

Finnish Election System

Background information

- Population of Finland: 5,4 million
- Entitled to vote: 4,4 million
- Electoral districts: 15 (13 September 1st 2013 onwards)
- Municipalities: 320
- Candidates (approximately):
 - Parliamentary elections: 2 000
 - Presidential elections: 8-10
 - Municipal elections: 37 000
 - European elections: 200

General elections in Finland

- European Elections
 - every 5th year, next in May 2014
- Parliamentary Elections
 - every 4th year, next in April 2015
- Municipal Elections
 - every 4th year, next in october 2016
- Presidential Elections
 - every 6th year, next in january 2018

Electoral legislation

- The Constitution (731/1999)
 - Right to vote, eligibility and other basic principles
- The Election Act (714/1998)
- The Act on Political Parties (10/1969)
- The Act on a Candidate's Election Funding (273/2009)

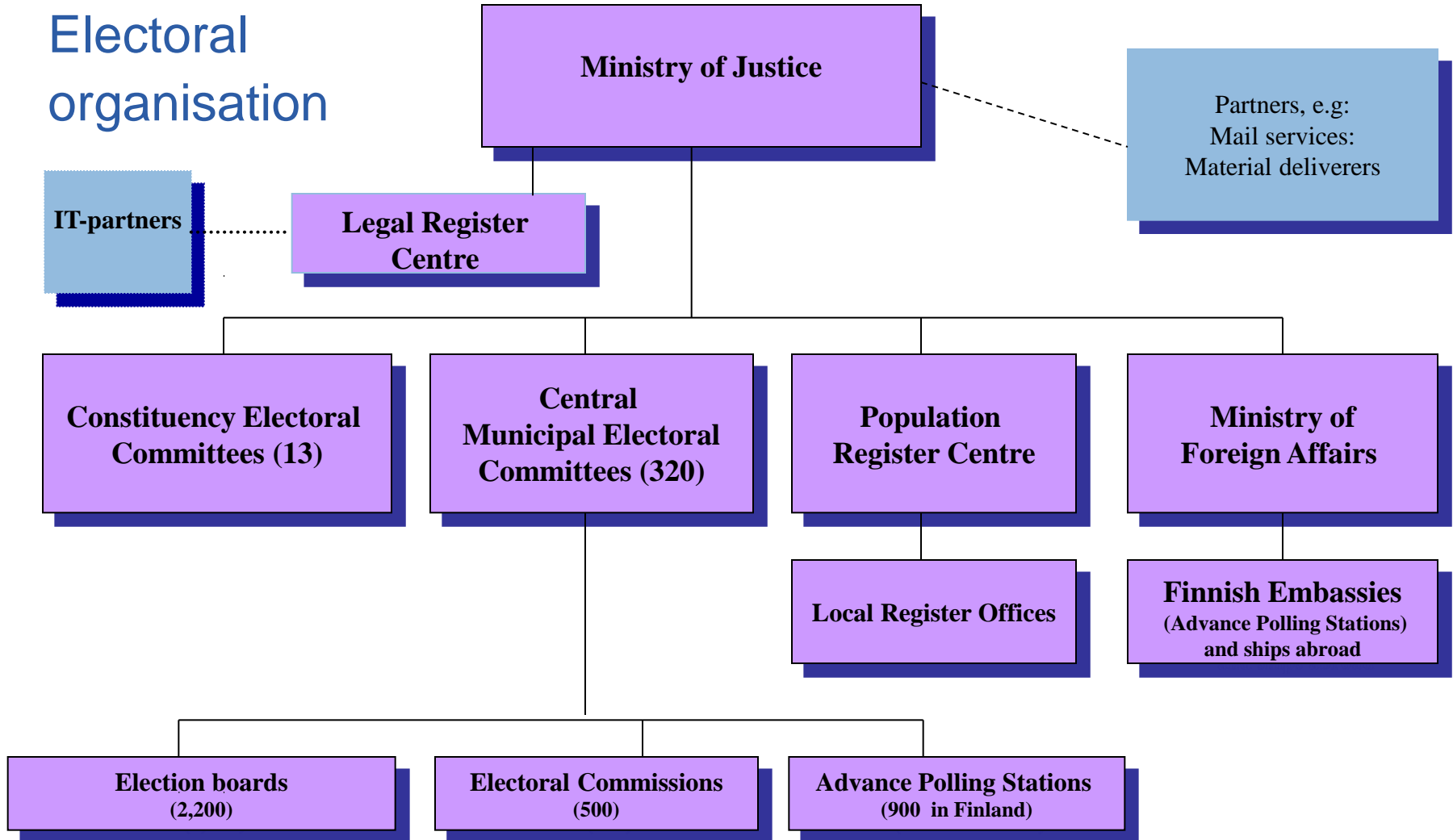
Basic Principles

- Elections are direct, proportional and secret
- Voting right is equal
- Voting is personal and takes place in front of election authorities
 - Remote voting (by mail, via internet or proxy voting) is not allowed in any form
- Combination of voting for an individual candidate and a party

Right to vote

- Parliamentary and presidential elections:
 - 18 years old finnish citizens
- European elections:
 - 18 years old finnish citizens; and
 - 18 years old citizens of other EU-member states who have registered themselves into the voting register of Finland
- Municipal elections:
 - 18 years old citizens of Finland, other EU-member states, as well as Norway and Iceland, who have municipality of residence in Finland; and
 - 18 years old citizens of other states, who have had municipality of residence in Finland during two years

Electoral organisation



20 March 2013

Ministry of Justice, Finland

Voting register

- The Population Register Centre compiles a computer register of everyone entitled to vote (voting register)
- Voting register contains information on the voters (name, identity code, electoral district, municipality of residence, and polling station) as this information appears in the Population Information System 51 days before election day
- The period of display for public inspection is from 41 days before the election day onwards
- Claims for correction of the register have to be submitted to the civic administration not later than 16 days before Election day
- The voting register becomes legally valid at noon 12 days before election day

Advance voting

- A voter may vote either: 1) in advance or 2) on election day
- Advance voting period
 - In Finland: seven (7) days from 11th to 5th day before election day
 - Abroad: Four (4) days from 11th to 8th day before election day
- General Advance Polling Stations
 - Voter can vote in whatever advance polling station
 - Post-offices, municipality offices, libraries and other places determined by municipality (~900 stations)
 - Abroad: Finnish embassies and consulates (~200)

Voting on the Election Day

- Election day is Sunday, voting begins at 9 a.m. and ends at 8 p.m.
- On Election Day voter can vote only in his/her own polling station
- Some 2200 polling stations in the whole country

Latest turnouts

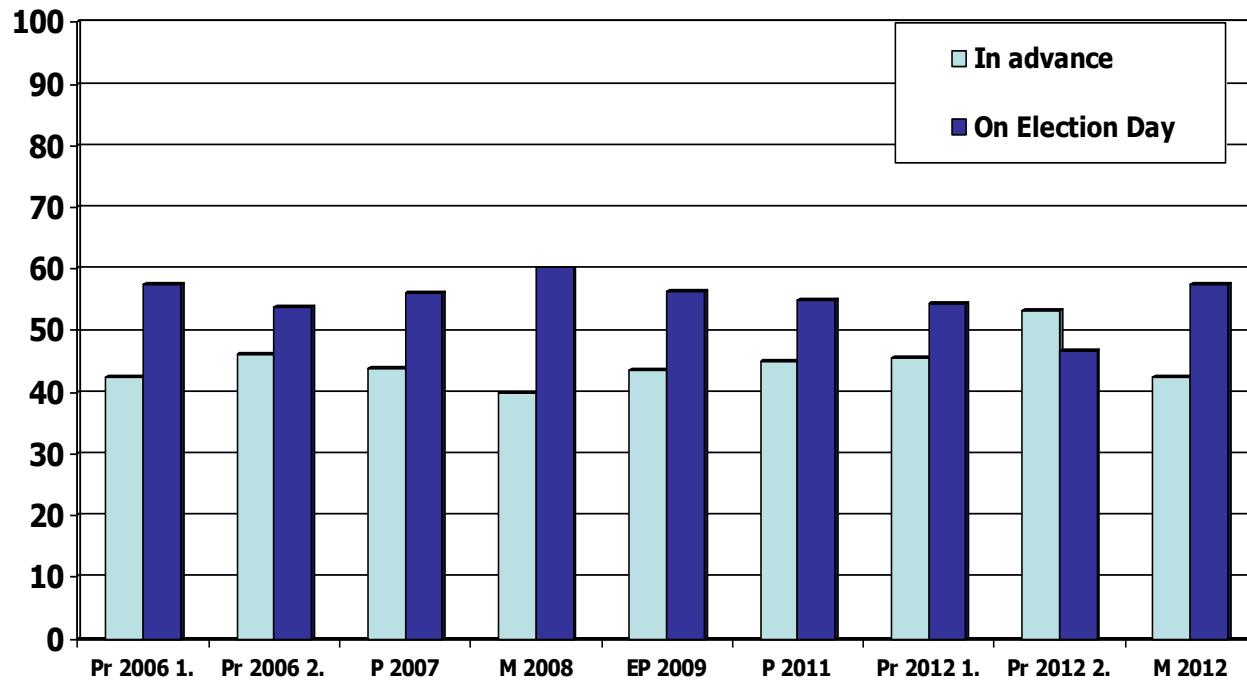
- Municipal elections 2012: 58,3 %
- Presidential elections 2012, second round: 68,9 %
- Presidential elections 2012, first round: 72,8 %
- Parliamentary elections 2011: 70,5 %
- European elections 2009: 40,3 %

Highest turnout ever: Presidential elections 1982 (86,8 %)

Lowest turnout ever: European elections 1999 (31,4 %)

Voting habits

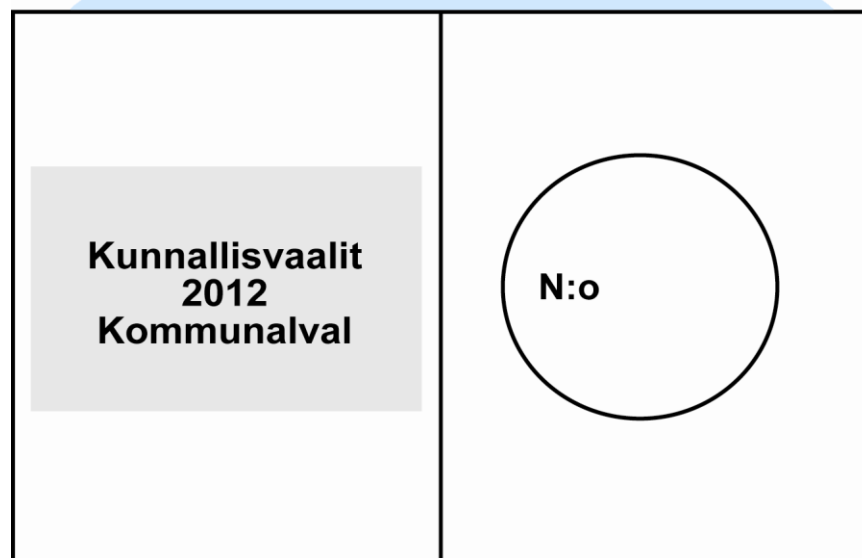
P = parliamentary elections, EP = European Parliamentary elections, M = municipal elections, Pr = Presidential elections



How to vote?

- Election official checks the voters identity
- Voter is given a ballot by election officials
- Voter goes into a ballot booth
- Voter writes on the ballot the number of the candidate he/she wants to vote for
- The combined list of all candidates and their numbers is on the inside wall of every ballot booth
- Voter folds the ballot so that his/her marking cannot be seen, gets the ballot stamped by officials and puts the ballot to the ballot box

The Ballot



Combined List of Candidates in the Constituency of XYZ in Parliamentary Elections

Coalition Party	Green League	Center Party	Social Democrats	Swedish Party
2 Harkimo, Liisa Project Manager	6 Pulli, Taina MP, Journalist	8 Huhtamäki, Risto Teacher	10 Lipponen, Erkki Professor	14 Dahlberg, Eva Secretary
3 Lahti, Jari Master of Arts	7 Sauri, Kalle Psychiatrist	9 Salovaara, Reino TV-producer	11 Ahde, Anneli Medical Doctor	15 Kihlman, Peter MP, Writer
4 Sarkomaa, Silja Student	Electoral Alliance		12 Anttila, Leila Nurse	16 Sandbacka, Karl Director
5 Zyskowicz, Ari MP, Psychologist			13 Pajamäki, Arvo Taxi Driver	

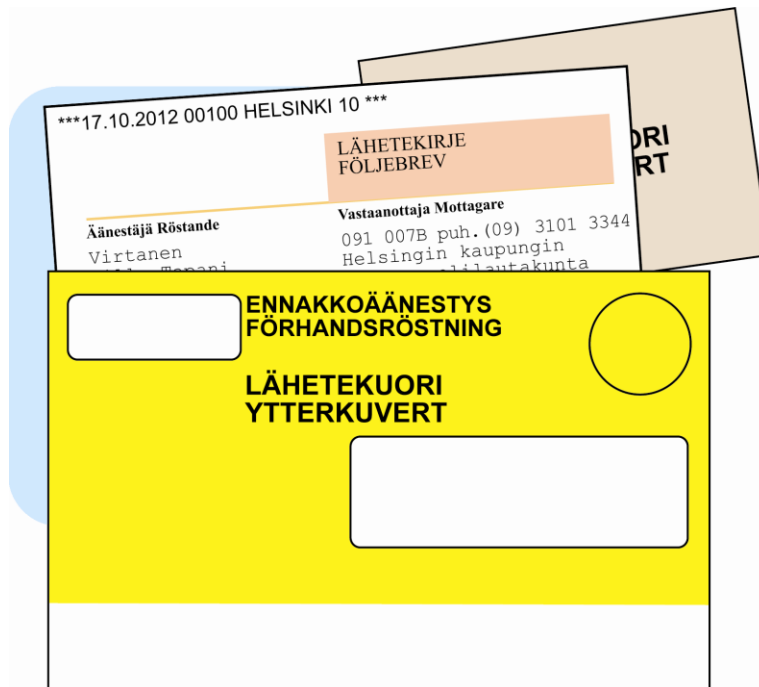
Folded and stamped ballot



Advance voting: Putting the ballot into the election envelope



Advance voting: Putting the election envelope and covering letter into the covering envelope



Advance voting: Covering envelope addressed to voter's own municipality



Voting on the election day: Putting the ballot into the ballot box



Counting of votes

- Counting of the advance votes begins at 3 p.m. on election day in Electoral District Committees (behind closed doors)
- Preliminary counting of the election day votes begins at 8 p.m. in polling stations
- Results are immediately transmitted to the Central Calculation System
- Preliminary results in every district are ready usually approx. at 11 p.m. on Election Day
- Each Electoral District Committee
 - controls the preliminary count on the following day
 - confirms the final results of the elections on the 3rd day after the election day
 - gives the letter of appointment to every MP

Example of defining the results

The following example is imaginary:

- Name of the Constituency: **Helsinki**
- Number of the MP's elected: **Six (6)**
- Number of the Parties in the Elections: **Five (5)**
- Number of the Candidates: **15**

Combined List of Candidates in the Constituency of Helsinki in Parliamentary Elections on 17th April 2011

Coalition Party	Green League	Center Party	Social Democrats	Swedish Party
2 Harkimo, Liisa Project Manager	6 Pulli, Taina MP, Journalist	8 Huhtamäki, Risto Teacher	10 Lipponen, Erkki Professor	14 Dahlberg, Eva Secretary
3 Lahti, Jari Master of Arts	7 Sauri, Kalle Psychiatrist	9 Salovaara, Reino TV-producer	11 Ahde, Anneli Medical Doctor	15 Kihlman, Peter MP, Writer
4 Sarkomaa, Silja Student	Electoral Alliance		12 Anttila, Leila Nurse	16 Sandbacka, Karl Director
5 Zyskowicz, Ari MP, Psychologist			13 Pajamäki, Arvo Taxi Driver	

Defining the Results: d'Hondt system

Coalition Party

Personal votes:

Harkimo, Liisa: 110
 Zyskowicz, Ari: 70
 Lahti, Jari: 30
 Sarkomaa, Sari: 10

List total: 220 votes

Comparative Indexes:

Harkimo: 220
 Zyskowicz: 110 (=220:2)
 Lahti: 73,3 (=220:3)
 Sarkomaa: 55 (=220:4)

Electoral Alliance of Green League and Center Party

Personal votes:

Salovaara, Reino: 45
 Pulli, Taina: 35
 Huhtamäki, Risto: 10
 Sauri, Kalle: 5

List total: 95 votes

Comparative Indexes:

Salovaara: 95
 Pulli: 47,5 (=95:2)
 Huhtamäki: 31,6 (=95:3)
 Sauri: 23,7 (=95:4)

Social Democrats

Personal votes:

Anttila, Leila: 90
 Lipponen, Osku: 85
 Pajamäki, Arvo: 80
 Ahde, Anneli: 15

List total: 270 votes

Comparative Indexes:

Anttila: 270
 Lipponen: 135 (=270:2)
 Pajamäki: 90 (=270:3)
 Ahde: 38,5 (=270:4)

Swedish Party

Personal votes:

Sandbacka, Karl: 60
 Dahlberg, Eva: 50
 Kihlman, Peter: 40

List total: 150 votes

Comparative Indexes:

Sandbacka: 150
 Dahlberg: 75 (=150:2)
 Kihlman: 50 (=150:3)

Defining the results: Final stage

Candidates in order of Comparative Indexes:

Anttila (Social Democrats): 270
Harkimo (Coalition party): 220
Sandbacka (Swedish Party): 150
Lipponen (Social Democrats): 135
Zyskowicz (Coalition Party): 110
Salovaara (Center Party): 95

Elected

Pajamäki (Social Democrats): 90
Dahlberg (Swedish Party): 75
Lahti (Coalition Party): 73,3
Sarkomaa (Coalition Party): 55
Kihlman (Swedish Party): 50
Pulli (Green League): 47,5
Ahde (Social Democrats): 38,5
Huhtamäki (Center Party): 31,6
Sauri (Green League): 23,7

Not elected

Election Information System EIS

- ADP elections started 1990 (some basic calculation operations earlier)
- EIS contains subsystems
 - Basic Data (electoral districts, municipalities, voting districts, election authorities, the advance polling places and the election day polling stations, etc. ...)
 - Candidate register
 - Franchise data (Voting register)
 - Centralised calculation system
 - Statistics and information services, results publishing etc...(internet, data transfer to mass media companies etc.)

Where to find information?

www.vaalit.fi (Ministry of Justice)

- General information about elections
- The final results

www.vaalirahoitusvalvonta.fi (State Audit Office)

- Candidate's election funding (in Finnish and Swedish)