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## Voting rights for alien residents--who wants it?

<https://arctichealth.org/en/permalink/ahliterature39472>

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Source: Int Migr Rev. 1985;19(3):451-67  
Date: 1985  
Language: English  
Publication Type: Article  
Keywords: Demography  
Developed Countries  
Emigration and Immigration  
Europe  
Legislation  
Political Systems  
Politics  
Population  
Population Dynamics  
Public Policy  
Scandinavia  
Socialism  
Sweden  
Transients and Migrants

Abstract: Foreign nationals permanently domiciled in Sweden have been entitled since 1975 to vote and to municipal and county council elections. This article examines some of the major issues associated with international migration and disenfranchisement of migrants created by a contradiction between economic and political rationale. The alien population of Sweden remained small for a long time, but during the 1960s it rose 1st to 300,000 and later to 400,000 persons. Since 1970, aliens have constituted roughly 5% of the total national population of 8.3 million. Surveys following the 3 elections held in Sweden so far have shown immigrants to be quite well informed concerning election procedures and the parties. In contrast to single males, women with children tend to be highly stable, because of favorable social security for women, particularly for women with children. Participation elections among women (55%) is higher than among men (49%), and married women (58%) are usually the highest participants. Class-voting is still rather strong in Sweden; the percentage difference in preference for Socialist parties between working-class and middle-class was as high 55% in 1960. Long term trends in the distribution of party-preference among immigrants are determined to a large extent by the policy on immigration regulation and political asylum for refugees and exiles. Another selectivity is due to the differential remigration rate. A 1976 study showed that although local franchise of immigrants is now the law of the land, some Swedes are still against the granting of voting rights and electability to immigrants. On the whole, there is clearly a psychological environment conducive, at least in Stockholm, to the task of putting local franchise reform into real practice.

PubMed ID: 12341058 [View in PubMed](#) 