

Colombian presidential candidates in tight race

Polls show that Juan Manuel Santos, a former defence minister, could tie with Antanas Mockus, a former Bogota mayor, in a first ballot on May 30



Juan Manuel Santos
Social National Unity Party

Economist, journalist and politician, from one of Colombia's most influential families

As defence minister under President Alvaro Uribe (2006-09), was responsible for carrying out U.S.-backed security policies behind some of worst defeats for left-wing FARC rebels

Military operations – including rescue of **Ingrid Betancourt** and 14 more hostages from guerrilla hands, and killing of FARC leader **Raul Reyes** during air raid into Ecuador – have been successful, but have also generated controversy

Santos pledges to continue Uribe's hardline approach towards FARC rebels and free-market approach to foreign investment



Antanas Mockus
Green Party

Mathematician, former rector of National University, and twice-mayor of Bogota, son of Lithuanian immigrants

Famous for eye-catching stunts, once mooned a group of rowdy students, and dressed up in spandex "Super Citizen" outfit to persuade Bogota residents to follow traffic rules

Commitment to education and grass-roots approach to politics appeal to many young voters, but older voters say he lacks toughness to confront criminal gangs involved in drug trafficking. Has been criticized for unclear policies

Mockus, diagnosed with early Parkinson's disease, promises to clean up endemic corruption and improve social welfare