

# **Diversification and Structural Transformation for Growth and Stability in Low-Income Countries**

**Ricardo Hausmann  
International Monetary Fund  
February 2013**

# THE ATLAS OF ECONOMIC COMPLEXITY

MAPPING PATHS TO PROSPERITY

*Hausmann, Hidalgo et al.*

[www.cid.harvard.edu/atlas](http://www.cid.harvard.edu/atlas)

The Observatory  
OF ECONOMIC COMPLEXITY

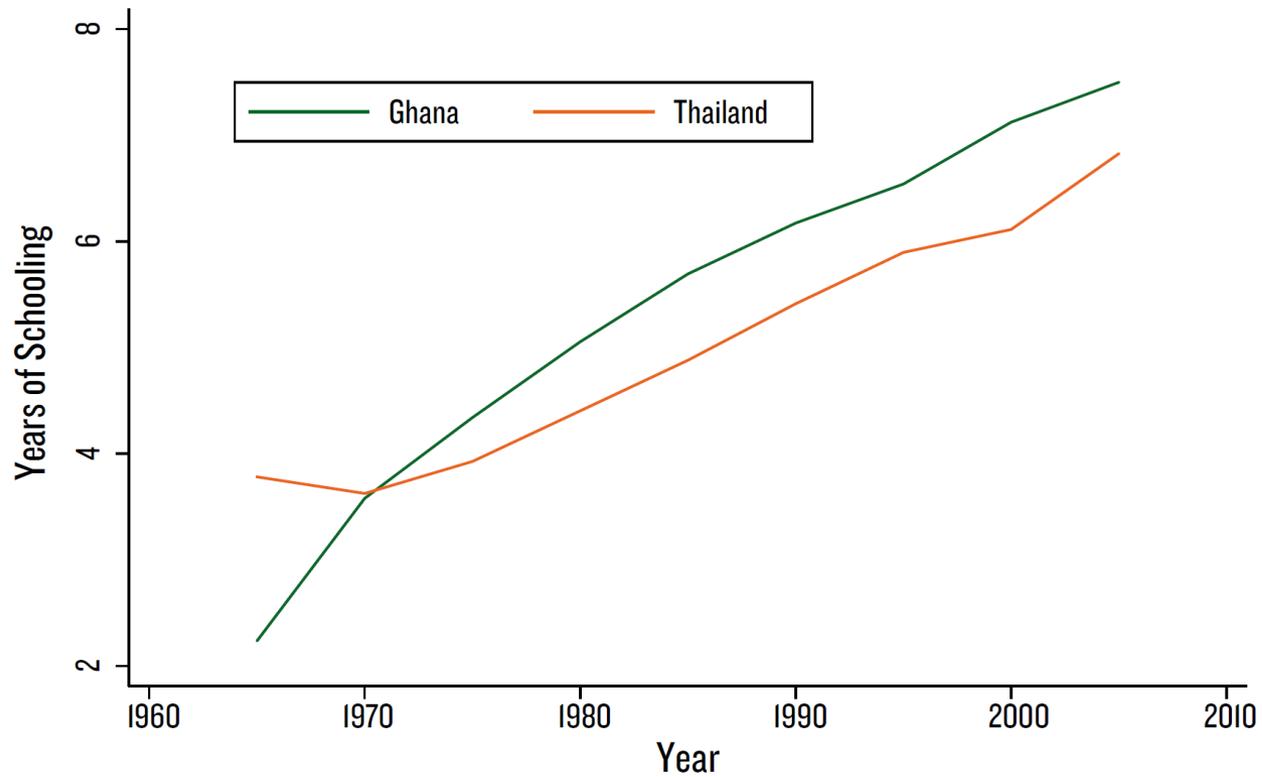
# **A tale of two countries: Ghana vs. Thailand**



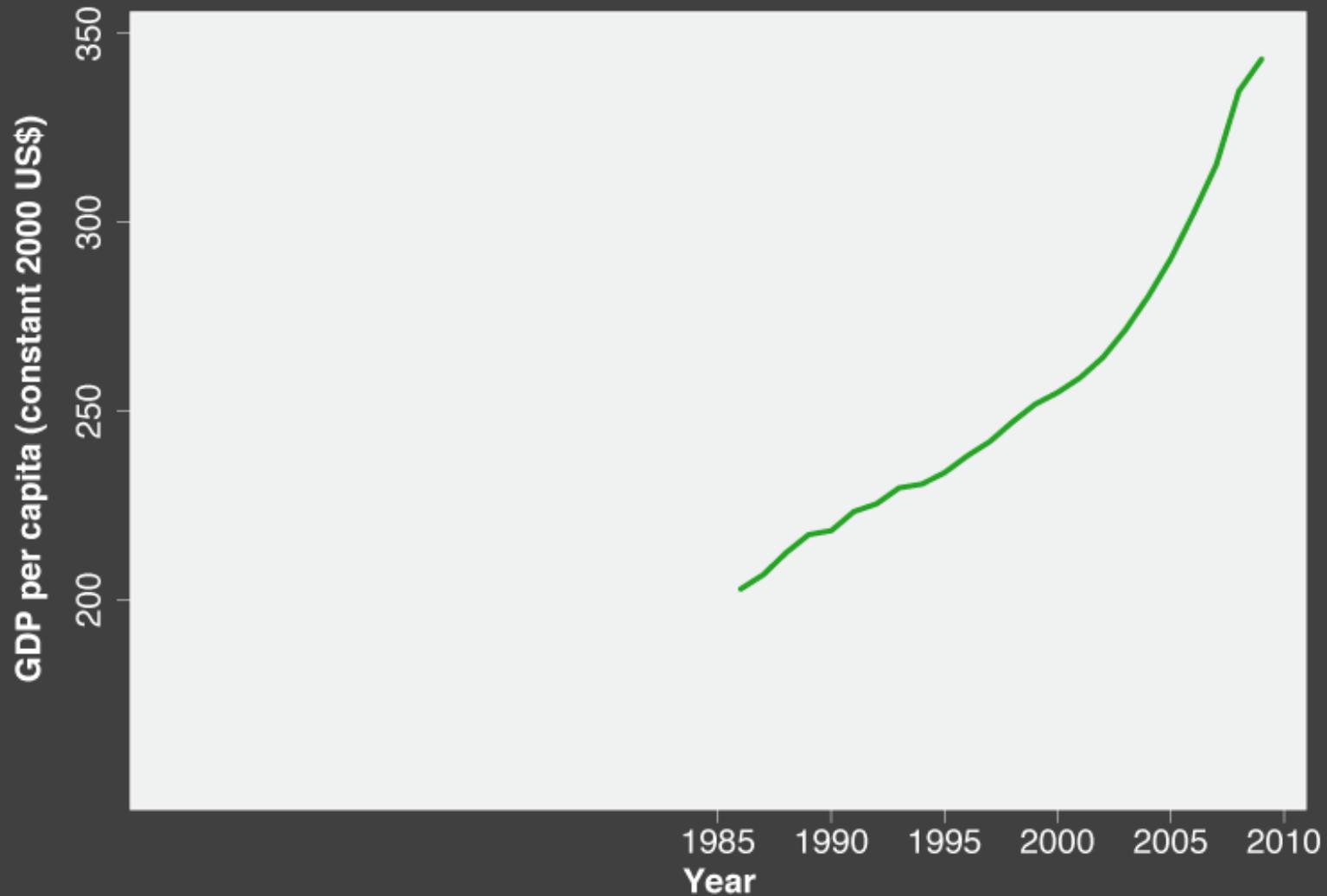
**Ghana**

# ...more education than in Thailand

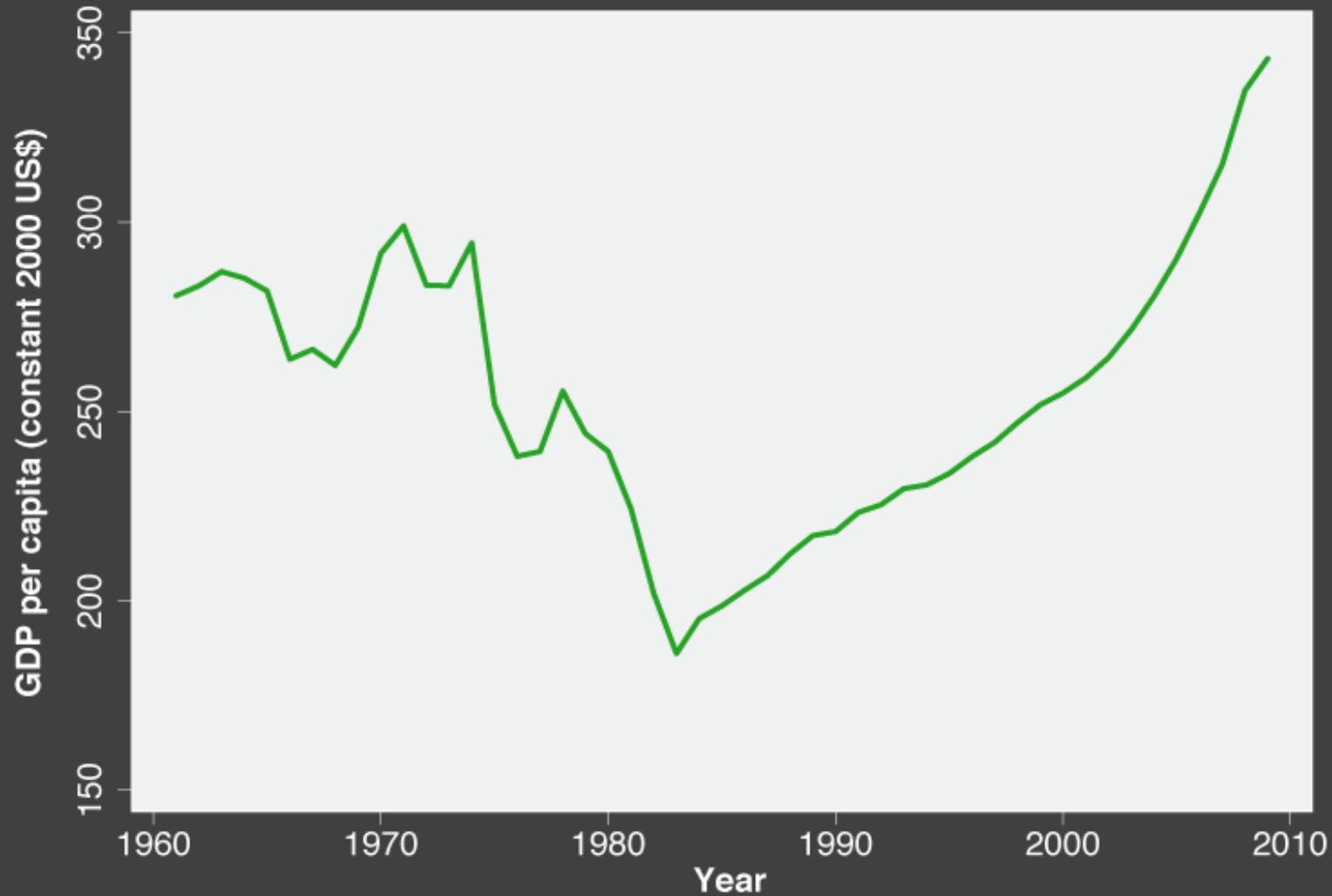
► Years of schooling of Thailand and Ghana as a function of time.

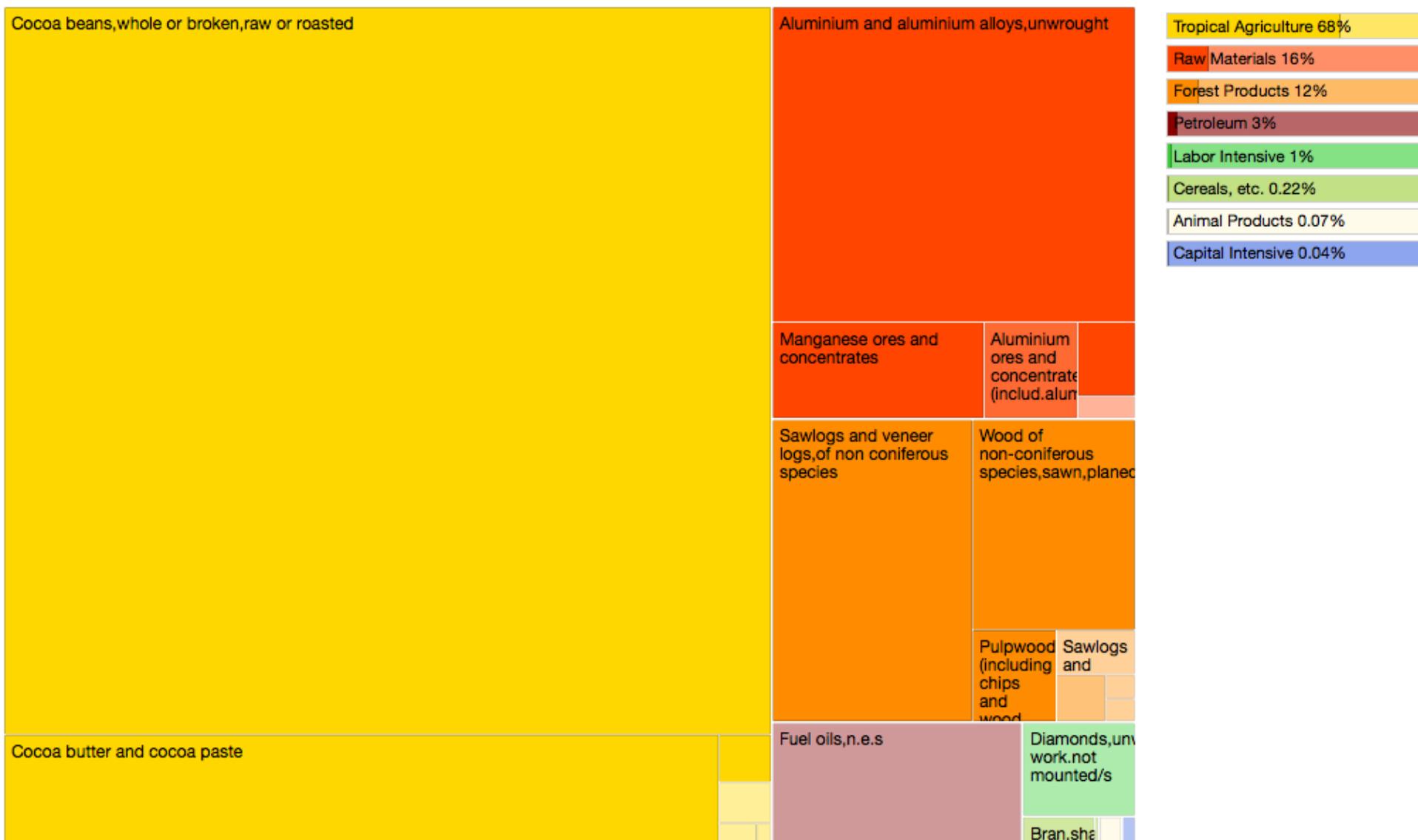


# Ghana: a success story?

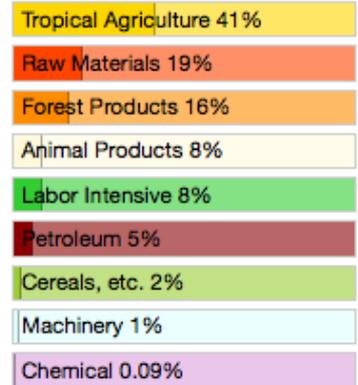
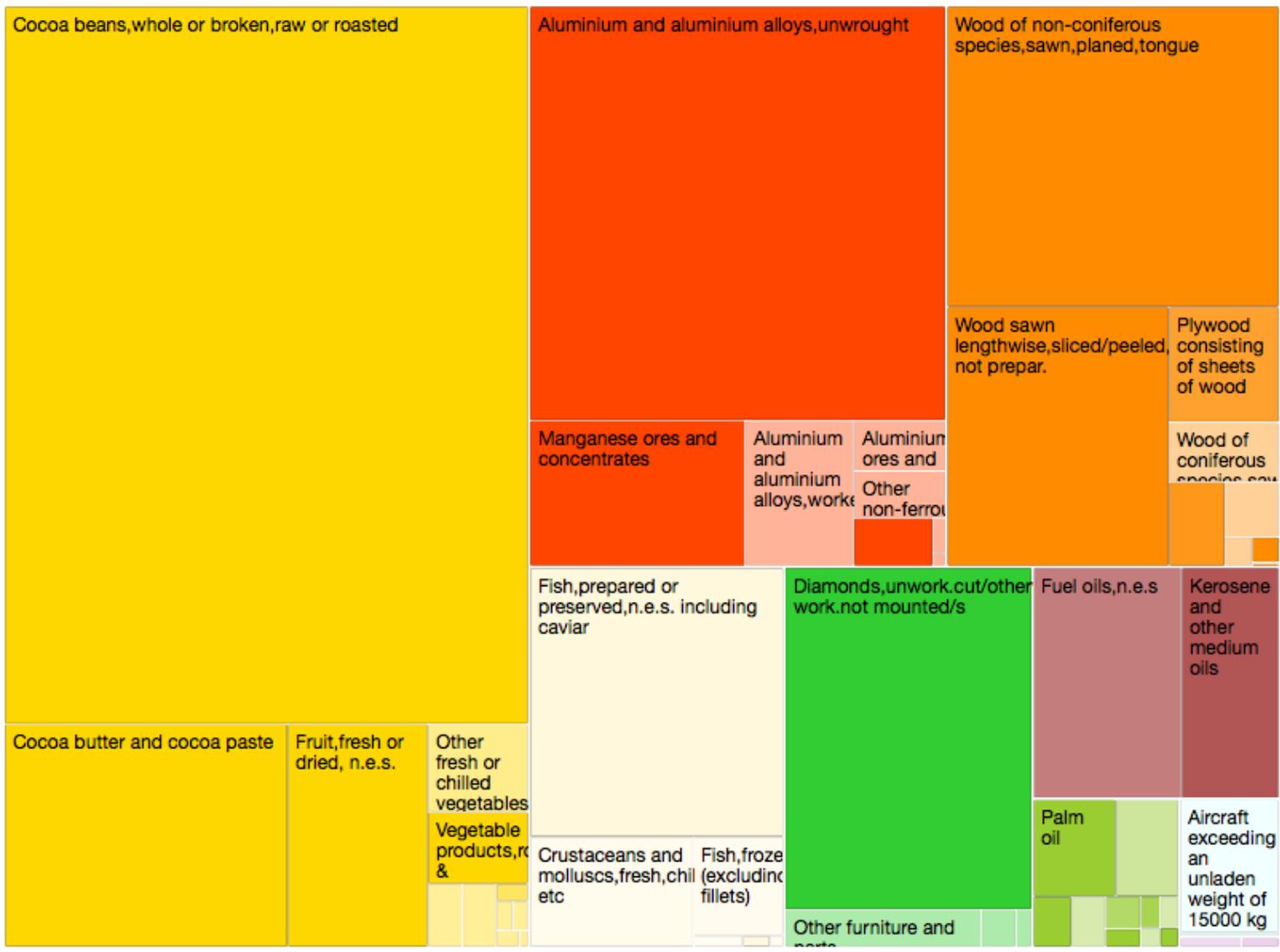


# Ghana: a success story?

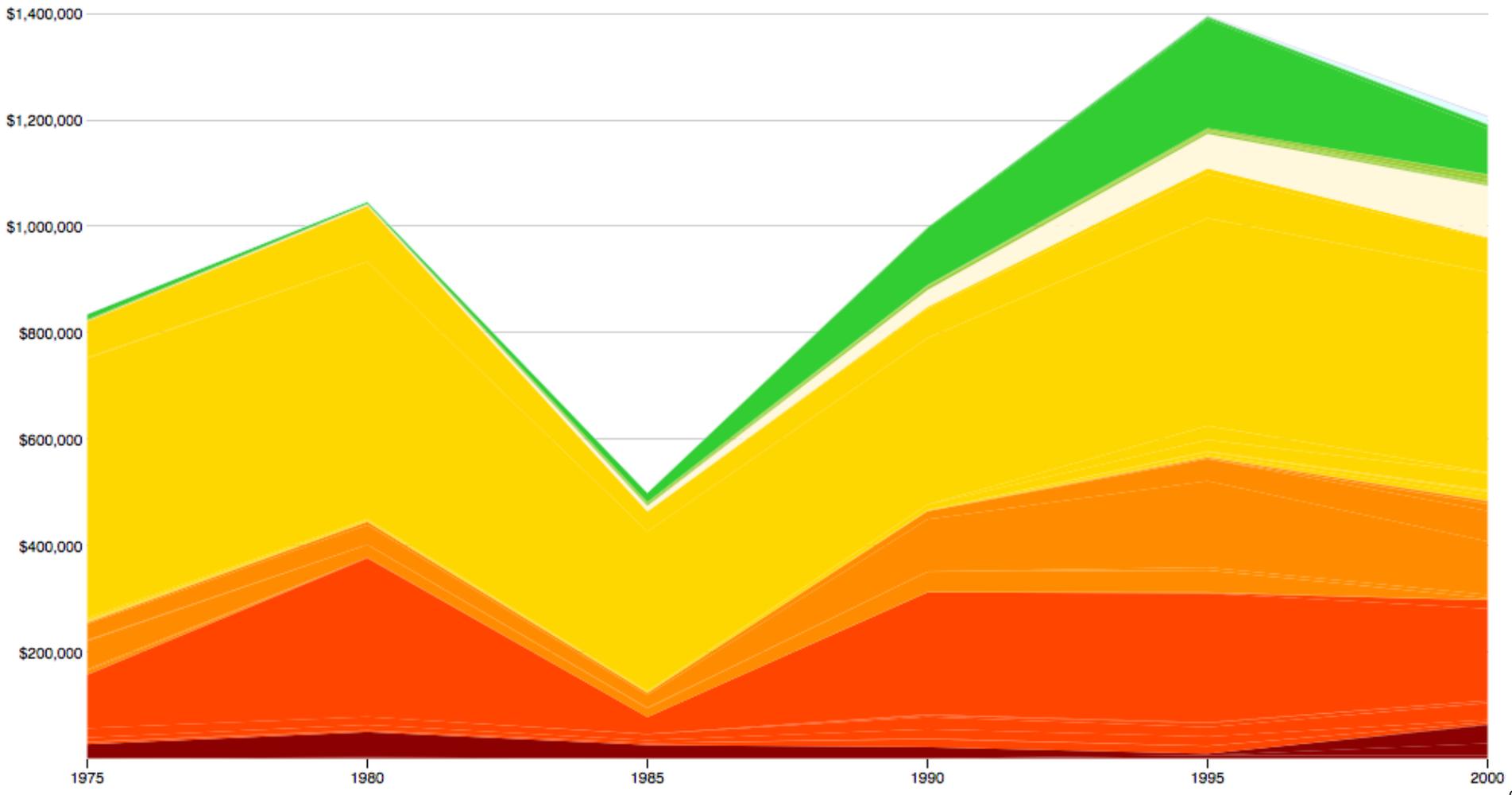




1975



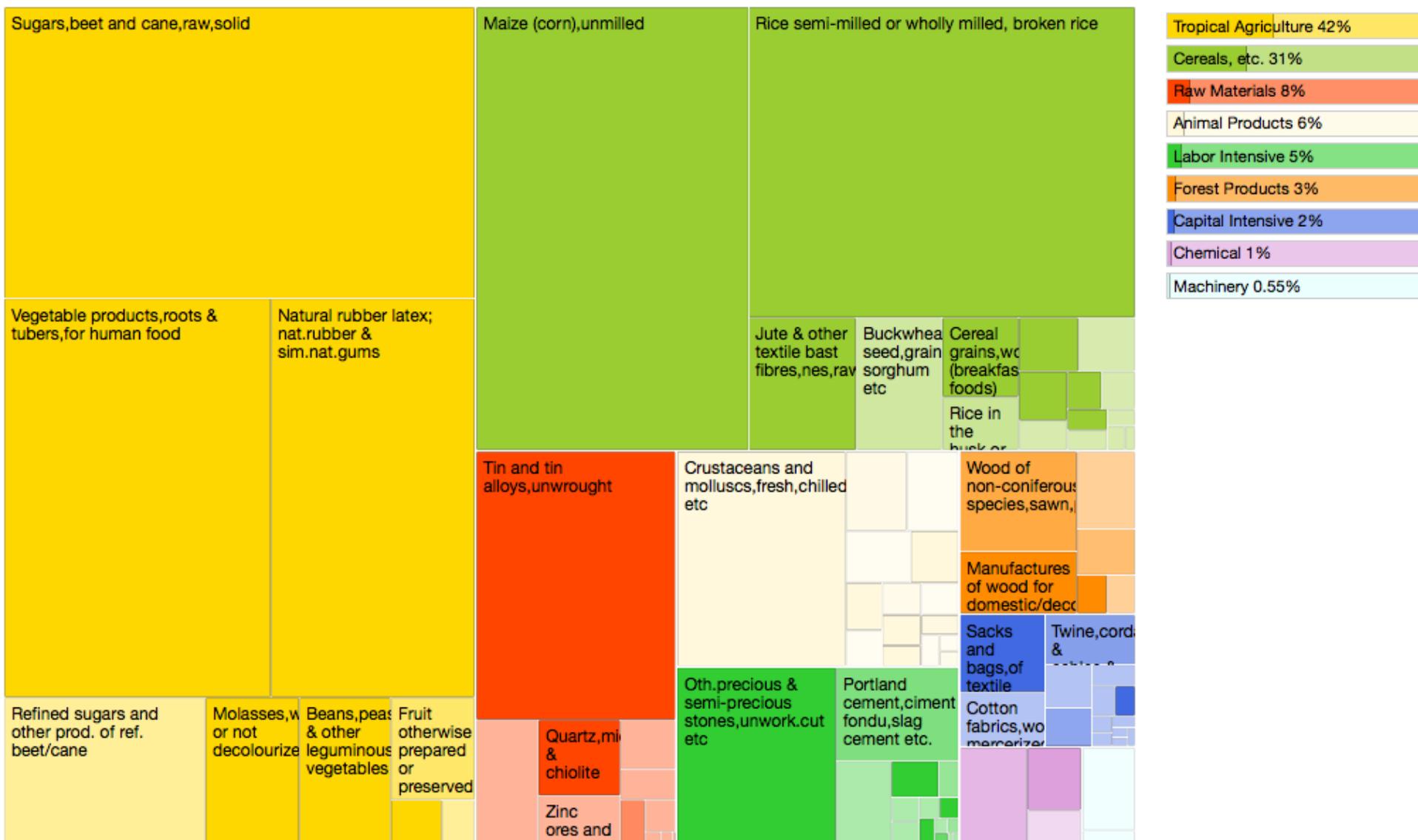
2000



**Value**

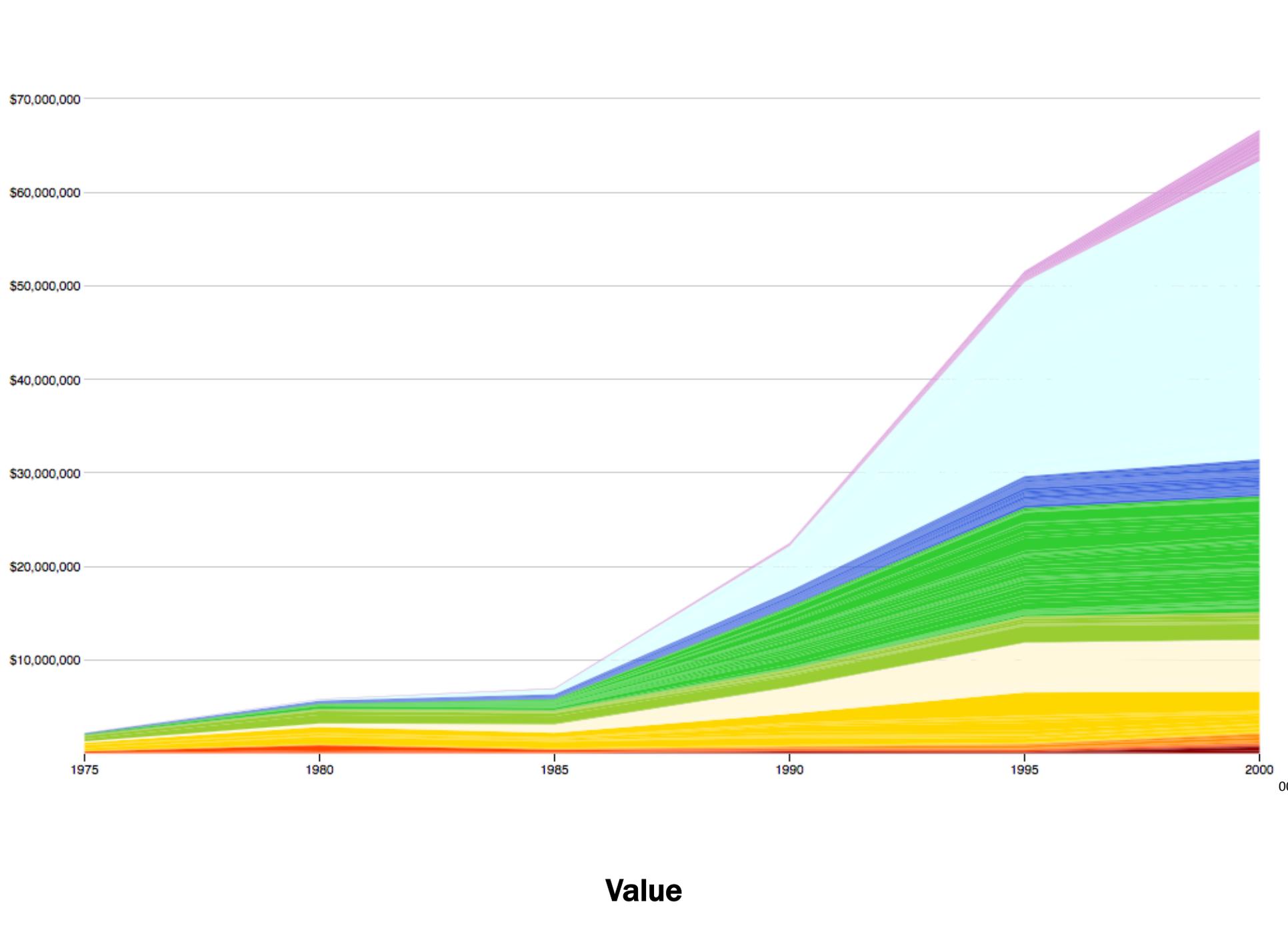


**Thailand**



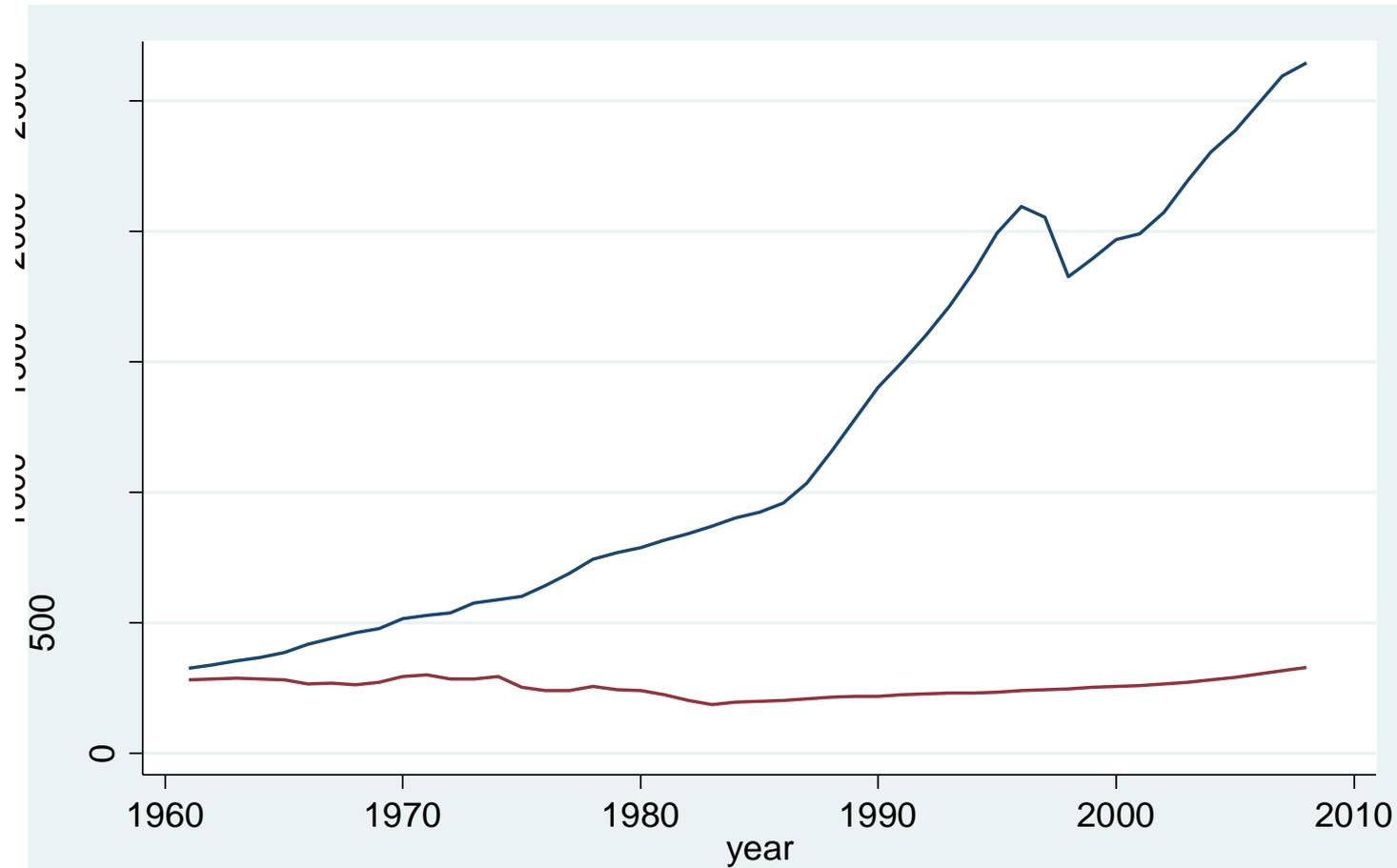
1975





Value

# Thailand vs Ghana



# DIVERSIFICATION AND STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION

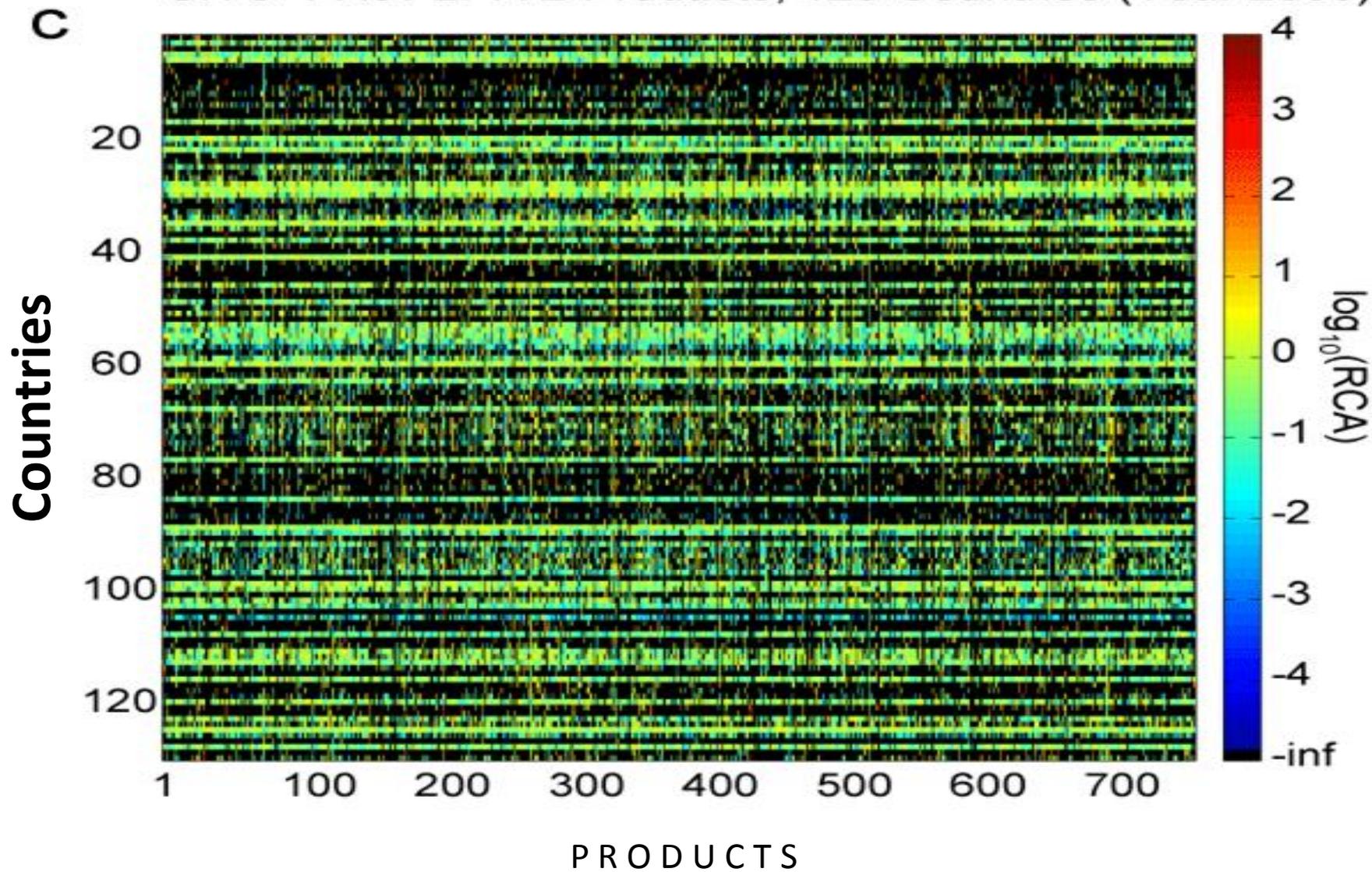
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- Rich countries are more stable and more diversified than poor countries
- Is there anything causal about this relationship? Does diversification cause growth?
- Is there a trade-off between growth and diversification for stability
  - Developing less productive activities for the sake of stability
  - Like in choosing a lower risk and return portfolio
- Are there market failures in diversification and structural transformation that require policy action?

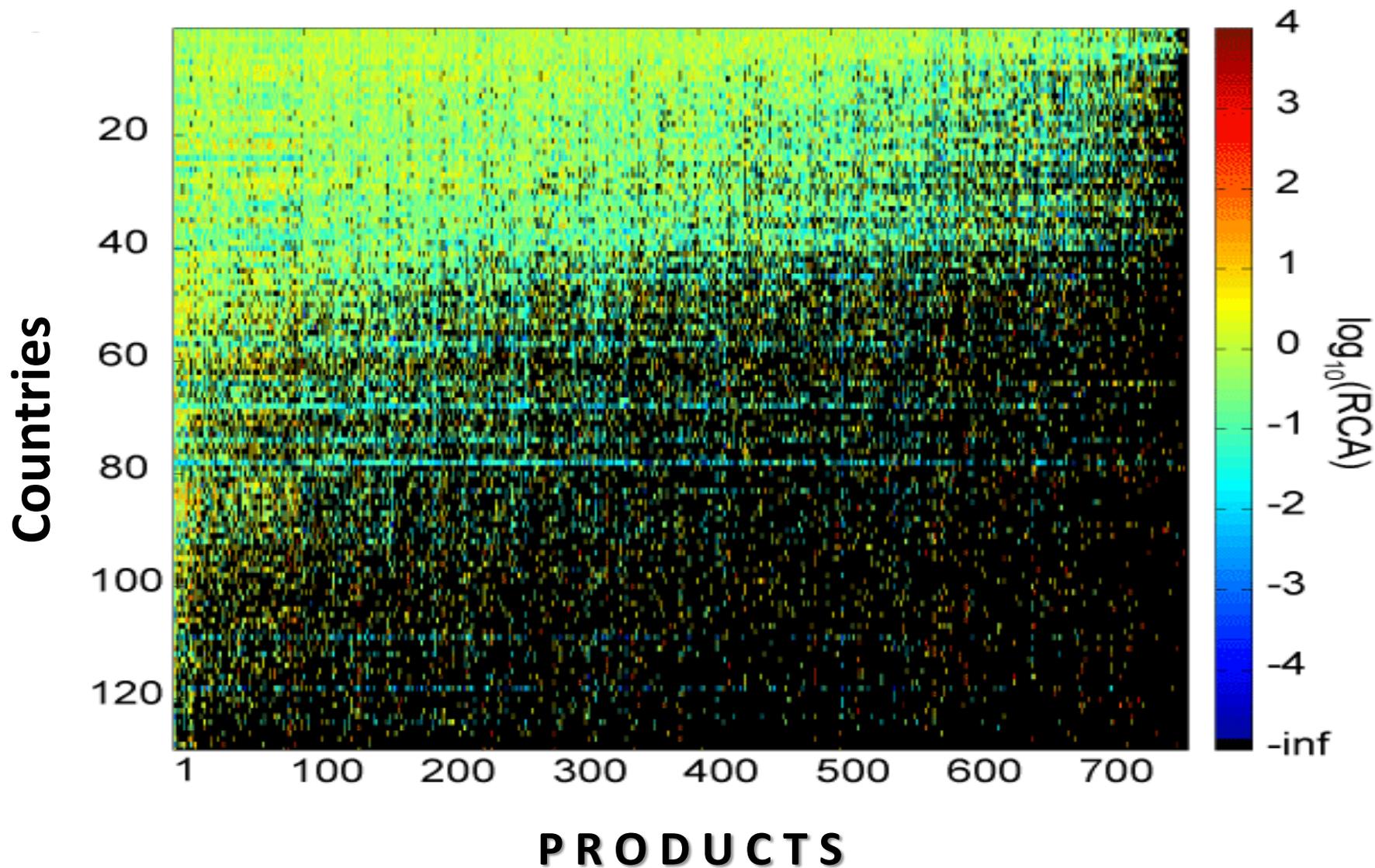
# The shape of the world



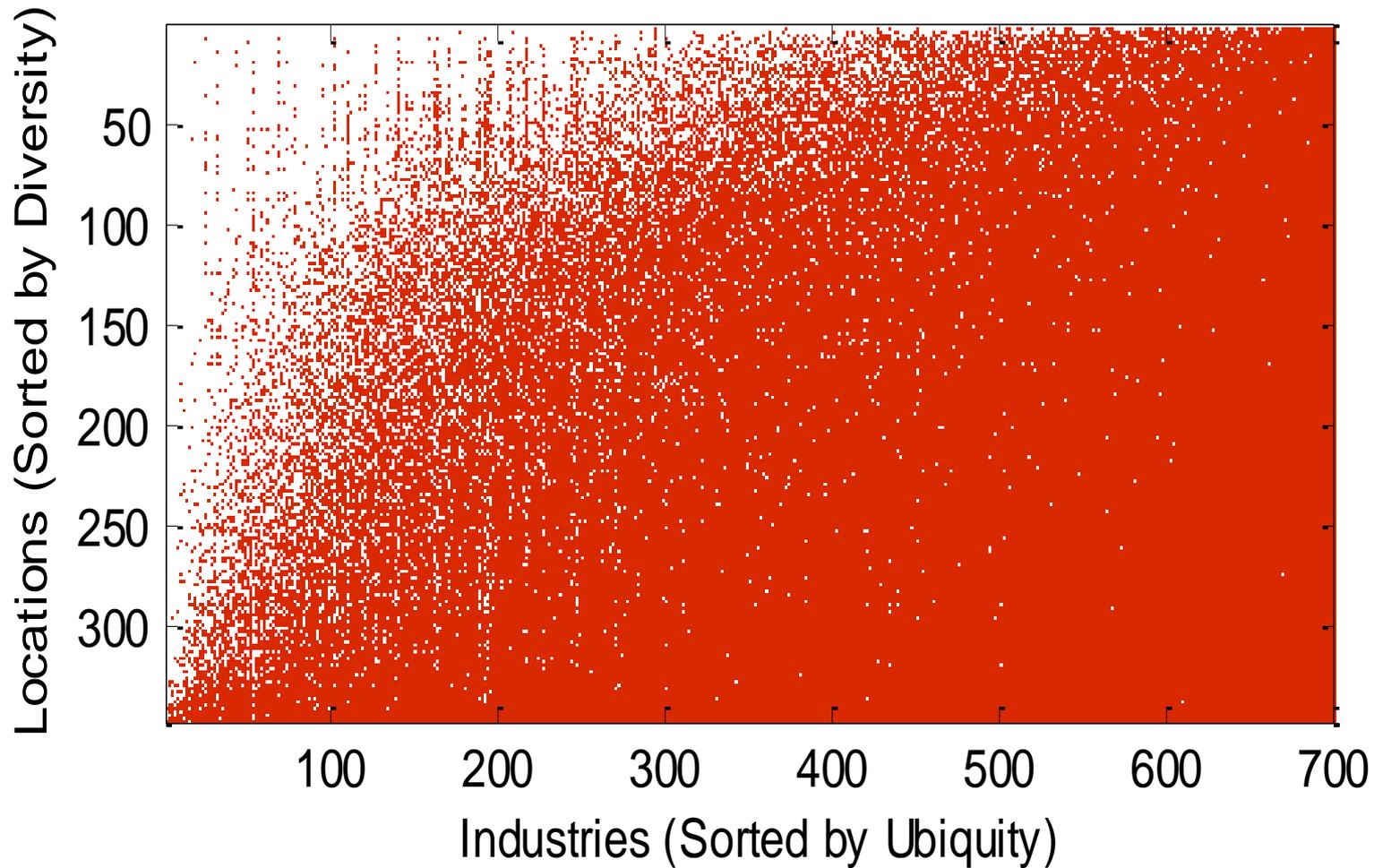
SITC-4 Rev 2: 772 Products, 129 Countries (Year 2000)



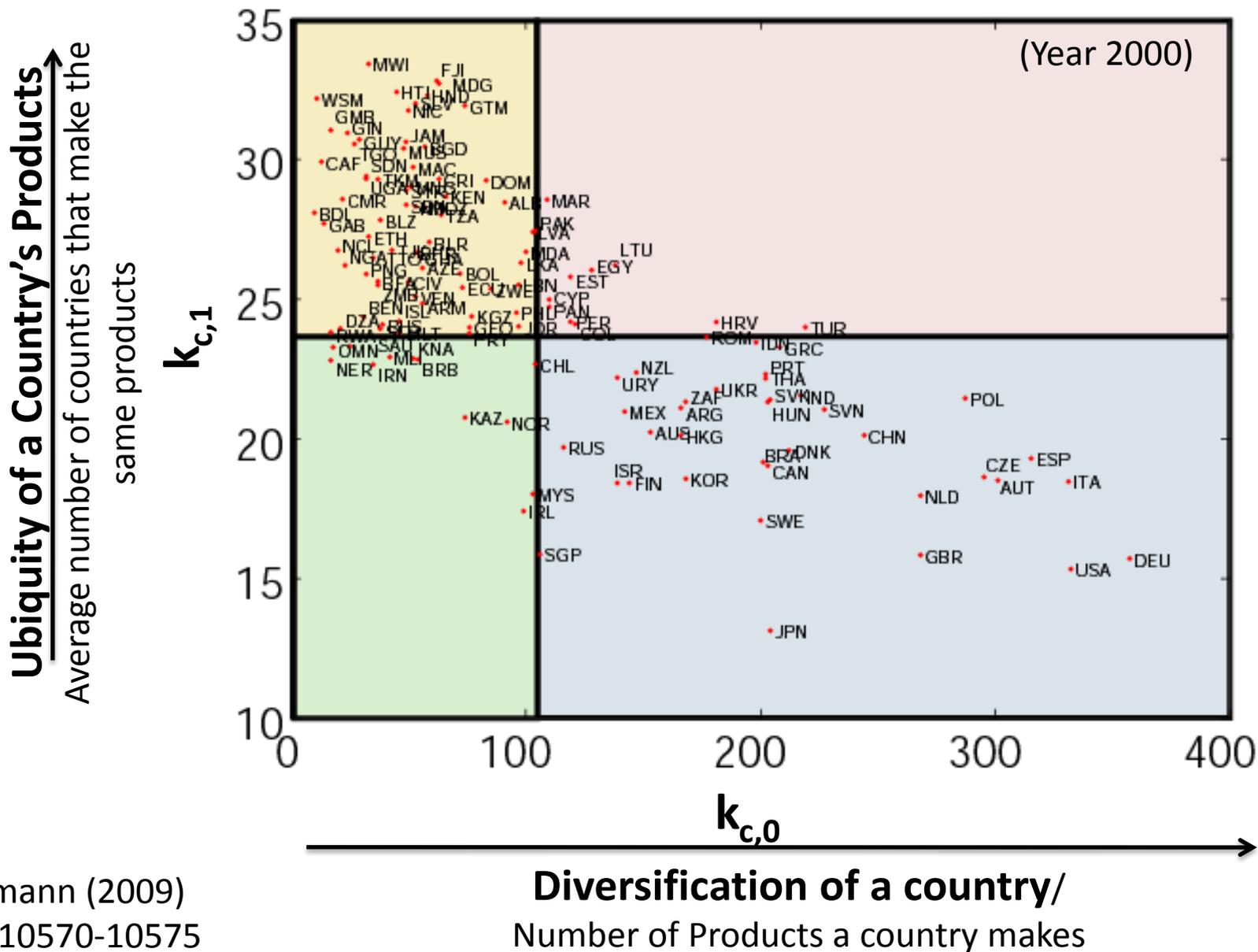
SITC-4 Rev 2: 772 Products, 129 Countries (Year 2000)



# Happens within countries too: **Chile**

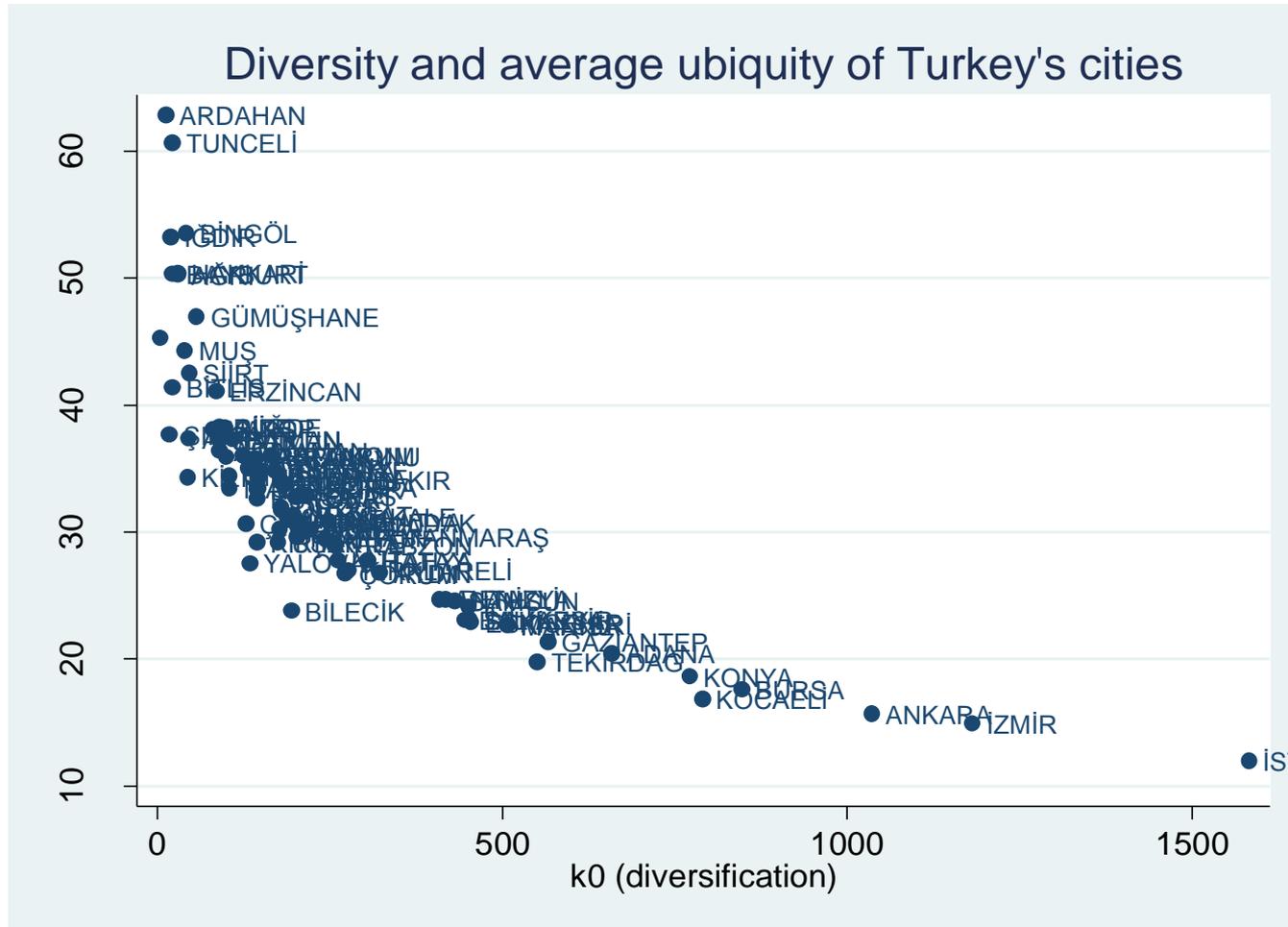


# Evidence of the Connection between the diversity of inputs and that of outputs





# ...and Turkey



# How to account for these features of the world?

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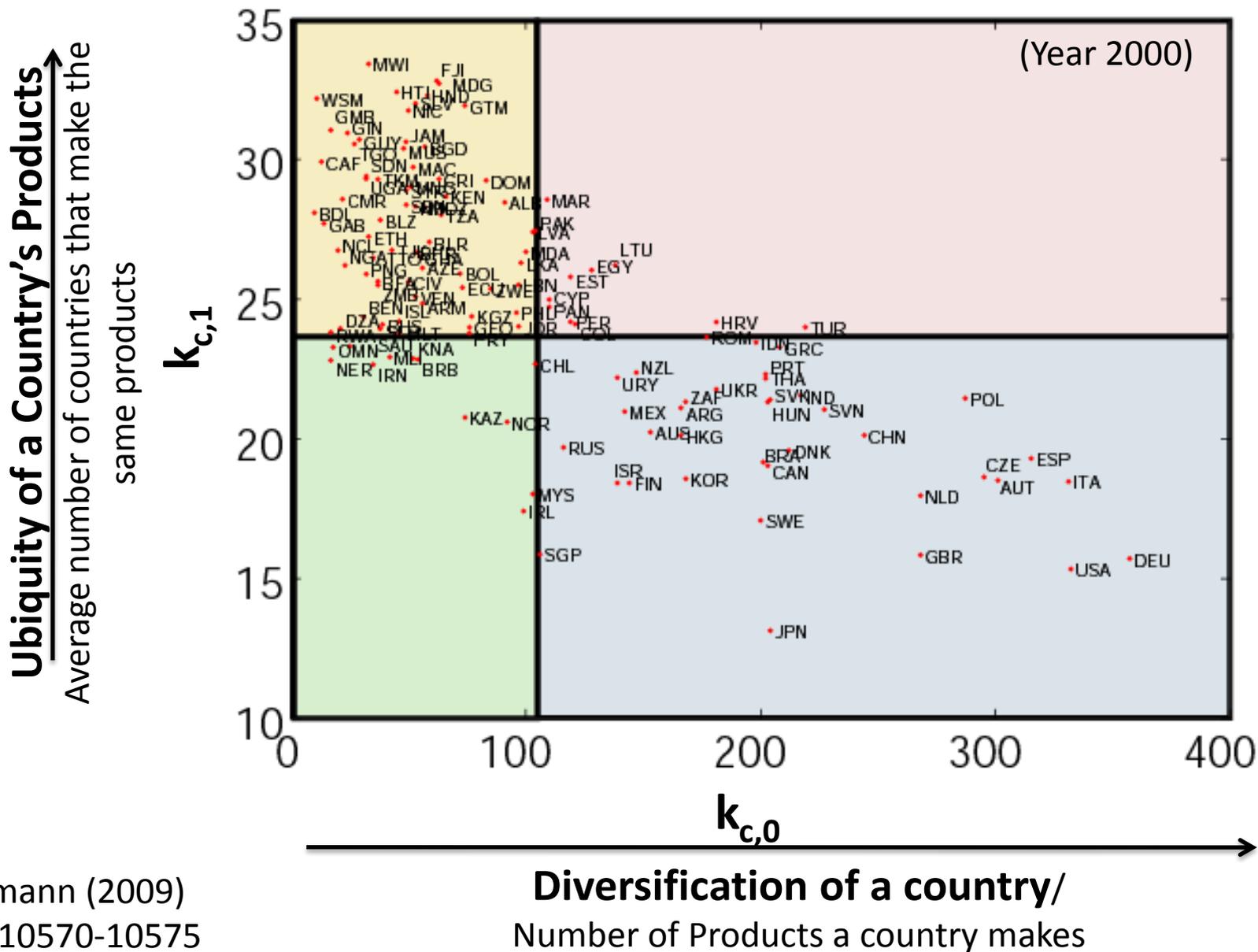
- To produce a particular good you need a varying number of non-tradable intermediate inputs (call them capabilities)
  - Specific human skills
  - Non-tradable goods and services
  - Public goods or other types of public inputs
- They are highly complementary
- There is a fixed costs to developing new types of capabilities
- Products differ in the vector of capabilities they require
- Countries or regions differ in the vector of capabilities they have

# INTUITION

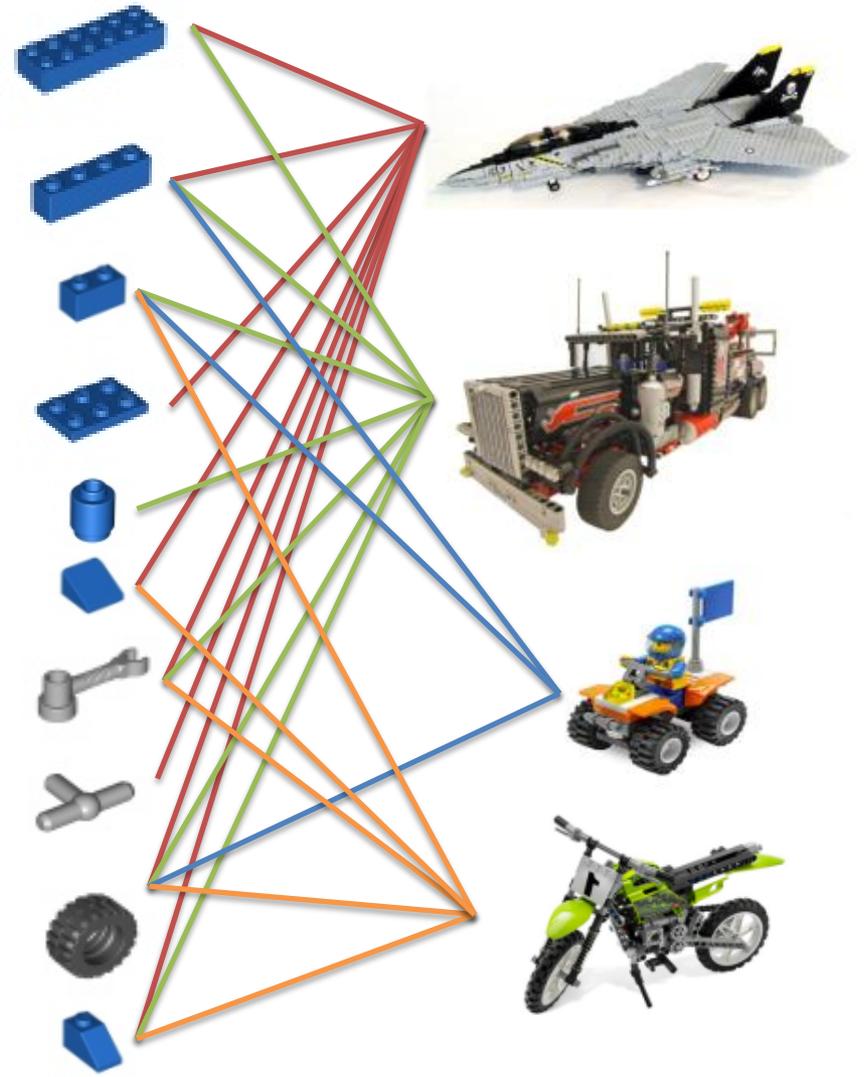
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- Countries that have more capabilities will be able to make more products  
Countries would be more diversified
- Products that require more capabilities will be made by fewer countries  
Products will be less ubiquitous
- Countries that have more capabilities will be able to make products that require more capabilities
- I.e. products that are less ubiquitous
- Countries with more capabilities should thus be more diversified and able to make less ubiquitous products

# Evidence of the Connection between the diversity of inputs and that of outputs



**Products differ  
in the set  
of capabilities  
they require**







数量限定、先着順プレゼント  
Nikon  
**D200**  
感謝キャンペーン  
D200をご購入の方にクリスマスプレゼント  
お早めにご来店ください  
キャンペーンはラストチャンスです  
マルチメディアのD200

D200  
D200  
D200

CASHIER

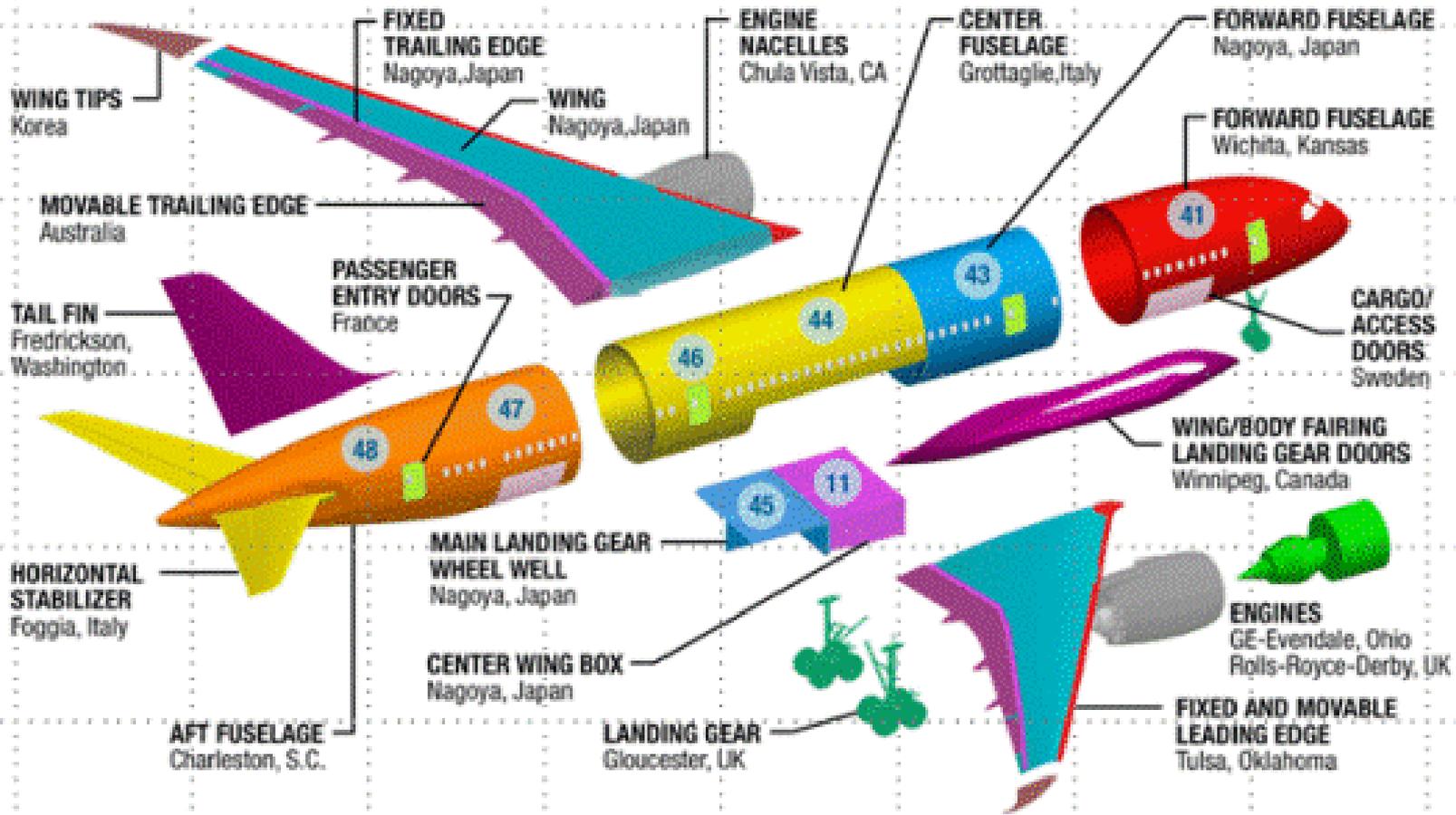
Nikon  
Nikon  
**D70s**  
Niko

ボディカメラ前編  
D70s  
¥83,800

Yodobashi-Camera

# THE COMPANIES

U.S.	CANADA	AUSTRALIA	JAPAN	KOREA	EUROPE
Boeing	Boeing	Boeing	Kawasaki	KAL-ASD	Messier-Dowty
Spirit	Messier-Dowty		Mitsubishi		Rolls-Royce
Vought			Fuji		Latecoere
GE					Alenia
Goodrich					Saab







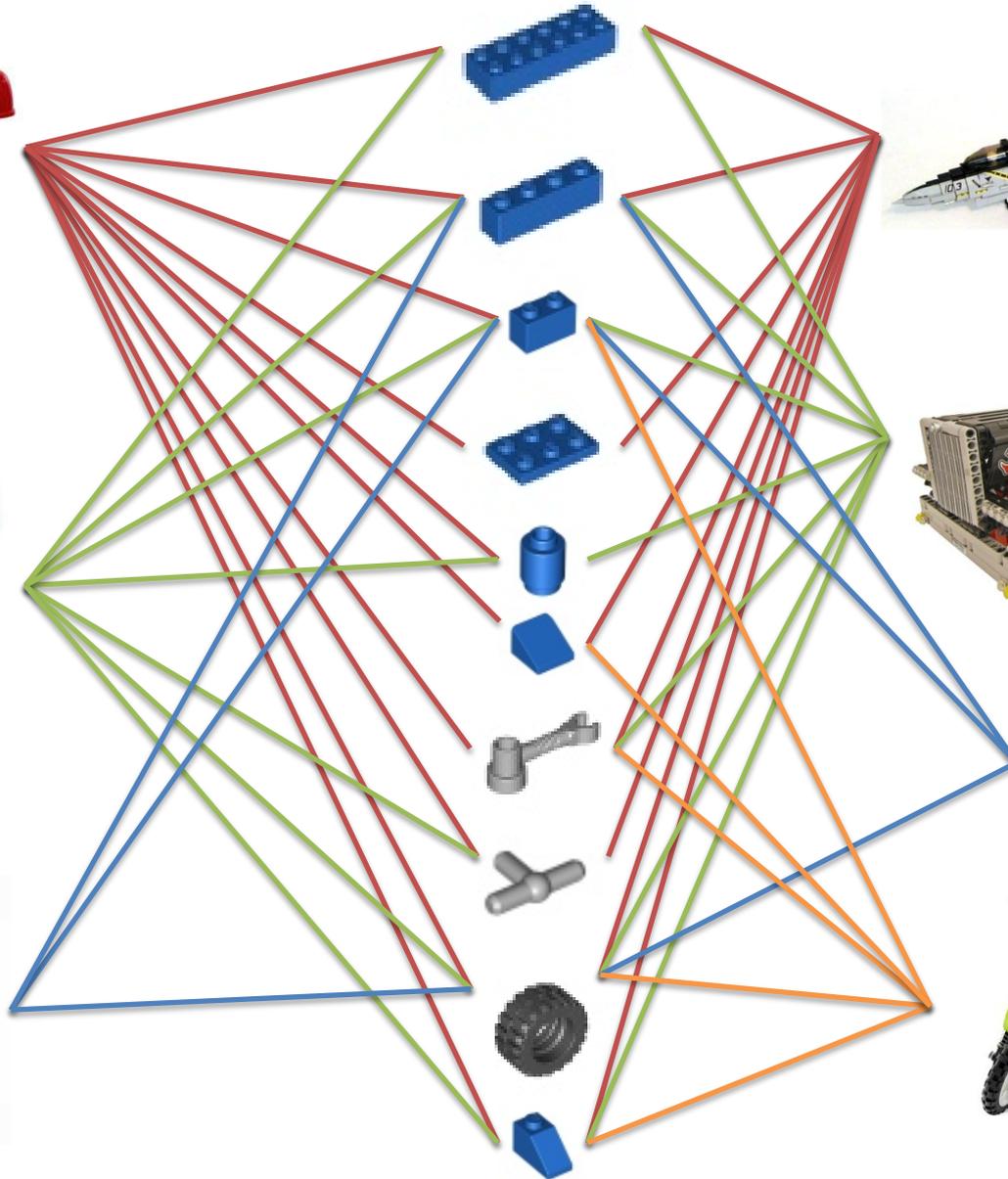
**Countries differ  
in the set of  
capabilities  
they have**



# Countries

# capabilities

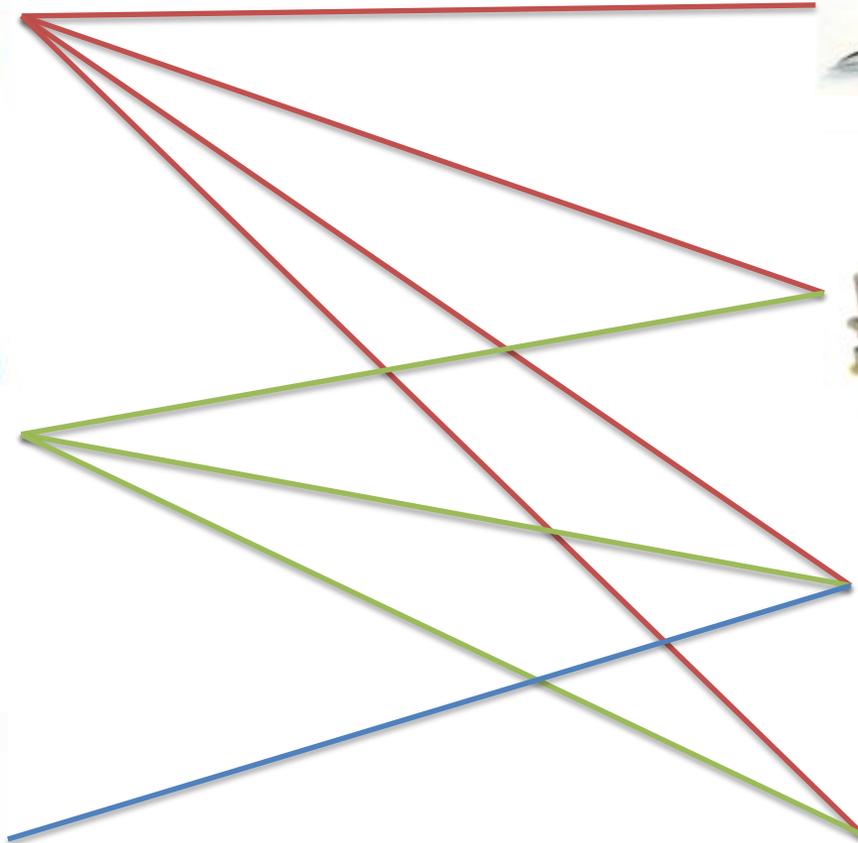
# Products



# What we can observe

Countries

Products



**The diversification that matters is  
at the level of capabilities.**

**It is expressed in the variety and complexity  
of the products that countries are able to  
put together**

**How can we  
measure a  
country's  
capabilities?**



# Calculating productive knowledge

$$\text{Diversity} = k_{c,0} = \sum_p M_{cp} \quad (1)$$

$$\text{Ubiquity} = k_{p,0} = \sum_c M_{cp} \quad (2)$$

$$k_{c,N} = \frac{1}{k_{c,0}} \sum_p M_{cp} \cdot k_{p,N-1} \quad (3)$$

$$k_{p,N} = \frac{1}{k_{p,0}} \sum_c M_{cp} \cdot k_{c,N-1} \quad (4)$$

$$k_{c,N} = \sum_{c'} \widetilde{M}_{cc'} k_{c',N-2} \quad (7)$$

where

$$\widetilde{M}_{cc'} = \sum_p \frac{M_{cp} M_{c'p}}{k_{c,0} k_{p,0}} \quad (8)$$

We calculate the second eigenvector  
We can do the same for products

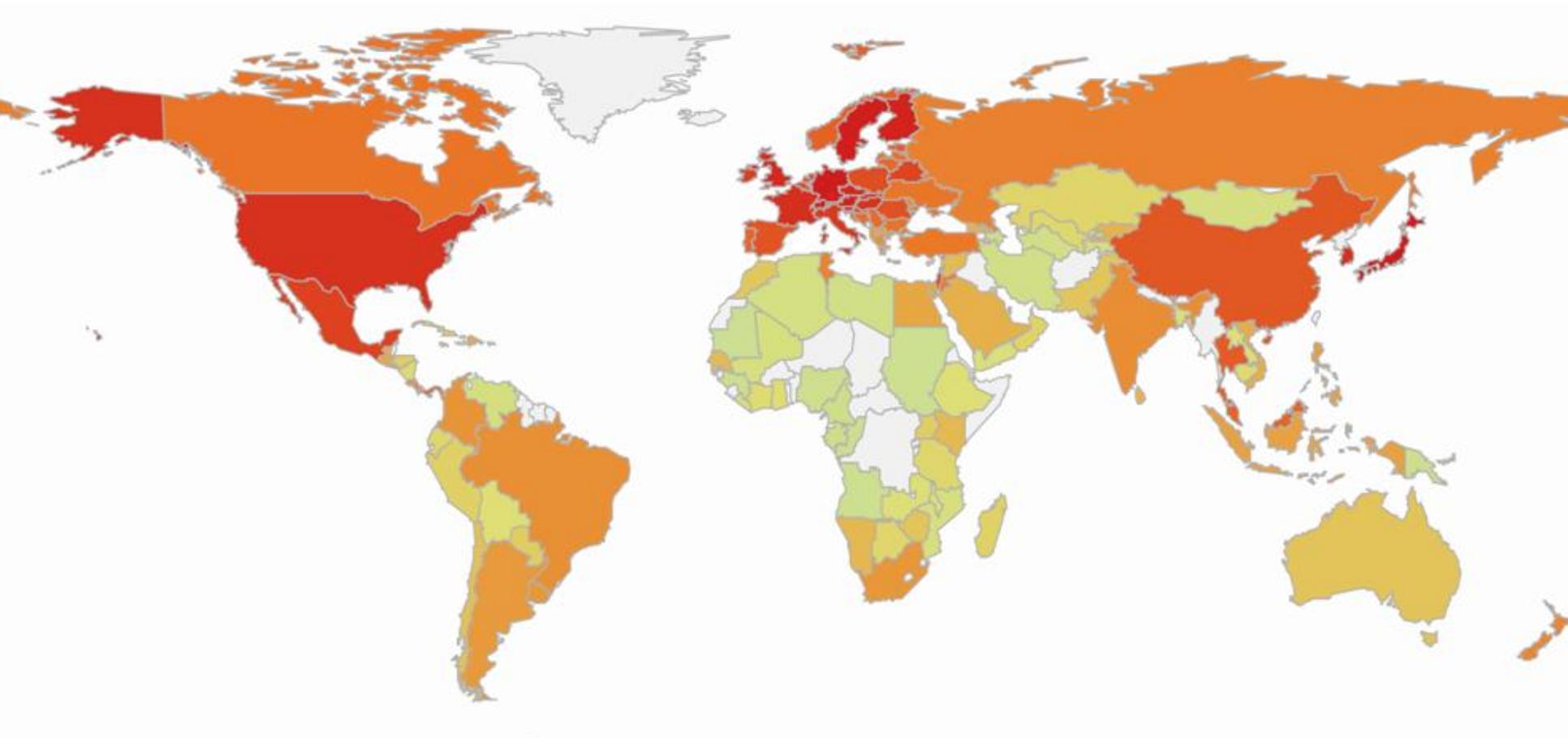
# Another stab at the logic

$$M_{c,p} = C_{c,a} \ddot{A} P_{p,a}$$

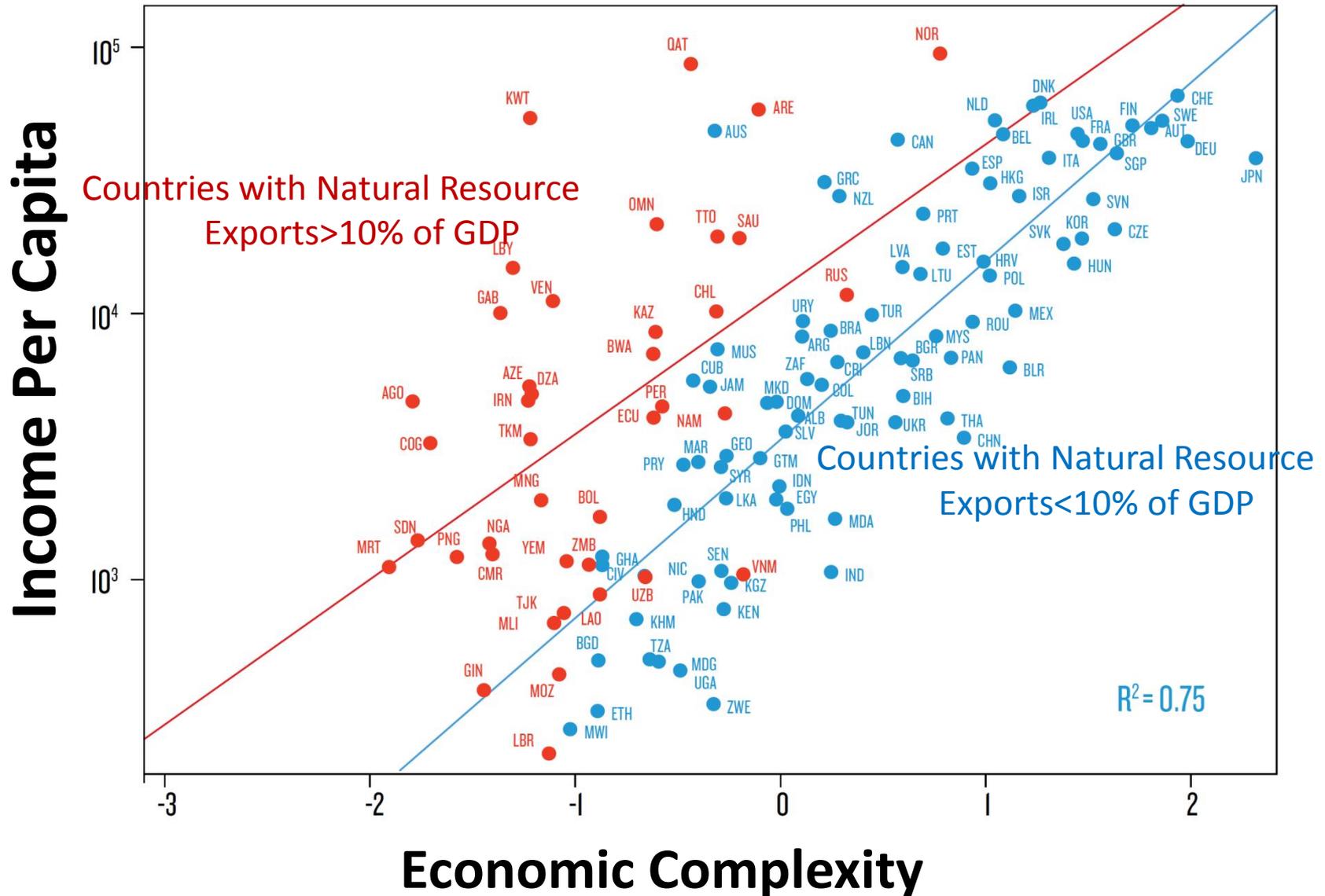
- ▣ If you average across products you get a measure of the  $C_{ca}$  matrix

# Economic Complexity Index

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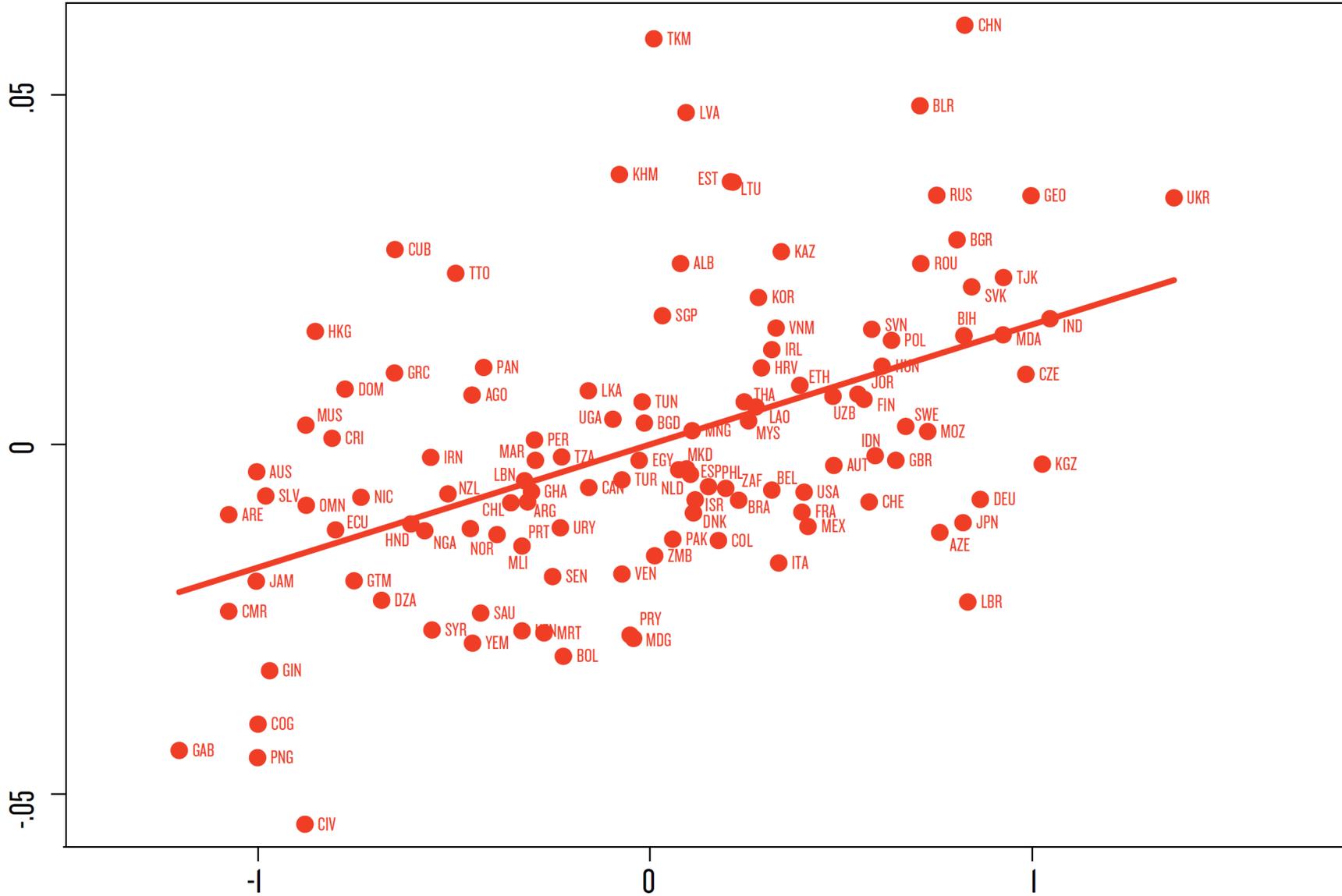


# ECI correlates with GDP per capita





Growth in per capita GDP, controlling for initial income and growth in natural resource exports [1998-2008]



Economic Complexity Index controlling for initial income and growth in natural resource export [1998]

**How are  
capabilities  
accumulated?**

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# The chicken and egg problem

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- You cannot make watches without watchmakers
- You don't want to be watchmaker if nobody makes watches
- You cannot become a watchmaker because there are no watchmakers to learn from
- How does the world deal with this?
- By moving towards “nearby” products



# What does nearby mean?

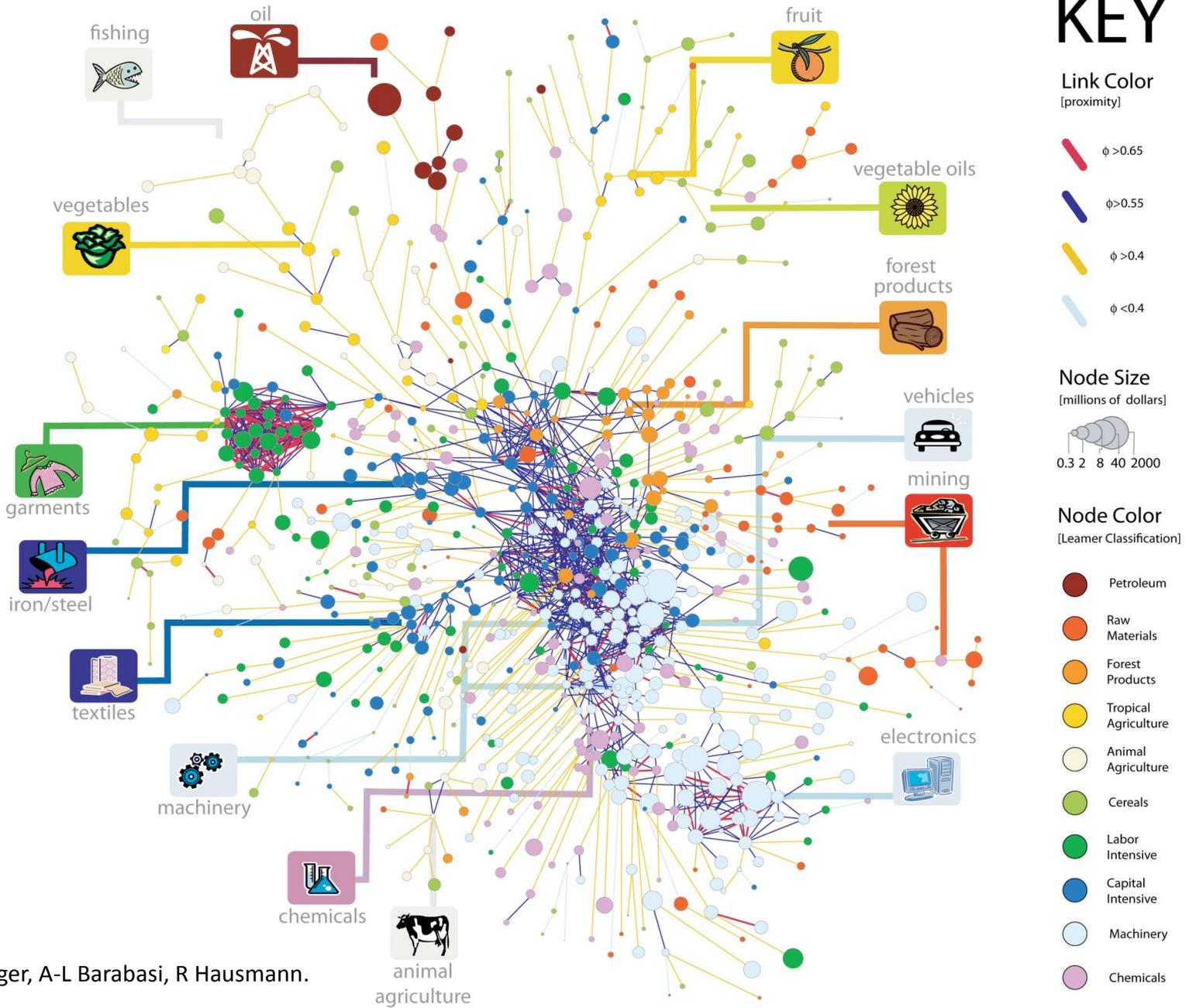
- Lets go back to the basic equation:
- $$M_{c,p} = C_{c,a} \ddot{A} P_{p,a}$$
- If you look at the probability that product are co-exported across all countries, you get a measure of how similar they are in the  $P_{pa}$  matrix

$$\emptyset_{pp'} = \frac{\sum_c M_{cp} M_{cp'}}{\max(k_{p,0}, k_{p',0})}$$

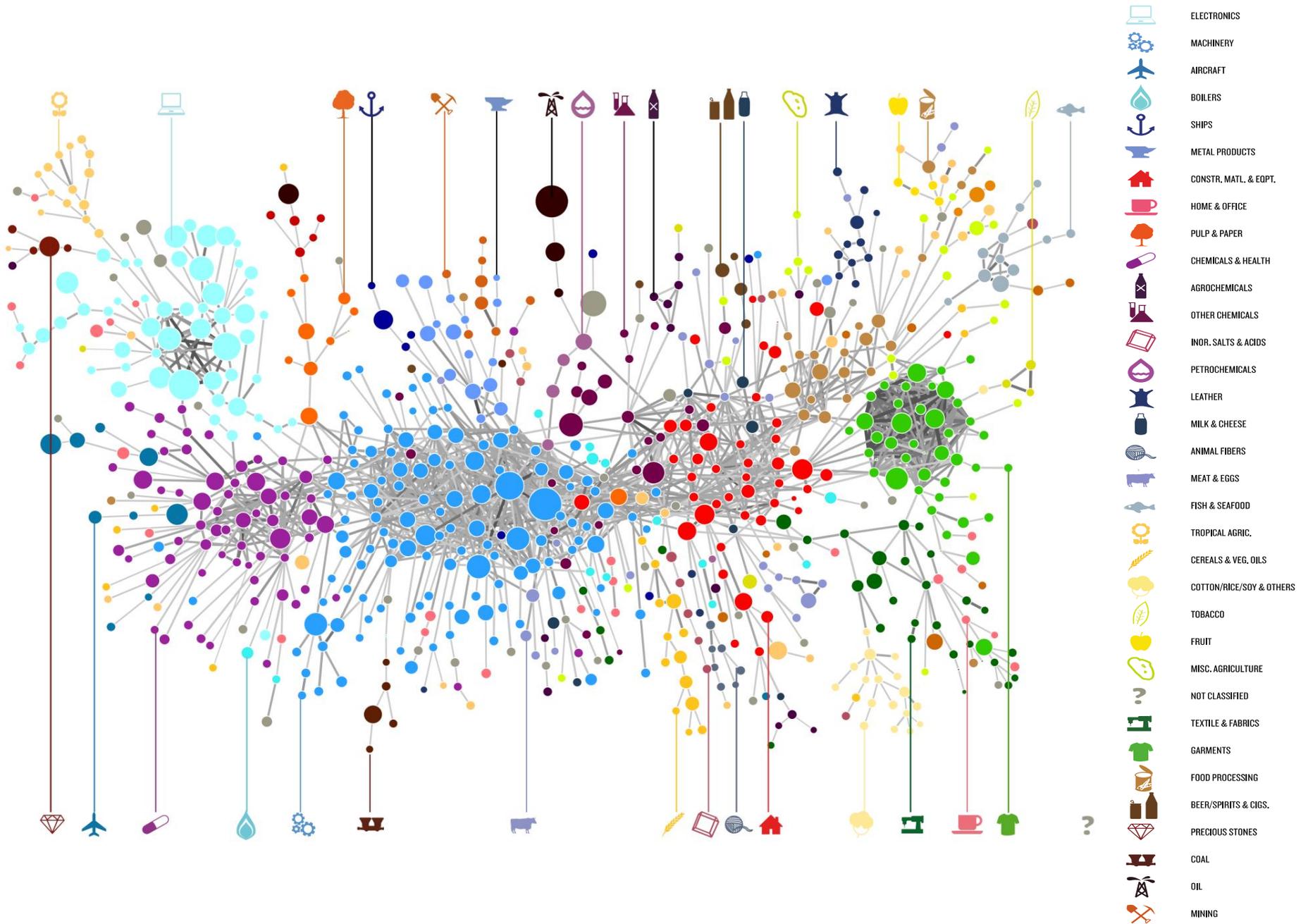


## Mapping out the Forest

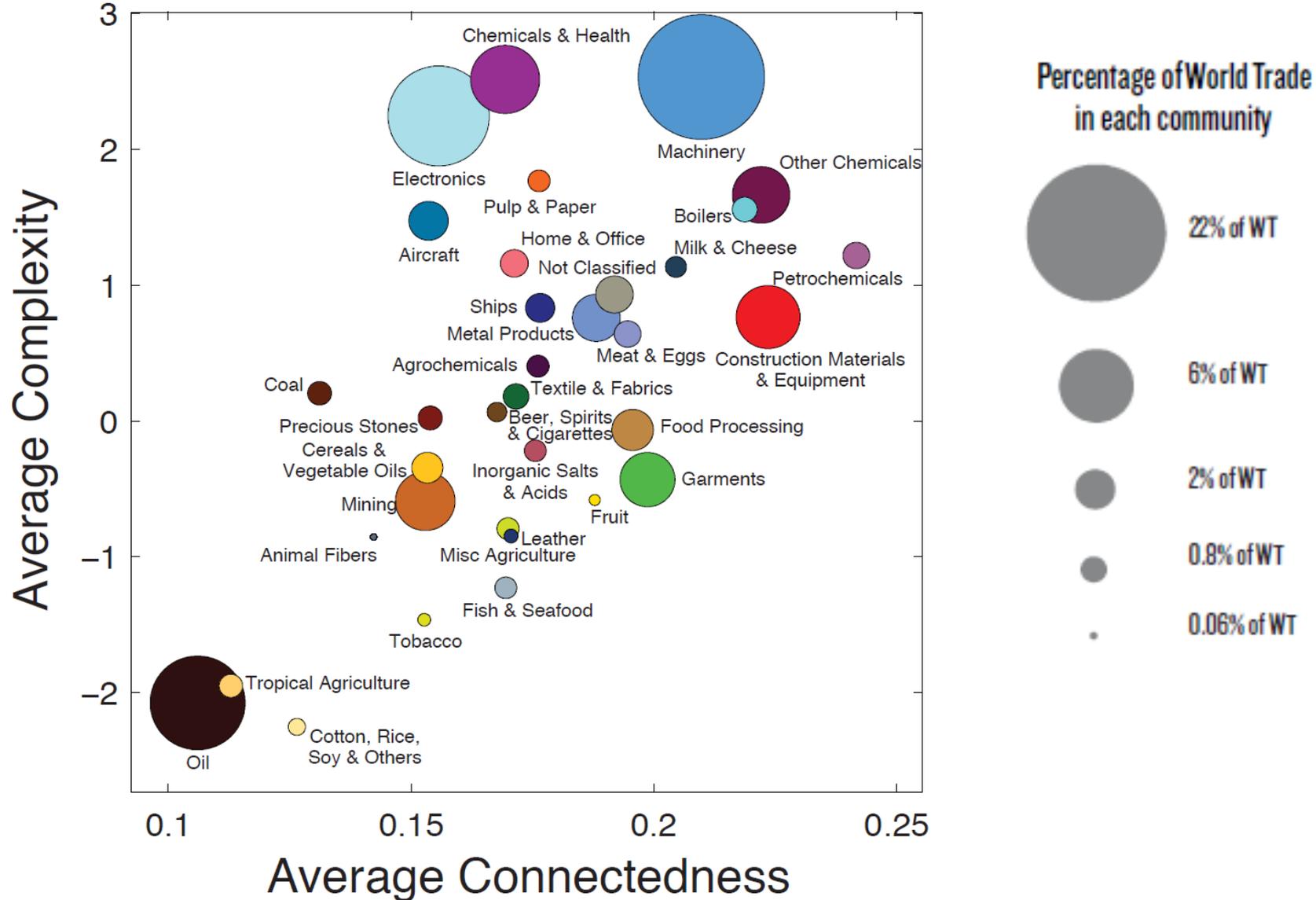




CA Hidalgo, B Klinger, A-L Barabasi, R Hausmann.  
*Science* (2007)



# Products differ in how many capabilities they require and in how related they are to other products



# Measuring the position of a country in the product space

- A country is characterized not just by the capabilities it has
- ...but by how easy it is to accumulate more capabilities
- This is affected by the proximity between the products it is able to make and other products
- We can measure this

# Measuring the position in the product space

Distance between a country's capabilities and a product

$$d_{cp} = \frac{\sum_{p'} (1 - M_{cp'}) \theta_{pp'}}{\sum_{p'} \theta_{pp'}}$$

Distance between a country's capabilities and a product, weighted by the complexity of the product

To the product you don't make

Weighted by how complex they are

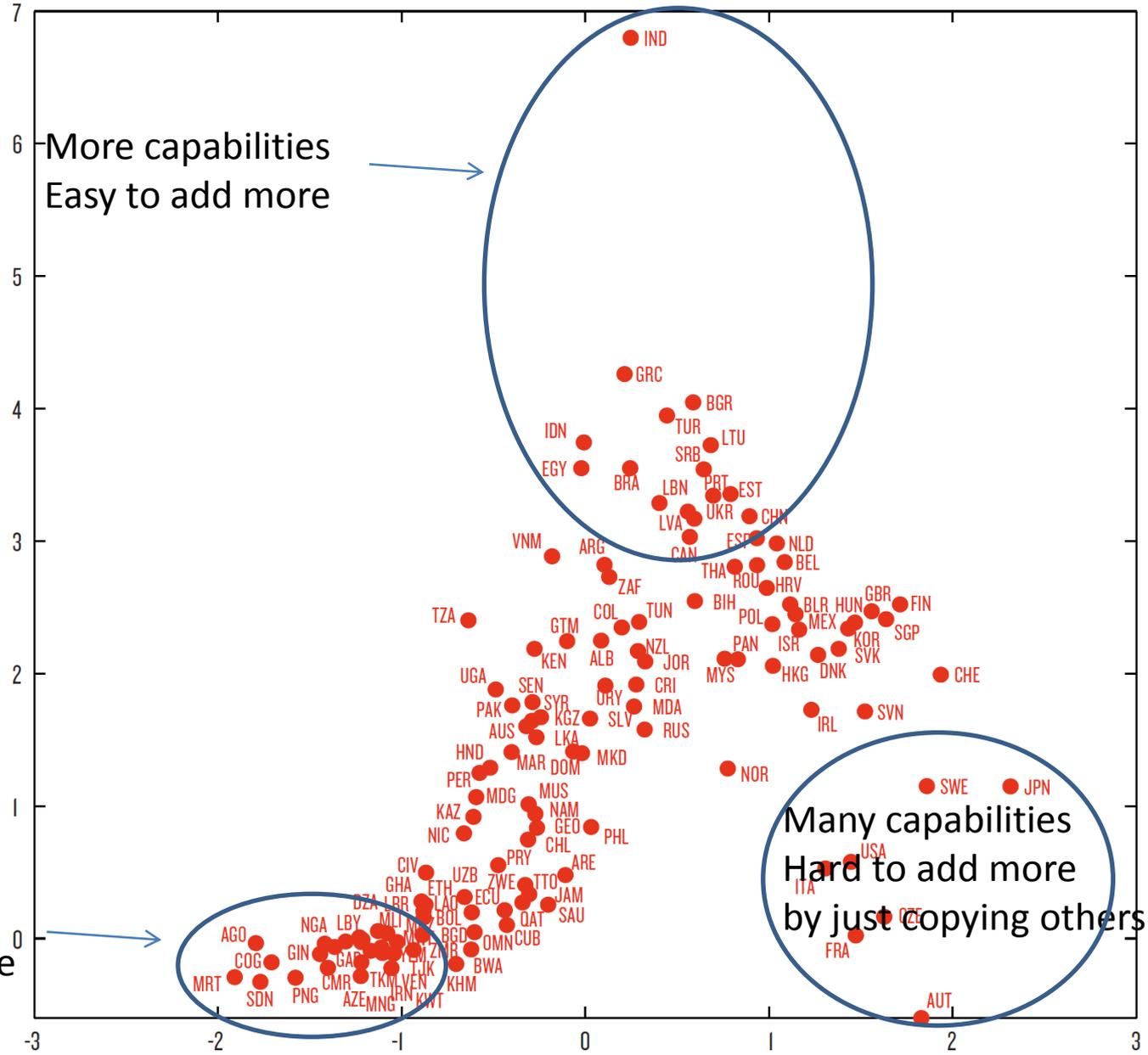
Distance between a country's capabilities and a product, weighted by the complexity of the product, and by the opportunity value of the product currently not made,

How complex you are

$$\text{opportunity value } c = \sum_{p'} (1 - d_{cp'}) (1 - M_{cp'}) PCI_{p'}$$

How close are you to other good products?

Few capabilities  
Hard to add more



How many capabilities you have?

# The position in the product space affects the growth of complexity

Economic Complexity Index (1978-2008)		
	5-Year Periods	10-Year Periods
VARIABLES	(1)	(2)
Initial Economic Complexity Index	0.915*** (0,017)	0.857*** (0,036)
Initial Complexity Outlook Index	0.078*** (0,017)	0.136*** (0,034)
Constant	-0,016 (0,035)	-0.064** (0,030)
Observations	637	313
R <sup>2</sup>	0,926	0,892
Year FE	Yes	Yes
Speed of adjustment, $\theta$	0,085	0,143
Long run effect, $\delta$	0,918	0,951

# Baseline

Dependent variable: 10 year real GDP growth per capita (%)

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Initial GDP per capita, logs	-0.009 (0.125)	-0.667*** (0.163)	-0.489*** (0.142)	-0.738*** (0.145)
Increase in real NNRR exports pc	4.034*** (0.830)	3.794*** (0.919)	4.062*** (0.967)	3.905*** (0.979)
Initial Economic Complexity Index		1.393*** (0.228)		0.859*** (0.197)
Initial Opportunity value Index			1.235*** (0.226)	0.832*** (0.215)
Constant	1.326 (1.097)	6.267*** (1.323)	4.894*** (1.173)	6.776*** (1.177)
Observations	294	294	294	294
R-squared	0.269	0.390	0.399	0.431
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Robust standard errors in parentheses

# Relation to standard stories

- Institutions matter
  - Because they facilitate the aggregation of capabilities through organizations and markets
- Human capital matters
  - HK is an intensive measure. PK is an extensive measure
  - Common HK may facilitate later specialization
  - And re-aggregation by making cooperation easier
- Finance matters
  - Because it may facilitate the re-aggregation of capabilities

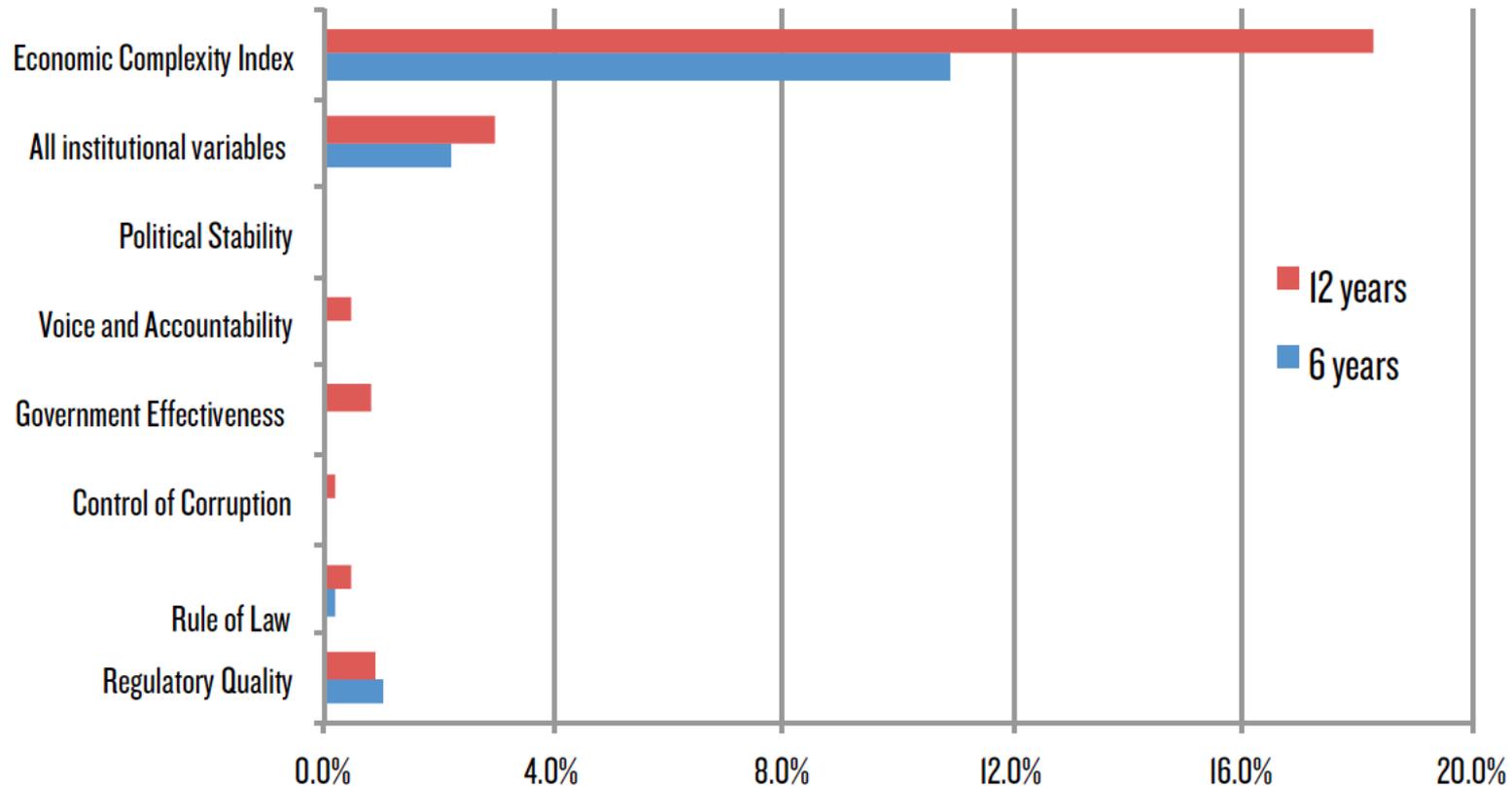
# Institutions

**Dependent variable: 10 year real GDP growth per capita (%)**

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Initial GDP per capita, logs	-1.249*** (0.194)	-1.142*** (0.268)	-1.115*** (0.276)	-1.367*** (0.194)	-1.139*** (0.255)	-1.128*** (0.273)	-1.226*** (0.213)	-1.041*** (0.300)
Increase in real NNRR exports pc	3.338*** (0.827)	3.301*** (0.822)	3.288*** (0.812)	3.362*** (0.825)	3.296*** (0.823)	3.262*** (0.783)	3.317*** (0.826)	3.204*** (0.769)
Initial Economic Complexity Index	1.459*** (0.274)	1.500*** (0.285)	1.506*** (0.283)	1.377*** (0.297)	1.502*** (0.285)	1.446*** (0.273)	1.471*** (0.287)	1.425*** (0.312)
Initial Opportunity value Index	0.483** (0.186)	0.467** (0.190)	0.484** (0.188)	0.509*** (0.183)	0.482** (0.188)	0.502*** (0.185)	0.486** (0.187)	0.561*** (0.199)
Initial Control of Corruption		-0.213 (0.316)						0.209 (0.875)
Initial Government Effectiveness			-0.290 (0.369)					-0.381 (0.775)
Initial Political Stability				0.372 (0.252)				0.845** (0.403)
Initial Rule of Law					-0.237 (0.341)			-0.795 (0.841)
Initial Regulatory Quality						-0.251 (0.433)		-0.091 (0.608)
Initial Voice and Accountability							-0.066 (0.343)	0.024 (0.435)
Constant	12.514*** (1.563)	11.697*** (2.109)	11.508*** (2.147)	13.454*** (1.564)	11.667*** (2.002)	11.620*** (2.093)	12.342*** (1.675)	11.033*** (2.308)
Observations	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119
R-squared	0.461	0.463	0.464	0.468	0.463	0.464	0.461	0.485
Year FE	Yes							

Robust standard errors in parentheses

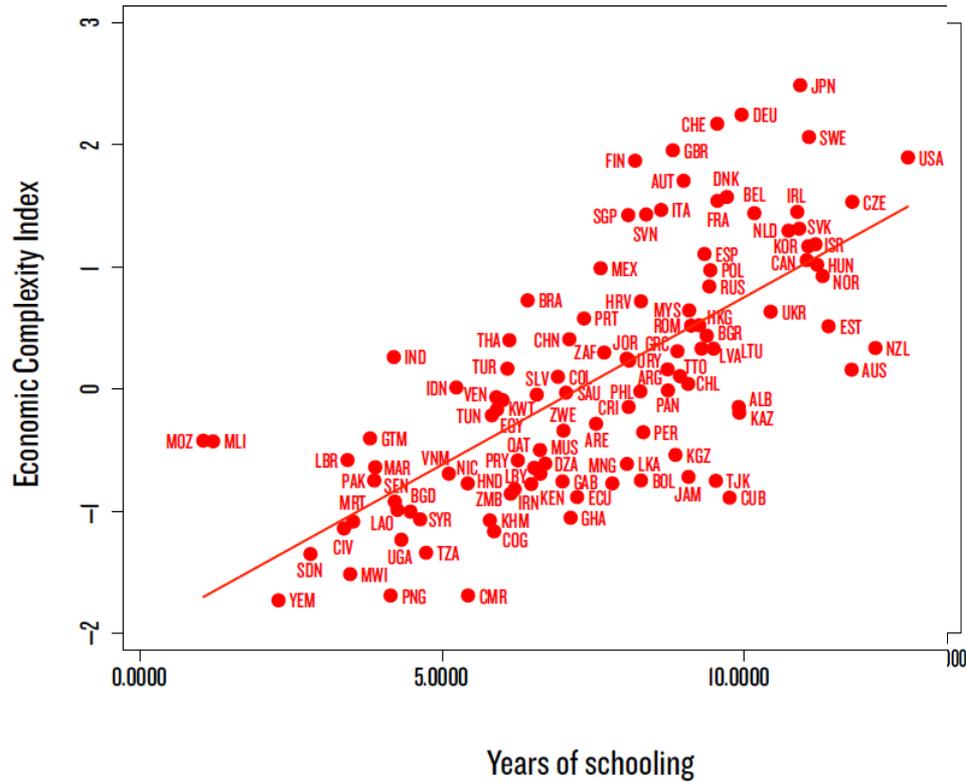
# Who can account for growth? Complexity vs. Governance



# Human capital vs productive capabilities

- Human capital is measured at the level of individuals
  - Years of schooling
  - Controlling for PISA results
- Standard measures of HK look at how much of the same curriculum or of the same skills do people hold
- HK characterizes a society by the average of HK held by individuals
- Our measures are about the diversity of the capabilities countries have
- Intensity vs. spectrum of light

# Complexity vs. schooling



# Education

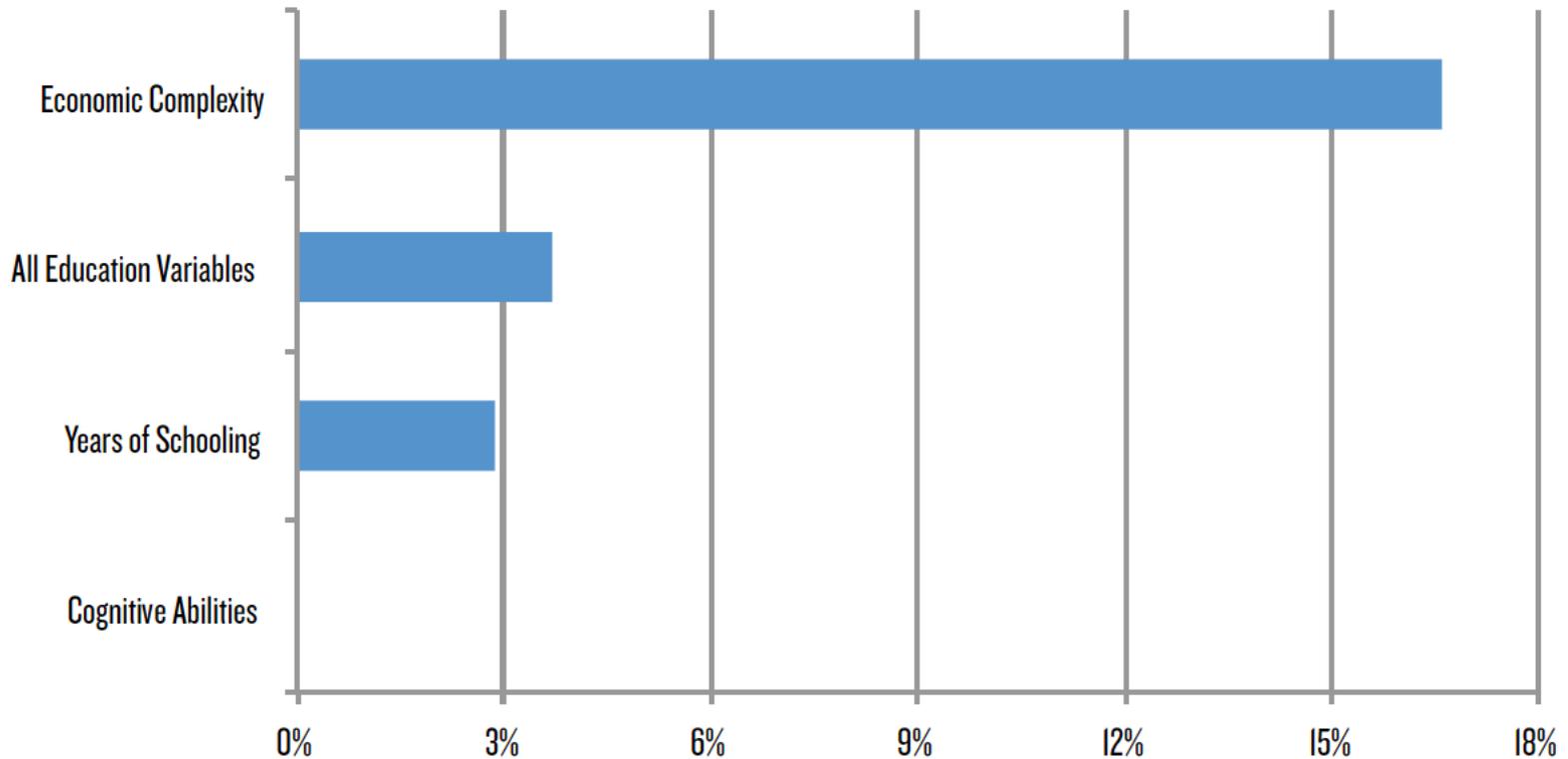
**Dependent variable: 10 year real GDP growth per capita (%)**

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Initial GDP per capita, logs	-0.762*** (0.144)	-0.954*** (0.170)	-0.884*** (0.154)	-0.776*** (0.149)	-0.921*** (0.162)
Increase in real NNRR exports pc	6.604*** (1.257)	6.146*** (1.303)	6.218*** (1.331)	6.593*** (1.262)	6.001*** (1.339)
Initial Economic Complexity Index	0.958*** (0.184)	0.766*** (0.174)	0.774*** (0.187)	0.947*** (0.184)	0.744*** (0.181)
Initial Opportunity value Index	0.851*** (0.218)	0.805*** (0.219)	0.869*** (0.210)	0.850*** (0.220)	0.827*** (0.212)
Initial average years of schooling		0.211*** (0.066)			0.209* (0.113)
Initial percentage of Secondary Complete			0.045*** (0.015)		0.027 (0.021)
Initial percentage of Tertiary Complete				0.009 (0.029)	-0.069* (0.038)
Constant	6.996*** (1.187)	8.383*** (1.235)	8.452*** (1.175)	8.376*** (1.207)	8.136*** (1.184)
Observations	261	261	261	261	261
R-squared	0.386	0.406	0.407	0.386	0.417
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

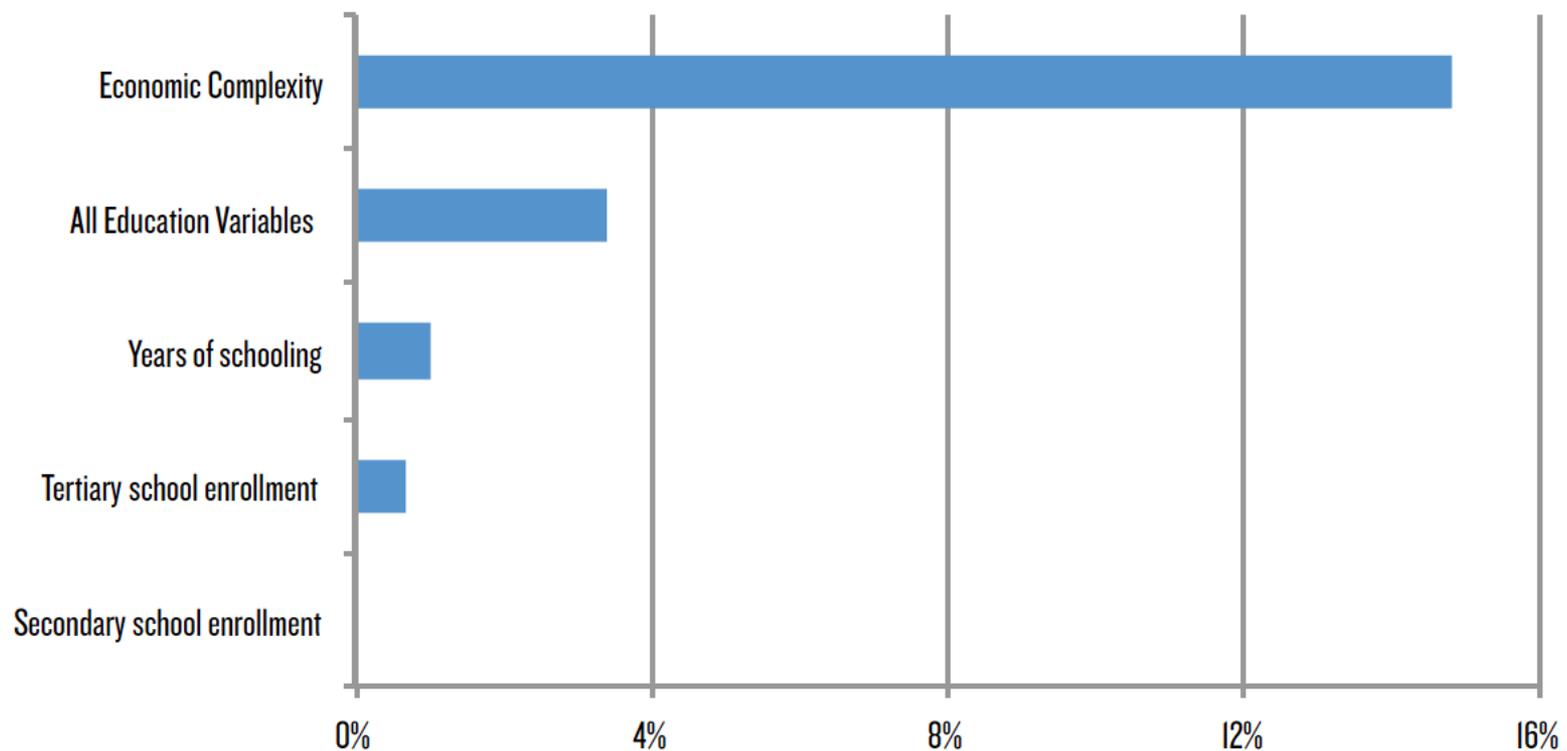
Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

# Who can account for income?



# Who can account for growth?



# Finance

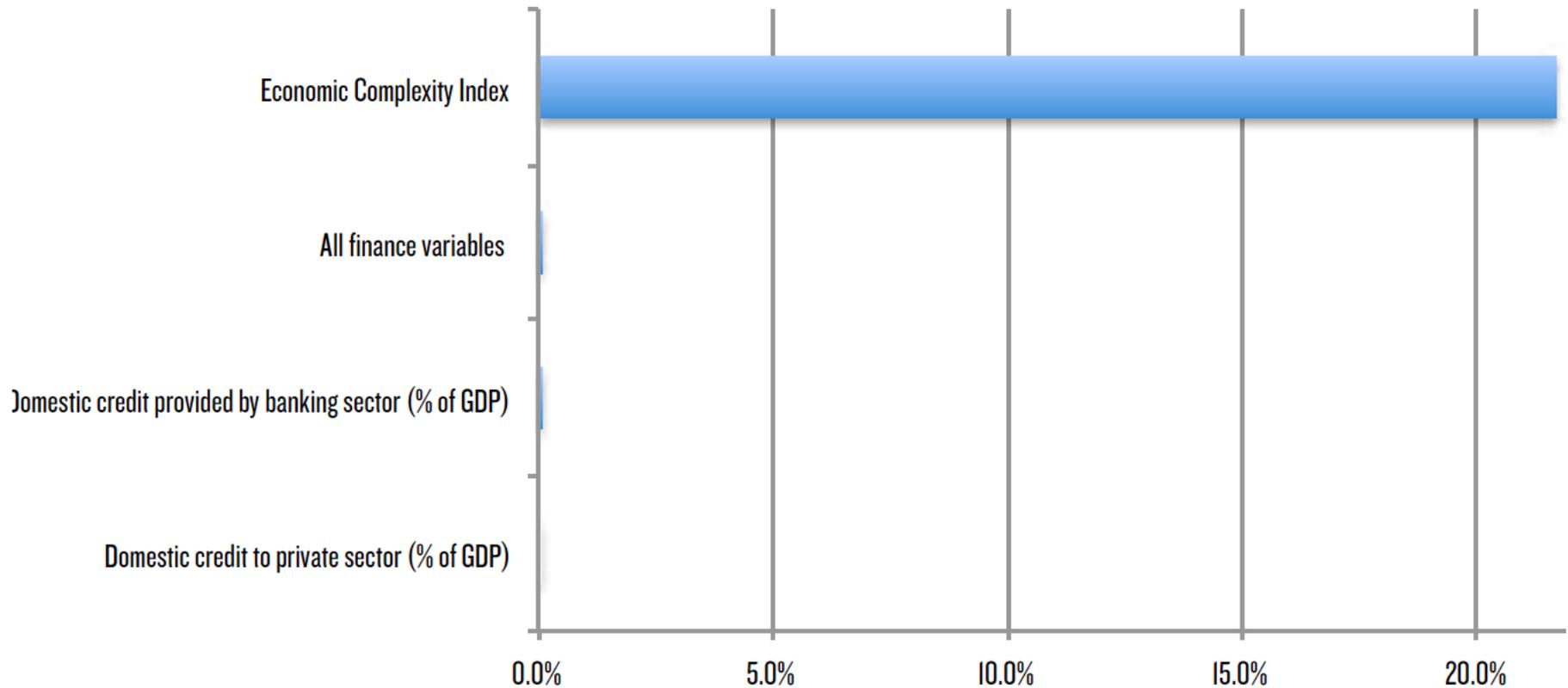
**Dependent variable: 10 year real GDP growth per capita (%)**

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Initial GDP per capita, logs	-0.756*** (0.151)	-0.712*** (0.159)	-0.720*** (0.178)	-0.781*** (0.178)
Increase in real NNRR exports pc	3.927*** (1.008)	3.757*** (0.966)	3.889*** (1.007)	3.728*** (0.948)
Initial Economic Complexity Index	0.939*** (0.213)	1.091*** (0.243)	0.985*** (0.227)	1.079*** (0.240)
Initial Opportunity value Index	0.859*** (0.218)	0.831*** (0.229)	0.855*** (0.228)	0.821*** (0.212)
Initial Domestic credit provided by banking sector (% of GDP)		-0.007** (0.003)		-0.013** (0.005)
Initial Domestic credit to private sector (% of GDP)			-0.003 (0.005)	0.010 (0.008)
Constant	6.040*** (1.162)	6.058*** (1.177)	5.900*** (1.272)	6.485*** (1.288)
Observations	273	273	273	273
R-squared	0.474	0.482	0.475	0.485
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

# Who can account for growth? Complexity vs. Financial Depth



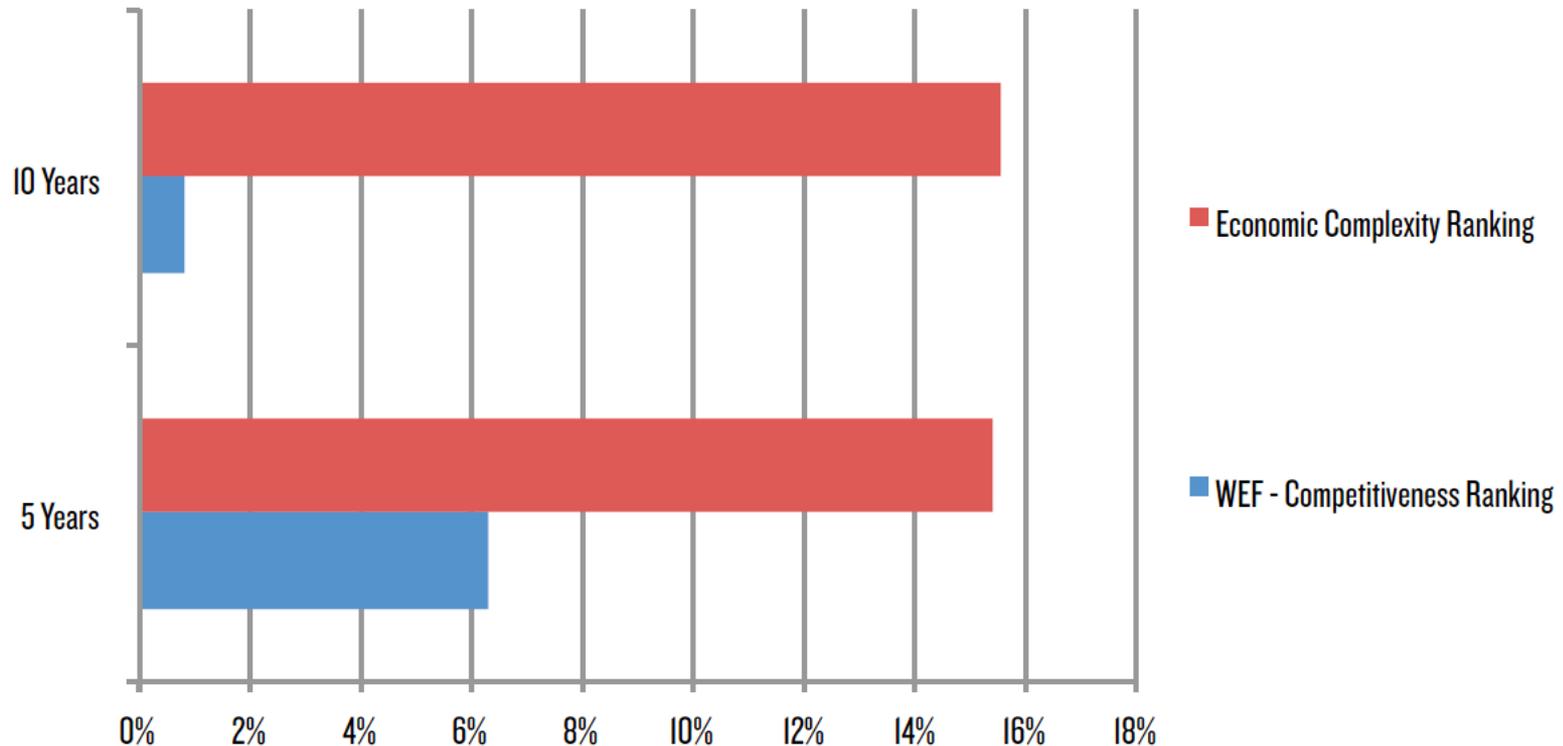
# Competitiveness as the secret of growth



## The Global Competitiveness Report 2011–2012

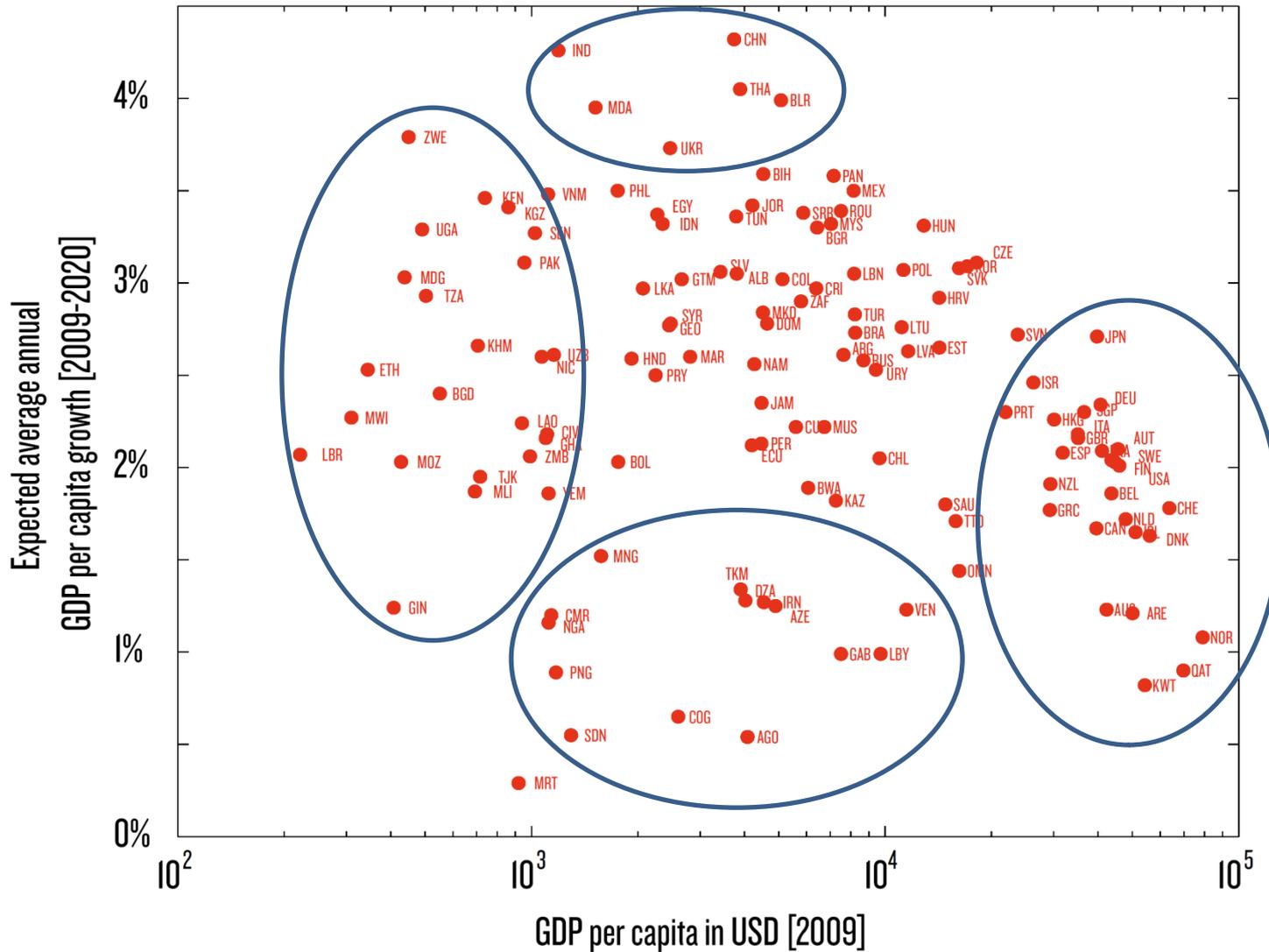


# Who can account for growth? Complexity vs WEF-Competitiveness



# Projections to 2020

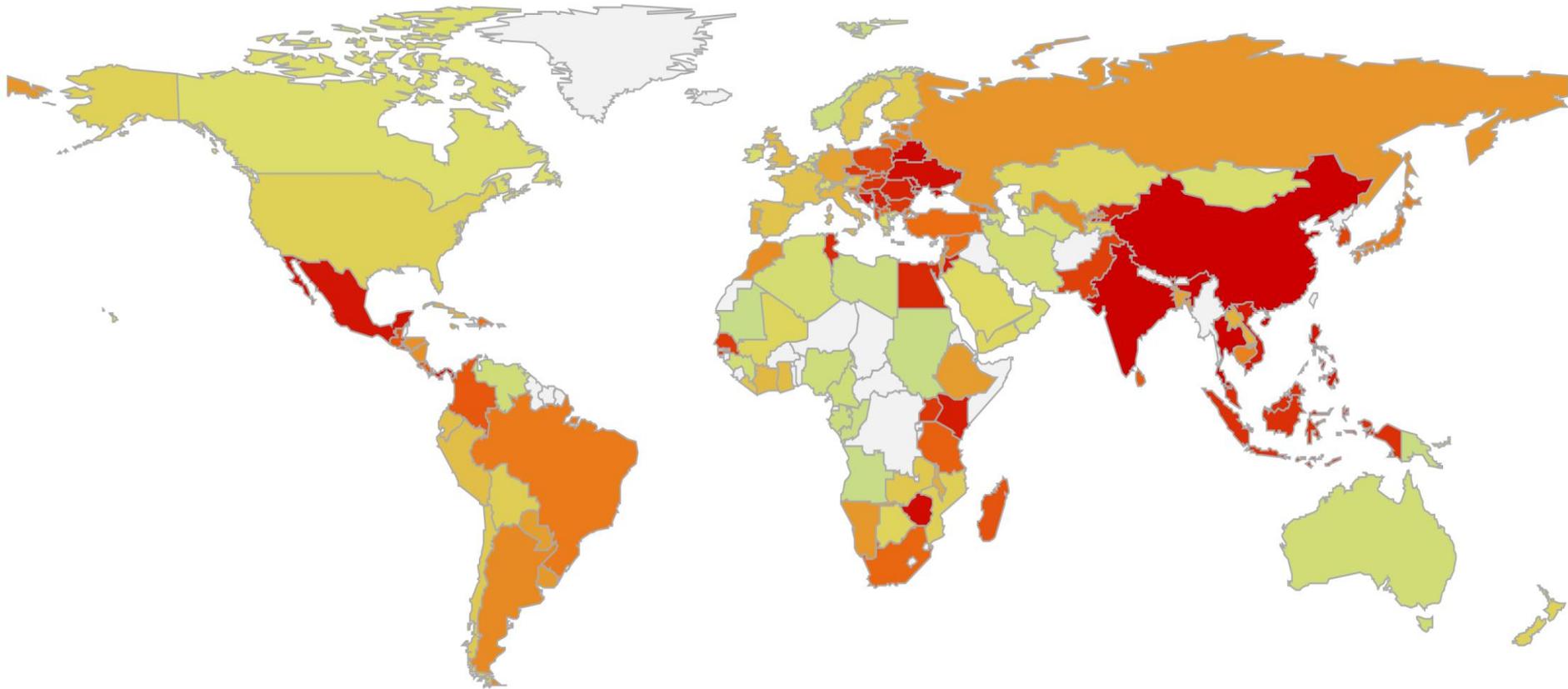
# Who will grow? Who will catch up?



# Who will grow faster?

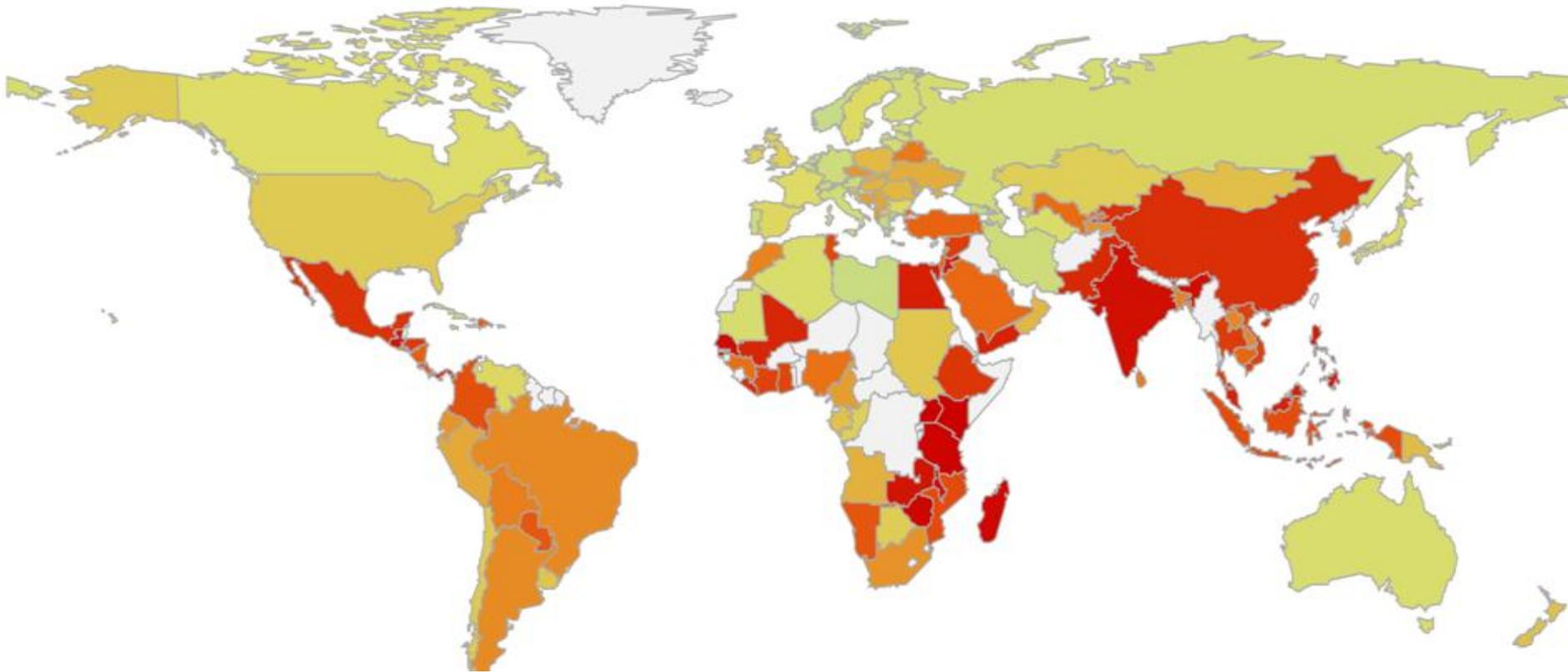
## Growth in GDP per capita to 2020

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# Who will grow faster? Total GDP growth to 2020

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Why does Nigeria export mainly  
oil?

# Not because it has a lot of it

<b>Country</b>	<b>Non-hydrocarbon</b>	<b>Hydrocarbon</b>
	<i>Goods exports per capita, USD</i>	
Nigeria	15	433
	<i>Ratio to Nigeria's exports</i>	
Mexico	138.8	0.7
Iran	12.1	1.9
Algeria	3.6	3.3
Venezuela	11.7	4.0
Angola	2.6	5.4
Saudi Arabia	80.1	14.6
Libya	22.6	15.6
Norway	653.0	33.1

# Other countries that have more oil have even more non-oil

Country	Non-hydrocarbon	Hydrocarbon
	<i>Goods exports per capita, USD</i>	
Nigeria	15	433
	<i>Ratio to Nigeria's exports</i>	
Mexico	138.8	0.7
Iran	12.1	1.9
Algeria	3.6	3.3
Venezuela	11.7	4.0
Angola	2.6	5.4
Saudi Arabia	80.1	14.6
Libya	22.6	15.6
Norway	653.0	33.1

# Why is Chile so specialized in copper? Exports per capita

	Chile	New Zealand	Australia	Canada	Norway
Mineral Exports	1.0	0.0	1.7	1.5	11.1
Primary exports	1.0	1.6	2.0	2.1	8.6

# Why is Chile so specialized in copper? Exports per capita

	Chile	New Zealand	Australia	Canada	Norway
Mineral Exports	1.0	0.0	1.7	1.5	11.1
Primary exports	1.0	1.6	2.0	2.1	8.6
Other goods exports	1.0	3.0	3.3	10.4	11.9
Service exports	1.0	6.6	6.7	6.6	19.9
GDP pc at PPP	1.0	2.0	2.6	2.7	4.2

# A set of propositions for discussion

- Low income countries are undiversified
- ...because they have few productive capabilities
- ...and so they make few simple, low productivity products
- Diversification of capabilities and of industries is made difficult by coordination failures that are particularly severe in low income countries, given the dearth of existing capabilities that can be combined with new ones
- These coordination failures have first order costs and require a policy response
- So diversification is not just a correlate of growth
- More on the policy implications later...