

The latest monthly round-up of research and news around pay & income inequality.

Most of the information in this email was previously reported via our twitterfeed (@equalitytrust).

February brought the worrying news that we are [on course](#) to suffer the biggest rise in inequality since the Thatcher years, due to a major slowdown in living standards. That grim warning leaves no room for complacency and it's why we've been working hard to secure changes at both ends of the income spectrum, stepping up our fight for a fairer society.

To help end the myth of poverty driven by profligacy, we carried out analysis of official [Family Spending](#) data, turning the usual accusatory stories on their head to show, for example, that the richest spend as much on alcohol and tobacco as the poorest do on gas and electricity. Our Executive Director Dr Wanda Wyporska wrote for the [Huffington Post](#) that this gulf in spending illustrates our vast inequality, and our work was featured in the [Guardian](#), the [Huffington Post](#) and the [Daily Mail](#).

Wanda was also on Sky News this month discussing the shameful fact that many poorer children go hungry during the holidays without free school meals. And because poverty is the sharp end of inequality, we signed this [important letter](#) supporting Dan Jarvis MP's Private Member's Bill calling for the reinstatement of the child poverty target.

While some struggle to feed and clothe their families, others are essentially guaranteed a lottery win every year with their bloated pay packets. We responded to the Government's consultation on [corporate governance](#), pushing hard for mandatory pay ratio reporting, workers on boards and worker representation on remuneration committees. To help demonstrate the strength of feeling on this issue, this week we will launch our brand new public petition calling for legislation on pay ratio reporting. Please share it widely to show the Government how many of us want a narrower gap between poverty pay and fat cat salaries.

We're also pushing for public bodies to do more to tackle inequality. You may recall before Christmas we organised a letter to the [Sunday Telegraph](#) calling for the Government to commence the duty on public bodies to take account of how their decisions worsen or reduce inequality. We've just launched our joint campaign with [Just Fair](#) to get that [socio-economic duty](#) brought to life.

As for the ever-present [housing](#) crisis, we welcomed the Government's plans to seize land from developers who fail to build, but were disappointed that its Housing White Paper didn't go far enough in a vision for large-scale social housebuilding and an overhaul of our regressive council tax system.

Catch up on February's blogs:

- [A Perfect Union](#)
- [Tackling Inequality Bristol Fashion](#)
- [A New Way to Tackle Tax Avoidance](#)
- [Income Inequality Worsened by Land Grabbers and State Imposed Debt](#)

Last but not least, The Equality Trust is proud to announce it has joined the [Green Economy Coalition](#), and we are looking forward to learning from and sharing knowledge with our partner organisations about the links between greater equality and greater sustainability.

## LATEST LOCAL GROUP NEWS

From postcards in Sheffield to marching in London and all sorts of activity in places in between, it's been a busy month for the local equality groups. [Read on to find out more...](#)

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS AND REPORTS

We're on course to suffer the biggest rise in inequality since the Thatcher years, warned the [Resolution Foundation](#).

The [Resolution Foundation](#) also showed that young men earn £12,500 less during their 20s than the previous generation, and the proportion doing low-paid work is up by 45%.

The [TUC](#) revealed that more than three million people now work in insecure jobs – that's one in 10 employees in the UK. It also showed that UK [workers' wages](#) fell 1 per cent a year between 2008 and 2015. Meanwhile, FTSE 100 CEO pay went up 10 per cent just last year.

Four million more of us have been pushed below the adequate income level for a decent standard of living, warned the [Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#).

[Official](#) wealth inequality figures showed the top 1 per cent of Scots have more wealth than the bottom 50%.

There is more than a two and a half year attainment gap between rich and poor bright kids, said the [Sutton Trust](#), calling it 'wasted talent'.

Poorer children are 'making less progress' than affluent peers, found a worrying report from [Social Mobility Commission](#) on educational inequality.

Chief executives are on course to earn 400 times the average worker by 2037, said the [High Pay Centre and CIPD](#).

## INEQUALITY IN THE NEWS

More than 80 percent of the highest-paid [bankers](#) in Europe are based in the UK, and one was paid nearly €34m.

The [UCU](#) called university vice chancellors' pay packages an "embarrassment" to the sector, with pay stagnating for other staff.

Families unable to manage the 42-day wait for first [Universal Credit](#) payment are regularly being referred to food banks. And millions of us are vulnerable to financial shocks, as we showed in our [briefing note](#) on debt and savings inequality.

## **BEST INEQUALITY READS**

[Professors Kate Pickett and Richard Wilkinson](#) warn in this powerful article that we should prepare for the worst: the inequality rift will tear our society apart.

Also read this excellent and balanced account of inequality from the [Flip Chart Fairy Tales](#) blog.

*We rely on donations to keep our campaign going. Please support our work by [signing up as a regular supporter or by making a one off contribution](#). You can also support our work by forwarding this bulletin to people you know who might be interested. Thank you!*