



The Swedish National  
Election Studies

# Report 2018:1

Swedish Voting Behavior  
1956–2014

Henrik Oscarsson  
Sören Holmberg

Swedish National Election Studies

Department of Political Science  
University of Gothenburg

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[www.valforskning.pol.gu.se](http://www.valforskning.pol.gu.se)



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### **Valforskningsprogrammets rapportserie**

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 kunskapsförsörjningen till samhället. 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 (2018) Swedish Voting Behavior. Swedish National Election Studies, working paper series. Report 2018:1. University of Gothenburg, Department of Political Science.

# Report 2018:1

## Swedish Voting Behavior

1956–2014

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**Henrik Oscarsson**  
Department of Political Science  
University of Gothenburg

**Sören Holmberg**  
Department of Political Science  
University of Gothenburg

### Abstract

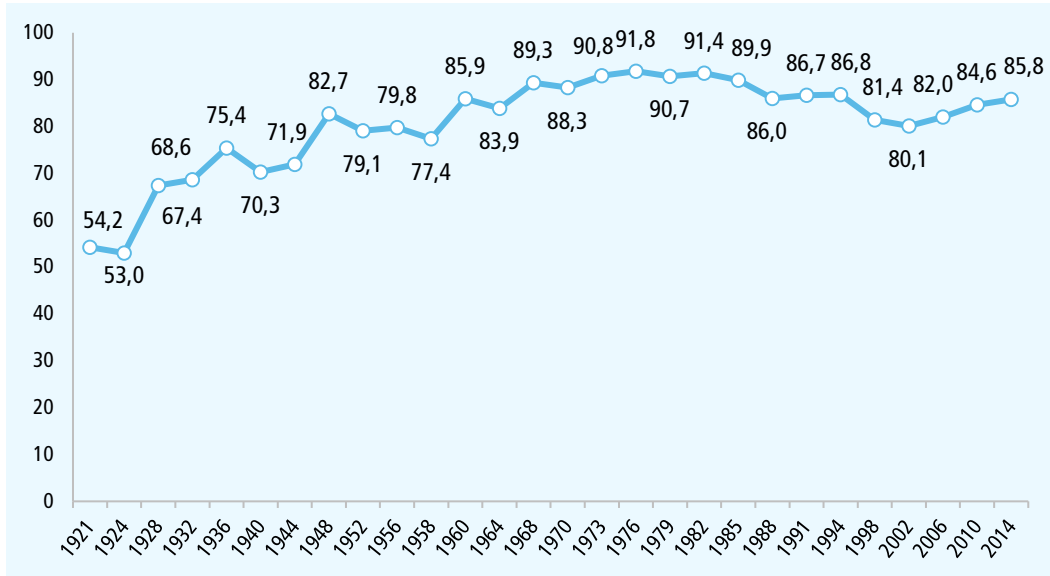
The results presented in the following set of figures and tables stem from the Swedish National Election Studies Program (SNES). The Program was initiated by Jörgen Westerståhl and Bo Särilvik in the mid 1950s, shortly after the Michigan Election Studies Project began. The first studies were done in 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 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 3 500 – 4 000. 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 56 per cent.

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 – 2014).

## Turnout

Figure 1 Turnout in Swedish Riksdag Elections 1921–2014 (per cent)



Comment: The results show turnout among registered voters (= Swedish citizens of voting age; since 1976 18 years and older).

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Election Results

Table 1 Swedish Election Results 1976–2014 (per cent)

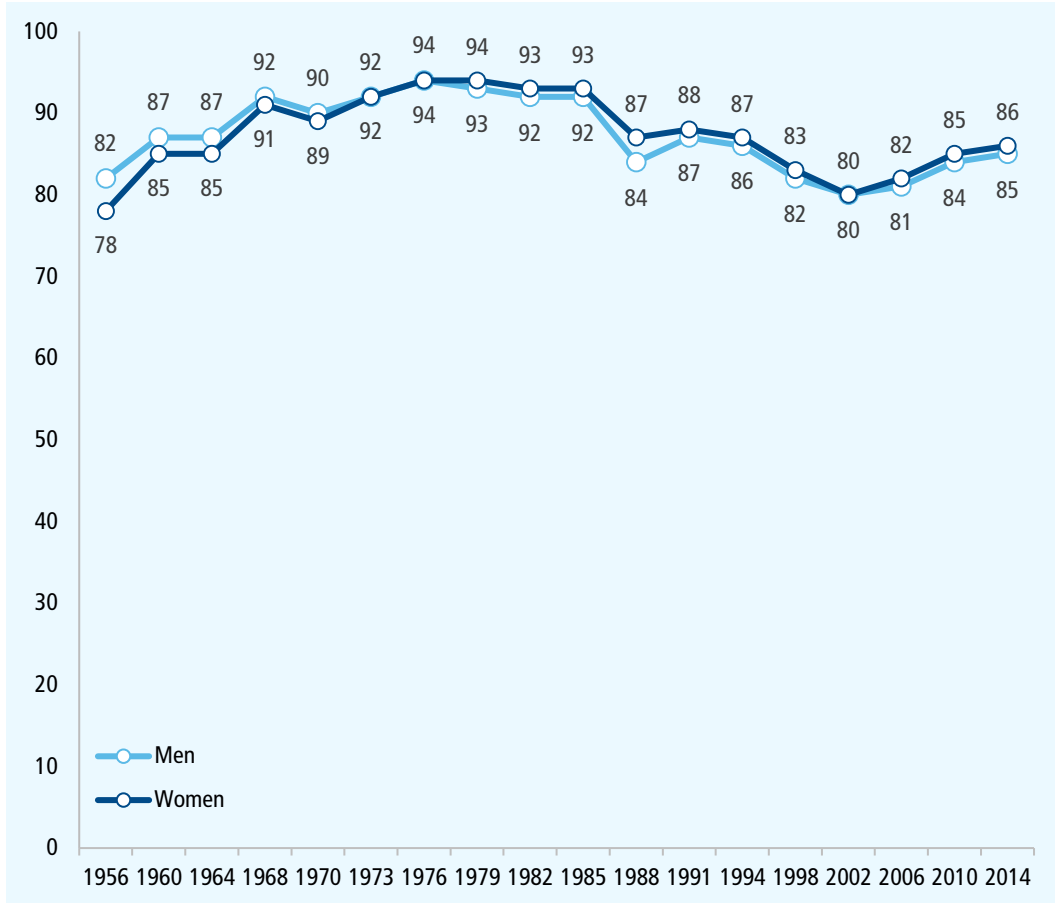
party	1976	1979	1982	1985	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010	2014
Left party (L)	4,8	5,6	5,6	5,4	5,9	4,5	6,2	12,0	8,4	5,9	5,6	5,7
Social Democratic party (Soc. Dem)	42,7	43,2	45,6	44,7	43,2	37,7	45,2	36,4	39,9	35,0	30,7	31,0
Swedish Green party (SGP)	-	-	1,6	1,5	5,5	3,4	5,0	4,5	4,6	5,2	7,3	6,9
Centre party (C)	24,1	18,1	15,5	10,1	11,3	8,5	7,7	5,1	6,2	7,9	6,6	6,1
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
Christian Democrats (Christ. 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
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
New Democracy (ND)	-	-	-	-	-	6,7	1,2	-	-	-	-	-
Sweden Democrats (Swe. Dem)	-	-	-	-	0,0	0,1	0,3	0,4	1,4	2,9	5,7	12,9
Feminist initiative (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	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
Turnout	91,8	90,7	91,4	89,9	86	86,7	86,8	81,4	80,1	82	84,6	85,8

Comment: Parliamentary elections only; official results.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Turnout

Figure 2 Turnout in Swedish Riksdag Elections among Women and Men  
1956–2014 (per cent)

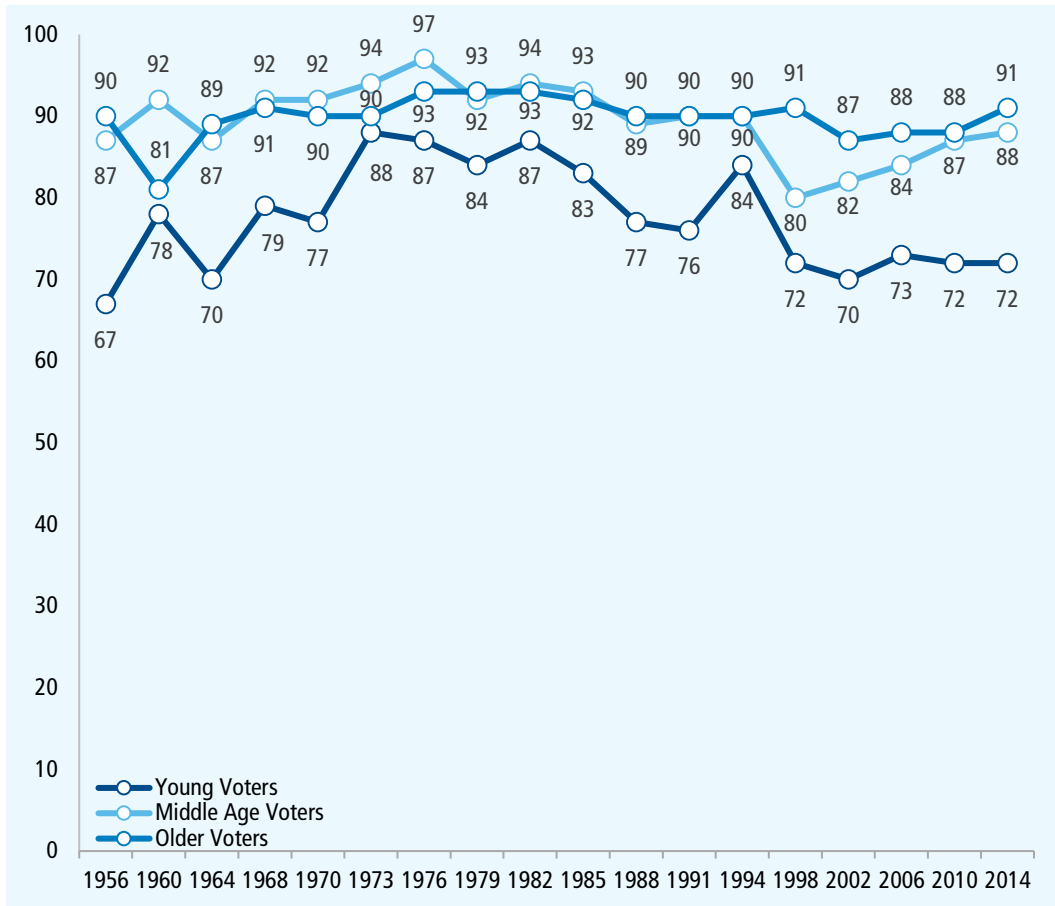


Comment: The turnout information is checked (validated) against official records. Data from Statistics Sweden and their special turnout study.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Turnout

Figure 3 Turnout in Swedish Riksdag Elections among Young, Middle Age and Older voters 1956–2014 (per cent)

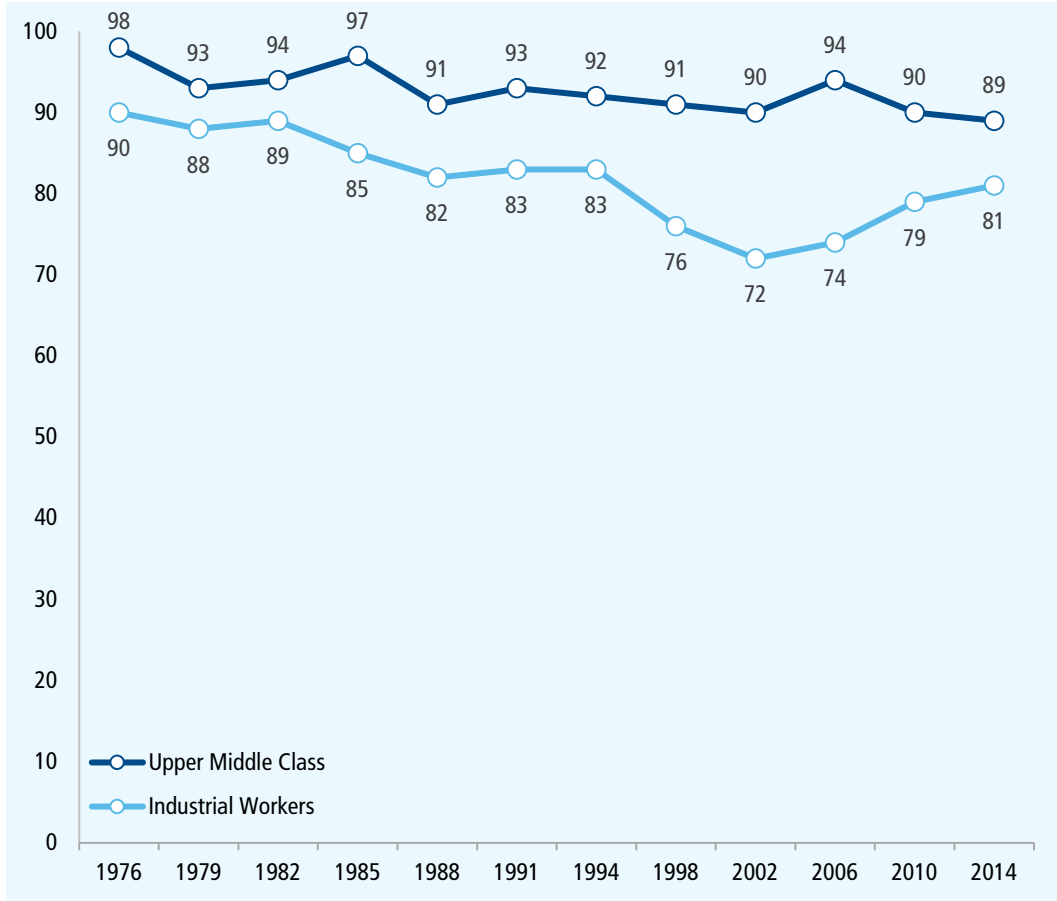


Comment: The turnout information is checked (validated) against official records. Data from Swedish National Election Studies. Young first-time voters were 21-25 years old 1956-1968, 19-22 1970-1973 and 18-21 since 1976. Middle age voters are 41-50 years old while older voters are 61-70 years old.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Turnout

Figure 4 Turnout in Swedish Riksdag Elections among Industrial Workers and Upper Middle Class White Collar Workers 1976–2014 (per cent)



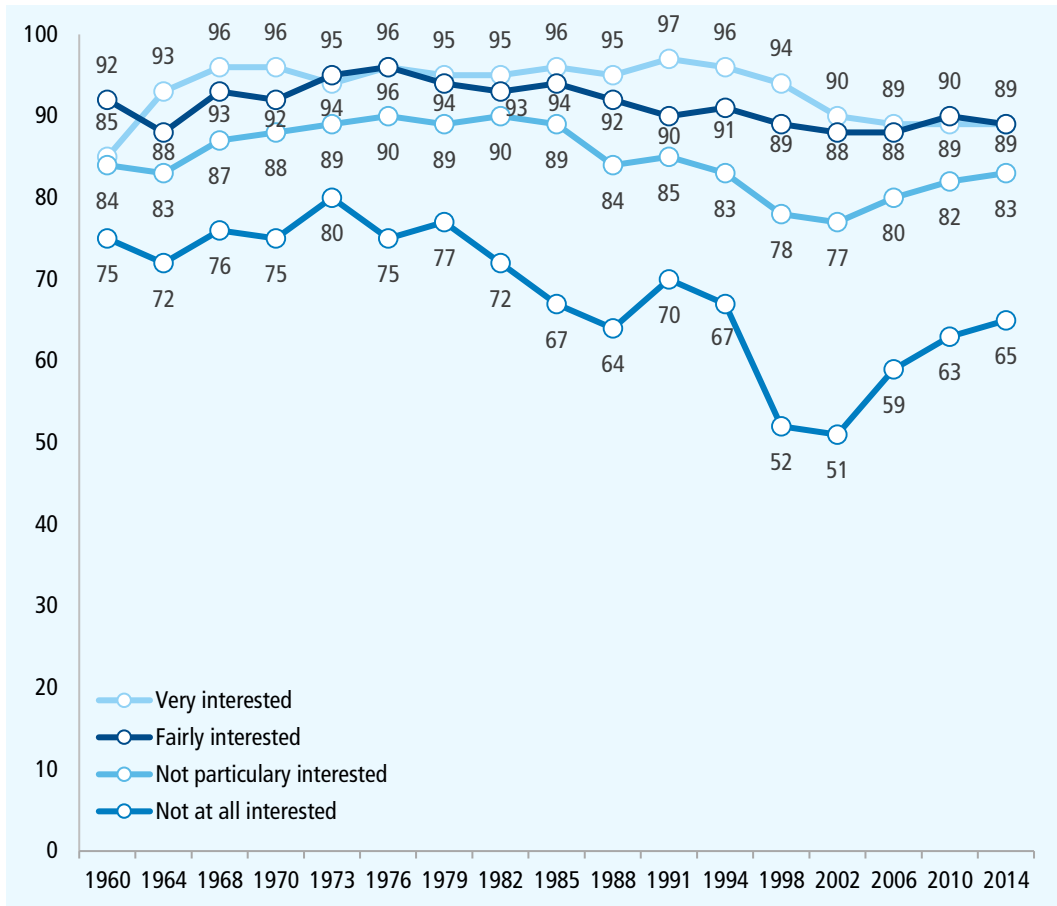
Comment: The turnout information is checked (validated) against official records. Data from Swedish National Election Studies. Responsible for the analysis of turnout is Per Hedberg.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program



## Turnout

Figure 5 Turnout in Swedish Riksdag Elections among Voters with Different Degrees of Political Interest 1960–2014 (per cent)

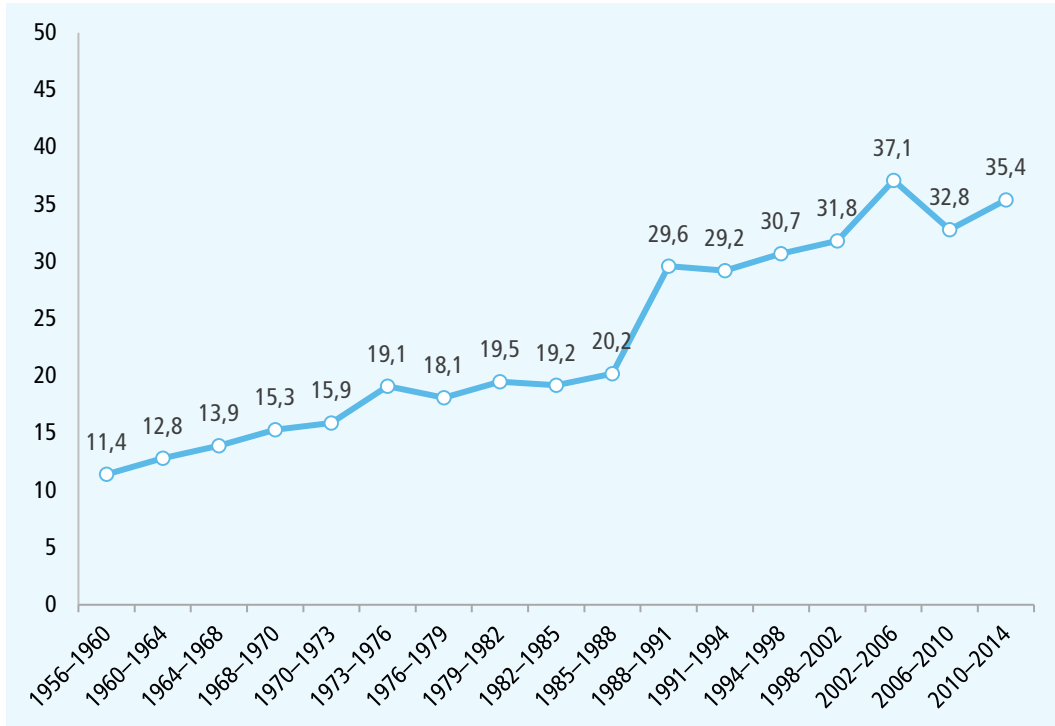


Comment: The turnout information is checked (validated) against official records. The result for Not at all interested respondents was 87 percent in 1982; in all likelihood a too high estimate due to random error. Data from Swedish National Election Studies. Responsible for the analysis of turnout is Per Hedberg.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Voter Volatility

Figure 6 Party Switchers in Swedish Elections 1960-2014 (per cent)

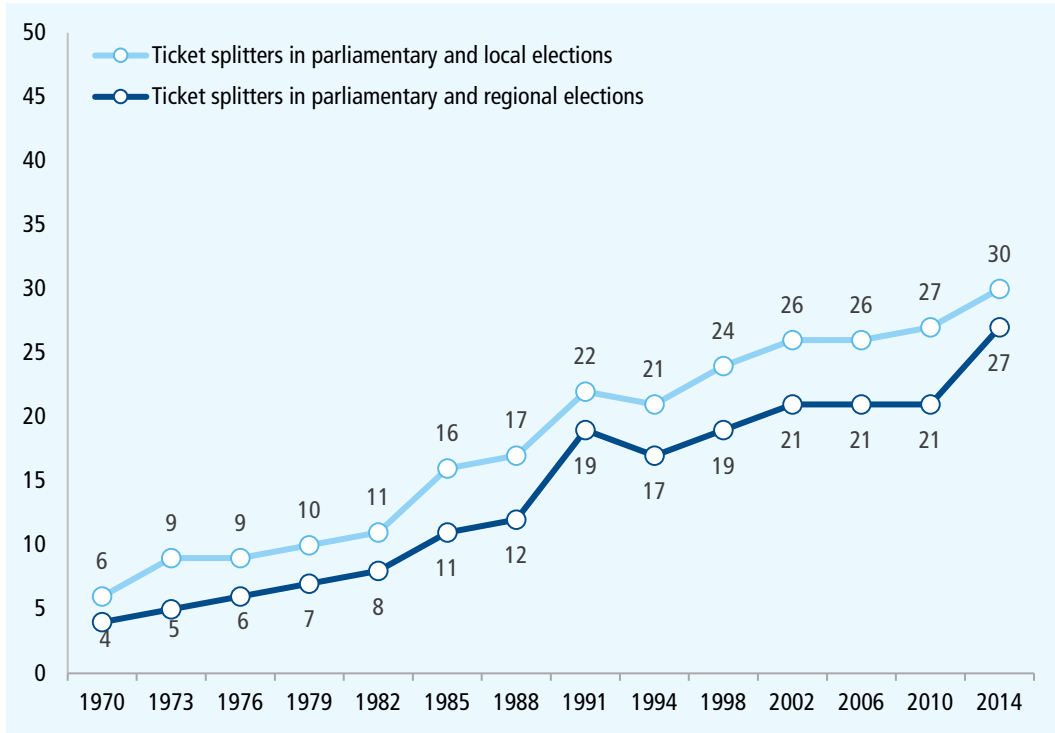


Comment: At every election, the results show the proportion party switchers among voters participating in that and the immediately preceding election. Results for the years 1960-1968 and 1973 are based entirely on recall data while results for 1970 and for the years 1976-2006 are based in part on data from panel studies.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Voter Volatility

Figure 7 Ticket Splitting in Swedish Elections 1970-2014 (per cent)

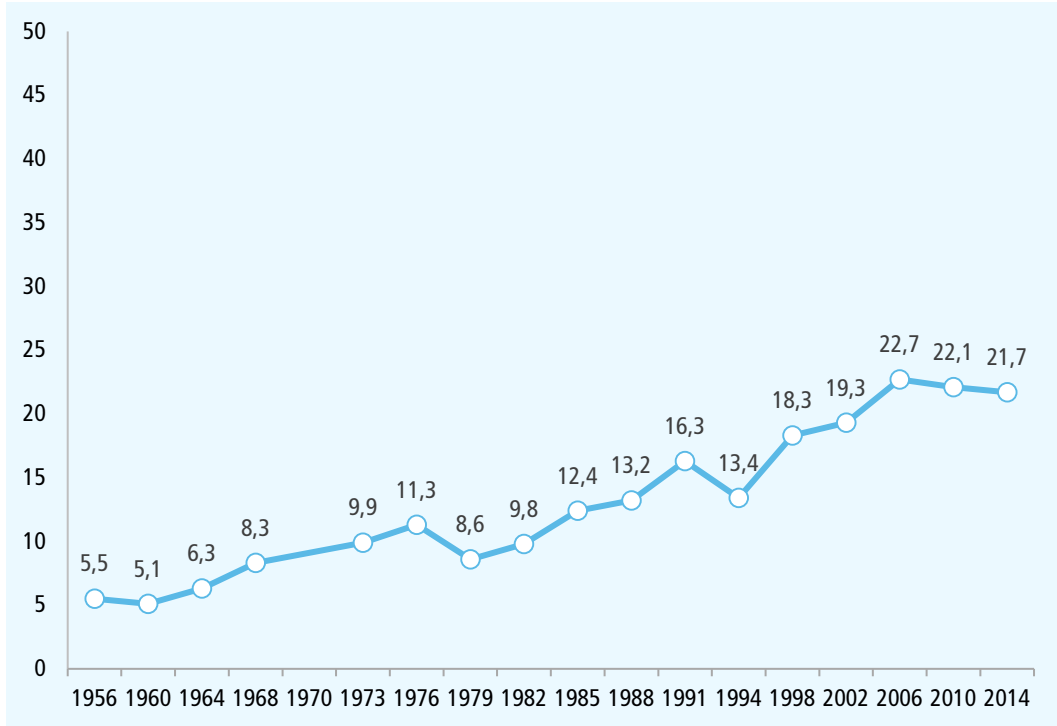


Comment: The percentage base is defined as voters participating in parliamentary and local elections (kommun) and in parliamentary and regional elections (landsting), respectively.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Voter Volatility

Figure 8 Party Switchers during Election Campaigns 1956–2014 – from Best Party Pre-election to Party Choice Post-election (per cent)

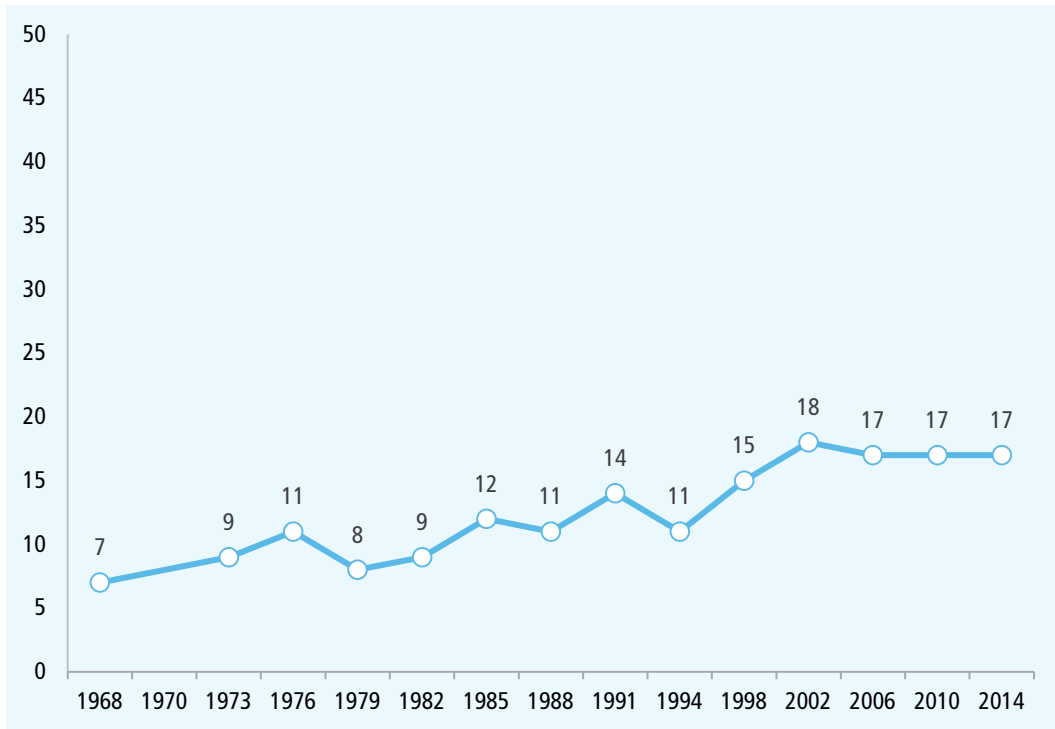


Comment: The results are based on panel data consisting of party sympathy data ("best party") from pre-election face-to-face interviews and information about party choice in post-election mail questionnaires. No election campaign panel study was performed in 1970. The numbers of respondents vary around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

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Voter Volatility

Figure 9 Party Switchers during Election Campaigns – from Vote Intention Pre-election to Party Choice Post-election 1968–2014 (per cent)

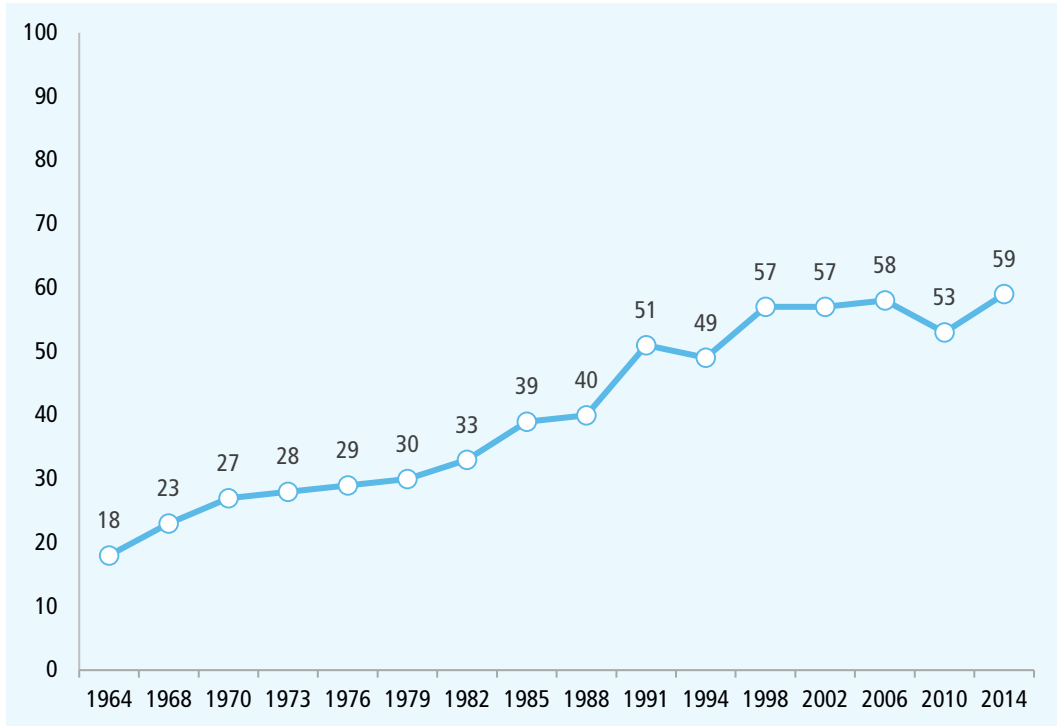


Comment: The results are based on panel data consisting of voting intention data from pre-election face-to-face interviews and information about party choice in post-election mail questionnaires. Respondents without a specific vote intention have been assigned a party based on a question about "best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

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Time of Voting Decision

Figure 10 Party Choice Decided during the Election Campaign 1964–2014 (per cent)

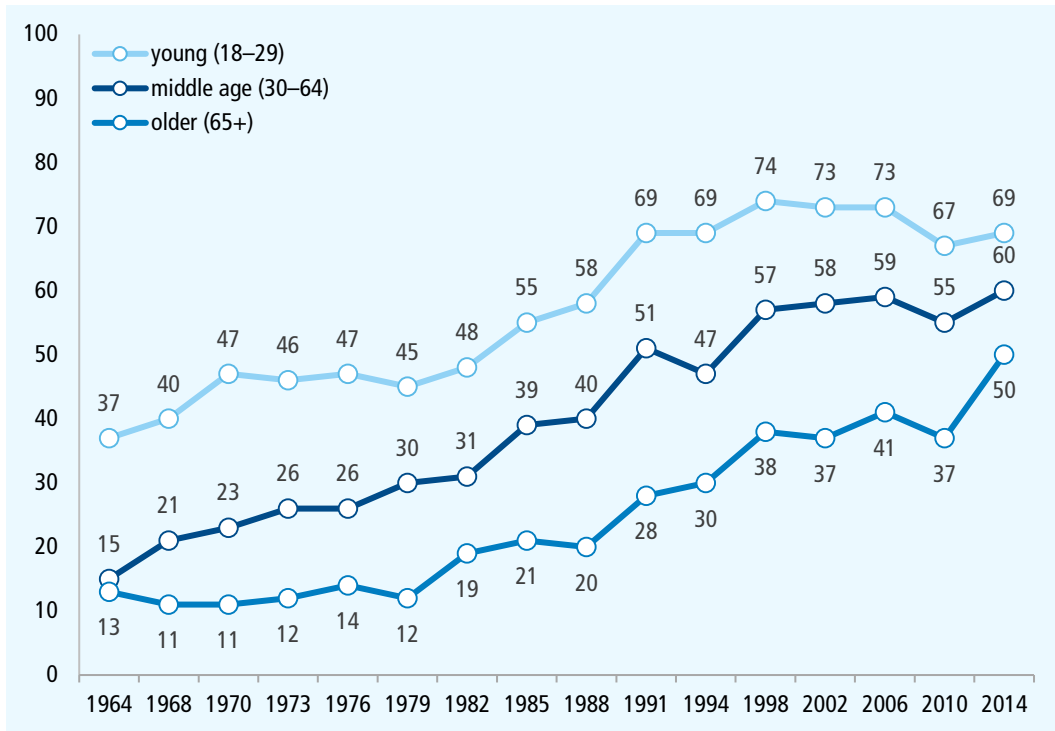


Comment: The results are based on a question with the following wording: "When did you decide which party to vote for in the election this year? Was it during the last week before the election, earlier during autumn or summer or did you know all along how you were going to vote?" The two first response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

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Time of Voting Decision

Figure 11 Party Choice Decided during the Election Campaign among Young and Older Voters 1964–2014 (per cent)

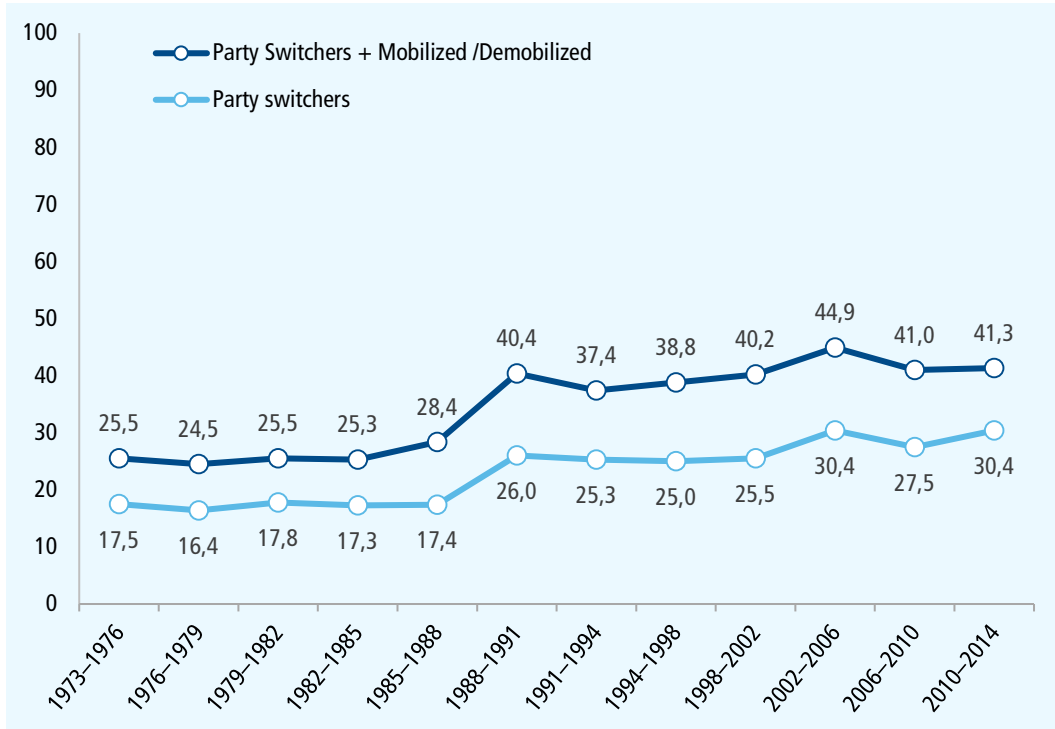


Comment: The results are based on a question with the following wording: "When did you decide which party to vote for in the election this year? Was it during the last week before the election, earlier during autumn or summer or did you know all along how you were going to vote?" The two first response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

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Voter Volatility

Figure 12 Total Voter Volatility in the Swedish Electorate: Proportion of Party Switchers and Proportion of Mobilized and Demobilized Citizens 1976–2014 (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.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program



## Second Best Party

Table 2 Swedish Voters' Second Best Party 1956–2014 (per cent)

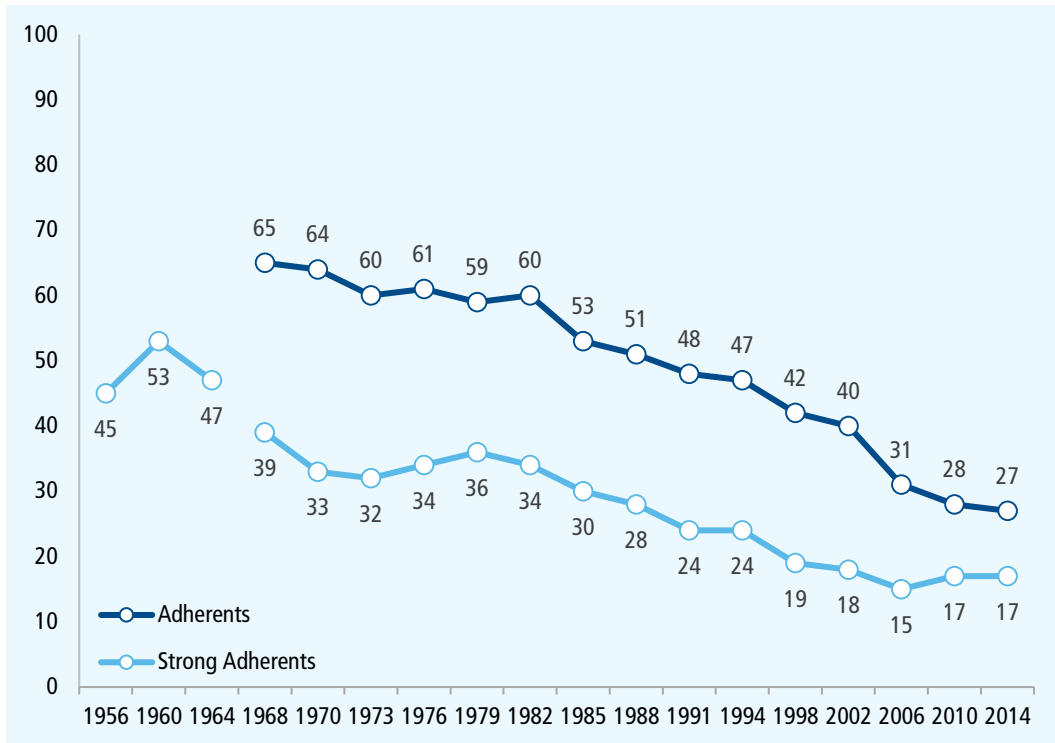
party	1956	1964	1968	1970	1973	1976	1979	1982	1985	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010	2014
L	6	9	8	10	14	15	19	20	18	16	12	16	21	20	14	14	15
Soc. Dem	20	12	10	13	14	11	11	9	10	12	9	13	14	15	13	13	13
SGP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	4	11	4	13	10	9	12	20	19
C	19	41	50	49	44	30	22	32	18	21	16	14	11	9	12	8	12
Lib.	36	31	24	23	18	33	34	20	35	28	29	24	14	23	21	19	16
Christ. Dem	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	3	11	7	18	12	10	7	6
Con.	19	7	7	4	9	10	12	14	13	10	11	11	12	11	17	18	11
ND	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	2	-	-	-	-	-
Swe. Dem	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	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).

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Party Identification

Figure 13 Degree of Party Identification 1956–2014. Percentage of Eligible Swedish Voters (per cent)

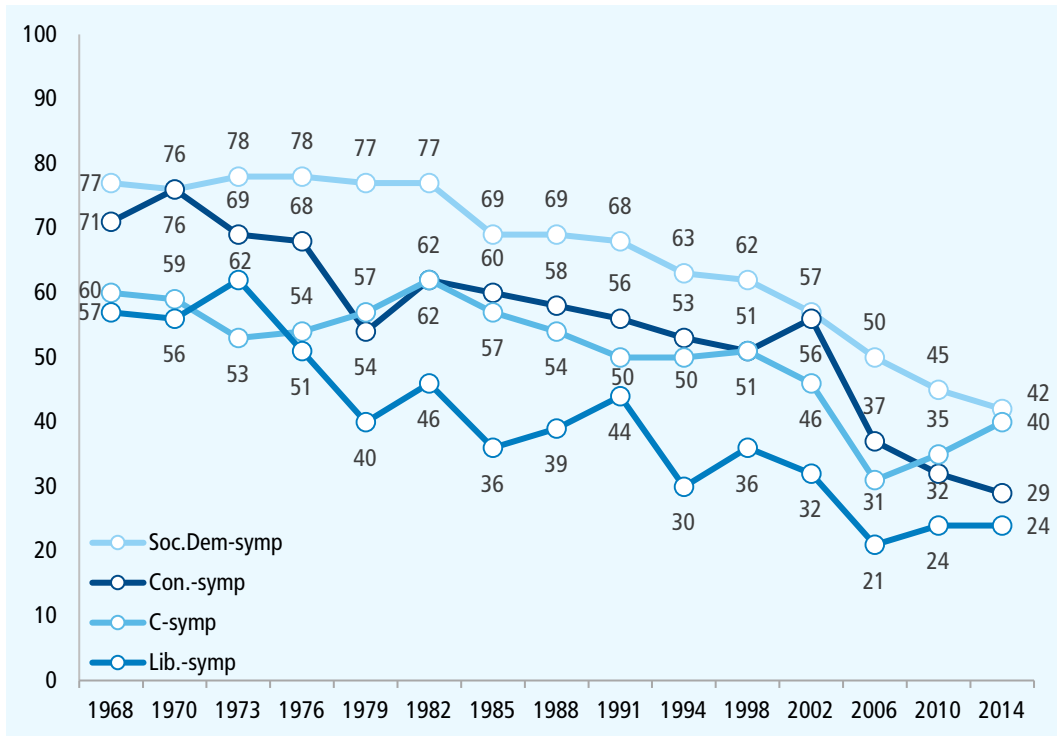


Comment: The first interview question asked is: "Many people consider themselves adherents of a specific party. But there are also many others who do not have any such attachment to any of the parties. Do you usually think of yourself as an adherent of any particular party, or do you have no such attachment 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.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Party Identification

Figure 14 Subjective Party Identifiers 1968–2014 among Sympathizers of Different Swedish Parties (per cent)

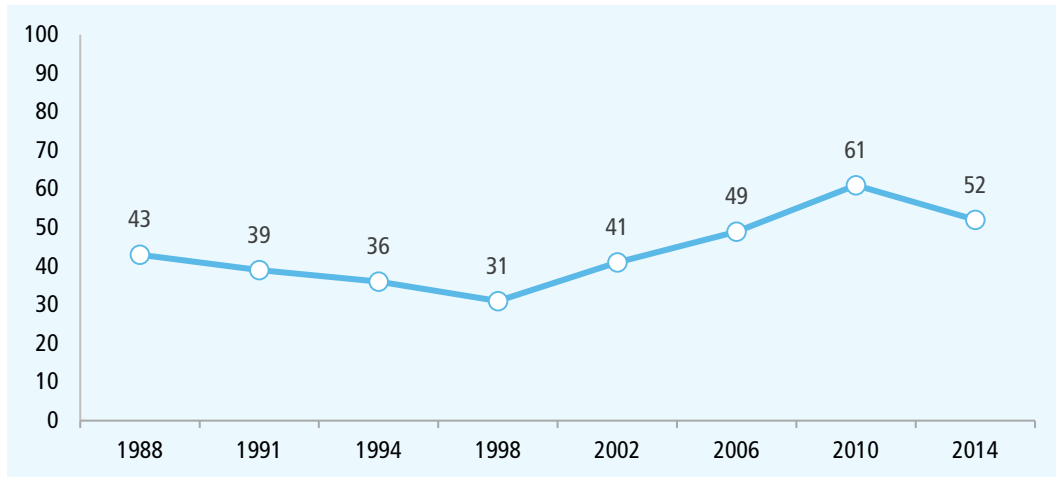


Comment: Persons who consider themselves identifiers of a party have been defined as subjective identifiers. The results for L-, Christ.Dem-, SGP-, Swe.Dem- and FI-sympathizers in 2014 are 35, 27, 22, 27 and 43 percent subjective identifiers, respectively.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Political Trust

Figure 15 Trust in Politicians 1988–2014 (per cent)

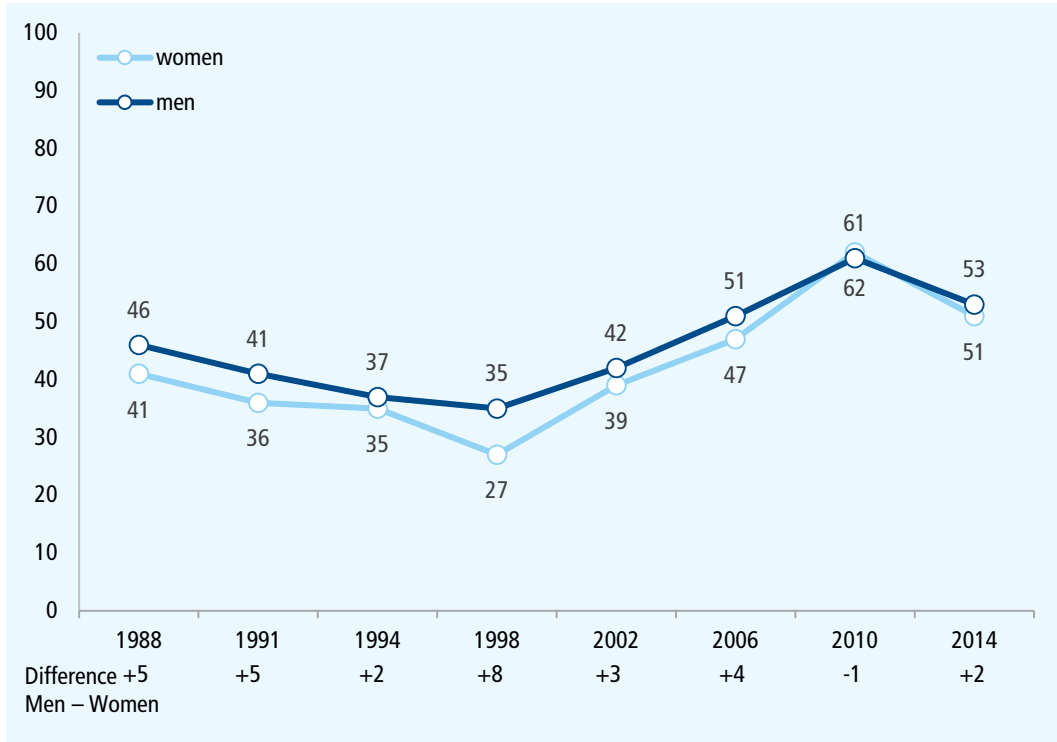


Comment: The interview question is phrased: "Generally speaking, how much confidence do you have in Swedish politicians – very high, fairly high, fairly low or very low". The results show the proportion of respondents answering very or fairly high confidence.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Political Trust

Figure 16 Political Trust and Gender 1988–2014 (per cent)

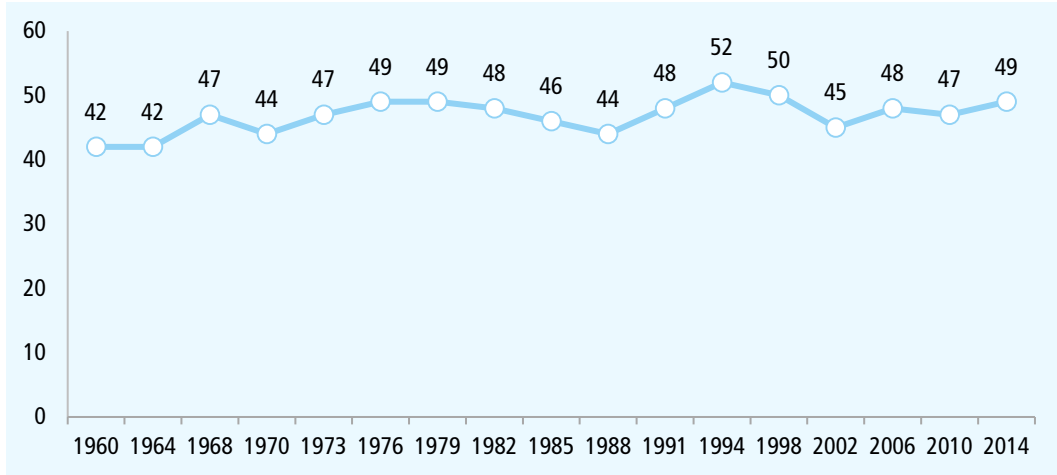


Comment: The interview question is phrased: "Generally speaking, how much confidence do you have in Swedish politicians – very high, fairly high, fairly low or very low". The results show the proportion of respondents answering very or fairly high confidence.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Political Trust

Figure 17 Political Interest. Proportion of Interviewed Persons Who Indicate That They Are Very Much Interested or Rather Interested in Politics 1960–2014 (per cent)

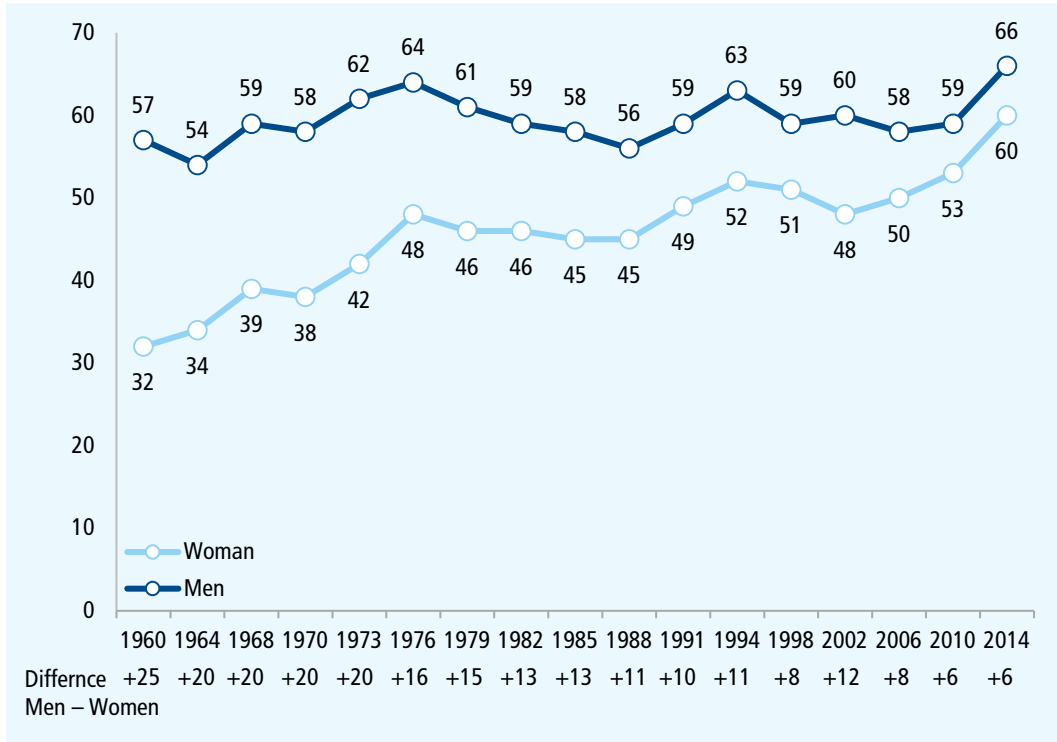


Comment: The results are weighted down for the declining response rate over the years.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Political Interest

Figure 18 Political Interest and Gender 1960–2014 (per cent)

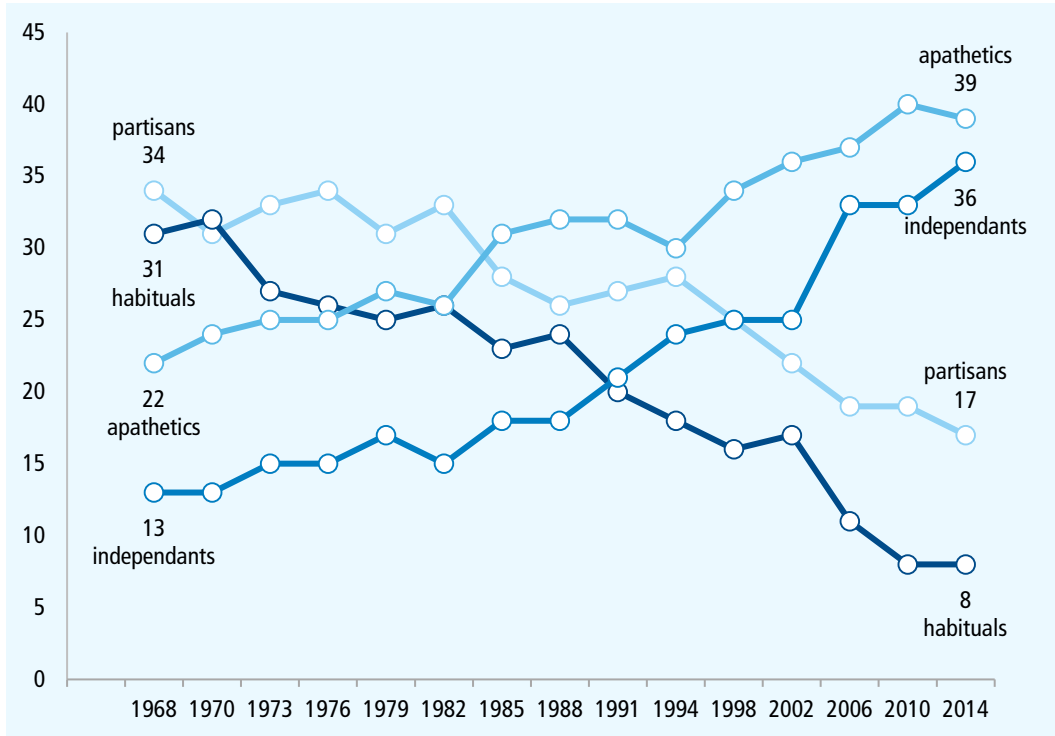


Comment: The results are not weighted down for the declining response rate over the years.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Political Interest and Partisanship Combined

Figure 19 Political Interest and Political Partisanship 1968–2014 (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, the results have been weighted for the declining response rate over the years.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program



## Important Issues

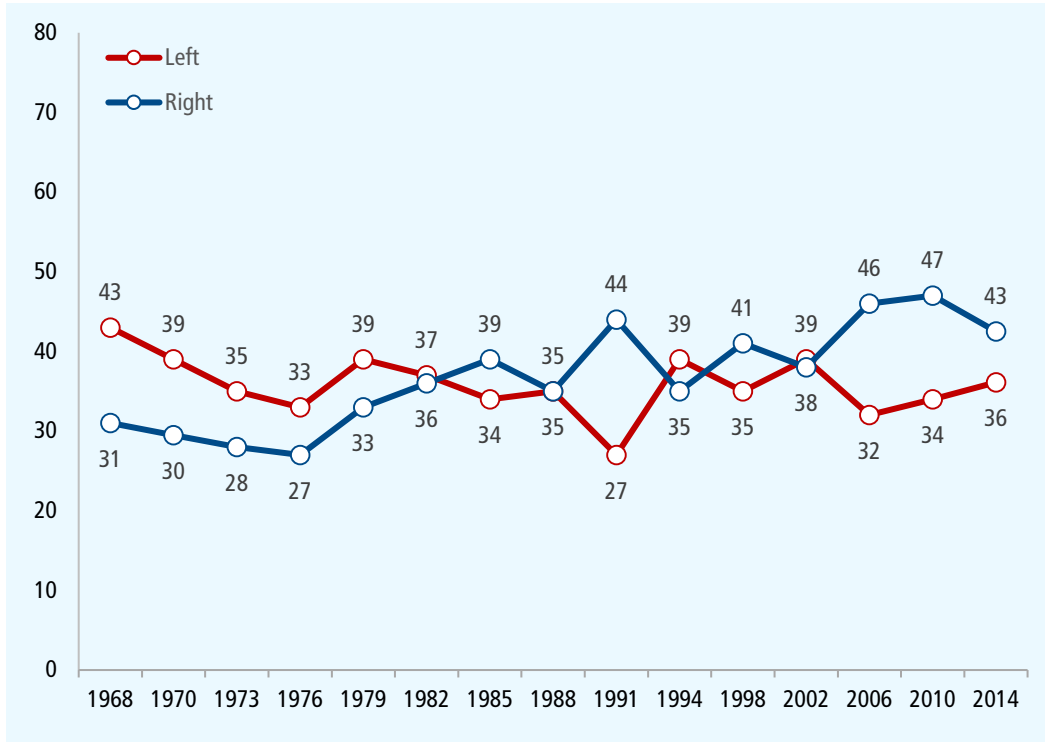
Table 3 Election Issues in Sweden 1979–2014. Percentage of Party Voters Who on an Open-Ended Question Mentioned the Various Issue Areas as Important for Their Party Choice (per cent)

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/EMU	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

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Ideological Left-Right Placement

Figure 20 Left-Right Opinion Among Swedes 1968–2014 (per cent)

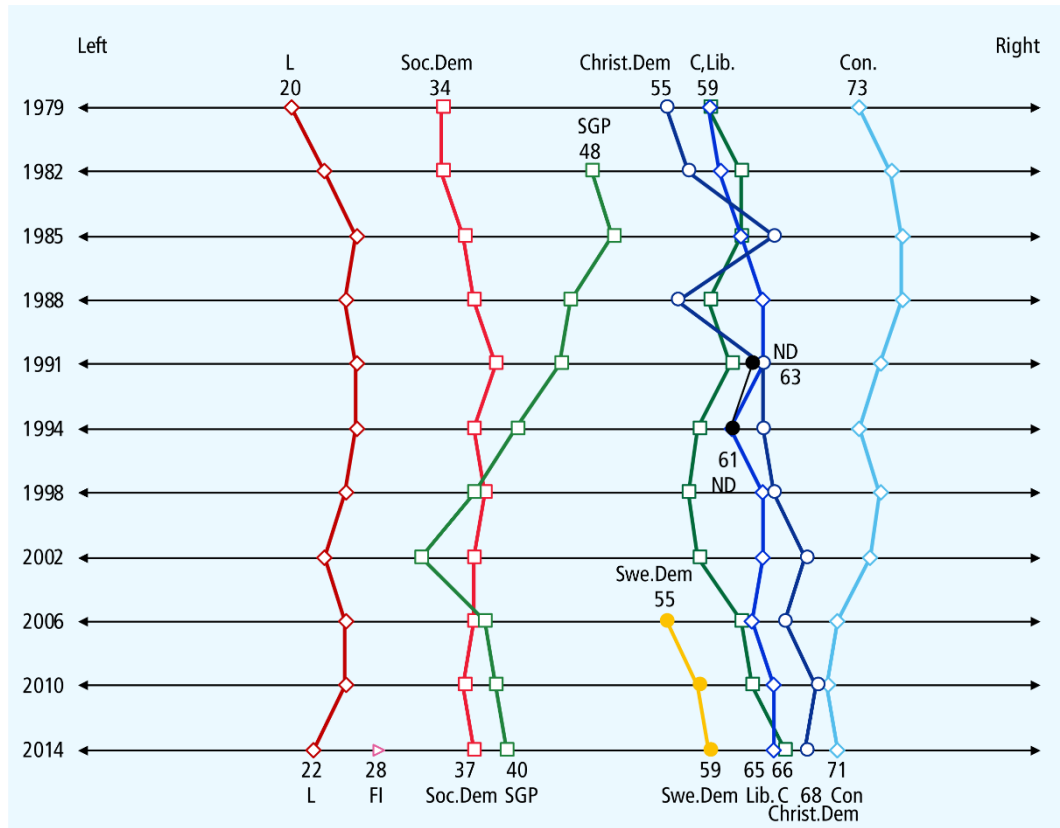


Comment: The left-right scale runs from 0 (far left) to 10 (far right) with a designated midpoint a 5 (neither left nor right). All respondents are included in the results. Persons answering don't know are excluded from the analysis, between 3-10 percent through the years.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Ideological Left-Right Placement

Figure 21 Average Left-Right Self Placements among Swedish Voters 1979–2014 (mean)

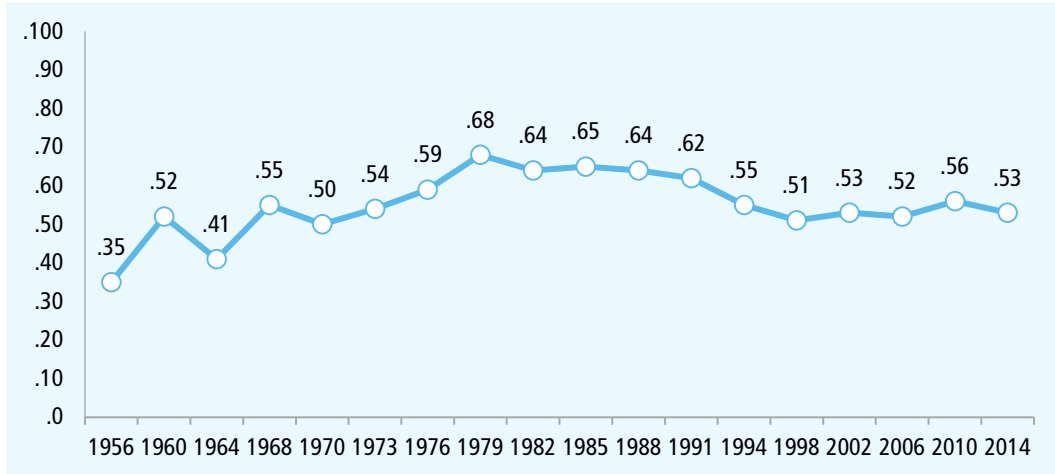


Comment: The left-right scale runs from 0 (far left) to 10 (far right) with a designated midpoint a 5 (neither left nor right). The mean for the entire electorate was 4,9 in 1979, 5,0 in 1982, 5,2 in 1985, 5,0 in 1988, 5,5 in 1991, 4,9 in 1994, 5,1 in 1998, 4,9 in 2002, 5,2 in 2006, 5,3 in 2010 and 5,1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

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Issue Voting

Figure 22 Ideological Left-Right Voting and Party Choice in Swedish Elections 1956–2014 (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.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Issue Voting

Table 4 Party Profiles 1982–2014. Percent Respondents Who Mentioned at Least One Election Issue for the Relevant Party (per cent)

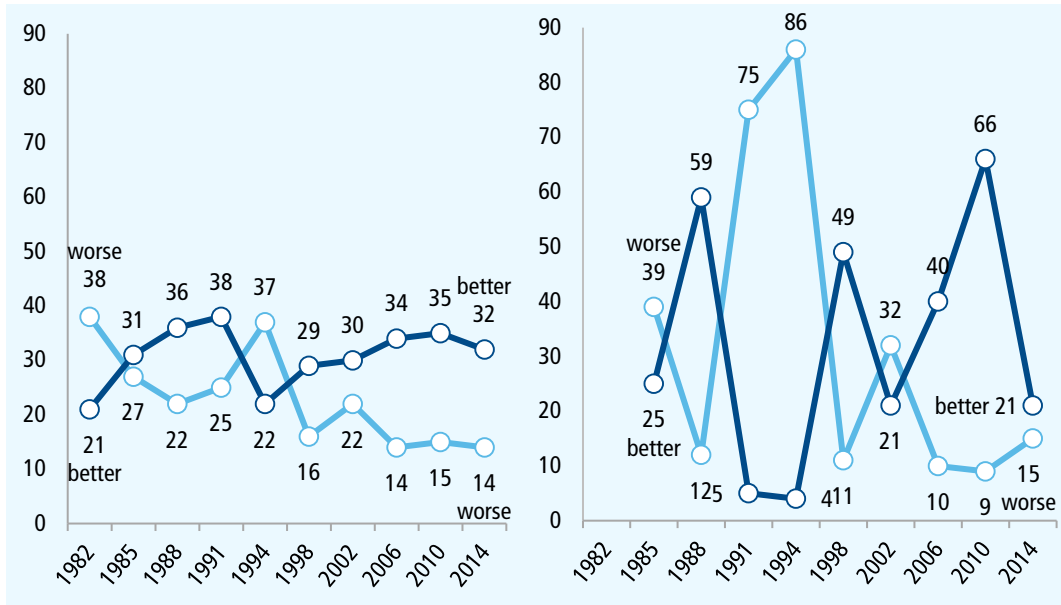
party	1982	1985	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010	2014
Left party	48	58	47	25	52	63	49	36	48	71
Social Democratic party	88	64	59	60	83	78	61	57	55	84
Swedish Green party	-	-	80	52	71	55	51	52	64	80
Centre party	58	46	54	42	47	34	35	51	42	60
Liberal party	45	62	59	54	46	43	68	63	59	77
Christian Democrats	-	29	-	58	49	61	54	51	40	51
Conservative party	68	70	54	67	66	72	70	78	66	75
Swedish Democrats	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70	69
New Democracy	-	-	-	59	38	-	-	-	-	-
mean five old parties	61	60	54	50	59	58	57	57	54	73
mean all parties	61	55	59	52	57	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).

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Retrospective Economic Voting

Figure 23 Retrospective Evaluations of the Development of the Swedish Economy and the Respondents' Personal Financial Situation and Respondents' Personal Financial Situation 1982–2014 (per cent)

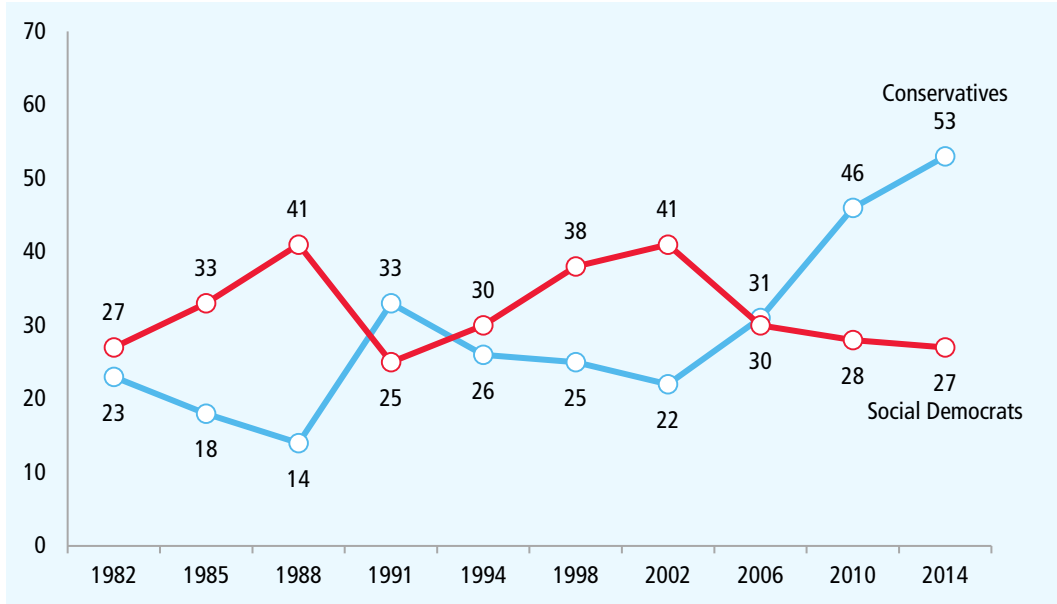


Comment: The interview question on the Swedish economy was not put in 1982. The time frame for the evaluations were "the two-three latest years" in the Election Studies in 1982-1994. Since 1998 the time frame has been changed to "the last twelve months". The interview questions also include a middle 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.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Issue Ownership

Figure 24 Issue Ownership – Parties Judged to Have the Best Policy for the Swedish Economy 1982–2014 (per cent)

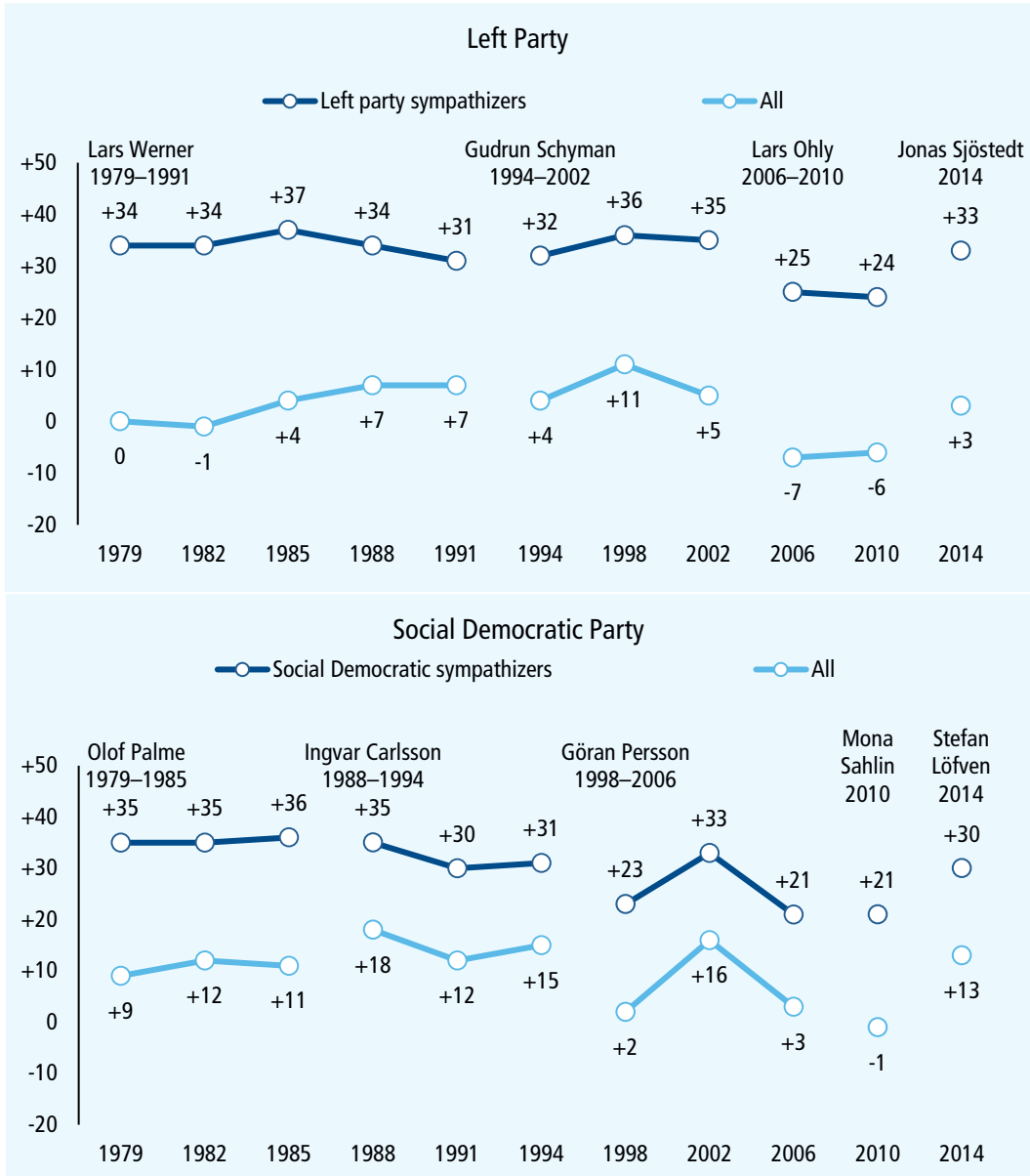


Comment: All respondents are included in the percentage base. The results are based on an open ended question where respondents could indicate which party or parties have a good or bad policy for the Swedish economy.

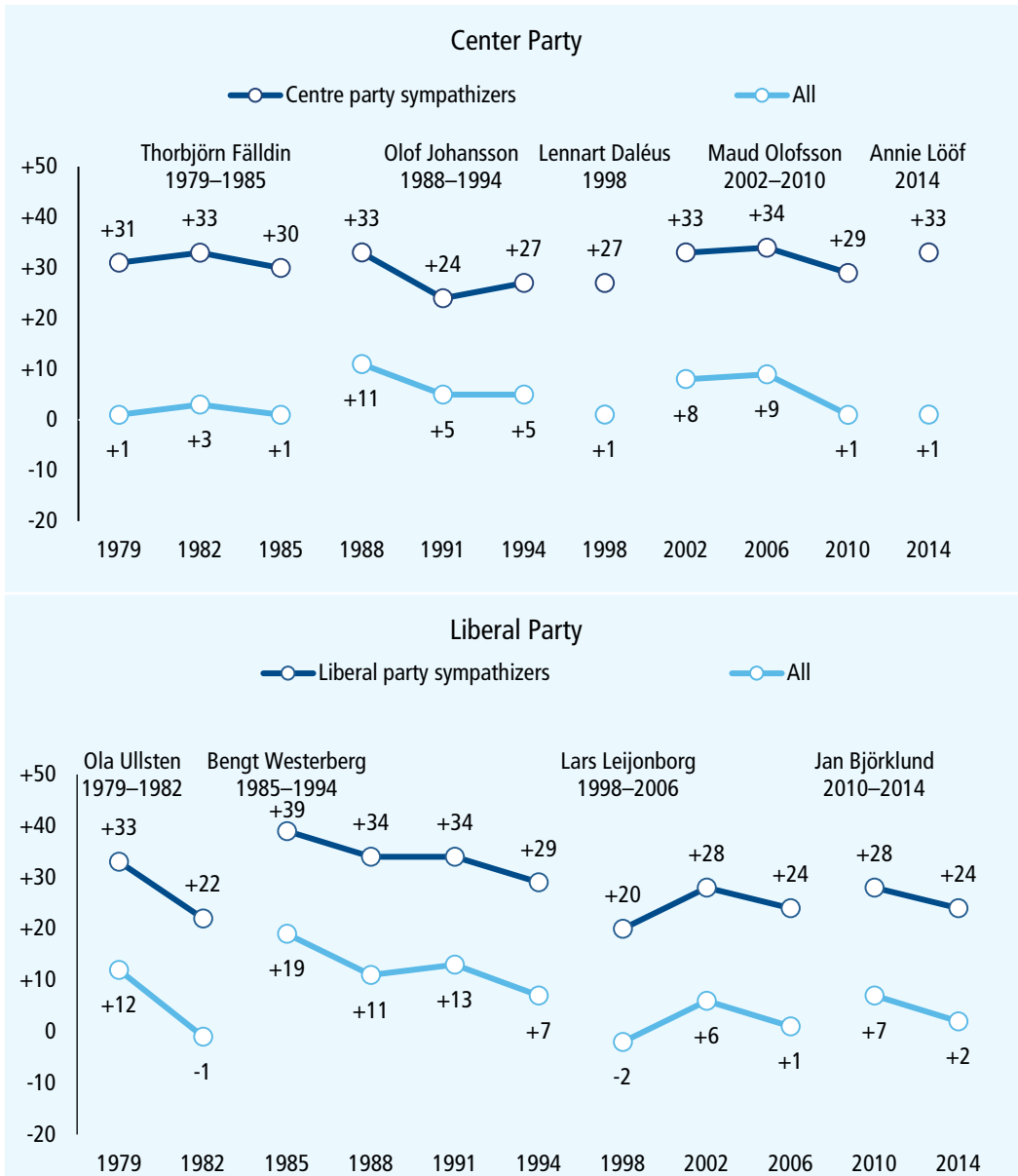
Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

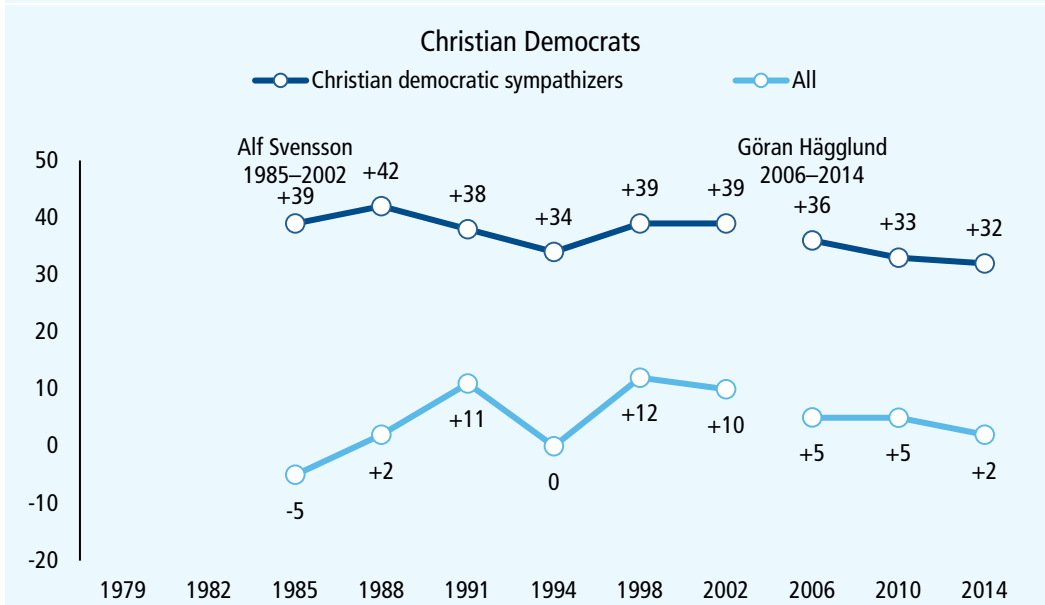
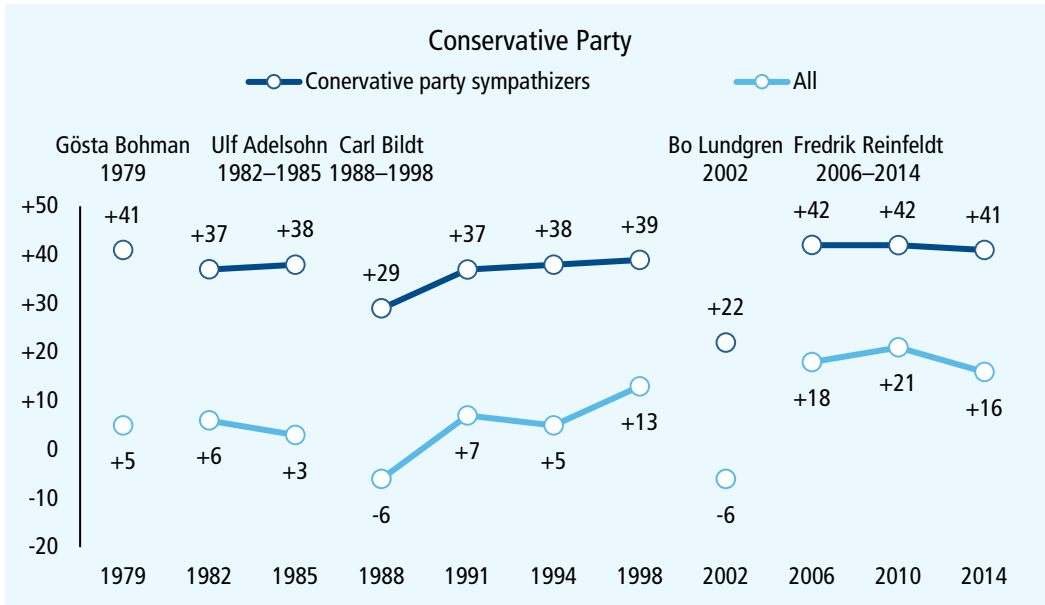
## Party Leader popularity

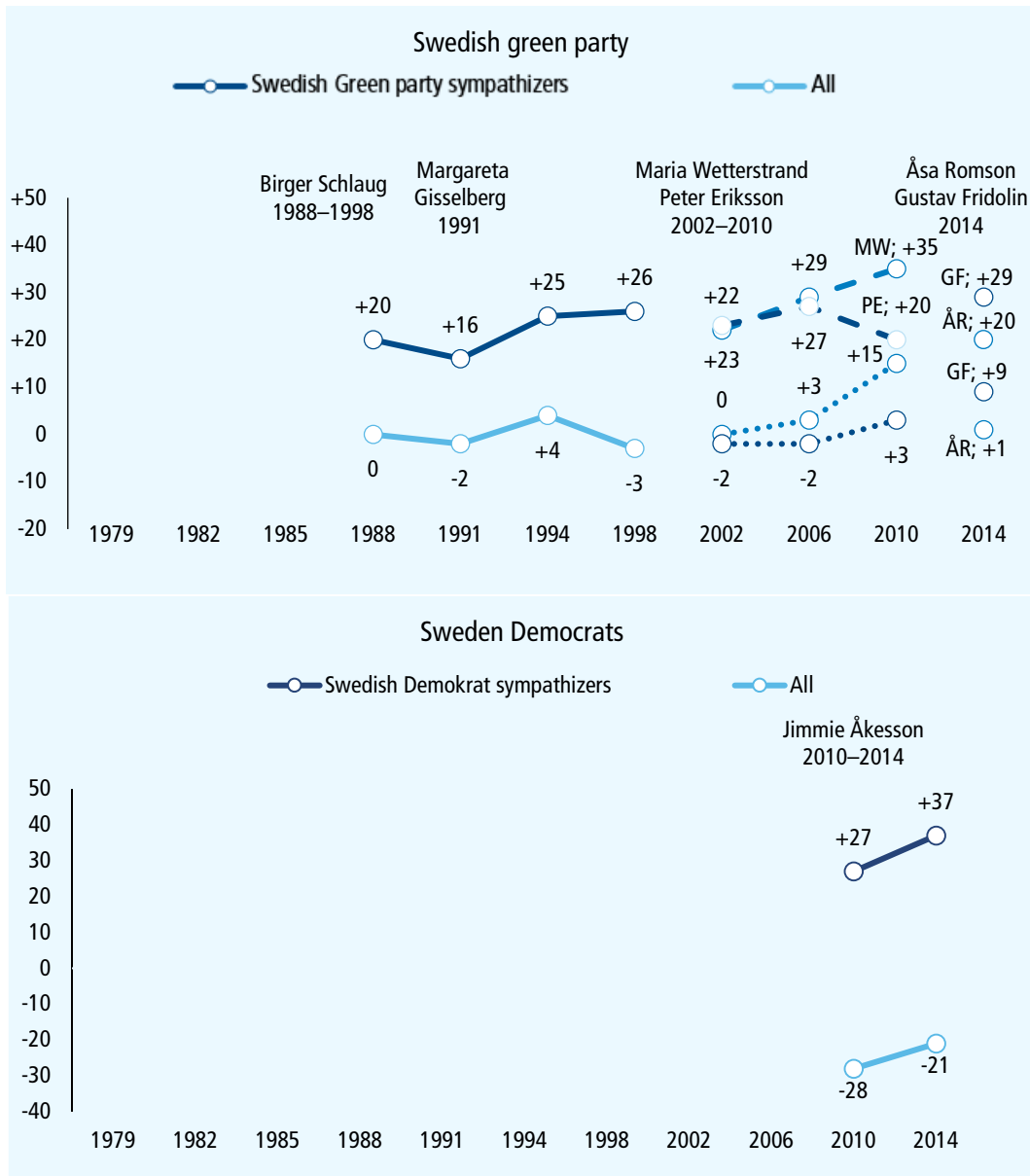
Figure 25 Party Leader Popularity 1979–2014 (mean)











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). The Swedish Green Party has two official spokespersons working as chairman of the party. In the figure SNES has only measured party leader popularity on both spokespersons from 2002–2014. From 1988–1998 both of the spokespersons I measured like one. The popularity of Gudrun Schyman (FI) was -1 among all respondents and +45 among Feminist Initiative sympathizers.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Party Leader Effects

Table 5 Party Leaders as Potential Vote-Getters for Their Parties 1979–2014  
(per cent)

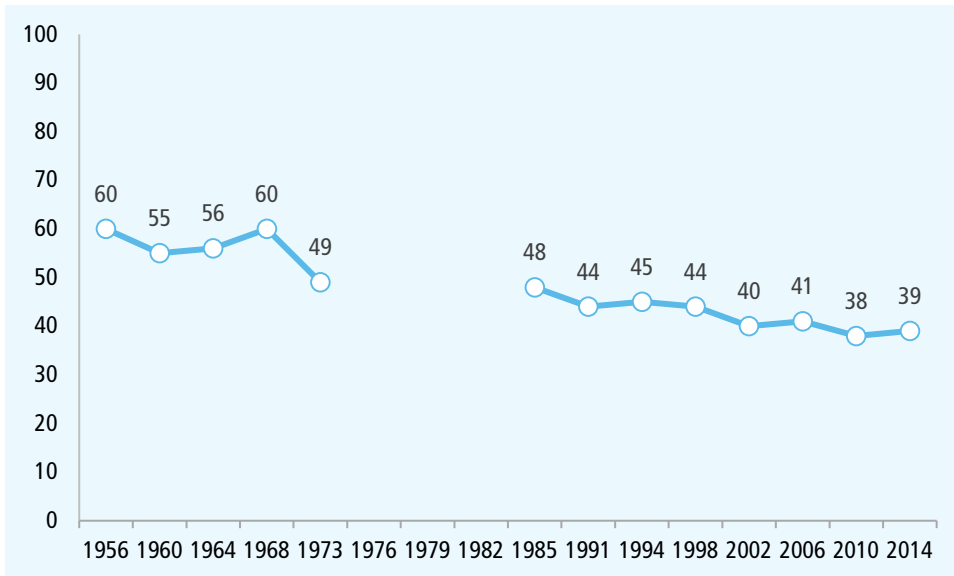
party	1979	1982	1985	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010	2014
Left party	15	18	26	22	26	13	19	23	15	15	16
Social Democratic party	11	16	13	14	9	7	6	11	9	6	8
Swedish Green party	-	-	-	-	3	6	6	11	10	17	12
Centre party	10	20	13	14	6	10	12	21	37	11	25
Liberal party	22	8	27	18	18	17	4	6	7	13	9
Christian Democrats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

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.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Candidate Recognition

Figure 26 Proportion of Respondents Who Can Name at Least One Riksdag Candidate in Their Own Constituency 1956–2014 (per cent)

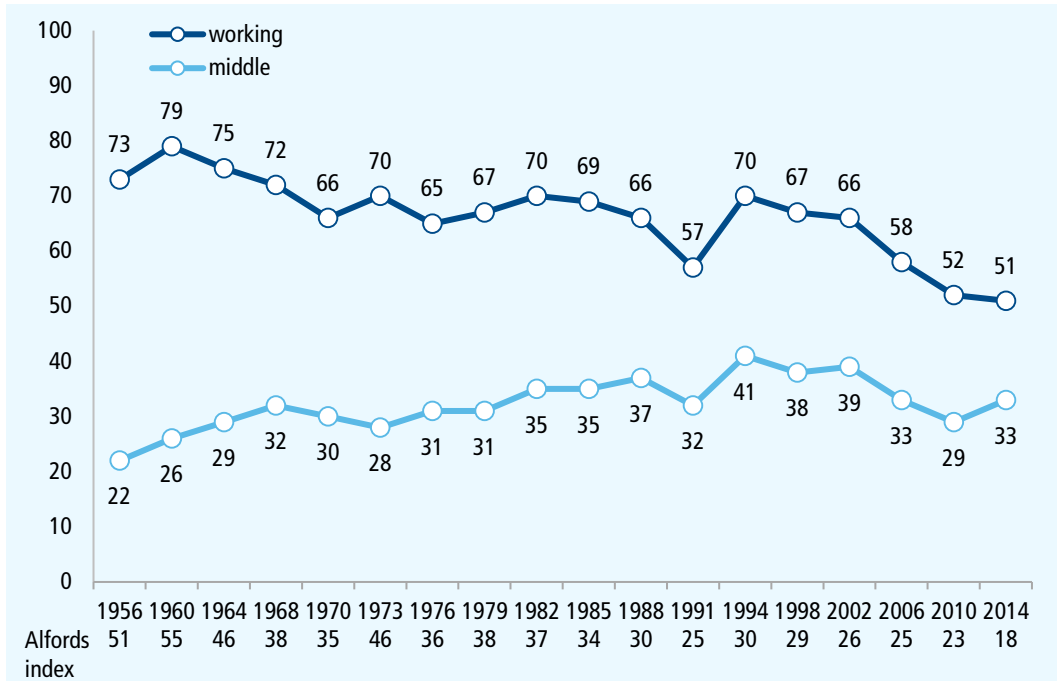


Comment: Only voters are included. The data is collected after the elections. In the years 1964 – 1994, the correctness of names given was not checked systematically. Minor tests indicate that the results for the years 1964 – 1994 should be scaled down 5 – 8 percentage points if one wants to estimate 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.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Class Voting

Figure 27 Class Voting in Swedish Elections 1956–2014. Percentage Voting Socialist (L and Soc.Dem) among Workers and in the Middle Class (per cent)

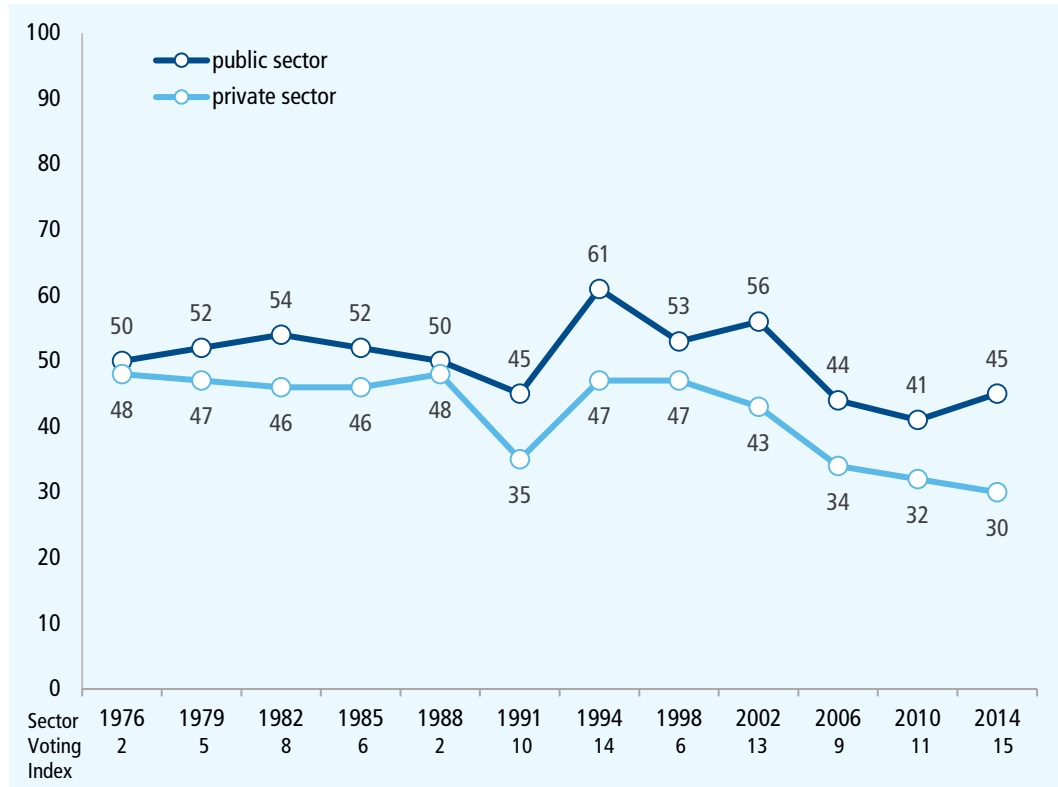


Comment: The Class Voting Index (Alford's index) is defined as the percentage voting socialist (L or Soc.Dem) among workers minus the percentage voting socialist in the middle class. The results have been corrected for the oversampling of Social Democratic voters in the earlier election studies. The percentage base is all party voters. Students are excluded from the analysis.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Sector Voting

Figure 28 Sector Voting in Swedish Elections 1976–2014. Percentage Voting Socialist (V and S) 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 (V or S) 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.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Gender Voting

Table 6 Difference in Party Choice Between Women and Men 1948–2014  
(percentage point difference)

party	48	52	56	60	64	68	70	73	76	79	82	85	88	91	94	98	02	06	10	14
Left party	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	3	0	1	2	1	-1	0	-2	-5	-3	-1	1	0
Social Democratic party	3	2	1	-2	3	0	0	-1	1	-1	-2	-5	-3	0	3	5	3	1	-4	-2
Swedish Green party	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-1	0	0	-3	-2	-2	-2	-4	-3	-3
Centre party	1	4	3	1	4	3	1	0	-2	-4	0	1	1	-2	-3	0	1	0	-4	-3
Liberal party	-4	-8	-3	-1	-4	-2	-2	-2	0	0	-2	-3	0	-2	-2	-2	0	1	-1	0
Christian Democrats	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	-1	-1	-1	-1	-2	-2	-1	-4	-2	-2	-1	-1
Conservative party	-2	0	-2	0	-4	-2	0	0	1	4	4	7	5	5	7	7	3	3	8	6
New Democracy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sweden Democrats	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	5
Feminist initiative	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-3
mean absolute difference per party	2,4	3,2	2	1,2	2,7	1,3	0,8	1	0,8	1,8	1,7	2,6	1,7	2,1	2,6	3,6	2	1,6	3,1	2,6

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.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program



## Age Voting

Table 7 In Which Age Group Does the Parties Have Their Strongest Support 1948–2014?

election year	party								
	L	Soc. Dem	C	Lib.	Con.	Christ. Dem	SGP	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	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.

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program

## Self-Report

Table 8 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						2014								
		1988	1994	2002	2006	2010	2014	L	Soc.Dem	SGP	C	Lib.	Christ.Dem	Con.	Swe.Dem	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	53	53	51	48	76	34	32
Ideological Voting	The party has a good political ideology	41	41	45	49	49	54	74	57	71	55	45	54	40	27	82
Prospective Voting	The party has a good program for the future	-	-	34	46	49	51	49	47	72	46	50	43	53	44	58
Government Voting	The party is needed to make it possible to form my favourite government	-	-	-	-	-	42	52	37	40	36	43	59	38	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	44	46	40	30	42	37	50
Retrospective Voting	The party has done a good job in recent years	-	-	25	22	36	27	16	21	28	24	12	15	51	18	18
Party Leader Voting	The party has a good party leader	23	20	24	23	27	28	19	27	11	19	17	20	44	36	28
Habitual Voting	I always vote for the party	27	21	16	14	14	10	6	18	2	6	2	7	10	7	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	10	13	2	7	6	7	18
Campaign Performance Voting	The party has been convincing during the election campaign	-	-	-	-	18	17	16	19	10	25	10	13	12	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	6	4	3	2	22	12	8
Group Interest Voting	The policy of the party is favourable to me personally	-	-	-	-	-	13	7	13	10	11	5	17	19	11	8
	The policy of the party is usually favourable to my occupation group	21	18	14	15	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Candidate Voting	The party has good Riksdag candidates on the ballot in my constituency	-	9	10	10	10	12	6	14	2	23	9	10	13	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	5	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".

Source: Swedish National Election Studies Program



**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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