

The Rightwing Opposition Forces forecast to win in the Slovenian General Elections on 4th December next.

from **Corinne Deloy**
translated by Helen Levy

ANALYSIS
1 month before
the poll

On 4th December next Slovenia will be holding the first early general elections in its history. This election follows parliament's rejection on 20th September last of the confidence motion presented by Borut Pahor's government (Social Democratic Party, SD). 51 MPs of the Democratic Party (SDS), the People's Party (SLS), the Slovenian National Party (SNS), Zares (Z) and of the Democratic Pensioners' Party (DeSUS) voted against the text, 36 members of the Social Democratic Party and of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDS) as well as three independent MPs voted in support. The Slovenian Parliament was dissolved on 21st October.

Borut Pahor is the third Slovenian head of government to fall after Alojz Peterle (Slovenian Christian-Democrats) in 1992 and Janez Drnovsek (LDS) in 2000. After the announcement of the government's collapse, President of the Republic, Danilo Türk left New York where he was attending the UN's General Assembly to return to Ljubljana. "The vote of defiance has worsened the political crisis," he declared, calling on all political parties to show courage rapidly in order to find solutions to the crisis in the interest of the Slovenian people.

"The vote of defiance is good news because it will lead to a new government that will have wider public support, which is vital if the necessary decisions are to be taken," declared Janez Sustarsic, professor at the Faculty of Management in Koper.

The Slovenian Political System

Slovenia has a bicameral parliament. The Drzavni Zbor (lower chamber, National Assembly) comprises 90 members, all elected for a 4 year period by proportional representation. The Constitution guarantees a seat to each of the Italian and Hungarian minorities. The Drzavni Svet (upper chamber, National Council) is elected for 5 years by indirect suffrage and comprises 40 members: 18 representatives of the professional and socio-economic sectors (4 for the employers, 4 for the employees, 4 for the farmers, SME's and independent workers and 6 for non-profit making organisations) and 22 members representing local interests. The role of the Drzavni Svet is consultative.

Political parties have to win at least 4% of the vote to be represented in the Drzavni Zbor.

At present 7 political parties are represented in the outgoing Drzavni Zbor as follows:

- the Social-Democratic Party (SD), founded in 1993, lies to the left of the political scale and was born of the former Communist Party (PCSQ); it is chaired by Prime Minister, Borut Pahor; it has 29 seats;
- the Democratic Party (SDS), is a liberal party created in 1989 and led by former head of government (2004-2008) Janez Jansa. It is the main opposition party and has 28 MPs;
- Zares (Real, Z), a party founded by former Liberal Democratic MPs on 6th October 2007. It is led by Gregor Golobic and has 9 seats;
- the Democratic Pensioners' Party (DeSUS), created in 1991, chaired since 2005 by Karl Erjavec is a member of the government coalition, with 7 MPs;
- the People's Party (SLS), a liberal party created in 1988, is led by Radovan Zerjav with 5 MPs;

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- the National Party (SNS), a far right movement founded in 1991, is chaired by Zmagelj Jelenc, with 5 MPs.

- the Liberal Democratic Party (LDS), is a member of the outgoing government led by Katarina Kresal since 2008 (she was re-elected on 24th August last). Member of all the government coalitions between 1992 and 2004, except for an interruption of several months between May and November 2000; it has 5 seats;

The President of the Republic is elected by direct universal suffrage every five years in Slovenia. Danilo Türk, with the support of the Social Democrats, won the second round of the last presidential election on 11th November 2007. He won 68.26% of the vote, beating his rival Alojz Peterle, the candidate of the forces in office at the time – who won 31.74% of the vote. Turnout rose to 57.78% (57.6% in the first round on 21st October).

A Latent Political Crisis

Victor in the previous general elections on 21st September 2008, the Social Democratic Party formed a government coalition with three others: Zares, the Liberal Democratic Party and the Democratic Pensioners' Party. In May 2011, the latter, which was against the raising of the legal retirement age, put forward by the Prime Minister, chose to quit office, thereby depriving Borut Pahor's government of its parliamentary majority in the Drzavni Zavor. The following month Zares also quit government, after the failure of the referendum on 5th June with regard to the raising of the legal age of retirement to 65.

Finally on 10th August the Interior Minister and Liberal Democratic leader, Katarina Kresal was forced to resign after legal proceedings were taken against her for corruption. She is suspected of having accepted the lease of an office for the new National Investigation Office, whilst she personally knew the owner of Ram Invest, the company that was renting out the property. Five Liberal Democratic Party ministers left government just afterwards.

Now comprising a minority in Parliament, Borut Pahor's government is at its lowest ebb in the polls. A poll published in September by the daily Dnevnik

indicated that only 12.7% of the Slovenians believed that the government coalition had led the country properly, with a wide majority thinking (83.9%) that it had failed to do this. Apart from internal political tension within the government and the loss of his parliamentary majority, the Prime Minister was further weakened by his failure in four referenda organised this year.

On 10th April, a majority of Slovenians said "no" to the introduction of a new work contract for the unemployed, students and pensioners that would enable anyone aged 15 and over to work more than 720 hours per year. The holders of this contract would not have been paid as much and would not have had any sick leave, holiday pay or redundancy compensation. Eight Slovenians in ten (80.16%) voted against the referendum. Turnout totalled 34%.

On 5th June nearly three quarters of voters (72.05%) voted against the raising of the age of retirement and of changes to the way pensions are funded. Turnout rose to 40.46%.

An even higher percentage (75.41%) rejected stepping up measures against illegal work (40.43% turned out) and 70.88% refused the change in the law governing the opening of secret service archives approved on 4th February (which would restrict access to documents dating back to the communist era, by giving authority to a special committee to approve consultation of the archives on an individual basis). Turnout totalled 40.41%.

The reform of the retirement scheme had been demanded by the European Commission and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in order to counter the ageing of the population and to guarantee the stability of public finances. "The implementation of the retirement reform is vital not just to guarantee stability in the future but also now," said Antonio Spilimbergo, the IMF head of mission. The reform had been approved by Parliament in December 2010 before the Democratic Party and the unions had succeeded in collating the necessary number of signatures to achieve a referendum on the issue. "We are still masters of our future. But if we do not support the pension reform then public finance will collapse," declared Borut Pahor. Slovenian Central Bank governor, Marko Kranjec made a rare intervention in the

debate calling on the electorate to vote in support of the reform. "We ask you to think very seriously, not only about the short term effort required by the reform but also about long terms prospects. A "no" to this reform could endanger Slovenia's credit ratings, raise the cost of loans, damage competitiveness and economic growth," he said.

The country's socio-economic situation

Slovenia, which for a long time was top of the class amongst the 12 new EU members, has been the most seriously affected of the 27 by the international financial crisis due to its dependency on foreign capital and exports. "Since the adoption of the single currency no reform which could have boosted the economy or improve public finances has been approved," declared Marko Mrsnik, director of the Finance Department at the ratings agency Standard&Poor's. Whilst its GDP growth totalled 7% in 2007, Ljubljana experienced a recession of 7.8% in 2009. The following year the GDP totalled 1.4%, a figure that is due to remain the same in 2011 (below the 0.77 points forecast by Borut Pahor's government).

Slovenian debt has risen significantly, from 22.5% to 43.3% of the GDP between 2008 and 2010. The government wants to reduce State spending by 365 million € to bring down the public deficit to 5.5% of the GDP. Since 2008 unemployment has more than doubled and is now affecting 12% of the working population, notably young people. More than half of those aged 18 to 24 (55%) live with their parents (the European average is 46%). Inflation has risen to 2% due to low domestic demand. Finally, for the first time ever, the Slovenian average wage has fallen in comparison with the older EU Member States.

On 23rd September last the ratings agency Moody's downgraded Slovenia believing that there was an increased risk of the government having to intervene in the banking sector. On 28th September Fitch did the same, taking Ljubljana's rating down (to AA-) showing that the government had failed to adopt the reforms necessary to stabilise public finance.

In 2010 Borut Pahor's government coalition implemented austerity measures (the freezing of civil servants' salaries and retirement pensions amongst

others). The government wanted to continue reform, notably regarding the consolidation of public finance, the healthcare system and the labour market). It also announced cuts in social aid. Borut Pahor clearly stated that he would not accept the referendum on retirement that took place on 5th June last and that he would find a way to make the savings necessary for the State's survival. He announced that he would save 364 millions € by the end of the year, in the hope that the opposition would support his plan.

The programme put forward by the rightwing opposition

Janez Jansa's Democratic Party is promising to reduce unemployment and bring it back down to its 2008 level, the last year in which the party was in office. To do this it is suggesting the reduction of labour costs to encourage the creation of employment, notably for the eldest and the long-term unemployed and to develop life-long training programmes. Its aim is to achieve an employment rate of 75% by 2020. Janez Jansa also wants to include a clause in the Constitution stipulating that every elderly person has the right to a decent, independent life, and also participation in the country's social and cultural life. He would also like to develop the e-administration project. Ljubljana, which until recently was Europe's second best in terms of the development of new technologies for procedures dealing with daily life (after Estonia, a country that is extremely advanced in this area), has dropped to 9th place in the latest European ranking.

In order to implement his programme Janez Jansa is insisting on the need for his party to win a 2/3 majority in Parliament on 4th December next. "We need a 2/3 majority because reforms cannot be approved without that and we know that some of them are not going to be very popular," he declared at the end of September.

The opposition leader may regret however that the early general elections will be taking place at the same time as the start of the Patria trial in Austria and Slovenia – an affair in which he is under prosecution. Janez Jansa is accused of having received around 900,000€ in bribes in 2006 from Austrian bu-

businessman Walter Wolf, in support of his party as the Defence Ministry was purchasing 135 armoured vehicles to a total of 278 million € from the manufacturer Patria, 73% of which is owned by the Finnish government (EADS holds 27% of it). This transaction, that was made obligatory on Slovenia's entry into NATO in 2004, was the biggest military contract ever signed by Slovenia. Jorma Wiitakorpi, former Director General of Patria is also amongst those being prosecuted. "The trial is taking place to influence the general election results. I have nothing to do with any of this and I can prove it. It's a joke," declared Janez Jansa. "Those conducting the trial are not expecting me to be found guilty but they hope that it will last and that 50 cameras will be pointing at me every Monday," he added.

A Flood of New Parties

MEP Alojz Peterle (New Slovenia Party-People's Christian Party, NSi-KLS) founded Fokus 2031, a Christian Democrat association on 16th September last. The former Prime Minister (1990-1992) and unlucky candidate in the presidential election on 11th November 2007 quit the Christian Democratic Party in 2000 (SKD) – which he had founded in 1990 – after its merger with the People's Party. He then joined New Slovenia-the People's Christian Party. Matevz Tomsic, professor at the School of Social Science of Nova Gorica believes that Mr Peterle wants to use Fokus 2031 to weaken the New Slovenia-People's Christian Party.

On October 1st former ombudsman Matjaz Hanzek and retired journalism teacher, Manca Kosir created the Movement for the Sustainable Development of Slovenia. The two men are placing importance on cooperation, responsibility, environmental values; tolerance, political transparency and also on the defence of the Welfare State, the quality of employment and the reduction of regional inequalities.

Blaz Kavcic, leader of the National Council of the Liberal Democratic Party (of which he tried to become the leader during the congress in May), has also said that he wants to create a new political party. He disagrees with the Liberal Democrats on major issues (globalisation, the role of the elites and sustainable

development). Peter Jamnikar, former Liberal Democratic Party member may join him.

But the most important of the new parties are Positive Slovenia and the Citizens' List-Gregor Virant. Positive Slovenia was founded by the Mayor of Ljubljana, Zoran Jankovic, and has the support of former President of the Republic (1992-2002) Milan Kucan. Former head of the supermarket chain, Mercator, Zoran Jankovic, who is of Serb descent, is one of Slovenia's wealthiest men. Former Democratic Party member he decided to stand as an independent candidate in the local elections in Ljubljana on 22nd October and 12th November 2006 after being "let down" – as he says – by the then Prime Minister Janez Jansa. He won in the capital with 63.03% of the vote, taking 23 of the 45 seats on the town council. Four years later in the local election on 10th and 24th October this year, Zoran Jankovic made a landslide victory in the first round of voting with 64.79% of the vote. With his motto Dela (It works!), the outgoing Mayor campaigned using the results achieved after four years as head of the Slovenian capital which he has managed to transform significantly: modernisation of the transport system, notably thanks to the construction of new bridges over the Ljubljanica (the river which flows through the city), the building of 3,000 new flats and a sports stadium, Stozice.

Gregor Virant, former minister (2004-2008) in the government led by Janez Jansa, founded the Citizens' List-Gregor Virant (centre right) in order to run in the elections on 4th December.

The Democratic Party (SDS) is ahead in all of the polls. According to a Ninmedia poll undertaken at the end of October it is due to win 27.7% of the vote. It would be followed by the Citizens' List-Gregor Virant with 24.9% of the vote and Positive Slovenia with 21.6% of the vote. The Social Democratic Party (SD), which is collapsing, is due to win just 7.3% of the vote behind the Democratic Pensioners' Party (DeSUS) with 7.7%. No other party is due to win over 4% of the vote, a vital minimum to enter Parliament.

Finally, according to a poll published in the *Maldina Weekly*, 26% of Slovenians would like Gregor Virant to become Prime Minister, 21.8% Zoran Jankovic and 21.3% Janez Jansa.

Reminder of the General Election Results on 21st September 2008 in Slovenia

Turnout: 63.10%

Political Parties	No. /votes won	% /votes won	No. / seats
Social Democratic Party (SD)	320 248	30,45	29
Democratic Party(SDS)	307 735	29,26	28
Zares (Z)	98 526	9,37	9
The Democratic Pensioners' Party (DeSUS)	78 353	7,45	7
National Party (SNS)	56 832	5,40	5
People's Party (SLS)	54 809	5,21	5
Democratic Liberal Party (LDS)	54 771	5,21	5
Others	80 642	7,65	0
Italian and Hungarian Communities			2

Source : Slovenian elections internet site des (http://volitve.gov.si/dz2008/en/rezultati/rezultati_slo.html)

The Democratic Party leads in voting intentions in Slovenia just one week before the general elections

On 4th December 1,376 people from 21 political parties are standing in the general election – the first in Slovenia’s history to take place early. Seven parties will be present in the country’s 11 constituencies including the Social Democratic Party (SD), led by outgoing Prime Minister Borut Pahor, and the main opposition party, the Democratic Party (SDS) led by Janez Jansa. Four recently founded parties are running, notably Positive Slovenia led by the Mayor of Ljubljana, Zoran Jankovic, and the Citizens’ List-Gregor Virant, founded by former Minister Gregor Virant (2004-2008).

These early elections are the result of the rejection by the Drzavni Zbor (National Assembly), the lower chamber of parliament of the confidence motion put forward by Borut Pahor’s government on 20th September.

The Social Democratic Party, in office for the last four years, is struggling in the polls. According to a recent survey published by the newspaper, *Delo*, nearly three quarters of Slovenians (72.5%) consider the government’s work in a negative light. Outgoing Prime Minister Borut Pahor, formed a government with three other parties after the previous general elections on 21st September 2008: Zares (Z), the Liberal Democratic Party

(LDS) and the Democratic Pensioners’ Party (DeSUS). In May of this year, DeSUS chose to quit office in demonstration of its disapproval of the postponement of the legal age of retirement that was requested by the Prime Minister; by doing this Borut Pahor was deprived of his parliamentary majority in the Drzavni Zbor. In June, Zares also quit government after the failure of the referendum on 5th June on the extension of working

D-7
7 days before
the poll

time (the increase of the legal full retirement age to 65) and changes to pensions funding. Nearly three quarters of Slovenians (72.05%) voted against the question (turnout lay at 40.46%). Finally 6 LDS ministers quit the government after the departure of the Interior Minister Katarina Kresal, was forced to resign after her indictment for corruption. Borut Pahor is accused of delaying the dismissal of the Interior Minister, although he had been informed of the irregular nature of the situation by the National Bureau of Investigation. He protested saying that he had preferred to trust Katarina Kresal.

The outgoing government's economic results are mediocre. Slovenia has been badly affected by the international economic crisis, notably due to its dependency on foreign capital and exports. The country experienced a recession of 7.8% in 2009. This year, growth is due to rise just above 1%. The country's debt rose from 22.5% to 43.3% of the GDP in two years (2008-2010), unemployment has more than doubled (12% of the working population is unemployed). In 2010 the government coalition introduced austerity measures to bring the country back on track and to stimulate economic growth.

The Democratic Party, as well as the Slovenian National Party (SNS), led by Zmago Jelincic with the support of the other political parties, caused the failure of the vote on the austerity plan which targeted a 10% reduction in civil servants' salaries. *"A slap in the government's face was more important to them than reviving the country's growth,"* commented outgoing Prime Minister Borut Pahor. Although the parliament was dissolved on 21st October last, it was able to convene however on the request of at least 2/3 of the MPs.

The opposition leader qualified the election on 4th December "as being the most important one in the country's history." *"Not only is your vote decisive with regard to the way the Slovenians will live for the next four years but it will affect the way future generations will live also,"* he declared on 19th November last.

The SDS is putting forward 88 candidates, 32 of whom are women. It is also supporting four candidates from Avion, a movement created by the Mayor of Koper, Boris Popovic. Its programme, entitled *10 + 100 solutions for equity, jobs and development*, hopes to limit public spending to 45% of the GDP, facilitate the grant of loans and make national banks more responsible. Its wants to reduce business profit tax to 15%, reduce taxes on investments and on innovation revenues. It is promising to reduce unemployment and achieve an employment rate of 75% by 2020. It is suggesting the reduction of labour costs to encourage the creation of jobs, notably that of the eldest and the long term unemployed and to develop life-long training programmes.

Aware that Slovenia needs to undertake major reforms

but that these will be painful for the population, Janez Jansa is insisting on the need for his party to win the 2/3 majority in Parliament on 4th December. *"We need a 2/3 majority because the reforms cannot be approved without that and we know that some of them will not be very popular,"* he declared. Janez Jansa said that it *"would be difficult to avoid budgetary cuts in 2012,"* but that the SDS *"would share out the burden in a fair, equitable way between all Slovenians."*

Finally the SDS hopes to modify the Constitution in order to shorten the appointment procedure of all governments. At present this lasts between 2 to 3 months, and it is due to be reduced to two weeks.

Milan Kucan, former President of the Republic (1992-2002) and a sympathiser of Positive Slovenia, says that Borut Pahor and Janez Jansa have both lost the confidence of the Slovenians and have failed to convince them of the need for reform. Several members of the Social Democratic Party have also joined Positive Slovenia, including MP Melita Zuperc.

Zoran Jankovic, the leader of Positive Slovenia and Mayor of Ljubljana found himself at the heart of a polemic involving his two sons, who have been accused of investing money in tax havens. He will have a choice to make after the elections because since May of this year the electoral law stipulates that an MP cannot hold the post of mayor as well.

The Citizens List-Gregor Virant is putting 80 candidates forward, 37 of whom are women. Its programme is focused on the stimulation of economic development and the reduction of public deficit. It wants to reform the tax system to foster employment (for example by reducing taxation on small entrepreneurs), lighten the burden weighing on the middle classes and to reduce the number of the country's state institutions. It has however been losing ground in the polls since it was revealed that its leader had received 66,175 € in unemployment benefits at a time when he was declaring 95,252 € in income.

Janez Jansa has "accused" Zoran Jankovic and Gregor Virant of representing the interests of the wealthiest Slovenians only. When asked about a possible alliance with Positive Slovenia or the Citizens List-Gregor Virant, the opposition leader said that Slovenia needs as "united a government" as possible. All of the political leaders are avoiding talk of post-electoral alliances and are not saying with which other parties they might join forces to form a government.

The leftwing party, Zares, hopes to reduce the number of civil servants by 2%, by freezing recruitment, and in this way the country will save 100 million € per year. It indicates that the simplification of the administrative system would help Ljubljana save 300 million € and lead to a 10% reduction in public spending i.e. 250 million €.

Its leader Gregor Golobic says that it was impossible to ask more of workers, who were already heavily taxed. The People's Party (SLS), Slovenia's oldest party (founded in 1988), also wants to reduce business profit tax (notably that weighing on the smallest companies), to reduce the number of administrations and establish fairer redistribution of wealth.

Finally the National Party which is presenting 65 candidates is campaigning under the banner "Let's Clean up Slovenia". It is asking for a reduction profit tax and VAT, which it would like to set at 20% and 15% respectively. The nationalist leader, Zmago Jelincic says he is confident that his party will rise above the 4% vote mark, which is essential if it wants to be represented in the Drzavni Zbor.

According to the latest poll by Valicon which was published in the daily Zurnal 24, the Democratic Party

is due to win 28% of the vote on 4th December next. It should then be followed by Positive Slovenia led by Zoran Jankovic, 21%, the Citizens List-Gregor Virant 13%, the Democratic Pensioners' Party (DeSUS) 9%, the Social Democratic Party 8% ; the People's Party 6% and the New Slovenia-People's Christian Party, (NSi-KLS) 4%.

When interviewed about the qualities of the main candidates on the list one quarter of Slovenians (25%) believe that Gregor Virant is the most social of them (23% quote Janez Jansa and Zoran Jankovic). The latter is preferred for the post of Prime Minister by nearly half of those interviewed (45%), 22% speak in support of Janez Jansa and 13% Gregor Virant. Finally the leader of the Democratic Party is believed to be the best candidate to represent Slovenia in the world (34%), 29% preferred Zoran Jankovic and 17%, Gregor Virant.

Surprise in the Slovenian general elections where the new party, Positive Slovenia (left), led by the Mayor of Ljubljana, Zoran Jankovic, beat the Democratic Party (right) led by Janez Jansa.

The Slovenian general elections that took place on 4th December caused a surprise since the new party, Positive Slovenia, founded by the Mayor of Ljubljana, Zoran Jankovic, came out ahead with 28.45% of the vote and 28 seats in the Drzavni Zbor (National Assembly), the lower chamber in Parliament. He beat the main opposition party, the Democratic Party (SDS) led by Janez Jansa, which won 26.25% of the vote and 26 seats (-2 in comparison with the previous general elections on 21st September 2008). In 3rd place came the Social Democratic Party led by outgoing Prime Minister Borut Pahor, which recorded a clear decline: it won 10.5% of the vote and 10 seats (-19). It was followed by the Citizens' List-Gregor Virant, another new party, which won 8.42% of the vote and 8 seats.

After that came the Democratic Pensioners' Party (DeSUS) led by Karl Erjavec with 6.97% of the vote, 6 seats (-1), the People's Party (SLS) led by Radovan Zerjav (6.97% of the vote, +1). Finally New Slovenia-Christian People's Party (NSi-KLS) led by Ljudmila Novak is making a come-back in Parliament with 4.79% of the vote (4 seats).

Winning 1.8% of the vote, the far right National Party (SNS) led by Zmago Jelincic Plemeniti has left the Drzavni Zbor (-5), likewise Zares (Real, Z) led by Gregor Golobic 0.65% of the vote (-9) and the Liberal Democratic Party (LDS) led by Katarina Kresal, 1.46% of the vote (-5%).

Turnout totalled 64.69%, i.e. -1.59 points than the level recorded in the previous general elections on 21st September 2008. The centre of Ljubljana was the most motivated constituency (70.55%), Maribor the least (59.15%).

RESULTS

General elections in Slovenia 4th December 2011

"The results show that citizens want a different State, they have had Janez Jansa, Borut Pahor, now they want a democratic, efficient State, respect and consideration. Citizens voted for a new Slovenia, a Slovenia that will succeed, that will stand by others and that will be social," declared Zoran Jankovic on the announcement of the results. *"Janez Jansa and Borut Pahor have already had their chance to show who they were and what they were able to do,"* he repeated during his campaign. The leader of Positive Slovenia who has transformed Ljubljana, which he says he manages like a company, intends to manage the country in the same way. *"At the end of this legislature, Slovenia will have a 4% growth rate again,"* he maintains.

This election has revealed the Slovenians' defiance in a high turnout against the established political parties. Voters chose to wager on an entrepreneur who has produced good results as leader of his city. They rejected the Democratic Party, the favourite in the campaign, which did not succeed in convincing them that it could revive the country. According to many analysts, Janez Jansa paid for his fierce opposition over the last three years and for his aggressive tone during the electoral campaign. He was certainly affected by the Patria trial in which he was appearing. The former Prime Minister is accused of having received around 900,000€ in bribes in 2006 from Austrian businessman Walter Wolf, in support of his party as the Defence Ministry was purchasing 135 armoured vehicles to a total of 278 million € from the manufacturer Patria, 73% of which is owned by the Finnish government (EADS owns 27%). This transaction, that was made obligatory on Slovenia's entry into NATO in 2004, was the biggest military contract ever signed by Slovenia.

Zoran Jankovic now has to find the partners with whom to form a government coalition. *"I can work with everyone except Janez Jansa,"* he declared. Outgoing Prime Minister Borut Pahor has already said that his party was prepared to start negotiations. *"We are open to dialogue. We must think about our country's future,"* he declared.

Many political analysts are forecasting a left coalition bringing together Positive Slovenia, the Social Democratic Party and the Citizens-List-Gregor Virant. The latter, former Administration Minister (2004-2008) in the government led by Janez Jansa, said he was open

to dialogue but has set his conditions to take part in the next government: the Interior and Justice Ministers should not be held by members of Positive Slovenia. The leader of the Democratic Pensioners' Party, Karl Erjavec has also said he was ready to take part in a government led by Zoran Jankovic, likewise the People's Party.

"The formation of a government will be difficult. Zoran Jankovic will have to negotiate with all of the small parties in Parliament and the differences between them are great," declared Tanja Staric, journalist at the daily, Delo.

"Parliament's fragmentation leaves little hope to see the emergence of a wide government coalition which Slovenia needs. I hope that I'm wrong but I do not think so. I cannot imagine the next government completing its four year mandate. The country can expect further early elections," indicated Janez Jansa.

Aged 59, Zora Jankovic was born in Serbia. He came to Slovenia, his mother's homeland, when he was 11. A graduate in economy from the University of Ljubljana, he started his career as director of Mercator Investa in 1984 before creating his own company, Electa. He managed the chain of supermarkets Mercator from 1997 to 2005 and is believed to be one of Slovenia's wealthiest men. A former member of the Democratic Party he decided in 2006 to stand as an independent in the town of Ljubljana after, in his own terms, of being "let down" by the then Prime Minister Janez Jansa. He won in the capital with 63.03% of the vote, taking 23 of the 45 seats on the town council. Four years later Mr Jankovic was re-elected in the first round of voting. With the motto 'Dela!' (It works!), the outgoing mayor campaigned basing himself the results of the four years he spent in office: modernisation of the transport system, construction of new bridges, construction of 3000 flats and a sporting complex in Stozice.

The new government's first task will be to present a plan to reduce public debt so that Slovenia can stay on the financial markets. It will also have to start retirement reform, which has been asked for by the European Commission, in a country where the legal age of retirement is one of the lowest in Europe, (57 for women and 58 for men). Zoran Jankovic has already said that he wants to raise VAT by one point (21%), a measure which some of his possible government partners oppose.

Results of the General Elections on 4th December 2011 in Slovenia

Turnout: 64.69%

Political Parties	No. of votes won	% of votes won	No of seats
Positive Slovenia	310 071	28.54	28
Democratic Party (SDS)	285 205	26.25	26
Social Democratic Party (SD)	114 023	10.50	10
Citizens' List-Gregor Virant	91 465	8.42	8
Democratic Pensioners' Party (DeSUS)	75 675	6.97	6
People's Party (SLS)	74 917	6.90	6
New Slovenia-People's Christian Party (NSi-KLS)	52 084	4.79	4
Slovenian National Party (SNS)	19 558	1.80	0
Liberal Democratic Party (LDS)	15898	1.46	0
Others	47 441	4.37	0
Italian and Hungarian Communities			2

Source : Internet site of the Slovenian elections (http://volitve.gov.si/dz2011/en/rezultati/rezultati_slo.html)

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