

ERC Consolidator Grant 2015 Research proposal

a. State of the art and objectives

The study of how we function as political beings lies at the core of political science. How does it come about, for example, that some people are more politically committed and interested than others? What is it that explains why some people are willing to be candidates for political bodies whereas others would never dream of getting involved with politics? The overriding purpose of the CONPOL project is to increase knowledge of what explains differences in political participation between individuals. More specifically we intend to focus on how the decisions of individuals to become involved in politics are shaped in social contexts. In concrete terms this means that the project will answer questions about how we are affected by having grown up in a certain family, by having certain friends, by living in a specific area or by being employed at a certain workplace.

The question of the factors that explain differences in political activity is fundamental for several reasons. The first is that politics and political activity is something that in a deeper sense is a characteristic of us as a species. Humans are, to quote Aristotle's well-known aphorism, political animals by nature. On this assumption it is therefore only in society that a person becomes an actual *person*. It is true that other species also display behaviour that may in a broad sense be designated as political or social (Proctor & Brosnan 2011). But humans are still different. No other species is so marked by social and political relations. This means that a deeper understanding of how we think and act in political contexts is an important part of our understanding of ourselves.

A second reason why it is important to be better able to explain political attitudes and action is of a more normative nature. It is often asserted that the essence of politics, and therefore also the essence of the study of politics, is power and power relationships. This applies to the very highest degree to the subject that lies at the heart of this project: political participation. The idea behind the fundamental democratic right "one person, one vote" is that every citizen's political preferences should carry equal weight when we take joint decisions. But at the same time we know from earlier research that political participation, and therefore political power, is unequally distributed. Some people vote more often and are also more involved in other political contexts and therefore gain a greater hearing for their wishes (Lijphart 1997). From this point of view it is of course important to understand what explains why some citizens are more politically active than others. A better understanding of the reasons for political participation is a precondition for creating a more equal society (Campbell 2013).

a.1 Explaining political participation: Michigan versus Columbia

Research into who participates and who refrains has followed two parallel but sometimes overlapping courses over the last half-century (Zuckerman 2005; Campbell 2013). The predominant explanatory model – the Michigan school – has its roots in a psychological tradition (Campbell et al. 1960). Political participation is explained here primarily from a strictly individual perspective. The explanation for differences in political commitment is assumed to depend on the degree to which people possess different characteristics and resources. A number of explanatory factors have been held up in empirical models of political participation: demographic factors such as age, gender and ethnicity (Strate et al. 1989; Verba et al. 1993); different kinds of socioeconomic resources in the form of education, professional status and income (Verba & Nie 1972; Wolfinger & Rosenstone 1980; Verba et al. 1995; Nie et al. 1996); attitude factors such as political interest, political knowledge and political confidence (Finkel 1985; Blais & Young 1999; DiMaggio et al. 2001); and personality characteristics and values such as extraversion and conscientiousness (Mondak et al. 2010), cognitive ability (Deary et al. 2008), altruism (Fowler 2006) and patience (Fowler & Kam 2006).

These explanations of political participation share the underlying assumption of separate atomized individuals as the main analytical unit. This is often supplemented by the assumption of rational individuals whose ultimate motive in committing themselves politically or refraining from doing so is maximization of

utility (Riker & Ordeshook 1968; Aldrich 1993). This theoretical focus is reflected in the methodological choices with which researchers of the Michigan school are associated. The prevalent method in research into political participation since Campbell et al. (1960) presented their pioneering studies has been the use of data based on random samples of individuals in national contexts. Moreover these individuals are usually assumed to be (statistically) independent of each other in the statistical analyses that are then carried out on the sample.

The alternative explanatory model of political participation is instead based on the view that politics and political action have to be understood as social phenomena. In particular it is important to take into account that decisions to engage in politics are always taken in a social context. Our choices are not made in isolation from other people but are instead shaped within the framework of different social contexts, for example the immediate family, under the influence of friends and acquaintances or in relation to other individuals in the residential area or at the workplace.

This approach is strongly associated with a handful of researchers connected with Columbia University who established in the 1940s and 1950s what is known as the Columbia school (Lazarfeld et al. 1944; Berelson et al. 1954). In a number of significant studies of American presidential campaigns in the 1940s based on individual samples in local contexts they showed that people cannot be regarded as isolated beings when they make decisions on political questions. To understand why certain people utilize their civic right to vote while others refrain from doing so or what underlies an individual's decision to vote for a particular party or a special candidate it is not enough merely to take account of factors such as the individual's age, education, income or political attitudes. Instead the message from these sociologically inspired studies is that individuals' political choice is to a high degree shaped by information, opinions and behavioural patterns that are spread by social interaction with people in the immediate vicinity.

Compared with the Michigan tradition that has dominated research into political participation over the last 50 years studies with roots in the Columbia school are considerably less numerous. During the golden era of socialization research in the 1960s and 1970s several empirical studies showed that the primary social unit – the individual's rearing family – is crucial to the growth of political preferences (Jennings & Niemi 1968, 1981; Tedin 1974). However most of these studies have dealt with the influence of family factors on individuals' opinions on political issues and the deeper identification with one or other party political alternative (Jennings et al. 2009) while only a few have touched upon political participation and commitment. For example, both Beck & Jennings (1982) and Verba et al. (2005) show that children who have grown up with highly educated and politically active parents tend to be more politically committed as adults.

Moreover it has been maintained that features of the immediate social environment may have a bearing on an individual's political participation. For example there are a number of studies showing that individuals residing in environments where there is a high average level of education are more politically active quite irrespective of the individual's own level of education (Huckfeldt 1979; Krassa 1988; Cho et al. 2006).

As for how social network relationships in a stricter sense influence political participation, Mutz (2002) shows that people who are subject to conflicting pressures in their political networks are less inclined to be concerned with politics. Fowler (2005) points instead to the fact that a person's decision to vote affects the probability of people in the person's environment also voting. Nickerson (2008) reports similar results based on two field experiments.

One important aim of the CONPOL project is that of getting to grips with the growing but still modest research into how political participation is shaped in social contexts. The main aim of the project may thus be seen as a return to the basic principles spotlighted by the Columbia school more than 50 years ago. To increase our knowledge of the causes of political participation, the social logic of politics must regain its place in our theoretical and empirical models. It is important to point out here that such a return must not be achieved at the expense of the individual perspective with which the Michigan approach is associated. We intend instead to bring out how social contexts such as family, school, residential area and workplace and the interactions that take place within them influence people's political participation over and above and in combination with already established individual-centred explanations of political commitment such as education, income, ethnicity and cognitive abilities. Before we discuss specifically how the project is to be carried out and what is required in the way of data and design we shall briefly discuss what more exactly we mean by asserting that political participation is formed within the framework of social contexts and networks.

a.2 Contexts and networks

The most important distinction concerns the difference between context and network effects. In the case of the former it is possible to speak of contextual effects when differences within equivalent categories of individuals can be attributed to variations in the nature of the surroundings (Huckfeldt & Sprague 1995). In other words this implies that one and the same person is expected to act differently if he/she is moved from a social context with certain conditions (for example a neighbourhood or a workplace marked by a high level of political commitment) to a context with different characteristics (for example a neighbourhood or a workplace characterized by political apathy).

There are of course a very large number of conceivable contexts whose qualities may influence the behaviour and attitudes of individuals. Some of these may be defined geographically (such as a neighbourhood which is a part of a municipality which is in turn a part of a county in a state in a country) whereas other contexts are primarily defined not geographically but socially (such as families, workplaces or associations). In line with earlier research into political participation the CONPOL project will focus on contextual effects that can be attributed to individuals' immediate surroundings: family (Verba et al. 2005), neighbourhood (Huckfeldt & Sprague 1995) and workplace (Pateman 1970).

However the claim that political behaviour is shaped within the framework of social contexts should not be interpreted solely in terms of how the composition of the immediate environment affects individuals' choices and behaviour. Contextual effects in that sense risk being reduced to a form of "social telepathy" where a general statistical quality – for example, average level of education in a residential area – in a more or less indistinct manner affects individuals' behaviour (Huckfeldt et al. 2005). The risk is then that we end up in a situation where certain explanations for political behaviour are based entirely on the individual's own resources, while other explanations totally disregard qualities specific to the individual and instead focus on how people's behaviour is orchestrated by the social contexts in which they find themselves. What is missing from these attempts at explanation is the link between individuals and the fact that these links in turn constitute the social contexts within which the individuals make their choices. In other words we also need a network approach in order to gain a more complete understanding of ourselves as political beings.

In the CONPOL project we shall therefore also study whether and, if so, how political participation is spread between individuals connected with each other by different social relationships. The very simplest form of social network consists of two people with some form of relationship between them – a dyad. The family is the scene of several such dyadic relationships. For example, it is important to understand how political attitudes and behaviour are transmitted between parents and their children. (Jennings et al 2009) or passed between partners (Stoker & Jennings 1995).

The political network of an individual may of course extend beyond individual dyadic relationships within the family. For example earlier studies based on information on individuals and their discussion partners show that friends, family members and colleagues at work influence both how we discuss politics (Huckfeldt et al. 2002) and whether and, in that case, how we vote in general elections (Huckfeldt & Sprague 1991, 1995; Mutz 2002).

Such studies show clearly that political attitudes and behaviour are formed in a social context where we as individuals are influenced by and influence other people around us. The question is, however, whether such effects can also spread to other parts of a larger network of individuals. An important source of inspiration for the CONPOL project here is research that shows that individuals are influenced not only by their closest relatives, but also by their friends' friends and the friends of friends of friends, that is to say people who are up to three steps away from them and with whom they themselves have no direct contact. The phenomenon is called hyperdyadic spread, and means that even people beyond one's direct social contacts have an effect on one's own life where such disparate phenomena as eating habits, happiness and suicidal tendencies are concerned (Christiakakis & Fowler 2009). An urgent aim of the CONPOL project is to examine the extent to which such dissemination patterns can also be observed when they concern the inclination to become politically involved (Fowler 2005).

b. Methodology

A fundamental idea running through the CONPOL project is that an expanded theoretical perspective on explanations of political participation requires new thinking about data and design. As has already been mentioned, much earlier individual-centred research into political participation is based on national surveys of randomly selected individuals. Such a design has evident weaknesses, however, when answering questions of how decisions on political participation are affected by the social context and the social relations surrounding different individuals.

To obviate this problem researchers who have been interested in contextual effects and network effects have instead carried out focused studies of more locally restrictive areas. One of the better known examples is Huckfeldt & Sprague's panel data from South Bend, Indiana, in conjunction with the 1984 presidential election campaign. This unique body of data has been used in a number of studies of how social contexts and network relations affect political attitudes and behaviour (Huckfeldt & Sprague 1991, 1995; Kenny 1998). The problem with this design, however, is that there is little possibility of generalizing the results outside the given local context.

Ideally we would naturally like to have access to data that make it possible to examine how both individual factors and also context and network factors are related to political participation. To improve the opportunity for making generalizations such data needs to be representative and not confined to a specific local context. To put this differently, it means that we ought to strive for data and design that enable the Michigan and Columbia approaches to be combined. We believe here that studies based on Swedish register data combined with a more developed causal design may take us a good bit of the way towards this ideal.

b.1 Swedish register data

Statistics Sweden is a government authority responsible for official statistics. After special consideration researchers can obtain access to individually based data in anonymized form. For several reasons such register data gives us unique scope for examining the social roots of political participation. Firstly, with the central office register of Statistics Sweden we can gain access for the whole Swedish population to numerous relevant variables that have been linked in previous research to the inclination to become involved: gender, age, education (both type and level), career status, income etc. Through Statistics Sweden we can also obtain access to information on cognitive and non-cognitive capacities from the military enrolment tests that are mandatory for all men in the country. Secondly, as we describe in greater detail below, we can with the aid of this register information specify a number of relevant social contexts and relations between individuals within these contexts. In particular we can obtain information on different family relations (parents can be linked with children, siblings with siblings and partner/wife with partner/husband). Moreover it is possible to locate every one of the individuals in the Swedish population in specific residential areas and (for those who are employed) in workplaces. Thirdly the Swedish registers contain certain population data on political participation.

b.2 Measures of political participation

We intend to study political participation at both mass level (principally electoral participation) and elite level (nomination for and involvement in political assemblies). In the case of the latter form of participation we will use information from two different public registers. The first is the *register of people nominated and elected*, which contains details of all candidates nominated, elected and not elected in the seven Riksdag, county council and municipal elections held in 1991, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010 and 2014.¹ The other source of data is the survey of representatives in municipalities and county councils carried out by Statistics Sweden in 2007 and 2011. The register concerns details of all elected representatives in Sweden's municipalities and county councils after the elections of 2006 and 2010. Both registers also contain information on different background characteristics such as the party, gender, age, income, education, country of birth and nationality of the candidates.

¹ Riksdag, county council and municipal elections are held on the same day in Sweden. The elections are held every four years (every three until 1994).

Where participation on the mass level is concerned the supply of data from Statistics Sweden is less satisfactory. It is true that the public registers contain information on electoral participation and other civic activities from large and repeated sample surveys. Several of the studies that we outline below require us to have access to population data, however. This being so, we intend to collect population data on electoral participation by scanning and digitalizing the information in the public lists of voters.

More precisely we intend with the aid of OCR (Optical Character Recognition and ICR (Intelligent Character Recognition) to digitalize the information on electoral participation at individual level that can be found in the lists of voters drawn up in connection with public elections (Riksdag, county council, municipal and European Parliament elections) that are held in Sweden. Sweden's 290 municipal archives are responsible for the filing of the lists after the elections concerned have been held. The lists of voters contain information on the electoral participation of all persons shown as entitled to vote in a particular election and constitute public documents (on the other hand it is not of course possible to see *how* anyone has voted from the lists of voters). The lists of voters also contain personal identity numbers, which makes it possible to connect information on electoral participation to other information in the Statistics Sweden register.

The work of scanning and digitalizing the lists of voters has already begun. Within the scope of another project we are currently digitalizing information on electoral participation in the European Parliament elections of 2009 and the Riksdag, county council and municipal elections of 2010. The work of digitalizing these lists of voters is expected to be complete during the autumn of 2015.

Within the framework of the present project we intend to scan and digitalize information concerning participation in a number of other elections. In order to be able to study better how the inclination to vote is transferred between generations we will collect information on electoral participation from four past elections: 1970, 1979, 1988 and 1998. We will also digitalize the lists of voters from the Riksdag, county council and municipal elections of 2018 and the European Parliament election of 2019.

b.3 Examples of studies to be implemented within the framework of CONPOL

The register information from Statistics Sweden, in combination with digitalized information on electoral participation from a number of elections, will make up a unique material that gives us an excellent opportunity to study how the tendency to take an active interest in politics is shaped by social contacts and networks. Here follow some concrete examples of subprojects and studies that we intend to carry out within the CONPOL project.

b.3.1 Intergenerational transmission in political activity

The family is the primary social unit and the scene of crucial social interaction. Previous research has shown that individuals' rearing environment – especially under parental influence – is of much importance to political attitudes and behaviour later in life. For example, children of politically active parents tend as adults to vote more often and to become engaged in other ways (Beck & Jennings 1982; Plutzer 2002) and to consider putting themselves forward as candidates in political elections (Fox & Lawless 2014). As we will, unlike previous studies, have access to population data in long panels, we have the possibility of estimating considerably more precisely similar transmission of political participation between different generations (parents to children or grandparents to grandchildren). We also have the chance to examine how the transmission, and with it the mobility, has changed over time.

Even more important is the fact that our data enables us to check for possible genetic effects and in this way to clarify the social effects of a particular formative environment. Parents are not only primarily responsible for the rearing environment but also pass on a set of genes to their children. Correlations between parents and children regarding, for example, inclination to engage in political activity may therefore arise as a result of socialization effects (which has previously been the only interpretation) or a transfer of genetic conditions. A number of much discussed studies have shown over the last ten years that political attitudes and behaviour are in part genetically hereditary (Alford et al. 2005; Fowler et al. 2008). In a recently published study the main applicant in the CONPOL project and co-authors show that political participation in a Swedish context may also have genetic explanations (Dawes et al. 2014).

One way of distinguishing genetic and social transmission is to make use of what is known as an adoption design. Adoption can be interpreted as a social experiment where children are separated at birth from their biological parents and placed in a new rearing family. The Statistics Sweden register makes it possible to

identify all children born in Sweden and adopted by Swedish parents. Moreover, we can identify both their biological and their adoptive parents. This means that we can break down the connection between parents and children into a part based on biological effects (from the biological parents) and a part based on the formative effects (from the adoptive parents). In an earlier study the main applicant and co-authors have shown that the connection between parents and children with regard to inclination to vote in general elections has both biological and social roots (Cesarini et al. 2014). However the study was based on rather a small sample of adopted children and their parents. With the aid of the data on which this project is based we are a good deal better placed to examine how formative environment interacting with hereditary conditions influences political participation later in life. Furthermore, we can carry out these studies with relation to both electoral participation and the inclination to stand as a candidate in political bodies.

b.3.2 Sibling order and political participation

Another family relationship that has been linked to various attitudes and behaviour is that between siblings. A large number of studies have investigated whether position in the family (whether one is first-born or lower down the order of siblings) affects basic qualities such as level of education (Steelman et al. 2002) and personality traits (Sulloway 1995; Healy & Ellis 2007). As both level of education (Nie et al. 1996) and personality factors (Mondak et al. 2010) are strongly linked to political participation there is reason to examine whether position in the order of siblings is also related to political commitment. The data around which the proposed project is built permits very exact estimates, even within families, of effects of the position in the family on both electoral participation and willingness to stand as a candidate for political assemblies and also of possible mechanisms that may explain any connections.

b.3.3 The politics of mate choice

A third family relationship worthy of mention in this context is that between husband and wife. Earlier studies have shown that the correlation between partners with regard to political attitudes and behaviour is very strong – fully on a par with other characteristics such as height, religion and education (Alford et al. 2011). However it is not clear to what extent this can be explained as couples influencing each other after becoming a pair (Stoker & Jennings 1995) or whether people directly or indirectly choose a partner on the basis of political qualities (Alford et al. 2011). As we will have access in this project to data enabling us to follow individuals from the time before they meet and form a pair and then during the time when they constitute a pair we can examine more closely what mechanisms underlie the degree of agreement in political commitment between partners.

b.3.4 The importance of social contexts: neighbourhoods and workplaces

The family is perhaps the most important social context in which individuals' attitudes and behaviour are formed. We should however expect there also to be other social contexts which influence people's patterns of behaviour. With the aid of information from Statistics Sweden we can identify at least two such relevant contexts: residential area and workplace. The Swedish public registers annually contain detailed information concerning the residential area in which individuals live and the workplace at which employees work. Residential area is defined in the register as Small Area Market Statistics (SAMS) area, where every SAMS area has on average a population of just over 1000 people.

As we have access to population data this information enables us to make very precise estimates of how individuals' political action is influenced by different characteristics of their residential contexts and workplaces. Is it, for example, the case that two people with identical demographic and socioeconomic backgrounds have different tendencies to political participation depending on whether they are surrounded by neighbours with different levels of collective resources in terms of political commitment, education and class composition?

A fundamental problem of studies of this type is that of selection which affects assessment of contextual effects when individuals themselves have been able to determine where they are going to live or to work. A correlation between context factors and individual characteristics need not then necessarily reflect a causal effect. By using a political reform that covered refugees who came to Sweden during the period 1985-1994, however, we have certain opportunities of avoiding this selection problem with regard to a question discussed in earlier research: to what extent are characteristics of the accommodation context causally related to political participation by immigrants? Several previous studies have shown that immigrants' political activity is influenced by characteristics of the area in which they live: for example, degree of segregation,

level of education, level of unemployment and presence of role models in the shape of politically committed individuals of similar ethnic origin (Bobo & Gilliam 1990; Schlichting et al. 1998; Fieldhouse & Cutts 2008; O'Neill et al. 2012). However the question is whether these qualities also cause political participation among immigrants.

The implication of the "placement policy" between 1985 and 1994 was that refugees who had been granted residence permits during the period concerned were placed in different municipalities more or less at random. From this it can be inferred that the initial place of residence of the refugees concerned was independent of the individuals' characteristics, which markedly increases the possibility of studying the causal effect of different contextual factors on the degree of political activity. For example we can examine whether refugees placed in areas notable for low average levels of education show a lower level of political participation than those refugees who instead were placed in areas with stronger resources. The Swedish placement policy has previously been used to study the significance of the residence context for receipt of social assistance (Fredriksson & Åslund 2005) and refugee children's school results (Edin et al. 2009).

b.3.5 Politically connected: patterns of network influence on political engagement

The studies we have outlined above focus in part on effects on political participation when individuals find themselves in specific social contexts (in a particular sibling constellation or in a certain residential area) and in part on how political participation is influenced within the limits of dyadic relationships in families (between parents and children and between partners). The CONPOL project is intended also to examine whether and, if so, how, political commitment can spread through second and third stages beyond one's direct social contacts. Ideally we would then need information on each one of the individuals in the Swedish registers concerning which other persons they associate and discuss politics with, what their relationship with these individuals is (family, friend, workmate, casual acquaintance etc.) and how often they interact. Such information is not always available, however.

On the other hand we can use the public registers to define in advance large networks where individuals who are linked together can be assumed on good grounds to have a social relationship with each other and to discuss political questions now and then. One possibility is to create networks based on family relations by using information on an individual's partner and the partner's siblings who in turn have a partner etc. We also have access to detailed information on individuals' places of work. In many cases these are small workplaces where it is reasonable to assume that there is a social relationship with each of the few workmates. This makes it possible to study whether behaviour patterns are spread from one family to another both by family ties and by workmates. In this way we can for example examine whether the fact that a person has been a candidate for (or been elected to) a political body influences the brother-in-law's or the sister-in-law's (or workmate's) political activity which in turn has repercussions on individuals in the next stage or the one after.

b.3.6 Contagious turnout: a field experiment

Within the CONPOL project we also intend to carry out a "get-out-the-vote" experiment to study the degree to which the effect of an individual's decision to vote can be multiplied by influence at the first, second and third stage. The inspiration here comes from a well-known study by Nickerson (2008). In two field experiments Nickerson (2008) shows that the likelihood of voting rose by 10 percentage points among individuals exposed to attempts at persuasion by door-knocking campaigns. It was even more interesting that the inclination to vote among the partners of these people rose by 6 percentage points despite the fact that they themselves had not been directly exposed to attempts at persuasion. This result gives clear support to the idea that political participation is contagious to such a degree that an individual's decision to vote influences the inclination for political participation among other people in the immediate surroundings.

However the question is how far such effects reach and what total effect a person's decision to vote can have. Nickerson's study is limited to two-person households and can therefore only measure effects of one individual on another and only for one stage. Simulations based on reasonable assumptions about individuals' position and role in social networks indicate that turnout cascades can be provoked where several dozen people, in the first, second and third stages, decide to vote as a result of one single individual's initial decision to exercise his/her civic rights (Fowler 2005).

We have here the possibility of using the fact that within the framework of the CONPOL project we intend to digitalize the coming elections in 2018 and 2019. The idea is to carry out a "get-out-the-vote" experiment in

the city of Uppsala and the surrounding area in conjunction with the election to the European Parliament in June 2019. Like Nickerson's study (2008) and a large number of earlier similar ones this field experiment will be based on door-knocking and attempts at persuasion by arguing the importance of voting in the European Parliament election. As the average turnout in Swedish elections to the European Parliament elections (approx. 45%) is considerably lower than in national and local elections (approx. 80%) it is more reasonable to focus on the former in order to maximize the potential effect in the treatment group. With the aid of the public registers we can, as has been described, locate the individuals in the treatment and control groups in larger social networks and therefore have the opportunity to estimate both how far the experimental effects reach (from friend to friend to friend) and how great the total effect is.

b.4 Implications/significance

The CONPOL project is of obvious relevance from both an intra-disciplinary and an extra-disciplinary perspective. Studying why certain individuals are more politically committed and interested than others is fundamental in political science. It has long been acknowledged that political action has to be understood as social phenomena and decisions to engage in politics are always taken in a social context. That is, political behaviour follows a social logic. However, due to data constraints the implications following from this argument have rarely been tested.

Moreover, as described above existing studies of how political participation is shaped within social contexts and networks often suffer from selection bias rendering any causal interpretation of reported relationships dubious. Against this backdrop the aim of the CONPOL project is to alleviate these shortcomings. In short, we argue that we have exceptionally good opportunities for significantly pushing the boundaries in the field of political behaviour. For one thing through the registers at Statistics Sweden and our own data compilations we i) have access to population-wide data about political participation and a host of other relevant variables that in an international perspective are unique both in nature and scope; ii) can identify several relevant social contexts and network relationships; and iii) can exploit quasi-experimental variation from policy reforms and genetically informative samples in order to avoid possible selection bias in previous estimates of contextual and network effects on political participation. It is difficult to imagine that the studies included in the CONPOL project could be completed in very many countries other than Sweden.

From a societal perspective the project is important because it will contribute new knowledge of which social factors and possible reforms are important for levelling out differences in political influence between people of different social backgrounds. Ultimately the project is therefore about the possibility of creating a society that is able to fulfil the task of bringing up good democrats.

b.5 Research team, collaborations and workplan

The applicant will be the sole principal investigator of the project. The core research team consists of the applicant and his team at Uppsala University (three PostDocs to be hired with the ERC grant), collaborators at Uppsala University (political scientist Karl-Oskar Lindgren), University of Gothenburg (political scientist Mikael Persson), Stockholm University (political scientist Kåre Vernby), Princeton University (political scientist Rafaela Dancygier), New York University (political scientist Christopher Dawes and economist David Cesarini) and Stockholm School of Business (economist Magnus Johannesson).

Our aim is to deliver a series of at least 10-15 *peer-reviewed articles*, to be published in leading scientific journals. To diffuse the insights and results of this research project to policy makers, stakeholders, and the public, the applicant's team will:

- Present the results at conferences and workshops across different disciplines, including political science, economics and psychology.
- Engage with policy makers in workshops and seminars, utilizing the applicant's experience serving as an expert on panels, and leveraging contacts of the applicant's team with policy makers.
- Engage with the public using media contacts, press releases and social media disseminate results of our project to the general audience.

The overall duration of the project will be 60 months. This is justified in view of the demanding process of data collection – especially the time and effort needed to digitalize several election rolls and carry out a large scale field experiment – as well as the number of distinct subprojects and studies to be completed as part of

CONPOL

CONPOL. The data collection process can be divided into several stages. A first task of the project team is to order and prepare the data from Statistics Sweden and the Swedish Military Archives. At later stages this data will be complemented by digitalized turnout data from the 1970, 1970, 1988 and 1998 elections (project years 1 and 2), the 2018 general election (project year 3) and the 2019 European parliament election (project year 4). As soon as the register data is obtained, the subprojects and studies described above can be initiated.

Table 1: Time schedule for the CONPOL project

Year	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
Months	1-6	7-12	13-18	19-24	25-30	31-36	37-42	43-48	49-54	55-60
Data ordering and preparation										
Digitalizing turnout data										
Carry out "get out the vote" experiment										
Carry out the different subprojects										
Note: Black indicates main work period, grey less intensive phase.										

c. Resources (including project costs)

c.1 Personnel

The project will be led by the main applicant. The main applicant is at present involved in two other research projects. Despite these undertakings he will be able to devote the greater part of his working time to CONPOL. One reason is that the ongoing projects will be concluded during 2015 and 2016 respectively. The second is that several of the tasks in the ongoing projects are closely connected with the work in CONPOL, for example scanning and digitalization of voting lists. Altogether the main applicant counts on being able to devote 60% of his working hours to CONPOL during the period of the project. The remaining time will be spent teaching and fulfilling administrative obligations at the Department of Government, Uppsala University. His position as a university lecturer includes 20% funding. The salary cost for 36 FTEs for the principal investigator, given a monthly salary of EUR 5 300 and social security contributions of 50%, then amounts to EUR 286,639. The requested grant amounts to 229,370 euros (80% of the cost).

The rest of the research group will consist of two researchers/post-doctors. The first of these will be hired on September 1 2016 whereas the second will start working January 1 2017. Both post-doctors will be employed on a 75% basis within the project (see table below). The research group is jointly responsible for implementing the sub-projects around which CONPOL is built up. Given the theme of the project these researchers will have a doctor's degree in either political science, sociology or economics. Furthermore candidates for the research posts are required to have a sound knowledge and experience of quantitative methods and to be used to working with large quantities of data material.

The project will also employ a third post-doctor for a total of five months. This post-doctor will be responsible for programming work in connection with the digitalization of the lists of voters (see table below). During the first year of the project this will involve a three-month period for preparing and implementing digitalization of lists of voters from the elections of 1970, 1979, 1988 and 1998. During the fourth year we expect to need two months' work for similar duties in connection with the elections of 2018 and 2019. We are working on the present project with such an expert, whom we hope to be able to attach to the CONPOL project for these duties. The total salary cost for the three post-doctors (two researchers and a scanning expert), given a monthly salary of about EUR 4 400 and social security contributions of 50%, amounts to EUR 589,749.

The project will also engage a research assistant on a half-time basis throughout the project period. The chief task of the research assistant is to be responsible for the logistics of scanning and digitalizing lists of voters. In concrete terms it involves keeping in touch with Sweden's 290 municipal archives and ensuring that scanned material is sent to the project or himself/herself scanning lists of voters on site in different municipalities. The research assistant will also be engaged in connection with the implementation of the planned "get-out-the-vote" experiment in 2019. The project assistant will be recruited from among students at the Department of Political Science at Uppsala University. The total salary cost for the research assistant, given a monthly salary of about EUR 2 500 and social security contributions of 50%, amounts to EUR 119,433.

c.2 Other direct costs

In addition to salary costs the ordering of register data from Statistics Sweden and costs connected with the digitalization of lists of voters are the largest items in the project budget (see table below). Regarding the ordering of register data from Statistics Sweden, we estimate on the basis of previous experience that the total cost will be EUR 50,000.

As we have already begun scanning and digitalizing the lists of voters for the 2009 and 2010 elections we have quite a good idea of the cost involved in getting in the material from the municipal archives. We estimate that this cost will amount to EUR 35 000 per election. As we intend in the course of the CONPOL project to scan lists of voters from six elections the total cost here will be EUR 210 000.

The main applicant, the three researchers and the long-term research assistant will each need a laptop and some software in order to carry out the duties involved in the project. The cost of this is estimated at a total of EUR 20 000. In addition there will be costs of EUR 3 000 for equipment (hard disks and computer) and software in connection with the digitalization of the lists of voters. Finally it is calculated that the main

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applicant and the three researchers will each need EUR 3 500 annually for travelling expenses (which includes costs connected with research conferences and organization of project conferences and workshops). In total this means a cost of EUR 70 000 for travelling expenses. Audit certificate services amounts to EUR 6,000.

Cost Category		Total in Euro	
Direct Costs	Personnel	PI	286,639
		Senior Staff	
		Postdocs	589,749
		Students	119,433
		Other	
	<i>i. Total Direct Costs for Personnel (in Euro)</i>		995,821
	Travel		70,000
	Equipment		23,000
	Other goods and services	Consumables	
		Publications (including Open Access fees), etc.	
		Other: Costs for data purchase, scanning, audit	266,000
	<i>ii. Total Other Direct Costs (in Euro)</i>		359,000
A – Total Direct Costs (i + ii) (in Euro)		1,354,821	
B – Indirect Costs (overheads) 25% of Direct Costs (in Euro)		338,705	
C1 – Subcontracting Costs (no overheads) (in Euro)			
C2 – Other Direct Costs with no overheads (in Euro)			
Total Estimated Eligible Costs (A + B + C) (in Euro)		1,693,526	
Total Requested EU Contribution (in Euro)⁶		1,621,940	

For the above cost table, please indicate the duration of the project in months:	60
For the above cost table, please indicate the % of working time the PI dedicates to the project over the period of the grant:	60%

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