

Veltroni supporter in Germany welcomes two-party outcome

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Berlin - Laura Garavini, 41, a Berlin-based Italian who campaigned among Italians abroad for a seat in parliament, welcomed Tuesday the new two-party set-up in Italy, even though her own side, Walter Veltroni's Democratic Party, lost.

Garavini was still waiting to see if she had gained a seat, since the postal ballots for the 12 lower-chamber and 6 senate seats reserved for Italians abroad had still not been fully counted when she spoke.

The allocation of seats for Italians abroad will not alter the overall result. She said the Democratic Party's defeat was "bitter."

But she predicted that the sharp reduction in seats awarded to minor parties would help cure Italy's political instability and establish a strong opposition to future Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi.

"This will revolutionize Italian politics," she said.

Garavini toured six European nations as she campaigned for votes among the 1.5 million voting-age Italians who live abroad in Europe.

Active in an association of Italians abroad, the Union of Italians in the World (UIM), she is married to a German and has lived in Germany for the past 19 years.