

Parliamentarians & Representation: Attitudes towards Roles,
Policy and Unity in Sweden, 1985 to 2006

David Willumsen
European University Institute

Paper prepared for the workshop on Changing Modes of Parliamentary
Representation

14th – 15th October 2011

Draft Version – Please do not cite

A key problem facing political science if it seeks to understand the effects of political parties on legislative behaviour is that raised by Krehbiel: if we do not have a solid measure of the preferences of MPs, we cannot draw firm conclusions about anything else. However, given the difficulty of obtaining accurate measures of preferences, little work has been done that deals with this issue. Using a set of six surveys of the Swedish parliament, this paper first discusses how preferences should be understood in the context of legislative studies, and then shows that, by any of the measures proposed, Swedish MPs clearly do not simply vote for their sincere policy preference. Second, the paper analyses the MPs' attitudes to various aspects of party unity, and argues that what explains very high levels of party voting unity in the Swedish parliament is voluntary submission to the party line.

Introduction

In order for representative government to effectively function, united political parties are needed. Without them, responsible party government is impossible to achieve. If parties fail to act in a united manner, voters are unable to punish or reward parties for their actions in parliament. While formally, most European democracies ascribe a constitutionally central role to the MP as an individual (that is, one who acts on his own conscience), in practice, political parties in Europe vote in a highly unified manner. Yet the reasons for their ability to act in such a way is unclear. This paper seeks to provide an explanation for this, by analysing one of the more stable parliamentary democracies in Europe, Sweden, over a 20-year period. This paper proceeds as follows. First, a brief introduction to the party system in Sweden is given. Secondly, the concept of parliamentary preferences is discussed and developed, and applied to the Swedish Riksdag. Thirdly, the attitudes of Swedish MPs to party unity are analysed, to provide an insight into their motivations for voting the party line in parliament.

The Swedish Party System

As in the other Nordic countries, from the 1920's onwards, there existed in Sweden a so-called 5-party system (Lane et al. 1993, p.195), with a dominant social democratic party, a socialist party to its left, and a 'bourgeois' right, divided into three parties, namely a liberal party, a conservative party, and an agrarian party. Among the Nordic countries, the Swedish party system was the one that remained stable for longest. From the time when Sweden became fully democratic in 1920 until the 1988 election, the structure of the Swedish party system remained essentially unchanged (Sannerstedt & Sjölin 1992, p.101). Thus, no new party was able to break into the established political order until the 1988 election, partly because of the 4% threshold for representation in parliament introduced (along with a number of national 'top-up' seats) in 1970, and partly due to strong class identities, and a correspondingly stable electorate (Bergman & Bolin 2011, p.257).

As such, it was only when the Green party, on its third attempt, managed to garner enough votes to overcome the 4% barrier, and were elected with 5.5% of the vote, that a new party was able to gain representation in the Riksdag. Their success, however, was short-lived, as they failed to match their result at the following election, in 1991, dropped to 3.4% of the vote, and so were not re-elected. This did not, however, mean a return to the 5-party system. Instead, two other parties managed to get elected to the Riksdag for the first time. One, the right-wing populist New Democracy burst onto the political scene, with 6.7% of the vote, at their first general election. However, the party quickly fell victim to infighting, and by the 1994 election, its support at the polls had fallen to 1.2%, and the party dropped out of the Riksdag for good. The other 'new' party of the 1991 election, the Christian Democrats, had contested every election since 1964, but had never been close to overcoming the 4% barrier. After first breaching it, however, the Christian Democrats were able, unlike the Green Party and New Democracy, to achieve re-election, and have remained represented in parliament ever since. The final 'nail in the coffin' of the Swedish 5-party system was thus hammered in either in the 1991 election (Pierre & Widfeldt 1996, p.340), or alternatively, in the 1994 election, when the Greens managed to return to the Riksdag, where they have remained represented ever since.

Preferences in parliamentary politics.

One key element when it comes to studying legislative behaviour is the preferences of parliamentarians; as Krehbiel has argued, as long as we do not include MPs' preferences in our analysis, we will be able to say little about the effect of parties on legislative behaviour (Krehbiel 1993). However, merely acknowledging that preferences are expected to matter for the behaviour of MPs is insufficient; what is needed is also an understanding of how MP's preferences might manifest themselves in behaviour.

The absolute position of an MP on a given scale of preferences¹ tells us little about how this preference might manifest itself. What matters are the relative

¹ E.g. a 0-10 scale of support for government intervention in the economy.

preferences of an MP, that is, the extent to which the MP's views differ (or are similar) to those of his fellow party MPs.

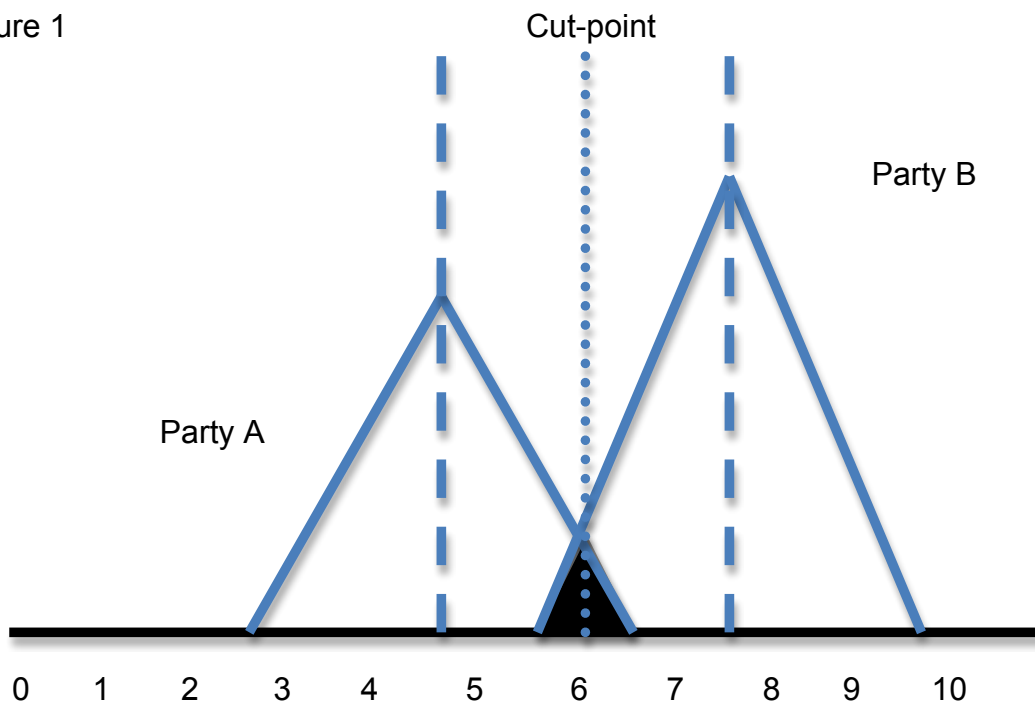
Such preference (dis)similarity can be found at two levels. Firstly, it can be found on the level of the political party itself; that is, a legislative party as a collective can have views that vary in their similarity. For example, a parliamentary party could be composed of MPs who all have identical views on an issue; contrariwise, it could be composed of MPs who vary widely in their views. The extent to which an MP would be willing to submit to the will of his party when disagreement arises (that is, be party oriented) could be expected to differ depending on how united (or fractious) his party is. MPs from parties which are fractious are less likely to defer to the party if in disagreement with it than MPs from highly united (in terms of preferences) parties, as they cannot expect that disagreement is a rare occurrence, and so submitting to the party's will whenever disagreements occur is more costly.

Thus, a party in which all the MPs have similar views would be expected to behave differently from one in which the MPs have widely differing views, irrespective of the views of any one party group member as such.

The other level at which preferences influence MPs is at the level of the individual, that is, to what extent do the views of an MP differ from those of his parliamentary party as a whole. A crucial aspect of understanding the preferences at the individual level is that of available alternatives. Figure 1 is a revised version of that used by Krehbiel to illustrate the issue of preferences in his seminal 1993 article. Note that only individuals in the shaded area are actually torn between voting for their party and voting their true preference. Thus, two MPs from party A, one whose policy preference is located at point 2 and one whose preference is found at point 6 are equidistant from their party's median policy position (i.e. 4 - denoted by the dashed line). Yet, they are not subject to the same temptation to defect to the other party on any given vote; in fact, the MP located at point 2 is about as unlikely to defect as any MP in party A. Thus, it is not only the distance to an MP's party policy median that matters; it is also the distance to the 'alternative' party that is relevant. In a two-party system, such as that discussed by Krehbiel, it is quite easy to deal

with this issue; one can calculate the cut-point (the dotted line) at which a policy preference is nearer to the median of party A than to that of party B, and so identify the MPs who are found on the “wrong” side of this line (see e.g. Kam 2001). In a multi-party system, however, this is harder to do, as there is, with the expectation of the two parties found at either extreme of a preference scale, two cut-points per party, rather than just the one found in a two-party system.

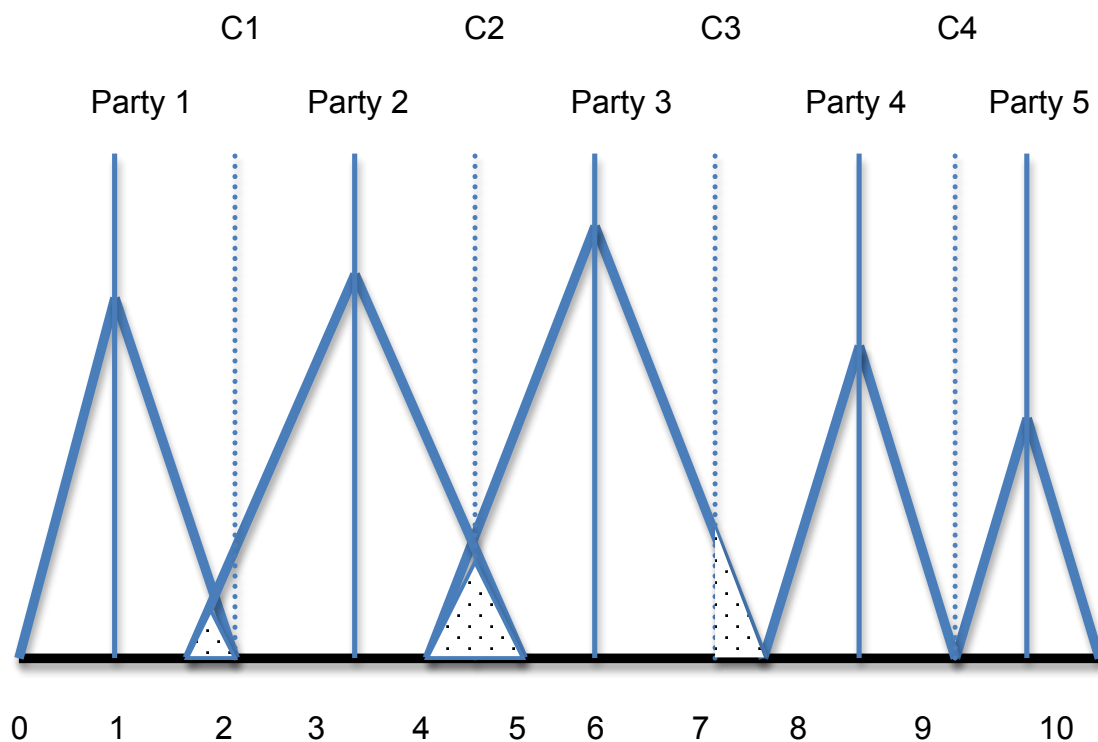
Figure 1



To illustrate this, consider figure 2, which shows the parliamentary preferences of MPs in a hypothetical 5-party system. As can be seen, the cut-point can theoretically be found in four different positions. The first (C1) goes ‘through’ one party only, and there is overlap between the policy preferences of the two parliamentary parties (illustrated by the shaded area between parties 1 and 2), i.e. at least some MPs from the two parties have identical preferences to those of the other party. A similar set-up is illustrated by C3, where, as with C1, the cut-point goes ‘through’ one party, but in this case, there is no overlap between the preferences of MPs of the two parties. In the situations illustrated by C1 and C3, MPs from one party thus have incentives

to defect to the other party, but this is not the case for the second party (i.e. the one which the cut-point does not go through). C2 illustrates the situation where the cut-point 'goes through' two parties, so that both parties have MPs that are nearer the other party's median preference than their own party's median, and so have policy incentives to defect. In such a situation, there will always be overlap between the MPs of the two parties. The final cut-point, C4, is located between two parties, so that all MPs from either party are closer to the median position of their own party than to the median of the other party. Thus, this is the only case where no MP has an incentive to defect.

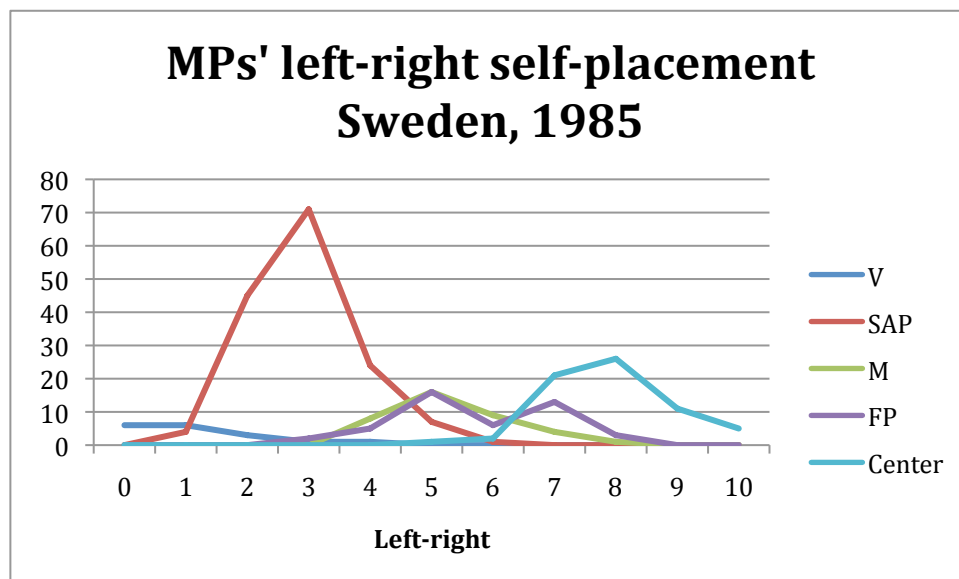
Figure 2



Here it is important to note that, from the perspective of incentives to defect in parliamentary voting, there is functional equivalency between the situations denoted by C1 and C3. Whether there is overlap of the MPs' preferences is irrelevant, despite the fact that this indicates that an MP could, in terms of policy preferences, just as well be in a party other than his own. Rather, the only thing indicating an incentive to defect is whether there is a party whose policy median is nearer the MP's preferences than the median of his own

party. Therefore, what is important is the extent to which an MP has preferences that are nearer those of another party than to his own. While figure 2 is of course a stylised version of reality, it does reflect it to a large degree. Figure 3 shows the distribution of Swedish MPs in 1985 (using self-placement) on a zero to ten left-right scale, each line indicating a party. It can be seen that of the 5 parties in the Riksdag at the time, three have clearly single-peaked distributions of preferences (the social democrats, SAP; the Center party, and the moderates, M). Further, the Left Party (V) has 12 of its 17 MPs at either point 0 or point 1 on the scale (6 at each point), indicating a 'flat' preference peak, but a peak nonetheless. Only one party, the liberals (FP), has a dual-peaked distribution of preferences. We can thus conclude that, while stylised, figure 2 does represent a good approximation of reality in terms of the distribution of preferences within a parliament.

Figure 3



While the above strongly suggests that the key way that preferences influence MPs' legislative behaviour is the existence of palatable alternative policies, the absolute distance between an MP's views and those of his party should not be ignored. While figure 2 illustrated that MPs only have incentives to vote against their party when there is an alternative party nearer to their ideal point,

this does not take into account the location of the status quo. It is straightforward to see that if the status quo of a policy is closer to an MP's ideal point than to the median position of his party, such an MP would have an incentive to vote against his party position, even if there is no alternative party nearer to him, as discussed above. The extent to which this situation will arise will of course vary according to the agenda-setting rules of the various legislatures, but the basic point, that an MP can have an incentive to vote against his party, despite there not being another party offering a better alternative, still holds. Therefore, we would expect an MP who shares the views of his party would thus to behave in a different manner to one who holds views that are far apart from those held by the rest of his party; the farther away, policy-wise, the MP is, the less likely s/he is to be party-oriented, *ceteris paribus*.

Here, it should be noted that preferences should not be understood solely as regarding policy. Two other categories are also relevant for our purposes, as they are also potential sources of discord within a political party, which is of course the object of interest. The first of these regards MPs' preferences regarding representation; that is, what importance do MPs believe should be accorded to representing various groups? If there is divergence within a party on this issue, this is clearly a source of potential discord.

The final category of preferences used is that of the role of parliament; in other words, exactly what actions should parliament, as an institution, engage in? As with the issue of representation, it is also clear that disagreement on this issue can lead to disharmony within a parliamentary party.

To measure the preferences of the Swedish MPs, a number of surveys of the Swedish parliament were used. Since 1985, every Swedish parliament (with the exception of the 1991-94 Riksdag) has been surveyed, giving a total of six surveys analysed in this paper (1985, 1988, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006)². As the surveys have been conducted by the same institution since the beginning, the wording of questions is very stable across time, allowing for easy cross-time

² I am grateful to Peter Esaiasson for allowing me access to the surveys, and for hosting me during my visits to Gothenburg to analyse the data.

comparison. Further, the response rate of these surveys is exceptionally high, well over 90% in all years, meaning that sample selection bias is not a potential problem.

In order to calculate the various ways in which the preferences of MPs can differ from their party, a number of variables were created. To measure the extent to which parties are (dis)-united in their preferences, the agreement index was calculated³. The agreement index, as defined by van der Eijk, allows a much better measure of the dispersion of preferences than more traditional measures such as standard deviations or median absolute deviation, as it does not reflect skewness, but only dispersion⁴. Further, as the agreement index is constructed in such a way that it is insensitive to both the length of the scale and the location of both empty and non-empty categories, it provides a highly non-biased measure of preference dispersion (Van der Eijk 2001). The index ranges from a minimum of -1, which indicates that a group is evenly split into the two extreme categories, through 0, which indicates that a group is evenly split into two adjacent categories, to a maximum of +1, which indicates that all members of a group are located in the same category.

The agreement index was calculated for each party, and for each survey item that was used to measure preferences (see Appendix for full list), and then averaged across the three main preference categories, thus creating one mean agreement index for each category of preferences.

The second set of variables used to measure the preferences of the MPs focussed at the extent to which the MPs were nearer, preference-wise, to a party other than their own; that is, the extent to which MPs have the chance to vote for position nearer their own by breaking party ranks. To calculate this, for each preference variable the median position of each party was calculated,

³ This was done using the 'agrm' command in Stata.

⁴ Skewness arises from the fact that, in an ordered scale, if the mean is located near one of the ends of the scale, a few cases at the other end of the scale will contribute a great deal to the standard deviation, much more so than if the mean was located at the centre of the scale.

and using this information, the absolute distance between each MP's preference and each party's median position was calculated. Taking the minimum of this (i.e. the smallest distance between an MP's preference and the median of any of the parties), and then comparing it with the distance between an MP and his own party on this issue, it was then possible to determine if another party's median position was nearer the preference of an MP than his own party's median position. For each preference, a binary variable was created to reflect this, equal to 1 if a party other than his own was nearer the MP's preference⁵. The frequency of this occurring was then calculated over the three groups of preferences (as was done with the agreement index discussed above), giving a variable ranging from 0 (indicating that the MP's preference is never nearer to that of a party other than his own) to 1 (indicating that for all issues, the MP is nearer another party than his own).

The third set of variables measuring preference (dis)-agreement between MPs and their party was calculated using the left-right positioning of the MPs. In the surveys, the MPs were asked to place themselves on a 0-10 left-right scale, and then to place all of the parties in the Riksdag on a similar scale. The MPs were then also asked to place their own party's voters on a 0-10 left-right scale⁶. Using the answers to these questions, it was then possible to calculate a number of variables measuring disagreement within a party, as well as the extent to which parties and MPs represent their voters. Note that since the voters' 'location' was indicated by the MPs themselves, immediately after noting their own position on the left-right scale, the combination of these variables provide a highly accurate measure of how well voters are represented by their MP and the party they voted for. It should also be noted that while a left-right scale may be a highly condensed and simplified measure

⁵ In the case of a MP's preference being located exactly in the middle between two parties, the variable was coded 0, as the MP would presumably be indifferent between the two parties, and would then choose to follow his party, as there is a cost to breaking the party line.

⁶ The question on the location of the voters of an MP's party was not asked in the 1998 survey; therefore, for that year, some of the variables measuring (dis)-agreement could not be computed.

of preferences, the fact that all the placements were done by a single individual (i.e. the responding MP) means that it allows for a highly accurate measure of whether an MP believes there to be a difference in preferences, and so a source of conflict, between himself and his party and his voters, respectively.

The first variable calculated using the placements of MPs, parties and voters measured whether there was a difference between an MP's placement of himself, and his placement of his own party, coded 1 if there was a difference, and else coded zero. Then, a similar variable was created, measuring whether there was a difference between the MP and the voters of his party, coded as above. Thirdly, it was calculated whether there was a difference in an MP's placement of his party and that of his party's voters, again coded 1 if this was the case, and else coded zero. Finally, a variable was created measuring whether an MP placed himself nearer a party other than his own, as well as a variable measuring whether the MP placed his voters nearer a party other than the one they voted for. These last two variables were coded 1 if this was the case, and else were coded zero.

Table 1 summarises the variables discussed above. For those variables using the agreement index (AGRM), the range (to two decimals) is given, i.e. between the party with the lowest and the party with the highest agreement index. For the variables measuring whether there is a difference between the MP, the party and the voters, a percentage is given, indicating the share of the MPs who indicated such a difference being present in each of the cases. Similarly, for the 'MP nearer other party' and the 'voters nearer other party', the percentage indicates the share of the MPs indicating that another party was nearer the MP and the voter, respectively. For those variables measuring whether another party's median position is nearer the preference of the MP than his own party's median position, a percentage is given, indicating the number of MPs who were nearer their own party in at least half the issues used to calculate the composite measure. N/A indicates that in the survey of that year, the questions used to create this variable were not asked.

Table 1 Swedish MPs' preferences, 1985 to 2006

	1985	1988	1994	1998	2002	2006
AGRM						
Policy	.49-.87	.57-.85	.44-.64	.50-.75	.56-.72	.36-.60
Representation	.47-.70	.56-.72	.51-.67	.57-.66	.44-.63	.46-.69
Role of Riksdag	.68-.74	N/A	.68-.80	N/A	.66-.83	.67-.79
LR-differences						
Self-party	45%	44%	45%	44%	43%	34%
Self-voters	62%	65%	65%	N/A	57%	56%
Party-voters	54%	54%	49%	N/A	53%	53%
MP nearer other party	12%	16%	15%	25%	14%	11%
Voters nearer other party	15%	18%	19%	N/A	15%	22%
"Nearer" variables						
Policy	79%	76%	46%	74%	70%	66%
Representation	95%	96%	85%	96%	96%	96%
Role of Riksdag	80%	N/A	72%	N/A	81%	72%

Looking at table 1, we can make a number of observations. First of all, we can observe that the parties of the Riksdag do have a significant impact on the way in which their members vote. If we recall Krehbiel's argument that only if we have an accurate measure of the preferences of MPs can we draw solid conclusions about whether parties influence the way in which parliamentarians vote, the null hypothesis being that we observe MPs from the same party voting together because they have shared preferences⁷ (Krehbiel 1993), and also recall that Swedish parties display very high levels of voting unity in floor voting (Sieberer 2006), table 1 tells us a lot about the extent to which MPs fail to vote their sincere policy preference. Firstly, the various agreement indices, while generally speaking quite high, do differ significantly from 1, meaning that there, in all of the parties in the Riksdag do exist differences of opinion, both with regards to policy, the role of parliament, and what kind of representative role MPs should play. For both the agreement index of representation and that of the role of parliament, the indices have no

⁷ Note that Krehbiel does not make a claim about whether parties influence the selection of MPs prior to their entry into a legislature; he only argues that since MPs are not randomly distributed into political parties, we cannot exclude the theoretical possibility that they are actually in agreement, and vote sincerely according to their preferences.

trend, that is, there is no pattern across time indicating either an increase or a decrease in the levels of agreement. The agreement index regarding policy does indicate a drop in the levels of agreement in the political parties, but only of a minor magnitude.

Turning to the variables measuring left-right differences, we see that a striking number of MPs indicate that there is a gap between the MPs themselves, the voters and the parties. In all 6 surveys, a majority of MPs indicated that they held views (as measured on a left-right scale) that were different from those of their party's voters, and, with the exception of 1994, a majority indicated that their party's position was different from that of its voters. The proportion of MPs that indicated differences between the position of their party and of their voters was also remarkably stable, especially when considering the very long time-span that this data covers. A similar stability is present with the regards to the position of MPs that indicate a difference between themselves and their political party (albeit with a drop in 2006). However, the proportion of MPs who indicated a difference between themselves and their party's voters does displays an interesting pattern. While stable (indeed rising slightly) in the decade between 1985 and 1994, a total drop of 9% then occurs by the 2006 survey. This coincides with the introduction of the possibility to cast individual votes in the Riksdag elections (see below for further details), indicating that, despite it only introducing a limited ability to influence the election of MPs by voters, the personal vote option has lead to at least some narrowing of the gap between MPs and voters.

While the discussion of the levels of the agreement index and the self-reported differences above has shown that real dissimilarities exist between MPs and their parties, this in itself is not enough to show that MPs do not vote sincerely. As was argued above, differences between the ideal policy of an MP and his party alone are not enough to produce an incentive for the MP to defect in floor voting. Rather, what is necessary is that MPs have a viable alternative voting option, that is, that another party is nearer their ideal point than their own party is. Looking at the bottom two rows of table 1, we can conclude that, at least for issues regarding representation and the role of

parliament, such alternatives are relatively rare, especially when it comes to representation. However, while both these issues are clearly potential sources of conflict within a parliamentary party, actual policy issues are more likely to lead to serious disagreement within a party. And, looking at the third row from the bottom of table 1, we can see that, on a very regular basis, MPs are nearer the policy position of a party other than their own. Recall that the percentage shown is the percentage of MPs who are nearer their own party than any other party in a majority of the issues used to construct the variable. So, for example, in the 1988-1991 Riksdag, 24% of MPs had a policy incentive to vote against their party *in a majority of the votes*. Over the whole period in question, on average a majority of MPs had an incentive to defect on policy issues in 31,8% of cases. Despite this, as mentioned above, defections in floor votes in the Riksdag are very rare, indicating that MPs' voting behaviour is substantially different from their sincere policy preferences. One objection to this line of argument is that, while there may be substantial differences in the objective preferences of MPs and their parties, these differences might not be perceived as problematic by the MPs in terms of voting with their party; in other words that, while their answers to policy questions indicate differences, MPs do not, in reality, perceive themselves to be different than their parties. However, looking at the 'MP nearer other party' line in table 1 disproves this argument. Recall that this variable indicates the proportion of MPs whose self-placement on a 0-10 left-right scale is nearer a political party other than their own than it is to their own party; in other words, it indicates the share of MPs who themselves acknowledge that policy-wise, they are a better fit with a party other than their own. This clearly shows that MPs do not always vote their sincere preferences in the Riksdag; if they did, then, by their own acknowledgement, a substantial number of votes would go against the party line, which simply does not happen.

To summarise, in this section it has been shown, using the preferences of MPs, as well as their positioning of themselves, their party and their voters on a left-right scale, that there exists real differences with regards to preferences within the parties in the Riksdag. This is the case for levels of agreement within parties, differences in self-placement of the MPs and their parties, as

well as the existence of available policy alternatives for MPs in the shape of parties with preferences nearer the MPs than the MPs' own parties. Further, it has been argued that this is conclusive proof of an intervening variable in legislative voting, as evidenced by the discrepancy between MP's preferences and their voting behaviour.

This conclusion then begs the question: why do Swedish MPs accept such constraints on their voting behaviour with regards to their party? The next section will seek to answer this question.

Understanding party voting unity

Theories of party unity.

As shown in the previous section, Swedish MPs clearly adjust their voting behaviour in order to vote with their party; yet why this is the case is unclear. In order to test this, I model the MPs' attitudes to party unity, to discover if a pattern exists with regards to why MPs feel they way that they do with regards to voting with their party. The intuition is that, if such a pattern does emerge, then the variables that are significantly correlated with the MPs' attitudes to party unity explain why MPs fall into line when it comes to voting. So, for example, if MPs' electoral incentives to cultivate a personal vote display a negative relationship with their attitudes to party unity, we can conclude that MPs vote with their party because they are compelled to do so, rather than because it is in their interest (which, in this example, would be to cultivate a personal following in the electorate). On the other hand, the null hypothesis is that, if no significant relationships exist between the incentives of MPs and their attitudes to party unity, then the acceptance by the MP of voting with the party must therefore be voluntary. In other words, a null finding will indicate that MPs have some given attitude to party unity, but since this is not influenced by any of the incentives included in the model, this attitude is idiosyncratic. Given that we know that MPs do vote the party line, the decision to forego voting sincerely must therefore be voluntary.

The literature on party unity in legislatures provides us with a number of possible influences on MPs' behaviour with regards to floor voting. As was

discussed in the previous section, one key element that has to be accounted for is the extent to which an MP's preferences are similar to those of the rest of his party (Krehbiel 1993). Despite the clear potential to influence the voting behaviour of MPs, little research has been done where the preferences of individual MPs are accounted for (for an exception, see Kam 2001; Kam 2009), due to the difficulty of establishing accurate measures of MPs' preferences at the individual level. The discussion of the nature of parliamentary preferences in the previous section gives us two testable hypotheses. The first of these regards the extent to which MPs hold policy preferences that are nearer the median of a party other than their own. Here, it would be expected that MPs who often find themselves in a position where another party offers them a more palatable policy option would be more inclined to have a negative view of party unity, and vice versa. We thus have

Hypothesis 1.a: The more an MP holds preferences that are nearer to the median position of another party than to that of his own, the less likely he is to be party-oriented, and vice versa.

A second way in which an MP's preferences could matter is the extent to which he holds views that are different from his party; that is, in terms of a spatial model of preferences, the absolute distance between the preferences of an MP and the median position of his party. This gives us

Hypothesis 1.b: The further the preferences of an MP are from those of his party, the less likely he is to be party-oriented, and vice-versa.

A key potential influence on legislative behaviour is the electoral rules under which MPs are elected. The theoretical assumption here is that legislators value re-election highly, and so will be highly responsive to anything that influences their chances of winning re-election. This does not mean that we have to assume that politicians are solely motivated by the prospect of re-election, that they are 'single-minded' concerning that goal (Mayhew 1974). Rather, the assumption is that since all the goals that legislators may have rely upon their continued membership of a parliament, then the electoral goal

will be the primary goal, for most members, most of the time (Fenno 1977, p.890). In an important contribution, Carey & Shugart, using only three characteristics (with three levels for each), ranked all theoretically possible electoral systems with regards to the incentives for a legislator seeking re-election pursuing a 'personal vote' versus pursuing a 'party vote' (i.e. whether the legislator has an incentive to maximise the number of votes going to her personally, or maximise the number of votes going to the party as a whole) (Carey & Shugart 1995). Thus, candidates can be expected to act differently with regards to their obedience to the party leadership depending on what electoral system they exist in. Carey and Shugart find that of the 27 possible combinations⁸, only 13 are logically feasible (Carey & Shugart 1995, p.420). However, the influence of a fourth variable, district size (i.e. how many legislative seats are at stake in each district), complicates matters, as its effect 'on the value of personal reputation is driven by the imperative (or lack thereof, in closed list systems) of politicians to distinguish themselves from their co-partisans in order to be elected'. In open-list systems (of which there are of course many variants), the larger the district size, the more important for election it becomes to have a personal vote. The reason for this is that as the district grows in size, there are more opponents within a legislator's own party that a candidate need to distinguish herself from. On the other hand, for closed-list systems, the larger the district, the less important personal reputation becomes. The reason for this is that as the need to attract votes to the party, which for smaller districts can be done by having a high personal profile, becomes less important than pleasing the selectorate who decides the order of candidates on the list. A number of studies has found support for this theory, albeit not always unequivocally so (see e.g. Carey 2007; Carey 2009; Chang & Golden 2007; Hix 2002; Shugart et al. 2005; Sieberer 2006; Sieberer 2010). Thus, according to this theory, MPs' views on party unity would be influenced by the extent to which they have incentives and opportunities to cultivate a personal following in the electorate, separate from their party. This gives us

⁸ That is, 3 categories (Ballot, Pool & Votes) with 3 levels each, i.e. 3*3*3

Hypothesis 2: *The larger an incentive an MP has to cultivate a personal vote, the less party-oriented he will be, and vice versa.*

In his study of parliamentary unity, Carey found that the older a political party is, the less likely it was for its MPs to break the party line in parliamentary votes (Carey 2009, p.150). This intriguing finding suggests that, over time, parties develop a norm of behaving in a unified manner, as MPs come to trust each other and understand the value of unity. A similar process has been found in Germany after reunification, where MPs from the former East relatively quickly attained levels of party unity similar to those from the West. This was done not by threats from the party whips, but rather by them 'pointing out the hard logic of parliamentary realities' to the newcomers (Davidson-Schmich 2001, p.99). Further, in Denmark, it has been found that one potentially crucial element in the exceptionally high levels of party unity found there⁹ is that MPs feel that they have a 'moral obligation' to their party (Skjæveland 1999, p.133), a process that has also been found in the British House of Commons (Crowe 1986). Thus, it would be expected that MPs, over time, internalise the norm of party unity in voting. This gives us

Hypothesis 3: *The longer a MP has been in parliament, the more party-oriented he will be.*

It is oft-cited truth that politicians are motivated by a desire for 'policy, office and votes' (Müller & Strøm 1999). As party leaders in parliamentary democracies have substantial control over access to political office in both the parliament (e.g. committee placements, chairmanships) and in government (i.e. ministerial office), they can use the promise of promotion (or the threat of demotion) to induce MPs to behave in a certain way (Cox 1987; Hix & Benedetto 2007). However, the extent to which such promises are effective depends on the individual MP. For example, an (older) MP near the end of his career will be unlikely to be offered office, regardless of other whether he is a 'team-player' or not; on the other hand, a younger MP, with his whole career

⁹ Less than 1 out of 1000 votes in the Danish Folketing is cast against the party line.

ahead of him, will be much more likely to be receptive to promises of promotion. This gives us

Hypothesis 4a: *The older an MP is, the less party-oriented he will be, and vice versa.*

A corollary of this, combined with the previous discussion about re-selection and re-election, is that MPs will be sensitive to their available alternative occupations; that is, an MP knowing that the alternative, in terms of employment, to being an MP is substantially worse than life in parliament is more likely to fall into line than an MP from whom leaving parliament will have no such negative repercussions. We thus have

Hypothesis 4b: *MPs' attitudes to party unity will vary according to the occupation available to them outside of parliament¹⁰.*

Data and operationalisation.

Three different dependent variables were used to explore the MPs' attitudes to party unity. In the surveys of 1985, 1988, 1998 and 2002, MPs were asked how they felt they should vote if there was a disagreement between their party and themselves. In the 1985 and 1988 surveys, MPs were given a 5-point

¹⁰ While the discussion of the potential influences on party unity above sought to be comprehensive, a number of theories were not mentioned, due to the data not allowing them to be modelled. Thus, when it comes to candidate selection rules, which influence who gets on the ballot in the first place, and so are a key potential source of influence over a parliamentary party (Depauw & Martin 2009; Hazan & Rahat 2006), the political parties of Sweden have highly similar procedures in place (Lundell 2004), leaving no variation to analyse. Similarly, the threat of early elections, which is hypothesised to compel MPs to toe the party line (Huber 1996; Diermeier & Feddersen 1998), does not vary in Sweden over the period analysed here. Lastly, whether a party is in government, which influences the pay-offs available to MPs from such a party (Carey 2007; Rahat 2007; Sieberer 2006), which does vary over time, cannot be modelled in a satisfactory manner, due to the very small effective N, as government status only varies on the level of parties (i.e. N ranges from 5 to 7); see section on data and operationalisation below.

scale on which to indicate their answer¹¹, while in the 1998 and 2002 survey, MPs could answer either 'own opinion' (coded 0) or 'with party' (coded 1). The wording of the question was identical in all four years. A second dependent variable was based on a question asking MPs about their views on the demands of party unity (asked in 1988, 1994, 2002 and 2006), and a third dependent variable was based on a question asking MPs about their views on expectation to follow the party line in parliamentary votes (asked in 1994 and 2002). Both the second and third dependent variable was a 3-step scale¹². These two dependent variables thus concern different aspects of party behaviour in parliament, with the first looking at more general aspects, while the second is about the very specific element of floor voting.

In order to test hypothesis 1a (the effect of an MP's preferences being nearer the median of a party other than his own) a variable measuring the frequency of an MP having policy preferences nearer another party's median position was included (constructed as discussed in the previous section). To test hypothesis and 1a (the effect of an MP having preferences that are distant to those of his party), a variable measuring the average absolute distance of an MP's policy preferences to his party's median position was included in the model. Further, binary variables measuring whether an MP had indicated that he was located at a different point on a left-right scale than his party (*lr_difference*) and that he was located nearer a party other than his own, also on a left-right scale (*mp_nearer_party*), were included as measures of an MP's preferences vis-à-vis his party.

One interesting aspect of the data analysed in this chapter is the fact that the Swedish electoral system was changed in 1997, and so from the 1998 election onwards, the electoral incentives of MPs changed. From 1974 until the 1994 election included, voting was by party, and the parties themselves decided on the order of their candidates (Constitution of Sweden, chap.3 Art

¹¹ The scale being 'always own opinion', 'usually own opinion', 'it depends', 'usually with party', 'always with party', in increasing order.

¹² The scale being 'should be made looser', 'good as is' and 'should be made stronger', in increasing order.

7); in other words, a closed-list electoral system was used. However, in the 1997 Elections Act, the possibility for the voters to influence which candidate got elected was introduced. Under the new electoral system, any candidate who had obtained as personal votes at least 8% of his party's votes in a constituency would, assuming that the party had won any seats in the constituency, be moved to the top of the party list (The Elections Act, 1997, sec.38). While the level of potential influence of the voters on which candidates are elected is thus limited, this change in electoral law nonetheless introduced an incentive to cultivate a personal vote for Riksdag candidates, in that it became possible (if difficult) to appeal directly to the voters over the heads of the party leadership. Thus, to test hypothesis 2 (the incentive to cultivate a personal vote), a variable measuring the size of each MP's constituency was included (size measured as the number of MPs elected from that constituency)¹³. Further, from the 1998 election onwards, a variable was included indicating whether an MP had conducted a personal campaign, that is, encouraged voters to vote for them as an individual, as opposed to voting for the MP's party. This binary variable was constructed using the answer to a survey question inquiring as to whether an MP had campaigned for individual votes. It thus measures whether those MPs that seek personal votes (in other words, those that sought to cultivate a personal vote base) differ from those that only campaign for their party.

Hypothesis 3 (parliamentary party socialisation) was tested by including a variable measuring the number of years an MP had been in parliament (*time_as_mp*). Unfortunately, in a number of the surveys, this was available only as an indicator of the first year an MP had been elected. As some MPs lost re-election bids, only to be elected to parliament again at a later stage, it is not possible to calculate the number of years an MP had served from that information alone. To compensate for this, a variable indicating whether an MP had served continuously since his first election was also included for those years where the direct measure of time as mp was not available.

¹³ At the time of writing, the constituencies had not been included in the 2006 survey; therefore, this variable is not included in the analysis of the 2006 data.

To test hypothesis 4a (the effect of life experience/years left in career) a variable measuring the MPs' age was included in the model.

To test hypothesis 4b (the effect of the attractiveness of outside jobs) a number of dummy variables indicating the nature of the last previous employment of an MP prior to their election were included. The coding for these categories was identical across all six surveys. The baseline category was white-collar worker. Due to perfect prediction by one of the dummies in the 1998 self vs. party model, the model was run without the observations matching this dummy; as this was only 9 in total, it should not bias the model results.

In the first section of this paper, three distinct modes of influence of preferences were discussed; however, only two of them are modelled here (i.e. leaving out the effect of a party's MPs having heterogeneous preferences). The reason for this is that as these variables only vary on the party level, and the number of parties in each year of the survey (between 5 and 7) was too small to draw meaningful conclusions from, it would not be feasible to model a multi-level model (with parties at the upper level)¹⁴. Instead, in order to prevent a bias arising from this omission, party fixed effects were included in all the models. Missing values were dealt with using multiple imputation (m=5), including the (very few) missing values of the dependent variables (as per Schafer & Graham 2002). Finally, when available, a variable indicating whether an MP was part of the parliamentary group leadership was included as a control, as such MPs are more likely to favour being party-oriented (as they control the party)¹⁵. For the models where the dependent variable was binary (1998 and 2002, self vs. party as dependent variable), a logit model was fitted, and as the remaining models all had an ordered scale as the dependent variable, ordered logit models were fitted. The results are shown in tables 2 and 3.

¹⁴ A similar logic applies to the effect of government status; see footnote 10

¹⁵ As the surveys were anonymous, it was not possible to code this variable where it was not available.

Results and discussion

As can be seen from tables 2 and 3, there is, to all extents and purposes, no support for any of the hypotheses. Virtually no coefficients attain statistical significance in any of the models, and so none of the hypotheses are supported by the data. There is very partial support for hypothesis 1a in the 2002 party_unity model, and for hypothesis 4a in both the party_unity and follow_party_line models based on the 1994 survey.

Further, the mp_nearer_party variable is statistically significant at the 5% level in the 1985 self vs. party model, but in the opposite direction of what was expected. Also significant in this model was the dummy variable indicating a background as an entrepreneur (i.e. owner of a company). Lastly, the blue-collar dummy variable is significant in the 1988 party_unity model as well as in the follow_party_line and party_unity models using the 1994 data. Also, the dummies for entrepreneur, farmer and no prior occupation were significant in the 2006 party_unity model.

These exceptions aside, however, the evidence is overwhelmingly in favour of failing to reject the null hypothesis, both across time and across the various ways in which MP's attitudes to party unity was operationalised. What emerges is that we can conclude, with great confidence, that the MPs' attitudes to party unity are not determined by any of the factors that indicate MPs having incentives to either object to or encourage party unity in the Riksdag. In other words, MPs' views on this issue are idiosyncratic; they hold a view, but the reasons why they feel one way or another on this topic is independent of any rational utility-maximisation that has been modelled here.

Table 2. Self vs. party as dependent variable

	1985	1988	1998	2002
distance_policy	0.269 (0.608)	0.938 (0.746)	-1.734 (1.493)	-1.35 (1.190)
lr_difference	-0.071 (0.226)	0.297 (0.222)	-0.266 (0.362)	-0.213 (0.360)
sum_nearer_policy	-1.01 (1.204)	-1.539 (1.269)	2.66 (1.830)	1.008 (2.130)
mp_nearer_party	0.689* (0.341)		-0.026 (0.476)	0.022 (0.504)
time_as_mp	-0.035 (0.021)	-0.043 (0.024)		
continuous_mp	-0.098 (0.360)	-0.048 (0.328)		
constituency_size	0.001 (0.012)	-0.001 (0.012)	0 (0.013)	0.008 (0.021)
personal_campaign			-0.458 (0.411)	-0.203 (0.443)
leader	-0.029 (0.310)	0.124 (0.334)		
age	0.013 (0.015)	-0.017 (0.015)	-0.007 (0.015)	0.034 (0.018)
Blue-collar	0.521 (0.294)	0.161 (0.358)	-0.237 (0.455)	0.219 (0.414)
Entrepreneur	1.077* (0.438)	0.233 (0.595)	1.368 (0.906)	0.957 (0.530)
Farmer	-0.257 (0.443)	-0.771 (0.497)	0.181 (0.545)	0.048 (0.588)
No prior occupation	0.455 (0.442)	-0.09 (0.447)		-1.225 (1.257)
Constant			1.576 (1.124)	0.077 (0.990)
cut1				
Constant	-1.392 (0.821)	-2.213* (0.866)		
cut2				
Constant	-0.891 (0.820)	-1.617 (0.862)		
cut3				
Constant	-0.123 (0.817)	-0.871 (0.857)		
cut4				
Constant	0.888 (0.817)	0.135 (0.859)		
N	327	311	308	327
* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001				
Party fixed effects				

Table 3. 'Party unity' and 'Follow party line' as dependent variables

	Party unity as DV				Follow Party Line as DV	
	1988	1994	2002	2006	1994	2002
distance_policy	-1.354 (1.084)	-0.5 (1.074)	1.417 (1.033)	-0.718 (0.971)	-1.133 (1.260)	1.035 (1.069)
lr_difference	-0.042 (0.328)	-0.071 (0.328)	-0.017 (0.311)	-0.346 (0.327)	-0.439 (0.391)	-0.06 (0.320)
sum_nearer_policy	0.406 (1.873)	0.288 (1.502)	-5.101** (1.829)	1.232 (1.606)	1.338 (1.763)	-3.184 (1.921)
mp_nearer_party		-0.191 (0.460)	-0.065 (0.435)	0.115 (0.517)	-0.063 (0.536)	-0.417 (0.444)
time_as_mp	-0.01 (0.033)	0.001 (0.027)		-0.022 (0.031)	0.006 (0.034)	
continuous_mp	0.452 (0.474)	0.526 (0.387)			0.315 (0.455)	
constituency_size	-0.03 (0.017)	0.003 (0.017)	-0.005 (0.017)		0.004 (0.021)	-0.003 (0.018)
personal_campaign			-0.228 (0.390)	-0.276 (0.411)		-0.172 (0.410)
leader	0.059 (0.444)	-0.25 (0.377)			0.443 (0.461)	
age	-0.023 (0.023)	-0.066** (0.020)	0.024 (0.014)	0.019 (0.014)	-0.060** (0.022)	0.025 (0.014)
Blue-collar	0.997* (0.457)	1.068** (0.411)	0.138 (0.364)	0.551 (0.399)	1.450** (0.535)	0.348 (0.396)
Entrepreneur	-0.251 (0.843)	-0.032 (0.759)	0.177 (0.529)	-1.113* (0.536)	-0.232 (0.810)	0.368 (0.547)
Farmer	0.356 (0.720)	0.185 (0.654)	-0.678 (0.453)	-1.176** (0.422)	-0.038 (0.743)	-0.207 (0.494)
No prior occupation	-0.059 (0.675)	-0.586 (0.821)	-0.808 (0.787)	-1.907** (0.677)	-0.1 (0.881)	-0.377 (0.857)
cut1 Constant	-4.461*** (1.317)	-5.957*** (1.243)	-2.338** (0.888)	-1.544 (0.883)	-5.415*** (1.413)	-1.509 (0.920)
cut2 Constant	0.827 (1.268)	-0.852 (1.148)	1.836* (0.883)	2.864** (0.896)	0.754 (1.356)	3.013** (0.950)
N	311	321	327	327	321	327

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Party fixed effects

To summarise, across the various models (10 in total) the hypotheses failed to find any substantial support, regardless of which dependent variable was used, and regardless of which year was analysed. Thus, we can confirm the null hypothesis: that MPs' views on party unity are not influenced by objective factors that may give MPs incentives to feel one way or the other about the issue.

Combining the finding that MP's attitudes to party unity are independent of any attempts at utility-maximisation with the previous finding of preference heterogeneity in the parties in the Riksdag, and keeping in mind the fact that Swedish political parties display very high levels of voting unity in floor voting, the findings in this chapter point very clearly towards the conclusion that Swedish MPs voluntarily accept voting the party line, even when their preferences differ from their party. This points to an intriguing potential addition to Krehbiel's warning that we cannot draw conclusions about party effects without controlling for preferences: we might not be able to conclude that party effects are present even we observe that MPs vote by party, and we know that the preferences of the MPs do not perfectly match those of their party. The reason for this lies in the finding of the idiosyncratic source of MPs' views on party unity. It is well established in the literature that parties in legislatures perform a series of functions that allow for a more efficient decision-making process (i.e. coordination, minimising the number of unstable equilibria, reducing information costs), so MPs have strong incentives to exist in legislative parties. However, as it is possible that the MPs, recognising the benefits that they gain from their membership of a parliamentary party, voluntarily fall into line when they disagree with their party, in order to ensure that the party can efficiently deliver the goods that come from being well-organised, it is entirely possible that legislative parties in Sweden simply do not influence voting outcomes. That is, the legislative outcomes in situations without parties with supposed powers of coercion with regards to their members could very well be identical to the outcomes in a situation which does have parties that have the ability to threaten 'their' MPs. In other words, as MPs have reasons to vote with their party even when disagreeing with it, we cannot conclude that 'party effects' are present even when we observe ideologically diverse parties voting as a unity actor; and the analysis presented in this chapter strongly suggests that the absence of 'party effects' in legislative politics is a very real possibility.

Bibliography

- Anon, 1996. *The Constitution of Sweden*,
- Anon, 1997. *The Elections Act, Sweden*,
- Bergman, T. & Bolin, N., 2011. Swedish Democracy. Crumbling Political Parties, a Feeble Riksdag, and Technocratic Power Holders. In T. Bergman & K. Strøm, eds. *The Madisonian Turn. Political Parties and Parliamentary Democracy in Nordic Europe*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Carey, J.M., 2007. Competing Principals, Political Institutions, and Party Unity in Legislative Voting. *American Journal of Political Science*, 51(1), pp.92-107.
- Carey, J.M., 2009. *Legislative Voting and Accountability*, New York, New York: Cam.
- Carey, J.M. & Shugart, M.S., 1995. Incentives to cultivate a personal vote: A rank ordering of electoral formulas. *Electoral Studies*, 14(4), pp.417-439.
- Chang, E.C.C. & Golden, M.A., 2007. Electoral Systems, District Magnitude and Corruption. *British Journal of Political Science*, 37(01), pp.115-137.
- Cox, G.W., 1987. *The Efficient Secret: The Cabinet and the Development of Political Parties in Victorian England*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Crowe, E., 1986. The Web of Authority: Party Loyalty and Social Control in the British House of Commons. *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 11(2), pp.161-185.
- Davidson-Schmich, L.K., 2001. Party Discipline and Universalism: The Case of Budgeting in Berlin. *Journal of Legislative Studies*, 7(4), pp.37-62.
- Depauw, S. & Martin, S., 2009. Legislative party cohesion and discipline in comparative perspective. In D. Giannetti & K. Benoit, eds. *Intra-party politics and coalition governments*. Routledge.
- Diermeier, D. & Feddersen, T.J., 1998. Cohesion in Legislatures and the Vote of Confidence Procedure. *The American Political Science Review*, 92(3), pp.611-621.
- Van der Eijk, C., 2001. Measuring agreement in ordered rating scales. *Quality and Quantity*, 35(3), pp.325-341.
- Fenno, R.F., 1977. U.S. House Members in Their Constituencies: An Exploration. *The American Political Science Review*, 71(3), pp.883-917.

- Hazan, R.Y. & Rahat, G., 2006. The influence of candidate selection methods on legislatures and legislators: Theoretical propositions, methodological suggestions and empirical evidence. *Journal of Legislative Studies*, 12(3&4), pp.366-385.
- Hix, S., 2002. Parliamentary Behavior with Two Principals: Preferences, Parties, and Voting in the European Parliament. *American Journal of Political Science*, 46(3), pp.688-698.
- Hix, S. & Benedetto, G., 2007. The Rejected, the Dejected and the Ejected: Explaining Government Rebels in the 2001-2005 House of Commons. *The Journal of Politics*, 40(7), pp.755-781.
- Huber, J.D., 1996. The Vote of Confidence in Parliamentary Democracies. *The American Political Science Review*, 90(2), pp.269-282.
- Kam, C.J., 2001. Do Ideological Preferences Explain Parliamentary Behaviour? Evidence from Great Britain and Canada. *Journal of Legislative Studies*, 7(4), pp.89-126.
- Kam, C.J., 2009. *Party Discipline and Parliamentary Politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Krehbiel, K., 1993. Where's the Party? *British Journal of Political Science*, 23(2), pp.235-266.
- Lane, J.-E. et al., 1993. Scandinavian Exceptionalism Reconsidered. *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 5(2), pp.195-230.
- Lundell, K., 2004. Determinants of Candidate Selection: The Degree of Centralization in Comparative Perspective. *Party Politics*, 10, pp.25-47.
- Mayhew, D.R., 1974. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Müller, W.C. & Strøm, K., 1999. *Policy, office, or votes? : How political parties in Western Europe make hard decisions*, Cambridge University Press.
- Pierre, J. & Widfeldt, A., 1996. Party Organizations in Sweden: Colossuses with Feet of Clay or Flexible Pillars of Government. In R. S. Katz & P. Mair, eds. *How Parties Organize. Change and Adaptation in Party Organizations in Western Democracies*. London: Sage Publications.
- Rahat, G., 2007. Determinants of Party Cohesion: Evidence from the Case of the Israeli Parliament. *Parliamentary Affairs*, 60(2), pp.279-296.
- Sannerstedt, A. & Sjölin, M., 1992. Sweden: Changing party relations in a more active parliament. In *Damgaard, E. (ed): Parliamentary Change in the Nordic Countries*. Oslo: Scandinavian University Press.
- Schafer, J.L. & Graham, J.W., 2002. Missing data: Our view of the state of the art. *Psychological methods*, 7(2), pp.147-177.

- Shugart, M.S., Valdini, M.E. & Suominen, K., 2005. Looking for Locals: Voter Information Demands and Personal Vote-Earning Attributes of Legislators under Proportional Representation. *American Journal of Political Science*, 49(2), pp.437-449.
- Sieberer, U., 2010. Behavioral consequences of mixed electoral systems: Deviating voting behavior of district and list MPs in the German Bundestag. *Electoral Studies*, 29(3), pp.484–496.
- Sieberer, U., 2006. Party unity in parliamentary democracies: A comparative analysis. *Journal of Legislative Studies*, 12(2), pp.150-178.
- Skjæveland, A., 1999. A Danish Party Cohesion Cycle. *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 22(2), pp.121-136.

Appendix: Survey questions used to measure MPs' preferences

Policy issues	1985	1988	1994	1998	2002	2006
Decrease size of public sector	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Abolish wage-earner funds	Yes					
Decrease defence expenditure	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Larger role for private healthcare	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ban all forms of pornography	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Permit commercials in Swedish TV	Yes	Yes				
Build more child-care institutions	Yes	Yes				
Introduce a 6-hour work day	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Retain nuclear power (85-94) / Abandon nuclear power (98 - 06)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Decrease the income-differences in society		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ban private cars in city centres		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Apply for EU membership (85-94)/Leave the EU (98 -)		Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Large increase in gasoline taxes to improve the environment		Yes				
Increase taxes on high incomes (94) / Lower Taxes (02 - 06)			Yes		Yes	Yes
Accept fewer refugees in Sweden			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Limit the influence of financial markets on politics			Yes			
Introduce gender quotas for leadership positions in the public sector			Yes			
Ban genetic manipulation			Yes			
Give higher priority for funding to sparsely populated areas			Yes			
Decrease development aid						
Apply for membership of NATO				Yes	Yes	Yes
Join the EMU				Yes	Yes	Yes
Soften labour laws					Yes	
Politically support the US' War on Terror					Yes	
Increase labour immigration into Sweden					Yes	
Introduce a language test to obtain citizenship					Yes	
Strengthen the rights of animals					Yes	
Turkey should be allowed to join the EU						Yes

Role of parliament	1985	1988	1994	1998	2002	2006
Take key decisions for society's development	Yes		Yes		Yes	Yes
Oversee the work of the government and ministers	Yes		Yes		Yes	Yes
Be the central arena for the political debate	Yes		Yes		Yes	Yes
Predict the problems of the future before they become acute	Yes		Yes		Yes	Yes
Reflect the views of the electoral as a whole	Yes		Yes		Yes	Yes
Take initiative on issues not addressed by the government	Yes		Yes		Yes	Yes
Oversee developments in the EU					Yes	Yes
Engage in follow-up and evaluation of the Riksdag's decisions					Yes	Yes
Representation	1985	1988	1994	1998	2002	2006
Work with problems that voters contact you about	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Advance causes that you personally find important	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Advance your party's policies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Advance your region's/constituency's interest/views	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Advance the interests of the young	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Advance the interests of employees	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Advance the interests of entrepreneurs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Advance the interests of women	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Advance the interests of farmers	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Advance the interests of pensioners		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Advance the interests of refugees/immigrants			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Advance the interests of the temperance movement			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Advance the interests of Christians				Yes	Yes	Yes
Advance the interests of LGBT people					Yes	Yes