

The Christian Social Party (CSV), winner of the Luxembourg general election, is set to return to power

The Christian Social Party (PCS/CSV), chaired by Claude Wisler and Elisabeth Margue and led by Luc Frieden, was the big winner in the general elections held on 8 October in Luxembourg. It garnered 29.21% of the vote and won 21 seats, a number equal to that won in the previous general elections on 14 October 2018. It beat outgoing Prime Minister Xavier Bettel's Democratic Party (PD/DP), led by Lex Delles, which obtained 18.7% of the vote (3rd in number of votes but 2nd in number of seats) and 14 elected members (+2) and, just after that, the Socialist Workers' Party (POSL/LSAP), a member of the outgoing government coalition, chaired by Dan Biancalana and Francine Closener and led by Deputy Prime Minister Paulette Lenert, which won 18.91% and 11 seats (+1).

The other winner of the election was the Democratic Alternative Reform Party (ADR), a right-wing populist party led by Fred Keup, which became the 4th largest political force in the country with 9.27% and 5 elected seats (+1). In the end, it did not suffer as a result of competition from Liberté/Fraïhett, a "movement of the people for the people" as its founder, former ADR member Roy Reding, describes it. Liberté/Fraïhett, which brings together personalities who were opposed to the government's health policy during the

Covid-19 pandemic, nevertheless managed to beat the Communist Party (KPL) and the Conservatives (K).

On the other hand, the Greens/Dei Greng (LV-DG), members of the outgoing government coalition, led by Djuna Bernard and Meris Sehovic and headed by the outgoing Minister of Justice and Culture Sam Tanson, suffered a significant setback: they won 8.55% and 4 seats (down 5). Taking fewer than 5 seats, the ecologists will therefore be unable to form a parliamentary group. The defeat is severe and may come as a surprise at a time when environmental issues are central to political debate.

The Pirate Party (PPL), chaired by Starsky Flor and Rebecca Lau and led by Sven Clement, saw a slight increase, with 6.74% and 3 elected members (+1). Lastly, the far-left La Gauche/Dei Lenk (LG/DL) party held firm with 3.93% and 2 MPs (=).

Turnout was 87.18%, down 5.58 points on the previous general election on 14 October 2018.

Voting is compulsory in the Grand Duchy. However, Luxembourgers living abroad or outside the commune where they are called to vote, or those over 75 years of age, are exempt from this obligation.

General elections in Luxembourg

8th October 2023

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Results of the general elections of 8 October 2023 in Luxembourg

Turnout: 87.18%

Political Parties	Number of votes won	Percentage of votes won	Number of Seats
Christian Social Party (PCS/CSV)	1 099 427	29.21	21
Socialist Workers' Party (POSL/LSAP)	711 890	18.91	11
Democratic Party (PD/DP)	703 833	18.70	14
Democratic Alternative Reform Party (ADR)	348 990	9.27	5
Greens/Dei Greng (LV-DG)	321 895	8.55	4
Pirate Party (PPL)	253 554	6.74	3
The Left/Dei Lenk (LG/DL)	147 839	3.93	2
Fokus	93 839	2.49	0
Freedom/Fraïheet	42 643	1.13	0
Communist Party (KPL)	24 275	0.64	0
The Conservatives (K)	8 494	0.23	0

Source : <https://elections.public.lu/en.html>

"The people of Luxembourg have spoken and the result is clear: the Christian Social Party came out ahead at the polls in all 4 constituencies. We have obtained a clear mandate to form the next government. We're not going to do it in a top-down or haughty way. The talks will be conducted with respect, with the aim of forming a strong majority based on a coherent programme," declared Luc Frieden when the results were announced, adding: "The voters have expressed a very clear choice, with a third of the MPs going to the CSV. This is a clear mandate to form a new government. It will have to reflect the number of seats in Parliament. I will be holding very respectful discussions with the parties with which a coalition is possible. There are two options: an alliance with the Democratic Party (35 MPs) or with the Socialist Workers' Party (32 MPs). I want to have a strong majority with strong convergence on the programme".

Luc Frieden, former Minister of Justice and Finance and current President of the Chamber of Commerce and Eurochamber, who has been out of the political limelight for the last ten years, has succeeded in his bid to lead the CSV to victory. The victory is clear-cut and should see the party return to power in the

Grand Duchy, although it should be remembered that in both 2018 and 2013, the party finished first in the general elections, both in terms of votes and seats, but on both occasions was excluded from the government.

This time, given his clear lead and the defeat of the outgoing government coalition, due in particular to the decline of the ecologists, Luc Frieden should not see the post of Prime Minister slip from his grasp.

Outgoing Prime Minister Xavier Bettel (PD/DP) declared himself "ready for government" as soon as the results were announced. He said he was closer to the CSV than any other party in terms of programmes: "At the moment, the outgoing coalition no longer has a majority. ... but in view of my personal result (the outgoing Prime Minister beat Luc Frieden by 3,019 votes in the Centre constituency) and that of my party, I think the voters want us to be part of the next government.

The Socialist Workers' Party, which came third, is also open to an alliance with the CSV in a future government. The two parties have governed together for 43 years since the end of the Second World War. An alliance with the CSV, and in particular with Luc

Frieden, would nevertheless have to be accepted by LSAP members, which some activists believe is not a matter of course.

According to the Polindex 2023 study, carried out by the University of Luxembourg's Parliamentary Studies Research Chair and the Ilres opinion institute, which paints a socio-demographic portrait of the electorate, Luxembourgers are in favour of an electoral coalition with two partners.

Once the official results have been announced, Grand Duke Henri will receive the outgoing Prime Minister, the President of the Chamber of Deputies, the President of the Council of State and the presidents of all the political parties that will sit in the new Chamber. If he thinks a coalition is possible, he will appoint a facilitator, generally from a party that will be part of the next government, who will be responsible for forming a government coalition. If, on the other hand, after meeting with these personalities, the Grand Duke considers that no coalition is emerging, he will appoint an informer. During the last general elections on 14 October 2018, the Grand Duke appointed Martine Solovieff, State Prosecutor General, as his informant. Her report led Grand Duke Henri to appoint Xavier Bettel

as his facilitator. The leader of the Democratic Party list then opened negotiations with the other political parties, which led to the formation of a tripartite government comprising the DP, the Socialist Workers' Party and the Greens.

Luc Frieden, 60, from Esch-sur-Alzette, has a degree in law. He began his professional career as a lawyer while teaching law. He was first elected to parliament in 1994 on the CSV list. In 1998, he was appointed Minister for Justice, the Budget and Relations with Parliament in Jean-Claude Juncker's government. He held this post until 2009 (Minister of Justice, Budget and Defence between 2004 and 2009); he was then Minister of Finance and Budget between 2009 and 2013.

After a ten-year absence from the political scene, Luc Frieden has been nominated to head the CSV party list for the general elections on 8 October. It was a wise choice, as he led the CSV to a clear victory, which should see it return to power this time.

With the renewal of the 60-MPs of the Chamber of Deputies on 8 October, Luxembourg closes its super election year, which witnessed the people of the Grand Duchy designate the representatives of the country's 100 communal councils on 11 June.

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