

# **Prop. 76 L**

**(2017–2018)**

## **Proposition to the Storting (Bill)**

Amendments to the Representation of the People Act  
(constituencies in parliamentary elections, the right to  
put up lists at an election, etc.)

*Recommendation of the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation 10 April 2018,  
approved in the Council of State on the same date.  
(Solberg Government)*

# Contents

1	The main contents of the proposition .....	5
2	Background.....	5
2.1	Introduction.....	5
2.2	The background for the proposed amendments to the Representation of the People Act.....	5
2.2.1	The municipal mergers across counties and border adjustments .....	6
2.3	The Electoral Reform Commission and the need for discussion .....	7
2.4	Conducting the municipal and county council elections in 2019.....	7
2.5	The consultation .....	8
2.6	Consultative bodies .....	8
3	The Bill.....	14
3.1	The background for the consultation.....	14
3.2	Current legislation.....	15
3.3	The Consultation Proposal .....	16
3.3.1	Constituencies .....	16
3.3.2	Electoral Committee.....	16
3.3.3	The right to put up a list of proposed candidates and signature requirements .....	16
3.3.4	Distribution of seats and selecting candidates.....	17
3.3.5	The list candidates at the polling station.....	18
3.3.6	Final count .....	18
3.3.7	Review of parliamentary elections.....	18
3.4	Consultation response .....	19
3.5	The Ministry's evaluations and proposals .....	20
3.5.1	Comments on the comments from the consultative bodies.....	20
3.5.2	The right to put up a list of proposed candidates and signature requirements .....	22
4	Evaluation of the parliamentary election in 2017 .....	24
4.1	Introduction.....	24
4.2	Statistics.....	24
4.2.1	Voter turnout .....	24
4.2.2	Voter turnout according to age .....	24
4.2.3	Voter turnout among immigrants .....	25

4.2.4	Votes received .....	26
4.2.5	Voting abroad.....	26
4.2.6	Rejected votes and ballot papers .....	27
4.2.7	Ballots received too late .....	29
4.2.8	Blank votes .....	30
4.3	Crossing off on the electronic electoral roll on Election Day.....	30
4.4	Manual provisional count .....	31
4.5	Pollbooks.....	31
4.6	Appeals .....	32
4.7	Information to the electors .....	33
4.7.1	General information.....	33
4.7.2	Voter cards.....	33
4.7.3	Extraordinary election to the municipal council in Færder municipality .	34
4.7.4	Distribution of seat and calculation of the seat at large.....	34
4.8	Availability .....	35
4.8.1	Organisation of the polling station .....	35
4.8.2	Universal design.....	36
4.9	External evaluation .....	37
4.9.1	Introduction .....	37
4.9.2	The Election Administration System EVA.....	37
4.9.3	Information .....	38
4.9.4	Training.....	38
4.9.5	User support .....	39
4.9.6	Overall assessment and recommendations.....	40
4.9.7	The Ministry's evaluation .....	41
5	Sami Parliamentary Election .....	41
5.1	Current legislation.....	41
5.2	Voter turnout.....	41
5.3	Evaluation.....	42
6	International election observation.....	42
6.1	Observation of the parliamentary election in 2017 .....	42
6.2	The OSCE report on the parliamentary election in 2017 .....	43
6.2.1	Introduction .....	43
6.2.2	Preference election during advance voting.....	43

6.2.3	Identification.....	43
6.2.4	Visually impaired electors.....	44
6.2.5	Counting advance .....	44
6.2.6	Publication of the election result.....	45
6.2.7	System changes.....	45
6.2.8	Source codes .....	45
6.2.9	Political party funding .....	46
7	Financial and administrative consequences .....	46
8	Comments on the individual proposals.....	46

# **1 The main contents of the proposition**

In this Bill, the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation proposes certain amendments to Act no. 57 of 28 June 2002 no. 57 relating to parliamentary and local government elections (the Representation of the People Act).

The proposed amendments to the Representation of the People Act imply that the parliamentary election in 2021 may be conducted with the current 19 constituencies, pending the review and final consideration of the issue. The Bill also contains a summary of the evaluations of the parliamentary election in 2017, where the Ministry responds to some comments from the Storting's Credentials Committee from Innst. 1 S (2017–2018), Recommendation to the Storting. The report the Ministry received from the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights under the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE/ODIHR) following the observation of the parliamentary election in 2017 is also commented in the Bill.

## **2 Background**

### **2.1 Introduction**

On 8 June 2017, the Storting adopted a new division of the regional democratic level, cf. Prop. 84 S (2016–2017), Proposition to the Storting (Bill) and Innst. 385 S (2016–2017), Recommendation to the Storting and on 8 June 2016, the Storting adopted the merger of the counties of Nord-Trøndelag and Sør-Trøndelag, cf. Prop. 130 LS (2015–2016), Proposition to the Storting (Bill) and Innst. 361 L (2015–2016), Recommendation to the Storting. On the basis of these decisions, the current 19 county authorities have been merged into 11. The mergers will take effect from 1 January 2020, with the exception of the merger of the counties of Nord-Trøndelag and Sør-Trøndelag, which took effect force from 1 January 2018. The new county division will have consequences for the electoral system, as the current counties are constituencies in a parliamentary election.

The Ministry has the overall national responsibility for the conduct of a parliamentary election, and is of the opinion that it is important to ensure a predictable situation for the electors, political parties and local electoral authorities until the issue has been thoroughly discussed. Therefore, in this Bill, the Ministry proposes the necessary amendments to the Representation of the People Act in order to achieve implementation with 19 constituencies at the parliamentary election in 2021.

The Ministry stresses that it is important to allocate sufficient time for adjustments between other legislation, procedures and the election administration system that will be used to conduct the election. The Ministry recommends that by the spring of 2018, the Storting clarifies what the constituencies will be for the parliamentary election in 2021.

### **2.2 The background for the proposed amendments to the Representation of the People Act**

The Constitution of Norway states that there shall be 19 constituencies in a parliamentary election, while the Representation of the People Act states that the counties are the constituencies. The number of counties in Norway no longer corresponds with the number of