



RIPE NCC
RIPE NETWORK COORDINATION CENTER

Dutch Elections

What you didn't need to know

Czech and Dutch Elections Side By Side



Czech Elections

- October 2025
- Lower chamber
- 200 seats
- 14 voting regions
- 5% quorum
- One ballot **per party**
- *It did not end up well*

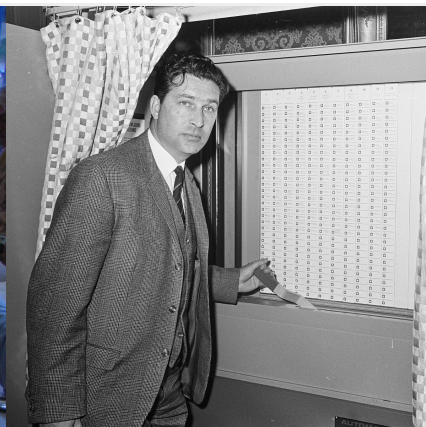
Dutch Elections

- October 2025
- Lower (*second*) chamber
- 150 seats
- 1 voting region
- No quorum
- One ballot **per voter**
- *It did not end up well*



The red pencil

Before the red pencil, there were computers!



Images: GerardM Wikipedia CC-BY-SA

The red pencil returned after 2007



Lack of trust was the biggest issue

- **Air-gapped** machines
- Vote is cast by **pressing a button**
- Machine **gives out results** at the end
- You don't find your vote in the results?
Bad luck
- Counting paper ballots is **error-prone**, but **verifiable**

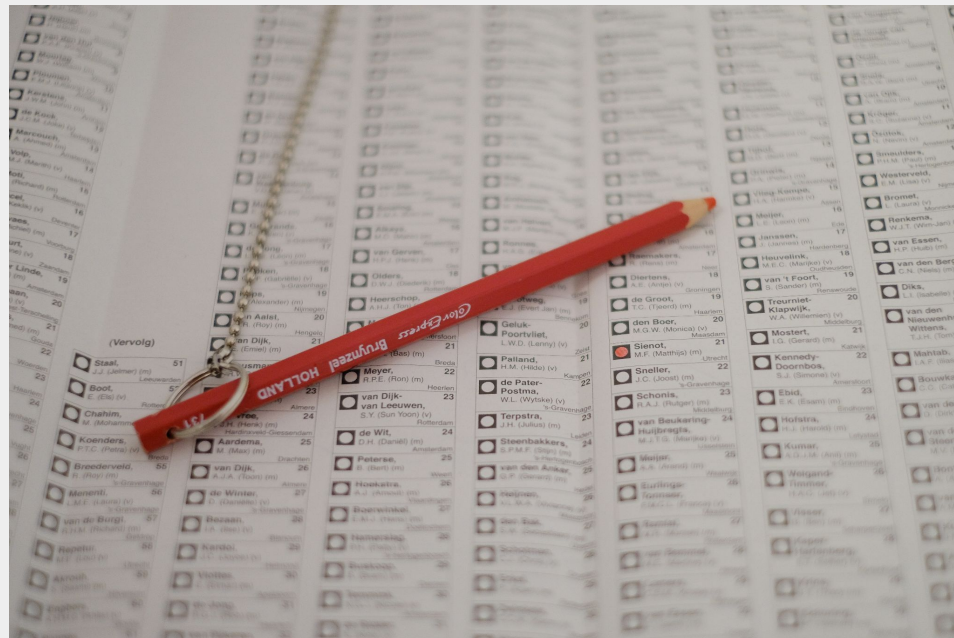


Image: Ter-burg Wikimedia Commons CC-BY





**Let's look at the practical
side of it...**

What you need to vote



Czech Elections

- At least 18 y. o.
- Citizenship
- Valid **proof of identity**
- You go to your **regular voting station** based on your home address

Dutch Elections

- At least 18 y. o.
- Citizenship
- Proof of identity that **expired no more than 5 years ago** 🤔
- **Stempas** you received by post
- You go to **any voting station** in your municipality

Not at home during voting day?



Czech Elections

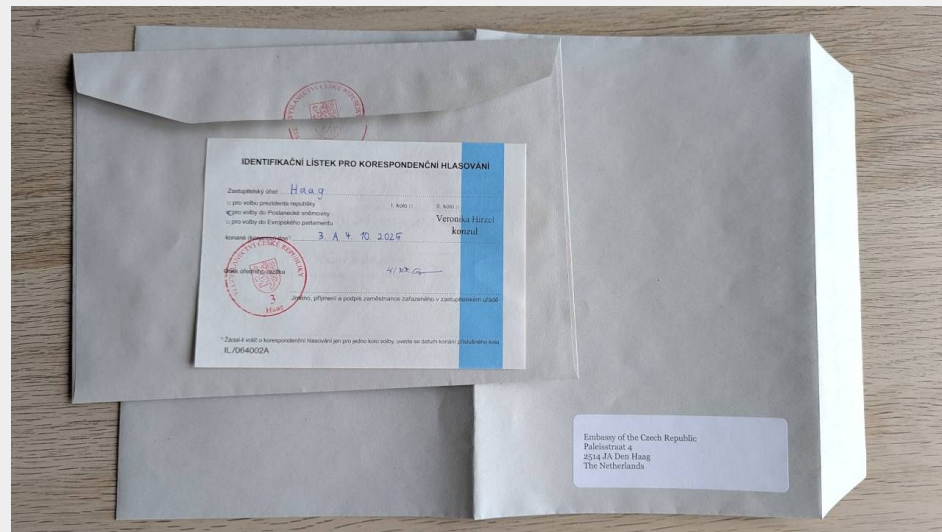
- Apply for **Voličský průkaz**
- If it gets lost, **bad luck**
- You can vote anywhere in the country or at **any consulate**
- **Voting by post** only for people abroad long-term
- You have to **vote personally**

Dutch Elections

- Apply for **Kiezerspas**
- If it gets lost, **apply again**
- You can vote anywhere in the country or in **Caribbean Netherlands**
- **Voting by post** only for people abroad long-term
- You can **vote by proxy**

The method of two envelopes

- Receive **two envelopes** and an identification card
- Print and fill your ballot
- Put your ballot into the inner envelope
- Send outer envelope containing **inner envelope, identification card** and **photocopy of passport** 🙄 (NL only)
- You can **override your postal voting** in person at the consulate (CZ only)



Voting by proxy in the Netherlands



The only option for people temporarily away

- Give **power of attorney** to another voter
- Give them a **photocopy of your passport** 🤔
- The other voter casts your vote **together with theirs**
- One person can vote **only for two others**
- Soliciting powers of attorney is a **criminal offense**





The voting on site

The ballots are HUGE!



And you can only select one person

- **Smaller ballots** were piloted for the second time in **five municipalities**
- You **choose party** and optionally the person from that party
- If you choose higher person number than the party lists, the **vote is invalid**
- Last year's pilot had **higher amount of invalid votes** with the new ballots

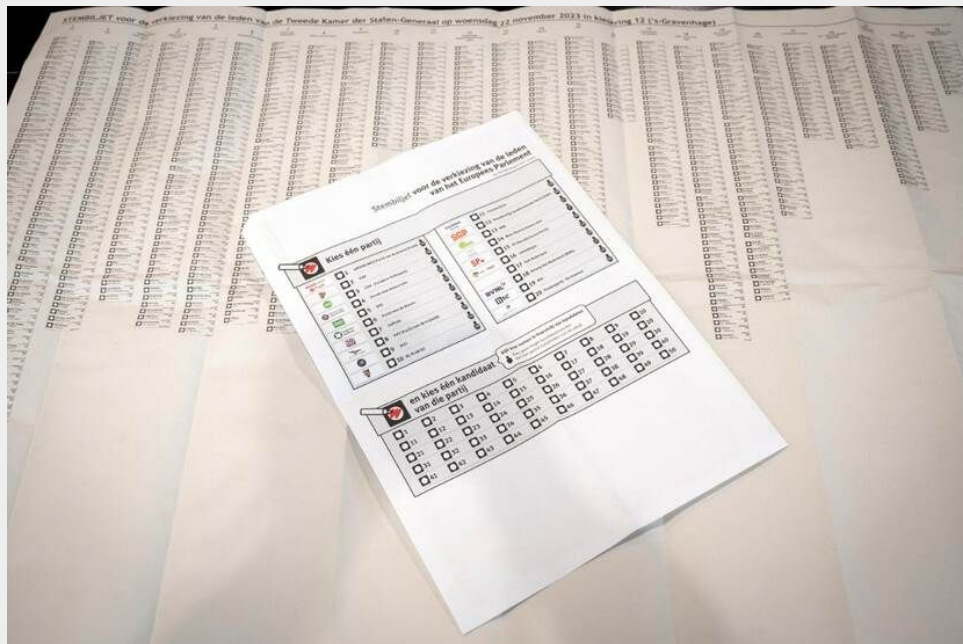


Image: Rijksoverheid

Ballots are casted into a trash can



And there's designated tool to unstuck it



The counting happens in two stages



And both are public

1. Ballots are **unfold** and sorted into **odd and even** heap
2. Ballots are sorted and **counted per party** number
3. Folded packages of ballots are given to the Mayor
4. Next day, votes per candidate are counted at a **central location** (NDSM)
5. Everything is **counted twice**



The party numbers are not random



They are assigned based on previous results

- Only new parties get random number
- Most votes are casted to parties with **low numbers**
- This makes sorting easier on a **limited table space**



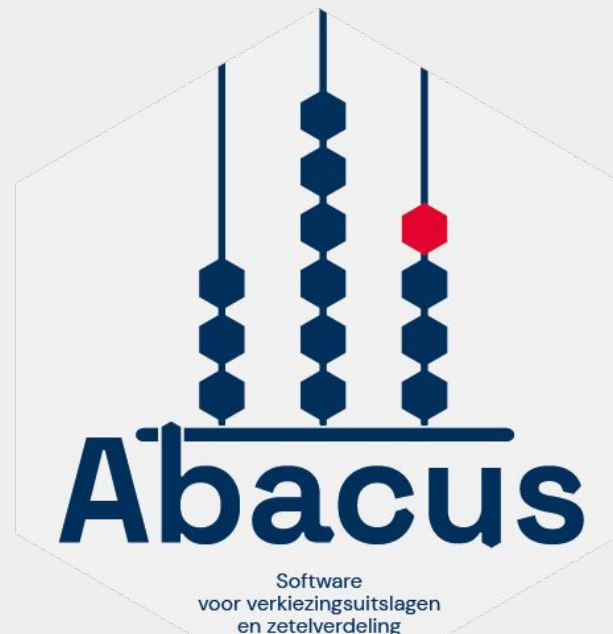
The Netherlands uses German software for elections



But they are building their own open source Abacus

There were **talks at WHY2025**:

- How election software can fail
- Abacus: Open source software for the Dutch Elections



<https://github.com/kiesraad/abacus>





No Time For Questions & Comments



<https://Ondřej.Caletka.nl>