Stepping Stones

Research on Political Representation,
Voting Behavior, and Quality of Government

Edited by
Stefan Dahlberg
Henrik Oscarsson
Lena Wängnerud

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Research on Political Representation, Voting Behavior and Quality of Government

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Preface

This anthology pays a tribute to the overwhelmingly successful academic career of the Swedish political science professor Sören Holmberg. The authors of this collection of original research chapters wish to recognize the exceptional achievements of a hardworking, structured, productive, and inspiring social scientist that is setting such a good example for academic work. Sören's wit, effectiveness, structure, and attention to detail continue to foster and inspire generations of students and PhD candidates. This book serves as an example of ongoing research born out of a tradition that is a direct consequence of Sören's innovations and undertakings.

Sören Holmberg's work has had a significant impact on the research at the Department of political science at the University of Gothenburg. This book is intended to illustrate this. We have chosen to highlight three research areas in which Sören has been most active and inventive. Hence, the book is organized into three sections: I. Political representation, II. Public opinion and voting behavior, and III. The quality of government.

As a young student, Sören was more interested in history, and particularly military history, than political science. In the mid-1960s, after university studies in political science, he was recruited to the Swedish National Election team by Professor Bo Särlvik. The 1968 Swedish Election Study was in 1969 accompanied by the world's first survey to Members of Parliament, which made possible, for the first time, to empirically analyse the degree of political representation and issue congruence between voters and MPs. The MP study 1969 was analysed thoroughly in Sören's PhD thesis, *Riksdagen representerar svenska folket* [*The Swedish Riksdag represents the Swedish people*] (1974), a publication that marked the beginning of a unique collection of data and in-depth analyses on MP-surveys in Sweden. The innovative studies of issue congruence between voters and elected representatives laid the ground for the political science department's research on polit-

ical representation, which is the first research theme of this book. Later, Peter Esaiasson and Sören Holmberg brought their ideas of a "Dynamic representation" to the scholarly debate on political representation in the book *Representation from above* (1996). Many have followed in their footsteps. Today, elite studies of the Swedish MPs, parliamentary studies of the Riksdag, and research into political representation, is a prosperous line of research at the department of political science in Gothenburg. The chapters in the first section of this book are illustrations of on-going research that originates from Sören's interest in political representation. If you ask him to describe his own main research interests, there is a high probability that studies in political representation will be mentioned first, and as the most central.

Sören's research into public opinion and voting behavior began in the mid-1970s with analyses of the public's attitudes towards energy in general and nuclear power in particular. This was the start of one of the most long-lived, albeit very small, standing research programs at the department, *Swedish Energy Opinion*. And, perhaps more importantly, in the late 1970s, Sören Holmberg took charge of the Swedish National Election Studies Program (SNES). His analyses of the 1979 Election Study was manifested in the work *Svenska väljare [Swedish voters]* (1981) – an exhaustive treatment of how almost all existing theories of voting behaviour pan out in the case of Sweden. Many of the most valuable time-series – judgments of governments' and opposition parties' past performance, retrospective and prospective perceptions of the economy, leader and party evaluations, judgments of parties' issue competence – were introduced by Sören in the 1979 Swedish National Election Study. These instruments have aged remarkably well, as they have survived many new trends and fashions in voting behavior research.

Books in Swedish on voting behaviour have appeared after each election, referendum, and European parliamentary election, co-authored or co-edited together with other principal investigators of the Swedish election studies, Mikael Gilljam and Henrik Ekengren Oscarsson. Sören has kept politicians, journalists, students, and the Swedish public well-informed about current trends in Swedish voting behavior. The message is clear: Swedish political scientists need to continue to publish top research in Swedish if political science is to keep its current strong reputation in the society.

The SOM Institute – a university based organization carrying out annual survey research – was created by Sören Holmberg and media professor Lennart Weibull in 1986, to meet a growing demand for a more detailed monitoring of opinion formation, also in-between elections. SOM was a collaboration between media and communication research and political science. A number of small research projects, engaged in a joint venture, to finance the first wave of data collection in the fall of 1986. No-one anticipated that, twenty-seven years later, the SOM Institute would have become a multidisciplinary national centre for survey research that manages to combine top quality research with a high presence in Swedish debate. The venture have generated a treasury of time series, some unique to Sweden. One example is the collection of data concerning citizens' media use, attitudes on immigration issues, and trust in societal institutions. As also is the case with the output from the SNES-program, Swedish social science and the University of Gothenburg is enjoying "great value for money invested", as the SOM research network keeps generating hundreds of international publications. Taken together, the output that can be traced back to Sören's undertakings is simply enormous.

The third stepping stone came into place in the mid-2000s. A marriage of policy analysis and survey based opinion research was the initial idea behind what later emerged as the Quality of Government Institute (QoG), founded in 2006 by Sören Holmberg and Bo Rothstein. The blue prints for the QoG-institute was the result of a creative discussion between Sören and Bo at 30 000 ft. during a transatlantic flight. The creation of QoG was not only a proof of good timing and academic leadership that set up a common goal for an expanding department of political science, but it also marked the beginning of an extremely successful research program that now encompasses a group of more than 25 scholars – a group that keeps winning recognition in all parts of the world. The QoG Institute is contributing significantly in making the research environment at the Department of political science in Gothenburg even more visible internationally.

There are many common denominators in the research platforms that have evolved much thanks to Sören. What immediately comes to mind is that they are all founded on ambitious, systematic, and huge data collection enterprises that have a large potential to be useful for many others and that encourage in-depth analyses. To earn Sören's respect, you need to prove that you are willing to "…get your hands

dirty down in the mines of empirical research". The accumulation of more data has always been a centrepiece of the whole endeavour: "It is important to build long time series!", we have all heard Sören say. Time-series will help you calibrate your findings and bring insights about how varying contexts affects your estimates. And if you put in some effort in making the data freely available to students and scholars, the value of data collection will snowball, as more people get the chance to reap the fruits of the data treasure.

It is often thought that there is a trade-off between large-scale, almost industrious, empirical social science, at the one hand, and political philosophy and normative political theory, on the other. We believe that this is a misunderstanding. Having experienced working close to Sören Holmberg in the planning of studies, the making of questionnaires, and data crunching, we would instead argue that the daily work is permeated with normative discussions. It rests heavily on an idea of being part of a continuous evaluation and bench marking of political and democratic systems and processes. And, as everybody knows, in order to evaluate or bench mark, you need to address normative problems. Decisions on which survey instruments, items, and scales, to use for political analysis, always involve taking a normative stand. Without normative theory, you would never know from what mine to dig out empirical data.

Sören Holmberg is a well-known public figure in Sweden. Since 1979, he has appeared as "Mr Election Night" and frequently as a political commentator in between elections. He remains one of Sweden's most famous representatives of the social sciences. Adapting results and insights from the academic world into the public debate takes communicative skills and a willingness to contribute to a balanced discussion. Sören has demonstrated great talent in these respects. He is still a favourite commentator among journalists, and he is sometimes referred to as "the man who speaks in headlines". At the Gothenburg department, it has always been regarded as an obligation to popularize research. Political science should be highly present in public debate. Not only because the research is paid for by the tax payers, but because political science need to be highly relevant for the society.

There is a normative Sören behind the neutral façade of the impartial political commentator. In the realms of academia, Sören remains a sceptic when it comes to causality, and he often reiterates his position

that ”causality is a social construct”. A hard core survey researcher is sometimes not that distant from a social constructivist.

It has become more and more evident over time that Sören bears a strong conviction that political science can make a real difference for humanity. One good example is his version of a Human Development Index, the Good Society Index (GSI), which combines aggregated statistics of child mortality and life expectancy with survey results of citizens' life satisfaction: a good society is a society where most children survive the age of five, live long lives, and are happy while living them. In the long run, no other task can be more important to a political scientist than the strive to contribute to a good society.

The editors of this book wish to thank all authors that were willing to participate in this anniversary book with original pieces of research. We are proud to present new and exciting high quality research, and we believe Sören will enjoy the contributions. Editors would also like to give a special thanks to research assistant Per Oleskog Tryggvason who helped us put the book together and Henny Östlund who assisted us with the book cover.

Some years ago, Sören became a senior professor at the department. We never really expected that this would change his research life in any dramatic way. To all our delight, we have seen no signs of diminishing returns when it comes to Sören's work. He keeps injecting the research community with enthusiasm, humour, and innovation. His productivity shows no signs of slowing down, and colleagues still have a hard time keeping up. After this celebration, we look forward to continuing collaboration and more good reads from Sören's pen. There are still many data sets to append and improve, many clever analyses to invent, and hand-written tables to make.

Happy birthday, Sören!

Gothenburg, September 2013

STEFAN DAHLBERG HENRIK OSCARSSON

LENA WÄNGNERUD

Part I

Political Representation

Chapter 1
Representation From Above and a Revolt From Below

JACQUES THOMASSEN

> 'Many studies of representative democracy, especially American studies, tend to be idealistic. They are pervaded by ideas about influence from below: that people and public opinion somehow have an independent influence on public policy, but they disregard political leadership and opinion formation from above.' (Holmberg 1997: 265)

Introduction

The distinction between representation 'from above' and 'from below' refers to a classic debate in both the normative and empirical literature on representative democracy. The normative debate refers to the relationship between representation and democracy: is representative democracy a 'sorry substitute for the real thing' (Dahl, 1982: 13), the real thing being direct democracy where the people have the ultimate say, or is representative democracy a type of government *sui generis* in which political elites are not just the servants of the will of the people but have their own responsibility, serving the interests of the people to the best of their abilities but according to their own judgment. The empirical study of political representation mostly addresses two major issues. First, the role conceptions of members of parliament: do they consider themselves as delegates of the people, recognizing that in a democracy the representatives of the people should follow the will of their principal, the people; or do they consider themselves as trustees of the people, bound to serve the interests of the people but according

to their own mature judgment. But most modern studies of representative democracy focus on a second question: does political representation work? The interesting thing is that most empirical research - and this must be the American influence Holmberg refers to - implicitly or explicitly starts from the normative assumption that political representation works when 'democratic policymakers [should] do what their citizens want them to do' (Powell, 2000: 251). Therefore, the litmus test of representative democracy is the level of congruence between the policy preferences of the citizenry and public policy, or as a step in between, between the policy preferences of the voters and their elected representatives in parliament. The logical empirical questions in political representation research then are how much congruence there is and how this congruence comes about.

In this chapter I will address all three elements in the debate: the normative discussion on the relationship between the people and their representatives, the empirical question on the role conceptions of members of parliament and the development thereof, and the main question in empirical political representation research: how much congruence is their between the policy preferences of the people on the one hand and the policy preferences of members of parliament on the other hand, what are the mechanisms bringing this congruence about and how effective are these mechanisms? I will try to answers these questions mostly on the basis of the Dutch representation studies. These are not as continuous as the Swedish representation studies but they are a good runner up[1].

In the next section I will discuss the 'mandate-independence' debate and the role conceptions deduced from this debate. In section three I will try to assess the effectiveness of the most important model of political representation in the modern literature, the Responsible Party Model. In section four I will present some data on the 'Fortuyn revolt', the populist revolt in the Netherlands at the beginning of this century. I will discuss whether this should be classified as representation *from above* or *from below*. Finally I will draw some conclusions on the development of representative democracy.

1 Studies among Members of Parliament (face to face interviews) were conducted in 1968, 1972, 1979, 1990, 2001 and 2006. A number of questions were asked in each of these studies. Also, because of a cooperation with the National Election Study, several questions were asked both at the elite and the mass level.

The mandate-independence controversy: role conceptions of Members of Parliament.

Much of the classic political representation literature is dominated by the so-called mandate-independence controversy (Pitkin, 1967): should members of parliament implement the policy preferences of their constituents or follow their own mature judgment in representing the interest of their constituents and of the country as a whole. This controversy goes back to Edmund Burke, who sharply formulated the dilemma of a Member of Parliament in 18th century England. Although the conservative Burke usually is seen as the champion of the view that MPs are not bound to the policy preferences of their constituents, even he argues that 'it ought to be the happiness and glory of a representative to live in the strictest union, the closest correspondence, and the most unreserved communication with his constituents' (as quoted in (Eulau and Wahlke, 1959): 747). Also, an MP must 'prefer their interests to his own'. But he immediately adds to it: 'But his unbiased opinion, his mature judgment, his enlightened conscience, he ought not to sacrifice to you .... Your representative owes you not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion' (as quoted in (Thomassen, 1976: 11). In other words, when it comes to it, a Member of Parliament should follow his own mature judgment rather than blindly follow his constituents' opinions.

This view on the role of representatives won the political debate in the nineteenth century and was written in stone in most of the constitutions of the evolving parliamentary democracies in Western-Europe. Also, Burke's views were the source of inspiration for the initial political representation studies in the United States and to a less extent in Europe as well (Eulau and Karps, 1978, Eulau and Wahlke, 1959, Wahlke et al., 1962, Miller and Stokes, 1963, Holmberg, 1974, Esaiasson and Holmberg, 1996, Wessels, 1999, Converse and Pierce, 1986 Thomassen 1976). This early research focused on the role conceptions of members of parliament. In the consecutive Dutch Parliamentary Studies the classic questions on the role conceptions of MPs were asked as well[2]. Although, as I argued before, the scientific interest

2 Here I only discuss the style of representation which in the literature usually goes hand in hand with the focus of representation.

in the mandate-independence controversy might be inversely related to its relevance in the parliamentary democracies of Western Europe (Thomassen, 1994: 239-240), the development of the answers to these questions offer a nice illustration of the development of MPs' understanding of their role in relation to their voters. We asked them explicitly what they should do in case of a clear conflict between their own opinion and the opinion of their party's voters' opinion: vote according to their own opinion or according to their voters' opinion. This question has been asked since 1972. In table 1 the answers to this question are summarized.

Table 1. Style of representation (with party voters as focus) 1972-2006

	1972	1979	1990	2001	2006
Delegates ('Follow party voters')	7	7	10	21	19
Politicos ('It depends')	22	29	34	40	32
Trustees ('Follow own judgment')	71	64	56	40	49
N	141	129	130	129	104

Source: Andeweg and Thomassen 2005 and 2007

What we see is a gradual decline of the percentage of MPs expressing a Burkean role orientation and a gradual increase of the MPs who see it as their task to yield to the opinion of their party's voter.

This seems to indicate a gradual increase of the view that representation should come from below rather than from above. However, this is only partly so. Many MPs added to their view that the voters have the opportunity to give a judgment on the party's program at the elections. MPs in turn feel committed to this program and by being committed to the program the voters voted for, they feel committed to their voters' views as well. As one of the MPs in the 1990 study said "I believe that an MP who is elected on a particular platform should see this platform as a contract with the party's voters' (Thomassen and Zielonka-Goei, 1992: 203). This, in a nutshell, is a perfect summary of the party model of political representation. This view is even clearer when MPs are asked how they should vote in case of a conflict between their own opinion and the policy position of their party in parliament. Here the development of the overwhelming importance of the party is even more obvious (data not shown). The number of MPs who think they should follow their own opinion has declined from 40% in 1972 to 5% in 2006, whereas the number of MPs thinking they should follow the party has increased from 7% to 31%. In fact

the dominance of the party is even much stronger than these figures suggest. A striking number of MPs is hiding their true opinion behind the answer 'it depends', an answer category not mentioned in the questionnaire. Probing these MPs revealed that most of them meant that one should follow the party line except in extremely exceptional circumstances (Andeweg and Thomassen, 2005).

Obviously, questions on MPs role conceptions do not clearly reveal their views on representation from above vs. representation from below. Although the distinction between these two views is not precisely defined, in my reading the essential meaning of representation from below is that 'public opinion is an exogenous force in the representative democratic system', whereas 'the key characteristics of a democratic system according to elitists run-from-above representational models, are accountability and leadership' (Esaiasson and Holmberg, 1996: 5).

In our 2001-2002 representation study we tried to operationalize these different views in survey questions we then asked to both MPs in the 2001 Parliamentary Study and the voters in the 2002 National Election Study. We asked them two questions, first:

In their relationship with their voters, politicians may emphasize different aspects. Which of these two aspects do you think is most important?

- translating the political views of citizens into policy as accurately as possible;
- seeking support from the voters for the political views of their own party.

This question differentiates between representation from below and representation from above.

A second question we asked differentiates between accountability as the main function of elections and asking for a mandate. The question was:

In our political system, elections have various functions. Which of these two functions do you think is most important?

- In elections, politicians account to the voters for their actions in the past;

- In elections, politicians put their plans for the future to the voters.

Table 2. Modes of representation

	MPs 2001	Voters 2002
Translating the political views of citizens into policy	33	85
Seeking support from the voters for political views of own party	67	15
N	126	1125
In elections politicians account to the voters for actions in the past	63	72
In elections politicians put their plans for the future to the voters	37	28
N	107	1187

Source: Andeweg and Thomassen 2005

In table 2 the answers to these questions are presented. The most striking finding is the huge gap between the role orientation of Dutch MPs and the perceptions of the Dutch electorate of these same roles. On both questions MPs in general choose the most elitist view: for representation from above and for accountability rather than committing themselves ex ante to a policy contract with the voters. In contrast, in both cases a great number of voters choose the role orientation that seems to give them the better chance to influence policy: representation from below and a prospective mandate to which the elected representatives commit themselves. It is obvious that most MPs have an elitist view on political representation that is not shared by their voters.

Where does this elitist view come from? One of the most striking findings in our series of Parliamentary studies is that MPs in general do not have a particular high esteem for their voters. We found that in general MPs are well aware that in many cases their views are not congruent with those of their voters. At least as interesting is how they explain these differences. In our 1990 study we asked them the following question: '*Members of parliament sometimes think differently about political issues than the voters of their party. How do you explain this difference?*'

According to no less than half of the MPs this difference is due to a lack of knowledge among the voters to come to the same measured judgments as MPs. Also, according to almost half of the MPs these differences of opinion are due to the fact that voters' opinions often are based on their private interests whereas MPs have to find a balance

between all these partial interests and are more inclined to serve the general interest (Thomassen and Zielonka-Goei, 1992). MPs clearly think to have a better judgment than their voters and therefore should stick to their own opinion rather than giving in to the voters. This, of course, is very much in line with a Burkean role orientation.

The party model of political representation

Needless to say, this elitist view on representative democracy is not the prerogative of Dutch MPs but is the most common view in much of the postwar literature on representative democracy as well. This literature is strongly influenced by Schumpeter's view on representative democracy. He explicitly rejects representation from below, or what he calls the classical doctrine of democracy which he defines as "that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions which realizes the common good by making the people itself decide issues through the election of individuals who are to assemble in order to carry out its will" (Schumpeter, 1976 (1942)).

His well-known arguments why the classical doctrine is not feasible include the argument that 'the typical citizen drops down to a lower level of mental performance as soon as he enters the political field. He argues and analyzes in a way which he would readily recognize as infantile within the sphere of his real interests. He becomes a primitive again. His thinking becomes associative and affective' (Schumpeter, 1976 (1942)). No wonder he rejects the classical doctrine and replaces it by an elitist definition of democracy: 'the democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote.' (Schumpeter, 1976 (1942):269). As a consequence he defines a political party as 'a group whose members propose to act in concert in the competitive struggle for political power' (Schumpeter, 1976 (1942)). Ever since Schumpeter defined democracy as a competitive struggle for the people's vote, there is a broad consensus that competitive elections, with political parties competing for the people's vote, are the identifying property of the contemporary democratic process (Powell, 2000, Schattschneider, 1942).

Schumpeter's contempt for the democratic qualities of the common man was anything but exceptional for his generation, a generation that had come of age during the turbulent years of fascism. Some of the leading scholars, including Schumpeter, had literally fled for it. As a

consequence, their fear for the 'revolt of the masses' and their sensitivity for the temptations of populist and fascists movements, was deeply rooted`(Kornhauser, 1960). Therefore, it was not just the presumed ignorance of voters that led to an elitist view of representative democracy but also the fact that the mass public did not seem to share some of the basic values of democracy, in particular the values of individual freedom and tolerance, usually associated with the *Rechtsstaat* or the *Rule of Law*. Since the 1950s the many studies on people's tolerance of minorities and their respect for civil liberties without any exception led to the conclusion that although the mass public supported the general principles of liberal democracy, most of them failed to apply them to specific groups in society they disliked[3] (Klosko, 2000). Therefore, Robert Lane, reflecting on these findings, and after having summarized the differences between the political elites and the mass publics, expressed the following objection against the role orientation of a delegate:

> 'delegates, bound to follow the demands rather than the needs of their publics, will be less supportive of free speech, less tolerant of unpopular groups, less supportive of legal due process, morally more rigid, more nationalistic, less prudent in finances, and less consistent in their policy preferences and expenditure patterns than political elites now are.' (Lane, 1996)

In other words, voters are not only ignorant; they also have a lack of understanding of the basic values of democracy. For this reason political elites were often portrayed as the guardians of democracy (Hoffmann-Lange, 1987).

Against this background it is somewhat ironic that Schumpeter's conception of democracy, a competition between political parties for the votes of the people, was the source of inspiration for a model of democracy that one still might consider as an elitist model of democracy but which at least had the intention to give the electorate an in-

3 Recent comparative research based on the World Values Study revealed that in this respect hardly anything has changed and that the early findings in the United States can easily be generalized to other advanced industrial democracies PEFFLEY, M. & ROHRSCHNEIDER, R. 2003. Democratization and Political Tolerance in Seventeen Countries: A Multi-level Model of Democratic Learning. Political Research Quarterly, 56, 243-257.

fluential voice in the political decision-making process and an electoral mandate to the winning party, or coalition of parties.

Schumpeter is considered as the founder of the so-called economic theory of democracy because of his analogy between democratic politics and the market. Just like entrepreneurs try to maximize their profits, political entrepreneurs try to maximize their votes. However, Schumpeter was criticized for not making the analogy complete. As Lively puts it:

> 'Whilst the politician is pictured as an entrepreneur, it is not clear what he is selling, or indeed if he is selling anything. To put this another way, Schumpeter is unwilling to admit any degree of consumer sovereignty in democratic politics, since this would be to admit the possibility of the political consumer, the voter, choosing between the goods offered by the politicians, different policies or different performances in office'. (Lively: 192)

It is exactly by taking the political consumer seriously that modern models of democracy based on party competition distinguish themselves from Schumpeter's. Downs' *An economic theory of democracy* was the first serious attempt to apply the idea of consumer sovereignty to politics (Downs, 1957). In this model politicians or political parties are only interested in winning the elections. They can only do so by offering a policy program that appeals to a majority of the voters. Once in office the winning party will stick to this program because otherwise they will be punished at the next elections for being unreliable. Voters are assumed to vote for the party that is closest to their own policy preferences. If all assumptions are met, the end result of the process is that government policy will be congruent with the policy preferences of (the majority of) the electorate.

The model of representation guiding most political representation research in parliamentary democracies, the Responsible Party Model, or Party Model, is essentially based on the same logic. This model is usually conceptualized as a mechanism ensuring policy congruence between government policy and the policy views of the (majority of the) voters when the following requirements are met:

1. Political parties present different policy alternatives to the voters. In other words, there must be different parties with different programs.

2. The internal cohesion, or party discipline, of parliamentary parties is sufficient to enable them to implement their policy program.
3. Voters vote for the party whose program is closest to their own policy preferences. This implies that:
   a. Voters do have policy preferences
   b. Voters do know the difference between the policy programs of different political parties (Thomassen 1994: 251-252).

For a correct understanding of the Responsible Party Model in its pure and original form a number of characteristics are important. First, the Responsible Party Model in its original form is a *majoritarian* model. It was originally conceived by a committee of the American Political Science Association and modeled after the British model of government, which was supposed to function much better than the American system with its loosely structured political parties (Association, 1950). A majoritarian model implies that the will of the people is interpreted as the will of the majority of the people, i.e. the voters of the party or the coalition of parties that won the elections. At least in theory two (blocks of) parties compete for the support of the voters for their policy program. The winning party or coalition not only wins a majority in parliament but also forms a government which then implements its policy program. In principle the opposition and therefore the voters having supported them have no influence on public policy. In other words it maximizes the influence of the voters of the winning party or coalition parties and minimizes the influence of the voters of the losing party or parties. Their votes are basically lost. Therefore, if one accepts the normative theory of democracy underlying this model, the ultimate test of the model refers to the relationship between the governing majority and their voters only. Thirdly, the Responsible Party Model is a *prospective* or *mandate* model. Political parties compete on the basis of their plans for *future* public policy. By voting for a particular party, voters give a policy mandate to that party for the next term of government. In a less rigid interpretation of the model retrospective judgments can be included as well, holding political parties *accountable* for their past performance. The most important mechanism by which voters then can still have an influence on public policy is by the anticipating reactions of politicians and parties wanting to be

re-elected to their perception of the preferences of the voters. The logical consequence of these original characteristics is that one should add two more requirements:

4. After the election, the winning party, or block of parties, takes over the government
5. The governing party, or coalition, implements the policy program it presented to the voters.

If all these requirements are met, the argument goes, government policy will be congruent with the will of at least the majority of the people. For several reasons this is a heroic assumption. First, the added requirements 4 and 5 are seldom met in multiparty systems where coalitions and therefore government policy programs are more often than not agreed upon *after* the elections, making it impossible for the voters to vote for that program[4].

In most representation studies in Europe, applying the Responsible Party conceptual framework in the context of a multiparty system, these last two requirements are simply forgotten for the sake of convenience. The litmus test of the model then is not whether government policy is congruent with government policy, but whether the policy views of each of the parties in parliament are congruent with those of their voters. This is supposed to be the outcome of the electoral process if the first three requirements are met. This makes the model indeed applicable to a multiparty system but the assumptions are still heroic. First, coming back to the analogy of consumer sovereignty, the choices voters have are limited to what political parties have on offer. In this sense the RPM stands for representation from above. This though is not really different from the position of consumers in a market economy. However, it is essentially different in another respect. The most heroic assumption of the Responsible Party Model is that voters, by a single vote, will endorse the complete policy platform of a particular party. However, as (Dahl, 1956: 127) observed a long time ago 'we can rarely interpret a majority of first choices among candidates in a national election as being equivalent to a majority of first choices for a specific policy'. It is most unlikely that voters will prefer

4 For a lucid explication of the sheer impossibility to vote 'rationally' in a multiparty system, see Downs 1957, chapter 9.

the policy proposals of the same party on each and every issue. Here the analogy with a market economy fails. As consumers we can go to a different shop for each and every product we want to buy. But in politics we are forced to do all our shopping in one department store, even though we might prefer specific products from another store. Or, to put it differently, the only way out for the voters is to vote for the party that is closest to them on the issue(s) most important to them. As a consequence, voters might meet all the requirements of the Responsible Party Model, i.e. vote rationally and still vote for a party that is not really representative of their policy preferences on many issues. Also, because of this, it is quite possible for a political party to win a majority of the votes, without representing a majority of the electorate even on a single issue.[5]

As I argued before, this problem can only be avoided when another requirement is met, i.e. when both political parties, in the composition of their programs, and voters, when they decide which party they will vote for, are constrained by the same one-dimensional ideology (Thomassen 1994: 354). This is the assumption on which Downs' theory of democracy is based.

But this, of course, is a very severe assumption, which has met severe criticism from the very beginning. Yet, to what extent this requirement, in addition to the other requirements, is met is an empirical question and a question that has been the subject of an ever extending body of literature.

Despite the initial criticism on the totally unrealistic assumptions of the Responsible Party Model, recent research findings lead to a more positive conclusion. According to a mainstream in the empirical literature on political representation the cleavages that for a long time dominated politics in most European countries have given way to a single dimension of conflict, the left-right dimension (Sani and Sartori, 1983). Extensive research into the party manifestos of political parties across Europe revealed that the policy proposals in these manifestos to a large extent are constrained by the left-right dimension (Klingemann et al., 1994, Budge et al., 2001). Also, political parties seem to live up to the promises they make in these manifestos once they are in government (Thomson, 1999). Equally voters across Europe seem to meet

5 This phenomenon is known as the Ostrogorski paradox. See: OSTROGORSKI, M. 1902. Democracy and the American Party System, New York, MacMillan.

the requirements of the Responsible Party Model reasonably well when applied to the left-right dimension. They know where the parties are, they can easily place themselves on this dimension and they tend to vote for the party that is closest to their own position on this dimension (Van der Eijk et al., 1999, Van der Brug and Van der Eijk, 1999, Van der Eijk et al., 2005). Thus, the RPM seems to work effectively at each of the major links in the chain of delegation: voters do their part by voting for the party they are supposed to vote for, parties in parliament are disciplined, and parties in government live up to their promises. As a consequence the congruence between the policy preferences of the voters and their representatives in parliament and between these preferences and public policy is amazingly high, at least on the left-right dimension (Thomassen and Schmitt, 1999). Therefore, if we take the left-right dimension as a yardstick, the system of political representation seems to work as a recent comparative study almost jubilantly concluded (Dalton et al., 2011).

A revolt from below

However, as we have seen, the fact that political parties compete on the left-right dimension and voters make their party choice on the basis of this same dimension is insufficient evidence for an effective system of political representation. In addition the other requirements we discussed above should be met.

First, there must be something to choose from. If both the policy positions of political parties and the policy preferences of the voters can be reduced to the left-right dimension but political parties cluster together in the middle of the scale whereas the voters are spread over the scale, many voters will not be able to find a political party close to their own position and elections will fail as an effective instrument of political representation. Several comparative studies have shown a direct effect of the spread of political parties over the left-right scale on the extent of policy voting (Dalton and Anderson, 2011, Van der Eijk et al., 2005, Dalton et al., 2011). Secondly, the left-right dimension can only serve as an effective instrument of political representation when indeed all policy issues are constrained by this single dimension. With regard to both conditions we can see an interesting development in the Netherlands that is exemplary for other West-European countries as well (Van der Eijk et al., 2005). First, the importance of the left-right dimension for people's party choice has gradually changed.

From the early 1970s until the middle of the 1980s we can observe an increase of the polarization between political parties and a decrease afterwards until the beginning of the new century (Thomassen et al., 2000, Van Wijnen, 2001). As a consequence the left-right dimension became less effective as an instrument helping people to find a party representing their own policy position[6]. Also, in 1994 it paved the way for a coalition government of the Labour Party (PvdA) and the Liberal-Conservative Party (VVD), the two major competitors on the left-right dimension. Although generally applauded as a major breakthrough in Dutch politics I at the time called this a disaster for representative democracy because it led to a complete depoliticisation of Dutch politics or to a cartel democracy. If the major parties on both sides of the left-right continuum form a coalition, there is hardly any serious opposition left *within* the political system. This I argued was the ideal breeding ground for a successful anti-system party (Thomassen, 2000). That prediction came true in 2002 when the Fortuyn revolt just in a few months after it was founded won 26 of the 150 seats in Parliament and turned Dutch politics upside down.

But although my prediction came true, the argument was disputable. The Fortuyn revolt was not just an anti-system movement but was clearly based on outspoken policy views that were not represented by the established parties. And this has to do with the second condition I referred to above, the condition that all policy issues are constrained by the left-right dimension. Only then, I argued, can this dimension serve as an effective instrument of political representation. But, as Powell (2000: 6) admits with regard to his own work, this is a heroic assumption. As far as we are able to tell from empirical research it has never been the case that each and every issue was constrained by the left-right dimension. Ever since Converse's seminal study on the nature of belief systems (Converse, 1964) we know that we should not have

6 A counter argument though is that voters always were less polarized than political parties and depolarized even more when political parties did. Therefore, one might argue, political parties had only adapted to the distribution of the voters. As a consequence the congruence of voters and parties has only increased. This is actually what Andeweg found ANDEWEG, R. 2010. Approaching Perfect Policy Congruence: Measurement, Development, and Relevance for Political Representation. In: ROSEMA, M., AARTS, C. & DENTERS, B. (eds.) Democracy. Political Representation and Policy Congruence in Modern Societies. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. This, however, is at the level of the total electorate compared to all members of Parliament. What remains is that the less polarization there is, the less people can use the left-right dimension to sort out themselves politically.

too high expectations of the extent to which issue positions of the common voter are constrained by *any* ideological dimension (Thomassen, 1999). Secondly, as far as they are, at least one second dimension organizing people's political attitudes, more or less orthogonal to the left-right dimension, was found since the early days of research into these matters. This is the libertarian-authoritarian dimension (Kitschelt, 1994, Flanagan and Lee, 2003). Obviously, if voters base their party choice on their position on the left-right dimension and their attitudes on the libertarian-authoritarian dimension are not related to this position, they might end up with a political party that does not represent them on such issues. This is a problem in particular for voters on the left because traditionally there are hardly any political parties combining a left-right position on social-economic issues with a 'right' position on the libertarian-authoritarian dimension. Left parties and their party elites tend to be libertarian as well whereas their rank and file tend to be anything but libertarian (Lipset, 1966). On the right hand of the left-right continuum this is less of a problem because parties on the right tend to be authoritarian as well (Van der Brug and Van Spanje, 2009, Van der Brug, 2008)[7]. Another issue that at least at the level of the voters is not constrained by the left-right dimension is the issue of European integration. Therefore, it is no wonder that many representation studies find that political parties are representing their voters reasonably well on social-economic issues like income policy, the role of the state and welfare state issues but less so on issues like law and order, moral issues, immigration, the integration of ethnical minorities and European integration (Esaiasson and Holmberg, 1996, Holmberg, 1997, Thomassen and Schmitt, 1999, Thomassen, 1976, Thomassen, 2012). This, one might argue, is not too much of a problem as long as these issues are not really salient to the voters. Then voters are still well represented on the issues that are really important to them whereas these other issues form at most 'a sleeping giant' {Van der Eijk, 2004). However, as far as this ever was a valid argument, it no longer is. Due to the process of globalization issues like immigration and European integration have become more salient to the voters (Kriesi et al., 2008, Kriesi et al., 2006). As far as political leaders and political parties in most West- European countries

7 Although there are exceptions, like in the Netherlands D66 and in the past the VVD.

were not aware of this, they got their wake up call during the last decades by the sudden electoral success of populist parties running on such issues.

The development of this issue domain as one of the most important issue domains in modern European politics is an interesting possibility to see how political representation works or at least can work. In this respect The Netherlands is an interesting case in point. When Pim Fortuyn's party won its landslide victory in 2002, for most observers this came out of the blue, but actually it did not.

Since the early 1970s one of the questions permanently asked in the National Election Study is what people consider as the most important problem in the country. Before the 1990s problems related to 'immigration' or 'refugees' were hardly ever mentioned. But in 1994 suddenly no less than 26% of the electorate mentioned this as the most important problem in the country (Aarts and Thomassen, 2008). Together with crime and the public order these problems dominated the issue agenda of the electorate until the economic crisis at the end of the first decade of this century began to dominate the agenda. And yet, initially most political parties and politicians didn't want to hear about it. When in the early 1990s the leader of the liberal-conservative party (VVD) tried to put this issue on the agenda, other political parties, the parties from the left in particular, reacted furiously. He was accused of populism and of 'exploiting the feelings of the abdomen of society'. When in the campaign for the 2002 elections Fortuyn appealed to the same feelings, emphasizing the danger of a massive immigration of people with an Islamic background, he as well got a cold shoulder from the established political parties. They even did not shy away from comparisons with the 1930s. But a large part of the electorate loved Fortuyn for expressing the feelings they had harboured all along. He was murdered just a few days before the elections but the party bearing his name still won an unprecedented landslide: 26 of the150 seats in parliament.

Wasn't this a form of *dynamic representation from below* (Holmberg, 1997, Holmberg, 2010) if there ever was one? Strictly speaking it was not, at least not if representation from below is defined as a situation where the political elites adapt their policy positions to those of their electorate. In principle the Fortuyn movement could have won its landslide victory without a single politician or political party having changed their policy position. But Fortuyn's

movement did prove the eventual responsiveness of the system, mainly due to the openness of the electoral system[8]. As observed above, the feelings Fortuyn had been appealing to had been slumbering for a number of years: they formed a sleeping giant waiting to be kissed awake. All this issue domain was waiting for was a political entrepreneur mobilizing at least part of the electorate on this issue dimension. Political issues are not political issues as long as they are not politicized (Bartolini and Mair, 1990). It needs a political entrepreneur to do so. This is exactly what Fortuyn did in 2002. He brilliantly changed the main dimension of contestation from the left-right dimension to the libertarian-authoritarian dimension (Pellikaan et al., 2007, Aarts and Thomassen, 2008, Thomassen, 2012).

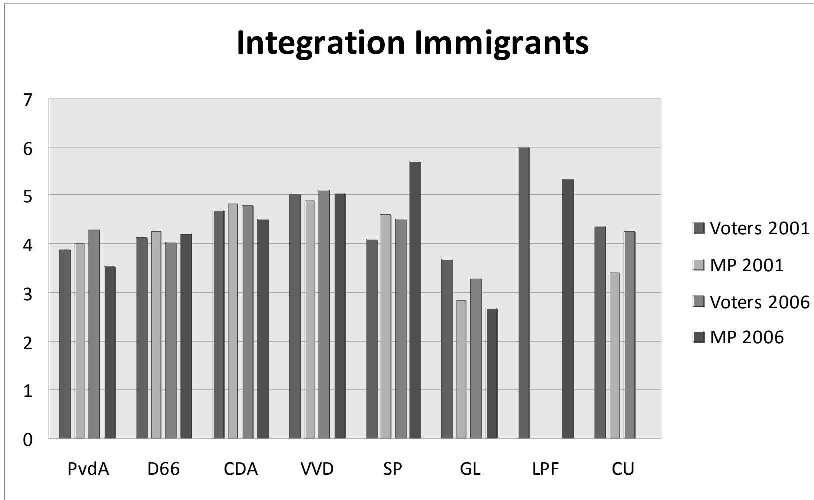
Because of the success of the Fortuyn movement and the wakeup call it contained one might expect 'true' dynamic representation from below as well, i.e. an adaptation of the politicians of the established parties to the feelings of the electorate. And yet, this did hardly happen. In the parliamentary studies of 2001 and 2006 and the national election studies of 2002 and 2006 MPs and voters respectively were asked their opinion on the issue of the integration of immigrants. Here the issue is formulated as a position issue: both voters and MPs could indicate their position on a scale running from the position that immigrants should be allowed to stick to their own culture to the position that immigrations should assimilate completely to Dutch culture. Perhaps somewhat surprisingly the representativeness of the MPs of the main parties (PvdA, CDA and VVD) does not seem to be as poor as one might expect (see figure 1; source: (Thomassen, 2009). In that sense they seemed to have little reason to move and they did not[9]. This confirms our conclusion that the *system* of political representation in the Netherlands recently showed to be highly dynamic and responsive to the changing importance of a particular issue domain among the electorate whereas the political elites of the established political parties hardly followed suit by changing their own issue positions. Many vot-

8 The electoral threshold is equal to the number of votes needed for a single seat in Parliament.

9 However, one might wonder about the validity, or at least the political relevance, of these measurements. It is beyond any doubt that the position of all major political parties on issues of immigration has become harder. After the Fortuyn revolt the 'multi-cultural society' has not many friends left.

ers for whom this issue was important simply left these parties behind and voted for the new party that represented their feelings better[10].

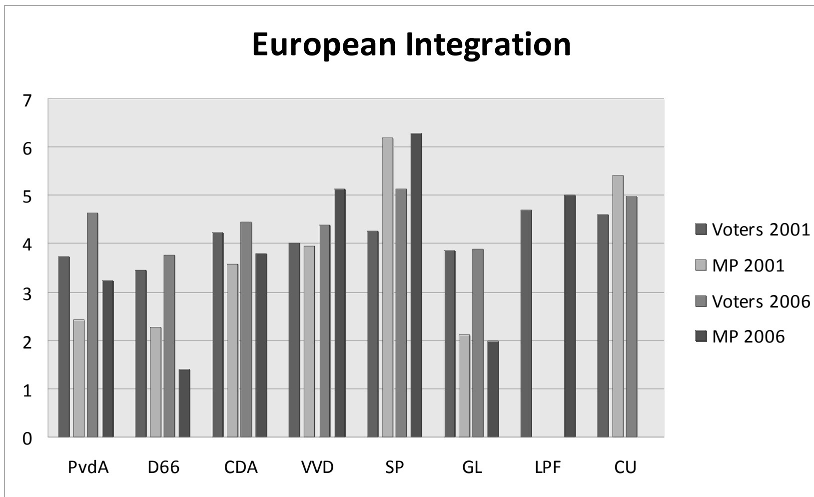
Figure 1. Positions on integration minority groups; voters and MPs; 2001-2006 (source: Thomassen 2009)



1 = Immigrants should be allowed to live in the Netherlands with the right to uphold all the customs of their own culture.
7 = Immigrants in the Netherlands should assimilate completely to Dutch culture.

10 Unfortunately, figures 1 and 2 do not show the positions of the MPs representing the List Pim Fortuyn (LPF). In 2001 they were not yet represented in Parliament whereas after the elections of 2006 they had already lost most of their strength (8 seats left) and too few LPF MPs participated in the 2006 Parliamentary Study to be included here.

Figure 2. Positions on European integration; voters and MPs; 2001-2006 (source: Thomassen 2009)



1 = European integration should go much further.
7 = European integration has gone much too far.

The issue of European integration (figure 2) shows a somewhat different picture. Here the discrepancy between voters and their elected representatives in parliament was clearly larger than on the ethnic minorities issue. But in contrast to the latter issue European integration never became a salient political issue, at least not in the period covered by the parliamentary studies. In this sense it remained a sleeping giant. But that giant got his moment of fame in 2005 when Parliament took the initiative to organize an advisory referendum on the ratification of the Constitutional Treaty. Whereas all major parties, together occupying 85% of the seats in parliament were in favour of ratification, 62% of the electorate voted against it. This was another wake up call. And on this issue we could observe a slight movement of the main parties towards the more eurosceptical position of their voters[11].

11 But this is not necessarily an indication of great respect for the opinion of the voters. In the 2006 Parliamentary Study MPs were asked what, in their opinion, was the most important lesson to be learned from the referendum. Close to one third of them thought the main lesson was that 'we should never have such a referendum again'!

In conclusion

As Holmberg (1997) concluded several years ago, 'representative democracy is a delicate system fundamentally built on trust and a fine-tuned balance between political leadership and responsiveness. Too much leadership leads to elitism, too much responsiveness leads to populism.' This nowadays is as true as ever. In 1997 Holmberg concluded that in Sweden 'the scale is somewhat tilted. Political leadership and representation run from above carry more weight than responsiveness and representation run from below'.

Our conclusions mainly based on research in the Netherlands do not lead to such an outspoken conclusion. On the one hand we found that the role conceptions of Members of Parliament in general are elitist, leaving little room for representation from below. On the other hand the rise of the Fortuyn movement, later taken over by other populist leaders like Geert Wilders, proves that the party system is anything but insensitive to the mood of the people. But these movements also proof that it takes a political entrepreneur to mobilize these feelings. Therefore, a pure form of representation from below is almost by definition impossible. It always goes hand in hand with political leadership. What the recent populist movements have taught the established parties is that if they are not responsive to the feelings of their voters, these voters will simply leave them. The increasing volatility of the electorate forces political parties and political leaders to be responsive to their voters, even to the extent that some observers fear that the scale has now tilted to the other side and responsiveness is turning into populism.

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Chapter 2
Sources of Elite Democratic Satisfaction: How Elected Representatives Evaluate Their Political System

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DAVID KARLSSON

It is a fragile polity that is not supported by its members. Acknowledging this fact, numerous studies have analyzed political support from the perspective of citizens (for reviews see Dalton, 2004; Levi & Stoker, 2000). However, while we know a lot about the factors that affect citizens' political support, corresponding research on elected representatives is lacking. To begin filling this gap in the research, this chapter explores various sources of elite democratic satisfaction. Precisely, we ask how elected representatives evaluate their political system, and we take as our indicator of political support the well-established survey item "satisfaction with democracy" (SWD) (Klingeman, 1999; Linde & Ekman, 2001; Anderson, 2002).

At this early stage of inquiry, we derive our hypotheses from three lines of research. The first is the theory of democratic elitism (Prothro & Grigg, 1960; McClosky, 1964; see Pefley & Rohrschneider, 2007 for a review). Democratic elitism theory proceeds from the assumption that political (and social) elites function as the guardians of democratic values in a given polity. As a consequence of their privileged position, and their high level of political sophistication, elites are substantially more democratic than the mass public. While the original theory is concerned with attitude constraints and commitment to central demo-

cratic values like "tolerance," we rely on analogy reasoning to hypothesize that elected representatives are more satisfied with democracy than are citizens. A rare previous study on the topic suggests that this is indeed the case (Holmberg, 1996). Hence, our first hypothesis – *the democratic elitism hypothesis* (H1) – is that elected representatives, as a collective, are more satisfied with democracy than citizens.

The second line of research of interest to us relates to the literature that targets citizen democratic satisfaction. This research shows that individual characteristics, as well as the political context, affect how citizens assess their political system. Democratic satisfaction is higher among citizens who have a university education, who belong to privileged social classes, who are male, and who are supporters of established parties in government (Anderson & Guillory, 1997). Additionally, previous studies have underscored the importance of political performance and service quality when explaining citizens' democratic satisfaction (e.g. Dahlberg & Holmberg, 2012). Our second hypothesis – *the identical sources hypothesis* (H2) – asserts that social characteristics, performance evaluations, parliamentary settings (e.g. degree of party conflict, type of ruling coalition, influence and political knowledge of top leaders, etc.), and individual political factors (such as party affiliation and support of the ruling regime), similarly predict democratic satisfaction among representatives and the general public.

The third line of research from which we derive our hypotheses is concerned with differences within the collective of elected representatives (e.g. Bowler, Donovan & Karp, 2006). Importantly, Paul Sniderman and colleagues (1991; 1996) argue that democratic elitism theory overlooks the premise that representatives hold widely different beliefs about democracy, and that these beliefs are anchored in their political position, and in their ideological values (see also Pefley & Rohrschneider, 2007). Similarly, recent surveys of local representatives demonstrate that a number of political attitudes are affected by factors like experiences in differing parliamentary settings, positions, seniority, and the quality of citizen encounters (Gilljam, Karlsson, & Sundell, 2010). Indeed, one study has specifically indicated that the top leaders in local politics are less likely than lower-level representatives to support local elites and more likely to support outsider groups (Karlsson & Erikson, 2009). Our third and final hypothesis is therefore *the political experience hypothesis* (H3), which states that that experiences of privileged positions and political influence have positive effects on rep-

resentatives' democratic satisfaction, and, correspondingly, that experiences of relative powerlessness have negative effects.

Data, design, and modeling strategy

In order to test our hypotheses we need data that allows us to make comparisons between elected representatives and citizens as well as comparisons among representatives in varying positions and parliamentary situations. To achieve this, we will rely on three data sources: two surveys administered to all local and regional elected representatives in Sweden in 2008 and 2012 (KOLFU) (Gilljam et al., 2011; Gilljam & Karlsson, 2013; Gilljam et al., 2010); a survey sent to all members of the Swedish parliament in 2010 (The Riksdag Survey) (Wängnerud, Esaiasson, Gilljam, & Holmberg, 2010); and two surveys of randomly sampled Swedish citizens (SOM) in 2008 and 2010 (Holmberg & Weibull, 2009; Holmberg, Weibull, & Oscarsson, 2011). To allow for systematic evaluations of contextual factors, a comparative local government approach will be applied. Precisely, we will focus primarily on representatives' and citizens' satisfaction with local democracy in the 290 municipalities of Sweden.

In the Swedish national context, a municipality is a complete political system with citizens, elections, elected representatives and public service responsibilities. In fact, Swedish municipalities have political responsibilities that are more extensive than in most non-Scandinavian countries (Karlsson & Johansson, 2008; Loughlin, Hendriks & Lidström, 2010). About one-third of the personal income in Sweden is paid in taxes directly to local and regional government, and municipalities have the possibility to determine the tax rate and the ambition level of local public services. Hence, a large part of the political decisions that directly affect the daily life of Swedish citizens are made at the municipal level. Consequently, local government is an essential part of Swedish democracy, and it is in local politics that citizens are most likely to engage in participatory activities between elections.

In all of the surveys, the question on democratic satisfaction was put in the following way: *On the whole, how satisfied are you with how democracy works: in the EU, in Sweden, in the county council/region where you live, and in the municipality where you live.* For each tier of government four response alternatives were offered: "very satisfied," "rather satisfied," "rather unsatisfied," and "not at all satisfied." For ease of interpretation, we have recoded responses onto a

scale ranging from 0 (not at all satisfied) to 100 (very satisfied). The mean values on this scale will serve as the measurement of democratic satisfaction among the representatives and citizens.

To test support for the democratic elitism hypothesis (H1) we will focus on the differences in democratic satisfaction between representatives and citizens. To test support for the identical sources hypothesis (H2), and the political experience hypothesis (H3), we will rely on OLS-regressions to identify factors that account for differences among representatives and citizens respectively. Four sets of independent variables will be analyzed:

1. *Individual factors*: Previous studies have concluded that individual characteristics may affect the democratic satisfaction of citizens (Anderson & Guillory, 1997). Such factors are obviously not indicators of how the democracy actually works, and effects of individual characteristics should rather be interpreted as factors that make individuals evaluate the same situation differently. In this chapter, five individual factors will be used: gender, age, ethnicity, education level and social class. These factors have been suggested as important in previous studies on democratic satisfaction and/or are associated with the political representation of social groups.

2. *Political performance*: Previous studies suggest that political performance and the performance of public authorities have effects on democratic satisfaction among citizens (e.g. Dahlberg & Holmberg, 2012). In the analysis, we rely on four indicators to illustrate the general condition of the locality (ethnic pluralism, wealth, unemployment rate, and tax rate), and four indicators of trends during the previous three years (change in refugee immigration levels, economic growth, unemployment, and tax rates).

3. *The parliamentary setting:* Previous studies have concluded that political institutions are important explanations for variations in democratic satisfaction among citizens (Aarts & Thomassen, 2008). Other studies have shown that even though the formal institutions of local government are the same within a country, variations in informal institutional settings have considerable effects on the attitudes of representatives (Karlsson, 2013).

In this analysis, seven indicators relating to the political arena in municipalities will be included. The first two relate to the parliamentary situation: type of coalition (measured as dummy variables: oversized coalition, minority rule and a minimum winning coalition as the

control group); and whether a pariah party has a parliamentary balance position (specifically if the municipality is ruled by a minority which would reach a council majority if it includes the anti-immigrant party the Sweden Democrats). Five other indicators, relating to the municipal political area, are drawn from the KOLFU-survey data: degree of party conflict, degree of leading representatives' political knowledge, and the degrees of influence of the executive board, the mayor, and the administrators. The assessment of conflict, knowledge and influence may differ among the members in a council, but their common assessment (the mean value of all council members) is a more objective indicator of the factual situation.

4. *Individual political factors*: The political factors mentioned above are all characteristics of the local political arena, but there are also political factors that could be tied to individual representatives and citizens. One such factor is party affiliation (here measured as dummy variables with Social Democrats as the reference category).

Another important factor, proven in previous research to affect democratic satisfaction among citizens, is support for the ruling regime. The literature on the winners and losers in elections has repeatedly shown that citizens who vote for the winning side in an election are more satisfied with democracy than losers (Blais & Gélineau, 2007), especially in majoritarian political systems (Anderson & Guillory, 1997). Another study has found that the negative effect on democratic satisfaction from losing an election is reduced among opposition sympathizers if they have had recent political victories (Curini, Jou & Memoli, 2012). That winning or losing an election also affects democratic satisfaction among representatives has been shown by Bowler, Donovan and Karp (2006). Whether a representative is a member of the winning, ruling majority or the losing opposition does also affect other attitudes towards democracy (Gilljam & Karlsson, 2012; Gilljam, Persson & Karlsson, 2012). In this study, the win/loss-factor is measured by a variable based on the respondents' party affiliation. A political representative can be a member of the ruling majority or the opposition in the local council, while a citizen can be a supporter of a party in the local ruling majority or of a party in opposition.

So far, all variables under discussion are potentially relevant for both representatives and citizens. To specifically test the political experience hypothesis (H3), we focus on factors relating to the unique ex-

periences of being elected to office. We hypothesize that the following factors will affect satisfaction with democracy among representatives: seniority (measured as the number of years in political office); political position (measured by whether the representative is a top leader – which we define as being chair of the council, executive board or council committee – or whether the representative is a member of the executive board). Finally, we expect that conflictual interactions with citizens will undermine democratic satisfaction among representatives (our measure is self-reported in the KOLFU-survey and shows whether the individual representative was threatened or harassed by citizens at least once in the past twelve months).

General and tier-specific democratic satisfaction

Practically all democracies in the world are organized in a multilevel government system. In the case of Sweden, there are four tiers: the EU, the state, the county/region and the municipality. Elected representatives at each tier are chosen in separate elections, and each tier is responsible for different kinds of public services. Even if politics at the four tiers of government are to some extent intertwined, each tier has its own distinct democratic processes for making political decisions. Over time, Swedish citizens have made different assessments of how democracy works at different tiers, and normally, citizens are most satisfied with national democracy, followed by democracy at the local and regional levels. Swedes have always been least satisfied with democracy at the EU-level (e.g. Holmberg & Weibull, 2005).

However, while a citizen is a citizen of all four tiers, representatives are strongly associated with the particular tier of government where they are elected. As representatives have specific experiences and responsibilities at one particular tier, they could be expected to perceive distinctions in democracy among the different tiers. Citizens, on the other hand, have less motivation, and are perhaps generally less equipped, to make clear distinctions between the tiers of government. Therefore, citizens can be expected to make a general assessment on how democracy works across the various tiers of government. Previous studies have shown that the local authorities' service performance predicts citizen satisfaction with democracy on the national level (Weitz-Shapiro, 2008). If these assumptions are correct, we would expect general democratic satisfaction to be a better predictor of tier-specific democratic satisfaction among citizens than among representatives.

The main dependent variable in our analysis is satisfaction with local democracy. Preliminary results indicate that both representatives' and citizens' democratic satisfaction, at a specific tier of government, to a considerable extent is influenced by their general assessment of democracy for the whole, multilevel government system. This general factor could potentially be so strong that the local factors included in our models would not significantly influence attitudes towards local democracy at all. Therefore, we will use the respondents' democratic satisfaction at the national level as an indicator of general satisfaction when analyzing democratic satisfaction at the local level.

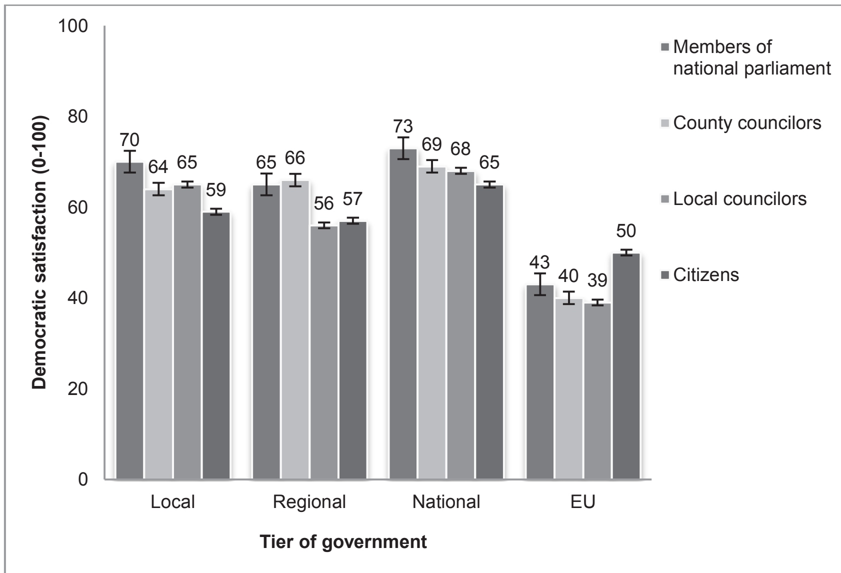
The democratic elitism hypothesis (H1): Are representatives more satisfied with democracy than citizens?

We can determine the differences in democratic satisfaction between elected representatives and citizens by comparing survey responses relating to the democracy at the EU, the national, the regional and the local tiers of government. In these comparisons we are also able to compare the democratic satisfaction of all elected representatives at the national, the regional and the local levels in Sweden. The results from this comparison are presented in Figure 1.

In support of the democratic elitism hypothesis, elected representatives report a higher level of satisfaction with democracy than citizens in the three tiers of government within Sweden; the only exception being satisfaction with regional democracy, where citizens are about as satisfied as local councilors. In absolute terms, the differences between the citizens' degree of democratic satisfaction, and the category of representatives that scores the highest, are 8-11 points on the 0-100 scale. However, a result clearly in conflict with our expectations concerns assessments on how democracy works in the EU. In this case, representatives in all three tiers of government are less satisfied than citizens. Citizens are 7-11 points more satisfied with EU democracy than the representatives.

Then, are elected representatives more satisfied with democracy on the tier of government where they have been elected and less satisfied with the tiers where they are not active?

Figure 1. Democratic satisfaction (0-100) of representatives and citizens at the EU, national, regional and local tiers of government.



Comments: The figure illustrates the degree of democratic satisfaction at four different tiers of government (mean value 0-100) for members of the national parliament (2010, N=309), county and local councilors (2012, N= 1,215 and 9,186) and citizens (2010, N=4,767). 95 percent confidence intervals are displayed.

This assumption has some support as members of the national parliament are the representatives most satisfied with democracy at the national level and county councilors are the representatives most satisfied with democracy at the regional level. However, national representatives are somewhat more satisfied with local democracy than local councilors.

The conclusions so far are that while the democratic elitism hypothesis receives some support, the differences between citizens and representatives are modest, and the results on EU democracy are in conflict with expectations. This latter result is especially surprising since Swedish elected representatives are traditionally seen as being more supportive of the EU than citizens. An interpretation in favour of the democratic elitism hypothesis is that the representatives in our study differ between the EU on the one hand and the three tiers within Sweden on the other, and their “elitist system support” only relates to the latter.

Generally, members of the national parliament show the highest degree of democratic satisfaction and local councilors the lowest. This difference between representative categories does not support the idea that the representatives are a uniform elite, but rather that there are degrees of elitism. The professional, national politicians are the elite of the elite and the local councilors, who in most cases are layman politicians, are closer to the citizens.

The identical sources hypothesis (H2): Do representatives and citizens rely on the same sources of democratic satisfaction?

When testing support for our second hypothesis, the dependent variable is satisfaction with democracy at the local level ("in the municipality where you live"). The determinants at the system level (factors relating to political performance and parliamentary settings) relate to the situation in each municipality. We use OLS-regression to estimate two models for citizens and local representatives respectively, where Model 2 includes a control for general democratic satisfaction (as measured by SWD at the national level). The results are presented in Table 1. The results in Table 1 show that factors relating to parliamentary settings affect representatives to a higher degree than they affect citizens. Two factors have similar effects on both groups: party conflict is negatively associated with democratic satisfaction and political knowledge among leading representatives is positively associated with democratic satisfaction. Three factors have significant effects only among representatives: A strong mayor decreases democratic satisfaction; strong administrators increases satisfaction; and an oversized ruling coalition decreases democratic satisfaction.

The two most important determinants of democratic satisfaction are support of the ruling majority and party affiliation. Among representatives, the effect of representing a majority party is 19 points on the 0-100 scale. Even though we did expected this result (c.f. Bowler et al., 2006), the size of the effect is surprisingly large. The corresponding effect among citizens is smaller (4 points) but it is still one of the most important determinants in this group.

Turning to party affiliation, supporters and members of the Social Democrats and the Left Party are the most satisfied with local democracy while supporters and members of local parties are the least satisfied.

Table 1. Determinants of democratic satisfaction among citizens and local elected representatives in 2008 (OLS-regression, b-values)

	Citizens		**Local representatives**	
	Model 1	*Model 2*	*Model 1*	*Model 2*
Constant	47.1	13.9	35.0*	2.6
General satisfaction				
Satisfaction with national democracy (0-100)	NI	0.5***	NI	0.5***
Individual factors				
Gender (female = 1)	-0.5	0.4	-2.9***	-1.2*
Age: Young (-29 =1)	5.3***	3.4**	0.3	-1.1
Age: Old (65+ =1) (Control group:30-64)	2.2	2.6**	2.6***	2.8***
Ethnicity (immigrant = 1)	0.6	0.8	-4.4***	-4.0***
Education (high = 1)	2.6**	0.4	-0.2	-0.7
Social class (worker = 1)	-1.8	1.1	1.4	2.2**
Political performance				
Unemployment rate, 2008 (percent)	-1.1	-0.2	-0.2	0.2
Unemployment rate, 2005-08 (relative change)	-0.4	-1.1	-0.4	-0.5
Tax rate, 2008 (percent)	-0.6	-0.6	-0.2	0.1
Tax rate, 2005-08 (relative change)	-6.5*	-3.6	0.6	0.7
Wealth (mean income, 2008, 1000 SEK)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Economic Growth, 2005-08 (percent)	0.4	0.2	0.5***	0.3*
Ethnic pluralism (percent foreign born, 2006)	0.1	0.0	0.1*	0.1
Refugee immigration, 2005-08 (arriving refugees per 10,000 inhabitants)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Parliamentary settings				
Type of coalition A: Minority rule = 1	-0.3	0.8	0.2	0.3
Type of coalition B: Oversized coalition = 1 (Control group: MWC.)	0.0	0.2	-2.0**	-1.4*
Pariah party in balance position = 1	0.1	-1.3	0.1	0.8
Degree of party conflict (0-10)	-1.0*	-0.9**	-1.6***	-1.8***
Political knowledge of executive board (0-10)	3.8**	3.6***	6.8***	5.6***
Influence: Strong executive board (0-10)	1.9	0.7	0.0	0.1
Influence: Strong mayor (0-10)	-0.7	-0.9	-3.0***	-2.8***
Influence: Strong administrators (0-10)	-1.5	-0.4	1.1	1.1*
Individual political factors				
Party: Left party =1	-3.8	0.1	-7.9***	-2.9**
Party: Green party =1	-2.6	-2.8	-12.6***	-7.6***
Party: Centre party =1	2.0	-0.7	-3.2***	-4.0***
Party: Liberal party =1	-1.4	-4.7**	-6.4***	-8.2***
Party: Christian democrats =1	-2.1	-3.0	-6.1***	-7.0***
Party: Moderate party =1	-1.3	-4.0***	-3.8***	-6.5***
Party: Sweden democrats =1	-10.6***	-2.5	-22.6***	-5.7*
Party: Others/unaffiliated =1 (Control group: Social democrats)	-16.3***	-8.8**	-15.7***	-10.4***
Supporting the ruling majority =1	5.0***	4.4***	19.1***	18.6***
Adj. R^2	.06	.30	.22	.34

Comments: Data sources are Riks-SOM, 2008 (for citizens, N=2,734) and KOLFU, 2008 (for local elected representatives, N=7,849). A test for collinearity shows that the unemployment indicators (year 2008 and the change from 2005-08) are strongly intercorrelated. However, the two indicators remain in the models as further controls show that neither of the two have a significant effect when the other is excluded, and an exclusion of one indicator does not significantly affect the effects of any other variable in the analysis. NI = variable not included, p-values: * <.05; **<.01; ***<.001.

The local parties are often founded as populist protest organizations against the local elites (c.f. Wörlund, 1999), and it is not surprising that supporters and organizations of such parties are unsatisfied with local democracy. The difference between those affiliated with the most and least satisfied party is only slightly larger among representatives than among citizens. The differences between supporters of different parties are generally larger when democratic satisfaction at the national level is the dependent variable.[1] Controlling for general satisfaction and support/opposition of the local ruling majority, the party effects on local democratic satisfaction are substantially weaker.

Furthermore, the results of Table 1 show that variables relating to individual characteristics and political performance affect both citizens and representatives, but to a much lesser extent than political factors. In both groups, people over the age of 65 are significantly more satisfied than others. And citizens under 30 are also more satisfied than middle-aged citizens (this youthful satisfaction is not mirrored among representatives). Female and immigrant representatives are less satisfied with local democracy than male and native representatives, but these effects are not mirrored among citizens.[2]

Performance factors have surprisingly weak effects on democratic satisfaction among both citizens and representatives. The only significant determinant on local democratic satisfaction is a changed tax rate, showing that raised taxes lower satisfaction. But this effect is no longer significant when controlling for general satisfaction.[3] Among representatives, economic growth in the locality seems to be the only factor that increases local democratic satisfaction.

1 In an analysis where national democratic satisfaction is the dependent variable, Sweden Democrats are the most dissatisfied while supporters and representatives of the parties included in the national government are the most satisfied. This result is valid both among citizens and among representatives, and validates the position of the Sweden Democrats as the most anti-establishment oriented party at the national level. The result also maintains the role of the political winner-loser factor in general.

2 A control analysis shows that traditional explanations of democratic satisfaction among citizens, such as education and social class, show the expected effects on democratic satisfaction at the national level, but there are no separate effects of these factors on local democratic satisfaction when controlling for general satisfaction. This indicates that these factors may have an effect on local democratic satisfaction, but only indirectly via general satisfaction.

3 A follow-up analysis shows that the negative effect of raised taxes is substantial and significant among citizens supporting opposition parties, while the local democratic satisfaction of supporters of the local ruling majority is not at all affected.

The overall result of Table 1 is that the identical sources hypothesis receives support. The main impression is that the factors that affect democratic satisfaction among representatives are basically those affecting citizens. In no case does a factor show opposite effects among representatives compared to among citizens. Even the effect of general democratic satisfaction is identical among representatives and citizens. This is surprising since we expected representatives to make more crystalized evaluations of the democracy at different tiers of government. However, the results also show that the factors included in the model generally have stronger effects on representatives than on citizens, especially the political factors.

The political experience hypothesis (H3): Does the experience of political office affect democratic satisfaction among representatives?

In the final step, we add the representatives' unique experiences of political office to the analysis: seniority, formal position within the political hierarchy, and the experiences of citizen interaction. Because being in majority or in opposition is a major divide, the analysis also tests whether effects of these experiences differ depending on representatives' parliamentary position.

All models in Table 2 below estimate the additional effects of experience-based factors while controlling for the variables in Model 2 above. The effects among all representatives are analyzed in Model 3, while Models 4 and 5 focus on representatives in majority and in opposition, respectively.

The results confirm the expectation that representatives' democratic satisfaction is affected by their experience in political office. A general finding is that representatives in privileged positions (top leaders and members of the executive board) are more satisfied with democracy than backbenchers. The results also indicate that seniority increases democratic satisfaction among representatives. It is perhaps not surprising that those who have personally benefitted from the rules and practices of an established system are more satisfied with how the system works than the system's "losers." The effect of seniority could also be interpreted as another example of this "privilege effect", since senior representatives informally have a leadership role in the political hierarchy, independent of their formal position. However, the seniority effect might also be a result of self-selection, that is: unsatisfied representatives leave politics while the content representatives stay on.

Table 2. Effects of parliamentary settings and experience of political office on representatives' local democratic satisfaction, results by majority and opposition (OLS-regression, b-values)

	All represen-tatives	**Majority parties**	**Opposition parties**
	Model 3	*Model 4*	*Model 5*
General satisfaction, individual and economic factors, party affiliation	CF	CF	CF
Type of rule: minority =1	0.3	-2.2	2.9
Type of rule: oversized =1 (Control group: MWC)	-1.4*	-1.3	-2.9**
Type of rule: pariah party in balance position =1	0.4	3.0	-1.1
Degree of political conflict (0-10)	-1.7***	-0.7***	-3.1***
Political knowledge: Executive board (0-10)	5.6***	4.6***	6.8***
Political power: Executive board (0-10)	0.4	-1.5	2.4
Political power: Mayor (0-10)	-2.9***	1.4*	-7.0***
Political power: Administrators (0-10)	1.0	0.5	2.1*
Seniority, years in political office	0.1***	0.1	0.2***
Top leader (chair of council, board, committee =1)	3.9***	3.6***	17.0***
Member of executive board =1	2.1***	2.2***	2.4**
Threats (threatened at least once the past 12 months =1)	-4.4***	-2.4*	-6.8***
Members of the ruling majority =1	17.6***	NI	NI
Adj. R2	.35	.24	.26

Comments: Data source is KOLFU, 2008 (Model A: N=7,849, Model B N=4,249, Model C N=3,450). In all models, local democratic satisfaction (0-100) is the dependent variable. CF = controlled for, NI = not included. P-values: * <.05, **<.01, ***<.001.

Another result in Table 2 is that representatives who have recently been threatened or harassed by citizens are less satisfied with democracy than their colleagues. The fact that representatives, when evaluating their political system, weigh citizen encounters, further underlines the result that personal experiences affect satisfaction with democracy.

Perhaps the most important result in Table 2 is that several factors affect majority representatives and opposition representatives differently (Models 4 and 5). This suggests that political strategy significantly affects the judgment of representatives. The ruling majority and the opposition are two political counterparts that have different political goals: The ruling majority wants to secure its privileged position and the opposition wants to replace the majority, or at least to make its rule unsuccessful. If a political factor has different impacts on demo-

cratic satisfaction among majority and opposition representatives, the assessments are likely to be affected by strategic calculations in relation to these goals.

This is most notable in the way majority and opposition representatives are affected by the political strength of the mayor (i.e. the chair of the executive board). A strong mayor makes majority representatives more satisfied with local democracy and opposition representatives more dissatisfied. A strong mayor is an important asset for the majority and a disadvantage for the opposition. The individualized leadership of the majority's leader reduces the relative influence of the collective bodies where the opposition is present (i.e. the council and the executive board) and possibly affects their chances to do well in coming elections.

Above we saw that influential administrators affect democratic satisfaction positively, which was a bit surprising. One would perhaps expect that politicians saw it as a democratic problem if administrators – and not elected representatives like themselves – had political power. However, the results of Table 2 reveal that the positive effect is only significant on the opposition side of the aisle. Perhaps the opposition views a strong bureaucracy as an ally against the majority, or at least an impediment for the ruling majority which the opposition appreciates.

Furthermore, the results of Table 2 show that oversized ruling coalitions – which earlier was identified as a negative factor for representatives' democratic satisfaction – in fact only have a negative effect among opposition representatives. In a situation where more parties than necessary have been included in the ruling majority, those who in the end were left out are especially unhappy and marginalized.

The degree of party conflict is a negative factor for democratic satisfaction on both sides of the aisle, but to a higher degree among opposition representatives. A culture of party conflict is often a result of the relationship between the majority and the opposition going sour. And when the relations are hostile, opposition members are likely weakened and hence more discontent.

Top leaders are rare among opposition representatives, as such positions are generally assigned to majority members. However, there are exceptions and the few top leaders who are in the opposition are much more satisfied with democracy than other opposition representatives. Additionally, the top leader effect is much stronger among opposition

than majority representatives. Seniority, i.e. the number of years a representative has held political office, is a positive factor for democratic satisfaction among opposition representatives, but not significantly so among majority representatives. As most formal top leader positions are awarded to majority representatives, perhaps informal hierarchy factors are more important among opposition representatives.

Conclusions: Elitism and political strategy

This chapter evaluates support for three broad hypotheses. The democratic elitism hypothesis predicts that elected representatives, as defenders of the system, will be more satisfied with democracy than citizens. In this study, we have found that even though representatives are generally more satisfied with democracy than citizens, the differences between the two are relatively small and in one case (attitudes towards democracy at the EU-level) citizens are more satisfied than are representatives. The hypothesis is thus only partly confirmed.

Other results in the chapter add to the elitism theory. Elected representatives are not a coherent group when it comes to system support, and a general pattern seems to be that there are grades of elitism: privileged representatives are more satisfied than less privileged; professional representatives at the national level are more satisfied than laymen representatives at the local level; majority representatives are more satisfied than opposition representatives; senior representatives are more satisfied than junior representatives; and representatives with higher positions within the political hierarchy are more satisfied than backbenchers. All of these results support the democratic elitism theory if we recognize that there are elites within the elite.

Our second hypothesis was that representatives and citizens evaluate the political system through similar sources. This hypothesis was generally supported, as most factors that affected representatives also affected citizens in a similar way. But we also noted that representatives were affected by more factors, especially those relating to local parliamentary settings. However, the fact that elected representatives are more affected by political factors than citizens does not mean that citizens are unaffected. The factors that influence democratic satisfaction among both representatives and citizens are membership/support of the ruling party, party affiliation, the degree of party conflict, and the competence of political leaders.

The unique experiences of representatives were the focus of our third hypothesis, which stated that such experiences would explain variation in democratic satisfaction among representatives. This hypothesis was clearly confirmed. As mentioned above, seniority and formal positions affect the degree of satisfaction. We also found that threats and harassment from citizens negatively affect the democratic satisfaction of the representative victim.

Perhaps the most important result of the analysis was the discovery of party political strategy as an explanation of democratic satisfaction among representatives. It was expected that majority representatives would be more satisfied with democracy than opposition representatives, but the difference we found was large and remarkably consistent across indicators.

Our major findings on the elitism factor and the importance of political strategy are illustrated in Figure 2, where the diverging levels of democratic satisfaction between majority and opposition supporters/members, among citizens and local elected representatives, are compared.

Figure 2. Democratic satisfaction among representatives and citizens by support/membership of local ruling majority and (among representatives) political position. Predicted mean values.

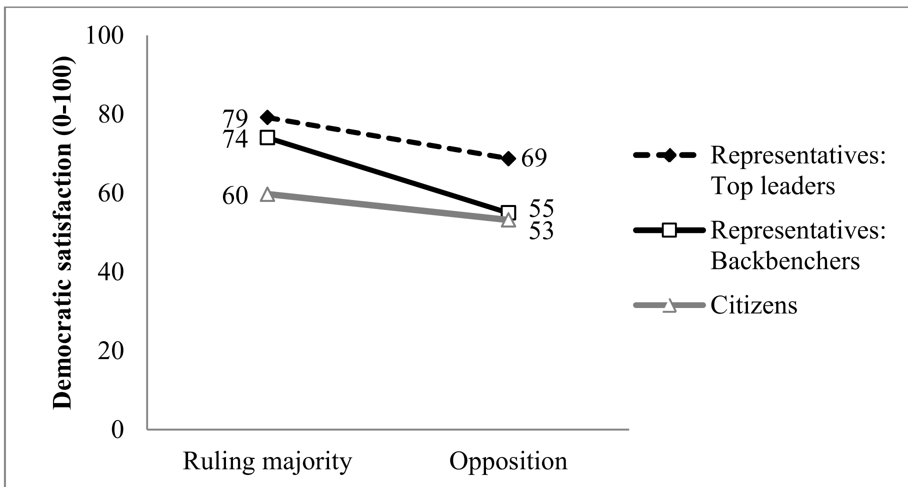


Figure 2 illustrates that representatives are more satisfied with their democratic system than citizens, but it also qualifies this result by

showing the important implications of political self-interest. In fact, the difference between majority and opposition representatives is larger than the difference between representatives and citizens. Furthermore, the levels of democratic satisfaction among citizens who support the local opposition, and representatives who are opposition backbenchers, are almost the same, and hence opposition representatives are less satisfied than citizens who support parties in the ruling the majority. We might also see some signs of co-optation among opposition members, where opposition representatives with top leadership positions are almost as satisfied with democracy as majority members without such positions. Being in opposition does decrease a representative's democratic satisfaction considerably, but the negative effect of being in an outsider position could to a high degree be compensated by promotion into high political offices. The opposition backbenchers are the least satisfied of all, and it may be that this group is extra sensitive to further political humiliation.

When the effect of factors relating to parliamentary settings on majority and opposition representatives was compared, the strategic dimension became even more apparent. Some of the differences between majority and opposition representatives could only be interpreted in the light of their different roles and differing political self-interest due to parliamentary position. Opposition members generally face an uphill battle when trying to influence policy decisions. Our results indicate that the presence of a strong mayor adds to the opposition's troubles, while strong administrators might serve as allies. A high degree of political conflict is possibly a result of the ruling majority's intention to keep their political opposition at bay.

The theory of democratic elitism builds on a view that the responsibilities of political office ennoble the representatives into supporting important democratic values. Political strategy on the other hand is a political self-interest-based explanation where representatives' views on the political system are coloured by their ambition to keep or attain political power.

Determining which of the two explanations is most valid must be a task for future research. But awaiting this research we can conclude that irrespective of what their actual incentives are, the political elite are more supportive of the democratic system than citizens, and most supportive of all are the elites within the elite.

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Chapter 3
The Story of the Gender Gap in Swedish Politics: Only Partially Diminishing Differences

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This is the story of the gender gap in Swedish politics. By taking a long-term perspective, we are able to show that differences between women and men are diminishing in some areas but not in others. Indicators on participation and engagement – *political form* – show that women and men today are almost on the same level. However, indicators on *political content* tell a different story. The gender gap in party choice was "historically big" in the election 2010 (Oscarsson & Holmberg, 2013 p. 94). Moreover, in that same election there was a clear difference in women's and men's priority lists over important issues, and differences in attitudes remained in some policy areas, like the support for a six-hour workday, on a remarkably high level.

The overall conclusion of this chapter is that there is no linear development towards a closing gender gap. This is somewhat surprising; it could have been the case that all indicators pointed in the same direction; towards diminishing effects of gender. In an international perspective, Sweden is a gender equal society. Women's involvement in higher education and the labor market is strong. Men are increasingly using the opportunity, guaranteed by parental leave legislation, to stay home with small children for a longer period of time. Women are visible on political top-positions, even though the prime-minister and the influential minister of finance both are men. However, what the long-

term perspective tells us is that the size of the gender gap varies over time. Some gaps that once seemed to be vanishing have in the last few years returned with renewed strength.

In this study we focus on the long-term trends and not on the details. The aim is to compare indicators on political form and indicators on political content. The finding is that these two dimensions of politics do not always work in tandem: when women become more equal to men in political participation and engagement, they apparently make other choices when it comes to political substance. Why women make these other choices will however only be briefly discussed. We will concentrate on analyzing long-term trends in several different areas: turnout, party membership, self-reported political interest, support for the Social Democratic Party versus the Conservative Party, the most important policy areas in voters' choice of party, and, finally, attitudes towards a number of policy proposals.

The rest of the chapter will proceed as follows: First we will discuss the concept of women's interests. The concept is contested but in order to understand empirical findings we need some guidance on why women and men differ in attitudes and priorities. In this section, we will also discuss recent findings from the United States identifying a plateau where the public support for gender equality no longer is increasing. Thereafter we will discuss the indicators used and also argue for the choice to focus on Sweden. In the section on results, we report the main findings of this study and in the concluding discussion we point out areas for further research. It is obvious that there is a need for a revival for gender research in the area of electoral studies. The role of gender is complex and the theoretical challenge facing this strand of research should not be underestimated.

The concept of women's interests

In a recent overview-article, focusing mainly on the situation in the United States, Nancy Burns and Katherine Gallagher (2010, p. 426) conclude that "There are many good studies on gender and public opinion. But as it stands now, the literature is not yet more than the sum of its parts." Studies are becoming increasingly specialized but very few take one step back and reflect on the big picture.

A closely related area to gender and public opinion research, is research on women in parliaments. In this strand of research, there is an ongoing debate on the concept of women's interests which can be used

as a point of departure for the forthcoming analyses. A core idea in research on substantive representation,[1] that is research on effects of women's presence in parliaments, is that there are certain interests and concerns that arise from women's experiences and that these will be inadequately addressed in a politics that is dominated by men. However, as already pointed out, the concept of women's interests is contested. Contemporary debates concern features of elitism in gender research – that is, a tendency to ascribe certain interest to women in a top-down fashion – and also features of essentialism: the tendency to view women and men as fixed, rather than changeable, categories. Debates also concern how gender is related to categories such as ethnicity, age, and class (Dietz, 2003). In her book *The Politics of Presence*, Anne Phillips (1995) presents a line of reasoning that is as close as one gets to a mainstream argumentation:

> "Women have distinct interest in relation to child-bearing (for any foreseeable future, an exclusively female affair); and as society is currently constituted they also have particular interests arising from their exposure to sexual harassment and violence, their unequal position in the division of paid and unpaid labor and their exclusion from most arenas of economic or political power." (Phillips, 1995, pp. 67-68)

When Phillips concretizes the concept of women's interests she stresses context; women's interests are connected to how societies are currently constituted. This contextual approach implies that concepts such as women's interests and gender equality are anchored in time and space and more exact definitions have to be worked out in relation to the actual society, and to the actual time-period, studied.

In this chapter, some analyses dates back to the 1920s and 1950s, but most dates back to the 1980s. What we have at hand is, at minimum, data that span more than two decades. During this time-period there have been dramatic shifts in women's position vis-à-vis men in Sweden. We will not get into details but what should be pointed out

1 A much used distinction in research on women in parliaments is descriptive representation, focusing on the number of women elected to national parliaments in the world, and substantive representation, focusing on effects of women's presence in parliament. In her book, The Politics of Presence, Anne Phillips (1995) presents reasons for expecting a link between descriptive and substantive representation.

in the context of Sweden is the double dependency that women historically have had in relation to the welfare state; both as receivers of welfare and as employees within the welfare state sector. We perceive the debate on women's interests to be a debate on opportunities for self-determination and in Sweden, as in the other Nordic countries, women's opportunities for self-determination have been closely aligned with the expansion of the welfare state (Bergqvist et al., 2000; Hernes, 1987; Sainsbury, 1999). However, taking one step back, we would like to denote this area as a conflict not over the welfare state per se but over the issue how to be able to successfully combine family life and working life; what is sometimes labeled "care-and-career-politics" (Skjeie, 1992; Grönlund & Öun, 2010). Thus, in order to be more specific, we perceive women's interests to be related to personal integrity – the absence of sexualized harassment and violence – and to the possibility to successfully combine working life and family life.[2]

Before we move on to the presentation of our indicators, we would like to point out that debates on interests often end up in debates on substance. To differentiate interests is a matter of concretizing that which various groups can expect to gain from political inclusion.[3] Anna Jónasdóttir (1991) however argued that interests are about "being there" and thus she emphasized the dimension that has to do with political participation and engagement. Empirical research show that there is no straightforward way to understand the relationship between those two dimensions: for example, one cannot expect a linear relationship where an equalization of political participation and engagement leads to a shared political agenda (Oskarson, 2009; Wängnerud, 2009).

In an ambitious longitudinal study in the United States, Cotter, Hermsen, and Vanneman (2011) analyze gender role attitudes from 1977 to 2008. Their main finding is that, after becoming consistently more egalitarian for more than two decades, gender role attitudes among citizens in the United States have changed little since the mid-1990s. Cotter, Hermsen, and Vanneman identify the emergence of a

2 What is reflected here is an approach that focuses on capability aspects; self-determination is related to aspects like income, having money of your own, education and health.

3 Important to note is that the concept of interests is not limited to gender research. For example, Hanna Pitkin (1967, p. 156 point out) that the concept of interests is "ubiquitous" in debates on political representation.

plateau and ascribe the lack of change to the rise of a cultural frame where stay-at-home-mothering is combined with a feminist rhetoric of choice and equality. This frame is different from previous cultural frames, apparent in the 1970s and 1980s, that more clearly emphasized a shift away from traditional gender roles.

To sum up, in this study we will concentrate on the comparison between gender gaps in the dimensions political form versus political content. In 1995 we published the book *Kvinnor som väljare och valda*[4] (Oskarson & Wängnerud, 1995) where the analyses were structured in a similar way. Our finding then was a closing gender gap in political form, but not in political content. A key issue for the following empirical analysis is how developments have occurred since then: do we find a plateau like in the studies from the United States?

Indicators on political form vs. political content

The possibility to follow developments over time have guided our choice of indicators: We have picked three indicators on political form – turnout, party membership, and subjectively reported political interest – and three indicators on political content – party choice (the Conservative Party versus the Social Democratic Party), priorities of important policy areas in voters' choice of party, and attitudes towards four different policy proposals that have featured in the political debate in Sweden. For all these indicators we have data that span more than two decades.

The choice of different policy proposals should be further discussed. The long-term perspective is important but our choice has been guided by additional principles. First, we have picked two proposals that relate to the structure of the welfare state: proposals *reduce the public sector* and *provide more healthcare under private management*. Secondly, we have picked two proposals that more clearly relate to how we have defined the concept of women's interests: proposal *ban all forms of pornography*, that relates to personal integrity, and *introduce a six-hour work day for all workers*, that relates to the possibility to successfully combine a working-life and a family life. The idea here

4 In English, the title is Women as voters and elected representatives. In this study we have, due to word-limit, excluded the elected representatives.

is to get a picture of how useful it is to separate a discussion on women's interests from a discussion on the structure of the welfare state.

In this study, we do not focus on gender role attitudes as in the previously mentioned study from the United States (Cotter, Hermsen, & Vanneman, 2011). This means that, if we find the same pattern, there are reasons for talking about a widespread trend in the area of gender and public opinion. From that perspective, our choice of focusing on Sweden is of utter importance. Sweden is an international forerunner in the field of gender equality and it differs from the United States in many ways: in terms of the structure of the welfare state, in terms of the electoral system, etcetera. Once again, if we find the same pattern here as in the United States this will strengthen the idea of something more general going on in Western democracies.

The data used is from SNES, the Swedish National Elections Study Program, at the Department of Political Science, University of Gothenburg. Data on turnout and party-membership has been gathered by Statistics Sweden. Questions used will be presented in more detail together with the presentation of results.

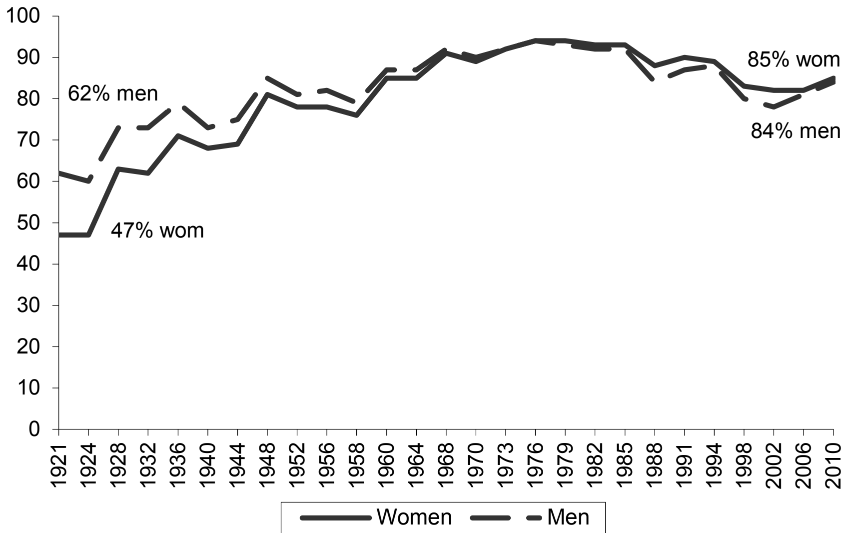
Results

Indicators on political form

In Sweden, women gained universal suffrage through a constitutional reform in 1919-1921.[5] The road that led to the franchise was paved with protests and campaigns targeting decision-makers, but also with mobilization efforts targeting women (Wängnerud 2012). However, in the first national election where women could participate on equal terms with men there was a rather big gender gap in turnout: 62% of men, and 47% of women, used their right to vote which corresponds to a gap of 15 percentage point. In the 1930s the gap had diminished to below 10 percentage points and since the election in 1979 the gap has been reversed. In the last general election in Sweden, 2010, 85% among women and 84% among men voted. Figure 1 report developments in turnout among women and men between 1921 and 2010.

5 Men had gained universal suffrage in 1907-1909. At the municipal level women had voting rights before 1919-1921 even though these rights, in practice, were restricted to a small group of rich widows.

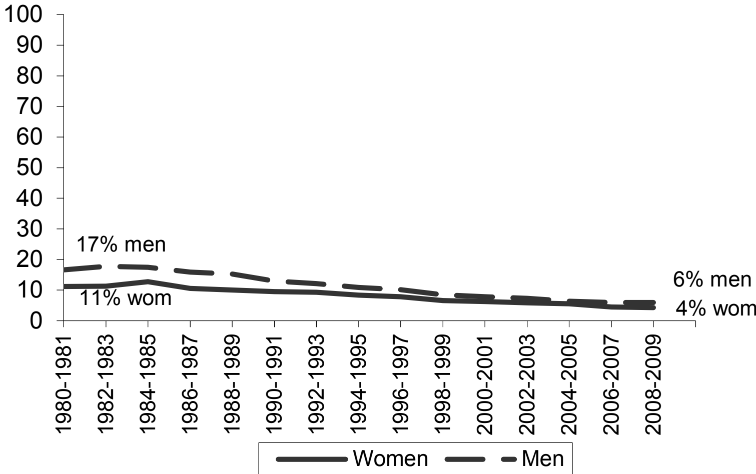
Figure 1 Turnout among women and men in Sweden 1921 – 2010 (%)



Comment: Data from Statistics Sweden.

There is no reason to make a big point out of the reversed gender gap; differences are small and women's higher levels of participation could, in the case of turnout, be interpreted as a higher propensity among women for norm compliance. For the following two indicators on political form there is however no societal norm telling people in Sweden what they "should" do. Figure 2 report developments in party membership among women and men in Sweden between 1980 and 2008. Figures have been gathered by Statistics Sweden and builds on self-reported membership (similar results occur if one relies on membership figures reported by parties themselves). The first thing to note in figure 2 is that Swedish parties have been losing members. This development has been highlighted in several reports (cf. Petersson *et. al.*, 2000). The drop was especially big during the 1980s.

Figure 2 Party membership among women and men in Sweden 1980/81 – 2008/9 (%)

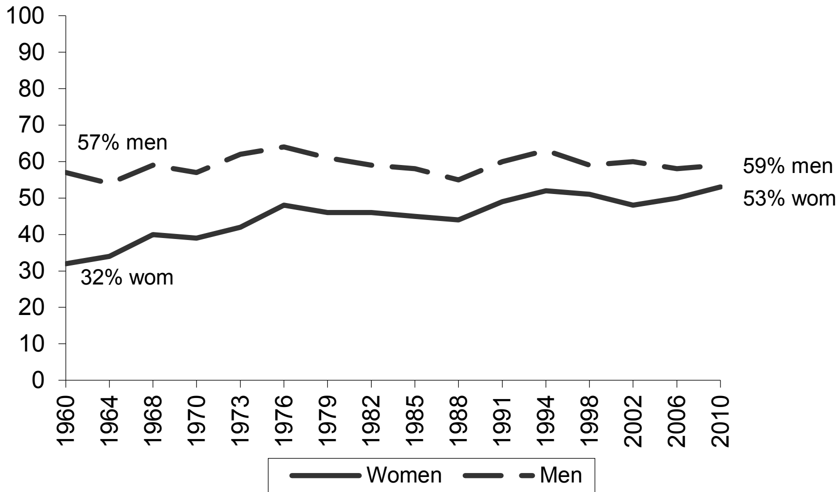


Comment: Data from Statistics Sweden (self-reported membership).

Secondly, what should be noted is that while this drop has been taking place there has been a trend towards a closing gender gap: in 1980 17% among men and 11% among women were party members which corresponds to a gap of 6 percentage points. In 2008 the gap was only 2 percentage points – that year 6% among men and 4% among women reported membership in a party.

So far, the results could be interpreted as an indication of decreased levels of political involvement and engagement among citizens in Sweden: party membership is going down and turnout is lower today than it was in the 1970s. The third indicator on political form however point in another direction: towards increased levels of political involvement. In figure 3 we report findings on self-reported political interest. Respondent have been facing four response alternatives "very interested", "fairly interested", "not so interested", and "not interested at all". Included in the figure are percentages answering very or fairly interested (categories merged).

Figure 3 Political interest among women and men in Sweden 1960 – 2010. Percentage very and fairly interested.



Comment: Self-reported political interest. Respondents could choose between four response alternatives “very interested”, “fairly interested”, “not so interested” or “not interested at all”. The figure shows the categories very and fairly interested merged. Source: Oskarson & Wängnerud (1995). Additional data provided by Per Hedberg, the Swedish National Elections Study Program, Department of Political Science, University of Gothenburg. Approximately 2-3,000 respondents at each occasion.

The level of political interest has increased in Sweden since the 1960s. What the results in figure 3 visualize is that this increase is due to changes among women: in 1960 32% among women reported that they were very or fairly interested in politics, in 2010 the corresponding figure was 53%, which represents an increase of 21 percentage points. Among men, the level has remained rather stable: in 1960 57% among men reported that they were very or fairly interested in politics, in 2010 the corresponding figure was 59%. If we turn to changes in the size of the gender gap, the results in figure 3 show that in 1960 the gender gap was 25 percentage points but only 6 percentage points in 2010.

It is tempting to get into a discussion on explanations for the developments reported. But so far we will only conclude that all indicators on political form points in the same direction; towards a closing gender gap. Today, there is really no reason to talk about a gender gap

either for turnout, party membership, or political interest. Compared to earlier time-periods current differences between women and men are small. In the next section we will report results for the three indicators on political content: party choice, most important policy areas in voters' choice of party, and attitudes towards four policy alternatives.

Indicators on political content

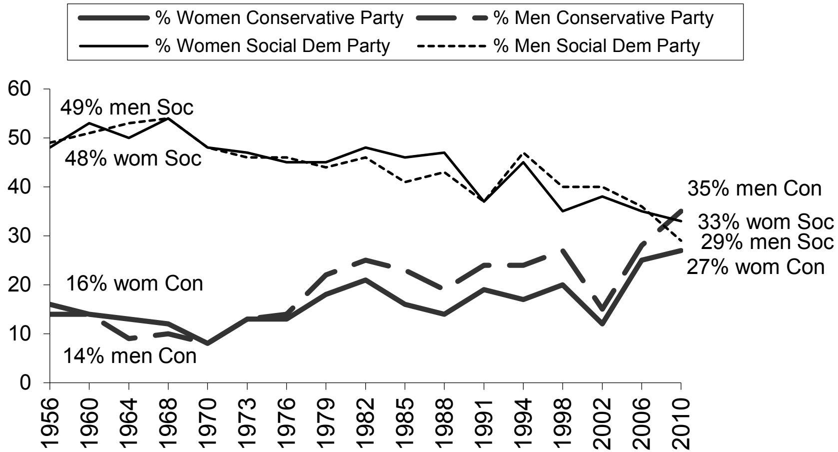
It is widely recognized that the Social Democratic Party, for a long period of time, dominated the Swedish political scene. It is also relatively well known that the support for the Social Democratic Party, in recent decades, has decreased significantly. At the same time the support for the Conservative Party has increased. In figure 4 we report support among women and men, percentage of votes, for the Conservative Party versus the Social Democratic Party, in national elections 1956 to 2010. Our choice is to focus on the two parties that currently are the major parties in Swedish politics. In figure 4 results for men are reported in dotted lines and for women in solid lines. Results for the Conservative Party are reported in thicker lines and for the Social Democratic Party in thinner lines.

An early finding in electoral studies was that women tended to be more conservative than men. This was explained by higher levels of religiosity among women. However, for Sweden, during the time-period we study, this finding has only been true at three occasions and that is in the elections 1956, 1964 and 1968. In 1956, 16% among women and 14% among men voted for the Conservative Party. From the election 1976 and onwards the level of support for the Conservative Party has been higher among men than women. The election 2010 displays a remarkably big gender gap; in that election 35% among men and 27% among women voted for the Conservative Party which represents a gap of 8 percentage points.

If we turn to the results for the Social Democratic Party patterns look a bit different. In the 1960s and 1970s there were no or only very small gender gaps in levels of support for the Social Democratic Party.

However in the 1980s all elections display a higher level of support among women but for the 1990s the gender gap is reversed with higher levels of support among men. In the elections 2006 and 2010 more women than men voted for the Social Democratic Party – for the election 2010 the figures were 33% among women and 29% among men which represents a gender gap of 4 percentage points.

Figure 4 Support for the Conservative Party versus the Social Democratic Party among women and men 1956 – 2010 (%)



Comment: Source: Holmberg, S. and Oscarsson, H. (2004). Additional data provided by Per Hedberg, the Swedish National Elections Study Program, Department of Political Science, University of Gothenburg. Approximately 2-3,000 respondents at each occasion.

What is most interesting to note in figure 4 is however that the dotted lines, representing results among men, cross which means that among men the support for the Conservative Party currently is bigger than the support for the Social Democratic Party. In the election 2010 35% among men voted for the Conservative Party and 29% for the Social Democratic Party. The solid lines, representing results among women, do not cross. In the election 2010 33% among women voted for the Social Democratic Party and 27% for the Conservative Party. We would like to repeat the quote from Oscarsson and Holmberg (2013, p. 94) stating that the gender gap in party choice was "historically big" in the election 2010.

We will now turn to the other two indicators on political content: most important policy areas in voters' choice of party and attitudes towards four different policy alternatives. Research on attitudes examines what solutions are favored once an issue is on the political agenda. In contrast, research on important policy areas focuses on an earlier step, asking which issues that receive attention in the first place. In table 1 we report results from an open-ended question that have been

included in the SNES questionnaires since 1982. Respondents are asked to state what they consider the most important issues for their party choice. The answers are classified according to a detailed coding-scheme. In table 1 we report the three most frequently mentioned policy areas among women and men between 1982 and 2010. The grey shading marks the policy area “social policy”. For 2010 we have also included results for two broad categories: the first category merging all respondents answering “social policy”, “health care” or “elderly care” and the second category merging all respondents answering “jobs” or “economy”.

Since the election 1998 social policy is the number one policy area among women when they decide which party to vote for. The grey shading visualize that, over time, social policy receives a position as a top-three-issue among men. However, it is only in the election 2002 that social policy is the most frequently mentioned area among men. High on men’s list we find jobs, taxes and economy. Jobs is also frequently mentioned by women as an important policy area, but that is not true for the areas taxes or economy.

The results for the merged categories in 2010, underline that there is a gender gap in attention for different policy areas. More women than men emphasized social policy, health care, and elderly care, and more men than women emphasized jobs and economy. One can always dispute over whether gaps are small or big – whether the glass is half-empty or half-full – however what we note is an indication of an emerging plateau in the mid-1990s with “jobs” as the number one issue among men and “social policy” as the number one issue among women.

Table 1 The three most important policy areas in voters' choice of party 1982-2006

	Women	Percentage	Men	Percentage
2010	Social policy	44	Jobs	33
	Education	33	Social policy	29
	Jobs	30	Economy	20
2006	Social policy	39	Jobs	37
	Jobs	32	Social policy	26
	Education	31	Education	18
2002	Social policy	54	Social policy	44
	Education	43	Education	35
	Pensions/elder care	29	Taxes	25
1998	Social policy	30	Jobs	33
	Jobs	27	Social policy	20
	Pensions/elder care	19	Taxes	18
1994	Jobs	39	Jobs	42
	Environment	26	Economy	37
	Social policy	25	Social policy	18
1991	Environment	29	Economy	24
	Social policy	27	Jobs	23
	Family policy	26	Environment	22
1988	Environment	50	Environment	43
	Family policy	24	Taxes	23
	Social policy	18	Social policy	12
1985	Family policy	25	Jobs	26
	Environment	23	Environment	23
	Jobs	23	Taxes	23
1982	Workers' funds	27	Workers' funds	38
	Jobs	27	Jobs	31
	Social policy	14	Economy	19

A special look at 2010:

	social policy/health care/elderly care	jobs/economy
Women	54	38
Men	40	48
Diff	+14	-10

Comment: Source: Oskarson & Wängnerud (1995). Additional data provided by Per Hedberg, the Swedish National Elections Study Program, Department of Political Science, University of Gothenburg. Approximately 2-3,000 respondents at each occasion.

In figure 5 we report attitudes towards four different policy alternatives that have featured in the political debate in Sweden. Dotted lines represent attitudes among men, and solid lines attitudes among wom-

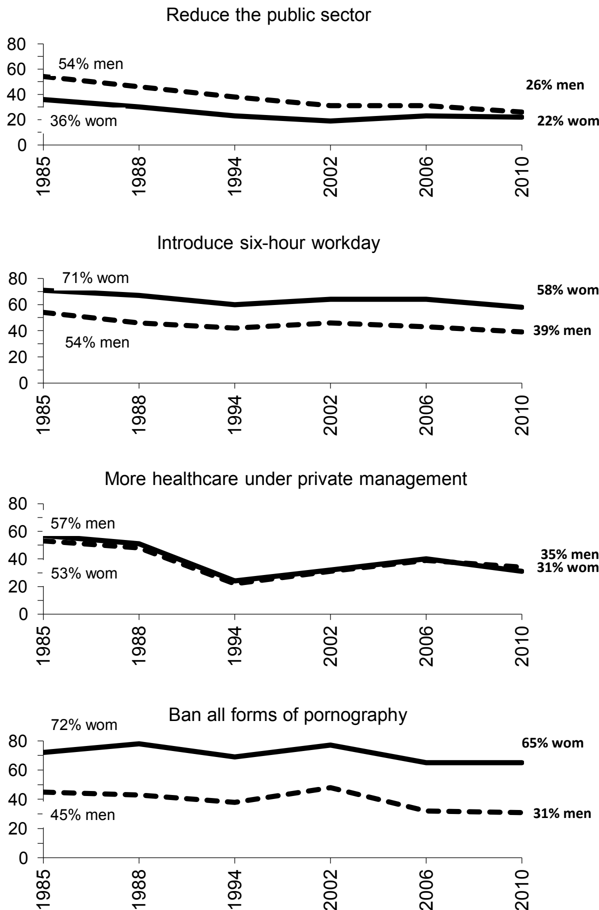
en. Percentages represent the number answering “very good” or “fairly good” proposal i.e. the numbers supporting each alternative.

We will start by commenting on the fact that the two proposals measuring attitudes towards the structure of the welfare state, “reduce the public sector” and “provide more healthcare under private management”, display comparatively small gender gaps. For the proposal “reduce the public sector” the gender gap is actually decreasing over time. It is worth noting that attitudes among men voters, on this specific proposal, are becoming more in line with the attitudes among women voters resulting in a rather low level of support. For the proposal “provide more healthcare under private management” the gender gap among voters has never been big, and also here the results display a rather low level of support (there is a decrease in support over time). Thus, the main finding here is that when proposals concern the structure of the welfare state we find small gender gaps among citizens in Sweden.

The next thing to comment on is that results look different when we focus on the two other proposals included in figure 5: “ban all forms of pornography” and “introduce a six-hour workday for all workers”. In earlier sections, we have presented pornography as an issue that affects personal integrity for women and the introduction of a six-hour workday as an issue that affects women’s possibilities to successfully combine a working life and a family life. The results in figure 5 visualize that the gender gaps is comparatively big on these two proposals and it is worth noting that among women voters the support for the proposal to ban all forms of pornography and introduce a six-hour workday remain remarkably stable and on a high level – a majority of women support each of these alternatives.

We have previously discussed results from the United States identifying the rise, in the mid-1990s, of a plateau in gender role attitudes. Our indicators are different but they represent highly gender-relevant topics. The results for Sweden show that there is no unanimous support for the idea of the emergence of a plateau in the public opinion. There is however an indication on very small changes in the opinion among women voters in the areas that most clearly can be defined as women’s interests. This can be interpreted as a sign of underlying factors that hamper further developments in equalizing directions.

Figure 5 Attitudes: Proportions of women and men in Sweden who support specific proposals 1985 – 2010.



Comment: The question reads. "The following list covers a number of proposals that have featured in the political debate. What is your opinion of each of them?" For each proposal, the alternatives were "very good proposal," "good proposal," "neither good nor bad proposal," "bad proposal," and "very bad proposal." The table shows the percentages in favour (very good and good proposal, combined). The exact wording of each proposal: "reduce the public sector;" "provide more healthcare under private management;" "ban all forms of pornography;" and "introduce a six-hour workday for all workers." Source: Oskarson & Wängnerud (1995). Additional data provided by Per Hedberg, the Swedish National Elections Study Program, Department of Political Science, University of Gothenburg. Approximately 2-3,000 respondents at each occasion.

The need for cross-country comparisons and intersectional studies

It is a theoretical challenge to further develop the distinction between political form and political content. If one reads between the lines, it appears like we, in this study, had expected a closing gender gap also on the indicators that relate to political content. But, why should one expect that increased levels of political engagement and involvement leads to a similar political agenda? From our perspective, with the Swedish context in mind, the answer is that we built our expectations on knowledge about increased levels of participation of women in higher education and the labor force, and the increased number of men using parental leave opportunities for staying home with small children.

Some of the most dramatic changes in women's position vis-à-vis men in Sweden were taking place in the 1960s and 1970s and most of our indicators on political content start in the 1980s. However, the picture we had in mind was of a transformation that started in earlier time-periods but continued like a "rising tide" (Inglehart & Norris, 2003). Before drawing more far-reaching conclusions this area need more cross-country comparisons and also more detailed studies that take into account developments within sub-groups e.g. by simultaneously taking class, gender and ethnicity into account. At this point we can only suggest that there may be some limits to expectations on a smooth processes towards a gender equal polity, if one by that mean a polity where no, or only few, gender gaps exist.

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Chapter 4
Call Me Maybe? Politicians' Views of Citizen-Initiated Contacts with Elected Representatives. A Survey and Experiment with Swedish Politicians.

ELIN NAURIN AND PATRIK ÖHBERG

In most Western democracies, citizens' political participation is shifting away from traditional participation in political parties to more individualized and short-term participation (Norris 2002; Stolle and Hooghe 2005; Stolle and Micheletti 2013). It has therefore been argued that direct citizen-initiated contacts where citizen meet with, telephone or write to individual politicians have become increasingly important as means to affect political decisions in between elections (Aars and Strømsnes 2007; Hooghe and Marien 2012).

In this chapter, we take as our point of departure that little is known about how efficient citizen-initiated contacts with individual politicians are compared to other types of political participation when it comes to affecting actual policy. Our analyses focus on politicians' *perceptions* of whether it is a good idea to contact a politician and the first question is: Do politicians believe that citizen-initiated contacts are efficient as means to affect public policy? To answer the question, we analyze data from the 2010 Study of Swedish Members of Parliament and compare MPs' perceptions of citizen-initiated contacts to their perceptions of citizens' other ways of influencing politics. In our second question, we try to dig deeper into the concept of citizen-

initiated contacts by making a difference between *citizen-initiated contacts* and *voter-initiated contacts*. We ask: Do politicians react differently when their own voters make the contact compared to when citizens in general make contact? To answer the question, we perform an experiment where we ask politicians in the online Swedish survey Panel of Politicians to react to different scenarios where their own voters respectively citizens in general make contact.

Background

There are large literatures on how citizens' take part in elections, how they engage in political parties, and how they participate in demonstrations and in different types of protests. However, less attention has been dedicated to the form of political participation where individual citizens initiate direct contact with individual politicians to change political decisions (Aars and Strømsnes 2007; Thomas and Melkers 2001).

The studies that exist indicate that citizen-initiated contacts with politicians are different from participatory democratic expressions such as political protests, signing of petitions and demonstrations. Instead, personal contacts with individual politicians are treated as having adherence to representative democracy and as being related to participation within political parties and voting in elections. Hooghe and Marien (2012) investigate perceptions of non-institutionalized citizen participation in Belgium and define "institutionalized participation" as engagements in a political party, voting in elections and making contact with politicians via letter or e-mail. "Non-institutionalized" participation is defined as "all other acts, such as political consumerism, demonstrations, illegal demonstrations, obtaining media attention, signing petitions, working in a voluntary organisation or taking part in Internet discussions" (Hooghe and Marien 2012: 8; compare Dalton 2008; Marien et al. 2010).

Hooghe and Marien's (2012) theoretical point of departure gets empirical support by Aars and Strømsnes' (2007) analyses of political participation in Norway. Aars and Strømsnes' (2007) find that citizen-initiated contacts with politicians are more related to conventional modes of political participation, for example party-related activities, than to demonstrations and protests (see also Hooghe and Quintelier 2012). Similarly, in the field of public administration research, citizen-initiated contacts with politicians are found to be related to institu-

tional participation, for example as means to change decisions made by non-elected public officials on administrative positions (Thomas and Melkers 2001).

Studies that evaluate how often citizens contact individual politicians indicate that between 10 and 30 percent of citizens have at some point contacted a politician directly. Parry et al. (1992: 44ff) found that 21 per cent of the public in the U.K. had contacted a local councillor and 10 per cent had contacted a member of parliament during the previous five years. In recent Norwegian election studies, about a fourth of the respondents report that they have contacted a politician during the last four years (Saglie and Björklund 2005: 332; compare Aars and Strømsnes 2007). In 1985, the same number in Norway was nine per cent, indicating an increasing importance of this form of political participation (Björklund and Saglie 2000: 85ff). In the case of Sweden, Petersson et al. (1998) report that in 1986, seven per cent of the Swedes said that they had been in contact with a decision-maker in order to influence a political issue. The same numbers were 18 and 16 per cent in 1991 and 1997, indicating an increase similar to the one in Norway (1998: 58ff). In 2010, the Swedish SOM Survey asked about activities taken during the latest 12 months. Two per cent of the Swedish respondents reported that they had contacted politicians via social media and eight per cent that they had contacted politicians in some other way in order to bring about improvements or counteract deterioration in society (Gustavsson and Höglund 2011: 517).

There is not much research on how politicians respond to these direct contacts taken by citizens. Hooghe and Marien (2012) compare MPs' perceptions in Belgium with Belgian citizens' perceptions of the efficiency of different kinds of political participation. The authors find that most types of activities are seen as more efficient by the MPs than they are by the citizens, and so are writing letters or e-mails to politicians. The authors also compare the perceptions of the Belgian MPs with perceptions of MPs in seven other European countries and find similar views among MPs in Austria, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Switzerland an the U.K. However, the aim of the analyses is to understand perceptions of non-institutional participation and the authors only give scares attention to direct citizen-initiated contacts. Also, as often in investigations of political elites, response rates are low. The study reports response rates that vary between 15% of the MPs in Italy and 17% in the UK and 39% in Belgium.

In this chapter, we give specific attention to perceptions of effects of citizen-initiated contacts, and we do so using the 2010 Study of Swedish Members of Parliament that enables us to investigate 89 per cent of the MPs in the Parliament. This means unique possibilities of capturing differences between different MPs. We also use a question that captures citizen-initiated contacts in a wide sense ("contact a politician") instead of one that focuses only on writing letters and e-mails.

Swedish MPs' perceptions of the usefulness of contacting politicians

We start our analyses with the question of whether politicians regard citizen-initiated contacts as efficient. Table 1 shows how Swedish MPs assess citizen-initiated contacts in comparison to other ways of influencing politics in the 2010 Study of Swedish Members of Parliament.

Table 1. MPs' perceptions of what are efficient ways to influence politics as a citizen.

	Mean	SE.	Min.	Max.	N.
Active in a political party	8.16	1.59	0	10	307
Voting in elections	8.11	2.24	0	10	305
Making contact with politicians	7.51	1.83	0	10	304
Media attention	7.48	1.65	2	10	307
Voting in referendums	7.45	2.43	0	10	306
Active in unions	5.75	1.95	0	10	305
Active in actions groups	5.75	1.92	0	10	306
Signing petitions	4.97	2.26	0	10	306
Demonstrations	4.33	2.18	0	10	307
Buy/Boycott goods	3.53	2.61	0	10	307
Illegal protest acts	2.07	2.04	0	9	307

Note: The question was: "There are differing views on how citizens can influence politics in an effective way. Using the following scale, indicate how efficient the following ways are for a citizen in influencing politics." The scale runs between 0 and 10, where 0 = "not at all efficient" and 10 = "very efficient". In Swedish: "Det finns olika uppfattningar om hur medborgarnas på ett effektivt satt kan påverka politiken. Kan du med hjälp av nedanstående skala ange hur effektiva följande satt att påverka är?" 0 = "inte alls effektivt", 10 = "mycket effektivt". The alternatives in Swedish in the order they were presented to the respondents: Partiarbete, aktionsgruppsarbete, fackligt engagemang, rösta i valen, rösta i folkomrostningar, kontakta politiker, uppmärksamhet i media, namninsamling, demonstrationer, olagliga protestaktioner, köpa/bojkotta varor.
Source: 2010 Study of Swedish Members of Parliament.

Table 1 tells us that Swedish politicians see direct contact with politicians as relatively efficient in comparison to other activities. The most

efficient types of participation are perceived to be activity in a political party and voting in elections. Those activities have a mean value of above eight on a ten point scale. Contacts with politicians comes on third place with a mean value of 7.51. As is seen also in other studies (Strömbäck 2011; Van Aelst et al. 2008), politicians regard media as a powerful actor in politics. The mean value for getting attention in media is about as high as the mean value for contacting politicians (7.48). The mean value for engaging in unions or action groups is considerably lower; 5.75 and participating in demonstrations get a mean value below the mid point, 4.33. The least efficient way to gain influence is according to MPs to take illegal actions (2.07).

When comparing to what Hooghe and Marien (2012) find in other European contexts, the results are similar. The MPs from Sweden rank the different forms of participation almost the same as the average European MP does.[1] Since the question that we analyze is measured on a ten point scale and the question in Hooghe and Marien's (2012) study is measured on a seven point scale, the mean values are not exactly comparable. However, if we allow ourselves to transform the Swedish scale into a seven point scale, the Swedish MPs get a lower mean value than the average European MP for signing petitions, demonstrating, boycotting or doing illegal acts, but higher for activity in a political party and receiving media attention. Furthermore, making contact with politicians is seen as more efficient by the Swedes (5.51) than writing a letter (4.73) or an e-mail (4.68) is by the European MPs on average (compare Hooghe and Marien 2012: 15).

What explains the view that contacts with politicians are efficient in the Swedish case? Previous research has shown that incumbency and ideology are of importance to Swedish politicians' perceptions of citizen participation. Gilljam et al. (2012) investigate Swedish politicians on municipal and regional levels and find that representatives' from the left side of the political spectra as well as politicians from the opposition have higher acceptance of citizen protests (see also Hooghe and Marien 2012). In a regression analysis shown in Table 2, we test

1 More specifically, the difference in ranking is the following (Swedish rank comes from Table 1 and the average European rank (here in parentheses) comes from Hooghe and Marien 2012: 15. The comparison is only for the activities that were included in all surveys): 1. Active in political party (2), 2. Voting in elections (1), 3. Making contact with politicians (4 = writing letter or e-mail), 4. Media attention (3), 5. Signing petitions (6), 6. Demonstrations (5), 7. Buy/Boycott goods (7), 8. Illegal protest acts (8).

whether this is true also when it comes to MPs' perceptions of citizen-initiated contacts with individual politicians. The model also includes whether or not the politician has politics as his/her occupational background and how long time he or she has spent in parliament, since research indicates that those factors sometimes matter for how representatives interpret their role towards citizen (Öhberg 2011). Furthermore, our model includes controls for size of constituency (in this case whether the MP is from one of the Swedish three biggest cities: Göteborg, Malmö or Stockholm), with the argument that politicians from larger constituencies might be more responsive in their contacts with citizens since they are in greater need to cultivate personal relationships (Carey & Shugart 1995). We also control for gender and age (compare Hooghe and Marien 2012).

Table 2. Explaining MPs' assessment of citizen-initiated contacts with politicians (OLS-regression).

	Making contact with politicians
Left-Right Ideology (0 = left, 5 neither/nor 10 = right)	-0.011
	(0.080)
In government or not (1= In government)	0.813**
	(0.329)
Gender (1= Woman)	0.604**
	(0.213)
Age (Years of age)	-0.001
	(0.012)
Occupational background (1 = Professional MP[1])	0.021
	(0.216)
Seniority (Years in parliament)	0.024
	(.021)
From a big city (1 = One of the three biggest cities)	-0.363
	(0.256)
Constant	40.000
	(44.345)
Observations	286
R^2	0.082

Note: The dependent variable runs between 0 (= not at all efficient) and 10 (= very efficient) [1] Professional politicians are MPs who were upon election to the parliament full-time employees of their parties, employed by a public sector organization to perform political work, or employed by lobbying organizations. The definition is established within the framework of the Studies of Swedish members of Parliament (see for example Esaiasson & Holmberg 1996) and was introduced in Holmberg 1974:276. Robust standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.
Source: 2010 Study of Swedish Members of Parliament.

Table 2 shows that ideology is not a relevant factor when it comes to assessing the usefulness of making contact with politicians. Nor is age, or whether or not the MP has a background as a professional politi-

cian, his or her degree of seniority, or what constituency he or she represents. However, the MPs who are women are significantly more likely to be optimistic about citizens' possibilities to influence the political system than are MPs who are men. This result is in accordance with what Hooghe and Marien (2012) find in other European contexts.

Table 2 also shows that MPs from the government parties are more assured of the usefulness of contacting politicians than are MPs from the opposition parties. This result contradicts research that shows that politicians from the opposition are more understanding of citizens' protests and more eager to stress the positive sides of having an active citizenry (Gilljam, et al. 2012; Hooghe and Marien 2012). In Table 3, we dig further into this result by comparing institutional and non-institutional participation following Hooghe and Marien's (2012) operationalization.

Table 3 shows that MPs' assessments of non-institutional activities are explained more by ideology than by the MP belonging to a governing party. MPs who place themselves to the left side on the ideology-scale are more optimistic about the efficacy of non-institutional activities.

However, the ideology dimension is not important for the evaluation of the institutional activities. Instead, it is MPs from the government side who are more in favour of institutionalised participation.

When we take a closer look at the factors that explain evaluations of institutional participation, it is only "making contact with politicians" that shows significant differences between the government and the opposition. If the aim of the contacting citizen is to actually change policy, it makes sense that it is more efficient to contact a government MP than an opposition MP. This is also seen in the way that government MPs report that they are being contacted more often than opposition MPs. In the questionnaire from the 2010 Study of Members of Parliament, there is a question about how often the MPs have been contacted on issues related to problems that voters have.

Among the MPs from the opposition, only two per cent are being contacted "at least once a month". The same percentage for the MPs from the government is 18 per cent. 76 per cent of the MPs from the opposition have never been contacted and the corresponding percentage among to the MPs of the government is 19 per cent.

Table 3. Explaining MPs' assessments of institutional and non-institutional participation.

	Non-institutional participation	Institutional participation
Left-Right Ideology (0 = left, 5 neither/nor 10 = right)	-0.149**	-0.010
	(0.048)	(0.019)
In government (1= In government)	-0.006	0.138*
	(0.205)	(0.080)
Gender (1= Woman)	0.574***	0.226***
	(0.118)	(0.051)
Age (Years of age)	-0.003	-.001
	(0.006)	(0.003)
Occupational background (1 = Professional MP[1])	-0.158	0.028
	(0.124)	(0.052)
Seniority (Years in parliament)	0.002	0.000
	(.012)	(0.004)
From a big city (1 = One of the three biggest cities)	-0.218	-0.056
	(0.147)	(0.061)
Constant	8.404	3.871
	(23.606)	(9.843)
Observations	284	284
R^2	0.202	0.089

Note: The dependent variables have been created out of the eleven activities that the MPs have to assess (see note under Table 1). "Institutional participation" consists of party activity, voting in elections and making contact with politician (Cronbach alpha value .66). "Non-institutional participation" consists of the other eight variables that were used in Table 1 (Cronbach alpha value .79). The dependent variables run between 0 (= not at all efficient) and 10 (= very efficient). The models have the same independent variables as the model in Table 2. [1] See note under Table 2. Standard errors in parentheses * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.
Source: 2010 Study of Swedish Members of Parliament.

(It is worth mentioning that perceived frequency of citizen-initiated contacts is a significant explanatory factor when we include it in the model in Table 3 for non-institutional actives but not for institutional activities).

Taken together, the answers from the MPs in the Survey of Members of Parliament indicate that politicians believe it to be meaningful to contact politicians, relative to other activities. Women perceive the contacts to be more efficient than do men and MPs from the government side perceive citizen-initiated contacts with politicians to be more efficient than MPs from the opposition side do. These results indicate that citizen-initiated contacts with politicians deserve to be analyzed separate from both non-institutional participation and institutional participation in the form of voting and engagement in political parties.

Do politicians react differently to citizen-initiated contacts compared to voter-initiated contacts?

Moving on; we know from previous research that politicians' responsiveness to public opinion varies depending on such things as the issue that is being discussed (cf. Wlezien 2004; Soroka and Wlezien 2010; Miller and Stokes 1963; Page et. al 1984) and who makes the contact (c.f. Butler and Broockman 2011; Harden 2013). To be able to further discuss in what situations citizen-initiated contacts are most efficient, we performed a survey experiment on Swedish local, regional and national politicians in the online survey Panel of Politician that is conducted at the Laboratory of Opinion Research (LORe) at the University of Gothenburg. The Panel of Politicians is an opt-in survey. All current Swedish MPs and members of municipal and regional level elected bodies and all candidates for the 2010 national election have been asked if they want to participate. The panel consists of around 3600 politicians when this is written, which is about ten per cent of the whole population of politicians in Sweden. We perform the experiment in a survey of 651 randomly selected respondents from this pool of politicians.

We randomly assigned the respondents to react to scenarios where citizens make contact. The purpose of the experiment was to evaluate whether politicians would be more responsive if it was the politicians' own voters who made the contact compared to when a group of the more anonymous "citizens" made the contact. The scenarios are designed to hold three things constant: First, we want the politicians to think about the same subject area when they describe their response to the contact that is taken. We choose a subject that is likely to be relevant to most politicians in local, regional and national level Swedish politics, namely that a group of people make contact to stop the shutting down of a school. Second, we want to hold constant the amount of pressure that the group uses when they contact the politicians. We therefore specify that the contact is taken via an e-mail. Third, we want to hold constant the time point when the contact is taken to avoid that some respondents think of for example election times, vacation times or any other time points that might affect their tendency to be responsive. We therefore specify that the e-mail has just arrived (which meant in February 2013, in the middle of an election period).

The vignettes were formulated in the following ways: "*It happens that different groups of citizens contact politicians with political prop-*

ositions. Imagine a situation where you just received an e-mail from… "a group of citizens you know voted for you in the previous election" or "a group of citizens". They oppose a proposition from the civil servants to close a school in your municipality. How likely is it that you do one of the following things?".

Responsiveness is a multifaceted concept and there are reasons to employ a measurement that captures different aspects of how politicians can react to citizen-initiated contacts. In this experiment, we focus on responsiveness as representatives' tendency to *act* according to public opinion (compare Esaiasson, et al. 2013). We identify two arenas where an individual politician can act according to public opinion, namely the internal party arena and the external media arena. More specifically, the alternatives were "*Take the question further and try to get others in your party to listen to their arguments*" and "*Take the question further and try to get the media to become interested in their cause*". The respondents answer on a seven point scale where 1 = not at all likely and 7 = very likely. When we collapse these two variables and use them as indicators of politicians' willingness to act according to the wishes of a contacting group, we get a Cronbach alpha value of .79.

In Table 4 we report the results from the experiment by giving the differences in means for the two groups.

Table 4 shows that there is a significant difference between the two groups when we collapse the two types of reactions to the contacts. Respondents say that they would be more responsive towards their own voters (4.29) compared to a more anonymous group of citizen (4.06). Hence, this rather simple experimental design and straightforward formulations of the vignettes create a significant effect on the reactions of the representatives.

The result supports previous research's findings that contacts between individual politicians and voters is important also in party-dominated systems like Sweden (Esaiasson and Holmberg 1996, compare Holmberg 1989; 1997). It also indicates that future studies of citizen-initiated contacts need to pay attention to the difference between voter-initiated contacts and citizen-initiated contacts. Furthermore, coming experiments in the Panel of Politicians should investigate for example to what extent the relationship between the representative and his/her voters remains strong when the party's position is

contrary to the voter position and to what extent responsiveness varies with the opinions held by the politician herself/himself.

Table 4. Difference in politicians' responsiveness depending on whether citizens or own voters make the contact.

	Contacting group		Difference
	Citizens	Own voters	
Responsiveness (collapsed)	4.06	4.29	.23*

Note: For formulation of vignettes and question, see the text. In Swedish: "Det händer att olika grupper av medborgare hör av sig till politiker med politiska förslag. Föreställ dig en situation där du precis har fått ett mail från en grupp medborgare. De motsätter sig ett tjänstemannaförslag om att lägga ned en skola i din kommun. Hur troligt är det att du gör något av följande saker?: Går vidare i frågan och försöker få andra i ditt parti att ta till sig deras argument, Går vidare i frågan och försöker få medierna intresserade av deras sak." Skala 1-7, 1=Inte alls sannolikt, 7=mycket sannolikt." The scale runs between 1 and 7. The mean for using the external arena (media) is 3.7 and for the internal arena, it is (4.7). N= 632 (media) & 637 (convince party). N for the group that were contacted by their own voters according to the vignette =322, N for the group that were contacted by citizen according to the vignette =329. Source: Panel of Politicians 2013.

Before ending this chapter, we would like to report on some differences between the different respondents of the experiment. By doing so, we can inspire to discussions about which politicians are most likely to respond to citizen-initiated contacts. In Table 5 we analyse all respondents of the experiment together in a regression analysis. The model includes who makes the contact, as well as level of education, gender, position, age and party affiliation of the representative (with the biggest party, the Social Democrats, as a reference group).

Table 5 confirms that politicians say that they are more responsive towards their own voters compared to a more anonymous group of citizen. The results also indicate that less educated and older politicians are more inclined to adapt to a contacting group. Furthermore, politicians who do not have a seat at the municipal executive council are more likely to say that they would act if they were contacted. We do not find gender differences in this analysis. Politicians from the Left Party, the Center Party, The Green Party and the Sweden Democrats have in common that they say that they would be more responsive than the Social Democrats. Politicians from the Liberal Party, the Con-

servative Party and the Christian Democratic Party are not significantly different from the Social Democrats.

Table 5. Differences in responsiveness between politicians with different background (OLS).

Contacting group (1= own voters)	0.243*
	(0.125)
Education (1= Studied at university level)	-0.254*
	(0.136)
Gender (1= Woman)	0.094
	(0.135)
[1] Position (1 = Position at executive council)	-0.280**
	(0.126)
Age (Years of age)	0.021***
	(0.005)
Party (The Social Democratic Party is the reference category)	
The Left Party	0.833***
	(0.250)
The Center Party	1.094***
	(0.217)
The Liberal Party	0.009
	(0.243)
The Conservative Party	0.069
	(0.181)
The Christian Democrats	0.289
	(0.255)
The Green Party	1.130***
	(0.244)
The Sweden Democrats	1.255***
	(0.286)
Constant	2.746***
	(0.314)
Observations	620
R^2	0.115

Note: [1] Position measures whether the respondent has a seat at the municipal executive council or not. The municipal executive council is the executive branch of the local government. The scale runs between 1 and 7. Robust standard errors are clustered by municipalities. The variance at the municipal level is not significant. Robust standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.
Source: The Panel of Politicians 2013.

These results suggest that the most responsive politicians is an older politician (over 50 years of age), with lower education, with no seat at the municipal executive council and from the Left Party, The Center Party, the Green Party or the Swedish Democrats. The predicted value to adapt for such a politician is 5.26 (if we include that the politician is contacted by his or her own voters, the predicted value is 5.38). A younger politician (under 50 years of age) with higher education and a seat at the municipality executive council and who belongs to the So-

cial Democrats, the Christian Democrats, the Conservatives or the Liberal Party has a predicted expected value of being responsive of 3.35 (if we include that that politician is contacted by a group of the anonymous citizens, his or her predicted value is 3.14). [2]

The model presented in Table 5 is preliminary in many aspects and we should interpret the differences between different politicians with care since the theoretical backup here is small. However, we can conclude that different politicians say that they would act quite differently and that the results give reason to go further with similar designs on differences in responsiveness.

Summing up

Citizens' actual possibilities of contacting individual politicians have increased rapidly with recent technological developments. Today, elected representatives can be reached directly through Facebook pages, twitter accounts, e-mail addresses and blogs. To some extent, contacting politicians has become less costly in terms of the time it takes to make the contact, how preparations can be made for the arguments that are put forward, and what social investments and personal "bravery" that are needed to approach the authority. The conclusion from this chapter is that MPs assess that making contact with a politician is a relatively efficient way to participate in politics. What is more, MPs of the government, who actually have the power to change policy, are the ones who perceive citizen-initiated contacts with politicians as efficient. We can also conclude that the usefulness of contacting politicians increases when representatives are contacted by their very own voters. Taken together, these result point at a fairly positive future for contacts between voters and representatives, which, in all humbleness, is a worthy result in a book that is written to the honor of the great nestor of Swedish electoral studies, Sören Holmberg.

2. Using the Margins command STATA 12, see Williams (2012).

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Part II

Public Opinion and Voting Behavior

Chapter 5
What has Happened with the Political Press? Perspectives on the Erosion in Swedish Newspaper Readership[1]

LENNART WEIBULL

Introduction

The signs were evident already in the 1960s. Two leading social democratic newspapers, one in Gothenburg and one in Stockholm, had to close down, leaving two main Swedish regions in the hands of a non-socialist press. This was perceived as a serious threat to public opinion, and the political reaction was to introduce a press support system. The subsidies, however, could not stop the increasing economic difficulties of the smaller papers, but for a long time kept them alive. But since the total newspaper circulation continued to grow, the market development raised little discussion. It was not until the early 2000s that an accelerating decline in the circulation of the printed press and a strong growth of ownership concentration sparked the fundamental question of what the development had meant to the role and nature of the Swedish press.

1 The chapter is based on analyses carried out within the research program Dagspresskollegiet, University of Gothenburg and Mid-Sweden University. I thank Professor Ingela Wadbring for valuable comments, and research assistants Per Oleskog Tryggvason and Elias Markstedt for their important help with the statistical analyses.

One reason for the delay in grasping the situation was obviously the strength of the Swedish daily press. Its strong position has been demonstrated in both international circulation statistics and comparative studies of newspaper reading. The strength has usually been related to the political tradition, where newspapers have been regarded as an important pillar of political democracy (Vallinder, 1968). In an international comparison this has been labeled the *democratic corporatist* model, which stresses the importance of the party press tradition for the strong standing of Swedish newspapers (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). The declining circulation, frequent closures, and many mergers between newspapers of different political affiliation have changed the picture. Moreover, the printed press is increasingly challenged by successful electronic newspapers and digital platforms.

The development is not unique for Sweden and has been demonstrated in pessimistic predictions[2]. In Sweden, the changes have raised questions concerning the consequences for the traditional character of the Swedish press – and what it means to the role of newspapers for the functioning of the democratic system. The aim of this chapter is to discuss the implications of the decline in newspaper readership for the political character of the Swedish press given its party-political tradition. The study is focused on the changes of the printed press and takes three approaches in three ways. The first concerns the role of political factors among other determinants of newspaper reading over time, the second the role of the changing newspaper structure for reading patterns, and the third the political aspects of changes in the national tabloid market, especially the expansion of digital versions. A special focus is put on the social democratic press, which is often regarded as the most typical exponent for the political press tradition in Sweden.

The analysis covers the period 1986-2012. It includes both the heydays of the printed press in the late 1980s, the stagnation of the 1990s, and the accelerating decline and strong expansion of digital media in the early 2010s. The study is based on annual survey data from the SOM Institute at the University of Gothenburg.[3]

2 http://futureexploration.net/Newspaper_Extinction_ Timeline.pdf
3 The National SOM surveys have been carried out annually since 1986. They have included questions on newspaper reading since the beginning. The surveys have minor variations in sample size and age interval.

The Swedish newspaper tradition

What we usually define as party press is newspapers with manifest relations to individual parties in terms of organization and/or content (Kantorowicz, 1922; Seymour-Ure, 1968; Hadenius et al, 1970). Political newspapers had started already in the early 19th century in Sweden (cf. Fredriksson, 1980) but it was not until the second half of the century, during an intense period of political organization building, a party political press developed. The parliament had been partly democratized in 1866 and in the 1870s the main forerunners to the later political parties were founded. The establishment of new newspapers reflected the changes in and was in many respects an extension of, the political system. Most of today's leading liberal newspapers in Sweden were established during this period. The papers were mainly liberal and developed in close contact with groups demanding universal suffrage and freedom of religion (Vallinder, 1962, 1968; Bergström, 2005).

As the strong development of the liberal press forced conservative groups to act, some of the older papers began to develop what they often called a moderate or moderate-liberal profile. Even though the statistics are uncertain, it is reasonable to conclude that also newspaper circulation rose as a consequence of the new opinion climate (Waller, 2001). Although the liberal and conservative newspapers were privately owned, their editors were normally closely involved in their respective political organizations. The political ideas of the workers and labor unions, however, gained little support from the private papers. Hence, the social democratic party and labor unions began founding dailies of their own. In the first decades of the 20th century, the party consciously started local newspapers in most regions to promote their political ideas (Hadenius et al., 1968). The later communist press and the newspapers supporting the agrarian party were also founded – and owned – by the party or organizations closely linked to them.

In the decades around the turn of the 20th century the structure of the Swedish press was laid out. Most local areas in Sweden had at least three newspapers, one supporting the liberals, one the conservatives, and one the social democrats. In addition, there was often also a second liberal paper, or a second conservative one, and sometimes papers supporting the agrarians or the communists depending on the character of the area. For many newspapers party affiliation was important to attract readers. The result was a press embedded in party

politics. In many respects, newspapers became the backbone of public opinion, forming a political parallelism typical also for the other Nordic countries (Furhoff, 1966; Hallin & Mancini, 2004:66ff; cf. Thomsen, 1965, 1972; Höyer et al., 1974; Östgaard, 1978).

In the first decades of the 20th century, the number of papers climbed dramatically. In 1919, 235 papers were published. After that there was a period of stagnation and in the 1930s the trend was downwards. However, the real decline took place in the 1950s, and in the mid-1960s the number had decreased to around 125 (Tollin, 1965). Looking at the development in terms of political affiliation, we can note that the main losers were the small liberal and conservative papers, which decreased from 160 to 75, whereas the number of social democratic papers in fact increased somewhat from around 20 to 25. In spite of the declining number of newspapers, the party-political character of the press did not change much (SOU 1965:22; Kronvall, 1991). The implication was that citizens often chose to read newspapers with political views close to their own. A study from the mid-1950s demonstrated a strong correlation between voting patterns and the distribution of the party press both at the structural and individual level. For example, 69 percent of the conservative voters read a newspaper with a conservative outlook, and 59 percent of the social democratic voters read a paper affiliated with the social democratic party; the lowest percentage for reading a party newspaper sharing one's political views was noted for voters of the agrarian party, but the proportion was still 44 percent (Westerståhl & Janson, 1958).

The local papers were normally based on subscription. Almost all were published in the morning[4], and hence in Swedish terminology they were called *morning papers*. However, from the 1950s a new type of newspaper with a new business model expanded: the national single copy sale tabloids. The liberal *Expressen*, founded in 1944, managed gradually to cover all of Sweden by introducing a new type of journalism and using new means of transport (Gustafsson, 1984). *Expressen* was followed by *Aftonbladet*. The Swedish Trade Union Congress bought *Aftonbladet* in the 1950s and gradually gave it a social democratic profile (Gustafsson, 1980; Hadenius, 1980). The all-time high of the tabloid market, which also included two regional papers, was

4 To facilitate co-distribution, a press subsidy form decided in 1969.

reached in 1971 with almost 1.4 million copies a day. Yet the tabloids in the Nordic countries served mainly as additional reading for subscribers to local papers (cf. Höst, 1991; Weibull, 1995, 1996).

The traditional morning papers also began to change their political character in the 1960s. This was due to two particularly important factors. The first factor was the changing opinion climate. During the second half of the 1960s, the close connections between newspapers and political parties were increasingly criticized. The critics, among them leading journalists, argued that party affiliations prevented newspapers from functioning as a critical stance in Swedish public opinion, and instead made them mere reflections, and defenders, of their respective party standpoints (Furhoff, 1963; cf. SOU 1979:78). It was an obvious contrast of the party political press tradition. The second factor was the gradual increase in market concentration. Although the non-socialist papers had decreased in number for decades, the circulation of the remaining papers had grown and now dominated most of the local markets, which made them attractive for both advertisers and readers. The smaller, often social democratic, papers were increasingly losing their politically less active readers to competitors, leading to economic problems (Hadenius & Weibull, 1991), The leading papers now had to serve readers from different party political camps, where party affiliation was perceived as a potential handicap. Unpartisan, "objective", reporting was the main market strategy and newspapers began to market themselves as *omnibus* papers – newspapers for all citizens (Schultz, 2008; cf. Schudson, 1978).

A consequence of the new ideas was that newspapers increasingly began to label themselves as independent, but usually also included a party name, e.g., independent liberal or independent moderate. The news coverage of the dominating papers was gradually made broader to attract all groups of readers. However, they largely focused on local coverage, leaving national and international news to radio and television (SOU 1994:94). For the social democratic press, the situation was different. It was, as we have seen, founded on a political idea and usually owned by party organizations or labor unions, and reflected in its structure the elderly Swedish party press tradition. It depended on economic support and had little possibilities to compete with the leading non-socialist papers (Andersson, 2008).

In the early 1990s, the situation seemed very solid for the leading non-socialist printed newspapers but problematic for social democratic

counterparts. Then gradually, almost furtively, the conditions changed, as also the leading papers began to face the same fate. This accelerated after the millennium shift and by 2012 they had lost more than one-fifth of their circulation. The question to be approached in the following sections is what this decline has meant to the Swedish political press.

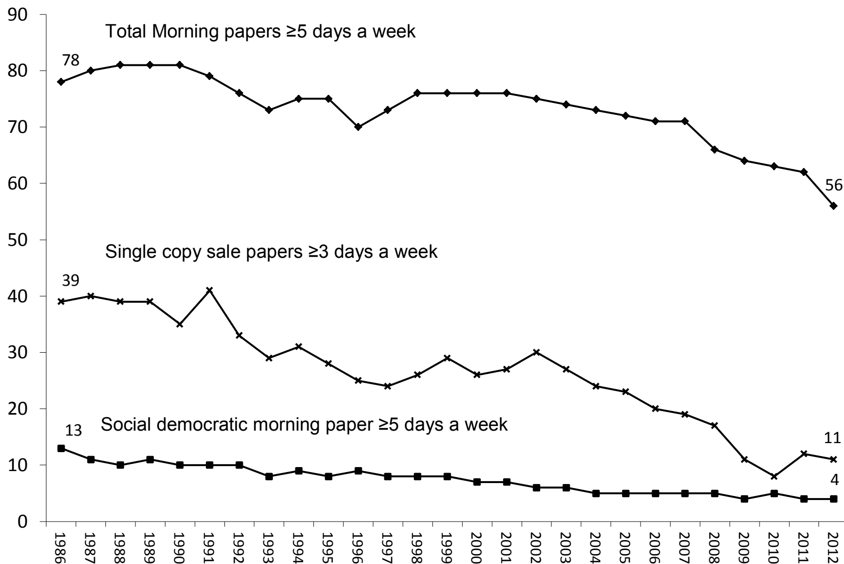
The decline of newspaper reading

The Swedish all-time high in newspaper circulation was reached in 1989 with almost five million copies per publishing day. This placed Sweden at the top of the international newspaper statistics with about 520 readers per 1,000 inhabitants in 1990 (Weibull & Nilsson, 2010). The stagnation in circulation in the early 1990s at first mainly seemed to concern the single copy sale tabloids, which lost more than half of their printed circulation from 1986 to 2012. Yet later also the subscription-based printed morning papers started facing the same downward tendency, losing more than one-fourth in circulation. The stagnation to some extent reflected the economic recession in Sweden in the early 1990s, yet the losses in circulation persisted even after the economy had long recovered. Although we can observe that the decline for paid newspapers to some extent was compensated for by the introduction of free dailies, in the long run they did not change the overall downward trend for printed papers.

The development of the newspaper market can be noted also in survey results from the SOM Institute (Figure 1). The percentage of Swedes reading a printed morning paper at least five days a week decreased from around 85 percent in 1986 to 56 in 2012. The proportion of people reading printed single copy sale tabloids at least three times a week dropped from 39 to 11 percent over the same period. If we extend reading to everybody who reads a printed paper at least once a week, the morning press reached 70 percent in 2012 and the single copy sale papers almost 25 percent. It might seem like the decline is just a matter of people reading less regularly, but also the non-readers increased over the period – from about 10 to 30 percent. Still, however, the printed press – morning papers and single copy sale pa-

pers together - reached about 90 percent of all Swedes in 2012 (Mediebarometern 2012, 2013).[5]

Figure 1 Readership of metropolitan and printed local morning press ≥5 days a week and of printed single copy sale tabloids ≥3 days a week, 1986 - 2012



Remark: Values for social democratic morning papers are fractions of the total reading of morning papers.
Source: The National SOM surveys 1986-2012.

In the figure we have also plotted regular reading of social democratic newspapers.[6] This curve has, on a much lower level, followed the same trend as total newspaper reading. Regular readership fell from 13 percent in 1986 to 4 percent in 2012. This can be compared with the

5 These figures might seem confusing. However, the 90 percent figure is from a study asking respondents about exposure yesterday and not habitual reading. There is reason to believe that many of the respondents here do not identify themselves as newspaper readers, although they still occasionally read a paper (Weibull, 1983:191ff).
6 The definition of party affiliation can of course be discussed. Our classification is based on what the papers call themselves. Papers using the prefix *independent* before a party name have been classified according to the party.

reading of traditional liberal and independent newspapers, which are dominating the Swedish newspaper landscape today. These newspapers show a similar but not as drastic decline – from 46 to 33 percent, i.e., a drop by over a quarter.[7]

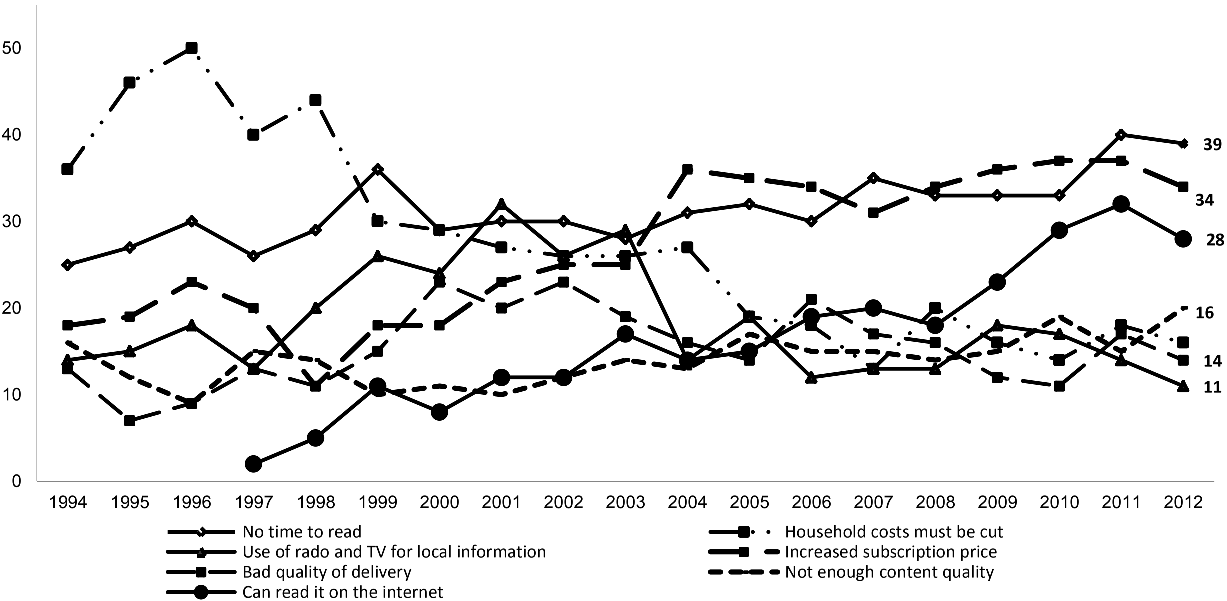
The reactions to the decline of printed press seem to differ. The tabloids observed the trend early and have very consciously moved into the digital media world. As a result, the circulation loss of printed tabloids has largely been compensated for by increased reading of their digital versions, especially using smartphones (Färdigh & Westlund, 2012). This cannot be said for the morning papers: the loss of print readers has, so far not been compensated for by increased reading of digital versions (Wadbring, 2013). The newspaper companies have acknowledged the problem but have not chosen to prioritize the digital platforms since they generate less profit than the paid print.

If we try to understand the decline from the perspective of the regular readers of the printed morning press, it seems that the stability in readership has been replaced by uneasiness. In a recent study, almost 40 percent of the subscribers to local morning papers said that they at least once in the last six months had hesitated to continue subscribing (Weibull, 2012b). What is even more striking is that the share of hesitating subscribers had increased at the same time as the percentage of subscribers had decreased. This contradicts the expectation that the remaining subscribers should be more loyal.

Looking into the arguments of subscribers hesitating to continue subscribing, economic reasons are most important, followed by disappointment with the newspaper's content, no time to read, and reading the paper on the internet (Weibull et al., 2013). The economic reasons for hesitating to subscribe were visible already in the early or mid-1990s, when the recession in this period meant that people looked for ways to cut costs. (Figure 2).

7 The other two main groups with a politically profiled editorial page are both non-socialist: the moderate press with regular readership of 14 percent in 1986 and 11 percent in 2012 and the agrarian press with 5 and 4 percent, respectively.

Figure 2 Given reasons for hesitation to continue subscription to morning papers on print in 1994 – 2012 (per cent among hesitant subscribers)



Remarks: Figures from a study of West Sweden (the Gothenbureg area)
Source: The regional SOM surveys in West Sweden 1994 – 2012.

During the recession period, many newspapers increased their subscription prices to compensate for losses in advertising revenue. This method had been used in earlier periods of recession without leading to reduced circulation. This time, however, circulation suffered (Björkqvist Hellingwerf, 1995). One obvious reason was the changing media landscape: This was a period of establishment of new commercial media channels in radio and television as well the start of the free daily *Metro* in 1995 (Wadbring, 2004). People with less economic resources stopped reading newspapers regularly, resulting in an increasing readership divide (Lithner, 2000). It is interesting to note that the content factor, e.g., politics, had little importance. Interestingly, the expanding free newspapers did not even have an editorial page.

The hesitation among subscribers of course also reflects the rapid evolution of digital media. In the late 1990s most subscription newspapers began to offer most of its content for free in digital form, testing the new technology and hoping to attract advertising, but risking some incomes from subscription. This is of course not a unique Swedish trend, but with a very high percentage of paying subscribers in Sweden, it created uneasiness and probably contributed to the gradual erosion of the strong printed newspaper system.

Change in reading patterns

Before the changes in the early 1990s, the Swedish newspaper market was remarkably stable. The introduction of press support in the 1970s meant that the structure could be maintained, although the some minor newspapers had to close. Further, newspapers in Sweden were regularly read by almost all socio-demographic groups with the exception of the young (SOU 1968:48; SOU 1975:78). In an international comparison, often the high reading level among Swedish blue collar workers often was noted. This reflects the important role of the social democratic press in promoting newspaper reading (cf. Hadenius et al., 1970; Weibull, 1983). However, it was especially this group of newspapers that encountered increasing problems in the 1980s and 1990s (Hadenius & Weibull, 1991).

To further explore the decline in newspaper reading, we have focused on three periods within the time span 1986-2012. In the first period (1986-1989), circulation was stable and even reached an all-time high.

Table 1 Reading a printed morning paper at least five days a week in three periods from 1986 to 2012 (percent)

	1986-1989		1998-2001		2010-2012	
	MP	SD	MP	SD	MP	SD
Gender						
Women	79	11	77	7	60	4
Men	81	11	76	8	60	4
Age						
15/16 – 29	68	9	61	5	28	1
30 – 49	83	12	74	7	51	3
50 – 64	87	12	85	8	70	5
65 – 75/85[8]	86	14	85	10	79	6
Family class						
Blue collar	75	17	70	11	54	6
White collar	86	6	84	5	67	3
Entrepreneur	83	5	80	4	68	3
Education						
Low	81	16	78	11	68	7
Middle	78	10	72	7	57	4
High	87	6	81	4	60	3
Political interest						
Very much	86	16	85	8	69	3
Rather much	82	10	80	7	65	4
Not much	79	10	73	8	57	4
Not at all interested	70	11	61	6	40	4
Party identification						
Strong	82	19	80	12	66	6
Somewhat	81	10	78	8	63	4
Weak	78	7	74	6	56	3
Left-right self-placement						
Strongly left	79	27	74	17	59	10
Somewhat left	81	20	77	12	61	6
Neither left nor right	79	9	73	7	56	4
Somewhat right	83	3	81	3	64	2
Strongly right	82	2	79	2	64	1
Party sympathy						
The Left Party	73	16	71	10	58	8
The Social Dem. Party	80	21	77	13	61	8
The Green Party	74	88	67	5	57	3
The Center Party	83	5	83	5	66	3
The Liberal Party	84	4	84	2	68	2
The Moderate Party	85	2	79	2	64	2
The Christian Dem. Party	76	5	81	2	66	3
Total	80	11	76	7	61	4

8 In the first period, the age interval was 16 – 75. The extended age interval does not change the reading pattern in the oldest age group.

Remarks to table 1: Percentages show the annual average for each period. MP = All morning papers, SD = Social democratic morning papers. The social democratic newspaper readership (SD) is also included in the total readership of morning papers (MP).
Source: The National SOM surveys 1986-2012.

The second (1998-2001) occurred just before the downward trend began to accelerate, and the third (2010-2012) represents today's situation with a relatively low readership.

Starting with the readership demographics for morning papers in the late 1980s, we note, as expected, differences in reading habits according to age and social class. Young people and workers are less regular readers but still display high levels, especially in an international perspective, and there are only small differences compared with other groups. Women and men show similar values – an expected finding considering that regular reading is almost exclusively based on household subscription. Educational background does not show a consistent pattern over the three periods, having a positive correlation in the firs period and a slightly negative in the third. (Table 1).

Four political factors are analyzed as potential determinants of regular newspaper reading in the early period: interest in politics, party identification, and self-placement on the left-right dimension. For the early period, it turns out that interest in politics has the highest correlation with newspaper reading: as expected individuals interested in politics are more likely to read newspapers regularly than people with little interest – 86 versus 70 percent. The effect of party identification is smaller, and left-right self-placement has almost no correlation with the likelihood of reading a newspaper regularly.

Table 1 also presents figures for the readership of the social democratic press. These figures, of course, are on a much lower level, but show an interesting pattern. In the first period 1986-1989, the age differences are roughly the same as for all newspapers, but education and class show a negative correlation, meaning a more frequent social democratic newspaper reading among blue collar workers and the less educated. When it comes to the political factors, there is as expected a strong correlation between left-right self-placement and reading social democratic press regularly. In this period, people classifying themselves to the left had an almost ten times higher probability of reading a social democratic paper than people placing themselves to the right.

Moreover, more than one-fifth of the social democrats read a social democratic newspaper, while almost none among the moderate sym-

pathizers did. The results are in line with the common knowledge concerning newspaper readership in Sweden in the 1980s (Weibull, 1983, 1989, 1991; Björkqvist Hellingwerf & Weibull, 1995).

The traditional picture of the Swedish press that newspapers are read by almost all citizens but have a somewhat stronger position among the elderly, the middle class, and people interested in politics is still true for the 1980s. However, the decline in newspaper reading during the early 1990s recession increased some of these differences, especially between younger people and the elderly and between blue collar workers and the upper classes. However, the main decline started later, as shown in Table 1.

The first observation is that reading of morning papers declined in all groups. The decline from the first period (1986-89) to the last (2010-12) is on average about 20 percentage units. The only group that shows a significantly lower decline is people above 65 years of age. Another observation is that there is an increasing segregation in the demographics. The gap between young and old goes from 18 to 51 percentage units, and the equivalent values for family class are 8 and 14. Interest in politics shows the same pattern, from 16 to 29 percentage units, meaning that interest in politics is a more important factor behind newspaper reading in the last than in the first period (cf. Strömbäck et al., 2012).

The pattern for reading social democratic press is somewhat different. While it is true that the reading decreased by 7 percentage units – meaning a loss of more than half the number of its regular readers from the period 1986-1989 to 2010-2012 – the social democratic papers especially lost the individuals interested in politics. The gap between those with a strong interest in politics and those with little interest is smaller in the last period (one percentage unit) than in the first (12 percentage units). The pattern is the same for party identification. Thus, we observe that there is clearly less difference in reader structure between the social democratic and the non-socialist press in the last than in the first period.

Summarizing our observations so far is that newspaper reading is increasingly segregated by age, even though this is less evident for the reading of social democratic newspapers. This has already been demonstrated in many studies (e.g., Shehata & Wadbring, 2012; Westlund & Weibull, 2013; Wadbring, 2013). What is interesting here is that the increasing important of age comes with the new millenni-

um, whereas this is not visible for the other factors with the exception of party identification.

To explore the relative importance of the independent variables, a series of multivariate analyses (OLS regressions) have been carried out. They are based on the same seven periods and use the same independent variables. Table 2a presents the standardized beta values of the independent variables for newspaper reading overall. The analyses largely confirm that age is the most significant factor in all periods – and its effect increases over time. Also social class shows increasing importance, although with a lower effect. Education demonstrates an independent effect for most periods except the last one. Individuals with a high level of education gradually read less printed morning papers than others. The political factors have a significant impact in the bivariate analyses, but lose their importance when controlling for demographic and socio-economic factors. However, interest in politics gradually increases in importance from the late 1990s and on, but is not as important as has been shown previously for use of the total news media use during the same period (Strömbäck et al., 2012). An analysis based on those with a newspaper subscription in the household shows almost the same pattern of influence.

A regression analysis has been carried out also for reading of social democratic newspapers (Table 2b). Here regular reading in all periods is mainly explained by political factors. Left-right self-placement is the most important variable, but party identification is also significant for all periods. However, the two political variables lose in importance over the total period, whereas age shows the opposite trend; already at the period around the millennium shift (1999-2001), age weighs heavier party identification. Also the effect of social class, meaning the overrepresentation of workers, loses in importance over time, although it is still significant in the last period 2010-2012.

The increasing role of the age factor in explaining the total readership leads to question what it really lies behind. A cohort analysis, analyzing people born in the different decades of the 20th century, demonstrates an accelerating readership drops among young people. Among those born in the 1960s, almost three-fourths read a newspaper regularly at age 25; for people born in the 1980s the share is only one-fourth (cf. Nilsson, 2005). It is true that young people have never read newspapers as regularly as the elderly, but in the last ten years they seem to almost have left printed newspapers aside, regarding

Table 2a Bivariate and multivariate OLS regression analyses explaining regular reading of printed morning papers for three time periods: 1986-1989, 1998-2001, and 2010-2012 (standardized beta)

	1986-1989					1998-2001					2010-2012				
	Modell 1	Modell 2	Modell 3	Modell 4	Modell 5	Modell 1	Modell 2	Modell 3	Modell 4	Modell 5	Modell 1	Modell 2	Modell 3	Modell 4	Modell 5
Interest in politics (high=1, low=4)	0,077***			-0,074***	-0,020	-0,138***			-0,134***	-0,075***	-0,144***			-0,132***	-0,066***
Party identification (dichotomized)		0,042***		0,034**	0,011		0,050***		0,028***	-0,001		0,087***		0,059***	0,014*
Left-right self-placement (1-5)			0,041**	0,019***	0,015			0,038***	0,040***	0,0002			0,032***	0,032***	0,009
Gender (men; reference women)					0,018					-0,025***					-0,027***
Age					0,174***					0,207***					0,347***
Education (high education; reference low education)					0,056***					0,030***					0,006
Family class (farmers; reference blue collar)					0,041**					0,022**					0,011
Family class (white collar; reference blue collar)					0,099***					0,104***					0,078***
Family class (entrepreneur; reference (blue collar)					0,046***					0,035***					0,050***
Number of respondents	3 983	3 983	3 983	3 983	3 983	11 348	11 348	11 348	11 348	11 348	13 383	13 383	13 383	13 383	13 383
Variance explained	1%	0%	0%	1%	5%	2%	0%	0%	2%	8%	2%	1%	0%	3%	15%

Remarks: The OLS regressions are carried out on the dichotomized dependent variable reading of printed morning papers at least five days a week (1=reading a newspaper at least five days a week; 0=not reading a newspaper five days a week). The results shown are standardized beta values showing the relative strength of the independent variables. No standard of error exceeds 0.2. The analysis is based on the total number of respondents from the annual SOM survey for the respective three year period. For the definition of the independent variables, see Table 1. Regarding age, see note to Table 1.

Table 2b Bivariate and multivariate OLS regression analyses explaining regular reading of social democratic printed morning papers for three time periods: 1986-1989, 1998-2001, and 2010-2012 (standardized beta)

	1986-1989					1998-2001					2010-2012				
	Modell 1	Modell 2	Modell 3	Modell 4	Modell 5	Modell 1	Modell 2	Modell 3	Modell 4	Modell 5	Modell 1	Modell 2	Modell 3	Modell 4	Modell 5
Interest in politics (high=1, low=4)	-0,008			0,021	-0,005	-0,014			-0,002	-0,019	0,010			0,022*	0,017
Party identification (dichotomized)		0,094***		0,073***	0,061***		0,063***		0,063***	0,046***		0,043***		0,052***	0,037***
Left-right self-placement (1-5)			-0,241***	-0,234***	-0,188***			-0,184***	-0,184***	-0,157***			-0,130***	-0,132***	-0,121***
Gender (men; reference women)					-0,035*					0,009					-0,003
Age					0,034*					0,061***					0,078***
Education (high education; reference low education)					-0,019					-0,015					-0,022*
Family class (farmers; reference blue collar)					-0,056***					-0,041***					-0,002
Family class (white collar; reference blue collar)					-0,106***					-0,091***					-0,038***
Family class (entrepreneur; reference (blue collar)					-0,069***					-0,050***					-0,016
Number of respondents	3 983	3 983	3 983	3 983	3 983	11 348	11 348	11 348	11 348	11 348	13 383	13 383	13 383	13 383	13 383
Variance explained	0%	1%	6%	6%	8%	0%	0%	3%	4%	5%	0%	0%	2%	2%	3%

Remarks: The OLS regressions are carried out on the dichotomized dependent variable reading of social democratic printed morning papers at least five days a week (1=reading a newspaper at least five days a week; 0=not reading a newspaper five days a week). The results shown are standardized beta values showing the relative strength of the independent variables. No standard of error exceeds 0.2. The analysis is based on the total number of respondents from the annual SOM survey for the respective three year period. For the definition of the independent variables, see Table 1. Regarding age, see note to Table 1.

them old-fashioned (Westlund & Weibull, 2013). Moreover, an increasing proportion of the young today have no newspaper in their home (Weibull et al., 2013).

The results indicate somewhat of a paradox. For total newspaper reading over the years, it is demonstrated that regular reading is less part of socio-economic stratification and more dependent on age and on interest in politics and society, whereas reading of the social democratic press, which by tradition has been in part politically motivated, tends to gradually lose its political position and be more influenced by age or generation. For the social democratic press, where politics has been a central feature, these results must be regarded as problematic. Also among social democratic sympathizers the regular reading of newspapers sharing one's political views is going down – from 21 percent in late 1980s to 8 percent in 2010-2012 – and this is an accelerated long term-trend: as late as in the end of the 1970s, the proportion exceeded 30 percent (Weibull, 1982). Drawing the most pessimistic picture, it seems that the papers are at risk of dying with their readers. But before making any prediction, we have to look at another factor: regional differences.

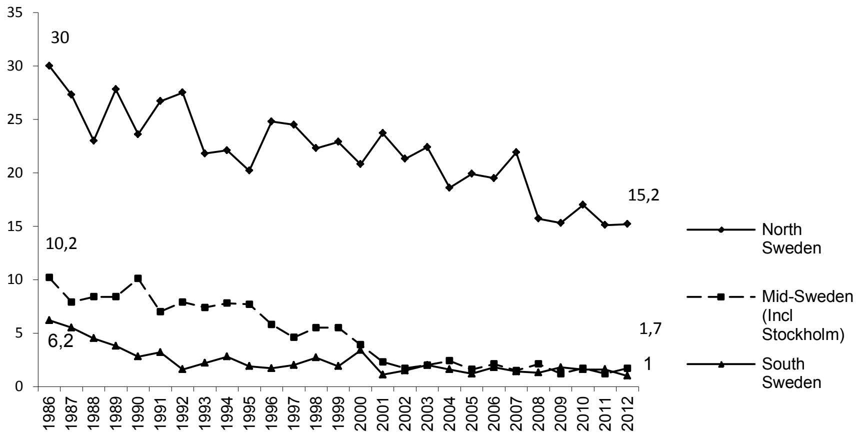
Regional differences in newspaper reading

Newspaper reading in Sweden has traditionally been strong all over Sweden because of the strength of local papers. In the 1960s, however, the morning paper market in the metropolitan area of Stockholm (and later on also in Gothenburg and Malmö) began to weaken (Kratz, 1995). One explanation to this was changes in the market structure, where the main social democratic paper had to close down. As a consequence of the Swedish political press tradition non-socialist papers at first had problems attracting all readers after a closure of a social democratic paper (Bergström et al, 2002; Wadbring, 2002). This was seen in other local markets as well, meaning that the percentage of regular newspaper readers is lower in markets with only one paper than in markets where there were alternatives (Wadbring, 2012).

The development in the 1980s and 1990s was especially problematic for local social democratic papers. Many had to close, some because of rationalizations initiated by the national holding company of the social democratic press, and others due to the subsequent bankruptcy of the holding company in 1992 (Andersson, 2008; Lindström, 2008). These problems were more frequent in the south of Sweden where the

social democratic press by tradition had a weak position. In the north, however, where the social democratic party was stronger, the press structure stayed almost intact - although the papers were increasingly published by the same company that published the local, normally dominating, non-socialist paper (Hadenius et al., 2011). The strength up north, however, did not prevent a declining readership, although it remained a social democratic stronghold in comparison with other parts of the country throughout the period (Figure 3).

Figure 3 Reading of printed social democratic morning papers at least ≥5 days a week in three Swedish regions 1986-2012 (percent)



Remark: The regions used are as follows. South Sweden: the counties of Skåne, Blekinge, Jönköping, Kronoberg, Kalmar, Gotland, Halland and Västra Götaland (45%); Mid-Sweden: the counties of Stockholm, Södermanland, Östergötland, Uppsala, Västmanland, and Örebro (ca 35%); North Sweden: the counties of Värmland, Dalarna, Gävleborg, Västernorrland, Jämtland, Västerbotten, and Norrbotten (ca 20%).
Source: The National SOM surveys 1986-2012.

Given the regional structure of the Swedish press, we have a type of natural experiment when further analyzing the decline in newspaper reading. In northern Sweden the traditional party press structure is still the typical model, although the ownership has changed; in mid-

Sweden and in the south, local monopolies of non-socialist or independent papers tend to dominate.[9]

The following analysis is based on the three regions south, mid, and north Sweden. Table 3 presents regional reading statistics for all morning papers and for social democratic morning papers in the first (1986-1993) and last (2010-2012) periods. As we have already seen from the national data the first period is generally characterized by stability and the last by a gradual decline.

In South and Mid-Sweden, the total newspaper readership is, as expected, similar to what was shown in Table 1 with 79 and 75 percent regular readers in the first period and 61 and 58 percent in the last, respectively. The lower figures for Mid-Sweden are explained by the low level of newspaper reading in Stockholm metropolitan area. The patterns of readership in different groups are also generally the same: the biggest losses are found among the youngest, implying the already observed increasing age segregation. The decline in reading is more pronounced among persons with less interest in politics than among those with stronger interest, meaning that the difference is clearly larger in the last period than in the first.

On a general level, the pattern of regular newspaper reading in North Sweden is the same as in the two other regions, but there are some important differences. The first is that newspaper reading is more common in the north in both periods. This is true for almost all groups, even though the reading in the youngest group is down to the same level as in the other regions in the last period. The second difference is that the readership among the most politically interested for the last period is higher in the north. Looking closer at the figures, we can observe that north Sweden has particularly high newspaper reading among individuals placing themselves politically to the left and in working class families, especially in the first period.

9 The regions used are as follows. South Sweden: the counties of Skåne, Blekinge, Jönköping, Kronoberg, Kalmar, Gotland, Halland and Västra Götaland (approx. 45% of the Swedish population); Mid-Sweden: the counties of Stockholm, Södermanland, Östergötland, Uppsala, Västmanland and Örebro (approx. 35%); North Sweden: the counties of Värmland, Dalarna, Gävleborg, Västernorrland, Jämtland, Västerbotten and Norrbotten (approx. 20%). The areas here called south and mid-Sweden are geographically located in the southern part of Sweden, and what is called north consists of more than two-thirds of Sweden.

Table 3 Reading a printed morning paper at least five days a week in the two periods 1986-1993 and 2010-2012 (percent)

	South Sweden				Mid-Sweden				North Sweden			
	1986 – 1993		2010- 2012		1986 – 1993		2010- 2012		1986 – 1993		2010- 2012	
	Total	SD	Total	SD	Total	SD	Total	SD	Total	SD	Total	SD
Total	79	8	61	2	75	4	58	1	84	26	63	16
Gender												
Women	78	8	61	2	75	4	57	1	83	26	64	16
Men	80	8	61	2	75	3	58	1	84	26	63	16
Age												
15/16 – 29	66	6	28	0	62	3	28	0	74	21	27	7
30 – 49	82	9	52	1	76	3	48	1	86	27	55	13
50 – 64	87	9	71	2	83	5	68	2	88	26	72	18
65 – 75/85	86	10	81	2	81	6	77	2	87	31	79	20
Family class												
Blue Collar	74	12	55	2	67	6	48	2	81	34	58	19
White Collar	87	6	67	1	82	2	65	1	88	18	71	14
Entrepreneur	83	3	70	1	77	1	65	1	85	14	67	11
Political Interest												
Very much	84	11	69	1	83	5	71	1	87	35	67	15
Rather much	83	9	65	2	76	3	62	1	88	26	70	18
Not much	76	7	59	2	72	3	52	2	82	25	61	15
Not at all	70	7	41	2	61	5	34	2	69	22	46	10
Left-right self placement												
Strongly left	75	22	56	2	74	11	59	3	84	46	63	30
Somewhat left	80	16	61	2	73	7	58	2	87	39	65	22
Neither left nor right	77	7	57	2	71	3	51	3	81	21	59	13
Somewhat right	82	2	66	1	80	1	62	1	84	10	67	8
Strongly right	83	2	64	1	78	0	62	0	85	11	70	7

Remark: Total=all morning papers; SD=social democratic morning papers (also included in total). The regions used are as follows. South Sweden: the counties of Skåne, Blekinge, Jönköping, Kronoberg, Kalmar, Gotland, Halland, and Västra Götaland; Mid-Sweden: the counties of Stockholm, Södermanland, Östergötland, Uppsala, Västmanland, and Örebro; North Sweden: the counties of Värmland, Dalarna, Gävleborg, Västernorrland, Jämtland, Västerbotten, and Norrbotten. Percentages show the annual average for each period.
Source: The National SOM surveys 1986-2012

The latter observation brings attention to the role of the social democratic press up north. We can generally note strong figures in the period 1986-1993 in particular: almost half of those placing themselves to the left read a social democratic paper in this period; in the period 2010-2012 the proportion was significantly lower, but still one-fourth, compared with 2-3 percent in the other two regions. The same pattern can be found for working class families. It shows that the existence of a social democratic paper has consequences for people's newspaper reading habits (cf. Weibull, 1985). But we also observe that the pattern is less evident in the later than in the earlier period. Behind the decline is obviously the increasing importance of the age factor also in North Sweden, where especially the social democratic papers lose ground especially among young people

To look closer into the regional differences in newspaper reading patterns, we carried out OLS regressions for each of the three regions using the same independent variables as for Sweden as a whole. The analyses confirm the importance of age as a common denominator for newspaper reading in all three regions, although less in the north in the early period. In the earlier period, family class and to some extent education also have an effect in South and Mid-Sweden, whereas interest in politics is the second most important factor in the north. The results for 2010-2012 confirm a trend of convergence, as North Sweden does not deviate as much as two decades earlier.

The conclusion is that the newspaper reading in the north seems to have been less characterized by social segregation than in other parts of Sweden for most of the entire period, even though it is less obvious in the early 2010s than in the late 1980s. In practice, this means that blue collar workers in the north have been more frequent readers than in the south and, especially, in Mid-Sweden. It is very reasonable to believe that the less class-based pattern in the north is explained by the existence of a relatively strong social democratic press. This confirms earlier observations that the existence of social democratic press has been an important factor behind the social equality in newspaper reading (Weibull, 1983, 1985).

To conclude, the northern part of Sweden to a larger extent than the rest of the country still in the early 21st century represents a more traditional political press structure. On the other hand, there is a trend of decreasing politically related readership in this area as well: young readers do not follow the reading tradition. Thus, the development is

going in the direction already seen in South and, especially, Mid-Sweden, where social democratic papers are few and newspaper reading is more socially stratified with more frequent readership among white collar groups than among blue collar counterparts.

The politics of the tabloid market

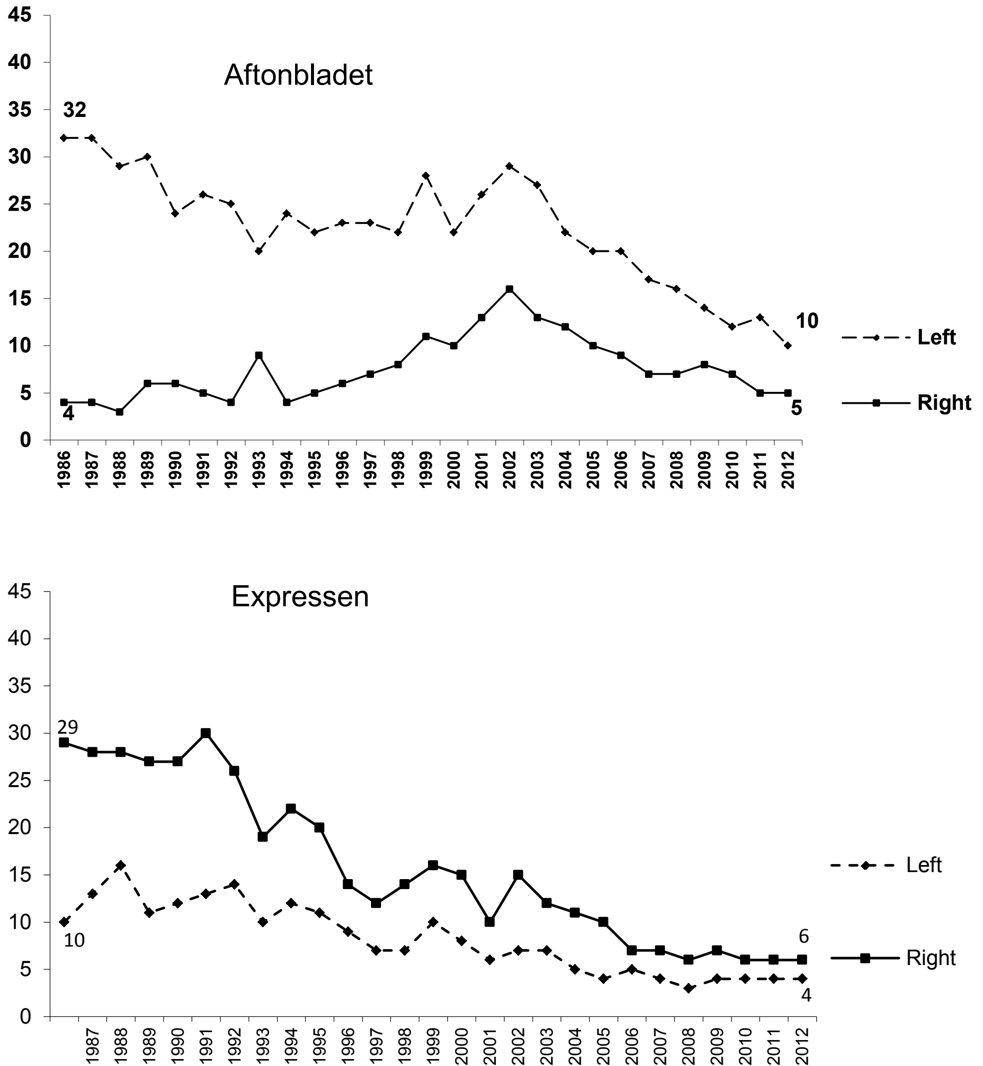
The situation of morning papers largely depends on their local base. Few papers reach outside the publishing area. Not even the main Stockholm-based morning papers reach many readers outside the metropolitan area with their printed editions. But as pointed out in the introduction, there is also a national newspaper market consisting of the two single copy sale tabloids *Aftonbladet* and *Expressen*. *Aftonbladet*, originally founded as a liberal opposition paper in the early 19th century, later turned conservative but since the late 1950s turned a social democratic political affiliation (Hadenius, 1980; Gustafsson, 1980) *Expressen* was founded in 1944 as liberal paper,

Since both papers turned single copy sale tabloids the market situation was characterized by intense competition, with *Expressen* being the circulation leader until 1995. As far as content, they both have focused on television, sports, and, later, entertainment, but they also stressed domestic political news as well as commentaries and debate, including culture (Weibull, 1996). In the mid-1990s, *Aftonbladet* ventured into digital media. It was the first Swedish paper to actively develop a successful internet site, soon followed by *Expressen*. In the last two decades, the print versions have lost readers (see Figure 2), whereas they have expanded strongly on the internet, especially *Aftonbladet* with *Aftonbladet.se* (Färdigh & Westlund, 2012).

Even though the internet ventures might have affected the character of both *Aftonbladet* and *Expressen*, they are still perceived as political papers – one to the left and one to the right. In the 1970s, it was even sometimes said that buying a single-copy sale newspaper was a political choice (Weibull, 1976). Now, the question is to what extent this is still the case, and what the digital technology might have meant for the political perception of the two papers. First let us look at the print version of the two papers as a potential party-political choice.

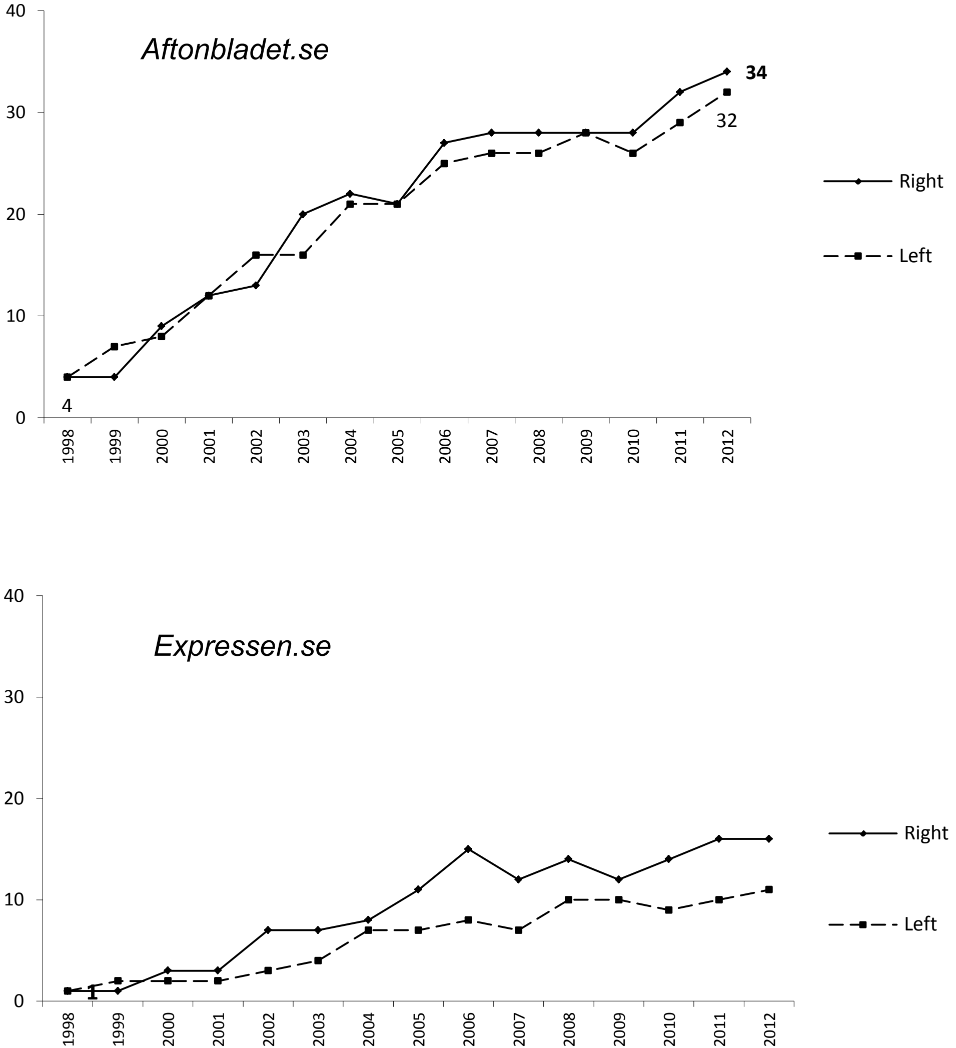
Figures 4a-b show to what extent individuals placing themselves to the left and individuals placing themselves to the right read the printed versions of *Aftonbladet* and *Expressen*, respectively.

Figure 4a Reading of *Aftonbladet* (social democratic) and *Expressen* (liberal) at least three days a week according to left-right self-placement 1986-2012 (percent)



Remark: Left placement is defined as those placing themselves "Wholly" or "Somewhat to the left; Right placement is defined as those placing themselves "Wholly" or "Somewhat to the right; Source: The National SOM surveys 1986-2012.

Figure 4b Reading of the digital versions of *Aftonbladet* (social democratic) and *Expressen* (liberal) at least 3 days a week according to left-right self-placement 1998-2012 (percent)



***Remark*:** View Figure 4a
***Source**:* The National SOM surveys 1998-2012.

The picture is very distinct: *Aftonbladet* is clearly more attractive among left-oriented persons than among the right-oriented. For *Expressen* it is the other way round. Secondly, we can see that there is a long-term decline in regular reading, independent of political orientation, for both papers. This reflects the decline in regular reading for printed tabloids. And, finally, we observe a very clearly shrinking gap between left and right sympathizers over time – for *Aftonbladet* from 28 percentage units in 1986 to 5 in 2012, and for E*xpressen* from 19 to 2.

Regression analyses confirm the observations. The political factors affected reading habits less in 2012 than in the late 1980s, when it was by far most important factor with *Aftonbladet* preferred by people to the left and *Expressen* preferred by people to the right. Similar to reading of local morning papers, age becomes a more important factor over time. However, the age factor is reversed over time: in the first period, print tabloid reading was more frequent among the young, whereas in the early 2010s, the elderly were the more frequent readers.

One important reason for this is, of course, that young people have largely changed to the digital versions of the two tabloid papers (Färdigh & Westlund, 2012). Another shared feature is the impact of education and social class, especially for *Aftonbladet*, although less so in the last period as the upper classes and educated people seem to be losing interest in reading tabloids on paper, probably choosing the digital alternatives.

It is reasonable to conclude that there is still a political, even a party-political[10], factor behind the choice to read the paper version of one of the two tabloids, even though the regression analyses show that education in the last period is a more important factor than political orientation.[11] It seems however that this is related only to the printed editions, while this factor is gradually diminishing in importance with shrinking circulation. Possibly, today it has in most cases become a mere tradition, but it might have originally been a conscious political choice.

In this perspective, it is interesting to carry out the same analysis for the digital versions of *Aftonbladet* and *Expressen* (Figure 4b). Here we

10 The same analysis has been carried out for sympathizers of the two main political parties – the Social Democrats and the Moderates. The pattern is almost exactly the same.
11 The less educated read tabloid papers more regularly than the more educated.

find almost no political influence on regular reading habits. This is especially true for *Aftonbladet.se*, where we find no difference between left-oriented and right-oriented persons in regular readership. Furthermore, right-oriented persons prefer *Aftonbladet.se* to *Expressen.se*. For reading *Expressen.se*, however, there is still a minor political gap between right-oriented and left-oriented persons.

Behind the pattern, we can find that age is a decisive factor – younger persons are more likely to be regular readers of digital media, but also education (high) and gender (men) contribute significantly. Political factors like political self-placement and political interest do not show significant effects. Reading of digital tabloids seems to be more a matter of innovation than of political choice (cf. Rogers, 1995). Thus, the assumption that the trademark of the papers should have some sort of party-political connotation finds no support. It seems as if the new media technology has erased the political layers still visible for the printed versions.

Concluding discussion

The point of departure for this article has been the question of what the gradual decline in regular newspaper reading has meant for the political character of the Swedish press. The question has been addressed from a readership perspective and approached in three ways. First we looked at the role of political factors among other determinants of newspaper reading patterns over time, then we explored the role of the changing newspaper structure by studying regional differences, and finally we turned to the political competition in the national tabloid market. The social democratic press received particular attention as an important part of the political press tradition in Sweden.

Concerning general newspaper reading, it is quite obvious that the idea of a party-political press has gradually eroded. The press has not reflected the party system for a long time. What we have observed in the analyses of the reading development the last 25 years is its final phase. As pointed out in the introduction, the declining party-political influence on newspaper content as well as on reading patterns was visible already in the 1960s and accelerated in the late 1970s because of increasing market concentration. Most newspapers kept their politically affiliated editorial pages, but showed less party loyalty than they used to do (Hadenius and Weibull, 1992; Nord, 1993, 2001; cf. Bastiansen, 2009). Instead, the strict logic of the economic market – some-

times described in systemic terms as the liberal model (Hallin & Mancini, 2004) – replaced political strategy. However, in markets with political alternatives like in North Sweden and in the single copy sale market we still note a political newspaper choice, although declining.[12]

The newspaper development meant a transition from politics to economy as the main *raison d'être* for newspaper publishing (cf. McManus, 1994). The readers were now transformed from citizens to consumers and news and advertising replaced party politics as the main currency; the free dailies established in the 1990s did not even have an editorial page. The changing conditions increased the problems of the social democratic press, building on a party political vision with a readership of party politically interested individuals. The state press support of the 1970s, introduced to save this type of papers, was not sufficient to keep a political balance (Hadenius et al, 2011). Hence social democratic papers lacked resources to compete with the non-socialist papers and lost readers. As has been shown, this was especially evident for the south of Sweden where the social democratic press never was very strong, whereas it has kept its market position better in the north, although gradually in non-socialist newspaper organizations.

The changes in the newspaper market reflected a social transformation where politics gradually had lost influence, while market solutions increased in importance. For the newspaper companies political connections were subordinate to economic considerations, also in terms of newspaper organization and recruitment (McManus, 1995). However, it is important to underline, that the disappearance of the party political press did not mean that newspapers lost their interest in politics. On the contrary, it is reasonable to say that the press now developed its political reporting. It is characteristic that politics today makes up a substantial part of the news coverage with an increased focus on investigative reporting (Djerf-Pierre & Weibull, 2009; Weibull, 2009).

The Swedish newspapers kept their strong position also without party connection – or more probable because of that. As we have seen the late 1980s and early 1990s represented heydays for the printed

12 There is also a traditional party political press with close party connections, but it has survived only in small papers published at best once a week (Ohlsson, 2006).

press. Since the early 21st century, however, the traditional print newspaper market has started to erode. The press is gradually losing readers, and, more importantly for its democratic role, the segregation in readership is increasing, reflecting a polarization also in news consumption (Strömbäck et al., 2012). The long-term development is that regular reading of local morning papers is increasingly structured according to age, with younger people reading less. Less than a quarter of the members of the youngest age cohort are regular readers.[13] The accelerating loss of young readers has given the printed press the nickname of an old-fashioned medium. It seems to be an irreversible development reinforced over generations (Weibull et al., 2013). The traditional business idea of one paper subscription for the whole household has been challenged by an increasing individualization in habits and interests, meaning less household cohesion and more mobility (Giddens, 1990). For mobile persons, morning delivery is not perceived as a matter of quality, and for a one-person household, getting the newspaper is very expensive (Weibull, 2012a, 2012b).

In this perspective, it is easy to understand that young people move to digital media. This technology is in all respects individualized and can be reached from all places, and is practically free of charge. The newspaper companies handled the new competition differently. With the exception of the metropolitan press, local morning papers have so far not been very successful at launching attractive digital versions, seemingly having problems to prioritize between printed and digital platforms. For the tabloids, the situation is the other way around: here the digital platforms are more attractive than the print versions, even though the profits from the digital versions are lagging behind.

The transformation, when readers move from print to computer or smartphone, is an obvious threat to the printed political press. It is an important factor behind the decline of the printed papers, but also to the printed newspaper as a symbol of the political press tradition. It has also been demonstrated that the digital newspaper versions are not perceived as political as print, at least so far, But is not only a matter of tradition. Print has represented an excellent form for broad news coverage, in-depth analyses and background stories. As a so-called display medium the printed newspaper offers a lot of content that the

13 Probably even a little less if we consider the response rate of the SOM surveys among the youth (Wadbring 2013).

reader has not sought for but might find of interest. In the digital versions of newspapers, so far the display is limited and the reader must therefore to a large extent know what to look for. What this means for readers' exposure to political news commentaries is difficult to predict. The increasing importance of new digital platforms opens for other sources of information, especially in the field of social media, implying a totally changed political communication system.

What then does the expansion of the digital media mean for the Swedish party political newspaper tradition? Does the printed political press still have a role to play in the developing media and communication system? The analysis of the latter part of the period shows that there are two confronting tendencies to consider. One is the increasing age segregation not only in newspaper readership but for most media use (cf. Westlund and Weibull, 2013); the other is the increasing effect of political interest for reading a morning paper. The former is a risk factor indicating a dying medium, even though it will obviously take some time, whereas the latter indicates that the printed morning paper in spite of changes in reading level has a content much appreciated by its readers (Andersson and Weibull, 2013).

The problem, however, is the economic conditions when printed papers gradually lose advertising to digital media. Two scenarios seem probable. In the first is business as usual, which means increasing prices for the readers, implying an elitist press. In the second the publishing frequency for print version is reduced to two or three days a week complimenting the daily online paper. The first scenario might be a possibility for the main metropolitan newspapers, the second for the countryside press.

Thus, a future where some leading papers devoted to politics are read by those who are politically interested and a large number of local papers read mainly by the elderly seems very likely, whereas young people with less political interest use digital media (cf. Strömbäck et al., 2012) If so, it means a new type of segregation breaking with the Nordic tradition of high newspaper readership in all social groups. But, as Daniel Hallin and Paolo Mancini (2004) point out, this is not something new. Actually, there has for many years been a gradual drift in the direction of a liberal, market-oriented press structure also in the Nordic countries, indicating the importance of international influences on media development.

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Chapter 6
Change and Stability in Issue Ownership: The Case of Sweden 1979-2010

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Issue ownership has been an important concept in the analysis of party behavior, party strategy and party competition for several decades. In addition, the concept has been used to explain election outcomes and voting behavior. The main idea behind the concept of issue ownership is that election outcomes are influenced by the public agenda. This since different political issues are advantageous or disadvantageous to political parties in such a way that certain parties gain support while others lose support when a certain issue becomes salient. From this perspective, the competition between parties is mainly thought to be a struggle over agenda setting, i.e. which issues or problems that should be discussed and considered important during an election campaign. The party succeeding in directing the agenda towards their own issues would thus benefit electorally.

Traditionally, issue ownership has been regarded as a stable phenomenon where parties have different profiles and are advantaged by different political issues or issue areas (e.g. Budge & Farlie 1983; Petrocik 1996). Already in 1968 Gunnar Sjöblom noted that parties had certain profit and loss issues, which gave the parties a competitive advantage or disadvantage when these issues were high on the agenda. The same is true for Holmberg (1981) who empirically examined if the political parties in the Swedish general election of 1979 had distinctive positive or negative profiles in certain issues among the voters. That a

certain issue or issue area was "owned" by a certain party was more or less seen as given. This way, fluctuations in the public agenda would affect parties' asymmetrically, and widely discussed issues would electorally benefit the party owning those issues. Issue ownership is in this respect a matter of track record (Budge 1994; Walgrave and De Swert 2007) where it is voters' perception of the importance of issues and issue saliency that produces electoral volatility, while issue ownership in itself is claimed to be stable and persisting. Klingemann *et.al.* (1994), for example, asserts that parties issue ownership originates from deep cleavages dividing society, while Petrocik (1996) states that issue ownership depends on the social basis of a party.

Recently, however, several studies have reported change and fluctuations concerning parties' issue ownership. Some examples of this includes the issue of elderly care and welfare in Norway (Narud & Valen 2001), the issue of crime in the USA (Holian 2004), and the issue of unemployment in Sweden (Oscarsson & Holmberg 2008; Martinsson 2009). A few instances of changes in issue ownership have also been reported in Canada (Bélanger 2003). But where do these studies lead us? Should we conclude that things have changed and that issue ownership is not as stable as it used to be (if it ever was)? Or have the concept itself been misused or misunderstood? And if issue ownership can easily be "stolen" or challenged, is it still a useful concept for understanding or predicting party behavior or election outcomes? The recent studies observing change in issue ownership also makes it clear that we know surprisingly little about what might cause, or facilitate, change in issue ownership. In fact, we do not even have systematic studies of how stable issue ownership usually is, or how frequent clear shifts in issue ownership actually are. Based on a large scale survey embedded experiment in Belgium, Walgrave *et. al* (2009) shows that issue ownership is a dynamic process and that significant shifts in issue ownership for preowned issues, seem to be dependent on the balance in the news items.

This chapter has, however, a more humble aim than explaining what causes or facilitates change in issue ownership. The aim of this chapter is to explore the extent of change and stability in issue ownership in Sweden. For this purpose we utilize the Swedish national election studies from 1979 to 2010.

Theoretical background - Who is in charge of the ownership

During the last decades traditional social-structural models of voting behavior have been decreasing in explanatory power since individual voters have become less inclined to vote according to class or party identification. Single issues and policies have in turn become more important for the vote-decisions among individuals in most western democracies. (Franklin, Mackie, and Valen 1992; Narud and Allberg 1999). The nature of Western European party competition has thus changed direction towards competition over agenda control: over which issues that should receive political attention (Green-Pedersen 2007). Issues thereby appear to gradually replace party identification and deep ideological affinity as the main motivation behind vote-choices among individuals (Dalton 1984). Researchers of electoral behavior have therefore shifted their attention towards models on issue voting where one of the more popular and empirically successful theories is the theory of issue ownership.

The issue-ownership theory claims that voters identify parties with issues and if they think about an issue they also think about a party. Issue ownership is a matter of reputation in the sense that it from a voter perspective is a question about which party that is most competent to handle a certain issue. According to this logic, parties do seldom compete by taking opposite stands on specific issues. Instead they are talking at cross-purposes, trying to make the issues where they can claim ownership to become the most salient issues during an election. The party who manages to make 'their issues' the most salient during an election will thus become the most successful party in terms of received amount of votes (Budge 1994; Budge and Farlie 1983; Klingemann, Hofferbert, and Budge 1994; Petrocik 1996). The theory has gained empirically support in several studies starting with Budge and Farlie (1983) who showed that parties often won elections when their issues were high on the public agenda, but its has also been used in other studies (see Ansolabehere 1994; Blomqvist and Green-Pedersen 2004; Budge and Farlie 1983; Damore 2004; DB 2004; Klingemann, Hofferbert, and Budge 1994; Petrocik 1996; Popkin 1991; van der Brug 2004)

From this perspective it is the voters' perceptions of the importance of issues and issue saliency that produces electoral volatility while issue ownership in itself is claimed to be stable and persisting. But from where does the ownership of an issue origin and how is it maintained?

The literature on issue ownership seems to neglect these straightforward questions. Issue ownership *per se* is mostly regarded as being an exogenous and given thing (Walgrave and De Swert 2007). Issue ownership is often used for explaining voting behavior but it is hardly explained itself. For example, Klingemann *et.al.* (1994) asserts that parties issue ownership originates from deep cleavages dividing society, while Petrocik (1996) states that issue ownership depends on the social basis of a party. In this aspect, the theory is underdeveloped in the sense that it only claims that ownership is related to cleavages or ideology. Consequently, it seems as not much research has been spent on exactly how a party can claim the ownership of a specific issue.

Klingemann et al. do, however, state that parties can gradually start to emphasize new issues while letting old issues fade away. By selectively emphasize or de-emphasize different issues, parties can reinforce old issue ownerships or claim new, free-floating issues. Consequently, parties can enter and claim possession over new issues but this is not the same as to say that parties can hijack another party's issue as in the case of Sweden 2006, where the Social Democrats lost their long-term ownership of the employment issue to their main competitor the Moderates (Oscarsson and Holmberg 2008). According to the issue ownership theory this is not really an option since issue ownership derives from cleavages or ideologies, and from a voter perspective, it is a question about which party that is most competent to handle a certain issue. A social-democratic party cannot simply begin to talk about lowering taxes and public spending in a trustworthy way since this issue has traditionally belonged to liberal or conservative parties. From this perspective, if lower taxes becomes the most salient issue in a specific election, voters will instead vote for a liberal or conservative party since these are the parties who can claim 'ownership' of the issue(s) and thereby also are the most competent and trustworthy parties to handle the issue. If an expanded public sector is an important issue for a voter, s/he will vote for the original, *i.e.* the party who is perceived as the issue owner (Budge 1994; Klingemann, Hofferbert, and Budge 1994).

Issue ownership is thus a matter of track record which takes time to change (Budge 1994; Walgrave and De Swert 2007). Hence, it seems as the issue ownership theory in its present form is unable to explain an empirical occasion as the election of 2006 where a party looses an issue at heart to its main competitor from one election to the other.

However, we know that the media have become the main intermediary between parties and voters at the same time as parties also have tended to move closer to each other in terms of ideology and under these circumstances, issue ownership might have become more changeable than before (Walgrave and De Swert 2007).

Defining issue ownership stability and change

In this paper we make use of four different definitions of change in issue ownership. For all definitions we depart from the rankings of issue ownership for each issue and year constructed from the so called measure of balance (net values). The measure of balance is defined as the sum of the percentage of the respondents who have stated that a party has good policies for a specific issue subtracted by the percentage of the respondents who have stated that a party has bad policies for the same issue. Thus, in theory, the measure of balance ranges from +100 to -100. *Issue ownership at any point in time is thus defined as having the most positive measure of balance of any party at that time*.

When it comes to *change* in issue ownership, however, things get more complicated. The first definition is the most liberal and simply defines change in issue ownership as every time a new party is ranked highest for a certain issue. The second definition lays a heavier focus on previous ownership and states that a change in ownership should only be counted if the change is preceded by a situation of stable issue ownership, defined as constant ownership for two consecutive elections. The advantage of this definition is that it disregards issues that constantly fluctuate and seem to lack a stable issue owner. It is reasonable to question if an issue ever had an owner, if the owner of the issue is never the same for two consecutive elections. The third definition of ownership does not take prior ownership into account but instead states that a change in ownership is only counted if the party that takes over the ownership keeps it for at least two consecutive elections. Lastly, the fourth definitions is the strictest, and states that a true change in issue ownership implies both retrospective stability as per definition two, and prospective stability as per definition three. This definition lies conceptually close to the notion of issues being stolen by other parties, since it demands both a previously stable ownership where an issue clearly belonged to one party, and in addition that the new issue owner is also able to keep what it “stole”. The four dif-

ferent definitions of ownership can be summarized in the following manner:

Figure 1. Time dimensions in four definitions of issue ownership.

Retrospective \ Prospective	No	Yes
No	I	III
Yes	II	IV

Although these definitions obviously differ in terms of temporality, it is clear that they may also be distinctively conceptually different and capture different types of changes in issue ownership. According to the first definition, and issue always has an owner, regardless of previous or future ownership. The second definition implies that a change in ownership requires that the issue has had a stable owner previously, and thus does not count issues that has fluctuated historically and later receives a stable owner. The third definition implies that previous ownership is uninteresting, and that stable future ownership is all that counts. It is unimportant whether the issue has been owned before, and it is thus able to include new issues in its definition. The last and fourth definition, as mentioned above, comes closest to a definition of change in issue ownership as stolen issue ownership, as it requires stability in issue ownership both precedes and follows the change.

These four definitions might be important since they potentially describe distinctively different situations. For example, when a stable ownership disappears, but no new stable owner appears (as in definition two), this might be due to weak policy performance, successful critique from other parties, but where no new successful and credible policy is to be seen. Definition three on the other hand, might describe a situation where no party has been able to outclass all other parties in an issue area, with a fluctuating ownership as the result, but then sud-

denly a party manages to successfully launch and market a new idea which grants them stable ownership of the issue.

The data used in this study to examine issue ownership across time comes from the Swedish National Election Studies (SNES). Measures of issue ownership have been included in SNES since 1979 by asking the respondents "Are there any party or parties that according to you have a good/bad policy on … [different issues]?" The issues mentioned in SNES have varied over time, but some issues such as the issues of employment and taxes have been included in all waves of SNES since 1979.

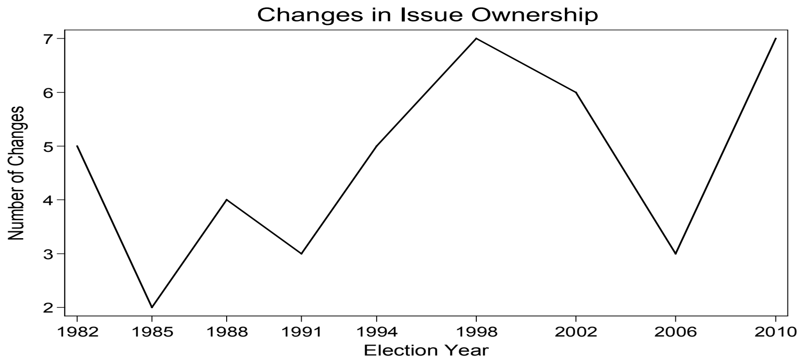
Results

So how common is issue ownership in Sweden? And how often does it change? Does the political world confirm to the view of a stable phenomenon that most classic studies using the concept of issue ownership adhere to? In the first section we map the frequency of changes in issue ownership in Sweden from one election to another according to the four definitions presented above.

Although we study issue ownership between 1979 and 2010, we are only able to examine actual *changes* in ownership from 1982 and on, since we need a previous election to compare with. Figure 2 present the frequency according to the first definition that counts all occurrences where the party ranked highest in terms of measure of balance changes from one election to the next. The exact number of issues measured varies and increases over time. For details of which issues are included in our analysis, see Table 2.

Figure 2 shows us that changes in issue ownership are not uncommon. In fact, a change in some issue seems to have occurred at every election between 1982 and 2010. The line seems to be meandering upward somewhat, which would indicate an increase in the frequency of changes in issue ownership over time. However, this is uncertain, and might depend a lot on the exact definition in use. The 2006 election broke the trend by exhibiting only three changes in ownership, in contrast to the higher numbers surrounding that year. But let us now examine the impact of the choice of definition more closely. In table 1, we present the frequencies of change each year for all four definitions simultaneously.

Figure 2. Changes in Issue Ownership



Comment: The changes in ownership refer to definition one presented above.

Table 1. Number of Changes in Issue Ownership across Elections

	Temporal emphasis	1982	1985	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010	Sum	Avg
Definition 1	None	5	2	4	3	5	7	6	3	7	42	4.67
Definition 2	Retrospective	-	0	1	1	0	4	1	0	5	12	1.50
Definition 3	Prospective	3	1	2	2	2	4	4	1	-	19	2.38
Definition 4	Retrospective Prospective	-	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	-	3	0.43

Comment: Frequency of changes in ownership since the last election according to the definitions presented in figure 1.

As seen in the rightmost column of table 1, the total number of changes observed depends heavily on the definition. The most liberal definition that was presented in figure 2 yields a total of 42 instances of change during the period of 1982-2010. The strictest definition on the other hand, which demands that we move directly from a period of stable ownership into another period of stable ownership, includes no more than three cases of change in issue ownership. Strictly speaking however, we can only analyze the period 1985-2006 when applying extended restrictions both retrospectively and prospectively at the same time as in definition four.

It is also interesting to note that definition three, with a prospective focus, includes more cases than definition two, that has a retrospective focus. This should not be surprising and is in our view in accordance with issue ownership theory (Klingemann, Hofferbert, and Budge

1994) since it is reasonably easier to grab ownership of a new and emerging issue than to change the political landscape by outright take-over of an issue with established ownership. This is also in accordance with the idea that it is easier to emerge as having the best policy by for example systematically emphasizing it in a situation where there is no clear issue ownership at hand.

In the end, however, our results indicate that whether one thinks that change in issue ownership is common or not, depends to a large extent on the definition of issue ownership change. With a liberal definition (nr one), it seems indeed to be fairly common. But with a definition demanding a previously stable ownership for us to think that any real change has occurred (nr two) it appears to be moderately common at best. And with a strict definition (nr four) it seems indeed to be rare.

The next step is to examine stability and change in issue ownership in Sweden substantially. Which political issues are we actually talking about? Where do we observe change and where do we observe stability? And further, how common is strong issue ownership as compared to weak issue ownership? And how common is it to establish a situation of strong issue ownership after a take-over? Or do these mostly result in weak or moderate ownerships? In this study, we define weak, or marginal, issue ownership as situations where the party with the highest measure of balance is less than five units ahead of the party with the second highest measure of balance. Strong issue ownership on the other hand is defined as when the party ranked highest is more than 20 units ahead of the party ranked number two. Table 2 shows the party owning each issue between 1979 and 2010. Weak ownerships are denoted by italics, and strong by bold letters.

It is strikingly clear from table 2 that strong issue ownerships, where the ownership surpasses the closest competitor by more than 20 measures of balance units, are in fact quite rare. Also, it is in fact very rare that an issue has been owned by the same party during the whole period under study. If we disregard issues only measured at three elections, only two issue has been owned by the same party at every election: Law and Order has been the home turf of the liberal-conservative Moderate party (M) at all six elections it has been measured, and Social Security has belonged to the Social Democratic party (S). Table 2 further confirms the message from figure 1 and table 1 above, there is actually quite a lot of change and fluctuation in issue ownership dur-

ing this period. Most issues are actually not constantly belonging to the same party.

Table 2. Issue Owners 1979-2010

	Year									
	1979	**1982**	**1985**	**1988**	**1991**	**1994**	**1998**	**2002**	**2006**	**2010**
Employment	S	**S**	**S**	**S**	S	**S**	*M*	S	M	*M*
Environment	-	**C**	**C**	**MP**	MP	**MP**	**MP**	**MP**	MP	**MP**
Taxes	*FP*	**S**	FP	*S*	*FP*	S	*FP*	*S*	*M*	*S*
Swedish Economy	-	S	S	**S**	M	S	S	**S**	*S*	M
Energy and Nuclear Power	C	*S*	-	C	*C*	C	M	*S*	*M*	S
Foreign and Security Policy	-	-	S	S	*S*	*S*	M	**S**	S	M
Social Security	-	-	**S**	**S**	**S**	**S**	S	**S**	**S**	**S**
Refugee Issues	-	-	-	-	FP	*S*	*FP*	FP	FP	*S*
Law and Order	-	-	-	-	**M**	**M**	**M**	M	M	M
Gender Equality	FP	**C**	-	-	-	S	*V*	V	*V*	S
School and Education	M	S	-	-	-	S	*FP*	FP	FP	FP
Child Care	*S*	-	*FP*	*S*	FP	S	*S*	*S*	*S*	S
Care of Elderly	-	-	-	-	-	-	KD	*KD*	*KD*	S
Business Climate	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	M	**M**	*M*
Health Care	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	*S*	*S*	S
Sparsely-populated areas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**C**	**C**	**C**
Issues concerning EU	-	-	-	-	M	*M*	M	S	S	*S*
Issues concerning EMU	-	-	-	-	-	-	M	*S*	-	-
Wage Earners Funds	*C*	*M*	*M*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Comment: The table reflects which party has the highest level of issue ownership at the corresponding election. The issue owner is defined according to the first definition presented above, i.e. the party which has the highest measure of balance. Party abbreviation in italics signifies weak issue ownership, defined as a distance to the party with the second highest measure of balance of less than 5 units. Party abbreviation in bold signifies strong issue ownership, defined as a distance to the party with the second highest measure of balance of more than 20 units.

Some issue areas, however, clearly exhibit a pattern of fairly stable ownership. The environment, for example, clearly belongs to the Swedish environmental party, which is perhaps hardly surprising. They have owned the issue since they first entered the national parliament in 1988. Although before that, environmental issues belonged to the Centre party. This is a clear instance where a change in issue ownership is tightly linked to the emergence of a new party (cf. Bélanger 2003).

Employment on the other hand, used to be closely associated with the Social Democratic party, which had a strong and constant ownership for a long time. 1998 was the first occasion where this situation changed, and a situation of almost equal balance measure for the social democrats and the moderates appeared, but with a ever so slight advantage for the Moderate party. Subsequently, the Moderate party firmly grabbed hold of the issue in the 2006 election (for more on this, see for example Martinsson 2009).

For the last four elections, school and education has appeared as profile issue for the Liberal party (fp), while child care has slipped from the liberals and now instead belong to the social democratic camp. Elderly care used to be an issue belonging to the Christian democrats (kd), but in the most recent election in 2010, more people now favour the Social Democrats on this issue too.

In the last section of this chapter, we examine if economic issues are indeed more volatile than other issues, as the previous research and theory seem to suggest (Budge & Farlie 1983; Petrocik 1996). In addition, we formally test if changes in issue ownership are indeed becoming more common over time or not. These analyses employ two different dependent variables: firstly, a dichotomous coding of whether a change in ownership has occurred, and secondly whether a change in a party's measure of balance for an issue surpasses ten units or not. Thus, the unit of analysis is the first case is yearsXissues, while the second case employs a unit of analysis specified as yearsXissuesXparties. For this analysis, we classified as economic issues employment, the Swedish economy, and taxes.

Table 3. Probability of change in ownership occurring or large changes in levels of ownership occurring (logistic regression, beta coefficients, average partial effects, p-values)

	Change in ownership		Large difference in issue ownership	
	β	APE	β	APE
Economic issues	1.093**	24.3	0.716**	8.4
	(0.027)	(0.014)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Election/time	-0.0212	-0.5	-0.0212	-0.3
	(0.836)	(0.835)	(0.706)	(0.706)
Constant	-0.618		-1.889***	
	(0.440)		(0.000)	
Baseline probability	41		15	
Percent correctly classified	66		86	
N	97		647	
Pseudo R2	0.042		0.017	

Comment: Change in issue ownership is defined according to definition one presented above. Large difference is a dummy variable signifying of the difference in the level of ownership from the previous election has increased or decreased with at least ten units. Average partial effects calculated with the Stata command margins. The high level of percent correctly classified combined with a low pseudo R2 for the second model is largely due to skewness in the distribution of the dependent variable. * significant at 10% level, ** at 5% and * < 1%

The results indicate consistently across both models that ownership of economic issues do fluctuate more than other kinds of issues, but that fluctuations in issue ownership has not become more common over time. Looking at the average partial effects, it is 24.3 percentage points more likely that a change in ownership will occur if the issue in question is an economic issue, which is both statistically and economically significant. This, of course, is in line with the impression table 2 above gives, as e.g. the tax issue has not been owned by a party in two consecutive elections. By contrast, the average partial effect of election/time is close to zero and nowhere near statistical significance.

In table 4 the relationship between the absolute change in level of issue ownership and time and issue type is examined.

Table 4. Effects on changes in level of ownership (OLS regression, beta coefficients, p-values)

	Absolute Difference
	β
Economic issues	0.0134***
	(0.006)
Election/time	-0.000193
	(0.851)
Constant	0.0511***
	(0.000)
N	647
R2	0.012

Comment: Differences are calculated as the absolute difference in the balance measure from one time of measurement to the next. Changes from 1979 to 1982 are not included in the model due to differences in coding. * significant at 10% level, ** at 5% and * < 1%.

The model clearly exhibits the same pattern as the two models in table 3 if less dramatic. According to table 4 economic issues are more volatile compared to other issues, even though the magnitude of the coefficient is quite small. This, perhaps, may be due to that for parties other than the contenders of ownership differences in levels may be very close to zero and display very little variation (Holmberg 1981). As the average difference for all non-economic issues between two elections is a mere .0511 measure of balance units, the difference for economic issues is 26% higher. The coefficient on the variable election/time is also in this case nowhere near statistical significance and has a coefficient very close to zero.

Concluding discussion

Despite sharply decreasing numbers of strong partisans and the anecdotal impression from previous studies that issue take-overs have become more common nowadays, our systematic exploration of this topic shows that changes in issue ownership has in fact not become more common than it used to be and nor has it ever been particularly stable either. The former is even more surprising as Holmberg (1981) concluded that partisans and other voters most often were in relative disagreement on the issue competence of the political parties. Still, stable

ownership is evidently much less common than the impression one gets from the seminal writings of Budge and Farlie (1983).

Hence, in light of more recent research which has delivered some tentative indications of that changes in issue ownership have increased over time, this is nothing that is supported in the Swedish case. Instead issue ownership seems never to have been a particularly stable phenomenon in general. Moreover, our results demonstrate that the ownership in economic issues are more volatile compared to others kind of issues, something which is well in line with our theoretical expectations since performance issues should be more sensitive to changes in voter evaluations. However, it should be noted that our conclusion of whether issue ownership should be considered a stable phenomenon or not hinges on the definition of issue ownership.

Lastly, this chapter set out to explore the extent of change and stability in issue ownership in Sweden from 1979 to 2010. As mentioned, changes do occur but not more often today than before. A natural venue for further research would thus be to continue to explore which factors that can explain actual changes in issue ownership. We believe that experimental research would be a good platform for such a continuation. Some first steps toward this direction has also already been taken by Walgrave et al (2009), who in a in an embedded survey experiment (where the actual party leaders from five different political parties in Belgium made statements on party policies on certain issues), found that news exposure can lead to significant shifts in issue ownership, especially if the issue in question is not owned by any party.

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Chapter 7
Religion and Political Participation in Sweden

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Religion and political participation in Sweden

In the western democracies, a concomitant of industrialization and urbanization has been a decrease in the importance of religion in society. In those countries, religion has become, relatively speaking, a subordinate institution (Mills 1956). This development has occurred unevenly across societies. The U.S., for instance, stands out as an exception in that there has been no more than a minor trend in this direction (Putnam and Campbell 2010; Chaves 1989; Glenn 1987). Sweden, on the other hand may be said to exemplify the trend. Analysts of U.S. institutions have subjected religion to intense scrutiny, but perhaps because of the presumed diminishing importance of religion, it has been more or less ignored in analyses of Swedish society. How has the trend towards more secularization in Sweden affected political participation?

Studies from the U.S. show strong evidence that church attendance is important for political participation (Peterson 1992; Smith and Walker 2013). In their seminal study Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) argued that churches promote individuals' motivation, recruitment and skills to participate in politics. Likewise, Putnam (2000) claims that churches can functions as 'networks of engagement' that promote participation. Moreover, church attendance is supposed to promote civic skills that are central for political participation (Jones

Correa and Leal 2001). But few studies evaluate how changes in church attendance over time affect political participation.

How to define secularization is a highly contested issue (cf. Gorski and Altınordu 2008). We draw on an understanding according to which secularization is the decline of belief and practice in religion. However, in our empirical analyses we cannot evaluate beliefs; we measure only attendance at religious services as a proxy for religiosity/secularization. In his work on secularization, Zuckerman labels Sweden (together with Denmark) as "probably the least religious countries in the world, and possibly in the history of the world" (Zuckerman 2008, 2). Our case study of Sweden can thus provide a hint of what kind of development to expect in other countries where the trend towards secularization has not gone that far yet. Although studies on the development of secularization in Sweden are scarce, a trend towards ever more secularization in Sweden should not be regarded as a foregone conclusion. Hamberg (1991) reported panel data that showed an increase in church attendance between 1955 and 1970. However, belief items in the same panel indicated that secularization was occurring during this period. Also, the church attendance finding is clouded by the fact that the question asked about monthly attendance, and the two waves of the panel were done during different seasons.

In this paper, we focus on a series of eleven election studies carried out in Sweden in the years 1956-2010 (cf. Holmberg and Oscarsson 2004). The Swedish National Election Studies (SNES) is a unique data source in that it represents one of the world's longest time series of election studies. The SNES are large national representative face-to-face interview studies with high response rates (ranging from 68 to 92 percent). Each of these studies included a measure of attendance at religious services and a measure of voting. As pointed out earlier, we take the measure of attendance at religious services as our proxy for religiosity/secularization. The measure of attendance at religious services is based on self-report while the measure of voting is based on the official records, i.e. the validated vote (Holmberg 1994). Thereby we avoid bias related to overreporting of voting (Granberg and Holmberg 1991). While it would be preferable to look at a wider set of political participation indicators, only voting is consistently measured during the entire period. However, we report results of analyses for another more demanding form of political participation as a robustness test: persuading others to vote for a political party. However,

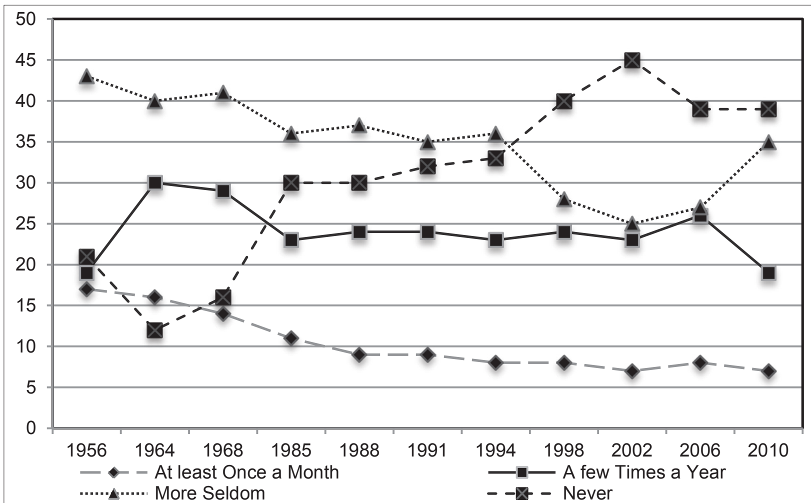
we cannot track the development of this relationship during the entire time frame.

The analysis asks whether evidence of increasing secularization is observed during 1956-2010. If so, what is the relationship between religiosity and political participation as a society becomes more secular? Do the religious people retreat and refrain disproportionately from participation? Or, perhaps out of concern over the direction of social change, are they disproportionately likely to vote? Finally, we evaluate whether the political elite is more secular than citizens.

Secularization in Sweden

Figure 1 shows the pattern of responses to the frequency of attendance at religious services question in each of the eleven election studies. In the most frequently attending category, at least once a month, the percentage decreased from 17% in 1956 to only 7% in 2010. Although the data are not perfectly regular, most importantly we lack information about the development during 1968 to 1985. No questions regarding attendance at religious services were asked during these years. Overall, however, the picture is quite clear. Sweden, already quite secular in the 1950s, became increasingly secular in the ensuing 50 years. In a comparative perspective the level of church attendance is very low. In the U.S., for example, slightly more than 30 % of the citizens attend churches weekly (Putnam and Campbell 2010). Since recent US research has found that the relationship between church attendance and political participation varies by denomination (Smith and Walker 2013) it should be kept in mind that Sweden has been dominated by Lutheran protestants (about 70 percent of the Swedes are members of the Lutheran Church of Sweden, compared to about 95 % in 1970).

Figure 1 Frequency of Attendance at Religious Services Among Swedish Adults, 1956-2002

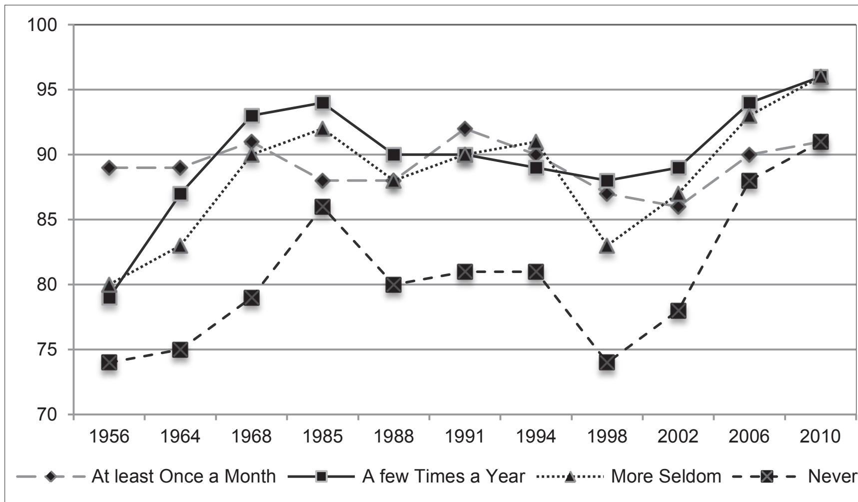


Comment: In 1998, 2002 2006 and 2010 there were six categories instead of four. The three less frequent categories were (a) never, (b) one time per year, and (c) 2-11 times per year. The most frequent category was broken down into three categories: (d) one time per month, (e) two or more times per month, and (f) every week. Source: Swedish National Election Studies.

Church attendance and political participation

Figure 2 displays the relationship between frequency of attendance at religious services and voting. In three of the eleven studies, those attending most often were also most likely to vote. However, the differences among the three most frequently attending categories were very small and not consistent across years. The consistency across years was that the people who say they never attended religious services were least likely to vote. Although it should be noted that the differences in voting between the categories seem to be reduced over time. In the latest election in 2010, the differences between the categories were small. Even among those who never attend churches voter turnout was above 90 % in the SNES sample in 2010.

Figure 2 Percentage Voting in Swedish Parliamentary Elections as a Function of Attendance of Religious Services



Comment: Each entry is the percentage voting, according to the official register. The percentage not voting would be 100 minus the number given. Percentages are weighted to take into account the official aggregate turnout level. Swedish National Election Studies.

Given the arbitrariness of declaring these variables to be the independent or dependent variable, and the problem that church attendance is closely related to other variables such as age and generation, we estimate the impact of church attendance on voting under control for other variables in a regression model. The fact that individuals in the dataset are not independent from each other but clustered within different election contexts violates one of the general assumptions of regression analyses—that the residuals are uncorrelated with each other. For that reason, a multilevel regression model is employed in which the nested two level structure – individuals (i), within elections contexts (j) – is explicitly modeled. Logistic multilevel regression is used since the dependent variable (turnout) is dichotomous. In our multi-level logistic regression models, variance at the election-year-level indicates whether there is significant variation in turnout at different election years.

The left column in Table 1 presents results from the first model which estimates the impact of church attendance on voting under control for age, age^2, gender, education and election year. The results show that the three categories representing the most frequent church

attenders do not significantly differ from each other at the 95 % statistical confidence level. However, those who never attend churches are significantly less likely to vote than those who attend churches more often. While these results show that there is a significant difference in voter turnout among secular and religious people when looking at the entire period, it does not capture whether the magnitude of this difference changes over time as society becomes more secular.

Table 1. The relationship between of attendance of religious services and voting in Sweden 1960-2010. Multilevel logit.

	(1) Main effects	(2) Interaction effects
Church attendance		
(ref cat=attend church monthly)		
Attend church a few times a year	0.163^{*}	-31.701^{***}
	(0.094)	(10.974)
Attend more seldom	0.045	-42.628^{***}
	(0.088)	(10.184)
Never attend church	-0.518^{***}	-40.441^{***}
	(0.089)	(10.191)
Controls		
Election year	0.003	-0.015^{**}
	(0.006)	(0.007)
Age	0.021^{***}	0.021^{***}
	(0.002)	(0.002)
Age^2	-0.000^{***}	-0.000^{***}
	(0.000)	(0.000)
Gender (0=man, 1=woman)	0.011	0.006
	(0.047)	(0.047)
Education (ref cat: only compulsory education)		
Gymnasium	0.407^{***}	0.407^{***}
	(0.056)	(0.056)
Higher education	0.965^{***}	0.974^{***}
	(0.076)	(0.076)
Interactions		
Attend church a few times a year × Election year		0.016^{***}
		(0.006)
Attend church more seldom × Election year		0.022^{***}
		(0.005)
Never attend church × Election year		0.020^{***}
		(0.005)
Constant	-3.886	31.585^{**}
	(11.542)	(14.408)
Election year variance	0.242^{***}	0.243^{***}
	(0.059)	(0.059)
Number of respondents	23593	23593
Number of elections	10	10
Bayesian Information Criteria	13585.190	13596.515

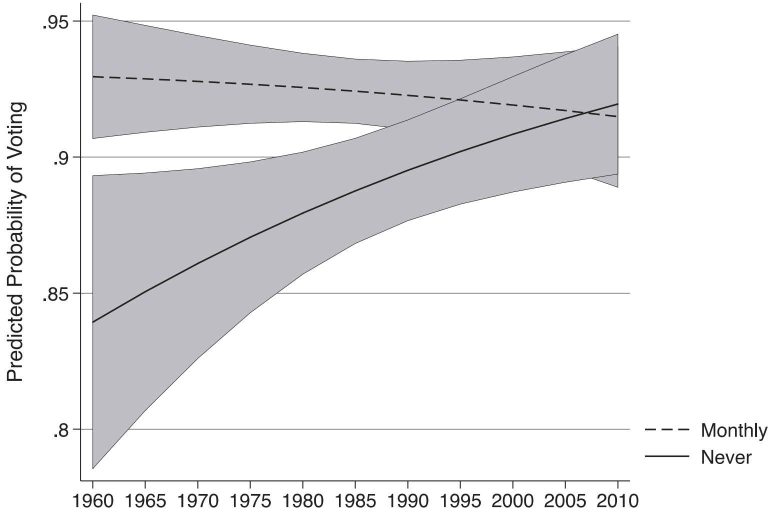
Comment: Standard errors in parentheses, * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$. Data from 1956 is not included since it did not include a variable measuring age in years.

To test whether the difference in voting between secular and religious people diminishes over time model 2 estimates the interactions between election year and church attendance. The estimates show support for an interaction effect. Since interactions are hard to interpret from logit coefficients, Figure 3 illustrates the predicted probabilities of voting for individuals who never attend churches and those who attend church monthly during 1960 to 2010. The figure shows that there was a significant gap in probability to vote between the two groups during the beginning of the period but that there is no significant difference in the probabilities of voting during later election years.

Hence we can draw the conclusion that there is no evidence that religious people refrain disproportionately from participation. At the same time, the most religious people do not stand out as much more likely to vote than the moderately frequent church visitors. Those who never attend churches were less likely to vote during the beginning of the period under study, but this difference has diminished over time.

An objection might be raised that the rate of voting is so high in Sweden (see Figure 2) that the threshold for participation is too low. Perhaps that is the reason for the small differences among the three most frequently attending categories. Therefore, we examined the results for another political participation variable. People were asked whether they had attempted to persuade some other person to vote for a particular political party. That question was asked in the eight elections, 1985-2010. This question has a much higher threshold than the more 'simple act of voting'. With relatively little variation across years, about 15% indicated that they had tried to influence someone. Figure 4 present the frequencies of this variable for individuals with different levels of church attendance. People who reported attending religious services most frequently were also most likely to say that they tried to influence someone. However, the differences were very small, and the safest statement is to say that the two variables, attendance at religious services and trying to influence somebody's vote, are unrelated.

Figure 3. Predicted probabilities and 95% confidence intervals of voting for individuals who never attend church and attend church monthly.

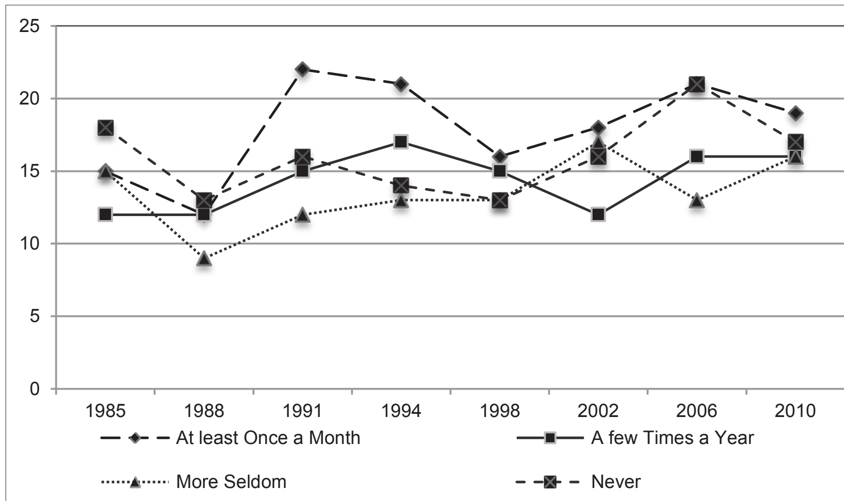


Comment: Predicted probabilities derived from model 2 in table 1. All control variables are hold at their means.

Finally, we look briefly at the difference between the electorate and the political representatives. Are the members of the political elite leading the way toward a more secular society? In 2010 the election studies were coordinated with a survey of the 349 members of the national parliament (MPs). The same question regarding church attendance was asked to the public and the MPs. Among the MPs, 10% said at least once a month, 28% said a few times per year, 27% said more seldom, and 34% said never. The comparable numbers for the public were 7 %, 19 %, 34 %, and 39%, respectively. Thus, the differences were not large, but it was the case that MPs reported higher attendance at religious services.

This small difference actually makes an intriguing interaction effect when we look at religious attendance in different political parties. Figure 5 illustrates the percentage of the three highest categories (attending religious services more often than never) among each party's voters and MPs.

Figure 4. Percentage Reporting Having Tried to Influence Some Other Person's Vote as a Function of Attendance at Religious Services



Comment: Each entry is the percentage saying yes to the question, "Before this year's election, did you try to persuade some family member, acquaintance, or other person to vote for a certain party." The percentage saying no would be 100 minus the number given in the graph.

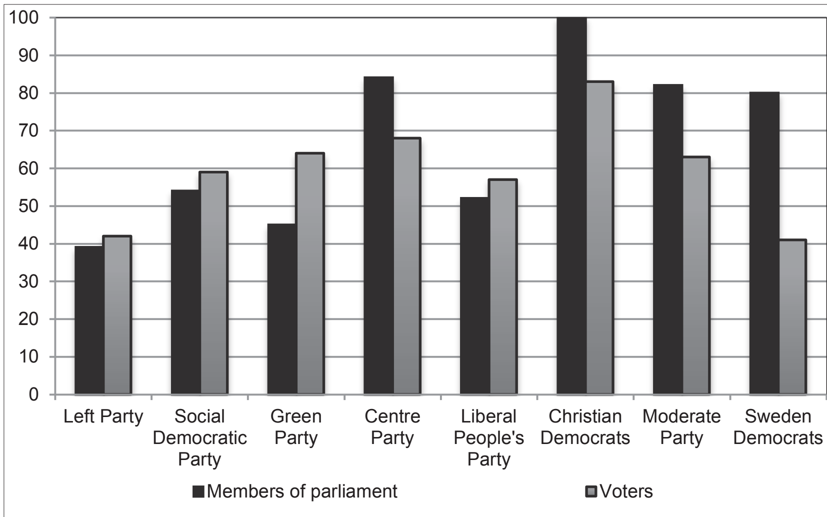
Among people voting for one of the Bourgeois parties, people reported lower levels of church attendance than their representatives in parliament (with the exception of the liberal party). Among The Moderate Party (conservative) voters, 37 % said never, compared to 18 % for Conservative MPs. 100 % of the Christian Democrats MPs attend churches while 83 percent of their voters were church attendances. The largest difference could be found between the voters for the anti immigrant party the Sweden Democrats (41 % attenders among voters) and their MPs (80 % attenders).

On the other hand, the result was reversed for the parties on the left. In these cases, the MPs indicated lower frequency of attendance at religious services than their voters. For the Social Democratic Party, the largest party in Sweden, 59% of the party's voters were attenders, compared to 54% of the Social Democratic MPs

One could say that leadership is divided. For the parties on the left the leaders were more secular than the masses. However, for the parties on the right, the masses were more secular than their leaders.

Hence, there is no clear trend that MPs are more or less secular than citizens.

Figure 5. Percentage Attending Religious Services (three highest categories) Among Voters and Members of Parliament 2010.



Comment: The percentage of people saying never would be 100 minus the number given in the graph. Sources: SNES and the Survey of Parliamentarians 2010.

Conclusion

To conclude, our analyses confirm that there is strong evidence of increasing secularization in Sweden. Secular people were more likely to not vote than religious people. However, differences in voting between secular and religious voters diminished over time. Voter turnout in Sweden is very high in a comparative perspective, even among those who never attend religious services. There is hence no evidence that religious people retreat and refrain disproportionately from participation as a society becomes more secular. Moreover, when looking at a less frequently occurring form of political participation – trying to persuade others to vote for a particular party – we find no clear relationship with attendance at religious services. Finally, there is no support for the hypothesis that the members of the political elite are leading the way toward a more secular society. Only MP's for the left parties were more secular than their voters.

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Chapter 8
Racism, Xenophobia, and Opposition to Immigration in Sweden

MARIE DEMKER

Attitudes toward refugees and immigration

Attitudes towards acceptance of refugees have proven a good indicator for tracking changes and patterns of opinion as well as multicultural tolerance and openness to that which is perceived as foreign. In Sweden, the opinion trend concerning acceptance of refugees runs in parallel with the trend regarding attitudes toward freedom of religion for immigrants, willingness to accept refugees as family members, and general attitudes toward immigrants in Sweden. For at least 20 years, that trend has been that Swedish public opinion is manifesting increasing acceptance of immigrants and immigration. Sweden is also the country in Europe where the highest percentage of the population is open to immigration.[1]

In contrast to the general trend, however, there are groups of citizens in Sweden, as in other countries, who do not believe a more heterogeneous population is a good thing and opposition to all forms of immigration is considerably more widespread among certain population groups than others. When we talk about opposition to immigration, xenophobia, and racism, we should be clear that the substance of these terms is theoretically discrete (Bizumic and Duckit 2012). In

1 Eurobarometer 380.

simple terms, one can say that opposition to immigration is a political position, xenophobia is a negative attitude toward immigrants, and racism is an ideological belief in racial hierarchies.

We are able to study attitudes toward various phenomena by means of surveys and interviews. We can use an attitude scale that examines attitude intensity through response options that indicate degrees of agreement to differentiate groups of individuals that have stronger or weaker antipathy toward immigrants. Through analysis of survey responses and interview responses, we can also study how these attitudes co-vary with other attitudes, as well as other socioeconomic attributes. By performing repeated studies, we can derive time series that provide a picture of developments among the population with regard to attitude intensity, covariance, and content.

During the more than two decades that studies of Swedes' attitudes toward refugees, immigrants, and immigration/integration policy have been performed within the framework of the SOM Institute at the University of Gothenburg, it has proven that there is a very strong correlation between attitudes toward immigration and attitudes toward immigrants.[2] In plain language, if someone dislikes immigration, they usually dislike immigrants too. Opinions on the question of whether Sweden should accept more, fewer, or the same number of immigrants may thus also be used as an indicator of the general attitude toward immigrants in Sweden. There is a very strong correlation between the belief that immigration constitutes a threat and is associated with serious social problems (and that the truth about these problems is withheld from us) and a negative attitude toward refugee immigration. The

2 As early as 1991, Sören Holmberg offered me the opportunity to develop a research program concerning immigration and refugee policy. Initially, this was conducted jointly with Martin Bennulf and Mikael Gilljam. During the years of 1995-2000, in cooperation with a research team funded by the Swedish Social Sciences Research Council (SFR) the work was carried out within the framework of the "No Man's Land" research project consisting of Cecilia Malmström, Hans Andersson, Carl Dahlström, and Isabell Schierenbeck, along with a large number of students at several levels who participated in the project through their written work. In recent years, I have conducted the work through a research project called "Not Only Populism," funded by the Swedish Council for Working Life and Social Research (FAS), 2010-2013. Members of the research team have included Göran Duus-Otterström, Henrik Friberg-Fernros, and Maria Solevid; current members include Maria Oskarson and Linn Sandberg. Since 2000, I have been engaged in research related to opinion formation and mobilization of opposition to immigration within the framework of the MIM research network, www.mim.gu.se, with the kind assistance of Henrik Ekengren Oscarsson, the SOM Institute, and the Swedish National Election Studies Program at the University of Gothenburg.

correlation also implies a coherent attitude pattern wherein views on refugee immigration are a good indicator of the more general understanding of the consequences and significance of immigration (Demker 2012).

Attitudes toward immigration and immigrants are complex; they are composed of multiple values-based components that do not form similar patterns in all individuals or in all groups (Haddock and Zanna 1998). Attitudes are only partially amenable to change; they are influenced by what is said in the individual's own society and own group, but also by the social status of the individual's own group and that of the "other" group (Hainmueller and Hopkins 2012). Attitudes are consciously or unconsciously incorporated into a larger pattern of values (an ideology), whose task is to cohere and support the individual's behavior, but they are also based on fundamental personality characteristics and character (Jost, Federico, and Napier 2009).

The literature refers occasionally to "cultural racism," a belief whose substance is that the individual in question considers people from other cultural contexts (religious, linguistic) inferior to themselves. The traditional understanding of racism however refers to the notion that people can be categorized into biologically distinguishable races whose characteristics are constituted as they are in animals or plants and sorted into a racial hierarchy. Racism in general thus decrees the separation of different races, but less biologically dictated racial beliefs may also lead to the conviction that people from different cultures should not be mixed. Philosopher Lawrence Blum draws attention to the risks inherent in overusing the term "racism." We use the term to describe the most morally reprehensible we can imagine when we want to describe one individual's behavior toward another. But the term was first used by German social scientists to describe an ideology based on a hierarchy of so-called "races." The term has since come to refer to systems other than German Nazism such as South African apartheid and various degrees of European colonialism. Blum suggests that we should use the term racism to refer to inferiorization or antipathy toward other people dictated solely by their presumptive racial affiliation. To inferiorize someone is to consider them of lesser value or worthy of less respect than others, while antipathy is expressed in dislike and hostility (Blum 2002).

Opposition to immigration thus need not arise from racism. The belief that groups of people with a particular skin tone, language,

origin, or culture are inferior to others and/or hostility directed at this group based solely on so-called racial attributes should, however, be designated racism. Virtually always, racism thus provides an ideological basis for opposition to immigration, but opposition to immigration cannot automatically be regarded as an expression of racism.

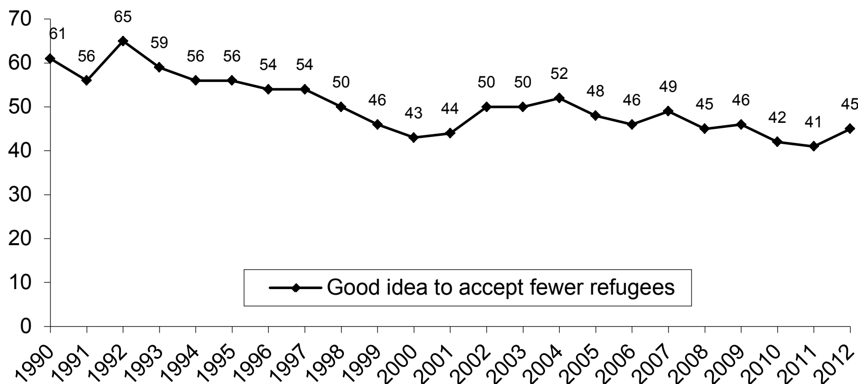
The term xenophobia is usually defined as the attitude that resides somewhere between a restrictive view on immigration and racist convictions. Xenophobia is a negative attitude – hostility, fear, or dislike – toward people or groups of people perceived as alien from the xenophobe's own group (Hjerm 2000). Prejudice is not adequate proof of xenophobia, since a certain measure of prejudice characterizes almost all interpersonal relations and the prejudgments need not have any negative overtones (Wells 1970). Still, empirical evidence shows that opposition to immigration extensively coincides with xenophobic attitudes (see however Spruyt and Elchardus 2012).

The attitude toward immigration may thus be viewed on a sliding scale: from opposition to immigration actualized in a particular situation, via a negative or hostile attitude toward those perceived as foreigners, and at the outside to an ideological belief in a human racial hierarchy.

For the past two decades, the Swedish attitude toward accepting refugees has become steadily more generous. In 2012, 45 percent of Swedes said they think it would be a good or fairly good idea to accept fewer refugees. Twenty years earlier (1993), the proportion was 65 percent.[3]

3 During the period of 1993-2010, the proportion of respondents who both grew up in Sweden and are Swedish citizens has been on average 89 percent. The proportion has varied between 91.7 percent at the highest (1995) and 87.5 percent at the lowest (2010). The proportion of foreign nationals has been on average 3.5 percent, varying between 4.4 percent in 1994 and 2.8 percent in 2007. The proportion of foreign nationals among the population was almost 7 percent in 2011. Respondents of "foreign background" are underrepresented in the SOM studies in relation to the population as a whole (with thanks to Elias Markstedt). Over the years 1993-2011, the composition of the population has changed to a greater or lesser degree in all categories used in the SOM studies, with the possible exception of gender. Among individuals who grew up in countries outside the Nordic region, 36 percent agreed in 2011 that it would be a very good or fairly good idea to accept fewer refugees, which may be compared to e.g. individuals who grew up in one of the three large cities in Sweden, where the corresponding proportion is 37 percent.

Figure 1 Proportion who think it would be a very good or fairly good idea to accept fewer refugees in Sweden, 1990-2012



Remarks: The suggested idea to which respondents were asked to take a position was "Accept fewer refugees in Sweden. The response options were Very Good, Fairly Good, Neither Good nor Bad, and Very Bad (idea). The reported figure represents the proportion that answered "very good idea" or "fairly good idea." Only individuals who answered the entire question were included in the percentage base.

I have shown in prior studies that there is an empirical correlation between a negative or hostile attitude toward immigrants in general and toward accepting refugees in Sweden (Demker 2012). Opposition to refugee immigration is however not evenly distributed across the population. We have known for a long time that there is a strong correlation between education and attitudes toward refugees: the more highly educated a person is, the more generous their attitude toward accepting refugees. Among people with postsecondary education or a college degree, 32 percent thought it would be a good idea to accept fewer refugees, while 58 percent of people with only primary education (nine years in Sweden) agreed with this position.[4] To a certain extent, this difference can be explained by age, gender, and urbanity but education is the factor – among the traditional socioeconomic conditions – that has the utterly determinative statistical explanatory power with regard to attitudes toward acceptance of refugees.

Many more Swedes are open to the idea of engagement in anti-racist activities than to engagement in anti-immigration activities: 22

4 2012 SOM Study.

percent and 4 percent respectively say that this would be "entirely true" for them.

Table 1 The Swedish people's stance on joining an organization that works against racism and xenophobia and, respectively, an organization devoted to stopping immigration, 2011 (percentage).

	Entirely True	Partly True	Partly False	Entirely False
Anti-racist org.	22	35	14	28
Stop immigration org.	4	7	12	77

Remarks: The suggestions respondents took a stance on read: "I would be willing to join an organization that works against racism and xenophobia" and "I would be willing to join an organization that wants to stop immigration to Sweden." The response options were Entirely True, Partly True, Partly False, and Entirely False. Only individuals who answered the question are included. "Don't know" responses were eliminated from the percentage base.

Apart from the willingness to join an organization at all, we thus see in Table 1 that the difference in the likelihood of engaging in anti-racist activities versus anti-immigration activities is significant.

The correlation between the attitude toward accepting refugees in Sweden and willingness to get involved in organizations that promote one's own attitude is distinct. Of the respondents who want to reduce refugee immigration to Sweden (very good or fairly good idea), 26 percent would be willing to join an organization that wants to stop immigration (entirely true or partly true).[5] Among the entire population, the proportion that would be willing to join an organization that wants to stop immigration is only 12 percent.[6] Of those who want to increase refugee immigration to Sweden, 82 percent would be willing to join an organization that works against xenophobia,[7] as compared to 57 percent of the entire population. There is thus a strong and un-

5 Among the smaller group who believe it would be a "very good idea" to reduce refugee immigration, only 21 percent say that they would be willing to join an organization devoted to stopping immigration (response option "entirely true"), but the proportion is 69 percent among sympathizers of the Sweden Democrats. The proportion is not quantifiable among adherents of other parties (N number too low).
6 Both options are shown on Table 1 with adequate rounding, 7 and 4 percent respectively. In a computation where the options are combined, the rounding changes and the result is 12 percent.
7 The 2011 SOM study asked about accepting more refugees in order to perform a method control of the reliability of the question. The correlation between the response patterns for the two questions was strong at 0.77. The control reinforces the assessment that the wording of the question in positive versus negative terms has no marked effect on the response pattern.

ambiguous correlation between the attitude toward accepting refugees and willingness to get involved in pro-immigration or anti-immigration efforts.

Immigration as threat and problem

The 2011 SOM study asked Swedes about their perceptions of immigration as a threat and as a problem.[8] The results indicate that there is a small proportion of citizens who clearly perceive immigration as a problem and a threat and do not trust the depiction of the consequences of immigration served up by the Swedish media. Ten percent of the respondents say that immigration is a threat to Swedish culture and Swedish values, 16 percent say they "know a lot of people" who think the problems associated with immigration are the most important social issue, and 23 percent do not trust the Swedish media to provide a truthful depiction of the problems of immigration.[9]

Table 2. The Swedish people's stance on immigration as a threat and problem, 2011 (percentage).

	Entirely True	Partly True	Partly False	Entirely False
Immigration is a threat to Swedish culture and Swedish values	10	27	23	39
I know a lot of people who think the problems with immigration are the important serious social issue	16	31	21	32
Swedish media do not tell the truth about social problems associated with immigration	23	41	21	16

Remarks: Only individuals who answered the question with one of the response options are included. "Don't know" responses were eliminated from the percentage base.

Although only a small group completely agrees that immigration to Sweden is a problem and that the truth about this problem does not come out, they seem to be a thoroughly convinced minority. Ninety percent of partisan sympathizers with the anti-immigration Sweden

8 Threat scenarios are critical to the construction of xenophobia; see e.g. Horgby (1996).
9 However, the share of "Don't know" responses concerning media credibility is as high as 21 percent.

Democrats believe that immigration is a threat to Swedish culture and Swedish values (entirely/partly true).[10]

Among the people who say that it is entirely true that immigration constitutes a threat, 91 percent also believe that it would be a very good or fairly good idea to reduce refugee immigration. If we look at those who believe it is entirely or partly true that immigration constitutes a threat, 75 percent still believe that refugee immigration should be reduced. These percentages should be compared to average of 41 percent for the general population.

Of the people who entirely agree that they know a lot of people who believe immigrant is the most important social issue, 79 percent also believe it would be a very good or fairly good idea to reduce refugee immigration. If we look at the group who entirely agree or partly agree, 63 percent believe it would be a very good or fairly good idea. Here as well, the proportions should be compared to the average for the general population, which was 41 percent in the 2011 survey.

Among those who believe it is entirely true that the Swedish media do not tell the truth about the problems of immigration, 80 percent think that refugee immigration should be reduced. If we expand the group to include those who also partly agree that the picture presented by the Swedish media is inaccurate, 60 percent think refugee immigration should be reduced. In this case as well, the proportions should be compared to the average of 41 percent for the general population.[11]

Overall, we thus see that beliefs that immigration constitutes a threat, that immigration is associated with serious social problems, and that the truth about these problems is kept from us are very strongly correlated with a negative attitude toward refugee immigration. The correlation implies a coherent pattern of attitude in which the view on refugee immigration is a good indicator of the more general understanding of the consequences and significance of immigration.

10 The proportion is 37 percent among adherents of the Social Democratic Party and 39 percent among adherents of the Moderate Party. The other parties are not quantifiable (N number too low).

11 Among sympathizers with the Sweden Democrats, 97 percent believe that the Swedish media do not tell the truth about social problems associated with immigration (entirely/partly true). The corresponding proportion among adherents of the Social Democratic Party and the Moderate Party is 65 percent.

The question of racism

As I mentioned, sentiment toward immigration may be regarded as a sliding scale that moves from opposition to immigration actualized in a particular situation, via a negative or hostile attitude toward those perceived as foreigners, and further to an ideological belief in a human racial hierarchy. Measuring racism, so to speak, is a nearly insurmountable task. Racism is an ideology whose foundation is that biological differences between groups of people (so-called races) are also grounds for separation and hierarchy. Racist representations play a role in debate, conversation, texts, and political action, even though the people who use them often cannot be termed racist. Myriad archetypes and metaphors reflect old hierarchies and prejudices about collectives and are used without insight into their meaning. Likewise, old ideas take on new meaning in a new context. The individuals who would respond upon direct inquiry that they were racists are virtually negligible since the social norm is clearly anti-racist (Ivarsflaten, Blinder, and Ford 2010). What we are thus left with is the option to use methods that can reveal indications of racist attitudes.

A tenet of traditional racism is that the biological differences between groups are what legitimizes the racial hierarchy. One of these innate characteristics is ability or intelligence (Virtanen and Huddy 1998). On six different occasions between 1993 and 2009, Swedes have been afforded the opportunity to take a position on whether there are disparities in intelligence among different groups of people. Aimed at coming as close to a traditional racist statement as possible, the statement was formulated as "Some ethnicities/races are more intelligent than others."[12] The proportion of Swedes who entirely agree with this statement has dropped by nearly half in the sixteen-year span during which the question was asked, from a little over 4 percent to a just above 2 percent.[13]

12 A linguistic explanation is in order with respect to the term "ethnicities/races" as used in this text. The Swedish survey deliberately used a somewhat old-fashioned word, folkslag, for this concept. Folkslag, which may be literally translated to "types of people," has retrospective connotations and the word was used to emphasize that the question referred to differences that have cultural, genetic, or historically determined causes. The meaning of this term, in contrast to the literal translation, lies somewhere between the English words "race" and "ethnicity."

13 The response options were: Entirely Agree, Mainly Agree, Partly Agree, Entirely Disagree. The question was asked by the SOM Institute in the National SOM studies in 1993, 1997, 1999, 2004, 2007, and 2009. If we also include the respondents who selected "Mainly Agree," the

Table 3. Attitudes toward immigration and immigrants in relation to beliefs about differences in intelligence among “ethnicities/races” (percentage).

	Some ethnicities/races are more intelligent than others	
Suggestion:	Entirely Agree/Mainly Agree	Entirely Disagree
There are too many foreigners in Sweden	72	31
Immigrants should have the right to freely practice their religion here	35	44
I would be willing to join an organization that works against racism and xenophobia	37	48
I would not want an immigrant from another part of the world to marry into the family	41	11
Accept fewer refugees (good idea)	72	45
Accept more refugees (bad idea)*	69	53

Remarks: Only individuals who answered the question with one of the response options are included. “Don’t know” responses were eliminated from the percentage base. The response options were Entirely Agree, Mainly Agree, Partly Agree, and Entirely Disagree, and Very Good, Fairly Good, Neither Good nor Bad, Fairly Bad, and Very Bad Idea. The table shows the percentages that answered “very good” or “fairly good” idea. The question was asked by the SOM Institute in the National SOM studies for 1993, 1997, 1999, 2004, 2007, and 2009. The total number of respondents in the data set is slightly less than 10,000 *except for the last suggest, where the total is slightly more than 3,000.

The group that firmly believes there are differences in intelligence between races/ethnicities are more often men than women, more often under 30 or over 65, likely to have fewer years of education and lower incomes than others, and are more likely to identify themselves ideologically as “distinctly to the right.”[14]

results are the same; agreement declines from 8 percent to 6 percent between 1993 and 2009. The results are significant at the 99 percent level.

14 Calculations by the author; SOM data set that includes all six years in which the question was asked. My thanks to Linn Sandberg for the compilations.

The correlations between the belief that there are intelligence differences between groups of people depending upon their origins and negative attitudes to immigrants and refugees are clear.

Above all, the belief in intelligence differences covaries with a negative general attitude to the number of people perceived as alien ("foreigners"), unwillingness to accept such a person into one's own family, and the view on acceptance of refugees. The attitude toward freedom of religion and willingness to join an anti-racist organization are also affected, but to a lesser extent.

Citizens who believe there are differences in intelligence depending upon origin and affiliation are more likely to support an integration policy that also helps preserve immigrants' native cultures and traditions than are those who do not believe such differences in intelligence exist. Likewise, more of those who believe in differences in intelligence among ethnicities/races mentioned immigration as a problem than did those who disagreed with the statement about differences in intelligence.[15]

It appears inarguable that the group of citizens who support the statement about differences in intelligence among ethnicities/races also have a markedly more antipathetic view of immigrants and immigration than other citizens. However, this determination does not rule out the possibility that the group which supports the statement about differences in intelligence also includes people who do not share a negative view of immigrants or immigration. However, believing that differences in intelligence are inevitable based on origin and/or culture (among "ethnicities/races"), dramatically increases the likelihood of also harboring negative attitudes towards immigrants and immigration. I contend that the group that both believes differences in intelligence exist and holds a pronounced negative attitude toward immigrants in society at large and within their own families may be considered as having a racist worldview.

If we look at the individual group that both supports the statement about differences in intelligence entirely or mainly and fully supports

15 The proportion who want Swedish policy to support immigrants' cultures of origin is 31 percent among people who support the statement about differences in intelligence and 24 percent among those who do not. Support of the notion of intelligence differences has no effect on support for an integration policy aiming at "Swedishness". The proportion who specified immigration as a problem is 23 percent among the people who support the statement about differences in intelligence and 15 percent among those who do not.

the statement that there are too many foreigners in Sweden, the group comprises scarcely 4 percent of the population. If we perform the same calculation on the group that both supports the intelligence statement entirely or mainly and also supports the statement that they would not like it if an immigrant from another part of the world married into the family, the group comprises just above 2 percent of the population.[16] The proportion of Swedes who embrace a racist worldview would in such case amount to somewhere between 2 and 4 percent. In other studies that used other questions, this group has been calculated as around 5-6 percent of the population (Mella, Palm, and Bromark 2012).

If, rather than racism, we talk about xenophobia or xenophobic attitudes, I argue that people who – without having racist beliefs – dislike the idea of having a person from another part of the world in the family, who believe that immigration is a threat to Swedish values, or who are prepared to join an organization dedicated to stopping immigration to Sweden should be considered as having xenophobic attitudes. In such case, this group comprises between 10 and 12 percent of the population (see Tables 1 and 2).[17]

A larger proportion of the population however holds attitudes that encompass criticism of aspects of the immigration/integration policy. Just above 40 percent think it would be a good idea to accept fewer refugees, even though they also believe the traditional grounds for refugee status laid out in UN conventions have become more legitimate over time (Sandberg and Demker 2013). The belief that Swedish integration policy should be aimed at making immigrants "Swedish" is also deep-seated: 73 percent believe this is a good or very good idea. Support for preserving the traditions and cultures of origin is significantly lower at only 22 percent.[18] However, criticism of immigration and immigrants has declined considerably over time in Sweden and

16 Calculations by the author; SOM data set that includes all six years in which the question was asked. All "Don't know" responses were excluded, as well as all of those who did not answer either question. The number of remaining respondents in the data set is then just above 7,000.

17 In the 2009 SOM study, 12 percent agreed entirely or mainly with the statement that they would not want an immigrant from another part of the world to marry into the family. Demker 2010.

18 Calculations by the author; merged SOM data for the the four years the question was asked: 1994, 1999, 2004, and 2011.

popular support for accepting and integrating people from other parts of the world is generally strong. The changes are occurring across the spectrum: racist and xenophobic attitudes have declined along with the critical attitude toward the refugee and immigration policy over the last two decades in Sweden.

However, the analysis reinforces the notion that there are groups of citizens in Sweden for whom a negative view of immigration and acceptance of refugees – and focus on the problems of immigration – constitutes the most important political frame of reference. For these individuals, the Sweden Democrats are a political alternative that corresponds to their worldview.[19] Despite the mobilization of opposition to immigration, only a minority of the group that would prefer to reduce refugee immigration to Sweden are personally prepared to join an organization dedicated to stopping immigration (21 percent). The proportion is much larger among sympathizers of the Sweden Democrats however, at 69 percent. Now that the Sweden Democrats are clearly on the political map, the issues of immigration and integration have undergone a partisan polarization that has heightened opportunities to mobilize certain ideological segments in Swedish society.[20] The ability of the Sweden Democrats to exploit the latitude that has been handed to them has created a platform for mobilization: they have become what are sometimes called "moral entrepreneurs." Whether or not this will lead to lasting success is another matter (Ramalingam 2011). The changes over time indicate that the beliefs and ideas at the root of attitudes toward immigration and multiculturalism can still be combined in various patterns. The current political climate is such that both voters and political representatives are taking clearer positions

19 In a comparative study of the Netherlands, Denmark, and Sweden, Mette Pedersen has shown that the Party of Freedom (PVV), the Danish People's Party (DF), and the Sweden Democrats (SD) all emphasize nationalism based on tolerance, freedom of expression, and liberal attitude. It is this domestic nationalism that is threatened by Islam because Islam represents intolerance, repression, and violence. Therewith, personal intolerance of Islam above all can be explained, even though the intolerance must then be reconciled with a national identity based on tolerance (Pedersen 2011). See also Halikiopoulu, Mock and Vasilopoulou 2013.

20 The group that agrees entirely or mainly with the statement about intelligence and also, in response to an open-ended question, mentions immigration or immigrants as one of the most important social problems makes up barely 6 percent of the population. The calculation was based on all six years the question was asked and "Don't know" responses were eliminated. The data set comprises 8,400 respondents.

surrounding immigration and integration, thus creating new conditions for mobilization of both opposition and support.

Is Sweden an outlier?

Most opinion surveys concerning immigration and immigrants show that Swedish opinion is less negative and restrictive in relation to immigrants and immigration than is the case in other European countries. In 2006, 33 percent of survey respondents in Sweden thought it was a good idea to allow many immigrants from other ethnic groups to immigrate to their own country. The proportions were 14 percent in Norway and 8 percent in Denmark.[21]

In a Eurobarometer survey[22] – an opinion survey carried out simultaneously in all EU countries – performed in the fall of 2011, Sweden is shown to have the population most in favor of encouraging labor migration from non-EU countries (60 percent), the lowest proportion who believe immigrants have difficulties integrating into the new country largely because they do not wish to (52 percent), and the highest proportion who believe immigrants may have difficulty integrating largely because of national discrimination (80 percent). To a higher extent than anywhere else in the EU, Swedes believe immigrants should have the same rights as national citizens (93 percent) and that immigration enriches their country (81 percent). The precept that EU Member States should offer asylum to those in need also enjoys the strongest support among Swedes (95 percent).

Roma people comprise one of the most vulnerable groups of migrants or perceived foreigners, but here as well, Swedes are more in favor of integration and inclusion than are other European populations. A Eurobarometer performed in the fall of 2012 shows that the proportion who believe the Roma are at risk of discrimination is highest in Sweden, among all EU countries, at 94 percent. The same study shows that in the entire EU, Sweden was the country which to the highest extent in the entire EU, at 87 percent, believed that society would benefit from better integration of the Roma.[23]

21 European Social Survey 2006.
22 Eurobarometer 380.
23 Eurobarometer 393.

Most reliable results and surveys thus show that the attitude toward accepting and including immigrants and refugees has not only become more generous over time, but is also more generous in Sweden than in other comparable European countries. As there are no equally long and continuous time series in other European countries concerning attitudes toward immigration, it is impossible to say whether there has been a corresponding increase in generosity in other countries. Comparison of the period of 2002/2003-2006/2007 shows, however, a decline in negative attitudes toward immigration in several countries in Europe, particularly Sweden, Finland, and Denmark, along with a parallel increase in corresponding negative attitudes in other countries including Hungary and Austria. There is no convergence among EU Member States with regard to views on immigration. On the contrary, both countries with a more favorable stance (including Sweden) and a more negative stance (including Hungary) seem to diverge from the average within the EU (Meuleman, Davidov, and Billiet 2009).

That Sweden is more open to accepting refugees and immigrants than are other European countries may be understood on the basis of three fundamental aspects: history, politics, and national identity.

To begin with, Sweden has accepted more and larger groups of immigrants per capita during the postwar era than any other European non-colonial country. The majority of this immigration involved labor migrants who have integrated well into Swedish society.

Secondly, Swedish political parties have actually never made opposition to immigration a point of partisan contention – instead, support for that judged as a "generous immigration policy" has been unanimous. Sweden's first anti-immigration party – the New Democrats – fell apart after they won seats in the Riksdag in 1991 and the other parties did not pick up the thrown gauntlet (Dahlström and Esaiasson 2011). Subsequently, significant xenophobic or anti-immigration parties were absent from the Swedish political scene until after the 2010 general election.

Thirdly, the nature of Swedish nationalism is such that it embraces values such as equality, gender equality, and fairness. "Swedishness" is perceived only in exceptional cases as grounded in history, race, or language. Pride in political equality and safeguarding of liberal rights are instead what are perceived as part of the national character. There is thus very little fertile ground for exclusionary ethnic nationalism (Hjerm 2000, Arielya 2011, but see also Pedersen 2011)

Economic competition is a frequently offered explanation of xenophobic attitudes, but the research casts strong doubt on the hypothesis that xenophobia is an effect of fear of economic competition from immigrants who take jobs or are a financial burden. Nor is there support for the notion that higher numbers of immigrants generate greater opposition. Instead, contact opportunities seem to increase as the immigrant group grows, which in turn allays distrust. The proportion of immigrants among the population seems to be able to reach a level where contact opportunities become more important than the sense of foreignness. The groups that perceive immigration as a threat are generally less educated and have a more precarious position in the labor market than others, but there is nothing to suggest any basis in reality for the perceived threat. Instead, the antipathy is rooted in the preconception that immigration threatens personal status; at the individual level there are no realistic explanations for the perceived threat (Schneider 2008, Lucassen and Lubbers 2012).

Even though the threats are not real, perceived threats may nevertheless generate antipathy toward immigration. Generally speaking, Sweden has had more equitable income distribution than other comparable countries, strong labor laws that protect workers against dismissal, widespread union organization, effective transitional insurance in terms of unemployment benefits, and an unusually high level of education in all social strata.[24] All of these factors contribute to creating a climate in which the realism in the threats from immigration toward the most economically disadvantaged people tends to be less persuasive than in other countries with strong, class-based cleavages.[25]

The political parties have also primarily mobilized their voters through issues of redistribution policy, rather than questions of identity, culture, or lifestyle. Accordingly, issues of nationalism or foreignness have not either constituted a central political controversy. This development sets Sweden apart from other countries like Denmark, for example, where politics has since the 1990s been more oriented toward cultural identity and fending off threats to fundamental national values (Rydgren 2004, but see also Dahlström and Sundell 2012).

24 Education is one of the most critical explanatory factors in relation to xenophobic attitudes (Ivarsflaten and Stubager 2012). However, see also Green, et al 2011.

25 The working class tends to vote for nationalist conservative parties to a greater extent than do other socioeconomic groups (Oskarson and Demker 2012).

But how should we understand the trend, this slowly changing but steadily more open attitude? There is no universal explanation on offer, but to use the aforementioned theoretical base models, we have in Sweden observed rising individualism, liberalization, and levels of education since the 1970s. Globalization has on the whole been good for Sweden, which has been able to increase its international economic competitive advantage. The political parties have not bumped up immigration policy on the agenda by using it in election campaigns. The population group made up of foreign-born individuals and their children has now also reached such a level (around 20 percent) that Swedes, especially people who were born after 1970 and live in urban areas, are likely to have good friends, family members, and acquaintances from various parts of the world.

The open, welcoming attitude is thus in our own hands and in the society we collectively choose to promote.

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Chapter 9
How Do Swedes Feel about Wind Power?

PER HEDBERG

In the 1970s, energy production was politicized in the industrialized world. The birth of the environmental movement, the oil crises in 1973/74 and the beginning conflict surrounding civilian nuclear power, put energy issues center stage on the political agenda. Energy policies – especially related to the development of nuclear power – came to dominate election campaigns, like in Sweden in 1976 or be the subject of referendums, like in Austria in 1978 or in Sweden in 1980.

Fueled by the nuclear accidents in Harrisburg in 1979, Chernobyl in 1986 and in Fukushima in 2011 and supplemented by conflicts over how to reduce the use of oil and coal, how to sensibly exploit the waste gas reserves, and how to develop renewable energy sources based on sun, wind and waves – have made all kinds of energy issues the focal point of political contentions ever since the early 1970s. In Sweden, as in many other countries, energy issues have been one of the most fought-over policy areas during the last thirty-forty years. And the contentious character of energy policies is not limited to the elite level of politics. Energy issues are highly polarizing among the Swedish people as well.

Given this background, starting in the 1970s, it was rather natural that energy questions – featuring most prominently questions related to nuclear power – would be important parts of the voter surveys performed by the Swedish National Elections Studies (SNES) at the University of Gothenburg. The first book-length studies of Swedish mass

attitudes toward nuclear power appeared already in the late 1970-ies (Holmberg, Westerståhl and Branzén 1977). Since then all SNES surveys have included measurements of Swedish opinions on various energy issues. A special election study was done in 1980 covering the nuclear power referendum (Holmberg and Asp 1984).

Beginning in 1986, SNES´s election year measurements were supplemented by annual studies done by the newly founded SOM Institute at University of Gothenburg. These annual measurements were from the start designed and coordinated by the research project *Energy Opinion in Sweden*, originally financially supported by the now non-existent National Board for Spent Fuel, but since 1999 financed by The Swedish Energy Agency. Since 1999 the research project measures the Swedish opinion on several energy sources, among them attitudes to wind power. Through all the years Sören Holmberg has been leading the research project (Holmberg and Hedberg 2012).

The world's wind-powered generation of electricity is dominated by a few countries. In 2011, ten countries accounted for 86 per cent of the total wind power capacity. China topped the list at 26 per cent, followed by USA at 20 per cent. Germany and Spain stood out in a European perspective, together producing as much electricity from wind power as USA. In 2011, the German and Spanish wind power sectors generated 29 000 and 22 000 MW, respectively. Sweden produced 3 000 MW in the same year. China, USA, Germany and Spain accounted for 67 per cent of the global wind power capacity (Global Wind Energy Council 2012). Looking at wind power capacity per capita, Denmark comes in first followed by Spain, Portugal, Germany, the Falkland Islands, Ireland and Sweden. Denmark also tops the list for wind power capacity per square kilometer, followed by Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal and Belgium. Sweden places 17th on the list, with China immediately ahead and USA immediately behind (World Wind Energy Association 2011).

Despite the intensified expansion of Swedish wind power in recent years, its proportion of the total Swedish energy system remains modest. The Swedish Parliament's aim for the year 2020 implies a dramatic expansion. More exactly, Sweden will have to increase its current wind power capacity fivefold in order to reach the target (Helker Lundström 2012; Regeringen 2009).

Below, we explore how Swedes feel about further expansion of wind power. Does the Parliament's positive attitude reflect public

opinion, and are differences in opinion related to demographic groups and political sympathies? In the last 2-3 years, the national wind power capacity has increased rapidly in a Swedish perspective, from 1161 wind power stations in 2008 to 2047 in 2011 (Swedish Energy Agency 2012). An interesting question is whether the increased number of stations in the Swedish landscape has affected people's attitudes to wind power.

How Swedes feel about wind power?

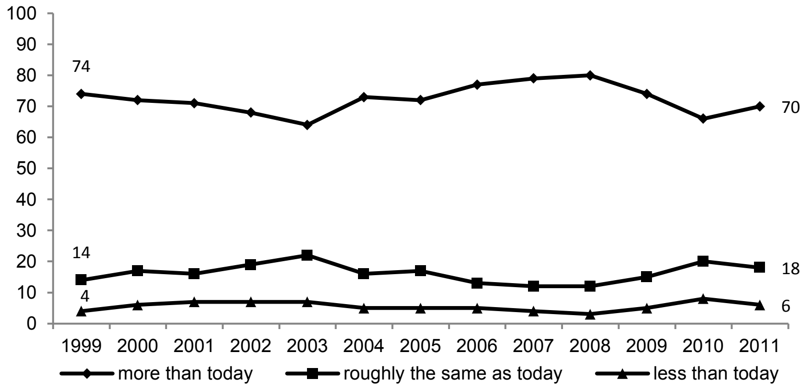
All SOM surveys since 1999 have included a question on the expansion of wind power in Sweden.[1] More exactly, the respondents are asked how much should be invested in wind power as an energy source in the next 5-10 years – more than today, roughly the same as today, less than today or wind power should be abandoned as an energy source. There is also a 'no opinion' alternative. Figure 1 shows the results 1999-2011.[2]

An overwhelming majority of the Swedish public support wind power as an energy source. The same conclusion has been reached ever since the question was first asked in 1999. In the 2011 survey, 70 per cent wanted to increase investments in wind power, and 18 per cent were happy with the current level. Only 6 per cent wanted to reduce investments or abandon wind power completely. The size of the most enthusiastic group has varied from 64 per cent in 2003 to 80 per cent in 2008, implying a range of 16 percentage points.

[1] The surveying of the attitudes of the Swedish public to different energy sources is part of the research project Energiopinionen i Sverige (Energy Opinion in Sweden), funded by the Swedish Energy Agency. For the latest results from the SOM-study 2012 see: Hedberg 2013, Holmberg 2013 and Hedberg and Holmberg 3013.

[2] For the latest results from the SOM-study 2012 see: Hedberg 2013, Holmberg 2013 and Hedberg and Holmberg 3013.

Figure 1. Shares who want increased, the same and reduced investments in wind power as an energy source in Sweden 1999-2011 (per cent) **Question:** *'How much should we in Sweden invest in the following energy sources in the next 5-10 years? /wind power'*



Comment: The response alternatives are 'more than today', 'roughly the same as today', 'less than today', 'completely abandon the energy source' and 'no opinion'. The share responding 'no opinion' has varied between 5 and 8 per cent. This group is not reported separately in the figure. For further details, see Hedberg and Holmberg 2012.

Figure 1 shows that the variations can be attributed to the two 'positive' response alternatives – invest more and keep investing at the current level – while the numbers for the two 'negative' response alternatives have remained fairly constant. When the most enthusiastic group grows, the status quo group shrinks and vice versa. Adding these two groups together, we find that the share of respondents who want to increase investments in wind power or keep the current level reached a low in 2003 with 86 per cent and reached a high in 2008 with 92 per cent, implying a range of 6 percentage points. The share who want to reduce investments in wind power has varied from 2 per cent in 2008 to 7 per cent in 2010, whereas the share who want to abandon wind power altogether remained stable at 1-2 per cent throughout the period.

From 2008 to 2010, the size of the most enthusiastic group decreased from 80 per cent to 66 per cent, implying a reduction by 14 percentage points. Yet this falling trend was broken in 2011 when the number climbed to 70 per cent. However, this is still 10 percentage points below the peak in 2008. It is not unreasonable to assume that the size of the most enthusiastic group will go down over time as the

wind power capacity is expanded. We might in fact already have seen the largest number for this group. It is also possible that the increased support in 2011 is a result of the Fukushima nuclear disaster. Sören Holmberg points to a clear Fukushima effect when it comes to people's attitudes to nuclear power (see Holmberg 2012a). It could be that the reduced support for nuclear power in 2011 implied increased support for wind power.

So what does the support for increased wind power capacity look like across different demographic and political groups? Can differences in opinion be related to factors such as gender, age, education and political sympathies? Table 1 gives some information.

Opinions about wind power and social background

The results show that social background variables such as gender, age, education and whether one resides in an urban or rural area have been very weakly linked to people's attitudes to wind power. Women have been somewhat more positive than men, although the difference has never been larger than a few percentage points. In 2011, 71 per cent of the female respondents indicated that they wanted to increase the investments in wind power; the corresponding number for men was 69 per cent. As regards age, people in the 31-60 age group are on average somewhat more positive than both younger and older individuals; in 2011, the difference was 4 and 7 percentage points, respectively. When it comes to education, in most years, those with a high level of education have been more positive to wind power than those with low and intermediate levels of education. In the survey 2011, 74 per cent of the highly educated wanted to increase the investments in wind power; the number for those with low and medium levels of education was 66%, respectively. In all years except 2009 and 2010, the strongest support for increased investments in wind power was found among people in rural areas. In 2011, 75 per cent of the respondents in this group showed this preference; the numbers for larger communities, the three largest cities and smaller communities were 71 per cent, 69 per cent and 67 per cent, respectively. We can also conclude that the support for increased investments increased in all demographic groups from 2010 to 2011, with the exception of people living in the country's three largest cities Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö.

Table 1. Share of respondents in different demographic groups and with different political sympathies who are positive to increased investments in wind power, 1999-2011 (in per cent)

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Gender													
Man	72	71	70	65	63	72	71	76	79	81	72	64	69
Woman	75	73	73	70	65	73	73	79	80	79	76	67	71
Age													
	69	75	69	67	62	70	69	70	78	76	73	65	69
	76	73	77	70	70	79	75	81	83	84	79	71	73
	72	68	63	62	54	63	68	74	75	76	66	57	66
Education													
Basic level/compulsory	71	71	67	67	59	66	67	74	74	75	67	57	69
Intermediate level	74	73	71	68	64	75	72	76	79	79	71	67	69
University/college	74	72	77	68	71	76	76	82	84	85	80	70	74
Place of residence													
Rural	80	83	80	72	73	81	77	83	83	83	72	68	75
Small community	77	72	71	70	62	74	74	77	79	78	72	60	67
Town, large community	70	70	70	67	63	69	72	77	79	80	75	66	71
The three largest cities	74	65	69	65	61	76	64	72	81	81	76	70	69
Political party sympathies													
Left Party	86	81	85	80	75	82	74	82	88	86	82	84	69
Social Democrats	72	72	70	66	62	70	73	78	78	81	76	62	71
Green Party	87	84	87	86	77	92	90	89	94	88	79	84	86
Centre Party	80	90	80	79	76	82	82	89	85	93	79	71	82
Liberal Party	84	81	78	70	63	69	72	67	81	77	78	64	67
Christian Democrats	72	69	72	70	66	68	68	83	80	77	77	71	64
Moderates	63	59	62	48	54	65	67	70	78	77	68	62	67
Sweden Democrats	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	68	68	68	66	51	65
Feminist Initiative	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	77	58	--
Pirate Party	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	69	68	--
Other	72	86	73	64	67	75	61	72	74	73	78	60	58
Left-right dimension													
Clearly left	87	81	76	75	79	83	77	84	86	83	82	77	82
Somewhat left	77	79	79	74	69	80	79	85	83	86	80	70	71
Neither left nor right	72	73	69	65	63	69	70	73	77	79	70	64	66
Somewhat right	71	68	69	64	59	71	72	77	80	78	74	66	72
Clearly right	61	54	63	56	57	63	59	68	75	72	66	57	63
Political interest													
Very interested	75	68	68	68	70	72	77	80	82	80	75	66	75
Fairly interested	76	73	75	67	65	76	74	80	82	83	76	67	72
Not very interested	73	74	70	71	64	71	71	75	78	76	75	66	69
Not at all interested	57	64	61	57	49	66	61	58	69	75	64	55	61
Opinion about nuclear power													
Phase out nuclear power	84	87	84	81	83	86	88	88	91	86	85	81	83
Use nuclear power	63	59	64	59	56	67	66	74	76	79	72	60	65
All	74	72	71	68	64	73	72	77	79	80	74	66	70

Comment to table 1: For the wording of the question asked, see Figure 1. Persons who did not respond to the question are not included in the calculation of percentages. The question used to assess attitudes to nuclear power differs somewhat between the years 2000 – 2004 and 1996–1999. In 2005, the response alternative 'phase out nuclear power by 2010' was changed to 'phase out nuclear power as soon as possible'. No results are reported for Feminist Initiative and the Pirate Party in 2011 since too few respondents supported these parties (5 and 6 persons, respectively). Instead, these individuals are included under 'Other'.

The main finding concerning the relationships between demographic characteristics and attitudes regarding future investments in wind power is that they are very weak. Or put differently: People's opinions about investments in wind power have very little to do with demographic profile.

Opinions about wind power and political sympathies

The correlations are weak also for political sympathies, yet not quite as weak as for demographic characteristics. Those sympathizing with the 'green' parties – the Left Party, the Centre Party and the Green Party – have been more positive to wind power than others, at least in ten of the thirteen surveys since the start in 1999. The exceptions are 1999 when supporters of the Liberal party were somewhat more positive than supporters of the Centre Party, 2010 when supporters of the Christian Democrats were as positive as supporters of the Centre Party, and 2011 when supporters of the Social Democrats were somewhat more positive than supporters of the Left Party. The supporters of most political parties (not supporters of the Left Party, the Christian Democrats and 'Other'[3]) were more positive to wind power in 2011 than in 2010.

Looking at left-right ideology, we find that people who place themselves to the left are more positive to wind power than people to the right on the political scale. This pattern has been found every year since the first time the question was asked in 1999. Yet the results from 2011 are a bit of an exception in the sense that people who place themselves somewhat to the right were as positive (72 per cent) as those who placed themselves somewhat to the left (71 per cent). Table

3 Among the supporters of the Left Party, 69 per cent responded that they want to invest more than today in wind power. This is a surprisingly low value and should be interpreted with caution since it may simply be due to chance. In previous years, the number was over 80 per cent. Compared with the 2010 results, 69 per cent implies a reduction by 15 percentage points.

1 also shows that people who are very interested or fairly interested in politics are more positive to increased investments in wind power than people who are not very interested or not at all interested in politics.

The results also show that there is a link between attitudes to wind power and attitudes to nuclear power. In every survey since 1999, respondents who have wanted to abolish nuclear power have been more positive to increased investments in wind power than people who have supported the use of nuclear power. In 2011, 83 per cent of the nuclear power opponents supported increased investments in wind power. The corresponding figure for nuclear power supporters was 65 per cent.

When looking at how people from different demographic and political groups feel about wind power, it is worth noting that in all groups, a strong majority support increased investments in wind power compared with the current levels.[4]

Opinions about wind power and other energy sources

As in previous years, the results for 2011 show that wind power is a popular energy source. But how do people feel about other sources, which ones should be prioritised in the future and which ones do people want less of or not at all?[5]

The results from the SOM surveys show that, among the different energy sources, only solar power attracts stronger support than wind power. Although solar power was not included in the 2011 survey, it was somewhat more popular than wind power in all other years. Among the energy sources included in the 2011 national SOM survey, wind power was the most popular in terms of the proportion of respondents who wanted to see increased investments in it. After wind power at 70 per cent came wave power at 60 per cent, biofuels at 48 per cent, hydropower at 46 per cent, natural gas at 22 per cent, nucle-

4 Compared with the groups of respondents who want to increase investments in wind power or keep the investments at the current level, we find that men, older individuals, right wing persons, individuals with a strong interest in politics and nuclear power supporters are overrepresented among those who want to reduce investments in wind power or abandon it altogether.

5 See Holmberg 2012b for an analysis of how the patterns in opinion are related when it comes to people's views of the different energy sources.

ar power at 12 per cent and coal power at 2 per cent.[6] The most unpopular energy source is coal, as 52 per cent responded that Sweden should stop using it completely. Nuclear power came in second at 21 per cent (Hedberg and Holmberg 2012).[7]

Opinions about wind power in areas with rapid expansion of wind power capacity

Although wind power is a very popular energy source, we know that it is subject to local protests in some places. Opponents are often concerned with how wind power stations affect the landscape and the environment, especially in connection with the planning and construction of large wind parks. The resistance may increase every time new wind power stations are built. One example is the Swedish association for landscape protection, Föreningen Svenskt Landskapsskydd. The organisation is growing, and its website declares: '*We want a discussion that acknowledges that wind power is not just "an infinite and clean energy source", but also a source of negative emotions for those who are affected by it*'. [8]

The question is whether we can identify the growing local resistance in our national SOM surveys. The responses to the question about how much we should invest in the different energy sources is made up of several components – one concerning attitude to the energy sources, one concerning already available capacity from the energy sources and one concerning the need for further expansion. In other words, the question concerns how much we have, how much we need and what one's attitude to a certain energy source is. The assumption in what follows is that in areas with relatively high wind power capacity, we will find a larger proportion of respondents who feel that we should *not* increase investments in wind power. Such a reduction can be interpreted in many ways with respect to the different components of the question. It can be due to changes in attitudes when a wind power station or park is actually built or it can be interpreted in terms of 'satu-

6 The questions about solar power and oil were not used in 2011, yet the results for these two energy sources were 81 and 2 per cent, respectively, in 2010.

7 The results of the 2010 SOM survey indicate that 22 per cent want to abandon oil as an energy source completely.

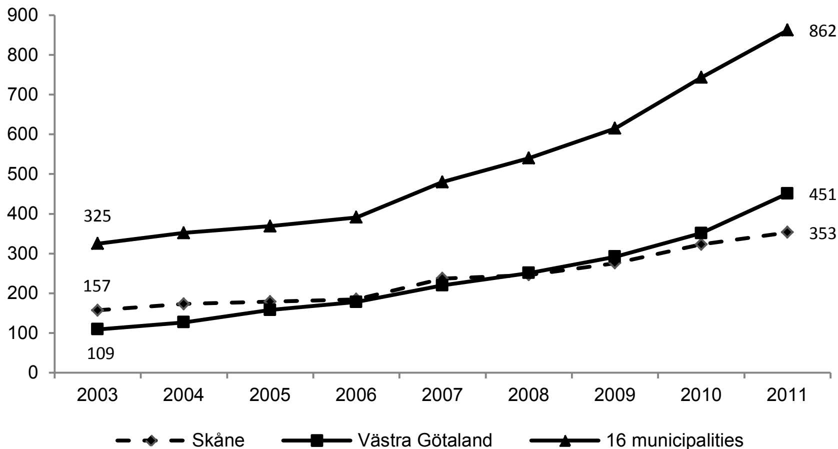
8 http://www.landskapsskydd.se/artikel/vindkraft. See also Ny Teknik 2012.

ration effects' related to assessments of what is needed and what has been installed.

The Swedish Energy Agency's statistics indicate in which counties and municipalities wind power has been expanded the most since 2003 (Swedish Energy Agency 2012). Figure 2 shows the development in the two counties with the most wind power stations in 2011 and at aggregate level for the 16 municipalities that had more than 30 wind power stations in 2011.

From 2003 to 2011, the number of wind power stations increased from 675 to 2 047. Thus, 1 372 new wind power stations were built. The two counties with the most wind power stations in 2011 were Västra Götaland with 451 and Skåne with 353, each with an increase of 342 and 196 wind power stations during the period.

Figure 2. Number of wind power stations in Skåne, Västra Götaland and the 16 municipalities with more than 30 wind power stations in 2011 (per cent)



Comment: The 16 municipalities with the most wind power stations in 2011 were Gotland, Laholm, Strömsund,Mjölby, Malmö, Falkenberg, Eslöv, Åsele, Vara, Falköping, Mellerud, Mörbylånga, Borgholm, Tanum,Kristianstad and Dorotea. Source: Swedish Energy Agency 2012.

Figure 2 also shows the number of wind power stations in the municipalities that had more than 30 wind power stations in use in 2011. From 2003 and 2011, their total number of wind power stations in-

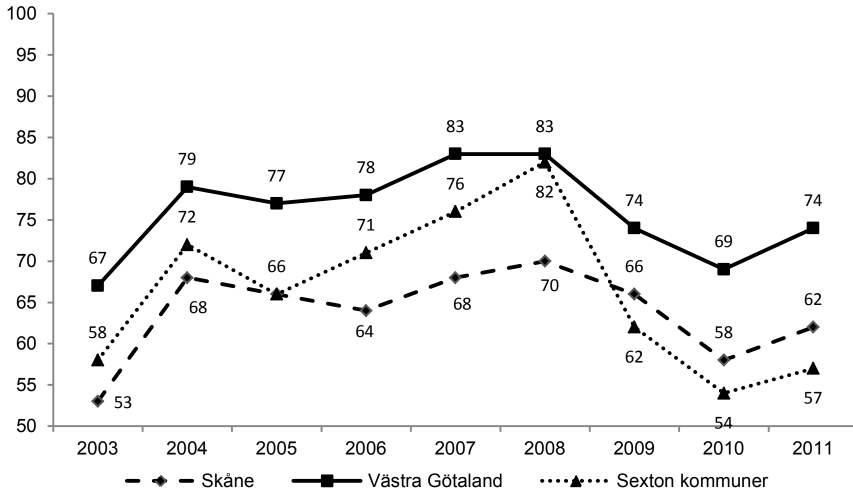
creased from 325 to 862. According to Figure 2, the expansion was a bit faster during the latter part of the period.

Figure 3 shows the share of respondents who want to increase investments in wind power in the counties of Skåne and Västra Götaland and the 16 municipalities that had more than 30 wind power station in 2011.9 The results show a previously known phenomenon – that people in Skåne are not as positive to expansion of wind power as people in the rest of the country. The curves for Västra Götaland and Skåne follow each other rather closely throughout the period. For our assumption to be correct, the willingness to invest more in wind power should fall with the expansion rate in the counties. However, this does not seem to be the case. Instead, the curves for Västra Götaland and Skåne follow the corresponding curve for the whole country. The share of Swedes who want to invest more in wind power has decreased by 10 percentage points since 2008. For Västra Götaland and Skåne, the corresponding numbers are 9 and 8 percentage points, respectively. Hence, our SOM material based on a national sample does not provide any evidence of the proposed relationship, at least not at country level.10 Yet if we look at the results for the municipalities with the most wind power stations in 2011, we find some possible support for our assumption: 82 per cent of the respondents in the 16 municipalities with the most wind power stations supported increased investments in wind power in 2008. In 2011, the number was 57 per cent, implying a drop of 25 percentage points. This reduction in support is 15 per cent larger than the corresponding reduction at the national level. It seems reasonable that wind power capacity at some point reaches a threshold where people stop supporting further expansion. This could be what we sense in the analysis of the 16 municipalities with the most wind power stations in the country.

9 In 2011, the 16 municipalities with the highest numbers of wind power stations were Gotland, Laholm, Strömsund, Mjölby, Malmö, Falkenberg, Eslöv, Åsele, Vara, Falköping, Mellerud, Mörbylånga,Borgholm, Tanum, Kristianstad and Dorotea. Source: Swedish Energy Agency.

10 If we instead of comparing Skåne and Västra Götaland with the entire country compare them with areas where the expansion of wind power is still slow, we still do not find any major differences. In the counties with fewer than 30 wind power stations in 2011, 81 per cent wanted to boost investments in wind power in 2008. This number fell to 71 per cent in 2011 (-10 percentage points).

Figure 3. Share of respondents who support increased investments in wind power in Skåne, Västra Götaland and the 16 municipalities with more than 30 wind power stations in 201



Comment: In counties with relatively few wind power stations (fewer than 30 in 2011), the share of respondents who wanted to increase investments in wind power was 63 per cent in 2003, 70 per cent in 2004, 70 per cent in 2005, 76 per cent in 2006, 82 per cent in 2007, 81 per cent in 2008, 74 per cent in 2009, 67 per cent in 2010 and 71 per cent in 2011. The counties with fewer than 30 wind power stations in 2011 were Stockholm, Uppsala, Södermanland, Kronoborg, Värmland,Västmanland, Gävleborg and Västernorrland. Overall in the country, the share of respondents who wanted to increase investments in wind power was 64 per cent in 2003, 73 per cent in 2004, 72 per cent in 2005, 77 per cent in 2006, 79 per cent in 2007, 80 per cent in 2008, 74 per cent in 2009, 66 per cent in 2010 and 70 per cent in 2011.

The Swedish public strongly supports the Swedish Parliament's decision to expand the country's wind power capacity. Wind power is a very popular energy source. In fact, only solar power is more popular. In the 2011 SOM survey, 88 per cent supported the current level of investment in wind power or wanted to increase it. Today, a full 70 per cent of the Swedish population support a higher investment level. A question for the future is how the public opinion will react when the extensive expansion plans are implemented. We can already see a tendency of reduced support in municipalities with a large number of wind power stations. Nevertheless, in 2011, a vast majority of respondents in these municipalities supported increased investments in wind power

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Part III

The Quality of Government

Chapter 10
Quality of Government and the Epistemic Problem of Democracy

BO ROTHSTEIN

The success and malaise of representative democracy

Democracy as an overall model for how societies should be governed has been a remarkable success over the last forty years. More countries than ever are now considered to be democratic or at least on their way to becoming democracies (Diamond 2007, Teorell 2010). There are certainly many reasons to be enthusiastic about this historically remarkable development. The enthusiasm is, however, dampened by the fact that empirical research show that there is no guarantee that procedural democracy will produce policies that improve the general human well-being of its citizens. On the contrary, most standard measures of human well-being either have a very weak, or no, or sometimes even negative, correlation with measures of the level of democracy (Holmberg & Rothstein 2011). The reason is that electoral-representative democracy does not automatically translate into *quality of government*. For example, the noted democratization researcher and promoter Larry Diamond had the following to say when the U.S. based *National Endowment for Democracy* celebrated its first twenty-five years of operations:

> "There is a specter haunting democracy in the world today. It is bad governance—governance that serves only the interests of a narrow ruling elite. Governance that is drenched in corruption, patronage, favorit-

> ism, and abuse of power. Governance that is not responding to the massive and long-deferred social agenda of reducing inequality and unemployment and fighting against dehumanizing poverty. Governance that is not delivering broad improvement in people's lives because it is stealing, squandering, or skewing the available resources" (Diamond 2007:199)

It is noteworthy that Diamond here makes a distinction between democracy and quality of government (or in his terminology: "good governance"). One aspect of the "specter" that haunts democracy is that a procedurally correct democratic system may produce decisions that are ill-informed and not in line with what according to the factual matters is true. The idea behind what has become known as epistemic democracy theory is that the decision taken by democratically elected politicians does not only deserve to be seen as legitimate because they have come about in accordance with the procedural rules of liberal representative democracy. In addition, epistemic democracy requires that the decisions are also based on what according to established knowledge is "true" or "right" (Anderson 2006, List and Goodin 2001). What is "true" or "right" is certainly contested in many policy areas, but one way to think about this can be taken from medical ethics saying that diagnosis and treatments should be based on "science and proven experience" as stated in, for example, the Swedish Health and Medical Service Act. Another definition would be that public policies should be "evidence based".[1] As for the political process, this has been stated by List and Goodin (2001) as: "Decision rules ought to be chosen so as to track the truth". I would like to underline that this is not a question about academic civilities only. The human disaster of at least 330.000 premature deaths in South Africa from AIDS is a tragic reminder what can happen when democratically elected political leaders make decisions that are out of line with established medical truths (Chigwedere et al 2008).

One problem in discussions of epistemic democracy is how to avoid "epistocracy", that is, rule by experts, which is anathema to most definitions of democracy (Estlund 2008, Holst 2012). Another problem is

1 There are now at least two scholarly journals published that cater to this notion of "evidence based policy", namely Evidence & Policy now in its seventh year and Journal of Evidence Based Social Work that started in 2003.

"which rules" in the machinery of representative democracy should be altered so as to increase the epistemic content in the decisions made by the democratic machinery Most of the suggestions seem to be about changing the rules on the "input" side of the democratic system, be they various forms of deliberative assemblies in which "ordinary citizens" can debate policy proposals or more jury-like or experimental processes (Anderson 2006, Ackerman & Fishkin 2006, Habermas 2006). These are theoretically interesting suggestions but they all suffer from a certain lack of realism when it comes to establishing them as functioning alternatives in real existing democracies (Ryfe 2005). I will argue that there is a way to secure a more epistemic orientation of electoral representative democracies, namely to increase their quality of government (henceforth QoG) defined as a public administration that is built on the norm of *impartiality* in the exercise of public policies (Rothstein & Teorell 2008). This has several advantages, not least that it can be backed by considerable empirical analyses showing that it improves the likelihood that a political system that combines representative democracy and QoG is more likely to launch policies that improve general human well-being In addition, it has been shown to work, it is simple, it has overwhelming support from most electorates and it is by and large "for free" in pure economic terms.

Democracy – Reasons for the current malaise

In a recently published article, Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen compares "quality of live" in China and India and comes to the conclusion that on most standard measures of human well-being, the communist-autocratic China now clearly outperforms democratically governed India (2011). This applies, inter alia, for infant mortality, mortality rates for children under the age of five, life-expectancy, immunization of children, basic education of children, poverty rates and adult literacy. Sen comments on, but presents no explanation to why India's democratic system does so poorly when it comes to improving human well-being for its population compared to autocratic China.

This problem can also be seen when comparing small countries. Jamaica and Singapore both achieved independence from British colonial rule in the early 1960s. They then had about the same size population and were both very poor. If the typical social scientist at that time would have predicted the situation for these two countries fifty years later, a fair guess is that he or she would have painted a very rosy fu-

ture for Jamaica but a much bleaker one for Singapore. Jamaica then (as now) had large areas of arable land, important natural resources (bauxite), is located close to one of the world's most important export markets and could have developed a huge tourist industry, especially since Cuba went out of this business at that time. Everyone in the country spoke English and very few ethnic-religious cleavages existed. Singapore, on the other hand, had no natural resources, no arable land, is far away from major export markets and had very problematic ethnic-religious divisions. The situation today, however, is completely the reversed of what would have been expected in the early 1960s. Singapore has nine times the GPD/capita than has Jamaica and hugely outperforms Jamaica on all standard measures of human well-being. The problem is that according to the best measure of democracy that I have come across, Jamaica has since independence been counted as a democracy while Singapore has never been close to being regarded as a democracy (Werlin 2007, Rothstein 2011, ch. 9).

The question is if these two comparisons of cases showing that autocracies can outperform democracies are matched by available cross-country statistics. In order to do such analyses, one needs a measure of democracy and as is well-known, there has been a long debate on how to define and measure democracy. According to one definition suggested by Przeworski et. al. (2000) a democracy is "a regime in which those who govern are selected through contested elections" where "contested" is defined as the presence of "an opposition that has some chance of winning office". Teorell (2010) has convincingly criticized this and other dichotomous (or absolute) measures for democracy and instead argued for a graded definition and measurement strategy. The graded measure of democracy that he (together with Hadenius) has constructed is based on the average scores of political rights and civil liberties reported by Freedom House, and the combined autocracy and democracy scores derived from the Polity IV data set (Hadenius & Teorell 2005). This index goes from 0 to 10 where 10 is most democratic and as the authors show, this index performs better both in terms of validity and reliability than its constituents parts.

Using a set of thirty standard measures of national levels of human well-being and also some variables known to be related to human well-being such as capacity for taxation, and including between 75

and 169 countries, Holmberg and Rothstein (2011) find only weak[2], or no, or sometimes even negative, correlations between these standard measures of human well-being and the above mentioned measure of the level of democracy. These results are confirmed by other studies such as Doucouliagos and Ulubasoglu (2008), Norris (2012) and UNDP (2002). The picture that comes out of available measures and statistics is this: Representative democracy is not a safe cure against severe poverty, economic inequality, illiteracy, being unhappy or not satisfied with one's life, infant mortality, short life-expectancy, maternal mortality, access to safe water or sanitation, gender inequality, low school attendance for girls, low interpersonal trust or low trust in Parliament. Thus, democracy measured in this way is only weakly correlated, or even unrelated, to more "objective" measures of human well-being (such as population health statistics) as well as to subjective measures (such as subjective well-being or interpersonal trust).

An objection to this bleak picture of the actual epistemic-based performance of democracies is the argument that democracy results in respect for human rights which no doubt is an important achievement. However, as Råby and Teorell (2010) have argued, this is close to saying that democracy results in democracy since respect for at least basic human rights is a condition for a country being defined as a democracy. It has often been said that representative democracy would minimize the risk for internal violence like civil war. Norris, however, shows that this is not borne out by the facts. In itself, liberal representative democracy, is not a cure against the outbreak of internal armed conflicts (Norris 2012, see also Öberg and Melander 2010). As Michael Mann has argued, when it comes to ethnic conflicts, democracy has a "dark side" (2005).

Thus the empirical picture is clear in that the worries raised by the epistemic democracy theorists are for real. On average, and as it is usually practiced, representative democracy alone does not produce "true" or "right" decisions that cater to improving human well-being. However, the problems with finding good outcomes from democracy do not stop at this. One central idea of liberal representative democracy is that when people have democratic rights, they will be of the opinion that their government has legitimacy understood as the "right to

2 Correlations below 0,35 are considered as weak.

rule". Gilley, using survey data from the World Value Study covering more than seventy countries, has studied what it is that explains citizens' perceptions of political legitimacy. He summarizes his result in the following way:

> "General governance (a composite of the rule of law, control of corruption and government effectiveness) clearly has a large, even overarching, importance in global citizen evaluation of the legitimacy of states .... it is notable that democratic rights, while certainly qualifying as one of the most important causes of legitimacy, turn out to be roughly on par with welfare gains, and both of these are far less important than good governance. This clashes with standard liberal treatments of legitimacy that give overall priority to democratic rights" (Gilley 2006:56f, cf. Gilley 2009).

Thus, when people make up their mind about their government's legitimacy, it is not democratic rights that are most important for them. Instead, it is various aspects of the quality of the public administration or, in other words, QoG.

Quality of Government: What it is and what you get.

Compared to democracy, *Quality of Government* (and its close cousins *Good Governance* and *State Capacity)* is a relatively new concept that has made a strong impact since the mid-1990s. The three concepts have received most attention in circles dealing with developing countries and the so-called transition countries (Smith 2007). Especially *good governance* is now used by many national development agencies and international organizations such as the World Bank and the United Nations. An example is the International Monetary Fund that in 1996 declared that "*promoting good governance in all its aspects, including by ensuring the rule of law, improving the efficiency and accountability of the public sector, and tackling corruption, as essential elements of a framework within which economies can prosper*" (IMF 2005). However, the economic and financial crises that erupted in October 2008 have shown that issues about "bad governance" cannot be seen only as a problem for developing and transition countries but also for the highly developed parts of the world (Rothstein 2011). A case in point is that several well-placed analysts have argued that the back-

ground to the financial and economic crisis can be found in how powerful investment banks on Wall Street used their influence to relax regulatory oversight and capital requirements (Kaufmann 2008, Johnson 2009, Johnson & Kwak 2010).

The intellectual background

One of the major sources for the rise of the good governance and quality of government agenda has been the 'institutional turn' in the social sciences. Around 1990, three major works were published that have had a profound impact for the analysis of the importance of institutions, namely, James B. March and Johan P. Olsen's *Rediscovering Institutions,* Douglass C. North's *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance* and Elinor Ostrom's *Governing the Commons*. Although coming from different intellectual traditions, they have one thing in common, namely to challenge the then dominating societal view in studies of social and economic outcomes and development. These paradigms in the social sciences (for example, Pluralism, Elitism and Marxism) all argued that societal variables like economic power configurations, systems of social stratifications or the structure of class divisions were central in explaining political and thereby social and economic outcomes. Contrary to this, the institutionally orientated scholars argued that political institutions, broadly understood, were central in explaining social and economic outcomes. In political science, this had become known as "Bringing the State Back In" (Evans, Skocpol & Rueschemeyer 1985, cf. Steinmo & Thelen 1992). In short, instead of focusing on how economic and sociological variables determined politics and outcomes of the political systems, the institutional approach turned the causal logic around by arguing that the character of a society's political institutions to a large extent determined its economic and social development. In common language, the institutional turn in the social sciences showed why "the rules of the game" should have a more central role in social science research. This lead to a number of interesting questions for research, such as, why societies had different institutions, what the relation between institutions and social/economic outcomes was and if some types of institutions were better in producing valued social outcomes than others.

In development policy circles, the quality of government and good governance agenda has to a large extent replaced what was known as *the Washington Consensus*. This approach stated that economic growth can be created by systematic deregulations of markets, tightening of public spending, guarantees for property rights and large scale privatizations (Serra & Stiglitz 2008). The reason why this strategy did not work was, according to many observers, that poor countries lacked the necessary type of institutions that were "taken for granted" in neo-classical economics. Among those, leading development economist Dani Rodrik lists both formal and informal institutions such as "a regulatory apparatus curbing the worst forms of fraud, anti-competitive behavior, and moral hazard, a moderately cohesive society exhibiting trust and social cooperation, social and political institutions that mitigate risk and manage social conflicts, the rule of law and clean government" (Rodrik 2007: 97). In the former communist countries, this strategy became known as "shock-therapy capitalism" which ran into a number of problems, not least because its proponents did not pay adequate attention to the need for institutions to be able to hinder fraudulent, anti-competitive, corrupt and other similar types of destructive behaviour (Kornai, Rothstein & Rose-Ackerman 2004).

The empirical background: Quality of Government and human wellbeing

Until the mid-1990s, issues of corruption and QoG were generally neglected in the social sciences. The reason was that many argued that some types of corruption could have a positive impact on economic development since this in many instances, could "grease the wheels" (cf. Rose-Ackerman 1998). A central reason for the rise of the QoG and good governance agenda since then is the establishment of different types of measures, notably the *Corruption Perception Index* (CPI) launched by Transparency International in 1996 and later the World Bank's Governance Indicators. Since these measures (and several others) became available, a great number of studies have shown that government institutions that are reasonable free from corruption and related practices have a strong positive impact on a large set of outcomes related to human well-being. Central in this discussion has been the link between the quality of government institutions that implement policies and economic growth (Acemoglu & Robinson 2012, Holmberg, Rothstein & Nasiritousi 2009). In addition, several studies

have shown positive links between measures of QoG and subjective well-being (aka "happiness"), a survey-based measure of individuals' evaluations of their quality of life (Holmberg & Samanni 2012, Helliwell 2008, Pacek & Radcliff 2008 and Ott 2010).

There is also a large body of literature that testifies to the negative consequences of "bad governance" and "low quality government" for areas such as population health and people's access to safe water (Sjöstedt 2008, Holmberg & Rothstein 2012, Transparency International 2006). In sum, while it has been very difficult to find any positive correlations between measures of the degree of democracy and measures of human well-being in cross-country studies, the opposite is true for measures of QoG that relate to the output side of the political system (Holmberg & Rothstein 2012, 2011a and 2011c).

Does democracy produce Quality of Government?

Establishing representative democracy has often been championed as an effective antidote to everything from corruption to poverty. This is because representative democracy is conceptually linked to accountability, which helps to reduce the discretionary powers of public officials (Fukuyama 2011, Deininger & Mpuga 2004:171). This would indicate that democracy would increase the quality of government. The problem is that empirically, there is no straightforward relationship between establishing electoral representative democracy and many features of what usually counts as QoG. On the contrary, measures of democracy seem to be curvilinearly related to, for example, the level of corruption (Montinola & Jackman 2002; Sung 2004, Charron & Lapuente 2010). Empirical research indicates that corruption is worst in countries that have been newly democratized. For example, some of the worst cases of corruption have appeared in newly democratized countries, such as Peru under its former president Fujimori (McMillan & Zoido 2004) and Jamaica since the mid-1970s (Collier 2006). One should also keep in mind that the two states that have made the greatest progress in curbing corruption over the last few decades – Singapore and Hong Kong – have not been and still are *not* democracies (Uslaner 2008). From this we have to conclude that quality of government is different from, and should not conceptually be equated with, representative democracy.

Having said this, democracy and QoG as impartiality do overlap at the conceptual level in two very important areas. First, this is apparent with respect to the "bundle of political rights" required to upheld a democratic system. Democracy, in O'Donnell's (2001:18) words, presupposes "a legal system that enacts and backs the universalistic and inclusive assignment of these rights". Democratic legitimacy requires that political rights such as freedom of association and of expression must be secured within a legal framework—and this framework in its turn must be impartially applied to all its subjects. As a consequence, democracy as political equality entails impartial government institutions in the *regulation* of the access to political power.

Secondly, this overlap is also readily seen if we consider the idea of "free and fair elections". Elections have to be administrated by the existing government but if they are to be considered free and, in particular, *fair*, the ruling party must refrain from organizing them in a partisan way that undermines the oppositions' possibilities to reach power. That is, in order to be seen as "free and fair" elections must be administrated by impartial government institutions (Choe 1997). But again, the impartial organization of elections does not imply that the content or outcome of this process will lead to the establishment of a public administration that is based on the principle of impartiality. On the contrary, the reason why many people take part in elections (and politics in general) is that they are motivated by very partial interests. The temptation for politicians that are elected into government to use the public administration as a means to support their political supporters with jobs and/or to politicize positions in the civil service as mean to increase their party's political power seem to be huge.

Deliberative democracy as rule through experts?

If QoG, as stated above, is highly correlated to the possibility of establishing policies that are "right" and "true" in the sense that they improve general human well-being, it is of course important to find explanations for why this is so. What, more precisely does QoG bring to representative democracy? The standard answers have so far been administrative and professional capacity the rule of law and low levels of corruption (Fukuyama 2004, Norris 2012, Rothstein 2011).

Using a new cross-country dataset based on a web-survey with experts on public administration that has been constructed to measure QoG as impartiality in the public administration, Dahlström,

Lapuente and Teorell (2011) have analyzed what type of structural features of a country's civil service that can explain the existing huge variation in levels of corruption. Contrary to what has often been taken for granted, they show that the separation of the civil service career through special (privileged) employment contracts or special exams do not have an effect on levels of corruption. They also show that the comparative level of pay is not significant for the degree of corruption. However, their results do show that *meritocratic recruitment* to the civil service have a significant positive influence for minimizing corruption also when controlling for a large set of other standard variables (see figure 1 and figure 2). These results are important because they indicate that a *procedural* norm, in this case the impartiality in the recruitment to the civil service, results in a more efficient and effective public administration. Secondly, these results may also give us an idea of why it is that high levels of QoG as defined above have much stronger positive effects on all standard measures of human well-being than has a country's level of democracy. My explanation for this is that meritocracy imputes knowledge into the political system and thereby increases its epistemic orientation. If recruitment to, and promotion within, the public administration is based on impartial evaluations of the candidates skills and qualifications, this will increase the amount of "true" knowledge in the machinery of government. Thus, we arrive at the following conclusion: Electoral-representative democracy does not seem to ensure the necessary epistemic qualities in the political system for creating policies that increase human well-being. However, QoG defined as a public administration based on the norm of impartiality, will result in meritocratic principles for recruitment and promotion within the civil service and this will substantially increase the epistemic quality of the state which in its turn increases the likelihood that the political system will produce public policies that improve human well-being. People with high levels of skills and knowledge (instead of those with a certain family background, or who are affiliated with clientelistic political networks) fill the positions in the public administration and positions as professionals in organizations implementing public policies. My argument is that if representative democracy is combined with meritocratic recruitment, this is very likely to result in *epistemic democracy as practice*.

At this stage, we can for the most part only speculate about how the causal mechanisms between a meritocratic public administration

and "right and true" decisions may work. One possibility is that merit-based civil services functions as "cages of reason" within the democratic machinery that may otherwise be overtaken by populism and/or special interest politics (Silberman 1983). By imputing knowledge-based rationality into the policy-making process, a non-politicized civil service based on meritocracy may lead to political decisions that are more likely to cater to the "public good". Another such mechanism may be that politicians that only surround themselves with political cronies recruited through patronage risk ending up with a quite distorted view about reality. In contrast, merit-recruited civil servants may actually be "speaking truth to power" (Wildavsky 1987). A third mechanism may be this system may force elected politicians to enter into a deliberative process with a meritocratic civil service when they plan and create public policies. Although centrally placed civil servants are known to exert a substantial influence on the content of public policies, this system does not necessarily have to degenerate into "rule by experts" (epistocracy). Instead, in combination with electoral-representative democracy, this can be seen as ensuring democratic *rule through experts*. In such a democracy, it is not the experts but the elected politicians that are held accountable for the political decisions. If the experts/civil servants who have prepared and analyzed the policy proposal cannot convince the elected politicians about the merits of their suggestions, the politicians can say no. However, this will only happen after a thorough deliberate process between the politicians and the expert/civil servants has taken place.

Deliberation has been thought to improve the epistemic qualities of democratic decision-making. However, as stated by Habermas, "whether deliberation does indeed introduce an epistemic dimension into political will-formation and decision making is, of course, an empirical question" (2006:413). Organizing large-scale deliberation processes on the "input" side of the political system has turned out to be complicated and impractical (Ryfe 2005). What is proposed here as an alternative is a system of deliberation inside the state machinery in which elected politicians deliberate about public policies with a civil service meritocracy and policy experts. Such as system will not "solve" the epistemic problem in democratic decision making but it will handle the problem in a way that produces more "true" and "right" decisions thereby contributing to the enactment of public policies that will increase human well-being. The large-n empirical analysis of the relation

between various measures of QoG and available measures of human well-being gives substantial empirical support for this model. A historical case study by Hermansson also supports the argument that QoG increases the likelihood of “true” and “right” decisions. Studying a large number of policy processes that took place when the Swedish welfare state was built, Hermanssons shows that in a respectable number of cases, an “enlightened” deliberative process between elected politicians, high level civil servants, experts and (often equally knowledgeable) representatives from interest organizations took place when important public policies were constructed.

To summarize: First, the epistemic problem in representative democracy is for real. There is little empirical support for the idea that representative democracy will produce decisions that are both “true” and “right” if by this we mean policies that improve human well-being. Secondly, what produce policies that increases human well-being (and political legitimacy) is largely states that are characterized by QoG defined as a public administration that is based on the norm of impartiality. Thirdly, in addition to providing the rule of law and control of corruption, such a public administration is likely to increase state capacity through meritocracy. Forthly, while such a system may degenerate into epistocracy (rule by experts), this does not have to be the case. A more benevolent interpretation is that this system may result in a decision making process in which elected politicians and high level civil servants/experts enter into a process of deliberation about public policies. Such a deliberative decision making process within the state will increase the likelihood that the decisions are not only in line with the procedures that make up representative democracy but also that they are “true” and “right”. For example, if being surrounded by population health experts being recruited through a meritocratic system instead of political cronies, it is unlikely that former South African president Thabo Mbeki would have made the catastrophic decisions he eventually made about how to cure and prevent the AIDS epidemic in his country.

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Figure Appendix

Figure 1. Meritocratic recruitment vs level of of corruption

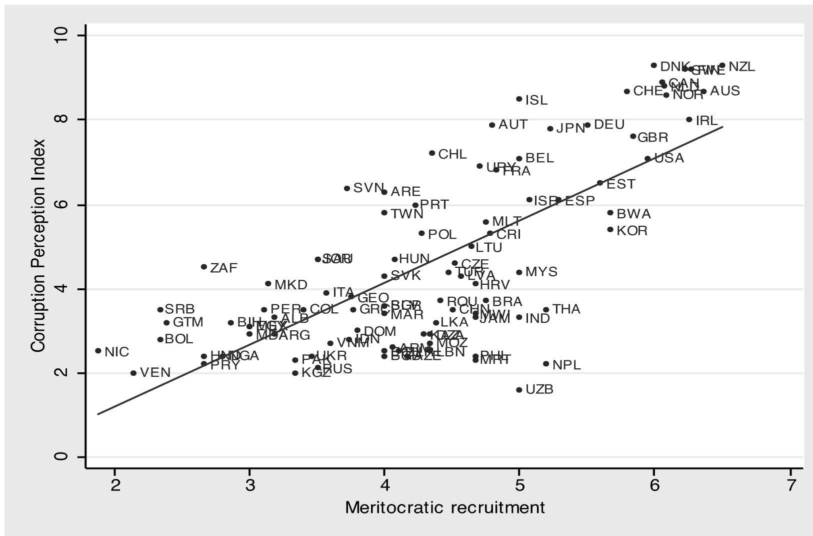


Figure 2. Relative pay for civil servants and level of corruption

Sources for figure 1 and 2: The Quality of Government Institute Dataset and Expert Survey: www.qog.pol.gu.se

Chapter 11
Religion and Demand for Social Protection: Revisiting the Substitution Hypothesis

HENNING FINSERAAS, MARIA ELENA SANDOVICI &
OLA LISTHAUG

Introduction

What is the relationship between a country's level of religiosity and its welfare state policies? If there is a relationship, is this so because religious individuals have different welfare state preferences than secular people do? Scheve and Stasavage (2006) identify a negative correlation between two measures of a country's level of religiosity and its level of social spending, and argue that religious people, irrespective of religious denomination, are less likely to support publicly provided social insurance. In their view, demand for social insurance increases with both material and "psychic costs of adverse life events". They argue that religious beliefs reduce the psychological costs of reductions in one's personal income, and therefore reduce religious individuals' demand for social insurance.

We believe that there are several reasons to be skeptical of their arguments. While Scheve and Stasavage (2006) argue that social spending is lower in Continental Europe because of lower demand for social insurance among religious citizens, there is a large comparative welfare state literature which argues that Christian Democratic parties have promoted welfare state development in Continental Europe (e.g. Esping-Andersen 1990, Huber and Stephens 2001, Manow 2009).

Intriguingly, this literature argues that Christian Democratic parties have provided a similar level of social insurance like we find in countries within the Social Democratic welfare state regime, but have provided less redistribution of income than in the Social Democratic regime type. The lower level of redistribution is attributed in this literature to the cross-class nature of Christian Democratic parties, which makes it more difficult to reach within-party agreement on the level of income redistribution.

We find Scheve and Stasavage (2006) and the mainstream comparative welfare state literature to be at odds on this account, since there is no trace of weaker preferences for social insurance within religious organizations in the latter literature. In fact, van Kersbergen and Manow (2009) point out that Social Catholicism, which teaches that the state should intervene to correct market outcomes, was an important part of the political ideology of Christian Democratic parties. Perhaps reflecting the conflicting welfare state related aspects of religiosity, the correlation between religious participation and welfare state preferences at the individual level does not appear to be very robust, as some studies using pooled cross-national data fail to find a significant influence of religious participation on welfare state preferences, e.g. De la O and Rodden (2008), Rehm (2011) on demand for unemployment insurance and Rehm (2009) on income redistribution (but see Stegmueller et al., 2012).

Our empirical analysis offers several contributions to the literature on religiousness and welfare state preferences. In particular, the comparative welfare state literature argues that there will be cross-national variation in the relationship between religiosity and preferences regarding social insurance. More specifically, the pro-welfare state stance of Christian Democratic parties in several Continental European countries suggests that the relationship between religiosity and welfare state preferences might be different in these countries.[1] Using Bayesian multilevel modeling on data from the fourth round of the

1 Scheve and Stasavage (2006) briefly examine cross-national variation in the importance of religion, however, their choice to use a factor score derived from a pooled analysis appears to conceal a large degree of cross-national variation (Huber and Stanig 2009). In addition, Stegmueller et al. (2012) examine the relationship between religiosity and support for income redistribution in a model where they allow the coefficient for religious denomination to vary across countries. We complement their analysis by analyzing a broader set of dependent variables.

European Social Survey, we examine the cross-national variation in the relationship between religiosity and welfare state preferences. Importantly, we go beyond Scheve and Stasavage's (2006) sole focus on support for social spending and study the "God gap" on several dimensions of welfare state support. Moreover, Scheve and Stasavage's (2006) argument implies that religious individuals should react differently to a fear of income loss than seculars, something they do not examine. We address this issue by exploring whether religious respondents expressing fear of future income loss have different welfare state preferences from seculars expressing this risk.

The rest of this paper is organized as follows. The next section discusses Scheve and Stasavage's arguments in light of the literature on welfare state development, in particular Manow (2009) and Manow and van Kersbergen (2008). Section three presents our data and method, section four the results, and section five the conclusion.

Religion, welfare state preferences, and cross-class coalitions

Understanding cross-national variation in generosity and public responsibility for social insurance is a classic topic in comparative politics. It has long been acknowledged that cross-national variance in the level of religiosity and the organizational strength of religion might explain some of the cross-national variation in levels of public social insurance, although it has usually not been emphasized as the most important variable. Perhaps the most prominent view has been that a country's level of welfare state generosity is a function of the organizational strength of the working class (e.g. Korpi and Palme 2003). The so-called power resources perspective emphasizes the role of trade unions and Social Democratic parties, arguing that the strength of these organizations represents the successful overcoming of the collective action problem within the lower socio-economic strata, for which generous welfare state arrangements are particularly important. Here religion plays the role of providing those opposing the Social Democratic agenda a counterforce and competing cleavage against socialist mobilization on class interests (e.g. Korpi 2006). Confessional parties and trade unions were established and became cross-class-alliances and they developed welfare state preferences reflecting their cross-class nature, i.e. demands lying in-between the generous demands of Social Democratic parties and the meager demands of Secular Conservative parties.

Esping-Andersen's (1990) seminal work *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* is partly aligned with power resource theory because it highlights the important role working class strength plays in welfare state development. However, Esprig-Andersen (1990) puts more emphasis on the decisive role of the type of political coalitions for the structure and generosity of the welfare state (or, to use his terminology, welfare state regime type). Esping-Andersen argues that the generous Nordic, "Social Democratic", regime type is due to a coalition between Social Democrats and Agrarian parties, the least generous Anglo-Saxon, "liberal", regime type is a consequence of a coalition between the middle class and the rich, while the Continental European, "Conservative", regime type, occupying a middle position between the two others with regard to levels of generosity, is the result of the strength of conservative political forces. Esping-Andersen (1990) has rightly been criticized for being unclear regarding why the particular-coalitions emerged (e.g. Manow 2009) and why they appear to be quite stable over time (e.g. Iversen 2006).

Manow's (2009) critique of Esping-Andersen (1990) is particularly important for this paper as he explicitly outlines the role of religion, or more specifically Catholicism, for welfare state development. Combining Esping-Andersen (1990) with Iversen and Soskice's (2006) model of how electoral rules influence the amount of income redistribution, Manow (2009) argues that the coalition between the middle-class and the rich in Anglo-Saxon, liberal, regime-type is a consequence of the majoritarian electoral system. This system gives the middle-class an incentive to vote with the rich (see Iversen and Soskice 2006). Countries within the Nordic, Social Democratic, regime and the Continental-European, Conservative, regime typically have proportional representation and multi-party-systems, and the distinction between them with respect to welfare state generosity can, according to Manow (2009) be explained by the importance of religious cleavages. In the homogenous Lutheran Protestant, Scandinavian countries, religion was not (strongly) politicized or particized. Instead, agrarian parties and organizations formed and eventually joined forces with workers in support of tax-financed rather than contribution-financed social insurance. Many small-scale farmers had unstable work history and thus opposed a contribution-financed solution. In Continental Europe, religion was strongly politicized and particized as Catholic interests fiercely opposed the increasing role of the state on behalf of the church.

Catholic organizations were cross-class in nature, which muted the opposition to status-differentiated social insurance.

In their comprehensive study of welfare state development, Huber and Stephens (2001) conclude that both Social Democratic and Christian Democratic parties have contributed to the development of generous welfare state arrangements. "Both types of welfare states are effective in keeping people out of poverty and highly redistributive, though the social democratic welfare state is clearly more so" (Huber and Stephens 2001: 39). Thus, countries with a strong religious cleavage have developed welfare states with generous social insurance, yet their welfare states redistributive less income than the welfare states of countries with a less politicized religious cleavage.

The comparative macro-oriented literature does not make any strong claims regarding the welfare state preferences of religious individuals, but emphasizes that which cleavages are mobilized has consequences for the emergence of political coalitions and thus welfare state outcomes. There is, however, a micro-oriented literature on the economic policy preferences of religious citizens, which culminates in the ambitious paper of Scheve and Stasavage (2006) where they provide a micro-level theoretical model of religiosity and social insurance preferences. In this paper they put forward the claim that a "God gap" in economic preferences explains lower social spending in countries with a higher level of religiosity. They argue that religious beliefs, in a similar manner as social spending, provide insurance against adverse life events, not because having religious beliefs often implies that you are a member of a Church or congregation that might provide you with material benefits in a situation of income loss (see e.g. Huber and Stanig 2009), but because religious beliefs protect against the psychological costs associated with adverse life events. The material consequences of income loss are of course the same for seculars and believers, but the psychological stress associated with income loss is smaller for believers. In their model, demand for social insurance has both a material and a psychological aspect, and the lower psychological costs associated with religiosity implies that religious citizens demand less social insurance than secular citizens do. Scheve and Stasavage (2006) emphasize that this is universal, irrespective of religious denomination. They point out that their model can account for the stylized fact that most European countries have more generous social insurance and lower levels of religiosity than the US. In contrast, the comparative

welfare state literature discussed above would instead emphasize the differences in political institutions, in particular that the US has a majoritarian electoral system.

The claim of smaller demand for social insurance among those of faith do not fit well with the findings that Catholic parties in Continental Europe have promoted welfare state development. True, the Conservative welfare state is less generous than the Social Democratic type, but as Huber and Stephens (2001) point out, this is due to the lower degree of income redistribution of these welfare states, not due to vastly different degrees of social insurance. Manow (2009) argues that this is a straightforward consequence of the cross-class nature of Christian Democratic parties: The Nordic choice of tax-financing of social insurance was too controversial, while income-differentiated social insurance represented a compromise between the Catholic working class and the middle class, since income redistribution is smaller with this type of financing. This outcome do not necessarily contradict the claim that religious persons demand less income redistribution, but it is more problematic to reconcile with lower demand for social insurance among those of faith.

Scheve and Stasavage (2006) present evidence that religiosity and social spending is negatively correlated. The mainstream approach in the comparative welfare state literature, however, is to measure welfare state generosity using more precise measures, such as replacement rates. Relying on institutional data like replacement rates instead of spending data is preferable for many reasons (see e.g. Scruggs 2008), most notably because they are not sensitive to the size of the dependent population, i.e. two countries with the exact same replacement rates could have very different spending levels due to different levels of unemployment and/or number of retirees. Figures 1-3 show the relationship between the average level of religiosity as reported in the World Values Survey (the same data used by Scheve and Stasavage, 2006) against net replacement rates for unemployment, sickness, and pensions (i.e. the same social insurance programs used by Scheve and Stasavage, 2006). There is a weak (insignificant) negative correlation for unemployment replacement rates (Figure 1), however, these figures together provide less evidence to the Scheve and Stasavage thesis than their analysis of spending data. Figure 4 shows, in line with the mainstream view in the comparative welfare state literature (see e.g. van Kersbergen and Manow 2008: 5) that religion is negatively correlated

with welfare state decommodification of workers. This finding does not contradict the macro-level evidence that Christian Democratic parties have promoted social insurance, but not redistribution (and thus worker decommodification).

Figure 1. Net unemployment replacement rates (family) and average response on “How important is God in your life” (1=not important, 10=very important).

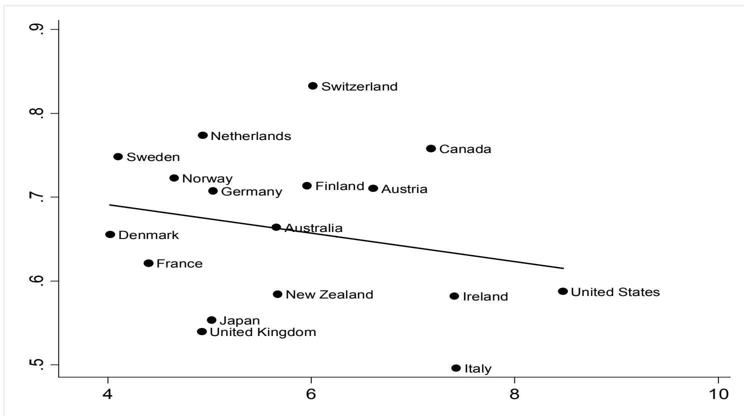


Figure 2. Net standard pension replacement rates (family) and average response on “How important is God in your life” (1=not important, 10=very important).

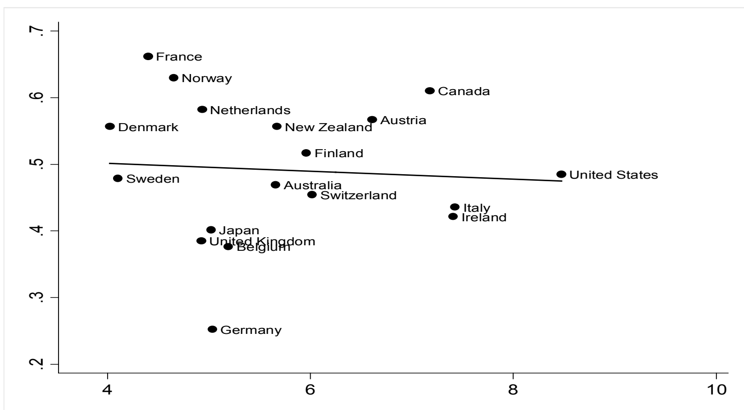


Figure 3. Net sickness replacement rates (family) and average response on “How important is God in your life” (1=not important, 10=very important).

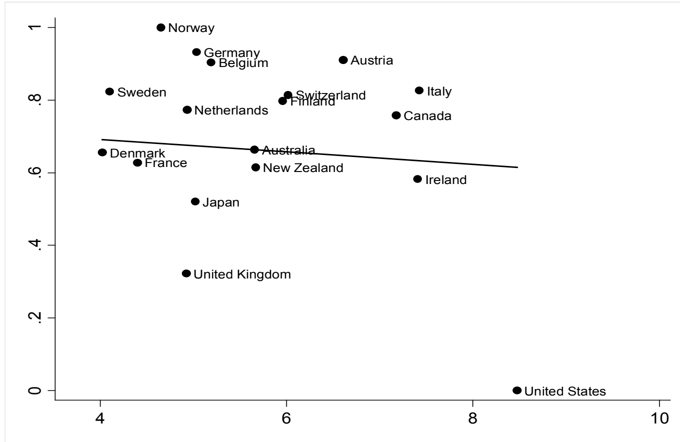
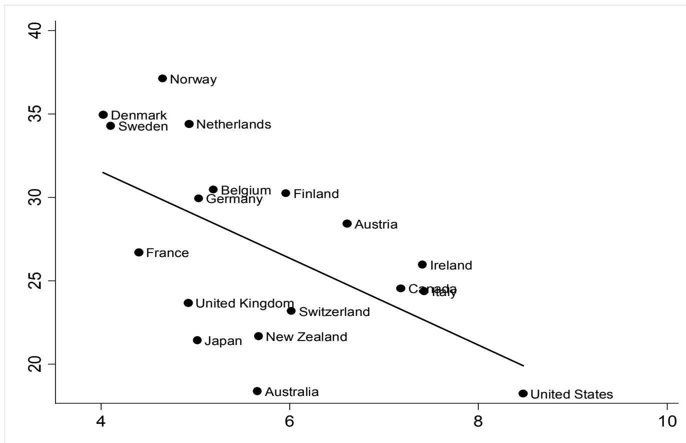


Figure 4. Decommodification index and average response on “How important is God in your life” (1=not important, 10=very important).



This far, we have been mainly concerned with the macro-level motivation and implications of Scheve and Stasavage’s (2006) model, and argued that the negative correlation between social spending and aver-

age level of religiosity that they find, is not likely to be due to a "God gap" in social insurance preferences, because average level of religiosity is not strongly correlated with replacement rates. Instead, a "God gap" in preferences over income redistribution do not contradict the comparative welfare state literature and the macro-level data this literature increasingly employs. We therefore propose to examine the "God gap" on various welfare state related preferences, either related to social insurance or to income redistribution. Next, the fact that the religious cleavage is politicized and particized in some countries but not in others suggests that one should explore the cross-national variation in the relationship between religiosity and welfare state preferences. Finally, Scheve and Stasavage (2006) do not test their proposed mechanism for why religious individuals demand less welfare state protection, namely that religious beliefs function as a buffer against the psychological costs associated with unemployment and bad health. We provide a more rigorous test of their claim by examining whether the relationship between risk of income loss and welfare state preferences are different for believers and seculars.

Data and methods

We rely on data from the fourth round of the European Social Survey (ESS4 edition 2.0) conducted in 2008-2009. The countries included in the analysis are listed in Table 1.[2]

In the main analysis we rely on the respondents' participation in religious ceremonies to capture religiosity. We believe religious participation should be more important than self-reported level of religiosity since participation in ceremonies signals a deeper commitment to religious beliefs, and because religious participation implies a stronger socialization to the Church's political beliefs. In addition, participation should imply better access to potential material benefits provided by the church. Following Scheve and Stasavage (2006), we do not differentiate between religious denominations. Previous research supports their view that the main cleavage regarding welfare state attitudes is between seculars and believers, not between different denominations (e.g. Stegmueller et al. 2012).

2 Bulgaria, Cyprus and Slovakia are excluded due to missing income data.

We rely on three dependent variables; i) a question of whether the respondent wants to increase taxes and social spending (range 0,10. A high score implies willingness to increase spending), ii) an index based on questions regarding the government's responsibilities for unemployment protection, old age pensions, and health care (range 0,30, but recoded to be in the range 0,10. A high score implies support for government responsibility),[3] and iii) a question of whether the government should reduce income differences (range 1,5. A high score implies support for redistribution). The first variable is similar to the one employed by Scheve and Stasavage, the second captures demand for public responsibility for social insurance, while the third captures demand for government income redistribution. Descriptive statistics for the main variables broken down by country are presented in Table 1. At the aggregate level, there is a fairly strong negative correlation between percentage *religious* and *spending* (-.43, p=.07), while the correlations are positive but insignificant for *insurance* (.13, p=.60) and *redistribute* (.30, p=.23). These findings partly contradict Scheve and Stasavage (2006) and also highlights that religiousness might not be uniformly associated with different dimensions of welfare state support.

We include a set of fairly standard control variables in the multivariate analysis: Gender, age, income, education, whether the respondent lives in an urban area, and the education level of the respondent's father. Descriptive statistics and operationalizations are presented in the Appendix. To simplify presentation we leave out the results for the control variables, but they are reported in the Appendix.

Since we find it plausible that the God gap in welfare state preferences varies across countries, we opt for multilevel modeling of welfare state preferences. More specifically, we allow the intercept and the coefficient for religiousness to vary across countries to get country-specific estimates of intercepts and coefficients for religiousness. In a multilevel model, the group-varying coefficients (in our case the intercepts and the coefficients for *religious*) represent a compromise be-

3 The three questions are strongly correlated with Cronbach's alpha .72.

tween the estimate based on the data from the respective group[4] and the average across the groups.[5]

Table 1 Descriptive statistics for main variables broken down by country and arranged in decreasing order by percentage religious.

	Percentage *religious*	*Spending*	Social *insurance*	*Redistribute*
Poland	70	4.4	8.0	3.8
Portugal	48	4.9	8.3	4.2
Israel	29	5.5	8.6	4.0
Slovenia	28	4.5	7.9	4.2
Spain	27	5.3	8.5	4.0
Switzerland	21	5.1	7.1	3.7
Netherlands	21	5.3	7.4	3.4
Great Britain	18	5.2	7.8	3.5
Germany	18	4.8	7.5	3.7
Hungary	17	3.6	8.2	4.3
Belgium	16	5.1	7.3	3.8
Russia	16	5.2	8.5	3.9
Finland	13	5.9	8.2	4.0
France	12	5.0	7.3	4.0
Denmark	10	6.0	7.9	3.1
Norway	10	5.6	8.3	3.5
Sweden	10	5.4	8.2	3.7
Estonia	9	5.6	8.2	3.8

The models we want to estimate are fairly complex and the number of countries is quite low. Practitioners increasingly rely on Bayesian approaches to estimate these types of models because simulations of parameters are argued to give more reasonable inferences (e.g. Gelman and Hill 2007). In Bayesian modeling one estimates the regression coefficients given the data and prior distributions of the coefficients. For the non-varying (individual level) coefficients, we use normal prior distributions with a mean of zero and a standard deviation of 100. This implies that we assume that the coefficients are in the range -100,

4 I.e. the "no-pooling" estimate in Gelman and Hill's (2007) terminology, economists tend to call this the fixed effects estimate.
5 I.e. the "complete pooling" estimate in Gelman and Hill's (2007) terminology where one ignores the multilevel structure of the data.

100 (Gelman and Hill 2007: 354), which are noninformative prior distributions since OLS estimates of these variables are in the range -.5, .5 (results available upon request). In practice the noninformative priors imply that the coefficients are pushed towards zero if there is little information in the data. As noted in the previous paragraph, the group level coefficients depend on the data from the specific group and the average across groups. The parameters that describe the group level means and their distributions are called the hyperparameters. The hyperparameters are also given prior distributions; the group level means are given the same noninformative prior distributions as the individual level coefficients, while the group level variances are given uniform prior distributions on the range 0, 100. Based on the prior distributions and the data, Bayesian models are fit by simulating the posterior distributions of parameters through an iterative process where each parameter in the model are estimated conditional on the values of the other parameters, and then iteratively updated as the values of the other parameters are updated. Eventually, the simulations will converge on a distribution of parameter estimates, known as the posterior distribution. We draw inferences on the coefficient values from the posterior distribution.

The simulations are conducted using WinBUGS (Lunn et al. 2000) via R using the R2WinBUGS (Sturtz et al. 2005) package. We ran three chains of (MCMC) simulations for 50 000 iterations, saving every 50th iteration for inference. The convergence statistic Rhat is always below 1.01, and the number of independent simulation draws are always above 200 (the number is equal to 1500 for most parameters). Thus the simulations have converged on a set of posterior distributions, and the number of independent simulation draws is large enough for inferences on estimates and confidence intervals.

Empirical results

Table A2 in the Appendix describes the posterior distributions (the medians and the 95% confidence intervals) for the country-specific intercepts and the coefficients for *religious* when increased *spending* is the dependent variable. Figure 5 displays the results for *religious*.[6]

6 We build on the R-codes accompanying Kastellec and Leoni (2007) when creating the figures.

Remember, a positive coefficient implies that religious citizens want more social spending. The Bayesian equivalence to the confidence interval for *religious* includes zero in all but two countries (three if we include Portugal for which the lower bound is very close to zero). In Spain (and Portugal), there is a God gap in the direction predicted by Scheve and Stasavage, as the religious are less supportive of more social spending. In Israel, the gap is the opposite, i.e. those participating in religious services are more supportive of social spending. In most countries, the median is actually positive, but the 95% confidence interval includes zero. Clearly, the results do not support Scheve and Stasavage's model.

Figure 5. Bayesian multilevel estimates of the impact of religious participation on social spending preference. Dots represent the medians of the posterior distributions, lines represent the Bayesian equivalent to 95% confidence intervals.

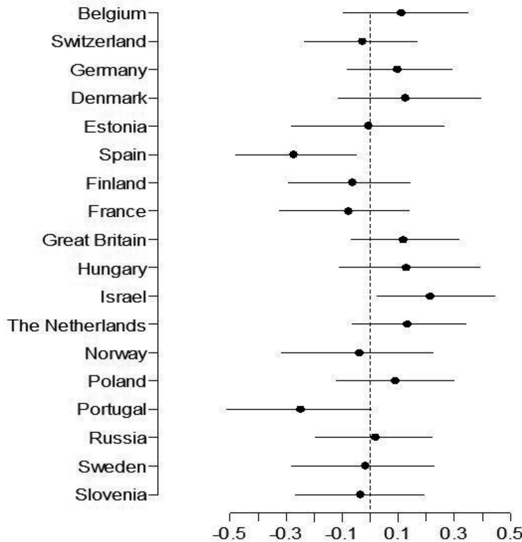


Table A3 and Figure 6 present the results from the same model but with support for public responsibility for social insurance as the dependent variable, while Table A4 and Figure 7 present the same results

for the redistribution model. Figure 6 provides very limited support to Scheve and Stasavage as religious beliefs is clearly related to less support for public social insurance in only three countries, Germany, France, and Portugal. The negative coefficient for Germany is surprising also in light of the comparative welfare state literature as we expected demand for social insurance to be less related to religiosity in Continental Europe. The impression that religious beliefs and welfare state preferences are weakly connected is reinforced by the results presented in Figure 7, although the negative relationship is somewhat stronger and significant in a larger number of countries than in Figure 5 and 6, i.e Seculars tend to be more supportive of government income redistribution (Stegmueller et al., 2012).

Figure 6. Bayesian multilevel estimates of the impact of religious participation on support for public responsibility for social insurance. Dots represent the medians of the posterior distributions, lines represent the Bayesian equivalent to 95% confidence intervals.

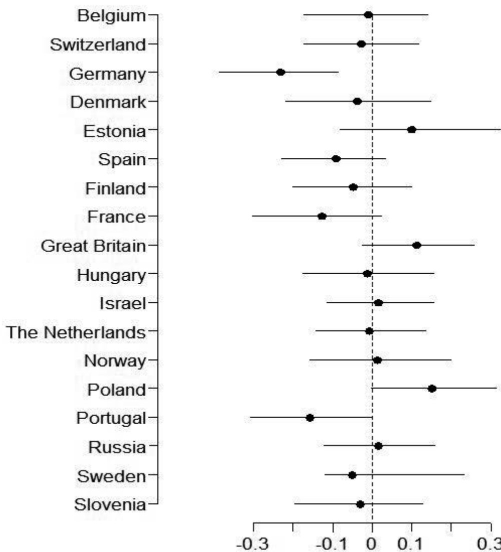
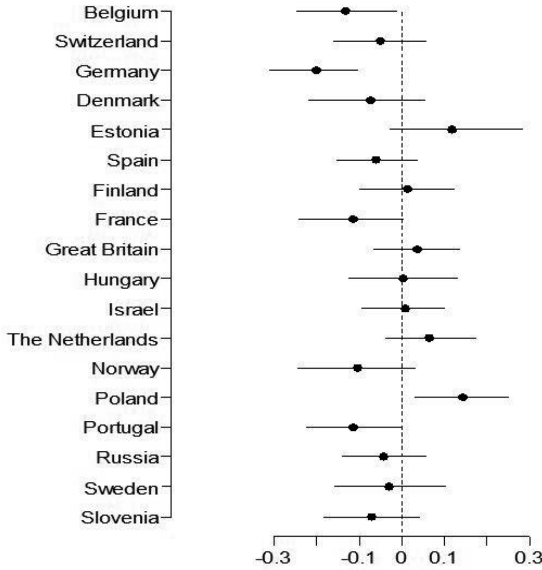


Figure 7. Bayesian multilevel estimates of the impact of religious participation on preference for redistribution. Dots represent the medians of the posterior distributions, lines represent the Bayesian equivalent to 95% confidence intervals.



The results thus far suggest that a general theory of religiousness and welfare state preferences do not fit the data. If anything, to be consistent with data such a general theory should predict that religious beliefs and economic preferences have little to do with each other rather than being negatively related as Scheve and Stasavage (2006) argue. A person's level of religious activity is a poor predictor of welfare state preferences in most European countries. However, it can nonetheless be the case that Scheve and Stasavage (2006) are correct in their claim that religious beliefs give you a psychological buffer against adverse life events. The lack of any relationship between religious beliefs and welfare state preferences clearly reduces the ability of Scheve and Stasavage's model to explain cross-country differences in the size and structure of the welfare state, but a finding that religious beliefs provide protection from shocks to the economy will nevertheless be an important finding, as it suggests that part of the cross-national varia-

tion in responses to economic downturns might depend on the size of the electorate holding religious beliefs.

To examine whether religiosity gives you a buffer against adverse life events we explore the relationship between religiosity, risk of income loss, and welfare state preferences. More specifically, we explore whether the relationship between respondents' expressed risk of not having enough money to cover household necessities the next twelve months and welfare state preferences is different for religious citizens compared to secular citizens.

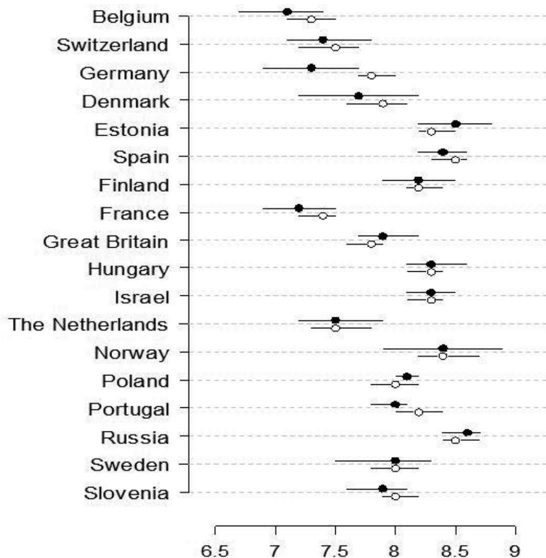
Expressed risk is a dummy variable that is set equal to one if the respondent answers that it is "very likely" or "likely" that (s)he will not be able to cover household expenses. We interact the *risk* variable with *religious*, estimate new models including risk and the interaction with religiousness, and use the estimates to predict and compare welfare state preferences for seculars reporting risk of income loss and religious respondents reporting risk. If religiousness is a substitute for government intervention as Scheve and Stasavage (2006) claim, we expect predictions for these groups to be different from each other. The intercept, risk, religious, and the interaction between risk and religious are all allowed to vary across countries.

Risk of income loss is related to support for public responsibility for social insurance and government income redistribution in the expected direction. The *risk* parameter, which represents the difference between Seculars with and without subjective risk of income loss, is positive and significant in most countries, which implies that Seculars reporting a risk of income loss tend be more pro public social insurance and income redistribution than Seculars that do not report this risk. There is some cross-national variation in the strength of this relationship, but the mean across countries is clearly positive and the difference between Seculars reporting risk and those not reporting risk is substantial (larger than the difference between those with high and low income, and between those with primary and tertiary education). While risk of income loss is related to *insurance* and *redistribution*, it is not related to a preference for increasing taxes and social spending. This is somewhat surprising, and suggests that not all high-risk respondents believe that they will benefit from an increase in social spending.

Figures 8 and 9 present predicted support for insurance and redistribution by country for religious citizens reporting a risk of income

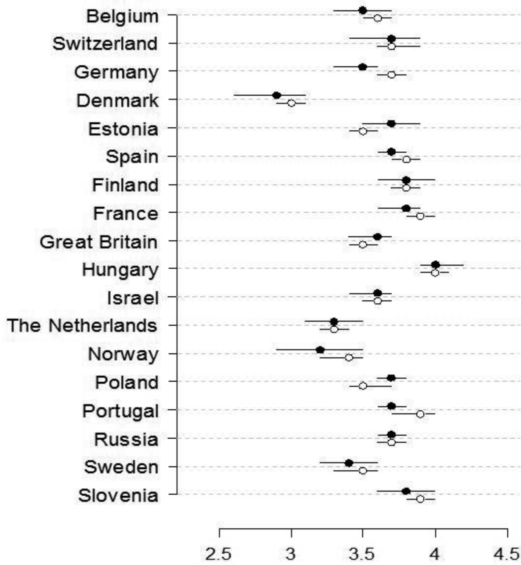
loss (black dots) and secular citizens reporting this risk (white dots).[7] The figures show that religious persons reporting risk is not different from seculars reporting risk in any country with the exception of Germany, where religious persons expressing risk are slightly less positive towards social insurance and income redistribution than seculars reporting risk. This difference is not driven solely by the difference between seculars and religious persons (evident in figure 6 and 7), as the interaction terms (*risk*religious*) are clearly negative in Germany. The general picture, however, is that religiousness is not strongly tied to welfare state preferences in Europe, and religious persons do not appear to be different from seculars if experiencing risk of income loss.

Figure 8. Bayesian multilevel estimates of support for public responsibility for social insurance for religious respondents with a high risk of income loss (black dots) and for secular respondents with a high risk of income loss (white dots). Lines represent 95% confidence intervals.



7 The control variables are set to male, urban, young, father with primary education, income above the median, and secondary education.

Figure 9. Bayesian multilevel estimates of support for government income redistribution for religious respondents with a high risk of income loss (black dots) and for secular respondents with a high risk of income loss (white dots). Lines represent 95% confidence intervals.



Conclusion

In this paper we have examined recent claims that religious beliefs have an impact on welfare state preferences. In a theoretically and methodologically impressive and very influential paper, Scheve and Stasavage (2006) claim that religion provides a psychological buffer against adverse life-events, leading religious beliefs to function as a substitute for government provided social protection.

We argue that this argument is at odds with comparative welfare state research finding that Christian Democratic Parties have promoted publicly provided social insurance in several countries where they have been strong. We therefore revisit the individual-level claims by Scheve and Stasavage (2006), and expand on their analysis by separating welfare state support into two dimensions—social insurance and income redistribution—and by exploring whether religious people who

express a risk of suffering a future income loss have different welfare state preferences from seculars expressing such risk.

Using data from the fourth round of the European Social Survey, we find that religious persons have very similar welfare state preferences as seculars. This similarity is particularly evident regarding social insurance, while seculars are somewhat more likely to support income redistribution in some of the countries. Moreover, we find no evidence for the psychological buffer argument, as religious persons expressing fear of income loss have similar welfare state preferences as seculars expressing such fear.

Our findings support De la O and Rodden's (2008) claim that religion does not distract voters from forming economic preferences in line with their economic interests. While our results are obviously more in line with the comparative welfare state literature than the Scheve and Stasavage (2006) model, we do not find that religious persons in Continental European countries with strong Christian Democratic parties are systematically different from religious persons in other countries. This finding is more consistent with Manow's (2009) coalition-explanation for why Christian Democratic parties have promoted welfare state development, than with arguments on the importance of Catholic doctrine (Manow and van Kersbergen (2008).

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Appendix

Table A1: Descriptive statistics

Variable	Operationalization (range)	Mean	St.dev.
Spending	Support increase in taxes/social spending (0,10)	5.2	2.0
Insurance	Support public responsibility for unemployment benefits, health care, and old age pensions (0,10)	8.0	1.5
Redistribute	Support government income redistribution (1,5)	3.8	1.0
Religious	Participates in religious ceremonies each month or more often	0.2	0.4
Male	Gender (0,1)	0.5	0.5
Urban	Lives in a big city or outskirts of big city (0,1)	0.3	0.5
Young	Below 50 years of age (0,1)	0.5	0.5
Father: primary	Father completed primary (0,1)	0.3	0.4
-secondary	Father completed secondary (0,1)	0.4	0.5
-tertiary	Father completed tertiary (0,1)	0.1	0.3
-don't know	Don't know father's education level (0,1)	0.1	0.3
-not primary	Father did not complete primary (0,1)	0.1	0.3
Income	Income below country median (0,1)	0.5	0.5
Secondary	Highest level of education is secondary level (0,1)	0.2	0.4
Upper secondary	Highest level of education is upper secondary level (0,1)	0.4	0.5
Tertiary	Highest level of education is tertiary level (0,1)	0.3	0.4
Primary	Highest level of education is primary level (0,1)	0.1	0.3
Pr(Unemp)	How likely unemployed and looking for work next twelve months (0,1)	0.2	0.4

Note: N=27456 except spending (25801), insurance (27165), pr(Unemp) (26713).

Table A2: Dependent variable is support for an increase in taxes and social spending. Descriptions of the posterior distributions.

	Median	2.5	97.5
Intercepts			
Belgium	5.111	4.972	5.267
Switzerland	5.209	5.052	5.365
Germany	4.832	4.689	4.976
Denmark	6.035	5.884	6.192
Estonia	5.705	5.548	5.857
Spain	5.468	5.328	5.607
Finland	5.959	5.829	6.094
France	5.114	4.987	5.259
Great Britain	5.254	5.108	5.403
Hungary	3.754	3.591	3.93
Israel	5.572	5.417	5.723
Netherlands	5.293	5.149	5.441
Norway	5.672	5.521	5.827
Poland	4.466	4.258	4.675
Portugal	5.192	4.992	5.394
Russia	5.262	5.118	5.41
Sweden	5.513	5.368	5.66
Slovenia	4.652	4.486	4.828
Mean intercept	5.23	4.917	5.509
Religious			
Belgium	0.113	-0.097	0.35
Switzerland	-0.027	-0.235	0.17
Germany	0.098	-0.081	0.292
Denmark	0.127	-0.115	0.397
Estonia	-0.006	-0.281	0.265
Spain	-0.276	-0.483	-0.048
Finland	-0.065	-0.291	0.143
France	-0.079	-0.326	0.14
Great Britain	0.117	-0.066	0.318
Hungary	0.128	-0.109	0.395
Israel	0.215	0.024	0.448
Netherlands	0.133	-0.064	0.345
Norway	-0.039	-0.316	0.226
Poland	0.089	-0.122	0.302
Portugal	-0.248	-0.514	0.006

Russia	0.017	-0.197	0.223
Sweden	-0.016	-0.281	0.228
Slovenia	-0.036	-0.267	0.195
Mean religious	0.013	-0.101	0.121
Non-varying			
Male	-0.042	-0.09	0.007
Urban	0.091	0.037	0.145
Young	-0.34	-0.391	-0.285
Father: primary	0.131	0.026	0.227
-secondary	0.147	0.041	0.252
-tertiary	0.135	0.016	0.252
-don't know	0.061	-0.066	0.19
Income	-0.05	-0.099	-0.001
Secondary	0.008	-0.083	0.108
Upper second.	-0.011	-0.106	0.082
Tertiary	0.115	0.014	0.22
Deviance	109000	109000	109000

Note: Reference category for father's education is not completed primary education. Reference category for own education is primary education. Rhat is below 1.01 for all estimates, the lowest number of effective simulation draws is 210, most are above 1000.

Table A3: Dependent variable is support for public responsibility for social *insurance*. Descriptions of the posterior distributions.

	Median	2.5	97.5
Intercepts			
Belgium	7.619	7.521	7.716
Switzerland	7.356	7.249	7.463
Germany	7.894	7.796	7.988
Denmark	8.283	8.175	8.386
Estonia	8.495	8.391	8.598
Spain	8.727	8.635	8.821
Finland	8.520	8.429	8.610
France	7.667	7.580	7.755
Great Britain	8.077	7.974	8.171
Hungary	8.449	8.344	8.557
Israel	8.730	8.631	8.822
Netherlands	7.716	7.609	7.820
Norway	8.685	8.578	8.785

Poland	8.114	7.958	8.260
Portugal	8.531	8.400	8.657
Russia	8.755	8.656	8.849
Sweden	8.490	8.386	8.588
Slovenia	8.196	8.077	8.305
Mean intercept	8.234	8.004	8.465
Religious			
Belgium	-0.010	-0.172	0.140
Switzerland	-0.027	-0.174	0.119
Germany	-0.231	-0.385	-0.087
Denmark	-0.039	-0.218	0.148
Estonia	0.099	-0.082	0.325
Spain	-0.092	-0.228	0.033
Finland	-0.047	-0.202	0.100
France	-0.128	-0.303	0.023
Great Britain	0.113	-0.026	0.259
Hungary	-0.012	-0.175	0.155
Israel	0.017	-0.114	0.156
Netherlands	-0.007	-0.143	0.135
Norway	0.013	-0.157	0.199
Poland	0.152	-0.002	0.314
Portugal	-0.158	-0.309	-0.003
Russia	0.015	-0.123	0.159
Sweden	0.050	-0.120	0.233
Slovenia	-0.029	-0.196	0.128
Mean religious	-0.017	-0.096	0.063
Non-varying			
Male	-0.093	-0.127	-0.058
Urban	0.025	-0.011	0.060
Young	-0.084	-0.120	-0.047
Father: primary	0.047	-0.018	0.116
-secondary	-0.025	-0.096	0.044
-tertiary	-0.048	-0.131	0.032
-don't know	0.016	-0.068	0.105
Income	-0.140	-0.175	-0.106
Secondary	-0.106	-0.165	-0.039
Upper second.	-0.143	-0.201	-0.085
Tertiary	-0.187	-0.252	-0.120
Deviance	95890	95870	95910

Note: Reference category for father's education is not completed primary education. Reference category for own education is primary education. Rhat is below 1.01 for all estimates, the lowest number of effective simulation draws is 210, most are above 1000.

Table A4: Dependent variable is support for government income *redistribution*. Descriptions of the posterior distributions.

	Median	2.5	97.5
Intercepts			
Belgium	4.115	4.043	4.190
Switzerland	4.023	3.947	4.098
Germany	4.113	4.043	4.182
Denmark	3.435	3.362	3.504
Estonia	4.041	3.965	4.113
Spain	4.271	4.209	4.336
Finland	4.276	4.21	4.340
France	4.348	4.282	4.414
Great Britain	3.848	3.781	3.917
Hungary	4.499	4.428	4.578
Israel	4.263	4.191	4.334
Netherlands	3.695	3.622	3.766
Norway	3.919	3.846	3.996
Poland	3.996	3.895	4.100
Portugal	4.421	4.334	4.506
Russia	4.256	4.185	4.325
Sweden	4.036	3.967	4.104
Slovenia	4.431	4.349	4.515
Mean intercept	4.114	3.961	4.263
Religious			
Belgium	-0.133	-0.248	-0.011
Switzerland	-0.050	-0.160	0.056
Germany	-0.201	-0.310	-0.103
Denmark	-0.074	-0.220	0.055
Estonia	0.117	-0.030	0.284
Spain	-0.060	-0.152	0.037
Finland	0.012	-0.100	0.122
France	-0.115	-0.241	0.004
Great Britain	0.036	-0.065	0.136
Hungary	0.004	-0.124	0.130
Israel	0.007	-0.095	0.101

Netherlands	0.065	-0.037	0.173
Norway	-0.103	-0.243	0.031
Poland	0.144	0.032	0.250
Portugal	-0.115	-0.223	-0.001
Russia	-0.044	-0.139	0.057
Sweden	-0.031	-0.157	0.103
Slovenia	-0.071	-0.184	0.042
Mean religious	-0.034	-0.095	0.031
Non-varying			
Male	-0.120	-0.143	-0.098
Urban	-0.004	-0.031	0.020
Young	-0.085	-0.110	-0.060
Father: primary	0.054	0.008	0.100
-secondary	-0.029	-0.081	0.022
-tertiary	-0.149	-0.207	-0.092
-don't know	0.028	-0.031	0.090
Income	-0.193	-0.217	-0.168
Secondary	0.015	-0.030	0.062
Upper second.	-0.045	-0.091	-0.002
Tertiary	-0.205	-0.256	-0.160
Deviance	76560	76540	76580

Note: Reference category for father's education is not completed primary education. Reference category for own education is primary education. Rhat is below 1.01 for all estimates, the lowest number of effective simulation draws is 310, most are above 1000.

The Legacy of Honesty: Understanding Swedish Perception of Corruption

MONIKA BAUHR

"No legacy is so rich as honesty" William Shakespeare (1623)[1]

The detrimental effects of corruption are well established in empirical research. Corruption undermines democratic institutions and economic growth and intensifies environmental, social and health problems (Holmberg & Rothstein 2011; Holmberg et al 2009; Djankov et al. 2003; Gupta et al. 2000; Mauro 1995; Pellegrini & Gerlagh 2006; Sung 2004). Several recent studies also show that differences in perceptions about corruption cannot easily be explained by cultural differences. On the contrary, considerable evidence suggests that corruption is considered morally wrong by a vast majority of the population in most countries. These insights have contributed towards placing corruption on the agenda of national governments and international organizations.

However, a better understanding of the nature of corruption, and in particular, how it varies both within and between societies, is essential to develop effective measures against it. To date, most accounts of corruption are based on data that describes corruption as differing in scale between countries, rather than in type. Corruption rankings play a dominant role in comparative research and in many ways guides our

1 "All's Well that Ends Well", Act 3 scene 5

knowledge about the effects of corruption and its global evolution. The excessive focus on the scale of the corruption problem clearly limits our understanding of the societal effects of corruption, and consequently the effectiveness of measures developed to contain it.

This chapter presents some of the results of the beginning of a research program on public perceptions of corruption in Sweden. According to Transparency Internationals' rankings, Sweden, together with several Nordic countries, is considered to be nearly free from corruption (Transparency International 2012). A representative survey of Swedish citizens (conducted in collaboration with the SOM Institute in 2009), corroborated this finding and showed that a very small portion of the Swedish population had ever been asked to pay a bribe. Merely 1.2 percent of the population had been asked to pay a bribe to a public sector employee. The equivalent number for private companies was 1.3 percent (Oscarsson 2010). Similarly, Holmberg (2009) finds that Swedish citizens perceive their politicians to be less involved in corruption compared to other countries included in the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES). 2 Although these measures provide evidence for the low levels of corruption that exist in Sweden today, they do not adequately capture variations in the type and acceptability of different forms of corruption within the Swedish society.

The 2010-2012 SOM surveys on perceptions of corruption are the most extensive surveys of Swedish citizens' perceptions of corruption to date, and represents the beginning of a time series that allows for systematic comparisons of the prevalence and perceived acceptability of different forms of corruption and misuse of power in Sweden (Bauhr and Oscarsson 2011ab; Bauhr and Färdigh 2012 and Bauhr forthcoming). These questions were in turn based on a series of experiments conducted about Swedish perceptions of corruption (Bauhr et al 2010). The purpose of these surveys is to provide a better understanding of corruption in Sweden and the type of corruption risks that low corrupt societies may face today. A better understanding of the kind of breaches of the norm of impartiality in public service delivery and misuse of power that citizens perceive in Sweden today can hopefully contribute to stimulate a debate on the areas where Sweden may

2 Linde and Erlingsson (2013) find, however, that Swedes are more prone to believe that politicians and public officials are corrupt than their Nordic counterparts

experience the greatest potential risk of corruption in the future, as well as appropriate measures to prevent corruption.[3]

Swedish perception of the prevalence of corruption

In the 2010 and 2011 year's SOM-survey, the following question was asked: "In your opinion, to approximately what extent are the following professions in Sweden involved in some kind of corruption?". The respondents were given the opportunity to rate three professions: *Politicians; Public Sector Employees;* and *Businessmen* on a scale from 1 ("not at all") to 7 (to a very large extent"). The 2010 results showed that businessmen were perceived as more often being involved in corruption (mean 4.4) than public sector employees (4.2) and politicians (3.9). Although the mean differences in the assessments are very small, they are statistically significant ($p<.001$). In other words, when the Swedish people assess which profession is the most involved in corruption, businessmen are the profession that is the most inclined to be involved in corruption, followed by public sector employees and politicians (Bauhr & Oscarsson 2011ab). These results were reproduced in the 2011 survey. In this survey, we also included another professional group, journalists, and asked participants to assess the spread of corruption within this group. The results show that journalists are perceived to be the least corrupt of the four professions included (Bauhr and Färdigh 2012).[4]

Perceptions of the prevalence of corruption are also more or less systematically associated with demographic differences in Swedish society. The 2010 and 2011 survey suggests, for instance, that high-income earners with a high educational level generally perceive corruption as less widespread. Interpersonal trust is also systematically negatively associated with perceptions of the prevalence of corruption: high trusters perceive less corruption. The results confirm that there is an intimate relationship between trust and perceptions of corruption (Rothstein & Uslaner 2005; Seligson 2002; Morris & Klesner 2010; Rose-Ackerman 2001; Treisman 1998).

3 For other research on corruption in Sweden see for instance Andersson 2002 and Erlingsson, Bergh & Sjölin 2008.

4 The mean values in the 2011 survey were 4,4 for businessmen, 4,1 for public sector employees, 4,0 for politicians and 3,7 for journalists.

In the 2012 survey, the Swedish public assessed the prevalence of corruption in different sectors in society rather than by type of actor. The question posed in this survey was: "In your opinion, to approximately what extent are following sectors in Sweden involved in some kind of corruption?" The respondents were given the opportunity to rate four sectors: *Construction; entertainment; restaurant; and health care sector* on a scale from 1 ("not at all") to 7 (to a very large extent"). The results revealed that there is a substantial difference in the level of perceived corruption in construction, entertainment and restaurant, on the one hand, and the perceived level of corruption in the healthcare sector on the other hand; the health care sector was perceived to be involved in corruption to a considerably lesser extent (Bauhr forthcoming).

What do these results tell us about the prevalence of corruption in Sweden? It is important to note that the question format does not lend itself well to provide an understanding of actual levels of corruption in Sweden compared to other countries. Rather, this question format is particularly useful to assess perceptions of the perceived relative prevalence of corruption between different professions and sectors in Swedish society. If these surveys are continued on a regular basis, we will also be able to track how perceptions of the prevalence of corruption in different sectors and among different professions shift over time in Sweden.

The acceptability of different forms of corruption

International survey results suggest that corruption is seen as morally wrong in many parts of the world. If corruption is seen as wrong in both low and high corrupt contexts, understanding these sentiments and opinions seem to do little to explain the variation in corruption that we see between different parts of the world (cf.Karklins 2005). One potential reason for the differences found between different parts of the world may be that although corruption per se is seen as wrong, the perceived boundaries between private and public goods differ between different societies (Rothstein and Torsello 2013, Widmalm 2008). In an attempt to begin to understand the perceived acceptability of different forms of corruption in Sweden, I selected five statements portraying actions that violate the norm of impartiality, or represent the exercise of power in the grey zone between legal and directly illegal behavior (Rothstein & Teorell 2008; Kaufman 2002). Thus,

the definition of corruption used here is deliberately broad and encompassing, in order to allow us to capture the kind of corruption and irregularities that may occur in low corrupt societies. The five types of corruption included in the survey was need corruption, greed corruption (see Bauhr 2012; Bauhr 2013), cronyism/ nepotism and two items used to assess the differences between public and private corruption. Thereafter, we asked the respondents to rate to what extent they believed the actions were acceptable. A longer series of questions has previously been used in a pilot survey accompanied by several other statements (Bauhr et al. 2010). However, the surveys conducted 2010-2012 are the first estimates available in a national representative sample.

In line with our expectations and the results of several international surveys, the acceptance of corruption was very low among the respondents. In 2010, close to half (46 percent) answered "never acceptable" on all the five sub-questions and the average assessments were all lower than 2.1 on the 7-point rating scale.[i] However, this being said, there are also interesting differences in Swedes' acceptance of different kinds of improper behavior.

The results show that different forms of corruption are indeed evaluated differently in Sweden. An important difference was found in the level of acceptability between need and greed corruption. The distinction between need and greed corruption is developed in Bauhr (2013) but can be explained as the difference between bribes paid to receive a service entitled to and bribes paid to receive extra benefits.[5] Need corruption is measured with the question of how acceptable it is that "a public sector employee asks for a fee or service to carry out a service that already is part of his/her job description". If public sector employees charge an extra fee, individuals will be forced to pay in order to receive the service they have a legal right to. This is the type of corruption that most closely resembles the traditional form of bribery. Greed corruption is measured as "A businessman offers a gift or a service to a public sector employee to win a contract". The results show that swedes see greed corruption as somewhat more acceptable as need

5 The distinction is related to the more relational definition of corruption as extortive or collusive, see eg. Klitgaard 1988; Flatters and MacLeod 1995; Hindricks et al 1999 and Brunetti & Weder 2003.

corruption. Around 90%[6] respond that need corruption is never acceptable, while the equivalent number for greed corruption lies between 75 and 80%.[7]

The analysis also shows some interesting results on the perceived acceptability of corruption in private vs. publicly provided public services. The 2010 and 2011 survey included two scenarios on doctors letting a friend or a close relative advance in the health care queue. The scenario, portraying publicly provided public services, asked participant to rate on a 7 point scale the extent to which it was acceptable that " A public sector doctor allows a friend or a relative to advance in the health care queue". The scenario, measuring the acceptability of corruption in the privately provided public services, was identical except that "a public sector doctor" was replaced by "a private doctor".[8] Interestingly, the share who believes that the behavior is "never acceptable" is clearly lower (59 percent) for the private doctor than for the publically employed doctor (77 percent). Hence, our respondents experience that partly different moral guidelines should be used for doctors who work privately, in comparison to doctors with equivalent work in the public sector. This result concurs with what we have previously seen in our pilot studies. It is potentially a controversial result, not the least in relation to the discussions regarding private medical care: Do Swedish people adhere to a different set of norms in order to assess acceptable behaviors for private actors than for publically employed actors? The result is perhaps especially noteworthy, since extensive public means are currently financing the private medical care in Sweden. We need additional studies in order to learn more about whether it is the distinction between private and public service delivery that is driving the results. What lends additional credibility to this result is that the findings are replicated in the 2011 study. Again, the share who believes that the behavior is "never acceptable" is clearly lower (64percent) for the private doctor than for the publically employed doctor (78 percent).

In the 2012 survey, I attempted to explore to what extent it is the distinction between public and private that is driving these results. To this end, the health care scenarios were replaced by education scenari-

6 Eighty- nine percent in 2010.
7 76% (2010), 79% (2011), 75% (2012)
8 "Offentliganställd läkare" and "privatpraktiserande läkare", author translation.

os. The items used in this survey was “A teacher in a public school provides extra tuition, during his /her regular working hours, to a close relative’s child”[9] and “A teacher in a private school provides extra tuition, during his /her regular working hours, to a close relative’s child”.[10] Interestingly, when these items were used, the difference between public and private disappeared. 64% of the respondents stated that providing extra tuition to a close relative’s child was never acceptable, whether schools were publicly or privately managed. There are several possible interpretations of this finding. One interpretation is that there is a difference in the acceptability of corruption between public and private service delivery in some sectors but not in others, i.e. that there may be a fundamental difference between providing health care and providing extra tuition to close relatives. However, there are several other potential interpretations of these results.[11]

Yet another interesting finding is that around 75% of the swedes believe that cronyism in terms of breaches of the norm of meritocratic recruitment is “never acceptable”.[12] The question asked the Swedish public to assess how acceptable it is that “A public sector employee offers a job to a close relative although he/ she lack the formal qualifications”[13]

The results also reveal a couple of findings that may be particularly interesting to highlight here, since they have been replicated for three years in a row (2010, 2011 and 2012). First, we found some systematic differences in the acceptance of corruption among different age groups in Sweden – younger people tend to find corruption somewhat more acceptable than older people. If these results reflect a generational differences in opinions, this result can be perceived to be worrying, since norms and values are formed early in life. However, we do

9 En lärare i en kommunal skola ger under ordinarie arbetstid extra undervisning till en nära släktings barn. Author translation

10 En lärare i en friskola ger under ordinarie arbetstid extra undervisning till en nära släktings barn. Author translations

11 One of these may even be that swedes react differently to the word “friskola” literally translating to a “free” or “independent” school as opposed to the use of various forms of the word private. Alternatively, demographic differences in experiences with different sectors of society may influence these results, where experiences of schools are greater among (typically middle aged) parents and experiences of health care are greater among older people.

12 73% 2010, 72% 2011 and 79% 2012.

13 En offentliganställd erbjuder en närstående jobb trots att personen saknar de rätta kvalifikationerna. Author translation.

not know if these results reflect a generational effect rather than a mere age effect. Second, those with an average income above 600 000 SEK (around 70 000 Euros) and those with a high level of education seem to be particularly negative to breaches of the norm of meritocratic recruitment. Third, those who place their political sympathies to the right tend to be somewhat more acceptable towards various forms of breaches of the norm of equal treatment, such as doctors allowing friends and relatives to advance in the health care queue, teachers giving extra attention to a relatives child or businessman offering a gift or service to a public sector employee to win a contract. All these results have been replicated in three rounds of surveys, 2010, 2011 and 2012.

No legacy so rich as honesty?

As pointed out in the introductory quote, honesty is certainly an important virtue, that may protect societies from sliding into economic and social decay. However, this chapter suggests that it may be useful to reflect somewhat on the how to best make use of the legacy of honesty that does permeate and define important parts of Swedish administration today. To what extent will the legacy of honesty protect Swedish institutions from sliding into worse forms of government?

The survey results presented in this chapter show how the Swedish public perceives the prevalence and acceptability of corruption. When Swedes are asked to define what issues they perceive to be important in Sweden today, very few people mention corruption (Weibull, Oscarsson, Bergström 2012). However, if the question is posed somewhat differently, more forward looking and without explicitly limiting its geographical scope to Sweden, current measures show that between 23% and 32% perceive wide spread corruption as “very worrying”.. The survey results presented in this chapter moves beyond results on general popular concerns, and attempts to understand how perceptions of corruption differs between different sectors and how the Swedish public asses the acceptability of different types of venality.

One of the basic motivations for this research program is that it may be risky to rely entirely on the legacy of honesty to protect Swedish society from corruption, not least considering that international experience and scholarly work on corruption suggests that it is generally easier to maintain well working institutions than to break vicious circles of fraud and corruption. To this end, we need a better

knowledge of the problem at hand, a goal that Sören Holmbergs work has strongly contributed towards, both as director of the QoG institute and the SOM institute. In other words, the legacy of honesty does protect against corruption, but without a better and wider spread knowledge about and reflection on the elusive concept of corruption and its different forms, we stand utterly unprepared to safe guard these institutions. These surveys are an attempt to somewhat contribute towards this end.

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Chapter 13
Does Corruption Suppress Voter Turnout? A Multi-level Approach.

STEFAN DAHLBERG & MARIA SOLEVID

Introduction

A fundamental principle of representative democracy is that citizens participate in politics and actively select their representatives and that the representatives, after being elected, act in the interest of their voters. Voter turnout, it is argued, is in this respect not only one of the most important indicators of the level of democratic legitimacy; elections are also crucial for linking principals with their agents in terms of policy representation and political accountability (Franklin, 2004; Powell, 2000). Thanks to numerous turnout studies, we now know a great deal about the mechanisms behind turnout and why it differs across citizens and countries (see Blais, 2006 for an overview; Franklin, 2004). Turnout differs across voters because voters differ with regard to resources, motivation and recruiting networks (Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993; Verba et al., 1995; Franklin, 2004). The more resources, motivation and networks, the lower the cost of voting and the higher the turnout. Turnout differs across countries because the electoral system differs, making voting a more or less costly act. Turnout is usually higher in countries with compulsory voting and proportional representation and at high salience elections (Blais, 2006). In addition, as shown by Franklin (2004), the individual level explanations are all modest in comparison to the effects of the electoral system or character of elections.

Taken together, it is probably not an exaggeration to claim that there are few fields in the social sciences that have attracted as much research as have electoral participation and turnout. In spite of this rich tradition, a viable shortcoming in the literature is the apparent focus on factors related to either individual characteristics or on system factors on the input side of the democratic system. When choosing representatives, electoral systems and party systems are just one part of the equation for democratic government. The other part refers to the output side of the system in terms of degree of efficiency and impartiality among political institutions when public policies are being implemented (Rothstein 2011).

The presence of corruption and issues related to corruption such as bribery, nepotism, patronage and clientilism are some of the most serious problems there are in a society. Corruption not only leads to lower economic prosperity (Bentzen, 2012); there also exists compelling evidence that corruption has a wide range of negative effects on human well-being (Holmberg and Rothstein, 2011; Charron et al., 2013). In addition, highly corrupt countries display higher levels of social inequality (Gupta et al., 2002; Jong-Sung and Khagram, 2005) manifested by greater income inequalities between the rich and the poor. Thus, corruption corrodes a government's function as a resource allocator. The presence of corruption is also a threat to principles of democracy by distorting the mechanisms by which citizens elect and hold representatives accountable and by reducing representatives' incentives to act in the interest of their voters (Warren, 2004; Charron, 2011). The presence of corruption has been shown to erode citizens' support both for core political institutions and for democracy as a system (Andersen and Tverdova, 2003; Gilley, 2009; Dahlberg and Holmberg, 2013) and leads to a lower aggregated turnout (Stockemer et al., 2013).

However, despite this large number of studies, we still know very little about circumstances when the relationship between the voter and the parties/representatives is distorted and how this affects levels of turnout. In addition, the few studies on corruption and turnout show mixed results; some studies finds support for corruption mobilizing voters and increasing turnout (Escaleras, et al., 2012, Inman and Andrews, 2009, Karahan et al., 2006, 2009, Kostadniova, 2009) while others find that corruption alienates voters and decreases turnout (Chong et al., 2012, McCann and Dominguez, 1998, Simpser, 2012,

Stockemer et al., 2013, Sundström and Stockemer, 2013). Besides different results, the studies at hand also vary in terms of the level of analysis and methods. There are single country studies, experimental studies and aggregate level studies, but there are few studies that test the relationship among voters across a wider range of countries and the impact of system level corruption on the presumed relationship between corruption perceptions and turnout. In this chapter, we argue that the presence of corruption fundamentally changes the rationale for voters and increases the cost of voting, but that this cost, aside from the electoral system costs, both depends on the individual's perception of corruption and the general corruption context in the country. To be more specific, we aim to investigate how voters' perception of corruption affects turnout and whether this presumed relationship differs depending on the corruption context. In summary, by investigating the interplay between individual level mechanisms and context level mechanisms as to why some voters choose to vote, this chapter will take a step further in the integration of corruption or quality of government research and political behavior research. Thus, the current chapter will make a contribution both to scholars interested in the effects of corruption and low quality of government, as well as to scholars interested in turnout, by offering a better understanding of mechanisms mobilizing or de-mobilizing voters at election times (see Birch, 2009, for a similar approach).

Defining corruption

By corruption, we as many other refer to the abuse of public power for private gains. Corruption can be grand, petty and/or political depending on the amount of money involved. Grand corruption exists at the highest level of government and refers to acts distorting the central functioning of the state. Petty corruption exists in the everyday encounter between public officials and citizens and refers to acts where public officials abuse their power when citizens try to access public services such as schools, hospitals and police departments (Transparency International). Political corruption, finally, "is a manipulation of policies, institutions and rules of procedure in the allocation of resources and financing by political decision makers, who abuse their position to sustain their power, status and wealth" (quote from Transparency International, 2013). Political corruption is then both "the abuse of public office for private gains" as well as "as all private

misdeeds, such as excessive patronage, nepotism, secret party funding, and overtly close ties between politics and business interests" (Stockemer et al., 2013:2). In this chapter, we will, as mentioned, test how perceptions of corruption affect level of turnout and how this relationship varies depending on the system level corruption. This way, our chapter includes all aspects of corruption as defined above.

Previous research on corruption and turnout

Although there seems to be overwhelming evidence pointing out the devastating social and political effects of corruption, two opposing claims are being made in the studies investigating the relationship between corruption and turnout. On the one hand, claims and empirical evidence are put forward saying that the presence of corruption *increases* turnout. On the other hand, claims and empirical evidence are put forward saying that the presence of corruption *decreases* turnout.

One reason offered for why corruption *increases* turnout is that rent-seeking and misuse of public office through for example bribe taking and soliciting leads to higher expected returns of staying in office, which leads the incumbents as well as the candidates challenging the incumbents to put more money and effort into their campaigns, which then mobilizes voters and leads to higher turnout rates (Karahan et al., 2006, 2009, Escaleras et al., 2012). Thus, the perceived value of staying in office implies higher electioneering efforts, which in turn mobilize voters to a higher extent. Studies from the US, analyzing county level elections Karahan et al., 2006, 2009) or gubernatorial elections (Escaleras et al., 2012) all found support for the idea that misuses of public office indeed lead to an increase in voter turnout. To be more specific, by using time series data from 1979-2005 including information about, among other things, the number of public officials convicted of corruption related crimes and official turnout rates in gubernatorial elections, Escaleres et al., (2012) showed that turnout was higher in states with a higher number of corruption convictions.

A different argument for why the presence of corruption should *increase* turnout is that voters are mobilized on 'clean government' issues. Thus, they turn their dissatisfaction with unequal resource allocation and inefficient service delivery into the opportunity of punishing corrupt politicians by voting against them. A study of European elections between 1983 and 2007 by Bågenholm (2010) found that parties that mobilize on anti-corruption issues attracted more votes

compared to parties focusing on other issues and that this is especially true in highly corrupt countries. Even though the study by Bågenholm does not specifically test the effect of corruption allegations on turnout, it can be argued that the mobilizing potential of anti-corruption issues also affects the degree to which voters turn out or not. There is also evidence that perceptions of impartial and dishonest public administration increase *non-electoral* political participation, but only in countries that control corruption and maintain a high quality of government, that is, in countries where issues of corruption are really no major problem. In countries with low quality of government, no effect of corruption perceptions on non-electoral participation could be found (Rothstein and Solevid, 2013).

Using both the experimental design and survey data from the Afrobarometer, Inman and Andrews (2009) found support for the notion that perceptions of governmental corruption increased voting among Senegalese voters. However, in the survey data, perceptions of corruption only increased turnout among non-partisan voters. An important contribution in the literature on how corruption affects voters' political attitudes and behavior is Kostadinova's study (2009). Using data from Comparative Study of Electoral Systems for eight post-Communist countries in Eastern Europe, she finds a weak positive direct effect of perceiving political corruption and the tendency to vote but that this effect almost, but not completely, is outweighed by the negative effect of corruption perceptions on political efficacy, which in turn suppresses turnout. Thus, even though clean government issues mobilize voters in the short run, the long term effects of persistent corruption on turnout are probably negative (Kostadinova 2009).

The counter-argument, that is, that the presence of corruption *decreases* turnout, is made from the perspective that corruption corrodes the political system (Warren 2004) which leads to general cynicism, distrust and voter apathy (Andersen and Tverdova, 2003, Bauhr and Grimes, 2013). As expressed by Warren (2004), "Corruption /…/ breaks the link between collective decision-making and people's power to influence collective decisions through speaking and voting, the very link that defines democracy. (Warren, 2004: 328). The presence of corruption increases the probability of inefficient delivery of what citizens are democratically entitled to, such as various public services (Warren, 2004; Stockemer et al., 2013). This process causes a negative spiral in which citizens develop cynicism and distrust towards incum-

bents, the political administration and democracy in general which in turn causes voter apathy (see Kostadinova, 2009).

By analyzing turnout between the years 1984 and 2009 in 72 countries (both OECD countries and more recently developed countries), Stockemer et al., (2013) found support for countries with better control of corruption also displaying higher turnout levels. On average, a one point increase in corruption control measured by the International Country Risk Guide (ICRG) index was associated with two percentage points higher turnout when controlled for other factors such as compulsory voting, decisiveness of the election, proportional systems, small state, electoral competitiveness and GDP/capita. Investigating variations in corruption and turnout across 172 regions in Europe, Sundström and Stockemer (2013) also find that high quality of government is associated with higher turnout. Thus, this study also confirms that the presence of corruption, whether measured as control of corruption or as aggregated measures of individual's perceptions of quality of government, goes hand in hand with lower turnout in regional elections.

Turning to individual level studies, the studies by McCann and Dominquez (1998) and Birch (2010) both show that perceptions of electoral fraud negatively affect turnout. The McCann and Dominguez study of Mexican elections found that perceptions of electoral fraud decreased turnout among opposition voters. Using CSES data, Birch (2010) found that voters who perceived the election as fair had higher electoral participation and, vice versa, voters perceiving the election as unfair had lower electoral participation. In a similar vein, analyzing Mexican states, Simpser (2012) also provides evidence of the negative impact of election manipulation on voter participation. Continuing with the Mexican case, a field experimental study by Chong et al., (2012) on the relationship between corruption information and electoral participation in twelve municipalities showed that information about corruption significantly decreased actual turnout at the precinct level.

So far, we have studies pointing in different directions. We have aggregate level, surveys of individuals and experimental studies showing that corruption increases turnout, and we have aggregate level studies, surveys of individuals and experimental studies showing that corruption decreases turnout. Of course, these studies differ in terms of scope and generalization. An important note is that the comparative studies

including many countries, whether on the aggregate level (Stockemer et al., 2013, Sundström and Stockemer, 2012) or at the individual level (Birch, 2010), point in the same direction: the presence of corruption or perceptions of electoral fraud decrease turnout.

Explanations for turnout

However, even if studies about the effect of corruption perceptions on turnout are rather rare, studies on electoral turnout *per se* are not. Although often labeled differently, explanations for voter turnout can be categorized into (at least) three different groups: *individual* explanations, *institutional* explanations and *contextual* explanations.

Among the *individual* level explanations, one can distinguish between voters' resources, such as socioeconomic position and cognitive capability, and motivation or mobilization, that is, to what extent the voter is part of a recruiting network. Studies focusing on individual level explanations often reach the same conclusion, that is, citizens with more economic and cognitive resources turn out to a higher extent than citizens with fewer resources (Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993, Franklin, 2004, Verba, et al, 1995). Additional studies from the US context also witness to how resources, motivation and recruiting networks are interlinked. Citizens with more socioeconomic resources have more cognitive skills and tend to be more motivated because they have greater political interest and a stronger party identification, and it is also plausible that such voters are surrounded by a recruiting network, which altogether leads to a higher turnout (Verba, et al., 1995)

However, in a comparative perspective, individual level explanations are of less importance. Instead, institutional explanations (features of the electoral system) are more important since they more strongly modify the individual's costs of voting (Franklin, 2004). Put differently, the electorates do not differ as much as the electoral systems across countries. Of the *institutional* level explanations, previous studies usually confirm that countries with compulsory voting and PR systems have a higher turnout. In addition, a higher voting age and facilities to ease voting (such as postal voting) also seem to be associated with a higher turnout (for an overview, see Blais, 2006).

The election *context* specific explanations, e.g. features of a specific election such as decisiveness, competitiveness and campaign intensity, are generally viewed as benefits in the vote calculus model. This group of explanations has also been shown to be more important compared

to the individual level explanations as to why voters in one country turn out in greater numbers than voters in another country. Thus, the more that is at stake, the higher the turnout (Franklin, 2004).

Despite the rich number of studies explaining why turnout differs across voters and countries, rather few have nevertheless tested the impact of corruption on turnout. We argue that voters' perceptions of corruption should be viewed as a motivation variable, with the potential to mobilize or de-mobilize voters to turn out.

Hypotheses

There are, however, reasons to believe that the rationale to vote for a voter in a highly corrupt country is different from the rationale of a voter in a country with low corruption. To our knowledge, no study has tested whether an individual's perceptions of corruption affects turnout and whether this relationship differs across countries with varying degrees of system level corruption. Thus, this chapter makes two contributions. First, it tests the relationship between corruption perceptions and turnout among voters in many countries and, second, it tests whether this relationship looks different depending on the system level corruption.

As mentioned earlier, voters' perceptions of corruption are viewed as a motivation explanation which could then both mobilize or de-mobilize voters. In line with most of the comparative research discussed earlier, we argue that the presence of corruption significantly increases the cost of voting which should then suppress turnout. In addition, since the aggregate level studies at hand show that turnout is lower in countries with high levels of corruption, we also expect the relationship between corruption assessments and turnout to be more negative in countries with high levels of corruption.

One the basis of previous studies, we state the following hypotheses.

H1: Perceiving politicians as corrupt decreases turnout.

H2: Perceiving politicians as corrupt decreases turnout more in countries with a high degree of corruption as compared to countries with a low degree of corruption.

Data and measures

We use data from *Comparative Study of Electoral Systems* (CSES) module 2, collected during the period 2001-2006 in post-election surveys in 34 countries. Because of missing data for some of our key variables and due to the fact that we have restricted our analysis to countries that are truly democracies according to the Freedom House index, our analyses are based on a total of 26 countries.[1]

The dependent variable of turnout measures whether the respondent voted or did not vote in the last national election. As with all subjective measures of electoral participation, turnout levels are considerably over-reported as a result of memory flaws or social desirability bias (Belli et al., 1999, Dahlberg & Persson, 2013, Granberg & Holmberg, 1991, Holbrook & Krosnick, 2010). Figure 1 illustrates turnout as reported by the respondents in CSES compared with official turnout numbers (voting age population) from IDEA (http://www.idea.int/vt/).

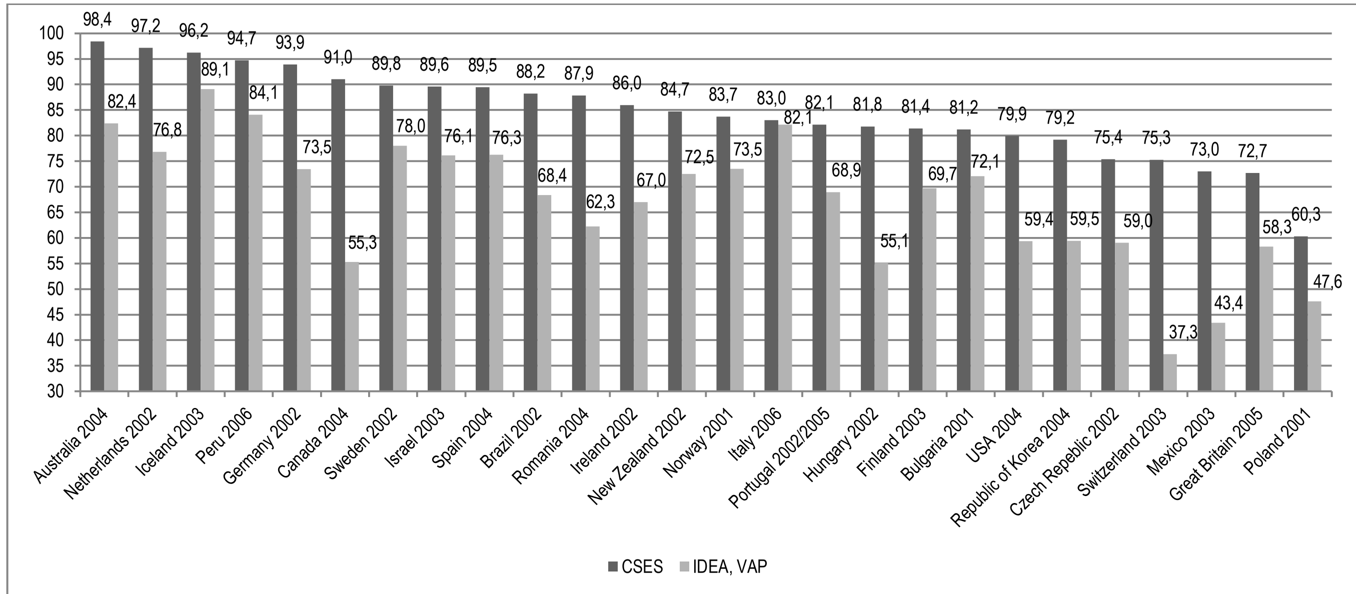
As shown in figure 1, the self-reported turnout is higher than the official turnout in all countries and differences are particularly large (> 20 percentage points) in Brazil, Canada, Switzerland, Germany, Hungary, Mexico, The Netherlands, Romania and the US. However, since validated turnout measures do not exist at the individual level in the CSES data, we proceed with this variable, bearing in mind that turnout measures are overestimated. The over-reporting of voting means we have less variation in the dependent variable.

As mentioned, most of prior research on corruption effects on electoral turnout is carried out as aggregated country level studies since data on individuals' corruption assessments are quite limited. However, CSES module 2 includes a survey item measuring perceptions of *political* corruption.[2] The question reads: *How widespread do you think corruption such as bribe taking is amongst politicians in [country]: very widespread, quite widespread, not very widespread, it hardly happens at all?*

1 "Freedom in the World." Freedom House's annual global survey of political rights and civil liberties (www.freedomhouse.org).

2 The data can be sought from CSES Secretariat, www.cses.org, Centre for Political Studies. Institute for Social Research. The University of Michigan. The data can also be downloaded from: www.umich.edu/~cses.

Figure 1 Self-reported turnout (CSES) compared with official turnout (IDEA)



Source: CSES module 2 and IDEA, http://www.idea.int/vt/. Comment: Turnout refers to the proportion of the voting age population that actually voted. The regular turnout measure states the proportion of registered voters who actually voted, which in some countries leads to overestimation of turnout. For the US, the official turnout measure is the mean of turnout rates in the presidential election and the Congressional elections. For Portugal, the graph reports the mean turnout (both self-reported and official) of two elections.

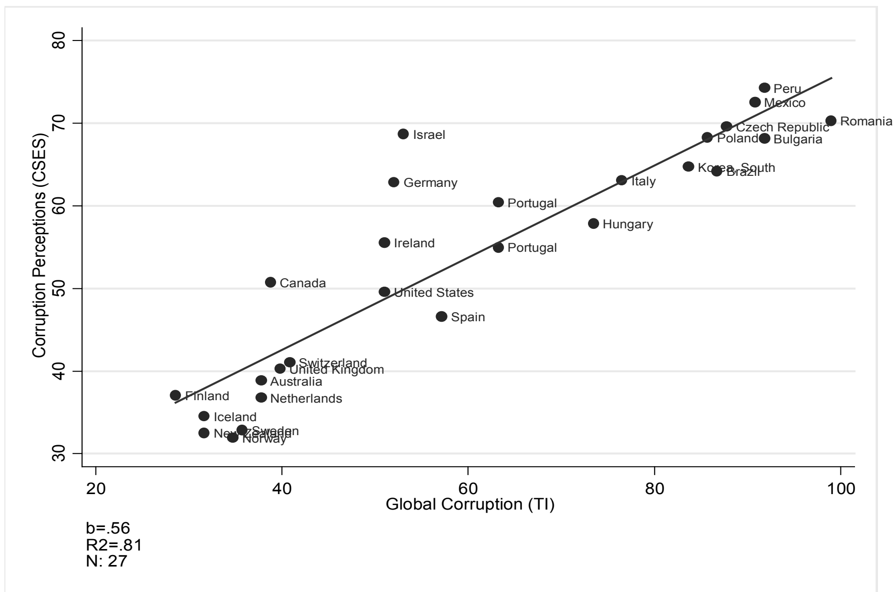
It should be noted that, given the aim and objectives of our research endeavor, the survey question is far from optimal since it is limited to political corruption and does not capture respondents' personal experience of corruption and neither separates between corruption in different sectors. All in all, this implies that we cannot be entirely sure of what respondents have in their minds when responding to the question. Nevertheless, it is one of few country comparative measures available at the individual level and, in some respect, despite its drawbacks, we do believe that it after all captures important variations in voters' perception about corruption.

Aside from corruption assessments, the remaining independent variables are chosen to represent the most often used explanations as to why turnout differs across individuals (see the section on previous research on corruption and turnout). All our individual level variables are based on the original variables included in the CSES module except for age, which is coded into seven categories. Education is based on the original eight categories. Marital status is coded as a dummy where 1 equals married or cohabitant and 0 equals single or divorced. Income has four categories and is based on percentile values. Employment and party identification are also entered as dichotomous variables. Political knowledge is constructed as an additive index based on three information items included in the data (see the appendix for detailed coding instructions).

Regarding the system level variables, the Transparency International CPI Score relates to perceptions of the degree of corruption as seen by business people, risk analysts and the general public and ranges between 10 (highly clean) and 0 (highly corrupt). Thus, this measure captures both grand and petty corruption. The measure for proportional electoral systems comes from the Database of Political Institutions (DPI) compiled by Beck et al., (2001, updated through 2010). A combination of the seats in parliament for the government and the number of parties in government gives the measure of majority status, which will serve as a proxy for the decisiveness of an election. This is scored as 30 for minority governments, 60 for coalition governments and 100 for one party majority governments (as in Powell, 2000). The effective number of electoral parties is based on publications by Gallagher and Mitchell (2008) and the measure is calculated from vote shares. GDP growth, which we believe to be an important control variable when it comes to turnout, is taken from World Development Indicators and from the QoG Standard dataset (Teorell et al, 2013).

Before we turn to the results, it might be a good idea to take a closer look at our main independent variables, which are corruption at a global level and individual perceptions of corruption. As already addressed in the theoretical section, we can expect some variation between citizens' perceptions of corruption and global corruption as assessed by Transparency International (TI). Figure 2 illustrates the correlation between the mean value in corruption perceptions based on the CSES data versus the mean placement in Transparency International's corruption perception index (both variables are here rescaled ranging from 0 to 100 where 0 is equivalent to a low degree of corruption).

Figure 2 Correlation between aggregated country means of corruption perceptions (CSES) and global corruption (TI).



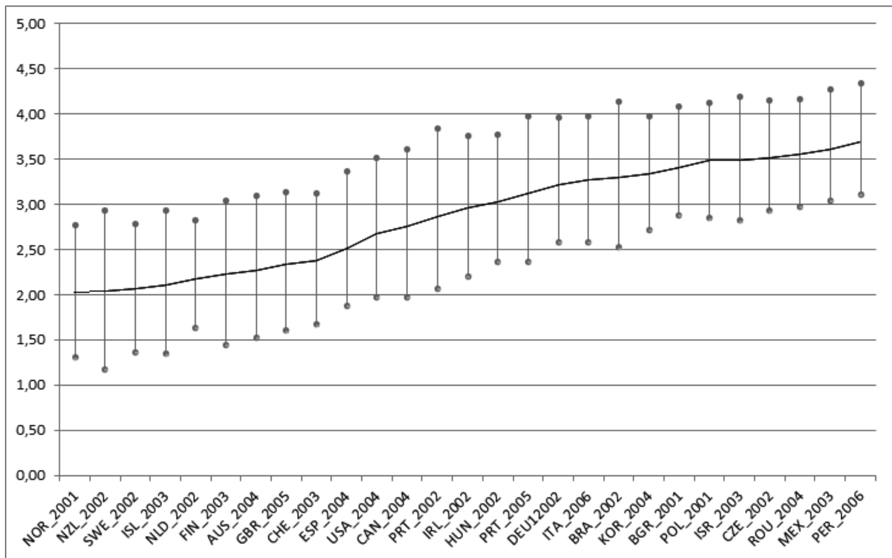
Source: CSES module 2 and Transparency International 2012, taken from Teorell et. Al., 2013.

Clearly, there is a strong relationship between the two (b=.58, R^2=.81), which simply means that, when corruption is widespread in a global sense according to TI, citizens also tend to judge corruption as being widespread. However, there are, no rules without exceptions, and the

same goes in this respect where in some countries there is a difference between how TI judges the presence of corruption vis à vis how citizens do the same, for example in Germany, Israel and Ireland.

Aggregated numbers often do not give the full story, however, and, as illustrated in figure 3, there is not only a notable between-country variation in citizens' corruption perceptions but also a large within-country variation in terms of standard deviations from the mean. All in all, this points towards the fact that both corruption on a system and individual perceptions of corruption might be relevant in terms of explaining citizens' electoral participation.

Figure 3 Corruption assessments by country (means and standard deviations, CSES)



Comment: Lower scores indicates less/no political corruption. Source: CSES module 2.

Towards a macro-micro approach to the effect of corruption on turnout

Table 1 presents a multilevel regression model predicting voter turnout. Model 1 contains the corruption assessment variable together with the individual level variables known to affect turnout. Perceiving corruption as a problem is associated with lower electoral participa-

tion. Thus, for each step on the corruption assessment variable (which varies from "hardly happens" to "very widespread"), turnout decreases with -.144. We find significant effects of all individual level variables indicating that citizens who are female, older, highly educated, married, employed, have higher income, high political knowledge and identify themselves with a political party have higher turnout compared to citizens who are male, younger, lower educated, single, have lower income, lower political knowledge and no party identification. The strongest predictor of turnout in model 1 is political knowledge.

Model 2 estimates the system level variables known to explain differences in turnout across countries. We also add the global perception index from Transparency International and GDP growth. The higher the values on the reversed and centered Transparency International index, the more corrupt the government. Thus, the results indicate that turnout is lower in countries with corrupt government. Of the electoral system variables, proportional electoral system, compulsory voting and government majority status significantly increase turnout.

In model 3, the individual level variables and the system level variables are estimated at the same time and the main message is that very little happens. We still see the same results with regard to the individual level variables, and the only difference between models 1 and 2 on the one side and model 3 on the other side is that the effect of proportional electoral system loses significance. Both the effect of citizens' corruption assessments and the aggregated global corruption perception index show that turnout is lower when citizens perceive politicians as corrupt and when there is system level corruption.

In model 4, we include the interaction variable between individual corruption assessments and system level corruption. The sign of the interaction term is positive. To further understand the interaction effect, figure 4 displays the marginal effect of voters' corruption assessments at different levels of corruption as measured by Transparency International. As shown, perceiving political corruption as a problem is associated with lower turnout, but only in countries with a low to medium degree of corruption according to CPI.

Table 1 Corruption and turnout (unstandardized logistic coefficients, random effects models).

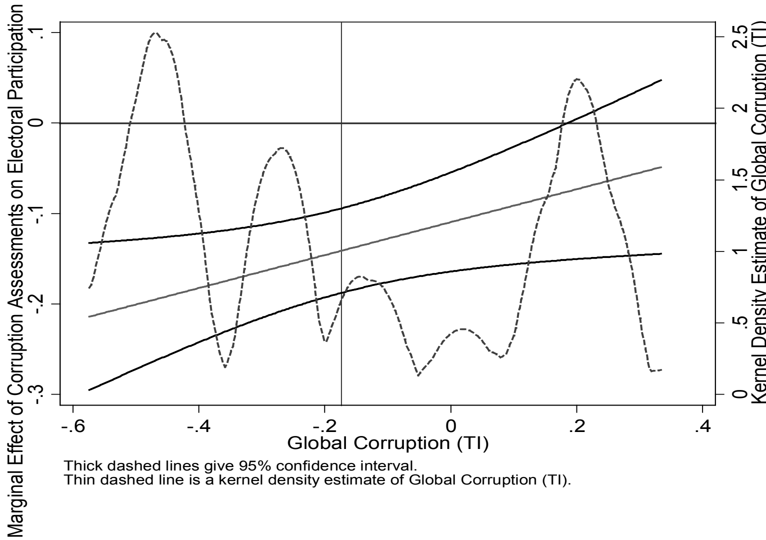
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Individual level variables				
corruption assessments (higher values=more corruption)	-0.144***	-	-0.141***	-0.109***
	(0.024)		(0.024)	(0.028)
sex	0.089**	-	0.089**	0.092***
	(0.035)		(0.035)	(0.036)
age	1.293***	-	1.295***	1.293***
	(0.069)		(0.069)	(0.069)
education	0.818***	-	0.824***	0.816***
	(0.089)		(0.089)	(0.089)
marital status	0.306***	-	0.307***	0.306***
	(0.037)		(0.037)	(0.037)
employed	0.133*	-	0.134**	0.135**
	(0.068)		(0.068)	(0.068)
income	0.277***	-	0.275***	0.272***
	(0.060)		(0.060)	(0.060)
political knowledge	1.169***	-	1.171***	1.163***
	(0.063)		(0.063)	(0.063)
party identification	0.910***	-	0.911***	0.911***
	(0.038)		(0.038)	(0.038)
System level variables				
global corruption perception index (ti) (reversed, higher values=more corruption)	-	-1.215**	-0.902*	-0.903*
		(0.498)	(0.503)	(0.507)
proportional electoral system	-	0.688*	0.559	0.547
		(0.386)	(0.389)	(0.393)
government majority status	-	0.008*	0.011**	0.011**
		(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
compulsory voting	-	1.346***	1.369***	1.363***
		(0.440)	(0.443)	(0.447)
effective nr. of electoral parties	-	-0.090	0.562	0.553
		(0.617)	(0.621)	(0.626)
gdp growth	-	0.008	0.014	0.013
		(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Interaction				
corr. ass.*global corr (ti)	-	-	-	0.182**
				(0.085)
Constant	-0.783***	0.238	-2.784***	-2.791***
	(0.198)	(0.579)	(0.594)	(0.599)
Std.Dev. Intercept lev 2.	.858	.568	.571	.576
Roh	.183	.089	.090	.092
Individuals	30,425	30,425	30,425	30,425
Countries	26	26	26	26

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$.

Comment: See Appendix 1 for coding of variables. For Portugal two election studies are

included in the CSES module 2, which are for the elections of 2001 and 2004, but the results are unaffected by the time aspect.

Figure 4 Interaction effect, corruption assessments and global corruption (TI) on turnout (marginal effects).



Clearly, the graphical illustration of the interaction effect from model 4 in table 1 indicates that individuals' corruption perceptions have no significant impact on turnout among voters in, according to Transparency International's corruption perception index, the most corrupt countries where the confidence interval overlaps zero on the y-axis. This is found among voters in countries such as Romania, Bulgaria, Peru, Mexico, Czech Republic, Brazil and Poland. Quite to the contrary, it seems that that individual corruption perceptions have a stronger impact on turnout the less corrupt a country is on a global level.

Discussion

In sum, the results presented indicate support for hypothesis 1, that is, levels of electoral participation are lower when political corruption is perceived as widespread. With regard to the second hypothesis, the picture is somewhat more complicated. Voters who perceive corruption as a problem show lower electoral participation, and so do voters

living in countries with a high degree of system level corruption. The calculated marginal effects also suggest that corruption assessments suppress turnout but not significantly so in countries with high levels of corruption at the system level. Thus, turnout is not suppressed more in highly corrupt countries; the results rather indicate that corruption assessments do not matter for electoral participation in these countries. As a consequence, hypothesis 2 is not supported. Interestingly, part of the results are in line with findings from a similar study by Rothstein and Solevid (2013) testing the interaction effect of citizens' perceptions of bureaucratic impartiality and efficiency and system measure of quality of government on non-electoral participation in Europe. In their study, they found a positive effect of perceiving problems with partial and inefficient public administration on non-electoral forms of participation, but only in countries where this really is not a problem, that is in countries with high levels of quality of government. If the preliminary findings from the present study and the Rothstein and Solevid study hold, it seems to be the case that corruption perceptions do not matter for citizens' political participation – both electoral and non-electoral - in countries with high system level corruption. A viable explanation in this respect could be that a survey item on perceptions of political corruption captures different notions in different contexts. More specifically, a question on corruption perceptions can mean different things depending on the corruption context. Assessing corruption as a problem in a low corruption context could be an expression of a lack of political system support while the opposite in a high corruption context would be an expression of regime support. A second interpretation relates to the findings of Dahlberg, Linde and Holmberg (2013), who studied citizens' satisfaction with the working of democracy in a country comparative perspective. According to their findings, government performance was more important for citizens' satisfaction with democracy in post-Communist countries, where corruption is generally more widespread, while individual perceptions of corruption and assessments of political representation were more important in less corrupt Western democracies with consolidated political institutions (Dahlberg, Linde and Holmberg, 2013).

A venue for further research would thus, except for expanding the study in time and space, be to examine the extent to which perceptions of corruption are related to different aspects of political trust and system support and to further elaborate with measures of different forms

of corruption. Another aspect that needs to be looked into more deeply is the politicization of corruption in electoral campaigns. Nevertheless, the present study contributes some first steps towards an integration of the research on quality of government into the field of election studies.

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Appendix 1. Coding of variables

Individual level variables

Voted (B3004_1): "In current election, did respondent cast a ballot?" (Voted=0) (Did not vote=1).
Corruption assessments (B3044): " How widespread do you think corruption such as bribe taking is amongst politicians in [country]: very widespread, quite widespread, not very widespread, it hardly happens at all?" (Very widespread=4) (Quite widespread=3) (Not very widespread=2) (It hardly happens at all=1). The variable is centered around the mean in our analyses.
Sex (B2002): coded as (Male=1) (Female=2)
Age of respondent (B2001): coded as: (16/21=1) (22/30=2) (31/40=3) (41/50=4) (51/60=5) (61/70=6) (71/max=7)
Education (B2003): (Elementary school =1) (High school (2/3)=2) (Upper Secondary (4/6)=3) (University (7/8)=4). Original CSES coding: 1=None, 2 Incomplete primary; 3 Primary completed; 4=Incomplete secondary; 5=Secondary completed; 6=post-secondary trade/vocational school; 7=University undergraduate degree incomplete; 8= University undergraduate degree completed.)
Maritial Status (B2004): (0= Widowed, Divorced and Single) (1=Married or Cohabitant)
Employment (B2010): (5=0) (1/4=1) (6/12=1) (97/max=.) Original CSES coding: 1= Employed - full-time (32+ hours weekly); 2=Employed - part-time (15-32 hours weekly) 3=Employed less than 15 hours; 4=Helping family member; 5=Unemployed; 6=Student; 7=Retired; 8=Housewife/home duties; 9=Permanently disabled, 10=others (not in labor force).
Income (B2020): Original CSES coding employed, (1=Lowest Household Income to 5=Highest Household Income)

Political Knowledge: Additive index based on Political information items 1-3 (B3047_1; B3047_2; B3047_3) coded as: (Correct=1) (Incorrect=0).
Party identification (B3028): "Are you close to any political party?" (No=0) (Yes=1)

System level variables

Global corruption perception is based on Transparency Internationals corruption perception index (CPI). The CPI focuses on corruption in the public sector and defines corruption as the abuse of public office for private gain. The surveys used in compiling the CPI tend to ask questions in line with the misuse of public power for private benefit, with a focus, for example, on bribe-taking by public officials in public procurement. The sources do not distinguish between administrative and political corruption. The CPI Score relates to perceptions of the degree of corruption as seen by business people, risk analysts and the general public and ranges between 100 (highly clean) and 0 (highly corrupt). (see Transparency International 2012). The variable is reversed and centered around the mean in our some of our analyses.
Proportional Electoral System: is taken from “Database of Political Institutions” (Beck et al 2001)
Government majority status: A combination of the seats in parliament for the government and the number of parties in government gives the measure of majority status. This is scored as 30 for minority governments, 60 for coalition governments, and 100 for one party majority government (as in Powell, 2000).
Compulsory voting (0=non-compulsory Voting) (1=Compulsory voting)
Effective Number of Electoral Parties: is measured as *the effective number of parliamentary parties* calculated by the vote-shares using the index of Laakso and Taagepera, also known as Herfindahl’s index of concentration (Laakso and Taagepera 1979) as that: $H = \sum_{i=1}^{n} p_i^2$ where p_i is the population proportion for group *i* of votes and where 1/H then is the effective number of parties.
GPD growth is taken from World Development Indicators (World Bank WDI 2013) compiled by (Teorell *et. al.* 2013)

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Stepping Stones pays a tribute to the overwhelmingly successful academic career of the Swedish political science professor Sören Holmberg. This anthology is a collection of thirteen original research articles born out of a research tradition that has evolved at the department of Political Science at the University of Gothenburg as a direct consequence of Sören's innovations and undertakings. This is our way to honour his work, and to express our gratitude and appreciation. *Stepping Stones* highlights three research areas in which Sören has been most active and inventive in his career: Research on political representation, Research on public opinion and voting behavior, and Research on the quality of government.

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