

SWEDEN

Date of Elections: 16 September 1979

Purpose of Elections

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

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Swedish Parliament, the *Riksdag*, comprises 349 members elected for 3 years.

Electoral System

All Swedish citizens who have reached the age of 18 and are not under tutelage are entitled to vote. This applies also to citizens living abroad provided that they have been residents of Sweden at one time and apply for entry in a special electoral register.

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

Anyone who is entitled to vote may be elected as a member of the *Riksdag*. The parliamentary mandate is generally not incompatible with other public or private offices. Although Ministers (as well as the Speaker) may not serve as members of Parliament while in office, they may retain their seats which, in the meantime, are held by substitute members, and may take up their parliamentary duties if and when they leave the Government. Substitute members also serve for ordinary members who have obtained a leave of absence for at least one month.

Of the 349 members of the *Riksdag*, 310 are elected in 28 constituencies, under the party-list system, with proportional distribution of seats according to the St. Lague 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 12% of the votes cast in a constituency.

The 39 remaining (or "compensatory") seats are allotted on the basis of total votes throughout the country, though distributed by constituencies; for this process, parties which have obtained seats only by means of the 12% rule are excluded.

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

General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

As at the 1973 and 1976 elections, the socialist bloc (Social Democrats and Communists) was once again opposed by the centre-right bloc (Centre, Moderate and Liberal

parties). Principal campaign issues concerned the results of governmental activity in the economic field and reform of fiscal policy. The Social Democrats, awaiting the decisions of a 1981 party congress, did not emphasize their programme of socialist development in Sweden. With regard to the role of nuclear reactors as future energy sources, the main parties had previously agreed that the question should be the subject of a referendum scheduled to take place in March 1980.

On polling day, the centre-right bloc retained its majority of seats with the narrowest possible margin—175 as against 174 for the socialist bloc. Among the non-socialists there was a significant shift to the right large gains for the Moderate Party and even larger losses for the Centre Party. After the election the Liberal minority Government resigned and a coalition Government was formed; Mr. T. Falldin, the leader of the Centre Party, returned as Prime Minister after resigning from this same post the previous year. The new Cabinet consists of eight Moderates, seven Centre representatives and five Liberals, the figures for the coalition Government of 1976-1978 having been six, eight and five, respectively.

Statistics

1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats in the Riksdag

Number of registered electors	6,040,461
Voters	5,480,126 (90.72%)
Blank or void ballot papers	31,488
Valid votes	5,448,638

Political Group	Votes obtained	%	Number of Seats
Social Democratic Party	2,356,234	43.2	154 (+ 2)
Moderate Party (Conservatives)	1,108,406	20.3	73 (+18)
Centre Party	984,589	18.1	64 (-22)
Liberal Party	577,063	10.6	38 (-1)
Communist Party	305,420	5.6	20 (+ 3)
Christian Democratic Union	75,993	1.4	
Others	40,933	0.8	

349

2. *Distribution of Deputies according to Professional Category*

Civil servants		
Executives of public services.	47	
Employees.	36 f	'''
Teachers.	28J	
Representatives of associations in the public interest		
Political organizations.	49	
Trade union organizations.17	86
Interest groups.17	
Representatives of the Free Church	3	
Employers and directors of companies		
Agriculture and fishing.	40	
Industry.	II	58
Commerce and transportation.	6	
Others.	I	
Administrative staff		
Industry.	161	
Commerce and transportation.11 >	47
Journalism.	20J	
Workers.		30
Others.17
		W>

3. *Distribution of Deputies according to Sex*

Men.	257
Women.	92
	349

4. *Distribution of Deputies according to Age Group*

Under 30 years.	4
30-39.	39
40-49.	109
50-59.	134
60-69.	62
70 and over.1
	349

Average Age of Deputies: 51 years