

Village and city – who do they vote for?

Results of the elections by settlement size

Analysis by Republikon Institute



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INTRODUCTION

One of the fundamental characteristics of modern political systems is that voter preferences are not distributed evenly across society but are organized along various fault lines. One of the most significant of these is the territorial divide, which can often be captured through the settlement structure. The differences between urban and rural areas are not merely economic or infrastructural in nature; they represent different worlds from social, cultural, and informational perspectives as well. These differences, in turn, powerfully influence political attitudes and party preferences.

In Hungary, this approach is particularly relevant, as the settlement network is highly fragmented: alongside many small settlements, small and medium-sized towns, as well as a few larger urban centers, play a significant role. For a political party, it is therefore of strategic importance to determine in which settlement types it can build strong support. It matters whether a party is primarily popular in small villages, medium-sized towns, or urban environments, as these categories represent different numbers of voters and require different types of political mobilization.

This analysis examines the support of the Tisza Party and Fidesz, broken down by settlement size. The data includes not only the number of votes but also the proportion they represent within each given category. This allows us to evaluate the performance of the parties not just in absolute numbers, but in relative support as well. The aim of the analysis is twofold: first, to present in detail how support for the two parties is shaped across various settlement types, and second, to reveal the broader social and political patterns that emerge from this data.

PARTICIPATION STRUCTURE

The results of the two major parties by settlement size are presented in the table below:

Number of people eligible to vote	Number of participants	Tisza no. of votes/%	Fidesz no. of votes/%
below 500	255 121	103 772	123 935
		40,68%	48,58%
500-1000	350 523	154 216	160 734
		44,00%	45,86%
1-5000	2 044 295	950 819	887 856
		46,51%	43,43%
5-20.000	1 174 707	632 824	431 535
		53,87%	36,74%
20-50.000	999 231	582 361	327 674
		58,28%	32,79%
above 50.000	1 502 648	920 919	454 394
		61,29%	30,24%

The distribution of voter turnout by settlement size provides important context for interpreting the results. Based on the data, the largest mass of voters is concentrated in settlements where the number of eligible voters is between 1,000 and 5,000. More than two million people participated in the voting in these locations. This category, therefore, plays a key role in shaping the national results.

Also significant is the group of settlements with 5,000 to 20,000 residents, with nearly 1.2 million participants, as well as the 20,000 to 50,000 category, which also includes nearly one million voters. In contrast, settlements with fewer than 500 eligible voters and large cities with over 50,000 eligible voters represent a smaller weight within the total voting population.

BELOW 5000 RESIDENTS

In settlements with fewer than 500 eligible voters, a marked dominance by Fidesz can be observed. In this category, the party garnered 123,935 votes, representing a share of 48.58%, while the Tisza Party achieved 40.68% with 103,772 votes. The difference is thus nearly 8 percentage points, indicating clear political dominance.

This pattern can be well-interpreted through the characteristics of rural societies, where local political networks and institutional presence are stronger, further bolstering Fidesz's position.

In the case of settlements with 500 to 1,000 eligible voters, a much more balanced competition emerges. Fidesz achieved 45.86% here, while the Tisza Party reached 44%. The difference is therefore barely more than 1.5 percentage points, which effectively signifies a head-to-head fight even in this category. This shift suggests that Tisza's calculations paid off and they were indeed able to penetrate even the smallest settlements through their numerous nationwide tours over the past two years.

Settlements with 1,000 to 5,000 eligible voters represent the first true turning point. Here, the Tisza Party, with 46.51%, overtook Fidesz, which achieved 43.43%. Although the difference is not yet large, the trend is clear: this settlement category has flipped. This group is crucial not only politically but also demographically, as it contains the highest number of voters. Thus, the advantage gained here is of particular significance. Such settlements often possess a small-town character, with more developed infrastructure and more opportunities, which can generate new types of political demands.

ABOVE 5000 RESIDENTS

In settlements with 5,000 to 20,000 eligible voters, the Tisza Party has already gained a clear advantage. Its result of 53.87% exceeds Fidesz's 36.74% support by more than 17 percentage points. This gap represents not just a competitive edge, but a dominant position. Since a significant number of voters live in this category as well, this lead has a serious impact on national political power dynamics. The population of smaller towns often leads a more active economic and social life than those in villages, which can be accompanied by a transformation of political preferences.

The difference grows even further in settlements with 20,000 to 50,000 eligible voters. The Tisza Party achieved 58.28%, while Fidesz reached 32.79%. This is a

difference of more than 25 percentage points, clearly suggesting that Fidesz has already lost a significant portion of mid-sized cities.

In the largest settlements, where the number of eligible voters exceeds 50,000, this trend strengthens even further: the Tisza Party achieved a result of 61.29%, while Fidesz reached 30.24%. Here, we can speak of a more than twofold difference in proportions. Even in Debrecen, previously considered the “capital” of Fidesz, there is a 1.7-fold difference in the number of votes in favor of Tisza.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis, a clearly emerging, structural political division can be observed. Fidesz builds its support primarily on smaller settlements, while the Tisza Party is strong in more urbanized environments. This difference is not merely a statistical phenomenon, but a reflection of deeper social and cultural disparities.

From a future perspective, the key question is whether these parties can cross these boundaries. Based on the current data, however, a highly fragmented political landscape is emerging, where settlement structure plays a decisive role in voter decisions.