

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves today signed a resolution calling the European Parliament elections for June 7 this year and made a statement in the Estonian Public Broadcasting:

“Dear citizens of the European Union,

Today, I signed a resolution with which I call European Parliament elections for 7 June this year.

Once again, we will elect these six people from Estonia who will be creating the common standpoints of the European Union in Brussels and Strasbourg for the next five years.

The procedure of these elections has changed in Estonia when compared to the first European Parliamentary elections in 2004. This time, voters cannot give their votes to their preferred candidates. This time, people have to choose between the lists of different parties.

I hope that our parties understand the responsibility associated with this change; that they only present candidates that will go and work in the European Parliament if elected and thereby justify the trust their voters have placed in them.

Those who stand as candidates only to win votes are deceiving the public.

Parties and individual candidates who are applying for the support of people also have to focus on issues of importance during their election campaigns.

Dear compatriots, let us be attentive when casting votes. Let us remember that we will elect the European Parliament on 7 June and not the Riigikogu or the local council.

We have to stick together and see through the attempts to use the European Parliament elections as a warm-up for the elections in autumn.

This is why we have to remind all those who only talk about Estonian domestic policies during their election campaign what these elections are really about. It is important what the candidates intend to do in European Union politics.

We have already gained some valuable experience:

We do not need to break through anything in the European Union. We do not have to protect Estonia from the European Union. We are the European Union.

We can prove ourselves in the European Union only if Estonian delegates make themselves heard in the European Parliament; if they find supporters who help them achieve their goals and can support their partners in the achievement of their goals.

I assure you on the basis of my experience: it is possible. The delegates of even the smallest states can have a say in the politics of the European Union.

The European Union will focus its activities on the future of the Baltic Sea region in the second half of the year. This initiative, my dear compatriots, started in the European Parliament four years ago.

Estonian delegates were also among the initiators.

One thing is clear – the delegates elected from Estonia must become opinion leaders in factions that consist of hundreds of delegates from different countries. In the place where decisions are really born.

Knowledge, the will to work and the ability to cooperate – these are the criteria I advise you to consider when giving your vote on 7 June.

I hope that our parties and candidates will all come out with good campaigns. I hope that all citizens of the European Union will give their votes wisely.”

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