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Finland's Turn



Sources: The Leap [Photo: Finnish and NATO flags fly in Helsinki (Antti Hämäläinen/Lehtikuva/AFP)]

Sanna Marin is the third European social democratic leader to have brought her country into NATO before losing the next election to the right.

Finland is kidnapped by the madness of war. News reports show mothers baking NATO celebratory cakes, as online sales of NATO flags grow geometrically and Savonlinna-based brewer Olaf Brewing launches a themed beer called Otan olutta, the first word being a play on the Alliance's acronym and meaning the full name "I'll have some beer." Outgoing Social Democrat Prime Minister [Sanna Marin](#) has repeatedly stressed the similarities between the 1939 Russo-Finnish war and the current conflict in Ukraine. Hundreds of Finns, including the former chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, have

paid to have personalized messages inscribed on Ukrainian artillery shells fired at Russian forces.

The speech reached its climax last week, when Finland officially joined NATO, almost exactly Seventy-five years after declaring its policy of neutrality. The About 78 per 100 of the population supported the initiative, but This is a recent development. In 2017 that figure was only 21 per 100. The new Atlanticist fervor has been spearheaded by Marin, whose Status as the world's youngest prime minister and her fondness for dating Festive in Helsinki had already attracted international attention, which which earned him a luminous profile in British Vogue magazine.

His A tough stance on Russia later cemented his stardom. In March visited Kiev and laid flowers at the grave of Dmytro Kotsiubailo (1995-2023), leading figure of the far-right Pravyi party Sektor killed in combat in the war against Russia. He also called for a increased arms shipments to Ukraine and supported the construction of a 200 kilometers along Finland's eastern border, packed of barbed wire, to stop Russians fleeing the service Mandatory military.

Marin's predilection for NATO It became a beacon of hope for the new European progressivism. Light in substance but eminently instagrammable, this trend politics bases its appeal not on a coherent ideological perspective, but in a feeling of millennial satisfaction. Its modernizing ethos owes more to the New World than to the Old; He is so at ease in the annual meeting of the Bilderberg Group and in the audience of the World Economic Forum, like in a nightclub or in the pride parade. During the Marin government, this new progressivism has used moral capital of Nordic pacifism, as well as the traditions of feminism, neutrality and social democracy linked to it, to destroy it.

However, Marin's international power was not enough to ensure the victory of the Social Democrats (SDP) in the Finnish parliamentary elections on 2nd April last. The The centre-right National Coalition Party (NCP) won the better results, obtaining 20.8 per 100 of the votes, while than the Party of Finns (PF, previously known as True Finns), far-right, came in second place, taking 20.1 per 100 of the votes and crowning its Best historical result. Although the Social Democratic Party of Finland (SDP) won 19.9 per 100 of the vote and won three seats more than the previous general election held in 2019, He could not keep his coalition afloat, as the parties more small of it – the Alliance of the Left and the Greens – They lost five and seven seats respectively. Apparently, their supporters had tactically voted for the SDP in a failed attempt to weaken the Finns Party (at the night party) SDP voting, the most expensive cocktail on the menu was called "Voto tactical").

For Marin's opponents on the right his main Crime has been fiscal mismanagement. During the pandemic, the ratio The country's debt-to-GDP rose ten points, from 64 per cent to 100 per 74, which led the PNC, led by Petteri Orpo, to demand sweeping cuts unemployment benefits and housing benefits, in addition to of other social welfare programs. The opposition exploded effectively the discontent created by the rising inflation, which had caused an increase of more than 100 per 30 in the price of basic foods and drawn a possible recession on the horizon.

The Party of Finns, for its part, took aim at immigration extra-community, which he tried to relate to the economic crisis. Although all the main parties supported membership in NATO, there was some scepticism in public opinion about the political management of the State by Marín. Some pointed out that, although Finnish President Sauli Niinistö is supposed to be the responsible for the country's foreign policy, Marin seemed to have often exceeded its own powers; for example, at offer Ukraine F18 Hornet aircraft without first consulting anyone, including the Finnish Air Force.

Most likely, Talks to form the next coalition government will take place Continue for weeks. The result may be an agreement between the PNC and the PF: a "blue-black" alliance of bourgeois conservatives and right-wing lumpen-populists similar to Sweden's. Or, if the NCP is Reluctant to tarnish his respectable image, he could enter into an alliance "blue-red" with the SDP. Whatever the outcome, the PF leader Riikka Purra, 45, soon unseat Marin, who has resigned at the head of the SDP, as the most promising young politician emerging from the country. Purra obtained 42,589 direct votes against the 35,623 Marin: the fourth highest percentage in the history of Finland and the highest obtained by any other female candidate in seventy-five years.

Like Marin, Purra has used the social networks to create a specific personal brand. Your Instagram It's packed with outdoor selfies and snapshots of your diet based of raw plants. Other millennial members of the PF –Miko Bergmom, Joakim Vigelius and Onni Rostila – have taken advantage of their large number of followers on TikTok to secure a seat in Parliament European. Among young people aged 18 to 29 the Party of Finns is now the most popular, enjoying an approval rating of 26 per 100, the double that registered by the SDP.

The growing successes of the Finnish far right have been met with curious silence in the foreign media, perhaps concerned not to damage Finland's position at the time of its entry into NATO. In the days after the election, Atlanticist analysts and commentators were quick to point out that Marin's defeat did not mean a rejection of the military alliance.

Strictly speaking, they are right, but the fact is that following the electoral defeats of the North Macedonian Zoran Zaev (Social Democratic Union of Macedonia) in 2021 and the Swedish Magdalena Andersson (Swedish Social Democratic Party) in 2022, Marin is the third European Social Democratic leader to have introduced her country to NATO before losing the next election to the right. What does this pattern of behavior tell us? Perhaps an exclusive focus on Euro-Atlantic integration has deprived these parties of their historical purpose and caused them to neglect more pressing issues.

Original article: [Finland's turn](#), originally published in Sidecar, blog of the New Left Review and translated by El Salto. See Pekka Haapakoski, '[Brezhnevism in Finland](#)', NLR I/86.

Source: <https://www.elsaltodiario.com/sidecar/giro-finlandia-entrada-OTAN>

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