

**Are wealth gaps between rich and poor widening? Are they reaching unsustainable levels? Is this the case only in the UK or certain countries or globally?**

The wealth gaps between the rich and poor have been widening in many countries, both developed and developing. However, the extent to which wealth gaps are widening and whether they are reaching unsustainable levels can vary significantly from one country to another.

**PREPARATION:**

Please have a read and a think before our meeting:

1. <https://99-percent.org/the-book/>
2. <https://99-percent.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/99-short-presentation-v2.pdf>
3. Are wealth gaps between rich and poor widening? Reaching unsustainable levels? Is this the case only in the UK or certain countries or more general?
4. What geopolitical consequences result?  These prompts may be useful:
   1. Social cohesion / unrest / political stability / level of police enforcement
   2. Migration / displacement
   3. Mortality / life expectancy / birth rates
   4. Policy responses – taxation / social welfare / Education policies / healthcare provision
   5. Global shifts in wealth and power / competition, international relations, tensions and conflicts
   6. Economic growth (within a country) and trade (within a country and between countries)

These links may be of interest:

<https://www.statista.com/chart/28788/share-of-wealth-held-by-the-wealthiest-1-percent-of-the-population-by-country/>

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1140100/Table_3.1a_2021.ods>

<https://wid.world/>

**Here are some of the key points expanded, to research and consider:**

1. **Global Perspective:** Globally, income and wealth inequality have been on the rise in recent decades. Organizations like Oxfam have regularly published reports highlighting the growing wealth gap between the richest individuals or groups and the rest of the world's population. However, it's important to note that the degree of inequality varies between countries and regions.
2. **Developed Countries:** In many developed countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom, and several European nations, wealth and income inequality have increased. Factors such as tax policies, wage disparities, and access to education and healthcare can contribute to these trends.
3. **Developing Countries:** Some developing countries have also seen increasing wealth inequality, often due to factors like corruption, lack of access to quality education and healthcare, and limited economic opportunities for the poor.
4. **Sustainability:** Whether wealth gaps have reached unsustainable levels is a matter of debate and depends on various factors, including the specific economic, social, and political conditions in each country. Extreme wealth inequality can lead to social unrest, political instability, and economic inefficiencies, which can be considered unsustainable in the long run.
5. **Policy Responses:** Governments in various countries have taken different approaches to address wealth inequality. Some have implemented policies aimed at redistributing wealth and income, while others have pursued more market-oriented policies that may exacerbate inequality.
6. **Recent Developments:** Wealth inequality trends have been influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic and changing government policies.

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