Who votes for whom and why? Why has growing inequality in many parts of the world not led to renewed class-based conflicts, and seems instead to have come with the emergence of new divides over identity and integration?

On April 1st 2021, Amory Gethin, Clara Martinez-Toledano and Thomas Piketty published "Political Cleavages and Social Inequalities" (in French), a collective work of 20 researchers around the world. The authors draw on a unique set of surveys conducted between 1948 and 2020 in fifty countries on five continents, analyzing the links between voters' political preferences and socioeconomic characteristics, such as income, education, wealth, occupation, religion, ethnicity, age, and gender. This analysis sheds new light on how political movements succeed in coalescing multiple interests and identities in contemporary democracies. It also helps us understand the conditions under which conflicts over inequality become politically salient, as well as the similarities and constraints of voters supporting ethnonationalist politicians like Narendra Modi, Jair Bolsonaro, Marine Le Pen, and Donald Trump.

**Book details**


**The World Political Cleavages and Inequality Database (WPID)**

The World Political Cleavages and Inequality Database (WPID) is the companion website of the book. The central aim is to provide open and convenient access to the most extensive available dataset on the structure of political cleavages and social inequalities in electoral democracies, located on the five continents, from the mid-20th century to the present.

> Explore the data: [https://wpid.world/](https://wpid.world/)
Global Income Inequality, 1820-2020

In this paper, Lucas Chancel and Thomas Piketty mobilize newly available historical series from the World Inequality Database to construct world income distribution estimates from 1820 to 2020. The authors find that the level of global income inequality has always been very large, reflecting the persistence of a highly hierarchical world economic system.

Changing Political Cleavages In 21 Western Democracies

In this paper, Amory Gethin, Clara Martinez-Toledano and Thomas Piketty provide new evidence on the long-run evolution of political cleavages in 21 Western democracies by exploiting a new database on the vote by socioeconomic characteristic covering over 300 elections held between 1948 and 2020. In the 1950s-1960s, the vote for democratic, labor, social democratic, socialist, and affiliated parties was associated with...
The Concentration Of Personal Wealth In Italy

In this paper, Paolo Acciari, Facundo Alvaredo and Salvatore Morelli expand the windows of observation on the distribution of personal wealth using a novel source on the full record of inheritance tax files. The data cover up to 63% of the deceased population and are available between 1995 and 2016, a period of substantial economic turbulence and structural reform for the Italian economy.

Political Cleavages in Algeria, Iraq, and Turkey

In this paper, Lydia Assouad, Amory Gethin, Thomas Piketty and Juliet-Nil Uraz draw on political attitudes surveys to document the evolution of political cleavages in light of inequality dynamics in Algeria (2002-2018), Iraq (2005-2018), and Turkey (1991-2018). The authors investigate how social divides and ethno-religious conflicts shape voting behaviors in these three countries of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

China’s Pension System

In this paper, Li Yang reviews the latest development of China’s public pension system. Last several decades saw China’s tremendous achievement in various public pension reforms. Especially since the 11th Five-Year Plan (2006-2010), the reform has accelerated. By 2019, the public pension system in China has covered almost one billion adults, which makes it the biggest pension system in the world.

To access all the publications of the World Inequality Lab, check out the dedicated page on WID.world

Debates on equality
The next Debate on Equality will take place on September 15th, 2021: "Une brève histoire de l'égalité", by Thomas Piketty (in French)

Register

Upcoming sessions:
- September 22nd, 2021: "L'information est un bien public. Refonder la propriété des médias", with Julia Cagé and Benoît Huet (French)
- October 6th, 2021: "Tous des bons profs. Un choix de société", with Asma Benhenda (French)

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In the media

Will philanthropists save the world? with Lucas Chancel

Towards a global minimum corporate tax? with Thomas Piketty

Watch the replay

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English
- The Guardian: "Biden corporate tax plan could earn EU and UK billions, study shows", with Gabriel Zucman, 01/06/2021.
- The Economist: "Educated voters' leftward shift is surprisingly old and international", with Amory Gethin, Clara Martinez-Toledano and Thomas Piketty, 29/05/2021.
- Washington Post: "Don't wait for billionaires to sell their stock. Tax their riches now", with Gabriel Zucman and Emmanuel Saez, 14/04/2021.

Other languages
- [AUDIO] France Inter: "Reprise et politique économique", with Thomas Piketty, 21/05/2021. (French)
- Vice: "La France est le pays qui compte le plus d'héritiers parmi ses milliardaires", with Lucas Chancel, 21/05/2021. (French)
- La Tercera: "La visión de Thomas Piketty sobre el impuesto a las personas de alto patrimonio", by Ignacio Flores and Thomas Piketty, 10/05/2021. (Spanish)
- [VIDEO] BFM: "La librairie de l'éco: Clivages politiques et inégalités sociales", with Amory Gethin, 07/05/2021. (French)

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Any questions: press@wid.world
WID.world relies on the combined effort of an international network of over a hundred researchers from all continents.

The World Inequality Database is funded by public and non-profit institutions.

WID.world aims to provide open access to the most extensive available database on the historical evolution of the world distribution of income and wealth.

Read More ›

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