

**European  
Elections monitor**

# Toomas Hendrik Ilves is re-elected as head of Estonia in the 1st round of voting : a first in the country's history.

from **Corinne Deloy**

Translated by Helen Levy

**RESULTS**

The outgoing President of the Republic Toomas Hendrik Ilves was re-elected as President of the Republic of Estonia on 29th August last in the 1st round of voting that took place in the Riigikogu, the only chamber in parliament. Toomas Hendrik Ilves is the first president of the Republic of Estonia to be elected by Parliament since 1996, the year in which the present system to appoint the head of State was established.

The Head of State won 73 i.e. 5 votes more than the minimum of 68 required to be elected by Parliament. He had the support of the Reform Party (ER) led by Prime Minister Andrus Ansip, the Pro-Patria Union-Res Publica (IRL), led by Mart Laar and the ER's partner in the government coalition and the Social Democratic Party (SDE), chaired by Sven Mikser. His rival Indrek Tarand, supported by the main opposition party, the Centre Party (KE) led by Edgar Savisaar, won 25 votes.

"I am ready to serve the Estonian state and all of those living in Estonia, whatever their view of the world and their mother tongue," declared T.H Ilves after he was re-elected. He also said that "little by little, Estonia is drawing closer to becoming what might be called a boring Nordic state" referring to the prosperous countries, which on the other side of the Baltic, have become a model for Tallinn. Contrary to his predecessors the Head of State does not speak Russian. He recently said he supported Moscow's exclusion from the G8.

Aged 57 Toomas Hendrik Ilves was born in Stockholm, Sweden and spent a part of his life in the USA (New Jersey) where his parents were in exile, escaping Estonia's occupation by Soviet troops in 1940. A qualified lawyer, he also has a degree in psychology from the University of Columbia (New York City) and the University of Pennsylvania. Toomas Hendrik Ilves also lived in Munich where he managed the Estonian department of Radio Free Europe from 1988 to 1993. In the same year he gave up his American citizenship to become the Estonian Ambassador in the USA. He then took office in

Mexico and Canada. In December 1996, he became Foreign Minister, a post he occupied until September 1998. He was then elected chair of the People's Party. He again became head of diplomacy after the general elections of March 1999 and stayed in office until 2002. From 2001-2002 he led the Moderate People's Party which he left after its defeat in the local elections of October 2002 (the party then became the Social Democratic Party, SDE). In 2003 Mr Ilves became an MEP, a post he was elected to in the first European elections in which his country took part on 13th June 2004 and which the SDE easily won (36.79% of the vote). In Strasbourg, he became the Vice-President of the Foreign Affairs Committee. Another event in Estonian political life: Edgar Savisaar was re-elected on 27th August last as the head of the Centre Party with 945 votes, i.e. 59.5% of the vote, against 642 (40.4%) for his rival Juri Ratas, deputy leader of the Riigikogu and former Mayor of Tallinn (2005-2007).

Mr Ilves's second term in office as head of State will start on 10th October next. It will end in the summer of 2016.

You can read all of our publications on our site:  
[www.robert-schuman.eu](http://www.robert-schuman.eu)

Publishing Director: Pascale JOANNIN

**THE FONDATION ROBERT SCHUMAN**, created in 1991 and acknowledged by State decree in 1992, is the main French research centre on Europe. It develops research on the European Union and its policies and promotes the content of these in France, Europe and abroad. It encourages, enriches and stimulates European debate thanks to its research, publications and the organisation of conferences. The Foundation is presided over by Mr. Jean-Dominique Giuliani.