



Government parties lost as Centre Party pulled its lowest general election result ever with just 13.8 percent of the vote to lose 13 seats with all votes counted. Finns Party came second with 39 seats, just one behind the Social Democrats' 40. Blue Reform disappeared from the map, getting just one percent of the vote and no MPs, while the third government partner the National Coalition Party finished on 38 seats.

Finns chairman Mr. Jussi Halla-aho scored a double win for the Finns Party, as he emerged as the evening's biggest vote magnet, attracting support from more than 30,000 voters.

The election was a tight race in which no single party was able to get 20 percent or more votes. This really is very unusual and a shift in Finnish politics. The outcome reflects an increasingly fragmented political landscape in Finland - the age when three big parties take turns in government or in opposition are over.

The overall voter turnout was 72 percent, up from 70 percent in the last general election in 2015. The election has seated a record number of female MPs in the Finnish parliament. This year women will take up 92 positions out of 200 as lawmakers, up from the previous record of 85 in 2011. In addition, this year saw more women than ever among the top vote-getters.

EU: As it has been agreed by the parties that the Prime Minister's party has the mandate to nominate the Finnish Commissioner to the EU, it seems at the moment that he/she will be a social democrat. The deadline to nominate EP candidate is on Thursday, so after that we are able to better indicate who would be the most likely candidate for Commissioner.

What the election result means:

Social Democrats (40 seats) chairman Mr. Antti Rinne has a mandate to start forming the government, but a weak one. The Finns are trailing at 39 seats and the Coalition Party at 38. Party chairmen usually give a good personal showing, but many SDP candidates scored more votes than Mr. Rinne. There is still also a very slight possibility that the share of seats will change as there is a recount in some of the election district.

Rinne will seek to form a government with a sufficient majority (as much as possible over 100 seats in Parliament). The basis will most likely be built on Social Democrats and the second biggest gainer of seats the Greens, but they will also need at least one of the other now mid-size parties of Finns, Coalition or Centre Party in order to have a majority.

Most likely outcome: Social Democrats, Greens, Coalition and Swedish Party (107) - this would however give the small Swedish People's Party too much leverage and Social Democrats might like to include the Left Alliance also to be on the safe side with the majority (and to avoid leaking from its left wing). Coalition would not like this and could require Christian Democrats to be added also to counterbalance the green/left front. This was the government basis of 2011-2015, which has been seen as the worst ever. This kind of "rainbow government" succeeded better in 1995-2003 - so we have experiences of both good and bad rainbow governments. Economy/taxation will be the most difficult area to agree on for this group.

Alternative outcome: the same kind of rainbow with Centre Party instead of Coalition. However, as Centre Party suffered its biggest loss for decades and worst result in 100 years, it is quite likely heading towards opposition.

Antti Rinne will start the formation talks with all the parties but everything indicates that he would not like to include the Finns - meaning that the Finns will be most likely left in the opposition.

What will happen next (tentative schedule):

- Election result will be confirmed on Wednesday 17.4.
- New parliament will convene after Easter
- Chairman of the largest parliamentary group (Antti Rinne from SDP) will call the representatives of all parliamentary groups into a negotiation on April 26. In this negotiation it will be agreed who will be the Prime Minister designate and thus initiate the government formation talks. The deadline for answering the questions presented by the Prime Minister designate to the parliamentary groups will also be agreed.
- The basis of parties joining the government negotiations should be known on May 2, so that the negotiations could begin on May 6.
- It is expected that the government negotiations will last at least the month of May - one key point is the EP election date May 26, it is not yet known how the parties will see that - should they aim to be ready before that or does it matter? Mr. Rinne has said that he would like to see the government appointed in the beginning of June in order to leave time to prepare for the EU Presidency.

Here are all the results again:

SDP (Social Democrats) 40 seats
FP (Finns) 39
NCP (Coalition) 38
CEN (Centre) 31
GREENS 20
LEFT ALLIANCE 16
SPP (Swedish Peoples' Party) 9
CD (Christian Democrats) 5
BLUE 0
OTHERS 2 (Åland representative and Hjallis Harkimo from Liike Nyt! / Movement Now!)

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