of this body on 12 July 1985. General elections had previously been held in April 1983.

### **Characteristics of Parliament**

The unicameral Parliament of Portugal, the Assembly of the Republic, consists of 250 Deputies elected to represent metropolitan Portugal and electors residing abroad. The latter are represented by 4 Deputies. The normal term of the legislature is 4 years.

### **Electoral System**

All Portuguese citizens, even if residing abroad, are entitled to vote if at least 18 years old and registered as electors. Disqualified are the insane and mentally infirm, persons incompetent to manage their own affairs, persons serving their sentences following conviction for crime, those deprived of their political rights and certain categories of persons who held important public positions prior to 25 April 1974 and did not clearly repudiate before this date the political regime then in power.

Electoral registers are permanent and revised annually. Voting is not compulsory.

All qualified electors are eligible for membership of Parliament. The parliamentary mandate is incompatible with membership of the Government and active service in the military and police forces, as well as with the post of magistrate, diplomat, and certain public and ecclesiastical offices. Portuguese citizens who have a second nationality may not stand as candidates in the constituency which is adjacent to the territory of this nationality. Deputies who are civil servants or members of public corporations may not exercise the latter functions during the term of the legislature.

Candidates are nominated by political parties. The lists may bear names of persons who are not party members.

Deputies are elected in 22 constituencies by party-list system, with proportional representation based on the d'Hondt method. The lists must bear as many names as there are seats to be filled in the constituency. Electors may only vote for one list.

Assembly seats which fall vacant between general elections are filled by the first of the "next-in-line" candidates appearing on the same party list.

## General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

On 13 June 1985, Ministers of the Social Democratic Party (PSD) withdrew from the Socialist-PSD coalition Government, and Prime Minister Mario Soares (Socialist Party) formally submitted the resignation of his Cabinet 12 days later. On 12 July, President of the Republic Eanes dissolved the Assembly of the Republic, having requested the outgoing Government to remain in office until the completion on 11 July of parliamentary ratification of the treaty of accession to the European Communities; general elections were then set for 6 October.

More than 3,000 candidates belonging to 12 parties or coalitions competed for the 250 Assembly seats in a three-week election campaign centred as much on personalities as policies. Proposed remedies for economic problems (especially unemployment, inflation, drop in the standard of living) that had resulted largely from austerity measures figured prominently in the debate.

On a polling day marked by a relatively high abstention rate, the centrist PSD, led by Mr. Anibal Cavaco Silva, defeated its former coalition partner by a substantial margin. However, the former did not gain majority control in the Assembly, even when joining forces with the Christian Democratic Party (CDS). The PSD drew nearly 30% of the popular vote while the Socialists' share dropped to just over 20%. The newly-formed Democratic Renewal Party (PRD), linked to President Eanes, polled a surprisingly large 18%.

On 30 October, Mr. Cavaco Silva was invited to form a Government. The resulting minority Cabinet was announced on 31 October.

## Statistics

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

Number of registered electors. . . . .	8,025,166	
Voters. . . . .	5,798,929	(72.26%)
Valid votes. . . . .	5,653,600	

Political Group	Votes obtained	Number of Seats
Social Democrats (PSD). . . . .	1,732,288	29.87 88 (+13)
Socialists (PS). . . . .	1,204,311	20.77 57 (-44)
Democratic Renewal Party (PRD)*	1,038,893	17.92 45 (+45)
United People's Alliance (APU). . . . .	898,281	15.49 38 (-6)
Democratic Social Centre (CDS). . . . .	577,580	9.96 22 (-8)
Others		250

\* New party.

*2. Distribution of Deputies according to Sex*

Men	234
Women	16
	250