

ELECTION MONITOR *iep* *Election* Latvia

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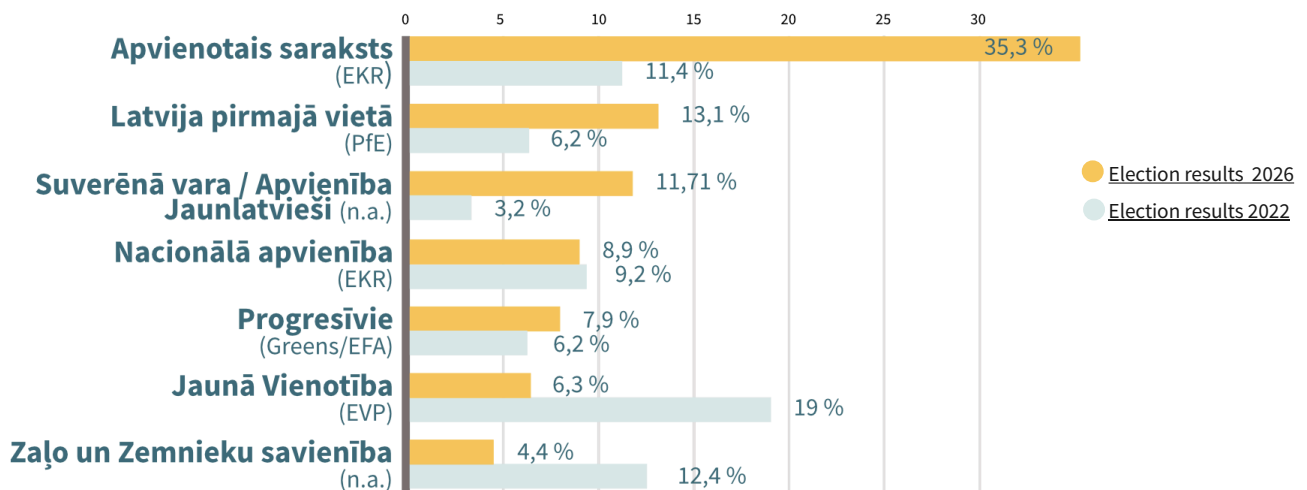
Overview of the Election Results

[Latvia held its 15th Saeima parliamentary election on 3 October 2026.](#) Prime Minister Andris Kulbergs's Apvienotais saraksts (United List) won decisively with 35.29 percent and 41 of the 100 Saeima seats, compared with only 11.14 percent and 15 seats in 2022. It was followed by Latvija pirmajā vietā (Latvia First) with 13.08 percent and 17 seats, Suverēnā vara/Apvienība Jaunlatvieši (Sovereign Power / "Young Latvians" Union) with 11.71 percent and 15, the Nacionālā Apvienība (National Alliance) with 8.90 percent and 10, Progresīvie (Progressives) with 7.88 percent and 10, and Jaunā Vienotība (New Unity) with 6.36 percent and seven seats.

Several trends distinguish 2026 from previous elections. Most strikingly, United List increased its vote total by roughly 180 percent compared with 2022, while New Unity fell from 19.19 percent and 26 seats to 6.36 percent and seven seats. The Zaļo un Zemnieku savienība (Union of Greens and Farmers) declined from 12.58 percent and 16 seats to 4.40 percent, meaning that for the first time in its 24-year history it failed to enter the Saeima. [Political scientists noted that United List and Union of Greens and Farmers compete partly for a similar electorate, potentially helping explain this dramatic transfer of support.](#)

According to Central Election Committee (CVK) data, turnout was particularly noteworthy: [only 51.79 percent \(806,641 of 1,557,615 eligible voters\)](#) participated, compared with 59.41 percent in 2022, making this the lowest turnout in Latvian parliamentary election history. Participation varied considerably geographically, from 59.05 percent in Vidzeme to just 46.43 percent in the Riga electoral district.

Latvian election coverage shows that the political campaign prominently addressed national and internal security, economic growth and taxation, health-care, education, energy policy, migration and regional development. However, [early Latvian political analysis](#) suggests the result can also be understood as a demand for political change without a complete rejection of the existing governing direction. Latvian Public Service Media (LSM) interviewed political scientists who described voters as wanting ["change, but not revolution"](#). This interpretation fits the extraordinary expansion of the governing United List and [the personal popularity of Kulbergs, who received 58,489 positive candidate marks](#), by far the highest individual total reported by LSM. Therefore, rather than attributing the result solely to one policy issue, the evidence currently points toward a combination of concerns about governance, economic and security policy, and support for Kulbergs and his party.



Perhaps the most important trend, however, is the combination of low turnout and considerable voter uncertainty. Shortly before election day, [a state survey reported by Latvian Public Media](#) found that almost one in five voters still did not know which party they would support. Reports from polling stations reinforce this picture. Latvian Radio interviewed voters in Riga who repeatedly described the choice as difficult: some pointed to the large number of competing parties, others to unfulfilled political promises and a lack of trust, while some voters described the decision as choosing the best among imperfect alternatives. Similar views were reported elsewhere, with voters expressed uncertainty about which party deserved their support while nevertheless stressing the importance of participating.

Although the available evidence does not establish why individual non-voters abstained, the combination of historically low turnout, substantial pre-election indecision and accounts of voters struggling to identify a convincing political choice raises broader questions about political engagement, trust and identification with the available alternatives.

Formation of the New Government

The election outcome points towards a relatively clear process of government formation, particularly compared with previous Latvian elections that have often required complicated coalition negotiations. The strong position of United List gives it a central role in determining the next government. Its

stated [preference is to continue cooperation with its current coalition partners](#), National Alliance and New Unity, which would provide a stable parliamentary majority. Nevertheless, negotiations may not be entirely straightforward. The main question is likely to concern the balance of power within the coalition, [particularly the distribution of ministerial portfolios and the influence of the smaller partners](#). While United List has argued that government representation should reflect the election result, its potential partners have emphasised the importance of maintaining meaningful influence over decision-making.

The next steps will involve negotiations on the coalition agreement, government programme and allocation of ministries. President Edgars Rinkēvičs will then invite a candidate for prime minister to form the government, which must receive the confidence of the newly elected Saeima. Overall, a continuation of the existing coalition currently represents the most straightforward option. However, beyond establishing a parliamentary majority, the new government will face the broader challenge of rebuilding public confidence and addressing the voter disengagement and uncertainty highlighted by the election.

Impact on European Union policies

The election result is unlikely to fundamentally change Latvia's European orientation. Given the expected continuity of the governing coalition, Latvia is likely to remain strongly committed to EU and NATO cooperation, support for Ukraine, sanctions

against Russia and strengthening Europe's defence capabilities. At EU level, negotiations over the next Multiannual Financial Framework will also be important, with Latvia expected to advocate greater resources for security, the EU's eastern border, cohesion, agriculture and strategic infrastructure. However, greater uncertainty may potentially emerge in the area of social and values policy. [The Istanbul Convention remains politically contentious and will return to the agenda of the newly elected Saeima](#). The possible approaches range from postponing further decisions to holding a consultative referendum, indicating that the issue may also enter government-formation negotiations. Consequently, the election appears more likely to produce continuity in Latvia's core European foreign and security policy than in socially sensitive policy areas. Latvia should therefore remain an active supporter of European cooperation on security and Ukraine, while questions concerning the Istanbul Convention, gender equality and related social policies may generate greater domestic political disagreement and potentially a more cautious Latvian position in corresponding European debates.

About the author

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IEP Election Monitor tracks and analyses elections within Europe through factsheets, background information, short interviews and election analyses. In this way, IEP promotes transnational debate on European policy issues.

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