

**EMERGING GLOBAL ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF
INTERCONNECTED INEQUALITIES - CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR
INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT**

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Abstract

This research explores the growing economic and political inequalities in our interconnected world. While globalization has driven economic growth and technological progress, it has also widened disparities among nations and social groups. The rich tend to benefit the most, gaining wealth, influencing politics, and contributing significantly to climate change, while the poor and marginalized face increasing hardships and social exclusion. These interconnected inequalities span income, wealth, education, gender, climate vulnerability, and regional development, creating complex challenges for inclusive progress.

The study uses recent statistical data from credible international sources to analyze the scale and causes of these disparities. It highlights how policies, taxation systems, and global financial structures can either widen or reduce these gaps. The findings emphasize the importance of fair taxation, social investments, and international cooperation to promote equity and sustainability. Addressing these inequalities is essential not only for justice but also for fostering stable, democratic, and environmentally sustainable development for all. The paper concludes that concerted efforts, inclusive policies, and global solidarity are crucial to create a more equitable world where opportunities are accessible to everyone, regardless of their economic or social background. Within this framework, the research investigates the critical and evolving issues that are impacting the modern, globally interconnected landscape.

***Keywords:* Political Inequalities, Globalization, Economic Growth, Climate Change, Fair Taxation,
Social Investments and Sustainable Development.**

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The theme of the article

In today's interconnected world, economic and political inequalities have become more complex and widespread. While globalization has fostered economic growth and technological progress, it has also deepened disparities among nations and groups within societies. These interconnected inequalities affect many areas, including income, wealth, education, climate, gender, and access to opportunities. The rich tend to benefit the most from globalization, generating large emissions, accumulating wealth, and influencing political decisions, while the poor and marginalized face growing hardships and vulnerabilities. This article explores the emerging dimensions of global inequalities, their causes, and their far-reaching impacts.

It highlights how these disparities are interconnected across regions and social groups, creating challenges for inclusive development. The analysis draws on recent statistical data and secondary sources to understand the scale and nature of these inequalities. It also discusses the role of public policies, international financial systems, and political dynamics in either widening or reducing these gaps. Ultimately, the article emphasizes the importance of fair taxation, social investments, and global cooperation to promote a more equitable and sustainable world. Addressing these interconnected inequalities is crucial not only for social justice but also for fostering stable, democratic, and environmentally sustainable development for all.

Statement of the problem

The modern world is increasingly interconnected through economic, political, and social ties. However, this interconnectedness has also led to growing inequalities that affect various aspects of life, such as income, wealth, education, gender, climate, and regional development. Despite overall global economic growth over the past two centuries, the benefits have not been shared equally. Small elite controls a large share of resources, while billions of people struggle with poverty, limited opportunities, and social exclusion. These inequalities are not only unfair but also threaten social stability, democratic processes, and sustainable development. The challenges are complex and multifaceted. Income and wealth are highly concentrated at the top, with the richest 10% earning more than half of the global income and owning over 75% of global

wealth. Meanwhile, the bottom 50% possesses only a tiny fraction of resources. Gender disparities persist, with women earning less, working more unpaid hours, and facing limited career growth.

Regional disparities are equally stark, with high-income countries far richer than low-income regions like Sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Asia. Climate inequality further aggravates the situation, as poor populations face greater risks despite contributing minimally to emissions. Addressing these interconnected inequalities requires comprehensive policy measures, fair taxation, improved access to quality education, and stronger international cooperation. Without concerted efforts, these disparities will continue to widen, undermining inclusive development, social cohesion, and global stability. The critical challenge lies in designing and implementing inclusive policies that promote equality, fairness, and sustainable growth for all sections of society. In this context, the study examines the major and emerging challenges shaping today's interconnected global environment.

Objectives of the article

The overall objective of the article is to explore the emerging economic and political dimensions of interconnected inequalities worldwide. It aims to identify the key challenges posed by income, wealth, gender, regional, and climate disparities. The article seeks to analyze the causes of these inequalities using secondary data and statistical sources. It also intends to highlight the implications of these disparities for inclusive development and social justice. Furthermore, the article emphasizes the need for effective policies, fair taxation, and global cooperation to reduce inequalities. Ultimately, it strives to provide insights for promoting equitable growth and sustainable development globally with the help of secondary sources of information and statistical data pertaining to the theme of the article.

Methodology of the article

The methodology of this research primarily relies on the analysis of secondary data collected from reputable sources such as the World Inequality Report, World Inequality Database (WID.world), and other credible statistical reports. The data includes various indicators related to income, wealth, education, climate, gender, and regional disparities across different countries and regions. The information is gathered from official reports, surveys, and research studies published by international organizations, governments, and research institutions. Once the data is collected, it is carefully examined to identify patterns, trends, and disparities in global

inequalities. The analysis involves comparing figures across regions, social groups, and time periods to understand the scale and nature of interconnected inequalities. Quantitative methods are used to interpret statistical indicators such as income share, wealth concentration, education spending, and climate vulnerability.

The findings from secondary data are synthesized to draw meaningful insights about the causes and consequences of inequalities, as well as the effectiveness of policies and systems in addressing them. This evidence-based approach helps in understanding the multidimensional aspects of inequalities and their interconnections. Overall, the methodology emphasizes clarity, objectivity, and systematic analysis of existing data to support the development of informed policies and strategies aimed at promoting inclusive development. The approach ensures that conclusions are grounded in reliable evidence, making the research comprehensive, credible, and relevant for policymakers, scholars, and development practitioners. The collected data are carefully analyzed and interpreted to generate meaningful insights, supporting the development of well-informed, evidence-based policies.

Review of literature

Alvaredo et al. (2020), present a detailed assessment of global income and wealth disparities, demonstrating that inequality has increased significantly in recent decades across both advanced and developing economies. The report highlights the concentration of wealth among top percentiles and stresses the importance of progressive taxation, data transparency, and redistributive policies to address inequality. It provides a strong empirical foundation for understanding global inequality trends. **Yoganandham (2016)**, examines the role of international cooperation in addressing global inequalities. The study emphasizes the importance of coordinated global policies, trade fairness, and institutional collaboration in reducing disparities between nations. It highlights how collective action can foster inclusive development and economic stability.

Piketty (2014), offers a comprehensive theoretical and historical analysis of inequality, arguing that wealth concentration intensifies when returns on capital exceed economic growth. The study emphasizes the structural nature of inequality in capitalist economies and advocates for progressive wealth taxation and international policy coordination. His work remains central to contemporary debates on inequality and redistribution. **Yoganandham (2017)**, analyzes the challenges of achieving inclusive growth and sustainable development in developing economies.

The study identifies structural barriers such as poverty, unemployment, and unequal access to resources. It emphasizes the need for policy interventions that integrate economic growth with social equity and environmental sustainability.

Milanovic (2016), analyzes global inequality in the era of globalization, introducing the concept of the “elephant curve” to explain uneven income growth across different population segments. The study reveals that while emerging economies have experienced growth, lower-income groups in developed nations have seen stagnation. It underscores the shifting global patterns of inequality driven by globalization. **Yoganandham (2020)**, investigates the impact of globalization on interconnected inequalities. The study highlights how globalization, while promoting economic growth, has also intensified disparities across regions and social groups. It calls for balanced globalization strategies that prioritize inclusiveness and equitable distribution of benefits.

Atkinson (2015), focuses on policy-oriented solutions to reduce inequality, proposing a wide range of measures including employment guarantees, social protection, and progressive taxation. The study highlights the role of government intervention in ensuring equitable distribution of income and opportunities. It provides a practical roadmap for policymakers aiming to achieve inclusive growth. **Yoganandham and Kumar (2019)**, critically analyze fiscal policies and their role in promoting social justice. The study examines taxation, public expenditure, and welfare policies in reducing socioeconomic disparities. It underscores the importance of equitable fiscal frameworks in achieving inclusive development.

Stiglitz (2012), critically examines the economic and social consequences of inequality, arguing that it undermines efficiency, fairness, and democratic institutions. He identifies market failures and political capture as key drivers of inequality. The study advocates for institutional reforms, improved governance, and equitable economic policies to address systemic disparities. **Yoganandham (2021)**, explores policy interventions aimed at reducing socioeconomic disparities in developing countries. The study highlights the significance of targeted welfare programs, education, and employment generation. It emphasizes evidence-based policymaking to ensure sustainable and inclusive growth.

Saez and Zucman (2019), explore how tax systems contribute to rising inequality, revealing that the wealthy often benefit from tax avoidance and loopholes. Their research highlights the declining progressivity of tax systems and its implications for income distribution.

The study calls for comprehensive tax reforms and stronger enforcement mechanisms to ensure fairness. **Yoganandham (2022)**, examines emerging dimensions of global inequalities in the context of inclusive development. The study identifies economic, social, and environmental factors contributing to persistent disparities. It advocates for integrated policy approaches and global cooperation to achieve equitable and sustainable development outcomes.

Oxfam International (2022), analyzes the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on global inequality, revealing that vulnerable populations faced disproportionate hardships while wealth concentration increased among the richest. The report calls for fair recovery strategies, including wealth redistribution and strengthened social protection systems. It highlights the urgency of addressing inequality in post-pandemic recovery efforts. **UNDP (2021)**, in its Human Development Report explores multidimensional inequalities beyond income, including disparities in health, education, and opportunities. The report emphasizes the growing uncertainties in global development and the need for resilience-building policies. It advocates for inclusive and human-centered development strategies to address complex global challenges.

Interconnected Inequalities in the Modern World: Challenges, Causes, and the Path to Inclusive Justice

Inequality today goes beyond income and wealth, influencing areas like education, climate, gender, and global finance. There are wide gaps in human capital, as poorer regions spend much less on education, restricting opportunities for future generations. Climate inequality is largely caused by the rich, whose consumption and investments generate most emissions. Gender inequality becomes more severe when unpaid work is considered, lowering women's overall earnings. The global financial system also favors wealthy nations through unequal income flows. Moreover, increasing regional differences within countries are weakening social unity. Therefore, strong global cooperation, fair taxation, and inclusive policies are necessary to reduce these connected inequalities.

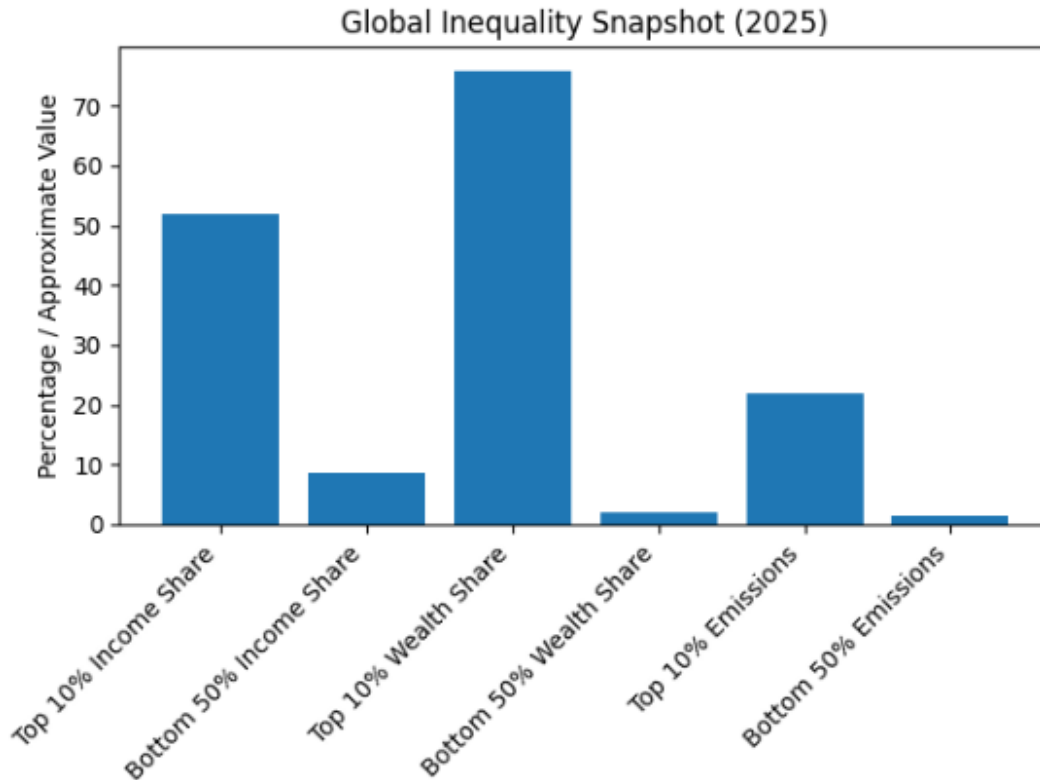
By 2025, global inequality has reached critical levels, with economic gains largely concentrated among small elite while billions struggle for stable livelihoods. These disparities are shaped by policy and institutional choices, not inevitability, and they weaken democratic systems by deepening divisions. Wealth is highly concentrated: the top 10% earn more than the remaining 90%, and the bottom half receives less than 10% of global income. The details of the *Interconnected Inequalities in the Modern World, 2025* are presented in table - 1.

Table - 1
Interconnected Inequalities in the Modern World, 2025

S.No.	Dimension of Inequality	Indicator	Top/Wealthy Group	Bottom/Poor Group	Key Observation
1.	Income Inequality	Share of Global Income (%)	Top 10%: ~52%	Bottom 50%: ~8.5%	Income is highly concentrated among a small elite population
2.	Wealth Inequality	Share of Global Wealth (%)	Top 10%: ~76%	Bottom 50%: ~2%	Wealth distribution is far more unequal than income
3.	Education (Human Capital)	Annual Education Spending per Student (USD)	High-income countries: \$8,000–\$15,000	Low-income countries: \$500–\$1,500	Large gap restricts upward mobility in poorer regions
4.	Climate Inequality	CO ₂ Emissions per Capita (tons/year)	Top 10%: ~20–25 tons	Bottom 50%: ~1–2 tons	Richest are major contributors to climate change
5.	Climate Vulnerability	Exposure to Climate Risks (%)	High-income: ~20% at risk	Low-income: ~70% at risk	Poor populations face greater climate impacts despite low emissions
6.	Gender Inequality	Share of Total Labor Income (%)	Men: ~63%	Women: ~37%	Gender gap widens when unpaid work is included
7.	Unpaid Work	Average Hours/Day	Men: ~1–2 hours	Women: ~4–5 hours	Unpaid care work reduces women's earning capacity
8.	Global Financial Inequality	Net Income Flows (% of GDP)	High-income countries: +2% to +4%	Low-income countries: -3% to -5%	Financial systems favor capital-rich nations
9.	Regional Inequality (Within Countries)	Income Gap Ratio (Top vs Bottom Regions)	Developed regions: 2–3 times higher	Underdeveloped regions lag significantly	Regional disparities weaken national cohesion
10.	Wealth Growth Rate	Annual Growth (%)	Billionaires: ~6–8%	Bottom 50%: ~1–2%	Wealth at the top is growing much faster
11.	Poverty & Livelihood Stability	Population Facing Economic Insecurity (%)	Top 10%: <5%	Bottom 50%: >60%	Majority struggle with stable income and basic security

Source: World Inequality Report 2026.

Extreme wealth is growing rapidly, with billionaires' fortunes increasing much faster than those of poorer populations. Inequality also extends to climate change. The poorest contribute very little to emissions but face the greatest risks, while the richest are the largest emitters and are better protected.



Addressing inequality through progressive taxation, social investment, and labor protections is essential not only for fairness but also for economic stability, democratic strength, and environmental sustainability.

Gender and Regional Inequality: Disparities in Work, Income, and Wealth Distribution

Gender inequality is deeply embedded in everyday life, affecting how work is valued, opportunities are distributed, and rewards are given. Globally, women receive just over one-quarter of total labor income, a proportion that has remained largely unchanged since 1990. Regional differences are significant: women's share is lowest in the Middle East and North Africa (16%) and South and Southeast Asia (20%), while it reaches around 40% in more developed regions like Europe and North America. Despite working longer hours than men, about 53 hours per week compared to 43 when unpaid care work is included, women earn substantially less. They receive only 61% of men's hourly wages in paid work, and this drops to 32% when unpaid labor is considered. This imbalance limits women's career growth, political participation, and ability to accumulate wealth, making gender inequality both unfair and economically inefficient. The details of the Gender and Regional Inequality are stated in table - 2.

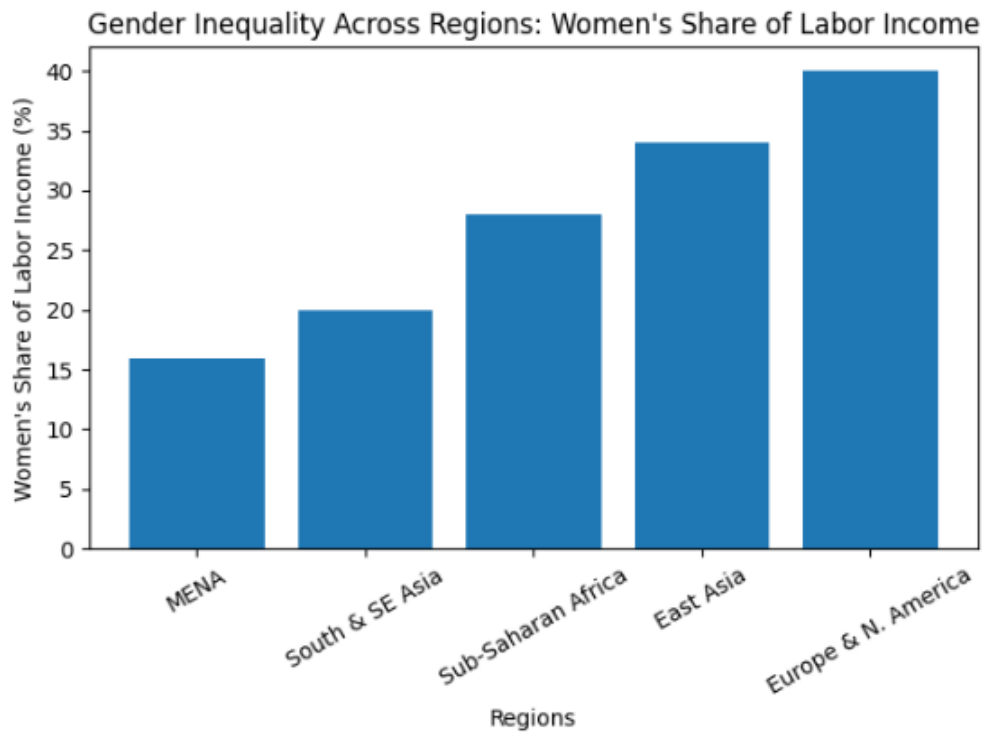
Table - 2
Gender and Regional Inequality

S.No.	Indicator	Global / Region	Statistical Value	Explanation
1.	Women's Share of Total Labor Income	Global	Just over 25%	Indicates that women receive only about one-quarter of total labor earnings worldwide, showing persistent inequality since 1990.
2.	Women's Labor Income Share	Middle East & North Africa	16%	Lowest regional share, reflecting strong gender disparities in employment and wages.
3.	Women's Labor Income Share	South & Southeast Asia	20%	Low participation and wage gaps reduce women's income share.
4.	Women's Labor Income Share	Sub-Saharan Africa	28%	Slightly higher but still unequal distribution of income.
5.	Women's Labor Income Share	East Asia	34%	Moderate improvement compared to developing regions.
6.	Women's Labor Income Share	Europe, North America & Oceania	~40%	Highest regional share, yet still not equal to men.
7.	Average Weekly Working Hours	Women	53 hours/week	Includes paid and unpaid work such as domestic and care responsibilities.
8.	Average Weekly Working Hours	Men	43 hours/week	Lower total workload compared to women.
9.	Women's Earnings (Paid Work Only)	Global	61% of men's wages	Reflects gender wage gap in formal employment.
10.	Women's Earnings (Including Unpaid Work)	Global	32% of men's income	Shows severe undervaluation of unpaid labor.
11.	Average Daily Income	North America & Oceania	€125	Represents high-income region with strong earning capacity.
12.	Average Daily Income	Sub-Saharan Africa	€10	Highlights stark global income disparity.
13.	Income Ratio	North America vs Sub-Saharan Africa	13:1	Average person earns 13 times more in richer regions.
14.	Income Distribution	Global	Top 10% vs Bottom 50%	Top 10% earn significantly more than the bottom half across all regions.
15.	Wealth Distribution	Global	Top 10% hold >50% wealth	Indicates extreme concentration of wealth worldwide.
16.	Inequality Measure (T10/B50 Ratio)	Europe & North America	Lower inequality	More balanced income distribution compared to other regions.
17.	Inequality Measure (T10/B50 Ratio)	Latin America, Southern Africa, MENA	Very high inequality	Extreme concentration of income among top groups.

Source: World Inequality Report 2026.

At the global level, inequality also varies sharply between regions. High-income areas like North America and Europe have much higher average incomes than regions such as Sub-

Saharan Africa, where earnings are significantly lower. However, inequality exists within all regions. The top 10% consistently earn far more than the bottom 50%, and wealth is even more concentrated, with the richest groups controlling the majority of assets.



The gap between rich and poor within countries is often stark. While regions like Europe show relatively lower inequality, areas such as Latin America, southern Africa, and the Middle East exhibit extreme disparities, where small elite holds a large share of income compared to the rest of the population.

Reducing Inequality: The Role of Public Policy, Global Finance, and Political Dynamics

Public policies like progressive taxation and social transfers can significantly reduce inequality, cutting income gaps by over 30% in regions such as Europe and North America. However, major disparities persist, especially in access to education, where spending per child in wealthy regions far exceeds that in poorer ones. Tax systems also often fail to fairly tax the ultra-rich, who pay proportionally less, limiting funds for public services. Additionally, the global financial system favors rich nations, allowing them to borrow cheaply and earn more, while developing countries face higher debt costs and reduced capacity to invest in development, reinforcing global inequality. These imbalances weaken global equity and slow inclusive growth. Strengthening fair taxation, closing tax loopholes, and reforming international financial systems

are essential steps. Greater investment in education and public services, especially in developing countries, can improve opportunities, reduce inequality, and support more balanced and sustainable economic progress worldwide. The details of the Key Indicators on Inequality, Redistribution, and Global Disparities, 2025 are stated in table - 3.

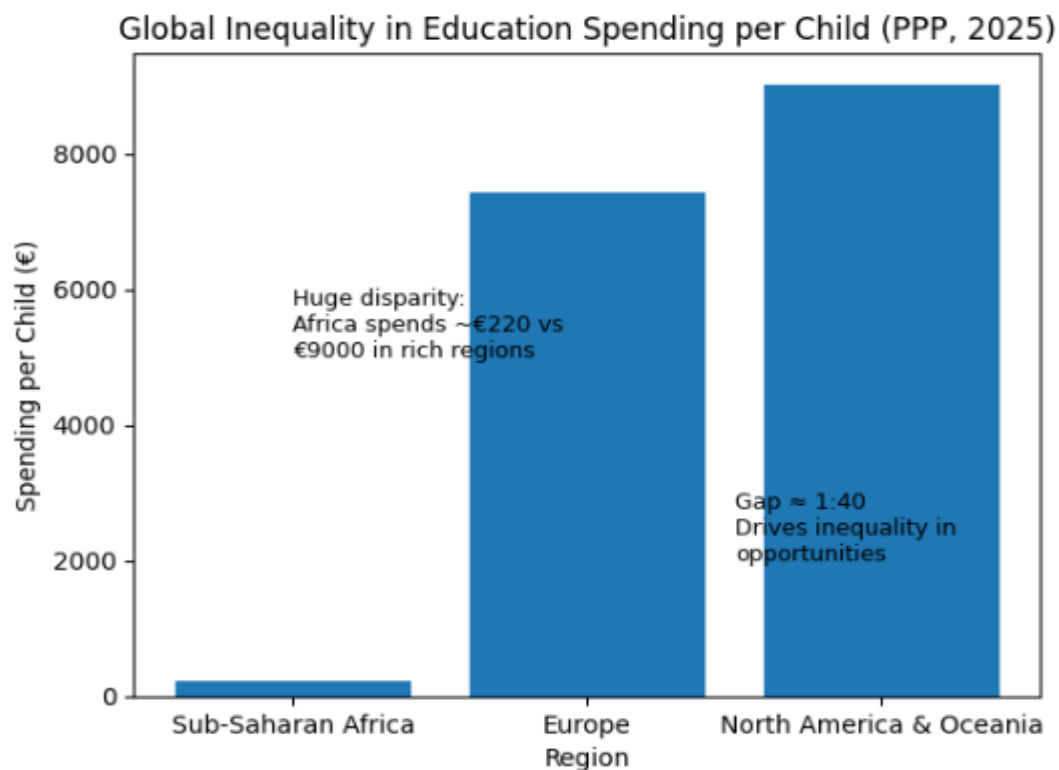
Table - 3
Key Indicators on Inequality, Redistribution, and Global Disparities, 2025

S.No.	Indicator	Region/Group	Statistical Data	Key Insight
1.	Reduction in income inequality through taxes & transfers	Europe	30–35% reduction	Strong welfare systems significantly narrow income gaps
		North America & Oceania	30–35% reduction	Effective redistribution reduces inequality but varies by country
		Latin America	15–25% reduction	Improvements after 1990s reforms, but still lower than developed regions
2.	Education spending per child (PPP)	Sub-Saharan Africa	€220 per child/year	Very low investment limits human capital development
		Europe	€7,430 per child/year	High investment ensures better education access
		North America & Oceania	€9,020 per child/year	Highest spending, widening global education gap (\approx 1:40 ratio)
3.	Effective tax rate trend	Middle-income groups	20–30% average	Tax systems are relatively progressive for general population
		Ultra-rich (billionaires)	10–15% or lower	Regressive taxation due to avoidance and loopholes
4.	Share of political donations	Top 10% earners	60–80% of total donations	Wealth concentration influences political decisions
5.	Borrowing costs (interest rates)	Developed countries	1–3% average	Benefit from strong currencies and financial systems
		Developing countries	5–10% or higher	Higher debt burden limits public investment
6.	Potential revenue from global minimum tax on ultra-rich	Global	0.45%–1.11% of global GDP	Could fund education, healthcare, and climate action

Source: World Inequality Report 2026.

Economic inequality increasingly shapes political outcomes, weakening traditional class-based voting patterns. Education and income now influence political choices differently, making unified support for redistribution harder. At the same time, growing divides between urban and rural areas reduce social cohesion and fragment working-class representation. Wealthy

individuals also exert strong influence through political donations, limiting fair policymaking. Despite these challenges, inequality can be reduced through effective policies. Investments in education, healthcare, and social protection help create equal opportunities and support vulnerable groups. Promoting gender equality, fair wages, and recognition of unpaid work is also essential. Well-designed climate policies and progressive taxation can further reduce disparities while funding public services. Reforms in the global financial system can give developing countries more resources for growth. Ultimately, reducing inequality depends on political will, inclusive policies, and stronger democratic systems that represent all sections of society fairly.



Global income and wealth have reached historic highs but remain highly concentrated, with small elite holding a large share. Current tax systems are inadequate, as the richest often face lower effective taxation, reducing funds for public services. Rich countries benefit from global financial structures, widening inequality between nations. Politically, inequality weakens representation of ordinary people and divides voters. Reducing these gaps requires fair taxation, stronger redistribution, and financial reforms. Gender inequality also persists, with women earning less and doing more unpaid work. Greater data transparency, global cooperation, and inclusive policies are essential to build trust and address inequality effectively.

Inequality continues to be a major global issue despite the rapid rise in income and wealth. Over the past two centuries, the world has become much richer, but the benefits of this growth have not been shared equally. A small section of the population controls a large share of resources, while many people still struggle with limited income and opportunities. To understand this gap, the population is grouped into the bottom 50%, middle 40%, and top 10%. This shows that resources are heavily concentrated at the top. The richest 10% receive more than half of global income, whereas the poorest half gets only a small portion. At the highest levels, inequality becomes even more extreme, with a tiny group earning as much as billions of people combined. The details of the Global Inequality: Key Statistical Indicators on Income and Wealth Distribution (2025) are stated in table - 4.

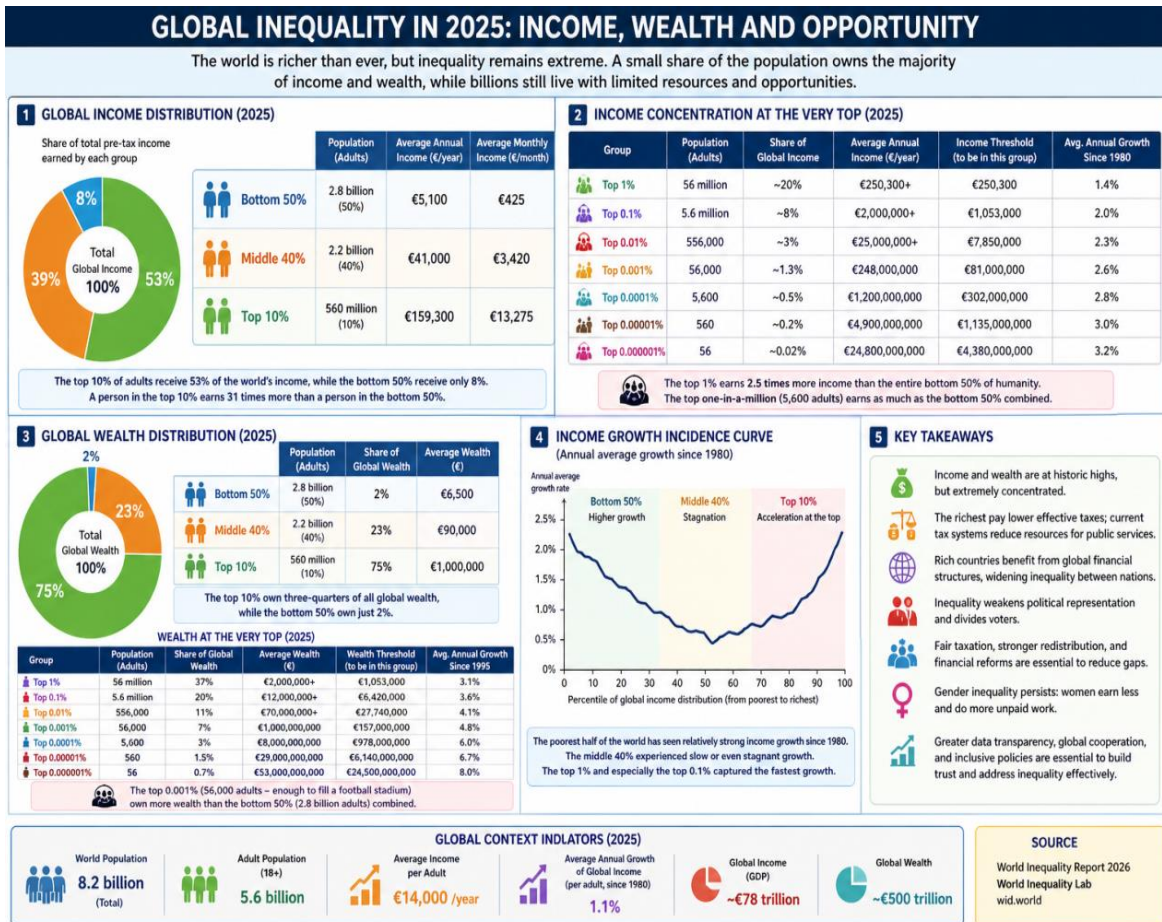
Table - 4

Global Inequality: Key Statistical Indicators on Income and Wealth Distribution (2025)

S.No.	Category	Group	Population Size (Approx.)	Share of Global Income (%)	Average Annual Income (€)	Share of Global Wealth (%)	Average Wealth (€)
1.	Bottom Group	Bottom 50%	2.8 billion adults	8%	5,100	2%	6,500
2.	Middle Group	Middle 40%	2.2 billion adults	39%	41,000 (approx.)	23%	90,000 (approx.)
3.	Top Group	Top 10%	560 million adults	53%	159,300	75%	1,000,000
4.	Upper Elite	Top 1%	56 million adults	~20% (est.)	250,300+	37%	2,000,000+
5.	Ultra-Rich	Top 0.1%	5.6 million adults	Comparable to bottom 50%	Millions annually	Highly concentrated	Tens of millions
6.	Extreme Elite	Top 0.001%	56,000 adults	Extremely high	~248 million	More than bottom 50%	~1 billion
7.	Global Average	All Adults	5.6 billion	100%	14,000	100%	—

Source: World Inequality Report 2026 (World Inequality Lab, wid.world).

Since 1980, global incomes have increased, but the growth has been uneven. The poorest groups have improved slightly, the middle class has seen slow progress, and the richest groups have gained the most. This has led to a polarized pattern, where inequality continues to rise at the top. Wealth inequality is even more pronounced than income inequality. A large share of global wealth is held by the richest individuals, while the bottom half owns very little.



Over time, billionaires have seen the fastest growth in wealth, further widening the gap. This growing concentration strengthens economic power among the rich and reduces equal opportunities for others.

Two Centuries of Rising Global Income amid Persistent and Extreme Inequality

Over the last two centuries, global income has increased dramatically, yet inequality has remained high and persistent. The richest 10% consistently receive over half of total income, while the poorest 50% have never gained more than 15% and receive only around 8% in 2025, despite numbering about 2.8 billion people. The top 1% earns nearly 20%, and the top 0.1% makes as much as the entire bottom half. While the middle 40% improved during the 20th century, the poorest group saw little benefit. Wealth inequality is even more extreme: the top 10% owns about 75% of global wealth, while the bottom half holds just 2%. Regional gaps worsen this situation, with North America & Oceania far above the global average and Sub-Saharan Africa far below it. The details of the Two Centuries of Rising Global Income amid Persistent and Extreme Inequality are stated in table – 5.

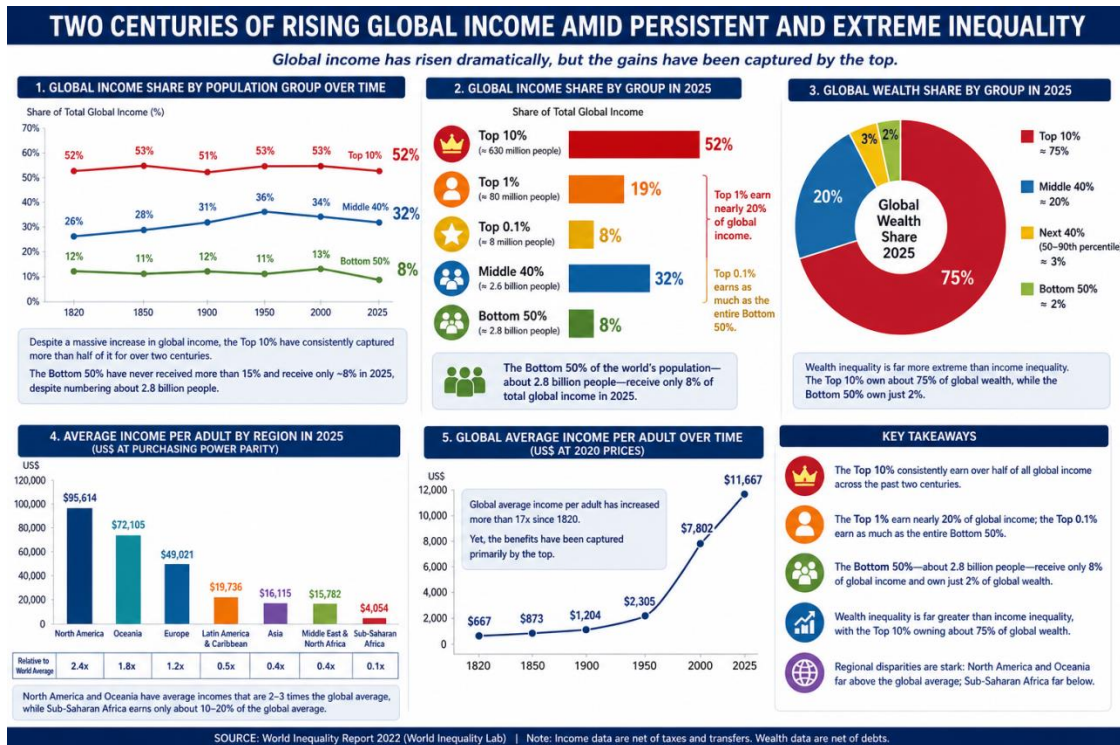
Table – 5

Two Centuries of Rising Global Income amid Persistent and Extreme Inequality

S.No.	Indicator	Population Group	Share / Value (Approx.)	Time Reference	Key Insight
1.	Global Income Share	Top 10%	50–55%	19th century–2025	Consistently captures more than half of total global income
2.	Global Income Share	Bottom 50%	8–15% ($\approx 8\%$ in 2025)	19th century–2025	Never exceeded 15%; remains extremely low despite population size
3.	Global Income Share	Middle 40%	30–40%	20th century peak	Saw improvements during mid-20th century, now relatively stable
4.	Global Income Share	Top 1%	18–20%	2025	Highly concentrated earnings among global elite
5.	Global Income Share	Top 0.1%	$\approx 8\text{--}10\%$	2025	Earns roughly equal to the entire bottom 50%
6.	Population Estimate	Bottom 50%	≈ 2.8 billion people	2025	Large population with minimal income share
7.	Global Wealth Share	Top 10%	$\approx 75\%$	2025	Dominates ownership of global assets
8.	Global Wealth Share	Bottom 50%	$\approx 2\%$	2025	Owens a negligible portion of total wealth
9.	Global Wealth Share	Middle 40%	$\approx 20\text{--}25\%$	2025	Moderate wealth ownership but far below top tier
10.	Regional Income Level	North America & Oceania	Above global average (2–3 \times higher)	2025	High-income concentration regions
11.	Regional Income Level	Sub-Saharan Africa	Below global average ($\approx 0.3\text{--}0.5\times$)	2025	Persistent low-income region with structural disadvantages

Source: World Inequality Report 2022.

The data in Table–5, Two Centuries of Rising Global Income amid Persistent and Extreme Inequality reveal a striking paradox, while global income has increased significantly over time, its distribution remains highly unequal. The top 10% consistently capture 50–55% of global income, whereas the bottom 50%, comprising about 2.8 billion people in 2025, receive only 8–15%, with a decline to nearly 8% in recent estimates. This indicates a severe imbalance between population size and income share. Further concentration is evident within elite groups: the top 1% holds 18–20%, and the top 0.1% alone controls about 8–10%, roughly equivalent to the entire bottom half. Wealth inequality is even more pronounced, with the top 10% owning around 75% of global wealth, while the bottom 50% possess just 2%, reflecting deep structural disparities in asset ownership.



The middle 40% accounts for 30–40% of income and 20–25% of wealth, indicating relative stability but limited upward mobility. Regionally, disparities are stark—North America and Oceania earn 2–3 times the global average, while Sub-Saharan Africa remains at only 30–50% of the average, highlighting persistent global inequality. Overall, the data suggest that economic growth has not translated into equitable distribution, reinforcing the need for inclusive and redistributive policy interventions.

Regional Income Inequality and Global Distribution of Income and Population (1800–2025)

Regional income inequality remains a defining feature of the global economy, shaped by both historical trends and present-day disparities. Over the past 200 years, global income has grown, but unevenly. North America and Oceania and Europe remain the richest regions, with average yearly incomes exceeding €45,000 and monthly incomes of about €3,800 and €2,900 respectively in 2025. In contrast, Sub-Saharan Africa earns less than €3,500 annually (about €300/month), making it the poorest region. South & Southeast Asia also lags behind with around €600 per month, while the global average is about €1,300. East Asia stands out as a success story, growing at 4.2% annually since 1950 and 5% since 2000, raising its income from below €1,000 in 1950 to over €17,000 in 2025. However, large gaps persist: incomes in North America & Oceania are about 13 times higher than in Sub-Saharan Africa and 2.5 times higher than in

East Asia. The details of the Regional Income Inequality and Global Distribution of Income and Population (2025) are stated in table - 6.

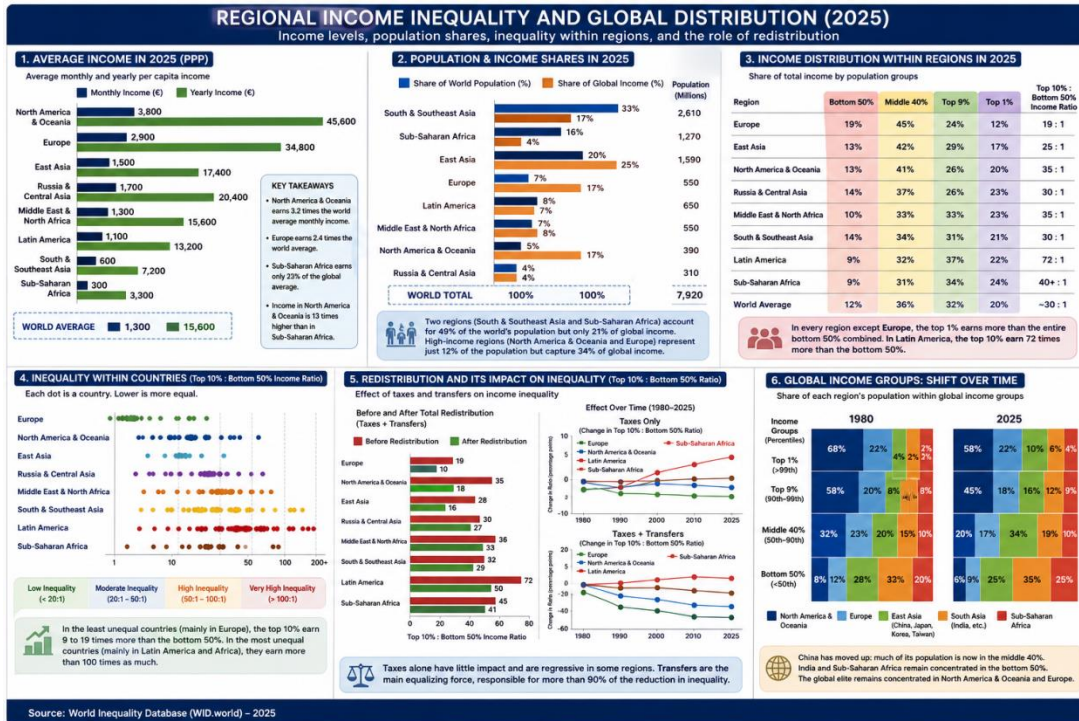
Table – 6

Regional Income Inequality and Global Distribution of Income and Population (2025)

S.No.	Region	Avg Monthly Income (€)	Avg Yearly Income (€)	Share of World Population (%)	Share of Global Income (%)	Bottom 50% Income Share (%)	Top 10% Income Share (%)	Top 1% Income Share (%)	Key Inequality Ratio (Top 10% : Bottom 50%)
1.	North America & Oceania	3,800	~45,000+	5%	17%	13%	46%	20%	35:1 (pre), 18:1 (post)
2.	Europe	2,900	~35,000+	7%	17%	19%	36%	12%	19:1 (pre), 10:1 (post)
3.	East Asia	1,500	~17,000	20%	25%	13%	46%	17%	~25:1
4.	Russia & Central Asia	1,700	~20,000	4%	4%	14%	~50%	23%	~30:1
5.	Middle East & North Africa	1,300	~15,000	7–8%	7–8%	10–11%	55–57%	23%	~35:1
6.	Latin America	1,100	~13,000	7–8%	7–8%	8–10%	55–57%	20–22%	72:1 (pre), 50:1 (post)
7.	South & Southeast Asia	600	~7,000	33%	17%	14%	~55%	21%	~30:1
8.	Sub-Saharan Africa	300	<3,500	16%	4%	8–10%	55–57%	20–24%	~40:1+
9.	World Average	1,300	~15,600	100%	100%	~12%	~52%	~20%	~30:1

Source: World Inequality Database, 2025.

Population and income are unevenly distributed. South & Southeast Asia holds one-third of the world's population, and Sub-Saharan Africa 16%, yet both have low incomes. Meanwhile, high-income regions represent only about 12% of the global population. Within regions, inequality is severe. In most regions, the top 1% earns 17–24% of total income, often more than the bottom 50%, which earns only 8–14%. Europe is relatively more equal, where the bottom 50% earns 19% and the top 1% 12%. Redistribution reduces inequality, but unevenly. In Europe, the top 10% to bottom 50% income ratio falls from 19:1 before redistribution to 10:1 after.



In North America and Oceania, it drops from 35:1 to 18:1. However, in regions like Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, the impact is minimal. Transfers account for over 90% of inequality reduction, while taxes contribute less than 10%. Overall, global inequality reflects both regional divides and strong income concentration at the top.

Global Income Inequality and the Redistributive Impact of Taxes and Transfers (2025)

In 2025, income inequality remains substantial across regions, but taxes and transfers play a key role in reducing these gaps. In North America and Oceania, before government intervention, the bottom 50% earns about 35 times less than the top 10%. After taxes and transfers, this gap narrows to 18 times, showing a significant redistributive effect. Taxes alone reduce inequality to some extent, with this region having the most progressive tax systems. In contrast, regions like Latin America and Russia & Central Asia often experience weaker or even regressive tax effects. When both taxes and transfers (such as pensions, unemployment benefits, and social assistance) are considered, inequality declines much more sharply across all regions. Europe and North America & Oceania demonstrate the strongest redistribution, highlighting the importance of welfare systems. Transfers consistently reduce inequality worldwide, although their impact varies by country.

Globally, income disparities between countries are extreme. High-income nations like the USA, Taiwan, and many European countries report monthly per capita incomes exceeding

€3,000, while the poorest countries, such as Burundi and Yemen, remain below €100. This represents a gap of over 80 times between the richest and poorest populations. The details of the Global Income Inequality and Redistribution through Taxes and Transfers (2025) are stated in table - 7.

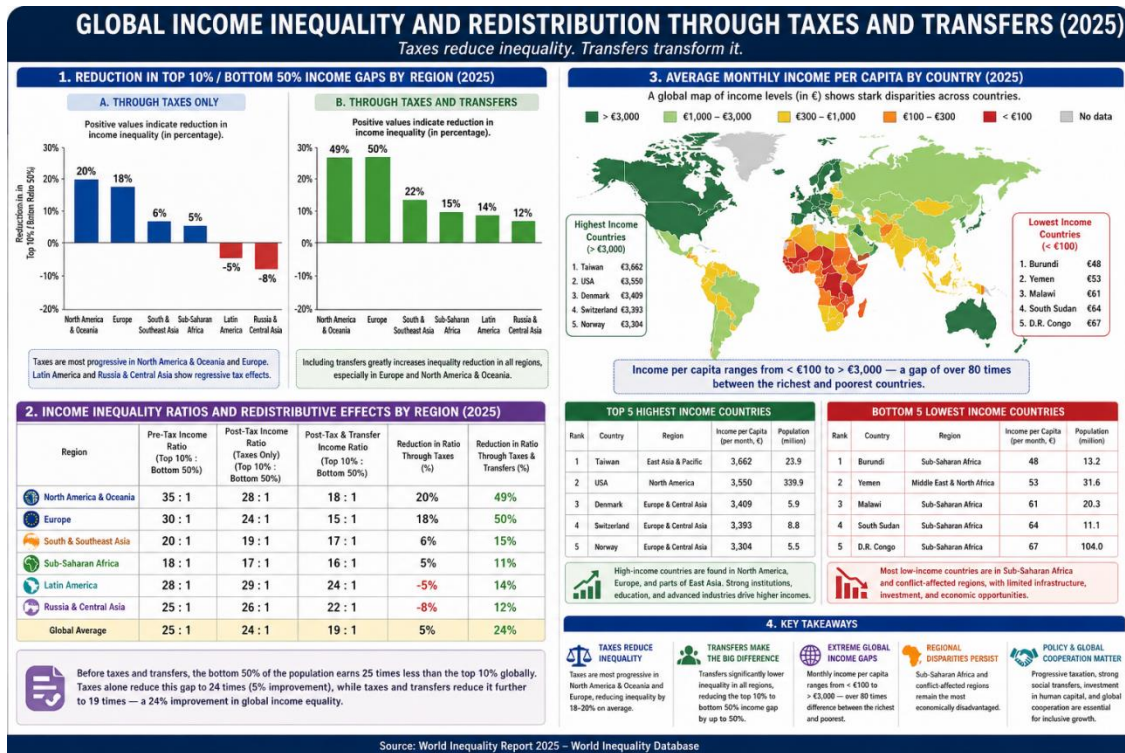
Table – 7

Global Income Inequality and Redistribution through Taxes and Transfers (2025)

S.No.	Region / Country Group	Pre-Tax Income Ratio (Top 10% : Bottom 50%)	Post-Tax & Transfer Ratio	Reduction Due to Taxes (%)	Reduction Due to Taxes & Transfers (%)	Average Monthly Income per Capita (€)	Key Observation
1.	North America & Oceania	35 : 1	18 : 1	~20%	~49%	>3,000	Strong tax progressivity and high redistribution
2.	Europe	30 : 1	15 : 1	~18%	~50%	>3,000	Highest impact of transfers in reducing inequality
3.	Latin America	28 : 1	24 : 1	~5%	~14%	800 – 1,500	Weak or regressive tax structures
4.	Russia & Central Asia	25 : 1	22 : 1	~4%	~12%	700 – 1,200	Limited redistribution effectiveness
5.	South & Southeast Asia	20 : 1	17 : 1	~6%	~15%	300 – 900	Moderate inequality with limited transfers
6.	Sub-Saharan Africa	18 : 1	16 : 1	~5%	~11%	<500	Lowest income levels, minimal redistribution
7.	High-Income Countries (e.g., USA, Taiwan)	—	—	—	—	>3,000	Advanced economies with strong fiscal systems
8.	Low-Income Countries (e.g., Burundi, Yemen)	—	—	—	—	<100	Severe poverty and limited state capacity

Source: World Inequality Report 2025.

Most low-income countries are concentrated in Sub-Saharan Africa, indicating strong regional inequality. These differences reflect unequal access to education, healthcare, infrastructure, and economic opportunities.



Wealthier countries benefit from advanced industries and stable institutions, while poorer nations face structural challenges and limited investment. Reducing these disparities requires progressive taxation, stronger social transfers, and sustained global cooperation focused on inclusive development.

Global Income Inequality and Country Rankings by Per Capita Income (2024)

In 2024, rankings of large countries (population above 10 million) by per capita national income reveal striking global inequalities, even after adjusting for purchasing power (PPP). The richest large economies, such as Taiwan, the United States, the United Arab Emirates, the Netherlands, Sweden, Belgium, Germany, Australia, Canada, and Saudi Arabia, the average monthly incomes between €3,200 and €4,100. In contrast, the poorest large countries, including Burundi, Yemen, Mozambique, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, Madagascar, South Sudan, Niger, and Chad, have average monthly incomes below €130, with Burundi as low as €50. This means that a person in a wealthy country can earn in a single day what someone in the poorest countries earns in an entire month.

When small and ultra-small countries are included, inequality appears even more extreme. The top countries, Monaco, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Bermuda, Guernsey, Jersey, Singapore, the Cayman Islands, Macao, and Anguilla, often exceed €12,000 per month, more

than 200 times higher than the poorest nations. Most of these are small financial hubs or tax havens with concentrated wealth and specialized economies. At the lower end, countries like Sudan, Burundi, and the Central African Republic remain deeply impoverished. Historically, ultra-small countries have maintained incomes about four times the global average since 1970, while the largest countries, such as India and China, have remained below average, though they are rapidly catching up. Overall, the data highlights a massive global income gap, over 250 times between extremes, driven by structural disadvantages, weak institutions, and uneven development. Reducing this disparity requires better governance, economic diversification, and sustained global cooperation. The details of the Global Income Inequality: Per Capita National Income Rankings (2024, PPP-adjusted) are stated in table - 8.

Table – 8

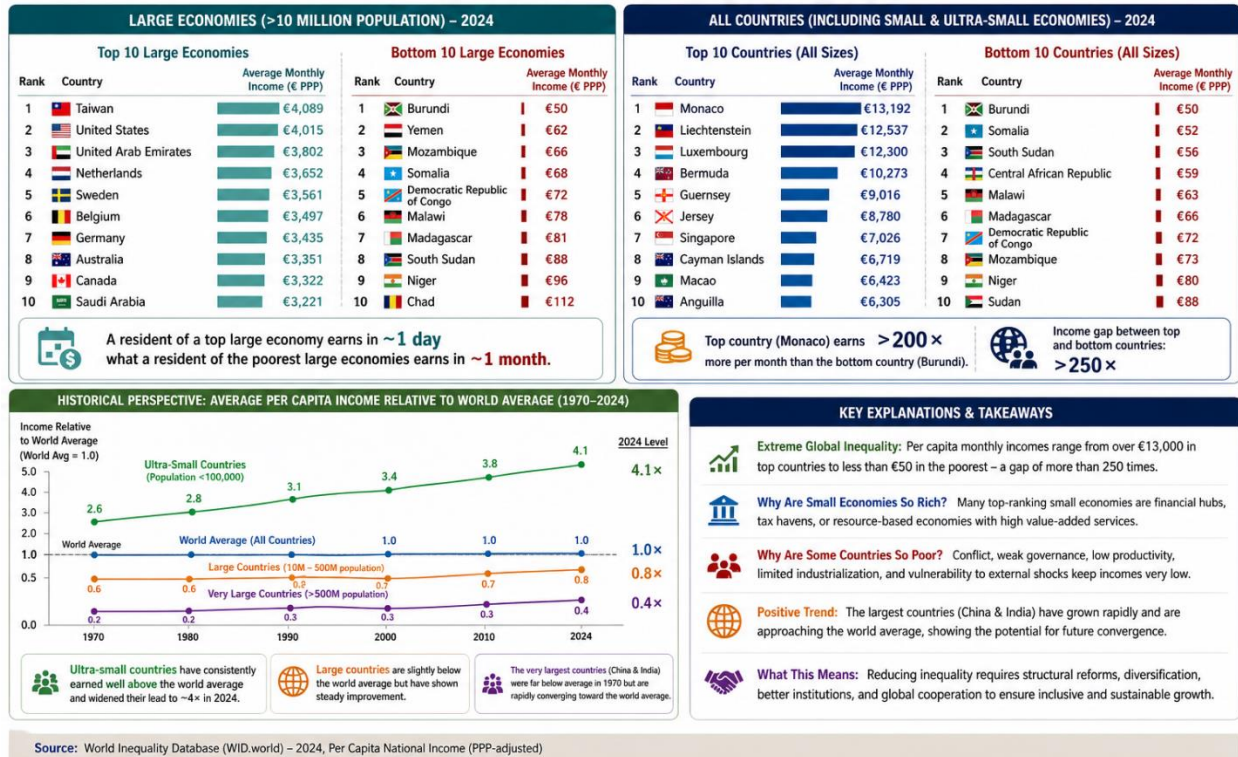
Global Income Inequality: Per Capita National Income Rankings (2024, PPP-adjusted)

S.No.	Category	Countries	Average Monthly Income (€ PPP)	Key Statistical Insight
1.	Top large economies (>10 million population)	Taiwan, USA, UAE, Netherlands, Sweden, Belgium, Germany, Australia, Canada, Saudi Arabia	€3,200 – €4,100	Residents earn in ~1 day what poorest countries earn in ~1 month
2.	Bottom large economies (>10 million population)	Burundi, Yemen, Mozambique, Somalia, DRC, Malawi, Madagascar, South Sudan, Niger, Chad	< €130 (Burundi: ~€50)	Extreme poverty; many survive on < €3 per day (country average)
3.	Top small & ultra-small economies (<10 million population)	Monaco, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Bermuda, Guernsey, Jersey, Singapore, Cayman Islands, Macao, Anguilla	> €12,000	Often financial hubs/tax havens; incomes >200× poorest countries
4.	Bottom small economies	Central African Republic, Sudan, others in fragile states	~€50–€150	Conflict, weak institutions, and instability suppress incomes
5.	Global comparison insight	Ultra-small vs large developing countries	Ultra-small $\approx 4\times$ world average (since 1970 trend)	Largest countries (India, China) still below world average but converging rapidly

Source: World Inequality Database (WID.world), 2024 PPP income estimates.

GLOBAL INCOME INEQUALITY IN 2024 (PPP-ADJUSTED)

Per Capita National Income Rankings and Key Insights



Regional Wealth Inequality and the Changing Global Distribution of Wealth (1995–2025)

Global wealth has grown strongly over the past 30 years, but its benefits remain highly uneven across regions. Between 1995 and 2025, world wealth rose sharply, yet it became more concentrated in private hands and increasingly shifted toward Asia, especially East Asia. East Asia is the biggest transformation story. Its share of global wealth increased from about 20% in 1995 to over 36% in 2025, growing nearly 7% per year. Europe moved in the opposite direction, falling from over 25% to about 16% due to slower growth (just above 3% annually). North America & Oceania remained broadly stable at around 4.3% annual growth. South & Southeast Asia also grew strongly (around 6%), but still holds only about 13% of global wealth despite its large population.

Other regions lag behind. Latin America and Russia & Central Asia grew slowly (below 3%), while Sub-Saharan Africa grew faster (about 4.7%) but still holds only around 2% of global wealth. The Middle East & North Africa increased moderately (around 5%). Wealth is also increasingly private. The details of the Regional Wealth Inequality and Global Wealth Distribution Trends (1995–2025) are stated in table – 9.

Table – 9

Regional Wealth Inequality and Global Wealth Distribution Trends (1995–2025)

S.No.	Region	Wealth Growth Trend (1995–2025)	Annual Growth Rate	Global Wealth Share Change	2025 Share of Global Wealth	Key Features of Wealth Structure
1.	East Asia	Strong expansion; fastest-growing wealth region	~7%	~20% → 36%	~36%	Largest wealth holder; strong public + private wealth; major rise in foreign assets
2.	Europe	Slow growth and relative decline	~3%	~25% → 16%	~16%	Declining global dominance; moderate wealth growth; rising foreign asset holdings
3.	North America & Oceania	Stable but volatile (crisis impacts)	~4.3%	Stable share	~High but not dominant	Very high private wealth (>600% income); negative public wealth; net debtor globally
4.	South & Southeast Asia	Strong but uneven growth	~6%	Low → modest rise	~13%	Rapid wealth building but low global share vs population (33%)
5.	Latin America	Weak growth	<3%	Declining/stagnant	Low	High inequality; negative foreign asset position
6.	Russia & Central Asia	Weak growth	<3%	Stagnant	Low	High concentration; strong top 1% wealth share (~46%)
7.	Middle East & North Africa	Moderate growth	~5%	Slight increase	Moderate-low	Positive foreign assets; high capital share; strong inequality
8.	Sub-Saharan Africa	Faster growth from low base	~4.7%	Very low → ~2%	~2%	Lowest global share; high inequality; dependency on external capital

Source: Compiled from regional wealth inequality data and global distribution estimates (1995–2025).

Global wealth rose from about 400% of world income in 1995 to over 600% in 2025, but public wealth stayed flat at 80–90% of income, and is even negative in some regions (like North America & Oceania). East Asia stands out with strong public wealth, while most other regions rely mainly on private wealth. Inequality within regions is extreme. The top 10% owns 60–74%

of wealth everywhere, while the bottom 50% owns only 1–5%. The top 1% alone holds 25–46% of wealth depending on the region, and in several regions it owns more than the entire bottom 90%. Globally, wealth is highly concentrated and unevenly distributed, with Europe and North America still dominant at the top, but East Asia rapidly rising and reshaping the global wealth hierarchy. The details of the Global Wealth Structure: Key Indicators (1995–2025) are given in table – 10.

Table -10
Global Wealth Structure: Key Indicators (1995–2025)

S.No.	Indicator	1995	2025	Key Insight
1.	Global wealth (% of world income)	~400%	>600%	Wealth growing faster than income
2.	Private wealth	~350%	>500%	Almost all growth captured privately
3.	Public wealth	~80–90%	~80–90% (stagnant)	Weak or negative in many regions
4.	Global labor share	~61%	~53%	Declining labor income share
5.	Global capital share	~39%	~47%	Rising returns to capital

Source: World Inequality Report (WIR 2026).

Table–10, highlights a structural shift toward wealth concentration between 1995 and 2025. Global wealth rose from ~400% to over 600% of world income, indicating that wealth has grown much faster than economic output. This expansion is largely driven by private wealth, which increased from ~350% to above 500%, while public wealth remained stagnant at ~80–90%, reflecting weak state balance sheets. At the same time, the global labor share declined from ~61% to ~53%, whereas the capital share increased from ~39% to ~47%. This suggests rising returns to capital and reduced income for workers, reinforcing inequality and limiting inclusive growth. The details of the Wealth Inequality within Regions (2025) are stated in table – 11.

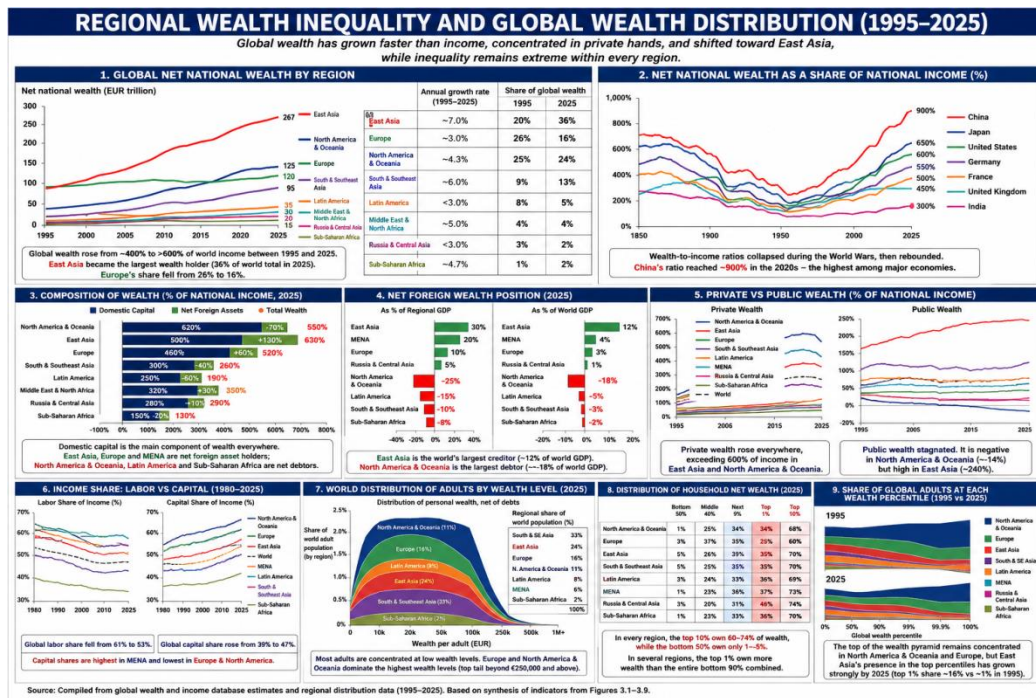
Table – 11
Wealth Inequality within Regions (2025)

S.No.	Region	Bottom 50% Wealth Share	Top 10% Wealth Share	Top 1% Wealth Share	Key Pattern
1.	All regions (range)	1–5%	60–74%	25–46%	Extreme concentration everywhere
2.	North America & Oceania	~1%	~65–70%	~34%	High elite concentration
3.	Europe	~3%	~60%	~25%	More balanced top structure
4.	East Asia	~5%	~65–70%	~35%	Growing upper-middle class

5.	Latin America	~3%	~69%	~36%	Very unequal distribution
6.	Sub-Saharan Africa	~1%	~70%	~36%	Extreme inequality + low wealth base

Source: Compiled from regional wealth inequality data and global distribution estimates (1995–2025).

Table–11, reveals that wealth inequality is extreme across all regions in 2025. The bottom 50% holds only 1–5% of total wealth, while the top 10% controls 60–74%, and the top 1% alone owns 25–46%, indicating severe concentration. Regions like North America & Oceania (~1% vs ~65–70%) and Sub-Saharan Africa (~1% vs ~70%) show the sharpest disparities.



Even relatively balanced regions like Europe (bottom 50% ~3%, top 10% ~60%) reflect inequality. Overall, the data suggest that wealth concentration is a universal structural issue, limiting inclusive economic participation and mobility.

Country-by-Country Patterns of Wealth Concentration and Inequality in Global Household Wealth (2025)

The distribution of wealth within nations is explained by wealth inequality, which is far more severe than income disparity. Across the world, the bottom 50% of the population owns very little wealth. In most countries, their share is close to zero and rarely exceeds 14%, while in many regions it is only 1–3.8%. This extremely low share is common in Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East & North Africa, and also appears in parts of Europe and the

United States. Even in relatively more equal countries like China, India, and parts of Western Europe, the bottom half still holds only a small fraction of total wealth. The middle 40% also holds a limited share in many countries, though there are differences. The details of the Country-by-Country Patterns of Wealth Concentration and Inequality (2025) are given in table – 12.

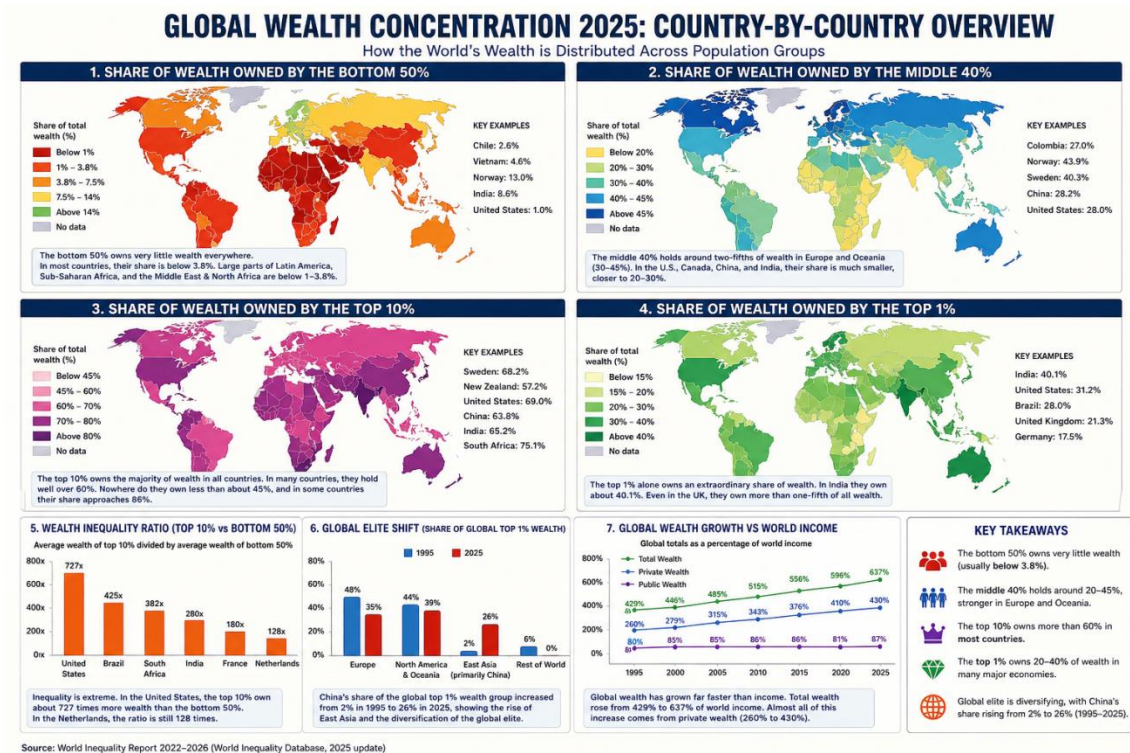
Table - 12
Country-by-Country Patterns of Wealth Concentration and Inequality (2025)

S.No.	Indicator	Estimated Share / Value	Country / Region Examples	Key Interpretation
1.	Bottom 50% wealth share	~1% to 14% of national wealth	Chile: ~2.6%, Vietnam: ~4.6%, many in Latin America, Africa, MENA	Bottom half owns almost no wealth in most countries
2.	Bottom 50% (regional pattern)	Very low (often 1–3.8%)	Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East, Latin America	Extreme exclusion from wealth ownership
3.	Middle 40% wealth share	~27% to 44%	Colombia: ~27%, Norway: ~43.9%	Middle class stronger in Europe/Oceania, weaker elsewhere
4.	Middle 40% (low-share countries)	~20–30% range	United States, China, India	Shrinking middle-class wealth share in major economies
5.	Top 10% wealth share	~45% to 86% of total wealth	USA, China, India, Russia, Latin America (often >60%)	Dominates national wealth everywhere
6.	Top 10% (Europe/Oceania)	~45% to 70%	Sweden: ~68.2%, New Zealand: ~57.2%	Lower than global peak but still highly concentrated
7.	Top 1% wealth share	~21% to 40%	India: ~40.1%, UK: ~21.3%	Very top group holds massive wealth concentration
8.	Wealth inequality ratio	128× to 727×	Netherlands: ~128×, USA: ~727×	Extreme gap between rich and bottom half
9.	Global elite shift (1995–2025)	China: 2% → 26% of global top 1%	Europe & N. America declining dominance	Global elite becoming more geographically diverse
10.	Global wealth growth Vs. income	Wealth: ~4× → >6× world income	Global trend	Wealth growing much faster than income
11.	Private Vs. public wealth	Private: ~260% → 430% of income; Public: ~80–90% stagnant	Global (East Asia exception)	Wealth accumulation mainly in private hands

Source: World Inequality Report (WIR) 2022–2026 synthesis data and related global wealth distribution datasets.

In Europe and Oceania, the middle group owns around 40–44% of wealth, reflecting a more balanced structure. In contrast, in countries like the United States, Canada, China, and

India, the middle 40% holds a much smaller share, closer to patterns seen in Latin America and Africa. For example, Colombia's middle group owns about 27%, while Norway's middle class reaches about 43.9%.



The top 10% dominates wealth ownership almost everywhere, typically controlling more than 60% of national wealth in many countries, including the United States, China, India, Russia, and parts of Latin America and Africa. Even in more equal regions such as Europe and Oceania, the share remains high but slightly lower, usually above 45%. In extreme cases, the top decile can own up to 86% of total wealth. At the very top, inequality becomes even sharper. The top 1% alone owns about 40.1% of wealth in India and around 21.3% in the United Kingdom. In the United States, the gap between groups is extreme: the top 10% are about 727 times wealthier than the bottom 50%, while in the Netherlands this ratio is still very high at 128 times. Overall, the data shows that wealth is heavily concentrated at the top globally, with minimal ownership among the bottom half and persistent dominance by the richest groups.

Conclusion

The analysis of global economic and political inequalities reveals that despite significant growth in income and wealth over the past two centuries, disparities remain alarmingly high and persistent. A small elite continues to control a large share of resources, while billions of people

struggle with poverty, limited opportunities, and social exclusion. Gender, regional, and climate inequalities further deepen these divides, making inclusive development increasingly challenging. The data shows that wealth and income are heavily concentrated at the top, with the richest 10% owning over 75% of global wealth and earning more than half of all income. Meanwhile, the bottom half owns only a tiny fraction, facing hardships and limited access to essential services.

Efforts to reduce inequality through progressive taxation, social investments, and international cooperation are crucial. Public policies that promote fair tax systems, better access to quality education, healthcare, and social protection can help bridge these gaps. Additionally, global financial reforms and stronger political will are necessary to ensure more equitable resource distribution. Addressing interconnected inequalities is vital not only for social justice but also for fostering stability, democratic governance, and sustainable development. Overall, reducing global inequalities requires concerted, inclusive, and transparent efforts at both national and international levels. Building a fairer and more sustainable world is possible when policies prioritize equity, social justice, and environmental sustainability for all.

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