

**33rd SESSION**

Report  
CPL33(2017)05final

**Observation of local elections in Finland (9 April 2017)**

Monitoring Committee

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Recommendation 408 (2017) .....	2
Explanatory memorandum.....	4

*Summary*

Upon official invitation from the Ministries of Justice and Employment and Local Government and Public Reforms of Finland, dated 8 August 2016, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities deployed a 23-member delegation to observe the local elections held in the country on 9 April 2017.

Against the backdrop of a comprehensive administrative reform, the observation of the local vote allowed the Congress delegation to gain insight into important changes underway at the territorial level. Technically speaking, with the exception of some minor issues, the 2017 local elections were organised in a very professional manner and characterised by a high level of public trust in the electoral processes and the administration. Transparency, a well-established voters' registration system and the possibility of advance voting are positive features of local elections in Finland. Issues to be considered to achieve further democratic progress include the modalities of nomination for independent candidates, the introduction of mandatory training for members of the election administration, the promotion of participation of non-Finns as voters and candidates at local level as well as the question of elected Mayors instead of the existing open application system, in order to strengthen the political role of Mayors, notably in larger urban zones.

In the context of the mentioned regional administrative reform, the Congress invites the Finnish authorities to implement genuine decentralisation at regional level, in particular with regard to financial autonomy and competences conferred to the future elected Regional Councils. Moreover, the Congress encourages the authorities to schedule the first regional elections to be held in 2018 on a different day than the Presidential elections, in order that regional voting will not be overshadowed by general political topics.

1 L: Chamber of Local Authorities / R: Chamber of Regions  
EPP/CCE: European People's Party Group in the Congress  
SOC: Socialist Group  
ILDG: Independent Liberal and Democratic Group  
ECR: European Conservatives and Reformists Group  
NR: Members not belonging to a political group of the Congress

## RECOMMENDATION 408 (2017)<sup>2</sup>

1. Following the invitation from the Ministry of Justice and Employment and the Ministry of Local Government and Public Reforms of Finland, dated 8 August 2016, to observe the local elections held in the country on 9 April 2017, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities refers to:

a. Article 2, paragraph 4 of the Committee of Ministers' Statutory Resolution (2000)1 on the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe;

b. the principles laid down in the European Charter of Local Self-Government (ETS No. 122) which was ratified by Finland in June 1991 and the Additional Protocol to the European Charter of Local Self-Government on the right to participate in the affairs of a local authority (CETS No. 207) ratified in February 2012;

c. Congress Resolution 395(2015) on its Rules and Procedures.<sup>3</sup>

2. It reiterates the fact that genuinely democratic local and regional elections are part of a process to establish and maintain democratic governance and observation of political participation at territorial level is a key element in the Congress' role as guardian of democracy at local and regional level.

3. The Congress welcomes the fact that the 9 April 2017 local elections were organised in an overall professional manner and that Election Day was held in an orderly and peaceful atmosphere.

4. It recognises the high level of transparency of the electoral processes, which ensures genuine public trust.

5. It praises the system of voters' registration, which provides for high-quality voters' lists and stipulates that only individuals who are permanently residing in a specific municipality are entitled to vote at the local level, which is in line with Congress Recommendation 369(2015) on Electoral lists and voters residing *de facto* abroad.

6. It also acknowledges the efforts made by the Finnish authorities to strengthen the position of female candidates through gender quotas on candidates' lists and the effective participation of women as elected local councillors.

7. In light of the above, the Congress suggests further improvements to be made in respect of the general electoral process and therefore invites the Finnish authorities to:

a. as a back-up measure to the on-going regional government reform, strengthen citizen participation at territorial level including the promotion of regional political parties and lists of independent candidates active in the regional context;

b. introduce mandatory training for all members of the election administration and all assistants at the level of polling stations in order to ensure a consistent level of knowledge and skills among the election administration;

c. intensify the voters' education efforts targeting the non-Finns who have the right to vote and to be elected in local elections, in order to further include them in the electoral process as both candidates and voters;

d. ensure that all candidates in the local elections submit information on their campaign financing, irrespective of the election results;

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2 Debated and approved by the Chamber of Local Authorities on 19 October 2017 and adopted by the Congress on 20 October 2017, 3<sup>rd</sup> sitting (see document CPL33(2017)05final, explanatory memorandum), rapporteur: Lelia HUNZIKER, Switzerland (L, SOC).

3 See, in particular, Chapters XVIII and XIX on the practical organisation of election observation missions and on the implementation of the post-electoral dialogue.

e. consider introducing incentives for local councils to elect mayors, in order to strengthen the political profile of mayors at the local level, notably in larger urban zones.

8. With regard to the regional administrative reform, the Congress invites the Finnish authorities to implement genuine decentralisation at regional level. In this respect, the Congress highlights the importance of financial autonomy for the newly created regions.

9. In addition, in the context of the first regional elections to be organised in 2018, the Congress encourages the Finnish authorities to schedule regional elections on a different day than the Presidential election, in order for regional topics not to be overshadowed by the national vote and so that voters can get full information on regional matters.

## EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM<sup>4</sup>

### 1. Introduction

1. Following a joined invitation from the Ministry of Justice and Employment and the Ministry of Local Government and Public Reforms, dated 8 August 2016, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities observed the local elections held in Finland on 9 April 2017.

2. The election observation mission took place from 5 to 10 April 2017 and comprised 23 Congress members from 18 different countries. Lelia HUNZIKER, Switzerland (SOC, L), served Head of delegation and rapporteur. The delegation was also accompanied by Nikolaos CHLEPAS, as member of the Congress Group of Independent Experts.

3. On Election Day, 10 teams visited more than 160 polling stations in 8 different areas (Helsinki, Tampere, Vaasa, Joensuu, Oulu, Kuopio, Jyväskylä, and Rovaniemi) throughout the country.

Further details, programme of the mission and deployment areas of the Congress delegation as well as the preliminary conclusions presented at the press conference on 10 April 2017 in Helsinki can be found in the appendices.

4. The following report focuses specifically on issues arising out of exchanges held with the Congress interlocutors in the context of the 9 April 2017 local elections in Finland and on observations made by the members of the delegation on Election Day.

5. The Congress wishes to thank all of those who met the delegation for their open and constructive dialogue. It thanks the Finnish authorities for their support in preparing this mission, in particular the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Justice. Special thanks go to the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities and its Director of International Relations, Mr Heikki TELAKIVI, for their support in preparing the election observation mission.

### 2. Current regionalisation reform

6. Following the 2015 Parliamentary elections, Juha SIPILÄ (Centre Party, KESK), became Prime Minister and Head of a new Governmental coalition supported by a right-leaning majority coalition consisting of the three largest political parties – the Centre Party, the Finns Party and the National Coalition Party.

7. The SIPILÄ Government committed to implement five structural reforms in strategic areas including four reforms directly related to local and/or regional self-government. These changes comprise the reform of social welfare and healthcare, of local government duties and obligations, the “Municipality of the future” reform and a regional administration reform.<sup>5</sup>

8. The so-called “SOTE” reform directly relates to the creation of 19 Self-Governed Regions in 2017.<sup>6</sup> The reform aims at cutting local authorities’ costs by removing some of their tasks and obligations, notably in the field of social services. Such services, including healthcare, will be transferred from the municipality to the newly created regions.

9. Interim administration will be in place until January 2018, when the first direct elections to the newly created regional councils are scheduled. The full re-assignment of competences from the local to the regional level is scheduled for January 2019. From April 2021 on, local and regional elections will be scheduled on the same day. The future regional councillors will not be able to hold local offices at the same time but will be able to be elected members of parliament.

10. According to the Congress’ interlocutors, one of the major weaknesses of the newly created regions is their limited financial capacity as they will have no right to levy taxes. Funding will therefore be provided by the central Government which will also get *de facto* supervisory powers on regional affairs.

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4 Prepared with the contribution of Dr. Nikolaos CHLEPAS, Faculty of Political Science and Public Administration, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

5 <http://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/implementation-of-the-government-programme>

6 One of these 19 Self-Governed Regions is “Åland Islands” which already constitute an Autonomous Region of Finland since 1921.

### 3. Institutional setting at local and regional level

11. The administrative-territorial structure of Finland is primarily governed by the Constitution (1999) and the Local Government Act (2015). Local autonomy is explicitly recognised in Section 121(1) of the Constitution. Accordingly, Finland is divided into Municipalities, “whose administration shall be based on the self-government of their residents”.<sup>7</sup>

12. A total of 311 Municipalities (*kunta / kommun*) forms the basic Units of Local Self-Government in Finland. Since the seventies, successive reforms of Local Self-Government resulted in a decrease in the number of Municipalities and, as a consequence, an increase in their average size.<sup>8</sup> In particular, in 2005, the Government launched an initiative to foster the process of voluntary amalgamation of Municipalities and encouraged inter-municipal co-operation through the allocation of State subsidies. Amalgamations of communities still regularly occur, most recently at the beginning of 2017.<sup>9</sup>

13. As the Finnish Local Self-Government structure is a one-tier system until Regions are fully operational in 2019, Municipalities are responsible for providing a very wide range of social services for their residents. Under the Local Government Act, the most important statutory functions of local authorities are social welfare, health care, education, environmental protection and technical infrastructure. Other optional functions relate to recreation, sports, culture and industrial policies.

14. Municipalities have the right to levy taxes at local level. In 2016, the total Municipal revenue in Finland was of 44.8 billion euros, of which 49% (21.8 billion euros) was tax revenue, 18% (8.2 billion euros) central Government transfers for operational finances, 23% (10.5 billion euros) operating revenue, 2% (1 billion euros) investment revenue and 6% (2.6 billion euros) borrowing.<sup>10</sup>

15. In 2016, the total expenditure of local authorities was of approximately 45.2 billion euros. The most costly services offered by Finnish municipalities are social welfare and health care services, which accounted for 50% of total Municipal expenditure. Education and culture services accounted for 21%, while other fields of activities accounted for 14% and investment expenditure for 10%. Debt service was also substantial, amounting to 4%.<sup>11</sup> Municipalities also employ 422.000 persons, equivalent to one-fifth of the employed labour force in the country. As a consequence, given a decrease in tax revenues and despite a very limited increase in Municipal expenditures, 111 out of 295 Local Self-Government Units of mainland Finland were in deficit in 2016.<sup>12</sup>

16. The Capital City of Finland is Helsinki, which is the most populated Municipality<sup>13</sup> but has no special status in domestic legislation. The various subdivisions of Helsinki – neighborhoods and districts – do not have any electoral significance but are used for urban planning and public services. The only Municipality with a sub-municipal system with a certain degree of independence in implementing the Municipal budget is the city of Rovaniemi (Lapland). The Local Council appoints six Regional Boards in six peripheral areas that were independent Municipalities before their amalgamation with Rovaniemi. Regional Boards in these areas are responsible for spending about 3 per cent of the Municipal budget for local purposes.

17. Given that Finland has two official languages – Finnish and Swedish – Municipalities can be either unilingual (Finnish or Swedish), bilingual Finnish/Swedish or bilingual Finnish/Sami for some Municipalities in Lapland. Sixteen municipalities are exclusively Swedish-speaking (located in the Åland Islands) and about a third of the total population (1.75 million people) resides in bilingual Municipalities. Moreover, both the Swedish-speaking population and the indigenous Sami people are represented in consultative bodies, respectively the Swedish Assembly of Finland and the Sami

7 Full text of art. 121 of the Finnish Constitution: «Municipal and other regional self-government. Finland is divided into municipalities, whose administration shall be based on the self-government of their residents. Provisions on the general principles governing municipal administration and the duties of the municipalities are laid down by an Act. The municipalities have the right to levy municipal tax. Provisions on the general principles governing tax liability and the grounds for the tax as well as the legal remedies available to persons or entities liable to taxation are laid down by an Act. Provisions on self-government in administrative areas larger than a municipality are laid down by an Act. In their native region, the Sami have linguistic and cultural self-government, as provided by an Act».

8 However, according to 2016 data, most municipalities still had fewer than 10,001 inhabitants, while 29% had less than 5,001 and 13% even fewer than 2000. Council of Europe, Local and regional democracy in Finland, adopted in March 2017.

9 Juankoski merged with Kuopio and Luvia with Eurajoki.

10 According to the data gathered by the Association of Finnish local and regional authorities.

11 Council of Europe, Local and regional democracy in Finland, CG32(2017)08prov 8 March 2017, page 17/44.

12 [http://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/over\\_100\\_municipalities\\_in\\_the\\_red\\_last\\_year/9448446](http://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/over_100_municipalities_in_the_red_last_year/9448446)

13 The Municipality of Helsinki has a population of 628,208 inhabitants (2016). Finland has an overall population of 5.48 million inhabitants.

Parliament, which aim at strengthening the position of minorities in Finland, including their respective language and culture.

### **3.1. Election of decision-making bodies at local level**

18. Municipalities are governed by the Local Government Act, which defines the Municipal decision-making bodies. The Local Council is the highest decision-making body of each Municipality and is directly elected by the residents of the respective Municipality.

19. The Local Executive Board is the executive body, thus responsible for municipal administration and financial management. The Local Council can choose between two institutional settings for the Local Executive Board: in the "Standing Committee model", only Local Councillors and deputy Councillors can be elected to the Local Executive Board. In the "Chairperson model", only the Chairperson of the Local Board shall be a Local Councillor, the other members of the Board being personalities appointed by the Local Council.

20. Moreover, in each Municipality, a Committee should be in charge of auditing municipal administration and finances. Other Committees can be set up upon decision of the Local Council, to perform specific tasks, notably in the areas of education, urban planning, welfare or health care.

21. All members of decision-making bodies shall be elected for the term of the Local Council, unless the Council has decided otherwise. According to gender quota regulations, at least 40 % of the members of municipal decision-making bodies must be women, with the exception of the elected Local Council, which should include a third of women. One particular feature of politics at local level in Finland is that the vast majority of elected officials in Municipalities are not part- or full-time professional politicians.

### **3.2. Election of a Mayor or a Municipal Manager**

22. According to the Local Government Act, Local Councils have the possibility to elect either a Mayor or a Municipal Manager. The Mayor (politician) or the Municipal Manager (civil servant) is the Chairperson of the Local Executive Board and is in charge of the Municipal administration.

23. The Municipal Manager is not a Local Councillor. The Manager is appointed by the City Council, according to a system of open applications for the position of Municipal Manager.

24. The Mayor is elected among Local Councillors and holds a political office. Prior to the 9 April 2017 local election, only two Finnish Municipalities had an elected Mayor, namely the city of Tampere and the Municipality of Pirkkala. Two further Municipalities elected a Mayor for the first time in 2017: Helsinki and Tuusula. In Helsinki, a political agreement ensured the candidate of the political party winning the local elections to be elected Mayor by the City Council.

## **4. Electoral framework and management**

### **4.1. Legal framework and electoral system**

25. Local elections are primarily regulated by the Constitution, the Election Act (1998) and the Local Government Act. Rules pertaining to campaign and party financing are regulated by the Act on a Candidate's Election Funding and the Act on Political Parties. The Election Act was adopted on 8 October 1998 and has been amended several times since then, most recently in 2013.

26. According to the Local Government Act, Local Councillors and their deputies shall be elected in the respective Municipality for a four-year term. Local elections shall be direct, proportional (according to the d'Hondt system) and by secret ballot. The Local Government Act also provides that the number of Local Councillors must be decided by the Local Council, in proportion to the number of residents in the Municipality.

27. The minimum number of Local Councillors to be elected should be as follows:

Population of the Municipality	Minimum number of Local Councillors
No more than 5,000	13
5,001-20,000	27
20,001-50,000	43
50,001-100,000	51
100,001-250,000	59
250,001-500,000	67
More than 500,000	79

28. As these numbers are a minimum, Local Councils can decide to increase the number of Local Councillors elected in their respective Municipality. For example, the Local Councils of Espoo and Helsinki include respectively 75 and 85 Councillors.

#### 4.2. Election administration

29. The election administration is a four-tier structure including the Ministry of Justice as the highest electoral authority.<sup>14</sup> There are 13 Constituency Electoral Committees (Electoral Districts) and 311 Central Municipal Electoral Committees (Municipalities) as permanent bodies in place and 500 Electoral Commissions as well as 2 100 Electoral Boards on ad-hoc basis, appointed for each election.

30. Generally, election administration bodies at lower level consist of a Chairperson, his/her deputy, three members and their substitutes. Members and deputy members shall represent the political parties and voter groups which participated in the previous local elections and are appointed by the respective Local Council. No member of the election administration can be a candidate in the elections.

31. On 9 April 2017, the 2,100 Election Boards were in charge of organising the electoral process at the level of polling stations including counting and tabulation processes. A majority of these members (3 members out of 5) had to be present during the whole electoral process and could appoint assistants to help them on Election Day. They received a financial compensation for their work.<sup>15</sup>

32. The election administration organised the practical aspects of the vote on Election Day and during the period of so-called “advance voting” period, when voters can vote before Election Day. Advance voting usually takes place in at least one polling station in each Municipality, in Finnish Embassies abroad, in hospitals and prisons, on ships as well as at the voters’ residence upon request (at-home voting for ill or disabled voters). For the 9 April 2017 local elections, advance voting took place in Finland from 29 March to 4 April 2017 in 900 polling stations. It was also organised in 125 polling stations in 78 countries from 29 March to 1 April 2017. Overall, about 45% of the voters who participated in the 2017 local elections casted their ballot during advance voting period. Advance voting procedures could not be observed by the Congress delegation but were reported by all interlocutors as having been held in a professional manner.

33. The whole electoral process is managed through the Finnish Election Information System.<sup>16</sup> This electronic system is in use since 1990 and maintained by the Ministry of Justice. It includes six sub-systems aiming at managing different parts of the electoral process, notably the boundaries of electoral districts and Municipalities, the polling stations, the voters, the candidates as well as the tabulation process and the election results. Most of the data included in the Election Information System is provided by the Population Register Centre. Overall, the quality of the data has been described by Congress’ interlocutors as accurate and thus ensuring efficient electoral management.

34. The Ministry of Justice made information on the 9 April 2017 local elections available in 23 languages, including several native languages of Finnish people.<sup>17</sup> This included elements on voting rights, the right to stand as a candidate and practical information on the voting process. It aimed in particular at targeting non-Finns who have the right to vote in local elections but were not very likely

<sup>14</sup> Election Act of Finland (714/1998, lastly amended in 2004), Chapter 2 – Election authorities

<sup>15</sup> The compensation is of 100 euros for members and 120 euros for the Chairperson.

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.vaalit.fi/en/index/generalinformation/electioninformationsystem.html>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.vaalit.fi/en/index/onelections/municipalelections/informationaboutthemunicipalelectionsindifferentlanguages.html>

to participate. In early 2017, a poll showed that about 40% of non-Finns who have the right to vote in local elections were not aware of their right.<sup>18</sup>

35. The electronic voting experiment which took place in the 26 October 2008 local elections was not pursued in 2017.<sup>19</sup> The Supreme Administrative Court had annulled the local elections in the three Municipalities where voting machines were in use in polling stations on the ground that they did not ensure the right to vote and to be elected in a satisfactory way. As the Congress concluded further to the 2008 local elections, the electronic voting system did not satisfy the fundamental principles for democratic elections, in particular the principle of universal suffrage.<sup>20</sup>

#### 4.3. Voters' registration

36. The right to vote in local elections is granted to citizens of Finland and citizens of any Member State of the European Union, Iceland and Norway who are at least 18 years old, permanently residing in their Municipality, if such residence is registered in the Population Information System 51 days before Election Day. It is worth noting that the right to vote in local elections is also granted to citizens of other countries, under the same conditions, after they have had their permanent residence in Finland for at least two years.<sup>21</sup>

37. It is to be mentioned that Finnish citizens living permanently abroad have no right to vote in local elections as they are not permanent resident of any Finnish Municipality. It has to be highlighted that the according provision of the Election Act is in line with Congress Recommendation 369(2015) on Electoral lists and voters residing *de facto* abroad.

38. The specific sub-system of the Election Information System dedicated to voters is called the "Voting Register" and compiles information from the general Population Information System, including personal data on voters, information on their Municipality and polling station as well as their eligibility status. The Voting Register is available to voters 41 days before Election Day, at the local administration. The Congress commends the fact that the Finnish system of voters' registration is efficient and compiles data of high quality.

39. The Voting Register is used to record advance voting. When advance voting is completed, the voters' lists for Election Day are derived from the Voting Register. The names of voters who participated in advance voting were removed from voters' lists. This significantly simplified the procedures on Election Day and was welcome by the members of Election Boards met by the Congress delegation on 9 April 2017.

40. All eligible voters also receive a notice of their right to vote ("polling card"), about a month but not later than 24 days before Election Day. The polling card specifies the date of Election Day, the dates of advance voting, the address of the polling station of the recipient, and the addresses and telephone numbers of the election authorities in the Municipality.

#### 4.4. Candidates' registration

41. Candidates can be nominated by political parties registered in the Party Register maintained by the Ministry of Justice and by constituency associations established by at least ten people entitled to vote in the respective Municipality. In some small Municipalities listed by the Ministry of Justice an association may, however, be established by at least three persons entitled to vote. Candidates registered by constituency associations may then create a joint candidates' list.

42. In general, for the 9 April 2017 local elections, candidates were selected by political parties through and among their members, following various internal selection procedures. Central Municipal Electoral Committees were responsible for candidates' registration in their respective Municipality. They examined in a timely manner the eligibility of candidates and other documents submitted by them no later than 40 days prior to Election Day.

18 [http://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/study\\_immigrant\\_voters\\_not\\_getting\\_enough\\_election\\_information/9481542](http://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/study_immigrant_voters_not_getting_enough_election_information/9481542)

19 [http://www.coe.int/t/dgap/goodgovernance/Activities/E-voting/CoE\\_Studies/CG\\_CP\(15\)4%20report%20congress%20e-vote%20FINLAND%2012%2008.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dgap/goodgovernance/Activities/E-voting/CoE_Studies/CG_CP(15)4%20report%20congress%20e-vote%20FINLAND%2012%2008.asp)

20 Congress' Information Report on the Electronic Voting in the Finnish Municipal Elections observed on 26 October 2008, December 2008

21 Local Government Act (410/2015) of Finland, Chapter 5 – Right of participation of municipality's residents, Section 20 – Right to vote in local elections

43. Each candidates' list contained as many names as there were seats in the respective Local Council. Additional names – half the number of seats in the Local Council – could also be included in the list to serve as deputy Councillors. Political parties could form electoral alliances, but the number of candidates nominated by an alliance could not exceed the maximum number of candidates for a single party. The order of candidates' lists on the ballot was randomly determined in an order drawn by lot and made public 31 days prior to Election Day.

44. On 9 April 2017, about 35,700 candidates ran for around 9,000 seats in Local Councils throughout the country. The overall number of candidates for these local elections was low in comparison to previous elections. The decrease in the number of candidates was directly related to a decrease in the number of Local Councillors, further to the adoption of the 2015 Local Election Act. In this context, the Green Party still presented more candidates than ever before in local elections.

45. Local elections in Finland are strongly party-politicised and are of high-significance for internal party politics. About 80% of members of the Finnish Parliament (*Eduskunta*) also sit on Local Councils and, nine out of 14 Ministers from the SIPILÄ Government ran for the position of Local Councillors in various Municipalities throughout the country on 9 April 2017.

## 5. Campaign and media environment

### 5.1. Campaign financing

46. After the Evaluation Report on Political Party Funding was published by the Group of States against corruption (GRECO) in 2007, the Act on a Candidate's Election Funding was adopted in 2009 along with amendments to the Act on Political Parties in 2010. The Act on a Candidate's Election Funding was adopted in an attempt to "increase the transparency of election funding, to provide information on the candidates' potential ties to third parties, and to restrain the increase in the cost of election campaigns".

47. For local elections, campaign financing includes incomes and expenditures over a period starting no earlier than six months before Election Day and ending no later than two weeks after Election Day, irrespective of when such costs incur. Contributions to campaign financing for local candidates cannot be anonymous and cannot exceed 3,000 euros. There is no legal ceiling in expenditures but most candidates in local elections do not spend more than 50,000 euros.<sup>22</sup>

48. For the 9 April 2017 local elections, election funds mostly consisted of candidates' self-financing, donations from private persons, donations from political parties and entrance fees to rallies.<sup>23</sup> The overall cost of the election campaign varied significantly among Municipalities, notably with regard to the price of advertisement.

49. Campaign financing disclosure documents shall be filed with the National Audit Office (NAO) within two months after the confirmation of the election results. Voluntary advance notification can be made before Election Day to NAO and some candidates disclosed financial information on their campaign websites. However, only successful candidates – members of Local Councils and their deputies – are obliged to disclose information with regard to campaign financing. In order to further increase the transparency of campaign financing, all candidates running in elections should be obliged to disclose financial information to the NAO, which is tasked to verify its compliance with the legislation and can issue sanctions where appropriate.

### 5.2. Election campaign

50. Despite precise regulations on campaign financing, there is no restriction on campaign advertising, no fixed campaign period and no "silence period" before Election Day. According to rulings of the Supreme Administrative Court, Municipalities shall however make arrangements for outdoor advertising by political groups in view of elections.<sup>24</sup> The campaign environment prior to Election Day was, as expected, calm. Candidates mostly campaigned on a small scale, discussion issues with citizens in public spaces and through door to door canvassing.

<sup>22</sup> According to the interlocutors met by the Congress delegation on 6 and 7 April 2017 in Helsinki.

<sup>23</sup> According to candidates met by the Congress delegation on 7 April 2017 in Helsinki.

<sup>24</sup> Supreme Administrative Court decisions No. 2012:84, 2006:98, 2005:62

51. On Election Day, it is prohibited to give speeches, display or distribute printed or written political propaganda or otherwise influence voters in polling stations or in their immediate vicinity. On 9 April 2017, the Congress' observers could observe that such prohibition was generally complied with by all political parties and candidates participating in the elections.

52. The major issues covered during the local elections campaign included the regionalisation reform, which will have a concrete impact on local authorities' competences and on the provision of social and healthcare services to citizens. Education and culture were also particularly discussed, given that education will be one of the main competences that will remain at local level further to the regionalisation reform.<sup>25</sup> The spending cuts announced by the Government in the educational system at central level also stimulated the debate on education at local level. However, on the contrary, the refugee crisis that was a main issue just a year ago did not seem to be any more at the forefront of the political debate.

53. Each political party focused on some priority issues, such as the role of local authorities in the context of the regionalisation reform (Centre Party), environmental issues and education (Green Party), entrepreneurship, economic growth at local level and limitation in public spending (National Coalition Party), social and healthcare reform (Social Democratic Party) and preservation of Swedish Finns' rights at local level (Swedish People's Party and the Åland Coalition).

54. The overall coverage of the 9 April 2017 local elections was stimulated by the polls, which foresaw a similar score for the three major political parties in the local elections, as well as by the first election of a Mayor in Helsinki. Another political issue was the electoral results of the Finns Party, which entered the Government for the first time in 2015. In this context, a poll published mid-February 2017 showed that about 60 per cent of the electorate was about to choose a candidate according to national policy rather than local measures.<sup>26</sup>

55. In the framework of the 9 April 2017 local elections, the national public service broadcasting company Yleisradio (YLE) as well as several local radio stations organised several debates among major political parties, including a debate in English for non-Finns voters.

### 5.3. The media

56. Finland's media sector is dynamic, with some 50 daily print media, 60 radio stations and 5 TV operators. More than five million Finns were online by 2016, which corresponds to a penetration rate of more than 92%. Newspapers and other print media are strong at all levels, including at regional and local level. Media ownership is a growing issue in Finland, given that the heavy concentration of media ownership results in a decrease in advertisement revenues.

57. The Government-owned national public service broadcasting company Yleisradio (YLE) is a major player in Finnish media and in electoral period in particular. It gathers about 50 per cent of total radio listening and 45 per cent of total TV viewing and notably includes four national television channels, 13 radio channels and 25 regional radio stations. YLE provides for radio and TV programmes in Finnish, Swedish and Sami languages.

58. With the exception of the Act on Political Parties, which provides that "State institutions should treat all parties equally", there is no legal provision with regard to media coverage during electoral campaigns. Journalists shall abide by the Guidelines issued by the Council for Mass Media in 2014<sup>27</sup> and the YLE (Yleisradio, the major media player, s. below) Code of Conduct adopted in 2015 if applicable.<sup>28</sup> According to the Act on Yleisradio Oy amended in 2012,<sup>29</sup> YLE shall "support democracy and everyone's opportunity to participate by providing a wide variety of information, opinions and debates as well as opportunities to interact", it has full discretion to implement this obligation without the right to produce sponsored programmes.<sup>30</sup>

25 [http://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/first\\_local\\_election\\_panel\\_focuses\\_on\\_family\\_leave\\_social\\_and\\_health\\_care\\_reform/9492172](http://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/first_local_election_panel_focuses_on_family_leave_social_and_health_care_reform/9492172)

26 [http://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/poll\\_national\\_decisions\\_more\\_important\\_to\\_voters\\_than\\_local\\_measures/9468810](http://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/poll_national_decisions_more_important_to_voters_than_local_measures/9468810).

27 [http://www.jsn.fi/en/guidelines\\_for\\_journalists/](http://www.jsn.fi/en/guidelines_for_journalists/)

28 <http://yle.fi/aihe/artikkeli/2016/04/02/yles-code-conduct>

29 <http://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/kaannokset/1993/en19931380.pdf>

30 Act on Yleisradio Oy, Chapter 3, Section 7

59. Despite the political and commercial alignment of most media, Finnish media have strong editorial independence. However, in the last months, pressures and threats against journalists grew in Finland, in a context where some politicians discredited fact-based journalism, notably with regard to issues related to migrants and asylum-seekers.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, alleged pressures in relation to a possible conflict of interest involving the Prime Minister led to resignations of experienced YLE journalists.

## 6. Election Day

60. On Election Day, ten Congress' teams were deployed throughout the country, notably in the regions of Helsinki, Tampere, Vaasa, Joensuu, Oulu, Kuopio, Jyväskylä and Rovaniemi. Overall, the Congress' observers visited some 160 polling stations.

61. In their preliminary statement presented at a press conference on 10 April, the Congress' observers concluded that Election Day was organised in an overall professional manner as well as with European standards for free, fair and transparent elections. Voting took place in a peaceful atmosphere. Polling stations opened and closed in a timely manner, from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Counting procedures were also carried out in conformity with the legislation.

62. On Election Day, the work of the election administration bodies was carried in a professional and timely manner. Chairpersons of Election Boards were usually experienced and carried out their tasks in conformity with the legislation. All members of the Election Boards received an adequate training prior to the elections on a voluntary basis. The voluntary basis of the training could, however, be revised in order to provide all members of the election administration with the same level of knowledge and skills and to ensure consistent implementation of procedures.

63. In the majority of polling stations visited by Congress observers before their opening, the Election Boards were complete, the teams well prepared and familiar with the opening procedures. The Congress' observers appreciated, in particular, the high level of transparency of the procedures. In particular, that not only the Election Boards but also the first voter entering the polling station in the morning was given the possibility to verify that the ballot box was empty and that all election materials were available.

64. Most voters were familiar with the voting procedures which involved writing the number of only one candidate in the circle marked on the ballot, folding the ballot and having it stamped by a member of the Election Board before casting the vote. Because of previous readability problems with the numbers 1 and 7, no candidate held these numbers and the Congress delegation could indeed observe a limited number of invalid ballots during counting.

65. The Congress teams did not observe a consistent manner in sealing and/or locking the ballot boxes on Election Day. Some ballot boxes were sealed while some other were locked, the key to the lock being kept by the Chairperson of the Election Board. The manner provided for the sealing and/or locking of ballot boxes should be made consistent among polling stations.

66. Moreover, voters' identification procedures were carried out in an adequate manner, thanks to official identification documents including passports, identity cards and driving licenses. In case a voter failed to present his/her official document, another voter who had his/her own official document could testify of the voter's identity upon registration with the Election Board. The flexibility of such procedure is an evidence of the high level of trust in the electoral process in Finland. However, impersonation could still occur in some places.

67. All polling stations visited by the Congress observers – which were mostly in school premises – were accessible to disabled people. However, a number of polling stations were set up in rooms that were either too small or not suitable for voting. No unauthorised persons were detected inside or in the vicinity of polling stations. No citizen observers were met by the Congress' observers in the polling stations they visited and media were occasionally present.

68. Voters who required assistance were adequately helped, either by bringing their own assistant to the polling station or by asking for the help of an "election assistant" selected by the Election Board. The procedure ensured effective protection of the secrecy of the vote.

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<sup>31</sup> According to the interlocutors met by the Congress delegation on 6 and 7 April 2017 in Helsinki.

## 6.1. Turnout

69. The overall turnout for the 9 April 2017 local elections was 58.9%, which constituted a 0.6 point increase in comparison to the 2012 local elections.<sup>32</sup>

70. Turnout in the 9 April 2017 local elections:

	<b>Number of voters</b>	<b>Percentage of voters</b>
Voting in advance	1169319	26.6
Voting on Election Day	1415891	32.2
General turnout	2585210	58.9

71. The highest turnout occurred in Vaasa, where 63.8 % of persons entitled to vote casted a ballot. Turnout increased the most in Helsinki, where the voting percentage increased by 4.4 points as compared to 2012.

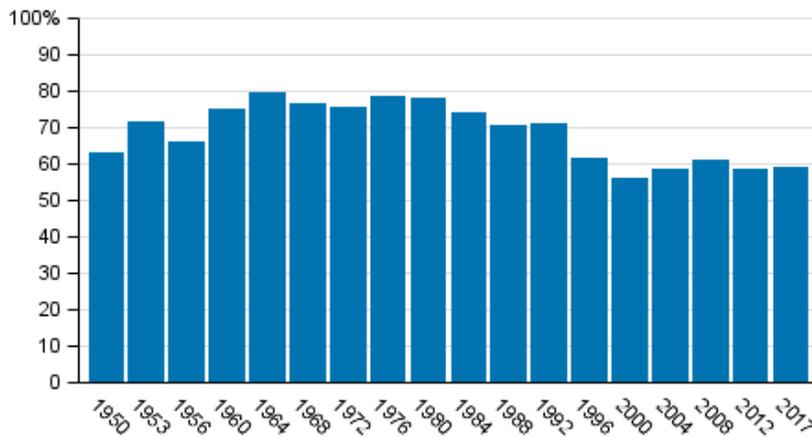
72. There is, however, a general trend towards a decrease in turnout in local elections in Finland.<sup>33</sup> Turnout in local elections is particularly low among young voters and non-Finns who have the right to vote in local elections. Prior to the 9 April 2017, some of the Congress' interlocutors pointed out the "lack of interest" of young people. It seems, however, that in Municipalities – like Helsinki – where a "political" Mayor was about to be elected, the election campaign and the debates were more vivid and the interest of the general public stronger.

73. A poll released in February 2017 showed that Finnish citizens were more likely to trust local decision-makers than regional and national politicians. About 30% of the respondents to the poll said they trusted local decision-makers but some 60% said they have little or no faith in them.<sup>34</sup>

74. Turnout in the 9 April 2017 local elections:

	<b>Percentage of voters</b>
General turnout	58.9
Citizens of other Member States of the EU	17.6
Citizens of Iceland and Norway	36.6
Other foreigners	20.0

75. Local elections turnout in Finland from 1950 to 2017:<sup>35</sup>



32 <http://tulospalvelu.vaalit.fi/KV-2017/en/aanestys1.html>

33 <http://www.localfinland.fi/en/authorities/local-self-government/Elections/Pages/default.aspx>

34 [http://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/study\\_shows\\_little\\_confidence\\_in\\_decision-makers\\_at\\_all\\_levels/9480810](http://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/news/study_shows_little_confidence_in_decision-makers_at_all_levels/9480810)

35 [http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/kvaa/2017/kvaa\\_2017\\_2017-04-21\\_tie\\_001\\_en.html?ad=notify](http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/kvaa/2017/kvaa_2017_2017-04-21_tie_001_en.html?ad=notify)

## 6.2. Election results

76. The final results of the 9 April 2017 local elections, as published by the Ministry of Justice, confirmed that all three political parties participating in the Government lost seats as compared to the 2012 local elections.<sup>36</sup> The Centre Party of Finland remained the stronger political party at local level with about 2,800 seats in Local Councils, followed by the Social Democratic Party which got about 1,700 seats. The Finns Party lost more than 400 seats in Local Councils as compared to 2012. In this context, the Green League received a much stronger support than in 2012 and gained more than 200 seats in Local Councils throughout the country, making it the fourth largest political party at local level.

77. The proportion of female Local Councillors has been rising steadily in Finland. About 39 % of the Local Councillors elected in the 9 April 2017 local elections were women.

	<b>Number of candidates</b>	<b>Percentage of candidates</b>	<b>Number of Local Councillors</b>	<b>Percentage of Local Councillors</b>
Men	20207	60.1	5485	61
Women	13411	39.9	3514	39
Total	33618	100	8999	100

78. The electoral results in some of the Municipalities visited by the Congress' observers – including the cities where a Mayor was elected – are presented in the appendices.

## 7. Conclusions

79. The 9 April 2017 local elections in Finland were prepared in a professional manner overall and voting took place in a calm and peaceful atmosphere. The election administration organised advance voting in Finland and abroad as well as on Election Day in compliance with Finnish legislation and international standards for free and fair elections. The Congress delegation could observe the high level of trust in the electoral processes on Election Day.

80. In spite of the rather low participation in the elections on E-Day, advance voting and voting through mobile ballot boxes particularly encouraged turnout – about 45 % of voters casted a ballot before Election Day. Turnout among foreigners residing in Finnish Municipalities who have the right to vote in local elections was particularly low. Their participation in the electoral process as voters and as candidates could be further promoted by authorities at all level and in particular by voters' education efforts already implemented by the election administration.

81. The first election of a political Mayor in the Capital City Helsinki was at the centre of the attention during the election campaign. The election of Mayors in Finland could strengthen political leadership at local level and create stronger interest in the local decision making among the general public.

82. With regard to the general context of the regional administrative reform in Finland, the Congress invites the Finnish authorities to implement genuine decentralisation at regional level. In this respect, the Congress highlights the importance of financial autonomy for the newly created Regions and the need for future elected Regional Councils to have the full authority to make decision at regional level.

<sup>36</sup> [http://tulospalvelu.vaalit.fi/KV-2017/en/tulos\\_kokomaa.html](http://tulospalvelu.vaalit.fi/KV-2017/en/tulos_kokomaa.html)

**APPENDIX I****Final programme of the election observation mission  
Composition of the Congress delegation****FINAL PROGRAMME****Wednesday, 5 April 2017**Various times      **Arrival of the Congress Delegation in Helsinki****Thursday, 6 April 2017**

- 9:00 – 9:30      Briefing for the Delegation with the Congress' Secretariat  
Venue: Crowne Plaza Hotel, Mannerheimintie 50, meeting room # 2
- 10.00 – 11:00      Meeting with **Ambassadors of relevant Council of Europe member States** to Finland  
- **Mr Philippe BEKE**, Ambassador, Embassy of Belgium  
- **Ms Claudia SCHMIDT**, Chargée d'Affaires, Embassy of Germany  
- **Mr Adnan BAŞAĞA**, Ambassador, Embassy of Turkey  
Venue: Crowne Plaza Hotel, Mannerheimintie 50, meeting room # 2
- 11:30 – 12:30      Briefing with **Ms Sirpa PAATERO**, President of the **Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities**, and **Mr Heikki TALAKIVI** Director of International Affairs, notably on the regionalisation reform  
Venue: Crowne Plaza Hotel, Mannerheimintie 50, meeting room # 2
- Lunch break
- 13:40      Transfer to the Ministry of Justice
- 14:00 – 15:30      General briefing on the upcoming local elections with the Director of the election administration (Ministry of Justice), **Mr Arto JÄÄSKELÄINEN**  
Venue: Ministry of Justice, Eteläesplanadi 10, Helsinki
- 17:00 – 17:45      Courtesy visit to the Mayor of Helsinki, **Mr Jussi PAJUNEN**  
Venue: City Hall, Pohjoisesplanadi 11-13, Helsinki

**Friday, 7 April 2017**

- 8:10      Transfer to the Ministry of Local Government
- 08:30 – 9:30      Meeting of a sub-delegation with the Minister of Local Government and Public Reforms, **Ms Anu VEHVILÄINEN**  
Venue: Ministry, Snellmaninkatu 1, Helsinki – Council of the State building
- 10:00 – 10:30      Briefing for the Delegation with the Congress' Secretariat  
Venue: Crowne Plaza Hotel, Mannerheimintie 50, meeting room # 2
- 10:30 – 11:30      Briefing with **representatives of political parties** participating in the 9 April local elections  
- Centre Party  
- National Coalition Party  
- Social Democratic Party  
- Swedish Party  
Venue: Crowne Plaza Hotel, Mannerheimintie 50, meeting room # 2

11:35 – 12:15 Meeting with **Mr Risto RAUTAVA**, Member of the City Council of Helsinki and Head of the Finnish delegation to the Congress  
Venue: Crowne Plaza Hotel, Mannerheimintie 50, meeting room # 2

Lunch break

14:30 – 15:15 Meeting with **Mr Markus ÖSTERLUND**, Secretary General of the **Swedish Assembly of Finland** ("Folktinget")  
Venue: Crowne Plaza Hotel, Mannerheimintie 50, meeting room # 2

Coffee break

16:30 – 17:30 Meeting with **representatives of the media**  

- Mr Jari KORKKI, YLE (public radio/TV broadcaster)
- Political Journalist, MTV (private TV channel)
- Political Journalist, Helsingin Sanomat (daily newspaper)
- Mr Juha PULKKINEN, NGO "Suomen Pen" ("Finnish Pen")
- Mr Juha REKOLA, International Ombudsman, Union of Journalists in Finland

 Venue: Crowne Plaza Hotel, Mannerheimintie 50, meeting room # 2

17:30 – 18:00 Technical briefings for Election Day with the Congress' Secretariat  
Venue: Crowne Plaza Hotel, Mannerheimintie 50, meeting room # 2

18:00 – 18:30 Technical briefings for Election Day with the drivers and interpreters  
Venue: Crowne Plaza Hotel, Mannerheimintie 50, meeting room # 2

#### Saturday, 8 April 2017

Around 13:00 **Deployment of 7 Congress teams** from Helsinki to various regions  
(See "Deployment plan")

#### Sunday, 9 April 2017 – ELECTION DAY

Around 8:00 **Deployment of 4 Congress teams** from Helsinki  
(See "Deployment plan")

20:00 **Election Night Event**  
Venue: House of the Municipalities

Around midnight **Debriefing** with the Congress teams in Helsinki  
Venue: Crowne Plaza Hotel, Mannerheimintie 50

#### Monday, 10 April 2017

From 8:00 **Debriefing** for the Congress teams coming back from the various regions  
Venue: Crowne Plaza Hotel, Mannerheimintie 50

11:00 **Press conference** to present preliminary conclusions with the Head of Delegation, **Mrs Lelia HUNZIKER**  
Venue: Crowne Plaza Hotel, Mannerheimintie 50, meeting room # 1

Various times **Departure of the Congress Delegation**

## DELEGATION

### Congress members

**Ms Lelia HUNZIKER**, Switzerland (SOC, L) - Head of delegation and Rapporteur

**Mr Mehmet AYDIN**, Turkey (EPP-CCE, R)  
**Ms Nathalie BERLU**, France (SOC, L)  
**Mr Andrew BOFF**, United Kingdom (ECR, R)  
**Ms Majlinda BUFI**, Albania (SOC, L)  
**Mr Xavier CADORET**, France (SOC, L)  
**Ms Violeta CRUDU**, Republic of Moldova (EPP-CCE, L)  
**Mr Mario GAUCI**, Malta (EPP-CCE, L)  
**Ms Linda GILLHAM**, United Kingdom (ILDG, L)  
**Mr Remo GRENGA**, Italy (SOC, L)  
**Mr Robert-Csongor GRUMAN**, Romania (EPP-CCE, R)  
**Mr Mihkel JUHKAMI**, Estonia (EPP-CCE, L)  
**Ms Kateryna MARCHENKO**, Ukraine (SOC, L)  
**Mr Luc MARTENS**, Belgium (EPP-CCE, L)  
**Mr Stanislav MOSHAROV**, Russian Federation (ILDG, L)  
**Mr Gerald OTTO**, Germany (EPP-CCE, R)  
**Mr Sasa PAUNOVIC**, Serbia (SOC, L)  
**Ms Sevdia UGREKHELIDZE**, Georgia (EPP-CCE, R)  
**Mr Karim VAN OVERMEIRE**, Belgium (NR, R)

### Congress' Secretariat

**Ms Renate ZIKMUND**, Head of Division, Local and Regional Election Observation  
**Ms Ségolène TAVEL**, Local and Regional Election Observation Officer  
**Ms Martine ROUDOLFF**, Assistant, Local and Regional Election Observation

### Expert

**Mr Nikos HLEPAS**, Congress' Group of Independent Experts on the European Charter of Local Self-Government, expert on electoral matters

**APPENDIX II**  
**Deployment plan on Election Day**

**DEPLOYMENT PLAN**

HELSINKI	TEAM 1	Mr Gerald OTTO
		Ms Martine ROUDOLFF
		Ms Niina NYBERG Interpreter
	TEAM 2	Ms Violetta CRUDU
		Mr Robert GRUMAN
		Ms Noora ESKELINEN Interpreter
TAMPERE	TEAM 3	Mr Andrew BOFF
		Ms Ségolène TAVEL
		Mr Lauri VAALASRANTA Interpreter
VAASA	TEAM 4	Ms Sevdia UGREKHELIDZE
		Ms Kateryna MARCHENKO
		Ms Niina HAAPALA-LIVERA Interpreter
JOENSUU	TEAM 5	Mr Mario GAUCI
		Mr Remo GRENGA
		Ms Anna UTRAINEN Interpreter
OULU	TEAM 6	Ms Linda GILLHAM
		Mr Mihkel JUHKAMI
		Ms Saana ALA-ANTTI Interpreter
KUOPIO	TEAM 7	Mr Mehmet AYDIN
		Mr Stanislav MOSHAROV
		Mr Johannes JÄRVISALO Interpreter
JYVÄSKYLÄ	TEAM 8	Ms Majlinda BUFI
		Mr Sasa PAUNOVIC
		Mr Henry LIGHTFOOT Interpreter
ROVANIEMI	TEAM 9	Ms Lelia HUNZIKER
		Mr Karim VAN OVERMEIRE
		Mr Nikos CHLEPAS
		Ms Renate ZIKMUND
		Mr Jani RUOTSALAINEN Interpreter
	TEAM 10	Ms Nathalie BERLU
		Mr Xavier CADORET
		Mr Luc MARTENS
		Ms Ella HANSE
		Interpreter

**APPENDIX III**  
**Press Release**

**Congress concludes mission to assess local elections in Finland**

10 April 2017 - At a press conference held on 10 April in Helsinki, findings of the Congress' electoral visit in Finland were presented by Mrs Lelia Hunziker (Switzerland, SOC), Head of the Congress delegation to observe the local elections organised on 9 April 2017 in the country. The Congress deployed 10 teams to visit some 150 polling stations in Helsinki, Tampere, Vaasa, Joensuu, Oulu, Kuopio, Jyvaeskylae and Rovaniemi. "The voting day was organised in a highly professional manner and procedures were fully in line with European standards for free, fair and transparent elections", stated Lelia Hunziker. The delegation welcomed the Finnish well-established system of voters' registration, recently also based on a sound computer population register. "We appreciated that the very first voter is given the opportunity to check the ballot box and the materials and we think that this is good practice for other Council of Europe countries" she added. The Congress also praised that only individuals who are permanently residing in a specific municipality have the right to vote at local level.

However, the Congress noticed some possible improvements, as a more consistent system of sealing of the ballot boxes and a strengthened role of independent candidates at the local and regional level. Regarding the issue of the regional administrative reform in Finland, Congress delegation expressed its concerns. "Even though many of the Congress' interlocutors told that this reform was necessary because it will improve the access to health and social services for the Finnish population, we are concerned about the fact that regions will be given new responsibilities without the necessary financial autonomy", Lelia Hunziker explained. "There is danger that this could result in a sort of decentralisation of centrally allocated funds instead of real regionalisation", she concluded.

**Contact:** Renate ZIKMUND, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, Head of the Division of Local and Regional Election Observation, Phone: + 33 659 786 455, email: Renate.ZIKMUND@coe.int

**APPENDIX IV**  
**Consolidated results of the 9 April 2017 local elections**

	<b>Number of votes</b>	<b>% of votes</b>	<b>Mandates</b>	<b>Mandates as compared to 2012</b>
Centre Party of Finland	450529	17.5	2824	-253
National Coalition Party	531599	20.7	1490	-245
The Finns Party	227297	8.8	770	-425
The Finnish Social Democratic Party	498252	19.4	1697	-32
Green League	320235	12.5	534	+211
The Left Alliance	226626	8.8	658	+18
Swedish People's Party in Finland	125518	4.9	471	-9
Christian Democrats in Finland	105551	4.1	316	+16
The Communist Party of Finland	7600	0.3	2	-7
Communist Workers Party (Finland) - For Peace and Socialism	702	0.0	0	0
Liberaalipuolue - Vapaus valita	4117	0.2	5	+5
Pirate Party of Finland	9119	0.4	2	+2
The Animal Justice Party of Finland	1795	0.1	0	0
Feministinen puolue	6856	0.3	1	+1
Independence Party	1846	0.1	2	+2
Other groups	53126	2.1	227	+42
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2570768</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>8999</b>	

**APPENDIX V**  
**Results of the 9 April 2017 local elections in selected Municipalities**

**Results in Municipalities where a Mayor is elected**

**Helsinki**

	<b>Number of votes</b>	<b>% of votes</b>	<b>Mandates</b>
National Coalition Party	92183	28.3 %	25
Green League	78322	24.1 %	21
The Finnish Social Democratic Party	44994	13.8 %	12
The Left Alliance	36464	11.2	10
The Finns Party	21882	6.7	6
Swedish People's Party in Finland	18996	5.8	5
Christian Democrats in Finland	9139	2.8	2
Centre Party of Finland	9209	2.8	2
Pirate Party of Finland	981	0.9	1
Feministinen puolue	4910	1.5	1
The Communist Party of Finland	2716	0.8	0
Liberaalipuolue - Vapaus valita	1646	0.5	0
The Animal Justice Party of Finland	981	0.3	0
Independence Party	480	0.1	0
Communist Workers Party (Finland) - For Peace and Socialism	127	0.0	0
Other groups	318	0.0	0

**Tampere**

	<b>Number of votes</b>	<b>% of votes</b>	<b>Mandates</b>
The Finnish Social Democratic Party	24838	22.1	16
National Coalition Party	24263	21.6	15
Green League	22511	20	14
The Left Alliance	12149	10.8	7
The Finns Party	6924	6.2	4
Centre Party of Finland	6261	5.	4
Tampereen Puolesta ry. yhteislista	5589	5.0	3
Christian Democrats in Finland	4524	4.0	2
VaihtoehtoTampere ry. yhteislista	1836	1.6	1
Swedish People's Party in Finland	472	0.4	1
Pirate Party of Finland	993	0.9	0
The Communist Party of Finland	754	0.7	0
Feministinen puolue	324	0.3	0
Liberaalipuolue - Vapaus valita	304	0.3	0
Suomalaiset Ensin yhteislista	248	0.2	0
Seppo Lehto	163	0.1	0
Matti Grönfors	39	0	0
Aleksi Juppala	7	0	0

**Results in other Municipalities visited by the Congress' observers on Election Day****Rovaniemi**

	<b>Number of votes</b>	<b>% of votes</b>	<b>Mandates</b>
Centre Party of Finland	8012	29.8	16
National Coalition Party	5697	21.2	10
The Finnish Social Democratic Party	5140	19.1	10
The Left Alliance	3458	12.9	6
The Finns Party	2014	7.5	4
Green League	1874	7.0	3
Christian Democrats in Finland	452	1.7	2
Pirate Party of Finland	164	0.6	0
The Communist Party of Finland	30	0.1	0

**Vaasa**

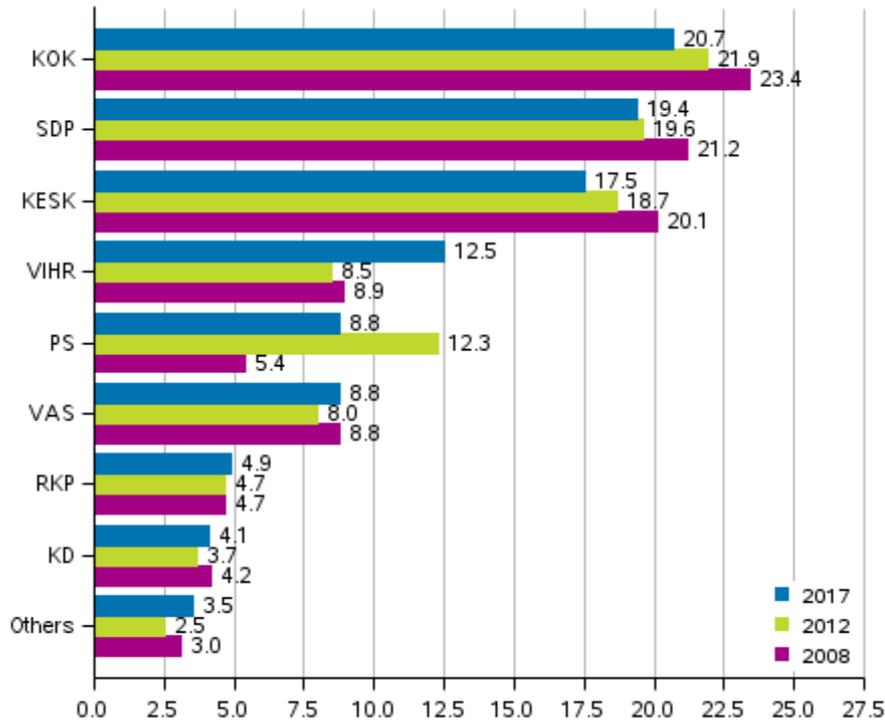
	<b>Number of votes</b>	<b>% of votes</b>	<b>Mandates</b>
Swedish People's Party in Finland	9631	29.5	18
The Finnish Social Democratic Party	6799	20.8	13
National Coalition Party	5132	15.7	10
The Finns Party	3201	9.8	6
Green League	2537	7.8	4
The Left Alliance	2085	6.4	4
Centre Party of Finland	1527	4.7	2
Christian Democrats in Finland	1385	4.2	2
Risto Helin	190	0.6	0
Pirate Party of Finland	135	0.4	0
The Communist Party of Finland	76	0.2	0

**Turku**

	<b>Number of votes</b>	<b>% of votes</b>	<b>Mandates</b>
Centre Party of Finland	4830	5.2	3
National Coalition Party	21639	23.3	17
The Finns Party	6900	7.4	5
The Finnish Social Democratic Party	15919	17.1	12
Green League	18172	19.6	14
The Left Alliance	14917	16.1	12
Swedish People's Party in Finland	4812	5.2	3
Christian Democrats in Finland	2368	2.5	1

**APPENDIX VI**

**Evolution of the support for the Finnish political parties in local elections in 2008, 2012 and 2017<sup>37</sup>**



<sup>37</sup> [http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/kvaa/2017/kvaa\\_2017\\_2017-04-21\\_tie\\_001\\_en.html?ad=notify](http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/kvaa/2017/kvaa_2017_2017-04-21_tie_001_en.html?ad=notify)