


WORLD WEALTH & INCOME DATABASE
THE SOURCE FOR GLOBAL INEQUALITY DATA

Introduction of World Wealth and Income Database

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Introduction

- WID.world started with historical top income shares for France, USA, Britain
 - gradually extended to over forty countries and to wealth (Piketty 2001, 2003, Piketty-Saez 2003, Atkinson-Piketty 2007, 2010, Alvaredo et al 2013, Saez-Zucman 2016)
- New website WID.world launched in January, 2017
- Four major extensions underway:
 - **Emerging countries** and not only rich countries: new tax data recently made available for China, Brasil, India, South Africa, etc.
 - **Wealth distribution** and not only income distribution
 - **Bottom of the distribution** and not only the top
 - **Aggregated National Wealth and Income**
- Overall objective : **Distributional National Accounts (DINA) for all countries**

Strategic Dialogue on Poverty and Inequality in Asia and the Pacific
Bangkok, Thailand, October 2017

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Introduction

- **Most extensive database on the historical evolution of income and wealth**
 - Top income shares, averages, thresholds: 50 countries
 - Wealth income ratios, wealth distribution: 20 countries
 - Net National Income, CFC, GDP: 150 countries

- **Open access, multi-lingual website and visualization tools**
 - Chinese, English, French, Spanish : reach more than 3 billion people

- **State of the art tools for inequality research**
 - GPINTER package: manipulate distributions online
 - Stata and R packages: access our data from Stata directly



wid.world Interface

WORLD | BY COUNTRY | DATA | **WORLD WEALTH & INCOME DATABASE** | METHODOLOGY | ABOUT US | NEWS

COUNTRY & REGION >

KEY INDICATORS >

AVERAGE INCOME

- Per adult national income
- Per adult GDP

AVERAGE WEALTH

- Per adult national wealth
- Wealth-income ratio

INCOME INEQUALITY

- Top 10% share
- Middle 40% share
- Bottom 50% share
- Top 1% share

WEALTH INEQUALITY

- Top 10% share
- Middle 40% share
- Bottom 50% share
- Top 1% share

MORE INDICATORS >

Search a concept...

Top 1% national income share

Share of total (%) Latest year

Share (%) Share (%) More options

USA France China

Data collection and validation

- The World Wealth and Income Database (WID.world) relies on the combined effort of an international network of **over a hundred researchers** covering more than **70 countries** from all continents.
- All the data being used in the database are compiled based on individual research papers using the same methodology.
- Data Sources
 - 1. Household/Individual Income Tax Data
 - 2. Income and Wealth Surveys
 - 4. National Account (National Balance Sheet, Flow of Funds, International Investment Position, Balance of Payment etc.)
 - 3. Rich List (Forbes's list)
 - 5. Estate Tax
 - 6. Other Data (Reports from International Investment Banks and Consulting Firms)

Methodology

Example: Estimating DINA Income Distribution

1. Estimating survey income distribution (y_s)
 - Income survey data
 - Generalized Pareto interpolation techniques (Blanchet-Fournier-Piketty, 2016)
2. Estimating fiscal income distribution (y_f)
 - Correcting survey income distribution using income tax data
3. Estimating distribution of total personal income (y_p)
 - $y_p = y_f + y_{nf}$
 - Correcting tax-exempt capital income y_{nf}
 - y_{nf} : private share of undistributed profits and imputed rent
4. Transform the distribution of personal income (y_p) into the distribution of national income y (normalize the distribution by national income)

Challenge-Data Availability for Measuring Inequality

- It is extremely difficult to collect income tax data, especially in developing and emerging countries. Taking Asia-Pacific countries as example:
 - Countries/regions that publish tax tabulations regularly: Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Australia, and New Zealand.
 - Countries/regions with limited published tax tabulations: China Mainland (annual income higher than 120,000RMB, 2006-2010), Indonesia (1920-1939, 2005).
 - Countries/regions without published tax tabulations: Vietnam, Philippines, Macau, North Korea.
 - Countries/regions that have not been explored yet: Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, East Timor, Mongolia, Brunei

Challenge-Data Availability for Measuring National Wealth

- National accounts are not complete in most of the countries. Taking Asia-Pacific countries as example:
 - Most of the countries do not provide complete official national balance sheet
 - Singapore publishes only household balance sheet
 - Malaysia and Mongolia publish only government balance sheet
 - China, Viet Nam, Indonesia, Indonesia, Cambodia, Laos, etc. with no official national balance sheet published
 - Many countries do not provide complete Flow of Funds
 - Malaysia and Indonesia with only financial transaction of Flow of Funds

Putting Distribution Back at the Center of Economics

- Our studies and findings have been
 - presented in many economic conferences, such as the American Economic Association Meeting, European Economic Association, etc.
 - reported by various major international media, such as, BBC news, the New York Times, Washington Post, the Economist, the Guardian, etc.
 - published in a range of academic journals.

- **In January 2018, the [World Inequality Lab](#) will release its first bi-annual **World Inequality Report**,**
 - examining the latest trends in economic inequality across the world.
 - will be translated into nine different languages and be published by Harvard University Press.

Thank You

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