

Statement by the President of Latvia Egils Levits regarding election participation

Published more than 2 years ago

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Dear citizen of Latvia, voters,

Over the next four years, our country will need a parliament and government that would steer our country through the stormy seas.

Russia is hurt, but its yet undefeated imperialistic spirit will continue to haunt Latvia and Europe for a while. Russia will continue blackmailing us with energy supplies, prices will soar and our quality of life will suffer. We will all feel it. Global Covid-19 pandemic has subsided, but it is not defeated yet.

No one knew this would happen four years ago, when we took to the polls and elected the 13th Saeima. Even today we are not sure when these crises will end and what other challenges future holds for us. And we will have new, 14th Saeima, to deal with them.

That is why people of Latvia must choose a parliament and government that has experience, foresight, energy and expertise.

We will, first of all, need a parliament and government that prioritise security of Latvia, i.e., support development of national armed forces, introduction of national defence service and close cooperation with other NATO countries.

That is why I am highly sceptical of political parties and figures that hesitated to clearly state who is the aggressor and who is victim at the outset of the Russian invasion of Ukraine being able to assure our national security.

Secondly, Latvia needs a parliament and government that has the energy to boost growth. Saeima and government that can

enhance our energy security and provide targeted assistance to people struggling with energy costs. Saeima and government that would genuinely care about education and science. These priorities need to be captured in a clear programme and implemented in consistent phases. We need politicians that can ensure that.

That is why I am highly sceptical of political parties and figures promising to get us out of this mess quickly and easily. I do not trust those who offer simple, and most often useless, solutions to extraordinarily complex problems. Those who promise to cut all costs and increase all benefits overnight. Empty promises offer little help in dire times.

Thirdly, we need a parliament and government that values our national, Latvian identity. Saeima and government that is serious about strengthening the use of Latvian in public domain and schools, a leadership that wipes away the last remnants of occupation ideology from our public eye.

That is why I am highly sceptical of political parties and figures that spent decades dodging questions about occupation of Latvia and refused to condemn these acts. Those who had or still have hard time accepting that Latvian is the only official language in our country. Parties and politicians that still claim trade relations with Russia are possible and we should continue issuing golden visas to Russian nationals.

Dear citizen of Latvia,

Do not believe those who claim your vote will make no difference. Sometimes, it takes a couple dozen votes to decide which parties will form the coalition and which will remain in opposition. Sometimes, it takes a couple dozen votes to decide which party gets to nominate its prime minister.

Do not let the others decide that for you. Do not trust your fate in their hands.

Your vote may be decisive.

Democratic states are as strong as their people. We must demonstrate our strength by showing up at the polls on 1 October!

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