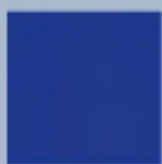


LLYC
IDEAS



A COMPASS
TO INTERPRET
THE FIRST
DAYS OF THE
PRESIDENT
ELECT.



CHILE
DECEMBER 2025

Chile after the polls

CHILE AFTER THE POLLS

A Compass to Interpret the First Days of the President-Elect

Without Surprises, Chile Opts for Change

Ultimately, what opinion polls and the prevailing political climate in Chile had anticipated came to pass. With 99.82% of polling stations counted and **58%** of the vote secured, **José Antonio Kast** (59), a lawyer and leader of the Republican Party, won the presidential runoff and will assume office as Head of State on March 11 for the 2026–2030 term.

According to data released by the Electoral Service (Servel), the Conservative bloc's candidate defeated Communist Party candidate Jeannette Jara by more than two million votes, out of an electorate of **13.4 million people, with turnout reaching 85% in an election held under compulsory voting**. For the Republican candidate, the third time was finally the charm, following unsuccessful bids in 2017 and 2021.

This decisive outcome, **reflecting a 16 percentage point margin**, underscores the victory of the right-wing candidate, who appears to have successfully consolidated the anti-incumbent vote. At the same time, it represents a major shock for the Chilean left, which will now be forced to regroup and redefine itself over the next four years. Beyond the weight that anti-communist sentiment may have carried among part of the electorate, **Jara also bore the brunt of voter rejection of the outgoing administration of President Gabriel Boric**. Despite this, Boric seems willing to continue playing a relevant role within a coalition -the Frente Amplio (Broad Front)- that emerged significantly weakened from the electoral process.

At 7:29 p.m., just an hour and a half after polling stations closed, Jeannette Jara publicly conceded defeat to the conservative candidate. At 7:55 p.m., President Boric himself, in keeping with long-standing tradition in Chile's consolidated democracy, called President-elect Kast to offer his support, emphasizing before the entire nation since the call was broadcast live **the importance of institutional** continuity. This message carries

particular weight when recalling that, during the campaign, segments of the right sought to cast the specter of a hypothetical new social uprising in the event of a conservative victory.

During his first speech as President-elect, José Antonio Kast struck a conciliatory tone and signaled a new approach for his administration, stating: **"A government is not built solely with its supporters. The opposition is also important. We ask the opposition for a sense of responsibility and statesmanship. We need everyone to improve healthcare and education, because I will be the president of all Chileans."**

At the same time, congratulations began to arrive from conservative leaders abroad, starting with neighboring Argentina through a message from President Javier Milei, as well as from the United States Secretary of State, Marco Rubio.

One noteworthy aspect of the election was **Kast's performance across all regions of Chile**, where he prevailed nationwide, including in areas where Jara had led in the first-round vote, such as the Metropolitan Region, Aysén, Valparaíso, and Magallanes. This outcome further confirmed that voters who had supported **Franco Parisi** representing the Party of the People and the third-largest force in the first round shifted their support to the eventual winner, as was the case in northern regions such as Arica and Parinacota, Antofagasta, Atacama, and Coquimbo.



It is important to note that José Antonio Kast entered the runoff with a nominal electoral base exceeding 50%, when combining his first-round result of 23.9% with the votes obtained by **Johannes Kaiser** of the National Libertarian Party (13.9%) and **Evelyn Matthei** of the Chile Grande y Unido -Great and United Chile- coalition (12.4%). This allowed him to prevent a potential loss of support while also capturing a significant share of voters who had backed Franco Parisi, who secured 19.7% of the vote. Nevertheless, a more measured analysis will be required to determine whether, as runoff polls had suggested, **a substantial number of Matthei's supporters ultimately harbored serious reservations about voting for Kast in the second round.**

In any event, the result represents the **second-largest margin of victory in a presidential runoff since the return to democracy**, surpassed only in 2013, when Michelle Bachelet defeated Evelyn Matthei by a 24-percentage-point margin.

Following Kast's victory, **key questions arise regarding the position in which the Republican leader now finds himself after successfully crossing this milestone and how he will arrive at La Moneda. How will he govern with a polarized Congress in which he will not hold a majority?**

To understand this process, it is useful to look back at the final weeks of the campaign. Contrary to speculation, José Antonio Kast did not modify his platform, nor did he make significant overtures to candidates eliminated in the first round. He maintained his measured style, and on this occasion the debates did not appear to work against him, unlike in his previous campaigns.

This strategic decision is understandable, as his narrative was clear and focused on restoring order. There was little room for error, and the objective was to capitalize on the momentum generated by the strong first-round result.

Forging consensus: a compass to interpret the first days of the President-elect

The main measures included in the political agenda announced by Kast throughout the campaign, particularly those **involving significant legal changes**, will require the President-elect to **build bridges and reach agreements** within a newly configured and fragmented Congress, posing an additional challenge to their implementation. This task will begin with the formation of his government, after most right-wing parties have expressed their willingness to take part in a **“Government of Emergency”** or a **“National Unity”** administration, with security and the economy as top priorities.

In any case, the government alone will not hold a sufficient majority to enact such changes, and since the close of the polls, numerous voices have suggested that the ability to forge consensus will define the legislative term. Many of these voices come from the business community. Kast will need **parliamentary support to advance his agenda** and, at times, will require **reinforced majorities to push through reforms** that had already garnered broad agreement among all candidates during the campaign.

From within his own advisory team, there is an acknowledgment of this challenge, as frustration over unfulfilled political promises and deep public concern about crime could quickly exhaust voters' patience. This gap between the expectations raised during the campaign and the results ultimately achieved in dealings with the Legislature appears to explain much of the sharp decline in approval of the outgoing president, Gabriel Boric. It is also evident that the expectations generated during this campaign regarding core aspects of social coexistence, such as security, the economy, employment and even healthcare, are far from modest.

In light of these lessons, Kast's political team faces a growing challenge beginning with the transition into government. **Will the first 90-day agenda focus on consensus-building, adopting a more pragmatic approach, or will values-driven debates prevail? How will Kast shape his cabinet, and what message will his choice of ministers convey? Will he insist on forming a Government of Emergency and therefore a broader-based administration, as he emphasized during the campaign? And how will the left, now immersed in its own process of reconfiguration after defeat, respond?**

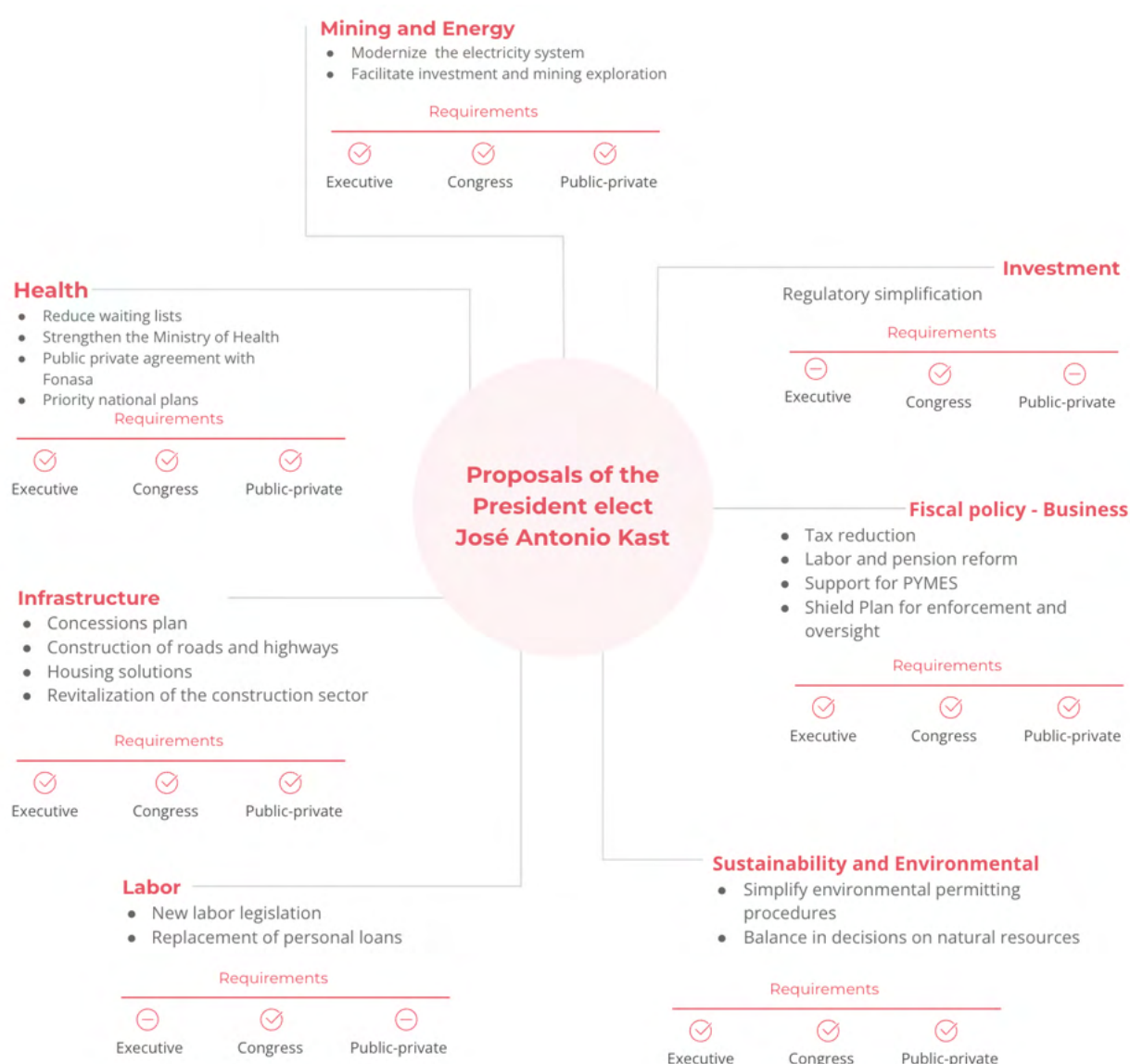
It is not difficult to anticipate that a **short-term pragmatic political approach** could create a more favorable environment for progress on **consensus-based priorities identified** during the campaign, such as security, economic growth, job creation and improvements in key healthcare performance indicators. A **values-driven agenda**, by contrast, with its greater **polarizing potential**, may prove more conducive to allowing emerging opposition leaders to define their own profiles. In the short term, this does not suggest significant opportunities for broad consensus within a legislature composed of 17 different political sensitivities. Business sources and several national think tanks argue that it may be advisable to postpone this agenda, often described as the cultural battle, to a later stage.

With a **fragmented Parliament** and in light of the practical lessons learned during the outgoing legislative term, all political, social and economic actors will be closely watching the profile of the new government, its composition and its ability to forge consensus. Attention will also focus on whether priorities tilt toward policy implementation or toward debates over values and ideas. A simple overview of the general priorities outlined by Kast during

the campaign highlights the reality that navigating the legislative term without building a flexible capacity for agreement will not be feasible.

Campaign teams are leaving behind an exhausting phase, but none are planning to rest. The next stage now begins, with the formation of the new government on one hand and the reconfiguration of the political space of those who were defeated on the other. Those who now become part of the governing bloc understand that the race for re-election began last night. Those who aspire to become the next contenders are already assessing how to differentiate themselves starting tomorrow. The traditional 100-day grace period feels far too long in the age of digital information and clickbait, barely covering even the transition phase. Finding a path toward consensus in this environment appears to be one of the most significant challenges the President-elect will face.

The following diagram outlines the main proposals of the President-elect of the Republic of Chile, according to his most recent government platform, together with the institutional and management requirements implied by their implementation.



Analysis of the Public Conversation: Decisive Campaign Territories

To better understand some of the main factors that ultimately tipped the election in favor of José Antonio Kast, **LLYC's Deep Learning** team conducted an **analysis of public conversation** around the issues that led supporters of candidates who did not advance to the runoff to shift toward the right-wing option. **In total, more than 20 million messages that formed part of the conversation around both campaigns were qualitatively analyzed.**

Although only a few hours have passed since the winner of the presidential runoff was announced, several key factors are already emerging that help explain why Chilean society is shifting toward the right and bringing to an end the progressive cycle that began nearly five years ago. However, **the fact that Jara surpassed 41 percent** of the vote prevents more dramatic interpretations for the left and preserves the perception that an alternative to the future governing bloc remains in place, an essential element in any democratic system.

Through the analysis of social conversation territories, six key battlegrounds were identified that ultimately tipped the balance in favor of José Antonio Kast. Each territory represents different segments of the electorate, with specific narratives, distinct opinion leaders and particular patterns of mobilization.

The Parisi Ecosystem

The factor with the greatest impact on the electorate was the alignment of voters who had supported **Franco Parisi** in the first round. The striking **19.7 percent obtained** by the candidate of the Party of the People proved decisive in allowing José Antonio Kast to secure a comfortable victory in the runoff. While this pool of votes did not transfer automatically, Kast's discourse advocating a hard line on **irregular migration** and a **strong stance against crime** resonated with these voters, particularly in northern regions of the country. As a result, Kast was able to capture a significant share of these votes or at least prevent them from shifting to Jara's candidacy. Without this support, a late surge by the ruling coalition's candidate would have been highly unlikely.

The Security Agenda

Security emerged as a decisive issue during the campaign. **Jeannette Jara** was unable to compete for control of this agenda, and her campaign attempted to shift the conversation toward issues such as the economy, equality or leadership. However, with **72 percent of chileans** identifying **security as their primary daily concern**, this represented a strategic misalignment in the Communist candidate's campaign.

Kast's campaign succeeded in keeping security at the center of the debate until the final day, maintaining consistent control over this issue. Jara attempted to counter proposals focused on technology and financial intelligence, but these initiatives lacked the strength needed to effectively compete in this space.

This dynamic helps explain part of Kast's electoral success, while also posing a significant challenge for his incoming administration. Expectations are high, and the new government's initial period of public support could quickly erode if concrete actions are not delivered in this area.

A Frightened Center

Voters left politically unanchored by **Evelyn Matthei's** candidacy from the center-right faced a significant dilemma in the runoff. Centrist voters were divided between their rejection of communism, which pushed them toward Kast, and their concern over authoritarian tendencies and conservative values, which pulled them away from the Republican candidate. This tension fragmented the vote within this group.

Although the **12.5 percent of votes obtained by Matthei** did not ultimately prove decisive, it appears clear that Jara, who secured 26.8 percent in the first round, representing nearly the entirety of the left-wing vote, was able to capture a portion of this centrist electorate. This helps explain, at least in part, how she reached 41.8 percent in the runoff.



The Communist Burden

Another key factor in José Antonio Kast's victory was **fear surrounding the concept of communism and its historical baggage**, embodied by Jeannette Jara and her inability to shed the communist label and reposition herself as a social democrat, as she sought to present herself.

Historical memory outweighed present-day considerations. Repeated references to Venezuela, Cuba and the Soviet Union activated fears among voters over the age of 45 who had lived through the Cold War and the dictatorship. This dynamic further mobilized the right and immobilized the center. In this context, sectors aligned with Kast succeeded in installing a narrative portraying both communism and the administration of Gabriel Boric as failed experiments, arguing that a comprehensive renewal of the State, led by the Republican movement, would return Chile to a path of order and growth.

Progressive Youth Mobilization

Compulsory voting in both the first and second rounds introduced uncertainty regarding the participation of politically disengaged groups, particularly younger voters, in the runoff.

Although Chilean youth are often described as progressive, the factor of a punitive vote against the Boric administration, combined with the appeal of **more anti-system proposals** such as those represented by Parisi or Kaiser in the first round, proved to be an important element in understanding the final outcome.

These groups, now primarily informed through social media and digital platforms, became a segment more susceptible to being attracted by candidates with populist elements. In this case, those tendencies aligned more closely with the Republican proposal or translated into a decision to cast a blank or null vote.

Once again, Jara's candidacy, having failed to capture the interest of this bloc, saw its chances of moving closer to victory in the runoff significantly diminished.

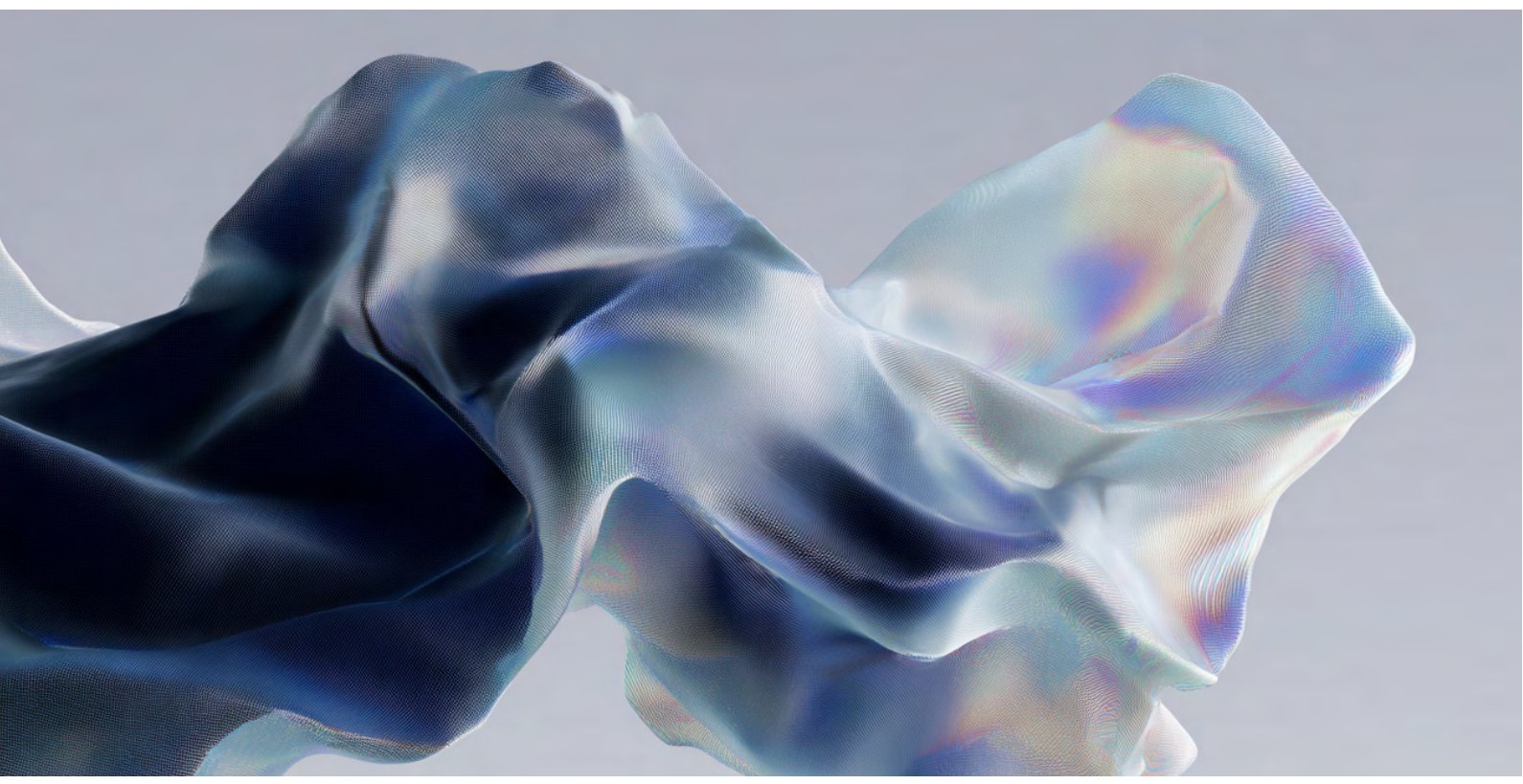
These factors undoubtedly shaped the outcome of the election in Chile in favor of Kast. At the same time, they will place additional pressure on the incoming administration, as the public is unlikely to show much patience for a slow or cautious transition. Kast himself has

emphasized that his government is meant to act and to drive change, leaving no time to waste. As a result, the first 90 days will be critical for the new president.

A Brief Honeymoon

Alongside José Antonio Kast's arrival at La Moneda on March 11, the **155 newly elected members of the Chamber of Deputies and the 23 new members of the Senate will also take office.** Following this milestone, internal negotiations will begin to renew the leadership of both legislative bodies, a process expected to be finalized by the end of the same month. Subsequently, the internal balance of power within Parliament will take shape through the appointment of members to the Permanent and Sectoral Committees of Congress.

It is worth recalling that the Chamber of Deputies will be composed of **61 members from the Unidad por Chile pact, 42 from Cambio por Chile, 34 from Chile Grande y Unido, 14 from the Party of the People, three from the Greens, Regionalists and Humanists, and one independent.** Meanwhile, the Senate will be made up of **20 members from Unidad por Chile, 18 from Chile Grande y Unido, seven from Cambio por Chile, three from the Greens, Regionalists and Humanists, and two independents.** While this configuration may appear to reflect a future majority leaning toward the political right, it also reveals and anticipates a **high level of fragmentation within the Legislature.**



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