

EPP PRESIDENT: SDS SOLIDIFIES LEADING POSITION IN SLOVENIA LOCAL ELECTIONS

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On Sunday, 12 November 2006, Slovenia held the second round of local elections. Analysts rated these elections as the most exciting since the first democratic local elections of 1994.

The results for the governing SDS were impressive. SDS was the only party that improved its result relatively and as well in absolute number of voters. Specifically, in 2002 SDS elected 23 mayors – in 2006 SDS virtually tripled its mayors to 68.

"For the first time we are in the lead at the local elections as well," said the President of the SDS and Prime Minister **Janez Janša**. The biggest losers were Liberal Democrats. They lost almost 9 percentage points or nearly half of its electorate. The Socialists lost most of their strongholds; including the capital Ljubljana and Maribor city, just to name a few.

The other two EPP member-parties, NSi and SLS, in government with the SDS, also scored well in the local elections.

"If we speculate and copy results to the national level, we see that governing parties together strengthened their position in comparison to the national elections in 2004. This is definitively a positive signal for my government," stated Prime Minister Janša.

EPP President **Wilfried Martens** congratulated Janez Janša and his government coalition for the results: *"This is an important result since it solidifies the leading position of Prime Minister Janša's SDS, together with his coalition partners, at the mid-term of his government. I am convinced that this momentum will continue since Prime Minister Janša will have many more achievements to present: the accession of Slovenia in the Euro-zone as of January 1st 2007 – the first new EU member to join – and the Slovenian EU Presidency in the first half of 2008."*

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