

# Social Democrat Borut Pahor created a surprise by coming first in the first round of voting in the Slovenia Presidential Election.

Former Prime Minister (2008-2011) Borut Pahor (SD), supported by the Citizens' List (DL), a member of the rightwing coalition in office created a surprise in the first round of the presidential election that took place on 11th November in Slovenia. He came out ahead with 40% of the vote. He drew ahead of outgoing Head of State and the Slovenians' favourite politician – Danilo Türk – who is supported by Positive Slovenia (PS), the main opposition party led by Zoran Jankovic and by Karl Erjavec's Democratic Pensioners' Party (DeSUS), who won 35.83% of the vote. Milan Zver, who was supported by the Democratic Party (SDS) led by Prime Minister Janez Jansa and New Slovenia/ People's Christian Party (NSi-KLS) led by Ljudmila Novak, came 3rd with 24.16%.

Turnout, which was the lowest ever recorded in a presidential election rose to 47.68%, i.e. -10 points in comparison with the first round of the presidential election on 21st October 2007.

Danilo Türk had however been forecast easily ahead in all of the polls. He achieved his highest score in the two constituencies of Ljubljana (42.4% in the centre and 38.7% in Ljubljana Bežigrad). Borut Pahor came out first in the six other constituencies in the country. "My score goes well beyond what I had hoped for. I believe that the message in this vote is clear: together we can do more

than we dare to imagine," declared Borut Pahor, adding, "you have shown exceptional trust in me which inspires me to continue. As president of the Republic I will go beyond your expectations" (B. Pahor's government was overthrown on 20th September 2011 by a motion of censure against his reform of retirement pensions and the labour market).

## Results of the first round of voting in the Presidential election on 11th November 2012 in Slovenia

Turnout: 47.68%

Candidates	% of votes won
<b>Borut Pahor (Social Democratic Party, SD)</b>	40.01
<b>Danilo Türk</b>	35.83
<b>Milan Zver (Democratic Party, SDS)</b>	24.16

Source : <http://www.dvk-rs.si/index.php/si/>

Although the presidential function is mainly honorary in Slovenia voters wanted to show however their concern and expressed their lack of confidence in the future. Slovenia, which for a long time was top of the class in the EU in the 21st century, is now suffering greatly due to the international economic crisis, notably because

of its dependency on foreign capital and exports. Its public debt has risen significantly from 23.4% of the GDP (2007) to 47.6% (2011). Unemployment is affecting 11.6% of Slovenians (August 2012). The country's main unions have also called for demonstrations on 17th November against austerity and notably against

## Presidential election in Slovenia

### 11<sup>th</sup> November and 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2012

wage decreases for civil servants and reductions in social aid. Ljubljana is forecast to undergo a recession of 2.3% in 2012 and 1.6% next year according to the latest figures released by the European Commission.

On 6th November the ratings agency Standard & Poor's placed the country's long term sovereign rating under negative watch. *"Slovenia's long term sovereign rating, at present in A, will be taken down a notch if the Constitutional Court allows the organisation of a referendum on the law introducing a holding to manage state enterprises,"* indicated the agency.

The Slovenian Parliament approved the bill introducing the holding to manage state enterprises on 28th September and on 23rd October a bad bank was created to absorb the State banks' non-performing loans. 30 MPs from the Slovenian opposition party Positive Slovenia put in a request a week later for a referendum to be organised on each of these laws. The one governing the creation of a holding was accepted but the leader of Parliament, Gregor Virant (DL) rejected the one concerning the law creating a bad bank due to the fact that some signatures put forward were not the originals (40,000 voters' signatures have to be collated to achieve the organisation of a referendum). The government appealed to the Constitutional Court, which will decide on the issue in December.

Finally Prime Minister Janez Jansa is at present negotiating a reform with social partners concerning the retirement system and the labour market. The Slovenian State has to save 800 million € in 2012 and 950 million the following year.

*"It is only the first round and it is a warning to the political classes by the electorate which is disappointed by our policy,"* declared outgoing President Danilo Türk. *"By the 2nd round I shall have done everything to show the conceptual differences between myself and my rival,"* he added. Danilo Türk explained his result via the low turnout rate. The outgoing Head of State has always wanted to lie above the political splits but from the start of his mandate he stood against Prime Minister Janez Jansa. He refused to approve the appointment of the former Foreign Minister, Dimitrij Rupel, as Slovenia's new ambassador to Italy. The battle between the two men will never be settled. Last January after the general elections on 4th December 2011 Danilo Türk maintained that Janez Jansa, who was being prosecuted in the Patria affair, did not have the necessary legitimacy to form a government.

Danilo Türk and Borut Pahor will be facing each other in the second round on 2nd December next and for the first time in a Presidential election the Slovenians will have to choose between two leftwing candidates. Prime Minister Janez Jansa has called on the Slovenians to vote for *"one of the two candidates who supports reform, notably in terms of the retirement system and the banks,"* a call which implies supporting Borut Pahor.

According to the first poll published after 11th November two thirds of Milan Zver's voters (65%) are about to vote for Borut Pahor in the second round.

See all of our publications on our site:  
**[www.robert-schuman.eu](http://www.robert-schuman.eu)**

Publishing director : Pascale JOANNIN

**THE ROBERT SCHUMAN FOUNDATION**, created in 1991 and acknowledged by State decree in 1992, is the main French research centre on Europe. It develops research on the European Union and its policies and promotes the content of these in France, Europe and abroad. It encourages, enriches and stimulates European debate thanks to its research, publications and the organization of conferences. The Foundation is presided over by Mr. Jean-Dominique Giuliani.