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Swedish Voting Behavior

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Report 2015:05 Swedish National Election Studies Program Department of Political Science University of Gothenburg

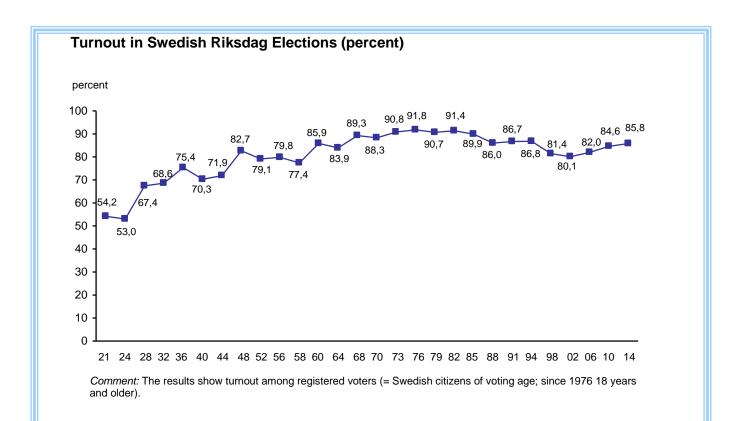


The Swedish National Election Studies

The results presented in the following set of figures and tables stem from the Swedish National Election Studies Program (SNES). The Program was initiated by Jörgen Westerståhl and Bo Särlvik in the mid 1950s, shortly after the Michigan Election Studies Project began. The first studies were done in conjunction with the local elections in 1954 and the parliamentary election in 1956.

In all national elections since 1956 - including the ATP-referendum in 1957, the Nuclear Power-referendum in 1980, the EU-referendum in 1994, the Euro-referendum in 2003 and the European Parliament elections in 1995, 1999, 2004, 2009 and 2014 – a large representative sample of eligible voters has been interviewed. The basic design in the latest studies has been a rolling panel in which half of the sample has been interviewed in connection with the previous election, and the other half in connection with the succeeding election. The sample size has been about 3500 - 4000. Historically, the response rate has been 75 - 80 percent. However, in recent years that rate has fallen. In the 2014 Election Study the response rate was only 56 per cent.

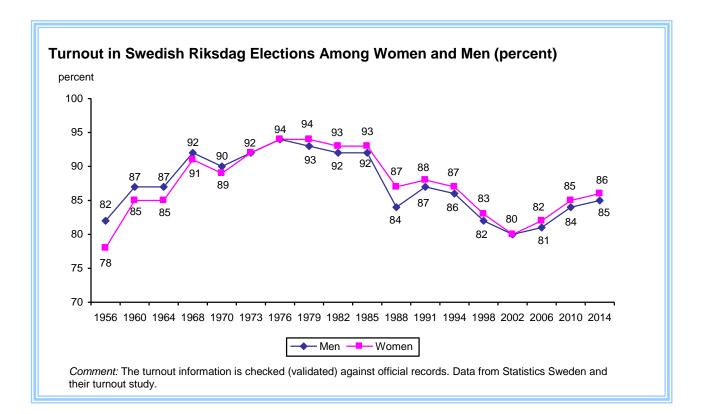
The early Election Studies were directed by Jörgen Westerståhl (1954–1956), Bo Särlvik (1954–1973) and Olof Petersson (1973–1976). The most recent studies have been directed by Mikael Gilljam (1985 – 1994), Sören Holmberg (1979–2010) and Henrik Oscarsson (2002 – 2014). The latest book publication from the program covering a Riksdag election is **Nya svenska väljare** (2013) written by Henrik Oscarsson and Sören Holmberg. The next book from the SNES program **Svenska väljare** will be published in 2016 by Henrik Oscarsson & Sören Holmberg.

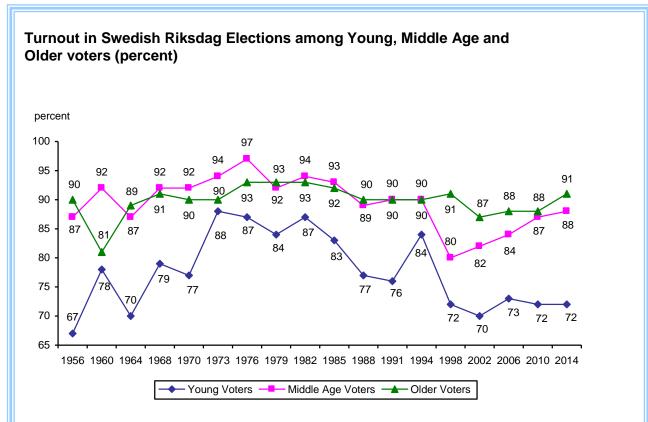


Swedish Election Results 1976 – 2014 (percent)

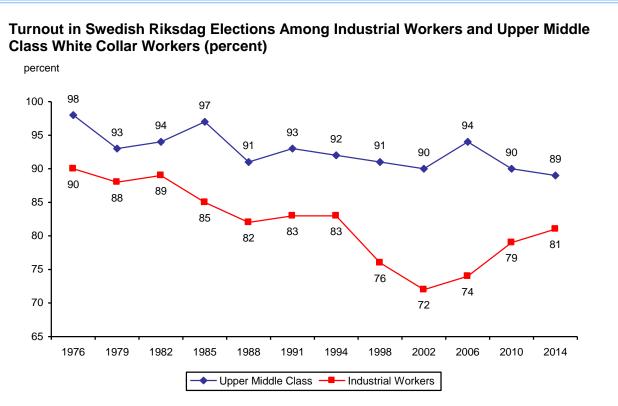
Party	1976	1979	1982	1985	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010	2014
V	4,8	5,6	5,6	5,4	5,9	4,5	6,2	12,0	8,4	5,9	5,6	5,7
S	42,7	43,2	45,6	44,7	43,2	37,7	45,2	36,4	39,9	35,0	30,7	31,0
MP	-	-	1,6	1,5	5,5	3,4	5,0	4,5	4,6	5,2	7,3	6,9
С	24,1	18,1	15,5	10,1	11,3	8,5	7,7	5,1	6,2	7,9	6,6	6,1
FP	11,1	10,6	5,9	14,2	12,2	9,1	7,2	4,7	13,4	7,5	7,0	5,4
KD	1,4	1,4	1,9	2,3	2,9	7,2	4,1	11,8	9,1	6,6	5,6	4,6
Μ	15,6	20,3	23,6	21,3	18,3	21,9	22,4	22,9	15,3	26,2	30,1	23,3
NYD	-	-	-	-	-	6,7	1,2	-	-	-	-	-
SD	-	-	-	-	0,02	0,1	0,3	0,4	1,4	2,9	5,7	12,9
FI	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0,7	0,4	3,1
Minor Parties	0,3	0,8	0,3	0,5	0,7	0,9	0,7	2,2	1,7	2,1	1,0	1,0
total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
turnout	91,8	90,7	91,4	89,9	86,0	86,7	86,8	81,4	80,1	82,0	84,6	85,8

Comment: Parliamentary elections only; official results. The initials for the parties are the customary ones in Sweden: V=Left Party, S=Social Democratic, C=Center, FP= Liberal, M=Conservative, KD=Christian Democrat, MP=Green, NYD=New Democrats, SD=Sweden Democrats and FI=Feminist Initiative.

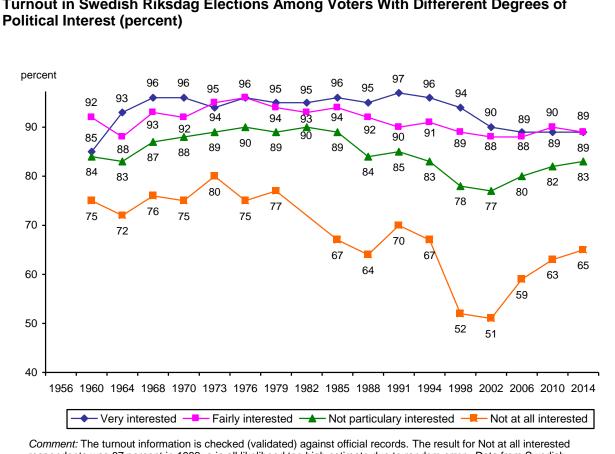




Comment: The turnout information is checked (validated) against official records. Data from Swedish National Election Studies. Young first-time voters were 21-25 years old 1956-1968, 19-22 1970-1973 and 18-21 since 1976. Middle age voters are 41-50 years old while older voters are 61-70 years old. Responsible for the analysis of turnout is Per Hedberg.

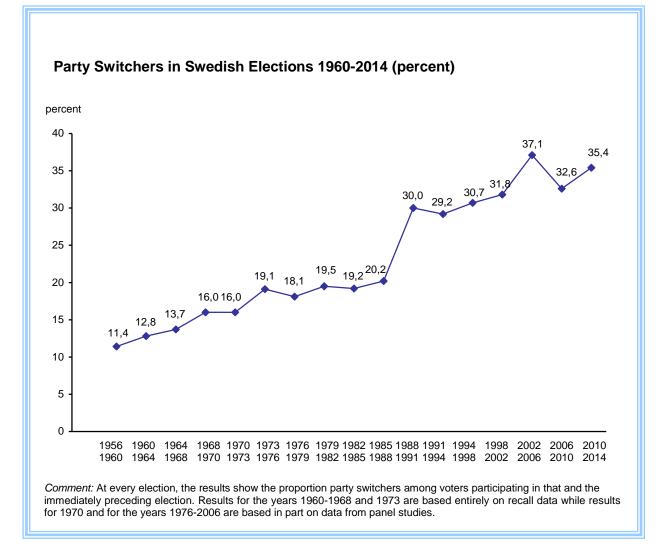


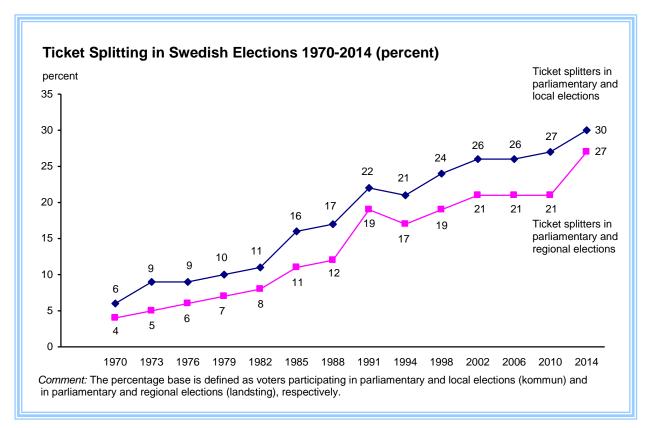
Comment: The turnout information is checked (validated) against official records. Data from Swedish National Election Studies. Responsible for the analysis of turnout is Per Hedberg.

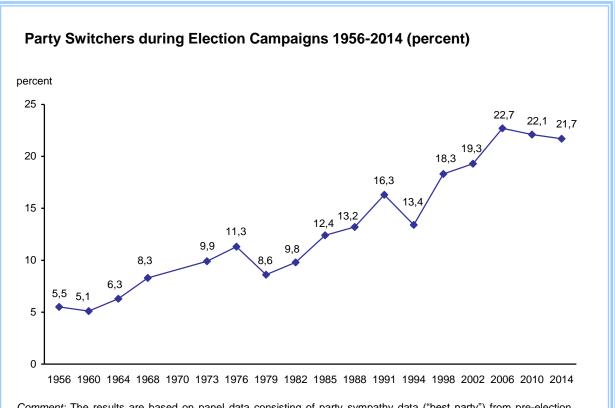


Turnout in Swedish Riksdag Elections Among Voters With Differerent Degrees of

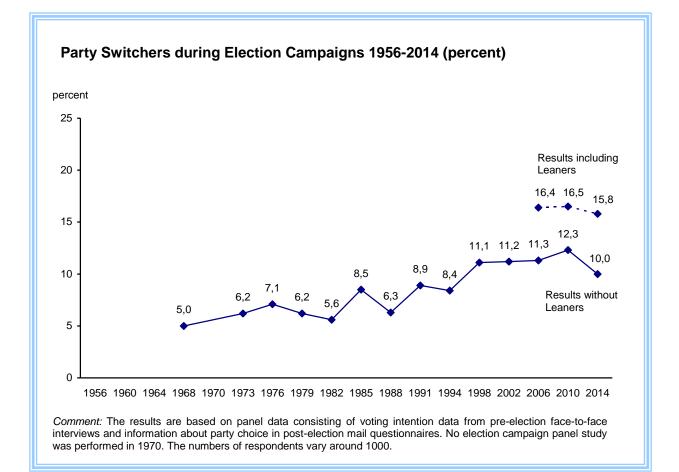
respondents was 87 percent in 1982; a in all likelihood too high estimate due to random error. Data from Swedish National Election Studies. Responsible for the analysis of turnout is Per Hedberg.

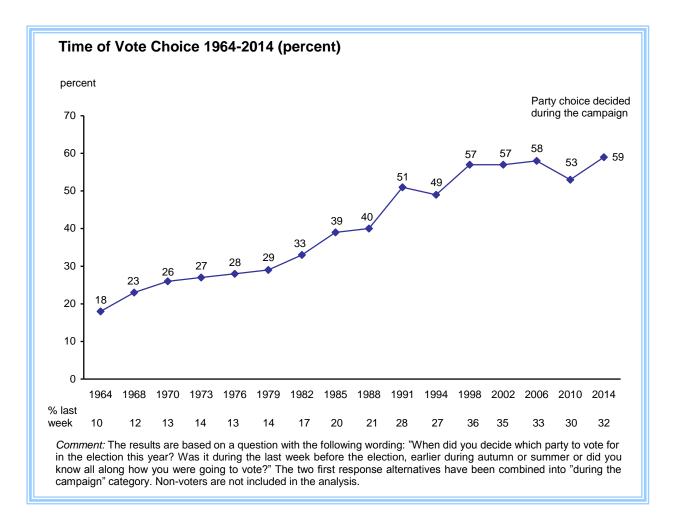


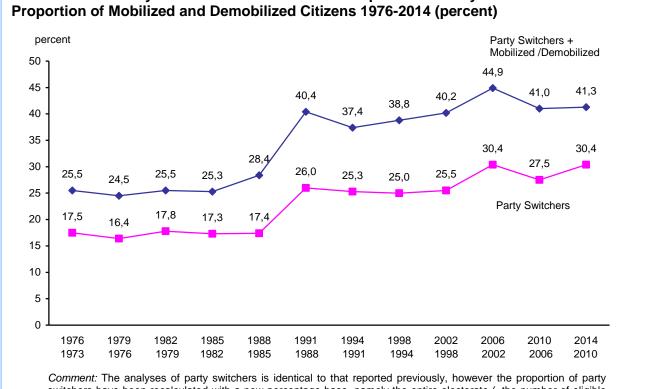




Comment: The results are based on panel data consisting of party sympathy data ("best party") from pre-election face-to-face interviews and information about party choice in post-election mail questionnaires. No election campaign panel study was performed in 1970. The numbers of respondents vary around 1000.





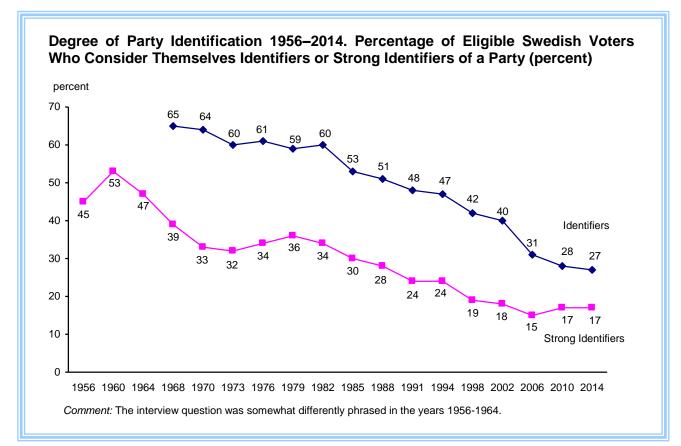


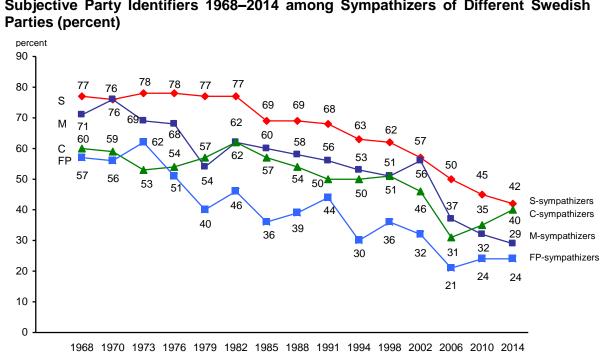
Total Voter Volatility in the Swedish Electorate: Proportion of Party Switchers and

switchers have been recalculated with a new percentage base, namely the entire electorate (=the number of eligible voters at each election). Information of turnout has been validated against official census registers.

Swedis	Swedish Voters' Second Best Party 1956-2014 (percent)																
	1956	1964	1968	1970	1973	1976	1979	1982	1985	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010	2014
V	6	9	8	10	14	15	19	20	18	16	12	16	21	20	14	14	15
S	20	12	10	13	14	11	11	9	10	12	9	13	14	15	13	13	13
MP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	4	11	4	13	10	9	12	20	19
С	19	41	50	49	44	30	22	32	18	21	16	14	11	9	12	8	12
FP	36	31	24	23	18	33	34	20	35	28	29	24	14	23	21	19	16
KD	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	3	11	7	18	12	10	7	6
М	19	7	7	4	9	10	12	14	13	10	11	11	12	11	17	18	11
NYD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	2	-	-	-	-	-
SD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	3
FI	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Sum	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Respondents	729	1804	2360	2244	1777	1932	2121	2033	2093	1948	1933	1847	1412	1467	1213	907	673

Comment: The following wording was used: "What party do you like second best?". The analysis includes voters who also gave a response to an earlier question about what party they liked best. Don't knows are not included in the percentage base, as well as respondents who have identical first and second party preferences (about 14 percent 2014).

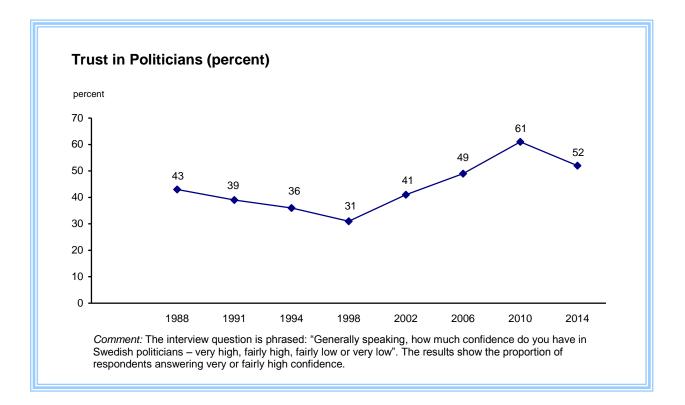


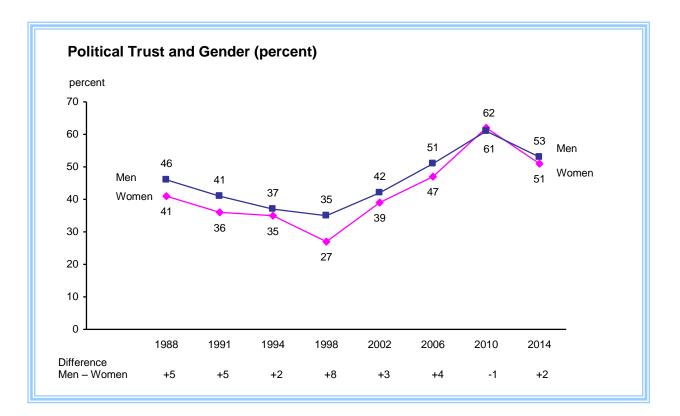


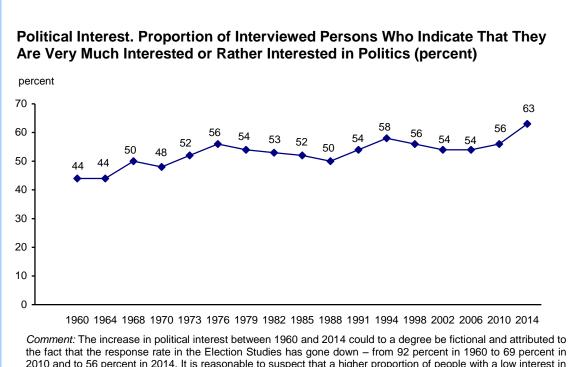
Subjective Party Identifiers 1968–2014 among Sympathizers of Different Swedish

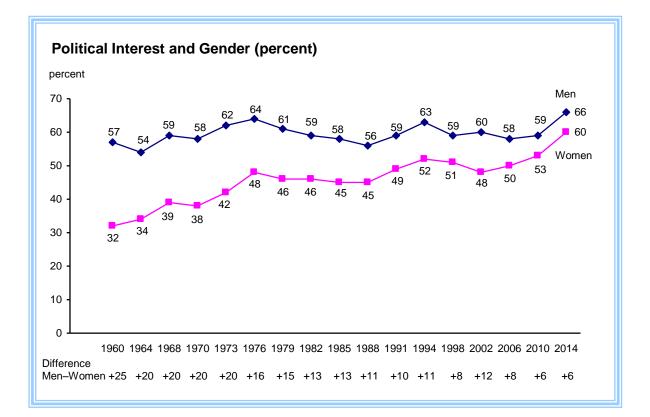
Comment: Persons who consider themselves identifiers of a party have been defined as subjective

identifiers. The results for V-, KD-, MP-, SD- and FI-sympathizers in 2014 are 35, 27, 22, 27 and 43 percent subjective identifiers, respectively.

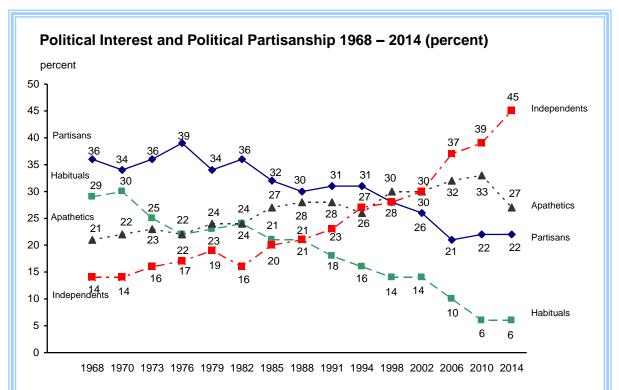








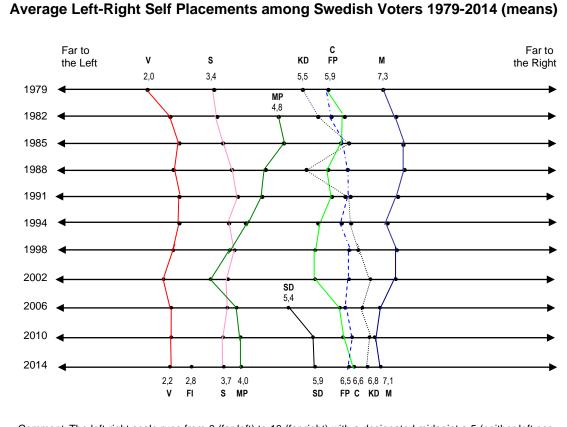
2010 and to 56 percent in 2014. It is reasonable to suspect that a higher proportion of people with a low interest in politics participated in the older Election Studies. These people have tended to opt-out in the more recent Election Studies. Consequently, the upward trend in political interest is in all likelihood exaggerated, especially in 2014.



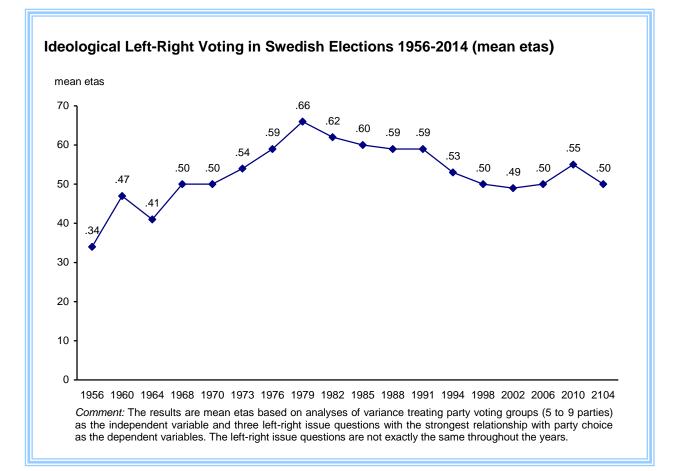
Comment: Partisans have a party identification (=strong or weak) and are interested in politics. *Independents* are interested in politics but have no party identification. *Habituals* have a party identification but lack interest in politics. *Apathetics* have neither a party identification nor interest in politics. The typology was devised by Allen Barton (1955) and applied to Sweden by Olof Petersson (1977). Given the lower response rate in the most recent studies, especially in 2014, the proportion of Independents and Partisans are in all likelihood somewhat exaggerated and the proportion of Apathetics and Habituals similarly estimated too low.

Election Issues in Sweden 1979-2014. Percentage of Party Voters Who on an Open-Ended Question Mentioned the Various Issue Areas as Important for Their Party Choice (percent)

Issue Area	1979	1982	1985	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010	2014
Health Care/Welfare	4	12	19	15	22	21	28	36	32	37	43
Education	6	3	3	2	4	6	20	29	24	26	41
Full Employment	18	29	25	5	23	41	34	7	35	31	30
Immigration/Refugees	0	0	1	2	8	5	3	10	5	9	23
Environment	6	7	22	46	25	20	12	8	11	13	20
Pensions/Care of Elderly	5	8	8	9	20	9	17	20	21	19	17
Economy	9	14	14	8	20	30	14	10	11	17	15
Taxes	17	8	20	19	18	9	17	14	15	15	11
Gender Equality	1	0	0	0	0	2	2	3	4	1	5
Family/Child Care	8	8	17	16	18	13	15	14	15	6	4
Energy/Nuclear Power	26	2	1	3	3	2	3	1	5	2	2
Public vs Private Sector	5	2	7	3	4	4	3	4	2	2	2
Agriculture	1	1	2	1	3	1	1	2	3	1	2
Housing	5	2	2	4	5	1	0	2	1	1	1
Religion/Moral	2	1	1	1	3	1	2	2	1	0	1
EU/ĔMU	0	0	0	1	10	14	6	5	0	0	1
Wage Earners' Funds	4	33	11	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Percentage of voters who mentioned at least one issue	63	76	78	72	82	79	77	73	80	86	90



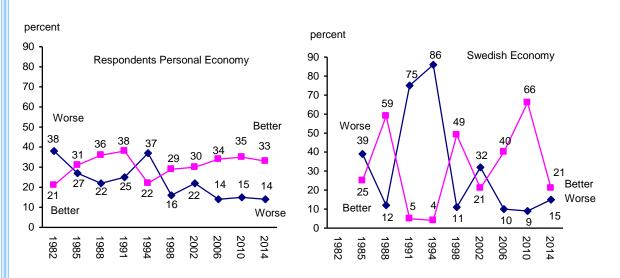
Comment: The left-right scale runs from 0 (far left) to 10 (far right) with a designated midpoint a 5 (neither left nor right). The mean for the entire electorate was 4,9 in 1979, 5,0 in 1982, 5,2 in 1985, 5,0 in 1988, 5,5 in 1991, 4,9 in 1994, 5,1 in 1998, 4,9 in 2002, 5,2 in 2006, 5,3 in 2010 and 5,1 in 2014. The mean for the NYD-voters was 6,3 in 1991 and 6.1 in 1994.



Party Profiles 1982 – 2014. Percent Respondents Who Mentioned at Least One Election Issue for the Relevant Party (percent)

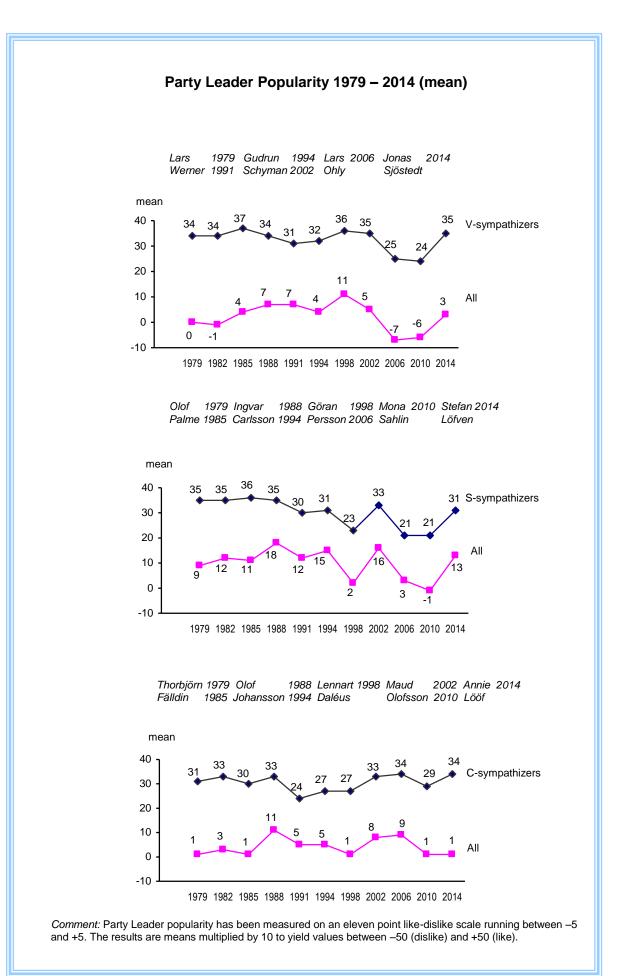
party	1982	1985	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010	2014
V	48	58	47	25	52	63	49	36	48	71
S	88	64	59	60	83	78	61	57	55	84
MP	-	-	80	52	71	55	51	52	64	80
С	58	46	54	42	47	34	35	51	42	60
FP	45	62	59	54	46	43	68	63	59	77
KD	-	29	-	58	49	61	54	51	40	52
Μ	68	70	54	67	66	72	70	78	66	75
SD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70	88
FI	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	69
NYD	-	-	-	59	38	-	-	-	-	-
mean five old parties	61	60	54	50	59	58	57	57	54	73
mean all parties				51	59	58	55	55	55	73

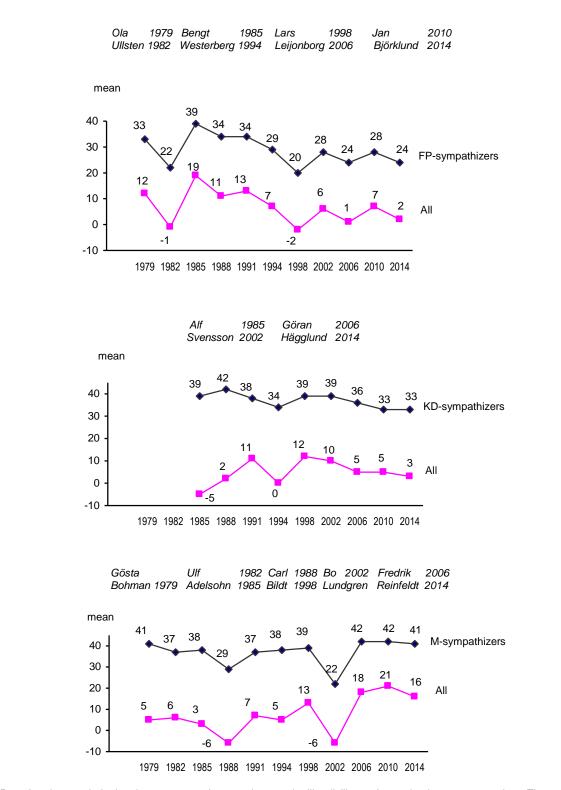
Comment: Post-election data only. The results are based on open-ended interview questions, one per party. Observe that the number of people responding to the question was extraordinarily small in 2014 (only 431).



Retrospective Evaluations of the Development of the Swedish Economy and the Respondents Personal Economy (percent)

Comment: The interview question on the Swedish economy was not put in 1982. The time frame for the evaluations were "the two-three latest years" in the Election Studies in 1982-1994. Since 1998 the time frame has been changed to "the last twelve months". The interview questions also include a middle response alternative ("about the same"). The percent calculations include Don't Know answers comprising between 0-2 percent for the question on personal economy and between 3-11 per cent for the question on the Swedish economy.



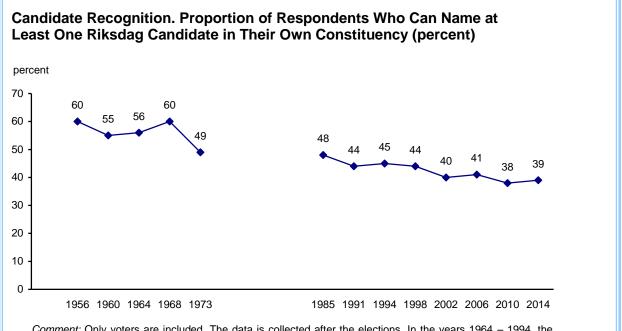


Comment: Party Leader popularity has been measured on an eleven point like-dislike scale running between –5 and +5. The results are means multiplied by 10 to yield values between –50 (dislike) and +50 (like). The 2014 popularity results for the Green spoke persons were for Gustav Fridolin +9 among all respondents and +33 among Green sympathizers and for Åsa Romson ±0 among all respondents and +25 among Green sympathizers. The popularity of Jimmie Åkesson (SD) was among all respondents -21 and +38 among Sweden Democrat symphathizisers. The popularity of Gudrun Schyman (FI) was -5 among all respondents and +46 among Feminist Initiativ symphathizisers.

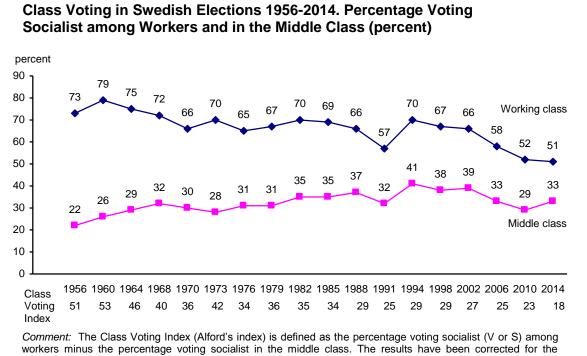
party	1979	1982	1985	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010	2014
V	15	18	26	22	26	13	19	23	16	8	10
S	11	16	13	14	9	7	6	11	10	7	8
MP	-	-	-	-	3	6	6	11	9	16	11
С	10	20	13	14	6	10	12	21	35	19	25
FP	22	8	27	18	18	17	4	6	8	14	9
KD	-	-	7	-	13	18	25	32	11	19	12
M	26	14	18	7	18	28	33	4	29	38	33
NYD	-	-	-	-	20	8	-	-	-	-	-
SD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	14
mean five old parties	17	15	19	15	15	15	15	13	20	17	17
mean seven parties	-	-	-	-	13	14	15	15	17	17	15

Party Leaders as Potential Vote-Getters for Their Parties (percent)

Comment: Party and party leader popularity have been measured on the same eleven point like-dislike scale. The results show per cent respondents among a party's sympathizers who like the party leader better than the party. The results for the Green party (MP) in 2002, 2006, 2010 and 2014 are averages for the two spoke persons for the party. The result in 1991 holds for Margareta Gisselberg, while the results in 1994 and 1998 apply to Birger Schlaug. The result 2014 for FI and party leader Gudrun Schyman was 20 per cent.

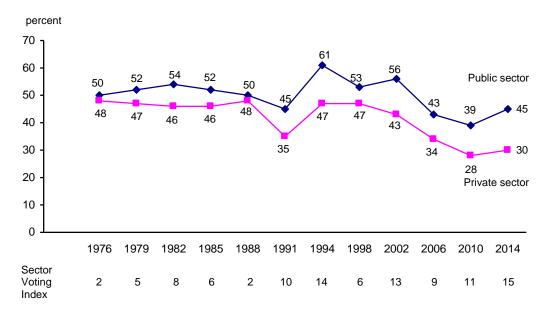


Comment: Only voters are included. The data is collected after the elections. In the years 1964 - 1994, the correctness of names given was not checked systematically. Minor tests indicate that the results for the years 1964 - 1994 should be scaled down 5 - 8 percentage points if one wants to estimate the proportion of voters who mention correct candidate names. A check in 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010 and 2014 showed that the proportion of party voters who could mention at least one correct name was 32, 30, 29, 28 and 27 percent respectively.



oversampling of Social Democratic voters in the earlier election studies. The percentage base is all party voters. Students are excluded from the analysis.

Sector Voting in Swedish Elections 1976 – 2014. Percentage Voting Socialist (V and S) among Voters in the Public and the Private Sector (percent)



Comment: The Sector Voting Index is modelled after Alfrod's Class Voting Index and show the percentage voting socialist (v or s) in the public sector minus the percentage voting socialist in the private sector. Public-Private sector is determined by an inteview question asking voters to indicate which sector they belong to. The analysis only includes gainfully employed people.

	48	52	56	60	64	68	70	73	76	79	82	85	88	91	94	98	02	06	10	14
V	+2	+2	+1	+2	+1	+1	+2	+3	0	+1	+2	+1	-1	0	-2	-5	-3	-1	+1	(
S	+3	+2	+1	-2	+3	0	0	-1	+1	-1	-2	-5	-3	0	+3	+5	+3	+1	-4	-3
MP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-1	0	0	-3	-2	-2	-2	-4	-2	-3
С	+1	+4	+3	+1	+4	+3	+1	0	-2	-4	0	+1	+1	-2	-3	0	+1	0	-4	-2
FP	-4	-8	-3	-1	-4	-2	-2	-2	0	0	-2	-3	0	-2	-2	-2	0	+1	-1	(
KD	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	-1	-1	-1	-1	-2	-2	-1	-4	-2	-2	0	-1
М	-2	0	-2	0	-4	-2	0	0	+1	+4	+4	+7	+5	+5	+7	+7	+3	+3	+8	+6
ND	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+4	-	-	-	-	-	
SD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+2	+4	+5
FI	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-3

Difference in Party Choice Between Women and Men 1948 – 2014 (percentage point difference)

Comment: A positive (+) difference means that the relevant party was more supported among men than among women while a negative (-) difference indicate more support among women than among men.

In Which Age	Group Does th	ne Parties Have	Their Strongest Support?

election year	party V	S	С	FP	М	KD	MP	SD	FI
1948	Vouna	no diff	old	Vouna	old				
	young			young		-	-	-	
1956	-	young	old	old	no diff	-	-	-	
1960	old	young	old	old	old	-	-	-	
1964	old	no diff	middle age	no diff	old	-	-	-	
1968	no diff	no diff	middle age	young	old	-	-	-	
1970	young	no diff	young	old	old	-	-	-	
1973	young	middle age	young	old	old	-	-	-	
1976	young	middle age	young	young/old	middle age	-	-	-	
1979	young	old	old	young	middle age	-	-	-	
1982	young	old	old	no diff	middle age	-	-	-	
1985	young	old	old	no diff	young	old	young	-	
1988	young	old	old	young	young	old	middle age	-	
1991	middle age	old	old	young	young	old	young	-	
1994	young	old	old	no diff	old	no diff	young	-	
1998	young	old	old	young	young	old	young	-	
2002	young	middle/old	old	young	no diff	old	young	-	
2006	young/middle	old	old	no diff	no diff	old	young	young	
2010	young/middle	old	old	old	middle age	old	young	young	
2014	no diff	old	no diff	no diff	middle age	old	young	old	young

Comment: Young is defined as 18 - 30 years, *middle age* as 31 - 60 and *old* as 61 - 80. *No diff* means there is no difference in party support across age groups.

Voters' Self Reported Reasons for the Choice of Party. Percent saying "One of the most important reasons" among All Voters in 1988, 1994, 2002, 2006, 2010 and 2014 and among Party Voters in 2014

Theoretical Explanation	Reason to Vote	Year 1988		2002	2006	2010	2014	<u>2014</u> V	S M	IP C	FP	KD N	/ SD	FI
Issue voting	The party has a good policy on issues that I think is important	-	-	51	-	58	-	-	-		-			-
Competence Voting	The party has competent persons that can run the country	30	31	31	42	51	54	44	51 5	3 53	3 51	48 7	6 34	32
Ideological Voting	The party has a good political ideology	41	41	45	49	49	54	74	57 7	1 55	5 45	54 4	0 27	82
Prospective Voting	The party has a good program for the future	-	-	34	46	49	51	49	47 7	2 46	50	43 5	3 44	58
Government voting	The party is needed to make it possible to form my favourite government	-	-	-	-	-	42	52	37 4	0 36	\$ 43	59 3	8 38	72
Campaign Agenda Voting	The party has good policies on many of the issues in recent public debates	33	32	34	37	39	41	55	37 4	4 46	\$ 40	30 4	2 37	50
Retrospective Voting	The party has done a good job in recent years	-	-	25	22	36	27	16	21 2	8 24	l 12	15 5	1 18	18
Party Leader Voting	The party has a good party leader	23	20	24	23	27	28	19	27 1	1 19) 17	20 4	4 36	28
Habitual Voting	I always vote for the party	27	21	16	14	14	10	6	18	26	2	7 1	07	2
Class voting	The policies of the party is usually favourable to the occupational group to which I belong	21	18	14	15	14	-	-	-		-		-	-
Party Identification Voting	I feel like a supporter of the party	21	16	14	11	11	10	13	14 1	0 13	3 2	76	67	18
Campaign Performance Voting	The party has been convincing during the election campaign	-	-	-	-	18	17	16	19 1	0 25	; 10	13 1	2 32	28
Instrumental Voting	The party is a big party and therefore it has greater possibilities than a smaller party to implement its policies	-	-	14	17	16	15	4	23	54	3	2 2	2 12	8
Group Interest Voting	The policy of the party is favourable to me personally	-	-	-	-	-	13	7	13 1	0 11	5	17 1	9 11	8
Candidate Voting	The party has good Riksdag candidates on the ballot in my constituency	-	9	10	10	10	12	6	14	2 23	39	10 1	3 13	8
Tactical Voting	The party is a small party that risks falling under the four percent threshold to the Riksdag	-	-	6	5	9	8	9	4	3 15	55	32 4	13	30
Social Influence Voting	People around me sympathize with the party	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-		-		-	-

Comment: "You say you are going to vote for [...] in this year's Riksdag election. How important are the following reasons for your choice of party?". The alternatives were "one of the most important reasons", "fairly important reason", "not particularly important reason" and "not at all important reason".

Swedish Voting Behavior

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