

GREECE

Date of Elections: November 20, 1977

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the members of Parliament following premature dissolution of this body on October 20, 1977. Previous general elections had been held in November 1974.

Characteristics of Parliament

According to the 1975 Constitution, the unicameral Parliament of Greece, the Chamber of Deputies, comprises no fewer than 200 and no more than 300 deputies, all elected for 4 years. The present number of members is 300; of these, 288 are directly elected and 12, called "honorary" or "State" deputies, are nominated by the most successful political parties from among the "most prominent personalities" in their ranks.

Electoral System

All Greek citizens at least 20 years of age * and in full possession of their civil and political rights are entitled to vote. Barred from voting are persons disfranchised pursuant to a court decision or specific regulations, persons (except bankrupts) deprived of the right to manage their property, and those convicted of crime or, under military law, of desertion or insubordination.

Electoral registers are compiled at the local level and revised annually. Voting is compulsory, failure to participate resulting in a term of imprisonment ranging from one month to one year.

All qualified electors at least 25 years of age may be elected to Parliament. If they are candidates, members of the armed and police forces, certain public officials or holders of public office, notaries, registrars of mortgages, and employees or directors of semi-governmental agencies or organizations must resign from their posts at least 18 days before announcing their candidature. All candidates must be supported by a minimum of 12 electors.

In conformity with the electoral laws adopted in 1974 and 1977 *, deputies are elected in 56 different constituencies in accordance with a system of reinforced proportional representation. Under this system, seats are allocated to the different parties presenting lists of candidates on the basis of

* See *Chronicle of Parliamentary Elections XI* (1976-1977), p. 19.

proportional representation (calculated by dividing the total number of votes cast in each electoral region by the number of seats for that region, plus one), with those remaining to be allotted after this first allocation being distributed among those parties which have received more than a required minimum proportion of the vote (17 % of the national vote for a single party, 25 % for a two-party coalition, 30 % for a coalition of three or more parties).

By-elections are normally held to fill parliamentary seats which become vacant between general elections. A vacancy that arises during the last year of a parliamentary term is not filled by election as long as the number of vacant seats does not exceed one-fifth of the total number of members.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

Since the general elections of 1974, a new republican Constitution, providing for a parliamentary democracy, was promulgated in June 1975 **.

The main reasons given for the premature dissolution of Parliament (13 months before the end of its term) and the calling of new elections by the Government of Prime Minister Constantine Karamanlis (New Democracy Party) were the need for increased authority and renewed confidence in dealing especially with the crisis in relations with Turkey regarding the Aegean Sea and Cyprus, and the political and economic issues linked to the Government's decision concerning the country's earliest possible entry into the European Economic Community.

Some 2,100 candidates from 15 political parties/groups or standing as independents vied for the 288 directly elected seats of Parliament. The liberal-conservative New Democracy Party, the socialist Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) and the liberal Union of the Democratic Centre fielded candidates in all constituencies. There was a record number of female candidates — 60.

Led by Mr. Andreas Papandreou, the PASOK, which opposed full EEC membership, succeeded in ousting the Democratic Centre as the major opposition party. New Democracy, in the meantime, lost 43 seats from the total it had held at dissolution. Mr. Karamanlis formed his seventh Government on November 28.

- See *Chronicle of Parliamentary Elections XI* (1976-1977), p. 19.
- See *Chronicle of Parliamentary Elections IX* (1974-1975), p. 14.

Statistics

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

Number of registered electors.	6,389,255
Voters.	5,193,888 (81.3 %)
Blank or void ballot papers.	64,117
Valid votes.	5,129,771

Political Group	Number of Candidates	Votes obtained	%	Number of Seats	Number of Seats held at Dissolution
New Democracy.	288	2,146,365	41.84	172	215
Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK)	288	1,300,025	25.34	93	16
Democratic Centre Union *	288	612,786	11.95	15	57
Communist Party of Greece	285	480,272	9.36	11	5
National Rally **	274	349,988	6.82	6	
Alliance of Left-wing and Progressive Forces	273	139,356	2.72	2	3
Neo-Liberal Party **	124	55,494	1.08	2	
				300	300***

- Known as the Centre-New Forces Party in 1974.
- New party.
- Including five independents.

2. *Distribution of Deputies according to Professional Category*

Lawyers.	149
Industrialists, shipowners, landlords, civil servants, workers, etc.	38
Doctors.	30
Architects.	23
Economists.	18
Teachers.	13
Ex-military.	12
Journalists.	9
Actors.	3
Agriculturalists.	3
Pharmacists.	2
	300

3. *Distribution of Deputies according to Sex*

Men.	289
Women.	11
	300