

The color of a vote

Dir: Koen Suidgeest
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The Color of a Vote portrays the growing interest of politicians in the immigrant vote through the situation of the Romanians who live in Alcalá de Henares. 38,000 immigrants live in this town near Madrid, half of whom are Romanians. On May 27, 2007, this group was able to participate in municipal elections for the first time. The documentary focuses on the political initiatives that the local government (Popular Party, PP) carried out to capture the Romanian vote, which were highly criticized by the two opposition parties. "I arrived in the summer of 2002. I worked as an intern like most people who arrive here without a contract. Then I met my current partner. I came to Alcalá, and in a little while we set up a law office and from there we started working especially with Romanians," says the Romanian Elena Roman, general director for immigration in Alcalá de Henares. For the opposition, her appointment was just one more way to capture the immigrant vote. According to them, the transfer of some land by the Town Hall so that the Romanians can construct their church is another such attempt. "For me they are neighbors, although the way that they got here was irregular," states Bartolomé González, PP, Mayor of Alcalá. The PP has a foreigner who is number 16 on the electoral rolls, "a citizen of Alcalá born in Poland," says Bartolomé. He is not the only foreigner on the rolls. In Getafe, for example, the romanian soccer player Gica Cranoiveau is in the second position for the PP candidacy. The leader of Los Verdes de Alcalá de Henares states, however, that "Spanish society is not prepared for all the immigrants to vote in the elections." "We are part of Spain," says Stefan Gradinaru, who has been living in Spain for 8 years and believes that his fellow countrymen should cast their ballots. However, in this city, many Romanians are not aware of the importance that their vote could have in towns like Alcalá de Henares, where the right and the left are balanced at this time.



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