

In the example schedule below, you will find an overview of all activities that take place during the elections. The deadlines are based on the SER model regulations. Always check the Works Council regulations to see whether different deadlines apply.

	What	Explanation	Who
AT LEAST 15 WEEKS BEFORE THE ELECTIONS			
○	If necessary, amend the Works Council regulations.	The Works Council regulations set out the number of seats, any electoral groups, any schedule of retirement, the nomination procedure, the method of voting (individual candidates or list system), the determination of the results, and the way in which interim vacancies are filled.	
○	In consultation with the employer, determine the date and the start and end times of the voting.	This date may not be earlier than four weeks and not later than two weeks before the end of the term of office of the outgoing Works Council members. Do not schedule elections during a holiday period.	
○	Optional: establish or expand the election committee.	Composition of the committee: at least three members. Preferably a neutral committee: the (official) secretary, a Works Council member who is not standing for re-election, and a member from outside the Works Council.	
○	Determine the facilities.	This may include, among other things: time, budget, other resources and support. When determining the required time, take the following aspects into account: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preparing letters, leaflets and forms; • sending election newsletters, voting notices and similar communications; • setting up and staffing the polling station. 	
○	Schedule for the organisation of the elections.	Prepare a schedule for this election, including specific dates, actions and responsible parties.	
○	Preparation of the electoral register.	In accordance with the regulations, determine the criteria for passive and active voting rights (eligible voters and eligible candidates). Provide these criteria to the HR department and request a list of employees who meet these criteria; this list forms the electoral register. If necessary, also request address labels (for sending information to home addresses, distributing voting notices, etc.). <p>This electoral register (for electoral groups, it must be drawn up per group):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • must be published to employees as the first step in the election process, so that everyone knows which voting rights apply in these elections; • is used to verify the validity of candidate lists (whether a candidate is eligible); • makes it possible to check whether the submitter of a trade union member on a free list is eligible to vote; • is used to send voting notices or ballot papers. 	

○	Consider the publicity around the elections. Draw up a communication plan.	<p>At this stage, consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a leaflet about the content of Works Council activities; • an article in the staff magazine; • an information meeting about Works Council activities; • personally approaching employees to ask whether they are interested in Works Council membership; • posters and similar materials; • encouraging employees to stand as candidates. 	
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13 WEEKS BEFORE THE ELECTIONS

○	The Works Council secretary notifies the employer, the persons working in the organisation, and the relevant employee organisations (see the collective labour agreement) of the election date and the opening hours of the polling station.	<p>Notification to employees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when the current term of office ends; • the date and time of the elections; • the method of voting; • the criteria for eligibility to vote and to stand as a candidate; • when and where the electoral register will be available for inspection, including the possibility to submit an objection to this list (sending or emailing is also permitted); • the start and closing dates of the nomination periods for trade union lists and free lists. <p>Notification to employee organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when the current term of office ends; • the election date; • the closing date for submitting trade union lists (no later than six weeks before the election date); • the candidate lists must be accompanied by statements from the candidates confirming that they accept the nomination. 	
○	Publication of the electoral register (names only, no personal address details!).	This may take place up to no later than nine weeks before the election date, for example by making the list available for inspection at the Works Council secretariat and in the staff canteen, or by enclosing or emailing it together with the above notification.	

11 WEEKS BEFORE THE ELECTIONS

○	Preparation of the election campaign.	<p>Already consider activities for the second phase of the election (the voting). Encourage employees to cast their vote, for example through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • election bulletins and the intranet; • promotional materials (such as printed pens); • posters and similar materials. 	
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10 WEEKS BEFORE THE ELECTIONS

○	Induction programme for new Works Council members.	At this stage, there is not much work required for the elections. This is a good moment to consider how the handover will take place and how new Works Council members can be inducted as effectively as possible. Options for scheduling a Works Council training course after the elections can also be explored.
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9 WEEKS BEFORE TE ELECTIONS

○	Deadline for publishing the electoral register.	See the explanation above, under 13 weeks.
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6 WEEKS BEFORE THE ELECTIONS

○	Deadline for submitting trade union candidate lists.	When a candidate list is submitted, a dated acknowledgement of receipt is sent to the relevant employee organisation.
○	Prepare the nomination forms for independent candidate lists in advance.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A form for the proposer of an independent list, on which the name(s) of the candidate(s) can be entered. 2) Separate forms for individual candidates, on which they confirm that they accept their nomination.
○	Notify the organisation that eligible employees may stand as candidates via independent lists until no later than three weeks before the elections.	<p>Make sure to state the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that nomination forms are available from the Works Council secretariat; • which trade unions have submitted a candidate list; • that eligible employees who are not members of a trade union, or who are members of a trade union that has not submitted candidates, may stand for election on an independent candidate list and may submit such a list themselves as eligible voters; • that eligible employees who are members of a trade union that has submitted candidates may be nominated on an independent list by at least one eligible employee who is not a member of a trade union that has submitted candidates; • that a candidate's name may appear on only one list; • that each candidate must sign a declaration confirming acceptance of the nomination.

4 WEEKS BEFORE THE ELECTIONS

<input type="radio"/>	Agreements on the setup and staffing of the polling station.	Agree on who will staff the polling station at which times and make practical arrangements for election day.	
<input type="radio"/>	Agree in advance with the employer on a date for the installation of the new Works Council members.	For example, the next consultation meeting.	

3 WEEKS BEFORE THE ELECTIONS

<input type="radio"/>	Closing date for nominations via independent lists.	Send a dated acknowledgement of receipt to the submitter(s) of the list(s).	
<input type="radio"/>	Check the validity of the candidate lists.	Check whether all lists comply with the legal and regulatory requirements. Verify against the electoral register that the candidates are indeed eligible. If a list is invalid, inform the submitter immediately in writing, stating the reasons. The submitter is given one week to amend the list.	
<input type="radio"/>	Publication of the provisional candidate list.	Publication of the provisional candidate lists. Objections to a candidate list may be submitted within one week.	
<input type="radio"/>	Determine whether a vote is required.	If there are fewer candidates than available seats, or exactly the same number, they are deemed to be elected and no vote is required. After the objection period referred to above has ended, the election result may be announced to the organisation, the employer and the employee organisations that have nominated candidates. If there are more candidates than vacancies, a vote must be organised.	

2 WEEKS BEFORE THE ELECTIONS

<input type="radio"/>	Publication of the final candidate list to all employees in the organisation.	Publication of the final candidate lists (notice boards, email or intranet).	
<input type="radio"/>	Printing and distribution of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> voting notices (for voting at a polling station); ballot papers (for postal voting). 	Ensure that employees receive clear and complete instructions on how to vote (for example, how many boxes to tick), as well as the location, date and voting times. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voting notice: include the voter's name, the voter's number in the electoral register, the date and opening and closing times of the polling station, and the location of the polling station. Print a proxy authorisation form on the reverse side Ballot paper: ensure it is officially validated (for example, printed on coloured paper with a specific stamp). 	

1 WEEK BEFORE THE ELECTIONS

○	<p>Organisation of election day.</p>	<p>What materials are needed for each polling station?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electoral register (one per polling station) to tick off employees who have voted; • Ballot papers (officially validated); • Voting booths; • Ballot box; • Table and chairs for polling station staff; • Writing materials. <p>For determining the result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seat allocation list; • Tally sheet showing the number of votes per candidate. 	
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ELECTION DAY

○	<p>Remind employees of the election day.</p>	<p>If desired, hand out a small card at the entrance in the morning, remind employees to vote during the lunch break, and use the intranet, email and display screens to draw attention to the election.</p>	
○	<p>Determine the election result after the voting has closed.</p>	<p>Determine the number of valid and invalid votes and count the total number of votes cast.</p>	
○	<p>Calculate the turnout percentage.</p>	<p>The turnout percentage is calculated by dividing the total number of votes cast by the number of eligible employees and multiplying the result by 100%.</p>	
○	<p>Determine the number of valid and invalid votes.</p>	<p>Ballot papers are invalid if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it is not clear who has been voted for; • the required number of votes has not been cast (too many or too few votes marked on the ballot); • other markings or notes have been made on the ballot paper; • an unvalidated ballot paper has been used. 	
○	<p>Sort and count the valid votes by list and by candidate.</p>	<p>Carry out an additional check as well.</p>	
○	<p>Zetelverdeling.</p>	<p>The allocation of seats differs depending on whether an individual voting system or a list system is used.</p> <p>Individual voting system: Count the number of valid votes cast for each candidate. The candidates with the highest number of votes are allocated seats until all seats are filled.</p> <p>List system</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) calculate the electoral quota: divide the total number of valid votes cast by the number of Works Council seats. 2) Divide the number of votes per list by the electoral quota; the result is the number of seats allocated to that list. 3) Allocate any remaining seat to the list with the highest number of surplus votes. 	

- 4) Allocate the seats to candidates on the list in the order in which the list was submitted, with the exception that a candidate placed lower on the list who has reached the electoral quota takes precedence over a higher-ranked candidate who has not reached the quota.
- 5) If a list is allocated more seats than it has candidates, the remaining seat is allocated to the next list with the highest number of surplus votes. (Only if no list has additional candidates available does the seat remain vacant, in which case interim elections must be organised at a later stage.)

AFTER THE ELECTIONS

<input type="radio"/>	Announce the election results and the composition of the Works Council to the employer, employees and the employee organisations that have nominated candidates.	Publish the election results, stating which candidates have been elected and which candidates are placed on the reserve list (to take a seat if a vacancy arises during the term). The names and roles of the Works Council members must be displayed on a permanent basis in a place accessible to all employees (for example, the intranet). Introduce the new Works Council members in the staff magazine or on the intranet and thank employees for their contribution to the Works Council elections.
<input type="radio"/>	Installation of Works Council members.	At the first consultation meeting, the employer formally installs the new Works Council. The minutes should state that the new Works Council has taken office as of the start date of the new term, which is the day the previous term of office ends.
<input type="radio"/>	Handover and induction of new Works Council members.	Organise a handover meeting and an induction programme. It is important that case files are transferred thoroughly and that the strategic approach is also passed on.
<input type="radio"/>	Election of the chair, deputy chair and secretary.	The chair, deputy chair and secretary are usually elected at the first Works Council meeting or during the first training session.
<input type="radio"/>	Assessment of the training needs of the new Works Council.	Jointly assess the training needs of the new Works Council. Identify any knowledge gaps, the areas of interest of the members and individual training wishes. Draw up a training plan for at least the first year.

Disclaimer

This advice is based on Dutch law. In case English terms are used that may have a different meaning, the interpretation under Dutch law shall prevail.