

The biggest story on inequality this month was that [it has fallen slightly since 2008](#), according to new research from the IFS. Our brief response to the report can be found [here](#), but let us be honest – there is little to cheer. Firstly, the report finds that narrowing inequality occurred between 2008-12, with little change since. Secondly, planned changes to taxes and social security are still predicted to see inequality rise to record levels over the coming years. Clearly, there is much work still to be done.

However, this month did see an important step forward for greater equality, and a fantastic result for unions, with UNISON winning its Supreme Court battle [against employment tribunal fees](#). These fees were a hopelessly regressive policy that denied access to justice for poorer workers, and this win is testament to the enduring power and significance of unions in the fight for equality.

Further good news came in the announcement by Sir David Metcalfe, the new labour market tsar, that [bosses who fail to pay the minimum wage](#) will face more severe punishments, including jail time. This is absolutely right. Minimum wage theft is a scourge that must be addressed through better enforcement. As ever, action must follow tough rhetoric, but this is a positive change in attitude it seems.

Elsewhere the BBC came in for some sustained criticism after the publication of its “star” pay. The gulf in pay between certain male and female employees, and between top earners and those at the bottom, left Auntie with some tough questions to answer. In response, our Executive Director, Dr. Wanda Wyporska, appeared on LBC and Talk Radio to make the case for greater pay equality.

We also continued the fight for a more equal society online and in print. Wanda wrote for [Left Foot Forward](#), discussing new research on the appalling food poverty faced by many children, comparing this to the almost unimaginable wealth of those at the top. Wanda wrote for the same site on [the new minimum income standard](#) and growing voter unrest on inequality, and our Pay Tracker work was once again cited in a [Guardian editorial](#) on the richest 1 per cent.

Catch up on July’s blogs:

- [Tackling poverty in Cambridge - The most unequal city in the UK](#)
- [A good week for unions. A good week for equality](#)
- [Why housing is an issue of equality](#)
- [An optimistic day: Our local groups and activists day 2017](#)
- [The bare minimum](#)

LATEST LOCAL GROUP NEWS

The main event for the month was our [Activists & Local Groups' Day held on 1st July](#) which was a great success in sharing skills and knowledge, and building relationships. In addition, we also have a special "In Focus" feature on the Swindon Equality Group and their ongoing work to influence their local business community. [Read on to find out more...](#)

KEY DEVELOPMENTS AND REPORTS

[Research from the Resolution Foundation](#) found that while the top 1% of households in UK have fully recovered from the financial crisis, the rest of the British population is still struggling

[An LSE review](#) of 61 childhood studies confirmed that household income plays a crucial role in determining a child's prospects.

Half of children needing summer food bank support are in primary school, according to worrying [new research](#) from the Trussell Trust.

Low-income families are becoming less able to achieve a decent living standard' according to [worrying research from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#).

The UK is one of the top two countries acting as [conduits to tax havens](#), according to research carried out by the University of Amsterdam.

INEQUALITY IN THE NEWS

[A rise in drug deaths](#) in Scotland may have been caused by the the huge rise in inequality seen during the 1980s, according to new research by NHS Health Scotland and Glasgow University.

["How Inequality Erodes the Foundation of Modern Societies"](#) according to former US Secretary of Labor Robert Reich.

[BBC pay disparities are emblematic of inequality in Big Business Britain](#), says Josie Cox of the Independent.

The Economist discussed climate change and inequality – ["the rich pollute, the poor suffer"](#)

BEST INEQUALITY READS

["Let's be honest - if you're middle class, you're less likely to become homeless"](#) a great article by Professor Suzanne Fitzpatrick on the realities of homelessness, and its links to poverty.

In response to the Taylor Review on gig economy workers, [Jonan Boto](#) suggests gig workers need more choice not more flexibility. (£)

The excellent Chris Dillow on why slightly falling inequality [offers little comfort](#). ["Why Tax Cuts for the Rich Solve Nothing"](#) says Professor Joseph Stiglitz.

An [interesting article](#) on the rich people working to dismantle inequality in the US. [How Income Inequality Makes Economic Downturns Worse](#)

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