



Election of the President of the Republic 2018

Finnish citizens choose the President through an election every six years.

First round of presidential election:

- Election day is Sunday 28 January 2018
- Advance voting in Finland from 17 to 23 January 2018
- Advance voting abroad from 17 to 20 January 2018

Possible second round of presidential election:

- Election day is Sunday 11 February 2018
- Advance voting in Finland from 31 January to 6 February 2018
- Advance voting abroad from 31 January to 3 February 2018

Duties of the President

The President approves the bills that Parliament has passed.

The President directs Finland's foreign policy in cooperation with the Government.

The President appoints the Prime Minister and other ministers. In addition, the President appoints judges and certain other senior public officials.

The President is also the Commander-in-Chief of the Finnish Defence Forces. The President decides on matters of war and peace with the consent of Parliament.

Who may vote?

You may vote in the presidential election if

- you are a Finnish citizen, and
- you have reached the age of 18 no later than on 28 January 2018.

Who may you vote for?

Political parties and constituency associations may nominate candidates in the presidential election. The candidates must be Finnish citizens. Each candidate will be assigned a number. The presidential candidates are the same ones in the entire country, so you may vote for any of the candidates. You can find information about the candidates for example in newspapers, on TV and on the internet.

You will receive a polling card by post

If you have the right to vote, a letter will be sent to you. The letter contains two polling cards, because the presidential election may consist of two rounds.

The address of the polling station that you must use if you vote on the election day is stated on the polling cards. The letter also contains a list of advance polling stations located near you.

One or two rounds

The presidential election may consist of two rounds. If one of the candidates receives more than half of the votes in the first round, he or she will be elected President.

If none of the candidates receives more than half of the votes, a second round will be arranged between the two candidates who received the most votes in the first round.

The first round of election will be conducted on 28 January 2018.

The possible second round will be conducted on 11 February 2018.

At-home voting

If you are severely disabled or suffer from a long-term illness, you may vote in advance at your own home. You may contact the central municipal election board of your municipality to receive more information about at-home voting. The board's telephone number is given on the polling card that will be sent to you.

Voting in advance

You may vote in advance at any general advance polling station. The advance voting period is from 17 to 23 January 2018. If a second round is conducted, the advance voting period will be from 31 January to 6 February 2018.

When you go to the advance polling station, take an official ID with you, for example your passport, ID card or driving licence.

1. Show your ID to the election official.
The official will check it and give you a ballot.
2. Take the ballot with you and go to a voting booth.
Write the number of the candidate that you wish to vote for on the ballot as clearly as possible.
Do not write anything else on the ballot.
3. Fold the ballot in the middle.
4. Return to the election official.
The official will stamp the ballot and give you a brown ballot envelope.
Put the ballot in the envelope and seal the envelope.
5. The election official will then ask you to sign a form.
By signing the form you affirm that you have marked the ballot yourself, had the ballot stamped and sealed it in the envelope.
6. Finally, the official will put the ballot envelope and the form that you signed in a yellow covering envelope.

When you have voted, you can leave the advance polling station.

Voting on the election day

On the election day, the polling stations are open at 9-20. Check the polling card to find out where your polling station is. You may only vote at the polling station mentioned on your polling card.

When you go to the polling station, take an official ID with you, for example your passport, ID card or driving licence.

1. Show your ID to the election official.
The official will check it and give you a ballot.
2. Take the ballot with you and go to a voting booth.
Write the number of the candidate that you wish to vote for on the ballot as clearly as possible.
Do not write anything else on the ballot.
3. Fold the ballot in the middle.

4. Return to the election official.
The official will stamp the ballot.
5. Drop your ballot in the ballot box.

When you have voted, you can leave the polling station.

Who can you turn to for assistance?

If you need advice or assistance, you may turn to the election officials present at the polling stations both during the advance voting and on the election day.

There will also be a polling assistant present at the polling station. You may ask the assistant to come with you to the voting booth, if you need help with marking the ballot.

Also a person that you have selected yourself, such as a family member or a friend, may act as your polling assistant. However, a candidate or a candidate's family member cannot act as a polling assistant. The polling assistant must not tell anyone who you voted for.

Election secrecy

Everyone decides whether he or she wishes to vote at all and who he or she votes for.

Election secrecy means also that you do not need to tell anyone who you voted for.

Cast your vote in the presidential election!

More information about voting and elections:

vaalit.fi