

Elections in Sweden

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1. The Swedish election system

The Swedish election system is based on universal suffrage. Elections are to be free, secret and direct. The election system used is proportional representation; consequently the share of seats any party receives in the Riksdag (the Swedish Parliament) generally reflects the share of all the votes received by that party.

The Swedish election system consists of elections and referendums. The Elections Act, the Elections Ordinance, the Referendums Act and a number of other laws stipulate how elections and referendums are to be carried out.

Parliamentary elections

Elections to the Riksdag, municipal and county councils are held on the third Sunday in September every four years. The Constitutional Report has proposed that from 2011, Election Day should be moved to the second week in September.



All European Union member states hold elections to the European Parliament in June every five years. In Sweden these elections are always held on a Sunday.

By-elections (also known as special elections) to the Riksdag are carried out as and when the Riksdag takes such a decision. In principle the same rules apply here as they do for the parliamentary election and by-elections must, according to the system of government, be implemented within three months of the decision. Consequently, time periods for advance voting etc. are shorter than at general elections.



Referendums

In Sweden there are two kinds of referendums that apply to the entire country: consultative referendums and constitutional referendums. The Riksdag determines whether a national referendum is to be held, as well as who is entitled to vote and which alternative responses are to be presented.

National referendums are basically subject to the same rules as parliamentary elections with regard to electoral districts and voting inside and outside Sweden etc.

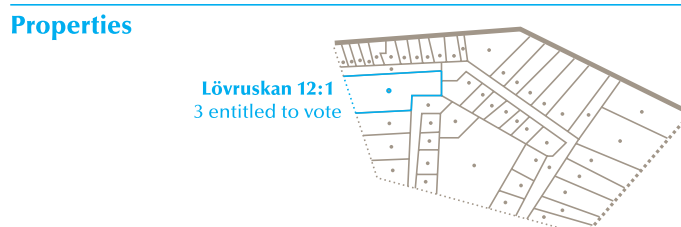
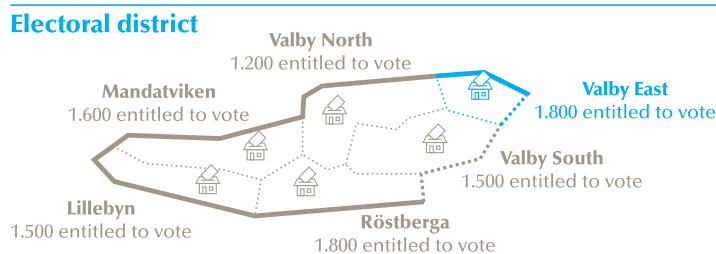
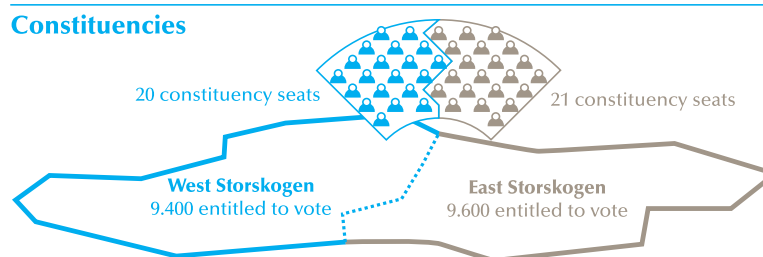
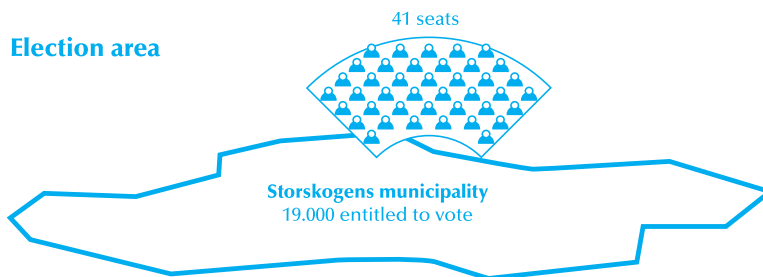
A referendum held in one municipality or county council is always consultative. The municipalities and county councils themselves determine if and when such referendums are to be held.

2. Election geography

The election area is the geographical area covered by the election e.g. a municipality or, in the case of the parliamentary election, the entire country. The election area is divided into constituencies and it is these units that actually elect members. Election constituencies are, in turn, divided into electoral districts, with one polling station per electoral district. Electoral districts consist of a number of properties and it is in these properties that people who are entitled to vote are registered as residents.

The sizes of electoral districts vary but generally each district includes approximately 1 000–2 000 people who are entitled to vote. There is no absolute upper or lower limit to the size of electoral districts. The smallest district contains only a few hundred voters and the largest more than 2000. Each electoral district contains a polling station, where those who live in the district are able to cast their votes on Election Day.

The County Administrative Board determines the borders of the electoral districts following proposals by the relevant municipal council. The County Administrative Board is required to determine this division into electoral districts not later than 1 December in the year before election year



Seats

In order for the election results to be as close as possible to proportionality there are what is known as adjustment seats in the parliamentary and county council elections. First the permanent seats are allocated to the different parties and then the adjustment seats. A party that has not received enough votes for a permanent seat may still be allocated an adjustment seat. There are only permanent seats for elections to the Municipal Council and to the European Parliament. Please look at Chapter 8 for more information on allocation of seats.

By 30 April of the election year at the latest, the Swedish Election Authority must have taken a decision concerning how many permanent seats each constituency will be granted in the parliamentary election. This distribution is based on the number of qualified voters in election constituencies.

For the municipal and county council elections, the relevant municipal or county council takes the decision concerning the total number of seats to be established. The County Administrative Board decides, not later than 30 April of the election year, the number of permanent seats for each constituency.

Sweden constitutes a single constituency for elections to the European Parliament. The number of seats that each member state receives depends on the size of the country's population. Sweden had 18 seats at the election of 2009 and will be allocated an additional two when the Lisbon Treaty enters into force.

3. Right to vote and electoral roll

Right to vote

Age, nationality and residency are the only criteria governing the right to vote.

The right to vote in elections to the Riksdag and the European Parliament is enjoyed by Swedish citizens who attain the age of 18 not later than on Election Day and who are, or at some time have been, registered resident in Sweden.

The right to vote in elections to the European Parliament is also enjoyed by citizens of other member states of the European Union who attain the age of 18 years not later than Election Day. It is a precondition that they must be registered residents in Sweden at least 30 days before Election Day and that they must submit a notification requesting that they be listed on the electoral roll. They may not then vote in any other member state.

The right to vote in elections to county councils and municipal councils is enjoyed by Swedish citizens who attain the age of 18 years not later than on Election Day and who are registered for population purposes within the county council area or municipality concerned. Citizens of the Union and citizens of Iceland and Norway also have the right to vote subject to the same conditions. Other foreign citizens have the right to vote if they have been registered residents in Sweden for a continuous period of the three years before Election Day.

The information found in the population registration database of the Swedish Tax Agency 30 days before Election Day determines who has the right to vote and where they may cast their ballots. This means that voters resident in Sweden are entered as entitled to vote in the electoral district where they were registered as resident 30 days before Election Day.

Electoral rolls

All individuals must be included in the electoral roll in order to be allowed to vote.

Electoral rolls are compiled before each election and contain only the people who have the right to vote in the election concerned. When more than one election is held at the same time, the electoral roll is common to all elections. An electoral roll is drawn up for each electoral district and used in the relevant polling stations.

Personnummer	Namn	Adress	Ålder
1901010101010	Andersson, Anders	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	25
1901010101011	Andersson, Maria	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	22
1901010101012	Andersson, Emma	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	19
1901010101013	Andersson, Erik	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	16
1901010101014	Andersson, Sofia	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	13
1901010101015	Andersson, Viktor	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	10
1901010101016	Andersson, Hugo	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	7
1901010101017	Andersson, Alva	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	4
1901010101018	Andersson, Oscar	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	1
1901010101019	Andersson, Isak	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101020	Andersson, Elin	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101021	Andersson, Axel	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101022	Andersson, Maja	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101023	Andersson, Arvid	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101024	Andersson, Lovisa	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101025	Andersson, Gustav	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101026	Andersson, Matilda	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101027	Andersson, Emil	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101028	Andersson, Ida	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101029	Andersson, Viktor	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101030	Andersson, Hugo	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101031	Andersson, Alva	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101032	Andersson, Oscar	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101033	Andersson, Isak	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101034	Andersson, Elin	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101035	Andersson, Axel	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101036	Andersson, Maja	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101037	Andersson, Arvid	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101038	Andersson, Lovisa	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101039	Andersson, Gustav	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101040	Andersson, Matilda	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101041	Andersson, Emil	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101042	Andersson, Ida	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101043	Andersson, Viktor	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101044	Andersson, Hugo	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101045	Andersson, Alva	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101046	Andersson, Oscar	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101047	Andersson, Isak	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101048	Andersson, Elin	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101049	Andersson, Axel	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101050	Andersson, Maja	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101051	Andersson, Arvid	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101052	Andersson, Lovisa	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101053	Andersson, Gustav	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101054	Andersson, Matilda	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101055	Andersson, Emil	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101056	Andersson, Ida	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101057	Andersson, Viktor	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101058	Andersson, Hugo	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101059	Andersson, Alva	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101060	Andersson, Oscar	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101061	Andersson, Isak	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101062	Andersson, Elin	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101063	Andersson, Axel	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101064	Andersson, Maja	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101065	Andersson, Arvid	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101066	Andersson, Lovisa	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101067	Andersson, Gustav	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101068	Andersson, Matilda	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101069	Andersson, Emil	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101070	Andersson, Ida	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101071	Andersson, Viktor	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101072	Andersson, Hugo	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101073	Andersson, Alva	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101074	Andersson, Oscar	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101075	Andersson, Isak	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101076	Andersson, Elin	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101077	Andersson, Axel	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101078	Andersson, Maja	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101079	Andersson, Arvid	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101080	Andersson, Lovisa	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101081	Andersson, Gustav	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101082	Andersson, Matilda	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101083	Andersson, Emil	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101084	Andersson, Ida	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101085	Andersson, Viktor	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101086	Andersson, Hugo	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101087	Andersson, Alva	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101088	Andersson, Oscar	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101089	Andersson, Isak	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101090	Andersson, Elin	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101091	Andersson, Axel	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101092	Andersson, Maja	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101093	Andersson, Arvid	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101094	Andersson, Lovisa	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101095	Andersson, Gustav	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101096	Andersson, Matilda	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101097	Andersson, Emil	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101098	Andersson, Ida	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101099	Andersson, Viktor	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0
1901010101100	Andersson, Hugo	Stora Mellansåra 11:1	0

Anyone who considers that the electoral roll contains incorrect information regarding themselves must apply in writing in order to have it rectified. The request must be received by the County Administrative Board not later than 12 days before Election Day.

Swedish citizens who have emigrated (Swedes living abroad) are included in the electoral roll if they have emigrated within the last ten years or if they have applied to the Swedish Tax Agency not later than 30 days before Election Day to be included in the electoral roll. Application is made by sending address details to the Swedish Tax Agency. There is a special form for Swedes living abroad who wish to apply to be included in an electoral roll.

Voting cards

Before an election the Election Authority sends voting cards to all those who have the right to vote. The voting card is sent to the address recorded in the Swedish Tax Agency population registration database. When advance voting begins 18 days before the election, the voting cards should have reached all voters.

RÖSTKORT 2010

Den 19 september har du rösträtt vid val till:

- Riksdagen**
Valdeltagande i riksdagen
- Landstinget i Stockholms län**
Valdeltagande i landstinget
- Botkyrka kommun**
Valdeltagande i kommunal valsammanläggning

Kommunal valsammanläggning
Botkyrka kommun

Den tillhör valkretsen:
Botkyrka 1

Den valkretsen är:
Falkbergskolan
Kommunikation
Östra äggen 1
01600 Botkyrka
0800 2010

Den nummer i valkretsen:
01 80 2382 1234

Valmyndigheten i Botkyrka kommun
SE-800 99 AKALLING-SÅLEN

Svea Riksdagen
c/o Svea Riksdagen Bevakning
Svea Huset Svea väg 18 C
112 12 Stockholm
Land

Anyone who loses their voting card may obtain a replacement card from the municipal election committee, county administrative board or the Election Authority.

4. Parties and ballot papers

There are no rules prescribing how to form a political party in Sweden. The definition of a political party according to the Instrument of Government is as follows “Party is understood to mean any association or group of voters which runs for election under a particular designation.”

Eligibility

Anyone who has the right to vote is also eligible for election. Eligibility is determined by the information contained in the population register on Election Day. A person must be a registered resident in a municipality or a county in order to be eligible for election there. However there is no residential requirement for election to the Riksdag but individuals must be, or have been, registered as resident in Sweden at some point in time.

For election to the European Parliament any citizen of the Union is eligible for election on the condition that they are not also standing in another member state and that they certify that they have not lost their eligibility in their home country. Individuals wishing to be candidates for election to the European Parliament for a party in Sweden, but who are citizens of another EU country, must submit a declaration to the Election Authority that they are not candidates in any other country.

To be elected, a person must be listed as a candidate for a political party.

Registration of party name

The party name is the name that the party concerned wishes to be printed on its ballot papers. A party is not forced to register its party name in order to stand for election; instead they may order ballot papers with no registered party name on them. However by registering their name with the Election Authority it is possible for a party to protect its name so that cannot be used by another party.

If the Election Authority is to be able to register a party name, its application must be supported by a certain number of voters. The name may not resemble any other party name to the extent that they may be confused with each other. It is also necessary that the party concerned proves that statutes have been adopted and a board elected.

Applications to register a party name must have been received by the Election Authority by the last day of February of the election year at the latest if the registration is to apply in the election that year.

If a party name has been registered for a parliamentary election, the registration is also valid for municipal and county council elections throughout Sweden and for election to the European Parliament. If a party name is registered for county council elections, the registration is valid for elections to the county council concerned and for elections to municipal councils in the county. Registration for an election to the European Parliament is valid only for election to the European Parliament.

Notification of candidates

The parties must provide notification of their candidates prior to an election. By stating their candidate names, a party is able to protect its candidate list from the voters themselves nominating candidates. These candidate lists are supplied when the party orders ballot papers.

Notification of candidates is not compulsory. If a party chooses not to state their candidate names on their ballot papers, voters are able to write in their own candidates and consequently cast a vote for a specific candidate that the party itself has not nominated.

The parties must provide notification of candidates by a particular date. This date is determined by the Election Authority. Candidates may only be notified by an authorised representative of the party. The candidates must also declare in writing that they have given the party consent to use their names. These declarations are to be submitted at the same time as the parties state their candidates.

Ballot papers

Ballot papers are yellow for parliamentary elections, blue for county council elections and white for municipal elections and elections to the European Parliament. The ballot papers are required to be identical in size and material.

Ordering ballot papers

For parliamentary elections, municipal and county council elections, ballot papers are ordered from the County Administrative Board. For European Parliament elections, ballot papers are ordered from the Election Authority. The parties must order ballot papers before a certain date in order to ensure that they can be delivered not later than 45 days before Election Day. Ballot papers may also be ordered after the set date, but no guarantee is then given concerning delivery time.

Parties which have received at least 1% of the votes in Sweden at one of the two most recent parliamentary elections have a right to free printing of ballot papers with candidate names for the next parliamentary election. The allowance for free ballot papers is three times the number of individuals entitled to vote. For elections to municipal and county councils a party is entitled to free ballot papers if the party is represented.

When the election has been completed the parties that received more than 1% of the votes in the parliamentary election, or have been represented in the county council or municipal elections, will be reimbursed for their ballot paper expenses.

The rules concerning free ballot papers also apply to elections to the European Parliament.

Three types of ballot papers are in use in the different elections:

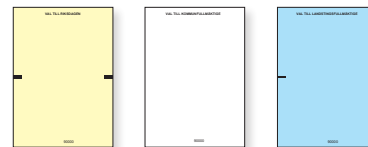
Name ballot papers –
ballot papers with party name
and candidate names.



Party ballot papers –
ballot papers with party name
but no candidate names.



Blank ballot papers –
ballot papers on which a party
name may be written in.



Putting out ballot papers

For the parties that have obtained more than 1% of the votes in the parliamentary election, the election officials are responsible for putting out party ballot papers in the polling stations and voting places. This applies to parliamentary, municipal and county council elections. The parties must themselves request, a certain period of time before the election, that their ballot papers be put out.

For elections to municipal and county councils, parties who are represented have the right to have party ballot papers put out in the polling stations and voting places in the respective municipality or the county.

The election officials also put out blank ballot papers for all elections at all places where it is possible to vote. However name ballot papers are put out by the parties themselves.

For elections to the European Parliament the election officials are responsible for putting out name ballot papers for the parties that have received at least 1% of the votes in Sweden at one of the two most recent elections to the European Parliament at all places where it is possible to vote if the party has only one name ballot paper that applies to the entire country.

5. Voting

Any voters who are not known to the election officials must show identification or otherwise confirm their identity before casting their votes. The election officials must also make a note of how they have checked voter identities.

Polling stations

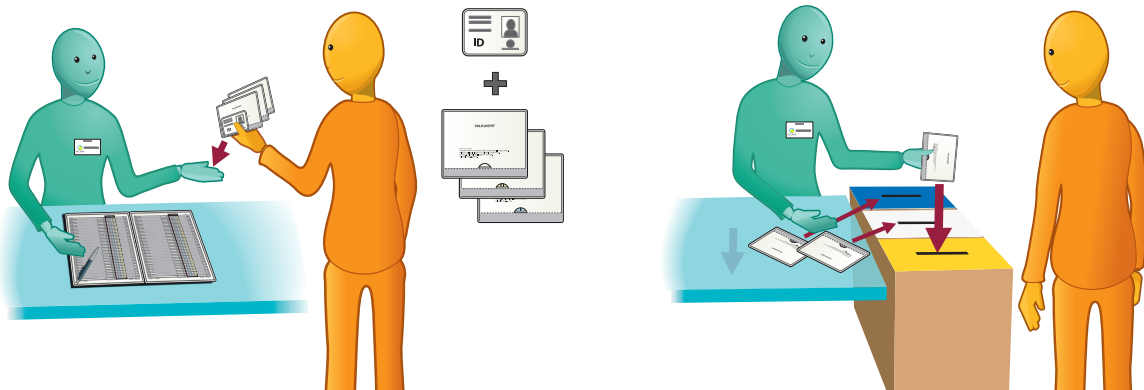
There is one polling station in each electoral district. On Election Day, the voter votes at the polling station in the district where he/she is included in the electoral roll. The exact location of the relevant polling station is stated on the voting card. Polling stations must normally also be accessible to people with physical disabilities. If, due to physical disability, the voter still cannot enter the polling station the election officials may collect their vote from outside the polling station.

Symbol for polling station



Polling stations are normally open between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. (9 p.m. for elections to the European Parliament). The Election Committee may decide on shorter opening hours after consultation with the relevant County Administrative Board.

The Election Committee in each municipality determines the premises that are most suitable and also appoints at least four individuals to act as polling clerks at each station. At least three polling clerks must be present when a voter casts his/her vote.



Advance voting places

Symbol for advance voting place

The Election Committee is also responsible for advance voting within the municipality. Premises in which voters may place their votes in advance are called voting places and may perhaps be the municipal buildings or a local library. The Election Committee is also responsible for ensuring that votes can be properly received and processed at these sites.

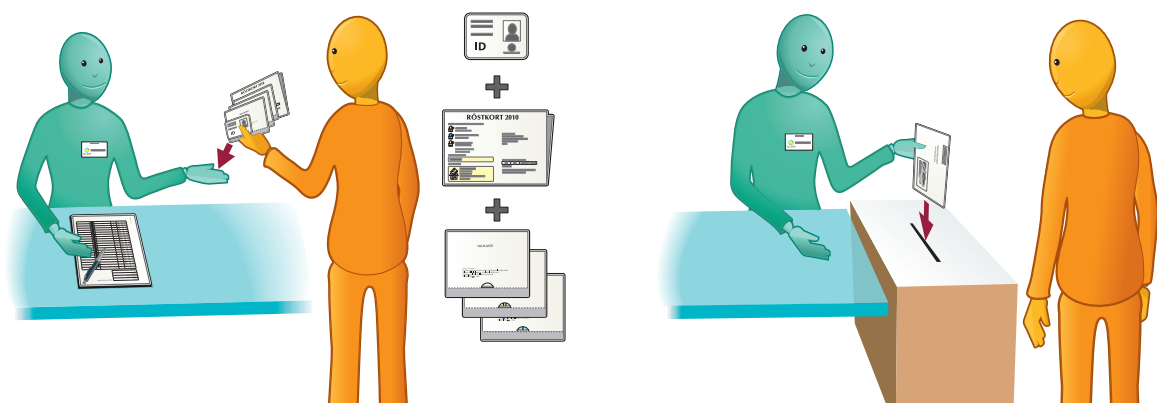


All election and voting premises are to be freely accessible. If the Election Committee wishes to use premises that are not accessible to disabled people then this issue must be transferred to the County Administrative Board for final decision. The Election Committee must then be able to prove that there are no other suitable premises available.

A voter who for some reason cannot vote at her/his polling station on Election Day may vote in advance at a voting place anywhere in Sweden. Advance voting begins 18 days before Election Day. As an additional service to voters, each municipality also has at least one voting place which is also open on Election Day.

At some hospitals and other nursing institutions election committees arrange the receiving of votes for voters wishing to cast their votes there e.g. patients, staff or visitors.

Where there is advance voting the election officials receive the votes and send them in special window envelopes to the Election Committee. A person voting in a voting place must produce her/his voting card and be able to identify herself/himself or otherwise confirm her/his identity.



Voting by messenger

Voting by messenger means that another voter takes an individual's vote to a polling station or to a voting place for advance voting. Any individual who, because of illness, physical disability or age, cannot personally go to a polling station or voting place may vote by messenger.

Special material is required for voting by messenger. This material may be ordered from the Election Authority or from the municipality and includes instructions on how to proceed. Certain municipalities appoint messengers to act for voters who have no-one who can help them.

Rural mail carriers

Everyone who lives along a route serviced by rural mail carriers may use them as voting messengers. Rural mail carriers are equipped with the material necessary for voting by messenger.

Voting at diplomatic missions abroad

Anyone who is abroad during the voting period may vote at any Swedish mission abroad that provides such a service.

The Election Authority decides, after receiving proposals from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, at which Swedish diplomatic missions abroad votes may be received. Voting begins 24 days before Election Day, and in some places may take place only for a short period of time. Voting must cease long enough before the election to enable votes cast to reach the Swedish Election Authority not later than the day before Election Day. All votes received at diplomatic missions abroad are sent to the Election Authority, where they are sorted and forwarded to the relevant election committee.

Postal voting from abroad

Individuals who are entitled to vote and are abroad may vote by post from all the countries in the world. Seafarers on ships in international traffic may also vote by post. Postal votes may not be sent earlier than 45 days before Election Day or later than Election Day.

Special material is required for postal voting. The material may be ordered from the Election Authority or from a mission abroad.

Postal votes must be posted abroad and have been received by the voter's municipality by the Wednesday Vote Count at the latest. Please read more about the Wednesday Vote Count in Chapter 6.

Changing a vote

People who have voted in advance (in Sweden or from abroad) may change their vote; however this must be done in person at a polling station on Election Day. The vote in the polling station will then be accepted and the advance vote declared invalid.

Party and preference voting

Voters vote for a political party and may, at the same time, mark the candidate that they would prefer to be elected on their ballot paper. This is called preference voting. The voter casts a preference vote by marking one of the candidates on the ballot paper with a cross. Only one candidate may be marked. The mark must be made in the box preceding the name of the candidate. Please read more about election assessment in Chapter 7



6. Vote counting on election night

After reception of votes has ended on Election Day, election officials in each electoral district count the votes received. However before counting commences the approved advance votes (from voting places in Sweden, from abroad and as postal votes) are placed in the relevant ballot boxes.

The ballot boxes are then emptied and the votes in each ballot box are counted. The ballot papers for the parliamentary election are counted first, followed by those for the municipal election and finally those for the county council election. When an election district has counted the votes on election night the results are phoned in to a reporting officer who records them in the Election Authority Election Database System. Consequently the Election Authority is able to calculate a provisional election result on election night, followed later during the night by a provisional distribution of seats. As results for the electoral districts are recorded, they are made directly available to the media and the public via the Election Authority website.

When local counting is has been completed, the ballot papers are placed in special security bags which are sealed and handed to the Election Committee. The Election Committee is responsible for ensuring that the votes from the polling stations are delivered to the County Administrative Board as soon as possible.

The Wednesday count

On the Wednesday after Election Day the election committees count the advance votes that had not reached the polling stations on Election Day. These are primarily votes from abroad and advance votes cast in other municipalities on Election Day. Once the count by the election committees has been completed, these votes are also delivered to the County Administrative Board.

7. The final count

The final count begins at the County Administrative Board on the Monday after Election Day. There all the votes are counted again including the number of preference votes for each candidate.

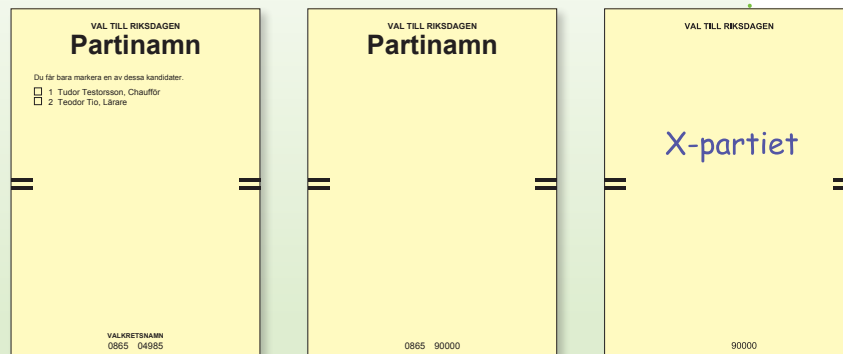
The parliamentary election is counted first, followed by the municipal council and finally the county council elections. About ten days after Election Day it is usually possible to publish the final results of the county council elections. The final vote count can also be followed as it happens on the Election Authority website www.election.se.

The examination of ballot papers

Only valid votes may be included and influence the distribution of seats. The County Administrative Board determines in accordance with the Elections Act which votes are valid and which are not and counts the votes for each party. The same scrutiny has to be carried out with regard to candidates i.e. only valid preference votes are counted.

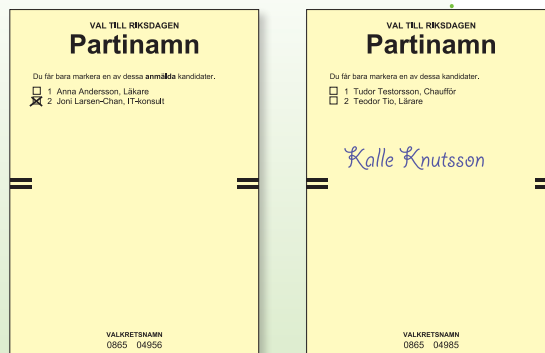
Valid ballot papers

A ballot paper is valid if it contains a party name. It can be a name ballot paper, a party ballot paper or a blank ballot paper on which the voter has written a party name.



The counting of valid preference votes

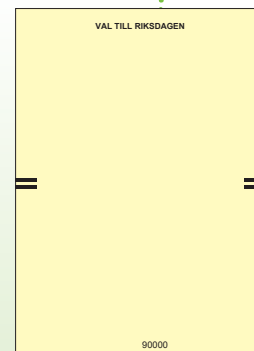
A valid preference vote can be a name ballot paper with one candidate marked. Or it can be a name that has been added by the voter to a ballot paper for a party that has not provided notification of its candidates. It is written on the ballot paper if the party has provided notification of its candidates.



Invalid ballot papers

A ballot paper is deemed invalid if:

- It has no party name on it (see picture).
- It has more than one party name (for example if there are two (or more) ballot papers in the same envelope with different party names).
- It is marked with a sign that is clearly intended to identify the voter.



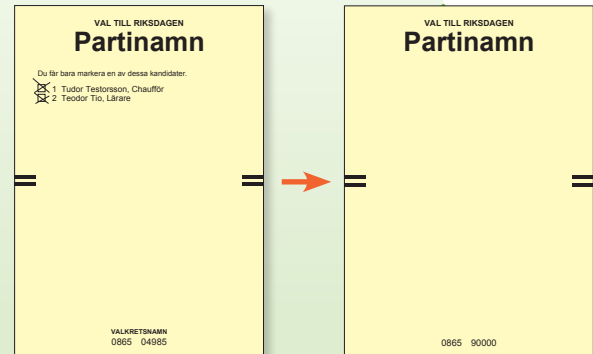
Ballot papers that lack a party name are termed blank votes and these are the most common type of invalid votes. The number of blank votes is reported separately from the other invalid votes.

All candidate names are disregarded

In certain cases the County Administrative Board will disregard all the names of candidates on a ballot paper, for example:

- The voter has marked two or more candidates (see picture below).
- The personal vote cross may have been made mechanically.
- If there are two or more ballot papers in the same envelope with the same party name but with differing lists of candidates or crosses for different candidates.
- A party vote ballot paper intended for another constituency/municipality or county council is used.

Example: The ballot paper is valid and will be regarded as a party ballot paper

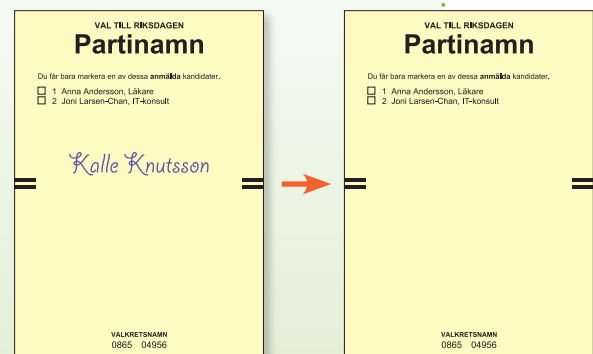


Specific candidate names are disregarded

The ballot paper is valid, but one or more names of candidates are disregarded in the count if:

- A candidate is not eligible (this is checked against the population registration database on Election Day).
- A name has been added to a ballot paper for a party that has registered its party name and provided prior notification of its candidates (see picture to the right).

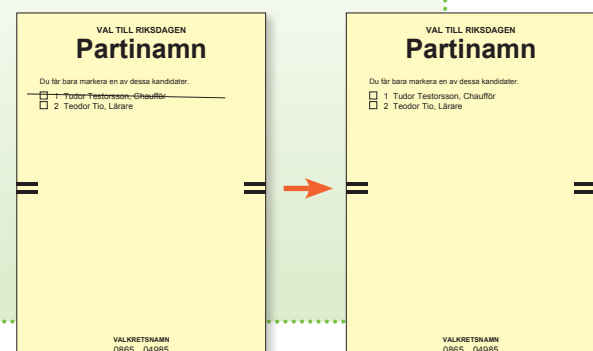
Example: The ballot paper is valid but the added name is disregarded. The ballot paper will be regarded as a name ballot paper with no preference vote.



Deleted names of candidates

Even if the name of a candidate has been deleted on a ballot paper, the name is not disregarded, i.e. the deletion does not affect the order of the candidates on a ballot paper

Example: The ballot paper is valid, but the deletion is disregarded. The ballot paper will be regarded as a name ballot paper with no preference vote.

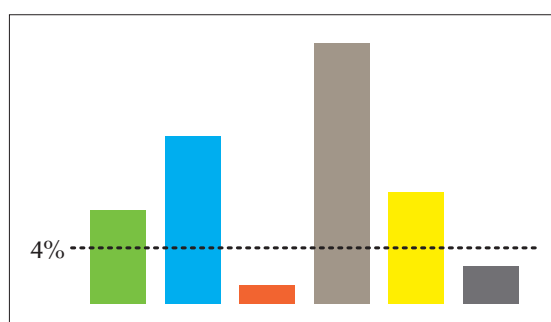


8. Distribution of seats

When the County Administrative Board has finished counting all the votes, distribution of seats among the parties can begin.

Thresholds for parties

In order to take part in the distribution of seats in parliamentary elections and elections to the European Parliament, a political party must gain at least 4% of all valid votes cast in the whole of Sweden. However if a party gains at least 12% of the votes in one constituency, it may also participate in the distribution of permanent seats in that constituency.



In county council elections, a political party must gain at least 3% of all valid votes cast in the whole county in order to take part in the distribution of seats. There is no threshold for municipal elections in the electoral system.

Distribution of seats between parties

The permanent seats are distributed first, followed by the adjustment seats. These seats are distributed on the basis of the number of votes that each party has received in each constituency.

The method of calculation used to distribute the permanent seats is called the “adjusted odd-number method”.

Parliamentary elections

When the permanent seats have been distributed between the parties within each constituency, the permanent seats for each party in all constituencies (a total of 310 seats) are totalled. A new distribution of seats is then carried out using the same method but based on the parties’ grand total of votes in the country. This time, 349 seats are distributed, taking the whole of Sweden as one single constituency.

A comparison is then made between the outcomes of the two distributions. A party which has obtained more seats in the second distribution, using the whole of Sweden as one constituency, is entitled to adjustment seats. The party is allotted adjustment seats in the constituency where

the party has the largest comparative figure following the distribution of the permanent seats. If a party has not obtained permanent constituency seats in every constituency, the party's total number of votes in the constituencies where the party has not yet gained a seat is used as the comparative figure when distributing adjustment seats.

If a party receives more seats in the summation of the constituency seats than in the distribution using the votes of the entire country, it is still permitted to retain the constituency seat number and consequently there will be the equivalent number fewer adjustment seats to distribute.

County council elections

In county council elections, 9/10 of the seats are permanent seats and 1/10 adjustment seats. The seats are distributed using the same method as for parliamentary elections. First the permanent seats in each constituency are distributed. A distribution of the total number of seats for the county is then made, based on the total number of votes for each party in the whole county. This makes it possible to determine which parties are entitled to adjustment seats. The adjustment seats are distributed using the same rules as for parliamentary elections.

Municipal council elections

In municipal council elections, all seats are permanent, and the number of seats in each constituency has previously been determined by the County Administrative Board.

Elections to the European Parliament

In elections to the European Parliament all seats are permanent and the entire country forms one constituency.

FACT BOX

The adjusted odd-number method

Permanent seats are distributed on the basis of the number of votes that the parties have obtained in each constituency. Comparative figures are calculated for the parties that have qualified to take part in the distribution of seats.

The first comparative figure is obtained by dividing each party's total vote by 1.4. The party with the highest comparative figure obtains the first seat in the constituency. The party then obtains a new comparative figure by dividing the party's total vote by 3. Other parties retain and compete with their original comparative figure until they obtain a seat. When a party obtains its second seat the total vote is divided by 5, which gives the next comparative figure. At the third seat the total vote is divided by 7 etc. This calculation continues until all the seats have been distributed.

EXAMPLE 1: Distribution of the permanent seats in Kronoberg constituency in the 2002 parliament election

1. The total vote of all parties is divided by 1.4.

Total vote = the total number of votes obtained by the party in the constituency.

3. The total vote for the party with the highest comparative figure (i.e. S) is now divided by the next divisor, i.e. 3

6. The total vote for the party obtaining the highest comparative figure (i.e. M) is now divided by the next divisor, i.e. 3. Other parties still compete with the same original comparative figure, except for S which has of course already been divided by 3 and 5.

Party	Total vote	Seat 1	Seat 2	Seat 3	Seat 4
M	15 200	10 857,14	10 857,14	10 857,14	5 066,66
S	43 696	31 211,42	14 565,33	8 739,20	8 739,20
Fp	10 538	7 527,14	7 527,14	7 527,14	7 527,14
C	11 746	8 390,00	8 390,00	8 390,00	8 390,00
V	7 864	5 617,14	5 617,14	5 617,14	5 617,14
Mp	4 354	3 110,00	3 110,00	3 110,00	3 110,00
Kd	11 695	8 353,57	8 353,57	8 353,57	8 353,57

7. The party that then has the highest comparative figure is S and S thus obtains seat no. 4.

5. The party that then has the highest comparative figure is M and M thus obtains seat no. 3

2. The party that then has the highest comparative figure is S and S thus obtains the first seat.

4. The party that then has the highest comparative figure is still S and S thus obtains seat no. 2. The party's total vote is divided by 5 to obtain the next comparative figure setal

EXAMPLE 2: Distribution of the permanent seats in Uppsala County Council in the 1998 election

Uppsala County Council has three constituencies and at this election in 1998 a total of 71 seats to distribute – 63 permanent seats and 8 adjustment seats. The 63 permanent seats were allocated as follows: South Constituency 11, Central Constituency 41 and North Constituency 11. Parties that received less than 3% of the votes were not entitled to participate in the distribution of seats.

The permanent seats were distributed between the parties within the three constituencies as follows:

Party	South	Central	North	Total
M	3	10	2	15
S	5	13	6	24
Fp	-	4	-	4
C	1	2	1	4
V	1	5	1	7
Mp	-	3	-	3
Kd	1	4	1	6
Total	11	41	11	63

Constituency distribution was then compared with total county distribution of all 71 seats in the County Council.

Party	Total distribution of 71 seats	Sum constituency seats	Difference adjustment seats
M	17	15	2
S	25	24	1
Fp	6	4	2
C	5	4	1
V	7	7	0
Mp	4	3	1
Kd	7	6	1
Total	71	63	8

For the Moderate Party, two adjustment seats were allocated. Including the distribution of the permanent seats, the party had the following comparative figures in the three constituencies:

Comparative figure	South	Central	North
M	1213,85	1265,71	810

The two adjustment seats went to the party in the Central and South constituencies. Using the same method, the adjustment seats for the other parties were placed to give the following final distribution of seats for the three constituencies:

Party	South*	Central*	North*
M	4 (1)	11 (1)	2
S	5	14 (1)	6
Fp	1 (1)	4	1 (1)
C	1	2	2 (1)
V	1	5	1
Mp	-	3	1 (1)
Kd	1	5 (1)	1
Total	13 (2)	44 (3)	14 (3)

* The number of adjustment seats for each party in each constituency is shown in brackets.

9. The appointment of members and their substitutes

Name order within a party

When the distribution of seats among the political parties is complete, the candidates who are to have the seats are selected. The first step is to check whether the rules on preference voting can be applied.

In order to be elected on preference votes, a candidate must have received a certain share of the votes as preference votes. In most cases the number of preference votes received by candidates is not sufficient to fill all the seats allocated. If the number of candidates above the threshold is too low then the remaining party seats can be filled using the whole number method.

Threshold rules for preference votes

The total number of preference votes is the number of preference votes cast for a specific candidate in a constituency under one party name, irrespective of how many lists the candidate has been included in.

To be elected on preference votes the candidate must have received a number of preference votes equivalent to at least:

- 8% of the votes cast for the party in the constituency in the parliamentary election (there is a proposal that this threshold should be reduced to 5% from 2011).
- 5% of the votes cast for the party in the constituency in the county and municipal council elections, although at least 100 votes in the former and at least 50 votes in the latter.
- 5% of votes cast for the party in the whole country in the election to the European Parliament.

If more than one candidate clears the preference vote threshold, the seats are awarded to them according to the number of preference votes for each. If two or more candidates gain the same number of votes, lots are drawn to decide which of them will be awarded the seat.

The whole number method

If all seats cannot be filled with the help of preference voting then the whole number method is used to rank the relevant names. This involves sorting the ballot papers in groups with the name of the same candidate as first listed name. Candidates who have already been awarded a seat on the basis of preference votes are disregarded.

The whole number method is most simply demonstrated when a party is standing with only one ballot paper in a constituency for which members and substitutes are to be appointed. In practice the members are appointed according to the order in which they are listed on the ballot paper. In these cases, new groups are formed i.e. the same candidate is the first, unselected name on all the ballot papers, when the first candidate has taken up his/her seat. Comparative figures are then obtained by the number of votes for the group being divided by two. If the second candidate is appointed to the second seat and all ballot papers contain the same third candidate, then the number of votes is divided by three in order to obtain the next comparative figure etc.

If the party has established several different ballot papers, the first count should see the papers sorted in groups according to the first, valid candidate name. The name with the greatest number of votes is allocated the first place on the party list. The number of votes for the ballot papers that have been allocated seats is reduced by division by 2, 3, 4 etc. Calculations could become more or less complicated depending on whether the names are on all the ballot papers or not.

Sometimes there are not enough candidates listed on a ballot paper in a constituency to fill all the seats allocated. In this case the additional seats are moved to another constituency in which the party is participating in the distribution of permanent seats. The constituency in which the party has the highest comparative figure after the distribution of permanent seats will receive the first seat and so on.

EXAMPLE 3: How members are appointed

In Valstad Municipality, the Local Party has obtained 621 votes and been awarded four seats on the Municipal Council. The party's ballot paper appears as shown below, and the candidates have received the following percentage preference votes:

1	Anna	70	11,27 %
2	Niklas	49	7,89 %
3	Signe	113	18,19 %
4	Adam	18	2,89 %
5	Urban	10	1,61 %
6	Claes	22	3,54 %

Signe and Anna are elected on the basis of their preference votes. They have exceeded the threshold of 5% of the votes and a minimum of 50 preference votes. Niklas, who has received 7.89% of the votes, cannot gain a seat with the aid of preference votes as he has only received 49 preference votes. The party's two remaining seats must be awarded with

the aid of the whole number method. The candidates who have already obtained seats are now disregarded. Niklas is the first name on the ballot paper. His comparative figure equals the total number of votes for the party $621/1=621$. When Niklas has been awarded a seat, Adam will head all the 621 ballot papers. The comparative figure for Adam will be $621/2=310.50$. The party candidates will thus be awarded seats in the following order:

Signe	113	preference votes
Anna	70	preference votes
Niklas	621,00	comparative figure
Adam	310,50	comparative figure

Double election replacement

If a candidate gains a seat in more than one constituency, the constituency that he/she will represent must be established and one or more other candidates must be appointed in order to replace the person who has been elected twice. This is known as double election replacement.

If a candidate has a place on the party list in more than one constituency he or she will be awarded the seat in the constituency where he or she:

- Firstly, has the largest number of preference votes in proportion to the party's total number of votes in the constituency (if the seat has been awarded in accordance with the rules on preference voting).
- Secondly, has the highest comparative figure (if the seat has been awarded using the whole number method).

That candidate will then be replaced by a substitute in the other constituency. The person substituting for such a candidate will be

- Firstly, the candidate having the highest proportion of preference votes who has not yet obtained a seat.
- Secondly, the first available candidate on the list who has received the highest number of votes on the lists that applied for the member originally chosen. The first name on the ballot paper is considered to be the first candidate who has not already taken a seat for the party.

If a candidate is elected as a member for more than one party, he/she will be awarded one of the seats. The other seat(s) will be allocated in the same manner to another person as member. It is, however, possible to be a substitute for more than one political party

Appointment of substitutes

For each member appointed, a substitute must also be named who will be able to take the member's place if he/she is unable to attend a meeting. A calculation is made for each member in order to appoint a substitute.

The primary rule is that a substitute must come from the list where the elected member has the most voter support (known as list loyalty). There

is, however, one exception to this principle – if, when substitutes are to be appointed, there are still candidates who have achieved the preference vote threshold but have not yet been allocated a seat, these candidates must be the first ones to be appointed as substitutes.

When there are no more candidates with preference votes to be appointed as substitutes, the calculation continues using only the ballot papers valid for the ordinary member when he/she was awarded the seat. The calculation is always made on the basis of the original order of names, consequently never from a candidate who received his/her place due to double election replacement.

The first candidate on the ballot paper is now considered to be the first candidate who has not already been appointed as member or substitute for the member that the calculation refers to. No comparative figures need be calculated since the total number of votes is used. If the total number of votes for two candidates is the same, lots are drawn to determine which candidate will be appointed substitute.

Number of substitutes

In elections to the Riksdag, county councils and the European Parliament, for each member a number of substitutes equal to the number of seats gained by the party, but never fewer than three, will be appointed.

Sometimes the ballot papers do not include sufficient names to be able to appoint all the substitutes. For municipal council elections the remaining substitute places will be left vacant.

For other elections it is possible to continue by first determining whether there are other ballot papers where substitutes may be found. In practice this means that selection from the list of names continues in the same manner as when members are appointed using comparative figures. As a last resort it is possible to go to other constituencies to identify suitable candidates to appoint.

Municipal council elections

The proportion of substitutes may not be more than half of the number of seats gained by each party in the municipality. The relevant municipal council will decide before the election how large this proportion should be and the most common situation is that the council decides that the proportion of substitutes should be half. A party which has four seats then normally has two substitutes. For parties that have gained only one or two seats, however, two substitutes will nevertheless be appointed. When members from a party have been elected from more than one list, the number of substitutes may exceed the proportion decided by the municipal council in question.

10. Election bodies

The Election Authority is responsible for planning and coordinating the implementation of elections and referendums. This authority also develops and maintains the necessary IT support for the entire election administration.

The Election Authority establishes electoral rolls, voting cards, ballot papers and other election material. After the election, the Election Authority distributes the seats among the parties and establishes the members and substitutes who have been elected for the parliamentary and European Parliament elections.

The County Administrative Board is the regional election authority. The County Administrative Board takes decisions concerning electoral districts, is responsible for the final count in all elections and establishes the results of the municipal and county council elections.

The Election Committee in each municipality forms the local election authority and appoints polling clerks, ensures that there are polling stations in the municipality and bears full responsibility for advance voting there. This committee is also responsible for the preliminary count of the votes both on Election Day and on the Wednesday of the week following Election Day. The municipality is responsible for the costs for polling clerks and polling stations.



The Election Review Board takes decisions concerning appeals. The Board consists of seven members. The Chair of the Board must have qualified as a judge and may not be a member of parliament. The Riksdag appoints the members of the Board.

11. Appeals

Anyone who considers that a mistake or an error has been made which has affected the results of an election may appeal this result. As concerns the parliamentary election, appeals are to be submitted to the Election Authority and for municipal and county council elections, appeals are to be submitted to the relevant County Administrative Board. Appeals must have been received by the government authority that is to make the relevant determination within ten days of the announcement of the election results.

More information

There is more to read about elections and referendums on the Election Authority website at www.val.se including

- Instructions for how a party can apply for registration of party name.
- Examples of calculations for seat distribution between parties and how members and their substitutes are appointed.

It is also possible to order this material from the Election Authority.

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