

# PNV wins the elections and PP and EH rise

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The Basque Nationalist Party will lead, for the sixth consecutive time since 1980, the organization of the new Basque Government, after their victory in the elections held to elect the members of the Basque Parliament, which took place last October 25<sup>th</sup>, and which gave them 21 of the 75 seats.

The elections were preceded by ETA's cease-fire and by tough confrontations between the state parties and the nationalist parties. The extreme ends of the political landscape –José María Aznar's Popular Party and Euskal Herriarrok, the new name of the political movement led by ETA– improved their previous results.

The elections of October 25<sup>th</sup> confirm the plurality of Basque society and the need to maintain the understanding between Basque nationalists and state parties.

The day of the elections, the first that has been celebrated in peace since the advent of autonomy in Euskadi, there was a high participation –abstention was a little under 30%– and a complete lack of incidents.

41 of the 75 seats of the Basque Parliament will still belong to Basque nationalist parties, which got 54.6% of the votes, and state parties, which got 45% of the votes, will take the remaining 34. So after the elections there is still the same representation in the Basque Parliament for the Basque nationalist parties and for the non-nationalists, although the inner distribution of the two groups has varied.

However no party has reached the necessary majority to organize a Government on their own, and the organization of a government composed by the three nationalist parties is unlikely. Therefore, any project seeking the stability given by the majority in Parlia-



ment will have indubitably to count with the participation of nationalist and Spanish parties, just as it has been happening since 1986. After all, this situation is only a reflection of the plurality of Basque society.

The electors have given the victory to the Basque Nationalist Party, the party that has ruled the Basque Autonomous Community since 1980. The ot-

- **EAJ-k gobernu berria osatuko du, gutxienez, beste alderdi baten laguntzaz. Gobernu horrek pake prozesuari ekin beharko dio.**

her parties have acknowledged their leadership in the constitution of the new government. PNV has played an im-

portant role in the achievement of the cease-fire during the last few months.

The Popular Party had previously 11 seats and in these elections they have reached 16 seats, therefore they have become the second political group in the Basque Parliament. According to PP the electors have clearly shown their support to the firm resistance of the party against ETA, which has taken the lives of 6 councilors of this party this year.

Euskal Herriarrok is the third party on the rise. This is the name chosen by HB for these elections. The group has grown from 11 seats to 14.

The Socialist Party of Euskadi, PSOE, has won two more seats, but they have lost their second position in the parliament to the PP.

Eusko Alkartasuna, a member of the last coalition government, has lost two seats.

And finally, UA, the group from Alava that left PP, and IU (united left),

the Basque wing of Julio Anguita's party, have lost 3 seats the former and 4 the latter.

Two political events will determine the formation of the new Basque Government. In the first place, all Basque parties will have to try, while they organize the new government, to set the peace process on a safe road; and if the peace process is to reach port safely, it will have to be supported by all the groups with parliamentary representation. Secondly, the attitude of the parties is not going to be independent of the next two elections. The municipal elections, which are very important for Basque institutions, will take place in June '99. Then the Spanish general elections are supposed to take place no later than March 2000. It is easy to foresee very rough confrontations between the main two Spanish parties: José María Aznar's PP and PSOE. ■



FOTO: PAULINO ORIBE

Juan José Ibarretxe met the General Secretary of the PSE-EE, Nicolás Redondo, to talk about the organization of the new government.

## Ibarretxe rolls up his sleeves

All parties accepted from the beginning that the responsibility of forming a new government fell on Juan José Ibarretxe. Ibarretxe did not lose a single moment and he started to talk to the rest of political groups straight away in order to try to form the new government as soon as possible. On the 25<sup>th</sup>, as soon as the results of the elections were known, he phoned the leaders of all the parties with parliamentary representation to talk about the results, and on the 27<sup>th</sup> he started to meet them.

For the moment only Eusko Alkartasuna has accepted to participate in the Government of Euskadi. The Popular Party refused from the very beginning to take part in the same government with PNV, and the Socialist Party of Euskadi-PSOE are in the middle of an internal debate in order to make a decision. Euskal Herritarrok do not want to consider the possibility of being part of the Basque Government, and they suggest to PNV and EA the formation of a government in minority supported by alliances among all the nationalist parties in order to rule the Basque County and Town Councils.

There is no legal deadline for the formation of the government. Considering that previous processes of negotiation have lasted a couple of months, it seems unlikely that the new government could be completed before the beginning of next year. ■

BASQUE ELECTORS ABROAD	
	TOTAL
France	5.023
Argentina	3.699
Venezuela	2.273
USA	2.010
United Kingdom	1.617
Mexico	1.597
Germany	1.138
Uruguay	1.022
Belgium	977
Chile	933
Switzerland	694
Italy	495
Brazil	455
Colombia	442
Peru	429
Canada	300
Andorra	225
The Netherlands	196
Portugal	163
Ireland	155
Subtotal	23.843
OTHERS	2.553
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26.396</b>

## VOTES FROM ABROAD 1990 - 1998

	1990		1994		1998	
	VOTES	%	VOTES	%	VOTES	%
TOTAL CENSUS	7.005		14.373		26.396	
VOTERS	2.152	30,72	3.119	21,70	6.888	26,09
<b>PARTIES</b>	<b>VOTES</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>VOTES</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>VOTES</b>	<b>%</b>
PNV	647	30,07	978	31,36	2.011	32,57
PSOE	523	24,30	858	27,51	1.500	24,29
PP	205	9,53	431	13,82	1.343	21,75
HB/EH	204	9,48	312	10,00	522	8,45
IU	0	0	31	0,99	256	4,15
EA	105	4,88	251	8,05	378	6,12
OTHERS	468	21,75	258	8,27	166	2,69
NULL					712	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2.152</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>3.119</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>6.176</b>	<b>100</b>