

Different elections – different issues

National Parliamentary elections differ from European Parliament elections in many ways and, as Fact Sheet number 7 showed, many vote differently during these elections. There are several reasons for this, but one reason is that the Swedish Riksdag and the European Parliament have the right to decide on different issues. For some policy areas, such as the internal market and trade, the EU Member States have jointly chosen to delegate powers to the EU, while the Member States want to continue to have the main responsibility over other policy areas such as social policy. In the election surveys from 2014, it was also evident that the voters had prioritized various issues in the European Parliament elections and the Swedish parliamentary election, even though there were only 112 days between the elections. While the number one issue was environment and energy in the European Parliament elections in 2014 (33 percent), this same issue ended up being number five in the parliamentary election (21 percent). Rather, education (41 percent) was the number one issue in the 2014 parliamentary elections, while education was not in the top ten in the 2014 European Parliament elections (Berg & Oscarsson 2015).

Table 1. Important issues for choice of party in the European Parliament elections in 2014 and in the Swedish parliamentary election in 2014 (percent).

European Parliament election 2014		Position	Position		Swedish parliamentary election 2014
Environment/Energy	33%	1	1	41%	Education
Labor market	15%	2	2	32%	Social issues/problems
Integration/immigration	14%	3	3	30%	Labor market
EU and international issues	12%	4	4	23%	Integration/Immigration
Democracy/Rights	9%	5	5	21%	Environment/Energy
Taxes	8%	6	6	20%	Health and dental care
Agriculture/Agricultural issues	8%	7	7	17%	Elderly care and pensions
Governance/Politics	8%	8	8	15%	Economy
Social issues/problems	5%	9	9	11%	Taxes
Equality between men and women	5%	10	10	5%	Public sector/Service/Municipal/Region

Source: [Valforskningsprogrammet](#), Europaparlamentsundersökningen 2014 and Valundersökningen 2014

Comment: The results are based on a coding of open free text answers to questions about which issues were perceived as important for the choice of party. The question asked by the parliamentary inquiry questionnaire is: "If you think about the election to the Riksdag this year. Was there any or any of the questions that were important to you regarding which party you voted for in the parliamentary elections on September 14? "(And the corresponding question for the European Parliament). The comparison applies to voting voters in the European Parliament election (open free text question in post-election survey) and voting voters in the parliamentary election (open question in visitor interview with the possibility of using follow-up questions to stimulate further answers). In the survey interviews of the polls, the respondents mentioned an average of 2.6 reasons for voting (n = 1 768). The corresponding average for the European Parliament election surveys is 1.4 (n = 1,530). The code scheme used for the analysis of important issues for personal selection is the same as the SOM institute's code scheme for important societal problems http://som.gu.se/digitalAssets/1481/1481065_kodbok-riks-som-2013--v1-.pdf.

References

Berg, L & Oscarsson, H. (2015) "Supervalåret 2014. Demokratistatistik: Rapport 20". Stockholm: Statistiska centralbyrån (SCB). Available: https://www.scb.se/Statistik/_Publikationer/ME0106_2014A01S_BR_ME09BR1503.pdf