

the political ecology  
of the metropolis

Edited by  
Jefferey M. Sellers, Daniel Kübler,  
Melanie Walter-Rogg, and R. Alan Walks



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## | Preface

This volume, the product of a ten-year endeavour, presents the second set of results from the International Metropolitan Observatory (IMO) research programme. The current work represents in many respects the culmination of this initiative to establish the politics of metropolitan regions as a new frontier of research in political science and such allied disciplines as geography and sociology.

We would like to thank all the contributors to this ambitious comparative enterprise for their constant efforts and their patience since this collaborative undertaking first took shape in September 2002 in Stuttgart.

Successive meetings organised around the project over 2002–9 were made possible through the support of several institutions. We express in particular our deep gratitude to the Center for International Studies, the Center for Religion and Civic Culture, the Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences and the Office of the Provost at the University of Southern California, the University of Stuttgart (Institute of Social Sciences), the French Ministries of Research (PIR-Villes and ACI-Ville Programs) and Education (DRIC – ACCES Program), the CNRS (SHS Department) and the GRALE in Paris, Sciences Po Bordeaux, the European Consortium for Political Research, and the Thyssen Foundation.

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*Jefferey M. Sellers, Daniel Kübler, Melanie Walter-Rogg and R. Alan Walks*  
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# Chapter One | Introduction – The Metropolitanisation of Politics

*Jefferey M. Sellers and R. Alan Walks*

Metropolitanisation and the changing shape of metropolitan regions are responsible for global parallel shifts in the conditions of everyday life. As metropolitan areas have emerged as the predominant form of human settlement, extended urban regions increasingly shape national economies and cultures. Comparative analysis of the ways urban regions shape political behaviour has advanced little beyond the traditional distinctions between urban and rural localities. Most accounts of contemporary changes in political culture focus on survey analysis of individuals or on the macro analysis of global change. These approaches fail to account sufficiently for the new patterns of politics emerging across the developed world. Patterns of consumption, production and settlement within urban regions are crucial to understanding the new politics of the twenty-first century. This volume undertakes a pioneering investigation into the role these metropolitan shifts have played in the changing politics of nations across the developed world and beyond.

Until recently, it was commonly held that as nation states industrialised and urbanised, political behaviour and values would form around national institutions and countrywide groups. This nationalisation thesis, put forward by scholars of ‘political modernisation’ (Campbell *et al.* 1966; Hoffbert and Sharkansky 1971; Lipset and Rokkan 1967), held that national political cleavages rooted in social class would come to dominate political contests and party structures at every electoral scale. Regional and locally-based political parties would wither. Localities would no longer serve as a basis for political engagement, value formation and political party strength (Agnew 1987). Caramani’s analysis of nineteenth and twentieth century elections in national legislative districts across Europe (2005) demonstrates the continued relevance of this thesis for explaining earlier transformations. His analysis of partisan allegiances shows a growing territorial uniformity within countries throughout Europe that extends into the post-war era.

From the late 1960s onward, however, party systems have fragmented, and partisan attachment and membership have declined (Dalton and Wattenberg 2000). As the territorial arrangements and settlement patterns of developed and transitional countries have shifted, metropolitan and local contexts have become more rather than less important in shaping national political ideologies and behaviour. Analyses of these changes have thus far remained focused on regional economies and regional concentrations of particular cultural or language groups (e.g. Caramani 2005; Gimpel and Shuknecht 2004). New regional parties and secessionist movements have emerged in industrial countries such as the United Kingdom, Spain, Italy, Belgium, Japan, and Canada. Elsewhere, such as in the United States, France and Germany, regional cleavages in party support have in some respects become more pronounced (Agnew 1987).

The metropolitan dimension of contemporary territorial shifts, however, is both more pervasive and in many ways more important for politics. In 1968, Henri Lefebvre announced a coming 'urban revolution'. Global capitalism, he argued, was in the midst of a transition away from a mode of production grounded in industrialisation, which posed rural existence against modern industrial cities. Instead, as the countryside was swept up into the accelerating process of urbanisation, the social and political divisions of the future would run between different forms and levels of urbanisation. Throughout the developed world today, as contemporary theorists such as Hayward (2001) suggest, this revolution has already taken place. The everyday experiences of production, consumption, social life, and politics within urban regions form the building blocks upon which regional and national politics develop. The argument of this volume is that metropolitanisation is contributing to a re-territorialisation of politics.

The thesis of metropolitanisation developed in this volume not only directly counters the thesis of nationalisation, but offers a refined approach to transnational political change. Global shifts in culture and the spread of political ideologies, norms, and behaviour in many countries often appear to be imposed from the outside. We argue that social, economic and political conditions within metropolitan regions are central to these shifts and that they have decisively influenced patterns of political participation and partisan competition at a wider level. In doing so, influences rooted in local and regional settings interact with the more familiar social structures of class, age, and ethnicity. How metropolitan influences take place differs with the political institutions and pre-existing legacies of settlement in different countries. Yet overall, metropolitanisation has re-territorialised politics under a new set of configurations and conditions.

### **Why metropolitan political ecology?**

Several far-reaching shifts in the political economies and cultures of contemporary societies are restructuring the spaces of politics. These changes highlight the need for new analytical approaches to take into account the local and metropolitan contexts of political behaviour. We have adopted a multilevel political-ecological approach to the study of electoral behaviour. This approach utilises a quantitative empirical examination of contextual and spatial effects on the collective political behaviour of voters within bounded electoral communities (districts, cantons, communes, constituencies, municipalities), rather than individual level electoral or survey responses. This well-established methodological approach to political ecology (going back to Siegfried 1913; Dogan and Rokkan 1969) thus differs from the less formalised qualitative analysis of ecological and environmental politics that has recently also gone by the name 'political ecology'.

The vast majority of people in developed countries and emerging majorities in transitional countries, such as those of Eastern Europe, Latin America and South Africa, now live in urbanised settings (see Table 1.1). Throughout most of the developed world, the settlements that have accompanied growing affluence bear only a limited resemblance to the concentrated nineteenth century European city that

# Chapter Three | Metropolitan Political Ecology and Contextual Effects in Canada

*R. Alan Walks*

The importance of urban life in articulating political behaviour in Canada has only recently begun to receive attention in the literature. Canadian political discourse and literature has traditionally been preoccupied with understanding regional differences, which are very marked due to the distinct geographies of language, immigration, class, industrial production, the history of ethnic and loyalist settlement across the country, and the vast distances between population centres (Blake 1972; Schwartz 1974; Erikson 1981; Gidengil 1989; Leuprecht 2003). From a country once characterised by its longest-serving Prime Minister, William Lyon McKenzie-King, as having ‘too much geography’, have emerged countless regional and/or separatist political parties, thirteen distinct provincial and territorial political cultures (and seven distinct provincial party structures), and a host of federal political traditions devised in order to share political power in ways that appease regionalist aspirations. Regionalism has been at the heart of Canadian political culture from the very first federal election in 1867 and, in recent times, has produced two close referenda on the secession of the province of Quebec (in 1980 and 1995). Because of the dominance of regionalist perspectives, intra-metropolitan place effects have received insignificant attention in the literature examining local-level contextual processes in Canada (Eagles 1990; Cutler 2007).

Nonetheless, there is evidence of significant political contextual effects operating within Canadian metropolitan areas. Notably, the residents of suburban areas as a whole, and the outer suburbs in particular, have diverged from their inner-city counterparts in both their political attitudes and their partisanship during elections (Walks 2004a, 2004b, 2005). Residents of the outer suburbs have been increasingly drawn toward the main parties of the right, which in 2004 merged together to form a new Conservative Party. The stark exception is in Quebec, where the suburbs have been more likely to vote for other parties, often for reasons related to language and culture. Until 1993, the citizens of Quebec provided the bulk of their votes to the Liberal Party, followed by the Bloc Québécois between 1993 and 2008, and the New Democratic Party (NDP) in the 2011 federal election. Meanwhile, residents of the inner cities have disproportionately favoured the Liberal Party (the traditional party of the centre), and the NDP.

The divergence in partisanship that has developed between voters in the outer suburbs and the inner cities is a phenomenon that emerged only since the early 1980s (Walks 2004b, 2005). Such spatial political divergences have occurred alongside the growth and transformation of Canada’s metropolitan areas, and the continued metropolitanisation of the country. Between 1981 and 2006, the proportion of Canada’s population residing in metropolitan areas (as defined by Statistics Canada) increased from 57 per cent to over 68 per cent, while the

proportion living in any sort of urban area rose from 76 per cent to 81 per cent, revealing stagnation and even decline in many smaller urban places. Similar to their southern neighbour, Canadian metropolitan areas are characterised by widespread and increasing ‘sprawl’ and automobile use, and by growing income inequality between both households and neighbourhoods (Walks 2010). They also reveal a cleavage based on homeownership, like their US counterparts (Pratt 1986; Verberg 2000; Gainsborough 2001). However, unlike most US cities, Canadian metropolitan areas do not tend to exhibit high degrees of racial segregation, nor significantly poor or declining inner cities (the important exception is Winnipeg). Many Canadian cities are instead developing what might be called a ‘Parisian’ pattern of income decline and filtering of housing within a number of early post-war ‘inner’ suburbs characterised by above-average levels of social housing, while the outer suburbs continue to attract middle- and upper-income households and the inner cities witness gentrification of varying intensity (Walks 2001, 2008, 2010; Walks and Maaranen 2008). New immigrants are locating in all three zones, however, and as in Paris the poorest immigrants are increasingly concentrating in the declining inner suburbs.

The emergence of new spatial and contextual factors at the neighbourhood level are important in explaining growing political divergences in electoral behaviour, particularly in relation to support for parties defining the left and right of the spectrum (Walks 2005). Spatial political divergences are not due to increasing city-suburban segregation by class, ethnicity or race, which in fact have largely been declining over time at this scale – although not necessarily at smaller scales (Walks and Bourne 2006). Instead, evidence from the Toronto region suggests the main mechanisms producing such a divergence are conversion effects stemming from different everyday life experiences in the two different settings, and the self-selection of residents based on their political sympathies into different communities (Walks 2006). Those with preferences on the left of the spectrum are selecting the inner cities in search of ‘community’ with others with similar values and/or out of a desire to synchronise their lifestyles to their political values. Those on the right, on the other hand, are moving into the suburbs out of a preference for private space. To this end, it is differences in urban form and lifestyle, related to concepts such as ‘habitus’ and identity, that increasingly articulate political discrepancies between urban zonal areas, rather than municipal tax rates, municipal policies, or racial or class segregation (Walks 2007).

The research described above provides much insight into potential neighbourhood effects operating on political preferences in metropolitan Canada. However, that research has been focused on a smaller set of the largest metropolitan regions, while important shifts occurring since the year 2000 have yet to be explored. It is not yet clear whether neighbourhood effects remain strong after controlling for socio-economic differences between metropolitan areas, or how electoral behaviour might vary across different types of communities within the same zones. Furthermore, we do not yet know how place of residence might effect electoral turnout, and very little research has dealt with place effects in the context of municipal elections, partly because the data is very difficult to compile and most municipal elections in Canada remain officially non-partisan.

This chapter fills these gaps through analysis of eleven of the largest metropolitan areas representing each major region in Canada. The chapter analyses the effects of contextual factors on differential levels of electoral turnout and compares the relative importance of social composition and spatial effects between federal and municipal elections. It then examines changes in the importance of compositional and contextual factors operating on partisanship and ideological positions related to globalisation, economic policy, and sociocultural attitudes, in federal elections. The focus is on results from the 1980 and 2006 federal elections across the eleven major metropolitan areas at the level of the electoral district/constituency – called ‘ridings’ in Canada – and on municipal elections across the three largest metropolitan regions in 2005/2006. Socio-demographic and contextual data are derived from the 1981 and 2006 censuses of Canada. The results demonstrate that Canada fits the pattern of delocalisation in electoral participation, while contextual factors operating at the intra-metropolitan scale are growing in importance in accounting for shifts in partisanship across the urban landscape.

### **Political parties and ideology in Canada**

Canada’s Westminster-based electoral system has traditionally been dominated at the federal level by three main political parties: the right-of-centre Progressive Conservative (PC) Party (Canada’s oldest federal party); the nominally centrist Liberal Party, which has won the majority of federal elections since 1896; and the New Democratic Party (NDP), Canada’s left-of-centre social democratic party, dating from 1961 (their predecessor was the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, or CCF, which formed in 1944). Since the early 1990s, however, this party structure has been transformed. In the 1993 election, the PC Party, in power since 1984, was reduced to a rump of only two elected Members of Parliament (MPs) after much of their support defected to two new regional parties. One of these, the Bloc Québécois (BQ), was formed as a federal vehicle to advocate for the separation of Quebec. The other, the right-wing populist Reform Party, began as a voice for western-Canadian alienation in the late 1980s and evolved into the Canadian Alliance (CA) in an attempt to become a national (farther-) right wing alternative to the PC Party in time for the 2000 election. However, vote-splitting on the right (between the PC and CA parties) continued and, in early 2004, these two parties merged into a single Conservative Party under the leadership of the former CA leader, Stephen Harper, who was subsequently elected Prime Minister of Canada in 2006.

Ideologically, each of Canada’s main political parties draws significantly on variants of liberalism. The Liberal Party is associated with a utilitarian and Keynesian welfare-oriented liberalism, although it has by now fully embraced neoliberal policies not dissimilar to those of ‘New Labour’ in the United Kingdom, while under Tony Blair. Meanwhile, Fabian socialism competes with welfare liberalism and trade unionism within the NDP (not dissimilar to ‘old’ Labour in the UK) (Christian and Campbell 1990). From the beginning, the PC (‘Tory’) Party combined traditional British conservatism (and Canadian nationalism) with

classical liberalism, and has been Canada's political voice for 'big business'. Indeed, the original name of the party until the late 1870s was the Liberal-Conservatives, but this officially changed to the Progressive Conservatives after it merged with the Progressive Party in 1942. The Reform and Canadian Alliance parties followed the US Republican Party in mixing religious fundamentalism and a focus on 'family values' with Thatcher- and Hayek-inspired anti-state neoliberalism, and this has remained the main ideological focus within the merged Conservative Party. The Bloc Québécois, leaning towards social democratic policy during parliamentary votes and reflecting Quebecers' more liberal social attitudes, has shared with its provincial sister, the Parti Québécois, a primary focus on separation and a big-tent philosophy (i.e. work with anyone in pursuit of mutually-shared goals) toward representing Quebec's social and business interests.

Figure 3.1 locates the four main parties contesting the 2006 federal election in relation to their positions on four indices as adjudicated by their supporters in electoral surveys: self-placement on a left-right scale, index of economic policy, index of attitudes towards globalisation, and an index of sociocultural attitudes (lower scores identifying policy preferences on the left and higher scores on the right). Clearly the Conservatives distinguish themselves from each of the other parties with their position lying far to the right of the other parties on each index. Based on the attitudes of their supporters, the NDP is positioned farthest to the left on the economic and left-right indices, while the Bloc is the farthest left on the sociocultural scale, and the Liberals are farthest to the left on the globalisation index.

It might be noted that despite a number of popular political parties vying to occupy the right of the spectrum in both federal and provincial politics, it has been rare for them to promote on a nativist/nationalist or racist platform, and reported levels of xenophobia have remained low overall. Indeed, in a survey conducted in the mid-2000s Canada, ranked as the most welcoming nation for immigrants in the developed world with 74 per cent agreeing that immigration is good for the country (Bramham 2006). While there is some evidence of racial discrimination in the housing and labour markets, and in urban segregation between whites and visible minorities (Galabuzi 2006; Walks and Bourne 2006), political realities have required all political parties to support high rates of immigration and compete for the votes of immigrants. This is despite traditionally low rates of electoral participation among immigrants (Black 2001; Chui *et al.* 1991). On the whole, parties of the right in Canada have kept to a neoliberal fiscal platform, officially intent on reforming (or eliminating) the welfare state, privatising public assets and services, and reducing public spending and taxation levels, although occasionally also making a scapegoat of 'illegal' immigrants and refugees for taking advantage of Canadian generosity.<sup>1</sup>

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1. An example of the latter can be seen in the official Conservative Government response to the arrival of a boat of Sri-Lankan refugees in the autumn of 2010. The response has been to blame the refugees, invoke punitive detention for the migrants, and to promise tougher immigration legislation (Youssef and Leblanc 2010).

# Chapter Six | The Metropolitan Bases of Political Cleavage in Switzerland

*Daniel Kübler, Urs Scheuss and Philippe Rochat*

## **Introduction<sup>1</sup>**

The distinction between rural and urban areas is usually emphasised as one of the crucial factors for the explanation of Swiss politics. Indeed, tense relationships between cities and the countryside during long historical periods in Switzerland resulted in a persistent political cleavage between urban and rural areas. The effects of this founding cleavage are still felt in multiple ways. On the one hand, the quest for a balance of power between progressive urban and conservative rural areas was the main drive in Swiss constitutional history in the early nineteenth century (Masnata and Rubatell 1991; Kölz 1992). The resulting federalist system is geared towards the protection of cultural and regional minorities and, until today, provides the increasingly circumscribed rural population with decisive political influence. On the other hand, distinct voter-preferences in the cities and the countryside have been a constant of Swiss politics ever since, in elections (Lutz and Selb 2007) as well as in referendum voting (Trechsel 2007). The mobilisation of these preferences by political actors resulted in the organisation of the urban-rural cleavage, thereby contributing to the structuring of the Swiss party system (Ladner 2004).

According to data collected in the 2000 population census, only 26.7 per cent of the population live in rural areas, whereas the vast majority (73.3 per cent) live in places that are to be considered as urban, i.e. cities and metropolitan areas (Schuler *et al.* 2005). This ongoing process of metropolitanisation raises new questions with respect to the urban-rural divide. In terms of governance, relations between urban and rural areas have become tenser, as the former have started to challenge the political influence that the latter enjoys in the Swiss federal state (Kübler *et al.* 2003). The rural-urban divide will therefore continue to haunt inter-governmental relations and federalism in Switzerland.

Nevertheless, as metropolitan areas have become the dominant form of human settlement in this country, the rural regions increasingly turn into residual spaces. We can therefore argue that the traditional urban-rural distinction will become less and less significant as a determinant for political behaviour.

The interesting question, then, is whether new territorial patterns of political

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1. This chapter is based on research conducted for the National Centre of Competence in Research, Challenges to Democracy in the 21st Century, at the University of Zurich. The authors are grateful to Hanspeter Kriesi for thorough and constructive criticism of earlier drafts.

behaviour have emerged *within* the urbanised area of this country, and how they can be explained. The goal of this chapter is to answer this question. Referring to the common theme of this volume, the analysis is guided by what we called the metropolitanisation of politics thesis. Our goal is to assess to what extent patterns of political behaviour within Swiss metropolitan areas can be explained not only by compositional differences, but by the genuine characteristics of the spatial context in which citizens dwell. The chapter follows the research framework defined by the International Metropolitan Observatory (IMO) project and presented in the introductory chapter of this volume. We start with outlining the territorial dynamics of Swiss metropolitan areas and summarise the findings in a five-fold typology of municipalities within metropolitan areas. The next section implements the ecological approach to analyse metropolitan effects on political behaviour. We use exploratory as well as regression techniques to analyse the compositional and contextual determinants of municipal-level data on turnout of national and local elections, as well as on partisanship. The conclusion summarises the findings and discusses their implications, both for understanding Swiss politics and for the *problématique* raised by the IMO programme. Technical details on data and variables used in the analysis are given in the Chapter 14.

### **The socio-spatial structure of metropolitan Switzerland**

The process of metropolitanisation in Switzerland has been ongoing throughout the twentieth century. It has produced a pattern of spatial organisation that is similar, in many respects, to the situation found in most other industrialised countries. Today, Switzerland is clearly dominated by its metropolitan areas, which provide the living space for nearly three quarters of its inhabitants and are the main motors of the Swiss economy. Similarly, the growth of Swiss metropolitan areas has mainly taken place as a growth in surface area, i.e. by spatial expansion and urban sprawl, resulting in a decrease in the average population density of urban settlements. Swiss metropolitan areas are clearly dominated by the suburbs, where the population outnumbers that of the core city by a ratio of three to one. In institutional terms, the lack of territorial reforms or the failure of attempts to amalgamate municipalities – especially in the second half of the twentieth century – has resulted in increasing geopolitical fragmentation of Swiss metropolitan areas. In the light of international comparative data (Hoffmann-Martinot and Sellers 2005), the degree of geopolitical fragmentation of Swiss metropolitan areas indeed appears to be one of the highest in Europe. The seven Swiss metropolitan areas under scrutiny illustrate these general observations quite well (see Table 6.1).

#### ***Typology of core and suburban municipalities***

Metropolitan growth has led to spatial differentiation within metropolitan areas and notably to socio-economic segregation. However, as we have argued previously (Kübler and Scheuss 2005), socio-economic disparities in Swiss metropolitan areas cannot be described entirely by the differences between core cities and

*Table 6.1: Characteristics of Swiss metropolitan areas under scrutiny (data for 2000)*

	<b>Overall population</b>	<b>Overall number of municipalities</b>	<b>Population outside core city (%)</b>	<b>Density (inhabitants per hectare)</b>	<b>Index of geopolitical fragmentation</b>
Zurich	1,080,728	132	66.3	9,95	3.6
Basle	731,167	127	77.2	9,95*	4.4*
Geneva	645,608	131	72.4	10,32*	4.2*
Bern	349,096	43	63.2	7,25	3.3
Lausanne	311,441	70	59.9	9,97	5.6
Lucerne	196,550	17	69.7	9,94	2.9
Lugano	136,032	77	80.5	5,85*	27.1*

\*excluding foreign municipalities in cross-border metropolitan areas

suburban locations. They follow a more complex pattern that sets apart the core city and the poor suburbs on the one hand and the middle class, affluent, and low density suburbs on the other hand.

The socio-economic differentiations within the suburban belt of Swiss metropolitan areas are well captured by the typological approach developed in the common research protocol. According to this protocol, the 482 municipalities located in the seven metropolitan areas under scrutiny<sup>2</sup> were classified into five types: urban concentrations, poor suburbs, middle-class suburbs, affluent suburbs and low-density suburbs (see Chapter 14, the Methodological Appendix, for a description of the procedure). A range of indicators sets apart these five types of metropolitan locations, thereby allowing us to discern the main spatial patterns of socio-economic differentiation in Swiss metropolitan areas (see Table 6.2).

On the one hand, this typology of municipalities within metropolitan areas encompasses geographical and morphological dimensions. First, it shows that metropolitan areas differ according to the spatial organisation (distances) of the municipal types. Low-density suburbs are those locations at the greatest distance from the centre, while the middle-class suburbs are a step closer to the centre. Poor and affluent suburbs are closer still to the centre, except in the metropolitan areas of Basle and Lausanne, where middle-class suburbs are on average closer to the centre than poor and affluent ones. Interestingly, there is no clear-cut correlation between the size of a metropolitan area (population) and the average distance from the centre of low-density suburbs, highlighting differences between metropolitan areas regarding the degree of urban sprawl.

2. Data on the foreign municipalities, i.e. those municipalities pertaining to one of the cross-border metropolitan areas (Basle, Geneva, Lugano) but located in Germany, France or Italy, were not available. Hence, only municipalities located within Switzerland were included in the subsequent analysis.

# Chapter Nine | Metropolitan and Political Change in Sweden

*Daniel Kübler and Henry Bäck*

## **Introduction**

Metropolitan areas are characterised by centrifugal forces producing dispersed patterns of actors and activities. These patterns can be described along a number of dimensions. Three of those important dimensions are the spatial, the social and the political dimensions (Bäck 2005). In this chapter, we investigate how in particular the spatial and social dimensions are related to patterns of electoral behaviour in the three Swedish metropolitan areas of Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö.

Among the advanced industrial countries examined in this volume, Sweden has maintained comparatively low rates of metropolitanisation and suburbanisation (Bäck 2005). Mostly dominated by the Social Democratic Party in the post-war period, Swedish governments have built up one of the world's most generous social welfare systems (Esping-Andersen 1990). Thanks to comprehensive welfare state arrangements, Sweden has been a relatively egalitarian society throughout the twentieth century. Territorial sorting according to lifestyles and consumption interests remains limited. In this national setting of relatively high territorial homogeneity, metropolitan spatial contexts might be expected to have less effect on political behaviour than in other countries.

In the early 1990s, economic crisis, globalisation and European Union membership have put the Swedish model of welfare capitalism under pressure. Reforms implemented by the first post-war, centre-right government (between 1991 and 1994), but also by subsequent Social Democratic governments have weakened the Swedish welfare state. In the first decade of the twenty-first century, the electoral victory of a centre-right alliance appears to mark a critical juncture in Swedish politics and a watershed for the future development of the Swedish model (Miles 2010).

Against this background, the analyses in this chapter discuss the metropolitanisation of politics thesis in the Swedish context. We pay particular attention to the links between territorial structure and political change in Sweden's metropolitan areas. Following the common research protocol, we will first examine the socio-economic and spatial structuring of the three major Swedish metropolitan areas. We then turn to analysing political behaviour, i.e. turnout in municipal and national elections, as well as the partisan orientations of municipal electorates, before we discuss the spatial pattern of electoral change in parliamentary elections between 1991 and 2010. In the conclusion, we explore the relationships between the processes of metropolitan and political change in Sweden as the country has entered the twenty-first century.

### The socio-spatial structure of the three Swedish metropolises

As in other industrialised nations, urbanisation in Sweden steadily increased over the course of the twentieth century. While approximately half of the Swedish population lived in rural areas before World War II, the population share of urban areas rose steeply to more than 80 per cent in 1970. Since then, the growth of Sweden's urban population was quite moderate: 84 per cent of the population lived in localities classified as urban in the year 2000, and in 2010, 85 per cent of Sweden's 9.42 million inhabitants lived in an urban environment (Statistics Sweden 2011: 3). Similarly, the development of large metropolitan areas has remained relatively limited. There are only three metropolitan areas with populations above 200,000 – namely Stockholm (1.66 million inhabitants), Göteborg (0.78 million) and Malmö (0.38 million) – and roughly a third of the overall population of the country lives there. However, since the 1970s the national population has concentrated increasingly in these three metropolitan areas (Bäck 2005: 121).

As in other Nordic countries, extensive territorial reforms have been carried out in Sweden's local government system in the mid-twentieth century. This is why today Swedish municipalities are generally large in size and why core cities in the metropolitan areas account for over half of the metropolitan population. The figures for the three metropolitan areas of Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö (see Table 9.1) show that geopolitical fragmentation is indeed quite low. Nevertheless, all three metropolitan areas have been characterised by ongoing suburbanisation since the 1970s. Only in Malmö has the annual growth rate of the core city recently overtaken that of the suburban area.

By international standards, social segregation – particularly in the form of spatial clustering among low resource households – has been relatively limited in Sweden's metropolitan areas (Vogel 1992). Andersson *et al.* (2010) argue that, on the one hand, the generous Swedish welfare state arrangements have kept

Table 9.1: Characteristics of three main metropolitan areas in Sweden (data for 2002)

	Stockholm	Göteborg	Malmö
Overall population	1,666,513	781,622	382,271
Population in core city	45.5%	60.7%	69.4%
Number of core city districts	18	21	10
Annual growth rate of core city (1990–2003)	1.0%	0.8%	1.1%
Number of suburban municipalities	21	9	6
Annual growth rate suburban area (1990–2003)	1.3%	1.2%	0.7%
Geopolitical fragmentation*	0.290	0.210	0.263

Notes: \*Zeigler Brunn index: number of municipalities per 10,000 inhabitants divided by the core city's share of the overall metropolitan population.

Source: Bäck (2005).

income disparities low while, on the other hand, Sweden's national government has implemented a broad range of anti-segregation policies. Tax equalisation among municipalities helps to maintain equal levels of municipal services in spite of different tax bases. Nationwide housing and land-use policies aimed at producing socially-mixed neighbourhoods were implemented from the mid-1970s onwards. A strategy of 'refugee dispersal' was put into practice in the mid-1980s to counteract further spatial concentration of immigrants in areas where there were already high proportions of ethnic minorities. Finally, a new area-based urban policy formulated in the late 1990s aimed to promote economic and social development in deprived neighbourhoods of the metropolitan areas of Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö.

From the 1980s onwards, however, income differences between households have increased. Capital revenues among middle and high income earners as well as growing returns from educational investments in the service sector have contributed to this process. These income differences have translated into socio-economic segregation, and a widening polarisation between rich and poor metropolitan localities. Simultaneously, some of the anti-segregation policies were dismantled or relaxed by the centre-right government of the early 1990s, and recent reforms 'such as the dismantling of an active housing policy as well as education reforms have made it difficult for planning authorities to counteract segregation processes' (Andersson *et al.* 2010: 5). Although Sweden remains a country with relatively small economic disparities, socio-economic segregation is increasing in Swedish metropolitan areas, and it has a strong ethnic character.

As the maps in Figure 9.1 illustrate, this growing socio-economic differentiation is closely related to spatial differentiation in political behaviour. The top row of maps distinguishes five equally large categories of municipalities by their values on an index of socio-economic status (SES), summarising measures of income, education and unemployment. The municipalities with the highest SES are represented with the lightest shade of grey, while the lowest ranking (fifth) is black. The middle row of maps represents turnout in the 2002 local election, with the highest participation (above 82.5 per cent) in light grey and those with lowest participation (below 75 per cent) in black). Finally the lowermost maps display the cumulative percentage of votes in the 2002 municipal elections for socialist parties (i.e. the Social Democrats and the Left Party) with the lowest share (below 31.9 per cent) in light grey and the highest share (above 45 per cent) in black.

As the national metropolis, the Stockholm region (left column) has experienced the most extensive process of suburbanisation and population sorting. The central city there has retained a large concentration of affluent residents. In doing so, it has maintained a higher average socio-economic status, comparatively moderate electoral participation and a mixed socialist vote. Closer inspection reveals a concentration of four to five relatively affluent municipalities located north east of the core city. There the average socio-economic status is high, levels of turnout are high and support for socialist parties is low. The industrial Malmö region (the right-hand column) presents in many respects an inverse picture.

In all three maps, low socio-economic status, low electoral participation and

# Chapter Twelve | Metropolitan Processes and Voting Behaviour in Israel

*Eran Razin and Anna Hazan*

## **Introduction<sup>1</sup>**

Unveiling how voting behaviour and political orientations vary within and between Israel's metropolitan areas provides a fundamental perspective on the political components of intra- and inter-metropolitan processes. Moreover, it provides insights on a potentially emerging democratic crisis associated with decreasing voter turnout, political fragmentation, eroding image and legitimacy of elected politicians – and, in some cases, intensification of voting behaviours based on kinship, ethnicity and religion. All of these processes are manifested at the local and metropolitan scale. This chapter has two objectives:

- (1) To examine variations in local voting behaviour in Israel, discussing variations in turnout between local authorities and their interrelationships with metropolitan processes.
- (2) To examine the political ecology of partisanship in Israel's metropolitan areas, i.e. political orientations in different local authorities, as revealed by voting patterns in national elections.

Our analysis of local elections identifies the determinants of voter turnout, party/list fragmentation of elected councils, and party/list composition (right-wing and religious parties, centre-left parties, Arab parties and non-partisan independent lists). It also examines over time changes in these indicators of voting behaviour. The study examines whether patterns of voter turnout and voting preferences in national elections diverge from those of local elections, and looks also at different scales of left-right political orientations at the national level. We seek to identify the manifestation of variations in voting behaviour in metropolitan space, assessing if place of residence is an explanatory variable of voting behaviour in Israel, or if inter-local variations in voting merely reflect socio-economic, demographic and ethno-religious attributes of particular local authorities.

Israel has four metropolitan areas: Tel Aviv, Haifa, Jerusalem and Beer Sheva (Razin and Hazan 2005). The Tel Aviv metropolis is Israel's dominant economic and cultural heart, consisting of nearly one half of Israel's population and economy. Haifa and Jerusalem are secondary metropolitan areas, Jerusalem being unique as Israel's capital city and as a bi-national metropolis. Beer Sheva is a smaller and

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1. The authors would like to thank Noga Buber and Ron Horne for their research assistance.

weaker peripheral metropolitan area. Given Israel's small size and short distances, it is somewhat superfluous to limit the analysis to the narrow definitions of these metropolitan areas. In fact, under a broad definition, the whole area of Israel, except for its most remote southern and north-eastern localities, can be divided into four regions, each defining a metropolitan sphere of influence. Using a broad definition of metropolitan regions also provides larger samples of local authorities, essential for statistical analysis. Our study thus covers all local authorities in Israel, except for those in rural regional councils, classified into four metropolitan regions.

Information was gathered at the local authority level. An analysis of aggregate variables at the local authority level rather than at the individual voter level (for example Walks 2004a) limits the ability to distinguish between various socio-economic and ethnic attributes that are highly correlated when measured as aggregates, and the ability to determine causality based on the results of a regression model. The aggregate level, however, enables the identification of finer spatial variations between local authorities, in addition to being based on real election results rather than on less reliable surveys.

The analysis includes the local elections held in 1998 and 2003 and the national elections held in 1999 and 2003,<sup>2</sup> as well as insights from the 2006 national elections. The data for both local and national elections excludes the rural regional councils (8.7 per cent of Israel's population). Local elections in regional councils, which include kibbutzim, moshavim and exurban settlements, differ from elections in urban local authorities (including those in small towns and exurban settlements that have an independent municipal status), in being non-partisan and majoritarian, rather than proportional.<sup>3</sup> The local elections data also exclude local authorities that did not hold elections in the particular year – 1998 or 2003 (elections at a different date can be caused by the resignation/death of the mayor or the early dissolution of a council of a malfunctioning local authority).

The analysis included the following dependent variables, representing voting behaviour and party orientation: voter turnout, percentage of votes for the following groups of parties: (1) right-wing and religious parties, (2) centre-left parties, and (3) Arab parties. Additional dependent variables for the local elections included the number of parties/lists per council member, the share of the largest party out of total number of council members, the share of the mayor's party out of the total number of council members, and the percentage of council members of immigrant parties and independent lists. In the case of the 2003 national elections, reference was also made to additional left-right scales based on economic and cultural ideologies and left-right self-placement.

The first part in the analysis was based on a classification of local authorities into seven types – central cities and six suburban categories, differentiating local authorities by population size, socio-economic status and minority (Arab)

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2. Only data for 2003 is presented in some tables, because data for 1998/1999 revealed very similar patterns.

3. Councillors in regional councils represent specific rural localities rather than parties/lists.

population. Means of the dependent variables were compared for the seven types, providing insights on intra-metropolitan variations in voting behaviour and on the political ecology of Israeli metropolitan areas. Means of compositional and place-linked independent variables were also compared. Compositional variables included the Arab-Jewish distinction, several measures of socio-economic status, percentage of immigrants, percentage of children (up to age 18), and percentage of elderly (over age 60). Place-linked variables included population size, population density, distance from a metropolitan centre, Gini coefficient (representing income disparities and class heterogeneity of the population), rate of home ownership, and metropolitan region. Insights gleaned from the 2006 national elections, in which the traditional right-left divide in Israeli politics seemed to be falling apart, portending a shift in long-standing patterns of partisanship, also feature here.

The next part consists of multivariate analyses of variables expected to have a major influence on inter-local variations in voting patterns. Finally, based on the results of the OLS regression analyses, multilevel models were opted on two major dependent variables: voter turnout in the 2003 local elections, and percentage of votes for right wing and religious parties in the 2003 Knesset elections.

## **National and local elections in Israel**

### *Israel's electoral system*

Israel is a unitary state with only two levels of government: national and local. Except in the case of the rural regional councils, elections to both levels are proportional – elected members of the Knesset (Israel's legislature) and members of local authority councils formally represent party lists and not voters of a particular constituency. Debates on changing this system, at least partially, into majoritarian elections, in order to reduce fragmentation, instability and the immense bargaining power of small coalition parties, have led nowhere, largely because of possible implications on Jewish religious and ultra-religious parties. The divide between Jews and Arabs and across Jewish secular, religious and ultra-religious populations also presents risks for gerrymandering if majoritarian representation is applied. Increasing the election threshold also faced considerable opposition, and its increase from 1 per cent until 1988 to 1.5 per cent afterwards and to 2 per cent in 2006 had a limited impact on levels of fragmentation in the Knesset.

The alternative chosen in Israel was a move from a Knesset/council elected prime minister/mayor to a method of directly elected prime minister/mayor. Although considered successful at the local government level (see below), subsequent implementation of this system in the national elections of 1996 and 1999 led to unanticipated outcomes (Brichta 2001). Representation of parties of elected prime ministers became much smaller in the Knesset (Kenig *et al.* 2004), weakening the prime minister's and the government's influence there. Hence, the reform was scrapped at the national level and, in the 2003 elections, the method of a Knesset-elected prime minister was back, with some modifications.