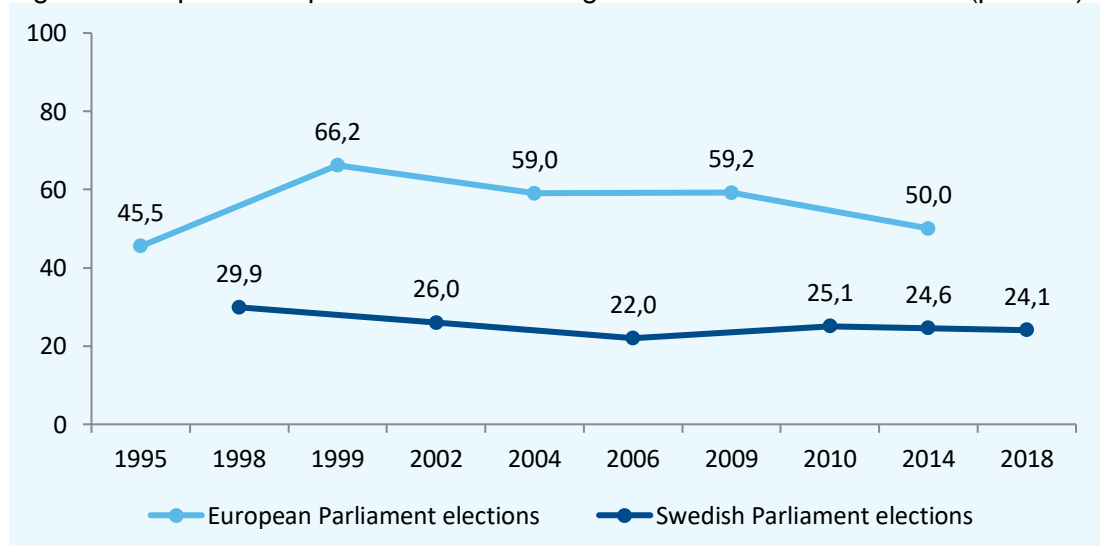


More preferential voting in European Parliament elections

Preferential voting is more common in European Parliament elections than it is in Swedish National elections. One contributing factor is that in the elections to the European Parliament, all of Sweden is considered to be one constituency, which means that the same list of the most well-known top candidates is included on the ballots throughout the country. In national elections, on the other hand, Sweden is divided into 29 constituencies with different party lists. Fewer people vote in European Parliament elections, but they are often more interested in politics and thus more likely to vote for specific candidates. It is also important to note that a European Parliament election has a limited number of seats (Sweden is poised to receive 21 mandates after Brexit, see Fact Sheet no. 6) unlike the 349 seats in the Swedish Parliament. When fewer spots are to be filled, greater demands are also placed on the individual candidate's suitability and ability, which can increase the number of preferential votes cast. Despite the relatively high proportion of preferential votes, there are still few candidates who receive a mandate in the European Parliament that they would not have received without the preferential vote. This is due to the fact that the vast majority of voters cast preferential votes for their party's top candidate, who would still have received a mandate, regardless (Berg & Oscarsson, 2015).

Figure 1. Proportion of preferential voters in general elections 1995–2018 (percent).



Comments: Source: official election statistics from Statistics Sweden and the National Election Board (www.val.se). Before the European Parliament Election 2009, the numbers in the figure indicate the share of preferential voting among those who voted for parties who passed the electoral threshold in each election. Thereafter the numbers indicates the share of preferential vote among all valid tickets.

Referenser

Berg, Linda & Oscarsson, Henrik (2015) (ed.) *20 år med personval*. Report 2015:3, Swedish National Election Studies Program, Department of Political Science, University of Gothenburg.