

<https://npa31.org/spip.php?article7444>



Chile

Boric's victory. What challenges for what government?

- IV Online magazine - 2021 - IV563 - December 2021 -

Publication date: Thursday 23 December 2021

Copyright © International Viewpoint - online socialist magazine - All rights reserved

According to the results of the Servicio Electoral de Chile, after the counting of 99.99% of the ballots, Gabriel Boric Font obtained 4,620,671 votes, or 55.87%. José Antonio Kast Rist received 3,649,647 votes or 44.13%. There were 70,272 invalid votes (0.84%) and 23,944 blank votes (0.29%). The turnout was exceptionally high at 55.68%.

The Chilean website Resumen wrote on the evening of 19 December:

The president-elect [Boric] has imposed himself according to the characteristics of Chilean politics, managing to attract the support of the former Concertación coalition [PDC, PS, PPD, PRSD] and the left, even the Communist Party, all thanks to a characterization of his policy that constantly refers to the consensus of the 1990s. This is evidenced by the formation of a political team with many names from this current [Concertación], which will most likely have representatives in the cabinet. [1] It must be said that the Apruebo Dignidad project has tried to present itself as social democratic. In reality, it tends to develop social-liberal policies, that is, a state that acts as a powerful regulator of the market and protects civil liberties. It is highly unlikely that the state entity will be given economic power to act in concert with private enterprise or by itself, as was the case in European social democratic proposals. The link with Bacheletism [referring to Michelle Bachelet's two governments from March 2006 to March 2010 and March 2014 to March 2018] is therefore deeper than just communicative support [Bachelet met with Boric and supported his candidacy]. An exchange with supporters of this orientation is envisaged.

Moreover, the forces supporting Boric will be faced with a very divided Congress in both Houses (Senate, Chamber of Deputies), which will give importance to negotiation and rapprochement with sectors of the right that are closer to liberalism. In the face of this, a possible social and popular movement could soon take to the streets, called by a social and economic crisis that has no chance of being overcome in the immediate future. In this respect, a social agenda that responds to the most felt demands of the Chilean people will be essential: guarantee of social rights and economic assistance.

The Constituent Convention process is being strengthened by the new government [which will take office in March] and will surely see its process accelerated, since in September the so-called exit plebiscite to register and approve the new constitution is expected to take place. The Boric government will be an important element in favour of the constituent process, and therefore the Boric administration will have to devote great attention to the constituent process and its finalisation, both in form and substance. Indeed, the outcome of the Constituent Convention will determine the framework within which the government's progressive project will unfold from March 2022 to March 2026.

Finally, a question will arise: will Gabriel Boric take advantage of the constitutional change to call for new elections and immediately consolidate the change of political regime. This would make it possible to unblock the situation [of the political balance of power] in Congress and thus bring about the necessary transformations for a new path for Chile. This challenge remains a big question mark.

Boric's victory. What challenges for what government?

At the very large demonstration held on Avenida de la Alameda, in the centre of Santiago, according to *The Clinic* (20 December), Boric:

gave a speech very similar in tone to the one he had given three days earlier, from Almagro Park, at the close of his campaign on Thursday 16 December. As on that occasion, he bluntly attacked the AFP [private administrations of individual capitalized pension funds]: We do not want the AFP to continue doing business with our pensions. The AFP, which today earn absurd amounts of money at the expense of the work of Chilean men and women, are part of the problem. And we are going to defend an autonomous, non-profit public system, without AFP.

Another similarity between the two speeches is that Boric made no mention in favour of a pardon for those in pre-trial detention in the [October 2019] social rebellion, although the audience at the Alameda spoke out strongly in their favour: "We are not all here, the prisoners are not present." President-elect Boric simply mentioned that he had "already spoken to the prisoners' families."

However, Giorgio Jackson, a close associate of Boric, beyond the differences, stressed that Gabriel Boric's government would withdraw all charges under the State Security Law against those imprisoned in connection with the October uprising. The question remains: will the pardon for the prisoners be the result of a "case by case" review - with all possible "exceptions" given the charges brought by some police forces - or a decision for a general amnesty.

20 December 2021

PS:

If you like this article or have found it useful, please consider donating towards the work of *International Viewpoint*. Simply follow this link: [Donate](#) then enter an amount of your choice. One-off donations are very welcome. But regular donations by standing order are also vital to our continuing functioning. See the last paragraph of [this article](#) for our bank account details and take out a standing order. Thanks.

[1] Progressive Economic Forum, 21 December 2021 "[Interview with socialist Chilean President Gabriel Boric's economic advisor, Stephany Griffiths-Jones](#)". Original publication: *ctxt* 18 December 2021 "[Boric es socialdemócrata, Kast sí es extremista](#)".