

THE SWEDISH REGIONAL REFORM AND THE POLITICAL MAP: PARTY INTERESTS AT STAKE

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Abstract

In this article we conduct contra factual experiment of thoughts, applying the tactics of gerrymandering into the regionalization process of Sweden. By applying the actual election data from 1998 up to 2010, we discuss the various outcomes of four regional models; i) the present system, ii) a realistic scenario of regional reform (a roadmap commissioned by SALAR), and two hypothetical but possible models based on what regional structure would mostly benefit iii) the left parties and iv) the right parties. The overall aim of the paper is to estimate the implications of a regional reform on the political geography of Sweden to provide instruments for future research on if, and how party interests affect the regional reform process.

The analyses also give fuel to a number of relevant discussions on regional reform and its political outcomes. For example, our results highlight the possible lock-in effects in the present discussions concerning the Stockholm/Uppsala regions, Västra Götaland and Halland/or Värmland, and the region of Southwest Sweden.

One suggestion is that if citizens are to have long-term confidence in the future regional structure, it should be arranged in such a way that both the left *and* right wings are satisfied – a double-packing strategy. Such a strategy would make it relatively harder for smaller local/regional parties to affect the political stability of a region. If political stability is pursued, we suggest that the solution of the Wise men is more functional than the present structure.

Keywords:

regions, regional reform, county councils, political geography, parties, gerrymandering, packing, cracking, Sweden

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Studying a Regional Structure Reform – An Introduction

The multi-level systems of Europe are undergoing structure reforms in many countries, where Scandinavia³ and Sweden are no exceptions. For several years, there has been a clear movement towards an amalgamation reform of the Swedish regions.⁴ But the reform process has been complicated and many political actors on different political levels have been involved. When this paper is written (in 2011) we might be reaching an endpoint in the discussions, but it is also possible the process will carry on in the years to come.

The question of regional structure reform is, despite its political importance, more or less absent from any public debate on the national arena. But behind the public scenes the real game is played, and the players are regions with a variation of cards at hand. Some of the regions, mainly in the big city areas, are regarded as growth regions which it would be beneficial partners to be enclosed with. Other counties are more stagnating regions with failing economies, skewed demographic patterns and with gloomy future prospects. On the political dance floor, counties make invites to their more attractive but often indifferent neighbors and at the same time they try to politely fend off invites from less attractive counties. In this partly open, partly concealed political game, a key task for all students of the Swedish regional reform is to explain how the process has developed, what interests are involved and how possible outcomes of the process could be explained.

³ Regional reforms are implemented and discussed in all Scandinavian countries (Sandberg 2009). By tradition, the regional authorities in Scandinavia has been responsible for health and hospital care, but increasing health spending and a discussion on who should be responsible – the state, the “middle level” or the local governments (*kommuner*), has fuelled various reforms in each country. In Denmark, the *amter* were removed in the beginning of 2007 and replaced by five regions. By a ‘quick and efficient’ reform, the Danish government decided to redraw the municipal and regional map was decided a few years earlier (Mouritzen 2010, s. 28f). Hospital services remained at the regional level while health care was transferred to the local governments. The Danish regions also lost their tax collection power, the health services were financed by a combination of state and local subsidies. Looking East, Finland constitutes of six larger regions since 2010, when the 12 state authorities (*län*) were transformed into the six *regional state administrative agencies* with responsibility for hospital services.³ The state is the financial agent for hospital services in Finland. While Denmark and Finland more or less has removed the middle-tier, the regional level, Norway has kept the system with local governments and county councils. The latter did not benefit taxation power before 1976, but since they have had direct elections and direct tax collecting power. In 2002, the main task for the regional bodies, *fylken*, was lifted by the Labour government to the state level (Baldersheim & Rose 2010: 93).

In light of the development in the other Scandinavian countries, the Swedish regional process is a remarkable exception. Instead of downgrading the influence of regional authorities by centralization to the state, decentralization from the state level to the regions is the present trend. And if the amalgamation reform is carried out fully, the regional level will most likely end up as much stronger than ever before in the Swedish political system.

⁴ In this article we use the term *region* (sv. *landsting*) for County Councils, the 20 ‘mid-level’ self-governing entities, whose’s budgets to 90 per cent are used for hospital services. Other responsibilities are transport, infrastructure, culture and middle-level education.

This paper will focus on the interest towards the role of the political parties and the political geography in the regional process. If the regional reform is mentioned rarely in the public debate, the issue of political geography is totally absent. This is remarkable, since a reform could potentially have large impact on which political parties will govern the regional authorities in the future. If the regional border-drawing will favor the right coalition, or the left, the turnouts would look rather different in the middle parts of the country. To modify political maps along with party interests is a phenomenon known primarily from the US, where population changes in constituency districts regularly call for border redistricting. This is rarely used in the Scandinavian context, as the national registration of all citizens implies that at election times, “leveling seats” can be distributed in order to mirror the election result correctly. Evidence from also indicates that the party political factors did not play an important role in their recent municipal amalgamation reform (Bhatti & Hansen 2011).

Our aim in this paper is to estimate the implications of a regional reform on the political geography of Sweden. It is a given fact that how an amalgamation reform is carried out could potentially benefit different parties or party coalition, and since important party interests are at stake, it is not unreasonable to assume that party strategists are attempting to gerrymander the process, i.e. to actively adjust the boundaries of regions in order to benefit party interests. Since such strategies are planned and implemented behind closed doors, it is impossible for us to answer if, and to what extent, gerrymandering is a part of the reform process. Instead, our analysis will show how gerrymandering of Swedish regions could be carried out, and what the ultimate effects would be if gerrymandering was allowed to influence the reform process. The contribution of this analysis is to provide instruments for future research if, and how, party interests are affecting the regional reform process.

On the basis of the election results from 1998 – 2010, we will analyze the likely effects of a Swedish regional reform in terms of political majorities in future elections. Our two main research questions are: Which political parties stand to gain or lose if the most likely reform proposals are implemented? Which realistic reform outcomes are most favorable to either side? The results of these analyses should be of interests to all actors involved in the process, not the least the inhabitants of the regions undergoing reform.

Our empirical analyses in this paper have the form of contrafactual experiments. Since it is impossible to have certain knowledge of which parties the Swedes will support in regional elections in the future, we have to rely on historical data. In our analyses we test what would have happened to the political landscape of Swedish regions if a regional amalgamation reform had been implemented in 1998. By assuming that a Swedish voter would vote on the same party in a regional election independently of what regional constellation he or she was living in, we estimate what the outcomes of

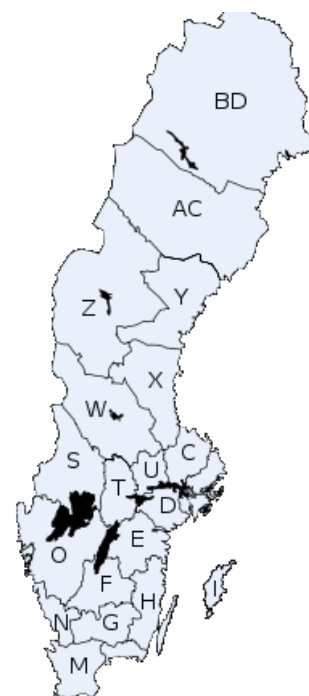
regional elections would be in three hypothetical regional models: a most likely scenario (“The Wise Men Model”, presented in a report commissioned and endorsed by SALAR⁵), a model that would benefit the left parties (The Left Model) and a model that would benefit parties to the right (The Right Model). All these results are then compared with what actually has happened within the regions of the present structure in the four elections periods since 1998.

It may very well be so that the results of similar calculations already are well known to the party strategist in some closed circles. If this is the case, it is also reasonable to assume that party positions on the national level are influenced by rational calculations regarding voter-maximization. With our results at hand, it is possible to analyze if party positions on the national level in any way could be interpreted as the result of such lines of reasoning. But it is also likely that such mathematic efforts on the national level are of little use at present, since the process for the time being is controlled by the counties and is played as a “who-takes-who”-game. The paper will end with a discussion on how our findings have bearings on the ongoing process. But firstly we will present a short overview of the regional structure in Sweden and the Scandinavian context.

Regions and regional reform in Sweden

As of 2011, the second political tier of Sweden consists of 21 regional units, and these territories are governed in parallel by the state county administrative boards (*furtheron CABs*) (sw. *länsstyrelser*) and the self-governing authorities, not being linked to the state but maintaining tax collection privileges and being responsible for hospital care, formally referred to as *county councils* (*furtheron CCs*), (in Swedish: *landsting*).⁶ The terminology is confused, as a limited amalgamation reform was initiated after the EU-membership in 1995, when the regional experiments were allowed in Skåne (M) in 1996 and Västra Götaland (O) in 1998 by merging of two and three counties, respectively. In this process, the responsibility for regional development issues was transferred from the state authorities to the self-governing authorities on the regional level (prop 2009/10:156). To mark the significance of this, the newly created units were given the right to call themselves

Figure 1 – Present structure of Swedish regions and their official letter symbol



⁵ SALAR is the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions. A commission under SALAR had the mandate to negotiate and suggest a new regional solution with its members, and the solution was presented in march 2011, which then became the official proposal of SALAR (2011).

⁶ The island of Gotland is a county but since the whole island consists of only one municipality, the local authorities carries out the responsibilities of the county council and there is no middle-tier on Gotland.

regions (Swedish: *regioner*) – referring both to the CCs and the CABs simultaneously.

Two existing and much smaller counties, Gotland and Halland, was in 2011 also given the status as regions – a decision which in practice gave these counties immunity to further amalgamation processes⁷, at the same time as the regional experiments of Skåne and Västra Götaland were permanented (prop 2009/10:156). When the ongoing reform process is over it is likely that all counties will have transformed into regions. To avoid any terminological confusion, we will in the rest of the paper refer to all self-governing CC units on the regional level as *regions*, not to be mixed-up with the CABs.⁸

The ongoing reform process

Traditionally, Swedish regional politics is often regarded to take place in the shadow of national and local politics (Erlingsson 2009). The media interest is generally low, especially in regions where there is a lack of newspapers or TV-/radio stations that cover the whole region (Johansson & Danielsson 2010).

But when Sweden entered the European Union in 1995, the regional level had a political revival of sorts. Encouraged by the Europeanization and general globalization processes, regional bodies have since invented various forms of partnerships, innovation and governance structures in order to continue as legitimate service providers and to attract regional growth and bilateral networks; with other regions or in order to attract investment from the EU regional funds (Loughlin, Hendriks and Lidström 2010). It was in line with these trends that the regions of Skåne and Västra Götaland was given the mandate by the Swedish parliament (*Riksdagen*) to take over responsibilities concerning regional development issues.

Instigated by the European membership and the partial reforms of Västra Götaland and Skåne, the state commission *Investigation of Responsibilities (Ansvarsutredningen SOU 2007:10)* was given the assignment to make an overview of how public responsibilities should be distributed and, if necessary, produce proposals of necessary structural reforms.⁹ The commission was active during the years 2003 – 2007, and under the umbrella of the *Investigation of Responsibilities*, a consultant report in 2006 proposed that Sweden, in order to maximize economic growth, should redraw its regional territorial borders in order to end up with between six to fourteen regions.¹⁰ In the end the

⁷ At least in the short run – the future is yet to be seen.

⁸ Confusion is very likely to occur at this point, as the regions of Skåne, Västra Götaland, Halland and Gotland functions as CABs and CCs in parallel, a difference not easily discerned by the citizens.

⁹ Direktiv 2003:10. Översyn av strukturen och uppgiftsfördelningen inom samhällsorganisationen.

¹⁰ It was carried out by Nordregion and EuroFutures, http://www.sou.gov.se/pdf/Blandat/pdf_avslut_uttr/Sveriges%20regionala%20indelning.pdf

commission proposed a structural reform in line with this report. The proposal suggested that each region ideally should be formed so that it comprised a university hospital and roughly a similar number of inhabitants.

A general argument the *Investigation of Responsibilities* was that various governmental agencies one by one had developed various territorial maps on how they administered sectorial issues within the jurisdiction of each and every agency. In sum, it was hopeless to overview the administrative borders of all different authorities, it was referred to as the '*regional mishmash*', even though the 21 CABs going back to 1634 was a common denominator. The commission was composed by members from all parties in the national parliament, and the conclusion on regional reform was unanimous. But it soon it became clear that the conservative Moderate party opposed any regional reform.

The traditional position of the Moderates is that Sweden should abolish the self-governing middle tier of the government altogether, and even if the party has not purported this idea in the national debate for some time, it is obvious that strong forces within the party oppose any reform of the regional level that would strengthen it rather than reducing its importance.¹¹ As the Moderates dominates the government and are the holder of the offices of the Prime minister and the Finance minister, their opposition could not be ignored. On the other hand, all other established parties are positive to reform, and so is the SALAR. A report written on commission by SALAR in mars 2011 concludes:

"In all counties except from Stockholm there is a strong support behind the conclusion drawn by the Investigation of Responsibilities, in order to constitute larger regions with extended responsibilities" (The State in the Regional Issue, 2011 p. 5)

The primary motive of SALAR to further the regionalisation process is claimed to be strengthened conditions for health services and an increased influence in regional development and growth. Other supporting motives are claimed to be the need to create an organisation which can collaborate with a new state administration with regards to infrastructure, employment and innovation. The SALAR report also provides a suggested map of how the future regions of Sweden should look like, summing up to eight regions in total, and the commission who produced this proposal is informally referred to the *Wise Men*.¹² Therefore, we will refer to the SALAR commission as the *Wise Men* and their proposed regional dividing as *The Roadmap of the Wise Men* or *The Wise Men Model*. We will soon use this map in our analysis as a "most likely scenario".

¹¹ DN debate 2007-11-11 and DN 2008-03-01.

¹² The three commissioners were Roland Andersson (Former Chair of Executive board, Västra götaland, Social democrat), Jerker Swanstein (Former Chair of Executive board, Skåne, Moderate) and Kent Johansson (Former Member of Executive board, Västra götaland, Centre party).

But despite the positive stance from many of the involved actors, the solution of the conflict within the national government has hitherto been to explicitly decentralize the process to the regions. It is now up to them to build alliances with neighbors and put forth proposals of new amalgamated regions. Since a couple of years, all regions are involved in processes of doing just that (Eriksson 2009, Gustafsson & Karlsson 2010).¹³ The bottom-up approach to reform has, not surprisingly, a very strong support among regional political representatives (Karlsson 2010).

The Swedish regional issue: target for gerrymandering tactics?

The established term for the practice of establishing a political advantage for a particular party by manipulating geographic boundaries to create partisan election districts is “gerrymandering”.¹⁴ The possibility to manipulate district boundaries in order to secure election results is always an issue in countries that lack any leveling instrument within its election system. It is especially effective to gerrymander in single-winner systems with a first-past-the-post rule, where only a relative majority is needed for winning a district. Gerrymandering is generally seen as morally dubious, especially if it is carried out by the ruling parties in order to secure elections results in their own favor.¹⁵ But there are also arguments claiming that gerrymandering practices could have positive outcomes (Gelman & King 1994).

The Swedish election system is pretty much immune against gerrymandering. There is no way a constituency revision would affect the results in national elections, and it is likewise unlikely to happen in relation to regional elections. The reason for this is the use of “leveling seats” which secure that party mandates in Swedish parliaments are proportional to the popular vote in the whole electorate. But there is one way in which a creative cartographer could change the Swedish political map in favor of a political party or a coalition of parties, and that would be through a structural reform of municipalities and regions – and at present the discussion in Sweden regards changing a pattern that largely has prevailed since 1634.¹⁶

¹³ It should also be mentioned that in parallel with this process, another state commission is investigating the future of the regional state authorities. This commission should present its results by the end of 2011.

¹⁴ Elbridge Gerry was governor over Massachusetts, and when he in 1812 determined the outlines of boundaries of the districts of his states, they were said to resemble salamanders (hence the term Gerrymander).

¹⁵ Some countries with single-winner systems like the UK and Canada have decided that non-partisan institutions should be in control of necessary redistricting reforms, while this activity is still in the hands of the parties in the USA.

¹⁶ The use of the term gerrymandering when talking about regional reform rather than redistricting election constituencies is perhaps to stretch the meaning of it. But since the ultimate goal and much of the same logic is applied in either activity, we will continue to use the term gerrymandering in this paper when discussing the active manipulation of a regional structure in order to advance a political interest.

Since gerrymandering is very much a present phenomenon in the USA, where the Congress regularly needs to redraw the constituency borders along with population and demographic changes (Yoshinaka and Murphy 2011, p. 438), almost all research on the matter is dominated by US authors. The mathematics behind effective gerrymandering could be made very complicated and researchers have readily provided models for how party strategist should act while redistricting (Sherstyuk 1995; Owen & Grofman 1988). But the research field has also reputedly discovered that gerrymandering is not an easy business, and gerrymandered district do not always generate 'safe seats' (McCarty, Poole & Rosenthal 2009). Other authors conclude that gerrymandering leads to a loss in competitiveness between local candidates but strengthen party polarization (Mann 2007).

A terminology developed within this field is the gerrymandering strategies of "packing" and "cracking" (Friedman & Holden 2008; Puppe & Tasnádi 2009). To use packing in gerrymandering is to concentrate as many of opponent voters as possible into as few districts as possible. This districts will be secure seats for the opposition party but since opposition voters are more rare in all other districts, the overall victory of the own side is guaranteed. To gerrymander by cracking is to spread out the opposition voters in as many district as possible, but at the same time secure that the own side keeps a relative majority in all or most districts. In practice, the two strategies could be combined as when the opposition party are packed in minority of districts and cracked across a majority of the districts.

A skillful cracking could in theory create a landslide victory for a party which in reality has the support of a relatively small percentage of the electorate. But cracking also brings the question of risk into the equation since it normally is built on narrower margins in elections. Packing is thus a more secure strategy, but it will never lead to a complete victory. The American research on gerrymandering, including the strategies of packing and cracking, could to some extent be adapted on the case of the Swedish regional reform. But there are also great differences that we have to acknowledge before proceeding to our analysis.

Firstly, in this paper we are not talking about creating districts of seats in a parliament but regions with parliaments of their own. When gerrymandering election districts for a parliament, as substantial number of opponent seats could be tolerated as long as the own side wins the majority. But when we are gerrymandering a regional structure, each region where the own side does not win is a substantial loss. Secondly, the election systems in the USA and in Sweden are very different. While representatives in the US are elected in single-winner districts by a first past the post system, Swedish representatives are elected in a proportional system with multiple-winner districts and levelling mandates. In the US the largest party always wins a district, even with a small relative majority. The

seats in a regional council in Sweden will always be proportional to the party preferences of the regional electorate and small parties are always represented in accordance with their popularity among the voters. Thirdly, Sweden has a multiparty system where the US in practice has a two party system. This means that one party rarely could count on winning a majority in any district or region in Sweden.

As a consequence of this last circumstance, it is more feasible to base an analysis of Swedish political geography and potential gerrymandering strategies with party coalitions as the central actors.

Due to their size, two parties are dominating the political scene on both the national and the regional level in Sweden: the Social democrats and the Moderate party (conservative). The Left Party (socialists, former communists) and The Green party has on the national level been tightly associated with the Social democrats (the “Red-Greens”) but on the local and regional levels, the Greens are just as likely to align with parties to the right. The three centre/right parties are the Liberal Peoples’ Party, the Centre party (agrarians) and the Christian democrats. These three tend to have similar views in left-right issues, and since 2006 they are coalition members of the national government together with the Moderate party, and the coalition calls itself “Alliance for Sweden”. Today “Alliance”-coalitions are the most common ruling majorities on local and regional level in Sweden. The Sweden Democrats (populist nationalists) has recently gained prominence in Swedish politics, but all established parties have distanced themselves from the party and its controversial views on immigration. As a result the Sweden Democrats are not included in a ruling majority in any region or municipality.

On the local level, there is a great variety of coalitions between different parties. However on the regional level, most coalitions tend to follow the national pattern and either be based around the centre right parties of the Alliance for Sweden or the two Socialist parties to the left, with the Greens often controlling the balance of power.¹⁷

If the aim of gerrymandering is to control who will win an election in a future region rather than to maximize the election results of a particular party, the combined support for either the socialist parties (Social democrats and the left party – the “Left”.) or the Alliance for Sweden parties (Moderates, Liberals, Christian democrats and Centre party – the “Right”) should be in focus.

In the old days, most elections results would give a straight forward result; either the left or the right would win. But with Greens and Sweden Democrats gaining support during recent years, neither

¹⁷ The region of Västra Götaland was a prominent exception to this rule by forming a centre-left coalition for many years, but after the election of 2010 (and re-election of 2011) this region is also ruled by a Redgreen minority.

side could be certain of winning a majority in an election. But the side which has a relative majority, i.e. a larger support than the other side, generally has the larger chance of leading the executive and attracting support from the Greens. With this in mind, we have decided to illustrate the regional political geography of Sweden by using four categories: regions where Social democrats and the Left party have a majority of the votes (Left majority), regions where the Alliance for Sweden parties have a majority (Right majority) and regions where none of these have a majority of their own but where one of the sides is stronger than the other (Right stronger than left or Left stronger than right). It should here once again be noted that these categories are built on election results and does not reflect which coalitions that actually are or have been ruling the regions.

In our analysis we have chosen to include results from the four most recent regional elections. An alternative possibility would have been to just build the analysis on the most recent election. However, that would be to ignore the electoral fluctuation that takes place over time. Since the 1930s the Left has been most successful in elections on all levels of government, but the last two election periods the Right has been the stronger side.

In the following analysis we will try to answer how the political map of regional Sweden would change if a regional reform was implemented. The first step in this exercise is to describe the political geography within the present system. The next step is to investigate how the present situation would change in a most likely scenario (the Roadmap of the Wise Men), and the third step is to engage in the art of gerrymandering and study the potential outcomes of a fully partisan reform.

Step I: The political map of Swedish region in the present system






The election results in Swedish regions 1998-2010 are summarized in Table 1. In this period 84 elections have been held in the 21 regions. Of these 84 elections, 32 have ended in a regional council with a light leaning majority (or relative majority), 48 leaned to the left and 4 ended with an even result. 42 elections (50 percent) ended in a result with a clear majority for either the left or the right side, while the other 42 elections ended in a result where no side had a majority of their own.

Over time, the number of regions where no side has a majority of their own has increased. What has happened during this period of time is that parties traditionally not affiliated with either the left or the right side has grown stronger, especially the Greens and the Sweden Democrats but also some regional parties.¹⁸

¹⁸ The average share of *other parties'* votes in 1998 was 7,7 percent (across all regions), while the corresponding number at the regional elections in 2010 was 9,8 percent. This pattern is well documented for the Swedish national elections (Holmberg & Oscarsson 2004), as well as the municipal elections (Wörlund 1999; Bäck 2003; Loxbo 2008).

Table 1. Election result in Swedish regions 1998 – 2010.

Regions	1998			2002			2006			2010		
	Left %	Right %		Left %	Right %		Left %	Right %		Left %	Right %	
AB Stockholm	40	53		44	50		34	56		32	55	
C Uppsaa	45	48		45	47		38	52		37	49	
D Södermanland	53	40		54	41		48	44		43	43	
E Östergötland	48	45		49	44		39	42		39	42	
F Jönköping	42	53		44	52		40	54		38	52	
G Kronoberg	46	49		47	48		43	51		40	49	
H Kalmar	49	48		48	48		46	47		46	45	
I Gotland (municipality)	41	46		48	44		40	50		41	47	
K Blekinge	54	41		53	41		48	42		44	39	
M Skåne	43	45		46	43		39	47		34	47	
N Halland	38	51		41	52		36	54		33	54	
O Västra Götaland	44	45		44	44		40	47		37	45	
S Värmland	54	42		44	35		48	39		46	39	
T Örebro	55	40		55	39		51	41		51	39	
U Västmanland	54	41		54	40		44	44		45	41	
W Dalarna	52	41		50	41		45	44		44	41	
X Gävleborg	57	37		48	41		46	41		44	38	
Y Västernorrland	55	31		55	33		50	37		46	38	
Z Jämtland	54	40		52	38		48	45		48	42	
AC Västerbotten	56	37		56	39		53	40		55	37	
BD Norrbottens läns landsting	59	23		50	22		51	25		52	24	

 = Left majority
  =Left wing largest minority
  =Right wing largest minority
  = Right majority
  =Even game

This is the reality which has formed Swedish regional politics during the last 13 years. In step II we will use the map drawn by the Wise men in March 2011 as a most likely scenario for future regional reform and show how Swedish regional councils would have looked like if the proposal had been implemented in 1998.

Step II: The Roadmap of the Wise Men reflecting regional election results 1998 – 2010

The differences between the actual regional election results in the present structure and the hypothetical results of the Wise Men Model are illustrated in Table 2.

The election wind blew to the left this year and 46,5 percent of the Swedes voted for the left parties and 45,0 percent for the right parties. 62 percent of the councils in the present system leaned left this year and 48 percent leaned right. However, only 38 percent of the Swedes lived in a left leaning region. If the Wise Men model had been in place, 38 percent of the regions would have left leaning councils but 49 percent of the Swedes would live in left leaning regions. The Wise Men model would

thus benefit the left in terms of citizens ruled over, but it would benefit the right in terms of percentage of regions ruled.

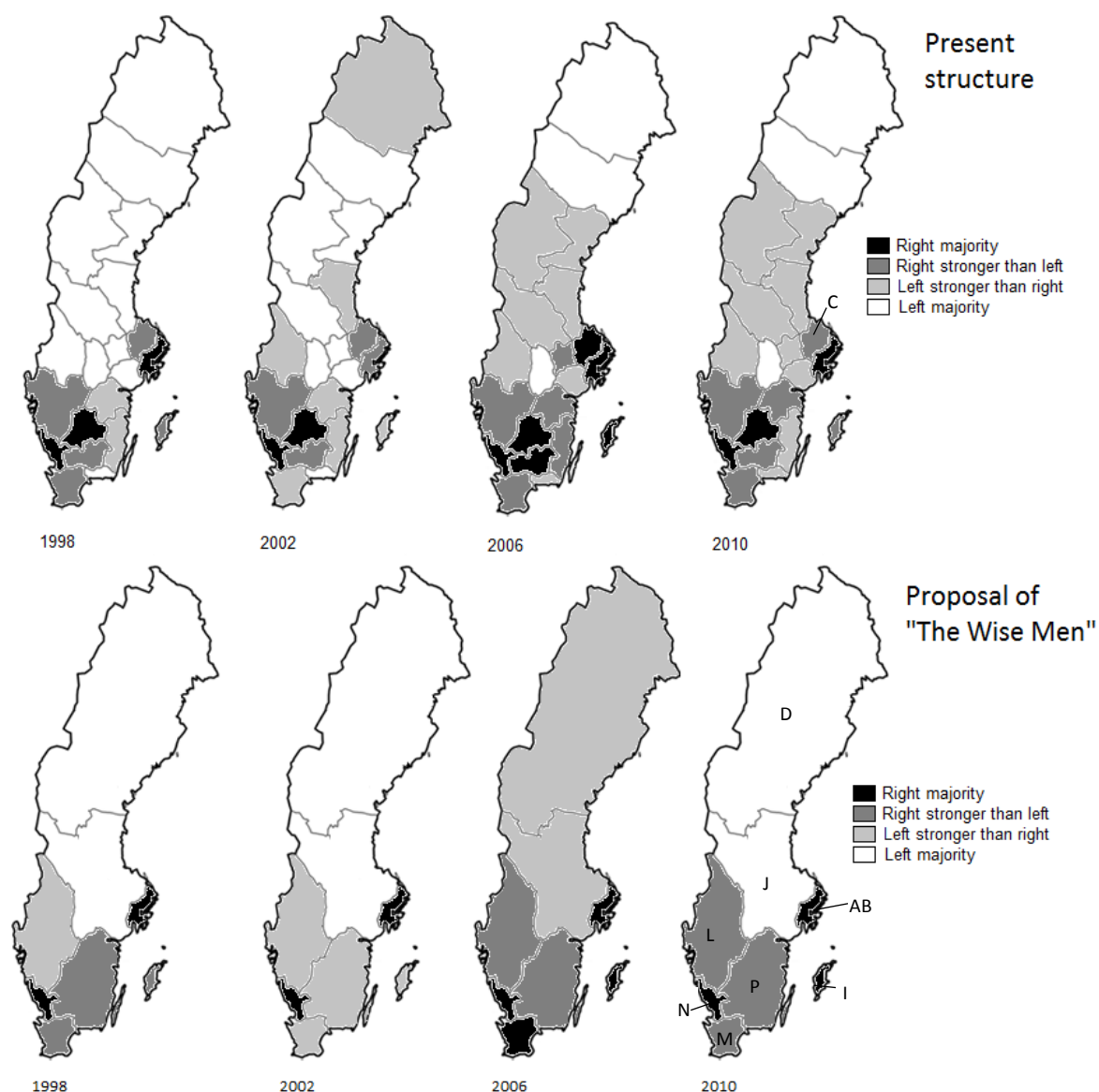
Next we turn to the 2002 results. This year was even stronger for the left side as 46,9 of the Swedish voters supported parties to the left and 43,8 percent supported parties to the right. 71 percent of the regions had left leaning councils and 50 percent of the Swedes lived in left leaning regions. In a world where the Wise men proposal had been implemented, 75 percent of the regions would have been left leaning and 76 percent of the Swedes would have lived in a left leaning region. The Wise Men Model would undoubtedly favor the left parties in 2002.

In the 2006 the election wind blew in favor of the right. 47,3 percent of the Swedes voted for parties to the right and 41,0 percent voted for parties to the left. Within the present structure, 53 percent of the regions were leaning right, and 74 percent of the Swedes lived in these regions. If the Wise men model had been implemented, 75 percent of the regions would have been leaning to the right and 72 percent of the Swedes would have lived in these regions. This means that the outcomes of the 2006 would have been very similar in the Wise Men Model compared to the Present Model.

In the 2010 elections, which started the ongoing election period, the election wind was continuously blowing right. 46,0 percent of the Swedes voted for parties to the right in the 2010 elections and 38,8 percent voted for parties to the left. As of today, 43 percent of the regions have right leaning councils and 68 percent of the Swedes live in these regions. If the Wise Men model was implemented today, 63 percent of the regions would be leaning right and 73 percent of the Swedes would live in these regions. The results indicate that the Wise Men Model would not alter the political geography that much in 2010, at least in terms of how many Swedes are living in left or right leaning regions.

The comparison between two models clearly indicates that the present structure would heavily benefit the left in terms of number of regions ruled. Since 1998, 50 of the 84 regional councils in the present system (60 percent) have leaned to the left while only 13 of 32 (41 percent) of the regions would do the same if the Wise Men Model had been implemented. The Present Model consists of a number of right leaning small regions in Northern and Middle Sweden that would disappear in an amalgamation reform, and this is the main explanation for these differences.

Table 2. Present results from *regional county elections* 1998 – 2010 (upper row) and likely outcomes if the proposed *Roadmap of the Wise Men* had been laid out already in 1998 (below).



	Election results 1998						Election results 2002						Election results 2006						Election results 2010					
	Present structure			Wise Men proposal			Present structure			Wise Men proposal			Present Structure			Wise Men proposal			Present structure			Wise Men proposal		
	N	%	V%	N	%	V%	N	%	V%	N	%	V%	N	%	V%	N	%	V%	N	%	V%	N	%	V%
Left Majority	11	52	31	2	25	29	8	38	21	2	25	28	3	14	9	0	0	0	3	14	9	1	13	10
Left Stronger	2	10	7	1	13	20	7	33	30	4	50	48	7	33	18	2	25	28	9	43	23	1	13	18
Right Stronger	5	24	35	3	38	28	4	19	43	0	0	0	5	24	40	2	25	34	6	29	40	3	38	48
Right Majority	3	14	27	2	25	23	2	10	7	2	25	24	6	29	34	4	50	38	3	14	28	2	25	25
Total	21	100	100	8	100	100	21	100	100	8	100	100	21	100	100	8	100	100	21	100	100	8	100	100

N = number of counties/regions

% = percentage of counties/regions

V%=percentage of the Swedish electorate within the borders of these counties/regions

But in terms of citizens ruled over, the Wise men model seem to benefit the left, at least in years when the election wind is blowing in that direction. On average over the four years, 37 percent of the Swedes have lived in left leaning regions and 63 percent in right leaning regions in the present structure. With the Wise Men model, the same shares would have been 45 percent in left leaning and 55 percent in right leaning councils.

Let us now push the discussion a little further and in step iii take a closer look at the “mostly wished scenarios” from a national standpoint, given that you in a rational-choice manner want to maximize the number of i) left-wing regions, or ii) right-wing dominated regions.

Step III: The art of gerrymandering Swedish regions, and its implications

In the next section of this paper we will conduct a contra factual experiment. By assumptions of rational maximization¹⁹, we will try to construct regional solutions that would be the most attractive to the political left and the political right respectively, and the way of determining the desirability of a future regional reform is to examine which kind of election results it would have produced if it was implemented 13 years ago.

On the surface, gerrymandering Sweden looks like an easy task. Historically, the election result may have produced different majorities in the same region, but the underlying political geography is fairly constant. The party selection of Swedish voters is continuously strongly dependent on “class voting” (Oskarsson 1994), and the socio-economic structures that determines the social status of voters is interwoven with the economic geography, changing only very slowly. Territories where the left or the right have their strongest support is roughly the same as 90 years ago (Berglund & Dellenbrandt 1986).

The left is continuously stronger in Northern and Middle Sweden, provinces that comprise two thirds of the land area of the country, but a much smaller proportion of the population. Parties to the right are dominating the politics in The Greater Stockholm area, including the Stockholm (AB) and Uppsala

¹⁹ To presuppose the occurrence of gerrymandering in a reform process is to ascribe utilitarian rationality to the actors involved. Rationality is not always present in political processes. In a regional reform several “irrational” motives for actions are visible, such as identity politics and a general unwillingness to change anything. But if we acknowledge this and assume that the involved actors may have rational reasons for seeking different outcomes of a regional reform, party interest and voter maximization is definitely one aspect to account for. The rational actors are in this case party representatives, or representatives for coalitions of parties. However, it is here important to remember that parties are multi-level organizations. Party actors are present both on the national, regional and local levels in a multi-level manner. The party as a whole and its leadership is often focused as the top prize of politics: winning the national elections and implementing its policies on the national arena. But one should not underestimate the fact that party representatives on regional and local levels could have very different goals from their party affiliations on the national level. The definition of what is in the interest of the party could vary depending on which level a party strategist is placed on.

(C). The right is also traditionally stronger in Southern and Western Sweden, especially in the counties of Halland (N) and Jönköping (F). The east coast of Southern Sweden is leaning more to the left.

However, even if this political geography is fairly consistent and easy to identify, it is no simple matter to draw political maps which would permanently benefit either side. In conducting of our contrafactual experiment of gerrymandering the Swedish regions, we have identified three major choices that a political strategist with gerrymandering ambitions would have to face:

- 1) should the gerrymandering be orchestrated towards benefitting a *singular party*, or a *coalition* of parties,
- 2) should the gerrymandering be directed towards maximizing the *number of regions* ruled by a party/coalition, or maximizing the *number of citizens ruled over*? A winning tactic in the first case would be to create a number of relatively small regions which are ruled by the preferred side and concentrating the opponents in fewer and possibly larger regions.
- 3) should the gerrymanderer maximize towards a limited number of secure regions for the foreseeable future and leave unsecure territories aside, or should the gerrymander aim at directing larger regions but with more narrow margins? With other words, how high *risks* are the political strategist willing to take, or does the gerrymanderer choose a *packing strategy* (low risk) or a *cracking strategy* (high risk)?

We purport that which choices a political strategist would make in these three aspects, depend on several factors tied to the political system in question and on which level the strategist is based on.

The first choice, between maximizing the votes of parties or coalitions, would depend on the party structure and election system of the country in question. The latter strategy would probably be more likely to be found in a multi-party system like that of Sweden and its regions. In our contrafactual experiment we assume a focus on the two traditional political sides in Swedish politics: the left (Social democrats and The Left party) and the right (The Alliance for Sweden parties: Moderates, Liberals, Christian democrats and The Centre party).

The second choice depends on the construction and role of the multi-level system. In a federal system, with a federal chamber of parliament dedicated to the self-governing regions/states, the actual number of regions won would be much more significant than how many citizens are ruled over by either political side; especially if the regions differ largely in size. But in a unitary state like Sweden, where the number of regions won is of no importance of its own, the number of citizens ruled over

is probably the mostly preferred option for a party strategist. In our experiment, we therefore assume voter maximization (by population numbers) rather than the number of regions.²⁰

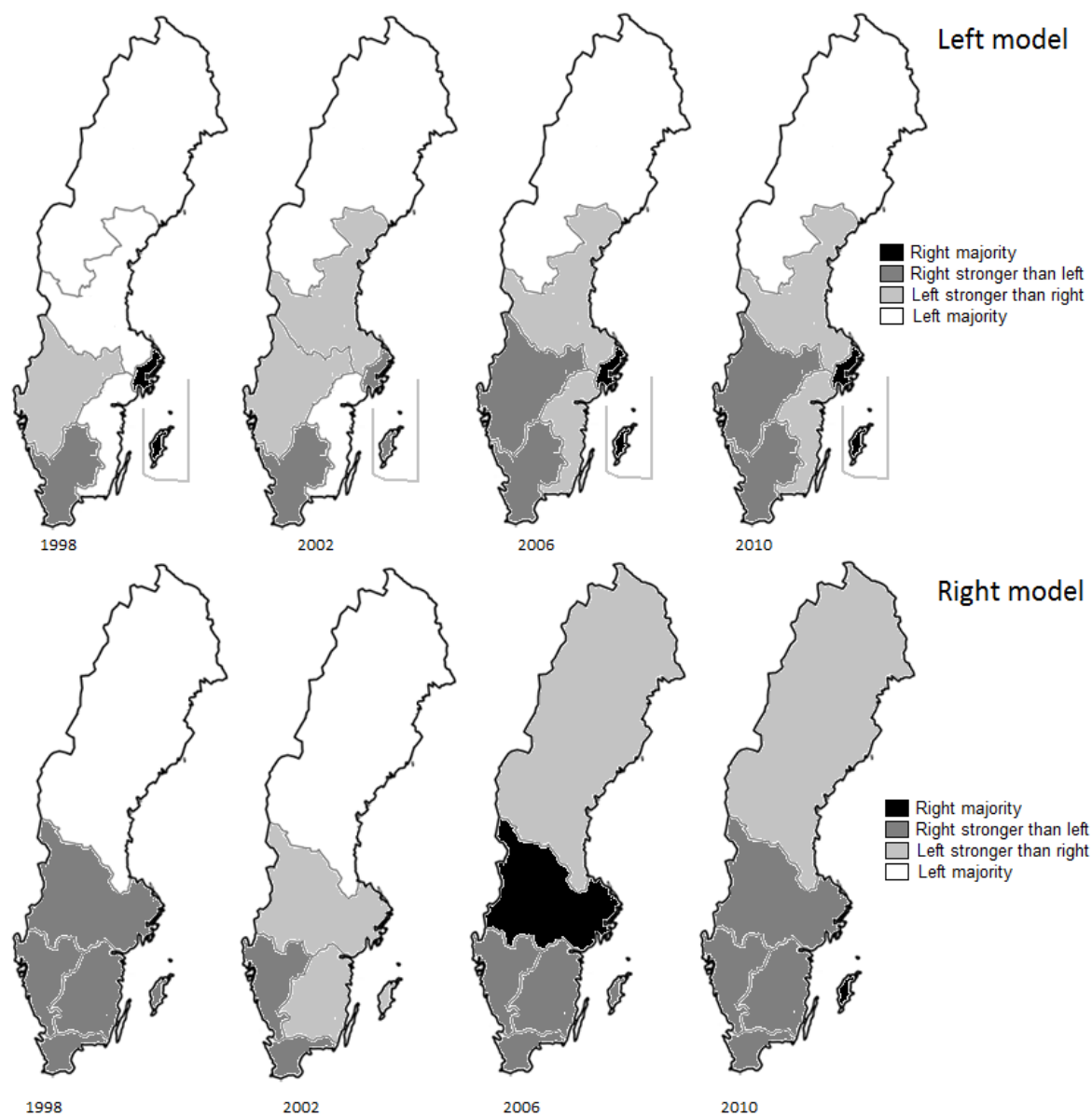
Table 3. A model of national gerrymandering tactics

	High risk – winning large areas in good years, risking losing large parts in bad years	Low risk – securing sufficient numbers of strongholds, but concede large areas to the opposition
Maximizing number of regions ruled over	A	C
Maximizing number of citizens ruled over	B	D

The third choice concerning the level of risk-taking in constructing new regions would probably depend on the relation between state and region within a multi-level political system. In a system where the state is heavily dependent on regional authorities to implement national politics, it is of vital importance to maximize the areas and citizens ruled over. To rule regions in only parts of the country is not enough. However, in systems where the distribution of responsibilities between state and region are more separated, this aspect is less important from a national perspective. Regions ruled by the national opposition under these circumstances do not threaten the national government in the same way. Instead the secure rule of certain strongholds could be seen as relatively more important, especially as an insurance in times when the own political side is in opposition on the national level. In such times, a secure regional stronghold could function as a political base and store window of alternative politics. As the Swedish multi-level system is based on strong ties and vague boundaries between state and regional politics, we assume the more risky strategy in our contrafactual experiment. The common elections day of Sweden would also make it likely that if you succeed in winning the majority of in national election, then you are likely to have the margins on your side in a number of regions with traditionally narrow majorities as well. To win the national elections but have a large number of regions ruled by the opposition would be a great obstacle in implementing national policies. Our assumptions can be illustrated as Table 3 below, where strategy B will direct us in the subsequent experiment, assumed from a national gerrymander strategy.

²⁰ Additionally, the choice between number of regions ruled and number of citizens ruled over would certainly also be affected of which political level the political strategist is active on. For the regional party representatives who at present are making their minds up regarding different amalgamation alternatives, this aspect is potentially of great importance. To accept a fusion with another region might directly affect the possibility to secure the re-election of such a representative. On the national level, the preservation of a particular region is of secondary importance. A national strategist would see the larger picture and think of regional reform as winning and sacrificing different parts of the land to maximize the ultimate goals of a greater good. An actor on the regional level is likely to be less open to self-sacrifice for a greater good, especially if the electoral situation in the present model is beneficial.

Table 4. Optimized map proposals for Left model (upper row) and Right model (below), with examples of election results 1998 – 2010.



	Election results 1998						Election results 2002						Election results 2006						Election results 2010					
	Left model			Right model			Left model			Right model			Left model			Right model			Left model			Right model		
	N	%	V%	N	%	V%	N	%	V%	N	%	V%	N	%	V%	N	%	V%	N	%	V%	N	%	V%
Left Majority	3	50	32	1	20	14	2	33	19	1	20	13	1	17	7	0	0	0	1	17	7	1	20	0
Left Stronger	1	17	26	0	0	0	2	33	38	2	40	53	2	33	24	1	20	13	2	33	24	0	0	13
Right Stronger	1	17	21	4	80	86	2	33	43	2	40	33	2	33	47	3	60	48	2	33	47	4	80	87
Right Majority	1	17	21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	17	22	1	20	39	1	17	22	0	0	0
Total	6	100	100	5	100	100	6	100	100	5	100	100	6	100	100	5	100	100	6	100	100	5	100	100

N = number of counties/regions

% = percentage of counties/regions

V%=percentage of the Swedish electorate within the borders of these counties/regions

Gerrymandering Swedish regions – a contra factual experiment

In the following analysis, the question we seek to answer is which regional structure would over the long haul mostly benefit either political side (The Left Model and The Right Model), and how big the differences in outcome would be if either of these two models were realized.

The identification of The Left and The Right Models has not been based on a selection from all mathematically possible solutions. It is quite likely that there are other alternative models that marginally would produce stronger results for either side. But the two models presented here are developed with two objectives in mind, A) to produce a map that *over time is more beneficial* for each side and B) that the model should be a *realistic alternative*, or at least not unrealistic.²¹ As for step II before, we take a contra factual approach and compare how the election results would have turned out if the reforms had been implemented in 1998.

Starting by taking the role of a left side gerrymandering strategist creating *The Left Model*; one major problem immediately arises when looking at the Swedish political map: The Stockholm region (AB) is a stronghold for the right and encompasses a high number of citizens. To find a model that would merge a sufficiently large number of left leaning regions with Stockholm in order to put the capital under leftist control is not realistic, since it would mean to merge Stockholm in a region that would cover all parts of Sweden to the north of Stockholm. And such a super region of the North would only be leaning left in 1998 and 2002, meaning that that Stockholm and all land north thereof would be controlled by the right in 2006 and 2010. This model is not only unrealistic; it is a very risky strategy for a left wing strategist.

Another very realistic alternative that have been widely discussed is to create a Greater Stockholm region, including all counties around Lake Mälaren. However, this would be disastrous from a leftist point of view since a number of traditionally left leaning counties would be put under a more or less permanent rule by the right, due to the strength of the right in the populous Stockholm. Instead, the optimal strategy for a left side gerrymandering strategist would be to contain Stockholm within its present borders and secure the surrounding areas for leftist control.

One trait of the Wise Men Model that was very favorable to the left side was the amalgamation of right leaning Uppsala (C) to a number of left leaning counties in North and North West. This solution is kept in our Left Model as we put Uppsala (C), Dalarna (W), Gävleborg (X) and Västernorrland (Y) in the same region. A couple of the left leaning counties in Middle-Sweden which the Wise Men put together with Uppsala, Örebro (T) and Västmanland (U), we have instead reserved for an amalgamation

²¹ Salamander like regions à la Elbridge Gerry are not likely alternatives for Swedish regions.

with Västra Götaland (O) and Värmland (S). The reason for this is that with such a construction, the populous Western Sweden would be under leftist control during the elections periods where the socialist parties were more successful, such as in 1998 and 2002. In election years when parties to the right are more successful the balance between the two sides would be very even. However, the whole region is also at risk of being lost to the right parties, as would have been the case in 2006 and 2010. An alternative model could be to secure Värmland (S), Västmanland (U) and Örebro (T) to a left leaning region in Middle-Sweden. But such a strategy would leave the populous Västra Götaland in the hands of the right for the foreseeable future. A gambling leftist strategy is therefore to make a map that put Västra götaland under leftist rule when the national election wind blows to the left, and be content with even results in when the wind blows in the other direction.

The East coast south of Stockholm is also traditionally either left leaning or even between the two sides. A region covering the present counties of Södermanland (D), Östergötland (E), Kalmar (H) and Blekinge (K) would during the whole period 1998-2010 be controlled by the left side. The small region of Gotland (I) is mostly right leaning and it would be wise from a leftist perspective to leave it out of any East coast region, and in this model Gotland is merged with Stockholm (AB), which also is a realistic alternative that has been considered in the regional debate. Left out would be the traditionally right leaning counties of Jönköping (F), Kronoberg (G) and Halland (N), which in this model are merged with Skåne (M), into a permanent right leaning reservation. The remaining counties of Northern Sweden (Norrbotten BD, Västerbotten AC and Jämtland Z) are put into a secure left leaning area.

If we then change party affiliation and try to draw a regional map that would benefit the parties to the right (*The Right Model*), we would obviously try to avoid some of the solutions chosen in the Left Model. For instance, Stockholm (AB) should not be isolated and Uppsala (C) should not left by its own in a great leftist region. Instead both these counties is in The Right Model used to tilt a large Middle-Sweden region (including Södermanland , Västmanland, Örebro, Värmland and Dalarna) to the right. To avoid a left leaning East coast, the traditionally right leaning counties Gotland, Kronoberg and Jönköping should be included in an East Sweden region (which thereby will be larger than its counterpart in the hypothetical Left Model). In The South, a merging of the right leaning larger Skåne and the left leaning smaller Blekinge, would produce a normally right leaning region of Southern Sweden.

During the four election periods studied, 1998-2014, The Right Model would produce right leaning regional councils in three out of four elections in regions of Middle-Sweden, The East coast and South Sweden.

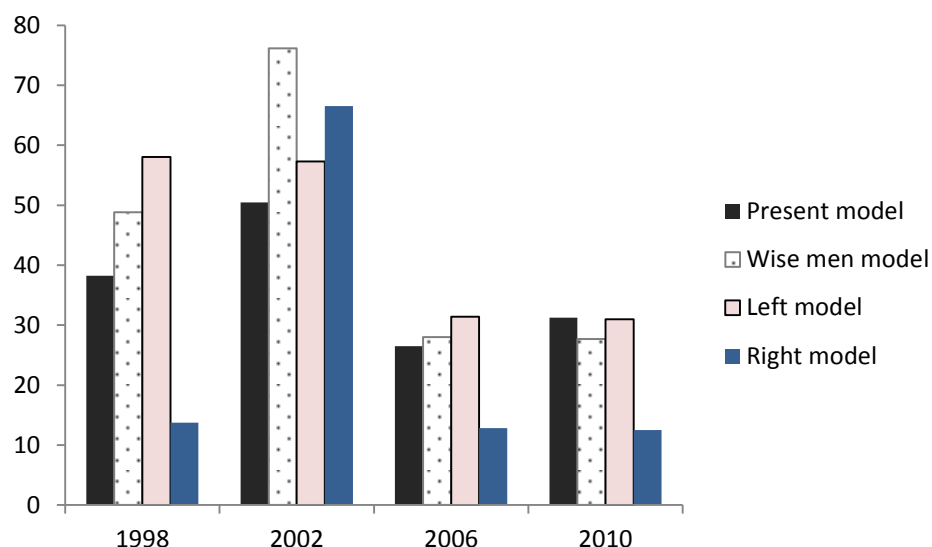
The large present region of Västra Götaland (O) normally produces even election results, but usually with a tilt to the right. By adding the smaller but steadily conservative Halland (N) to the larger Västra Götaland, the new region of the West Coast would have been controlled by the right through all four election periods.

Northern Sweden is forever lost for the Right and it is in this model made into a left leaning reservation; the reasoning here being that even if Northern Sweden comprise a large part of the land geographically, only a fraction of the national population who live there. It is now time to draw some conclusions from these excursions by answering two questions: How different are these two partisan models? And how far from the Present Model and the Wise Men Model are the Left and the Right models? Table 5 and Figure 2 summarize results that answer these questions.

Table 5. Percentage of the Swedish electorate living in regions where a the majority (or relative majority) of the council is comprised by parties to the left (Social democrats, Left party) by election year

Election year	Present model (PM)	Wise men model (WM)	<i>Diff. WM-PM</i>	Left Model (LM)	<i>Diff. LM-PM</i>	Right Model (RM)	<i>Diff. RM-PM</i>	<i>Diff. RM-LM</i>
1998	38	49	+11	58	+20	14	-25	-44
2002	50	76	+26	57	+7	67	+16	+9
2006	27	28	+1	31	+5	13	-14	-19
2010	31	28	-4	31	+/- 0	13	-19	-18
Mean	37	45	+9	44	8	26	-10	-18

Figure 2. Percentage of the Swedish electorate living in regions where a the majority (or relative majority) of the council is comprised by parties to the left (Social democrats, Left party) by election year



The results show that in three out of four election periods the Right Model would be the most beneficial for the parties to the right; while the Left Model would be the most beneficial for parties to the left in two out of four periods. The differences between the Right and Left models would have been largest during the 1998-2002 election period. In the election of 1998, when 46,5 percent of the Swedish electorate voted for a socialist party and 45,0 percent voted for a party to the right. In the Left Model 58 percent of the electorate would have lived in a region dominated by left parties after this election, which is 44 percentage points more than what would have been the case in a right model structure. This is of course a remarkable difference.

In the elections of 2006 and 2010 the differences between the Right and the Left Model are smaller. Even so, close to a fifth of the Swedish electorate that would have lived in a left leaning region if the Left Model was implemented, would – if the Right Model was adapted, live in a right leaning region. The most surprising and revealing results of this analysis concern the election period of 2002-2006. After the 2002 elections, the Right Model would have produced a situation where 67 percent of the Swedes lived in a left leaning region. This is substantially more than would be the case under the Left Model – which is deliberately created to benefit the parties to the left! Why is this so?

The answer lies in the gambling aspect of the model construction. Both Models were created with the premise that a larger region with a consistent by narrow majority for the own side is better than a smaller region with a larger and more secure majority. The risk of the narrowness of such a model is that in election years when the opponents are unusually successful nationally, then an all-covet-all-lose-situation can occur. In 2002, the right lost three hypothetical regions of the Right Model that

would normally have been secure. In 1998, when the national election results were similar but the left's success was slimmer, then all these hypothetical regions would have been controlled by the right.

In comparison with the Present Model and the Wise Men Model, the Right Model would produce a situation radically more favorable for the right in three out of four election periods (the exception being 2002-06). The Left Model would produce a more favorable situation for the left parties compared to the Present Model during the whole period, but the differences in the last two elections would have been very small. Normally, the Left Model would also be more favorable to the left party compared with the Wise Men Model, but not in the exceptional election year of 2002 where regions that normally are secure for the right were swayed to the left in a way that greatly resembles what would simultaneously have happened in a Right Model system.

Concluding discussion – What if gerrymandering ambitions blend into the ongoing process?

A question that puzzled us during this study is, why did Sweden *not* follow Denmark, Finland and Norway in order to direct the hospital services to the state responsibility with a simple stroke of a pen? To analyze why the issue of regional redistricting was decentralized to the regions, alongside with SALAR which acts as an active mediator and proponent of the reform, could be the focus of a future study, but what we clearly can conclude here is that the *Regional issue* in Sweden includes a bouquet of considerations, each one tricky for the Moderate led Alliance government to deal with.²²

Redistricting processes are not a day-to-day business in the state of Sweden. But it is very likely that the on-going discussion behind closed doors will result in a reform changing the regional political game for the next coming century(-ies). Before such a decision, careful consideration should take place over the possible consequences of various values allowed into the final moment of decision.

First; gerrymandering is basically an American phenomenon reflecting changing population balances in constituencies and districts recruiting for the, which follows from the regular census in the US, when the population is counted house by house.²³ In the US, the redistricting activities takes place to

²² Possible reasons why the *Regional issue* was handed over to SALAR could be that the newly elected Alliance government, who in effect got into power in 2007, wanted to buy time. An easy solution, also exercised in Norway but for Local government issues, was to hand the portfolio over to SALAR. During the summer 2011, at the time of writing, there are indications that the time is ripe for the government to step in again.

²³ In Sweden, the national population statistics keeps track of every birth-record, emigrating and immigrating persons, as well as those dying off, and in the end the constituencies can be adjusted by leveling seats after every election in order to mirror the "true" voting results.

secure the representation at the Federal House of Representatives, an exercise that is not in focus for the present regional reform in Sweden. Therefore, to transfer the US discussion on gerrymandering into the Swedish *regional issue discourse* could risk the initial reform motivations, if the legitimacy of the process is punctuated.²⁴ Our interpretation is that such a reform ought to be legitimate over the next coming centuries in a broad sense; therefore discussions on which political coalition who would gain or lose on either bordering suggestion should not direct the final regional re-mapping decision.

In order to maximize politically stable governments, the roadmap of the Wise Men secured 4 of the suggested 8 regions as either clear left or clear right in all election periods 1998 – 2010, while the present system generated clear right/left majorities in 14/10/8/6 out of 21 counties during the time period. This means that unclear governments were allowed in up to 71 per cent of the counties (Table 2). If political and fiscal stability is preferred, the proposal of the Wise men is clearly preferred - seen from the overall picture, and a national standpoint.

Second, *if* a political strategist would find him or herself inspired by the American debate on the topic, he or she needs have the preference pattern of the competing parties clear

- i) Do competing parties optimize for a single party or for a coalition of parties;
- ii) Is maximum number of regions the mostly desired outcome, or to rule the maximum number of people?
- iii) Should a packing strategy be employed (involving less risks), or a cracking strategy (high risk but high rewards for the winner)?

Depending on which party the gerrymander strategist belongs to, he or she would come up with different preference orderings. In our analysis at step III, we assumed a high-risk strategy (cracking), to maximize the number of people ruled over, but also risking large areas to coalitions when the political wind is calm, close to the median voter. What we display in our ‘experiments’ to maximize the map-solutions either for the Left or the Rights, is that the Stockholm (AB) borders fixed at the present solution, would most likely favor the Left, as a large share of the East coast (apart from the AB-region) will be left. If Stockholm (AB) would get packed up together with Uppsala (C), Södermanland (D), Västmanland (U), Örebro (T), Värmland (S) and Dalarna (W), the region would instead turn left in

²⁴ Reasons that could disrupt the legitimacy are disrupted representation (Yoshinaka & Murphy 2011), cracking strategies could foster political instability at elections and in between of elections (Yoshinaka & Murphy 2011), and increase voters’ perceptions on the political system per se, which could harm voting turnouts (Mann 2007). Others argue that redistricting could produce increased political polarization (McCarthy, Poole & Rosenthal 2009; Carson, Crespin & Rohde 2007), but that is given a majoritarian voting system, or “first past the post-system”, which is not the case in the Swedish proportional context.

three out of four cases. In the south-west coast, the left solution is to pack Västra Götaland (O) together with Värmland (S), but this strategy only pays off in half of the cases. If Västra Götaland instead is packed together with Halland (N), it would maximize the wishes of the right. Similarly, the south-eastern coast is mixed, where the territories of Östergötland (E), Jönköping (F), Kronoberg (G), Kalmar (H) and Blekinge (K) displays a politically mixed-up landscape, depending on how the borders are drawn. All in all, the right model also leaves more opportunities to unsure coalition rule than the left model, as the left model have secured right and left dominance in the north and in Stockholm (except for 2002), while the right model secures a right majority only once, in 2006, in the 'mid-Sweden-region' and Gotland (I)²⁵ in the last election 2010. All other regions are either left to grey unsure minority rule, or to the opposition (the Northern parts). Maximizing the regional maps with a cracking strategy in mind, could therefore be a rather dubious business.

In this paper, we have primarily conducted an experiment of thoughts, applying the tactics of gerrymandering into the regionalization process in Sweden, yet not knowing which the outcome finally will be.²⁶ By applying the actual election data from 1998 up to 2010, we have discussed the various outcomes with the present system, the roadmap of the Wise men and possible risk-maximization solutions pursued by national gerrymander strategists of either left or right conviction. Our discussions shed light to the crucial territories to negotiate, where the key lock-ins probably are in the Stockholm/Uppsala regions and Västra Götaland/Halland in West Sweden. We suggest, that over time, if the maximum number of voters should be satisfied and respect the regional territorial map, it should be arranged in such a way that both the left parties *and* the right wing coalition parties are satisfied – a 'double-packing' strategy in order to secure the interests of both the right and the left side combined. Such a strategy would make it relatively harder for smaller local/regional parties to affect the political rule of a region, whether the parties arise for a single election period or under the package of Nationalist sympathies. More respected coalition partners, such as the Greens, could easily negotiate with either the right or the left, and such a strategy would not be directed towards them. If political stability is pursued, we suggest the solution of the Wise men is the best option presented so far. But in the end, many other strategies may mix into the final decision, and the future remains yet to be seen.

²⁵ Constituted by some 50 000 inhabitants.

²⁶ If a final decision to redraw the regional maps is to this date unknown. However, we estimate that a) Swedish government will not let the *regional mishmash* halt at its present state, and b) it would be very unlikely that the regional CCs would cover *different* territories than the regional CABs. We believe, when change is coming, the government will apply parallel logics, as was the case with Skåne and Västra Götaland. It is possible to leave for example two regional CCs within a state governed CAB, but this solution doesn't seem plausible.

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