

# Trespassing the Threshold of Relevance: Media Exposure and Opinion Polls of the Sweden Democrats 2006-2010

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## Abstract

In September 2010 the anti-immigration party, the Sweden Democrats (SD), crossed the electoral threshold to the Swedish parliament (*Riksdagen*) with 5, 7 percent of the total votes. The other seven parliamentary parties, together with the mainstream press unite in a show of repugnance towards the SD, in turn; the SD is regularly ascribed to the position of a political trespasser. This article shall devote full attention to the correlation between the media exposure and the SD opinion fluctuations during the period that preceded the elections in 2010. The aim of this article is to analyze the effect of the media exposure on fluctuations in opinion polls for political parties; i. e. the *media effect*. In particular to what extent this can explain the electoral fortunes of the SD. We do this quantitatively and correlate the number of articles published in the print media with the SD opinion polls results and all the other parties during a 48 month period, from the month after the 2006 elections (October 2006) up to September 2010. Our material is based on the average level of monthly opinion poll measures and the number of articles published in the six largest newspapers in Sweden every month in this period. First, we hypothesize that the *media effect* shows in the poll fluctuations of all the political parties. Second, we hypothesize that the opinion polls for the five parties who are similar in size as the SD, are less (or even not) affected by the media exposure. Third, we hypothesize that the media exposure in the region of Skåne, where the SD already was an established party in 2006, has less effect on the SD opinion poll in this period. The results of the analysis suggest that the SD was given a fair amount of publicity. Our findings also tend to falsify the first hypothesis; hence, the *media effect* is not significant for all the parliamentary political parties. At the same time, we could verify our second hypothesis; hence, the media effect shows to be more important for the SD compared to the other parliamentary parties, similar in size. Finally, the third hypothesis is verified – the regional newspaper *Sydsvenskan* had relatively the highest proportion of articles linked to the SD, however, this exposure was less significant to explain the fluctuations in the opinion polls. The *media effect* differs between the six newspapers put into scrutiny in this study, the leading daily *Dagens Nyheter* (DN) had a considerably stronger effect on the opinion fluctuations, compared to the other five newspapers. The media exposure sometimes matters, especially for ‘new parties’, but neither to the same degree everywhere nor at the same time. Ultimately, our findings show that the threshold of relevance, does not perfectly match with the crossing of the electoral threshold to the national parliament, as suggested in the literature to explain the electoral fortunes of new anti-immigration parties prior to their entry into the parliament.

Keywords: Populist Radical Right Parties (RPP), The Sweden Democrats (SD), public opinion, opinion polls.

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## **Introduction**

Immigration to Sweden since the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century has been substantial. In 2010 the Swedish population consists of approximately 14 percent foreign born people and another six percent have at least one parent born abroad. Politically, immigration to Sweden was in the 1950s and 1960s a means to neutralize labour shortage in primarily the industrial sector. The following decades, 1970s, 1980s and the 1990s, with increased need for assistance to the world refugee situation, Sweden was among the industrial countries with the highest per capita intake of refugees, in addition, Sweden has one of the most liberal family reunion policies. Recapitulating the integration diachronically, the integration of immigrants and their descendants, in particular economically, have been positive during the first decades after the Second World War, but decreased gradually since the 1970s. This weakening integration, especially into the labour market, but also into other segments of society, has been a great puzzle over the last decades.

For many European countries a similar development can be observed, but the political reactions to this situation, has been quite different and prompted scholars to explain why in some countries anti-immigrant opinions thrived, and not in others (see e.g. Mudde 2007; Ivarsflaten 2008). In countries such as Denmark (Hervik 2011) or the Netherlands (Koopmans et al. 2005), the mobilization against immigration (especially from countries perceived as culturally remote) and the resistance towards multi-culturalism impinges on governmental politics. Sweden, on the other hand, is structured along a partisan consensus on the immigration issue with the exception of the most recent parliamentary party, the Sweden Democrats (SD). The SD wishes to limit immigration to Sweden, up to 90 percent according to a recent budget proposal (See Sverigedemokraterna 2010). The other seven parliamentary parties, who managed to cross the electoral threshold of four percent in the 2010 elections, unanimously reject the strong immigration-skeptic stance of the SD.

This article shall focus less on the possible implications of the changing partisan structure in Sweden, and instead devote full attention to the correlation between the media exposure and opinion poll fluctuations during the period that preceded the national elections in 2010, i.e. 2006–2010, to explaining the entry of a so-called Populist Radical Right Party (RPP)<sup>2</sup> in the

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<sup>2</sup> In the literature, there are many labels attached to this motley party-family, united in its resistance of multi-culturalism and generous policies of immigration. The label RPP, though certainly not contested, is frequently used (see further Mudde 2007).

Swedish parliament. Sweden was before the 2010 elections referred to as an exemption in Western Europe, elsewhere the RPPs already had made headway (cf. Arter 2010). Following Ellinas (2010: 3) we assume the media to ‘control the gateway to the electoral market’. Without publicity, negative or positive, it is not possible for a new political party outside the parliament to gain enough votes to secure seats in the assembly, xenophobic or not (cf. Declair 1999). The aim of this article is to analyze the effect of media exposure on fluctuations in opinion polls for political parties; i.e. the *media effect*. In particular to what extent this could explain the SD entry into national parliament (*Riksdagen*). More precise, we hypothesize that the *media effect* shows in the poll fluctuations of the political parties in the period between the national elections 2006 and 2010. Second, we hypothesize that the opinion polls for the five parties who are similar in size as the SD, are less (or even not) affected by the media exposure. Third, we hypothesize that the media exposure in the region of Skåne, where the SD already was an established party in 2006, has less effect on the SD opinion poll in this period.

### **Sweden belongs to the Swedes**

The SD slogan before the 2010 elections was: ‘Give us Sweden back’ (Sverigedemokraterna 2010). They long back to a more homogenous Sweden [the heartland] before what they refer to as the ‘mass immigration’ gained hold.<sup>3</sup> This emphasis on Sweden as *the heartland* - now threatened by foreign ideas and foreign people causing societal ruptures, therefore in need of protection - has fashioned the SD party programs from the start in the late 1980s up to now.

Otherwise, SD has developed from a loud organization of angry young men with clear Neo-Nazi tinges (with e.g. tentacles to the extreme right movement White Arian Resistance) to try becoming a party for the prudent ordinary worker, attracting voters from all the other parties - including those who abstain from voting (Holmberg 2007; Sannerstedt 2008).<sup>4</sup> During its history, extremist views have been abandoned (such as the death penalty or resistance towards extra-European adoptions) and extremist party members, occasionally, kicked out. SD now says to represent the *common man*, to advocate a much more limited immigration policy (in

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<sup>3</sup> Paul Taggart (2002: 67) suggests that populist parties unite in perceptions of ‘the people’, limited to the populace of ‘the heartland’: ‘The heartland is a construction of an ideal world but, unlike utopian conceptions, it is constructed retrospectively – being, in essence, a vision derived from the past and projected onto the present’.

<sup>4</sup> SD-voters tend to be married; having a fairly strong household income, and to live in areas that are neither particular fancy nor slummy (Sannerstedt 2008). We are thus not necessarily talking about the outcast of society who would suffer more than others from unemployment or declining welfare privileges (Hellström & Nilsson 2010).

their view, the Swedish immigration policy is extreme and they say to share the only responsible alternative in line with the Danish policy) and tougher policies regarding integration. The SD defers any integration measures, to be substituted by various assimilation strategies; i.e. all are welcome to become Swedes, but all people also *must* become 'Swedes' to obtain a residence permit.

The question remains, what 'Sweden' is it that SD longs back to, and wishes to restore? In its programme SD refers to the days of the Swedish Social Democratic Sweden under Prime Minister Tage Erlander; this was the People's Home at its best and *the heartland* they wish to restore. This is according to the SD perceptions, but this view is hardly alien to e.g. disillusioned Social Democrats today. Between 1950 and 1970, the number of foreign born individuals living in Sweden almost tripled from 198 000 to 538 000 people. This was mainly due to that the Swedish industry was in strong need of labour and Sweden therefore opened up for labour immigration from other Nordic countries and subsequently also Mediterranean countries like Greece, Turkey and former Yugoslavia. The SD does not, however, ultimately resist labour immigration, especially in 'good times'. However, current labour immigration should be curtailed to very few people, with skills not available within the borders of the country (Sverigedemokraterna 2010). The SD mobilize voters around a message that drastically reduce the immigration to Sweden, moreover, they suggest tightening the qualifications needed for citizenship acquisition. SD does not presuppose certain ethnic groups or cultures to hold superior or inferior qualities compared with others, yet they maintain that the difference between Swedes and the non-Swedes is impermeable and thus incommensurable. In this view - referred to as ethno-pluralism (Rydgren 2007), nativism (Mudde 2007) or cultural racism (Taguieff 1990) - all people share particular loyalties to their respective country of origin.

### **New parties and new issues**

The SD entry into the national parliament came rather late. Scholars have tried to explain why for instance the Danish People's Party (DP) managed to consolidate a stable position in Danish politics - since 2001 it has acted as a supporting party for the mainstream right government - whereas no equivalent party has made such breakthrough in Swedish politics. Christoffer Green-Pedersen and Jesper Krogstrup (2008) argue that the party political attention to the immigration issue has been considerably stronger in Denmark, compared to Sweden. The different strategic situation of the mainstream right parties and the salience of

the immigration issue, they argue, could explain the progress of the DP in Denmark. Till the 1990s, their analysis suggests, the issue of immigration was much marked by a partisan consensus in both countries. By the early 1990s, the Swedish RPP party *Ny Demokrati* (NyD), who entered the parliament in 1991, tried to politicize the issue; however both the NyD and the issue of immigration disappeared from the political agenda by 1994. Conversely in Denmark, the liberal party (*Venstre*) and also the conservative party started to emphasize the immigration issue during the 1990s to win back governmental power from the social-liberal/social-democratic coalition government. This was made possible by the Social Liberals (*Radikale Venstre*) decision to (again) switch sides, and joining in the Social Democratic government. Before, the social liberals were an obstacle for *Venstre* and the conservative party to make proposals to attract the immigration-skeptic voters. In popular polls on the immigration issue, both Denmark and Sweden follow general European patterns, which show that a majority of the native populations prefer stricter immigration policies, at least compared to the mainstream party representatives (Ifvarslaten 2008; Mudde 2007).<sup>5</sup>

According to Jens Rydgren (2010), we need to consider the activities of the mainstream parties to explain why the RPPs thrive in some countries, and not in others. In Sweden, Rydgren argues, the debate continues to be centered on socio-economic cleavages whereas socio-cultural issues such as immigration bore less salience in the political competition of the votes, compared to e.g. Denmark.

Recent research on the RPPs (Green-Pedersen and Krogstrup 2008, Bale et al. 2010, Mudde 2008 and Jens Rydgren 2010) suggest increased scholarly attention to the political competition of the voters and the salience of the immigration issue, to understand the emergence and further development of the RPPs, rather than a mere focus on the demand for such parties, following e.g. periods of crisis. There is e.g. no clear significant correlation between e.g. levels of unemployment, slow economic growth, or ethnic heterogeneity and the electoral fortunes of the RPPs (Rydgren 2007: 249–50). In addition, the size of the immigration population does not match well with high levels of anti-immigrant sentiments

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<sup>5</sup> There is a considerable discrepancy between the electors (less prone to accept a generous immigration policy) and the elected, apparent from the early 1980s and on (see e.g. Edgerton, Fryklund and Peterson 1994; Dahlström and Esaiason 2009). In other words, there is a strong demand to be capitalized on by e.g. RRP-parties, though this demand was kept in check before the 2010 national elections. Recent studies show that the attitudes towards e.g. multiculturalism and a generous immigration policy have grown to become more positive overtime in Sweden (Demker 2008; Gorodzeisky and Semyonov 2009), though. 65 percent were in favour of reducing the number of asylum seekers in 1992 - this figure fell to 45 per cent in 2007.

(Sprague-Jones 2010). While the RPPs certainly attract more politically discontent voters than others, this does not help to explain why protest voters turn to the RPPs and not to other system-critical parties.

Hence, Jens Rydgren (2007) turns his attention to the so-called support-side factors<sup>6</sup> to explain the emergence of the RPPs. To explain their challenge to established party hierarchies, scholars need to emphasize the political opportunity structures in the electoral market. First, scholars converge on that new political parties mobilize voters around new issues, not enough issued by the mainstream parties. Much post-war politics was shaped around the socio-economic cleavage structure - between the left (more prone to accept an active welfare state) and the right (more prone to accept more market-oriented solutions). However, following e.g. the rise of the Green movement (Inglehart 1990), the politization of identity politics (Hervik 2011) and the moralization of politics (Mouffe 2005) the socio-cultural axis of political competition has gained ground.

Ellinas (2010: 26) recognizes this 'socio-cultural shift' in many stable democracies towards greater emphasis on life-style politics and polarization between, on the one hand those embracing the post-material movement and thus inclined to pursue a political agenda that rests on cultural pluralism and, on the other hand, those resisting such views to instead find preferences for cultural homogeneity and protectionism. Evidently, the RPPs managed to exploit this 'backlash', however in the 1980s also the 'mainstream European parties capitalized on the electoral opportunities provided by 'increasing public demands for cultural protectionism' (Ibid: 27). Jens Rydgren (2010) shows that countries yet dominated by socio-economic cleavages provide less political opportunities for the RPPs to thrive on their anti-immigration and cultural protectionist agenda. The re-alignment process (the shift to the socio-cultural cleavage structure dimension) is more salient in Denmark, compared to Sweden, leaving a much confused and ideologically disoriented Danish Social Democratic Party poorly equipped to avoid losing working-class votes to the DP.

Second, the convergence between the established parties in political space provides yet another favourable opportunity structure for new competitors (Rydgren 2007: 253). Peter

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<sup>6</sup> Rydgren (2007: 252) distinguishes support-side explanations in three distinct sub-groups; political opportunity structures, party organizations and the ideological positioning of the RPPs. These explanations are not always easily distinguishable from the demand-side factors, though.

Mair (2004) points out that the political identities of the mainstream parties are increasingly blurred, which in turn invites new political actors to occupy an underdog position in relation to the established elites. Chantal Mouffe (2005: 73) links the Social Democratic turn to the political centre and the abundance of the conflicts along the socio-economic axis to the recent electoral fortunes by the RPPs. In her view, the moralization of politics (politics being played out in the moral register between good versus evil (rather than solely between right and left) has taken speed due to this increased party convergence. This provides opportunities for new political contesters to occupy the position of a political underdog – protecting the wills and interests of the native population, to establish a feasible alternative to the consensual elites.

The overall structure of the political competition of the votes constitutes a third relevant opportunity structure; i.e. how the mainstream parties respond to the RPPs. Bale et al. (2010) shows how the Social Democratic Parties, traditionally split between progressive- and conservative voters, have responded with rather different approaches to the challenge of the RPPs, to *hold* its initial ‘generous’ approach; to *defuse* the immigration issue; to *adopt* the politics of the RPPs, following the dictum: ‘if you cannot beat them, join them’ (ibid: 423): ‘Most parties therefore end up mixing, and matching, boxing and coxing, in the hope that they can stay competitive without surrendering too many of their values and too much of their credibility’. Previously, the mainstream parties in Sweden, conveniently enough, endured with the *hold*-strategy, or alternatively *defused* the immigration issue from the political agenda, since SD remained outside the parliamentary activities (see Kiiskinen and Saveljeff 2010 who recognize a rather different situation at the municipal level, though).

Looking at our case properly, the SD thrives on popular demands for a more restrictive immigration politics, yet it articulates rather mainstream views on socio-economic issues (see further Holmberg 2007; Sannerstedt 2008). To date, the other seven parties are careful not to be associated with SD – as the card you least want on your hand in the dynamics of political competition – a loosening up of the moral distance towards SD risk credibility losses as the mainstream parties risk being accused of stealing (back) the SD-votes as a consequence (Saveljeff 2011). This resistance, Rydgren (2010) concludes, has motivated a strategy of *cardon sanitaire* adapted by the other parties to answer (or rather not answer) to the challenge posed by the SD in Swedish politics.

There is thus a strong convergence at the centre around the immigrations issue to defer any influence of SD in national politics. However, mainstream parties in the national parliament have previously launched demands of e.g. language-tests and citizenship courses as prerequisites for naturalization, in addition, proposals were initiated to make possible the withdrawal of citizenship for foreign-born individuals (see further Bevelander et al. 2011). SD exacerbates popular worries about e.g. multi-culturalism, suggesting further measures to strengthen the demands for citizenship qualification, and to limit the immigration to Sweden.

While the mainstream parties and the mainstream press ultimately rejects the challenge of SD, Sweden now faces a new political contender grand enough not to be taken seriously. It is not perfectly viable to counter a parliamentary party that enjoys the position of tipping the scales in favour of either political bloc with a *strategy of silence* (Bale et al. 2010). So far its influence on the dynamic of political competition is limited to the moralization of the political language and the increased polarization around the immigration issue. Whether this will lead to increased politization, divisions between the mainstream parties or even to some issue convergence between SD and other parliamentary parties (adaptation) – what has been the case in most other European countries (Ibid), it is too close to call.<sup>7</sup>

In this brief overview of some frequently adopted explanations to explaining the electoral gains of the RPPs, we have e.g. discussed theories that emphasize the politization of new issues and the re-alignment processes from socio-economic issues to the socio-cultural cleavage dimension; the degree of convergence between the mainstream parties in the political space; the need to consider the strategies adopted by the mainstream parties to respond to the RPP-parties and the overall structure of the political competition. Instead of further speculating on the possible implications of the entry of SD in national politics, we shall in this paper devote full attention to the role of the media in the emergence of new RPP parties in national parliaments. According to Jens Rydgren (2007: 255): ‘there has been no systematic study of the role of mass media in the rise of new radical right-wing parties’. Our analysis of the electoral fortunes of the SD in relation to its media exposure seeks to fill this gap, emphasizing the *media effect* in the political competition of the votes.

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<sup>7</sup> In the literature, the process of mutual adaptation between the RPPs and the mainstream parties has e.g. been referred to as ‘the mainstreaming of the radical right’ (Hervik and Berg 2007) or as a ‘pathological normalcy’ (Mudde 2008).



## **Media Exposure and Voting Behaviour**

In 2010 Antonis Ellinas gave a systematic account of the role of the media and the rise of the 'Far Right' in countries such as France, Austria, Greece and Germany. His book has two main theses. Firstly, the party positioning on national identity issues structures the opportunities for the RPPs to enjoy their initial electoral breakthrough. Secondly, it examines how the media exposure granted to the political newcomer (or lack thereof) can explain or possibly hinder the newcomer to gain electoral fortunes. His analysis offers a temporal dimension to understand not only why certain RPPs make headway, while others fail, but also *when*.

Ellinas (2010: 15) relies on the Sartorian notion of 'threshold of relevance', which is based on the premise that: 'once parties become electorally relevant, their electoral fortunes are determined by different factors than before'. In practice, Ellinas suggests a two-stage approach – before and after its initial electoral breakthrough. At the first stage, before the RPPs have grown big enough to play a central role on the electoral market, it is most appropriate to focus on the reactions of the mainstream parties whether they i.e. choose to ignore, confront or adjust themselves to the political newcomer. Once the party has crossed the threshold of relevance, though, it is likely to moderate its claims to address a broader audience and the mainstream parties shall find it more difficult to ignore these claims. At the latter stage, it gets increasingly more important to focus on the internal party arena, i.e. the organizational capacity of the new parliamentary party whereas the tactical maneuvering of the political competitors subsides in importance.

Faced with internal ruptures and a lack of solid organizational base, the party is a likely candidate to become a 'flash phenomenon' (see e.g. Taggart 2002), and thus quickly disappear from the scene, or at least suffer from heavy drops in their electoral support. Many of these parties mobilize voters around an anti-establishment agenda that help them to cross the initial electoral threshold. Once in the parliament it is difficult to maintain with this underdog position as they, in fact, are parts of the establishment. The scholar of populism, Margaret Canovan (1999), adheres to the idea that the RPPs in its initial stage emphasize the *redemptive* face of democratic politics (politics that aim to satisfy the perceived demands and wishes of the people) to gain votes, however once they have crossed the threshold of relevance it gets increasingly difficult to maintain the redemptive ambitions, when faced with

the realities of everyday politics (what Canovan refers to as the *pragmatic* face of democratic politics). In turn, the new political party risks electoral drops.<sup>8</sup>

Our analysis is limited to the role of the media (or more correctly media exposure) as an explanatory factor for the entry of a new political RPP party in Swedish politics, in this regard, Elinas (2010: 18) suggests:

It is plausible that the media have a stronger impact on the electoral performance of Far Right parties during the earlier phase of their development than afterward. Media exposure can push minor parties into mainstream debate, give them visibility, and legitimating their claims. Yet, once minor parties become part of the mainstream discourse, media effects might subside in importance

This is not to say that we disregard the role of the mainstream parties to shape the structure of the political opportunities available for the RPPs. Christoffer Green-Pedersen and Jesper Krogstrup (2008: 628) suggest that the media plays a less dominant role to explain why e.g. the ‘immigration issue’ is politicized and made into a salient, even dominant, political issue in the political competition of the votes. This might be correct, not least in the Danish case where the DPP has enjoyed a stable position at least since 2001, however, to explaining the SD entry into the national parliament 2010 there is reason to also take a closer look at the *media effect*, in the period preceding its electoral breakthrough.

To proceed with the analysis, we suggest an extension of Ellinas approach, introducing *three* phases of development. It is not clear, in our view, when exactly the SD crossed the ‘threshold of relevance’. In 2006, SD failed to gain enough votes (2, 93 per cent) to cross the electoral threshold to the national parliament. However at the same time, SD managed to gain seats in half of the country’s local governments, most obvious in the southern regions of the country. This caused some parliamentary turbulence in some of the municipalities, but not in others. Furthermore, its limited success at the local elections in 2006 generated a great deal of attention also at the national level, which did not correspond well with its, relatively, low strength at the polls (Hellström 2010).

The first stage corresponds to the period before 2006 when it had very limited media exposure and most commentators disregarded SD as ‘devils in disguise’ (Hellström and Nilsson 2010). The second stage takes place between 2006 and 2010 when the media

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<sup>8</sup> To mention but one example, the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) suffered from heavy electoral losses and even split into two parties after their initial success in the 1999 national elections. This was certainly much due to its participation in the national government in February 2000.

interest escalated and also the mainstream political parties started to worry about the party, gradually abandoned their initial *cardon sanitaire* strategy and engaged in debates with the SD. The third stage occurs after the 2010 when the party crossed the electoral threshold to the Swedish *Riksdag*. The moral aversion towards SD has seemingly escalated after 2010 and a majority of the Swedes express strong antipathies towards the SD (Hellström 2011). The debate on the national identity is polarized between the SD and the other parties, though it seems reasonable to agree with Ellinas that it gets increasingly difficult for the mainstream actors to rely on a strategy of silence to combat this ‘political trespasser’.

In this paper, we shall focus on the media exposure as an explanatory factor for the rise of SD in the national parliament during the second stage; i.e. between 2006 and 2010. The scholarly interest in SD outside Sweden has gained speed, only recently. Before the 2010 elections, Sweden was typically referred to as an exception in Europe (See e.g. Arter 2010). Ignazi (2006: 159) makes brief mention of SD in his comprehensive overview of Extreme Right Parties in Europe (ERP). Also in more recent literature, such as Ellinas mentioned above, SD is referred to as ‘a small Far Rightist group’ (2010: 10-11). Even if Swedish journalists have written extensively on SD after its initial relative breakthrough in the 2006 elections (see e.g. *Svenska Dagbladet* 27 October 2010), the international interest has hitherto been quite modest and mainly devoted to explain the relative failure of SD to bring about a *negative* politization of the immigration issue (Green-Pedersen and Krogstrup 2010; Rydgren 2010).

### **Data, method and hypotheses**

As earlier mentioned, our aim is to discern the correlation between the opinion poll results, conducted every month *and* the magnitude in newspaper articles by the most important newspapers in Sweden. More specific, was the SD opinion poll and election results affected by the media attention in the period October 2006 – September 2010?<sup>9</sup>

We do this by the use of two data sources. On the one side, the opinion polls conducted by different opinion poll companies in Sweden over the period October 2006 to August 2010<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Theoretically we assume that the media exposure of a political party affects the opinion poll for that party. However, we are aware of the fact that the causality can go either direction and view the analysis as an attempt to establish a correlation.

<sup>10</sup> We are very grateful to Henrik Oskarsson for granting us the access to the use of the opinion poll data, i.e. ‘the poll of polls’.

and, on the other side, the number of newspaper articles published by the six leading newspapers which can be traced in the Swedish digital media archive, Mediearkivet (2010).

The monthly opinion poll used in the article is the means of all opinion polls conducted in that particular month. For September 2010 we used the actual election outcome. Moreover, we create series for eight political parties, Social Democrats (S), Moderaterna (M)<sup>11</sup>, Sweden Democrats (SD), Christian Democrats (KD), the Greens (MP), the Centre Party (C), the Liberal party (FP) and the Left party (V). Besides the Social Democrats (S) and the Moderaterna (M), the other parties are all relatively small parties and have over the last decade been relatively close to the parliamentary threshold of four percent. We emphasize the media exposure for these parties in order to compare the results of the SD to other political parties who share about the same magnitude in potential votes. Our analysis focuses on the second stage, outlined above, since the period 2006-2010 seems to be the most crucial for assessing the degree of media exposure as an explanatory factor for the entry of SD in the Swedish parliament by 2010.

The statistics on the number of newspaper articles written on a particular party are based on monthly searches in the Swedish digital media archive by newspaper and political party. Our material is based on the six leading newspapers in Sweden, given their circulation rate (Mediefakta 2010). According to Strömbeck and Aalberg (2008: 95), the Swedish model of media and politics belong to the so-called ‘Democratic Corporatist Model’, which alludes to a historical co-existence of commercial and public media, tied to particular social and political groups with a legally limited, though relatively active, role of the state (ibid: 92). The newspapers in Sweden, traditionally split along the classic left-right continuum, have to a high degree broken their formal ties to political parties, leaving a majority of the newspapers to describe themselves as ‘independently liberal’. Concerning SD, however, all dominant newspapers share a negative view towards the party (Hellström and Hervik 2011) and after the national elections 2010 e.g. the tabloids *Expressen* (Exp) and *Aftonbladet* (AB) launched campaigns against the party, and the xenophobic sentiments they are said to capitalize on. Our sample consists of two tabloids (Exp and AB), two Stockholm-centered, yet nationwide newspapers (*Dagens Nyheter* (DN) and *Svenska Dagbladet* (SvD) and finally two regionally

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<sup>11</sup> Conservative – liberal party.

based newspapers (*Göteborgsposten* (GP) in Gothenburg and *Sydsvenskan* (SDS) in the Malmö region.

We have also contacted the responsible editors-in-chief, the political editors and news editors of these six newspapers.<sup>12</sup> A response given by the editor-in-chief of *Exp*, Thomas Mattsson answer is symptomatic in this regard as he resists guidelines or publishing policies devoted to distinct parties (either to publish more or less about them), though he hints at the media logic that make priority over the ‘deviant’ and particular interesting phenomena in the total media coverage (interview 20 april 2011; see also Strömbeck and Aalberg 2008). Many of the interviewees also remembered much discussion on this issue, especially after that the SD increased its support in the polls. According to e.g. the news editor of *DN*, Anders Olsson (interview May 9) , also emphasized by the section editor Eva Parkrud of the GP (interview April 27), it is important to report meticulously on the SD, to avoid being blue-eyed<sup>13</sup> and yet recognize that the party developed in this period to become a political contender on the verge to the national parliament. Accordingly, if the SD is conceived as a particular interesting and/or deviant case in the Swedish political life, especially after it – according to the opinion polls – grew above the electoral threshold, we could perhaps expect more relative weight devoted to the SD in the media coverage, compared to the mainstream parties.

From the research overview on media exposure and electoral gains, our first general hypothesis is:

1. *The degree of media exposure is a significant factor to determining the electoral fortunes of all the parliamentary parties, reflected in the monthly opinion polls 2006-2010.*

Provided the newspapers’ ambitions not to publish more, or less, articles around particular parties, the media effect should remain equally salient for all the parties of similar sizes. However, if we listen to Ellinas, the *media effect* rests more salient for parties that are on the verge to cross the threshold of relevance, yet not in the parliament. The special character of the SD, by some of the interviewees described as xenophobic, in combination with its eruption in the opinion polls motivates us to formulate a second hypothesis:

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<sup>12</sup> In sum, we received seven responses – either in written form or over the telephone. The respondents were asked to estimate whether they had published more, less or the same amount of articles on the SD, relative its size, compared to the other political parties. In the appendix, there is a complete list of the interviewees.

<sup>13</sup> In this regard, Anders Olsson mentions the news reporting on the NyD before the 1991 national elections as a warning example.

- 2. The degree of media exposure in the six largest newspapers in Sweden is more important for SD, reflected in the monthly opinion polls 2006-2010, compared to all the other five small national parties, who shared seats in Riksdagen also before 2010.*

In addition, we anticipate a three-step temporal model to explain spatial varieties in the electoral fortunes of SD. The degree of media exposure is not equally important in all newspapers, but shifts along regional preferences. Given this, the SD had already crossed the ‘threshold of relevance’ in Skåne, which suggests that the correlation between the media exposure of the SD in the regional newspaper *SDS* already had subsided in significance after the 2006 elections. Our third explanatory hypothesis suggests:

- 3. The media effect rests more salient in the national newspapers and the regional newspaper Göteborgsposten compared to the regional newspaper Sydsvenskan, reaching an audience already acquainted with SD in 2006.*

In the following section we analyze the development of the opinion poll results for the six different political parties, and the SD in particular, regarding the magnitude of articles published on these parties in the six largest newspapers in Sweden. To establish a connection between opinion poll results and the media attention for a particular party, we correlate these two data sources in two ways. Firstly, we correlate the first differences of opinion poll monthly levels of a political party with the first differences (FD) of the number of published articles in the same month. Secondly, we lag these series on the number of published articles with one month to assess whether there is a lag in the effect of the media reporting on a particular party and its opinion poll. Using series with first differences, these are not affected by either an upward or downward trend, neither in the opinion poll nor in the number of articles published in this period. This can be the case, especially, concerning the number of articles published, since the number of monthly articles on the political parties will increase, approaching the elections. Finally, we conduct an ordinary least regression analysis to investigate to what extent published articles affect the SD opinion poll.

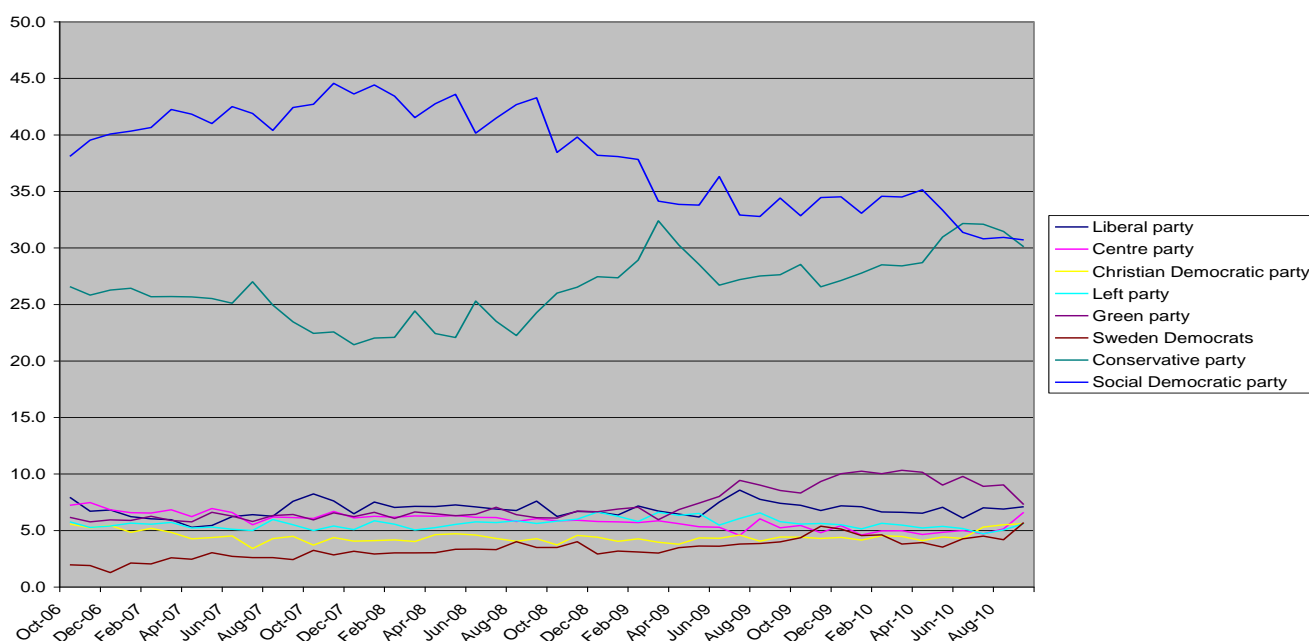
## **Analysis**

### *Descriptives*

A first look at the data on the six political parties opinion polls shows that only two parties seem close to the electoral threshold in the period put into scrutiny, namely the Christian

Democrats and the Sweden Democrats (see figure 1). Four parties reach polls between four and eight percent, while the two major parties scored more than 20 per cent. One party, the Green party seems to do somewhat better in the polls than the other parties in the last year before the actual election. However, this did not clearly materialize in the actual election as the Greens scored 7.3 of the votes in September 2010, which nevertheless was sufficient to become the third largest party.

**Figure 1, Opinion polls results by month for Political Parties, October 2006 - September 2010.**



Source: Own calculations based on poll statistics 2006-2010.

Table 1 shows the number of newspaper articles published by the six largest newspapers in Sweden, between 2006 and 2010. The table shows that most articles were connected to the two largest and leading parties of the electoral block in Sweden, the Conservatives and Social Democrats. The Green party is the leader when it comes to the smaller parties. The two parties that circulated most clearly around the election threshold, the SD and the KD have about the same number of articles. The FP and the V occupy the middle ground and attract around 140 articles per month. The outlier in this table is the number of articles connected to the C, which is substantially lower than for the other parties. In this case, though, we should acknowledge limitations as to how we search for this party in the archive.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> The results do in this regard display certain linguistic complexities; i.e. biases. While there are other parties in Europe labeled ‘Social-democratic’, ‘the Green/s’, ‘The Christian Democrats’ or the ‘People’s Party’ – thus our

As can be seen in table 1, the newspaper *Sydsvenskan* is by far the newspaper that publishes most articles on any political party, but in particular the SD.

**Table 1, Number of Newspaper articles written on political parties, October 2006 – September 2010.**

	DN	SvD	Exp	AB	GP	SDS	Total	Articles per month
Sweden Democrats	810	495	627	479	688	1982	5081	<b>106</b>
Christian Democrats	1060	766	530	362	833	1239	4790	<b>100</b>
Green Party	1599	1232	820	546	1438	2225	7860	<b>164</b>
Centre Party	595	566	310	262	438	600	2771	<b>58</b>
Liberal Party	1315	1053	661	543	1245	1990	6807	<b>143</b>
Left Party	1322	1113	637	479	1204	1836	6591	<b>137</b>
Conservative Party	2098	1881	1473	1053	1609	3137	11251	<b>234</b>
Social Democrats	3661	2776	1904	1548	3062	4740	17691	<b>369</b>

Source: Mediearkivet 2010

Our primary focus is on the SD opinion poll development and media exposure over time, figure 2 therefore pin-points the opinion poll development of the SD. This figure clearly shows an increasing trend over time where both outliers above the trend are connected to two specific events in this four year period. The first event is connected to an article published by the party leader Jimmy Åkesson in one of the evening tabloids *Aftonbladet* in October 2009. In this article, he expresses the view that ‘Muslims’ are the largest threat to the Swedish society. The SD opinion poll in October 2009 is for the first time over the four percent threshold (4.4), the article is published on October 19, and the poll increases to 5.4 in November 2009. The following months the SD poll gradually drops to its earlier level just beneath the threshold.<sup>15</sup> The second event is the elections when the SD crosses the electoral threshold to the national parliament.

Figure 3 shows the number of news articles in the six newspapers for SD in the studied period. Also in this figure we observe a weak positive trend towards more newspaper articles, including the SD over time. The trend has three peaks. The first one is in October 2006, the month after the 2006 election. The SD did not cross the threshold for national parliament, but obtained several seats in the local parliaments, especially in southern Sweden (Kiiskinen and Salveljeff 2010). The second peak is in October 2009, the month in which Jimmy Åkesson

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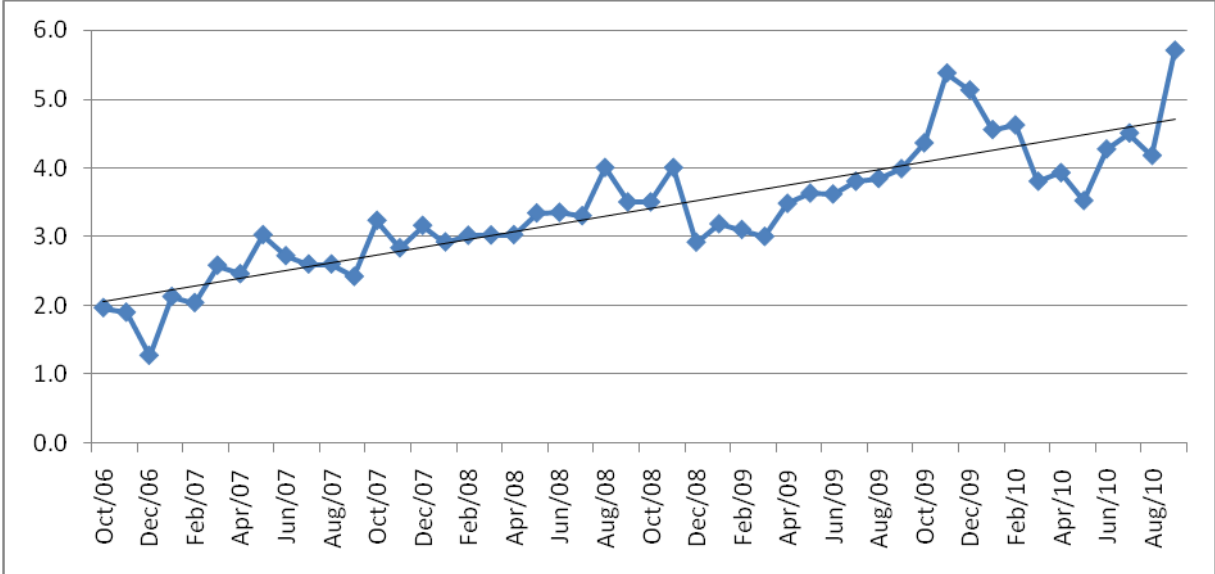
sample also risk to incorporating non-Swedish parties in the sample net, this is rarely the case with e.g. the Center party, Moderaterna or the Sweden Democrats. The alternative procedure would be to instead of the full names, use the party abbreviations – however this search technique showed too be even more faulted as e.g. the Center Party shared the same abbreviation (C) as the target player in an ordinary ice-hockey team.

<sup>15</sup> *Aftonbladet* had already one month before (September 17) decided to allow the publication of election campaign materials from all the other parties, but SD. The editor-in-chief, Jan Helin, explained he refused to be the sender of the SD propaganda, though the editorial policy was yet to allow the SD representatives to publish debate articles in their own names.



published the above referred article in *Aftonbladet*. The third peak is in August/September 2010 in connection to the elections. Many articles here concerned the SD promotion film that first was released, but then abandoned from television broadcasting due to its provocative imaginary directed at Islam. At the time when the election film was prohibited, millions of people could yet follow the uncensored version on You Tube.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, the number of articles dedicated to all the parties, rather dramatically, increases in the last month before the elections.

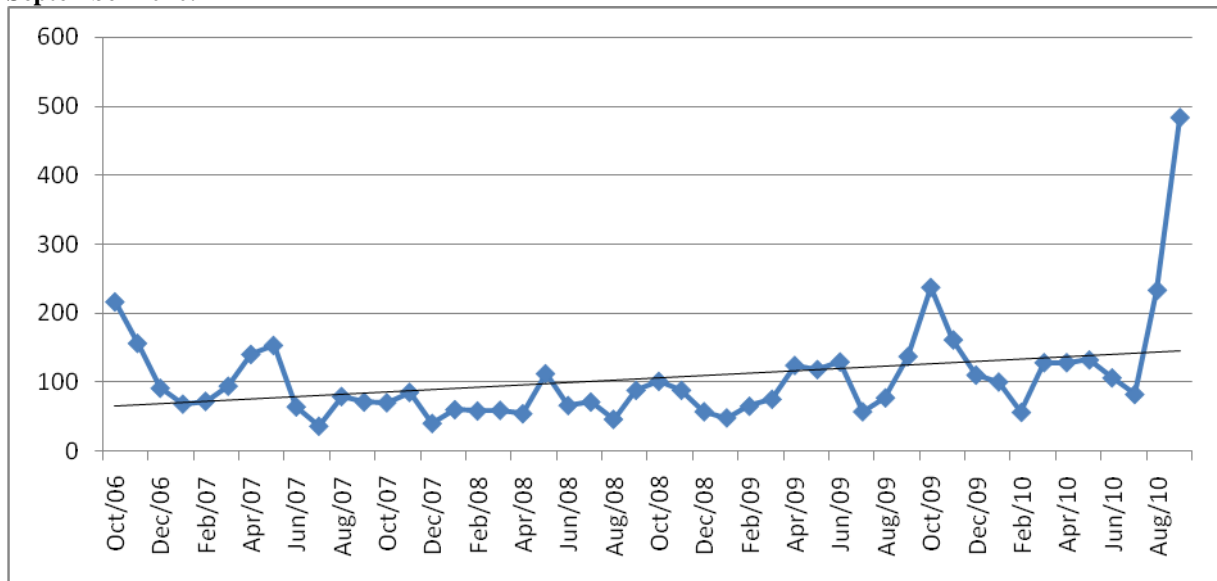
**Figure 2, Opinion polls for Sweden Democrats including trend line, October 2006 – September 2010.**



Source: Poll of polls, 2010.

<sup>16</sup> In the film, a group of burqa-dressed women chased a native-looking female elder. The message was that the state could not afford to spend money on both, the message was clear: multi-culturalism – here associated with burqa-dressed women – threatens the Universalist welfare state. While many were angered by the film, yet other voters could relate to the dichotomy of multi-culturalism versus welfare. It seems fair to suggest that the SD here manages to test the tolerance of the mainstream media, radicalizing concerns already being voiced by others who were anxious about the impact of the growing Muslim population in Sweden.

**Figure 3, Number of newspaper articles for Sweden Democrats including trend line, October 2006 – September 2010.**



Source: Mediaarkivet, 2010.

Summarizing the descriptive results, the SD opinion poll and the number of articles seem to be connected towards a positive trend. Moreover, at two occasions both the opinion poll and the number of articles published peaked at the same time in the studied period. The newspaper *SDS* based in Malmö in Southern Sweden publishes most extensively on the SD compared to the other newspapers. In the following section we study, more sophisticated, the connection between the SD opinion poll and the number of articles written on the SD, correlating the first differences from the SD trend. Moreover, by studying the other parties that are close to the election threshold and the number of articles published on these parties, we try to establish a validation of the results, established for the SD.

### *Correlation results*

Table 2 shows the correlation results between the two variables, opinion polls and published newspaper articles connected to the different parties for all newspapers together and each newspaper separately. Very few correlation coefficients are positive and significant. However, both the strongest correlations and number of significant correlations are measured, for SD. In particular, articles that were published in the month earlier are stronger correlated to the opinion poll for SD than articles in the same month.

**Table 2, Correlations between opinion polls and published articles, monthly statistics, October 2006 – September 2010.**

	SD	Ch. Dem	Greens	Centre	Liberal	Left	Cons.	Soc. Dem
All articles FD	0.20	0.16	-0.28	-0.20	-0.02	-0.05	-0.20	0.09
All articles FD lagged	0.51**	0.06	-0.05	-0.07	0.17	-0.15	-0.05	-0.16
DN FD	0.29*	0.18	-0.21	0.07	-0.03	0.03	-0.26	0.05
DN FD lagged	0.50**	0.13	-0.19	0.20	0.17	-0.13	-0.05	-0.10
SvD FD	0.05	0.06	-0.08	0.08	0.11	-0.25	-0.06	-0.08
SvD FD lagged	0.42**	0.18	-0.07	0.03	0.12	0.12	-0.06	-0.22
Exp FD	0.34*	-0.01	-0.36*	-0.19	-0.14	0.06	-0.11	-0.01
Exp FD lagged	0.39*	0.07	0.06	0.03	0.09	-0.04	-0.08	-0.08
AB FD	0.23	0.00	-0.37**	0.00	-0.11	0.06	-0.16	0.02
AB FD lagged	0.23	-0.02	0.19	0.02	0.05	-0.10	-0.13	-0.05
GP FD	0.22	0.28	-0.11	0.05	-0.06	-0.06	-0.18	0.01
GP FD lagged	0.25	-0.23	-0.09	-0.18	0.25	-0.15	0.03	0.03
SDS FD	-0.04	0.12	-0.24	0.42**	-0.02	-0.18	-0.22	0.20
SDS FD lagged	0.45**	0.16	0.02	-0.32	0.10	0.00	-0.01	-0.28

Source: Poll of polls and Mediaarkivet, 2010.

Significance: \* = 0.1, \*\* = 0.05, \*\*\* = 0.01

Table 2 shows the correlation coefficients between the opinion poll of the SD and the six newspapers. The correlations with the two leading national newspaper *DN* and *SvD* are obtained positive and significant (0.29 and 0.50). Also for the national evening tabloid *Exp*, we find positive and significant correlations with the variable published newspaper articles on the SD and the lagged variant of this variable (0.34 and 0.39 respectively). The third newspaper that shows only one substantial correlation between published articles on the SD and the opinion poll in the studied period is the regional newspaper *SDS* (0.42). The two newspapers *AB* and *GP* have positive but insignificant correlations with the variable published news articles on the SD with the trend. Finally, the newspaper *SDS* also had just one positive and significant correlation coefficient. This positive correlation is with the detrended and lagged series of published newspapers on the SD (0.45).

If we scrutinize the tables for the several other small parties in the Swedish political arena, and their correlation coefficients with the number of published articles in the studied period, we observe very few positive and significant correlation coefficients. For the Green party we observe a negative and significant correlation of the opinion poll and articles published in the evening tabloid *AB*. The Center party poll is positive correlated with articles in *SDS*. For the two large parties no significant correlations between opinion poll measures and published articles can be observed.

The correlations of the SD public opinion polls and the other parties with the published articles in the largest and most important newspapers in Sweden over the years between the two elections 2006-2010 seem to be different in number and level. The correlations between SD opinion poll and the relative media exposure have in three newspapers a number of significant positive correlations. For the other three newspapers at least one correlation is on a positive level. For no other party or newspaper we found so many correlations between opinion polls and the number of articles published. Besides, it is only for the opinion poll for the SD and the number of articles published that verged the 0.50 correlation levels, i.e. fairly strong levels, were obtained. These results indicate that the SD opinion poll has been affected by the publicity of a number of important newspapers in Swedish society. Other parties' poll show no such media effect.

In order to see which newspaper affected the opinion poll to the largest extend and to what degree, we used an ordinary least square regression technique to analyze the effect of newspaper articles on the SD opinion poll. In table 3 the beta coefficients for separate regressions for each newspaper and one regression including all newspapers are displayed. The separate regressions show that four newspapers, *DN*, *SvD*, *Exp* and *SDS* have an impact on the opinion poll of the SD. The regression for all newspapers and with both series, in the same month and lagged one month, show only one positive and significant coefficient for *DN* and one negative and significant coefficient for *SDS*. That the effects for the other newspapers become insignificant but are still quite high is due that in this regression all series are depended of each other. However, it also shows that *DN* is the most important newspaper in the regression explaining the correlation between media and opinion poll of the SD. In terms of effect on the SD opinion poll, if *DN* published ten more articles on the SD the, the opinion poll one month later rose with 0.2 percent. However, when *SDS* published 10 more articles the opinion poll when down with 0.1 percent in the same month of the opinion poll.

**Table 3a, OLS on opinion poll for Sweden Democrats October 2006 – September 2010**

	By newspaper	All newspapers
DN FD	.007	.001
DN FD lagged	.022***	.023**
SvD FD	.008	-0.14
SvD FD lagged	.029**	.013
Exp FD	.014*	.013
Exp FD lagged	.020**	.015
AB FD	.013	.016
AB FD lagged	.015	-.020
GP FD	.010	.000
GP FD lagged	.011	-.003
SDS FD	-.003	-.011**
SDS FD lagged	.013***	.001
Constant		.060
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>		.37

Source: Poll of polls and Mediearkivet, 2010.

Significance: \* = 0.1, \*\* = 0.05, \*\*\* = 0.01

With the purpose of to test for that the measured effect in the regressions is due to that both the opinion poll and the media exposure has a strong increase during the last months before the election, i.e. is due to a so called electoral campaign effect, we run OLS regressions without the last two months, the period October 2006 – July 2010. The results of this analysis are shown in appendix 2, table 3b. The results in general the results show the same picture as was found in table 3a. The coefficient for *DN* is slightly lower, but still significant. This accounts also for the other newspapers *SvD*, *Exp* and *SDS*. This test shows that the media exposure and the opinion poll for the SD is only to a minor part the effect of the electoral campaign.

## Discussion

In the Swedish national election of 2010 the SD gained access to parliament and crossed the threshold of relevance. Certainly, a number of factors are relevant in explaining the increasing political support for the SD over the period 2006-2010. One of these factors, and our focus in this study, is the media exposure in Sweden and to what extent it provides some further knowledge of why and when the RPPs, in this case the SD, enters the national parliament. Emphasizing the explanatory power of the degree of visibility in the public debate - by means of measuring the correlation between media exposure and voting poll fluctuations - we contribute with a systematic test of the relevance of the impact of media exposure, providing

opportunities for the RPPs to capitalize on the demands for nationalist and immigration-skeptic politics.

Our analysis of the number of articles published in six leading newspapers on the political parties in Sweden, and in particular the SD, close to the four percent parliament threshold and the opinion poll of these parties in the period 2006-2010, shows no censoring of the SD by the mainstream press. Besides, the regional newspaper *SDS* reported relatively the most of all newspapers on the SD. One explanation for this would be that the SD already in the 2006 elections crossed the electoral threshold to the regional parliament and almost all of the municipalities in that region. Another and related explanation is that this newspaper had a stronger incentive to publish articles on the SD due to its relatively high number of electoral mandates obtained in the region in which this newspaper, primarily, is read. An indication of this is the fact that we found a negative significant correlation between the number of newspaper articles published in this newspaper and the opinion poll of the SD in this period – the SD had to live up to its voters expectations and face the realities of day-to-day politics.

The correlations obtained in the number of published articles on the SD and the SD opinion polls suggest that the SD did capitalize on the publicity, good or bad, to receive sufficient votes to enter the parliament. Both, the quantity of positive and significant correlations, indicate that the SD was not excluded from publicity in these leading Swedish newspapers (cf. Nordstrand and Ljunggren 2010). This in turn affected the opinion poll of this party, either directly in the same month or in the following month. The few correlations between the opinion polls of the other parties and the number of articles published are an indirect indication of the media effect on the SD poll results, and point towards the fact that the media *effect*, generally, was rather limited

We could thereby raise some doubts about the *first* hypothesis that says that the degree of media exposure always affect the voting behavior. Our findings suggest that we need to refine the saying that the media matters. Certainly, it partly does, but not always and not to the same degree, not everywhere and not all the time. Especially for parties outside the parliament, returning to Ellinas, it is fundamental to get access to the media space, to get the message across to the public. Thus in the phase preceding the electoral breakthrough, referred to as the threshold of relevance by Ellinas, the media exposure makes an explanatory factor for the entry of new parties in the national parliament. The articles published by the leading

newspaper for public opinion in Sweden, *DN*, has enjoyed a significant effect on the opinion poll of the SD. Ten newspaper articles more, published the month before the opinion poll, the SD increases with 0.2 percent the month after the media exposure. We thereby conclude that the *second* hypothesis is partly verified, though it matters which newspaper referred to.

Whereas we have neither tested nor disputed the salience of other supply-side explanatory factors for the entry of the RRP-parties in the national parliaments, the *media effect* has *some* explanatory power in its own right, though rather limited. During the period 2006-2010, the mainstream parties including the mainstream press have acted unanimously against the SD and gradually abandoned their initial *cardon sanitaire* approach. We could tentatively find supporting evidences for a re-alignment process, from a sole focus on the socio-economic cleavage dimension to an increased focus on socio-cultural issues, ranging from the Christian Democrats leader's outburst against the "new radical elite" (*Dagens Nyheter* 17 September 2009), to the mobilization against the SD on the immigration issue.

There certainly is an increased convergence at the centre, as all the other parliamentary parties mutually, from the left to the right, refuted the SD claims or simply ignored them, though between themselves they continued to quarrel along tradition socio-economic parameters in the political competition of the votes before the 2010 elections. Yet, our findings confirm that the SD was given a fair amount of publicity in the leading newspapers, between 2006 and 2010. They were talked about, and heard of, which confirm the view that without publicity there is no access to the electoral market for any new political contender.<sup>17</sup> In the regional newspaper, *SDS*, reaching out to an audience already acquainted with the SD before 2006, our analysis suggests, the media exposure as such (which was higher compared to the other newspapers) does not help much to explain the electoral fortunes of the SD in the 2010 national elections.

Our findings show that the threshold of relevance does not perfectly match with the crossing of the electoral threshold. The relative weight of the various explanatory factors, common in the literature, does not neatly correspond with before and after the initial electoral of the party in question. Think for instance of the different levels of threshold between Denmark (two percent) and Sweden (four percent). In 2006, the SD received a little less than three percent of

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<sup>17</sup> This invites further comparative research, to e.g. compare *the media effect* for any other new party (e.g. the Pirate Party in the 2009 European Parliament) with the SD.

the overall votes – thus not eligible for the *Swedish* national parliament. Nevertheless, it was enough to be seriously considered by its adversaries. This certainly affects the behavior of the mainstream parties in a way that differs from the situation before the 2006 national elections. Our findings suggest regional deviances in the case of the SD, which was confirmed by our answer to the *third* hypothesis; i.e. the regional newspaper *SDS* actually had a negative *media effect*, conversely the regional newspaper *GP* had none. Future research will preferably inform us about whether the media effect will subside in importance, or perhaps turn negative, for all the other five newspapers put into scrutiny in this study after the 2010 elections. A possible hypothesis for future research is thus that the media effect on the SD opinion polls in all the leading six newspapers subsides in importance after the 2010 elections; instead factors such as the SD organizational capacity will gain salience.

Summarizing, the normal implication from this study does not necessarily imply that the mainstream press was wrong to publish a fair amount of articles on the SD in the period between the national elections. Apparently there is a popular demand for a party such as the SD also in Swedish national politics. To completely refute or ignore that demand is neither necessarily democratically sound, nor to say that there are no anti-immigrant opinions among the Swedish populace as long as we do not speak of them. Future research could preferably devote more attention to the mechanisms around such anti-immigration demands, not to take these for granted, but conversely, to critically examine their accuracy (in fact, more people in Sweden seem prone to, gradually, accept a generous immigration policy and increased diversities) and feasibility in view of normative ideals of e.g. democratic inclusion. To address these issues, future research needs to dwell into the content of the media reporting and thus expand beyond the mere quantitative *media effect*.

This invites further elaboration on the issue raised by Ellinas, not explicitly dealt with in this article, about the party positioning on national identity issues as structural conditioning of the opportunities for the RPPs to enjoy electoral gains, and remain in the national parliament. The opportunity structures that the RPPs capitalize on to gain electoral profits, is shaped in the broader partisan structure of political competition, as Green-Pedersen and Krogstrup (2008) reckoned. Our findings imply this to be a significant factor in Sweden after the 2010 national elections to explain fluctuations on the electoral market, as the *media effect* might subside in importance. In this regard, after the 2010 national elections, we need to foster



increased attention to which explanations are given to the, comparatively, rather modest success of the SD and to which solutions the mainstream actors shift their attention.

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## APPENDIX 1

### List of respondents

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Newspaper</b>	<b>Date of interview</b>
<b>Avellan, Heidi</b>	Political editor, the editorial pages	SDS	27 April 2011
<b>Jönsson, Martin</b>	Managing editor	SvD	3 May 2011
<b>Mattsson, Thomas</b>	Editor-in-chief	Exp	20 April 2011
<b>Melin, Lena</b>	Assistant editor-in-chief	AB	3 May
<b>Olsson, Anders</b>	News editor	DN	9 May
<b>Parkrud, Eva</b>	Section editor (political- and the economical department)	GP	27 April 2011
<b>Sandström, Daniel</b>	Editor-in Chief	SDS	27 April 2011

**Table 3b, OLS on opinion poll for Sweden Democrats October 2006 – July 2010**

	By newspaper	All newspapers
DN FD	.006	.001
DN FD lagged	.019**	.022*
SvD FD	.001	-0.13
SvD FD lagged	.019*	.013
Exp FD	.009	.013
Exp FD lagged	.017**	.015
AB FD	.001	.016
AB FD lagged	.006	-.020
GP FD	.007	.000
GP FD lagged	.002	-.004
SDS FD	-.007*	-.011**
SDS FD lagged	.009**	.002
Constant		.060
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>		.37

Source: Poll of polls and Mediearkivet, 2010.

Significance: \* = 0.1, \*\* = 0.05, \*\*\* = 0.01