



Niedersächsischer
Landeswahlleiter

MUNICIPAL ELECTION 2006

On September 10, 2006, the polling stations in Lower Saxony will be open from 8 am to 6 pm. During this time the citizens of Lower Saxony will elect their municipal governments in the counties, towns, local districts, parishes and villages. In several counties, towns, parishes and communities, the eligible voters will vote directly for their local councils, mayors, and lord mayors. In a few cases there even might be a second ballot which will be held on September 24, 2006. Wherever this may be the case, you will be informed through public announcements by the local election official.

Persons who are entitled to vote in several elections at the same time, e.g. in the elections for the county council, municipal council and for the mayor, shall receive several ballots. The names of the candidates taking part in the election will be shown on the ballots and the admitted candidates shall be published by public notice to be issued by the electoral board approximately four weeks prior to election day. Political parties, voter groups or individual candidates can make nominations.

Who is allowed to vote ?

You are allowed to vote if you are either a German citizen or a citizen of another member state of the European Union (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Spain, Slovakia, Slovenia and United Kingdom), if you are **16** years of age **on election day**, and

- have been, for at least three months, a resident of the respective constituency in which you like to vote (e.g. in the county if you like to vote for the county council),
- and have not been excluded from your right to vote,
- are listed in the register of voters or are in the possession of a ballot.

The registers of voters are kept at the local districts. In general, your name will be automatically entered in the register of voters, provided that you have not forgotten to seek registration (in proper time) in your local district !

Where to cast your vote ?

If your name has been entered in the register of voters, you will automatically receive a ballot card indicating at which polling station you are entitled to vote.

As an exception, you will be entitled to cast your vote by absentee ballot, provided that you have applied for and received a postal ballot (see overleaf).

How to cast your vote?

You will receive **one ballot for each election** in which you vote (e.g. one for the election of the local council and one for your municipal council, and where applicable one ballot each for voting a district administrator or a mayor).

Election of Representatives

Unlike the federal government and regional government elections, you may **cross-mark each ballot three times** in the election for the people's representatives (e.g. county council, local council). You may cast **three** votes on one ballot!

You may either cast all three votes for an electoral proposal (entire list of candidates) or for one single candidate from a list of nominated candidates. However, you may split your votes onto several lists of candidates and/or several individual candidates of the same list and/or different nomination lists.

Election of Mayors and District Administrators

In the event that the election in your constituency is carried out by way of direct election, you will be entitled to **only one vote** in each election. You may give your vote to the direct candidate of your choice by marking the ballot accordingly.

What do you have to keep in mind?

- ◆ If you have not received a ballot card until August 18, 2006, your name has probably not been entered in the register of voters. You are able to check by yourself whether your name has been entered: the electoral board of your local district will make the register of voters available to you between August 21 and August 25, 2006. If you are not registered, you may apply for correction prior to August 25, 2006. Please observe that, if you are a resident of several places in one constituency at the same time, your name will be entered in the register of voters **only at the location of your main residence!**
- ◆ It is a democratic tradition to go to the polling station on election day in person. However, should important reasons (e.g. illness or old age) exceptionally prevent you from going and voting at the polling station in person, or should your name have not been entered in the register of voters for reasons you are not to be made responsible of, you are entitled to apply for a ballot paper and make use of the **postal ballot** procedure.
- ◆ The ballot paper and other documents needed for the **postal ballot** are available at your local district administration upon written or oral application (not by phone call). Your application is to be made at the latest at 6 pm on September 18, 2006. In exceptional cases, you may also apply for and collect the documents for other voters, but only if you provide a written authorisation.
- ◆ Your postal ballot documents will be sent to your address, in the event that you shall not collect them in person. A person acting in your stead is entitled to collect the documents for you - by providing a written authorisation - only in case of sudden illness, when the documents cannot be sent in proper time and the person entitled to vote declares in written form that he/she has suddenly fallen ill.
- ◆ The postal ballot must be returned to the electoral board of your local district at the latest at 6 pm on September 10, 2006. The voter must take care that the postal ballot is returned in time.
- ◆ Should you have further questions, please ask your election official or the electoral board of your local district or county.