

## WID.world & The World Inequality Lab Newsletter - October 2017

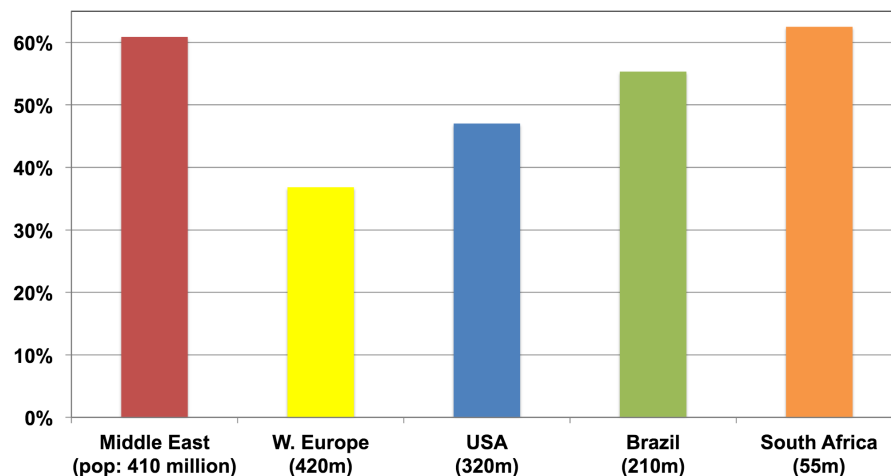
Welcome to the third WID.world and World Inequality Lab newsletter, which covers our main developments over the last two months. There has been a flurry of activity over the summer which has seen the publication of a number of new articles, most recently for the Middle East and Lebanon in October, with India and Brazil in September, and Russia in August.

In addition, our first WID.world conference has begun to take shape. A [preliminary agenda](#) is now available, with sessions dedicated to the release of the first issue of the World Inequality Report, presentations of the latest research papers on income and wealth inequality, and a panel debate in honor of the late Tony Atkinson. You are encouraged to register if you have not already done so via this [link](#).

### [New Inequality Series](#)

Facundo Alvaredo, Lydia Assouad and Thomas Piketty recently released their paper "[Measuring Inequality in the Middle East, 1990-2016: The World's Most Unequal Region?](#)", which combines national accounts, surveys and fiscal data in order to provide consistent series on income inequality in the Middle East from 1990 to 2016. According to their benchmark series, the Middle East is indeed one of the most unequal region in the world, with a top decile income share as large as 61% of national income, compared to 36% in Western Europe, 47% in the USA and 55% in Brazil.

### *Top 10% national income shares across the world, 2012-2016*



See this figure and obtain more information on how it was constructed at [WID.world](#)

This Middle East paper builds upon the research that Lydia Assouad had done for Lebanon in her paper "[Rethinking the Lebanese economic miracle: The extreme concentration of income and wealth in Lebanon 2005-2014](#)", which combines national accounts, surveys and fiscal data in order to provide consistent series on income inequality in Lebanon from 2005 to 2014. Income also appears to be

extremely concentrated in Lebanon, with the top 1% and top 10% of the adult population receiving approximately 25% and 55% of national income, respectively, in 2014.

Lucas Chancel and Thomas Piketty's paper "[Indian income inequality, 1922-2014: From British Raj to Billionaire Raj?](#)" combines national accounts, surveys and fiscal data in order to provide consistent series on income inequality in India from 1922 to 2014. The authors found that the share of national income accruing to the top 1% of income earners in 2013-2014 (22%) was at its highest level since the creation of the Indian Income tax in 1922, having been at a historical low in the early 1980s (6%).

#### ***Top 1% national income share in India, 1922-2014***

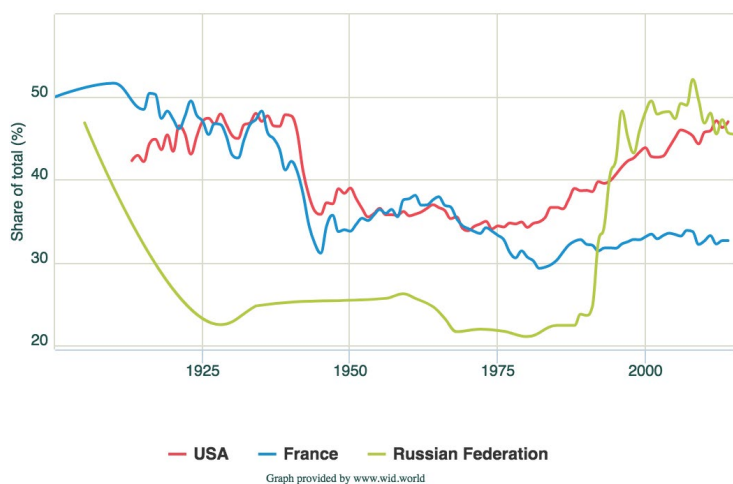


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Earlier in the summer Marc Morgan released his paper on Brazil, named "[Extreme and Persistent Inequality: New Evidence for Brazil Combining National Accounts, Surveys and Fiscal Data, 2001-2015](#)", which similarly combined national accounts, surveys and fiscal data in order to provide consistent series on income inequality in Brazil. His benchmark national income series indicated a sharp upward revision to official estimates of inequality in Brazil. While the top 1% and bottom 50% income shares slightly increased over the period, the middle 40% was squeezed. These results are in stark contrast to the decreasing inequality trends that had previously been reported.

Filip Novokmet, Thomas Piketty and Gabriel Zucman have also released a paper entitled "[From Soviets to Oligarchs: Inequality and Property in Russia, 1905-2016](#)", which combines national accounts, surveys, and fiscal and wealth data (including recently released tax data on high-income taxpayers) in order to provide consistent series on inequality and property in Russia. Their results indicate that official survey-based measures have vastly under-estimated the rise in inequality since 1990. Their benchmark estimates suggest that top income shares in Russia are now similar to the levels observed in the United States.

#### ***Top 10% national income share in France, Russia and the USA, 1900-2015***



See this figure and obtain more information on how it was constructed at [WID.world](http://www.wid.world)

### First WID.world conference

As you may be aware from our previous newsletters, we are organizing the [First WID.world Conference](#) on December 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017, hosted by the Paris School of Economics. An exciting preliminary agenda has been confirmed and can be viewed [here](#).

### Life at the World Inequality Lab

We are also delighted to welcome new research assistants and research fellows to the World Inequality Lab. Mauricio De Rosa has recently arrived from Montevideo, Uruguay to finalize his research with Joan Vilá in constructing Distributional National Accounts for Uruguay, while Aurélie Sautura and Florian Bonnet have also joined the World Inequality Lab to construct a database on historical income inequality across France's departments.

Warm regards,

Facundo Alvaredo, Lucas Chancel, Thomas Piketty, Emmanuel Saez, Gabriel Zucman

### *WID.World & The World Inequality Lab*

The World Wealth and Income Database ([WID.world](http://www.wid.world)) aims to provide open and convenient access to the most extensive available database on the historical evolution of the world distribution of income and wealth, both

within and between countries. WID.world was initiated in 2011 and is administered by the [World Inequality Lab](#). It regroups more than a hundred researchers located over five continents. [Read more about us here](#).

The World Inequality Lab aims to promote research on global inequality dynamics. Its core mission is to maintain and expand the World Wealth and Income Database. It also produces inequality reports and working papers addressing substantive and methodological issues. It is located at the [Paris School of Economics](#), and comprises a small team of about ten permanent staff members and research assistants. The World Inequality Lab works in close coordination with a large international network (over one hundred researchers covering nearly seventy countries) that contribute to the WID.world database, and is supervised and coordinated by the same executive committee as WID.world.

### *Disclaimer*

You have received this email as the WIL team thought you would be interested in updates on economic inequality data and research. If you are no longer interested in receiving news from WIL, you can unsubscribe using the link above.