

Staging Appeal?

A longitudinal study of the Sweden Democrat's
programmatic development, between 1989 and 2014.



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Abstract

Can the Sweden Democrats (SDs) be accountable for their own success? If so, how can it be explained over time? This study sets out to measure the ideological appeal of the SDs and explain it via three stages of party development. Ideological appeal is conceptualised using saliency theory and explained via supply theory that centres on the behaviours of the SDs to win votes. To test behaviours, it develops an explanatory mechanism that predicts the process leading up to programmatic offerings. Ideological appeal is measured using unique primary data produced by analysing the content of the SD's party programmes and explained via process tracing that accumulates empirical evidence on mechanisms leading up to change. The study finds compelling alterations in ideological appeal in 2003- and 2011-year's party programme. Furthermore, it finds that stages of party developments are good predictors for behaviours to explain these changes. Conclusively, the strategic behaviours of the SDs are a vital component to understand their rise and a stage-like perspective on party development is a valuable analytical tool to explore the impact of explanatory factors over time. Ultimately, this study innovates the way Populist Radical Right parties are researched from a perspective of agency.

Key words: The Sweden Democrats, Populist Radical Right, ideological appeal, programmatic profiles, stages of party development, supply theory

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1 Introduction

I wrote my first essay on the Sweden Democrats (SDs) more than 10 years ago. Back then, the SDs were still an anonymous force within the Swedish political system. Not big enough to matter politically, not radical enough to matter socially. Since then a lot has changed. The SDs are today the third largest party in Sweden and possess balance of power in parliament. As I am writing this, it has been nearly four months since the parliamentary elections and Sweden has still not managed to form a government. The question of whether or not the SDs should be allowed secondary influence on policy is high up on the agenda and continues to block attempts towards forming coalitions.

The SDs are not alone in reshaping the political map of Europe. A number of Populist Radical Right (PRR) parties have emerged since the 1980's. To name a few: Front National in France, Vlaams Block in Belgium, the Danish Peoples Party and Lega Nord in Italy (e.g. Rydgren 2007). Hand in hand with the revival of these parties goes the academic interest to study them. The rise and sustainment of PRR parties in Europe has developed into a well-studied phenomenon today, where I aim to address three broader research agendas.

First, Sweden long figured as a deviant case in PRR party studies because it had no PRR party represented in parliament. In 2010, however, the SDs acquired enough votes to enter parliament, forcing Sweden into a similar state to other European countries. To further the knowledge pertaining to the Swedish case, it is thus necessary to address these new parliamentary conditions where the SDs have successfully risen as a credible alternative to other established parties. The academic implications of which reside in the use of theory by understanding their development from the perspective of success, rather than failure.

Moreover, whereas many studies seek to explain differences in PRR party performance between countries, studies that seek to explore the different effects of explanatory factors over time are scarce. The focus on exploring differences between countries and parties therefore leave me wondering about the assumed constancy of explanatory factors. Is it right to assume that explanatory factors remain constant? Or is it possible that the impact of explanatory factors on the success/failure of PRR parties may change over time? To answer this, the function of explanatory factors needs to be explored on a longitudinal basis via in-depth case studies.

Lastly, explanations of PRR party performance that start from the perspective of voter demand need to be nuanced with knowledge that stem from the perspective of the party. I call this the accountability problem. Does the power to influence PRR party performance reside with the voters or are PRR parties' agents

of their own destinies? More importantly, how come PRR parties fail to establish in some countries but succeed in others, despite the fact that these countries display similar demands for such parties (e.g. Norris 2005)? I argue that the study of PRR party performance must acknowledge the party's own power to influence their fortunes. Otherwise we are only telling half of the story about how and why PRR parties have acquired and continue to acquire foothold within Europe. This more agency-based view adopts explanatory factors that stem from the supply of PRR parties and focus on what the parties offer voters in exchange for their vote.

1.1 Purpose and research question

The general ambition of this study is therefore to 1) stretch the scope about what it means to be a successful PRR party in Sweden by 2) focusing on time-based trends in explanatory factors, from 3) the perspective of party behaviours. Spurring from this, I have formed an exploratory and explanatory case study about the SDs in Sweden. The purpose of this study is to measure the SD's ideological appeal and explain it via three stages of party development. By combining long-term trends in ideological appeal with theory about PRR parties' ability to influence these trends, this study enables 1) a dynamic view of the SD's programmatic platform and 2) an in-depth analysis of the SD's party development based on strategic behaviours. The research question guiding this study is therefore:

What are the developments of the SD's ideological appeal, understood as programmatic concentration and policy salience, and how can these be explained through stages of party development?

Ontologically, this study assumes a pragmatic determinist view, meaning that the social world is characterized as a pragmatic place. This strand does not assume a unified world; it can exist independently of our minds as well as through it (Biesta 2010). Epistemologically, the ambition is to generate a minimally sufficient explanation to our research problem. Doing so, I engage in deductive inference by analysing data that represent the empirical reality. The theoretical ambition to test generalisations is an important quality, as it separates this study from mere historical scholarship (Beach & Pedersen 2013: 19).

The dependent variable, ideological appeal, is theorized based on Ian Budge & Dennis Farlie's (1983b) idea about the relative importance (saliency) of issues. Ideological appeal is then explained via PRR party theories that predict how the SDs have been able or inclined to create successful appeals to win votes. These party behaviours are framed as a stage-like explanatory mechanism that create a

chain of events and actions which ultimately lead to developments within ideological appeal.

Overall, the study comprises of two methods that together produce a mixed method research design. *Quantitative content analysis* will be used to generate unique and original primary data on the SD's ideological appeal. It answers the *what* part of the research question by measuring the development of ideological appeal over time. All raw-data is produced from scratch by coding the SD's party programmes to derive at the issue saliency of each policy category. These estimates are then converted to two indicators of ideological appeal, namely *programmatically concentration* and *programmatically policy salience*, which form a time-series. The guidelines for coding and measuring salience is adopted from a project called Manifesto Research on Political Representation (MARPOR).¹

The next method seeks to explain the data about the SD's ideological appeal.² It takes the study to the next level by answering *why* ideological appeal has developed the way that it has. This methodological approach aspires from Beach & Pedersen's (2013) *qualitative explaining-outcome process tracing*, which traces the hypothesised explanatory mechanisms in-between initial conditions (stages) and outcomes (ideological appeal) (Bennett 2008; Bennett & Checkel 2014). The mechanisms represent a series of interconnected processes that are tested based on the congruence (i.e. compatibility) of evidence. However, to make inferences it adopts an analytical logic called *subjective probabilism*, which is defined as the likelihood of something existing, rather than the chance of something existing.³ Contrary to frequentist logics, I seek minimally sufficient explanations for the SD's ideological appeal, not to assess the magnitude of their effects. Likelihoods therefore depend on human judgements, rather than stochastic processes.

Finally, in terms of scope and delimitations, this study aspires to produce generalisable knowledge on two levels. It firstly seeks to make within-case inference about Sweden and the SDs. By actively weaving in context-dependent elements to the study design we expand the possibilities to pose questions that prompt more elaborate and comprehensive answers about the Swedish case. This however implies that it is unable to make generalisations to other PRR parties based on empirical findings (Beach & Pedersen 2013).

That said, it also makes a universal claim with regards to powers to generalise. Namely, on behalf of its innovative research design which develops and tests an original theoretical framework based on agency and stages of party development, whilst employing a mix of methods. In other words, it develops a new way for researching PRR parties, and that quality can be generalised to all PRR parties.

¹ Please consult Volkens et al. 2013d for more information on MARPOR's coding procedure.

² Process tracing also complements the quantitative observations of ideological appeal with qualitative ones to strengthen their validity. More importantly, it helps to fill the gaps within the quantitative observations to enable inference about the second stage, which does not contain any party programmes, and therefore no quantitative observations about ideological appeal.

³ As opposed to a frequentist logic that looks for significance. See Beach & Pedersen 2013: 76ff, 177 for more information about Bayes theorem from which the logic derives.

1.2 Disposition

The remainder of this thesis is structured in six chapters. *Chapter 2* describes the background of the research problem. It firstly defines the overarching subject of this study, namely PRR parties. Following this is a literature review on major findings, debates and themes in the field of PRR parties and how previous contributions can be seen as a springboard into this study. The next section aims to justify and provide a historical overview of the case used in this study as well as highlight gaps within research on the SDs. Lastly, there are two definitional sections that clarify the main concepts used in this study: ideological appeal and party stages. The final section on party stages furthermore operationalises and presents evidence speaking for or against the conditions that defines each stage.

Chapter 3 describes this study's theoretical framework. It is organised in a stage-like fashion, where predictors for the stages of party development are described and rationalised in chronological order. Each stage theorises on strategic behaviours of PRR and niche parties and contain four separate predictions that form a chain of events and/or actions. The first prediction relates to challenges experienced by the party and the second predict voter-based incentives stemming from these challenges. These eventually lead to the third and fourth prediction about the dependent variable, ideological appeal. Ideological appeal generates two predictions, one on the quantitative measurements of the programmatic profile and one on the qualitative observations based on strategic behaviours. The chapter concludes by showing a summarising explanatory table of each part of the hypothesised mechanism. Aside from describing the different parts of the mechanism, the table also emphasise the order for testing them; first quantitatively, then qualitatively.

Speaking of which, *Chapter 4* presents the methods used for empirically testing the hypothesised mechanism. The initial section describes the procedure for measuring ideological appeal by quantitatively analysing the content of the SD's party programmes. The data-making procedure on ideological appeal is two-fold. The first step describes the production of the raw-data, where each programme is unitised and hand coded. These codings are then statistically reduced into percentage shares, called saliency estimates/scores. The second step describe how these saliency scores are converted to indicators for ideological appeal, i.e. programmatic concentration and programmatic policy salience. The final section presents the procedure for tracing the processes between the initial condition (stages) and the dependent variable (ideological appeal) via the hypothesised explanatory mechanism. Both methods are critically evaluated at the end of each section.

Chapter 5 answer the first part of the research question by presenting the quantitative measurements for ideological appeal, understood as programmatic concentration and programmatic policy salience. The chapter also highlights key developments linked to each separate measure as well as a joint force.

Chapter 6 answers the second part of the research question. Here, results on ideological appeal is explained by testing the hypothesised mechanism against empirical evidence for the existence of each part. Similar to the theoretical framework, this too is structured on a stage-like basis where findings are presented in chronological order. This chapter therefore consist of three larger sections, one for every stage. Each section follows similar structures. First, the quantitative measures of ideological appeal are evaluated against the theoretical predictions for each stage. Then each mechanistic part is presented along with its (non)evidence; first challenges then incentives.⁴ Lastly, I provide a summarising evaluation about the likelihood of each stage and predicted mechanism. The chapter concludes by presenting the processes and explanations for ideological appeal in a summative explanatory, empirically reverberated, mechanism for the programmatic development of the SD's.

Chapter 7 concludes by offering a summary of what has been done as well as a discussion about key findings, limitations and discrepancies within the results. It also incorporates avenues for future studies and finishes by zooming out to discuss broader implications of the results.

⁴ The final stage slightly departs from this structure on behalf of what was found within the previous stages. Here the findings are evaluated against evidence of the prior stage, rather than against the hypothesised explanatory mechanism.

2 Background

2.1 What constitutes a PRR party?

In Sweden, there is a saying which roughly translates into: “a beloved child has many names”. This sums up the definitional debate about these types of parties well. To name a few, they have been classified as extreme right (e.g. Hainsworth 2008; Carter 2005), extreme right-wing (e.g. Lubbers et al. 2002; Ignazi 1992), far right (e.g. Cheles et al. 1995; Ellinas 2013), populist right (e.g. Bornschieer 2010; Ivarsflaten 2005), radical right (e.g. Kitschelt & McGann 1997; Norris 2005) and radical right-wing populist (Rydgren 2004; Betz 1993). In 2010, however, one of the most comprehensive attempts to define and conceptualise these parties was issued by Cas Mudde (also 2007 and 2013). Since then, his classification has become widely used in academia (e.g. Röth et al. 2018; Arter 2010; Bale et al. 2010; Jungar & Jupskås 2014; Pauwels 2011; Loch & Norocel 2015). Not too surprisingly then, this study follows Mudde’s (2007) work to define and conceptualise the SDs.⁵

Mudde’s definition is based on ideology where the core ideological features of PRR parties are nativism, populism and authoritarianism. Together these provide a so-called maximum definition of PRR party ideology.⁶ Concept-wise, he calls them Populist Radical Right parties which is justified in three ways. First, Mudde uses the term “radical” instead of “extreme” because these parties do not question the legitimacy of the democratic system *per se* (Mudde 2010: 25; Pirro 2015: 3). Secondly, the “right” does not refer to the conventional socioeconomic scale, but to an egalitarian-based scale that measures the attitude towards (in)equality. PRR parties are placed on the right of this spectra because they believe in the natural order of inequality and in the non-intervention of the state to correct for these. Third, the term “populism” is placed before “radical right” because these parties are first and foremost radical rightist, not populist (Mudde 2010: 26).

2.2 Explanations for the development of PRR parties

Since the 1980’s, the success and failures of European PRR parties have attracted international academic attention (Ellinas 2007; Muis & Immerzeel 2017; Golder

⁵ This perspective is shared by for instance Jenny Kiiskinen & Sigrid Saveljeff 2010.

⁶ As opposed to the minimal definition only including nativism (Mudde 2007: 15-20)

2016). There are two main approaches that dominate this research field, namely demand-side and supply-side explanations.

Initially, the scholarly interest focused on demand-side explanations which sought to understand the electoral fortunes of PRR parties from the perspective of voters (e.g. Rydgren 2008; Rydgren & Ruth 2011, 2013; Betz 1993, 1994; Van der Brug & Fennema 2007; Kestilä 2006; Ford & Goodwin 2014). This explanation argue that grievances linked to culture, modernisation and economy follow changes in sociodemographic conditions, which create a demand for such parties (Ivarsflaten 2008; Van Kessel 2015; Golder 2016; Kitschelt 2007; Rydgren 2007). In a nutshell, forces outside of the party's control decide whether or not the party will flourish.

As it would turn out, however, demand-side explanations could not adequately account for variation in cross-national and sub-national support (Golder 2016; Eatwell 2000; Givens 2005; Bustikova 2014; Van der Brug et al. 2005; Coffé 2004). Scholars therefore turned to a more agent-based view that sought to do justice to the influence of political agents. These supply-side models centre on the notion that political parties themselves are able to influence their fortune and, more importantly, that what they do with that power matters for the outcome of the party's trajectory (Arzheimer & Carter 2006; Mudde 2007; Norris 2005).

Supply-side factors can be divided in to two main strands: external and internal factors. According to Mudde (2007) the former relates factors that are not inherent to the party, called opportunity structures. They also go under the name "contextual factors" because the party does not possess direct power over them. Opportunity structures can be found in institutional or political contexts (e.g. electoral thresholds or how competing parties act), and on behalf of media (e.g. agenda-setting). In fact, the media factor has been particularly relevant in PPR party studies that adopt a salience approach to political competition, i.e. how parties compete by emphasising certain issues over others, rather than via the actual position adopted (e.g. Walgrave & De Swert 2004). Visibility in media can amongst other help to differentiate the stances of one party from another by pushing the emphasis of certain policy issues that favour of PPR parties. At best these can increase the relevance of the party (Muis & Immerzeel 2017; Art 2007; Koopmans & Olzak 2004; Ellinas 2009).⁷

Internal supply factors, on the contrary, relate directly to the party and their actions. Only the party possess power over them. This strand therefore holds PRR parties accountable for their successes/failures, regardless of whether the political landscape provide fertile grounds. Here, leadership, organisational structures and party ideology are the most important explanations to PRR party success/failure. In terms of leadership and organisation, Carter (2005) propose that these often go hand in hand. She presents a study that draw upon factors relating to leadership

⁷ In a case study on the Dutch Centre Party, Muis (2015) identified that this factor however is influenced by a trade-off scenario. It appears that the main challenge for PPR parties is to find a balance between coverage that is newsworthy yet increases the credibility of the party.

autonomy, degree of centralisation and level of factionalism to explain the rise of PRR parties. According to her study, well led and organised parties perform better than poorly led and organised parties. Party ideology is on the other hand the most studied internal supply explanation (Muis and Immerzeel 2017). Arguably, because it is the most accessible tool for political parties when seeking votes. It also makes up the dependent variable of this study.

According to Mudde (2007) there are two perspectives that figure in the study of party ideology to explain PRR party performance. The first perceive ideology as something real; that ideological claims of the party in fact represent true beliefs (e.g. Rydgren 2004, 2005; Kitschelt 1997). The second perceive ideology as something strategic; something that is external to the party's actual beliefs (e.g. Muis & Scholte 2013; Budge & Farlie 1983a). In studies about ideological moderation, electoral success is therefore either attributed to the extent to which PRR parties find the winning ideological formula, or the way in which parties present their ideologies via for instance party propaganda. This study is concerned with the latter.

Overall, studies that focus on demand- and supply-side explanations have provided valuable insights into the causes and consequences for the rise of PRR-parties (e.g. Giugni et al. 2005; Walgrave & De Swert 2004; Muis & Immerzeel 2017; Art 2007; Koopmans & Olzak 2004; Ellinas 2009, 2007; Carter 2005; Muis 2015; Coffé 2005). Demand factors have helped us understand the motivations behind PRR party votes and what the socio-demographics look like. Supply factors have brought focus to the PRR party as an agent, capable of accounting for their own electoral fortunes. This has nuanced to the study of PRR parties by allowing for more tangible explanations. Together demand and supply have highlighted important variance for the cause and consequence of PRR party performance between countries and contexts.

Nevertheless, previous studies of PRR party performance have essentially offered two takes on the same research problem: why do PRR parties flourish in some countries, but not in others (e.g. Art 2011; Arzheimer 2009; Kitcheldt 2007)? More recently, scholars have therefore started to approach these factors from a different angle. Namely by proposing that the trajectory of PRR parties should be divided into different stages to explore how these can be explained by different factors (Ellinas 2007). The premise of this approach is that explanatory factor does not produce the same effect over time. By unravelling why some parties break through at certain points in time – why not before, why not after – this could help address conflicting results displayed in cross-national studies (Golder 2016; Muis & Immerzeel 2017; Kitschelt & McGann 1997).

Following this line of thought, scholars have made claims about this stage-like view and the factors that impact them. For instance, leadership factors have figured heavily in studies that examine the process for PRR party institutionalisation (Mudde 2007). According to Harmel & Svåsand (1993), party institutionalisation can be divided into three phases: identification, organisation and stabilisation. For the identification phase, the most important job of the leader

is to get the party message across. For this purpose, Harmel & Svåsand suggest that a charismatic leadership is beneficial. Within the phase of organisation, it is however more conducive to have a practical leader who prioritises the growth of the internal infrastructure. The stabilisation phase includes stabilising both the organisation and the party vote, meaning that the leader should be charismatic and practical (e.g. De Lange & Art 2011; Pedahzur & Brichta 2002).

Other studies have also shown how different factors impact the performance of PRR party differently depending on when the effects are measured. Bonnie Meguid (2005) and David Art (2011) for instance argue that the tactics from mainstream parties e.g. *cordon sanitair* or accommodation of PRR party politics, produce little or even contra-productive effects in terms of winning back voters after a PRR party has entered parliament. And case studies conducted by Michael Minkenberg (2001) suggest that policy positions of mainstream parties play a bigger role for the break through of a PRR party than for their sustainability (e.g. Front National in France and the National Republican Movement in Italy). Another example is Antonis Ellinas (2010) who argue that the effect of media, e.g. negative portrayals of party leaders or scandals, is greater in the beginning of a party's political development. This too can have contra-productive effects if employed later on. Pippa Norris (2005) argue that organisational structures and strong leadership might have more effect on the party's political trajectory after their breakthrough. Before this, organisational factors bare little significance for the success/failure of PRR parties.

Finally, to attract votes Mudde (2007) suggest that the distribution of party propaganda is more important for PRR party consolidation and therefore have more electoral effect after the initial breakthrough of the party. That is because in addition to reaching the already converted, the new platforms presented to the party on basis of the breakthrough expand the reach to new voters with similar attitudes as well as first-time voters.

Despite these assertions, however, few studies use a research design that systematically distinguishes between different stages to examine the impact of explanatory factors. I suggest that this in part is because long-term data on the development of explanatory factors is scarce and can therefore not support such analyses. Hence, to advance the conclusions of these studies towards a more systematic understanding of how PRR party trajectories depend on different factors, we first need to know more about how they work long-term. A good starting point to know more about how explanatory factors vary over time is by studying in-depth cases, such as this one.

2.3 The SDs

The actual time and place where SD party came about is debated; some argue (including the party themselves) that they came about quite mundanely in 1988 at

flat in Stockholm by a few men who had tired of their current political party Bevara Sverige Svenskt (Keep Sweden Swedish) (e.g. Sverigedemokraterna 2013; Hellström 2016). Other more critical voices argue that there is more to the story (e.g. Kiiskinen & Saveljeff 2010: 50). Mikael Ekman and Daniel Pooh (2010: 21) for instance claim that the SDs came about by due to misfortunes involving the Sweden Party (Sverigepartiet), who had been formed a couple of years earlier. Namely, in 1987, an extreme militant faction within the Sweden Party was excluded on basis of their actions and values. A faction which later came to initiate the SDs.

Although the SDs acknowledge that the founders of the party had been active within the BBS movement prior to forming the Sweden Party, they often omit the extreme nationalistic and even neo-Nazi values advocated by these men (Larsson & Ekman 2001: 83ff; Ekman & Poohl 2010: 74f). Leif Zeilon, head initiator and the first elected spokesperson for the SDs, for instance possessed longstanding relations with both the Swedish Nazi party called The Nordic Realm Party (Nordiska Rikspartiet, NRP 2018) and the fascist party New Swedish Movement (Nysvenska rörelsen 2018). In Malmö, Skåne, where the SDs experienced most support (and still do),⁸ a man named Gustav Ekstrom joined. In the Second World War, he had been an active volunteer for Germany's Waffen-SS (Bakgrund: Bakom den 2003).

Since then, the SDs has entered parliament and achieved growing influence due to their balance of power within the three hung parliaments (Waterfield & Day 2010; Sweden election: Social 2014; Rothwell 2018; Scalley 2018). Today, the SDs represent the third largest party in parliament, winning 17,5% in the latest election (Valmyndigheten 2018a).

2.3.1 The Swedish Case

When choosing a study that centres on a single case, the case and the research design must be selected with care to make sure it provides value for the larger research community. According to Robert Yin (1994) case studies are appropriate when three criteria are met: when the research question asks about the how and why, i.e. explanatory studies, when studying a contemporary phenomenon and when the researcher has no control over the behavioural events. The design of this study meets all three criteria. The next part is to choose the case. Sweden and the SDs where chosen based on two reasons.

The first reason for choosing this case is its revelatory and precluding qualities into the study about the SDs and other PRR parties (Shakir 2002; Yin 1994). By revelatory, I mean that this study brings observations and analyses currently not accessible to the study of the SDs, i.e. unique and original primary data on the SD's programmatic development and the systematic application of three stages to explain it. It is also a study that prelude further investigations into the electoral success of the SDs (using the data of ideological appeal as an independent instead

⁸ A brief view at 2018-year's election result confirm this statement:
<https://data.val.se/val/val2018/slutresultat/R/riike/index.html>

of a dependent variable), as well as into comparative studies about PRR party developments in other countries. Particularly with regards to the different impacts of explanatory factors over time. Essentially, I hope this study will incentivise scholars to conduct studies with similar research designs to generate comparative data that can be used to make generalisations about how stages in other PRR party trajectories can be explained by different factors.

Moving on to the actual focus of this study, the SDs present an interesting case within Swedish politics. In 15 years, the party has gone from being located on the outskirts of the political arena to being one of the most influential players in parliament. Nearly all other parties relate their politics and strategies to the (daunting) possibility of the SD's political influence (Nej, ingen vill 2018). As I am writing this in January 2019, post-election Sweden still has not managed to form a government after almost five months of negotiations (Horvatovic 2018). However, a few weeks ago, it was on behalf of the SD's decisive vote that the budget of the right-wing Moderate party successfully passed parliament (Riksdagen röstar ja 2018). If Sweden fail to form a government by February, the speaker will call for re-election (Wedin 2018) which, according to some political commentators, would favour the SDs more than any other party (e.g. Mattson 2018).

How and why the SDs have been able to grow at this rate and to this extent within the last 15 years is still a puzzle. Next, we turn to a statement about current debates within the study of the SDs. It also highlights gaps that need to be addressed, so that we can continue to piece this puzzle together, one study at the time.

2.3.2 Gaps in the study of the SDs

Since the electoral breakthrough of the SDs, there has been an up-swing in studies that focus on the development and performance of the SDs (Bolin et al. 2014; Bolin & Loxbo 2014; Hellström 2016; Jungar & Jupskås 2014; Loxbo 2015; Mulinari & Neergaard 2014; Norocel 2016, 2017; Sannerstedt 2010). Similar to the international research field on PRR parties, models based on demand factors shortly became insufficient in terms of explaining the rise and sustainment of the SD's electoral support (Oskarson & Demker 2015; Pettersson et al. 2016; Rydgren & Ruth 2011, 2013; Sannerstedt 2013, 2014). To achieve a more comprehensive explanation for the rise of the SDs, scholars thus turned to supply factors for answers (Hellström et al. 2012; Jungar 2014; Loxbo 2014; Widfeldt 2018).

The current state of affairs within research about the Swedish context and the SDs can be advanced in three ways. First, there exists a shortage of in-depth academic capital from the perspective of success. This is largely due to the fact that Sweden long figured as a deviant case in literature addressing explanatory factors for the growth of PRR parties. During this period the scholars set out to understand why Sweden appeared, or for how long Sweden would be, immune to this trend (e.g. Rydgren 2002, 2010; Widfeldt 2008; Dahlström & Esaiasson

2013). It was only with the electoral breakthrough of the SDs in 2010 that Sweden could be studied on the same terms as other successful PRR parties in Europe (Rydgren & Van der Meiden 2016, 2018; Strömbäck et al. 2017; Widfeldt 2017; 2018; Hellström et al. 2012). In addition, because of the scholarly focus on spatial variation, the SDs has typically figured together with other PRR parties in comparative studies (e.g. Akkerman et al. 2016; Eger & Valdez 2014, 2018; Rydgren 2010). These only provide information about the SDs that is relative to the contexts of other countries and does not necessarily provide any relevant knowledge taken on its own.

Secondly, there is a gap in terms of comparative data on the SD's programmatic profile that span between their initiation until today. The Manifesto Research on Political Representation (MARPOR) represent one of the most well-founded and funded projects that collect and compare data on policy positions from all around the world. MARPOR however only include parties that are represented in parliament. This means that the SD's policy positions are included from 2010 and thereby lack nearly 20 years of programmatic developments. Because of this, there has not been enough information available that can support studies about rise of the SDs from a long-term saliency-based perspective of programmatic offerings (Loxbo & Bolin 2016; Erlingsson et al. 2014). The hope is that this study will break this trend by offering a longitudinal perspective about the developments in the SD's programmatic profile.

Lastly, theory that seek to explain the development of the SD's programmatic profile by linking them to the party's own actions can be improved. For instance, to my knowledge no other study has systematically divided the SD's party trajectory into stages to pinpoint the impact of different party behaviours on programmatic developments. On the contrary, most studies that explore the programmatic profiles of the SDs do not systematically acknowledge the party's own role in developing their programmatic platform (e.g. Muis & Scholte 2013; Hellström & Nilsson 2010; Hellström & Hervik 2014). Knowing more about the underlying rationales that have steered the developments of the SD's programmatic platform facilitates analysis about their own role within the path to success.

In sum, regarding the SDs and the Swedish context there is a lot is left to be desired, academically. Both with regards to data on their programmatic platform and knowledge about the drivers that have helped shaped it. The Swedish case is a good starting point to enquire about how programmatic profiles have been used for strategic purposes by applying data and theory about what the SDs can offer voters and how it matters for their development towards success.

2.4 Ideological appeal: concepts & definitions

Ideological appeal constitutes the dependent variable of this study. In ambition to *measure* the SD's ideological appeal, it is therefore important to understand what it is that you are looking for. The meaning of ideological appeal is two-fold and relate to 1) the *appeal* and 2) the *ideological*. First, *appeal* is understood as programmatic features and ways to strategize upon them. The process by which parties are assumed to strategize on these features is in turn understood through saliency theory.

According to Michael Laver (2001) this means that that parties argue with each other by emphasizing different policy priorities. Issues are therefore assumed to be salient in nature, i.e. parties pay attention to some issues and neglect others, regardless of their positions on these issues. Strategies based on salience imply that the programmatic profile are a product of internal party decisions on how important issues are considering the political market/space, i.e. *salience* (Budge and Farlie 1983a, 1983b). For each issue, the party must make an active decision on its relative importance vis-à-vis other issues and how much space it should be devoted (Wagner 2012).

Consequently, programmatic strategies based on salience can affect voter perception of the party by simply shifting the relative space devoted to each issue without changing the position on the issue (Harmel et al. 1995; Wagner 2012). By shifting the salience of its programmatic platform, the party can create appeals that either seek to maximise votes or to attract a particular type of voter (Wagner 2012; Harmel et al. 1995; Dolezal et al. 2014). Appeal is therefore conceptualised and defined as two programmatic strategies that can be changed for vote purposes:

- 1) Programmatic concentration – the number of policy issues displayed
- 2) Programmatic policy salience – type of policy issues displayed

Secondly, the *ideological* is based on three qualitative aspects of the SD's programmatic profile and refer to the type of policy displayed (i.e. programmatic policy salience). These are conceptualised via Mudde's (2007) description about the core features of PRR party ideology: nativism, populism and authoritarianism.

*Nativism*⁹ is often the main feature in studies adopting a minimal definition of PRR party ideology (e.g. Mudde 2007; Art 2011; Rydgren 2007). It is defined as a combination of exclusionary nationalism and xenophobism, i.e. it is an ideology that, according to Mudde "holds that states should be inhabited exclusively by members of the native group ('the nation') and that non-native elements (person

⁹ Within a European context, the concept of nativism sometimes goes under different names, e.g. exclusionary nationalism or xenophobism (Betz 2018: 12; Golder 2016: 408; de Cleen 2017: 7-8; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser 2013: 493). Semantically, however, they often inhabit similar meanings (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser 2013).

or ideas) are fundamentally threatening to the homogeneous nation-state” (Mudde 2010: 1173; Mudde 2007: 19).

Populism is defined in ideational terms as a thin-centred ideology that “considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, ‘the pure people’ versus ‘the corrupt elite’, and which argues that politics should be an expression of ... the general will of the people” (Mudde 2010: 1174; Mudde 2007: 23). This way of understanding populism facilitates comparisons across time, as it constitutes a minimal definition only focusing on ‘the corrupt elite’ and ‘the pure people’ (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser 2013; Rooduijn & Pauwels 2011).¹⁰

Finally, *authoritarianism* is defined as the belief in a “strictly ordered society in which infringements of authority are to be punished severely” (Mudde 2010: 1174; Mudde 2007: 23). Its prime objective is to stipulate and uphold normative and legislative laws to sustain the constitution of the ‘real people’ and the exclusion of the ‘others’.

2.5 Party stages: concept, definition & operationalisation

The final important ambition of this study is to *explain* the development of the SD’s ideological appeal. To understand change, this study therefor draws upon theory on *stages* in party development. According to Pedersen (1982) stages assume that parties’ manifest mortal characteristics and can be confined to a lifespan. Pedersen defines party stage development as the passing of so-called thresholds. This generally implies that internal as well as external factors and circumstances, such as electoral support, organisational cohesion or parliamentary influence encourages parties to strive towards or pass certain important thresholds.¹¹

In this study, the SD’s lifespan is conceptualised as three stages, delimited by two thresholds. The thresholds adopted here are inspired from Mogens Pedersen (1982: 6-7): the *threshold of representation* and the *threshold of relevance*. The threshold of representation refers to the moment when a party legislatively represents its electorate by entering parliament for the first time. It was coined by Stein Rokkan (1970) and is quantitatively defined by electoral law. Operationally,

¹⁰ The validity of this ideational definition of populism is however debated amongst scholars (e.g. Betz: 2018; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser; Aslanidis 2016; de Cleen 2017; Rooduijn & Pauwels 2011). Other main interpretations instead define populism as a mere rhetoric strategy, as a discourse or as a form of organisation (e.g. Hawkins 2009; Jagers and Walgrave 2007; Taggart 1995, 1996). Nevertheless, there have been several successful studies, using this ideational approach of populism in West Europe (e.g. Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012, 2013).

¹¹ Though the concept of thresholds is a universally applicable, the definition and underlying rationale for the ones used in this study has been developed from a liberal western democratic perspective (Pedersen 1982).

it corresponds to the vote-share required to acquire seats in the legislature and is thus quite straightforward.

The next threshold means to capture the development from being politically irrelevant, existing merely in the periphery of the political space, to becoming relevant, that is being “big enough to matter”. Some scholars argue that parties cannot reach this threshold before they reach parliament (e.g. Sartori 1976), others argue that it is possible to be politically relevant before entering parliament (e.g. Carter 2005; Mudde 2007; Norris 2005).

To mirror the context and circumstance of Sweden and the SD’s this study holds that relevance can occur prior to representation. Inspired by the work of Pieter Bevelander & Anders Hellström (2011), the threshold of relevance is here defined as the stage when the SDs gained enough votes to attract the attention of media, forcing political opposition parties to respond to their activities. Prior to this period, the party was operating in the periphery of both the electoral market, with mainstream parties maintaining a solid *cordon sanitaire* and in platforms of mainstream media, treating them as a non-issue. Chronologically, this implies that the SDs reached the threshold of relevance prior to that of representation.¹²

Based on the definition of stages presented above and the contextual knowledge about the SDs, this study forms its own conceptual framework for stages of party development:

- 1) *Stage of marginalisation*, 1998-2006: Signifies the period where neither relevance nor representation has been reached. The party is nonetheless authorised to run for elections since 1988, with the closest upcoming election being in 1991.
- 2) *Stage of relevance*, 2006-2010: Signifies the period where relevance, but not legislative representation has been reached.
- 3) *Stage of representation*, 2010-present: Signifies the period where legislative representation is acquired, but neither office benefits nor influence over policy has been reached.¹³

The stage of marginalisation is operationalised as experiences of political disadvantages and institutional exclusion. Evidence about the existence of this stage relate to external opportunity structures and concern the role of the party on the political market, as perceived by others and by the party itself. The

¹² David Art (2011: 4, footnote 7) also adopts this interpretation, in relation to the performance of Front National in France. Art highlights that a too restrictive interpretation of what constitutes electoral breakthrough marginalises the municipal election fortunes that may attract both attention in media and other political parties, i.e. going from a non-issue towards being a recognised political force on the electoral market.

¹³ For more info on political goals relating to office and/or policy see Strøm 1990.

observations can be divided into two overarching categories that adhere to the party's political influence as well as institutional structures.

The first set of evidence suggest that the party's political influence was limited on both national, regional and municipal levels during this stage. Although the party won an increasing number of seats in regional and local councils in 2002, these pertained to a small part of the country in Skåne and Blekinge (Widefeldt 2008). Even where electoral fortunes generated representation, the political influence remained scarce. According to a study by the Swedish Immigrant Institute (Ekström von Essen, & Fleischer 2006: 137, 161), all SD representatives were marginalised by the traditional party system between 2002 and 2006. That includes three city councils in which the SD's achieved balance of power. With only few exceptions, both circular and independent motions submitted by the party received immediate rejection in all city councils, (Ekström von Essen, & Fleischer 2006; Loxbo 2010).

Difficulties associated with achieving public reach entrenched the marginal position of the party further. Due to the previously insufficient electoral results, institutional rules dictated that ballot papers for the party were not automatically available on a national scale at the polling stations. Instead, the party had to finance and distribute their own ballot papers, aggravating election campaigns both in term of the effort, time and finance (Slätt 2004; Sverigedemokraterna 2013).

Moreover, in December 2003, Party Executives explicitly acknowledged the party's marginalised state and formulated an agenda in which they actively aspired to achieve an independent bar within official election polls. As of then, the SD electoral support had been absorbed into a residual category in official measurements. This goal was recognised as a means to break the position of marginalisation by establishing the party with the public. Kenneth Sandberg, active in SD-Värmland, writes: *such success in 2006 [reaching threshold of representation] require that the SDs are established with the public, manifested by our own column in opinion polls, at least one year prior to the election* (Slätt 2004: 80). Said and done, but it was not until 2006-year's election that one of the most influential opinion poll services, the Swedish Institute for Opinion Surveys (SIFO), recognised the party as a genuine political force by establishing a separate report on their electoral results (Sverigedemokraterna 2013).

Hence, the perception of political exclusion and institutional disadvantage prior to 2006 was shared by forces both external and internal to the party. The inability to reach voters on the same terms as other established parties consolidated the party on the fringes of the political arena during this period.

Likewise, the basis for judging the existence of the *stage of relevance* rely upon perceptions of the party as well as external sources. Indicators also link to external opportunity structures. In addition to increased financial support, automatic distribution of ballot papers, inclusion in opinion polls as an independent political force, it also includes media coverage and acknowledgement

by the established parties (Sverigedemokraterna 2013; Kiiskinen, & Saveljeff 2010: 53–54).

The electoral fortunes in 2006 stimulated the party on many levels. It meant that the party could finally reap the benefits of all the hard work to achieve local rootedness. The party won 2,93% of the votes which translated into 145 seats in local councils and 16 seats in 3 regional councils (Widfeldt 2008: 266, 274; Arbetarnas bildningsförbund & Expo 2007: 9). For the first time the party also qualified for state funding, which is granted to all parties that reach 2,5% or more of the national vote (Widfeldt 2008: 275). What is more, according to the party, their membership count increased by 40% in 2006 alone (Sverigedemokraterna 2013).

Moreover, media coverage of the party increased drastically post-election. Anders Hellström (2010) notes that the party attracted little publicity until 2006 when the party experienced their breakthrough in terms of relevance. Statistics presented by Hellström (2010: 223; 2016: 91), comparing the number of articles mentioning the party in *Mediearkivet*, indicate that the party's media exposure during this period greatly exceed any prior records. One of the greater milestones for the party was the decision to air the party's National Party Convention in 2007 on national state-funded TV (Rinderheim 2013; 107).

For the first time, traditional parties also started to address the politics of the SDs, even by direct confrontation (Kiiskinen, & Saveljeff 2010). In 2007, Jimmie Åkesson for instance appeared in live TV-debates against leaders and leading officials of the Social Democratic Party, the Liberal Party and the Moderate Party (Åkesson 2008: 15; Widfeldt 2008: 271; Sverigedemokraterna 2013).

By effect, 2006-year's election opened many doors for the party. Despite lack of representation on a national level, the electoral result meant that the party would gain awareness on a national scale and recognition in public discourse. More importantly, the party would be allowed to promote their political message on national platforms, making it more accessible to the electorate. Hence, for the SDs, representation on a local level translated into relevance on a national one. It is on basis of these observations that the existence of the initial condition is rationalised and judged for its likelihood, which is deemed sufficient enough to use as starting point for this mechanism.

Third and final, *the stage of representation* is operationalised between the elections of 2010, when the SDs won 5,7% of the popular vote and thus entered parliament for the first time, and 2014 (Valmyndigheten 2018b).¹⁴

¹⁴ Because the operational criteria for this stage is less abstract than previous stages i.e. the number of votes requires to enter parliament, there is no need to present other types of evidence for its existence.

3 Theoretical Expectations: A Mechanismic Approach

The ambition of this study is to measure the SD's ideological appeal and explain it via the three stages defined previously. Theoretically, I am testing if the SDs have engaged in vote-seeking behaviours that stem from electoral challenges linked to each stage. If so, this would explain why ideological appeal, i.e. concentration and policy saliency, look the way it does. The framework is designed in a chain-like fashion where one event lead to another, namely stages are associated with electoral challenges that spur particular vote-seeking incentives that ultimately shape ideological appeal. The theoretical framework thus centres on the party's own behaviours and the sources of those behaviours to explain changes in ideological appeal. As such it is part of the supply-side explanations for the rise of the SDs.

The theoretical process is deductive, seeking a minimally sufficient explanation to ideological appeal. Explanations therefore allow contextual and universal components of theory to co-exist. For instance, contextual factors that make the SDs relevant prior to their parliamentary entrance can be merged with more universally accepted factors such as voter trade-offs. Each stage and corresponding appeal (both quantitative, as observed in programmes, and qualitative, as observed via actions of the party) are visualised in a Hypothesised Explanatory Mechanism (HEM) at the end of this chapter. The HEM also visualises the links between the initial condition (stages) and the dependent variable (ideological appeal) via predicted challenges and incentives.

3.1 Explanatory mechanisms and their outcomes

Ideological appeal and the different stages are linked via programmatic strategies for competing on the electoral market and in political space. As the party passes through the different stages, I assume that the premise or condition by which the party compete looks different. Depending on the stage, they require different appeals to address challenges both internal and external to the party itself. The passing of stages is thus by itself not enough to motivate priorities in ideological appeal, rather it is the mechanisms, linked to challenges and incentives, that drive the outcome. The application of stages can thus be viewed as an analytical lens by which to understand the SD's choice of ideological appeal. That is, stages of party

development help shed light on underlying processes that are linked to the specific conditions and circumstances experienced by the party at the time. If true, this would ultimately generate a particular type of ideological appeal.

Two main strands within PRR party theory are used to predict the SD's behaviours leading up to the appeals, i.e. their supply to voters. Niche party theory is used to predict the level of concentration, and saliency theory is used to predict the type of policy emphasis. Furthermore, explanations for ideological appeal – challenges and incentives – will be tested against internal and external supply factors, such as organisational structures, factional disputes and media coverage to know the sources of behaviours within the specific context of this case. Explanations from voter-perspectives are however excluded in this framework, i.e. those that stem from demand.

3.1.1 The stage of marginalisation

Drawing on niche party theory, one of the main challenges for new parties is to establish themselves on the electoral market and generate a core voter base (Zons 2016). This of course requires awareness of the party's existence on behalf of the voters. In PRR theory, to achieve awareness and attract electoral support, new parties benefit from presenting a focused and innovative programme (Meguid 2005; Mayer & Wagner 2013; Wagner 2012).

Rationally, emphasis on few issues provides a clear and easily grasped identity which in turn can attract attention in media and facilitate voters' ability to comprehend the political message (Zons 2016). When entering the electoral arena, the SDs should therefore be incentivised to present a concentrated programme that focuses on a few ideologically instinctive core issues (Adams et al. 2006).

Furthermore, the SD's programmatic platform is also expected to portray levels of issue distinction, i.e. issues that stand out compared to mainstream party issues. Distinctiveness aids the process of generating issue ownership, which can translate into credibility and authority in the eyes of voters. According to Gregor Zons (2016: 5) policy innovation is the best strategy to achieve distinction and ownership of issues. Policy innovation can either stem from ambitions to create demand via so called issue entrepreneurship or to meet pre-existing needs/gaps in conventional policy space.¹⁵

When competing for votes with mainstream parties that already have found their own territory in policy space, it makes sense to initially focus on entrepreneurial issues. In this case nativist ones. Because, by persistently drawing attention to a few but radical policies outside of the conventional class-based policy space, the party can establish a stable voter-ship over time that is drawn to an issue-based niche (Wagner 2012). Initially, it also renders the party

¹⁵ Defined by Catherine De Vries and Sara Hobolt (2012: 247) as an ambition to mobilize “conflict on a new issue dimension to change the basis on which voters make political choices and thereby potentially improving their electoral fortunes”.

unchallenged in their position since these issues exist in unclaimed policy territory (Ward et al. 2015).

Positions that overlap with previously occupied policy areas are on the other hand expected to link to authoritarian issues. That is, issues that communicate desires to maintain social order and achieve conformity. These are for instance policy to address crime or border controls. As studies have shown, authoritarianism constitutes a quintessential part of PRR party success in their initial stages and furthermore goes hand in hand with nativist ideas of how society should function (e.g. Tillman 2016; Jungar & Jupskås 2014; Mudde 2010; 2007).

3.1.2 The stage of relevance

Once the party has managed to establish themselves on the electoral market and acquired a core voter base, the main challenges are expected to change. The ultimate challenge will no longer concern the establishment of the party on the electoral market, but to rally enough support to surpass the threshold of representation. The party should therefore be incentivised to extend its appeal beyond its core voters by increasing its competitiveness vis-a-vis other parties (Zons 2016).

If the party aim to maximise votes, they should emphasise positions that yield the greatest electoral returns (Wagner 2012: 67). According to niche and PRR party theory, the most conducive programmatic strategy to accomplish this goal is to shift the programmatic appeal towards the centre of the political sphere, bringing about programmatic moderation (Cox 1990; Wagner 2012; Zons 2016; Widfeldt 2008; Akkerman et al. 2016).

To achieve moderation, the party should however opt to broaden its policy package by adding new positions, instead of shifting existing policy positions (Wagner 2012). This rational is guided by three main assumptions. Firstly, in accordance with Markus Wagner (2012) it is assumed that policy positions precede issue salience, that is, positions are internal to the party and salience resides externally from the party's core identity. It therefore makes more sense for the party to first of all alter salience rather than position.

In extension to the previous reason, it is also the least risky alternative in view of potential voter trade-offs between core and new voters.¹⁶ That is because it helps to maintain policy appeal towards core voters who are drawn for ideological reasons whilst simulating appealing to new voters whose policy preferences go beyond the party's ideological core (Adams et al. 2006; Zons 2016). Finally, a more comprehensive appeal will increase the competitiveness of the party relative to other mainstream parties by spreading the electoral risks. This for instance leave

¹⁶ Core voters of PRR parties are particularly sensitive to ideological – that is positional – change, because they portray more ideological reasons for voting for the party. Thus, PRR parties face greater electoral risks when shifting ideological positions – on non-economic and value-based issues – once their core voter base has been established (Tavits 2007).

the party less exposed to mainstream party tactics (Meguid 2005; Wagner & Meyer 2017).

Following this train of thought, Thomas Meyer and Markus Wagner (2013: 2163) furthermore argue that parties do not only compete on questions that they own. Hence, parties can stress positions closer to the political centre, even if they do not reside within the bounds of the party's policy ownership. Forsaking distinctiveness and ownership means that the party can target broader voter segments (Wagner 2012). It may also prove an effective strategy to mitigate the perception of the party, which in turn can generate acceptability and respectability amongst voters (Wagner & Meyer 2017). Thus, by shifting salience the party can be perceived as more moderate without having to change its issue positions. Thereby increasing its competitive leverage within policy dimension closer to heart of the median voter.

In terms of the type of policies emphasised, populism is the only ideological characteristic of PRR parties that transcend the bounds of the left-right continuum. To rally the masses, I therefore predict that populist sentiments are likely to take precedence over nativist policies. By appealing to sentiments anchored in fundamental democratic values and procedures, votes can be won on a wide range of the political spectra (Mudde 2007). Hence, incentives to increase the party's competitiveness is expected to generate programmatic moderation by diluting the distinctiveness of previous appeals and shifting issue emphasis from more extreme positions – nativist – to more centrist – populist – ones. Lastly, authoritarian policy is likely to increase or remain the same, as it can compensate for the decreased nativist emphasis, making sure the party does not forsake reach with voters on the conservative end of the policy spectra.

3.1.3 The stage of representation

Once the party manages to increase the vote-share enough to enter parliament, one of the most immediate challenge that implicates the party's vote-seeking strategies is re-election and electoral party institutionalisation¹⁷ (Arter & Kestilä-Kekkonen 2014). The main incentive should therefore be to stabilise the votes which granted them access to parliament and extend the appeal further to acquire more representational power for the sake of secondary aims, such as office or policy related goals.

However, in terms of theory, this stage is unexplored in relation to the expected choices of programmatic appeal. It is therefore difficult to form expectations based on theory that is anchored in empirical observations. This part of the study therefore incorporates more exploratory qualities than previous parts. Nonetheless, there is one fundamental assumption found in both niche and mainstream party theory that can help steer the expectation.

¹⁷ Defined as both a process and a set of properties (Arter & Kestilä-Kekkonen 2014: 934)

Namely, it is assumed the party will grow more risk averse with age (Meyer & Wagner 2013: 1246–48). The expectation of programmatic change will therefore decrease as the party transitions between stages of development. Hence, it is likely that the party will continue on the path towards moderation, if that in fact was the winning formula that granted them access to parliament in the first place. Consequently, the density of the programmes is likely to remain similar or broader compared to the previous stage. It is also likely that the party will continue to emphasise centrist positions whilst striving for ownership within policy dimensions that attract the most voters. This would work to level the playing field vis-à-vis competing parties in the political arena.

3.2 Hypothesised Explanatory Mechanisms

Accordingly, the theoretical expectations can be summarised in a three-stage mechanism. The table on the next page show a step-wise layout of the quantitative and qualitative observations that is empirically tested, and how they complement each other to answer the first and second part of the research question. The numbers and arrows represent the chronology and direction of the different analytical steps.

Table 3.1 Hypothesised Explanatory Mechanisms (HEM)

Starting the process to explain why					
2 Stages of party development	3 Political competition Mechanismic processes			4 Ideological appeal Dependent variable	
	Challenges	Vote-seeking incentives	Qualitative observations	1 Quantitative observations (measurements)	
				Concentration	Salience
Marginalisation 1989-2006	Establishment on electoral market	Attract attention and awareness to develop a core voter base	Differentiation and innovation; generate ownership; distinct from mainstream parties; policy radicalism	High levels	Thin issue distribution Nativist foci
Relevance 2006-2010	Rally enough support to enter parliament; voter trade-off	Increase competitiveness by extending appeal	Moderating appeal by adopting new policy focuses; less radical	Lower levels	Wider issue distribution Decrease in Nativist emphasis Increase of populist and authoritarian emphasis
Representation 2010-2014	Electoral party institutionalisation; re-election	Stabilise support to sustain parliamentary access	Little change from previous stage; continuing process of broadening appeal; generating new issue ownership	Low levels	Wide issue distribution Populist/ Authoritarian foci

4 Methodology

The first empirical ambition of this study is to map the SD's ideological appeal via two indicators found in the SD's party programmes: *programmatically concentration* and *programmatically policy salience*. Since there is no previous data that can support these indicators, I begin by producing the raw-data using content analysis to code all programmes by hand. Thereafter, the raw-data is converted to estimates of concentration and policy salience. Secondly, I seek to explain change in ideological appeal via three *stages* of party development. Each stage is explored as an independent unit of analysis where I trace the process between the initial conditions, as defined by each stage, and the dependent variable, ideological appeal, using explaining-outcome process tracing.

4.1.1 Materials and sources of evidence

Materials used for content analysis constitute the full range of the SD's party programmes¹⁸ spanning from the first published programme in 1989 to the most recent programme in 2011. This make up a total of seven party programmes covering 25 out of 28 active party years and seven elections between 1989 and 2014.¹⁹ Party programmes are suitable for this study because they are authoritative, meaning that they speak for the party as a whole (Budge et al. 1987).²⁰ The materials thus represent a justified foundation upon which inference about the target population – the SDs – can be achieved.

Stage-wise, the first stage contains six programmes, and the last stage contain one programme. No programmes were released in-between these two stages, i.e. during the middle stage. However, though the middle stage fails to provide any new information about ideological appeal, it can aid explanations within the preceding and subsequent stages. The programme released in the final stage, might for instance display lagged effects of the middle stage.²¹

¹⁸ The Swedish equivalent is “Partiprogram” or “Principprogram”.

¹⁹ 2014 year's election represent the nearest subsequent election after the latest programme was issued in 2011.

²⁰ Each programme is authoritative in the sense that they represent a continued and/or unique political issue-document that has been legally ratified by a body of elected representatives at a National Party Convention through some internal democratic process (Alonso & Volkens 2012).

²¹ Inference about the ideological appeal within the stage of relevance (the second stage) is instead based on qualitative observations of ideological appeal within that stage.

Secondly, the study relies on evidence that either increases or decreases the confidence in the existence of each part of the HEM. The type of evidence collected can be defined as diagnostic evidence, which generates non-standardised and/or non-quantifiable data based on events, facts and activities within this case (Kincaid 2012; Bennett & Checkel 2014).²²

Two types of evidence are used to trace the mechanistic processes. First, I use sequence evidence to test if the predicted events took place at the right time of their prediction. For instance, if an event is predicted for the middle stage, but evidence for that event is found within the first stage, this will make me reconsider the likelihood of this part of the explanatory mechanism. Second, I look for account evidence. This is evidence that accounts for the content of the material, for instance, what was said in a meeting rather than just stating the actual event of the meeting (Beach & Pedersen 2013: 99-100).

Sources of evidence are collected from various platforms; some are found online, others via library archives. I use primary sources as far as it is possible and triangulate them with secondary sources to increase their validity.²³ Examples of primary sources are internal party documents such as minute-meetings, email correspondence, organisational decision-making documents etc. Examples of secondary sources are newspaper articles or academic papers and books published about the SDs. All materials are found via systematic searches for “Sweden Democrats” and “Sverigedemokraterna” in LIBRIS; a national catalogue that collects materials and titles from all Swedish libraries.

With regards to quotes, these are all originally in Swedish. They have been translated by me and cannot be understood as exact quotes or be referenced as such. Instead, they are cited as paraphrased sentences in accordance with APA guidelines (Lee 2014). However, to make them more visible and distinguished, I have opted to highlight paraphrased quotes in *Italics*. I hope this bring more clarity as you read along in the text.

4.2 Content analysis: measuring ideological appeal

The first part of this chapter describes the data-making process of ideological appeal, using content analysis. The data for concentration and salience is collected

²² According to Andrew Bennett & Jeffrey Checkel (2014: 7), diagnostic evidence is neither causal nor caused. Instead, evidence simply indicates the kind of process at play without transmitting any independent effects to the dependent variable. Similar to a medical test that helps diagnose the internal processes taking place inside a body, diagnostic evidence indicates but does not independently effect the process leading to an outcome.

²³ Unfortunately, primary sources of the SDs are rare. What is more, since starting this thesis, the party has removed their online archive, including access to former party programmes. This makes prior selections of materials precarious since there is no way of knowing beforehand what is out there. Criteria for selecting materials is therefore all-encompassing, including whatever materials I can come over with regards to the SDs.

and produced from scratch by quantitatively analysing each party programme issued by the SDs.

4.2.1 Step 1: coding process and calculating saliency scores

The first step towards measuring *programmatic concentration* and *programmatic policy salience* i.e. ideological appeal, is to analyse the content of each programme to generate data on their issue salience, i.e. the amount of space devoted to each policy issue. This procedure is done by hand and reports the whole content of programmes. The actual coding process comprise of two elements: *unitising* and *coding*. Both procedures follow rules and guidelines stipulated by MARPOR.²⁴ In brief, the decision-making process is guided by two main questions: 1) how many unique statements do parties make and 2) what kind of statements do parties make (Werner et al. 2014: 5)?

Accordingly, I first break down the programmes into different recording units called quasi-sentences; each quasi-sentence represents one unique statement.²⁵ This process is called “unitising”. The procedures for unitising the programmes are three-fold, each chronologically displayed in the separate tables below:

Table 4.1 Excerpt of original text to be cut into quasi-sentences and coded

Att äga ett svenskt medborgarskap är något att vara stolt över. Svenskarna har alltid varit väl ansedda runt om i världen och har trots ett relativt litet befolkningsantal frambringat en rad framstående vetenskapsmän, konstnärer, författare och idrottsmän. För att få förmånen att bli svensk medborgare ska man som icke nordbo, ha varit bosatt minst 10 år i Sverige och dessutom behärska det svenska språket i tal och skrift på ett fullgott sätt samt besitta vissa kunskaper i svensk historia. Nordiska invandrare skall kunna erhålla svenskt medborgarskap efter tre år och återvändande svenska emigranter efter två år. Den som förvärvat uppehållstillstånd och svenskt medborgarskap på falska grunder eller begår en grov förbrytelse ska kunna fråntas sitt medborgarskap och utvisas ur Sverige.
--

²⁴ Please see Appendix 1 for a more detailed and thorough account of the coding process using MARPOR’s guidelines.

²⁵ Each quasi-sentence represents one individual argument or a statement that convey one idea or meaning (Klingemann et al. 2007: xxiii).

Table 4.2 Excerpt of original text being cut into quasi-sentences

Att äga ett svenskt medborgarskap är något att vara stolt över. Svenskarna har alltid varit väl ansedda runt om i världen och har trots ett relativt litet befolkningsantal frambringat en rad framstående vetenskapsmän, konstnärer, författare och idrottsmän.
För att få förmånen att bli svensk medborgare ska man som icke-nordbo, ha varit bosatt minst 10 år i Sverige och dessutom behärska det svenska språket i tal och skrift på ett fullgott sätt samt besitta vissa kunskaper i svensk historia. Nordiska invandrare skall kunna erhålla svenskt medborgarskap efter tre år och återvändande svenska emigranter efter två år.
Den som förvärvat uppehållstillstånd och svenskt medborgarskap på falska grunder eller begår en grov förbrytelse ska kunna fråntas sitt medborgarskap och utvisas ur Sverige.

Table 4.3 Excerpt of text converted into quasi-sentences

Att äga ett svenskt medborgarskap är något att vara stolt över.	
Svenskarna har alltid varit väl ansedda runt om i världen och har trots ett relativt litet befolkningsantal frambringat en rad framstående vetenskapsmän, konstnärer, författare och idrottsmän.	
För att få förmånen att bli svensk medborgare ska man som icke-nordbo, ha varit bosatt minst 10 år i Sverige och	
dessutom behärska det svenska språket i tal och skrift på ett fullgott sätt	
samt besitta vissa kunskaper i svensk historia.	
Nordiska invandrare skall kunna erhålla svenskt medborgarskap efter tre år	
och återvändande svenska emigranter efter två år.	
Den som förvärvat uppehållstillstånd och svenskt medborgarskap på falska grunder eller begår en grov förbrytelse ska kunna fråntas sitt medborgarskap och utvisas ur Sverige.	

After the programmes have been unitised, I code each quasi-sentence by assigning one policy category to it (Volkens et al. 2013d: 13-20). In total, I can choose from seven main policy domains that together incorporate 57 individual policy categories, including one residual category. Twelve of the policy categories include additional subcategories that can be found in Appendix 2 (Volkens et al. 2013d).²⁶

²⁶ Each policy statement is therefore analysed using *a priori* categories that capture the essence of the message itself within the political communication process. This allow for inference about unobservable underlying characteristics of the text's author from observable content of the text. Volkens et al. (2013d) states that the objective of content analysis is to describe the real saliency of policy issues. However, as Benoit et al. (2009) highlights, real policy salience is not observable and can therefore not be measured directly but must be inferred. The saliency codings are therefore not *de facto* measurements of the party's real issue saliency, but measurements of the party's observed issue saliency, which later is interpreted as the party's real issue salience. Note however

Table 4.4 Available MARPOR policy categories to code quasi-sentences ²⁷

External Relations	101 Foreign Special Relationships: Positive, 102 Foreign Special Relationships: Negative, 103 Anti-Imperialism: Positive, 104 Military: Positive, 105 Military: Negative, 106 Peace: Positive, 107 Internationalism: Positive, 108 European Integration: Positive, 109 Internationalism: Negative, 110 European Integration: Negative
Freedom and Democracy	201 Freedom and Human Rights: Positive, 202 Democracy, 203 Constitutionalism: Positive, 204 Constitutionalism: Negative
Political System	301 Decentralisation: Positive, 302 Centralisation: Positive, 303 Governmental and Administrative Efficiency: Positive, 304 Political Corruption: Negative, 305 Political Authority: Positive
Economy	401 Free Enterprise: Positive, 402 Incentives: Positive, 403 Market Regulation: Positive, 404 Economic Planning: Positive, 405 Corporatism: Positive, 406 Protectionism: Positive, 407 Protectionism: Negative, 408 Economic Goals, 409 Keynesian Demand Management: Positive, 410 Economic Growth, 411 Technology and Infrastructure: Positive, 412 Controlled Economy: Positive, 413 Nationalisation: Positive, 414 Economic Orthodoxy: Positive, 415 Marxist Analysis: Positive, 416 Anti-Growth Economy: Positive
Welfare and Quality of Life	501 Environmental Protection: Positive, 502 Culture: Positive, 503 Equality: Positive, 504 Welfare State Expansion, 505 Welfare State Limitation, 506 Education Expansion, 507 Education Limitation
Fabric of Society	601 National Way of Life: Positive, 602 National Way of Life: Negative, 603 Traditional Morality: Positive, 604 Traditional Morality: Negative, 605 Law and Order, 606 Civic Mindedness: Positive, 607 Multiculturalism: Positive, 608 Multiculturalism: Negative
Social Groups	701 Labour Groups: Positive, 702 Labour Groups: Negative, 703 Agriculture and Farmers, 704 Middle Class and Professional Groups: Positive, 705 Minority Groups: Positive, 706 Non-Economic Demographic Groups: Positive

Once the coding process is complete, I am left with tables that look like this, containing the quasi-sentences as well as their codes for which policy category they belong:²⁸

Table 4.5 Excerpt of coded quasi-sentences in their final state²⁹

Att äga ett svenskt medborgarskap är något att vara stolt över.	601.1
Svenskarna har alltid varit väl ansedda runt om i världen och har trots ett relativt litet befolkningsantal frambringat en rad framstående vetenskapsmän, konstnärer, författare och idrottsmän.	601.1
För att få förmånen att bli svensk medborgare ska man som icke-nordbo, ha varit bosatt minst 10 år i Sverige och	601.2

that content analysis only makes it possible to know what the party says, not what they actually think (Volkens et al. 2013d). The party's *true* position is therefore a different matter (Benoit et al. 2009).

²⁷ For a full account of the MARPOR policy categories and their respective sub-categories, please see Appendix 2. For the description and meaning of MARPOR's policy categories, please see codebook produced by Volkens et al., 2016.

²⁸ The .1 after 601 indicate that the quasi-sentence has been allocated the first sub-category within the main policy area named 601; .2 indicate that it has been allocated the second sub-category and so on.

²⁹ Note that this is only one of many examples. The full set contain codings from a variety of policy categories, that is, other than category 601 and 602.

dessutom behärska det svenska språket i tal och skrift på ett fullgott sätt	601.2
samt besitta vissa kunskaper i svensk historia.	601.2
Nordiska invandrare skall kunna erhålla svenskt medborgarskap efter tre år	601.2
och återvändande svenska emigranter efter två år.	601.2
Den som förvärvat uppehållstillstånd och svenskt medborgarskap på falska grunder eller begår en grov förbrytelse ska kunna främtas sitt medborgarskap och utvisas ur Sverige.	605.1

The final task is to convert these codings to data on issue salience, i.e. saliency estimates. This is done by calculating each policy category's relative saliency score. The procedure summarises the codings and reduces them to percentage shares of the total number of quasi-sentences identified within the programme (Volkens et al. 2013d: 18-19). The absolute values are thus converted into a ratio, i.e. an estimate that is relative to all the other categories. The relative values provide a sense of what issues the party prioritises by systematically comparing them to the emphasis of other policy categories. The formula for measuring the saliency estimates is (Volkens et al. 2013d: 29):

Equation 1 Calculating saliency estimates

$$S_i = \frac{X_i}{\sum_{j=1}^n X_j}$$

S_i is then the percentage share of quasi-sentences in policy category i , where X_i represent the total amount of allocated quasi-sentences in policy category i over the total number of coded quasi-sentences within the entire programme X_j . This is indicated as a standard summation notation $\sum_{j=1}^n X_j$. A more practical example would look like this:

Equation 2 Example of how saliency estimates are calculated

$$0.94 = \frac{4}{425}$$

4 is then the number of quasi-sentences within a particular category (in this example I use policy category 101 from 1989-year's programme) and 425 is the total amount of coded quasi-sentences within that program (i.e. 1989-year's programme). The actual result is 0.0094 but it has been adjusted to represent the right percentage format (i.e. been multiplied by 100). The final result, that is the saliency score of category 101 within 1989-year's programme, is therefore 0.94. Ultimately, this forms a time-series containing saliency scores for each policy category within all seven programmes. Below is an example, where *codetot* indicate the total amount of coded quasi-sentences within this particular programme, *tot101* indicate the total amount of allocated quasi-sentences within

category 101 and *per101* indicate category 101's saliency score which has been converted according to the formula above:

Table 4.6 Total amount of coded quasi-sentences within each category and their conversion into percentage shares i.e. saliency estimates

codetot	tot101	per101	tot104	per104	tot106	per106
425	4	0,94	21	4,94	3	0,71

4.2.2 Step 2: converting saliency scores into ideological appeal

Subsequently, the collected time-series containing data on issue saliency is presented as a descriptive quantitative summary. The final step is to infer my dependent variable, ideological appeal. To do this, the saliency scores have to be systematised using two measurements.

First, *programmatically concentration* is operationalised through a standard measure for concentration, the Hirschman-Herfindahl Index (HHI), which links to both the number of policy categories and their relative salience (Volkens et al. 2013d: 29). HHI thus provides information about the programmatic platform by highlighting dissimilarities in the degree to which the party focuses on just a few issues (Zons 2016). As such, the object of this measure is to evaluate how concentrated the party has been on various issues over time by comparing index values. The Hirschman-Herfindahl Index read as follows:

Equation 3 Calculating programmatic concentration

$$hhi_p = \sum_{i=1}^n [(S)_i^2]$$

Where hhi_p represent the sum of the squared saliency estimates within programme p , across n policy categories, starting from the first category i . Hence, there are in total seven index values for programmatic concentration, one for each programme. $n \leq 57$ policy categories, depending on the number of categories used within each programme. hhi reaches its minimum when there is equal distribution on all policy categories and its maximum of 100 when the party only emphasise one single policy category (Volkens et al. 2013d: 29; Zons 2016: 10).

Secondly, the measure for *programmatically policy salience* is operationalised as the sum of saliency scores within three ideological categories that correspond to Mudde's (2007) conceptualisation of ideological appeal. That is, each category cluster saliency scores from policy areas that link theoretically to one of the three features of PRR party ideology: nativism, authoritarianism and populism. This

measure was exclusively developed for this study and contains 16 categories and 18 sub-categories³⁰ borrowed from MARPOR’s original category scheme:

Table 4.7 Ideological categories and adhering policy categories that form the measurement for programmatic policy salience

Nativism ³¹	Authoritarianism ³²	Populism ³³
Internationalism: Negative	Military: Positive	Freedom and Human Rights: Positive
European Integration: Negative	Traditional Morality: Positive	Democracy
Culture: Positive	Law and Order: Positive	Political Corruption: Negative
National Way of Life: Positive		Political Authority: Positive
Civic Mindedness: Positive		Welfare State Expansion
Multiculturalism: Negative		Labour Groups: Positive
		Non-Economic Demographic Groups: Positive

Because this measure is based on categories from MARPOR’s original scheme it is a deductively derived *a priori* measure that provide the relative salience of positions within each ideological category. This enables comparisons that are sensitive to the salience between different ideological categories but also to the salience of the programme taken as a whole.³⁴ I take inspiration from a *standard summation notation* when developing the technique for calculating policy salience:

³⁰ This table only display the main policy areas included. Please see Appendix 2 for the sub-headings included.

³¹ The MARPOR categories included here centres on positive notions of 1) the nation 2) national culture and negative notions of external forces that threaten the nation state, such as 1) immigration 2) supranational unions and 3) multiculturalism, in accordance with Mudde’s definition mentioned in section 2.4.

³² The MARPOR categories included here centres on positive notions of 1) militarism 2) law 3) order and 4) traditionalism, in accordance with Mudde’s definition mentioned in section 2.4.

³³ The MARPOR categories included here are based on Matthjis Rooduijn & Teun Pauwels’s (2011) measurements for populism within content analysis methods. Each category emphasises either positive sentiments towards “the people” (e.g. citizens, community, society, public opinion, the electorate) or 2) “anti-elitist” sentiments (because they undermine the centrality of the people e.g. media, political, economic, legal elites), in accordance with Mudde’s definition mentioned in section 2.4.

³⁴ Since the salience scores included within each ideological category are based on the total number of quasi-sentences within each programme (Volkens 2013a).

Equation 4 Calculating programmatic policy salience

$$pps_c = \sum_{i=1}^n S_i$$

Accordingly, pps_c represent the estimates of programmatic policy salience for ideological category c (i.e. nativism, authoritarianism or populism). These are derived through summing the saliency scores of all included policy categories S_i in ideological category c . 16 out of 57 categories are incorporated and therefore $n \leq$ to the number of policy categories used within each ideological category. Variation in programmatic policy salience is measured and observed through values that range from 0 to 100. The higher the value, the more salient the ideological category. This is then done for each programme, producing a total of three programmatic policy salience estimates for each programme, i.e. 21 estimates overall that span from 1989 to 2011.

4.2.3 Critical assessment of procedures and results

Some scholars' have debated whether data collected through MARPOR's guidelines are particularly prone to error by virtue of the hand coding procedures (see Laver et al. 2003). These critical viewpoints raise concerns that the results cannot be replicated to the same extent as computerised codings, thus inflicting limits to the reliability of the findings (Volkens et al. 2013b; Alonso & Volkens 2012). To a certain extent this is true, there will always be a certain amount of error based on the fact that human judgements vary. Both compared to other humans, but also compared to one-self between different points in time.

However, clear and thorough coding instructions mitigate this stability error. That is one of the prerogatives about using MARPOR's pre-defined coding instructions; it is all there in writing and it has been tested at length, making the procedure both transparent and accountable for error (Mölder 2016). In addition, the methodological procedure strives to mitigate bias by transcribing the party's observable issue emphasis rather than interpreting its position (Volkens 2013c).

4.3 Process tracing: explaining ideological appeal

The data on ideological appeal then constitute the foundation for further explorations conducted through process tracing. Process tracing contributes to the study by going beyond a purely descriptive account of programmatic change to

actually trying to explain it.³⁵ Put simple, it goes from answering the *what* to the *why*. The analysis examines the relationship between stages of party development and ideological appeal by tracing actions and events linked to challenges and incentives experienced by the party within each of the three stages.

4.3.1 Explaining-outcome process tracing

Explanatory mechanisms are a theory of systems that form interlocking parts that transmit forces from the dependent variable to the independent variable (or in this case the initial condition), like a chain reaction. This chain reaction is here referred to as a mechanistic process, meaning that I am exploring whether X is a minimally sufficient cause of Y in an individual case, not whether X co-varies with Y (Beach & Pedersen 2013).

These assumptions are deterministic and as such omit stochastic processes from the analysis. Instead explanatory mechanisms are assumed to be invariant, meaning that the chain reaction being assessed is the presence/absence of an explanatory mechanism (or its parts) within one particular case, rather than the magnitude of its effect or difference in degree (Beach & Pedersen 2013; Waldner 2015: 249). Operationally, therefore, the different parts of the HEM are described in the terms of their activities, not just changes to their properties (Beach & Pedersen 2013: 45).

In order to make this methodological ambition more systematic, each mechanistic part will be evaluated with the help of an intuitive logic. This logic is called *subjective probabilism* and it guides the inference about the existence of each part of the HEM (Bennett 2008: 8). The guiding question of this logic is: how certain am I that I am right about the existence of this part, given evidence (Beach & Pedersen 2013: 83ff)? Hence, subjectivity is defined as the choices and assumptions made by the researcher and therefore has nothing to do with probabilism in its original sense, as chance; I do not ask my-self what the chances are that I am right (Bennet 2014: 289). Stochastic processes are omitted from the analysis and the error assessment is instead based on uncertainties relative to my own judgement i.e. determined by my previous experiences and other causes; not random processes that predict chances of something happening. Given what I already know about this case, and given the evidence about the different parts of the HEM, what is the likelihood that it exists?

Another fundamental assumption about evaluating mechanisms in this way is that evidence has different probative values (Bennet 2008). Namely, it assumes that the likelihood of an explanation, theory or hypotheses being true, is conditional on evidence and its ability to discriminate between alternative explanations (Bennett 2014). For explaining-outcome process tracing, it is

³⁵ It also complements the lack of quantitative observations for ideological appeal within the second stage with qualitative observations, to enable inference about ideological appeal within that stage too.

therefore not the number of pieces of evidence that matters, but their probative value and different inferential weights (Bennett 2008; Beach & Pedersen 2013). Next, we turn to the procedure for assessing the inferential weight of evidence.

4.3.2 Assessment of evidence

As manifested, the concept of evidence is pivotal for this study because it underpins its ability for inference. Here, evidence is defined as observations that have been evaluated for their content and meaning and is thereupon able to conclude some inferential value. Prior to this evaluation, empirical observations simply constitute to raw-data, defined as empirical observations (Beach & Pedersen 2013).

To assess the inferential weight of evidence I follow Stephen Van Evera (as cited in Beach & Pedersen 2013: 101–102) who argues that observational evidence bares two features, namely *uniqueness* and/or *certainty*. On the one hand, *unique* evidence imply that observations do not overlap with other theories. That is, evidence that cannot be explained by other theories. If I for instance hypothesise that the SDs struggle financially and find a reliable transcript declaring the party’s financial ruin, little else can explain this piece of evidence, other than that the party struggle financially.³⁶

Certain evidence is on the other hand unequivocal, meaning that the evidence must be observed for the hypothesis to be deemed valid. Again, if I predict that the party struggle financially, the existence of this part of the HEM does not stand and fall with a transcript about the party’s financial struggle. If such transcript is not found, it does not mean that the party does not still suffer financially. If I however hypothesise that the SDs has increased their official influence on policy on a municipal level, there should reasonably be evidence to confirm their increased involvement in the decision-making process, since everything is recorded. If there is no evidence of the party’s official involvement, I will have reason to doubt the existence of this part of the HEM.

Unique evidence therefore guide inference when found, and certain evidence (or absence thereof) guide inference when not found (Beach and Pedersen 2013: 101-102). That said, certain evidence is much more difficult to obtain due to its rare character; both in terms of predictions and evidence. I therefore prioritise unique evidence and triangulation of sources whenever possible to ascertain diversity of observations (Beach and Pedersen 2013: 101-102, 104-105).

³⁶ Explaining the cause of this financial struggle is however a different matter.

4.3.3 Limitations and uncertainties

The main limitation to process tracing according to Andrew Bennett (2008: 12-13) concerns the potential for underdetermination of theory. Meaning that evidence might prove insufficient to determine what beliefs one can obtain from it, generating incapacities to either falsify or verify theory. Bennett firstly state that the process of confirming explanations requires knowledge and awareness of all other alternative explanations that might explain the outcome. Ideally background knowledge should incorporate all other hypotheses than the one presently at stake, even explanations that have not yet been conceived and can therefore not be considered. This goal is evidently unattainable and will as such underdetermine the response to any confirmatory data.

Secondly, this method utilises eliminative induction to disregard theories that does not fit with the predicted evidence. However, because no empirical test is able to function in total isolation, it is difficult to know with 100% certainty if evidence falsifies an entire theory or merely some of its sub-hypotheses, linking to for instance specific contextual factors. Levels of underdetermination will therefore always impair the process of generating response to failed predictions and/or evidence that has been disconfirmed.

5 Statistical Results of the SD's Ideological Appeal

To answer the first part of the research question, this chapter presents descriptive and quantitative data results³⁷ of the SD's ideological appeal, conceptualised as *programmatic concentration* and *programmatic policy salience*. The results are based on a unique set of time-series that have been produced exclusively for this study. The measurement for programmatic concentration includes codings within all policy categories, whereas policy salience is elicited via three ideological indicators that contain policy categories relating to nativism, authoritarianism and populism. The chapter concludes by highlighting key findings that relate to both concentration and salience.

5.1 Programmatic concentration

The first result to be presented is the data on programmatic concentration. This measurement provided index values that correspond to the relative concentration of issues, i.e. the relative space devoted to each issue policy.³⁸ Results are based on 2954 recording units, each carefully coded based on their content. Overall, 41 out of 57 main policy categories and 16 out of 32 sub-categories were used.

Observed variation in programmatic concentration is twofold. The first noteworthy result derives from the party programme released in 2003, where values indicate a steep increase in the relative space devoted to certain policy issues, making the programme more concentrated. 2005-year's party programme follow this trend by continuing to offer more space to less issues.

The second change occurred in the party programme released post 2010 year's election. In this programme, the dispersion of policy issues increases markedly, reverting the programmatic concentration back towards similar values found in the programmes released prior to 2003. Hence, from 2005 to 2011, the amount of issues included increases, but the relative space devoted to each issue decreases, i.e. it presents a more dispersed content.

³⁷ I have chosen not to release the raw-data and coded materials because of its potential inclusion in future studies. It may however be provided upon request.

³⁸ Note, this measurement says nothing about the actual length of the programme but provides a sense of the distribution of issues on display.

When transforming the results into a graph, shifts in the density of party programmes are visualised accordingly:

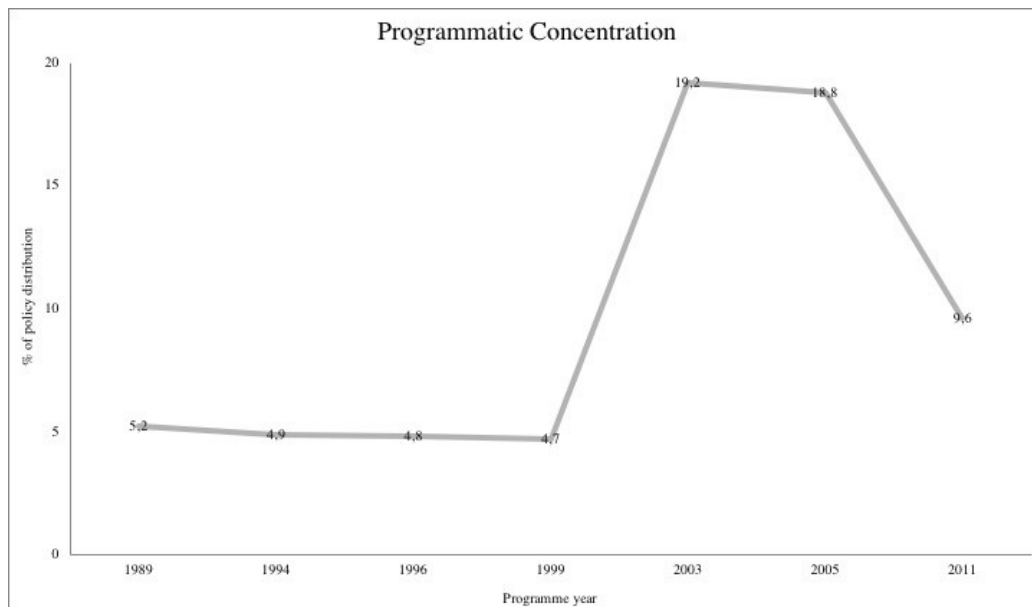


Figure 5.1 Development of programmatic concentration containing estimates from all policy categories, 1989–2011

5.2 Programmatic policy salience

We now turn to the second measurement for ideological appeal: programmatic policy salience. Here, the saliency estimates of 16 different categories are summed and divided between three theoretically deduced categories that link to ideological appeal.³⁹ In their final state, emphasis on nativist, authoritarianist and populist issues are distributed accordingly:

³⁹ Although this measure only includes the codings that belong to the policy categories that form ideological appeal (nativism, authoritarianism and populism), the saliency estimates represent percentage shares of the total amount of codings over all policy categories. As such they still stand in relation to the policy categories that are not included in this measure. This is a vital factor, and one of the main strengths of this measurement because it means that no information is omitted from the analysis, offering more valid comparisons.

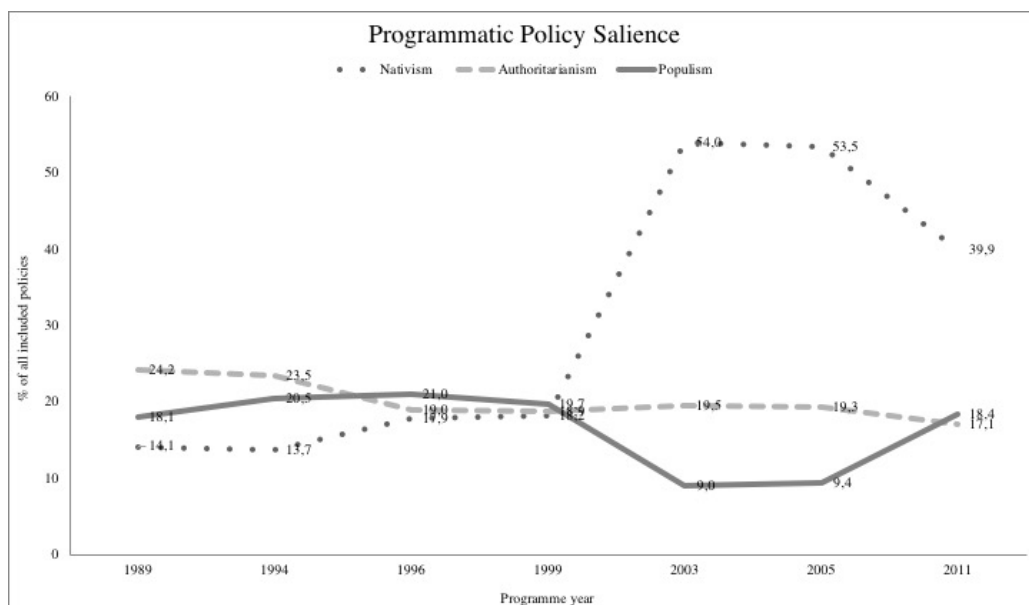


Figure 5.2 Development of programmatic policy saliency containing estimates from ideological categories, 1989–2011

5.2.1 Nativism

As shown by the scatter plot, the development of saliency between 1994 and 1996 mark a shift towards enhancing the saliency of nativist issues. Following the 1999-year's programme, there is also a distinct increase in the emphasis of nativist issues. The difference between 1999- and 2003-year's programmes is 35,5%, which implies that an additional near third of the entire space within the programme is devoted to issues relating to nativist appeals. With 54% devoted to nativist issues, this focus marks the vast majority of emphasis placed over all issues within this year's programme. And it is a focus that extends into the subsequent programme.

The second noteworthy change occurs in 2011-year's programme when the estimated saliency of nativist policy issues decreases with 13,6%. This finding indicates, contrary to the previous two programmes, that there is less relative emphasis on nativist issues. Instead the programme has been adjusted to incorporate other issues in to the SD's programmatic repertoire.⁴⁰

What is more, out of the six MARPOR coding categories that make up this measure some warrant further attention. First and foremost, two categories stand out as they persistently accumulate greater values than the other four: *National Way of Life: Positive & Multiculturalism: Negative*. On the contrary, no units were assigned to the category *Civic-mindedness* and negative mentions about *European Integration* were dismissed all together from 2003 and onward. Emphasis on

⁴⁰ Note however that this does not signal change in the actual sense of policy emphasis. Hence, the nativist-related issues included may in all actuality have been left unchanged, only to be surpassed by additional inclusions of issues that relate to other policy areas.

Culture: Positive were removed in in 2003-year's programme but made a comeback in 2011-year's programme. The table below show the saliency estimates per category and is sorted by year, starting with 1989 year's estimates:

Table 5.1 Excerpt of individual saliency estimates which informs the nativist indicator by MARPOR policy categories, 1989–2011

Internationalism: Negative	European Integration: Negative	Culture: Positive	National Way of Life: Positive	Multiculturalism: Negative
0,94	1,41	0,71	7,06	4,00
1,19	1,19	1,39	7,95	1,99
1,22	0,52	1,04	11,13	4,00
2,55	0,85	1,02	10,88	2,89
5,50	-	-	39,00	9,50
5,45	-	-	38,61	9,41
2,82	-	1,30	22,78	13,02

5.2.2 Authoritarianism

The second indicator conveys the salience of authoritarian issues in the SD's party programmes. Emphasis on authoritarian issues report the most invariable estimates over time. The programme released in 1989 contain the highest indication of emphasised issues relating to authority, and except for a marginal increase in the programme released in 2003, salience estimates consistently decrease with every new programme. In more detail, 1996- and 2011-year's programme experience the greatest decrease in emphasis on issues pertaining to authority.

Overall, the saliency estimates are distributed across the three different MARPOR categories respectively:

Table 5.2 Excerpt of individual saliency estimates which informs the authoritarian indicator by MARPOR policy categories, 1989–2011

Military: Positive	Traditional Morality: Positive	Law and Order: Positive
4,94	9,65	9,65
5,57	8,15	9,74
4,35	5,74	8,87
4,25	6,29	8,33
1,00	12,00	6,50
0,99	11,88	6,44
1,74	11,28	4,12

When analysing the indicator pertaining to authoritarianism, there are two compelling findings that aspire further commentary. First, whereas *Law and Order: Positive* and *Military: Positive* overall indicate tendencies to reduce in numbers, *Traditional Morality: Positive* present fluctuations that generate an overall increase in saliency estimates over time. This category hence displays the most substantial category in terms of programmatic saliency devoted to authoritarian issues and relate to, for instance, traditional family values and/or support for religious institutions (Volkens et al. 2016). Secondly, emphasis on policy relating to military ambitions, such as rearmament, protection/security, enlistment and expenditure, nearly perishes all together in from 2003 onward, with a small escalation in 2011-year's programme.

5.2.3 Populism

The last indicator of ideological appeal pertains to the salience of populist issues. According to the measurements, populist appeal can be divided into three stages that distinguish change; namely 1989-1996, 1999-2003 and finally 2005-2011.

Overall, the first and last segment demonstrate an increase in the emphasis of populist sentiments, whereas the programmes issued in the middle demonstrate a downward trend. 2003- and 2005-year's programmes indicate a particularly substantial reconstruction in terms of policy. In 2003, policy conveying populist positions dropped by 10,7% and judging from the saliency estimates, this derive from an exclusion of four out of seven previously included policy areas; namely referral to policies relating to *Political Corruption* and *Authority*, and *Labour* and *Non-Economic Demographic Groups*. However, in 2011-year's programme the party reinstate three out of the four excluded policy categories, resulting in an increase of salience for populist issues.

Table 5.3 Excerpt of individual saliency estimated which informs the populist indicator by MARPOR policy categories, 1989–2011

Freedom and Human Rights: Positive	Democracy	Political Corruption: Negative	Political Authority: Positive	Welfare State Expansion	Labour Groups: Positive	Non-Economic Demographic Groups: Positive
3,06	1,88	1,88	0,24	6,82	1,88	2,35
3,18	1,39	1,79	1,79	8,15	1,99	2,19
2,61	3,83	1,22	2,78	7,30	1,57	1,74
2,38	3,57	1,19	2,72	6,63	1,53	1,70
2,50	5,00	-	-	1,50	-	-
2,97	4,95	-	-	1,49	-	-
2,82	2,39	-	4,56	4,56	3,47	0,65

More precisely, 2011-year's programme indicate a percentage increase by nine units in the programmatic space devoted to populist issues. The category which experience the greatest increase pertain to *Political Authority*, *Welfare State Expansion* and positive mentions of *Labour Groups*. These adhere to acknowledgements of the party's competence to govern and/or lack of such competence on behalf of other parties, negative mentions of former elites, welfare state chauvinism and positive mentions of working class and unemployed workers (Volkens et al. 2016).

5.3 Key findings linked to both measurements

The longitudinal measurements of programmatic concentration and policy salience offer further findings when aggregated. The first finding concerns the corresponding index values for programmatic concentration and the nativist saliency estimates from 2003 and onwards. Change in programmatic concentration seem to correspond to change in nativist policy salience. This means that 2003-year's programme not only display fewer issues incorporated into the programme, but that the issues included predominantly advocate nativism. Particularly with regards to the fabrics of society, such as positive mentions about a nationalist way of life. For example:

For the Swedish Nation, the following applies: A Swede is someone who perceive themselves as Swedish and who is perceived by others as Swedish. In practice this means a kind of open Swedishness, where people from other origins have the possibility to belong to the Swedish Nation. Nationhood is however not the same as citizenship. It might take several generations to fully become Swedish. Citizenship can nevertheless be obtainable by non-Swedes, as long as this does not lead to serious violations of the Nationalist principle. In essence, though, Swedish citizenships should be a privilege for Swedes (Sweden Democrats 2003: 5, my translation).

Inversely, as 2011-year's programme indicate a broadening of the SD's programmatic platform, emphasis of nativist issues decreases compared to other policy issues included. On the contrary, populist saliency estimates report negative correlations to high programmatic concentration from 2003 and onward.

In connection to these findings, both programmatic concentration and programmatic policy salience indicate prevalent changes in the programmes released in 2003 and 2011. Prior to this, both measurements indicate relative stability in the way in which the party chooses to present their programmatic platform. These two dates therefore provide a good reference point for further investigations that attempts to trace the mechanisms leading up to these changes. In the next chapter, each section begins by assessing these quantitative results against the predictions specified in the hypothesised explanatory mechanism.

6 Testing Explanatory Mechanisms

The second part of the results is qualitative and attempt to explain developments within the SD's ideological appeal via three stages by testing the HEM. In practise this means collecting observable implications of theory i.e. evidence for the (non)existence of each hypothesised part: the mechanism (electoral challenges and incentives) and the outcome (ideological appeal). The following chapter is ordered temporally and contain three sections that are based on the theorisation about stages of party development. The theorisation stem from supply-side explanations of PRR party behaviours and predict how the party has used their programmatic platform for electoral fortunes. Each section begins by relating the quantitative results presented in the former chapter to the quantitative predictions of ideological appeal as stated in the HEM. This then serves as a starting point for the qualitative analysis. Each section ends by offering a summary about what we have found about the different mechanisms, in light of both quantitative and qualitative observations about ideological appeal.⁴¹

6.1 Mechanisms of the marginalised stage

The starting point of this explanatory mechanism, i.e. the initial condition from which the mechanistic process takes place, stem from a position of marginalisation. It is theorised to stretch between the birth of the party in 1988 to the election of 2006.

6.1.1 Evaluating results of ideological appeal against predictions

Contrary to theoretical expectations stated in the HEM, the SD's programmatic platform initially indicate low levels of concentration, i.e. an even spread of policy, and no distinct policy salience. In terms of development, there is little

⁴¹ Note that the process for collecting evidence on potential explanations for ideological appeal go beyond merely tracing the different explanations hypothesised in the HEM. In actuality the empirical analysis considered all types of explanations for ideological appeal within each stage, both internal and external supply factors. However, due to lack of space, I am only able to give account for the findings that link directly to the hypothesised explanations in the HEM. The stage of marginalisation nevertheless reports parts of this process, where different factors are tested against each other, to give the reader an understanding of the *de facto* analytical process.

change in both concentration and policy salience until the adoption of 2003-year's programme.

In 2003, however, the programmatic platform undergoes a transformation towards values described in the HEM. Nativist policy saliency exceedingly surpasses both authoritarianism and populism and the programmatic concentration increases radically. The policy offerings thereby become more concentrated and focused compared to previous years.

Nevertheless, observations within the programmes adopted in the years leading up to 2003 display different characteristics and components than those predicted. On an empirical level, this renders the question: What brought about this change in programmatic strategy at this point in time?

6.1.2 Challenges to establish the party on the electoral market

Evidence found in internal party documents and interviews with party members indicate that the development of the party during the first stage was volatile (Slätt 2004; Sverigedemokraterna 2013; Ekman & Poohl 2010). According to internal statements, the party's public reach was undermined by a fragile party organisation, non-responsiveness by established parties and lacking or negative media coverage (Åkesson 2008: 6; Rinderheim 2008: 103, 106; Söder 2008: 145; Ekman 2015: 62; Hellström 2016: 91).

However, only evidence of organisational incoherence can increase the likelihood of this part of the HEM. That is because observations linked to the *cordon sanitaire* of established parties and the media-effect overlap with other theories i.e. they can be explained just as well via other hypotheses, generating difficulties in terms of determining their effects.⁴²

Accordingly, the party's position on the electoral market during this period was tainted by organisational incoherence and instability (Slätt 2004; Sverigedemokraterna 2013). Attempts made by the party to establish themselves as a valid alternative to traditional parties were disrupted by internal factors. Such as ideological discontent, conflicting ideas about what people to attract and how, as well as insufficient human capital to spread the political message. This ultimately triggered an ambiguous party image and insufficient party promotion.

For one, evidence illustrate that the party was characterised by ideological discontent which turned into internal oppositions and splits. Members of radicalised factions were excluded from the party on at least two occasions due to ideological differences: in 1996 and 2001. The split of 1996 was a direct

⁴² For instance, Meguid (2005) argues that by not acknowledging the party's existence, established parties fuel the SD's position as a martyr, legitimising their claims about the undemocratic elites in power. Alternatively, is there such a thing as bad publicity? Though most written statements framed the party negatively, it might nevertheless have had positive effects on their establishment with the public. Such promotion can for instance contribute to setting the agenda and creating public debates about the party and its politics (Rydgren 2006, 2007).

consequence of change in leadership when Mikael Jansson replaced Anders Klarström. Jansson was the first party leader without a radicalised past. He worked hard to soften the party image by implementing a more liberal agenda and excluding radical members who did not conform (Sverigedemokraterna 2013; Slätt 2004: 30, 84f; Widefeldt 2008: 269). Jansson was additionally the first to take an active stance against Nazism, both as an ideology and practice. He for instance prohibited uniforms at marches to purge the party from skinheads and neo-Nazis. (Larsson and Ekman 2001: 168–172).

Jansson's liberalising agenda however caused remaining party veterans to turn against the party. In 2001 the height of tensions led to another split based on similar reasons i.e. differences in ideological values. Essentially, initiatives to ease relations by either ignoring or actively excluding radical activities resonated poorly with the opposing forces within the party (Åkesson 2008: 11). The so-called traditionalists would oppose the liberal agenda of new members and Party Executives, whereas the faction leaning towards party reform would oppose the radical manifestations brought about by the traditionalists (Slätt 30, 53–54). Thus, factional divides made it difficult to unite and consolidate the party around a coherent message and to decide on what type of voter the party should target.

Moreover, the party also struggled to recruit members and activists to engage the public and get the message “out there” (Slätt 2004: 48). The de-radicalising agenda enforced by Mikael Jansson which resulted in the 2001-year's party-split, drove away most of its activists. The party was left with about 900 members and 200 activists, which were unevenly distributed around the country. With 68% of members and activists located in the southern parts of Sweden, this ultimately impaired the local rootedness (Slätt 2004: 47–50; Widefeldt 2008: 274; Sverigedemokraterna 2013).⁴³

In 2003 party representatives in the southern districts drafted a statement to the party board, regarding these difficulties. The statement was named “What needs to be done for the SDs to enter parliament?”. Overall, the statement ruled for a focus on party growth, stating: *We feel that the party does not have an adequate strategy for growth and establishment and that the importance of this function is not taken seriously* (Slätt 2004: 48–50). Tommy Funebo also shares his vision: *The future depends on how well the party manages to engage the common people* (Funebo 2008: 179).

As result, the party failed to recruit enough active members to run for elections. Internal debates and documents distributed by the excluded member Tommy Funebo show that most of the candidates from 2002-year's election were arbitrary elected, some of which were not even members of the party, nor had been informed they were listed as candidates. With merely 1400 members and 200 activists ahead of the election, the organisational strength of the party did frankly not stand in proportion to the electoral results which amounted to an impressive

⁴³ The definition of an activist according to party is to distribute at least 20 flyers per month (Slätt 2004: 41).

76 000 votes (Slätt 2004: 36, 40;) Ekström von Essen & Fleischer 2006: 24; Widefeldt 2008: 274)

At the next election in 2006, Jansson argued that at least 2000 activists were needed on the field to manage the amount of lobbying necessary to enter the threshold of representation (Slätt 2004: 48). Important party profiles, e.g. the current party leader Jimmie Åkesson, wrote yet another statement for discussion to the party board: *The party must prioritise activities that focus on reaching out to the people. As of today, we do not have enough resources (time or active members) to devote time to administrative tasks and internal work at the expense of the massive labour efforts which is needed to reach the people and mobilise more members and voters for the SDs* (Slätt 2004: 45).

In conclusion, failure to build a strong party organisation resulted in poor local rootedness on a national scale, an ambiguous political message, and insufficient forces on the field to communicate it. As result, organisational challenges undermined attempts to establish the party on the electoral market, which prolonged the party's inability to break the stage of marginalisation. Displayed evidence demonstrate a minimally sufficient explanation to how and why organisational challenges perpetuate struggles of establishment on the electoral market, which in turn increases the likelihood of the existence of this part of the HEM.

6.1.3 Incentives to attract a core voter base

The next part of the explanatory mechanism traces the incentives spurring from the aforementioned challenges to establish the party on the electoral market whilst being in a position of marginalisation. Theory predicts that the challenges to establish the party on the electoral market will incentivise the party to attract attention with a core voter base by forming a clear and unified identity. This section will therefore focus on how and why the changes in 2003-year's party programme can be traced back to unsolved ideological disputes and high turnover in membership, bringing about new strategies to target a specific type of voter.

Accordingly, due to the factional unrest within the party, Party Executives called for a crisis meeting in 2003 where the growing unrest could be addressed. This time, the main factions were divided in two groups, "the bunker" and "the reformers" (Ekman & Poohl 2010: 132). The reformers had grown increasingly wary about Mikael Jansson and his Stockholm-based entourage called the bunker and accused them of maintaining hierarchical power structures (Slätt 2004: 37–39).

In 2003, the reformers actively sought to alter the power structures and organisational framework. In particular, they opposed the frame of mind exerted by the men in power. In a five-page long report, members of the pro-reform faction stated: *Unfortunately, we experience that there are some members within the top*

leadership group who act as if the party is an end in itself rather than a means to an end— where personal influence and prestige is more important than whether or not the party actually succeed in its political endeavours (Slätt 2004: 56).

The party was in dire straits for ideological consolidation and the persons entrusted with this task was the reformists Jimmie Åkesson and Mattias Karlsson, two of the most influential voices within the party today (Sverigedemokraterna 2013). At the crisis meeting, it was decided that a full revision of the party programme was necessary to secure the survival and development of the party. Ideologically, it had to strive deeper, and policy-wise it had to become clearer and less detailed (Ekström von Essen & Fleischer 2006: 42; Sverigedemokraterna 2013). This resulted in a change from a party programme to a principal programme, which devoted more space to ideological principles and clarified the party's policy stances (Sverigedemokraterna 2013).

According to Åkesson, the adoption of the new programme was a triumph that settled accounts with the party's radical past and an important step in the normalisation process of the party; it was the most imperative strategy to be able to extend the political impact of the party (Åkesson 2008: 12–13). The programme was unanimously adopted, making it the most anchored programme since 1988 (Funebo 2008: 103). In terms of factional divides, the reformers came out on the winning side. Two years later, Åkesson replaced Jansson as party leader (Kiiskinen, & Saveljef 2010: 51; Sverigedemokraterna 2013).

Together, Jimmie Åkesson, Björn Söder, Richard Jomshof and Mattias Karlsson initiated a conceptual transformation of the party's core values in order to proceed from the margin and into a reel political force. Taking inspiration from the organisational structure of established parties, Åkesson and the others hoped for a fundamental change in terms of how the party was perceived by the voters (Kiiskinen & Saveljef 2010: 52f).

More importantly, this was a way for the reformers to unite the party around one message and refine the strategy for targeting and attracting a specific voter group. Rather than attracting radicals on the outskirts of the political periphery, the new ideological cohesiveness and clear policy platform was meant to attract and engage a particular segment of the mainstream public (Funebo 2008; Söder 2008).

According to the party, the districts in which they were most successful adhered to the working-class. Mattias Karlsson, one of the founders for the new party ideology and the person in charge of public relations, determined that the party would do best to target leftist election districts (Slätt 2004: 103–104). The quest for local rootedness were therefore to be achieved by targeting socialist election districts and generate long-term members. The latter stemmed from a perception that electoral fortunes displayed a function of the number of members within the district (Åkesson 2008: 14; Slätt 2004: 51–52).

There are a number of qualitative observations within the newly adopted programme that speak in favour of the likelihood that this part of the explanatory mechanism exists. Particularly in terms of programmatic strategy. The strive for

political and ideological unity as well as reach with Social Democratic voters, can be exemplified by three pieces of evidence.

First, the most infected policy issues, on which the party could not agree, are removed: abortion, adoption (from countries outside of the EU) and death penalty. Secondly, the party also softens the criteria for what it means to be Swedish by launching the term “open Swedishness”, ultimately replacing the former biological view with a more ethno-cultural one (Ekström von Essen & Fleischer 2006: 42–43). Åkesson argues that Swedishness is not a matter of skin colour but a matter of values and actions. On principle, this means that anyone can become Swedish as long as they assimilate (Åkesson 2008: 13). A final telling development is the adoption of a Social Democratic narrative. That is, the party applies the concept *Folkhemmet*⁴⁴, a concept that is more or less synonymous with the Social Democratic world view (Ekström von Essen & Fleischer 2006: 33, 42–43; Ekman & Poohl 2010: 281).

Effectually, these observations speak directly for the likelihood of this part of the HEM. In terms of programmatic strategy, they illustrate attempts to unite the party by consolidating broad acceptance of the party’s political message. They also illustrate attempts to attract attention and awareness with a particular voter group by conforming, both politically and organisationally, to more traditional ways of what it means to be a political party. In conclusion, evidence suggest that the party seek to target a more mainstream voter from a specific segment of the electoral market, rather than attracting voters from the far ends of the political spectra. This is to be done by defining a more cohesive party message, appealing to a different voter group; ultimately reinventing (or rather inventing) a clear party agenda and programmatic strategy.

6.1.4 Likelihood of mechanisms given evidence

Overall, the underlying mechanisms that link to changes and incentives during this stage exhibit a minimally sufficient explanation for the development of the SD’s programmatic profile. Prior to 2003, the programmatic profile was a product of organisational shortcomings: factional disputes, weak leadership and financial deficits. These insufficiencies prevented the party from providing a clear message to a delimited voter group. Once this was dealt with, the party could modify their programmatic strategy to address incentives produced by the challenges. Hence, the empirical evidence of the SD’s programmatic platform and underlying mechanisms for change follow the hypothesised predictions from 2003 and onward.

⁴⁴ Roughly translated into ‘the people’s home’.

6.2 Mechanisms of the relevance stage

The next stage to be examined is that of relevance, which is expected to precede the stage of marginalisation. It is theorised to stretch between 2006 and 2010, when the SD's first entered parliament.

6.2.1 Evaluating results of ideological appeal against predictions

In terms of programmatic development, there are no measurable observations for this stage. The party enters this period with the programme from 2005, which is not altered until 2011. Consequently, the analysis will have to rely on results from the preceding and the following stages. On the one hand, as predicted for the stage of marginalisation, the programme issued in 2005 display high concentration and low distribution of policy issues, i.e. high emphasis on nativist policy issues. On the other hand, the programme released in 2011, is less concentrated and the programmatic space devoted to nativist and authoritarian decreases, whilst the space devoted to populist issues increases.

It can therefore be concluded that a programmatic development has taken place somewhere between the stage prior to this one and the stage after. What is more, the outcome of 2011-year's programme indicates a change towards the theoretical expectations identified for this period. That is, programmatic appeal has been moderated by broadening the number of issues included and shifting salience from nativist policy areas to populist ones. This begs the question of whether or not the programmatic moderation is a function of underlying mechanisms linked to this stage. The main aim of this section is therefore to infer if observations measured in the programme issued in 2011 display lagged effects which can be traced back to the period of relevance.

6.2.2 Challenges to rally support whilst avoiding a voter trade-off

Despite the favourable election results in 2006, they nevertheless informed the party that they still had some rallying to do in terms of raising support to pass the threshold of representation (Åkesson 2008; Rinderheim 2008). However, when posing questions about the meaning of rallying support at this stage – why and for whom – evidence tell a different story than theory predicts. Rather than mitigating the perception of the party as radical, it is more likely that challenges to rally support meant combatting the public perception of the SDs as a one-policy party (Ekman & Poohl 2010; Slätt 2004; Söder 2008).

In an opinion poll from 2007, ordered by the Trade Union *SEKO*, *Synovate* asked 1042 respondents if they knew of any policy issues advocated by the SDs,

other than those pertaining to immigration. A mere 11% answered yes (Ekman & Poohl 2010: 275–276). In 2007 Åkesson replies to external allegations about the party's limited political offerings on his blog: *It is said that we always circle back to the question of immigration, regardless of the subject. I am prepared to agree, but this does not automatically mean that we are a one-policy party. The reason why we bring up immigration is not because that is the only question of interests to us. Nevertheless, we are on the clear that mass-immigration, its costs and consequences, cannot be isolated from other political areas* (Ekdahl & Poohl 2010: 172).

Ekman & Poohl (2010) however present an article from 2007 that provide a different perspective. The article shows that Åkesson could provide few stances on concrete and coordinated policy issues when confronted by the evening newspaper *Expressen*. Amongst other, Åkesson failed to provide viewpoints on matters pertaining to small businesses, emissions, eldercare and prohibition of smoking and the Swedish monopoly on wine and spirits.

There are in addition no observations to indicate that the party faced the challenge of – and therefore strategized on – a potential voter trade-off. On the contrary, the party recognised that their pre-conditions for attracting new segments of the electorate were limited. According to Söder, they party instead chose to target already ideologically converted voters. In particular, the party's aim was to give these voters incentives to foremost drag themselves to the election polls and secondly to vote for the SDs rather than attempting to affect the balance of power between the main blocks (Sverigedemokraterna 2013).

Contrary to this behaviour, if the party were to acknowledge and act on a potential voter trade-off scenario, theory predicts that the party would seek acceptance and respectability with new voter segments and/or the broader public by moderating its appeal. This implies that they would forsake distinctiveness and ownership and increase emphasis on populist appeals at the expense of nativist ones. One particularly probative observation speaks against this. Namely, the televised election film presented by the party prior to 2010-year's election.

In the film, an elderly white woman representing the Swedish pension community loses the race for state funds to women wearing burkas and niqabs. The film illustrates the incompatibility between maintaining the Swedish welfare state and current immigration policies, placing focus on the financial repercussions. When the party later commented on why they chose this extreme angle, the party's spokesperson stated that the message had to be controversial enough to get already value-driven voters to the election polls (Sverigedemokraterna 2013).

Hence, the party still attempted to create appeal based on distinction by focusing on nativist appeals, on which the party previously had strived for ownership. Together with the previous statement regarding the party's strategy to target voters within their established ideological span, it is unlikely that the party perceived of any challenges to avert a potential voter trade-off. Instead, challenges

faced by the party likely related to voter perceptions about their political capacity to accommodate a wider range of policy, not the actual quality of policy.

6.2.3 Incentives to increase competitiveness by extending appeal

Because challenges did not fully accord with theory, it cannot be expected that incentives follow the theoretical prediction either, and the same goes for the programmatic strategies.

This part of the mechanism predicted that the party would be incentivised increase competitiveness by extending the programmatic appeal. Operationally, we would therefore expect to see an extension of the party's programmatic appeal by diluting the concentration and salience of policy. After collecting evidence, however, it appears more likely that incentives to increase competitiveness vis-à-vis other parties generated an enhancement of the already established appeals.

In the aftermath of the election, two of the most influential party profiles and strategists recognised that if the party were to increase competitiveness and reach national representation, their politics had to be sharpened. Both Jomshof (2008: 190) and Söder (2008: 146), in charge for media strategies and PR the time, state that the chances for electoral success in the election of 2010 depend on whether or not the party can offer a more comprehensive policy platform. However, the willingness to advance their appeal does not display the same characteristics as theory predicts. That is, spreading electoral risk by forsaking previously emphasised policy areas in exchange for new ones. Instead, the proposed extension resulted in a transformation of the way in which policy was packaged.

Examples of how the programmatic enhancement was strategized upon is found in statements made by various party officials' (Ekman and Poohl's 2010: 299).⁴⁵ The most probative observation within these statements is generated by Mattias Karlsson, the party's leading ideologist. He suggests that the party would do best to shift focus from ideological appeals to issue-based appeals. That the future for the party is best captured by focusing on realpolitik (Sverigedemokraterna 2013). The party thus sought to redirect focus from value-laden incentives to pragmatic ones. Undoubtedly, this would be a reasonable strategy if the targeted voter group already aligned with the party's more value-driven offerings; there is no need to preach to the choir.

Towards this end, the party for instance saw potential within the female segment of their target group. In 2010, the SDs issued a report which assumed causation between level of immigration and level of rape in Sweden. The basis of this report was the statistics presented by the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (BRÅ) and was given the title "Time to speak plainly about rape!". The report included an action programme in which the party assigned one billion SEK to prevent and aid female rape victims (Sverigedemokraterna 2010). Thus,

⁴⁵ Taken from primary sources found in Expo's archive on the SDs.

instead of extending the appeal to bring about perceived moderation and reach new voter segments, evidence suggest that the party targeted similar groups as before by offering concrete policy that tangents their established nativist core.

6.2.4 Likelihood of mechanisms given evidence

In pursuit of combatting the one-policy image of the party and increasing the turnout of voters that already complied to the party's value-driven agenda, the party responded to different rationales during this stage than initially predicted. There is thus low likelihood that the programmatic developments of 2011 stem from the mechanistic processes predicted for this stage. All things considered, it is more likely that the programmatic appeal of this stage resembles that of 2003 and 2005-year's programme. In conclusion, this part of the HEM is dismissed because evidence fail to provide a minimally sufficient explanation to the developments in 2011-year's programme.

6.3 Mechanisms of the representative stage

The final stage is that of representation, i.e. when the party has achieved political representation on a national level.

6.3.1 Evaluating results of ideological appeal in light of prior stage

As inferred in the previous section, 2011-year's programme indicate change compared to earlier programmes. It displays lower levels of concentration and increased populist policy emphasis at the expense of nativist ones; policies that link to the authoritarian category slightly decrease.

In the HEM, the programmatic appeal of this stage was predicted to continue from the developments of the stage of relevance. However, because the empirical test failed within the previous stage, the programmatic outcomes of this stage cannot be accounted for on the same premise.⁴⁶ To provide a minimally sufficient explanation for the observed changes in programmatic appeal, the underlying mechanistic processes is thus expected to stem from different sources than mere

⁴⁶ Unfortunately, theorisation of potential mechanistic processes linked to this stage is weak. The main assumption guiding the expectations for this part of the HEM stated that parties grow risk adverse with age, i.e. parties are less likely to change the older they get. Hypothetically, therefore, the programmatic developments were predicted to resemble values which corresponded to the stage of relevance.

continuity. The contextual evidence provided by the analysis in the previous stage will serve as starting point.

6.3.2 Mechanisms linked to prior stage: a starting point for analysis

As the previous stage could conclude, challenges linked to a potential voter trade-off were unlikely. It is more likely that the party's main electoral challenge was to get their original target group to vote and foremost vote for the party. This challenge was furthermore exacerbated by what the party perceived as their one-policy party image. Based on this, they decided to make more efficient use of the programmatic platform already in place.

Incentives to increase the party's competitiveness resulted in a superficial enhancement of the programmatic platform by adding concrete issue-policy to dimensions already corresponding to the party's core values. On behalf of these observations, aspirations to targets voters within additional segments was deemed unlikely. The party also assumed that programmatic strategies, based on ownership and distinction provided continuous benefits. Contrary to what theory predicted, nativist and extreme policy were still important characteristics of the party's strategy for appeal.

So, what does this mean for the party's transition between the stage of relevance and representation? It means that nothing indicates attempts to moderate appeals, i.e. increase focus on populist sentiments and toning down distinct policy offerings by submerging into more centrist policy areas. In consequence, the party did not have to make the choice between keeping current voters and attracting new voters. This is the starting point for further analysis of the transition between the stage of relevance and representation, and the mechanistic process that ensue.

6.3.3 Challenges of re-election and electoral party institutionalisation

Unlike the previous stage, there is an increased likelihood that challenges of this stage do accord with the underlying rationales which are theorised for programmatic moderation. On a diagnostic level, however, evidence indicate a greater likelihood that the challenges identified by the party relate more to long-term aspirations of electoral party institutionalisation, rather than short-term ambitions of re-election. For the SDs, the success of facing challenges is contingent on the party's capacity to combat their one-policy image and address ideological weaknesses. On a more abstract level, however, these challenges spur new goals which stem from the party's enhanced role in the Swedish political landscape. To this we will turn first.

After entering parliament, the party was fuelled by new ambitions. In an article signed by Åkesson (2011b), published in one of Sweden's leading morning papers

Svenska Dagbladet, he writes: *With new goals, follow different directions. Earlier when we spoke about creating condition conducive for entering parliament, we now have to create conditions for continued growth.* By this Åkesson means to extend appeal to new segments of the electoral market. In his speech at the National Party Conference in 2011 he continues this line of reasoning: *We are not only speaking to potential voters in the next election, but we must increase the popular confidence in the party, its politics and representatives amongst the broader masses because it is there, amongst voters who would not dream of casting their vote for the party today, that our future supporters exist. Those are the voters we have to win over to reach our long-term goals* (Åkesson 2011a).

Åkesson furthermore identifies two programmatic challenges that needs to be addressed to fulfil the party's new ambitions. He pinpoints the party's weak ideological base as the most imminent obstruct to electoral expansion, stating: *It is wise to – before the issue-based extension reaches too far – look over this particular value-based core* (2011a). Antithetically to the prior focus on realpolitik, Åkesson implies that a more thorough value-based foundation enables rooted and justified issue-policy, on which the party can target voters with confidence and leverage.

Moreover, in pursuit of ideological expansion, the party still battle to overcome their alleged one-policy party image, which according to the party now even lean towards a racist one (Sverigedemokraterna vill 2011; Åkesson 2011b). Linked to challenges of the party's thin ideological platform, Åkesson therefore insisted that previous strategies to target voters by concrete issue-policy had to be renewed. Namely, with a more substantial base upon which a comprehensive and ideologically anchored policy platform could evolve (Åkesson 2011a).

By judgement of these observations, it is therefore likely that the party addressed challenges that pertained to long-term goals of electoral party institutionalisation rather than re-election. That is, the party wanted to acquire value and stability within the political system and its voters.

6.3.4 Incentives to stabilise support and sustain parliamentary access

In his speech at the National Party Convention in 2011, Åkesson (2011a) wraps up by emphasising the most imminent challenges and the way forward to concur them. Three words. Humility, responsibility and sustainability. These words encapsulate the incentives that trigger programmatic developments during this period.

Challenges linked to the institutionalisation of the party seem to provide two encompassing incentives: to sustain and stabilise parliamentary access on a long-term basis. Collectively, the programmatic strategy to achieve these goals are referred to as moderation in this study. The party themselves refers to it as “soften the party image” (Sverigedemokraterna vill 2011; Åkesson 2011a). Strategically,

this strategy induced changes in appeal by broadening the programmatic platform linked to both ideology and policy salience.

As part of the aim towards broadening appeal and attracting voters from new electoral segments, the party was incentivised to fundamentally alter their party programme (Åkesson 2011a). Part of the strategy was to encourage a dimensional image of the party by adopting a more comprehensive ideology: *Nationalism* was to be replaced by *Social Conservatism*. This was by far the most debated amendment as the National Party Convention, but in the end the new party programme, with its new conceptual view of ideology, was ratified with 125 votes against 28 (SD antog 2011).

The prime argument for this new ideological interpretation was that it opened up for a more versatile content. Nationalism would still be a vital part of the party's ideological core, but the new definition made it possible to complement current systems of values, ideas and beliefs. For instance, it made it more feasible to consolidate the party's middle position on the political spectra and include values found both to the left and right (SD antog 2011). Åkesson writes: *Social Conservatism offer a complete value-system which signals the party's position on bigger issues. It is important to point out that the SDs have never been a one-policy party* (2011a).

Prompted by this new ideological designation, the programme also incorporated a number of new policy areas which were meant to work as an internal compass for more concrete policy motions. These were stipulated in separate policy documents and incorporated action programmes for immigration, labour market policy, education, crime, energy and animal rights (Sverigedemokratern 2013). Of these policy areas, policy on crime was singled out as most essential. In fact, Åkesson declared that by the election of 2014, the party's policy on crime would be as established with the public as their policy on immigration (Åkesson 2011a).

Discordantly, however, the actual programme indicates a slight decrease in authoritarian policy. The most logical explanation for this converse development is that policy on authoritarianism does not decrease in absolute terms. Conjoint with aims to integrate a wider range of policy, saliency of authoritarian issues simply becomes diluted. Hence, in spite of the saliency results, the aforementioned observation increases the likelihood that the party enhance focus on crime policy and actively attempt to acquire ownership of issues pertaining to it.

Theory also predicts an intensified focus on populism at this stage; a view the programmatic estimates share. According to the measurements, this is likely a product of the party's increased focus on social service and welfare state policy. According to Åkesson (2011a), it is time for the party to mentally reset from an anti-establishment movement to policy makers. By emphasising labour market policy, elder care and specific labour groups, the quality of populist sentiments relates more to the pro-people, than the anti-elitist side of the populist definition. Hellström support this claim by arguing that the SDs are the heir of the Social

Democratic legacy in terms of representing one party for the real people (2010: 115).

Populist claims also permeate the political discourse of the new party programme by posing current immigration policy against a functioning welfare state (Loxbo 2015). Namely, fiscal savings from tougher immigration policies act as a trump card that enables the party to propose lower taxes and simultaneously improve welfare services (Norocel 2016; Ekman & Poohl 2010). This conjoint populist/nativist discourse is furthermore conducive to settle the party's middle position in policy space. As is the coordination of typically conservative policy on crime with social policy on welfare as mentioned previously.

Turning now to the voter trade-off which according to theory is symptomatic for PRR parties who pursue the path towards moderation. There is no evidence to make a mechanistic claim about the effects of a potential voter trade-off on the development of the programmatic platform. That said, not all members were equally thrilled about this new programme. Particular with regards to the expansion of the ideological core values. However, the opposition most likely belonged to the so-called traditionalist faction.⁴⁷ A relatively small veteran group with which current party leaders had settled their agenda years back, when the reformists usurped power within the party (Vergara 2011).⁴⁸

It is therefore likely that the party expected to win more voters than they would forsake by moderating appeal (Sverigedemokraterna vill 2011). By profiling the party via tougher policy on crime and investments for eldercare, the party sought to extend appeal to accommodate a wider range of voters. Furthermore, as theory would have us predict, evidence indicate an ideological extension, not a shift. Continuous advocacy for ideological values linked to immigration and nationalism increases the likelihood that core voters, who could concede with the advantages of the more moderate strategy, remained appeased.

In conclusion, the party made it clear from the beginning that the main challenge was long-term growth and increased appeal amongst the broader masses. Equally, incentives to stabilise short-term support was forsaken by a more long-term view that only compromised the most radical voters.⁴⁹ On the whole, incentives to sustain parliamentary access and excel support from the median voter generated a number of moderations to the party's image and more importantly, to the ideological appeal communicated through the party's programmatic platform.

⁴⁷ Contrary to the party leaders, traditionalists' perceived ideology to be a relative value, anything added or removed will affect other aspects. The party leaders on the other hand perceived ideology as an absolute. Adding qualities will not affect the amount of focus placed on other aspects; it is possible to be 100% Nationalist and 100% Social Conservative at the same time (SD antog 2011).

⁴⁸ Please see section 6.1.2 for a description of these factional disputes.

⁴⁹ The party for instance established a zero tolerance on racism in 2012 to confirm their dissociation from racism and extremism (Schreiber 2012). This ultimately led to a number of exclusions from the party by misbehaving representatives. As result of this policy, one of the most high-profile expulsions occurred in conjunction with the "Iron Pipe Scandal" when two MP's had to resign (Baas & Holmén 2012).

6.3.5 Likelihood of mechanisms given evidence

In pursuit of median voters, programmatic strategies and outcomes can be traced back to challenges of electoral party institutionalisation. These in turn spurred incentives for long-term sustainment and stability of parliamentary access and advancement of political influence. Whereas challenges and incentives accord with the predicted observations, evidence on a potential voter trade-off is limited. Contextual knowledge has nevertheless led us to a minimally sufficient explanation of the programmatic developments and can conclude with increased likelihood that they stem from behaviours linked to this stage, not the former.

6.4 Empirical Explanatory Mechanisms

All things considered, accumulated evidence result in a different mechanistic process than that predicted. In light of contextual knowledge about the Swedish case, the Empirical Explanatory Mechanisms is presented on the next page:

Table 6.1 Empirical Explanatory Mechanisms for the SD's programmatic development

Stages of party development	Political competition Mechanismic processes		Ideological appeal Dependent variable		
	Challenges	Vote-seeking incentives	Qualitative observations	<i>Quantitative observations</i>	
				<i>Concentration</i>	<i>Saliency</i>
<p>Marginalisation 1989-2006</p> <p>Initial conditions ✓</p>	<p>Establishment on electoral market</p>	<p>Attract attention and awareness to develop a core voter base</p>	<p>Differentiation and innovation; generate ownership; dense and distinct from mainstream parties; policy radicalism</p>	<p><i>Until 2003 → Low</i></p> <p><i>From 2003 → High</i></p>	<p><i>Until 2003 → Wide distribution</i></p> <p><i>From 2003 → Thin distribution: Nativist foci</i></p>
<p>Relevance 2006-2010</p> <p>Initial conditions ✓</p>	<p>Rally support to enter parliament; one-policy party image; no voter trade-off</p>	<p>Increase competitiveness by enhancing appeal towards original target group</p>	<p>Similar policy to previous stage; slight enhancement by focusing on realpolitik</p>	-	-
<p>Representation 2010-2014</p> <p>Initial conditions ✓</p>	<p>Electoral party institutionalisation; ideological weakness and one-policy image; insignificant effects of voter trade-off</p>	<p>Sustain long-term parliamentary access; extend support to broader masses; soften party image</p>	<p>Broadening appeal; extending ideological reach; generating new issue ownership</p>	<i>Low</i>	<p><i>From 2011 → Wide distribution</i></p> <p><i>Populist emphasis increases</i></p> <p><i>Nativist emphasis decreases</i></p> <p><i>Authoritarian emphasis slightly decreases</i></p>

7 Concluding Discussion

So, what to make of this information? Chapter seven offers a systematic review and analysis of the results. It will also pinpoint discrepancies of the results as well as offer avenues for further study.

There is still much to know about the developments of PRR parties. Especially about how explanatory factors changes over time and how strategic behaviours shape them. I therefore set out study the ideological appeal of the SDs from a stage-like view. Contextually, this study has contributed to the understandings of SDs rise by exploring the specific conditions and circumstances that has contributed to their programmatic development. It has also started to bridge the gap on longitudinal data about programmatic profiles as well as explored the extent to which the SDs have possessed power over their own fortunes.

To better understand how the SD's programmatic platform has been shaped by strategic behaviours to win votes, this study set out to accomplish two things. First, to measure the SD's ideological appeal and second, to explain it via three stages of party development. Doing so, it has argued for the benefits of understanding political party competition from a perspective of saliency. It has also developed a more general argument for the analytical value of a stage-like view on programmatic profiles to explain changes in ideological appeal.

Resultantly, two significant developments could be identified in terms of the dependent variable, ideological appeal. First in 2003, due to organisational reforms that spurred from factional unrest and need for ideological conformity. And in 2011 on basis of new ambitions to extend the ideological disposition and appeal the broader masses. To explain these outcomes, findings were traced back to the stage of party development via hypothesised mechanismic processes. On a theoretical level, results could infer an increased likelihood that programmatic appeals stem from mechanisms linked to the first and third stage. The mechanism hypothesised for the second stage was disqualified for the Swedish case, but nevertheless provided important contextual knowledge about the development and behaviour of the SDs.

7.1 Key findings and avenues for future studies

The first notable contribution of this study is the produced time-series of the SD's ideological appeal via saliency estimates. Having access to this original

information enabled the study to follow and describe the development of the SD's from an inter-organisational and strategy-based perspective. The data demonstrates important variations to the extent by which the party has competed for votes based on saliency. Nativist appeal was for instance prioritised early on in the party's life-span, whereas populist and authoritarian appeal was prominent during the later stages. The data also indicate variation in programmatic concentration over time, suggesting that programmes display selective priorities linked to the perceived importance of issues. What is more, the data on programmatic saliency and concentration offer a new lens towards understanding the SD's development. They can for instance be employed as an analytical tool or as an independent variable in studies that seek to address the question of electoral success more directly.

Next, by using a mechanistic approach to explain ideological appeal, challenges and incentives have proven most useful to highlight behaviours guiding the party's programmatic development. For instance, organisational structures seem to implicate the development of the party more prior to establishment, and programmatic outputs more after the party has settled with a core voter base. Future studies are thus encouraged to turn to organisational supply factors to explain the performance of the SDs, prior to their establishment on the political and electoral market.

In addition, though challenges linked to the party image stretch between two stages, the response changes from one stage to another. Mechanisms linked to the stage of relevance highlights the importance of *realpolitik* to break with this image, and the ones predicted for the stage of representation indicate an ideological response. Hence, though the challenge manifest similar characteristics, the results seem to suggest that stages – bound by certain conditions – administer different incentives for action. This contributes to analyses of what it means to advance in the political landscape for the SDs.

The final part of this section deals with discrepancies between theoretical and contextual levels of knowledge, concerning assumptions and principals offered by theoretical accounts of PRR party development. The first discrepancy relates to the principle of voter trade-offs. Although results indicated a likelihood for such circumstance, it appeared to bare little or no effect upon the actions of the party. That is, willingness to preserve core voters does not seem to drive incentives to moderate ideological appeal.

Moreover, the change adverse assumption relating to party age, which originally governed the predictions for the stage of representation, does not seem to apply to the Swedish case. On the contrary, empirical observations indicate substantial changes to party appeals in the final stage. This give cause for further elaboration about the circumstances and concepts that condition this assumption. Does it merely relate to the concrete age of the party or does it entail behavioural markers that link more deeply to the development of a party?

In connection, the empirical observations seem to form a more complex relationship towards theory than predicted. Contrary to expectations, behavioural

mechanisms for the stage of relevance displayed a continuation of those predicted for the stage of marginalisation. And the stage of representation displayed decisive observations which feature mechanisms predicted for the stage of relevance. This might indicate potential weaknesses in terms of the conceptualisation and measurement of stages within the Swedish context. For example, that the stage of relevance cannot precede parliamentary representation. Alternatively, it might be that measurements of party stages are valid but does not apply to the case of Sweden and the SDs.

Future studies are therefore encouraged to expand on the conceptual and theoretical foundation about what it means for a PRR party to transcend between stages of development. What are the delimitations of the voter trade-off and under what circumstances is it expected to steer behaviours of the party? Why would the SDs continue to strategize on programmatic behaviours pertaining to the stage of marginalisation, if they in fact was no longer marginalised? This provides compelling avenues for future studies, which would benefit both the study of the SDs and PRR party development in general.

7.2 Broader implications

Findings suggest that the SDs actively sought to influence voters' perception of the party. By using tactics linked to saliency, the programmatic appeal was altered to first induce a more concrete image, and secondly a more moderate one. These are important findings because they problematise the perception of political competition as something more than just policy content and confrontation (e.g. Kitschelt & McGann 1997). They also make a compelling case for the perception of the party's role as an agent. From the perspective of supply theory, saliency approaches evidentially provide valuable complements to the way in which we perceive the strategic tool box available for the SDs. Hence, whether analyses circumvent the particular stage-like interpretation of party development adopted in this study, there are important strategic factors to consider whenever the SDs are being assessed for their actions.

Moreover, aside from the emergence of PRR parties as a political phenomenon, the most studied aspect is their sustainment within the political landscape (De Lange 2007; Kitschelt 2007). The design of this study develops a new way for researching both the emergence and sustainment of PRR parties by combining a long-term perspective with a theoretical framework based on agency. The study also demonstrates particular utility in its mixed methods design which enables elimination between programmatic strategies used by the party for electoral purposes. I hope other scholars can appreciate the fruitfulness of this study design and draw upon it further to advance the knowledge of the rise and sustainment of other PRR parties.

8 Executive Summary

Since the 1980's, the presence and political influence of Populist Radical Right (PRR) parties have increased markedly around Europe, and so has their study. In Sweden, the Sweden Democrats (SDs) have journeyed from the outskirts of the political arena into being the third largest party in parliamentary politics. Right now, the SDs possess the power of balance in a hung parliament that still has not managed to form a government, nearly five months' post-election. This is partly due to conflicting attitudes over what the SD's role should be in government. That is, whether or not they should be given powers to indirectly influence policy.

Gaps in the study about PRR parties and the SDs are four-fold. The first relate to the powers by which PRR parties are able to influence their own trajectories, so called supply-side explanatory factors. This study therefore turns to an explanatory factor for PRR party fortunes that centre on their behaviours to attract votes, namely ideological appeal. Second, the way supply-side factors are studied needs to be reinvented to produce more dynamic understandings of how they function over time. To address this gap, I differentiate between stages of party development to understand how developments of the SD's ideological appeal can be explained by different factors.

Third, data on the behavioural development of PRR parties are scarce. This study begins to bridge this gap by providing unique and original time-series about developments within the SD's programmatic offerings. Fourth, the study of the Swedish case and the SDs need to catch up with the new conditions under which the SDs operate. Since 2010, when the SDs entered parliament, Sweden no longer presents a deviant case in the study of PRR parties. Previous literature must therefore be complemented by studies that understand the SDs from a position of success, rather than failure.

The purpose of this study is to measure the SD's ideological appeal (dependent variable) and explain it via three stages of party development (initial conditions). Ideological appeal refers to party behaviours that strategizes on two *quantitative* dimensions of the SD's party programmes for vote-seeking purposes: *programmatic concentration* and *programmatic policy salience*. These are developed on basis of saliency theory which claims that the relative emphasis of each issue matters for how it is perceived by voters. Stages of party development are defined *qualitatively* as three different phases of the SD's life-span. Namely, the stage of marginalisation (1989–2006), the stage of relevance (2006–2010) and the stage of representation (2010–2014). These depend upon specific circumstances and conditions experienced by the party.

Theoretically, this study develops a Hypothesised Explanatory Mechanism (HEM) that describes the process leading up to both quantitative and qualitative observations for ideological appeal. Each stage is theorised to contain particular challenges that spur electoral incentives on basis of PRR and niche party theory. The mechanistic process is therefore initiated via conditions and circumstances of each stage, which aim to explain ideological appeal via behaviours and actions of the party linked to specified challenges and incentives.

Accordingly, the stage of marginalisation predicts a high level of concentration within the programmes, and high salience of nativist issues. These features make up a clear and easily grasped identity and are therefore conducive for the party's establishment on the electoral market and acquire a core voter base. Qualitatively, ideological appeal is predicted to display radical and distinct policy offers that help differentiate the party from other players on the electoral market.

The stage of relevance, on the contrary, predicts a less concentrated programme and dispersed policy saliency, by toning down nativist issues and increasing populist and authoritarian ones. That is because, once the party has established themselves on the electoral market and acquired core support, the challenges are likely to shift towards acquiring parliamentary representation. This incentivises a moderation of the appeal to reach a broader vote base. It however also generates a voter trade-off between appeasing ideologically induced core voters and attracting voters within more central parts of the political spectra.

Last, the stage of representation is predicted to continue on the path towards moderation by broadening the ideological appeal further. Now that the party has entered parliament the main challenge adheres to re-election and electoral party institutionalisation by stabilising and extending support even further. Programmes are therefore predicted to be even less concentrated and include more dispersed policy offers. Particularly with regards to populist and authoritarian policy. Nativist policy is expected to be played down even further.

To empirically test these predictions, the study uses a deductive approach that comprise of two methods. First, to quantitatively measure ideological appeal it uses content analysis. Second, to qualitatively explain ideological appeal it uses explaining-outcome process tracing to unpack the mechanistic process between stages and ideological appeal.

The data-making procedure is thus conducted through content analysis. It is used to produce unique and original quantitative time-series about SD's programmatic profile, by coding each party programme released from 1989 until today. The codings are then summarised and reduced to saliency scores that indicate how salient each policy category is relative to other policy categories. Once the raw-data has been produced, it can be conformed into the indicators for programmatic appeal: programmatic concentration and programmatic policy salience. Programmatic concentration is systemised using a standard measure for concentration, the Hirschman-Herfindahl Index. Programmatic policy salience is systemised by summing the saliency scores of 16 different policy categories that

are distributed between three different ideological categories. These are developed exclusively for this study and draw upon previous conceptualisations of PRR party ideology.

Once data on the quantitative measures, concentration and policy salience have been collected it is time to explain the results. This is done by applying explaining-outcome process tracing that uses *subjective probabilism* to infer the likelihood about the existence of each part of the HEM, in light of evidence. Evidence is made up by observations in primary and secondary sources that have been assessed for their probative values. It is probative if it is either able to discriminate between different explanations, i.e. that it does not overlap with theory, or in case of its absence where evidence should be easily found. In the former it will increase the likelihood of the existence of that part of the explanatory mechanism; in the latter it will decrease the likelihood.

The statistical results of the SD's ideological appeal overall follow initial expectations, with a few discrepancies. Ideological appeal was for instance predicted to display high concentration and salience on nativist policy within the first stage. This is only true from 2003-year's programme and onward when the programmes change radically. Prior to this, values for programmatic concentration and programmatic policy salience indicate low concentrations and dispersed policy. Also, in 2011 the results indicate a change towards predicted values for the stage of representation. The programmes divert back towards less concentrated values and higher policy dispersion by increasing the relative space devoted to populist policy. Nativist policy salience decreases according to predictions, but so does authoritarian policy which is contrary to predictions.

To explain the changes within 2003- and 2011-year's programme I empirically test the predictions specified in the HEM by accumulating evidence on each part. Within the first stage, evidence accord with predicted explanations. It also reveals that the source of challenges to establish the party on the electoral market derives from poor organisational structures, factional disputes and poor leadership. The results within the second and third stage do however divert from theoretical predictions, both in terms of content and when they were expected to occur. The second stage contain no quantitative observations for ideological appeal, but the qualitative observations indicate that there have been no attempts at moderating appeal, nor has the party strategized on basis of a potential voter trade-off. This part of the HEM is therefore dismissed. Evidence accumulated for the third stage nevertheless indicate that the party in fact has sought to moderate ideological appeal by shifting relative salience of issues whilst maintaining core values, to attract the broader masses. It also indicates that the party has prioritised long-term goals in terms of party institutionalisation and stability of electoral support. There is however no evidence to indicate that the party has acted on behalf of a potential voter-trade off.

On basis of these findings, this study concludes four things. First that the ideological appeal of the SDs varies over time. Nativist policy is more salient in

previous stages, and wears off with age, whereas populist and authoritarian appeals increase with age. It is also more concentrated in earlier stages. Suggestively, instead of using this supply factor as a dependent variable, future studies can apply the data accumulated about the SD's programmatic offerings as an independent variable to address the question of the SD's electoral success more directly.

Secondly, stages of party development are good behavioural predictors for the SDs and can thus contribute to supply theory about how behaviours of the party matter for their performance. An example of this is how this study shows that responses to similar challenges vary between stages, because the party operates under different conditions. Likewise, the differentiation between stages in the SD's trajectory reveals that organisational structures seem to impact development more prior to the establishment of the party. Programmatic factors, on the other hand, appear to be more influential after the establishment of the party.

Third, the study also encounters discrepancies between theory and empirical findings within the Swedish case. One relates to the voter trade-off, which does not seem to impact the behaviours of the party to any noteworthy extent. Secondly, programmatic developments of the SDs also seem to go against the principle stating that parties should become less inclined to change the older they get. Results indicate that the party changed quite drastically in the later stage. Last, the predictions of the second stage actually occurred in the third stage, and the second stage exhibited mechanisms and behaviours that resembled a continuation of the first stage. To address these inconsistencies between theory and contextual knowledge about Sweden, future studies are encouraged to advance theory about what it means for a party to pass different stages of development. Both with regards to the SDs, but also for PRR parties in general.

Finally, this study shows that the SDs actively sought to influence voter perceptions by shifting the relative emphasis of issues within their programmatic programmes. This generates three broader implications. For one, the saliency-based strategies adopted by the SDs complement more traditional ways of understanding political competition, which is based solely on policy confrontation. Second, it demonstrates the SD's role as an agent. These two implications bring nuance to the understanding about the SD's role on the political market. Third and final, the study design offers a new way to approach research on PRR parties. It develops a theoretical framework that merges perspectives of agency and party stages which help isolate PRR party behaviours over time. In addition, it draws on mixed methods to bring new light to strategic behaviours relating to both programmatic profiles and accompanying mechanisms. This research design can be applied to studies of other PRR parties to understand their role on political markets elsewhere.

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Appendix 1 Coding instructions

This coding procedure comprises of two steps: unitising and coding. To do this, I have adopted MARPOR's Manifesto Coding Instructions (5th ed.) (2014). According to MARPOR, the overarching question guiding the process reads (Werner et.al 2014: 5):

- What is the message that the SDs are trying to convey to its voter and other parties?
- What issues do the SDs regard as important?

1. Unitising: how many unique statements do the SDs make within each programme?

To unitise the programmes means to cut sentences into measurable units, so called quasi-sentences. One quasi-sentence contains exactly one unique statement. Sometimes one quasi-sentence equals a full sentence; sometimes it has to be cut into two or more quasi-sentences. However, one quasi-sentence can never exceed one full sentence; thus, one sentence is at minimum one quasi sentence (2014: 5-6).

The decision to cut a full sentence into two or more quasi-sentences is only allowed if the full sentence contains more than one unique statement. There are two possibilities in which this could be the case: 1) a full sentence contains two statements that are unrelated or 2) a full sentence contains two statements that are related, that is, part of the same policy field by address different aspects. Examples, reasoning and explanations are not unique statements and should therefore not guide decisions to cut full sentences. Only *specific* policy goals should be separated (2014: 6).

Step-by-step unitising procedure:

- 1) Download document
- 2) Fill in the Party Programme Information Table in excel, to keep track of references, e.g.

Sample Units

Party Name in Original Language	Country code	Year	International Party Name	Party Acronym in Original Language	Title in Original Language	Title in English Language	Source
Sverigedemokraterna	11	1989	SD	Sweden Democrats	Partiprogram	Party Programme	SD-arkivet

- 3) Copy and paste into word document
- 4) Sort out and remove irrelevant paragraphs (headings, intro, statistics and tables)
- 5) Cut to quasi-sentences using this marker |, e.g.:

Att äga ett svenskt medborgarskap är något att vara stolt över. | Svenskarna har alltid varit väl ansedda runt om i världen och har trots ett relativt litet befolkningsantal frambringat en rad framstående vetenskapsmän, konstnärer, författare och idrottsmän. |

För att få förmånen att bli svensk medborgare ska man som icke-nordbo, ha varit bosatt minst 10 år i Sverige och | dessutom behärska det svenska språket i tal och skrift på ett fullgott sätt | samt besitta vissa kunskaper i svensk historia. | Nordiska invandrare skall kunna erhålla svenskt medborgarskap efter tre år | och återvändande svenska emigranter efter två år. |

Den som förvärvat uppehållstillstånd och svenskt medborgarskap på falska grunder eller begår en grov förbrytelse ska kunna fråntas sitt medborgarskap och utvisas ur Sverige. |

- 6) Insert table, each row containing one quasi-sentence
- 7) Insert an additional table to right of the quasi-sentences where the codes will be allocated, e.g.:

Att äga ett svenskt medborgarskap är något att vara stolt över.	
Svenskarna har alltid varit väl ansedda runt om i världen och har trots ett relativt litet befolkningsantal frambringat en rad framstående vetenskapsmän, konstnärer, författare och idrottsmän.	
För att få förmånen att bli svensk medborgare ska man som icke-nordbo, ha varit bosatt minst 10 år i Sverige och	
dessutom behärska det svenska språket i tal och skrift på ett fullgott sätt	
samt besitta vissa kunskaper i svensk historia.	
Nordiska invandrare skall kunna erhålla svenskt medborgarskap efter tre år	
och återvändande svenska emigranter efter två år.	
Den som förvärvat uppehållstillstånd och svenskt medborgarskap på falska grunder eller begår en grov förbrytelse ska kunna fråntas sitt medborgarskap och utvisas ur Sverige.	

2. Coding: what kind of statements do the SDs make within each programme?

The following question guides the decision-making process when assigning codes:

- Which policy position does the SDs convey?

When statements and arguments are clear, the allocation of codes is straightforward: identify message and assign corresponding code. However, the statements are often ambiguous which leads to a trickier process of assigning codes. In such cases, it is important to fully understand the meaning of the statement and run it against all categories in the category scheme.

Sources for ambiguity in the statements are three-fold: 1) language, 2) statement contain policy goal and the plan for achieving it, and 3) complexity of policy issues prevent conveyance of a clear message within one sentence (2014: 9).

The five general guidelines for dealing with ambiguous statements are, firstly, when ambiguity stem from language it-self the general direction of the policy statement (positive/negative) might be miss-judged. Sometimes the author makes arguments by highlighting the negative aspects of an issue in order to convey its importance. It is therefore important to be clear of the meaning of a statement to be able to code it correctly. Though the author might criticise the state of things, it might still be so that they convey a positive statement on the ideals of that principle, e.g. *the democratic principles of our country are undermined because of x, y and z*. However, the coder should not read too much into the statement itself but merely attempt to understand the meaning from the author's point of view. For instance, sometimes ambiguities are the effect of hidden agendas concerning politically incorrect arguments or viewpoints. It is important to code what the author says, not what the coder think they mean.

Secondly, ambiguities that stem from complexities in the policy issue can be dealt with by placing the quasi-sentence in hierarchical context levels; these are, in sequence from the quasi-sentence level upwards, starting with a quasi-sentence that simply adheres to the rest of the natural sentence, i.e. code equal to the previous quasi-sentence. The levels then escalate until the final context level that assign the sentence to a category that adheres to a countrywide political discourse (2014: 10).

Next, goals take presidency over means when assigning codes. One quasi-sentence may read: *We want to achieve A by doing B and C*. Here, *A* represents the message of interest whereas *B* and *C* simply represent the means to get there. *A* therefore guide the coding decision (2014: 10-11).

Fourthly, sometimes a quasi-sentence does not contain any message at all, but is merely an introductory, terminal or connecting sentence. These are typically party of a continuous argument and should be coded correspondingly to previous quasi-sentences or within the context of the paragraph or full sentence as a whole in which they appear.

Lastly, it may so happen that that author place two contradictory statements on the same policy issue right next to each other, one containing a positive direction and the other a negative one. Here, it is important not to assume hidden meanings just to make sense of the surrounding sentences. The object of the coder is not to

decipher the messages but to code them as they appear in the programme; only code what is actually written (2014: 11).

Aside from these guidelines, there are also certain rules that apply when allocating codes. These rules are: 1) use meaningful codes as far as possible, however, if the statement is entirely devoid of meaning and cannot be traced back to the previous sentences or paragraphs, or it includes a statement that is not covered by the policy categories, one can use the 000 category (no meaningful category applies), 2) always use the most specific category if applicable and avoid catch-all categories as far as possible, and 3) relating to the previous rule, when a policy category contains sub-categories, one of these must be chosen (2014: 9, 12). Once the coding process is complete, the final table will look like this:

Att äga ett svenskt medborgarskap är något att vara stolt över.	601.1
Svenskarna har alltid varit väl ansedda runt om i världen och har trots ett relativt litet befolkningsantal frambringat en rad framstående vetenskapsmän, konstnärer, författare och idrottsmän.	601.1
För att få förmånen att bli svensk medborgare ska man som icke-nordbo, ha varit bosatt minst 10 år i Sverige och	601.2
dessutom behärska det svenska språket i tal och skrift på ett fullgott sätt	601.2
samt besitta vissa kunskaper i svensk historia.	601.2
Nordiska invandrare skall kunna erhålla svenskt medborgarskap efter tre år	601.2
och återvändande svenska emigranter efter två år.	601.2
Den som förvärvat uppehållstillstånd och svenskt medborgarskap på falska grunder eller begår en grov förbrytelse ska kunna fräntas sitt medborgarskap och utvisas ur Sverige.	605.1

The final step is to count the sentences and codes according to 1) number of quasi-sentences per policy category and 2) total number of quasi-sentences over all. These compilations are needed to report the findings, as they will be systemised and reduced to relative issue emphasis.

The table below represent a sample from the final calculations, where saliency estimates are presented as a ratio:

per000	per101	per104	per106	per107	per109	per110
0,47	0,94	4,94	0,71	2,59	0,94	1,41

In brief, each saliency estimate represents the percentage share of the total number of issues mentioned within that specific programme. Each variable (perX) indicate the code name of a specific policy category found in the category scheme. These estimates are subsequently used to measure programmatic concentration and policy salience.

Appendix 2 MARPOR policy categories

(Volkens et al. 2016)

Domain 1: External Relations

- 101 Foreign Special Relationships: Positive
 - Positive
- 102 Foreign Special Relationships: Negative
- 103 Anti-Imperialism: Positive
 - 103.1 State Centred Anti-Imperialism*
 - 103.2 Foreign Financial Influence*
- 104 Military: Positive
- 105 Military: Negative
- 106 Peace: Positive
- 107 Internationalism: Positive
- 108 European Integration: Positive
- 109 Internationalism: Negative
- 110 European Integration: Negative

Domain 2: Freedom and Democracy

- 201 Freedom and Human Rights: Positive
 - 201.1 Freedom*
 - 201.2 Human Rights*
- 202 Democracy
 - 202.1 General: Positive*
 - 202.2 General: Negative*
 - 202.3 Representative Democracy: Positive*
 - 202.4 Direct Democracy: Positive*
- 203 Constitutionalism: Positive
- 204 Constitutionalism: Negative

Domain 3: Political System

- 301 Decentralisation: Positive
- 302 Centralisation: Positive
- 303 Governmental and Administrative Efficiency: Positive
 - Positive
- 304 Political Corruption: Negative
- 305 Political Authority: Positive
 - 305.1 Political Authority: Party Competence*
 - 305.2 Political Authority: Personal Competence*
 - 305.3 Political Authority: Strong government*
 - 305.4 Former Elites: Positive*
 - 305.5 Former Elites: Negative*
 - 305.6 Rehabilitation and Compensation*

Domain 4: Economy

- 401 Free Enterprise: Positive
- 402 Incentives: Positive
- 403 Market Regulation: Positive
- 404 Economic Planning: Positive
- 405 Corporatism: Positive
- 406 Protectionism: Positive
- 407 Protectionism: Negative
- 408 Economic Goals
- 409 Keynesian Demand Management: Positive
- 410 Economic Growth

- 411 Technology and Infrastructure: Positive
- 412 Controlled Economy: Positive
- 413 Nationalisation: Positive
- 414 Economic Orthodoxy: Positive
- 415 Marxist Analysis: Positive
- 416 Anti-Growth Economy: Positive
 - 416.1 Anti-Growth Economy: Positive*
 - 416.2 Sustainability: Positive*

Domain 5: Welfare and Quality of Life

- 501 Environmental Protection: Positive
- 502 Culture: Positive
- 503 Equality: Positive
- 504 Welfare State Expansion
- 505 Welfare State Limitation
- 506 Education Expansion
- 507 Education Limitation

Domain 6: Fabric of Society

- 601 National Way of Life: Positive
 - 601.1 General*
 - 601.2 Immigration: Negative*
- 602 National Way of Life: Negative
 - 602.1 General*
 - 602.2 Immigration: Positive*
- 603 Traditional Morality: Positive
- 604 Traditional Morality: Negative
- 605 Law and Order
 - 605.1 Law and Order: Positive*
 - 605.2 Law and Order: Negative*
- 606 Civic Mindedness: Positive
 - 606.1 General*
 - 606.2 Bottom-Up Activism*
- 607 Multiculturalism: Positive
 - 607.1 General*
 - 607.2 Immigrants: Diversity*
 - 607.3 Indigenous rights: Positive*
- 608 Multiculturalism: Negative
 - 608.1 General*
 - 608.2 Immigrants: Assimilation*
 - 608.3 Indigenous rights: Negative*

Domain 7: Social Groups

- 701 Labour Groups: Positive
- 702 Labour Groups: Negative
- 703 Agriculture and Farmers
 - 703.1 Agriculture and Farmers: Positive*
 - 703.2 Agriculture and Farmers: Negative*
- 704 Middle Class and Professional Groups: Positive
 - Positive
- 705 Minority Groups: Positive
- 706 Non-Economic Demographic Groups: Positive
- 000 No meaningful category applies

