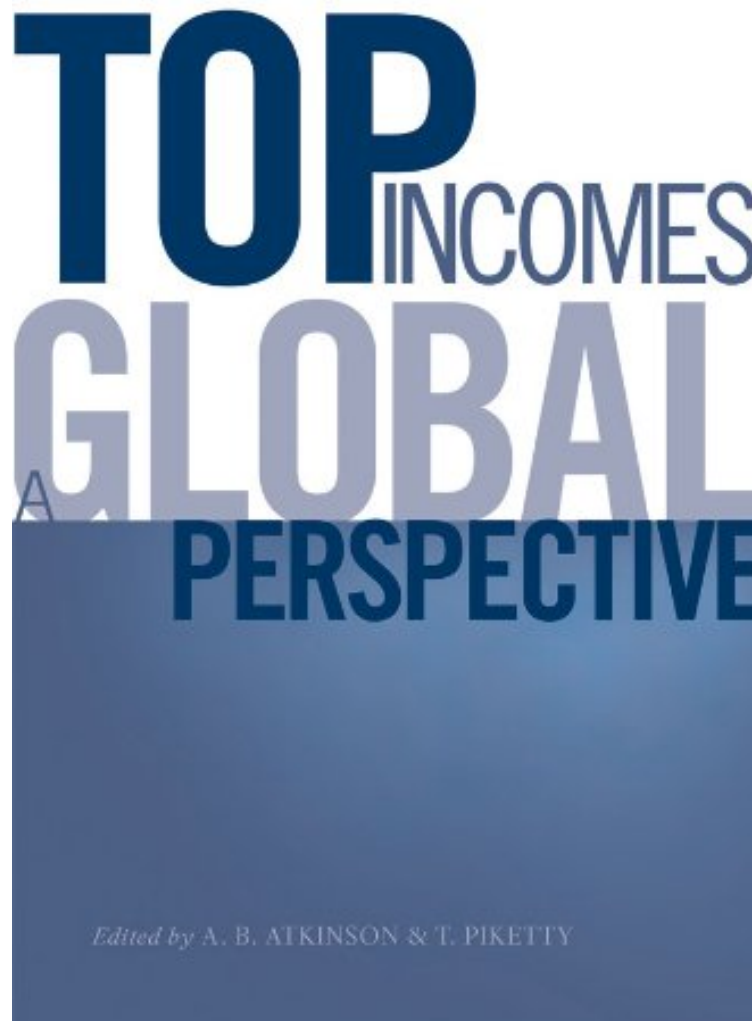


## Top Incomes: A Global Perspective

*A. B. Atkinson, Thomas Piketty*

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**A. B. Atkinson, Thomas Piketty : Top Incomes: A Global Perspective** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Top Incomes: A Global Perspective:

A rapidly growing area of economic research investigates the top of the income distribution using data from income tax records. This volume brings together studies of top incomes for twelve countries from around the world, including China, India, Japan, Argentina and Indonesia. Together with the first volume, published in 2007, the studies cover

twenty two countries. They have a long time span, the earliest data relating to 1875 (for Norway), allowing recent developments to be placed in historical perspective. The volume describes in detail the source data and the methods employed. It will be an invaluable reference source for researchers in the field. Individual country chapters deal with the specific nature of the data for each of the countries, and describe the long-term evolution of top income shares. In the countries as a whole, dramatic changes have taken place at the top of the income distribution. Over the first part of the century, top income shares fell markedly. This largely took the form of a reduction in capital incomes. The different authors examine the impact of the First and Second World Wars, contrasting countries that were and were not engaged. They consider the impact of depressions and banking crises, and pay particular attention to the impact of progressive taxation. In the last 30 years, the shares of top incomes have increased markedly in the US and other Anglo-Saxon countries, reflecting the increased dispersion of earnings. The volume includes statistics on the much-discussed top pay and bonuses, providing a global perspective that discusses important differences between countries such as the lesser increase in Continental Europe. This book, together with volume 1, documents this interesting development and explores the underlying causes. The findings are brought together in a final summary chapter by Atkinson, Piketty and Saez.

About the Author Sir Tony Atkinson is Professor of Economics at the University of Oxford and Fellow of Nuffield College, of which he was Warden from 1994 to 2005. He is a Fellow of the British Academy, and has been President of the Royal Economic Society, of the Econometric Society, of the European Economic Association, and of the International Economic Association. He was responsible for the Atkinson of Measurement of Government Output. He has been a member of the Conseil d'Analyse Economique, advising the French Prime Minister. He was knighted in 2001 for services to economics, and is a Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur. He is author of *Unequal Shares*, *The Economics of Inequality*, *Lectures on Public Economics* (with J.E. Stiglitz), *Poverty and Social Security*, *Public Economics in Action*, *The Economic Consequences of Rolling Back the Welfare State*, *Social Indicators and The EU and Social Inclusion* (both with B Cantillon, E Marlier and B Nolan), and *The Changing Distribution of Earnings in OECD Countries*. Thomas Piketty is a New York Times best-selling author of *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* (Harvard University Press), and a Professor of Economics at the Paris School of Economics, of which he was the founder and first director from 2005 to 2007. He obtained his PhD in economics from the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS, Paris) and the London School of Economics in 1993. He then taught at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)'s Economics Department, before returning to France in 1996. He is the author of numerous articles published in journals such as the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, the *Journal of Political Economy*, the *American Economic Review*, and the *Journal of Economic Studies*, and of several books. He received Le Monde's Best Young Economist Award in 2002. He is also the co-editor of the *Journal of Public Economics* and co-director of CEPR's Public Policy Programme.