Jerzy Buzek elected President of the European Parliament

MEPs elected Jerzy Buzek to be the new European Parliament President with 555 votes in favour (or 86.18 per cent of the valid votes). He was elected after the first-round of voting. The 69-year-old Polish MEP will lead the European Parliament for two and a half years (until January 2012). President Buzek is the first President of the European Parliament to come from Central and Eastern Europe following the EU's enlargement in 2004.

Jerzy Buzek (EPP, Poland) replaces the outgoing President Hans-Gert Pöttering (EPP, Germany).

Enormous challenge and a great honour

In a brief address to the European Parliament in Strasbourg immediately after the vote, Mr Buzek described his election as "an enormous challenge and a great honour". Referring to the message of "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity", championed by the French Revolution whose anniversary is commemorated today in France's national day, the newly elected president said "all three of those words ring out in the European Union" today.

Once his ambition had been to be a member of parliament in a free Poland, but now he was President of the European Parliament. He saw this as "a measure of how Europe can change". He also regarded it as "symbolic" for the other central and eastern European countries who joined the EU in 2004 and as "a tribute to the millions of people who didn't bow to a hostile system". "There is now no 'you' and 'us': we live in a shared Europe", he said.

Looking ahead to the challenges facing the EU, such as unemployment, energy security and climate change, Mr Buzek stressed that "we first need the Lisbon Treaty so that the Union can be well-organised and effective". He concluded by paying tribute to his predecessor as EP President, Mr Pöttering.

Mr Buzek will give a more detailed description of the work programme he intends to pursue over the next two and a half years during the 14-17 September plenary session in Strasbourg.

Full result of the vote for the President of the European Parliament

Under Parliament's Rules of Procedure, to be elected President, a candidate must win an absolute majority of the valid votes cast, i.e. 50 per cent plus one. Blank or spoiled ballots do not count in calculating the majority required.

The results of the first-ballot was as follows:
Votes cast: 713
Blank or invalid votes: 69
Valid votes cast: 644
Absolute majority of votes cast required to be elected: 323

Votes for candidates:
Jerzy Buzek (EPP, PL) 555: Mr Jerzy Buzek duly elected President of the European Parliament
Eva-Britt Svensson (EUL/NGL, SE): 89
Curriculum vitae - Jerzy Buzek

Jerzy Buzek, born on 3 July 1940 in Śmiłowice (Silesia region) in Poland.


Professor. Studied at the Technical University of Silesia, Energy Engineering Faculty.


Member of the European Parliament since 2004, elected with the best result in Poland. Vice-president of the European Energy Forum since 2004. The rapporteur for the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Innovation as well as the rapporteur for the European Strategic Energy Technology Plan.

Represented the European Parliament during the 2004 elections in Ukraine and supported the Orange Revolution. Holds "MEP of the Year for 2006 in the scientific research and technology category" title awarded by the Parliament Magazine. Prize-winner of “White Coal 2006” awarded by the Polish Engineers. In 2007 President Pöttering awarded him with the statuette of a pigeon funded on the occasion of 60. anniversary of adopting the Declaration of Human Rights. According to the Wprost and Rzeczpospolita rankings (2008) he was chosen the best Polish MEP.


Delegations in the European Parliament: EU-Ukraine Parliamentary Cooperation Committee as well as Delegation for relations with the countries of Southeast Asia and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Political group leaders react

The first speaker, Joseph Daul (FR) on behalf of the EPP group, believed that "Every Member of the House is overjoyed that Europe is no longer split between East and West". He described Mr Buzek's election as "a powerful symbol of unity".

For the PASD group, Martin Schulz (DE) described Mr Buzek's election as "a historic moment", coming as it did 20 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall and five years after the accession of Poland and the other central European countries to the EU. "This shows the dream of democracy and freedom can become a reality", he said.

Guy Verhofstadt (BE), the new leader of the ALDE Group, said Mr Buzek had the full support of the Liberals. He faced a difficult time, with the Lisbon Treaty and the economic crisis. However, "there is a large pro-European majority in this House", said the former Belgian prime minister, and "we can only request that you use it" especially when speaking to the European Council.
Speaking on behalf of the Greens/EFA, Rebecca Harms (DE), congratulated Jerzy Buzek on his election, stating that "throughout your political career, I think that everything you have done has outlined the extent to which you deserve the great honour which is being extended to you." Mrs. Harms said: "I firmly believe that with you as the speaker of this House, we will be in a position to forge ever closer links between east and west."

Timothy Kirkhope (UK), of the European Conservative and Reformist Party Mr Buzek said that Mr Buzek appears to be "someone who will value the freedoms which this House wishes to have; the freedoms of expression, the freedoms also of looking ahead, of change and reform in Europe, and that this House must change and reform with it….You are someone who can embrace the changes which Europe needs now."

Lothar Bisky (GUE/NGL, DE) spoke of his support for the closer union of eastern and western Europe, but also emphasised the important role of Polish culture within the European Union. "I hope that eastern and western Europe will recognise and not forget the importance of the cultural contribution of Poland in our history…I think that [Mr. Buzek] will help to do an important job in that respect."

Speaking on behalf of the Europe of Freedom and Democracy Group, Nigel Farage (UK) congratulated Mr Buzek, but condemned the process of electing the new President of the European Parliament as a "stitch-up" between the main parties. He expressed his frustration that the Parliament, by utilising the European anthem and EU flag, is "pushing ahead with all the symbols of statehood", despite the continuing opposition to the Treaty of Lisbon.

For the non-attached MEPs, Bruno Gollnisch (NI, FR) regretted the manner of Mr Buzek's election, and called on Mr Buzek to stand up against traditional voices as he had done in the past.

Commission President's reaction

President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso congratulated Mr Buzek both personally and behalf of the whole Commission. Mr Barroso said that that Mr Buzek was "the ideal candidate given the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin wall and the fifth anniversary of the EU's enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe". Mr Barroso said he looked forward to working with him to build "a more powerful Europe based on solidarity."

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