

People's Front party says it will compete alone in 2019 elections

Ukraine

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KYIV, Nov 13, 2013 - The People's Front party will compete alone in the 2019 presidential and parliamentary elections, Concorde Capital informed its clients today based on a statement by party head and former prime minister, Arseniy Yatsenyuk to a party meeting convened on Nov. 10. Among his main positions, Yatsenyuk called for constitutional amendments to reduce the president's authority. The party will decide on its presidential candidate in 2018, he said. Recall that the People's Front party had been in talks with the Solidarity Poroshenko Bloc to compete in the 2019 elections together. The Poroshenko Bloc has the most parliamentary seats at 138, while the People's Front has the second-most at 81. Together they form the parliamentary majority on a de facto basis (though their coalition lacks seven votes to have a de jure majority). Concorde analyst Zenon Zawada added: "It's quite surprising to see the People's Front decide against a merger with the Poroshenko Bloc, despite the tensions between them. The reason for the surprise is that the People's Front has almost no chance of qualifying for parliament as its pro-EU "national-democrat" electoral niche is already oversaturated by the Poroshenko Bloc, the Fatherland party, the Civic Position party and the Self-Reliance party, all of whom have better chances to qualify. "Even though Interior Minister Arsen Avakov [one of the party founders] is quite powerful (and likely added to his personal war chest in recent years), he is utterly unpopular with the public, lacks charisma and has no chance of success as a presidential candidate, along with the party's other leaders. "We believe the People's Front is holding out for a better offer from Poroshenko Bloc to compete jointly in 2019. We also believe People's Front is hoping to win a dozen or so single-mandate districts (assuming the election law isn't amended). However, this strategy has enormous downside risk. The 2019 elections are likely to be the end of the People's Front party."

Photo courtesy People's Front website