

19th CPC National Congress

1. How CPC Elects Delegates to National Congress

The National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) is a congress of over 2,000 delegates representing 89 Mn CPC members held every five years to discuss important issues that will decide future development of the Party and the country.

The first CPC National Congress was held in 1921 with 13 delegates representing dozens of Party members. In 2017, 2,280 delegates attended the 19th National Congress during 18-24 October in Beijing.

1.1 Who are the delegates?

The delegates to National Congress include workers, farmers, government officials, businessmen, intellectuals, military officers, athletes and artists. They must have unshakable belief, correct political stance, good moral quality, high standards in honesty and integrity, excellent career record, strong capability to perform the duty as delegate and wide support from Party members and the people. There should be a diverse mix to best represent all Party members.

The number of candidates should be at least 15% greater than the number to be elected. The CPC Central Committee encourages more delegates from working class and grassroots level. There are 40 electoral units that consist of:

- 31 units from provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions
- 1 unit from institutions directly under CPC Central Committee
- 1 unit from Central State organs
- 1 unit from People's Liberation Army
- 1 unit from People's Armed Police Forces
- 1 unit from Centrally administered financial institutions
- 1 unit from Centrally administered enterprises
- 1 unit from All-China Federation of Taiwan Compatriots
- 1 unit from CPC Work Committee in Hong Kong
- 1 unit from CPC Work Committee in Macao

The Number of Delegates by Electoral Units

Unit	Delegates
Provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions	1,576
- Shandong	76
- Shanghai	73
- Sichuan	73
- Jiangsu	71
- Guangdong	70
- Henan	69
- Hunan	64
- Beijing	63
- Liaoning	63
- Hubei	63
- Hebei	63
- Anhui	57
- Zhejiang	51
- Heilongjiang	50
- Guangxi	48
- Yunnan	47
- Tianjin	46
- Shaanxi	44
- Chongqing	43
- Shanxi	43
- Jiangxi	43
- Xinjiang	43
- Fujian	41
- Inner Mongolia	41

The Number of Delegates by Electoral Units (Continue)

Unit	Delegates
- Gansu	41
- Guizhou	39
- Jilin	37
- Ningxia	30
- Tibet	29
- Qinghai	29
- Hainan	26
Institutions directly under the CPC Central Committee	109
Central State organ	186
People's Liberation Army	253
People's Armed Police Forces	50
Centrally administered financial institutions	44
Centrally administered enterprises (in Beijing)	53
Others	16
Total	2,287*

*Note: 7 delegates failed to pass the final review

1.2 How are delegates elected?

- General principles
 - Reflect voters' will
 - Five-year tenure
 - Secret ballot
 - Inquiry allowed
 - No compulsion of voters
 - The number of candidates is greater than the number of persons to be elected
 - Full deliberation and discussion by Party organizations and voters
- Role of CPC Central Committee in delegates' election
 1. Determines number of delegates
 2. Decides procedure of delegates' election
 3. Sets up supervisory team along with the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI)
 4. Organizes publicity activities
 5. Checks credentials of delegates
- Role of electoral units (Duration of election: 10 months)
 1. Nominate from grassroots Party organizations and Party members
 2. Assess credentials of preliminary list of candidates for vetting
 3. Publicize preliminary list of candidates
 4. Organize vote for shortlist of candidates
 5. Organize vote to elect delegates
 6. Publicize list of delegates

2. How CPC Convenes National Congress

2.1 Two missions

2.1.1 Decisions

Major issues of the Party and state are discussed and decided, including:

- Update and improve the basic theories of the Party
- Draw out and revise guidelines, principles and policies
- Amend the Constitution of Communist Party of China
- Study and make deployments about major issues of the Party and the country
- Summarize the experience the Party has gained from the historical process

2.1.2 Elections

Elect the Party's top anti-graft body

- CCDI
 - Assist the Central Committee in improving Party's work style and in organizing and coordinating the work against corruption

Elect the Party's central leadership at the First Plenary Session of the new CPC Central Committee

- Central committee of the CPC
 - Convene the National Congress and determine delegates number and election procedure
 - Elect the political bureau, its standing committee and the general secretary of the Central Committee

2.2 Procedures

2.2.1 Preparatory meeting

- Examines the qualification of delegates
- Elects the presidium and its secretary general

What does presidium do?

- Sets the agenda of National Congress
- Hands out reports to the delegates
- Determines the list of invitees in addition to delegates
- Organizes elections of members of CPC Central Committee and members of CCDI
- Presides over the Congress

2.2.2 First presidium meeting

- Approve two lists'
 - List of the presidium's standing committee members
 - List of non-voting participants and guests
- Adopt a review report on the delegates' qualifications
- Other agenda-related issues

2.2.3 Opening of the National Congress First plenary session

- Great Hall of the People, Beijing
- General secretary of CPC Central Committee delivers a report to National Congress on behalf of CPC Central Committee.
- The report reviews the work over the past five years of the CPC Central Committee and sets the tone for work in the next five years.

2.2.4 Second plenary session

- Hear the report of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection

2.2.5 Panel discussions

- Delegates deliberate the two reports
- Political Bureau members will join some discussions

Note: Usually Political Bureau members visit delegations related to their work areas:

In 2012, then-vice-president Xi Jinping visited Shanghai delegation (where he once worked) and HK and Macao delegations (in his then capacity as the head of central leading group for coordinating HK and Macao work).

2.2.6 Second presidium meeting

- Submit the draft resolutions on the two reports, based on the panel discussion
- Discuss and submit draft resolution on amendments to Party Constitution
- Discuss and adopt suggested lists of preparatory candidates of members and alternate members of CPC Central Committee and members of CCDI and distribute the lists for panel discussions

2.2.7 Panel discussions

- Competitive election based on lists of preparatory candidates

2.2.8 Third presidium meeting

- Further narrowing down of the candidate lists

2.2.9 Closing of the Congress - Third plenary session

- All delegates vote to elect the members and alternate members of the CPC Central Committee and members of CCDI from the candidate lists, by secret ballot.
- All delegates vote to adopt the two reports that are revised after discussions, as well as amendments.
- All delegates vote to adopt the new Party Constitution or the amendments to it.

CPC Central Committee consists of 200+ members and 160+ alternate members. All members are from all walks of life, including:

- Party and government agencies
- Universities
- Research institutions
- Media groups
- State-owned enterprises
- Armed forces

2.2.10 First plenary meeting of the new CPC Central Committee

- Elect
 - Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the CPC
 - Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee
 - General secretary of the CPC Central Committee

3. Major Changes at Previous National Congresses

3.1 First CPC National Congress (1921, Shanghai): 13 delegates

The Communist Party of China is born through the establishment of first guiding principles. The name, nature and guideline are decided, and the ultimate goal of the party is proposed.

3.2 Second CPC National Congress (1922, Shanghai): 12 delegates

The CPC Constitution, the Party's highest code of conduct, is adopted. The congress officially declares that the Party's revolutionary goal is to fight imperialism and feudalism.

3.3 Third CPC National Congress (1923, Guangzhou, Guangdong province): 40 delegates

The Constitution's first amendment is approved, which improves regulations about the procedures for Party admission.

3.4 Fourth CPC National Congress (1925, Shanghai): 20 delegates

The Constitution's second amendment is approved. It states that three Party members or more should establish branch, and defines the Party branch as the basic organization of the CPC, The title for the head of the CPC Central Committee is changed from chairman to general secretary.

3.5 Fifth CPC National Congress (1927, Wuhan, Hubei province) : 82 delegates

The Constitution states that democratic centralism is the Party's guiding principle. It is also states that the CPC Central Committee not only elects the general secretary, but also elects members to form a Political Bureau to guide the political work of the country.

3.6 Sixth CPC National Congress (1928, Moscow, Russia): 84 delegates

It is written into the Constitution that the Party's fundamental organizational principle is democratic centralism. As well as that the CPC is part of and guided by, the Communist International, an organization that advocates global Communism.

3.7 Seventh CPC National Congress (1945, Yan'an Shaanxi province): 547 delegates

The congress confirms Mao Zedong Thought as the guiding thought of the Party and stresses the "mass line" policy, which says the Party should rely on the people and work the people. The definition of democratic centralism is expanded.

3.8 Eighth CPC National Congress (1956, Beijing): 1,026 delegates

The Constitution proposes to fully develop a socialist society, and new rules are introduced for Party organizations such as the rule that a national congress should be held every five years.

3.9 Ninth CPC National Congress (1969, Beijing): 1,512 delegates

The congress legitimized the theory and practice of the "cultural revolution" and solidified the position of Lin Biao and Jiang Qing in the Party Central Committee.

3.10 Tenth CPC National Congress (1973, Beijing): 1,249 delegates

The Congress affirmed the revised Constitution of the Communist Party of China that was also adopted by the 9th national congress. It stipulated some adjustments in the structure but the provisions of the section is not much changed, such as the guiding ideology and the basic principles of the party. In the edited bill, only discussions and doctrines proposed or related to Lin Biao were removed.

3.11 Eleventh CPC National Congress (1977, Beijing): 1,510 delegates

The Constitution reaffirms the aim to build a powerful socialist society with "four modernizations" which relates to manufacturing, agriculture technology and national defense. It also states disciplinary inspection commissions will be set up at various levels of Party, government and military organizations.

3.12 Twelfth CPC National Congress (1982, Beijing): 1,545 delegates

It is written into Constitution that all major problems should be democratically discussed and decided by Party committees.

3.13 Thirteenth CPC National Congress (1987, Beijing): 1,936 delegates

The Constitution is amended to state that Party elections should be contested by multiple candidates, It also stresses the importance of intra Party democracy.

3.14 Fourteenth CPC National Congress (1992, Beijing): 2,000 delegates

The theory of socialism with Chinese characteristics is written into the Constitution. The decision is also made to scrap central and local advisory commissions, and all regulations relating to them.

3.15 Fifteenth CPC National Congress (1997, Beijing): 2,074 delegates

Deng Xiaoping Theory is added to the Constitution as guiding thought of the Party. It requires all Party members and cadres to study the theory along with Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought.

3.16 Sixteenth CPC National Congress (2002, Beijing): 2,120 delegates

- The Thought of Three Represents is added to the Constitution as a guiding thought of the Party. along with Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought and Deng Xiaoping Theory.

3.17 Seventeenth CPC National Congress (2007, Beijing): 2,217 delegates

The Scientific Outlook on Development is written into the Constitution. The Party's "four-in-one" development blueprint is also clarified, focusing on economic, political, cultural and social development. It is stated that the goal of the Party is to build a strong, prosperous, democratic and culturally advanced nation.

3.18 Eighteenth CPC National Congress (2012, Beijing): 2,270 delegates

The Scientific Outlook on Development is set as a guiding philosophy of the Party. The socialist system with Chinese characteristics, with the socialist road Chinese characteristics and socialist theory with Chinese characteristics are written into the Constitution as is construction of an ecological civilization.

3.19 Nineteenth CPC National Congress (2017, Beijing): 2,287 delegates

An amendment to the Party's constitution was approved on 24 October, making Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era a new component of the Party's guide for action. A wide range of new ideas, thinking and strategies have also been added to the Party's Constitution, such as giving play to the decisive role of market forces in resource allocation, advancing supply-side structural reform and enhancing the country's cultural soft power. Xi's military thinking and the Party's absolute leadership over the armed forces also have been included in the Constitution.

Number of Party Members		Mn: Million
Year	Members	
1921	50	
1922	195	
1923	420	
1925	994	
1927	57,967	
1945	1.21 Mn	
1956	10.73 Mn	
1969	22 Mn	
1973	28 Mn	
1977	35 Mn	
1982	39.65 Mn	
1987	46 Mn	
1992	51 Mn	
1997	59 Mn	
2002	66 Mn	
2007	73 Mn	
2012	82.60 Mn	
2016	89 Mn	