

Majority of Swedes want to join NATO; rapid shift in public opinion

Written by Staff reporter

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A majority of Swedes are now in favour of joining Nato, according to a new poll.

"I'm surprised at how rapidly it has changed," said Wilhelm Agrell, professor of intelligence analysis at Lund University, who published an opinion piece in the Dagens Nyheter on Sunday in which he argued Sweden should apply for Nato membership together with Finland, the Local reports.

Defence News said a proposal from Sweden's NATO-skeptic Center Party that the country should join the alliance in conjunction with non-aligned neighbor Finland has reignited the NATO debate in Sweden.

"It would be natural that part of our deepening [defense] cooperation with Finland will also involve working together to seek membership in NATO," according to a statement. "We believe such a course would not only strengthen the ability of our two countries to contribute to the stability and security in our immediate area, but also in international security efforts."

The trend suggests a rapid shift in public opinion, partly explained by a increased perceived threats from Russia.

Russia is staunchly opposed to Finland or Sweden joining NATO.

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