

Minor Parties

Below are a table and a graphic that give some detail regarding the fortunes of small parties in Malta. Both illustrate the virtual disappearance of smaller parties since 1962, the last election in which more than two parties were represented in Parliament. Different small parties have periodically contested elections in more recent elections -- such as the Democratic Party and Communist Party in 1987 and the Alternattiva Demokratika in from 1992 to 2008 -- but all without success.

The single-transferable-vote (STV) system does not create barriers to the entry and success of small political parties; but a constituency size of five seats does. Even a nation-wide 12% of the vote would not be sufficient for a party to gain representation in Parliament because a party must poll some 16% of the votes in a given district to obtain a seat.

The Gozo and Jones parties in 1947, with their exclusive basis in one district and with only a minimal share of the nation-wide vote, gained five seats. On the other hand, small parties with geographically dispersed supporters are destined to be unsuccessful.

It is the rare case when a small party manages to obtain a percentage of the seats that exceeds its percentage of the national vote, as the Maltese Workers Party did in 1950. The usual case is of a seat percentage for small parties which is much lower than the vote percentage.

Minor Parties Competing, 1947 - 2008

Note: "Minor party" is defined as a party polling less than 25% of the national vote. (Thereby, the PN is classified as a minor party for the 1947 election.)

Note: The Table below gives the parties' national vote and seat percentages, as well as the seats they won in specific districts. For the districts, a blank space indicates that the party did not present any candidates in the district; a zero indicates that the party's candidate(s) failed to win a seat there.

Year	Party	National Percentage Of:		Seats Won in Election Districts												
		Votes	Seats	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th	13th
1947	DAP	13.30	10.00	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0					
	PN	18.00	17.50	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0					
	GOZO	5.20	7.50								3					
	JONES	3.50	5.00								2					
1950	CON	10.00	10.00	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1					
	DAP	6.00	2.50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1					
	JONES	0.80	0.00								0					
	MWP	23.20	27.50	1	1	2	2	1	1	3	1					
1951	CON	8.10	10.00	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1					
	MWP	18.80	17.50	1	0	2	1	0	1	1	1					
	JONES	0.80	0.00								0					
1953	CON	1.20	0.00	0			0	0		0	0					
	MWP	11.80	7.50	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0					
	PCP	4.30	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0					
1955	PCP	3.00	0.00	0			0	0	0	0						
1962	CWP	9.50	8.00	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0			
	DCP	0.50	0.00	0					0	0	0	0				
	DNP	9.30	8.00	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2			
	PCP	4.80	2.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0			
1966	CWP	6.00	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			
	DNP	1.30	0.00	0		0			0	0	0	0				
	PCP	1.40	0.00	0					0	0	0	0	0			
1971	PCP	1.00	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			
1976																
1981																
1987	COM	0.10	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	DP	0.20	0.00	0					0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1992	AD	1.70	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1996	AD	1.50	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1998	AD	1.20	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2003	AD	0.70	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2008	AD	1.30	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	AN	0.50	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

AD = Alternattiva Demokrtika; AN = Azzjoni Nazzjonali; COM = Communist Party; CON = Constitutionalist Party; DAP = Democratic Action Party; DCP = Democratic Christian Party; DNP = Democratic Nationalist Party; DP = Democratic Party; GOZO = Gozo Party; JONES = Jones Party; MWP = Maltese Workers Party; PCP = Progressive Constitutionalist Party; PN = Nationalist Party

There were four pseudo-parties in 2008, consisting of just one individual competing in the election: Alpha Demokratiku; Forza Malta, Imperium Europa and the Gozitan Party. These competitors are more appropriately considered to be Independents.

The Figure below shows the percentages of first-count votes obtained, cumulatively, by minor parties in each election since 1947.

Minor Parties' Share of the National Vote, 1947 - 2008

