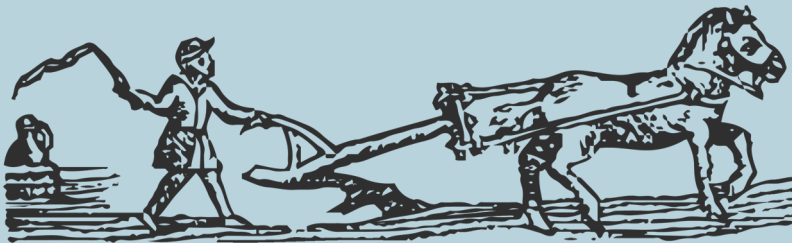




A Population History of Sixteenth-Century Sweden

Martin Andersson

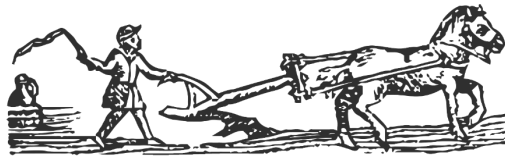


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A Population History of Sixteenth-Century Sweden

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Ämnet agrarhistoria är en historisk disciplin som omfattar en utveckling från äldsta tid till nutid. Ämnet handlar om den agrara produktionen och den tekniska utvecklingen, sociala och ekonomiska förhållanden, människorna i agrarsamhället samt deras relation till naturen, landskapet och samhället i stort. Tyngdpunkten ligger på forskning och undervisning om nordeuropeiska förhållanden, bland annat Sverige, även om också en vidare internationell agrarhistoria är viktig för ämnet.

Agrarhistoria är också namnet på den här rapportserien som ges ut av avdelningen för agrarhistoria vid Sveriges Lantbruksuniversitet. Serien har till syfte att tillgängliggöra rapporter och forskning rörande agrarhistoria i tryckt form och via digital open access.

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Sammanfattning

I denna bok presenteras resultaten av ett forskningsprojekt rörande hur Sveriges folkmängd och sociala struktur förändrades år från år under 1500-talet. Undersökningen bygger på uppgifter hämtade bland annat ur fogdarnas räkenskaper, ur olika typer av skattelängder samt ur lönings- och förtäringregister från kronans och adelns storgårdar, slott, skeppsgårdar, bruk, fiskerier och andra anläggningar. Utifrån dessa uppgifter beräknas antalet hushåll i varje härad, bergslag eller stad för varje år under perioden 1530–1600 för de 16 landskapen i dåvarande Sverige (utom Finland), från Södra motet på Öland i söder till Torneå lappmark i norr.

Antalet hushåll rekonstrueras i sju steg (kap. 1–7). Först bestäms antalet kamerala bondehushåll (enligt jordeböcker eller räkenskaper), med avdrag för alla de gårdar som låg öde. En undersökning (som redovisas i kap. 1) visar nämligen att gårdar som betecknas ”öde” i räkenskaperna också i normalfallet var obebodda. I ett andra steg (kap. 2) diskuteras hemmansklyvning och sänjedelning, och utifrån extraskatter och tiondelängder beräknas sedan det totala antalet bondehushåll i varje härad. I det tredje steget (kap. 3) läggs härtill antalet husmän och hantverkare, det vill säga de obesuttna torparna, baserat på uppgifter hämtade ur hjälpskatte- och tiondelängder. Sedan (kap. 4–6) behandlas tre grupper av hushåll som var anställda vid storgårdar och andra större anläggningar. I kapitel 4 rör det sig om kronans anställda, och kapitlet innehåller även en särskild undersökning av hur stora de kungliga hoven var. Kapitel 5 rör istället frälsets anställda, där de fåtaliga bevarade löningsregistren från adelns sätesgårdar används för att bestämma hur stora dessa normalt var. Denna uppgift kombineras sedan med hur många sätesgårdar det fanns varje år i varje härad. I kapitel 6 läggs sedan till de hushåll som var anställda av kyrkan, dels på storgårdar brukade av hospital, kloster och domkyrkor, dels sockenprästernas hushåll. I ett sista steg (kap. 7) bestäms så antalet hushåll bosatta i städerna. Utifrån antagandet att ett genomsnittligt hushåll i 1500-talets Sverige bestod av sex individer är det sedan möjligt att beräkna folkmängden årligen såväl lokalt som nationellt.

För varje landskap redovisas lokala resultat och källsituation i ett separat appendix som följer efter huvudtexten (kap. A–M).

Huvudresultaten av folkmängdsberäkningarna redovisas i kapitel 8. Sveriges folkmängd växte med 33% från 1530 till 1600, vilket innebar att Sveriges folkmängd ökade från 430,000 invånare år 1530 till 572,000 invånare år 1600. Folkökningen låg de flesta år i intervallet 0,5–1 %, men upprepade pestepidemier (liksom svår missväxt under 1590-talet) innebar att den genomsnittliga årliga tillväxttakten under perioden var 0,4 %. Detta innebär att Sveriges befolkning under 1500-talet växte ungefär lika snabbt som befolkningen i Tyskland eller i Centraleuropa.

Utifrån resultaten kan 1500-talets Sverige indelas i fyra demografiska regioner: centrala Sverige (Uppland, Södermanland, Västmanland, Östergötland och Närke), västra Sverige (Västergötland, Dalsland och Värmland), norra Sverige (Övre Dalarna och Norrland) samt södra Sverige (Småland och Öland). Folkökningen var snabbast i väst (över 100 % i Värmland och Dalarna och 140–160 % i vissa delar av Västergötland), långsammast i centrum (endast 20 % i Uppland) och syd (där folkmängden till och med minskade i vissa områden). Befolkningstätheten var högst i centrala Sverige, där den uppgick till samma nivåer som norra Tyskland eller Litauen på andra sidan Östersjön (5–15 inv./km²). Större delen av Sverige, särskilt de norra och västra delarna av landet, var dock lika glesbefolkat som de stora stäpperna i Östeuropa (<2 inv./km²), och ingen del av Sverige kom ens i närheten av befolkningstätheten i 1500-talets Västeuropa.

Resultaten rörande den sociala strukturen presenteras i kapitel 9–13. Urbaniseringsgraden i Sverige var betydligt lägre än i resten av Europa. Om man endast räknar städer med över 5,000 invånare (det vill säga endast Stockholm) var urbaniseringsgraden i Sverige endast 1–3 %. Om man i stället räknar alla städer, så bodde 7–8 % av Sveriges befolkning i städer såväl 1530 som 1600. Sverige var därmed långt mindre urbant än resten av Europa, där urbaniseringsgraden i exempelvis Tyskland uppgick till över 30 %.

Den tidigmoderna statens tillväxt speglas i andelen av befolkningen som arbetade för kronan (vid slott, storgårdar, skeppsbyggen med mera). Andelen växte från endast 1 % år 1530 till så mycket som 5 % år 1560. Vid sekelskiftet 1600 hade den dock minskat till bara 2 %. Kronans roll hade då istället till viss del övertagits av frälset, vilket 1530 hade sysselsatt 2 % av befolkningen vid sina sätesgårdar, en andel som 1600 hade ökat till 3 %. Internationella jämförelsetal saknas, men antagligen arbetade en relativt stor andel av Sveriges befolkning för kronan i mitten av 1500-talet, medan det ännu år 1600 var en relativt liten andel av befolkningen som direkt sysselsattes av det fåtaliga svenska frälset.

Husmän, obesuttna hushåll som delvis försörjde sig genom lönearbete för bönder och på storgårdar, utgjorde 5 % av befolkningen i Sverige under 1500-talet. Bondehushåll (skattebönder och landbor) var därmed den överlägset viktigaste sociala gruppen eftersom den utgjorde ungefär 85 % av befolkningen. Detta innebär dock *inte* att 1500-talets Sverige var något socialt homogent "bondesamhälle": 15 % av befolkningen var inte bönder. Istället utgjordes dessa 15 % av tre ungefär lika stora sociala grupper: av husmän, av arbetare vid kronans och frälsets storgårdar, och av städernas borgare.

Också den sociala strukturen varierade betydligt mellan de fyra demografiska huvudområdena. I västra Sverige, där folkökningen var som kraftigast, minskade urbaniseringsgraden då städerna blev allt mindre. Kronan anlade endast få nya anläggningar här, medan istället frälset sysselsatte en allt större andel av befolkningen. Husmän och legodrängar var sällsynta. Västra Sverige (Västergötland, Dalsland och Värmland) var därför och blev under 1500-talets lopp alltmer socialt homogent: över 95 % av hushållen i Västsverige var vid sekelskiftet 1600 bönder.

Den sociala strukturen i västra Sverige liknade på många sätt det glesbefolkade Norrland. I norra Sverige förblev urbaniseringsgraden obetydlig, trots grundandet av några städer vid slutet av 1500-talet. Varken kronan eller frälset drev heller några betydelsefulla anläggningar här. Därtill fanns det i norr endast få husmän och legodrängar. Norra Sverige var därför nästan ett så nära socialt homogent bondesamhälle som ett område kunde vara under 1500-talet, i synnerhet eftersom det nästan uteslutande beboddes av skattebönder.

Den sociala strukturen i södra Sverige låg under 1500-talet nära genomsnittet för Sverige i stort. Urbaniseringsgraden var inte obetydlig men växte inte heller, och stadsväsendet dominerades av den stora staden Kalmar. Kronan lät anlägga ett antal storgårdar i området vid mitten av århundradet, men inemot 1500-talets slut hade de flesta av dessa stängts ned och kronans intresse koncentrerats till Kalmar slott. Andelen av befolkningen som arbetade vid frälsets sätesgårdar ökade under 1500-talet (i takt med att antalet sätesgårdar ökade), medan antalet husmän och legodrängar var relativt lågt. Böndernas andel av befolkningen i södra Sverige låg därför mellan 80 och 90 %.

I centrala Sverige var folkökningen (i procent räknat) alltså låg jämfört med resten av landet. Området skilde också ut sig socialt från resten av Sverige. Trots att Stockholms befolkning minskade ökade urbaniseringsgraden under århundradet i centrala Sverige. Därtill var centrala Sverige det område där kronans andel av befolkningen både ökade mest under tillväxtperioden fram till 1560 och där den

förblev högst intill århundradets slut. Detta berodde på kronans intressen i Bergslagen, på att Stockholms slott var den huvudsakliga hemorten för det kungliga hovet, och på att Stockholm var den svenska flottans bas. Därtill var emellertid också de flesta andra kungliga slott och storgårdar belägna i centrala Sverige. Trots detta växte även andelen av befolkningen som arbetade vid frälsets sätesgårdar i området, särskilt i Södermanland och Uppland. Dessutom var centrala Sverige socialt heterogent genom att det här var relativt vanligt med både husmän och legodrängar. Bondehushåll utgjorde följaktligen en betydligt mindre andel av befolkningen i centrala Sverige än i resten av landet.

Trots den snabba folkökningen i 1500-talets Sverige förblev den sociala strukturen oförändrad. Vare sig den tidigmoderna statens tillväxt eller den större mortalitetskris som inträffade under det krigs- och pestdrabbade 1560-talet rubbade nämnvärt socialgruppernas andel av befolkningen, vilka förblev mer eller mindre lika stora år 1600 som de hade varit år 1530. Ett viktigt resultat, som avviker från denna övergripande statiska bild, är emellertid framväxten av en kärnregion i centrala Sverige, ett område som under århundradet kom att skilja sig alltmer från resten av landet. Centrala Sverige urbaniserades, vilket indikerar ökad handel och arbetsdelning, och här tog sig den tidigmoderna statens tillväxt konkreta uttryck i form av slottsbyggen, storjordbruk och industrier. Proletariseringsgraden ökade i området när alltfler hushåll försörjde sig som lönearbetande husmän eller genom arbete vid kronans och frälsets storgårdar. Allt sammantaget måste detta ha inneburit avsevärd ökad social (och sannolikt också ekonomisk) ojämlikhet i centrala Sverige. Detta kan kontrasteras mot utvecklingen i norra Sverige, där dessa sociala processer helt saknades, liksom mot utvecklingen i västra och södra Sverige, områden som istället var *mer* socialt homogena år 1600 än vad de hade varit vid medeltidens slut. Trots detta – eller kanske snarare tack vare detta? – var det i just dessa områden, och inte i det ekonomiskt och socialt dynamiska centrala Sverige, som den största delen av befolkningstillväxten ägde rum.

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Introduction

Questions regarding the size and social structure of human populations in the past are among the most fundamental in the discipline of history.¹ As a Swedish historian once put it, “An as deep knowledge as possible regarding the social composition, localization, and change in the population is a basic requisite for strictly speaking every form of social history research”.² The contents of the quote can easily be found in a plethora of other publications. Although perhaps somewhat exaggerating, the sentence is true in the sense that changes in the size of a population influences so many other things of interest to the social and economic historian, such as calculations of economic inequality or gross domestic production figures.³ Knowledge of historic population figures are however also interesting in themselves, for they reflect things that we almost instinctively want to know, including questions such as if premodern towns were small or large, if a population grew or decreased because of or despite warfare, plague and other epidemics, and how it was affected by cultural changes in marriage patterns, the number of children born, or migration. Furthermore, there is a general tendency to regard population growth, or a larger population, as something in itself positive, as a sign of an expanding economy, while a stagnant or decreasing population instead often is interpreted as an expression of crisis, either through warfare and plague (as during the Early Modern era) or through ageing and increasing care needs (as today). If we believe that such valuations are justified, we must then concern ourselves with trying to find out more about population change in the past.

Historical population statistics of good international standards were produced in Sweden (although not published until much later, as they were kept as a state secret)

¹ This work was funded by the Swedish Research Council through the project grant “The rural working poor in Sweden, 1300–1600”, Vetenskapsrådet dnr. 2020-06423.

² “En så ingående kännedom som möjligt om befolkningens sammansättning, lokalisering och förändring utgör en fundamental förutsättning för strängt taget varje form av socialhistorisk forskning”. Larsson 1972 p. 11.

³ Concerning Early Modern Sweden, see for the former e.g., Andersson & Molinder 2024; for the latter, e.g. Enflo & Missiaia 2018.

from the middle of the eighteenth century.⁴ Our inherited knowledge is relatively good also concerning population figures for the earlier part of the eighteenth century, thanks to numerous studies carried out by historians during the 1900s.⁵ There are further several studies of the population change during the seventeenth century, although opinions diverge widely between as the one hand the historical school, which finds evidence of relatively rapid population growth, and one other hand the economic-history school, which leans more towards stagnation.⁶ Opinions differ even more regarding the sixteenth century, and population studies are altogether lacking for the period before ca. 1570. The few population lists that has survived from the Middle Ages in Sweden have thus been given vastly different interpretations, although the general population growth trend is clear.⁷ The population of Medieval Sweden probably followed the general European trend of increase until the Black Death hit in the middle of the fourteenth century, when rapid decrease (by perhaps 50%) followed.⁸ Population growth then resumed sometime during the fifteenth century (although the more precise timing remains unknown), and this population increase continued (but with an unknown growth rate) into the following century.

Seen against this state-of-the-art backdrop, there are thus good reasons why the population of sixteenth-century Sweden ought to be studied in greater detail. As newly elected King Gustav Vasa ca. 1530 reformed the taxation system and the state administration (including the laudable habit of keeping high archival standards), it is only from this time onwards that sources useable for population studies on a national level are preserved. Beginning in the 1530s, there are however thousands of volumes available, only a tiny fraction of which have so far been used in population history research. The period beginning ca. 1530 is thus the oldest time for which we can do reasonable estimations of national population figures, based on contemporary sources. This means that the calculations may also serve as a viewpoint from which we can glance further backwards into the Late Middle Ages, a period for which similar sources are lacking.

The aim of this work is consequently to present annual local, regional, and national population figures for Sweden for the period 1530–1600. In addition, the work also

⁴ Sköld 2004.

⁵ See e.g. Palm 2000.

⁶ See further discussion of the research historiography below in the next section.

⁷ See discussion in Myrdal *manuscript*.

⁸ Myrdal *manuscript*.

includes a study of some foundational tenets of the social structure during the same period, including annual figures on urbanisation rates, the population share employed by the Crown at its castles and manors, the population share employed by the nobility, and the population shares that were landless households, landed peasant households, and (male) servants in husbandry. The work is based on studies of a vast collection of sources, of which the majority are accounts that were kept by the Crown, by towns, or by the nobility.⁹

The work is structured as follows. The rest of the introductory part includes first an overview of the historiography and of the current state-of-the-art concerning the total population of sixteenth-century Sweden, followed by a rather brief summary of the main methods used in this study. The following empirical chapters 1–7 in turn present the results concerning one major social group, including more detailed discussions of the sources and methods used, as well as further discussion of previous research concerning the social group in particular. **The main results of this first part of the work are then presented in chapter 8**, which includes calculations of the regional and national population size, population growth rates, and population densities. These results are compared to results of previous research on the Swedish population ca. 1570, as well as to the population history of other European countries during the sixteenth century.

The next part of the book, chapters 9–13, are all devoted to analyses of the social structure of sixteenth-century Sweden. Using data collected for the population study, these studies in turn address questions of urbanisation and the population shares of different social groups. Comparisons with previous research are included continuously. **The main results of this latter part of the work are found in the concluding chapter**, in which they are viewed together with the new knowledge of sixteenth-century population change.

⁹ In addition to the figures presented in this book, raw data excerpted from the sources as well as all calculations concerning individual towns and other localities will be published as data sets at the Swedish National Data Service (*Svensk Nationell Datatjänst*, SND).

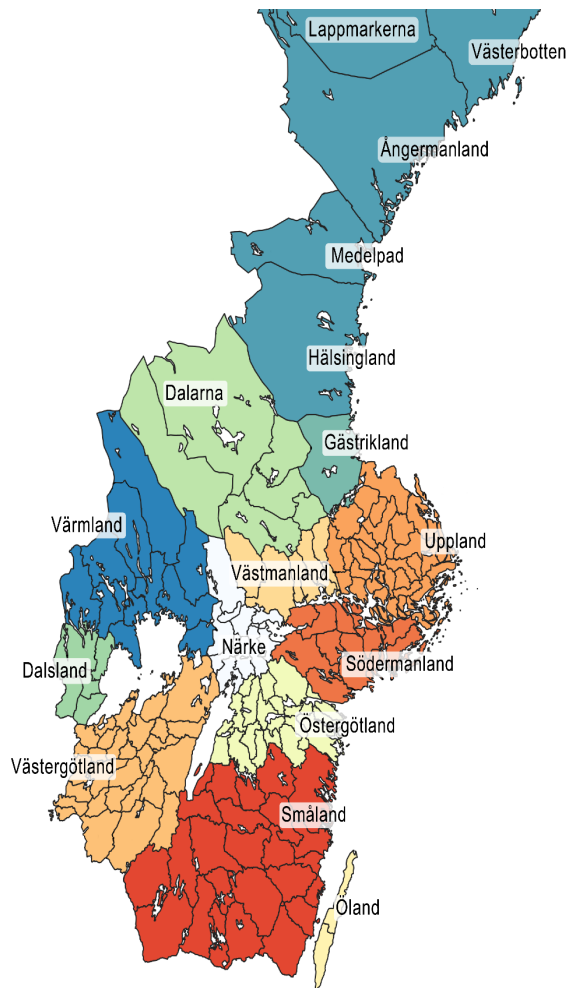


Figure 1. Map of Sweden, showing its sixteenth-century regional subdivisions into provinces (*landskap*) and hundreds (*härader*) which are used in this work.

After the main body of the text are attached a series of appendices. These present and discuss in more detail the regional development in each province (*landskap*) in Sweden; the regional subdivision of sixteenth-century Sweden is shown in figure 1. Although the appendices thus include information both on regional population growth and social change, their main objective is to present issues specific concerning the sources for each individual locality.

Research overview

Scientific study of the size of the Swedish population in the sixteenth century began with **Hans Forssell**, who in a study (published in two volumes in 1872 and 1883 respectively) made a detailed calculation of the population figure for 1571.¹⁰ Forssell based his study on the registers of all those paying the wealth taxation *Älvsborgs lösen*; the year 1571 was thus not chosen as being particularly interesting in itself, but was rather a result of the available sources. For those areas for which taxation records were lost, Forssell used data from other sources such as cadastres (*jordeböcker*) and tithe registers (*tiondelängder*). In addition, he also made some investigations of the number of workers at castles and manors ran by the Crown, as well as estimations of those employed by the nobility. From this, Forssell reached the number of households living within the borders of Sweden in 1571 (83,900; excluding Finland), which was then multiplied by an assumed average household size of 5.1–6.3 individuals. This resulted in a total population of between 426.400 and 531.400 (that is, an interval centred around 479.400).¹¹

Forssell's figures lasted for about half a century, when they came under sharp criticism from **Sigurd Sundquist**. In 1931, Sundquist published a work on Finland's population, and then in 1938 another work on Sweden's population in the days of Gustavus Adolphus.¹² Sundquist tried to calculate the population total around 1630, based on taxation records from the 1610s, the 1620s, and the 1630s. Like Forssell, he first counted the number of households, which was then multiplied by more or less the same average household sizes. This gave a result of 644,400 individuals, which Sundquist called a 'preliminary sum'.¹³ This sum included the number of households found in the sources, with an addition of what Sundquist meant were missing unmarried individuals. The result was however deemed too low, as it was too close to what Sundquist called '[t]he low figure of Forssell's [...], a telling expression of the incredibly large faults in the sources'.¹⁴ He therefore made an addition to reach a 'probable minimum' (*sannolikt minimum*) of 813,100 individuals, an addition which

¹⁰ Forssell 1872, 1883.

¹¹ Forssell 1883 p. 348.

¹² Sundquist 1931, 1938.

¹³ Sundquist 1938 p. 263. The total has been corrected from the stated 644,900, since the table has an error in the figure for Norrland.

¹⁴ Sundquist 1938 p. 263: "Forssell's låga summa, ett i sin mån talande uttryck för källmaterialets utomordentligt stora brister."

included a guess of the share of households that should have paid the taxes but which had succeeded in its avoidance. To this figure another addition was then made to reach what Sundquist called a 'probable circa maximum' (*sannolikt ungefärligt maximum*) of 851,500 individuals, by assuming that additionally a large number of poor households were missing in the taxation lists. Even this figure was finally deemed too low by Sundquist, who therefore ended his calculations with a Swedish population of as much as 900,000 individuals in 1630.¹⁵

Although Sundquist's main interest was the seventeenth century, he also discussed the question of how large the Swedish population had been in 1563, at the eve of the Nordic Seven Years' War. He started from the general assumption that population growth during the sixteenth century was "incredibly fast" up until 1563, but that the period thereafter was characterized by civil unrest, plague, and warfare.¹⁶ This meant that it was "unthinkable" that the Swedish population would have grown during the latter part of the century.¹⁷ From this followed that Forssell had to have erred, as the population in 1563 or 1571 could not have been (much) lower than the figure Sundquist had just found for 1630. "The lowest population figure imaginable" in 1563 was consequently 750,000, a figure Sundquist tried to corroborate by arguing that King Erik XIV could not possibly have conscripted a larger share of the men in his realm than Gustavus Adolphus did.¹⁸ A subsequent comparison of the population figures for 1563 and 1630 however resulted in a population increase of 20%, which Sundquist then found "too large".¹⁹ He saw 12.5% as a "far more reasonable" population growth, which made his final result for the Swedish population in 1563 to be 800,000, a result he thought was far more likely than any lower figure.

As should be apparent from the above summary, Sundquist's calculations were mainly founded on his assumptions regarding how large the population growth should have been: The seventy-year period 1563–1630 was not a period during which the population could have grown, at least not more than 12.5% at the most. These results were presented to a wider audience by **Eli F. Heckscher**, the founding father of Swedish economic history. Heckscher began the first volume of his magnum opus *Sveriges ekonomiska historia* by discussing sixteenth-century national population

¹⁵ Sundquist 1938 p. 279.

¹⁶ Sundquist 1938 p. 265–6. "utomordentligt stark"

¹⁷ Sundquist 1938 p. 266: "[d]et synes mig ej gärna tänkbart, att det under tider som de ovannämnda [det vill säga slutet av 1500-talet] kan bli tal om folkökning i annat än ringa mått."

¹⁸ Sundquist 1938 p. 272–3: "Den lägsta tänkbara".

¹⁹ Sundquist 1938 p. 280: "väl kraftigt".

figures.²⁰ He argued against Forssell in a manner that we will see later repeated in the economic history research tradition, namely that Forsell's population figure for 1571 resulted in unreasonably (according to Heckscher) high annual population growth rates of 0.50–0.57% when compared to Heckscher's own calculations of the Swedish population around 1720.²¹ Heckscher therefore sided with Sundquist's calculations, although he mentioned the tendency of Sundquist to round all figures upwards. Heckscher thus "to a large extent by feeling" decreased the population figure down to 750,000 around 1570.²² As a result, the annual population growth from 1570 to 1620 would only have been 0.267%, "which does not seem unreasonable", although Heckscher admitted that there in reality was no knowledge at the time regarding what population growth rates really *could* have been during the sixteenth century.²³

During the post-war era, studies of Swedish sixteenth-century population history was mainly driven by two kinds of local history. The most important was settlement history, especially that produced within *Ödegårdsprojektet* ('The Scandinavian Research Project on Deserted Farms and Villages'). Historians within this large scientific program, and others who used their or similar methods, reconstructed the sixteenth-century settlement history for a total of about twenty hundreds, most of which located in Southern or Western Sweden.²⁴ Their results were summarized in 1987 by **Janken Myrdal**, who himself had not been part of the project.²⁵ As for population history, the researchers involved were however careful to point out that changes in the number of settlements not necessarily reflected changes in population (even though some close connection between the two should often be assumed). They consequently abstained from making any calculation of population figures. Their results concerning the settlement growth were however unanimous. Spare a clear break in the 1560s, the number of settlements increased continuously during the sixteenth century, with a total growth of about 50% from 1540 to 1600, corres-

²⁰ Heckscher 1935 p. 29–31.

²¹ Heckscher 1935 p. 30–1.

²² Heckscher 1935 p. 30–1: "i hög grad på känn". Heckscher referred to Sundquist's at the time still unpublished work. In the introduction to his work, Sundquist subsequently thanked Heckscher for continuous discussion and comments. As the population figure cited by Heckscher (830,000) is somewhat higher than Sundquist's published figure, it seems that the latter adjusted his calculations somewhat based on Heckscher's comments, although still sticking with a higher figure than that proposed by Heckscher.

²³ Heckscher 1935 p. 30–1: "vilket ej förefaller orimligt".

²⁴ The methods used by *Ödegårdsprojektet* are discussed in further detail below, in the chapters concerning land desertion and the division of farms (chapters 1–2).

²⁵ Myrdal 1987.

ponding to an annual growth rate of 0.8%.²⁶ It is worthy of note that the growth rate was *not* lower after 1570 than what it had been before 1560, which strongly speaks against Sundquist's thesis of a stagnant period beginning in 1563. The annual growth rate further seemed to have been faster in Western Sweden, where it reached 1.5%, than in Eastern and Central Sweden, where it was closer to 0.5%.²⁷ The results from *Ödegårdsprojektet* thus indicate important regional differences in population growth within sixteenth-century Sweden, but as it only studied a limited number of hundreds, its results cannot be used to calculate any national population figures.

The second contribution to the field of sixteenth-century population history dating to the second half of the twentieth century was that of the urban historians. The many monographs concerning individual towns that were published during this era almost always included an attempt to calculate the urban population at least since the middle of the 1500s.²⁸ An important contribution was made by **Sven Lilja**, who in 1996 published a collection of urban population figures.²⁹ Lilja's work mainly contained previously published figures for various years during the sixteenth century; in his urban statistics, he however chose to use the highest value found to represent the year 1570, despite which year it originated from. This was then multiplied by average household sizes collected from statistics concerning the 1770s in order to calculate population figures.³⁰ This method has subsequently been criticised in an essay by Per Gunnar Sidén, who showed that Lilja hereby underestimated the average household sizes and thus also the urban population sizes during the sixteenth century.³¹

With the new millennium came a new major contribution to our knowledge of the sixteenth-century population in the form of **Lennart Andersson Palm's**

²⁶ Myrdal 1987 p. 90.

²⁷ Myrdal 1987 p. 94.

²⁸ Examples are given below (in chapter 6 and in the appendices), where the urban historiography is further presented.

²⁹ Lilja 1996 p. 158–164.

³⁰ Lilja 1996 p. 159. The numbers in the table on p. 160–3 should be used with caution. Some are given without sources (e.g., Växjö), some have apparently been mixed up (e.g., the very high number for Torshälla in 1596 in fact concerns Strängnäs). Some of the figures have been passed on for a long time in the historiography. For Örebro 1591, Lilja gives Lager-Kromnow 1986 p. 88 as the reference, who in her turn however refers on to Öhman 1973 p. 164, 171. He refers to Westling 1883 p. 70, where the population figure is found but without a reference to any primary source. I have been able to locate the original source, which in this case is a *mantalsregister* in Hertig Karls Råntekammare vol. 16, RA (a source which also includes the number of households in Karlstad, a figure missing in Lilja).

³¹ Sidén 2002 p. 46.

Folkmängden i Sveriges socknar och kommuner 1571–1997.³² Palm's work concerned population change over time and aimed at producing a local population statistics for each parish in Sweden. For 1571, Palm took Forssell's work as his starting point and used his household figures (albeit supplemented by a few figures from taxation lists that had been unknown to Forssell).³³ Palm did however not follow Forssell concerning the manors of the nobility or the Crown, and for the towns he instead relied on Lilja's then recently published population figures. In order to calculate the average household size, Palm used the number of male servants according to taxation lists from 1576. This number was then multiplied with the proportion of male to female servants taken from the beginning of the seventeenth century.³⁴ To this was then added (also based on some seventeenth-century records) the share of children in the population (46%). The average household in Sweden would then have had 5.39 members (but with some local variation).³⁵ With an addition of 5% to cover missing (old and the sick) households, Palm finished on 442,569 inhabitants in 1571.³⁶ This meant that the population in Sweden grew from 1571 to 1630 by an annual rate of 0.7%; 0.5% in Eastern Sweden, 0.9% in Western Sweden, and 0.7% in Northern Sweden, numbers which (although lower) still confirmed the regional differences previously found by *Ödegårdsprojektet*.³⁷

Sweden's population in 1571 was thus, according to Palm, well within the interval found already by Forssell, but far from what Sundquist had found (and Heckscher had corroborated). Palm's figure was largely accepted by **Janken Myrdal**, who in his overview of agriculture in Early Modern Sweden from 1999 included Palm's annual population growth figure and presented rough estimates of Sweden's population within its present-day borders.³⁸ The revived figures were however not accepted within the field of economic history. **Rodney Edvinsson**, writing in 2007, meant that Palm's "guesstimates" were far too low, and that no certain conclusion could be drawn from the sources.³⁹ While Edvinsson conceded that the average household size used by Palm seemed realistic, he thought the number of households to be severely

³² Palm 2000.

³³ Palm 2000 p. 17.

³⁴ Palm 2000 p. 22.

³⁵ Palm 2000 p. 32.

³⁶ Palm 2000 p. 38.

³⁷ Palm 2000 p. 95, 105. The growth rates are calculated from Palm's figures both for 1571 and 1630. Minor corrections of local figures were later added by Palm 2013 s. 45.

³⁸ Myrdal 1999 p. 370.

³⁹ Edvinsson 2008 p. 17.

underreported in the records as “the effectiveness of the taxing authorities in this period was very low”.⁴⁰ Edvinsson’s main scepticism however concerned the population growth rate of the seventeenth century, as he saw a rapidly increasing Swedish population being at odds with the supposedly stagnant population in several other European countries.⁴¹ A number of indices are cited as evidence: mortality ought to have been high, Sundquist’s comparisons of the number of conscripted men in 1563 and 1620, while data from grain tithe records indicate that harvests per capita were declining. In conclusion, Palm’s population growth rate must be deemed to be too high, and Edvinsson therefore sides with Sundquist in that the number of households taxed was much lower than the total population.⁴²

Having reached this conclusion, Edvinsson then made a calculation of the national population figure for 1620. He used the number of households according to the mill toll taxation lists (*kvarntullmantalslängder*) from 1628 (already summed up by Sundquist), which he subsequently argued as a “probable maximum” included only 50% of the population.⁴³ The true population figure is thus taken as double that registered, and with an assumed annual population growth rate of 0.4%, Edvinsson then reaches the figure for 1620. Further, in order to then calculate the population of 1571, he assumed that the annual population growth rate must have been 0.4–0.6%, which results in a population of 600,000–680,000 individuals.⁴⁴

Edvinsson’s critique of Palm’s results was published internationally in 2015.⁴⁵ They were soon accepted by **Lennart Schön** and **Olle Krantz**, who in the same year used them to calculate a Swedish GDP per capita series back to 1560.⁴⁶ They sided with the economic history tradition of Heckscher, claiming that a problem with Palm’s figures was that they “implied too high population growth” and that they had been found to have “certain weaknesses”, which however were not further speci-

⁴⁰ Edvinsson 2008 p. 20. The basis for this claim is only a reference to a general remark by Heckscher.

⁴¹ Edvinsson 2008 p. 17. The countries in question are not mentioned; The Netherlands, England, and Ireland are cited as exceptions with fast growth rates.

⁴² Edvinsson 2008 p. 17–9.

⁴³ Edvinsson 2008 p. 22.

⁴⁴ Edvinsson 2008 p. 23. A further calculation (p. 21) assumes that the number of cadastral farms equalled the number of peasants, and that the population share of peasants in 1571 was the same as in the eighteenth century. The result is 650,000, neither assumption is however justified.

⁴⁵ Edvinsson 2015.

⁴⁶ Schön & Krantz 2015 p. 4–5.

fied.⁴⁷ Through their publication, Edvinsson's population figure was further accepted into the Maddison population and GDP database, where they replaced Palm's.⁴⁸

Palm has responded to Edvinsson's critique in several articles. He underlines that Sundquist's and Heckscher's complaints regarding the high population growth rate implied by Forssell's calculation is "in fact, taken out of very thin air and not based on any contemporary sources".⁴⁹ It is further not clear, Palm argues, from where Edvinsson got his assumed population growth rate, as it is adjusted somewhat upwards compared to that of previous economic historians'. Palm cites several studies of other European countries which indeed had higher population growth rates (such as England 0.63 % 1550–1600, Holland 0.83 % 1514–1622, Ireland 0.66 % 1600–1700).⁵⁰ He further responded to Edvinsson's argument regarding the decreasing grain harvests per capita by showing that Sweden went from being a net exporter of grain to instead having to import large amounts around the middle of the seventeenth century.⁵¹ Stagnation within the agricultural sector would thus not necessarily be an indication of a stagnant population.

Following from Edvinsson's critique, Palm however also adjusted some of his previous figures. I had in 2020 noted that the numbers of farmhands given by Forssell was misleading, as it in some parts of the country included also those sons and sons-in-law who were living at home.⁵² This had now been noted also by Palm, who adjusted his calculation of the average household size upwards from 5.27 to 5.93 individuals.⁵³ This meant that the total population of Sweden rose to 512,709. However, as this calculation included a numerical error, a recent correction by Palm instead resulted in an average household size of 5.34 individuals, and a total population of 461,735.⁵⁴ Regarding 1630, Palm further admitted that some of Edvinsson's suggestions regarding the population share not seen in the taxation records were justified, and hence recalculated the national population to 716,415 individuals.⁵⁵ As a result, the annual population growth rate would have been 0.57%

⁴⁷ Krantz 2017 s. 3; Krantz 2023 p. 5.

⁴⁸ Maddison database 2020; that the database previously included Palm's figures is pointed out by Edvinsson 2008.

⁴⁹ Palm 2021 p. 68.

⁵⁰ Palm 2021 p. 70.

⁵¹ Palm 2022.

⁵² Andersson 2020.

⁵³ Palm 2021 p. 68.

⁵⁴ Palm, personal communication in e-mail 5 November 2024. A correction is due to be published in *Bebyggelsehistorisk tidskrift*.

⁵⁵ Palm 2021 p. 71.

1570–1700 (corrected in 2024 to 0,64%), well within the limits of what had previously been found for expansive areas such as Ireland, England, or Holland.⁵⁶

A final suggestion regarding Sweden’s population in the sixteenth century has recently been made by **Sven Lilja**.⁵⁷ In his calculations of the national populations of all of Northern Europe, Lilja assumed that epidemics and warfare on the one hand seldom led to significant depopulation, but that it on the other hand resulted in a “normal” annual growth rate of only 0.20%.⁵⁸ This number was however not further justified, even though it is far below what has been found by all other researchers (except Sundquist).

Table 1. Overview of previous calculations of the population of Sweden (within its historic borders) during the sixteenth century, and the annual population growth rate to 1620/1630.

STUDY	YEAR	POPULATION	ANNUAL POPULATION GROWTH RATE
FORSELL 1872–1883	1571	427,400 – 531,400	-
SUNDQUIST 1938	1563	800,000	0.18%
HECKSCHER 1935	1570	750,000	0.267% ⁵⁹
PALM 2000	1571	442,569	0.7%
EDVINSSON 2008	1570	600,000 – 680,000	0.4–0.6%
PALM 2021	1571	512,709	0.57%
2024 CORRECTION		461,735	0.64%
LILJA 2021	16 th c.	-	0.2%

Sources: see table.

To conclude: There exist today two competing views of the population of sixteenth-century Sweden (or rather, regarding its population around 1570). On the one hand we have the opinion, founded by Heckscher and Sundquist in the 1930s and lately developed foremost by Edvinsson, that the Swedish population was rather stagnant, at least during the seventeenth century. The annual population growth rate must consequentially have been low. Following from this, calculations of the population around 1630 can thus be used to determine the population in 1570 (or 1563).

⁵⁶ Palm 2021 p. 94. The calculated yearly growth rate is 0.57% also 1571–1630.

⁵⁷ Lilja 2021.

⁵⁸ Lilja 2021 p. 437–66, the section is headed “Early Modern demographic normality” (“Tidigmodern demografisk normalitet”).

⁵⁹ Until 1720.

Edvinsson however acknowledges a much higher population growth rate than his predecessors (while Lilja recently presumed a rate even lower than Heckscher's).

On the other hand, there is the tradition going back to Forssell which bases its calculations on sixteenth-century sources (foremost taxation records from *Älvsborgs lösen* in 1571). Forssell's calculations have until now on three occasions been corrected by Palm, who further argues that the population growth rate in Sweden may well have been on the same level as in other expansive European populations, far above what Heckscher assumed, that is. Palm's latest calculation (2024) in fact results in an annual growth rate that is just outside what Edvinsson thinks reasonable. Their views still differing regarding the population total in 1570 is therefore mainly an effect of them having different opinions on the national population total around 1620.

Methods

Previous research on the population history of sixteenth-century Sweden has thus been dominated by two different research methods. The first, that of Sundquist, starts with population figures from a later period (1630) and calculates those of the sixteenth century by arguing what should be seen as a reasonable population growth rate. As we have seen above, the results depend heavily on the chosen growth rate, and Edvinsson accepted a two to three times as high rate as Sundquist. The other method, that of Forssell and Palm, instead starts with a contemporary source (taxation lists from 1571) in order to determine the total number of households, which is then multiplied with an (assumed) average number of household members.

The study presented in this work follows the latter method, but it is not limited to one single source or year. Instead, the analyses are carried out in seven steps, each determining the size of one part (one social group) of the population. Since most of the surviving sixteenth-century population sources are taxation records, different social groups are listed in highly various ways as they differed in the way they paid (or, in some cases, did not pay) taxes. Thus, only a composite calculation can determine the total number of households, which is then (in chapter 8) multiplied by an average household size (based on the results of previous research) in order to reach a total population figure. A clear advantage to this method, compared to the earlier ones, is that it in addition gives information on the social composition of the population: how large the share of the population was that lived in towns, that worked

for the nobility, or that was landless. This thus forms the basis for the studies of the social structure that follow in chapters 9–13.

Detailed information on methods and materials is given in the following chapters. Here, a summary will suffice. In short, the method consists of seven steps. The first study (chapter 1) is based on the Crown accounts of its yearly local revenues (*årliga räntan*) and the number of farms that existed in each locality according to the cadastres (*jordeböcker*). The numbers presented are thus similar to those produced by *Ödegårdsprojektet*, which mainly based their studies on cadastres. In order to be able to study the number of farms each year in all of Sweden, I have however not used the cadastres themselves but instead the bailiff accounts (*fogderäkenskaper*), which include sums of the number of farms (divided into groups based on their sizes and owners, so that the number of peasant-owned farms can be determined separately from the number of crofts owned by the nobility, etc.) In some cases, especially for the earlier part of the century, farms have however had to be counted manually in the cadastres or other taxation lists.

The sums taken from the bailiff accounts can however not be used as they come, since some farms were registered as ‘deserted’ (*öde*). The scientific discussion of the interpretation of this word is extensive and is hence treated in chapter 1. Here, it is sufficient to note that I subtract the number of deserted farms from the total number of farms given by the accounts. The means that the work also include figures on the number of deserted farms in each year in all of Sweden, similarly to what *Ödegårdsprojektet* previously did for some hundreds (*härader*) in the southern and western parts of the country.

The number of farms in the cadastres (or bailiff accounts) is however not equal to the number of peasant households, which was a result also found in *Ödegårdsprojektet*. After most land taxations had been fixed for the individual farms during the taxation reforms of the 1530s and 1540s, the number of peasant households could increase without this being registered in the cadastre. One reason was that new farms were founded as settlements on common land, which were included in the cadastre only after a few years. A more important reason was that cadastral farms could be divided so that several households each held only a part of the land (*sämjedelning*). This could be the result of intermittent solutions connected to generational shifts but could also result in permanent division. The number of peasant households in the population over time thus became larger than the number of cadastral farms. Previous research has shown that the true number of peasant households is most easily found in taxation

lists not built on the cadastral units, such as the wealth taxations of 1571 and 1599. Other such examples exist and are used in the following (in chapter 2); an important example are grain tithe registers, which sometimes also show the full number of peasants. (I call this the 'division of farms', *hemmansklyvning*, following the research tradition established by *Ödegårdsprojektet*, although their definition is somewhat different and discussed further below.) The number of tithe payers is however only sporadically given in the bailiff accounts, and I have not been able to go over the tithe registers with manual counts to any larger degree. Future research will thus possibly be able to refine some calculations of the division of farms by employing handwritten text recognition methods to the vast number of surviving tithe records.

The landless, which during the sixteenth century were mostly called *husmän* and *huskvinnor*, are the subject of chapter 3. They are almost never included in the cadastres, rarely in tithe lists (since they did not have enough farmland to have to pay grain tithes), but quite often in wealth taxation lists. In addition, there is plenty of evidence of the number of landless in connection to specific taxations from the middle of the century, when the Crown demanded that cottagers performed corvée labour (*dagsverken*) or paid small subsidy taxes (*hjälpsskatter*). The number of rural landless households (including craftsmen) can thus be determined separate from that of the landed peasantry.

The following three chapters each deal with a non-tax paying social group. The first of these are those working for the Crown at its castles, manorial farms, shipyards, metal works, and at the numerous royal courts, treated in chapter 4. The sources are here mainly wage lists (*löningsregister*) and food lists (*förtärlingsregister* or *mantalsregister*), which list those having received wages and food from the Crown. All those with annual employment have been included, and all men (except for various types of servants) have been assumed to represent a household.

The source situation is worse concerning those working for the nobility (chapter 5), as very few accounts from private noble estates have survived from the sixteenth century (and presumably because no written accounts were ever made at the manors of the lower nobility). I have gathered all that I have been able to find in private as well as in the state archives. On the basis of the few surviving accounts, I have then made a schematic model of how many employees there (on average) would have been at the manorial seats of the high nobility (*sätessgårdar*), at other demesne farms owned by the high nobility (*avelsgårdar*), and at the seats of the rest of the nobility.

Concerning those employed by various church institutions (chapter 6), I have gathered what survives of accounts from cathedral demesne farms, from hospitals, and from the monastery in Vadstena. To this has been added the number of households of the parish clergy, which has been collected from the bailiff accounts, as they regularly (following the Reformation) paid annual taxes to the Crown.

The final piece of the jigsaw puzzle is the urban population, which is treated in chapter 7. The source material consists partly of taxation lists, partly of bailiff accounts in which the number of urban households has been summarized. In order to calculate the total urban population, groups that were tax exempt have also been included; the most important of these were those households that were employed by the Crown. The total urban population is thus calculated in the later study of the social structure.

From these seven pieces (that is the cadastral peasants, the farm division, the landless, the workers of the Crown, of the nobility, and of the church, as well as the urban populations), I then calculate the population total for each hundred and for each year during the period 1530–1600. The population can thus be studied both locally and nationally, including aspects such as population density and population growth rates. As stated above: The main results regarding the national population are presented in chapter 8, while local population figures (and all discussion of local and regional variation in source quality, etc.) are presented in the appendices. In the following chapters (chapters 9–13) then follows the results concerning how the social structure changed during the sixteenth century. The method employed for these studies follows naturally from the population figures, as the sizes of the different social groups have already been determined in order to calculate the total population.

Overall, all types of data are naturally not available for all areas for all years. Most complete are the series of the number of cadastral farms, while the series lacking most data concern some of the towns, the number of landless households in some areas, and the division of farms. I have interpolated linearly between two years when data is missing for the period in between. However, only a few data series can be traced all the way back to 1530. I have thus also had to extrapolate most series backwards, assuming either a growth similar to that during the following years or else a constant share of the population for a certain social group (such as cottagers). This is the main reason why this study cannot go any further back than to 1530: The Middle Ages must be studied using other methods (and sources).

The study presents local population data for the hundreds (for a definition, see the beginning of chapter 1) of Sweden.⁶⁰ The reason for this is that the bailiff accounts include sums for hundreds but not for individual parishes, and to do manual counts of the number of households for each parish has not been feasible. For those interested in parish populations, there is however ample data available in the separately published online database that will enable at least some calculations also of local population figures, albeit not for all years. The reason that the study is limited to only the western part of what in the sixteenth century was Sweden, and thus completely leaves out not only Finland but also Estonia and other temporarily occupied territories, is lamentable (although well in line with how the question has been treated in previous research). It has however not been possible to find time to include also the voluminous Finnish sources in this work.

To conclude: Using the method described above, the following chapters presents my main results concerning the population and social structure of sixteenth-century Sweden. These results are compared to those found by previous Swedish historians, as well as to studies of the social structure and population change in other European countries during the sixteenth century. Results concerning individual provinces and towns are presented mainly in the appendices, while included in the main text in the form of overview maps. All population figures are digitally available, together with the raw data as it was collected from each account, in online databases available for download from the Swedish National Data Services.⁶¹

⁶⁰ This differs from Palm 2000, who also presented population figures for each parish in 1571.

⁶¹ *The Swedish National Data Service* (www.snd.se).

Population

I. Cadastral peasants

Sweden (west of the Baltic Sea) consisted of 16 provinces (*landskap*) in the sixteenth century. These are in the following work subdivided into 159 subdistricts that will in short be called hundreds, a translation of the word *härad*. Not all of the districts were proper hundreds, as some instead were called mining districts (*bergslag*), and in the northern provinces (north of Uppland), there was no subdivision of the provinces into hundreds. As a consequence, the smallest unit of the statistics will here instead be the whole province (this concerns the provinces Gästrikland, Hälsingland, Medelpad, Ångermanland, and Västerbotten). The Sami lands were however divided into smaller areas called *lappmarker*, which will serve as the smallest unit of analysis.⁶²

The majority social group of sixteenth-century Sweden was the peasant households, either tenants (of the Crown, of a church institution, or of the nobility) or freeholders who owned their own land. Together, they make up the largest and thus most important piece to our population jigsaw. Their numbers are based on cadastral lists (or rather on the sums registered in the bailiff accounts), which were made up for most of the country beginning around 1530. The summary lists usually look similar to figure 1.1 below. The list separates freeholders (*skattebönder*, 50 in the example) from crown tenants (*kronobönder*, 6 in the example), (local) church tenants (*kyrkolandsbor*, 30 in the example), settlers on church land (*kyrkotorpare*, 4 in the example), and so on. I have excerpted all the sums for the separate groups; as lists are often damaged, leading to some numbers being lost, these can usually be supplemented from a preceding or following year (with linear interpolation necessary if the number has changed). This way, even severely damaged lists may yield some useful information, as may lists

⁶² Six *lappmarker* were usually counted to be in Sweden (with one further in Finland), but the northerly Västersjö lappmark has not been included in this study, as the area was contested between Sweden, Norway, and Russia, and its borders varied significantly during the century. On the taxation units in *lappmarkerna*, see Lundmark 1982 ch. 8.

containing only one type of peasant (such as cadastres including only church tenants, which were common in the earlier part of the century).

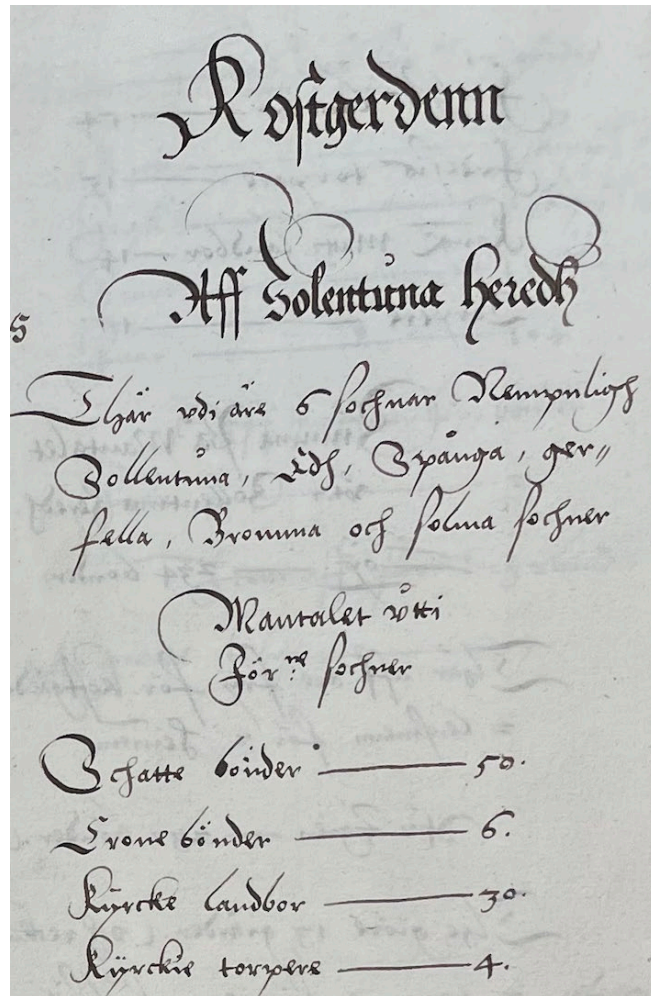


Figure 1.1. Summary of the number of cadastral peasants in Sollentuna hundred in Uppland in 1556 (excerpt). Source: Gärderegister, vol. 2, RA.

Figure 1.2 shows the earliest year for which it has been possible to reconstruct the number of cadastral peasants in a hundred from preserved accounts. It shows that only 11% goes back as far as 1530 (and only a couple to the year before), a clear indication as to why the method used here cannot be extended back to the Middle Ages. The share however rises to almost 50% already by 1535, from which year a

taxation list covering the peasantry in large parts of Sweden survives,⁶³ and to over 80% by 1540. By 1545, the share reaches 90%, climbing to 95% in 1549. Among the last areas for cadastral sources to come into place (after 1550) are the five Sami districts (*lappmarker*), one small mining district (Lekebergslagen), and the smallest of the hundreds in Södermanland (Villåttinge), for which data exist only from the first half of the 1550s.

This means that, although annual accounts for most hundreds are certainly not preserved continuously since the first year of their appearance, we can at least use interpolation (for all the various forms of peasants separately) in order to produce annual figures for the number of cadastral peasants in most hundreds in Sweden from the mid-1530s onwards. In contrast, more uncertain extrapolation has to be used (relying on local population growth trends) for each hundred before the time of the first surviving cadastre or account. This means that for the 1530s, and especially for the years before 1535, the number of cadastral peasants is more uncertain, based as it is on only a small source base.

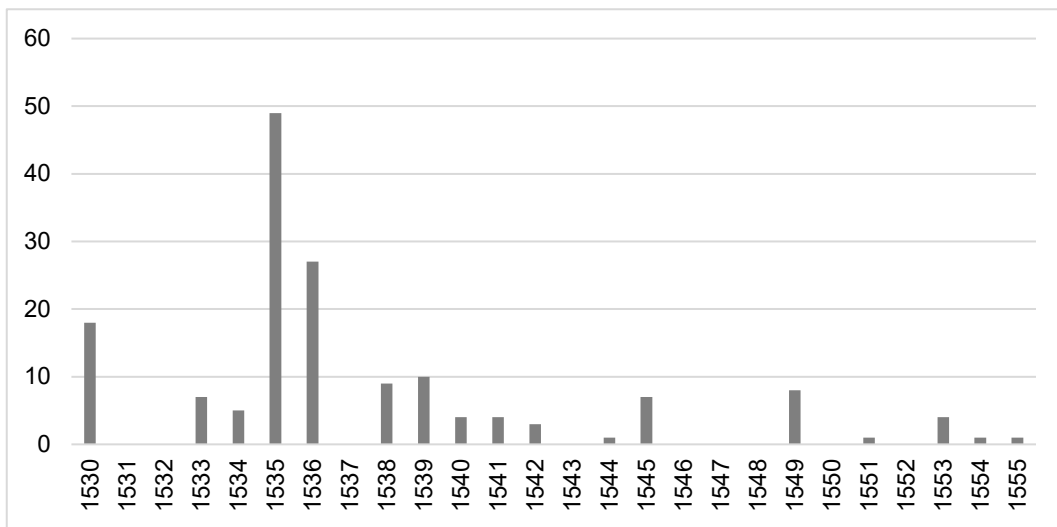


Figure 1.2. The number of hundreds for which it is first possible to reconstruct the number of cadastral households, per year (1530–1555).

⁶³ Gärder och hjälper 1535, RA.

Tracking how the number of cadastral peasants changed over the sixteenth century has been done before, most famously within the Swedish part of *Ödegårdsprojektet*. The researchers there involved raised two main concerns against straightforwardly interpreting the cadastral sums as reflecting population change. One, which is treated in the next chapter, was that the cadastres did not show the subdivision of farms (*hemmansklyvning*), which meant that there were more peasant households living in an area than the cadastre recognized. The other was how to interpret farms labelled as “deserted” (*öde*) in the cadastres. First to discuss the term was **Eva Österberg**, who in 1971 argued that the term did in fact *not* denote deserted farms, but rather farms which could not pay their taxes.⁶⁴ Österberg studied some hundreds located on the border to Denmark in Southern Sweden during the Nordic Seven Years’ War (1563–1570), and the term *öde* was there introduced following the devastation brought on by the war.⁶⁵ From my study it is apparent that the amount of *öde* farms here was much larger than anywhere else in Sweden during the sixteenth century (as the area was directly and severely affected by the war), and also that the terminology here was more complex, as the accounts not always distinguished between farms being “deserted”, “pillaged”, or “burned” (by the enemy). It is thus not evident that Österberg’s results are valid outside this area.

What Österberg did was to compare the farms listed as “deserted” in the Älvsborgs lösen 1571 taxation lists with those being *öde* according to the 1570 cadastre.⁶⁶ Why she did not choose the cadastre of 1571 is not clear; there was rapid repopulation going on during the years around the end of the war, meaning that the number of farms “deserted” in 1571 was much lower than in 1570.⁶⁷ Her study showed that out of 228 deserted farms in Sunnerbo hundred according to the cadastre, 112 were listed with peasants owning animals in 1571. The true number of deserted farms in 1570 was however 288 according to my calculations (289 according to Österberg’s own table⁶⁸), and 157 in 1571.⁶⁹ While Österberg contends that 49% of deserted farms were in fact inhabited, the true number must have been lower (approximately 35%); and in any case not “the majority” as Österberg claims.⁷⁰ Her other study was of Mark

⁶⁴ Österberg 1971 p. 41.

⁶⁵ Österberg 1971 p. 124–6.

⁶⁶ Österberg 1971 p. 200–2.

⁶⁷ My population database.

⁶⁸ Österberg 1971 p. 280.

⁶⁹ My population database.

⁷⁰ Österberg 1971 p. 280 “den största gruppen”.

hundred; here 124 peasants were listed with property, which according to her made up 45% of those listed as deserted in 1570;⁷¹ comparing instead with 1571, the share is only approximately 21%. Österberg's conclusion that "deserted in the cadastres [...]" is a cameral term, behind which only to a limited extent lies a real, demographic desertion" is thus not borne out by her evidence; possibly as much as 65–79% of the "deserted" farms in her area were really deserted in 1571.⁷²

Österberg was followed in 1972 by **Lars-Olof Larsson**, who claimed that Österberg had shown that only about a quarter of the *öde* farms in Sunnerbo hundred were "really deserted farms", but that three quarters "often had a rather largescale agriculture".⁷³ It is not clear how Larsson reached this conclusion, which he further claimed would last throughout the period. He then went on to compare the number of *öde* farms in two hundreds in Southern Småland in Älvsborgs lösen with the 1571 cadastre.⁷⁴ He found that in Konga hundred only 15 farms qualified as "really deserted farms" out of 150 mentioned in the cadastre, and that in Uppvidinge 9 farms out of 15 were really deserted. He concluded that "[f]rom the tables [...]" it is evident the apparent lack of any quantitative relation between cameral desertion and demographic desertion [...]"⁷⁵ Checking Larsson's figures in the accounts, it is however clear that in Konga actually only 15 farms were listed as *öde* in 1571, while another 135 were "burned" by the enemy troops. The same is true for Uppvidinge: only 9 were really listed as *öde*, while the remaining 6 were just "burned". In Larsson's case, there was thus a perfect match between the number listed as *öde* in the cadastral accounts and the number of farms he found to be really deserted based on Älvsborgs lösen.

Ole Skarin studied six hundreds in Western Västergötland, also affected by the war in 1563–1570.⁷⁶ He could only compare the number of deserted farms in Älvsborgs lösen with cadastres from 1572 or even 1573, as those of 1571 were missing.⁷⁷ While

⁷¹ Österberg 1971 p. 200; the number of deserted farms is not the same as in the table on p. 277 (273 compared to 356).

⁷² Österberg 1971 p. 205: "öde i jordeböckerna [...]" en kameral term, bakom vilken det endast i mindre omfattning döljer sig ett faktiskt, demografiskt öde".

⁷³ Larsson 1972 p. 107: "verkliga ödegårdar"; "var bebyggda och drev ofta ett tämligen omfattande jordbruk".

⁷⁴ Larsson 1972 p. 114–5.

⁷⁵ Larsson 1972 p. 114: "Av tabellerna [...] framgår tydligt bristen på direkt kvantitativ relation mellan kameral ödeavkortning och demografisk ödeläggelse [...]"

⁷⁶ Skarin 1979.

⁷⁷ Skarin 1979 p. 161.

the cadastres claimed that 20% of all farms in the area were deserted, he could therefore only prove that at least 10% really were deserted. He however also did a comparison for the year 1600, which showed an almost perfect match between the cadastre and a wealth taxation list.⁷⁸ **Jan Brunius** could for Närke only show that about half of the according to the cadastre deserted farms in his area really were deserted, but lacked evidence in the rest of the cases.⁷⁹ **Käthe Bååth**, studying a part of Northern Småland in 1983, instead claimed that *öde* was used only to describe actually deserted farms, and pointed to military conscription as an additional cause of farm desertion.⁸⁰

Both Bååth and Skarin (for around 1600) thus reached the conclusion that “deserted” (*öde*) in the cadastres (and hence, also in the bailiff accounts summarizing these) actually denoted deserted farms. Larsson did not think that this was the case, but when scrutinized his figures actually show this to have been true also in his area. This leaves Österberg’s study area, where (although her numbers should be adjusted downwards) still about 25–30% of those farms listed in the cadastre as *öde* were in fact inhabited in 1571. One important reason for this is that farms in some parts of Västergötland and Småland during and just after the Nordic Seven Years’ war were listed under the heading “deserted, pillaged, or burned”. Probably due to the very high number of farms affected in these areas (and the reason for the farm not paying tax a certain year thus being of less importance), the bailiffs did not distinguish between these various reasons for a farm not paying its taxes. This indeed means that some of the farms in Österberg’s study area were inhabited in 1571, although they were not simply listed as *öde* in the accounts. This was a situation specific to this time and place: for most of the century, and for most regions in Sweden, we should instead treat the number of *öde* farms as those really not inhabited, which is my impression from going through all the century’s accounts. The land may not have been abandoned, as many notes testify to neighbours paying small rents for using the fields of a deserted farm. But for our calculation of the population total, this means that the number of deserted farms in each hundred has to be subtracted from the number of total farms. These sums are also usually taken from the annual accounts, with interpolations made if some accounts are missing. As it turns out, desertion was very rarely mentioned before the 1560s; as early accounts do not even include a section

⁷⁸ Skarin 1979 p. 161.

⁷⁹ Brunius 1980 p. 120–1.

⁸⁰ Bååth 1983 p. 185–7.

on deserted farms, this has been taken as an indication of the number of deserted farms being zero. A problem that cannot be completely solved are the accounts that (like in Österberg's case) do not separate the pillaged from the deserted: this means that the number of deserted farms in Västergötland in particular will be somewhat too high during and just after the war 1563–1570, with the recovery phase there also being seemingly too rapid.

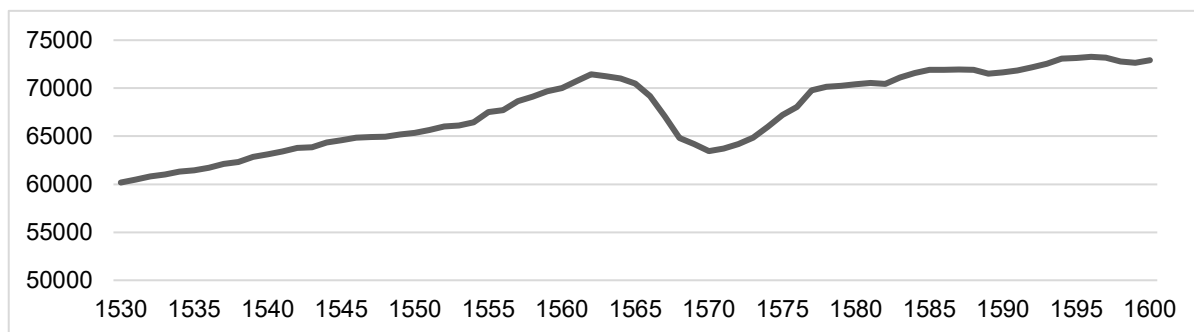


Figure 1.3. Number of cadastral peasants (minus deserted farms) in Sweden, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

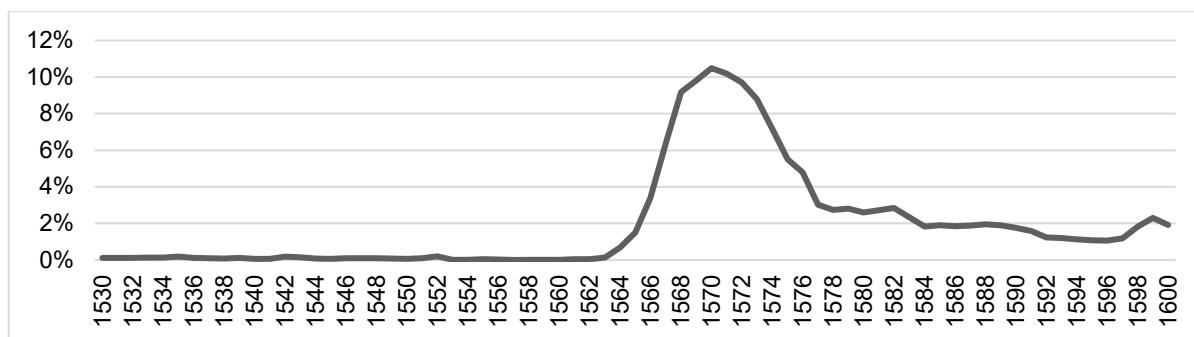


Figure 1.4. Deserted farms as share of all farms in Sweden, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

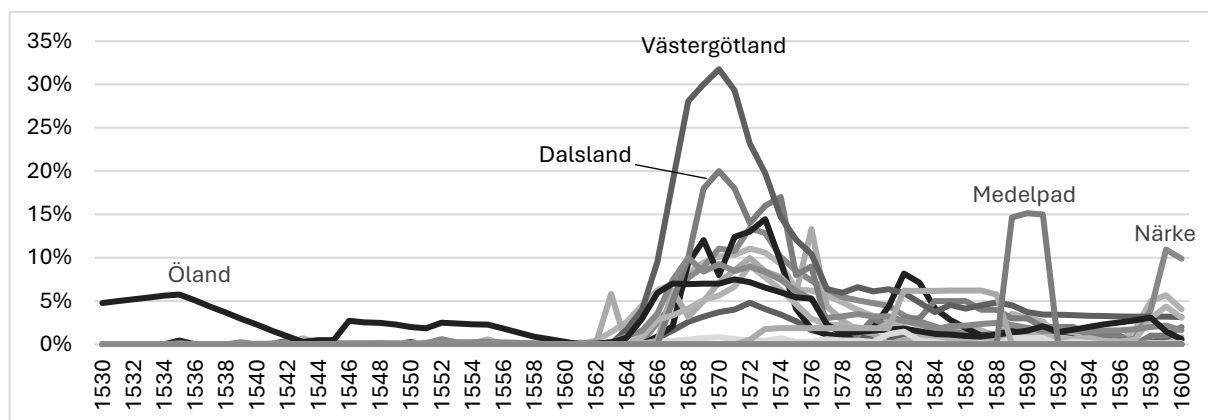


Figure 1.5. Deserted farms as share of all farms in the provinces of Sweden, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

Through the method and sources described above, the number of cadastral farms in Sweden can thus be calculated to have been about 60,000 in 1530 (see figure 1.3). This number grew steadily to over 71,000 at the beginning of the 1560s, whereafter it however decreased until 1571, reaching a trough of less than 64,000. Recovering during the 1570s, more quickly during the first half decade or so after the war, it regained its previous figure of 71,000 only in 1584. The growth in the number of cadastral peasants was thereafter slower, reaching just below 73,000 at the end of the century. The growth since 1530 was thus about 21%, or 0.27% a year. Although there are many steps left until we can calculate the total population, we can from these figures (as cadastral peasants was the largest social group) already see that the general population trend during the century was positive.

The reduction in the number of cadastral farms during the 1560s was due to desertion, as can be seen from figure 1.4. Before this date, the number of deserted farms in Sweden was negligible, as farms abandoned already during the crisis of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century had by this point either disappeared or else been registered as permanently deserted units in the cadastres.⁸¹ Beginning in 1564, farm desertion began to rise, with a sharp increase until 1568, and a slower increase in the following two years, reaching its centennial peak in 1570.⁸² At this

⁸¹ Karsvall 2016.

⁸² Local trends in farm desertion were of course previously studied in *Ödegårdsprojektet*, see e.g. Brunius 1980 p. 120–5; Bååth 1983 p. 193.

time, more than 10.5% of all cadastral farms in Sweden were reported as deserted, that is, close to 7,500 farms. The 1570s were then a recovery phase, first quickly (until about 1577, when desertion had decreased to a level of 3%), and then flattening out and decreasing more slowly. In 1596, it had reached just over 1% or some 800 farms, after which time it however rose again for three years, reaching 2.5% in 1599 during a severe harvest crisis.⁸³

Figure 1.5 shows the amount of deserted cadastral farms on the province level. Before the 1560s, the only province in which desertion was significant was on Öland, where about 5% of the farms were deserted already in the 1530s. Farm desertion on the island thus seems to have been a permanent feature. More interesting is the desertion taking place in the 1560s. A first sign comes from Värmland in 1563, but most severe is without competition the desertion in Västergötland, which reached over 40% in 1571, followed by Dalsland, where over 20% of the farms were deserted in 1571. The desertion here was a result of the war,⁸⁴ and we should remember that some bailiff accounts overestimate the number of deserted farms by including those burned down or pillaged. But farm desertion was substantial also in areas not directly hit by the war, such as Södermanland, Närke and Västmanland, where desertion reached between 10% and 15%, peaking only in the early 1570s. Below those we find Värmland and Östergötland with farm desertion at between 5% and 10%, even though both these provinces were subject to warfare during the 1560s (and in both cases desertion actually peaked only in 1572). Uppland had a more modest farm desertion of only 5%, also reaching its peak in 1572. It thus seems as if the crisis that apparently hit Sweden during the 1560s in fact had two phases: one first affecting the western provinces (during the war), with another affecting Eastern Sweden (but Uppland only to a lesser extent) somewhat later: beginning in the late 1560s but exacerbated in 1570–1571. In comparison, Dalarna and Norrland seem to have been more or less unaffected by this crisis. The results previously found by *Ödegårdsprojektet* in the 1970s and 1980, which stressed very high levels of farm desertion caused by warfare, may thus now be seen in a context of regional differences in desertion, where also Central Sweden – not directly hit by the war – experienced severe population loss in the years around 1570.

⁸³ Österberg 1977 p. 205; Brunius 1980 p. 120–1.

⁸⁴ Österberg 1971 p. 122–3 interestingly compared desertion on the parish level with the marching routes of the Danish army.

Compared to the crisis around 1570, all other periods of desertion in the sixteenth century look rather insignificant, although they could still locally be quite severe. The highest numbers during the latter part of the century are found in Västmanland in 1580–1582 (where the share of deserted farms reached 8%), in Dalsland in 1582–1585 (rising to 5%), in Hälsingland in 1582 (6%). In 1589, farm desertion in Medelpad suddenly jumped to 15%, while in Södermanland in the same year farm desertion rose to 4%. Most pronounced was however the rise in farm desertion in the late 1590s, which is also clearly visible in the national figure. In 1599, desertion in Närke reached 11%, with Södermanland following on 6% and Östergötland on 4%. Although an increase is detectable also in Dalsland, it thus seems as if this last rise in farm desertion of the century was most pronounced in Eastern Sweden.

The reasons for the rises in farm desertion (indicating population decrease) will be discussed in detail further on. Here it will suffice to summarize the general trend. Important for our understanding of the concept is that farm desertion was very rare before the 1560s, with bailiffs only occasionally reporting an odd farm being deserted for a year. While farms abandoned following the Black Death and other plague waves had become permanently abandoned (and registered as such in the cadastres), population increase during the early sixteenth century apparently led to almost no farms being vacant, and deserted farms noted as anomalies. Around 1565, the accounting apparatus thus suddenly had to deal with crisis on a scale previously unencountered by any living scribe.⁸⁵ In most cases, bailiffs started to report the rising number of deserted farms separate from those that did not have to pay taxes in a year due to other causes, although sometimes (especially in hundreds directly hit by the war) the deserted farms were mixed with those pillaged etc.

After a few years, farms previously abandoned in most cases were reinhabited. Accounts from now on list those farms previously deserted but currently under resettlement separate from those still deserted, as the resettling peasant was to be tax-exempt during a number of years (usually three) of reconstruction work. This phase of rapid repopulation of farms abandoned during the crisis of the 1560s lasted for about ten years. After ca. 1575, many farms had been deserted for over a decade, and it seems as if many of them now became more or less permanently abandoned and

⁸⁵ Österberg 1971 p. 208–9 also found that the practice of registering *öde* mainly developed in the 1560s, although she interpreted the term differently.

their land put to other use. This was especially the case in Västergötland, the province worst affected by the war and the crisis.

Starting with the crisis of the 1560s, bailiffs subsequently came to annually report the number of deserted farms in their respective district. In Norrland, which had not been affected by the crisis, this practice was still less prevalent, leading to somewhat odd-looking figures as for Medelpad in the 1580s: a sudden increase in desertion in 1589 led to a revision of the cadastre which simply reduced the number of farms a few years later, omitting those still deserted. In the rest of the country, increases in farm desertion was always more modest in scale than during the 1560s, and also exclusively regional in extent.

2. Subdivision of cadastral farms

Farm desertion was one reason why the members of *Ödegårdsprojektet* were hesitant to treat the number of cadastral farms as reflecting population change; unregistered subdivision of cadastral farms (*hemmansklyvning*) between two or more peasant households was the other. **Österberg** was the first to point this out, making a general remark that farms may often have been divided and citing one instance where this was mentioned in a cadastre.⁸⁶ **Larsson** concurred, citing a few examples of “clear evidence” from the 1540s that could be either interpreted as two peasant households sharing a cadastral farm, or else that both a peasant and a landless cottager household was living on the land belonging to a farm.⁸⁷ This led Larsson to define ‘farm division’ (*hemmansklyvning*) as there having been more *gårdsbruk* (agricultural enterprises) than cadastral units, disregarding if the households were landed peasants or landless cottagers. He then went on to do a comparison between the number of households registered in the cadastres and those registered in the Älvsborgs lösen taxation lists of 1571, in cattle taxation registers (*boskapslängder*) from 1621–1640, and in court records (which however are not cited).⁸⁸ His comparison of the number of households found in the cadastre with the number in Älvsborgs lösen found a subdivision of 19% in Småland, 23% in Västergötland, and 7% in Östergötland.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Österberg 1971 p. 40.

⁸⁷ Larsson 1972 p. 36–7: “klara belägg”.

⁸⁸ Larsson 1972 p. 117–8.

⁸⁹ Larsson 1972 p. 144–5.

However, I believe that Larsson did a mistake in including landless cottagers in the calculations of farm subdivision, as their presence should be seen as a distinct phenomenon, which did not result in proper subdivision (*sämjedelning*) of cadastral farms. If we recalculate Larsson's figures but exclude cottagers, the resulting farm division was then instead 23% in Konga but only 2% in neighbouring Uppvidinge, and 0% in Södra Möre (all in Småland); in Vadsbo in Västergötland it was 16%. Local variation in farm subdivision was thus substantial in the four hundreds studied by Larsson.

Österberg then studied farm division in nine parishes in Värmland. Comparing the cadastre with the property taxation in 1600, she found "a significant subdivision of farms".⁹⁰ Her numbers (which probably also include landless cottagers) showed a farm division of 18% in four parishes.⁹¹ Instead comparing the cadastre with tithe lists, Österberg further concluded that there was "[l]ots of subdivision of farms", even though the number of tithe payers was sometimes less than the number of cadastral farms.⁹²

Skarin found the division of farms to be "unusually large" in his study area in Western Västergötland, using the same methods as Larsson and Österberg.⁹³ Comparing the cadastres with Älvsborgs lösen (and including cottagers), farm division was between 3% and 54% in six neighbouring hundreds in 1571.⁹⁴ For four hundreds a comparison could be made also in 1600, which showed a rapid increase in farm division in three hundreds, with a small decrease in a fourth; now reaching levels of 41–87%. **Brunius** used the same method studying Western Närke, but here he instead found that most division of farms was actually registered in the cadastre, and that the division of farms in four hundreds in 1600 only amounted to 6%.⁹⁵ **Bååth** finally compared Älvsborgs lösen for five parishes in Norra Vedbo hundred in Småland with the 1575 cadastre, finding 21% farm subdivision in 1571, but only 17% in 1600 (varying between 1 and 25%).⁹⁶

From the results of *Ödegårdsprojektet* there is no doubt that the number of peasant households in sixteenth-century Sweden often was larger than the cadastres show.

⁹⁰ Österberg 1977 p. 163: "en hemmansklyvning av betydelse".

⁹¹ Österberg 1977 p. 163.

⁹² Österberg 1977 p. 273: "En hel del hemmansklyvning".

⁹³ Skarin 1979 p. 178: "ovanligt stor".

⁹⁴ Skarin 1979 p. 150.

⁹⁵ Brunius 1980 p. 105.

⁹⁶ Bååth 1983 p. 180–1.

For that reason, we need to get at the total number of peasant households in a hundred. The main method for studying how large the share of the cadastral farms that was divided between several peasant households was, is to compare the cadastre with the number of households in wealth taxation lists. The most important of these are the taxes of 1571 (Älvsborgs lösen) and of 1599–1600, which were also used by *Ödegårdsprojektet*. These lists usually report all households in an area, and they cover most of the country (although some regions are as always missing because of archival losses). In addition, for some regions all peasant households are recorded also in taxation lists from other subsidy taxations (*hjälpsskatter*), most commonly in those of 1560, 1563, and 1573.

Some previous studies also compared cadastres with the number of households given by grain tithe lists. As stated before, I have only been able to do a few manual counts of the number of tithe payers in those lists, and instead relied mostly on bailiff accounts that already contain a sum. Such accounts survive to a small degree already from the 1540s, most from Western Sweden. For the 1550s and 1560s they however cover most of the country; after this time, the practice of counting the tithe payers seems to have gradually disappeared (perhaps as a consequence of the widespread land desertion), although it continued in some provinces also during the 1570s and 1580s.

In addition, there are some occasional notes in bailiff accounts listing not just the number of cadastral farms but also the total number of peasant households (so in a part of Dalarna in the 1550s, and in Västersysslet in Värmland in 1592). All these types of evidence have been put together to calculate the rate of farm subdivision. In contrast to *Ödegårdsprojektet*, this is however done by first excluding the landless cottagers; Their presence do not imply farm division proper, as they would not hold land on the same terms as ordinary peasant households; to call their presence ‘farm subdivision’ is thus misleading. The number of landless cottagers is instead calculated separately, based on other types of sources, in the following chapter.

Altogether, this means that subdivision of cadastral farms can be best studied for the period after ca. 1550, and that the sources are especially rich after ca. 1570. As there are no annual figures on farm subdivision, interpolation has been made between years with known levels. That the data is scarce for the earlier part of the century turns out to be a minor problem. Subdivision of cadastral farms was of less importance earlier, which is likely an effect of the reforms of the land taxation system around 1540, when taxes were imposed on individual farms rather than on collectives. There is also a

clear tendency for cadastres to include new farms continuously before the 1560s. In contrast, cadastres often became “frozen in time” during the later part of the century, enlisting few new settlements. As a consequence, the number of unregistered peasant households (the subdivision of the cadastral farms) grew; luckily, this is also the period for which data on farm subdivision is available.

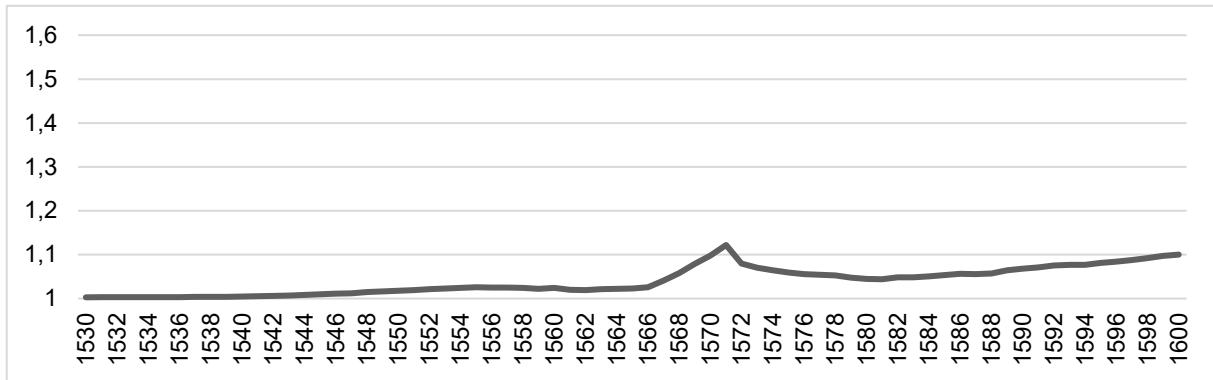


Figure 2.1. Subdivision of cadastral farms in Sweden, 1530–1600. Note: Subdivision is calculated by dividing the total number of peasant households by the number of cadastral farms in an area; a value of 1 thus means that there was no subdivision, while a value of 1.1 means that there were 10% more households than cadastral farms. Source: Population database.

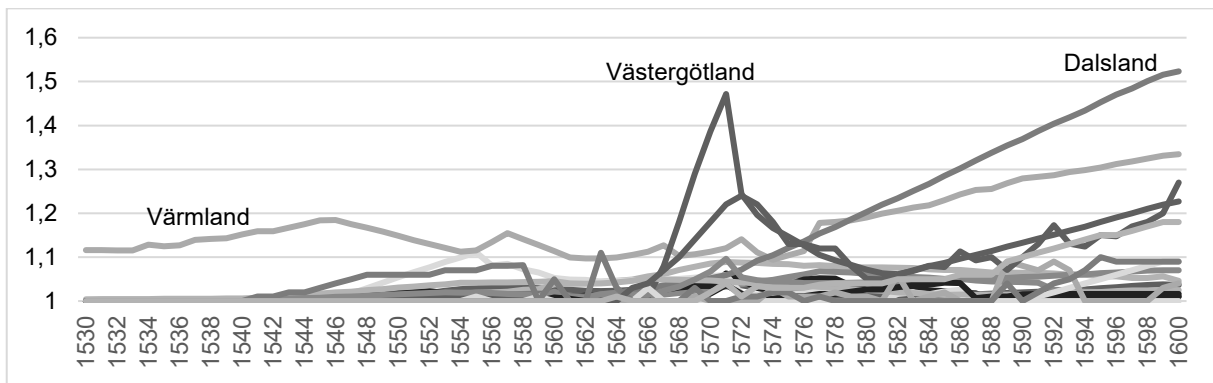


Figure 2.2. Subdivision of cadastral farms in the provinces of Sweden, 1530–1600. Note: for an explanation, see figure 2.1. Source: Population database.

The subdivision of cadastral farms is thus calculated by comparing the total number of households (reported in subsidy taxation lists or other sources) with the number of cadastral peasants, which has first been reduced by the number of deserted farms.

The main results are shown in figure 2.1, which also highlights the main crux of the method: the peak in 1571, which stems from the comparison with Älvsborgs lösen. As is apparent from figure 2.2., this is mainly caused by a steep rise in apparent farm subdivision in Västergötland, mirroring the high share of deserted farms in this area previously shown in figure 1.5. The high calculated subdivision of cadastral farms here thus mainly reflects the fact that farms labelled as pillaged or burned were in fact inhabited (and not that farm division in reality was very high). The recovery phase during the 1570s then soon brought the share of divided farms back down, in Västergötland as in Sweden as a whole, to about 5%, resuming the trend from before the 1560s crisis of slow but steady growth.

The main results regarding how much cadastral farms in Sweden were subdivided between two or more households during the sixteenth century can thus be summarized as follows. In 1530, farm subdivision was close to non-existent, with a few local exceptions in Western Sweden (in Värmland in particular). It was still modest by the late 1550s, when it had reached about 2%. After its (misleading) peak around 1570, it then resumed its previous course, being at about 4% in 1580. As said before, at this time the number of cadastral farms became stagnant in most areas: cadastres were not as before updated with new farms, reflecting a change in the accounting customs. Instead, the share of subdivided cadastral farms began to rise more quickly, reaching about 8% in 1590 and 10% in 1600. By this time, the difference between the number of cadastral households and the total number of peasant households in Sweden had thus become substantial, meaning that the cadastres of the seventeenth century no longer give a good sense of population change. The research concerning Swedish population figures around 1620 or 1630 consequently instead rely on other forms of taxation records.⁹⁷

Some clear regional differences in farm subdivision can be gathered from figure 2.2. While farm division in Värmland was 10% already in 1530, it then oscillated between 10 and 20% for most of the century. In Dalarna and Medelpad, farm division reached 10% already in the 1550s, with subsequent reforms to the cadastres soon reducing these numbers. Farm division becomes a major factor in the calculation of regional population growth only after ca. 1580. While the growth is apparent in the national aggregation, the regional data shows it to have been mainly driven by farm subdivision in two areas. The most important of these was Western Sweden, where

⁹⁷ E.g., Sundquist 1938; Palm 2000; Edvinsson 2008.

farm division in Dalsland reached 50%, in Värmland 30%, and in Västergötland over 20% by the end of the century.⁹⁸ The other area where farm division became significant was in the north of Sweden, where the province of Ångermanland reached close to 30%, Västerbotten close to 20%, and Medelpad and Gästrikland about 10% by the year 1600. In contrast, subdivision of cadastral farms remained unimportant in Central Sweden up to the end of the century. This mainly reflects differences in population growth between different regions, perhaps to some extent also in differences in accounting practices, as cadastres at least in parts of Central Sweden (Närke and Södermanland) seem to have been more thoroughly kept up to date.⁹⁹

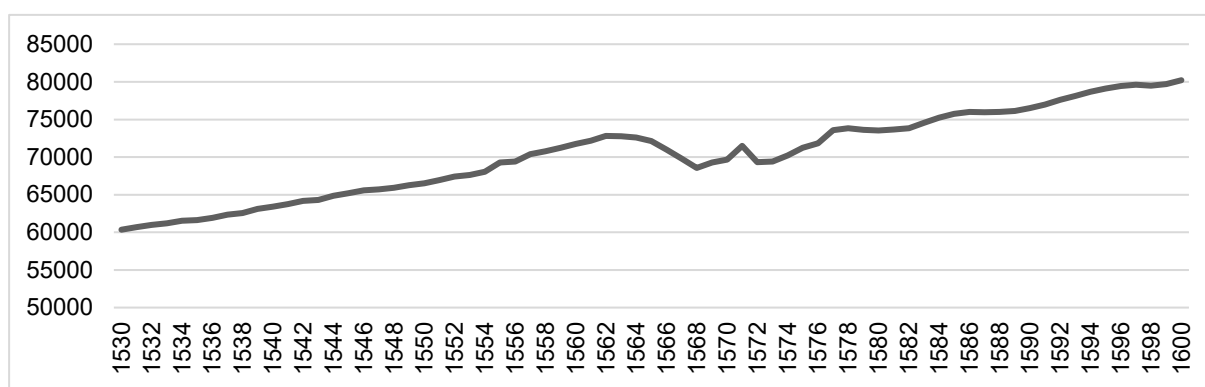


Figure 2.3. The total number of peasant households in Sweden, 1530–1600.

Source: Population database.

On the basis of the number of cadastral households (excluding deserted farms) and the share of cadastral farm subdivision, it is now possible to calculate the size of the first and largest social group of our population calculation: the total number of peasants in sixteenth-century Sweden. The results are shown in figure 2.3. In 1530, there were just over 60,000 peasant households living in Sweden, a number which rose with an almost constant rate of about 0.6% per year until it reached a peak close to 73,000 in 1562. The number then decreased by almost 6% to 1568, reaching only 68,500, recovering its previous level only in 1578 after a decade and a half. (As has been said before, the peak in 1571 reflects the problems of correctly calculating the

⁹⁸ This concurs with the results from *Ödegårdsprojektet*, where Skarin 1979 stressed the unusually high levels of farm division in Western Västergötland; some regional differences were apparent already in Larsson 1972.

⁹⁹ This is reflected in the inventories of new farmsteads repeatedly drawn up by bailiffs working for Duke Charles in order to enter them into the cadastres; see e.g., Myrdal & Söderberg 1991.

rate of farm subdivision in the period of highly volatile desertion figures, especially in Västergötland. Yet, many other areas with limited farm subdivision show decreasing figures from 1571 to 1572, indicating a real decrease in this year.)

At the end of the century, the number of peasant households in Sweden at last reached 80,000, having halted somewhat in its rate of increase during the last years of the 1590s. In sum, this means that the number of peasant households in Sweden as a whole increased by a total of 33% from 1530 to 1600, or about 0.4% per year. To this we must now add the other social groups that lived in premodern Sweden. First of these are the landless cottagers and craftsmen who made up the second largest group in the countryside.

3. Cottagers

Landless cottagers (*husmän* or *husfolk*) and rural craftsmen are seldom discussed in the literature concerning population figures. Forssell dismissed them as being unimportant,¹⁰⁰ and of the researchers connected to *Ödegårdsprojektet* only **Larsson** discussed their presence. He showed that in parts of his study area, many cottagers in the 1620s owned some cattle and sometimes held a small plot of arable land, although there were also other cottagers who did not.¹⁰¹ He did however include cottagers among the landed peasants when calculating rates of farm subdivision,¹⁰² although noting that “[t]he cottager class did [...] make up a significant part of the rural population in the decades around 1600.”¹⁰³ More recently, **Jonas Lindström** has done a regional study of the share of households not owning enough cattle or holding enough land to have been self-subsistent, also during the seventeenth century.¹⁰⁴ His results also indicate that cottagers made up an important part of the rural population, at least in some parts of Sweden (in Västmanland in particular).

In contrast to previous research, I do not (as previously mentioned) include cottagers among the figures for subdivided cadastral farms. Cottagers and rural craftsmen (the

¹⁰⁰ Forssell 1884 p. 65.

¹⁰¹ Larsson 1972 p. 175–9.

¹⁰² Larsson 1972 p. 144–5.

¹⁰³ Larsson 1972 p. 147: “Husmansklassen har under alla omständigheter utgjort en betydande andel av allmogen under decennierna kring 1600.”

¹⁰⁴ Lindström 2019.

two groups obviously to some extent overlapped, although many sources do separate them as two distinct social groups; they are henceforth collectively referred to as ‘cottagers’) were in fact not responsible for a part of the cadastral farm or had access to its fields. Instead, they heavily relied on resources from village and parish common land, not least for grazing their (few) animals, as well as for the production of wooden craft objects, tar, and charcoal.¹⁰⁵ They were also partially dependent on wage labour, and could thus become an important asset for their landed village neighbours, who would use the cottagers’ labour for agricultural work, transportation, and timber building. That cottagers were a distinct social group is thus clear; and the task now is to determine its size relative to the landed peasants.

As cottagers were not generally subject to taxation in the sixteenth century, and cottages rarely entered into cadastres, the best source to determine their numbers are taxation lists from extra-ordinary subsidies (*hjälpsskatter, extraskatter*). Such lists often under separate headings include cottagers, but practices varied from region to region or from hundred to hundred. The earliest subsidy lists containing cottagers date from 1535; data then exist for a number of hundreds in 1560, in 1563, in 1569, and in 1571 (the Älvsborgs lösen wealth taxation, which covers most of the country). Further lists come from 1573, 1576 (when there was a taxation specifically targeting cottagers), 1578, 1579, 1581, 1589, 1590, 1596, 1598, and 1599–1600. On top of this, several accounts (from Västergötland, Dalsland, and Småland) for the years 1589–1590 further state that, as a result of recent military conscriptions targeting them, there were no cottagers at all anymore living in the area.¹⁰⁶

Had all regions been covered in all of these years, the source situation would not have been too bad (at least not from 1560 onwards). Unfortunately, some of the above-mentioned taxations were only of a local nature, while others were national but only included cottagers in some areas. In addition, sources have – as always – been lost, meaning that even for the most complete years (1571, 1576, and 1599) there are substantial gaps in what we can find out regarding the number of cottagers.

For the time period before 1560, when cottagers were not usually subject to taxation, a rather large number of lists and accounts survive that show how cottagers (in some regions) had to perform yearly corvée labour at the Crown’s castles and manors. This practice, which disappeared during the latter part of the century, seems to have been

¹⁰⁵ Andersson 2025.

¹⁰⁶ E.g., VgH 1590:4A.

especially prevalent during the 1540s and 1550s (with some late examples from the 1560s). They mostly concern Central Sweden, where the majority of the Crown's castles were located, but an important source covering most of Västergötland and Östergötland also survives, concerning corvée labour used for the construction of Vadstena castle.

A final source are the cadastres. Although most cottages were never entered into these lists, there were some local exceptions. On Öland, an annual fee previously paid by cottagers to the local bailiff instead went to the king's coffers during the 1540s and 1550s. In parts of Västergötland and Småland, cottagers were included among those that had to pay *fodring* (a tax substituting the obligation to feed the horses of the king or some other state official) some years during the 1540s, resulting in them being recorded in the *fodring* taxation lists. (This practice unfortunately stopped in the early 1550s, as the *fodring* was incorporated into the regular cadastres.) In Värmlandsberg mining district, following a local taxation reform the number of cottagers were recorded in the cadastres during a number of years of the 1560s; unfortunately, another reform soon ended this laudable consuetude. In parts of Södermanland finally, in Österrekarne hundred in particular, cottages were thoroughly recorded in the cadastres from ca. 1595 (another example of the fact that the cadastres were less stagnant in Södermanland than in other parts of the country).

In sum, sources that can enlighten us on the number of cottagers survive for most hundreds only for odd years, either in the form of extra-ordinary taxations, corvée labour lists, or as part of the cadastre itself. The coverage is best after ca. 1560, although there is also a good representation of many districts during the 1540s and 1550s. Nevertheless, the number of cottagers often has to be interpolated between years that may sometimes be quite far apart (such as 1571 and 1599, to take a common example). The regional data tends to be somewhat uncertain, especially for the earlier part of the century. Yet, as the total size of the social group turns out to be rather modest (compared to the number of peasant households), there is no problem of determining its relative importance for the total population or social structure.

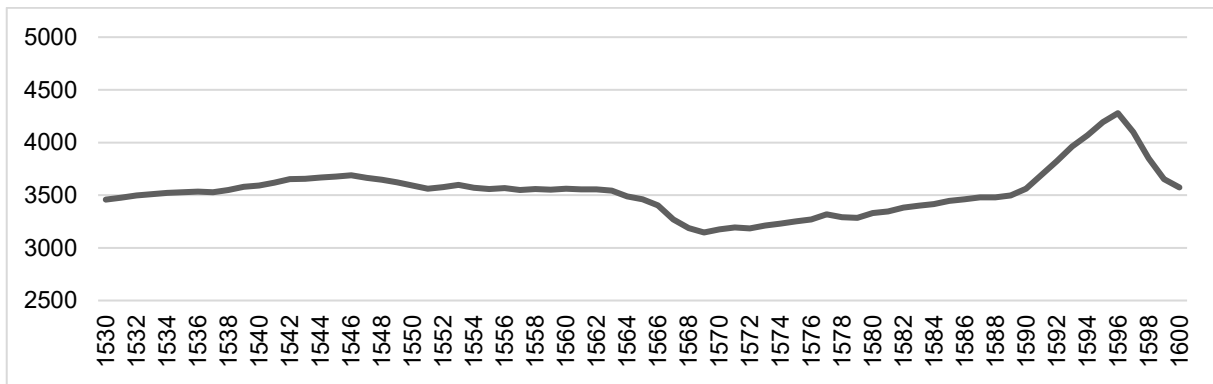


Figure 3.1. The total number of cottager households in Sweden, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

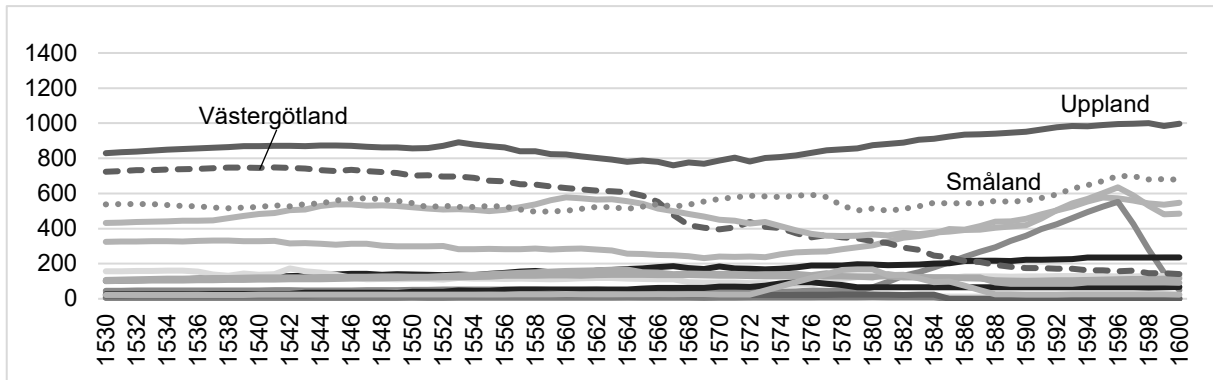


Figure 3.2. The number of cottager households in the provinces of Sweden, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

Within the limitations set by the sources, the number of cottager households in sixteenth-century Sweden can now be determined. The number was relatively stable at around 3,500 from 1530 into the 1560s (see figure 3.1). During the crisis years of this decade, it decreased by 12%, down to 3,200 in 1570. After this time the cottager population grew again, showing a more rapid increase after about 1590. The peak of the century (4,200) was reached in 1596, after which time it decreased again until 1600, making the number of cottagers almost the same that it had been 70 years previous. There was thus no significant population increase among cottagers during the century, but rather remarkable stability.

The regional data show that the number of cottagers did in fact increase in the Central and Eastern parts of the country. The curve for Närke is most worthy of attention. A significant rise in the number of cottagers took place between ca. 1580 and 1596, followed by a sharp decrease during the next few years. Although this could be explained away as a source issue (the 1600 taxation lists in Närke perhaps omitting cottagers), it is more likely that this indeed reflects a real decrease. In 1600, farm desertion in Närke reached over 11%, more than in any other Swedish province at the time (see figure 1.3). A local subsistence crisis, which severely affected the number of peasant households, thus also reduced the number of cottagers (presumably through a combination of mortality and of cottagers being able to advance socially by taking up abandoned farms). We will return to this crisis of the 1590s in the summary chapter; for now, it is sufficient to say that the figures for Närke should not a priori be dismissed as a lapsus of the sources.

The regional data shown in figure 3.2 further shows that in many regions, cottagers remained an insignificant social group throughout the century, including all of the northern provinces. A peculiar path was taken by Västergötland. Here, cottagers were rather common in 1530, and they were numerous enough to attract the attention of the royal officials, who had them travel across lake Vättern to perform *corvée* labour on the construction of Vadstena castle, and who subjected them to recurring *fodring* taxation during the 1540s. Later taxation lists however show continuous decrease in the number of cottagers in Västergötland, leaving the number at just a fifth in 1600 of what it had been 70 years before. This numerical evidence is further corroborated by the fact that a number of bailiffs in Västergötland around 1590 reported that there were no cottagers at all left in their districts. At the same time as the division of farms became much more common, cottagers disappeared as a distinct social group, indicating a shift in the access to land taking place in Västergötland over the course of the century.

4. The Crown

We now leave the small family-based agrarian households of peasants and cottagers and move, in the three following chapters, on to the social groups that made up the workers at the large demesne farms of the Crown, of the nobility, and of various church institutions. In addition, the Crown also run a number of other establishments during the sixteenth century, most importantly metal works and mines, shipyards, and

castles. Finally, there also existed not just one but a number of courts serving the members of the royal family, which added considerable population figures to the places where they resided. In this chapter we will first treat the general development of the number of those working for the Crown, after which the workers and members of the royal courts are treated in detail.

No matter if we concern ourselves with the Crown, the nobility, or with church institutions, two sets of sources usually (or at least in good cases) exist in parallel that can be used to study their workers. The first are wage lists (*löningsregister*), an example of which is shown below in figure 4.1. It included all those that received wages (cash in this example, while separate lists were drawn up for clothes and shoes), usually for a year or for half a year. The lists sometimes also include people receiving a wage for just a short period of labour (such as threshing); these have been omitted from our population calculations, as they probably were registered in another social group. **Ulf Söderberg**, who in 1977 published a study of Örbyhus manor in Northern Uppland, compared various lists and found that the wage lists did not include all workers, as the young and inexperienced not always received any money.¹⁰⁷ This may speak in favour of using the other type of list, records of those who received food at the table of the manor (*förtäringregister*). A problem with these lists is however that they list the personnel present each week, making it necessary to choose just one week a year as a snapshot. (The first week of the accounting year, for most part of the period beginning just after Michaelmas, has usually been used, unless the account is damaged.) Further, not only those living at the manor but also “strangers” or guests received food; these included visiting bailiffs or scribes, soldiers, day-labourers, and even local peasants, present to do the yearly inventory. These are usually recorded separately from the permanent staff, but especially the early records do not always clearly distinguish between the various groups. I have thus whenever possible preferred to use wage lists, although (due to archival losses) in reality both types of sources are frequently used.

¹⁰⁷ Söderberg 1977.



Figure 4.1. Wages paid to musicians (trumpeter, fiddler, piper, drummer, singer, and harper) at Gustav Vasa's royal court at Easter in 1538. Source: Räkenskapsböcker vol. 11, fol. 27r, RA.

Another methodological issue arises from the fact that we need to separate those workers of the Crown (and, in the following chapters, of the nobility or of the church) that had their own households from those who did not. The sources are of little help in this regard. I have made the assumption that all men with more specific work titles (such as all craftsmen, scribes, as well as soldiers) represent a whole household, while servants (including the rare journeymen) do not. Women have also not been included, as it is probable that – in the cases they were married – they had formed a household with a man already included in our calculations. (Some rare mentions exist of women being married to men serving at the same crown establishment.) This approach thus differs from Palm's, who counted a crown establishment as only a single household.¹⁰⁸ The difference in method is especially important for calculating population figures for

¹⁰⁸ Palm 2000 p. 17.

regions where many new Crown establishments came into being during the sixteenth century.



Figure 4.2. The total number of households employed at Crown establishments in Sweden, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

The number of households (that is, men that are assumed to have had families) employed at Crown establishments (excluding the royal courts) is shown in figure 4.2, which is a good illustration of the Swedish Crown's changing direct involvement in the Swedish economy. In 1530, the Crown only employed a total of about 500 households at its castles and manors. During Gustav Vasa's reign, this number grew steadily, reaching 1,000 in 1542, 1,500 four years later, and 2,000 by 1553, thus doubling in a decade. This expansion of the Crown's activities must no doubt be labelled as swift. At its peak in 1562, the number of households employed by the Crown reached over 3,600; and we may speculate what would have happened if the Nordic Seven Years' War had not broken out in the following year. The outbreak of the war shifted the focus of the Crown towards military matters; money was spent on hiring soldiers instead of craftsmen, and so the number of households employed at crown establishments fell below 2,000 before the end of the war. It then remained more or less stable throughout the reign of King John III, whereafter it decreased further in the 1590s. At the end of the century only 1,500 households remained employed by the Crown; yet this was still three times as many as there had been seventy years before. The growth of the Early Modern Swedish state was not to be reversed.

The development during the sixteenth century can summarily be divided into three phases: a first phase, lasting from 1530 (or possibly from an even earlier date) to about

1563, characterized by an increase in both the number of Crown establishments and in the number of people employed at them; a second phase, during the Nordic Seven Years' War, when the number of households employed by the Crown instead decreased by over 40%; and then a third phase, lasting throughout the rest of the century, when the numbers were stagnant (or perhaps with a slight further decrease in the 1590s, especially in Uppland and Småland).

Table 4.1. The five largest Crown establishments in Sweden in 1530, 1560, and 1590.

1530	1560	1590
Skeppsholmen (133)	Stockholm castle (498)	Stockholm castle (201)
Kalmar castle (120)	Skeppsholmen (383)	Vadstena castle (129)
Stockholm castle (93)	Kalmar castle (293)	Kalmar castle (127)
Kronoberg castle (44)	Vadstena castle (130)	Born metal industries (125)
Gripsholm castle (29)	Uppsala castle (110)	Skeppsholmen (107)

Note: The number of households employed in parentheses. Source: Population database.

To give a concrete impression of what these numbers meant, the five largest Crown establishments are listed for the years 1530, 1560, and 1590 in table 4.1. In 1530, the largest establishment was the shipyard in Stockholm (Skeppsholmen), which employed over 130 households. This was followed by the castles in Kalmar, Stockholm (here excluding the royal court), Kronoberg, and Gripsholm, of which the last two employed less than 50 household. Both Kalmar and Stockholm castles remained among the largest establishments throughout the century, as did the Stockholm shipyard. It must be noted that all of these were larger in 1560 than in 1590. Although the number of Crown establishments was much larger in 1560 than in 1590, this shows that the number of those working for the Crown also decreased due to its large castles being less staffed. In 1560, another two castles (Vadstena and Uppsala) were among the largest establishments, while in 1590 Uppsala castle had been replaced by Borns hyttegård. This was a metal industry, located at the great copper mines at Stora Kopparberg (in present Falun). While the Crown's other establishments were decreasing, the growth of Born indicates the growing importance of the metal industries towards the end of the century.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ On the copper industry at Born in the late 1500s, see Odén 1960.

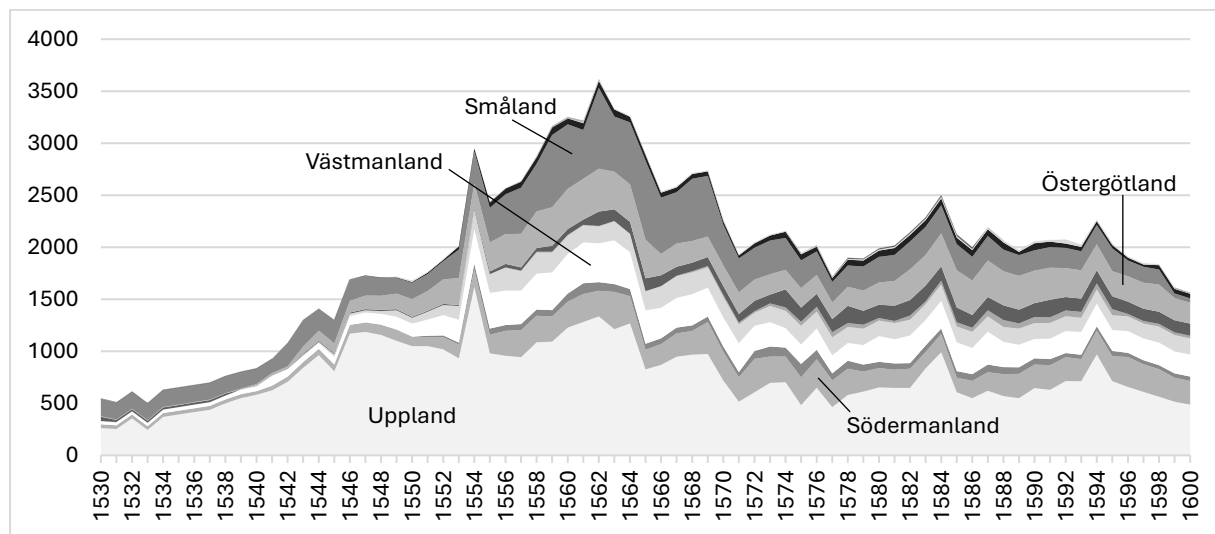


Figure 4.3. The number of households employed at Crown establishments in the provinces of Sweden, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

In figure 4.3 we see the regional distribution of the households working at Crown establishments. The lion's share was at the beginning of the period living in Uppland, and the province remained the most important throughout the century. This was especially due to the castle and shipyard in Stockholm, in addition to the manor and later castle in Uppsala. Other provinces in which the Crown employed relatively many households were Småland (dominated by Kalmar castle and shipyard), Södermanland (with Gripsholm and Nyköping castles), Västmanland (with Västerås castle and the silver mining industry in Sala), Östergötland (with Vadstena and Stegeborg castles), and Dalarna (where the Crown had no castles, but instead several metal industries, of which Born was the most important). In contrast, the Crown had a very limited presence in other provinces, notably in all of Northern Sweden, as well as in Västergötland. While the Crown clearly chose to expand in certain regions, especially during the reign of Gustav Vasa, it refrained from or was hindered from doing so in others.

The next step of our population study is now to add the number of households employed by the royal courts. Before we do so, we must however first establish which courts there were in sixteenth-century Sweden, and where they resided. For, although most courts were itinerant, it is still evident that most had a primary place of residence. For the king, this was in most years Stockholm, although some years

(during plague outbreaks) were spent in other parts of the country.¹¹⁰ The members of the royal courts were recorded in the same types of sources (wage and food registers) as those employed at other crown establishments. However, the court archives were often treated differently from the main Crown archives, meaning that their survival (especially material from the smaller courts of princesses and widowed queens) is more sporadic. As no overview exists of the material, the following section may hopefully also be of use to those further interested in sixteenth-century court history (from the social historian's point of view).

By 1530, there only existed one royal court in Sweden: that of King Gustav Vasa. Although itinerant, King Gustav spent most of the time until his death in 1560 at the castle in Stockholm, which (as we saw above) was the by far largest of the castles in the realm, even when not including the royal court. King Gustav mainly left Stockholm for longer periods during plague years, and I have counted his court as residing at Gripsholm castle in 1549 and at Kalmar castle in 1552.¹¹¹ The members of King Gustav's court are mainly known from wage lists, which survive almost annually since Christmas, 1526.¹¹²

After King Gustav's death, his widowed Queen Katarina Stenbock (25 years old) moved her court to Strömsholm castle in Västmanland, where she resided until her death in 1621.¹¹³ Most of her archives have been lost; the size of her court can thus only be measured from a wage list from the spring of 1561, when she was still resident in Stockholm,¹¹⁴ and from a register dated December 1568, when she resided in Stockholm with King John, just after the deposition of his brother Erik.¹¹⁵ After this date, the size of her court has to be extrapolated for the rest of the century. It seems to have been rather small, although this might be the sources misleading us, as they never show Queen Katarina at home at Strömsholm.

As king, Gustav was succeeded in 1560 by his oldest son Erik XIV. Erik had spent the last years of the 1550s as duke, residing in Kalmar with his court. After his father's death, he moved his court to Stockholm, where he lived (although often away during

¹¹⁰ Strömberg 2013. I will follow Strömberg in locating the king's court to Stockholm in most years, with exceptions noted below.

¹¹¹ Strömberg 2013.

¹¹² Most in Råntekammarböcker, RA; some in Löningsregister, RA; and some in Strödda kamerala handlingar, vols. 62, 105, RA.

¹¹³ SBL: Katarina Stenbock.

¹¹⁴ Råntekammarböcker vol. 39, RA.

¹¹⁵ Strödda mantalsregister 1568, RA.

the summer months for waging the war in Southern Sweden from 1563 onwards) until he was deposed by his brothers' rebellion in 1568. He was then kept as a prisoner in Stockholm 1569–1570, at Gripsholm 1571–1572, at Västerås 1573–1574, and at Örbyhus 1575–1577, where he was murdered. Wage lists of his court survive already from his years as duke in Kalmar,¹¹⁶ as well as yearly from his time as king.¹¹⁷ Some lists also survive of his (very reduced) court during his time in prison, also including the number of soldiers stationed to guard him.¹¹⁸

Erik was deposed by a rebellion led by his two brothers, John and Charles. King John III had previously spent the years 1566–1567 as prisoner at Gripsholm castle, but after he ascended the throne, he stayed most of his time in Stockholm. He however left the town during the plague years 1572 (when he went to Kalmar castle) and 1580 (when he went to Vadstena castle).¹¹⁹ He further spent a long time away from Stockholm, residing mostly at Kalmar castle during the years 1585–1588. Already from his time in prison some wage lists survive.¹²⁰ For his years as king, wage lists survive for most years in several versions.¹²¹ In addition, food registers for the members of the court survive in large numbers, especially for the later part of King John's reign.¹²²

After the death of King John, his widow Queen Gunilla Bielke moved her court from Stockholm to Bråborg castle in Östergötland, where she resided until her death in 1597, only 29 years old.¹²³ A single wage list survives from 1595.¹²⁴ Her son John (*hertig Johan av Östergötland*) was then only eight years old; lists of the members of his court after his mother's death survive from 1598 and 1600, when he was residing with his uncle Duke Charles.¹²⁵

After King John III's death, the throne went to his oldest son Sigismund, who had however previously been elected king of Poland in 1587. (Before this date, Sigismund's

¹¹⁶ Räntekammarböcker vols. 35–38, RA; K 334, RA.

¹¹⁷ Räntekammarböcker vols. 39–46, RA; additional lists in Löningsregister vol. 19, RA.

¹¹⁸ Räntekammarböcker vols. 47–50, RA; a *mantalsregister* from 1568 in Strödda kameralia handlingar vol. 68, RA.

¹¹⁹ Strömberg 2013.

¹²⁰ Löningsregister vol. 1, RA; Räntekammarböcker vol. 43, RA.

¹²¹ Some are found in Räntekammarböcker, RA; some in Löningsregister vols. 1–2 and 19, RA; some in K14–15, RA; and a few in Skeppsgårdshandlingar vol. 43, RA.

¹²² Most in Strödda mantalsregister, RA; some in K14–15, RA.

¹²³ SBL: Gunilla Bielke.

¹²⁴ ÖgH 1595:11, RA.

¹²⁵ A wage list of 1598 in Hertigdömenas räntekammare, Johan av Östergötland, vol. 1, RA; from 1600 in Räntekammarböcker vol. 62, RA; a list of the members is also preserved from 1598 in Hovförtäringregister vol. 7, Slottsarkivet.

court was included in the wage lists of the royal court of his father.) He lived in Krakow, but travelled to Stockholm with his court in August, 1593, leaving again the next summer.¹²⁶ The members of his court in Stockholm during this time is know from two wage lists and a food register.¹²⁷ Sigismund then only returned to Sweden for a few months in 1598; after having been defeated in the battle of Stångebro by his uncle Charles, he then left Sweden for good. No wage lists are known from his court in Sweden for this year, and I have not included it in the population calculations.

Sigismund's sister Princess Anna followed her brother Sigismund to Poland when he was elected king there in 1587.¹²⁸ She returned to Sweden in 1589 to reside at the royal court in Stockholm, returning to Poland in 1592, and then coming back to Sweden in 1593 together with her brother. She then took up residence at Stegeborg castle in Östergötland, where she lived from 1595 to 1598, after which time went into exile to Poland together with her brother. Wage lists survive from her court in 1589–1591,¹²⁹ and food registers from 1593–1595.¹³⁰

The main political opponent of King Sigismund was his uncle Charles, the youngest son of King Gustav Vasa, who was to become crowned King Charles IX in the early seventeenth century. At his father's death in 1560 he was only 11 years old and seems to have resided at Gripsholm castle together with his sisters. In 1568 he sided with John in the rebellion against their half-brother King Erik and was rewarded with the control of his duchy in Central Sweden. He now moved his court to Nyköping castle, which remained the centre of the duchy until the mid-1590s. At this point, he once more rebelled against the king, defeated Sigismund, and then moved his seat of government to Stockholm. Duke Charles' court is known from wage lists from the 1560s and early 1570s, then mainly through food registers from the late 1570s and 1580s, and then again through wage lists only after his taking over of the government in the 1590s.¹³¹

¹²⁶ SBL: Sigismund.

¹²⁷ In Lönningsregister vol. 19, RA; Räntekammarböcker vol. 60, RA; and in Strödda mantalsregister, RA.

¹²⁸ SBL: Anna.

¹²⁹ Räntekammarböcker vol. 56–58, RA.

¹³⁰ Räntekammarböcker vol. 60, RA; Hovförtärlingsregister vol. 8, Slottsarkivet.

¹³¹ Wage lists 1563–1575 in Hertig Karls räntekammare, vols 1–2, RA; food registers 1575–1600 (but not from all years) in Hovförtärlingsräkenskaper vols. 4–6, Slottsarkivet; wage lists from 1598–1600 in Räntekammarböcker vols. 61–62, RA; a few lists in Röda nummer 53, RA; Hertig Karls räntekammare vol. 8, RA; Strödda mantalsregister, RA; K351, RA.

We now move on to the courts of the members of the royal family that did not ascend the throne, all children and grandchildren of King Gustav. His third son, Magnus, became duke of Östergötland, residing at Vadstena castle from 1560. As a consequence of him suffering from mental illness, his court decreased over time as his brothers stepped in and took over his duchy, and in 1588 he was moved out into the countryside to live at Kungsbro manor. Wage lists survive for some years during the 1560s and 1570s,¹³² and annually after his move to Kungsbro.¹³³ In addition, food registers survive for most years during the 1580s, as well as from his time at Kungsbro.¹³⁴

King Gustav's daughters (Cecilia, Anna, Elisabet, and Sofia) had a common court 1561–1568, which was called the court of *prinsessorna* or *fröknarna*. It seems to have resided at Gripsholm castle, although probably also spending time at Stockholm. The court decreased over time as the sisters married. Anna was first to go; in 1562, she married Count Georg Hans I of Pfalz-Lützelstein, where they moved.¹³⁵ Wage or food lists survive for the common court of the sisters for most years 1561–1568.¹³⁶

In 1564, Princess Cecilia married Count Kristoffer of Baden, with whom she soon travelled to England.¹³⁷ Fleeing debtors, they returned to Sweden in 1571; in 1575, Cecilia was widowed, and in 1579 she left the country for good. During the 1570s she mainly resided in Arboga. I have unfortunately been unable to trace any document concerning the size of her court during these years; it has been assumed to have been of the same size as her sister Sofia's.

Princess Sofia was the third sister to marry, in 1568. Her husband, Duke Magnus of Saxony, had previously kept his own (small) court in Stockholm by King Erik, from which time a wage list and a food register survives.¹³⁸ The couple settled at Ekolsund manor in Uppland. In 1579, Duke Magnus was expelled from Sweden, among other things for being physically violent towards his wife.¹³⁹ Sofia remained in Sweden throughout the century, her court staying at Ekolsund. Some wage lists survive mostly

¹³² Hertig Magnus räkenskapsböcker vols. 1–2, RA; Hovförtärlingsregister vol. 1, Slottsarkivet; Räkenskapsböcker vol. 50, RA; Skeppsgårdshandlingar vol. 62, RA.

¹³³ In ÖgH, RA

¹³⁴ Hovförtärlingsregister vols. 2–3, Slottsarkivet; for Kungsbro in ÖgH, RA.

¹³⁵ SBL: Anna.

¹³⁶ Räkenskapsböcker vol. 39, RA; K336, RA.

¹³⁷ SBL: Cecilia.

¹³⁸ Räkenskapsböcker vol. 39, RA; Strödda kamerale handlingar vol. 68, RA.

¹³⁹ SKBL: Sofia, prinsessa.

from when wages were paid out by her brother, King John.¹⁴⁰ A few food registers also survive.¹⁴¹ In addition, the couple's only surviving child, Gustav, had a separate court until he died from a shooting accident in 1597, 27 years old; its members are known from surviving lists 1594–1597.¹⁴²

The final royal court in sixteenth-century Sweden was that of King Gustav's youngest daughter, Elisabeth. She kept a court in Stockholm until 1581, when she married Count Kristofer of Mecklenburg.¹⁴³ The couple moved to his lands, where she stayed until after his death. In 1593 she returned to Sweden, settling with her court at Norrköpingshus in Östergötland, until her sudden death in 1597. From the period before her marriage, wage lists survive for most years.¹⁴⁴ For her time in Norrköping in the 1590s, food registers survive for most years up until her death.¹⁴⁵

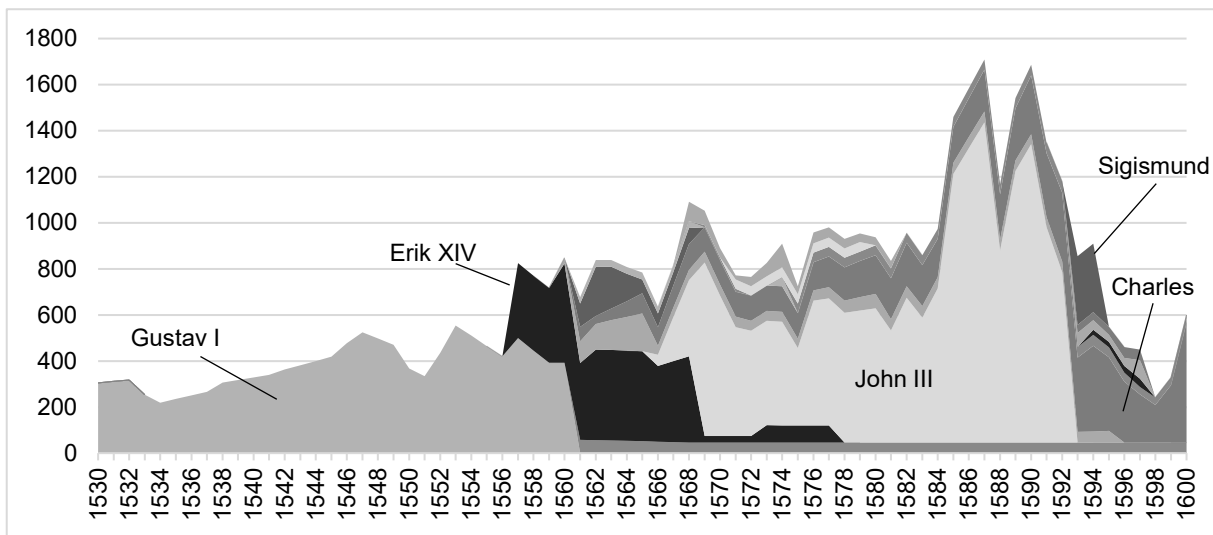


Figure 4.4. The number of households employed by the royal courts in Sweden, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

¹⁴⁰ Räkenskapsböcker vols. 49–50, RA.

¹⁴¹ K336–337, RA; UH 1600:13, RA.

¹⁴² K337, RA.

¹⁴³ SBL: Elisabet (Vasa).

¹⁴⁴ Räkenskapsböcker vols. 49–54, RA; K336, RA.

¹⁴⁵ K336, RA; Hovföretärräkenskaper vol. 8, Slottsarkivet.

In figure 4.4, we see how the size of the courts of the royal family varied over time, with one king succeeding another, as well as the relative sizes of the courts of the king, the queen widows, the dukes, and the princesses. By far most important of the royal courts was (for most of the century) that of the king. In the 1530s, King Gustav employed 200–250 households, a number which doubled to 400–500 at the end of his reign. His successor King Erik XIV then had a somewhat smaller court of about 300–350 householders; a large increase thus followed the rebellion in 1568, when King John already from the beginning of his reign employed some 500 households. The royal court then continued to expand, especially during the 1580s, as Prince Sigismund grew older. The royal court now consisted of some 800–900 householders, or 1200–1400 persons including servants. In contrast, Sigismund only brought some 250 households from Poland when visiting Stockholm in 1593–1594. The disappearance of the royal court after King John’s death must thus have put serious stress on the local population and economy of Stockholm. Duke Charles only had a court of some 150–200 households, which however expanded to close to 400 households when, having defeated his nephew, his court moved to Stockholm at the end of the century.

In comparison, the courts of princesses and widowed queen were always much more modest in size. They seem to have usually employed some 40–50 persons, although some courts (notably that of Anna, Sigismund’s sister) employed over a hundred, as did the collective court of the four daughters of Gustav Vasa in the years following their father’s death in 1560.

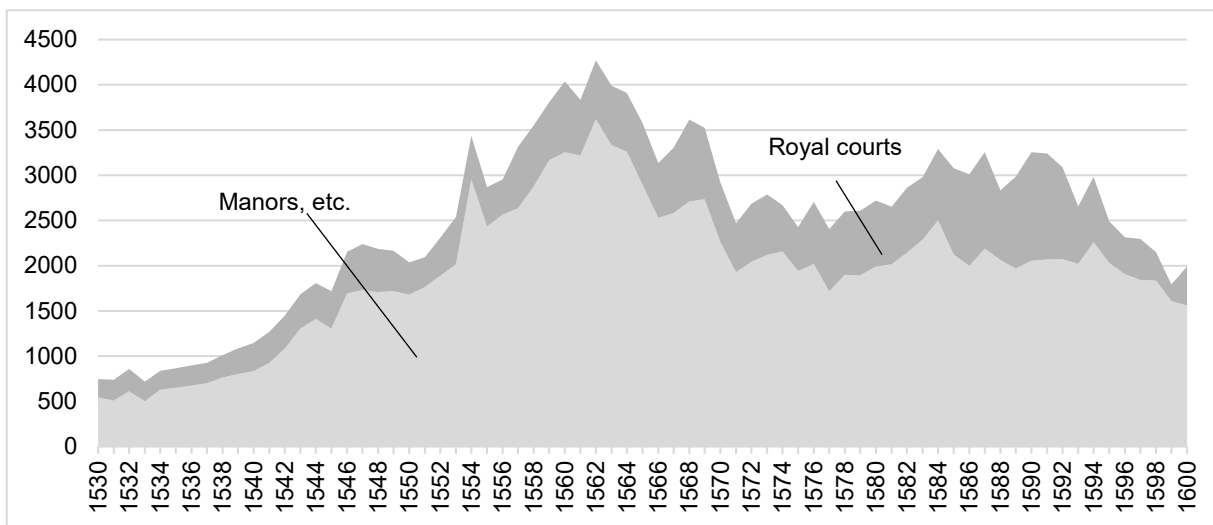


Figure 4.5. The number of households employed at various Crown establishments and at the royal courts in Sweden, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

We can now complete picture (previously shown in figure 4.3) of those employed at manors, castles, and other Crown establishments, with those employed at the royal courts. The result is shown in figure 4.5, which gives the complete figure for the number of households that in total were employed by the Swedish Crown. In 1530, the royal court of King Gustav made up no less than 30% of all those employed by the Crown. As the economic enterprises undertaken by the Crown expanded during the following decades, the figure decreased to about 15% in the 1550s, despite the expansion also of the king's court. The share however grew again, reaching over 30% by 1590, when the court had expanded while other crown establishments remained stagnant. In sum, the general picture remains of a rapidly expanding crown during the period ca. 1530–1563, followed by a rapid decrease during the wars of the 1560s. While other crown establishments remained rather stable for the rest of the century, increase in the total numbers during the 1580s and then decrease during the 1590s was mostly driven by changes in the royal courts. The figure can thus also be interpreted as showing the interest of the sixteenth-century monarchs changing between production and military strength (farms, mines, and castles) and court life.

5. The Church

The next social group that needs to be included in our calculation are those households that were working for various church institutions. The largest of the church institutions, monasteries and cathedrals, had been stripped of most of their property following the Reformation. This included their large demesne farms, many of which were taken over by the Crown and continued their existence during the sixteenth century (including e.g., the demesne farms of Julita, Eskilstuna, Alvastra and Vårfruberga monasteries). Some however remained the property of the church, and some church institutions even expanded during the latter part of the century. On top of this, the sometimes quite large households of the parish clergy also need to be added to the population figures.

Let us begin with the bishops, of which there were six in Sweden in 1530. They had by this time recently had all their castles and demesne farms taken over by the Crown, many of which were converted into royal manors. At least two bishops, those in Skara

and Linköping, were however granted a manor each by the king during the 1570s.¹⁴⁶ Their dependence of the Crown is shown by the fact that their accounts were still audited by state officials and kept in the same archival series as the Crown accounts. The number of households employed at a bishop's demesne farm was roughly equivalent to the number of workers at the smallest of the manors of the Crown.

The Diet in 1527 severely limited the begging rights of friars, and as a consequence, most convents ceased to exist already before 1530. Of the eleven (mostly Franciscan) convents that remained at that date, seven were dissolved in 1530–1531, another two later during the 1530s, while the last two convents (Krokek and Skänninge) lasted only to 1544.¹⁴⁷ As for monasteries, ten remained in 1530. Four or possibly five of these were abandoned during the 1530s, followed by Husby in Dalarna in 1545.¹⁴⁸ The four remaining monasteries (Riseberga, Vreta, Sko, and Vadstena) were all nunneries, where the nuns were mostly left to live out their lives without any new acolytes recruited. Riseberga functioned to probably not long after 1556, Vreta to 1582, and Sko to 1587. Accounts do not survive for any of these,¹⁴⁹ but they did not have any demesne farms and probably did not anymore employ any households. The only exception is Vadstena, which had been the largest and most prosperous monastery in late Medieval Sweden. It remained in function as a Catholic bastion, making new recruitments even during the late sixteenth century, until it was closed down in 1595. Accounts survive from Vadstena monastery up to 1570 (as well as for 1596, when it had been taken over by the Crown), showing it to have continued to run a demesne farm at Orlunda.¹⁵⁰ The accounts show the monastery employing around 10 households, which must have been much less than during its heyday, but still more than any other Catholic institution in sixteenth-century Sweden.

Most medieval hospitals seem to have survived the Reformation, although in several cases different earlier religious institutions were merged, while recently abandoned convent buildings were put to new uses.¹⁵¹ A major study of hospitals in Sweden is still lacking, and records are scarce for most of them; the majority of hospital accounts

¹⁴⁶ The oldest account from the manor of Linköping's bishop dates from 1580, ÖgH 1580:1, RA; those from Brunnbo outside Skara from 1574, VgH 1574:19, RA.

¹⁴⁷ Berntson 2003 p. 61–3.

¹⁴⁸ Berntson 2003 p. 61–3.

¹⁴⁹ Accounts for Vreta survive 1522–1532 in vol. X 953, KB; they are sadly so heavily damaged that I have not been allowed to view them.

¹⁵⁰ Vadstena accounts published in Silfverstolpe 1895; ÖgH 1596:16, RA.

¹⁵¹ On hospitals in general during the sixteenth century, see Morell 1989 p. 81–5.

are kept in the state archives, the earliest dating from the 1540s (Kalmar, Strängnäs and Stockholm).¹⁵² I have been able to identify 24 hospitals in Sweden during the sixteenth century, a number which certainly covers most but perhaps misses some.¹⁵³ Even for those hospitals with relatively good records, these only rarely go back before the 1570s. Many of the smaller hospitals have no surviving accounts at all, which means that the number of their staff and inmates has to be estimated by comparison with other hospitals. In the Church Ordinance of 1571, it was stated that hospitals in cathedral towns should be big enough to take in about 30 inmates,¹⁵⁴ but hospitals could certainly be smaller than this. Largest of all was Stockholm hospital, located at Danviken outside the city since a move in the 1550s. It employed as much as 25–30 households, mostly due to it running three demesne farms, and housed at times as much as 150 inmates. Most hospitals however only ran one demesne farm and consequently had much smaller staffs and fewer inmates. In total, it thus seems unlikely that the hospitals in sixteenth-century Sweden even together ever employed as much as 100 households; the number was probably more often less than half of this.

Finally, we come to the parish clergy, which made up the vast majority of the households employed by the church in Sweden during the sixteenth century. While those households employed at the demesne farms of hospitals, monasteries, and cathedrals are found in manorial accounts (although a significant amount of inter- and extrapolation has been necessary due to the fragmentary state of the church archives), the number of parish priests are usually found in taxation records and cadastral accounts. As the numbers were mostly constant over the century, I have only sampled their numbers for a few years, as interpolation between constant figures here is unproblematic. The total number of parish priest in Sweden was between 700 and 800, increasing slowly during the century.

¹⁵² E.g., SmH 1542:2B; SdH 1551:14; UH 1552:23, RA.

¹⁵³ Lists of hospitals survive for example in testamentary donations of the royal family; a list of 1560 from King Gustav Vasa does mostly overlap with a list made by King Erik XIV in 1564, but both contain some hospitals left out in the other. “Tuna hospital” in 1560 has for example not been identified – it could have been located in Dalarna (Stora Tuna) or in Roden (Biskopstuna), or somewhere else. Räntekammarböcker vols. 39, 41, RA.

¹⁵⁴ Blom 1991 p. 26.

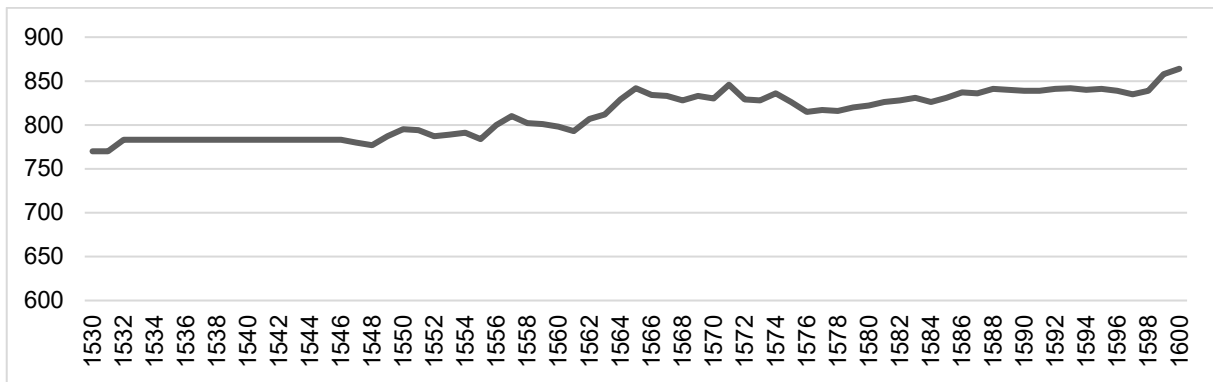


Figure 5.1. The total number of households employed by the church in Sweden, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

The total number of households employed by the various church institutions in sixteenth-century Sweden can be seen in figure 5.1. Most (about seven eighths) of these households were the parish clergy, while most of the rest were employed working the demesne farms of hospitals. By comparison to previous figures, it is quite clear that households employed by the church was a comparatively very small social group; While the church in 1530 had employed about the same number of households as the Crown, there was no comparable increase. The stagnant figures further mean that the number of parish clergy compared to peasant households, their most common parishioners, decreased over time despite the slow growth also of the clergy. Despite the importance attributed to the parish clergy in the Reformation, the number of priests per capita decreased.

6. The Nobility

We now move on to those who worked on estates owned by the nobility. In the same way as for the Crown's manors, the primary sources to study this should be food registers and wage lists. However, in contrast to the well-preserved archives of the Swedish Crown, accounts from private manors, owned by the nobility, are rarely preserved from the sixteenth century.¹⁵⁵ In addition, there is no catalogue listing those few records that do survive. I have thus only been able to track down accounts for

¹⁵⁵ Ferm 1990.

17 noble demesne farms, most of which are preserved in various private collections in the National Archives or in research libraries. In addition, these accounts all are quite limited compared to those of the Crown: they only cover one or a few years, most date from the end of the century (only Åkerö manor has accounts going back before 1550, and only another three go back into the 1560s), and most concern demesne farms owned by the highest nobility. They thus likely show the maximum number of people that were employed at nobility manors, while petty noblemen probably hired less hands.

In addition to these private accounts, there are accounts preserved in the Crown archives for about ten demesne farms which were confiscated from the nobility by the Crown around 1600, as their previous owners had supported the loosing King Sigismund in the civil war and subsequently fled the country. These accounts make it possible to get a good impression of the type and number of staff employed at these large farms around the year 1600.¹⁵⁶

A third source is a private account book kept by Karl Gera 1563–1565, in which he (among many other things) listed how many women (and a few men) he gave money to as tips when visiting various manors in Småland and Västergötland.¹⁵⁷ Gera's notes give some information on the number of women employed also at smaller manors, although it seems as if he mostly only tipped the women working inside (and not all dairy maids, etc.). As I do not use the number of women for the population calculations, the figures from Gera's notebook are not further cited below but have been included and discussed in the appendices.

Most nobility manors have thus left no accounts, and those few that have only cover a couple of years. I have thus developed a method to calculate how the number of households employed by the nobility changed over time. First, data on the number of demesne farms in each year and hundred has been taken from Almquist, with some corrections made, especially where he is vague on exact years.¹⁵⁸ All demesne farms have then been divided into three groups, trying to reflect the variation in size. The first group is the manorial seat of a common nobleman (*sätesgård*), which was the most common form of demesne farm. The second group accounts for the very large manors

¹⁵⁶ I have used the accounts of all of these confiscated demesne farms, even though some only survive for 1601 or 1602.

¹⁵⁷ X 265h, UUB.

¹⁵⁸ Almquist 1960. Corrections have for example been made for the enfeoffment of some crown manors.

of the high nobility: Data on which seats were built in stone has been taken from Samuelson, who previously used this as a measure of nobility wealth and standing during the sixteenth century.¹⁵⁹ (An alternative method, trying to get the size of the demesne or the social standing of each nobleman, would have been possible, but much more time-consuming and probably not more reliable.) The third group of manors are those that were also owned by the high nobility, but which were not used as their main seat, instead functioning as a large-scale demesne farm (*avelsgård*). Data on these also come from Almquist, although it seems like his treatment of them is less complete.¹⁶⁰ In addition, a fourth group consists of those royal castles for a time enfeoffed by the Crown to a member of the high nobility, such as Nyköping or Örebro.

The final step of the method is then to study the preserved accounts in order to see how many households a typical manor of each of the sizes would have employed. The result is that the largest manors (*stenhus*), owned by the high nobility, employed just over 9 households (10, including the noble family itself). An ordinary nobility manor (*sätessgård*) was smaller, housing a noble family and six other households. An *avelsgård* was even smaller: it was not the home of a noble family (who was wealthy enough to own another residence), so it only housed three households involved in working the land and running the farm. The size of the enfeoffed castles finally has been taken from the earliest Crown accounts from the same castles; they also varied somewhat in size but employed some 50 households.

¹⁵⁹ Samuelson 1993.

¹⁶⁰ The accounts of some of the demesne farms confiscated in 1599 for example show additional *avelsgårdar*, as Almquist mainly focuses on the *sätessgårdar* and sometimes leaves out the fact that a demesne farm continued to be used as an *avelsgård*.

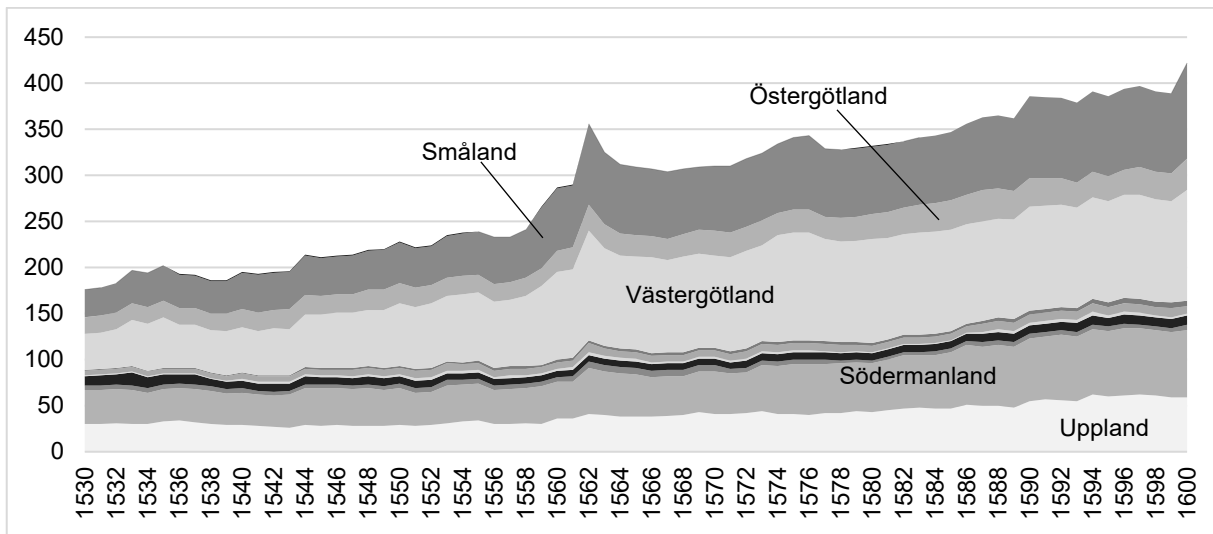


Figure 6.1. The number of nobility manors in the provinces of Sweden, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database; mainly based on Almquist 1960.

The total number of nobility demesne farms (including *avelsgårdar*) in sixteenth-century Sweden can be seen in figure 6.1, which also shows their regional distribution. Throughout the century, the majority of Swedish nobility manors were located in just four provinces: Uppland, Södermanland, Småland, and Västergötland. No manors at all were located in Gästrikland or Norrland, while very few were found on Öland, or in Dalarna.

This regional imbalance became even more pronounced as the century progressed and the number of nobility demesne farms grew. By 1530, there were less than 180 demesne farms in all of Sweden, of which more than three quarters were located in the four provinces mentioned above. The number then increased steadily during the century, reaching 200 in 1544, 300 in 1562, and 400 in 1600. The ‘peak’ in 1562 is due to the Crown in this year surveying all nobility estates and reclassifying into ordinary peasant farms those nobility farms where for example a noble woman was found to have married a commoner. The sharp increase in 1600 is instead due to Almquist often saying that a manor was founded ‘at the turn of the century’.¹⁶¹ It is difficult to be more exact regarding the late 1590s, when civil war led both to some nobility going into exile and to the ennoblement of those that had supported

¹⁶¹ Almquist 1960 *passim*.

the rebellion of Duke Charles. Some of the manors probably did come into being already a few years earlier, others however perhaps not until a couple of years into the seventeenth century.

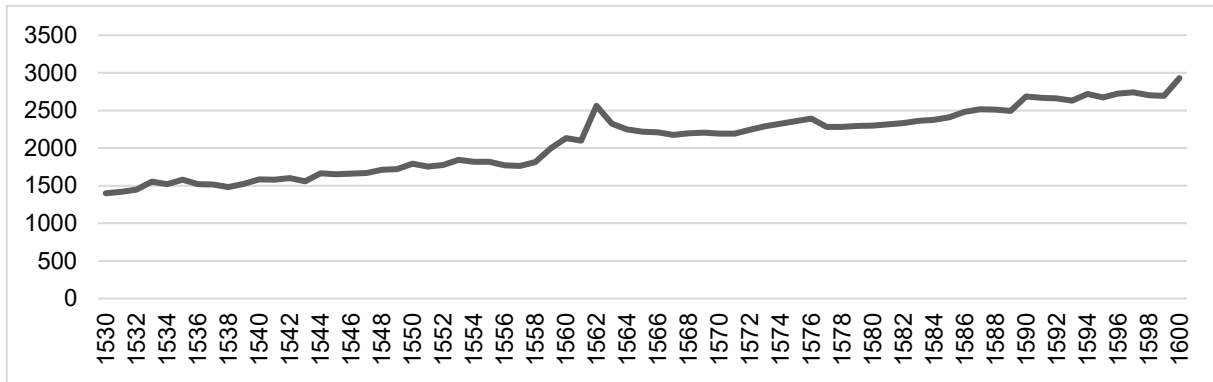


Figure 6.2. The number of households working at nobility manors in Sweden, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

The rising number of nobility demesne farms led to an equivalent rise in the number of households employed by the nobility, even though most of the castles that had been enfeoffed by the Crown during the 1530s and 1540s (such as Nyköping, Stegeborg, Örebro, and Älvsborg) were subsequently taken back. In 1530, the nobility together employed about 1,400 households, twice as much as the Crown did at this time (see figure 4.4). The number increased by 50% to 1560, when it reached over 2,000, and then by another 50% to 1600, when it reached over 2,900. Compared to seventy years earlier, the number of households employed by the nobility had thus more than doubled. So had however also the number of demesne farms, a fact which indicates that the average nobility demesne farm decreased somewhat in size over the century. The number of households employed by the nobility by 1600 once more outnumbered those employed by the Crown (including at the royal courts), which had not been the case during the Crown's most expansive phase around the middle of the century.

7. Towns

There were 58 towns in sixteenth-century Sweden, varying in size from Stockholm at the top down to small marketplaces or fishing communities where perhaps just a dozen of households lived. Some new towns were founded during the century,

especially in provinces where towns had not previously existed (such as Värmland and the provinces of Norrland) which meant an expansion of the urban frontier northwards. In other cases, old towns were moved to new (nearby) locations, such as the movement of Nya Lödöse to Älvsborg in the 1540s (a town which was then moved back again after the Nordic Seven Years' War), or the movement of Trosa to Trosa åminne. Other towns were instead deserted and abandoned, their land turned into peasant holdings: this fate especially struck small towns in Småland (Pata, Vetlanda, and Vimmerby), while Skänninge in Östergötland lost its town privileges for a couple of decades, regaining them again after the 1560s' war.

For our population calculations, it is important to know which places were towns, as there would have lived people otherwise not included in any other source. Finding (or defining) towns in sixteenth-century Sweden is however not entirely straightforward. It seems that places did not need specific urban privileges in order to count or function as a town. First, several towns (such as Nora kyrkopol, Lindesås, Norberg, and Sala) were located in the mining districts, and instead probably owed their existence to the privileges of respective district. Second, several small towns on the Baltic Sea coast whose main trade was fishing (and trade in fish) functioned without town privileges (but perhaps enjoyed fishing privileges instead). This includes Älvkarleby and nearby Roteskär, at least some parts of the triple-town constellation of Nya Östhammar–Gamla Östhammar–Öregrund, Norrtälje, and Trosa åminne. Of these, Norrtälje is thought to have been founded only in the seventeenth century, and the same is true of Mariefred and Mönsterås. In this study, they have however all been counted among the towns of the sixteenth century, based on one or more of the following criteria: they paid urban taxes, were included in lists of towns, were described as towns in the bailiff accounts, or had some urban administration such as a town bailiff. The classification of these locations as towns matters both for us being able to estimate the population figures, which would otherwise not show up in cadastres or other taxation lists, and because their populations differed from the surrounding countryside in regard to their social structures.

The most common source listing urban populations in the sixteenth century were taxation lists.¹⁶² Sometimes other kinds of lists of urban inhabitants survive, such as enumerations (*mantalsregister*) of several town populations made during the 1580s and 1590s. The purpose of these lists however also seems to have been connected to

¹⁶² Cf. Sidén 2002.

taxation, as they were used to check those who claimed to be tax exempt. Figures of the total number of households in a town is further sometimes included in local bailiff accounts. These were based on taxation lists which themselves not always survive and are thus a good compliment to the full taxation lists. The numbers in the accounts were however usually not annually renewed, as the bailiff either did not bother to acquire a new population list, or did anyway not make a new count. In contrast to the rural cadastral lists, urban taxes were owed by the town as a collective, which meant that it mattered less to the Crown who participated in paying them. However, in order to adjust the annual sums owed by the urban community, as well as for distributing the burden of subsidy taxations, some information on the number of inhabitants was needed. A few central lists of the number of urban inhabitants in several towns thus also survive (presumably collected from mostly lost population lists), e.g. from 1566 (when the Crown's interest probably was connected to the high mortality of the ongoing the plague epidemic) and from 1591. In addition, urban taxation lists also often survive for subsidy taxations paid by individual households, such as the wealth taxation in 1571. A final source type of source are the bailiff records from 1590, when parish priests had to pay a subsidy based on the number of households in their congregations. For some of the smaller towns, this resulted in notes on urban population sizes that would otherwise have remained unknown.

The source situation thus varies considerably from town to town. From about a third of the towns in Sweden, population lists survive already from the 1530s or 1540s. For most other towns the earliest data comes from the 1550s, while for a few no population figures at all survive from before 1560 (Västerås 1561, Arboga, Köping, Örebro and Västervik 1562, Nyköping 1566, Bogesund 1571). In addition, no town has population figures surviving from every year after the date of its first list. Interpolations are therefore frequently needed for the calculations of the urban populations, and extrapolations (mainly by keeping the population figure constant) have further frequently been necessary for the earlier decades.

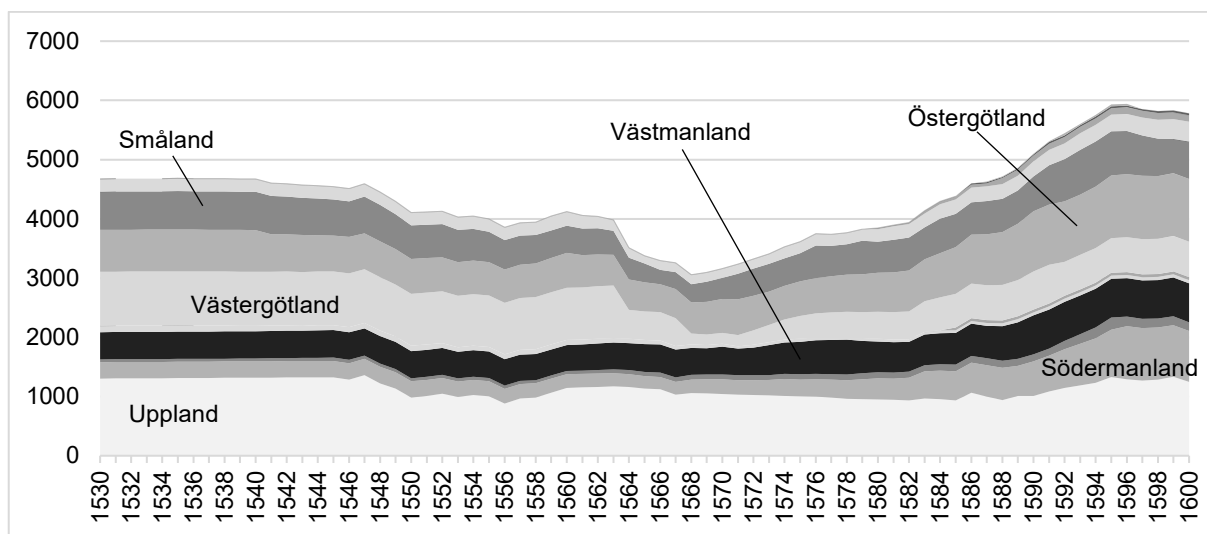


Figure 7.1. The number of households in towns (excluding the workers of castles, etc.) in the provinces of Sweden, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

In figure 7.1, we see a preliminary sketch of the general development of the number of urban households in sixteenth-century Sweden. The development is preliminary as it excludes those households that were tax exempt, that is mainly those households which were employed by the Crown (at castles and at the royal courts), or by church institutions (such as hospitals). As these households have already been included in the population calculations, they are excluded here; the total urban population figures are instead presented in the next section, on social structure. The general development shows a small reduction in the number of urban households (from about 4,500 in 1540 to 4,000 in 1560), mainly due to a decrease in Uppland, where we may recall that the Crown expanded. The number was then rapidly reduced to 3,000 in 1566, as towns were apparently hard hit by the war and the plague epidemic. The latter part of the century was then instead characterized by urban expansion. The urban population (excluding castles etc.) thus grew by about a third from the 1530s to the 1590s, while doubling from its nadir in 1566 to its maximum in 1596. A cursory look at the regional figures indicates diverging trends, with expansion in Södermanland and Västmanland while Västergötland instead experienced urban decline. We will soon return to these trends when discussing the social structure.

8. The population of sixteenth-century Sweden

In the last seven chapters we have been concerned only with determining the number of households. The final step that needs to be taken in order to calculate population figures for sixteenth-century Sweden is to convert the household figures (that we have now obtained for every year and every hundred) into individuals. This is done by multiplying the number of households with an average household size. Forssell, writing in the nineteenth century, thought that the average household size could not be determined more exactly than having been somewhere between 5 and 7 individuals.¹⁶³ Palm did further studies, noting that the average household size in 1751 (the first year with contemporary statistical data) was 5.69. He then calculated the average household size of 1571 to 5.27, a figure he however later revised upwards to circa 5.9, and thought almost certainly within the interval 5.5–6.4.¹⁶⁴ This however includes the later conquered provinces; a recalculation for just Sweden within its sixteenth-century borders results in an average household size of 6.0.¹⁶⁵ Palm's earlier calculation has been accepted as "realistic" also by Edvinsson.¹⁶⁶

Palm further calculated regional average household sizes, which he then used for his population calculation. For this, he used taxation lists that recorded the number of young men in each household in 1576.¹⁶⁷ While these taxation lists in some areas include only servants, in others regions they also include live-at-home sons (and brothers, and sons-in-law, etc.).¹⁶⁸ Palm uses the ration between these two groups from areas where this is known to complete the data for the areas in which data on the number of sons is missing. I am however doubtful if this results in reliable figures, as there also existed regional variation in the preference of peasants of hiring servants as compared to instead keeping further sons living at home. This can be exemplified

¹⁶³ Forssell 1872–1883.

¹⁶⁴ Palm 2021 p. 80, 85. Palm's recent correction to this figure (see table 1) however results in an average household size of only 5.34 individuals.

¹⁶⁵ Calculated from Palm 2021 tabs. 15 and 17.

¹⁶⁶ Edvinsson 2008 p. 21.

¹⁶⁷ Palm 2021.

¹⁶⁸ Andersson 2020.

by notes in the subsidy taxation records from Eastern Närke in 1596, where for many households it is stated that many peasant “has his son on the farm as his farmhand”.¹⁶⁹

Palm’s method further estimates the number of young women estimated based on the number of young men, as there were no taxations in the sixteenth century targeting female servants (or daughters living at home). In addition, as the number of young children is also unknown for the sixteenth century, their population share is also based only on later data. In conclusion, although Palm’s method has the advantage of introducing regional variation in household size (based mainly on variations in the number of male servants in 1576), the problem is that the method results in regional variation being built on the assumption that a region with many male servants would also have had more female servants as well as children.

Although there certainly was some regional variation in household size during the sixteenth century, its magnitude and change over time thus remains unknown. As a consequence, and in order not to introduce regional variation that cannot be proven by the sources, I have chosen to just use one fixed constant of **6.0 individuals** as the average household size. Regional variation cannot be measured, and variation over time in average household size cannot be seen. The latter point is especially important concerning years of mortality crises (such as the 1560s), when the number of households dramatically decreased; although it is very probable that the average household size also decreased in these years, such decrease can thus not be included in the following calculations.

A consequence of using a constant household size is thus that it may underestimate sudden changes in population size, although these changes probably lie within $\pm 10\%$. The same is true for the missing regional variation: in most regions in Sweden, average household size was (according to Palm) between 5.5 and 6.5 individuals in the seventeenth century, thus within 10% from the average now used. Even local population figures should thus be correct within these limits. It should finally be noted that the uncertainty regarding the average household size only affects the following calculations of the population figures and the population density, while the studies of the social structure remain unaffected.

¹⁶⁹ Examples in Sköllersta and in Asker hundreds; NH 1596:6: ”haver son i gården till dräng”.

Population totals

A general overview of the calculated number of inhabitants in Sweden and in its seventeen provinces is given in table 8.1. In 1530, Sweden had a population of about 430,000 inhabitants. Most populous of the provinces was Småland, where 20% of the country's population lived, followed by Västergötland (17%) and Uppland (16%). The population had increased to about 450,000 by 1540 and reached close to 520,000 by 1560. It then decreased by over 30,000 during the next decade, attaining its previous level again only in 1580. The crisis of the 1560s may thus be seen as a loss of population equivalent to twenty years' normal increase. In 1590, the population in Sweden for the first time reached over 550,000, and at the turn of the century the total population in the provinces here studied was 572,000. By now, 19% of the population lived in Småland, 18% in Västergötland, and only 14% in Uppland. As the population had increased by 142,000 during the seven decades, it also became somewhat more evenly spread over the country. Although the previously most populous provinces remained most populous, their shares of the country's population had decreased from 53% to 51%.

Another way to measure regional trends in the population growth is by comparing the population share of a province in 1530 with its share of the population increase up to 1600. Uppland then comes out on the losing side: while it had 16% of the country's population in 1530, it only took 9% of the population increase. Among the clear 'winners' were Dalarna (with 10% of the population increase compared to 5% of the population), Västergötland (20% compared to 13%), Värmland (7% of the increase compared to 2% of the population), and Dalsland (4% of the increase but only 1% of the population). 'Losers', besides Uppland, were Östergötland (10% of the population but only 6% of the increase) and Småland (20% of the population, but only 15% of the population increase). Overall, it is thus evident that populous provinces in Eastern Sweden were losing compared to the relatively sparsely populated provinces in the west. Overall, as can be seen in figure 8.1, this however only resulted in very marginal changes to the provinces' population shares during the century. Population growth in sixteenth-century Sweden did thus not significantly alter the country's population distribution.

Table 8.1. Total population in the provinces of Sweden, decadal figures, 1530–1600.

PROVINCE	1530	1540	1550	1560	1570	1580	1590	1600
UPPLAND	68,749	74,495	77,195	82,445	78,443	75,967	83,898	82,235
SÖDERMANLAND	34,194	34,518	35,611	37,737	36,621	39,568	44,157	46,508
NÄRKE	13,437	13,940	14,669	15,461	14,656	16,378	19,148	16,458
VÄSTMANLAND	17,218	19,268	20,056	22,255	21,355	22,505	22,901	23,671
DALARNA	19,894	22,005	26,176	29,482	30,576	32,864	34,859	34,812
VÄRMLAND	9,522	10,414	10,900	12,987	13,074	13,592	18,232	19,505
DALSAND	5,076	5,287	5,480	6,967	5,896	8,318	9,471	10,692
VÄSTERGÖTLAND	74,058	77,891	80,966	87,652	73,721	86,459	94,899	103,012
ÖSTERGÖTLAND	41,692	43,457	45,759	48,840	46,381	50,700	50,043	50,146
SMÅLAND	85,802	87,209	89,315	98,885	93,953	99,105	103,515	106,745
ÖLAND	8,034	8,492	8,627	8,902	8,493	8,953	8,843	8,992
GÄSTRIKLAND	4,551	4,941	5,371	5,641	5,199	5,570	5,787	6,577
HÄLSINGLAND	15,858	17,069	18,791	20,962	20,475	20,443	19,642	20,450
MEDELPAD	3,914	4,345	4,812	5,054	4,587	4,987	4,212	5,765
ÅNGERMANLAND	11,616	12,307	13,216	16,622	15,311	14,990	13,112	15,493
VÄSTERBOTTEN	13,350	13,925	14,416	16,221	14,738	15,992	16,371	17,539
LAPPMARKERNA	2,244	2,244	2,244	2,190	2,358	2,634	2,898	3,300
SWEDEN	429,209	451,807	473,603	518,303	485,836	519,024	551,989	571,899

Source: Population database.

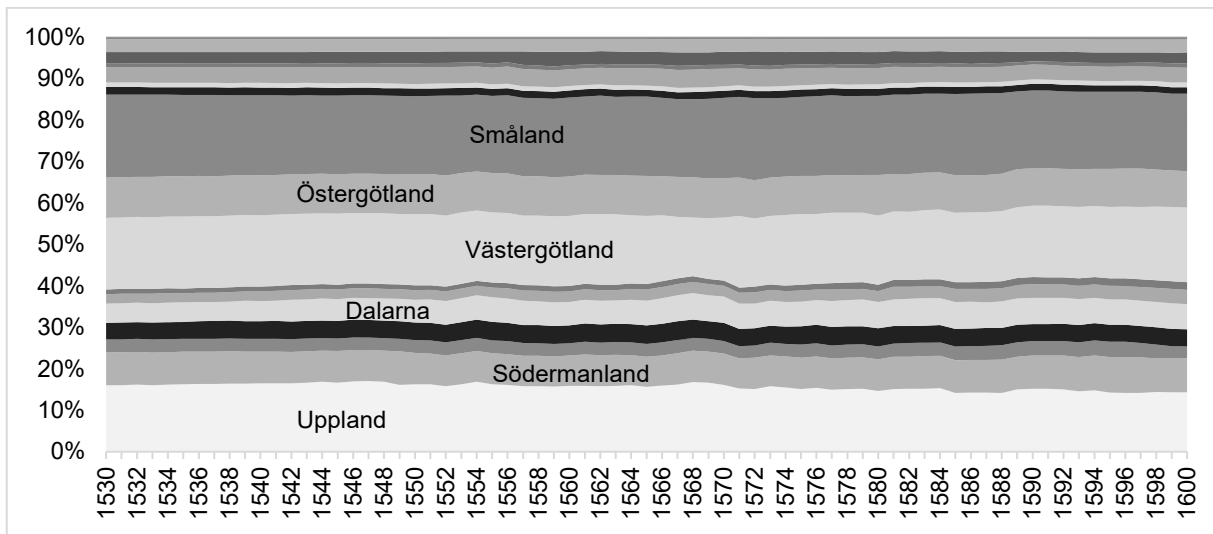


Figure 8.1. The population shares of the provinces in Sweden, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

How, then, do these figures compare to those found in previous research? Going all the way back to table 1, we recall that Sundquist thought that Sweden in 1563 had 800,000 inhabitants, a number which Heckscher (for 1570) reduced to 750,000.¹⁷⁰ More recently, Edvinsson proposed that Sweden in 1570 had 600,000–680,000 inhabitants.¹⁷¹ Compared to my results, Edvinsson's figure is therefore 24–40% too high, while that of Heckscher is 55% and that of Sundquist 53% too high.¹⁷² In comparison, the results found in this study are well within the limits of Forssell's (broad) interval, in fact close to its centre.¹⁷³ Palm's figure from 2000 is 9% below mine, while his revision from 2021 is 5% above, and his correction from 2024 5% below.¹⁷⁴ The results of my studies thus mainly corroborate Palm (and Forssell) for the national population figure around 1570 (with minor adjustments). They are further well in line also with a recent estimate by Janken Myrdal for 1520, 420,000, a figure which is based exclusively on Medieval sources.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁰ Sundquist 1938; Heckscher 1935.

¹⁷¹ Edvinsson 2008.

¹⁷² Although Heckscher reduced Sundquist's guesstimate, he also changed the year to after the Nordic Seven Year's war, which explains why their figures are off by about the same proportion.

¹⁷³ Forssell 1872–1883.

¹⁷⁴ Palm 2000; Palm 2021. For the correction, see table 1.

¹⁷⁵ Myrdal *forthcoming* p. 20. Thanks to Janken for sharing his manuscript with me.

We now move on to study the annual population growth rates and (in the following section) the population density. Although these measures are interesting in themselves, they also allow further comparisons with other regions in Northern Europe, which may be used as controls of how well the results of the population calculations may have captured the actual development.

Population growth rates

The population increase in Sweden during the period 1530–1600 was as we saw above 142,000 individuals, or a total of 33%.¹⁷⁶ This growth can now be broken down both regionally and over the century. First, in figure 8.2 we see how the population increase varied between the Swedish provinces. While the population increase from 1530 to 1600 in Värmland and Dalsland was over 100%, and that in Dalarna close to 80%, most provinces only experienced a population increase of about 30–40%. In five provinces (Uppland, Närke, Östergötland, Småland, and Öland) the population increase was instead as low as or even below 20%.

This regional variation can further be broken down on the hundred level, as seen in the map of figure 8.3. We see that Western Sweden was by far the most fast-growing region, including Western Dalarna, Värmland, Dalsland, and Western Västergötland. In Eastern Sweden, the only hundred which could match this population increase was Öknebo (where the town of Södertälje grew rapidly towards the end of the century). Most fast-growing of all was Väse hundred in Värmland, where population increased by 161%, followed by a number of hundreds in the Northern Göta River Valley (Flundre, Väne, Bjärke, and Ale), where population increased by 142–153%.

¹⁷⁶ It may be noted that in the following section the average household size does not matter, as long as a constant household size is assumed.

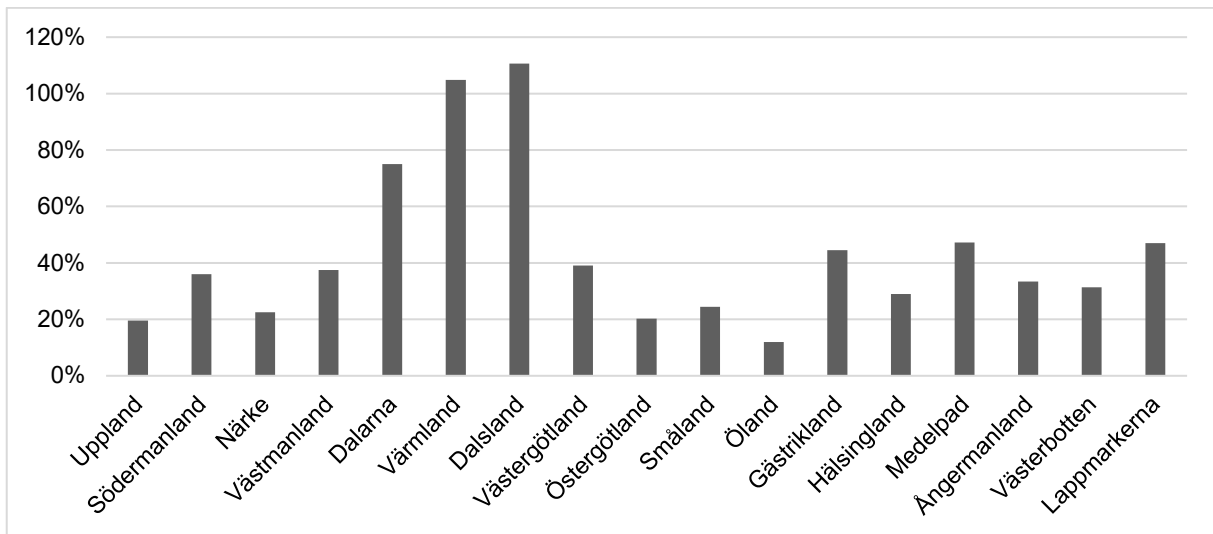


Figure 8.2. Regional population increase (per cent) from 1530 to 1600 in the provinces of Sweden.
Source: Population database.

At the other end of the scale there were 16 hundreds in which the population actually decreased during the period, remarkably as these localities were going against the national trend. These hundreds were clustered in four–five regions: One was South-Eastern Småland (Handbörd, Stranda, and Norra Möre hundreds, with slow growth also in adjacent hundreds and on Öland), another Central Östergötland, and a third South and Central Västergötland (where deurbanization caused the populations of Kinne and Skåning to decrease). Population further decreased or was stagnant also in in Eastern Närke, as well as in a belt stretching over most of Central Uppland, from its northern coast down to Stockholm. Most severe was the population decrease in Handbörd in Småland (20%), while the population in some hundreds in Östergötland decreased by about 15%.

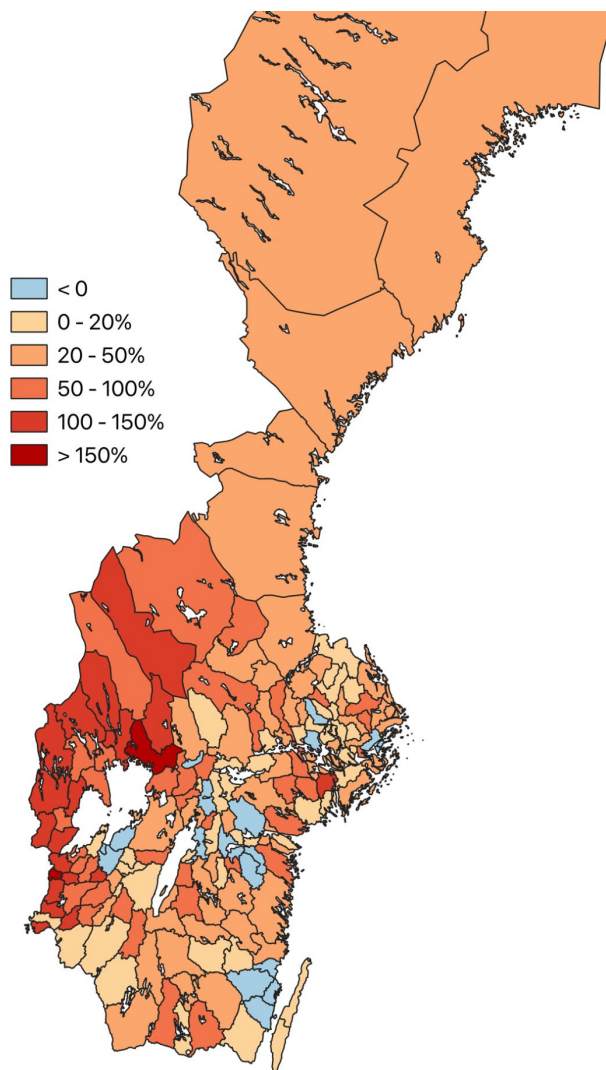


Figure 8.3. Regional population increase (per cent) in the hundreds of Sweden, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

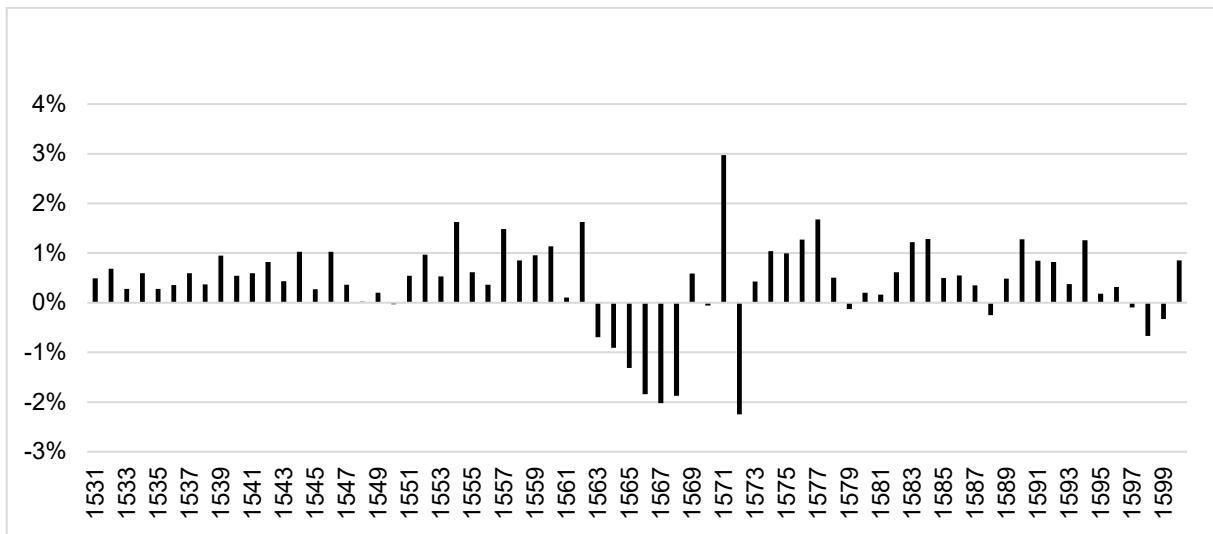


Figure 8.4. Annual national population growth/decrease in Sweden (per cent), 1531–1600.
Source: Population database.

Figure 8.4 shows that there further also was substantial variation in population increase over time. While the national population growth rate in Sweden in most years was between 0.5 and 1% during the sixteenth century, there were also some shorter intervals when the growth rate was close to zero or even negative. These periods, when the population of Sweden was stagnant or even decreasing, were 1548–1550, 1563–1568, 1570 and 1572, 1579–1581, 1588, and 1595–1599. Of these, 1563–1568 clearly stands out as the worst population crisis of the century, when the national population decreased by 1–2% per year. Further population decrease followed also in 1570 and 1572 (although we know from before that the population calculations for 1571–1572 are uncertain due to the difficulties of estimating the number of deserted farms in Västergötland because of the war).

What caused these periods of population stagnation or decrease? Most important was epidemic mortality, caused by plague. One epidemic hit 1547–1550, the next 1565–1567, a third 1571–1573, a fourth 1579–1581, and one last in 1588–1590.¹⁷⁷ The close connection between plague and population decrease is thus evident for all of the episodes of population loss but the 1590s. To this should be added the impact of the

¹⁷⁷ There is yet no academic work on the plague epidemics in Sweden during the sixteenth century; I will treat the subject in detail in a forthcoming work.

Nordic Seven Years' War in the 1560s, during which time a vast number of farms in Southern Sweden were burned down or pillaged; this would both have resulted in direct war casualties, in harvest failures and possible starvation, and in furthering the spread of the plague (and possibly also of other epidemic diseases). The final population decrease, that of the 1590s, is unique in that plague was not a contributing factor. This population decrease was instead caused by adverse weather conditions, which resulted in catastrophic harvests and starvation. This has been known at least since a publication by Utterström in 1955, although he based his account mainly on narrative sources,¹⁷⁸ while Dribe, Olsson and Svensson also found evidence of a sharp increase in prices in 1597, caused by the harvest failure.¹⁷⁹

As the population decrease of the 1590s uniquely stands out as not being caused by plague, it may be justified to include a digression on its causes, although they have to be gathered mainly from narrative sources. The parish priest Joen Petri Klint, writing a manuscript on the phenomenon on omens towards the end of the century, mentions two episodes of epidemic diseases spreading in the early 1590s. In 1592, according to Klint, "struck a most terrible measles epidemic" (which presumably killed King John III) as well as "difficult coughing and chest sickness".¹⁸⁰ In 1594, "many wonderous sicknesses and new struck, partly swelling around the neck or head, became in five or six days large like a club; *item* difficult chest and abdominal cramps".¹⁸¹ It is not possible to determine if these epidemics are reflected in the national population figures, but then follows Klint's descriptions of the epidemics 1596–1597. According to Klint, the years were the worst since the time of the Black Death. He claimed that there were so many poor and sick Finns (including Finnish children) roaming around the countryside in Östergötland, who stole and ate turnips and peas out in the fields and swiddens, as well as the fruit from the trees before it even had ripened "so that nothing could be defended from that 'company of chewers'".¹⁸² They further, according to Klint, stole sheaves of grain from the fields during the harvest, as well as hens, geese, and lamb from farm buildings, butchering them hidden in the woods. A concrete example is taken from a wedding (probably

¹⁷⁸ Utterström 1955.

¹⁷⁹ Dribe, Olsson & Svensson 2017 p. 193–4.

¹⁸⁰ Linköpings stiftsbibliotek vol. N 28, fol. 145r: "en mesta förfärlig mässling vankade", "svår hosta och bröstsjuka".

¹⁸¹ Linköpings stiftsbibliotek vol. N 28, fol. 161r: "vankade många underliga sjukdomar och nya, som var en part svullnade om halsen och huvudet, var på 5 eller 6 dagar stort på dem som en klubba. Item svåra rev och håll."

¹⁸² Linköpings stiftsbibliotek vol. N 28, fol. 176r: "så att man kunde intet försvarat för det tuggaresällskapet".

visited by the priest himself), taking place in Lent 1598 in Mellanvika (Vikbolandet) in Östergötland. To the wedding came many beggars asking for something to eat; in the end, they cooked some self-dead lambs. Another concrete example mentioned was a Polish woman, who in March 1598 took and ate a dead calf found on the ground in Östra Stenby parish (in Östkind hundred, the parish in which Klint lived), while two women were convicted for having slaughtered and ate a fat horse, which belonged to a peasant living somewhere between Vadstena and Linköping.

Klint explained all of the above things by the horrible harvest failures, which lead to “hunger and dear times” in 1597 and 1598. People in general resorted to eating bread made from moss, hazel buds, chaffs, acorns, and linden bark, to picking juniper berries, threshing and grinding them to malt, because of the great distress. Children and the elderly died from hunger, and the bodies of beggars were frequently found dead in huts, saunas, stables, and even outside in the snow. Theft became so common that no one dared to let beggars in. The priest further complained that one never saw these beggars in the church on Sundays, as they instead spent their time breaking in to steal whatever they could take; “an awful amount of people was hanged or whipped by the pillow during these years”.¹⁸³

Another document preserving the memory of the awful years was written down by the priest and some parishioners in Örslösa parish on Kålland in Västergötland.¹⁸⁴ According to their story, everything was still going well by Midsummer, 1596, but in the beginning of July there began to fall so much rain that suddenly all bridges were swept away, and the people who were at the fair in Skara struggled to get back home. As fields and pastures were flooded, all harvest was ruined, and this in turn resulted in cattle diseases spreading and killing most animals during the following winter. Prices of foodstuffs skyrocketed, while people first sent their children out to beg on the highways and then left their homes themselves, dying from hunger and starvation. As in Klint’s story, also on Kålland people started making bread out of mash, chaff, bark, buds, nettles, leaves, hay, stray, peatmoss, nutshells, and pea-stalks; many people were thought to have died from eating such bread. Many widows, according to this testimony, were found dead outside with their mouths full of grass. Corpses were found dead in houses, hiding under barns, in the ovens of saunas; many bodies were mutilated or eaten by dogs. People were further found in their homes lying dead

¹⁸³ Linköpings stiftsbibliotek vol. N 28, fol. 175v: ”Vart svåra mycket folk hängt hudstruket vid kåken de åren”.

¹⁸⁴ This source was also referred by Utterström 1955 p. 27–8.

beside their hand-mills, in which there was found chaff and bark. Also on Kålland, people resorted to stealing: “Gallows were built in our district and hang full; Women were flogged and had their hair and ears cut off at the gallows.” In the wake of the starvation came disease: dysentery (*rödsot*) killed “countless”, while others were thought to have died from hunger.

A third narrative source concerning the crisis of the 1590s are notes regarding the weather and related facts made by the parish priest Petrus Magni in Ålem in Småland.¹⁸⁵ In the summer of 1596 fell so much rain in Ålem that the peasants could go fishing in their fields. The harvest was lost and the livestock died, resulting in widespread famine. The spring of 1597 was cold and wet, so that the fields were like lakes; further animals froze to death. The fields were flooded again this summer, and in the autumn, bread was baked with bark and peatmoss, while the number of beggars exploded; “Many were heard to say that they wished for death”, and young men and women offered to work for free as servants in order to receive any food.

The contemporary narrative sources can be backed up by modern climate research. Martin Skoglund found these years to have been the coldest of the century,¹⁸⁶ and tithe data proves that the harvests in 1596–1597 were among the worst of the century (although harvests also very meagre around 1570).¹⁸⁷ Through the narrative sources, we learn that the cold and wet weather killed the crops in 1596, leading to animal disease spreading in the winter (a result of the bad quality of the fodder). When also the next year’s weather was adverse, the crisis was a fact. This first resulted in widespread begging, then in widespread stealing of food (which was harshly punished by the authorities), and then in very high mortality. However, only the document from Västergötland mentions a spread of epidemic disease (dysentery) related to the starvation, while the priests in Småland and Östergötland only referred mortality directly caused by hunger. Perhaps the mortality crisis and population loss of the 1590s thus was less disastrous than it would have been, had more epidemic diseases begun to spread.

For all of Sweden, the average annual population growth rate during the period 1530–1600 was 0.4%. As the 1560s was such a watershed between two periods of more or less continuous population growth, it may be useful to calculate figures

¹⁸⁵ Ålems kyrkoarkiv vol. L1a:1, VLA; referred to by Utterström 1955 p. 28–9.

¹⁸⁶ Skoglund 2023 p. 41.

¹⁸⁷ Leijonhufvud 2001 p. 240.

also for the three separate subperiods 1536–1560, 1561–1575, and 1576–1600. This results in an annual population growth rate of 0.6% for the first subperiod and 0.5% for the third, while the population decreased annually by 0.2% during the middle period, 1561–1575.

Table 8.2. Annual population growth rates in Sweden, 1536–1600.

PROVINCE	1536–1560	1561–1575	1576–1600	1530–1600
UPPLAND	0.5%	–0.6%	0.2%	0.3%
SÖDERMANLAND	0.4%	–0.2%	0.7%	0.4%
NÄRKE	0.5%	0.0%	0.1%	0.3%
VÄSTMANLAND	0.7%	–0.2%	0.2%	0.4%
DALARNA	1.5%	0.0%	0.6%	0.8%
VÄRMLAND	1.2%	0.2%	1.8%	1.0%
DALSLAND	1.3%	0.3%	1.5%	1.1%
VÄSTERGÖTLAND	0.6%	–0.2%	0.8%	0.5%
ÖSTERGÖTLAND	0.5%	–0.4%	0.3%	0.3%
SMÅLAND	0.5%	–0.2%	0.4%	0.3%
ÖLAND	0.4%	–0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
GÄSTRIKLAND	0.8%	–0.3%	0.8%	0.5%
HÄLSINGLAND	1.0%	–0.1%	0.0%	0.4%
MEDELPAD	0.8%	–0.1%	0.7%	0.5%
ÅNGERMANLAND	1.3%	–0.3%	0.0%	0.4%
VÄSTERBOTTEN	0.7%	–0.3%	0.5%	0.4%
LAPPMARKERNA	–0.1%	0.5%	1.1%	0.5%
SWEDEN	0.6%	–0.2%	0.5%	0.4%

Source: Population database.

How then do the calculated annual growth rates compare to previous Swedish research? As most historians only have studied the period after 1570, we should compare with the calculated annual growth rate of 0.5%. Sundquist and Heckscher both based their calculations on the *a priori* assumption that population growth had to be modest during the latter part of the sixteenth century. Their values (here once

more referring to table 1) was 0.18% and 0.27% respectively,¹⁸⁸ which is far below what we find, and also far below what is now known to have been the case in other countries. Sven Lilja has recently proposed an annual growth rate of only 0.2%, which likewise has to be ruled out as far too low.¹⁸⁹ Lennart Palm's original calculations from 2000 resulted in an annual population growth rate of 0.7%, which would have been high by international standards, as that would have made the Swedish population increase faster than that of England and close to that of the province of Holland.¹⁹⁰ His revised figure of 0.57% (corrected to 0.64%) is however still above what I have now found.¹⁹¹ The result is however neatly in the middle of the interval proposed by Edvinsson, who proposed that the annual growth rate should have been somewhere between 0.4% and 0.6%.¹⁹² It should however be noted that both Palm's and Edvinsson's figures are also affected by their uncertain calculations of the population figures for 1620/1630.

Let us now compare the annual population growth rate in sixteenth-century Sweden with that found in a few studies of other European societies. Cambridge researchers Tony Wrigley and Richard Schofield calculated growth rates for five-year periods back to 1541 for all of England.¹⁹³ During the sixteenth century, there was only one five-year period in which England experienced population decrease (1556–1561, when the yearly population decrease was –1.13%, thus of the same magnitude as the crisis that hit Sweden in the 1560s). The lowest annual growth rates were otherwise just above 0.5% and often as high as 0.8–1.0%. For the whole sixty-year period covered by their study, the average annual population growth rate was just above 0.64%, England thus clearly experiencing a more rapid population growth in the sixteenth century than Sweden did.

In the Netherlands, the annual population growth has been estimated to 0.5% for the first half of the sixteenth century, and to 0.4% for the second half.¹⁹⁴ Most rapid was the population increase in the province of Holland, where the annual growth was no less than 0.83% between 1514 and 1522. Now, Holland was of course economically very dynamic during this period, benefitting from significant immigration not least to

¹⁸⁸ Sundquist 1938; Heckscher 1935.

¹⁸⁹ Lilja 2021.

¹⁹⁰ Palm 2000.

¹⁹¹ Palm 2021.

¹⁹² Edvinsson 2008.

¹⁹³ Wrigley, Davies, Oeppen & Schofield 1997 p. 614–5 (table A9.1).

¹⁹⁴ Grigg 1980 p. 147–8.

Amsterdam, but its increase was nevertheless slower than in some Swedish provinces, while the population growth rate in all of the United Provinces together was similar to the Swedish case.

Another important comparison is with the German lands, for which Christian Pfister has published national figures. For Switzerland, the annual population growth rate during the sixteenth century was 0.41%, for Austria it was 0.26% from 1527–1600, while for Germany (within its 1914 boundaries) it was 0.60% from 1530–1600.¹⁹⁵ For Germany, this can further be broken down into decadal figures. Growth 1500–1560 was between 0.7% and 0.8% per year, while slowing down after 1560. Pfister tentatively explained this as reflecting a decrease in land available for colonisation (*“für Neusiedler verfügbare Land”*), leading to an increase in the share of the population that was landless.¹⁹⁶ For a somewhat different area, Ulrich Pfister has more recently estimated the German annual population growth rate to 0.4–0.5%, but noted no significant decrease around 1560.¹⁹⁷ Either way, it seems that the annual population growth rate now calculated for Sweden did not differ much from that of Germany; possibly including a shift to somewhat slower growth after 1560.

Altogether, the Swedish population thus grew somewhat slower than the English, even though also England experienced a period of population decline, just like Sweden in the 1560s. While the population growth in the economically prosperous province of Holland was faster than in Sweden, the Netherlands as a whole was similar to the Swedish case, as were Switzerland and Germany. Most of the international studies also indicate a somewhat faster population growth during the first half of the sixteenth century, which corresponds to what in this study is found for Sweden. The international comparisons thus indeed show that the Swedish population growth rates are not in any way unexpected, but follow the common patterns previously found for other parts of Northern Europe.

¹⁹⁵ Pfister 2007 p. 10.

¹⁹⁶ Pfister 2007 p. 11f.

¹⁹⁷ Pfister 2022 p. 1078.

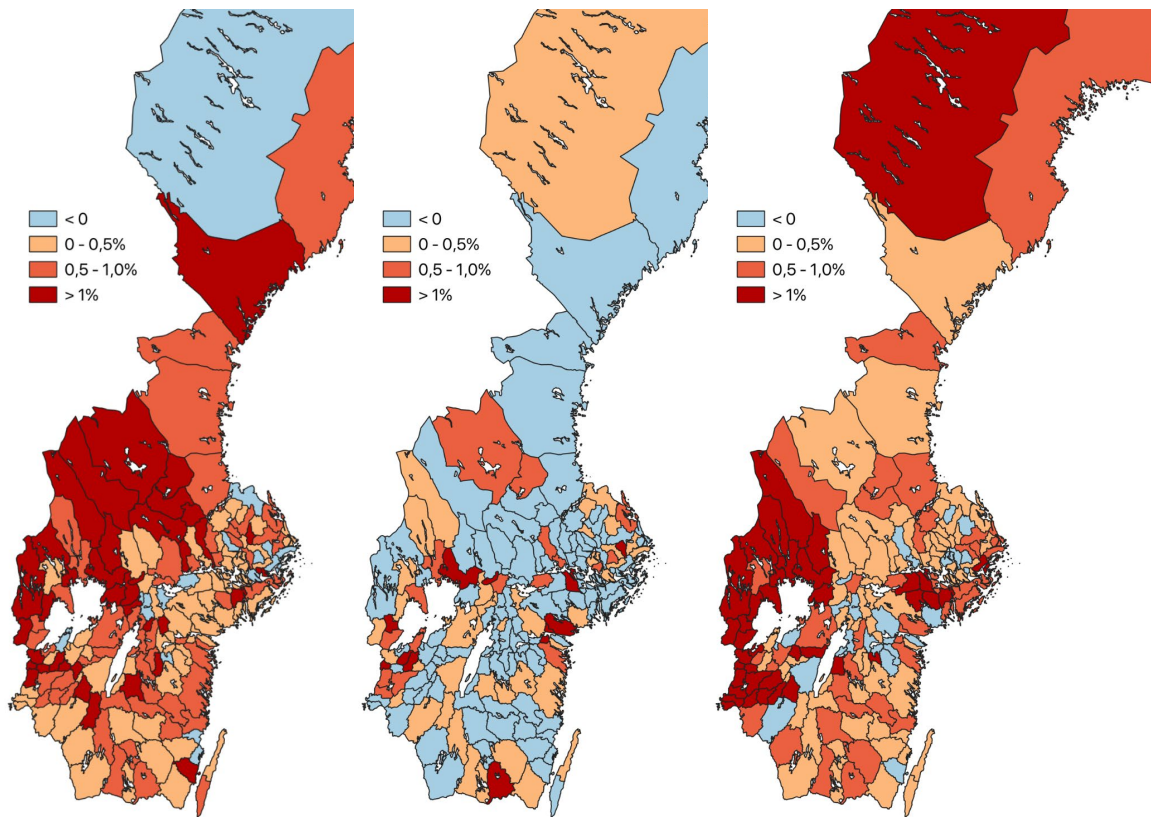


Figure 8.5. Annual population growth rates in the hundreds of Sweden, in three periods: i) 1536–1560; ii) 1561–1575; iii) 1576–1600. Source: Population database.

For the individual provinces, annual growth rates are shown in table 8.2. A regional pattern is however more easily seen through figure 8.5, where the three maps show the annual population growth rates calculated for the three subperiods. Before 1560, population growth was fastest (over 1.0% per year) in Western Sweden: in Dalarna, Värmland, Dalsland, and parts of Västergötland. In addition, population increase was also fast in Ångermanland in the north and in a few other scattered hundreds. Yet, even in this generally expansive period, local population figures decreased in several hundreds, most of which were located in Uppland. Although we do not know anything of migration in this period, one reason for the divergent pattern could well be people leaving Uppland to become settlers in the forested regions of Western Sweden.

The period of crisis, 1561–1575, was characterized by general population decrease which was spread over most of Sweden. Only few hundreds sustained their previous population levels; growth was pronounced only in a few regions such as Northern Dalarna, parts of Värmland and Västergötland, and in a few other locations. Decline on the other hand hit Sweden from the south to the north, and in Western as well as in Eastern Sweden.

The previous pattern of general population growth resumed in the third subperiod, after 1575. It was now as before fastest in Värmland, Dalsland, and in parts of Västergötland, but now also in Lapland and in parts of Södermanland. Although the fast increase in Western Sweden resumed the trend of the earlier part of the century, Södermanland was thus becoming more expansive (during the reign of Duke Charles). Dalarna and Västmanland instead became less dynamic than before, possibly because of stagnation in the mining and metal industries. As for population decrease, it continued in scattered hundreds, as before most of which were located in Uppland, Närke, and now also in Östergötland. As it is improbable that this decline was caused by regional differences in mortality, at least part of the explanation must be out-migration from these regions, although this still remains to be studied.

Population density

Using the population figures, changes to the population density (the number of individuals living per square kilometre) can be calculated for each year and hundred.¹⁹⁸ The results for the beginning and the end of the period, 1530 and 1600, are shown in figure 8.6

¹⁹⁸ The area of the hundreds has been calculated by a GIS program, as many borders have been changed since the sixteenth century, making later statistics less reliable.

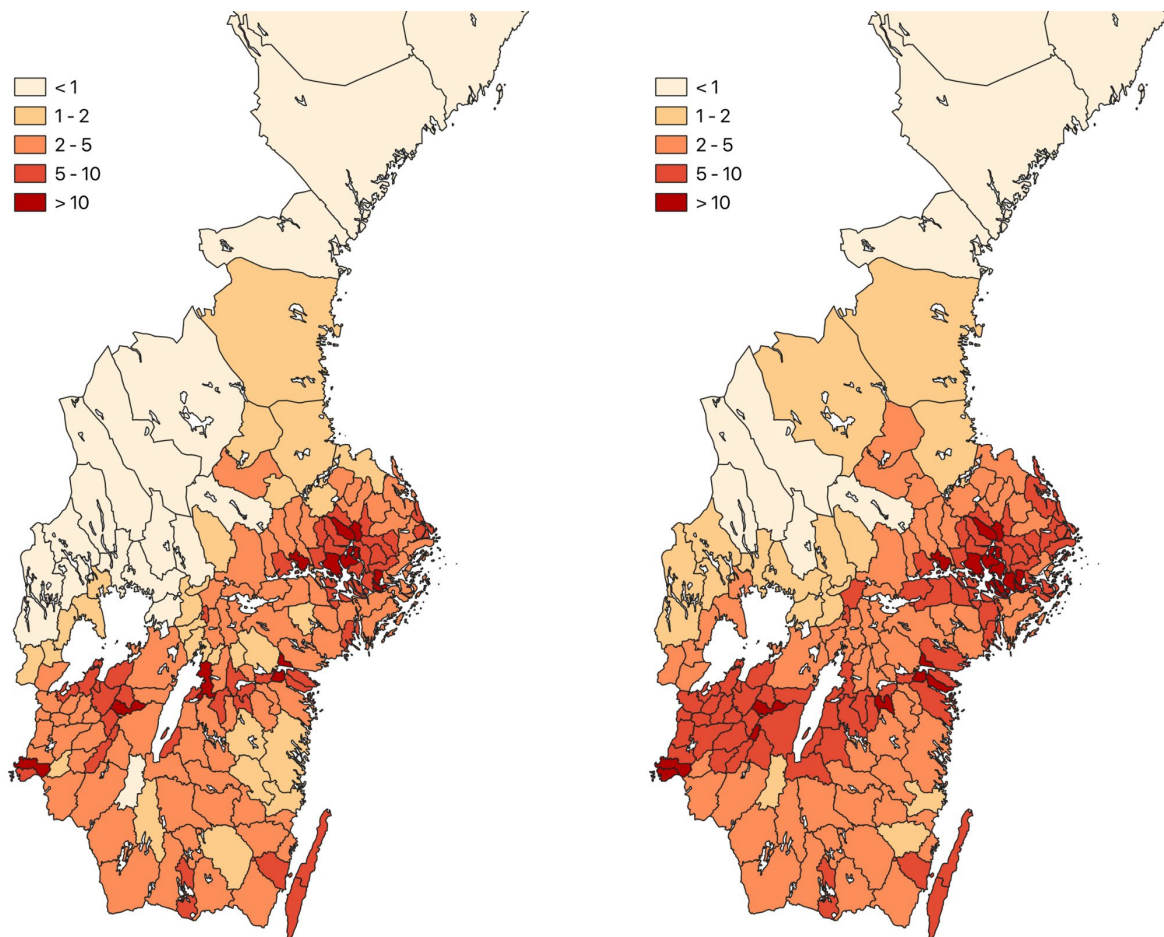


Figure 8.6. Regional population density (ind./km²) in the hundreds of Sweden, in i) 1530 and in ii) 1600. Source: Population database.

In 1530, the most densely populated areas in Sweden were Central Uppland (around Uppsala, Enköping, and north of Stockholm) and adjacent hundreds in Västmanland and Södermanland, all located around lake Mälaren. Densely populated were also central parts of Östergötland, and the plains in Västergötland (Falbygden and Skaraslätten). Other rather densely populated areas were Westernmost Västergötland (the two hundreds bordering the North Sea, Askim and Sävedalen), as well as the island of Öland and Norra Møre hundred in Småland (where Kalmar was located) on the opposite site of the narrow strait. In all these areas, there lived between 5 and 10 individuals per square kilometre. Only in ten hundreds in Sweden did the population density exceed this limit. These were Danderyds skeppslag (where Stockholm was located), which was the most densely populated hundred in Sweden at 48 ind./km², followed by Ulleråker hundred (where Uppsala was located) at 14 ind./km², Trögd hundred in Uppland at 13 ind./km². With 11 ind./km² followed Aska hundred (with Vadstena), Vaksala hundred just outside Uppsala, Sävedalen (with Nya Lödöse), and Håbo (with Sigtuna); a population density of 10 ind./km² was further found in Siende (with Västerås) in Västmanland, Lösing (with Norrköping) in Östergötland, and Gudhem in Västergötland. As expected, large towns resulted in high population densities (as we will see, not only Stockholm but also several of the other towns mentioned were among the largest in Sweden in 1530). Trögd, Vaksala, and Gudhem are thus interesting in that they were entirely rural districts, yet had high population densities compared to Swedish standards, although they were of course located in the vicinity of relatively large towns.

At the other end of the scale, population density in most of Northern and Western Sweden in 1530 was lower than 1 ind./km². This includes not only what in the sixteenth century was referred to as “the North Lands” (*Norrlanden*, that is Medelpad, Ångermanland, Västerbotten, and Lappmarkerna), but also most of Dalarna (except for the mining districts), most of Värmland, as well as parts of Dalsland, and Noraskoga mining district in Närke. In southern Sweden, only Mo hundred, located on the border between Västergötland and Småland, had a population density less than 1 ind./km² in 1530.

As a consequence of the population in Sweden increasing by 33% from 1530 to 1600, so did its population density. At the end of the century, the most densely populated areas remained Central Uppland and nearby areas in Södermanland and Västmanland, Central Östergötland, and Central and Western Västergötland (including the Göta River valley). The areas in which the population density exceeded 10 ind./km² had

visibly expanded in all these areas, in contrast to the stagnant South-Eastern Småland and the island of Öland. We can however see that population was increasing in Småland as well, as many hundred reached a population density of more than 2 ind./km². We can further see the settlement frontier moving northwards and westwards, as the population density reached the threshold of 1 ind./km² during the sixteenth century in parts of Dalsland, Värmland, and Dalarna.

These results may now be compared with those of Pfister for Germany. During the latter part of the sixteenth century, population density in Germany varied from over 50 ind./km² in Western Schwarzwald and over 40 ind./km² in Württemberg (both located in Southern Germany) down to the sparsely populated areas in the Northwest, where Mecklenburg had 10 ind./km² and Hinterpommern just 5 ind./km².¹⁹⁹ To this may be added data from Janeczek, who claims that Poland was one of the most sparsely populated countries in Europe in the early sixteenth century.²⁰⁰ In its western parts, the Polish population density was 10–15 ind./km², while in Red Ruthenia (on today's border between Ukraine and Poland) and in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, population densities were as low as 3–5 ind./km². Even further east, the “Wild planes” of the Ukrainian steppes were “practically uninhabited”.²⁰¹

On the southern shore of the Baltic Sea, population densities during the sixteenth century thus varied between 3–5 ind./km² in Lithuania, 5 ind./km² in Hinterpommern, up to 10 ind./km² in Mecklenburg, similar to what we have now found to have been the case also in Southern and Central Sweden. No region in Sweden could however match the population densities found in Western Poland or Southern Germany, and even less the population density of Western, Central, or Southern Europe.²⁰² By European standards, even the most central parts of Sweden were thus sparsely populated. Going further to the north, population densities fell even more, far below those of Germany or Lithuania. The provinces of Norrland (as

¹⁹⁹ Pfister 2007 p. 13. Pfister only gives the number of households per km², which has here been multiplied by 5.

²⁰⁰ Janeczek 2001 p. 156–8.

²⁰¹ Janeczek 2001 p. 158.

²⁰² One example: England had a population density of 21 ind./km² already in 1541 (as calculated from Wrigley, Davies, Oeppen & Schofield 1997 p. 614–5), a national population density that was more than 50% higher than the population density in every single hundred in Sweden in 1530 (the only exception being Danderyds skeppslag, where Stockholm was located).

well as Dalarna, Värmland, and Dalsland, at least in 1530) in this sense rather resembled the great planes of the East than any region in Western or Central Europe.

Social structure

9. Urbanisation

A great advantage with the method used in this work to calculate the Swedish population figures is that it also reveals important information regarding the social structure, including how it varied regionally and how it changed over time. Several different aspects of this development will be studied in the following chapters; here, we first return to the question of the size of the towns relative to the whole population. In order to do this, additional calculations have been made to establish the population size of each town by adding the number of urban households employed by the Crown and by various church institutions to the number of urban tax-paying households previously used in chapter 7.

Table 9.1. Towns with more than 1,000 inhabitants in Sweden: in 1540, in 1600, and in the year when they reached their maximum population.

RANK	1540	1600	MAXIMUM POPULATION
1	Stockholm (10,704)	Stockholm (7,992)	Stockholm (15,222, 1547)
2	Kalmar (2,616)	Nyköping (2,706)	Kalmar (5,322, 1560)
3	Nya Lödöse (2,568)	Söderköping (2,358)	Nyköping (3,504, 1596)
4	Uppsala (1,824)	Uppsala (2,256)	Uppsala (2,718, 1558)
5	Vadstena (1,770)	Gävle (2,034)	Nya Lödöse (2,568, 1540s)
6	Skara (1,500)	Sala (1,620)	Söderköping (2,394, 1592)
7	Gävle (1,296)	Norrköping (1,566)	Vadstena (2,862, 1565)
8	-	Nya Lödöse (1,506)	Gävle (2,052, 1599)
9	-	Linköping (1,392)	Sala (1,920, 1587)
10	-	Kalmar (1,344)	Norrköping (1,746, 1593)
11	-	Västerås (1,266)	Västerås (1,566, 1563)

RANK	1540	1600	MAXIMUM POPULATION
12	-	Strängnäs (1,230)	Skara (1,500, 1540s)
13	-	Tälje (1,176)	Linköping (1,440, 1595)
14	-	Arboga (1,140)	Strängnäs (1,230, 1596)
15	-	Vadstena (1,122)	Västervik (1,226, 1566)
16	-	Jönköping (1,056)	Tälje (1,176, 1596)
17	-	-	Örebro (1,170, 1595)
18	-	-	Arboga (1,146, 1590)
19	-	-	Jönköping (1,056, 1600)

Note. The column with maximum populations excludes years with visits of the king's court for Vadstena and Kalmar (but include years when ducal courts resided there). Source: Population database.

The size of towns, and the share of the total population that lived in towns, are often seen as important measures, as they may serve as a proxy of national economic development: How productive agriculture was, and how well-functioning the transport infrastructure was, set limits to how large the urban share of the population in preindustrial societies could become.²⁰³ Let us begin by looking at how large the largest towns in sixteenth-century Sweden were. In table 14.1 are shown all towns that had more than 1,000 inhabitants, either in 1540, in 1600, or at some other year during the century. These towns, which were large in Sweden but small by European standards, only numbered seven in 1540. Largest was by far Stockholm which had just over 10,000 inhabitants, followed by the two trade and castle towns Kalmar (in the southeast) and Nya Lödöse (in the west), each with about 2,500 inhabitants. They were thus about a quarter the size of Stockholm. Next in the list we find three (previously) important religious centres: the bishop sees Uppsala and Skara, and Vadstena, dominated by its Bridgettine monastery, which had been the richest institution in Medieval Sweden.²⁰⁴ Of these, Uppsala and Vadstena became important centres for the Crown following the Reformation, with royal castles constructed in both towns. Skara on the other hand did not, and (after suffering during the Nordic Seven Years' War of the 1560s) its population had fallen well below 1,000 by the year 1600. The seventh town that reached 1,000 inhabitants in 1540 was finally Gävle, prospering from trade in iron and copper exported from inland mining districts.

²⁰³ Pfister 2020 p 11.

²⁰⁴ Norborg 1958.

By 1600, the number of Swedish towns that had more than 1,000 inhabitants had more than doubled to 16. Stockholm's population had however decreased significantly, especially during the 1590s, when no royal court any longer resided in the town. Stockholm was however still the largest town of the country, with no other town reaching even half its size. Four towns had now more than 2,000 inhabitants, two of which were newcomers compared to the 1540s: Nyköping, which had grown since it in the 1560s was chosen as the seat of Duke Charles, and the export town Söderköping. Overall, metal export trade originating from the mining districts seems to have been an important factor driving population increase in many of the largest towns, including Gävle, Norrköping, Västerås, Strängnäs, Tälje, and Arboga, as well as Sala, located by the main Swedish silver industries.

That the number of towns that had over 1,000 inhabitants more than doubled over the century may be seen as an indicator of the Swedish population becoming more urbanised, and no less than ten out of the nineteen towns in the table reached their largest population figures during the last decade of the century. Yet, we have already noted that Stockholm decreased significantly, and besides Skara also Kalmar, Nya Lödöse, and Vadstena had actually lost population by 1600 compared to sixty years prior. Some towns reached their population peaks already around the middle of the century, such as Västervik (which prospered during the war of the 1560s because of its shipbuilding industry). Despite the fact that the number of large towns (measured with Swedish standards) doubled during the century, especially trade towns located in Central Sweden, there was thus no general, national trend of growing urbanisation. With this in mind, let us now move on to properly measuring the degree of urbanisation in sixteenth-century Sweden.

The degree of urbanisation

The degree of urbanisation, that is the share of a population that is living in towns and cities, is often measured for towns that has reached a certain population threshold such as 5,000 inhabitants, Ulrich Pfister has gathered such data for a number of European regions for the years 1500 and 1600.²⁰⁵ While urbanisation increased in most countries, it actually decreased in Germany (as studied by Pfister) from 10% in 1500 to 8% in 1600.²⁰⁶ While urbanisation was much higher in most parts of Southern and Western Europe, in Poland it increased during the century

²⁰⁵ Pfister 2020 p. 16.

²⁰⁶ Pfister 2020 p. 15, 27.

from 6% to 8%, and in Central Europe (Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia) it was stagnant at only 5%.

This measure is however less useful when studying sixteenth-century Sweden, as only Stockholm (and perhaps Kalmar during those few years of the 1550s when it functioned as a ducal seat) ever reached over 5,000 inhabitants. Measuring the rate of urbanisation in the usual way thus means measuring Stockholm's share of the national population. If this is done, the degree of urbanisation in Sweden varied between 1.9% and 3.2% from the 1530s to the 1570s (reaching a maximum of 3.28% in 1559, if Kalmar is included), then falling as low as 0.7–0.8% during the 1580s, recovering to 1.2–1.3% towards the end of the century. Urbanisation in Sweden (by this measure) was thus far removed even from the least urbanised regions of Continental Europe.

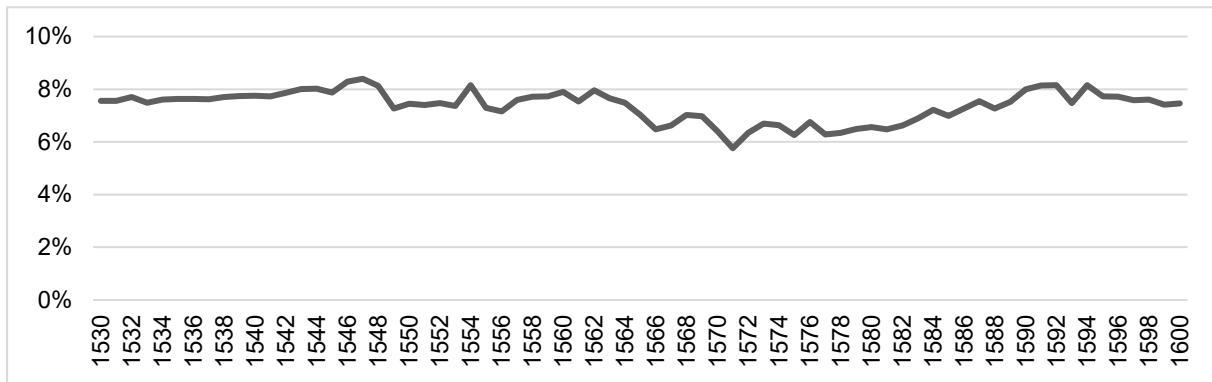


Figure 9.1. Population share living in towns in Sweden, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

A more useful measure for Sweden, and for other regions with a low degree of urbanisation, is the share of the population that was living in towns, regardless of their size. Similar measures have been calculated for several regions in Germany, where the share of the population that was living in places that held town privileges was around 30% during the 1500s.²⁰⁷ These figures can now be compared to those of sixteenth-century Sweden. For the country as a whole the development is shown in figure 9.1. The degree of urbanisation was 7.8% in 1530, remaining rather stable throughout the century and ending up on 7.5% by 1600. It never reached above 8.5% (in 1547) or

²⁰⁷ Pfister 2020 p. 14 mentions Württemberg 28% (in 1544), Kur-Sachsen 31% (in 1555), Hessen-Kassel 31% (in 1577/1585), and Thüringen 27% (in the sixteenth century).

below 5.8% (in 1571).²⁰⁸ In short, this means that only about 6–8% of Sweden's population lived in locations that were seen as towns in the sixteenth century, or only about a fourth as much as in Germany.

The national figure is however somewhat misleading, as urbanisation in Sweden was certainly not even across the country. Figure 9.2 shows the degree of urbanisation on the level of the hundred in 1530 and in 1600. Due to the fact that the number of towns in Sweden was small, most hundreds did not have a town located within its boundaries (although a couple of hundreds actually had two towns). Most town hinterlands thus probably stretched beyond the borders of its surrounding hundred. On the other end of the scale, large towns could often contain more than half of the hundred's total population. In 1530, this only included Stockholm, as well as Nya Lödöse, Uppsala, and Kalmar, while in 1600, there were no less than 15 hundreds in which the town held over 25% of the population of the hundred. On the local level, the degree of urbanisation in Sweden could thus equal that of (much larger regions in) Germany.

Comparing the two maps in figure 9.2, we see some increase in urbanisation in parts of Central Sweden (around lake Mälaren and in Östergötland). In contrast, urbanisation levels actually went down in most of Västergötland during the same period. Sweden's urban population thus became more geographically concentrated over the century.

²⁰⁸ These figures are significantly higher than those of Lilja (2021 p. 306), who also found a rather constant degree of urbanisation during the century, but only at 4% (as he assumed the rural population figure was much higher, p. 123).

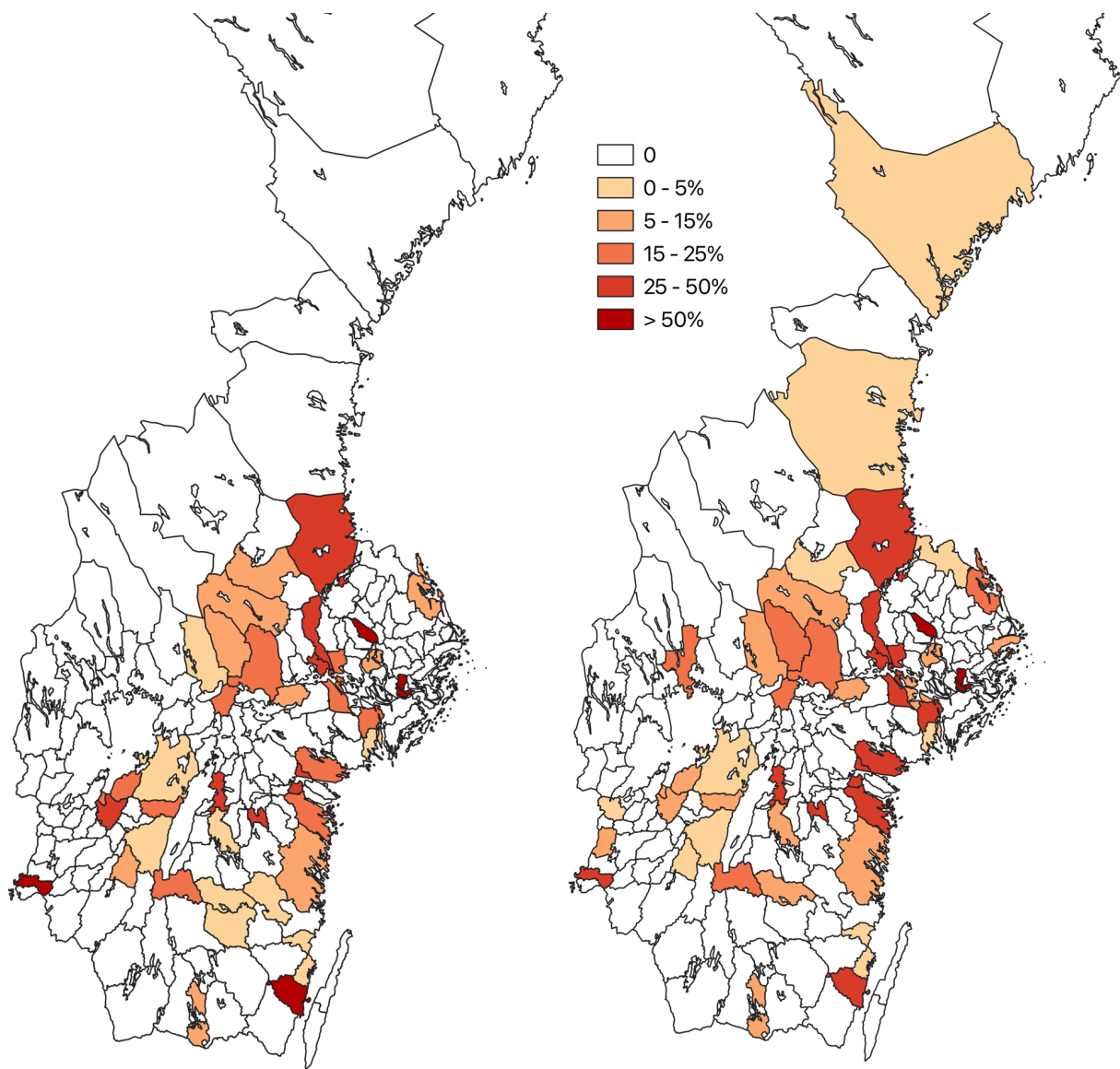


Figure 9.2. The degree of urbanisation in the hundreds of Sweden, in i) 1530 and ii) 1600.
Source: Population database.

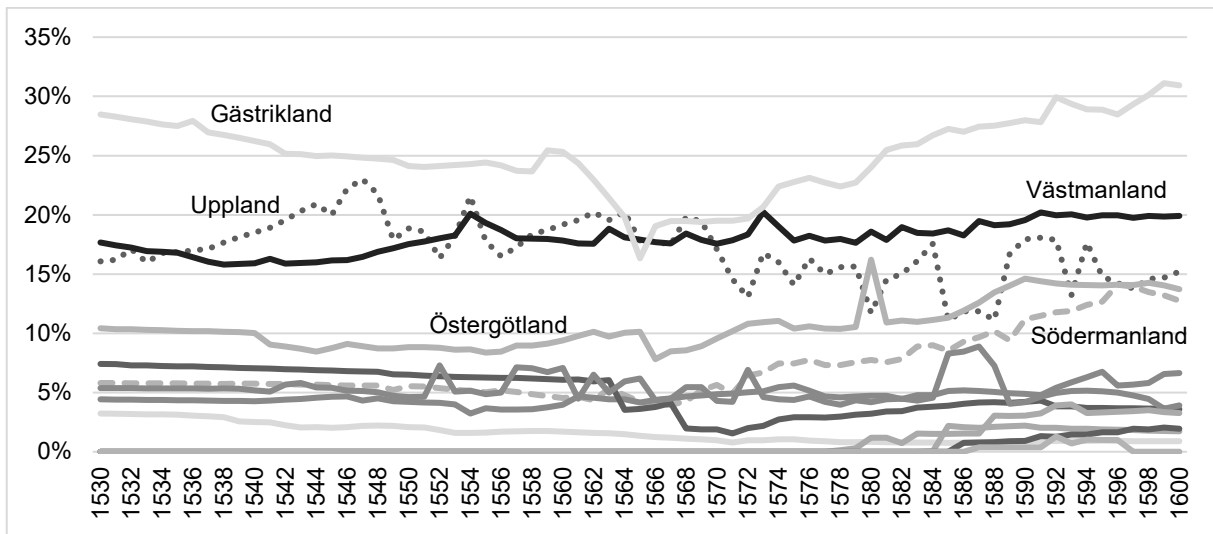


Figure 9.3. The degree of urbanisation in the provinces of Sweden, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

Let us improve our comparison with the German lands by moving up to the level of the province. Figure 9.3 shows how the degree of urbanisation varied between the provinces of Sweden during the sixteenth century. Remarkably, the most urbanised province in sixteenth-century Sweden was Gästrikland, where the sole town of Gävle housed up to a third of the population of the (small) province. Urbanisation levels were also relatively high in Västmanland, where 15%–20% of the population lived in its five towns (most in Västerås and Sala), and in Uppland, where Stockholm was located. Although many towns in Uppland increased in size during the century, Stockholm however did not, and so the urban population could not keep up with the general population expansion of the province, resulting in its degree of urbanisation declining to only 15% at the end of the century. Even the most urbanised provinces in Sweden did thus not reach more than half the degree of urbanisation found in sixteenth-century Germany.

One further, by Swedish standards, relatively well-urbanised province was Östergötland, where the degree of urbanisation was about 10% during the earlier part of the century. It remained stable at this level until becoming more urbanised from about 1580 onwards, reaching a level close to 15% at the end of the century. In neighbouring Södermanland, the urbanisation rate saw the sharpest increase during the century. Starting from a degree of urbanisation of only about 6% in 1530,

the increases in population in Nyköping, Tälje, and Strängnäs from about 1570 resulted in urbanisation also here being about 15% in the 1590s, taking Södermanland up to the same level of urbanisation as that of Uppland and Östergötland. The degree of urbanisation further also increased in Närke from the low 4% in 1530 up to 7% by 1600.

Urbanisation rates were certainly much higher in Eastern and Central Sweden than in the rest of the country. In Småland in the south, it remained about 5% throughout the century. In Västergötland, the degree of urbanisation was at about 7% in 1530, but decreased over the century down to only 4% in 1600, most of which decrease occurred during the Nordic Seven Years' War of the 1560s. Another province where the degree of urbanisation actually went down was Dalarna, where the share of the population living in its two towns decreased from about 3% to only 1%.

It may be that Sweden was at the European urban frontier during the century, as towns for the first time were founded in several provinces during the century. Yet, the degree of urbanisation in these provinces remained low: by 1600, it reached only 3% in Hälsingland, 2% in Värmland, and 1% in Ångermanland. Despite the expansion of towns into the northern parts of the realm, Sweden thus also remained in the European urban periphery: it was a country with an overall very low degree of urbanisation, while regional variation in urbanisation was high. As the central provinces saw their relatively large urban population shares increase over the sixteenth century, this was not the case for the rest of the country, neither in the north (in Norrland and Dalarna), nor in the south (in Småland and on Öland), or in the west (in Västergötland, Dalsland, and Värmland).

10. Workers of the Crown

The share of households that was directly employed by the Crown (at its castles, demesne farms, mining industries, shipyards, royal courts, or otherwise) can be seen as one measure of how Early Modern state formation influenced sixteenth-century Swedish society, and how this changed with time. While the workers at certain

Crown establishments have been studied in detail by previous historians,²⁰⁹ no national overview has to date been produced.

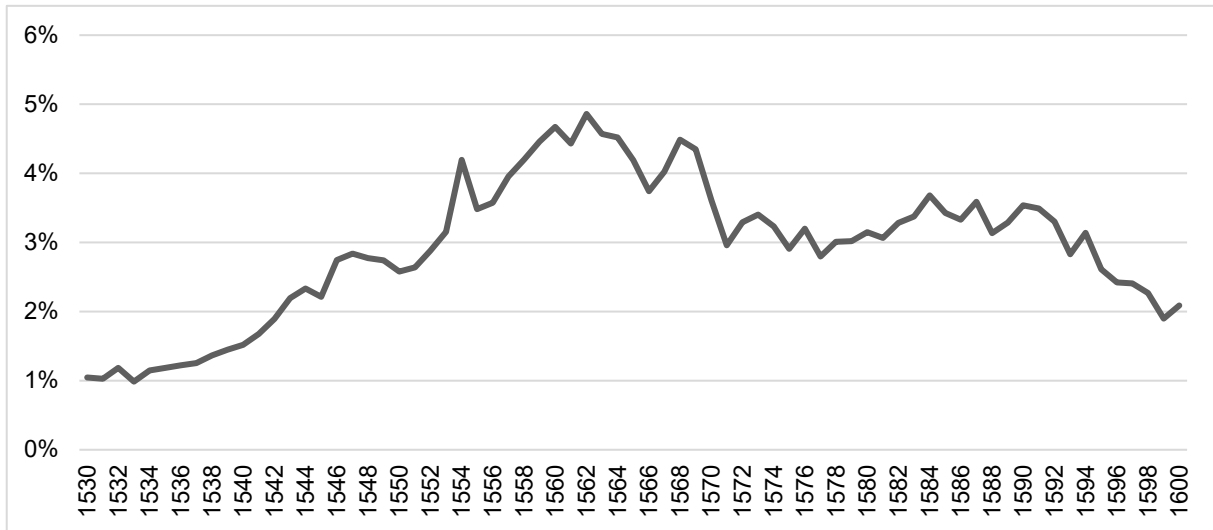


Figure 10.1. The population share employed by the Swedish Crown (at manors, castles, royal courts, metal industries, shipyards etc.), 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

A general overview of the share of all households that were working for the Swedish Crown between 1530 and 1600 is shown in figure 10.1. At the beginning of the period, the Crown employed about 1% of all households. During the next three decades, the share increased steadily, reaching almost 5% in the years around 1560. When Erik XIV inherited the throne from his father, he was thus (directly or indirectly) employing no less than every twentieth household in Sweden. His reign during the 1560s was however in this as in so many other aspects a turning point, as the increase in the population share working for the Crown halted before dropping to only 3–3.5% around 1570. It remained on this level during the reign of King John III. Following his death in 1592, a second period of decrease brought the share down to just 2% at the end of the century. In absolute terms, this means that the Crown went from just employing about 500 households in 1530 up to a maximum of over 3,600 in 1562, and then down again to some 1,600 households at the end of the century.

²⁰⁹ Söderberg 1977; Pihl 2012.

Viewed from a state-building perspective, there was evidently no ever-expanding Early Modern Swedish state. Instead, we find several shorter periods with quite different characteristics: one, lasting from 1530 to about 1560, in which the share of households employed by the Swedish Crown nearly quintupled, contrasting sharply to the rest of the century which was instead characterized by decrease (albeit with a long period of relative stability from ca. 1570 to 1590). The reasons for this development are no doubt complex but remain beyond the scope of this work. Still, it must not be forgotten that at the end of the sixteenth century, the share of the population employed by the Crown was twice the size it had been in 1530. The Early Modern Swedish state was thus far removed from what it had been during the Late Middle Ages.

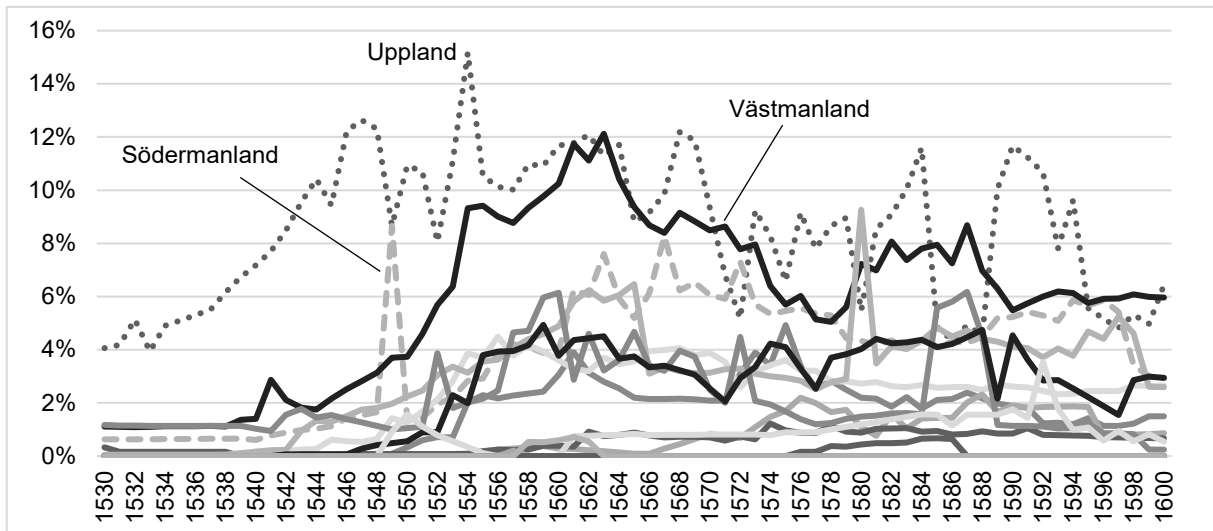


Figure 10.2. The population share employed by the Swedish Crown in the provinces of Sweden, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

There was however significant regional variation in the share of households that the Crown employed, as can be seen in figure 10.2. In the 1530s, the Crown already employed about 4% of the households in Uppland, but only as little as 1% of the households in Västmanland, Småland, and Södermanland, and nothing at all yet in the rest of the country. From figure 10.3 it is further clear that crown establishments in 1530 were few and far apart, mainly consisting of those castles that had existed already during the fifteenth century (and which had survived the civil war of the 1520s), in addition to some castles recently taken over by the Crown from the bishops following the Reformation.

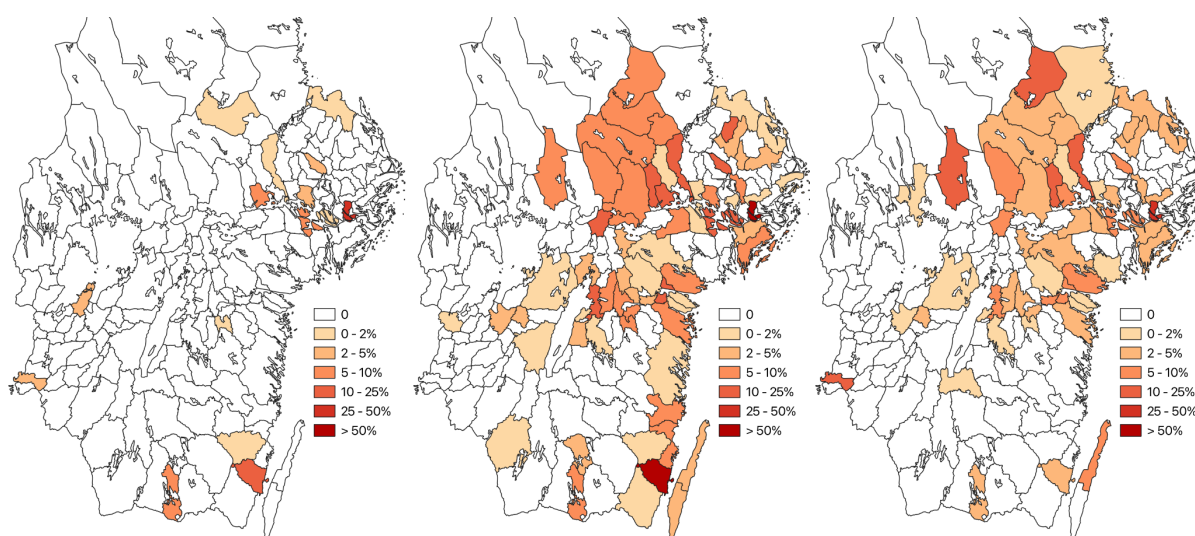


Figure 10.3. The population share employed by the Crown in the hundreds of Sweden, in i) 1530, ii) 1560, iii) 1600. Source: Population database.

In 1560, when the share of the Crown's workers in the population was at its maximum level, the picture was very different. The Crown by now employed over 10% of the population in Uppland, and an almost as large share in Västmanland. In addition, it employed some 4–6% of the population also in Södermanland, in Östergötland, in Närke, in Dalarna, in Småland, and on Öland. From figure 10.3 we see that the Crown by now had established a presence in a majority of the hundreds in Central Sweden, and in addition also all along the coast of Småland. By now, the Crown was also an active entrepreneur in most of the mining districts (in Västmanland, Dalarna, and Värmland), where it employed between 5 and 10% of the

households. Yet, even at this high tide of crown direct involvement in the Swedish economy, the Crown was still more or less absent as an employer in other parts of the realm. There were few or no crown establishments in most of Inner Småland, in Västergötland, in Dalsland, and in Värmland, in Upper Dalarna, and in all of Norrland. If the establishment of crown manors and other industries was vital to the Swedish state formation process, this process was in other words regionally variable, hardly at all affecting vast areas of the realm. Among other things, this meant that resources extracted as taxes in the West, the South, and the North, to a large extent must have been transported to Central Sweden in order to remunerate and feed the Crown's workers there.

After the 1560s, the population share working for the Crown was halved. In figure 15.2, we saw that the share decreased in Uppland from 12% down to about 6–8% (although the Uppland figure also shows much volatility, due to sudden changes in the sizes of the royal courts). In Västmanland as well we saw marked decrease, from the peak of 12% around 1560 down to only 6% in 1600. The population shares working for the Crown in other provinces in Central Sweden were more stable, only beginning to decrease towards the end of the 1590s in Östergötland and Södermanland. In the North, South, and West, the Crown's share of the population remained insignificant throughout the century. Even though the Crown in 1560 had had a very limited presence in Småland and Västergötland, the population share went down to nothing by 1600 as the Crown closed most of its (rather small) establishments here. In yet other parts of the country, including most of the mining districts in Bergslagen, the Crown's metal industries remained but did not grow apace with the general population increase. The effect of all this was that the Crown's establishments by 1600 had become much more centralised to Central Sweden than they even had been 70 years before. What we see is thus not only two phases of growth and subsequent decrease in the population share employed by the Swedish Crown during the 1500s, but also two phases of first geographical expansion which was then followed by a geographical concentration of the Early Modern Swedish state.

II. Workers of the nobility

Let us now turn to the share of the households that was employed by the nobility in Sweden, at their demesne farms or at enfeoffed castles. (The following study does obviously not include the households who were tenants of the nobility, living on their own farmsteads.) Just as in the previous chapter, there exist few studies of those employed at individual manors,²¹⁰ while no attempt has previously been made to estimate the total population share of the workers of the nobility.

The main results are presented in figure 11.1. By 1530, about 2% of the Swedish population was employed by the nobility. The population share rose slowly but steadily throughout the century, leading to just over 3% of the population working for the nobility in 1600. In other words: The share grew by half in those seventy years, which in absolute numbers means that the nobility went from employing 1,400 to employing over 2,900 households.

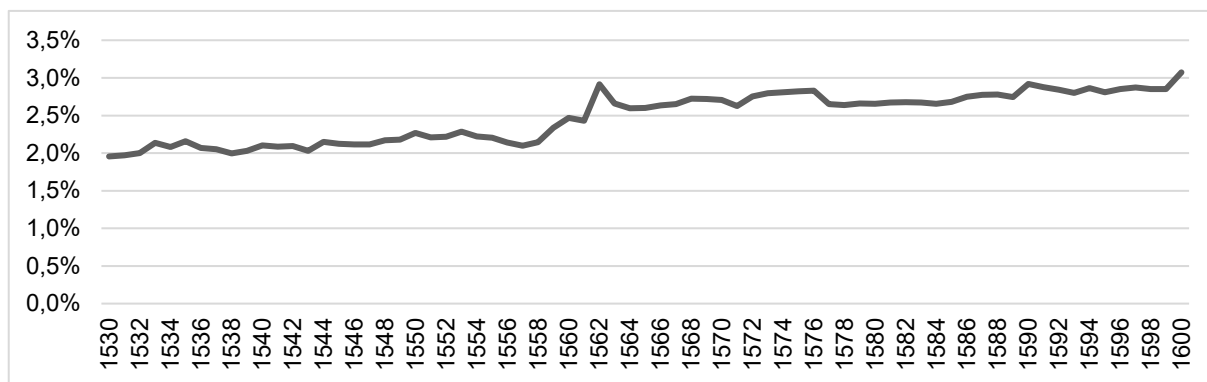


Figure 11.1. The population share employed by the nobility in Sweden, 1530–1600.

Source: Population database.

The number of households employed by the nobility may now be compared to the number of households employed by the Swedish Crown, as presented in the previous chapter. At the beginning of our study period, in 1530, the nobility employed twice as many households as the Crown. By the middle of the 1540s, the establishment of new crown manors and industries made the share of the population the Crown

²¹⁰ Ferm 1990.

employed rise beyond the 2% then employed by the nobility, and in the 1550s, the Crown probably employed twice as many households as the nobility. After 1560, when the population share of the Crown's workers began to decrease, the population share employed by the nobility continued to grow. The Crown still remained a larger employer than the nobility until the 1590s. By 1595 however, the nobility employed 2.8% of the Swedish households, while the Crown employed only 2.6%, meaning that by the turn of the century, the Crown had lost its position as Sweden's dominant employer, perhaps marking the end of a phase of the Swedish Early Modern state formation process.

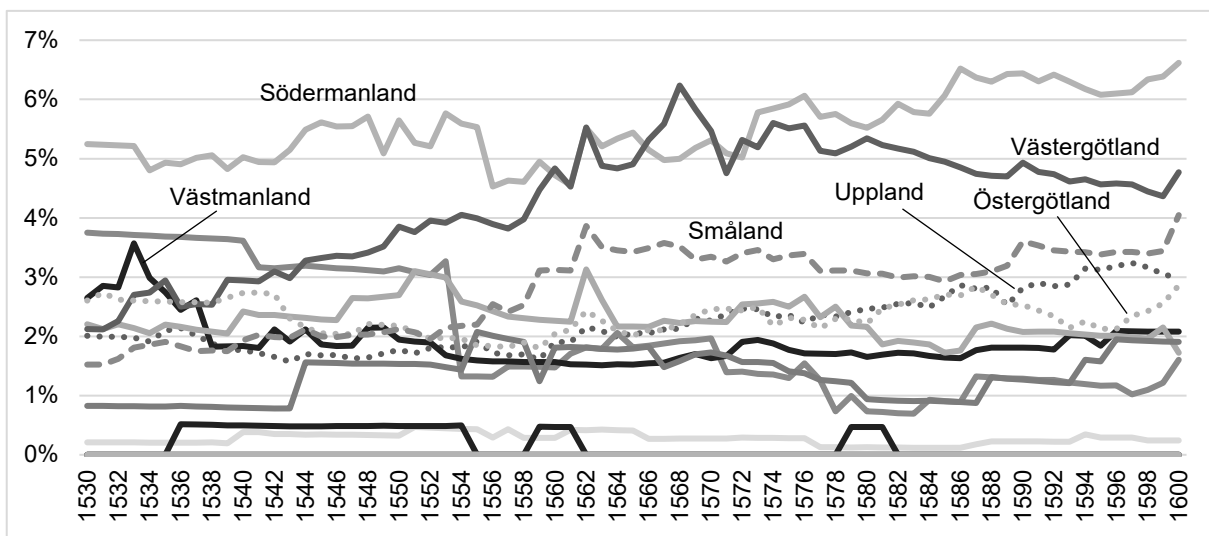


Figure 11.2. The population share employed by the nobility in the provinces of Sweden, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

The share of the population employed by the nobility also shows significant regional variation, as seen in figure 11.2. The province with the highest population share employed by the nobility was Södermanland, where already in 1530 more than 5% of the households were working at nobility manors. This share rose to 7.5% by 1600, Södermanland being the most densely nobility-populated province in all of Sweden. Västergötland is another interesting example: having a population share working for the nobility in 1530 that did not distinguish it from most other provinces in Southern and Central Sweden, the population share rose and actually surpassed that of Södermanland in the 1560s, before decreasing again (as the total population of Västergötland grew faster than the number of its noble manors). Still,

in 1600 the population share working for the nobility in Västergötland was almost 5%. By then, Småland (which also did not have a particularly high population share working for the nobility in 1530) had climbed to third place, with 4% of its population working at demesne farms owned by the nobility. It is noteworthy that the Crown had very few manors and workers in the latter two provinces, so that the nobility in a sense took its place in the agrarian economy. Södermanland differed in that here both the Crown and the nobility had a strong presence, both actors employing large population shares at their many manors and other establishments.

In most of the other provinces in Southern and Central Sweden, the nobility only employed between 1% and 3% of the population, with rather small changes or no distinct trends over the century. The only exception in Southern Sweden was Öland, where there for most of the century were no nobility manors at all. Öland thus looked like most of Northern Sweden: in Dalarna, the nobility likewise only employed a very small share of the workers (less than 0.5%), while in Gästrikland and in the rest of Norrland there were no nobility demesne farms at all.²¹¹

²¹¹ See the Norrland appendix for a possible exception in Hälsingland in the 1530s.

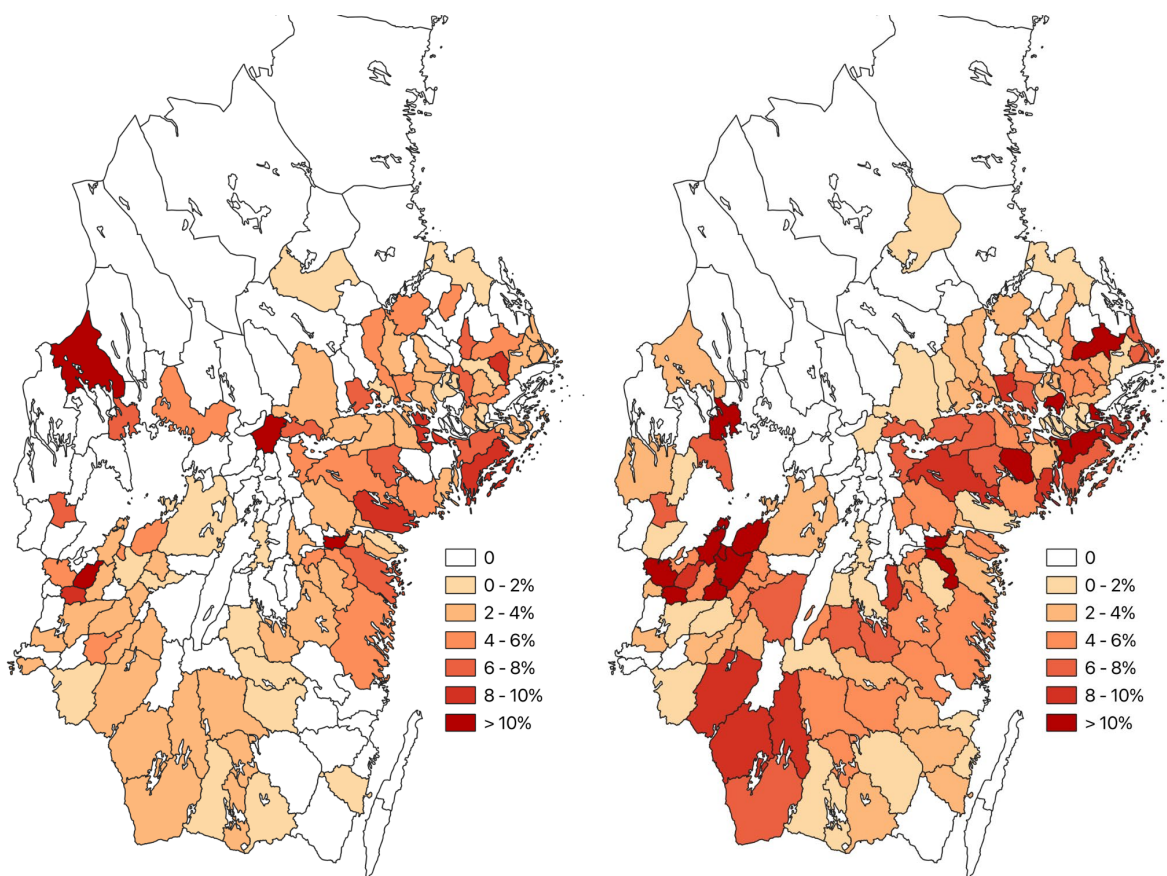


Figure 11.3. The population share employed by the nobility in the hundreds of Sweden, in i) 1530, ii) 1600. Source: Population database.

Figure 11.3 lets us study these regional differences in even greater detail. In 1530, regions with the largest population share of nobility workers were found in Central Sweden (in parts of Södermanland, Uppland, and Östergötland), as well as in dispersed hundreds in Värmland, Västergötland, and Närke (where Örebro castle was enfeoffed). Although some people were working for the nobility in most of Västergötland and Småland, there were regions also within these provinces lacking nobility demesne farms (South-Eastern Småland, hundreds around lake Vättern, and the Göta River Valley in Western Västergötland). There was thus significant variation also within these provinces.

Comparing with 1600, the increase in the population share working for the nobility was most striking in Central Västergötland and in South-Western Småland. By now, it was no longer uncommon for 8% to 10% of the population in a hundred to be

working at the nobility's manors. Still, some pockets remained even in those provinces where there was no nobility demesne farms at all. Most of the previously manor-less areas, such as the hundreds around Vättern or South-Eastern Småland, by now however also had a few per cent of their populations working at (relatively recently founded) demesne farms. As for Central Sweden, the intensification in Södermanland is most striking, where the population share employed by the nobility in many hundreds went from already relative high levels in 1530 to even higher population shares in 1600. The development in Uppland was more varied, with the population share growing in some hundreds while decreasing in others. And while there were always some manors in Värmland, in Närke, and in Dalarna, most hundreds in these provinces still remained without any nobility at all in 1600, as they had been in 1530.

12. Cottagers and peasants

Landless workers (cottagers and craftsmen) had by the sixteenth century already long been part of the Swedish rural society. Yet, few studies have so far tried to estimate their numbers for the era before the agricultural revolution of the eighteenth century.²¹² The results of this work, shown in figure 12.1, thus break new ground for the study of landless groups in Medieval and Early Modern Sweden. By 1530, cottagers made up about 5% of all households in Sweden, which (comparing with the results in the previous two chapters) means that cottagers at this time were more common than Crown and nobility workers combined. Remaining rather stable into the 1540s, the share of cottagers in the population then slowly decreased throughout most of the century, ending at just below 4% by 1600. Although the total number of cottagers thus remained largely unchanged, the size of the social group did not grow apace with the total Swedish population: The sixteenth century experienced population growth without proletarianization, in contrast to the development during the agrarian revolution.²¹³

²¹² Exceptions are Larsson 1972; Lindström 2019; Miettinen & Lindström 2023. Andersson *forthcoming* analyses the social and economic function of cottagers for rural society in the sixteenth century.

²¹³ Winberg 1975.

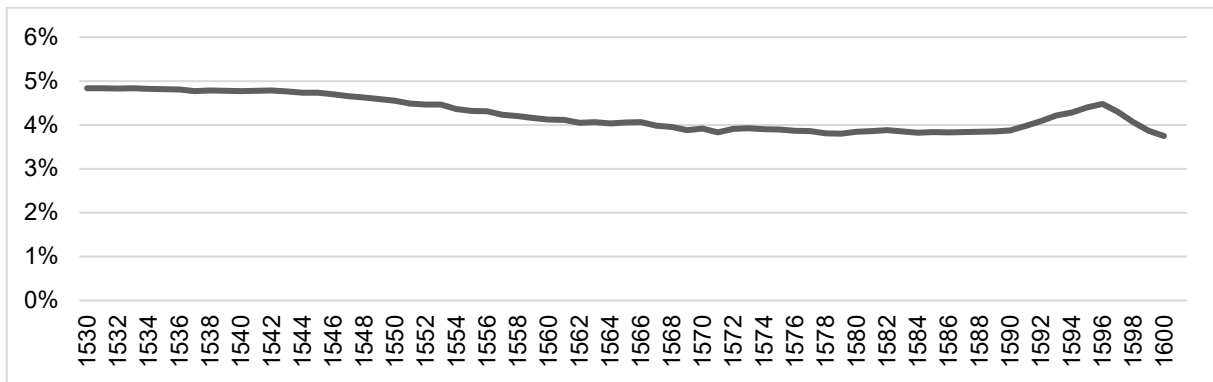


Figure 12.1. Share of cottager households in Sweden, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

The regional pattern shown in figure 12.2 however (as so often) complicates the national picture. In 1530, there were several regions where cottagers were much more common than the national average. One of these regions was Central Västergötland, where cottagers made up 10–15% of the population. Cottagers were further also relatively common in Värmland, in parts of Östergötland, and especially in Central Sweden around lake Mälaren (in Southern Uppland, Eastern Västmanland, and Northern Södermanland), where they amounted to over 25% of the population in some hundreds. In these regions, cottagers obviously made up an important element in the rural market for wage labour. The same was true for most of the mining districts, where cottagers for example made up more than 20% of the population in Värmlandsberg and in Kopparbergslagen, and more than 10% in most of the other mining districts. In contrast, cottagers made up less than 1% of the population in regions including Upper Dalarna, most of Norrland, as well as Western Sweden (Dalsland, Western and Southern Västergötland, and most of Inner Småland). Småland and Västergötland thus stand out as provinces in which there were significant numbers of cottagers only in some parts, while very few in others.

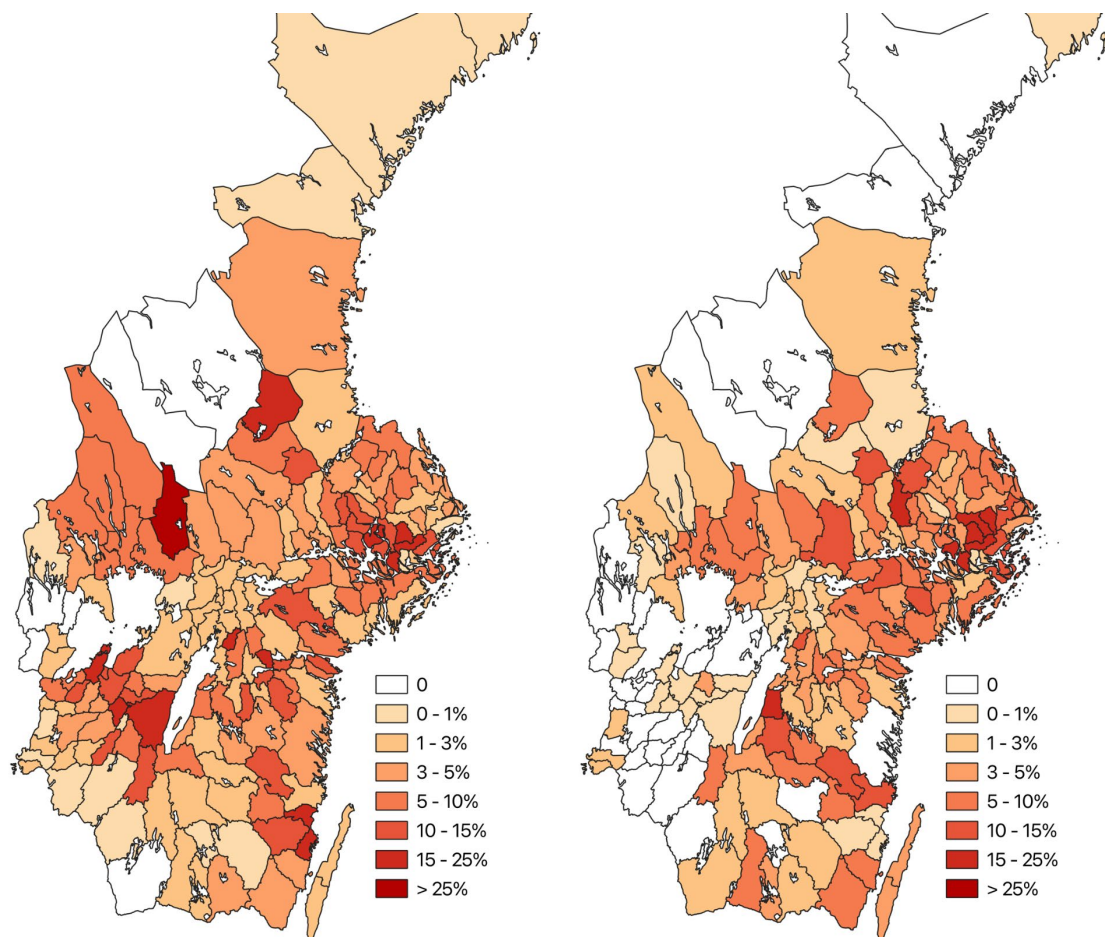


Figure 12.2. Share of cottager households in *the* hundreds of Sweden, in i) 1530, ii) 1600.
Source: Population database.

Although the national trend was that the share of cottagers went down from 1530 to 1600, figure 12.2 shows that the cottager population share actually increased over the century in many parts of Central Sweden, where cottagers in most hundreds by 1600 made up at least 10% of the population. The national decrease was thus driven by rapid decrease in cottagers in parts of Östergötland, in Småland, and especially in Västergötland. In Southern and Western Västergötland, parts of the province where cottagers had previously been rare, almost no cottagers at all were left by 1600, and in Central Västergötland, where cottagers had been common in 1530, their population share had gone down to just about 1%. The social structure of Sweden thus became

more regionally diverse over the sixteenth century, with cottagers remaining an important part of the rural population in the central provinces, while more or less disappearing in the west.

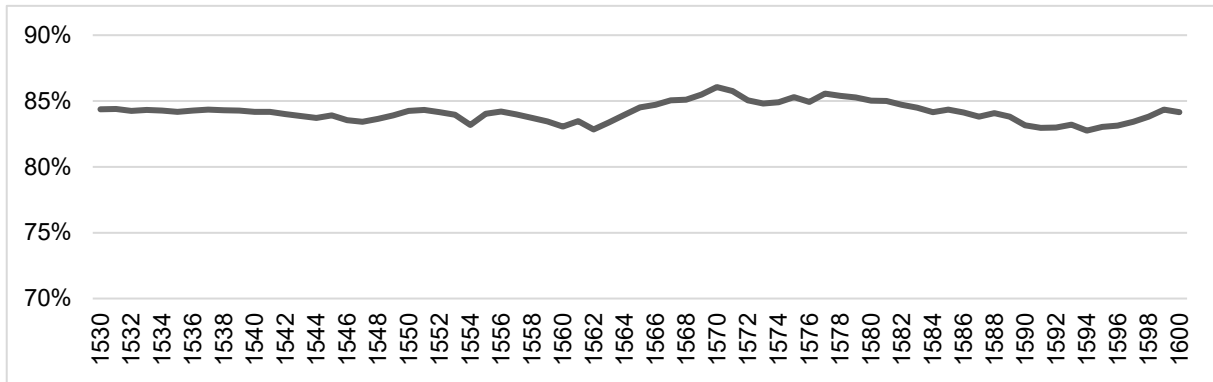


Figure 12.3. The share of peasant households in Sweden, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

Turning now from cottagers over to peasant households; figure 12.3 shows how their population share varied between 1530 and 1600. In fact, there was very little variation: 84% of the households in Sweden were peasants in 1530 as well as in 1600, and the population share remained within the narrow band of 83% to 86% throughout the century. The high point was reached around 1570, when plague and warfare took its toll especially on the urban population. Yet, no matter what happened to the other social groups, peasants always made up the vast majority of sixteenth-century Sweden's population; although it must also not be forgotten that as much as 15% of the households belonged to other social groups.

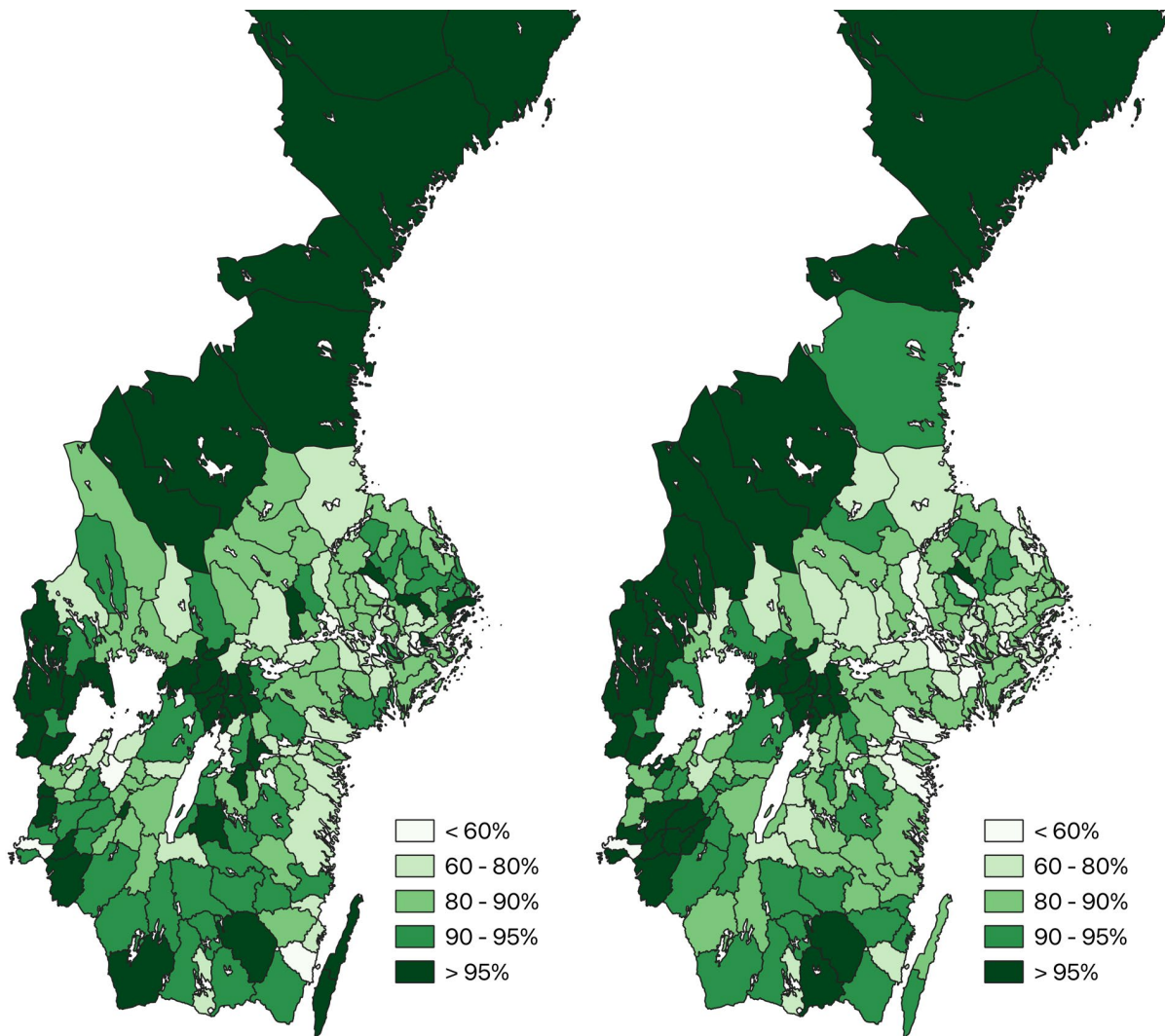


Figure 12.4. The share of peasant households in the hundreds of Sweden, in i) 1530, ii) 1600.
Source: Population database.

As is to be expected from the previous studies of the other social groups, there was significant regional variation also in the peasants' population share. In 1530, peasant households were most socially dominant (making up over 95% of the population) in all of Norrland, Upper Dalarna, most of Närke, in Dalsland and parts of Värmland. Further, peasants also made up over 95% of the population on Öland, and in some hundreds in Western Västergötland, as well as in parts of Östergötland and Småland.

Even in Uppland in Central Sweden there were a few hundreds which were socially completely dominated by peasant households, and hence socially most homogenous.

This pattern largely remained by 1600, by which time peasant households had come to dominate the population even more in most of Western Västergötland and Värmland, in addition to in Dalsland, Närke, and Upper Dalarna. Peasants also made up more than 95% of the population in most of Norrland (albeit no longer in Hälsingland). Western Sweden had evidently become more socially homogeneous over the century, with large areas almost lacking households that did not belong to this dominant social group.

Turning our attention to the areas where peasants were relatively rare (although still making up the majority of the population in almost every hundred in the country), these were in 1530 found in parts of Central Sweden, such as in the hundreds close to Stockholm, around lake Mälaren, and in Östergötland, as well as in for example parts of Västergötland. Over the century, the peasant population share further decreased in many of these regions, decreasing in Södermanland from 82% in 1530 to 71% in 1600, and in Västmanland from 75% in 1530 to 68% in 1600. Although still the most common social group also in Central Sweden, peasant households already by 1600 thus only made up some 65%–75% of the population. In other words, every third to fourth household in Central Sweden was *not* a peasant household by the year 1600. While Western Sweden became more socially homogeneous over the century, Central Sweden during the same time instead became more socially complex, as the major social group's share of the population decreased.

13. Servants

It is difficult to go beyond the household level in a study of the Swedish population in the sixteenth century. Only for male servants do population sources exist in the form of subsidy taxation records. The oldest of these is from 1576 (which was first used by Hans Forssell²¹⁴), while later records survive for 1589, 1590, and 1596.²¹⁵ As usual, many of the records have been lost, resulting in there for the majority of the

²¹⁴ Forssell 1872–1883 published some figures from these registers, later used by Palm in 2000 and subsequent works for population calculations.

²¹⁵ Most of the figures of these records have been published in Andersson 2020.

hundreds in Sweden only existing records for a single year of the sixteenth century for which the number of male servants can be determined. To make matters even worse, there are further a number of hundreds for which no data at all survives. The worst lacuna is the loss of all sixteenth-century servant taxation records for about half of the hundreds in Uppland; in addition, figures are missing also for three hundreds in Östergötland, two in Dalarna, and one in Västergötland. Many towns also lack data. In order to calculate national figures, extrapolations have thus frequently been made on the basis of surviving records from nearby hundreds (or towns).

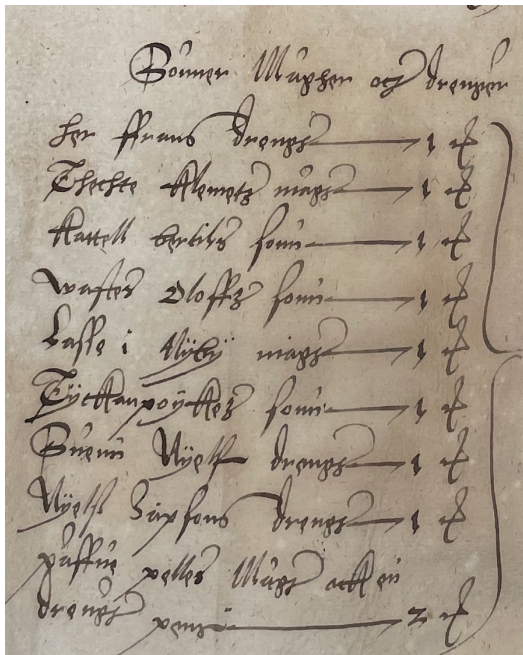


Figure 13.1. A taxation list of servants, sons-in-law, and sons at Sala in 1576, each paying one *mark*. Source: Bergsbruk: Salbergets räkenskaper, vol. 65, RA.

An example of the taxation records is shown in figure 13.1. The taxation records generally include all male servants employed by peasants, burgesses, and the clergy. To this figure has then been added the number of servants working for Crown, for church institutions, or at nobility demesne farms. The result is the total number of servants in each hundred, which is then divided by the number of households for comparative purposes. Because of the fragility of the records, it has been deemed impossible to study annual change over the century, especially since we do not have any figures for the period before 1576. What we can tell from surviving records is that

there seems to have been little change in the number of male servants per household in Sweden during the last quarter of the sixteenth century.

Table 13.1. Male servants per household in the provinces of Sweden, in 1576 and in 1600.

PROVINCE	1576	1600
UPPLAND	0.31	0.31
SÖDERMANLAND	0.31	0.31
NÄRKE	0.19	0.18
VÄSTMANLAND	0.30	0.31
DALARNA	0.12	0.11
VÄRMLAND	0.20	0.18
DALSLAND	0.12	0.13
VÄSTERGÖTLAND	0.20	0.19
ÖSTERGÖTLAND	0.19	0.19
SMÅLAND	0.15	0.13
ÖLAND	0.18	0.16
GÄSTRIKLAND	0.13	0.08
HÄLSINGLAND	0.05	0.00
MEDELPAD	0.03	0.05
ÄNGERMANLAND	0.10	0.02
VÄSTERBOTTEN	0.08	0.04

Sources: Andersson 2020; Andersson 2023; Population database.

The results of the servant calculations are shown in table 13.1, first and foremost showing remarkable regional variation. The three provinces in Central Sweden, Uppland, Södermanland, and Västmanland, stand out by having very high numbers of male servants per household (ca. 0.3). There thus was a very marked difference between this centre of service and the rest of the country. In most of the provinces in Southern and Western Sweden (Närke, Värmland, Västergötland, Östergötland, and on Öland), there were only 0.15–0.2 male servants per household, while in Dalarna, Dalsland, and Småland the number was as low as 0.11–0.13. Even lower were the figures for Norrland, where less than 0.1 male servants were employed in each household in the late sixteenth century.

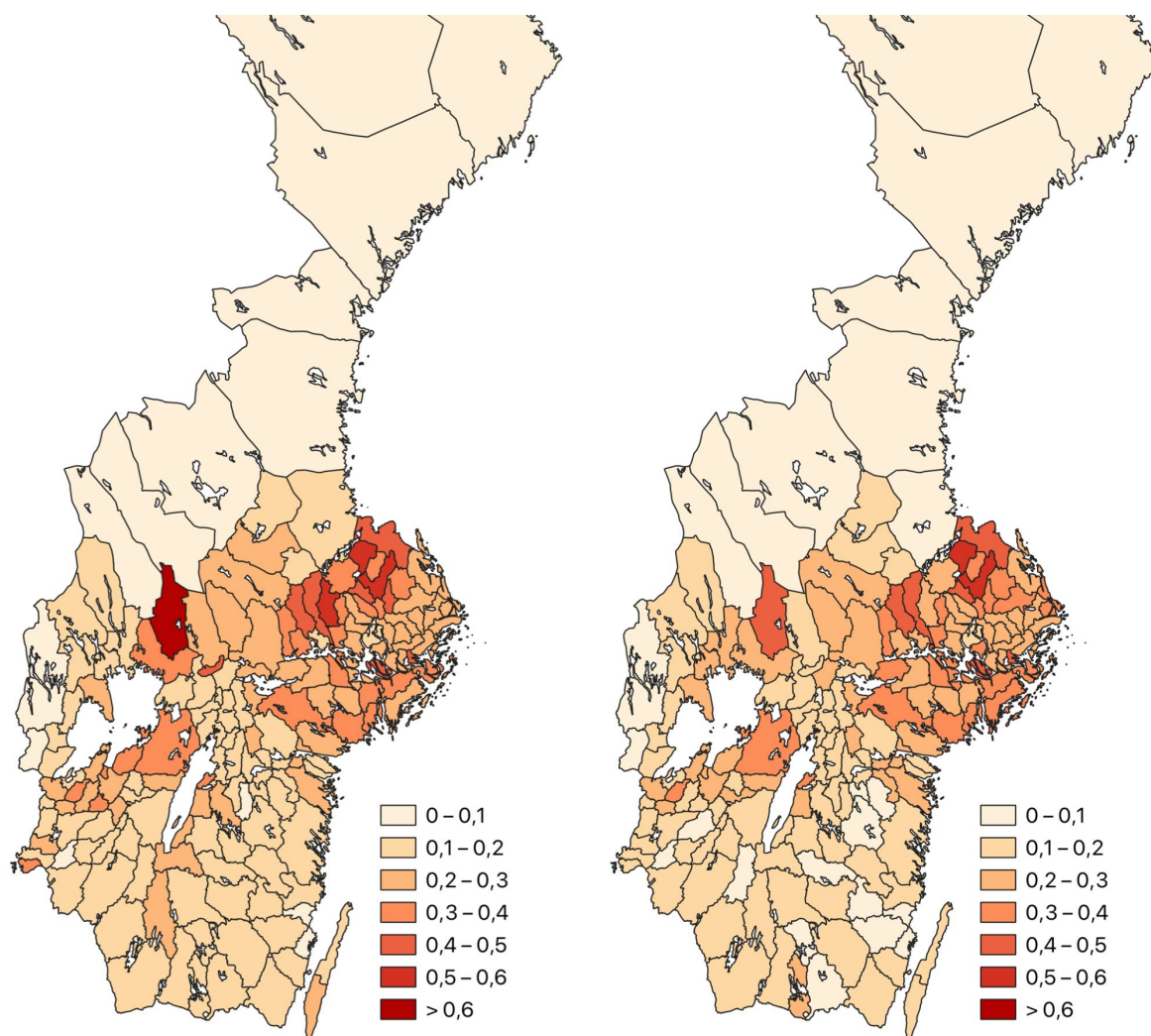


Figure 13.2. The number of male servants per household in the hundreds of Sweden, in i) 1576 and ii) 1600. Source: Population database.

This regional variation can better be seen in figure 13.2, which adds further nuance to the provincial figures. Within Central Sweden, male servants were especially common in Northern and Central Uppland, in Central Västmanland, and in Northern Södermanland. In Dalarna, servants were common only in the mining districts, with almost no servants living in the upper regions of the province. This pattern is found also in Närke and in Värmland, where more male servants likewise were found in the mining districts than in other parts of the provinces. In Västergötland, servants were

more common on the central plains, while rarer in the forested southern parts (a pattern recurring also in Dalsland). In Småland, servants were relatively more common on the plains close to Lake Vättern, while in Östergötland, servants were most common on the Baltic Sea coast and on the central plain of the province.

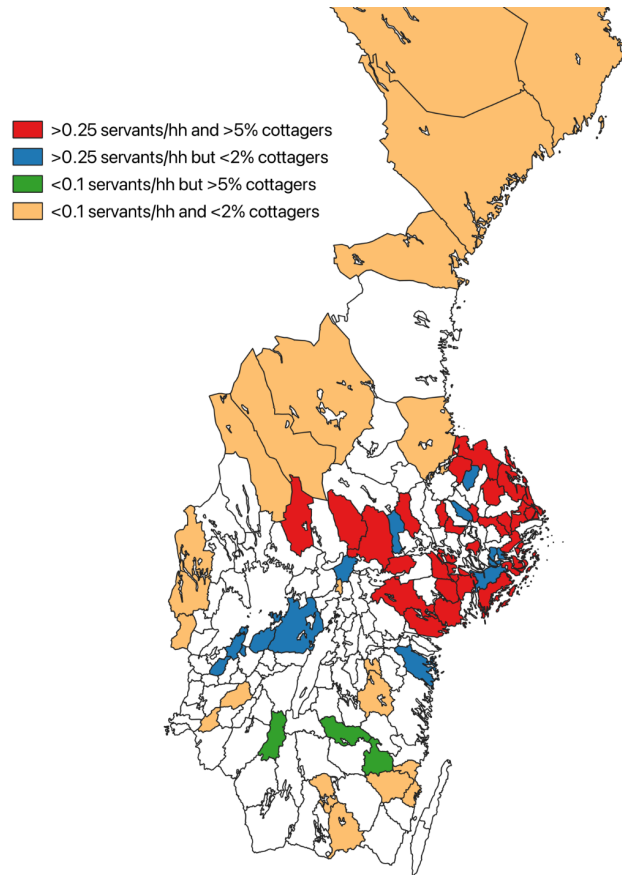


Figure 13.3. Male servants per household and share of cottager households in the hundreds of Sweden in 1600. Source: Population database.

As a final analysis of the social structure of sixteenth-century Sweden, in figure 13.3 are shown the data on the number of male servants per household combined with the share of cottager households in the population. This way we can make a rough social classification of sixteenth-century Sweden into regions based on the forms of labour commonly employed. In the first type of region (coloured red in the figure), both

servants and cottagers were relatively common in 1600 (the former being more than 0.25 male servant per household, the latter making up more than 5% of the population). These were the socially most unequal areas, where relatively large parts of the population were working either as servants or as cottagers (i.e., as day labourers); hence, here the degree of proletarianization was relatively high. These areas were almost exclusively located in Central Sweden: They included most of Södermanland and Uppland, parts of Västmanland, and Värmlandsberg mining district in Värmland.

In blue in figure 13.3 are coloured those hundreds in which servants were common, but the number of cottagers was very low. Although these areas were socially stratified, there was thus a preference to employ servants over day labourers. These areas are also to a large extent located in Central Sweden, including some hundreds close to Stockholm, but also on the plains in Västergötland, as well as Örebro hundred in Närke and Hammarkind in Östergötland. Although male servants were commonly employed here, they do seem to have had other opportunities later in life than becoming landless cottagers (as was in contrast probably commonly the case in the red areas). The opposite of this would be the third type of hundred, those coloured green in the figure, where cottagers were common, but servants were rare. Here we see a preference for hiring day labourers instead of employing servants; but as these hundreds were few, this was a quite uncommon way of organising rural labour. It does thus not seem to have been possible for a society to rely only on cottage labourers without servants, further underlining the probable recruitment of cottagers from the ranks of servants.

While the white areas in the figure indicate those regions where both the share of servants and cottagers were close to the national average, the yellow areas are finally those in which both servants and cottagers were relatively rare. As can be seen in the figure, these regions included most of Norrland, Upper Dalarna, Älvdalen in Värmland, Western Dalsland, and a few scattered hundreds in Västergötland and Småland. These were thus the areas where social stratification and proletarianization was least present in sixteenth-century Sweden. As almost no servants or cottagers lived in these regions, most work tasks would consequently have been done by the peasant families themselves, without resorting to hiring any labourers from outside the family.

Conclusion: Population and social structure in sixteenth-century Sweden

It is time to summarize the main findings of our study of the population of sixteenth-century Sweden and its social structure. Based on a large number of accounts, taxation lists, and other sources (and on the assumption that an average household consisted of six individuals), it has been possible not only to calculate annual local and national population figures, but also to present quantitative data on the social structure, relating to the rise of the Early Modern state and to sixteenth-century population change.

Let us iterate the main findings regarding the population size, which were previously presented in chapter 8. The population of Sweden (not including Finland) grew by about 33% from 1530 to 1600, which meant that Sweden went from having about 430.000 inhabitants in 1530 to about 572.000 in 1600. These results are not so far from what Forssell and Palm have previously found for 1571, or what Myrdal is about to publish regarding 1520.²¹⁶ The annual population increase over the whole period was 0.4%, although it was faster both before (0.6%) and after (0.5%) the mortality crisis of the 1560s. Although the population in most years grew by 0.5–1%, plague epidemics could bring the growth rate down close to 0, and the population actually decreased during a number of years of the war-ridden 1560s, as well as during the harvest failures of the 1590s. Overall, this meant that population grew slower in Sweden during the sixteenth century than it did in England or Holland, but at about the same pace as in Germany or Central Europe.

The national figures have been broken down on the local (hundred) and regional (province) levels, in order to make possible more nuanced studies. A main result is

²¹⁶ Forssell 1872–1883; Palm 2021; Myrdal *manuscript*.

that regional development in social change and population growth varied significantly between different parts of Sweden. Four main regions can now be identified, in which the figures concerning population growth and the social structure align. Those four regions are Central Sweden (including Uppland, Södermanland, Västmanland, and often also Östergötland and Närke), Western Sweden (including Västergötland, Dalsland, and Värmland), Northern Sweden (including Upper Dalarna, Hälsingland, Medelpad, Ångermanland, and Västerbotten), and Southern Sweden (including Småland and Öland).

The population increase was markedly faster in the West (with over 100% population increase in Värmland and Dalarna, and about 140–160% in some hundreds in Västergötland) than in Central Sweden (where Uppland only saw a 20% increase over the century) or in the South (where the population even decreased in some hundreds). As for population density, the most populous regions were parts of Central Sweden, but also the central plains in Västergötland. Here, population density was on par with that of sixteenth-century Northern Germany or Lithuania, on the other side of the Baltic Sea. Most of the country, and especially the North and parts of the West, was however as sparsely populated as the great plains of Eastern Europe, and no region in Sweden came even close to being as densely populated as regions in Western or Central Europe, such as England or Holland.

In chapters 9 through 13, a number of aspects regarding the social structure of sixteenth-century Sweden were studied, mostly using the same records and methods that were previously employed to calculate the population figures. Let us begin by summarizing the overall figures, before diving into the regional particularities. As for the degree of urbanisation, Sweden was far beyond the rest of Europe. If only towns with more than 5,000 inhabitants are included (only Stockholm, that is), Sweden had an urbanisation degree of 1–3% throughout the century. If instead all places with town privileges are included, the degree of urbanisation was still only 7–8%, and likewise remained more or less constant from 1530 to 1600. Sweden was thus, by both measures, a far more rural country than the rest of Europe.

More variation was found in the study of the population share employed by the Swedish Crown. By 1530, the Crown's workers (including the royal courts) made up just 1% of the population, but by 1560 this had increased to no less than 5%. Although there are no international figures to compare these numbers to, it would seem to suggest that the Swedish state apparatus in 1560 was very extensive by Early Modern standards. During the rest of the century, it however decreased again, being only 2%

by 1600. The role of the state as an employer was instead at least partly taken over by the landed nobility, who by 1530 had employed 2% of the population at its demesne farms but by 1600 had increased this share to 3%. Once more, figures for international comparisons are lacking, but given that the Swedish nobility was rather small, it is likely that the population share it employed was also relatively low.

We further studied the population share of cottagers, landless households who would (at least partly) be dependent on wage work for peasant households or at demesne farms. Cottagers made up about 5% of the population in 1530, a share decreased by a fraction over the century. We also studied (male) servants, for which it is not possible to study change over time, as sources are lacking before the last quarter of the century. We finally also calculated the population share of ordinary peasant households, including both tenants (*landbor*) and those owning their own land (*skattebönder*), which was determined to have made up about 85% of the population throughout the century. This means that, during the sixteenth century, peasant households always made up the vast majority of the Swedish population. Yet, it must be remembered that the 15% that were not peasant households is not an insignificant population share; sixteenth-century Sweden was certainly not a homogeneous all-peasant society. These 15% were made up of (roughly) a third cottagers, a third workers on either the Crown's or else the nobility's demesne farms and other establishments, and a third of the urban population.

There was significant regional variation also in the social structure. In Western Sweden (Västergötland, Dalsland, and Värmland), population increase was most rapid. Urbanisation rates were however falling, with towns becoming smaller over the century. The Crown did not establish any significant presence here, while the nobility's share of the population increased. The cottager share was small and decreasing, and the number of male servants was also generally low. Overall, Western Sweden was socially homogenous, having become more so over the century, with over 95% of the households being peasants (the exception being the central plains in Västergötland, which in some respects differ from the rest of the West).

The West had some characteristics in common with the very sparsely populated North (Norrland). Here, urbanisation remained insignificant throughout the century, despite the foundation of a few new towns during its latter part. The Crown likewise remained insignificant, as did the nobility (which the North in fact had in common with large tracts of the West). The cottager share of the population was always very low, as was the number of servants. The North was thus close to as socially

homogeneous as a region could be in the sixteenth century, totally dominated as it was by peasant households (who in most cases owned their land).

The South (Småland and Öland) does in many aspects lie close to the national average. It had a significant but stagnant degree of urbanisation, mainly dominated by the large town of Kalmar. The Crown did establish lots of new manors here around the middle of the century, but towards the year 1600 the direct involvement of the Crown in the South had contracted and become mainly centred on the main castle in Kalmar. The share of the population employed by the nobility increased over the century, especially in Finnveden on the Danish border. The number of male servants was however low, as was the cottager population share, which decreased somewhat over the century. As a consequence, the peasant population share in the South was thus also around the national average of between 80 and 90 per cent.

Finally: the provinces in Central Sweden (Uppland, Södermanland, Västmanland, Närke, and Östergötland). Here, population increase was the most limited over the century. Central Sweden also differed sharply from the rest of the country on most social aspects. The degree of urbanisation increased over the period in most of the area (although Stockholm was stagnant or decreasing). Central Sweden was also where most of the increase in the Crown's population share took place not only during the expansion phase before 1560, but also where it remained high until 1600. This was partly due to the Crown having major interest in the metal industries in Bergslagen, but also because Stockholm castle became the main seat of the royal court, because Stockholm became the base of the Swedish navy, and because – for various reasons – most other major manors and castles owned by the royal family were located in Central Sweden. As for the nobility, the population share it employed grew in Central Sweden, especially in Södermanland and Uppland, possibly because of their vicinity to Stockholm. Central Sweden was further socially heterogeneous in that the share of cottagers here was much larger than in the other regions, as was the number of servants. As a result, peasant households thus made up a significantly smaller portion of the population in Central Sweden than in all other regions.

Despite a rapid population increase, the main result is thus that Sweden experienced very limited change to its social structure over the course of the sixteenth century. Its social composition, that is the population shares of the main social groups (as defined in this study), remained similar in 1600 to what it had been in 1530, despite both the growth of the Early Modern state, and the mortality crisis of the 1560s. One major result that differs from this static view is however the development of a core

region in Central Sweden, which over the century became increasingly different socially compared to the rest of the country. Here, in Central Sweden, we find the establishment and growth of the Early Modern state, increasing urbanisation, increasing proletarianization, and increased social (and probably also economic) inequality. This contrasts sharply with the North, where all of these social processes were absent, as well as with the West and the South, regions which actually instead had become *more* socially homogeneous in 1600 than they had been at the end of the Middle Ages. Yet, it was these areas, and not the more dynamic Central Sweden, that took most of the century's population increase.

Appendices

The following appendices contain detailed information regarding each of the provinces in sixteenth-century Sweden. Its aim is to one hand present (and discuss) local variation in source availability, and on the other to present more detailed results, especially regarding the size of the urban population.

The general structure of the appendices follows that of the chapters in the main text. After a (short) general overview of the province, the first section then discusses cadastral peasants and farm desertion. The second section presents sources on the division of farms in the province, and the total number of peasant households. The third section presents the sources and the number of cottagers. The fourth section concerns the Crown: it gives a short presentation of what crown establishments there were in the province and when they were active, as well as the sources to those employed there. The fifth section concerns church institutions. It shortly presents what is known of the closing date of monasteries and convents, as well as the sources for the population (staff and inmates) of hospitals. The sixth section then concerns the nobility. In addition to presenting the number of manors in each province, it also contains detailed information on all known sources (wage lists and food registers) concerning sixteenth-century nobility manors. The seventh and final section concerns the towns. Here, an overview is first given regarding the general source situation in the province. Then follows a short presentation of each town, including the sources to its sixteenth-century population. Information is also given on why some places have been considered as towns, even though they have usually not been regarded as such in the historiography. Urban populations are then calculated (including hospitals, castles, courts, etc.).

A. Uppland

Uppland was one of the largest provinces in sixteenth-century Sweden. It is located in Central Sweden, between the northern shore of Lake Mälaren and the Baltic Sea. Fishing and trade in fish and forest products were consequently important for a large part of the population, although the plains in the central and southern parts of the country were among the more fertile of the country.²¹⁷ In the west, the province included the hundreds of Simtuna, Torstuna, and Våla, even though these formed a bailiwick with Tjurbo in Västmanland, centred around the silver mine in Sala. The two hundreds on Södertörn, Sotholm and Svartlösa, were (because of their vicinity to Stockholm) often counted with Uppland during the sixteenth century but have here been kept with the province of Södermanland. In southern Uppland, Färentuna hund-red was created during the 1540s by separating the island of Adelsö from Trögd in 1540 and Ekerö from Svartlösa in 1544, adding them to Färingsö tingslag (which was previously a part of Bro hundred).²¹⁸ I have used the borders from after 1544 for all of the study. All in all, this means that Uppland was divided into 34 hundreds or similar districts (the regions along the coast were instead referred to as *skeppslag*, technically a subdivision of the hundred but functioning as proper hundreds during the sixteenth century).

The towns in Uppland were located either on Mälaren or on the Baltic coast; most important of these were Stockholm and Uppsala, the seat of the archbishop. Stockholm castle was the most important of the crown establishments, not least since this was the main residence of the royal family, while another large castle was constructed in Uppsala during the century. Some metal industries were developed in the northern part of the provinces during the latter part of the century, at Österby, Forsmark, and Ortala.

²¹⁷ Palm 2013; Friberg 1983.

²¹⁸ Ferm, Johansson & Rahmqvist 1992 p. 114.

1. Cadastral peasants

For six of the hundreds in Uppland, the number of peasants who owned their own land (*skattebönder*) is given already in 1530 in the accounts.²¹⁹ The number of cadastral peasants is known for a couple of other hundreds from 1533,²²⁰ ten more are given in the 1535 subsidy taxation lists,²²¹ and another dozen in the years 1538–1540, including the hundreds closest to Stockholm and Uppsala. After 1540 only comes data for the number of cadastral peasants in Oland (in 1541) and Lyhundra (in 1544).²²²

Due to archival losses, records for Uppland are badly preserved from the latter part of the century (circa 1580–1599). This results in the number of deserted farms having to be estimated for Seminghundra 1568–74 from neighbouring hundreds. Data is further missing for three hundreds after 1595, and for one additional in 1600. The latter lacunae are however of minor importance, as the number of cadastral peasants in Uppland had become stable at the end of the 1570s, no longer being annually updated by the bailiffs.

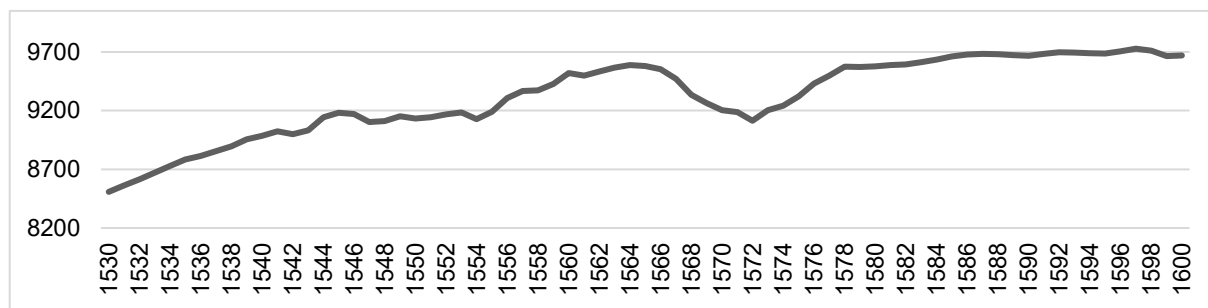


Figure A1.1. Cadastral peasants (excluding deserted farms) in Uppland, 1530–1600.

Source: Population database.

²¹⁹ Fogdarnas räkenskaper, RA.

²²⁰ Räntekammarböcker, vol. 5, RA (accounts from the subsidy taxation).

²²¹ Gärder och hjälper 1535, RA.

²²² Upplands handlingar 1541:11; 1544:6, RA.

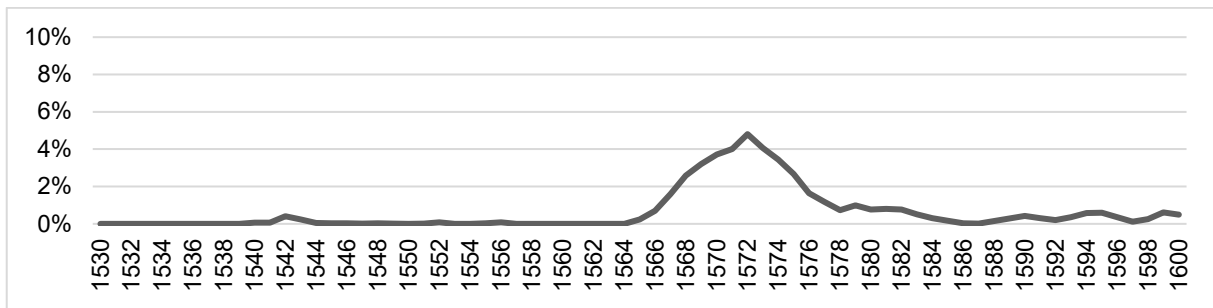


Figure A1.2. Deserted farms in Uppland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

The number of cadastral farms in Uppland grew from 1530 to about 1565, decreased to about 1572, then recovered until about 1578, whereafter it grew more slowly to 1600 (with a small dip during the late 1590s). As can be seen in figure A1.2, there were virtually no deserted farms before 1565; while a peak of 5% was reached in 1572. A rapid recovery phase to 1578 was then followed by more slow recovery, with some farms remained deserted for the rest of the century. The crisis of the 1560s in Uppland thus resulted both in largescale desertion in the short run, which soon was remedied by new households taking up the old farms, and some permanent farm abandonment.

From Uppland, accounts explicitly state that deserted farms were completely abandoned and connected this to high mortality. From Håbo in 1566, it is reported that some farms “Have been deserted [...] because there everyone died [...] the meadow was harvested for the benefit of the king”,²²³ from Trögd in 1567 that farms “are deserted and no one is living there”,²²⁴ and from Värmdö from the same year farms were reported as “deserted, which lie trampled by cattle’s feet”.²²⁵

²²³ Upplands handlingar 1566:9, RA: ”Hava varit öde ... ty där dödde allt ut... bärgades ängen till konungens behov”.

²²⁴ Upplands handlingar 1567:4, RA: “ligga öde och ingen besitter dem”.

²²⁵ Upplands handlingar 1567:5, RA: “öde, som ligger för fåfot”.

2. Division of farms

The data on the division of farms in Uppland comes from the subsidy taxation lists of 1563 (for four hundreds),²²⁶ 1571 (for about half the province),²²⁷ and from 1599 (covering most of the province).²²⁸ In addition, some grain tithe data exist from 1548, while covering most of the province in the 1550s.²²⁹ More or less complete tithe data also exist for 1578 and 1582,²³⁰ while some hundreds are covered also later in the 1580s and 1590s.

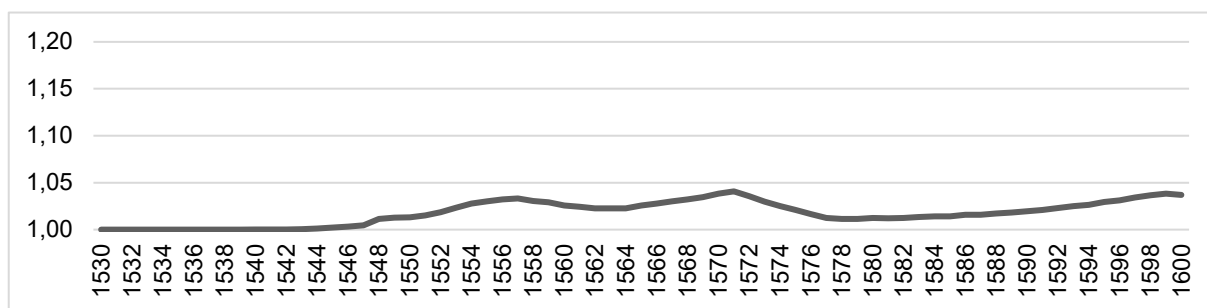


Figure A2.1. Division of farms in Uppland, 1530–1600. For further explanation of the figure, see figure 2.1. Source: Population database.

The division of farms was always rather limited in Uppland, never reaching above 4%. Having a top in the early 1550s, the number decreased until about 1565 (probably due to some division of farms being registered as proper cadastral units). From about 1580 onwards, we see a steady increase, during a phase when new units were registered less frequently in the cadastres in Uppland.

²²⁶ Brudskatten 1563, vol. 1, RA.

²²⁷ Älvsborgs lösen 1571, RA.

²²⁸ Upplands handlingar 1599:9, RA.

²²⁹ Prostarnas tionderäkenskaper, RA.

²³⁰ Röda nummer 57a, RA; Strödda kamerala handlingar, vol. 43:2, RA.

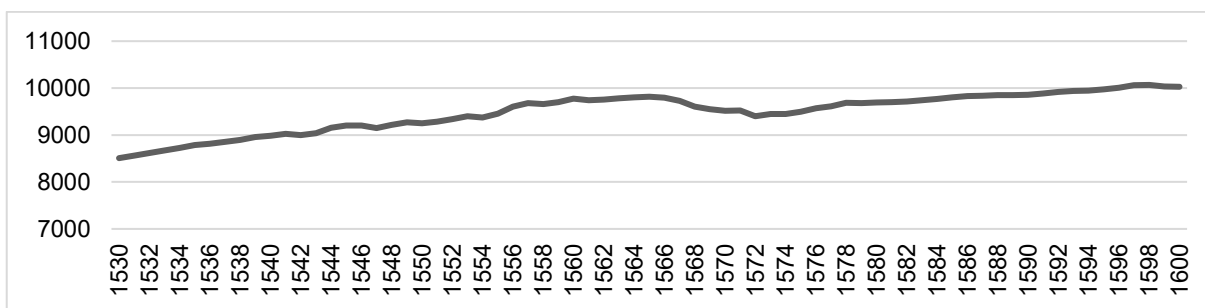


Figure A2.2. Total number of peasant households in Uppland, 1530–1600.

Source: Population database.

The total number of peasant households in Uppland was about 8,500 in 1530. It rose steadily until the mid 1560s, reaching 9,800 in 1565. It then decreased down to a trough of about 9,400 in 1572 (a decrease by about 4%), that is to the number it had had in 1554. Recovery took until 1586 (again reaching 9,800). The number peaked in 1598 (over 10,000), with a small decrease (<0.5%) during the last two years of the century. The total number of peasant households in Uppland thus rose by 18% from 1530 to 1600.

3. *Cottagers*

The number of cottagers can in Uppland be taken both from subsidy taxation lists and from lists of corvée labourers. The subsidy taxation lists of 1535 concerns only one hundred (Håbo),²³¹ and likewise cottagers in only a few hundreds are included in the subsidy taxation lists of 1560,²³² 1569,²³³ 1576,²³⁴ 1579,²³⁵ 1589,²³⁶ and 1590.²³⁷ More important are the subsidies of 1571 and 1599,²³⁸ which both covers most of the province; in addition, a subsidy taxation list from 1598 contains data on the number of cottagers in seven hundreds.²³⁹

²³¹ Gärder och hjälper 1535, RA

²³² Silverskatten 1560, vol. 1, RA.

²³³ Silverskatten 1569, vol. 1–2, RA.

²³⁴ Drängeregister, RA.

²³⁵ Brudskatten 1579, vol. 1, RA.

²³⁶ Upplands handlingar 1589:22, RA.

²³⁷ Upplands handlingar 1590:1, RA.

²³⁸ Upplands handlingar 1599:9, RA.

²³⁹ Upplands handlingar 1598:24, RA.

As for accounts of cottager *corvée* labour, data survive already from 1542 for Färentuna (*corvée* labour at Svartsjö) and Norunda (at Uppsala).²⁴⁰ For 1549 and for many years of the 1550s we have data on a number of hundreds related to the building of Uppsala castle.²⁴¹ Further data comes from the 1560s (from e.g., Hallkved manor and Svartsjö manor).²⁴²

Data for cottagers in Uppland is thus well available from ca. 1549 onwards, with a relatively good coverage especially for the 1550s and 1560s, as well as the 1590s. Regionally, the source situation is worst for the area just north of Stockholm (including Danderyds skeppslag, Åkers skeppslag, Seminghundra, Sollentuna, Vallentuna, and Ärlinghundra). For some of these hundreds we only have data from 1599, making an extrapolation for the whole century necessary. This is unfortunate but reflects archival losses of most Uppland taxation materials from the 1570s and 1580s (the period when most subsidy taxation lists would include cottagers). There is thus no reason to believe that this in any way reflects a relative paucity of cottagers.

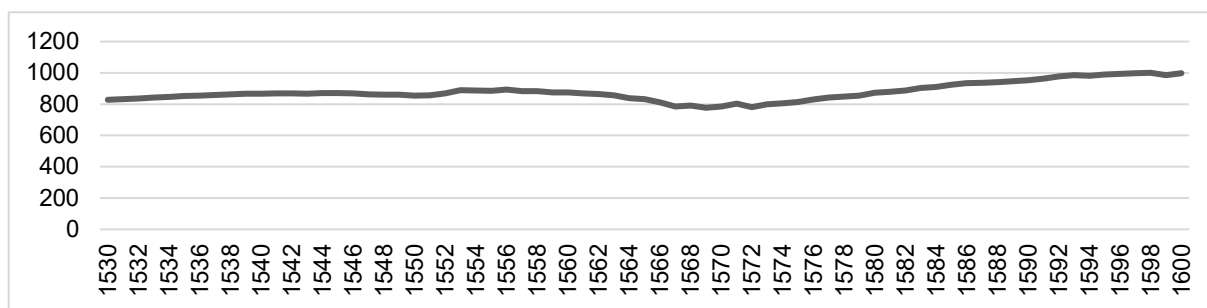


Figure A3.1. The total number of cottager households in Uppland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

The number of cottagers in Uppland was rather stable from 1530 to the 1560s (between 830 and 890). The number decreased somewhat 1565–1572, after which time it again started to recover, reaching 900 in the middle of the 1580s and 1,000 in 1598. The total number of cottagers in Uppland thus increased by 20% from 1530 to 1600.

²⁴⁰ Upplands handlingar 1542:3; 1542:11, RA.

²⁴¹ E.g., Upplands handlingar 1552:12, RA.

²⁴² E.g., Upplands handlingar 1566:29, RA.

4. *The Crown*

The Crown had a relatively strong presence in Uppland already in 1530. In addition to Stockholm castle, which included one demesne farm at this point, Vädla, the shipyard and the armoury (*arkliet*), it also held Svartsjö, Uppsala, Arnö, and Ekholmen manors. In the 1540s, Arnö was abandoned as the Crown moved to Ekolsund, while Örby manor in northern Uppland was added to the royal patrimony. The Crown also established a new demesne farm outside Stockholm (“Nya ladugården”), Skediga manor was founded, and the establishment at Ekholmen manor was resumed. The 1550s saw the foundation of a large number of new manors, some only short-lived, some that would last: Berga, Glia, Hallkved, Nygård, Sjö, Skällnora, Stäket, Torvesund, Tuna, Tynningö, Vattholma, Venngarn, and Väntholmen, spread over large parts of the province. It also established military presence by the sailing route to Stockholm in Vaxholm. After this intensive period, no new manors were however established during the rest of the century, and many of the previous ones were either abandoned or enfeoffed to members of the nobility.

During the latter part of the century, the Crown instead invested in industrial production and shipbuilding. Early attempts in the mining industry included Österby iron works with Dannemora mines (founded in 1549), to which Vattholma was soon added. Iron mining and production was also established at Hökhuvud (1551–1556). Later came Forsmark (in 1580) and Ortala (in 1590), which both (as Österby) lasted to the end of the century. Shipbuilding outside Stockholm was begun at Älvkarleby in 1564, lasting until the 1590s. In addition, places for ship buildings were also located at Harbovik, Öregrund, Bergshamra, Skobolandet, and Gröneborg.²⁴³ Most of these places were however only active for a few years. More long-lasting was the fishery in river Dalälven at Älvkarleby, active as a separate establishment from the 1530s and into the 1560s. In contrast, the fisheries in Tensmyra and Öregrund, which were the other two crown fisheries in Uppland during the 1500s, were active only a brief period in the middle of the century.

²⁴³ On shipbuilding locations, see also Johansson 2023.

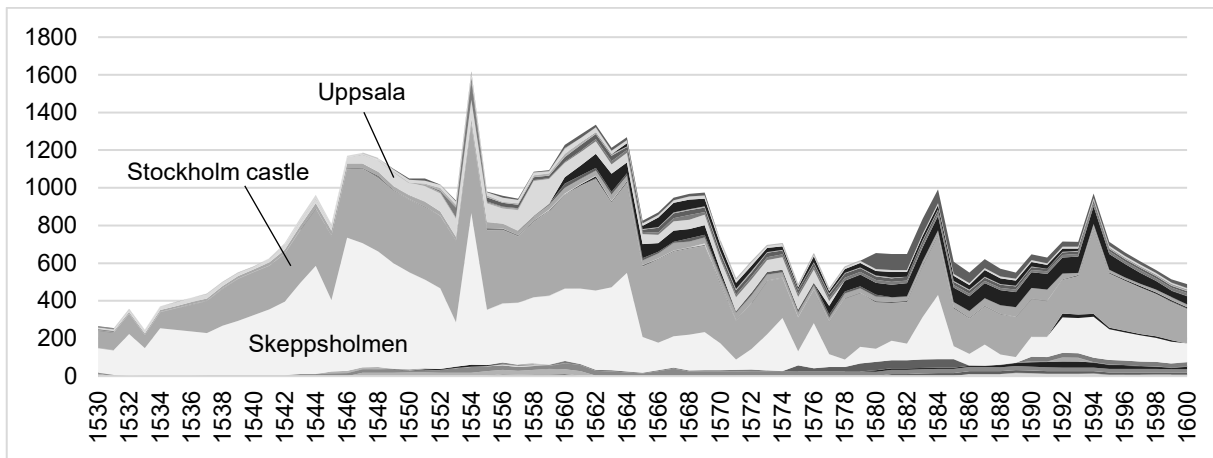


Figure A4.1. The number of households employed at various crown establishments in Uppland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

Already by 1530, the Crown thus had a number of establishments in Uppland. The labour force was however numerically dominated by Stockholm castle and Skeppsholmen, the shipyard in Stockholm. Although we in figure A4.1 see that the number of households in Uppland employed by the Crown rose from about 300 to 1,200 from 1530 to 1550, we also see that this rise was completely dominated by the rise of Stockholm. Stockholm then continued to dominate the province throughout the century, albeit with two important caveats: Skeppsholmen was significantly reduced during the 1560s (as most shipbuilding activities were moved out of the city, including to many places in Uppland along the Baltic Sea shore), and the number of households employed at Stockholm castle also decreased during the latter part of the century. While the ca. 200 households employed at the castle in 1600 was double the figure of 1530, it was still far from its maximum of 500–600 households it had employed around 1560.

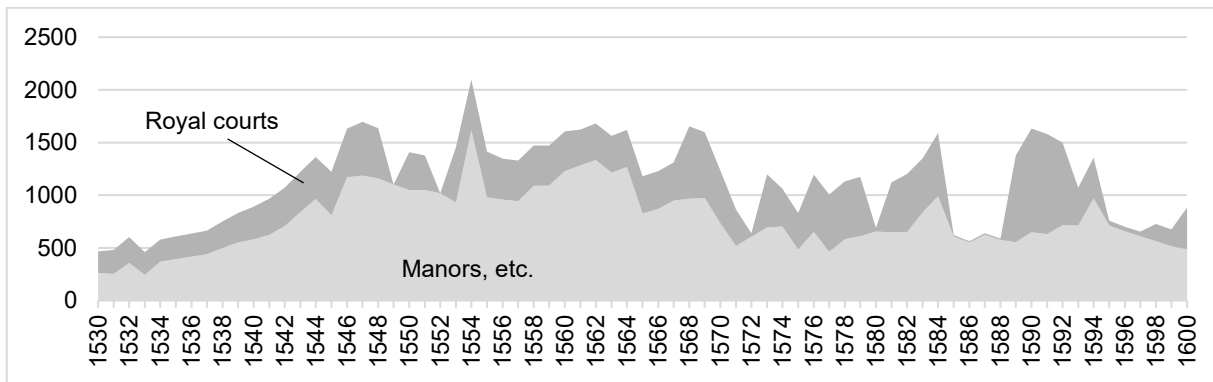


Figure A4.2. The number of households employed at various crown establishments and at the royal courts in Uppland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

In addition to the manors, castles, industries, and shipyards, Uppland was also home to the most populous royal courts. King Gustav I spent most of his years in Stockholm, as did King Erik XIV and King John III (although the latter also spent several years of the 1580s out of the province). King Sigismund however only visited Stockholm in 1593–1594, while his sister Anna probably kept her court in Stockholm 1589–1594. In addition, Duchess Sofia (and later her son, Duke Gustav) lived with their court on Ekolsund in Trögd hundred from 1569 onwards, while her sister Elisabeth probably mostly stayed in Stockholm with her court from 1568 until her marriage and emigration in 1581.

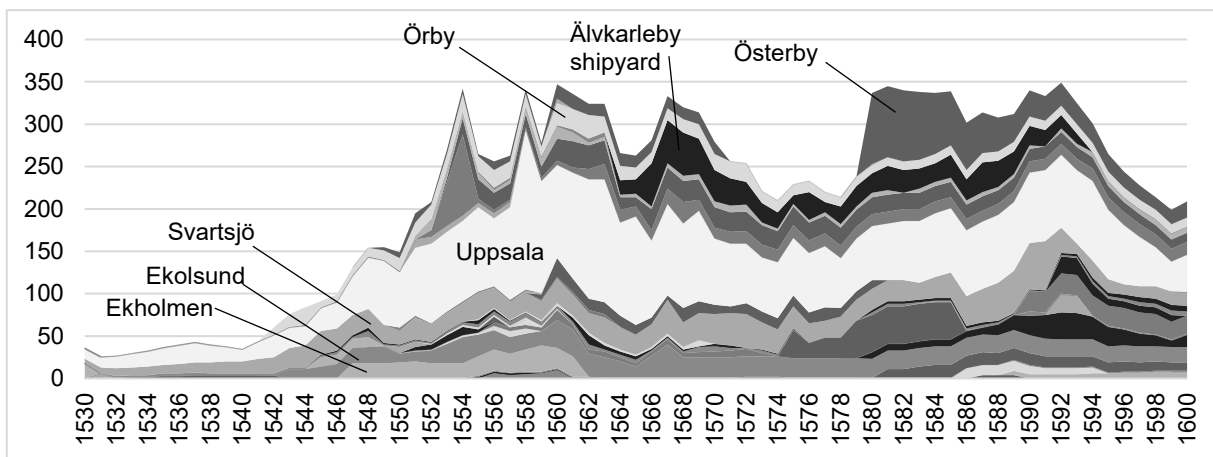


Figure A4.3. The number of households employed at various crown establishments in Uppland (excluding Stockholm and Skeppsholmen), 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

In order to show the development also for the rest of Uppland, figure A4.3 shows the number of households employed at crown establishments excluding the royal courts, Stockholm and Skeppsholmen shipyard. Here we see Uppsala manor being most important throughout the century (replaced by Uppsala castle in the 1570s). Some industrial establishments such as Österby were also important, at least during some decades. Overall, the number of crown-employed households in Uppland expanded especially during the 1540s, then oscillated between 250 and 350 until about 1590, when it saw a decrease down to 200 at the end of the century. Crown interest in Uppland became increasingly focused on industry, while agricultural manors (except for those at the castles in Uppsala and Stockholm) were left to stagnate.

5. *The Church*

There were five hospitals in Uppland during the sixteenth century. The most important of these (and largest in the whole country) was Stockholm hospital. It took over the buildings of the abandoned Greyfriars' convent in 1531 but was subsequently relocated to outside the town in the early 1550s to Danviken.²⁴⁴ To Danviken belonged three demesne farms, Sickla, Hammarby, and Järla, of which latter was replaced by Östberga in the 1560s (closed down around 1575). Accounts from Danviken exist from the early 1550s and until 1600 (but with numerous gaps), which include wage lists of those working at its farms. The number of inmates is earliest mentioned in a list from 1557, last in 1578 (after which date the records suffer the same lacuna as the rest of Uppland).²⁴⁵

Accounts from the sixteenth century are completely lacking from the hospital in Uppsala. Its relative size has been estimated through a royal donation in 1564, which shows it to have been somewhat larger than other hospitals in the towns around Lake Mälaren (but much smaller than Danviken).²⁴⁶ In Enköping, the Franciscan convent was converted into a hospital in 1530.²⁴⁷ The earliest surviving accounts come from 1601, which have been used to estimate a (presumably rather constant) size during the sixteenth century.²⁴⁸ From Sigtuna hospital no accounts exist. It is first mentioned in a *länsregister* of 1597; although it might have been older, it must in that case have

²⁴⁴ Berntson 2003 p. 61–3.

²⁴⁵ A list of the inmates at Danviken in 1557 in *Strödda kamerala handlingar*, vol. 49, RA. Some accounts 1557–1561 are kept in *Stockholms borgmästare och råds arkiv*, serie G, *Stockholms stadsarkiv*. Most accounts are however included in *Upplands handlingar*, RA (from 1549 to 1600).

²⁴⁶ *Räntekammarböcker*, vol. 41, RA.

²⁴⁷ Berntson 2003.

²⁴⁸ *Sandbergska samlingen* vol. YY4, RA.

been very small in order not to have been previously mentioned. I have not included it in any population calculations before this date. Finally, Södermalms sjukstuga (located in Södermalm suburb in Stockholm) was founded by King John III during the late 1570s. No accounts exist, but the number of inmates is given in the accounts from Stockholm castle, as they got food from the kitchen there.²⁴⁹

By 1530, two convents and one monastery survived in Uppland. Enköping Franciscan convent probably closed down in 1531, while the Clarissan convent in Stockholm (which had been moved into the Greyfriars' buildings some years before) saw its buildings converted into a hospital in 1532. After this time the only religious foundation remaining was Sko Cistercian nunnery, which was not closed down until 1587, with its number of nuns known from lists in the 1560s and 1570s.²⁵⁰

The parish clergy in Uppland numbered about 120 in the sixteenth century.

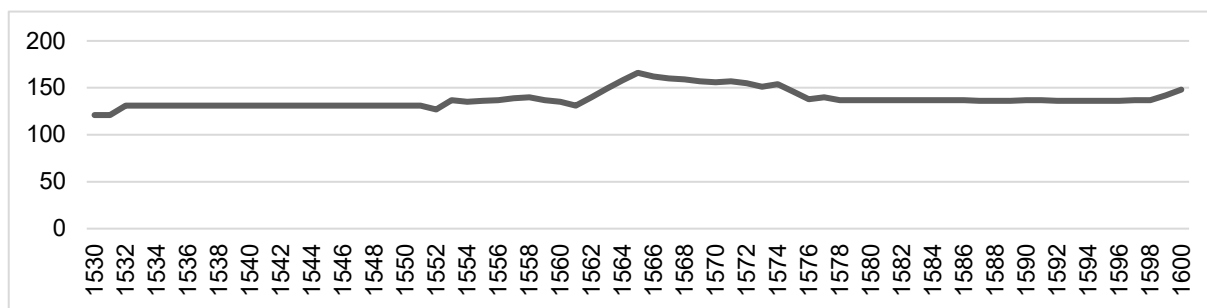


Figure A5.1. Total number of households employed by the church in Uppland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

6. *The Nobility*

Private accounts that list all employees survive from just four manors in Uppland: Salsta, Ekholmen, Rydboholm, and Fånö. The oldest of these date from 1585, while the rest come from the 1590s. In addition, records survive from the beginning of the 1600s for five manors which were confiscated from the high nobility by the Crown as a result of the struggles between Duke Charles and King Sigismund.

Salsta (in Tensta parish, Norunda hundred) was a large manor, which in 1585 was run by Sigrid Svantesdotter (Sture) or her son Erik Turesson (Bielke). A food register

²⁴⁹ E.g., Strödda militiehandlingar rörande flottan, vol. 5, RA.

²⁵⁰ Berntson 2003.

survives for that year, and additional food registers survive for 1597 and 1599, when the manor was run by Erik's brother Nils Bielke. The manor employed 6–7 householders (in 1597 perhaps as many as 12, although most lack titles), 5–7 male servants, and 7–11 women.²⁵¹

Ekholmen (in Veckholm parish, Trögd hundred) was a large manor which had previously belonged to the Crown before it was enfeoffed to Pontus de la Gardie in 1571. From 1594, when the manor belonged to his children, a sole wage list survives.²⁵² The list contains six male householders, eight male servants, and seven women.

Rydboholm (in Ryds skeppslag) was a large manor owned by the highest nobility, Per Brahe and his son Abraham. For 1595, accounts survive both of food and wages.²⁵³ The food register contains a remark that there *should* be 12 people at the manor, but that the bailiff had overspent and allowed 19 to dine there. The wage list contains only 12 individuals; adding one title from the food register, we are left with six persons whose social status is unknown.

Fånö (in Löt parish, Trögd hundred) was an ordinary manor, reestablished in 1594 when the widow Brita Gabrielsdotter (Oxenstierna) moved here. A food register survives from 1597:²⁵⁴ it lists two householders, four male servants, and seven women.

Penningby (in Länna skeppslag) was a large manor owned by the highest nobility. It was confiscated by the Crown in 1599, probably from Clas Bielke; a food register survives from 1601, when it was run by the Crown, as well as a wage list from 1602.²⁵⁵ It included the bailiff and possibly a scribe, as well as another nine male householders. In addition, eleven male servants, and nine women were employed at Penningby.

Wijk (in Balingsta parish, Hagunda hundred) was a large manor confiscated by the Crown in 1599 from Clas Bielke. A wage list survives from 1602: it lists 10 householders, 9 male servants, and 9 women.²⁵⁶

²⁵¹ Adeln och dess gods, vol. 37, RA.

²⁵² De la Gardiesamlingen, Topographica: Ekholmen, vol. 9, LUB.

²⁵³ Röda nummer 354, RA.

²⁵⁴ Oxenstiernska samlingen E 520, RA.

²⁵⁵ Upplands handlingar 1602:28, RA.

²⁵⁶ Upplands handlingar 1602:28, RA.

Rävelsta (in Altuna parish, Simtuna hundred) was a demesne farm confiscated by the Crown in 1599 from Clas Bielke. A food register survives from 1602, indicating that 2–3 householders were employed at the manor.²⁵⁷

Djursholm (in Danderyds skeppslag) was a large manor confiscated by the Crown in 1599 from Gösta Axelsson Banér. A wage list survives from 1602: it lists seven householders, six male servants, and six women.²⁵⁸

Hammarskog (in Dalby parish, Hagunda hundred) was an ordinary manor confiscated by the Crown in 1599 from Jöran Posse. A wage list survives from 1602: it lists 4 householders, 5 male servants, and 6 women.²⁵⁹

Table A6.1. The number of householders, servants, and women employed at manors in Uppland, 1530–1600.

MANOR	YEARS	TYPE	HOUSEHOLDERS	MALE SERVANTS	WOMEN
SALSTA	1585, 1597–99	large	6–7	5–7	7–11
EKHOLMEN	1594	large	6	8	7
RYDBOHOLM	1595	large	3	4	6
FÄNÖ	1597	ordinary	2	4	7
PENNINGBY	1601	large	12	11	11
WIJK	1602	large	10	9	9
RÄVELSTA	1602	farm	2–3	8?	8?
DJURSHOLM	1602	large	7	6	6
HAMMARSKOG	1602	ordinary	4	5	6

Source: Population database.

²⁵⁷ Upplands handlingar 1602:28, RA.

²⁵⁸ Upplands handlingar 1602:28, RA.

²⁵⁹ Upplands handlingar 1602:28, RA.

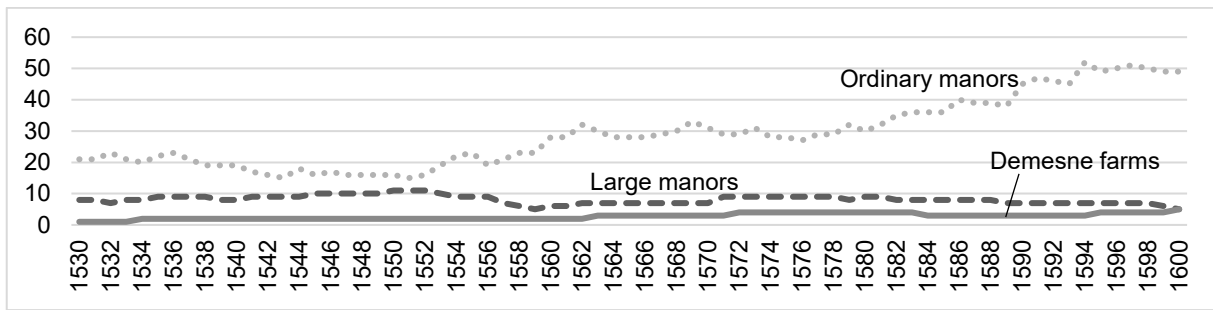


Figure A6.1. The number of nobility manors in Uppland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

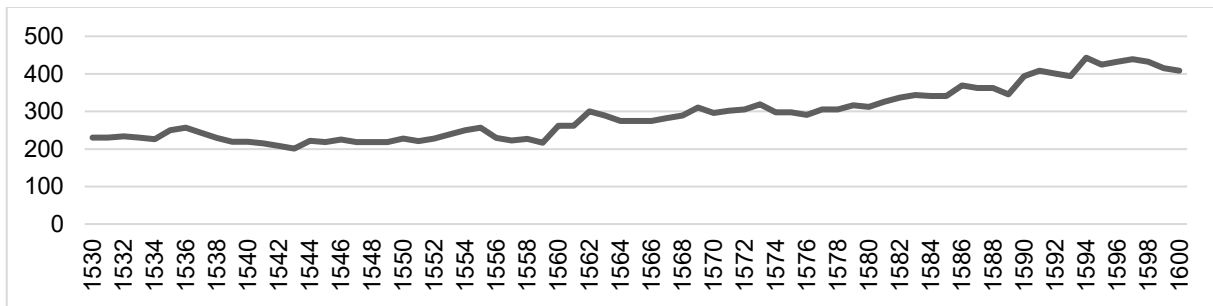


Figure A6.2. The number of households living at nobility manors in Uppland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

In 1530, there were just below 30 nobility manors in Uppland, of which about a third were large manors (with a manor house built of stone). After a small reduction in numbers, which lasted to about 1560, the number first increased during the 1560s up to about 40 manors, and then again from about 1580 into the 1590s, reaching close to 60 manors by the end of the century (of which five were demesne farms). This rise in the number of manors is reflected in the number of households living and working at the manors: from between 200 and 250 in the 1530s up to between 400 and 450 by the end of the century.

7. Towns

There were nine (or perhaps eight or ten, see discussion below) towns in Uppland in the sixteenth century. Stockholm was by far the most populous not only in the province but in the whole of Sweden, where it was the only town with over 5,000 inhabitants. In Uppland, Uppsala took the second spot, while Enköping probably lost its position as the third largest town to Öregrund towards the end of the 1500s. All other towns in Uppland always remained well below the 100-household mark.

Stockholm has attracted most previous research and has also the by far richest sources (although there are gaps in the surviving annual taxation lists from 1526 to 1544 as well as from 1561 to 1581). For the other towns in Uppland, the earliest population data comes from the 1550s (except for Öregrund, whose inhabitants were listed already in 1530 when they bought their land from the Crown). There is further population data for most towns from the 1560s and 1570s, as well as the 1590s, while data from the 1580s (due to archival losses) is all lacking. Worst is the source situation for the (very) small towns Östhammar, Älvkarleby/Rotskär, and Norrtälje.

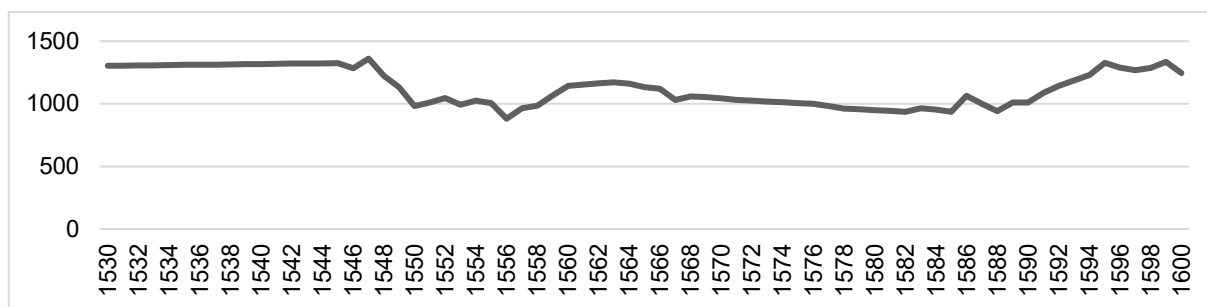


Figure A7.1. The total number of households in towns (excluding castles) in Uppland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

Enköping (in Åsunda hundred) was during the High Middle Ages located at what was once the mouth of Enköpingsån on Lake Mälaren and at the end of Enköpingsåsen, at an important crossroads for land and sea transports.²⁶⁰ Enköping was thus important for the long-distance trade in iron, in fish, and in grain from its surrounding areas. During the sixteenth century, it was however probably very difficult to reach the town by boat because of the land elevation, and the metal trade waned away.²⁶¹ The town was further hit by a major fire in the summer of 1572, after which some plots still remained not rebuilt by the end of the century.²⁶² The earliest data on the number of taxpaying households in the town comes from the *länsregister* of 1559,²⁶³ after which

²⁶⁰ Källström 2021 p. 258.

²⁶¹ Gustafsson 1979 p. 6.

²⁶² PRF 3 nr 118; Gustafsson 1979 p. 8; Källström 2021 p. 279.

²⁶³ Länsregister, vol. 8, RA.

time additional figures exist for 1566,²⁶⁴ 1571,²⁶⁵ 1573,²⁶⁶ 1590,²⁶⁷ 1599²⁶⁸ and 1600.²⁶⁹ Additionally, a very low number of burgers is stated in the accounts in most years 1566 to 1597; it seems to represent only those who paid taxes but did not own their own plots of land. In addition to the civil population, there were no crown establishments in Enköping, but one hospital (which continued the existence of the Franciscan convent, having been converted around 1530²⁷⁰). It seems as if the population of Enköping decreased during the crisis of the 1560s (probably hit by the plague), and further during the early 1570s (perhaps due to the fire), but then recovered most (but not all) of the population it had lost up to the end of the century.

Norrtälje (in Frötuna and Länna skeppslag) is located at the western end of a long bay through which the Baltic Sea reaches into the interior of Uppland. It is usually not considered to have been a town before 1622. However, a note concerning the 1599 wealth taxation includes Norrtälje among the towns in Uppland.²⁷¹ It is known that Norrtälje was an important trading location where peasants from inner Uppland met men travelling from the northern parts of the Baltic Sea to trade grain for furs and fish,²⁷² and the Crown levied toll here on the fish brought into the market.²⁷³ That it was counted as a town in 1599 indicates a permanent population, and since its size is never indicated in the sources, I have assumed that it was smaller than Sigtuna (which paid the same amount of tax in 1599). I further assume that Norrtälje as a town with permanent population had been founded only in the middle of the 1590s.²⁷⁴

Sigtuna (in Håbo hundred) was the oldest town still in existence in sixteenth-century Sweden. Owing its existence to long-distance trade across Lake Mälaren, at a location where two important sea routes met,²⁷⁵ it had lost its importance after the foundation

²⁶⁴ Strödda kamerala handlingar, vol. 43:1, RA.

²⁶⁵ Älvsborgs lösen 1571, vol. 1, RA.

²⁶⁶ Köpsilverskatten 1573, vol. 1, RA.

²⁶⁷ Upplands handlingar 1590:12, RA.

²⁶⁸ Upplands handlingar 1599:9, RA.

²⁶⁹ Upplands handlingar 1600:23A, RA.

²⁷⁰ Berntson 2003.

²⁷¹ "Uppsala stad 200, Enköping 100, Öregrund 50, Sigtuna 50, Norre Tälje 50 [daler]".

²⁷² Friberg 1983.

²⁷³ Upplands handlingar 1599:9, RA.

²⁷⁴ Had most accounts from Uppland from the 1580s and 1590s not been lost, there would probably have survived more evidence regarding the town status of Norrtälje, e.g., from the subsidy taxations of 1590 or 1596.

²⁷⁵ Douglas 1978 p. 6.

of Uppsala and Stockholm.²⁷⁶ The Dominican convent was important during the Middle Ages, but was shut down by 1529, and used as a quarry for the construction of Svartsjö castle.²⁷⁷ All other churches but one were also shut down following the Reformation, which meant that the importance of the town as a regional church centre disappeared.²⁷⁸ There were no crown institutions in Sigtuna, but probably a small hospital towards the end of the century. The earliest population data exist for 1558,²⁷⁹ and then only for 1566,²⁸⁰ 1594,²⁸¹ and 1599.²⁸² Sigtuna's population probably increased somewhat in the middle of the century, decreasing again, and on the whole remaining rather stagnant.

Uppsala (in this study counted with Ulleråker hundred) was located on the border between Ulleråker and Vaksala hundreds in the middle of the rich agricultural plains of Central Uppland.²⁸³ It had water connection with Lake Mälaren through Fyris River, while travel over land northwards was possible on Uppsalaåsen. Trade in grain was economically important, as was the fact that the town was the seat of the archbishop, also after the Reformation. The Franciscan convent was however shut in 1529 and quarried for stone to the building of Uppsala castle.²⁸⁴ This castle, and the previous crown manor, remained important for the town population throughout the century, as they were the centre of crown administration in Central Uppland. In addition, there was a hospital in the town, at least towards the end of the century. The town probably burned three times during the century: in 1541, in 1543 which “to the

²⁷⁶ Björklund 2014 p. 263–4.

²⁷⁷ Berntson 2003.

²⁷⁸ Douglas 1978 p. 7.

²⁷⁹ Upplands handlingar 1558:16, RA.

²⁸⁰ Upplands handlingar 1566:9, RA; Strödda kamerala handlingar, vol. 43:1, RA.

²⁸¹ Strödda kamerala handlingar, vol. 43:2, RA.

²⁸² Upplands handlingar 1599:9, RA.

²⁸³ *Medeltidsstaden: Uppsala* 1976 p. 8.

²⁸⁴ Berntson 2003.

ground devastated” the town,²⁸⁵ and again in 1572.²⁸⁶ Population data earliest exist for 1555,²⁸⁷ and then for 1557,²⁸⁸ 1566–1568,²⁸⁹ 1576,²⁹⁰ 1578,²⁹¹ and 1599.²⁹²

Älvkarleby (in Norra Roden) was probably located at the location of Älvkarleby village and church, possible to reach by boat on River Dalälven from the Baltic Sea, and the location of an important crown salmon fishery and a large fish market.²⁹³ It is not usually counted among the towns. It is however clear from the sixteenth-century sources that it was a town with a permanent population, at least for a period in the middle of the century. It is first mentioned as a town (*stad*) in 1556, when it paid subsidy taxes as other towns in Uppland,²⁹⁴ and then likewise at several later occasions, the last in 1586, while an urban bailiff (*byfogde*) is mentioned in 1588.²⁹⁵ The matter is complicated by the fact that a separate urban settlement was located on the island Rotskär, a few kilometres north of Älvkarleby, at the mouth of River Dalälven. The island was in 1559 used for pasture by Örbyhus manor, but the Crown established a shipbuilding here in 1564, which remained active to 1593.²⁹⁶ A permanent settlement on Rotskär is first mentioned in the accounts in 1567, then not as a town but with a population consisting of 15 fishermen (of which 14 were currently employed at the wharf).²⁹⁷ In the subsidy taxation list of 1571, the place is called Roteholm, and its inhabitants listed under a separate heading. Subsidy taxation lists for 1579, 1580 and 1586 however group together the two towns “Älvkarleby and Rotskär”. I have thus counted the population of the two places together. I have assumed that some form of urban settlement was established in Älvkarleby in 1556 (although it might have existed at an earlier date), and that it remained throughout the century, although a letter from 1598 says that the population of Rotskär had

²⁸⁵ PRF 2 nr 152 & 196; Dahlbäck, Ferm & Rahmquist 1984 p. 22, 251.

²⁸⁶ Linköpings stiftsbibliotek vol. N 28 fol. 78v. Joen Petri Klint, writing during the 1590s, says that this fire was an arson attack by a “skälm”, which had later been confessed in Stockholm.

²⁸⁷ Städers acta, vol. 32, RA.

²⁸⁸ Upplands handlingar 1557:4A, RA.

²⁸⁹ Upplands handlingar 1556:13; 1567:15; 1568:19, RA.

²⁹⁰ Drängeregister, vol. 1, RA.

²⁹¹ Upplands handlingar 1578:23, RA.

²⁹² Upplands handlingar 1599:9, RA.

²⁹³ On trade at the market in Älvkarleby, see Friberg 1983.

²⁹⁴ Länsregister 1556, RA.

²⁹⁵ In the accounts of a Gävle merchant, published in Fyhrvall 1901 p. 30–1.

²⁹⁶ Dahlbäck, Jansson & Westin 1972 p. 55; Zettersten 1890; the earliest preserved wage list dates from 1565, Skeppsgårdshandlingar, vol. 14, RA.

²⁹⁷ Upplands handlingar 1567:6, RA.

previously been expelled by men from Älvkarleby but in 1595 been granted the right to return as long as they paid their taxes to the crown. Possibly the end of the shipbuilding also meant the end of the urban settlement, both at Älvkarleby and at Rotskär. Population figures are known for Älvkarleby for 1556,²⁹⁸ for Rotskär 1566–1567 and 1578,²⁹⁹ and for both locations in 1571.³⁰⁰ It is not clear if the figures for Rotskär also include Älvkarleby, so the total urban population size might be underestimated. Had most accounts from Uppland not been lost, more population figures would probably have survived for the latter part of the century.

The relationship between Öregrund and Östhammar (both in Frösåker hundred) is similar to that between Älvkarleby and Rotskär in that a town was moved to a new location, yet the old location remained inhabited. Östhammar was the original location of the town; at the end of the fifteenth century, land elevation had made it unsuitable for trade, and a new location was chosen further east on the Baltic Sea coast.³⁰¹ This new settlement became Öregrund, but after the town had been burned down during the 1520s' war, settlement was relocated back to Östhammar, albeit to a new location close to the old town. Yet, urban settlement also continued at Öregrund. In 1530, 22 men bought the Öregrund land from the Crown and received protection and town rights.³⁰² Later population lists for Öregrund survive from the 1550s of those paying their taxes in fish (which might not have been all town inhabitants),³⁰³ from 1569,³⁰⁴ 1571,³⁰⁵ 1572,³⁰⁶ 1591,³⁰⁷ and 1599.³⁰⁸ The situation for Östhammar is more complicated: for 1554–1556,³⁰⁹ separate lists of those paying fish taxes survive for both the old and the new town, while later population data (from 1572 and 1599) only mention one town, either because one location was by now abandoned, or because the two settlements were now considered to be just one town.

²⁹⁸ Länsregister, RA.

²⁹⁹ Upplands handlingar 1566:26; 1578:8, RA.

³⁰⁰ Älvsborgs lösen 1571, vol. 2, RA.

³⁰¹ Söderberg 1985 p. 10–12.

³⁰² PRF 2 nr. 71.

³⁰³ E.g., Upplands handlingar 1555:27, RA.

³⁰⁴ Silverskatten 1569, vol. 1, RA.

³⁰⁵ Älvsborgs lösen 1571, vol. 2, RA.

³⁰⁶ Upplands handlingar 1572:21A, RA.

³⁰⁷ Lokala tullräkenskaper vol. 439, RA.

³⁰⁸ Upplands handlingar 1599:9, RA.

³⁰⁹ E.g., Upplands handlingar 1556:29, RA.

Urban taxes were however often paid together by Östhammar and Öregrund during the latter part of the century, just as the case was with Älvkarleby and Rotskär.

As Stockholm, located where Lake Mälaren meets the Baltic Sea, was the largest town in sixteenth-century Sweden, with its castle, royal court, and shipyard, its population history has been studied like no other Swedish town. Annual taxation lists survive from 1545 to 1560 and from 1582 to 1600,³¹⁰ in addition to wage lists from the various crown establishments. Lager established the number of households in 1582, by combining taxation registers with lists of those employed by the Crown, and those found in other sources.³¹¹ The 1,260 households she found is very close to the 1,298 found in this study. Lager further also gathered information for how the number of taxpaying households changed from the late fifteenth and into the late sixteenth century, as well as the number of households in Stockholm during the 1560s, which she found to be higher than in 1582.³¹² Lilja later recalculated population figures for the 1560s (11,626, very close to what is found in this study) and 1582 (6,930, about 10% below what is found in this study), while for ca. 1570 his published number is 9,100 (as much as 33% below what I find).³¹³ Sidén on the other hand has 9,380 for 1565, 7,750 for 1580, and 9,610 for 1595, which is less than 2% from my figure for 1565 and just 5% above my figure for 1581 (the court did not reside in Stockholm in 1580, which however is included in Sidén's calculation), while the figure for 1595 is 32% too high, mainly due to Sidén not having considered annual changes in the size of the staff of Stockholm castle and the royal court.³¹⁴ While Sidén claims that the population of Stockholm was expanding by 50% from 1582 to 1595 but then remained stagnant to 1613, this study instead finds that the population was stagnant in Stockholm from 1582 up to the end of the century (but significantly larger in the years when a royal court resided in the town, and hence also very volatile during the last two decades of the century). The population of Stockholm thus probably – although it is beyond the scope of this study – resumed its growth only during the first decade of the seventeenth century, as King Charles IX once more established a royal court at the castle in Stockholm.

³¹⁰ *Upplands handlingar* 1553:26; 1554:31; *Sandbergska samlingen* vol.YY 13; *Stockholms borgmästare och råds arkiv före 1636*, series G; *Städers acta*, vol. 21.

³¹¹ Lager-Kromnow 1962 p. 19, 22, 50.

³¹² Lager-Kromnow 1992 ch. 2.

³¹³ Lilja 1995 p. 304–311; Lilja 1996.

³¹⁴ Sidén 2012 p. 45.

Table A7.1. Urban populations in Uppland, decadal figures, 1530–1600.

TOWN	1530	1540	1550	1560	1570	1580	1590	1600
ENKÖPING	522	522	522	582	720	612	750	720
NORRTÄLJE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	240
SIGTUNA	360	360	360	408	510	420	306	414
UPPSALA	1,812	1,824	2,136	2,310	2,076	2,058	2,352	2,256
ÄLVKARLEBY/ROTEHOLM	0	0	0	162	102	108	66	42
ÖREGRUND	132	126	114	264	480	600	762	684
GAMLA ÖSTHAMMAR	108	108	108	102	0	0	0	0
NYA ÖSTHAMMAR	138	138	138	168	150	180	228	252
STOCKHOLM	7,974	10,704	11,118	11,742	8,569	4,890	10,608	7,992

Source: Population database.

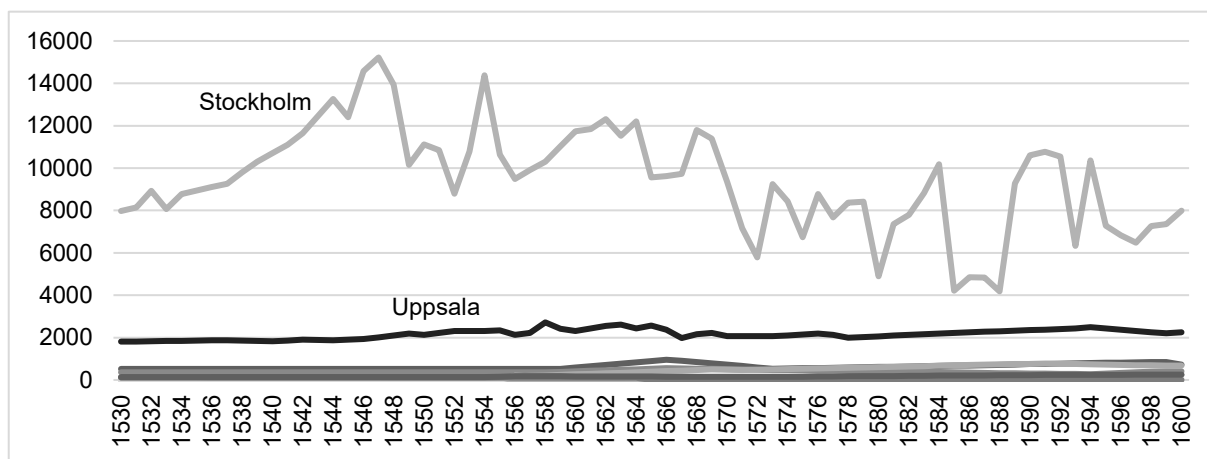


Figure A7.3. Urban populations in Uppland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

Population figures for the towns in Uppland (including the royal castles, manors, and shipyards, hospitals, and the royal court, which resided in Stockholm in most years) are shown in figure A7.3 and listed in table A7.1. Stockholm was by far largest of the towns, but it also had the most volatile population figure. Its population grew from about 8,000 in 1530 to over 15,000 in 1545, mainly due to the rapidly increasing size of the royal court and the number of those employed at the shipyard and at Stockholm castle. This rapid expansion of the crown personnel however resulted in some increase also in the number of civil households (burgesses). After this point, the population of Stockholm fell back to some 10,000–12,000 until the early 1570s. Even

though King John III expanded his royal court after 1568, other crown establishments decreased in size at this time, shipbuilding for example being mainly moved outside of Stockholm. The lowest Stockholm population figures of just 4,000–5,000 are found in 1580s, when the royal court left Stockholm to reside in Vadstena and in Kalmar for a number of years, while the town population also suffered from the plague epidemic of 1579–1580.

Towards the end of the century, the population in Stockholm had decreased to about 7,000–8,000. At this time, King Sigismund had left for Poland with his court, while Stockholm's future was uncertain during the years of civil strife. The price Stockholm had to pay for being the largest and most important Swedish town was thus that it hence became closely connected and sensitive to political affairs, population growth and decrease were very much a result of the monarch's decisions. In addition, Stockholm was hit much harder than any other town in Sweden by every plague epidemic of the century, as can be seen in the figure for the years around 1550, in the middle of the 1560s, in 1572, in 1579, and at the end of the 1580s. (Although the population losses seen in these years also come from a secondary effect of the plague, namely the king and his court withdrawing from Stockholm).

Outside Stockholm, the by far largest town in the province was Uppsala. It had a population of about 1,800 in 1530 and grew to over 2,200 in 1600 (although its largest population figure was reached already in the early 1560s, just before the plague epidemic). No other town in Uppland, apart from Stockholm and Uppsala, could be counted among the largest in the realm. Third was Enköping, which reached a population size of over 900 in the 1560s, and fourth was Öregrund, which had no more than 700 inhabitants in the 1590s.

B. Södermanland

Södermanland is located south of Lake Mälaren and along the shore of the Baltic Sea, south of Stockholm. The best agricultural land was located along the shorelines, while the inner part of the province was more sparsely populated. In the east, the two hundreds of Södertörn (Sotholm and Svartlösa) were in the sixteenth-century often counted together with Uppland because of their vicinity to Stockholm. From Svartlösa hundred, Ekerö parish was taken in 1544 in order to create the new hundred of Färentuna in Uppland, and Ekerö has consequentially been kept there also for the

preceding decade. In the north-west, Torpa and Sätterbo parishes are included in Västerrakarne hundred, as they were only removed from there in the seventeenth century. As for Villåttinge hundred, some parishes from neighbouring Oppunda hundred were joined to the hundred in the 1580s. In order to enable a study over time, the borders of Villåttinge have been fixed as they were before this date. All in all, this means that Södermanland was divided into 13 hundreds during the sixteenth century.

The towns in Södermanland were all located either on Lake Mälaren or on the Baltic Sea coast. Most important was Nyköping, as it became the seat of Duke Charles during the latter part of the century. Tälje became a major harbour for metal exports during the aegis of Duke Charles, while the importance of Strängnäs diminished after the Reformation, even though it remained the bishop see. The Crown had two major castles in Södermanland: in Nyköping and at a rural location at Gripsholm on Lake Mälaren. These castles were often visited by the royal court, which spent time at Gripsholm during the plague of 1549 in Stockholm. As for industries, some metal works were founded by the Crown during the latter part of the century, and some further gunpowder and arms industries were located in the vicinity of Stockholm.

1. Cadastral peasants

For two of the hundreds of Södermanland, the number of peasants is known already from 1530,³¹⁵ while another seven are first given in the 1535 subsidy taxation lists.³¹⁶ For another three, the data goes back to 1538.³¹⁷ Only for one hundred (Villåttinge) does the data only begin after 1540; although here we don't have any data on cadastral peasants before 1551,³¹⁸ mainly due to a severe loss of archival materials for Södermanland for the 1540s and 1550s. Towards the end of the century, data is missing for two hundreds after 1598 (Åker and Selebo); and additionally for three in 1600. As the data on deserted farms is missing for Selebo 1570–72, these numbers have had to be estimated based on the development in surrounding regions (as the numbers for other hundreds show a peak in those years).

³¹⁵ Fogdarnas räkenskaper, RA.

³¹⁶ Gärder och hjälper 1535, RA.

³¹⁷ Upplands handlingar 1538:1, RA.

³¹⁸ Södermanlands handlingar 1551:11, RA.

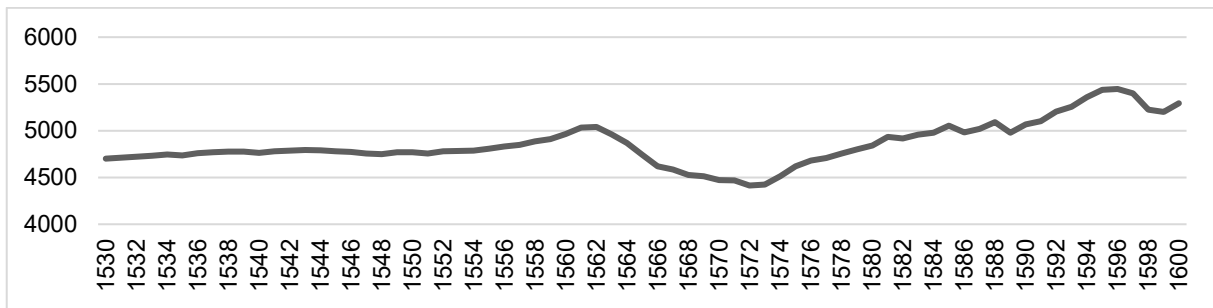


Figure B1.1. Cadastral peasants (excluding deserted farms) in Södermanland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

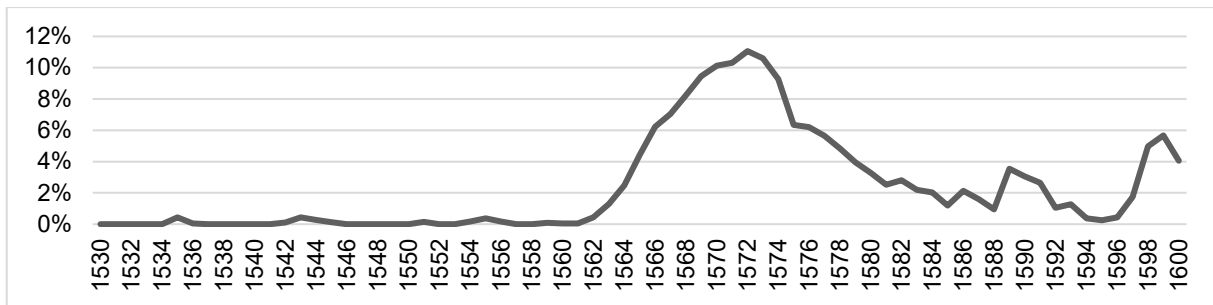


Figure B1.2. Deserted farms in Södermanland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

The number of cadastral farms in Södermanland grew steadily from 1530 to about 1562, whereafter it decreased for about a decade. After 1572 it began to grow again, with a small depression around 1590, reached its peak in 1596, and then decreased somewhat during the last years of the century. As can be seen in figure B1.2, farm desertion began in the early 1560s, growing to a peak in 1572 at 11%. A recovery phase into the 1580s was broken by some increase in 1589, and then again in 1598–1599, although these were not nearly as devastating as earlier in the century. As in Uppland, land desertion after the major crisis of the 1560s thus both resulted in some farms very soon being resettled, and in some permanent farm desertion, lasting throughout the century.

It is sometimes explicitly mentioned in the accounts how farms were completely deserted. For Jönåker in 1566, the bailiff reported that “hay and grain harvested and brought to the castle [in Nyköping]” at some farms, which shows that although grain

had been sown, no one remained in the autumn who could harvest it.³¹⁹ An interesting note comes from the accounts of Sotholm and Svartlösa hundreds in 1578, that is from the recovery phase. Some farms were then reported as being “only deserted as men are concerned, and those who work the land there cannot pay anything but the annual taxes [...] because no one lives there, but their land is cultivated by other farms”.³²⁰ While most farms that had been deserted 1566–1572 had already been re-occupied by 1578, this shows an example of how even though some farms became permanently abandoned, yet their land remained in use by their surviving neighbours.

2. Division of farms

The data on the division of farms in Södermanland is limited to the subsidy taxation lists of 1571 (for five hundreds) and 1600 (for eight hundreds).³²¹ In addition, grain tithe data exist from the 1550s and beginning of the 1560s for most hundreds, as well as some data from the 1570s and 1580s.³²²

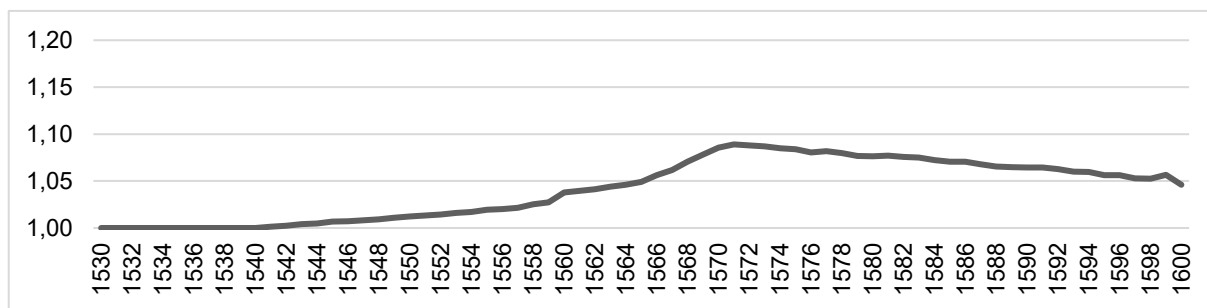


Figure B2.1. Division of farms in Södermanland, 1530–1600. For further explanation of the figure, see figure 2.1. Source: Population database.

The division of farms increased in Södermanland up until about 1570, when it reached 9%. After this time, it began to decrease, reflecting a continuous increase in the number of peasant households registered in the cadastres.

³¹⁹ Södermanlands handlingar 1566:5, RA; ”hö och korn bärgat till slottet [Nyköping]”.

³²⁰ Upplands handlingar 1578:11, RA; ”öde allenast mantalet, och de som dem bruka förmå icke mera göra av dem som än årliga skatten, men inga gårdar, så framt de icke skola bliva slätt öde igen, ty där bor ingen uppå dem, utan äro tagna under andra hemman”.

³²¹ E.g., Södermanlands handlingar 1599:20, RA.

³²² E.g., Prostarnas tionderäkenskaper, vol. 1, RA.

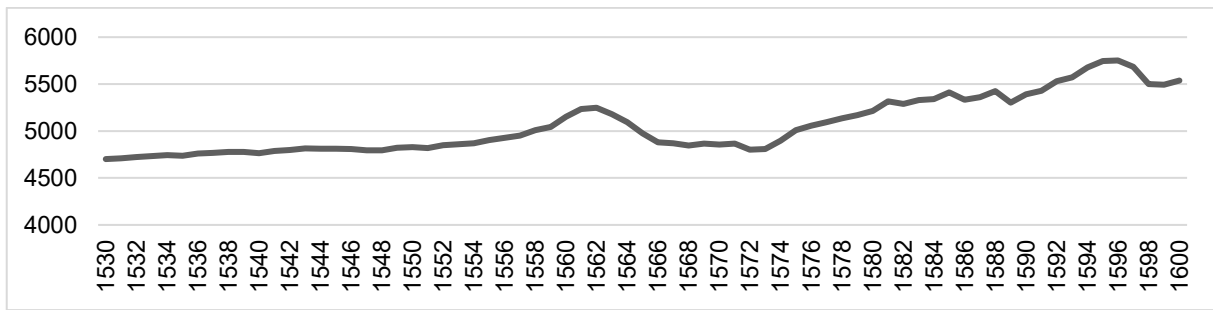


Figure B2.2. Total number of peasant households in Södermanland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

The total number of peasant households in Södermanland was about 4,700 in 1530. It increased until the beginning of the 1560s, especially rapid during the 1550s, and reached 5,250 in 1562. It then decreased to a trough of 4,800 in 1571–1572 (a decrease of about 8%), that is to the number it had had 25 years earlier. Rapid recovery during the 1570s led to the earlier maximum being surpassed in 1581. While the 1580s were shaky, the 1590s saw first rapid increase to a centennial maximum of over 5,700 households in 1596, and then a sudden drop (4%) during the last years of the century. The number of peasant households in Södermanland thus rose by 18% from 1530 to 1600.

3. Cottagers

Cottagers in Södermanland are specified for a number of hundreds already in the subsidy taxation lists of 1535.³²³ Later taxation lists that include data on the number of cottagers survive for 1563,³²⁴ 1571 (covering four hundreds),³²⁵ 1576,³²⁶ 1578,³²⁷ 1590,³²⁸ 1596 (for all hundreds but two),³²⁹ and 1600.³³⁰ In addition, cottages in Österrekarne were in 1595 entered in annually updated lists in the cadastre.³³¹ Data on cottager corvée labour is more scarce, mainly concerning Sotholm and Svartlösa

³²³ Gärder och hjälper 1535, RA.

³²⁴ Brudskatten 1563, vol. 1, RA.

³²⁵ Älvsborgs lösen 1571, vol. 3, RA.

³²⁶ Drängeregister, RA.

³²⁷ E.g., Södermanlands handlingar 1578:3, RA.

³²⁸ E.g., Södermanlands handlingar 1590:5, RA.

³²⁹ E.g., Södermanlands handlingar 1596:10, RA.

³³⁰ E.g., Södermanlands handlingar 1600:10, RA.

³³¹ Södermanlands handlingar 1595:21, RA.

in the 1550s, where cottagers performed corvée labour at Rävsnäs manor,³³² and Oppunda in 1559, concerning corvée labour at Julita manor.³³³

Data on cottagers in Södermanland is thus available for most of the province from 1535, while no data exist for a number of hundreds before the 1550s, or even the 1570s. The situation is worst for Daga and Öknebo, where data is only available in 1596, making extrapolation necessary for most of the century.

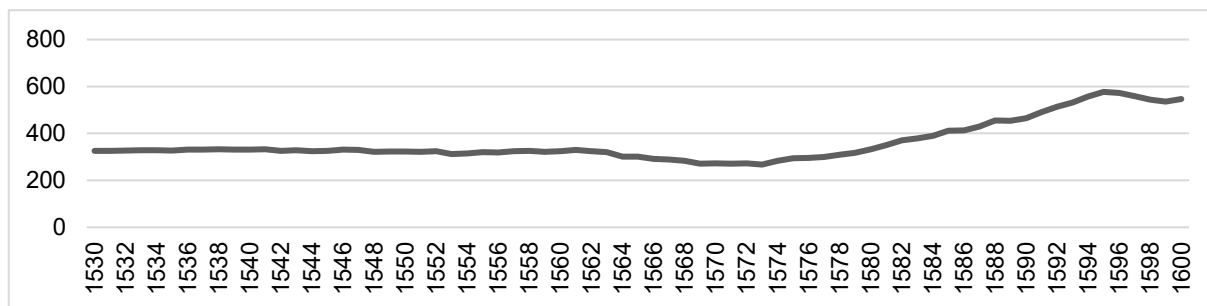


Figure B3.1. Total number of cottager households in Södermanland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

The number of cottagers in Södermanland was stable just above 300 from the 1530s to the 1560s, when it decreased somewhat until 1572. It then started to increase during the 1570s and 1580s, reaching a top of close to 600 in 1595. It then decreased somewhat during the last years of the century. The total number of cottagers in Södermanland thus increased by 68% from 1530 to 1600.

4. *The Crown*

The Crown only had two manors in Södermanland in 1530, Tynnelsö and Gripsholm, both of which had recently been confiscated from church institutions. During the 1540s, to this Kungsberga (previously Vårfruberga) and Eskilstuna manors were added, confiscated from two monasteries, and Rävsnäs, which belonged to the king's patrimony. The 1550s saw the establishment of Häringe and nearby Hammersta (which later came to function as one large manorial complex), of Julita (also a confiscated monastery), and small demesne farms such as Magerö, Björsund, Strängnäs, and Sundby, most of which only functioned for a few years. Most important was however

³³² E.g., Strödda kamerala handlingar, vol. 45. RA.

³³³ Södermanlands handlingar 1559:15, RA.

that the enfeoffment of Nyköping castle ended in 1556, giving the Crown control of another castle in Södermanland (besides Gripsholm). After this time not much happened until the 1580s, when two new demesne farms were established by Nyköping, Sundby manor was established outside Strängnäs, and Vibyholm manor was constructed.

As for industrial production, a gunpowder mill was established in Vättinge during the early 1550s, soon followed by Nacka (which also was a major iron factory), and Gräsvad during the 1560s, all located in the vicinity of Stockholm. Shipbuilding began in Södermanland at Häringe in 1571, with later wharves also established at Nyköping, Strängnäs, Väsbyviken, and on Aspö. Crown metal industries were likewise established during the latter part of the century, some short-lived like a copper industry in 1571 or Svärta ironworks (1584–1585), while some that were to last, such as Lappe (from 1589) or Åker (from 1600).

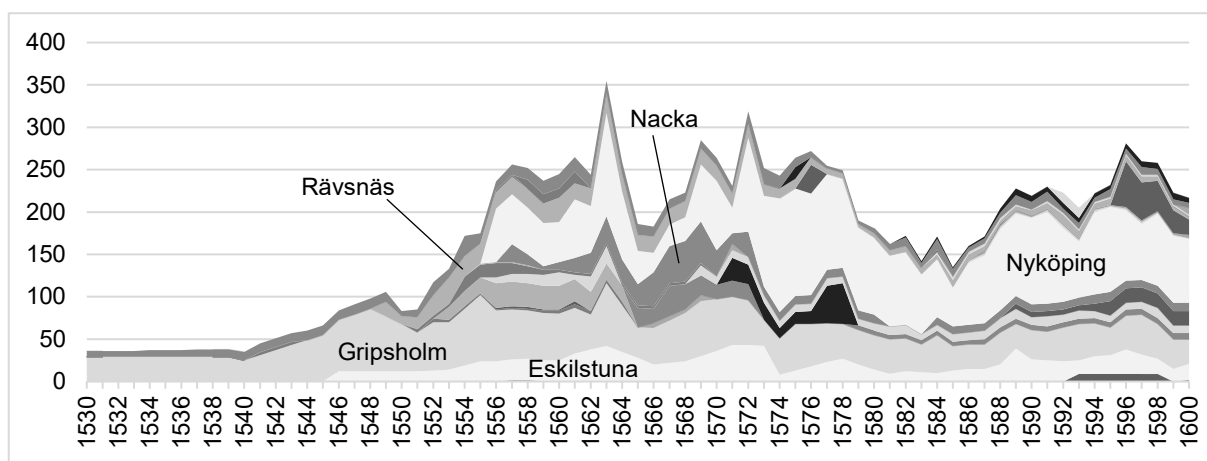


Figure B4.1. The number of households employed at various crown establishments in Södermanland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

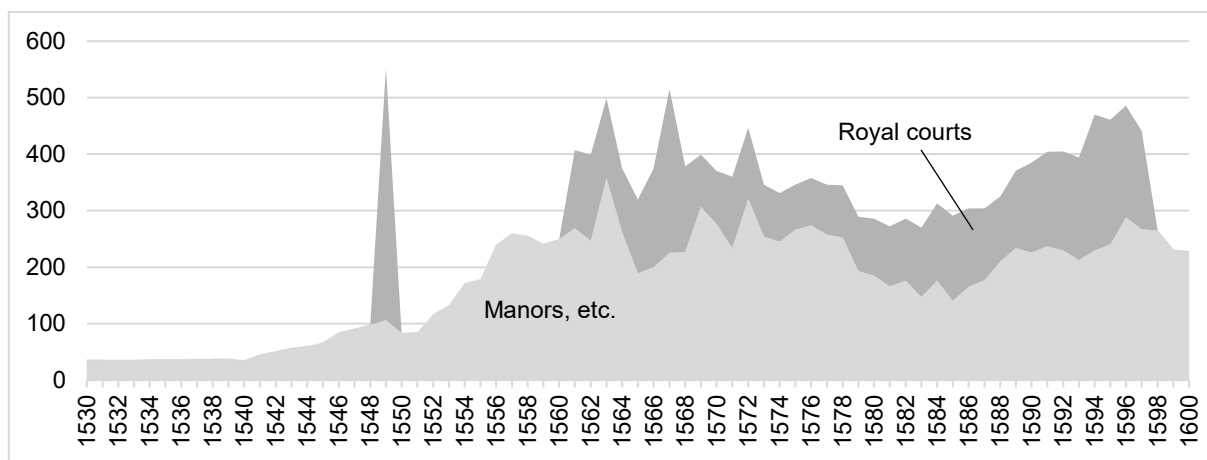


Figure B4.2. The number of households employed at various crown establishments and at the royal courts in Södermanland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

While the Crown in 1530 had only two establishments in Södermanland, the sector being dominated by recently established Gripsholm castle, by 1600 the number of active crown establishments had grown to 17. This included two castles (with three separate demesne farms), seven other manors, two metal works (Åker and Läppe), two gunpowder mills (Vättinge and Nacka), and one shipyard (in Nyköping). Of these, Nyköping castle, the seat of Duke Charles, had been the most prominent since the earlier 1570s, while Gripsholm had been the largest establishment (in number of employed households) earlier in the century. The number of households employed by the Crown in Södermanland had increased from below 50 in 1530 to about 225 in 1600, while the maximum numbers of 300–350 had been reached during the 1560s and 1570s. Expansion had been most rapid during the 1550s; after some stagnation during the 1560s and 1570s, numbers fell during the 1580s, only to then again expand (both in number of households and in number of active establishments) during the later 1580s and the 1590s.

In addition, Södermanland was often home to the royal court during its travels, even during those years when the main residency of the king was Stockholm. In 1549 (a plague year), King Gustav spent most time with his court at Gripsholm. Gripsholm was later used as the prison for Duke John 1566–1567 and for the deposed King Erik XIV 1571–1572. Duke Charles and his sisters (“the princesses”) also spent time at Gripsholm, before taking over his duchy and moving his seat to Nyköping in 1569.

At the end of the century, after deposing King Sigismund, Charles however instead mainly came to reside with his court in Stockholm.

5. The Church

There were two hospitals in sixteenth-century Södermanland. From Strängnäs hospital an account survives already from 1551,³³⁴ while data becomes richer only after 1581.³³⁵ To the hospital belonged Stenby demesne farm, at least from 1590 but probably already before 1581. For Nyköping hospital, the earliest account giving the number of inmates dates from 1575, while continuous accounts are preserved from 1590 onwards.³³⁶

There were one Franciscan convent and three monasteries still active in Södermanland in 1530, all which however had ceased to exist already before 1540. The Dominican convent in Strängnäs was closed down in 1529, and the Franciscan convent in Nyköping was abandoned around 1530.³³⁷ Mariefred Carthusian monastery had been closed already in the spring of 1526 and was used as a quarry for the building of Gripsholm castle. The same fate befell Vårfruberga Cistercian nunnery, which was closed sometime after 1533, while Eskilstuna Knights Hospitaller monastery was abandoned in 1534, and Julita Cistercian monastery by 1535. In all those locations, the Crown subsequently established demesne manors during the subsequent decade.

The number of parish clergy in Södermanland was about 60 in the sixteenth century.

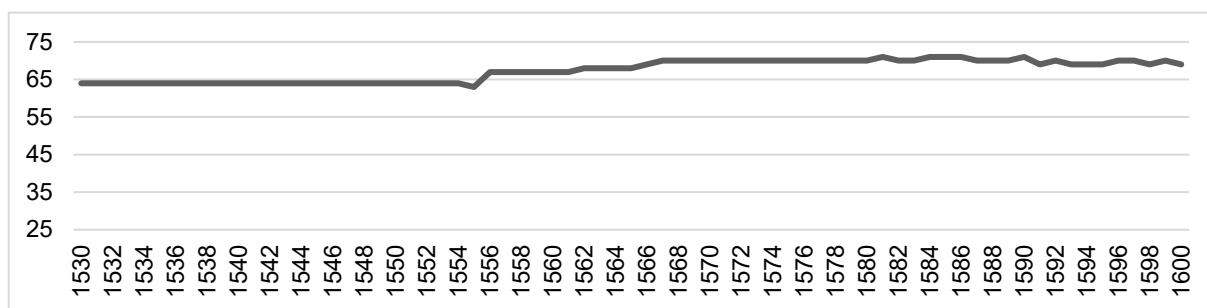


Figure B5.1. Total number of households employed by the church in Södermanland, 1530–1600.

Source: Population database.

³³⁴ Södermanlands handlingar 1551:14, RA.

³³⁵ E.g., Södermanlands handlingar 1585:9B, RA.

³³⁶ Södermanlands handlingar 1574:1, RA.

³³⁷ Berntson 2003.

6. *The Nobility*

Södermanland was one of the provinces in which the nobility employed the largest share of the population. Accounts in which the number of employees is listed survive from four manors in Södermanland: Åkerö, (Stora) Sundby, Fiholm, and Sundbyholm. The oldest of the accounts are those from Åkerö, which form the fullest and oldest set of manorial accounts in all of sixteenth-century Sweden, going back to the 1540s. The rest of the surviving nobility accounts all come from the 1590s. In addition, accounts survive for two manors, Edeby and Sundby, which were confiscated by Duke Charles in 1599 from supporters of King Sigismund. For Sundby, accounts thus survive both from 1594 and 1601, showing a reduction in the number of employees after the takeover by the Crown (although the earlier list is vague on titles for many men).

Åkerö (in Bettna parish, Oppunda hundred) was a large manor belonging to the high nobility: Nils Pedersson (Bielke) and Anna Hogenskild in the middle of the century, and later to their son Hogenskild Bielke. The number of preserved accounts in which those employed are listed is higher for Åkerö than for any other sixteenth-century Swedish manor. The lists include those receiving shoes as part of their wages in 1546–1547,³³⁸ 1553–1557,³³⁹ 1568–1569,³⁴⁰ and 1586–1587,³⁴¹ as well as from one undated year in the 1590s.³⁴² In addition, proper wage lists survive 1554–1556,³⁴³ and 1586–1591.³⁴⁴ Based on these lists (most of which are to some extent incomplete), the number of those employed at Åkerö can be reconstructed for ca. 1546, 1555, 1569, and 1590. They show the number of householders being 6 at the three earlier dates, but 11 in 1590; the number of male servants 13–17 at the earlier dates, but 21 in 1590; and the number of women employed being 22–25.

Sundby (in Västermo parish, Västerrekarne hundred), later called Stora Sundby, was a large manor belonging to the high nobility, at the end of the century to Erik Sparre. From 1594 several types of registers survive, each covering a piece of the manor's population: an incomplete register of those employed, a likewise incomplete wage list, another wage list only containing male servants, a register of those who received

³³⁸ Bielkesamlingen E 1992, RA.

³³⁹ Acta rörande ridderskapet och adeln, vol. 14, RA.

³⁴⁰ Bielkesamlingen E 1991, RA.

³⁴¹ Bielkesamlingen E 1992, RA.

³⁴² Acta rörande ridderskapet och adeln, vol. 14, RA.

³⁴³ Acta rörande ridderskapet och adeln, vol. 17, RA.

³⁴⁴ Bielkesamlingen E 1992, RA.

shoes in December, and a note in the accounts about how many people received food (distinguishing between those who were living “on the wall” (*på muren*), which included the noble family, and those who lived “down at the manor”).³⁴⁵ These two lists include 66 and 22 persons respectively. The noble family consisted of nine; 26 householders can be identified, as well as 17 male servants, and 12 women. In 1599, Sundby was confiscated by the Crown for treason from Erik Sparre. A wage list and a food register both survive from 1600.³⁴⁶ Together, they show the manor employing 10 householders, 5 male servants, and 5 women.

Fiholm (in Jäder parish, Österrekarne hundred) was a manor belonging to high nobility Gustav Gabrielsson (Oxenstierna). A list of those who received money gifts (at Christmas?) survives from 1596, which however does not seem to be complete in its coverage of the staff of the manor.³⁴⁷ An undated list of those employed survives from the 1590s (the list does not say which manor it refers to, but several names can be found in the 1596 register).³⁴⁸ The noble family consisted of 14 people, while 10 householders were employed at the manor, as well as 14 male servants (and another 15 men whose status is not given in the record), 25 women, and 3 children.

Sundbyholm (in Sundby parish, Österrekarne hundred) was previously a crown manor, founded in the 1550s. It was donated to Karl Karlsson (Gyllenhielm), an illegitimate son of Duke Charles, in 1597; a wage list survives from 1600.³⁴⁹ The manor employed 11 householders, 8 male servants, and seven women.

Edeby (in Ripsa parish, in Rönö hundred) was a demesne farm when it was confiscated by the Crown in 1599 from Arvid Gustafsson (Stenbock), who had his main seat down in Göstring hundred in Östergötland. A wage list and a food register survive from 1601.³⁵⁰ The manor then employed two householders, four male servants, and six women.

³⁴⁵ Acta rörande ridderskapet och adeln, vol. 17, RA.

³⁴⁶ Upplands handlingar 1601:5, RA.

³⁴⁷ Oxenstiernska samlingen E 520, RA.

³⁴⁸ Oxenstiernska samlingen E 520, RA.

³⁴⁹ Sandbergska samlingen vol. FF 10, RA.

³⁵⁰ Södermanlands handlingar 1601:6, RA.

Table B6.1. The number of householders, servants, and women employed at manors in Södermanland, 1530–1600.

MANOR	YEARS	TYPE	HOUSEHOLDERS	MALE SERVANTS	WOMEN
ÅKERÖ	1546–1569	large	6	13–17	22–25
ÅKERÖ	1586–1590	large	11	21	23
FIHOLM	1590s	ordinary	10	14	25
SUNDBY	1594	large	26	17	12
SUNDBY	1600	large	10	5	5
SUNDBYHOLM	1600	ordinary	11	8	7
EDEBY	1601	farm	2	4	6

Source: Population database.

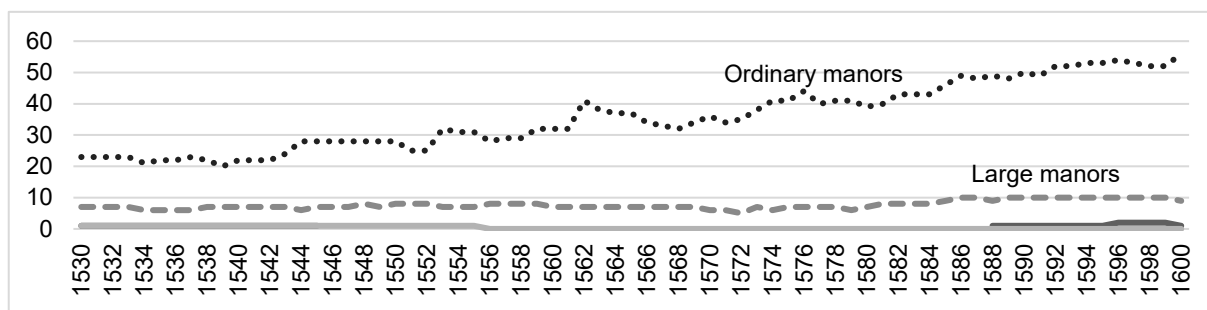


Figure B6.1. The number of nobility manors in Södermanland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

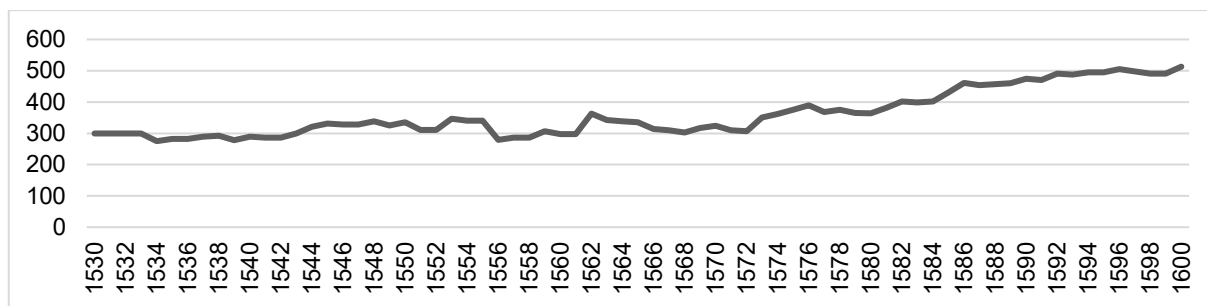


Figure B6.2. The number of households living at nobility manors in Södermanland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

There were close to 40 nobility manors in Södermanland in 1530, including the then enfeoffed Nyköping castle. After little change, the number rose in the early 1560s to

50, and then again more rapidly from the late 1570s onwards. By the end of the century, the number of nobility manors in Södermanland was over 70, of which 10 were large manors with buildings of stone. The number of households employed at nobility manors likewise grew from 300 in 1530 to over 500 in 1600. Most of this rise took place only from about 1570 onwards, with some of the previous increase annihilated when Nyköping was recalled by the Crown in 1556.

7. Towns

There were six (or seven) towns in sixteenth-century Södermanland, of which Nyköping was the most prosperous, no doubt because Duke Charles kept his court at the castle there. Strängnäs and Tälje, both located on Lake Mälaren, were second and third, while the number of households in Torshälla never reached above 100. Even smaller was Mariefred, probably founded during the 1580s, and Trosa, a micro town whose location was moved to nearby Trosa åminne during the 1570s.

Population sources are rare for all of the towns in Södermanland for the earlier part of the century, with only a single figure surviving for three towns (Tälje, Torshälla, Strängnäs) from before 1560. Data becomes richer from the 1570s onwards, and from the 1580s and 1590s population data exist for at least some years for all towns.

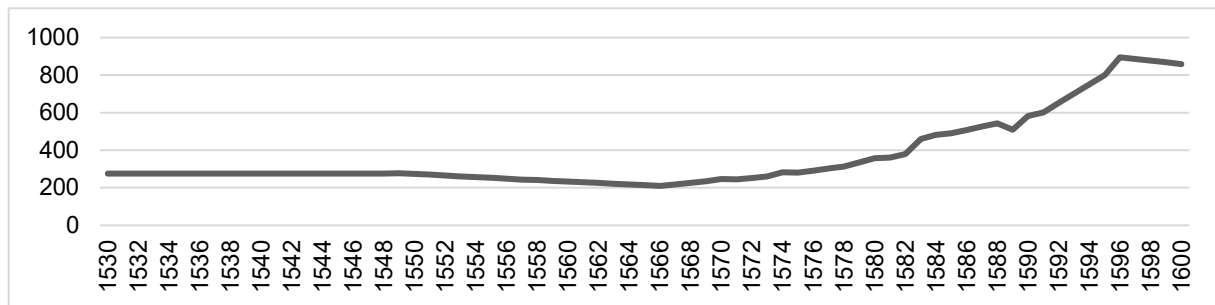


Figure B7.1. Total number of households in towns (excluding castles) in Södermanland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

Mariefred (in Selebo hundred), or Gamlegården as the town was also called in the sixteenth-century sources, is usually not counted as a town before its privileges in 1605. The town grew up in the vicinity of Gripsholm castle (which was situated in a rural location on Lake Mälaren) and was probably closely connected to the castle. It is first mentioned as being a town in 1590, when the parish priest in Kärnbo paid

subsidy taxes also for the burghers in Gamlegården.³⁵¹ A second mention is made in the accounts of the 1596 subsidy taxation, according to which “Mariefreds inhabitants” or “Gamlegårdsbor” had not paid the tax.³⁵² The only sixteenth-century population data regards the number of inhabitants in 1590; I have assumed that the town was founded in the 1580s, as “those who are living in Mariefred by Gripsholm” were granted some land by the crown in 1590.³⁵³

Nyköping was located at the mouth of the Nyköping River on the Baltic Sea, on the border between Jönåker and Rönö hundreds (but has here been counted with Jönåker).³⁵⁴ It was involved in grain trade from the local region, and possibly also in some metal trade from nearby mining districts. Nyköping castle, to which at the end of the century three demesne farms and one shipbuilding belonged, was enfeoffed until 1556, and then became the seat of Duke Charles from around 1568 onwards. A Franciscan convent was closed down around 1530,³⁵⁵ while there was a hospital in the town later during the century. The earliest population data comes from 1566,³⁵⁶ while later the number of tax-paying households was registered annually in the accounts 1573–1591.³⁵⁷ The latest list comes from the subsidy tax of 1596.³⁵⁸

Strängnäs (in Åker hundred) was located on Lake Mälaren, and an important marketplace.³⁵⁹ It was a bishop see, and as a consequence probably lost ground after the Reformation, as also its Dominican convent was closed down in 1529 and its bricks quarried for the building of Gripsholm castle.³⁶⁰ It further suffered a town fire in 1535.³⁶¹ The Crown established a small demesne farm in Strängnäs, active only 1556–1557, and a shipbuilding, only active for a couple of years during the 1570s. Population

³⁵¹ Södermanlands handlingar 1590:5, RA.

³⁵² Södermanlands handlingar 1596:23, RA.

³⁵³ PRF 3 nr. 430.

³⁵⁴ Broberg 1979a p. 7–8; Janzon 2013 p. 229.

³⁵⁵ Berntson 2003.

³⁵⁶ Södermanlands handlingar 1566:5, RA.

³⁵⁷ E.g., Södermanlands handlingar 1574:11, RA.

³⁵⁸ Städerna, vol. 19, RA.

³⁵⁹ Järpe 1979 p. 8–9; Lovén 2020.

³⁶⁰ Berntson 2003.

³⁶¹ PRF 2 nr 102.

data exist for 1551,³⁶² 1566,³⁶³ and then for several years during the 1590s.³⁶⁴ It is thus not possible to see to what extent the town suffered from the Reformation.

Torshälla (in Västerrekarne hundred) was located at the mouth of River Eskilstunaån on Lake Mälaren. Through this waterway, iron from Närke could be transported via Torshälla, while grain could be traded from the surrounding agricultural plains.³⁶⁵ There were however no Crown establishments of importance in the town, and no previous church institutions either. The earliest population data comes from 1549,³⁶⁶ while later data is found in the accounts during the 1560s and 1570s,³⁶⁷ as well as in subsidy taxation lists from 1596 and 1600.³⁶⁸

Trosa (in Hölebo hundred) was located at the mouth of River Trosaån, where its inhabitants possibly were involved in iron exports during the fifteenth century.³⁶⁹ Because of the land elevation, the river lost its navigability during the sixteenth century, leading to the foundation of a new town, called Trosa åminne, located closer to the Baltic Sea. The new town is first mentioned in the accounts in 1573,³⁷⁰ and for about a decade there seems to have existed two small towns close to each other. The old Trosa was finally abandoned around 1582, when its land was registered as new farms in the cadastre.³⁷¹ There were no Crown or church establishments in the small town. The number of inhabitants in Trosa åminne is known from 1584 and then for a couple of years during the 1590s.³⁷² The number of inhabitants of old Trosa is not known but has been estimated at the same (low) number as later in Trosa åminne.

Tälje (in Öknebo hundred) was located on a narrow isthmus between Lake Mälaren and the Baltic Sea, where export was possible through reloading and short land transports.³⁷³ The town seems to have been focused on fishing until the middle of the sixteenth century, while exports of iron took off after new privileges were granted in 1584. The rapid population growth was then followed by grants of new land to

³⁶² Södermanlands handlingar 1551:9, RA.

³⁶³ Strödda kamerala handlingar, vol. 43:2, RA.

³⁶⁴ Södermanlands handlingar 1590:5; 1591:16, RA; Städens akter, RA; Sandbergska samlingen vol. YY 16, RA.

³⁶⁵ Järpe 1982 p. 7–9.

³⁶⁶ Södermanlands handlingar 1549:4, RA.

³⁶⁷ E.g., Södermanlands handlingar 1575:11, RA.

³⁶⁸ Södermanlands handlingar 1596:2; 1600:4, RA.

³⁶⁹ Broberg 1979b p. 6–8.

³⁷⁰ Södermanlands handlingar 1573:1, RA; accounts are missing for the preceding years.

³⁷¹ Södermanlands handlingar 1582:9, RA.

³⁷² Södermanlands handlingar 1596:10; 1600:16, RA.

³⁷³ Broberg 1979c p. 6–11.

expand the town.³⁷⁴ There were no significant Crown or church establishments in the town. The earliest population figure comes already from 1543,³⁷⁵ after which time there is a long gap until 1582,³⁷⁶ with further population figures for 1583,³⁷⁷ 1588–1590,³⁷⁸ and 1596.³⁷⁹

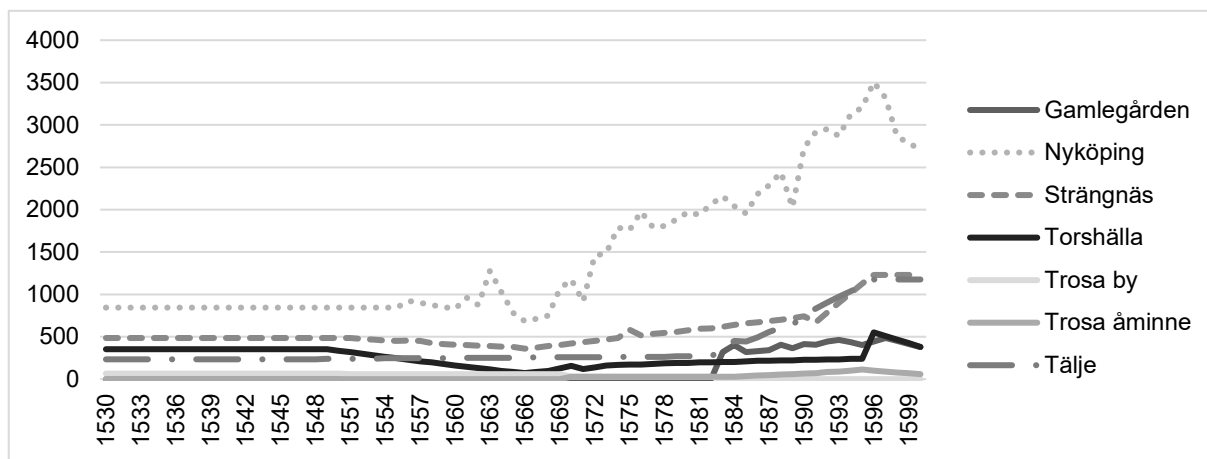


Figure B7.2. Urban populations in Södermanland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

Table B7.1. Urban populations in Södermanland, decadal figures, 1530–1600.

TOWN	1530	1540	1550	1560	1570	1580	1590	1600
MARIEFRED/GAMLEGÅRDEN	0	0	0	0	0	0	414	378
NYKÖPING	846	846	846	828	1,176	1,968	2,730	2,706
STRÄNGNÄS	486	486	486	408	420	576	744	1,230
TORSHÄLLA	354	354	336	162	156	192	228	378
TROSA (THE OLD TOWN)	66	66	66	60	30	30	0	0
TROSA ÅMINNE	0	0	0	0	30	30	66	60
TÄLJE	234	234	240	252	258	270	762	1,176

Source: Population database.

³⁷⁴ Nordström 1968 p. 193.

³⁷⁵ Södermanlands handlingar 1543:2, RA.

³⁷⁶ Södermanlands handlingar 1582:9, RA.

³⁷⁷ Södermanlands handlingar 1583:20, RA.

³⁷⁸ Städers acta, vol. 29, RA; Södermanlands handlingar 1589:13, RA.

³⁷⁹ Södermanlands handlingar 1596:10, RA.

In 1530, the largest towns in Södermanland were Nyköping (probably with over 800 inhabitants) and Strängnäs (with close to 500), while all other towns were much smaller. Nyköping grew rapidly over the century, having a population peak of over 3,500 in the 1590s, when Duke Charles moved his court away to Stockholm. What is overall remarkable about the urban development in Södermanland is the population expansion after ca. 1580, which affected not only Nyköping but also Strängnäs and Tälje, which both reached over 1,000 inhabitants by the end of the century. This was no doubt an effect of the generous trade privileges granted by Duke Charles, which came at the expense and stagnation of Stockholm.

C. Närke

The province of Närke was located west of Södermanland, encircling most of Lake Hjälmaren. Most of the population lived on the agricultural plains in the centre of the province, where also the main town Örebro was located. The province was however also iron-producing from an early date,³⁸⁰ with mining districts located in the north (Noraskoga) and west (Lekebergslagen). Of these, Lekeberg was only treated as a district separate from the surrounding hundreds from the middle of the century but has here been included as a constant unit of analysis throughout the century. Sundbo hundred in the south was often counted with Östergötland during the sixteenth century but has here been included with Närke. Noraskoga, which has been transferred to Västmanland after the sixteenth century, is here included in Närke. All in all, the province consisted of eleven hundreds, of which two were mining districts. The Crown's main establishment was the castle in Örebro, with no less than three demesne farms attached to it by the end of the century. As for industries, the Crown established iron works (in Lekeberg), silver works (in Glanshammar), and a sulphur industry (in Dylta) during the century, all of which however were of minor importance for the economy of the province.

³⁸⁰ Eriksson 1940; Hansson 1989.

1. Cadastral peasants

Concerning cadastral peasants, the source situation in Närke is less than ideal. While the number of peasants in Glanshammar hundred is known already from 1530,³⁸¹ and accounts from Noraskoga are preserved from 1539,³⁸² most of the province only have records beginning in 1549 (and Lekebergslagen only in 1554).³⁸³ Towards the end of the century, Glanshammar is missing data on deserted farms 1598–1600.

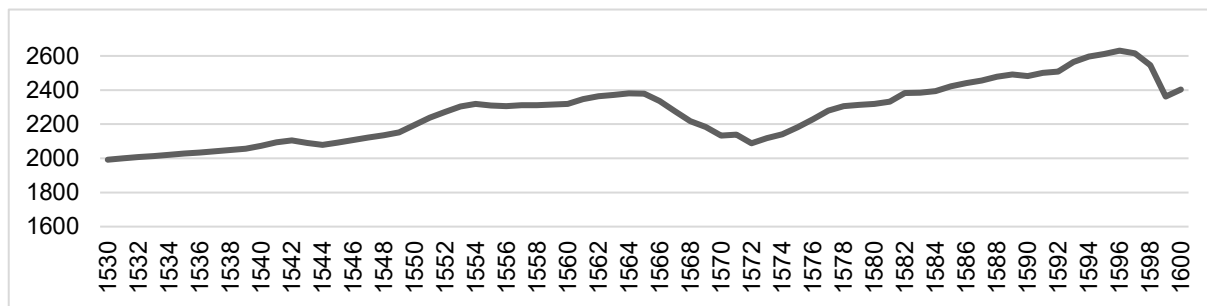


Figure C1.1. Cadastral peasants (excluding deserted farms) in Närke, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

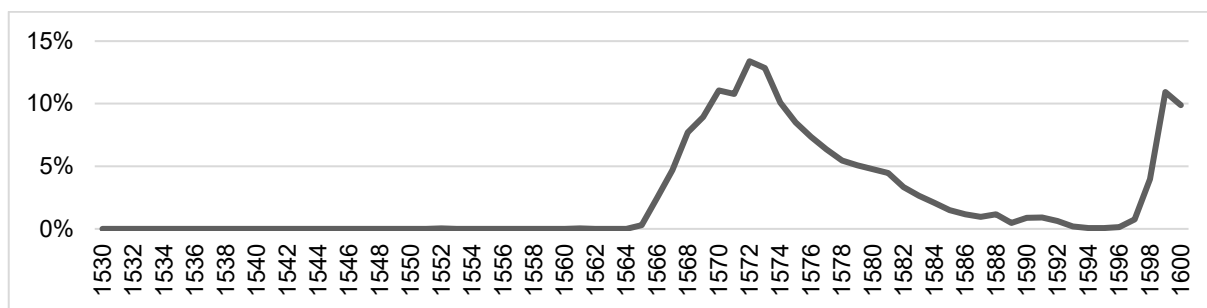


Figure C1.2. Deserted farms in Närke, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

As seen in figure C1.1, the number of cadastral peasants in Närke grew from 1530 to the mid 1560s. It then decreased until 1572, whereafter its increase resumed until the mid 1590s. Figure C1.2 shows that Närke saw two major episodes of farm desertion during the sixteenth century: one during the late 1560s, culminating in 1572 at over

³⁸¹ Fogdarnas räkenskaper, RA.

³⁸² Västmanlands handlingar 1539:3, RA.

³⁸³ Närkes handlingar 1554:12, RA.

13%, and another 1599–1600, with a peak at 11%. An example of how desertion was described comes from the accounts of Glanshammar in 1586, where some farms were recorded as “are deserted and under cattle’s feet [...] which no-one farms or lives on [...]”, the farmland thus being used for pasture.³⁸⁴

2. Division of farms

Data on the division of farms in Närke comes from subsidy taxation lists in 1563 (for two hundreds) and 1600 (for all of the province), while the subsidy taxation lists from 1571 are preserved only for one hundred (Glanshammar).³⁸⁵ Tithe data is very rare from the 1550s and 1560s, while all the province is covered in 1577,³⁸⁶ and most in 1590–1591.³⁸⁷

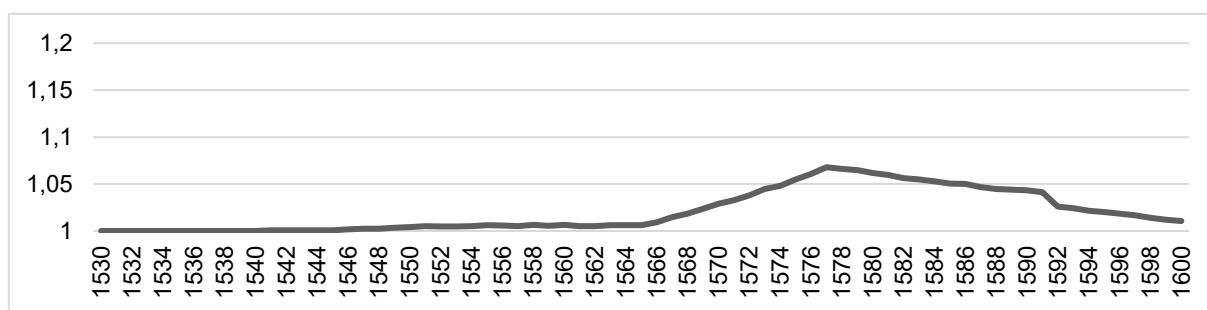


Figure C2.1. Division of farms in Närke, 1530–1600. For further explanation of the figure, see figure 2.1. Source: Population database.

The data on the division of farms in Närke indicates that it was very limited until the 1560s and only rose up to about 7% during the latter 1570s. Farm division then decreased during the 1580s and 1590s. The development was mainly driven by farm division decreasing in the central part of the province (Örebro and Asker), while in the southern (Sundbo) and western (Edsberg) parts it instead increased during the latter part of the century.

³⁸⁴ Närkes handlingar 1586:9, RA: ”ligger öde och för fåfot uti Glanshammars härad som ingen brukar och besitter [...]”.

³⁸⁵ Brudskatten 1563, vol. 1, RA; Närkes handlingar 1600:2A, RA; Älvsborgs lösen 1571, vol. 3, RA.

³⁸⁶ Kungliga arkiv K 351, RA.

³⁸⁷ Hertig Karls räntekammare, vol. 16, RA.

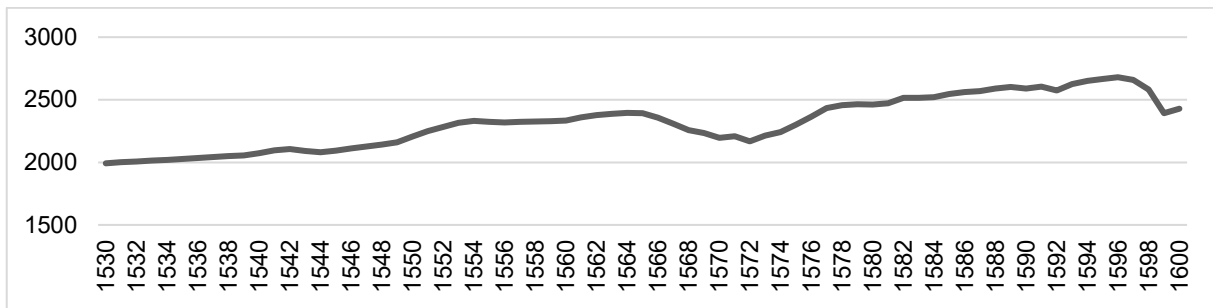


Figure C2.2. Total number of peasant households in Närke, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

Peasant households in Närke numbered about 2,000 in 1530. Rising steadily until the mid 1560s, the number reached almost 2,400 in 1564, while then decreasing until 1572. This decrease was 10%, resulting in a number of households that had previously been surpassed in 1549. The recovery however only took five years, whereafter the previous growth trend was resumed. Another severe break came only in 1597–1599, which saw the number of peasant households in Närke decrease by 11%. In sum, the number of households however increased by 22% from 1530 to 1600.

3. *Cottagers*

Data on cottagers in Närke is scarce. Records survive from only two hundreds in 1571 and 1576 (Noraskoga and Glanshammar),³⁸⁸ while three hundreds are covered in 1579,³⁸⁹ and only one (Sundbo) in 1589 and 1590.³⁹⁰ The situation at the end of the century is much better, as all of the province is covered in 1596,³⁹¹ and most in 1600.³⁹² The only corvée labour performed by cottagers in Närke occurred in Noraskoga, where in 1554 some cottagers were working by the mines.³⁹³ Overall, this results in a situation where the development of the cottager social group can be followed in the sources with little certainty before the 1570s, as we then have to rely on extrapolations for all of Närke.

³⁸⁸ Älvsborgs lösen, vol. 3, RA; Drängeregister, RA.

³⁸⁹ Närke's handlingar 1578:6, RA.

³⁹⁰ Östergötlands handlingar 1589:17; 1590:8, RA.

³⁹¹ Närke's handlingar 1596:6; 1596:16, RA.

³⁹² Närke's handlingar 1600:2A, RA.

³⁹³ Västmanlands handlingar 1554:2, RA.

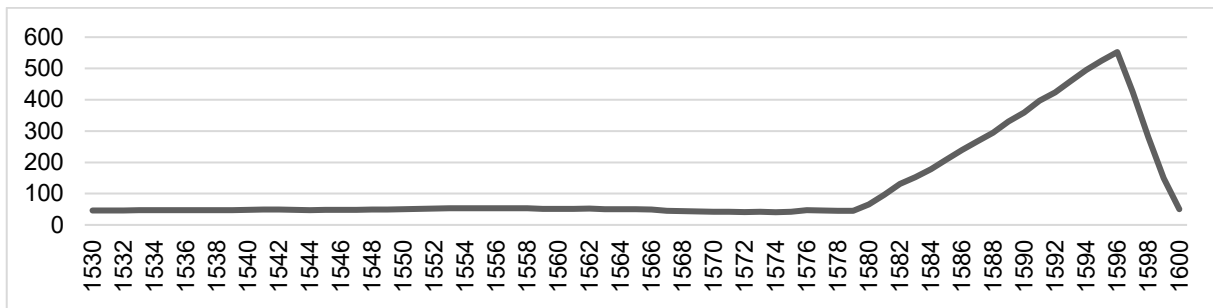


Figure C3.1. The total number of cottager households in Närke, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

Due to the poor data before the 1570s, the stable and low number of cottagers in Närke needs to be taken with a large grain of salt. Still, the records indicate a rapid increase from the 1570s until 1596, when it reached 550. The number of cottagers then dropped dramatically during the last years of the decade, a development which is supported by the land desertion figure found above. Together these numbers indicate a crisis in Närke during the harvest failures at the end of the 1590s. This resulted in the number of cottagers in Närke (probably) being at the same level in 1600 as it had been in 1530.

4. *The Crown*

Närke was in its entirety enfeoffed until 1554, and the Crown had no manors here before 1549, when Tuna (soon renamed Käggleholm) was founded. In 1554, Örebro castle returned to the Crown at the death of Lars Siggesson (Sparre), the holder of the fief. From now on, the castle was the largest and most important of the crown establishments in Närke. By 1560, it had two demesne farms (Södra and Norra ladugården), with a third (called “Nya” 1598, “Karlberg” in 1599, and “Västra” in 1600) added in the 1590s.³⁹⁴ In 1560, the Crown also established two new manors: Askersund (1560–1561) and Segersjö, of which the latter lasted throughout the century.

As for mining and industrial production, Duke Charles established Lekebergs hyttegård in Lekebergslagen in 1572, which remained active until the middle of the 1580s.³⁹⁵ Charles further founded a sulphur industry at Dylta in 1579, which at least

³⁹⁴ Närkes handlingar 1598:14; 1599:13; 1600:15, RA.

³⁹⁵ On Duke Charles’ establishments in Närke, see Hedberg 1995.

during the 1590s was accompanied by an iron works.³⁹⁶ In the part of Närke which remained outside the duchy, Glanshammar silver works were established in 1581, where operations lasted for about a decade.³⁹⁷

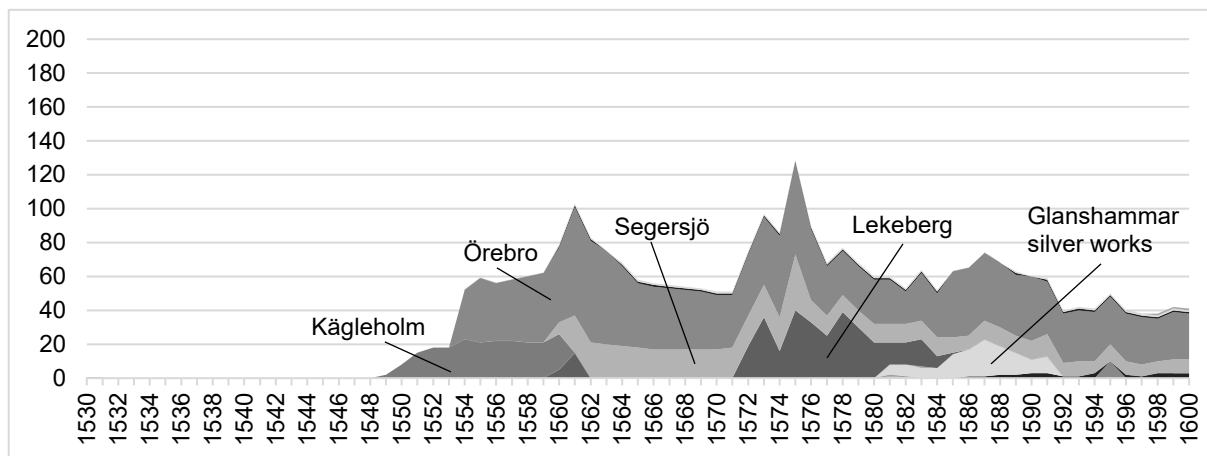


Figure C4.1. The number of households employed at various crown establishments in Närke, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

While there were no crown establishments at all in Närke in 1530, by 1600 there was one castle (Örebro) with three demesne farms, one additional manor (Segersjö) and one sulphur industry (Dylta). The number of households employed by the Crown at this date numbered only 40, having reached a peak in 1575 at 125. Most of the Crown's expansion took place in the 1550s, with a later expansion in the 1570s (mainly at the mining industry in Lekebergslagen) followed by gradual recession during the rest of the century.

5. The Church

The only hospital in Närke was that in Örebro. No accounts are known from before the early 1580s, with the number of inmates first listed in 1581 and the number of those employed by the hospital in 1582.³⁹⁸

³⁹⁶ E.g., Närkes handlingar 1594:15, RA.

³⁹⁷ E.g., Närkes handlingar 1581:6, RA.

³⁹⁸ Närkes handlingar 1581:17; 1582:22, RA.

The Carmelite convent in Örebro was closed down at an unknown date, its buildings possibly reused for the hospital, or else quarried for stone for building of the castle.³⁹⁹ The Antonine convent in Ramundeboda was abandoned by 1529 and subsequently turned into a tavern.⁴⁰⁰ By 1530, the only still active religious institution was the Cistercian nunnery in Riseberga. It is known that Riseberga suffered from a fire in 1546, but that a small community of nuns remained at least until 1556, when there were only two nuns left.⁴⁰¹

The number of parish clergy in sixteenth-century Närke was about 25.

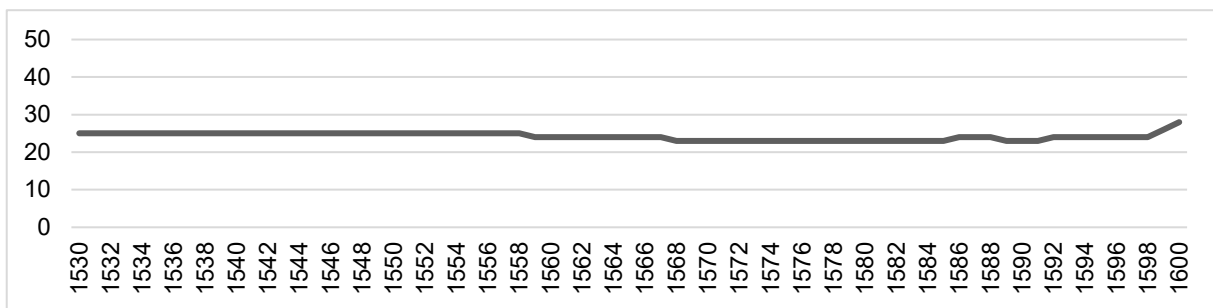


Figure C5.1. The total number of households employed by the church in Närke, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

6. The Nobility

Accounts in which the employees are listed survive from only one nobility manor in Närke, namely from Göksholm for a single year in the 1580s.

Göksholm (in Mellösa parish, Asker hundred) was a large manor owned by the high nobility. A wage list survives for 1587, when the manor probably was run by Axel Johansson (Natt och Dag).⁴⁰² The wage list contains six householders and another seven men that are given no title; seven male servants, and five women.

³⁹⁹ Berntson 2003.

⁴⁰⁰ Berntson 2003.

⁴⁰¹ Berntson 2003.

⁴⁰² Acta rörande ridderskapet och adeln, vol. 17, RA.

Table C6.1. The number of householders, servants, and women employed at manors in Närke, 1530–1600.

MANOR	YEARS	TYPE	HOUSEHOLDERS	MALE SERVANTS	WOMEN
GÖKSHOLM	1587	large	6–13	7	5

Source: Population database.

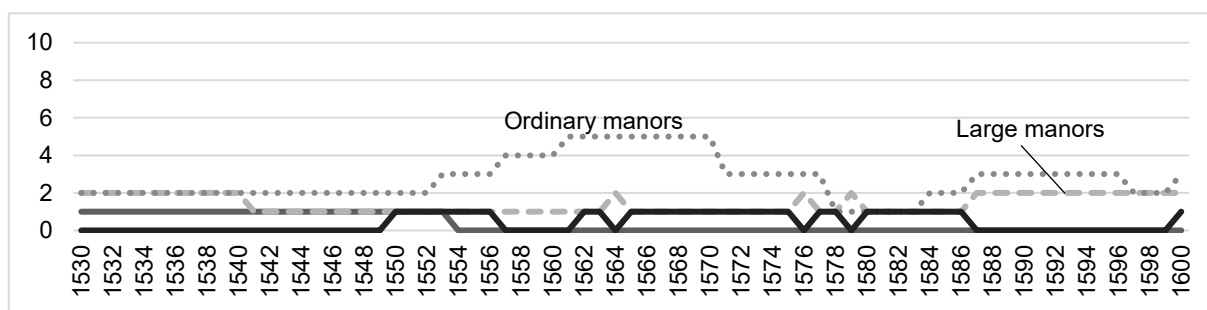


Figure C6.1. The number of nobility manors in Närke, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.



Figure C6.2. The number of households living at nobility manors in Närke, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

The number of nobility manors in Närke was only 5 in 1530. It remained largely constant (varying between 3 and 7) throughout the century. Accordingly, the number of households employed at manors was also rather constant, save for the drop caused by the Crown taking back the enfeoffed Örebro castle in 1554. After the mid-1550s, the number of households employed by the nobility in Närke mainly fluctuated between 20 and 40 households.

7. Towns

There were only two towns in sixteenth-century Närke: Örebro, which was the largest and may be considered the centre of the province, and Nora kyrkobil, a small

town which was the centre of the iron mining district Noraskoga. Örebro reached a population figure of more than 100 households only in the 1590s, while Nora kyrkobol always remained smaller than this. Both towns however grew over the century, Örebro especially during the 1590s (although losing some population again at the end of the century, at the same time as the number of rural households in the province took a hard hit following the harvests failures).

As for population sources, data survive for Örebro only for a couple of years during the 1560s and then again not until the 1590s, while the situation is unusually fortunate regarding Nora kyrkobol, as its population was listed annually in preserved cadastres and accounts.

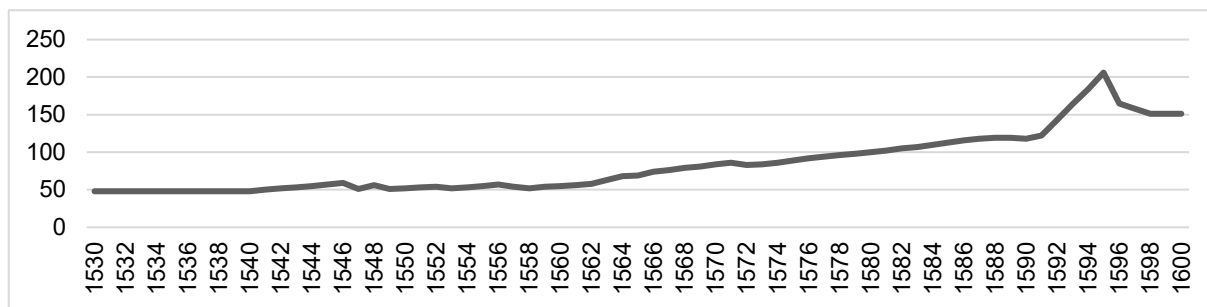


Figure C7.1. Total number of households in towns (excluding castles) in Närke, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

Nora kyrkobol (in Noraskoga mining district) is not usually considered to have been a town before the seventeenth century. A town bailiff is however noted in the accounts since at least 1549 and into the 1580s,⁴⁰³ and in addition a note in the accounts from 1565 explains that Nora kyrkobol was then “A town and full of alehouses which house travellers”.⁴⁰⁴ It is further included in lists of towns in the realm in 1599 and 1600.⁴⁰⁵ The place was important for trade in iron from the surrounding mining district, and both the mining peasants (*bergsmän*) and merchants from Arboga had warehouses for their goods, which numbered over 110 in the 1560s

⁴⁰³ E.g., Västmanlands handlingar 1549:7, RA.

⁴⁰⁴ Västmanlands handlingar 1565:5, RA.

⁴⁰⁵ Sandbergska samlingen vol. R:2, RA.

and 1570s.⁴⁰⁶ Data on the number of inhabitants in Nora kyrkobil is given already in the cadastre of 1539, and then in most years throughout the century.

Örebro (in Örebro hundred) is located in the centre of Närke on the agricultural plain close to the mouth of river Svartån into Hjälmaren, and where road transport could cross the river on a bridge.⁴⁰⁷ It was an important transit place for the iron exports from the mining districts in Närke, from which the iron could be shipped over Hjälmaren for further transport along the river Eskilstunaån and over Lake Mälaren. Of further importance was the castle, which reverted back to the Crown in 1554. While the Carmelite convent was closed down, probably in the 1530s, there was a hospital in Örebro at least during the latter part of the century. The earliest population data survives for 1562 and 1566,⁴⁰⁸ after which time further data is lacking into the 1590s.⁴⁰⁹

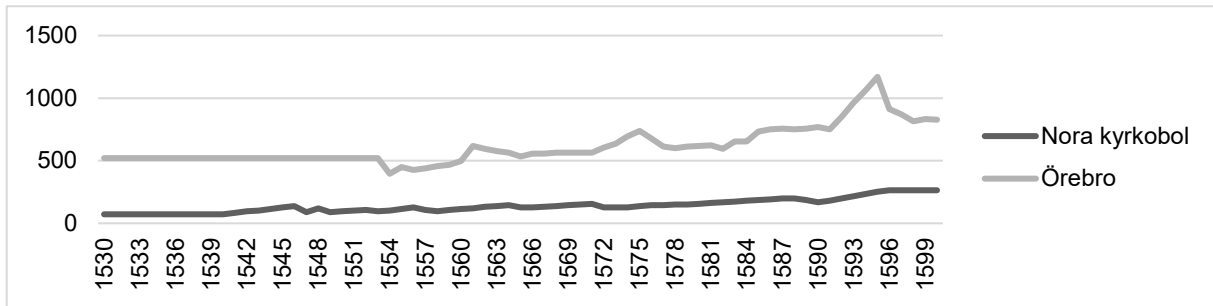


Figure C7.2. Population in towns in Närke, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

Table C7.1. Total population in the towns of Närke, decadal figures, 1530–1600.

TOWN	1530	1540	1550	1560	1570	1580	1590	1600
NORA KYRKOBOL	72	72	96	114	150	156	168	264
ÖREBRO	522	522	522	498	564	618	768	828

Source: Population database.

In the earlier parts of the century, Örebro had about 500 inhabitants, while Nora kyrkobil was much smaller. Örebro however grew slowly over the century, its

⁴⁰⁶ E.g., Västmanlands handlingar 1570:14, RA.

⁴⁰⁷ Redin 1978 p. 6–8.

⁴⁰⁸ Närkes handlingar 1562:9B, RA; Strödda kamerale handlingar, vol. 43:2, RA.

⁴⁰⁹ Hertig Karls räntekammare, vol. 16, RA; Städerna, vol. 39, RA; Närkes handlingar 1598:14, RA.

population perhaps reaching over 1,000 inhabitants only in 1594–1595, after which time it however fell back to about 800 by the end of the century. In contrast, although also Nora kyrkobil grew over the period, it had not reached more than 250 inhabitants by 1600.

D. Västmanland

Västmanland is located on the northern shore of Lake Mälaren, opposite Södermanland and west of Uppland. Its main grain-producing regions were located on the plains close to Västerås and Arboga towns. The economic life of those towns was however shaped by the vicinity to the mining districts in Lindesberg and Skinnskatteberg (from which iron was exported over Köping and Arboga), in Dalarna (from which Västerås was a major exporter of metals), and at Sala in Tjurbo hundred, the most important silver mine in sixteenth-century Sweden. All in all, Västmanland consisted of seven hundreds, of which one (Lindesberg) was a mining district. The border with Södermanland has changed since the sixteenth century: here, Torpa and Sätterbo parishes are included in Västerrekarne hundred in Södermanland, as they were in the sixteenth century. The border between Dalarna and Västmanland in the north has also changed over time: here Skinnskatteberg is counted with Åkerbo hundred in Västmanland, Våla with Norrbo hundred in Västmanland, while Norberg is counted with Dalarna. Half of Tuhundra hundred has later become included in Snevringe hundred but is here counted with Tuhundra throughout the period.

1. Cadastral peasants

The number of cadastral peasants is known already in 1530 for four hundreds in Västmanland;⁴¹⁰ two more is added through the subsidy taxation lists of 1535,⁴¹¹ while the earliest account from Lindesberg comes from 1539.⁴¹² All of the province is thus covered already before 1540.

As a result of Snevringe hundred and half of Tuhundra hundred being enfeoffed to Queen Widow Katarina Stenbock from 1561 until her death in 1620, accounts from here are rare, as most of her archives have been lost. The number of deserted farms

⁴¹⁰ Fogdarnas räkenskaper, RA.

⁴¹¹ Gärder och hjälper 1535, RA.

⁴¹² Västmanlands handlingar 1539:9, RA.

in Snevringe thus has to be estimated for the period 1567–1580, a period for which we know that there was substantial land desertion in surrounding hundreds. Due to archival losses, data is further scarce for all of Västmanland after 1591. This again most severely affects Snevringe (which has to be extrapolated from 1590), while two other hundreds are missing data only for the year 1600.

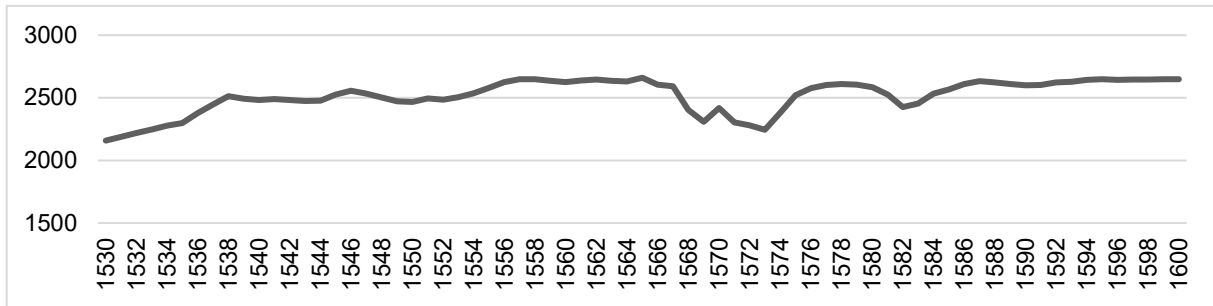


Figure D1.1. Cadastral peasants (excluding deserted farms) in Västmanland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

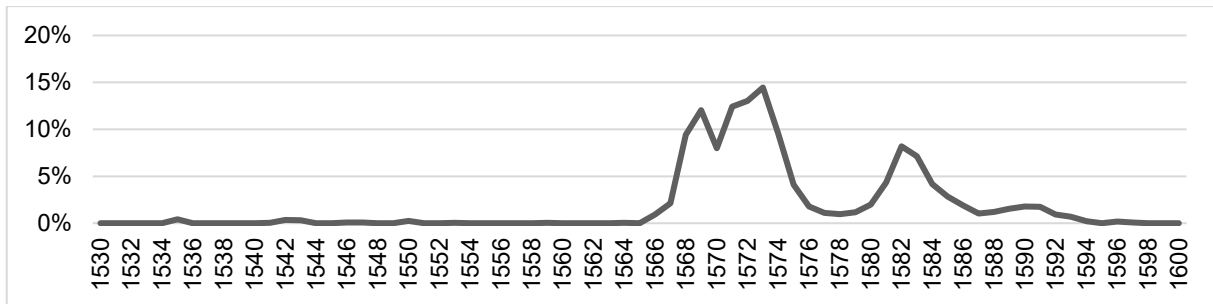


Figure D1.2. Deserted farms in Västmanland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

Figure D1.1 shows that the number of cadastral peasants in Västmanland increased during the 1530s, and then more slowly until the middle of the 1560s. The decrease to 1574 was succeeded by a recovery phase and then once more stagnation. An interesting decline also took place during the early years of the 1580s (decreasing 1579–1582). As may be seen in figure D1.2, these periods of decrease were due to the number of deserted farms increasing; in the years around 1570 it rose to almost 15%, while in 1582 it peaked at 8% of the cadastral farms in Västmanland. While the western part of Västmanland (Åkerbo) was worst hit in the 1560s, with more than 20% of its farms being deserted, most of the province was affected in the 1570s as well as in

1582, where the highest values concern the central province. An example of how farm desertion was described in the accounts may be taken from Norrbo hundred in 1572, where farms “lay deserted, farmed by no one”.⁴¹³

2. Division of farms

Farm division in Västmanland can be calculated from the subsidy taxation lists of 1563 (for two hundreds),⁴¹⁴ 1571 (for all of the province),⁴¹⁵ and for 1600 (only for Tjurbo hundred).⁴¹⁶ In addition, Västmanland is rich in grain tithe data from the 1550s as well as from the 1570s and 1580s, with additional data from some hundreds from the 1560s and 1590s. There is thus ample data on the division of farms from the 1550s onwards, with only Lindesberg mining district being in a worse situation (with data only from 1571).

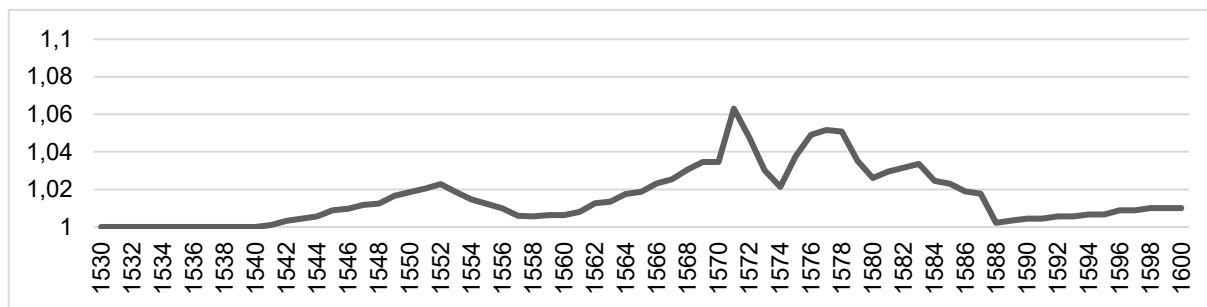


Figure D2.1. Division of farms in Västmanland, 1530–1600. For further explanation of the figure, see figure 2.1. Source: Population database.

Division of farms in Västmanland reached a few per cent during the 1550s and 1560s, variously growing and decreasing (as farms were registered as proper cadastral units). The pattern was mainly driven by Snevringe, for which cadastral data is relatively poor. From about 1570 and into the 1580s, division of farms remained at about 5%. It then fell towards the end of the century, being limited to only a few per cent around 1600.

⁴¹³ Västmanlands handlingar 1572:6, RA: “Lågo öde, som ingen brukade”.

⁴¹⁴ Brudskatten 1563, vol. 2, RA.

⁴¹⁵ Älvsborgs lösen 1571, RA.

⁴¹⁶ Västmanlands handlingar 1599:9, RA.

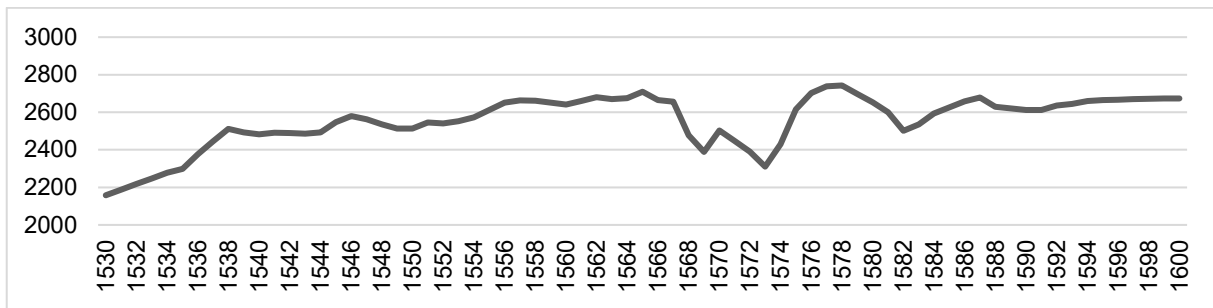


Figure D2.2. The total number of peasant households in Västmanland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

The number of peasant households in Västmanland grew from about 2,200 in 1530 to over 2,600 at the beginning of the 1560s. It then decreased (by 15%) to 1573, when it was back to numbers not seen since the 1530s. A rapid recovery during the rest of the decade was then followed by a further trough 1579–1583. The rest of the century saw no or very limited growth, resulting in the peak of peasant households in Västmanland actually being reached already in 1578, before the second depression. The number of households nevertheless increased by 24% from 1530 to 1600, most of which had happened already before the 1560s.

3. Cottagers

Cottagers are relatively well-recorded in the sources from Västmanland. Already the subsidy taxation lists of 1535 list cottagers in four hundreds;⁴¹⁷ later taxation documents exist for 1571 and 1576 (both of which cover almost all the province),⁴¹⁸ 1579,⁴¹⁹ 1589,⁴²⁰ 1596,⁴²¹ and 1598.⁴²² In addition, cottager corvée labour was common in the province from the late 1540s and until the middle of the 1560s, at the manors of Väsby, and Arboga, in the mining district of Lindesberg, and at Västerås castle.⁴²³ Coverage of the number of cottagers in Västmanland is thus very good for the period 1550–1575, and relatively good already since 1535. After 1580 the source situation becomes increasingly

⁴¹⁷ Gärder och hjälper 1535, RA.

⁴¹⁸ Älvsborgs lösen 1571, RA; Drängeregister 1576, RA.

⁴¹⁹ E.g., Västmanlands handlingar 1579:4B, RA.

⁴²⁰ E.g., Västmanlands handlingar 1589:3A, RA.

⁴²¹ Västmanlands handlingar 1596:7, RA.

⁴²² Västmanlands handlingar 1598:24, RA.

⁴²³ E.g., Västmanlands handlingar 1557:16, RA.

fragile, especially due to archival losses of the 1590s materials, when otherwise several subsidy taxations including cottagers were levied.

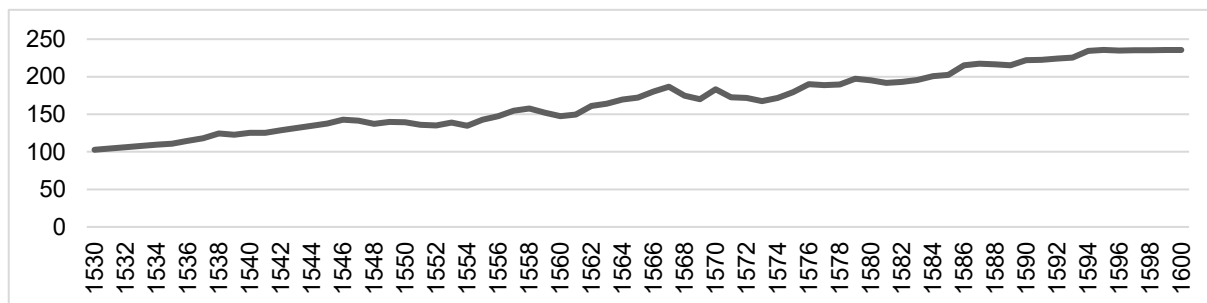


Figure D3.1. The total number of cottager households in Västmanland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

The data on cottagers in Västmanland shows a steady increase during the century, from about 100 in 1530 to close to 250 in 1600. The periods of increased farm desertion (e.g., 1566–1573) did not break but only momentarily slow down the general trend. The increase was however mainly limited to Åkerbo hundred in Western Västmanland, while the number of cottagers in the rest of the province remained largely unchanged. The increase for the whole period 1530–1600 was as high as 129%.

4. The Crown

The Crown already by 1530 had two important establishments in Västmanland: Västerås castle, located in the town with the same name, and Väsby manor, located by the silver mines in Sala. During the 1540s, Kungsör manor was founded and soon became one of the most important manors in the province, while Grönö and Vad manors only lasted a few years. The 1550s saw the establishment of Arboga, Fiholm, Grönö (a reestablishment), Ridö, Mölntorp/Strömsholm, and Hammarfors manors, as well as a new demesne farm at Kungsör (when the manor was moved and renamed to Ulvsund). Västerås castle soon had two demesne farms, while Ulvsund manor had two large demesne farms and two smaller ones (Runna and Kvicksund). The most important change during the latter part of the century was the relocation of Ulvsund back to Kungsör in 1580, and the abandonment of Arboga manor in 1591.

As for industries, the most important were those located at the silver mine in Sala. Väsby manor was running already in 1530, and the number of households employed at Sala mines and foundries grew significantly over the century. Other important

industrial establishments ere Guldsmedshyttan ironworks, established in Lindesberg mining district in 1552 and lasting throughout the century, and Ervalla sulphur works, which was active for a few years during the 1580s. Shipbuilding was less important: a wharf existed at Ulvsund in the late 1570s, and then at Kungsör (presumably at the same location) for a few years during the 1590s.

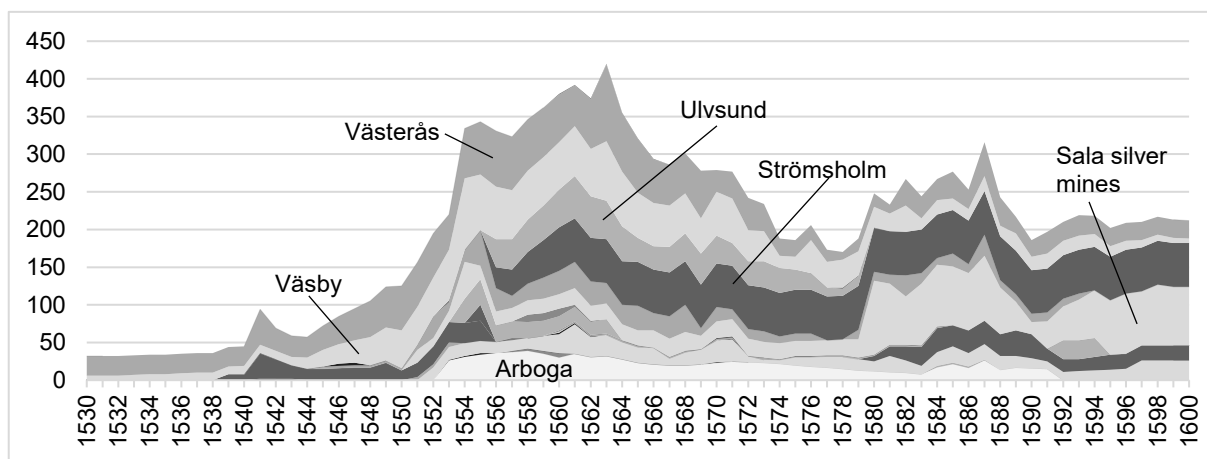


Figure D4.1. The number of households employed at various crown establishments in Västmanland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

Going from the Crown employing less than 50 households in 1530, the number rose sharply during the late 1540s and into the 1550s, reaching a peak of over 400 in 1563. The number then decreased during the 1570s, recovering during the 1580s mainly because of an increase at the Sala silver mines, and then decreasing again into the 1590s. At the end of the century, only 200 households were employed by the Crown in Västmanland, with no establishment being significantly larger or more important than the others.

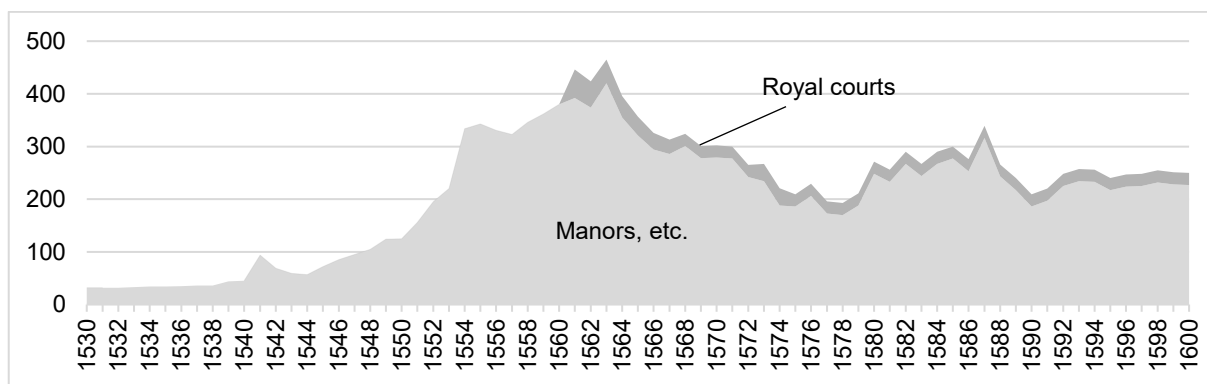


Figure D4.2. The number of households employed at various crown establishments and at the royal courts in Västmanland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

Although King Gustav often visited the province, a more permanent court was establishment in Västmanland only after his death, when Queen Katarina Stenbock took up residency at Strömsholm castle. In addition, deposed King Erik XIV was imprisoned at Västerås castle 1573–1574, whose court only consisted of a very small staff of servants and guards at this time. Regarding Strömsholm, it must be noted that no data survives regarding its number of employees (including the court of Queen Katarina Stenbock) after 1560. The figures for Strömsholm have therefore been kept constant from 1560 to 1600, assuming that no major changes occurred during her residency there, compared to the previous years.

5. *The Church*

There were three hospitals in sixteenth-century Västmanland, located in the three towns Arboga, Köping, and Västerås. Best known of these is Arboga, from where surviving accounts including lists of its inmates and staff cover some years between 1579 and 1588.⁴²⁴ For Västerås hospital, accounts with lists of those employed are preserved only from 1585 to 1591,⁴²⁵ with an additional note on the number of inmates preserved for 1600.⁴²⁶ To Västerås hospital belonged a demesne farm in Önesta. For

⁴²⁴ E.g., Västmanlands handlingar 1579:11, RA.

⁴²⁵ E.g., Västmanlands handlingar 1590:13, RA.

⁴²⁶ Kyrkors, skolors och hospitals akter, vol. 33, RA.

Köping hospital no accounts at all survive. The hospital was mentioned in 1560 and in 1585 and seems to have been smaller than the other two.⁴²⁷

The Dominican convent in Västerås was abandoned soon after Easter 1528, and quarried for stone for Västerås castle, while the Franciscan convent in Arboga was abandoned by Lent 1529.⁴²⁸ All monasteries and convents in Västmanland had thus been closed already before 1530.

The parish clergy in Västmanland numbered 40–50 in the sixteenth century.

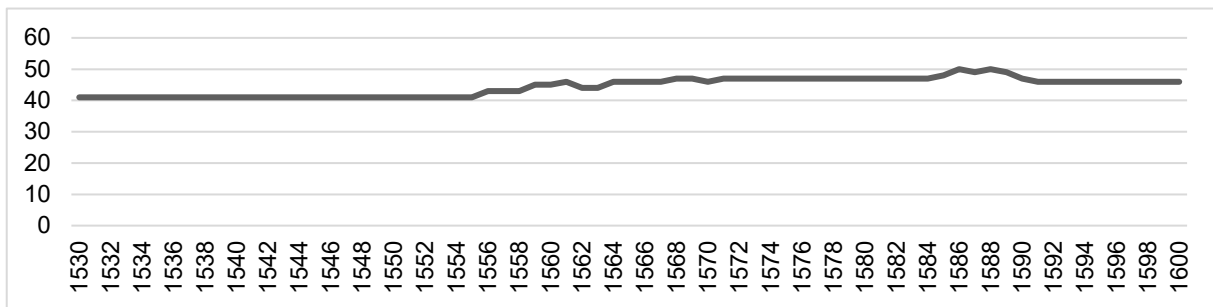


Figure D5.1. Total number of households employed by the church in Västmanland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

6. The Nobility

No accounts that list the number of employees survive from (the rather few) noble manors in Västmanland.

⁴²⁷ Räntekammarböcker, vol. 39, RA. Köping hospital is however not mentioned in a list of gifts from King Erik XIV to all hospitals in the realm in 1564, included in Räntekammarböcker, vol. 41, RA. Björnånger 1974 p. 132 says that the earliest mention of the hospital is from 1582, and that the hospital only had about 10 inmates in the early seventeenth century.

⁴²⁸ Berntson 2003.

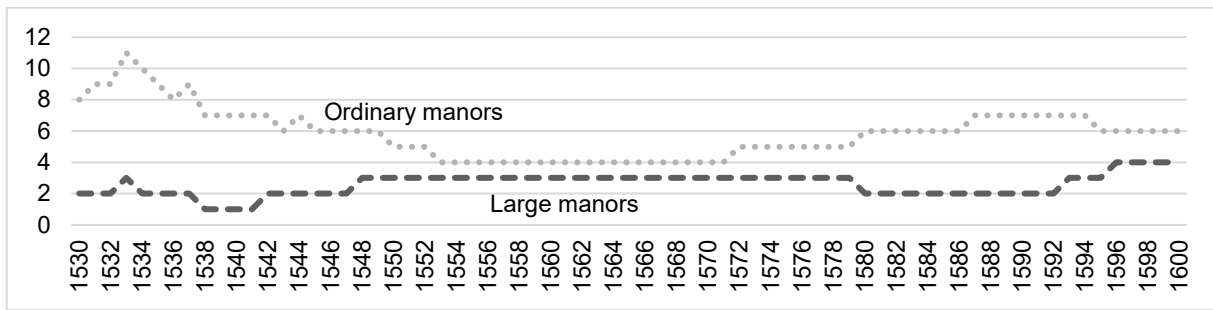


Figure D6.1. The number of nobility manors in Västmanland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

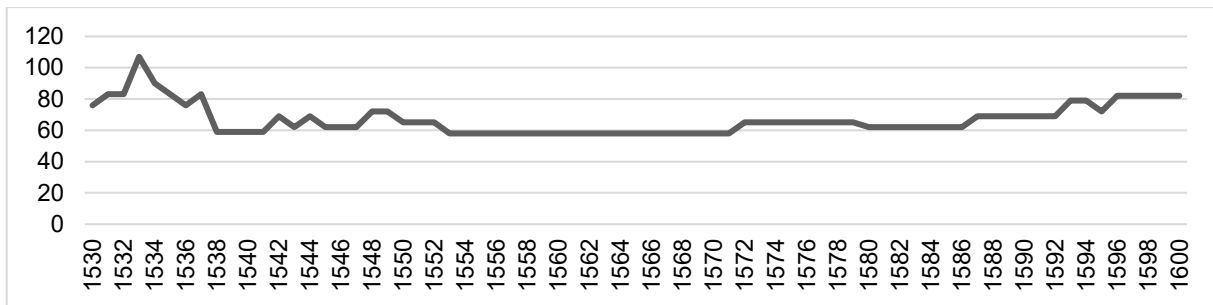


Figure D6.2. The number of households living at nobility manors in Västmanland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

In Västmanland, the number of nobility manors was only 10 in 1530. Increasing somewhat in the 1530s, it then fell down to 7 for most of the middle of the century, climbing back up to 10 only by 1600 (of which however 4 were large manors). The number of households employed at the manors of the nobility was consequently around 80 both in 1530 and in 1600, having been as low as around 60 for most of the century.

7. Towns

There were five towns in Västmanland during the sixteenth century. Largest of these was for most of the century Västerås, where the main castle of the Crown was located, although both Sala with its mine and Arboga with its crown manor had similar numbers of inhabitants and at times rivalled Västerås for the leading position in the province. Köping and Lindesås towns were both much smaller, never reaching beyond the 100-household level.

The sources are richest for Lindesås, for which annual population registers begin in 1539 and survive for most years. For Sala, population data survives already from the 1540s, while the other three towns only have population data from the beginning of the 1560s. While most other provinces have good urban data from the end of the century, this is unfortunately not true for Västmanland, as archival fires have caused all sixteenth-century urban population registers after 1590 to be lost.

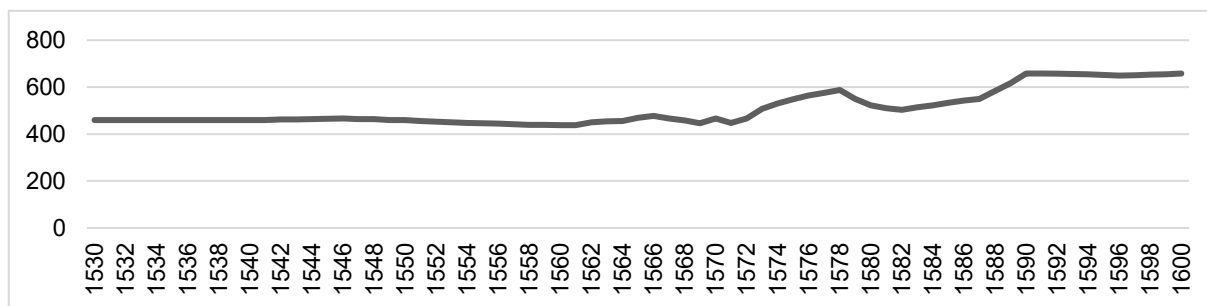


Figure D7.1. Total number of households in towns (excluding castles) in Västmanland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

Arboga (in Åkerbo hundred) was located at Arbogaån, through which it was connected to the iron mining districts in Noraskoga, Lindesberg, and Västerbergslagen in Dalarna.⁴²⁹ The town was located on the medieval border between Närke, Södermanland, and Västmanland provinces, but has here been included in Åkerbo in its entirety. The Franciscan convent was abandoned in 1529, while a hospital is known from the latter part of the century. The Crown established a manor in the town in the 1550s, which was the seat of Countess Cecilia (the king's sister) during the 1570s. The town was struck by fire in 1569.⁴³⁰ The earliest population data comes from 1562,⁴³¹ and later data survives from 1566,⁴³² 1571,⁴³³ 1582,⁴³⁴ and 1590,⁴³⁵ while later subsidy taxation lists have been lost due to archival fires.

⁴²⁹ *Medeltidsstaden: Arboga* 1977 p. 6–8.

⁴³⁰ PRF 3 nr 83.

⁴³¹ Västmanlands handlingar 1562:13, RA.

⁴³² Strödda kamerala handlingar, vol. 43:2, RA.

⁴³³ Älvsborgs lösen, vol. 6, RA.

⁴³⁴ Sandbergsska samlingen vol. YY:3, RA.

⁴³⁵ Västmanlands handlingar 1590:14A, RA.

Köping (in Åkerbo hundred) was located on Köpingsån, through which iron was exported from Skinnskatteberg, Norberg, and Västerbergslagen.⁴³⁶ The town consequently paid its taxes in iron.⁴³⁷ There was no important church or crown institutions located in the town during the sixteenth century, except for a small hospital, first mentioned in the 1560s. A fire in the 1540s ruined most of the town.⁴³⁸ The earliest population data comes (as for Arboga) for 1562,⁴³⁹ and then from several years during the 1560s, 1570s, and 1580s.⁴⁴⁰ But, as for Arboga, no population data is available after 1590.⁴⁴¹

Lindesås (in Linde mining district) was the centre of its mining district, located by the church where both the mining peasants (*bergsmän*) from the surrounding district and merchants from Arboga built iron warehouses. It is usually not seen as a town before well into the 1600s; A town bailiff (*byfogde*) is however mentioned in the accounts from the 1540s until the 1580s, and Lindesås is further included in lists of all towns in the realm in 1599–1600.⁴⁴² Ever since 1539 its population is listed separately in the annual cadastres.⁴⁴³

Västerås (here counted with Siende hundred) was located in central Västmanland on the mouth of river Svartån, and close to the main road on Badelundaåsen leading north to the mining districts in Dalarna.⁴⁴⁴ This led to the export of metals over Lake Mälaren being most important for the town's economy. It was located on the border between Tuhundra, Norrbo, and Siende hundreds (which met in the river): the cathedral and the Dominican convent were located on the eastern side of the river (in Siende), the castle on the western side (in Tuhundra). While the town suffered from the Reformation with the closing of the Dominican convent in 1528, it prospered due to the Crown's continuous expansion of Västerås castle. In 1539, the inhabitants were complaining that some people living "above Långheden in the mining districts" were burghers in the town but did not pay any taxes, to which the king responded that such merchants should all move into the town.⁴⁴⁵ Another complaint, common to the towns

⁴³⁶ Folin 1979 p. 6–8.

⁴³⁷ Björnånger 1974 p. 133.

⁴³⁸ Björnånger 1974 p. 38.

⁴³⁹ Västmanlands handlingar 1562:17, RA.

⁴⁴⁰ Several lists in Sandbergska samlingen vol. YY:9, RA.

⁴⁴¹ Sandbergska samlingen vol. YY:9, RA.

⁴⁴² Sandbergska samlingen vol. R:2, RA.

⁴⁴³ Västmanlands handlingar 1539:3, RA.

⁴⁴⁴ *Medeltidsstaden: Västerås* 1977 p. 6–8.

⁴⁴⁵ PRF 2 nr 122.

in which the major castles were located, was that the servants of the king refused to pay taxes; they were ordered to do so in 1552.⁴⁴⁶ A fire struck the town in 1569.⁴⁴⁷ The earliest surviving population register dates from 1561,⁴⁴⁸ with later registers covering several years during the 1560s, 1570s, and 1580s.⁴⁴⁹ No later sixteenth-century population register than from 1590 has however survived.⁴⁵⁰

Sala (in Tjurbo hundred) was located by the Sala silver mines, and it is often just referred to as “Sala mine” (*Sala gruva*) in the accounts. In some years the place is however more correctly referred to as “Sala mining town” (*Sala gruvstad*) or “Sala town by Sala mine” (*Sala stad vid Sala gruva*), and the accounts always concern both town and mine.⁴⁵¹ In the privileges of 1512, the town was granted Wednesdays as its market day “as all other towns have”, which was repeated in the privileges of 1530 (markets on Wednesday and Saturday) and 1535, which further underlines that Sala was considered a proper town.⁴⁵² Sala was in fact the sixth largest town of the realm in the late sixteenth century. Except for the mine, the Crown also had silver works in Sala at Väsby manor, located just outside the town. Data on population is first available from 1548,⁴⁵³ and after a lacuna in the accounts during most of the 1550s and 1560s, annual figures are preserved from 1569 to 1584,⁴⁵⁴ in which year the king abolished the population tax, resulting in no further data being available.

⁴⁴⁶ PRF 2 nr 223.

⁴⁴⁷ *Medeltidsstaden Västerås* 1977 p. 8.

⁴⁴⁸ Västmanlands handlingar 1561:1, RA.

⁴⁴⁹ E.g., Sandbergsska samlingen vol. YY:18, RA.

⁴⁵⁰ Västmanlands handlingar 1590:2B, RA.

⁴⁵¹ Most accounts in Bergsbruk: Salbergets räkenskaper, RA.

⁴⁵² PRF 1 nr 239; PRF 2 nr 72 & nr 100.

⁴⁵³ Bergsbruk: Salbergets räkenskaper, vol. 46, RA.

⁴⁵⁴ Bergsbruk: Salbergets räkenskaper, RA.

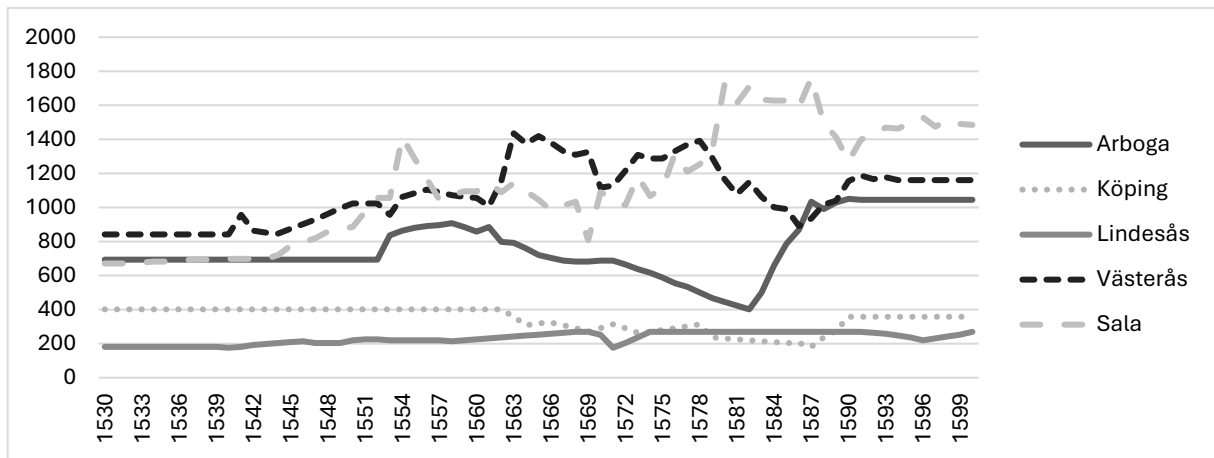


Figure D7.2. Population in towns in Västmanland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

Table D7.1. Total population in the towns of Västmanland, decadal figures, 1530–1600.

TOWN	1530	1540	1550	1560	1570	1580	1590	1600
ARBOGA	756	756	756	936	750	486	1,146	1,140
KÖPING	438	438	438	438	318	252	390	390
LINDESÅS	198	192	240	246	276	294	294	294
VÄSTERÅS	918	918	1,116	1,152	1,218	1,272	1,260	1,266
SALA	732	762	966	1,194	1,188	1,878	1,386	1,620

Source: Population database.

Of the five towns in Västmanland, three (Arboga, Västerås, and Sala) were of similar size, having about 700–900 inhabitants in the earlier part of the century, and growing to 1,100–1,600 by 1600. Most prosperous was the mining town Sala. Having grown to about 1,000 inhabitants around 1550, its population was stagnant until the 1570s, when another phase of expansion brought the number up to over 1,800 inhabitants in the 1580s. Västerås instead grew mainly in the 1560s, then stagnated and decreased during the latter part of the century. Arboga finally saw a long population decrease from about 1560 to 1580, whereafter it expanded towards the end of the century. In comparison, both Lindesås and Köping always remained small, having only some 200–400 inhabitants throughout the century.

E. Dalarna

The large province of Dalarna is located to the north-west of Västmanland. Its northern part was divided into the two larger regions of Eastern and Western Dalarna, in which settlements followed the courses of Western and Eastern Dalälven rivers respectively. In Eastern Dalarna, which was the more populous of the two, population also lived around Lake Siljan. The southern part of the province differed in its economic structure, as it was divided into four mining districts: Västerbergslagen, Nedre Bergslagen, Övre Bergslagen, and Kopparbergslagen. (In fact, the internal divisions of the mining districts changed quite often over the sixteenth century, especially concerning Övre and Nedre Bergslagen; their boundaries have been kept unchanged over the period of the study.) Iron was the main commodity in the first three of these, although some copper and silver was also produced here. Kopparbergslagen was the main source of copper in sixteenth-century Sweden, and the Crown early on had a share in its production through the large Born industry, and even had a monopoly on copper exports during the latter part of the century.⁴⁵⁵ The metal industries in southern Dalarna thus kept the presence of the Crown high throughout the century, in contrast to the situation in Upper Dalarna. While the mining districts therefore in some regards may be included in the core region of Central Sweden, Upper Dalarna instead much more resembled the North.

1. Cadastral peasants

The number of cadastral peasants in Dalarna is first known for 1535 for the four mining districts, while the number of cadastral peasants in Österdalarna and Västerdalarna is known from 1539.⁴⁵⁶ This means that the whole province is covered already before 1540. As with Västmanland, archival losses especially affected records from after 1590. A couple of districts therefore lack data for 1599–1600.

⁴⁵⁵ Odén 1960.

⁴⁵⁶ Gärder och hjälper 1535, RA; Dalarnas handlingar 1539:4½, RA.

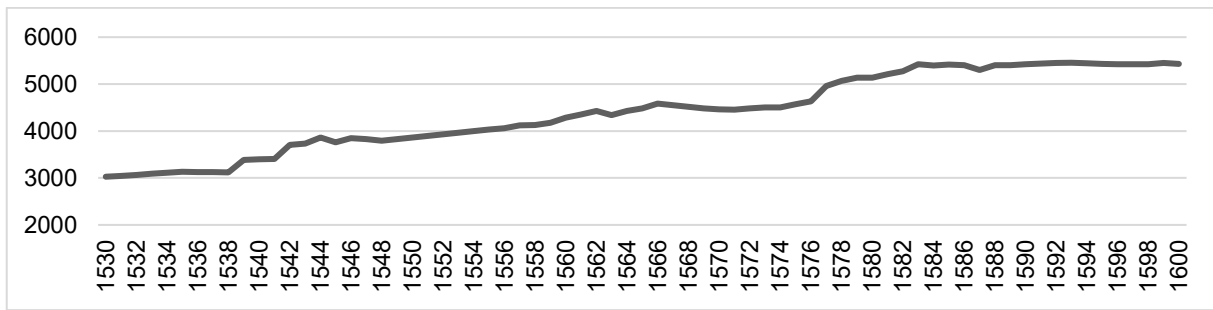


Figure E1.1. Cadastral peasants (excluding deserted farms) in Dalarna, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

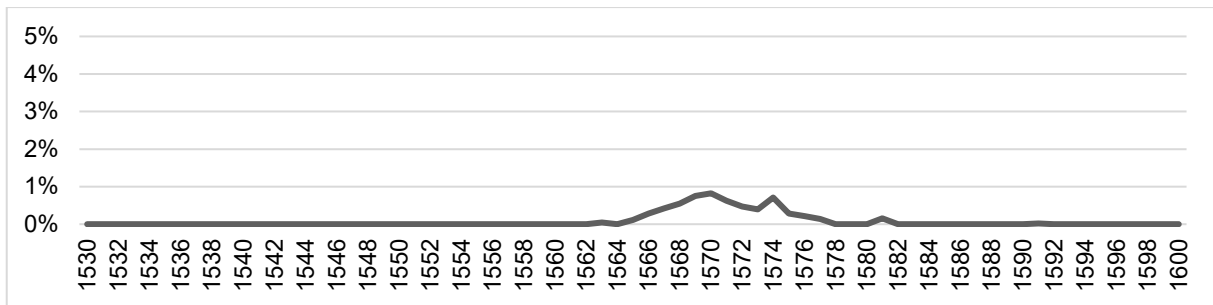


Figure E1.2. Deserted farms in Dalarna, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

As can be seen in figure E1.1, the number of cadastral peasants in Dalarna grew almost without exception from 1530 to 1600, although the periods 1565–1575 and after 1582 were more stagnant. Figure E1.2 shows that the number of deserted farms was always very limited in Dalarna, never reaching above 1%. On a regional level, only Västerbergslagen in the south was affected by farm desertion during the general crisis of the 1560s (1566–1572). Here, farm desertion reached almost 10% when it peaked in 1569. Dalarna did thus not go unaffected through the crisis, but it did not spread beyond this southernmost part.

2. Division of farms

Division of farms in Dalarna can be studied through the subsidy taxation lists of 1571 for the whole province.⁴⁵⁷ In addition, the cadastres for Övre Bergslagen give annual figures 1555–1560 that directly report the total number of peasant households (in

⁴⁵⁷ Älvsborgs lösen 1571, RA.

addition to the number of cadastral peasants).⁴⁵⁸ Further, grain tithe data is available for the 1550s, the 1570s, and 1580s for all of the province, as well as some data for some districts from the 1540s and 1560s. There is thus ample data available on the division of farms for the period ca. 1550–1585; while less data is available for the end of the century due to archival losses.

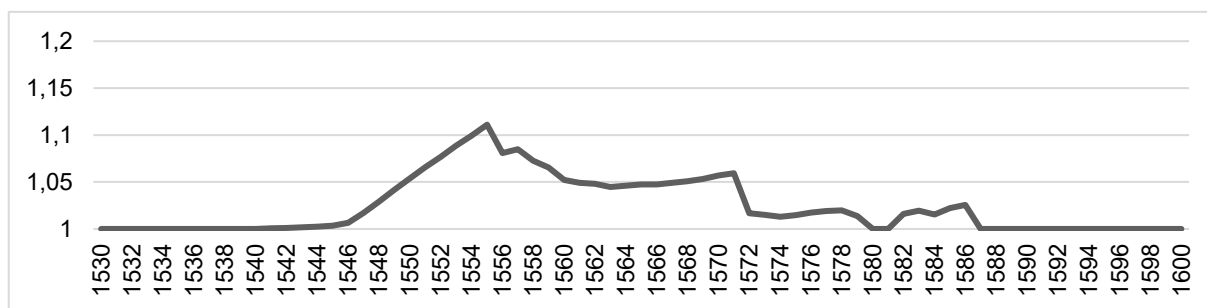


Figure E2.1. Division of farms in Dalarna, 1530–1600. For further explanation of the figure, see figure 2.1. Source: Population database.

Farm division in Dalarna peaked at about 10% in the middle of the 1550s, after which it decreased for a decade as farms were registered in the cadastres. Being stable until the 1570s, it then further decreased to a couple of per cent during 1580s. After the early 1580s, farm division disappears from the tithe records (and other sources are lacking).

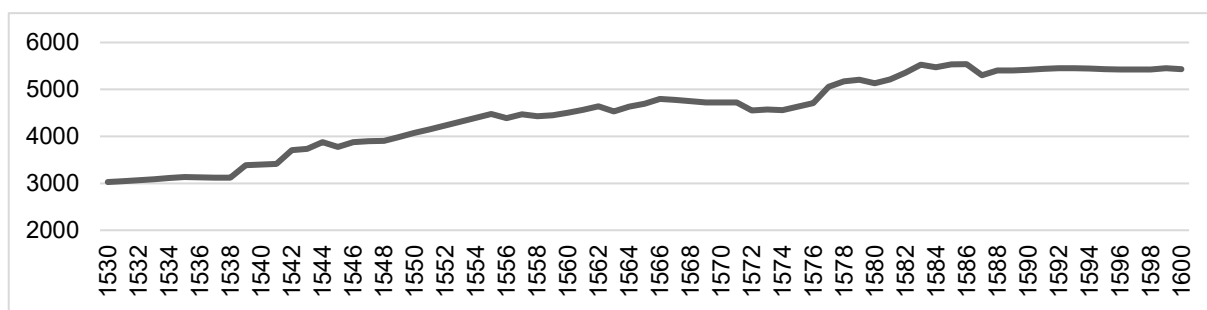


Figure E2.2. The total number of peasant households in Dalarna, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

⁴⁵⁸ E.g., Dalarnas handlingar 1555:8, RA.

Peasant households in Dalarna (including the mining districts) numbered just over 3,000 in 1530. Increasing rapidly, it reached close to 4,800 in 1566, before falling by 5% to 1572. Growth then resumed, with the curve however becoming stagnant after ca. 1590, perhaps partly due to a lack of sources on the division of farms. The number of peasant households in 1600 was over 5,400, which means that it had grown by a whole 79% since 1530.

3. *Cottagers*

Cottagers in Dalarna were listed already in the 1535 subsidy taxation lists for half the province.⁴⁵⁹ Later taxation lists including cottagers come from 1563,⁴⁶⁰ 1571,⁴⁶¹ 1576,⁴⁶² and 1579;⁴⁶³ they all cover various parts of the province. Records of corvée labourers additionally lists cottagers from Nedre Bergslagen working at Väsby manor during the 1540s⁴⁶⁴, cottagers from Västerbergslagen working at Västersilvberg manor in 1557,⁴⁶⁵ and in Övre Bergslagen cottagers and craftsmen were registered for a number of years 1548–1558.⁴⁶⁶ In the end, cottagers in Dalarna are relatively well covered by the sources during the middle of the century, although with few or no sources concerning Upper Dalarna (Västerdalarna and Österdalarna, where there however are no indications of cottagers being present at all in the social structure).

⁴⁵⁹ Gärder och hjälper 1535, RA.

⁴⁶⁰ Brudskatten 1563, vol. 2, RA.

⁴⁶¹ Älvsborgs lösen 1571, RA.

⁴⁶² Drängeregister, RA.

⁴⁶³ Dalarnas handlingar 1579:1B, RA.

⁴⁶⁴ E.g., Västmanlands handlingar 1551:4A, RA.

⁴⁶⁵ Dalarnas handlingar 1557:4, RA.

⁴⁶⁶ E.g., Dalarnas handlingar 1558:14, RA.

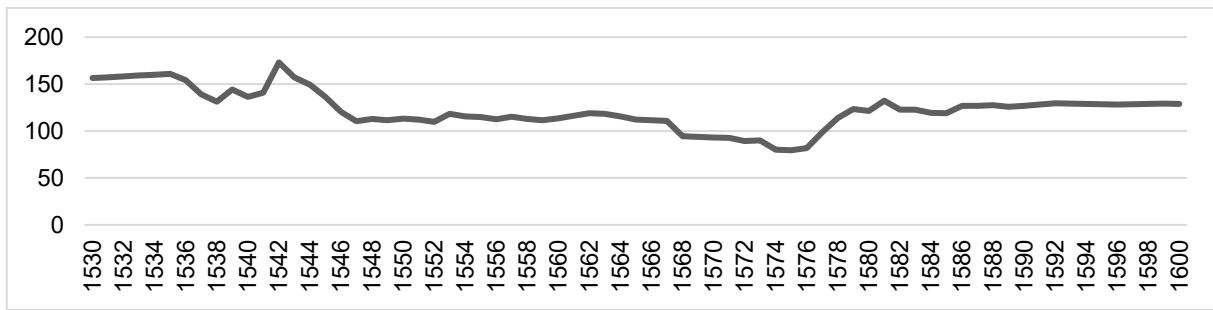


Figure E3.1. The total number of cottager households in Dalarna, 1530–1600.

Source: Population database.

Cottagers in Dalarna began at a level of only about 160 in 1530. After some early decrease, their numbers remained relatively stable at 120–130 throughout the century, despite the general population increase in the province. The total number of cottagers probably decreased by 18% from 1530 to 1600 (although data is admittedly missing from after ca. 1580).

4. *The Crown*

Crown establishments in Dalarna were negligible before the 1540s, when Borns hyttegård was founded by the large Falun copper mine, and Gamla Silvbergs gård (soon renamed Östra Silvberg) reopened by silver mines which previously had been active during the late fifteenth century. During the 1550s followed metalworks at Främby (copper), Garpenberg (copper and silver), Grängeshyttan, Näs, Rankhyttan, Säter, and Västra Silvberg (silver). Some of these only lasted for a few years, as hopes were high but mineral scarce. Short-lived were also later silver industries at Klingsboda and Lövåsen, active during the 1560s, with only Näs, Säter, and Västra Silvberg lasting the whole century. Although some agricultural production took place also on these manors, the main focus of the Crown's activities in Dalarna was clearly investment in the metal industries.

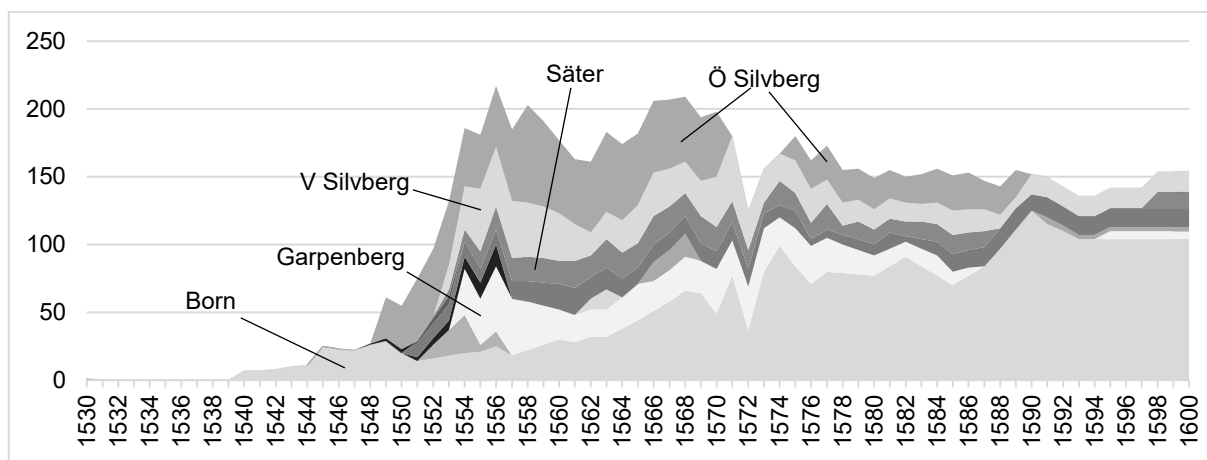


Figure E4.1. The number of households employed at various crown establishments in Dalarna, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

While Crown involvement in Dalarna was still modest during the early 1540s, by 1555 the Crown employed about 200 households engaged in metal production at the two Silvbergs, at Garpenberg, and at Born. The number of households employed by the Crown then decreased somewhat around 1570, remaining stable at 150 households for the rest of the century. During this time, it became markedly more concentrated to Born, located by the Falu copper mines, which alone employed more than two thirds of the Crown's workers (or roughly 100 households) in Dalarna at the end of the century, when it was among the largest Crown establishments in Sweden.

5. The Church

There were no known hospitals in Dalarna in the sixteenth century.⁴⁶⁷ The Cistercian monastery in Husby remained active until 1544, when its few monks were described as old and sick (an explanation for why they could not become parish priests).⁴⁶⁸

⁴⁶⁷ A Tuna hospital is mentioned in Gustav Vasa's last will and testament in *Räntekammarböcker*, vol. 39, RA. This could potentially refer to an otherwise unknown hospital in Stora Tuna (although other locations are also possible). It is not mentioned in the 1563 list of hospitals receiving funds from Erik XIV, and no other mention of it has been found.

⁴⁶⁸ Berntson 2003.

The parish clergy in Dalarna numbered about 20, perhaps 30 if counting also the rarely mentioned chaplains that probably were necessary in some of the geographically vast parishes.

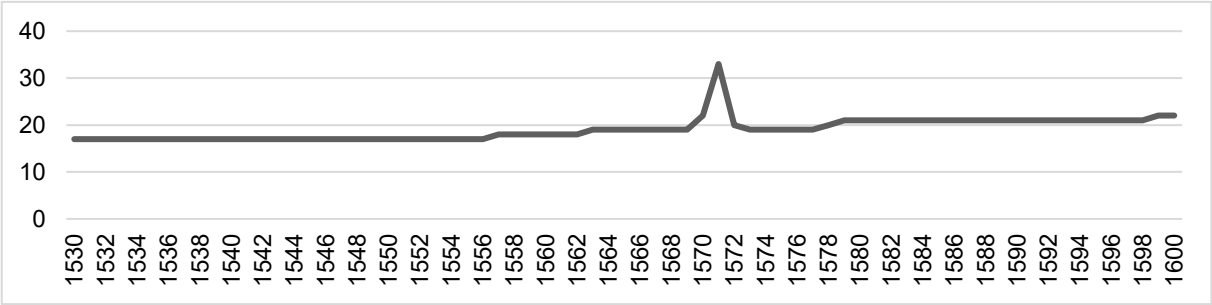


Figure E5.1. The total number of households employed by the church in Dalarna, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

6. The Nobility

No accounts survive from (the very few) nobility manors in Dalarna.

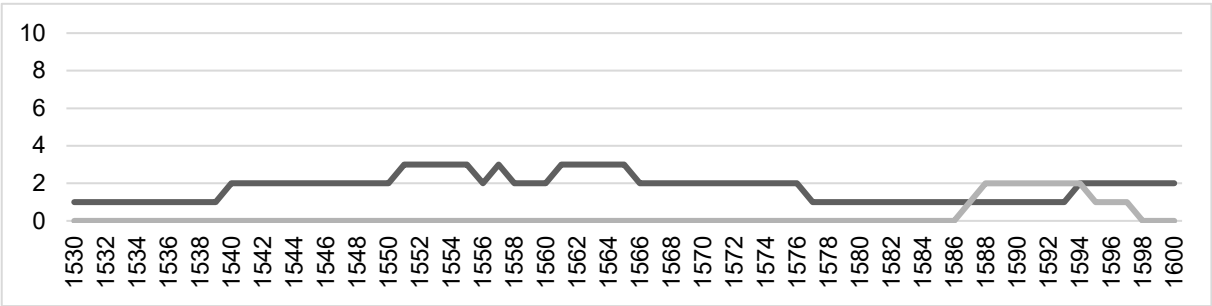


Figure E6.1. The number of nobility manors in Dalarna, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

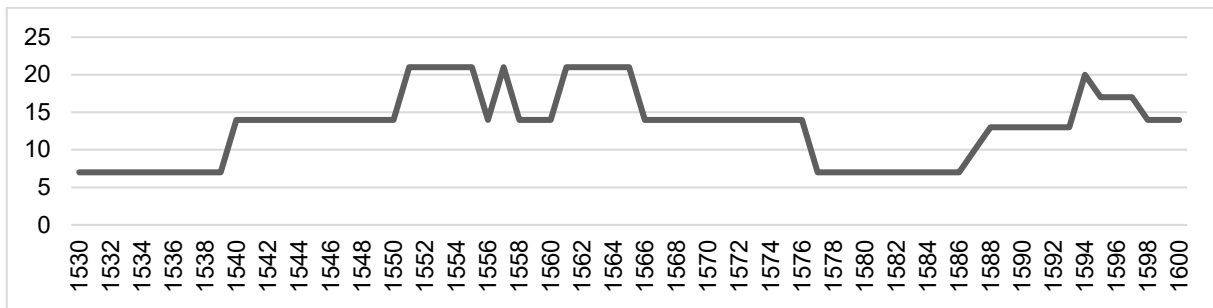


Figure E6.2. The number of households living at nobility manors in Dalarna, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

There was only one nobility manor in Dalarna in 1530, and the total number never reached above three during the century. These were all located in the mining districts, with no nobility at all present in Upper Dalarna. The total number of households employed at those manors mostly varied between 10 and 20.

7. Towns

There were two towns in Dalarna in the sixteenth century, Hedemora and Norberg, which both were located in the mining districts in the southern part of the province. Hedemora was the largest of the two, although its population seems to have decreased significantly during the century, while the population of Norberg more or less remained constant. Neither of the two towns ever came close to having 100 households.

As with several of the other towns located in mining areas, the populations of both towns were registered in the annual cadastres from the 1530s onwards. Population data consequently survives for most years of the century. As for Västmanland, most of the records from the 1590s have however been lost, meaning that the subsidy taxation lists that survive for most other towns and provinces are missing for Dalarna.



Figure E7.1. The total number of households in towns in Dalarna, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

Hedemora (in Övre Bergslagen mining district) was located by river Dalälven, on the road leading from Kopparberget and Upper Dalarna down towards Västerås in Västmanland.⁴⁶⁹ The town was important for the trade in metals, especially iron from the surrounding mining district, which could be exported via Västerås and Stockholm. There were no significant Crown establishments in the town. The earliest population list survives from the subsidy taxation of 1535,⁴⁷⁰ and since the town population was included in the annual cadastres, numbers survive for most years after 1539.⁴⁷¹

Norberg (here in Västerbergslagen mining district) was located at the centre of its mining district. It is usually not included among the towns in Sweden, as it never received any town privileges. The accounts from 1545 onwards however explicitly refer to it as a town,⁴⁷² and a town bailiff is mentioned as late as 1599–1600.⁴⁷³ As with Hedemora, the town population was registered in the cadastres from 1539 onwards, meaning that population data survives for Norberg for most years of the sixteenth century.

⁴⁶⁹ Folin 1978 p. 6–8.

⁴⁷⁰ Gärder och hjälper 1535, RA.

⁴⁷¹ E.g., Dalarnas handlingar 1542:5, RA.

⁴⁷² E.g., Dalarnas handlingar 1545:12, RA.

⁴⁷³ E.g., Dalarnas handlingar 1600:6, RA.

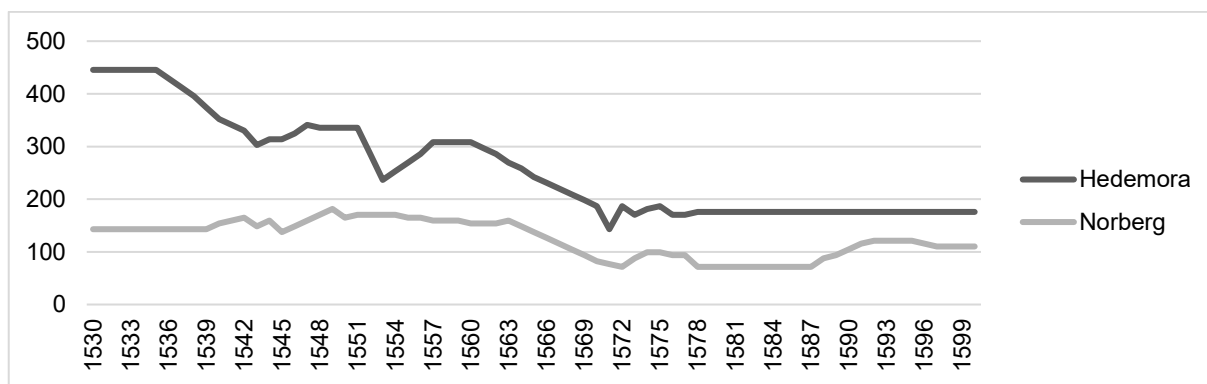


Figure E7.2. Urban populations in Dalarna, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

Table E7.1. Urban populations in Dalarna, decadal figures, 1530–1600

TOWN	1530	1540	1550	1560	1570	1580	1590	1600
HEDEMORA	486	384	366	336	204	192	192	192
NORBERG	156	168	180	168	90	78	114	120

Source: Population database.

Hedemora and Norberg were each the (small) market centre of a mining district. In terms of population, Hedemora was about three times larger in the 1530s, but its population decreased over the century, so that it was only about two times the size of Norberg in 1600. The population of neither town in Dalarna ever exceeded 500 inhabitants.

F. Värmland

The province of Värmland is located north of Lake Vänern, with most settlements close to its shore, but also up in the river valleys north towards the Norwegian border. Large tracts were very sparsely populated, but as a consequence of population increase during the sixteenth century, three new administrative regions were created (Ölme, Nyed and Karlskoga) towards the end of the century. As I have strived to keep the districts constant over time, their populations have been included in those hundreds that existed at the middle of the century. Nordmark hundred, which belonged to Dalsland during the fifteenth century, became part of Värmland around 1550 and has

been included here.⁴⁷⁴ In total, Värmland was thus made up of eleven hundreds, of which one was an iron mining district (Värmlandsberg, later called Filipstads bergslag). There were no towns in Värmland before the foundation of Karlstad in the 1580s. The Crown's main interests were found in Värmlandsberg, where it since the 1550s had iron and later also silver mining works. No castle was located in the province, while a manor founded at Bro in the 1570s was moved to Karlberg as a result of the founding of Karlstad. Much of the economy of the province was focused on the export of iron, which was brought from the mining district down to Lake Vänern for further transport by boat over to Västergötland.

1. Cadastral peasants

The number of cadastral peasants in Värmland is known for six hundreds already from 1530,⁴⁷⁵ and for another two from 1532.⁴⁷⁶ For the last two hundreds, data comes from 1535;⁴⁷⁷ while the number of cadastral households in the mining district of Värmlandsberg is known only since 1545.⁴⁷⁸ Although archival losses are severe for the 1590s, all districts have data until 1600.

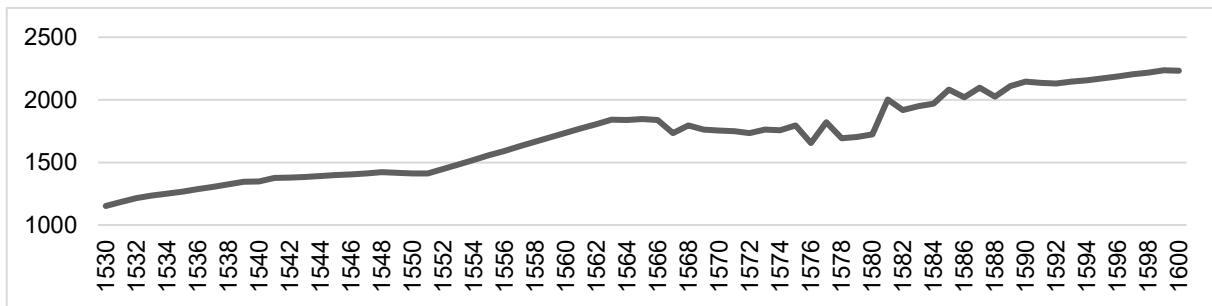


Figure F1.1. Cadastral peasants (excluding deserted farms) in Värmland, 1530–1600.

Source: Population database.

⁴⁷⁴ Björklund 2018 p. 32.

⁴⁷⁵ Fogdarnas räkenskaper, RA.

⁴⁷⁶ Fogdarnas räkenskaper, RA.

⁴⁷⁷ Gärder och hjälper 1535, RA.

⁴⁷⁸ Värmlands handlingar 1545:11, RA.

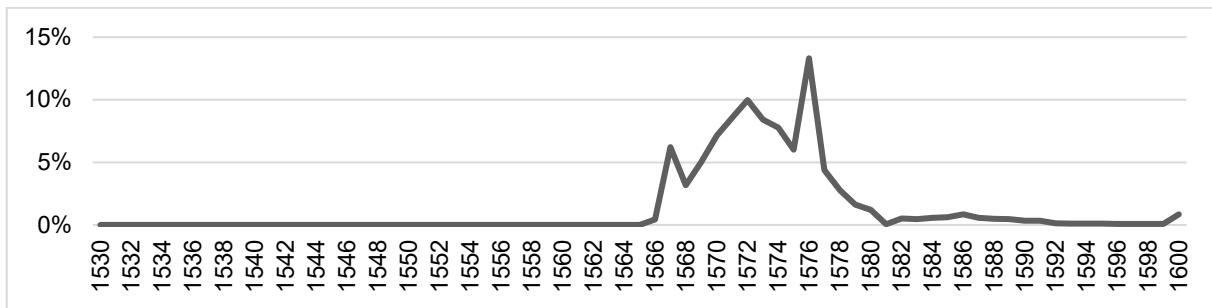


Figure F1.2. Deserted farms in Värmland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

The number of cadastral peasants in Värmland grew from 1530 to about 1565, when it flattened out or decreased somewhat, until a new growth phase started about 1580 which lasted until the end of the century. As can be seen from figure F1.2, the fact that there was only a slight decrease in the number of cadastral farms in the middle of the 1560s was not due to there not being a substantial number of deserted farms in Värmland, but rather because this happened at the same time as high numbers of new farms were being entered into the cadastres. The share of deserted farms indeed increased during the war from 1566 onwards to 1572, when it reached 10%. (The peak in 1576 is due to a number of previously unregistered crofts (*torp*) being entered in the cadastres in this year as deserted, only to then not being registered again in subsequent years. This indicates that the level of farm desertion is actually under-reported for the period 1566–1575.)

Farm desertion was highest in the hundreds along the Norwegian border (Nordmark, Jösse, Gillberg, Älvdalen); which clearly indicates this being a result of the war. This is further made clear by some comments in the accounts, such as for Western Värmland in 1572: “Deserted farms, [whose inhabitants] were expelled by the enemy”.⁴⁷⁹ However, from 1573 onwards there are also lists of “Deserted farms [...]”, in many places there lives a poor peasant on the farm, nothing more than a cottager, and does not do any agricultural work because it was expelled by the wartime and the mining industry”, which indicates that farms were being repopulated but could still be listed as deserted in the cadastres.⁴⁸⁰ In 1574, we learn that “Deserted farms

⁴⁷⁹ Värmlands handlingar 1572:3, RA; “Ödegårdar som fördrivet är av fienderna”.

⁴⁸⁰ Värmlands handlingar 1573:14, RA; “Ödegårdar [...] som icke äro besuttna, mångenstans bor där en fattig bonde på gården, intet annat som en husman, och brukar föga ting för den skull att det är fördrivet av ofriden och bergsbrukningen”.

and deserted crofts and those farms in which poor peasants live, and sit in their houses like other cottagers and use [only] the meadow and only pay half taxes, and some have no money to pay taxes, and sow little or nothing at all”,⁴⁸¹ while in 1576 “Deserted farms in Western Värmland which are ruined by the long wartime which happened here along the Norwegian border, and little grain has since grown, as is known to every man”.⁴⁸² A combination of pillaging during the war, heavy corvée labour having to be performed in the mining districts, and bad harvests, together resulted in farm desertion. Although some farms were repopulated by peasants returning again after the war, they were apparently for many years not sowing grain but only using the meadows, thus being seen as no different than destitute cottagers.

2. Division of farms

Data on farm division in Värmland comes from the subsidy taxation lists of 1571 (for Visnum hundred only) and 1600 for the whole province.⁴⁸³ In addition, there is a note in an account from 1592 that gives the total number of peasants in Västersysslet, compared to the number of cadastral peasants.⁴⁸⁴ Tithe data exist for most of the province already in 1546, and then for a number of years during the 1550s, 1560s and 1570s.⁴⁸⁵ Farm division in Värmland is therefore well known for most of the period after 1546.

⁴⁸¹ Värmlands handlingar 1574:16, RA; ”Ödegårdar och ödetorpare och de hemman som fattiga bönder äro hemma uti och sitta i husen som andra husmän och bruka ängen och göra ut halv skatt och somliga hava intet råd till att skatta och så litet eller slätt intet”.

⁴⁸² Värmlands handlingar 1576:11, RA; “Ödegårdar uti Väster syssla som fördärvat är igenom den långliga ofrid här ut med den norska gränsen varit haver och litet korn sedan vuxit haver som var man vet”.

⁴⁸³ E.g., Värmlands handlingar 1600:9, RA.

⁴⁸⁴ Hertig Karls räntekammare, vol. 16, RA.

⁴⁸⁵ E.g., Prostarnas tionderäkenskaper, Skara stift vol. 1, RA.

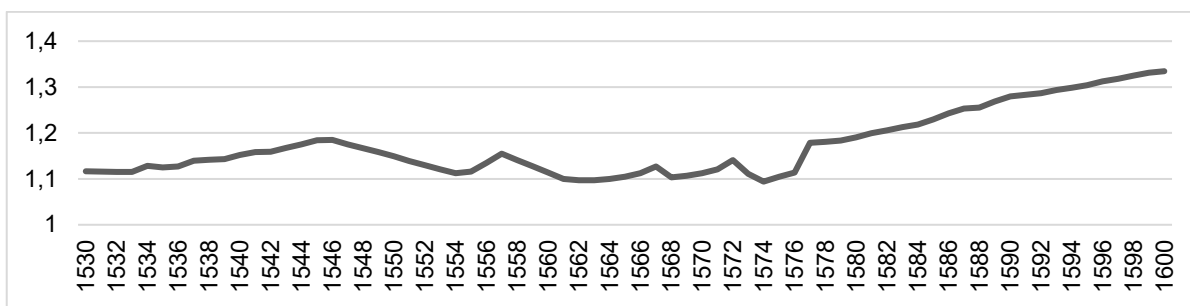


Figure F2.1. Divided farms in Värmland, 1530–1600. For further explanation of the figure, see figure 2.1. Source: Population database.

The records show that farm division in Värmland was substantial in some hundreds already in the middle of the 1540s, indicating that this had been the situation also in 1530. The number of cadastral peasants in Värmland did consequently not even at this early date well reflect the total number of peasants households. This is especially true for Älvdalen, where the number of peasants households was more than twice the number of cadastral units. In Näs and Gillberg hundreds, the division of farms in 1530 was also substantial. During the latter part of the century, farm division took off also in Jösse, Nordmark, and Fryksdalen, rising to over 60%. This however all pertains to Western Värmland: division of farms in Eastern Värmland (including Värmlandsberg) was much more modest, or even non-existent.

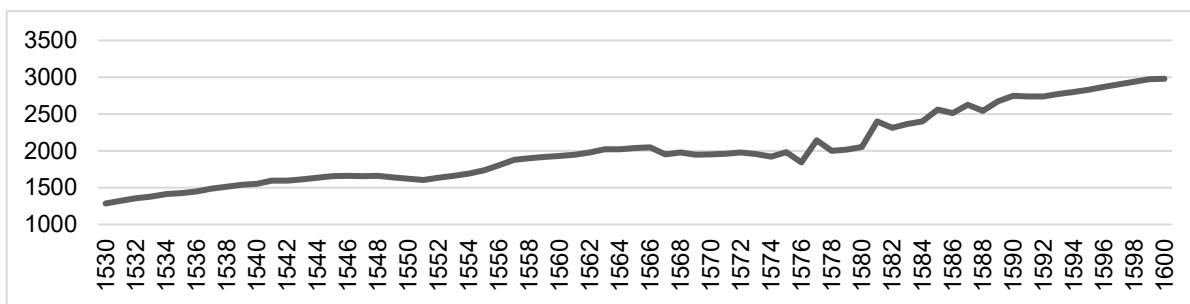


Figure F2.2. Total number of peasant households in Värmland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

The total number of peasants households in Värmland was about 1,300 in 1530. It grew steadily until about 1565, when it came to a halt for about a decade, whereafter it once more began to rise. At the end of the century peasant households in Värmland numbered almost 3,000, a growth by no less than 132% since 1530.

3. Cottagers

Cottagers were recorded in subsidy taxation lists from 1576 for all of the province, and in 1590 for Västernorrland.⁴⁸⁶ Cottagers in some hundreds were additionally covered by the 1571 and 1600 subsidy taxation lists.⁴⁸⁷ In addition, all cottagers in the mining district of Värmlandsberg were listed in the annual cadastres during the 1560s (of which the years 1560 and 1563–1566 survive).⁴⁸⁸ In sum, cottagers in Värmland are only well-recorded for the period 1576–1590, with the data in only some hundreds going back to 1571 (Visnum) or forward to 1600 (Älvdalen and Värmlandsberg).

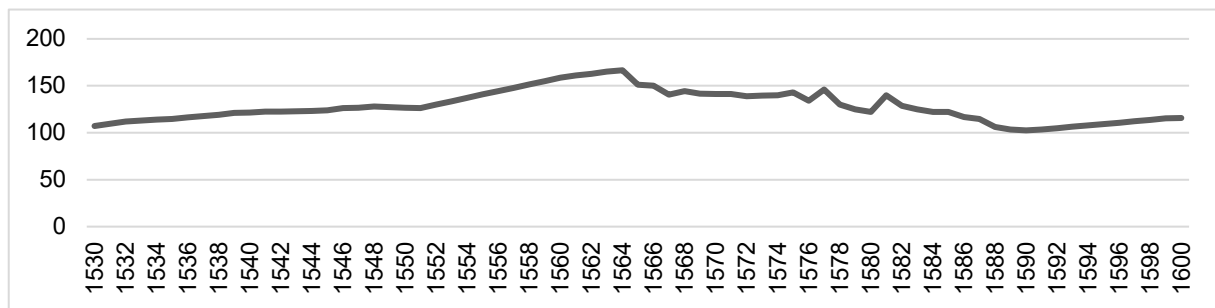


Figure F3.1. Total number of cottager households in Värmland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

Cottagers in Värmland seem to have become somewhat more common until the 1560s. From about 160, the number however decreased until 1590, mainly reflecting a fall in the number of cottagers in the mining district Värmlandsberg (but also in some other hundreds, such as Fryksdalen). The number of cottagers in Värmland thus remained largely the same in 1600 as it had been in 1530, growing by only 8%. Most of the population increase in the province thus took the form of the establishment of new peasant farms, not of landless cottages.

4. The Crown

There were no crown establishments in Värmland before the foundation of Asphyttan iron works in 1556. The iron industry here was moved in the 1580s to nearby Torskbäcken and Nykroppa, when silver mines and works were opened at Hornkulla. In addition, a short-lived ironworks existed in Säby in the 1570s. Outside the

⁴⁸⁶ E.g., Värmlands handlingar 1590:5, RA.

⁴⁸⁷ E.g., Värmlands handlingar 1600:14, RA.

⁴⁸⁸ E.g., Värmlands handlingar 1560:13, RA.

industrial sector, a demesne farm was established by Duke Charles at Bro in 1573. As a result of his abandoned plan to establish a town here, the manor was moved to Karlberg (outside the then newly founded town Karlstad) in 1585. The Crown's interest in Värmland was consequently mainly concentrated on metals, but (from the 1570s onwards) also in a manor directly related to the metal trade on Lake Vänern.

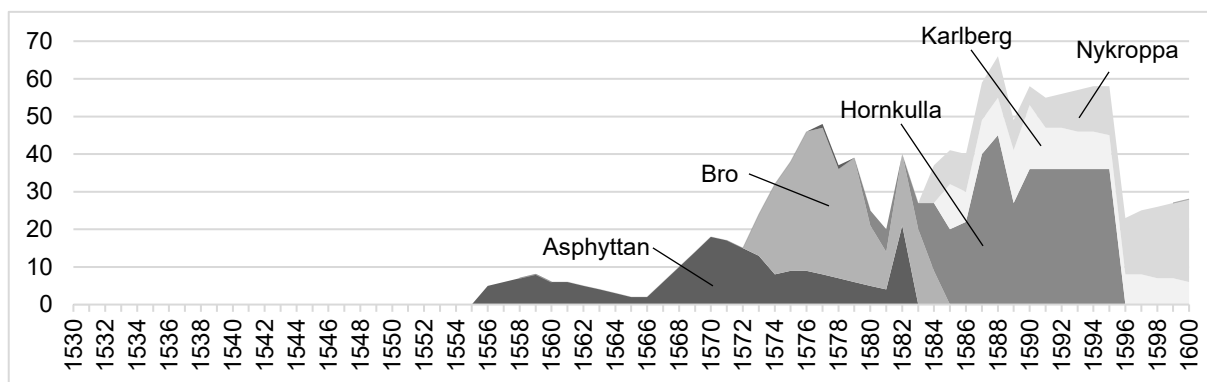


Figure F4.1. Number of households employed at various crown establishments in Värmland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

The number of households employed by the crown (or, in its place, Duke Charles) always remained limited in Värmland. A rise in the 1570s reflected the establishment of Bro, another in the late 1580s the investments in Nykroppa and Hornkulla metal works. Even at the end of the century, no more than 30 households in Värmland were working at the only two crown establishments remaining at that time.

5. The Church

There were no Medieval monasteries or convents in Värmland. A new hospital was founded in Karlstad in the 1580s, soon after the foundation of the town. The number of inmates is known from 1594 and from around 1600.⁴⁸⁹

The parish clergy in Värmland numbered just under 20 during most of the century, a few more in 1600 due to the foundation of new parishes, reflecting the population increase of the province.

⁴⁸⁹ Hertig Karls räntekammare, vol. 16, R.A.

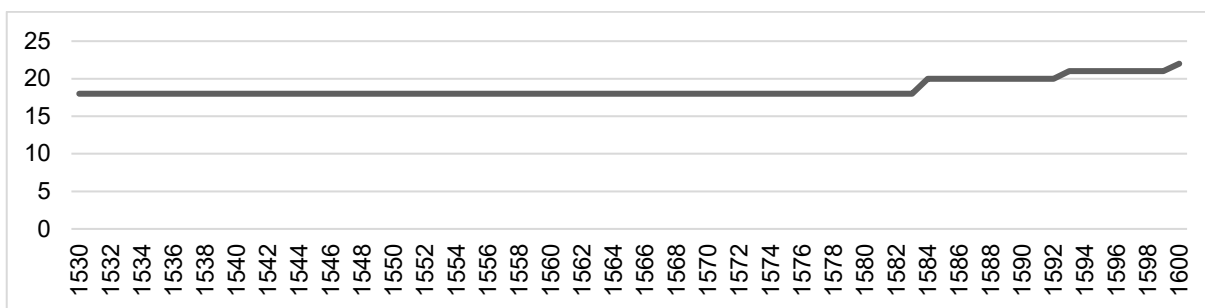


Figure F5.1. Total number of households employed by the church in Värmland, 1530–1600.

Source: Population database.

6. The Nobility

No accounts survive from (the few) nobility manors in Värmland from the sixteenth century.

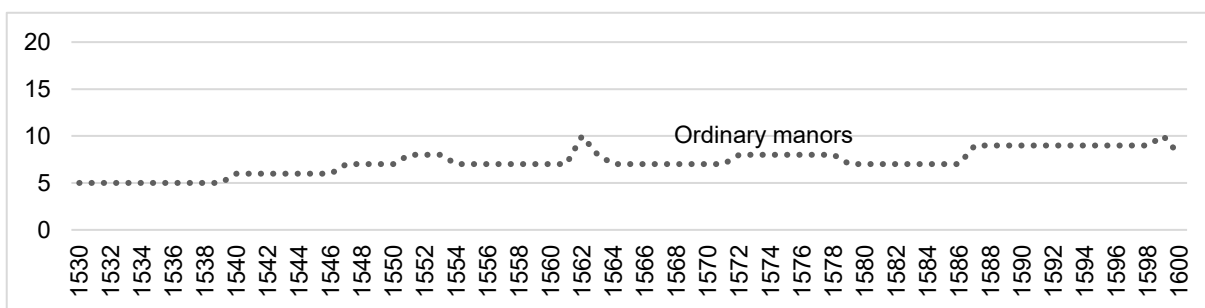


Figure F6.1. The number of nobility manors in Värmland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

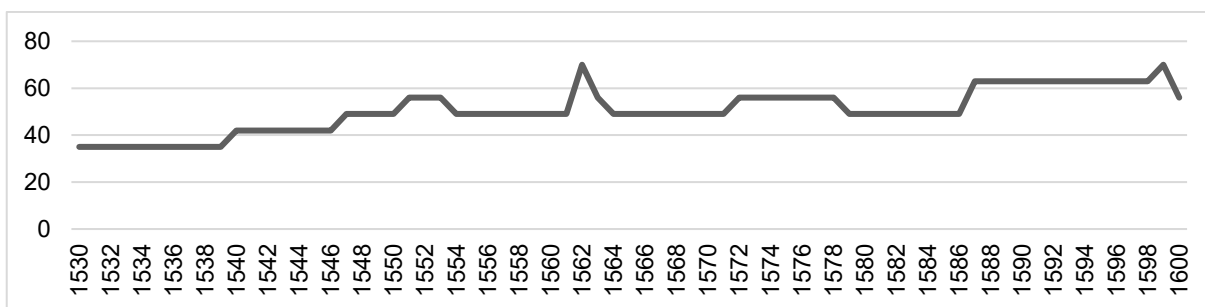


Figure F6.2. The number of households living at nobility manors in Värmland, 1530–1600.

Source: Population database.

The small number of nobility manors in Värmland rose from five in 1530 to eight in 1600, reaching a maximum of only ten at a couple of occasions during the century. The number of households employed at these manors thus rose from 35 in 1530 to between 60 and 70 at the end of the century.

7. Towns

There was only one town in sixteenth-century Värmland: Karlstad, founded at the beginning of the 1580s. Its only surviving population figure comes from a register of the whole duchy in 1591. This is both due to poor record survival from Värmland during the 1590s, and to the new town having some years of exemption from taxation. The population has thus been estimated as having been constant from 1585 to 1600, based on the 1591 figure.

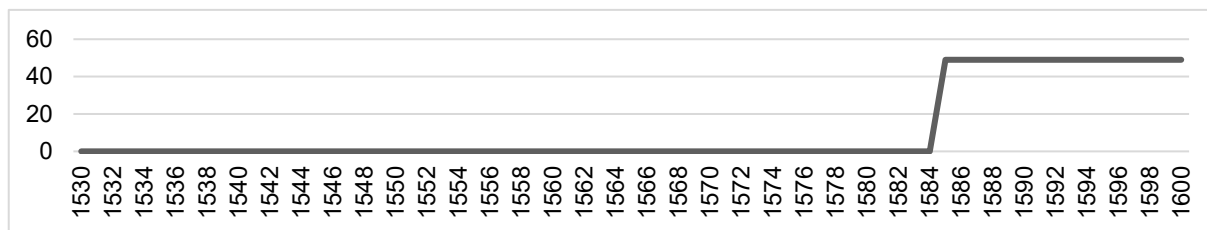


Figure F7.1. The number of households in Karlstad in Värmland, 1530–1600.

Source: Population database.

Bro (in Väsö hundred) was first mentioned in January 1582 by Duke Charles, who planned to found a new town at his manor there, just as he a few weeks before had launched plans for a town at his manor Tunaholm in Västergötland.⁴⁹⁰ The manor at Bro was the site of a harbour involved in shipping iron from Värmland across Lake Vänern down to the Göta River and the town Brätte, which was also founded around this time. While a town soon was founded at Tunaholm, Duke Charles however by April 1582 had become hesitant about the location of his town in Värmland, and by June he instead had chosen to locate it at Tingvalla, and to also move his manor from Bro to Karlberg. A town was thus not founded at Bro before well into the seventeenth century.

Karlstad (in Kil hundred) was founded in the 1580s on the northern shore of Lake Vänern, close to the mouth of river Klarälven. Markets had been held on the location

⁴⁹⁰ PRF 3 nr 244.

since at least the fourteenth century.⁴⁹¹ The town was founded on the initiative of Duke Charles, who in 1581 wrote about “those who want to build and live in Tingvalla”.⁴⁹² In January 1582, he instead considered founding a town at Bro manor, on the mouth of river Varnan,⁴⁹³ but in April he wrote that he had not yet decided on what location the new town should be located,⁴⁹⁴ and in June he once more wrote to “the subjects, to build a town by Tingvalla”.⁴⁹⁵ The town was definitely populated by 1584, when its inhabitants were granted 20 years’ tax exemption. The manor was moved from Bro to Karlberg (outside Karlstad) in 1584, where it also included a tar factory, and a new hospital was soon founded in the town. As the only surviving population figure for Karlstad is from 1591,⁴⁹⁶ the variation seen in figure F7.3 is due only to variation in the number of those employed at Karlberg manor.

⁴⁹¹ Björklund 2018 p. 420.

⁴⁹² PRF 3 no 294.

⁴⁹³ PRF 3 no 244.

⁴⁹⁴ PRF 3 no 251.

⁴⁹⁵ PRF 3 no 294.

⁴⁹⁶ Hertig Karls räntekammare, vol. 16, R.A.

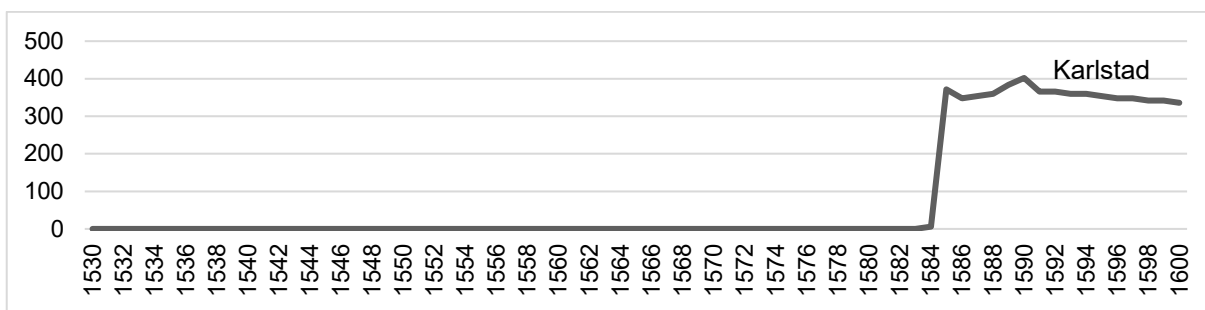


Figure F7.3. Population in towns in Värmland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

Table F7.1. Total population in the towns of Värmland, decadal figures, 1530–1600.

TOWN	1530	1540	1550	1560	1570	1580	1590	1600
KARLSTAD	0	0	0	0	0	0	402	336

Source: Population database.

G. Dalsland

The province of Dalsland is located between the western shore of Lake Vänern and the Norwegian border. Its southeastern part (Sundal and Nordal hundreds) mainly consisted of agricultural plains, while its northern and eastern parts were sparsely populated. The province was divided into six hundreds in the Middle Ages, of which Nordmark however was transferred to Värmland around 1550, with which it here has been counted. Dalsland was thus made up of only five hundreds during most of the sixteenth century, in which there were no towns and no crown establishments.

1. Cadastral peasants

The number of cadastral peasants is known for all of the five hundreds of Dalsland already since 1534.⁴⁹⁷

⁴⁹⁷ Fogdarnas räkenskaper, RA.

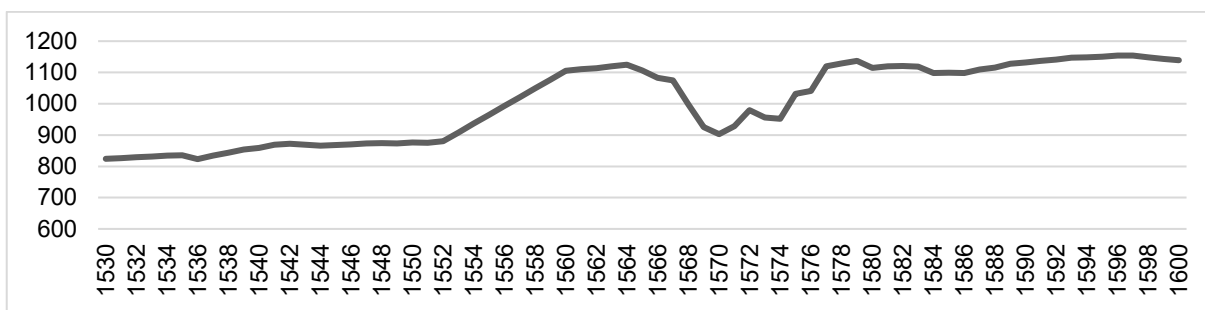


Figure G1.1. Cadastral peasants (excluding deserted farms) in Dalsland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

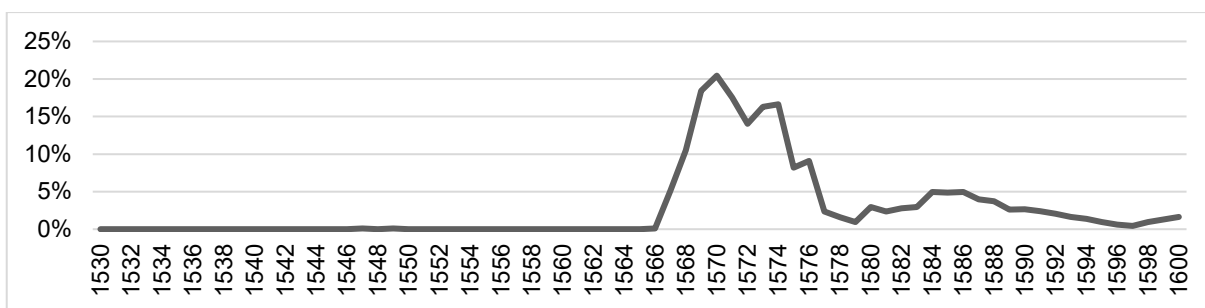


Figure G1.2. Deserted farms in Dalsland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

The number of cadastral peasants in Dalsland grew from 800 in 1530 to 1,100 in 1564, more rapidly from about 1552 onwards. The number then decreased with 20% from 1564 to 1570, which resulted in the number being back to the level it had previously had at the beginning of the 1550s. The recovery after the Nordic Seven Years' War was rather swift, the number in 1578 again reaching the level it had had in 1564. After this time the number of cadastral peasants in Dalsland however ceased to grow, as the cadastres became fixed.

As can be seen from figure G1.2, the share of deserted farms reached as much as 20% in Dalsland about 1570, while regionally it even went as high as 25–30% (higher closer to the Norwegian border). Although then decreasing to less than or about 5%, it never completely went down to zero again: In Dalsland, as elsewhere, the crisis of the 1560s both entailed severe short-term farm desertion, and some farms becoming permanently abandoned.

That much of the farm desertion was related to the war is clear from notes in the accounts, such as this one (concerning the whole province in 1568): a large number of farms were “burned by the enemy and are now completely deserted, and no one has farmed them”.⁴⁹⁸ Even in 1575–1576, farms were listed as being “completely deserted” since the war.⁴⁹⁹ As for regional variation in farm desertion, Sundal hundred farthest to the south clearly stands out as being less affected than the rest of the province (even though farm desertion also here reached over 10% in 1569).

2. Division of farms

Data on the division of farms in Dalsland comes from the subsidy taxation lists of 1571 (for three hundreds) and for 1600 for the whole province.⁵⁰⁰ In addition, grain tithe data exist for one hundred for 1550 and for the whole province for a number of years during the 1560s.⁵⁰¹ Dalsland is thus well covered regarding the division of farms since about 1560 and until the end of the century.

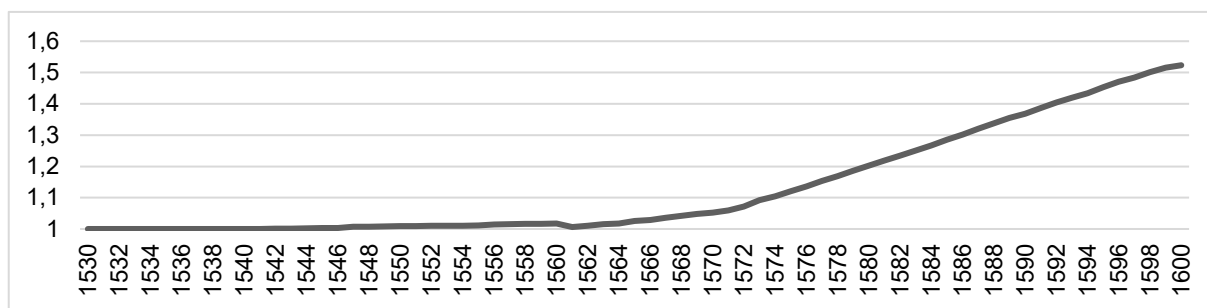


Figure G2.1. Division of farms in Dalsland, 1530–1600. For further explanation of the figure, see figure 2.1. Source: Population database.

Division of farms in Dalsland seems to have been unimportant before 1560. Only after ca. 1570 do the numbers start to grow, that is at the same time as the registration of new farms in the cadastres stopped. The high division of farms in Dalsland in 1600 thus mirrors the stagnant number of cadastral farmsteads. It was especially high in Sundal, where it reached almost 80%, although all hundreds in Dalsland show a high degree of divided farms (ca. 40–50%) in 1600.

⁴⁹⁸ Dalslands handlingar 1568:3, RA; “brända av fienderna och äro nu öde och ingen haver dem brukat”.

⁴⁹⁹ Dalslands handlingar 1575:11, RA; ”platt öde”.

⁵⁰⁰ Dalslands handlingar 1600:6, RA.

⁵⁰¹ E.g., Västergötlands handlingar 1562:25, RA.

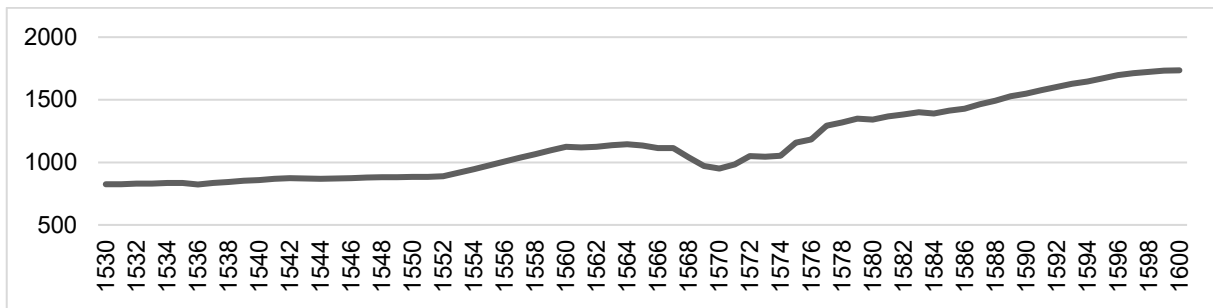


Figure G2.2. Total number of peasant households in Dalsland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

Adding together the data on the number of cadastral farms with the share of farm division, we find that in 1530 there were just over 800 peasant households in Dalsland. Growing to almost 1,150 in 1564, the number then decreased to only 950 in 1570, which was about the same as it had had been in the middle of the 1550s. Recovery was swift, the previous number reached already in 1575, whereafter continuous population growth led the number of peasant households up over 1,700 in the year 1600, which was a growth of 111% compared to seventy years before.

3. Cottagers

Cottagers in Dalsland were recorded in subsidy taxation lists in 1571, 1576, and in 1600.⁵⁰² That their numbers were modest is indicated by the fact that a priest in Valbo in 1576 listed only one cottager, and then stated explicitly that “Other cottagers and craftsmen, which are listed in the King’s statute regarding the taxation, do not exist in my parish”.⁵⁰³ Perhaps even more telling is that the scribe responsible for the accounts of the province in 1589 explained when questioned in Stockholm that “such crafts [as shoemakers, or tailors] do not exist there, as most every man himself performs such crafts himself”.⁵⁰⁴ This was the reason for the bailiff not reporting any subsidy taxation from cottagers in that year. In sum, cottagers in Dalsland are best recorded ca. 1570–1600, and there seems to be good reason to expect their numbers to have been low.

⁵⁰² E.g., Dalslands handlingar 1600:6, RA.

⁵⁰³ Drängeregister 1576, RA; ”Andra ämbetsmän och gärningskarlar som uti Kongl Mattz mandat och längd utvisar finnes intet uti mitt gäld.”

⁵⁰⁴ Dalslands handlingar 1589:2, RA; ”sådana lösa ämbeter finns där intet, utan mest var man bruka sådana ämbeter själva”.

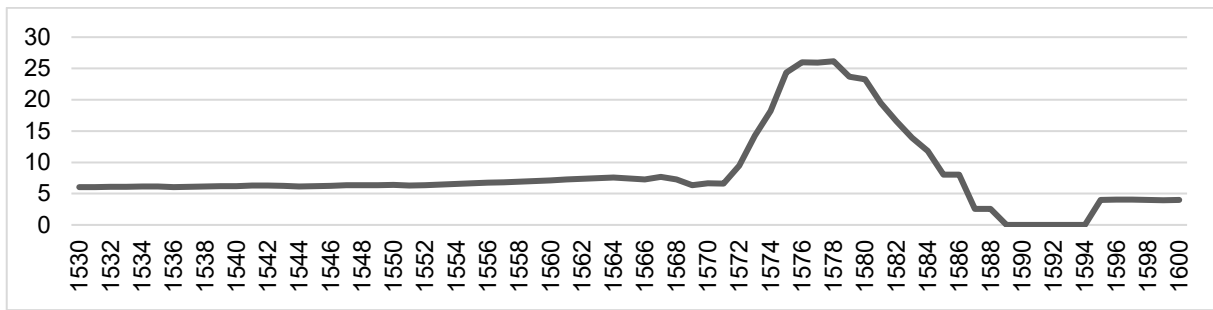


Figure G3.1. Total number of cottager households in Dalsland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

While data is scarce before 1570 (hence making comparisons over time more uncertain), there seems to have been a rise in cottagers in the 1570s, although the number then again went down and nigh disappeared towards the end of the century. The numbers are however always very small (the rise in the late 1570s is in fact mainly due to no more than 16 cottagers and craftsmen in Sundal hundred in 1576).⁵⁰⁵ Over the century, we thus see no growth (but perhaps modest decline) in the number of cottagers in Dalsland.

4. *The Crown*

There were no significant crown establishments in Dalsland during the sixteenth century.

5. *The Church*

There were never any monasteries or convents in Dalsland, and likewise no hospitals.

The parish clergy in Dalsland numbered 9 throughout the century.

⁵⁰⁵ Drängeregister 1576, RA.

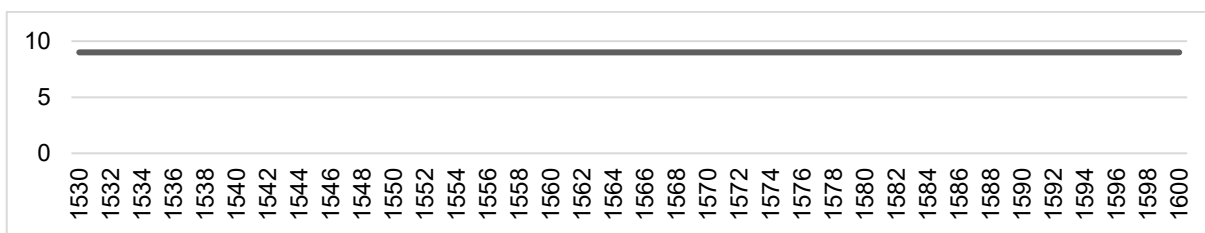


Figure G5.1. Total number of households employed by the church in Dalsland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

6. The Nobility

No accounts survive from the few nobility manors that were located in Dalsland.

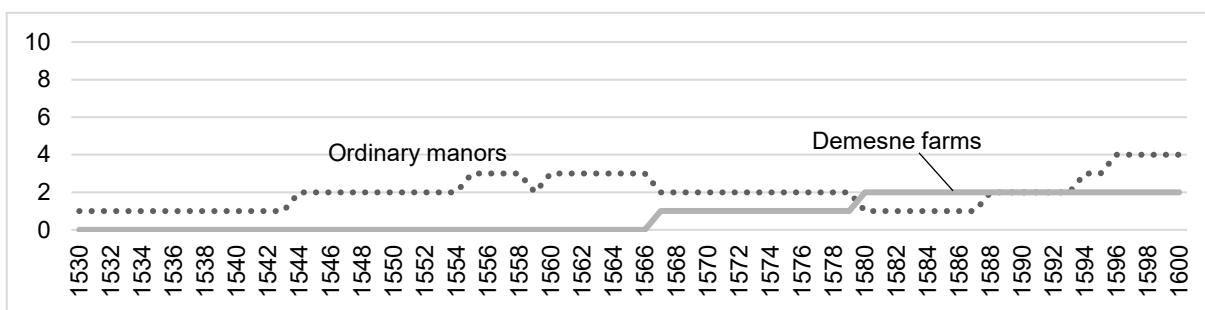


Figure G6.1. The number of nobility manors in Dalsland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

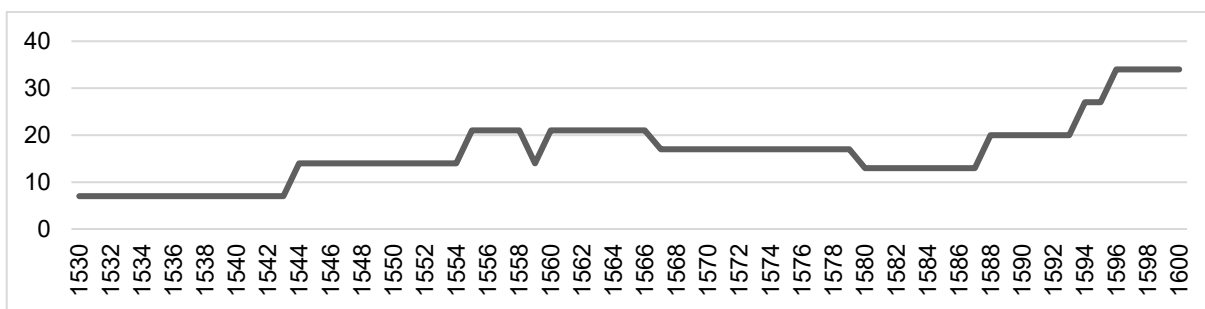


Figure G6.2. The number of households living at nobility manors in Dalsland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

There was only one nobility manor in Dalsland in 1530. Rising slowly over the century, the number reached six by the year 1600. The number of households employed at nobility manors in the province thus increased from below 10 to just over 30. Dalsland

was thus part of the rise of the importance of the nobility in Western Sweden, although the numbers always remained very low.

7. Towns

There were no towns in sixteenth-century Dalsland.

H. Västergötland

Västergötland was the main province of Western Sweden. Located south of Lake Vänern and east of the Göta River, which for most of its length functioned as the border with Norway, the north-western part of the province increasingly became involved in export trade of iron from Värmland towards the end of the century. The central plains were among the most fertile agricultural regions of the country, and here most of the small towns of the province were located. The western and southern parts of the province were forested uplands, regions in which the province economically looked more like the rest of Western or Southern Sweden. Here, the province also bordered Denmark (in the south-west). In all, the province was divided into 30 hundreds (including Mo hundred which after the sixteenth century instead has become part of Småland).

1. Cadastral peasants

The earliest data on the number of cadastral peasants in Västergötland comes from Marks and Ås hundreds in 1530.⁵⁰⁶ Vilske is listed in a subsidy taxation list of 1535,⁵⁰⁷ while data for an additional 19 hundreds comes from 1536 (from which year an account of peasants in enfeoffed regions survive).⁵⁰⁸ Accounts first survive for Gudhem 1539, Vartofta and Vadsbo in 1541, and Kåkind in 1542, while the latest data on the number of cadastral peasants comes from the four hundreds of Frökind, Gäsene, Valle and Veden in 1545.⁵⁰⁹

Cadastral coverage of the later years of the century is rather good, even though archival fires have destroyed many accounts. However, the numbers of deserted farms in two hundreds, Ås and Veden, have to be estimated for the years 1566–1573 and

⁵⁰⁶ Fogdarnas räkenskaper, RA.

⁵⁰⁷ Gärder och hjälper 1535, RA.

⁵⁰⁸ Förläningsregister, vol. 39, RA.

⁵⁰⁹ Västergötlands handlingar 1539:1; 1541:3; 1541:7; 1542:9; 1545:9A, RA.

1566–1570 respectively (years for which we from the accounts of surrounding hundreds know that levels of farm desertion in the province were high).

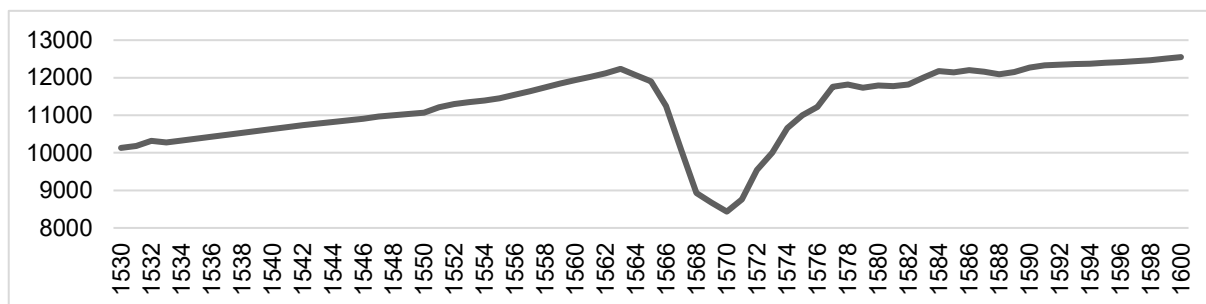


Figure H1.1. Cadastral peasants (excluding deserted farms) in Västergötland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

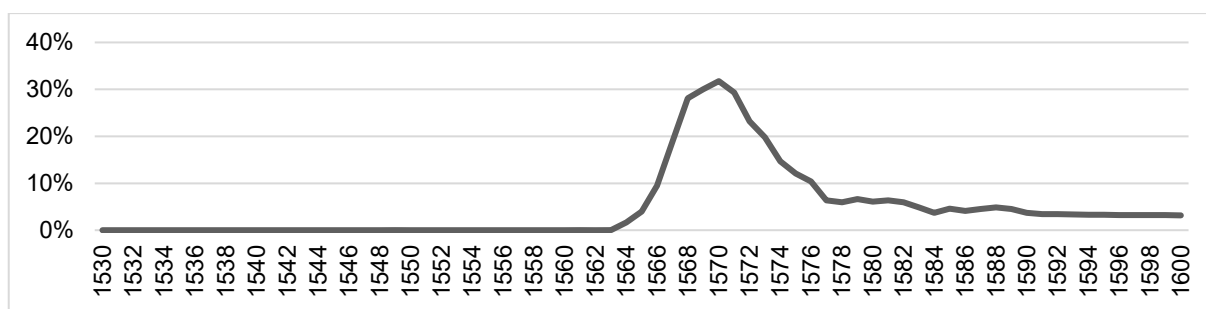


Figure H1.2. Deserted farms in Västergötland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

The number of cadastral peasants grew almost constantly in Västergötland from 1530 to 1564, as can be seen in figure H1.1. The number then sharply decreased to a trough in 1570 which was 30% lower. Although a recovery phase started in 1571–1572, the previous number of cadastral farms was reached again only in 1584, as a substantial number of farms continued to be deserted (see figure H1.2). Farm desertion was as high as 30% in Västergötland in 1569–1570, a clear effect of the then ongoing war. Locally, it was even worse, reaching well over 40% for a number of years in many hundreds. Although most hundreds show signs of recovery during the 1570s, some stand out as only slowly recovering, Valle hundred reporting high levels of farm desertion all through the 1580s. Some hundreds, such as Kåkind and Vartofta, also show some rise in farm desertion towards the end of the 1580s.

That farm desertion was directly connected to the war is clear from comments in the accounts such as “burned farms and completely deserted” in Gudhem and Vilske 1568,⁵¹⁰ or farms listed as “deserted and burned, which no one can farm” in Mark 1570.⁵¹¹ As for the long-time effects, the accounts of 1583 for the four westernmost hundreds Ale, Flundre, Vättle and Sävedalen lists “Deserted farms which are completely dilapidated and no one has re-inhabited them”, which indicates that farms that had been deserted for a number of years would become less attractive to resettle.⁵¹²

2. Division of farms

For most of the province, farm division can be studied through the subsidy taxation lists of 1571 and 1600.⁵¹³ In addition, data for one hundred comes from the subsidy taxation lists of 1560 (Mo) and for one 1573 (Bollebygd).⁵¹⁴ Tithe data is available as early as 1546, and then for most of the province during the 1550s and 1560s, as well as in 1572 and in 1582. This means that division of farms can be well studied in Västergötland from the 1540s onwards.

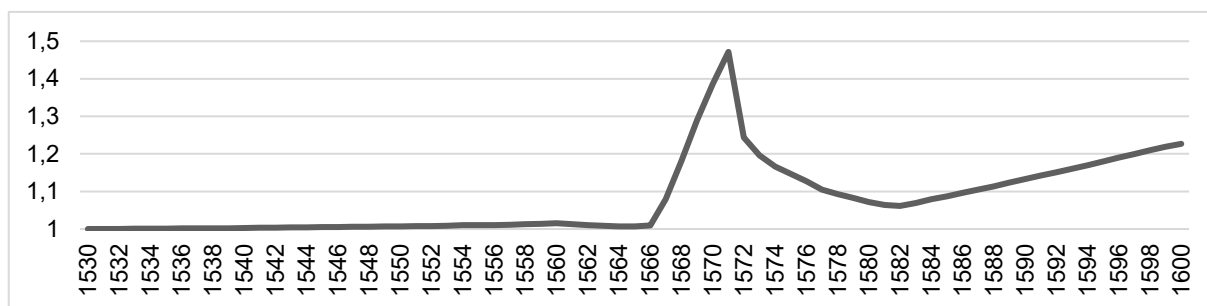


Figure H2.1. Division of farms in Västergötland, 1530–1600. For further explanation of the figure, see figure 2.1. Source: Population database.

Farm division in Västergötland seems to have been limited before the 1560s, although in Veden hundred the tithe records give almost 30% division of farms already during the 1550s. The division of farms around 1570 was however substantial, reaching close

⁵¹⁰ ”Brända hemman och slätt öde”, Västergötlands handlingar 1568:9, RA.

⁵¹¹ “Öde och brända som ingen kan besitta”, Västergötlands handlingar 1570:4A, RA.

⁵¹² “Ödeshemman som platt förfallna är och ingen haver dem upptagit”, Västergötlands handlingar 1583:1, RA.

⁵¹³ E.g., Västergötlands handlingar 1600:1B, RA.

⁵¹⁴ Silverskatten 1560, RA; Köpsilverskatten 1573, vol. 4, RA.

to 50% in the whole province (and over 100% in several hundreds). According to grain tithe data, it then however fell again during the 1570s, before growing again from about 1580 until the end of the century. The peak in 1571 is explained by faults in the record keeping during the war years: Many of the reportedly deserted farms in Västergötland were in fact inhabited, but some scribes did not distinguish between ‘properly’ deserted farms and those that had been burned and plundered by the Danish invading army, but where a peasant household nevertheless remained or had soon returned. During the 1570s, this situation rapidly changed as farms were once more listed as inhabited in the cadastres. After ca. 1580, cadastres were no longer updated regularly with new farms and farm division numbers thus once more began to grow. Regionally, this division of farms was most marked in the western part of the province, along the Göta River and by the North Sea (in Askim hundred).

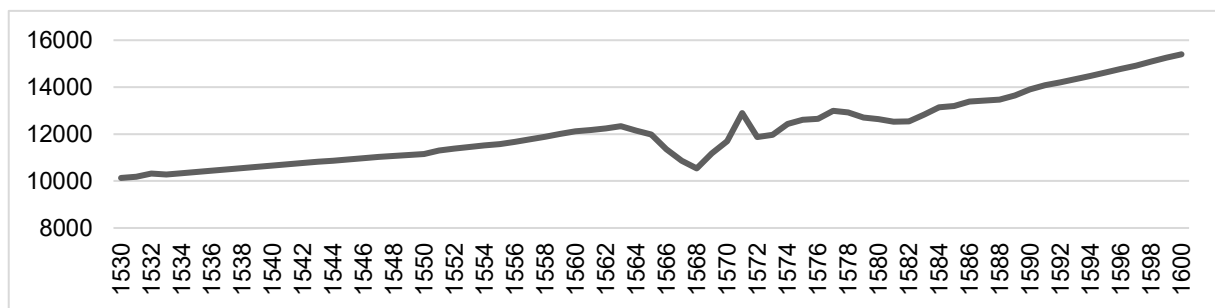


Figure H2.2. Total number of peasant households in Västergötland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

In 1530, the total number of peasant households in Västergötland was just over 10,000. It grew until the beginning of the 1560s, then decreasing by 15% during the war years, hitting bottom in 1568 with a number not seen since the 1530s. The province recovered swiftly, and already by the mid-1570s it had however regained its population loss, whereafter the number of peasants households continued to grow until the end of the century (albeit with some stagnation in the years around 1580). In 1600, the number of peasant households in Västergötland was 15,400, a growth by 52% compared to 1530.

3. Cottagers

Cottagers in most of Västergötland are listed in subsidy taxation lists of 1571 and 1576.⁵¹⁵ In addition, cottagers in some hundreds are included in taxation lists surviving from 1579, 1581, 1589 and 1590.⁵¹⁶ Cottagers in Vilske hundred are listed already in 1535,⁵¹⁷ while the cadastres of Kinne and Skåning hundreds contain lists of cottagers in 1540,⁵¹⁸ as do the accounts of Vartofta 1546–1552.⁵¹⁹ Data on cottagers in five hundreds are further given 1545–1546 because of them having to perform *corvée* labour at the building of Vadstena castle in Östergötland.⁵²⁰ In sum, while the data on cottagers is good for all of the province from 1571 onwards, for about a third of its hundreds it goes back to the 1540s (or even to the 1530s, in one case).

Notes in the accounts sometimes give qualitative evidence of the very low numbers of cottagers in parts of Västergötland. From the four western hundreds of Ale, Flundre, Sävedalen and Vättle, the scribe in 1589 claimed that there were not cottagers since “they had mostly ran off towards Norway [Bohuslän] and Denmark [Halland] because of the military conscriptions”.⁵²¹ For the five hundreds of Gäsene, Kulling, Veden, Bjärke and Bollebygd in 1590, the bailiff likewise claimed that “no such persons [cottagers and rural craftsmen] have been in his district, except those that have been conscripted as soldiers into the service of the realm”.⁵²² In the same year, the scribe for the three southernly hundreds Mark, Kind and Redväg explained that “here in the district, there are no such persons [cottagers and craftsmen]”.⁵²³

⁵¹⁵ Älvsborgs lösen 1571, RA; Drängeregister 1576, RA

⁵¹⁶ E.g., Brudskatten 1579, vol. 2, RA; Västergötlands handlingar 1581:9A; 1589:11; 1590:11A, RA.

⁵¹⁷ Gärder och hjälper 1535, RA.

⁵¹⁸ Västergötlands handlingar 1540:13, RA.

⁵¹⁹ E.g., Västergötlands handlingar 1546:1, RA.

⁵²⁰ E.g., Östergötlands handlingar 1546:3A, RA.

⁵²¹ ”Att de hade mest rymt åt Norge och Danmark för utskrivningens skull”, Västergötlands handlingar 1589:9, RA.

⁵²² ”Inga sådana personer haver varit uti hans befallning utan de som äro antagna uti riksens tjänst till knektar”, Västergötlands handlingar 1590:7, RA.

⁵²³ ”Efter här uti befallningen finns icke sådana personer”, Västergötlands handlingar 1590:4A, RA.

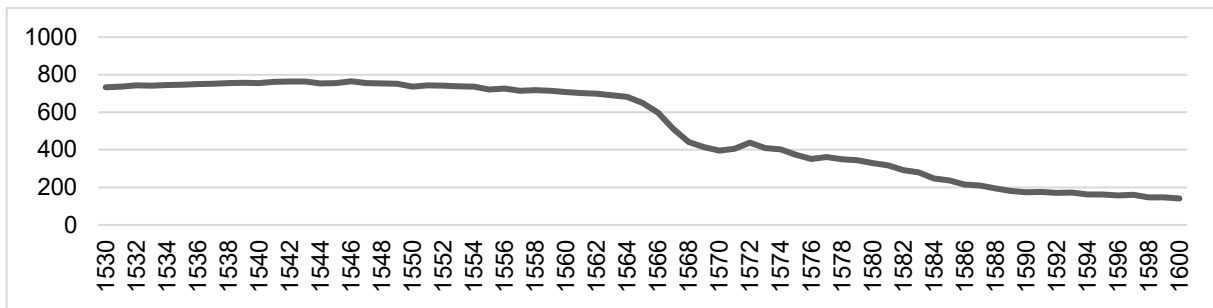


Figure H3.1. Total number of cottager households in Västergötland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

The data on cottagers in Västergötland show the numbers to have been significantly higher earlier in the century than towards its end. The decrease probably started during the Nordic Seven Years' War of the 1560s, followed by continuous decrease during the rest of the century, leaving only about 150 cottagers in the province in 1600. 77% of the number of cottagers in the province had then disappeared, compared to seventy years earlier.

4. *The Crown*

The Crown had a relatively strong establishment in Västergötland in 1530, with castles both at Läckö (recently taken over from the bishop as a consequence of the Reformation) and Älvsborg. Both were however enfeoffed during the 1530s, and while Höjentorp was established as a royal manor in 1540, it too was enfeoffed after a few years, as was Ettak. Only after ca. 1545 did the Crown gain more permanent manors in Västergötland at Brunsbo and Orreholmen. The 1550s then saw the regaining of Höjentorp, and in addition several short-lived establishments such as Fly, Götala, Härjevad, and Naglumsund, as well as the more stable Tunaholm manor. In 1562, Älvsborg fortress was regained from enfeoffment, and in addition the nearby Gullberg fortress was also established. The war however soon meant that Älvsborg was occupied by Danish forces, Orreholmen was burned to the ground, the manor being transferred to Ettak, while Tunaholm was moved to Säckestad. In 1576, the crown further enfeoffed Brunsbo, while Tunaholm was reestablished in 1578 (having its name changed in 1583 to Marieholm when Mariestad was founded as a new town). In the 1580s, Orreholmen was refounded, as was Ettak, and a new manor in Gälakvist outside Skara (which was renamed Skaraborg after a few years). Finally, Älvsborg castle gained another demesne farm when Sannegården on Hisingen was

Hisingen was founded in 1589, in addition to the old demesne farm of the castle, which dated at least from the 1570s.

The number and location of manors in Västergötland thus varied substantially over the years, with the Crown changing back and forth from enfeoffments to direct establishments. Except for its castles and manors, it further also had ships built at Älvsborg, both in the 1560s and for a number of years during the 1570s and 1580s (at least some of which were built at the wharf at Lindholmen on Hisingen). Industrial investments in Västergötland were however limited: only at Tunaholm were there some short-lived iron works by the late 1570s, founded by duke Charles but seemingly soon abandoned.

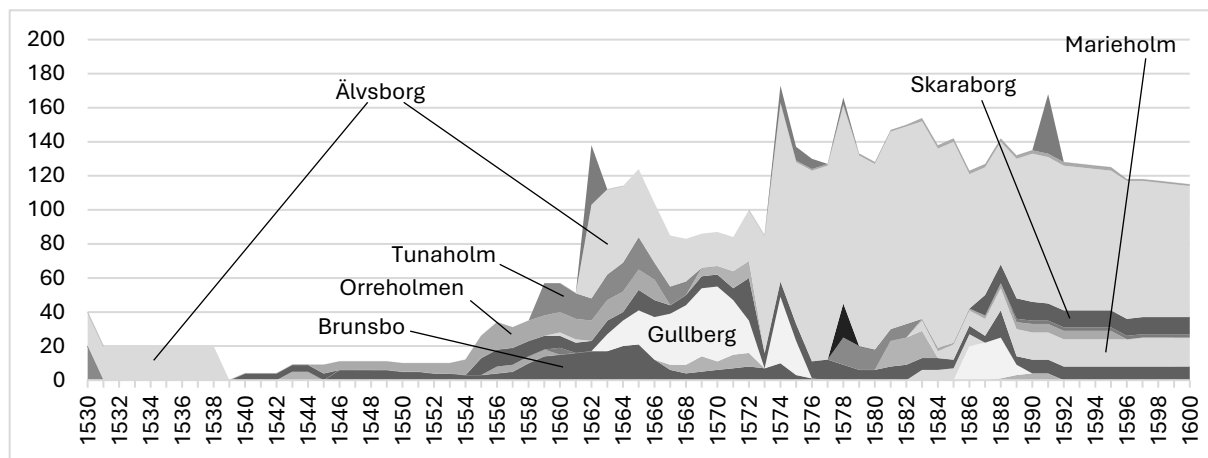


Figure H4.1. The number of households employed at various crown establishments in Västergötland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

After the enfeoffments of the 1530s, the number of households in Västergötland that was employed by the Crown remained insignificant into the 1560s, when the regaining of Älvsborg fortress together with the establishment of many new manors led to an increase to over 100 households. Another increase took place after the peace treaty of 1570, when the number of households employed by the crown in Västergötland rose to about 120, a level on which it remained for the rest of the century. The vast majority of these were employed at Älvsborg castle, while manors such as Höjentorp, Marieholm, and Skaraborg were insignificant in comparison.

5. *The Church*

There were four hospitals in Västergötland in the sixteenth century, for which only fragmentary accounts survive. For Skara hospital, we only know the number of inmates for the middle of the 1560s and for 1583.⁵²⁴ For Nya Lödöse hospital, which was founded in the 1520s, its number of inmates and staff is known from 1583 only.⁵²⁵ As some records earlier refer to it as 'Älvsborgs hospital', it is uncertain whether the hospital remained in the same location throughout the century (as the town was moved from Nya Lödöse to Älvsborg and then back again). From the hospital in Lidköping no accounts at all survive, but the hospital is mentioned both in 1560 and 1564 as being a relatively small one.⁵²⁶ The hospital in Mariestad was finally probably founded soon after the town in the 1580s: accounts survive from 1599, and the number of inmates is further known from 1594 and 1600.⁵²⁷

Two convents and two monasteries remained in function in Västergötland in 1530. Gudhem Cistercian nunnery was still in function in 1533 but abandoned before 1540, while the nearby Varnhem Cistercian monastery was abandoned sometime between 1538 and 1543.⁵²⁸ Of the two Dominican convents that had existed in Västergötland during the late middle ages, the one in Skara was closed in 1529 and later (around 1540) quarried for constructions at Läckö castle, while the one in Gamla Lödöse was probably closed as the town was abandoned in the 1530s. As for the Franciscan convent in Skara, one sick friar was the only person remaining by 1539, who was then sent to live in the hospital instead.

The bishop of Skara also suffered confiscations following the Reformation, both of the castle at Läckö and of the manor at Brunsbo. The latter was however given back by the Crown as a donation in 1574, from which time accounts survive for most years that list both its employees here and at various construction works in Skara.⁵²⁹

The parish clergy in Västergötland numbered about 130.

⁵²⁴ Västergötlands handlingar 1567:20, RA; Sandbergska samlingen vol. YY:15, RA.

⁵²⁵ Västergötlands handlingar 1583:20, RA.

⁵²⁶ Räntekammarböcker, vol. 39; vol. 41, RA.

⁵²⁷ Västergötlands handlingar 1599:18, RA; Hertig Karls räntekammare, vol. 16, RA.

⁵²⁸ Berntson 2003.

⁵²⁹ E.g., Västergötlands handlingar 1600:3, RA.

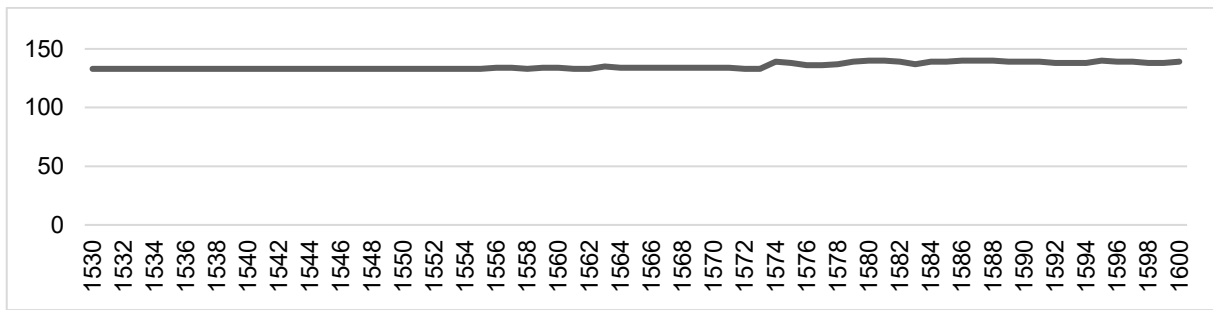


Figure H5.1. Total number of households employed by the church in Västergötland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

6. The Nobility

Accounts that list those employed by the nobility survive from three manors in Västergötland: Läckö, Dala, and Lindholmen. From Läckö castle, confiscated by the Crown from the bishop of Skara and then enfeoffed to various members of the high nobility during most of the century, accounts listing all employees survive for the 1560s and the 1580s. For Dala, accounts survive only for the 1560s, while accounts from Lindholmen survive only for the 1590s. Accounts are in addition preserved for three other manors from around 1600, as they had been confiscated by the Crown from members of the high nobility as punishment for treason. In addition, the nobleman Karl Gera visited two manors in Västergötland during the 1560s, for which he in his notebook recorded the number of women he had tipped (given *drickspenningar*).

Läckö castle (on Kållandsö in Kålland hundred) belonged to the Crown but was enfeoffed to Svante Sture and was then after his death (after having reverted to the Crown for a few years) enfeoffed to Hogenskild Bielke. From the time of Svante Sture, food registers survive 1564–1565 as well as lists of all workers from 1561 and 1564.⁵³⁰ From Hogenskild Bielke's time survive wage lists from 1584, 1588, 1597, and 1600; food registers from 1588, 1590, 1594–1596, a list of those employed in 1586, and the number of those receiving food according to the accounts of 1586–1587.⁵³¹ A normal year in the 1560s, during Svante Sture's time, 8–12 householders were employed at Läckö, while the number of male servants was 7–9, and the number of women 16–18. In addition, the castle housed 5–6 prisoners (during the war, as it was), and 3–5 children. In 1565, when Svante himself visited the castle, he brought with

⁵³⁰ Strödda kamerala handlingar, vol. 45, RA; Acta rörande ridderskapet och adeln, vol. 14, RA

⁵³¹ Hogenskild Bielkes samling, RA; Västergötlands handlingar 1588:17; 1600:1A, RA.

him five other noblemen, with 19 ‘servants’ (*tjänare*), 16 personal servants (*adelsdrängar*), and 5 female servants (*adelspigor*). His ‘court’ thus consisted of another 45 people. In Hogenskild Bielke’s time, Läckö employed some 12–14 householders, 10–14 male servants, and 10–17 women (higher in the 1580s, perhaps somewhat lower in the 1590s).

Dala (in Dala parish, Gudhem hundred) was a large manor owned by members of the high nobility, who most often used it as a demesne farm. Wage lists survive for 1562–1564 and 1567–1570.⁵³² These lists do however only list male and female servants, and not the householders employed. The men numbered 7–13, with the lower numbers during the war years, with the women varying between 4–6.

Lindholmen (in Strö parish, Kålland hundred) was a large manor owned by members of the high nobility. Towards the end of the century, it was owned by the children of Bengt Gabrielsson (Oxenstierna). No separate wage lists survive, but wages are mentioned in the surviving accounts from 1592–1600.⁵³³ In addition, a list of all those employed survive from October 1601. Taken together, the records show the number of householders to have been 4–5, the number of males servants probably 6–8, and the number of women 6–9.

Torpa (in Länghem parish, in Kind hundred) was a large manor owned by the highest nobility. It was confiscated by the Crown from Erik Gustafsson (Stenbock) in 1599, and wage lists and a food register survive from 1600.⁵³⁴ These contain 6 householders, 6–7 male servants, 5–8 women, and 5–8 poor children (*allmosebarn*).

Sundholmen (in Äspered parish, Ås hundred) was a large manor belonging to the high nobility. It was confiscated by the Crown in 1599 from Gustaf Brahe. From 1600 a wage list, a food register, and a list of all those working at Sundholmen exist.⁵³⁵ These contain only 3 householders, 8 male servants, 7 women, and 4 children (one *allmosebarn*, the others children of the smith and the cook).

Gräfsnäs (in Erska parish, Bjärke hundred) was a large manor owned by the highest nobility. It was confiscated from Axel Stensson (Leijonhufvud) by the Crown, and for 1601 both a wage list and a food register survive.⁵³⁶ These differ moderately in their

⁵³² Hogenskild Bielkes samling, RA; Acta rörande ridderskapet och adeln, vol. 16, RA.

⁵³³ Oxenstiernska samlingen E 517, RA.

⁵³⁴ Västergötlands handlingar 1600:12, RA.

⁵³⁵ Västergötlands handlingar 1600:19, RA.

⁵³⁶ Västergötlands handlingar 1601:17, RA.

lists of names: the number of householders at Gräfsnäs was 11–14, male servants numbered 11, and women 8.

Karl Gera visited Skällared (in Asklanda parish, Gäsene hundred) in 1565, which was an ordinary manor, where he tipped two women. He also visited Mängsholm (in Siene parish, Kulling hundred) in the same year, where his sister lived, tipping two male servants and eleven women.⁵³⁷

Table H6.1. The number of householders, servants, and women employed at manors in Västergötland, 1530–1600.

MANOR	YEARS	TYPE	HOUSEHOLDERS	MALE SERVANTS	WOMEN
DALA	1560s	demesne farm	–	7–13	4–6
LÄCKÖ	1560s	castle	8–12	7–9	16–18
SKÄLLARED	1565	manor	–	–	2
MÄNGSHOLM	1565	manor	–	–	11
SVANTE STURE	1560s	court	–	40	5
LÄCKÖ	1590s	castle	12–14	10–14	10–17
LINDHOLMEN	1590s	large	5	6–8	6–9
TORPA	1600	large	6	6–7	5–8
SUNDHOLMEN	1600	large	3	8	7
GRÄFSNÄS	1601	large	11–14	11	8

Source: Population database.

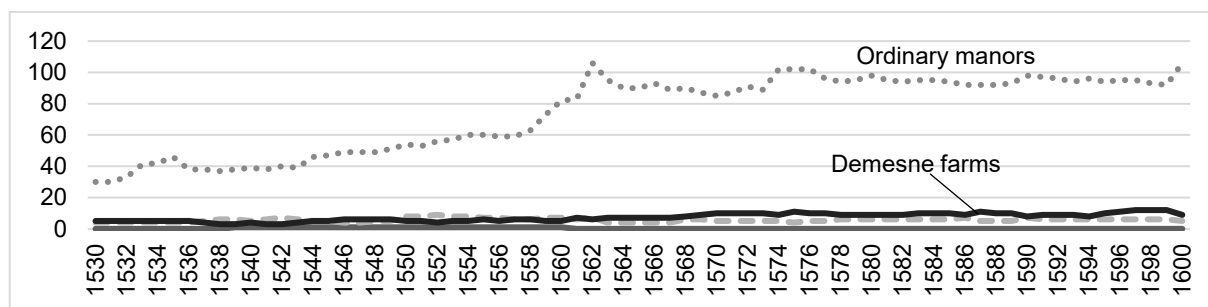


Figure H6.1. The number of nobility manors in Västergötland, 1530–1600.

Source: Population database.

⁵³⁷ X 265h, UUB.

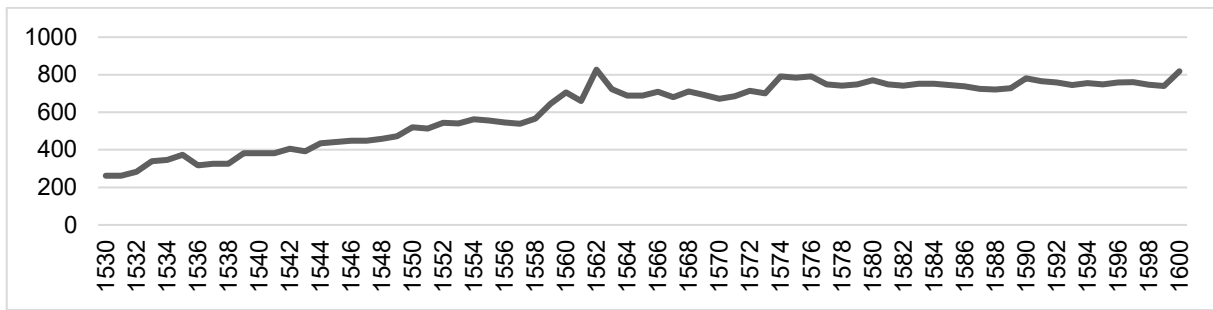


Figure H6.2. The number of households living at nobility manors in Västergötland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

In 1530, there were just under 40 manors belonging to the nobility in Västergötland, including already at this time 5 demesne farms run by members of the highest nobility who (mainly) resided elsewhere. The number of manors rose to 60 by the mid-1540s, and to over 100 by the early 1560s. The number then stabilized at between 100 and 120 for the rest of the century, of which about 10 were demesne farms. From below 300, the number of households employed at the nobility manors in Västergötland thus more than doubled to a level of 700–800 from about 1560 until the end of the century.

7. Towns

There were eleven or twelve towns in Västergötland in the sixteenth century, more than in any other Swedish province, although not all of these were in existence at the same time. Nya Lödöse (which was moved close to the fortress and renamed Älvsborg in the 1540s but then moved back to its previous location after the war) was the largest and economically most important, as it was the only Swedish harbour on the west coast. It was however hard hit by the Nordic Seven Years' War and did probably not regain its previous population number afterwards; the same is probably true also for the bishop see Skara, which was the second-largest town in the province. Of the other towns in Västergötland, none ever reached over 100 households, most being significantly smaller.

Data on population exist from 1540 for two towns (Falköping and Lidköping), possibly also for Nya Lödöse and Skara. For Skövde, Hjo and Ullervad, some population data exist from the mid-1550s, while the earliest data from Bogesund comes only from 1571. In the 1570s and 1580s, three new towns were founded in Västergötland: Brätte, Gamla Lödöse, and Mariestad. While population data exist for

several years for Gamla Lödöse, the population is known only for one year for Brätte, and for none at all for Mariestad. Otherwise, most towns in Västergötland have good population data from the end of the century.

Although largely dependent on the (uncertain) population figures from Nya Lödöse and Skara, it seems that the urban population in Västergötland decreased greatly during the Nordic Seven Years' War, and then only slowly recovered until about 1590, at which time the urban population stagnated. At the end of the century, the number of urban households in Västergötland was only about two thirds of what it had been 70 years earlier.

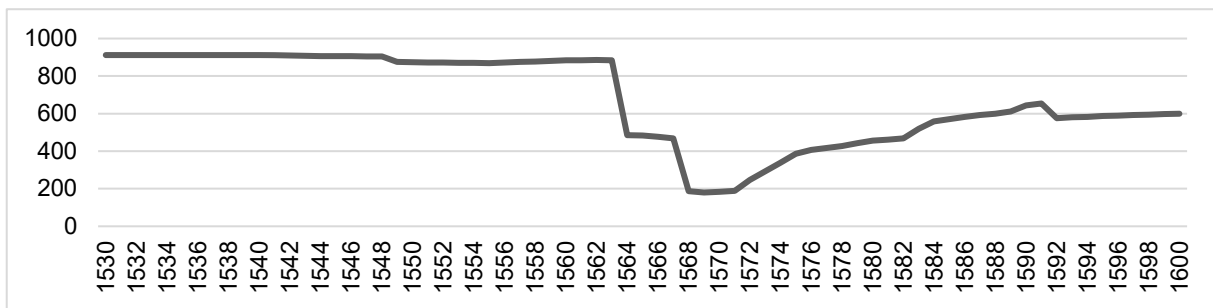


Figure H7.1. Total number of households in towns (excluding castles) in Västergötland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

Bogesund (in Redväg hundred) was located close to where river Ätran falls into the small lake Åsunden, in the forested southern part of Västergötland, on the main road leading from the province into Danish Halland and its harbour town Falkenberg.⁵³⁸ The population of Bogesund was trading both in Denmark and with oxen in Central Sweden. The Crown repeatedly sought to make the inhabitants abandon the town: in 1535, it was suggested that the merchants should move to Nya Lödöse and the craftsmen to either Skara or Lidköping,⁵³⁹ and by 1544 the king thought that parts of the population had already moved to Jönköping and suggested that only 8–10 households should be allowed to remain as peasants.⁵⁴⁰ By 1545, the king instead suggested migration to the (planned) town Hornborga, where the inhabitants should live together with those from Falköping, Skara, and “the other small towns”.⁵⁴¹ Yet, Bogesund remained, and even though the town was burned by the Danish invading army in 1566 and another movement to a (planned) town was suggested, so did some of the inhabitants.⁵⁴² The earliest population data survives only for 1571, when the population might have been smaller than before the war.⁵⁴³ However, the number of plots in the town are listed in the accounts repeatedly 1545–1560, and their low number (9–16) suggest a very small population.⁵⁴⁴ Later population figures survive only for 1575, 1582, and 1591, showing a rather stagnant urban population of about 200 inhabitants.⁵⁴⁵

Brätte (in Väne hundred) was located at “the end of the water”, Vassända, the southernmost tip of Lake Vänern, close to the mouth of the Göta River. Its inhabitants were employed in transporting iron (and other goods) over the lake and past the falls of the river, and the foundation of the town is thus connected to the increasing metal production in Värmland, on the northern side of the water. The town was probably founded during the early 1580s: it is first mentioned as “Brätte stad” in 1582,⁵⁴⁶ and then repeatedly throughout the century, both in accounts and in lists of

⁵³⁸ Klackenborg 1983 p. 6–10.

⁵³⁹ PRF 2 nr 97.

⁵⁴⁰ PRF 2 nr 150.

⁵⁴¹ PRF 2 nr 166.

⁵⁴² PRF 3 nr 52. The planned town was Odenskulle in Vartofta hundred, where the boundaries of a new town had been laid out.

⁵⁴³ Älvsborgs lösen 1571, RA.

⁵⁴⁴ E.g., Västergötlands handlingar 1560:16, RA.

⁵⁴⁵ Bogesunds rådhusrätt och magistrat, GLA; Sandbergsska samlingen vol.YY:17, RA.

⁵⁴⁶ Länsregister, RA.

towns; in a royal letter of 1590, the town square and warehouses are mentioned.⁵⁴⁷ The only surviving population figure comes from 1599, when the town probably had about 100 inhabitants.⁵⁴⁸

Falköping (in Vartofta hundred) is located on the Falbygden plain in Central Västergötland, for which it functioned as the market centre.⁵⁴⁹ As for the other “small” towns in Västergötland, the king in 1545 suggested that Falköping’s inhabitants should move to a planned new town at Hornborga, a plan which however was never realised.⁵⁵⁰ The town was burned down in 1566; it was “all deserted” from 1567–1570 according to the accounts, while by 1572 some rebuilding had begun.⁵⁵¹ Population data survives already for 1540 and 1545,⁵⁵² and later population figures are available for the 1560s, the 1570s, the 1580s, as well as the 1590s.⁵⁵³ Together, they show a throughout the century small and stagnant urban population of some 100–200 inhabitants.

Hjo (in Kåkind hundred) was located on the western shore of Lake Vättern, remote from the rest of the province but in close contact with Östergötland on the other side of the water.⁵⁵⁴ It functioned as a harbour for transports going between Västergötland and Östergötland, and probably also as a marketplace for travellers. It was closely connected to Vadstena; in 1559, the king sentenced six merchants from Hjo (“and more thereto”) to move to Vadstena, while another two were allowed to remain at Hjo as tavern keepers.⁵⁵⁵ The earliest population data for Hjo is from 1555, while some later figures are known for the 1560s, the 1570s, and the 1580s, as well as through subsidy taxation lists 1599–1600. These all show a very small town with 100–200 inhabitants.

Lidköping (in Kinne hundred) was located on the mouth of river Lidan, one of the larger rivers in Västergötland, and was until the 1580s the only town located on Lake Vänern.⁵⁵⁶ From nearby agricultural plains were transported grain and oxen over the water west to Dalsland and north to Värmland, where it was traded for furs, hides,

⁵⁴⁷ PRF 3 nr 423.

⁵⁴⁸ Västergötlands handlingar 1599:17, RA.

⁵⁴⁹ Klackenbergs 1981a p. 6–8.

⁵⁵⁰ PRF 2 nr 166.

⁵⁵¹ E.g., Västergötlands handlingar 1570:2, RA.

⁵⁵² Västergötlands handlingar 1540:1A; 1545:3, RA.

⁵⁵³ E.g., Sandbergsska samlingen vol. YY:5, RA.

⁵⁵⁴ Klackenbergs 1981b p. 6–8.

⁵⁵⁵ PRF 2 nr 280.

⁵⁵⁶ Klackenbergs 1982 p. 6–10.

and above all iron, which was then exported over Göta River and Nya Lödöse. The town was struck by fire in 1553, and although the king in 1560 ordered its inhabitants to move to Huvudnäs (alluding to the “recent” fire), the town remained in its previous location.⁵⁵⁷ An early population figure for Lidköping exists from 1540 in the form of the number of urban households supporting the town priest.⁵⁵⁸ After this, population data is available from 1564,⁵⁵⁹ and then for a number of years spread over the rest of the century.⁵⁶⁰

Gamla Lödöse (in Ale hundred) was located on the Göta River in the western part of Västergötland, about 10 kilometres south of where waterfalls made the river unpassable.⁵⁶¹ From the town led a road east towards Central Västergötland, while another led north along the river. The town had previously been important for Swedish exports westwards, but much less so after the foundation of Nya Lödöse in the late fifteenth century. In 1526, the king rescinded the urban privileges, and in 1528 he ordered its marketplace and hospital moved to Nya Lödöse. The Dominican convent was probably abandoned around the same time.⁵⁶² Although the inhabitants of Nya Lödöse in 1532 complained that “many” merchants were still trading at Gamla Lödöse,⁵⁶³ there are no further signs of an urban settlement here before the latter part of the century. The town first resurfaces in a population list of 1577,⁵⁶⁴ while the first explicit mention of Gamla Lödöse as a town comes from 1582, and then repeatedly throughout the century.⁵⁶⁵ Population data further only survive for 1591,⁵⁶⁶ one year after the inhabitants had asked for confirmation of all their privileges of old.⁵⁶⁷ By this time, the town had already grown to over 300 inhabitants, making it among the larger of the (relatively small) towns in Västergötland.

Nya Lödöse, or Nylöse for short (in Sävedalen), was located where Säveån fell into the Göta River and was the only harbour town in sixteenth-century Sweden on the west coast. It was one of the largest towns in the country, as iron was exported from

⁵⁵⁷ PRF 2 nr 288.

⁵⁵⁸ Västergötlands handlingar 1540:14, RA.

⁵⁵⁹ Västergötlands handlingar 1564:9, RA.

⁵⁶⁰ E.g., Sandbergiska samlingen vol.YY:10, RA.

⁵⁶¹ Carlsson & Ekre 1980 p. 6–10.

⁵⁶² Berntson 2003.

⁵⁶³ PRF 2 nr 87.

⁵⁶⁴ Drängeregister, RA.

⁵⁶⁵ Städers acta 18, RA.

⁵⁶⁶ Sandbergiska samlingen vol.YY:5, RA.

⁵⁶⁷ PRF 3 nr 438.

the mining districts in Värmland, while all salt and fish to Western Sweden had to be imported either through foreign towns or through Nya Lödöse.⁵⁶⁸ A few kilometres from the town was located Älvsborg fortress, the main crown establishment not only in Västergötland but in all of Western Sweden. The Franciscan convent was shut down by 1528, its buildings instead used for the hospital (which at this time was moved here from Gamla Lödöse).⁵⁶⁹ In 1543, the king decreed that the town should be moved close to the castle for protective reasons;⁵⁷⁰ and many inhabitants presumably moved to the new location in 1545, although the “old town” and the “new town” are both mentioned as existing in parallel in 1551 and 1552.⁵⁷¹ In 1563, at the beginning of the Nordic Seven Years’ War, the Älvsborg town was however burned down (by the defending Swedes), and by 1566 some of the inhabitants were living at Nya Lödöse.⁵⁷² Others fled into various locations in Västergötland, where they were registered as refugees in the 1571 subsidy taxation lists. After the end of the war, the king first proposed the construction of a town in yet a new location, by the Gullberg fortress just outside Nya Lödöse,⁵⁷³ In 1572, privileges were however granted for those “who have previously lived in Älvsborg but now have moved to Nya Lödöse”.⁵⁷⁴ Plans for a new town at Otterhällan in 1583 were never realised, and at this point the Crown could not afford to move the town to either Gullberg or Älvsborg.⁵⁷⁵ The town thus remained at Nya Lödöse for the rest of the century.

Although it is clear that Nya Lödöse was the most important town in Västergötland, actual population data is scarce. In 1537, the inhabitants complained that those who had arrived from other towns in the years before (ordered to move to Nya Lödöse by the king) had left again because of the high taxes.⁵⁷⁶ Another complaint over high taxes came from the inhabitants in 1552, when they also claimed that the population was smaller than before.⁵⁷⁷ Although tax complaint must not be taken at face value, such complaints are in fact rare, thus indicating a real population stagnation or loss over the

⁵⁶⁸ Järpe 1986 p. 6–10.

⁵⁶⁹ Berntson 2003.

⁵⁷⁰ PRF 2 nr 151.

⁵⁷¹ PRF 2 nr 167; nr 222.

⁵⁷² PRF 3 nr 101.

⁵⁷³ PRF 3 nr 101.

⁵⁷⁴ PRF 3 nr 113. In 1574, it was further decided that the town should remain at Nya Lödöse and not be moved back to Älvsborg (PRF 3 nr 154)

⁵⁷⁵ PRF 3 nr 278.

⁵⁷⁶ PRF 2 nr 109.

⁵⁷⁷ PRF 2 nr 222.

1530s and 1540s. The only population data from before the war is however indirect: an account from 1540 states how much money the priest in Nya Lödöse collected from his parishioners. Assuming that each household paid the same amount as those living in Lidköping gave their priest (where the account gives both the sum and the total number of households), the number of households in Nya Lödöse can thus be (approximately) calculated to 2,500.⁵⁷⁸ For 1571, subsidy taxation lists contain the number of refugee households from Nya Lödöse settled in other parts of Västergötland, but not the number of households presumably living in the town itself.⁵⁷⁹ The king at this point planned to build a new city at Gullberg of the same size as Kalmar (which had 3,500 inhabitants before the war, but only 2,500 afterwards).⁵⁸⁰ Proper population lists however only survive for three years of the 1590s.⁵⁸¹ The reconstructed population figures for Nya Lödöse thus show a larger population before the war than after (but somewhat decreasing already during the 1540s), an almost complete depopulation during the war and then continuous growth.

Odenskulle (in Gökhem parish, Vilske hundred) was a town planned by King Erik XIV. It is first mentioned in 1561, but in 1562 the project was stalled because a master builder could not be found, and in 1563 there was still no one living at the location.⁵⁸² The project was then interrupted by the war (although the inhabitants of Bogesund were admonished to move there in 1567, when their town was burned down by the invading Danish army) and never realized.

Skara (in Skåning hundred) was located on the central plain of Västergötland and was above all the religious centre of the province, as it was the bishop's seat.⁵⁸³ The Reformation thus struck the town hard, with the closing of its Dominican convent in 1529, and the Franciscan convent before the end of the 1530s.⁵⁸⁴ After a fire in 1545, the king ordered the inhabitants to move to his planned (but never realized) town at Hornborg.⁵⁸⁵ The town was further burned during the war of the 1560s. The earliest population data however only comes from 1571, while the rest of the century is well

⁵⁷⁸ Västergötlands handlingar 1540:14, RA.

⁵⁷⁹ Älvsborgs lösen 1571, RA.

⁵⁸⁰ PRF 3 nr 101.

⁵⁸¹ Sandbergska samlingen vol. YY:6, RA; Städerna vol. 18, RA; Västergötlands handlingar 1600:17, RA.

⁵⁸² PRF 3 nr 23, 33.

⁵⁸³ Sigsjö 1980.

⁵⁸⁴ Berntson 2003.

⁵⁸⁵ PRF 2 nr 166.

covered by the sources.⁵⁸⁶ For the pre-war population, I have used a (damaged) note found in a 1582 population list, which laments that “[...] old population lists exist when the town was flourishing and properly built, then were the number of built plots 248. [Now there are no] more than 69”.⁵⁸⁷ The “old” list referred to does not survive, and the note does not date it, but it clearly refers to the time before the Nordic Seven Years’ War (although possibly to the pre-reformation era). As population lists survive for several other towns in Västergötland from ca. 1540, it is likely that this lost list did likewise, and it has thus been used for estimating Skara’s population in 1540.

Skövde (in Kåkind hundred) was located on the edge of the agricultural plains on the road towards Hjo and Östergötland.⁵⁸⁸ There were no significant crown establishments in the town in the sixteenth century, and the town was burned down in 1566 during the war. The earliest population data for Skövde survives from 1555,⁵⁸⁹ while some population lists then survive from all decades for the rest of the century.⁵⁹⁰

Ullervad (in Vadsbo hundred) was probably the smallest town in Västergötland. The place is first mentioned as a town in 1530.⁵⁹¹ It was located where the roads north from Skara and Skövde met before going into Värmland, where they passed River Tidan. Its inhabitants were likely involved in the trade with iron on Lake Vänern (and possibly also over land, on the roads along which they lived), as they paid their yearly taxes in iron, but this seems to have become more difficult in the 1560s, when the urban tax was converted to grain. In 1573, its inhabitants sought and were granted renewed urban privileges like those of other towns.⁵⁹² Population figures exist from 1559 and from the 1580s.⁵⁹³ The town was abandoned after the foundation of Mariestad in the 1580s, the location converted to farmland.⁵⁹⁴

⁵⁸⁶ E.g., Sandbergska samlingen vol.YY:15, RA.

⁵⁸⁷ ”...gammalt mantal finnes när staden [var vid?] makt och rätteligen uppbyggd voro alla [tom]pter bygde 248. [Är nu icke?] flere än – 69.” Sandbergska samlingen vol.YY:14, RA.

⁵⁸⁸ Klackenbergs 1981c p. 9–10.

⁵⁸⁹ Västergötlands handlingar 1555:13, RA.

⁵⁹⁰ E.g., Sandbergska samlingen vol.YY:16, RA.

⁵⁹¹ *Undervisning om rikets ränta*.

⁵⁹² PRF 3 nr 131.

⁵⁹³ Västergötlands handlingar 1559:15; 1581:9B, RA.

⁵⁹⁴ The town is still included in the cadastre for Vadsbo hundred in 1590, but not in 1597. Västergötlands handlingar 1590:16A; 1597:6, RA.

Mariestad (in Vadsbo hundred) was a new town, founded in the 1580s by Duke Charles on the location of his manor Tunaholm where River Tidan falls into Lake Vänern, just a few kilometres from the location of Ullervad. The location of the town was likely chosen as being better suited for trade with iron on the lake. Duke Charles took the initiative in early 1582, and later that year some people had already begun the settlement; urban privileges were granted in 1583.⁵⁹⁵ A hospital was soon founded in the town. Since the town was given twelve years freedom from all taxation, which was then extended for another five years,⁵⁹⁶ no population data survives from the sixteenth century (although this might also be caused by archival fires destroying most records from the 1590s for Västergötland). I have had to estimate the population of Mariestad to have been somewhat larger than Brätte but smaller than Gamla Lödöse (the two other towns that were founded in Västergötland during the 1580s, and which likewise were involved in trade in iron across Lake Vänern and further along the Göta River).

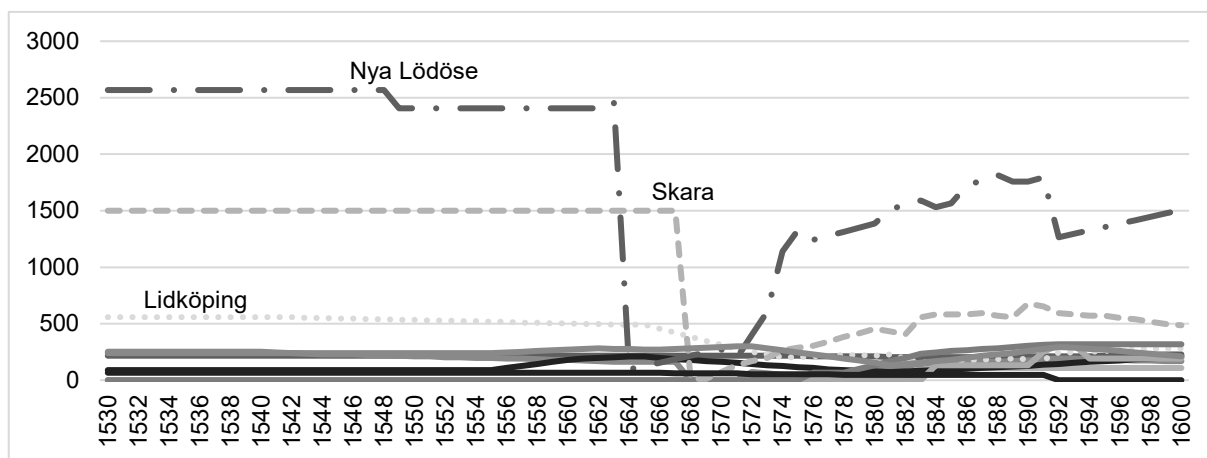


Figure H7.2. Population in towns in Västergötland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

⁵⁹⁵ PRF 3 nr 243; nr 256; nr 286.

⁵⁹⁶ PRF 4 nr 55.

Table H7.1. Total population in the towns of Västergötland, decadal figures, 1530–1600.

TOWN	1530	1540	1550	1560	1570	1580	1590	1600
BOGESUND	216	216	216	216	216	210	210	228
BRÄTTE	0	0	0	0	0	0	108	108
FALKÖPING	252	252	210	180	0	102	174	168
HJO	90	90	90	180	162	78	126	210
LIDKÖPING	558	558	534	504	312	216	186	282
MARIESTAD	0	0	0	0	0	0	132	192
GAMLA LÖDÖSE	0	0	0	0	0	132	306	318
NYA LÖDÖSE/ÄLVSBORG	2568	2568	2406	2406	270	1386	1758	1506
SKARA	1500	1500	1500	1500	72	456	678	486
SKÖVDE	240	240	240	270	294	156	258	210
ULLERVAD	66	66	66	66	60	48	48	0

Source: Population database.

Largest of the towns in Västergötland was without competition Nya Lödöse, which in the earlier part of the century had around 2,500 inhabitants. Having been moved to Älvsborg in the 1540s, the town suffered heavy damage in the Nordic Seven Years' War of the 1560s and was subsequently rebuilt in its original location. It however seems as if Nya Lödöse never regained the size it had had before the war, its population being only somewhere around 1,500 inhabitants at the end of the century.

The second town in Västergötland was Skara, which probably had around 1,500 inhabitants before the war. Afterwards, it only regained about a third of its previous size, reaching 500 inhabitants in the latter quarter of the century. Lidköping, the third largest town in Västergötland, suffered a similar fate: having about 500–600 inhabitants in the 1530s, it decreased during the war of the 1560s, and ended the century at about half the size it had had seventy years before. By then, it had fallen to the same size as most of the other towns in Västergötland, which rarely reached over 300 inhabitants.

I. Östergötland

The province of Östergötland is located in Eastern Sweden, between Lake Vättern in the west and the Baltic Sea in the east. In a belt stretching over the centre of the province, some of the most fertile agricultural land of the country is found, while its southern and northern parts are more elevated and forested. During a few years of the sixteenth century, the Crown had some copper mines in the southern part of the province, but the main metal industries were located in the three mining districts Vånga, Godegård, and Hällestad, which formed the northwestern part of the province. The Crown further had one major castle at Stegeborg, overlooking the sailing route into the merchant town Söderköping on the Baltic Sea, while another important castle was constructed in Vadstena on Lake Vättern. Crown presence in the province was overall high, not least as a consequence of the Reformation. All in all, the province was divided into 18 hundreds, in addition to the three mining districts (which were separated in the accounts before the middle of the century). In the south, Kinda and Ydre hundreds were still counted as belonging to Småland and have been kept that way in this study. In the northwest, Sundbo hundred was sometimes counted with Östergötland, but has here been counted with Närke.

1. *Cadastral peasants*

For three hundreds (Bankekind, Hanekind and Valkebo), data on cadastral peasants is found in the accounts already in 1530.⁵⁹⁷ Another 14 hundreds and the three mining districts are first found in the subsidy taxation lists of 1535;⁵⁹⁸ only for Memming hundred is the number of cadastral peasants first found in a list of enfeoffed hundreds from 1536.⁵⁹⁹ This means that, concerning the number of cadastral peasants, all of Östergötland is covered by sources already before 1540. As later archival losses are limited for Östergötland, the only data missing for the end of the century is the number of peasants in Gullberg in 1600.

⁵⁹⁷ Fogdarnas räkenskaper, RA.

⁵⁹⁸ Gärder och hjälper 1535, RA.

⁵⁹⁹ Förläningsregister, vol. 39, RA.

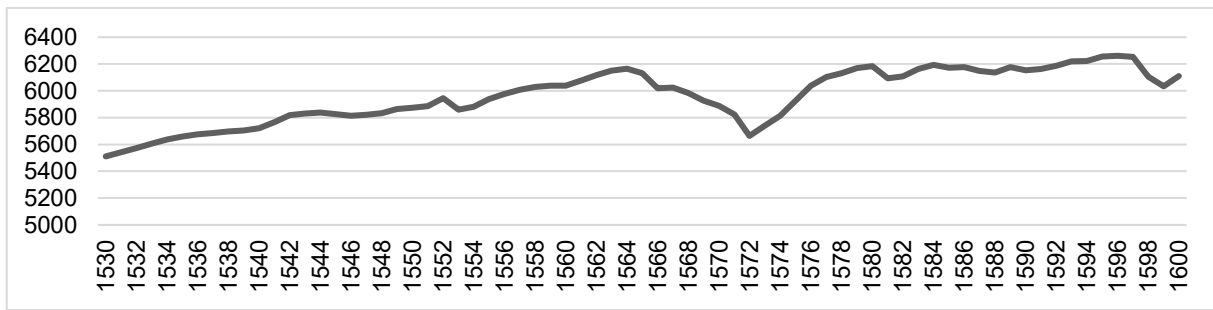


Figure II.1. Cadastral peasants (excluding deserted farms) in Östergötland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

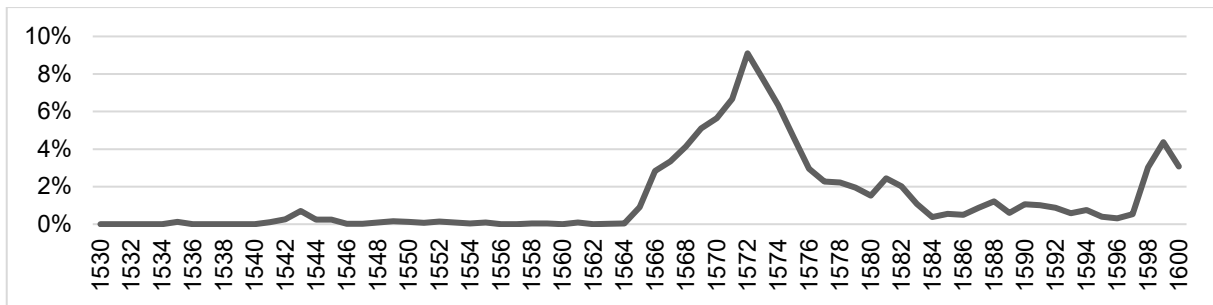


Figure II.2. Deserted farms in Östergötland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

The number of cadastral peasants was just over 5,500 in Östergötland in 1530. Growing to 6,100 in 1564, it then dropped to 5,800 in 1572. This decrease of 8% took the number back to levels of the 1530s. Growth resumed during the 1570s, resulting in the previous level being reached again before the end of the decade. During the latter part of the century, the number of cadastral peasants was largely unchanged until the last years of the 1590s, when it once more decreased by 4%.

The two phases of regression can clearly be identified in figure II.2, which shows the share of deserted farms. Beginning to rise in 1565, during the Danish invasion, a peak of 9% was reached in 1572, followed by recovery. Some hundreds in the western part of the province were most affected, while the more moderate increase in desertion at the end of the 1590s mostly hit the eastern parts.

In 1566, some of the desertion was explicitly connected to recent mortality. In Gullberg hundred, the account lists “Deserted farms, which are deserted anno 66, in

which the people have died out”,⁶⁰⁰ while the accounts for Bråbo in the same year name “one peasant who owns his land (*skattetorp*) and two tenant settlers on crown land in Bråbo hundred are deserted, where the peasants are all dead [...]”.⁶⁰¹ Regarding more permanent desertion, the account from Gullberg hundred in 1584 noted that farms were “lying all deserted, that no one holds or farms, since they are all rotten down”.⁶⁰² In Östergötland as elsewhere, it is thus apparent that while many farms initially became deserted during the 1560s due to high mortality, some remained deserted and uninhabited for a very long time, during which resettlement became increasingly difficult due to houses and farm buildings not being well kept.

2. Division of farms

Farm division in Östergötland can be studied for parts of the province in the subsidy taxation lists of 1560,⁶⁰³ and for almost all of the province in 1571 and 1599.⁶⁰⁴ Additional data comes from grain tithe lists, the earliest from 1547, but most from the 1550s and 1560s. Some tithe data is available also for later years, including 1600. Östergötland is thus mostly well-covered concerning data on the division of farms since the 1550s.

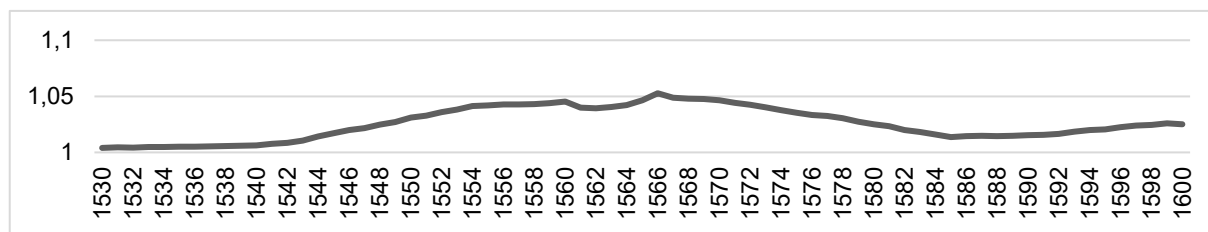


Figure I2.1. Division of farms in Östergötland, 1530–1600. For further explanation of the figure, see figure 2.1. Source: Population database.

From figure I2.1 we see that during the 1530s and 1540s, farm division slowly increased in Östergötland, reaching a peak of about 5% in the 1560s and the early 1570s. Regionally, farm division especially stands out in Skärkind hundred (where it

⁶⁰⁰ "Ödegårdar som är öde anno 66 som folket är blivit utdött av." Östergötlands handlingar 1566:13, RA.

⁶⁰¹ "Än är en skattetorp och två krononybyggare uti Bråbo härad blivna öde, där som bönderna utdödade är [...]." Östergötlands handlingar 1566:17, RA.

⁶⁰² "Ligger platt öde som ingen besitter eller brukar, efter de äro nederruttna." Östergötlands handlingar 1584:13, RA.

⁶⁰³ Silverskatten 1560, RA.

⁶⁰⁴ Älvsborgs lösen 1571, RA; e.g., Östergötlands handlingar 1600:1, RA.

was over 20% already in the 1540s, according to the grain tithe lists), and in Memming hundred, where high levels were reported throughout the 1540s, 1550s, and 1560s. After 1570, farm division became rarer in most hundreds in Östergötland, with only a couple of hundreds (Bankekind and Göstring) reaching above 10% at the end of the century.

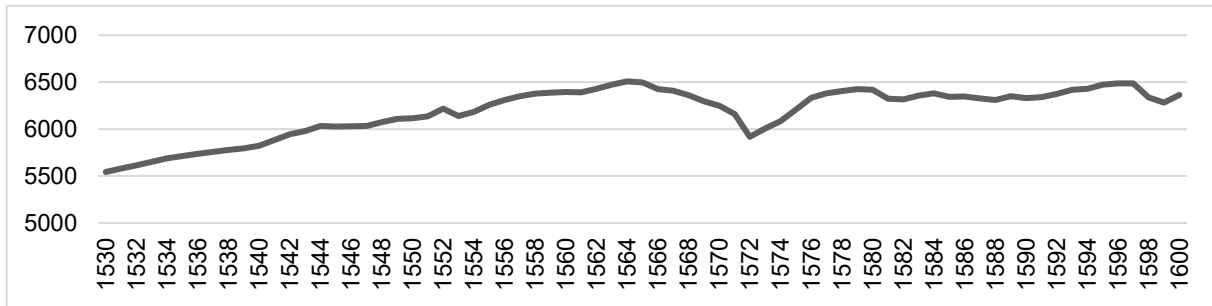


Figure I2.2. The total number of peasant households in Östergötland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

In 1530, the total number of peasant households in Östergötland amounted to about 5,500. Growing into the 1560s, it then decreased by 9% until 1572. Although the province recovered during the 1570s, the total number of peasants households then seems to have stagnated at a level that was actually somewhat below that which had been reached in the early 1560s. Coming very close to 6,500 again in 1597, it once more decreased by 3% in the late 1590s. At the end of the century, the number of peasant households in Östergötland had only increased by a modest 15% since 1530.

3. *Cottagers*

Cottagers were listed already in the subsidy taxation lists of 1535 for more than half of the hundreds in Östergötland.⁶⁰⁵ Most of the province is then covered in 1560,⁶⁰⁶ 1571,⁶⁰⁷ 1579,⁶⁰⁸ 1589,⁶⁰⁹ and 1596,⁶¹⁰ while parts are recorded also in 1563,⁶¹¹ 1576,⁶¹²

⁶⁰⁵ Gärder och hjälper 1535, RA.

⁶⁰⁶ Silverskatten 1560, RA.

⁶⁰⁷ Älvsborgs lösen 1571, RA.

⁶⁰⁸ Brudskatten 1579, vol. 1, RA.

⁶⁰⁹ E.g., Östergötlands handlingar 1589:1, RA.

⁶¹⁰ E.g., Östergötlands handlingar 1597:9, RA.

⁶¹¹ Brudskatten 1563, vol. 1, RA.

⁶¹² Drängeregister 1576, RA.

1590,⁶¹³ and 1599.⁶¹⁴ In addition, cottagers in seven hundreds were listed doing corvée labour building Vadstena castle in 1546,⁶¹⁵ while some were forced to work at the castle also during the 1550s.⁶¹⁶ Taken altogether, this means that cottagers in Östergötland are relatively well-recorded since 1535 and into the 1590s.

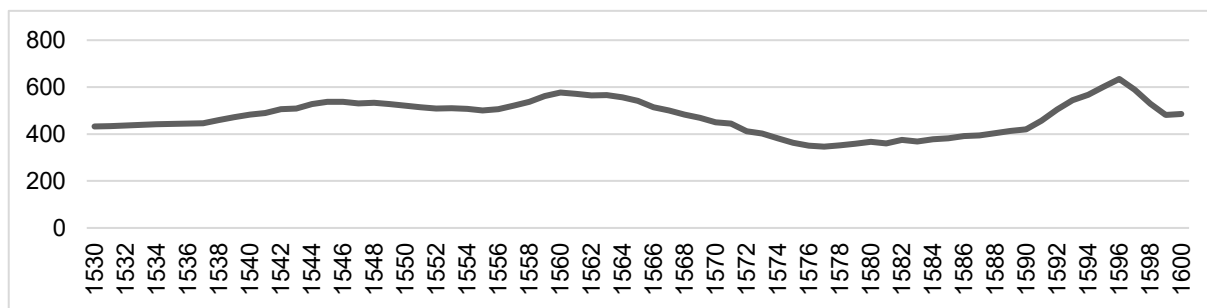


Figure I3.1. The total number of cottager households in Östergötland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

The total number of cottagers in Östergötland grew from about 450 in the 1530s to close to 600 at the beginning of the 1560s. It then decreased into the 1570s and 1580s, before again starting to grow and reaching a high point of more than 600 in 1596. Although data on cottagers is available for only about half the province at the end of the century, the surviving taxation lists indicate that the number of cottagers in Östergötland decreased during those last years of the 1590s. Altogether, the number however increased by 12% from 1530 to 1600.

4. *The Crown*

By year 1530, the Crown only had the recently acquired Linköping manor in Östergötland. In 1539, the previous Cistercian monastery Alvastra was converted into a royal demesne farm, and then during the 1540s several new manors were established: Hov, Starby, Vadstena, Mastad, Norrby, and Tuna. Importantly, Stegeborg castle was also retrieved by the Crown after having previously been enfeoffed; to it belonged one demesne farm, to which Rönö demesne farm soon was added. During the 1550s, further new manors were founded, such as Kungsbro, Brånäs, Motala, Munkeboda,

⁶¹³ E.g., Östergötlands handlingar 1590:7, RA.

⁶¹⁴ E.g., Östergötlands handlingar 1600:7A, RA.

⁶¹⁵ E.g., Östergötlands handlingar 1546:7A, RA.

⁶¹⁶ E.g., Östergötlands handlingar 1555:13, RA.

Norrköping, Norsholm, and Skedenäs. While some of these were abandoned during the 1560s, such as Alvastra, others were converted into demesne farms under Vadstena or Stegeborg castles. This followed widespread destruction during the 1560s, when Danish occupants ruined several of the royal manors in Östergötland (such as Hov, Norrby, Norrköping, Tuna, and Norsholm). The latter part of the century saw few new manors: Liljestad came into the possession of the crown through Queen Gunilla Bielke, who also converted Brånäs manor into Bråborg castle in 1591.

Crown manors in Östergötland thus became numerous during the 1540s and remained so throughout the century. In addition, the Crown also invested in industries in the province. From the 1540s onwards, the Crown had workers in Hällestad and Vånga mining districts. The 1550s saw a renewal of the Medieval copper industry in Åtvidaberg, while Rönö mines were active during the 1560s. In the 1580s, a sulphur industry was active for a few years, while Finspång iron works, established in 1581, came to last through the century (although enfeoffed for a few years). Ship building in Östergötland was more limited, taking place only at Bråviken for a short spell during the 1580s, while the Crown had an active fishery in Lösing hundred only during the 1550s. The Crown's industrial activities in Östergötland were thus mainly focused on metals, although most initiatives were relatively short-lived.

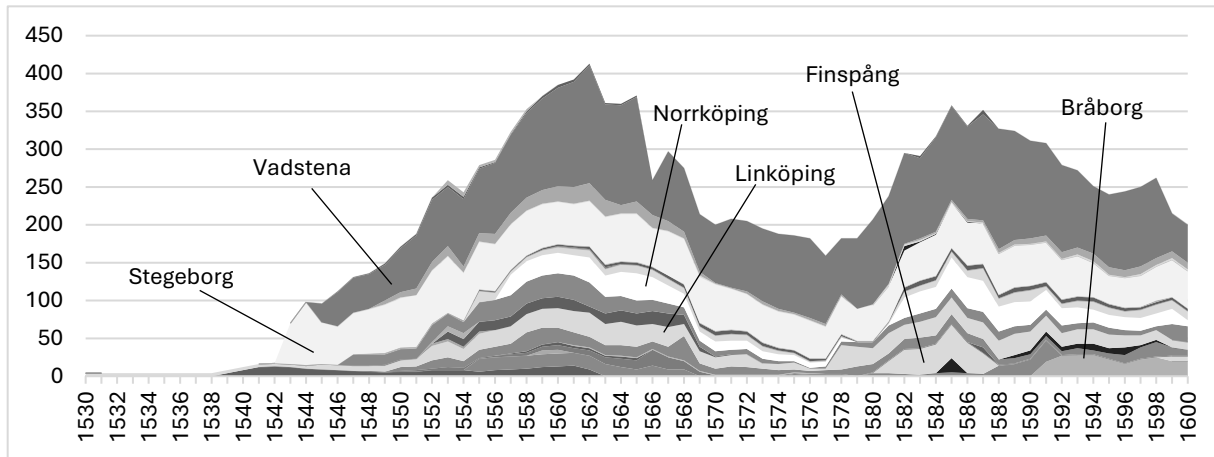


Figure I4.1. The number of households employed at various crown establishments in Östergötland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

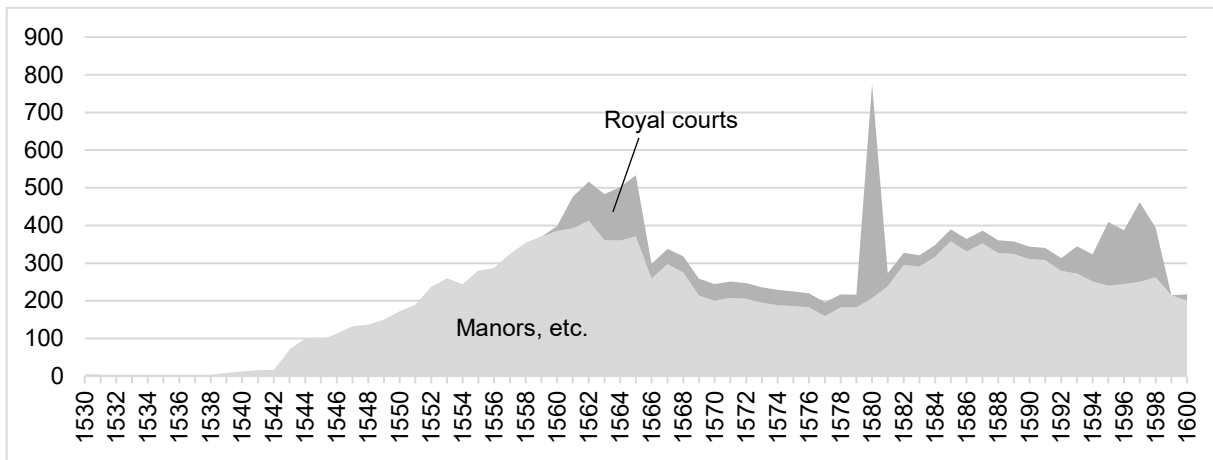


Figure I4.2. The number of households employed at various crown establishments and at the royal courts in Östergötland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

From having employed next to no households in Östergötland in 1530, the number of those employed by the Crown rose steadily from about 1542, until it reached over 400 by the early 1560s. The blow dealt to several manors by the invading Danish army led to a sudden decrease, from which the Crown's activities in the province never fully recovered. Although it is evident that the number of households employed by the Crown rose again during the 1580s, peaking at about 350, it then once more decreased until the end of the century, when it numbered only about 200. A large share was employed at Vadstena and Stegeborg castles, while those employed at the rest of the numerous manors in total only amounted to about one hundred.

Östergötland was also home to several of the smaller royal courts during the latter part of the century. Duke Magnus took up residency in Vadstena after his father's death, and remained in the province throughout his life, although moved (probably as a consequence of his mental illness) to Kungsbro manor in 1588. King John, evading plague in Stockholm, spent a good deal of 1580 with his court in Vadstena. In 1593 Duchess Elisabet, having returned to Sweden, settled with her court at Norrköping, where she died in 1597. Queen Gunilla Bielke likewise chose Östergötland after her husband's death in 1592, settling in newly built Bråborg castle together with her son Duke John. And finally Princess Anna settled at Stegeborg in 1595, only to soon follow her brother, the deposed King Sigismund, into exile in Poland in 1598.

5. *The Church*

There were four hospitals in sixteenth-century Östergötland, located in the towns of Linköping, Norrköping, Söderköping, and Vadstena. For Linköping hospital, accounts that list the number of employees and inmates survive for 1571 and then almost yearly from 1578 onwards.⁶¹⁷ From the accounts is clear that to the hospital belonged one demesne farm, located in Slaka outside the town. For Norrköping hospital, sources are more limited with accounts preserved only 1577–1579.⁶¹⁸ For Söderköping hospital, the source situation is better, with accounts listing the inmates surviving from 1568, 1573, 1578, and from 1582 onwards.⁶¹⁹ For Vadstena hospital finally, accounts are continuously preserved since 1581.⁶²⁰ In addition to the hospitals, Linköping cathedral was granted a demesne farm by King John III in the 1570s, for which accounts are preserved 1580–1591.⁶²¹

As Östergötland was the province in which not only most but also the wealthiest of the church institutions in Medieval Sweden had been located, the Reformation thus dealt a severe blow to the economy of the province. At Skänninge, the male Dominican convent was closed down before April 1529, while the female Dominican convent there was dissolved in 1544,⁶²² leading to the town losing its urban privileges. The Franciscan convent in Linköping was abandoned before 1529, its buildings converted into a hospital, while the Franciscan convent in Söderköping was converted (together with the Holy Spirit monastery) into a hospital in 1531.⁶²³ Further, the Franciscan convent located in rural Krokek was probably abandoned during the early 1540s. As for the monasteries, Cistercian Alvastra was probably abandoned around 1529, and was in the 1540s quarried for stone for the building of Vadstena castle, at the same time as the Crown used the site to establish a demesne manor. The Cistercian nunnery at Askeby was probably also abandoned in 1529. The Cistercian sisters in Vreta were much more persistent: they still numbered 2–3 in the 1570s, and their nunnery was abandoned only after 1582.⁶²⁴ Even longer lasted the Bridgettine monastery in Vadstena. The monastery's account book has survived, giving detailed

⁶¹⁷ E.g., Östergötlands handlingar 1571:20; 1578:9, RA.

⁶¹⁸ Östergötlands handlingar 1577:15; 1578:10, RA.

⁶¹⁹ E.g., Östergötlands handlingar 1568:9, RA.

⁶²⁰ E.g., Östergötlands handlingar 1581:2, RA.

⁶²¹ E.g., Östergötlands handlingar 1580:1, RA.

⁶²² Berntson 2003.

⁶²³ Berntson 2003.

⁶²⁴ An account book survives for Vreta 1522–1532 (X 953, KB), but is sadly in such a bad condition that its use is prohibited, awaiting restoration.

information about its workers 1546–1570 (although the number of members of the college has to be inferred from other sources).⁶²⁵ Vadstena monastery also ran a demesne farm at Orlunda, which is included in the same accounts. After the monastery was shut down by Duke Charles in 1595, Crown accounts were made in 1596, which also gives the number of those employed at the monastery and at Orlunda, leaving a gap in the sources to be interpolated for the period 1571–1595.⁶²⁶

There were about 80 parish priests in Östergötland in the sixteenth century.

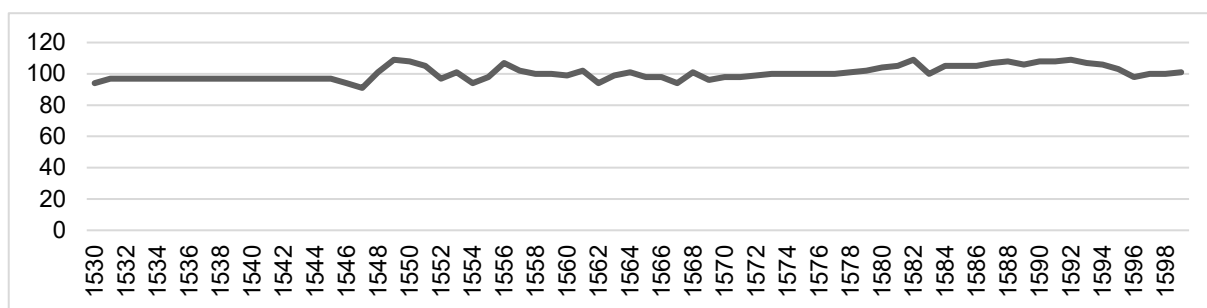


Figure I5.1. Total number of households employed by the church in Östergötland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

6. The Nobility

There are four manors belonging to the nobility in Östergötland from which accounts that give details about those employed survive from the sixteenth century: Björkvik, Liljestad, Ulvåsa, and Häradsäter. For Björkvik, accounts survive already from the 1560s, while accounts for Liljestad survive from the latter part of the 1570s, for Ulvåsa mainly from the 1580s, and for Häradsäter only from the 1590s.

Björkvik (in Östra Ryd parish, Skärkind hundred) was a manor owned by brothers Jöran and Karl Gera. Wage lists survive from 1560–1562, when Jöran Gera ran the manor, and from 1563–1566, when it had been passed over to Karl.⁶²⁷ Jöran Gera's accounts show him employing 3 householders, 4 male servants, and 7 women. Karl Gera's accounts are less complete, with no women mentioned; they list 3 householders, and 7 male servants.

⁶²⁵ Silfverstolpe 1895.

⁶²⁶ Östergötlands handlingar 1596:16, RA.

⁶²⁷ X265g, UUB.

Liljestad (in Skönberga parish, Hammarkind hundred) was long a demesne farm before it was inherited by Queen Gunilla Bielke in the late 1580s. Wages are (infrequently) listed in accounts 1577–1584, while a register of those employed was made in 1588 as the queen took over the manor.⁶²⁸ The wage lists show that Liljestad employed 2 householders, 4 male servants, and 6 women in 1577. In 1588, the number had been reduced to 2 householders, 3 male servants, and 4 women.

Ulvåsa (in Ekebyborna parish, Aska hundred) functioned as demesne farm (or rather, as one of several manors) owned by Hogenskild Bielke.⁶²⁹ Wage lists survive from 1579, 1584, and 1588, in addition to one undated list of those employed at the manor. Another wage list, from 1585, covers Hogenskild Bielke's court, as does an undated list.⁶³⁰ The lists show that at Ulvåsa worked 10–12 households, and probably about 10 male servants (the exact number is difficult to determine, as many are given no title in the accounts), as well as 15–18 women. Hogenskild Bielke's court ("mitt dagligen efterföljande tjänstefolk") consisted of 4–6 householders, 7–15 male servants, and 11–17 men listed without any titles given; in addition, only 0–2 women were employed by Hogenskild Bielke.

Häradsäter (in Värna parish, Bankekind hundred) was a manor owned by Axel Bielke in the 1590s. A food register survives for 1594–1595: it shows the manor employing (in 1594) only 1 householder, 3 male servants, and 7 women.⁶³¹ In 1595, a note says that master Axel and his wife visited with their court of 27 people, and that the staff of the manor now numbered 18 (to be compared with the 11 listed in 1594).

⁶²⁸ Östergötlands handlingar 1586:21; 1588:18, RA.

⁶²⁹ Hogenskild Bielkes samling, RA.

⁶³⁰ Hogenskild Bielkes samling, RA; Acta rörande ridderskapet och adeln, vol. 14, RA.

⁶³¹ Kungliga arkiv K 73, RA.

Table I6.1. The number of householders, servants, and women employed at manors in Östergötland, 1530–1600.

MANOR	YEARS	TYPE	HOUSEHOLDERS	MALE SERVANTS	WOMEN
BJÖRKVIK	1560s	manor	5	7	7
LILJESTAD	1577	demesne farm	2	3–4	4–6
ULVÅSA	1580s	demesne farm	10–12	10	15–18
HOGENSKILD BIELKE	1580s	court	4–6	7–15	0–2
HÄRADSÅTER	1594	manor	1	3	7

Source: Population database.

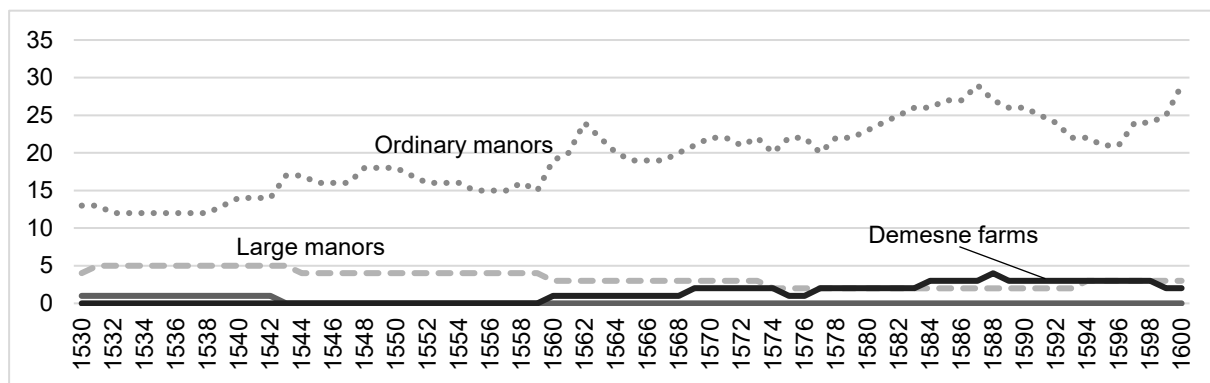


Figure I6.1. The number of nobility manors in Östergötland, 1530–1600.

Source: Population database.

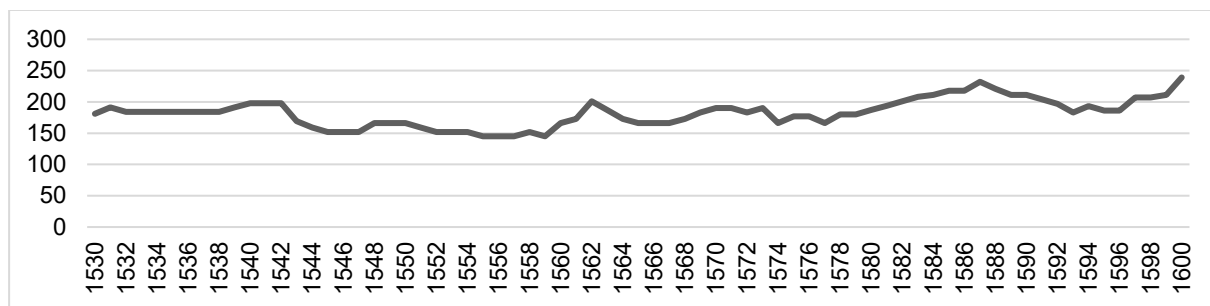


Figure I6.2. The number of households living at nobility manors in Östergötland, 1530–1600.

Source: Population database.

In 1530, there were less than 20 manors owned by the nobility in Östergötland, including the enfeoffed Stegeborg castle (which reverted back to the Crown in 1543). The number stayed below 30 until the 1580s, then reaching the level on which it would remain for the rest of the century. The number of households employed at those manors also increased, although only to some extent. Beginning at just below 200, the number dropped to about 150 in the 1540s as Stegeborg was taken back by the Crown. Reaching its previous level again in the 1560s, it remained around 200 until finally climbing up towards 250 households at the end of the century.

7. Towns

There were five towns in sixteenth-century Östergötland. In the earlier part of the century, Vadstena was largest, a town which however saw its civil population decline over time. Other towns in Östergötland, Söderköping as well as Linköping and Norrköping, instead gained in population, especially during the 1580s and 1590s. Only Skänninge remained a small town throughout the century, its population never reaching above the 100-household line.

Population data exist for four of the five towns in Östergötland already from the 1540s, while Söderköping has data only from 1555. There is however a gap in the data for several of the towns from 1540 into the 1560s, while the latter part of the century is generally well-covered; although Norrköping and Söderköping do not have any population lists later than 1590.

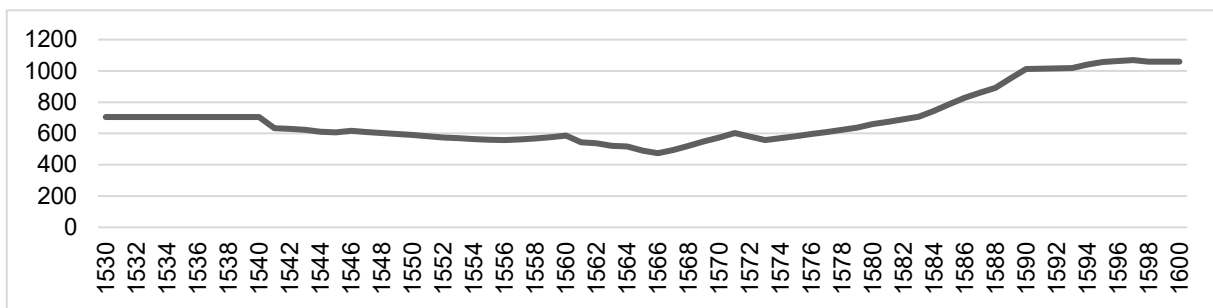


Figure I7.1. Total number of households in towns (excluding castles) in Östergötland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

Linköping (in Hanekind hundred) was located where one of the main roads leading up to Central Sweden crossed river Stångån, on the plains in Central Östergötland. The town was the bishop's see and thus lost importance following the Reformation,

when also the Franciscan convent shut down in 1529.⁶³² The crown however established a manor here already by 1530. The town burned down in 1546,⁶³³ and was then burned again during the 1560s' war. A population list earliest survives for 1540 and then again only from 1560.⁶³⁴ For the rest of the century, population figures exist for a number of years.⁶³⁵

Norrköping (in Lösing hundred) was located on the mouth of Motala Ström, where rapids hindered further navigation inland from Bråviken and the Baltic Sea.⁶³⁶ It was located on the border between Lösing and Bråbo hundreds but has here been counted with Lösing in its entirety. The fertile plain south of Lake Glan was the town's immediate upland, while vast marshlands made travel to the rest of the province cumbersome. For the increase in metal production in the mining districts in northern Östergötland during the sixteenth century, especially at Finspång, was Norrköping harbour however ideal, and the population increase towards the end of the century may be explained by export trade in iron. In 1567, the half of the town that was located south of Motala Ström was burned down by the Danish army, after which time the king ordered the town to be moved to the northern bank.⁶³⁷ A population register exists from 1540,⁶³⁸ and then the next from 1560.⁶³⁹ A number of population lists then survive from the 1560s, 1570s and 1580s, while the latest population figure comes from 1590.⁶⁴⁰

Skänninge (in Göstring hundred) was located on the fertile plains in Western Östergötland, close to several hundred borders.⁶⁴¹ The main roads from Östergötland south into Småland passed the town, and it was early an important religious centre, with both a male and a female Dominican convent. The former was closed in 1529, and the latter in the 1540s, as the king in 1543 also ordered the inhabitants of the town and all their market rights to be moved to nearby Vadstena, with which the town had been unable to compete during the later middle ages.⁶⁴² The former urban

⁶³² Berntson 2003.

⁶³³ PRF 2 nr 180.

⁶³⁴ Östergötlands handlingar 1540:1, RA; Silverskatten 1560, RA.

⁶³⁵ E.g., Köpsilverskatten 1573, vol. 2, RA; Sandberg'ska samlingen vol. YY:10, RA.

⁶³⁶ Broberg 1984 p. 6–10.

⁶³⁷ PRF 3 nr 65, 108.

⁶³⁸ Östergötlands handlingar 1540:1, RA.

⁶³⁹ Östergötlands handlingar 1560:21, RA.

⁶⁴⁰ E.g., Gärderegister vol. 1, RA.

⁶⁴¹ Hasselmo 1983 p. 6–8.

⁶⁴² PRF 2 nr 145.

land was then turned into peasant farmland, and the convents were quarried for stone for the building of Vadstena castle in 1547. The accounts show that the town really was converted into farmland. In 1570, just after the Nordic Seven Years' War, the king however decided that since Skänninge "has previously been a useful town", it should now regain its former privileges.⁶⁴³ Subsidy taxation lists of 1560 and 1563 do however indicate that there nevertheless was a small town there also during the middle of the century.⁶⁴⁴ Further population lists survive from 1571, 1590 and 1599.⁶⁴⁵

Söderköping (in Hammarkind hundred) was located on Storån, which falls into Slätbaken and the Baltic Sea some kilometres further downstream from the town.⁶⁴⁶ The town functioned as the main export town in Östergötland for grain, butter, and hides, also from the western part of the province, but because of land elevation the harbour had continuously to be moved further east. Located some kilometres east of the town was Stegeborg castle, which guarded the sailing route into Söderköping. As most of the other towns in Östergötland, Söderköping was burned down during the war in 1567. The earliest population data from Söderköping is a list from 1555,⁶⁴⁷ after which time the survival of lists from the 1560s and the 1570s is rather good.⁶⁴⁸ The last population data however comes from 1590.⁶⁴⁹

Vadstena (in Aska hundred) was located on a bay in Lake Vättern which was a good place for a harbour, and the town had good connections over the lake with Hjo in Västergötland, Jönköping in Småland, and Askersund in Närke, where Vadstena had rights to hold a market.⁶⁵⁰ The town thus prospered both due to its trade in grain from the fertile plains on which it was located, in iron arriving from the north, and due to the presence of the Vadstena monastery, which was the richest in all of Medieval Sweden.⁶⁵¹ Founded close to older Skänninge, it soon surpassed its neighbour, and the main roads all came to run over Vadstena instead of as previously over Skänninge. Although the monastery remained functioning into the 1590s, the town would have lost more population during the century had not the Crown decided to

⁶⁴³ PRF 3 nr 89.

⁶⁴⁴ Silverskatten 1560, RA; Brudskatten 1563, RA.

⁶⁴⁵ Älvsborgs lösen 1571, RA; Östergötlands handlingar 1590:19; 1600:6, RA.

⁶⁴⁶ Broberg & Hasselmo 1978 p. 6–10.

⁶⁴⁷ Östergötlands handlingar 1555:9, RA.

⁶⁴⁸ E.g., Sandbergska samlingen vol. YY:16, RA.

⁶⁴⁹ Östergötlands handlingar 1590:3, RA.

⁶⁵⁰ Hasselmo 1982 p. 6–10.

⁶⁵¹ Norborg 1958.

construct a large castle here in the 1540s, which after 1560 became the seat of Duke Magnus. In 1567, the town was burned down by the invading Danish army. The oldest population list survives already for 1540,⁶⁵² and several later taxation lists survive from the 1540s and 1550s, as well as for the latter part of the century.⁶⁵³

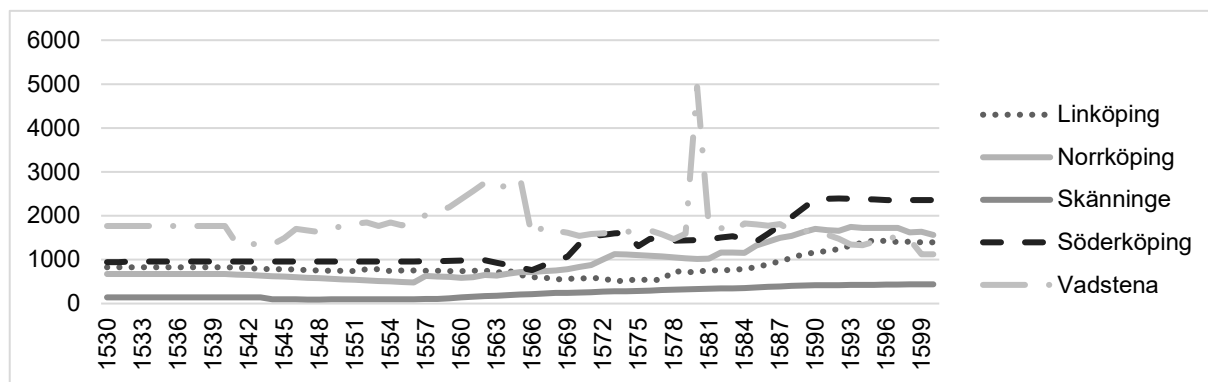


Figure I7.2. Population in towns in Östergötland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

Table I7.1. Total population in the towns of Östergötland, decadal figures, 1530–1600.

TOWN	1530	1540	1550	1560	1570	1580	1590	1600
LINKÖPING	828	828	744	738	570	714	1,164	1,392
NORRKÖPING	672	672	552	588	834	1,014	1,704	1,566
SKÄNNINGE	138	138	96	144	252	330	420	438
SÖDERKÖPING	942	960	960	978	1,356	1,446	2,376	2,358
VADSTENA	1,770	1,770	1,782	2,376	1,542	4,938	1,662	1,122

Source: Population database.

By far largest of the towns in Östergötland in the earlier part of the century was Vadstena, with some 1,700 inhabitants. Its population grew after 1560, as Duke Magnus took up residence at the castle with his court, but suffered from plague and warfare in the 1560s and from the fact that the duke, because of his mental illness, had his court substantially decreased. Being stagnant at about 1,500 inhabitants until the 1580s, when King John III resided there with his court during plague outbreaks in Stockholm, the town decreased further during the remainder of the century, ending up with just over

⁶⁵² Östergötlands handlingar 1540:1, RA.

⁶⁵³ E.g., Silverskatten 1560, RA; Köpsilverskatten 1573 vol. 2, RA; Sandbergska samlingen vol. YY:18, RA.

1,100 inhabitants by 1600. By then it had been surpassed by three other towns in Östergötland. Söderköping, Norrköping, and Linköping all had between 500 and 1,000 inhabitants in the 1530s and 1540s, with Söderköping being the largest. It also remained the largest, growing during the latter part of the century and reaching over 2,000 inhabitants around 1590. Norrköping with over 1,500 inhabitants by this time took over as the second largest town in Östergötland, while Linköping just surpassed Vadstena in the late 1590 with its 1,400 inhabitants. Compared to the other four towns, Skänninge always remained the by far smallest, although it also had a positive population trend during the latter part of the century.

J. Småland

The vast province of Småland was pieced together by a number of smaller provinces, of which some of the larger ones were Finnveden in the south-west, Västervik in the south, Möre in the south-east, and Njudung in the centre of the province. The population in the province was scattered, with many living along the coast of the Baltic Sea from the Danish border up to Östergötland, while another populous area was the hundreds around the southern tip of Lake Vättern. Småland shared a long border with the Danish provinces Blekinge, Skåne, and Halland. In total, the province consisted of a total of 24 hundreds. (This number includes Ydre and Kinda, which have been considered with Östergötland after the sixteenth century, but not Mo hundred, which still was considered part of Västergötland.) Tunalän became a proper hundred only in the 1540s, when some parishes were transferred from Sevede and Aspeländ hundreds; the larger Tunalän has been used as the constant unit of analysis also for the preceding decade.

1. Cadastral peasants

Accounts giving the number of cadastral peasants in Småland survive earliest from 1533 for five hundreds;⁶⁵⁴ for another two from 1535,⁶⁵⁵ while seven meet in a list of enfeoffed regions from 1536.⁶⁵⁶ Another three hundreds have data from 1538 or

⁶⁵⁴ Smålands handlingar 1533:1A; 1533:1B, RA.

⁶⁵⁵ Gärder och hjälper 1535, RA.

⁶⁵⁶ Förläningsregister vol. 39, RA.

1539.⁶⁵⁷ Östbo hundred comes in 1541,⁶⁵⁸ Tveta and Södra Vedbo in 1542.⁶⁵⁹ For three hundreds, Kinda, Ydre, and Västra hundred (in Njudung), the number of cadastral peasants is not known before 1545 (and for a quarter of Västra hundred, Kilbo fjärding, the number of cadastral peasants is actually not known before 1550).⁶⁶⁰

Although the sixteenth-century accounts from Småland are generally well-preserved, some data is missing for hundreds that were enfeoffed. The most important loss, for which numbers have to be estimated, is the number of deserted farms in Allbo, Kinnevald, and Norrvidinge hundreds in 1567–1572, and in Södra Vedbo hundred 1567–1570. Some data is further missing for the last years of the century, including the number of deserted farms in Östbo hundred in 1600, in Möre 1599–1600, and in parts of Vista and Södra Vedbo hundreds 1599–1600.

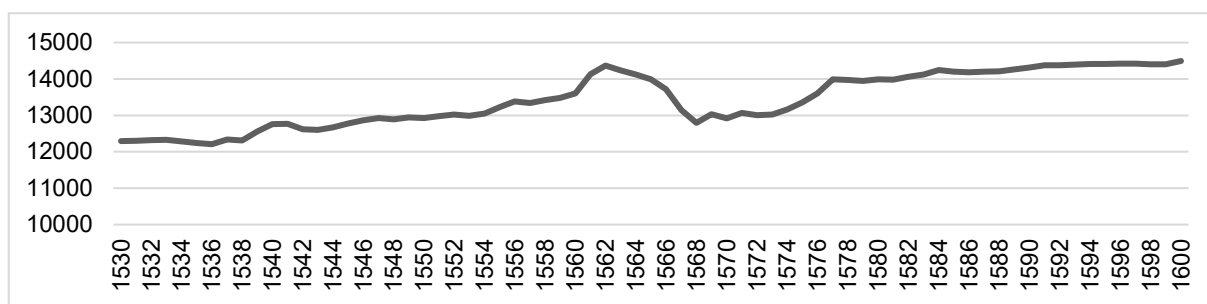


Figure J1.1. Cadastral peasants (excluding deserted farms) in Småland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

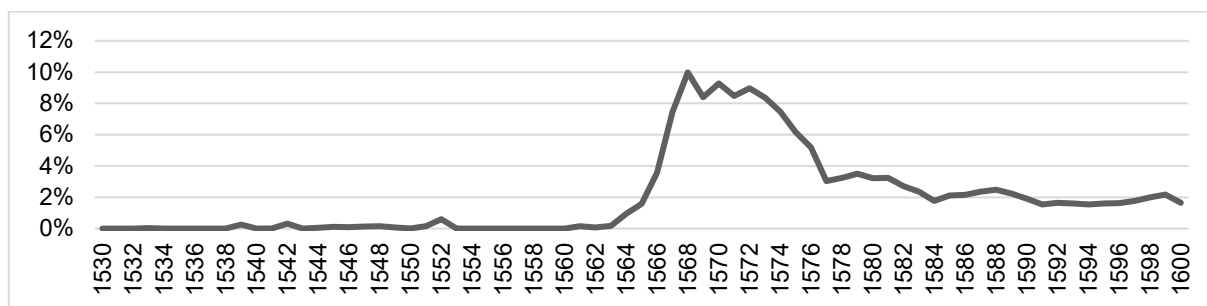


Figure J1.2. Deserted farms in Småland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

⁶⁵⁷ Smålands handlingar 1538:2; 1539:10, RA.

⁶⁵⁸ Smålands handlingar 1541:2, RA.

⁶⁵⁹ Östergötlands handlingar 1542:4; Smålands handlingar 1542:6. RA.

⁶⁶⁰ Östergötlands handlingar 1545:18; Smålands handlingar 1545:12; Smålands handlingar 1550:2, RA.

Cadastral peasants in Småland numbered more than 12,000 already in 1530. Reaching over 14,000 in 1562, it fell by 10% to 1570. It then recovered during the latter years of the 1570s and continued to grow until the end of the century, when it reached almost 14,500.

As expected, the regression phase during the Nordic Seven Years' War can clearly be identified in figure J1.2, which shows the total number of deserted farms in Småland reaching 10% around 1570 and only starting to recover after 1573. Regionally, a small peak (5%) in deserted farms was reported in 1542 for Stranda and Handbörd hundreds, possibly connected to the Dacke insurrection, while another early peak (7%) in farm desertion occurs in the same region in 1552. During the 1560s' war, the highest number of deserted farms (20–30%) is reported for Finnveden (Sunnerbo, Västbo, and Östbo hundreds) on the Danish border, where high levels of farm desertion lasted into the 1570s. Remarkable is also the relatively high level of desertion that lasted in Handbörd and Stranda hundreds all through the century (after a high peak of desertion had been registered in Stranda already in 1565).

Regarding deserted farms, the accounts from Kinda and Ydre in 1570 report that farms “have laid deserted that no one has lived upon”,⁶⁶¹ a clear indication of the demographic abandonment. From Tjust and Tunalän hundreds in 1576, it was reported that some deserted farms “stand completely deserted [...], by some peasants used for grass harvests, having mowed the meadows of these farms”.⁶⁶² Presumably such use by the neighbours of deserted farms, which had been deserted a decade before, also made it more difficult for others to once more take up residence there.

2. Division of farms

For most of Småland, the division of farms can be studied in subsidy lists from 1563,⁶⁶³ 1571,⁶⁶⁴ and 1599.⁶⁶⁵ In addition, some hundreds are covered also of taxation lists in 1560 and 1573.⁶⁶⁶ Tithe data go back to 1550, being especially abundant ca. 1556–1572, with some later data available also for the end of the 1570s and 1590–1591. As a

⁶⁶¹ ”Haver legat öde som ingen haver bott uppå”, Smålands handlingar 1570:12, RA.

⁶⁶² ”Stå platt öde – ödegods som ännu intet äro upptagna. Utav några bönder är upptaget gräsgäld, som hava bärgat ängarna utav dessa hemman.” Smålands handlingar 1576:13, RA.

⁶⁶³ Brudskatten 1563 vol. 1, RA.

⁶⁶⁴ Älvsborgs lösen 1571, RA.

⁶⁶⁵ E.g., Smålands handlingar 1599:12, RA.

⁶⁶⁶ Silverskatten 1560, RA; Köpsilverskatten 1573, vol. 2–3, RA.

whole, farm division in Småland can thus be best studied for the period 1550–1580, with coverage of about two thirds of the province up until 1600.

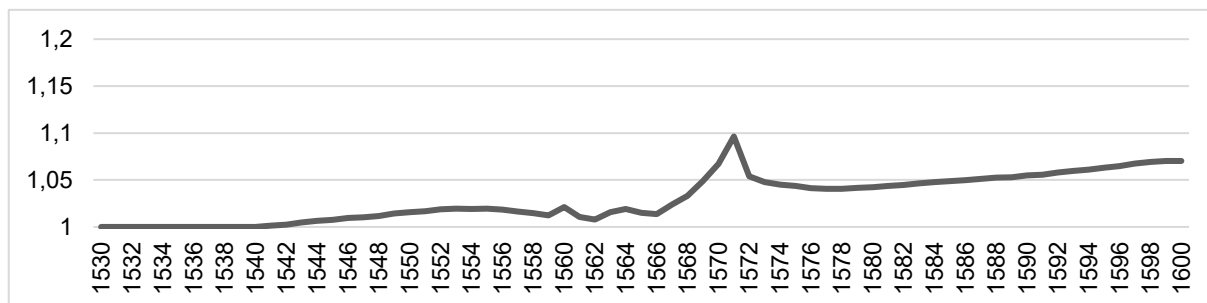


Figure J2.1. Division of farms in Småland, 1530–1600. For further explanation of the figure, see figure 2.1. Source: Population database.

Although some division of farms can be detected in Småland already in the 1540s and 1550s, it was then limited to only a couple of per cent. Regionally, Vista and Norra Vedbo hundreds show some of the higher figures, which soon however were converted into farms registered in the cadastres. A peak was reached in 1571, when the subsidy taxation lists indicate about 10% division of farms in Småland, especially in Sunnerbo and Östbo hundreds. As here a large number of farms were also reported as deserted, some of this difference is apparently due to farms just having become resettled but not yet recorded as such in the cadastre. During the latter part of the century, division of farms in Småland continued to rise, reaching about 7% in 1600. Regionally, this growth was especially intense in Konga hundred (which reached almost 50%) and in neighbouring Uppvidinge hundred (reaching 20%), indicating substantial population growth towards the end of the century.

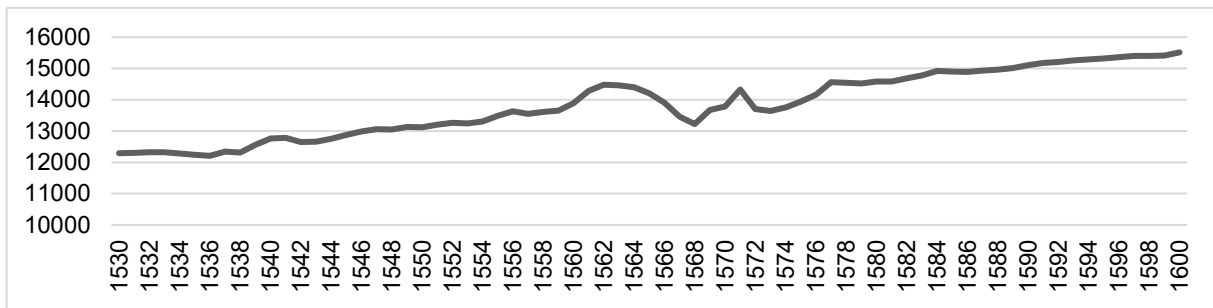


Figure J2.2. The total number of peasant households in Småland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

The number of peasant households in Småland was around 12,300 in 1530. Growing until 1562, when it reached close to 14,500, it then fell by 6% to a low in 1573. (The peak in 1571 shows the uncertainty caused by the large number of division of farms in the southern part of the province in this year.) Recovering during the 1570s, the previous growth trend was subsumed around 1580, lasting throughout the century. In 1600, the number of peasant households reached over 15,500, meaning that it had grown by 26% since 1530.

3. Cottagers

Cottagers in Småland are well-reported in subsidy taxation lists from 1571,⁶⁶⁷ 1576,⁶⁶⁸ 1579,⁶⁶⁹ 1589,⁶⁷⁰ 1590,⁶⁷¹ 1596,⁶⁷² and 1600.⁶⁷³ In addition, some cottagers are listed in taxation lists already 1536–1537.⁶⁷⁴ In 1543, cottagers in five hundreds paid *soningspenningar* for their involvement in the Dacke rebellion.⁶⁷⁵ Cottagers in various hundreds in addition paid local taxes or performed corvée labour during a number of years during the 1540s through 1560s,⁶⁷⁶ as well as in three hundreds at late as in 1591.⁶⁷⁷ The data on cottagers in Småland is thus good for the period from

⁶⁶⁷ Älvsborgs lösen 1571, RA.

⁶⁶⁸ Drängeregister 1576, RA.

⁶⁶⁹ E.g., Brudskatten 1579, vol. 1, RA.

⁶⁷⁰ E.g., Smålands handlingar 1589:1, RA.

⁶⁷¹ E.g., Smålands handlingar 1590:1, RA.

⁶⁷² E.g., Smålands handlingar 1596:11, RA.

⁶⁷³ E.g., Smålands handlingar 1600:6B, RA.

⁶⁷⁴ Smålands handlingar 1533:1A, RA.

⁶⁷⁵ Smålands handlingar 1543:11, RA.

⁶⁷⁶ E.g., Smålands handlingar 1559:9, RA.

⁶⁷⁷ Smålands handlingar 1591:7, RA.

the 1540s to the 1590s, although some hundreds are better equipped with data than others.

Notes in the accounts sometimes comment on the total lack of cottagers in an area. For Norrvinge and Västra hundreds in 1590, the bailiff claimed “that no such persons have been in his district, except for those who have been conscripted as soldiers, and except for the following”, whereafter only one cottager in Norrvinge was named.⁶⁷⁸ For neighbouring Östra and Uppvinge hundreds, the bailiff in the same year likewise claimed “that no such persons have been in his district, except for those that are conscripted as soldiers”.⁶⁷⁹ Military conscriptions during the 1580s thus was one explanation for the lack of cottagers at least in parts of Småland around 1590.

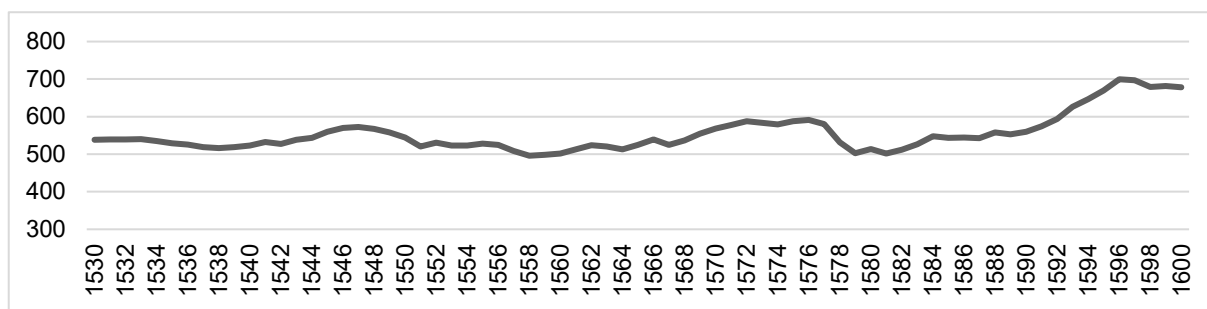


Figure J3.1. Total number of cottager households in Småland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

Cottagers in Småland numbered about 550 from 1530 to the 1570s. After a small drop in the 1580s (possibly due to military conscriptions), the number started growing, reaching close to 700 at the end of the century, which was an increase by 26% compared to seventy years before.

⁶⁷⁸ “Att inga sådana personer hava varit uti hans befällning, utan de som äro utskrivna till knektar, mer än dessa efterskrivna.” Smålands handlingar 1590:16, RA.

⁶⁷⁹ “Att inga sådana personer hava varit uti hans befällning, utan de som äro utskrivna till knektar.” Smålands handlingar 1590:7, RA.

4. The Crown

In 1530, the Crown had the two castles in Småland, Kronoberg and Kalmar, as well as the demesne farm Grönskog, which was however soon shut down. In the 1540s, the small Rosendal demesne farm was founded but closed down again after a few years. Only in the 1550s did the Crown begin to invest in manors in Småland: Grönskog, Hammar, Högsby, Kungs-Osby, Strömsrum, Virbo and Värnanäs. Some were soon closed again, while others were founded during the early 1560s (Åby, Eknaholm, Jönköping). In addition, Kalmar castle attained two demesne farms in Perstorp and Skällby. As a direct or indirect consequence of the Nordic Seven Years' War (some manors were burned down, such as Hammar and Jönköping), the number of crown establishments in Småland then decreased, with no new demesne farms created during the remainder of the century. In 1600, as in 1530, only Kronoberg and Kalmar castles remained (although remaining were also the two demesne farms under Kalmar).

In Småland, the crown pursued no metal industries but instead invested in fisheries and ship buildings. Its first two fisheries (Simpevarp and Stånghamn) were established in 1553; later followed Torforsen (1555), Skäggenäs (1557), Emån (1560), and Tjusts skär (1560). The latter two lasted for only a year, while Skäggenäs and Torforsen remained running until 1574. Ship buildings were in contrast more important. A major shipyard was established in Kalmar during the 1550s, which had its main function during the 1560s' war. During the war, Västervik shipyard was founded, which remained in use as a site for ship building into the 1570s. Ships were further built at Björkenäs around 1560 and again in the 1570s, when the ship building was moved north first to Svartöhamn (in 1578) and then on to Drakenäs outside Mönsterås (1579–1595).

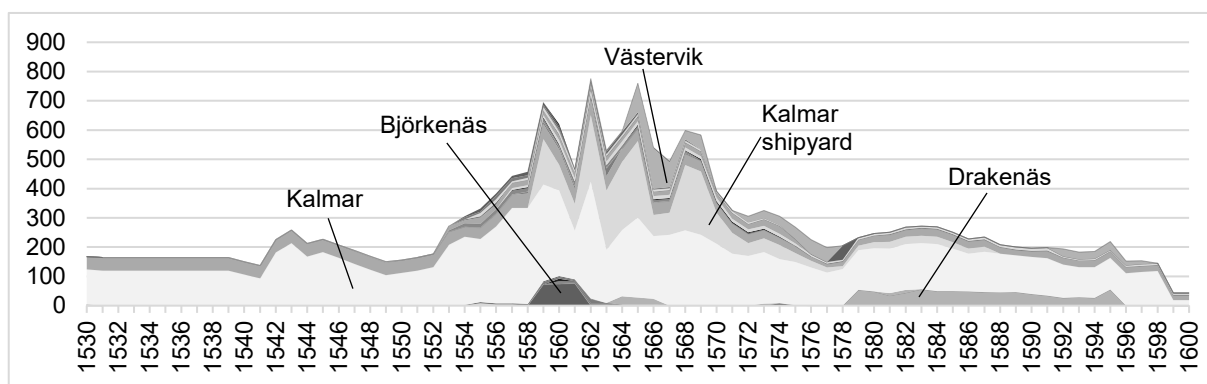


Figure J4.1. The number of households employed at various crown establishments in Småland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

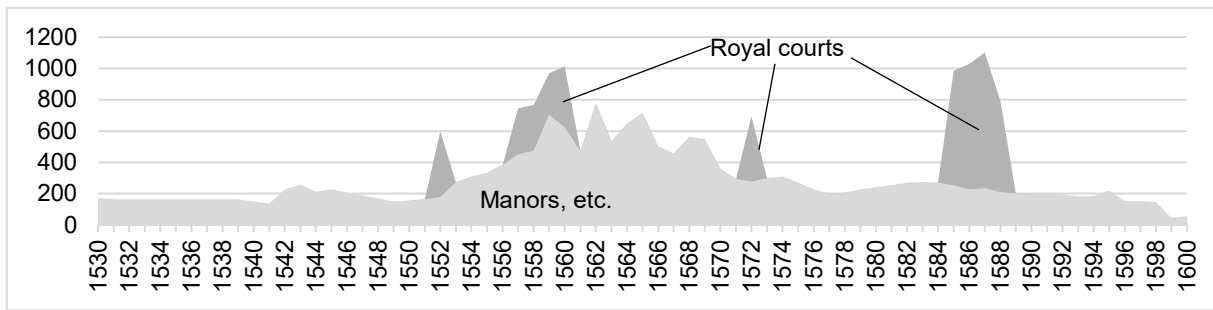


Figure J4.2. The number of households employed at various crown establishments and at the royal courts in Småland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

While the Crown already in 1530 had a significant number of households employed in Småland, most of which were working at the castle in Kalmar, the number still increased from around 200 to more than 700 during the Nordic Seven Years' War of the 1560s. This was mainly due to an increase of the number of employed at Kalmar castle and at the shipyard in Kalmar; other smaller contributions were made by the other ship buildings. In contrast, the vast number of fisheries and demesne farms in Småland were all too small to affect the total number of households employed. (The volatility in the numbers employed during the 1560s is an effect of the wartime conditions.) After 1570, the shipyard in Kalmar shrunk to almost nothing, at the same time as the staff of the castle was reduced, and the number of other crown establishments in Småland was decreasing. Decreasing throughout the 1580s and 1590s, the number of households employed by the Crown then decreased to less than 50 at the end of the century: This reflects a situation in which Kalmar castle sided with King Sigismund, was besieged and then conquered. (Data is however available only for 1599, not for 1600, by which time Kalmar probably had begun to be re-staffed.)

When royal courts spent longer times in Småland, they always did so on Kalmar castle. King Gustav I spent a good part of the plague year 1552 here; later, his son Duke Erik took up residency here 1557–1560, after which time he ascended the throne and moved to Stockholm. King John III spent the plague year 1572 here and then resided here during the 1580s (although also spending considerable time in Vadstena), when he for a few years rarely visited Stockholm at all.

5. The Church

There were three hospitals in Småland in the sixteenth century, located in Jönköping, Kalmar, and Växjö. For the hospital in Kalmar, accounts listing those employed are preserved already from the 1540s, although continuous accounts only survive from 1576–1586; the number of inmates is further given in 1563.⁶⁸⁰ Växjö hospital has more or less preserved accounts since 1573,⁶⁸¹ while the earliest surviving accounts from Jönköping hospital start in 1570.⁶⁸²

As for other religious institutions, the Cistercian monastery at Nydala was probably abandoned in 1529, while the Knights Hospitaller monastery at Kronobäck was (according to King Gustav) first turned into a hospital but then quarried for stone in the 1540s for the church in nearby Mönsterås.⁶⁸³ The Franciscan convent in Växjö was abandoned probably in 1530, and quarried for construction work at Kronoberg castle, while the Dominican convent in Kalmar was abandoned soon after 1531, the Crown later using the buildings for a stable and a kitchen.⁶⁸⁴ While two convents possibly survived in 1530, both were thus abandoned in the early 1530s.

The parish clergy in Småland numbered about 140 in the sixteenth century.

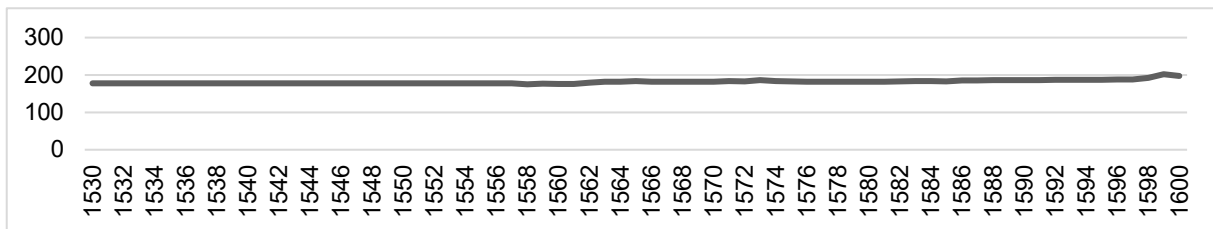


Figure J5.1. Total number of households employed by the church in Småland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

⁶⁸⁰ E.g., Smålands handlingar 1548:6B; 1563:29; 1581:4, RA.

⁶⁸¹ Smålands handlingar 1573:4B, RA.

⁶⁸² Smålands handlingar 1570:16, RA.

⁶⁸³ Berntson 2003.

⁶⁸⁴ Berntson 2003.

6. The Nobility

There are just two accounts preserved from nobility manors in Småland from the 1500s which include lists of those employed, coming from Vinäs and Bro manors, and both dating to the 1590s. In addition, Karl Gera in his private account book noted the number of women he tipped when visiting three manors in 1565.

According to his account book, Karl Gera visited the large manor Bergkvara (in Bergunda parish, Kinnevald hundred) in 1564 and again in 1565, tipping 5 and 8 women respectively. He visited Näs (in Adelöv parish, Norra Vedbo hundred), a small manor, in 1565, tipping 4 women. He further visited Herrestad (in Kärda parish, Östbo hundred) both in 1563 and 1565, tipping 5 women.⁶⁸⁵

Vinäs (in Ed parish, Tjust hundred) was a large manor, owned by the high nobility; in the 1590s it belonged to Maurits Grip's daughters. Food registers survive from 1590–1592.⁶⁸⁶ These show that the manor employed 6–10 householders, 6–10 male servants, and 6–8 women, and that additionally 2 children received food at the manor.

Bro (in Vårdnäs parish, Kinda hundred) was a large manor, owned by the member of the high nobility Erik Månsson (Natt och Dag). Wage lists survive from 1593 and 1595, when the manor probably functioned as a demesne farm.⁶⁸⁷ It then employed 7–8 householders, 7–8 male servants, and 9–11 women.

Table J6.1. The number of householders, servants, and women employed at manors in Småland, 1530–1600.

MANOR	YEARS	TYPE	HOUSEHOLDERS	MALE SERVANTS	WOMEN
BERGKVARA	1565	large	–	–	8
NÄS	1565	manor	–	–	4
HERRESTAD	1565	manor	–	–	5
VINÄS	1590s	large	6–10	6–10	6–8
BRO	1590s	large	7–8	7–8	9–11

Source: Ppulation database.

⁶⁸⁵ X 265h, UUB.

⁶⁸⁶ Wijksamlingen, RA.

⁶⁸⁷ Acta rörande ridderskapet och adeln, vol. 17, RA.

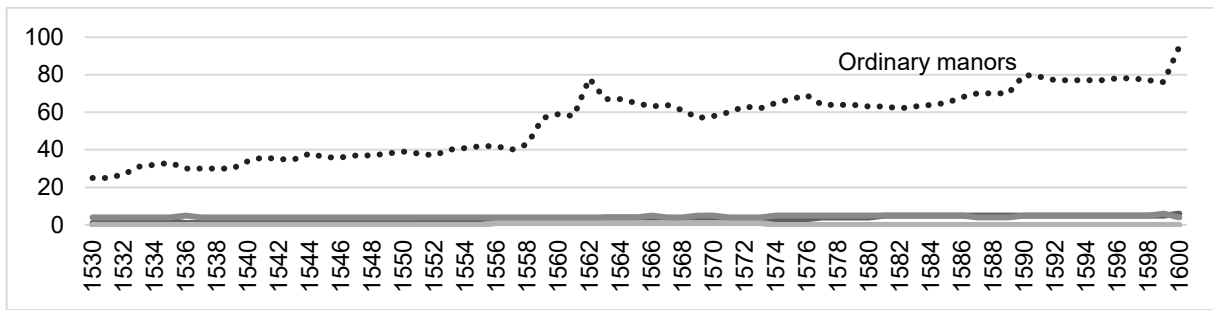


Figure J6.1. The number of nobility manors in Småland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

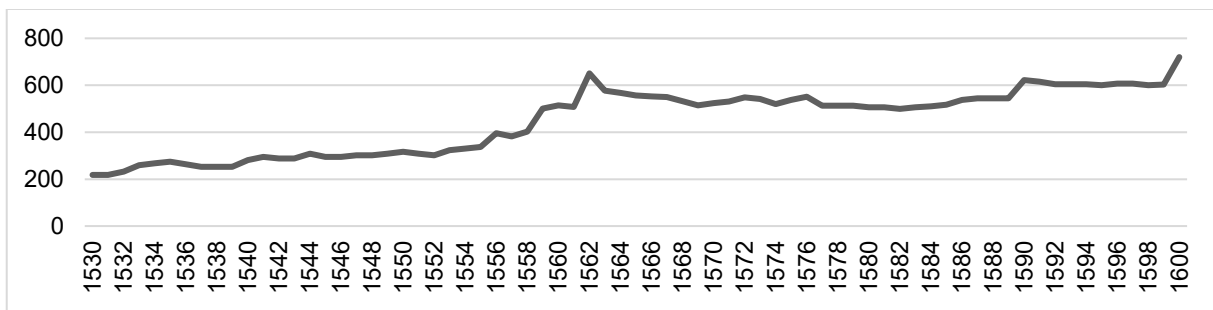


Figure J6.2. The number of households living at nobility manors in Småland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

There were only 30 nobility manors in Småland in 1530. More than doubling until 1560, the number then remained rather stable at 60–70 until the late 1580s, when it rather rapidly rose to close to 100 at the end of the century. In terms of households employed, this means that the number increased from about 200 in 1530 to over 650 in the early 1560s, including the recently constructed Jönköping castle. (Jönköping castle was enfeoffed, but taken back by the Crown in 1563, at the same time as Kronoberg castle became enfeoffed for another decade.) Remaining at a level of between 500 and 600 households until the end of the 1580s, the number went up during the 1590s, reaching over 700 at the end of the century.

7. Towns

There were nine towns in Småland during the sixteenth century. Most populous was by far Kalmar, although it suffered greatly during the 1560s due to the war. In second place came Jönköping, and third Västervik, the latter having a population around or just above the 100-household line. Much smaller were Eksjö and Växjö, the latter perhaps just reaching 100 households at the end of the century. Three really small

towns in Småland that existed in 1530 were all abandoned during the 1540s or 1550s, while one town (Mönsterås) came into being during the latter part of the century. Overall, the number of urban households in Småland (excluding castles etc.) was about the same in 1530 as in 1600, although it had been much lower during the middle of the century.

Of the larger towns, Kalmar and Jönköping have population data already from the 1540s, while the earliest records from Eksjö and Våxjö survive only from the 1550s. Of the non-micro towns, Västervik has data only from 1562 onwards. As for the end of the century, Våxjö and Västervik has no population data later than 1593, and Jönköping no later than 1594.

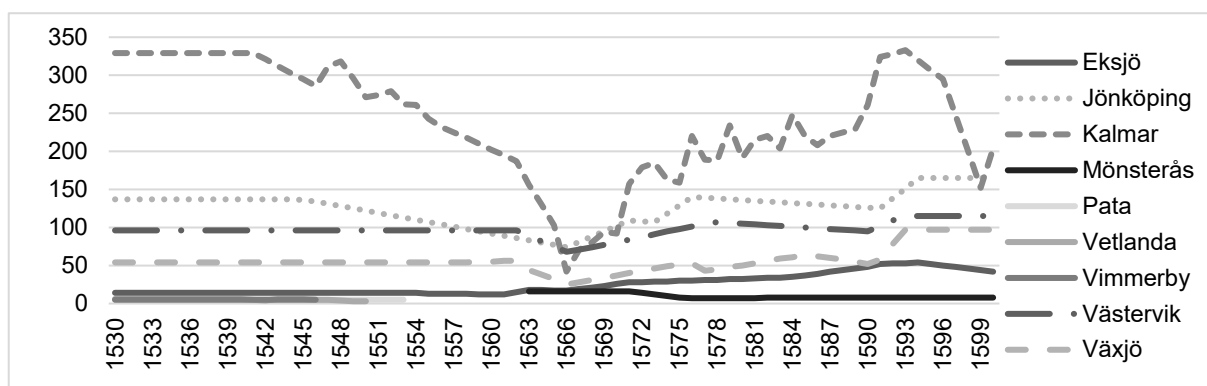


Figure J7.1. The number of households in various towns (excluding castles) in Småland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

Eksjö (in Södra Vedbo hundred) was located in Northern Småland on the crossroads between the road leading from the Baltic Sea over Jönköping westwards into Västergötland, and the road leading north from Kalmar to Skänninge and Östergötland.⁶⁸⁸ The inhabitants traded in animal products in Kalmar, and above all in oxen, driven north into Central Sweden. Although the king in 1544 revoked the urban privileges and ordered the inhabitants to move to Västervik or Jönköping, some urban population remained.⁶⁸⁹ The town was burned down by the invading Danish

⁶⁸⁸ Varenius 1984 p. 6–10.

⁶⁸⁹ PRF 2 nr 153.

army in 1568 and was then rebuilt in a nearby location.⁶⁹⁰ In 1600, another order was passed that Eksjö should be abandoned and its inhabitants move to Kalmar, but was soon cancelled.⁶⁹¹ The earliest surviving population list for Eksjö comes from 1551.⁶⁹² Several later lists exist for the 1560s, 1571, the 1580s, and the 1590s.⁶⁹³

Jönköping (in Tveta hundred) was located on the southern shore of Lake Vättern, where the main roads from Västergötland and Östergötland met with the main road leading south into Inner Småland and on to Denmark.⁶⁹⁴ The town inhabitants were trading in animal products, which were exported over Söderköping, Nya Lödöse, and Danish Halmstad, as well as oxen driven north to the mining districts in Central Sweden. The Crown built a castle in Jönköping (using the buildings of the abandoned Franciscan convent) which was enfeoffed until 1563 and then burned down together with the whole town in 1567 by the retreating Swedish army. The earliest population surviving population register for Jönköping dates from 1544.⁶⁹⁵ Then follows a gap to 1566, whereafter population figures are given several times during the 1570s, and then again in the 1590s.⁶⁹⁶

Kalmar (in Norra Möre hundred) was the by far largest town in Småland. It was located in Möre on the coast of the Baltic Sea, on the narrowest part of the Kalmar strait between Öland and Småland.⁶⁹⁷ Export trade from Kalmar mainly involved animal products from Inner Småland. In the town, one of the most important of the Crown's castles was located, which was often visited by the royal court, especially by King John III during the 1580s. Kalmar was also (besides Stockholm) the only town in Sweden with a proper town wall or fortification. The town and castle was besieged during the Nordic Seven Years' War of the 1560s, which led to a severe population decrease; in 1566, the king suggested that since the number of inhabitants in Kalmar had fallen so suddenly, perhaps merchants from Norrland could move there, a proposition repeated (with unknown result) in 1569.⁶⁹⁸ The earliest surviving population list comes from 1541, and – exceptional for Sweden – town accounts

⁶⁹⁰ PRF 3 nr 57 & 76.

⁶⁹¹ PRF 4 nr 128 & 133.

⁶⁹² Smålands handlingar 1551:1, RA.

⁶⁹³ E.g., Smålands handlingar 1592:6, RA; Sandbergsska samlingen vol. YY:4, RA.

⁶⁹⁴ Areslätt 1984 p. 6–11.

⁶⁹⁵ Smålands handlingar 1544:2, RA.

⁶⁹⁶ E.g., Sandbergsska samlingen vol. YY:8, RA; Städernas acta vol. 10, RA.

⁶⁹⁷ Selling 1984 p. 6–11.

⁶⁹⁸ PRF 3 nr 49 & 70.

including population lists then survive for most of the century.⁶⁹⁹ Kalmar is consequently the (besides Stockholm) best recorded urban population in sixteenth-century Sweden.

Mönsterås (in Stranda hundred) was located on a small bay on the Baltic Sea coast, north of Kalmar. It is usually not seen as a town in the sixteenth century.⁷⁰⁰ Kronobäck monastery, which was located adjacent, was quarried in the 1540s for an expansion of the church in Mönsterås,⁷⁰¹ and the Crown had a shipbuilding located at Drakenäs just outside Mönsterås from the 1570s and into the 1590s. In 1571, the place was called a “marketplace” (*marknadsplats*), listed in the subsidy taxation list with a permanent population, and was subsequently included in lists of towns (paying urban taxes) in 1580,⁷⁰² 1582,⁷⁰³ and 1599–1600.⁷⁰⁴ Further population lists survive from 1576 and 1589.⁷⁰⁵

Pata (in Stranda hundred) was located in Ålem parish on the Baltic Sea coast, north of Kalmar and south of Mönsterås. Pata is mentioned in central accounts as a town 1540–1544,⁷⁰⁶ but no population lists survive, although a few of its inhabitants were performing corvée labour at Kalmar castle in 1546–1549.⁷⁰⁷ The town was abandoned around 1553 when the Crown founded Strömsrum demesne farm on its land.⁷⁰⁸

Vetlanda (in Östra hundred in Njudung) likewise belonged to the smallest of the towns in Sweden. It was paying urban taxes in 1526,⁷⁰⁹ and was called a town in the accounts of 1539,⁷¹⁰ while it later instead was referred to as “Vetlanda torg” or “på torget”, indicating that its function as a town had now probably ceased. Population

⁶⁹⁹ Smålands handlingar 1541:10, RA.

⁷⁰⁰ Although I have not included Mönsterås in the population calculations before 1571 as a town, the fact that several earlier mentions are made of plots and *tomtöre* payments perhaps suggest an earlier urban settlement; Brunius & Ferm 1990 p. 236–237.

⁷⁰¹ Berntson 2003.

⁷⁰² Strödda kamerala handlingar vol. 68, RA.

⁷⁰³ Smålands handlingar 1582:6, RA.

⁷⁰⁴ Sandbergsska samlingen vol. R2, RA.

⁷⁰⁵ Smålands handlingar 1576:3; 1589:10, RA.

⁷⁰⁶ Länsregister, RA.

⁷⁰⁷ E.g., Smålands handlingar 1546:11, RA.

⁷⁰⁸ Brunius & Ferm 1990 s. 285–286. Further on Pata, see Ferm 1989.

⁷⁰⁹ Forssell 1875, who further says that “the place no doubt had no privileges but was one of these *fläckar*, which at this time were quite numerous”, however without giving any further examples.

⁷¹⁰ Smålands handlingar 1539:3, RA.

lists only survive for the 1540s, showing the place then only being inhabited by 3–6 households.

Vimmerby (in Sevede hundred) was a local market centre, located close to the main road leading from Stockholm to Kalmar.⁷¹¹ Not much is known of its trade; its inhabitants might have been involved in transporting oxen to the mining districts in Central Sweden. The town was burned down during the war in 1567. Vimmerby paid urban taxes in 1526,⁷¹² and was mentioned as a town in the accounts until 1546.⁷¹³ The town was then abandoned and converted into peasant farmland, although when urban privileges were regained in 1604, this was explained as being due to the old privileges having gone missing. No population lists survive from the sixteenth century, so its size has been estimated to have been equal to that of Vetlanda and Pata.

Västervik (in Tjust hundred) was located on a bay on the Baltic Sea coast. The town moved several times between two locations: in 1517 it moved to the site Gamleby, and (after the king in 1543 had tried to make the inhabitants abandon the town and move to Kalmar⁷¹⁴) in 1544 the town was moved back to its present place close to the enfeoffed Stäkeholm castle.⁷¹⁵ The inhabitants traded in fish and animal products over the Baltic Sea. The Crown's ship building in Västervik employed at most over 100 households in the 1560s and was an important establishment in the town also during the 1570s and 1590s. The earliest population lists for Västervik survive for 1562,⁷¹⁶ while later registers come from 1578, 1590, and 1593.⁷¹⁷

Växjö (in Kinnevald hundred) was the centre of Värend in Inner Småland, not least due to it being the seat of the bishop.⁷¹⁸ As the Franciscan convent was abandoned by 1530, Växjö as other Medieval religious centres would have suffered from the Reformation, although it benefited from the Crown investing in Kronoberg castle a few kilometres north of the town. In 1570, the town was burned down by retreating Danish troops. The oldest surviving population list comes from 1557.⁷¹⁹ A number of

⁷¹¹ Åhman 1984 p. 6–8.

⁷¹² Forssell 1875.

⁷¹³ E.g., Smålands handlingar 1539:3, RA.

⁷¹⁴ PRF 2 nr 148.

⁷¹⁵ Sandell 1988.

⁷¹⁶ Sandberg'ska samlingen vol. YY:18, RA.

⁷¹⁷ Smålands handlingar 1578:3; 1590:1, RA; Sandberg'ska samlingen vol. YY:18, RA.

⁷¹⁸ Åhman 1983.

⁷¹⁹ Smålands handlingar 1557:23, RA.

years during the following decades are then covered by population lists, the last of which dates from 1593.⁷²⁰

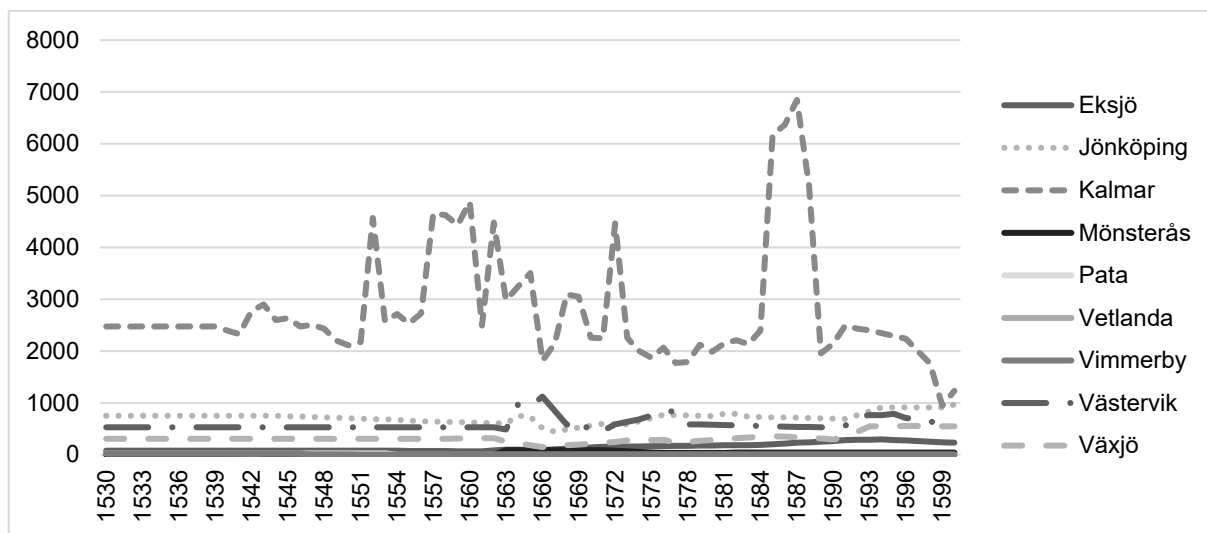


Figure J7.2. Population in towns in Småland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

Table J7.1. Total population in the towns of Småland, decadal figures, 1530–1600.

TOWN	1530	1540	1550	1560	1570	1580	1590	1600
EKSJÖ	84	84	84	72	156	192	288	252
JÖNKÖPING	822	822	768	678	612	816	762	1,056
KALMAR	2,700	2,616	2,304	5,322	2,466	2,166	2,334	1,344
MÖNSTERÅS	0	0	0	0	96	42	60	240
PATA	30	30	30	0	0	0	0	0
VETLANDA	36	36	18	0	0	0	0	0
VIMMERBY	30	30	0	0	0	0	0	0
VÄSTERVIK	576	576	576	576	480	630	570	690
VÄXJÖ	336	336	336	342	234	306	324	600

Source: Population database.

Largest of the towns in Småland was by far Kalmar, which had about 2,700 inhabitants in the 1530s. It had several periods of rapid expansion, as the royal court

⁷²⁰ E.g., Sandberg'ska samlingen vol.YY:19, RA.

visited during plague outbreaks in Stockholm. In addition, Kalmar was the seat of Duke Erik in the late 1550s, and then of King John III in several years in the 1580s. This created a particular boom-and-bust pattern, with population figures reaching over 5,000 in the 1550s and over 6,000 in the 1580s. Yet, the civil population of Kalmar decreased over the century, especially after King John left with his court, and the town suffered further population loss during the civil war of the 1590s. At the end of the century, the population of Kalmar had thus decreased to just about 1,300.

The second town in Småland during most of the century was Jönköping, which however just reached 1,000 inhabitants by 1600. Third was Västervik, which thanks to its large ship building industry succeeded to rise above this level in a few years of the 1560s. The population of Västervik otherwise remained between 500 and 700. The rest of the towns in Småland were all smaller than this, with Växjö just climbing over the 500-line in the 1590s.

K. Öland

The long and narrow island of Öland is located in the Baltic Sea, just outside the coast of Småland. Öland was the southernmost province of sixteenth-century Sweden, and thus suffered heavily during the war of the 1560s. The island was divided into eight small hundreds. These were however usually grouped together in the accounts into two larger *mot* (originally a clerical division of the island), consisting of the northern and the southern halves of the island respectively.⁷²¹ The Crown established a number of demesne farms on the island during the century, of which Borgholm was converted into a castle during the 1570s. There was however no town on Öland, although Kalmar across the sound in Småland would have been important for the island's trade.

⁷²¹ Axelsson, Janzon & Rahmqvist 1996 p. 27–29.

1. Cadastral peasants

The number of cadastral peasants is known for all of Öland from 1535, with no later data missing.⁷²²

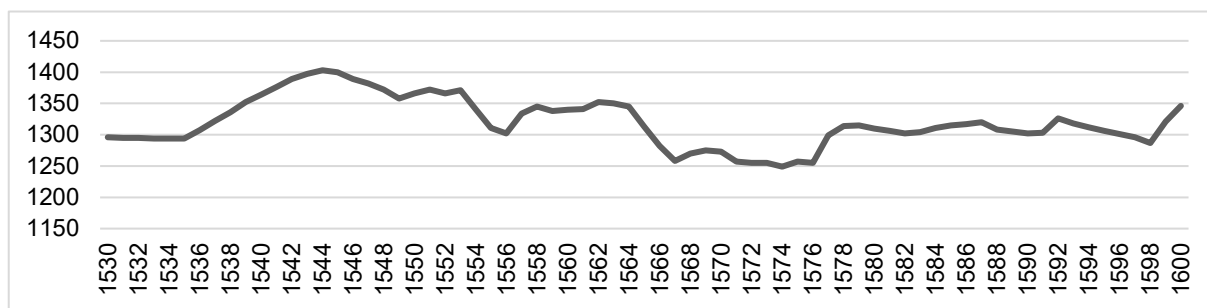


Figure K1.1. Cadastral peasants (excluding deserted farms) on Öland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

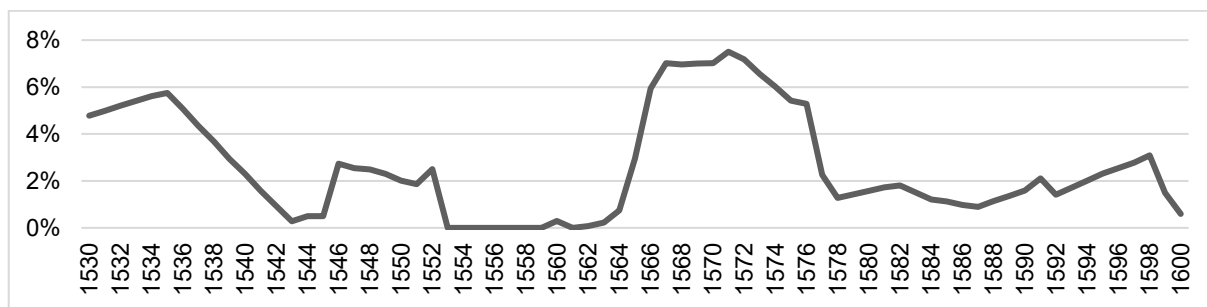


Figure K1.2. Deserted farms on Öland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

There were about 1,300 cadastral peasants on Öland in 1530, a number which grew to 1,400 by 1545. The number then began to decrease, first during the 1550s and then more significantly during the 1560s, when it became lower than it had been even in 1530. As can be seen in figure K1.2, this was mainly due to farms becoming deserted (especially in Södra Motet where the level of desertion reached 12% during the war in the 1560s). Although desertion decreased towards the end of the 1570s, the number of cadastral peasants on the island never recovered, remaining around 1,300 throughout the century.

⁷²² Gärder och hjälper 1535, RA.

It is also worth noting that already the earliest accounts from the 1530s report (about 5%) deserted farms on Öland; the deserted farms of the 1540s may be a remnant of this. Whatever their origin, which must date back to before 1535, there seems to have been a high propensity for some farms on Öland to become abandoned, leading to farms becoming permanently abandoned, before 1535 as well as after the 1570s.

2. Division of farms

Farm division on Öland can be studied through the subsidies of 1571 and 1573 (for Norra Motet).⁷²³ In addition, grain tithe data is available for many years during the 1550s, 1560s, and 1570s, as well as for the period 1585–1590. This means that farm division on Öland can be studied for the period 1550–1590.

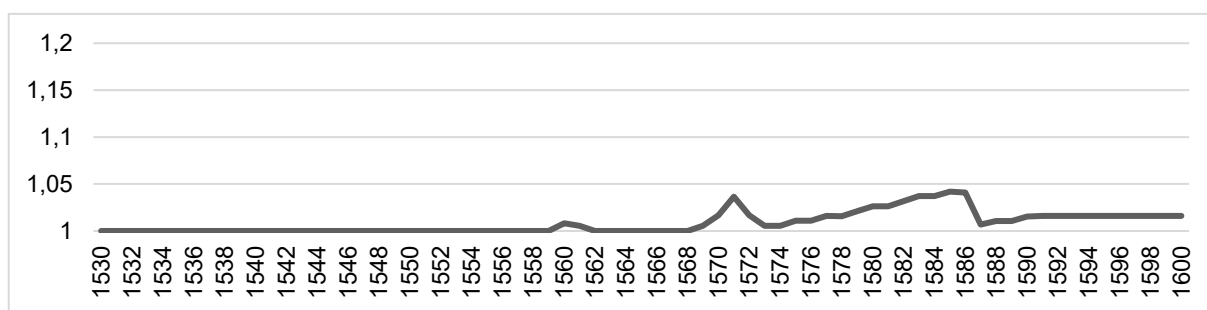


Figure K2.1. Division of farms on Öland, 1530–1600. For further explanation of the figure, see figure 2.1. Source: Population database.

Strangely enough, all division of farms on Öland seems to have taken place in Norra Motet, while no indications for its presence have been found for the southern part of the island. In Norra Motet, the degree of farm division reached about 6% around 1571, and then somewhat more at the beginning of the 1580s. For the island as a whole, this however means that the division of farms never reached higher than 4% during the century.

⁷²³ Älvsborgs lösen 1571, RA; Köpsilverskatten, vol. 3, RA.

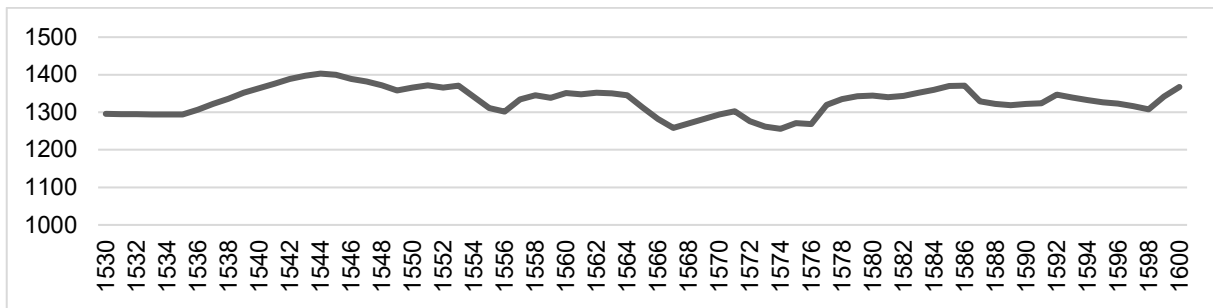


Figure K2.2. Total number of peasant households on Öland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

Given its relatively small size, the number of peasant households on Öland appears remarkably stable in figure K2.2, oscillating between 1,300 and 1,400 households for most of the century. Although perhaps increasing somewhat between 1530 and ca. 1545, the number of peasant households then stopped growing. Slowly decreasing, it reached an all-time low of about 1,270 in 1568 and then again in 1575–1576. Recovering into the 1580s, the number of peasant households on the island once more declined in the years before 1590, and then further during the 1590s. Only in the last two years of the century did it once more begin to grow, reaching just over 1,350 in 1600. This means that the number of peasant households on Öland grew by only about 5% from 1530 to 1600.

3. Cottagers

On Öland, cottagers were subject to annual taxation from 1541 and into the later 1560s.⁷²⁴ Although their numbers fluctuate in a way that make some lists look suspicious, these annual taxation lists form a solid basis for the study of cottagers during this period. Later, cottagers are included also in subsidy taxation lists from 1571,⁷²⁵ 1573,⁷²⁶ 1576,⁷²⁷ and 1579.⁷²⁸ Sadly however, due to archival losses no later subsidy taxation lists survive for Öland that include cottagers. Their numbers can thus be well studied only for the period 1541–1579.

⁷²⁴ E.g., Smålands handlingar 1548:5, RA.

⁷²⁵ Älvsborgs lösen 1571, RA.

⁷²⁶ Köpsilverskatten 1573, vol. 3, RA.

⁷²⁷ Drängeregister, RA.

⁷²⁸ Smålands handlingar 1579:3, RA.

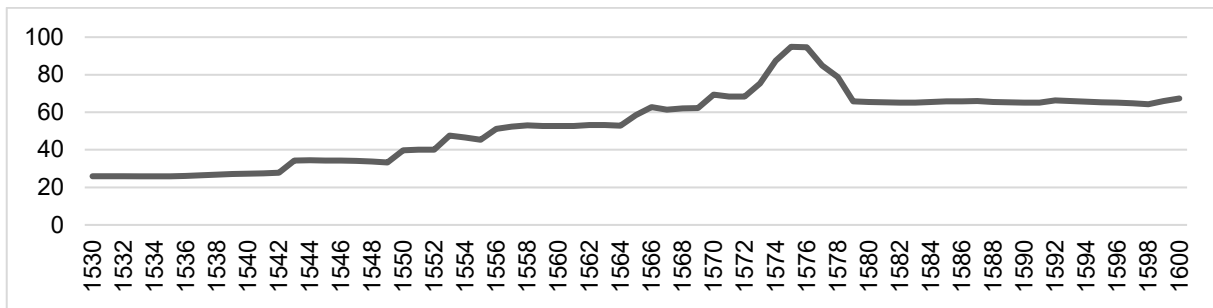


Figure K3.1. Total number of cottager households on Öland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

The records from the earlier part of the century show that the number of cottagers on Öland was about 30–40. Steadily increasing, it reached a peak of close to 100 in 1576, after which year it however fell with about a third already to 1579. With no further data available, and with the number of peasant households being rather constant during the rest of the century, the number of cottagers is here estimated to have been just under 70 also in 1600. If so, the number still had grown by 128% since 1530.

4. *The Crown*

There were no crown establishments on Öland until the early 1540s, when Borgholm demesne farm was established. Later in the decade followed Rälla and Ottenby demesne farms, then Horn (1551) and Gärdslösa (1555), which replaced Rälla. Of these, Ottenby was burned down by the Danish invaders in 1564, but reestablished again after the war. During the 1570s, Borgholm castle was built, using the old manor as its demesne farm. Now, also Gärdslösa was shut down, while Ottenby lasted into the early 1590s. By 1600, the Crown thus had one castle (Borgholm) and one additional manor (Horn) remaining on the island.

In addition to the manors, the crown also established three important fisheries on Öland. Böda and Kyrkhamn are mentioned from 1553, Segerstad was added in 1555. The latter was discontinued during the war, while Böda lasted to 1572 and Kyrkhamn to 1584. Besides the fisheries, no crown industrial establishments (e.g., in metalworks or ship building) were located on Öland.

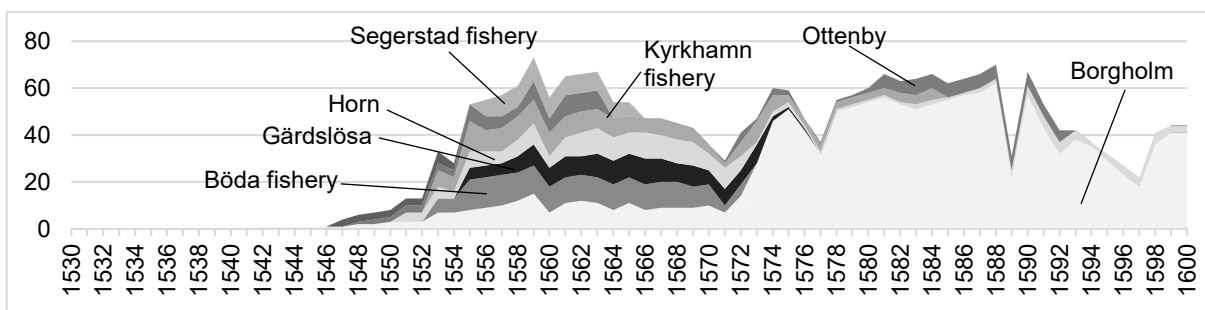


Figure K4.1. The number of households employed at various crown establishments on Öland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

The number of households employed by the Crown on Öland began to rise in the 1540s, more rapidly during the 1550s and peaked at about 70 households. After some adversities during the war, it rose to between 60 and 70 households again in the 1570s and 1580s. From having been more or less equally divided between four manors and three fisheries, the Crown's engagement on Öland during the latter part of the century was instead totally dominated by Borgholm castle. The number of households employed here however decreased during the 1590s, leaving the total number of households employed by the Crown on Öland at only 40 by the end of the century.

5. The Church

There were no hospitals located on Öland in the sixteenth century, nor had there been any monasteries or convents in the years before the Reformation. The parish clergy on the island numbered between 15 and 20.

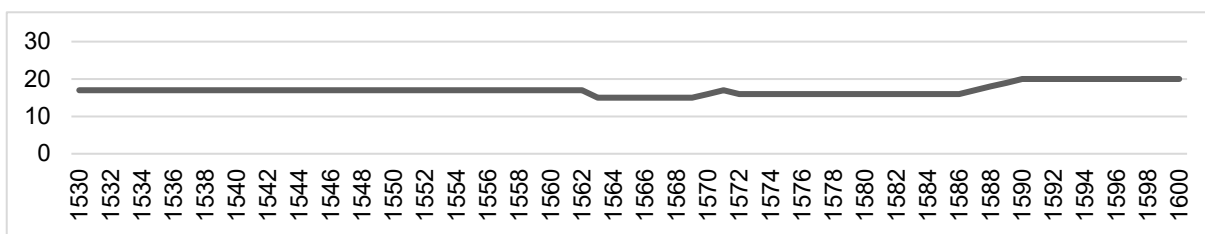


Figure K5.1. Total number of households employed by the church on Öland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

6. The Nobility

No accounts survive for the (very few) nobility manors on Öland.

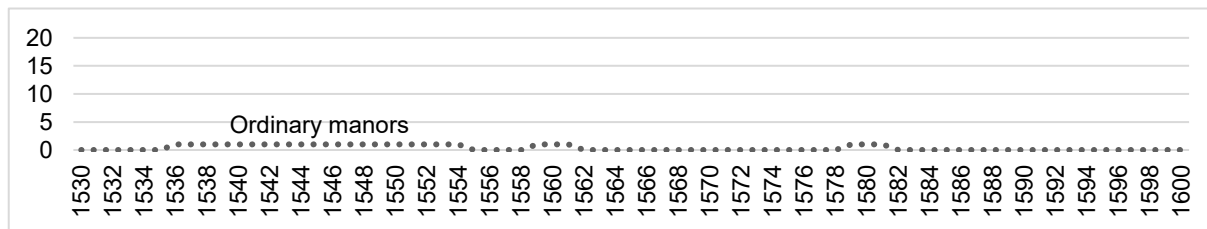


Figure K6.1. The number of nobility manors on Öland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

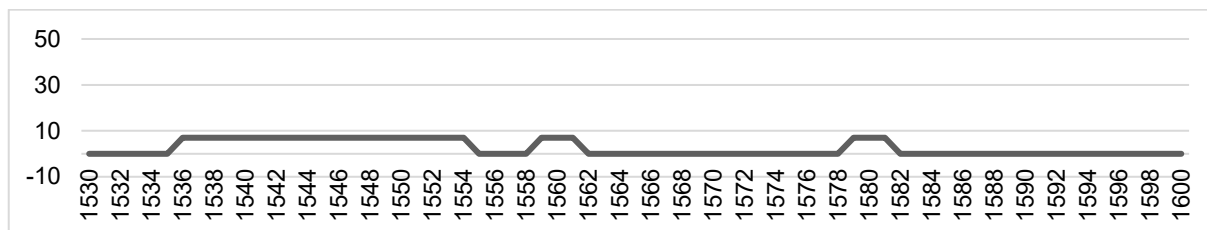


Figure K6.2. The number of households living at nobility manors on Öland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

There was never more than one manor on Öland in the sixteenth century. (Although there were three different manors on the island, they were not concurrently run as demesne farms.) The number of households employed by the nobility thus never rose above 10.

7. Towns

There were no towns on Öland in the sixteenth century.

L. Gästrikland

Gästrikland is located north of Uppland on the coast of the Baltic Sea, between Ödmården forest in the north and Dalälven river in the south. The province, which had been considered part of Uppland in the Middle Ages, was not subdivided into hundreds.⁷²⁹ Gävle was the only town in the province, which on the other hand was among the most populous towns in the realm, due especially to its metal exports from the inland mining districts in Dalarna. This resulted in a very high degree of urbanization in the province, which among other things must have led to significant imports of grain being needed to sustain its population.

1. Cadastral peasants

The number of cadastral peasants is known for all of Gästrikland (for its nine parishes) since 1535,⁷³⁰ and as later archival losses are negligible, the number of cadastral peasants is known for most years.

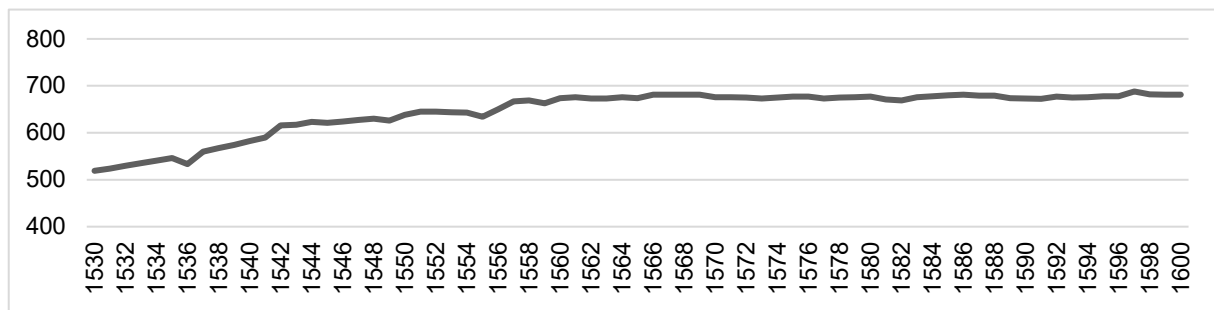


Figure L1.1. Cadastral peasants (excluding deserted farms) in Gästrikland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

⁷²⁹ Rahmqvist 1998 p. 17–19.

⁷³⁰ Gärder och hjälper 1535, RA.

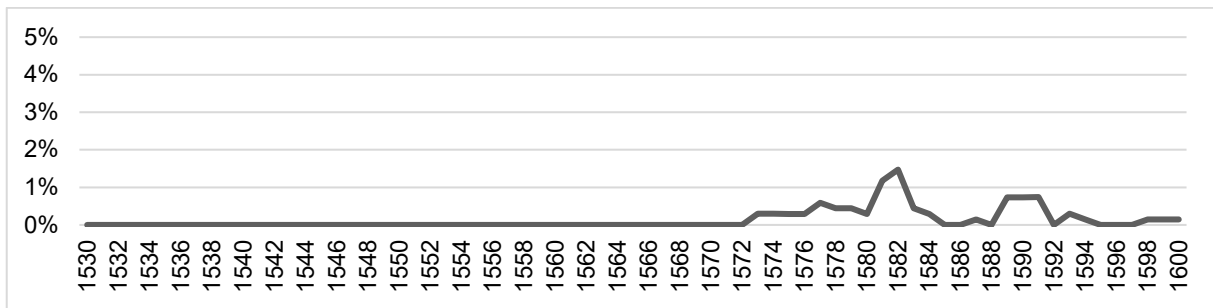


Figure L1.2. Deserted farms in Gästrikland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

There were somewhat more than 500 cadastral peasants in Gästrikland in 1530. This number grew steadily over the following decades, reaching close to 700 by 1570. At this time, the number however stagnated, as no new farms were registered in the cadastres. As can be seen in figure L1.2, there was no farm desertion registered in Gästrikland before the 1570s: the crisis of the 1560s here mainly resulted in a stagnant population, not in a decrease of households. Although farm desertion peaks are evident for 1582 and around 1590, these were of minor importance as they only reached about 1% of the cadastral peasants in the province.

2. *Division of farms*

Division of farms in Gästrikland can be studied from the subsidy lists of 1571 and 1599,⁷³¹ as well as from grain tithe lists for more than 20 years during the period 1555–1589.

⁷³¹ Älvsborgs lösen 1571, vol. 20, RA; Gästriklands handlingar 1599:8, RA.

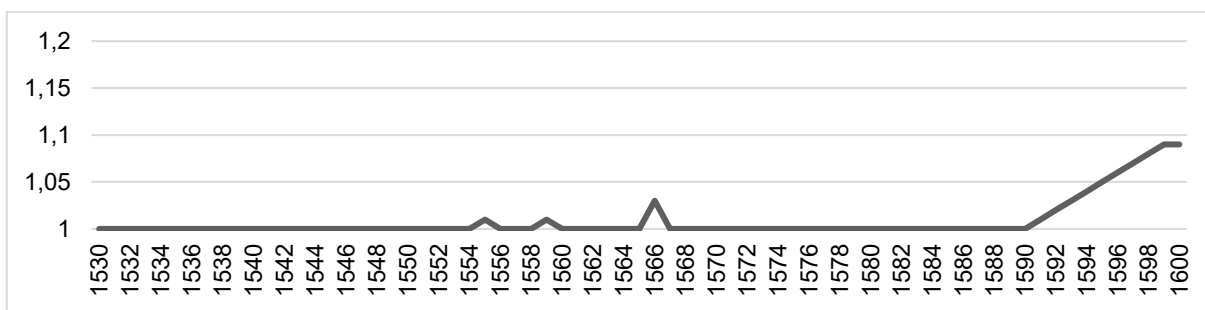


Figure L2.1. Division of farms in Gästrikland, 1530–1600. For further explanation of the figure, see figure 2.1. Source: Population database.

Until the 1590s, farm division in Gästrikland was limited, with a single tithe list reaching a level of just 3% (in 1566).⁷³² Only the subsidy taxation list of 1599 indicates a higher but still moderate level of 9% division of farms in the province.

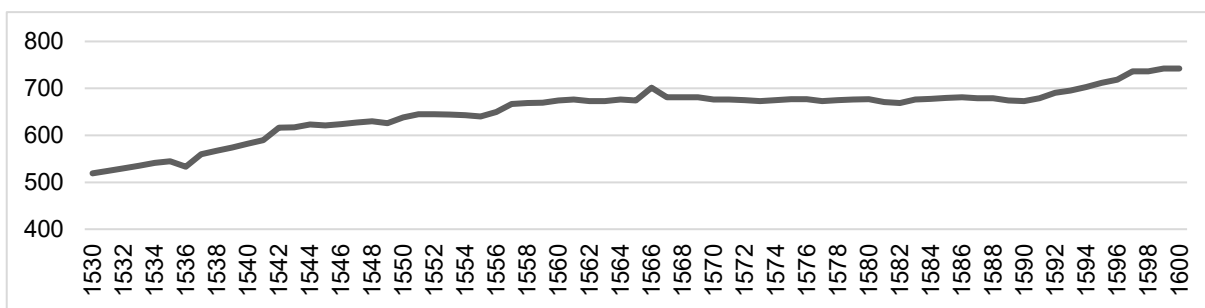


Figure L2.2. Total number of peasant households in Gästrikland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

Peasant households in Gästrikland became more numerous from 1530 to about 1560. The number thereafter remained stagnant for three decades, showing neither decline during the 1560s nor any significant growth. Only after about 1590 did the number of peasants start to grow again, reaching just below 750 in 1600. This meant that the number of peasant households in Gästrikland grew by 43% from 1530 to 1600.

⁷³² Gästriklands handlingar 1566:10, RA.

3. Cottagers

Data on cottagers in Gästrikland comes from subsidy taxation lists of 1560,⁷³³ 1576,⁷³⁴ 1579,⁷³⁵ 1589,⁷³⁶ and 1599.⁷³⁷ Although these lists are well spread over the latter part of the century, data is missing for the period before 1560.

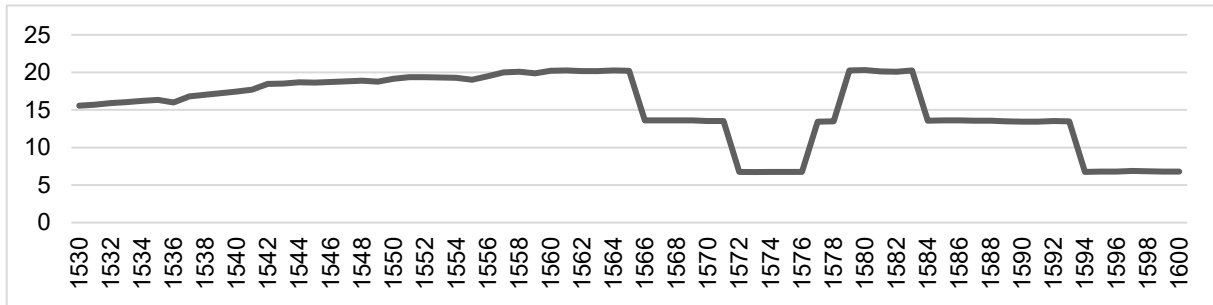


Figure L3.1. Total number of cottager households in Gästrikland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

The number of cottagers in Gästrikland was however always very limited: no more than 20 households in the earlier part of the century, as well as around 1580. During the 1560s and 1570s it seems to have decreased somewhat, which is likewise true also for the end of the century. In total, the number of cottagers in Gästrikland decreased by 56% from 1530 to 1600 (albeit that the small numbers make such a calculation quite unreliable).

4. The Crown

There were no crown establishments in Gästrikland in 1530. The first establishment was the ironworks at Hade, founded in 1549, which lasted only until the mid-1550s. After 1560 a manor was established in Gävle, which saw its name changed to Gävle hus or Gävleborg around 1590; it remained the only crown manor in Gästrikland. During a couple of years of the 1590s, there was in addition also a shipbuilding located in Gävle.

⁷³³ Silverskatten 1560, RA.

⁷³⁴ Gästriklands handlingar 1576:3, RA.

⁷³⁵ Gästriklands handlingar 1579:3, RA.

⁷³⁶ Gästriklands handlingar 1589:7, RA.

⁷³⁷ Gästriklands handlingar 1599:8, RA.

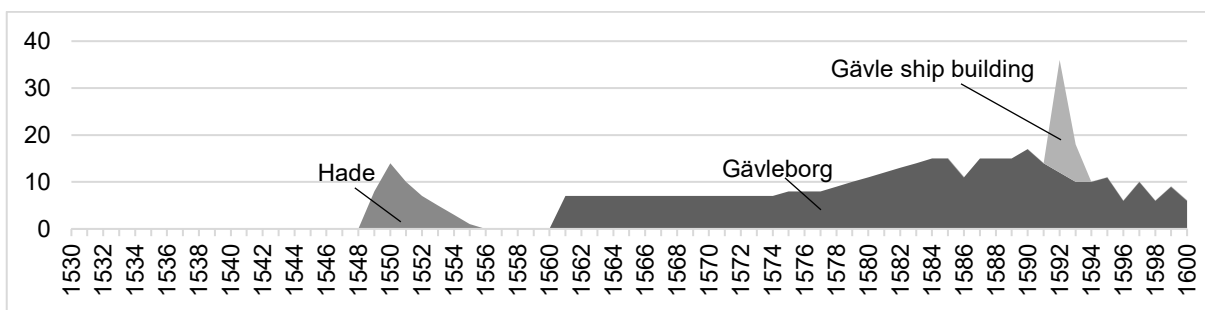


Figure L4.1. The number of households employed at various crown establishments in Gästrikland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

The number of households employed by the crown in Gästrikland was always quite small, reaching over 20 only in the 1590s (when there was a short-lived shipbuilding in Gävle). Compared with 1530, the crown had by 1600 at least gained a stable foothold in the province through Gävleborg manor, although the number of households employed there was still less than ten.

5. The Church

The only hospital in Gästrikland was located in Gävle; no accounts are preserved, but the amounts it received as royal bequests in 1560 and 1564 shows it to have been rather small.⁷³⁸ It is further mentioned as running also in 1588. There were no monasteries or convents in Medieval Gästrikland, while the number of parish clergy amounted to only eight in the sixteenth century.

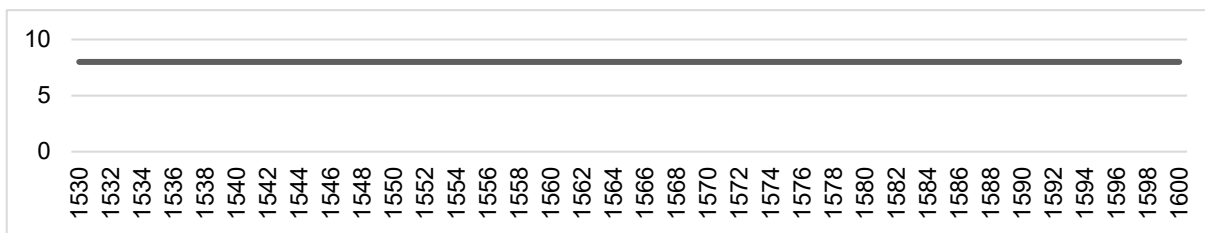


Figure L5.1. Total number of households employed by the church in Gästrikland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

⁷³⁸ Räntekammarböcker, vol. 39; vol. 41, RA.

6. The Nobility

There was no nobility at all in Gästrikland in the sixteenth century.

7. Towns

Gävle was the only town in sixteenth-century Gästrikland. It was located close to the mouth of River Gavleån on the Baltic Sea and on the main land route from Uppland to Norrland.⁷³⁹ The town prospered in the sixteenth century from its export trade over the Baltic Sea to Reval, Riga, and Narva, as well as to Western Europe.⁷⁴⁰ In 1569 the town was struck by a fire. That the town was expanding during the earlier part of the century is clear from the fact that the king in 1542 thought that Gävle paid too low urban taxes, and thus asked for a new population list, through which he “clearly” saw that the town’s annual taxation needed to be increased.⁷⁴¹ This population list is sadly lost; the earliest surviving population figure is instead from 1558,⁷⁴² after which time the number of households in Gävle were listed in the accounts in most years (although not necessarily renewed annually). The population figure before 1558 has been estimated as having been constant at just over 200 households (despite its probable increase at least during the 1530s).

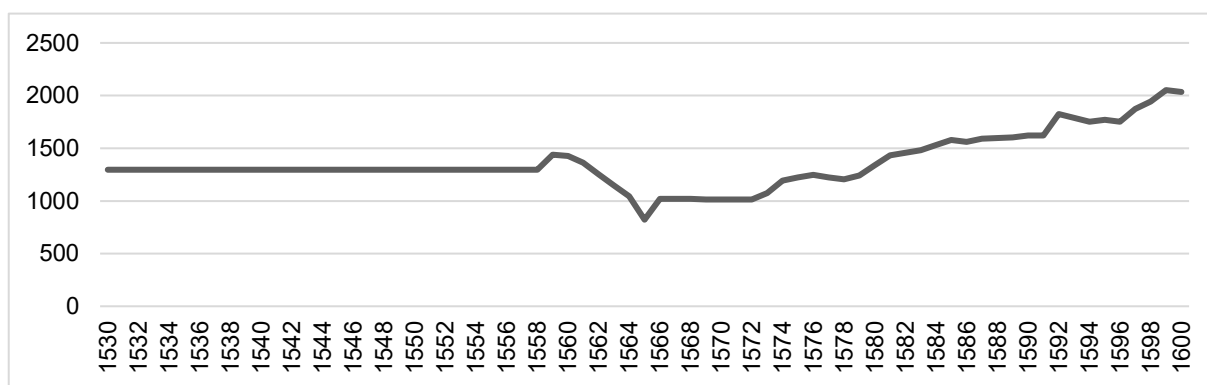


Figure L7.1. Population in Gävle in Gästrikland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

⁷³⁹ Rahmqvist 1998 p. 122.

⁷⁴⁰ Aagård 1984 p. 9.

⁷⁴¹ PRF 2 nr 136; as the tax was changed from 1 last of iron to 200 *mark penningar*, it is neigh impossible to use this shift for calculating the size of the population increase.

⁷⁴² Sandbergska samlingen vol.YY:5, RA.

Table L7. 1. Total population in the towns of Gästrikland, decadal figures, 1530–1600.

TOWN	1530	1540	1550	1560	1570	1580	1590	1600
GÄVLE	1,296	1,296	1,296	1,428	1,014	1,338	1,620	2,034

Source: Population database.

The population of Gävle was about 1,300 in the earlier part of the century. After some decrease during the general recession of the 1560s, it then increased until the end of the century, finally reaching over 2,000 by 1600, making it the then fifth-largest town in Sweden.

M. Norrland

Along the Baltic Sea further north followed (from south to north) the four provinces of Hälsingland, Medelpad, Ångermanland and Västerbotten. Just like Gästrikland, these provinces also lacked an internal division into hundreds and were consequently only subdivided into parishes. They were often grouped together in the sixteenth century as “Norrlanden” (a term sometimes also including Österbotten in today’s Finland) and has here been collectively treated under the heading Norrland. In addition to the four coastal provinces, five so-called *lappmarker* (Ångermanland, Umeå, Piteå, Luleå, and Torneå lappmark) were inland districts covering the populations of the Sami territories. (A sixth *lappmark*, Västersjö, has been left out of the study, as its borders varied significantly over the century.) Most of the population in Norrland was living in the large river valleys and along the coast, and trade over the Baltic Sea (abroad as well as in Stockholm or in Uppland) with furs, forest products, and fish was important for the local economy.⁷⁴³

1. Cadastral peasants

The number of cadastral peasants in Hälsingland, Medelpad and Ångermanland is known since 1535,⁷⁴⁴ while the earliest population data for Västerbotten is from 1539.⁷⁴⁵ The number of households in four of the *lappmarker* (Umeå, Piteå, Luleå and Torneå) is known since 1553,⁷⁴⁶ while the number of households in Ångermanlands

⁷⁴³ Friberg 1983.

⁷⁴⁴ Gärder och hjälper 1535, RA.

⁷⁴⁵ Norrlands handlingar 1539:1, RA.

⁷⁴⁶ Norrlands handlingar 1553:2, RA.

lappmark is known only from 1555.⁷⁴⁷ The archival preservation of accounts from Norrland is exemplary, with no later significant losses.

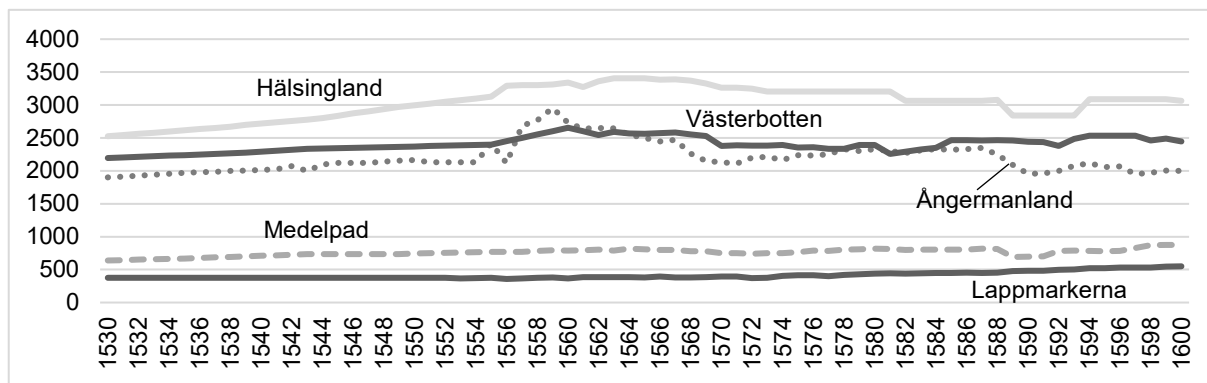


Figure M1.1. Cadastral peasants (excluding deserted farms) in Hälsingland, Medelpad, Ångermanland, Västerbotten, and five lappmarker, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

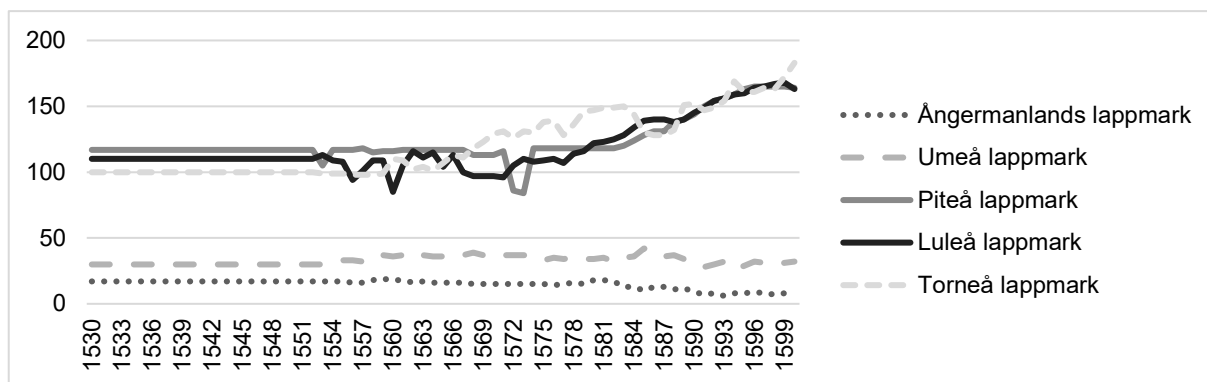


Figure M1.2. Cadastral households in the five lappmarker, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

The number of cadastral households in the four provinces and in the five lappmarker can be seen in figures M1.1–2. The number of peasants in Hälsingland was about 2,500 in 1530, rising to about 3,500 in the early 1560s but then decreasing again, becoming less than 3,000 around 1590. Medelpad grew from below 650 households in 1530 to around 800 in 1565, then decreasing somewhat but remaining mainly stable and increasing again towards the end of the century. Ångermanland went from having

⁷⁴⁷ Norrlands handlingar 1555:4, RA.

a cadastral population of less than 2,000 households in 1530, reached nearly 3,000 in 1560, only to then fall down to close to 2,100 again by 1570. It then remained stable until about 1590, when it fell even further, ending the century with a cadastral population of just below 2,000 households. The cadastral population of Västerbotten expanded from about 2,200 households in 1530 to 2,600 in the beginning of the 1560s, fell during the following two decades, and grew somewhat towards the end of the century to about 2,400. The total number of cadastral households in the five *lappmarker* remained rather stable just below 500 during the 1550s and 1560s, then increased rather rapidly until it reached 550 households by the end of the century.

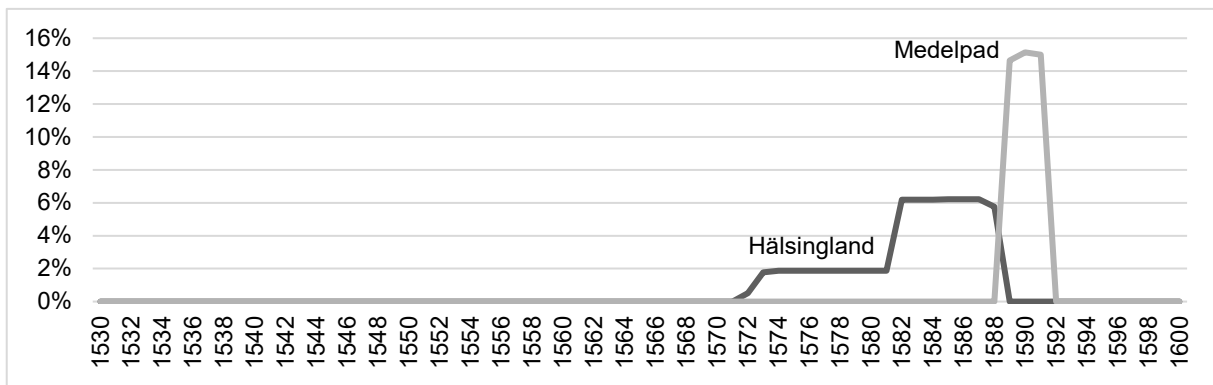


Figure M1.3. Deserted farms in Hälsingland and Medelpad, 1530–1600.

As the cadastres in Norrland initially sought to represent peasant households rather than farms, numbers of deserted farms are generally not given. Only from the 1570s onwards is farm desertion included in the accounts for Hälsingland, where it reached 6% during the early 1580s. In Medelpad, as much as 15% of the farms were listed as deserted 1589–1591. In both cases, cadastres subsequently were updated in order not to anymore include deserted farms.

2. Division of farms

Division of farms can be studied for Norrland in 1571 and in 1599 (when data for only Medelpad is missing).⁷⁴⁸ In addition, data from tithe registers are available for most years 1557–1599, and in addition from Medelpad in 1546. This means that the division of farms is well covered by the sources from just before 1560 and until 1600.

⁷⁴⁸ E.g., Norrlands handlingar 1600:2B, RA.

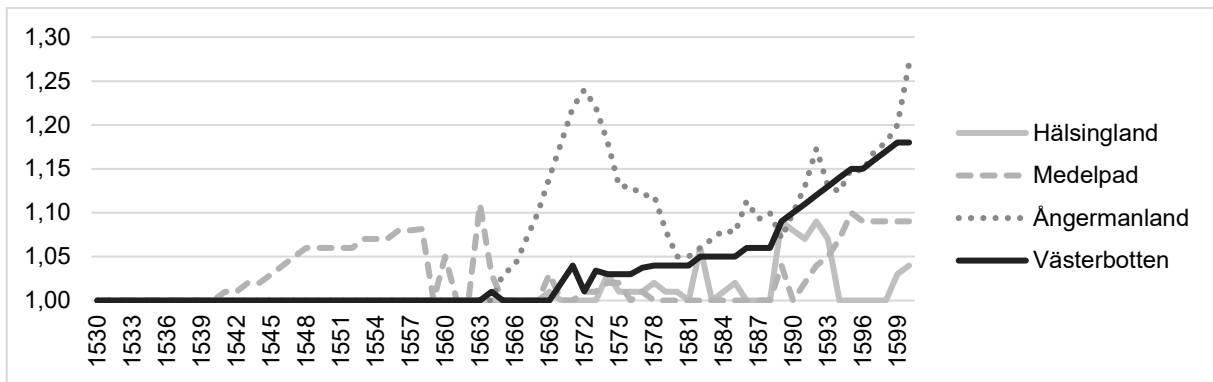


Figure M2.1. Division of farms in Hälsingland, Medelpad, Ångermanland, and Västerbotten, 1530–1600. For further explanation of the figure, see figure 2.1. Source: Population database.

Most modest was the farm division in Hälsingland. Figure M2.1 shows it to have reached above 5% only in some years during the 1580s and around 1590. In Medelpad, farm division reached between 5% and 10% during the 1550s but then decreased to close to 0 until the 1590s, when it once more reached about 10%. Farm division in Ångermanland was far more pronounced, increasing from about 1565 up to a level of close to 25% at the beginning of the 1570s. Although it fell back to 5% around 1580, it then once more increased rapidly, reaching a level of over 25% by the end of the century. In Västerbotten finally, the division of farms remained below 5% until the 1580s, when it began to grow as cadastres became fixed. By the end of the century, the farm division in Västerbotten had thus reached a level of between 15% and 20%.

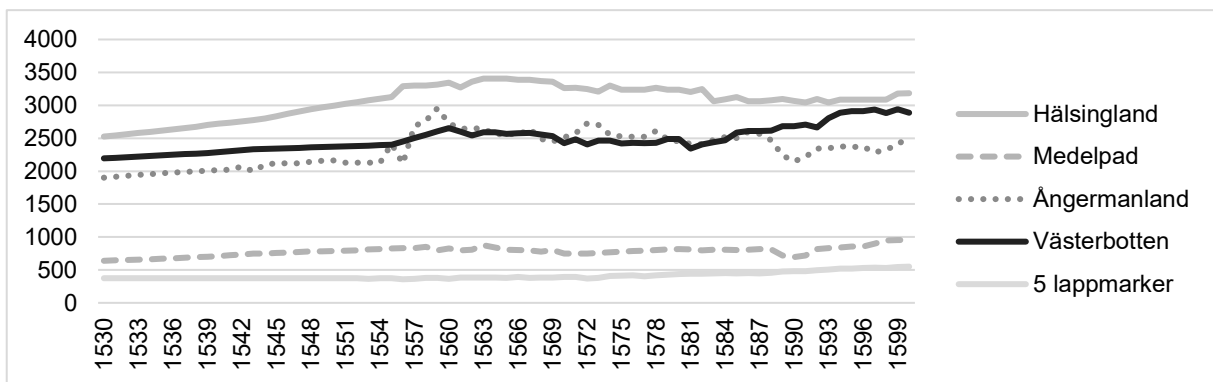


Figure M2.2. Total number of peasant households in Hälsingland, Medelpad, Ångermanland, Västerbotten, and five *lappmarker*, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

Hälsingland was the most populous of the provinces in Norrland. The number of peasant households in the province was about 2,500 in 1530, which grew until the 1560s. A long phase of decrease then ensued, resulting in the number of peasant households in the province being about 3,200 at the end of the century (an increase by 26% compared to 1530).

In Medelpad, the number of peasant households expanded from about 650 in 1530 to over 850 in the early 1560s. After some decades of stagnation, the province then saw growth again during the 1590s, resulting in the number of peasant households being over 950 in 1600 (an increase by 49% compared to 1530).

The number of peasant households in Ångermanland was just under 2,000 in 1530. Growing until the later 1550s, it saw a sharp rise in the years just before 1560, reaching almost 3,000. It soon decreased to about 2,500 and saw further decrease down to a level of about 2,200 around 1590. After some final increase during the 1590s, it once more reached about 2,500 in 1600 (an increase by 33% compared to 1530).

Peasant households in Västerbotten increased from 1530 into the 1560s, then becoming stagnant at about 2,500 households. Only after the middle of the 1580s did it once more begin to grow, reaching just under 3,000 households by 1600 (an increase by 32% compared to 1530).

As no equivalent to the 'cadastral farm division' is known from Lappmarkerna, the previously reported number of households stands. After stagnation in the 1550s and 1560s, the number of households in Lappmarkerna started to grow during the 1570s, reaching a total of 550 in 1600 (an increase by 47% compared to the middle of the century).

3. Cottagers

Cottagers in Norrland are known from the subsidy lists of 1571 (Medelpad and Västerbotten),⁷⁴⁹ 1576 (Hälsingland, Medelpad and Ångermanland),⁷⁵⁰ 1579 (Västerbotten),⁷⁵¹ 1589 (Medelpad, Ångermanland and Västerbotten),⁷⁵² 1598 (Hälsingland; the collection of the 1596 subsidy had here been postponed two

⁷⁴⁹ Älvsborgs lösen 1571, vols. 20–21, RA.

⁷⁵⁰ Drängeregister, vol. 2, RA.

⁷⁵¹ Norrlands handlingar 1579:2, RA.

⁷⁵² E.g., Norrlands handlingar 1589:3, RA.

years),⁷⁵³ and 1600 (Ångermanland and Västerbotten).⁷⁵⁴ This means that the number of cottagers in Norrland generally can be studied from the 1570s onwards, but not earlier; for Medelpad, data is missing also for the 1590s.

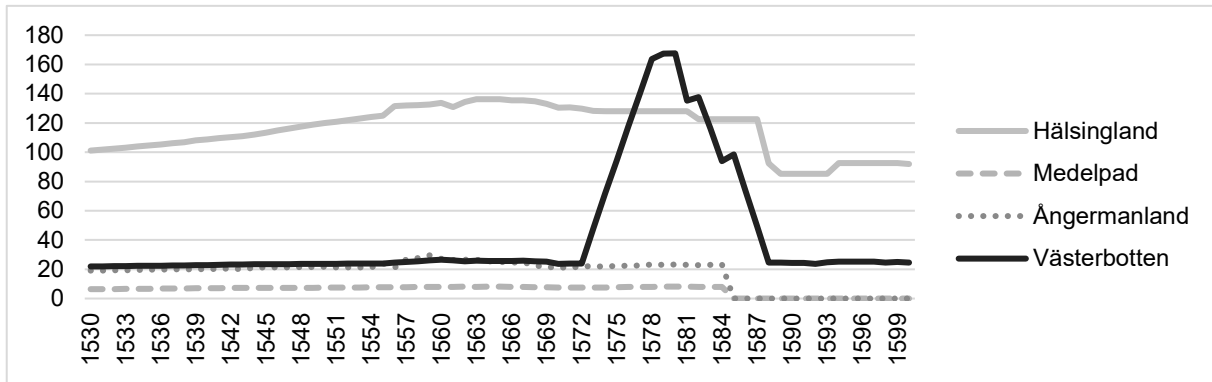


Figure M3.1. Total number of cottager households in Hälsingland, Medelpad, Ångermanland, and Västerbotten, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

The number of cottagers in Norrland was highest in Hälsingland, where it grew from about a 100 in 1530 to some 130 in the 1560s. A substantial decrease seems to have taken place during the late 1580s, reducing the number to somewhat under 100 at the end of the century. Cottagers in Medelpad were never numerous, being less than 10 in 1530 and remaining so for the rest of the century, falling to zero during the 1580s. In Ångermanland, cottagers numbered between 20 and 30 until the 1580s, when the number reduced to zero. Västerbotten stands out by its variation in the number of cottagers. Starting out at a level of 20–30 at the beginning of the century, the number of cottagers in the subsidy lists of 1579 is almost 170. This sharply contrasts with the numbers in other sources (1571 and 1589 being those closest in time), which results in the increase during the 1570s and subsequent decrease during the 1580s. For Lappmarkerna, there no equivalent to cottagers is to be found in the accounts during the sixteenth century.

⁷⁵³ Norrlands handlingar 1598:1, RA.

⁷⁵⁴ E.g., Norrlands handlingar 1600:2B, RA.

first demesne farms were founded in 1557–1558 (Hudik, Umeå and Luleå), but these were however all soon discontinued, leaving Norrland completely without crown establishments again after 1566. While ship buildings were founded in Hälsingland and in Ångermanland after 1575, both were also discontinued after only a few years' time. By 1600, no crown establishments consequently remained in Norrland.

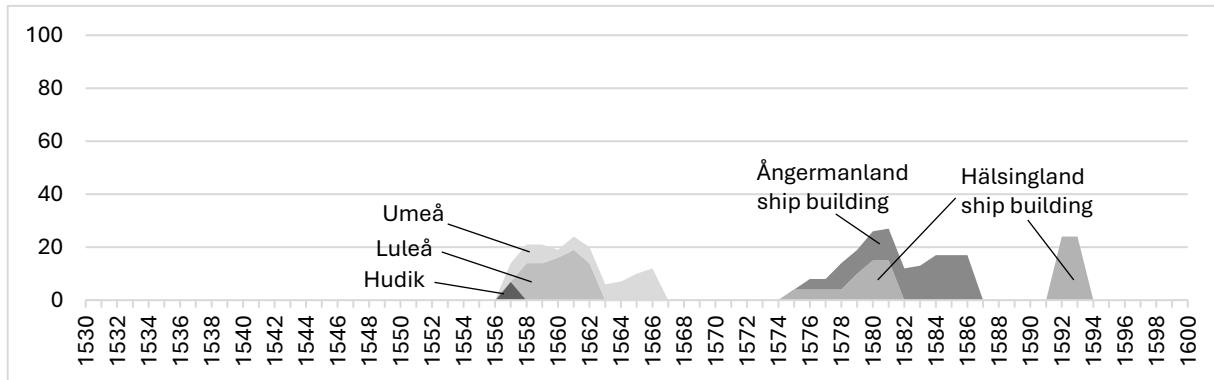


Figure M4.1. Number of households employed at various crown establishments in Norrland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

Reflecting the small number of establishments, the total number of households employed by the Crown in the four provinces of Norrland never reached above 30, peaking at the beginning of the 1560s (most of which worked at Luleå manor) and around 1580 (when most were working at the two ship buildings).

5. The Church

No hospitals existed in Norrland in the sixteenth century, and nor had there previously been any monasteries or convents. The parish clergy in Hälsingland numbered between 15 and 20, those in Ångermanland about 15, while those in Medelpad and Västerbotten numbered between 5 and 10 each.

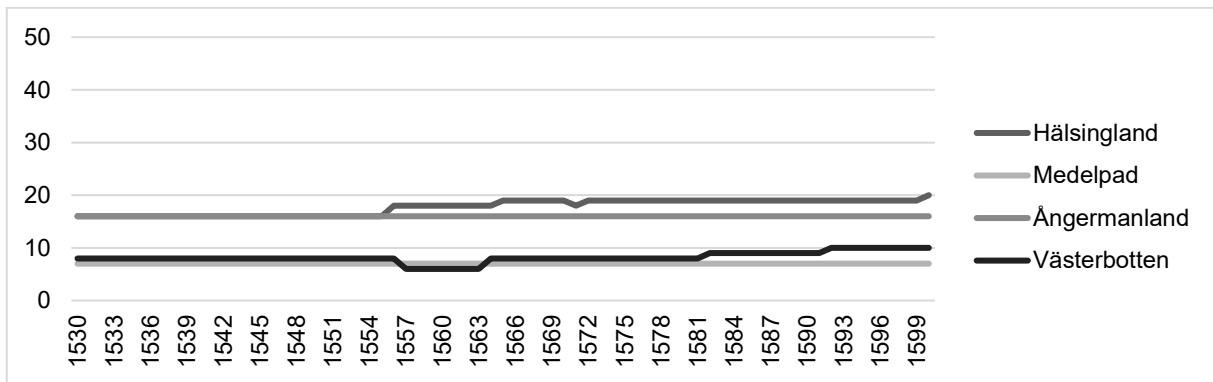


Figure M5.1. Total number of households employed by the church in Norrland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

6. The Nobility

There was no nobility in Norrland during the sixteenth century.⁷⁵⁵

7. Towns

In 1530, there were no towns in all of Norrland. Three or perhaps four were founded after 1580. Of these, Hudiksvall was the first and quickly became the by far largest; it is also for Hudiksvall that most of the population data survives. Härnösand and Umeå were both also founded in the 1580s, but neither town seems to have grown significantly, and Umeå was probably abandoned as a town in the 1590s. If Bygdeå ever became a town is doubtful; it is mentioned as such only in 1592, and no population figures are known.

⁷⁵⁵ This may not be totally accurate, as a *förläningsregister* of 1536/1537 states regarding the *underlagman* Per Rålamb in Hälsingland that he has “alla de stadgepenningar i förläning som gamla frälsemän där i landet pläga utgöra sedan de komma under skatten”, possibly when they had become too old to perform *rusttjänst*. *Förläningsregister* vol. 39, RA. In any case, there were no nobility demesne farms in Norrland after the 1530s. On nobility in Hälsingland in the fifteenth century, see discussion in Brink 1994 p. 129–30.

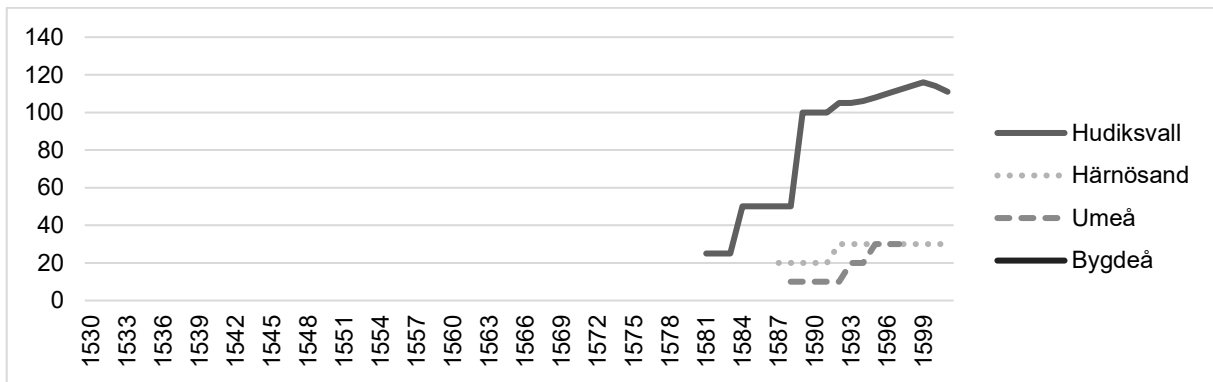


Figure M7.1. The number of households in various towns in Norrland, 1530–1600.
Source: Population database.

Hudiksvall (in Hälsingland) was founded on the coast of the Baltic Sea on the location of an old marketplace. Although rural merchants in Hälsingland, Medelpad, and Ångermanland were ordered already in 1560 to found a new town here,⁷⁵⁶ the town was not founded until 1580; the copper smiths in Hälsingland did not pay any taxes in this year as they were building the new town, according to the accounts.⁷⁵⁷ In 1582 the king ordered craftsmen and merchants to move to Hudiksvall,⁷⁵⁸ in 1583 this order was extended also to the merchants in Medelpad,⁷⁵⁹ and in the same year the town and its church were under construction.⁷⁶⁰ Population figures first survive from 1590,⁷⁶¹ and then from 1591,⁷⁶² 1599,⁷⁶³ and 1600.⁷⁶⁴

Härnösand (in Ångermanland) was also founded on the coast of the Baltic Sea on the location of an old marketplace. In 1584, peasants in Ångermanland were threatened by the king to be forced to move to Finland unless the rural merchants in the province moved into Härnösand.⁷⁶⁵ It is first included in a list of towns in 1586,⁷⁶⁶ and in 1587 it was given town privileges, and craftsmen and merchants were then

⁷⁵⁶ PRF 2 nr 289.

⁷⁵⁷ Norrlands handlingar 1581:3, RA.

⁷⁵⁸ PRF 3 nr 247.

⁷⁵⁹ PRF 3 nr 277.

⁷⁶⁰ PRF 3 nr 269–270.

⁷⁶¹ Norrlands handlingar 1590:5, RA.

⁷⁶² Norrlands handlingar 1591:6, RA.

⁷⁶³ Norrlands handlingar 1599:8, RA.

⁷⁶⁴ Norrlands handlingar 1600:9, RA.

⁷⁶⁵ PRF 3 nr 301.

⁷⁶⁶ Strödda kamerala handlingar vol. 68, RA.

living in the town.⁷⁶⁷ However, no population data survives from the sixteenth century, which means the town population has to be estimated (based on that of Umeå and Hudiksvall).

Umeå (in Västerbotten) was located at the mouth of the Umeå river on the coast of the Baltic Sea. As Hudiksvall and Härnösand, the town was founded during the 1580s. In 1583, the merchants of Västerbotten asked the king not to have to move to a town, but the king instead asked them if they rather preferred one town in the centre of the province, or one town in the south and one in the north.⁷⁶⁸ As the rural merchants could not agree on the matter, the king in 1585 declared that there should be built two towns, one in Umeå and one in Torneå.⁷⁶⁹ A year later, the population of the province asked to rather have one town in the middle of the province at Piteå (where they had already begun some sort of construction), although the population of Umeå parish preferred the two-town solution.⁷⁷⁰ In 1588, the king declared that all rural merchants should move into two towns, Umeå and one unnamed town located in the middle of the province (as Torneå was out of question because of a bad prophecy).⁷⁷¹ Privileges were granted in the same year for those who “were to build” in Umeå.⁷⁷² In 1589, the king declared that there now should be three towns in the province: Umeå, Torneå, and Piteå.⁷⁷³ This seems to have come to nothing. In 1593, Umeå town was exempt from urban subsidy taxation, while merchants were admonished to move into the town.⁷⁷⁴ It is further also mentioned as a town in 1596.⁷⁷⁵ By 1600, the king however once more declared that the merchants in Västerbotten should found towns on the coast, including Umeå among those that should be founded.⁷⁷⁶ From all of this follows that Umeå is first considered as a populated town in 1587,⁷⁷⁷ and that it remained a town into the mid-1590s. The

⁷⁶⁷ PRF 3 nr 356.

⁷⁶⁸ PRF 3 nr 279.

⁷⁶⁹ PRF 3 nr 309.

⁷⁷⁰ PRF 3 nr 317.

⁷⁷¹ PRF 3 nr 393.

⁷⁷² PRF 3 nr 397.

⁷⁷³ PRF 3 nr 399.

⁷⁷⁴ PRF 4 nr 8.

⁷⁷⁵ PRF 4 nr 86.

⁷⁷⁶ PRF 4 nr 127.

⁷⁷⁷ Strödda kamerala handlingar vol. 68, RA.

number of inhabitants is only given in 1594,⁷⁷⁸ and it is likely that the new town was abandoned only a few years later; Umeå was to be refounded as a town only in 1621.

Bygdeå (in Västerbotten) was also located on the Baltic Sea coast in southern Västerbotten. Although not mentioned in the royal plans for the urbanization of Västerbotten, it is mentioned as a town in 1592, when a list of towns declares that its urban tax should be the same as that of Umeå.⁷⁷⁹ It is doubtful if Bygdeå ever evolved into a town, even for a short while, or if this was just wishful thinking on the part of King John III. I have thus estimated that Bygdeå had an urban population only in this year, and that it was even smaller than Umeå.

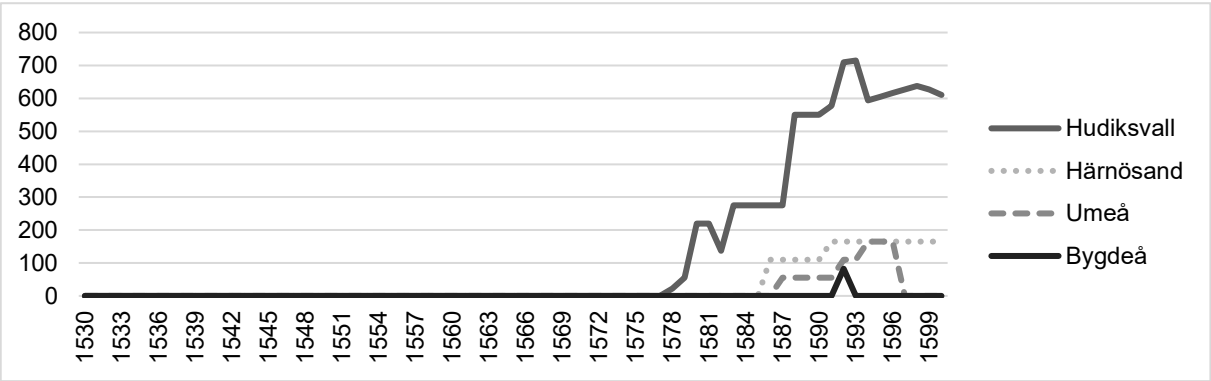


Figure M7.2. Population in towns in Norrland, 1530–1600. Source: Population database.

Table M7.1. Total population in the towns of Norrland, decadal figures, 1530–1600

TOWN	1530	1540	1550	1560	1570	1580	1590	1600
HUDIKSVALL	0	0	0	0	0	240	600	666
HÄRNÖSAND	0	0	0	0	0	0	120	300
UMEÅ	0	0	0	0	0	0	60	0
BYGDEÅ	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Population database.

⁷⁷⁸Västerbottens handlingar 1594:3, RA.

⁷⁷⁹ Strödda kamerala handlingar vol. 68, RA.

Of the four towns that were founded in Norrland during the 1580s (including the short-lived Umeå, and Bygdeå, which it is doubtful if it ever became a town), only in Hudiksvall in Hälsingland did the population increase above the size of a micro-town, reaching 600–700 inhabitants by the end of the century, while in Härnösand in Ångermanland at this date probably only lived about 250–300 individuals.

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Population change and the social structure are key for our understanding of premodern societies. Drawing from a vast range of sources, including private and crown accounts, cadastres, taxation lists, wage lists and food registers, this book presents the first local and national population figures for Sweden for each year from 1530 to 1600. In addition, it also explores how the social structure of Sweden changed following the Reformation and during a period of rapid state formation. This includes studies of servants and cottagers, as well as of those working at church and nobility estates, and those employed by the Crown at castles, shipyards, mining industries, and at the royal courts. In the appendices, information is provided on the regional developments of each province (landskap), town and hundred (härad) in Sweden, as well as extensive presentations of the regional variation in source availability and quality. A population history of sixteenth-century Sweden promises to be the main point of departure for all further research on the population and social structure of Medieval and Early Modern Sweden, as well as a welcome reference for comparative population histories of sixteenth-century Europe.

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