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Swedish Voting Behavior
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Swedish National Election Studies Program
Department of Political Science
University of Gothenburg





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Preliminary results
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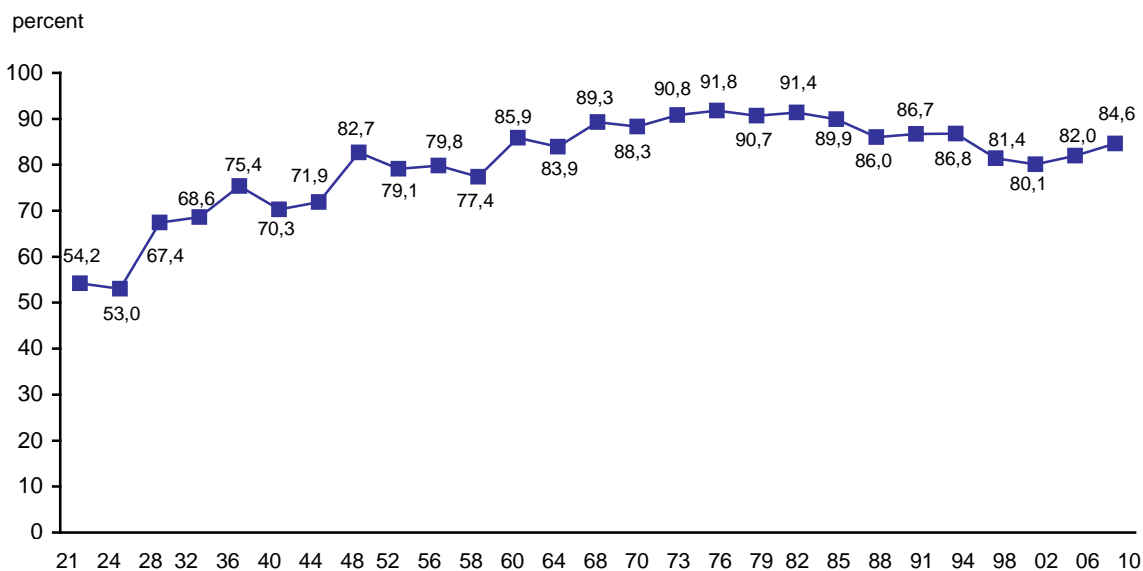
The Swedish Election Studies Program

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

In all national elections since 1956 – including the ATP-referendum in 1957, the Nuclear Power-referendum in 1980, the EU-referendum in 1994, the Euro-referendum in 2003 and the European Parliament elections in 1995, 1999, 2004 and 2009 – a large representative sample of eligible voters has been interviewed. The basic design in the latest studies has been a rolling panel in which half of the sample has been interviewed in connection with the previous election, and the other half in connection with the succeeding election. In recent years the sample size has been approximately 3 500- 4 000 and the response rate about 75 per cent.

The early Election Studies were directed by Jörgen Westerståhl (1954–1956), Bo Särilvik (1954–1973) and Olof Petersson (1973–1976). The most recent studies have been directed by Mikael Gilljam (1985 – 1994), Sören Holmberg (1979–2010) and Henrik Oscarsson (2002 – 2010). The latest publications from the program covering a Riksdag election is **Regeringsskifte** (2008) and **Åttapartivalet 2010** (2011) written by Henrik Oscarsson and Sören Holmberg.

Turnout in Swedish Riksdag Elections (percent)



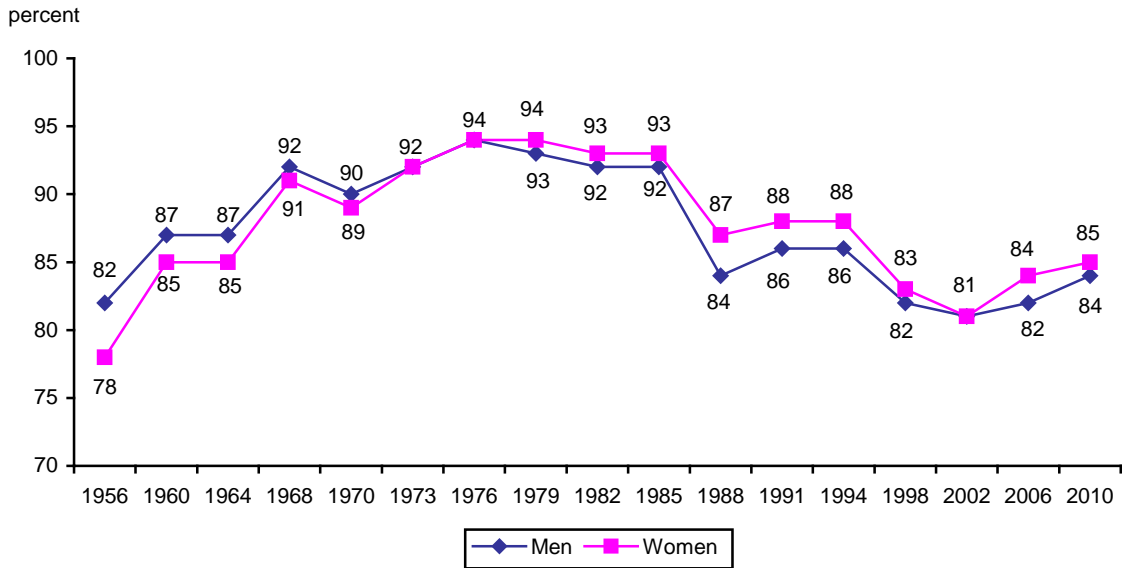
Comment: The results show turnout among registered voters (= Swedish citizens of voting age; since 1976 18 years and older).

Swedish Election Results 1976 – 2010 (percent)

Party	1976	1979	1982	1985	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010
v	4,8	5,6	5,6	5,4	5,9	4,5	6,2	12,0	8,4	5,9	5,6
s	42,7	43,2	45,6	44,7	43,2	37,7	45,2	36,4	39,9	35,0	30,7
mp	-	-	1,6	1,5	5,5	3,4	5,0	4,5	4,6	5,2	7,3
c	24,1	18,1	15,5	10,1	11,3	8,5	7,7	5,1	6,2	7,9	6,6
fp	11,1	10,6	5,9	14,2	12,2	9,1	7,2	4,7	13,4	7,5	7,0
kd	1,4	1,4	1,9	2,3	2,9	7,2	4,1	11,8	9,1	6,6	5,6
m	15,6	20,3	23,6	21,3	18,3	21,9	22,4	22,9	15,3	26,2	30,1
nyd	-	-	-	-	-	6,7	1,2	-	-	-	-
sd	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,9	5,7
minor parties	0,3	0,8	0,3	0,5	0,7	1,0	1,0	2,6	3,1	2,8	1,4
total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
turnout	91,8	90,7	91,4	89,9	86,0	86,7	86,8	81,4	80,1	82,0	84,6

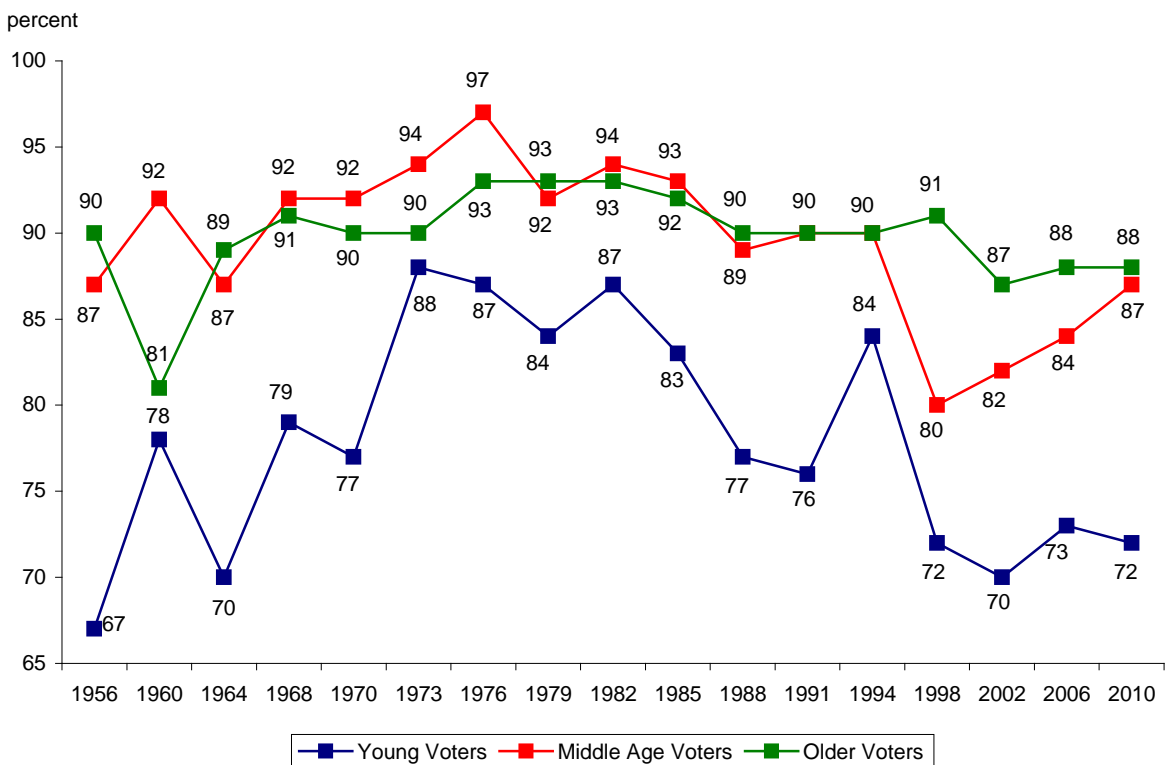
Comment: Parliamentary elections only. The initials for the parties are the customary ones in Sweden: v = Left Party, s = Social Democratic, c = Center, fp = Liberal, m = Conservative, kd = Christian Democrat, mp = Green, nyd = New Democrats, and sd = Sweden Democrats.

Turnout in Swedish Riksdag Elections Among Women and Men (percent)



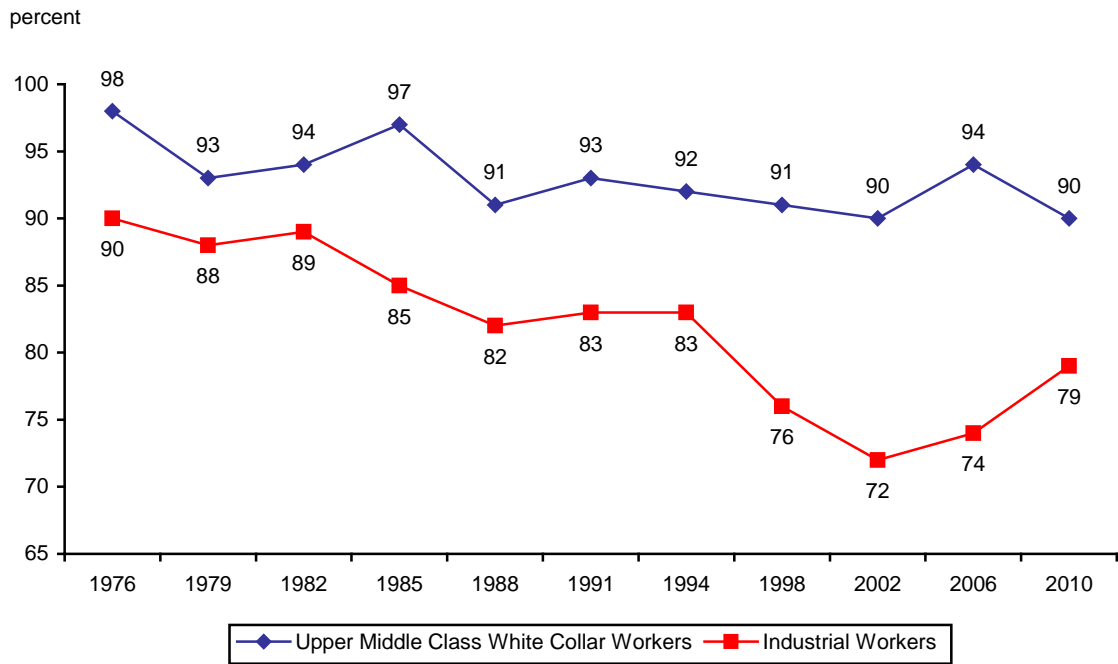
Comment: The turnout information is checked (validated) against official records. Data from Statistics Sweden.

Turnout in Swedish Riksdag Elections Among Young, Middle Age and Older voters (percent)



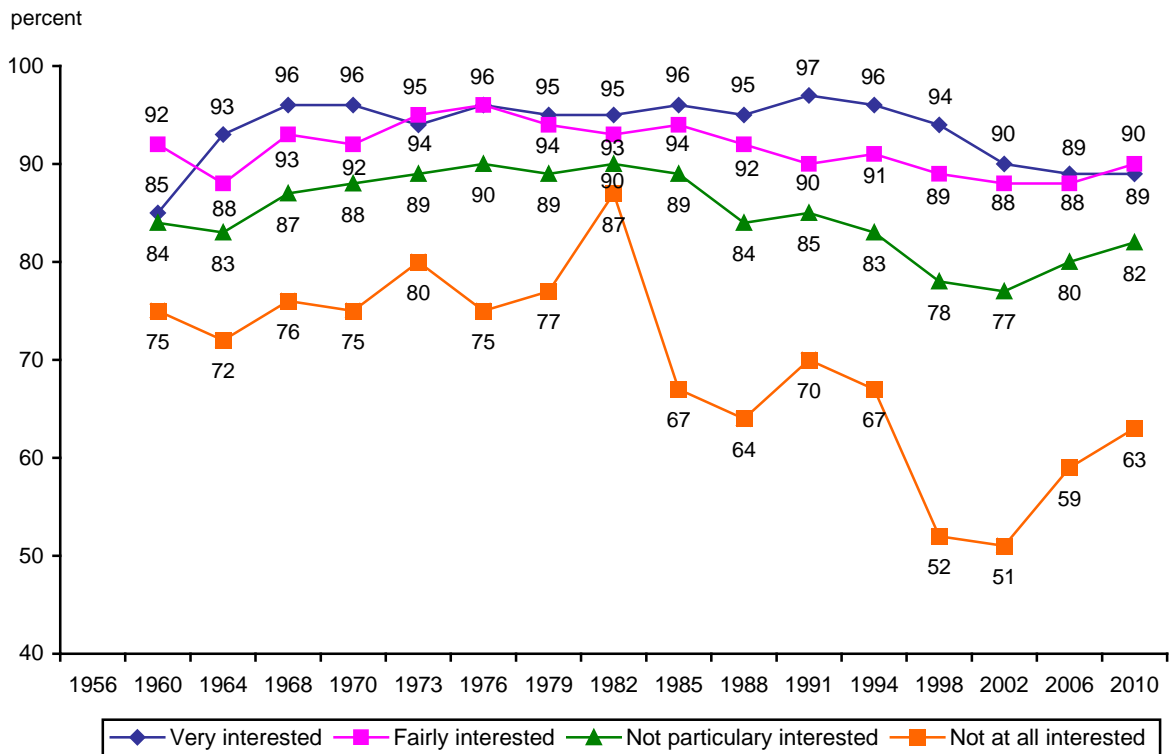
Comment: The turnout information is checked (validated) against official records. Data from Swedish National Election Studies. Young first-time voters were 21-25 years old 1956-1968, 19-22 1970-1973 and 18-21 since 1976. Middle age voters are 41-50 years old while older voters are 61-70 years old. Responsible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

Turnout in Swedish Riksdag Elections Among Industrial Workers and Upper Middle Class White Collar Workers (percent)



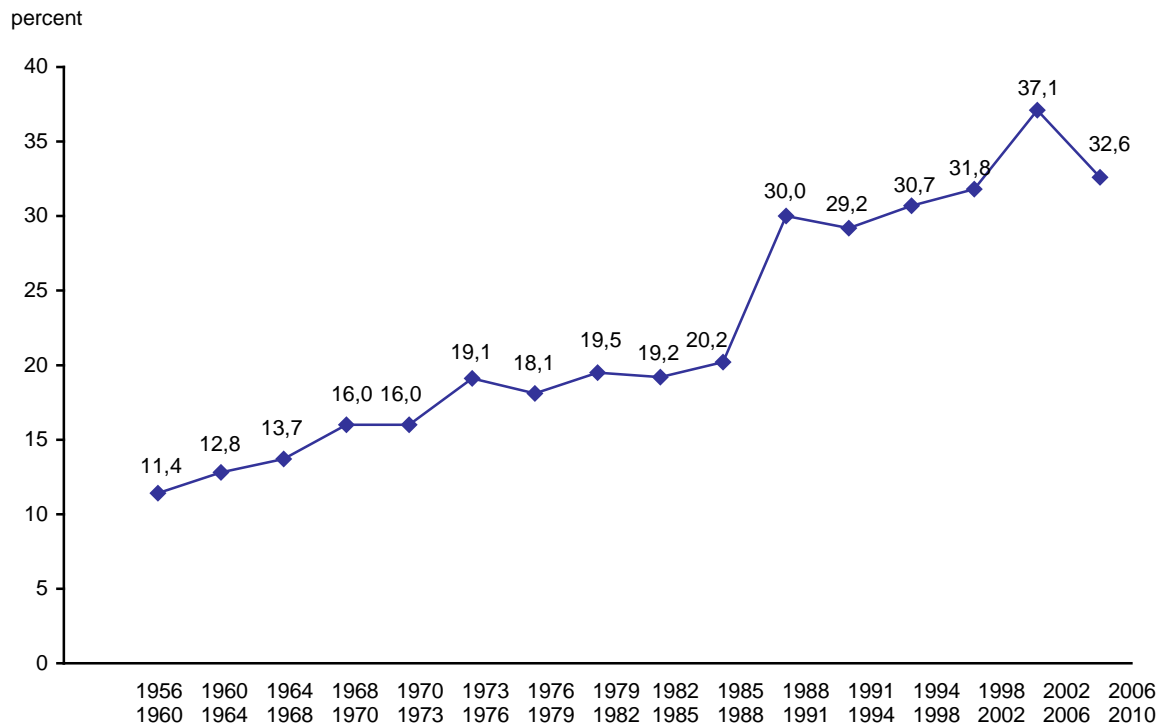
Comment: The turnout information is checked (validated) against official records. Data from Swedish National Election Studies. Responsible for the analysis of turnout is Per Hedberg.

Turnout in Swedish Riksdag Elections Among Voters With Different Degrees of Political Interest (percent)



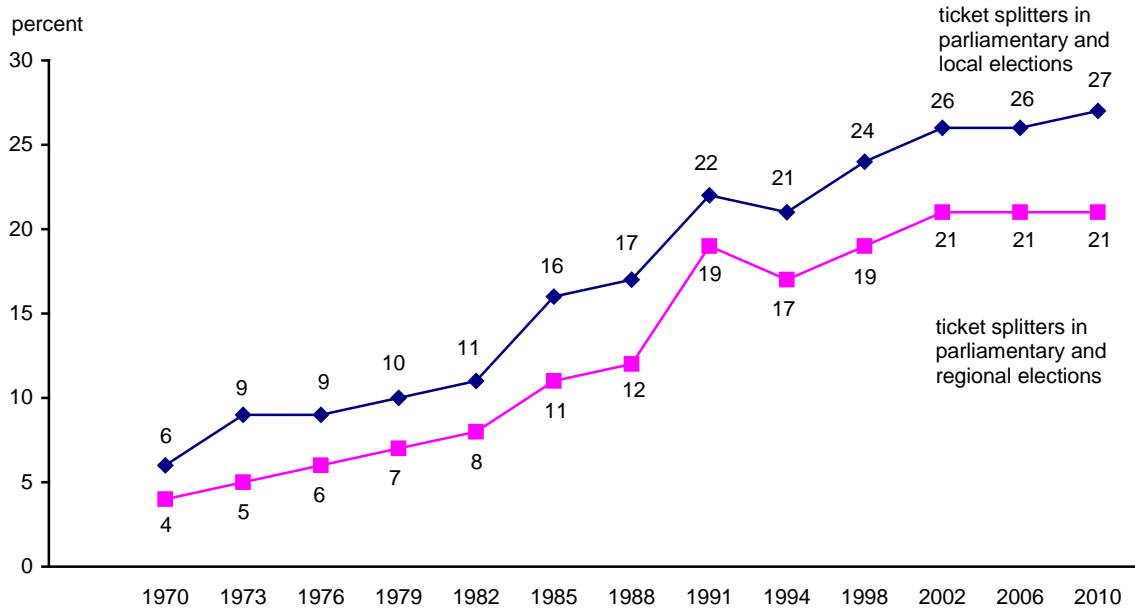
Comment: The turnout information is checked (validated) against official records. Data from Swedish National Election Studies. Responsible for the analysis of turnout is Per Hedberg.

Party Switchers in Swedish Elections 1960-2010 (percent)



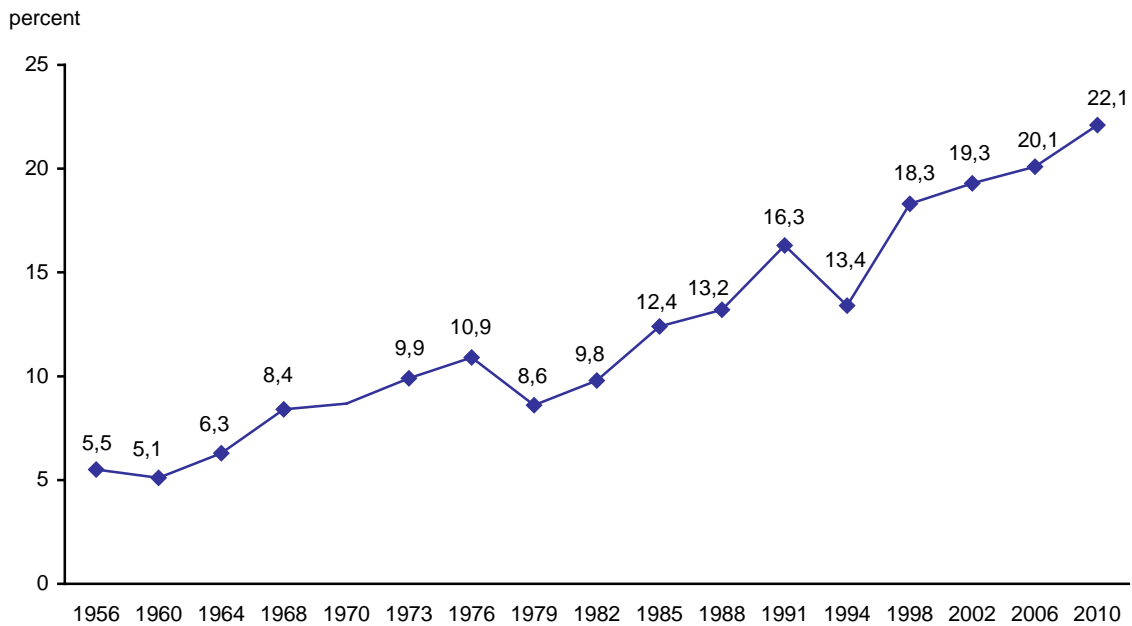
Comment: At every election, the results show the proportion party switchers among voters participating in that and the immediately preceding election. Results for the years 1960-1968 and 1973 are based entirely on recall data while Results for 1970 and for the years 1976-2006 are based in part on data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

Ticket Splitting in Swedish Elections 1970-2010 (percent)



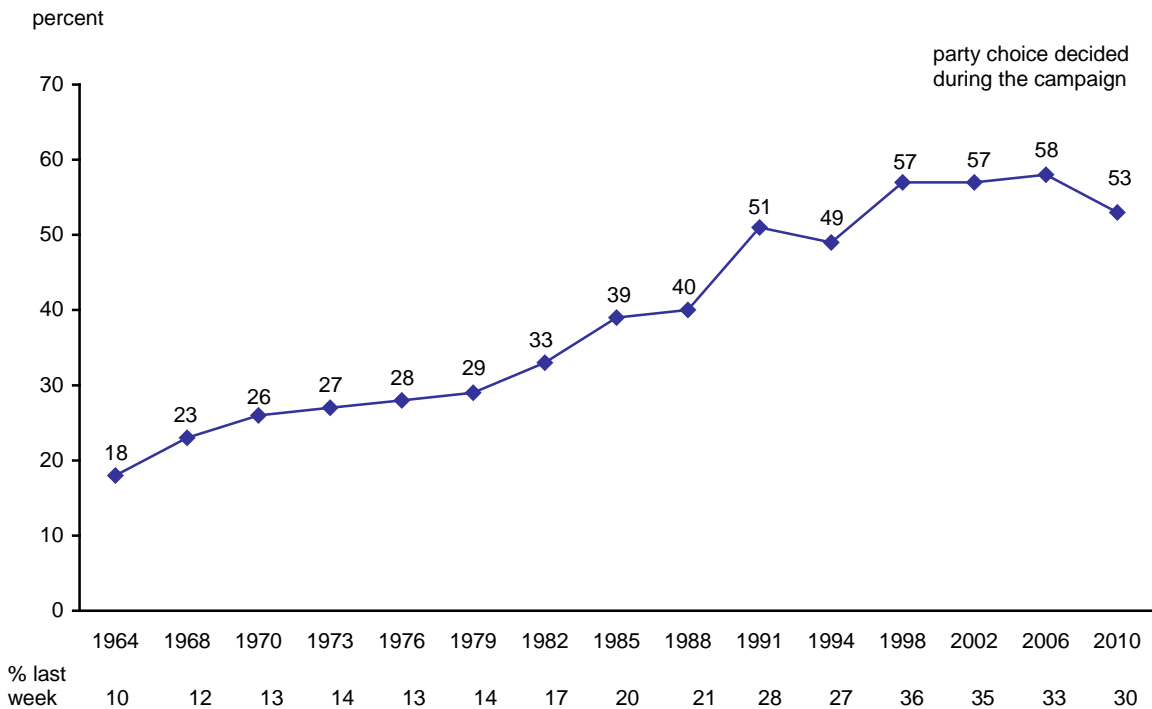
Comment: The percentage base is defined as voters participating in parliamentary and local elections (kommun) and in parliamentary and regional elections (landsting), respectively.

Party Switchers during Election Campaigns 1956-2010 (percent)



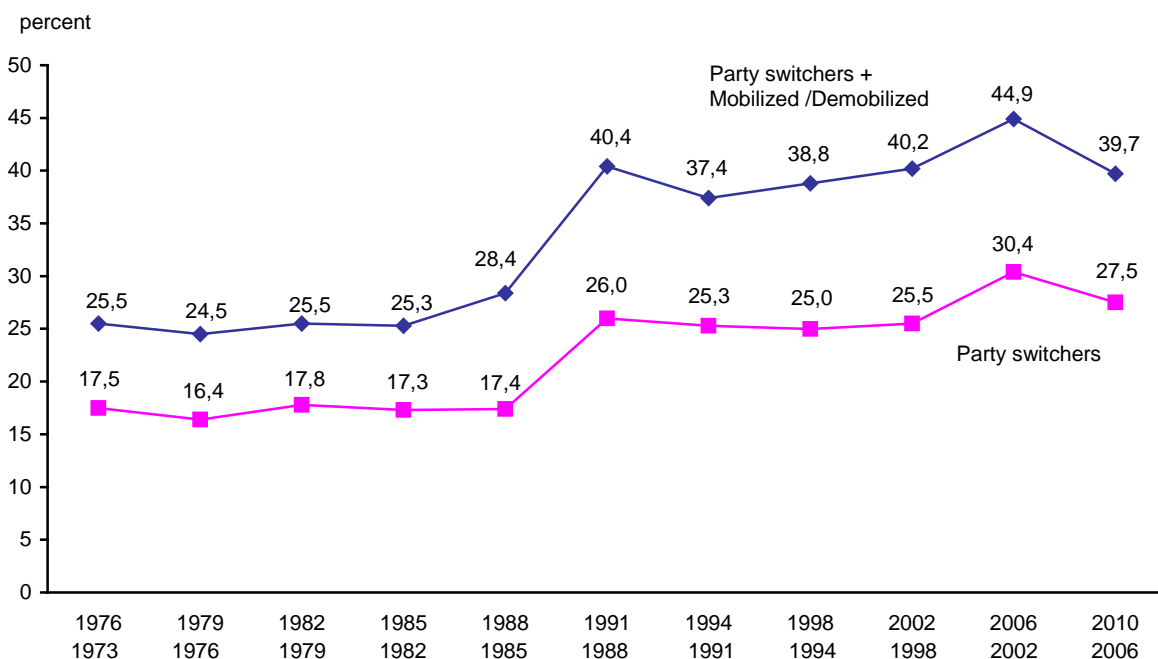
Comment: The results are based on panel data consisting of party preference data from pre-election face-to-face interviews and information about party choice in post-election mail questionnaires. No election campaign panel study was performed in 1970. The number of respondents vary around 1000.

Time of Vote Choice 1964-2010 (percent)



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

Total Voter Volatility in the Swedish Electorate (Proportion of Party Switchers and the Proportion of Mobilized and Demobilized Citizens) 1976-2010 (percent)



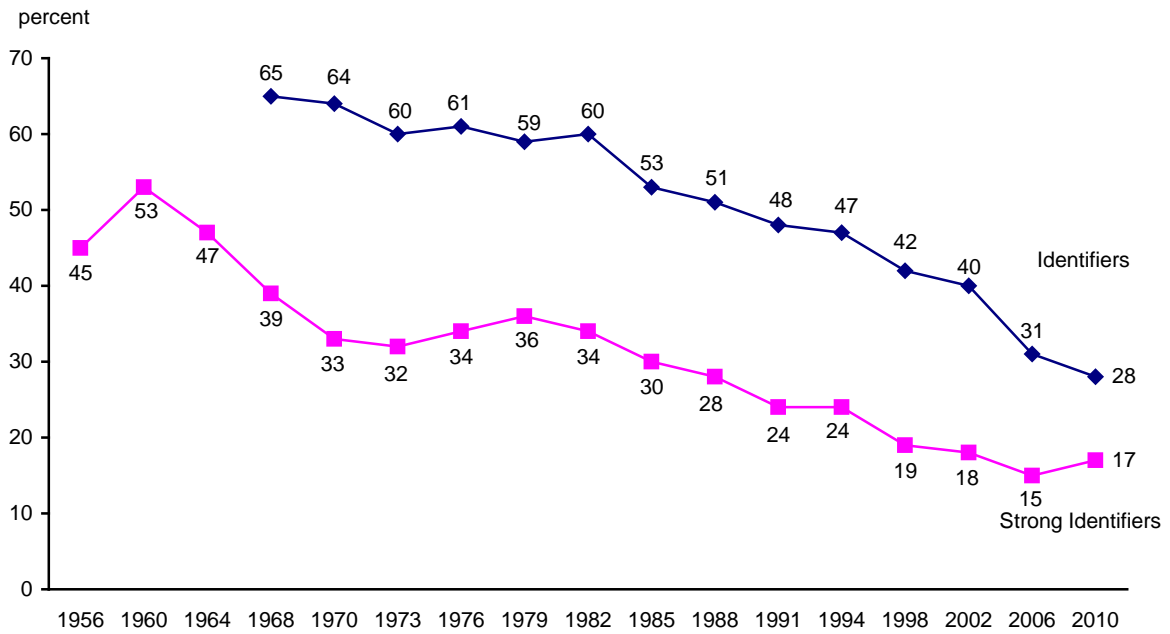
*Comment:*The analyses of party switchers is identical to that reported previously, however the proportion of party switchers have been recalculated with a new percentage base, namely the entire electorate (=the number of eligible voters at each election). Information of turnout has been validated against official census registers.

Swedish Voters' Second Best Party 1956-2010 (percent)

	1956	1964	1968	1970	1973	1976	1979	1982	1985	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010
v	6	9	8	10	14	15	19	20	18	16	12	16	21	20	14	14
s	20	12	10	13	14	11	11	9	10	12	9	13	14	15	13	13
mp	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	4	11	4	13	10	9	12	20
c	19	41	50	49	44	30	22	32	18	21	16	14	11	9	12	8
fp	36	31	24	23	18	33	34	20	35	28	29	24	14	23	21	19
kd	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	3	11	7	18	12	10	7
m	19	7	7	4	9	10	12	14	13	10	11	11	12	11	17	18
nyd	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	2	-	-	-	-
sd	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Sum	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Respondents	729	1804	2360	2244	1777	1932	2121	2033	2093	1948	1933	1847	1412	1467	1213	907

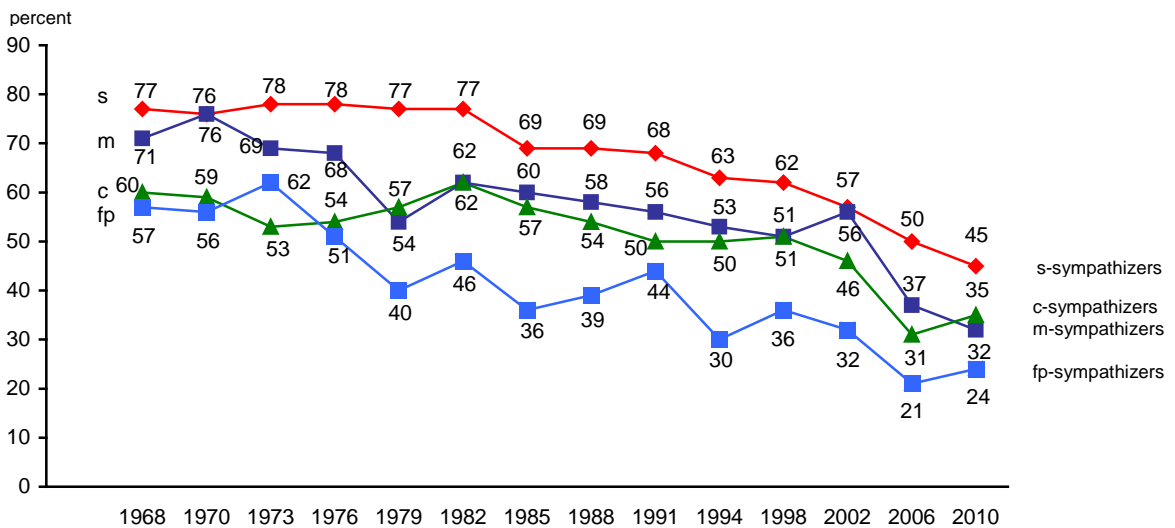
Comment: The following wording was used: "What party do you like second best?". The analysis include voters who also gave a response to an earlier question about what party they liked best. Don't knows are not included in the percentage base, as well as respondents who have identical first and second party preferences (about 8 percent).

Degree of Party Identification 1956–2010. Percentage of Eligible Swedish Voters Who Consider Themselves Identifiers or Strong Identifiers of a Party (percent)



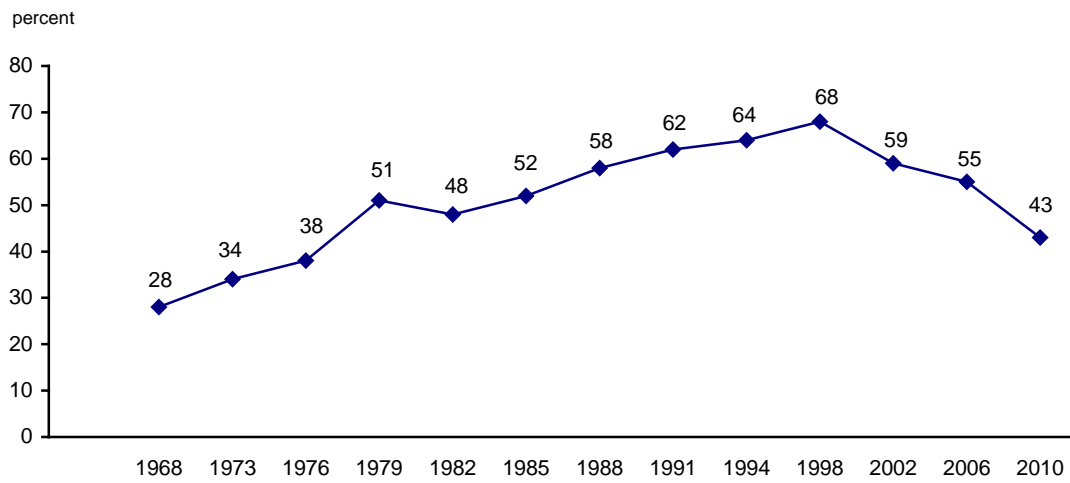
Comment: The interview question was somewhat differently phrased in the years 1956-1964.

Subjective Party Identifiers 1968–2010 among Sympathizers of Different Swedish Parties (percent)

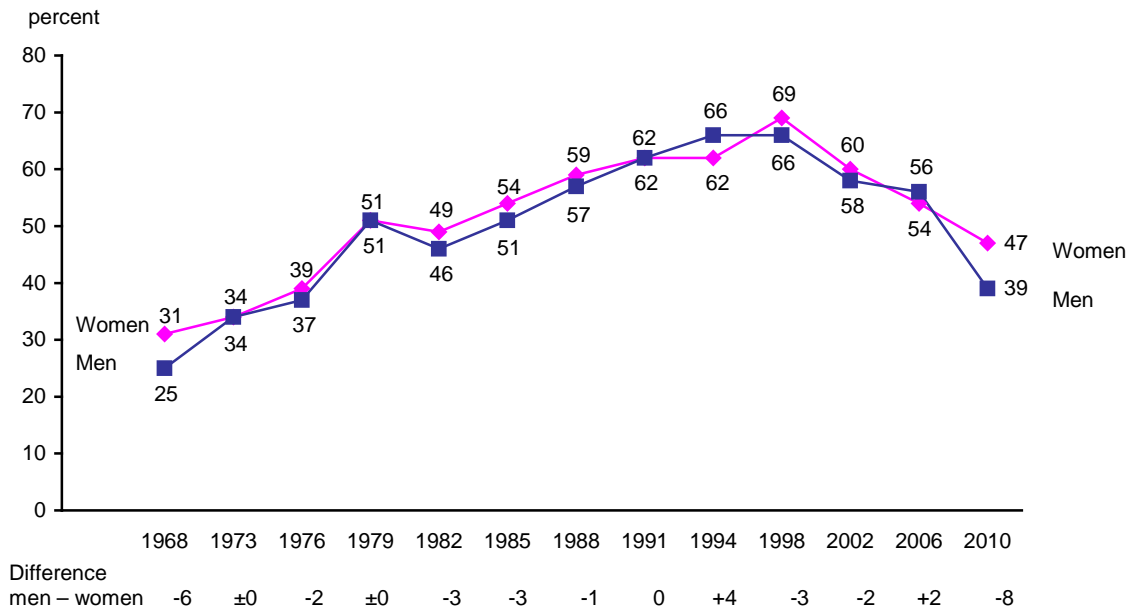


Comment: Persons who consider themselves identifiers of a party have been defined as subjective identifiers. The results for v-, kd-, mp- and sd-sympathizers in 2010 are 29, 29, 26 and 26 percent subjective identifiers, respectively.

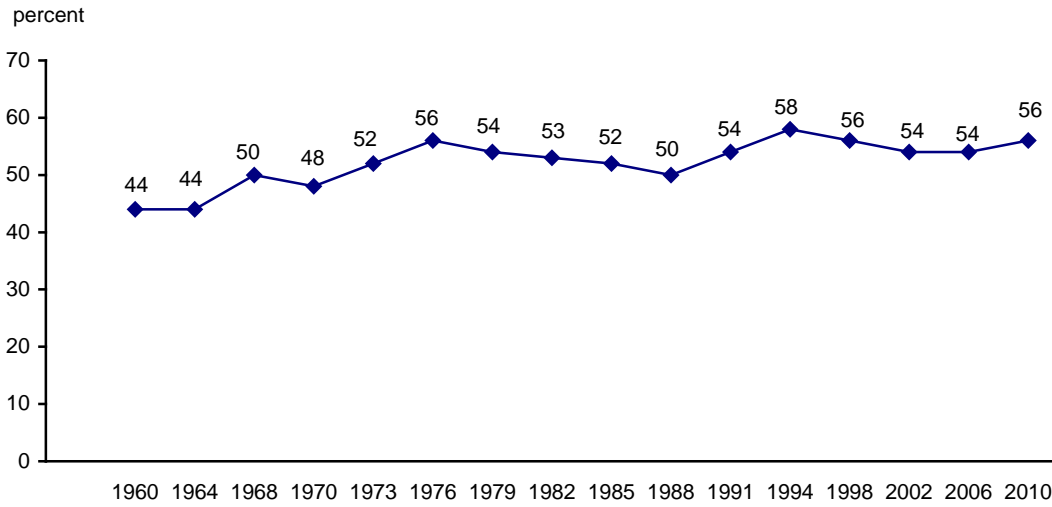
Distrust in Parties and Politicians. Proportion of Interviewed Persons Who Answered Agree (=Distrust) on Two Negatively Phrased Trust Items (percent)



Political Distrust and Gender (percent)

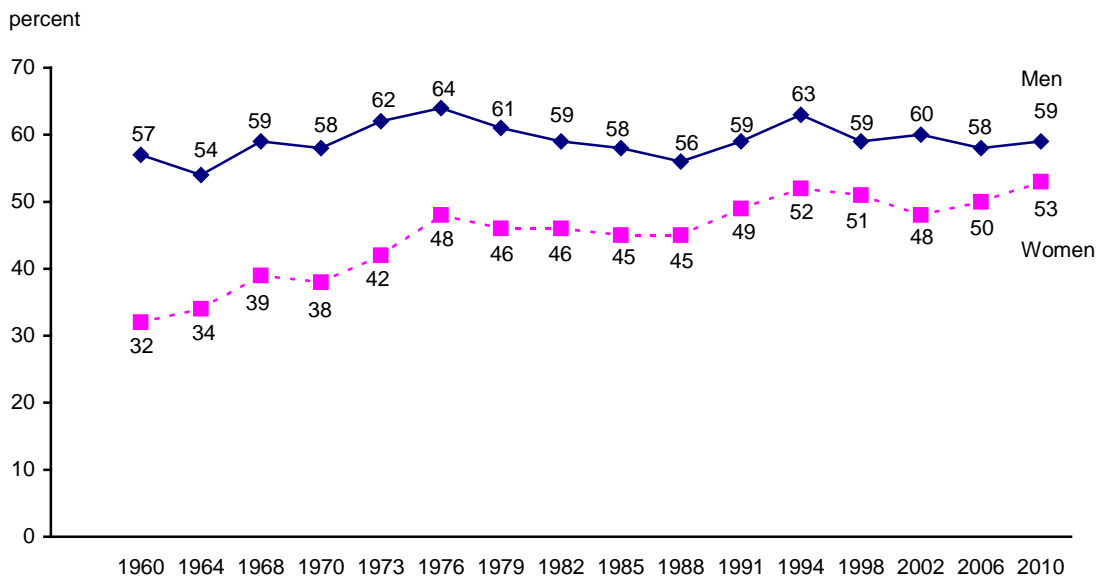


Political Interest. Proportion of Interviewed Persons Who Indicate That They Are Very Much Interested or Rather Interested in Politics (percent)



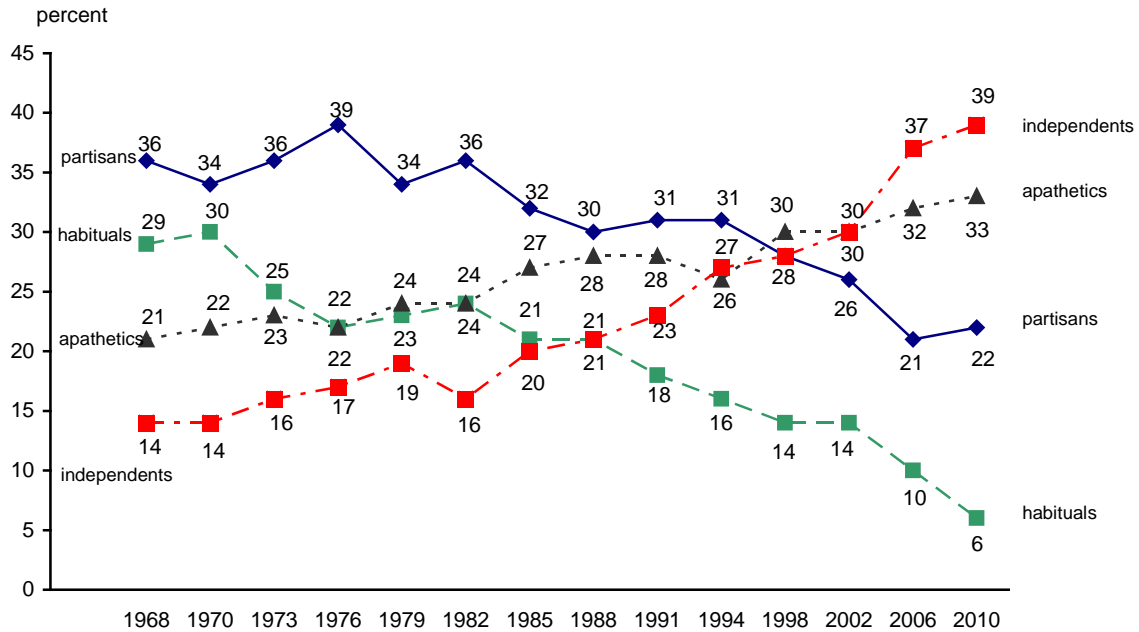
Comment: The increase in political interest between 1960 and 2010 could to a degree be fictional and attributed to the fact that the response rate in the Election Studies has gone down – from 92 percent in 1960 to 69 percent in 2010. It is reasonable to suspect that a higher proportion of people with a low interest in politics participated in the older Election Studies. These people have tended to opt-out in the more recent Election Studies. Consequently, the upward trend in political interest is in all likelihood exaggerated.

Political Interest and Gender (percent)



Difference
men – women +25 +20 +20 +20 +20 +16 +15 +13 +13 +11 +10 +11 +8 +12 +8 +6

Political Interest and Political Partisanship 1968 – 2010 (percent)

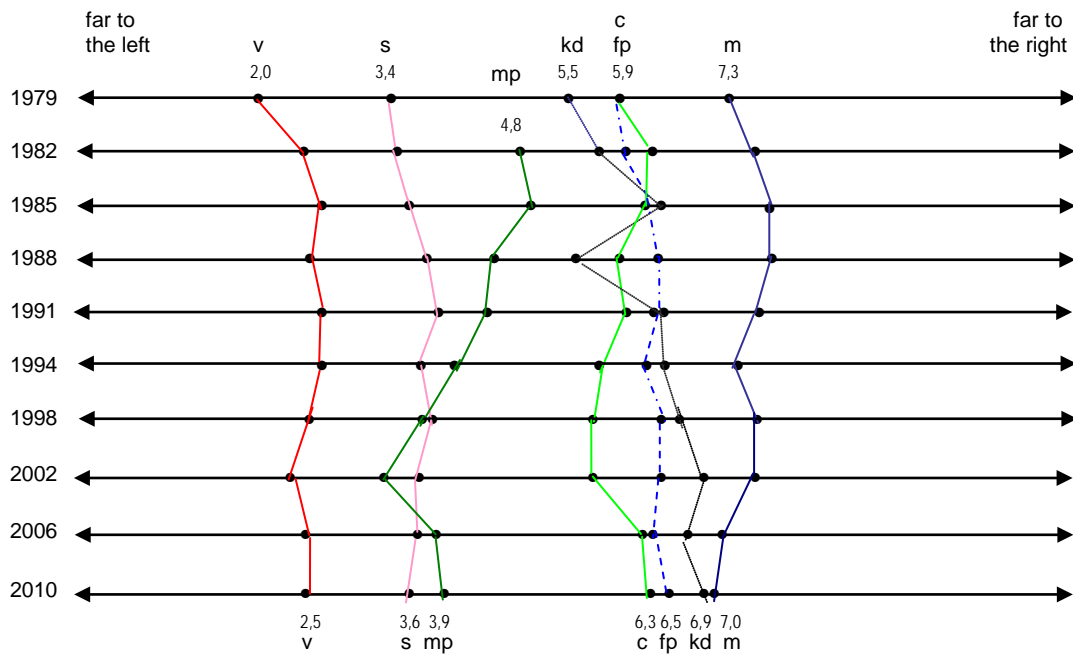


Comment: Partisans have a party identification (=strong or weak) and are interested in politics. *Independents* are interested in politics but have no party identification. *Habituals* have a party identification but lack interest in politics. *Apathetics* have neither a party identification nor interest in politics. The topology was devised by Allen Barton (1955) and applied to Sweden by Olof Petersson (1977).

Election Issues in Sweden 1979-2010. Percentage of Party Voters Who on an Open-Ended Question Mentioned the Various Issue Areas as Important for Their Party Choice (percent)

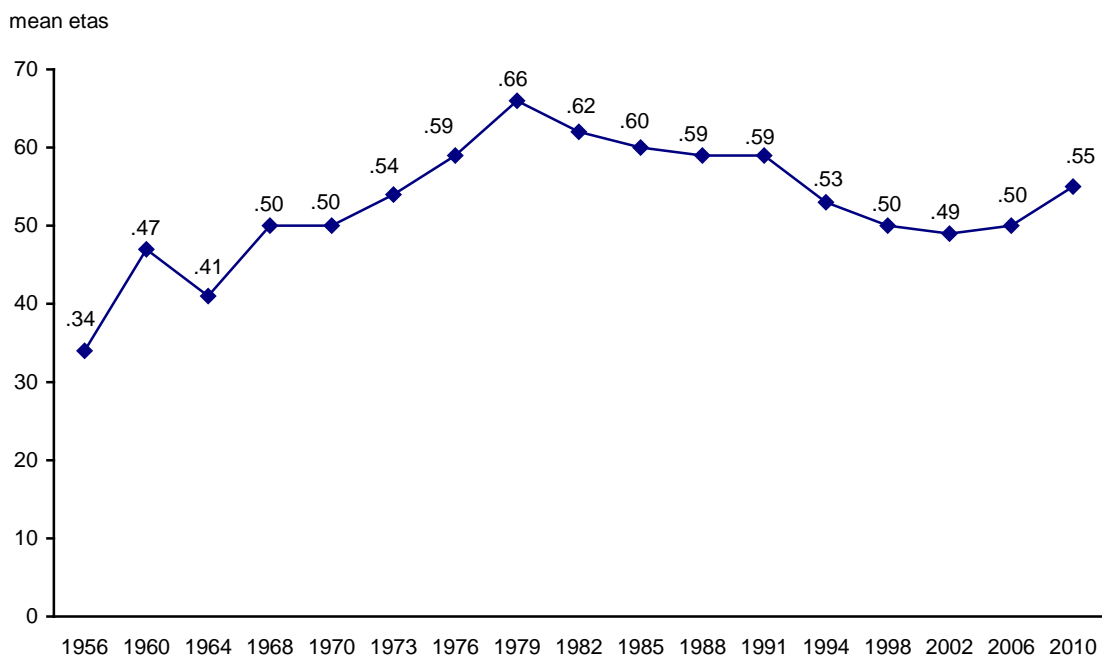
Issue Area	1979	1982	1985	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010
Health Care/Welfare	4	12	19	15	22	21	28	36	32	37
Full Employment	18	29	25	5	23	41	34	7	35	31
Education	6	3	3	2	4	6	20	29	24	26
Pensions/Care of Elderly	5	8	8	9	20	9	17	20	21	19
Economy	9	14	14	8	20	30	14	10	11	17
Taxes	17	8	20	19	18	9	17	14	15	15
Environment	6	7	22	46	25	20	12	8	11	13
Immigration/Refugees	0	0	1	2	8	5	3	10	5	9
Family/Child Care	8	8	17	16	18	13	15	14	15	6
Energy/Nuclear Power	26	2	1	3	3	2	3	1	5	2
Public vs Private Sector	5	2	7	3	4	4	3	4	2	2
Gender Equality	1	0	0	0	0	2	2	3	4	1
Agriculture	1	1	2	1	3	1	1	2	3	1
Housing	5	2	2	4	5	1	0	2	1	1
Religion/Moral	2	1	1	1	3	1	2	2	1	0
EU/EMU	0	0	0	1	10	14	6	5	0	0
Wage Earners' Funds	4	33	11	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Percentage of voters who mentioned at least one issue	62	76	78	72	82	79	77	73	80	86

Average Left-Right Self Placements among Swedish Voters 1979-2010 (means)



Comment: The left-right scale runs from 0 (far left) to 10 (far right) with a designated midpoint a 5 (neither left nor right). The mean for the entire electorate was 4,9 in 1979, 5,0 in 1982, 5,2 in 1985, 5,0 in 1988, 5,5 in 1991, 4,9 in 1994, 5,1 in 1998, 4,9 in 2002, 5,2 in 2006, and 5,3 in 2010. The mean for the nyd-voters was 6,3 in 1991 and 6,1 in 1994. For sd-voters the mean was 5,4 in 2006 and 5,8 in 2010.

Ideological Left-Right Voting in Swedish Elections 1956-2010 (mean etas)



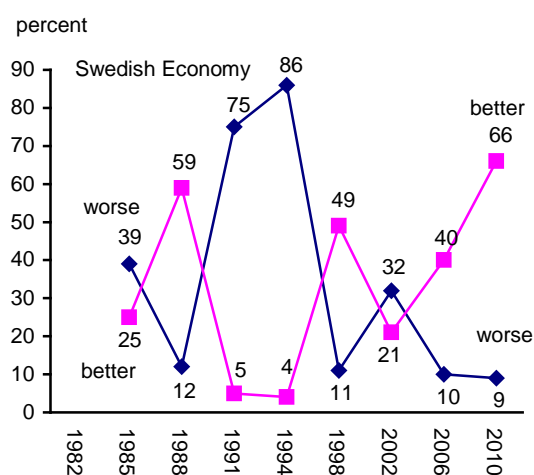
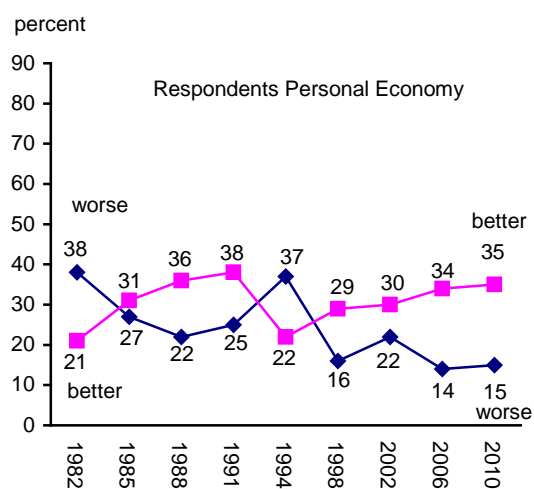
Comment: The results are mean etas based on analyses of variance treating party voting groups (5 to 8 parties) as the independent variable and three left-right issue questions with the strongest relationship with party choice as the dependent variables. The left-right issue questions are not exactly the same throughout the years.

Party Profiles 1982 – 2010. Percent Respondents Who Mentioned at Least One Election Issue for the Relevant Party (percent)

party	1982	1985	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010
v	48	58	47	25	52	63	49	36	48
s	88	64	59	60	83	78	61	57	55
mp	-	-	80	52	71	55	51	52	64
c	58	46	54	42	47	34	35	51	42
fp	45	62	59	54	46	43	68	63	59
kd	-	29	-	58	49	61	54	51	40
m	68	70	54	67	66	72	70	78	66
sd	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70
nyd	-	-	-	59	38	-	-	-	-
mean five old parties	61	60	54	50	59	58	57	57	54
mean seven parties				51	59	58	55	55	53

Comment: Post-election data only. The results are based on open-ended interview questions, one per party.

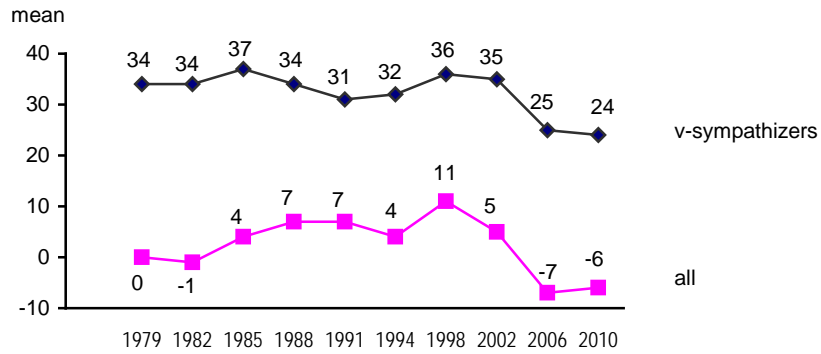
Retrospective Evaluations of the Development of the Swedish Economy and the Respondents Personal Economy (percent)



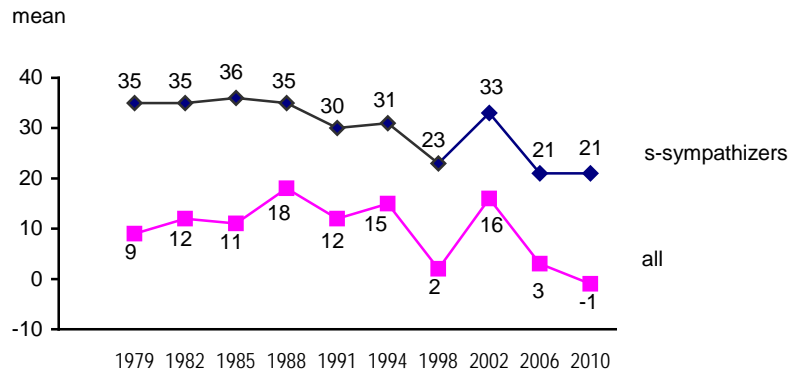
Comment: The interview question on the Swedish economy was not put in 1982. The time frame for the evaluations was "the two-three latest years" in the Election Studies in 1982-1994. Since 1998 the time frame has been changed to "the last twelve months". The interview questions also include a middle response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

Party Leader Popularity 1979 – 2010 (mean)

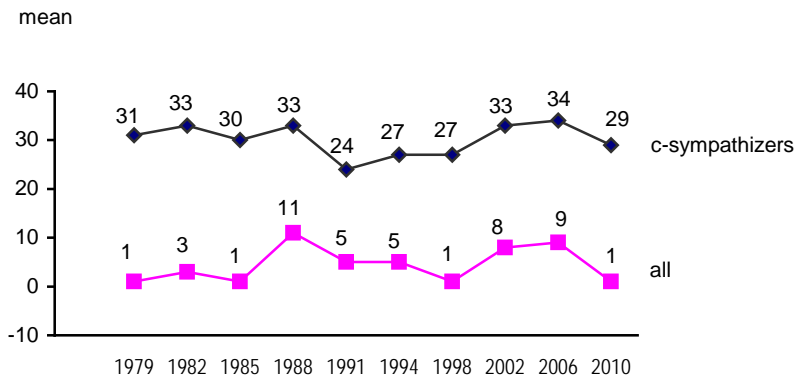
Lars 1979 Gudrun 1994 Lars 2006
Werner 1991 Schyman 2002 Ohly



Olof 1979 Ingvar 1988 Göran 1998 Mona 2010
Palme 1985 Carlsson 1994 Persson 2006 Sahlin

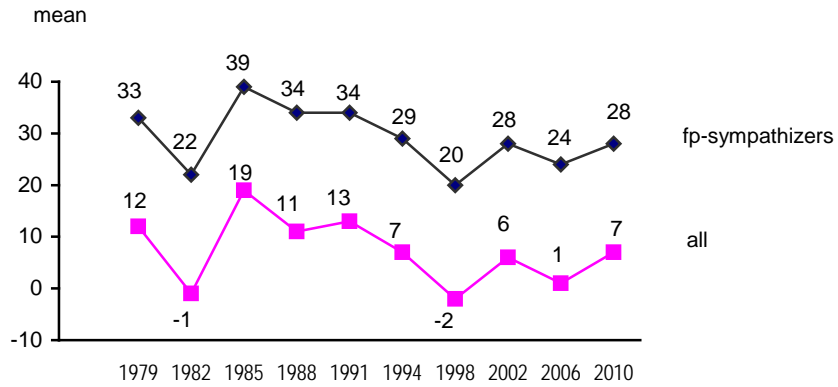


Thorbjörn 1979 Olof 1988 Lennart 1998 Maud 2002
Fälldin 1985 Johansson 1994 Daléus Olofsson 2010

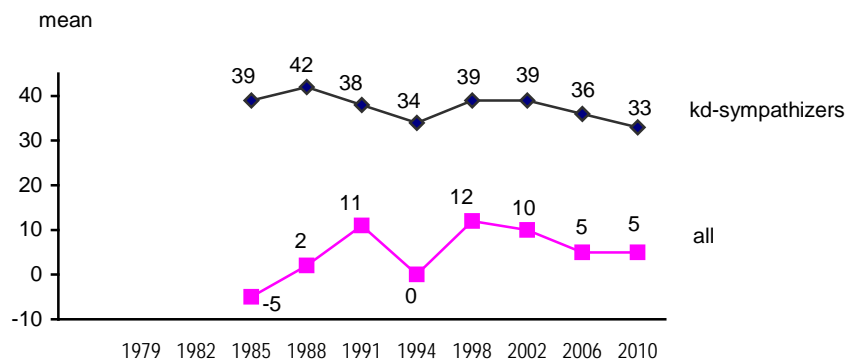


Comment: Party Leader popularity has been measured on an eleven point like-dislike scale running between -5 and +5. The results are means multiplied by 10 to yield values between -50 (dislike) and +50 (like).

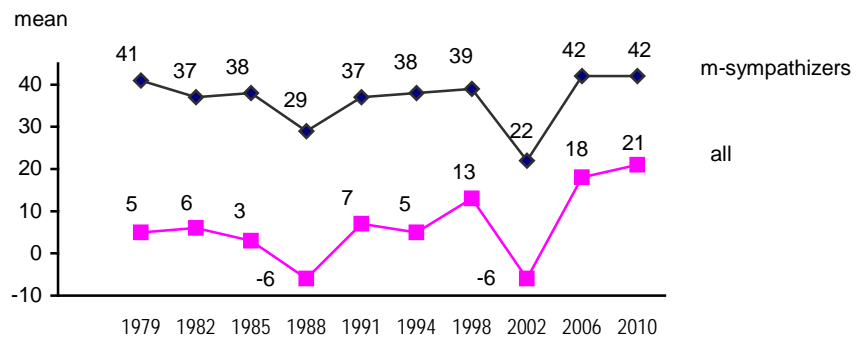
Ola 1979 Bengt 1985 Lars 1998 Jan 2010
 Ullsten 1982 Westerberg 1994 Leijonborg 2006 Björklund



Alf 1985 Göran 2006
 Svensson 2002 Hägglund 2010



Gösta Ulf 1982 Carl 1988 Bo 2002 Fredrik 2006
 Bohman 1979 Adelsohn 1985 Bildt 1998 Lundgren Reinfeldt 2010



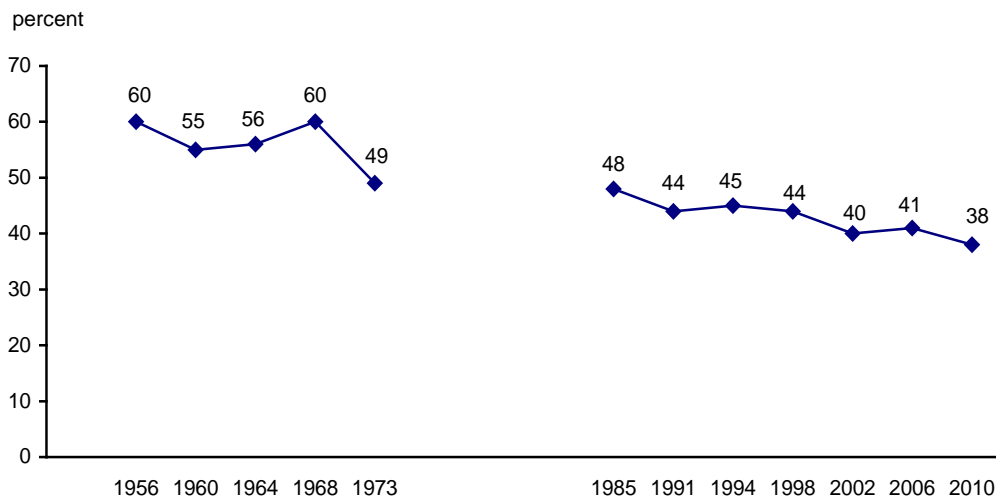
Comment: Party Leader popularity has been measured on an eleven point like-dislike scale running between -5 and +5. The results are means multiplied by 10 to yield values between -50 (dislike) and +50 (like). The 2010 popularity results for the Green spokespersons were for Maria Wetterstrand +15 among all respondents and +35 among Green sympathizers and for Peter Eriksson +3 among all respondents and +20 among Green sympathizers.

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

party	1979	1982	1985	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010
v	15	18	26	22	26	13	19	23	16	8
s	11	16	13	14	9	7	6	11	10	7
mp	-	-	-	-	3	6	6	11	9	16
c	10	20	13	14	6	10	12	21	35	19
fp	22	8	27	18	18	17	4	6	8	14
kd	-	-	7	-	13	18	25	32	11	19
m	26	14	18	7	18	28	33	4	29	38
nyd	-	-	-	-	20	8	-	-	-	-
sd	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
mean five old parties	17	15	19	15	15	15	15	13	20	17
mean seven parties	-	-	-	-	13	14	15	15	17	17

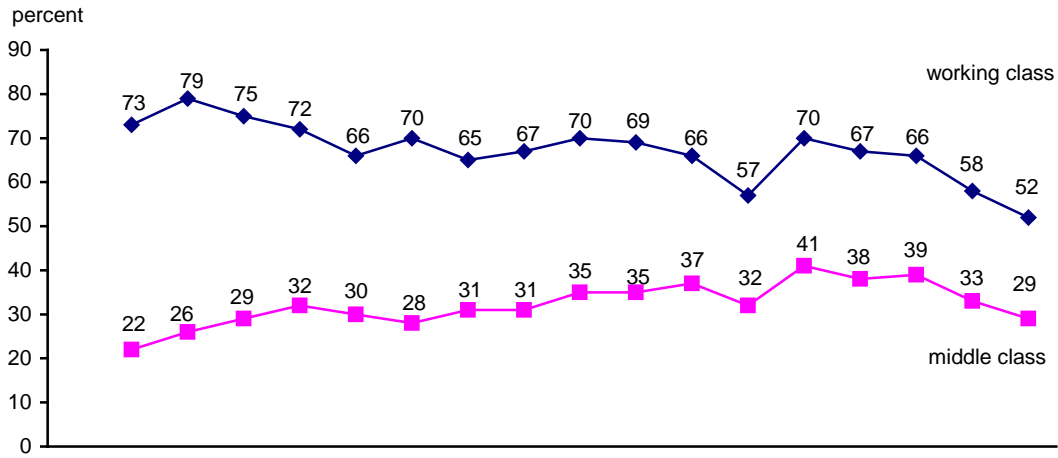
Comment: Party and party leader popularity have been measured on the same eleven point like-dislike scale. The results show per cent respondents among a party's sympathizers who like the party leader better than the party. The results for the Green party (mp) in 2002, 2006 and 2010 are averages for the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

Candidate Recognition. Proportion of Respondents Who Can Name at Least One Riksdag Candidate in Their Own Constituency (percent)



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

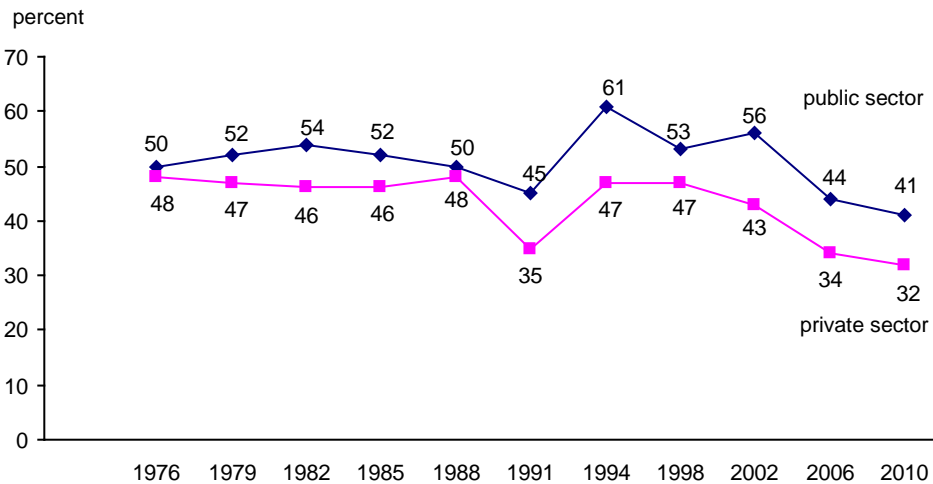
Class Voting in Swedish Elections 1956-2010. Percentage Voting Socialist among Workers and in the Middle Class (percent)



Class	1956	1960	1964	1968	1970	1973	1976	1979	1982	1985	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010
Voting	51	53	46	40	36	42	34	36	35	34	29	25	29	29	27	25	23
Index																	

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

Sector Voting in Swedish Elections 1976 – 2010. Percentage Voting Socialist among Voters in the Public and the Private Sector (percent)



Sector	1976	1979	1982	1985	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010
Voting	2	5	8	6	2	10	14	6	13	10	9
Index											

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

Difference in Party Choice Between Women and Men 1948 – 2010 (percentage point difference)

party	48	52	56	60	64	68	70	73	76	79	82	85	88	91	94	98	02	06	10
v	+2	+2	+1	+2	+1	+1	+2	+3	0	+1	+2	+1	-1	0	-2	-5	-3	-1	+1
s	+3	+2	+1	-2	+3	0	0	-1	+1	-1	-2	-5	-3	0	+3	+5	+3	+1	-4
c	+1	+4	+3	+1	+4	+3	+1	0	-2	-4	0	+1	+1	-2	-3	0	+1	0	-4
fp	-4	-8	-3	-1	-4	-2	-2	-2	0	0	-2	-3	0	-2	-2	-2	0	+1	-1
m	-2	0	-2	0	-4	-2	0	0	+1	+4	+4	+7	+5	+5	+7	+7	+3	+3	+8
kd	-	-	-		0	0	0	0	-1	-1	-1	-1	-2	-2	-1	-4	-2	-2	0
mp	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-1	0	0	-3	-2	-2	-2	-4	-2
nd	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+4	-	-	-	-	-
sd	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+2	+4

mean absolute
difference per

party	2,4	3,2	2,0	1,2	2,7	1,3	0,8	1,0	0,8	1,8	1,7	2,6	1,7	2,3	2,9	3,6	2,0	1,8	3,0
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Comment: A positive (+) difference means that the relevant party was more supported among men than among women while a negative (-) difference indicate more support among women than among men.

In Which Age Group Does the Parties Have Their Strongest Support?

election year	party							
	v	s	c	fp	m	kd	mp	sd
1948	young	no diff	old	young	old	-	-	-
1956	-	young	old	old	no diff	-	-	-
1960	old	young	old	old	old	-	-	-
1964	old	no diff	middle age	no diff	old	-	-	-
1968	no diff	no diff	middle age	young	old	-	-	-
1970	young	no diff	young	old	old	-	-	-
1973	young	middle age	young	old	old	-	-	-
1976	young	middle age	young	young/old	middle age	-	-	-
1979	young	old	old	young	middle age	-	-	-
1982	young	old	old	no diff	middle age	-	-	-
1985	young	old	old	no diff	young	old	young	-
1988	young	old	old	young	young	old	middle age	-
1991	middle age	old	old	young	young	old	young	-
1994	young	old	old	no diff	old	no diff	young	-
1998	young	old	old	young	young	old	young	-
2002	young	middle/old	old	young	no diff	old	young	-
2006	young/middle	old	old	no diff	no diff	old	young	young
2010	young/middle	old	old	old	middle	old	young	young

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

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

Theoretical Explanation	Reason to Vote	Year					2010							
		1988	1994	2002	2006	2010	v	s	mp	c	fp	kd	m	sd
Issue Voting	The party has a good policy on issues that I think is important	-	-	51	-	58	67	50	72	48	60	55	60	62
Competence Voting	The party has competent persons that can run the country	30	31	31	42	51	38	42	37	46	42	40	77	25
Ideological Voting	The party has a good political ideology	41	41	45	49	49	65	53	69	47	50	53	39	33
Prospective Voting	The party has a good program for the future	-	-	34	46	49	48	45	60	44	53	48	55	35
Campaign Agenda Voting	The party has good policies on many of the issues in recent public debates	33	32	34	37	39	47	34	42	31	43	35	45	39
Retrospective Voting	The party has done a good job in politics in recent years	-	-	25	22	36	22	20	32	32	31	32	61	17
Party Leader Voting	The party has a good party leader	23	20	24	23	27	17	15	16	27	22	25	51	22
Campaign Performance Voting	The party has been convincing during the election campaign	-	-	-	-	18	13	13	15	11	18	16	24	22
Instrumental Voting	The party is a big party and therefore it has greater possibilities than a smaller party to implement its policies	-	-	14	17	16	11	26	1	2	5	3	33	0
Habitual Voting	I always vote for the party	27	21	16	14	14	16	25	4	11	3	6	10	9
Group Interest Voting	The policies of the party is usually favourable to the occupational group to which I belong	21	18	14	15	14	18	20	4	19	12	10	17	3
Party Identification Voting	I feel like a supporter of the party	21	16	14	11	11	10	18	12	11	6	10	7	3
Candidate Voting	The party has good Riksdag candidates on the ballot in my constituency	-	9	10	10	10	12	13	4	8	6	18	9	8
Tactical Voting	The party is a small party that risks falling under the four percent threshold to the Riksdag	-	-	6	5	9	25	4	3	23	5	49	3	16
Social Influence Voting	People around me sympathize with the party	-	-	-	-	3	4	5	1	4	1	0	2	8

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

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