

Very excited to see our (@faustine\_perrin, Tobias Karlsson & me) paper on the Historical Gender Gap Index in Sweden finally out in the Journal of Economic History, 5 years after my Master's thesis on the same topic! 🎉

Brief summary below ↴

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-economic-history/article/historical-gender-gap-index-a-longitudinal-and-spatial-assessment-of-sweden-18701990/D50225E04E4573AA7D3B175032291B2C>

(1/x)

(2/x)

In order to study temporal and spatial trends in gender equality across the Swedish provinces from 1870 until 1990, we created a Historical Gender Gap Index using quantitative indicators in three subindices: health, the labour market, and politics.

(3/x)

Women were as healthy as men, or even healthier, already in 1870! 🧑🏻

Meanwhile, the large gender gaps on the labour market (in labor force participation and wages) and in the political sphere (in the share of local elected politicians) saw large improvements since 1940.

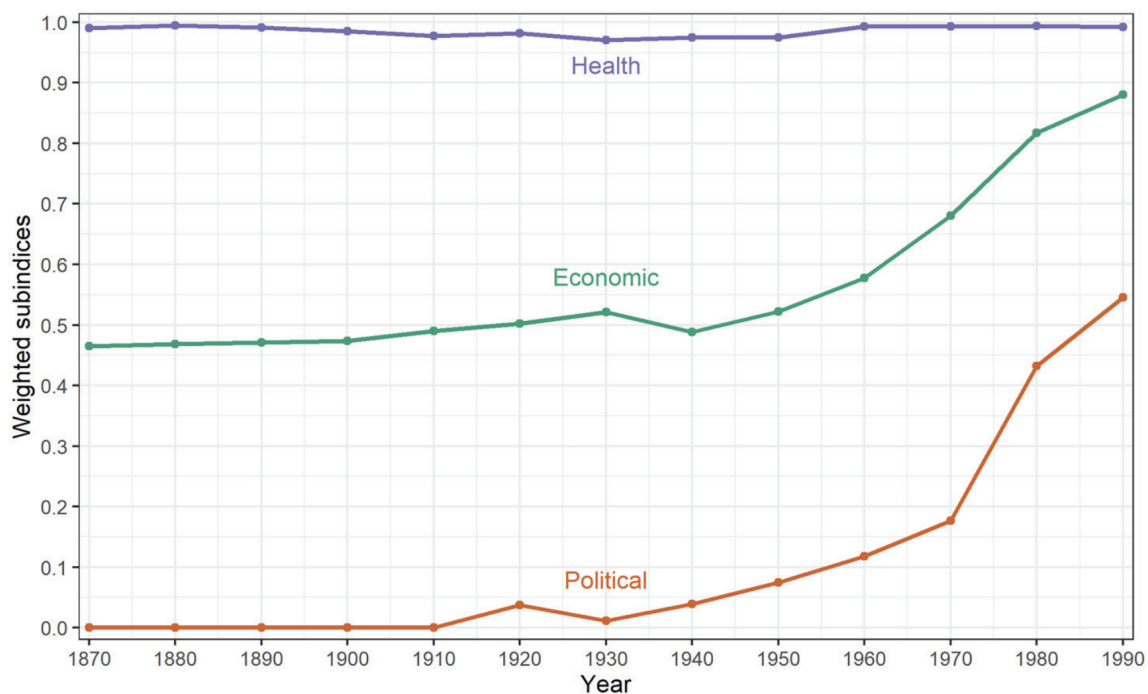




FIGURE 2  
HGGI SUB-INDICES—WEIGHTED BY COUNTIES' POPULATION SIZE

Sources: Authors' calculations using data from SCB.

(4/x)

We also noted significant differences between Swedish counties. Stockholm had historically been a laggard, but became a leading county since 1940 

In contrast, Älvsborg, a county that had been at the top early on, fell behind in later decades 

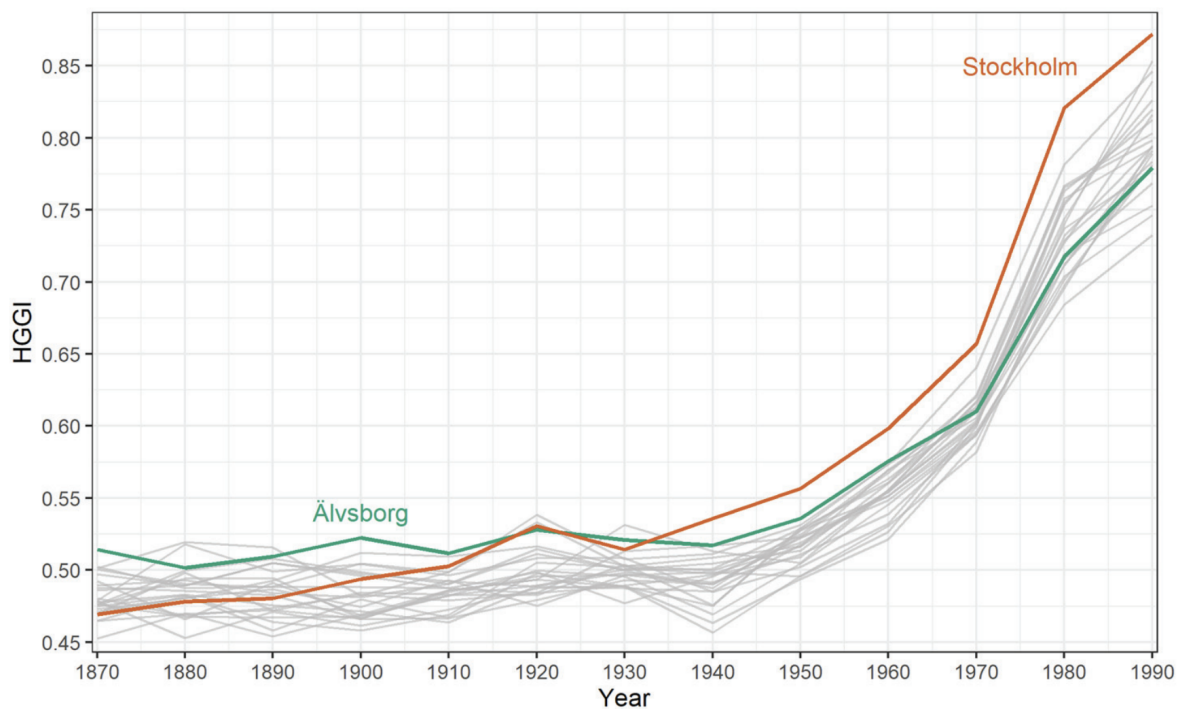



FIGURE 3  
HGGI BY COUNTIES

*Sources:* Authors' calculations using data from SCB.

(5/x)

Yet, over time we observe a tendency towards convergence, both within periods and between counties. Convergence in regional inequalities sped up especially after 1940. 

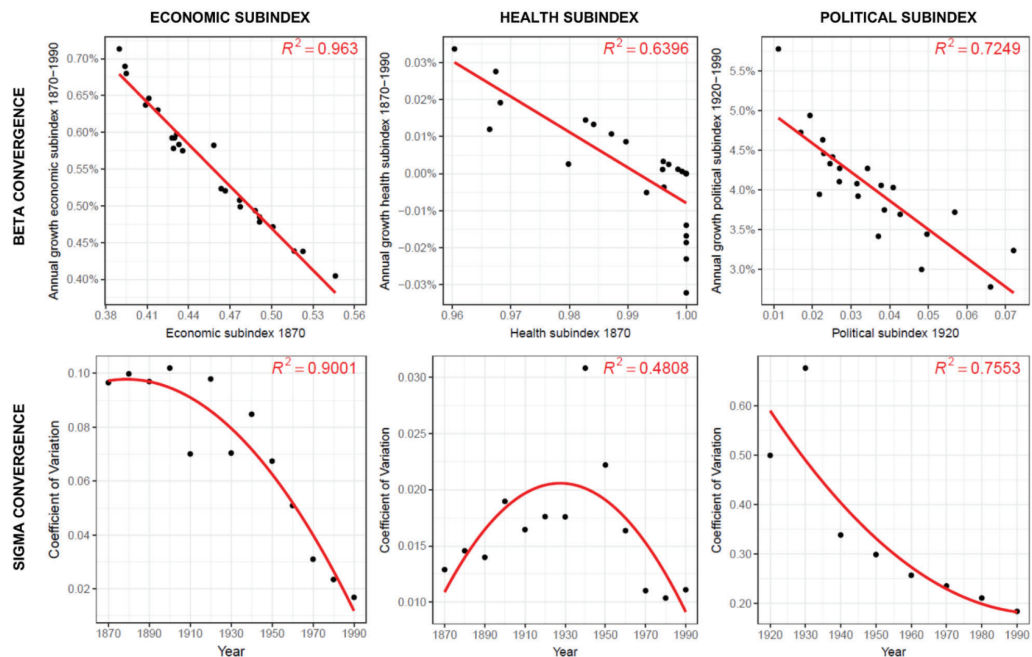


FIGURE 5  
BETA-CONVERGENCE AND SIGMA-CONVERGENCE OF THE SUB-INDICES

Sources: Authors' calculations using data from SCB.

(6/x)

We also observe a relationship between our Historical Gender Gap Index and economic growth 💰

As GDP per capita grew across Swedish counties, so did gender equality. Using our panel data, we find the same relationship in the empirical analysis.

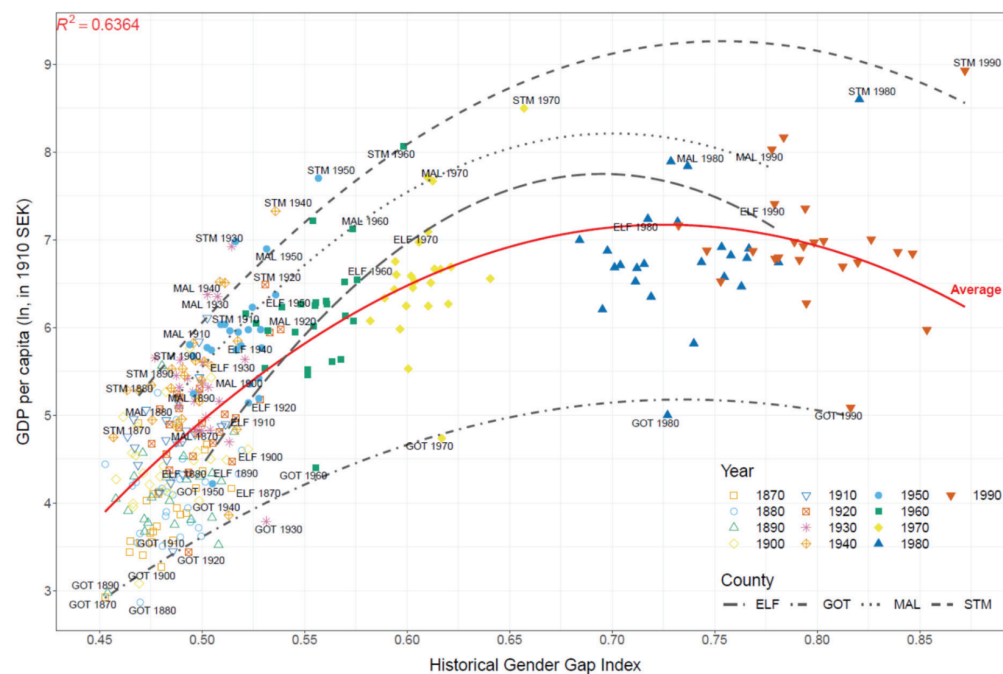


FIGURE 6  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HGGI AND GDP PER CAPITA, 1870–1990

Note: Älvsborg (ELF), Gotland (GOT), Malmöhus (MAL), Stockholm (STM).

Source: GDP per capita estimates from Enflo, Henning, and Schön (2014).

(7/x)

To conclude, while Sweden is known today as a leading country in gender equality, it was nowhere near that equal before 1940. In fact, 1940 Sweden lagged behind 1850 France in several ways.


So what happened after 1940?

(8/x)

On the labour market, periods of wage compression were followed by policies explicitly aiming to eliminate wage inequalities, which helped reduce the gender wage gap and motivated women to enter the labour market.



(9/x)

In the political sphere, female politicians made steady gains entering municipal councils from the 1940s onwards. 

Yet, we must note that while women today are better represented on municipal boards than before, they are still much less likely to chair them!

(10/x)

What about education?

Swedish women made great strides in education since the 19th century. But we have little data on their schooling, especially across time and space.

Currently we are working on a paper on girls' high schools in Sweden. More info soon! 