

On Elections to the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus

The Council of the Republic of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus is one of the houses of the Parliament.

The composition of the Council of the Republic is 64 members.

Election of members of the Council of the Republic is carried out on the basis of equal and direct suffrage at secret ballot.

The Council of the Republic is a house of territorial representation. The procedure of formation of the Council of the Republic combines elements of both election and appointment. Eight members of the Council of the Republic are appointed by the President of the Republic of Belarus. Other members are elected at secret ballot by local Councils of Deputies of the basic level, eight members of the Council of the Republic from each region and the city of Minsk.

The Constitution of the Republic of Belarus establishes certain requirements to citizens being nominated as candidates for members of the Council of the Republic. A citizen of the Republic of Belarus, aged at least 30 and having resided in the territory of the respective region, the city of Minsk no less than five years may become a member of the Council of the Republic. Besides, citizens having a criminal record may not be candidates for members of the Council of the Republic.

The same person may not be a member of two houses of the Parliament at the same time. A member of the Council of the Republic may not be a member of the Government at the same time. It is not permitted to combine duties of a member of the Council of the Republic with the office of the President or a judge at the same time.

The procedure of holding the election of members of the Council of the Republic is determined by the Electoral Code of the Republic of Belarus.

The election of members of the Council of the Republic of new convocation is appointed by the President of the Republic of Belarus no later than four months and held no later than 30 days prior to termination of powers of the Council of the Republic of the current convocation.

Holding the elections of members of the Council of the Republic is ensured by the following:

the Central Commission of the Republic of Belarus on Elections and Holding Republican Referenda (further referred to as the Central Commission);

local Councils of Deputies of the regional and basic level – district and city (regional cities) Councils and the respective executive committees and in the city of Minsk – Minsk City Council of Deputies and Minsk City Executive Committee.

The right to nominate candidates for members of the Council of the Republic belongs to presidiums of local Councils of Deputies of basic level and the respective executive committees, and in the city of Minsk it belongs to the presidium of Minsk City Council of Deputies and Minsk City Executive Committee.

Candidates for members of the Council of the Republic are registered by the Central Commission. A decision on registration of a candidate for members of the Council of the Republic is taken on the basis of documents are submitted to the Central Commission. The list of these documents is provided in the Electoral Code.

The Central Commission checks compliance of the procedure of nominating candidates for members of the Council of the Republic with the requirements of the electoral legislation, composes a conclusion thereabout and takes a decision on registration as candidates for members of the Council of the Republic or a reasoned decision on refusal of registration. The decision of the Central Commission on refusal of registration may be appealed against in the Supreme Court of the Republic of Belarus within three days after making this decision.

The registered candidates for members of the Council of the Republic are elected at the sittings of deputies of local Councils of Deputies of the basic level of the region, deputies of Minsk City Council of Deputies. The Central Commission provides its conclusion on eligibility of their nomination prior to electing the members of the Council of the Republic.

The Electoral Code that candidates for members of the Council of the Republic are entitled to make statements at the sitting presenting the programme of prospective activities. Every deputy participating in the sitting has the right to ask questions to a candidate for members of the Council of the Republic, express his/ her opinion, campaign for or against the nominated candidate.

At the sitting the decision on including the candidates for members of the Council of the Republic in a voting ballot issued to every deputy, participating in the sitting, is made. When holding the election of members of the Council of the Republic every participant of the sitting votes personally, it is not permitted to vote on behalf of other deputies.

A candidate for members of the Council of the Republic deems elected if he/ she received more than a half of votes of deputies having taken part in voting.

The Central Commission establishes the results of the election of members of the Council of the Republic from regions and the city of Minsk, registers the elected members of the Council of the Republic and sends a message thereabout to the press.