

Why are immigrants under-represented in politics?

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Under-representation of immigrants

- All over the world, immigrants are less likely than natives to become elected politicians.
- Descriptive representation matters
 - Might affect policy.
 - Under-representation increases marginalisation.
 - Political exclusion could increase the risk of riots.



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Immigrants in Sweden

- 19 percent of the adult population, but only 9 percent of local politicians and 2 per cent of 'majors'.
- Dancygier et al (2015) on Swedish data
 - 50 % of this gap 'explained' by observable characteristics.
 - Mostly the seats-to-voters ratio.
 - The study was limited to administrative data.



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Our project

- Analyse why immigrants are under-represented among elected politicians.
- Using both register and survey data we can also analyse differences in experiences, perceptions and attitudes.
 - Do immigrants lack the networks or contacts that natives have?
 - Do immigrants feel less qualified to run for office?
 - Are immigrants discouraged by party elites or structures?
- The project is still at its planning stage, so we are very grateful for your feedback!



What could explain the under-representation?

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Decomposed in the steps to being elected:

- **1** Probability of joining a political party.
- 2 Probability of running for office (if party member).
 - $\bullet\,$ We will ask about the order of 1 and 2 in the survey.
- **3** Probability of being elected (if running).

4 Average time in office.



What could explain the under-representation?

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Differences in characteristics

- Socio-economic and demographic differences (already done)
- Political interest.
- Political efficacy.
- Political socialisation.
- Political networks.
- Fit between own preferences and party programs.
- Excluded from political parties or discriminated by party officials.
- Attitudes in the electorate.



Sampling strategy

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Challenges

- A random sample of 12 000 eligible would include ~80 who ran for local office in 2014 and ~20 who were elected.
- One solution: limit the sample to over-represented occupations (Fox and Lawless [2004]).
 - Not representative for the population.
 - Only occupations where 10 percent run: politicians and professionals in special-interest organisations.



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Solution: Case-control design

- Our solution: stratify on the dependent variable (case-control or choise-based sampling).
 - Complete population data on both candidates and candidacy eligible who did not run.
- 6000 who did not run for office in 2014 (but were eligible).
- 6000–8000 who ran for office in 2014.
- Immigrants will make up 50 per cent of both sub-samples.
- The survey data will be linked to population-wide registers.



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What can we use the survey data for, in addition to explaining the under-representation?

- What comes first? Joining a party or the will to run for office.
- Are there differences in attitudes between immigrants and natives and do we find the same differences among elected politicians as in the electorate?
- Attitudes in the electorate towards foreign born politicians.
- Ask about experiences of discrimination in the labour market?



Other topics for discussion

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What can we do with the register data?

- Decompose: relative probability of being elected and average time in office.
- Immigrants are on average placed lower on the ticket.
 - Can this be explained by experience and background characteristics?
 - Is the position of immigrant candidates affected by the number of 'safe seats' and the probability of incumbency?
- Comparison between popularly elected politicians and those appointed by the party.



Other topics for discussion



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Any additional register data we should get?

- List position and party belonging for everyone who has run for office between 1982 and 2022.
- Details about political positions on municipal boards for everyone elected since 2010.
- Migration background (country of birth [grouped], parents' country of birth, year of migration, ground for residence permit, citizenship) and language skills (successful participation in Swedish for Immigrants).
- Socio-economic characteristics (income, education, employment) and demographics (age, sex, city of residence, number of children).



Other topics for discussion

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How should we phrase our survey questions?



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1 POLITICAL INTEREST

How interested are you in politics when it comes to:	Not at all interested	Very nion/not interested relevant
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	9 10
Politics in general?		
The municipality where you live?		
The county where you live?		
Sweden?		
The European Union?		
Countries outside the European Union?		



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2 F	POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION	÷			· · ·	÷
		Frequently	Occasionally	Seldom	Never	No opi- nion/not relevant
c	When you were growing up, how often lid your parents discuss politics with you?					
c	When you were growing up, how often lid your parents suggest that you, comeday, should run for office?					
c	When you were in high school, how often did you discuss politics with your eachers or class mates?					



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	3	PARENTS' POLITICAL ACTIVITY					
		Did either of your parents ever run for elective office?	Yes, both	Yes, My mother	Yes, my father	No	No opi- nion/not relevant
Ī	4	ENGAGEMENT IN THE SCHOOL COUN	CIL				
		When you were in school, did you ever represent your class in the school council?	No	Yı [Yes, I was the chair of the school council	No opi- nion/not relevant



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POLITICAL ABILITY		
To what extent do you agree with the following propositions	Do not agree Agree at all completely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	No opi- nion/no relevan
I am qualified enough to engage in politics.		
I have a good understanding of the most important political issues.		
I would be (or am) at least as good a politician as most others.		
I know more about politics than most people do.		
Most people can influence political decisions.		
Politicians care about the opinions of the citizens.		
Politicians usually do what most citizens want them to.		
Citizens can influence policy through elections.		



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7	ACQUAINTANCE

6 POLITICAL NETWORKS

Your colleagues

Political activists

Someone else

Elected politicians

None of the above

Your friends

Your family

How often do you discuss politics

with the following people?

ACQUAINTANCES					
How many of the people around you have immigrant origin, if you consider…	Almost no one	Quite a few	Most	Almost everyone	No opi- nion/not relevant
the neighborhood where you live.					
your friends.					
your colleagues.					
people with whom you discuss politics.					

Frequently Occasionally Seldom

 No opi-

nion/not

relevant

Never

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8 POLITICAL CONTACTS No opinion/not Do you know anyone who... Yes No relevant ... frequently participates in demonstrations and manifestations? ... is a member of a political party? Π ...has held public office?



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Political interest, efficacy, etc.

Yes	No	No op nion/r releva
Yes	No	No c nion/ relev



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	11 POLITICAL ACTIVISM			
าร	There are many ways to engage politically and to affect political decisions. Have you done any of the following during the last 12 months? Signed a petition	Yes	No	No opi- nion/not relevant
	Contacted a politician			
	Participated in a demonstration			
	Contacted a public official			
	Contacted, or appeared in, a media outlet			
	Given or raised money for a political cause			
	Written a notice to the local newspaper			
	Shared a political message in social media			
	Attended a meeting with the labor union			
	Attended a meeting with a political party			



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	12 EFFECTIVENESS		
	There are many views on how to best affect political decisions. How effective do you believe that the Not at all effective	Very effective	No opi- nion/not relevant
ons	following methods are? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7		reievant
g	Work in political parties		
	Work in protest groups		
	Vote in the general elections		
	Contact politicians		
	Participate in demonstrations & protests		
	Run for public office		
	Lobbying through interest organisations		
	13 PARTY MEMBER		÷
	Are you a member of a political party?		
	Yes Proceed to Question 14. No Proceed to Question 15. No, but I have been Proceed to Question 17.		



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14 PARTY ACTIVITIES					
Do you participate at party activities?					
🗌 Yes					
Sometimes					
No, never					
Proceed to Question 18.					
15 POSSIBLE MEMBER?				· · ·	
If asked, would you consider to become a member of the party that you sympathize with?	Yes, absolutely	Yes, maybe	No, probably not	No, absolutely not	No op nion/no releva
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	1	6	WHY	NOT	Α	MEM	BER?
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What could make you join a party? You can pick multiple alternatives.

If my	job	did	not	take	so	much	of	my	time
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If I did not have to spe	nd so much tin	ne on household work
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	lf I	I felt that	I belonged	("fit in")
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If there was a	party that I	represented	my opinions.
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- If there was a party whose representatives were more like me.
- If I thought I could change things to the better.
- If I was more knowledgeable about politics.
- Something else, namely:

Proceed to Question 18.



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17 WHY LEAVE?

What made you leave the party?

You can pick multiple alternatives.

- I did not have the time to engage in party activities.
- | I did not fit in.
- My opinions did not match the party's policies.
- It was difficult to reconcile my religiosity with my political engagement.
- Another party member asked me to leave the party.
- I was not as knowledgeable about politics as the others.
- ☐ I forgot to pay the membership fee.
- Other reason, namely: ______



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	18 RECEPTION IN PARTY					
nsions Iling	Imagine that you were a recent member of the party you sympathize with. Do	absolutely	Yes, maybe	No, probably not	No, absolutely not	No opi- nion/not relevant
	you think that you would feel welcome?	?				
ey (19 ELECTED	· ·			• • •	
	Have you ever held public office in you Yes — Proceed to Question 21. No	r municipal	ity or co	unty?		
	20 WILLINGNESS TO RUN					
	If asked, would you consider to hold public office, for example in the	Yes, absolutely	Yes, maybe	No, probably not	No, absolutely not	No opi- nion/not relevant
	municipality or county, for the party you sympathize with?					



21 WHY NOT RUNNING?

What could make you run for office?

You can pick multiple alternatives.

- If my job did not take so much of my time.
- If I did not have to spend so much time on household work.
- If I felt that I belonged ("fit in") with the other politicians.
- If there was a party that represented my opinions.
- If someone asked me to run.
- If I was more knowledgeable about politics.
- Something else, namely:_____

22 WHY RUN?

When you are considering to engage in politics, there are probably some things which make you more positive and other things which deter you from joining a party or running for office. Do the following issues make you more or less interested in engaging in a political party?

	Deterrin	g			Enciting	No opi- nion/not
	1	2	3	4	5	relevant
Get to know people						
Represent the party in discussions with voters						
Participate at meetings with party members						
Affect political decisions						
20						

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Yes, absolutely ink	Yes, p maybe 	No, probably not	No, absolutely not	No opi- nion/not relevant
	· · · ·	·		
ember of?				
		м	ember and	No opi- nion/no
Not member	Passive men	nber atte	nd meetings	relevant
	absolutely	ember of?	ember of?	Yes, Yes, probably absolutely absolutely maybe not not mk



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11 PAID POLITICIAN	?
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How is your political engagement best described?

Fulltime politician

Parttime politician	
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- Politician without pay
- None of the above

12 ELECTED?

In which municipal bodies do you currently hold a seat? You can pick multiple alternatives.

]	The	City	Executive	Board
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The City Council		
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- Municipal committee or division
- Municipal company board

None of the above — Proceed to Question 16.



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13 INFLUENCE						
How much influence do you have compared to others with the same	Much less	A little less	The same	A little more	Much more	No opi- nion/not relevant
position?						
14 OBSTACLES	·					
Do you experience any hindrances You can pick multiple alternatives.	in order t	o have	more influ	ence?		
Do you experience any hindrances	in order t	o have	more influ	ence?		
Do you experience any hindrances You can pick multiple alternatives.	in order t	o have	more influ	ence?		
Do you experience any hindrances You can pick multiple alternatives.		o have	more influ	ence?		
Do you experience any hindrances You can pick multiple alternatives. Yes, within my own party. Yes, within the other parties.		o have	more influ	ence?		



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Have you ever held public office in your municipality or county?

Yes

No

15 ELECTED

16 WHY RUN?

When you are considering to engage in politics, there are probably some things which make you more positive and other things which deter you from joining a party or running for office. Do the following issues make you more or less interested in engaging in a political party?

	Deterrin	g			Enciting	nion/not
	1	2	3	4	5	relevant
Get to know people						
Represent the party in discussions with voters						
Participate at meetings with party members						
Affect political decisions						



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17 DRIVING FORCES

How would you describe your way into politics? You can pick multiple alternatives.

I joined a political party because I wanted to become an elected politician.

The thought of running for office was born after I joined a political party.

I cannot say what came first.

18 HOW MANY YEARS

For how many years were you active in politics before you ran for office the first time?

Answer: years



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19 THE NOMINATION PROCEDU	JRE				
Did your party have some so committee proposed a candi					
🗌 No					
Yes, but the committee's p	roposal deviated from	the resu	It in the pri	mary	
Yes, and the committee fol	llowed the result in the	primary	,		
Yes, but I do not know if th	e committee followed	the resul	It in the pri	mary	
20 RECEPTION IN PARTY					
			No.	No.	No op
Imagine that you were a rece	nt member . Yes,	Yes,	probably	absolutely	nion/n
of the party you represent. D	o you	maybe	not	not	releva
think that you would feel wel	come?				



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Imagine that you had recently been elected to the city council for the first	Yes, absolutely	Yes, maybe	No, probably not	No, absolutely not	No opi- nion/not relevant
time. Do you think you would feel welcome?					
22 THREATS?		÷		• •	
22 THREATS? Have you during the last 12 months bee because of your political activities?	en subjected	l to viole	ence or th	reats	
Have you during the last 12 months bee	en subjected	l to viole	ence or th	reats	



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23 EFFECTIVENESS		
There are many views on how to best affect political decisions. How effective do you believe that the	Not at all effective Very effective	No opi- nion/not relevant
following methods are? Work in political parties	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Work in protest groups		
Vote in the general elections		
Contact politicians		
Participate in demonstrations & protests		
Run for public office		
Lobbying through interest organisations		



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24 CONTACTS				
What kind of associations do you	communicate v	vith in your role	e as politically a	ctive?
	No contact	Some contact	Regular contact	No opi- nion/not relevant
Sports or recreation association				
Environmental organization				
Labor union				
Cultural association				
Local community				
Immigrant association				
Senior citizens' association				
Business Organization				



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Political attitudes

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	25 POLITICAL ATTITUDES						
	Do you agree with the following	Disagree	complete	ly	Agree c	ompletely	No opi- nion/not
	propositions?	1	2	3	4	5	relevant
ons	Swedes in general have a welcoming attitude towards immigrants.						
;	If two equally qualified persons apply for the same job, the employer usually hires the one of Swedish origin.						
	Most politicians do what they believe to be the best for the citizens.						
	The possibility of making a successful career is larger for people born in Sweden than it is for people born abroad.						
	Politicians who grew up in Sweden are more competent than politicians of foreign origin.						
	The possibility of a political career is larger for men than for women.						
	Deeply religious people become worse politicians.						
	It is important that politicians resemble the electorate in terms of						
	sex.						
	age.						
	ethnicity.						
	income.						



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26 IMMIGRANTS IN POLITICS

An increasing number of politicians have an immigrant background, but immigrants and their children remain underrepresented among elected politicians. What do you think are the reasons for this underrepresentation?

The underrepresentation is caused by	Disagree	complete	ely	Agree c	ompletely	No opi- nion/not
The underrepresentation is caused by	1	2	3	4	5	relevant
immigrants' poor language skills.						
Swedes' negative attitudes towards immigrants.						
immigrants' being unfamiliar with Swedish politics and organizational culture	e. 🗆					
immigrants being less interested in politics than are native Swedes.						
voters being less likely to vote for candidates with immigrant background.						
the lack of a political party which represents the interests of immigrants.						
immigrants being more interested in issues that concern their country of origin.						
There are enough immigrants among our elected politicians.						



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Political attitudes

27 POLITICAL PROPOSITIONS

What is your opinion about the following	Disagree	complete	ly	Agree c	ompletely	No opi- nion/not
propositions?	1	2	3	4	5	relevant
Raise the municipal tax to improve the quality of public services						
Receive more refugees to the municipality						
Allow private businesses to take over more of the public services						
Increase the prevalence of choice systems in public services						
Invest more resources in municipal cultural policy						
Building more residential areas even if it mean that some green space disappears	s 🗌					
Reduce income inequality						
Opt for an eco-friendly society even if it comes with economic costs						
Prohibit private business to make a profit from tax-funded health care and education						
Opt for a society with greater equality between women and men						



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а	Which party do you like the be	st?	
	Vänsterpartiet		Moderaterna
	Miljöpartiet		Kristdemokraterna
	Socialdemokraterna		Sverigedemokraterna
	Centerpartiet		Feministiskt initiativ
	Folkpartiet		Annat parti



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29 TRUST		
In your opinion, to what extent can you trust people in general?	You cannot trust You can trust people in general people in general 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	No opi- nion/not relevant
30 TOP OR BOTTOM OF SOCIETY		
It is sometimes said that in our society, there are groups which tend to be towards the top and groups which tend to be toward the bottom. Where would vou put vourself?	At the bottom At the top 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 	No opi- nion/not relevant



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Do you belong to any church,	No	Yes, but I have a ttended a cerem during the last 12 n	not Yes, and nony a ceremo	I have attended ony during the 12 months
The Swedish church				
Other Christian church				
Muslim community				
Other religious community				
2 RELIGIOSITY				
How important is religion in yo		,	t too Not at all ortant important	No opi- nion/not relevant



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33 HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Would you say that your household income is enough for the household's needs?

No, the income is much lower than what I/we need.

] No, the income is a little bit lower than what I/we need.

] I/We make about as much as I/we need.

Yes, the income is a little bit higher than what I/we need.

Yes, the income is much higher than what I/we need.



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34 LABOR MARKET STATUS

Which of the following categories best describes your current situation? *Pick one alternative.*

Employed fulltime (incl. sick or parental leave from fulltime work)

- Deltidsarbetande (incl. sjukskriven eller föräldraledig från deltidstjänst)
- Enrolled in active labor market policy
- Unemployed
- Retired
- Early retirement
- Student
- Other, namely:_____



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	TION

What is your level of education? If you have not completed the education, mark the alternative which you are currently enrolled in.

- Not completed primary school (or equivalent compulsory school)
- High school (or equivalent compulsory school)
- Studies at secondary school (or equivalent)
- Graduate from secondary school (or equivalent)
- Post-secondary education, no college / university
- Studies at the college / university
- Graduated from college / university
- Studies at / graduated from graduate education



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36 CHILDREN					
Do you have any children living at home? Include children which live at least half the time with you.					
Yes					
🗌 No					
37 GROWING UP					
Where have you and your parents grown up? No opi-					
	Sweden	Other Nordic country	Other European country	Country outside Europe	nion/not relevant
You					
Your mother					
Your father					