

SENEGAL

Date of Elections: 28 February 1988

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the seats in the National Assembly on the normal expiry of the members' term of office.

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of Senegal, the National Assembly, consists of 120 members elected for 5 years.

Electoral System

All Senegalese citizens who are at least 21 years of age and in full possession of their civil and political rights are entitled to vote. Disqualified from being registered as electors are persons convicted of crime or under sentence of imprisonment of specified length for certain offences, persons in contempt of court and undischarged bankrupts. Members of the armed forces on active service, as well as police and customs officials and those of the penitentiary system, cannot vote while holding these posts.

Registration on the electoral lists is compulsory. These lists are compiled at the local level and revised annually. Voting is not compulsory.

Every registered voter is eligible for election to the National Assembly provided he is at least 25 years of age and has fulfilled all legal requirements regarding active military service. Naturalized foreigners and women who have acquired Senegalese nationality by marriage are eligible only after expiry of a period of 10 years from the date of their naturalization. Persons declared ineligible by court decision, those under guardianship, and convicted persons if their conviction prevents them from registering on an electoral list cannot seek election to the National Assembly.

Governors and their deputies, certain high public officials, judges and senior officials of national services or public institutions are for their part ineligible while holding these offices and for six months thereafter.

The parliamentary mandate is incompatible with a number of offices or activities, including membership in the Economic and Social Council, holding of public office under foreign States or position in an international organization, and occupying the post of executive in a State enterprise. State-assisted company, savings and credit organization or company holding a government contract.

Lists of candidates for the National Assembly must be submitted by political parties no later than 60 days prior to the election date, accompanied by a monetary deposit of CFA 3,000,000. The latter sum, set separately for each poll, is reimbursed if the list concerned obtains at least 5% of the votes cast in the elections.

National Assembly members are chosen according to a mixed system of party-list majority vote and proportional representation; 60 are elected by simple majority vote at the departmental level in 30 constituencies, and the other half via proportional representation from lists of candidates presented by parties at the national level. In the latter case, seats remaining to be distributed after the first computation are allotted in conformity with the rule of highest average. Electors cannot cast preferential votes, split their votes between different lists or limit their votes within the same list.

Parliamentary vacancies are normally filled by the "next-in-line" candidate on the list of the same party which held the seat in question. By-elections are resorted to within three months should there remain no more names of potential Deputies on the list concerned and should the total number of Deputies in the Assembly have been reduced to 70. No by-election is held within the last 12 months of the legislature.

Background and Outcome of the Elections

As is the practice in Senegal, the parliamentary elections coincided with polling for President of the Republic.

The election campaign opened on 8 February. Of the country's 16 political parties, four contested the presidential race and six the National Assembly seats; all were considered as left of centre. Primary opposition to the ruling Socialist Party (PS) of President Abdou Diouf once again came from the liberal Senegalese Democratic Party (PDS), headed by Mr. Abdoulaye Wade. Debate centered on the Government's policy of economic austerity carried out with the support of international lending institutions. Mr. Wade advocated "sopi" (change) and the opposition parties moreover called for major amendments to the national Electoral Code. Altogether 720 candidates (120 per party) vied for the Assembly's seats.

Both President Diouf - whose campaign slogan had been "serene energy" - and the PS were triumphant on polling day, but with reduced majorities, the Socialists' parliamentary losses being picked up by the PDS. In the aftermath of the voting, the opposition charged electoral irregularities, riots broke out and a state of emergency was declared in the area of Dakar, the capital. The charges were later rejected by the Supreme Court.

On 5 April, a new Council of Ministers was formed.

Statistics

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

Number of registered electors.	1,932,265	
Voters	1,118,246	(57.87%)
Blank or void ballot papers.	4,500	
Valid votes	1,113,746	

Party	Number of Candidates	Votes obtained	%	Number of Seats
Socialist Party (PS)	120	794,559	71.34	103 (- 8)
Senegalese Democratic Party (PDS)	120	275,552	24.74	17 (+ 9)
Democratic League- Labour Party Move- ment (LD-MPT)	120	15,664	1.41	
Party for the Liberation of the People (PLP)*.	120	13,186	1.18	
Independence and Labour Party (PIT)	120	9,304	0.84	
Senegalese Democratic Party - Renova- tion (PDS - R)*.	120	5,481	0.49	
				120

* New party.

2. *Distribution of Deputies according to Profession*

Teaching profession	33
Liberal professions	23
Employees and manual workers.	20
Engineers	7
Journalists	3
Others	<u>34</u>
	120

3. *Distribution of Deputies according to Sex*

Men	105
Women	<u>15</u>
	120

4. *Distribution of Deputies according to Age*

30-45 years.	27
46-60 »	70
Over 60 »	23
	120

Average age: 52 years