

di Malin Björk, Member of European Parliament Swedish Left Party / Vänsterpartiet –

Report on the Swedish elections

The Swedish Left Party has made one of its best election results ever. The first results show that we are now at 7,9 percent (up from 5,7 percent in 2014).

The result was even better in the three largest cities: Stockholm (13 percent), Göteborg (14 percent), and Malmö (11 percent). It shows that our campaign for equality, welfare, feminism and ecological sustainability has been successful. We are also seen as the main force against the increasing racism and anti-refugee rhetoric and policies. We have also seen a big increase in membership, and that many people want to get active.

Despite our progress, however, the overall results show an almost dead race between the red-green bloc (The Left Party, The Green Party and the Social Democrats), which together received 40,6 percent of the votes, and the right-wing bloc (The Conservatives, the Center Party, The Liberals and the Christian Democrats) which together got 40,3 percent of the votes. At the same time, the extreme right-wing party Sweden Democrats went from 13 to 17 percent, which is a lot but far less than expected.

I attach a spanish image, which explains the results in a european way:

Government negotiations

The view of the Left Party is that the only decent option is that if, when all votes are counted (by Wednesday), and the red-green bloc is the largest, it should be governing Sweden. However, in his speech on Sunday night, Social Democratic prime minister Löfven clearly stated that he prefers some form of a cross-block cooperation rather than forming a purely red-green government. He went as far as to say that “bloc politics are buried.”

Although both the Social Democrats and the right wing parties have stated that they will refuse to cooperate with the extreme right-wing party, it is clear that some of the right-wing parties (notably the Conservatives and the Christian Democrats) eventually could choose to collaborate with the racists in order to form a government. That would be a very dangerous development. We have seen what it leads to in countries like Austria, Denmark and Italy. The raw racism of the far right, together with the ice-cold neoliberal economic policies of the right, would be a terrible blow to so many people. It would create a Sweden where many of us no longer will recognise ourselves.

However, negotiations between the different parties have just only begun and it will take

some time before we know more about what the new government will look like.