

The Christian Social People's Party of Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker in the lead but breakthrough by the Democratic Party in the general elections in Luxembourg

The Christian Social People's Party (PCS/CVS) of outgoing Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker and led by Michel Wolter is still the country's leading party: it won 33.68% of the vote and 23 seats (-3 in comparison with the previous general election on 7th June 2009). It drew ahead of the Socialist Workers' Party (POSL/LSAP) of Alex Bodry which won 20.28% of the vote and 13 seats (=). The Democratic Party (PD/DP), led by the Mayor of Luxembourg, Xavier Bettel seems to be the other victor in the election with 18.25% of the vote and 13 seats (+4). Sam Tanson and Christian Kmiotek's Greens/Dei Greng (LV-DG) came fourth with 10.13% of the vote and 6 seats (-1). The Alternative Democratic Reform Party (ADR), led by Roby Mehlen won 6.64% of the vote and 3 seats (-1). The Left/Dei Lenk (LG/DL) won 4.92% and 2 seats (+1). Sven Clement's Pirate Party, the Communist Party (KPL) led by Ali Ruckert and the Party for Integral Democracy (PID) respectively won 2.94%, 1.64% and 1.51% of the vote. The Communists therefore failed to return to the Chamber of Deputies from which they have been absent since 2004 and the leader of the Party for Integral Democracy, Jean Colombera lost his seat. Turnout was almost the same as that registered in the general election on 7th June 2009. It totalled 91.4% (+ 0.5 points).

The general elections of 20th October, initially programmed to take place in May 2014, were only the second to be organised early in the Grand Duchy's history (after those in 1969). They were also the first since 1979 not to have taken place at the same time as the European elections. The vote followed the resignation on 10th July of

Jean-Claude Juncker who lost the support of his government partner, the Socialist Workers' Party. The outgoing Prime Minister had been challenged over his management of the State of Luxembourg's Information Services (SREL) when it was discovered there was a dysfunction within this organisation that was under his responsibility.

General Election Results of 20th October 2013 in Luxembourg

Turnout: 91.4% (it is obligatory to vote in the Grand Duchy)

Political Parties	No. Of votes won	% of votes won	No. of seats
Christian Social People's Party (PCS/CVS)	1 103 636	33.68	23
Socialist Workers' Party (POSL/LSAP)	664 586	20.28	13
Democratic Party (PD/DP)	597 879	18.25	13
The Greens/Dei Greng (LV-DG)	331 920	10.13	6
Alternative Democratic Reform Party (ADR)	217 683	6.64	3
The Left/Dei Lenk (LG/DL)	161 759	4.92	2
Pirate Party	96 270	2.94	0
Communist Party (KPL)	53 669	1.64	0
Party for Integral Democracy (PID)	49 290	1.51	0

Source : <http://www.elections.public.lu/fr/elections-legislatives/2013/resultats/index.html>

"We are the leading party. There is a major gap between our movement and the two behind us; we are claiming priority to form the next government," declared the outgoing Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker when the results were announced; "I see with satisfaction that the Christian Social People's Party is still the country's leading party," stressed Luc Frieden, outgoing Finance Minister adding, "it is however too early to say which coalition will govern the Grand Duchy over the next five years."

Two government coalition possibilities emerge from the results of the election on 20th October: the first might bring together the Christian Social People's Party and the Democratic Party, i.e. the party which came out ahead and the one which gained the most, a coalition which already governed Luxembourg between 1999 and 2004. The second would rally the Socialist Workers' Party, the Democratic Party and the Greens/Dei Greng, a tripartite coalition unseen since 1964. During the electoral campaign the liberals and the ecologists mentioned that they wanted to oust the outgoing Prime Minister. If they manage to join forces with the socialists the three parties would have a total 32 MPs, i.e. a 2 seat majority in the Chamber of Deputies, the only chamber in parliament.

Jean-Claude Juncker said during the electoral campaign that he was against a government rallying three political groups and said he was ready to govern with the socialists, the liberals or the ecologists. Although Jean-Claude Juncker congratulated the Democratic Party leader, Xavier Bettel after the election, he does not necessarily have retained happy memories of his previous period in government with the latter. He might renew his government alliance with the Socialist Workers' Party.

"If it is possible to undertake real reforms with a tripartite government in view of modernising the State and giving it renewed impetus I then support a tripartite coalition," indicated the socialist candidate for Prime Minister Etienne Schneider, saying "I really want to be Prime Minister to provide new energy to the country and to make

in depth reforms."

Liberal leader Xavier Bettel was pleased with the results. "The electorate has clearly given us a mandate to enter government or to form one."

"Both parties in the outgoing coalition have been sanctioned," analysed Philippe Poirier, Professor of Political Science at the University of Luxembourg, who is counting on a government coalition uniting the Christian Social People's Party and the Democratic Party. The political analyst believes that the creation of an alliance bringing together the socialists, the liberals and the ecologists will be difficult, even impossible, because of the "transfer of votes towards the small parties on the left and the decline of the Greens/Dei Greng."

The wealthiest country in the world (revenue per capita = 112,000 €/annum – is the highest in the world), Luxembourg is experiencing a difficult period however. Unemployment totals 7%, buying power has dropped by 5% since the start of the international economic crisis and the country's debt has tripled over the last fifteen years. Moreover, according to the polls only 12% of Luxembourgers say they trust their politicians. The Christian Social Party campaigned on the need for stability with the slogan *fair an stabil* (fair and stable).

Finally and as of January 2015 the Grand Duchy will accept the automatic exchange of fiscal information on accounts held by non-residents, which means the end of banking secrecy. Fiscal revenues linked to the Luxembourg financial market – the 13th in the world (the country is also the 2nd most important international centre for investment funds after the USA) – represent one third of the country's total revenue.

Grand Duke Henry will appoint the person who he has chosen to form the next Luxembourg government within the next few days. Outgoing Prime Minister Juncker, the European record holder in terms of longevity as government head (he has led the country for the last 18 years) might well return to office.

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