The electoral system in the Netherlands

The election for
the House of Representatives

October 29, 2025

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Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations

1 Legal framework and actors

2 Political parties and candidates

3 Voters

4 Voting

5 Counting

6 Measures against election interference

1. Legal framework and actors

Dutch electoral legislation

The Dutch electoral legislation has been laid down in a number of documents:

The **Constitution** provides especially for the right to vote and to stand for election, and for any applicable exceptions and restrictions.

The **Elections Act** provides for the elections of members to the First and Second Chamber of Parliament, the Electoral College for non-residents, the European Parliament, the provincial council, water management boards and municipal councils. In the Caribbean: island councils and electoral colleges for the First Chamber of parliament.

Ministry of the Interior and the Electoral Council

Electoral Council (Kiesraad)

- Central electoral committee

  Responsible for:
  - Tabulation of the election results
  - Candidacy

- Advisory college
- *(from 1-1-26: election authority responsible for quality improvement and support of municipalities)*

Ministry of the Interior

- Responsible for:
  - Electoral law and policy making
  - Voter communication and information
  - (until 1-1-26: support of municipalities in organization of elections)
  - Resilicience and functioning of the democratic system

Organisation of the election is decentralised

The Netherlands has 342 municipalities and 3 public entities in the Carib. Municipalities and public entities are responsible for the organisation of the elections.

Responsibilities of the municipalities:

- Determining who is eligible to vote.
- Printing and distributing voting cards.
- Determining locations for polling stations.
- Selection and training of polling staff.
- Determining election outcome within the municipality.
- Forwarding the outcome to the relevant Central Electoral Committee.

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2. Political parties and candidates

Political parties

- Last election (2023) **26 political parties** were participating.
- In comparison in 2021 there were 37 political parties.
- There are 20 electoral districts for candidacy and determining election results.
- Not all parties participate in every electoral district.
- For now we don’t know how many parties are participating.
- 15 September is the day of candidature

Candidates

- 150 candidates will be elected
- Maximum allowed number of candidates per party differs:
  - If a political party currently does not have seat in the Second chamber or has 15 seats or less > a maximum of 50 candidates.
  - If a political party currently has 16 seats or more in the Second Chamber > a maximum of 80 candidates.
- Candidates must be 18 years or older, have the Dutch nationality and their right to be elected cannot have been revoked by a court order.

3. Voters

- Voter eligibility
- Information to voters
- Voting by proxy
- Voters abroad

Voter eligibility for the Second Chamber elections

- More than 13 million people are eligible to vote for election for the dutch representatives in the European Parliament.
- Citizens are eligible to vote for these elections if:
  - They have reached the age of 18 on election day;
  - They are a Dutch national and
  - Their right to vote hasn't been revoked by a court order.

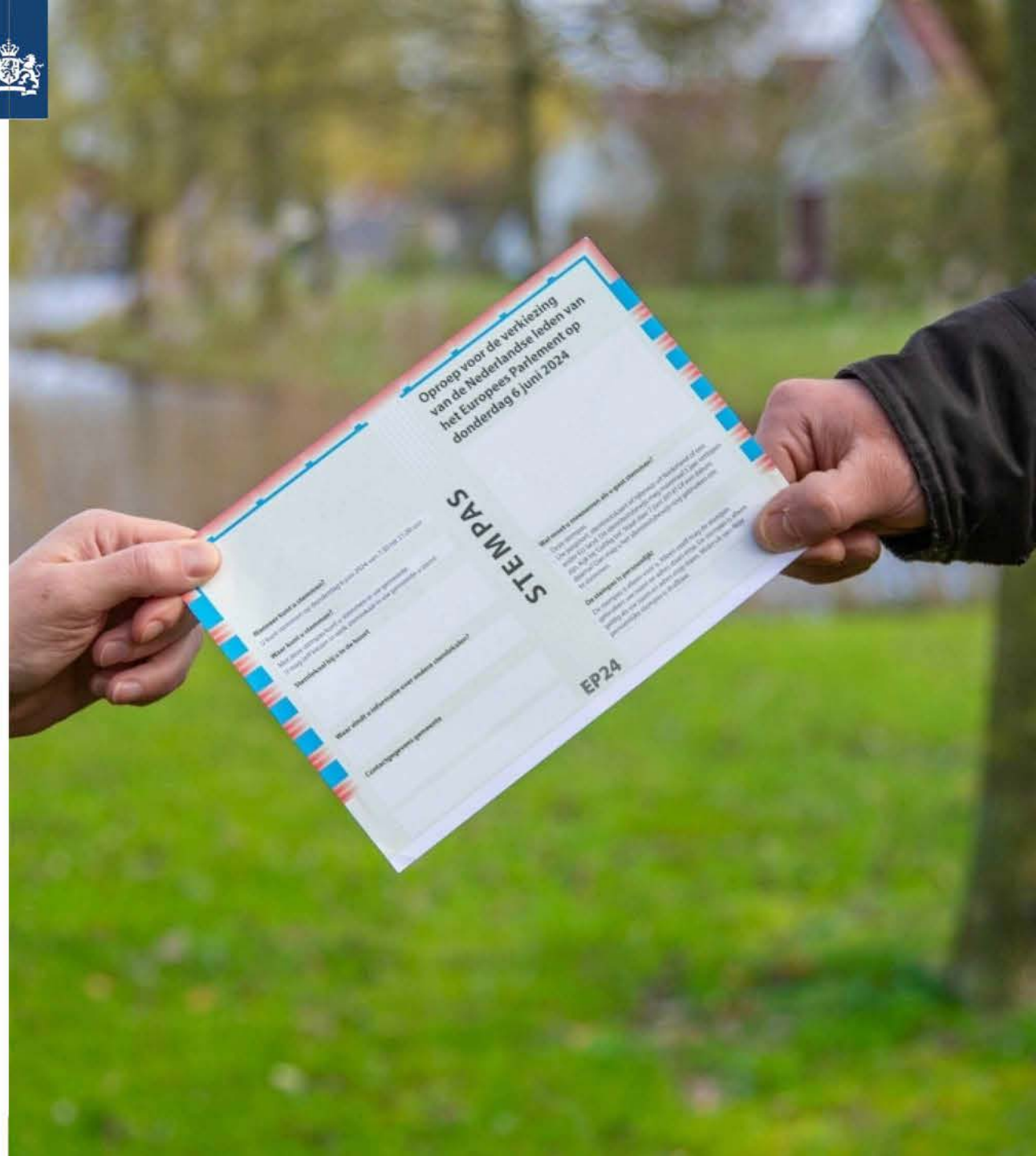
- Voter turnout for this election:
  - 2023: 77,7%
  - 2021: 78,71%
  - 2017: 81,57%
  - 2012: 74,57%

Information to voters

- National public campaign ‘Every Vote Counts’ (Elke Stem Telt).
- All campaign materials are made available for municipalities through the elections toolkit www.verkiezingentoolkit.nl
- Communication materials are developed in cooperation with focus groups.
- The website elkestemtelt.nl contains information and Q&As about the elections.

Voting by proxy

- In the Netherlands, approximately 10% of the votes are cast by proxy.
- The maximum number of proxy votes is 2 per person per election.
- There is an initiative bill pending on early voting in combination with lowering the number of proxy votes to 1.
- A new law tightening the criminalization of recruiting proxies is now pending in the Senate. The law aims to end abuse and the risk of influencing and manipulating voting behaviour through proxy canvassing.



Voters abroad

- Voting by mail
- Permanent registration of voters abroad
- Municipality of The Hague

- Registered voters abroad: +/- 125.000

4. Process of voting

- Types of polling stations
- Process of voting
- Ballot paper
- Experiment with a new ballot paper
- Observing

Types of polling stations

- Regular polling stations (07.30AM-09.00PM)
- Regular polling stations with different counting locations (07.30AM-09.00PM)
- Special polling stations (divergent opening hours)
- Mobile polling stations

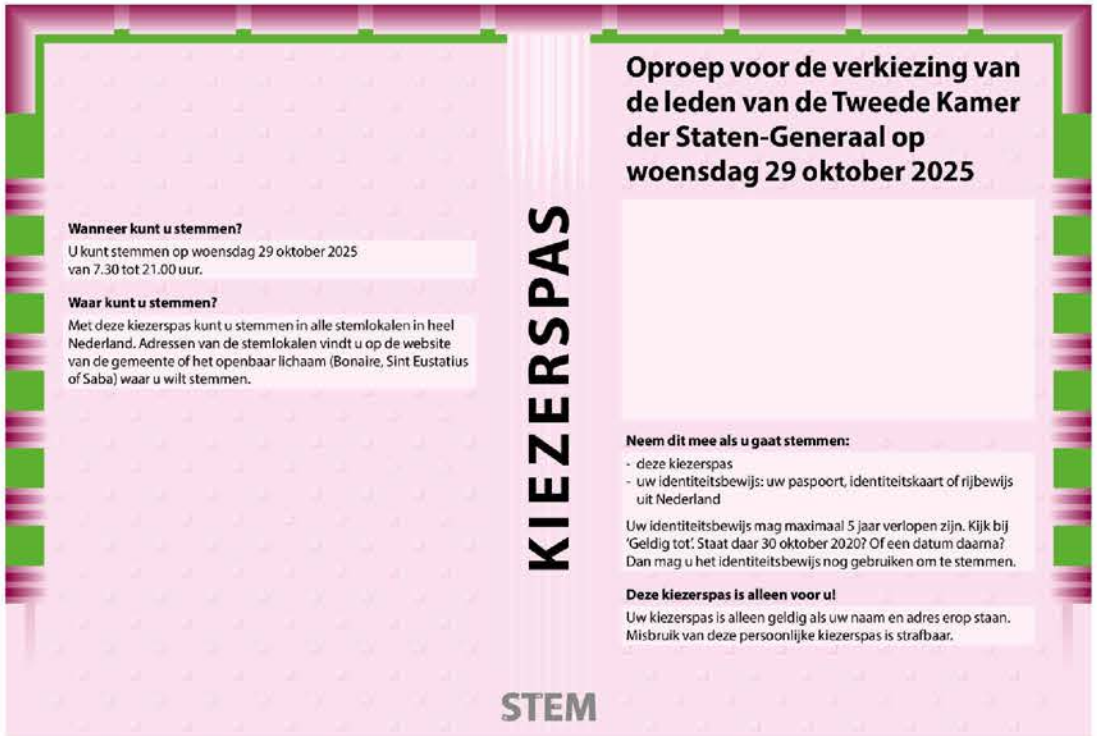
Process of voting

Every voter receives a voting pass at home.

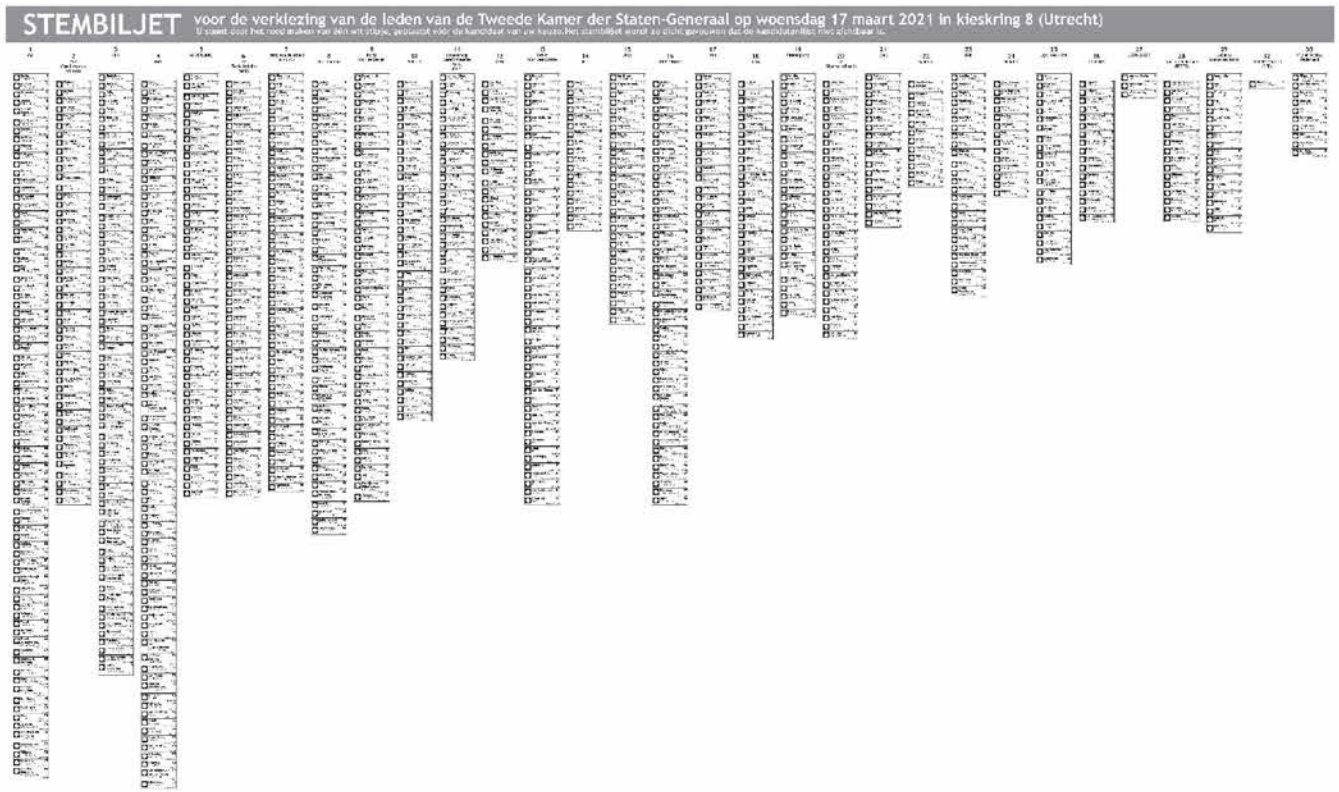
The electoral committee checks the voting pass and identification.

And checks the register of invalid voting passes.

The voter receives a ballot paper to cast a vote.



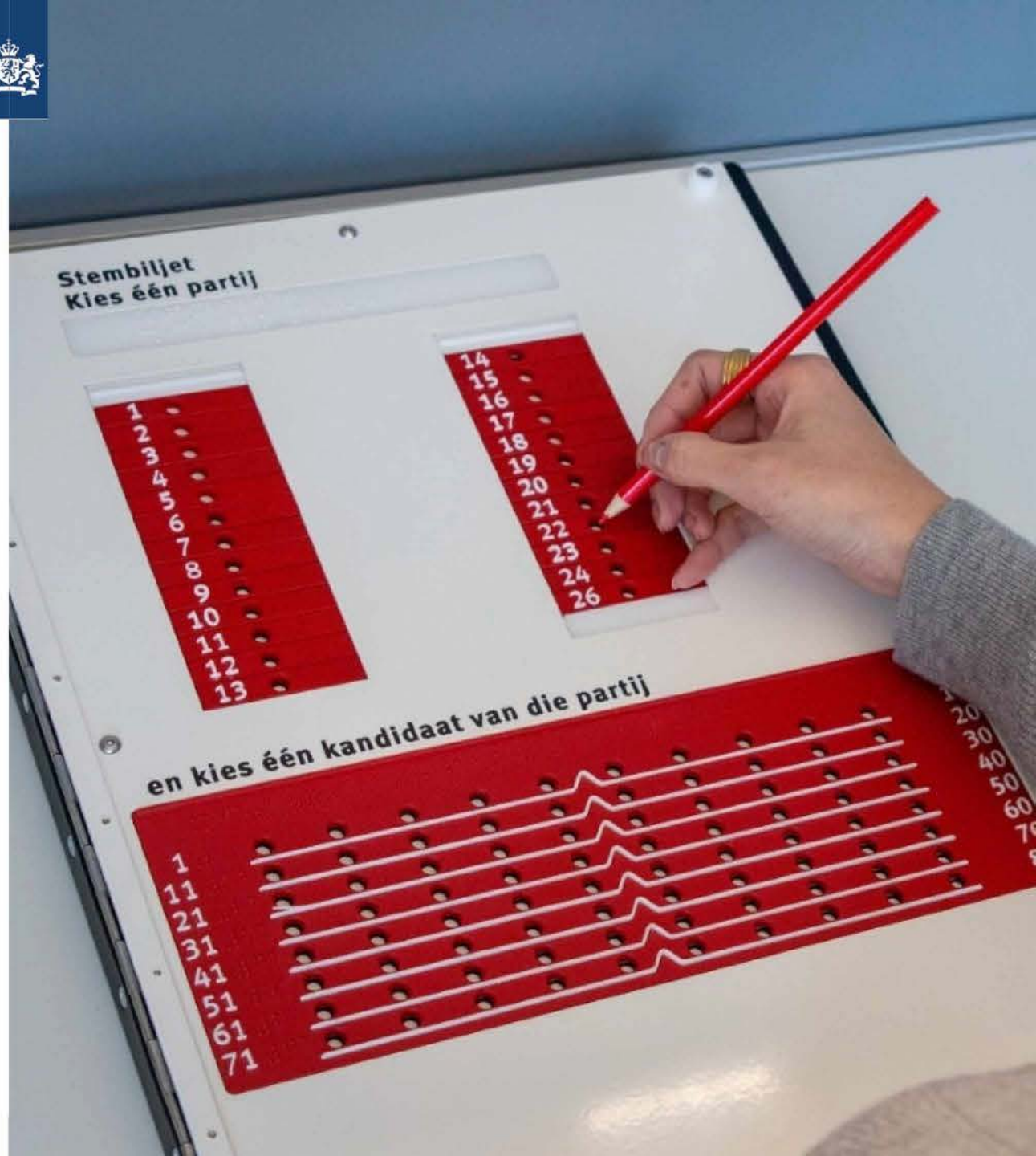
Ballot paper


STEMBILJET voor de verkiezing van de leden van de Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal op woensdag 17 maart 2021 in kieskring 8 (Utrecht)

- An example of a ballot paper.
- The ballot paper contains all the political parties and candidates.
- 70cm x 50cm.
- Experiment with a new model ballot paper.

Experiment with new ballot paper

- Second experiment in five municipalities:
  - Alphen aan den Rijn
  - Boekel
  - Borne
  - Midden-Delfland
  - Tynaarlo
- As this is a by-election, no additional municipalities will be added to the experiment.
- 40cm x 30cm



Experiment with new ballot paper

stembiljet

Dit is geen stembiljet

Overzicht van kandidaten

[Aanduiding van de verkiezing] [datum]

1	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	15	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	29	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]
2	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	16	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	30	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]
3	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	17	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	31		
4	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	18	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	32	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]
5	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	19	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	33	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]
6	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	20	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	34	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]
7	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	21	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	35	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]
8	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	22		[Aanduiding van de partij]	36		[Aanduiding van de partij]
9	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	23	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	37	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]
10	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	24	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	38	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]
11	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	25	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	38	Logo	
12	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	26	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	40	Logo	
13	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	27	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]			
14	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]	28	Logo	[Aanduiding van de partij]			

Ga naar de bladzijde met de partij en kandidaat van uw keuze

Observing the voting and counting of the votes

- It is allowed to observe the voting and counting of the votes in the polling station.
- It is allowed:
  - To observe
  - Take notes
  - Make photos
  - Submit an objection.

5. Counting

Counting the votes

- Counting manual by electoral committee in the polling stations and by municipal electoral committee.
- Report for each polling station.
- Municipal results and reports are published online as soon as possible.
- Checks by central electoral committee.
- If checks lead to a recount and corrections, a report will be published online.
- Public hearing municipal electoral committee and central electoral committee.

Information online

www.elkestemtelt.nl

www.kiesraad.nl

Websites of municipalities

www.verkiezingsuitslagen.nl

6. Measures against election interference

Free and fair elections

- Election tables
- Security briefing local government officials
- Government wide strategy for effectively tackling disinformation
- Communication strategy
- Election flagger status

- Whole-of-society approach: each stakeholder has their own responsibility
- Role platforms under DSA:
  - Following own terms and conditions
  - Identify systemic risks for electoral processes and take measures against them

Questions?

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