

Opposition party wins the most votes in Greenland election amid Trump takeover talk



Jens-Frederik Nielsen, center, chairman of Demokraatit Party, plays guitar as he reacts during the election party at Demokraatit by cafe Killut in Nuuk, early Wednesday, March 12, 2025.

Mads Claus Rasmussen/AP

NUUK, Greenland — The center-right Demokraatit Party won the most votes in Greenland's parliamentary elections, a surprise result as the territory went to the polls in the shadow of U.S. President Donald Trump's stated goal of taking control of the island one way or another.

Both Demokraatit — the Democrats — and the second place party, Naleraq — "Point of Orientation" — favor independence from Denmark but differ on the pace of change.

Demokraatit's upset victory over parties that have governed the territory for years indicates that many in Greenland care just as much about health care, education, cultural heritage and other social policies.

"I think this is a historic result in Greenland's political history," Demokraatit party leader Jens-Frederik Nielsen said at the election party after the results.

Greenlandic newspaper Sermitsiaq wrote that Nielsen, 33, appeared to be surprised by his party's gains, with photos showing him sporting a huge grin and applauding at the election party.



The Danish Broadcasting Corporation DR reported that Nielsen said his party would reach out to all other parties to negotiate the future political course for Greenland.

"We had not expected that the election would have this outcome," Nielsen told Greenlandic Broadcasting Corporation KNR TV. "We are very happy."

Nielsen also said that Greenland needs to stand together "in a time of great interest from outside," KNR TV reported.

Prime Minister Mute Bourup Egede had called the early vote in February, saying the country needed to be united during a "serious time" unlike anything Greenland has ever experienced.

On Wednesday, after the results were known, Egede thanked voters in a Facebook post for turning out and said the parties were ready to turn to negotiations to form a government.

Danish Defense Minister Troels Lund Poulsen congratulated the Demokraatit party and said the future Greenlandic government would likely have to "deal with massive pressure from U.S. President Donald Trump," according to DR.

He added that "it's not the case that you can just take part of the Danish Realm — the future of Greenland is based on what the Greenlandic people and government want," DR reported.

Trump has been outspoken about his desire to control Greenland, telling a joint session of Congress last week that he thought the U.S. was going to get it "one way or the other."

Greenland, a self-governing region of Denmark, straddles strategic air and sea routes in the North Atlantic and has rich deposits of the rare earth minerals needed to make everything from mobile phones to renewable energy technology.

Egede's Inuit Ataqatigiit (United Inuit) had been widely expected to win, followed by Siumut — two parties which had dominated Greenland's politics in recent years.

A break from Denmark wasn't on the ballot, but it was on everyone's mind. The island of 56,000 people has been on a path toward independence since at least 2009, and the 31 lawmakers elected will shape the island's future as it debates whether the time has come to declare independence.

Four of the five main parties in the race sought independence, but disagreed on when and how.

Naleraq is the most aggressively pro-independence, while Demokraatit favors a more moderate pace of change.

"What approach to independence will win the day will ultimately depend on if Demokraatit decides to form a coalition government, and if so, with which party," said Dwayne Menezes, managing director of the Polar Research and Policy Initiative.