



The Swedish National  
Election Studies

# Report 2020:1

Swedish Voting Behavior  
1956–2018

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Sedan 1950-talet genomför forskare knutna till Valforskningsprogrammet i Göteborg empiriska undersökningar av hur den svenska demokratin mår och utvecklas. Rapportserien är vår viktigaste publikationskanal för att bidra till samhällets kunskapsförsörjning på demokratiområdet. Målsättningen är att sprida grundläggande fakta och forskningsresultat som rör val och väljarbeteende till en bred publik av forskare, studenter, journalister, politiker och allmänhet.

### **The Swedish National Election Studies Program working report series**

Since the 1950s, the researchers associated with the Swedish National Election Studies Program at the Department of Political Science, University of Gothenburg, conducts empirical research on the well-being and development of the Swedish democracy. The working report series is our main publication outlets. The aim is to publish basic facts and research results about elections and voting behavior to a broad audience of researchers, students, journalists, politicians and the public.

### **Refer to this report**

Oscarsson, Henrik & Sören Holmberg (2020) Swedish Voting Behavior. Swedish National Election Studies, Working Paper Series. Report 2020:1. University of Gothenburg, Department of Political Science.

### **Editor of the SNES working report series:**

Henrik Ekengren Oscarsson

# Report 2020:1

## Swedish Voting Behavior 1956-2018

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### Abstract

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 Särilvik 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, 2014 and 2019 – a large representative sample of eligible voters has been interviewed. The basic design in studies (1976-) is a rolling two wave 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.

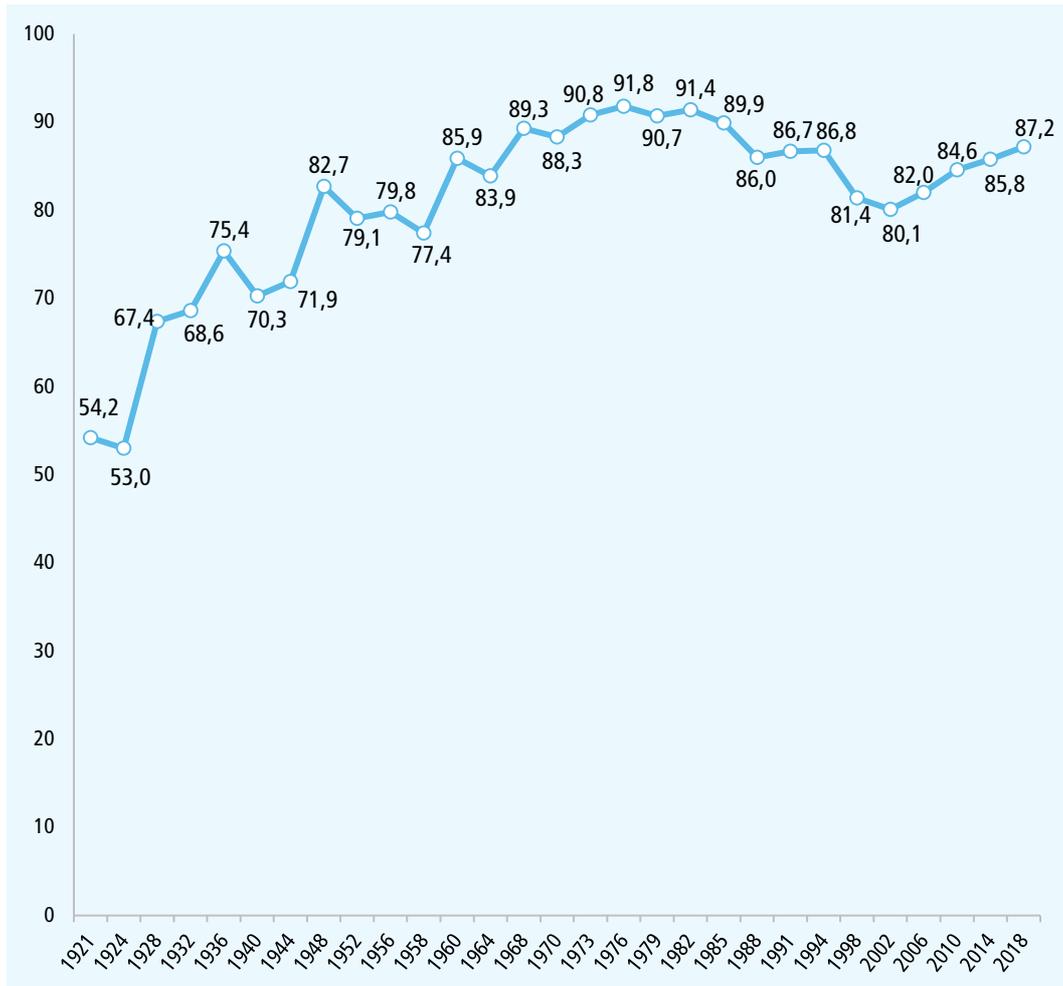
The 2018 Election Study used the same design as previous studies. The incoming panel (2014-2018; n=7 700) come from the 2014 national and European parliamentary election study, and the outgoing panel (2018-2022; n=7 700) consisted of a new sample from the national population registry (RTB). The 2018 election study included a pre- and post-election component, where the pre-election respondents were contacted again after the election. Importantly, in the period 2014-2018, the mode of data collection has changed from live interviews (face to face and telephone) to a combination of mail back and web questionnaires. This mode change make it possible to increase the sample size considerably but it may at the same time potentially affect point estimates in some but not all time series reported here. In the 2018 Election Study the gross response rate was 46,4 per cent, and the net response rate 47,2 per cent. Unless noted otherwise, all results presented in the report are unweighted. For response rates in previous studies, please see Report 2015:02.

The early Election Studies were directed by Jörgen Westerståhl (1954–1956), Bo Särilvik (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 (2002–2018).



## Turnout

Figure 1 Turnout in Swedish Riksdag Elections 1921–2018 (per cent)



**Comment:** The results show official turnout among registered voters.

**Source:** Valmyndigheten

## Election Results

Table 1 Swedish Election Results 1976–2018 (per cent)

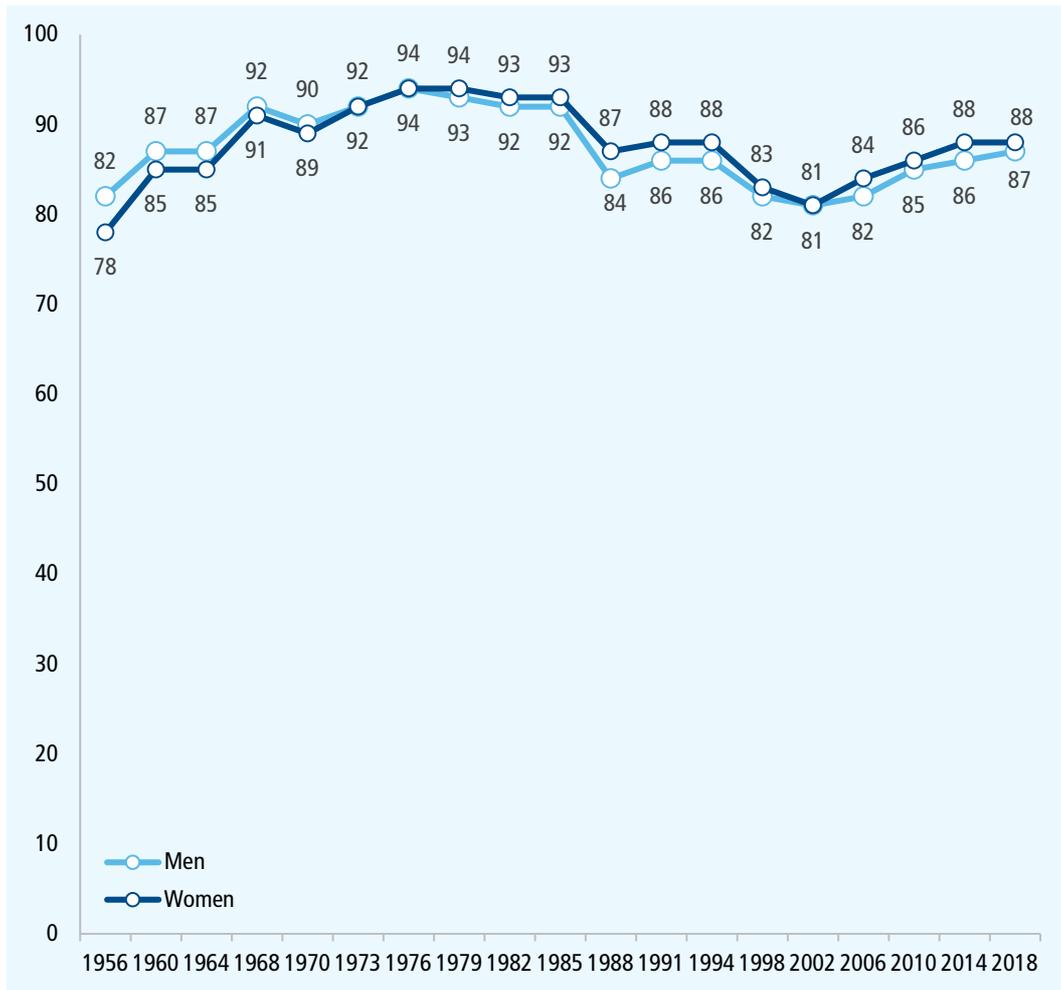
party	1976	1979	1982	1985	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010	2014	2018
Left party (Left)	4,8	5,6	5,6	5,4	5,9	4,5	6,2	12,0	8,4	5,9	5,6	5,7	8,0
Social Democrats (Soc.Dem)	42,7	43,2	45,6	44,7	43,2	37,7	45,2	36,4	39,9	35,0	30,7	31,0	28,3
Green party (Gr.)	-	-	1,6	1,5	5,5	3,4	5,0	4,5	4,6	5,2	7,3	6,9	4,4
Centre party (Cen.)	24,1	18,1	15,5	10,1	11,3	8,5	7,7	5,1	6,2	7,9	6,6	6,1	8,6
Liberal party (Lib.)	11,1	10,6	5,9	14,2	12,2	9,1	7,2	4,7	13,4	7,5	7,0	5,4	5,5
Christian Democrats (Ch.Dem)	1,4	1,4	1,9	2,3	2,9	7,2	4,1	11,8	9,1	6,6	5,6	4,6	6,3
Conservative party (Con.)	15,6	20,3	23,6	21,3	18,3	21,9	22,4	22,9	15,3	26,2	30,1	23,3	19,8
New Democracy (NYD)	-	-	-	-	-	6,7	1,2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sweden Democrats (Swe.Dem)	-	-	-	-	0,0	0,1	0,3	0,4	1,4	2,9	5,7	12,9	17,5
Feminist initiative (FI)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0,7	0,4	3,1	0,5
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	1,1
Total	100	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	87,2

**Comment:** The election result for Sweden Democrats in the 1988 election was 0,02%.

**Source:** Valmyndigheten

## Turnout

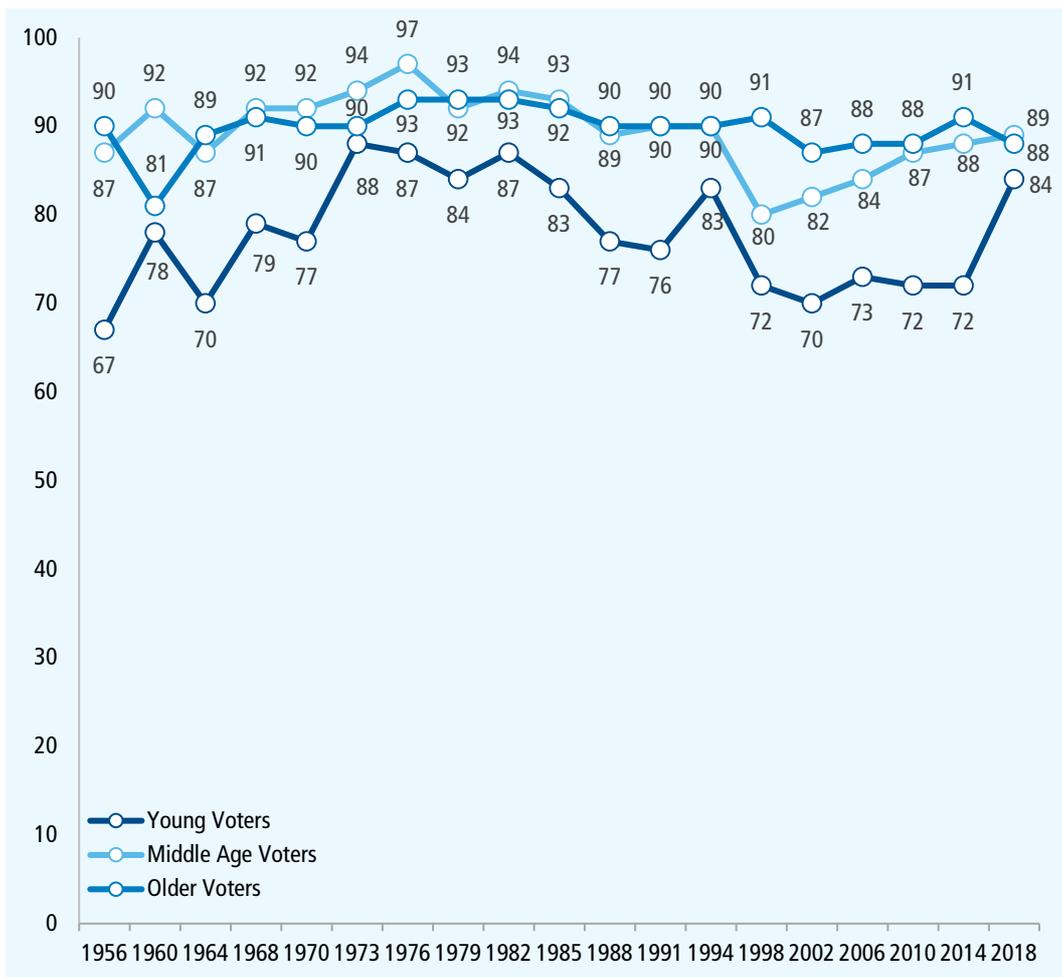
Figure 2 Turnout in Swedish Riksdag Elections among Women and Men 1956–2018 (per cent)



Source: Statistics Sweden

## Turnout

Figure 3 Turnout in Swedish Riksdag Elections among Young, Middle Age and Older Voters 1956–2018 (per cent)

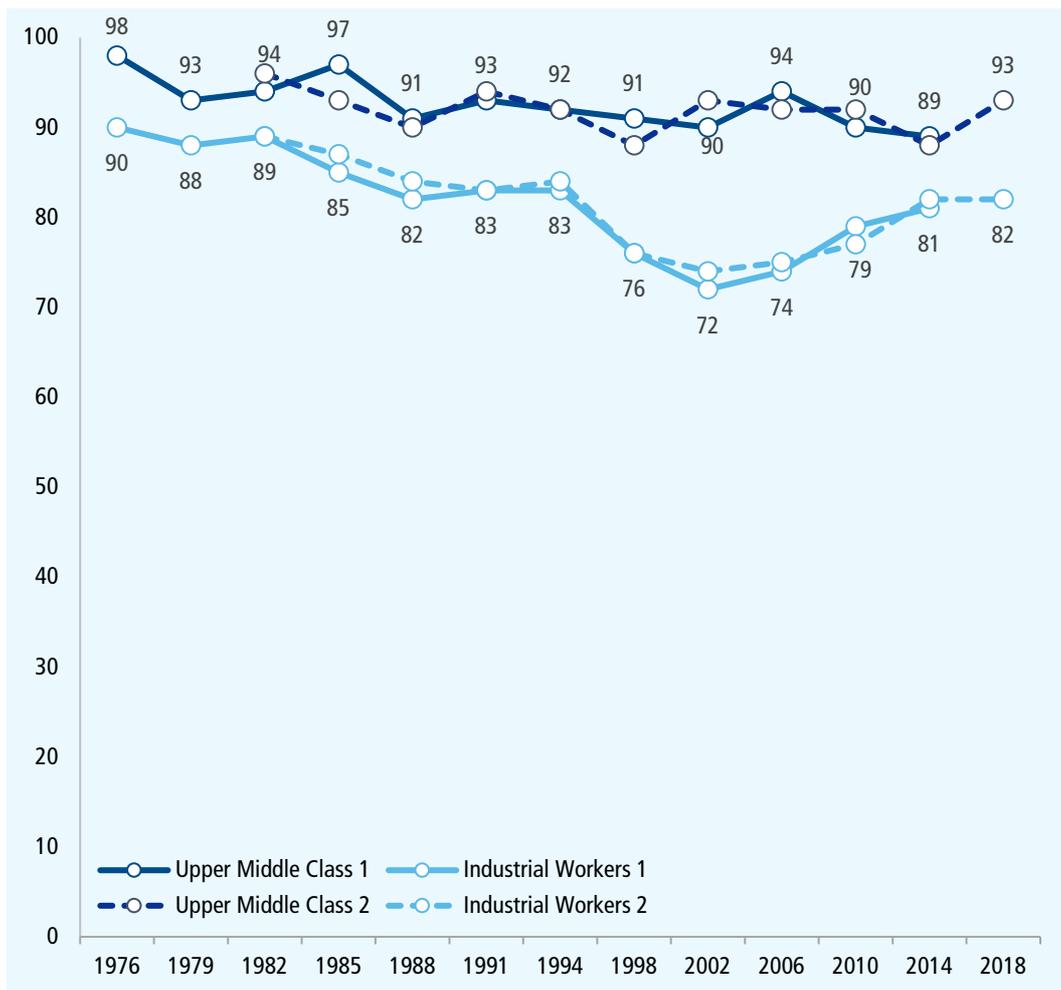


**Comment:** The turnout information is checked (validated) against official records. Data from Swedish National Election Studies. Young first-time voters were 21-25 years old 1956-1968, 19-22 1970-1973 and 18-21 since 1976. Middle age voters are 41-50 years old while older voters are 61-70 years old. Responsible for the analysis of turnout is Per Hedberg. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Turnout

Figure 4 Turnout in Swedish Riksdag Elections among Industrial Workers and Upper Middle Class White Collar Workers 1976–2018 (per cent)

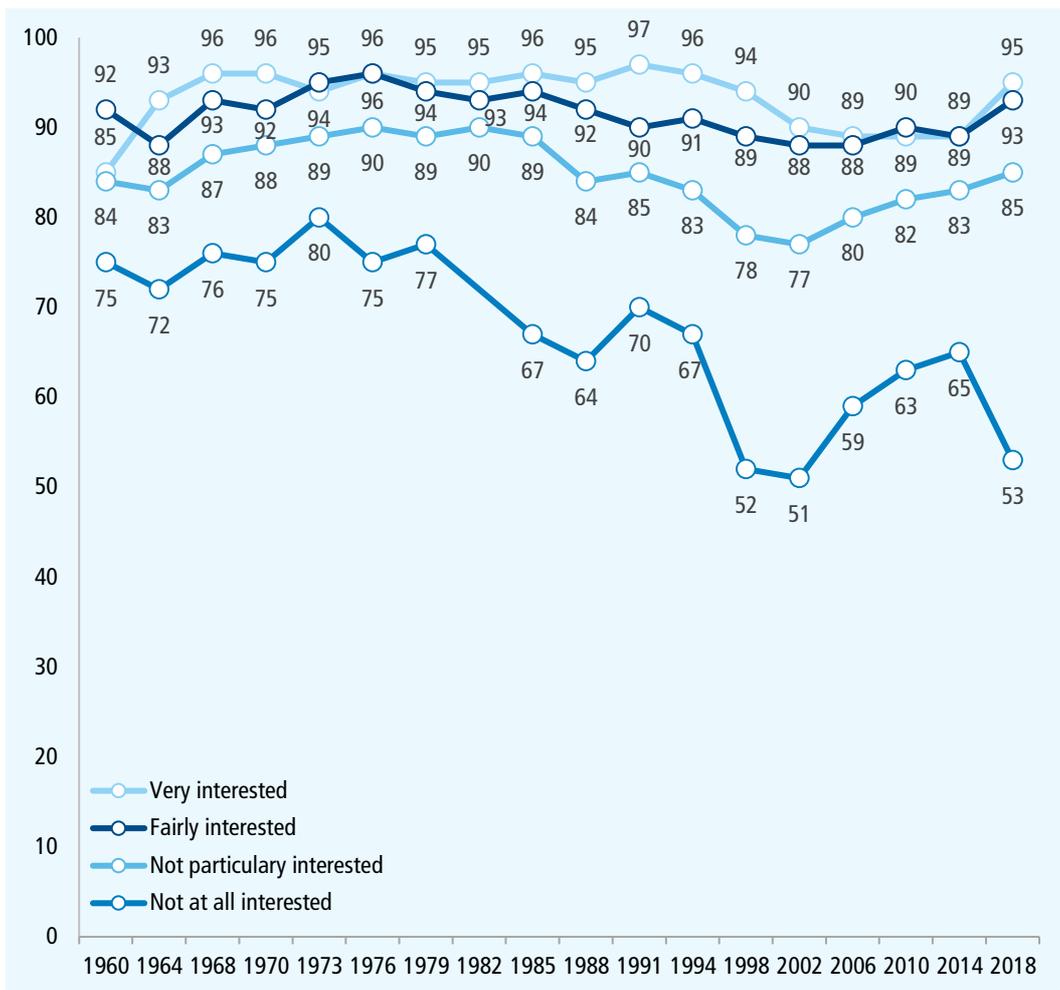


**Comment:** The turnout information is checked (validated) against official records. Data from Swedish National Election Studies. Responsible for the analysis of turnout is Per Hedberg. Version 1 is based on a coding of occupational status from open-ended responses and version 2 is based on respondents' self-classification into pre-formulated categories of occupation. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Turnout

Figure 5 Turnout in Swedish Riksdag Elections among Voters with Different Degrees of Political Interest 1960–2018 (per cent)

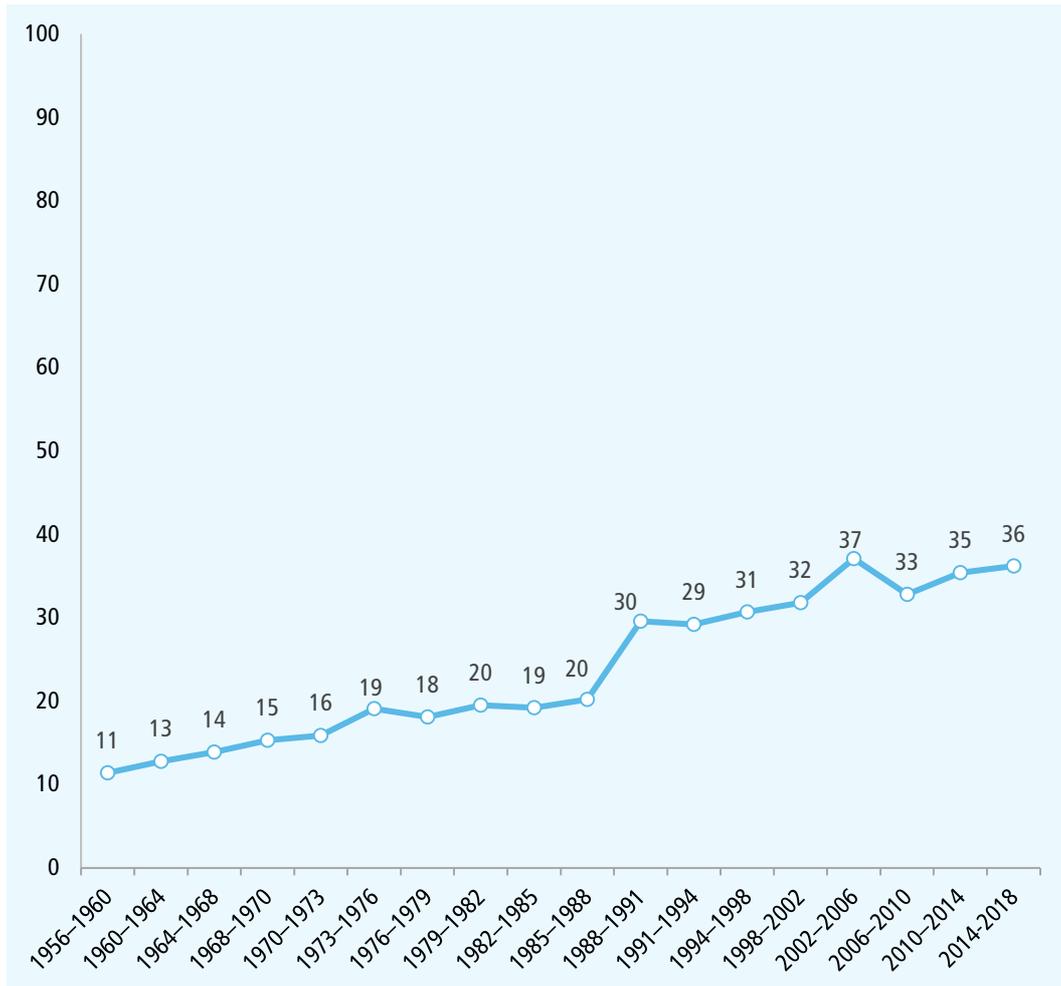


**Comment:** The turnout information is checked (validated) against official records. The result for Not at all interested respondents was 87 percent in 1982; in all likelihood a too high estimate due to random error. The share of respondents in 2018 that are Very Interested, Fairly Interested, Not Particularly Interested, and Not at all Interested are 15, 51, 30, and 4 percent respectively. Data from Swedish National Election Studies. Responsible for the analysis of turnout is Per Hedberg. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Voter Volatility

Figure 6 Party Switchers in Swedish Elections 1960-2018 (per cent)

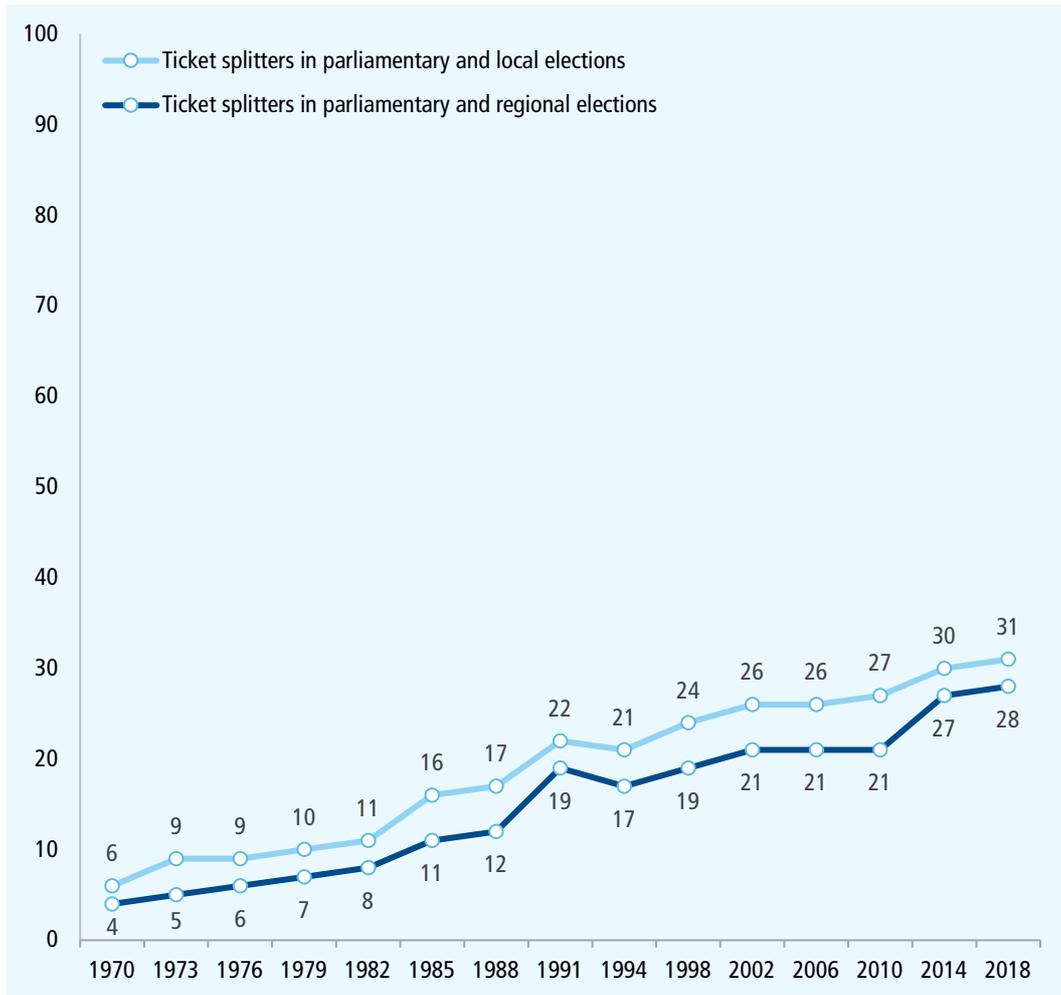


**Comment:** At every election, the results show the proportion party switchers among voters participating in that and the immediately preceding election. Results for the years 1960-1968 and 1973 and 2018 are based entirely on recall data while results for 1970 and for the years 1976-2018 are based in part on data from panel studies. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Ticket Splitting

Figure 7 Ticket Splitting in Swedish Elections 1970-2018 (per cent)

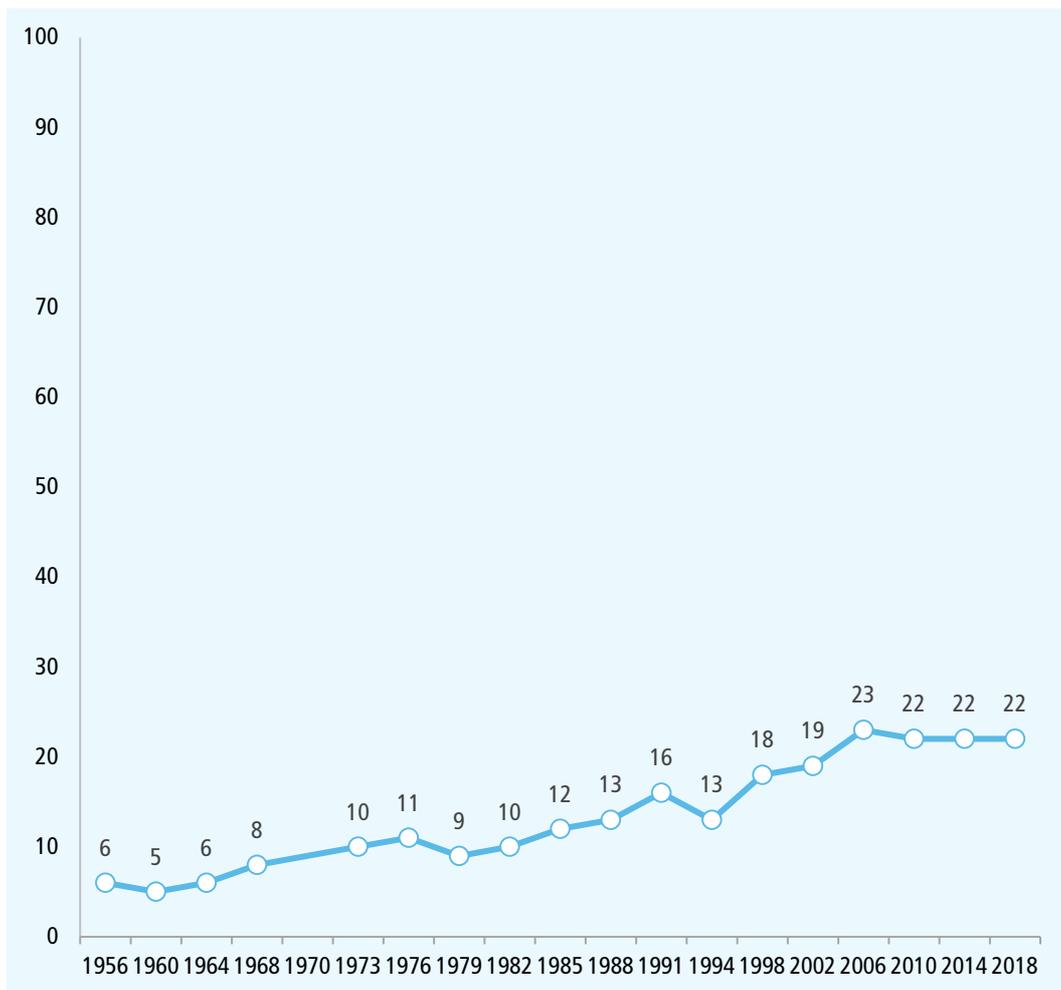


**Comment:** The percentage base is defined as voters participating in parliamentary and local elections (kommun) and in parliamentary and regional elections (landsting), respectively. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Voter Volatility During Election Campaigns 1956-2018

Figure 8 Party Switchers during Election Campaigns 1956–2018: From Best Party Pre-Election to Party Choice Post-Election (per cent)

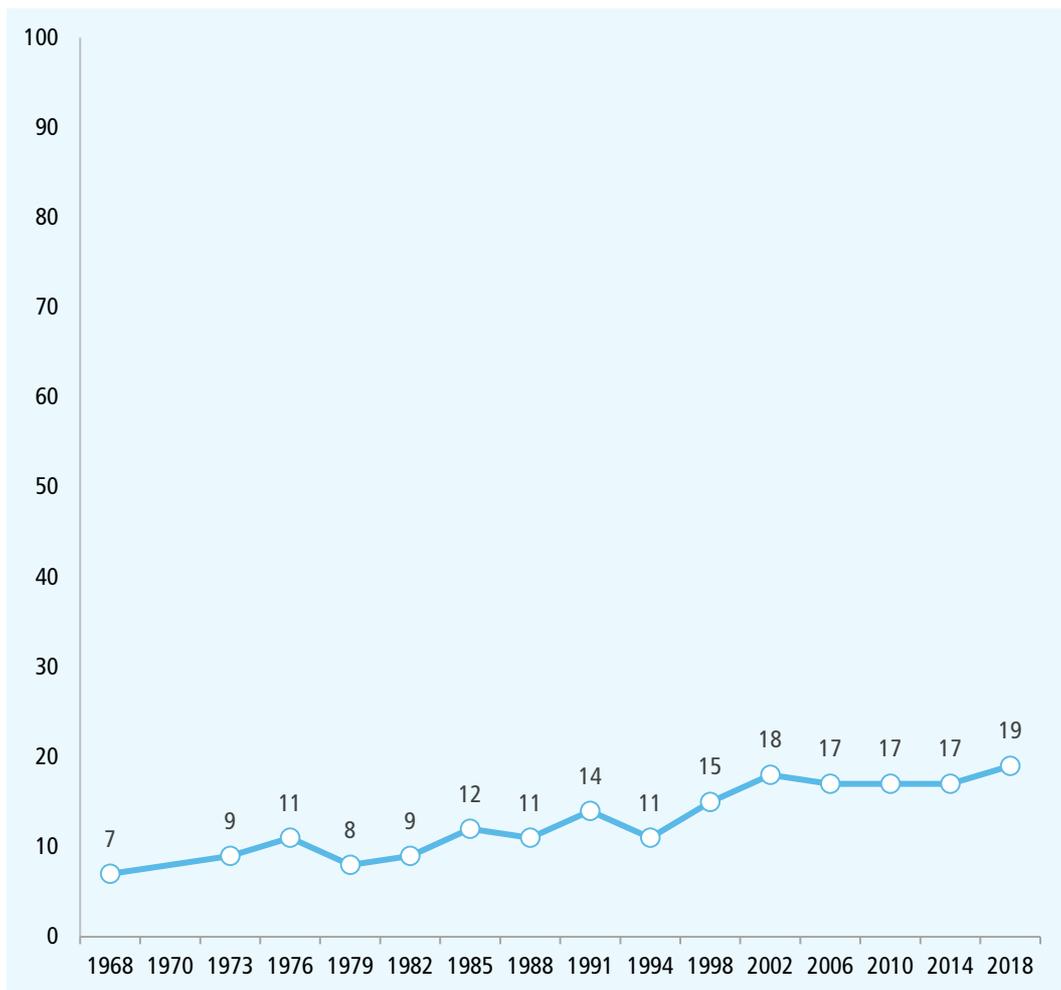


**Comment:** The results are based on panel data consisting of party sympathy data (“best party”) from pre-election face-to-face interviews and information about party choice in post-election mail questionnaires. No election campaign panel study was performed in 1970. The numbers of respondents vary around 1000. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Voter Volatility During Election Campaigns 1968-2018

Figure 9 Party Switchers during Election Campaigns: From Vote Intention Pre-Election to Party Choice Post-Election 1968–2018 (per cent)

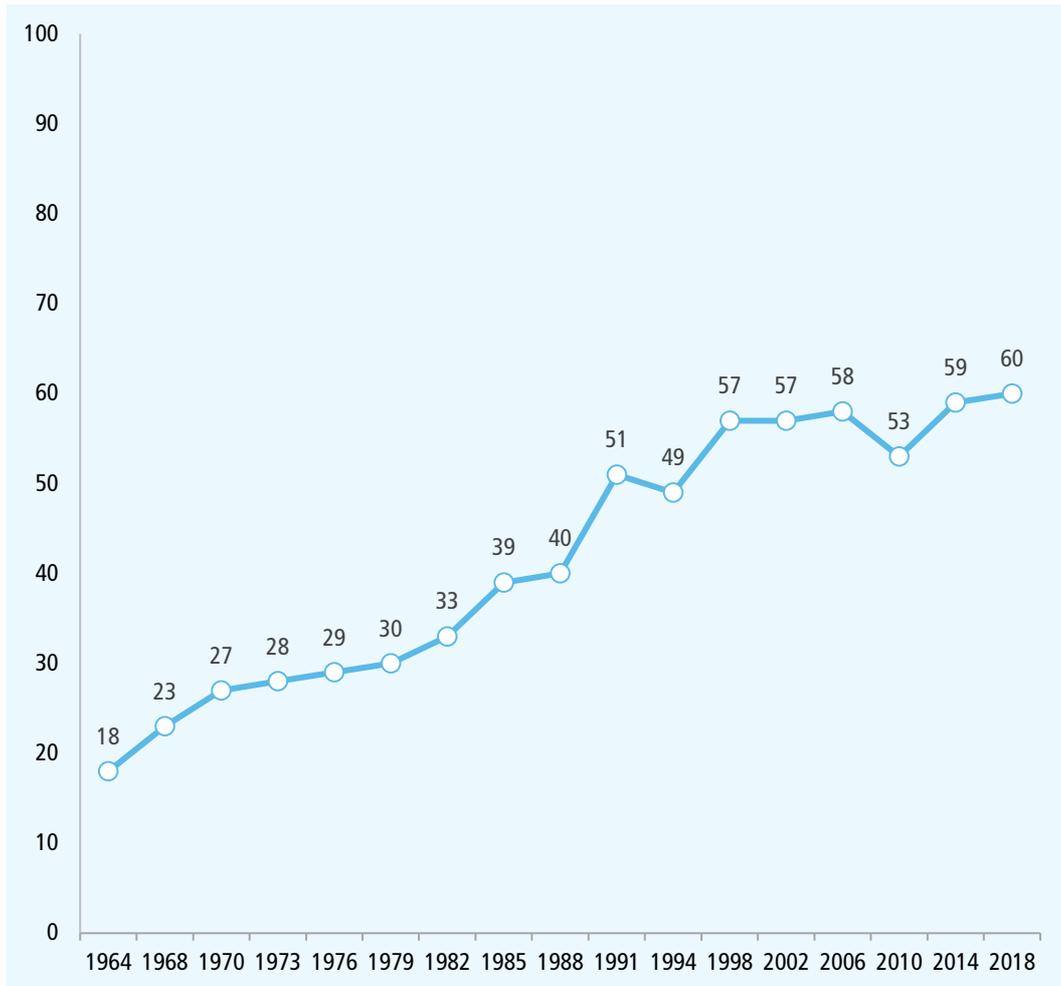


**Comment:** The results are based on panel data consisting of voting intention data from pre-election face-to-face interviews and information about party choice in post-election mail questionnaires. Respondents without a specific vote intention have been assigned a party based on a question about "best party". No election campaign panel study was performed in 1970. The number of respondents vary around 1000. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Time of Voting Decision

Figure 10 Party Choice Decided during the Election Campaign 1964–2018 (per cent)

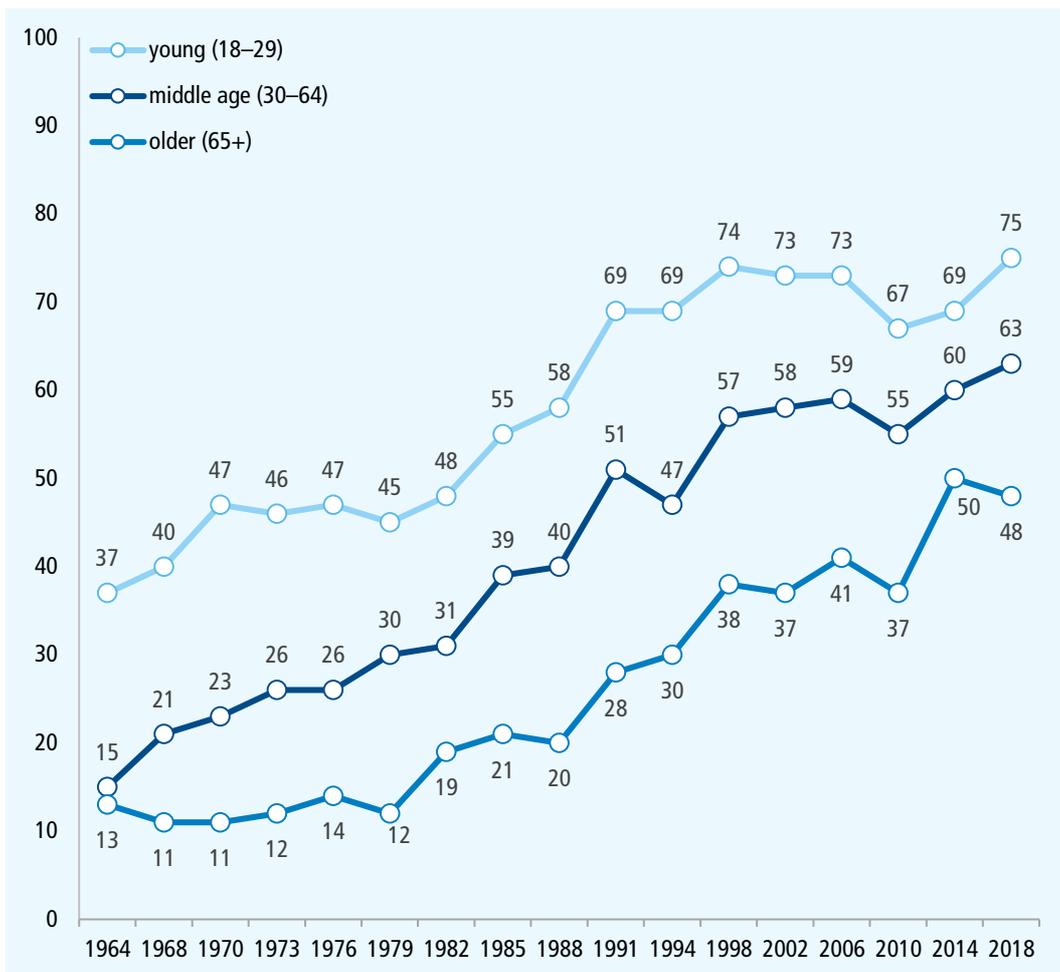


**Comment:** The results are based on a question with the following wording: "When did you decide which party to vote for in the election this year? Was it during the last week before the election, earlier during autumn or summer or did you know all along how you were going to vote?" The two first response alternatives have been combined into "during the election campaign" category. Non-voters are not included in the analysis. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Time of Voting Decision

Figure 11 Party Choice Decided during the Election Campaign in Different Age Categories 1964–2018 (per cent)

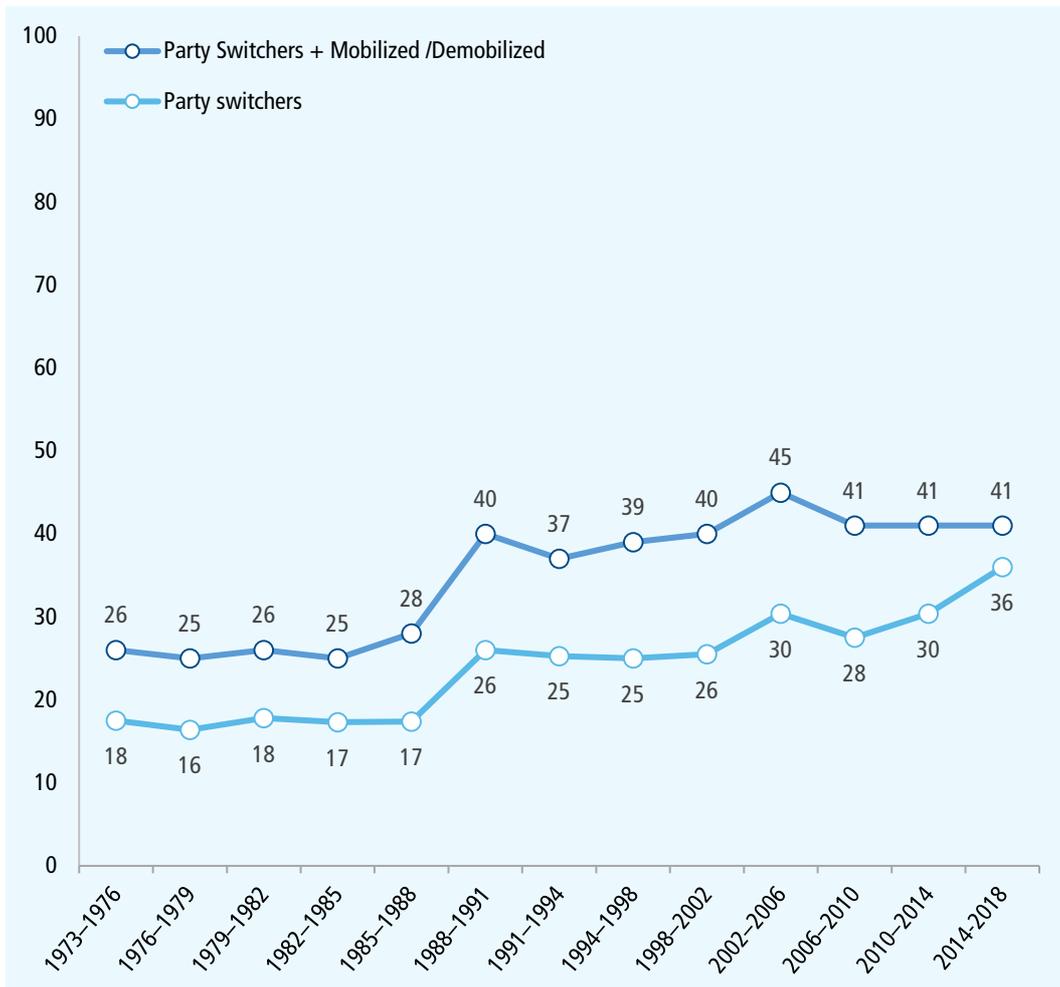


**Comment:** The results are based on a question with the following wording: "When did you decide which party to vote for in the election this year? Was it during the last week before the election, earlier during autumn or summer or did you know all along how you were going to vote?" The two first response alternatives have been combined into "during the election campaign" category. Non-voters are not included in the analysis. Young is defined as 18/21-29 years, middle age 30-64 years and older 65+ years. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Total Voter Volatility

Figure 12 Total Voter Volatility in the Swedish Electorate: Proportion of Party Switchers and Proportion of Mobilized and Demobilized Citizens 1976–2018 (per cent)



**Comment:** The analyses of party switchers is identical to that reported previously, however the proportion of party 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. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Second Best Party

Table 2 Swedish Voters' Second Best Party 1956–2018 (per cent)

party	1956	1964	1968	1970	1973	1976	1979	1982	1985
Left party	6	9	8	10	14	15	19	20	18
Social Democratic party	20	12	10	13	14	11	11	9	10
Green party	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	4
Centre party	19	41	50	49	44	30	22	32	18
Liberal party	36	31	24	23	18	33	34	20	35
Christian Democrats	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
Conservative party	19	7	7	4	9	10	12	14	13
New Democracy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sweden Democrats	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Feminist initiative	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sum	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Respondents	729	1804	2360	2244	1777	1932	2121	2033	2093

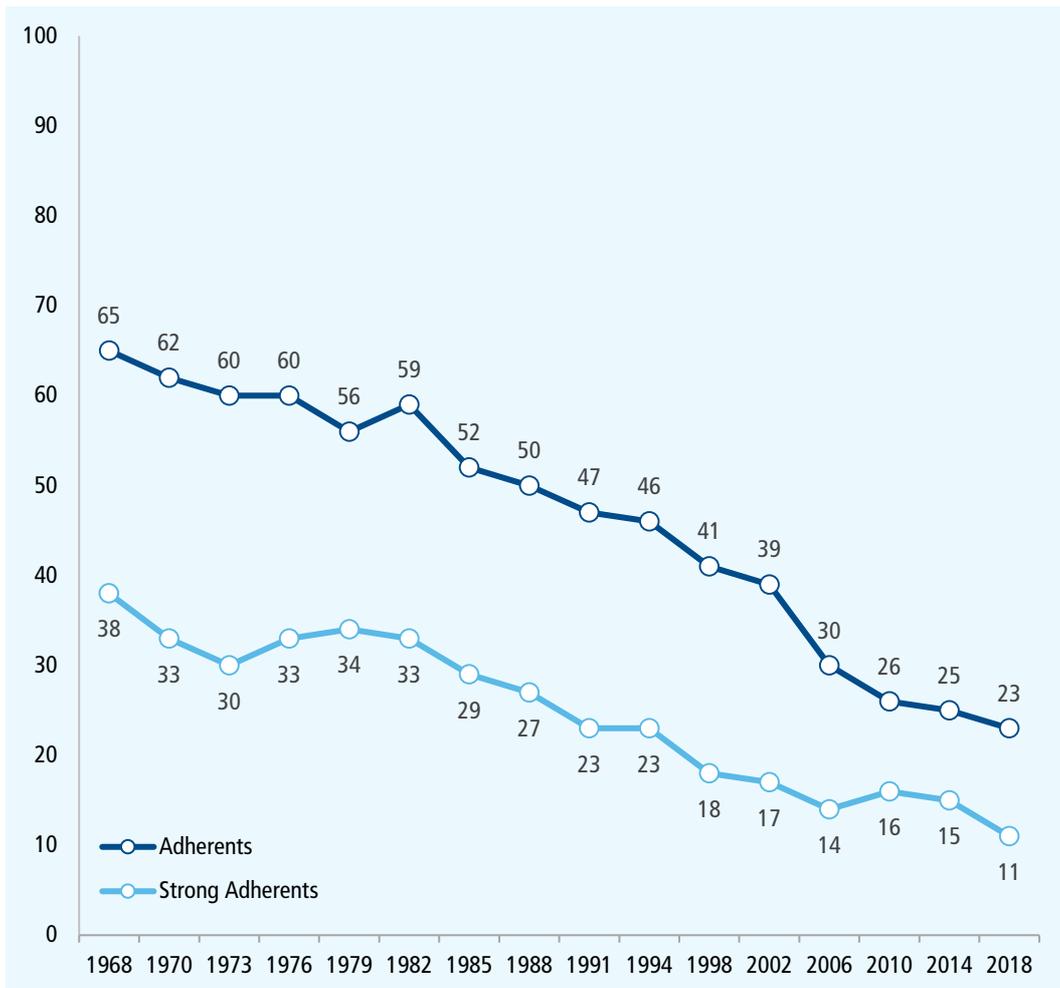
party	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010	2014	2018
Left party	16	12	16	21	20	14	14	15	14
Social Democratic party	12	9	13	14	15	13	13	13	12
Green party	11	4	13	10	9	12	20	19	9
Centre party	21	16	14	11	9	12	8	12	16
Liberal party	28	29	24	14	23	21	19	16	12
Christian Democrats	3	11	7	18	12	10	7	6	10
Conservative party	10	11	11	12	11	17	18	11	17
New Democracy	-	7	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sweden Democrats	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	3	6
Feminist initiative	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	3
Sum	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Respondents	1948	1933	1847	1412	1467	1213	907	673	2509

**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). Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Party Identification

Figure 13 Degree of Party Identification 1968–2018 (per cent)

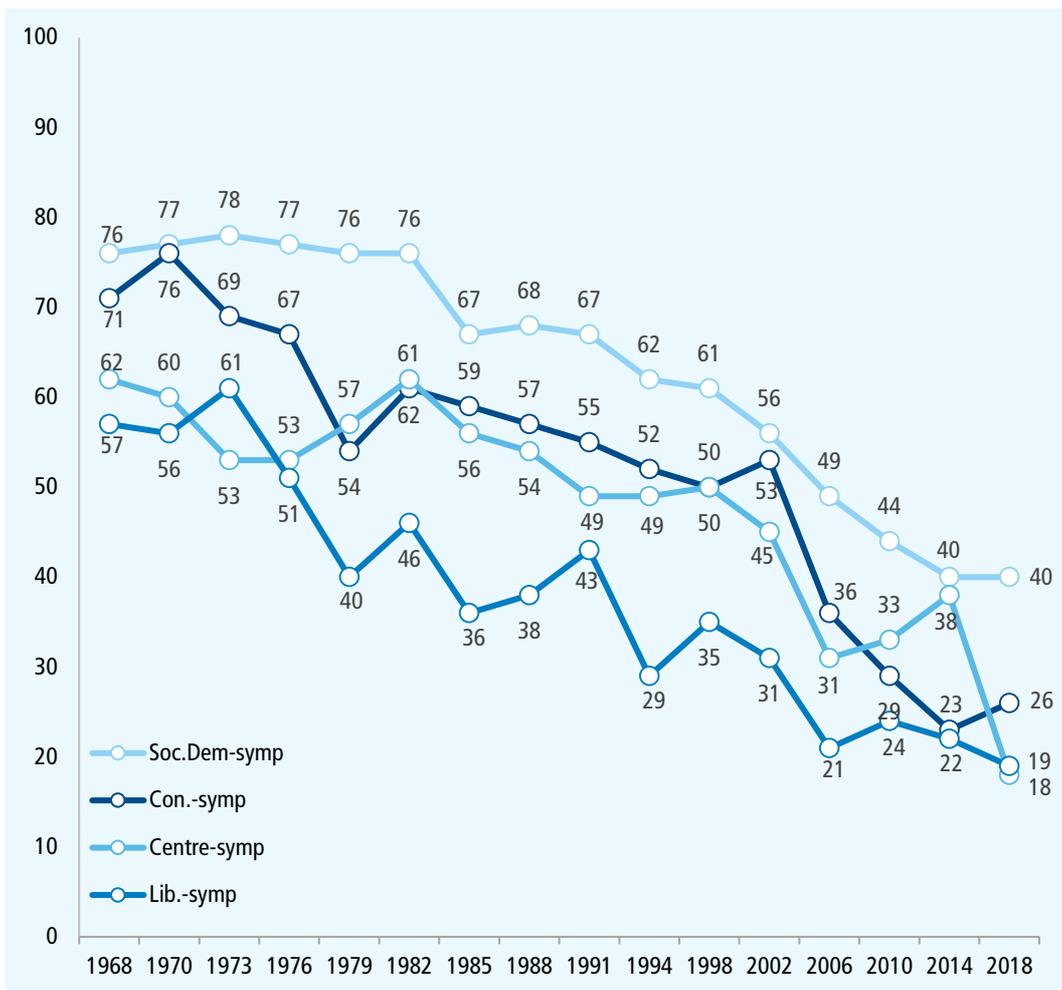


**Comment:** The first interview question asked is: “Many people consider themselves adherents of a specific party. But there are also many others who do not have any such attachment to any of the parties. Do you usually think of yourself as an adherent of any particular party, or do you have no such attachment to any of the parties?”. The first answer option is “yes, thinks of him/herself as an adherent of a specific party”, and the second one “no, does not think of him/herself as an adherent of a specific party”. The second question used is: “Some people are strongly convinced adherents of their party. Others are not so strongly convinced. Do you yourself belong to the strongly convinced adherents of your party?” and the first answer option is “yes, strongly convinced”, the second is “no, not strongly convinced”. A similar but somewhat differently phrase was used in the years 1956-1964. The results for strong adherents in 1956 was 45, in 1960 53, and in 1964 47. The results are weighted down for the increased sample loss over the years. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Party Identification Among Sympathizers of Different Parties

Figure 14 Subjective Party Identifiers 1968–2018 among Sympathizers of Different Swedish Parties (per cent)

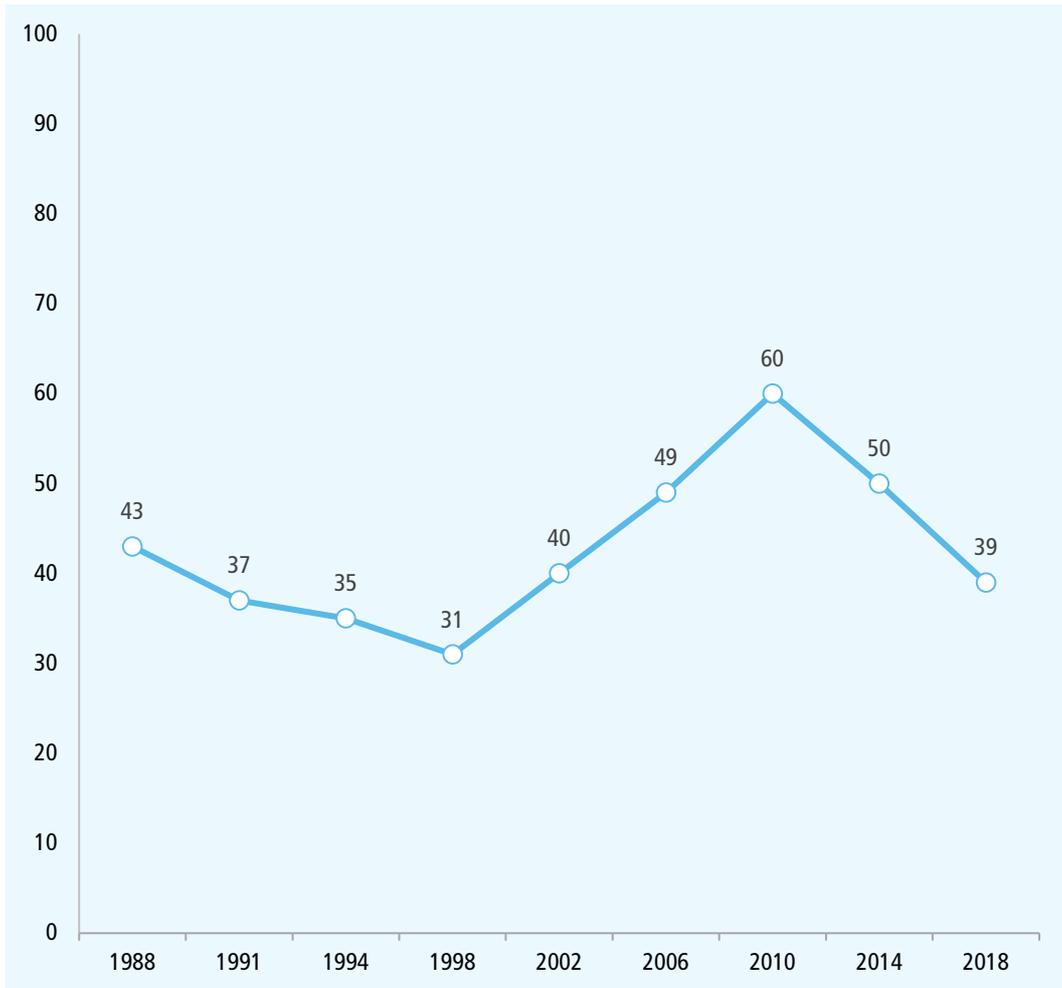


**Comment:** Persons who consider themselves identifiers of a party have been defined as subjective identifiers. The results for Left-, Christ.Dem.-, Greens-, Swe.Dem- and FI-sympathizers in 2018 are 33, 23, 25, 28 and 29 percent subjective identifiers, respectively. The results are weighted down for the increased sample loss over the years. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Political Trust

Figure 15 Trust in Politicians 1988–2018 (per cent)

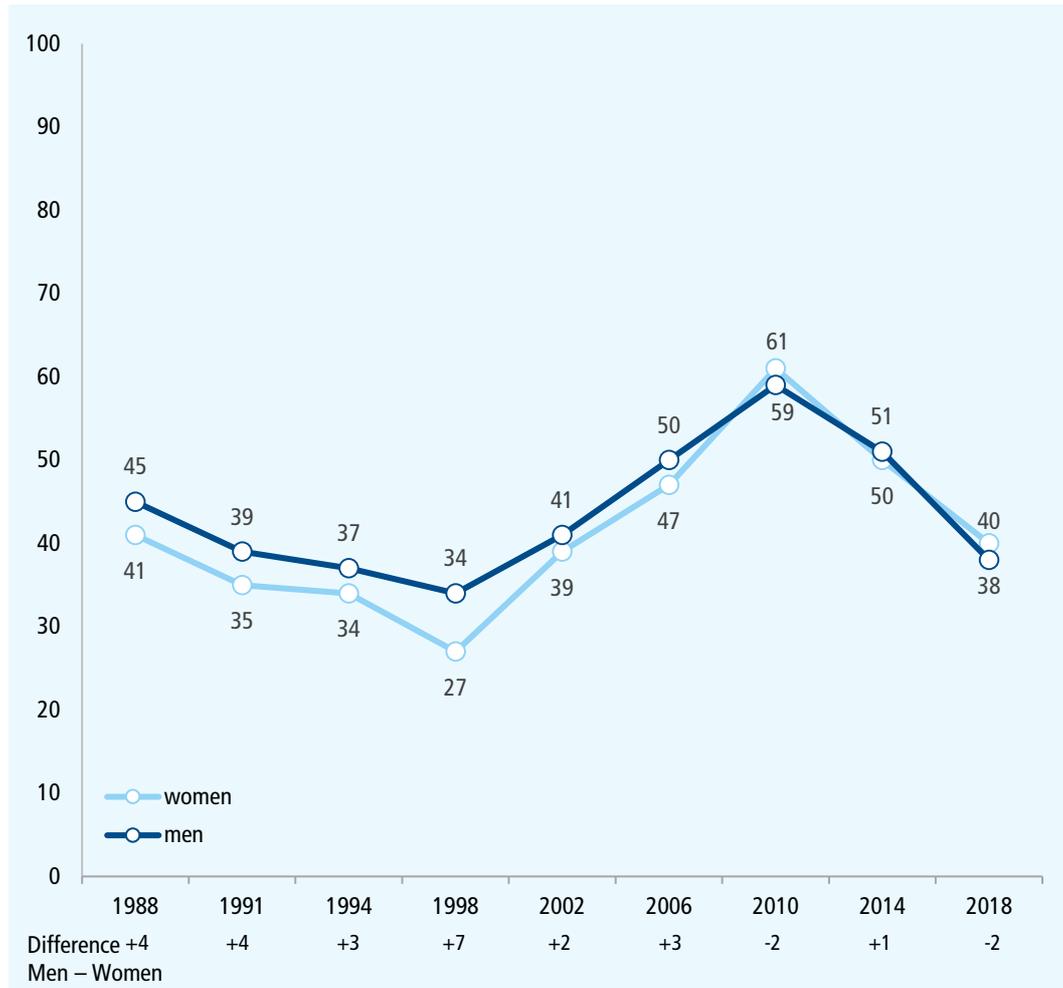


**Comment:** The interview question is phrased: “Generally speaking, how much confidence do you have in Swedish politicians – very high, fairly high, fairly low or very low”. The results show the proportion of respondents answering very or fairly high confidence. The results are weighted down for the increased sample loss over the years. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Political Trust Among Women and Men

Figure 16 Political Trust and Gender 1988–2018 (per cent)

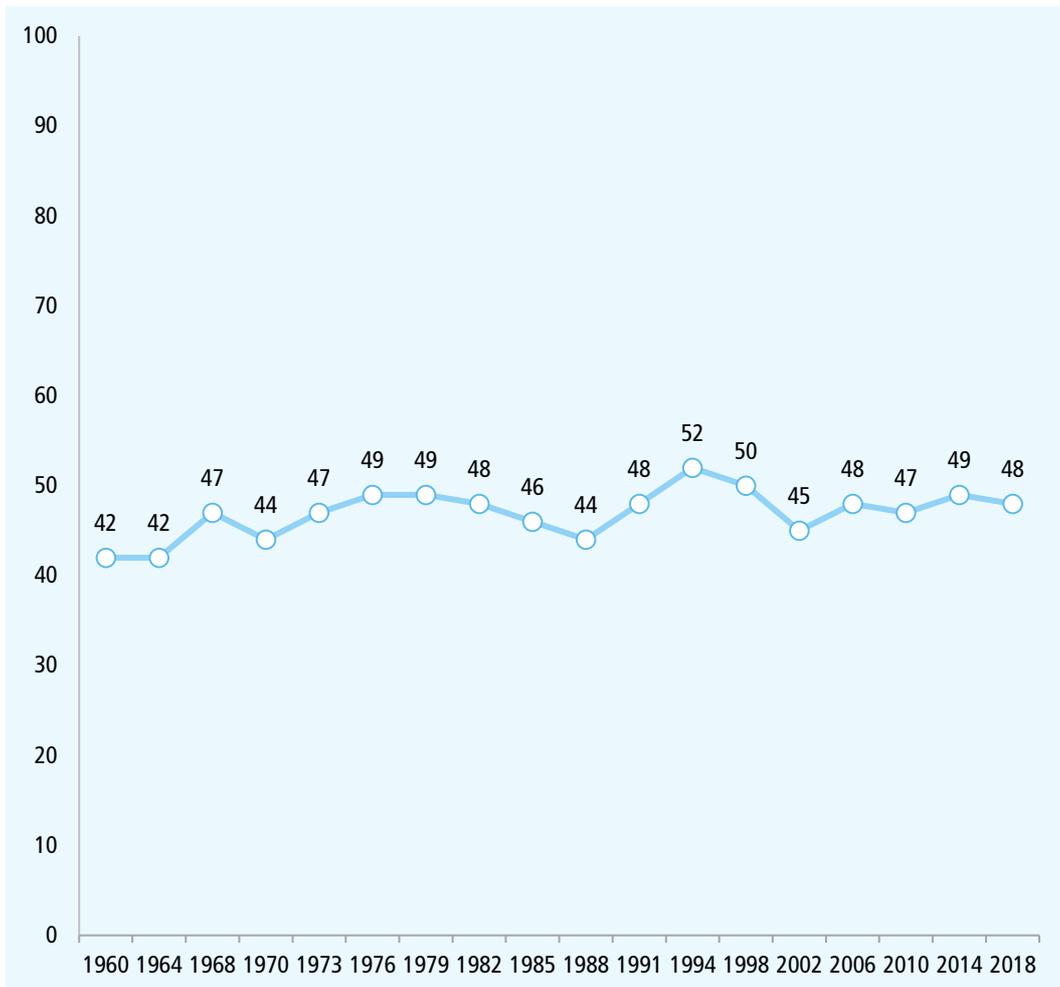


**Comment:** The interview question is phrased: “Generally speaking, how much confidence do you have in Swedish politicians – very high, fairly high, fairly low or very low”. The results show the proportion of respondents answering very or fairly high confidence. The results are weighted down for the declining response rate over the years. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Political Interest

Figure 17 Political Interest. Proportion of Interviewed Persons Who Indicate That They Are Very Much Interested or Rather Interested in Politics 1960–2018 (per cent)

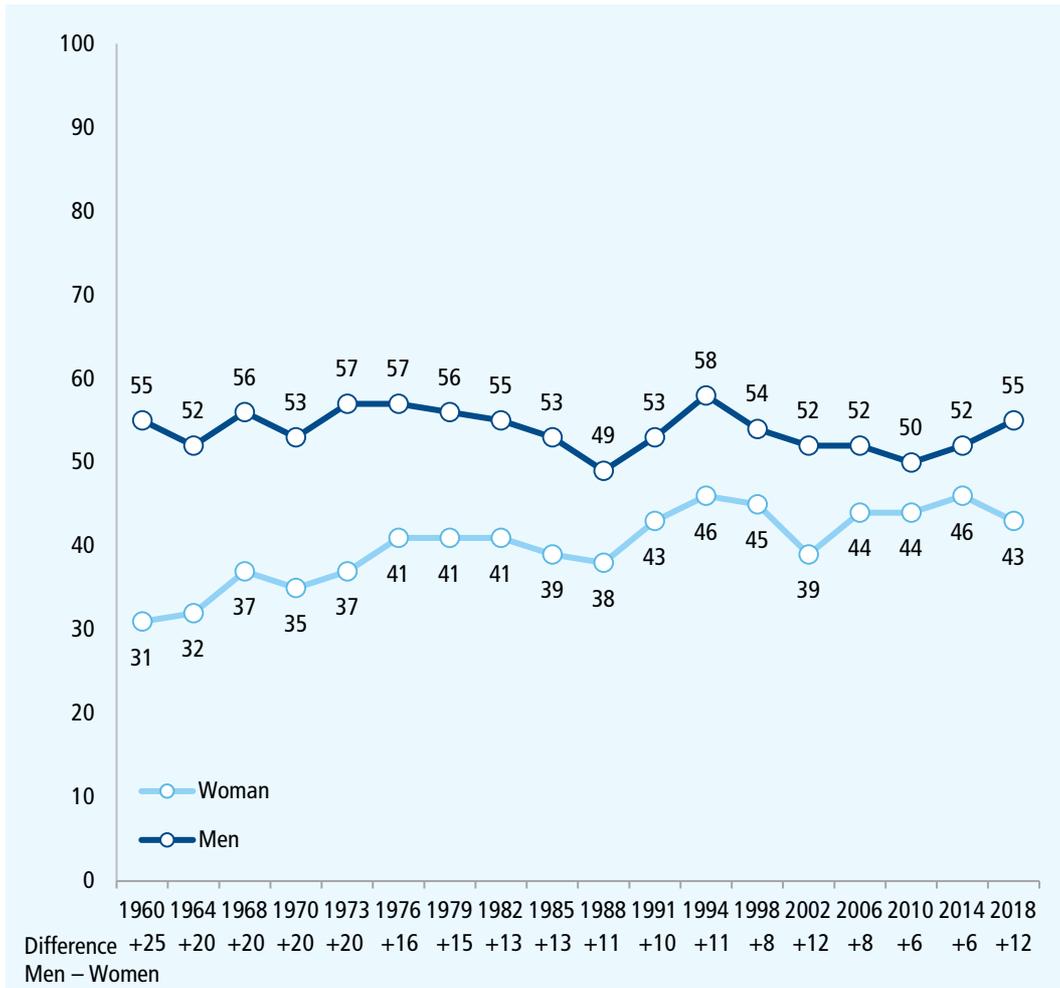


**Comment:** The results are weighted down for the declining response rate over the years, see SNES report 2016:3 for details. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Political Interest Among Women and Men

Figure 18 Political Interest and Gender 1960–2018 (per cent)

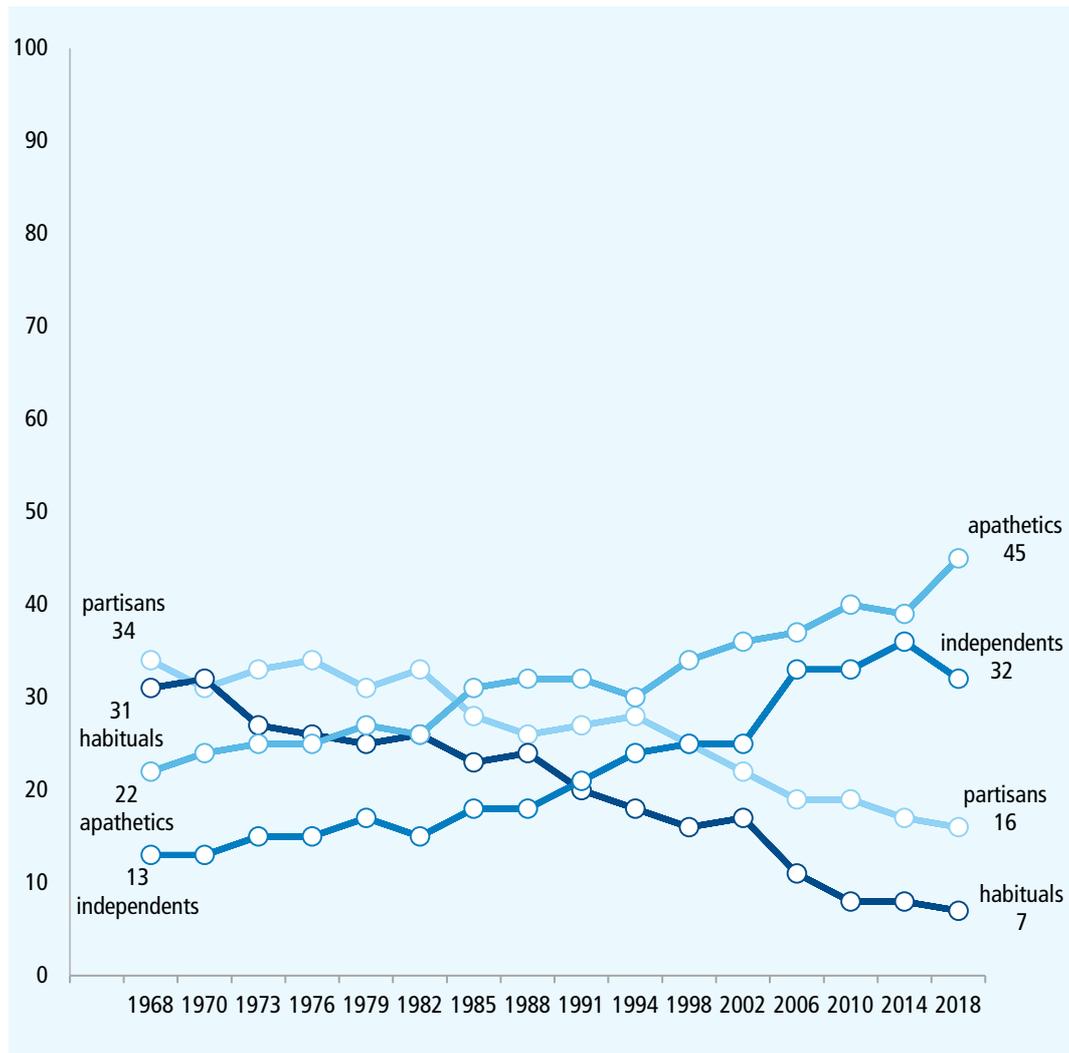


**Comment:** The results are weighted down for the declining response rate over the years. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Political Interest and Partisanship Combined

Figure 19 Political Interest and Political Partisanship 1968–2018 (per cent)



**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 and 2018, the results have been weighted for the increased sample loss over the years. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Important Issues

Table 3 Election Issues in Sweden 1979–2018. Percentage of Party Voters Who on an Open-Ended Question Mentioned the Various Issue Areas as Important for Their Party Choice (per cent)

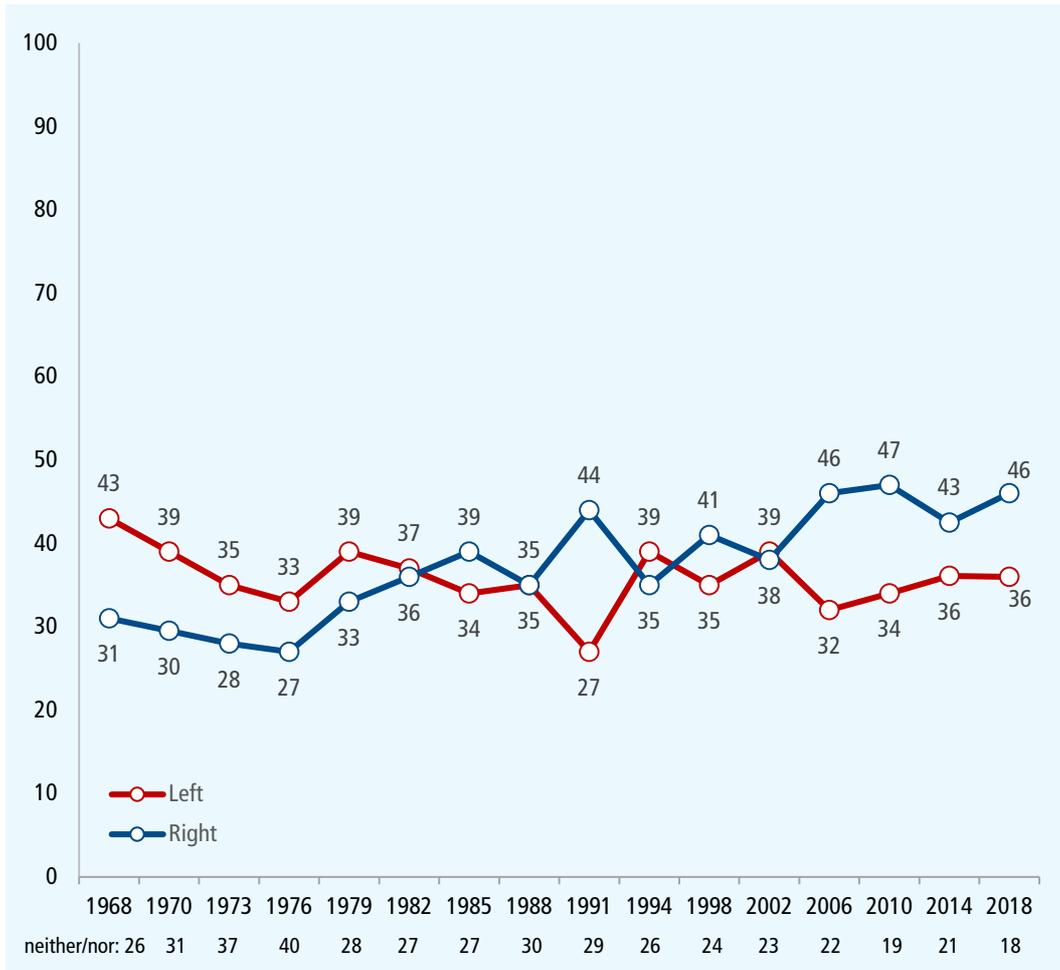
Issue Area	1979	1982	1985	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010	2014	2018
Health Care/Welfare	4	12	19	15	22	21	28	36	32	37	43	42
Immigration/Refugees	0	0	1	2	8	5	3	10	5	9	23	30
Education	6	3	3	2	4	6	20	29	24	26	41	23
Environment	6	7	22	46	25	20	12	8	11	13	20	18
Pensions/Care of Elderly	5	8	8	9	20	9	17	20	21	19	17	15
Taxes	17	8	20	19	18	9	17	14	15	15	15	7
Law and Order	1	1	2	1	3	1	2	4	3	1	8	7
Economy	9	14	14	8	20	30	14	10	11	17	11	4
Full Employment	18	29	25	5	23	41	34	7	35	31	30	3
Gender Equality	1	0	0	0	0	2	2	3	4	1	5	3
Family/Child Care	8	8	17	16	18	13	15	14	15	6	4	3
Peace/Int./Armed Forces	1	4	6	4	3	2	2	2	2	1	5	3
Business Policy	1	1	0	0	0	1	2	3	5	4	2	2
Public vs Private Sector	5	2	7	3	4	4	3	4	2	2	2	2
Housing	5	2	2	4	5	1	0	2	1	1	1	2
Religion/Moral	2	1	1	1	3	1	2	2	1	0	1	2
Energy/Nuclear Power	26	2	1	3	3	2	3	1	5	2	2	1
Agriculture	1	1	2	1	3	1	1	2	3	1	2	1
EU/EMU	0	0	0	1	10	14	6	5	0	0	1	1
Wage Earners' Funds	4	33	11	1	1	0	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	73
Respondents	2678	2640	2610	2299	2273	2256	1633	1864	1667	1274	984	6899

**Comment:** The number one important issue is marked with a circle each election year. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Ideological Left-Right Placement

Figure 20 Left-Right Opinion Among Swedes 1968–2018 (per cent)

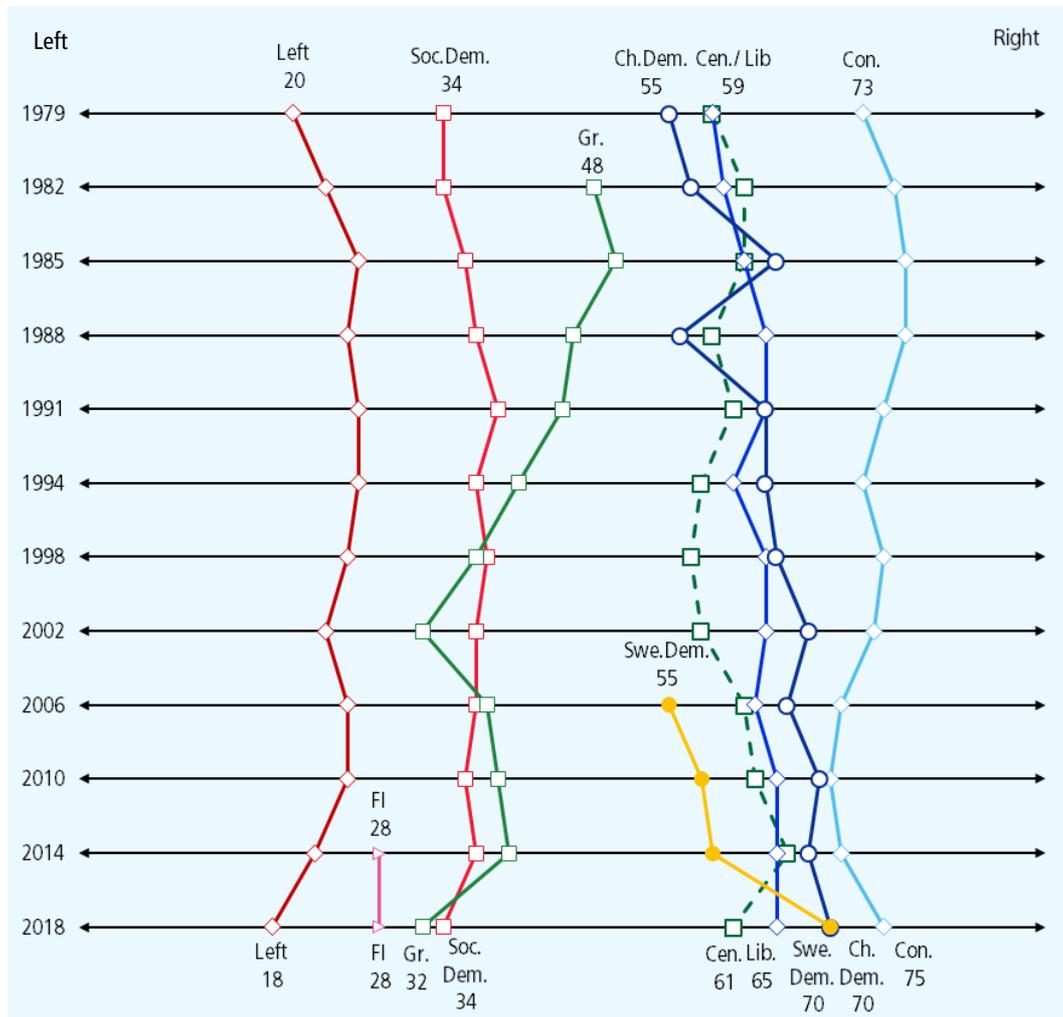


**Comment:** The left-right scale runs from 0 (far left) to 10 (far right) with a designated midpoint a 5 (neither left nor right). All respondents are included in the results. Persons answering don't know are excluded from the analysis, between 3-10 percent through the years. In the study 2018, the end points of the response scale was "Left" and "Right", in previous years it was "Far to the left" and "Far to the right". Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Ideological Left-Right Placement Among Voters for Different Parties

Figure 21 Average Left-Right Self Placements among Swedish Voters 1979–2018 (mean)

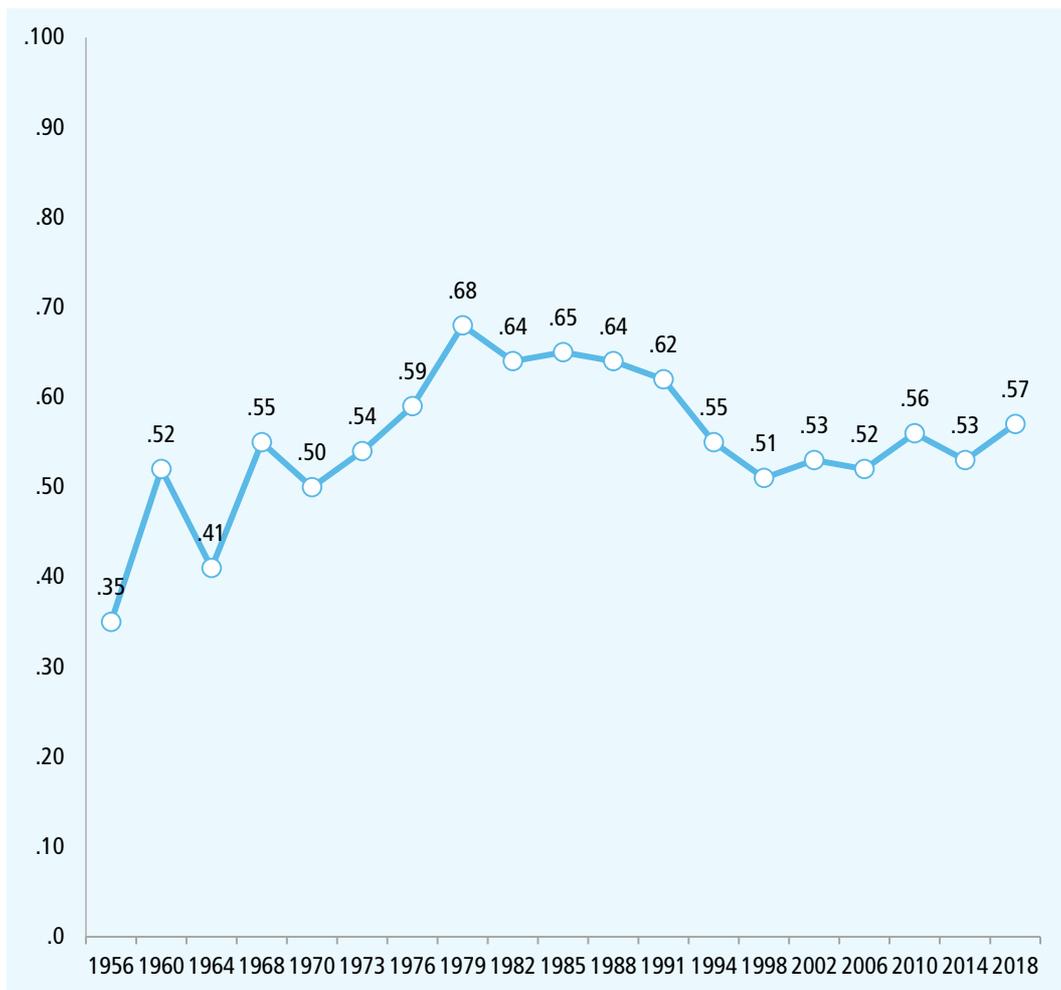


**Comment:** The left-right scale runs from 0 (far left) to 10 (far right) with a designated midpoint a 5 (neither left nor right). The mean for the entire electorate was 4,9 in 1979, 5,0 in 1982, 5,2 in 1985, 5,0 in 1988, 5,5 in 1991, 4,9 in 1994, 5,1 in 1998, 4,9 in 2002, 5,2 in 2006, 5,3 in 2010, 5,1 in 2014 and 5,2 in 2018. The mean for the NYD-voters was 6,3 in 1991 and 6,1 in 1994. In the study 2018, the end points of the response scale was “Left” and “Right”, in previous years it was “Far to the left” and “Far to the right”. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Ideological Left-Right Voting

Figure 22 Ideological Left-Right Voting and Party Choice in Swedish Elections 1956–2018 (mean eta)



**Comment:** The results are mean etas based on analyses of variance treating party voting groups (5 to 9 parties) as the independent variable and three left-right issue questions with the strongest relationship with party choice as the dependent variables. The left-right issue questions are not exactly the same throughout the years. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Parties with Issue Profiles

Table 4 Party Profiles 1982–2018. Percent Respondents Who Mentioned at Least One Election Issue for the Relevant Party (per cent)

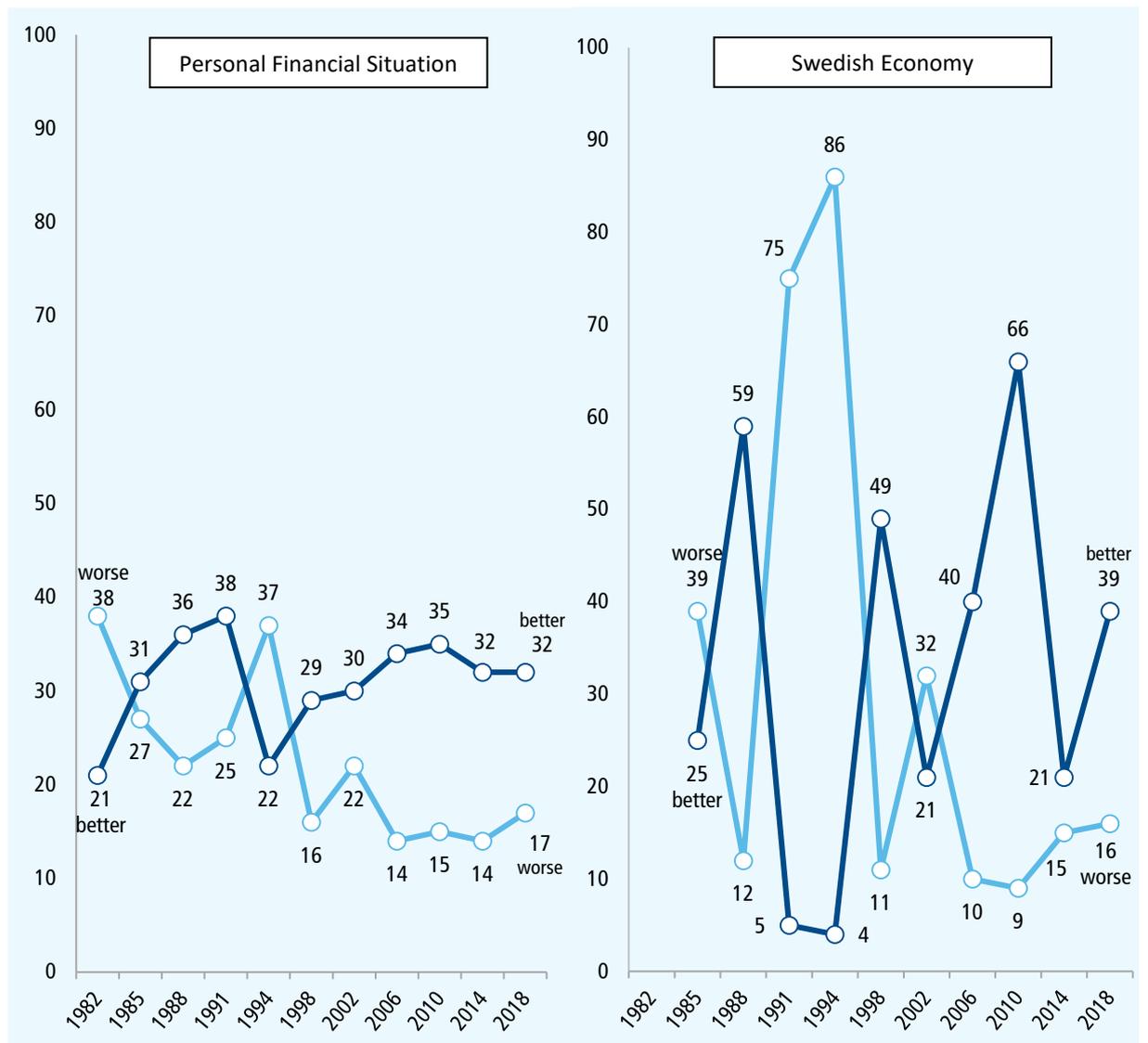
party	1982	1985	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010	2014	2018
Left party	48	58	47	25	52	63	49	36	48	71	45
Social Democrats	88	64	59	60	83	78	61	57	55	84	53
Green party	-	-	80	52	71	55	51	52	64	80	47
Centre party	58	46	54	42	47	34	35	51	42	60	44
Liberal party	45	62	59	54	46	43	68	63	59	77	46
Christian Democrats	-	29	-	58	49	61	54	51	40	51	44
Conservative party	68	70	54	67	66	72	70	78	66	75	48
Swedish Democrats	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70	88	54
New Democracy	-	-	-	59	38	-	-	-	-	-	-
mean five old parties	61	60	54	50	59	58	57	57	54	73	47
mean all parties	61	55	59	52	57	58	55	55	55	73	48

**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). Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Retrospective Economic Voting

Figure 23 Retrospective Evaluations of the Respondents' Own Personal Financial Situation and of the Development of the Swedish Economy 1982–2018 (per cent)

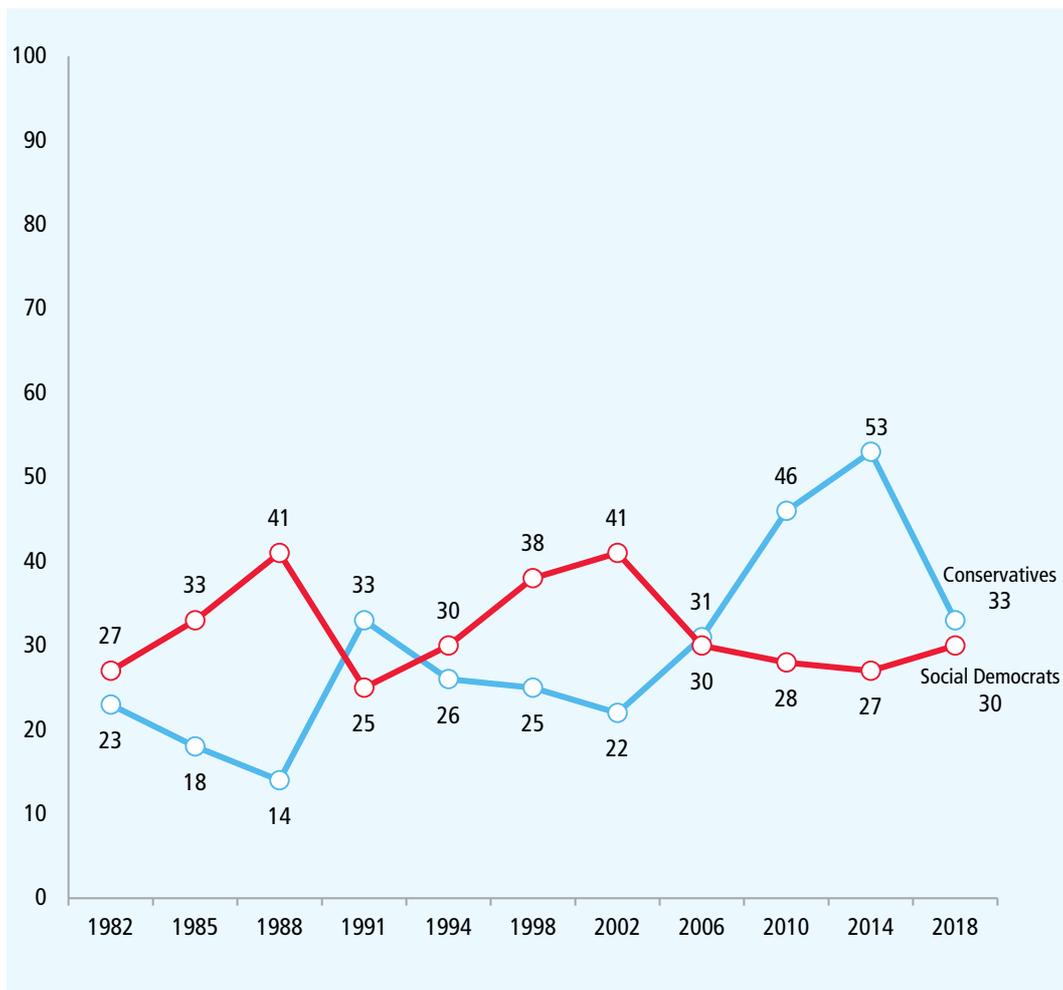


**Comment:** The interview question on the Swedish economy was not put in 1982. The time frame for the evaluations were “the two-three latest years” in the Election Studies in 1982-1994. Since 1998 the time frame has been changed to “the last twelve months”. The interview questions also include a middle 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. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Issue Ownership

Figure 24 Issue Ownership – Parties Judged to Have the Best Policy for the Swedish Economy 1982–2018 (per cent)

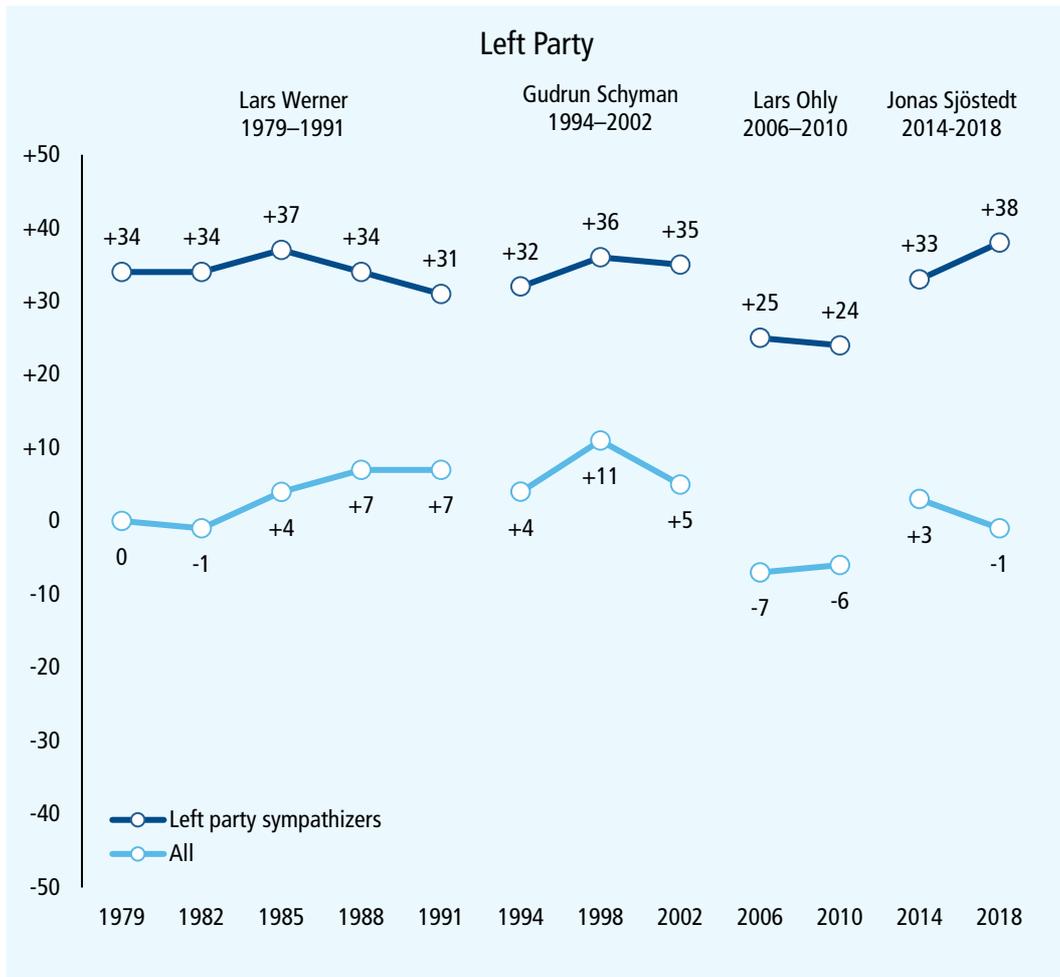


**Comment:** All respondents are included in the percentage base. The results are based on an open ended question where respondents could indicate which party or parties have a good or bad policy for the Swedish economy. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Party Leader Popularity

Figure 25 Party Leader Popularity, Left Party (Vänsterpartiet), 1979–2018 (mean)

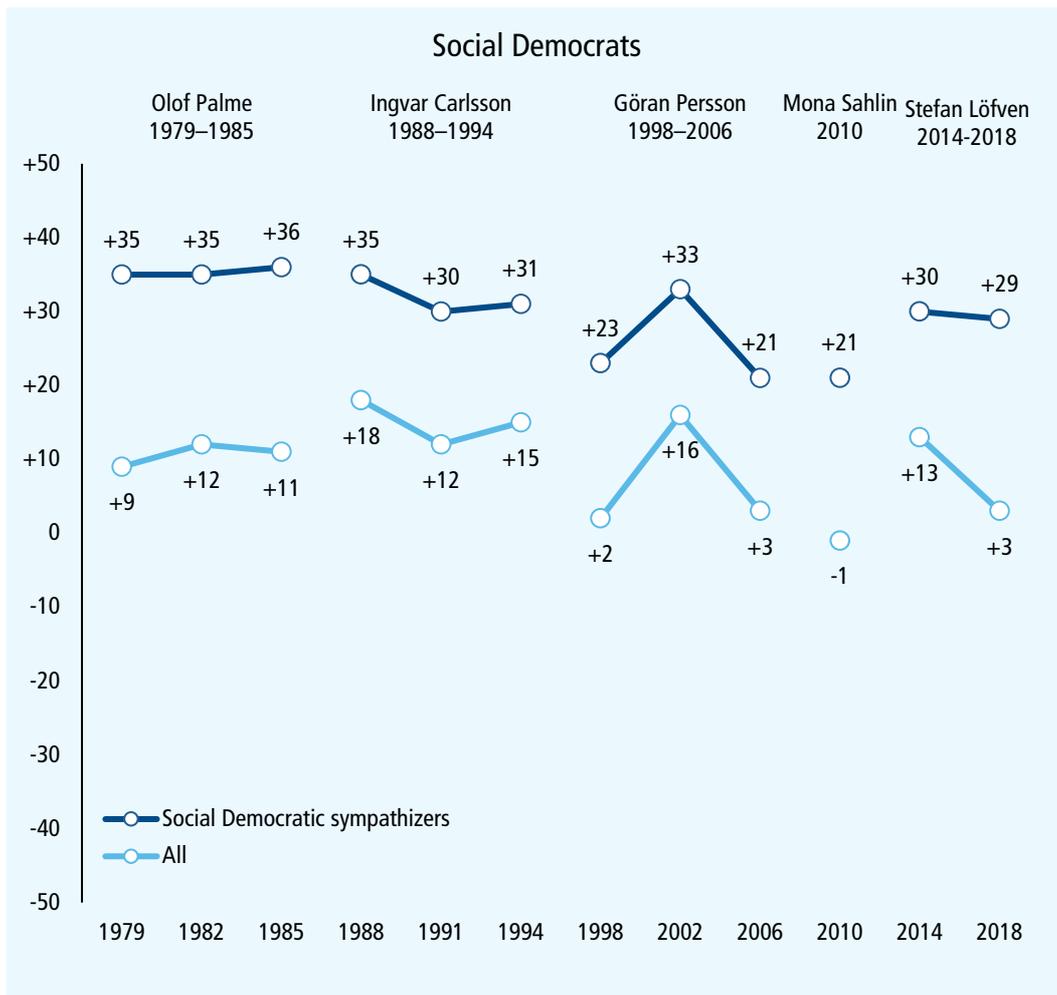


**Comment:** Party Leader popularity has been measured on an eleven point like-dislike scale running between -5 and +5. The results are means multiplied by 10 to yield values between -50 (dislike) and +50 (like). Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Party Leader Popularity

Figure 26 Party Leader Popularity, Social Democratic Party (Socialdemokraterna), 1979–2018 (mean)

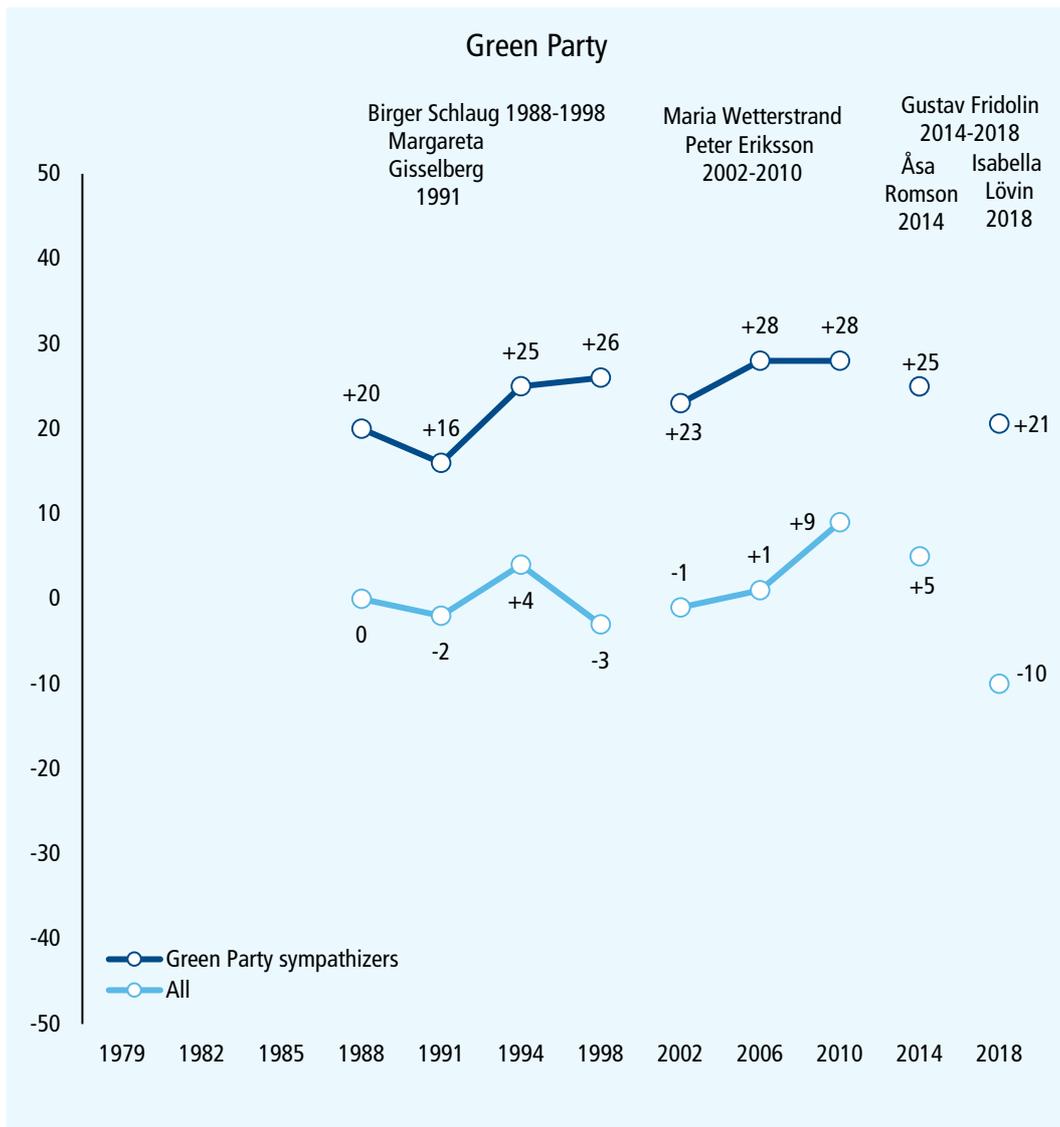


**Comment:** Party Leader popularity has been measured on an eleven point like-dislike scale running between -5 and +5. The results are means multiplied by 10 to yield values between -50 (dislike) and +50 (like). Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Party Leader popularity

Figure 27 Party Leader Popularity, Swedish Green Party (Miljöpartiet), 1979–2018 (mean)

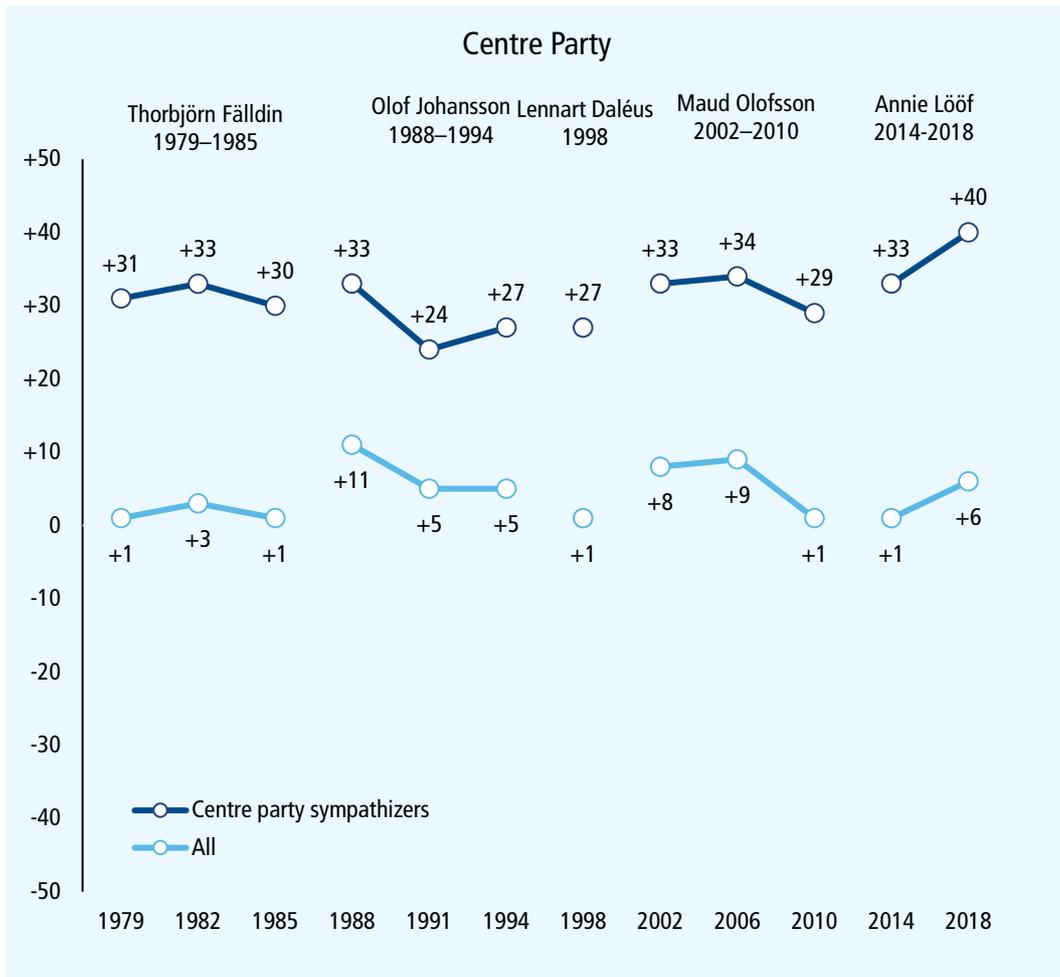


**Comment:** Party Leader popularity has been measured on an eleven point like-dislike scale running between -5 and +5. The results are means multiplied by 10 to yield values between -50 (dislike) and +50 (like). For the years where both spokespersons have been rated, the mean is presented in the graph. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Party Leader Popularity

Figure 28 Party Leader Popularity, Centre Party (Centerpartiet), 1979–2018 (mean)

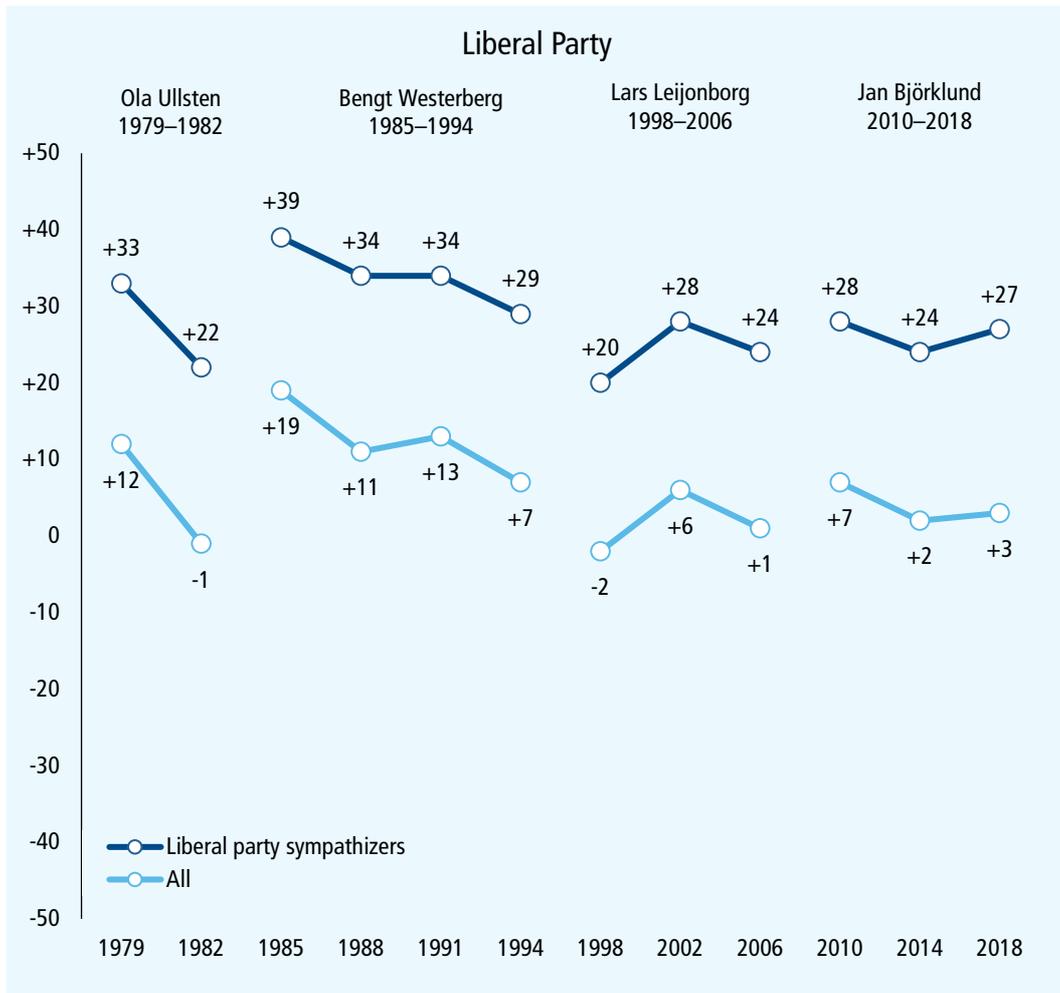


**Comment:** Party Leader popularity has been measured on an eleven point like-dislike scale running between –5 and +5. The results are means multiplied by 10 to yield values between –50 (dislike) and +50 (like). Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Party Leader Popularity

Figure 29 Party Leader Popularity, Liberal Party (Liberalerna), 1979–2018 (mean)

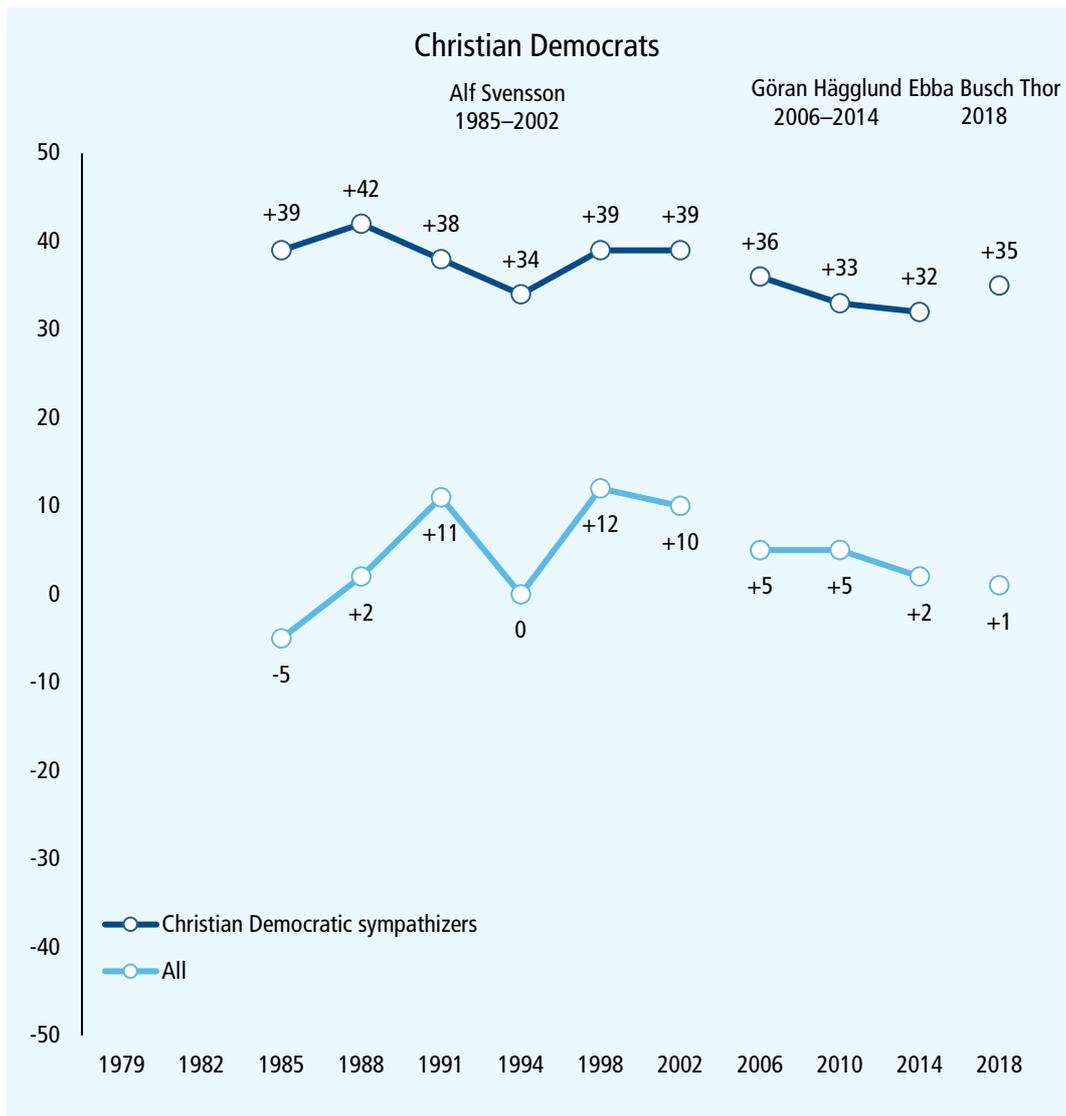


**Comment:** Party Leader popularity has been measured on an eleven point like-dislike scale running between -5 and +5. The results are means multiplied by 10 to yield values between -50 (dislike) and +50 (like). Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Party Leader Popularity

Figure 30 Party Leader Popularity, Christian Democrats (Kristdemokraterna), 1979–2018 (mean)

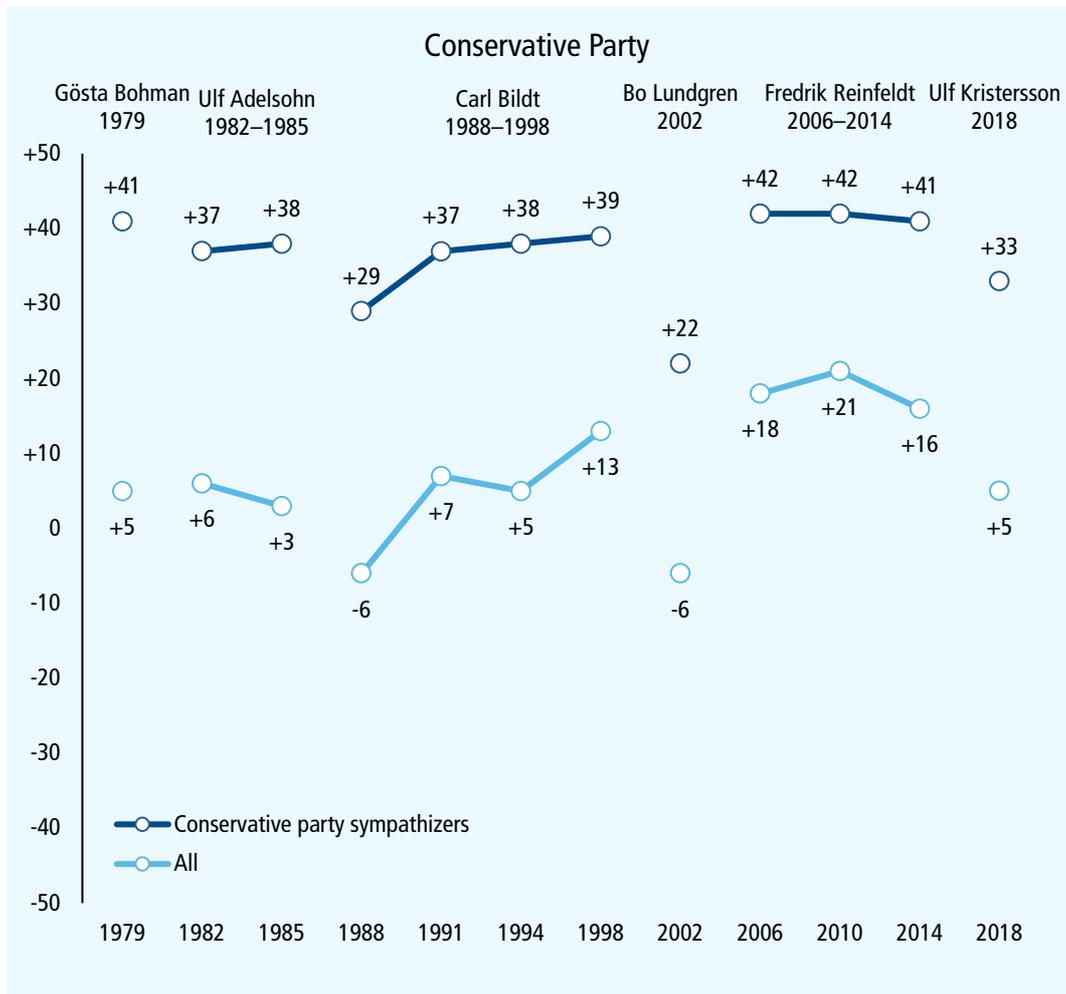


**Comment:** Party Leader popularity has been measured on an eleven point like-dislike scale running between -5 and +5. The results are means multiplied by 10 to yield values between -50 (dislike) and +50 (like). Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Party Leader Popularity

Figure 31 Party Leader Popularity, Conservative Party (Moderaterna), 1979–2018 (mean)

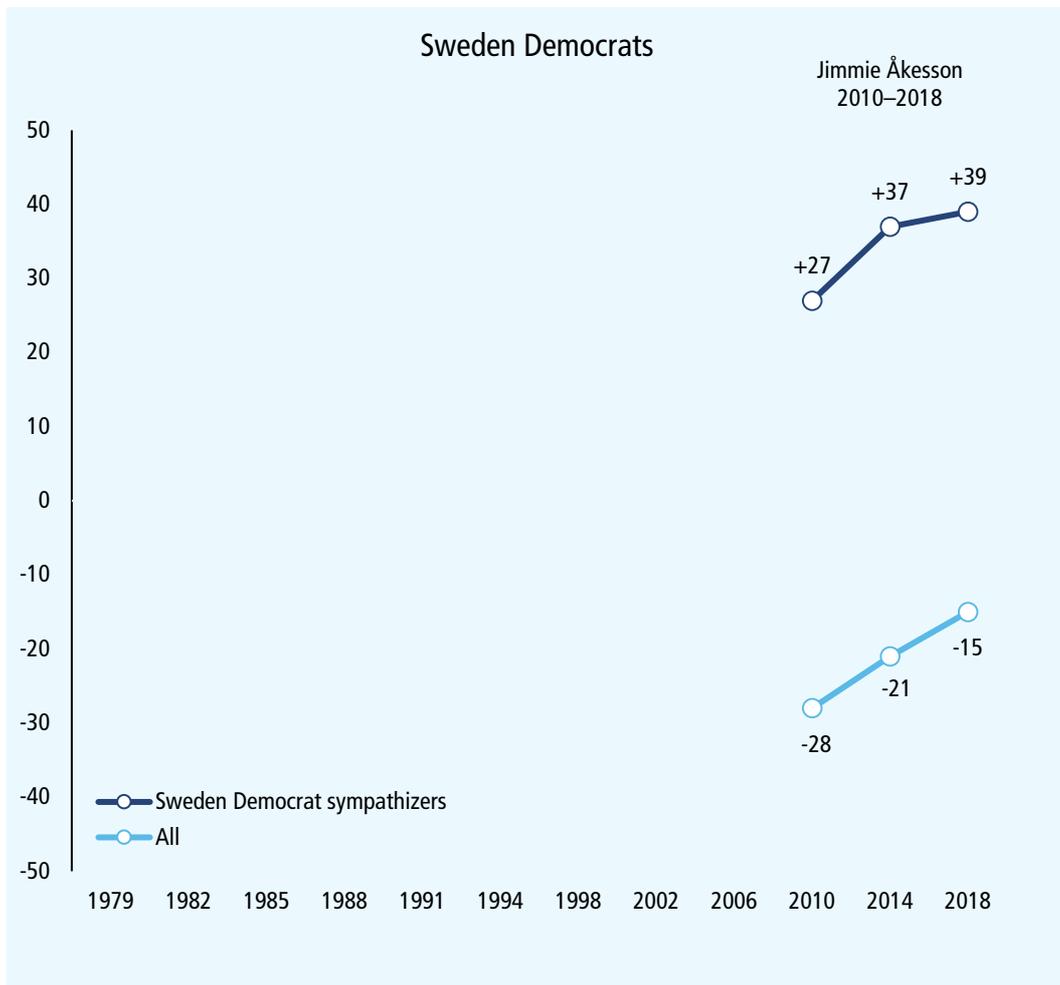


**Comment:** Party Leader popularity has been measured on an eleven point like-dislike scale running between -5 and +5. The results are means multiplied by 10 to yield values between -50 (dislike) and +50 (like). Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Party Leader Popularity

Figure 32 Party Leader Popularity, Sweden Democrats (Sverigedemokraterna), 1979–2018 (mean)



**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). Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Party Leader Effects

Table 5 Party Leaders as Potential Vote-Getters for Their Parties 1979–2018 (per cent)

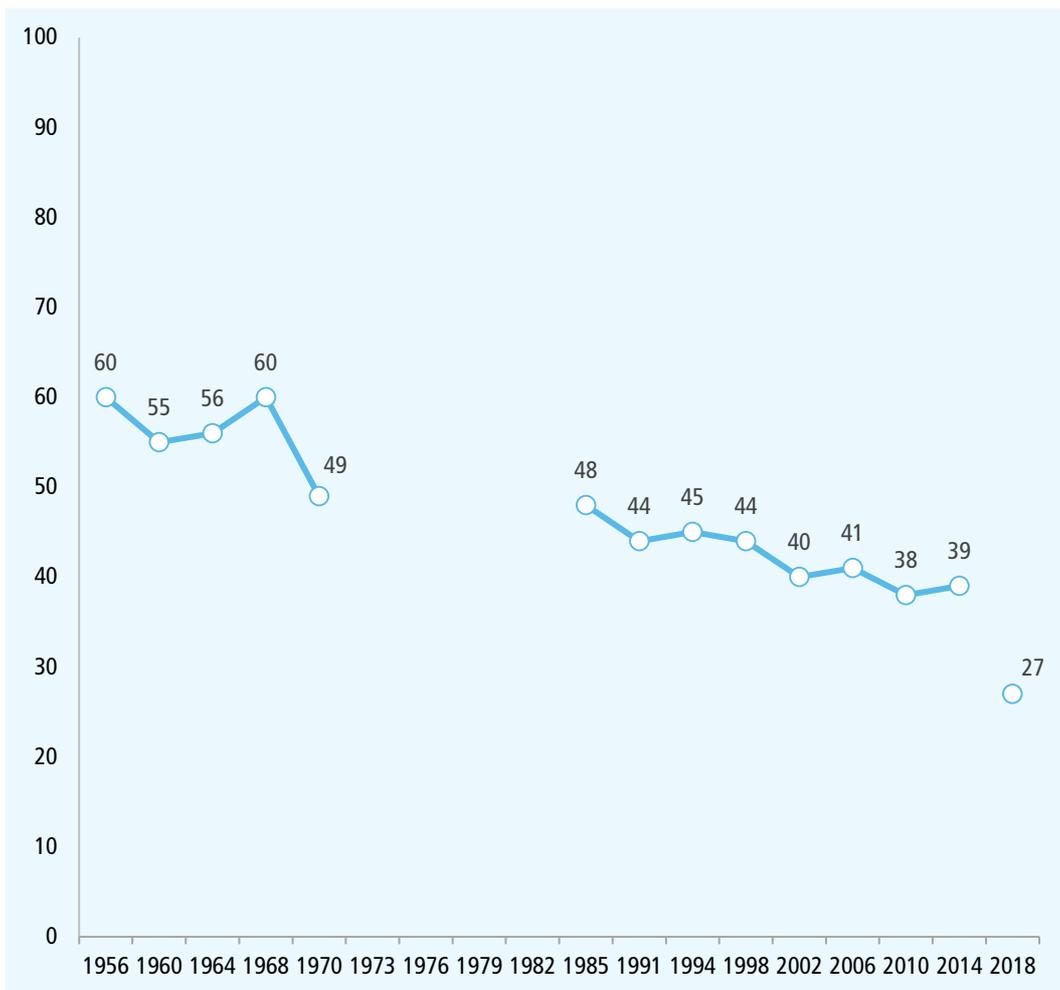
party	1979	1982	1985	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010	2014	2018
Left party	15	18	26	22	26	13	19	23	15	15	16	20
Social Democratic party	11	16	13	14	9	7	6	11	9	6	8	11
Green party	-	-	-	-	3	6	6	11	10	17	12	7
Centre party	10	20	13	14	6	10	12	21	37	11	25	27
Liberal party	22	8	27	18	18	17	4	6	7	13	9	14
Christian Democrats	-	-	7	-	13	18	25	32	12	13	12	22
Conservative party	26	14	18	7	18	28	33	4	29	31	33	14
New Democracy	-	-	-	-	20	8	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sweden Democrats	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	14	20
mean 5 old parties	17	15	19	15	15	15	15	13	19	15	18	17
mean 6/7/8 parties	-	-	17	-	13	13	15	15	16	15	16	17

**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 2018 for FI and party leader Gudrun Schyman was 23 per cent. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Candidate Recognition

Figure 33 Proportion of Respondents Who Name at Least One Riksdag Candidate in Their Own Constituency 1956–2018 (per cent)

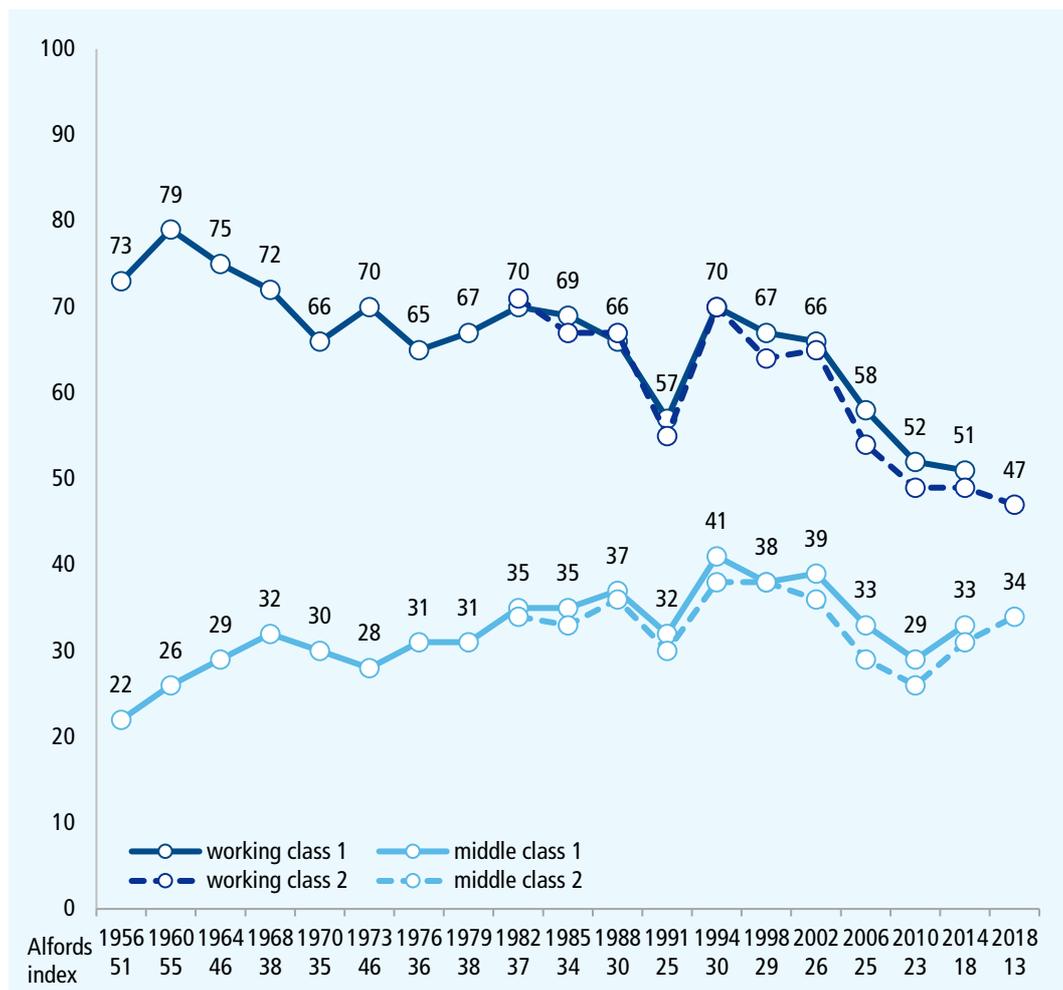


**Comment:** Only voters are included. The data is collected after the elections. In the years 1956 and 1960 the correctness of the names given was not checked. In the years 1964 – 1994, the correctness of names given was not checked systematically. Minor tests indicate that the results for the years 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, 2014 and 2018 showed that the proportion of party voters who could mention at least one *correct* name was 32, 30, 29, 28, 27 and 22 percent respectively. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Class Voting

Figure 34 Class Voting in Swedish Elections 1956–2018. Percentage Voting Socialist (Left and Soc.Dem) among Workers and in the Middle Class (per cent)

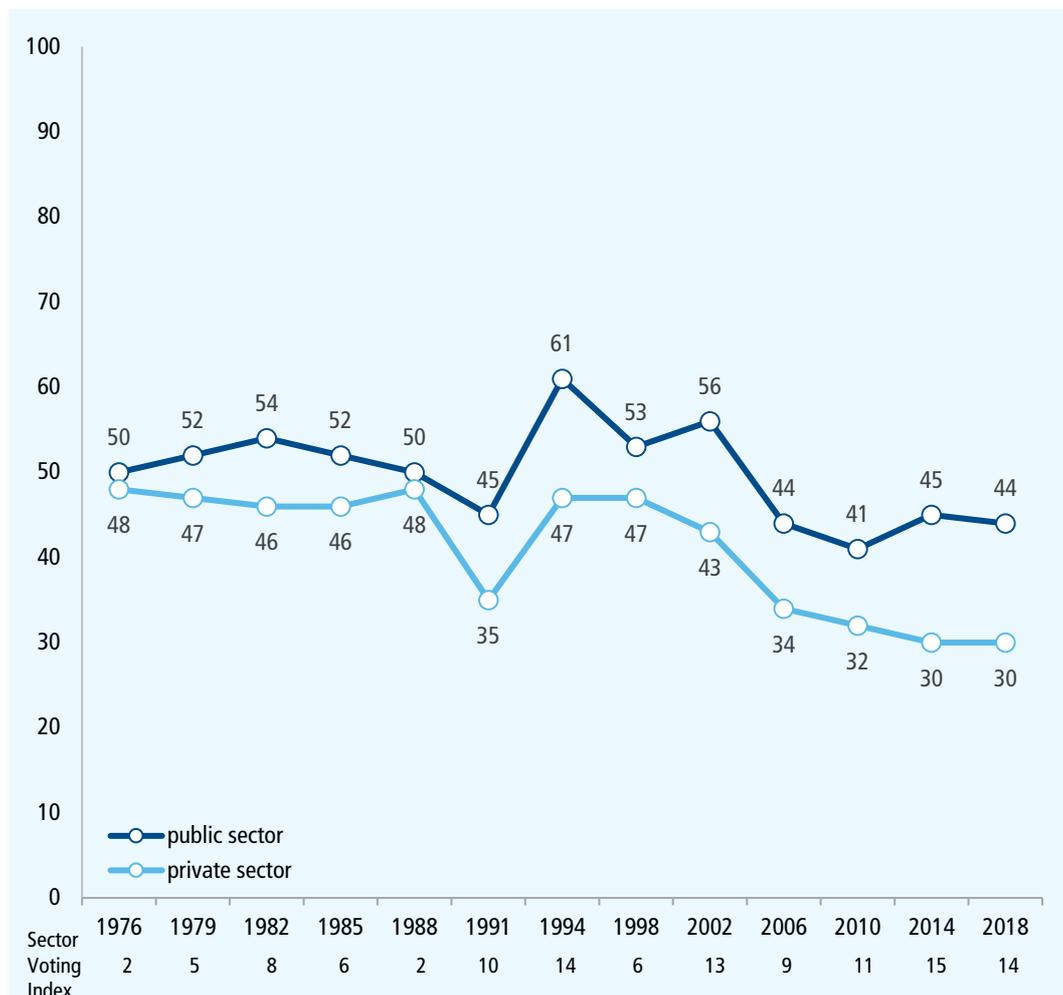


**Comment:** The Class Voting Index (Alford's index) is defined as the percentage voting socialist (Left or Soc.Dem) among workers minus the percentage voting socialist in the middle class. The results have been corrected for the oversampling of Social Democratic voters in the earlier election studies. The percentage base is all party voters. Students are excluded from the analysis. Version 1 is based on a coding of occupational status from open-ended responses and version 2 is based on respondents' self-classification into pre-formulated categories of occupation. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Sector Voting

Figure 35 Sector Voting in Swedish Elections 1976–2018. Percentage Voting Socialist (Left and Soc.Dem.) among Voters in the Public and the Private Sector (per cent)



**Comment:** The Sector Voting Index is modelled after Alford's Class Voting Index and show the percentage voting socialist (Left or Soc.Dem.) in the public sector minus the percentage voting socialist in the private sector. Public-Private sector is determined by an interview question asking voters to indicate which sector they belong to. The analysis only includes gainfully employed people. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Least Liked Party

Table 6 Least Liked Party 1970–2018 (per cent)

party	1970	1973	1976	1979	1991	2018
Left party	38	38	51	41	26	13
Social Democrats	3	4	4	9	7	3
Green party	-	-	-	-	8	10
Centre party	0	1	3	5	2	2
Liberal party	2	7	3	2	3	0
Christian Democrats	4	4	2	2	4	2
Conservative party	39	29	35	39	17	3
New Democracy	-	-	-	-	34	-
Sweden Democrats	-	-	-	-	-	54

**Comment:** Least liked party among the respondents who answered that they consider one party to be least liked. The question asked was: "Which party do you like the least?" ("Vilket parti tycker du sämst om?"). Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Gender Voting

Table 7 Difference in Party Choice Between Women and Men 1948–2018  
(percentage point difference)

party	1948	1952	1956	1960	1964	1968	1970	1973	1976	1979	1982
Left party	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	3	0	1	2
Social Democrats	3	2	1	-2	3	0	0	-1	1	-1	-2
Green party	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-1
Centre party	1	4	3	1	4	3	1	0	-2	-4	0
Liberal party	-4	-8	-3	-1	-4	-2	-2	-2	0	0	-2
Christian Democrats	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	-1	-1	-1
Conservative party	-2	0	-2	0	-4	-2	0	0	1	4	4
New Democracy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sweden Democrats	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Feminist initiative	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
mean absolute difference per party	2,4	3,2	2,0	1,2	2,7	1,3	0,8	1,0	0,8	1,8	1,7

party	1985	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010	2014	2018
Left party	1	-1	0	-2	-5	-3	-1	1	0	-2
Social Democrats	-5	-3	0	3	5	3	1	-4	-2	-4
Green party	0	0	-3	-2	-2	-2	-4	-3	-3	-2
Centre party	1	1	-2	-3	0	1	0	-4	-3	-3
Liberal party	-3	0	-2	-2	-2	0	1	-1	0	1
Christian Democrats	-1	-2	-2	-1	-4	-2	-2	-1	-1	-1
Conservative party	7	5	5	7	7	3	3	8	6	4
New Democracy	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sweden Democrats	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	5	8
Feminist initiative	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-3	0
mean absolute difference per party	2,6	1,7	2,1	2,6	3,6	2,0	1,6	3,1	2,6	2,8

**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. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Age Voting

Table 8 In Which Age Group Does the Parties Have Their Strongest Support 1948–2018?

Election year	party								
	Left	Soc. Dem	Green	C	Lib.	Ch. Dem	Con.	Swe.Dem	FI
1948	young	no diff	-	old	young	-	old	-	-
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	young	old	no diff	old	young	-	-
1988	young	old	middle age	old	young	old	young	-	-
1991	middle age	old	young	old	young	old	young	-	-
1994	young	old	young	old	no diff	no diff	old	-	-
1998	young	old	young	old	young	old	young	-	-
2002	young	middle/old	young	old	young	old	no diff	-	-
2006	young/middle	old	young	old	no diff	old	no diff	young	-
2010	young/middle	old	young	old	old	old	middle age	young	-
2014	no diff	old	young	no diff	no diff	old	middle age	old	young
2018	young	old	young	young	no diff	no diff	no diff	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. Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Vote Choice - Self-Report 1968-2018

Table 9 Voters' Self-Reported Reasons for the Choice of Party. Percent Saying "One of the most important reasons" 1988-2018

Theoretical Explanation	Reason to Vote	1988	1994	2002	2006	2010	2014	2018
Prospective Voting	The party has a good program for the future	-	-	34	46	49	51	54
Ideological Voting	The party has a good political ideology	41	41	45	49	49	54	53
Competence Voting	The party has competent persons that can run the country	30	31	31	42	51	54	48
Issue voting	The party has a good policy on issues that I think is important	-	-	51	-	58	-	44
Campaign Agenda Voting	The party has good policies on many of the issues in recent public debates	33	32	34	37	39	41	-
Government voting	The party is needed to make it possible to form my favourite government	-	-	-	-	-	42	35
Party Leader Voting	The party has a good party leader	23	20	24	23	27	28	26
Campaign Performance Voting	The party has been convincing during the election campaign	-	-	-	-	18	17	24
Retrospective Voting	The party has done a good job in recent years	-	-	25	22	36	27	22
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	19
Ego Interest Voting	The policy of the party is favourable to me personally	-	-	-	-	-	13	18
Negative Voting	The party was the least bad alternative	-	-	-	-	-	-	18
Habitual Voting	I always vote for the party	27	21	16	14	14	10	17
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	10
Candidate Voting	The party has good Riksdag candidates on the ballot in my constituency	-	9	10	10	10	12	9
Tactical Voting	The party is a small party that risks falling under the four percent threshold to the Riksdag	-	-	6	5	9	8	5
Social Influence Voting	People around me sympathize with the party	-	-	-	-	3	-	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". Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

## Vote Choice - Self-Report Among Different Party Voters 2018

Table 10 Voters' Self-Reported Reasons for the Choice of Party. Percent Saying "One of the most important reasons" among Party Voters 2018

Theoretical Explanation	Reason to Vote	Left	Soc.Dem	Green	C	Lib.	Ch.Dem	Con.	Swe.Dem	FI
Prospective Voting	The party has a good program for the future	66	50	68	44	48	49	54	61	75
Ideological Voting	The party has a good political ideology	69	60	76	45	53	53	44	40	78
Competence Voting	The party has competent persons that can run the country	39	50	33	50	44	53	59	35	50
Issue voting	The party has a good policy on issues that I think is important	58	38	46	41	37	49	42	59	48
Government voting	The party is needed to make it possible to form my favourite government	32	38	38	19	21	39	37	47	33
Party Leader Voting	The party has a good party leader	17	20	7	26	16	32	29	43	29
Campaign Performance Voting	The party has been convincing during the election campaign	31	19	8	18	8	34	24	46	33
Retrospective Voting	The party has done a good job in recent years	25	29	10	17	10	13	20	33	26
Instrumental Voting	The party is a big party and therefore it has greater possibilities than a smaller party to implement its policies	3	34	2	6	3	3	26	24	11
Ego Interest Voting	The policy of the party is favourable to me personally	12	17	9	13	10	17	22	28	17
Negative Voting	The party was the least bad alternative	17	17	17	15	10	15	14	33	33
Habitual Voting	I always vote for the party	16	24	3	9	5	10	14	26	9
Party Identification Voting	I feel like a supporter of the party	11	14	7	6	5	6	7	13	9
Candidate Voting	The party has good Riksdag candidates on the ballot in my constituency	6	11	3	6	5	9	6	12	11
Tactical Voting	The party is a small party that risks falling under the four percent threshold to the Riksdag	3	2	20	2	5	18	3	3	32
Social Influence Voting	People around me sympathize with the party	1	4	1	1	2	3	2	9	6

**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". Please note: The mode changed in 2018 from face-to-face to mail/web-questionnaires.

**Source:** The Swedish National Election Studies

**The Swedish National Election Studies Program was established in 1954 by Jörgen Westerståhl and Bo Särilvik and is today a high profile network of researchers at the Department of Political Science in Gothenburg. The Program serve as a collaborative platform for Swedish and international scholars interested in studies of electoral democracy, representative democracy, opinion formation, and voting behavior.**

**The aim of our research is among others to explain why people vote as they do and why an election ends in a particular way. We track and follow trends in the Swedish electoral democracy and make comparisons with other countries.**

**Professor Henrik Oscarsson is the director of the Swedish Election Studies Program.**

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