

LUXEMBOURG

Date of Elections: 10 June 1979

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the members of Parliament on 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 who are at least 18 years of age, in full possession of their civil and political rights and domiciled in the country are entitled to vote. Persons convicted of crime, the insane, those condemned to imprisonment for theft, swindling or abuse of confidence, bankrupts, and persons under guardianship or incapable of managing their own affairs cannot exercise this right.

Electoral registers are compiled on the local level and revised annually in April. Voting is compulsory, non-compliance being punishable by a fine.

Qualified voters at least 21 years of age are eligible for election to the Chamber of Deputies. The office of Deputy is incompatible with membership of the Government, Council of State or Audit Office, as well as with the offices of judge, district commissioner, receiver or accountant of the State, minister of religion, teacher of primary education, civil servant or employee of the State, and career soldier on active duty.

For election purposes, Luxembourg is divided into four districts—South, Centre, North and East. In each, one Deputy represents no less than 4,000 citizens and no more than 5,500. Thus, 24 Deputies represent the South, 20 the Centre, 9 the North and 6 the East.

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 district. Each candidate of a list must be supported by 25 electors of his district. 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 district concerned).

Each list obtains 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 by dividing 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 which arises between general elections.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

In the 1979 general elections—held simultaneously with voting for Luxembourg representatives to the European Parliament Prime Minister Gaston Thorn's Democratic (Liberal) Party gained votes and seats while its outgoing coalition partner, the Socialist Workers' Party, lost ground in both categories. This resulted in the conservative Christian Social Party—which captured 24 seats—supplanting the Socialists as the new member of the ruling coalition, thus returning to power after a five-year lapse.

Prior to the elections, the Christian Socials, led by former Prime Minister Pierre Werner, conducted a vigorous campaign. Energy issues—particularly that relating to nuclear power—were in the forefront of debate.

On polling day, an unprecedented number of 11 party lists were submitted to the electorate. The results clearly indicated a rightist voting pattern in the country's four electoral districts. On 9 July, the new coalition was agreed upon. Mr. Werner again became Prime Minister and announced his new Cabinet on 15 July.

Statistics

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

Number of registered electors.	212,382
Voters. . . . .	.188,909(88.94%)
Blank or void ballot papers. . . . .	.13,101
Valid votes. . . . .	.175,808

Political Group	Votes obtained	%	Number of Seats
Christian Social Party. . . . .	.1,049,393	34.5	24 (+ 6)
Democratic (Liberal) Party. . . . .	.648,404	21.3	15 (+1)
Socialist Workers' Party. . . . .	.737,931	24.3	14 (- 3)
Social Democratic Party. . . . .	.181,726	6.0	2 (- 3)
Communist Party. . . . .	.177,269	5.8	2 (- 3)
<i>Enrolesde Force.</i>135,360	4.4	1(+1)
Independent Socialist Party.66,909	2.2	1(+1)
Others44,236	1.5	<u>—(=)</u>

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