

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION
AFTER THE PRESS CONFERENCE HELD AT THE NEC HEADQUARTERS
AT MIDDAY ON 3RD DECEMBER 2010.

At 12.00 a.m. CET on 3rd December 2010 in the seat of the National Electoral Commission, a press conference was held concerning the second round of elections for the positions of reeves, mayors and presidents of cities scheduled for 5th December 2010.

Conference participants:

Chairperson of NEC: Judge Stefan Jaworski,

Deputy Chairperson of NEC: Judge Jan Kacprzak,

Deputy Chairperson of NEC: Judge Stanisław Kosmal,

Member of NEC: Judge Maria Grzelka,

Member of NEC: Judge Andrzej Mączyński,

Member of NEC: Judge Włodzimierz Ryms,

Member of NEC: Judge 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 aspects of the runoff from statistical point of view, consequences of violating election silence, voters' behaviour in polling stations and manner of voting, as well as work of the National Electoral Commission on the day of the second round of elections, i.e. 5th December 2010.

NEC Secretary, minister Kazimierz Czaplicki, presented statistical data pertaining to the elections. As of 3rd December 2010, runoff should take place in 738 communes and cities, in which reeves, mayors and presidents were not elected in the first round of voting. In 8 out of the said 738 units, the voting was postponed by another 14 days, that is until 19th December 2010, due to withdrawal of one of the candidates.

Minister Kazimierz Czaplicki announced that provinces with the highest numbers of communes where runoff is necessary are: Mazowieckie (115 units) and Lubelskie (63 units) provinces.

Judge Stanisław Kosmal presented the rules of voting. Polling stations will be opened from 8.00 a.m. until 10.00 p.m. CET. In order to vote, a person needs to present an ID or another document with photo, confirming the person's identity. Each voter will obtain one ballot paper with names of two candidates. To cast a valid vote it is necessary to place an X mark next to the name of one of the candidates.

Judge Maria Grzelka explained the notion of election silence, which starts at midnight on Friday, 3rd December, and shall last until 10.00 p.m. CET on Sunday, 5th December 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. The ban on campaigning encompasses also so called negative campaigning, i.e. behaviours aimed against one of the candidates. 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 before commencement of election silence.

The runoff is taking place only in some communes and it has got a local character. Therefore, election silence has a local character as well; ban on canvassing for a given candidate is related to the area of the commune in which the said candidate is running in the elections. Radio and TV broadcasters who cover communes where runoff is taking place are allowed to present and discuss social and political events on air, provided that the programmes do not include elements of campaigning for candidates. It is allowed to present the candidates by names and present their images in the programmes, if all candidates from a given commune (city) are presented in the same manner.

Judge Maria Grzelka explained that violation of election silence is a misdemeanour punishable with a fine of up to 5 thousand PLN, and announcing publicly results of opinion polls is a crime punishable with a fine of up to 1 million PLN. Assessment whether election silence was violated is carried out by prosecuting authorities and courts, and not by electoral bodies.

Judge Jan Kacprzak gave an overview of work of the National Electoral Commission on the day of elections. Turns of duty of employees of the National Electoral Commission and experts of the National Electoral Office start on 4th December 2010 at 8.00 a.m. CET and will last until 8 p.m. CET. On the day of elections, i.e. 5th December 2010, turns of duty will begin at 7.00 a.m. CET and will last until final results are announced, which will, most probably, take place in the afternoon on Monday, 6th December.

The first press conference of NEC on the runoff day is scheduled for 9.00 a.m. CET on 5th December and it will be devoted to 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. CET. Preliminary partial results may be expected after NEC obtains 30% of the voting protocols from electoral commissions. A conference summarizing the course of voting will take place after 10 p.m. CET.