



The Social Sciences since 1945 in East and West: Continuities,  
Discontinuities, Institutionalization and Internationalization.  
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## Educational Science between Academia and the State. The Case of Sweden, 1945–2015

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## TOC

### I. Periods:

1945–1970. Americanisation and reform technocrats

1970–1990. Exit of the elites

(i.e. education tends to be cut lose from the field of power)

1990–. The elites strike back. Less state, more market

### II. Examples of data sources and results



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## 1945–1970. Americanisation and reform technocrats

- Massive influx of American research models
- Simultaneously: expansion of social/behavioural sciences
  - Sociology a separate discipline in 1947
  - The cleavage, from the late 1940's, of Pedagogy into Pedagogy and the new discipline Psychology, from the late 1940's
- Important agents were reform technocrats, among them professors in social and behavioural sciences
  - Those were active policy-makers, not obedient relief workers in the service of the political field

## The Reform Technocrats 1930–1960 as portrayed by Lundin & Stenlås

(Per Lundin & Niklas Stenlås, "The Reform Technocrats: Strategists of the Swedish Welfare State, 1930–60". In: *Scientists' Expertise as Performance: Between State and Society, 1860–1960*, Eds. Joris Vandendriessche, Evert Peeters & Kaat Wils, Pickering & Chatto, London 2015)

### Typical Patterns

- Young academics: architects, economists, engineers, planners, scientists
- Educated at a few selective institutions
  - "engineers from the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm, economists from the Stockholm School of Economics, physicians from the Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm, social scientists from Stockholm University College or scientists from Uppsala University".
- "Often [...] acquainted at the university, [...] informal networks."

## The Reform Technocrats, cont. as portrayed by Per Lundin & Niklas Stenlås

- “lobbied the government to set up government committees on which they served as experts.”
- “Once on the committees, they led the planning and surveying of the needs, and proposed the founding of institutions of which they were later appointed leaders”
- “thus [...] the implementers of their own plans[...].
- “often [...] academic careers, thus gaining a scientific legitimacy for the reforms they carried out as committee members or institute directors”
- “[Some] active Liberals or Social Democrats, but most were professionals first, and politicians second, if at all.”
- “mainly defined themselves as apolitical and disinterested experts, employing scientific methods”

## 1945–1970. Americanisation, cont.

- Pedagogics (Education) rather high ranked within the University field – an oddity by international comparison
- In the frontline of application of up-to-date American psychology and statistical methodology
- Indicators: Pedagogy professors members of royal learned academies. Later on several professors in pedagogy became presidents of major universities

## 1970–1990. Exit of the elites

- Triumph of “state progressivism”
- The educational system ruled by middle-level administrators and professionals rather than elites
  - i.e. *more* autonomy in relation to the field of power and the scientific field
  - and *less* autonomy in relation to the educational sector, especially schooling
- Homogenisation of the entire educ. system accomplished everywhere during the 1970's
  - Unified compulsory primary and lower secondary
  - Unified upper secondary
  - 1977 all post-secondary education assembled within one single organisation

## Exit of the elites, cont.

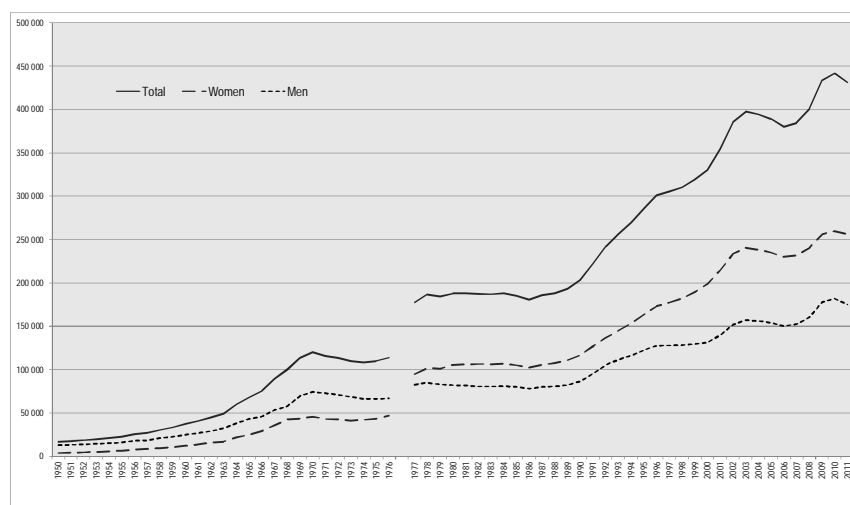
Educational research strong ties to teacher training  
Teacher training's position in the university hierarchy as indicated by social and meritocratic recruitment of students:

- Before, around 1970, very high grades to be accepted to teacher training programmes
- Since then sharp decline of the teacher students' assets, especially among those training for positions at the upper secondary level
- 2001 homogenisation of teacher education
  - Similar vocational training at universities and university colleges for teaching at all levels, from preschool to upper secondary

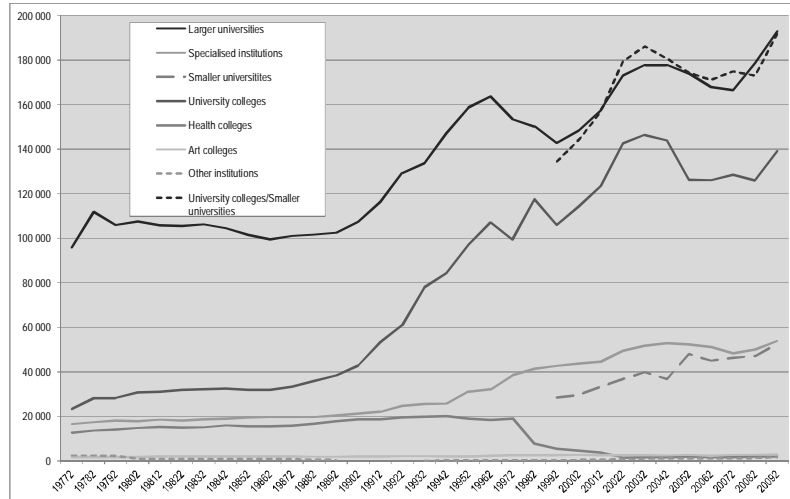
## 1990–. The elites strike back. Less state, more market

- From the early 1990's: decentralisation, deregulation
- The State's withdrawal
- Later in the 1990's: marketisation, privatisation
  - For example extremely far-reaching school voucher system (only to be compared with that of Chile): state money directly to the school chosen by the parents. No fees allowed.
  - Schools for profit allowed, many now owned by venture capitalists.
  - Marked principles also in non-private schools.
- More favourable conditions for various elites to control and utilise the system.
- Sharpened struggles on educational science, what it should be and accomplish

## Higher education enrolment 1950-2011



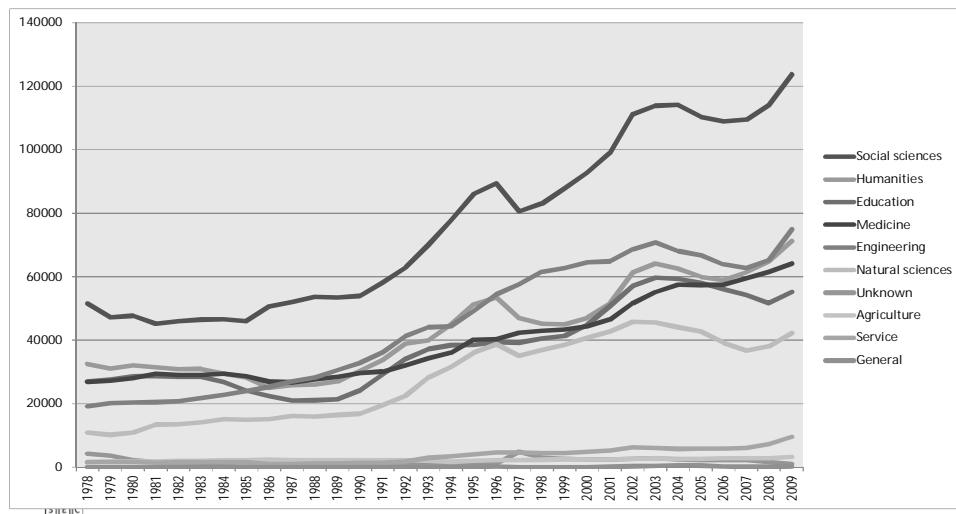
## Education and culture – Higher education institutions 1977-2009



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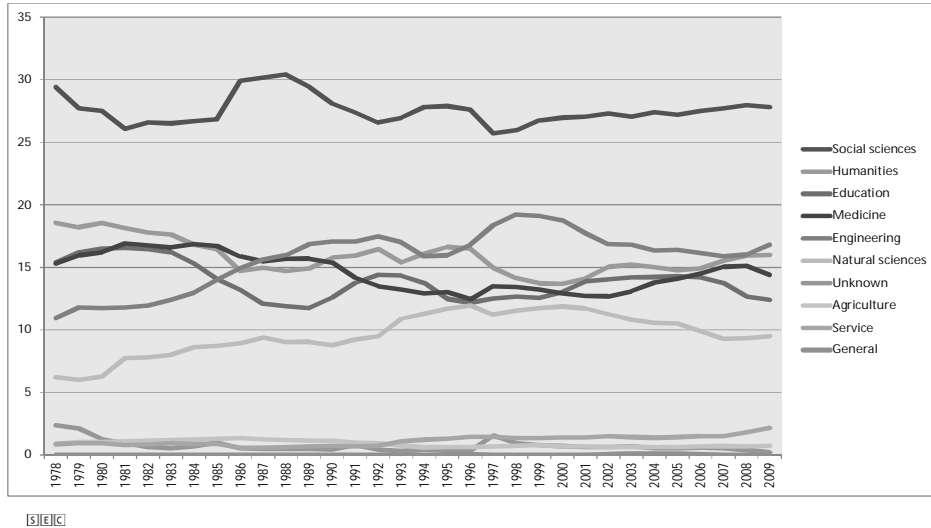
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## Fields of study, 1977-2009



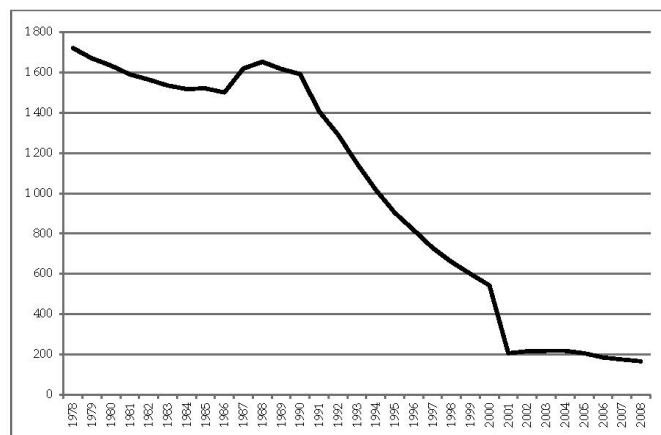
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## Fields of study, 1977–2009. Shares



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## Exit of the elites: Number of lectores (school teachers with dr grade), 1978–2008



Emil Bertilsson,  
*Skollärare, diss.*,  
Uppsala Univ.  
2014, p. 89

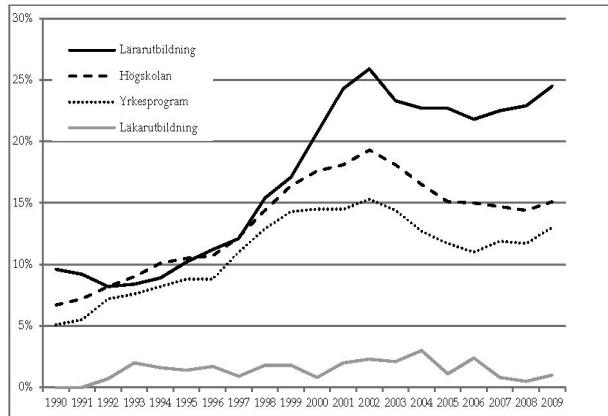
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Mikael Börjesson & Donald Broady, [www.skeptron.uu.se/broadys/sec/](http://www.skeptron.uu.se/broadys/sec/)

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## Exit of the elites: Portion (%) of students with very low grades from upper secondary, 1990–2009



← Teacher educ.

← All  
Occupational  
programs

← Medicine

Emil Bertilsson,  
*Skollärare, diss.*,  
Uppsala Univ.  
2014, p. 108

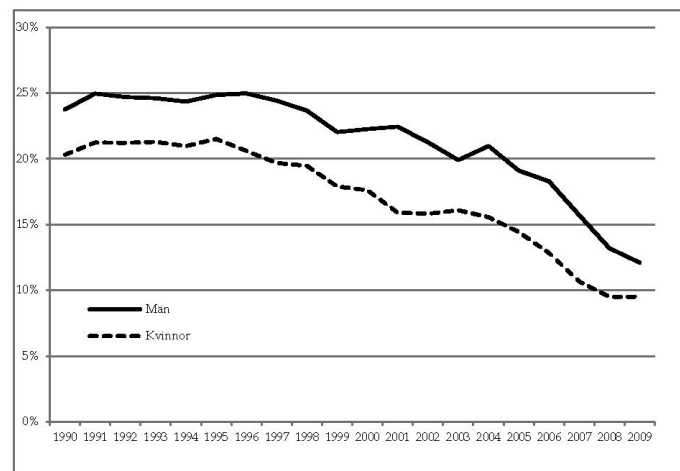
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Mikael Börjesson & Donald Broady, [www.skeptron.uu.se/broadys/sec/](http://www.skeptron.uu.se/broadys/sec/)

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## Exit of the elites: Portion of male (—) and female (---) teacher students with a parent who is teacher, 1990–2009



Emil Bertilsson,  
*Skollärare, diss.*,  
Uppsala Univ.  
2014, p. 118

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Mikael Börjesson & Donald Broady, [www.skeptron.uu.se/broadys/sec/](http://www.skeptron.uu.se/broadys/sec/)

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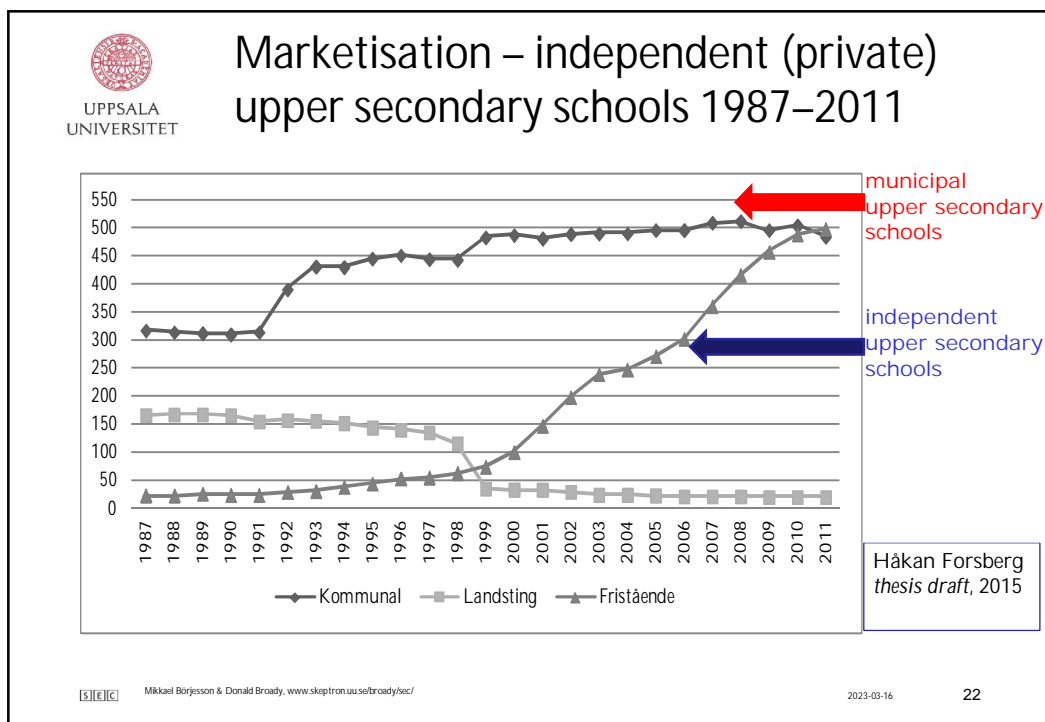
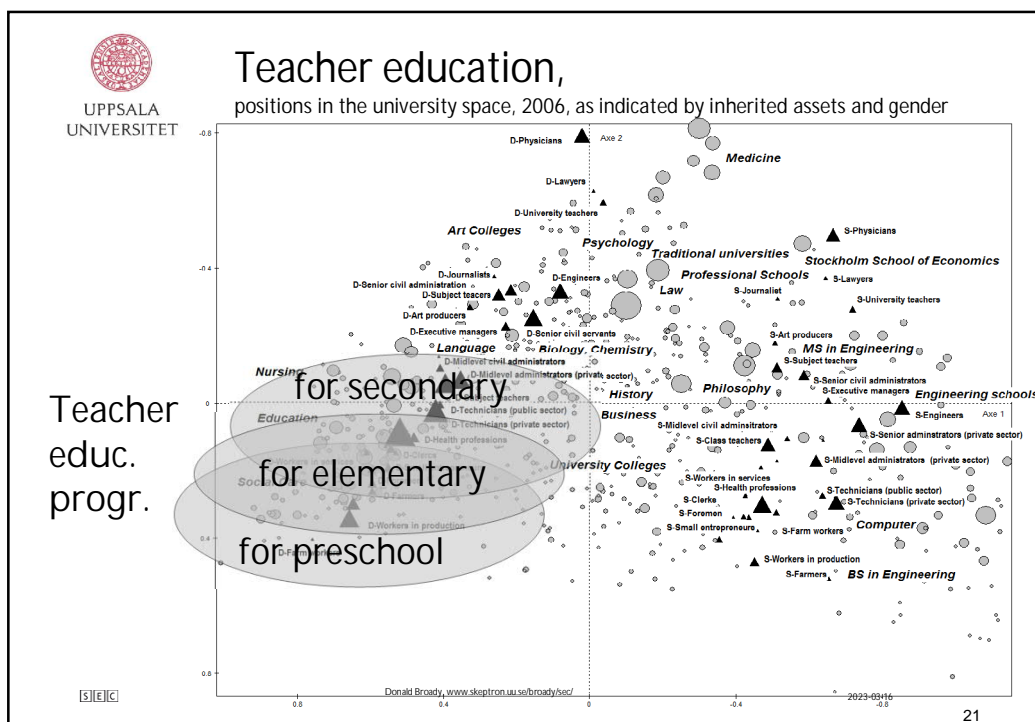
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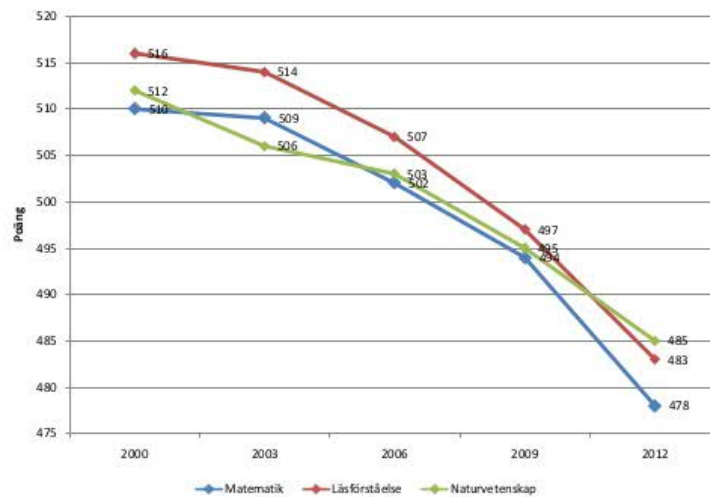
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## PISA scores for Sweden, 2000–2012



## Summing up

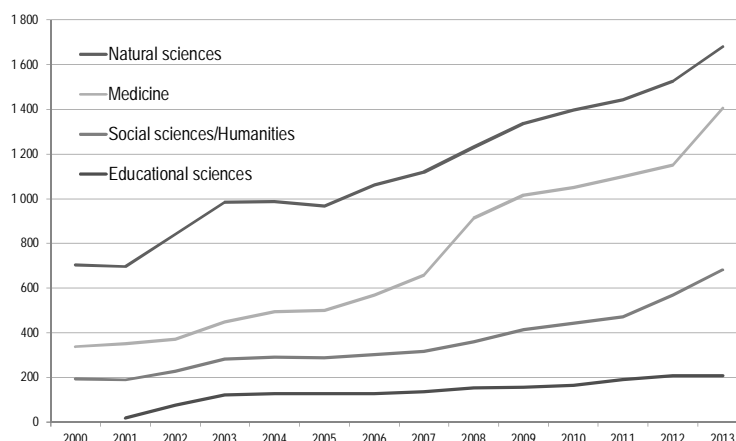
- Crisis in the late decade:
  - Falling results in PISA and other international evaluations
  - Recruitment crisis, lack of teachers, too much administration
  - Teacher education: low grades, no selection, drop-out
  - Closing down of schools, debate about profits,
- A series of initiatives:
  - Creation of the Educational Sciences Committee, 2001
  - New teacher education, 2011
  - A new Swedish Centre for Educational Research, 2015
  - A number of school committees, 2011-

Recently intensified struggles on the control over educational research

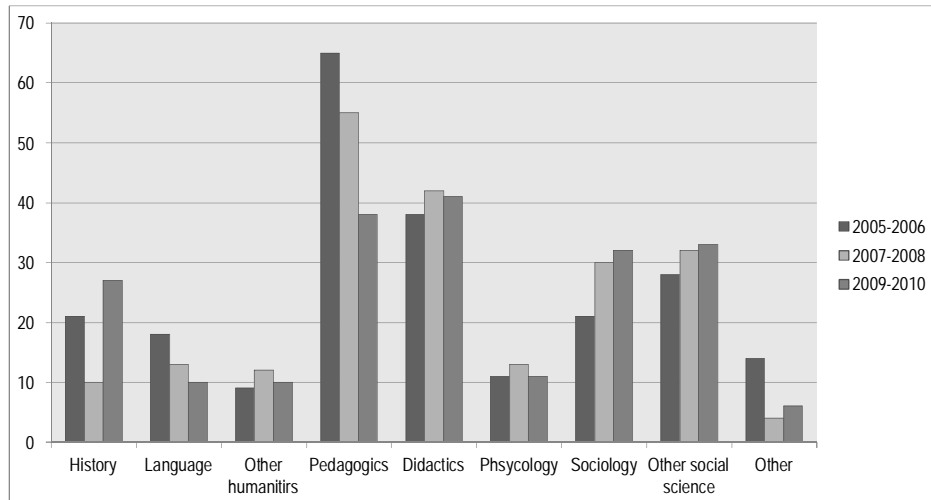
## Educational Sciences Committee

- 2001 Creation of the Swedish Research Council, and its Educational Sciences Committee
- Immense funding resources for educational research
  - In the beginning corresponding to more than half of the Research Council's funding of *all other* social sciences and humanities (incl. linguistics, law etc).
  - Now risen to an annual budget of 20 million euro.
- Although within the Swedish Research Council, the status of "pure" science was questioned, should also fulfil demands from the practitioners, part of the project of professionalise the teacher corps

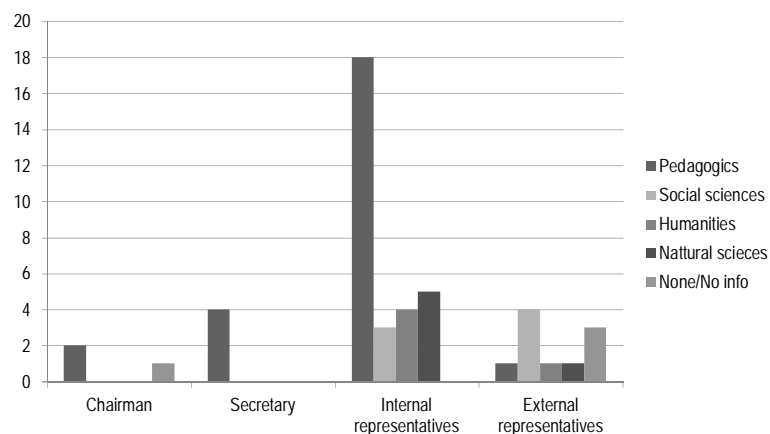
## Swedish Research Council Funding of research, 2001–2013



## Educational sciences funded by the Swedish Research Council – Subjects



## Educational Sciences Committee Disciplines of the members by position



The End