

August 2026 was the world's hottest month on record. From record heatwaves across Europe to the glacier collapse in Nepal, signs are mounting that planetary habitability is under threat.

The vision set out in the [*Global Justice Report*](#), to reconcile planetary habitability and high well-being for all by the end of the century, may seem both distant and indispensable. As Thomas Piketty recently [*wrote*](#), "public awareness may begin to shift, but the intellectual and political battle ahead will be tough".

Concrete policy initiatives are already moving in this direction. In this newsletter, we focus on the **proposal to create an International Panel on Inequality**, with a key milestone this week at the UN General Assembly. We also share **highlights from the World Inequality Conference** held in Paris in June, and update you on **what's new in the World Inequality Database**.

Alice F. on behalf of the team.



World Inequality Conference Rewind



More than **500 researchers and civil society representatives** gathered in Paris on June 4,5 and 6. The conference opened with the **launch of the [*Global Justice Report: a Plan for Equality and Prosperity Within Planetary Boundaries*](#)**, which served as the guiding framework for the ten plenary sessions. The conference also showcased the latest research on inequality, with more than 230 papers presented across 61 parallel sessions. On this occasion, we were honored to present the **Global Research Inequality Award to [*Jean Drèze*](#)** in recognition of his outstanding work on poverty and inequality measurement in India, as well as his advocacy for the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) and the National Food Security Act (NFSA). Watch the plenary session below.



Opening and Presentation of the Global Justice Report with WIL co-directors Lucas Chancel, Rowaida Moshrif, Thomas Piketty, and GJP team Cornelia Mohren, Moritz Odersky, Anmol Somanchi



How Much Do We Need to Degrow to Save the Planet? with Jason Hickel, Tejal Kanitkar, Nicholas Stern, moderated by Moritz Odersky



Utopia and Dystopia in the XX1st Century with Kim Stanley Robinson and Thomas Piketty, moderated by Alice Fauvel



The Future of Billionaire Taxation with Sarah Perret, Emmanuel Saez and Gabriel Zucman Moderated by Emma Agyemang



The Inequality Question in Climate Futures with Jofre Carnicer, Lucas Chancel, Olivier De Schutter, Celine Guivarch moderated by Thomas Bézy



Announcement of the Global Inequality Research award - speech by Jean Drèze



Compressing the Wealth Scale, Democratizing the Economy with Jean Drèze, Marc Fleurbaey Isabelle Ferreras and Ingrid Robeyns moderated by Anmol Somanchi



States vs Markets in the Energy Transition with Lucas Chancel, Thomas Melonio, Mariana Mazzucato, moderated by Cornelia Mohren



Do We Need a Bretton Woods Reset to Save the Planet? with David Adler, Paula Druschke, Jayati Ghosh, Marie-Yemta Moussanang, and Gastón Nievas moderated by Thomas Piketty



Gender Equality, Labour Hours and Sustainability with Julie Gonnet, Camille Landais, Anne-Sophie Robilliard moderated by Valentina Gabrielli



Class Conflict and the Global Left on a Warming Planet with Grace Blakeley, Julia Cagé, Dena Freeman, and Don Kalb moderated by Amory Gethin



Are We on the Road for Global Equality? with Christian Christiansen, Branko Milanović, Thomas Piketty and Lea Ypi moderated by Marie Andreescu

The Case for an International Panel on Inequality



On September 23, at the United Nations General Assembly, South Africa, Brazil, Norway, and Spain will convene, together with the Secretary-General, heads of state and government to discuss the creation of an International Panel on Inequality (IPI).

The project was born in 2025 during South Africa's presidency of the G20, which tasked a committee of independent experts led by Joseph E. Stiglitz with assessing the state of global inequality. Their report's main recommendation was the creation of an international scientific body, modeled on what the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has brought to the climate debate.

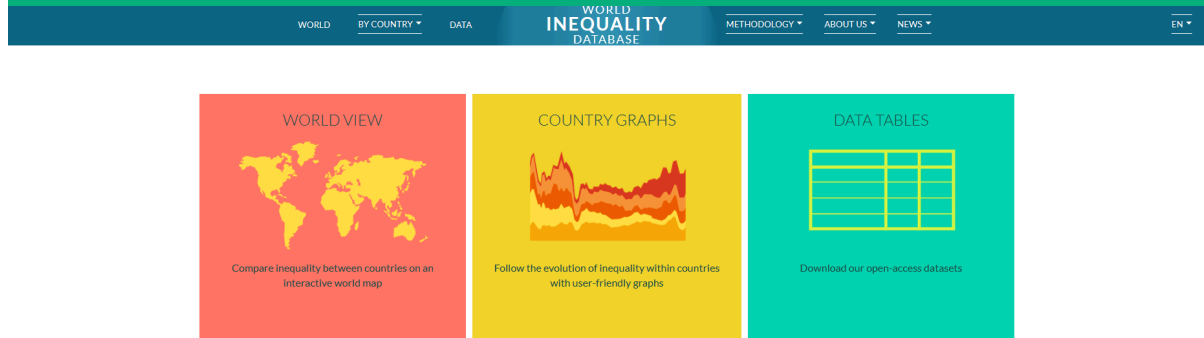
The World Inequality Lab is actively supporting this initiative, which aligns with and can build on the work we have been doing for more than a decade. WIL Co-Director Lucas Chancel took part in the IPI Consultative Council meetings at the UN in Geneva and in Johannesburg earlier this year.

With the September 23 high-level meeting approaching, calls are growing at country-level - for example, in the UK, Spain, and France - for governments to attend. More than 1,500

academics and economists from over 100 countries have just signed a letter urging world leaders to support the urgent establishment of the IPI.
Please share to help build momentum.

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What's New in the World Inequality Database?



The World Inequality Database ([WID.world](https://wid.world)) provides open access to the most extensive available database on the historical evolution of the world distribution of income and wealth, both between countries and within countries.

Every year, the WID is updated with updated series on:

- **Global inequality** including series on the distribution of national income, national wealth, foreign income and foreign wealth between countries, across world regions and at the world level (**June-July**)
- **Within-country inequality** covering the entire distribution, using a diversity of income and wealth concepts, both pre-tax and posttax, and reconciling a broad range of data sources (**October-November**).

The WID macro update 2026 was released in July 2026 and includes a revised set of macro series from 1800 to 2025.



This note presents new insights on the changing structure of global inequality with **updated tables on the world's richest and poorest countries in 2025**, the world trade balance and current account, and the world capital stock and capital shares.

Unsure how to navigate the World Inequality Database?
Check our [methodology](#) and our [video tutorials](#)



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New Working Papers

Jakurti, E., [Preferences for Inheritance Taxation in Europe: Experimental Evidence on Vertical Equity and Public Debt](#), World Inequality Lab Working Paper 2026/19

Briole, S., Salesse, C., [Who Bears the Cost of Air Pollution? How Pollution Shocks Widen Socio-Economic Gaps in Educational Achievement](#), World Inequality Lab Working Paper 2026/18

Bua, K., Coronese, M., Lamperti, F., Marino, C., Palagi, E., Roventini, A., [The Carbon Content of Billionaire Wealth: Composition, Concentration, and Taxation](#), World Inequality Lab Working Paper 2026/17

Chakrabarti, P., [Conceptualizing and Measuring Forms of Ethnic Inequality: Findings from India](#), World Inequality Lab Working Paper 2026/16

Chakrabarti, P., [Politics of Dignity: How Status Inequality shaped Redistributive Politics in India](#), World Inequality Lab Working Paper 2026/15

Bengtsson, E., Molinder, J., Prado, S., [Income Inequality and Structural Transformation: Evidence from Swedish Micro Data, 1870–1970](#), World Inequality Lab Working Paper 2026/14

Brassac, P., [Taxing Wealth & Enrichment: Lessons from the 1945–French ‘National Solidarity Levy’](#), World Inequality Lab Working Paper 2026/13

Artola Blanco, M., Pujadas-Mora, J. M., [Measuring Income Inequality Using a Graduated Poll Tax: Spain, 1874–1943](#), World Inequality Lab Working Paper 2026/12

Bothe, P., Chancel, L., Dietrich, J., Druschke, P., Mohren, C., Nievas, G., Odersky, M., Piketty, T., Somanchi, A., [The Global Justice Platform: Distributional Pathways, the Global Justice Fund and the New Democratic International Order, 2026–2100](#), World Inequality Lab Working Paper 2026/11

Godechot, O., Lojkin, U., [Cutting hours through outsourcing](#), World Inequality Lab Working Paper 2026/10

Bharti, N., Blakeslee, D., Malik, S., [Land Inequality in India: Nature, History, and Markets](#), World Inequality Lab Working Paper 2026/09

Nabernegg, M., [Extreme Income Inequality in Ecuador - Dollarization, Commodity Price Boom, and Citizen Revolution](#), World Inequality Lab Working Paper 2026/08

Castillo-García, C., [Conflicting Claims and Taxation: A Distributive History of 20th Century Peru](#), World Inequality Lab Working Paper 2026/07

Druschke, P., Nievas, G., [The Global Democratic Deficit: Institutional Asymmetries and the Provision of Global Public Goods](#), World Inequality Lab Working Paper 2026/06

Cagé, J., Guillot, M., Huang, Y., [Should Charitable and Political Donations Benefit from Similar Tax Treatments? Evidence from a Survey Experiment](#), World Inequality Lab Working Paper 2026/05

Media highlights

Le Monde, [La pollution de l'air contribuerait à creuser les inégalités scolaires](#), 15/09/2026

The Asahi Shimbun, [ピケティ氏が語る繁栄共有への道 富の集中は進むが「今も楽観」](#), 19/08/2026

Tel Quel, Gastón Nievas : « Penser que les marchés sont libres est faux et c'est en partie le résultat de la période coloniale », 04/08/2026

Süddeutsche Zeitung, „Die Brutalität von Trumps USA ist ein Zeichen der Schwäche“, 10/07/2026

Kyunghyang Shinmun 피케티 “청년들에게 보편자산 제공, 자본이득 과세 강화 필요하다”, 09/07/2026

Financial Times, Letter: The right kind of growth is key to economic and climate justice, 05/07/2026

Wall Street Journal, Ranks of the Ultrawealthy Jumped in 2025, 23/06/2026

Daily Maverick, Thomas Piketty think-tank unveils a global wealth shake-up plan, 21/06/2026

The Times of India, India's growth ambition is valid – 99% can get richer without climate disaster, 10/06/2026

Outras Palavras, Thomas Piketty vislumbra o pós-capitalismo, 08/06/2026

South China Morning Post, New global financial architecture needed to end trade surplus fixation: Piketty, 04/06/2026

Le Monde, Thomas Piketty's lab proposes ambitious plan to cut global inequality and curb climate change, 04/06/2026

Business Standard, India can attain high prosperity: French economist Thomas Piketty, 04/06/2026

The Guardian, An equal and habitable world is possible: academics set out sweeping vision for planetary survival, 04/06/2026

The Indian Express, Top 10% rural households own 44% land in India: World Inequality Lab study findings, explained, 08/04/2026

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Ojo Público, Impuestos a la riqueza y desigualdad: el Perú lleva medio siglo sin una tasa a las herencias, 29/03/2026

Alternatives Économiques, Un système d'assurance inégalitaire face aux dégâts du changement climatique, 27/03/2026

San Francisco Chronicle, Progressives love him. Billionaires hate him. Can a Berkeley professor pass California's wealth tax?, 18/03/2026

PressAfrik, Inégalités Nord-Sud : le "World Inequality Report 2026" plaide pour une refonte du système financier mondial, 06/03/2026



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