



THE IMPACT OF THE MIGRATION CRISIS ON THE RISE OF EUROSCEPTICISM

CASE STUDIES OF ITALY, SWEDEN AND
POLAND

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SCIENCES PO STRASBOURG

INTRODUCTION

- « Migration crisis » from 2010 to 2016
- Did the migration crisis of 2015 decisively strengthen Euroscepticism in Europe?
- An analysis of Eurobarometer data between 2009 and 2017 finds no statistically significant effect of immigration levels on individual Eurosceptic attitudes, Eddy S. F. Yeung (2021)



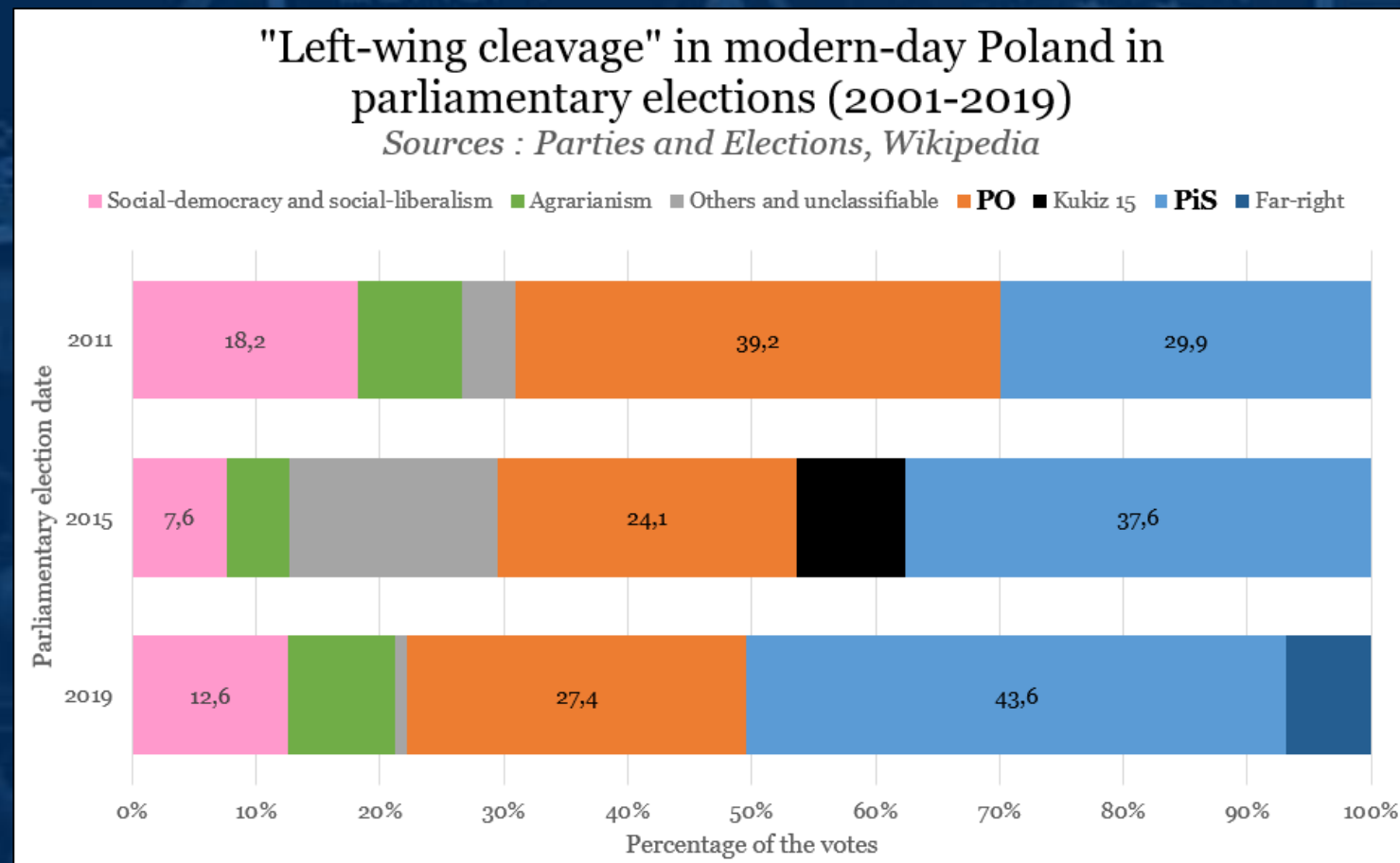


AXIS 1

EUROSCEPTICISM AS A RESULT OF THE
DOMESTICATION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS INTO THE
NATIONAL POLITICAL AGENDA BY FAR-RIGHT AND
POPULIST POLITICAL PARTIES

AXIS 1 POLAND

2015 : the PiS wins the parliamentary elections with an anti-immigration discourse



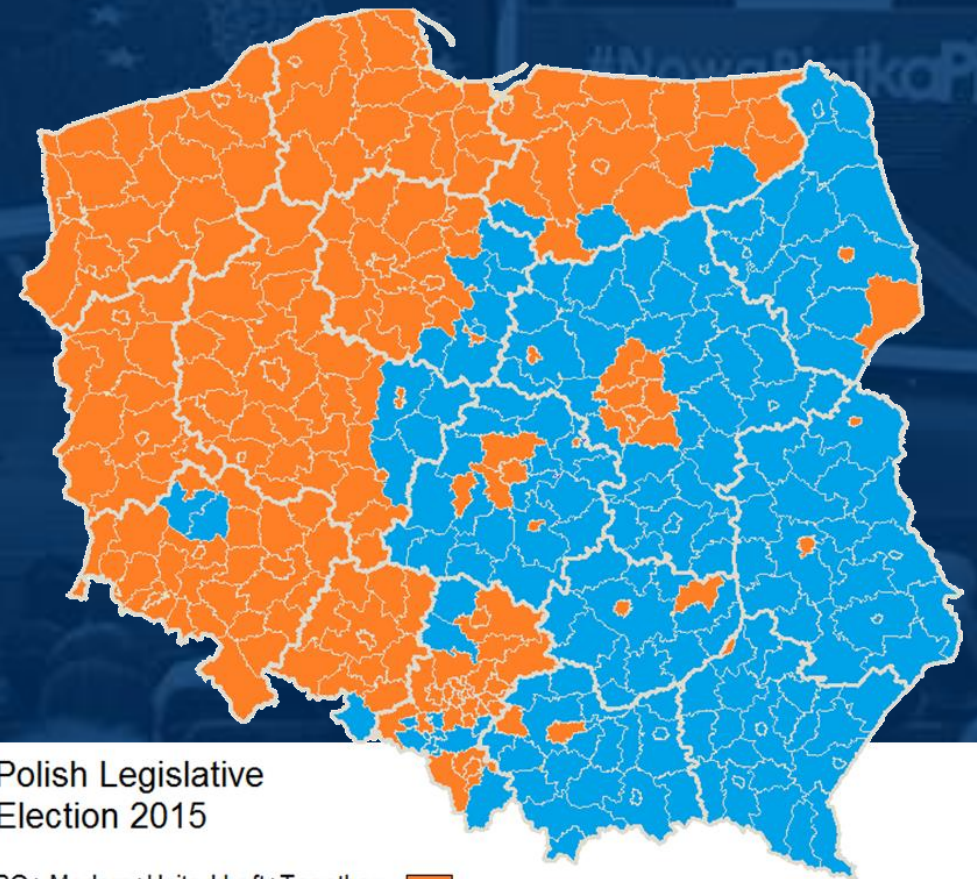
AXIS 1 POLAND

PRACA
Wyższe Koszty
Uzyskania Przychodu
I niższy PIT

POLSKA
SERCEM
EUROPY

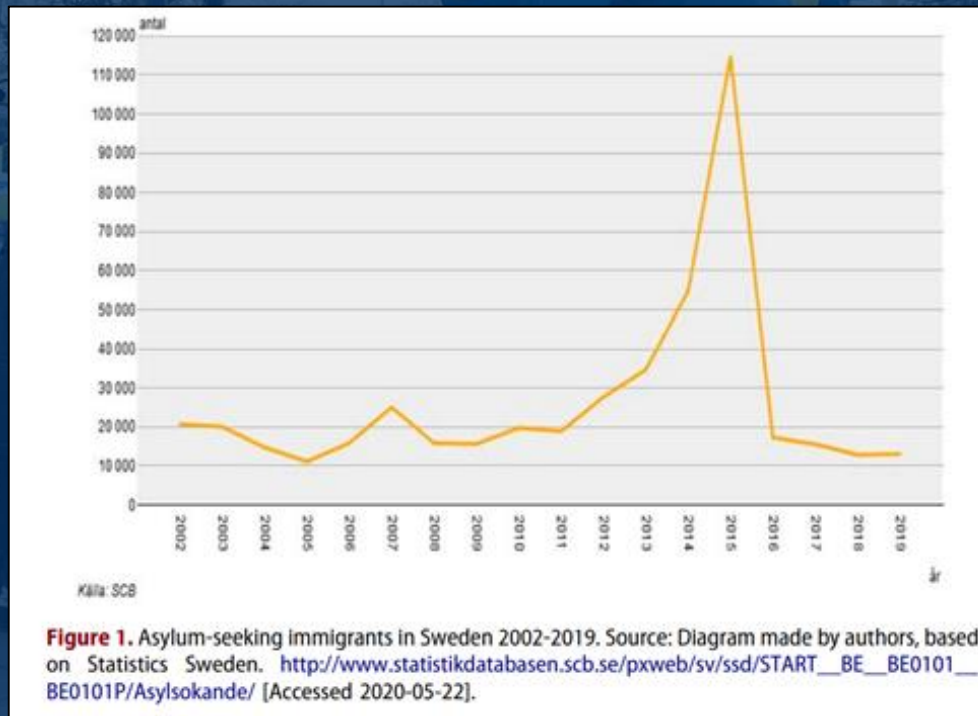
A divided Poland between
Eurosceptic and pro-EU parties :
East/West, Countryside/Cities and
Educational cleavage.

Nonetheless, PiS election results
are also based on social and
conservative measures and on the
PO controversies.

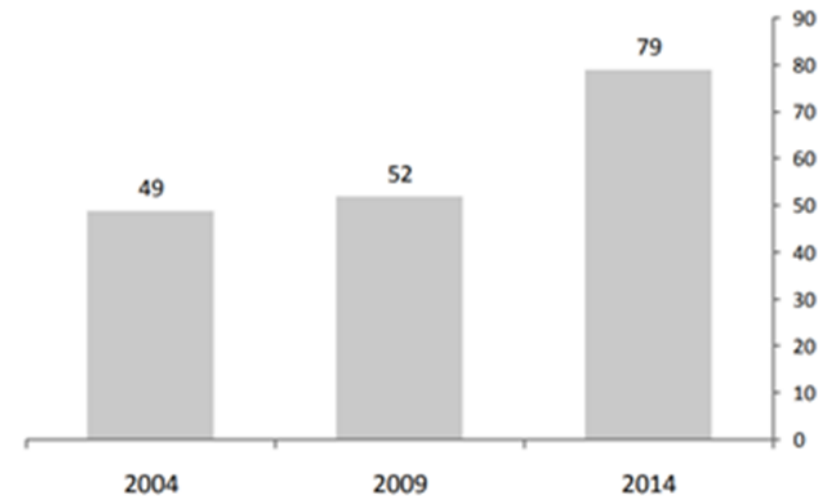


AXIS 1 SWEDEN

- No radical right-wing party
- 2010 election: anti-immigration Sweden Democrats win their first seats in parliament
- Arab Spring: 163,000 asylum seekers



Total of seats won by radical populist right-wing parties in the European Parliament (2004-2014)



Source : European Parliament, author's calculations

AXIS 1 ITALY

- Anti-system party Five Star Movement (Movimento Cinque Stelle (M5S))
- Lega Nord party supported by the Christian centre-right Forza Italia, post-fascist far-right formation Fratelli d'Italia.
- Around 300,000 migrants 2015-2016
- Around 700,000 2011-2019
- In 2021, around 85% of Italians who perceive themselves as conservative want a policy that favours the rejection of migrants from Italy. 34% of Italians consider immigration to be one of the country's main problems.



A close-up photograph showing a hand with pink nail polish lighting a match. The match is burning and is held against a piece of the European Union flag, which is blue with yellow stars. The flag is being set on fire, and the background is blurred, showing a crowd of people.

AXIS 2

THE MIGRATION ISSUE AS PART OF A MORE GLOBAL
CRITICISM OF THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

AXIS 2 POLAND

PRACA
Wyższe Koszty
Uzyskania Przychodu
I niższy PIT

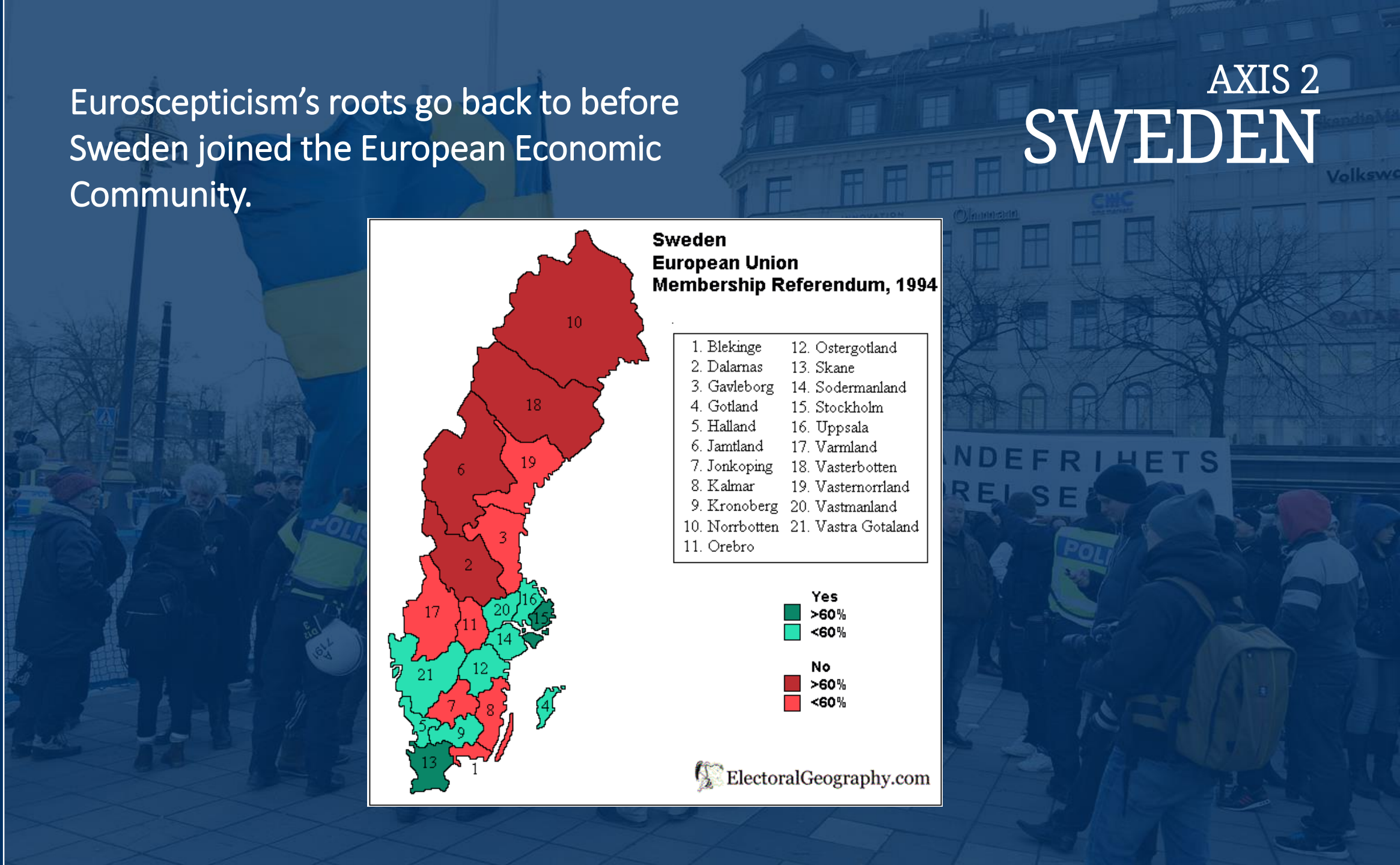
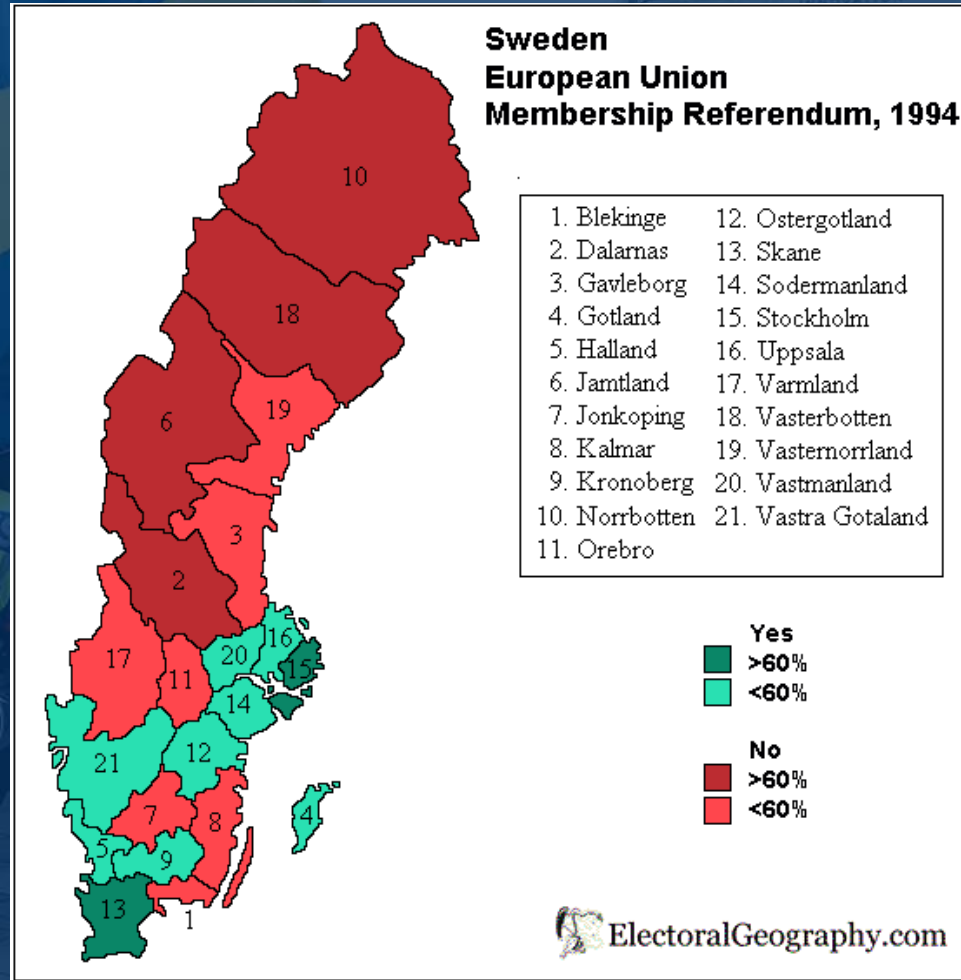
POLSKA
SERCEM
EUROPY

- The PiS uses the migration topic to criticize the European Union
- Sovereignty is the central question for Polish eurosceptics
- PiS and Polish Public Opinion on the European Union role : the EU should remain only economical



Euroscepticism's roots go back to before Sweden joined the European Economic Community.

AXIS 2 SWEDEN



AXIS 2 SWEDEN

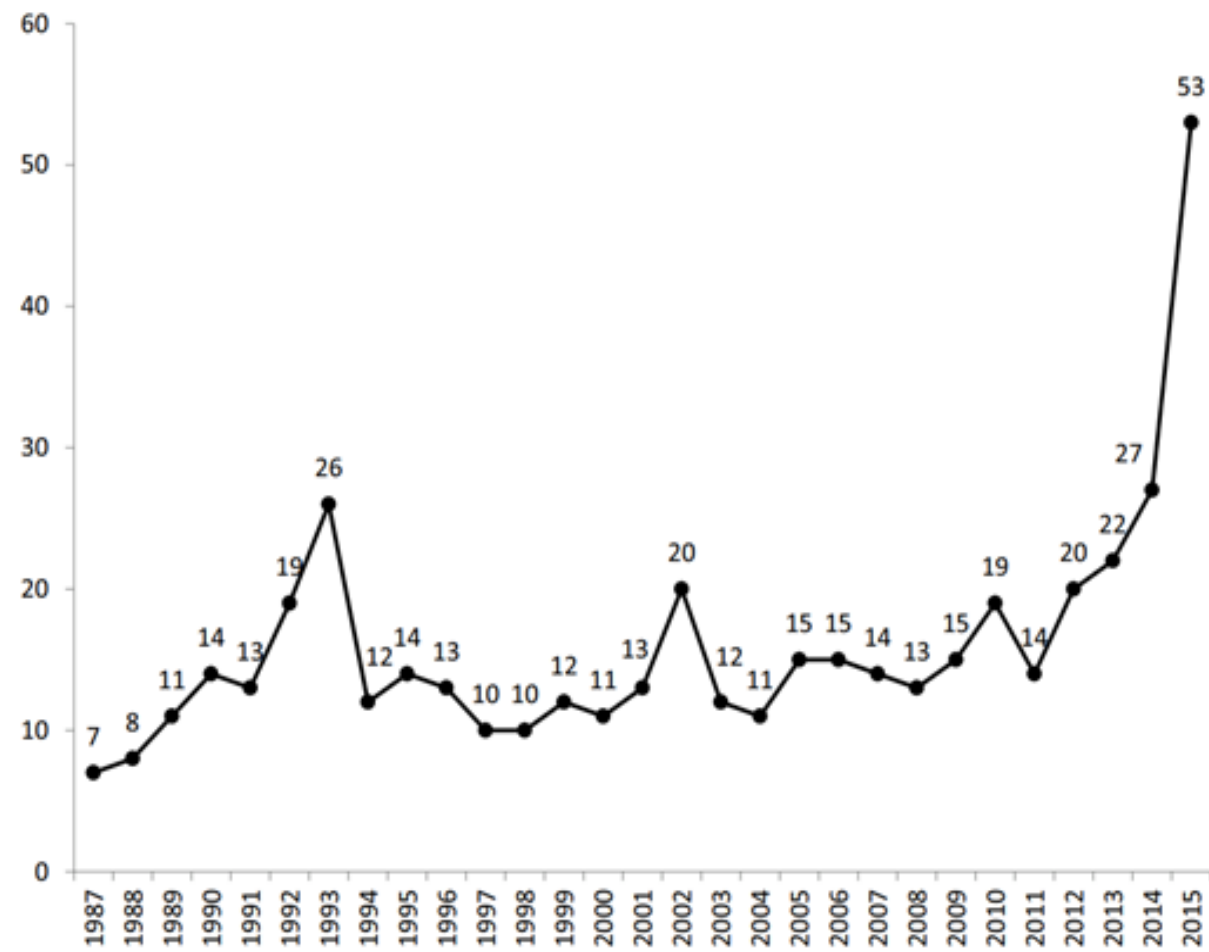


Fig. 2 The importance of the immigration issue 1987–2015 (percent). *Source:* Bergström and Oscarsson (2015), Demker and van der Meiden (2016)

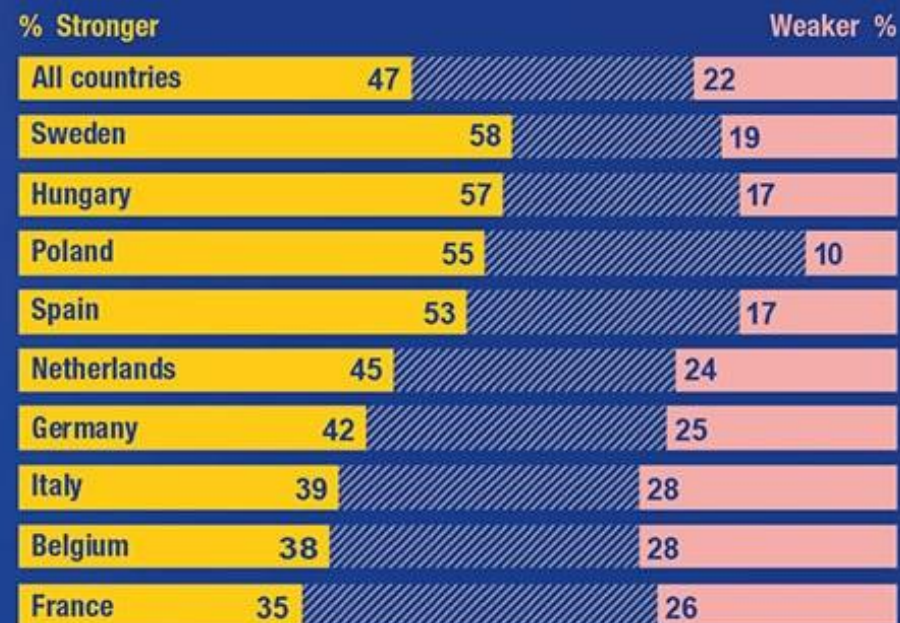
AXIS 2 SWEDEN



Has the
European Project
been a success
so far?



EUROPEAN PROJECT 2020



Q: Taking everything into account, do you think this European Project has made Europe stronger or weaker today than it would have been without it?

7,001 online adults aged 16-74 were interviewed across 9 EU countries, 25 September - 9 October 2020

AXIS 2 ITALY

- Like Sweden, a crisis of confidence older than thought.
- Support for the European project went from 66% in 1990 to 36% in 2012.
- Failure of the Frontex mission



CONCLUSION

- Absence of a mechanical link between Euroscepticism and immigration
- The link between migration and criticism of the European Union is made by so-called populist media and political actors who instrumentalise the migration issue towards domestic aims
- Only a part of a broader criticism of the EU

