

# Diversity and Inclusion Data – A Way of Measuring and Understanding Realities in Sweden

Sayaka Osanami Törngren and Pieter Bevelander

**Abstract** Over the past five decades, Sweden—and Malmö in particular—has undergone extensive demographic change driven by sustained immigration, resulting in increasing diversity and, in Malmö, a context in which people without a migration background now constitute a numerical minority. This transformation has generated a level of demographic complexity that is best captured by the concept of *superdiversity*, which emphasizes variation within groups and the interaction of multiple social, legal, and socioeconomic variables in shaping inequality, stratification, and belonging. Understanding these processes depends critically on data. While Sweden’s population registers provide unparalleled longitudinal coverage of socioeconomic outcomes, they cannot capture subjective identities, lived experiences, or intersecting forms of discrimination. The Diversity and Inclusion Survey makes a unique methodological contribution through its systematic collection of voluntary self-identification data, enabling multidimensional analysis of inclusion and exclusion. By complementing register data, the survey also contributes theoretically by facilitating more precise empirical analyses of *superdiversity*, inclusion, and the changing contours of the social mainstream in contemporary Sweden.

## INTRODUCTION

In many European countries and cities, people without a migration background are increasingly becoming a numerical minority.<sup>1</sup> Sweden—and Malmö in particular—are no exception. Over the past five decades, Sweden, and especially its larger cities, has experienced significant immigration from around the globe. At different times, this intake has been dominated by refugees and family to refugees whereas in other periods labour migrants and students have constituted a growing share.<sup>2</sup> Occasionally, immigration has been marked by arrival of large, distinct groups, such as Bosnians in the early 1990s, or Syrians during the 2010s, or labour migrants from new EU member states following their accession in 2004 and 2007. Each of these waves have contributed to an increasingly

diverse population in Sweden in terms of racial, ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds.

The share of children of immigrants has steadily grown, as the majority of immigrants choose to settle and build their lives in Sweden. When we look at the population as a whole, this demographic transformation becomes clear: about 21% of Sweden’s residents are first-generation immigrants, 7% are children of immigrants i.e. second-generation individuals, born in Sweden to two foreign-born parents, and 8% are born in Sweden with one foreign-born and one Swedish-born parent, often referred to as “mixed”. Among the younger generation—those aged 10–19 today—the change is even more striking. In this age group, 14% are first-generation immigrants, 13% are children of immigrants, and 12% are mixed. These figures illustrate how diversity is not only a feature of Sweden’s past and present but will play an even more central role in its future demographic landscape. This gradual transformation has created a society that is more diverse than at any previous point in its modern history.<sup>3</sup>

To capture the complexity of this demographic transformation, researchers have increasingly drawn on the concept of *superdiversity* coined by Vertovec. Superdiversity refers to a new form of demographic complexity shaped by multiple interacting variables—such as country of origin, migration channel, legal status, socioeconomic position, and transnational ties—across increasingly small, scattered, and heterogeneous migrant populations.<sup>4</sup> Superdiversity does not simply refer to demographic diversity; rather, it

draws attention to variation within groups, not only between them. This perspective enables an intersectional analysis<sup>5</sup> of how multiple axes of identity—such as race, gender, class, and legal status—interact to produce new hierarchical social positions, statuses, and forms of stratification, alongside evolving yet historically rooted patterns of racism, inequality, and prejudice. Malmö is one such superdiverse context in which the native Swedish population has become a numerical minority, underscoring the need for updated ways of measuring and understanding inclusion, exclusion, and inequality. Today, around 41% of Malmö's residents have two Sweden-born parents, whereas 59% are first- or second-generation Swedes, or individuals of mixed parental background.<sup>6</sup>

A society's ability to understand the diversity of the population and address the indicators of inclusion and exclusion, or in other words, the inequality in society, rests on the quality and relevance of the data it collects. Appropriate data can enable researchers, policymakers, and civil society to identify patterns of discrimination and exclusion that would otherwise remain hidden. In other words, research on experiences of immigrants and their descendants, both opportunities and the barriers they face, requires detailed data, including both objective and subjective indicators and attitudinal, and ideally longitudinal information that allows us to follow developments over time.

Today, a majority of quantitative studies focusing on migration and inclusion/exclusion across disciplines rely on register-based administrative data in Sweden. Since the mid-1980s, Statistics Sweden has successfully integrated several major and important administrative registers held by different state agencies like the Tax authorities that is responsible for the Swedish population register, the Migration Agency, the Educational Board, the Employment Agency, etc and made information from these registers available not only for national, regional and municipal planning but also for research purposes. This makes Sweden one of the few countries in the world where researchers can

access individual-level data covering entire populations and specific sub-groups of population, enabling analyses of inclusion and exclusion across important domains such as the labour market, housing, and health over time longitudinally. Researchers can after ethical approval build their own own datasets, taking advantage of the linkability of these registers, or they can pre-construct longitudinal databases provided by Statistics Sweden. One of the most important databases for migration and integration research in Sweden is STATIV.<sup>7</sup>

Careja & Bevelander<sup>8</sup> suggest that the most promising path forward for studying inclusion and exclusion is a carefully designed combination of register data sampling and survey data. They argue that population registers are ideal sampling frames: they are directly accessible to researchers, centrally managed and include key variables such as age, sex, current address, country of origin, and year of arrival, which allow the identification of the target population. This means that researchers can draw random samples of immigrants, their descendants and appropriate control groups at the national, regional or local level. Moreover, population registers can also support high-quality survey research in several ways. First, they can be used to weight survey responses in case the population actually surveyed has been biased through non-responses, and secondly, they make it possible to conduct the survey with the same sub-sample again enabling creation of longitudinal panel dataset. Finally, using population registers as sampling frames offers cost advantages: a centralized register provides a single point of access and because socio-economic information is already available in the register, researchers can exclude these items from their questionnaires. Shorter and focused surveys reduce respondent burden and reduce the risk of bias due to an overload of respondents and can result in higher-quality answers.

In 2025, the Malmö Institute for Studies of Migration (MIM) launched the Diversity and Inclusion Survey, which makes a unique

contribution by collecting self-identified data on transgender identity or expression, ethnicity (including racial identification and national minority status), religion or other belief, and sexual orientation—covering six grounds of discrimination recognized under Swedish Discrimination Law that are largely absent from register-based data. Even though disability, which is also a ground for discrimination, is not directly addressed, we collect self-reported health status as a proxy. By doing so, the survey responds to ongoing methodological debates about the limits of relying solely on administrative registers to study patterns of inclusion, exclusion, and inequality in Sweden. Moreover, the survey contributes to the development and refinement of theoretical and academic concepts—such as superdiversity—by offering empirical insights into contemporary demographic change.

Rather than presupposing a particular societal trajectory, the survey provides an opportunity to explore whether and how Sweden—and Malmö in particular—may be approaching a condition of increased demographic complexity often described as superdiversity, and what such developments could imply for the contours of the social mainstream. Using the Diversity and Inclusion Survey, we examine how intersecting demographic variables relate to social positioning, experiences of belonging, and perceptions of power and inequality in a context where conventional majority–minority distinctions may be becoming less stable and less analytically sufficient.

## **OUR CONTRIBUTION: UNIQUE, REPRESENTATIVE SELF-IDENTIFICATION DATA FROM MALMÖ**

*The Diversity and Inclusion Survey for the city of Malmö in 2025* was developed and financed by the Malmö Institute for Studies of Migration, Malmö University and conducted by Statistics Sweden. While administrative register data provide detailed information on individual characteristics—such as age, sex, civil status, education, employment, income, occupation, housing, area of residence, country of birth, parental country of birth,

citizenship, admission status, and year of arrival—the survey was designed to complement these registers by capturing self-identified characteristics and experiences of inclusion and exclusion across multiple life domains. These included labour market and political participation, access to healthcare, language proficiency and language use at home, experiences of discrimination, trust in institutions and neighbours, sense of belonging, and attitudes towards immigration and diversity.

Sweden’s population registers are extensive and offer robust longitudinal data, particularly on socio-economic outcomes such as employment, income, education, and housing. However, the available demographic variables remain limited, primarily covering sex, age, citizenship, country of birth, year of residence, and parental country of birth. As a result, important blind spots persist. Register data cannot capture subjective dimensions of social life, including experiences of discrimination, perceived belonging, cultural and linguistic practices, identity, attitudes, and processes of racialisation—key indicators of attachment to and navigation within Swedish society. The absence of self-identified information on race, ethnicity, religion, gender identity beyond binary categories, sexual orientation, minority status, and language ability further constrains analyses of how inequalities are produced, intersect, and persist across different groups.

Collecting self-identification data therefore enables researchers to broaden analyses of inclusion and exclusion beyond Swedish government- and policy-led categorizations of *foreign background* and *Swedish background*, which rely primarily on country of birth or citizenship. These categories, for example, classify individuals born to two second-generation parents or individuals with one Swedish-born parent as having a Swedish background, despite their potential experiences of racialisation and discrimination. Without self-identified data covering all seven grounds of discrimination recognised in Swedish Discrimination Law, important disparities—and

intersections between these grounds—risk remaining underestimated or entirely invisible.

The sampling frame is based on several administrative registers like the population and tax register, the educational register, registers held by the Migration agency, etc., and contains individual information of the population in Malmö. This information is linked to individual answers on 118 questions in the survey. From the adult (age 18-79) population of the city (approximately 276'000 individuals), 29'962 individuals were sampled with an oversampling for individuals having low education, being in younger age cohorts are immigrants or children of immigrants. The oversampling of these categories was informed by results by earlier surveys conducted by Statistics Sweden, which showed lower response rates among these populations, and was implemented, with the aim of minimizing response bias and improving representativeness. The surveys were provided in Swedish and English. The response rate of the survey was 18,6% and full answers on survey were received from 5'644 individuals. Statistics Sweden weighted the final sample to the population of the city.<sup>9</sup>

The survey's self-identification data—often referred to as Equality Data—is important for understanding how the seven discrimination grounds recognized by Swedish Discrimination Law intersect: sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation, and age.<sup>10</sup> These categories reflect distinct forms of social vulnerability, and each requires adequate measurement to ensure equal rights and opportunities. Equality data refers to aggregated quantitative and qualitative information used to describe, analyze, and monitor the state of equality within a population. Crucially, such data is based on voluntary and anonymous self-identification, enabling individuals to articulate aspects of their identity that remain invisible in most general statistics or administrative records.<sup>11</sup> By focusing on lived identities and experiences rather than proxies such as country of birth or parental country of origin, equality data makes it

possible to map the complexity of discrimination in ways that register data cannot.

Data can only reveal and measure signs of marginalization and inequality therefore it is also important to implement active measures and policy interventions aimed at promoting inclusion. Such measures and policy interventions based on data enable the implementation and evaluation of anti-discrimination and policies by providing measurable indicators of progress or stagnation. Sweden's own experience demonstrates how data can support equality advancements: progress in gender equality has relied on continuous monitoring and evaluation based on register data, particularly information on sex and socio-economic conditions. Today, this discussion is increasingly expanding to include questions of gender identification.<sup>12</sup>

## **CONCERNS REGARDING SENSITIVITY AND RELIABILITY OF SELF-IDENTIFICATION DATA IN SWEDEN**

Despite growing global consensus and explicit EU-level calls for member states to collect such data,<sup>13</sup> Sweden remains an outlier. Successive governments have been cautious in collecting self-reported equality data—especially concerning race and ethnicity—a position reinforced in mainstream political discourse and echoed by parts of academia.<sup>14</sup>

Policy debates in recent years show that this reluctance persists. Although the Discrimination Ombudsman hosted the 2023 conference "*Equality Data as a Tool for Combating Discrimination*," sustained and constructive engagement on the issue remains limited.<sup>15</sup> The term "equality data" (*jämlikhetsdata*) has become fragmented and is frequently misrepresented as equivalent to register-based data, drawing misplaced associations with Sweden's history of eugenics.<sup>16</sup>

This long-standing reservation continues to shape national policy. In the government's Action Plan Against Racism and Hate Crimes, published in December 2024, the state reaffirms a restrictive stance on collecting statistics related to ethnicity.

While the Action Plan recognizes that effective anti-racism work requires stronger knowledge bases—including longitudinal and comparative data—it also highlights methodological and ethical concerns, such as anonymity, privacy, and hesitancy among parts of the population to share this information.<sup>17</sup>

This position increasingly diverges from EU policy developments. Both the EU Anti-Racism Strategy 2020–2025 and its updated 2026–2030 version emphasize that robust equality data is essential for understanding systemic racism and integrating antiracist perspectives into policy. Eurostat is also developing EU-level guidelines to standardize data collection on groups at risk of discrimination, with member states encouraged to strengthen and better coordinate their efforts through national statistical offices.<sup>18</sup>

In Sweden, public and political debates on collecting data on race and ethnicity frequently focus on concerns about sensitivity, privacy, and the reliability of self-identification.<sup>19</sup> While such concerns warrant serious consideration, equality data collection is typically voluntary and anonymous, allowing individuals to refrain from self-identification if they choose. Internationally, comparable approaches are widely used—particularly in the European context, including the United Kingdom and Ireland—to monitor inequalities and support anti-discrimination initiatives.<sup>20</sup> International evidence indicates that individuals belonging to racialized or minority groups tend to welcome opportunities to self-identify in contexts where anonymity is ensured.<sup>21</sup> We need to remember that for marginalized groups, having their identities and experiences reflected in data can be empowering, transforming invisibility into recognition and making disparities quantifiable rather than anecdotal. Indeed, within the Swedish context, racialised communities, including Afro-Swedes have played an important role in drawing attention to the need for equality data, while in more recent years selected opinion-forming groups representing Asian-Swedes have also contributed to these discussions. In

various forums, including dialogues with bodies such as the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, these communities have pointed to how limited data availability can constrain efforts to identify and address discrimination and racism effectively.<sup>22</sup>

Although Sweden lacks large-scale systematic studies, the limited available evidence does not support claims of sensitivity or unreliability. One Swedish study from 2019 showed that asking questions about ethnic identity does not negatively affect respondents.<sup>23</sup> Another study on white privilege and discrimination from 2021 found that respondents' self-identified racial categories (White, Black, or MENA) closely aligned with their country or region of origin<sup>24</sup>—showing about 90% overlap. Notably, the only group with high rates of “don't know/don't want to answer” consisted of individuals with Swedish, Western European, or North American backgrounds, suggesting that reluctance is not inherent to the questions themselves but rather reflects a culturally specific discomfort among majority populations.<sup>25</sup>

Moreover, self-identification is widely recognized as shaped by individuals' lived experiences and social contexts,<sup>26</sup> and international research documents both the stability of identification for most individuals and the conditions under which shifts may occur. Importantly, there is no empirical evidence to support claims that individuals routinely misrepresent protected social identities. Rather, studies show that self-identification remains stable for the majority of the population, with changes occurring primarily in response to shifts in available classification categories and to evolving ethnic and racial policy frameworks and their associated social consequences.<sup>27</sup> The introduction of census identification possibilities such as “Multiracial” or “Middle Eastern and North African (MENA)” in the United States illustrates how institutional classifications can shape reported identification over time.<sup>28</sup> In this context, the development and implementation of new categories were undertaken through consultation with affected minority communities. Such

practices—combining community engagement with transparency regarding the purposes and uses of data collection—are widely regarded as fundamental to legitimate and effective equality data collection.<sup>29</sup>

The data collected through the Diversity and Inclusion Survey makes a unique and important methodological contribution to ongoing concerns regarding the above sensitivity and reliability of self-identification data. It enables us to address critical questions such as: for whom equality data is perceived as sensitive; how do individuals choose to identify when given the opportunity; and what patterns of diversity, inclusion, and discrimination become visible when analysis moves beyond the limited proxies available in administrative register data?

Our data also highlights the importance of voluntary self-identification, shown both through respondents' ability to refrain from answering and through the potentially varying sensitivity associated with different questions linked to the seven discrimination grounds. Two% of respondents chose not to answer the question on gender identification, while 8% opted not to disclose their sexuality. Additionally, 3% declined to identify their race, and 8% chose not to disclose their religion. Among those who reported belonging to a national minority, 42% did not specify which minority. Our data allows us to have a constructive discussion on how we can collect self-identification data and demonstrates both the feasibility and necessity of collecting equality data for a more just and inclusive society.

## **SITUATING THE SURVEY IN CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES**

Malmö's residents, regardless of whether they belong to the 41 per cent classified as having a Swedish background, meaning individuals born in Sweden to two Sweden-born parents, or the 59 per cent classified as having a foreign background, including second-generation Swedes and individuals of mixed parental backgrounds born in Sweden, may hold diverse ethnic, racial, and

religious identities. Do the native majority feel that they are "becoming a minority"?<sup>30</sup> What happens when second-generation Swedes and individuals of mixed parental backgrounds born in Sweden form families and are categorized as having a "Swedish background" solely because they are born in Sweden to two Sweden-born parents?

If Malmö is understood as a superdiverse city, an important question is whether the "mainstream" into which immigrants and their descendants are included, integrated, and incorporated is itself expanding.<sup>31</sup> Superdiversity suggests that the mainstream is no longer defined solely by a historically homogeneous majority, but is increasingly shaped by demographic complexity, social mobility, and everyday interaction across differences. In this sense, the mainstream may become more inclusive, accommodating new cultural practices, identities, and forms of belonging.

Examining predominantly the US context, Alba argues that the mainstream is not equivalent to a numerical majority but represents a historically rooted center of social power that structures access to opportunities and social acceptance while remaining open to gradual transformation as societies diversify. The mainstream thus shapes the cultural adjustments and integration expected of immigrants and minorities. Alba further suggests that the mainstream can be reshaped and expanded as individuals of non-white or immigrant origin gain power, social mobility, or move into influential positions.<sup>32</sup>

Bonilla-Silva similarly argues that the racial inequality in the US is not disappearing but being reorganized. In this reconfiguration, racial stratification increasingly operates through three hierarchical groups: Whites at the top, an intermediate group of "honorary Whites" who are granted partial and conditional inclusion, and a "collective Black" at the bottom that remains most strongly racialized and marginalized. This arrangement allows racial hierarchies to persist despite formal equality, diversity, and intermarriage, as selective inclusion at the top

provides proximity to the mainstream and stabilises the system, while enduring inequalities are obscured.<sup>33</sup>

In line with this understanding of proximity to the mainstream and the persistence of inequality, Crul and Lelie argue that what matters is not the numbers themselves, but how residents engage with diversity, how they adapt socially, and how power structures are renegotiated.<sup>34</sup> It concerns the ways in which institutional power, as held and exercised by the majority without a migration background, shapes diversity climates in neighborhoods or workplaces, with consequences for people with a migration background and/or racial and ethnic minorities. Many adults in Malmö and in Sweden today may not have learned during childhood how to navigate diversity, which affects their feelings of inclusion or exclusion in the new demographic reality.<sup>35</sup>

Taken together these concepts offer important analytical insights for understanding how power, hierarchy, and conditional inclusion operate in superdiverse societies, such as Malmö and Sweden. The mainstream may persist even where no group holds numerical dominance, as native Swedish majorities continue to uphold institutional and cultural power, keeping them central to the mainstream.

## **THE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS SPECIAL ISSUE**

Understanding superdiversity requires examining how different forms of diversity intersect to produce new hierarchical social positions, statuses, and forms of stratification, alongside evolving but historically rooted patterns of racism, inequality, and prejudice. These dynamics shape changing forms of segregation, experiences of urban space and intergroup contact, and everyday practices of conviviality and multiculturalism. Through this issue and the Diversity and Inclusion Survey, we seek to contribute empirically and conceptually to a deeper understanding of what inclusion and exclusion mean in contemporary superdiverse contexts.

Emilsson and Ulseluse's article in this Special Issue is an example of addressing the limits of relying solely on migration background statistics to understand inequality in Sweden, highlighting how this approach overlooks important dimensions of self-identification categories and lived experience. The authors show that self-identified race and religion provide complementary insights; particularly in explaining discrimination and belonging across generations in superdiverse contexts, including among individuals without a direct migration background. Rather than replacing country-of-birth data, the study demonstrates how combining multiple perspectives offers a more complete understanding of social outcomes.

Suter, Green, and Lafond's article also illustrates how family practices cut across demographic categories and migration histories by contributing one of the first quantitative analyses of transnational family (TNF) relations in Sweden. Their exploratory analysis shows that nearly half of all respondents report having family members abroad, indicating that transnational ties constitute a substantial component of Malmö's family landscape. While these ties are most prevalent among the foreign-born population, they are also evident among second-generation and Swedish-born residents, underscoring that transnational family life extends beyond migration-driven family separation. Moreover, almost one third of Malmö residents report frequent cross-border contact, which—based on existing research—likely entails emotional and practical caregiving responsibilities. The findings further reveal a temporal dimension, with more recent arrivals reporting higher levels of transnational engagement than long-term residents. Taken together, the study highlights the need to understand transnationalism as a dynamic and socially stratified dimension of superdiversity rather than as a marginal or exceptional phenomenon.

Together, Emilsson and Ulseluse's article and Suter, Green and Lafond's article demonstrate the analytical value of alternative forms of data for understanding inclusion and exclusion, particularly

among individuals without a direct migration background. While Emilsson and Ulseluse show how self-identified social categories provide complementary analytical insights, Suter, Green and Lafond illustrate how global ties intersect with local processes of belonging and social positioning in Malmö. These and other contributions underscore the importance of addressing superdiversity not merely through demographic affiliations or subjective identities, but also through analyses of how overlapping demographic variables shape socioeconomic outcomes and experiences of inclusion and exclusion.

In order to achieve a deeper understanding of what inclusion and exclusion mean in contemporary superdiverse contexts, Fernández, Dahlstedt and Righard's contribution introduces the concept of *diversity capital*. This is an important contribution that explores how individuals navigate, mobilise, and are constrained by diversity in their everyday lives. Going beyond the majority–minority narrative, the authors propose a novel approach to conceptualise and investigate the individual capacities and assets that help people thrive and succeed in superdiverse societies. They discuss the theoretical foundations of the concept of diversity capital in relation to relevant literature and then examine it empirically using data from the Diversity and Inclusion Survey.

Moreover, other contributions focus on how dimensions such as belonging, trust, and language intersect with socioeconomic and sociopsychological outcomes in superdiverse settings. For example, in their contribution on healthcare, Strange, Zdravković, and Mangrio analyze survey questions covering self-reported health status, unmet healthcare needs, and trust in different channels of healthcare information. While these indicators align with established findings in health research, the Diversity and Inclusion Survey enables a broader analysis of how health intersects with belonging, trust, and inclusion in a superdiverse urban context. Trust in the healthcare system emerges as particularly significant, as it shapes whether individuals feel at home and secure

within Swedish society. Although health-specific questions constitute only a small part of the survey, the authors demonstrate how health operates as a cross-cutting dimension of social inclusion, allowing the survey to be read not only as a measure of individual well-being but also as an indicator of the health of society itself.

Language and belonging are addressed by Schütze and Irastorza, investigate how multilingualism and experiences of discrimination influence migrants' and their children's sense of belonging in Malmö. Their analysis highlights the complex relationship between language proficiency, multilingual identity, and linguistic racism—understood as discrimination directed at individuals with non-native accents or language practices. While speaking Swedish at home is strongly associated with feeling at home in Sweden, experiences of discrimination and lower levels of language proficiency significantly undermine feelings of belonging. The study demonstrates how language functions simultaneously as a resource for inclusion and a mechanism of exclusion, revealing how symbolic boundaries are reproduced even within officially inclusive and diverse urban settings.

While Schütze and Irastorza analyse language as a factor shaping experiences of belonging, Hutcheson, Mosbach and Bevelander examine language proficiency, sense of belonging, and trust, alongside self-reported sociodemographic characteristics, as explanatory factors for electoral turnout and political participation in Swedish local elections in the superdiverse city of Malmö. Results indicate that turnout is higher among older voters, women, the highly educated, and Swedish citizens; among immigrants, it varies by region of birth and increases with years of residence. Moreover, differences by religious identification are observed, with nativity status playing a key moderating role. In line with Schütze and Irastorza's analysis of language as both a resource for inclusion and a mechanism of exclusion, Hutcheson, Mosbach and Bevelander also find that voters report a stronger sense of belonging to the city and higher levels of language proficiency than non-voters. On the other

hand, findings on social attitudes toward neighbors of other ethnicities, religions, and gender orientations are mixed.

As Sweden undergoes one of the most significant demographic transformations in its modern history, researchers—supported by relevant data—can contribute meaningfully by helping society understand what diversity means and how it is experienced. The contributions in this special issue exemplify how empirically grounded analyses can illuminate the complex ways in which social positions, forms of belonging, and experiences of inequality are shaped through intersecting social categories. Is Malmö's mainstream expanding to incorporate some minorities while excluding others from the formerly dominant majority, thereby maintaining the social inequalities and power structures that underpin it? Rather than confirming a predetermined narrative of social change, the findings point to a more uneven and differentiated landscape, where inclusion and exclusion coexist and are continuously renegotiated. In this sense, the special issue highlights both the analytical potential of multidimensional data and the need for continued, critical engagement with how diversity is conceptualized, measured, and governed in contemporary Sweden.

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This article is accompanied by a [visualisation](#) that conveys its main message. The visualisation was created by Noel Grunander, BA student in Visual Communication at Malmö University, in collaboration with the authors.

**Author bio** Sayaka Osanami Törngren is an Associate Professor in International Migration and Ethnic Relations. She received her B.A. from Sophia University, Tokyo, and her Ph.D. from Malmö/Linköping University (a joint program). Her dissertation, *Love Ain't Got No Color: Attitudes toward Interracial Marriage in Sweden*, was awarded Malmö University's Dissertation of the Year (2012). Osanami Törngren's research interests include race and racialization, racism and discrimination, and inequality. She has extensive experience in conducting and managing externally funded research (EU and national funding). Her work involves international and cross-sectoral collaboration with public and private sectors and NGOs. Email: [sayaka.torngren@mau.se](mailto:sayaka.torngren@mau.se)

**Author bio** Pieter Bevelander is Professor of International Migration and Ethnic Relations (IMER) at the Department of Global Political Studies and Director of MIM, Malmö Institute for Migration Studies, Malmö University, Sweden. His main research field is international migration and different aspects of immigrant integration as well the reactions and attitudes of natives towards immigrants and minorities. Email: [pieter.bevelander@mau.se](mailto:pieter.bevelander@mau.se)

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<sup>7</sup> STATIV stands for Register for Integration Studies (Registret för Integrationsstudier)

<sup>8</sup> Careja, R., & Bevelander, P. (2018). Using population registers for migration and integration research: examples from Denmark and Sweden. *Comparative Migration Studies*, 6(1), 19.

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