

Version Note

June 30, 2022

The World Income Inequality Database (WIID) collects and stores information on income inequality for developed, developing, and transition countries.

Data on economic inequality are obtained from historical repositories from the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and UNICEF, from the main available current databases, such as the Luxembourg Income Study (LIS), Socio-Economic Database for Latin America and the Caribbean (SEDLAC), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Eurostat, OECD, and Poverty and Inequality Platform (World Bank), as well as from national statistical offices and from a large range of independent research papers.

This version retains the concepts of the previous version, released on 31 May, 2021. New data has been added for several countries, and more precise metadata information has been included. A few observations from the previous version have been deleted, mostly duplicate records with similar information available in the other observations. Some cases, where the reported values of the Gini coefficient were inconsistent with historical trends, have been verified with the source and corrected accordingly.

Distributional values that are directly computed from microdata from LIS by the WIID team, are now obtained after assigning a value arbitrarily close to zero (1 per cent of the mean) to income or consumption values that are zero or negative in the microdata. This is done so all inequality measures can be estimated consistently with the minimum loss of information. This has produced a small difference in some indices with LIS values reported in the previous version.

Users are kindly referred to the WIID [User Guide](#) for the complete description of the variables and the format of the database.

Coverage

The WIID comprises 22,758 observations. The following table summarizes the total numbers of observations for different time periods:

Time span	Number of observations
Total observations	22,758
Before 1960	311
1960–69	703
1970–79	915
1980–89	1,625
1990–99	3,732
2000–09	6,654
2010–19	8,401
2020–	417

The database has 3,820 unique country-year observations for a total of 201 countries/economies (including historical entities), providing an almost worldwide coverage.¹ In several cases, the database reports more than one observation for the same country and year. This occurs when these observations add relevant information. For example, they provide consistency with other time series for the same country, or they refer to different resource concepts, area coverage, or equivalence scales, among others.

¹ Exceptions being Democratic People's Republic of Korea, some microstates (e.g., Monaco, Vatican City State), and certain specific areas (e.g., Western Sahara, French Guiana).