

Finland's right-wing opposition party wins parliamentary elections, defeating Sana Marin's Social Democrats

The National Coalition Party, a right-wing opposition party, emerged victorious in Finland's parliamentary elections held on Sunday (local time), according to Yleisradio Oy, the country's national public broadcasting company. The party, led by Petteri Orpo, secured over 93.4 percent of the votes, paving the way for a new Prime Minister to take charge soon. Orpo expressed his delight at the win, stating, "Do you know what? It was a win," as he greeted jubilant supporters. In contrast, the current Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Social Democrats finished third. The far-right Finns Party won seven new MPs and secured 20 percent of the vote.

Finland, national parliament elections:

100.0% counted

Kok.-EPP: 20.8% (+3.8)

PS-ID: 20.1% (+2.6)

SDP-S&D: 19.9% (+2.2)

Kesk.-RE: 11.3% (-2.5)

Vas.-LEFT: 7.1% (-1.1)

Vihr.-G/EFA: 7.0% (-4.5)

SFP-RE: 4.3% (-0.2)

KD-EPP: 4.2% (+0.3)

...

+/- vs. 2019 election [#Finland pic.twitter.com/i4ETiZL0pL](https://twitter.com/i4ETiZL0pL)

— Europe Elects (@EuropeElects) [April 2, 2023](https://twitter.com/EuropeElects/status/1638444444444444444)

The National Coalition Party emerged as the front-runner with 20.7 percent of the vote, closely followed by the right-wing populist party The Finns with 20.1 percent, while the Social Democratic Party of Marin secured 19.9 percent. The Centre Party, Left Alliance, and Greens suffered significant losses after participating in the five-party coalition, with all three leaders stating that it would be challenging for them to return to government after the election results.

Forming a new government in the new parliament will be a difficult task for Orpo, according

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to Yleisradio Oy. His first priority will be to establish common ground on key issues with each of the parties and explore the possibility of drafting a government programme. Once this is done, he will negotiate with his preferred coalition partners and formulate a plan for the next four years. The NCP has led in polls for nearly two years, but its lead has diminished in recent months. The party has pledged to reduce spending and curb the rise of public debt, which has risen to just over 70 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) since Marin took office in 2019, according to Al Jazeera.

NCP on Ukraine

In his victory speech, Orpo, a former finance minister, pledged to maintain Finland's strong solidarity with Ukraine during his tenure, stating that "we stand by you, with you." He condemned the ongoing conflict and called on Russian President Vladimir Putin to withdraw his troops from Ukraine, warning that he would "lose" if he did not.

Congratulations to my friend [@PetteriOrpo](#) for winning the elections in Finland!

At this crucial time towards [@NATO](#) membership, the people of Finland know that our commitment to protecting our shared values across Europe will only get stronger.

Yhdessä vahvempia 🇪🇺🇪🇺🇪🇺 pic.twitter.com/2tmeUn88H8

— Roberta Metsola (@EP_President) [April 2, 2023](#)

Tweet by European Parliament President

The elections took place against the backdrop of Finland's bid to join NATO, which was given the green light by alliance members Turkey and Hungary. Finland shares a border with Russia, and the country's possible entry into NATO has caused concern in Moscow.

Sanna Marin's Leadership Comes to an End

Sanna Marin, the world's youngest prime minister, has seen her four-year term come to a close. Marin assumed office in 2019, and her leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic and Finland's progress towards NATO membership have been widely praised.

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Marin's personal life has also attracted attention, with some hailing her as a role model for young female leaders. However, her behaviour has also been criticized, particularly after photos and videos emerged of her drinking and dancing with friends. She apologized and took a drug test but defended her right to enjoy a social life.

Marin's upbringing in a "very poor" household and her determination to succeed through hard work have been noted by her supporters. She has a master's degree in administrative studies and a five-year-old daughter with her partner Markus Raikkonen, whom she married while in office.

Although the Social Democratic Party (SDP) could still be part of the new coalition, Marin's time as prime minister has come to an end, and the largest party, the NCP, will have the first opportunity to form a majority government.

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