**Factsheet on the preliminary results of the legislative election in Kazakhstan**

**Overview**

Elections to the Mazhilis (the lower chamber of the Kazakh parliament) and the maslikhats (local administrative bodies) took place on March 19.

Seven political parties competed in the election, including two new parties.

In line with recent legislative changes in Kazakhstan, political parties need to pass the **five percent threshold** to gain seats in the Mazhilis, which will consist of 98 members – 69 elected by party lists and 29 in single-mandate constituencies. There were 281 party list candidates vying for 69 seats and approximately 370 single-mandate candidates (including independent and self-nominated) seeking 29 seats in the lower house.

**Preliminary election results**

Preliminary results were announced on March 20 by the Central Electoral Commission:

* **Amanat** – 53.9% (over 3.4 million votes)
* **Auyl** – 10.9% (693,938 votes)
* **Respublica** – 8.59% (547,154)
* **Aq Jol** – 8.41% (535,139)
* **People’s Party of Kazakhstan** – 6.8% (432,290)
* **National Social Democratic Party** – 5.2% (331,058)
* **Baytaq** – 2.30% (146,431)

3.90% chose the option **“against all”** – 248,291 votes.

The results mean that six out of the seven parties received enough votes to pass the required five percent threshold to gain seats in parliament.

**Voter turnout**

Preliminary voter turnout has been set at just over **54 percent of eligible voters**. This means over **6.3 million Kazakh citizens** out of more than 12 million eligible voters cast their ballots.

Voter turnout in cities of national significance:

* **Astana** – 42.41%
* **Shymkent** – 45.46%
* **Almaty** – 25.82%

High voter turnout was noted in the following regions:

* **Kyzylorda Region** – 67.21%
* **Zhambyl Region** – 65.23%
* **Kostanai Region** – 65.1%
* **North Kazakhstan Region** – 65.25%
* **East Kazakhstan Region** – 64.15%

**Monitoring of the election by international observers**

793 international observers from 41 foreign states and 12 international organizations monitored the election. The observers noted the following:

* **Candidates campaigned actively and freely**. The increased competition, particularly with self-nominated candidates, is a significant development. Electoral preparations were administered efficiently (*OSCE Parliamentary Assembly)*
* **The election was transparent** with no interference or obstacles *(Margarita Assenova, Senior Fellow of The Jamestown Foundation)*
* **No serious violations** *(CIS Interparliamentary Assembly)*
* **No irregularities** *(Erhan Türbedar, Vice President of the International Turkic Academy)*
* **Active voter participation** **among the youth** *(observers from the Interparliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States)*
* **Peaceful and orderly voting** *(Shanghai Cooperation Organisation)*
* **Election was in line with national legislation and international standards** *(Alexander Markevich, a member of the Collective Security Treaty Organization’s Parliamentary Assembly)*

In addition, international observers made the following observations and comments about the election:

* **Grigory Logvinov, Deputy Secretary General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization**, said no election-related problems were witnessed by the mission in the dozens of sites visited by them. “The mission regards the election as transparent, trustworthy, and democratic.”
* **Sadi Jafarov, Deputy Secretary General of the Organization of Turkic States**, said the election was transparent and competitive. The mission observed no violations of the norms of the legislation.
* **Pedro Roque Oliveira, member of the Parliament of the Portuguese Republic and Vice-President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean**, said Kazakhstan, a country that upholds the defining features of a democracy, such as the rule of law, freely elected parliament, strong opposition, and representative government, might serve as an example for the region.
* **Daniel Robert Kawczynski, a member of the UK Parliament**, commended Kazakhstan’s dedication to the expansion of freedom and democracy, saying “I must applaud the will of the Kazakh people in working together in such a short period of time, after the fall of the Soviet Union, to create this functioning democracy.”
* **Dr Kamran Bokhari, Senior Director of the Eurasian Security and Prosperity Portfolio at the New Lines Institute**, said Kazakh citizens were motivated to vote because of new political parties that promoted different election campaigns and values.
* **Recep Şeker, Head of the Observers Mission of the Turkic States Parliamentary Assembly**, said the mission observed all stages of the election process, noting that they are satisfied with the level of preparation and give a positive assessment to these elections, including organisational measures.

**Background to the legislative election**

* President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev first proposed holding elections to the Mazhilis and maslikhats in his **Address to the Nation** on September 1 last year.
* This legislative election constitutes the **final stage in the political renewal cycle** initiated by President Tokayev, which started with a presidential election on November 20 last year and continued with a Senate election on January 14 this year.
* Significant changes have been made to the electoral system in comparison to the previous elections following constitutional amendments last year. In particular, a **proportional-majoritarian model** was used for the first time since 2004, where 30 percent of Mazhilis members are elected in single-member districts.
* The **threshold** for political parties to gain seats in parliament has been **lowered from seven to five percent**.
* Other changes include an **“against all” column** on the ballots, and a **30 percent quota for women, youth, and persons with special needs** in party lists.
* Two new parties that participated in the election (Respublica and Baytaq) were able to register due to **simplified party registration rules**.
* Previous legislative election in Kazakhstan took place in January 2021. Five parties participated in that election, with three parties gaining seats in the Mazhilis – the ruling Amanat party (previously Nur Otan), Aq Jol, and the People’s Party.