



President of
the National Election Office

**Report by the President of the National Election Office
on the organisation and implementation of the state duties
related to the 2014 European Parliament elections held on 25 May 2014**

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President of the National Election Office

Budapest, June 2014

Honourable Parliament,

Pursuant to Article 13(1) of Act XXXVI of 2013 on Electoral Procedure, I am submitting the following report on the organisation and implementation of the state duties related to the European Parliament elections held on 25 May 2014.

On the 10th anniversary of Hungary's accession to the European Union, the organisation and implementation of the European Parliament elections were carried out in compliance with the law, in an efficient and effective manner by the election bodies.

I. The European Parliament elections

The elections were held between 22 and 25 May 2014 throughout the Union. According to this, and in consideration to the Electoral Procedures Act, the President of the Republic of Hungary set the election day for 25 May 2014. In 2004, at the first European Elections in Hungary, 24 Hungarian MPs were elected to the European Parliament, while in the year 2009 this number was 22. Pursuant to the Treaty of Nice, this year – following the accession of Croatia – 21 seats were allocated according to the will of the voters. The MPs shall be elected through a proportional and one-round list system in which only the political parties were entitled to put forward lists and candidates. The territory of Hungary forms one constituency.

II. Education, arrangements

Several meetings were held for diplomatic corps as well as the representatives of the media by the National Election Office in order that international and Hungarian inquirers obtain accurate information on the election held in Hungary. Similarly to the previous elections, voter education was undertaken by the National Election Office through potential communication platforms such as broadcasting TV-spots in public media, announcements as well as posters displayed in polling districts. During the arrangements of the elections, the National Election Office was permanently collaborating with the European Parliament Information Office for Hungary, even a common press conference was held. After the

Hungarian members of the European Parliament were elected, the Information Office thanked the National Election Office for the support and professional collaboration in a letter.

As during the previous elections of the Members of the Hungarian Parliament, Electoral Guidelines were published to promote the education of candidates, nominating organisations and election bodies in the European Parliament elections.

The National Election Office was continuously operating the official website of the elections at www.valasztas.hu. The European Parliament elections were held in 3176 settlements, in 10,386 polling districts and at 96 foreign representations, with the involvement of tens of thousands staff members of election bodies.

Considering the experiences of the former years and the prospective voter participation, the National Election Office provided the preparation of about 7,866,000 ballots, amounting to 85 tons of paper. The equipment needed for voting was duly delivered to the election offices. Similarly to the elections of the Members of the Hungarian Parliament, the National Election Office had built up its data monitoring system which – after fully scanning the records drafted in the polling districts – compared the content of the original records (on paper) serving as the basis of the declaration of the election results to the data stored in the electronic system.

The election bodies paid special attention to first time voters. Each first time voter, who had reached voting age between 7 April and 25 May 2014, received a memorial certificate from the polling station commission.

III. The conduct of the election

Putting forward candidates

In the European Parliament elections 37 nominating organisations were registered by the National Election Commission. A nominating organisation had to be backed by at least 20,000 voters filling in a specific statement of support to have the opportunity to put forward a list. In eight days the National Election Office conducted the verifying of 34,880 recommendation sheets submitted by deadline. In the course of the verification process, 265,691 statements of support were checked. Within the period of the 3-day deadline, the verifying of the statements of support could have been undertaken only by working in shifts, over extremely long working hours with the help of collaborators. In consequence, the

deadline was extended to one day further thus such statements could have been verified in 4 days. In the election eight party lists were put forward by the nominating organisations gathering the required number of valid statements.

Voter turn-out

In the election held on 25 May, 8,041,386 citizens were enrolled to vote. On election day 2,329,304 voters casted their vote and thus the general turnout reached 28.97%. At the foreign representations 6322 person voted, accounting for 83.49% of the citizens who were enrolled.

Nationals who were enrolled in their host country, and non-nationals who were registered to vote in Hungary

Before the elections, 7504 Hungarian citizens residing in other member state of the EU sought to be enrolled in their state of residence. In Hungary 2915 citizens of other EU member states asked to be registered in relation to the European Parliament elections. According to the polling district electoral register 1619 voters out of such citizens were registered.

Voting at foreign representations

Voters with permanent residence in Hungary but residing in a foreign country on election day could cast their vote at Hungary's foreign representations. Through the electronic system which was used efficiently in the Hungarian parliamentary elections, the voters could request registration by electronic means. As a result, the turnout at foreign representations increased significantly (almost doubled) compared to the previous European Parliament elections held five years ago.

Changing polling districts

Voters with permanent residence in Hungary but staying in a different polling district on the election day could cast their vote by previously requesting a change of polling district. The opportunity to submit such request by electronic means made this option widely applied. 69,200 voters requested the change of polling districts.

IV. Financial data

For the 2014 European Parliament elections HUF 5 billion were appropriated from the fund approved for the National Election Office to fulfil its related duties in 2013 and 2014. About 45% of the planned expenditures were made up of costs related to the duties of the local

and regional election bodies. Expected central costs included the charges of printing material and postal services, the development and running costs of the electronic systems, and the operational costs of endpoint connections of election offices.

V. Conclusion

The European Parliament elections were conducted in a statutory manner, in compliance with the Fundamental Law of Hungary and other legal regulations, without any complication. I would like to express my gratitude to tens of thousands persons, civil servants and election body staff members, whose involvement was essential for the success of the election.

I would like to ask the Esteemed Parliament to kindly accept this report.

Budapest, 17 June 2014

Dr. Ilona PÁLFFY
President of the National Election Office