



INFORMATION ON THE 2025 COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

County and Municipal elections will be held in Finland on Sunday 13 April 2025. The municipal councils of municipalities and county councils of wellbeing services counties are elected every four years in the County and municipal elections.

Under the Constitution of Finland (731/1999), Finland is divided into municipalities with autonomy. The municipality is responsible for the provision of basic services for many of its residents. The highest decision-making power in a municipality is exercised by the elected council.

The Constitution also provides that self-government in a larger administrative area than municipalities is regulated by law. In 2021, 21 autonomous wellbeing services counties were established in Finland, and responsibility for the organisation of health and social services and rescue services was transferred from the municipalities to these counties. The highest decision-making power in a wellbeing services county is exercised by the elected county council.

County and municipal elections are not held in the Region of Åland. Residents of the City of Helsinki are only entitled to vote in municipal elections, as Helsinki is not part of a wellbeing services county.

Voting rights – who is entitled to vote?

The precondition for the right to vote in county and municipal elections is that you have reached the age of 18 at the latest on the election day (13 April 2025).

In addition, you must have a municipality of residence in Finland as follows:

- A citizen of Finland or another EU country, Iceland or Norway must have a municipality of residence registered in Finland by 21 February 2025
- Citizens of other countries must have had a municipality of residence in Finland registered continuously for at least two years by 21 February 2025.

Municipality of residence is determined on the basis of the Municipality of Residence Act (210/1994). Municipality of residence is usually the municipality where you live.

You are entitled to vote in the 2025 county and municipal elections in the municipality and the wellbeing services county of the municipality that is listed as your municipality of residence in the population information system on 21 February 2025 at midnight.

If necessary, you can check your municipality of residence from the Digital and Population Data Services Agency. In the municipal elections, you may only vote for a candidate standing for election in your municipality of residence. In the county elections, you may only vote for a candidate standing for election in your wellbeing services county.

Voting in elections is voluntary in Finland.

A notification of the right to vote is sent to all persons entitled to vote

Before the elections, the Digital and Population Data Services Agency will establish a voting register, which will include all persons entitled to vote in county elections and municipal elections. There is no need to register for the voting register separately.



By **20 March 2025**, the Digital and Population Data Services Agency will send a notification of the right to vote to those entitled to vote. If you have activated the Suomi.fi Messages, you will only be sent a notification of your right to vote electronically (additional information at www.suomi.fi/messages). The notification of the right to vote contains instructions on the voting process, a list of advance polling stations near your place of residence, and information concerning your right to vote. You do not need to bring your voting right notification to the polling station, but you will need to prove your identity before casting your vote. However, if you vote in an institution or abroad, you should bring the notification of the right to vote with you.

Eligibility – who may stand as a candidate?

You can stand as a candidate in municipal elections if

- the municipality in which you stand as a candidate is your municipality of residence; and
- you have the right to vote in the municipal elections in one of Finland's municipalities.

You can stand as a candidate in county elections if

- your municipality of residence is located in the wellbeing services county in which you stand as a candidate; and
- you have the right to vote in county elections in a wellbeing services county.

Please note that certain state officials, leading wellbeing services county or municipal officials and employees listed in the Wellbeing Services Counties Act and Local Government Act may not stand as candidates. Those declared legally incompetent by a court decision may also not stand as candidates.

Nomination of candidates

In county and municipal elections, candidates can be nominated by

- registered parties
- constituency associations established by eligible voters.

Candidates for county elections and candidates for municipal elections will be nominated separately.

Each party may decide on its own candidates in accordance with its rules and regulations. If you wish to stand as a party candidate, you must discuss the matter with your preferred party.

In municipal elections, the establishment of a constituency association will require at least ten eligible voters who are residents of the municipality in question. However, in municipalities with smaller populations, only three or five residents are required.

In county elections, the establishment of a constituency association will require 50 people entitled to vote who are residents of the wellbeing services county in question.

In the county elections, applications for standing as a candidate are submitted to the central election board of the wellbeing services counties of each wellbeing services county and in the municipal elections to the central municipal election board of each municipality.

Each officially approved candidate will have their own candidate number. If the same person is nominated in both county and municipal elections, they have different candidate numbers for the



county election and municipal election. A master list of candidates will be drawn up separately for each election and printed on paper. The candidates will be listed on the master list in numerical order.

The master list of candidates will be drawn up on 13 March 2025. These will be on view at e.g. polling stations and on the Ministry of Justice's elections website (www.vaalit.fi/en).

Voting

You can vote either on election day on Sunday, 13 April 2025, or before election day during the advance voting period.

You can vote in both the county elections and municipal elections at the same time at all polling stations. You can also vote in only one of these. You can only vote once in each of the elections.

In the county elections, votes are given on purple ballots and in municipal elections on white ballots.

Advance voting:

Advance voting begins on **Wednesday, 2 April 2025**.

Advance voting abroad ends on **Saturday, 05 April 2025**, and in Finland on **Tuesday, 08 April 2025**.

Advance polling stations may be open during varying hours on these days.

You can vote in advance at any general polling station in Finland or abroad.

Information on general advance polling stations, such as their locations and opening hours, is available for example, in the appendix to the notification of the right to vote and on the www.vaalit.fi website.

In addition to general advance polling stations, you can vote in advance in institutions such as hospitals, social welfare units, garrisons and penal institutions, or in Finnish ships located abroad. Only those who are patients in care institutions or serving a sentence at penal institutions may vote in these institutions. Only a ship's crew and staff can vote on board a ship.

A voter for whom it is unreasonably difficult to travel to a polling station may also vote in advance at home. You must notify your municipality's central municipal election board by 01 April 2025 before 4 pm if you wish to vote at home.

If you will be abroad during the entire advance voting period and on election day, you also have the option of voting by post from abroad.

To vote by post, you must order postal voting material to an address situated abroad from the Ministry of Justice's ordering service (www.vaalit.fi/en/postalvoting).

Voting on election day:

On election day, voting will take place on **Sunday, 13 April 2025, between 9 am and 8 pm**.



On election day, you can only vote at the polling station in your municipality of residence that has been listed on the notification of the right to vote sent to you. For more detailed instructions on the voting process, see your notification on the right to vote, the www.vaalit.fi website or ask election officials at the polling station.

Additional information

- For additional information on elections, please contact the Central municipal election board in your municipality of residence. Any questions concerning personal voting rights can be submitted to the Digital and Population Data Services Agency. The contact details of both are available on your voting right notification.
- The addresses and opening hours of advance polling stations, instructions for ordering a postal vote, information on candidates and other election information are all available on the Ministry of Justice's elections website at www.vaalit.fi/en.