
Sergio Mattarella re-elected President of the Republic with an overwhelming majority

Italy's president Sergio Mattarella has been re-elected to the post during a joint session of both chambers of the Italian Parliament plus regional delegates in the eighth round of voting. Mattarella received 759 votes, well above the required threshold of 505, and markedly more than the 665 votes he received in 2015. It was the second best performance ever since Sandro Pertini was elected in 1978, at a significantly different historical and political juncture. But over and above statistical data, the extent of the consensus - which is the result of an agreement between the forces supporting the Draghi government - is all that matters in the best interests of the country. Carlo Nordio, designated by FdL (Brothers of Italy) and Nino Di Matteo were among the other personalities who received double-digit votes, gaining 90 and 37 votes respectively. *Mattarella had made it clear that he did not want to be re-elected - for some time and on various occasions. However, given the political logjam, along with a series of deadlocks also involving leading institutional representatives, and in response to a strong and pressing concern within Parliament, Sergio Mattarella decided to accept.* "I will be there if you need me," he reportedly told parliamentary group leaders who went to the Quirinal Palace in the early afternoon, asking him to accept a second mandate. Other reported statements are along those same lines: "I had other plans but I will respect Parliament's decision." *By yesterday's sixth ballot, a total of 336 votes had already been cast for the incumbent president, thus confirming the core message of the so-called 'big voters', irrespective of the party's indications. In the seventh round of voting, Mattarella received 387 votes, in a crescendo mirrored by political and institutional players.* In the morning news reports featured a meeting at the presidential palace between Prime Minister Mario Draghi and Mattarella himself, on the sidelines of the swearing-in of newly-appointed constitutional judge Filippo Patroni Griffi, followed by a meeting between the members of the governing majority parties, which ended around 12:30 p.m. At 3:00 p.m., the parliamentary group leaders of the governing majority coalition (not the political party leaders, which is no small detail) asked Mattarella that he not turn down a second mandate. At 3.45 p.m. the Regions' delegation made the same request. Thus the eighth and decisive round of voting began at 16.30. Immediately after the proclamation, in the evening, the Presidents of Chamber and Senate went to the Quirinal Palace where they personally announced to Mattarella that he had been re-elected.

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