



## Finnish Parliamentary Elections 2015

### **Parliamentary elections**

At the parliamentary elections, held every fourth year, 200 representatives are elected to Parliament to decide on matters that affect us all. The 2015 parliamentary election will be held on Sunday, 19 April 2015.

### **Role of the Parliament**

According to the Constitution of Finland, power is vested in the people, who elect representatives to the Parliament to decide on various matters.

Parliament's most important task is to pass the legislation based on which society functions.

Another key task is to decide on the State budget, which outlines the state's revenue and expenditure. Parliament is also tasked with overseeing the management of State finances.

Moreover, Parliament elects the prime minister to lead the country's Government, and oversees the Government's activities. In addition, Parliament decides on Finland's position on a range of European Union issues.

### **Who is eligible to vote?**

All Finnish citizens who have turned 18 years of age no later than on the election day, 19 April 2015, are eligible to vote.

If you are entitled to vote in the parliamentary election, you will receive a poll card by post in March.

The poll card includes your name, the date of the election, the dates for advance voting, and information on your polling station on election day. A list of advance polling stations close to your home, and other important information about the election, will be sent with the poll card.

### **Who can you vote for?**

You can vote for anyone who is a candidate in the parliamentary elections in your constituency.

Finland is divided into 13 constituencies, and each constituency has its own candidates. Your constituency is specified on the poll card.

Information about candidates is available in newspapers, on television or the Internet at [www.vaalit.fi](http://www.vaalit.fi).

Each candidate has a specific number. The numbers for candidates in your constituency are listed at polling stations, for example, and in candidates' election advertisements in most cases.

### **Secrecy of election**

Everyone decides for him- or herself whether or not to vote, and which candidate to vote for. Secrecy of election is integral to the right to vote. This means that you need not disclose, to anyone, who you decide to vote for.

### **When can you cast your vote?**

At the parliamentary election, you may vote either via advance voting or on the election day.

### **Voting on election day**

Election day is Sunday, 19 April 2015. Polling stations are open from 9am to 8pm on election day, and on that day you can only vote at the polling station mentioned on your poll card.

### **Advance voting**

If you are unable to cast your vote on election day, or do not wish to do so, you can vote in advance at any advance polling station in Finland or abroad. Advance voting begins on 8 April 2015 and ends on 14 April 2015. Check the opening hours of advance polling stations on the list sent with the poll card, or online at [www.vaalit.fi](http://www.vaalit.fi)

### **Who to turn to for assistance?**

Polling clerks and polling assistants will provide assistance and advice in all situations. If you need assistance in casting your vote, you may ask a polling assistant to join you in the polling booth. You can also choose someone to assist you with voting. This person who assists you may not disclose who you voted for.

### **Voting at home**

If you are seriously disabled or chronically ill, you may vote at home in advance. If you wish to vote at home, please notify your local central election committee by telephone or on a form, by 4pm on 7 April 2015. The election committee telephone number is given on your poll card. Family carers may also vote at home. You can vote in advance at hospitals and similar institutions, if you are receiving treatment there.

### **Before you vote**

Bring along proof of identity, for instance a passport, identity card, driving licence or another official document bearing your photograph. At the polling station, you will meet a polling clerk who will verify your identity by checking your identity card and give you the ballot ticket.

### **How to vote on election day**

1. Enter the polling booth to fill in the ballot ticket. Write the number of the candidate you choose to vote for on the ballot ticket in clear digits. You may only vote for one candidate. If you cannot remember the number of the candidate you have chosen, you can check this from the list posted on the polling booth wall. Do not write anything else on the polling ticket.
2. Fold the ticket in two down the middle, so that no-one can see the number. The folding line is marked on the ticket.
3. Return the ticket to the polling clerk who will stamp your ticket.
4. Drop the folded ballot ticket into the ballot box.

### **How to vote in advance**

1. Enter the polling booth to fill in the ballot ticket. Write the number of the candidate you choose to vote for on the ballot ticket in clear digits. You may only vote for one candidate. If you cannot remember the number of the candidate you have chosen, you can check this from the list of candidates for your constituency, which is displayed at the advance polling station. Do not write anything else on the polling ticket.
2. Fold the ticket in two down the middle, so that no-one can see the number. The folding line is marked on the ticket.
3. When you have filled in the ballot ticket, return it to the polling clerk, who will stamp the folded ticket and give you a brown envelope. Place the ticket in the envelope and seal it.
4. The polling clerk will then ask you to sign a form. By signing the form, you are confirming that you have completed the ballot paper yourself, the clerk has stamped it and you have personally sealed it in the envelope.
5. Finally, the polling clerk will seal the brown voting envelope alongside the form you signed in a yellow covering envelope, and send it to the central election committee.

Voting is now completed and you may leave the polling station.

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This brochure is available online at [www.vaalit.fi](http://www.vaalit.fi) and [www.papunet.net/selko](http://www.papunet.net/selko)

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