
Tsipras's Leftist Syriza Wins Greek Elections

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With 80 percent of the ballots counted, Syriza has garnered 35.54 percent and 145 seats in parliament, while the conservative New Democracy party headed by Vangelia Maimarakis, has obtained 28 percent of the vote and 75 seats, according to results released by the Interior Ministry.

As soon as the initial official results were made public, Meimarakis acknowledged to the media his party's defeat and congratulated Tsipras.

Tsipras, who arrived at Syriza's party headquarters with his arm raised in a sign of victory, was acclaimed by the huge crowd that jammed the street outside the downtown Athens location.

In third place, according to preliminary results, is the neo-Nazi Golden Dawn party with 7 percent of the votes, followed by the Pasok social democrats with 6 percent, the KKE communists with 5 percent, the centrist To Potami, with 4 percent, the nationalist Independent Greeks (ANEL), who had been partners with Syriza in Tsipras's former coalition government, with 3.5 percent and 10 parliamentary seats, and other parties with correspondingly less.

In order to gain representation in the parliament, Greek parties must obtain more than 3 percent of the votes.

Tsipras said that Syriza will form the same coalition with the Independent Greeks that it held during his previous government, a move that would give it an absolute majority in parliament of

155 seats.

He acknowledged that in the coming months the nation will confront "difficulties," but he added that the election had created "stable terrain on which to work."

"The mandate that the people gave us today is also a mandate to end the regime of corruption that governed for so many years in Greece," Tsipras said alluding to the past governments of conservatives and social democrats, two parties whose cooperation he had rejected more or less openly.

Voter participation appears to be on the order of 55 percent, the lowest ever registered in national elections in a country where going to the polls is obligatory.

About 10 million Greeks were eligible to vote in the election, the second balloting held so far this year, which transpired without any reported incidents.
