Article

European Parliament

Antonio Tajani elected president: "I will be a spokesman for the whole Parliament"

Antonio Tajani was elected president of the European Parliament on 17 January, succeeding Martin Schulz. Tajani, an Italian member of the centre-right European People's Party (EPP) group and vice-president of the Parliament, received 351 votes in the fourth and final round of voting, compared to 282 votes for Gianni Pittella, the Italian leader of the S&D group. His term in office will end in 2019, when the next elections for the European Parliament will be held.

The election took four rounds of voting over 12 hours. At the press conference following the election, Tajani said: "This was a long day of democracy."

The new president also thanked his predecessor Martin Schulz for the work he did as well as the MEPs who voted for the other candidates, telling them he would be a "president for everybody". Tajani said he would seek to ensure that Parliament would be strong and have its views heard by the Council, representing national governments in the EU. He also said he dedicated his election to the victims of last year's earthquakes in Italy.

The election on 17 January started at 9.00 CET with speeches given by the candidates and concluded 12 hours later with the announcement of Tajani becoming president. In addition to Pitella, the other candidates were Helga Stevens (ECR, Belgium), Jean Lamberts (Greens, UK), Eleonora Forenza (GUE/NGL, Italy) and Laurentiu Rebega (ENF, Romania). Guy Verhofstadt, the Belgian leader of ALDE, was also a candidate, but withdrew before the first in favour of Tajani. Tajani received the most votes in every round and the final round was only between him and Pittella.

Antonio Tajani

Tajani served in the Italian army and worked as a journalist before entering politics with Forza Italia. He was first elected to the European Parliament in 1994 and served as a spokesperson for Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusoni, the leader of Forza Italia, in 1994-95.He became the commissioner in charge of transport in 2008 and take over responsibility for the industry and entrepreneurship portfolio in 2010.

Tajani, who holds a law degree and is married with two children, was re-elected as MEP in 1999, 2004 and 2014. Following his latest re-election he was elected vice-president of the

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1 I 3

European Parliament.

He is the Parliament's 30th president and the 15th since the first Parliament elections in 1979.

Find out more

Antonio Tajani
Parliament President's website
Press release
Video of the press conference

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2 I 3

Antonio Tajani after the results of the final vote were announced

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