

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION
AFTER THE PRESS CONFERENCE HELD AT THE NEC HEADQUARTERS
ON 19TH NOVEMBER 2010.

On 19th November 2010 in the seat of the National Electoral Commission, a press conference was held concerning elections for municipal councils, county councils and regional assemblies and elections for the positions of reeves, mayors and presidents of cities scheduled for 21st November 2010.

Conference participants:

Chairperson of NEC: Stefan Jaworski,

Vice-Chairperson of NEC: Jan Kacprzak,

Vice-Chairperson of NEC: Stanisław Kosmal,

Member of NEC: Maria Grzelka,

Member of NEC: Antoni Ryms,

Member of NEC: Stanisław Zabłocki,

Secretary of NEC: Kazimierz Czaplicki – Head of the National Electoral Office.

Chairperson of the National Electoral Commission, judge Stefan Jaworski opened the press conference, announcing that it will focus on organizational and legal aspects related to voting, including consequences of violating the election silence, voters' behaviour in polling stations and work of the National Electoral Commission on the Election Day, i.e. 21st November 2010.

NEC Secretary, minister Kazimierz Czaplicki, presented statistical data pertaining to the elections. As of 31st October 2010, there are 30.590.896 people entitled to vote. Upon own request, 403 citizens of EU member States were included in the register of voters in order to take part in the voting on the territory of the Republic of Poland. In total, the elections encompass: 46.809 councillors in 23.101 constituencies and 2.479 reeves, mayors and presidents of cities. 12 candidates from EU member states were registered.

Judge Stanisław Kosmal presented the rules of voting. Polling stations will be opened from 8.00 a.m. until 10.00 p.m. Only people included in the registers of voters will be eligible to vote, as in these elections there are no certificates allowing a person to vote outside the place of permanent residence. A voter whose name was omitted in the register of voters or a person who was discharged from hospital or a penal institution may be entered in the register of voters. It was also reminded that in order to vote, a person needs to present a document with photo, confirming the person's identity.

Voter receives 4 ballot papers:

- white – elections for municipal councils (in the case of Warsaw – the council of the capital city of Warsaw),
- yellow – for county councils (in Warsaw – district councils),
- blue – for regional assemblies,

- pink – for reeves, mayors or presidents of cities.

In communes of fewer than 20 thousand inhabitants, voting takes place through placing an X mark next to names of as many candidates to municipal councils (they can be on different electoral lists) as many councillors are elected in a given constituency. In communes of more than 20 thousand inhabitants, as well as in the case of lists of candidates for county councils and regional assemblies, we elect only one candidate from one committee. On lists of candidates for the position of reeve, mayor or president of a city, the X mark shall be placed next to the name of just one candidate.

Judge Stanisław Kosmal asked for carefulness when voting, as a voter may not make any corrections or supplement anything on the ballot paper, nor receive a second one.

Judge Maria Grzelka explained the notion of election silence, which starts at midnight on Friday, 19th November 2010, and shall last until 10.00 p.m. on Sunday, 21st November 2010.

In that period, it is forbidden to campaign and to announce any results of polls conducted during the campaign or on the day of elections. Judge Maria Grzelka emphasised that on the day of elections it is allowed to encourage people to vote, yet that it should not be done by the candidates themselves, any people from their committees, nor any public officials whose views or preferences for a given candidate are commonly known.

Election silence is not violated by static campaign materials, such as billboards, posters or online materials placed earlier in the Internet. The only exception are polling stations and buildings in which polling stations are located; in that case, all campaign materials should be removed. Election silence is not violated by publication of any corrections, apologies and other materials ordered by the court.

Judge Jan Kacprzak gave an overview of work of the National Electoral Commission on the Election Day. Turns of duty of employees of the National Electoral Commission and the National Electoral Office start on 21st November 2010 at 7.00 a.m. The first press conference of NEC is scheduled for 9.00 a.m. on that day. It will be devoted to the commencement of voting. Subsequent conferences, focusing on the turnout and course of voting, will take place at 11.30 a.m., 4.30 p.m. and 8.30 p.m. Preliminary partial results may be expected after NEC obtains 30% of the voting protocols from electoral commissions.