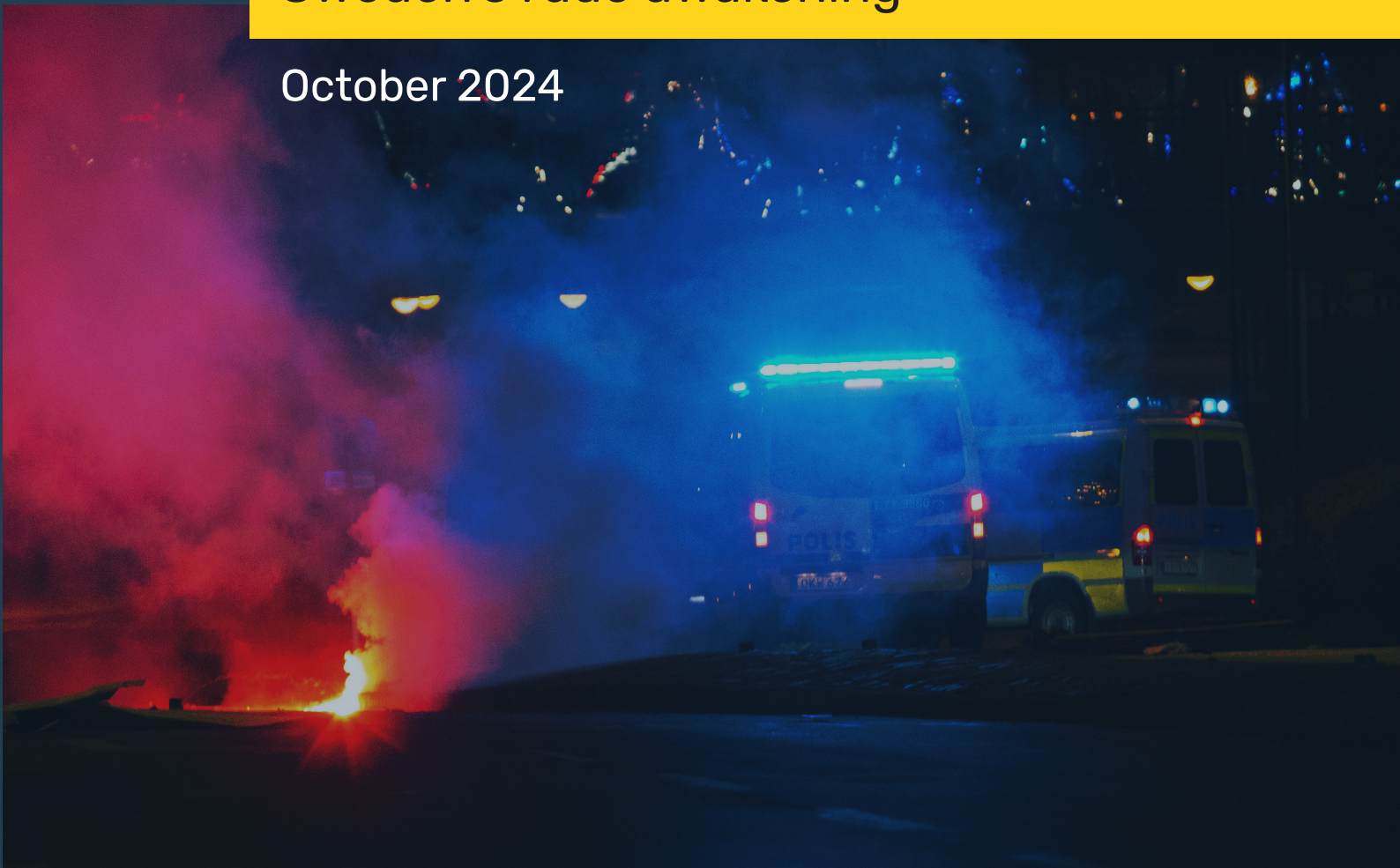


Multiculturalism in Flames

Göran Adamson

Sweden's rude awakening

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Executive Summary

Everybody understands that mass migration has an enormous impact on society. Yet stating this opinion, or even deeming it worthy of public discussion, is enough to get you dismissed as a racist.

The impact of mass migration has been even more acute in countries with a strong sense of cultural homogeneity. This is only logical – migrants bring with them ‘diversity’, that is, something different to the relatively homogenous societies they enter.

A case in point is Sweden. Sweden has never been an idyllic land free of conflict. Yet, especially in its recent history, it has enjoyed a powerful consensus on the fundamental basics of the social order. Mass migration has transformed Sweden.

- **Crime:** The impact of migration in Sweden has been most marked in relation to crime. Swedish newspapers now regularly report explosions and shootings – something that would have been scarcely believable a few decades ago. The transformation of the city of Malmö by criminal gangs has become a news story around the world. When it comes to extreme violence, according to official statistics, between 2013 and 2017 around two-thirds of murders, attempted murders and manslaughter offences in Sweden were committed by migrants or the children of migrants. Sweden has seen over 300 shootings per year since 2017.¹ More shockingly, 2023 saw Sweden suffer nine times as many deadly

shootings as Finland, Denmark and Norway put together.² Despite the attempts by the Swedish authorities to blame poverty and social exclusion, the Swedish Crime Prevention Council in 2023 demonstrated: ‘Foreign-born individuals are 2.5 times more likely to be registered as suspected of a crime compared to those born in Sweden with both parents also born in Sweden. For people born in Sweden with two foreign-born parents, the likelihood is over three times higher than for those with Swedish-born parents.’³

- **Freedom:** But crime is not the only symptom of runaway mass migration. Sweden has had a reputation for being a tolerant country committed to fundamental political and democratic freedoms. Yet, as a result of threats of violence from migrants and the concerns of elites about ‘inflaming’ tensions or ‘offending’ minorities, freedom of expression is now under serious threat in Sweden.
- **Politics:** Migration has also had a profound political impact on Swedish society. The different values of migrants, especially Muslim migrants, has created tension between Sweden’s official policies of multiculturalism and its adherence to progressive ideals around gender equality or the restricted role of religion in public life.

Underpinning these problems have been two dangerous political trends. The first is the official state policy of multiculturalism. This goes beyond tolerance for racial, cultural or religious difference and instead imposes a positive duty to *preserve and entrench* these differences. Difference and diversity have become values in and of themselves – and officially and unofficially, migrants have been encouraged *not* to adopt the values and

customs of Swedish society. The result is that the social consensus that has underpinned Swedish society for decades has been ruptured.

The second is the marginalisation of any critics of mass migration. At every turn, rather than treating criticism as part of legitimate political debate, the mainstream consensus on mass migration has punished and delegitimised critics. This has made a productive discussion about immigration almost impossible. Yet the critics of open borders have much to teach us. Revisiting some of them, especially early critics, provides important insight into what we can and should do today.

This report hopes to sound an alarm in Swedish and wider European society. Migration is not an automatic evil. But neither is it an automatic good. Instead, it is a social process which, like all social changes, requires careful handling. Simply ignoring the negative consequences of runaway migration is no longer an option. Instead, European society needs to change course before nothing recognisably European remains. The case of Sweden illustrates how a country can be transformed almost overnight. But even in Sweden it is not too late. Standing up for Swedish values, halting the uncontrolled flow of migrants, insisting on the benefits of social integration, and strengthening law and order are all possible and necessary.

Our parents or grandparents may not recognise the countries we have – consciously or not – remade under the policies of mass migration. But there is still time to ensure that our children and grandchildren inherit countries that preserve the legacy of their forefathers.

1 Introduction: the long-gone haven of homogeneity

An idyll only appears through the rear window. Back in a south-Swedish small town in the early 1970s, the bike locks were strings of metal: ‘Please don’t!’ My beautiful sister went to school and nobody would even consider ‘her safety’. Nobody knows about the rate of rape, kidnapping, cars being set ablaze and murder, but if the talk of the town had any bearing on reality, it was non-existent. My father, a teacher and forward-thinking man, once proudly figured in *The Local* newspaper along with a young teacher from India because she was ‘the first black woman in Markaryd’.

While the jet-setting cynic may ridicule the Sweden of yesterday, welcoming the fact that we have finally entered ‘the real world’, I believe Sweden during my childhood was a good place to be. The only scary thing was a lunatic who used to stagger around the neighbourhood, his crazy mum on his heels.

Why was Sweden a good place to be? Because we were family. Over centuries, and through endless measures and decisions, we had been carefully trimmed and groomed until a fine unifying web influenced everything we did. It wasn’t suffocating. It was safe. There were differences, of course, but they were intellectual and ideological rather than religious and existential. We agreed on the basics and disagreed about politics. Tage Erlander, leader of the Social Democrats and prime minister of Sweden 1946–1969, famously said: ‘The situation for us Swedes is so much more fortunate. Our population

is homogeneous, not only in terms of race, but also in many other ways.’⁴ Erlander’s insight from not long ago speaks volumes about the decay of Swedish Social Democracy.

So here is, perhaps, part of the explanation behind Sweden’s current problems. As if conducting a social experiment writ large for all the world to see, we have transitioned from unity to diversity, from the virtues of trust to the elusive promises of multiculturalism; from the politics of equality to the politics of difference, and, as Tage Erlander might have said, it is all very unfortunate for us. In 2018 alone, there were 162 bomb explosions, roughly one every second day; in 2016, waves of exploding hand grenades tore into Sweden, putting us on a par with Mexico.⁵ In 2019, Denmark, concerned about the bombings across the strait, introduced passport control on its border checkpoints with Sweden for the first time since the 1950s.⁶ We can’t blame the Danes, but the effect has been collective humiliation.

When did this trend start to escalate? Around the turn of the millennium. Sweden’s decision to take in migrants on a larger scale also goes back to this period, which further seems to underpin Erlander’s classic Social Democratic idea: peace requires unity. As late as 2003, the rate of shooting deaths in Sweden was among the lowest per capita in Europe, but within less than two decades, by 2021, it was one of the highest. In 2022, the gun-murder rate in Stockholm, our capital, was about 30 times that of London on a per-capita basis.⁷

We shall now briefly examine a few of multiculturalism’s disquieting consequences in Sweden in 2024. We define multiculturalism, then, not merely as a ‘multi-ethnic’ society containing people from various cultures, but as a *normative ideology* according to which a society made up by many different cultures is deemed preferable to a society dominated by one single culture.

But before turning to those current social repercussions of multiculturalism, let's go back to where it all started. As in most cases of large-scale social change, it all began in higher learning. The field of education was never overlooked by left-wing intellectuals.

1.1 Diversity at the university

Back in 2001, I had just taken up a teaching position at Malmö University in Sweden. For some reason, many colleagues were referring to the concept of 'diversity' with great enthusiasm. It was casually inserted in the Dean's speeches, on posters, and in course programs. When I asked what it meant, they weren't quite sure, so curiosity got the better of me and I decided to find out more.

I soon realised that every university – by means of a vague promise of considerable financial compensation – had been persuaded to present a 'Diversity Plan'. There was no intellectual autonomy to speak of. Whenever a Social Democratic politician exited an airport taxi, as I'd witnessed several times, the entire faculty board were lining up like tin soldiers. But these plans were not confined to the university. In fact, they were now available at every single public institution in my country.⁸

I decided to take a closer look at the Diversity plan at the eight largest universities in Sweden. Intellectually, they were rather empty, but all of them were characterised by tremendous self-importance. Diversity, I realised, was considered a Good Thing. I was struck, however, by the fact that, as you leafed from one plan to the next, many ideas and sentences were similar, even identical. They were all humbly reflecting, I came to suspect, some background master text. And there it was: *Diversity at the University* – a 260-page Social Democratic government report, where multiculturalism

was transformed into the ideological foundation of university life – and a wide-ranging administrative tool.⁹

And now I was sitting there, next to one of its authors, puzzled at the fact that ‘Diversity is good’, ‘Diversity is enriching’ and ‘Diversity is necessary’ recurred about four times per page, blurring the boundaries, I felt, between a government report and religious worship.

‘How do you prove this?’, I asked. ‘Well, we don’t’, he said, his eyes fixed on me. The link between ethnicity and quality was just a political thing. The government was behind it. It was a mantra.¹⁰

Diversity at the University and those Diversity Plans had initially come about, we were told, because of ‘racism’. Migrants applying to university were being ‘discriminated against’. The report’s own statistical material, however, said something different. There was no evidence at all of discrimination against migrants in this manner.¹¹ Young native Swedes were not favoured by some stuffy nationalism. This bombastic moralism, this alarming rise in discrimination, was exclusively confined, so it seemed, to the minds of its left-wing proponents. All that display of grand self-abasing emotions, and all the money drizzling from above for years on end into Diversity Plans, and thousands of hours spent by thousands of administrators, deans, university directors and heads of departments with a mission – and yet there was no reason for it.

And what about those vague promises of substantial financial compensation? As ‘recommended by’ the Social Democratic government in their own report, universities ‘particularly keen on implementing diversity’¹² should jointly be awarded a total sum of 2.5 billion SEK. But what happened? The Social Democratic ‘recommendation’ was turned down by the Social Democratic government, and eventually only four per cent of it was paid

out. Practically for free, Social Democracy had managed to make the entire university multicultural by falsely claiming that the Swedish university was marred by racism.

1.2 When did Sweden become ‘multicultural’?

But the original onset of multiculturalism as a government program dates from much earlier. On 14 May 1975, following an upward turn of immigration during the early 1970s, the Swedish parliament passed an act – *Regeringens proposition om riktlinjer för invandrar- och minoritetspolitiken m. m.*

(Government report on guidelines concerning policy for immigration and minorities), stressing equality, freedom of choice and cooperation between native Swedes and migrant populations.¹³ In doing so, Sweden became the first country in Europe to endorse multiculturalism as official government policy.

This major ideological shift had also, in various intriguing ways, come to be associated with ideas brimming with positive energy, such as ‘inclusion’ and ‘tolerance’ – as opposed to exclusion and intolerance; ‘openness to the world’ – instead of nationalist myopia; and, last but not least, the tandem ideas of ‘fascination’ and ‘curiosity’, which, according to its keen protagonists, would kick in only once any shared experience diminished to, at most, the size of a postage stamp.

Judging by the above, one would have expected Swedish society to flourish as a result of our novel policy of state-sanctioned multiculturalism.

2 When reality sets in

But the unfolding events of the twenty-first century have painted a darker picture. Malmö is a good case in point, where about every second inhabitant now has a migrant background.¹⁴

2.1 For all the wrong reasons: the new-found fame of Malmö

Our third most populated city, and once the pride of the south, Malmö had a booming shipping industry and a large and increasingly prosperous working class catered for by its Social Democratic patrons. If multiculturalism provided prosperity, then, no city would match Malmö. Unfortunately, this was not the case. In 2019, Malmö received some 5.5 billion SEK in financial transfers from more prosperous regions – Stockholm in particular – and more than double the transfer to any other city. This was not only caused by migration, but a large influx of unemployed, and often unemployable, migrants certainly played a role in the city's decline. In terms of crime, the picture is no less sombre. If Sweden's international reputation has switched from role model to cautionary tale, Malmö embodied this trend. 'Bombs are a part of life in Malmö', read a headline by *Deutsche Welle*, adding 29 bombs had already rattled the city between January and October 2019 – with 50 shootings along the way. In the same year, the headcount in the Jewish community of Malmö was a mere 800 souls. By 2029, its spokesperson feared, Jews may 'die out' altogether in the city.¹⁵

2.2 The bigger picture

Still, while the case of Malmö is telling, a fuller picture is required to understand how Sweden has been impacted by multiculturalism.¹⁶ In doing so, we shall refrain from ‘boutique multiculturalism’ – where certain darker traits of overseas’ cultures are sidelined for the sake of more innocent traits such as spices and dances. Instead, we shall focus on the political side of an elitist, heavy-handed, orchestrated mixing of cultures, which is what multiculturalism essentially is about.

We shall start with an overview of a few major events in Sweden – fueled, it will be argued, by multiculturalism. Here, the relation between migration and crime will be backed up by statistics. Then, we shall turn to multiculturalism’s early critics, and how they fared. Subsequently, we shall ask: What about our political elites? Are they finally realising what is happening to our country? Is there a way out from Sweden’s early, ominous embrace of multiculturalism?

2.3 Riots

If we study multiculturalism’s impact on Sweden without rose-tinted glasses, it is hard to overlook the escalating violence in its wake. In 2008, as a result of the termination of their contract, the tenants of an ‘Islamic culture organisation’ in Rosengård, Malmö, started protesting. Riots ensued.¹⁷ In Husby, outside of Stockholm, riots erupted in late spring 2013, and more than 100 cars were torched. According to *The Guardian* (25th May 2013) which reported official statistics, more than 10% of those aged 25 to 55 in Husby were unemployed back then, compared with 3.5% in Stockholm as a whole. Those that did have jobs earned 40% less than the city average. Soon riots spread to nine cities, lasting five more nights. In 2020, violent riots erupted in Malmö after Rasmus Paludan – a Swedish-Danish lawyer and

politician – decided to burn a Quran in public. Cars were torched, rocks, bricks and other heavy items hurled at the police, fire brigades were attacked, water pipes cut, streets cut off by roadblocks.¹⁸ But the most widespread ethnic riots in recent years – ‘the Easter Riots’ – took place in 2022 following, again, Rasmus Paludan who torched the Quran or, at least, said he would. These riots caused widespread destruction, and 183 police officers were injured.¹⁹ Parts of Malmö looked like a war zone, and a newspaper called these riots ‘an attack against our democracy’.²⁰

We can, of course, only count real instances of violence and will, hence, overlook ‘internalised censorship’ in response to what the Danes call ‘the veto of the violent man’.²¹ If we imagine similar tensions mounting during the early 1970s, when Swedes never shied away from mocking religions, heaven knows what might have happened.

2.4 Ethnicity and crime

The above picture can be backed up by statistics. In 2005, Sweden’s Crime Prevention Agency (*Brå – Brottsförebyggande Rådet*) presented a report on migration and crime.²² Then, for many years, such figures vanished from the limelight, possibly due to political pressure. Morgan Johansson, a former Social Democratic minister of justice, said in 2018 that new data on migrants and crime are unimportant ‘because we know migrants are overrepresented in crime’.²³ The same minister had eventually to admit that ‘the exposure to sexual crimes has doubled in two years’ whilst according to the Moderates’ legal policy spokesperson, Tomas Tobé, ‘we have 70,000 young women in Sweden who have been victims of sexual crimes’.²⁴

In 2020, as a result of this lack of political will, we decided to present an update of the agency’s 2005 study, titled *Migrants and Crime in Sweden in the 21st Century*.²⁵ Three diagrams are highlighted below. In Table 1, we focus on the so-called ‘over risk’ for crime between 1985 and 2017.²⁶

Table 1 Over risk for various groups and types of crime in relation to native Swedes

Total crime	Foreign background	of which children of immigrants	of which foreign-born
1985–1989	1.8	1.5	2.1
1997–2001	2.0	1.6	2.5
2002–2006	2.1	1.7	2.4
2013–2017	2.0	1.8	2.1

Murder	Foreign background	of which children of immigrants	of which foreign-born
1985–1989	2.7	1.5	3.5
1997–2001	3.0	2.3	3.8
2002–2006	3.8	3.3	4.2
2013–2017	4.1	4.3	3.9

Assault	Foreign background	of which children of immigrants	of which foreign-born
1985–1989	–	–	–
1997–2001	2.3	1.7	2.9
2002–2006	2.4	1.9	2.8
2013–2017	2.4	2.0	2.6

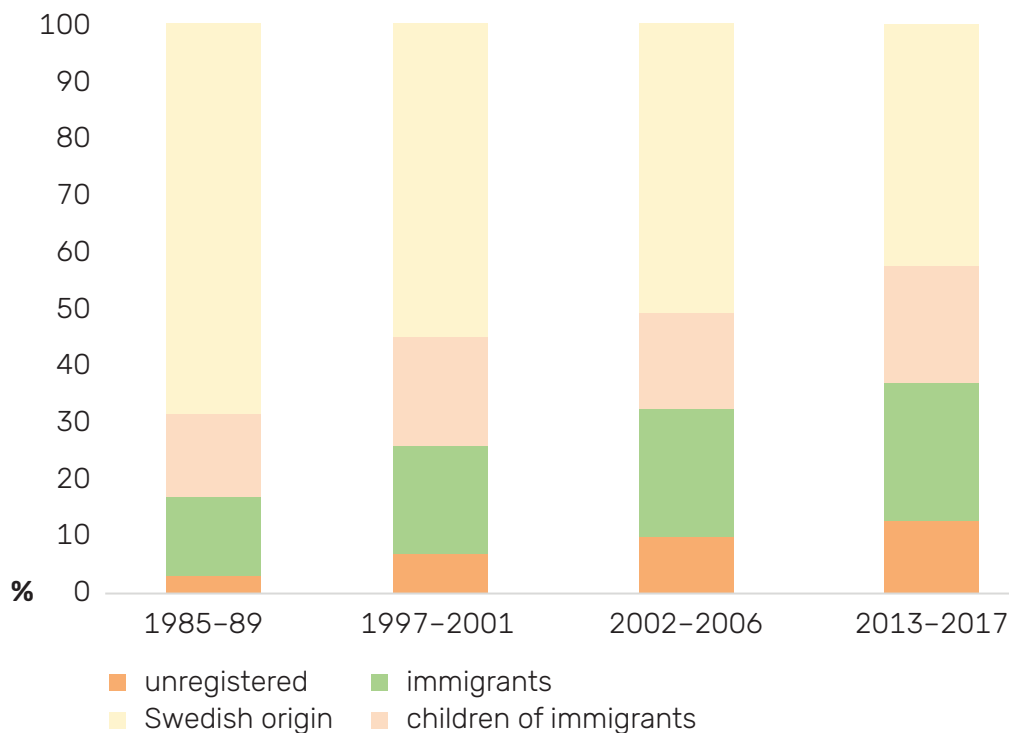
Robbery	Foreign background	of which children of immigrants	of which foreign-born
1985–1989	2.0	2.1	2.0
1997–2001	3.5	3.1	3.9
2002–2006	4.2	3.7	4.6
2013–2017	3.1	3.9	2.6

If we look at, for example, ‘children of immigrants’ 2013–2017 and an over risk for robbery of ‘3.9’, this means that a random child of immigrants on the street is about four times more likely to be linked to robbery compared to a native

Swede, with a robbery rate set at '1'.²⁷ Over time, migrant over risk of 'total crime' has remained fairly stable at around 2. The more serious the crime, generally, the higher the over risk among migrants. Over risk for murder among 'children of migrants' has increased significantly over time – from 1.5 (1985–89) to 4.3 (2013–17). Over risk varies depending on origin. A random person from South-East Asia, for instance, has an over risk for crime of 0.9, meaning this person is *less* likely to be engaged in crime than a native Swede, while a person from 'Northern Africa' and 'West Asia' (Middle East), has an estimated over risk of 3.2 and 2.7 respectively (standardised for gender and age).²⁸

In Figure 1 below, 'Proportion of total crime', migrants are broken down into 'Unregistered', 'Immigrants', and 'Children of Immigrants'.²⁹ Over the

Figure 1 Proportion of total crime



period, their combined proportion of total crime in Sweden has gone up from 30 per cent to 56 per cent.

In Table 1 above, we saw that migrant over risk of total crime has remained fairly stable, at around 2. As individuals, then, they are not becoming more inclined to commit crimes. Migrant crime is increasing because migrants are growing in number.

Figure 2 Proportion of murder, manslaughter, and attempted murder

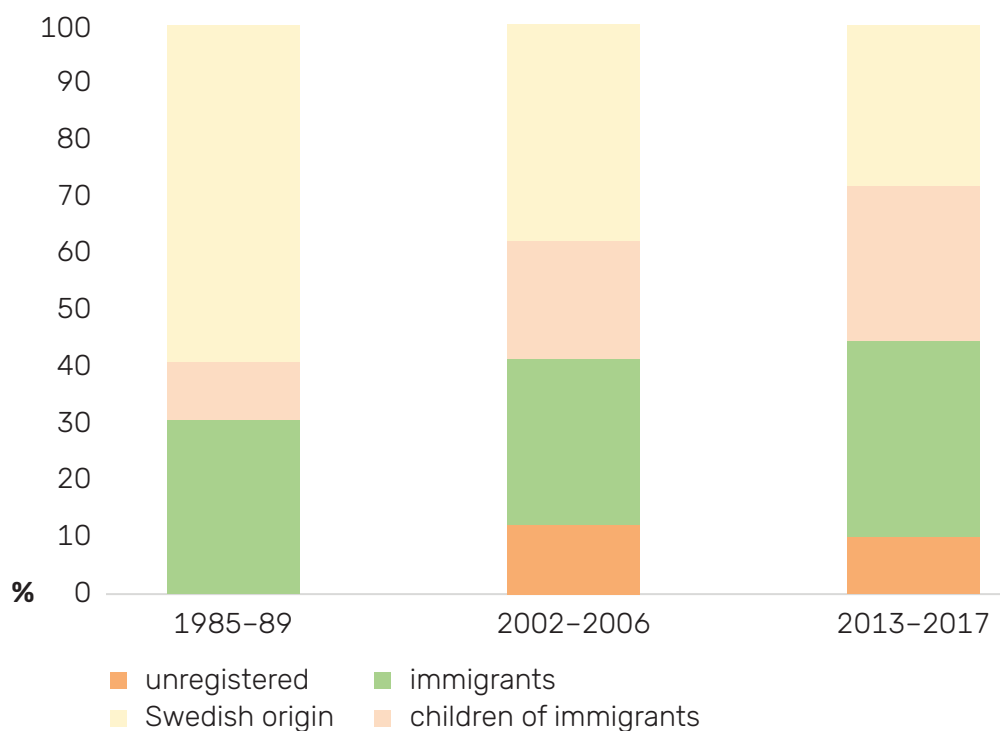


Figure 2 shows the proportion of murder, manslaughter and attempted murder in Sweden for which migrants are responsible.³⁰ It has increased from 40 per cent in the late 1980s, to 73 per cent (that is, about three-quarters) during the period 2013–2017.³¹ The proportion, moreover, does not say anything about the increase in the absolute number of these crimes. As the number of these crimes committed by natives is fairly stable, it is more accurate to imagine this upper part of the respective bar as fixed,

while its proportion has diminished over time. Displayed in absolute numbers, the right bar would then be a good two times taller than the left one.

Another way to illustrate the 2013–2017 table is to point out that if we imagine Sweden with no migrants, about three out of four cases of murder, manslaughter and attempted murder would disappear.

2.5 Threats against freedom of expression

Another dangerous development, often linked to the discussion about riots, relates to freedom of expression. Free speech has a long tradition in our country. Our Freedom of the Press Act of 1766 is regarded as the world's first law supporting freedom of the press and freedom of information. The day before it was formally implemented, the priest Anders Chydenius claimed that without 'a reasonable freedom of print and of publication', all 'wisdom and sanity will be suppressed, speech and thought will become cruder and, within a few years, our entire sky of freedom be engulfed in harrowing darkness'.³² These efforts by Chydenius and others 250 years ago should not be squandered.

But alongside Paludan's Quran-burnings, where he wanted to put freedom of speech in Sweden to the test, there is the similar case of Lars Vilks.³³ A professor in art theory and an artist with international reach, Vilks also wanted to test the boundaries for artistic freedom in Sweden. Hence, in 2007, he published a 'Roundabout dog' with the face of Mohammed in a Swedish local newspaper. As a result, an Al-Qaeda group placed a \$100,000 bounty on his head. His house was torched. Several times his life was in danger, such as the 2015 gun attack at Krudttönden in Copenhagen. Protected 24/7 by the Swedish police, Vilks constantly changed lodgings – until one day in broad daylight in

2021, an armed safety vehicle suddenly veered off towards oncoming traffic, crashing into a truck at 160 km an hour, killing Vilks and two policemen instantly.

Both Vilks and Paludan sought to test the level of freedom of expression by staging an event and assessing the reactions. They were not satisfied with the idea that all will be well if only you make use of freedom of expression with caution, paying attention to those who might take offence. On the contrary, freedom of expression comes to life exactly at the point where someone may take offence. ‘If liberty means anything at all’, George Orwell said, ‘it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear’.³⁴ Vilks and Paludan dipped their finger in the water and it came up all red.

If we put this into our larger framework – the effects of multiculturalism in Sweden – a few things emerge. Freedom of expression in our country is under relentless pressure from certain migrant groups trying to have it dismantled for the benefit of multicultural ‘tolerance’. From a classic left-wing perspective, this reminds one of religious submission, which may explain why traditional left-wing ideas have been abandoned by today’s multicultural left-wingers.

We have already touched upon the issue of internalised censorship. It should be noted that this kind of defensive rhetoric has started creeping into the very fabric of public and academic discourse as a result of our multicultural ideology, through phrases such as ‘If only Vilks didn’t do that’, or ‘Well, Paludan has only himself to blame’. Today, we blame the artist and the peaceful *provocateur* for any violence that might come their way, and this shuffling of values and cultural self-harassment has the exotifying, reactionary ideology of multiculturalism written all over it. Somehow, it is as if Western laws never existed. As Lars Vilks once noted, ‘the person who murders is the one who bears the responsibility’.³⁵

But there is another challenge to freedom of expression that must be brought to our attention. The fact that foreign extremists were trying to kill someone like Lars Vilks in Sweden – where his actions did not break the law, but rather constituted part of its foundation – is disheartening enough. But even more disquieting was our public debate around it. With few exceptions, this discussion was characterised by cynicism, sometimes even sadism. The central question of whether an artist in a democracy is allowed to mock a religious figure was hidden behind a layer of irrelevance.

An ageing news-anchor grabbed the opportunity, saying Vilks was merely referring to ‘freedom of speech ... in order to humiliate Muslims’.³⁶ ‘Time has come’, a prominent spokesperson for the Church of Sweden announced, ‘to distance ourselves from Vilks’s blasphemies’, and a former leader of the Left Party – who would defend any art mocking bourgeois values – now had his head sunk in profound self-reflection, maintaining it ‘was important to bear in mind Vilks’s ambition ... is to fuel racism and Islamophobia’.³⁷ A major morning newspaper labeled his roundabout dog a ‘mockery with no purpose’, while the former head of the Social Democratic Party in Malmö claimed one of Vilks’s exhibitions was only there for ‘political ends’ and hoped ‘no one will visit the gallery’.³⁸ ‘The quality of (Vilks’s) art is to say the least far below even mediocre’, a leading art critic maintained, ‘and only meant to insult’. Jan Guillou, one of our most influential left-wingers, took the opportunity to disqualify Vilks on the technical grounds that ‘He can’t draw’, while *Svenska Dagbladet*, our leading right-of-centre morning newspaper, took it even further, saying Vilks had decided ‘to make a thing out of his bad artistic craftsmanship’.³⁹

The willingness to stand up for freedom of expression – especially by those who benefitted from it – seemed absent. There were exceptions, but

often one had the impression that Sweden's elites almost sided with the Islamists who wanted Vilks assassinated. In addition to the fact that Islamists attacked him, it became apparent almost no one defended him. If a democracy ultimately rests on the willingness of its elites to defend its customs, then, it seems, Sweden has turned into a very puzzling entity, wholly passive and indifferent.

What has this to do with multiculturalism? Quite a lot, I would say. A dismissive attitude towards the Enlightenment. Aestheticization of violence. Cultural self-abasement. Siding with an overseas perpetrator. Lack of recognition of the value of debate and provocation. Anti-intellectualism, primitivism and hatred towards modernity. An idea brimming with bourgeois morality stating that only art we find aesthetically appealing should be protected by law. Finally, the reactionary, passive idea that you may somehow protect your freedom if only you remain silent.

Multiculturalism's impact on freedom of expression seems to be rather negative. But the conflict may, again, be observed with some detachment. If Sweden suddenly were to harbour a substantial French minority, we would soon have plenty of red wine and chansons; and so, when our country experiences a large influx of individuals from regions with no democratic tradition and without freedom of expression, we will soon experience attacks against our freedom of expression. One of the fallacies of multiculturalism is always to insist on the co-existence of cultures as if the opposite – keeping them apart – would necessarily be a hierarchical idea, perhaps even racist. One needn't talk about morality, but merely about values, and the fact that certain values might be incompatible. Seeing a crude hierarchy of cultures as the only alternative to optimistic 'peaceful coexistence' only reveals the multiculturalist's crude, combative nature.

2.6 Political challenges to Swedish society

Attacks against freedom of expression are damaging our social cohesion. But there are also other types of violations against Sweden that, perhaps more directly, are undermining our country.

On social media, from December 2021 onwards, images started spreading featuring weeping Muslim parents and devastated children, and by early 2022, hundreds of parents were demonstrating outside the Swedish Parliament, accusing the Swedish state of kidnapping Muslim children.⁴⁰ This ‘campaign of hatred against Sweden’ carried on through 2022 towards 2023, and there were threats and violence against social workers. ‘This is the reason behind the campaign of hatred against Sweden’, a heading on Swedish State television read, claiming ‘children are said to have been kidnapped by Swedish social authorities, despite evidence of [them] having been subjected to domestic violence’.⁴¹ The conflict was set: Muslim values against Swedish values. Of course, we may have opinions and be emotional about it, but why wouldn’t anyone protest against the authorities if they violate the ways in which you see fit to raise your children? This, I would claim, is not cultural relativism, but merely admitting the fact that cultural differences can be hard to overcome, and make co-existence very difficult.

Still, this conflict of values raises acute questions in Sweden. ‘These clips, security experts maintain, are posted in order to demonise Sweden and our social authorities’, and, according to the head of the Swedish Agency for Psychological Defense, we are witnessing an attempt to manufacture a unified, religious entity for ultimately political reasons: ‘The aim is to fuel sentiments within a larger Muslim community in order to victimise Muslims, and to depict Swedish authorities as perpetrators.’⁴² ‘This campaign’, he stresses, ‘is the most widespread and the most potentially disintegrating of its kind in a long time’.⁴³

The instigators behind these initiatives are, he continues, Islamists reaching millions with their hate-filled messages, including Al Jazeera and Turkish TRT.⁴⁴ It is hard to deny the corrosive impact of these demonstrations.

A society is not undermined by new political parties as long as they adhere to political principles, such as confining criticism to ideological adversaries and being fundamentally political. But if their criticism is targeting the state itself, and they seek to attract voters by means of ethnicity, clan, tribe or religion, these parties will harm any open, political and value-driven society. They will cause polarisation and eventually, at worst, lead to societal disintegration. What is more, they seem likely to promote a reactionary politics in which tribal, ethnic or religious grievance will fuel a reactionary leader cult, as the party leader may justify his role not by means of a CV and political abilities, but through mythical notions such as ‘shared background’, ‘mutual suffering’, and so on.⁴⁵

This overview is perhaps not an entirely unfair description of a new political party in Sweden by the name of Nyans (‘Nuance’). Nyans is headed by Mikael Yüksel, whose membership in the Center Party was previously suspended due to his allegiance with the Grey Wolves – a Turkish Islamist and neo-fascist organisation that was very active during the campaign against Swedish social authorities for allegedly kidnapping Muslim children. With some success, Yüksel is now offering a party for all Swedish Muslims, irrespective of background and political allegiance. In relation to Sweden’s recent application for NATO membership, Yüksel was interviewed in Turkish media, urging Ankara to put pressure on Sweden to ban the burning of the Quran. Interviewed in *Dagens Nyheter* – our largest morning newspaper – he said, ‘Sweden must be taught to bow down to’ Muslim demands regarding

the burning of the Quran.⁴⁶ Political parties may be ideologically divisive, but that is part of politics. Nyans, however, is culturally and religiously divisive, and for that reason it has a dangerously corroding impact on our political system. As of March 2024, having sufficiently placated Turkey, Sweden became a full member of NATO.

But why shouldn't Nyans – just like we do – argue for values they cherish? How should we even try to imagine a situation whereby they instead would embrace Western values that they abhor? The very fact that we are all saturated with our respective culture raises some questions regarding integration.

In fact, we are approaching one of multiculturalism's most diehard paradoxes: the idea that 'culture' is 'deep, fragile, authentic and eternal' and yet, once a migrant enters Swedish territory, may be traded for a sixpence for accepting women's rights, the ideology of LGBTQ and a faceless state. But maybe it isn't a paradox after all. Perhaps it only goes to show just how insignificant human beings are in the multicultural equation: one day, red-cheeked, gorgeously brimming with some overseas culture; the next day, an empty shell miserably staggering around, craving for new content provided by the multiculturalist.

Before we turn to the next section of our discussion, an overview of multiculturalism's early critics, there are two additional ways in which Swedish society – or any society – may be undermined by features ingrained, I would argue, in the ideology of multiculturalism. The first feature has to do with in-fighting between migrant groups, such as the chaotic scenes which ensued at the 'Festival Eritrea Scandinavia', organised by Eritreans closely aligned with the Eritrean dictatorship.⁴⁷ A hundred police officers were called in as hundreds of the regime's critics – mainly from Ethiopia's Tigray region –

were approaching the festival area outside Stockholm.⁴⁸ As migration to Sweden from unruly regions is increasing – also by means of ‘family reunions’ – clashes like these are likely to increase in the future, further undermining social cohesion.

The last example of corroding tendencies as a result of multiculturalism is geographical. Rather than causing disruption, it is about challenging Sweden’s territory. Figures are notoriously hard to obtain, but we might estimate that Sweden has around 100 no-go zones – where Swedish authorities are reluctant to enter – each covering one square kilometre. The total area of no-go zones thus amounts to about a hundred square kilometres, which is equivalent to half the size of Stockholm. Sweden’s territory, then, defined as under our jurisdiction and control, is not 528,447 square kilometres, but rather 528,347 square kilometres – a small but notable reduction.

3 Early critics

So far, we have outlined how our country, in different ways, has been impacted by multiculturalism. Starting with the disquieting case of Malmö, we touched upon riots, statistics showing migrants over-represented in crime, attacks against freedom of expression, and different ways in which our state might be undermined – such as corrosive campaigning, hostile political parties, the importing of foreign political unrest on to Swedish soil, and a downsizing of our country due to increasing no-go zones. Still, the picture of multiculturalism’s polarising impact would be incomplete unless we addressed the fate of its critics.

How come multiculturalism’s critics have often ended up in the line of fire of the Swedish elites? Most of these critics, it should be noted, have raised their concerns out of care for their country and their culture, which, until rather recently, was also in the interest of our elites. Those who govern a country also tend to be its strongest supporters. But, as noted by Jonathan Friedman, the elites and the people in Sweden – and elsewhere – have experienced a groundbreaking transformation. ‘It is interesting to consider’, he continues, ‘the inversion of perspectives in which a formerly nationalist elite who may have seen “the people” as a motley foreign mixture, today identifies itself as hybrid/multicultural, and views “the people” as dangerously purist’.⁴⁹

Without attracting much attention, Swedish elites – leading newspapers, state television, the church and the educational system – have turned from conservative to multicultural, while the masses, in contrast, have gone from socialist to conservative and nationalist. The conflict continues, but the tables are turned. This discreet intellectual groundswell may partly explain why today’s critics of multiculturalism haven’t been embraced by our elites, but punished.

Starting with party politics, the Sweden Democrats was once far-right. Over the past two decades or so, however, the party has successfully morphed into a social conservative party, with a program very similar to that of the Danish Social Democrats. When I, in 2012, gave a course at Copenhagen University titled ‘The Sweden Democrats – Danger for Democracy or the Will of the People?’, we went through all the party material available, and found no support for right-wing extremism by any stretch of the word.⁵⁰ As described in great detail by Kurt Lenk, there is an enormous range of nuances right of centre. Conservatism is not fascism.⁵¹ Indeed, as I demonstrated in my study *Populist Parties and the Failure of the Political Elites*,⁵² the Sweden Democrats is one of the most liberal (in the traditional sense) of Europe’s new populist parties.⁵³

Despite the above, the party has been subject to unforgiving, fanatical attacks. Even the slightest deviance from multicultural orthodoxy has been scolded as ‘racist’, ‘right-wing extremism’, or ‘fascist’. Would it be fair to say the ideology of multiculturalism has brought back an old-school left-wing political purism? To some extent. Not long ago, intellectuals influenced by Soviet propaganda knew anyone whose soul was impure could be dismissed as ‘fascist’. Today, similar crude name-calling is all too common among multicultural purists. Today’s multiculturalism seems slightly influenced by the toolbox of Soviet-school communism.

If our public institutions, and above all the media and the university, had realised that what we were witnessing was criticism against multiculturalism from a party akin to the Danish Social Democrats, we might not have lost 20 years.

The difficulties in raising even the most tentative critique of multiculturalism have also been noted by people from the other end of the political spectrum. For example, the left-winger Aminah Kakabaveh shares Sweden Democrat leader Jimmie Åkesson's views. Kakabaveh, not surprisingly, has experienced similar sanctions. An outspoken Marxist from a Kurdish background and a Peshmerga soldier during childhood, she hails the values of the Enlightenment, and criticises identity politics because, she maintains, it confines people to their respective ethnicity and religion.⁵⁴

Kakabaveh has complained that her campaigning against honour killings gained more appreciation among political opponents than within her own party. More pointedly, in 2019, her left-wing party initiated an expulsion case against her, for 'repeatedly and seriously damaging the party's reputation'. The allegations against her, the party secretary claimed, included 'spreading rumors that an Islamic caliphate is being established in Swedish suburbs'.⁵⁵ There are things you are not allowed to say, even though they are true. And there are other things you *are* allowed to say, even though they are not true.

In one of the most modern and gender-equal countries in the world, all it takes to come under fire from the elites is to insist on progressive ideas and women's rights. Why? Because multiculturalism – Sweden's reactionary state ideology hailed by influential left-wingers – is incompatible with them.

Leaving party politics, two intellectuals should be mentioned, whose early criticism of multiculturalism may shed light on its impact on our society.

Multiculturalists idealise overseas cultures, which also means they have a hard time accepting when these cultures are being criticised. This is

something Per Brinkemo, Sweden's foremost expert on clan societies, came to realise when a young Somali boy vanished from his school in Stockholm.⁵⁶ Astonished at the deafening silence surrounding the boys' disappearance, Brinkemo tried to alert social authorities, but instead of getting support and headlines, he was caught in a storm of accusations for being far-right. The boy, whom Brinkemo later adopted, was eventually found in Mogadishu, and Brinkemo realised Sweden was under the influence of powerful clan structures, openly challenging the authority of the Swedish state. He noted a surprising lack of interest in clan-based societies. At the prominent Lund Middle Eastern Institute at Lund University, for instance, the issue was entirely ignored. Clan-based societies are part of exotic cultures, and these cultures must, according to multiculturalists, be protected at all cost, even if this 'protection' means you abandon children from minorities. Brinkemo realised that anyone could be labelled racist for two reasons: either you claim clan societies exist, or you set out to rescue these societies' most fragile members – young boys and girls.

The most famous case recently, however, capturing many of multiculturalism's insidious qualities, relates to Dr Sameh Egyptson, who last year defended his doctoral thesis, titled *Global politisk islam? Muslimska brödraskapet & Islamiska förbundet i Sverige* ('Global political Islam? The Muslim Brotherhood and the Islamic Association in Sweden').⁵⁷ In his thesis, Egyptson points at numerous connections between various Swedish organisations and the Muslim Brotherhood.

In Arabic media, Egyptson continues, the Muslim Brotherhood is spreading conspiracies about alleged mistreatment of Muslims in Sweden, echoing the campaigning against Swedish social authorities for kidnapping Muslim children. Islamiska förbundet (Islamic Association in Sweden), he demands, must cease to damage the fabric of our society. Swedish

Orientalists, Egyptson urges, must be more scientific, stop being activists, and stop supporting Islamists; the Swedish Church, he claims in a similar vein, ‘must cease to fuel political radical extremism’.⁵⁸

His doctoral thesis has caused a storm of criticism from Muslim groups, but also enraged Swedish academics. Suffering a fate possibly unique among academic publications, his PhD thesis has been the subject of no fewer than three separate legal challenges,⁵⁹ one of which has already led to the thesis being reported to the public prosecutor for court proceedings.⁶⁰

In what seems like a good illustration of ‘lawfare’, activists are trying to have Egyptson silenced, and dissuade anyone else who might consider pursuing research along similar lines. This general attitude – refusing to have an open discussion or challenge a scholar on intellectual grounds, and instead trying to undermine his research through legal proceedings – is a new and worrying phenomenon in Swedish higher education. Lawfare also appears to fit into the general picture of multiculturalism, in which the basic pillars are not constituted by meritocracy and the rule of the better argument, but rather by assuming the moral high ground, shaming and name-calling. Multiculturalism seems to go well with lawfare.

4 Countdown to midnight: so, is the light soon returning?

We have presented an outline of how Sweden has been affected by the ideology of multiculturalism – and the consequences, it has been argued, have been mostly damaging. In its wake, the university is crumbling, riots are shaking our cities, our freedoms are being rolled back, murders have increased by a factor of four, and our once famously homogeneous system is plagued by corrosion. What is more, those who addressed these urgent issues early on were not praised for it but harassed and – indeed – excluded.

4.1 The fate of Egyptson and Kakabaveh

In many ways, things have not improved. Kakabaveh is still sidelined by her previous left-wing party for campaigning for classic left-wing ideas. In the proud tradition of Vaclav Havel – who was forced to roll beer barrels for a living in Prague during the era of Charter 77 – Egyptson is a self-employed tourist guide in Cairo and elsewhere in his native country.

4.2 Can Social Democrats change?

But this is, in fact, not the complete picture. Whether multiculturalism's grip on society is finally abating is hard to predict, but today it seems as if the situation is improving. Per Brinkemo, who for many years struggled against those who denied the very existence of clan structures, is nowadays a famous journalist, giving talks all over, even to Social Democrats. Jimmie Åkesson has become a household name, more visible in the media than his Social Democratic counterpart. In January 2024, Richard Jomshof, the Sweden

Democrats' most vocal critic of Islam, featured in an extensive interview in our largest newspaper *Aftonbladet*, outlining why mosques housing anti-Western sentiments should be confiscated or torn down. 'To my knowledge', he added, 'there isn't one single functioning Muslim country today'.⁶¹ For decades, it should be mentioned, *Aftonbladet* was multiculturalism's chief means of political propaganda. Jomshof's star appearance in *Aftonbladet* might suggest things are changing.

The picture is no less surprising if we turn from multiculturalism's critics to its advocates. The Social Democratic Party's new program, titled *Ny Riktning för Sverige 2030* ('A New Direction for Sweden 2030'), is an interesting case in point. Here are a few comments along three lines.

First, this program conveys some straightforward changes. Defending the Swedish language used to be 'racist'. But now, its authors almost take a conservative approach to it, and their section on social trust seems inspired by the American political scientist Robert Putnam who, in brief, says the more diversity, the less social trust.⁶² Without any multicultural excuse in sight, today's Sweden, the program acknowledges, has 'endured a demographic change unparalleled in our part of the world'. The 'connection between criminal gangs and migration', something Social Democrats were always fiercely denying, is now 'self-evident', and many ordinary citizens, they continue with unusual compassion, 'are terrified at the sight of escalating crime'.

Historically, Social Democratic crime prevention was all about the criminal's well-being, but now they insist 'putting dangerous individuals behind bars is a good case of crime prevention'. Multiculturalists always saw our state institutions as enriched by migration, but in the Social Democrats' new program, our bureaucracies are at risk of being undermined by an influx

of migrants with unclear allegiances, and ‘growing organised crime is getting more established and finding its way deeper and deeper into our vital public institutions’.

Multiculturalists have a never-ending love-affair with exotic cultures, but in the new party program, this wide-eyed romanticism has partly given way to robust modernism. The program refers to ‘a developing country marred by patriarchal norms’, and ‘so-called educational travels to Africa, forced marriages, honour culture, and female genital mutilation being a part of young women’s reality’. In case all those ill-fated facets of multiculturalism play out together, ‘we shall’, in an oft-cited passage, ‘witness the emergence of an existential threat against our sense of community – the rise of parallel societies’. If even Social Democrats talk about an existential threat against Sweden, we might soon reach a situation where constructive discussion will again be possible.

The second line of interest relates to another seemingly novel quality – self-criticism. ‘Our state and our public institutions’, the new program acknowledges, ‘have failed in their core duty in keeping our citizens safe and secure. At this point, we Social Democrats have also played an unfortunate part’, and the following case of self-criticism is even more to the point: ‘One reason why we made so many mistakes on this issue was probably linked to Sweden Democrats entering parliament, and the fact that we as a party – eager to underscore a distance to the Sweden Democrats – for some time were lacking an analysis of our own.’ Perhaps it is not immediately obvious to a foreign observer, but in a Swedish context, this unequivocal concession is something new.

Still, it wouldn’t be a Social Democratic program unless the good news was not somehow nullified, obliterated under the bandwagon of classic authoritarianism. So where is the twist? The twist has to do with who will

set things straight after the (mostly) Social Democratic fatal romance with multiculturalism. In order to put an end to segregation, ‘the structural spatial separations between groups have to be broken down’. And even clearer: ‘Without forceful political measures ... polarisation will increase’, and the ‘economic, ethnic and language-based segregation has to be broken down structurally, which requires a mixing of the population’.

In other words, the general population will bear the burden of Social Democracy’s flunked multicultural experience over the past 30 years. Eventually, living side by side as groups didn’t quite work out, but if we can only be convinced to live shoulder by shoulder aided by some ‘forceful political measures’, everything will be fine. If something fails, try harder. You can always count on Social Democratic elitism. The message seems to be: ‘We have made mistakes, and therefore you must change.’⁶³

But let’s end on a more positive note. These authoritarian tendencies are certainly unpleasant, but their new party program also contains some fresh rethinking and unusual self-criticism. This is not the right moment to be sarcastic and unforgiving. There is no point in scolding Social Democrats, as this will only deepen social disintegration. Instead, we should try to unite for the better of our country. Let us welcome it when people admit their failings, but reserve the right to criticise them seriously when they fail to change or to put their new rhetoric into practice.

4.3 The rise of the Sweden Democrats

Apparently, however, the Social Democrats cannot respond to the changing mood of the electorate and, in recent years, the Sweden Democrats has shown it might be the answer.

2019 was something of a watershed moment for the populist party as they overtook the Social Democrats in the polls. This prompted speculation that

the Sweden Democrats might emerge victorious in the 2022 general elections.⁶⁴ What explained their rise?

One study suggested that the party had ‘grown up’ and moved beyond whatever ‘racism’ might have defined its past. Also important, according to the authors, was the deteriorating situation in Sweden and the inability of the mainstream parties to respond to ‘deindustrialisation, public spending cutbacks, rising unemployment, and ... an influx of refugees’.⁶⁵

In the 2022 elections, Sweden Democrats maintained its upward trend. The party gave its support to the Moderate-led government of Ulf Kristersson. Before the elections, Moderates had 70 seats, Social Democrats 100 and Sweden Democrats 61. After the elections, these figures changed quite dramatically – Moderate 68, Social Democrats 107 and Sweden Democrats 73. The Sweden Democrats, by entering into a government alliance with the Moderates, demonstrated a willingness to resolve the issues at stake.

Under the influence of the Sweden Democrats, the government implemented an overhaul of Sweden’s immigration policies. In summer 2024, the Ministry of Justice announced that Sweden was on track to register the lowest annual total of asylum seekers since 1997 and had already reached ‘net emigration’ – meaning that more people left than arrived – for the first time in half a century.

Yet even as the Sweden Democrats appeal to a broad section of the population to challenge and change immigration policy, there is still public misunderstanding of the depth of the problems associated with migration. This is not just about migration and the search for a better life. Instead, multiculturalism has given free rein to – indeed it has legitimised – different regressive trends, especially in the form of radical Islam. The infamous 2007 speech by Sheik Yousuf Al-Qaradhawi gives a clear indication of the issues at stake:

*The conquest of Rome – the conquest of Italy, and Europe – means that Islam will return to Europe once again ... Europe is miserable with materialism, with the philosophy of promiscuity, and with the immoral considerations that rule the world – considerations of self-interest and self-indulgence. It is high time Europe woke up and found a way out from this. Europe will find no life saver or lifeboat other than Islam. Islam will save Europe from the raging materialism from which it suffers.*⁶⁶

The defenders of multiculturalism prefer to overlook these passages, and roughly misunderstand the figures for migration, too.

It is clear therefore that addressing the migration issue must involve a radical rethinking of European and national multicultural policies. The Sweden Democrats should continue to face the problem accordingly. It is true that nearby Denmark – where all the main parties now agree on the need to reduce immigration dramatically – might influence Swedish policy makers. But in the Swedish case, the system of multiculturalism and atomisation of society has gone so far that merely limiting migrants is not likely to solve the issue. A broader debate about what it means to be Swedish – and what to do with those who refuse to accept that definition – is absolutely urgent.

Conclusion: Sweden's descent into multiculturalism – and a way out?

So, what are the lessons learned from Sweden's troubled descent into multiculturalism? Is there a way out? And if so, what does it look like?

Starting with a few practical suggestions, we must face down tendencies to undermine Swedish society – be it demonstrations, hostile values or anything else. Policing should happen without fear or favour. Multicultural enthusiasm for foreign cultures is a stereotype, as crude and inhuman as the racist's abusive attitude to anything foreign. In both cases, strangers are put on a pedestal, cut off from real life. We should not ban political parties based on ethnicity, but investigate violations against our constitution, and imprison or expel members if needed. Political parties based on ethnicity are not 'enriching diversity', but violations against our democracy.

We should not allow foreign conflicts on Swedish soil, and every no-go zone must be taken back – if need be with military force. A no-go zone is not 'vibrant multiculturalism', but a threat against the state of Sweden. Clan-based, parallel societies must be stamped out. A situation where three out of four murders are committed by migrants is untenable. Stockholm having a per-capita gun-murder rate 30 times that of London is untenable. A unified state is not 'right-wing extremism', but the foundation for democracy. The transition from nationalism to fascism is not seamless, but, as Jürgen Habermas noted, merely a potential, unlikely outcome.

Those who violate the right to freedom of expression will be imprisoned or expelled. Nothing prevents multiculturalists opposed to freedom of expression from relocating to countries without freedom of expression. In sum: the Swedish state must regain its monopoly of violence.

Universities must be meritocratic. Multicultural ideology has no place there. Foreign interests must be prohibited from having an impact on research in Sweden. From a global point of view, Sweden's academic traditions are vastly superior to most other countries. Freedom of expression and all other freedoms cannot be negotiated. We must also be aware of tendencies towards self-censorship.

We should not, however, get caught up in that game of cultural hierarchies – who is better and who is to blame. All we need to say is that we are different and that these differences sometimes make co-existence difficult, or even impossible. We cannot prevent people from having opinions hostile to our values, but we can prevent them from imposing these opinions here. Diversity does not bring fascination and curiosity, but confusion and conflict. We should focus on the things we share instead of on the things we do not share. And if we share nothing, we should agree to disagree and part on good terms. Multiculturalism does not work, but to mix the entire population – to shake the bottle of the nation and see what happens – will only make things worse. For decades, Social Democrats labelled multiculturalism's early critics 'racists', and now, Social Democrats are using their critics' rhetoric, pretending they always did. Still, this is not the moment to make enemies. If influential Social Democrats reconsider their previous ideology, one should not be sarcastic, but show generosity to those who wish to join forces and make Sweden a better place.

Recommendations

- Acknowledge that multiculturalism is a failure. Acknowledge also that multiculturalism must be overturned on all fronts to save democracy.
- Swedish territory is not negotiable. Any attempt to challenge Swedish state sovereignty and create no-go zones must be immediately stopped by all means necessary.
- Focus on what we share rather than what we do not share. And if we share nothing, we must part.
- Dedicate your energy to opposing social corrosion, polarisation, disintegration, the floor of society caving in. Instead, create social cohesion: in institutions, bureaucracies, at universities. Learn from the failure of multiculturalism – insist on meritocracy, equality, differences based on political views, and colour-blindness.
- Practise subjective rationality. We may disagree with other people, but had we been in their shoes, we might have had their views. Unless we are able to see things from a higher perspective, any analysis will be meaningless and counterproductive.
- In the years to come, Swedish society is likely to experience dramatic political changes. The novel ideas in the Social Democrats' new party program are only the beginning. Those who used to belong to the opposite camp will approach us. When these changes happen, we should show generosity, and judge people for what they do and not for what they did in the past – or failed to do. When a society is deeply fractured, it must be healed.

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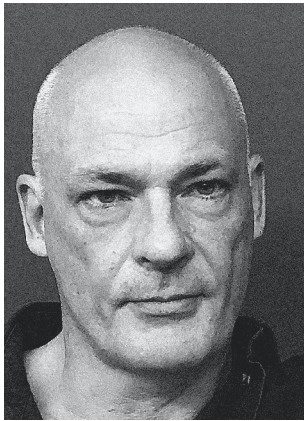
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About MCC Brussels

At a time of unprecedented political polarisation, MCC Brussels is committed to providing a home for genuine policy deliberation and an in-depth exploration of the issues of our time.

MCC Brussels is committed to asking the hard questions and working with people of goodwill from all persuasions to find solutions to our most pressing problems. An initiative of MCC (Mathias Corvinus Collegium), the leading Hungarian educational forum, MCC Brussels was founded in the autumn of 2022 to make a case for celebrating true diversity of thought, diversity of views, and the diversity of European cultures and their values.

Sweden has undergone a radical transformation in recent years, marked by surging violent crime, political tensions, and cultural clashes. The source of this transformation? A dangerous combination of mass migration and the ideology of multiculturalism. This report hopes to sound an alarm in Swedish and wider European society.

Once a symbol of stability, Sweden now faces profound challenges that demand urgent attention. Today, three out of four murders are committed by migrants, and Stockholm's per-capita gun-murder rate is 30 times that of London. In 2018 alone, 162 bomb explosions shook the country – almost one every two days. These shocking figures illustrate the scale of Sweden's transformation.

However, discussing these issues has been suppressed by an official policy of ideological multiculturalism. This policy goes beyond mere tolerance, enforcing the preservation and entrenchment of cultural differences. Critics of mass migration have been marginalized by Sweden's political and cultural elites, rendering public debate nearly impossible.

But it is not too late. As more Swedes voice their unease, it has once again become possible to stand up for national values, question the uncontrolled flow of migrants, and insist on the benefits of social integration and law and order.

This report examines the rise of multiculturalism in Sweden, the establishment's efforts to silence its critics, and how Swedes are beginning to fight back.