

Report
Parliament Elections in Latvia in 2006

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The Parliament (Saeima) elections were held on October 7, 2006 in Latvia.

The elections passed successfully. Commissions of every level worked on a high professional level. There were practically no reproofs to their work.

1,006 divisional election commissions worked at the Parliament Elections in Latvia, as well 26 district, 7 major city, 53 city, 433 rural (pagasts) municipality and 34 county election commissions participated in the organization of the elections.

1,490,636 voters, citizens of Latvia who have reached the age of 18, had the right to vote. The voting process was organized both on the territory of Latvia and at 53 polling stations abroad.

60.98% of electorate took part in the elections. In comparison with the previous parliamentary elections (72.50%), the decrease of voters' activity was observed.

The Central Election Commission organized the pre-election opinion poll in the process of which opinions of voters were summarized for obtaining the reasons for planned participation or not participation in the elections. The main reason why the voters were planning not to take part in the voting process was that they did not have confidence in politicians and political promises (40.9%). The next significant reason was conviction that the participating in the elections would not change a situation for the better at all (17.6%). The third most widespread reason mentioned by voters - it was no sense in participation in the elections.

The main reasons for voters to participate in the elections were a citizen's duty (45.5%), a wish to support a certain political party (24.8%), and hope for a better future (13.1%).

The parliamentary elections in Latvia are held in five constituencies out of which 100 deputies are elected to the Parliament in accordance with the principle of proportionality.

In 2006 the Central Election Commission had registered the candidate lists of 19 political parties and their associations and 1,027 deputy candidates. The two deputy candidates were deleted from candidate lists by the Central Election Commission. In the first case the candidate had not reached the prescribed age of 21, in the second case the same candidate was included in two candidate lists.

7 candidate lists out of 19 submitted passed the 5% vote threshold.

A new phenomenon appeared in the process of the elections that could be discussion topic for other countries, too. Several public organizations which didn't belong to any political party sided in favor of definite parties. As a result the suspicions appeared that it could be one of the way how to circumvent the campaign finance limitation.

On this basis the application about contesting the results of the elections was submitted to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court rejected this application, however it recommended the Cabinet of Ministers to make arrangements to prevent third person participation in an election campaign in future.