

# Municipal Elections 9 April

Advance voting 29 March – 4 April



Which issues are important to you?  
What do you want your local councillors  
to focus on?

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2017

## What do municipalities do and how will their role change in the future?

- Finland's municipalities play a vital local government role, fostering participation and democracy at local level.
- The municipalities perform a range of functions laid down by law and other functions that are related to their self-governing status and decided by their residents.
- Each municipality takes decisions on a wide range of local matters closely affecting the lives of its residents.
- The municipalities arrange a significant proportion of basic public services, such as education, sports and fitness services and cultural services.
- The highest decision-making body in a municipality is the municipal council. The council is elected in municipal elections once every four years.
- The municipal council takes decisions on matters concerning the municipality's activities and finances.
- The functions and role of municipalities will change during the coming term of the municipal councils. This is due to the regional government reform, establishing a new level of government: the counties. In the future, health and social services will be organised by the new counties.
- Health and social services will be transferred from the municipalities to the counties in 2019.
- Despite changes in the role of the municipalities, they will still be responsible for a range of key basic services important to their residents, and for the wellbeing of their residents and the vitality of the local area.

## Responsibilities of municipalities, counties and central government

### COUNTIES

- Skills and education
- Health and wellbeing
- Sports and culture
- Youth work
- Local industrial and business policy
- Land use and construction

### MUNICIPALITIES

- Health and social services
- Rescue services
- Environmental health services
- Regional development
- Guidance for regional land use and construction
- Employment and business services
- Regional planning of transport systems and public transport
- Rural development and farm relief services

### CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

- Ensuring the rule of law
- Safeguarding and assessing basic rights
- Safety and security
- National and international tasks
- Public guardianship

## New Local Government Act

The new Local Government Act focuses especially on the following:

### Sustainability

Municipal finances to be based on what is efficient and reasonable in the longer run.

### Management

New management methods in local government to enhance economic efficiency.

### Democracy

Improved scope for local residents to influence matters and greater interaction with decision-makers.

### Flexibility

Municipalities can introduce solutions tailored to their needs.

### New practices

Increase in online services and easier cooperation between municipalities..

Sustainability

Management

Democracy

Flexibility

New practices



MINISTRY OF FINANCE

