

Minister Pūce: the possibility to vote electronically in municipal referendums

Published: 16.09.2020.

Municipalities

Press release



Riga, September 16, 2020 - Today the Saeima Public Administration and Local Government Commission conceptually supported the proposals of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development (VAR) in the Local Government References Law. We can encourage citizens to be able to vote electronically, not only to participate in referendums.

Minister Juris Pūce (AP!): "The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development has made it one of its priorities in working on regulatory frameworks to create a system where civil society has ample opportunities to engage in local government work and decision-making. Proposals for participation in the referendum by electronic means would be a modern and logical follow-up to initiatives such as the participation budget, the right to submit collective submissions and the involvement of resident boards in the work of local governments, which the Ministry has provided for in the Local Government Bill. These are steps that would strengthen civil society, without an active co-operation of which there is no democratic state."

The Law on Local Government References has already been submitted to the Saeima in 2013, which provides that the collection of signatures on the opening of a municipal referendum is being carried out electronically, so the Ministry recommends including in the Law the possibility not only to sign up for the need for a referendum, but also to vote electronically, while not excluding the possibility of making their choice in person at the polling station.

We can expect a referendum to take place on the basis of the voting system of the Central Election Commission (CEC) during certain working days, while on Saturday there would be a vote at the polling station. In order to participate in the referendum electronically, it would be necessary to authorize using the secure electronic signature. . The Saeima commission agreed today to set up a working group that will submit proposals for electronic voting to the commission within three weeks.

The amendments to the draft law WE HAVE drafted have been aligned with the CEC. The system of prior electronic voting is scheduled to be drawn up by 1 January 2023 at the latest.

Other information:

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<https://www.varam.gov.lv/en/article/minister-puce-possibility-vote-electronically-municipal-referendums>