

'Christian Democrats register gains' from the Luxemburger Wort (11 June 1979)

Caption: On 11 June 1979, the daily newspaper Luxemburger Wort publishes the results of the first election by direct universal suffrage of the 410 members of the European Parliament, held on 7 and 10 June 1979. The ballot results show how the left has lost ground to centre and pro-European right-wing political groups.

Source: Luxemburger Wort. Für Wahrheit und Recht. 11.06.1979, n° 132; 132e année. Luxembourg: Imprimerie Saint-Paul. "Gewinne der Christdemokraten", p. 1.

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Christian Democrats register gains

Socialists largest parliamentary group / Luxembourg's representation expected to remain unchanged

The first direct elections to a European Parliament, marked by a predictably low turnout, have in most EU countries brought clear gains for centrist and conservative parties compared with national parliamentary elections. The Socialists will, however, form the largest parliamentary group. This much was clear from the projections and interim results available at midnight. Results available in the early hours of today suggest that Luxembourg will again be represented in the European Parliament by two Members each from the CSV, DP and LSAP.

The projections show that the European Parliament's 410 seats will be distributed as follows:

| | |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Socialists | 108 seats |
| Christian Democrats | 100 seats |
| Liberals | 47 seats |
| Conservatives | 63 seats |
| Communists | 44 seats |
| European Democrats | 24 seats |
| Others | 24 seats |

In the previous Parliament, the Socialists held 66 seats, the Christian Democrats 51, the Gaullists 17, the Conservatives 17, the Liberals 26 and the Communists 15.

Devastating Labour defeat in Great Britain

Great Britain's ruling Conservative Party has scored a stunning electoral victory. According to an estimate by the commercial TV channel ITV, the Conservatives have secured 61 of the 81 seats allocated to the United Kingdom in the European Parliament. The Labour Party, already defeated in the general elections in May, can expect a mere 17 seats.

In France, the elections also produced a success for the UDF, the centrist presidential majority party. Headed by the French Health Minister, Simone Veil, the UDF list polled some 28 %, a substantial improvement on its 21.5 % score in the National Assembly elections in March 1978. The second government party, Jacques Chirac's Gaullists, on the other hand, slid from 22.6 % to about 16 %. On the opposition side, the Socialists led by François Mitterrand, in alliance with the left-wing Liberals, polled 23 %, a somewhat lower figure than in 1978 (24.7 %), while the Communists headed by Georges Marchais remained steady at about 20 %.

In the Federal Republic of Germany, the CDU and the CSU took 49.3 % of the vote, a more than 0.5 % improvement on the last Bundestag elections. For its part, the SPD and FDP coalition lost between 1.5 % and 2 %. The SDP obtained 41 % (-1.6 %) and the FDP some 6 % (-1.9 %). This means that 43 Members from the Union parties, 34 from the SPD and four from the FDP will be entering the European Parliament on behalf of the Federal Republic.

In Italy, the Christian Democrats and Communists lost ground to the moderate centrist parties. The Christian Democrats' losses, at 3 %, are particularly high compared with last week's parliamentary elections. They won 35.6 % of the votes (down from 38.3 %) while the Communists scored 29.4 % (slipping back from 30.4 %). With 29 seats, the Christian Democrats nevertheless remain the largest Italian group in the European Parliament.

It is further projected that the Communists will win 24 seats, the Socialists 9, the Neo-Fascists 4, the Social Democrats 4, the Republicans 2, the Liberals 3, the Radicals 3 and other parties 3.

The swing towards the Christian Democrats was confirmed in Denmark. The Social Democrats, in contrast, registered a decline of some 15 %. With 20.7 % of the votes, the 'People's Movement against the EC' emerges as the main winner from Sunday's European elections. Glistrup's Progress Party obtained some 6 % of the votes. The 'Bourgeois Bloc' consequently takes six seats, the anti-EC group five, the Social Democrats three and the Progress Party one.

In the early hours of Monday morning, no results or projections were yet available from the Irish Republic on the direct European elections. Ireland will be sending 15 Members to Strasbourg. In the Netherlands, ballot papers will not be counted until today.

Initial predictions from Belgium indicate that the Christian Democrats will take nine seats, the Socialists seven, the Liberals four and other parties four.

Turnout varied greatly from one Member State to another. Around midnight turnout was as follows in the various EU countries (percentage figures, rounded; in brackets: last national elections):

| | | |
|------------------|----|--------|
| Belgium | 81 | (93.0) |
| Federal Republic | 63 | (90.7) |
| Denmark | 50 | (88.7) |
| France | 60 | (82.8) |
| Great Britain | 32 | (76.0) |
| Ireland | 58 | (77.2) |
| Italy | 86 | (95.3) |
| Luxembourg | 85 | (90.1) |
| Netherlands | 58 | (87.3) |

Simone Veil to stand for President

Simone Veil, the successful front-runner from France's governing party, the UDF, has set her sights on the presidency of the newly elected European Parliament. The UDF Chairman, Jean Lecanuet, announced this on French television on Monday morning.

France expected to send 16 women MEPs to the European Parliament

The 81 new French Members of the European Parliament will probably include 16 women.