

## MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS IN LITHUANIA 2007 BRIEF OVERVIEW

### *LEGAL BASICS*

There are 60 municipalities in the Republic of Lithuania. Therefore we run elections in those municipalities for Municipal Councils.

There are 1.550 member seats in all 60 municipalities (at least 21 seats per municipality or maximum 51 seats in largest municipalities). Seats can only be won by fully proportional election system. Office term for the Member of the Municipal Council is 4 years. Candidate must be at least 20 years old and be permanent resident of the municipality.

Ballot paper allows voting for 1 candidate list (political party) and making up to 5 preferences in that list.

Mandates are distributed (by quotas and remains method) among those candidates' lists, which received 4% of votes or 6% in case of coalition list.

Voting day has 13 hours for active voting, but there is preliminary voting from 4 to 2 days prior to voting day (on Sunday) in post offices or embassies and consular offices abroad.

### *VOTER TURNOUT*

There are 2.7 million voters on the voter list in Lithuania. First time in our history those who have residence permit were allowed to participate in municipal elections (even those, who had no citizenship). Thus even 19.604 permanent residents voted in these elections and 25 candidates exercised this new opportunity.

**Voter turnout – 41.3%** (1.112.981 voted). 1 of 11 voters used possibility to vote preliminary (at home or post office), i.e. 8.74% of those who participated in elections. We noticed that preliminary voting increased quite noticeable, i.e. it was 3.66% in 2002 Municipal Elections.

### *CANDIDATES AND RESULTS*

There were 13.422 candidates (8.029 men and 5.393 women) registered in Municipal Election 2007. Candidates were nominated by 24 different political parties. There were 604 candidates' lists in total, 8 lists were joined as 4 coalitions, and thus 600 candidates' lists were participating in these elections.

There were 1.550 Members of Municipal Councils (approx. 78% men and 22% women) elected in all 60 municipalities.

During these elections 1.068.857 votes were distributed among all candidates' lists and 91.82% of votes collected candidates' lists, which participated in mandates distribution.

Almost 80% of voters used preferential voting. 3,37 preferential votes per ballot (of all 5 possible votes) were used on average.

The Law on Municipal Elections provides that members of councils have to refuse other offices, which are incompliant with their duties. Thus 359 mandates were cancelled by Central Electoral Commission (CEC) and 66 other candidates were skipped on the lists (most of the candidates submitted their acknowledgements to Central Electoral Commission that they refuse their mandates and stay in other offices).

The official results in 2 municipalities were cancelled by the CEC because of violations of the Law, but The Highest Administrative Court cancelled both decisions of CEC. So CEC approved official results in all 60 municipalities.

#### *COMPLAINTS AND FRAUD PREVENTION*

229 complaints were received by Central Election Commission during the campaign of recent municipal elections. Most of complains are related to agitation, political advertisement and other violations. There was initiated one investigation process (regarding counting of preferential votes) in one municipality. Two election commissioners were brought to book in another municipality. CEC prepared some Law draft on improvement of the system, regarding voting process and financial control over campaign funds. This draft was submitted to the Parliament.

For more information visit our web:

[www.vrk.lt](http://www.vrk.lt) – Official web site of the Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Lithuania

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