

A centre-right government to be formed in Slovakia

On 23 June, Iveta Radicova, leader of the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union – Democratic Party (SDKU-DS) was entrusted by President Ivan Gasparovic with the mission of forming the government. SDKU-DS signed a programme declaration with the other three centre-right parties (SaS, KDH and Most-Hid) and is negotiating the composition of the government at the moment. The new coalition intends to focus on improving public finances, reviving the economy and combating corruption.

The government will be formed as a result of an agreement between Slovak right-wing parties, which represent a broad variety of views, from the pro-market and liberal SaS and the conservative and more pro-welfare KDH. Economic issues will be at the core of the new cabinet's programme. The coalition's priority task will be to make healthier public finances since, according to Radicova, the budget deficit will reach at least 7% of GDP. The new government is not planning to raise taxes and intends to simplify the public levy system.

The centre-right parties have declared their will to develop co-operation with Slovakia's neighbours, first of all making efforts to improve relations with Hungary. Promises have been made to amend the law under which individuals seeking foreign citizenship are to be deprived of Slovakian citizenship. The Slovakian parliament adopted the law on 26 May in response to the Hungarian law which enables ethnic Hungarians living in neighbouring countries to obtain Hungarian citizenship. The coalition has also promised to embark on an active policy in the EU, support for the Eastern Partnership and to establish closer co-operation inside the Visegrad Group, which Slovakia will preside over starting on 1 July. While negotiating the financial prospect for the EU, the new government intends to seek the liquidation of subsidies for agriculture.

The party leaders have agreed to divide the ministries among themselves in the following ways: SDKU-DS will have the prime minister and four ministries, SaS will head four ministries and the parliamentary speaker, KDH will head three ministries, and Most-Hid will head two ministries and appoint a deputy prime minister for human rights and ethnic minorities. Details of who will be appointed to certain posts are still being negotiated. The coalition agreement is likely to be signed next week. <grosz>