Latvia

Sources:
Atkinson and Micklewright 1992, Tables UE5, UE6, and UI3 from the Statistical Appendix
Alexeev and Gaddy 1993, Table 3, 4a and 4b
Milanovic 1998, country tables in the Appendices 2 and 4
Statistical Yearbook 1998
World Bank Poverty during the Transition website 9/2000, Milanovic
World Bank Poverty Monitoring Database 2002
Deininger & Squire, World Bank 2004
Transmonee 2004

The documentation relies heavily on Atkinson and Micklewright (1992).

Surveys:
Family Budget Survey 1988, 1989, 1990
The Family Budget Survey, used by Atkinson and Micklewright (1992), Alexeev and Gaddy (1993) and Milanovic (1998), was a survey of families of persons employed in the state sector and of families of collective farmers (covering the whole USSR). Families have been selected by sampling individuals at their place of work. Sampling appears to have operated principally on a quota basis, with quotas for economic sectors, industrial branches and, within these, republics and oblasts. Beneath this level enterprises were selected on the basis of average age level and within each enterprise individuals were chosen according to their skill level and wage. Once included in the sample, an individual (and his or her family) was asked to participate until they left the enterprise or retired; retirement did not lead to automatic exclusion from the sample but was usually associated with a family dropping out from the survey. Replacement occurred only when a household dropped out from the survey. Participating households were monitored by the survey throughout the year. There were interviews with the whole household twice every month with diary records being maintained continuously. At inception in its post-war form in 1951, the sample size was about 51 000 families, in 1969, 62 000 and in 1988, 90 000. A family was defined as relatives who share a common budget. Approx. one third of the oblasts were not represented in the survey, high wage heavy industrial branches were over-represented in the selection of enterprises and less-skilled workers and those outside the direct production process were less likely to be selected. State farm workers seem also to have been under-represented but the rural population as a whole over-represented. When the sample size was expanded in 1988 it was specifically to correct problems of regional and branch representation.

For the above mentioned reasons the FBF sample was unrepresentative: families of those employed in the co-operative or private sectors and those not employed were in general excluded, old-age pensioners were heavily under-represented since they were originally excluded, the probability of selection was proportional to the number of working members since the sampling unit was the worker and, the panel nature of the survey biased the sample towards families of elder persons with long service records.

No figures of non-response are available but apparently the response rates were very high due to material and moral incentives to participate. Where non-response did occur, the household concerned was substituted with another household with similar observable characteristics.

When reporting results, figures have been adjusted for the over-sampling of collective farm families.

Annual gross family income was collected, including all money income from employment and from social security benefits. Reported cash income from sales of agricultural produce was included as was the value at state prices of agricultural production for self-consumption. The value of benefits in-kind from the employers such as meals and transport was included. Apparently benefits in-kind from the state are not included. Respondents' information on earnings and pensions were checked with employer records.

In Atkinson and Micklewright (1992) the reference period was a year but the data has been divided by twelve in the tables. The authors had to interpolate in order to arrive at values for the mean, median, and the Gini coefficient. To do this the authors used the program INEQ written by F.A. Cowell. Alexeev and Gaddy (1993) used a simple nonparametric technique based on the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test to fit the data to a lognormal distribution. They report that the estimates for 1990 are more reliable than those for 1988 as incomes were grouped only into 5 categories in 1988 but 7 in 1990.

Earnings Surveys 1981, 1986, 1989

Two sources of data have been used for earnings by Atkinson and Micklewright (1992). The first is Goskomstat 100% census of enterprises, held periodically since 1956, and from 1976 every five years (this is called the March Census by the authors). Enterprises were obliged to provide information on earnings for all their employees in a number of discrete earnings bands. The second source relates to data for 1984 and 1989. This is a survey of households of state sector and collective farm employees (this is called the March Household Survey by the authors). The information from this survey should be comparable with the first one. The March census covered only persons working in state enterprises, whereas those about 10% working on collective farms or private agricultural plots were excluded. Those employed by "social organisations", usually taken to mean the Communist Party and its close affiliates, were also excluded. The earnings data used from the household survey 1989 have been selected to include only those employed in state enterprises and farms (i.e. excluding collective farm workers). Employees not working a full month were excluded and only first jobs were considered. Part-time workers were included but are excluded from the tables provided by the authors.

The earnings concept is gross earnings for the month in question. The monthly bonus and the monthly value of any quarterly bonuses were included but annual bonuses or any other rewards based on a period of more than three months were excluded. No account was taken of the value of income in kind provided by enterprises. The reference period

was gross earnings in March for both surveys. The authors had to interpolate in order to arrive at values for the mean, median, and the Gini coefficient. To do this the authors used the program INEQ written by F.A. Cowell.

Household Budget Survey 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998

The Household Budget Survey is conducted by the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia. A new HBS was launched in 1995. The first survey had quality problems due to lack of experience.

The survey is a continuous survey with information obtained every month from the households. The sample is formed to represent the whole population as well as its most typical groups. In 1996, full survey information was obtained for 7524 households. Half of the households surveyed in 1996 formed the panel part of the survey. The households included in the panel were surveyed during the same month as in 1996 for the next 3 consecutive years. The total response level after replacement has been around 70%.

Two types of principal survey forms were developed in order to perform the survey: a diary and a questionnaire. The household diary is completed by the household itself and contains data on all money expenditure and goods and services received in-kind or from own production. Each household receives two diaries in succession: the first for the first 15 days of the month, and the second for the period until the end of the month. The household questionnaire is filled in by the interviewer. It consists of two interviews: an introductory interview and a final interview asking about incomes.

The income concept is disposable income and is the sum of income in-cash and in-kind (including self-consumption) minus the expenditures for taxes and compulsory social insurance contributions. Income from work, entrepreneurial activity, domestic craft and agricultural production, property or sale of property and social transfers are included.

Household expenditure consists of consumption expenditure and other expenditure. The International Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose is applied for the expenditures. According to this classification, consumption expenditure is divided into the following functional groups:

1. Food, beverages (including spirits) and tobacco
2. Clothing and foot-wear
3. Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels
4. Furnishings, household equipment and routine maintenance of the house
5. Health
6. Transport
7. Leisure, entertainment and culture
8. Education
9. Hotels, cafes, restaurants
10. Miscellaneous goods and services

Other (non-consumption) expenditures include alimonies paid, presents in the form of money and gifts donated in-kind, voluntary payments and donations and voluntary payments into non-governmental pension and health insurance funds.

Milnaovic (1998) had access to the 4th quarter of the 1995 survey. The Poverty during the Transition website had access to unit record data for 1998 and uses apparently the full expenditure data (including non-consumption expenditures). Deininger & Squire (2004) uses apparently also the full expenditure data. It is not clear why the income Gini reported by Deininger & Squire (2004) suddenly raises so much in 1998.

Data from Transmonee

Earnings: The survey is The Survey of Occupations and Distribution of Employees by Average Gross Wages. It covers the public sector but not social organizations. The reference month is November until 1999 and thereafter October.

Incomes: The Household Budget Survey is used (see above for more information). The survey covered 7520 households in 1996, 7881 in 1997, 6689 in 1998, 3929 in 1999 and 3847 in 2000.