

PRESS RELEASE

Snap parliamentary elections in Ukraine could give carte blanche to Zelensky

The president's Servant of the People party may win a majority of seats in the parliament, but could still prefer to form a coalition.

Ukraine is set to hold snap parliamentary elections on July 21, only a few months earlier than the scheduled date. The snap elections were announced by newly elected president Volodymyr Zelensky on the day of his inauguration. He hopes that the hasty elections will allow his party, Servant of the People, to ride the wave of his electoral success before voters have a change of heart.

Currently most polls show that Servant of the People Party will have between 42% and 48% of the vote, which would be the record highest level in the history of Ukraine's parliamentary elections. With Ukraine's mixed election system (50% of seats are allocated through party lists and 50% are single-mandate districts), Servant of the People would need to win about half of the single-mandate seats to be able to form a one-party majority.

The next most popular party, Opposition Bloc (pro-Russian party lead by Yuri Bojko) has only 15% of the vote according to the most recent polls. Three other parties are likely to overcome the 5% threshold to enter the parliament are European Solidarity (centrist and pro-European party of former president Petro Poroshenko), Fatherland (nominally conservative – but de facto populist – party of Julia Tymoshenko), and newly created Voice (liberal and pro-European party lead by a local rock star Svyatoslav Vakarchuk).

Most likely Servant of the People will prefer to form a coalition to ensure there are sufficient votes to pass key issues. Mr Zelensky announced that his party would not form a coalition neither with Opposition Bloc, nor with Mr Poroshenko's party. The most likely candidate to enter the majority coalition is Voice.

At the core of the program of Servant of the People are anti-corruption measures, improvement of investment climate, and infrastructure development. The party has pledged to end immunity for lawmakers and make it mandatory to confiscate property from corruption offenders. It also has promised to expand Ukraine's cooperation with the EU and NATO.

Voice's main focus is also on the anti-corruption measures as well as judicial reform. Additionally, the party is in favor of introducing a land market, privatization of enterprises, and fight against illegal customs and tax schemes.

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