

U.S. Income Distribution



LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

SOCIAL JUSTICE at LOYOLA

Income distribution in the United States is unequal...

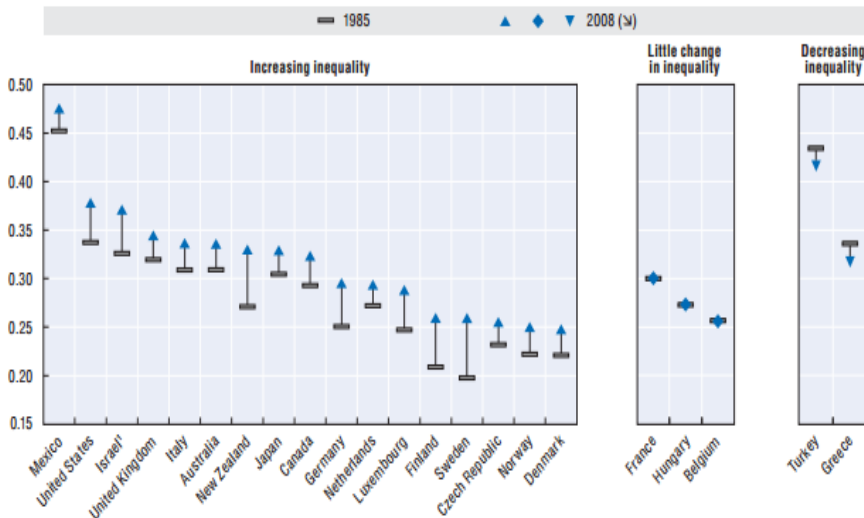
The top 1% of Americans:

- Own almost 40% of the nation's wealth
- Earn 24% of the nation's income
- Own half of the nation's stocks, bonds, and mutual funds
- Have only 5% of the nation's personal debt

This unequal distribution is growing...

- The top 1% of Americans are taking in more of the nation's income than any other time since the 1920s
- This unequal distribution has grown dramatically since 1985, especially when viewed from a global perspective.

Gini coefficients of income inequality, mid-1980s and late 2000s



Graph source: <http://www.oecd.org/els/soc/49499779.pdf>

What in the world does U.S. income distribution look like?

The countries with the greatest income inequality are:

- Italy
- Chile
- Portugal
- Germany
- Israel
- Mexico
- United States**
- France
- Luxembourg
- Austria
- Poland
- Turkey
- Belgium
- Australia
- Hungary
- Finland
- Japan
- Spain
- Estonia
- United Kingdom

Rankings are listed from most unequal (top) to least unequal (bottom). Data source:

<http://stats.oecd.org/index.aspx?queryid=46189>

How is income inequality measured?

The Gini Coefficient – used in the graph and list above – is a measurement established by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The measurement ranges from 0 (identical incomes for everyone) to 1 (when income goes only to one person).

For more information, visit these resources:

United States Census Bureau Income Statistics

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/>

Economic Policy Institute Interactive Experience

<http://inequality.is/>

Mother Jones Income Inequality in American Charts

<http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2011/02/income-inequality-in-america-chart-graph>

Thoughts from Jesuit Leader Father James Martin, SJ

<http://uscgbmedia.blogspot.com/2013/08/what-can-i-do-three-steps-to-reduce.html>

For more on social justice and what you can do, visit:

www.luc.edu/socialjustice

Is there anything I can do?

LEARN – Take a class. Attend a guest lecture. Talk with a professor. Read. Research.

ACT – Get involved with extracurricular organizations. Form a discussion group. Serve in the community. Change your personal habits.

PRAY – No matter your faith background and identity, put your intentions for the world, its people, and its resources in your prayer and reflections. Read Fr. Martin's thoughts on the left.

Document Sources:

<http://thinkprogress.org/economy/2011/10/03/334156/top-five-wealthiest-one-percent/>

<http://www.oecd.org/els/soc/49499779.pdf>

Produced by Kelly Silay, August 2013