POLICY EFFECTS OF ANTI-IMMIGRANT PARTY REPRESENTATION ON AID TO MIGRANT BEGGARS

Maria Tyrberg and Carl Dahlström
Department of Political Science
University of Gothenburg

Draft: 2015-07-29
Word count: 8461

Adress: Statsvetenskapliga institutionen
Box 711, 405 30 Göteborg
Sweden
Telephone numbers: Carl Dahlström 031-786 5995, Maria Tyrberg 076-2594466
Email addresses: carl.dahlstrom@pol.gu.se (corresponding author), matyrberg@gmail
An increasing number of EU/EEA migrant beggars has created debate across Europe about state responsibilities in receiving countries, as legal frameworks often leave room for discretion. For example, in Sweden, the aid offered by different municipalities varies a lot. Taking advantage of sub-national variation, this paper investigates anti-immigrant party policy impact. The Sweden Democrats—the biggest anti-immigrant party in Sweden—has, unlike the mainstream political parties, preferences for a strict policy. Our data give us a unique opportunity to investigate whether their representation impacts the aid offered to migrant beggars. The empirical findings are mixed. First, there is indeed a negative correlation between SD’s representation and the aid offered. Second, the study indicates that municipalities where SD holds a pivotal position offer less aid to migrant beggars. Third, however, we find no support for the hypothesis that these effects are conditional upon the ideology of the ruling coalition.

Key words:
Anti-immigrant parties, niche parties, Sweden Democrats, policy impact, migrant beggars, party politics
INTRODUCTION

The number of beggars has increased in Europe in recent years. A large proportion is Roma people, who are poor and often discriminated in their countries of origin, and therefore travel abroad to make an income (SCM 2014). The beggars’ vulnerable position and an often vague legislation has caused debates across Europe concerning the responsibilities of the state for temporary migrants, and the practical problems are often pushed down to the local level. In Sweden, for example, the increase in migrant beggars is challenging for the municipalities. According to the Social Services Act (Socialtjänstlagen; SFS 2001: 453), Swedish municipalities have to help all EU/EEA citizens in urgent need, but the law is perceived as vague and difficult to implement. According to reports in the media, the municipalities receive little guidance, and appeals have been made to establish national directives (Nebel 2014, SALAR 2014a). As a consequence there is a large variation between Swedish municipalities, where some provide much assistance to migrant beggars while others do nothing at all (Delling 2014; Johansson and Hans-Ers 2015; SALAR 2014b; Sievers 2015). The cause of this variation is as yet unclear.\(^1\)

Given the relative independence of Swedish municipalities, the variation could be caused by the political composition at the local level. The Sweden Democrats (SD)—the biggest anti-immigrant party in Sweden—have policy preferences unlike those of the other political parties in this policy area. While the migrant beggar issue is currently debated among most political parties, SD is the only Swedish party that campaigned to introduce a ban against begging (SD 2014).

SD is represented in almost all Swedish municipal assemblies, but it is uncertain whether they have had policy influence. On the one hand, the party is not in any coalitions, and the mainstream parties distance themselves from SD (Kärrman 2015). On the other hand, SD hold the balance of power in many municipalities, and there are arguments from comparative research indicating that mainstream parties adjust their policy positions in an attempt to decrease anti-immigrant parties’ influence (Schain 2006: 271p).

Empirical findings from comparative research on anti-immigrant parties’ impact are however inconsistent. Some argue that anti-immigrant parties’ policy preferences have influenced mainstream parties (de Lange 2012; van Spanje 2010), while others claim that the policy impact of anti-immigrant parties is overstated (Akkerman 2012a; Mudde 2013). It is also unclear whether a potential impact is conditioned on the ideological orientation of mainstream parties. Several authors argue that centre-right parties should be most affected by the presence of anti-immigrant parties (Bale 2008; Norris 2005), while others claim that centre-left parties could very well be equally, or even more, responsive (Downs 2011; Hinnfors et al. 2012). In the Swedish context, Folke (2014) finds that local representation of the anti-immigrant party New Democracy (ND) had a negative impact on the size of immigration to the municipality. Similarly, Lidén and Nyhlén (2013) argue that SD has influenced municipalities’ willingness to receive refugees and, in slight contrast, Bolin et al. (2014) claim that the effect of SD only occurs when the party holds balance of power.

The clear policy preference of SD, and its representation in most of Sweden’s 290 rather independent municipalities, give us a good opportunity to contribute to the discussion on anti-

\(^1\) The EEA (The European Economic Area) agreement is a free trade agreement valid for the EU countries and Iceland, Lichtenstein and Norway (EUI C 2014).

\(^2\) The act of begging is commonly defined as when a person asks for money or a gift without offering anything in return (Adler et al. 2000: 18). In order to simplify the following text we henceforth refer to the EU/EEA citizens who are homeless and/or beg as ‘migrant beggars’. According to a recent review, the group consists of approximately 3400-4100 people, but this is only a broad estimation (Olsson and Axelsdotter Olsson: 2015).
immigrant parties’ policy impact. The inconstancy of previous research indicates that there might be context specific factors, or conditional effects. With the relatively large number of units of analysis, a fair variation of political factors, and a constant institutional set-up, we can explore under what political conditions a potential impact occurs. What is more, although this study suffers from the same limitations of causal identification as all cross-sectional studies, the data available to us have made it possible to include a large number of relevant controls, such as social, demographic, economic and attitudinal factors.

On the basis of previous research on anti-immigrant parties’ impact, the paper suggests three hypotheses. First, we hypothesize that there is a negative correlation between SD representation and aid offered to migrant beggars. Second, we expect a negative association between SD holding balance of power and aid to migrant beggars. Third, we hypothesize that the correlation between SD representation and aid to migrant beggars is conditioned on the ideology of the ruling coalition.

In order to test these hypotheses, we have collected new and unique data on the level of SD representation and aid to migrant beggars in the Swedish municipalities. The empirical findings support the hypotheses of anti-immigrant parties’ impact to some extent. First, while in some specifications falling below the standard threshold of statistical significance, there is indeed a negative correlation between SD representation and the level of aid offered. Second, the study indicates that municipalities where SD holds a pivotal position offer less aid to migrant beggars, with robust and statistically significant negative correlations in all specifications. Third, regarding the final hypothesis, we do not however find empirical support for conditional effects.

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows: First, previous research and our hypotheses are presented. Second, the research design is described together with a discussion of methodological choices, description of data collection and operationalization of variables. Third, we present results of the statistical analysis and discuss these in relation to our expectations and findings from comparative research. The fourth and final section concludes the work.

THEORY
The support for anti-immigrant parties has increased in Europe during the last decades and is now a feature of most European party systems. In addition, they have entered governing coalitions in several European countries since the end of the 1990s (Goodwin 2011: 4; Hale Williams 2006: 1). While these parties are described with various labels in the literature, we follow van der Brug et al. (2005, 537) and use the term anti-immigrant parties (AIP). As argued by Dahlström and Sundell (2012, 353), there are two reasons for preferring this term. First, resistance against immigration is the defining characteristic for the otherwise rather disparate parties within the group. Second, these parties do not necessarily belong to the right end of the ideological scale. The self reported ideology of both politicians and voters of the Swedish SD are for example rather in the middle of a left-right scale (Gilljam et al. 2010; Oscarsson & Holmberg 2013). The label ‘radical right’ or ‘extreme right’ commonly used thus does not always fit the parties’ ideological position.

The reasons for AIPs’ electoral success are widely discussed in the literature and include theories of individual and institutional factors, as well as the characteristics of the AIPs (Arzheimer 2009; Carter 2002; Hale Williams 2006; Norris 2005; Rydgren 2007; van der Brug et al. 2005). However, scholars have rather recently become more and more interested in potential policy effects of AIPs’ presence (Akkerhman 2012a; Bolin et al. 2014; Folke 2014; Mudde 2013; van Spanje 2010). As immigration is the main area of concern for AIPs, most studies focus on this issue when studying policy effects. This paper broadens the picture by investigating the impact on
a new and previously unexplored policy area: policies towards migrant beggars, where there are distinct AIP policy preferences.

We understand the concept of policy impact as ‘the ability to promote a particular outcome that would not be observed in the absence of the agency of the challenger party’ (Carvalho 2014, 2). As discussed by Bolin et al. (2014), there are both direct and indirect forms of policy impact. A party has direct impact if it has policy-making capacities and indirect impact if it influences the policy position of another political party (Schain 2006, van Spanje 2010). These two forms of impact are not contradictory in any way, but indicate that there are several ways in which a party can have influence, which all need to be taken into consideration if we wish to evaluate the full impact of AIPs.

Direct policy influence is thus rather straightforward and should occur when for example an AIP is in coalition or has a pivotal position in the Parliament. As suggested by Bolin et al. (2014), holding seats in a decision-making assembly might also be considered as a position where a party could obtain direct policy impact. Furthermore, direct impact is not limited to the national parliaments; AIPs often experience their first (and sometimes only) government participation on the local level (Mudde 2007, 279).

The idea of indirect effects originates from the spatial theory developed in Downs’ (1957) seminal work. Parties are vote maximizing from this perspective and, based on this assumption, indirect policy impact occurs when rational parties respond to new parties by choosing policy positions close to the new party, if they can, or otherwise taking an opposite stance. The aim is under all circumstances to minimize the distance between themselves and the voters. Mainstream parties thus react to the success of a new party by either moving away from it or adopting their position in order to maximize votes.

The spatial theory of Downs (1957) has been criticized for being too simplistic (van Spanje 2010: 566), and other scholars have developed the theoretical perspective further. Meguid (2005) argues, for example, that the theory lacks an important aspect, namely issue salience. According to Meguid, the strategies available to mainstream parties are not only to move away from or towards the issue, as argued by Downs (1957). They can also take over ownership of the new issue raised, and thus influence its salience. According to Mudde (2007: 291), this aspect is important in regard to AIPs. He argues that it is reasonable to assume that their effect is noticeable on the salience of attitudes, rather than the content of them. Another example of similar critique comes from Bale et al. (2010), who argue that established parties have three strategic options when faced with the risk of losing votes due to the emergence of a new party or political issue: they can hold on to their position and argue for their view, try to defuse the impact of the new issue or change their position.

An advantage of Meguid’s (2005) modified spatial theory is the theoretical possibility for political parties to target all opponents, not just the neighbouring parties. This differs from Downs’ (1957) theory, according to which political parties can only affect the electoral support of those in ideological proximity (Meguid 2005, 350). Applied to the Swedish context, Downs (1957) indicates that it is merely the mainstream parties on the political right, e.g. the Conservative Party, Moderaterna, that would adopt the position of SD. Meguid’s (2005) modification instead opens up for the possibility of positional adoption among parties on the left, for example the Social Democrats, Socialdemokraterna, as well as the ones on the right.

AIPs’ indirect influence on policy-making is often described in the literature as ‘contagion effects’ (van Spanje 2010, 564), which include two different kinds of effects. Firstly, established parties have made a shift to the right. Secondly, restrictive immigration policies have been co-opted by the mainstream parties (van Spanje 2010, 564). While indirect impact might intuitively
seem less relevant than direct impact, this is not necessarily the case. Mudde (2007, 282p) argues that the importance of AIPs in Europe probably comes from their indirect policy impact, rather than direct influence. Schain (2006, 287) argues on a similar note that AIPs have been more successful throughout Western Europe in indirectly influencing the political agenda, rather than direct participation in policy-making. Furthermore, Minkenberg (2001, 18) concludes that agenda setting and policy effects are mediated through the interaction between AIPs and established parties. Applied to the Swedish context, SD could thus influence policy-making in the municipalities in several ways, with or without a position in the ruling coalition or holding balance of power.

Previous empirical findings about AIPs’ impact are inconclusive. This is potentially due to country variation and the difficulty in isolating the specific impact on policy-making (Bolin et al. 2014, 323p). Zaslove (2004) claims that AIPs have had direct effects on policy-making in Italy and Austria, whereas Duncan (2010) presents opposite findings from Austria. Mudde (2013) and Akkerman (2012b) follow a similar line, arguing that the direct impact of AIPs is overstated, and van Heerden et al. (2014) suggest that the changes towards restrictive immigration policies were already set in motion by mainstream parties, before AIPs had their electoral breakthrough. Hale Williams (2006) show that AIPs have had a strong impact on the agenda and institutional levels, and a moderate impact on the policy level, in Western European countries. Similarly, van Spanje (2010) and de Lange (2012) argue that established parties in Western Europe have co-opted aspects of AIP policy preference. The results of these studies thus support the theory of contagion effects, indicating a turn to the right in policy-making due to AIPs’ indirect influence. According to others, AIPs have only had limited indirect impact on the policy programmes of the established parties (Akkerman 2012a; Alonso and Fonseca 2011), while Carvalho (2014) argues that the contagion effect is contingent upon two premises: a salient electoral threat towards the mainstream parties posed by the AIP, and the engagement of mainstream elites.

Following arguments regarding AIPs’ influence, scholars also discuss whether the impact is conditioned on the ideology of the mainstream parties. It is commonly argued that parties on the political right generally have policy positions more in line with a strict approach towards immigration than those on the left side of the spectrum. Hence, centre-right parties are said to be more likely to adopt the position of AIPs (Green Pederson and Krosgstrup 2008: 613). Theoretically, this notion follows the argument of Downs (1957) regarding political parties targeting the electoral support of those in ideological proximity.

However, results are also mixed when it comes to the influence of mainstream party ideology. A study by de Lange (2012) argues that the electoral success of AIPs created incentives for the mainstream right-wing parties to move further rightwards in immigration and integration issues, in order to facilitate coalition formation. The left-leaning centre and social democratic parties were supposedly opposed to government participation of AIPs (ibid, 914). Other scholars find no result of conditional influence (Bolin et al. 2014; van Spanje 2010). According to van Spanje (2010), parties in opposition are most influenced, regardless of their ideological position. Still, others suggest it is the already existing strict stance among centre-right parties towards immigration that leads to stricter policies, not AIP influence (Akkerman 2012b, 523; Mudde 2013, 12.).

Alonso and Fonseca (2011, 868) conclude that it is really centre-left parties that are most likely to be influenced by AIPs, not the right. This is potentially due to the mixed preferences of the mainstream left constituency, consisting of both high income/educated voters and working class voters. The impact of AIPs on centre-left parties is otherwise less commonly discussed than that on right-wing parties, but there are exceptions. According to Hinnfors et al. (2011), the Social
Democrats in Sweden have continuously initiated and backed strict immigration policies. On a similar note, Bale et al. (2010) argues that social democratic parties have, under certain circumstances, introduced more restricted migration policies as a result of AIPs’ electoral success.

All in all, we derive three hypotheses from previous research, which we are going to test in this paper. First, we expect a negative correlation between SD representation and the level of aid offered to migrant beggars. This hypothesis tests whether SD has any form of policy impact on the municipal level, direct or indirect.

Second, we investigate whether there are indications of a direct impact. This is based on the findings of Bolin et al. (2014) and should be most pronounced when SD holds the balance of power. We thus expect a negative effect of SD in municipalities where they hold this position.

The third hypothesis investigates whether the policy influence is conditional on the ideology of the ruling coalition. Considering the inconsistent empirical findings, it is relevant to test whether centre-right parties are more influenced by AIPs than centre-left parties.

RESEARCH STRATEGY
The purpose of this study is to investigate AIP’s influence over aid to migrant beggars, by means of a within country comparison in Sweden. The method is straightforward, using a multiple linear regression with ordinary least square (OLS) estimations as a statistical tool. The units of analysis are Swedish municipalities, which are the body mainly responsible for migrant beggars. The national political parties, including SD, are represented in the municipal council (the highest political authority on the local level). There are 290 municipalities in Sweden, and there are several advantages of using municipalities as units of analysis when studying AIP impact. The local governments in Sweden have capabilities similar to those of national governments and can thus be used for studying questions that have previously been raised on the national level (Dahlström and Sundell 2012, 356). Furthermore, studies of local levels enable us to keep institutional settings constant, and to compare a large number of units than is normally the case in cross-country comparisons (Bolin et al. 2014, 328).

On the dependent side of our analysis we try to capture aid to migrant beggars on the municipal level. The free movement of persons guarantees EU/EEA citizens the possibility to travel to other member states and the right to stay for up to three months (EUIC 2014; EP 2014). Those with rights of residence can stay longer, and have the same rights as Swedish citizens to social welfare and other social security benefits. However, certain obligations must be fulfilled in order to achieve rights of residence. A person who is not self-sufficient and without realistic possibilities to enter the Swedish labour market, e.g. someone who begs for a living, does not qualify for rights of residence and can only appeal for aid if there is an emergency situation. The most common forms consist of shelter, food or travel expenses to the home country. Each request for aid has to be individually evaluated (NBHW 2014), but it is not entirely clear whether there are also legal possibilities to take general precautions in order to aid the vulnerable EU/EEA citizens (SALAR 2014c). Considering that the Social Services Act is only a legal framework, it gives municipalities some freedom to adjust their work depending on local conditions. The vagueness of the regulation thus comes with both pros and cons. It gives the municipalities the possibility to solve issues as they see fit, but does not provide any clear guidance (Petersson 2006).

Data on aid to migrant beggars were gathered through a web survey distributed to representatives of the Social Services Administration in the Swedish municipalities. The data used for the analysis are thus unique. The survey asked questions similar to those used in a previous study by SALAR (2014b). Due to the potential difficulty for the Social Services Administration to distinguish between beggars and other homeless EU/EEA migrants, the broader definition
EU/EEA citizens who are in acute homelessness and/or who beg’ was chosen. The survey was kept brief in order to reach the highest possible response rate, and was designed so that only those questions relevant for each informant were displayed. Hence, not all questions were asked to all informants. For the complete questionnaire, see Appendix I. The survey was sent out in several rounds in order to enable adjustments. The information was gathered January to April 2015. Of the 290 municipalities, 192 responded. The response rate is thus over 66 per cent. Out of the 192 responses, 13 informants reported that they have no migrant beggars in the municipality. These were excluded from the analysis, thus a total of 179 units.

While we can only speculate as to why some municipalities chose not to respond to the survey, it is possible they have not received migrant beggars to the same extent as the others. Hence, they might not have perceived the study as relevant for their participation. In order to test the generalizability of the results, an analysis was made where the municipalities included were compared to those that did not respond to the survey. There seems not to be any systematic differences that correlate with the focal independent and dependent variables; both groups show similar patterns in municipal characteristics. In regard to the political composition, there is an even spread of SD seat share, but the ideology of the ruling coalitions differs slightly. The group that did not respond has a higher share of centre-left coalitions than the other group. This should not affect the study to any great extent, however. As discussed further below, the regression analyses include ruling coalition as a controlling factor. The results could thus be considered generalizable for the Swedish municipalities.

The dependent variable—aiding migrant beggars—is operationalized through questions regarding municipalities’ handling of the issue. These questions were compiled into an index, presented in Table 1. The scale ranges from 0-7, where 0 = no aid offered and 7 = several forms of aid offered, capturing the number of aspects covered in order to help the beggars.

The Social Services Administration has specific responsibilities regarding children (NBHW 2014). Questions were therefore asked in order to rule out the possibility that those who offer aid only do so when children are included. The responses show no signs of such a correlation.

The municipal council is the highest political authority on the local level and it is elected directly every fourth year, on the same day as the national election. The parties represented in the municipal councils are mainly the same as in the national government, and the voter turnout in the municipal elections is similar to that in the national election, albeit a few percentages lower (Pettersson 2006, 103).3 For social services, the municipalities have social welfare committees or the equivalent that deal with related issues. The committees act according to the guidelines of the municipal assembly and the legal framework regulating the specific area, in this case the Social Services Act (Montin and Granberg 2013, 41). The committees consist of politicians designated by the municipal assembly, and the seats are allocated in relation to the party size in the municipal assembly, often through agreements between the parties (Pettersson 2006). The political decisions of the social welfare committees are implemented by The Social Services Administration (Socialförvaltningen). Hence, it is SD’s representation in these committees that is most relevant for our study.

[Table 1 about here]

In order to retrieve data for the focal independent variable—SD representation—we contacted the municipalities and asked for a list of the permanent representatives in the social welfare

---

3 Since 1970, the average voter turnout for the national election has been 89.1 per cent, the county council election 87.5 per cent and municipal election 87.6 per cent (Pettersson 2006, 103)
committee or equivalent decision-making committee. An alternative to this approach would be to use the seat share in the municipal assembly, but the previous measurement is preferable for several reasons. First and foremost, the political decision-making regarding issues related to social services mainly takes place in the social welfare committee. Furthermore, the political composition in the social welfare committee does not always mirror that of the municipal assembly. Depending on the size of the committee, small parties are sometimes left out. This is especially the case for SD, which has seemingly been intentionally kept out of municipal committees (e.g. Samuelsson 2006). Hence, while SD might have seats in the municipal assembly, they are not necessarily equally represented in the committees. Based on these aspects, the seat share in the social welfare committee is the most accurate and advantageous measurement for the purposes of this paper.

The focal independent variable in hypothesis 2—SD in a position of balance of power—is operationalized using a dichotomous variable where 0 = other political majority and 1 = SD in balance of power. The operationalization follows Loxbo (2010), who defines a position of balance of power as a situation where neither of the ideological blocs holds a majority of the seats, and SD is in a pivotal position. In order to measure this, we used data regarding ruling party coalitions in the municipal assemblies and applied it to the social welfare committees. SD is considered to have a pivotal position in the social welfare committee in those cases where the ruling coalition is in need of SD votes in order to achieve a majority. While there is a risk that this measurement does not capture potential informal coalitions, this is an aspect that is difficult to avoid.

The ideology of the political coalition—one constituent variable in hypothesis 3—is measured using dummy variables, indicating which ideological blocs are in a position of power in the municipal assembly, and thus also in the social welfare committee.

The biggest challenge to a cross-sectional study like this is omitted variable bias, and there are several factors that could potentially explain the various approaches taken by the Swedish municipalities. We try to control for all factors that can correlate with the focal independent variable—SD representation—and the dependent variable—aid to migrant beggars. The number of migrant beggars in the municipalities and the number of years they have been present there are clearly such factors. Municipalities with fewer migrant beggars are potentially less likely than others to actively pursue policies to provide aid. Furthermore, there might not yet be a plan for how to deal with the issue in those municipalities where this is a new situation. Regarding the focal independent variable, the presence of beggars could increase electoral support for SD.

Another very important factor to take into account is public opinion towards migrant beggars, because a negative public opinion could affect both SD’s electoral support and mainstream parties’ migrant beggar policy. However, we lack information about attitudes to migrant beggars, and therefore use attitudes towards immigration as a proxy since it is reasonable to assume these two areas are highly correlated. The question is gathered from a pooled, high quality national survey, the so-called Super-Riks-SOM survey (2014). The measurement is not perfect since it is from the entire period between 1986 and 2012. As expected, however, it is highly correlated with support for SD (0.63) and we have also tried pooling other, shorter time periods, which increases the correlation with SD support (0.67) but does not alter the results.

A further potential explanatory factor that can be derived from previous research concerning AIP influence is the financial state of the municipality. It is suggested that more affluent societies have better possibilities for receiving refugees (Bolin et al. 2014, 331), which could also be the case with migrant beggars. Population growth shows the ability to attract new citizens and is commonly used as a measure of economic success in municipalities (Fjertorp 2013), and is thus included as a control variable in the analysis.
The capacity of the Social Services Administration, which is responsible for providing aid to several socially marginalized groups in society, is also related to municipal finances. Municipalities with more socially vulnerable citizens might be less able to prioritize the issue. This factor can also correlate with the independent variable; social marginalization is often discussed as a potential explanation for AIP support (Rydgren and Ruth 2011, 203). Demand for social services is therefore included and operationalized using the percentage of the municipal population receiving financial aid from the Social Services Administration.

Municipal size, including population and area, is a common factor that is controlled for when studying municipal politics and public administration (Karlsson 2007, 9) and is hence included in the analysis. This aspect could potentially have an impact on both variables. Support for SD is higher in the countryside than in the larger cities (Sannerstedt 2014, 446f). Furthermore, municipal size could affect the municipalities’ ability to aid migrant beggars.

As discussed previously, the ideology of the ruling coalition is one of the constituent variables in hypothesis 3. It is also included as a control variable in testing hypotheses 1 and 2. Left-wing parties are considered to be more prone to aid in general, thus potentially causing a difference in approach. In addition, municipalities with a centre-right majority in the municipal assembly might also have higher electoral support for SD due to their ideological proximity.

Summary statistics are presented in Table 2. The variables measuring area and population size are transformed, using logarithmic transformation, because of a skewed distribution.

RESULTS
The following section outlines the empirical analyses. The first regression aims to test whether there is a negative relationship between SD representation and aid, as suggested in hypothesis 1. The results are presented in Table 3, models 1-2, showing a negative effect of SD seat share on the aid offered to migrant beggars. The effect is statistically significant in model 1. In model 2, it is below the standard threshold of statistical significance, but above 0.9. This change is due to the inclusion of the variables measuring number of beggars and years present in the municipality. There are at least two possible explanations. First, because of missing data, the second model includes fewer units of analysis, which could influence the statistical significance. In order to test this, we performed a new regression analysis, excluding these units from all models. The variation in significance however remained, indicating this aspect does not explain the change. A second possible explanation is simply that the variables measuring the extent of migrant beggars reduce the effect of SD seat share, suggesting this aspect is more important than the impact of SD.

The results are thus ambiguous. There seems to be a negative relationship between SD representation and the level of aid offered to migrant beggars, but the variation in statistical significance suggests the results are not robust. Hypothesis 1 is thus only weakly supported. Hence, we cannot argue for the theoretical notion of contagion effects, which suggests that AIPs have influenced the established parties to move further rightward in order to decrease their electoral success.

Our second hypothesis concerns the potential policy impact of SD when they hold balance of power. As discussed previously, if the hypothesis holds it could indicate that they have direct influence on policy-making due to their pivotal position. The results presented in models 3-4 support the hypothesized correlation; the level of aid offered is lower in municipalities where SD holds a balance of power, with statistically significant effects. The size of the effect is rather large...
and indicates that when SD is in a pivotal position, between 1.3 and 1.5 steps less aid is offered to migrant beggars, which equals 69 to 79 percent of one standard deviation. 

In order to capture whether it is indeed SD’s pivotal position, or whether the pivotal position actually picks up some omitted variable correlated with SD’s seat share, we include the interaction term between SD’s balance of power and SD’s seat share. If SD’s seat share contributes, the interaction term should be negative and statistically significant, but it is not (model not shown).

These results support the hypothesis of SD’s direct policy impact, with more robust findings than in the previous analysis. In this study we cannot get closer to identifying whether the actual effect is causal, and if in such case it is a direct or an indirect effect, but it is fairly probable that SD’s policy preferences become clearer in a position where they are able to put direct pressure on the policy area.

[Table 3 about here]

The final hypothesis aims to test whether the impact of SD representation is conditioned on the ideology of the ruling coalition. When measuring the single effect of ruling coalition, excluding interaction variables, there are weak tendencies toward an ideological effect, which are positive for centre-left and negative for centre-right (model not shown). The results of the analysis of conditional effects are presented in models 6-7. Perhaps counterintuitive, the results show a negative interaction between centre-left coalitions and SD’s seat share, while the interaction with centre-right is positive. The effects are however statistically insignificant and, while the table only shows the final step of the analysis (including all controls), they are also throughout more parsimonious models.

In order to further test the theory of conditional impact, we re-ran the analysis with SD’s seat share replaced with SD’s balance of power in order to see whether the previously shown effect of the latter varied depending on the ruling coalition. Again, the results were statistically insignificant, indicating that this is not the case. Finally, we tested the individual effect of each political party in order to see whether they differed. This would have indicated that distinct preferences among political parties were suppressed (did I guess correctly?) when coalitions were used as the measurement. The results showed only minor differences compared to the results in models 6-7. Hypothesis 3 is thus rejected; the effect of SD is not conditioned on political coalition. Hence, we find no empirical support for the theoretical argument of AIPs influencing parties in close ideological proximity to a greater extent than others.

Turning to the control variables, the positive effect of the variable measuring social aid to citizens is unexpected, and contrary to what was predicted. It indicates that municipalities with a higher demand on their Social Services Administration offer more aid than others. This result could capture an organization effect, suggesting municipalities with a proficient routine for dealing with social aid in general are more able to provide aid also to migrant beggars. The effect is only statistically significant in the initial models, however, falling back to insignificant levels when the variables measuring the years and numbers of beggars are included. Another significant control, lasting throughout all the models, is population size. Larger municipalities offer more aid than others. It is possible that this aspect also captures the presence of migrant beggars to some extent; larger municipalities are likely to have a greater number than smaller ones. As mentioned above, this would suggest that the level of aid offered is positively correlated to the extent of migrant beggars in the municipality, which is expected. While the effect remains in the models where the aspects that control for number of beggars and years present are included, these are only rough estimates from the Social Services Administrations. This measurement is thus somewhat
insufficient, which could explain why there is still an effect of municipal size. It might also be that municipal size captures some other unknown factor that is more common in larger municipalities than in smaller ones. For instance, larger municipalities are likely to be more used to dealing with homelessness in general. Lastly, none of the effects of the variables controlling for population growth, area size, ruling coalition and public opinion reach significant levels.

While it is not shown in the table, the adjusted $R^2$ increases a great deal when population and area size are included, indicating that the larger municipalities provide significantly more aid to migrant beggars, which is important to take into account, as we do here.

Finally, in order to test the robustness of all the analyses presented in Table 3, additional tests were made. First we explored the relationship further by replacing the political composition of the social welfare committee with that of the municipal assembly. The results point in the same direction as in previous analyses but with small changes in effect size and statistical significance, reaching insignificant levels. However, as discussed previously, the composition of the social welfare committee is more reliable for the purposes of this paper. Furthermore, both measurements show negative effects. This indicates that the results presented can be considered valid. Second, the regression model was controlled for multicollinearity, extreme outliers and heteroscedasticity, which show that the models are reliable. Scatter plots, correlation matrix and histograms are presented in Appendix III. Third, and finally, due to the skewed distribution of our dependent variable, we dichotomised it and re-ran all analyses with logistic regression, which confirmed the results presented above.

CONCLUSIONS
On a general level, the aim of this paper is twofold. It studies the unexplained variation in the municipal approach towards migrant beggars in Sweden, and tests theories of AIP policy impact on a new and previously unexplored policy area. More specifically, we ask whether SD representation has an impact on aid offered to migrant beggars in different Swedish municipalities and, on the basis of previous research, we make three suggestions that are tested empirically in the paper. We hypothesize that i) the strength of SD’s representation is negatively correlated with the aid to migrant beggars; ii) that SD holding a balance of power is negative correlated with aid to migrant beggars; iii) that the correlations above are conditioned on the ideology of the ruling coalition. In order to answer the research questions, we collected unique data covering municipal handling of the situation with migrant beggars and the representation of SD in Swedish municipalities.

Our analyses show mixed results. While the first hypothesis regarding the impact of SD seat share only renders weak support, we find a robust and statistically significant negative correlation between SD holding balance of power and the level of aid offered. It thus appears as though their policy preferences become clearer when they possess a position where they are able to put direct pressure on the other parties in this policy area. Furthermore, the study indicates that the impact of SD can stretch to other areas of policy preference, not just immigration. When it comes to the third hypothesis, although the ideology of the ruling coalition seems to matter to some degree in itself, we fail to establish conditional effects.

In addition, the analysis shows that the size of the municipality is an important influencing factor. Larger municipalities offer more aid than others, which is potentially explained by the fact that they also experience the presence of migrant beggars to a greater extent. Furthermore, we find some tendencies of an organizational effect, indicating that municipalities with more proficient routines offer more aid to migrant beggars. These are previously unknown aspects. The paper thus
contributes to the societal discourse by providing new explanatory factors for the municipal variation.

In regard to the research field of AIP policy impact, the first analysis shows a consistently negative effect of SD seat share, which is in line with the argument that AIPs have influenced the established parties to move further rightward in order to decrease their electoral success (e.g. de Lange 2012; van Spanje 2010). The variation in statistical significance however indicates the that result is lacking in robustness, corresponding with studies that find weak support for the theory of ‘contagion effects’ (Akkerman 2012a; Alonso and Fonseca 2011). The negative effect of SD in the case it holds a balance of power is, as mentioned, more robust, suggesting that SD has a direct policy impact due to their pivotal position. This result contradicts studies arguing that the direct impact of AIPs is overrated (Akkerman 2012b; Mudde 2013), but corresponds with the findings of Bolin et al. (2014) who traced an effect of SD only insofar they hold balance of power. Lastly, we find no signs of AIPs influencing centre-right to a greater extent than others, as has commonly been argued (Green Pederson and Krogstrup 2008). There is initially an independent positive effect of left-wing parties, indicating that they offer more aid than others, but there are no significant interaction effects between SD seat share and the ruling coalition. The notion that AIPs impact parties in close ideological proximity more than others is thus not supported.
### Table 1. Index – forms of aid offered by municipalities included in dependent variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aid offered</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acute shelter</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journey to home country</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial aid</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other form of aid</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financing other actors</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: N=179. Cronbach’s α = 0.82.*

*Comment:* All affirmative replies to the alternative “other” consist of one single form of aid. This category was thus included in the index on the same premises as the other alternatives. While the index is skewed, the limited number of steps on the scale made it unsuitable for logarithmic transformation. The frequency distribution is shown in Appendix II.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Sd</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SD seat share 2014/2015</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>6.59</td>
<td>6.91</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aiding beggars index 2015 (0-7)</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of beggars 2015 (1-6)</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of years with beggars 2015 (1-5)</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area km²/1000 2014</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>20.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population size/100 2014</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>388.93</td>
<td>830.84</td>
<td>24.51</td>
<td>9119.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population growth 2014</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>-1.52</td>
<td>3.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public opinion 1986-2012 (1-5)</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>3.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Receiving social aid 2013</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Comment:* Number of beggars is scaled in: 1=1-20, 2=21-40, 3=41-60, 4=61-80, 5=81-100, 6=100<. Number of years with beggars is scaled in: 1=>1, 2=1-2, 3=3-4, 4=5-6, 5=6<. Public opinion ranges from 1=very bad proposal (to receive fewer refugees) to 5=very good proposal. Due to the difficulty in determining the number of migrant beggars, it was not mandatory to reply to the question. Two informants thus left this question unanswered. The question regarding number of years with beggars was included after the first round of the survey was sent. Hence, the first informants did not receive this question.
### Table 3. Effects on the level of aid offered to migrant beggars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
<th>Model 5</th>
<th>Model 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SD seat share</strong></td>
<td>-0.055**</td>
<td>-0.044*</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.036</td>
<td>-0.057***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.022)</td>
<td>(0.023)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.026)</td>
<td>(0.026)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SD balance of power</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.490***</td>
<td>-1.311***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.375)</td>
<td>(0.427)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area size (Ln)</strong></td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>-0.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.120)</td>
<td>(0.124)</td>
<td>(0.116)</td>
<td>(0.122)</td>
<td>(0.125)</td>
<td>(0.125)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population size (Ln)</strong></td>
<td>1.019***</td>
<td>0.765***</td>
<td>0.998***</td>
<td>0.732***</td>
<td>0.750***</td>
<td>0.737***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.142)</td>
<td>(0.212)</td>
<td>(0.136)</td>
<td>(0.202)</td>
<td>(0.214)</td>
<td>(0.214)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>% Receiving social aid</strong></td>
<td>0.194**</td>
<td>0.104</td>
<td>0.167**</td>
<td>0.101</td>
<td>0.106</td>
<td>0.103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.076)</td>
<td>(0.084)</td>
<td>(0.072)</td>
<td>(0.081)</td>
<td>(0.084)</td>
<td>(0.084)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population growth</strong></td>
<td>-0.147</td>
<td>-0.211</td>
<td>-0.083</td>
<td>-0.160</td>
<td>-0.196</td>
<td>-0.207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.195)</td>
<td>(0.205)</td>
<td>(0.190)</td>
<td>(0.201)</td>
<td>(0.207)</td>
<td>(0.205)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Public opinion towards</td>
<td>0.984</td>
<td>0.888</td>
<td>0.291</td>
<td>0.439</td>
<td>0.873</td>
<td>0.756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>refugees**</td>
<td>(0.978)</td>
<td>(1.032)</td>
<td>(0.834)</td>
<td>(0.910)</td>
<td>(1.034)</td>
<td>(1.038)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Years with beggars</strong></td>
<td>0.244</td>
<td>0.285</td>
<td>0.241</td>
<td>0.285</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.229)</td>
<td>(0.223)</td>
<td>(0.230)</td>
<td>(0.232)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of beggars</strong></td>
<td>0.280</td>
<td>0.274</td>
<td>0.278</td>
<td>0.280</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.175)</td>
<td>(0.171)</td>
<td>(0.175)</td>
<td>(0.175)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ruling coalition (Centre-left)</strong></td>
<td>0.429</td>
<td>0.332</td>
<td>0.666**</td>
<td>0.490</td>
<td>0.515</td>
<td>0.274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.305)</td>
<td>(0.323)</td>
<td>(0.300)</td>
<td>(0.316)</td>
<td>(0.416)</td>
<td>(0.327)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ruling coalition (Centre-right)</strong></td>
<td>0.159</td>
<td>0.052</td>
<td>0.510</td>
<td>0.398</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>-0.253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.315)</td>
<td>(0.326)</td>
<td>(0.316)</td>
<td>(0.338)</td>
<td>(0.328)</td>
<td>(0.432)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction SD seat share*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.029</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruling coalition (Centre-left)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.042)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction SD seat share*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.042</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruling coalition (Centre-right)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.039)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intercept</strong></td>
<td>-7.752**</td>
<td>-6.426*</td>
<td>-5.743**</td>
<td>-5.205*</td>
<td>-6.386*</td>
<td>-5.800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3.314)</td>
<td>(3.487)</td>
<td>(2.857)</td>
<td>(3.071)</td>
<td>(3.493)</td>
<td>(3.534)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adjusted R²</strong></td>
<td>0.268</td>
<td>0.274</td>
<td>0.305</td>
<td>0.299</td>
<td>0.271</td>
<td>0.274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
<td>179</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: OLS regression, unstandardized b-coefficients, standard errors in parentheses. Levels of significance:
  *p< 0.1, **p< 0.05, ***p< 0.01.
  
  **Comment:** Ruling coalition is divided into three categories: centre-right, centre-left, bloc exceeding/other.
REFERENCES


Hinnfors, Jonas, Andrea Spehar & Gregg Bucken-Knapp (2012). ‘The missing factor: why social
The Sweden Democrats (2014). *Sverigedemokratisk kommunpolitik. Inriktningsprogram för en Sverigedemokratisk kommunpolitik – 2014*


Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR 2014). *Styren i kommuner 2014*. Available at www.skl.se


Zaslove, Andrej (2004). ‘Closing the door? The ideology and impact of radical right populism on immigration policy in Austria and Italy’, *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 9:1, 99-118