

FINLAND

Dates of Elections: 15 and 16 March 1987

Purpose of Elections

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

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of Finland, the *Eduskunta*, is composed of 200 members elected for 4 years.

Electoral System

All Finnish citizens who have attained the age of 18 before the year in which the election takes place are entitled to vote, with the exception of those who have been convicted of vagrancy or certain corrupt practices connected with elections.

Electoral registers are revised annually at the constituency level. Voting is not compulsory.

Every member of the electorate is eligible to become a member of the *Eduskunta*, except persons under guardianship and those on active military service. The parliamentary mandate is incompatible with the posts of Chancellor of Justice, Ombudsman of Parliament, with membership of the Supreme Court of Justice and the Supreme Administrative Court. Candidates are nominated by registered political parties.

Finland is divided into 15 electoral constituencies which roughly correspond to the boundaries of the country's provinces. In 14 of them, 199 members of the *Eduskunta* are elected by proportional representation from party lists of candidates. Seats are distributed among the individual parties, or alliances of several parties, in accordance with the d'Hondt rule of highest average. For the distribution of seats within each list, candidates are ranked according to the number of personal votes they have polled.

The province of Aland elects a single deputy by simple majority vote.

A vacancy arising in the *Eduskunta* between general elections is filled by the individual who is "next-in-line" on the list of the party which formerly held the seat.

General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

Main contenders for the *Eduskunta's* 200 seats were, once again, the parties of the outgoing coalition Government (Social Democratic Party (SDP), Centre Party (KESK),

Swedish People's Party (SFP) and Rural Party (SMP)), which together had 112 Deputies, and the opposition conservative National Coalition Party (KOK). Altogether 12 groups and some 1,800 candidates were in the running. As a result of a split in 1986, the left-wing was represented by the Finnish People's Democratic League (SKDL) comprising, among others, Eurocommunists, and the more orthodox communist Democratic Alternative (Deva).

Primary campaign issues included economic questions, particularly taxation, as well as post-election coalition negotiations and an eye to the 1988 presidential poll; foreign policy was not discussed. Due to the proportional representation system in force, KOK gained an additional nine seats on polling day although its share of the popular vote hardly rose and it thus nearly overtook SDP as the largest party in Parliament. The other coalition partners together lost four seats. As a result, outgoing SDP Prime Minister Kalevi Sorsa and his Cabinet resigned and, on 30 April, Mr. Harri Holkeri of the KOK took his place at the head of a new four-party coalition which also included members of the SDP, SFP and SMP. The KOK had been in opposition since 1966. The new coalition partners held 131 of the 200 parliamentary seats.

Statistics

1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats in the Eduskunta

Number of registered electors			4,018,248
Valid votes			2,877,520
Political Group	Votes obtained	„	Number of Seats
Social Democratic Party (SDP)	694,666	24.1	56 (- 1)
National Coalition Party (KOK)	665,477	23.1	53 (+ 9)
Centre Party (KESK)	507,384	17.6	40 (+ 2)
Finnish People's Democra- tic League (SKDL)	269,678	9.4	16 (-10)
Finnish Rural Party (SMP)	181,557	6.3	9 (-8)
Swedish People's Party (SFP)	162,539	5.6	13 (+ 3)
Democratic Alternative (Deva)	122,115	4.2	4 (+ 4)
Greens	115,830	4.0	4 (+ 2)
Finnish Christian Union (SKL)	74,011	2.6	5 (+ 2)
Others	84,263	2.9	- (- 3)
			200

Finland

*3. Distribution of Members of Parlytne
according to Sex*

Men	137
Women	<u>63</u>
	200