

## 32. ELECTIONS

On 5 and 6 October 2018, regular elections to local councils, councils of city districts and city sections in statutory towns, and elections to the Prague City Assembly and councils of Prague city sections were held. On the same date, regular elections to the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic were held in 27 electoral districts. It applied to those districts, in which the electoral term (that started in 2012) was about to be finished. The elections were announced by the Decision of the President of the Czech Republic No 85/2018 Sb of 23 May 2018 and were held only on the territory of the Czech Republic. Execution of the elections was governed by the Act No 491/2001 Sb, on Local Council Elections, as amended, and by the Act No 247/1995 Sb, on Elections to the Parliament of the Czech Republic, as amended. Presented data are derived from the results approved by the State Electoral Committee, which as a permanent electoral body coordinated preparation, organisation, course, and execution of the elections.

Casting of ballot papers, their examination, and the primary counting of votes took place in permanent electoral wards; ward election committees were the same for the announced elections. Elections to local councils were carried out in 14 748 electoral wards (in other wards the elections were not carried out for legal reasons). Elections to the Senate of the Parliament of the CR were held in 4 752 electoral wards and in the second round only in 4 493 electoral wards (in two senatorial districts a senator was elected ahead in the first round and therefore the second round was not carried out). For elections to the council of the town of Lišov (in the České Budějovice District) and to the council of the Prague 9 city section, 5 electoral districts were made (2 electoral districts for Lišov and 3 electoral districts in Prague 9).

**The elections to local councils** were held on the basis of universal, equal, and direct suffrage by secret ballot. A voter ID (an electoral card) is not applicable.

Citizens of the Czech Republic who at least on the second polling day attained the age of at least 18 years, who were on the polling day registered as permanently resident in the municipality, and for whom no legal impediment to the exercise of their right to vote occurred were classified as a voter. Under the same conditions, also a national of another country to whom an international treaty gives the right to vote (a treaty by which the Czech Republic is bound and that has been promulgated in the Collection of International Treaties) was classified as a voter. The Treaty of Accession of the Czech Republic to the European Union is such a treaty based on which also nationals of other Member States of the EU can vote in the Czech Republic; based on the case-law and direct effect of European law, instead of fulfilment of the condition of registration for a permanent residence it is enough when one is registered for a temporary residence in the relevant municipality. Foreigners can exercise their right to vote only provided that they are listed in a supplement to the permanent electoral roll (list of voters).

Any voter for whom it was not determined by law that he or she is deprived of his or her personal liberty due to serving a term of imprisonment or that he or she is deprived of his or her legal capacity to exercise his or her right to vote could have been elected a member of a local council, a council of a city district or a city section of a territorially subdivided statutory town, or councils of Prague city sections.

Regular elections to local councils were held for another four-year term in the total of 6 237 municipalities, small towns, and towns. Members of a local council (councillors) were not being elected in 17 municipalities due to a failure to present lists of candidates or due to an insufficient number of candidates.

The total of 365 individual political parties, political movements, their coalitions and their associations with independent candidates took part in the elections; besides them, over 9 200 individual independent candidates and over 8 400 various local associations of independent candidates stood for the elections.

The number of members of a local council being elected depended on the number of the population of a municipality ranging from 5 to 55, except for the Prague City Assembly, for which 65 members were being elected. Voters could use one of three ways to mark their vote as it is determined by the Election Act (they could mark only a party, or only candidates from across all parties, or a party and at the same time candidates from other parties) using a ballot paper that was common to all election parties standing for the election. The determined number of seats in the local council was split among the election parties in one scrutiny, using a proportional system and electoral divisors.

**The elections to the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic** were held on the basis of universal, equal, and direct suffrage by secret ballot, using the majority voting system, in single-seat electoral districts. The electoral term of senators is 6 years. A voter ID (an electoral card) is applicable.

Delineation of electoral districts is in the Annex No 3 to the Act No 247/1995 Sb, on Elections to the Parliament of the Czech Republic, as amended. The amendment No 72/2018 Sb, which became effective on 19 May 2018, cancelled two sections of the Election Act and, as a result, electoral districts are not redistricted every time when the population in some of the electoral districts drops or increases by 15% compared to the average population per seat. Electoral districts remain to be delineated in the same way as in the year 2016.

The right to vote belonged to citizens of the Czech Republic who attained the age of 18 years on the second polling day at the latest; they were entitled to vote provided no legal impediment to the exercise of their right to vote occurred. Voters could exercise their right to vote in some of the electoral wards on the territory of the electoral district, in which they were included in the electoral roll. Citizens of the Czech Republic with permanent residence abroad were also entitled to vote if they stayed on the territory of the Czech Republic on the polling day. They could vote in any electoral ward of the electoral district, in which the elections took place.

Political parties and political movements with registration at the Ministry of the Interior or their coalitions were allowed to nominate their candidates for the elections to the Senate or an individual independent candidate was also allowed to register as a candidate for the elections provided that he or she met prerequisites set by law (hereinafter referred to as "election parties"). In total, 236 candidates were standing for a seat in the elections from the total of 55 election parties.

A voter inserted one ballot paper of the selected candidate into an official envelope and cast the envelope into the ballot box executing thereby his or her vote. If a candidate won over 50% of the total number of valid votes in the electoral district, he or she was elected senator; if none of the candidates won over 50% of valid votes, the senator was not elected and in such electoral district the second round of elections took place a week later. It was a runoff between the two candidates who won the highest numbers of valid votes in the first round.

In the first round of the elections, on 5 and 6 October 2018, two senators were elected. In the electoral district No. 20 (Praha 4) it was Prof. Jiří Drahoš and in the electoral district No. 77 (Vsetín) it was Jiří Čunek. In the remaining 25 electoral districts, the second round of the elections took place on 12 and 13 October 2018.

**The elections to the European Parliament** were held on 24 and 25 May 2019. On the territory of the Czech Republic it was already for the fourth time. The entire Czech Republic was one constituency (electoral district), in which 21 Members of the European Parliament were being elected.

The elections were held pursuant to the Act No 62/2003 Sb, on Elections to the European Parliament, as amended. The election date was declared based upon a Decision of the President of the Czech Republic No 9/2019 Sb of 8 January 2019, on Announcement of the Elections to the European Parliament. The European Parliament elections were held on the basis of universal, equal, and direct suffrage by secret ballot according to the proportional representation principle.

The right to vote belonged to citizens of the Czech Republic who attained the age of 18 years on the second polling day at the latest; they were entitled to vote provided that no legal impediment to the exercise of their right to vote occurred. Nationals of other Member States of the European Union, on top of that, had to meet the condition of a permanent or a temporary residence on the territory of the Czech Republic for a period of at least 45 days prior to the elections.

Any citizen of the Czech Republic or any national of any of the other Member States of the European Union, who on the second polling day at the latest attained the age of at least 21 years, had not been deprived of his or her legal capacity to exercise his or her right to vote, and met prerequisites determined by law for the exercise of his or her right to vote (active suffrage) could have been elected a member of the European Parliament. Members of the European Parliament are elected for a five-year term.

Every voter could be registered only in one electoral roll and could cast his or her vote in some of about 14 700 polling stations, usually in the one that was established for an electoral ward according to the voter's permanent address. If a voter applied for a voter ID (an electoral card) he or she could vote anywhere in the Czech Republic.

Casting of ballot papers, their examination, and the primary counting of votes took place in permanent electoral wards (see the Act No 491/2001 Sb, on Local Council Elections, as amended). There was a principle that one voter has one vote. It was ensured as follows: the ward election committee issued an official envelope to a voter; the voter inserted one ballot paper (belonging to the party in favour of which he or she was voting) in the envelope. On the ballot paper, the voter was allowed to mark two candidates as a maximum; i.e. those to whom he or she wanted to give preference. Only those political parties, political movements, and coalitions, which won at least 5% of the total number of valid votes could contest 21 seats in the European Parliament.

Registered voters are (the number of) persons included in electoral rolls (persons who meet prerequisites determined by law for the exercise of their right to vote or, in other words, active suffrage).

Turnout is calculated as the share of the number of voting voters (persons who were given an official envelope in the polling station) in registered voters (persons included in the electoral rolls).

Names of election parties that are too long are shortened for the needs of presentation in tables. Only data on identical political entities are comparable to those from previous years. However, identification according to the name (or an abbreviation) when comparing in time may not be unequivocal due to often changes (births of new political entities, changes of their names, changes in composition of coalitions, etc.).

*The piece of data on the number of votes won in the Table 32-2 reflects the fact that each voter who participated in the elections had maximally as many votes as was the number of councillors in the local council being elected. A piece of data on the number of seats won thus does not have to be in direct proportion to the number of votes won, because to obtain a seat a much lower number of votes was necessary in smaller municipalities compared to larger ones (when measured by the number of voters).*

*Tables 32-1 and 32-2 do not include results of elections to councils of city sections and city districts of territorially subdivided statutory towns and elections to councils of Prague city sections.*

*First names, surnames, and degrees of elected senators in the Table 32-5 are taken over from applications for registration for the elections to the Senate of the Parliament of the CR, which had been submitted to the relevant registration office.*

*A list of elected Members of the European Parliament is provided in the Table 32-8. The piece of data on preferential votes is calculated from the base, which is the number of valid votes for a given political party, political movement, or a coalition.*

*Since the percentages are rounded off, their sum may not be equal to 100.*

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*Further information can be found on the website of the Czech Statistical Office at:*

- [www.czso.cz/csu/czso/elections\\_en](http://www.czso.cz/csu/czso/elections_en)
- [www.volby.cz/index\\_en.htm](http://www.volby.cz/index_en.htm)