

Changes in the International Distribution of Income

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to assess the extent of income inequality among nations and the development of international inequality over the last three decades. After a brief introductory discussion of changes in the economic policies of industrialized countries towards poor countries and corresponding changes in the attitudes of economists, the author goes on to give an impression of the actual state of the international income distribution and mention some general problems of such comparisons. In the third section he computes an inequality index to describe the development of the international income distribution over time and presents some decompositions. The fourth section investigates the robustness of the results, and the fifth section presents an extension to world-wide inequality and reflects briefly on the significance of the results.

RESUMEN

Este texto evalúa la magnitud de la desigualdad en el ingreso entre las naciones y el desarrollo de la desigualdad internacional en las últimas tres décadas. Luego de una breve discusión introductoria de los cambios en las políticas de los países industrializados hacia los países pobres y de los correspondientes cambios en las actitudes de los economistas, el autor pasa a dar una impresión del estado actual de la distribución internacional del ingreso y a mencionar algunos de los problemas generales de tales comparaciones. En la tercera sección el autor calcula un índice de desigualdad para describir el desarrollo a través del tiempo de la distribución internacional del ingreso y presenta algunas descomposiciones. La cuarta sección investiga la robustez de los resultados. La quinta sección los extiende en términos de desigualdad mundial y reflexiona brevemente sobre su significación.

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