



# Summary and analysis of results of Japanese lower house election

28 October 2024

## LDP loses majority in major defeat, turmoil looms amid uncertainty over next government

The ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and coalition partner Komeito suffered a significant defeat in the House Representatives election held 27 October, as the two parties failed to maintain their majority. The result will pressure Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba to aggressively seek cooperation from minority parties Nippon Ishin no Kai and Democratic Party for the People (DPFP) to salvage his administration. However, sentiment within the LDP may turn against Ishiba as the party examines who bears responsibility for its poor showing. Lack of certainty over the composition of the next government is likely to lead to considerable turmoil in the coming weeks.

## CDP and DPFP emerge as big winners

The result marks the LDP's and Komeito's first loss of majority rule since their defeat in the 2009 election. The LDP has faced a major backlash following the emergence of a political funds scandal involving its former factions and lost more than 50 of the 247 seats it previously held. Komeito also struggled in Osaka, where it faced off against Ishin for the first time since the end of their cooperation agreement in the prefecture. Its decision to not field candidates eligible for election through both single-member districts and proportional representation backfired. Komeito leader Keiichi Ishii lost reelection in a shock result and indicated he will quit as party head.

The LDP and Komeito now hold a combined 215 of the 465 seats in the lower house. Even if it were to reintegrate the independents banished from running



as LDP candidates due to their involvement in the political funds scandal, it would not secure the seats needed for a majority. The coalition will need to explore new governing frameworks to maintain power that could include Ishin or the DPFP. The latter has emerged as a potential kingmaker after quadrupling the number of seats it holds from seven to 28.

The leading opposition Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan (CDP) also made substantial gains after winning 148 seats, an increase of 50 from its pre-election total. Former Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda, who has embraced a centrist-conservative approach as party leader, effectively presented his party as an alternative to LDP-Komeito government. The CDP is also expected to seek support from Ishin and DPFP as it seeks to claim power. It is important to note, however, that the CDP, DPFP, and Ishin only won a combined 214 seats, one less than the total for the LDP and Komeito. Such a coalition is therefore unlikely as it would also require support from the Japan Communist Party and other fringe parties.

## **Parties jostle for power ahead of deadline to select prime minister**

The coming weeks will see aggressive maneuvering among the ruling and opposition parties as they compete to secure a majority. According to the Constitution, the Diet must convene for a special session within 30 days of an election. The Diet must therefore select a new prime minister by 26 November.

Meanwhile, Ishiba could face growing calls to resign within the LDP after failing to achieve his goal of maintaining a majority. Although he has expressed his intention to continue as prime minister, internal dissent could intensify should negotiations with opposition parties falter, fueling uncertainty over his ability to maintain power.

The lack of a clear mandate for any party and complicated coalition dynamics could potentially lead to a degree of legislative gridlock. However, the changes in government will also present opportunities for consideration of new policy solutions.



## Number of seats won by each party

Party	LDP	Komeito	CDP	Ishin	DPP	JCP	Reiwa	Others and Independents
Seats	191	24	148	38	28	8	9	19
Seats Change	▼56	▼8	△50	▼6	△21	▼2	△6	N/A

## Upcoming Political Schedule

5 November 2024	US Presidential Election
15 November	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit (Peru)
18 November	G20 Summit (Brazil)
26 November	Deadline for convening Special Diet Session and selection of prime minister
To be determined	Possible extraordinary Diet Session, consideration of FY 2024 supplementary budget proposal (depends on political situation)
Late December	Fiscal 2025 budget proposal finalized and tax reforms
January 2025	Ordinary Diet Session begins
2025 summer	Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election and House of Councillors election