

# **The Ethnic Nationalist Seduction: Populist Radical Right Parties in Denmark and Sweden**

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## Abstract

Populist radical right (PRR) political parties have become important players in many European countries. These parties generally have a core ideology of ethnic nationalism supported by antiestablishment populism and sociocultural authoritarianism. PRR parties have managed to find electoral success in many European countries over the last few decades, usually at the expense of more established mainstream parties. The success of PRR parties is dependent on both voters and the parties themselves. In other words, parties must frame issues in a way that appeals to at least some voters while voters must have some reason for supporting these parties. This thesis looks at Denmark and Sweden, two countries with relatively similar cultures, political systems, and economies that have had different experiences with PRR parties. An analysis of socioeconomic factors highlights certain traits that make voters more likely to vote for PRR parties, namely education and unemployment. Additionally, PRR party rhetoric likely appeals to socioeconomically disadvantaged voters by promising improved welfare and shifting the blame for their troubles to immigrants. In sum, this thesis suggests that PRR parties will continue to find electoral success as long as immigration maintains a high level of political salience, as PRR parties can use anti-immigration rhetoric to attract the socioeconomically disadvantaged.

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General Audience Abstract

Populist radical right (PRR) political parties have become important players in many European countries. These parties generally have a core ideology of ethnic nationalism, a form of nationalism defined by ethnicity and focusing on a shared heritage. PRR parties also generally espouse antiestablishment populism by trying to appeal to the masses through critiques of the government and established political parties. These parties also tend to embrace sociocultural authoritarianism, the desire for strict obedience to authority as it pertains to society and culture. This thesis looks at Denmark and Sweden, two countries with relatively similar cultures, political systems, and economies that have had different experiences with PRR parties. However, PRR parties have been electorally successful in both countries over the last decade. This thesis examines socioeconomic factors that may affect the likelihood of voters to vote for PRR parties, and determines that education and unemployment can play a large role in voter attitudes. Additionally, this thesis analyzes PRR party rhetoric and ascertains that these parties likely appeal to socioeconomically disadvantaged voters. In sum, this thesis suggests that PRR parties will continue to find electoral success as long as immigration remains an important political issue, as PRR parties can use anti-immigration rhetoric to attract the socioeconomically disadvantaged.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

Since the 1980s, populist radical right (PRR) parties have appeared in many European countries, with varying degrees of success and at different times in different countries. These parties include National Rally (Rassemblement national, RN; formerly known as Front national) in France, Freedom Party of Austria (Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs, FPÖ), Lega Nord (LN) in Italy, Alternative for Germany (Alternative für Deutschland, AfD), Flemish Interest (Vlaams Belang, VB) in Belgium, the Swiss People's Party (Schweizerische Volkspartei, SVP), Jobbik in Hungary, and Finns Party (Perussuomalaiset, PS). These parties are generally referred to as both right-wing and populist and they share similar policy preferences and utilize similar rhetoric to try to win voters. Notably, these parties tend to espouse ethnic nationalism and antiestablishment populism, making anti-immigration policies a priority for most of these parties.

This thesis will explore the reasons for the success of the Danish People's Party (DF) and the Sweden Democrats (SD), the primary populist radical right parties in Denmark and Sweden. Specifically, it will look at factors that could affect what motivates voters to vote for these parties as well as party rhetoric to see how these parties frame themselves, other parties, and political issues. Sweden and Denmark are both members of the European Union with similar political, economic, and social conditions and structures; however, they also have different histories and experiences with PRR parties, and thereby provide an opportunity for examining the differing success of these parties in relatively similar conditions. Knudsen and Rothstein (1994, 204, 217-18) argue that Sweden and Denmark are unique case studies among Scandinavian countries because they alone had an independent state-building process for many centuries, while the other countries were subordinated to either or both of these countries. Additionally, they argue that these countries share much in common, including a universalistic

welfare state, a strong state that is closely integrated with society, multiparty systems with strong social democratic and agrarian parties, a public sector with a universal bureaucracy, and low levels of corruption paired with high levels of efficiency. However, they also make an important distinction between the two countries, claiming that Sweden has successfully imposed a “social construction of reality” due to its paternalistic corporatism while Denmark has a pragmatic welfare liberalism that balances dual heritages of centralism and individualism.

PRR parties have seen sustained success in Europe in the twenty-first century. The Danish People’s Party is the third-largest party in Denmark, even after below average results in the 2019 general election. The Sweden Democrats have seen a rapid increase in its vote share since the early 2000s, and became the third-largest party in Sweden’s parliament after the 2018 general election. However, PRR parties have found success in numerous other European countries as well. This thesis therefore addresses a timely issue, for the success of PRR parties comes at the expense of traditional parties. The success of these parties throughout Europe suggests a sizeable portion of Europe’s population sees at least some part of the PRR party message – ethnic nationalism, antiestablishment populism, or sociocultural authoritarianism – as attractive. Understanding why these features of PRR parties are attractive at this point in time would help to explain PRR party success and voter preference for these parties at the expense of traditional parties.

Additionally, with a few notable exceptions, much of the literature on PRR parties neglects Scandinavian countries. Denmark and Sweden are good case studies for examining PRR parties because they share similar cultures and political structures but have very different experiences with PRR parties. As will be discussed later, Denmark had experience with successful right-wing populist parties since 1973 while Sweden has seen sustained PRR party

success only since 2010. The similarities and differences between these two parties and their voters could help shed light onto the factors that can affect PRR party success.

### **Terminology of the right**

There is not a clear consensus on how to label this kind of party. Right-wing populist parties throughout Europe are generally seen as belonging to a single party family despite some ideological differences, including the importance of the immigration issue and state-market relations. Given these differences, scholars have alternatively referred to these parties as “populist radical right,” “extreme right-wing populist,” “far-right,” and “niche” (Odmalm and Rydgren 2019, 374). This issue is further compounded by differences in party positions in the economic and sociocultural domains. For example, some of these parties can be seen as far-right or radical in the sociocultural sphere but their economic policies are much more mainstream with some parties having welfare policies barely distinguishable from those of social democratic parties (Odmalm and Rydgren 2019).

This thesis will use the term “populist radical right” (PRR) to describe these parties. In general, radical parties favor deep reforms of the economic and political systems while extremists are opposed to democracy. Right-wing parties in Europe tend to favor capitalism; indeed, they often seek to establish authoritarian systems that reinforce the “natural” order of society along with a strict law-and-order system that punishes deviant behavior (Golder 2016, 479). As will be discussed later, this definition of “radical” fits many parties within this party group. Additionally, while the economic policies of these parties tend to be more centrist, economic policies are usually less important to these parties than sociocultural policies. The term “radical right” is therefore applicable and serves to differentiate this party group from mainstream parties on the right.

## **Populism**

The other aspect of these parties apart from “right-wing” is their populism. The definition of populism is still heavily debated. However, “an ever-growing number of scholars” are opting to use an ideational approach which defines populism as a set of ideas depicting a struggle between the “pure people” and a “corrupt elite” while focusing on respecting popular sovereignty (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2018, 1669; Rydgren 2009, 1551). The ideational approach also suggests populism is limited in scope and is therefore almost always attached to elements of other ideologies and that populists generally dislike liberal democracy and instead prefer popular sovereignty (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2018). Another approach to defining populism is the political-strategic approach, which defines populism as a strategy employed by a charismatic leader who seeks to govern through the support of his followers (Weyland 2017). Additionally, the sociocultural approach argues that populism is a style of politics used by leaders who break taboos in order to ingratiate themselves with a certain electorate (Ostiguy 2017).

Beyond these general definitions, there are also different types of populism. For example, there are both inclusive and exclusive forms of populism, although the former tends to be emphasized in Latin America and the latter in Europe (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2013). European right-wing populism is of the exclusionary variety, usually based on ethnonationalism. Right-wing parties often accuse the political elites and established mainstream parties of prioritizing internationalism and specific special interests over the needs of the people. In this way, right-wing populist parties can criticize established parties as members of the elite, thereby presenting themselves as the true champions of democracy (Rydgren 2007). This approach follows the above ideational approach in which a pure people struggles against a corrupt elite with a focus on popular sovereignty.

There is also a distinction between populist ideology and populist strategy. Populist ideology features an aversion to representative democracy and a preference for direct democracy, a notion of “the people” as a homogenous unit distinct from “the elite,” and the belief that the party represents the view of “the people” (Rydgren 2006, 5-7). Populist strategy, on the other hand, involves creating the appearance of opposition to the entire political establishment while not appearing antidemocratic or politically extreme. This strategy generally involves a populist party attempting to distance itself from mainstream parties by arguing that the governing parties and the mainstream opposition parties constitute one political class with superficial differences (Rydgren 2006).

### **Populist radical right ideology and policy preferences**

Members of the populist radical right tend to share common ideology and policy preferences. These parties are characterized by the trait of “sharing the fundamental ideological core of ethnonationalist xenophobia and antiestablishment populism” (Rydgren 2006, 2). This ethnic nationalism is tied to sociocultural authoritarianism, as PRR parties promote anti-immigration, assimilationist policies as a means to ensure the state remains as culturally and ethnically homogenous as possible (Jungar and Jupskås 2014). According to PRR parties, peaceful societies require homogeneity, since different cultures are incompatible. This approach allows the PRR message to be xenophobic while avoiding accusations of racism, since cultures are not said to be better or worse than others, just incompatible (Rydgren 2006). PRR parties are also often referred to as nativist, as nativism combines nationalism with xenophobia by calling for states to consist of only members of the native group while non-natives are described as threatening to the nation-state (Golder 2016; Herkman 2017a; Rydgren 2009). Indeed, the core issue of PRR parties is arguably anti-immigration, as that is the one issue that unites all

successful PRR parties (Ivarsflaten 2008; van der Brug, Fennema, and Tillie 2005). Moreover, when not pursuing anti-immigration policies, PRR parties often focus on economic issues that implicitly nod towards the immigration issue (Taggart 1995).

Ethnic nationalism is also tied to the antiestablishment populism of these parties, as they propagate the notion that an elite, especially established political parties, betrayed their respective countries by embracing multicultural and internationalist ideas (Rydgren 2017). This message often includes attacks on the elite for selling out their country's sovereignty to the European Union (Szöcsik and Polyakova 2019). To counter the elites, PRR parties appeal to the common man and his common sense and clearer picture of reality (Betz 1993). Also, the sociocultural authoritarianism espoused by PRR parties includes believing in a strictly ordered society in which transgressions are to be severely punished (Jungar and Jupskås 2014; Rydgren 2009). Authoritarianism also extends to encouraging traditional family values along with skepticism toward gender equality and gay rights (Jungar and Jupskås 2014; Rydgren 2006). PRR parties are therefore radical in that they reject the established sociocultural and sociopolitical system in favor of greater direct democracy and cultural controls (Betz 1993).

With some exceptions, economic issues are generally less important to populist radical right parties than cultural issues. The secondary nature of economic policy allows for some variance among radical right parties, both across countries and across time. In the 1980s, most of these parties espoused a neoliberal approach toward the public economy but have drifted toward a centrist position that defends the welfare state since the 1990s (de Lange 2007; Eger and Valdez 2019; Rydgren 2006). The term "right-wing egalitarianism" has been used to describe the combination of support for a strong welfare state and opposition to progressive taxation still adopted by many PRR parties (Derks 2006; Jungar and Jupskås 2014, 219). Furthermore, PRR

parties often combine ethnic nationalism and support for the welfare state through welfare chauvinism by associating problems with the welfare state with the cost of immigration (Rydgren 2006).

### **Explanations for the electoral success of right-wing populist parties**

Studies on populist radical right parties often offer explanations for their increasing popularity and electoral success. One way this is done is by comparing demand- and supply-side explanations. Demand-side explanations focus on grievances that make right-wing populist parties attractive while supply-side explanations focus on how the parties themselves and the political environments in which they operate allow them to be successful. Demand-side explanations include support from the economically frustrated “losers of modernization” (Mudde 2010, 1006), anti-immigrant attitudes caused by competition with ethnic minorities for limited resources as well as popular xenophobia (Golder 2003; Ivarsflaten 2008), and political discontent (Treib 2014). Anti-immigration opinions are particularly important in causing voters to favor right-wing populist parties. Several studies have found a positive correlation between anti-immigrant attitudes and radical right voter support stemming from both economic and cultural concerns (Ivarsflaten 2008; Rydgren 2008; Sides and Citrin 2007; van der Brug, Fennema, and Tillie 2005). Similarly, Bustikova (2014) argues that the success of far-right parties is dependent on the politics of minority accommodation, with successful radical right parties representing a backlash against policy concessions to minority groups.

Studies have also found that voters of radical right parties are typically young males with low levels of education and who are either unemployed or a manual laborer (Arzheimer 2009; Arzheimer and Carter 2006). The disproportionate share of the working class among PRR party voters is usually explained by economic conflict, cultural conflict, and alienation. Workers want

to protect their jobs from competition with immigrants and international trade, are possibly more likely to feel unease with multiculturalism, and are possibly more likely to feel discontent toward the political system, especially as trade unions are weakened. However, cultural conflict and alienation appear more important than economic conflict in the likelihood of voting for a PRR party (Oesch 2008).

More broadly, the idea that support for PRR parties is stronger in socioeconomically marginalized communities is known as the social marginality hypothesis while the idea that support for PRR parties is stronger in communities with a high proportion of immigrants is known as the ethnic competition hypothesis (Rydgren and Ruth 2011). There is some blending between the two hypotheses, as the ethnic competition hypothesis suggests that areas with high levels of both immigrants and unemployment are more likely to see a greater share of votes for PRR parties (Arzheimer 2009). Supporters of right-wing parties also demonstrate high levels of welfare chauvinism and welfare populism. The former is the combination of egalitarian views with a low belief in the deservingness of immigrants while the latter is the combination of egalitarian beliefs with a critique of the welfare state (de Koster, Acherberg, and van der Waal 2013). Finally, and perhaps unsurprisingly, voters with populist attitudes are more likely to vote for populist parties, with right-wing populists being particularly unwilling to listen to the opinions of others (Akkerman, Mudde, and Zaslove 2014).

Supply-side explanations focus on political opportunity structures, party organizations, and the messaging used by populist right parties. For example, some studies suggest that radical right parties are more electorally successful when more traditionally conservative parties adopt a centrist, rather than conservative, position (van der Brug, Fennema, and Tillie 2005). Van der Brug, Fennema, and Tillie (2005) also find no evidence that far-right parties are more electorally

successful in proportional electoral systems, although others find support for far-right parties to be higher in countries with these systems (Golder 2003; Veugelers and Magnan 2005).

Socioeconomic structures can also affect the vote share of PRR parties, as they are benefitted by unemployment only in countries where unemployment benefits are low (Vlandas and Halikiopoulou 2019). Similarly, policy changes that negatively impact the labor market can create “losers” with incentives to turn away from mainstream parties (Rueda 2005, 72).

Additionally, some PRR parties may be a response to left-libertarian movements that espouse feminism, gay rights, environmentalism, and multiculturalism and therefore mobilize voters by taking opposing positions on these issues (Karapin 1998). Despite the success of some populist parties, mainstream parties have not adopted more populist platforms, perhaps allowing populist parties to fill a niche role in society (Rooduijn, de Lange, and van der Brug 2014). The media also plays a role in shaping perceptions of right-wing parties. For example, successful right-wing populist leaders are more prominently featured during election campaigns and they also appear more authoritative in the news (Bos, van der Brug, and de Vreese 2010). PRR parties may also receive greater media focus in countries where they are relatively new and first entering parliament than in countries where they have had more long-term success (Herkman 2017b).

Additionally, party organization can play a large role in the viability of a party. Large parties are better at mobilizing voters while strong organization allows for greater party unity (Tavits 2012).

Finally, PRR parties have a message that is appealing to some voters. PRR parties want to restrict immigration, which they argue will strengthen the nation by making it more ethnically homogeneous and returning to traditional values. PRR parties also tend to accuse elites of putting internationalism and other special interests ahead of the nation and the interests of the people (Elgenius and Rydgren 2017). In terms of immigration, Rydgren (2004; 2006) identified four

themes or frames that originated with Front National in France in the 1970s and have since been successfully used by other PRR parties: immigrants are a threat to native identity, culture, and values; immigrants lead to rising crime; immigrants drain the welfare state, depriving natives of the opportunity to receive welfare money or tax cuts; and immigrants take jobs that would otherwise be held by natives. The first two frames contribute to the idea that cultures should not mix while the latter two are a part of the welfare chauvinist doctrine, as immigrants and natives are depicted as competing for limited economic resources. Natives are deserving of resources while immigrants are illegitimate competitors in a zero-sum game (Rydgren 2006). Additionally, these parties often have authoritarian social and anti-immigration platforms but maintain centrist or even left-leaning economic platforms that favor the welfare state (de Koster, Acherberg, and van der Waal 2013; de Lange, 2007). Some PRR parties present few economic policies, focusing instead on ethnonationalism and antiestablishment rhetoric (Rydgren 2005). In some cases, PRR parties even make their economic positions vague in order to maintain support across class lines (Rovny 2013). The variance in messaging suggests that different issues in different national and historical contexts may have similar effects of mobilizing a populist discontent of the right (Taggart 1995).

### **Scandinavia**

Many of the aforementioned studies were conducted using data from specific countries or specific political parties. For example, the Netherlands, Italy, Germany, and Austria are commonly studied countries. Less attention has been explicitly been paid to Scandinavia, also regularly referred to as the Nordic countries. Indeed, the countries that make up this region are often overlooked in studies of European politics, with the five countries often being represented by a single country, usually Sweden (Knudsen and Rothstein 1994). Studies on right-wing

populism that do address Scandinavia generally focus on the same parties in these countries: the Sweden Democrats (Sverigedemokraterna, SD), the Danish People's Party (Dansk Folkeparti, DF), Norway's Progress Party (Fremskrittspartiet, FrP), and the Finns Party (Perussuomalaiset, PS, formerly known in English as the True Finns).

These parties are populist and antiestablishment and like other right-wing populist parties, support an authoritarian sociocultural policy and a centrist economic policy. Indeed, SD and DF are the two most authoritarian parties in these countries, meaning they value order, tradition, and stability, and believe that the government should be a firm moral authority on social and cultural issues. However, they are just right of center economically, placing them to the economic left of traditional conservative and agrarian parties. The exception to this rule is Norway's Progress Party, which is somewhere between a right-wing populist and a traditional conservative party due to its less authoritarian and more economically right-wing stances (Jungar and Jupskås 2014). Jungar and Jupskås (2014, 232) also find that SD, DF, and PS constitute a party group that is distinct and separable from other traditional Nordic party families, although the FrP is more akin to Norway's "functional equivalent" of a right-wing populist party and is not as easily classified with the other three parties. Ennser (2012) similarly concludes that the Norwegian Progress Party is not as easily classified with other right-wing populist parties in Scandinavia.

### **Denmark**

Denmark's modern experience with populist right parties began in the 1973 landslide election in which more than half of the members of the Folketing, Denmark's parliament, were replaced and five parties received seats for the first time. This group included the Progress Party

(Fremskridtspartiet), a populist anti-tax protest party founded the previous year.<sup>1</sup> The Progress Party received 15.9 percent of the vote, or second-most among all parties. The shocking result of this election was likely the result of discontent with high taxes and the dysfunctional nature of the welfare state, coupled with a belief that an alternative was needed to the dominant parties, between which there were few significant differences on policy (Rydgren 2004). At the time, the party was focused only on tax policy and reducing bureaucracy and made no claims toward immigration or nationalism. In this way, it could not be classified as a radical right-wing party on sociocultural issues (Rydgren 2004). However, the Progress Party began to adopt an anti-immigration platform in the 1980s. Partly in response to a 1983 law guaranteeing immigrants the right to family reunion, the Progress Party began making anti-immigration a key part of their message, especially in regard to the “Mohammedan threat” (Karpantschov and Mikkelsen 2017, 717). This change brought the Progress Party more in line with PRR parties and allowed it to appeal to voters in a new way, especially as it dominated conversation about a new political issue. Much of the party’s support in the late 1980s and early 1990s was driven by the increase in immigration during the 1980s (Anderson 1996). Likewise, racism was a strong factor in voter support for the Progress Party, although support for market liberalism and authoritarianism were also important factors (Karapin 1997). Danish voters perceived the Progress Party as shifting significantly to the right during the 1980s to the point that it was seen as the most right-wing party in all Scandinavia by 1990 (Gilljam and Oscarsson 1996).

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<sup>1</sup> The Norwegian Progress Party, FrP, was founded in 1973 and was heavily modeled after the Danish Progress Party. Unlike most other PRR parties, FrP has maintained a socioeconomically right-wing platform, which most other PRR parties abandoned after the 1990s. This difference makes it harder to include FrP in discussions of PRR parties, although it does have a sociocultural authoritarian platform, including an anti-immigration focus (Jungar and Jupskås 2014).

The Progress Party's fortunes began to decline when founder Mogens Glistrup was imprisoned for tax fraud in 1984. Pia Kjaersgaard took control of the party while Glistrup was in prison and, after becoming frustrated with party members focused on neoliberal policies and wanting a more professional and institutionalized party, left the party and founded the Danish People's Party (DF) in 1995 (Jungar and Jupskås 2014). The success of this new party, which won 7.4 percent of the vote in its first general election in 1998, helped to ensure the end of the organizationally weakened Progress Party (Rydgren 2004). Unlike the Progress Party, DF held ethnic nationalism as a core component of the party's ideology. From its inception, DF claimed that Denmark and Danish culture was threatened by immigration and supranational entities like the EU. Intentionally or otherwise, DF appeared to adopt most of the aforementioned frames from France's Front National, which had become popular in the mid-1980s. Following its lead, DF claimed that immigration was a threat against Danish culture and ethnic national identity, that immigrants were a major source of criminality, and that immigrants drain the welfare state of resources that otherwise could have been used to help native Danish people (Rydgren 2004). Since its first election in 1998, DF has continued to be electorally successful and provided support to coalition governments between 2001 and 2011 and from 2015 to 2019. During this time, DF has dominated political discussion of immigration, causing traditional parties on both the right and left to adopt harsher rhetoric toward immigrants and support stricter rules concerning refugees (Karpantschof and Mikkelsen 2017).

Table 1: Percent of Vote Received by Select Danish Political Parties

	1973	1975	1977	1979	1981	1984	1987	1988	1990	1994	1998	2001	2005	2007	2011	2015	2019
Progress Party	15.9	13.6	14.6	11.0	8.9	3.6	4.8	9.0	6.4	6.4	2.4	0.6	--	--	--	--	--
Danish People's Party	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	7.4	12.0	13.3	13.9	12.3	21.1	8.7
Social Democrats	25.6	29.9	37.0	38.3	32.9	31.6	29.3	29.8	37.4	34.6	35.9	29.1	25.8	25.5	24.8	26.3	25.9
Liberal Party	12.3	23.3	12.0	12.5	11.3	12.1	10.5	11.8	15.8	23.3	24.0	31.2	29.0	26.2	26.7	19.5	23.4

Source: Statistics Denmark

## **Sweden**

Sweden's experience with right-wing populist parties came later than Denmark's when New Democracy (Ny Demokrati, NyD) received 6.7 percent of the vote in the 1991 general election. Unlike PRR parties, NyD placed a greater emphasis on economic over cultural issues. It had a neoliberal economic platform, arguing for a reduced tax burden and a reduced public sector. However, NyD did have an anti-immigrant message, although this message was usually presented in economic terms. For example, the costs of immigration were juxtaposed with tax cuts and welfare chauvinist doctrines such as the claim that immigrants compete with pensioners for state resources were sometimes used (Rydgren 2006). Finally, NyD used a populist antiestablishment strategy in which it claimed to represent the common man and common sense while other parties were depicted as alienated from the people as well as the face of bureaucracy and political elitism. The populist antiestablishment strategy went hand-in-hand with the neoliberal message in that the demands for the established welfare state were portrayed as requiring a high tax burden (Rydgren 2006). NyD's fortunes changed quickly after the 1991 election, and it failed to muster enough votes to remain in the Riksdag, Sweden's parliament, in the 1994 elections and ceased to exist after the 1998 elections. The primary reason for its decline was its poor organization, which created conflict between party members and party leadership as well as within the leadership. However, NyD also suffered from a deep recession in Sweden that shifted public opinion to the left, whereas public opinion had shifted to the right in the late 1980s, benefiting NyD in the 1991 elections (Rydgren 2006).

Following the brief rise and fall of New Democracy, there was no electorally successful PRR in Sweden until the Sweden Democrats (SD) won 5.7 percent of the vote in 2010, enough for seats in the Riksdag. This absence was due to several factors. Social class mattered more in

Sweden than other countries, meaning working-class voters identified strongly with the Social Democratic party. Also, socioeconomic issues still took precedence over sociocultural issues such as immigration. Additionally, voters still perceived clear policy alternatives across the left-right divide. Finally, SD was perceived as being too extreme due to its origins in a right-wing extremist context (Rydgren and van der Meiden 2019). Unlike the Danish Progress Party, DF, and NyD, SD existed for several decades before finding electoral success. It was founded in 1988 as part of an explicitly neo-Nazi movement and established parties on the right and left refused to work with SD, unlike in Denmark where DF made alliances with some of the right parties (Schierup and Ålund 2011).

Over the last few decades, these factors have eroded, as social class became less important; sociocultural issues, especially immigration, became more important; the Social Democratic and Moderate parties moved toward the center, leaving voters confused about policy alternatives; and SD has been more successful in distancing itself from its neo-fascist past and appearing more respectable (Rydgren and van der Meiden 2019). Jimmie Åkesson's assumption of leadership of SD in 2005 played a large role in making the party appear more moderate, in part by forcing out several extremist members (Jungar and Jupskås 2014). Interestingly, anti-immigration attitudes in Sweden declined from the mid-1990s to the early 2010s while Sweden was receiving more refugees than ever. However, SD has been able to mobilize support among the substantial minority of Swedish voters that want a tighter immigration policy (Rydgren and van der Meiden 2019).

Sweden Democrats is similar to other PRR parties in several ways. Like other PRR parties, SD uses nationalist claims of homogenous origins, a common destiny, and an inherited social solidarity as part of its ethnic nationalist doctrine. These claims are complimented by a

rhetoric of decay that suggests Sweden was better off in a past time such as the 1950s when Sweden was more ethnically homogenous and life was more “traditional” (Elgenius and Rydgren 2017, 354). SD accuses the political elite, especially the leftist parties generally in power, of embracing multiculturalism and the EU, costing Sweden its sovereignty. Meanwhile, immigration from non-European countries is a primary cause of moral decay and declining Swedish cohesion. Swedish nationalism is therefore offered as a remedy to restore ethnic and cultural homogeneity as well as social solidarity (Elgenius and Rydgren 2017). Furthermore, SD does not challenge the traditional welfare state, but instead argues for more restrictive, ethnicity-based access to social services (Nordensvard and Ketola 2015). Moreover, SD claims to support gender equality in the context of multiculturalism and immigration, but is critical of gender equality in other contexts (Towns, Karlsson, and Eyre 2014).

Rydgren and Ruth (2011; 2013) find support for both the social marginality hypothesis and the ethnic competition hypothesis, suggesting SD support is more common among the less educated, the less wealthy, the unemployed, and in areas with a higher proportion of immigrants. SD tends to do well among working class voters and has attracted voters from both the left and right, particularly from the Social Democrats and the Moderate Party, Sweden’s two biggest parties. For these new SD voters, those who previously voted for the Social Democrats more often come from the working class, have lower socioeconomic status, and experience a more deteriorated personal situation and pessimism about their future than do former Moderate Party voters. Additionally, regardless of their prior party affiliations, almost all SD voters perceived immigration as a societal threat and expressed a desire to decrease immigration. Compared to current Social Democratic and Moderate Party voters, SD voters held more xenophobic attitudes toward immigrants, were more socially conservative and authoritarian, had more nostalgic views

on Sweden’s past, and were more distrusting toward societal institutions and politicians (Jylhä, Rydgren, and Strimling 2019).

Table 2: Percent of Vote Received by Select Swedish Political Parties

	1988	1991	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010	2014	2018
Sweden Democrats	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.4	1.4	2.9	5.7	12.9	17.5
New Democracy	--	6.7	1.2	0.2	--	--	--	--	--
Social Democratic Party	43.2	37.7	45.2	36.4	39.9	35.0	30.7	31.0	28.3
Moderate Party	18.3	21.9	22.4	22.9	15.1	26.2	30.1	23.3	19.8

Source: Statistics Sweden

### **The way forward**

The next two chapters will examine Denmark and then Sweden. To try to gain the most inclusive perspective on the success of DF in Denmark and SD in Sweden, this thesis will combine a demand-side approach focused on the voters of these parties and a supply-side approach focused on how these parties try to frame issues and position themselves to mobilize their electorate. After looking at the two countries individually, the two will be compared and contrasted to determine which factors appear to play significant roles in the electoral success of PRR parties.

## **Chapter 2: Denmark and the Danish People's Party**

### **Introduction**

Since its first election in 1998, the Danish People's Party has been successful in Danish general elections. Specifically, it has received the second- or third-most votes of all parties in every general election since 2001. This sustained success suggests DF managed to attract a constituency that consistently votes for the party. This constituency may have certain features that make it more inclined to vote for DF and DF likely tries to appeal to this constituency through its rhetoric. This chapter will explore both demand-side factors that could influence the likelihood of voting for DF and party literature that shows how DF is trying to appeal to voters.

### **Demand-side: data and methods**

I estimated ten ordinary least squares (OLS) multiple regression models, which were tested against the electoral support for the Danish People's Party in the 2007, 2011, 2015, and 2019 Folketing elections. These elections were selected because they were the ones for which all data was available. The unit of observation was the 98 municipalities of Denmark. The intent behind running regressions for multiple elections was to see which, if any, factors contributed in consistent ways across time to the vote share received by DF. All data came from Statistics Denmark's StatBank. Statistics Denmark is the central government authority for statistics in Denmark and its StatBank is a large online database. Statistics Denmark and its StatBank were selected as the source for data because it offered a wide variety of statistics, especially at the municipality level, and because its status as the primary official organ for statistics in Denmark suggested a high degree of reputability. The validity and reliability of the data obtained from StatBank were believed to be high because Statistics Denmark is an independent organization with the resources to be able to effectively acquire the statistics that it publishes. Independence

assures that the published data is not altered for political purposes and Statistics Denmark has access to business and administrative resources in addition to official surveys that ensures a relatively high degree of accuracy in its data. Statistics Denmark's independence and resources were therefore thought to provide the data in StatBank with a higher level of validity and reliability than other sources.

Data for the variables was obtained in StatBank by finding the available data that best matched the intent of the models. For example, StatBank only offered the total number of individuals in each municipality with a bachelor's degree or higher. To acquire a more proportionate number to compare education values across the municipalities, the total number of people with degrees from StatBank was divided by the total population of each municipality from StatBank. This value was then multiplied by 100 to get a percentage of the population with a bachelor's degree or higher. This type of adjustment was not required for all variables and Table 3 indicates which variables required such an adjustment.

These adjustments should not impact the usefulness of the data; instead, they allow for comparisons across the municipalities. The data for some variables, indicated in Table 3, was available only quarterly or, less often, monthly. In these cases, the data for the month or quarter in which the elections took place was used in order to determine the effects of these variables at that moment in time. However, it is possible that the quarter or two preceding the elections could have had different values that affected how people voted. Such an occurrence would decrease the usefulness of the data. Finally, there were a few instances, noted in Table 3, in which data at the time of the election was not available in StatBank, so the data from the closest time available were used. This change could affect the outcomes of the regressions, potentially making them less accurate.

This method of analysis relies on aggregate data rather than individual observations. As such, it is limited to correlations in the dependent and independent variables. By focusing on municipality-level results, this analysis intends to capture results at the lowest practical level to include more observations and produce more refined results. However, this approach does not take into consideration other factors that may influence voting between municipalities such as the geographic size or location of a municipality. For example, DF received a plurality of votes in 10 of the 11 municipalities in mainland Jutland in southern Denmark, just north of the border with Germany, in the 2015 general election (Danmarks Statistik). Due to the proximity to the rest of Europe, voters in this border area may have felt particularly vulnerable to the influences of immigration and therefore may have been more inclined to vote for DF than voters in, for example, northern Denmark. An aggregate-level study such as this one cannot capture these anxieties and instead must rely on correlations across the country.

Model 1 in each election will test indicators of socioeconomic marginality: income, unemployment rates, educational attainment, and recipients of welfare. Model 2 will test the effects of the proportion of total immigrants while Model 3 will test the proportion of non-Western immigrants. These models use the term “non-Western” as it is used by Statistics Denmark: Europe outside of the European Union, with the exception of the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, Andorra, San Marino, Monaco, and Liechtenstein, and the rest of the world with the exception of the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. As such, the data for non-Western immigrants reflects immigrants from these countries. Model 4 will test the effect of crime rates and Models 5 and 6 will combine all of the variables, first with the

proportion of total immigrants then with the proportion of non-Western immigrants. Interaction variables are introduced in Models 7 through 10 to further test the significance of the variables.<sup>2</sup>

These models will test the social marginality and ethnic competition hypotheses, as they are often cited as explanation for support for PRR parties. Under the social marginality hypothesis, one would expect income and education to be negatively correlated with DF vote share while one would expect unemployment and welfare to be positively correlated with DF vote share. In other words, one would expect poorer and less educated people as well as the unemployed and those receiving welfare benefits to be more likely to vote for DF, given its role as a populist party. Crime is also expected to have a positive correlation with DF vote, in part because high crime rates can contribute to feelings of social marginality but also because DF places a strong emphasis on a law-and-order platform (Rydgren and Ruth 2011). The crime statistics used for this model are the total reported crimes and therefore include petty, major, and violent crimes. Following the ethnic competition hypothesis, one would expect a positive correlation between immigrants, and especially non-Western immigrants, and DF vote share. If native Danes are having to compete with immigrants for jobs and other socioeconomic resources, areas with a higher ratio of immigrants are expected to see greater resentment on the part of Danes and are therefore expected to have higher vote shares for an ethnic nationalist, anti-immigration party. Finally, the interaction variables are expected to be positively correlated with DF vote share. Areas with high levels of unemployment and high ratios of immigrants are expected to see greater support for DF given DF's welfare chauvinist message (Arzheimer 2009; Golder 2003). Likewise, areas with high levels of crime and high ratios of immigrants are

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<sup>2</sup> This methodology is largely based on a similar one used by Rydgren and Ruth (2011) to examine support for the Sweden Democrats in the 2006 and 2010 municipal elections.

expected to see greater support for DF since DF links immigrants with crime (Rydgren and Ruth 2011).

Table 3: Variables Used in Regression Analysis

Variables	Description	Mean (standard deviation) 2007	Mean (standard deviation) 2011	Mean (standard deviation) 2015	Mean (standard deviation) 2019
Dependent variable	Proportion of vote for DF	14.78 (2.80)	13.39 (2.91)	23.16 (5.03)	9.89 (2.70)
Income	Average total wages and salaries (DKK)	176,452.72 (31,005.20)	183,389.27 (35,517.32)	192,054.20 (39,480.09)	199,926.80 (40,552.34)
Unemployment	Unemployed in percent of the labor force, by month of election	2.83 (1.31)	5.33 (1.30)	4.14 (1.06)	4.04 (1.15)
Education	(Population by municipality with a bachelor's degree or higher (age 15-69) / population by municipality) x 100	4.11 (3.42)	4.75 (3.84)	5.50 (4.34)	6.39 (4.81)
Welfare	Percentage of people receiving public benefits, by quarter of election	13.68 (2.43)	16.93 (2.95)	17.48 (3.02)	16.08 (2.90)
Immigrants	(Population of immigrants by municipality / population by municipality) x 100	5.78 (3.06)	6.47 (3.30)	7.66 (3.52)	9.17 (3.78)
Non-Western Immigrants	(Population of non-Western immigrants by municipality / population by municipality) x 100	3.58 (2.62)	3.85 (2.78)	4.44 (2.82)	5.36 (3.04)
Crime	Reported crimes per 100,000 of average population, by quarter of election	1,964.59 (670.67)	2,015.79 (673.96)	1,623.08 (702.66)	1,543.92 (722.66)
Unemployment x Immigrants	Interaction between Unemployment and Immigrants	16.79 (14.36)	35.77 (27.21)	33.68 (26.23)	37.53 (22.33)
Unemployment x Non-Western Immigrants	Interaction between Unemployment and Non-Western Immigrants	10.43 (11.74)	21.94 (22.86)	20.16 (20.53)	22.01 (17.51)
Crime x Immigrants	Interaction between Crime and Immigrants	12,671.29 (11,380.99)	14,136.94 (11,282.49)	13,849.21 (11,899.50)	15,415.99 (12,231.28)
Crime x Non-Western Immigrants	Interaction between Crime and Non-Western Immigrants	8,165.69 (8,861.42)	8,660.21 (8,315.32)	8,371.91 (8,462.24)	9,245.53 (8,308.13)

Note: 2017 income used for 2019 election due limits of available data; January 2019 unemployment used for 2019 election due to limits of available data; Q1 2019 welfare used for 2019 election due to limits of available data

## Results

Beginning with the 2007 election, I generally receive support for the social marginality hypothesis. As expected, voter support for DF is positively correlated with unemployment and welfare rates and negatively correlated with education. However, it is also positively correlated with income, albeit very slightly. These findings are all statistically significant at the .05 confidence level. These findings are consistent throughout the models as more variables are included, although welfare is statistically significant only in Model 1. The results regarding immigrants are unexpected and ambiguous. On their own in Models 2 and 3, higher proportions of immigrants are negatively correlated with increased vote share for DF, although these findings are not statistically significant. The Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> values for these two models also show that immigration explains little of the variance between the municipalities, while socioeconomic

factors explain much more of the variance. In Models 5 through 10, the proportion of immigrants and non-Western immigrants are both positively correlated with DF vote share, which was expected given the emphasis DF places on immigration and the predicted effects of the ethnic competition hypothesis. However, only in Model 6 is the proportion of total immigrants statistically significant. For crime, the results indicate a positive relationship, as expected, but the relation is small and not statistically significant in any of the models. The social marginality hypothesis is mostly supported, as higher unemployment, lower education, more welfare recipients, and higher crime are all positively associated with DF vote share. These factors, except perhaps crime, also contribute to fairly high Adjusted R2 values. The ethnic competition hypothesis also mostly receives support, as higher rates of immigration are associated with increased DF vote share except in Models 2 and 3.

Table 4: 2007 DF Regression Results

2007 general election by municipality	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10
Income	6.97x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.70x10 <sup>-5</sup> )				5.17x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.69x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	4.98x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.76x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	5.04x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.66x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	4.83x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.75x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	4.74x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.73x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	4.71x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.84x10 <sup>-5</sup> )
Unemployment	0.468 (0.212)				0.440 (0.206)	0.475 (0.207)	0.838 (0.286)	0.634 (0.228)	0.513 (0.216)	0.523 (0.225)
Education	-0.716 (0.099)				-0.805 (0.088)	-0.764 (0.087)	-0.822 (0.087)	-0.765 (0.086)	-0.805 (0.088)	-0.765 (0.087)
Welfare	0.572 (0.22)				0.320 (0.223)	0.297 (0.228)	0.329 (0.220)	0.308 (0.226)	0.268 (0.228)	0.261 (0.237)
Immigrants		-0.051 (0.093)			0.163 (0.090)		0.499 (0.192)		0.368 (0.203)	
Non-Western Immigrants			-0.044 (0.113)			0.111 (0.099)		0.424 (0.219)		0.252 (0.268)
Crime				0.001 (4.22x10 <sup>-4</sup> )	4.90x10 <sup>-4</sup> (3.72x10 <sup>-4</sup> )	6.58x10 <sup>-4</sup> (3.70x10 <sup>-4</sup> )	0.001 (3.72x10 <sup>-4</sup> )	0.001 (3.70x10 <sup>-4</sup> )	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)
Unemployment x Immigrants							-0.090 (0.045)			
Unemployment x Non-Western Immigrants								-0.080 (0.050)		
Crime x Immigrants									-8.37x10 <sup>-5</sup> (7.45x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	
Crime x Non-Western Immigrants										-5.49x10 <sup>-5</sup> (9.67x10 <sup>-5</sup> )
Constant	-3.732 (5.539)	15.071 (0.609)	13.549 (0.500)	13.1700 (0.876)	1.438 (5.434)	2.027 (5.662)	-0.207 (5.413)	1.261 (5.634)	1.407 (5.426)	2.377 (5.717)
N	98	98	98	98	98	98	98	98	98	98
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.5504	-0.0073	-0.0095	0.0070	0.5978	0.5890	0.6103	0.5960	0.5990	0.5859
P-Values:										
Income	0.000				0.003	0.006	0.003	0.007	0.007	0.012
Unemployment	0.030				0.035	0.024	0.004	0.007	0.020	0.022
Education	0.000				0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Welfare	0.011				0.155	0.196	0.138	0.176	0.242	0.274
Immigrants		0.385			0.074		0.011		0.074	
Non-Western Immigrants			0.440			0.266		0.055		0.349
Crime				0.198	0.191	0.078	0.102	0.051	0.097	0.105
Unemployment x Immigrants							0.051			
Unemployment x Non-Western Immigrants								0.112		
Crime x Immigrants									0.264	
Crime x Non-Western Immigrants										0.572

The results for the 2011 election are somewhat similar, with some differences. With the exception of Model 1, income had a negative relationship with DF's vote share. This finding was expected, unlike the negative relationship between the number of welfare recipients and DF's vote share. Under the social marginality hypothesis, it was expected that income would have a negative relationship with DF vote share and the percentage of the population receiving welfare would have a positive one, as low incomes and welfare are indications of social marginality. The positive relationship between unemployment levels and DF's vote share and the negative relationship between education levels and DF's vote share are both expected. Income is not statistically significant in any of the models, while unemployment and education levels are significant in all models in which they are present. Welfare is also significant in Models 5 through 10. Also like the 2007 election, the proportion of total immigrants and non-Western immigrants has a negative relationship with DF vote in Models 2 and 3 that is not statistically significant but they have positive relationships in the other models except Model 10. The proportion of total immigrants and that of non-Western immigrants is statistically significant in Models 7 and 8, respectively. Crime's relationship with DF's vote share is ambiguous, as it is negative in Model 4 and positive in Models 5 through 10. It was significant only in Model 6. Like the 2007 election, the Adjusted  $R^2$  values are fairly high for the models with the socioeconomic factors. The social marginality hypothesis is again mostly supported as lower incomes, higher unemployment, lower education, and higher crime rates are mostly associated with higher DF vote share. The ethnic competition hypothesis also is mostly supported, although higher rates of immigrants are negatively correlated with DF vote share in three models.

Table 5: 2011 DF Regression Results

2011 general election by municipality	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10
Income	1.37x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.36x10 <sup>-5</sup> )				-3.83x10 <sup>-6</sup> (1.48x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	-7.00x10 <sup>-6</sup> (1.54x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	-5.03x10 <sup>-6</sup> (1.45x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	-1.28x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.55x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	-1.22x10 <sup>-6</sup> (1.539x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	-8.75x10 <sup>-7</sup> (1.67x10 <sup>-5</sup> )
Unemployment	0.724 (0.237)				0.569 (0.256)	0.581 (0.263)	1.044 (0.351)	0.893 (0.308)	0.563 (0.257)	0.578 (0.263)
Education	-0.606 (0.093)				-0.644 (0.095)	-0.604 (0.091)	-0.693 (0.096)	-0.613 (0.090)	-0.667 (0.101)	-0.645 (0.100)
Welfare	-0.210 (0.144)				-0.389 (0.160)	-0.408 (0.161)	-0.409 (0.158)	-0.460 (0.161)	-0.390 (0.161)	-0.391 (0.162)
Immigrants		-0.147 (0.089)			0.131 (0.085)		0.632 (0.270)		0.004 (0.209)	
Non-Western Immigrants			-0.050 (0.107)			0.129 (0.101)		0.720 (0.328)		-0.153 (0.314)
Crime				-4.86x10 <sup>-4</sup> (4.37x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	7.45x10 <sup>-4</sup> (3.90x10 <sup>-4</sup> )	0.001 (3.89x10 <sup>-4</sup> )	0.001 (3.84x10 <sup>-4</sup> )	0.001 (3.85x10 <sup>-4</sup> )	3.65x10 <sup>-4</sup> (0.001)	3.00x10 <sup>-4</sup> (0.001)
Unemployment x Immigrants							-0.070 (0.036)			
Unemployment x Non-Western Immigrants								-0.078 (0.041)		
Crime x Immigrants									5.56x10 <sup>-5</sup> (8.34x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	
Crime x Non-Western Immigrants										1.20x10 <sup>-4</sup> (1.26x10 <sup>-5</sup> )
Constant	13.465 (3.857)	14.342 (0.643)	13.586 (0.505)	14.373 (0.929)	18.359 (4.147)	19.294 (4.374)	15.891 (4.277)	19.167 (4.314)	18.851 (4.225)	19.117 (4.380)
N	98	98	98	98	98	98	98	98	98	98
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.5329	0.0176	-0.0081	0.0024	0.5606	0.5571	0.5737	0.5693	0.5579	0.5567
P-Values:										
Income	0.318				0.796	0.651	0.730	0.410	0.937	0.958
Unemployment	0.003				0.029	0.030	0.004	0.005	0.031	0.031
Education	0.000				0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Welfare	0.148				0.017	0.013	0.011	0.005	0.017	0.018
Immigrants		0.101			0.127		0.022		0.986	
Non-Western Immigrants			0.640			0.204		0.031		0.626
Crime				0.269	0.059	0.047	0.058	0.060	0.600	0.641
Unemployment x Immigrants							0.054			
Unemployment x Non-Western Immigrants								0.062		
Crime x Immigrants									0.507	
Crime x Non-Western Immigrants										0.345

For the 2015, the results are mostly similar. Income has a slight positive relationship with DF vote share that was not statistically significant in any model. The results for the levels of unemployment and education are again as expected, with unemployment levels having a positive relationship and education levels having a negative relationship in all models in which they are present. Education is statistically significant in all models in which it is present while unemployment is significant in Models 1, 7, 8, and 10. Additionally, the impact of education and unemployment on DF vote share is greater than in most other elections, as education is less than -1.0 in all Models in which it is present while unemployment is greater than 1.0 in five of the seven models in which it is present. The results for welfare are unexpected, as they demonstrate a negative relationship between welfare recipients and DF vote share. Welfare is not statistically significant in any model.

The results for immigration are more ambiguous for this election than the prior two, as the proportion of total immigrants has a negative relationship with DF votes in Model 2 and a positive one in Models 5, 7, and 9. More surprising is the proportion of non-Western immigrants has a negative relationship with DF vote share in Models 3, 6, and 10 and a positive relationship only in Model 8. The expectation was that immigration would have a positive correlation with DF vote share, especially for areas with a higher concentration of non-Western voters. The proportion of total immigrants is statistically significant in Models 2 and 7 while the proportion of non-Western immigrants is not statistically significant in any model. Crime once again has an ambiguous relationship with DF vote share, as it is negative in Model 4 and positive in Models 5 through 10. In no model is it statistically significant. The Adjusted  $R^2$  values for the models containing the socioeconomic factors show they explain a good deal of the difference between DF vote shares in the municipalities. Support for the social marginality is weaker than in the previous two elections, as higher unemployment, lower education, and high crime rates are associated with higher DF vote share. However, higher income and lower rates of welfare are also associated with higher DF vote share. Support for the ethnic competition hypothesis is also weaker, as higher rates of immigrants are negatively correlated with DF vote share in four models. Moreover, three of these four models involve non-Western immigrants, and the ethnic competition hypothesis would suggest that non-Western immigrants should lead to higher rates of DF vote share.

Table 6: 2015 DF Regression Results

2015 general election by municipality	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10
Income	3.12x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.63x10 <sup>-5</sup> )				1.54x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.74x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	2.11x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.83x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	1.20x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.70x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	1.62x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.86x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	1.27x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.84x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	2.11x10 <sup>-5</sup> (2.11x10 <sup>-5</sup> )
Unemployment	1.096 (0.351)				0.539 (0.449)	1.021 (0.471)	1.634 (0.618)	1.437 (0.575)	0.538 (0.451)	1.021 (0.474)
Education	-1.170 (0.115)				-1.210 (0.117)	-1.175 (0.114)	-1.264 (0.116)	-1.179 (0.114)	-1.195 (0.122)	-1.175 (0.124)
Welfare	-0.143 (0.169)				-0.223 (0.173)	-0.239 (0.173)	-0.280 (0.169)	-0.289 (0.177)	-0.228 (0.174)	-0.239 (0.181)
Immigrants		-0.361 (0.141)			0.155 (0.127)		0.868 (0.310)		0.277 (0.288)	
Non-Western Immigrants			-0.293 (0.180)			-0.087 (0.162)		0.413 (0.432)		-0.085 (0.472)
Crime				-0.001 (0.001)	9.00x10 <sup>-4</sup> (5.23x10 <sup>-4</sup> )	0.001 (5.31x10 <sup>-4</sup> )	8.18x10 <sup>-4</sup> (5.10x10 <sup>-4</sup> )	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)
Unemployment x Immigrants							-0.121 (0.048)			
Unemployment x Non-Western Immigrants								-0.080 (0.064)		
Crime x Immigrants									-5.61x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.81x10 <sup>-4</sup> )	
Crime x Non-Western Immigrants										-8.59x10 <sup>-7</sup> (1.93x10 <sup>-4</sup> )
Constant	21.555 (4.791)	25.931 (1.191)	24.464 (0.944)	25.464 (1.267)	25.881 (5.054)	24.106 (5.356)	22.010 (5.054)	23.759 (5.346)	25.528 (5.130)	24.110 (5.464)
N	98	98	98	98	98	98	98	98	98	98
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.7083	0.0540	0.0169	0.0292	0.7191	0.7154	0.7345	0.7172	0.7167	0.7123
P-Values:										
Income	0.059				0.380	0.251	0.480	0.386	0.493	0.322
Unemployment	0.002				0.233	0.033	0.010	0.014	0.236	0.034
Education	0.000				0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Welfare	0.399				0.200	0.171	0.102	0.106	0.193	0.190
Immigrants		0.012			0.225		0.006		0.338	
Non-Western Immigrants			0.106			0.591		0.341		0.857
Crime				0.051	0.089	0.040	0.112	0.062	0.212	0.282
Unemployment x Immigrants							0.014			
Unemployment x Non-Western Immigrants								0.214		
Crime x Immigrants									0.636	
Crime x Non-Western Immigrants										0.996

Finally, the results for 2019 largely reflect those of previous years. Income has an unexpected positive relationship with DF vote share that was statistically significant in Models 1, 6, and 10. Unemployment and education have expected positive and negative relationships with DF vote share, respectively, that are statistically significant in all models in which they are present. The results for welfare are ambiguous, with a positive relationship in Model 1 and a negative relationship in Models 5 through 10. Welfare is not statistically significant in any model. As with previous elections, the results for immigration are ambiguous, with the proportion of total immigrants having an unexpected statistically significant negative relationship with DF vote share in Model 2 and a positive relationship in Models 5, 7, and 9. The proportion of total immigrants was also statistically significant in Model 7. The results for non-Western immigrants are also ambiguous and unexpected, with a negative relationship with DF's vote share in Models 3, 6, and 10 and a positive relationship in Model 8. Only in Model 3 is the

proportion of non-Western immigrants statistically significant. Crime has a positive relationship with DF vote share that is statistically significant in Models 5 through 8. Again, the high Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> values for the models containing the socioeconomic factors show they explain a large amount of the difference in DF vote share between municipalities. Similar to the 2015 election, the ethnic competition hypothesis received support in terms of unemployment, education and crime, but not income or welfare. Also like the 2015 election, higher rates of immigration were correlated with lower DF vote share in four models, three of which involved non-Western immigrants.

Table 7: 2019 DF Regression Results

2019 general election by municipality	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10
Income	2.91x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.17x10 <sup>-5</sup> )				1.95x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.20x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	2.56x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.26x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	2.04x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.16x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	2.35x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.25x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	1.94x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.23x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	2.57x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.28x10 <sup>-5</sup> )
Unemployment	0.811 (0.209)				0.730 (0.215)	0.843 (0.217)	1.455 (0.325)	1.058 (0.249)	0.730 (0.216)	0.840 (0.224)
Education	-0.576 (0.071)				-0.561 (0.069)	-0.568 (0.069)	-0.605 (0.068)	-0.581 (0.069)	-0.560 (0.071)	-0.569 (0.071)
Welfare	0.013 (0.085)				-0.089 (0.089)	-0.056 (0.092)	-0.053 (0.087)	-0.040 (0.091)	-0.090 (0.090)	-0.056 (0.094)
Immigrants		-0.170 (0.071)			0.025 (0.056)		0.527 (0.182)		0.030 (0.143)	
Non-Western Immigrants			-0.188 (0.089)			-0.067 (0.067)		0.327 (0.239)		-0.077 (0.226)
Crime				4.85x10 <sup>-5</sup> (3.81x10 <sup>-4</sup> )	0.001 (2.57x10 <sup>-4</sup> )	0.001 (2.51x10 <sup>-4</sup> )	0.001 (2.49x10 <sup>-4</sup> )	0.001 (2.50x10 <sup>-4</sup> )	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)
Unemployment x Immigrants							-0.096 (0.033)			
Unemployment x Non-Western Immigrants								-0.071 (0.042)		
Crime x Immigrants									-2.44x10 <sup>-6</sup> (7.13x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	
Crime x Non-Western Immigrants										4.98x10 <sup>-6</sup> (1.15x10 <sup>-4</sup> )
Constant	4.275 (3.480)	11.451 (0.700)	10.896 (0.545)	9.812 (0.648)	6.835 (3.535)	5.071 (3.713)	2.596 (3.704)	4.001 (3.727)	6.810 (3.634)	5.098 (3.785)
N	98	98	98	98	98	98	98	98	98	98
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.6495	0.0475	0.0350	-0.0102	0.6724	0.6753	0.6969	0.6821	0.6688	0.6717
P-Values:										
Income	0.015				0.109	0.045	0.082	0.064	0.118	0.048
Unemployment	0.000				0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000
Education	0.000				0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Welfare	0.880				0.320	0.541	0.543	0.659	0.323	0.556
Immigrants		0.018			0.651		0.005		0.835	
Non-Western Immigrants			0.036			0.318		0.175		0.736
Crime				0.899	0.013	0.003	0.030	0.006	0.368	0.269
Unemployment x Immigrants							0.005			
Unemployment x Non-Western Immigrants								0.090		
Crime x Immigrants									0.973	
Crime x Non-Western Immigrants										0.965

The results across these four elections provide some support for the social marginality hypothesis, especially in terms of unemployment and education. In all models, higher levels of education are associated with lower DF vote shares while higher levels of unemployment are associated with higher DF vote shares. The results for income are more ambiguous, as higher

incomes are mostly associated with higher DF vote shares, albeit at very slight rates. With the exception of the 2007 election, higher levels of welfare are generally associated with lower levels of DF vote share. It was expected that higher levels of welfare would be associated with higher levels of DF vote share. As discussed above, the high Adjusted  $R^2$  values for the models containing socioeconomic factors, especially in the 2015 and 2019 elections, suggest these factors explain a great deal of the difference in DF vote share between municipalities. Support for the ethnic competition hypothesis is mixed at best. Higher proportions of total immigrants are typically associated with higher levels of DF vote share although higher proportions of non-Western immigrants are associated with higher DF vote share in 2007 and 2011. Higher proportions of non-Western immigrants are mostly associated with lower DF vote share in 2015 and 2019. This finding runs counter to what is expected under the ethnic competition hypothesis, as one would expect higher proportions of non-Western immigrants to lead to higher DF vote shares. Finally, the models show higher levels of reported crime are almost always associated with higher DF vote shares, which was expected since crime is an indicator of social marginality.

Taken together, these results suggest socioeconomic factors play a much greater role in explaining DF vote shares across municipalities than the presence of immigrants or crime. Unemployment and educational attainment appear to be particularly important, as they are consistently statistically significant and the coefficient values are relatively large. These findings suggest some socioeconomic factors may play a more important role than others in determining which voters are likely to support DF. Also, the consistent effects of unemployment and education indicate the same voters or at least the same type of voters consistently vote for DF. Since income and welfare generally had unexpected relationships with DF vote share and income and crime generally had small effects on DF vote share, it is possible that they do not play a

significant role in encouraging someone to vote for DF. Crime may be a secondary factor after other socioeconomic factors while class or type of work may be more important than one's salary due to the significance of education. Furthermore, simply receiving welfare benefits may not be enough to cause one to feel socially marginalized or to vote for DF; rather, the desire for a job and the inability, at least temporarily, to obtain one appears far more important in causing one to feel marginalized and to vote for DF.

Meanwhile, the mixed support for the ethnic competition hypothesis suggests either DF voters support DF for reasons other than immigration or, more likely, that they vote for DF on anti-immigration principles rather than any personal loss due to the presence of immigrants. Similarly, the frequent negative effect of non-Western immigration on DF vote share implies DF voters generally do not live in areas with high densities of non-Western immigrants. One would expect those concerned about immigration and its effects on Danish culture would be more likely to vote for DF if they witness a relatively large number of people ethnically and culturally different from themselves. Therefore, this trend further suggests DF voters vote by principles rather than personal experience, and indicates these voters are predisposed to xenophobic attitudes, are susceptible to DF rhetoric, or both.

### **Supply-side: party programs**

In addition to the demand-side approach taken above, a supply-side approach is useful in examining how parties are positioning themselves to appeal to voters. For the Danish People's Party, electoral pamphlets from the 1998, 2001, 2005, and 2011 general elections, along with the current principle program outlining the party's position, were obtained. These pieces of party literature highlight the issues most important to the party and outline their position on these

issues. By analyzing the issues on which DF places a high level of importance and the phrasing it uses in doing so, one can see how DF is attempting to appeal to prospective voters.<sup>3</sup>

### **1998 electoral pamphlet**

In 1998, the first election in which the Danish People's Party participated, DF used nationalism to try to appeal to voters. In multiple places, the electoral pamphlet encourages voters to vote Danish while the front page carries the assertion that DF wants to make Denmark a little more Danish (DF 1998).<sup>4</sup> Additionally, the pamphlet demonstrates the populist nature of DF, as the front page also carries the demand for referendums on immigration and the EU (DF 1998).<sup>5</sup> The demand for referendums reflects a populist attitude, since immigration and the EU are portrayed as negatively affecting the Danish people, who, in the eyes of DF, would vote against immigration and the EU if given the opportunity. Additionally, the preference for direct democracy reflects antiestablishment sentiments. The second page of the pamphlet lists twelve policy areas and DF's stance on them, beginning with immigration and the EU. The section on immigration twice repeats the demand for a referendum on foreign policy and claims that foreigners must return home as soon possible "in accordance with the wishes of the people" (DF 1998, 2).<sup>6</sup> The pamphlet continues with the assertions that Danish citizenship should be difficult to obtain, the requirements for Danish knowledge must be increased, and that foreigners should be able to support themselves (DF 1998).<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The literature used from the 1998, 2001, 2005, and 2011 elections came from the Manifesto Project Database, formerly known as the Manifesto Research Group and Comparative Manifestos Project. The 2017 principle program was taken from the DF website. Unless otherwise noted, the analysis of the literature is the author's.

<sup>4</sup> *stem dansk* . . . *Dansk Folkeparti vil gøre Danmark lidt mere dansk* (DF 1998, 1).

<sup>5</sup> *Dansk Folkeparti kræver folkeafstemning om udlændinge og EU* (DF 1998, 1).

<sup>6</sup> *Vi forlanger en langsigtet politik i overensstemmelse med befolkningens ønsker: Udlændinge skal hjem igen straks, det er muligt* (DF 1998, 2).

<sup>7</sup> *Dansk statsborgerskab skal være vanskeligt at opnå . . . kravene til ordentlige danskundskaber skal skærpes betydeligt. Udlændinge skal som hovedprincip kunne forsørge sig selv* (DF 1998, 2).

The 1998 pamphlet ties the EU to the issue of immigration, stating DF's opposition to the Schengen Agreement and the open borders permitted under that treaty (DF 1998).<sup>8</sup> To DF, the Schengen Agreement must be scrapped and referendums on all issues of sovereignty are needed (DF 1998).<sup>9</sup> DF portrays the EU as antagonistic toward local interests and sovereignty, thereby positioning itself as the defender of Danish interests against a foreign power. The remaining ten issues are discussed without much of a trace of nationalism but with some signs of populism. The pamphlet calls for better care of the elderly, partly through higher pensions; less and simplified taxes and public administration; no more "foolish restrictions" on the environment; and "the people's choice" rather than state control of cultural activities (DF 1998, 2).<sup>10</sup> DF also promotes security through better support to police and support for NATO.<sup>11</sup>

Overall, DF positions itself as a champion of the Danish people, fighting for their rights and security against a burdensome state and an indifferent supranational government. This focus on supporting the Danish people, especially in the face of immigrants and the EU, demonstrates the nationalist nature of the position DF is taking. Its policies also tend to have a populist aspect to them, such as the demands for referendums and the desire for less taxes and state control in many areas. However, this populism is not entirely intended to weaken the government. Indeed, there are areas such as care for the elderly and crime where DF endorses greater government action where it thinks greater government intervention will benefit the Danish people. This antiestablishment approach critiques the government for poor policies while positioning DF as

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<sup>8</sup> *UD med Europaparlamentet og Schengen-aftalen – og dermed grænser uden control* (DF 1998, 2).

<sup>9</sup> *Schengen-aftalen skal skrottes . . . Vi kræver folkeafstemninger om alle suverænitetsafgivelser* (DF 1998, 2).

<sup>10</sup> *en højere, ens folkepension til alle pensionister . . . Den offentlige administration skal beskæres og skattesystemet forenkles . . . Ud med overflødig administration og tåbelige begrænsninger . . . UD med statsstyring af kulturen. IND med befolkningens valg af kulturaktiviteter*. (DF 1998, 2).

<sup>11</sup> *større sikkerhed og fuld opbakning til politiet . . . Vi er 100 procent for NATO* (DF 1998, 2).

the voice of the people and claiming the people are better suited to make policy decisions through referendums.

### **2001 electoral pamphlet**

The electoral pamphlet from 2001 contains much less information in the way of DF policy positions but it carries forward some of the main points from the 1998 pamphlet. It begins by encouraging voters who want to “give Denmark a new opportunity” to vote for DF (DF 2001, 2).<sup>12</sup> Next, it notes that what Denmark needs most is a respite from “mass immigration” and the “EU’s iron grip” (DF 2001, 3).<sup>13</sup> The pamphlet continues by stating that Denmark should stop closing strangers inland and leaving decisions to the EU while taking more care of the old, weak, and sick.<sup>14</sup> These themes are largely continuations from 1998, with immigration and the EU being branded as villains damaging the Danish people and way of life. Less attention is paid to other issue areas, but the need to take care of the weak, including the elderly, continues DF’s position of offering government support to those it believes require help.

### **2005 electoral pamphlet**

The 2005 electoral pamphlet continues to disparage immigration and the EU while promoting care for the weak and greater security. The pamphlet states that “Denmark is not an immigrant country” and that foreigners must respect Danish customs, laws, and regulations (DF 2005, 1).<sup>15</sup> Further restrictions on obtaining Danish citizenship are also encouraged (DF 2005).<sup>16</sup> The pamphlet implicitly ties the issue of immigration to terrorism, as there is a section immediately following the section on immigration that states terror must be fought by all

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<sup>12</sup> *Hvis du vil give Danmark en ny mulighed, så er der et parti, du kan stole på* (DF 2001, 2).

<sup>13</sup> *Et pusterum i forhold til masseindvandringen. Et pusterum i forhold til EU’s jerngreb* (DF 2001, 3).

<sup>14</sup> *Lad os holde op med lukke endnu flere fremmede ind i landet . . . Lad os holde op med at overlade beslutninger til Bruxelles . . . vore gamle, vore svage og vore syge* (DF 2001, 3).

<sup>15</sup> *Danmark er ikke et indvanderland . . . Og så skal udlændinge til at respektere dansk skik og brug samt danske love og regler* (DF 2005, 1).

<sup>16</sup> *Det er stadig alt for nemt at opnå dansk indfødsret; her må strammes yderligere op* (DF 2005, 1).

available means and that DF supports action against Islamic fundamentalists and “medieval imams” (DF 2005, 1).<sup>17</sup> The EU receives less attention than in past electoral pamphlets, but voters are encouraged to vote no in the upcoming referendum on the EU constitution, as the EU is moving toward a United States of Europe (DF 2005).<sup>18</sup>

The 2005 pamphlet again highlights the need to care for the sick and the elderly as well as the importance of security and the need to punish criminals (DF 2005).<sup>19</sup> Additionally, the pamphlet takes a more nationalist tone in discussing education, stating children must know “the history of Denmark, Christianity, and Western culture” (DF 2005, 1).<sup>20</sup> The pamphlet again takes a populist approach toward taxes, offering to keep them at current levels, while adopting a somewhat paternalistic stance toward society by arguing that the family is the “core of the country” and “a safe and good family life is the foundation of human life” (DF 2005, 2).<sup>21</sup> Finally, the pamphlet contradicts the 1998 pamphlet to a degree by arguing “requirements for the environment must be strict and must be followed by everyone” while advocating for harsh penalties for animal cruelty (DF 2005, 1).<sup>22</sup>

The pamphlet ends with a poem that highlights both the nationalism and populism of the Danish People’s Party. It claims that DF’s goal is to preserve Denmark’s independence and

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<sup>17</sup> *Terroren skal bekæmpes med all til rådighed stående midler. Vi vil ikke acceptere, at islamistiske fundamentalister gør verden utryk. Dansk Folkeparti er hundrede procent på de allierdes side i civilisationens kamp mod middelalderlige imamer og deres tilhængere* (DF 2005, 1).

<sup>18</sup> *Vi er modstandere af udviklingen i EU, som går i retning af Europas Forenede Stater. Vi anbefaler et nej til den kommende afstemning om EU-Forfatningen* (DF 2005, 1). The Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe or European Constitution was signed by representatives of the EU’s members states in 2004. While it was ratified by most EU states, some by referendum, the failures of referendums on the Constitution in France and the Netherlands in late May and early June 2005 ended the ratification process. The planned Danish referendum was therefore cancelled.

<sup>19</sup> *Et samfund bør bedømmes på, hvordan det behandler sine svageste . . . Danmark skal være et trygt og sikkert sted at være . . . Et land, hvor forbryderne straffes hurtigt* (DF 2005, 1).

<sup>20</sup> *de skal kende danmarkshistorien, kristendommen og den vestlige kultur* (DF 2005, 1).

<sup>21</sup> *Dansk Folkeparti er garant for, at skattestoppet fortsætter efter næste valg . . . Familien er landets kerne . . . Et trygt og godt familieliv er grundlaget for menneskers tilværelse* (DF 2005, 1).

<sup>22</sup> *Kravene til miljøet skal være skrappe og skal følges af alle . . . Dyremishandling skal straffes hårdt* (DF 2005, 2).

freedom so that the Danish people can secure a people's government (DF 2005).<sup>23</sup> It further states DF will fight any attempt to reduce freedom (DF 2005).<sup>24</sup> Mentions of “the good land,” “our long history,” and “our free country” underscore the nationalist message (DF 2005, 2).<sup>25</sup>

More than the 1998 and 2001 pamphlets, the 2005 pamphlet demonstrates the ethnic nationalism of DF. This pamphlet disparages Islam while arguing for teaching Christianity and Western culture. The focus on promoting families and tougher stances on crime reflect a sociocultural authoritarian stance while the simultaneous promotion of the welfare state and promise to keep taxes low reflects a right-wing egalitarian attitude. As in previous pamphlets, DF positions itself as the champion of the people by arguing to seek to preserve Denmark’s freedom and independence as well as establish a system of government that reflects what the people want.

### **2011 party newspaper**

The piece of literature from 2011 is a special election edition of *Dansk Folkeblad*, DF’s party newspaper. The newspaper opens with a headline proclaiming “Battle of Denmark,” DF’s description of the two ways forward for Denmark: a free and independent Danish culture where Danes make decisions in their own country, or a Denmark further subordinated to the EU federalists in Brussels (DF 2011, 1).<sup>26</sup> DF states its intent to “protect and preserve our lovely country,” portraying itself here and throughout the paper as defending Denmark from malevolent political, economic, and especially cultural options (DF 2011, 1).<sup>27</sup>

DF congratulates itself on the work it has been able to accomplish in the Folketing in limiting immigration, arguing “every year we make Denmark a little more Danish” (DF 2011,

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<sup>23</sup> *Dansk Folkeparti mål er at bevare Danmarks/selvstændighed og frihed, så vi kan sikre folkestyret* (DF 2005, 2).

<sup>24</sup> *Vi vil bekæmpe ethvert forsøg på at indskrænke den/folkelige frihed* (DF 2005, 2).

<sup>25</sup> *det gode land . . . vores lange historie . . . vort frie land* (DF 2005, 2).

<sup>26</sup> *Slaget om Danmark . . . Vælger du en fri og selvstændig dansk kultur, hvor vi danskere også fremover bestemmer i vort eget land, eller vælger du, at Danmark yderligere skal underlægge sig EU-føderalisterne i Bruxelles* (DF 2011, 1).

<sup>27</sup> *hvorfor vi vil beskytte og bevare vort dejlige land* (DF 2001, 1).

2).<sup>28</sup> The situation in 2001 before immigration changes went into effect is painted as dire, with wide open borders and those against immigration being mocked and despised (DF 2011).<sup>29</sup> The newspaper claims entire villages were called racist because the citizens there did not think it was acceptable for “a few hundred Palestinians and Pakistanis” to arrive and become residents within an hour (DF 2011, 2).<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, the newspaper notes that most of the refugees coming into Denmark were Muslim and argues that DF wanted to help “true refugees” while turning away those “who just came to abuse our welfare society” (DF 2011, 2).<sup>31</sup> Here, DF uses a strong welfare chauvinist argument, arguing that immigrants not only abuse the welfare system but that they come to Denmark with the intention of doing so, rather than for any other reason.

The newspaper continues to describe how DF is fighting to curb immigration, claiming that borders are becoming more secure, thereby displeasing the “arms smugglers, drug smugglers, illegal immigrants, [and] criminal home robbers” who were previously able to “freely drop over the borders” at “lightning speed” in the past (DF 2011, 3).<sup>32</sup> A great deal of emphasis is also placed on the idea that foreigners convicted of crimes should serve the sentence in their own country (DF 2011).<sup>33</sup> Indeed, it is suggested that an agreement to serve time in one’s home country, including sending Danes back to Denmark, should be a precondition for development

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<sup>28</sup> *Hvert år gør vi Danmark lidt mere dansk* (DF 2011, 2).

<sup>29</sup> *Til en tid, hvor flertallet i Folketinget var enig om at åbne landets grænser på vid gab, så alle og enhver kunne strømme ind. Og hvor danskere, som ikke ville være med til dette eksperiment, blev hetzet, hånet og foragtet* (DF 2011, 2).

<sup>30</sup> *Til en tid, hvor hele landsbyer blev kaldt racistiske, fordi borgerne dér ikke mente, at det var OK, at et par hundrede palæstinensere og pakistanere fra den ene time til den anden pludselig stod i landsbyen, og var blevet indbyggere* (DF 2011, 2).

<sup>31</sup> *Til en tid, hvor op til 28.000 (!), mest muslimske, flygtninge og deres pårørende . . . Ægte flygtninge ville vi gerne hjælpe, mens vi sagde nej til dem, der bare kom for at misbruge vort velfærdssamfund* (DF 2011, 2).

<sup>32</sup> *Våbensmuglere, narkosmuglere, illegale indvandrere, kriminelle hjemmehøvere, som i store, lukkede kassevogne før, i lyn fart, frit kunne drøne ind over Danmarks grænser* (DF 2011, 3).

<sup>33</sup> *Udlændinge, der idømmes fængselsstraf her i landet, skal fremover afsone straffen i et fængsel i borgerens eget land* (DF 2011, 3).

assistance (DF 2011).<sup>34</sup> The depiction of foreigners as different and dangerous reflects the nationalist approach taken by DF. Foreigners bring crime with them, threatening the true Danish people. This opinion is further backed by a free-standing quote from Martin Henriksen stating “parliament must ensure a strict foreign policy, the purpose of which is basically to protect Danish culture” (DF 2011, 2).<sup>35</sup>

The attack on immigration continues later in the newspaper with DF again noting the work it has done in decreasing immigration. The newspaper claims that DF “worked diligently to clean up the morass left by Poul Nyrup Rasmussen's Social Democratic government” but argues there is still a long way to go in addressing the issues of mass immigration and “failed integration efforts” (DF 2011, 6).<sup>36</sup> For example, many of the members of young criminal gangs came to Denmark during the period of Social Democratic control (DF 2011).<sup>37</sup> The newspaper states that if a red coalition under “Helle and Villy” is elected, smugglers will direct tens of thousands of asylum seekers to Denmark (DF 2011, 6).<sup>38</sup> Here, DF again explicitly connects immigration with crime and the threat of outsiders, and a picture of a large crowd of presumably Muslim men bent over in prayer further highlights the otherness DF associates with immigrants.

Some statistics are provided to provide support for this connection, such as the claim that immigrants and their descendants are overrepresented in both crime and unemployment statistics,

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<sup>34</sup> *Ja, det burde faktisk være en betingelse for modtagelse af dansk bistand, at en aftale om udveksling af afsonere er på plads* (DF 2011, 3).

<sup>35</sup> *Folketinget skal sikre en stram udlændingepolitik, hvis formål dybest set er at værne om dansk kultur* (DF 2011, 3). Martin Henriksen is a DF member and was a member of the Folketing from 2005 to 2019.

<sup>36</sup> *Dansk Folkeparti ihærdigt arbejdet for at rydde op i det morads, som Poul Nyrup Rasmussens socialdemokratiske regering efterlod . . . før der for alvor er rådet bod på masseindvandringen og den fejlslagne integrationsindsats* (DF 2011, 6). Poul Nyrup Rasmussen is a member of the Danish Social Democratic Party. He was a member of the Folketing from 1988 to 2004 and Prime Minister from 1993 to 2001. He was also a Member of the European Parliament from 2004 to 2009.

<sup>37</sup> *Mange af dagens unge, kriminelle bandemedlemmer, kom her til under socialdemokratiets herredømme* (DF 2011, 6).

<sup>38</sup> *Det vil først og fremmest glæde menneske smuglerne, for så kan de igen dirigere i titusindvis af asylansøgere til Danmark* (DF 2011, 6). Helle Thorning-Schmidt and Villy Søvndal, then-leaders of the Social Democrats and Socialist People's Party, respectively.

including Somali and Lebanese immigrants having an employment rate of only 39% (DF 2011).<sup>39</sup> The newspaper further suggests that DF is willing to provide assistance to refugees with the caveat that it would be better if the assistance is provided outside of Denmark. The refugees in the Third World are the “real refugees” while other asylum seekers submit “baseless applications for asylum with the aim of increasing crime in Denmark” (DF 2011, 6).<sup>40</sup> Once refugees are no longer in danger, they must be repatriated to their home countries.<sup>41</sup> While DF does not want Denmark to be a closed country, it wants only foreigners who will make a “positive contribution” to Denmark and will not “undercut Danish workers” (DF 2011, 6).<sup>42</sup>

Throughout the newspaper, immigrants are described as parasites on the Danish economy and culture, coming to Denmark only to receive welfare benefits and commit crimes. This portrayal is linked to that of immigrants as cultural outsiders, as it both explicitly and implicitly links immigrants with Islam. The particularly tough stance in this newspaper might be due to the fact that it is in a party newspaper and therefore more likely to be targeted at party members and likely supporters rather than the general public. In this focused audience, DF can afford to be more aggressive in its stance against immigration and overtly linking immigrants with crime, unemployment, and Islam in ways that might otherwise earn accusations of racism.

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<sup>39</sup> *så er beskæftigelsesfr sekvensen for indvandrere fra Libanon og Somalia på 39* (DF 2011, 6).

<sup>40</sup> *de ægte flygtninge . . . asylansøgere indgiver en grundløs ansøgning om asyl med det formål i mellemtiden at forøve kriminalitet i Danmark* (DF 2011, 6).

<sup>41</sup> *så skal man tilbage til sit hjemland* (DF 2011, 6).

<sup>42</sup> *Danmark skal ikke være et lukket land. Udlændinge, der vil bidrage positivt til vores land, byder vi velkommen. Men ingen skal komme her for at underbyde danske arbejdere* (DF 2011, 6). It is unclear what “undercutting Danish workers” means, since the statistics about immigrant unemployment suggest that immigrants are not employed at levels high enough to take jobs from Danish workers. Therefore, it could mean that immigrants place an undue burden on the welfare system, which is partly funded by income taxes on Danish workers, or it could refer to immigrants criminally preying on honest Danish people, as is suggested throughout the newspaper. Whatever the intent, the meaning is not explicitly stated, although this could be intentionally done to let readers account for all of these possibilities.

Much of the rest of the newspaper repeats policy positions found in past programs. The EU is again singled out for criticism, with the newspaper claiming the “EU is gaining more and more power over Denmark and the Danish people” and that DF opposes the EU because DF is “a supporter of a free and independent Denmark” (DF 2011, 3).<sup>43</sup> Conversely, the elderly are praised and more support is offered to them, including the notion that those uncomfortable with computers and information technology should not be forced to use them (DF 2011).<sup>44</sup> The military is also lauded and DF promises to ensure the military’s budget remains strong (DF 2011).<sup>45</sup> The newspaper also stresses internal security, advocating for the use of surveillance and tougher penalties for crime, including jail sentences for speeding violations (DF 2011).<sup>46</sup> The newspaper lauds DF for lowering the criminal age to fourteen and suggests it should be entirely eliminated (DF 2011).<sup>47</sup> Unsurprisingly, the section on crime also notes that a third of the prison population is composed of immigrants, descendants of immigrants, and foreigners (DF 2011).<sup>48</sup>

Elsewhere in the newspaper, there is additional populist language. Returning to the threat posed by *Helle and Villy*, the newspaper warns voters that they will “pick every penny you have” (DF 2011, 8).<sup>49</sup> This threat includes increased taxes on tobacco, driving taxes, “climate charges” for airline tickets, and taxes on unhealthy foods (DF 2011, 8).<sup>50</sup> After disparaging the idea of new taxes, the newspaper praises work done by DF in helping the homeless, those with

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<sup>43</sup> *EU tiltager sig mere og mere magt over Danmark og det danske folk . . . Dansk Folkeparti er tilhænger af et frit og selvstændigt Danmark, og er følgelig modstander af Den Europæiske Union* (DF 2011, 3).

<sup>44</sup> *derfor vil Dansk Folkeparti sikre, at ældre ikke under nogen omstændigheder tvinges til at bruge computer i kommunikationen med de offentlige systemer, hvis de ikke mener at kunne klare det* (DF 2011, 2).

<sup>45</sup> *Det vil Dansk Folkeparti sikre ved en total om-organisering af Forsvarets økonomi* (DF 2011, 3).

<sup>46</sup> *Overvågning er et af de virkemidler, Dansk Folkeparti vil benytte . . . Vi vil gøre det ved at tage deres køretøjer fra dem, og øjeblikkelig sende dem af sted til afsoning* (DF 2011, 7).

<sup>47</sup> *og helst skal helt væk* (DF 2011, 7).

<sup>48</sup> *Mere end en tredjedel af indsatte i landets lukkede fængsler var i 2009 indvandrere, efterkommere eller udlændinge* (DF 2011, 7).

<sup>49</sup> *de vil plukke dig for hver en skilling, du har* (DF 2011, 8).

<sup>50</sup> *Hver dansker, som hygger sig med en pakke om dagen, kommer årligt til at bøde 18.250 kroner . . . kørselsafgifter . . . klima-afgift . . . smækker lige ekstra-skat på alt, hvad der hedder sukker, fedt og chokolade* (DF 2011, 8).

disabilities, abused women, and psychiatric patients (DF 2011).<sup>51</sup> As in past literature, DF positions itself against things that could impose on people such as taxes while advocating for spending on things that are likely to be popular such as security and defense, the elderly, and the sick.

Nationalist language is also found in the newspaper. The newspaper again states DF's main goal of preserving Denmark's freedom and independence (DF 2011).<sup>52</sup> Meanwhile, standalone quotes in the newspaper include “[w]e must adhere to Danish values, and foreigners must respect the laws and regulations of our society” from Peter Skaarup (DF 2011, 7).<sup>53</sup> In addition, a quote from Søren Espersen states “[h]ow deeply do we bow to China? The flattery of the free world, including Denmark, for the communist regime is embarrassing” (DF 2011, 8).<sup>54</sup> DF again tries to position itself as the defender of Denmark from foreign influence while praising the qualities of Danish culture and tradition.

This edition of DF's newspaper presents some of the strongest language of the party literature examined. At least three, if not all four, of Rydgren's PRR frames are present in the newspaper. Immigrants are presented as a threat to Danish culture, a source of criminality, and drains on the welfare system. The fourth frame, that immigrants take jobs that would otherwise be held by Danes, may be present depending on the meaning of the phrase “undercutting Danish workers.” Not only are these frames present, DF utilizes them to the greatest extent possible. Palestinians, Pakistanis, Somalis, and Lebanese are specifically mentioned as foreign groups

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<sup>51</sup> *Dansk Folkeparti har altid talt de hjemløses sag . . . Handicappede skal i videst muligt omfang sidestilles med personer uden handicap . . . I finansloven fik DF derfor gennemtrumfet, at Dannerhuset fast blev sat på finansloven . . . Dansk Folkeparti arbejder for, at der til stadighed skal ske en udvikling i den psykiatriske behandling* (DF 2011, 8).

<sup>52</sup> *Dansk Folkepartis øverste formål er at bevare Danmarks frihed og selvstændighed* (DF 2011, 5).

<sup>53</sup> *Vi skal stå fast på de danske værdier, og udlændinge skal respektere vores samfunds love og regler* (DF 2011, 7). Peter Skaarup is a member of DF and a member of the Folketing since 1998.

<sup>54</sup> *Hvor dybt bøjer vi os for Kina? Den frie verdens, inklusive Danmarks, fedteri for det kommunistiske regime er beskæmmende* (DF 2011, 8). Søren Espersen is a member of DF and a member of the Folketing since 2005.

trying and failing to integrate into Danish society and Muslims are presented as culturally incompatible with Danish culture. The use of this frame highlights the ethnic component of DF's nationalism. Additionally, immigrants are not just linked to crime and drains on the welfare state. DF argues that they come to Denmark for the sole purpose of committing crime and abusing the welfare system. This spin on these two frames – suggesting nefarious intent by immigrants rather than just undesirable consequences – is a particularly aggressive manner in which to negatively portray immigrants. Furthermore, these two frames contribute to DF's ethnic nationalist message, as the immigrants are depicted as ethnic and cultural outsiders.

### **2017 principle program**

Finally, DF's current principle program serves to outline DF's stance on various issues and was available during the 2019 election. Unlike the previous literature, this principle program introduces support for the monarchy, with “preserving and extending popular rule and the monarchy” being one of the three purported purposes of DF (DF 2017, 2).<sup>55</sup> This apparent contradiction with its populist message is repeated later, as the program states that the monarchy must be maintained but that the Danish Constitution should be developed into more of a direct democracy (DF 2017).<sup>56</sup> This contradiction encapsulates the nationalism and populism of DF: nationalism through support of Danish customs and traditions and populism through the idea that direct democracy and referendums will allow the people to express what they truly want, thereby producing better policies than through a representative government.

Along these lines, DF again positions itself as the defender of Danish tradition, stating it is committed to Danish cultural heritage and therefore wants to strengthen the country's external

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<sup>55</sup> *at bevare og udbygge folkestyre og monarki* (DF 2017, 2).

<sup>56</sup> *der bør udvikles yderligere gennem et mere direkte demokrati* (DF 2017, 2).

and internal security (DF 2017).<sup>57</sup> Moreover, the program offers another apparent contradiction, arguing that Danes must care for and decide for themselves but that the state must support Danes in need (DF 2017).<sup>58</sup> This represents the broad populism of DF: trying to appeal to voters by promising less interference in their lives while simultaneously offering government support to those who may need it. This populism is also reflected in the promise to fight attempts to “curtail the rule of the people” and citizens’ freedoms (DF 2017, 2).<sup>59</sup>

In addition to the monarchy, the program expresses support for the Church of Denmark, stating that Christianity is inseparable from people’s lives (DF 2017).<sup>60</sup> It further argues that Christianity makes a distinction between the secular world and the world of faith, a distinction that is essential for freedom, openness, and democracy (DF 2017).<sup>61</sup> This position not only establishes DF’s support for another Danish tradition, it also serves to distinguish Danish tradition and culture from that of the Muslim immigrants that DF often decries. The program later states that Danish culture must be preserved and strengthened as a prerequisite for the country's existence as a free and enlightened society (DF 2017).<sup>62</sup> Unlike past literature, this program goes further in claiming that Danish culture should be preserved everywhere and that support should be given to Danish minorities outside of Denmark (DF 2017).<sup>63</sup>

Beyond defending Danish culture, the program states DF’s opposition to immigrants, again stating that Denmark is not an immigrant country and never has been (DF 2017).<sup>64</sup> This

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<sup>57</sup> *Vi er forpligtede af vor danske kulturarv . . . Derfor vil vi styrke landets ydre og indre sikkerhed* (DF 2011, 2).

<sup>58</sup> *frie danske borgere, som gives muligheder for at klare sig selv og bestemme over sig selv; men staten må samtidig forpligtes til at støtte de danskere, der er i vanskeligheder* (DF 2017, 2).

<sup>59</sup> *vil bekæmpe ethvert forsøg på at indskrænke folkestyret og borgernes frihedsrettigheder* (DF 2017, 2).

<sup>60</sup> *Kristendommen har århundreders hævd i Danmark og er uadskillelig fra folkets liv* (DF 2017, 3).

<sup>61</sup> *Kristendommen skelner skarpt mellem den verdslige verden og troens verden – et skel, der er af afgørende betydning for et lands udvikling – for frihed, åbenhed og folkestyre* (DF 2017, 3).

<sup>62</sup> *dansk kultur skal derfor bevares og styrkes . . . en forudsætning for landets beståen som et frit og oplyst samfund* (DF 2017, 4).

<sup>63</sup> *Udenfor Danmarks grænser bør der gives økonomisk, politisk og moralsk støtte til danske mindretal* (DF 2017, 5).

<sup>64</sup> *Danmark er ikke et indvandrerland og har aldrig været det* (DF 2017, 5).

assertion is accompanied by the claim that DF will not accept a “multi-ethnic transformation of society” (DF 2017, 5).<sup>65</sup> The program is not as aggressive in its anti-immigration stance as some previous literature, but it states that foreigners should be admitted into Danish society only if they do not jeopardize security and democracy (DF 2017).<sup>66</sup> As with past literature, the program asserts DF’s opposition to the EU on the grounds that Denmark should not give up its sovereignty (DF 2017).<sup>67</sup> However, as part of being a strong and independent nation, Denmark should be a member of NATO (DF 2017).<sup>68</sup>

The program reiterates other main concerns of DF, including support for the elderly and disabled, education, families, and environmental protection (DF 2017).<sup>69</sup> However, the program ends by restating the core ideals of DF adopted in October 2002, stating that DF is proud of Denmark and feels a commitment to “protect the country, the people and the Danish heritage” (DF 2017, 8).<sup>70</sup> Moreover, this commitment comes with the need for strong defense as well as safe and secure borders, for only in a free Denmark can the country develop according to the will of the people (DF 2017).<sup>71</sup>

### **Supply-side summary**

From 1998 to 2017, the rhetoric espoused in official Danish People’s Party literature has remained almost entirely consistent, although some issues are advocated for more strongly and regularly than others. DF repeatedly states its goal is to protect Danish culture and traditions,

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<sup>65</sup> *Vi vil derfor ikke acceptere en multi-etnisk forvandling af landet* (DF 2017, 5).

<sup>66</sup> *men kun under forudsætning af, at dette ikke sætter tryghed og folkestyre på spil* (DF 2017, 5).

<sup>67</sup> *men vi vil ikke acceptere, at Danmark afgiver suveræniteten* (DF 2017, 3).

<sup>68</sup> *Danmark bør som selvstændig og fri nation indgå i NATOalliancen* (DF 2017, 4).

<sup>69</sup> *Pleje og omsorg af ældre og handicappede er en offentlig opgave . . . Dansk Folkeparti prioriterer undervisning, uddannelse og forskning meget højt . . . Familien er kernen i det danske samfund . . . Vi skal tage vare på naturen* (DF 2017, 5-7).

<sup>70</sup> *vi stolte af Danmark; vi elsker vort fædreland, og vi føler en historisk forpligtelse til at værne om landet, folket og den danske arv* (DF 2017, 8).

<sup>71</sup> *Med denne forpligtelse følger nødvendigheden af et stærkt forsvar samt trykke og sikre grænser. Kun i et frit Danmark kan landet udvikle sig efter folkets vilje* (DF 2017, 8).

Denmark's freedom and sovereignty, and individual citizen's freedoms. These goals are reflective of the ethnic nationalist message inherent in DF's policies. Denmark and all things Danish are good, while all things that try to undermine or suppress Denmark or Danishness are bad. Additionally, DF uses populist messaging to reach these goals by professing to support the will of the people. In this context, DF speaks the most frequently and the strongest about immigration, portraying immigrants as unable to assimilate into Danish society, sources of crime, and drains on the welfare system. The European Union is another frequent target of DF's abuse, as it is portrayed as undemocratic and violating Denmark's sovereignty. These two issues are framed through both nationalist and populist rhetoric. Immigrants are bad because they violate what is considered true Danish culture while negatively impacting actual Danes through crime and strain on the welfare system. The EU is bad because it imposes restrictions and regulations on Denmark in violation of what is best for the Danish people.

Most of the rest of the issues on which DF focuses are more populist than nationalist, although there are still traces of nationalism. DF places a high priority on both internal and external security, advocating for increased support for police forces, tougher penalties for criminals, and a strong military. The focus on domestic security fits into the populist message of doing what is best for the people, in this case ensuring personal safety; however, the desire for tougher penalties and increased mass surveillance demonstrate a sociocultural authoritarian perspective through a belief in a strictly ordered society. A strong military also ensures the safety of the people and is often discussed in nationalist terms of independence and freedom, as a subservient Denmark could not fully espouse what it means to be Danish.

DF's populism carries into economic policy as well. DF regularly embraces the need to provide support to the elderly, sick, and disabled and less frequently to other at-risk groups such

as the homeless. It also generally supports education. These policies are not inherently populist but DF often uses antiestablishment rhetoric to portray itself as fighting for the people against a stagnant bureaucracy. Similarly, DF, especially in its earlier days, generally adopted anti-tax positions, opposing taxes on the grounds that they negatively impact regular people. Other policies are harder to define as populist, most notably its overall advocacy for environmental protection and animal protection laws. However, environmental protection could be construed as a means of protecting Denmark. Furthermore, these stances on issues of relatively low importance to DF could be a means of appealing to a broader audience by appearing more centrist.

DF literature shows that it tries to position itself as a defender of Denmark and the Danish people. Through ethnic nationalist and populist rhetoric, DF claims to be protecting a special Danish heritage while other political parties are willing to allow foreign forces to erode this heritage. DF also portrays itself as supporters of the people's will, advocating for greater direct democracy and more referendums. This approach suggests most people are opposed to policies that have been instituted by other unthinking and uncaring parties whose policies have had negative consequences for most people. Despite its strong stances on immigration and the EU, DF's fairly centrist economic policies are likely targeted at lower class workers, including those who may otherwise vote for a more left party. In other words, those who vote for left parties for economic reasons may see similar promises of support from DF, with the additional bonus of a promise of lower taxes. Any anti-immigration sentiments held by these working-class voters may also lead them to vote for DF, especially if they hold welfare chauvinist views and fear that their access to welfare benefits may be negatively impacted by immigrants

## **Summary**

The quantitative look at Danish general elections led to the conclusion that socioeconomic factors play a greater role in explaining DF vote shares across municipalities than the presence of immigrants or crime. The social marginality hypotheses therefore received some support, as education and unemployment were important determinants in voting for the DF. However, the results for income, welfare benefits, and crime did not support the social marginality hypothesis. The ethnic competition hypothesis received mixed support at best, especially since non-Western immigrant ratios had less of a positive impact on DF vote than overall immigrant ratios. The review of DF literature demonstrates DF's attempt to position itself as a defender of Danish culture, arguing against immigration and the EU, for greater penalties for criminals, and in favor of the welfare state. It uses antiestablishment populist rhetoric to argue for more power for the people and to distinguish itself from parties whose poor policies have led to declining conditions in Denmark. In short, it matches the description of a PRR party, blending ethnic nationalism, antiestablishment populism, and sociocultural authoritarianism.

The demand- and supply-side approaches appear to be at odds with each other. DF's biggest issue is immigration but higher ratios of immigrants, especially non-Western immigrants, does not necessarily lead to greater vote share for DF. DF argues for greater welfare benefits but a greater proportion of people receiving welfare benefits does not always correlate with an increased vote share for DF. DF has a law-and-order platform but crime does not strongly influence DF vote share. However, this does not mean DF's rhetoric has been ineffective. Instead, it is possible, perhaps even likely, that DF voters are motivated not by personal experience with immigrants or crime but by fear of these things. By portraying immigrants as threats to Danish culture, security, and welfare, DF may instill fear into voters, especially those who have not had contact with immigrants and can therefore easily perceive them as others. As

indicated above, DF may be targeting blue collar workers, who may feel especially threatened by the notion of competing for jobs and welfare benefits with immigrants. These workers may therefore be prone to welfare chauvinist attitudes, making the DF an appealing party. This explanation corresponds with the strong support for the social marginality hypothesis in terms of education and unemployment and clarifies why the ethnic competition hypothesis received so little support: it is not actual ethnic competition but the fear of ethnic competition that draws voters to DF and that DF rhetoric seeks to exploit.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter examined the Danish People's Party and discovered a strong positive correlation between lower education levels and greater DF vote share as well as between higher unemployment levels and greater DF vote share. An analysis of official DF literature also discovered frequent and often strong statements of ethnic nationalism, antiestablishment populism, and sociocultural authoritarianism. These findings may be linked in that an economically vulnerable working class may be susceptible to DF's anti-immigrant rhetoric. The next chapter will continue with a similar analysis of Sweden and the Sweden Democrats.

## **Chapter 3: Sweden and the Sweden Democrats**

### **Introduction**

Despite existing since the 1980s, the Sweden Democrats only began receiving a significant share of votes in general elections in the 2000s, and did not gain enough vote share to have seats in the Riksdag until 2010. Most recently, SD received the third-most votes of any party in the 2018 general election. This sudden surge in success means SD was able to attract a significant number of voters in a relatively short amount of time and continued to attract more voters in every election through 2018. It is possible that SD's voters have certain socioeconomic traits that make them more likely to vote for SD; meanwhile, SD's increased success suggest that its rhetoric was able to attract voters to the party. This chapter will explore both demand-side factors that could influence the likelihood of voting for SD and party literature that shows how SD is trying to appeal to voters.

### **Demand-side: data and methods**

I estimated six ordinary least squares (OLS) multiple regression models, which were tested against the electoral support for the Sweden Democrats in the 2010, 2014, and 2018 Riksdag elections. These elections were selected because they were the ones for which all data was available. The unit of observation was the 290 municipalities of Sweden. The intent behind running regressions for multiple elections was to see which, if any, factors contributed in consistent ways across time to the vote share received by SD. All data was obtained from Statistics Sweden with the exception of unemployment and crime data, which were obtained from the Swedish Public Employment Service and the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, respectively. Statistics Sweden is the government agency responsible for producing official statistics and offers an online database of statistics. The Swedish Public Employment

Service is a government agency and offers some employment data on its website while the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention is a government agency that offers some crime data on its website.

Statistics Sweden was selected as the source for data because it offered a wide variety of statistics, especially at the municipality level, and because its status as the primary official organ for statistics in Sweden suggested a high degree of reputability. It is a little less comprehensive than Statistics Denmark, hence the need to obtain unemployment and crime data from the Swedish Public Employment Service and the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention. These organizations were selected as the sources for unemployment and crime data because of their expertise in these issues and the reputability that their status as government agencies affords. The validity and reliability of the data obtained from all three organizations were believed to be high because the organizations have access to raw data from businesses, government agencies, and private citizens. This access, combined with large and well-trained staffs to compile and publish data, allows these agencies to effectively produce accurate data (Statistics Sweden). Data from these organizations was therefore thought to have a higher level of validity and reliability than that available other sources.

Data for the variables was obtained by finding the available data that best matched the intent of the models. As with the Danish data in Chapter 2, this approach sometimes required adjustments so that data could be compared across the municipalities. For example, Statistics Sweden only offered the total number of individuals in each municipality with a bachelor's degree or higher. These totals were divided by the total population of each municipality and this value was multiplied by 100 to get a percentage of the population with a bachelor's degree or higher. This type of adjustment was not required for all variables and Table 8 indicates which

variables required such an adjustment. These adjustments should not impact the usefulness of the data; instead, they allow for comparisons across the municipalities. Finally, income data for 2018 was not available from Statistics Sweden, so income data from 2017 was used instead. This change could affect the outcomes of the 2018 regressions, potentially making them less accurate.

As with the analysis of DF, this method of analysis relies on aggregate data rather than individual observations. As such, it is limited to correlations in the dependent and independent variables. By focusing on municipality-level results, this analysis intends to capture results at the lowest practical level to include more observations and produce more refined results. However, this approach does not take into consideration other factors that may influence voting between municipalities such as the geographic size or location of a municipality. For example, SD tends to achieve some of its best electoral results in Skåne County in southernmost Sweden across the Øresund from Denmark. In 2018, SD won a plurality of votes in 18 of the 32 municipalities in Skåne County (Valmyndigheten 2020). Voters in this area may feel particularly susceptible to the forces of immigration due to their proximity to mainland Europe. An aggregate-level study such as this one cannot capture these anxieties and instead must rely on correlations across the country.

Model 1 in each election will test indicators of socioeconomic marginality: income, unemployment rates, and educational attainment. Model 2 will test the effects of the proportion of total immigrants while Model 3 will test the effect of crime rates. Model 4 will combine all of the variables, then interaction variables will be introduced in Models 5 and 6 to further test the significance of the variables.<sup>72</sup> These models will test the social marginality and ethnic

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<sup>72</sup> The methodology for the Swedish elections differs slightly from that used in Chapter 2 for the Danish elections due to the availability of data on welfare and non-Western immigrants in Denmark. However, the different methodology does not make comparisons between the two countries invalid, since non-Western immigration is used in additional models for Denmark. The methodology is still largely based on that used by Rydgren and Ruth (2011).

competition hypotheses, as they are often cited as explanation for support for PRR parties. Under the social marginality hypothesis, one would expect income and education to be negatively correlated with SD vote share while one would expect unemployment to be positively correlated with SD vote share. In other words, one would expect poorer and less educated people as well as the unemployed to be more likely to vote for SD, given its role as a populist party. Crime is also expected to have a positive correlation with SD vote, in part because high crime rates can contribute to feelings of social marginality but also because SD places a strong emphasis on a law-and-order platform (Rydgren and Ruth 2011). The crime statistics used for this model are the total reported crimes and therefore include petty, major, and violent crimes. Following the ethnic competition hypothesis, one would expect a positive correlation between immigrants and SD vote share. If native Swedes are having to compete with immigrants for jobs and other socioeconomic resources, areas with a higher ratio of immigrants are expected to see greater resentment on the part of Swedes and are therefore expected to have higher vote shares for an ethnic nationalist, anti-immigration party. Finally, the interaction variables are expected to be positively correlated with SD vote share. Areas with high levels of unemployment and high ratios of immigrants are expected to see greater support for SD due to SD's welfare chauvinist rhetoric (Arzheimer 2009; Golder 2003). Likewise, areas with high levels of crime and high ratios of immigrants are expected to see greater support for SD, as SD links immigrants with crime (Rydgren and Ruth 2011).

Table 8: Variables Used in Regression Analysis

Variables	Description	Mean (standard deviation) 2010	Mean (standard deviation) 2014	Mean (standard deviation) 2018
Dependent variable	Proportion of vote for SD	6.30 (2.53)	15.34 (4.47)	20.93 (5.43)
Income	Gross pay distributed by municipality of residence (SEK) / population by municipality	108,892.32 (17,596.45)	138,392.51 (22,013.08)	150,482.80 (23,523.04)
Unemployment	Registered unemployed in percent of the register-based workforce	8.77 (2.61)	7.86 (2.63)	6.92 (2.54)
Education	(Population 16-74 with a post-secondary education of 3 years or more by municipality / population by municipality) x 100	9.71 (4.21)	10.73 (4.49)	11.48 (4.73)
Immigrants	(Population of foreign-born persons by municipality / population by municipality) x 100	10.91 (5.47)	12.69 (5.77)	15.39 (6.27)
Crime	Reported crimes per 100,000 of average population by municipality	9,904.21 (2,988.92)	9,552.81 (2,876.00)	9,337.16 (2,688.11)
Unemployment x Immigrants	Interaction between Unemployment and Immigrants	97.84 (72.54)	105.46 (77.20)	114.49 (81.41)
Crime x Immigrants	Interaction between Crime and Immigrants	117,746.27 (93,870.22)	131,835.09 (98,994.40)	152,908.53 (102,515.04)

Note: 2017 income used for 2018 election due limits of available data

## Results

Starting with the 2010 election, the findings generally support the social marginality hypothesis. As expected, income and educational attainment have a negative relationship with SD vote share, although unemployment level has an unexpected negative relationship with SD vote share as well. It was expected that higher levels of unemployment would lead to higher levels of SD vote share, as unemployment is an indicator of social marginality. Education is statistically significant in all models in which it is present while unemployment is significant in Models 4 and 6. Income is not statistically significant in any model. The ethnic competition hypothesis also receives support, with the proportion of immigrants having a positive relationship with SD's vote share, though it is not statistically significant in any model. As expected, crime also has a positive relationship with SD vote share and it is statistically significant in all models in which it is present. The Adjusted  $R^2$  values show the socioeconomic factors and crime explain more of the variance among municipalities than the proportion of immigrants, but the combination of all factors provides the most explanation for the variance. However, the Adjusted  $R^2$  values are relatively low in all models, meaning most of the variance in SD vote share between municipalities is explained by factors outside of the models.

Table 9: 2010 SD Regression Results

2010 general election by municipality	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Income	-8.70x10 <sup>-6</sup> (1.41x10 <sup>-5</sup> )			-1.53x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.37x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	-1.47x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.39x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	-1.89x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.39x10 <sup>-5</sup> )
Unemployment	-0.021 (0.072)			-0.161 (0.075)	-0.187 (0.113)	-0.170 (0.075)
Education	-0.145 (0.056)			-0.205 (0.055)	-0.206 (0.550)	-0.189 (0.056)
Immigrants		0.053 (0.027)		0.040 (0.032)	0.016 (0.084)	0.166 (0.089)
Crime			1.53x10 <sup>-4</sup> (4.91x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	2.16x10 <sup>-4</sup> (5.97x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	2.21x10 <sup>-4</sup> (6.21x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	3.45x10 <sup>-4</sup> (1.03x10 <sup>-4</sup> )
Unemployment x Immigrants					0.002 (0.007)	
Crime x Immigrants						-1.06x10 <sup>-5</sup> (6.92x10 <sup>-6</sup> )
Constant	8.974 (1.855)	5.723 (0.331)	5.723 (0.331)	4.784 (0.508)	9.193 (1.894)	7.982 (1.926)
N	290	290	290	290	290	290
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.0731	0.0097	0.0294	0.1469	0.1441	0.1509
P-Values:						
Income	0.539			0.266	0.289	0.175
Unemployment	0.770			0.032	0.1000	0.023
Education	0.010			0.000	0.000	0.001
Immigrants		0.051		0.216	0.849	0.061
Crime			0.002	0.000	0.000	0.001
Unemployment x Immigrants					0.758	
Crime x Immigrants						0.126

The results for the 2014 election are similar but more ambiguous, with the social marginality and ethnic competition hypotheses both receiving mixed support. Income and education still have a negative relationship with SD vote share but unemployment has a positive relationship in Model 1 and a negative relationship in Models 4 through 6. Educational attainment is statistically significant in all models and is the only socioeconomic factor to be significant in any model. The proportion of immigrants is also ambiguous, as it has a positive relationship with SD vote share in Models 2 and 6 and a negative relationship in Models 4 and 5. Immigration is not statistically significant in any model. Crime again has a positive relationship with SD vote share and is statistically significant in Models 4 through 6. The Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> values

show that socioeconomic factors explain much more of the variance among municipalities than the proportion of immigrants or crime rates. The Adjusted R2 values are much higher than in 2010, suggesting the variables in the models explain more of the variance in voting between municipalities.

Table 10: 2014 SD Regression Results

2014 general election by municipality	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Income	-2.11x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.90x10 <sup>-5</sup> )			-2.60x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.89x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	-2.50x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.90x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	-3.00x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.88x10 <sup>-5</sup> )
Unemployment	0.170 (0.105)			-0.032 (0.124)	-0.147 (0.206)	-0.043 (0.123)
Education	-0.403 (0.082)			-0.488 (0.083)	-0.491 (0.083)	-0.454 (0.083)
Immigrants		8.60x10 <sup>-4</sup> (0.046)		-0.060 (0.051)	-0.140 (0.125)	0.241 (0.130)
Crime			1.31x10 <sup>-4</sup> (9.12x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	4.30x10 <sup>-4</sup> (1.05x10 <sup>-4</sup> )	4.43x10 <sup>-4</sup> (1.06x10 <sup>-4</sup> )	8.12x10 <sup>-4</sup> (1.84x10 <sup>-4</sup> )
Unemployment x Immigrants					0.008 (0.012)	
Crime x Immigrants						-2.68x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.07x10 <sup>-5</sup> )
Constant	21.248 (2.611)	15.327 (0.636)	14.086 (0.910)	21.073 (2.605)	21.891 (2.856)	17.412 (2.963)
N	290	290	290	290	290	290
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.2898	-0.0035	0.0037	0.3269	0.3257	0.3393
P-Values:						
Income	0.268			0.170	0.189	0.112
Unemployment	0.106			0.800	0.477	0.724
Education	0.000			0.000	0.000	0.000
Immigrants		0.985		0.238	0.263	0.065
Crime			0.152	0.000	0.000	0.000
Unemployment x Immigrants					0.484	
Crime x Immigrants						0.013

Finally, the 2018 election differs in several respects from the first two. Income has a slight positive relationship with SD vote share in Model 1 and a slightly negative relationship in Models 4 through 6. Unemployment has a positive relationship with SD vote share and educational attainment has a negative relationship with SD vote share in all models in which they are present. Education is statistically significant in all models in which it is present while unemployment is significant only in Model 1 and income is not significant in any model. Support is also provided for the ethnic competition hypothesis, as the proportion of immigrants has a

positive relationship with SD vote share and is statistically significant in Model 4. Crime has an unexpected negative relationship with SD's vote share that is not statistically significant in any model. Again, the Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> values show the socioeconomic factors explain much more of the difference in SD vote share between the municipalities than the proportion of immigrants or crime levels.

Table 11: 2018 SD Regression Results

2018 general election by municipality	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Income	6.33x10 <sup>-6</sup> (2.20x10 <sup>-5</sup> )			-5.96x10 <sup>-6</sup> (2.25x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	-5.29x10 <sup>-6</sup> (2.26x10 <sup>-5</sup> )	-5.11x10 <sup>-6</sup> (2.28x10 <sup>-5</sup> )
Unemployment	0.288 (0.128)			0.094 (0.165)	0.001 (0.306)	0.105 (0.170)
Education	-0.576 (0.099)			-0.578 (0.100)	-0.579 (0.100)	-0.582 (0.101)
Immigrants		0.084 (0.051)		0.142 (0.058)	0.097 (0.137)	0.101 (0.162)
Crime			2.34x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.19x10 <sup>-4</sup> )	-1.04x10 <sup>-4</sup> (1.24x10 <sup>-4</sup> )	-9.55x10 <sup>-5</sup> (1.27x10 <sup>-4</sup> )	-1.71x10 <sup>-4</sup> (2.75x10 <sup>-4</sup> )
Unemployment x Immigrants					0.006 (0.015)	
Crime x Immigrants						3.74x10 <sup>-6</sup> (1.37x10 <sup>-5</sup> )
Constant	24.591 (3.100)	19.631 (0.843)	21.147 (1.156)	26.583 (3.195)	27.123 (3.533)	27.115 (3.747)
N	290	290	290	290	290	290
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.2844	0.0061	-0.0033	0.2941	0.2920	0.2918
P-Values:						
Income	0.774			0.791	0.815	0.822
Unemployment	0.025			0.569	0.997	0.537
Education	0.000			0.000	0.000	0.000
Immigrants		0.098		0.016	0.478	0.535
Crime			0.844	0.406	0.451	0.536
Unemployment x Immigrants					0.719	
Crime x Immigrants						0.785

Certain trends are noticeable over the three elections. Educational attainment always has a negative relationship with DF vote share and is always statistically significant; however, the coefficient values demonstrate its effect grew larger over time. Similarly, the effect of unemployment changes from negative to ambiguous to positive. Income and the ratio of immigrants stay largely consistent while crime's effect becomes negative in 2018. Finally, the Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> values for the 2014 and 2018 elections are much higher than the 2010 election.

These trends provide overall support for the social marginality hypothesis, as those with lower incomes and education are more likely to vote for SD, as are those with higher crime. Overall support is also provided for the ethnic competition hypothesis, as those in areas with a higher ratio of immigrants are more likely to vote for SD.

However, the aforementioned trends, along with SD's growing vote share between the three elections, suggest those with less education and the unemployed are increasingly voting for SD. There was likely a core group of SD voters in 2010 with lower incomes and educations who, through xenophobic attitudes or personal exposure to immigrants, voted for SD. Over time, more people with low incomes and education, likely lower-class workers, voted for SD, as did the unemployed. In other words, SD became more popular among lower-class workers and the unemployed. This development would explain the higher Adjusted  $R^2$  values in the later elections, as more voters of a certain socioeconomic background vote for SD. It could also explain the increasing effect of education, if the least-educated working-class voters switched to SD. This trend could also explain the change in the effect of unemployment from negative to positive, as the least-educated workers may be among the most likely to be unable to secure employment. Moreover, attracting additional lower-class voters may not have a strong impact on the overall effect of income and would likely happen independent of the effects of crime, which would explain why the effects of those two variables remained relatively unchanged. Finally, SD is likely appealing to those with xenophobic attitudes. The effects of the ratio of immigrants were largely unchanged through the models, with the exception of some negative values in 2014. Since the effects of immigrants went largely unchanged in the models, it is possible that SD voters were motivated by xenophobic attitudes rather than any personal conflict or experience with immigrants.

### **Exit polls: additional quantitative data**

The results of these models mostly supported by exit polls from the 2014 and 2018 elections conducted by Sveriges Television, Sweden's national public television broadcaster. The models suggested those with lower educations are more likely to vote for the Sweden Democrats and this holds in the exit polls as well. In 2018, 35% of those who did not complete primary school voted for SD while 27% with only a primary school education voted for SD.<sup>73</sup> Conversely, only 9% of those who completed a college degree and 10% of those who completed a graduate degree voted for SD (SVT 2018).<sup>74</sup> Additionally, 24% of both blue-collar workers and those belonging to blue-collar unions voted for SD in 2018 compared to 12% and 11%, respectively, in 2014.<sup>75</sup> On the other hand, 12% of white-collar workers and managers, 13% of members of white-collar unions, and 9% of members of professional unions voted for SD in 2018 while the vote shares were even lower in 2014 at 6%, 6%, and 4%, respectively (SVT 2014; 2018).<sup>76</sup> SD also did well with business owners and the self-employed, receiving 24% of their vote in 2018 (SVT 2018).<sup>77</sup> The results in the models for unemployment were ambiguous, as its relationship with SD vote share moved from negative in 2010 to positive in 2018. However, 24% of those unemployed voted for SD in 2018 while 13% did in 2014.<sup>78</sup> Furthermore, 30% of those permanently outside of the labor market voted for SD in 2018 and 14% did in 2014 (SVT 2014; 2018).<sup>79</sup>

The models also generally suggested higher rates of immigrants in a municipality led to higher SD vote shares. In 2018, 32% of those who thought it was good for Sweden to receive

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<sup>73</sup> *ej grundskola/obligatorisk skola . . . grundskola/motsvarande obligatorisk skola* (SVT 2018, 18).

<sup>74</sup> *studier/examen från högskola/universitet . . . studier/examen från forskarutbildning* (SVT 2018, 18).

<sup>75</sup> *arbetare . . . LO-medlem* (SVT 2014, 16; SVT 2018, 17).

<sup>76</sup> *tjänsteman . . . TCO-medlem . . . SACO-medlem* (SD 2014, 16; SVT 2018, 17).

<sup>77</sup> *företagare . . .* (SVT 2018, 17).

<sup>78</sup> *arbetslösa* (SVT 2014, 16; SVT 2018, 17).

<sup>79</sup> *sjuk/aktivitetsersättning* (SVT 2014, 16; SVT 2018, 17).

fewer refugees and 36% of those who thought immigration was a very important issue voted for SD (SVT 2018).<sup>80</sup> 19% of those who thought immigration was a very important issue voted for SD in 2014 (SVT 2014).<sup>81</sup> Perhaps unsurprisingly, only 9% of those who grew up outside of Europe voted for SD in 2018.<sup>82</sup> However, somewhat surprisingly, more of those who grew up in Scandinavia but not Sweden (36%) and those who grew up in Europe outside of Scandinavia (22%) voted for SD than those who grew up in Sweden (17%; SVT 2018).<sup>83</sup> There were similar results in 2014, with 3% of those growing up outside of Europe voting for SD compared with 8% growing up in Sweden, 9% growing up in Scandinavia outside of Sweden, and 8% growing up in Europe outside of Scandinavia (SVT 2014).<sup>84</sup> Overall, 32% of those who voted for SD in 2018 said that Sweden should receive fewer refugees (SVT 2018).<sup>85</sup> The models had very ambiguous results for crime, as crime rates had a slightly positive relationship with SD vote share in 2010 and 2014 but a mostly negative one in 2018. According to the exit polls, 23% of those who voted for SD in 2018 thought that criminals should receive much harsher penalties (SVT 2018).<sup>86</sup>

By combining the models with exit poll data, one can see that both strongly suggest a correlation in one's educational attainment and the likelihood that person will vote for SD. Both demonstrate that higher levels of education correlate with lower levels of SD vote share and that lower levels of education correlate with higher levels of vote share. Additionally, blue-collar workers are more likely to vote for SD than their white-collar and professional counterparts, who are likely to have a higher level of education. The models and exit polls also both suggest a relationship between immigration and votes for SD. The models suggest those living in areas

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<sup>80</sup> *bra ta emot färre flyktingar . . . flyktingar/invandring mycket viktig fråga* (SVT 2018, 41).

<sup>81</sup> *flyktingar/invandring mycket viktig fråga* (SVT 2014, 38).

<sup>82</sup> *utanför Europa* (SVT 2018, 25).

<sup>83</sup> *i Norden utanför Sverige . . . i Europa utanför Norden . . . i Sverige* (SVT 2018, 25).

<sup>84</sup> *utanför Europa . . . i Sverige . . . i Norden utanför Sverige . . . i Europa utanför Norden* (SVT 2014, 23).

<sup>85</sup> *ta emot färre flyktingar i Sverige* (SVT 2018, 34).

<sup>86</sup> *införa mycket hårdare fängelsestraff för brottslingar* (SVT 2018, 34).

with a higher proportion of immigrants are more likely to vote for SD while the exit polls indicate those with anti-immigrant attitudes are more likely to vote for SD. The exit poll results also seem to indicate culture may play a role in the immigration discussion, as those who grew up in Scandinavia and Europe are more likely to vote for SD than someone who grew up outside of Europe. The fact that those who grew up in Europe outside of Sweden voted for SD in similar or higher rates than those who grew up in Sweden suggests the concern is less the preservation of Swedish culture and more the preservation of broader Western culture or an opposition to non-Western culture. Results for unemployment are mixed, with the models having an ambiguous outcome regarding unemployment and the exit polls showing a high level of success for SD among the unemployed. Likewise, results for crime are mixed, as the models had slight and inconsistent findings regarding its relationship with SD vote share while exit polls suggest a relatively high proportion of SD voters want increased punishments for criminals. Overall, educational attainment and attitudes on immigrants appear to be motivating factors for SD voters, although unemployment seems to be increasingly important.

### **Supply-side: party programs**

In addition to the demand-side approach taken above, a supply-side approach is useful in examining how parties are positioning themselves to appeal to voters. For the Sweden Democrats, electoral manifestos from the 2010, 2014, and 2018 general elections were obtained. These pieces of party literature highlight the issues most important to the party and outline their position on these issues. By analyzing the issues on which SD places a high level of importance

and the phrasing it uses in doing so, one can see how SD is attempting to appeal to prospective voters.<sup>87</sup>

### **2010 electoral manifestos**

The 2010 electoral manifesto, presented as a “contract with voters” states that SD is a “Sweden-friendly” party without “ideological blinders” that always puts Swedish interests first (SD 2010, 1-3).<sup>88</sup> The manifesto covers many issues, beginning with the promise of more jobs. Several policies are presented in support of this issue, including tightening labor immigration rules, work tax deductions, and greater support for small businesses and entrepreneurs (SD 2010).<sup>89</sup> The inclusion of greater restrictions on immigrants coming for work explicitly establishes immigrants as a threat to Swedish workers and implies that immigrants are preventing Swedes from obtaining jobs.

The manifesto next expresses SD’s desire for greater support to the elderly, including the abolition of the pension tax and programs to combat crime against the elderly (SD 2010).<sup>90</sup> Next, crime in general is addressed, with SD promising harsher penalties for serious crimes, including the introduction of life sentences without the possibility of parole (SD 2010).<sup>91</sup> The overall push for harsher penalties includes the desire for compulsory expulsion for all foreign nationals who

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<sup>87</sup> The manifestos used from the 2010, 2014, and 2018 elections came from the Manifesto Project Database, formerly known as the Manifesto Research Group and Comparative Manifestos Project. Unless otherwise noted, the analysis of the literature is the author’s.

<sup>88</sup> *kontrakt med väljarna . . . Sverigedemokraterna är ett Sverigevänligt parti . . . fritt från ideologiska skygglappar . . . ett parti som i alla lägen sätter svenska intressen i första rummet* (SD 2010, 1-3).

<sup>89</sup> *fler job . . . en skärpning av reglerna för arbetskraftsinvandring . . . ett bibehållande av jobbskatteavdragen . . . stödja mindre svenska företag och innovatörer* (SD 2010, 3).

<sup>90</sup> *avskaffande av pensionärsskatten . . . trygghetsprogram för att bekämpa brott och övergrepp mot äldre* (SD 2010, 4).

<sup>91</sup> *kraftig straffskärpning för grova och upprepade brott . . . införande av verkliga livstidsstraff, utan möjlighet till tidsbestämning eller benådning* (SD 2010, 4).

commit more serious crimes (SD 2010).<sup>92</sup> Here, SD establishes a link between immigrants and crime.

Immigration is fully addressed next in the manifesto. The manifesto states SD's desire to preserve Swedish cultural heritage and to ensure Swedes have a right to develop culture on their own terms (SD 2010).<sup>93</sup> SD's desired immigration policies include the assimilation of immigrants into Swedish society, increased support for "women living under religious and honor-related oppression," a stop to the Islamization of Swedish society, a ban on full-length veils, and tighter requirements for citizenship and residence permits (SD 2010, 5).<sup>94</sup> These policies suggest Islam is incompatible with Swedish society, including through its insinuated oppression of women.

The manifesto continues with policies supporting better healthcare, including the abolition of free medical care for illegal immigrants, before offering greater support for schools.<sup>95</sup> In schools, SD wishes to emphasize the "central importance of Christian ethics and Western humanism" while conveying a "profound understanding and acceptance of our Swedish cultural heritage" (SD 2010, 6).<sup>96</sup> To meet this goal, SD seeks a "re-nationalization of the Swedish school" and the introduction of Swedish as the only spoken language in schools (SD

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<sup>92</sup> *obligatorisk utvisning för alla utländska medborgare som begår grovre brott* (SD 2010, 4).

<sup>93</sup> *värnas det svenska kulturarvet . . . svenskarnas rätt att utveckla sin kultur på egna villkor* (SD 2010, 5).

<sup>94</sup> *assimileringspolitiken . . . kvinnor som lever under religiöst och hedersrelaterat förtryck . . . stopp för islamiseringen av det svenska samhället . . . förbud mot bärandet av heltäckande slöjor på allmän plats . . . skärpning av kraven för medborgarskap och uppehållstillstånd* (SD 2010, 5).

<sup>95</sup> *avskaffande av den kostnadsfria sjuk- och tandvården för illegala invandrare* (SD 2010, 5).

<sup>96</sup> *den kristna etikens och den västerländska humanismens centrala betydelse för vårt samhälle . . . förmedlas en djupgående förståelse och acceptans för vårt svenska kulturarv* (SD 2010, 6).

2010, 6).<sup>97</sup> The manifesto also pushes for a strong and modern military, greater support to families, and stronger environmental protection and energy policies (SD 2010).<sup>98</sup>

The next section of the manifesto focuses on “close European cooperation without supranationalism,” stating that Sweden ought to be an independent, free, and democratic nation-state in which the Swedish people have power over themselves and the Swedish Parliament is the highest decision-making body (SD 2010, 7).<sup>99</sup> With these goals, SD seeks to renegotiate Sweden’s EU membership and to restore border security through a renegotiation of the Schengen Agreement (SD 2010).<sup>100</sup> Additionally, the manifesto states SD’s opposition to Turkish EU membership (SD 2010).<sup>101</sup> SD depicts the EU as violating Swedish sovereignty, otherwise it would not be concerned with the Swedish people’s ability to be self-governing and it would not be concerned with renegotiating Sweden’s treaties with the rest of Europe. The manifesto does not give a reason for opposing Turkish membership in the EU but one can infer that membership in the EU would allow Turkish citizens greater ability to move to Europe, including Sweden. In the eyes of SD, this change would put greater stress on the availability of jobs for Swedes and would allow more Muslims into the country, furthering the process of Islamization.

After promoting gender equality and greater support for women, the manifesto focuses on promoting a common Swedish culture that creates cohesion and solidarity between citizens (SD 2010).<sup>102</sup> In this context, SD advocates for increased support for activities that preserve and

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<sup>97</sup> *återförstatligande av den svenska skolan . . . införande av svenska som enda tillåtna samtalspråk i skolan* (SD 2010, 6).

<sup>98</sup> *starkt och modernt svenskt försvar . . . starka och självständiga familjer . . . ansvarsfull och hållbar miljö och energipolitik* (SD 2010, 6-7).

<sup>99</sup> *nära europeiskt samarbete utan överstatlighet . . . Sverige är en självständig, fri och demokratisk nationalstat . . . har svenska folket makten att själva . . . är den svenska riksdagen högsta beslutande organ* (SD 2010, 7).

<sup>100</sup> *omförhandling av det svenska EU-medlemskapet . . . återupprättat gränsskydd genom en omförhandling av Schengenavtalet* (SD 2010, 7).

<sup>101</sup> *nej till Turkiet i EU* (SD 2010, 7).

<sup>102</sup> *jämställdhet och ökad trygghet för landets kvinnor . . . präglas samhället av en gemensam svensk kultur som skapar sammanhållning och solidaritet mellan medborgarna* (SD 2010, 7-8).

enliven the Swedish cultural heritage as well as the establishment of a Swedish cultural canon (SD 2010).<sup>103</sup> Similarly, the manifesto argues that taxes should fund cultural expressions whose purpose is to delight, beautify, and create community while no taxes should fund cultural expressions whose primary purpose is to shock, upset, and provoke (SD 2010).<sup>104</sup> The manifesto finishes with the promotion of a “vibrant countryside and animal-friendly community,” in part because the landscape is part of the Swedish identity (SD 2010, 8).<sup>105</sup>

The 2010 manifesto heavily emphasizes the importance of preserving Swedish culture. As such, it targets immigrants, stating SD’s desire to make it more difficult for immigrants to arrive in the country and stressing the importance of cultural assimilation. Islam is explicitly targeted as an object of SD’s resentment, as the manifesto states its opposition to the purported Islamization of society as well as individual components of Islamic customs, such as wearing veils. Immigration is mentioned throughout the manifesto, including the contexts of increasing jobs, improving healthcare, and improving schools. All four of Rydgren’s frames are thereby utilized in this manifesto, as immigrants are presented as threats to Swedish culture, sources of crime, drains on the welfare system, and threats to Swedish jobs.

SD does not place a heavy emphasis on the EU in this manifesto but does state its hostility toward the notion that decisions affecting Sweden could be made without the approval of the Swedish people or Riksdag. The manifesto also demonstrates a fairly high degree of sociocultural authoritarianism through the proposal of higher criminal punishments and greater support to police and especially in its description of a proper Swedish cultural heritage that must

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<sup>103</sup> *utökad stöd till sådan verksamhet som bevarar och levandegör det svenska kulturarvet . . . upprättande en svensk kulturell kanon* (SD 2010, 8).

<sup>104</sup> *används skattemedel i första hand till att befrämja kulturyttringar vars syfte är att glädja, försköna och skapa gemenskap* (SD 2010, 8).

<sup>105</sup> *levande landsbygd och ett djurvänligt samhälle . . . beskyddas och vårdas det öppna landskapet med åker och hage som är en del av svenskarnas identitet som folk* (SD 2010, 8).

be defended. The suggestion that taxes support certain forms of art and not others indicates that SD sees the government as responsible for promoting appropriate culture. SD's economic policies in the manifesto are fairly centrist, as despite suggestions for lower taxes in a few areas, it also recommends greater financial support to small businesses, the elderly, healthcare, schools, families, and conservation. Through the manifesto, SD positions itself as protecting a true Swedish culture, generally at the expense of non-Christian and non-Western immigrants, although its authoritarian cultural tendencies are tempered by centrist economic policies.

### **2014 electoral manifesto**

The 2014 manifesto, entitled "We Choose Welfare!" begins with the assertion that the policies espoused by SD reflect the fact that they have chosen to support welfare and its members love Sweden.<sup>106</sup> The rather lengthy introduction states that SD's "primary task is to guarantee the people of Sweden good living conditions, security and welfare" even though "other parties have stated that there are no resources to secure jobs and fix holes in Swedish welfare" (SD 2014, 1, 3).<sup>107</sup> SD is distinguished from other parties by its willingness to dare to think of new ways and to make tough decisions (SD 2014).<sup>108</sup>

The manifesto next expresses SD's love for Sweden in a number of different ways, including its culture, traditions, and cultural environments as well as its democracy, welfare, and people (SD 2014).<sup>109</sup> However, the manifesto next notes that things used to be better than they currently are and that while there are still many positive aspects about Sweden, politicians have

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<sup>106</sup> *Vi väljer välfärd och vi älskar Sverige* (SD 2014, 3).

<sup>107</sup> *att garantera människorna i Sverige goda levnadsförhållanden, trygghet och välfärd . . . andra partier uppgivet konstaterar att det inte finns några resurser till att säkra jobben och laga hålen i den svenska välfärden* (SD 2014, 3).

<sup>108</sup> *Orsaken till att vi kan göra detta är att vi vågar tänka i nya banor och vågar göra tuffa, men nödvändiga prioriteringar* (SD 2014, 3).

<sup>109</sup> *Vi är stolta över vår kultur, våra traditioner och våra vackra kulturmiljöer . . . vår demokrati och vår välfärd, över alla fantastiska män och kvinnor från vårt land* (SD 2014, 3).

made Sweden worse off over the last few decades through wrong priorities and divisive policies (SD 2014).<sup>110</sup> The introduction reflects SD's antiestablishment populism. SD has "chosen welfare" and wants to give the people what they need while the traditional, mainstream parties have neglected this duty and continue to state that greater support is not possible. The three paragraphs on SD's love of Sweden also demonstrates its nationalist ideology.

The rest of the manifesto devotes a page to each policy issue that SD deems important. The first issue is crime, where SD advocates for tougher penalties for crimes, enhanced resources for law enforcement, and greater support to victims of crime (SD 2014).<sup>111</sup> Next, the manifesto pledges increased support for the elderly before arriving at the section on immigration in which the desire for an immigration policy that "promotes cohesion and welfare" (SD 2014, 7).<sup>112</sup> SD acknowledges that it wants to "[guard] our community and our own unique culture and identity" and wants immigration to be an "asset and not a burden on society" (SD 2014, 7).<sup>113</sup> Under this framework, SD suggests more temporary rather than permanent visas and the acceptance of fewer asylum seekers, a return of the assimilation policy, restricting new immigrants' access to welfare, language tests and increased residential requirements for citizenship, and the introduction of compulsory health checks for newly arrived immigrants who may be carrying infectious diseases such as Ebola.<sup>114</sup> These policies suggest immigrants threaten Swedish cultural

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<sup>110</sup> *de styrande politikerna, genom sin splittringspolitik och sina felaktiga prioriteringar, under de senaste decennierna har gjort Sverige lite mindre fint och lite mindre fantastiskt för varje år* (SD 2014, 3).

<sup>111</sup> *kraftig straffskärpning för grova och upprepade brott . . . Utökade resurser till de brottsbekämpande . . . Stärkt stöd till landets alla brottsofferjourer* (SD 2014, 5).

<sup>112</sup> *Trygghet och värdighet på ålderns host . . . invandringspolitik som befrämjar sammanhållning och välfärd* (SD 2014, 6-7).

<sup>113</sup> *slår vakt om vår gemenskap och vår egen unika kultur och identitet . . . invandringen blir en tillgång och inte en belastning för samhället* (SD 2014, 7).

<sup>114</sup> *skifte från det regelmissiga beviljandet av permanenta uppehållstillstånd till temporära samt en kraftig begränsning av asyl- och anhöriginvandringens . . . återgång till den assimileringspolitik . . . genom att begränsa nyanlända, icke-skyddsbehövande invandrades tillgång till bidragssystemen . . . språk och kunskapstester och genom att utöka den tid som man skall ha varit bosatt i Sverige . . . införande av obligatoriska hälsokontroller för nyanlända invandrare* (SD 2014, 7).

heritage, welfare systems, and physical security. To SD, current policies grant far too much to immigrants.

The manifesto next expresses SD's desire for better working conditions, including increased staffing in welfare positions; increased support to the unemployed; a better environment for businesses, including the elimination of payroll taxes for small businesses; and improved healthcare, including the abolition of free care for illegal immigrants (SD 2014).<sup>115</sup> Increased support for education is next conveyed, including support for knowledge of the Swedish language and "increased knowledge, understanding and respect for the Swedish cultural heritage" (SD 2014, 12).<sup>116</sup> The importance of a strong and flexible military is next discussed, including the idea that Sweden's military should be used for home defense more than foreign conflicts (SD 2014).<sup>117</sup> Next, the manifesto promotes increased support for families and children; sustainable environmental and energy policies; and gender equality, including increased efforts against genital mutilation, forced marriage and sexual and honor-related violence (SD 2014).<sup>118</sup>

Following these policies, the manifesto encourages "a historically rooted, common Swedish culture that creates cohesion and solidarity between citizens" (SD 2014, 18).<sup>119</sup> As part of this effort, SD wants to increase support to activities that make Swedish cultural heritage accessible and to increase support for the Christian cultural heritage (SD 2014).<sup>120</sup> Next, the

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<sup>115</sup> *Minskad underbemanning inom välfärden . . . Ökat stöd till arbetslösa . . . Helt slopad allmän löneavgift för småföretag . . . avskaffande av den i praktiken kostnadsfria sjuk- och tandvården för illegala invandrare* (SD 2014, 8-11).

<sup>116</sup> *förstärkt satsning på kunskaper i svenska språket samt ökad kunskap, förståelse och respekt för det svenska kulturarvet* (SD 2014, 12).

<sup>117</sup> *väpnade insatser i andra världsdelar till ett försvar av Sveriges gränser* (SD 2014, 13).

<sup>118</sup> *starka, självständiga familjer och trygga barn . . . hållbar miljö- och energipolitik . . . ökade insatser mot könsstymning, tvångs gifte samt sexuellt och hedersrelaterat våld* (SD 2014, 14-15, 17).

<sup>119</sup> *samhället präglas av en historiskt rotad, gemensam svensk kultur som skapar sammanhållning och solidaritet* (SD 2014, 18).

<sup>120</sup> *verksamheter som ägnar sig åt att bevara, synliggöra, levandegöra och tillgängliggöra det svenska kulturarvet . . . utökat stöd till det kristna kulturarvet* (SD 2014, 18).

manifesto advocates for the countryside and animals before addressing the EU.<sup>121</sup> SD desires a new referendum on Swedish membership in the EU with the goal of Sweden leaving.<sup>122</sup> Turkish EU membership is also rejected “in order not to aggravate the economic, cultural, democratic and social problems within the Union” (SD 2014, 20).<sup>123</sup> SD also desires restored border protection “in order to counter trafficking in human beings, terrorism, smuggling of weapons, drugs and more” (SD 2014, 20).<sup>124</sup>

The manifesto next considers broader foreign policy and SD states its intent to cease using aid to finance the relocation of immigrants to Sweden and instead to provide greater assistance to refugees near the areas in which they are affected.<sup>125</sup> SD also intends to allocate greater assistance to Christians persecuted because of their faith and to counter Islam and “other totalitarian ideologies that help to destabilize the world” (SD 2014, 21).<sup>126</sup> Finally, the manifesto ends with promises for greater support for particularly vulnerable groups and better infrastructure (SD 2014).<sup>127</sup>

Overall, the contents of the manifesto match the populism and nationalism of the introduction. SD promises increased support for nearly all services, including the elderly, healthcare, education, infrastructure, and especially the welfare system. At the same time, any reference to taxes involves a reduction in taxes. These policies cater to what people want to hear, as most people would likely enjoy more services and lower taxes. SD therefore positions itself as

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<sup>121</sup> *levande landsbygd och ett djurvänligt samhälle* (SD 2014, 19).

<sup>122</sup> *ny folkomröstning om det svenska EU-medlemskapet med målet att Sverige snarast möjligt skall lämna den överstatliga unionen* (SD 2014, 20).

<sup>123</sup> *i syfte att inte förvärta de ekonomiska, kulturella, demokratiska och sociala problemen inom unionen* (SD 2014, 20).

<sup>124</sup> *i syfte att motverka människohandel, terrorism, smuggling av vapen, droger med mera* (SD 2014, 20).

<sup>125</sup> *för att finansiera mottagandet av invandrare i Sverige . . . flyktinghjälp i närområdena* (SD 2014, 21).

<sup>126</sup> *starkare stöd till kristna som förföljs på grund av sin tro i olika delar av världen samt ett tydligare motarbetande av islamism och andra totalitära ideologier som bidrar till att destabilisera världen* (SD 2014, 21).

<sup>127</sup> *politik för stärkt stöd till särskilt utsatta grupper . . . Infrastruktur för fler hem, bättre tillväxt och ett sammanhållet Sverige* (SD 2014, 21).

working for the people. However, this approach of lower taxes and more spending is not conducive to budgetary stability and contradicts the earlier claim that SD is willing to make tough decisions. SD also calls for a referendum on Sweden's EU membership, a move complimentary to its goal of allowing the Swedish people to shape their own future through elections. Here, SD appeals to the idea that people can and should determine policy themselves through direct democratic measures. Finally, SD positions itself as a challenger to the established and allegedly failing politicians, suggesting they are incapable of making the changes necessary to improve Sweden's conditions to a former standard. These last two points underscore the antiestablishment discourse used by SD.

The ethnic nationalism inherent in SD's message can be seen throughout the manifesto, particularly in SD's open desire to curb immigration to protect Swedish culture. Immigrants are portrayed as taking advantage of Swedish welfare, incompatible with Swedish culture unless they assimilate, and dangerous to public health. Open borders also allow for "trafficking in human beings, terrorism, smuggling of weapons, drugs and more" (SD 2014, 20). SD also is openly pro-Christian, as it offers greater support to Christian groups and activities in multiple locations; conversely, it also espouses anti-Muslim rhetoric though associating Islam with "other totalitarian ideologies that help to destabilize the world," is concerned that Turkey would "aggravate the economic, cultural, democratic and social problems" within the EU, and while not explicitly associating these acts with Islam, wants to counter "genital mutilation, forced marriage and sexual and honor-related violence," acts commonly associated with Muslim and African cultures (SD 2014, 17, 20-21). Through its pro-Christian and tough-on-crime policies as well as its frequent allusions to Swedish culture and the need to preserve and promote it, the manifesto

also demonstrates SD's belief in a genuine Swedish culture, one that the government should attempt to foster.

Given the nationalist and anti-immigrant policies generally adopted by SD, it would appear that SD's rhetoric at times is meant to assuage concerns that SD's policies are extreme. SD says Sweden should be an open country but proposes accepting fewer immigrants. SD is willing to spend more money on foreign aid but that money should go to people in other parts of the world rather than encouraging people to move to Sweden. SD wants a "Sweden that extends a helping hand to countries and people in need, but who at the same time do not forget the responsibility to their own people or reduce the great needs that exist at home" (SD 2014, 3).<sup>128</sup> Through its rhetoric, SD positions itself as caring and concerned for the welfare of others, allowing it to appear less extreme than many of its policies would suggest. Furthermore, the heavy focus on choosing welfare and supporting a variety of social programs further contributes to the idea that SD is not extreme, as these are fairly centrist, if not leftist, economic policies. SD balances its more extreme views on culture and immigration with centrist economic policies and rhetoric that indicates an openness to others.

### **2018 electoral manifesto**

The 2018 manifesto presents a much bleaker view of the state of Swedish society. The 2014 manifesto presents Sweden as having declined from a better condition but is still an overall good place. On the other hand, the 2018 manifesto states that Sweden is culturally divided; immigrants have divided society, cultivated exclusion, and eroded welfare; women, children and the elderly hesitate to go out alone because "brutal civil wars are fought between rival suburban

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<sup>128</sup> *Sverige som sträcker ut en hjälpande hand till länder och människor i nöd, men som samtidigt inte glömmer ansvaret mot den egna befolkningen eller förringar de stora behov som finns på hemmaplan* (SD 2014, 3).

gangs;” and the Swedish education system has been failing for decades (SD 2018, 3-5, 9).<sup>129</sup> The blame for these issues is placed on government policies: several governments have for a long time allowed the social mess to crack, Sweden's migration policy has been handled in an irresponsible and ignorant way, current and former governments have seriously damaged the confidence in justice, and Sweden's young people have been neglected by this and previous governments (SD 2018).<sup>130</sup> Blaming the professed bad conditions on current and former governments allows SD to present itself as an agent of change that can right all of the wrongs plaguing Swedish society. Antiestablishment discourse distinguishes SD from other parties whose policies have seemingly led Sweden into a decline of its fortunes.

The populist rhetoric present in this manifesto goes beyond antiestablishment discourse. SD again positions itself as a supporter and defender of the people. As in past manifestos, all references to taxes are negative and generally carry the promise of reductions or eliminations. Also, this manifesto does not advertise welfare as prominently as the 2014 manifesto, but it promotes almost identical policies as in past manifestos, including increased support to the elderly, healthcare, education, infrastructure, housing, gender equality, and families. It also includes several generic pro-welfare statements such as “in our Sweden, the welfare state is strong” (SD 2018, 3).<sup>131</sup> Overall, the dual promises of lower taxes and greater support to welfare and social services are still present.

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<sup>129</sup> *Sverige är idag ett kluvet land . . . mycket högt asyl- och anhörigmottagande har splittrat samhället, odlat utanförskap och urholkat välfärden . . . Kvinnor, barn och äldre tvekar att gå ut ensamma kvällstid samtidigt som brutala inbördeskrig utkämpas mellan rivaliserande förortsgång . . . svenska utbildningsystemet har nedmonterats under decennier* (SD 2018, 3-5, 9).

<sup>130</sup> *Flera regeringar har under lång tid tillåtit samhällskittet att krackelera . . . Sveriges migrationspolitik har under decennier hanterats på ett ansvarslöst och ignorant sätt . . . Nuvarande och tidigare regeringar har allvarligt skadat förtroendet för rättsväsendet . . . Sveriges unga har tveklöst åsidosatts av denna och tidigare regeringar* (SD 2018, 3-5, 21).

<sup>131</sup> *I vårt Sverige står välfärdsstaten stark* (SD 2018, 3).

Additionally, there is a greater emphasis on referendums in this manifesto, with SD claiming that referendums allow all people to express their opinions and therefore give policies the broadest support (SD 2018).<sup>132</sup> The manifesto states that “far-reaching proposals for constitutional amendments” should not be adopted without a referendum (SD 2018, 20).<sup>133</sup> This logic is again applied to the EU, as a referendum on EU membership is again presented as necessary. SD argues that “European politicians with dreams of a federal super state” have allowed the EU to make more decisions in more policy areas while its budget takes in more Swedish tax money (SD 2018, 16).<sup>134</sup> The EU is portrayed as an indifferent external actor whose decisions have little regard for the Swedish people, who should be making more decisions for themselves. This stated desire for more referendums suggests the government is out of touch with what the people want and that the people are more capable of making decisions on important policies.

Immigration is again targeted in the 2018 manifesto and is blamed for many issues in Swedish society. SD claims that tens of thousands of illegal immigrants live in Sweden and that Sweden is “internationally known for unrest and citizens active in terror networks” (SD 2018, 4).<sup>135</sup> Failed immigration policy is blamed for the housing shortage while native Swedes allegedly are discriminated against in favor of illegal immigrants in terms of access to healthcare (SD 2018).<sup>136</sup> Some of the rhetoric suggests that SD is concerned only with illegal immigrants but the first recommended policy is to accept asylum seekers only from Sweden’s neighboring

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<sup>132</sup> *Folkomröstningar ger hela folket möjlighet att uttrycka sin mening och därför bredast möjliga politiska förankring* (SD 2018, 20).

<sup>133</sup> *långtgående förslag på grundlagsändringar* (SD 2018, 20).

<sup>134</sup> *Europeiska politiker med drömmar om en federal superstat . . . har låtit EU ta över beslutanderätten på fler och fler områden samtidigt som dess budget sväljer fler och fler svenska skattekröner* (SD 2018, 16).

<sup>135</sup> *vistas tiotusentals personer illegalt inom landets gränser och Sverige är internationellt känt för oroligheter och medborgare som är aktiva inom terrornätverk* (SD 2018, 4).

<sup>136</sup> *den viktigaste orsaken till bostadsbristen ligger i en misslyckad migrationspolitik . . . infödda svenskar inte diskrimineras i förhållande till personer som vistas i landet illegalt* (SD 2018, 2, 8).

countries (SD 2018).<sup>137</sup> Likewise, SD wants to strengthen requirements on family immigration to “make it impossible to exploit the system and further overload the welfare system” (SD 2018, 4).<sup>138</sup> SD also wants agreements with other countries that lets Sweden expel more people (SD 2018).<sup>139</sup> Despite the rhetorical focus on illegal immigrants, many policies target immigrants in general.

Despite the opposition to immigration, SD portrays itself as very generous in foreign aid, calling itself “Sweden's most aid-friendly party” (SD 2018, 15).<sup>140</sup> As in 2014, the goal is for this aid money to be spent on refugee assistance in the areas near those from which the refugees are fleeing, including supporting reconstruction of infrastructure in war-affected areas and contributing to the voluntary return of refugees to these areas (SD 2018).<sup>141</sup> As generous as this aid may be, it is designed to keep refugees close to their points of origin rather than having them flee to Europe and to return once the conflict is over. This aid policy therefore is complimentary to SD’s immigration policy, as it keeps refugees out of Sweden and returns them once conflict is over. SD also wants to abolish aid to corrupt organizations, providing Islamic Relief and the Palestinian Authority as examples (SD 2018).<sup>142</sup> Regardless of how corrupt these organizations are, it is telling that SD chooses two overtly Islamic organizations as examples of corrupt organizations. SD also proposes several controversial policies that target or would anger

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<sup>137</sup> *förstärkt lagstiftning för att dels göra det betydligt svårare att arbeta och bo i Sverige utan tillstånd . . . Sverige endast ska ta emot asylsökande från våra grannländer* (SD 2018, 4).

<sup>138</sup> *anhöriginvandring . . . för att omöjliggöra utnyttjande av systemet samt ytterligare överbelastning av välfärdssystemet* (SD 2018, 4).

<sup>139</sup> *avtal med andra länder för att kunna utvisa fler personer* (SD 2018, 4).

<sup>140</sup> *Sveriges biståndsvänligaste parti* (SD 2018, 15).

<sup>141</sup> *generös internationell flyktinghjälp i närområdet, stödja återuppbyggnad av infrastruktur i krigsdrabbade områden och bidra generöst till frivilligt återvändande av flyktingar* (SD 2018, 15).

<sup>142</sup> *Avveckla biståndet till korruperade organisationer som Islamic Relief och den palestinska myndigheten* (SD 2018, 15).

Muslims such as acknowledging genocide committed by the Ottoman Empire and recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel (SD 2018).<sup>143</sup>

These apparently anti-Muslim policies work in conjunction with more subtle attacks on Islam that demonstrate it is incompatible with Swedish culture. For example, SD expresses its desire to withdraw tax-funded support to “anti-democratic, violent and segregating faiths and associations,” presumably Muslim ones (SD 2018, 20).<sup>144</sup> The manifesto laments honor-related violence and oppression of women and advocates for a special category for honor-related crimes as well as the introduction of a minimum marriage age of 24 years for foreign nationals (SD 2018).<sup>145</sup> These policies are not explicitly targeted toward Muslims but they are the most likely targets based on stereotypes of Islamic culture.

The ostensibly anti-Muslim policies are part of SD’s broader cultural authoritarianism. SD again notes that it is driven by love and belief in the future of Sweden and wants Swedish culture to be a visible part of society (SD 2018).<sup>146</sup> As part of this, social orientation should be mandatory for everyone granted a residence permit (SD 2018).<sup>147</sup> Moreover, SD desires the introduction of a civic duty in which all citizens are expected to participate in socially useful tasks (SD 2018).<sup>148</sup> The manifesto also expresses the belief that Sweden “needs to come together around common norms and values, collective memories, common myths, celebrations, traditions,

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<sup>143</sup> *erkänna folk mordet under det Osmanska riket . . . erkänna Jerusalem som Israels huvudstad* (SD 2018, 14).

<sup>144</sup> *Dra in allt skattefinansierat stöd till antidemokratiska, våldsbejakande och segregande trossamfund och föreningar* (SD 2018, 20).

<sup>145</sup> *Hedersrelaterat våld och förtryck har etablerat sig som fenomen . . . särskild brottsrubricering för hedersrelaterad brottslighet . . . införa en 24-årsregel vid äktenskap med utländska medborgare* (SD 2018, 13).

<sup>146</sup> *Sverigedemokraterna drivs av kärlek och framtidstro för vårt land . . . den svenska kulturen syns och är en livskraftig, naturlig del av samhället* (SD 2018, 3).

<sup>147</sup> *göra den obligatorisk för alla som får uppehållstillstånd* (SD 2018, 3).

<sup>148</sup> *medborgarplikt där samtliga medborgare utöver värn- eller civilplikt också förväntas delta i samhällsnyttiga uppgifter* (SD 2018, 3).

customs and practices” in order to stay together (SD 2018, 20).<sup>149</sup> Swedish culture should be allowed to flourish rather than be “suffocated by left-liberal wet blankets or educational contempt” (SD 2018, 20).<sup>150</sup> Instead, schools should teach a Swedish cultural canon (SD 2018).<sup>151</sup> This rhetoric and these policies imply SD sees a true Swedish culture and a manner in which people should behave.

These ideas about proper culture and behavior are also evident in SD’s proposed policies on crime. SD alleges that police and their families are shot in their homes and have their cars blown up, the few perpetrators who are actually convicted receive mild sentences, and as a result of uncontrolled immigration, terrorists with war experience go freely on the streets (SD 2018).<sup>152</sup> To confront this dire situation, SD wants to increase the number of police; give police increased powers including an extended self-defense policy, increased use of surveillance cameras, and the ability to detain people who appear aggressive toward police; a mandatory deportation policy for serious criminal aliens; and sending foreigners and those with life sentences to jails in other countries (SD 2018).<sup>153</sup> These policies would greatly strengthen the powers of the police and state and would help to enforce proper behavior. Therefore, they can be seen as contributing to SD’s notion of proper citizenship and civic behavior, especially as many are targeted at

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<sup>149</sup> *gemensamma normer och värderingar, kollektiva minnen, gemensamma myter, högtider, traditioner, seder och bruk för att hålla ihop* (SD 2018, 20).

<sup>150</sup> *svenska kulturen ska erkännas och blomstra istället för att kvävas av vänsterliberala våta filter eller bildningsförakt* (SD 2018, 20).

<sup>151</sup> *en svensk kulturkanon i skolundervisningen* (SD 2018, 20).

<sup>152</sup> *Poliser och deras familjer beskjuts i hemmen och får sina bilar sprängda i attentat . . . få gärningsmän som faktisk fälls för grova brott slipper undan med milda straff . . . Till följd av den okontrollerade invandringen går terrorister med krigserfarenhet fritt på gator* (SD 2018, 5).

<sup>153</sup> *Göra polisen starkare genom att kraftigt utöka antalet poliser . . . Ge polisen ökade befogenheter . . . utökad nödvärnsrätt . . . underlätta användningen av polisära övervakningskameror . . . uppträder aggressivt mot polis . . . obligatorisk utvisning av grovt kriminella utlännningar . . . hyra fängelseplatser i andra europeiska länder för livstidsdömda och utländska medborgare* (SD 2018, 5).

immigrants. Overall, SD expresses cultural authoritarianism in espousing the belief of and trying to legislate a true Swedish culture.

Finally, SD tries to portray itself as pragmatic and devoid of ideological constraints. In the manifesto they twice describe their approach to policy as pragmatic and another time as realistic.<sup>154</sup> Three times the manifesto claims that SD does not put ideological values into operation while another time it claims that SD does not place ideological values on different types of solutions (SD 2018).<sup>155</sup> SD policies are called cross-political and SD does not pursue classical right or left politics (SD 2018).<sup>156</sup> Other than the aforementioned derogatory “left-liberal wet blanket” comment, SD appears to eschew ideology in favor of pragmatism, adopting the policies that work best for the country and its people. This position allows SD to appeal to a broader audience than identifying with a particular ideology. As discussed in relation to previous manifestos, the centrist economic policies help to moderate more extreme social policies. By claiming to forgo ideology, SD can frame itself as finding the policies that work best for Sweden, which has a broader appeal than a strictly ideological message. This approach combines with SD’s populism to appeal to a wide audience. A message of greater welfare and security under the auspices of strict pragmatism and love for country can attract people from across the ideological spectrum.

### **Supply-side summary**

Certain themes are present in the Sweden Democrats’ electoral manifestos from 2010 to 2018. SD stresses the need to preserve and protect Sweden’s culture and generally supports initiatives that would support this goal such as art and cultural programs as well as educational

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<sup>154</sup> *pragmatisk . . . realistisk* (SD 2018, 6-7, 18).

<sup>155</sup> *vi lägger inga ideologiska värderingar i driftsform . . . Vi lägger ingen ideologisk värdering i olika trafikslag och lösningar* (SD 2018, 2, 7, 11-12).

<sup>156</sup> *tvärlöslig . . . vi inte driver vare sig klassisk höger eller vänsterpolitik* (SD 2018, 6).

programs aimed at promoting Swedish culture. Immigrants, especially Muslims, are threatening to this culture and should be required to assimilate into Swedish culture. SD maintains that its policies are not ideological and are instead based on pragmatism. A strong welfare state is a key component of SD's message, as is a tough stance against criminals. Immigrants are also linked to crime and open borders are presented as a grave security risk. The EU is criticized for infringing upon Swedish sovereignty, referendums are demanded for important issues, and governments are disparaged for implementing disastrous policies.

These themes denote SD's status as a PRR party: ethnic nationalism, antiestablishment populism, and sociocultural authoritarianism. The electoral manifestos examined here support Elgenius and Rydgren's (2017) argument for a rhetoric of decay. Indeed, both the level of discussion of decay and the severity of the decay described increased significantly from 2010 to 2018. Immigrants are presented as the main cause of the decay, as they disrupt society and are major sources of crime. However, poor immigration policies are blamed for allowing high levels of immigration, including illegal immigration, to occur. SD's ethnic nationalism is provided as the solution to the decay, as a halt to immigration coupled with a reinvigoration of Swedish culture would eliminate societal fractures. In addition to accusing immigrants of threatening Swedish culture, SD uses Rydgren's other three frames as well. Immigrants are strongly linked to crime, depicted as receiving favorable treatment in the welfare system over native Swedes, and blamed for taking Swedish jobs. The last two points highlight SD's welfare chauvinist message. Swedes are portrayed as competing with immigrants for welfare benefits, with the latter being more successful despite having less, if any, right to the services.

SD's discourse is also antiestablishment populist. SD positions itself as working for the Swedish people by fighting for their rights, generous welfare programs, and sources of security.

SD promotes referendums and therefore direct democracy, suggesting the people are currently unable to adequately voice their opinions and that their desires run counter to those in power. Moreover, other parties are uniformly criticized for ineffective policies without significantly differentiating among them. Finally, SD's rhetoric demonstrates a sociocultural authoritarian stance. SD desires tough penalties for crime, greater support to the police, specific pro-Swedish lessons in schools, government support for only certain types of artistic and cultural programs, and greater participation in civic duties. Non-Swedish cultural practices should be outlawed. SD clearly believes in a specific Swedish society that it wants Swedes to be a part of and it wants to use government policies to actively create and shape this culture. Additionally, transgressions from this ordered society should be harshly punished.

### **Summary**

The quantitative data in the models and in the exit polls suggest that those with lower educations are more likely to vote for SD. Unemployment is becoming increasingly important in voting for SD as well. Income generally had a negative relationship in the models with SD vote as well. Coupled with the exit poll data, it appears that members of the working class are more likely to vote for SD than their better educated peers. Higher crime was also generally associated with higher SD vote in the models. These factors provide support for the social marginality hypothesis, indicating that the most vulnerable members of society are more likely to vote for SD. Higher ratios of immigrants also generally led to higher SD vote shares in the models, providing support for the ethnic competition hypothesis as well. These two hypotheses could also work in tandem, for if unemployed or underemployed voters feel that immigrants are receiving government benefits or jobs that they should have, the voters may be prone to welfare chauvinist or xenophobic attitudes.

The increasing vote share for SD and the increasing effects of unemployment, education, and income on SD vote share indicate that SD's rhetoric may be effective. Much of the core ethnic nationalist, antiestablishment populist message remained constant between 2010 and 2018. Working-class voters down on their luck may be willing to switch their vote from a left party to SD, as SD promises improved welfare benefits and claims that other parties cannot solve the issues facing Sweden. Voters who blame immigrants for their economic struggles are especially more likely to be swayed by SD's welfare chauvinist discourse. In other words, SD's centrist economic policies are likely attractive to working class voters while its antiestablishment populism and ethnic nationalism likely appeal to those facing economic difficulties such as unemployment. Overall, the demand- and supply-side approaches suggest the most vulnerable members of society – the unemployed and less educated and wealthy – are more likely to vote for SD while SD's rhetoric caters to those same groups. SD's increasing vote share suggests this strategy has been effective, as more vulnerable members of society vote for SD.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter analyzed the Sweden Democrats and discovered that, as with DF in Denmark, lower levels of education and higher levels of unemployment are correlated with higher vote share for SD. For SD, these effects became stronger over the three elections examined, suggesting that an economically vulnerable working class is voting for SD in greater numbers over time. This change also likely reflects SD's increasing vote share over time. SD's rhetoric in official literature also reflects ethnic nationalism, antiestablishment populism, and sociocultural authoritarianism. This rhetoric also portrays the situation in Sweden as more dire over time and SD also portrays itself as pragmatic rather than ideological. With the analysis of DF and SD completed, the following chapter will conclude the paper by comparing and

contrasting the findings of Chapters 2 and 3 before making a generalized argument about PRR parties and suggesting avenues for further research.

## **Chapter 4: Conclusion**

### **Introduction**

The first section of this chapter will compare similarities between the Danish People's Party, the Sweden Democrats, and their voters. Next, the second section will contrast the two, noting differences found in this thesis. Then, the third section will discuss which factors seem to be the most significant in influencing populist radical right vote shares. Finally, the fourth section will summarize the findings of this thesis and the fifth section will provide opportunities for further research.

### **Comparison**

The previous two chapters demonstrated many similarities between the Danish People's Party and the Sweden Democrats. In terms of their rhetoric, both are ethnic nationalist, antiestablishment populist, and sociocultural authoritarian. Both parties want to preserve and protect a native culture that they portray as threatened by immigration and the EU and position themselves as defenders of that culture in the face of poor policies established by other parties. DF and SD both link immigrants to crime and use welfare chauvinist discourse to depict immigrants as a threat to welfare systems. Both parties promote direct democracy through a desire for more referendums and present themselves as the champions of democracy and the protector of native rights and sovereignty. DF and SD both support a strictly ordered society with severe punishments for transgressions and both support family values. Both also advocate for increased security through stronger police forces and militaries. For economic policy, both parties espouse a form of right-wing egalitarianism in which they heavily promote the welfare system while criticizing taxes.

In the quantitative demand-side models, Sweden saw increasing support for the social marginality hypothesis and mostly received support for the ethnic competition hypothesis. Denmark received support for the social marginality hypothesis in terms of unemployment and education and to a lesser extent crime, while support for the ethnic competition hypothesis was ambiguous. In both countries, education and unemployment had significant correlations with PRR party vote shares, although this effect increased over time in Sweden. This pattern suggests PRR parties are particularly successful among the working class, a finding consistent with previous literature on PRR parties. However, the association of working-class voters with PRR parties is somewhat surprising, as working-class voters are generally left-leaning (Hix 2002). DF and SD are likely able to attract working-class voters through centrist economic policies that are often not very distinguishable from those of leftist parties, as DF and SD heavily promote welfare policies. Indeed, DF and SD compete with social democratic parties for voters. In Sweden, 10% of those who voted for the Social Democratic Party in 2014 voted for SD in 2018 while in Denmark, 10% of DF's 2015 voters voted for the Social Democrats in the 2019 general election (DR 2019; SVT 2018, 15).

Other factors could also contribute to the success of PRR parties with the working-class and the unemployed. Following the social marginality hypothesis, members of the working class are also among the most vulnerable in society. They are often less educated and therefore less competitive for jobs than other segments of the population and are at a higher risk of losing employment to the forces of globalization (Rydgren 2006). In Sweden, 35% of voters in 2018 said that their personal finances were of great importance in choosing a party.<sup>157</sup> However, 43% of blue-collar union members, 38% of business owners, 49% of the unemployed, and 51% of

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<sup>157</sup> *Procent som anger att "den egna ekonomin" är av mycket stor betydelse för valet av parti i riksdagsvalet* (SVT 2018, 24).

those permanently outside of the labor market answered that personal finances were of great importance to them.<sup>158</sup> 50% of SD voters said personal finances were of great importance in choosing a party, compared to 31% of Social Democratic Party voters and 37% of Moderate Party voters (SVT 2018, 24). Working-class voters and the unemployed appear to be more concerned about their personal finances and may therefore be more likely to vote for a party that promises greater welfare, more political power for the people, and more restrictions on immigrants that threaten access to welfare benefits and jobs.

Given their vulnerability, working-class voters and the unemployed may also be more likely to be critical of government policies and politicians, especially those that promote internationalization, and are therefore possibly more susceptible to antiestablishment populism. In Sweden, 18% of those with low confidence in politicians voted for SD in 2014 and 33% of those with low confidence voted for SD in 2018.<sup>159</sup> Also in 2018, 23% of SD voters said they had very high trust in politicians while 60% of overall voters said they had very high trust in politicians (SVT 2018).<sup>160</sup> Furthermore, 31% of those who left their ballot blank in 2014 and 30% of those who chose not vote in 2014 voted for SD in 2018 (SVT 2018).<sup>161</sup> These statistics suggest SD is successful among political outsiders and those who lack trust in the government. Members of the working class and the unemployed are also often among the most skeptical groups in terms of the perceived benefits of the EU (Hix 2002). The anti-EU rhetoric of PRR parties may therefore be effective with these groups. Only 15% of Swedish voters in 2018 thought Sweden should leave the EU but 52% of those who agreed that Sweden should leave the

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<sup>158</sup> *LO-medlemmar . . . företagare . . . arbetslösa . . . sjuk/aktivitetsersättning* (SVT 2018, 24).

<sup>159</sup> *lågt politikerförtroende* (SVT 2014, 38; SVT 2018, 41).

<sup>160</sup> *Allmänt sett, hur stort förtroende har Du för svenska politiker? . . . Mycket/ganska stort förtroende* (SVT 2018, 35).

<sup>161</sup> *blankt . . . ej röstande 2014* (SVT 2018, 15).

EU voted for SD (SVT 2018).<sup>162</sup> Members of the working class and the unemployed may therefore be attracted to PRR parties due to their centrist economic policies, anti-immigration and welfare chauvinist policies, and antiestablishment populism that cater to the socioeconomic vulnerability of these groups.

### **Contrasts**

The rhetoric and type of voters for the Danish People's Party and the Sweden Democrats are generally very similar; however, there were some differences between the parties as well. Both parties used antiestablishment populist rhetoric to criticize various policies and other political parties and to set themselves apart from other parties. SD was more critical of other parties in general and tried harder to set itself apart from other parties by claiming to eschew ideology and left-right politics. DF's most open criticisms were comments in the 2011 newspaper that explicitly criticized Social Democratic policies under Poul Nyrup Rasmussen as well as current leaders of leftist parties. The difference in the number of types of critiques may be due to the parties' interactions with other parties in their respective parliaments. DF grew out of the established Progress Party and was seen as a more reliable partner than the often-erratic Progress Party. Additionally, DF focused almost exclusively on immigration issues in the Folketing and was willing to compromise on other issues (Green-Pedersen and Odalmalm 2009). These factors led DF to support ruling coalitions from 2001 to 2011 and again from 2015 to 2019. Conversely, SD grew out of a neo-Nazi movement and despite attempts to improve its appearance, all parties refused to cooperate with it since entering the Riksdag in 2010 (Ahlander 2018). Therefore, SD likely feels more freedom in criticizing other parties and presenting itself as non-ideological since it does not have to consider offending partners in parliament to have its

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<sup>162</sup> *Sverige bör utträda ur EU* (SVT 2018, 33-34).

policies passed. The non-ideological approach may be effective, as SD has a relatively large share of voters who consider themselves to be neither right- nor left-leaning and a smaller percentage of voters who consider themselves right-leaning than the Moderate Party, Liberal Party, and Christian Democrats. Moreover, only 9% of those who consider themselves right-leaning voted for SD in 2014, with that percentage remaining relatively low at 23% in 2018 (SVT 2014; 2018).<sup>163</sup>

Table 12: Percent of Swedish Voters Who Identify as Left, Right, or Neither, by Party and Year

		Left	Neither	Right	Vote Share			Left	Neither	Right	Vote Share
SD	2006	12	46	42	2.9	FP/L	2006	4	26	70	7.5
	2010	18	34	48	5.7		2010	4	24	71	7.1
	2014	17	39	44	12.9		2014	5	19	77	5.4
	2018	8	34	58	17.5		2018	4	20	76	5.5
M	2006	3	13	84	26.2	KD	2006	4	26	70	6.6
	2010	2	14	83	30.1		2010	4	24	71	5.6
	2014	2	14	84	23.3		2014	5	19	77	4.6
	2018	3	13	85	19.8		2018	4	20	76	6.3
C	2006	9	34	57	7.9	S	2006	70	25	5	35.0
	2010	5	24	71	6.6		2010	75	21	4	30.7
	2014	6	29	65	6.1		2014	74	22	4	31.0
	2018	10	33	57	8.6		2018	76	20	5	28.3

Note: SD: Sweden Democrats; M: Moderate Party; C: Centre Party; FP/L: Liberals; KD: Christian Democrats; S: Social Democratic Party

Sources: Sveriges Television and Statistics Sweden

Somewhat surprisingly, Sweden demonstrated more consistent support for the ethnic competition hypothesis than Denmark in terms of vote shares for PRR parties. One may have expected more consistent support in Denmark, where DF had electoral success for over a decade before SD first gained seats in the Riksdag. After 2000, both countries saw jumps in immigration around 2006 and asylum-seekers around 2012, although the total numbers were higher in Sweden. This influx of foreigners coincides with the increasing electoral performance of DF and

<sup>163</sup> *högerideologi* (SVT 2014, 38; SVT 2018, 41).

SD in the mid-2000s and early- to mid-2010s. DF and SD also likely took advantage of the influx of foreigners to further politicize the issue of immigration. This politicization can be seen in how other parties address immigration. The Liberal Party (Venstre), Denmark's largest center-right party, moved from promoting the rights of immigrants in 1995 to focusing on the cultural and economic demands Danish society should impose upon immigrants in 2006 (Green-Pedersen and Odmalm 2009). Prior to the 2019 election, the Danish Social Democrats adopted an anti-immigration platform, arguing these policies are needed to protect Denmark's welfare system and to take care of migrants already in the country (Henley 2019). Likewise, in the leadup to the 2018 election, the Swedish Social Democrats backed a massive reduction in refugee arrivals until a European-wide solution is reached (Schultheis 2018). The adoption of anti-immigrant policies by major center-left parties in both countries indicates immigration is at least perceived as a major motivating factor in influencing how people vote. In Sweden, the percent of people who consider refugees and immigration to be a very important issue rose from 19% in 1998 to 41% in 2018.<sup>164</sup> 52% of voters in 2018 said Sweden should accept fewer refugees and immigration was the only issue on which a plurality of voters thought SD had the best policy, with 25% of voters choosing SD (SVT 2018).<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> *Vilken betydelse har följande frågor för Ditt val av parti i riksdagsvalet idag? . . . Procent mycket stor betydelse . . . Flyktingar/invandring* (SVT 2018, 10).

<sup>165</sup> *Ta emot färre flyktingar i Sverige . . . Vilket parti tycker Du har bäst politik när det gäller . . . Flyktingar/invandring* (SVT 2018, 12, 33).

Table 13: Number of Immigrants and Asylum-Seekers in Denmark and Sweden

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Denmark</b>																			
Immigrants	30,810	33,654	30,597	27,692	27,870	29,989	34,281	42,702	50,981	46,302	47,670	48,858	50,633	56,995	65,547	76,323	72,179	67,445	65,427
Non-Western Immigrants	13,236	14,667	12,996	11,828	10,448	10,268	10,572	13,610	15,338	14,089	15,154	14,814	14,553	18,393	23,275	32,307	28,658	22,781	20,464
Asylum-Seekers	10,347	8,385	6,600	2,767	1,633	1,283	922	1,029	951	2,022	2,844	3,600	3,336	5,144	10,192	10,472	12,722	2,411	2,600
<b>Sweden</b>																			
Immigrants	58,659	60,795	64,087	63,795	62,028	65,229	95,750	99,485	101,171	1102,280	98,801	96,467	103,059	115,845	126,966	134,240	163,005	144,489	132,602
Non-Western Immigrants	26,211	27,261	29,264	29,512	27,738	29,579	51,647	49,273	49,809	54,331	52,043	47,192	53,433	64,574	73,450	80,538	108,060	87,791	80,463
Asylum-Seekers	--	--	33,016	31,355	23,161	17,530	24,322	36,207	24,535	24,194	31,819	29,648	43,887	54,259	81,301	162,877	28,939	25,666	21,502

Note: The Danish asylum-seeker numbers apply only to asylum applicants lodged in Denmark. For Sweden, asylum-seekers comprise individuals who have sought asylum in Sweden and have been registered in the database on foreigners with the Swedish Migration Board. Asylum numbers were not available for Sweden in 2000 and 2001.

Source: Statistics Denmark and Statistics Sweden

With similar immigration trends and similar responses by other parties in Denmark and Sweden, it is unclear why the ethnic competition hypothesis received more consistent support in Sweden than in Denmark. Especially surprising is the fairly consistent negative relationship that the proportion of non-Western immigrants had with DF vote share. However, these findings are consistent with past research such as Rydgren and Ruth (2013), which finds support for the halo effect, or the concept that living near but not with immigrants makes people more likely to vote for PRR parties. People living in areas that border immigrant-dense areas meet “imagined others” on a daily basis but have less experience with the “experienced other” (Rydgren and Ruth 2013, 718, 723). In other words, living in close proximity to immigrants does not necessarily encourage anti-immigrant attitudes, contrary to the ethnic competition hypothesis. Rather, close proximity may provide opportunities for engagement that lead to greater cultural understanding and empathy for immigrants and refugees. Seeing immigrants and refugees from a distance, on the other hand, does not provide for as meaningful interaction but could contribute to the notion that immigrants are becoming more numerous and are negatively affecting local society. On the demand-side of voting then, the concentration of immigrants is likely less significant in explaining voting behavior toward PRR parties than socioeconomic factors.

However, on the supply-side, stoking fear of immigrants appears to be effective in shaping how people perceive immigrants and therefore the greater political dialogue surrounding immigrants.

### **What matters in PRR party voting**

This thesis looked at both demand- and supply-side factors to explain what motivates people to vote for PRR parties. Through analysis of the Danish People's Party and the Sweden Democrats, results of several regression models suggest socioeconomic factors, especially unemployment and educational attainment, are more significant in determining whether a person will vote for a PRR party than living in an area with a dense population of immigrants. These results generally provide support for the social marginality hypothesis, while the results for the ethnic competition hypothesis are mixed at best. The importance of education also suggests members of the working class are more likely to vote for PRR parties, a finding that is consistent with previous literature. Since the working class and the unemployed are traditionally left-leaning groups, the tendency of these groups to vote for PRR parties suggests these parties are doing something to appeal to these groups.

The literature examined in this thesis demonstrates PRR parties appeal to the most vulnerable members of society, such as the working class and the unemployed. This appeal is done by maintaining centrist economic policies that promote a strong welfare state. These policies can attract to people from across the political spectrum, including voters formerly loyal to center-left parties. Positioning a party as pragmatic and non-ideological may aid in engaging a diverse audience while avoiding the appearance of extremity. PRR parties are primarily concerned about immigration and their ethnic nationalism also likely appeals to the most vulnerable members of society, as immigrants are linked to crime and welfare chauvinist arguments present immigrants as a threat to welfare benefits and, less often, jobs.

Antiestablishment populism can also entice voters with low trust in government who otherwise may opt not to vote. PRR parties can present themselves as different from other parties by criticizing long-established policies and the EU while positioning themselves as defenders of the people and popular sovereignty.

These factors can help to explain the very different histories of electoral success between DF and SD. The Danish People's Party secured seats in the Folketing in the first election in which it competed in 1998. The Sweden Democrats existed for over two decades before securing seats in the Riksdag. As discussed in Chapter 1, there are several reasons why SD may have been slow to receive votes, including its background in a neo-Nazi movement and subsequent image as an extremist party. Conversely, DF not only splintered from a party that had existed successfully for over twenty years, it was seen as more professional than its parent party. Other political parties were willing to work with DF, giving it further credibility. Since 2000, SD's vote share has steadily increased while DF's rose to a high in 2015 before plummeting to their lowest vote share since 1998 in 2019.

The rhetoric used by both parties was very similar since 2000, using ethnic nationalism, antiestablishment populism, and sociocultural authoritarianism. SD's increasing success can be seen as the increasing salience of immigration as a political issue, which was likely compounded by the large influx of refugees in the early 2010s. The increasingly strong relationship of income, unemployment, and education with SD vote share indicates SD did increasingly well with the working class and the unemployed from 2010 to 2018. This success is likely due to the interaction of demand- and supply-side factors as described above in which SD rhetoric appealed to the most vulnerable members of society. While SD was successful in the 2018 election, it was polling even higher during the summer of 2018, polling as high as 28.5% in June (Peterson

2018). The adoption of more anti-immigrant policies by other parties likely brought some voters back to the established traditional parties.

DF's jump in vote share in the 2015 election was likely at least in part a response to the large number of refugees and immigrants arriving in Denmark. Following the 2015 election, support for DF in opinion polls remained around 20% before beginning a steady decline in late 2018 and early 2019 (DR 2019). As in Sweden, this drop is likely at least in part due to the adoption of anti-immigrant policies by other parties, including the center-left Social Democrats. In addition to the 10% of DF's 2015 voters who voted for the Social Democrats in 2019, 23% voted for the Liberal Party, 8% voted for the New Right, and 6% voted for Hard Line in 2019 (DR 2019). The Liberal Party is a traditional center-right party and, as noted above, has brought its immigration policy closer to DF's since 2000. However, the New Right (Nye Borgerlige, NB) and Hard Line (Stram Kurs, SK) are both far-right parties founded since the 2015 election. NB wants even stricter controls on immigration than DF, preferring asylum to be given only to refugees coming directly from the U.N. refugee agency's resettlement scheme. NB also wants Denmark to leave the EU as well as the Refugee Convention and the U.N. convention on statelessness. Unlike DF, NB has a more neoliberal economic policy than DF, as it wants to abolish the corporate tax (Panagiotopoulos 2017). SK's policies include the deportation of all Muslims and the preservation of Denmark's ethnic community (Boffey 2019). In the 2019 general election, NB received 2.4% of the vote, gaining seats in the Folketing, while SK received 1.8% of the vote, just shy of the 2% required for representation in the Folketing (Statistics Denmark).

The defection of DF's 2015 voters to other parties suggests voters who prioritize anti-immigrant policies are not loyal to any particular party but are willing to vote for other parties

that have anti-immigrant policies. This fickleness can help traditional center-left and center-right parties as well as more extreme parties. DF leader Kristian Thulesen Dahl acknowledged this possibility following the 2019 election, noting that DF's significant decline in vote share from 2015 could be due to voters feeling they could "get [their] policies elsewhere" (Politiken 2019). From the demand-side, xenophobic and anti-immigrant attitudes may be significant motivating factors in voting for PRR parties. When mainstream parties adopt similar anti-immigration policies, PRR parties lose their monopoly on that issue. This trend helps to explain the recent struggles of DF and the continued success of SD, which remains isolated in the Riksdag. From the supply-side, PRR parties may be successful only when they can shape the political dialogue on key issues. Additionally, the normalization of anti-immigrant policies creates the opportunity for new parties to pursue even more extreme policies. NB and SK are likely seen as too extreme by most voters at the moment, limiting their appeal to a broad electorate. However, the fact that one crossed the threshold of votes required to receive seats in the Folketing and the other came very close to securing seats indicates these parties are not seen as extreme enough to shun as SD was in its early existence. Moreover, the success of these parties suggests the conversation surrounding immigration has shifted far enough to the right that their policies are not seen as too extreme.

### **Summary**

This thesis found overall support for the social marginality hypothesis, especially in regard to unemployment and education. These results suggest PRR parties receive significant support from the working class and the unemployed. PRR party literature likely appeals to these groups, as the centrist economic policies, anti-immigration and welfare chauvinist policies, and antiestablishment populism are likely appealing to these socioeconomically vulnerable groups.

Indeed, the centrist economic policies espoused by PRR parties may be crucial to attracting voters from the center-left and to moderating their sociocultural authoritarian rhetoric. However, the reliance of PRR parties on anti-immigration rhetoric may be effective only as long as they have a monopoly on the issue. If other parties adopt anti-immigration positions, voters may be less willing to vote for PRR parties. This thesis also failed to find significant support for the ethnic competition hypothesis. Given the importance of ethnic nationalism and anti-immigration rhetoric to PRR parties, this failure is not likely caused by a lack of xenophobic sentiments on the part of PRR party voters. Rather, it is likely that PRR party voters fear the cultural and economic effects of immigrants and PRR parties effectively incite these fears. Living apart from immigrants may make voters more susceptible to these fears, as the “imagined other” is likely scarier than the “experienced other.”

This thesis suggests PRR parties will likely continue to be successful as long as immigration maintains a high level of political salience. Additionally, traditional parties can bring voters back to their parties by adopting anti-immigration rhetoric. These mainstream center-left and center-right parties therefore face a dilemma: adopting a version of the ethnic nationalism for which PRR parties are often criticized or risk losing vote shares to PRR parties. Either way, it appears that ethnic nationalism and anti-immigration policies will be powerful forces in Europe for the foreseeable future.

### **Further research**

There are ample opportunities to better study PRR parties and their voters. On the demand side, this and other studies have generally relied on aggregate voter data in comparing socioeconomic factors with PRR party vote share. More individual-level analysis would be helpful in establishing voter attitudes, beliefs, and ideologies and how they correspond with

voting for PRR parties. On the supply side, there are a number of factors that can affect the viability of a political party such as media coverage, party organization, relationships with other political parties, and the effect of external events such as the September 11 attacks, the Syrian refugee crisis, and recessions on voter opinion. Some of these factors have been studied more than others but there is still room for much more research in this area. The effects of some of these factors may also change depending on the political, cultural, and historic contexts of different countries, so it may be hard to generalize conclusions about PRR parties as a whole.

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