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Malta

Defeat for pro-European government

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The Nationalist Party (Partit Nazzjonalista) emerged shaken from the European elections, losing more than 10% of its votes in relation to the parliamentary elections of 1998 and those of April 2003. It paid the price for its policies of "adapting the Maltese economy to the European Union".

The Labour Party (Partit Laburista), which opposed joining the EU at the referendum of March 2003, won three of Malta's five seats in the European Parliament, although its progress in terms of votes was not spectacular.

	Parliament 1998 (%)	Parliament 2003 (%)	referendum on EU	European (%)	seats
Alpha Party (far left)	-	-	against	0.31	0
Partit Laburista	47.0	47.51	against	48.42	3
Alternattiva Demokratika	2.0	0.68	for	9.33	0
Partit Nazzjonalista	51.0	51.79	for	39.76	2
Imperium Europa (far right)	-	-	for	0.65	0

The breakthrough of the ecological party, Alternattiva Demokratika, constitutes the real surprise of this election. Although it did not win a seat in the European Parliament it scored five times more votes than in 1998 (in the parliamentary elections of 2003 the two big parties turned the vote into a second plebiscite on joining the EU and AD's pro-European electors voted massively for the nationalist party). The Maltese voters have thus confirmed the pro-European majority registered at the referendum of March 2003, while showing their aversion to neoliberal policies. The AD breakthrough, if confirmed at the next national elections, could lead to a crisis of the Maltese two-party system.