



**CEDMO**  
Central European Digital  
Media Observatory

## **CEDMO Special Brief**

**Postal voting: Low awareness,  
strong opinions**



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# Main Disinformation Narratives Connected to Postal Voting

## Postal voting in the Czech Republic

With the parliamentary election in Czechia fast approaching, false claims about the newly introduced postal voting system have been circulating on Czech social media. According to the most frequent narrative, the government's actions make many compatriots eligible for Czech citizenship. This would enable them to vote by post and significantly influence the results of the October elections. Some posts mention an "army" of a million new voters who only need to declare they are "former Czechs" to gain citizenship and vote for the current coalition.

However, as [Demagog.cz](#) explained, this claim is based on a misinterpretation of the law. Although the law allows former citizens and their descendants to acquire Czech citizenship, only a few hundred people take advantage of this opportunity each year. Furthermore, applicants must provide documents proving that their direct ancestor actually lost Czech or Czechoslovak citizenship.

## Postal voting abroad

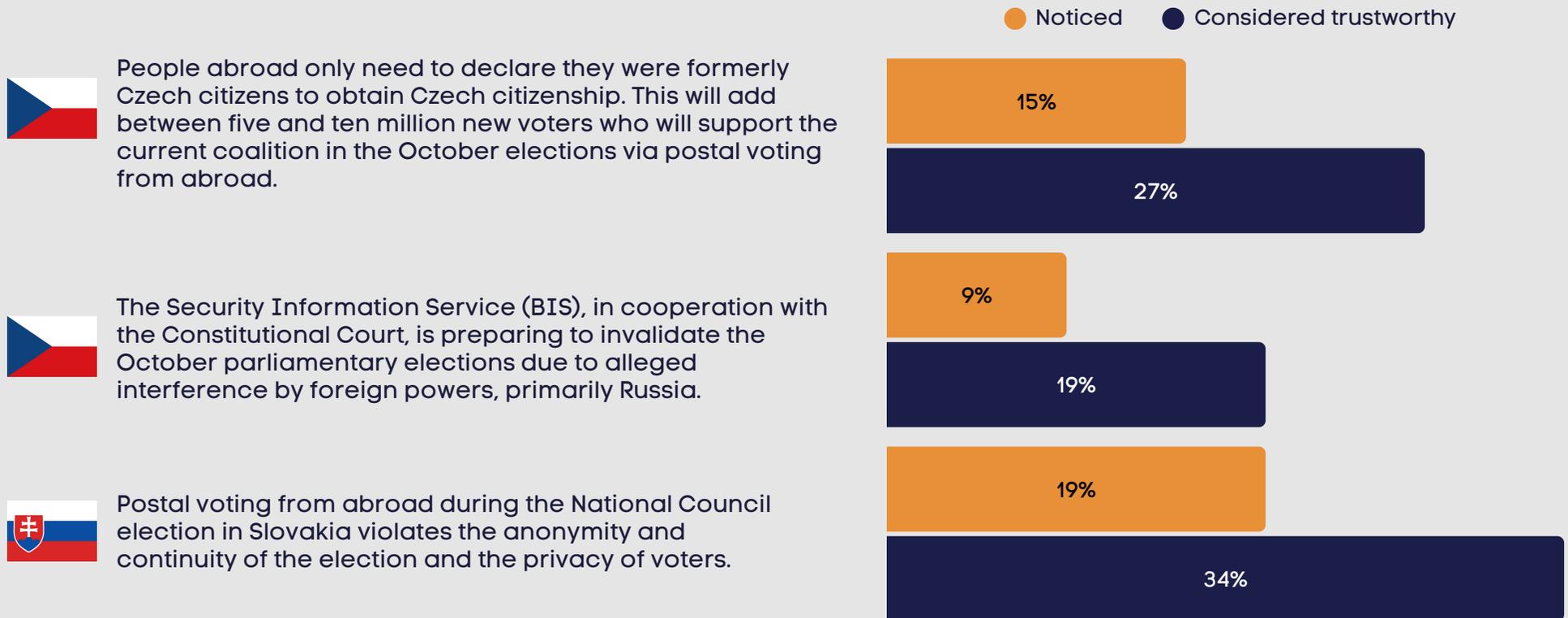
A post linked to the October parliamentary election in Czechia claimed that, during a town hall meeting in Pardubice, President Petr Pavel said that elderly citizens should lose their right to vote and that he intended to grant citizenship to all Ukrainian refugees and ban some political parties. However, the town hall was recorded, and the President made no such statements throughout the duration of the recording. There is also no evidence of him having made such statements before. The presidential spokesperson described the allegations as deliberately spread falsehoods and emphasized that the president does not have the power to restrict the right to vote.



# Awareness and Credibility of Selected Disinformation Narratives

**Question: To what extent are you aware of the following news or information?**

**Question: To what extent do you consider the following information trustworthy?**



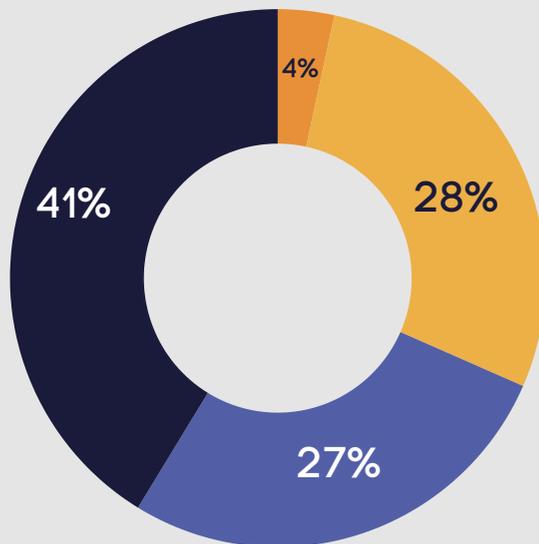
The graph shows the sum of values "I've heard and spread it" and "I've heard it and paid it no attention," and "Highly trustworthy" and "Somewhat trustworthy."

## Postal Voting: Rules and Regulations

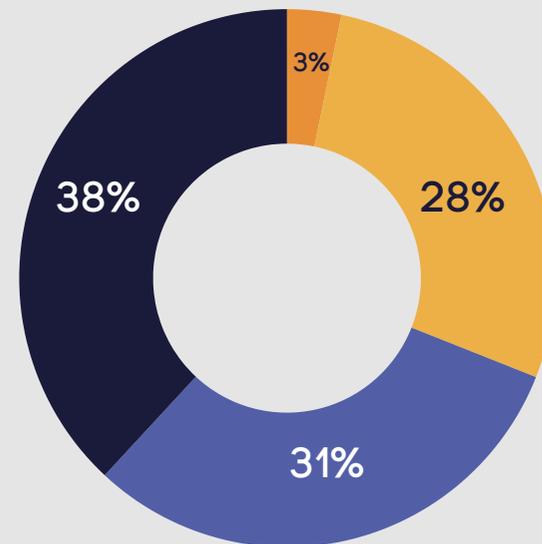
**Question (CZ):** In the upcoming parliamentary election, scheduled for 3 and 4 October 2025, Czech citizens who reside abroad will be able to vote by post for the first time. Do you know the rules for voting by post from abroad?

**Question (SK):** Elections to the National Council allow voting by post, i.e. postal or mail-in voting. Do you know the rules for voting by post from abroad?

### Czechia



### Slovakia



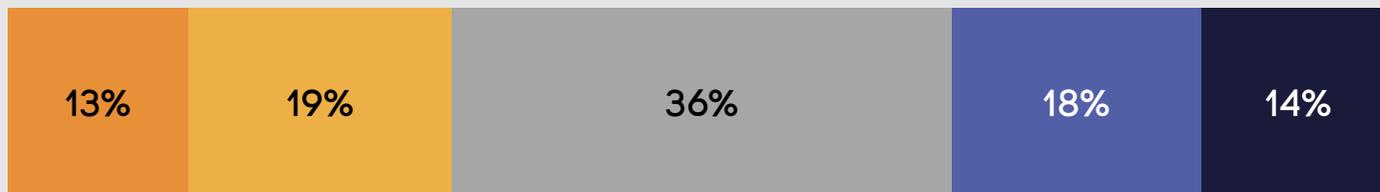
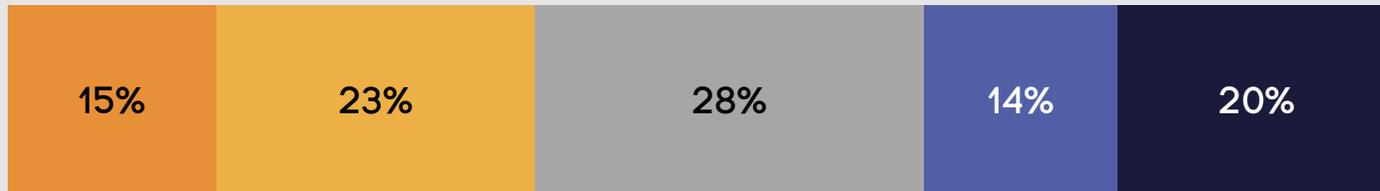
 Yes, I know them in detail     Yes, but I don't know all the details  
 No, I hardly know them     No, I don't know them at all



# Postal Voting: Importance for Democracy

**Question: In your opinion, how important or unimportant for democracy is the option to vote by post in the Czech Republic/Slovakia?**

■ Extremely important    
 ■ Very important    
 ■ Somewhat important    
 ■ Unimportant    
 ■ Completely unimportant



## Summary:

# Awareness of the Rules and Importance for Democracy

In the Czech Republic, between 9% and 15% of respondents have heard the false claims about postal voting, and between 19% and 27% considered them credible. In Slovakia, responses to questions on awareness and credibility were similarly distributed, with up to 34% of respondents considering the claim of anonymity violations when voting from abroad to be trustworthy. A certain part of society is particularly vulnerable to these narratives, which is undoubtedly related not only to low awareness of the rules of postal voting (see below), but also to misconceptions about its scope (i.e. expected votes cast), which is also covered in this brief (see slides 10–11).

Few respondents report being aware of the rules and regulations around postal voting. In Czechia, 4% of respondents report knowing them well, and 28% report partial knowledge. However, 68% of respondents only have a superficial knowledge, or no knowledge at all. In Slovakia, the response distribution is similar, with 3% of respondents knowing the rules in detail and 28% reporting a general knowledge, while 69% are almost or completely unaware of them.

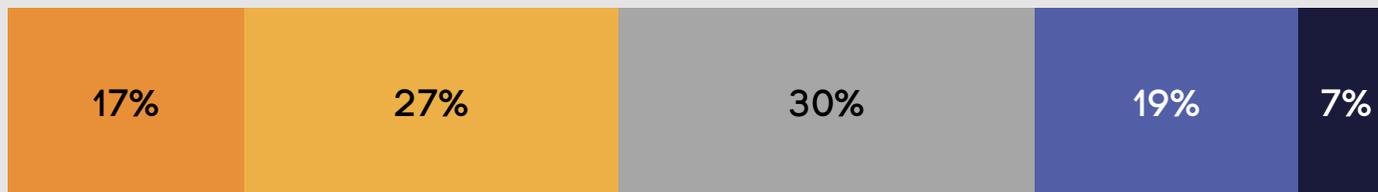
The Czech and Slovak populations are divided on the perceived importance of postal voting for democracy. This result is unsurprising, given the generally low awareness of the topic. Although a part of the public sees the postal vote as an important democratic tool, there is also a strong group of sceptics. In the Czech Republic, 38% of respondents consider this option extremely or very important, while 34% consider it somewhat or completely unimportant. In Slovakia, even less importance is attributed to postal voting: 32% consider it very or extremely important, while 32% see it as somewhat or completely unimportant.



## Postal Voting: Concerns of Fraud and Manipulation

Question: To what extent are you worried about fraud and manipulation in postal voting?

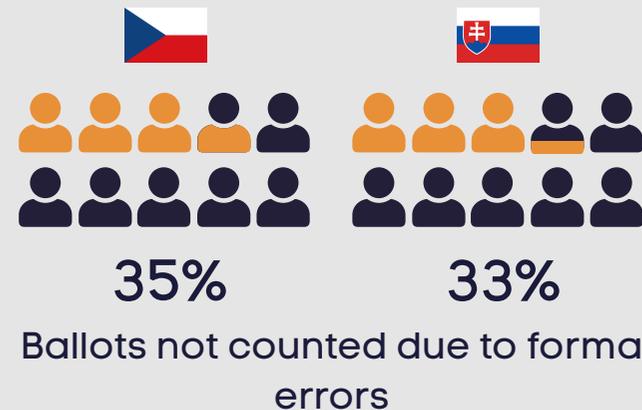
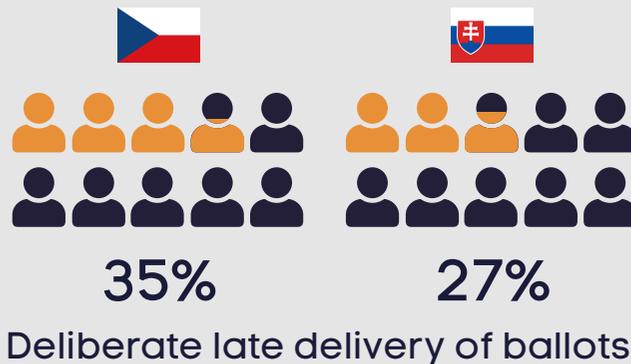
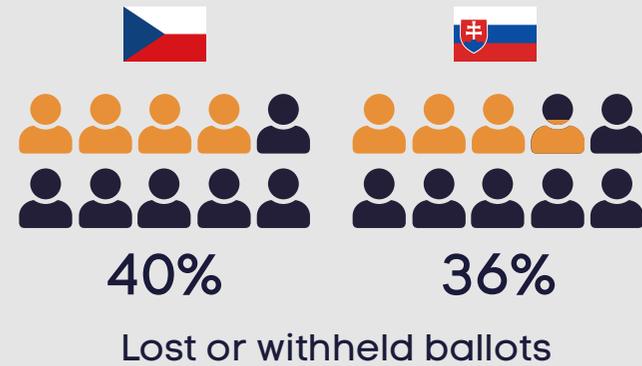
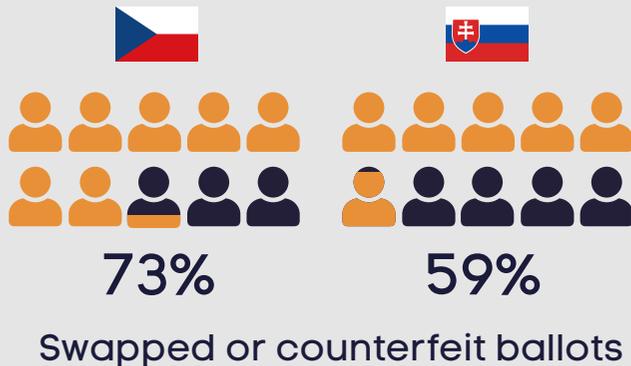
1 = Highly concerned 2 3 4 5 = Unconcerned





# Postal Voting: Concerns of Fraud and Manipulation

Question: What do you suppose these frauds and manipulations consist of?



■ Yes ■ No

Only respondents concerned about fraud and manipulation in postal voting answered this question.

N = 1,368 N = 646

## Summary:

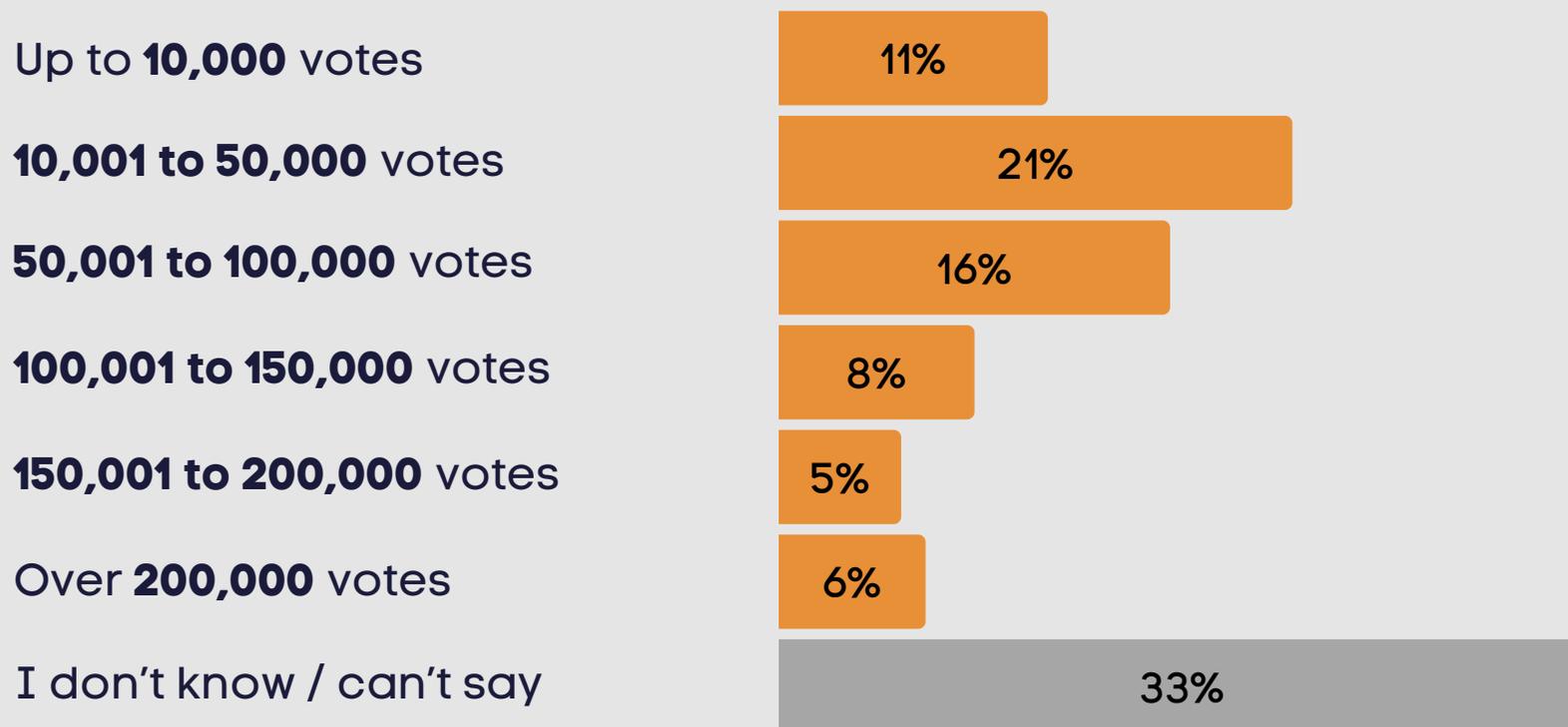
# Concerns of Fraud and Manipulation

Concerns about fraud and manipulation of the postal vote are relatively widespread in both countries, with the level of concern higher in the Czech Republic, where the process debuts in the October parliamentary elections, than in Slovakia, where the postal vote was first used in the 2006 parliamentary elections. The biggest concern in Czechia is outright vote rigging, while in Slovakia, the concerns are more evenly spread among various forms of election fraud. Almost half of the Czech respondents feel significant concern (48% overall, with 28% “strongly concerned” and 20% “somewhat concerned”). On the other hand, only 12% of respondents state they are not concerned at all about potential postal vote fraud. In Slovakia, the proportion of people who voiced concern is lower (17% “strongly”, 27% “somewhat”). However, there is also a smaller proportion of those who have confidence, as only 7% are “unconcerned”.

The public sees the largest potential risk in ballot manipulation. Concerns about technical or procedural failures, such as formal errors or delayed deliveries, are also present, but to a lesser extent. The biggest concern in Czechia is outright vote rigging, while in Slovakia, the concerns are more evenly spread among various forms of election fraud, and the overall concern is slightly lower. In Czechia, most respondents (73%) voiced concern about swapped or fraudulent ballots. In Slovakia, this form of election fraud worries 59% of respondents. The second most frequent concern is the loss or withholding of envelopes, mentioned by 40% of Czech and 36% of Slovak respondents. Other concerns include delayed delivery (CZ: 35%; SK: 27%) and failure to count votes due to formal errors (CZ: 35%; SK: 33%).

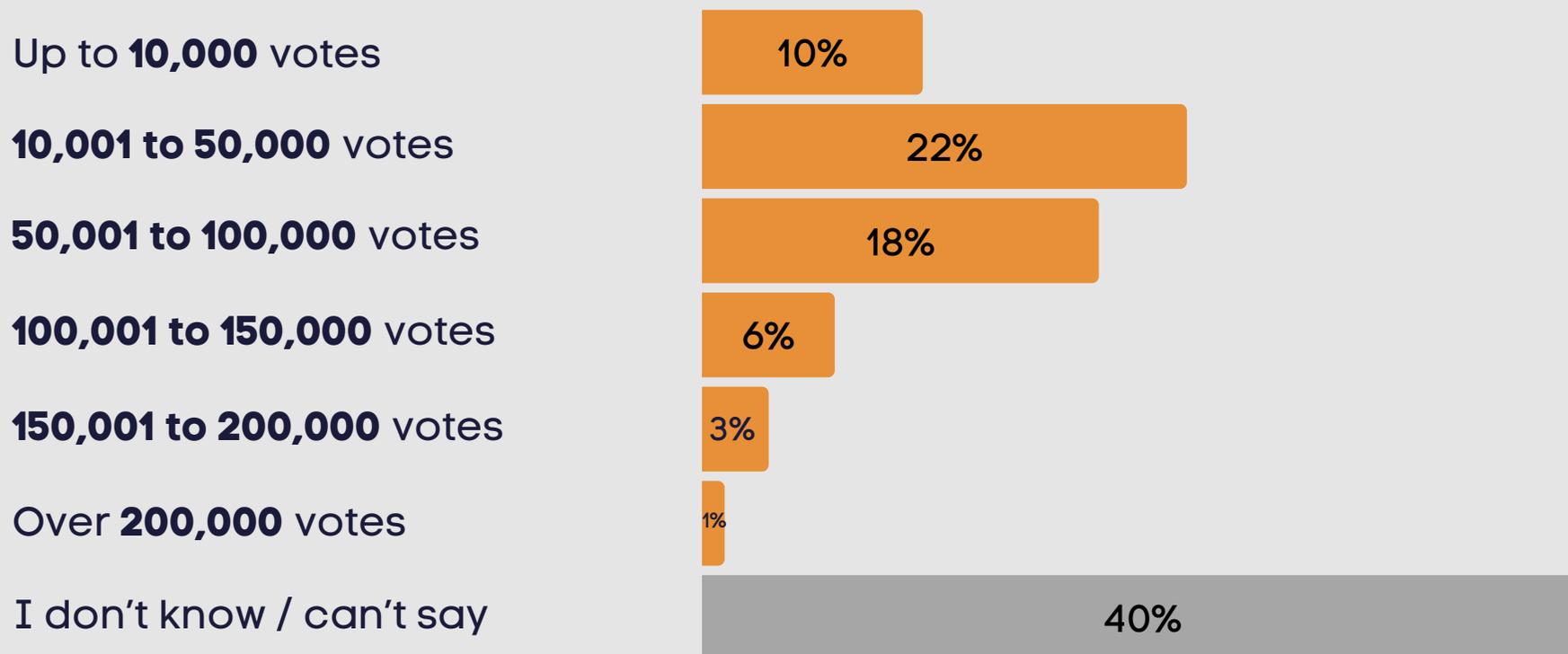
## Postal Voting: Expected Number of Votes

**Question: How many postal votes do you think will be delivered from abroad in the October parliamentary elections in Czechia?**



## Postal Voting: Expected Number of Votes

Question: How many votes do you think were delivered by post from abroad in the last elections to the National Council of Slovakia in 2023?





# Postal Voting: Fear of Election Interference

**Question: To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following statements about the Czech parliamentary elections in October?**

Strongly agree
  Somewhat agree
  I don't know / can't say  
 Somewhat disagree
  Strongly disagree

**The elections are likely to be negatively impacted by social media**, which allow lies and manipulative posts to spread freely.



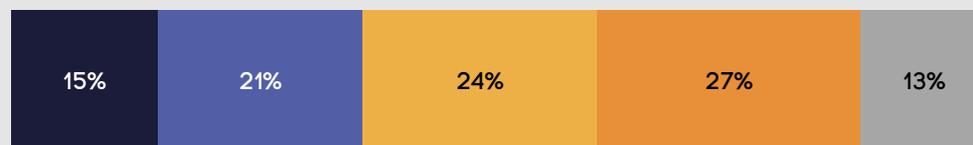
Introduction of the postal vote **will result in a lot of electoral fraud and manipulation.**



I am worried that **the elections will be rigged by the government**, which will not want to give up power, and its supporters.



I am worried that **the elections will be rigged by EU officials** if the results do not suit them.



I am worried that **the elections will be rigged by Russian influence.**



# Postal Voting: Fear of Election Interference

**Question: To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following statements about future National Council elections in Slovakia?**

Strongly agree
  Somewhat agree
  I don't know / can't say  
 Somewhat disagree
  Strongly disagree

**The elections are likely to be negatively impacted by social media**, which allows lies and manipulative posts to spread freely.



Introduction of the postal vote **will result in a lot of electoral fraud and manipulation.**



I am worried that **the elections will be rigged by the government**, which will not want to give up power, and its supporters.



I am worried that **the elections will be rigged by EU officials** if the results do not suit them.



I am worried that **the elections will be rigged by Russian influence.**



## Summary:

# Number of Votes and Interference

The public in both countries only has a limited understanding of the scope of postal voting and is often unsure how many votes from abroad are actually expected (in the Czech Republic) or how many were cast in the past (in Slovakia). In the Czech Republic, a third of the respondents (33%) could not answer the question about the number of votes, while in Slovakia, the uncertainty was even higher (40%). This shows a low general understanding of postal voting in both countries. The most frequent estimates among the respondents range from 10 to 50 thousand votes (21% in the Czech Republic, 22% in Slovakia) and 50 to 100 thousand votes (16% in the Czech Republic, 18% in Slovakia). Only a small portion of respondents (CZ: 6%; SK: 1%) estimated over 200,000 votes. Respondents seem to view postal voting as a supplementary part of the electoral process, rather than a mass element. This suggests that in the Czech debate on the postal vote, the public did not experience a significant increase in votes from abroad, and therefore also no significant impact on election results.

Two-thirds of Czechs and Slovaks agree that the future elections will be negatively affected by social media (CZ: 65%; SK: 69%). 48% of respondents in the Czech Republic and Slovakia are concerned that postal voting will introduce a lot of fraud and manipulation into the electoral process. Election rigging by the current government is a concern for 47% of Czech and 46% of Slovak respondents. 36% of people in the Czech Republic are worried about potential interference by the EU, compared to 41% in Slovakia. Roughly a third of respondents in both countries (CZ: 32%; SK: 35%) are concerned about Russian interference in the elections.

## Research Method: Czechia

**Sample size** wave 27: 2,835 respondents

**Survey date** 17 July – 17 August 2025

**Survey method** online panel survey (CAWI)

### Representativity

Quota sampling. The survey is representative of the general population of Czechia aged 16 and older based on basic sociodemographic variables (gender, age, education, region, and size of town), employment status, and past voting behaviour (2021 Chamber of Deputies election, 2nd round of the 2023 presidential election).

### Contracted and carried out by

Survey conducted by MEDIAN, s.r.o. (SIMAR member) exclusively for Charles University – CEDMO.

Data collection in Czechia was carried out by Median and funded by the National Recovery Plan of EU's Recovery and Resilience Facility under the project 1.4 CEDMO 1 - Z220312000000, support for increasing the impact, innovation and sustainability of CEDMO in the Czech Republic.

## Research Method: Slovakia

<b>Sample size</b>	wave 21: 1,505 respondents
<b>Survey date</b>	11 July – 12 August 2025
<b>Survey method</b>	online panel survey (CAWI)

### Representativity

Quota sampling. The survey is representative of the general population of Slovakia aged 16 or older based on basic sociodemographic variables (gender, age, education, region, and size of town).

### Contracted and carried out by

Survey conducted by Ipsos (SAVA and SIMAR member) exclusively for the Charles University – CEDMO.

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The URLs of all fact-checks referenced in this publication can be found [HERE](#).

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