

# Municipal elections 2017

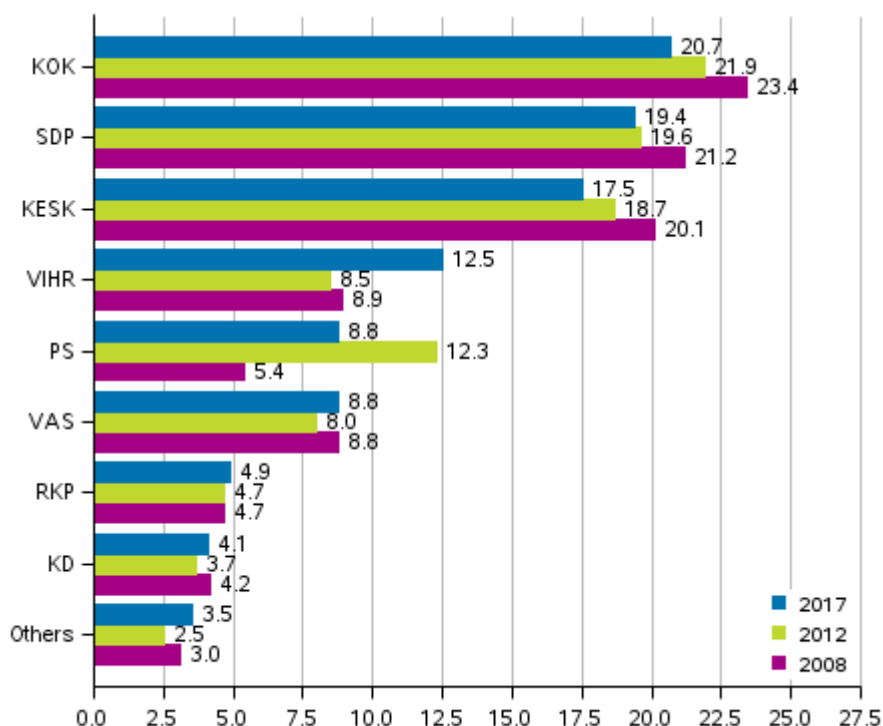
## Confirmed result

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### Confirmed election result: Coalition Party the largest political party, Green League the biggest winner in Municipal elections 2017

The National Coalition Party retained its position as the largest party in the Municipal elections. The Coalition Party gained 20.7 per cent of the votes, which is 1.2 percentage points down from the previous Municipal elections. The Coalition Party received a total of 531,599 votes, which is 14,291 down from 2012. The number of elected Coalition Party councillors declined by 245 councillors. The Green League gained 12.5 per cent of votes, the party's support increased by 3.9 percentage points, by 107,135 votes in total. The data are based on Statistics Finland's statistics on the Municipal elections 2017.

**Support for the parties in Municipal elections 2008, 2012 and 2017, %**



Others in 2017: Communist Party of Finland (SKP), Communist Worker's Party (Finland) – For Peace and Socialism (KTP), Independence Party (IP), Pirate Party, Liberal Party – Freedom for Choice (LIBE), Animal Justice Party of Finland (EOP), Feminist Party and Constituency associations  
 Others in 2012: Communist Party of Finland (SKP), Pirate Party, Independence Party (IP), Communist Worker's Party (KTP), Change 2011, Finnish Labour Party (STP), For the Poor (KA), Liberty Party (Liberty Pty) and Constituency associations  
 Others in 2008: Communist Party of Finland (SKP), Independence Party (IP), Communist Worker's Party (KTP), Finnish Labour Party (STP), Finnish Seniors' Party (SSP), For the Poor (KA) and Constituency associations

The Social Democratic Party retained its position as the second largest party. The party received 498,252 votes, or 19.4 per cent of votes cast. The support for the party decreased by 0.2 percentage points, but the number of votes grew by 10,328. The Centre Party of Finland also retained its position and was the third largest party in the elections. The party received 450,529 votes (17.5 per cent of votes cast), which is 1.2 percentage points and 14,638 votes fewer than in the previous Municipal elections.

The biggest winner in the elections was the Green League that gained 12.5 per cent of the votes and became the fourth largest party in the Municipal elections. The party's share of the votes cast increased by 3.9 percentage points and the number of votes by 107,135. The party increased its number of councillors by 211.

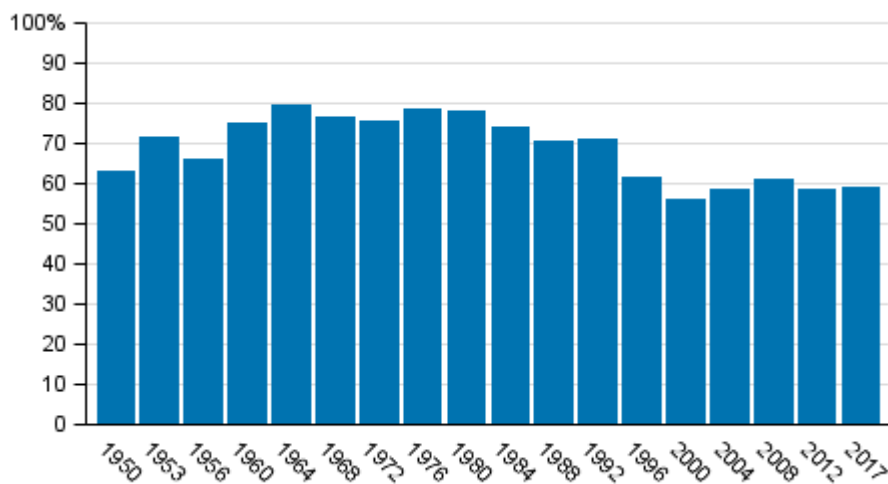
The Left Alliance's share of the votes was 8.8 per cent, which was 0.8 percentage points higher than in the previous elections, the party's number of votes increased by 27,011 votes. In relative terms, the Finns Party lost most votes. The party received 8.8 per cent of votes cast, which is 3.5 percentage points and 80,501 votes fewer than in the previous elections. The Swedish People's Party's share of votes cast was 4.9 per cent, which grew by 0.2 percentage points. The Christian Democrats gained 4.1 per cent of votes, 0.4 percentage points more than in 2012.

**Voting turnout on level with previous Municipal elections**

The voting turnout in the Municipal elections 2017 was 58.9 per cent, which is 0.6 percentage points more than in 2012. Voting turnout increased most in the constituency of Helsinki, where the voting percentage increased by 4.4 percentage points from the previous elections. The voting turnout also increased in the constituencies of Varsinais-Suomi, Pirkanmaa, Uusimaa, Vaasa, Häme and Oulu. The voting turnout was

highest in the constituency of Vaasa, where 63.8 per cent of persons entitled to vote cast their vote. The voting turnout was also higher than average in the constituencies of Helsinki (61.8%), Varsinais-Suomi (60.1%), Pirkanmaa (60.1%) and Satakunta (59.9%). The lowest voting percentage among the constituencies was found in Savo-Karjala, where 54.8 per cent of persons entitled to vote cast their vote.

### Voting turnout in Finland in Municipal elections 1950 to 2017, %



## Party Analysis

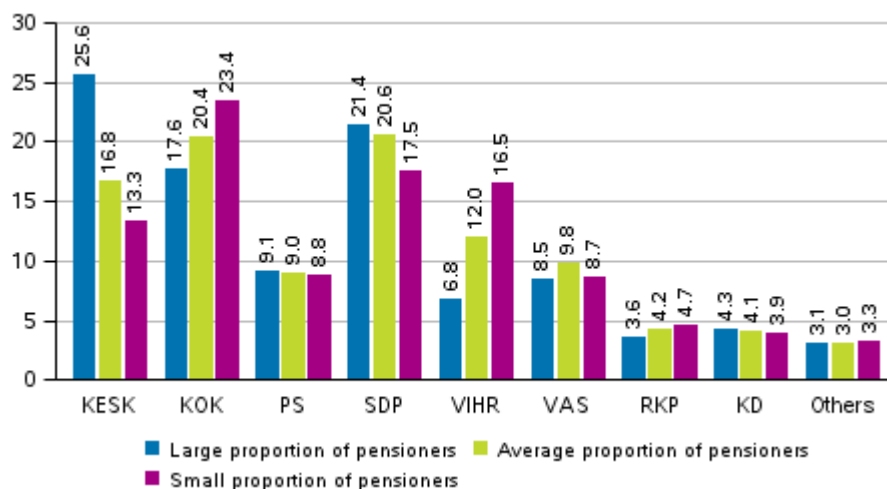
The party analysis examines parties' results in the Municipal elections 2017 with the help of various background variables in classified areas. The changes in parties' support are compared with the results of the previous elections. The voting districts, whose borders have changed as little as possible since the previous elections are used as data. Small voting districts with less than 1,000 persons entitled to vote are combined so that the average size of a voting district is about 2,000 persons entitled to vote. The analysis is based on around 1,400 areas comparable to the previous elections.

The background variables used in the analysis are the area's industrial structure, degree of urbanisation, income level, unemployment rate and the number of children and pensioners. For example, in areas with high unemployment, the unemployment rate is higher than the country's average rate. The background variables used are not mutually exclusive. For example, the area's industrial structure and degree of urbanisation also partially describe the area's income level. (See methodological description.)

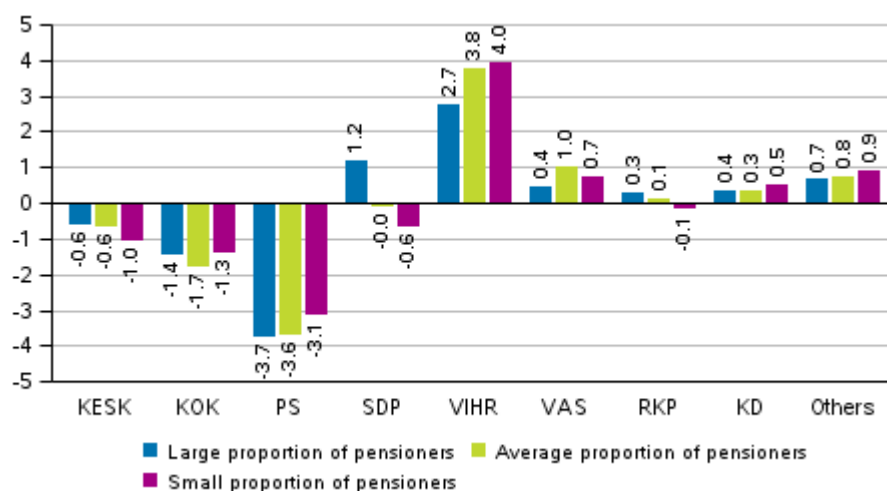
Support for the Green League that won the elections was clearly higher in relative terms in areas where the share of pensioners in the population is low. Support for the Coalition Party was also larger in areas where there is fewer pensioners than on average. By contrast, support for the Centre Party was clearly higher in areas with a large share of pensioners. Support for the Social Democratic Party was also slightly higher in areas with a larger share of pensioners, even though the differences in support between areas was smaller than for the Centre Party. The number of pensioners in different areas do not seem to have much effect on the support for the Finns Party.

The Centre Party lost support relatively evenly in various areas regardless of the number of pensioners. The changes in support for the Coalition Party were also relatively small. The Social Democratic Party increased its support in areas where the share of pensioners is high. By contrast, the party lost support in other areas. The Finns Party lost least support in areas where the share of pensioners is lower than average.

**Support for the parties in the Municipal elections 2017 by the number of pensioners in specific geographical regions, %**



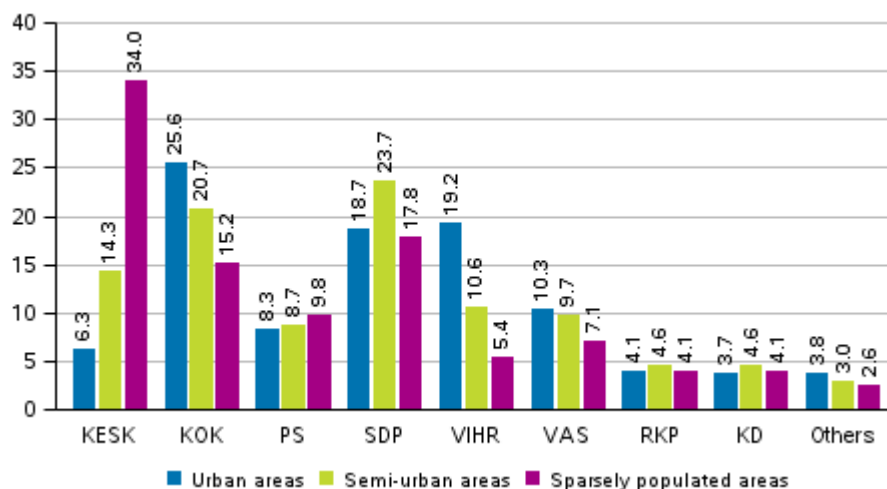
**Change in the support for the parties in the Municipal elections 2017 by the number of pensioners in specific geographical regions, %**



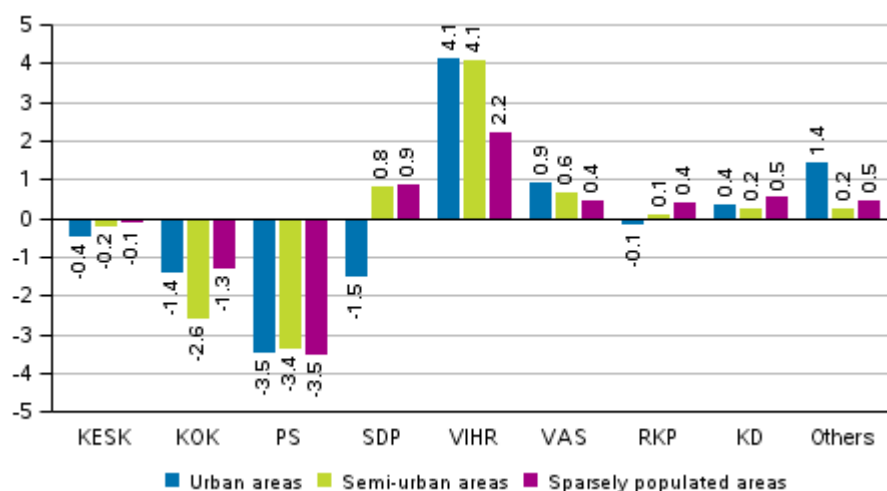
Support for the Centre Party, and in a more limited extent also the Finns Party, focused on sparsely populated areas. The support profile for the Coalition Party and the Green League was almost the opposite examined with this indicator, their support was largest in urban areas. The Social Democratic Party’s support was divergent when examined with this indicator, the biggest support was reached in population centres that are less populated than urban areas.

The Centre Party lost support quite evenly in variously populated areas in the 2017 elections. The Coalition Party’s support decreased most in population centres, while that of the True Finns decreased evenly in various settlement areas. The Social Democratic Party, in turn, lost support in urban areas but managed to increase its support in less populated areas. Support for the Green League increased in all areas, most in urban areas and in population centres.

**Support for the parties in the Municipal elections 2017 by areas specified by population density, %**



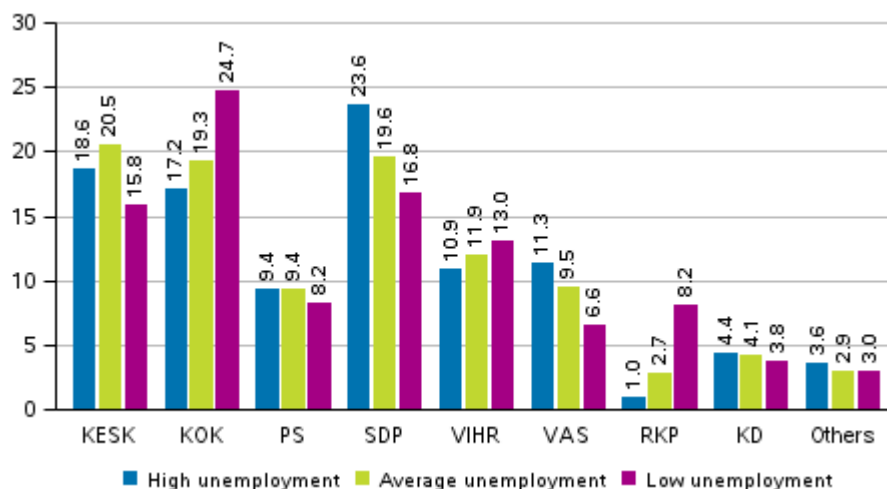
**Change in the support for the parties in the Municipal elections 2017 by areas specified by population density, %**



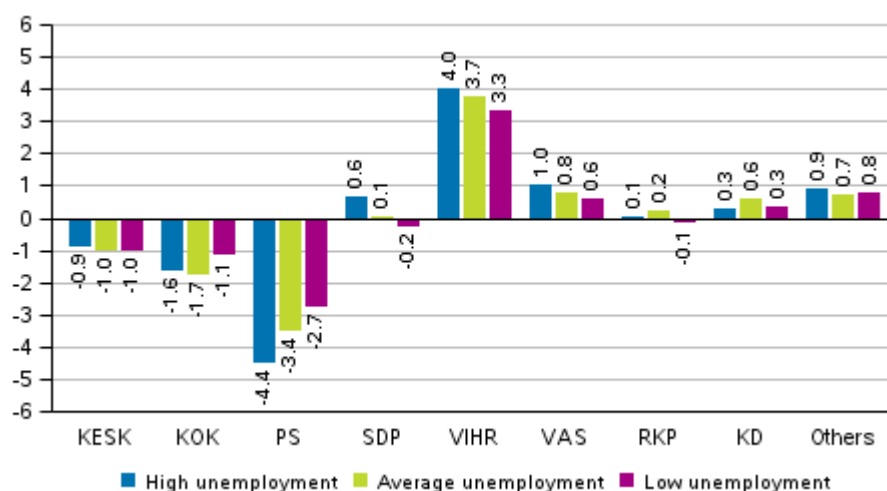
In areas of high unemployment, the Social Democratic Party and the Left Alliance gained higher support than on average. The situation was the opposite for the Coalition Party and the Green League, support was higher in areas with lower unemployment. By contrast, the support for the Finns Party was, on average, lower in areas with low unemployment.

The Centre Party and the Coalition Party lost support in all areas measured by unemployment; the Centre Party evenly in all areas and the Coalition Party especially in areas with high or average levels of unemployment. The Green League and the Left Alliance increased their support everywhere but most in areas of high unemployment. The Social Democratic Party mainly improved its support in areas with high unemployment. Support for the True Finns declined in all areas measured by unemployment but particularly in areas where the unemployment rate is higher than average.

**Support for the parties in the Municipal elections 2017 by areas specified by the unemployment rate, %**



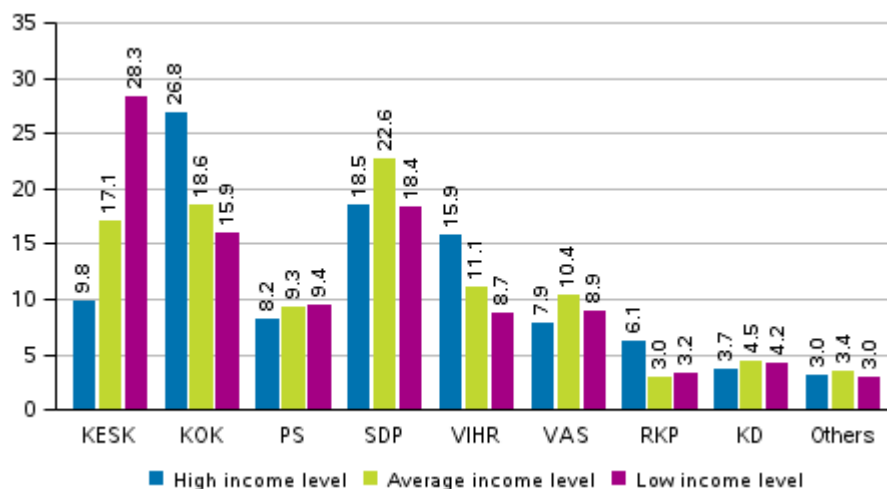
**Change in the support for the parties in the Municipal elections 2017 by areas specified by the unemployment rate, %**



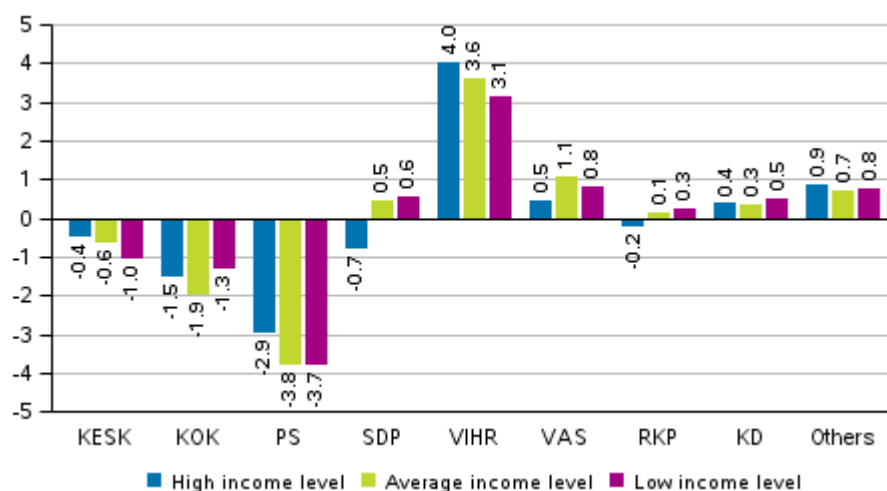
Support for the Centre Party was highest in areas with low income levels. This is explained by the fact that the areas where the party is strong, agriculture-dominated and sparsely populated areas, the income level is lower than average. The support profiles of the Coalition Party and the Green League are also similar in terms of this indicator, support is highest in areas with a high income level. The Social Democratic Party and the Left Alliance collected support in areas of an average income level, while support for the Finns Party focused on areas with a slightly lower income level.

The Centre Party lost most support in areas with a low income level, the support for the Finns Party decreased most in areas of low and average income levels. In relative terms, the Coalition Party lost most support in areas with average income levels and the Social Democratic Party in high income level areas. In areas with average or low income levels, the Social Democratic Party managed to improve its support. Support for the Green League increased in all areas, most, in relative terms, in high income level areas.

**Support for the parties in the Municipal elections 2017 by areas specified by the income level, %**



**Change in the support for the parties in the Municipal elections 2017 by areas specified by the income level, %**



**Statistics Finland's election result services**

Before the elections, Statistics Finland released a review on 31 March 2017 on the background of municipal election candidates analysing the candidates' sex distribution, age, origin, education, employment, income level and family status in comparison to persons entitled to vote. The review will be updated on 27 April 2017 with background data on the elected councillors.

On 11 April 2017, Statistics Finland opened a free of charge election map service on the web containing data illustrated by maps and charts on the Municipal elections. The themes include voting turnout, the party with the most votes and support for parties and change in the support and the proportion of young, female and new councillors. The data can be browsed by various area categories such as municipalities, constituencies and the largest towns by voting district. The map data will be updated with the confirmed election results on 21 April 2017.

More detailed election result data are available in Statistics Finland's PX-Web database service where users can compile customised statistical tables on the elections. Database tables on the preliminary Municipal election data will be produced on 11 April 2017. Database tables according to the confirmed results of the Municipal elections will be released on 21 April 2017.

[Election map service](#)

[Tables in databases](#)



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## Appendix tables

**Appendix table 1. Support for parties in Municipal elections 1976-2017, %**

Party	Municipal elections										
	1976	1980	1984	1988	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012	2017
KOK	20.9	22.9	23.0	22.9	19.1	21.6	20.8	21.8	23.4	21.9	20.7
SDP	24.8	25.5	24.7	25.2	27.1	24.5	23.0	24.1	21.2	19.6	19.4
KESK	18.4	18.7	20.2	21.1	19.2	21.8	23.8	22.8	20.1	18.7	17.5
VIHR	-	-	2.8	2.4	6.9	6.3	7.7	7.4	8.9	8.5	12.5
PS	2.1	3.0	5.3	3.6	2.4	0.9	0.7	0.9	5.4	12.3	8.8
VAS	18.5	16.6	13.1	12.6	11.7	10.4	9.9	9.6	8.8	8.0	8.8
RKP	4.7	4.7	5.1	5.3	5.0	5.4	5.1	5.2	4.7	4.7	4.9
KD	3.2	3.7	3.0	2.7	3.2	3.2	4.3	4.0	4.2	3.7	4.1
Pirate pty	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.2	0.4
SKP	-	-	-	-	-	0.1	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.3
Femin.p.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.3
LIBE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.2
IP	-	-	-	-	-	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
EOP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.1
KTP	-	-	-	-	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other parties	5.7	3.7	0.4	1.6	1.4	1.9	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.1	-
Constituency assocs.	1.8	1.1	2.4	2.5	3.8	3.6	4.0	3.3	2.4	1.7	2.1

**Appendix table 2. Turnout in Municipal elections 1950-2017, %**

Year	Total	Men	Women
1950	63.0	67.6	58.9
1953	71.3	75.3	68.0
1956	66.2	70.0	62.9
1960	74.8	77.4	72.7
1964	79.3	80.9	77.9
1968	76.7	78.4	75.3
1972	75.6	75.8	75.4
1976	78.5	78.6	78.5
1980	78.1	78.2	78.0
1984	74.0	73.7	74.3
1988	70.5	69.0	71.9
1992	70.9	69.6	72.1
1996	61.3	59.8	62.8
2000	55.9	53.9	57.7
2004	58.6	56.4	60.7
2008	61.2	59.3	63.0
2012	58.3	56.7	59.8
2017	58.9	56.9	60.7

# Municipal elections, quality description

## 1. Relevance of statistical information

### 1.1 Summary of the information content of statistics

The confirmed result of the Municipal elections 2017 published by Statistics Finland is based on the result of the control calculation on 12 April 2017 (updated 20 April 2017). Statistics Finland produces official statistics on municipal elections containing key data on the candidates, elected councillors, those entitled to vote, those who voted and support gained by the parties. Statistics Finland's statistics pages on municipal elections also provide analyses on the backgrounds of the candidates and the elected, on those who voted in advance, and as separate services the election map service and the StatFin service (database tables / most detailed regional level is voting district).

### 1.2 Essential concepts

#### *General information*

Councillors to municipal councils are elected in the municipal elections. At the beginning of 2017, the number of municipalities is 295 in Mainland Finland and 16 in Åland.

*The municipal elections are held in accordance with the division of municipalities that came into effect at the beginning of the election year (2017) (the voting district division came into effect on 31 October 2016). \*If municipal elections are held in the year preceding a change in municipal division entering into force, they must be held in accordance with the new municipal division in the municipalities to which the change applies.*

The municipal council decides how many councillors are elected in each municipality (Local Government Act 410/2015, Section 16). The number of inhabitants is determined based on the data in the Population Information System at the end of 30 November preceding the election year.

The amendment of the Election Act (563/2015) entered into force on 1 June 2015 when the name of the elections was changed in Finnish to kuntavaalit, the time for holding the elections was changed (in 2012, the fourth Sunday in October every four years). Municipal elections are held every four years on the third Sunday of April (9 April 2017). If the third Sunday falls on Easter Sunday or the Sunday after it, the election day moves to the Sunday preceding Easter Sunday (Election Act 563/2015, Section 144). In the municipalities of the autonomous territory of the Åland Islands, elections ([www.val.ax](http://www.val.ax)) are also arranged every four years, but at a different time than those in Mainland Finland, next time in October 2019 ([www.val.ax](http://www.val.ax)).

Elections are held in accordance with the Election Act in force, (Election Act in force <http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1998/en19980714>), more details on the Ministry of Justice's web pages [www.vaalit.fi](http://www.vaalit.fi) (=> Legislation) and [www.finlex.fi](http://www.finlex.fi), Election Act (714/1998). In municipal elections advance voting was possible abroad for the first time in 2000.

#### *Legislation on elections*

The first act concerning municipal elections was enacted in 1917. With the revision of election legislation in 1998 all provisions on elections were collected into one single act, the Election Act (714/1998), which entered into force on 8 October 1998. The provisions concerning municipal elections are included in it and in the Local Government Act 410/2015.

#### *The main principles of holding elections*

All elections in Finland are held according to the following principles:

- **The elections are direct.** Electors (those entitled to vote) vote direct for the person they want to be elected.
- **The elections are proportional.** In proportional elections each party or other group gains seats in relation to the votes cast for it compared with the votes cast for other groups (not in presidential elections). In Finland, so called d'Hondt method is applied as the calculation method for proportional elections.

- **The elections are secret.** Secrecy of the ballot means that neither the election authorities nor anyone else get to know for whom voters have cast their votes or whether they have returned an empty ballot. By contrast, the information on whether a person entitled to vote has exercised his/her right, i.e. actually voted, is not covered by the secret of the ballot.
- **The right to vote is universal and equal.** Universal franchise means that the right to vote only depends on requirements which citizens usually fulfil. Equal franchise means that every person entitled to vote has an equal right to influence the election results. In general elections everybody has one vote.
- **Voting is personal.** The right to vote may not be used through an agent. However, an assistant can be used in the actual voting situation under certain conditions.
- **Voting must take place in front of election authorities.** The purpose of this is to ensure overall reliability of the elections, the voter's right to express his or her free will and to ensure the secrecy of the ballot. The selection of election authorities and their actions in their duties are set in the Election Act.
- The Finnish election system is a combination of voting for individuals and parties, where a vote goes to both a party and a person (not in presidential elections).

### *Right to vote and voting register; voting and calculation of the election result*

#### *Right to vote*

Entitled to vote in municipal elections are:

Every person that has reached the age of 18 no later than on the day of the election is entitled to vote provided that they are

1. Citizens of Finland or another Member State of the European Union or Iceland and Norway, whose municipality of residence is the municipality in question on the 51st day before election day; or
2. Citizens of other countries, whose municipality of residence is the municipality in question on the 51st day before election day, and who at that time have had a municipality of residence in Finland for an uninterrupted period of two years; or
3. Persons employed by the EU or an international organisation in Finland and family members of such persons whose municipality of residence is the municipality in question on the 51st day before the election day assuming that their data have upon their request been registered in the Finnish Population Information System and that they have notified the local register office of their willingness to exercise the right to vote in the municipal election in writing no later than on the 52nd day before the election day.

#### *Voting register*

The Population Register Centre compiles a register of everyone entitled to vote (voting register) 46 days before the election day. This register contains certain information on the voters (including the voters' name, identity code, constituency, municipality of residence, and polling station) as this information appears in the Population Information System 51 days before the election day. The voting register is established on 22 February 2017 based on the information included in the Population Information System on 17 February 2017.

The voting register is publicly available at the local register offices (maistraatti) from 41 days before the election day onwards (i.e. from 27 February 2017). In addition, everyone in the register is sent a notice of his or her right to vote (notification card) not later than 24 days before the election day (16 March 2017). The card states among other things the election day, the days for advance voting, the address of the polling station of the recipient and the addresses and telephone numbers of the election authorities. The voting register is later used to print out electoral rolls for the polling stations on the election day.

Claims for correction of the register have to be submitted to the local register offices not later than 16 days (24 March 2017) before the election day and the local register office will decide the claims not later than 13 days before the election day.

The voting register becomes legally valid at noon 12 days prior to the election day, that is, on Tuesday 28 March 2017 at noon.

## *Voting*

Persons with a right to vote can vote either 1) during advance voting, or 2) on the election Sunday (9 April 2017).

Advance votes in Finland (29 March to 4 April 2017) are cast in general advance polling stations, in institutions and at voters' homes under certain conditions. General advance polling stations in Finland are offices, post offices and other locations specified by municipalities. Advance votes abroad (29 March to 1 April 2017) are cast at Finnish embassies and their trade missions and on Finnish vessels. General advance polling stations abroad are the Finnish embassies and their trade missions specified in a Government decree. Each person entitled to vote can vote in advance in general advance polling stations in Finland and abroad at Finnish embassies. Anyone entitled to vote in municipal elections can cast their vote at embassies regardless of which country or municipality the person lives in. Thus, for example, persons entitled to vote that are on holiday or working on a posting abroad can cast their vote at embassies

On the election day an enfranchised person may vote only in the polling station of his or her own voting district.

A voter need not give grounds for advance voting, but may freely choose between voting in advance or voting on the election day. Advance voting commences on the 11th day (29 March 2017) and ends abroad on the 8th day (1 April 2017) and in Finland on the 5th day (4 April 2017) before the election day.

*Voting percentage = proportion of voters of persons entitled to vote*

*Calculation of the result of the municipal elections*

Counting the advance votes

Municipalities' central election committees begin counting the advance votes on the election day at 3 pm at the earliest (for a particular reason at noon at the earliest). The brown ballot envelopes sent from the municipalities are opened and the ballots within them are counted. Advance votes are counted so that the result of advance voting should be ready by 8 pm that evening. Before this the central election committees may not reveal anything on how the counting is progressing.

Counting the votes cast on the election day

As soon as the doors of the polling stations have been closed at 8 pm the election board begins a preliminary count of the votes. The board opens the ballot box, counts the ballots within it, and notes down the votes of the candidates in a particular election protocol. Immediately thereafter the board informs the central election committee of the municipality of the votes of the candidates, i.e. of the election results in the voting district. The central election committee again enters the results in the central calculation system in the Election Information System of the Ministry of Justice. Finally, the election board seals the ballots in a parcel and delivers it to the central election committee before Monday morning 9 am.

Determination of the election results

The so-called d'Hondt method is used to determine the election results. Thus, in the first stage of the calculation the total number of votes of each group, i.e.

- A (single) party not belonging to an electoral alliance,
- An electoral alliance,
- A joint list, and
- A constituency association not belonging to a joint list,

is counted. Parties which have formed an electoral alliance are thus treated as a single group, as are constituency associations on a joint list. In *the second stage* of the calculation the candidates in each group are ranked in order of their personal number of votes. In *the third stage* each candidate is accorded a comparative index, i.e. the candidate who has received most personal votes is accorded an index which equals the total number of votes of the group, the second best candidate half of that, the third best a third, the fourth best a fourth, and so on. In the final stage all candidates within the municipality are listed in order from best to worst according to their comparative index, and the representatives elected from the municipality are chosen from this list.

## *Eligibility and nomination of candidates*

### *Eligibility*

Eligible as candidates in municipal elections are persons,

1. Whose municipality of residence is the municipality in question,
2. Who are entitled to vote in municipal elections in some municipality, and
3. Who have not been declared legally incompetent.

Section 72 of the Local Government Act prescribes the restrictions to eligibility.

As a rule, eligibility is determined in the same schedule as the person's voting municipality, that is, according to the information drawn from the Population Register Centre's Population Information System 51 days prior to the day of the election (in the 2017 Municipal elections by Friday 17 February 2017). If the person changes his or her municipality of residence after that date, his or her eligibility follows with him or her.

The legislation has not set a clear deadline for the determination of eligibility of candidates but in practice, candidates' municipality of residence has to be clear at the latest on the 32nd day prior to the day of the election (in the 2017 Municipal election by Wednesday 8 March 2017), when the central election committees handle and decide the additions made to the candidate applications. Decisions on the candidates' municipality of residence are made based on the information in the Population Information System.

### *Nomination of candidates*

Candidates in municipal elections may be nominated by

1. Parties entered in the party register, and
2. Constituency associations established by people entitled to vote.

Each party may nominate a number of candidates equalling the number of councillors to be elected multiplied by one and a half. For example, if 27 councillors are elected in the municipality, the party may have at most 40 candidates. Parties may form electoral alliances. The number of candidates nominated by an alliance may not exceed the maximum number of candidates for a single party. A constituency association for the nomination of one candidate may be established by at least ten people who are entitled to vote in the municipality. In a municipality where the population at the end of November in the year preceding the election year is at most 1,500, a constituency association can be established by at least three people who are entitled to vote. If the municipality's population is 1,501 to 2,000, a minimum of five people who are entitled to vote can establish a constituency association.

Constituency associations may form joint lists with a maximum number of candidates equalling the number of councillors to be elected multiplied by one and a half.

Parties and constituency associations must deliver their list of candidates (candidate application) to the central election committee of the municipality 40 days before the elections (by 28 February 2017 by 4 pm at the latest). By the same deadline, notifications of electoral alliances and of joint electoral lists must also be delivered to the central election committee.

The central election committee of the municipality checks the lists of candidates and in particular that the candidates are eligible and confirms the nomination of candidates on the 31st day prior to the day of the election (9 March 2017).

The central election committee compiles a combined list of candidates in which the candidates of all parties, constituency associations and joint lists are enumerated in an order drawn by lot. The list contains the following information on the candidates: number (beginning with number 2), name, municipality of residence and title, profession or position.

The number of councillors elected depends on the population of the municipality (data at the end of 30 November preceding the election year).

*Local Government Act 410/2015, Section 16*

*”Unless the local council makes a decision about the number of local councillors, the number of local councillors elected shall be the minimum laid down by law. A local council decision about a larger number than the minimum, or a change to a previous decision, must be notified to the Ministry of Justice by the end of the year preceding the election year. A local council decision on the number of local councillors may be put into effect before it has attained legal force. However, action to put the decision into effect is not permitted if an administrative court forbids this.”*

According to Section 16 of the Local Government Act (410/2015), a minimum number of councillors has to be elected, however, as follows:

### **Number of councillors according to the population of the municipality**

Population	Minimum number of councillors
at most 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
over 500,000	79

### *Changes in constituencies and municipalities and consolidations of municipalities*

Changes in constituencies and municipalities and consolidations of municipalities concerning elections of different years are presented on the Internet in the appendix table of the statistical release (the home page for Municipal elections).

Municipalities are placed into constituencies according to the constituency division in force. At the beginning of 2017, the number of municipalities is 295 in Mainland Finland and 16 in Åland.

The valid statistical grouping of municipalities is used in the statistics (Statistics Finland, Municipalities and Regional Divisions Based on Municipalities).

*The municipal elections are held in accordance with the division of municipalities that came into effect at the beginning of the election year (2017) (the voting district division came into effect on 31 October 2016). \*If municipal elections are held in the year preceding a change in municipal division entering into force, they must be held in accordance with the new municipal division in the municipalities to which the change applies. In the statistical grouping of municipalities, municipalities are divided by the proportion of the population living in urban settlements and by the population of the largest urban settlement into urban, semi-urban and rural municipalities. The classification is based on the definition of urban settlements made in 2016 and the population of the municipality in 2015. The definition of urban settlements is produced yearly by the Finnish Environment Institute.*

1. Urban municipalities are those municipalities in which at least 90 per cent of the population lives in urban settlements, or in which the population of the largest urban settlement is at least 15,000.
2. Semi-urban municipalities are those municipalities in which at least 60 per cent but less than 90 per cent of the population lives in urban settlements, or in which the population of the largest urban settlement is at least 4,000 but less than 15,000.
3. Rural municipalities are those municipalities in which less than 60 per cent of the population lives in urban settlements, and in which the population of the largest urban settlement is less than 15,000, as well as those municipalities in which at least 60 per cent but less than 90 per cent of the population lives in urban settlements, and in which the population of the largest urban settlement is less than 4,000.

### *Classifications used*

Statistics Finland's classification of municipalities, constituency, municipality group, municipality, voting district, party (entered in the Party Register), age of candidates and elected councillors, country of residence.

*Candidates have been nominated in the Municipal elections 2017 by the following registered parties (15/16):*

- Finnish Social Democratic Party (SDP)
- Centre Party of Finland (KESK)
- National Coalition Party (KOK)
- Swedish People's Party in Finland (RKP)
- Christian Democrats in Finland (KD)
- Green League (VIHR)
- Left Alliance (VAS)
- Finns Party (PS)
- The Communist Party of Finland (SKP)
- Communist Worker's Party (Finland) – For Peace and Socialism (KTP)
- Liberal Party – Freedom for Choice (LIBE)
- Pirate Party of Finland (Piraattip.)
- Animal Justice Party of Finland (EOP)
- Feminist Party (Femin.p.)
- Independence Party (IP)

### *Data collection methods and data sources*

Statistics Finland receives basic election data from the Ministry of Justice's election data system, the technical implementation of which is assigned to Tieto.

#### **1.3 Acts, decrees and recommendations**

The function of Statistics Finland is to compile statistics describing conditions in society (Statistics Finland Act of 24 January 1992/48). These also include election statistics. Statistics Finland's Rules of Procedure define the Population and Social Statistics department as the producer of election statistics (Statistics Finland's Rules of Procedure, TK-00-580-16).

## **2. Methodological description of the survey**

The statistics are based on census data. The basic data of the statistics are based on the Ministry of Justice's election information system consisting of six subsystems. They are:

1. Basic data, including data on constituencies, municipalities, voting districts and election authorities;
2. Data on polling stations (polling station register), which include data on general advance polling stations and polling stations on the election day;
3. Franchise data (voting register), for which data on every person entitled to vote are collected by the Population Register Centre 46 days before the election day. This register contains certain information on the voters (including the voters' name, identity code, constituency, municipality of residence, and polling station) as this information appears in the Population Information System 51 days before the election day. The voting register becomes legally valid at noon 12 days prior to the election day;
4. Data on candidates (candidate register) in which the following data on each candidate in the elections are entered: name, candidate number, profession, municipality of residence, party/voters' association that has nominated the candidate, and personal identity code;
5. A centralised calculation system to which the electoral district committees and the central election committees submit their results of the elections;
6. A statistical and information service system by means of which the results of the elections and other statistical data are transmitted to the media and to Statistics Finland.

Statistics Finland's election data system comprises four election data files: regional file, party file, candidate file and candidate register.



## **Background analysis of candidates and elected councillors**

In connection with the election statistics, a background analysis is produced on persons entitled to vote, candidates nominated by the parties and elected representatives. The population of persons entitled to vote is based on the voting register established on 22 February 2017 and the candidates on the candidate register of the Ministry of Justice. The background data on the persons combined with these registers are based on statistical data from Statistics Finland such as population, family and employment statistics, and the Register of Completed Education and Degrees. Of the persons entitled to vote only those resident in Finland are included in the review.

The analysis describes the persons entitled to vote, candidates and elected councillors with regard to certain variables. The background data usually relate to the years 2014 to 2016. More recent data than that have not been available. The person's age is the age on the day of the election in full years.

The background variables used in the analysis are described in the following.

### *Constituency*

The constituency used in the analysis is for the candidates the one for which the person stands as a candidate. For those entitled to vote the constituency is based on the information drawn from the Population Register Centre's Population Information System 51 days prior to the day of the election.

### *Foreign background*

Foreign background is examined by means of two variables, that is, native language or origin. Persons whose native language is not Finnish, Swedish or Sami are regarded by language as coming from a foreign background. Persons whose both parents or the only parent were born abroad are regarded by origin as coming from a foreign background. The data are from the year 2015.

### *Main type of activity*

The concept of main type of activity describes the nature of the person's economic activity. The population is divided by their main type of activity to the active and inactive population. These groups can be further divided into sub-groups. The classification is based on the person's activity during the last week of the year. The main type of activity is based on data derived from different registers.

The classification of main type of activity is as follows:

- Employed
- Unemployed
- 0 to 14-year-olds
- Students, pupils
- Pensioners
- Conscripts, conscientious objectors
- Other inactive population

The information used in the analysis describes the person's activity during the last week of 2015.

### *Family status*

In this analysis the population is divided into the following groups by family status:

- Parent of a married/cohabiting family
- Single parent
- Childless couple
- Living alone
- –
- Child living at home
- Other

Parents of a married/cohabiting family include all married and cohabiting persons and partners in a registered partnership, who have their own and/or spouse's children living at home. Childless couples are married/cohabiting persons and partners in a registered partnership who have no children. People living

with their own or adopted parent/s having the status of a child are defined as children living at home. The group "Other" includes persons without a family living together with others (for example, a lone mother/father living with the family of their child), homeless persons and institutional population. Persons living alone without a family belong to the group "Living alone".

The data on the person's family status are from the year 2015.

#### *Number of children*

In the analysis the number of children used is the number of the person's biological and adopted children. The data are from the year 2015.

#### *Level of education*

Those with basic level education have at most nine years of education. They have qualifications from primary schools, middle schools or comprehensive schools.

Those with upper secondary level education have 11 to 12 years of education. These qualifications include matriculation examination, vocational qualifications attained in one to three years and initial vocational qualifications.

Lowest level tertiary education lasts two to three years after upper secondary level education. Examples of these qualifications include the qualification of a technician engineer, diploma in business and administration, and diploma in nursing, which are not university of applied sciences degrees.

Completion of lower-degree level tertiary education requires three to four years of full-time studies after upper secondary level education. Lower-degree level tertiary education comprises university of applied sciences degrees and lower university degrees.

Completion of higher-degree level tertiary education requires as a rule five to six years of full-time studies after upper secondary level education. Higher-degree level tertiary education leads to master's degrees and specialist's degrees in medicine, for instance.

Completion of higher-degree level tertiary education requires as a rule five to six years of full-time studies after upper secondary level education. Higher-degree level tertiary education leads to master's degrees and specialist's degrees in medicine, for instance.

Completion of doctorate or equivalent level tertiary education requires independent research work or doctorate theses fit for publication. The degrees are scientific licentiate and doctorate degrees.

The data on education are derived from Statistics Finland's Register of Completed Education and Degrees. The data used in the analysis concern the year 2015.

#### *Disposable cash income*

*Disposable money income includes monetary income items and benefits in kind connected to employment relationships. Money income does not include imputed income items, of which the main one is imputed dwelling income. When current transfers paid are deducted from gross money income, the remaining income is the disposable money income.*

*The data are from the year 2015.*

#### *Median income*

When income receivers are put in the order of size by income, median income is the income of the middle income receiver. An equal number of income earners remains on both sides of the middle income receiver. Median income is not as sensitive to extreme observations as mean income.

#### *Dual citizenship*

A person may be a citizen of more than one country (see Nationality Act, 359/2003 and Nationality Decree, 699/1985). Persons with both Finnish and foreign citizenship will be entered in the statistics as Finnish nationals. If a foreign national living in Finland has several nationalities, that person will be entered in the register and statistics as a national of the country on whose passport he or she arrived in the country. Nationality is determined by the country of issue of passport. A person may have several nationalities or no nationality at all. Possession of an alien's passport is also accepted as a nationality.

### *Income subject to state taxation*

With certain exceptions, all income received as money or a benefit of monetary value is taxable. Certain social benefits, allowances and compensations are not taxable. These are such as child benefits, housing allowances and income support. Taxable are neither grants and awards received from the general government.

## **3. Correctness and accuracy of data**

The basic data of the election statistics derive from the Ministry of Justice's election data system and from data supplied by the election authorities, which can be considered reliable.

## **4. Timeliness and accuracy of data**

The confirmed data always differ somewhat from the figures of the preliminary statistics.

The results change once the result is confirmed in all respects: by voting district, municipality, constituency, party and number of votes gained by all candidates and by the elected, whereby even their mutual order may change.

## **5. Accessibility and transparency/clarity of data**

The first data, or preliminary statistics are published as soon as possible on the Internet, in the StatFin service and on the statistics pages on Municipal elections. Election data by municipality and voting district (starting from 2004) and the numbers of votes gained by candidates and elected representatives are entered into the StatFin online service.

Releases and time series tables, in addition to the tables concerning the elections in question, are available in three languages (Finnish, Swedish and English) on the statistics pages on Municipal elections. The second, or final data are supplied to Statistics Finland after the election result is confirmed. After the confirmation of the election result, the confirmed data corresponding to the preliminary statistics are released on the statistics pages and the StatFin databases are updated.

Key election results on municipal elections are published in the election map service.

The chargeable ALTIKA regional database contains results on municipal elections starting from 1976.

## **6. Comparability of statistics**

The municipal division of the election year is used in the statistics. If municipal elections are held in the year preceding a change in municipal division entering into force, they must be held in accordance with the new municipal division in the municipalities to which the change applies. The statistical grouping of municipalities (urban, semi-urban and rural) was introduced starting from the year 2000. Prior to that, municipalities were grouped as follows: towns and other municipalities. Changes in constituencies and municipalities between elections have been taken into account in the statistics which contain comparative data with the previous elections.

Election results are presented on the statistics pages on Municipal elections from 1921 onwards.

## **7. Coherence and consistency/uniformity and documentation**

The Ministry of Justice publishes exhaustive information about different elections and the national candidate register and election result data on its web pages ([www.vaalit.fi](http://www.vaalit.fi)). The statistics on advance voters published by the Ministry of Justice differ from Statistics Finland's statistics on advance voters, because they are defined on different grounds:

- The Ministry of Justice counts the number of advance voters from the number of those entitled to vote, whereas
- Statistics Finland counts the number of advance voters from the number of all persons who voted.

The classifications used in the statistics can be found on Statistics Finland's website.

## Inquiries

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Source: Municipal Elections 2017, confirmed result, Statistics Finland