Key Data on Inequality

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April 2019
US: bottom 90% have seen little increase in income over last third of a century

Source: World Wealth and Income Database
Canada: Bottom 90% have seen little increase in income over the last third of a century

Source: World Wealth and Income Database
Top 1% income share in the United States 1913-2015

Note: Fiscal income is defined as the sum of all income items reported on income tax returns, before any deduction. It includes labour income, capital income and mixed income. The concept of fiscal income varies with national tax legislations, so in order to make international comparisons it is preferable to use the concept of national income. The population is comprised of individuals over age 20. The base unit is the individual (rather than the household) but resources are split equally within couples.

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Source: World Wealth and Income Database
Europe: Less increase in inequality in some countries than in others

Source: World Wealth and Income Database
Labour Share for Canada

Labour share of total income with and without the top 1 percent of earners, Canada, 1982-2008


Source: Lemieux and Riddell
3. TOP AND BOTTOM REAL INCOMES

- Output per hour (average productivity)
- Bottom 90% average real income (with capital gains)
- Top 1% average real income (with capital gains)

Source: Giovannoni (2014) based on WTID and BLS data

Source: Olivier G. Giovannoni
US: Disconnect Between Productivity and a Typical Worker’s Compensation, 1948-2015

Note: Data are for average hourly compensation of production/nonsupervisory workers in the private sector and net productivity of the total economy. "Net productivity" is the growth of output of goods and services minus depreciation per hour worked.

Source: EPI analysis of data from the BEA and BLS (see technical appendix of Understanding the Historic Divergence Between Productivity and a Typical Worker’s Pay for more detailed information)
Inequality is a decades-long trend, with more and more going to the very top.
Inequality even at the top 0.1%

CEO compensation has grown faster than the wages of the top 0.1 percent and the stock market
Cumulative percentage change in CEO compensation, wages of the top 0.1 percent, and the S&P 500, 1978–2015

Notes: Wage data for the top 0.1 percent is not yet available for 2015.
Source: EPI analysis of Compustat Execucomp, Social Security Administration, and Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis databases.

Economic Policy Institute
Stagnation: U.S. median household income (constant 2016 US$)

1996: $54,105
2016: $59,039

Median Household Income in the US

Growth of 0.44% per year in past 20 years

Source: U.S. Census Bureau
Note: Data is adjusted for the methodological change of 2013
Stagnation: Canadian median income in economic family and persons, not in economic family (constant 2017 dollars)

Growth of 1.2% per year in past 20 years
US: Median income of a full-time male worker is at the level it was more than 4 decades ago

(constant 2016 US$)

Note: Data is adjusted for the methodological change of 2013
Source: U.S. Census Bureau
Canada: Median income of a male, age 25-54, is lower than the level it was more than 4 decades ago

(constant 2017 Canadian $)

Source: Statistics Canada
US: Real wages at the bottom are at the level that they were roughly sixty years ago

Source: Federal Reserve

US Minimum Wage

Source: Federal Reserve
Canada: Real wages at the bottom for Ontario

Source: Statistics Canada
The Walton Family and The Koch Brothers have a net worth of $212 billion in 2016

That’s the net worth of 115 million Americans or 35% of the country.
7. WEALTH

The share of total U.S. wealth owned by the top 0.1 percent of families, 1913-2012

Notes: Wealth is total assets (including real estate and funded pension wealth) net of all debts. Wealth excludes the present value of future government transfers (such as Social Security or Medicare benefits).


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Source: Olivier G. Giavonnoni
7. WEALTH

The share of total U.S. wealth owned by the bottom 90 percent of families, 1917-2012

Notes: Wealth is total assets (including real estate and funded pension wealth) net of all debts. Wealth excludes the present value of future government transfers (such as Social Security or Medicare benefits).

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Source: Olivier G. Giavonnoni
Even health and life expectancy is in decline

- Especially surprising data on white males
- Reflecting social diseases—alcoholism, drugs, suicide
Figure 1.9 All-cause mortality, white non-Hispanics, ages 45-54

Figure 1.5 Drug, alcohol and suicide mortality, men and women ages 50-54

Figure 1.6 Drug, alcohol and suicide mortality, white non-Hispanics ages 45-54

Figure 1.7 Drug, alcohol and suicide mortality by birth cohort, white non-Hispanics, less than BA

Figure 1.13 Fraction reporting sciatic pain, white non-Hispanics by birth year and education class

Income inequality and earnings mobility

The Relationship between Income Inequality and Social Mobility

Around the world, high income inequality is associated with low social mobility.

Source: Corak (2013); World Bank (2013).
Note: Reproduction of figure 2 from Corak (2013). Data points for Italy and the United Kingdom overlap. The x-axis shows Gini coefficients as reported by the World Bank. The y-axis is a measure of social mobility and is equal to 1 minus the intergenerational earnings elasticity for each country.
Gini Coefficient of disposable income in 2015 (or latest year) and mid-1980s (when available)

Source: OECD Income Distribution Database
Global Inequality

- Oxfam reports on wealth concentration at the top: how many of the richest people have as much wealth as bottom 50% (3.8 billion people!)
  - In 2010: 388
  - In 2017: just 42
  - 2018: just 26

- 82% of all growth in global wealth in 2016 went to the top 1%, while the bottom half saw no increase at all.

- The richest 1% continue to own more wealth than the whole rest of humanity.