

Why do most countries ban mail-in ballots?: They have seen massive vote fraud problems

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Thirty-seven states have [changed](#) their mail-in voting procedures this year in response to the Coronavirus.¹ They have followed the lead of Democrats and the media, who claim that concerns about vote fraud/vote buying are figments of Republican imaginations.

One “news” article after another asserts that President Trump’s warning about vote fraud/voting buying with mail-in ballots is “[baselessly](#)” (Associated Press and [Washington Post](#)) or “[without evidence](#)” (New York Times, [Politico](#), and [NBC News](#)) about mail-in vote fraud.²

Liberals and progressives often try to model the US on Western European countries in many ways, but you never hear them arguing that we should adopt their voting rules. There is a reason for that. Banning mail-in voting or requiring people to use photo IDs to obtain a mail-in ballot is quite common in developed countries, especially in Europe.

To study this, the Crime Prevention Research Center, of which I am the president, created a database on voting rules around the world.

Here is what we found. Besides the United States, there are 36 member states in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Forty-seven percent ban mail-in voting unless the citizen is living abroad, and 30% require a photo-ID to obtain a mail-in ballot. Fourteen percent of the countries ban voting even for those living abroad.

In addition, some countries that allow voting by mail for citizens living the country don’t allow it for everyone. For example, Japan and Poland have limited mail-in voting to those who have special certificates verifying that they are disabled. France has made an exception this year to the ban on mail-in ballots to those who are sick or at particular risk during the Coronavirus pandemic. Poland [will allow](#) mail-in ballots for everyone for this year only.

Brazil and Russia satisfy the economic standards of the OECD, but are excluded for various political reasons. Both countries completely ban mail-in voting and require photo-IDs for in-person voting.

¹ “Changes to absentee/mail-in voting procedures in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, 2020,” Ballotpedia, accessed July 27, 2020 ([https://ballotpedia.org/Changes_to_absentee/mail-in_voting_procedures_in_response_to_the_coronavirus_\(COVID-19\)_pandemic,_2020](https://ballotpedia.org/Changes_to_absentee/mail-in_voting_procedures_in_response_to_the_coronavirus_(COVID-19)_pandemic,_2020)).

² Calvin Woodward, “AP FACT CHECK: Trump’s view of flawed voting is baseless,” Associated Press, July 30, 2020 (<https://apnews.com/3f6b2adcf0b66066195f307e18173b6f>); Jacqueline Alemany, “Power Up: GOP mounts rare challenge to Trump’s election suggestion,” Washington Post, July 31, 2020 (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2020/07/31/power-up-gop-mounts-rare-challenge-trump-election-suggestion/>); “U.S. Election Will Be Nov. 3 as Planned, Trump Advisers Say,” New York Times, August 2, 2020 (<https://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2020/08/02/us/politics/02reuters-usa-election-delay.html>); QUINT FORGEY, ZACH MONTELLARO and CAITLIN OPRYSKO, “Trump refuses to back down on suggestion of election delay,” Politico, July 30, 2020 (<https://www.politico.com/news/2020/07/30/trump-suggests-delaying-2020-election-387902>); and Chuck Todd, “Transcript of Meet the Press,” Meet the Press, NBC News, August 2, 2020 (<https://www.nbcnews.com/meet-the-press/meet-press-august-2-2020-n1235604>).

Among the 27 countries in the European Union, 63% ban mail-in voting unless living abroad and another 22% require a photo-ID to obtain a mail-in ballot. Twenty-two percent ban the practice even for those who live abroad.

There are sixteen countries in the rest of Europe, and they are even more restrictive. Every single one bans mail-in voting for those living in the country or require a photo-ID to obtain a mail-in ballot. Sixty-three percent don't allow mail-in ballots even for citizens living outside of the country.

Are all of these countries, socialist and non-socialist alike, Western and Eastern European, developed and undeveloped, acting "without evidence"? It is not as though people in these countries haven't heard the same arguments about the importance of ease of voting. Or about how photo ID requirements will supposedly, as one professor in the UK explained, "[lead to people not being able to vote](#)."³

These countries have learned the hard way about what happens when mail-in ballots aren't secured. They have also discovered how hard it is to detect vote buying when both those buying and selling the votes have an incentive to hide the exchange.

France banned mail-in voting in 1975 because of massive fraud in Corsica, where postal ballots were stolen or bought and voters cast multiple votes. Mail-in ballots were used to cast the votes of dead people.⁴

The United Kingdom, which allows postal voting, has had some notable mail-in ballot fraud cases. Prior to recent photo ID requirements, [six Labour Party councilors in Birmingham](#) won office after what the judge described as a "massive, systematic and organised" postal voting fraud campaign.⁵ The fraud was apparently carried out with the full knowledge and cooperation of the local Labour party. There was "widespread theft" of postal votes (possibly around 40,000 ballots) in areas with large Muslim populations because Labour members were worried that the Iraq war would spur these voters to oppose the incumbent government.

³ Jon Sharman, "Voter ID: Government announces plan to prevent UK citizens voting without photographic proof of identity at polling stations," *The Independent* (UK), October 14, 2019 (<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/voter-id-photo-uk-government-conservatives-queens-speech-elections-polling-a9154936.html>).

⁴ Staff, "In Corsica, the tormented history of the vote by correspondence," *World Today News*, June 15, 2020 (<https://www.world-today-news.com/in-corsica-the-tormented-history-of-the-vote-by-correspondence/>). Jean-Louis Briquet, "EXPATRIATE CORSICANS AND THE VOTE AU VILLAGE: MECHANISMS OF CONTROL AND EXPRESSIONS OF SENTIMENT (NINETEENTH–TWENTIETH CENTURIES)," *Revue française de science politique (English Edition)* Vol. 66, No. 5 (2016), pp. 43-63; Staff, "Corsicans of France Are Feeling the Sting of Publicity Given to Criminals," *New York Times*, January 7, 1973 (<https://www.nytimes.com/1973/01/07/archives/corsicans-of-france-are-feeling-the-sting-of-publicity-given-to.html>).

⁵ Nick Britten and George Jones, "Judge lambasts postal ballot rules as Labour 6 convicted of poll fraud," *The Telegraph* (UK), April 2005 (<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1487144/Judge-lambasts-postal-ballot-rules-as-Labour-6-convicted-of-poll-fraud.html>).

In 1991, Mexico's 1991 election mandated voter photo-IDs and banned absentee ballots. The then-governing Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) had long used fraud and intimidation with mail-in ballots to win elections.⁶ Only [in 2006](#) were absentee ballots again allowed, and then only for those living abroad who requested them at least six months in advance.⁷

If concern about vote fraud with mail-in ballots is delusional, it is a delusion that is shared by most of the world. Even the countries that allow mail-in ballots have protections, such as government-issued photo-IDs. But Americans are constantly assured even this step is completely unnecessary. Without basic precautions, our elections are on course to become the laughing stock of the developed world.

Brief discussion regarding the United States

'Absentee ballots remain the largest source of potential voter fraud.' That quote isn't from President Trump. It's the conclusion of the bipartisan 2005 report of the Commission on Federal Election Reform, chaired by former President Jimmy Carter and former Secretary of State James Baker III.⁸

Concerns about vote-buying have a long history in the U.S. They helped drive the move to the secret ballot, which U.S. states adopted between 1888 and 1950. Secret ballots made it harder for vote buyers to monitor which candidates sellers actually voted for. Vote-buying had been pervasive; voter turnout fell by about 8% to 12% after states adopted the secret ballot because people were no longer being paid to vote.⁹

Intimidation and vote buying were key concerns of the commission: "Citizens who vote at home, at nursing homes, at the workplace, or in church are more susceptible to pressure, overt and subtle, or to intimidation. Vote buying schemes are far more difficult to detect when citizens vote by mail."

⁶ John R. Lott, Jr., "Evidence of Voter Fraud and the Impact that Regulations to Reduce Fraud Have on Voter Participation Rates," SSRN, August 18, 2006 (https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=925611).

For example, as a result of fraud in their 1988 Presidential election, absentee ballots were not allowed in Mexico until 2006 (see Associated Press, "Mexican Senate approves mail-in absentee ballots for Mexicans living abroad," AZcentral.com, April 28, 2005 (<http://www.azcentral.com/specials/special03/articles/0428mexicovote-ON.html>)).

⁷ James C. McKinley, Jr., "Lawmakers in Mexico Approve Absentee Voting for Migrants," New York Times, June 29, 2005 (<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/06/29/world/americas/lawmakers-in-mexico-approve-absentee-voting-for-migrants.html>).

⁸ <https://moritzlaw.osu.edu/electionlaw/litigation/documents/Veasey7848.pdf>

⁹ John R. Lott, Jr. and Lawrence W. Kenny, "Did Women's Suffrage Change the Size and Scope of Government?," *Journal of Political Economy*, 1999, vol. 107, no. 6, pt. 1: 1163 -1198 (<https://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~iversen/PDFfiles/LottKenny.pdf>).

The report provides examples, such as the 1997 Miami mayoral election that resulted in 36 arrests for absentee-ballot fraud.¹⁰ The election had to be rerun, and the result was reversed.

Another famous example was a 1994 Pennsylvania race that gave Democrats control of the state Senate.¹¹ Democratic candidate William Stinson's staff forged the names on absentee ballots of people at nursing homes as well as people who were living in Puerto Rico or serving time in prison. The federal judge overseeing the case found that "Substantial evidence was presented establishing massive absentee ballot fraud," and he awarded the seat and control of the state Senate to Republicans.

There are more recent cases, too. In 2017 an investigation of a Dallas City Council election found some 700 fraudulent mail-in ballots signed by the same witness using a fake name.¹² The discovery left two council races in limbo, and the fraud was much larger than the vote differential in one of those races. The case resulted in a criminal conviction.

In a 2018 North Carolina congressional race, Republican Mark Harris edged out Democrat Dan McCready by 905 votes. Fortunately, the state had relatively complete absentee-ballot records. Election officials became suspicious when they discovered that the Republican received 61% of mail-in votes, even though registered Republicans accounted for only 19% of those who had requested mail-in ballots.¹³

A Republican operative, L. McCrae Dowless Jr., had allegedly requested more than 1,200 absentee ballots on voters' behalf and then collected the ballots from voters' homes when they were mailed out. Mr. Dowless's assistants testified that they were directed to forge voters' signatures and fill in votes. A new election was required, but Mr. Harris didn't run. Mr. Dowless faces criminal charges for absentee-ballot fraud in both the 2016 and 2018 elections and has pled not guilty.

A month after California's March 3, 2020, primary election, even Democratic Secretary of State Alex Padilla confirmed that at least a dozen people had both received two mail-in ballots in their name and voted in the March 3, 2020 election. The Election Integrity Project, California has discovered another 75 cases of suspected double voting.¹⁴ With the all mail-in voting expected in the November 2020 California election, the Election Integrity Project found that about 458,000 California registrants who have likely died or moved will be mailed ballots, since while they have died or moved, they remain classified as "active" voters. While it is possible for

¹⁰ "18 are arrested in 1997 Miami Ballot Fraud," New York Times, October 29, 1998 (<https://www.nytimes.com/1998/10/29/us/18-are-arrested-in-1997-miami-ballot-fraud.html>).

¹¹ Michael Hinds, "Vote-Fraud Ruling Shifts Pennsylvania Senate," New York Times, February 19, 1994 (<https://www.nytimes.com/1994/02/19/us/vote-fraud-ruling-shifts-pennsylvania-senate.html>).

¹² "Dallas County voter fraud suspect gets 180 days in jail," Fox 4 KDFW, June 20, 2018 (https://www.fox4news.com/news/dallas-county-voter-fraud-suspect-gets-180-days-in-jail#).

¹³ Alan Binder, "New Election Ordered in North Carolina Race at Center of Fraud," New York Times, February 21, 2019 (<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/21/us/mark-harris-nc-voter-fraud.html>).

¹⁴ Election Integrity Project, California, "California Secretary of State Investigating Double Voting in March Primary," PR Newswire, April 22, 2020 (<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/eipca-california-secretary-of-state-investigating-double-voting-in-march-primary-301045755.html>).

dead people to vote via mail-in ballots, but they can't do in-person voting when Voter IDs are required.

CBS Channel 2 in Los Angeles in 2016 found 265 dead people who had supposedly voted year-after-year after their deaths using mail-in ballots.¹⁵

Mail-in ballots raise problems just because they are not secure. Just this year, at an apartment building in Paterson, New Jersey, "a stack of ballots [was left] sitting on top of the mailbox because these are people that have moved away."¹⁶ Others could have simply taken these ballots and voted with them. Indeed, Patterson appears to be a hotbed of attempted fraud. This only seems to have been uncovered by the sloppiness of how those committing the fraud mailed in the ballots, though this case also illustrates how hard it is to determine who committed the fraud.

Just a week ago, felony convictions have been successfully brought against four men paying homeless people in Los Angeles for their votes on mail-in ballots.¹⁷

It is often claimed that impossibly large numbers of people live at the same address. In 2016, 83 registered voters in San Pedro, Calif., received absentee ballots at the same small two-bedroom apartment. Prosecutors rarely pursue this type of case.¹⁸

A much longer list of recent vote fraud cases in the United States has been collected by the Crime Prevention Research Center and they are available at our website (<https://crimeresearch.org/2020/05/examples-of-vote-fraud-for-mail-in-ballots/>).

Mail-in voting is a throwback to the dark old days of vote-buying and fraud. Like most of the rest of the world, Americans deserve a more trustworthy system.

¹⁵ David Goldstein, "CBS2 Investigation Uncovers Votes Being Cast From Grave Year After Year," CBS Channel 2 Los Angeles, May 23, 2016 (<https://losangeles.cbslocal.com/2016/05/23/cbs2-investigation-uncovers-votes-being-cast-from-grave-year-after-year/>).

¹⁶ Jayed Rahman, "Stacks of mail-in ballots left at Paterson apartment buildings," Paterson Times, May 5, 2020 (<https://patersontimes.com/2020/05/05/stacks-of-mail-in-ballots-left-at-paterson-apartment-buildings/>).

¹⁷ Megan Sheets, "Four men have admitted to paying homeless people cash and cigarettes in exchange for forged signatures on ballot petitions and voter registration forms in Los Angeles.," Daily Mail (UK), July 30, 2020.

¹⁸ Malia Zimmerman, "'Voter fraud'? California man finds dozens of ballots stacked outside home," Fox News, November 3, 2016 (<https://www.foxnews.com/politics/voter-fraud-california-man-finds-dozens-of-ballots-stacked-outside-home>).

Voting Rules for OECD Countries

	mail in ballots allowed for anyone	mail in ballots allowed under restrictive rules	mail in ballots are not allowed for citizens living in the country (they are allowed only for overseas voters)	mail in ballots are not allowed at all	photo voter ID required to get a mail in ballot	either not allowed for people living in the country or Photo ID required to get them	either not allowed for people living in the country or Photo ID required to get them or disability
<i>OECD countries</i>							
Austria	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
Australia	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
Belgium	0	1	1	0	1	1	1
Canada	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
Chile	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
Colombia	0	0	1	1	0	1	1
Czech Republic	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
Denmark	0	1	0	0	1	1	1
Estonia	0	1	1	0	1	1	1
Finland	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
France	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
Germany	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Greece	0	0	1	1	0	1	1
Hungary	0	1	0	0	0	0	0

Iceland	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
Ireland	0	1	0	0	1	1	1
Israel	0	0	1	1	0	1	1
Italy	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
Japan	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
South Korea	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Latvia	0	1	1	0	0	1	0
Lituania	0	1	1	0	1	1	1
Luxembourg	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
Mexico	0	1	1	0	1	1	1
Neatherlands	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
New Zealand	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Norway	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
Poland	0	1	0	0	1	1	1
Portugal	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
Slovak Republic	0	1	1	0	1	1	1
Slovenia	0	1	0	0	1	1	1
Spain	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
Sweden	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Switzerland	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Turkey	0	1	1	0	1	1	1
United Kingdom	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
Sums for all above countries	11	20	17	5	17	28	30
Averages	31%	56%	47%	14%	47%	78%	83%
Russia	0	0	1	1	0	1	1

Brazil	0	0	1	1	0	1	1
Sums for Brazil and Russia	0	0	2	2	0	2	2
38	11	20	19	7	17	30	32
Averages for all countries	29%	53%	50%	18%	45%	79%	84%

Voting Rules for EU Countries

EU countries	mail in ballots allowed for anyone	mail in ballots allowed under certain circumstances	mail in ballots are not allowed for citizens living in the country (they are allowed only for overseas voters)	mail in ballots are not allowed at all	ID required to get a postal ballot	either not allowed for people living in the country or Photo ID required to get them
Austria	1	0	0	0	0	0
Belguim	0	1	1	0	0	1
Bulgaria	0	0	1	1	0	1
Croatia	0	0	1	1	0	1
Cyprus	0	0	1	1	0	1
Czech Republic	0	0	1	1	0	1
Denmark	0	1	0	0	1	1
Estonia	0	1	1	0	1	1
Finland	0	1	1	0	0	1
France	0	1	1	0	0	1
Germany	1	0	0	0	0	0
Greece	0	0	1	1	0	1
Hungary	0	1	0	0	0	0
Ireland	0	1	0	0	1	1
Italy	0	1	1	0	0	1
Latvia	0	1	1	0	0	1
Lithuania	0	1	1	0	1	1
Luxembourg	1	0	0	0	1	1
Malta	0	0	1	1	0	1
Neatherlands	0	1	1	0	0	1

Poland	0	1	1	0	1	1
Portugal	1	0	0	0	1	1
Romania	0	1	1	0	0	1
Slovak Republic	0	1	1	0	1	1
Slovenia	0	1	0	0	1	1
Spain	1	0	0	0	1	1
Sweden	1	0	0	0	0	0
Averages	22%	56%	63%	22%	37%	85%

Voting Rules for non-EU European Countries

<i>European countries</i> (excluding EU members)	Mail in ballots are allowed for anyone	Mail in ballots are allowed under restrictive rules (e.g. for certain categories of voters)	Mail in ballots are not allowed for citizens living in the country (only overseas voters have the right to vote by post)	Mail in ballots are not allowed at all	A copy of ID is required to receive a mail in ballot)	either not allowed for people living in the country or Photo ID required to get them
Albania	0	0	1	1	0	1
Andorra	0	1	1	0	1	1
Belarus	0	0	1	1	0	1
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	1	1	0	0	1
Kosovo	0	1	1	0	1	1
North Macedonia	0	0	1	1	0	1
Moldova	0	0	1	1	0	1
Monaco	0	0	1	1	0	1
Montenegro	0	0	1	1	0	1
Russia	0	0	1	1	0	1
San Marino	0	0	1	1	0	1

Serbia	0	0	1	1	0	1
Turkey	0	1	1	0	1	1
Ukraine	0	0	1	1	0	1
United Kingdom	1	0	0	0	1	1
Liechtenstein	1	0	0	0	1	1
	13%	25%	88%	63%	31%	100%

Appendix: Voting rules by Country

Australia

1. Requirements to be eligible to vote in Australia

It is compulsory by law for all eligible Australian citizens to enroll and vote in federal elections, by-elections and referendums.

Eligibility basics¹:

- you are an Australian citizen, or eligible British subject²,
- aged 18 years and over, and
- have lived at your address for at least one month.

If you are 16 or 17 you can enroll now so when you turn 18 you'll be able to vote.

Non-Australian citizens do not have the right to vote in federal or state/territory elections, unless they were registered to vote prior to 1984, but may vote in some local government elections, for example council elections in South Australia³.

2. Australia allows mail-in ballots

After an election is announced, you can apply for a postal vote to have your ballot papers sent to you in the mail. You can apply online via the AEC website, or by completing a postal vote application form available from AEC offices at election time.⁴ To apply you will need “either your Australian driver's licence, or Australian passport number.”⁵

Electors who are registered as general postal voters will be sent ballot papers as soon as practicable after the declaration of nominations for a federal election, the issue of writs for a federal referendum, or according to the legislative timeline for a state or local government election. You do not need to re-apply for future elections.

You are eligible to register as a general postal voter if you are already on the electoral roll and you are unable to attend a polling place because you are⁶:

- enrolled at an address more than 20 km away from a polling place
- a patient at a hospital or nursing home and unable to travel to a polling place

¹ <https://www.aec.gov.au/enrol/>

² Eligible British subjects are those who were on an Australian electoral roll between 26 October 1983 and 26 January 1984.

³ <https://www.ecsa.sa.gov.au/enrolment/enrol-for-council-elections>

⁴ https://www.aec.gov.au/Voting/ways_to_vote/

⁵ See the “you will need” section of the instructions for General Postal Voters.

https://www.aec.gov.au/Enrolling_to_vote/Special_Category/general-postal-voters.htm

⁶ https://www.aec.gov.au/Enrolling_to_vote/Special_Category/general-postal-voters.htm

- unable to travel due to being infirm at home
- caring for a seriously ill or infirm person
- serving a prison sentence of less than 3 years
- registered as a silent elector
- unable to attend a polling place due to religious beliefs
- unable to sign your name due to a physical incapacity
- registered as an overseas elector
- a member of the defence force, or a defence civilian serving outside Australia
- an Australian Federal Police officer or staff member serving outside Australia.

Statistics:

1) Senate votes cast by postal vote between 1993 and 2016

Year	% Votes Cast by Postal Votes	No. of Postal Votes
1993	3.04	337,144
1996	3.33	383,264
1998	4.65	549,961
2001	4.19	516,434
2004	5.22 ⁷	660,324
2007*	6.2	704,563
2010*	7.1 ⁸	804,973
2013*	8.15 ⁹	1,126,528
2016	8.5 ¹⁰	1,217,528

* Federal Election Data

2) Overseas votes by post

Federal Election	Postal Vote Applications (PVAs)	Pre-Poll Votes (PPVs)	Postal Vote Envelopes Received at Post	Total Votes Issued (PVA + PPV)	Total votes dispatched to Australia (PPV + PVC)
2019 ¹¹	85	60,710	1,128	60,795	61,838
2013 ¹²	770	72,679	1,297	73,449	73,976

⁷ <https://annualreport.aec.gov.au/files/aec-annual-report-2004-05.pdf>

⁸ <https://annualreport.aec.gov.au/2011/files/aec-annual-report-2010-2011.pdf>

⁹ <https://annualreport.aec.gov.au/2014/contents/files/2013-14-annual-report.pdf>

¹⁰ https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/BriefingBook45p/FederalElection2016

¹¹ https://www.aec.gov.au/Elections/Federal_Elections/2019/downloads.htm

¹² https://www.aec.gov.au/Elections/federal_elections/2013/downloads.htm

2010 ¹³	9,252	64,832	unknown	74,084	unknown
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3) 2016 Federal Election¹⁴

House of Representatives votes by type

State/territory	Ordinary votes	Absent votes	Pre-poll votes	Postal votes	Provisional votes	Total
NSW	3,998,745	200,611	141,176	292,461	18,406	4,651,399
Vic.	2,888,562	166,866	159,567	383,140	14,688	3,612,823
Qld	2,266,259	122,707	94,665	311,863	7,457	2,802,951
WA	1,128,162	91,667	58,940	108,669	6,568	1,394,006
SA	913,581	58,512	26,390	82,361	5,327	1,086,171
Tas.	297,001	13,232	11,382	26,765	1,169	349,549
ACT	230,644	3,195	12,482	12,597	1,009	259,927
NT	92,954	1,721	4,874	5,163	478	105,190
Total	11,815,908	658,511	509,476	1,223,019	55,102	14,262,016

Senate votes by type

State/territory	Ordinary votes	Absent votes	Pre-poll votes	Postal votes	Provisional votes	Total
NSW	4,000,655	218,179	146,716	291,227	48,493	4,705,270
Vic.	2,888,305	182,275	165,691	381,387	36,078	3,653,736
Qld	2,266,749	129,810	97,017	310,163	15,258	2,818,997
WA	1,129,121	100,849	61,226	108,256	14,101	1,413,553
SA	914,035	63,307	27,342	82,065	10,961	1,097,710
Tas.	297,101	13,698	11,582	26,729	2,270	351,380
ACT	230,417	3,283	12,653	12,555	1,613	260,521
NT	92,993	1,764	4,946	5,146	690	105,539
Total	11,819,376	713,165	527,173	1,217,528	129,464	14,406,706

4) Proportion of postal votes counted for federal elections 2007-2013¹⁵

	2013	2010	2007
Postal votes issued	1,329,948	966,574	833,178

¹³ https://www.aec.gov.au/Elections/federal_elections/2010/downloads.htm

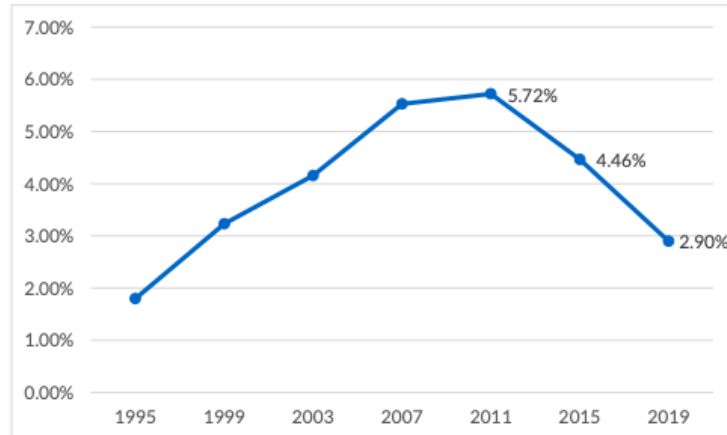
¹⁴ <https://annualreport.aec.gov.au/2017/contents/files/aec-annual-report-2016-17.pdf>

¹⁵ <https://annualreport.aec.gov.au/2014/contents/files/2013-14-annual-report.pdf>

Postal votes returned	1,175,868	854,726	749,566
% returned	88.41	88.43	89.97
Postal votes counted*	1,126,528	804,973	704,563
% counted	95.8	94.17	94

*Postal votes received later than 13 days after the close of polls or that fail to meet the preliminary scrutiny requirements as outlined in Schedule 3 of the Electoral Act cannot be admitted to the count.

5) Postal voting trends as a percentage of total votes in New South Wales¹⁶



Source: NSW Electoral Commission, Legislative Assembly

3. Voting fraud cases in Australia in the past 10-15 years

After the 2016 federal election, 18,343 people were asked to explain why their names had been crossed off more than once¹⁷. NSW, the most populous state, recorded 6760 instances of apparent multiple voting, compared with 4800 in Victoria and 2792 in Queensland. The Northern Territory recorded the fewest instances with 178¹⁸. Some 7,743 allegations of voter fraud were referred to the Australian Federal Police, only 65 were investigated, and none was prosecuted¹⁹.

Things haven't changed much. In 2007, 20,633 letters were sent to apparent multiple voters; 18,037 or 87% responded; 1167 admitted to multiple voting of whom 955 or 82% were excused due to confusion, poor comprehension or age; 10 were referred to the AFP and absolutely zero were prosecuted²⁰. At the 2013 federal election, despite nearly 8000 cases of suspected voting

¹⁶ https://www.elections.nsw.gov.au/NSWEC/media/NSWEC/Reports/Election%20reports/NSW-Electoral-Commission-2019-State-election-report_Part-1.pdf

¹⁷ <https://quadrant.org.au/opinion/qed/2019/06/election-fraud-and-the-aec/>

¹⁸ <https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/more-than-18000-people-asked-to-explain-why-they-voted-twice-at-election-20161019-gs5cal.html>

¹⁹ <https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/government-mps-call-for-mandatory-voter-identification-at-federal-elections-20181205-p50kfb.html>

²⁰ https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=em/elect07/media/02%20multiple%20voting.pdf

fraud, not a single person was prosecuted for multiple voting – including those who admitted to casting more than one ballot²¹.

²¹ <https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/no-voters-prosecuted-despite-7000plus-cases-of-suspected-voting-fraud-in-the-2013-federal-election-20150225-13o8cw.html>

Austria

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Austrian citizens have the right to vote in National Parliamentary Elections, European elections and Presidential elections. Austrian citizens and residents have the right to vote in Provincial Parliamentary Elections, Municipal Elections, and Mayoral Elections.

Requirements to be eligible to vote in National Parliamentary elections and Presidential elections:

1. You must be an Austrian citizen
2. You must be at least 16 years old on the election day
3. You must not have been excluded from the right to vote (e.g. if you were charged with severe crime like murder etc.)

Requirements to be eligible to vote in European elections:

1. You must be at least 16 year old on the Election day
2. You must a citizen of any EU country
3. You must not have been excluded from the right to vote in any of the EU countries

Requirements to be eligible to vote in Provincial Parliamentary Elections, Municipal Elections (except for Vienna municipal Elections), and Mayoral Elections:

1. You must be at least 16 years old
2. You must be a citizen of Austria or any other EU country legally living in Austria

3.If you are a legal resident of Austria but originally coming from any country outside EU, you don't have the right to vote even in municipal elections

The most recent change made to Austria's voting system happened in 2007 when the Austrian Voting rights Act was altered. The most important alteration was reducing the voting age from 18 to 16. By reducing the voting age, the government of Austria wanted to encourage young people to make political decisions because most of those decisions have a long-term impact on the society, quality of live etc. Unlike some other EU countries voting is not obligatory in Austria, so you will not be fined if you don't vote.

Before the election each eligible voter receives a letter with all the necessary information about the upcoming elections. Each address is assigned to a certain polling station; however it's possible to vote at any of those polling stations.

How to vote at the polling stations:

- 1.On the Election Day you should come to the polling station and present your ID which has a photo on it (a passport, a driver's license, a student ID etc.)
- 2.If you have a voting card you should bring it as well (You don't have to bring it, but if you do, it will make the whole process faster and easier)
- 3.Once you show your ID and a voting card, then you will receive an empty election envelope and a ballot from the officer
- 4.Procced to the voting booth and put X right next to your party or a candidate
- 5.Once you voted, put the ballot into the envelope and seal it
- 6.Put the envelope into the voting box or hand it to the voting officer

Postal voting

Postal voting is allowed in Austria if you are for some reasons can't cast your vote on the Election Day. Once the elections have been officially announced, each Austrian citizen who can't vote on the election day may apply for a postal ballot.

How to vote by post:

- 1.You must obtain a voting card first
- 2.At least 3-4 weeks before the election day you must request a postal ballot (via mail, fax, e-mail or online) from your local municipality office

3. The application for a postal ballot must include your name, your date of birth, number of your valid Austrian passport, and the exact address where your ballot should be sent to
4. Once your application is processed you should receive a letter with the ballot with two envelopes in it by mail
5. Once you voted, sign the opposite side of the ballot to prove that you cast your vote by yourself without anyone helping you or watching you
6. Make sure you put a folded ballot into a small envelope and seal it
7. Then put a small envelope into a big one and mail it to the address of the provincial electoral commission (the address is mentioned on the envelope)
8. Make sure your ballot arrives at the competent district electoral authority on the election day not later than at 5 p.m.

If you are an Austrian citizen and do not permanently reside in Austria, you must have your name added to a local “voter registry”. In order to do that you must submit an application online and attach a copy of your valid Austrian passport. You can submit that application to either the local electoral authority or to the Austrian embassy of the country you currently live in.

Recent statistics on postal voting in Austria

According to the statistics of the Austrian Ministry of the Interior during the 2019 national Parliamentary elections, **1, 070, 933 (16, 7%)** out **6, 396, 796** eligible voters requested postal ballots. About 62, 000 out of 1, 070, 933 voters were Austrian citizens living abroad. That number increased by 20% compared to the 2017 elections.

Recent mail in ballots fraud cases in Austria

During the 2010 Vienna municipality elections the Green party of Austria accused SPÖ party in the election fraud. According to the Green party investigation, SPÖ ordered more than 6, 000 mail-in ballots for people living in insane asylums, psychiatric hospitals without those people knowing about it. For example, the severely demented grandmother of one of the Green party members applied for postal ballots for all the patients of the psychiatric house. The above mentioned member of the Green party is convinced that his grandmother due to the disabilities would never be able to do something like that.

That was not the only violation By SPO. According to the Green Party investigation SPO party somehow registered more than 150, 000 illegal Turkish immigrants living in Vienna as eligible voters. The Green party is convinced that

SPO bribed those illegal immigrants with money so that they could vote for their party. According to the calculations, more than 150, 000 postal ballots were requested and sent to illegal Turkish immigrants during the 2010 elections. The Green Party is convinced that postal voting must be banned among Austrians living in the country. They think that only citizens who live abroad should have the right to vote by post.

Belgium

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Belgian citizens have the right to vote in Federal Parliamentary, European, municipal, provincial elections and referendums.

Federal Parliamentary elections take place every four years. Community and regional parliaments are elected every five years in Belgium.

Municipal and provincial elections take place every six years. Voters can only vote for the parliaments and councils of their region.

Requirements to be eligible to vote in all types of elections in Belgium:

1. You must be at least 18 years old on the election day

2. You must be a Belgian citizen

Voting in Belgium is obligatory.

Belgians who don't vote can face penalties. Eligible, unexcused voters who don't vote have to pay a fine of up to €10 (\$11.15) the first time, and up to €25 (\$27.88) the second time. If an unexcused voter fails to vote at least four times over 15 years, they are removed from the electoral register for 10 years. If you are removed from the electoral register, you will not be able to get any nominations or promotions from any public authority. That means that if you work in the government/local government sector, your supervisor will not be allowed to promote you for a 10-year period. Due to the severity of those fines, the Belgian voter turnout rate is more than 90%.

Residents' voting regulations

Residents are allowed to vote in municipal elections in Belgium on certain conditions. If you are a citizen of one of the countries of the European Union (EU), you are automatically allowed to vote in European elections.

In order to vote in municipal elections as a foreign resident, you must:

1. Be at least 18 years old

2. Be registered in a Belgian municipality:

∞in the local authority's register office

∞or at the foreign nationals register

1. Be listed in the **electoral register**

2. Have legally lived in the country for at least 5 years before the election day

In order to get enrolled on the electoral register, you must complete an application form. That form can be obtained free of charge from your local authority or can be downloaded from the election website.

The registration is valid for the upcoming municipal elections. If you no longer want to vote in local elections, you must renounce your right to vote in writing. All eligible voters receive their voting cards by post at least two weeks before the elections. The municipalities are in charge of sending those cards. The card gives the voter the instructions on when and where to vote.

In Belgium it's possible to vote at the polling stations, by proxy under certain circumstances and by using the system of electronic voting in some parts of the country.

Voting at the polling stations

Traditionally elections in Belgium take place on Sundays and polling stations are open from 08:00am until 13:00pm. However, some polling stations are open until 15:00pm.

How to vote at the polling station:

1. On the Election Day you should head to the polling station assigned to your address and bring a voting card that you received by post before

2. At the polling station you have to show your voting card and ID or a resident card (for non-citizens)

3. Before you head to the voting booth you must give your voting card and ID to the polling officer. After that you will get a ballot paper and a red pencil from the polling officer. The ballot is in two languages – Dutch and French

4. Head to the voting booth and use the red pencil to put X next to your favorite candidate or party. If you don't like any of the parties or candidates, you can cast a blank ballot too.

5. Once you voted you must show the ballot to the polling officer so that he could make sure you filled in all the information right

6. After the polling officer reviewed your ballot, put it into the voting box and pick up your ID and a voting card. Your voting card will be marked by the polling officer which confirms that you voted

Electronic voting

Electronic voting is used in some parts of the country. For example, in Brussels all voting is electronic. However, some surrounding Brussels areas such as Linkebeek and Sint-Genesius-Rode still use pencils.

How does electronic voting work?

1. Once you arrived at the polling station, showed your ID and a voting card and then handed them to the polling officer, you receive a magnetic card instead of a ballot paper from the officer

2. Head to the voting booth and insert a magnetic card into the reader and follow the instructions on the screen on how to cast your vote

3. Use an optical pen to put X next to your favorite party or candidate

4. Once the voting is complete, take the magnetic card from the reader and give it back to the polling officer. Once you return the magnetic card, you get your ID and voting card back. Your voting card will be marked by the polling officer which confirms that you voted

Voting by proxy

Voting by proxy is possible in certain circumstances in Belgium. Anyone who wants to vote by proxy due to health issues must prove the need for this with a medical certificate.

Other acceptable reasons for requiring a proxy vote can be due to business reasons (if you are on a business trip either in Belgium or overseas on the Election Day), Belgian citizens on holiday outside Belgium on the Election Day, students who need to prepare for exams. Religious issues are considered an acceptable reason as well. Prisoners are also allowed to vote by proxy.

Postal voting is only allowed for Belgian citizens living abroad

If you want to vote by post, you need to request an electoral envelope from the Belgian embassy of the country you live in. That envelope will contain a ballot paper, an identification form, instructions on how to vote and a return election envelope. Fill in the identification form first, and then put X next to your favorite party or a candidate on the ballot paper. Once you voted put the folded ballot and the identification form into the return election envelope and send it back to the election office (the address is already typed on the return envelope).

You should make sure your ballot arrives at the election office before 01:00pm on the Election Day.

Recent election fraud case in Belgium

During the 2018 municipal elections in Neufchateau 21 people were charged with election fraud. Those people were using forged proxies at the polling station. Those proxies belonged to people who were not able to vote due to health issues. However, those people confirmed that they had never obtained those proxies.

After the investigation that group of people was charged mainly with forgery and abusing the weakness of persons in vulnerable situations.

As a result of this case, the results of the municipal election in Neufchâteau have not been validated and the new municipal council was not installed in December 2018.

Canada

1. Requirements to be eligible to vote in Canada

1. Federal (National) Government

You may vote in the **federal election** if you:

- are a Canadian citizen
- will be 18 or older on election day
- are registered to vote

In most Canadian provinces and territories, only citizens may vote. Until the late 20th and early 21st centuries, British subjects who weren't citizens but resided in a Canadian province or territory were eligible to vote in elections at the provincial/territorial level. In addition to being a Canadian citizen, most provinces and territories require voters to be 18 years old and a resident of the province or territory for six months prior to election day.

	1. Provincial and Territorial Governments	1. Municipal Governments
Alberta	To be eligible to vote, you must be <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a Canadian citizen, ○ at least 18 years of age, ○ ordinarily resident in Alberta. 	A person is eligible to vote in an election held pursuant to this Act if the person <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ is at least 18 years old, ○ is a Canadian citizen, ○ resides in Alberta and the person's place of residence is located in the local jurisdiction on election day.
British Columbia	To vote in a Provincial General Election or by-election, you must be <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a Canadian citizen, ○ 18 or older on General Voting Day, ○ a resident of B.C. for six months before General Voting Day. 	In order to be eligible to vote in general local elections or by-elections as a resident or non-resident property elector, a person must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Be 18 years of age or older when they register to vote, or 18 years or older on general voting day, ○ Be a Canadian citizen, ○ Have been a resident of B. C. for at least six months before they register to vote, ○ Have either lived or owned property in the jurisdiction in which they intend to vote for at least 30 days before they register to vote, ○ Not be disqualified under the Local Government Act, or any other enactment, or by law from voting in a local election.

<p>Manitoba</p>	<p>You can vote if you are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a Canadian citizen, ○ 18 years of age on or before election day, ○ a resident of Manitoba for at least 6 months before election day, ○ in the case of a byelection, a resident of the electoral division in which the byelection is being held. 	<p>There are two types of voters that are qualified to vote in a municipal election and a Local Urban District committee election.</p> <p>∞ Resident Voters: In order to qualify as a resident voter, a person must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A Canadian citizen, ○ At least 18 years of age on Election Day, ○ A resident of the local authority or Local Urban District for at least six months on Election Day. <p>∞ Non-resident Voters: In order to qualify as a non-resident voter, a person must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A Canadian citizen, ○ At least 18 years of age on Election Day, ○ A registered owner of land in the municipality or Local Urban District for at least six months on Election Day.
<p>New Brunswick</p>	<p>A person is qualified to vote in a provincial election if he or she:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ is a Canadian citizen, ○ will be eighteen years of age on or before polling day, ○ has been or will have been ordinarily resident in the Province for a period of at least 40 days immediately before the election, ○ will be living in the electoral district on Election Day. 	<p>A person is qualified to vote in a municipal, district education council or regional health authority election if he or she⁹:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ is a Canadian citizen, ○ will be eighteen years of age on or before polling day, ○ has been or will have been ordinarily resident in the Province for a period of at least 40 days immediately before the election, ○ will be living in the municipality, school district, or health region on Election Day.
<p>Newfoundland and Labrador</p>	<p>A person must meet the following requirements to vote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Canadian citizen, ○ minimum 18 years of age, ○ resident of NL the day before polling day, ○ resident of the district in which the person is voting on polling day. 	<p>In accordance with section 22 of the Act, in order to vote in a municipal election a person must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ be a Canadian citizen, ○ be at least 18 years of age on or before election day, ○ have been ordinarily resident for the 30 days immediately preceding election day either in the municipality or in an area that on election day is part of the municipality.

<p>Nova Scotia</p>	<p>If you are a Canadian citizen who is 18 years or older on election day and have lived in Nova Scotia for the six months or more before the day the election is called, then you have the right to vote.</p>	<p>To be eligible to vote, you must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the full age of eighteen (18) years, ○ a Canadian citizen, ○ As of the first advance polling day, ordinarily resident in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♣ the Province of Nova Scotia for a period of six (6) months; and ♣ in the Municipality.
<p>Ontario</p>	<p>To be eligible to vote in an Ontario election, you must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 18 years of age or older, ○ a Canadian citizen, ○ a resident of Ontario. 	<p>You are eligible to vote in the election for municipal council if you meet all of the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ you are a Canadian citizen, ○ you are aged 18 or older, ○ you qualify to vote in the municipality.
<p>Prince Edward Island</p>	<p>You are eligible to vote as long as you are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Age 18 years old, or will be on Election Day, ○ A Canadian citizen on or before Election Day, ○ Living in PEI for the six months immediately before the date the election is called (writ), ○ Living in the polling district on the date the election was officially called (the writ). 	<p>You can vote in a municipal election if you*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Are a Canadian citizen, ○ Are at least 18 years of age or older, ○ Have lived in PEI for at least 6 months before election day, ○ Are ordinarily a resident in the municipality on election day. <p>*Different rules apply in the Resort Municipality (see section 32 of the MGA).</p>

<p>Quebec</p>	<p>To vote, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ have your name entered on the list of electors, at the address of your domicile, ○ be 18 years of age or older on election day, ○ be a Canadian citizen, ○ have been domiciled in Québec for six months, ○ not be under curatorship or have lost your election rights. 	<p>To be a qualified elector, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ be 18 years old on polling day, ○ September 1 in the year of a general election, or at the time of a by-election, at the date on which the writ of election is published: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♣ be a Canadian citizen, ♣ not be under curatorship, ♣ not have been found guilty of an offence that is a corrupt electoral practice, <p>And at that same date (September 1st or date of publication of the notice of election), you must meet one of the following two conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♣ be domiciled in the municipality and have been domiciled in Québec for at least six months, ♣ have been, for at least 12 months, the owner of an immovable or the occupant of a business establishment situated on the territory of the municipality.
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<p>Saskatchewan</p>	<p>To vote in the provincial election you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Be a Canadian citizen, ○ Be at least 18 years old, ○ Have lived in Saskatchewan for at least 6 months before the day the election is called, ○ Ordinarily be a resident of Saskatchewan. <p>You can also vote if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ you are a British subject who was qualified as a voter on June 23, 1971 ○ you meet the residency requirements stated above. 	<p>∞ Urban municipality</p> <p>To vote in a city, town or village election in Saskatchewan, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ be a Canadian citizen, ○ be at least 18 years of age and one of the following, ○ have lived in Saskatchewan for at least six consecutive months immediately before election day and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. lived in the municipality (or on land now in the municipality) for at least three consecutive months immediately before election day, or b. be the owner of assessable land situated in the municipality (or land now situated in the municipality) for at least three consecutive months immediately before election day. <p>∞ Resort village</p> <p>To vote in a resort village election in Saskatchewan, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ be a Canadian citizen, ○ be at least 18 years of age and one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. have lived in the resort village (or on land now in the resort village) for at least three consecutive months immediately before election day, b. be the assessed person with respect to property in the resort village (property now situated in the resort village, refer to Section 207 of <i>The Municipalities Act</i>) for at least three consecutive months immediately before election day, or c. be the spouse of an eligible voter mentioned in a or b. <p>∞ Rural municipality</p> <p>To vote in an RM election in Saskatchewan, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ be a Canadian citizen, ○ be at least 18 years of age and one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. have lived in the RM (or land now in the RM) for at least three consecutive months immediately preceding the day of the election,
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Northwest Territories	<p>You are eligible to be an elector if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ You are 18 years of age on or before ordinary polling day, ○ You are a Canadian Citizen, ○ You have been a resident of the NWT for 6 consecutive months as of ordinary polling day. 	<p>The Community Governments follow the Local Authorities Elections Act in regards to eligibility of voters and candidates. A person is eligible to vote if they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Are a Canadian citizen, ○ Have reached the age of 18 years, ○ Have lived in the community at least 12 consecutive months immediately before Election Day.
Nunavut	<p>You can vote if you are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A Canadian citizen, ○ 18 years or older, ○ A Nunavut resident, ○ Not disqualified from voting. <p>You may not vote if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ You have a court order that says you don't understand your actions or you can't decide things for yourself, ○ You committed a crime and are in a place for people with mental illness, ○ You have been convicted of breaking an election law anywhere in Canada in the last five years. 	<p>If you are eligible to vote in a municipal election in your community, then you are also eligible to vote in the referendum.</p> <p>You must meet the following rules to be able to vote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ You must be a Canadian citizen, ○ You must be 18 years of age or older, ○ You have been living in your community for the last 12 months, ○ You are a resident of your community on the day you vote.
Yukon	<p>To vote or be a candidate you must be a Canadian citizen, at least 18 years of age, and been resident in Yukon for the previous 12 months.</p>	<p>To either vote or be nominated as a candidate for mayor or council, a person must be at least 18 years old on election day, a Canadian citizen, and a resident of the municipality or local advisory area for at least one year immediately prior to election day.</p>

a. Canada allows mail-in ballots

∞Vote by mail – for electors who live in Canada

If your home is in Canada, you must wait until *after* an election is called to apply to vote by mail.

After an election is called:

- Complete an *Application for Registration and Special Ballot*. The form will be available on this website, at any local Elections Canada office or by calling Elections Canada.
- Send us your completed form and proof of identity and home address. You can submit them by fax, by mail, or in person at any local Elections Canada office.

○Once your application is accepted, we will send you a special ballot voting kit by regular mail. (If you apply in person, staff will hand you the kit.) The kit explains how to mark your special ballot and mail it in.

∞Vote by mail – for electors who live outside Canada

If you're a Canadian elector, your home is outside Canada, and you meet certain eligibility criteria, you can apply now to vote by mail in a future election.

You can also get an application form by calling Elections Canada. Ask for an *Application for Registration and Special Ballot for Canadian Citizens Residing Outside Canada*.

○If we accept your application, we will add your name to the International Register of Electors. This is a list of Canadians temporarily living outside Canada who can vote in federal elections.

○When an election is called, we will mail a special ballot voting kit to everyone in the International Register of Electors. The kit explains how to mark your special ballot and mail it in.

Important information on voting by special ballot

Voting by mail or at a local Elections Canada office means voting by special ballot.

○Anyone may vote by special ballot, but you must apply for this ballot in advance.

○Your application must be received at Elections Canada by the special ballot registration deadline: 6 p.m. on the Tuesday before election day.

○Once your application is accepted, we will give you a special ballot voting kit. This kit includes:

♣ a special ballot

♣ two envelopes (they keep your vote secret)

♣ instructions on how to mark and mail in your special ballot

○Your completed special ballot must arrive at Elections Canada by the election day deadline, or it will not be counted.

○Once your application to vote by special ballot has been accepted, this is the only way you can vote. You cannot vote at the advance or election day polls or apply for another special ballot.

○You may vote only once during an election, and you may vote only for a candidate running in your riding.

∞Statistics

a.2019 Federal Election by the Numbers

Registered electors - 27.3 million

Canadians voted - Approximately 18,350,359

Voted by mail from abroad - 34,144* (11,001 for 2015)

a.2019 General Election

A total of approximately 660,000 electors voted by special ballot, compared with about 619,000 electors in the 42nd general election, a 6.7 percent increase. This represents 3.6 percent of electors who voted.

a. Trend in Turnout by Voting Methods (2004 to 2015)

	Election Year				
	2004	2006	2008	2011	2015
Percent of voters cast their ballot on election day	89.0	86.5	87.2	83.8	75.8
Percent of voters voted at advance polls	9.2	10.5	11.0	14.3	20.8
Percent of voters voted by special ballot (either by mail or at an Elections Canada office)	1.8	3.0	1.8	1.9	3.5

a. Voting fraud cases in Canada in the past 10-15 years

∞2011 Canadian Federal Election Voter Suppression Scandal

Electoral fraud occurred during 2011 federal election, a federal court judge ruled on May 23, 2013, but there is no proof that it affected the outcomes in six ridings at issue, so the elections will not be overturned. The court challenge was brought by the Council of Canadians, which sought to overturn the election of six Conservative MPs who won close ridings where there was evidence that someone tried to affect the results by calling opposition supporters and telling them their polling stations had moved. Federal Court Judge Richard Mosley ruled that the calls “struck at the integrity of the electoral process by attempting to dissuade voters from casting ballots for their preferred candidates. This form of ‘voter suppression,’ was, until the 41st General Election, largely unknown in this country.” The evidence points to “a concerted campaign by persons who had access to a database of voter information maintained by a political party,” Mosley writes, but says there was no allegation that any of the candidates in the six ridings were responsible for the campaign.

Later, a junior Conservative campaign worker in Guelph, Ont., has been charged under the Elections Act in relation to fraudulent robocalls made during the 2011 election campaign. Michael Sona, 24, has been "charged with having wilfully prevented or endeavoured to prevent an elector from voting at an election." Sona is the only Conservative to be charged with any crime related to any robocalls, and in August 2014, he was found guilty of one violation of the Elections Act. The trial judge concluded that it was unlikely that Sona acted alone in the commission of the offence. Justice Gary Hearn sentenced Sona to 9 months of imprisonment and 1 year of probation. He described Sona's actions as 'an affront to the electoral process'. The sentence was appealed, but was upheld by the Ontario Court of Appeal. He was granted parole in September 2016. The remainder of his sentence expired in January 2017.

On April 24, 2014, Commissioner of Canada Elections Yves Cote announced that his investigation had determined that there was insufficient evidence to believe that an offence was committed and that full investigation would not be possible as the commissioner had no power to compel documents or testimony. The Elections Canada investigation has been criticized by lawyer Steven Shrybman as "fatally flawed". Similar criticisms have been made by others as well.

∞ **VOTER FRAUD? Foreigners were illegally asked to vote in 2015 federal election**

In April 2019, for the first time, IRCC was able to provide Elections Canada with information on permanent residents and foreign nationals. Elections Canada was able to initially identify approximately 103,000 potential non-citizens in the Register. This number subsequently increased to 112,000 following further analysis. Based on revised data sent by IRCC, the number was revised again, to 85,000, from which, approximately 74 000 were removed. Others were confirmed to be Canadian citizens. Elections Canada is continuing to analyze the data and cross-reference it with other data and verify the eligibility of these individuals and remove those who are not eligible to vote. It appears they are uncertain how many non-Canadians managed to bypass the vetting process during the 2015 election.

Chile

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Chilean citizens have the right to vote in presidential, parliamentary, regional and municipal elections.

Presidential elections take place every four years.

Parliamentary elections are held every four years and every eight years. Lower house of Parliament (Chamber of Deputies) elections are held every four year. Upper house of Parliament (Senate) elections happens every eight years.

Requirements to be eligible to vote in Chile:

- a. You must be at least 18 years old
- b. You must be a Chilean citizen or a resident who legally lived in the country for at least 5 years to vote in all types of elections including the national ones
- c. You must possess a valid Chilean passport or ID
- d. You must not have been sentenced to the death penalty

All eligible voters who turned 18 are automatically added to the voter's list. Before the Election Day you need to find your polling station at the following website - <https://consulta.servel.cl/>

How to vote at the polling station

- a. On the Election Day come to the polling station where you are registered to vote
- b. Show your passport or state issued ID to the polling officer
- c. Once the polling officer finds your name on the voter's list, you will get ballot papers
- d. Mark your chosen candidate or party by a pencil and fold the ballot

e. Show your ballot to the president of the polling station so that he could stamp it and cross your name out of the voter's list

f. Place a stamped ballot into the voting box

Voters with disabilities can have a person they trust as an assistant who can accompany them in the voting booth. In order to do that an assistant must show the ID to the polling officer as well.

Voting from abroad

Chilean citizens living abroad got their right to vote in national elections in 2012. In order to vote they need to go to the polling stations located at the embassies or consulates. The process of voting is the same as at polling stations in Chile.

Postal voting is not allowed in Chile.

Online voting

Some municipalities in Chile allow its residents to vote online during the local municipal elections and local referendums. Online voting is available on local municipalities' websites. Residents can also vote at the polling station if they for some reasons don't want or can't vote online.

Recent voting fraud cases in Chile

2017 Chilean presidential elections

Chile's candidate for presidential term Sebastián Piñera accused his opponent in rigging the elections. He said that a lot of observers noticed that many of the ballots at the tables had been previously marked. According to Sebastian Pinera, it was happening the entire day of the elections at many polling stations. Even if the election was rigged by his opponents, it didn't prevent Sebastian Pinera to win the elections and become the president of Chile in 2017.

Recent voter turnout rate

The voter turnout rate was traditionally very high in Chile (about 86-88%) before 2012 because the voting was compulsory back then. After the new law which allowed Chilean voters to choose whether they want to vote or not, the voter turnout rate declined dramatically. For example, only 46.7 percent of the total number of officially registered voters in Chile casted a vote for the 2017 presidential election. However, the voter turnout rate among Chilean citizens living abroad reached 60%. The voter turnout rate during the 2013 presidential elections was even lower.

2013 Presidential elections - 41.96%

2013 Chilean Senate elections - 35.69%

2013 Chilean Chamber of Deputies - 49.25%

2010 Presidential elections – 86.74% (when the voting was compulsory)

Colombia

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<https://www.registraduria.gov.co/20-Cuales-son-las-clases-de.html>

<https://www.as-coa.org/articles/what-watch-colombias-2019-local-elections>

<https://colombiareports.com/colombia-annuls-915000-id-cards-citing-evidence-of-mass-voter-fraud/>

Colombian citizens have the right to vote in presidential elections, elections for the lower (the House of Representatives) and upper (the Senate of the Republic) Houses of Parliament, referendums and local municipal elections.

Presidential elections take place every four years.

Elections for the lower and upper houses of Parliament are held every four years.

Requirements to be eligible to vote in Colombia:

- a. You must be a Colombian citizen
- b. You must be at least 18 years old
- c. You must not be an active military or police
- d. You must not be a convicted felony

Voting is not compulsory in Colombia.

As of January 2018, there were 36,025,318 registered voters in Colombia: 17,419,011 men and 18,606,307 women.

Colombian residents have the right to vote in local municipal and regional elections. In order to vote you must be at least 18 years old. You have to have lived more than five continuous years in Colombia and hold a residency visa. This must be verified by Colombia's migration office.

All eligible voters are required to register their identity document in the local municipal office or in various shopping centers across Colombia. Before the Election Day all eligible voters need to find polling stations where they are registered to vote at www.registraduria.gov.co website.

How to vote at the polling station:

- a. On the Election Day come to the polling station assigned to your address between 8a.m. and 4p.m.

- b. Show your Colombian yellow ID to the polling officer (this is the only type of identification accepted at the polling station)
- c. Once the polling officer finds your name on the voter's list, you will receive a ballot paper
- d. Head to the voting stand and mark your chosen candidate or party
- e. Put the ballot into the voting box

Voting from abroad

Colombian citizens living abroad can only vote in national elections. They can vote in embassies and consulates. In order to be eligible to vote they must possess a valid yellow Colombian ID card.

As of March 2018, there were 720,259 Colombians eligible to vote abroad.

Postal voting is not allowed in Colombia

Recent voting fraud cases

In September 2019 Colombia's National Electoral Council (CNE) canceled 915,000 ID cards citing evidence they may have been registered for electoral fraud purposes.

More than 773,000 newly requested ID cards had the addresses that didn't match with their actual places of living.

Voter trafficking is a major issue in local elections in Colombia as voters are allowed to cast ballots in municipalities they don't live in. Especially in smaller towns, this type of fraud can easily help corrupted officials to be elected without the actual support of the local population.

The practice in some cases is so extreme that municipalities end up having more registered voters than residents surveyed by the national statistics agency. It is not clear whether this is done through identity theft or with the consent of the voter.

Recent voter turnout rate

2018 Presidential elections - 53.04%

2018 Colombian Senate elections - 48.83%

2018 Colombian House of Representatives elections - 48.98%

2016 Referendum - 37.44%

Czech Republic

Sources:

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<http://aceproject.org/ero-en/regions/europe/CZ/czech-republic-voter-registration-case-study.pdf>

<https://www.mvcr.cz/clanek/texty-informace-pro-obcany-ceske-republiky-o-podminkach-hlasovani-ve-volbach-do-evropskeho-parlamentu-na-uzemi-ceske-republiky.aspx>

https://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/59568/RSCAS_GLOBALCIT_PP_2018_16.pdf?sequence=5

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Czech citizens have the right to vote in Presidential elections, European parliamentary elections, referendums, elections of the lower (Chamber of Deputies) and upper house (Senate) of Parliament and municipal elections.

Requirements to be eligible to vote in referendums, presidential and parliamentary elections:

- a. You must be at least 18 years old
- b. You must be a citizen of Czech Republic
- c. You must not have been disqualified from voting by the court

To be eligible to vote in European parliamentary and municipal elections:

- a. You must be a citizen of any EU country who is a legal Czech resident
- b. You must be at least 18 years old on the Election Day
- c. You must have a place of residence in Czech Republic
- d. You must have your name entered into the Permanent Electoral Roll
- e. You must not have been banned from voting in any other EU state

Voting is not compulsory in Czech Republic.

Voters in Czech Republic have to vote in a specific polling station based on their permanent residence. If they want to vote elsewhere within the Czech Republic, they have to apply for a voter's certificate at their local municipal office. The voter's certificate allows voting in any electoral district in Czech Republic.

At least 4-5 days before the Election Day all eligible voters receive an electoral package with ballot papers, a list of candidates and instructions on when and where to vote on the Election Day.

How to vote at the polling station:

- a. On the Election Day come to the polling station based on your place of residence and bring the ballot papers which you received by mail before (if you don't bring the ballots, you can request the new ones at the polling station)
- b. Show your ID to the polling officer (a Czech passport for referendums, presidential and parliamentary elections, EU identification card for European parliamentary and local municipal elections)
- c. If your name is not on the voter's list, you will be able to vote if you show the documents proving that you are eligible to vote in certain types of elections
- d. Once your identity is confirmed, you will get an empty stamped envelope from the polling officer (if you requested the ballot papers, you'll get them as well)
- e. Head to the voting booth and put the ballot which belongs to your favorite party/candidate into the envelope
- f. Seal the envelope and put it into the voting box in front of the polling officers

It is also possible to vote in prisons, hospitals or senior houses. If you can't vote at the polling station on the day of the elections due to health issues, you can choose the option to vote from home. If you submit a request, a polling officer will come to your place to collect the vote on the Election Day.

Proxy and online voting are not allowed in Czech Republic.

Czech citizens living abroad don't have the right to vote in municipal and regional elections. They are allowed to vote in national (presidential and parliamentary: Chamber of Deputies and the Senate) and in European Parliament elections.

Postal voting is not available even for Czech citizens living abroad.

The Czech Republic still fails to introduce postal ballots to facilitate the participation in elections for its citizens abroad. That's surprising because many other countries, including 24 out of the 28 EU states, allow its citizens who live abroad to vote by post.

There are about 300, 000 Czech citizens living abroad right now. In order for them to vote, they have to register to vote at the Czech embassy or consulate at least 40 days before the Election Day. On the day of the election, they have to turn up at the nearest foreign mission where a polling station was installed, often very far from their place of residence, to cast their ballot. That's one of the

main reasons why the voter turnout rate among Czech citizens living outside the country is very low.

The Chamber of Deputies doesn't approve the idea of enabling the postal voting for Czech citizens living abroad. One of the chairmen of the Chamber of Deputies said "People may be cheating in postal voting. In addition, I believe that decisions such as the choice of the president or the amount of pensions and taxes should be made by the people who permanently live here, not in the USA or Australia".

Recent voter turnout rate

2018 Presidential elections - 66.57%

2017 Czech Chamber of Deputies (lower house of Parliament) elections - 60.79%

2013 Presidential elections - 59.08%

2012 Czech Senate elections - 34.9%

Denmark

Sources:

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<https://valg.sim.dk/vaelgere/brevstemmeafgivning.aspx>

Danish citizens who are at least 18 years old have the right to vote in parliamentary, referendum, European, regional and municipality elections. Danish residents are only allowed to vote in regional and municipality elections and some of them in European Parliamentary elections.

Requirements to be eligible to vote in all types of elections in Denmark:

- a. You must be at least 18 years old
- b. You must be a Danish citizen
- c. You must live in Denmark and be registered in the Civil Register of Denmark (if you move abroad and you are no longer registered in CRD, you lose your right to vote. However certain groups of people may be admitted to the electoral roll even if they live abroad)

Requirements to be eligible to vote in regional, municipal and European elections in Denmark:

- a. You must be at least 18 years old
- b. You must be a Danish citizen
- c. Or you must be a citizen of one of the other EU Member States
- d. Or you must be a citizen of Iceland or Norway
- e. Or you must be a citizen of Faroe Islands or Greenland who legally lived in Denmark for at least four years (Residence is counted from the date you register in the Civil Register of Denmark)

All eligible voters are sent voting cards about five days before the elections. On the Election Day you should show up at the polling station (assigned to your address) from 08:00am to 20:00pm, show your ID, passport or a resident's card,

get a ballot and head to the voting booth alone. Then you need to put X for your candidate, fold the ballot and put it into the voting box.

In Denmark it is possible to vote beforehand by mail. Normally, postal voting takes place at any Citizen Service Centre in Denmark. It takes place the last six weeks before the Election Day and ends no later than three days beforehand. You need to bring an ID.

If you are ill or physically unable to go and vote, you can also vote from home. You can apply for this option at your municipality at least twelve days before the Election Day.

Citizens who reside in institutions such as hospitals or prisons can vote from there.

Postal voting is not a common thing and is mostly for those people who are unable to vote at the polling stations. For example, for marines, for people living in isolated places, far islands etc.

How to vote by mail:

Firstly, you need to show up at any of the Citizen Service Centers of Denmark, present your ID, driver's license or a yellow health card. After that you will get a ballot and an envelope. Once you voted, fold the ballot, put it into the envelope and attach a signed cover letter, where you need to fill in your name, date of birth and your place of residence. Seal the envelope and drop it into the postal box located in the Citizen Service Center.

Estonia

Sources:

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http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-03/04/c_137866335.htm

<https://www.tallinn.ee/est/valimised/Kuidas-toimub-haaletamine-6>

<https://e-estonia.com/solutions/e-governance/i-voting/>

<https://www.valimised.ee/en/estonian-elections-nutshell/voting-abroad>

Estonian citizens have the right to vote in **Riigikogu** (Parliamentary) elections, referendums, European Parliamentary elections and municipal elections.

Elections to the Riigikogu (Parliament) are held every four years.

Municipal council elections are held every four years.

Elections to the European Parliament take place every five years in Estonia.

Voting is not compulsory in Estonia. There's no fine if you don't vote.

Requirements to be eligible to vote in Riigikogu (Parliamentary) elections and referendums:

a. You must be at least 18 years old on the Election day

b. You must be an Estonian citizen

Citizens of other EU countries who are legal Estonian residents have the right to vote and stand as candidates in municipal and European Parliamentary elections.

To be eligible to vote in municipal and European Parliamentary elections:

a. You must be a citizen of any EU country

b. You must be at least 16 years old on the Election Day

c. You must not have been banned from voting in any of the EU countries

d. You must have a place of residence in Estonia and have your name entered into the Estonian Population Register

Citizens of non-European Union member states residing in Estonia can vote in municipal council elections, but they cannot stand as candidates for the councils. Citizens of non EU countries are not allowed to vote in European Parliamentary elections.

People eligible to vote are automatically included into the list of voters based on the Estonian Population Register. At least 15 days before the Election Day all eligible voters receive a voter card which describes all the voting options. Failure to receive the card may mean that your name is not on the list of voters.

People eligible to vote have the option to vote at the polling stations on the Election Day. They also have an opportunity to vote before the Election Day using the various options for advance voting. It is also possible to vote electronically.

Advance voting

From the 10th to 7th day before the Election Day at least one polling station has to be open in every county center where voters can vote regardless of their voting district of residence. The polling stations are open from 12 noon until 8 p.m.

All polling stations usually open on the 6th day before the Election Day (i.e. on Monday of the week preceding the elections) until the 4th day before the Election Day (Wednesday). Polling stations are open from 12 noon until 8 p.m.

Polling stations are not open on the last Thursday, Friday and Saturday before the Election Day.

How to vote at the polling station

- a. On the Election Day come to the polling station between 09:00am and 08:00pm
- b. Show your ID to the polling officer so that he/she could find your name on the voter's list (ID must have your first and last name, photo, date of birth and signature on it)
- c. Once the polling officer checks your ID, you will receive a ballot
- d. Head to the voting booth and put X next to your favorite candidate/party
- e. Once you voted, fold the ballot paper and give it to the polling officer so that he could stamp it
- f. Put a stamped ballot into the voting box

Voting from home

If can't vote at the polling station on the Election Day due to health issues, you have the option to vote at home. In order to do that you must submit a written application to the Tallinn City Council not later than 2pm on the Election Day. You can also call the polling station assigned to your address between 9am and 2pm on the Election Day and ask the polling officer to come to your place and collect your vote.

It is also possible to vote at prisons, hospitals and senior houses in Estonia.

I-Voting (internet voting)

Estonian government is convinced that I-Voting is a unique solution that simply and conveniently helps to engage people in the governance process. In 2005, Estonia became the first country in the world to hold nation-wide elections using

this method, and in 2007, it made headlines as the first country to use i-Voting in parliamentary elections.

Internet voting, or i-Voting, is a system that allows voters to cast their ballots from any internet-connected computer anywhere in the world.

I-voting is available during the days of advance voting, from the 10th until the 4th day before the Election Day. I-voting is not possible on the Election Day.

I-voting is only possible on a computer, not a smart device.

To vote electronically, the voter must have:

- ∞ ID-card issued by the Police and Border Guard Board
- ∞ PIN-codes issued along with the ID-card. If you have lost your codes, the Police and Border Guard Board will issue new ones;
- ∞ Valid certificates;
- ∞ Computer with Internet connection – Windows, Mac OS X or Linux operating systems can be used for voting;
- ∞ Card reader; this can be purchased in a computer store;
- ∞ ID-card software

In order to cast your vote electronically, you need to go to the election home page and follow the instructions. You should make sure your computer is virus free before i-voting.

According to the statistics, 44% of Estonian eligible voters use i-voting.

Postal voting

Estonian citizens permanently or temporarily residing abroad get an electronic voter card at least 15 days before the election which describes their voting possibilities. They have three options:

- a. Voting at the polling station at the embassy or a consulate
- b. Voting electronically
- c. Voting by post

If you decide to vote by post, you must request a postal ballot from the embassy or a consulate. A copy of an identification card must be attached to the application. The application form must be received by the embassy not later than thirty days before the Election Day.

Once your application has been processed, the embassy will send you a ballot paper, two envelopes and a list of candidates.

Once you received an electoral package and completed a ballot paper, you must put it into the internal (smaller) envelope, and then put a small envelope into the big envelope. You must write your name, personal identification code and the number of the Riigikogu electoral district on the big envelope (without this your vote will not count).

Send the envelope with the ballot paper inside back to the embassy. Make sure your envelope is received by the embassy not later than the set date, as the embassy will have to send it to Estonia and make sure it arrives not later than 8pm on the Election Day.

The expenses of sending the ballot paper to the embassy or consulate are borne by the voter.

Recent voter turnout rate

The average voter turnout rate in Estonia is 62.65% which is almost 10% higher compared to Estonia's neighboring Baltic countries. Estonian government is convinced that i-voting makes the whole process faster and easier and contributes to higher voter turnout rate.

Finland

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<https://vaalit.fi/en/voting-in-advance>

Finnish citizens who are at least 18 years old have the right to vote in presidential, parliamentary, European parliamentary and municipal elections.

Requirements to be eligible to vote in all types of elections in Finland:

a. You must be at least 18 years old

b. You be a Finnish citizen

Presidential elections are held every six years in Finland. The same person can be elected for no more than two consecutive terms of office. You must be a native Finnish citizen to become a candidate for a president.

Parliamentary elections are held every four years.

Requirements to be eligible to vote in municipality elections:

a. You must be a citizen of Finland, another EU country, Norway or Iceland and be at least 18 years old

b. If you come from another foreign country which is not a member of EU, you must be at least 18 years old and legally live in Finland for at least two years

Municipal elections are held every four years.

Finnish citizens and residents who are eligible to vote receive a poll card in their mail at least one month prior before the elections indicating the polling station they should go to on election day. The poll card also specifies advance voting locations, usually town halls, libraries and post offices. Polling stations are open from 9.00am to 8.00pm.

Finland is divided into 13 electoral districts. On Election Day, voters may only vote at their local polling stations.

How to vote at polling stations:

In order to vote in advance or on the Election Day, you need to bring a valid ID to the polling station such as a passport, police-issued ID card, driving license or Kela card with a photo.

Once you are at the polling station, show your ID and get a ballot paper from the clerk. Go to a polling booth, circle the number of the candidate/party you want to vote for and fold it over. Do not write anything else or make any other markings on your ballot paper.

Head to the polling clerk standing next to the ballot box. They will stamp your folded ballot paper and show you where to place it in the ballot box.

Advance voting

Advance voting usually starts 11-12 days prior and ends five days before the official Election Day. Advance polling stations are mostly Finland municipal offices, post-offices run by municipalities and Finnish embassies abroad. Every municipality has at least one polling station. In Finland there are also special advance polling stations such as hospitals, nursing houses prisons and some other institutions. If you are unable to come to an advance polling station or a polling station on the Election Day due to some disability or other health issues, you may vote in advance at home. An election commissioner comes to you to receive your vote. The crew of a Finnish ship abroad may vote in advance on board of the ship. The advance voting in ships usually begins three weeks before the Election Day.

Postal voting is only available for Finns living abroad

In 2019 more than 250, 000 Finnish citizens living outside of Finland got the right to vote **by postal ballots** in Finnish and European Parliamentary elections for the first time in history. Postal voting represents a big change as Finnish expatriates previously had to travel to Finnish embassies or consulates to cast their vote, which may have been thousands of miles away in countries such as Australia and US. The cost of travelling and the time that it would take discouraged many voters. That's why expatriate voting percentages have remained so low.

Finnish Expatriate Parliament's speaker Jarmo Virmavirta said that it took Finland twenty years to introduce the postal voting compared to other EU countries that have been practicing this type of voting for many years. Jarmo Virmavirta considers postal voting a bit outdated and is convinced that Finland should already have an online voting instead.

However, some other experts feel differently and consider postal voting a big improvement. For example another Finnish Expatriate Parliament's deputy speaker, Hanna Wagner, who lives in Washington DC is sure that postal voting will increase the absentee voting rate among Finns (especially younger ones) living in US dramatically.

The same situation is expected in Sweden. Despite the fact that there are 109,000 Finnish citizens living in Sweden who are entitled to vote, the voter turnout has been previously very low. According to the experts, postal voting should change the situation for the best.

France

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French citizens have the right to vote in presidential, European, parliamentary, local municipal, regional council elections and referendums.

Presidential elections take place every five years.

Municipal and regional council elections take place every six years.

Parliamentary elections take place every five years.

Requirements to be eligible to vote in national elections:

- a. You must be at least 18 years old
- b. You must be a French citizen
- c. You must not have been banned from voting (certain prisoners in France aren't allowed to vote)

Voting in France is not obligatory. There's no fine if you don't vote.

French residents are allowed to vote in municipal elections.

To be eligible to vote in the French municipal elections:

- a. You must be at least 18 years old
- b. You must have a resident card
- c. You must meet the legal conditions for inclusion into the electoral roll (for example, you must provide a proof of address such as a rent receipt, tax return, water or electricity bill)
- d. You must be on the register for one of the municipal taxes

You are not obliged to vote in the municipal elections once you are on the electoral register.

Requirements to be eligible to vote in European elections:

- a. You must be at least 18 years old

- b. You must be a citizen of one of the EU countries
- c. You must be a legal resident of France
- d. You must not have been banned from voting in any of the EU countries before

French eligible voters can cast their vote at the polling stations or by proxy in certain circumstances.

In order to be able to vote in France you must be registered on the official electoral roll. If you are a French citizen who reached the age of 18, you'll be automatically added to the electoral roll. If you are a French resident or a person who recently obtained a French citizenship by naturalization, you must register to vote by the last working day in December of the year preceding the elections. You can register at the Town Hall of your place of residence, by post or online.

In order to be added to the official electoral roll, you must provide the following documents:

- a. Proof of nationality (passport)
- b. A valid proof of identity with a photo on it (passport, resident card, driver's license, student's ID)
- c. Proof of address (a rent receipt, tax return, water or electricity bill)
- d. A completed voter registration form

Once you are added to the official electoral roll, you will receive a voting card. The voting card will contain the information on the address and the time when your polling station opens and closes.

Traditionally elections take place on Sundays and polling stations are open from 08:00am till 06:00pm (till 07:00pm during presidential elections).

How to vote at the polling station:

- a. Come to the polling station assigned to your address on the Election Day
- b. Present your voting card and ID which has a photo on it (a passport, driver's license, resident card, student ID)
- c. Once you show your ID, you will receive an envelope and ballot papers
- d. Head to a voting booth and cast your vote
- e. Once you voted, put a ballot into the envelope

f. Before placing an envelope into the voting box, give your voting card to the polling officer so that he could stamp it

g. Sign the register of voters

h. Put an envelope into the voting box

Some polling stations use voting machines. The process is the same – you need to come to the polling station, present your voting card and ID, head to a voting booth and use the instructions on the screen of the voting machine. Select your favorite candidate or party with an optical pen and press the “vote” button. After voting, sign the register of voters and give your voting card to the polling officer so that he could stamp it.

Voting by proxy

Voters unable to attend a polling station on Election Day may vote by proxy.

Acceptable reasons for absentee voting are:

a. Health issues

b. Professional or family obligations

c. If you are on holiday outside the country or municipality on the Election Day

If you want to vote by proxy, you should go to the local municipality office prior to the elections.

At the local municipality office you must:

∞ Show suitable proof of reason for absence - for example, letter from your employer or medical certificate - and proof of identity

∞ Nominate a proxy who must be registered on the electoral roll

Postal voting was suspended in France in 1975 due to some election fraud cases.

The same year postal voting was replaced by proxy voting.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the mayors of certain French municipalities asked the French government to bring the postal voting back for at least the second round of municipal elections which will take place at the end of June 2020. The mayors brought up the examples of Switzerland and Germany where postal voting is an option. The French government is not sure that there's enough time to set up the system in less than a month. Plus the government is concerned about mail in ballots fraud that might happen again.

Right now only French citizens who live abroad are allowed to cast their votes by postal ballots. They got that right in 1982.

Recent voter turnout rate

During the 2017 presidential election the voter turnout rate was only 67, 9%. That number was very low compared to 2012 elections when almost 80% of eligible French voters voted. 2017 turnout rate was recognized as the worst result in the modern French history.

Germany

Sources:

https://www.bundestag.de/leichte_sprache/wer_arbeitet_im_bundestag/bundestagswahl

<https://www.deutschepost.de/de/b/briefwahl.html>

<https://www.dw.com/en/german-election-could-be-won-by-early-voting/a-40296550>

Voting rules for Bundestag (German Federal Parliament)

Bundestag elections take place once in four years. The latest elections happened in 2017, the next ones are coming in 2021.

According to the law, German people can vote for a district representative and for a political party. The elections for a district representative and political party take place on the same day.

Unlike the presidential system in the United States, voters in Germany do not directly elect the chancellor, who is the head of the government.

In Germany you can vote at the polling stations or by mail. In 2017 around 650,000 volunteers participated in the German federal elections, posted at 88,000 polling stations across the country, usually classrooms in schools or public buildings. About 73,500 polling stations were regular stations with ballot boxes open to the public and another 14,500 were reserved for counting the absentee votes.

Before the polling station opened, the team of volunteers ensured that everything was in the right place and that the ballot box was in fact empty.

Volunteers checked the voter's ID and then handed voters their ballot and an envelope, with which the voter entered a screened-in desk set up for the process to mark the ballot. Voting in Germany is always done with pen and paper; the results are counted by hand.

A volunteer has to open the slot of the ballot box for the voter to drop the envelope with his/her marked ballot inside.

Requirements to be eligible to vote in Germany:

- a. You must be at least 18 years old
- b. You must be a German citizen and possess a German passport
- c. You must provide a state ID (there are 16 states/Lands in Germany, each state/Land citizens have their own ID)

You can also vote by mail in Germany. Nearly a quarter of German population votes by mail. For example, in 2013, 24.3 percent of German voters cast their

ballots by mail. That number has even reached 30 percent in some German states/Lands. More and more people chose to vote earlier and by mail now although it is still considered an exception rather than an option.

Marc Debus the political scientist from the Mannheim University believes that going to the polls simply isn't a cherished ritual anymore, at the same time, in comparison to the past; more people work on Sunday or are otherwise occupied professionally or in their private lives. But early voting does more than just reflect changes in German society and culture; it also has the potential to change the outcomes of elections. And that's something what the politicians and political parties take advantage of.

For example, CDU-CSU party under Angela Merkel, for the first time in history tailored a special campaign for mail-in voters, including 400,000 packages of campaign material and a special online video advertisement in 2017. Another German party - Free Democratic Party also put a lot of emphasis on mail-in and early voters. In Germany's last national election in 2013, the FDP did 40 percent better among people who cast their ballots by mail than among those who went to polling stations. FDP spokesman Felix Droste in his interview for Deutsche Welle newspaper said "We try to target people directly especially in the past few weeks and say 'Cast your ballot by mail - take the opportunity, it's easy and simple'". Nonetheless, while early voting may be convenient and increasingly popular, it remains controversial.

How to vote by mail:

a. Firstly you receive an election notification letter three to four weeks before the election. All letters are sent by the municipality/city government. Before sending the letter to a specific person they check the official register to make sure that the person is alive and still resides at the same address. Deceased people no longer receive election notification letters.

b. Once you receive your election notification letter, there you will find an election card where you need to tick one of the voting options listed. If you want to vote by mail, simply tick **voting by mail** option and send your election notification card back. In most German states/Lands you can also apply for postal voting online

c. A few days later you will receive a mail-in ballot in a blue envelope. Once you cast your vote, you need to put it back into a red envelope.

d. Put the sealed red envelope into a Deutsche Post mailbox.

Greece

a. Requirements to be eligible to vote in Greece

∞The Electorate

The electorate consists of all **Greek citizens** who have the right to vote. This right is granted to individuals who are **at least 17 years of age**, or shall turn 17 on the year of the election, **have the capacity for legal act and are not the subject of an irrevocable criminal conviction for felonies** listed under article 51 par. 3 of the Constitution, i.e. penalties which would, among others, deprive them from their right to vote. Eligible electors **must be registered on the electoral roll** to exercise their voting right. Compulsory voting is the law in Greece but is not enforced.

∞European Elections

Anyone **aged 17 or over** on the year of the elections can cast a vote. It is also possible to vote from abroad if certain conditions are met. Voting is compulsory. You do not need to register in advance, as the authorities do this automatically for you.

All **EU citizens residing in Greece, who reached the age of 17**, may vote. It is, however, necessary to be **registered** in order to be included to the special voters list that Greek municipalities established.

For **Greek citizens residing in other EU Member States** and wishing to cast their vote for one of the political parties participating in the European Elections in Greece, it is compulsory to **register** with your local Greek Embassy or Consulate. Please note that voting at the polling station will take place one day earlier.

How to vote at the polling stations

Voting takes place in the Municipality or Community of residence.

Voting usually take place from 07:00am to 08:00pm. On the day of the elections, voters have to go to the polling station with an ID or passport. Once their identity has been checked, the voter receives a full set of ballot papers and a marked envelope initialed by the court representative. The curtain must be pulled in the voting booth and the ballot papers must be placed in the envelope provided.

Assistance is available to voters who are physically incapable of voting. A signed and stamped voting certificate is available on request after the person has cast their ballot.

a. Greece doesn't allow mail-in ballots

Voting by mail is not possible in Greece.

Voting online is not foreseen in Greece. You have to be present, in person, at your polling station in order to vote.

Voting by proxy is not possible in Greece.

Hungary

a. Requirements to be eligible to vote in Hungary

Summary:

According to the Fundamental Law (Constitution) of Hungary all **Hungarian citizens** of legal age (**meaning 18 years and older or those who got married before**) has the right to vote and to stand as candidate **at parliamentary elections and at national referendums**; voters with no Hungarian domicile can exercise their right to vote and stand after **registration** only. Those shall not vote or stand as candidate, who have been disenfranchised by a court due to a committed crime or limited mental capacity.

At the general election of local self-government representatives and mayors as well as at local referendums, every adult Hungarian and EU citizen having a domicile in Hungary has the right to vote and to stand as a candidate. Every adult person recognized as a refugee, immigrant or resident has the right to vote.

At the general election of representatives of national minority local self-governments, every adult Hungarian citizen who has the right to vote and to stand as a candidate may vote if he has registered himself as a national minority voter (he/ she has been listed in the electoral register of the given minority). In this type of election, EU citizens with a Hungarian domicile and adult persons recognized as refugees, immigrants or residents are not entitled to vote.

At the election of Members of the European Parliament, every adult Hungarian citizen having a Hungarian domicile as well as every citizen of an EU member state other than Hungary having a temporary residence in Hungary, has the right to vote and to stand as a candidate provided that he has made a declaration that he wishes to exercise his right to vote and stand in Hungary. Thus, to be eligible to vote in European Parliament elections, you must:

- ∞be at least 18 years of age on the date of the election
- ∞be resident in Hungary
- ∞be an EU citizen
- ∞not have been deprived of the right to participate in elections by a court because of a criminal offence or on the grounds of limited mental capacity.

Details:

Article XXIII of the Fundamental Law defines the right to vote and to stand as a candidate as a fundamental political right: every adult Hungarian citizen has the right to vote (active suffrage) and to stand as a candidate (passive suffrage) at parliamentary elections.

At the general election of Members of Parliament, **voters living abroad also have – although restrictively – the right to vote and to stand as candidates.**

The right to vote and to stand as a candidate may only be restricted by the so-called **natural circumstances for exclusion**: a person shall be excluded from the right to vote and stand, if he/ she has been disenfranchised by a court

- ∞for having committed a crime, or
- ∞for his/ her restricted ability to understand the nature of his acts.

In a sentence restricting capacity to act, ordering guardianship, ordering guardianship excluding capacity to act, or ending a review procedure, the court shall provide for the question whether a person shall be excluded from the right to vote and stand.

Based on the above, a person

- ∞who is subject to a penalty depriving him from his civil rights; or
- ∞who has been excluded from the right to vote and stand by a court because his ability to understand the nature of his acts necessary for the exercise of his/ her right to vote and stand
 - is permanently, or in a repeated manner and greatly, diminished because of his mental health, intellectual disabilities or substance abuse, or
 - lacks completely and permanently because of his mental health or intellectual disabilities,

shall not have the right to vote and stand as a candidate (shall be excluded from both active and passive suffrages).

Those who, following a final ruling, are serving a prison sentence or are undergoing a forced medical treatment ordered in the course of a criminal procedure, and are not, in none of these cases, excluded from public affairs, **have the right to vote, but cannot stand as candidates.**

Every adult Hungarian national has the right to vote and to stand as a candidate **at parliamentary elections and at national referendums**; voters with no Hungarian domicile can exercise their right to vote and stand after **registration** only.

Every adult Hungarian national whose Hungarian domicile is registered in the address records, is automatically registered in the voters' register of the polling district of his domicile. Adult Hungarian citizens with no registered domicile in Hungary are listed in the central electoral register after registration. Some clarification on this point:

domicile	temporary residence	type of enrollment
Hungarian address	Hungarian address	automatic
Hungarian address	none	automatic
foreign address	Hungarian address	registration

foreign address	none	registration
none	Hungarian address	automatic
none	none	registration
if not registered in the address records	registration	

At the general election of local self-government representatives and mayors as well as **at local referendums**, every adult Hungarian and EU citizen having a domicile in Hungary has the right to vote and to stand as a candidate.

Every adult person recognized as a refugee, immigrant or resident has the right to vote.

Every citizen entitled to vote is automatically listed in the polling district electoral register of his/her address. A voter who established a temporary residence at least 30 days before the calling of the election (and if that temporary residence has been valid all the way until election day), may vote in the polling station of that residence by changing his polling district. If the voter changes his polling district (and there is no modification in his registered addresses), he/she remains listed in the electoral register of his temporary residence until the next local self-government election. (In other words, he/she will exclusively be able to vote at by-elections of local self-government representatives and mayors taking place in his area of temporary residence.)

At the general election of representatives of national minority local self-governments, every adult Hungarian citizen who has the right to vote and to stand as a candidate may vote if he has registered himself as a national minority voter (he/she has been listed in the electoral register of the given minority). In this type of election, EU citizens with a Hungarian domicile and adult persons recognized as refugees, immigrants or residents are not entitled to vote.

At the election of Members of the European Parliament, every adult Hungarian citizen having a Hungarian domicile as well as every citizen of an EU member state other than Hungary having a temporary residence in Hungary, has the right to vote and to stand as a candidate provided that he has made a declaration that he wishes to exercise his right to vote and stand in Hungary.

a. Hungary allows mail-in ballots under certain circumstances

∞Postal voters can only vote for the national party list.

∞Postal voters cannot vote either for the national minority list or for the candidate of a constituency⁴.

∞It is not possible to vote by post for European elections.

Hungarians living abroad who do not have a residential address in Hungary can vote by post.

They can register to vote no later than 25 days before the election on the website of the National Election Office or by letter. Voters having residence in Hungary and staying abroad may not cast their votes via mail, only in person at foreign representations.

The procedure of voting by mail is as follows³:

- the voter fills in the ballot paper of postal voting,
- places the ballot paper into the inner, small envelope,
- closes the inner envelope,
- completely fills in the declaration of identification
- places the inner envelope and the declaration of identification into the big reply envelope and closes it.

The vote is not valid if

- the inner envelope or the reply envelope is not closed,
- the identification declaration is not in the reply envelope,
- the small envelope is not in the reply envelope,
- the identification declaration is not filled in or is not signed,
- the data on the identification declaration are not equal with the ones registered,
- the ballot paper is not in the small envelope,
- the ballot paper is not filled in,
- the voter did not vote with the sign + or X,
- if the voter cast his ballot for more parties at the same time.

Statistics:

Comparative data on postal votes			
	2014 parliamentary elections	2016 national referendum	2018 parliamentary elections
enrolled citizens	193,793	274,627	378,449
returned postal voting packages	158,654 (82%)	154,145 (56%)	267,233 (71%)
valid postal voting packages (related to all returned packages)	128,712 (81%)	130,356 (85%)	225,471 (84%)
Total votes	4,943,762	3,646,334	5,796,268

∞2018 parliamentary elections⁴

Voting of citizens without residence in Hungary

The National Election Office received a total of 462,550 requests related to the central electoral roll from voting citizens without a residence in Hungary. Approximately half of them have been filed after the 2014 parliamentary elections. During the 2018 parliamentary elections 378,449 voters have been listed on the roll of postal voters. The postal vote package has been returned by 267,233 voting citizens, meaning 70.64% of enrolled postal voters returned their ballots. Literally 38,412 voting packages have arrived by post, while 205,684 have been handed over at foreign representations and 23,137 have been handed over at seats of single-member districts.

The processing of postal mail votes was handled by the National Election Office at 28 working stations with the support from 56 colleagues in a time span of 11 days. 225,471 of the returned postal voting packages have met the legal requirements.

Number of voting citizens

A total of 8,312,264 citizens have been enrolled as voters, out of which 7,933,815 possessed a Hungarian residence and 378,449 did not. Based on registration as a national minority member, 59,235 citizens could vote for a national minority list. Election turnout was 69.73% calculated on a basis of 5,796,268 voters (turnout for voters with a Hungarian residence was 70.22%).

∞2016 national referendum

Of the 8,272,625 eligible voters, a total 3,646,334 cast their votes, including 3,506,618 at polling stations, 9,360 in Hungary's foreign representative offices and 130,356 by mail. Turnout was 43.91 percent in polling stations, 83.34 percent in foreign representative offices and 47.47 percent by mail.

∞2014 parliamentary elections⁵

There were all together 8,241,562 voters listed on the electoral roll. At the elections of Members of Parliament held on 6 April 2014 4,943,762 voters, i.e. 61.65 % of the all voters who had the right to vote cast their ballot at 10,386 polling districts in Hungary. More voters than ever staying abroad exercised their right to vote at foreign representations. 24,119 voters, i.e. 85.65 % of foreign representation electoral register cast their ballot. 158,654 postal voters, i.e. 81.87 % of postal voters listed in the electoral register cast their ballot.

Voting fraud cases in Hungary in the past 10-15 years

∞Irregularities in the 2019 European Parliamentary and Local Elections in Hungary Discovered

“Following Freedom House’s recent downgrading of Hungary to a “hybrid-regime” on account of declining standards in democracy that includes the integrity of elections, Unhack Democracy has identified clearly persistent and concerning trends, including intimidating ballot counters, the threatening of elderly voters in care homes, vote buying, organized bussing of phantom voters and questions around the credibility of voter logs (also known as protocols) ...

According to the law, dual-citizens without a permanent address in Hungary have the right to vote by mail only at the national parliamentary and European Parliamentary elections (not local elections). But during the **2019 EP and local elections** we have found new evidence of mostly ethnic dual Hungarian citizens’ organized transportation to the polling stations from Ukraine. These ‘phantom voters’ are on the electoral registry for in-country voters but permanently reside in neighboring countries, where they always lived. This practice at the European Parliamentary elections raises the question of double-voting; voting by mail outside of Hungary and in person in the country.”

∞DK: Public Prosecutor Failing to Probe Election Fraud

“The opposition Democratic Coalition (DK) has sent a written request to Péter Polt, the public prosecutor, to state why the prosecution service had failed to investigate “obvious election fraud” in the context of Hungary’s upcoming **local elections**.

Gergely Arató, DK’s deputy parliamentary group leader, referred to an Index news portal report of an unrealistically large number of voters registered in households in Záhony, in eastern Hungary, and a related complaint lodged by the Socialist Party upheld by the local election committee of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County.

Referring to the ruling party, he said experiences during the 2018 general election campaign showed how “Fidesz vote-buying” worked at the Ukrainian border. Arató insisted that thousands of Ukrainian citizens in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County had registered at fake addresses in order to vote for Fidesz mayoral candidates and MPs in exchange for receiving Hungarian pensions and health care.”

∞Fresh evidence of Hungary vote-rigging raises concerns of fraud in European elections

Authored by Unhack Democracy Europe and published on the OpenDemocracy website, the report detailed widespread alleged vote-rigging and fraud in the **April 2018 vote**.

Incidents it described as "major malpractice" include transporting voters from neighboring countries like Ukraine, bribery and intimidation especially in villages, tampering with postal votes, missing ballots and election software malfunctions.

"Following the election, both Hungary's Supreme Court and the prosecutor's office ruled there had been "organized" voter fraud on the Ukrainian-Hungarian border involving the illegal bussing of voters on polling day. However, the court declared there was not enough evidence to order a fresh vote based on the video recording of József Kilb, in part because they believed that the number of voters affected was smaller than the difference between the first- and second-placed candidates. A year later, none of the roughly 370 investigations into alleged cases of election-day voter fraud has led to charges being brought."

∞**Study documents electoral corruption in Hungary**

Yale political scientist Isabela Mares and co-author Lauren Young, an assistant professor of political science at the University of California-Davis, documented the prevalence of multiple forms of electoral clientelism — quid pro quo exchanges of votes for some agreed upon behavior by a politician — in **Hungary's 2014 parliamentary elections**. They documented four types of clientelism in Hungary: vote buying, the provision of public benefits in exchange for votes, coercion through threatening receipt of benefits, and economic coercion involving threats from non-state actors, such as moneylenders and employers.

Iceland

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<https://www.ruv.is/frett/2020/05/25/early-presidential-election-voting-has-started>

Icelandic citizens can vote in parliamentary elections, municipal elections and presidential elections which are held every four years.

Requirements to be eligible to vote in Iceland:

- a. You must be at least 18 years old on election day
- b. You must be an Icelandic citizen (if you immigrated from Iceland to another country, you keep the right to vote for 8 years after immigration)
- c. Citizens of other Nordic countries (Finland, Denmark, Sweden or Norway) living in Iceland have the right to vote in municipal elections if they lived in Iceland for three or more years
- d. Citizens of other countries who have an Icelandic residence and lived in the country for five or more years are eligible to vote in municipal elections

How to vote at the polling stations:

- a. You need to come to the polling station from 09:00 to 22:00
- b. You need to provide your passport for presidential and parliament elections and your Kennitala (Icelandic identity number/residence card) for municipal elections
- c. You need to look for the booth area marked by the street you live on
- d. You need to present your name and ID (passport, a driving license or a resident's card) to one of the volunteers so that they can cross your name off their registry
- e. Then you should get a ballot from a volunteer and head to the voting booth

f. Once in the booth, you should mark a clear X in the box corresponding to your party/candidate of choice

g. Then you have to drop the ballot into the ballot box

During the 2014 municipal elections 239, 810 people voted. 10, 183 out of the total number were foreigners who had an Icelandic residence.

On the 25th of May 2020 early presidential election voting started in Iceland.

The main election will take place in Iceland on 27th June. Those unable to attend polling stations in person on 27th June can vote early at Smáralind shopping center in Reykjavik, district commissioners' offices around Iceland, and at Icelandic diplomatic missions overseas.

Voting by mail is possible for Icelandic citizens residing abroad. People who reside in Iceland but unable to attend polling stations can vote at district commissioners' offices around the country.

Israel

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<https://www.jpost.com/israel-elections/multiple-parties-from-left-to-right-accused-of-voter-fraud-619518>

Israel citizens regardless of their religion, gender or race have the right to vote in Parliamentary (Knesset) elections, referendums and local municipal elections.

Parliamentary elections take place every four years.

Requirements to be eligible to vote in all types of elections:

a. You must be at least 18 years old

b. You must be an Israel citizen

To be eligible to vote in local municipal elections:

a. You must be at least 17 years old on the Election Day

b. You must be registered on the local municipality's voter register for at least 18 months before the elections

c. You must be an Israel citizen or resident (for example, Arab residents of East Jerusalem cannot vote in Parliamentary elections, but they have the right to vote in local municipal elections)

Election Day became a national holiday in 2015 in order to enable all potential voters to participate. All eligible voters are automatically registered on the voter's register. At least one week before the day of the elections eligible voters receive a postal card notifying which polling station and booth they should vote in. Voting at the polling station you are assigned to is obligatory because it helps to prevent voting fraud.

How to vote at the polling station:

a. On the day of the elections come to the polling station you are assigned to between 07:00am and 10:00pm

b. You must bring with you one of the following four forms of identification:

a. An Israel driver's license with a photo

b. An Israel ID card

- c. An Israel passport with a photo
- d. A Knesset (Parliament) member ID card

Other identification documents, no matter how official they are, will not be accepted.

- a. Once your identity is confirmed, you will get an empty blue envelope from the polling officer
- b. Head to the voting booth
- c. Inside the booth, you will find stacks of slips with each party's letter-based symbol and name in Hebrew. Select a slip of paper that represents your chosen party and put a slip into the envelope (Make sure there is **only one slip** in the envelope. Multiple slips, even from the same party, will disqualify your vote)
- d. Seal the envelope and put it into the voting box

It is possible to vote at prisons and hospitals in Israel. Disabled people can vote in one of the special voting stations designed for accessibility.

Soldiers on active duty vote in polling stations in their units.

Absentee ballots

According to the Israel Election law, voting only takes place on Israel soil. That's why absentee ballots are not permitted. Exceptions are only made for Israel citizens serving abroad on official business. They can vote in Israel embassies or consulates abroad or on Israel ships.

Postal voting is not allowed in Israel.

Only diplomats, their spouses and children (aged 18-20) are allowed to vote via diplomatic mail. Their votes are sent to Jerusalem and counted together with other votes on the Election Day. Diplomats can also vote at the polling stations set up in the embassies.

Recent voter turnout rate

2020 Parliamentary (Knesset) elections - 71.52%

2019 Parliamentary (Knesset) elections - 71.65%

2015 Parliamentary (Knesset) elections - 72.34%

Recent voting fraud cases in Israel

Voter fraud is very common in Israel elections. The recent 23rd Parliamentary elections that took place on the 3rd of March 2020 were plagued with voter fraud and other misdemeanors, from parties attempting to "buy" votes to fake news being disseminated that turned voters away.

The Lukid party's buying votes

It was reported that the Likud party was buying votes in certain areas. For instance, a Likud party's activist was caught offering one of the voters in Tel Aviv NIS 1,000 if she would vote for the Likud Party.

The Shas Party was fined for giving away gifts to voters

The Shas Party was fined NIS 7,500 by the Central Elections Committee (CEC) for handing out amulets promising to protect the bearer from the coronavirus. Each amulet had an image of the late Shas spiritual leader Rabbi Ovadia Yosef and came inside a card holder saying, "Protection against plague: Corona – and all evils". The Shas Party activists at its election stands were witnessed offering those amulets to voters, as well as giving out Shabbat candles also bearing Yosef's picture and the Shas logo.

According to the Central Elections Committee, the Shas Party violated the law as the election propaganda should not be connected to giving away gifts.

Voting impersonations

It was reported that the woman in Petah Tikva was unable to vote because someone had already illegally voted in her name. Another woman in Ashkelon had the same issue.

Fake news

Fake letters arrived in several polling stations across Israel on the Election Day, claiming that Otzma Yehudit from the Union of Right-Wing Parties had dropped out of the election race. Those letters were allegedly signed by CEC (the Central Elections Committee) director Orly Ades.

"Never happened," the committee announced. "Otzma Yehudit never quit the race."

At some polling stations voting slips were intentionally damaged, glued to each other and not produced correctly.

54 voters from Kiryat Bialik complained that Yisrael Beytenu party's ballots were glued to each other at their voting booths.

Some voters complained that voting slips at their voting booths were intentionally damaged, had dirt, holes and drawings on one or both sides. Some slips were missing words or letters, were printed or cut incorrectly. The Central Election Committee is convinced that those slips were damaged on purpose in order to disqualify those votes. However, CEC announced that they would count the damaged ballots as well.

Italy

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Italian citizens have the right to elect the representatives to the lower (the Chamber of Deputies) and upper (Senate) houses of Parliament. Italian citizens can also vote in referendums, European elections and local municipal elections.

To be eligible to elect the representatives to the lower house (the Chamber of Deputies):

- a. You must be an Italian citizen
- b. You must be at least 18 years old

To be eligible to vote in the elections for the upper house (Senate):

- a. You must be an Italian citizen
- b. You must be at least 25 years old

Elections to the lower and upper houses of Parliament take place every five years in Italy.

All EU citizens who are Italian legal residents have the right to vote in European Parliamentary elections and local municipal elections.

To be eligible to vote in European Parliamentary and local municipal elections:

- a. You must be at least 18 years old
- b. You must be an EU citizen
- c. You must be an Italian legal resident and be registered in the local commune
- d. You must not have been banned from voting in any other EU country

When applying for residency, the applicant can also request to add their name to the electoral roll. If residency permission has already been granted, they will need to provide proof of address and residency to be registered on the electoral roll and be issued with a voting card.

Approximately ten days before the Election Day, all eligible voters receive Electoral Certificates (voting cards) which contain personal data and the information on when and where to vote on the Election Day.

How to vote at the polling station:

- a. On the Election Day come to the polling station assigned to your address between 07:00am and 11:00pm
- b. Bring your voting card and ID which has a photo on it. You must provide your passport during the elections for the lower and upper houses of Parliament
- c. Once your ID has been checked, you will be given ballot papers
- d. Head to the voting booth and use a pencil to put X right next to your favorite candidate
- e. Once you voted, fold the ballot papers and give them to the president of the polling station so that he could put them into the voting box

Postal voting

Italian citizens living abroad are allowed to vote by postal ballots.

In order to request a postal ballot:

- a. You must be registered with AIRE (Registry of Italian residents abroad)
- b. Registration must be completed not later than December 31 of the year preceding the elections
- c. At least eighteen days before the Election Day you will receive a package containing your electoral certificate, an electoral ballot or ballots (if you reached the age of 25 and now eligible to elect the Senate representatives) along with a small white envelope where you should place the ballots later and a large self-addressed and stamped envelope; the lists of the candidates and a list of instructions explaining how to vote
- d. Use the instructions to complete the ballot papers
- e. Once you voted, fold the ballot papers and put them into a small white envelope
- f. Put the white envelope into the large stamped envelope addressed to the consulate and send it

g. Make sure your ballot papers arrive at the consulate not later than 4pm on the Election Day

Voting by proxy is not allowed in Italy.

Italians, who due to health issues can't vote at the polling station attached to their address, can vote from hospitals or nursing houses. In order to do so they must send a special declaration and a medical certificate to the Mayor of the municipality. Those documents should be delivered to the Mayor not later than three days before the Election Day. On the Election Day the polling officer comes to the hospitals and nursing houses to collect the votes of the voters who previously declared their wish to vote.

Recent voter turnout rate

Voting in Italy is not obligatory. There's no fine if you don't vote.

During the 2018 general elections the voter turnout rate for the upper house (Senate) elections was 72.99 percent, the turnout rate for the lower house of Parliament elections was 72.93 percent. The voter turnout rate for local municipal elections was 70.57 percent.

Italian mafia's interference into the elections

Italy has a number of organized crime groups that interfered in many elections. Mafia vote-buying has been widely reported with various politicians investigated for the practice at a local and regional level. In 2014, the Italian Senate passed a reform to toughen up legislation against Mafia vote-buying although it's still taking place. Statistics portal named Statista notes that the number of individuals arrested for mafia vote-buying in Italy grew from 6 to 17 total cases, between the second semester of 2015 and the first semester of 2016.

The battle between the Italian state and organized crime groups has been muddled and murderous over the decades of the 20th century. Many Italian politicians whether local, regional and national have often been exposed as having links to organized crime groups.

A number of high-profile judges, police and anti-mafia activists have been murdered for speaking out against criminal groups in the country and the public opinion has broadly turned against the groups, yet Mafia activity is still a part of daily life in Italy and newspapers frequently feature reports of Mafia's activity, arrests and murders.

Japan

a. Requirements to be eligible to vote in Japan

	Who Can Vote?	Who are disqualified from voting?
<i>General Elections to the House of Representatives and the House of Councilors</i>	∞a Japanese national ∞aged 18 or older	α. Persons sentenced to imprisonment or a more severe form of punishment and who have not completed their sentences; β. Persons sentenced to imprisonment or a more severe form of punishment and to whom the sentence still applies (excluding persons for whom execution of the sentence is suspended);
<i>Local Elections for Prefectural Assemblies and Governors</i>	∞a Japanese national ∞aged 18 or older ∞require a three-month prefectural residency	γ. Persons who, during their tenure as public office-holders, were convicted of bribery. This disqualification is valid during the term of the sentence and for five years thereafter (including suspended sentences);
<i>Local Elections for Mayors and Assemblies in Municipalities</i>	∞a Japanese national ∞aged 18 or older ∞require a three-month municipal residency	δ. Persons sentenced to imprisonment or to a more severe form of punishment for an electoral offence, and who are given suspended sentences; ε. Persons who have committed an election-related offence provided for in the Public Offices Election Act; φ. Persons who have committed an offence provided for in the Public Funds Control Act.

a. Japan allows mail-in ballots under certain circumstances

∞Disabled Voters

Voters who hold official booklets certifying they are physically impaired, have been wounded in war, or obtain certain level of long-term care insurance are qualified to vote by mail. Physically disabled people who cannot write by themselves will be allowed to let a proxy fill in their mail-in ballots. Proxies must have the right to vote and be registered in advance at local election boards.

Voters can request the required documents such as a ballot paper from the municipalities where they are registered, mark the ballot at the place of their own such as home, and mail the voted ballot back to the municipal election management committee.

∞Overseas Voters

The overseas voting system allows Japanese voters, aged 18 or over and living overseas, to vote in national elections. In the elections after June 2007, it was made possible to vote from overseas for the small electoral district election of the House of Representatives and the electoral district election of the House of Councillors (including by-election and recall election), in addition to voting for the proportional representation segment of elections of the both Houses. In order to vote from overseas, it is necessary to be registered in advance on the overseas voter directory managed by the election board of the city/town government and to obtain overseas voter identification. Voters with valid overseas voter identification can vote by choosing one of the three methods of voting, a) voting at diplomatic missions overseas, b) voting by mail, or c) voting in Japan.

To vote by mail, overseas voters can request the ballot paper and envelope from the municipalities, mark the ballot received at their current address, and mail the voted ballot back to the municipal election management committee where they are registered.

*If there are any changes in the addresses to which the ballots are sent, be sure to submit the change with overseas voter identification to Japanese Embassies, Consulates or Permanent Missions.

a. Voting fraud cases in Japan in the past 10-15 years

∞Japan justice minister resigns in election fraud scandal (2019)

Japan's justice minister has resigned over election fraud allegations involving his wife, also a lawmaker, and about his own gift-giving allegations reported in a tabloid magazine. Isshu Sugawara resigned as trade minister last Friday over allegations that he and his aides offered money and gifts to his supporters in violation to election law.

∞Police questioning hundreds over voter fraud (2012)

The National Police Agency said it is questioning 280 people over their involvement in around 110 electoral irregularities following Sunday's lower house election. Over half of the cases being investigated are believed to have involved paying for votes, Fuji TV reported.

Korea, South

a. Requirements to be eligible to vote in South Korea

Korean citizens aged 18 years of age or more have the right to vote in presidential elections and National Assembly elections. **Korean citizens aged 18 years of age or more** that are **registered** as a resident in the constituency under the jurisdiction of the relevant local government as of the date used as the standard for creating the voters list has the right to vote in local elections. According to Article 34 (Preparation and Management of Registration Form of Foreigners) of the 'Immigration Control Act,' a **non-Korean citizen registered** in the relevant local constituency and who **has had a resident visa for at least three years** has the right to vote.

However, any citizen that meets any of the following criteria as of election day may not be allowed to vote:

- ∞A person who is declared incompetent
- ∞A person who is sentenced to imprisonment without prison labor or a heavier punishment but whose sentence execution has not been terminated or whose sentence execution has not been decided to be exempted
- ∞A person who commits an election crime, who violates the Election Act/the Political Fund Act, or who commits the crimes in connection with the duties while in office as the President, a member of the National Assembly, a member of local council, and a head of local government.
- ∞A person whose right to vote is suspended or forfeited according to a court ruling or any other Act.

a. South Korea allows mail-in ballots under certain circumstances

The voters who can apply for mail-in voting are as follow:

- 1) the confirmation of the head of Tong/Ri/Ban for the voters with severe physical disability;
- 2) the confirmation of the commander or the police office which a service person or police official in the barrack far from the absentee polling station is belonged to;
- 3) the confirmation of the head of relevant institute or facility for those living in a hospital, nursing home, camp or prison (Include detention centers);
- 4) the voters living outside Gu/City/Gun (Municipal District) which controls the district in which the election will be held also can have a vote after applying for the absentee voting.

* South Korea does not allow mail ballots for those overseas.

The absentee voters will get the ballot paper for the absentee voting in post mail. The absentee voters should send it back by post mail (free) after marking the ballot and putting it into the stamped address envelop. The mail-in vote must be arrived till the time of closing the vote at the election date.

a. Voting fraud cases in South Korea in the past 10-15 years

- ∞South Korea's spy agency tried to rig 2012 presidential elections

South Korea's National Intelligence Service (NIS) launched an illegal operation during the 2012 presidential election to sway voters into casting their ballot for former President Park Geun-hye, an internal probe team said.

The task force noted that the NIS also attempted to influence South Korea's parliamentary elections in 2011 and 2012, including by putting select opposition politicians under surveillance without their knowledge.

∞104 elected Members of Parliament were investigated for election fraud (20th Legislative Election in 2016)

More than 100 elected candidates were investigated for suspected violations of the electoral law after the 20th Legislative Election. The types of fraud include: Black Propaganda (56 people), Financial Temptation (23 people), Manipulation of Public Opinion (7 people), and others (18 people). Among the candidates elected in the 19th legislative election, 79 people were investigated and eventually 10 were invalidated.

Latvia

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Latvian citizens have the right to vote in Parliamentary (Saeima) elections, European parliamentary elections, referendums and local municipal elections.

Requirements to be eligible to vote in all types of elections:

- a. You must be at least 18 years old
- b. You must be a Latvian citizen (including naturalized citizens)
- c. You must not have been disqualified from the right of voting (you should not be serving court sentences in penitentiaries, you must not have any legal incapacity, insanity/mental illness)

EU citizens who are legal Latvian residents are eligible to vote in European Parliamentary and local municipal elections.

In order to vote in European and local municipal elections:

- a. You must have a registered place of residence or possess your own apartment or a house registered at least 90 days before the election day in accordance with the procedures established by law
- b. You must be at least 18 years old
- c. You must not have been deprived from voting in any other EU country
- d. You should be registered on the Population Register

During the local municipal elections you can only vote at the polling station assigned to your address.

Voting in Latvia is not compulsory. There is no fine if you don't vote.

EU citizens legally living in Latvia can also stand as candidates in local municipal elections. In order to stand as a candidate you must be an EU citizen who is at least 21 years old. You must not have any criminal records; you must not have been a former employee of the USSR. If you were a member of Latvian Soviet Socialist

Republic (Latvian SSR) in the past, you would not be able to stand as a candidate for local municipal elections.

How to vote at the polling station

- a. Come to the polling station assigned to your address between 07:00am and 10:00pm
- b. Show your ID (passport or EU citizen identification card) to the polling officer
- c. Once the polling officer confirms your identity and finds your name on the voter's list, you will receive ballot papers and an envelope
- d. Head to the voting booth and put the ballot paper which belongs to your favorite candidate or political party into the envelope
- e. Seal the envelope and put it into the voting box in front of the polling officers

Proxy voting is not available in Latvia. ***Online voting*** is not allowed.

Postal voting

If you are outside the country on the Election Day, you are allowed to vote by mail in European and Parliamentary elections. In June 2020 Latvian Parliament conducted a new draft law which allowed Latvian citizens residing abroad to vote by post in local municipal elections as well. In order to receive a postal ballot, you must sign up for postal voting abroad at one of the embassies or consulates not later than 42 days before the Election Day.

Requests could be sent by mail, handed over directly or electronically by using the voter e-services. A request can also be sent by email if there is a possibility to sign it with a secure electronic signature.

At least three weeks before the Election Day the election commission will send you the voting materials to the address you provided. You will have to make your choice and send the postal ballot to the election commission responsible for postal voting in Latvia. You should make sure your ballot arrives not later than 08:00pm on the Election Day.

Early voting

Early voting is available to any eligible voter who is unable to vote at the polling station on the Election Day. In order to vote early, you must come to the polling station, provide your passport or EU identification card and some proof explaining the reason why you can't vote on the Election Day.

During the 2019 European Parliamentary elections at least 36, 257 or 2.57% of Latvian residents who have the right to vote have used the opportunity to cast their early votes.

Recent voter turnout rate

During the 2018 Latvian Parliamentary elections, the voter turnout rate was 54.58%. However, during the 2012 Referendum elections the voter turnout rate was 71.11%.

Lithuania

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Lithuanian citizens have the right to vote in presidential, parliamentary, European parliamentary elections, referendums and local municipal elections.

Requirements to be eligible to vote in all types of elections:

- a. You must be at least 18 years old on the Election Day
- b. You must be a Lithuanian citizen
- c. You must not have been deprived from voting by the court

Presidential elections are held every five years.

Parliamentary elections take place once in four years.

Local municipal elections are held every four years.

Requirements to be eligible to vote in European and local municipal elections:

- a. You must be an EU citizen who is a legal Lithuanian resident
- b. You must be at least 18 years old

Voting is not compulsory in Lithuania.

How to vote at the polling station:

- a. On the Election Day you must come to the polling station assigned to your address between 07:00am and 08:00pm
- b. Show your voting card, passport or Lithuanian identification card to the polling officer so that he/she could find your name on the voter's list
- c. Once your identity is confirmed, you will receive a ballot
- d. Head to the voting booth and put X next to your favorite party or a candidate
- e. Once you voted, fold the ballot paper and put it into the voting box

Voters with disability or mobility impairment, and those over 70 years old can vote at home if they submit a request to the polling station assigned to their address.

Special polling stations are established in healthcare institutions, military, penitentiary and similar institutions.

Postal voting

Lithuanian eligible voters who are not in Lithuania on the Election Day can vote by post. However, they must apply for this option in advance.

In order to request a postal ballot, you must register in the electronic registration system called “Voters abroad”. This registration form is available on the following website -www.vrk.lt. In order to be registered you must attach a scan of your passport or Lithuanian identification card. Once you receive a postal ballot and choose your candidate, you should send the ballot back to the embassy or consulate. Your ballots must arrive before the polling stations close on the Election Day in Lithuania. Postal voting is not free of charge.

During the 2019 presidential and referendum elections a lot of Lithuanian citizens residing in Italy didn't receive postal ballots although they applied for them a couple of months in advance. Those voters who didn't receive postal ballots had to travel to Rome from different parts of Italy to be able to cast their vote at the embassy. Those people believe that the current postal voting system must be reviewed and improved. They also believe that postal voting must be free of charge.

Proxy voting is not allowed in Lithuania.

Early voting

Early voting is for those voters who for some reasons can't vote at the polling station on the Election Day. Early voting is normally held from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on the last Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before the Election Day. In order to cast an early vote, you should come to the polling station on one of those days, show your ID and some proof explaining the reason why you can't vote on Sunday.

Online voting

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the Lithuanian government has recently backed up the idea of online voting, but suggested to first test it out with the expatriate voters in the upcoming General elections. The government strongly believes that voting booths could become sites of Covid-19 spread. The government is convinced that if the current voting system doesn't adapt to post-corona challenges, there is a risk of a historically low turnout, a weaker governing mandate and a less healthy democracy.

Lithuania's Baltic neighboring country Estonia has been successfully practicing online voting since 2005.

Recent voter turnout rate in Lithuania

Luxemburg

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Luxemburg citizens have the right to vote in Parliamentary, municipality, referendums and European elections.

Parliamentary elections take place every five years. Municipality elections take place every six years.

Requirements to be eligible to vote in Luxemburg parliamentary elections and referendums

- a. You must be a citizen of Luxemburg
- b. You must be at least 18 years old on the Election day

Requirements to be eligible to vote in municipality elections:

- a. You must be at least 18 years old on the election day
- b. You must be a citizen or a resident of Luxemburg who legally lived in the country for at least five years.

All eligible voters who are registered on the official electoral roll are obliged to vote. If they for some reasons can't vote in person or by mail they must notify the local authority in advance explaining the reasons why and providing supporting documents. The legal excuses are health issues, traveling abroad on the election day, living abroad or living in a municipality different from your address (for example students) or seniors who are 75 or older by the election day. If the excuse provided by the voter is not justified the voter will have to pay a fine. If the voter failed to notify the local authority, the voter's fine will be even higher. If the voter doesn't vote or fails to notify the local authority repeatedly, the fine will be very serious.

Voting at the polling stations

At least five days before the Election Day each eligible voter receives a letter from the municipal authority which states the election date, the times when the polls open and close, and the location of their polling station. The letter will also contain instructions for voters and the list of candidates.

a. On the election day you must go to the polling station assigned to your address between 8am and 2pm

b. You must present a valid ID or a passport

c. Then you need enter the polling booth and make your choice

Postal voting

Everyone who is registered on the official electoral roll in Luxembourg can vote by post if they prefer.

How to vote by post

a. You must request a poll card with a mail in ballot from the local authority (commune) assigned to your address, it is possible to submit a request online or by post

b. In your request you must provide the following information:

- ∞ Your last name;
- ∞ Your first name(s);
- ∞ date and place of birth;
- ∞ address **and**;
- ∞ the address where the poll card has to be sent
- ∞ You must attach a valid copy of your ID or a passport

a. If you vote by post within Luxembourg you must request a mail in ballot not earlier than **12 weeks** before the date of elections and no later than **3 weeks** before the Election day

b. If you vote by post from abroad you must request a mail in ballot not earlier than **12 weeks** before the date of the elections and not later than **5 weeks** before the official Election Day

c. After that you should receive a poll card at least 15 days before the election, if you live in Luxembourg; or 30 days before the election, if you reside abroad

d. The poll card contains

- ∞ the list of candidates;

- ∞ instructions for postal voting;
- ∞ a non-transparent, standard-type, duly stamped envelope;
- ∞ duly stamped ballot papers;
- ∞ An envelope that you will have to use to put the electoral envelope in. That envelope must bear the indication "*Elections – Postal voting*", the indication of the polling station on the lower right corner of the envelope and the reference number, name, first name and address of the voter

a. Once you cast your vote, you must fold the ballot paper; make sure the stamp is on the outside of the ballot

b. Put the ballot into the electoral envelope, attach a copy of your valid ID or a passport

c. Put the electoral envelope into the postal envelope and send it by regular mail

d. Make sure your ballot is received not later than 14:00pm on the Election Day

Recent statistics on postal voting

During the 2009 General elections only 5,5 % of eligible voters cast their vote by post.

During the 2015 Referendum elections 8, 7% of eligible voters (around 18, 500 people) chose to vote by mail in Luxemburg.

However, the amount of people who prefers to vote by post is much higher when it comes to European elections. For example during the 2014 European elections in Luxemburg 14, 367 out of 21, 650 eligible voters voted by mail. That means that 66, 3 % of eligible voters preferred postal voting. Compared to 2009 European elections the number of people who chose postal voting over personal voting increased by 22, 2 percent.

Mexico

a. Requirements to be eligible to vote in Mexico

All persons with **Mexican nationality**, whether by birth or naturalization, who are **18 years of age or over** on Election Day and make an honest living, are entitled to vote both in federal and local elections. To exercise their right to vote, all citizens **must be registered** in the Electoral Roll and have their photo-voting card (identification card). The IFE issues a free photo-voting card to every citizen that applies for it.

a. Mexico allows mail-in ballots for overseas voters

During the federal election of 2006, Mexican citizens residing abroad were able to vote for the first time to elect the President, and they did so by means of a postal vote, which constituted an innovation for the Mexican electoral system, since voting within the national territory must be done personally in the polling sites especially enabled for this purpose. The absentee voting process has expanded since its inception. Now, as was established in the 2014 electoral reform, Mexicans abroad can vote for senators and governors in select states.

To be able to cast a vote from abroad, Mexican citizens residing in a foreign country must have a photographic voting card, which previously is only given in person to citizens living in Mexico, and then make a request to be included in a special register of Mexican voters abroad. The IFE has to send the documents required to cast a vote to all citizens fulfilling the requirements to be registered as voters abroad. Beginning in February 2016, eligible voters could obtain their electoral identification at any Mexican consulate or embassy instead of returning to Mexico.

a. Voting fraud cases in Mexico in the past 10-15 years

∞ Electoral Observations in Mexico 2006

○ OAXACA

Residents of San Pedro Mixtepec, in District 10, reported to local resident and EDUCA staff person, Crispín Fabian Mendoza, that the day before, PRI activists had been offering 100 pesos in exchange for PRI votes.

○ SAN LUIS POTOSI

In Tampate, in the municipality of Aquismón, three locals told delegation members about the delivery of cinder blocks and other construction materials to local residents in the days prior to the election, allegedly with the objective of buying votes...

Other reports from Tampate residents mentioned that food, specifically tortas and bread, was being distributed to voters who were supposed to have voted for PAN candidates. Also, in Tampate, an observer saw a woman driving a pickup truck loaded with people, dropping off those people in front of the polling station, waiting while they voted, and then loading them back into the truck. She was observed doing this at least five separate times. When

asked what she was doing, she volunteered that she was an active PRI member and that she was transporting voters who lived far from the polling station.

Exit poll workers in Tamuín informed observers of overhearing a PAN representative discuss with voters the payment of 500 pesos in exchange for support of PAN candidates. The PAN representative in question was identified but no one was interested in sharing any other information.

○ **ESTADO DE MEXICO- Chimahualcán**

At District 25, Polling Station 1177, Chimahualcán, Estado de México, Sandra Patricia Mendoza, who identified herself as representative general of Ruta 17 of the PRD, claimed to have personally witnessed party representatives from PRI buying votes in the morning for \$100 pesos in cash and a t-shirt.

∞ **Vote Buying, Fraud Rears Its Face Once again in Mexico Election (2018)**

Mexicans are attending polls to elect the new president and both chambers of the legislative branch at a federal level. As expected, fraud accusations have been rolling in for days and reports on vote buying, stealing ballots and violence are increasing.

The attorney's office, which specializes in electoral crimes, registered 1,106 complaints since Thursday. According to Hector Diaz Santana, head of the office, this elections' staple has been violence, but that's something the public security authorities have to deal with.

Regarding the common electoral crimes, Diaz Santana said only about 324 complaints had been received by 2:00 p.m. local time and at least 17 people were arrested. Among the most common crimes are vote buying and the stealing of IDs used to vote.

New Zealand

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New Zealand citizens and residents have the right to vote in Parliamentary elections, referendums and local body elections.

New Zealand is one of the few countries in the world which allows its residents to vote in national elections.

Elections in New Zealand take place every three years.

Requirements to be eligible to vote in all types of elections:

a. You must be at least 18 years old

b. You must be a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident

c. You must have lived in New Zealand for more than 1 year continuously at some time in your life

d. You don't have to be a permanent resident to be eligible to vote if you are a Cook Island Māori, Niuean, Tokelauan or Australian who's lived in New Zealand continuously for 1 year

In order to be able to vote you must be enrolled on either the Māori or general electoral roll. It's compulsory to be enrolled if you qualify — but voting is optional.

In order to enroll:

a. You must submit an enrollment form online

b. Attach a copy of your driver's license or a passport

If you live overseas you can enroll if you are a:

a. New Zealand citizen who has visited New Zealand within the last three years

b. If you are a New Zealand permanent resident who has visited New Zealand in the past 12 months

How to vote

Once you are on Maori or general electoral roll, you'll get a voting information pack called Easy Vote in the mail. The pack will tell you how to vote, who the candidates and political parties are, when and where to vote.

Early voting

If you're not going to be in your electorate or can't get to a voting place on Election Day, you can vote starting from 2 weeks before the day of the elections. You will be able to find the information on when, where and how to vote before in advance on your Easy Vote information pack or on the Electoral Commission's website.

If you're away from your polling station, you can still vote at any polling station or advance polling station.

You don't have to do anything special — just tell the person at the voting place that you're voting outside your electorate.

How to vote at the polling station:

a. On the Election Day come to the polling station between 9am and 7pm

b. Bring your EasyVote card with you and show it to the polling officer. You don't need to bring your ID (If you don't have an EasyVote card or forgot it at home, you can still vote. In this case you'll be asked for your name and address but finding you on the electoral roll may take a bit longer)

c. Once the polling officer finds your name on the electoral roll, you'll get the ballot papers

d. Head to the voting screen so that you could vote privately

e. On the right side of your election ballot paper, tick the circle next to the name of the candidate/party you choose (On your voting paper for referendums, vote by placing a tick next to your answer to each referendum question. You can answer 'Yes' or 'No')

f. Once you finished voting, fold the voting papers in half

g. Put your ballot paper into the voting box for your electorate. If you vote in a Māori electorate, the box will be grey. If you vote in a general electorate, the box will be orange. Place your referendum voting paper into the purple voting box.

If you are overseas on the Election Day:

- a. You can still vote at one of the advance polling stations starting from 2 weeks before the day of the election
- b. You can vote at an overseas post
- c. You can apply for a postal vote

Postal voting

Local body elections are carried out via postal voting in New Zealand.

Voters on local electoral rolls elect municipal councils, community boards and the mayors of cities and districts by postal ballots.

Postal voting is easy. If you are registered on the local electoral roll, you will receive voting forms at least 3 weeks before the Election Day. Complete the voting form and return them:

- a. **in the freepost envelope** via any New Zealand Post box
- b. to the electoral office
- c. to any city library
- d. to one of the community centers
- e. to the Wellington Railway Station

Make sure your vote is returned before noon on the Election Day.

Voter turnout in local body and general elections

During the 2016 local body elections the voter turnout rate was 43% which means that only 43% of eligible voters sent back their postal ballots. This number is by 1% higher compared to 2013 local elections.

During the 2017 General elections the voter turnout rate was 79.01%, the highest number in the past 10 years.

Recent mail in ballots fraud cases

During the 2010 local elections the police were investigating a possible attempt to influence the Super City election in which nearly 90 voters have been enrolled as living in two houses. According to the *Weekend Herald* newspaper, 48 voters were listed as living in one Papatoetoe home and 39 were enrolled as living in another property in the same South Auckland suburb.

Nearly all the 87 people listed as living at those properties had Indian last names. All those people were supposedly trying to vote for an Indian candidate Daljit Singh from the Labor Party.

Daljit Singh said that Labor Party was not asking people to falsely enroll in the area to vote for him. He said: "They know that I am a strong candidate. They are

trying to put dirt on me. A few hundred votes will not make much of a difference. It's a dirty-trick campaign."

The manager of Electoral Enrolment Centre warned that if those voters could not prove they lived at the listed address, they would be removed from the electoral roll.

The Netherlands

Sources:

<https://www.houseofrepresentatives.nl/voting-0>

<https://www.dutchnews.nl/features/2017/01/who-can-vote-and-for-whom-how-the-dutch-electoral-system-works/>

<https://www.dutchnews.nl/who-can-vote-in-the-local-elections/>

<https://www.european-elections.eu/how-to-vote/netherlands>

<https://www.bndestem.nl/bergen-op-zoom/valsheid-in-geschrifte-en-fraude-bij-stembureau-in-lepelstraat~ab692a4e/?referrer=https://www.google.com/>

<https://eunmask.wordpress.com/2015/03/26/we-zijn-inderdaad-bedonderd-stemfraude-in-nederland/>

Since the Netherlands is the parliamentary monarchy, Dutch citizens can vote in parliamentary elections to choose who would represent them in the Parliament.

They can also vote in European and local elections.

To be eligible to vote in the Netherlands:

a. You must be at least 18 years old

b. You must be a Dutch citizen

c. You must show your voting card and ID (passport or a driver's license) at the polling station (You can obtain a voting card at the local council)

d. EU citizens who are at least 18 years old can get a voting card as well and are eligible to vote in local/municipal elections and European elections

e. Non-Dutch and non-EU citizens who officially lived in the Netherlands for five and more years are allowed to vote in local elections

f. Every Dutch citizen aged 18 or older can also stand as a candidate for the election

Fourteen days before the Election Day, each person who is eligible to vote receives a voter registration card and a list of candidates by mail. On the Election Day you should show up at the polling station, present your voting card and ID and cast your vote. Polling stations are open from 07:30am till 09:00pm. Polling stations are usually located in schools, community centers and other public buildings. Some councils set up polling stations at the railway stations in order to catch early morning commuters.

According to the statistics, 450, 000 foreigners were able to vote in recent local elections which took place on March 21st, 2020. All votes are counted by hand. ***Although it is not possible to vote by mail or online in the Netherland,*** Dutch citizens residing abroad can request ***a postal ballot.*** They can also vote by proxy or in person at the embassies abroad.

Voting by proxy

To authorize another person to vote for you, you must submit a written request for a proxy vote at your own municipal office. These forms are available in the municipal offices. You and your chosen authorized representative must both sign the form and the representative will receive a certificate of authorization to vote for you. You must submit this form no later than five days before the election. When the form is approved by your municipal office, you cannot withdraw the request.

Recent voting fraud cases in Netherlands

a. Major mistakes were made during the 2015 municipal elections. In Amsterdam there were 600 more cast votes than the actual number of people who showed up at the polling stations and presented their voting cards or proxies. The elections in Rotterdam, second largest city of the Netherlands have not gone smoothly either. There were 500 more cast votes compared to the number of ID, voting cards or proxies provided. In Haag there were five hundred voting fraud cases confirmed, in Utrecht – more than one hundred. All those cases were investigated. Experts believe that those types of mistakes still happen because computer voting is still not allowed in the Netherlands. They are convinced that humans could easily make mistakes while registering each voter or while counting every vote by hand. The experts are worried that such a high number of mistakes can lead to another party winning the elections.

b. During the 2018 elections at one of the polling stations in Lepelstraat the number of voting cards/ proxies and the number cast votes were not equal. According to the head of the polling station, there were two additional votes. That case was investigated by the Electoral Council of Netherlands which later decided to remove those two extra votes and consider them invalid.

Norway

Sources:

<https://www.lifeinnorway.net/how-to-vote/>

<https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/elections-and-democracy/den-norske-valgordningen/the-norwegian-electoral-system/id456636/>

<https://www.norwegianamerican.com/voting-in-norway/>

<https://sciencenorway.no/election-politics-technology/no-more-online-voting-in-norway/1562253>

<https://www.newsinenglish.no/2019/09/10/high-voter-turnout-sends-a-message/>

Norwegian citizens who are at least 18 years old have the right to vote in parliamentary, European, referendum, local and municipality elections. If you lived outside of Norway for ten and more years, you have to re-apply for your voting card and the right to vote. Norwegian residents have the right to vote in municipality and county elections.

Requirements to be eligible to vote in all types of elections in Norway:

- a. You must be at least 18 years old or turning 18 by the end of the election year
- b. You must be a Norwegian citizen

Requirements to be eligible to vote in European, municipality and county elections:

- a. You must be at least 18 years old or turning 18 by the end of the election year
- b. You must a Nordic citizen (Swedish, Danish, Finnish or Icelandic) who registered as living in Norway before June 30 of the Election year
- c. You must be a foreign citizen who has been legally living in Norway for at least three years before the date of the election (**not allowed to vote in European elections unless that person comes from another EU country**)

Everyone who is eligible to vote receives a voting card (valgkort) by mail at least one week before the Election Day. This card contains details about the location of the election, and other important information.

How to vote at the polling stations:

- a. Come to the polling station assigned to your address (it's also possible to vote at a different municipality and at the polling station not assigned to your address)

b. Show your ID and a voting card (If you forget to bring your voting card, you can still vote although it might take more time for the officers to find you in the data base and give you the ballot)

c. Once you get a ballot, you should go to a voting booth alone

d. Put X next to your candidate, then fold the ballot paper with the candidate/ party name on the inside and the field for stamping on the outside so that no one could see who you voted for. You should not use an envelope or other cover because the ballot paper has to be stamped.

e. Go to one of the presiding officers, and have the outside of your ballot paper stamped. Your ballot paper must be stamped in order to be approved.

f. Put your stamped ballot paper into the voting box

Only Norwegians living abroad are allowed to **vote by mail**. In order to be able to vote by mail, you need to request a mail-in ballot on valg.no website.

Voters who live in the nursing houses/elderly people's houses can vote from there. It's also possible to vote in the hospitals.

Voters who, due to illness or disability, cannot vote at the polling stations need to apply for the option to vote at home in advance. In this case a voting officer comes to that person's house on the Election Day to collect the vote.

During the 2019 local elections in Norway the voter turnout rate reached 64.5% and increased by 4% compared to the previous years. Voter turnout hasn't been so high in a local election since 1991.

A record number of 875,584 Norwegians and eligible residents also voted ahead of Election Day in 2019, including people living abroad.

Poland

Sources:

<https://rg.ru/2020/05/13/poliaki-smogut-vybirat-kak-golosovat-na-vyborah-prezidenta.html>

<https://www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja/glosowanie-za-granica>

<https://polandin.com/39249210/friendly-reminder-eu-citizens-eligible-to-vote-in-regional-elections>

<https://polskatimes.pl/wybory-2020-lokal-wyborczy-jak-sie-w-nim-zachowac-jak-glosowac-w-lokalu-wyborczym/ar/c15-14487657>

<https://www.dw.com/en/poland-parliament-approves-postal-vote-election-reform/a-53357097>

<https://www.european-elections.eu/how-to-vote/poland>

<http://www.electionguide.org/countries/id/173/>

Polish citizens have the right to vote in Senate (upper house of Parliament) and Sejm (lower house of Parliament) elections, presidential, European parliamentary, local elections and referendums.

Presidential elections take place every five years.

Senate and Sejm elections are held every four years.

Requirements to be eligible to vote in parliamentary and presidential elections

- a. You must be at least 18 years old
- b. You must be a Polish citizen
- c. You should not have been deprived from the right to vote by court

Citizens of other EU countries who are legal Polish residents are eligible to vote in European Parliamentary and local municipal elections.

To be eligible to vote in European Parliamentary and local municipal elections:

- a. You must be a citizen of any EU country who is a legal Polish resident
- b. You must be at least 18 years old
- c. You must have your name entered into the official voter's register

To have your name entered into the official voter's register:

- a. You must submit an application at the municipal office
- b. Your application must include your first, middle and last name, date of birth and the number of Universal Electronic System for Registration of the Population (PESEL)
- c. You must attach a valid copy of your passport, EU Identification card and permanent resident's address

A decision approving or rejecting your entry into the list of voters usually arrives in three days. If a negative decision has been made, you can submit a claim to a regional court via the municipal head's office.

EU citizens also have the right to stand as candidates for municipal elections. During the 2014 municipal elections there were 10 EU citizens running for office.

How to vote at the polling stations:

a. On the Election Day come to the polling station assigned to your address. Polling stations are usually open from 07:00am to 09:00pm

b. If you want to vote **outside the place where you live**, you have two options:

a. You can take a **certificate of the right to vote** - the application is submitted to the office of the municipality in which you are included in the roll of voters. You can submit your application in writing, by fax or in electronic form. With this certificate you can vote at any of the polling stations in Poland or abroad;

b. You can submit a written **application to be added to the roll of voters** in the municipality where you will be staying on the Election Day. The application must be submitted to the office of the municipality no later than 5 days before the Election Day.

a. At the polling station must show your ID that has a picture on it (a passport, EU citizen's ID, driver's license, student's ID etc.)

b. Once the polling officer confirms your identity and finds your name on the voter's list, you will receive a ballot paper

c. Head to the polling booth or any other place where no one can watch you

d. Put X right next to your favorite candidate

e. Fold the ballot paper and put it into the voting box

Voting by proxy

Only voters who have a certificate of disability are allowed to vote by proxy. In addition to that, voters who are 75 and over on the Election Day may also vote by proxy.

A proxy may only be a person registered in the same register of voters, or having the certified right to vote in the same municipality, as the voter granting power of

attorney to vote. The power of attorney to vote can only be granted by the municipal mayor.

The application must be submitted not later than nine days before the Election Day.

The application should include:

- ∞ First and last name
- ∞ Father's name
- ∞ Date of birth
- ∞ Social security registration number (PESEL)
- ∞ Address of the voter and the person to be granted the power of attorney to vote
- ∞ Clear denotation of the election for which the proxy to vote is being provided

Postal voting

Only voters who have a certificate of disability are allowed to vote by post.

In order to vote by post:

- a. You must send the notification to the electoral commissioner not later than fifteen days before the election day (The notification can be sent by fax, telegraph, online or made orally)
- b. The notification should contain: your first and last name, your father's name, social security registration number (PESEL), declaration on entering you onto the register of voters in a given commune, denotation of the elections, delivery address of the election package
- c. Your notification should be accompanied by a copy of the current disability certificate

The disabled voter who submitted the intention to vote by mail will receive an electoral package not later than seven days before the Election Day. After filling in the voting card, the voter should put it in the voting envelope, seal it and then put the envelope in the return envelope. The voter should also attach a signed statement about the personal and secret vote received in the electoral package. The voter must send the complete electoral package to the appropriate polling station.

Polish Parliament approved postal-vote election reform at the beginning of May 2020

Due to COVID-19 pandemic polish lawmakers endorsed the bill that would allow the country to choose the president via postal ballots. Now polish eligible voters will have the right to choose whether they want to vote by post or at the polling station in the upcoming elections. The presidential elections will take place on the 28th of June 2020. Postal voting system will be tested out in Poland for the first time. Previously only disabled people had the option to vote by mail.

Voter turnout rate in the past five years

Voting is not compulsory in Poland. There is no fine if you don't vote. The voter turnout rate during the 2015 Presidential elections was 55.34%. The voter turnout rate during the 2019 parliamentary (Polish Senate) elections was 61.74%.

Portugal

Sources:

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<https://www.publico.pt/2019/10/06/politica/noticia/comissao-nacional-eleicoes-nao-fecha-porta-fraude-eleitoral-nomes-1889064>

<https://zap.aeiou.pt/denunciada-fraude-eleitoral-com-centenas-de-emigrantes-que-vieram-a-portugal-votar-176054>

<https://www.angloinfo.com/how-to/portugal/moving/voting>

<http://www.cne.pt/faq2/113/3>

In Portugal every citizen who is at least 18 years old has the right to vote in the following elections:

- a. President of the Republic (every 5 years)
- b. Parliamentary elections (every 4 years)
- c. Regional parliamentary elections (every 4 years)
- d. Regional government of the Azores
- e. Regional government of Madeira (island)
- f. Municipal elections (every 4 years)
- g. European elections (every 5 years)
- h. National Referendum
- i. Local Referendum

To be eligible to vote in Portugal:

- 1 You must be at least 18 years old
- 1 You must be a Portuguese citizen

- 1 You must be at least 17 years old and be a citizen of any other European Union country legally residing in Portugal. You must not have been banned from voting in another EU country (**not allowed to vote in** presidential elections)
- 1 You must be at least 17 years old and be a citizen of any Portuguese-speaking countries (Cape Verde and Brazil) who has been legally living in Portugal for more than 2 years (**not allowed to vote in** presidential elections)
- 1 You must be at least 17 years old and be a citizen of one of the following foreign countries - Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Iceland, Norway, New Zealand, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela who has been legally living in Portugal for more than 3 years (**not allowed to vote in** presidential elections)

Enrolment in the Electoral Register is automatic. Once you turn 18, you automatically receive a voter number and all you need to do is to show up at the polling station on the Election Day and present your ID, passport or a resident card. Foreign citizens legally residing in Portugal need to apply for the voter number online on the voter register portal.

How to vote at the polling stations:

- 1 On the Election or referendum scheduled day, go to your polling station (each polling station is attached to a specific address)
- 1 Present your ID to get a ballot paper
- 1 Put a cross (X) on the square in front of the list or the candidate for whom you wish to vote. In case of a referendum, you must put a cross (X) in the option "YES" or in the option "NO"
- 1 Fold the ballot paper in 4 with the printed part facing inwards
- 1 Give the ballot paper to the president of the polling station so that he could insert it into the ballot box. In municipal elections, the ballot papers are put into the ballot box by the voter

Voting by mail is only available during the Parliamentary and municipality elections. Voting by mail is an exception rather than an option. Other types of elections require voting in person. Portuguese citizens residing abroad are allowed

to vote by mail. However they can't vote by mail in European or presidential elections, only at the official embassies of Portugal.

How to vote by mail:

- a. You must request a ballot from the Secretariat-General of the Ministry of the Interior
- b. About a week before the Election day you will receive a ballot and two envelopes (green and white)
- c. Mark the voting option with a cross (X) in the ballot paper, fold the ballot four times, put it into the green envelope and seal it
- d. Put the green envelope into the white envelope along with a copy of your citizen's card/passport/resident's card
- e. Seal the white envelope and mail it before the Election Day

Recent voting fraud cases in Portugal:

- a. During the 2017 municipal elections 1, 641 immigrants who lived in different EU countries but still had the right to vote in Portugal arrived in Montalegre by buses early in the morning of the Election Day. They were the reason why the number of votes almost doubled compared to the previous elections. It turned out that the re-elected Mayor of Montalegre municipality paid those people to come out and vote for him. Plus he organized the transportation for all them.
- b. ***Voting impersonation/faking identity cases in Lisbon and Evora***

During the 2019 elections some people from Lisbon and Evora complained that they were not able to vote because somebody else had already voted for them. Among those people there was a well-known journalist from Lisbon who didn't want to leave that incident unnoticed and tried to give that case as much media coverage as possible. One of the representatives of the National Electoral Commission declared that those types of cases always happened in the past but the number of them was nowhere near as high as in 2019. The experts are worried that voting impersonation cases can change the outcome of the elections because sometimes 10 votes decide which party wins the election.

Slovakia

a. Requirements to be eligible to vote in Slovakia

In general, the active electoral right (to vote) in parliamentary, regional, European, local and presidential elections belong to every citizen of the Slovak Republic who is 18 years of age on the day of the election, and in the case of European, regional and local elections also to non-citizen residents in Slovakia. However, the law on elections stipulates Slovaks are not allowed to vote from abroad in the European Parliamentary elections, presidential elections, local and regional elections if they have no permanent residence in the country.

6 Presidential Elections

Citizens over 18 years of age have the right to vote, except those who are under a “legally set restriction of the personal freedom due to protection of the public health”. Voter registration is passive and decentralized with the voter register maintained by municipalities based on the permanent residence register.

6 Parliamentary Elections

Citizens of the Slovak Republic who are at least **18 years of age** on Election Day have the right to vote in National Council elections. Citizens serving prison sentences for serious crimes, deprived of legal capacity or whose freedom is restricted due to “public health protection” are ineligible to vote. Voters are added to the voter lists based on their permanent address.

a. European elections

For **citizens of the Slovak Republic**, you have the right to vote at the European elections if:

- you are a citizen of the Slovak Republic
- have reached the age of 18 years at the latest on Election Day and
- have permanent residence in the Slovak Republic
- don't have permanent residence in the territory of the Slovak Republic or in the territory of another EU country but you are present in the territory of the Slovak Republic on Election Day.

Citizens of other EU countries need to **register to vote** in the European elections. The municipality will add electors who are citizens of another EU country to the electoral list on request. This application must be submitted by the EU citizen to the municipality in which they **reside no later than 40 days** before the day of the election. Otherwise, they will no longer have the right to enroll on the electoral list. You have the right to vote in the Slovak Republic if:

- a. you are an EU citizen
- b. have reached the age of 18 at the latest on Election Day and
- c. have permanent residence in the Slovak Republic.

If you are an **EU citizen**, have **reached the age of 18** at the latest on Election Day, and you **haven't received your residence permit** in the Slovak Republic yet, but you are staying in the territory of the Slovak Republic for **more than three months** and want to vote in European elections, you **must apply for registration of the first permission**.

You should submit the application for registration of the first permission **personally at the local Department of Alien Police** where you live. You should attach your travel documents. The responsible police department will issue your confirmation of registration of the first permission on the day of submitting the application.

You will be enrolled to the list of electors in the municipality of his permanent residence upon submission of the application and the confirmation. The application has to be submitted no later than 40 days before elections.

a. Local and regional elections

The right to vote belongs to residents who have permanent residence and **reach the age of 18** at the latest on Election Day, except those who are under a “legally set restriction of the personal freedom due to protection of the public health”. That is to say, non-citizen EU residents, and third-country nationals **with permanent residence**, also have the right to vote and stand as candidates in local elections. Their registration is automatic as the electoral lists are generated on the basis of registration of residence within the relevant municipality.

a. Slovakia allows mail-in ballots from abroad in parliamentary elections

Summary:

Voters are only able to vote from abroad during the Parliamentary Elections in Slovakia. Slovak nationals can vote by mail in parliamentary elections if they are permanently or temporarily residing abroad.

Details:

Slovak citizens can vote by post in parliamentary elections if they are:

- a. **without permanent residence** in the Slovak Republic who have requested to be registered in a special list of electors;
- b. **with permanent residence** in the Slovak Republic but who are out of the territory of the Slovak Republic at the time of elections. In this case, they need to contact their municipality and request to vote by post.

Statistics:

Interest in postal voting increased considerably compared to past elections. A total of 55,141 requests were registered and 48,925 ballots were returned and taken into account in these elections, compared to 17,278 in 2016.

Final Result for the 29 February 2020 parliamentary elections¹⁰		
	Total	Percentage
Total number of Precinct Election Commissions	5,998	
Total number of registered voters	4,432,419	
Total number of voters who took part in the elections	2,916,840	65.80

Voters who voted in person in polling stations	2,865,284	98.23
Voters who returned postal votes from abroad	48,925	1.67
Number of valid votes	2,881,511	

For the 2010 parliamentary elections, only 5,861 mail ballots were received by election offices from abroad, according to official statistics, but in comparison with 2006 when the option of voting by mail was made possible for the first time, the number of absentee ballots had nearly doubled.

Voting fraud cases in Slovakia in the past 10-15 years

a. Court finds mayor guilty of vote-buying - the first case of its kind in Slovakia (2014)

One year behind bars, a fine of €300 and a five-year ban on running for public office, was the sentence the Specialized Criminal Court imposed on Miroslav Michalka, the Mayor of Gemerská Poloma in the Rožňava District.

Michalka, was found guilty of trying to buy the votes of the local Roma community in exchange for alcohol, coffee and chocolate through local Roma, Matej Kučerák, before the **local elections in 2014**, according to the criminal complaint.

a. Slovak Police charge man with electoral fraud, Romani voters were bribed (2013)

The Slovak Police have brought charges in a case of electoral fraud. Detectives believe the Slovak man charged allegedly promised voters a discount coupon worth EUR 5 and tobacco if they would vote for certain candidates in the **elections to the Banská Bystrica Regional Council**. If convicted the man faces up to five years in prison. Police discovered other attempts to influence the elections as well...

Police are still investigating two other cases of bribing voters. In the eastern Slovakian village of Jaronice, not far from Prešov, a certain person was attempting to get primarily Romani voters to cast their ballots for a specific candidate in exchange for similar perks.

In the town of Stará Ľubovňa in northeastern Slovakia, a different person attempted to bribe three Romani voters. Two days before the first round of voting, detectives allege the perpetrator promised the three Romani voters money if they would cast their ballots for a certain candidate to the regional council.

One Romani voter allegedly received the money immediately. Police see a crime as having been committed in the directing of the trio, who agreed to cast their ballots in exchange for remuneration...

One year ago, for example, the Slovak media reported that the populist Slovak National Party (Slovenská národná strana - SNS) was agitating for the re-election of Ivan Gašparovič during the presidential elections of 2009 in a controversial way. The SNS offered rewards such as cars or

consumer electronics to mayors in order to motivate them to ensure high voter turnout and votes cast for Gašparovič.

Slovenia

a. Requirements to be eligible to vote in Slovenia

7 Elections to the Slovenian National Assembly

National Assembly elections are regulated by the Elections to the National Assembly Act. The right to vote is universal and equal, meaning that **every citizen over the age of 18** is entitled to vote and to be elected regardless of their class, nationality, race, economic standing, etc.

7 Presidential elections in Slovenia

The right to vote in a presidential election is universal and equal, which means that it is held by everyone who has the right to vote in National Assembly elections. The principle of the universal voting right applies to the right to stand for election as well as the right to vote in elections. The Election of the President of the Republic Act sets out in detail who has the right to vote and stand for president of the republic. The right to vote and stand for president is therefore held by any **citizen of Slovenia** who has **reached the age of 18** by the time the election is held.

a. Election of Slovenian members of the European Parliament

All citizens of Slovenia with the right to vote in National Assembly elections (the right to vote and the right to stand for office) have the right to vote in European Parliament elections; this means that the right to vote is held by a **citizen of Slovenia** who has **reached the age of 18** on the day of the election. **Citizens of European Union Member States with permanent residence in Slovenia** also have the right to vote in European Parliament elections. Slovenian citizens and citizens of EU Member States have exactly the same right to vote in European Parliament elections and exactly the same right to stand for election.

a. Elections to the National Council

National Councillors are elected in indirect elections held within interest groups or local communities by voting bodies (i.e. via electors).

The right to vote and be elected as a member of the National Council is therefore held by a **citizen of Slovenia** who has **reached the age of 18** on the day of the election and **whose capacity to contract has not been removed**. Members of the National Council are not elected on the basis of a universal voting right but on that of a **'special' voting right**, as determined by the law for each interest group, i.e. their membership of an individual interest group or local community.

'The following have the right to vote for and be elected as members of the National Council:

- a. representatives of employers, employees, farmers, tradespersons, independent professions and non-commercial activities ('functional interests'), i.e. persons engaged in an appropriate activity or employed in Slovenia. Foreign nationals engaged in an appropriate activity or employed in Slovenia may elect members of the National Council from these interest groups under the same conditions as apply to citizens of Slovenia; however, they do not have the right to stand for election to the National Council;

- b. representatives of local interests with permanent residence in a voting unit;
- c. eighteen members of the National Council (representatives of functional interests), who are elected by electors' election committees. Representatives of the electorate (electors) are elected by local interest groups in accordance with their rules.

The 22 members of the National Council, who are representatives of local interests, are elected by local communities. A maximum of 22 voting units, each covering one or more local communities, may be formed for the election of representatives of local interests.

a. Slovenia allows mail-in ballots

a. Postal Votes Within Slovenia

The following persons may vote by post:

- a. those in the care of a home for the elderly who do not have permanent residence at the home;
- b. voters who are being treated at hospitals or health spas;
- c. voters who on polling day are in a penal institution;
- d. voters who have been recognized as invalids on the basis of a decision of the competent authority. People with disabilities can vote by mail once or permanently.

Notification of the intention to vote by post must be sent to the local electoral commission or the constituency electoral commission ten days prior to polling day.

The notification form for postal votes can be obtained from the institution in which the voter is located or on the state election commission website.

a. Postal Votes from Abroad

Voters who are abroad also have the right to vote. These voters can be divided into two categories:

voters who have registered permanent residence in Slovenia, and who are therefore in the general electoral register for a polling station area within Slovenia, and who on polling day are temporarily abroad (**voters temporarily abroad – EXPATRIATES**);

voters who have emigrated from Slovenia and are entered in a special electoral register of Slovenian citizens who do not have registered permanent residence in Slovenia (**EMIGRATED SLOVENIANS**)

I. Voters temporarily abroad – expatriates	II. Voters who do not have permanent residence in Slovenia – emigrated Slovenians
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<p>Voters who will be abroad temporarily on polling day must communicate their intention to the state election commission.</p> <p>The deadline for giving notice is preclusive, meaning the deadline refers to when the notice must arrive. Notices received late will be rejected as submitted too late.</p> <p>In the electoral register for the area where voters are registered as permanent residents, a note will be entered against the name and surname of the voter in the column “remarks” regarding the method of voting. The election committee cannot allow such voters to cast votes even if they appear in person at the polling station.</p>	<p>•Elections to the National Assembly, presidential elections and elections to the European Parliament:</p> <p>In accordance with Article 82 of the National Assembly Elections Act, the state election commission will send a ballot paper with the names of candidates or candidate lists to the permanent residential address of the voter abroad.</p> <p>Instructions on the method of voting by post are an integral part of the voting materials. Voters must send the completed ballot paper and personally signed voting card to the address of the local electoral commission (the address will be enclosed), or they may also send the materials to a diplomatic or consular representative office of the Republic of Slovenia.</p> <p>a.Referendums:</p> <p>Voters who do not have permanent residence in Slovenia (emigrated Slovenians) wishing to vote by post must notify the state election commission professional of their intention. Voters can send notice of their intention on the notification form published on the website of the state election commission.</p> <p>The deadline for giving notice is preclusive, meaning the deadline refers to when the notice must arrive. Notices received late will be rejected as submitted too late.</p>
<p>Voters who vote by post from abroad can return the voting materials they receive at their address abroad:</p> <p>a.to the address of the competent local electoral commission (the address will already be printed on the return envelope enclosed with the voting materials) or</p> <p>b.to the address of the Slovenian DCR where the polling station is located (the materials must arrive by the time the polling station opens).</p>	<p>Emigrated Slovenians who vote by post from abroad can return the voting materials they receive at their address abroad:</p> <p>a.to the address of the competent local electoral commission (the address will already be printed on the return envelope enclosed with the voting materials) or</p> <p>b.(in exceptions) to the address of the Slovenian DCR where the polling station is located (the voting materials must arrive at the DCR by the time the polling station opens).</p>

Spain

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Spanish citizens have the right to vote in general (Parliamentary) elections, European, municipal, local elections and referendums.

To be eligible to vote in all types of elections in Spain:

- a. You must be a Spanish citizen
- b. You must be at least 18 years old
- c. You must not have been banned from voting by the court in Spain (maniacs, serial killers and people with psychiatric disabilities don't have the right to vote)

Spanish general elections take place every four years.

EU citizens living in Spain are eligible to vote or stand as a candidate in European and local elections. In order to do that they must be registered on the population census and included to the official Town Hall register.

In order to be included to the official Town Hall register:

- 8 You must visit the local Town Hall and provide your passport

- 8 You must be at least 18 years old
- 8 You must provide a proof of the address (electricity bill, water bill, telephone bill, lease agreement etc.)
- 8 You have to provide a completed registration form

Once registered on the official Town Hall register, it is recommended to visit the Town Hall to verify inclusion on the municipal register and declare the desire to vote. Just being on the register does not grant voting rights, a declaration must be made in order to be included to the electoral roll. You need to apply at least three months in advance before the elections.

At least 1-2 weeks before the Election Day all eligible voters receive an updated census card which contains all the necessary information about the upcoming elections such as a list of all candidates, the date, the address and the time of when the polling station assigned to your address opens and closes.

All eligible voters in Spain have the right to vote at the polling stations, by a postal ballot or by proxy.

Voting at the polling station

- 8 On the Election day you should come to the polling station assigned to your address between 09:00am and 08:00pm
- 8 You can either cast your vote at home (some eligible voters receive ballot papers and an envelope at least 1-2 weeks before the elections) or cast your vote at the polling station
- 8 If you already voted at home, put the ballot into the envelope, seal it and come to the table where the polling officers sit
- 8 Show your ID (passport, driver's license or DNI – Spanish national identity card)
- 8 Once the polling officer checked your ID to make sure you are on the electoral roll and to make sure you haven't voted by post before. If everything is in order, you should be able to put a sealed envelope into the voting box

- 8 If you haven't received ballot papers by mail beforehand you should come to the polling station and ask the polling officer to give you the ballots and an envelope
- 8 Head to the voting booth alone and cast your vote, put the ballot papers into the envelope and seal it
- 8 Come to the table where the polling officers sit, show your ID (passport, driver's license or DNI)
- 8 Once the polling officer checked your ID, put a sealed envelope into the voting box

Postal voting

In order to vote by post you must request a postal ballot from the Electoral Census office not later than 10 days before the Election Day. You should also make sure you vote not later than 4 days before the official election day.

For example, during the 2019 General elections in Spain eligible voters could apply for a postal ballot starting from the 24th of September 2019. The deadline for an application was on the 31st of October 2019 while the elections took place on the 10th of November. November 6th was the last day when you could send your vote by post from the post office.

You can apply for a postal ballot at any of the post offices in Spain. Just fill in the application form at the post office and show your ID (a passport, a driver's license or a DNI – Spanish national identity card). Expired documents can be accepted as a proof of identity, although photocopies or pictures of ID will not work.

A couple of days after the application was submitted, a postal ballot and an envelope should be delivered to your address by the courier. Once you receive a postal ballot, you should cast your vote, attach a voting certificate; put a postal ballot and a voting certificate back into the envelope addressed to the Electoral office. Seal the envelope and send it from any of the post offices. Make sure to send your ballot not later than four days before the elections. Your postal ballot will be sent as certified and express mail. Postal voting is free of charge.

Recent statistics on postal voting in Spain

According to the recent statistics, 900, 188 out of 37 million eligible voters voted by post during the 2019 Spanish general elections. That number is by 26, 39% lower compared to 2018 municipal elections when 1, 222, 937 of eligible voters preferred postal voting.

One of the reasons why the postal voting rate dropped in 2019 might be because there were 30% less mail in ballots applications submitted compared to 2018 elections.

Recent mail in ballots fraud cases in Spain

More than 8, 000 voters from Castellon who requested postal ballots during the 2018 elections received the wrong ballots which belonged to 2016 elections. Instead of empty ballots those voters received the ballots in favor of one of the candidate party of 2016 Congress elections.

After the investigation, more than 8,000 ballots were confiscated and replaced with the right ones.

Sweden

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Swedish citizens who are at least 18 years old have the right to vote in Riksdag (parliamentary) elections, referendums, European parliamentary, county council and municipality council elections.

Voters who are eligible to vote in Sweden can cast their votes at polling stations on the Election Day or at special advance polling stations before the elections. Ballots can also be sent by mail or by proxy.

Requirements to be eligible to vote in all types of elections:

- a. You must be a Swedish citizen
- b. You must be at least 18 years old
- c. If you are a Swedish citizen living abroad you can still vote in parliamentary elections for ten years, after that you will have to re-apply for your right to vote

Requirements to be eligible to vote in county council and municipal county elections:

- 1 You must be at least 18 years old

- 1 You must be a citizen of any EU country, Iceland or Norway
- 1 You must be a Swedish citizen or a resident who legally lived in Sweden for at least three years
- 1 In order to vote in European parliamentary elections you must be a citizen of any EU country

At least three weeks before the elections the Election Authority sends out a letter with a polling card to each eligible voter. The polling card is sent to the address where you are registered. This letter will also include information about the location and opening time of your nearest polling station on Election Day. Every municipality in Sweden is divided into voting districts. Each district has its own polling station. Everyone who lives in that district can vote at the polling station on the Election Day.

In Sweden parliamentary, county council and municipality council elections take place on the same day.

How to vote at the polling station:

- 1 On the Election Day you must come to the polling station written on your polling card between 8:00 AM and 8:00 PM
- 1 You must present your ID (driver's license or a passport)
- 1 Then you must head to the polling booth where you will see three different types of ballots for each of the three elections taking place: yellow papers are for the Riksdag (parliamentary) elections, blue for the county council, and white for the municipal council
- 1 Once you voted you must put all three ballot papers you used to cast your vote in an envelope and hand it to the election officer in the room

In Sweden the ballot is secret at elections. This means that you are not obliged to tell anyone which party or candidate you voted for. The officials at polling stations who receive your vote have no way of finding out which party/ candidate you voted for because you have to put the ballots into an envelope before you give it to the election officer.

Advance voting

In Sweden it's possible to cast your vote in advance, starting 18 days before the day of the election. For that you need to go to one of the advance polling stations that are usually located in the libraries and present your ID. Before 2006 advance polling stations used to be the post offices but now they are mostly located in libraries.

An Electoral Committee of Sweden is responsible for accepting ballots at hospitals for those who wish to vote there, such as patients, personnel, and visitors.

Those who due to illness, disability, or age cannot personally come to the polling station can vote by proxy. Prisoners can also vote by proxy.

Swedish citizens who live outside of Sweden can vote at a foreign mission, an embassy or a consulate. They can also vote by mail. Seamen are also allowed to vote by mail. A vote from abroad counts as long as it is received by the Election Authority no later than the day before Election Day.

How to vote by post from abroad:

- a. You should order a mail in ballot from the Election Authority, a local authority, Swedish embassy or consulate
- b. Once you receive a mail in ballot, you can vote by post as early as 45 days before Election Day
- c. You should make sure your ballot arrives to the Election Authority no later than the day before the election to be counted

Recent statistics

During 2018 general elections about 7.3 million people were eligible to vote, including 580, 000 foreign citizens who were allowed to vote in county council and municipality council elections of Sweden.

87.2% of out of 7.3 million eligible voters cast their votes; the total number of votes was 6, 535, 271. The number of invalid votes was 58, 546.

Switzerland

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Swiss citizens have the right to vote in Parliamentary elections (which happen every four years), cantonal elections, referendums and municipality elections. Swiss residents are not allowed to vote at the federal level (including Parliamentary elections). Even if you were born in Switzerland and lived in the country for more than 50 years, you are still not allowed to vote in Parliamentary elections unless you have a Swiss passport.

Most cantons in French-speaking parts of Switzerland allow its residents to vote in municipal elections if they legally lived in the country for a certain period of time (the time period depends on each canton). And there are only two French speaking provinces (Neuchâtel and Jura) in Switzerland that allow its residents to vote in cantonal elections.

German-speaking cantons are much more reserved and conservative. Basel City, Appenzell Outer Rhodes and Graubünden allow their municipalities to give its residents the right to vote but in practice only few municipalities do so. Other

German speaking cantons don't allow its residents to vote even at the municipal level.

Requirements to be eligible to vote in Switzerland:

- a. You must be a Swiss citizen
- b. You must be at least 18 years old on the election day

Voting in Switzerland is not obligatory, so there's no fine if you don't vote.

Although you have to be at least 18 years old to vote at the federal level, each canton is allowed to give minors voting rights at cantonal and municipality level. For example, in Glarus you must be at least 16 years old to be eligible to vote in cantonal and municipality elections. Glarus is the only Swiss canton that allows 16- and 17-year-olds to vote.

In Switzerland each voter can choose freely whether to cast a postal vote or go to the polling station on the Election Day.

Postal voting

1978 was the year when postal voting was introduced in Switzerland for the first time. In 1994 postal voting became available throughout the country.

Unlike in Germany and Austria, Swiss neighboring countries, postal voting is extremely popular in Switzerland nowadays. More than 80% of Swiss eligible voters prefer to vote by post. In some provinces and cities that number is even higher. For example more than 95% of eligible voters in Geneva vote by post.

How to vote by post in Switzerland:

- 1* Each eligible voter receives an envelope with a postal ballot inside at least 3-4 weeks before the elections (municipalities are responsible for shipping those ballots)
- 1* Once you receive an envelope, you should open it without damaging since you will need this envelope to send in your ballot paper back
- 1* ***Make sure you have received all the voting papers, in particular:***

- 1) The (red) explanatory brochure from the Federal Council
- 2) The envelope to use for voting by post (generally the same envelope that the voting papers arrive in).
- 3) The ballot paper
- 4) ***In most cantons, the voting papers also include:***
- 5) Your polling card or voter identification card
- 6) A ballot envelope

Some Swiss cantons offer online voting although it is not as popular and widespread as the postal voting yet. Only less than 10% of eligible voters in Switzerland vote online.

How to vote online:

- a. At least 3-4 weeks before the election day, you will receive an envelope with the voting instructions and a postal ballot in it
- b. If your canton allows/offers online voting and you would like to use the online voting system, follow the instructions sent to you by post

Voting at the polling stations

Voting at the polls is extremely rare in Switzerland nowadays. Polling stations are dying out. According to the recent statistics, only 7, 5% of Swiss eligible voters prefer voting at the polling stations.

How to vote at the polling stations:

- a. At least 3-4 weeks before the election day you will receive an envelope with the voting instructions and a postal ballot
- b. There you will find the address and the time when the polling station assigned to your address opens and closes

- c. On the Election Day bring the postal ballot and the envelope that you received before to the polling station
- d. Show your ID to the polling officer (a passport at the Parliamentary elections, other types of ID are allowed at cantonal or municipality level elections in some provinces)
- e. Head to the polling booth, use a pen to fill in the ballot paper
- f. Once you cast your vote, put a folded ballot into the envelope and seal it
- g. Put the envelope into the voting box or hand it to the polling officer

Recent mail in ballots fraud cases in Switzerland

During the 2017 cantonal elections in Oberwalliser a 31-year old man was constantly stealing postal ballots from the mailboxes and forging them afterwards. He managed to forge around 190 mail-in ballots altogether. After the investigation, it turned out that he was a former member of SVP - Swiss People's Party of Switzerland. He was sentenced to twelve months in prison by the Brig district court and had to pay a 2, 000 SFr fine.

Voter fraud at the polling station in Geneva

During the 2018 cantonal elections in Geneva one of the polling station officers destroyed some ballots and added the new ones while he was counting the votes. He was caught doing that by some other polling station officers who later filed a police report. The suspect was detained and questioned by the police. The police searched the polling station later as well.

The Prosecutor's office opened a case on the election fraud afterwards.

Turkey

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Turkish citizens have the right to vote in presidential, parliamentary (Grand National Assembly of Turkey), local municipal elections and referendums.

Presidential and local municipal elections are held every five years in Turkey.

Requirements to be eligible to vote:

- a. You must be at least 18 years old on the day preceding the day of the elections
- b. You must be a Turkish citizen and be on the voter's list
- c. You must not be an active conscript, cadet or a prisoner who has committed intentional crime, regardless of severity

According to the Parliamentary Election law of Turkey, voting is mandatory. However, the penalty is just a small fine.

All eligible voters in Turkey receive voter information sheets which identify what polling station and ballot box the voter is entitled to vote at. They are typically sent out 21 days prior to Election Day by the District Electoral Boards.

How to vote at the polling station

- 1 On the Election Day come to the polling station you are entitled to vote at between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. (in some Turkish provinces elections start at 07:00am and finish at 04:00p.m.)

- 1 Bring a state issued form of identification to the polling station such as a national identification card, birth certificate, marriage certificate or passport
- 1 Once admitted to the polling station, show your ID to the polling officer
- 1 Once the polling officer finds your name on the voter's list, he/she will give you the ballot paper and an envelope, guide you to the voting booth and explain how to cast your vote
- 1 Once you are in the voting booth, mark your favorite candidate/party, fold the ballot paper and put it into the envelope
- 1 Seal the envelope and put into the voting box

Turkish citizens residing abroad are allowed to vote in presidential, parliamentary elections and referendums. However, they are not eligible to vote in municipal elections.

Early voting

Voters overseas are allowed to vote at the early polling stations in embassies and consulates abroad. Normally early polling stations open up two weeks prior to the Election Day. Voters can vote for nine days from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Early polling stations usually close 5-6 before the Election Day.

Postal voting

Postal voting is not allowed inside the country. Only overseas voters have the option to cast their votes by postal ballots. In order to do that, you must be registered on overseas electoral roll and request a postal ballot from the Foreign District Election Board. Approximately 75 days before the Election Day you will receive an electoral package with the ballot papers and two envelopes. Open the envelope and mark your favorite party/candidate on the ballot paper, then fold the ballot, put into a small envelope and seal it. Put a small envelope into a big envelope that has the following address on it «Yurt Dışı İlçe Seçim Kurulu Ankara/TÜRKİYE». Seal the envelope and send it back. Make sure your ballot arrives not later than 5p.m. on the Election Day. Ballots that arrive later are destroyed. Postal voting is free of charge.

Online voting is not allowed in Turkey.

Recent voting fraud cases in Turkey

Electoral fraud is very common in Turkey.

2017 referendum

The Council of Europe, the EU's leading human rights body, is convinced that nearly 2.5 million votes could have been manipulated in the April 2017 Turkish referendum, which resulted in giving greater presidential powers to the current Turkish president Erdogan.

2019 local municipal elections

Opposition parties claimed 'massive electoral fraud' in Turkey's local elections. A lot of videos, photos and reports captured voting fraud at the polling stations across Turkey.

Multiple Voting

A person has been reported to cast two votes at a time at #1224 ballot box in Istanbul, Atasehir.

In the southeastern province of Sanliurfa the police officer named Mersin reportedly voted without showing the required official document called "#142", which allows the officers to vote.

According to the claims, multiple voting also took place at #1094 ballot box in Halfeti Anatolian High School.

Two military soldiers attempted to vote twice in the eastern province of Tunceli, Hozat district.

Polling officials detected 45 votes that were not cast by original voters in the eastern province of Urfa, Hilvan district.

Violence at the polling stations

Two polling officials of the opposition Felicity Party (SP) were shot dead in the eastern province of Malatya, Puturge district. The leader of Felicity party Temel

Karamollaoglu announced that the suspect was a cousin of a mayoral candidate of the ruling AKP party.

According to the news agencies Demireoren and Mezopotamya, sixty-seven people have been wounded in brawls over the voting process throughout Turkey.

Turnout rate

2018 Parliamentary elections - 86.23%

2018 Presidential elections - 83.68%

2017 Referendum elections - 87.45%

Domestic and International Voter Gender Distribution in 2018 Presidential elections:

United Kingdom

a. Requirements to be eligible to vote in UK

General elections (elections to the UK Parliament)

To vote in a general election you must:

be registered to vote

be 18 or over on the day of the election ('polling day')

be a British, Irish or qualifying Commonwealth citizen

be resident at an address in the UK (or a British citizen living abroad who has been registered to vote in the UK in the last 15 years)

not be legally excluded from voting

Local government

To vote in a local government election you must:

a. be registered to vote

b. be 18 or over on the day of the election ('polling day') (16 or over in Scotland)

c. be a British, Irish, Commonwealth or EU citizen

d. be registered at an address in the area you want to vote in

e. not be legally excluded from voting

If you live in 2 different local authority areas (for example because you're a student), you may be able to vote in both areas.

You must [register to vote](#) in both areas. The local Electoral Registration Offices will check each application and tell you if you can register in both areas.

a. Scottish Parliament

To vote in the Scottish Parliament elections you must:

a. be registered to vote

b. be 16 or over on the day of the election ('polling day')

c. be a British, Irish, Commonwealth or EU citizen

d. be resident at an address in Scotland

e. not be legally excluded from voting

Northern Ireland Assembly

To vote in the Northern Ireland Assembly election you must:

a. be registered to vote

b. be 18 or over on the day of the election ('polling day')

c. be a British, Irish, Commonwealth or EU citizen

d. be registered at an address in the area you want to vote in

e. not be legally excluded from voting

Welsh Parliament

To vote in the Welsh Parliament elections you must:

- a. be registered to vote
- b. be 16 or over on the day of the election ('polling day')
- c. live in Wales
- d. not be legally excluded from voting

Local mayors, Mayor of London and London Assembly

To vote for a local mayor, you must be eligible to vote in local elections.

To vote in the London Mayor and London Assembly elections you must:

- a. be registered to vote
- b. be 18 or over on the day of the election ('polling day')
- c. be a British, Irish, Commonwealth or EU citizen
- d. be resident at an address in Greater London
- e. not be legally excluded from voting

Police and Crime Commissioner

To vote in a PCC election you must:

- a. be registered to vote
- b. be 18 or over on the day of the election ('polling day')
- c. be a British, Irish, Commonwealth or EU citizen
- d. be resident at an address in England or Wales (excluding London)
- e. not be legally excluded from voting

h **Referendums**

To vote in a referendum you must:

- be registered to vote
- be 18 or over on the day of the referendum ('polling day')
- be a British, Irish or Commonwealth citizen
- be resident at an address in the UK or Gibraltar (or a British citizen living abroad who has been registered to vote in the UK in the last 15 years)
- not be legally excluded from voting

2UK allows mail-in ballots; how the whole process works

You must apply for a postal vote if you want to [vote by post](#), for example if:

- you're away from home
 - you're abroad and want to vote in England, Scotland or Wales
- You do not need to give a reason unless you're voting in Northern Ireland*.

*To vote by post or proxy in Northern Ireland, you must complete an application form specifying the reason why you cannot go in person to vote at your polling station. You can apply for an indefinite postal or proxy vote at any time of year. To be eligible for an indefinite postal/proxy vote you must provide a reason why you cannot reasonably be expected to go to your polling station for an indefinite period. The only acceptable reasons are disability, employment or education.

- When voting by post, you should:
- mark your vote on your ballot paper in secret
 - fill in the postal voting statement
 - put the ballot and statement in the envelope provided
 - seal the envelope yourself

If you're too late to post your ballot paper, take it to your local polling station by 10pm, or Electoral Registration Office before they close. In Northern Ireland, take it to your local Area Electoral Office before they close.

Statistics on UK people vote by mail and at polls

Postal ballot paper in UK General Elections						
	Number of postal ballot papers issued	Covering envelopes returned before close of poll	Postal votes included in count	Postal votes as % of total		
			Number	% of all postal ballot papers issued		
	1945	1,219,111	1,032,688	83.5%		3.9%
	1950	507,711	478,038	91.9%		1.6%
	1951	831,871	756,967	89.3%		2.5%
	1955	595,001	526,904	86.7%		1.9%
	1959	692,821	612,231	86.4%		2.1%
	1964	818,901	723,927	86.4%		2.5%
	1966	617,481	528,006	83.1%		1.8%
	1970	731,241	639,674	85.5%		2.2%
	1974 Feb	743,441	645,080	84.6%		2.0%
	1974 Oct	1,075,111	875,324	79.1%		2.8%
	1979	847,331	714,892	81.7%		2.2%
	1983	757,601	643,634	82.3%		2.0%
	1987	947,941	818,349	83.7%		2.4%
	1992	835,071	714,895	82.9%		2.0%

1997	937,200	764,366	738,614	78.8%	2.3%
2001	1,758,000	1,402,073	1,402,073	79.8%	5.0%
2005	5,362,000	4,110,000	3,963,792	73.9%	12.7%
2010	6,996,000	5,818,800	5,596,865	80.0%	18.8%
2015	7,592,000	6,516,200	6,302,073	83.0%	20.5%
2017	8,412,000	7,155,300	6,986,581	83.1%	21.7%
Sources:					
1. Colin Rallings and Michael Thrasher, British Electoral Facts 1832-2006					
2. Electoral Commission					

3 Voting fraud cases in UK in the past 10-15 years

- 2016-2019 UK [Electoral Fraud Data](#)

Cases with regard to voting where the suspect was convicted, or accepted a police caution		
	Conviction	Caution
Year		

<p>2019</p>	<p>A conviction for using someone else's vote at a polling station West Yorkshire police received a report from polling station staff that a man had voted twice in the European Parliamentary election.</p> <p>A polling station staff member became suspicious and went to the police. The police then arrested and interviewed the voter. He admitted to voting twice, once using his own name and once using his son's name. He was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •sentenced to 8 weeks in prison, suspended for 12 months •given a fine of £50 •not allowed to vote for five years 	<p>A caution for using someone else's vote at a polling station West Mercia police received a report that someone had voted at a polling station in the European Parliamentary election, but they weren't on the electoral register.</p> <p>The suspect knew that he was not on the electoral register and could not vote. Instead, he gave his father's name to polling station staff and was given a ballot paper and cast his vote.</p> <p>A polling station staff member suspected the voter was not who he said he was. They raised their concerns with the police who interviewed him under caution. He fully accepted that he had voted using his father's name.</p> <p>He accepted a caution from the police.</p>
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2018	<p>A caution for false registration and voting (by post) more than once</p> <p>At the local elections in 2018, a Labour Party candidate seeking re-election registered to vote at two different addresses in Rochdale.</p> <p>He applied to vote by post at both addresses and voted twice in the Rochdale council elections.</p> <p>It is an offence to vote more than once in the same local election area.</p> <p>The candidate was interviewed by police and admitted he had voted twice. He accepted a caution from police.</p>
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**A caution for using
someone else's postal
vote by mistake**

West Yorkshire police received a report that a postal vote cast in the 2018 local elections appeared to have been completed and returned by someone who had died.

Police interviewed the deceased elector's widow. She had been his sole carer and often did his paperwork. It appeared to be a genuine mistake in the midst of grief.

The widow accepted a conditional caution and wrote a full letter of apology to the Returning Officer.

	<p>Metropolitan (UK Parliamentary election, Waltham Forest) – Voting - Personation/legal incapacity to vote/multiple voting (i) Polling station (60-62 and 62A)</p> <p>Following the general election, an allegation was reported to the police in relation to a social media post by an unknown person on Twitter who openly declared that they had voted twice, once by post and a once in person.</p> <p>The police undertook enquires which confirmed that the Twitter user had voted twice in the election after they were registered twice at their home address with a</p>	<p>Metropolitan (Non-election specific, Tower Hamlets) – Voting - Personation/legal incapacity to vote/multiple voting (i) Postal vote (60-62 and 62A)</p> <p>The police were informed by a member of the public that they were concerned about a message that a Facebook user had posted prior to the general election.</p> <p>The Facebook poster made a plea to their contacts asking them if they did not intend to vote themselves that they should consider letting the Facebook poster use their vote instead.</p> <p>The police undertook enquires which led to interviewing the Facebook poster who fully admitted posting the post.</p> <p>The Facebook poster was subsequently issued with a police adult caution.</p>
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[2017](#)

minor variance of their name.

The Twitter user was interviewed by the police under caution and following consultation with the Crown Prosecution Service they were subsequently charged.

The Twitter user appeared at Thames Magistrates Court where they pleaded guilty to the offence of multiple voting. The Twitter user was fined £150, ordered to pay £200 costs and a £30 victim surcharge. They were also banned for 3 years from registering and voting in any election in the UK and are not permitted to being elected to the House of Commons or holding any such elected office.

South Wales (Local election, Cardiff) – Voting - Personation/ legal incapacity to vote/multiple voting (i) Postal vote (60-62 and 62A)

An allegation was made that the subject completed three other family members' postal votes as well as their own and submitted them to Cardiff Electoral Services department for inclusion in the election process. A statement was obtained from Cardiff Council together with the postal voting statement and application for each of the postal votes.

The offender was interviewed and statements were obtained from the Electoral Services manager and the husband, son and daughter.

The offender was given a police caution for the offence of making a false instrument contrary to section 1 of the Forgery and Counterfeiting Act 1981.

	<p>EU referendum, East Ayrshire voting area – personation in a polling station</p> <p>A voter attended at a polling station in East Ayrshire during the EU Referendum claiming to be another voter (his friend) and was accordingly issued with a ballot paper in that name which he then used to cast a vote. The polling staff had no reason to be suspicious as the voter was not otherwise known to them and they had no reason to believe he was not who he said he was.</p> <p>Later in the day the same voter attended again and sought to vote again, this time in his own name. Due to certain physical characteristics of the voter (he was very tall and wore distinctive clothing) and the vigilance of the Presiding Officer</p>	<p>EU Referendum, Cheshire West and Chester voting area – personation in a polling station</p> <p>An elector voted at a polling station using his mother’s polling card in the morning and voted in his own right at the</p>
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		<p>EU referendum, Oxford voting area – personation in a polling station</p> <p>The offender (who had moved away from the area) attended his former local polling station wishing to vote there. He was not allowed to vote there as he was no longer registered to vote.</p> <p>The offender had the same first name as the person currently registered at his old address. The offender left the polling station but returned to vote later claiming to be the person currently registered at his old address. He voted under the name of the current elector.</p> <p>The offender fully admitted the offence of personation in Police interview and, after CPS advice was sought, he was offered and accepted a police caution.</p>
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		<p>Reigate and Banstead Borough Council – personation in a polling station</p> <p>The offender gave the name and address of a registered elector at a polling station and cast a vote as that elector. The actual elector arrived to vote later in the day and was given a tendered ballot paper.</p> <p>The offender was identified from a CCTV recording and interviewed by the police. He admitted the offence and accepted a police caution.</p>
		<p>Two cases which resulted in offenders accepting police cautions, relating to allegations of postal voting personation offences, but no detailed information from PSNI.</p>

- **other voting fraud cases**

Elections	Name	Ruling	Details
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2014 Tower Hamlets mayoral election	Lutfur Rahman	<p>Lutfur Rahman was found guilty of “corrupt and illegal practices for the purpose of promoting or procuring the election” during his 2014 mayoral campaign. The election of May 2014 was declared void, and with Rahman disqualified from holding electoral office for five years. The ruling meant that Rahman was ineligible to run for re-election, and he was ordered to pay immediate costs of £250,000.</p>	<p>The BBC reported that the Election Commissioner upheld the following allegations against Mayor Rahman:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voting fraud: ballots were double-cast or cast from false addresses; • False statements made against Mr. Rahman's rival Mr. Biggs; • Bribery: large amounts of money were given to organizations who were "totally ineligible or who failed to meet the threshold for eligibility"; • Treating: providing free food and drink to encourage people to vote for Mr. Rahman; • Spiritual influence: voters were told that it was their duty as Muslims to vote for Mr. Rahman.
2014 Scottish referendum	Brian McLaughlin	<p>In Scotland Brian McLaughlin was convicted of voting twice at the Scottish referendum.</p>	<p>Brian McLaughlin voted Yes in the morning then went back to the polling station in the afternoon and voted No.</p>
2012 local elections in Derby	Nasreen Akhtar, Tameena Ali and Samra Ali	<p>Nasreen Akhtar, a polling clerk, was jailed for 14 months for her part in personation offences at the local elections in Derby in May 2012. Tameena Ali and Samra Ali were given eight-month prison sentences, suspended for 18 months.</p>	<p>Nasreen Akhtar helped her nieces, Tameena Ali and Samra Ali, to cast fraudulent votes by pretending to be someone else.</p>
2012 local by-election in Maybury and Sheerwater in Surrey	Shaukat Ali, Parveen Akhtar, Shamraiz Ali, Sobia Ali-Akhtar and Abid Hussain	<p>Shaukat Ali was jailed for 15 months, Parveen Akhtar and Sobia Ali-Akhtar were both jailed for nine months, and Shamraiz Ali was jailed for six months. Abid Hussain was given a six-month prison term suspended for 18 months.</p>	<p>Shaukat Ali, Parveen Akhtar, Shamraiz Ali, Sobia Ali-Akhtar and Abid Hussain, from New Haw, were charged over claims that postal votes were being fraudulently submitted. They were all convicted of conspiracy to defraud at Reading Crown Court.</p>

2011 by-election in Beaver	Cengizhan Cerit	Cerit was sentenced on 8 February 2013 and has been jailed for a year.	Cengizhan Cerit was arrested after an investigation by the Returning Officer into alleged similarities in handwriting on postal votes was handed over to the police for further scrutiny. He also tried to apply for hundreds of postal votes to rig the election result.
2010 borough elections	Asif Manzur	Asif Manzur, a Liberal Democrat polling agent in Burnley, was jailed for eighteen months.	Manzur admitted stealing a book of unused ballot papers at a polling station and marking a number of them in favour of the Liberal Democrat candidate and putting them in the ballot box. Manzur admitted conspiring to defraud the Returning Officer.
2008 Walsall Council elections	Ali Hayder Munir	Ali Hayder Munir, a Conservative Party member, was jailed for three months after admitting two charges of making false applications for proxy votes at the Walsall Council elections in 2008. Munir, the son of Mohammed Munir was expelled from the Conservative Party.	The fake applications involved identifying real but unregistered people and then making electoral registration and proxy vote applications on their behalf.
2007 Winchester City elections	John Hall	A Conservative activist was found guilty of voting fraud. John Hall was fined £1,000.	John Hall falsified proxy voting forms during the 2007 Winchester City elections.

2007 local elections in Slough	Mahboob Khan, Eshaq Khan, Basharat Khan, Arshad Raja, Altaf Khan, Gulnawaz Khan	Six men were jailed at Reading Crown Court for postal vote fraud at the 2007 local elections in Slough; the longest sentence, four and a half years, was given to Mahboob Khan for conspiracy to defraud, conspiracy to pervert the course of justice and perjury. Eshaq Khan (the Conservative candidate who was elected) and Basharat Khan were each jailed for three and a half years for the same offences; Arshad Raja received eighteen months for conspiracy to defraud; Altaf Khan was jailed for four months for conspiracy to defraud and Gulnawaz Khan received eight months for personation.	Eshaq Khan was found guilty, with five others, of hundreds of creating false names in the weeks running up to the May 2007 local election in Slough and entering them on the voter register.
2006 local council elections in Oldham	Adeel Hanif	In Oldham Adeel Hanif pleaded guilty to the offence of personation at Minshull Street Crown Court. Hanif was sentenced to three months in jail.	Hanif went into the polling station that day with the intent of depriving another member of the public of their right to vote.
2006 Foleshill ward election	Iftikahar Hussain	Iftikahar Hussain was found guilty of rigging votes in the Foleshill ward in Coventry.	Iftikahar Hussain used the identities of two other people to place fraudulent votes in the Foleshill ward election on May 4, 2006.
2005 Westminster and Local Government elections	Dessie Stewart	Former Coleraine DUP Councillor, Dessie Stewart, was sentenced to four months in prison for electoral fraud. Stewart had pleaded guilty to six charges of fraud at the 2005 local elections.	Cllr Stewart admitted four counts of pretending to be someone else in order to cast postal votes and two of fraudulently stopping free exercise of a proxy vote.
2005 local elections in the Aston ward of Birmingham	Ahmad Ali	Ahmad Ali pleaded guilty to contravening the Representation of the People Act during the Aston ward by-election in 2005 after voting twice by postal ballot and was fined £100 with £43 costs.	Ahmad Ali obtained two postal votes at different addresses and voted twice.

<p>2005 general election for the Bradford West seat</p>	<p>Jamshed Khan, Reis Khan, Mohammed Sultan, Mohammed Rafiq, and Alyas Khan</p>	<p>Four men from Bradford were imprisoned for 21 months, and one for 11 months.</p>	<p>Five men attempted to rig the general election for the Bradford West seat in 2005 by fraudulently registering postal votes. The Times reported that they made more than 900 fraudulent applications for postal votes.</p>
<p>2004 local elections in Peterborough</p>	<p>Raja Akhtar, Abdul Razaq, Mohammed Khaliq, Mohammed Choudhary, Maqbool Hussein and Tariq Mahmood</p>	<p>Raja Akhtar, a former Conservative Mayor of Peterborough, was sentenced to three months in prison at Norwich Crown court after he had been found guilty of vote rigging. Former Conservative councillor Abdul Razaq and candidate Mohammed Khaliq were also given prison sentences of two months and five months respectively for their part in postal vote fraud at the 2004 local elections. Three other men, Mohammed Choudhary, Maqbool Hussein and Tariq Mahmood, had been jailed in April 2008 for vote rigging at the same elections.</p>	<p>Abdul Razaq had hijacked voters' poll cards and used them in to ensure that postal votes would be diverted to his friends and relatives.</p>
<p>2004 local elections in Burnley</p>	<p>Manzur Hussain, Mozaquir Ali</p>	<p>The two Liberal Democrat councillors, Manzur Hussain and Mozaquir Ali, convicted of postal vote rigging in Burnley at the 2004 local elections were both jailed for 18 months.</p>	<p>The pair had conducted "a campaign to maximise the vote for Ali", by getting voters to sign blank proxy voting forms.</p>
<p>2002 local election in Blackburn</p>	<p>Mohammed Hussain</p>	<p>A former Labour councillor on Blackburn Council, Mohammed Hussain, was jailed for stealing 233 people's postal votes in 2002. Hussain was given a sentence of 3 years and 7 months for tricking voters into handing over their blank ballot papers.</p>	<p>The police said he had sent friends to collect postal ballots and then arranged a 'conveyor belt' at his home to put crosses next to his name.</p>

<u>Cases of alleged electoral fraud reported 2010-19</u>		
Year	Cases of alleged electoral fraud	Voting as percentage of total
2010	262	32%
2011	242	14%
2012	362	25%
2013	148	13%
2014	219	27%
2015	518	26%
2016	291	43%
2017	336	31%
2018	266	21%
2019	585	24%