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Bulgaria: Presidential and municipal elections

- The ruling party candidate Mr. Plevneliev was elected President winning the run-off round with a 52.6% of the vote against his opponent who received 47.4%
- The ruling party GERB still maintains a clear lead against the opposition parties

The ruling party candidate Mr. Plevneliev was elected President winning the second run-off round with a 52.6% of the vote

The first round of presidential and municipal elections took place on Sunday, October 23rd. The incumbent President Mr. Georgy Parvanov was unable to run again after two successive terms in office. Mr. Rosen Plevneliev, nominated by the ruling party GERB, received 40.1% of the votes. Mr. Ivailo Kalfin, the Socialist opposition party nominee received 28.8% of the vote. A third independent candidate, Mrs. Meglena Kuneva who served as a former European commissioner won 14% of the vote.

At the same time, municipal elections took place. In the capital Sofia, as well as other major cities (Plovdiv, Burgas, and Pleven) GERB candidates either won outright or faced a run off round

with a high probability to be re-elected. As no candidate received the majority, there was a run-off round on Oct 30th. Mr. Plevneliev was elected President winning the second round with a 52.6% of the vote against his opponent who received 47.4%.

The first and second rounds of presidential and municipal elections confirm that the ruling government party GERB maintains the lead in the political stage of Bulgaria

In our view, the presidential elections results confirmed that the ruling right-wing party dominates the political stage and consolidates its electoral base two and a half years after the last parliament elections.

The Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria (GERB) won the last elections held in July 2009

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with 39.7 % of the vote and obtained 116 of 240 seats in the parliament, 5 seats less than the absolute majority. However, it managed to form a minority government with the parliamentary support of the nationalist party “Attaka”, which won 9.4% of the vote and 21 seats.

The parliamentary elections results mirrored the high popularity of GERB leader, Mr. Boyko Borisov, who served as the Mayor of Sofia. The support for the government has been declining ever since, a reflection of the recession, intergovernmental disputes and revelation of a high profile case of wiretapping.

Despite its waning support in the opinion surveys, it is evident that the ruling party maintains a clear lead against the opposition parties. The next parliamentary elections are scheduled to take place in July 2013. GERB stands a fairly good chance of extending its mandate for another four year period. If so, it will be the first party in the post communist era to win a second consecutive term.

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