

SPAIN

Date of Elections: June 15, 1977

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the elected members of the newly-established bicameral Parliament.

Characteristics of Parliament

In accordance with the Political Reform Law of 1976 *, the bicameral Parliament of Spain, the *Cortes*, consists of the Congress of Deputies and the Senate.

The Congress of Deputies comprises 350 members: three for each of the country's 50 provinces, plus one deputy for every 175,000 inhabitants. All are elected for 4 years.

The Senate is composed of 207 members elected for 4 years and 41 members appointed by the King. Elected Senators — generally four from each province — are chosen by popular vote from candidates nominated by provincial, municipal and trade union authorities. Of the appointed Senators, up to 25 are chosen by the King from among persons outstanding in culture, labour, politics and the military, while a maximum of 20 are picked by various professional and educational institutions.

Electoral System

All Spanish citizens at least 21 years of age are entitled to vote for members of the *Cortes* and be elected thereto. Cabinet members, members of the armed forces and high-ranking government and trade union officials are not permitted to stand for election to the *Cortes* unless they resign their posts within eight days after the announcement of the date of the elections.

Deputies appear on block lists and are elected by a system of proportional representation according to population, subject to a minimum number per province; each voter chooses one list among those presented in his constituency (province). Elected Senators are chosen according to majority vote, with voting for a maximum of three candidates on any one list; in most provinces, the four candidates with the most votes are proclaimed Senators.

* See section *Parliamentary Developments*, pp. 20-21.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

The June election date was announced by the Government on April 15, 1977. The poll represented the first since 1936 which was contested by a full range of political parties.

Over 6,000 candidates and 156 political groups participated in the three-week campaign. Major parties lined up in 10 national coalitions and 12 regional alliances. Foremost among the groups, ranging from right to left-wing, were the Popular Alliance, the centre-right coalition Union of the Democratic Centre (led by outgoing Prime Minister Adolfo Suarez), the Christian Democratic Federation, the Socialist Union (PSP and FPS), the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, and the Spanish Communist Party. Nine parties/coalitions put forward candidates in more than half of the constituencies (provinces). Central campaign issues included those relating to the economy (high unemployment and inflation rates), and administrative decentralization or regionalism, particularly the question of granting a certain degree of autonomy for the Basque provinces and Catalonia.

On election day, the Democratic Centre — a group of 15 centrist parties — and the Socialist Workers' Party — led by Mr. Felipe Gonzalez — proved to be the big winners. The former nevertheless narrowly failed to obtain an absolute majority in the Lower House. The two most populous provinces of Spain — Madrid and Barcelona — went Socialist. As head of the biggest group in the *Cortes*, Mr. Suarez remained Prime Minister and announced the formation of a new Cabinet on July 4.

Statistics

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

Number of registered voters.	23,616,421
Voters.	18,232,049 (77.20 %)

<i>T</i> , , <i>r</i> , Political Group	Votes <small>obtained</small>	<small>n/</small> %	<small>rf</small> Number <small>geatg</small>
Union of the Democratic Centre	6,220,889	34.71	165
Spanish Socialist Workers' Party — Socialists of Catalonia (PSOE-PSC/ PSOE).	5,240,464	29.24	118
Spanish Communist Party — United Socialist Party of Catalonia	1,655,744	9.24	20
Popular Alliance.	1,503,376	8.39	16
Socialist Union (PSP-FPS).	804,382	4.48	11
Democratic Pact for Catalonia — Christian Democrats of Catalonia	666,398	3.71	13
Basque Nationalist Party.	304,244	1.45	8
Democratic Front of the Left	259,840	1.40	1
Christian Democratic Federation	250,902	1.29	—
Other extreme-left parties.	169,442	0.94	1
Centre independents.	121,575	0.67	2
			350

2. *Distribution of Seats in the Senate*

Political Group	Number of Seats •
Union of the Democratic Centre.	105
Spanish Socialist Workers' Party — Socialists of Catalonia . . .	35
Spanish Communist Party — United Socialist Party of Catalonia	12
Democratic Senate.	12
Autonomous Front.	7
Association of Independent Electors.	4
Democratic Unity.	3
Senators for Democracy.	3
Popular Alliance.	2
Socialist Union (PSP-FPS).	2
Catalan Democrats.	2
Galician Democrats.	2
Others.	5
Independents.	13

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- Elected Senators only