

SWEDEN

Date of Elections: September 16, 1973

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the members of the *Riksdag* upon the normal expiry of their term of office.

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Swedish Parliament, the *Riksdag*, comprises 350 members elected for 3 years.

Electoral System

All Swedish citizens, of either sex, aged at least 19 during the year preceding the elections are entitled to vote. An added condition is registered residence in Sweden for the year in which the election takes place, although those citizens who have been registered as residents for some time during the 5 years preceding the election also qualify, as long as they apply for special registration. Criminals and the mentally deficient are disqualified from being electors.

Electoral registers are drawn up for each election district and are revised annually. Voting is not compulsory.

Voters of either sex, at least 20 years old, are eligible to stand for election. The parliamentary mandate is generally not incompatible with other public or private offices. While Ministers (as the Speaker) may not serve as members of Parliament while in office, they may retain their seats which, in the meantime, are to be held by substitute members, and may take up their parliamentary duties if and when they leave the Government*.

Of the 350 members of the *Riksdag*, 310 are elected in 28 constituencies, under the party-list system, with proportional distribution of seats according to the St-Lagiiie method (divisors: 1.4, 3, 5, 7, etc.). To obtain a seat, a party must either obtain at least 4 % of the votes cast throughout the country or at least 12 % of the votes cast in a constituency.

The remaining (or "compensatory") seats in the *Riksdag* are allotted on the basis of total votes throughout the country, though distributed by

* See section *Parliamentary Developments*, p. 15.

constituencies; for this process, parties which have obtained seats only by means of the 12 % rule are excluded.

If a seat of the *Riksdag* should become vacant between general elections, it is filled by the substitute member chosen at the same time as the elected member.

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

The election campaign for the elections opened on August 19, 1973. For the first time in Swedish politics, the ruling Social Democratic Party, which had come to power in 1932, was challenged by a joint centre-right Opposition consisting of the Centre Party, Liberal Party and Moderate Party (Conservatives).

Although the 3 opposition "bourgeois" parties presented no joint programme, they put together plans for a future coalition Government led by Mr. Thorbjorn Falldin, leader of the largest group, the Centre Party. The latter, invoking the slogan "equality and security in a decentralized society", advocated more power for city and county authorities; the Moderates supported tax cuts, restrictions on private industry and full Swedish membership in the European Communities; the Liberals, finally, emphasized tax and environment policies. The 3 parties all pointed to the high unemployment rate and stressed the need for a change after the long Social Democratic rule.

The Social Democrats, for their part, resorted to the slogan "Don't vote away your social security — vote Social Democratic" and extolled their past record in building up the welfare State, as well as proposing to combat unemployment by, *inter alia*, offering subsidies to industry in return for its hiring additional workers. The Communist Party largely supported the Social Democratic industrial policies.

Final election results left parliamentary seats evenly split between the socialist and non-socialist blocs.

The left-wing bloc and the centre-right coalition each won half of the *Riksdag* seats — 175. Biggest individual gainer and loser were, respectively, the Centre Party and the Liberals, while the Social Democrats received their lowest vote total since World War II — 43.6 %.

In the context of this outcome, all 3 Opposition parties called on the Government to resign. On September 21, 1973, however, outgoing Prime Minister Palme declared that his Government chose to remain in power, with the aim of generating a "broad consensus" on the country's crucial problems.

Statistics

Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats in the Riksdag

Number of registered voters.	5,690,333
Voters.	5,168,996(90.8%)
Blank or void ballot papers.	8,850
Valid votes.	5,160,146

Political Group	Votes obtained	∞	Number of Constit- uency Seats	Number of ' Compen- satory " Seats	Total Seats <i>Riksdag</i>
Social Democratic Party	2,247,727	43.6	146	11)	156
Centre Party.	1,295,246	25.1	80	10	90
Moderate Party (Conservatives)	737,584	14.3	47	4	51
Liberal Party.	486,028	9.4	27	7	34
Communist Party	274,929	5.3	10	9	19
Christian Democratic Union.	90,388	1.8	—	—	—
Other left-wing groups	26,937	0.5	—	—	—
Others.	1,307	—	—	—	—
			310	40	350

2. Distribution of Deputies according to Professional Category

Employers and directors of companies			
Agriculture and fishing	53		
Industry.	13		78
Commerce and transportation.	6		
Others.	6		
Civil servants			
Executives of public services.	36	j	
Employees.	12	[78
Teachers.	30		
Representatives of associations in the public interest			
Political organizations.	21		
Trade union organizations.	31		66
Interested groups.	11		
Representatives of the Free Church.	3		
Administrative staff			
Industry.	13	1	
Commerce and transportation.	16	\	41
Journalism.	12	J	
Workers.	24		
Members of the Government, the Speaker.	19		
Others.	44		
			350

3. Distribution of Deputies according to Sex

(excluding Ministers and the Speaker but including their substitutes)

	Men	Women	Total
Social Democratic Party	120	36	156
Centre Party.	68	22	90
Liberal Party.	43	8	51
Moderate Party.	29	5	34
Communist Party.	15	4	19
	275	75	350

4. Average Age of Deputies: 51 years