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Results
1st round

Outgoing head of State, Sauli Niinistö wins an overwhelming victory in the presidential election and is re-elected to lead Finland in the first round of voting

Outgoing head of the Finnish State Saulo Niinistö was re-elected in the first round of voting on 28th January. He won an overwhelming victory taking 62.7% of the vote. This success in the first round is a first since 1994, the year of the first election of the President of the Republic by direct universal suffrage in Finland.

Sauli Niinistö pulled ahead of MP Pekka Haavisto (Green League VIHR) who won 12.4% of the vote; MP Laura Huhtasaari (True Finns PS) won 6.9% of the vote and MEP Paavo Väyrynen (6.2%). The four other candidates won under 4% of the vote.

first round of the previous presidential election on 22nd January 2012: two thirds of the Finns (66.67% fulfilled their civic duty (+ 0.69 points). More than a third of them chose to vote early between 17th and 23rd January (36.7%, i.e. 1.5 million voters).

Turnout was slightly higher than that registered in the

Results of the Presidential election on 28th January 2018 in Finland

Turnout: 66.67%

Candidates	No. of votes won (1st round)	% of votes won (1st round)
Sauli Niinistö (Conservative Assembly, KOK)	1 874 334	62.70
Pekka Haavisto (Green League, VIHR)	370 823	12.40
Laura Huhtasaari (True Finns, PS)	207 175	6.90
Paavo Väyrynen	185 144	6.20
Matti Vanhanen (Centre Party, KESK)	122 321	4.10
Tuula Haatainen (Social Democratic Party, SPD)	97 255	3.30
Merja Kyllönen (Left Alliance, VAS)	89 816	3
Nils Torvalds (Swedish People's Party, SFP)	44 661	1.50

Source : http://tulospalvelu.vaalit.fi/TPV-2018_1/fi/ehdtulos_kokomaa.html

"This result is rather surprising. I am surprised and touched by this support. I shall have to think seriously about how I shall show that I am worth," declared Sauli Niinistö on the announcement of the results.

The Finns have therefore chosen the most competent candidate in terms of foreign policy, the head of

State who, in all events, has little power in terms of domestic policy. "A president of the Republic in office is very difficult to beat in Finland," maintained Pertti Ahonen, professor in political science at the University of Helsinki. "There is very little political difference between the candidates in the citizens' opinion. They are counting on the stability that Sauli Niinistö represents," he added.

Presidential election in Finland 28th January 2018

"The Finns aspire to stability, they do not want change for the time being. Sauli Niinistö's strategy, his tactics have proved to be winners, especially in terms of the way he has managed Russian President Vladimir Putin. People feel that Sauli Niinistö has the capacity and tools to face the challenges," indicated Juhana Aunesluoma, a researcher at the European Studies Network at the University of Helsinki. *"Sauli Niinistö played an active role in foreign policy, by meeting Russian leaders (...) people appreciate the leadership that he has shown,"* declared Tapio Raunio, professor of political science at the University of Tampere. *"Sauli Niinistö was able to maintain dialogue with Russia during crisis in Ukraine, whilst making Finland a firm support to Europe's sanctions against Moscow,"* added Teija Tiilikainen, director of the International Affairs Institute.

"His gruff, pragmatic attitude, based on the facts, is very much to the Finns liking," said Juho Rahkonen, studies director for the pollster Taloustutkimus.

Aged 69 Sauli Niinistö is from Salo (south-west Finland). A graduate of the University of Turku and a lawyer, he was elected MP for the first time in 1987. In 1994 he took the leadership of the Conservative Assembly (KOK), a post he kept until 2001. In 1995 he was appointed Minister of Justice in Paavo Lipponen's government (Social Democratic Party, SPD) before

becoming Finance Minister a year later – a post he would occupy until 2003. In this post Sauli Niinistö gained the trust of his fellow countrymen by bringing Finland out of the deep recession that it experienced in the 1990's.

In the general elections on 18th March 2007 he was re-elected MP taking 60,498 votes, a record in a legislative election in Finland. He then became leader of the Eduskunta (Parliament). In 2011 he did not stand in the general election, hoping to prepare for the presidential vote. After an initial failure in this election on 15th and 29th January 2006, in which he won 48.2% of the vote against outgoing President of the Republic Tarja Halonen in the second round, Sauli Niinistö entered the supreme office on 5th February 2012 with 62.59% of the vote beating Pekka Haavisto (37.41% of the vote). By doing this he brought 30 years of social democratic domination of this post to an end and became the first conservative Head of State since Juho Kusti Paasikivi (1946-1956). Six years later he has therefore managed to stay in office as head of State in the first round of voting by dominating all of his rivals with great ease.

Sauli Niinistö's second term in office as President of the Republic of Finland will start on 1st February next.

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