



# Portuguese Elections Analysis

MAY 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025



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# INTRODUCTION

The legislative elections of May 18 were triggered by the rejection, on March 11, 2025, of the motion of confidence presented by the minority government of the Democratic Alliance (AD). This motion of confidence had only the favourable votes of the parties that make up the Government coalition, PSD and CDS-PP, as well as the right-leaning Liberal Initiative (IL). The other parties – centre-left PS, far-right Chega, left party Livre, far-left Bloco de Esquerda, the Communist PCP and the animalist PAN parties - had previously announced that they would vote against the motion.

Before the vote on the motion of confidence, Chega and PCP had already individually presented a motion of censure against the AD government at the end of February and the beginning of March, both of which were rejected in Parliament, allowing the government to remain in office, albeit temporarily. These motions of censure were motivated by alleged conflicts of interest involving the family business - Spinumviva - of the Prime Minister, Luís Montenegro.

With the rejection of the motion of confidence and the consequent resignation of the government, the President of the Republic, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, opted to dissolve the Assembly of the Republic, calling early parliamentary elections for May 18, 2025. As such, these were the third parliamentary elections in just over three years, having also taken place in 2022 and 2024.

# RESULTS



## Center-right coalition

The Democratic Alliance wins the election with a significant increase in votes and seats (7 seats more). It widens the gap with the main opposition party, emerging stronger from the electoral process, although still falling short of a parliamentary majority.



## Socialist Party

The Socialist Party fell short of polling expectations, securing only 58 seats out of 230 in Parliament (19 fewer than in the previous election), remaining tied with the far-right Chega until the counting of overseas votes.



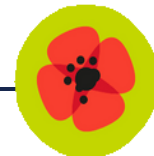
## Chega

The far-right party Chega achieved a historic result, electing 58 MPs, a number that may still increase after the counting of votes from the abroad (Europe and Outside Europe) constituencies. Its parliamentary representation rose from 48 to at least 58 seats. André Ventura, the party's leader, delivered a triumphant speech on election night, declaring the end of bipartisanship in Portugal..



## Iniciativa Liberal

Iniciativa Liberal (IL) gained one additional seat, now holding a total of 9 MPs. A potential coalition with the centre-right (PSD/CDS-PP) falls short of a parliamentary majority, with 95 seats compared to the 116 required.



## Livre

Livre increased its representation from four to six MPs.



## Communist Party

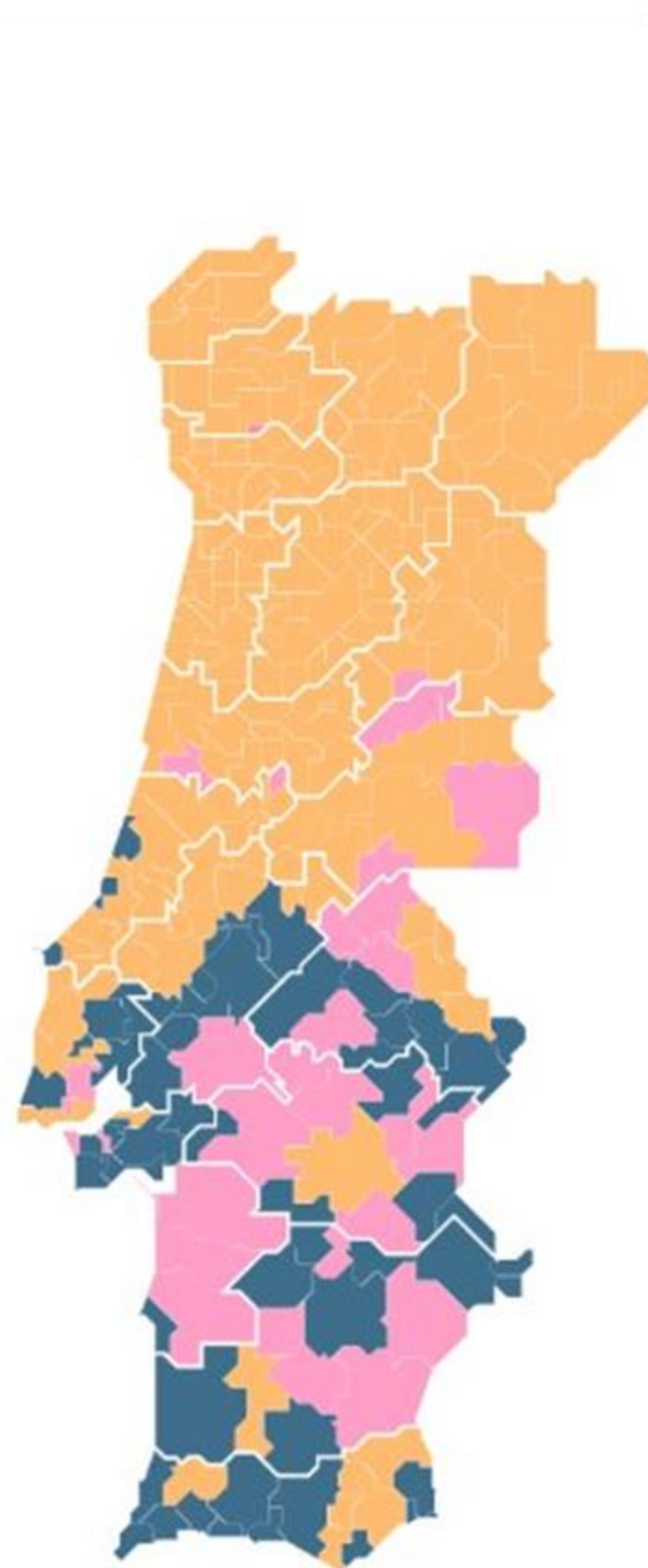
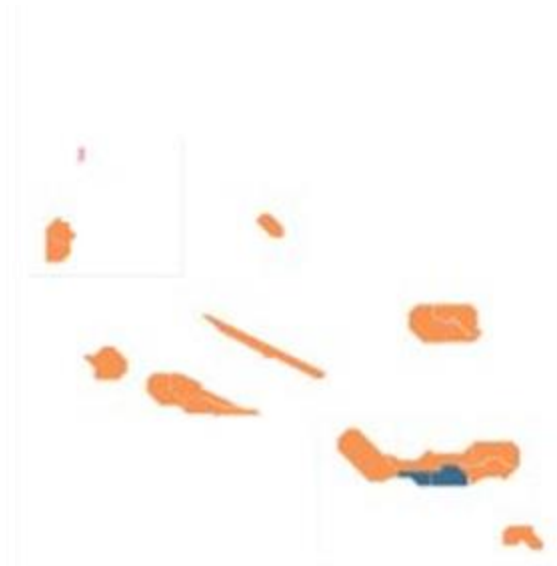
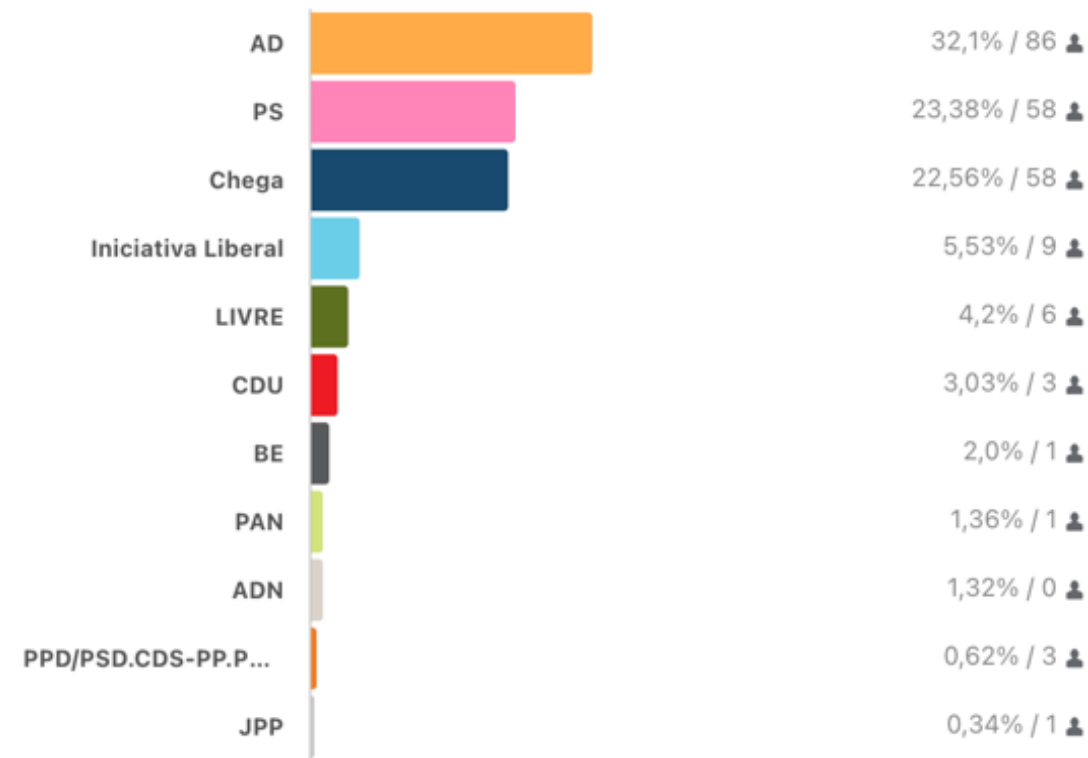
The Communist Party (PCP) lost one seat and now holds three MPs.



## Bloco de Esquerda, PAN & JPP

A notable outcome of last night was the entry of a new party into Parliament, JPP (Juntos Pelo Povo). In contrast, the Left Bloc saw its representation drop from five MPs to just one. PAN retained its single seat, held by Inês Sousa Real.

## Electoral map



# RESULTS

AD won this Sunday's legislative elections with 32.10 percent of the vote. AD leader Luís Montenegro said that the Portuguese people had given AD and the government a new vote of confidence, reinforcing the legitimacy of the Prime Minister.

Chega became the second largest political party, equaling the Socialist Party with the same 58 seats in parliament. With the emigration result still to be determined (4 MPs), Pedro Nuno Santos saw the PS record the third worst result in its history and announced his resignation from the leadership of the Socialists.

The Liberal Initiative had a victory night with a bitter taste. Although it increased its vote and won one MP, it lost relevance in a possible government solution with AD, since the combined mandates of the two candidates do not form a majority.

Livre was the only party on the left to see its vote increase, winning two new seats in parliament, and the JPP enters the Assembly of the Republic for the first time, which now has 10 parties.

The left suffered one of the heaviest defeats in its recent history, collectively losing 23 MPs.

# PRELIMINARY POLITICAL REACTIONS



Hugo Soares, elected for Braga, stressed that the Democratic Alliance was “strengthened” in these elections, saying that “the country has strengthened its confidence in Luís Montenegro”. He also stressed the “clear difference” between the AD vote and the other parties, classifying the victory as “very expressive”.



Isabel Mendes Lopes, Livre's co-spokesperson, summed up the moment in two words: “recognition and concern”. The latter is motivated by the “rising tide” of a “radicalized right”, against which Livre wants to assert itself, pointing out that “the country doesn't grow in hatred”.



Alexandra Leitão, the PS's parliamentary leader, refused to discuss Pedro Nuno Santos's future as leader and pointing out that the polls tend to underestimate the vote for the PS.



Jorge Costa, leader of the Left Bloc, reacted to the exit poll projections, predicting a “difficult night” and hard times ahead. He highlights the victory of the right and the decrease in Bloco representation, saying that the party had already warned of this risk.



Reacting to the big surprise of the night, Pedro Pinto, Chega's parliamentary leader, said that the party had “broken, once and for all, with bipartisanship in Portugal” and that it had “made the country tremble”, underlining the political impact of its rise in the preliminary results. While maintaining the party's willingness to negotiate with the Democratic Alliance, he stressed that “whatever happens, Chega is essential for a majority government”.



António Morgado Valente, PAN's second place candidate for Lisbon, highlighted the support he felt during the campaign and said he believed in a good representation in the Assembly of the Republic, despite the uncertain polls. He also criticized the timing of the elections.



CDU reacted to Sunday's election projections, with João Oliveira calling the new parliamentary composition a negative shift. Despite this, he emphasized the party's resilience in the face of dire forecasts. He affirmed CDU will remain a voice for workers and the people, even under adverse conditions.

# PARTY LEADER'S REACTIONS



Luís Montenegro said that voters had given AD and the government a vote of confidence, reinforcing the legitimacy of the Prime Minister. He argued that all parties should put the national interest above party agendas and rejected new early elections. He called for dialogue between the Government and the opposition, in the face of internal and geopolitical challenges.



Rui Tavares expressed satisfaction with the growth of his parliamentary group and promised to launch a turnaround movement through which the party would engage with citizens across the country with the Autumn local elections in mind. He noted that the radicalisation and rise of the right, alongside the decline of the left.



Pedro Nuno Santos thanked the voters of the Socialist Party and acknowledged defeat. He rejected supporting Luís Montenegro's government, criticizing its suitability and the programme of the AD. He noted the growth of the far right. He also announced his resignation and the announcement of party leadership elections.



Paulo Raimundo said that the results did not reflect what the country's situation demanded in order to stand up for the rights of working people. He reaffirmed the PCP's commitment to fight for their defence. He also stressed that this is not a time for collaboration with the right, but for fighting back.



André Ventura declared a historic victory for Chega, saying that the party may become the second largest in Portugal (if the remaining emigration seats are attributed to Chega candidates) and stressing that bipartisanship is over. He criticized the polling companies for supposedly deliberately downplaying the party's votes. He acknowledged that while his party did not win, it had made history and reinforced its commitment to political transformation.



The President of the Liberal Initiative said that the party will remain "equal to itself", even if the path is slower than desired. As for possible agreements to guarantee stability, Rui Rocha said that, with these results, "possible majorities are in place", so the Liberals will continue to defend its ideas in the Assembly of the Republic.



Nuno Melo celebrated AD's strengthened victory, considering it a validation of the government and Luís Montenegro. He criticized the opposition for the political crisis and pointed to the centre-left defeat as a sign that the Portuguese demand responsibility. He reaffirmed his commitment to governing with stability.



Mariana Mortágua acknowledged the Left Bloc's defeat, stressing that it had been a difficult campaign in a context of right-wing advances. She called for a reflection on the future of the left, saying that accepting defeat is the first step towards rebuilding the party and left politics in the country.

# PARTY LEADER'S REACTIONS



Inês Sousa Real, spokesperson for PAN, thanked voters “for ensuring that the animal cause, the environment, and women’s rights remain represented in Parliament.” She stressed that keeping a seat, “despite those who predicted our exit,” is a source of pride. Acknowledging that “this is not the result we had hoped for,” she pointed to tactical voting as a factor that harmed democratic plurality and affected parties like PAN. In the face of the far-right’s rise, she reaffirmed PAN’s commitment to continue working “with the strength of a single MP.”



Filipe Martins de Sousa (JPP), founder of the party and elected in the Madeira constituency, described it as a historic day for the party, which enters the Assembly of the Republic for the first time. He highlighted the increase in votes compared to last year, despite the rise of populism and achieved independently of national leaders..

# NEXT STEPS

## General Count and Official Results

Final results by **20 May**.  
The results for the Europe and Outside Europe constituencies will only be known on **May 27**.

## Meetings with Political Parties

To take place between **19 and 21 May**.

## Swearing-In of the Assembly of the Republic

The Assembly of the Republic shall convene on the **third day after the general election results are officially declared**.

## Swearing-In of the Government

There is no legally defined deadline, but historically this occurs approximately one month after the elections – around **16 June**

## Constitutional Restrictions

### Constitutional Restrictions on the Dissolution of Parliament

**18 May to 18 November 2025** (6 months following the election)

**9 September 2025 to 9 March 2026** (final 6 months of current President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa's mandate)

### Next Window for Dissolution of Parliament

From **9 March 2026**, once a new President of the Republic has taken office.

## Presentation and Vote on the Government Programme

The Government's programme must be presented to Parliament within 10 days after its swearing-in. A vote on the programme is only held if requested by a Parliamentary Group.  
This is expected to occur – **around 27 June**

## Vote on the State Budget for 2026

Must be submitted by **15 October**. Debate and approval must take place by **15 December**.

# POSSIBLE SCENARIOS (most to least likely)

1

## **Appointment of Luís Montenegro as Prime Minister**

Given the election results, the reappointment of Luís Montenegro as Prime Minister appears to be the most likely scenario. The size of the Democratic Alliance's parliamentary group — which surpasses the combined seats of the left-wing parties — reinforces the legitimacy and stability of this solution. It is expected that President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa will move forward with the formation of an AD-led government.

2

## **Understanding Between the Democratic Alliance and Iniciativa Liberal**

A potential governing arrangement between AD and IL was on the table throughout the campaign, repeatedly mentioned by both party leaders as a possible solution. However, in light of the election results, this scenario loses traction, as it does not secure an absolute majority and would require Luís Montenegro to reach an additional agreement with a party that has notable policy differences with AD's formal coalition partner, CDS-PP, led by current Minister of Defence, Nuno Melo.

3

## **AD Government Including Chega**

Throughout his campaign, Luís Montenegro firmly ruled out any agreement with Chega. However, excluding André Ventura's party makes it impossible for the right to secure a parliamentary majority. A formal understanding between AD and Chega would allow for an absolute majority in Parliament, potentially reinforcing stability and ensuring the full term of the legislature. According to reports, the President of the Republic is not supportive of such an arrangement. A source from Belém told the weekly Expresso that Marcelo is committed to "doing everything in his power to prevent Chega from participating in the government."

4

## **Informal Grand Coalition (Central Bloc)**

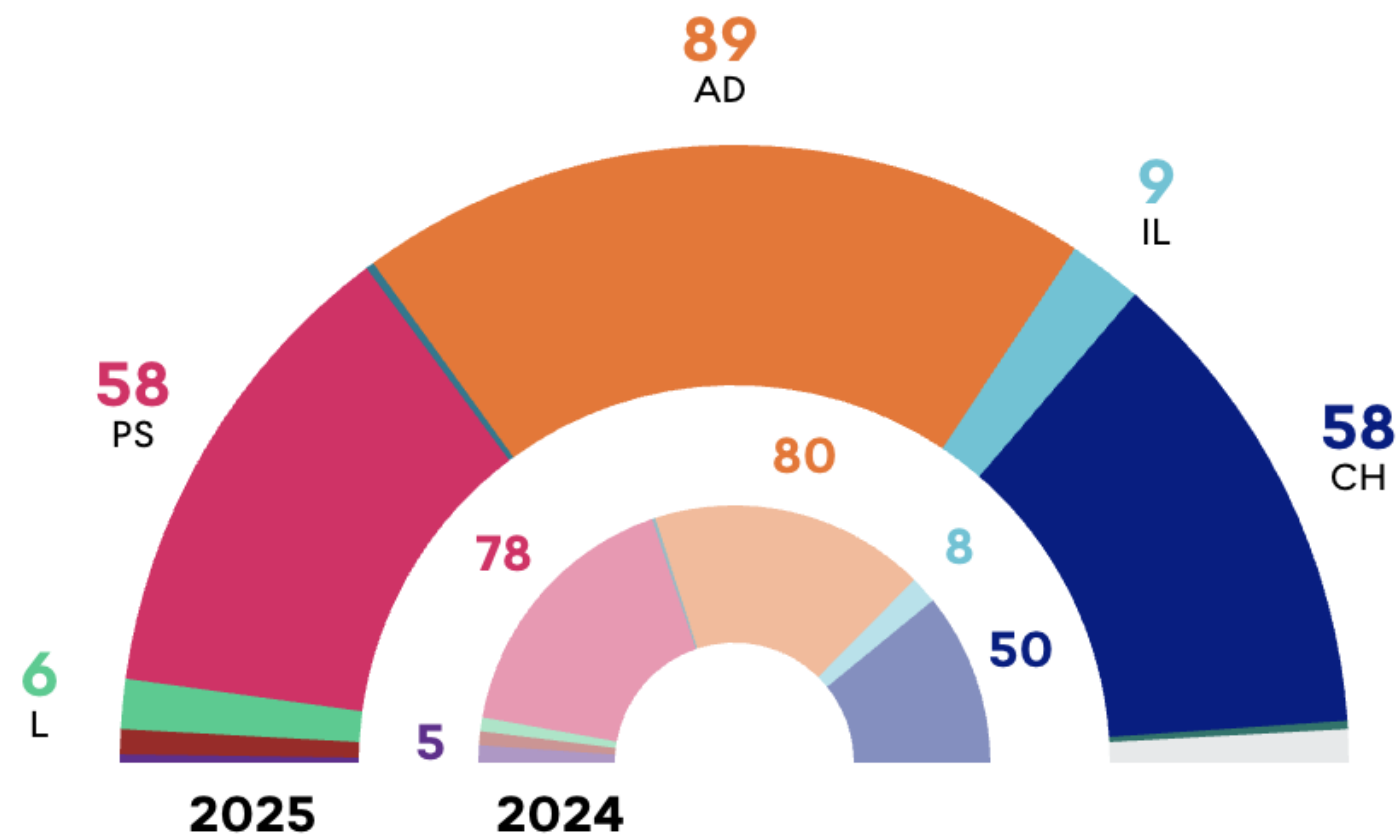
An informal grand coalition remains a possibility, whereby the PS — under new leadership — would enable governance in Parliament. This scenario would likely face internal resistance within the party, given the potential impact on the PS's role as the main opposition force. Nevertheless, some level of cooperation could still be expected, particularly regarding the government programme vote, the election of the Speaker of Parliament, or even the State Budget.

# ELECTED MPs

## ELECTED MPs

226 out of 230

### COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS LEGISLATURE



32,72%



AD

23,38%



PS

22,56%



CHEGA

5,53%



IL

4,20%



L

3,03%



CDU

2,00%



BE

1,36%



PAN

0,34%



JPP

Branços	Nulos	Abstenção
1,44%	0,99%	35,62%


The remaining 4 MPs will be known on May 27.

Source: [Expresso](#)

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