

Moderate Gains for Eurosceptics in Finland

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Eurocrisis in the
Press

By [Outi Keranen](#)

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The Electoral Results

In Finland the eurosceptic Finns Party (formerly known as True Finns) led by Timo Soini failed to repeat the landslide of the 2011 general elections despite polling 12.9 percent of the votes and increasing the party's representation from one to two MEPs out of Finland's thirteen parliamentarians.

It was the Prime Minister Katainen's pro-EU centre-right Kokoomus that gained the highest share of votes (22.9 percent) but fell one seat short of its aim of securing four seats in the European Parliament.

Perhaps the most interesting outcome of the Finnish elections was the strong performance of the left-wing Vasemmistoliitto-party which recently left the government as a protest to austerity politics. Following a five-year absence from the European Parliament, the party gained almost 10 percent of votes and a seat in the Parliament.

The focus of the media

Finnish media reporting on the elections has focused on the growing popularity of left and right wing populist parties. The broadsheet [Turun Sanomat](#) and the tabloid [Iltasanomat](#) declare the Finns Party as the biggest winner of the elections given the 3 percent increase in the party's vote compared to the previous European elections.

The northern daily, [Kaleva](#), on the other hand comments on the Finns Party's smaller than expected gains and suggests that the moderate gains reflect the toned-down Euro rhetoric of Soini. The newspaper notes that, on the whole, the Finnish election result sends a pro-European message.

The editorial in the largest daily newspaper, [Helsingin Sanomat](#), underlines the voter apathy that characterised the elections. The daily cautions against hasty declarations of the election result as a victory of anti-EU forces; the editorial asserts that votes for populist parties should be taken as an indication of the disillusionment with national governments rather than deep-seated antipathy towards the EU.



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Note: This article gives the views of the author, and not the position of the Euro Crisis in the Press blog, nor of the London School of Economics.

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