

Elections in Åland on 15 October 2023

- This information sheet was published by the Government of Åland in 2023.
- More information about elections in Åland can be found on the website www.val.ax.

Don't forget to vote in the upcoming elections!

Elections to the Parliament of Åland and the municipal councils will be held on 15 October 2023.

It is important that everyone exercises their right to vote and participates in the elections. But who has the right to vote? How do you vote? How do you stand as a candidate?

Here you will find answers to your questions about the elections.

Who are we electing?

In the parliamentary elections, we elect 30 members to a four-year term in the Parliament of Åland.

In municipal elections, we elect members to the municipal councils. They also hold office for four years. The number of council members depends on the number of inhabitants in each municipality.

Who gets to vote?

To be eligible to vote in the elections, you must be at least 18 years old by Election Day, 15 October 2023. This means that you must have been born no later than 15 October 2005.

- To **vote in the parliamentary elections**, you must also hold right of domicile (Åland regional citizenship). However, you do not need to be a resident of Åland when the election is held.

- To be eligible **to vote in the municipal elections**, you must be registered as a resident of an Åland municipality as of 1 September 2023. It is in that municipality that you are allowed to vote. You must also **either** hold right of domicile **or** have been registered as a resident of a municipality on Åland for a full year prior to Election Day (i.e., since no later than 15 October 2022).

If you have the right to vote, you will receive a voting card sent by post to your home address approximately one month before Election Day. When you receive the card, you can check that the information about your voting rights is correct. Below you can see an example of what the voting card looks like.

RÖSTKORT	
Avsändare/valregistermyndighet Statens ämbetsverk på Åland Enheten för magistratsärenden PB 58 Torggatan 16 22101 MARIEHAMN Tel. (018) 635 270	
Mottagare Alänning Abe Mariehamnsgatan 5 22100 MARIEHAMN	
Du är röstberättigad i Lagtingsvalet och kommunalvalet 2015	
Röstningsområde, -ställe och -tid 1 YTTERNÄS SKOLA 18.10.2015 kl. 9-20	
Rättelseyrkanden avgörs av Centralnämnden för lagtingsval PB 1060 22111 MARIEHAMN	
Kommun Mariehamn	
<small>Datakälla: Befolkningsdatasystemet och hembygdsrättsregistret 1.9.2015</small>	



FÖLJEBREV

478 1
CENTRALNÄMNDEN I MARIEHAMNS STAD

PB 5
22101 MARIEHAMN
TEL. (018) 5310

Ifylls på förtidsröstningsstället Jag har själv med bevarande av valhemligheten ifyllt röstsedein och insettit den avstämplad i valkuvertet.
Den röstandes underskrift
Ifylls av valmyndigheten. Tid och ort.
Jag intygar, att röstningen försiggått på det sätt som stadgas i lag. Underskrift av valförrättaren eller valbestyrelsens ordförande.
Förtidsröstning 3.10 – 13.10.2015

How do you vote?

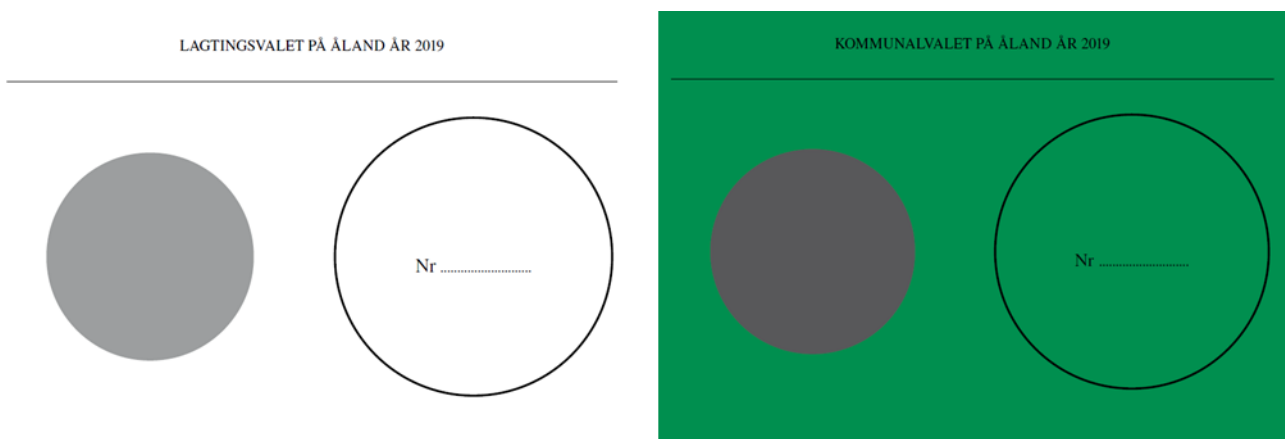
Each candidate who stands in the various elections is assigned a number. The numbers are usually included in the candidates' election ads. Candidate lists are also available at all polling stations, as well as on val.ax.

The numbering is different in the parliamentary and municipal elections:

- in the parliamentary elections, the numbers run from No. 2 onwards (white list of candidates)
- in the municipal elections, they run from No. 502 onwards (green list of candidates)

While candidates have the same number in all municipalities, you can only vote for the candidates who stand for election in your municipality of residence.

You vote by writing the number of your candidate in the correct place on the ballot. Each election has its own ballot. The ballot for the **parliamentary elections** is **white** and the ballot for the **municipal elections** is **green**. Below you can see what the ballots for the different elections look like.



Make sure you use the correct ballot for each election. **If you make a mistake on your ballot, request a new one.** A ballot that has been changed or corrected is invalid.

You can either vote early or vote on Election Day. If you vote early, you will usually receive two ballots, one for the parliamentary elections (white ballot) and one for the municipal elections (green ballot). If you have the right to vote in only one election, you can return the other ballot. Your right to vote is checked after you submit your ballot(s).

Here are the different ways you can vote:

1. Early voting at an early voting station in Åland

From Saturday, 30 September to Tuesday, 10 October, you can vote early at early voting stations in Åland. There are early voting stations all over Åland. Such a

station might be set up at a post office, the town hall, or another location decided by the municipality. The opening hours of early voting stations may vary during the early voting period; to check the hours, contact your municipality or go to val.ax.

You can vote at any early voting station. It does not need to be located in your home municipality.

When you vote early, you must be able to identify yourself. Bring your voting card to ensure that things go smoothly. The election officials will show you how to vote. If you need help, you have the right to appoint an election assistant. You can personally appoint someone to be your election assistant. The election officials can also help you.

2. Early voting at an early voting station outside of Åland

From Saturday, 30 September to Tuesday, 6 October, you can vote early at early voting stations outside of Åland, for example in various locations throughout the Nordic region. All the early voting stations are listed on val.ax.

You can vote at any of the early voting stations located outside of Åland.

When you vote early, you must be able to identify yourself. Bring your voting card to ensure that things go smoothly. The election officials will show you how to vote. If you need help, you have the right to appoint an election assistant. You can personally appoint someone to be your election assistant. The election officials can also help you.

3. Early voting by post

If you are unable to vote on Election Day or during the early voting period, you can vote by post. This gives you the opportunity to vote even if you are not in Åland, or if you have difficulty getting to a polling place due to illness or disability.

If you wish to vote by post, you will need to fill out an order form. Orders can be placed from 15 July 2023. It is recommended that you order your vote-by-post

documents well in advance of the elections. The form is available on val.ax. You will then receive all the necessary documents by post. You will also receive instructions on how to fill them out.

If you have difficulty collecting and sending post, you can have the documents delivered directly to you and get them picked up when you have finished voting. You can request this service when you order the documents. However, it is available only to residents living on Åland.

The documents you need to vote by post must be ordered no later than 10 October.

NB! You must return the ballots and cover letter so that they are received by your municipality **no later than 19:00 on 13 October**.

4. Early voting at facilities such as hospitals or retirement homes

Early voting at hospitals, retirement homes and other similar facilities is organised by an election commission appointed by the municipality. Members of the election commission come to the facility to give those staying there the opportunity to vote.

Voting is held for at least two days, at times determined by the election commission. These times are announced in advance by means of a clearly visible notice.

Only those staying or receiving care at the facility may vote in this way. The staff of the facility cannot vote in this way.

5. Voting on Election Day

Election Day is Sunday, 15 October 2023. The polling stations are **open from 09:00–20:00**. If you arrive at the polling station by 20:00, you can vote even if there is a queue and you have to wait a while.

On Election Day, you can only vote at the polling station specified on your voting card. When you arrive at the polling station, you first report to the election officials, who check whether you are eligible to vote. Therefore, you must be able to identify

yourself. It is also good to bring your voting card, as it will allow you to vote more quickly.

Once the election officials have established that you have the right to vote, you will receive either one or two ballots, depending on your voting rights. You fill in the ballots inside the voting booth so that no one can see what you write. The candidate lists are also posted in every voting booth.

Remember that the ballot for the parliamentary elections is white and the ballot for the municipal elections is green.

After you fill in the ballots, they must be stamped. Then you drop them into the ballot box.

An election assistant will be on hand at the polling station to offer any help you might need. You can also personally appoint someone to help you.

Who can stand as a candidate in the elections?

Anyone with the right to vote may also stand as a candidate, with a few exceptions. For example, if you work in a leading position in the municipality, you cannot stand for election.

How do you stand as a candidate in the elections?

If you wish to stand as a candidate in the elections, you can contact one of the political associations in Åland. You do not have to be a member of the association to stand as a candidate, but the association has the right to make certain demands of you as a candidate.

You can stand candidates yourself by forming a constituency association. To do this, you assemble a sufficient number of eligible voters to support the candidate you want to stand for election. The parliamentary elections require ten support persons, and the municipal elections require three support persons. If you yourself are a candidate, you may not be a member of the constituency association at the same time.

You can join forces with other people and create a candidate list with several candidates. There must still be enough support persons in the constituency association, i.e., ten people for each candidate in the parliamentary elections and three in the municipal elections.

If you wish to stand candidates, you can use the information and forms available on val.ax.

The elections are direct, secret and proportional

The elections are direct. This means that you vote directly for the candidate you wish to be elected. You must also always cast your vote yourself, and you cannot give your vote to anyone else.

Our elections are secret. This means that no one else gets to know how you voted. This is an important democratic right. Therefore, polling booths are equipped with screens, both at the early voting stations and at the polling stations. Your ballot can be folded when you take it to be stamped by an election official before dropping it in the ballot box.

In Åland, we have proportional representation. This means that the election results should reflect as closely as possible the support that the various groups receive in the elections. A group that gets 15 per cent of the vote should also get about 15 per cent of the seats in the Parliament or municipal council.

To ensure that representation is as proportional as possible, a calculation system commonly referred to as the "d'Hondt method" is used. For a detailed description of the calculation process, visit val.ax.

Election results

As soon as the polling stations close on Election Day, the votes begin to be counted. The early votes have already been counted during the day and can usually be reported immediately after 20:00. The media usually broadcast live and report on the vote counting.

The preliminary election results are usually ready by midnight at the latest. In the few days after Election Day, all votes are counted once more before finalising the official results.