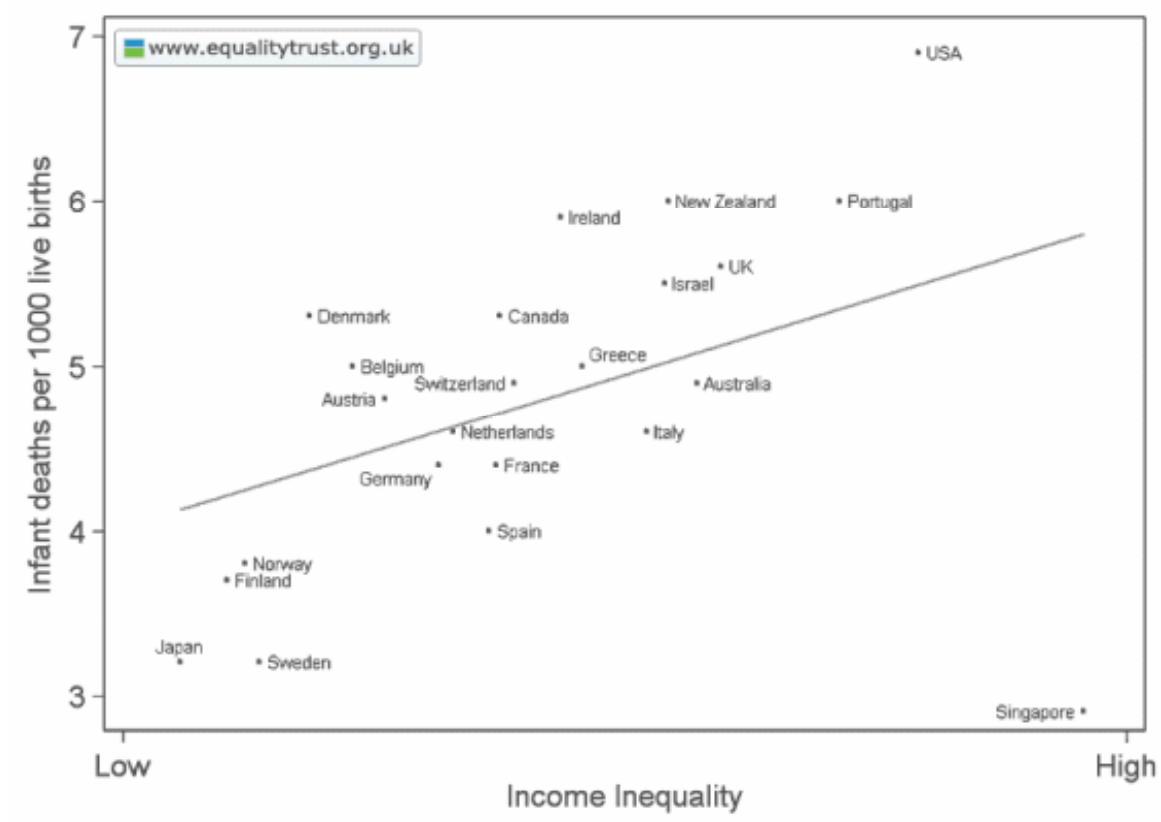


PHYSICAL HEALTH

Life expectancy, infant mortality, low birth weight and self-rated health have repeatedly been shown to be worse in more unequal societies.

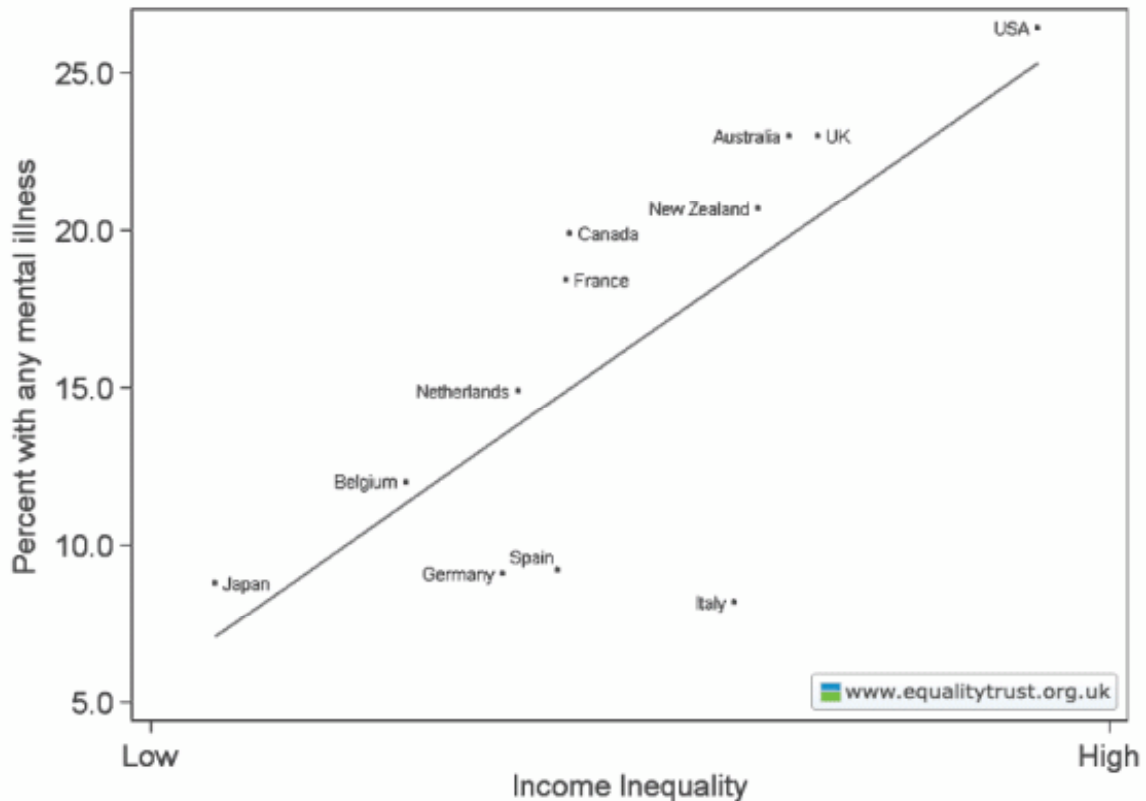


* The selection of graphs, and comments accompanying the graphs, is collected by the Tax Justice Network. For full and original data and resources, see <http://www.equalitytrust.org.uk/>



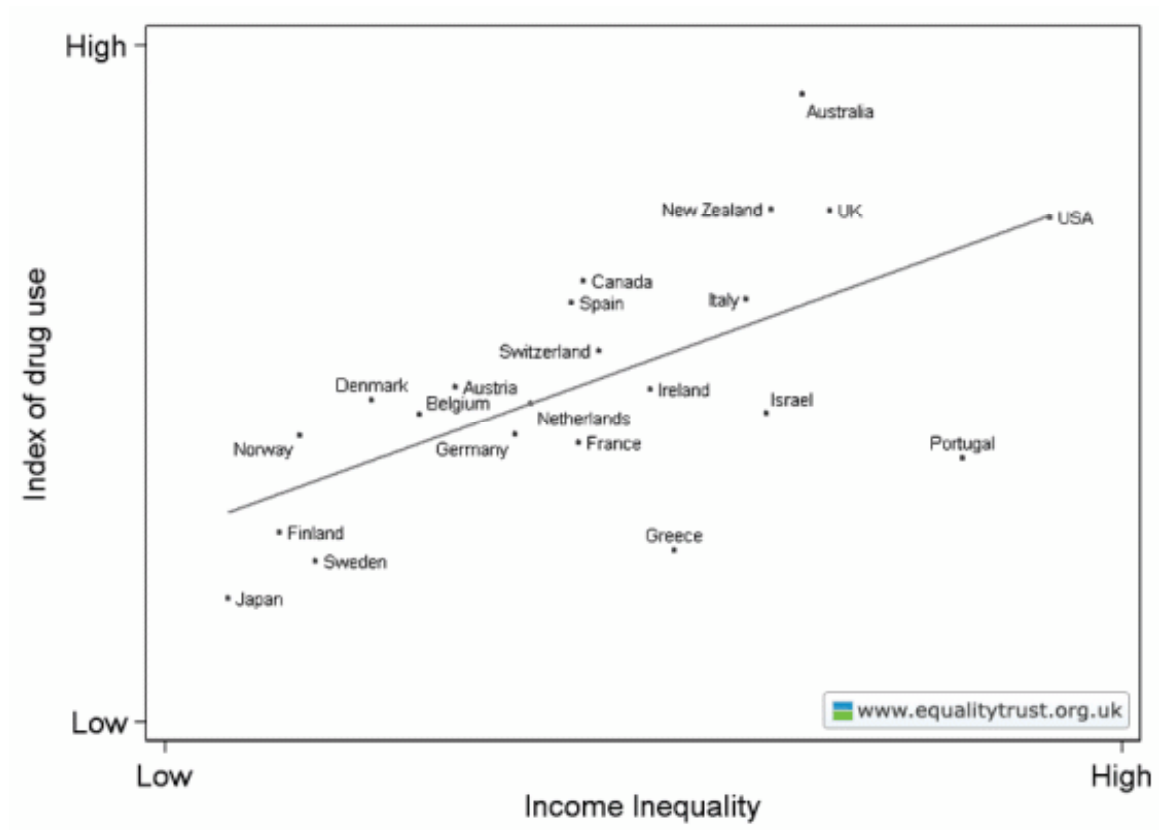
MENTAL HEALTH

Until recently it was hard to compare levels of mental illness between different countries because nobody had collected strictly comparable data, but recently the World Health Organisation has established world mental health surveys that are starting to provide data. They show that different societies have very different levels of mental illness. In some countries only 5 or 10% of the adult population has suffered from any mental illness in the past year, but in the USA more than 25% have.



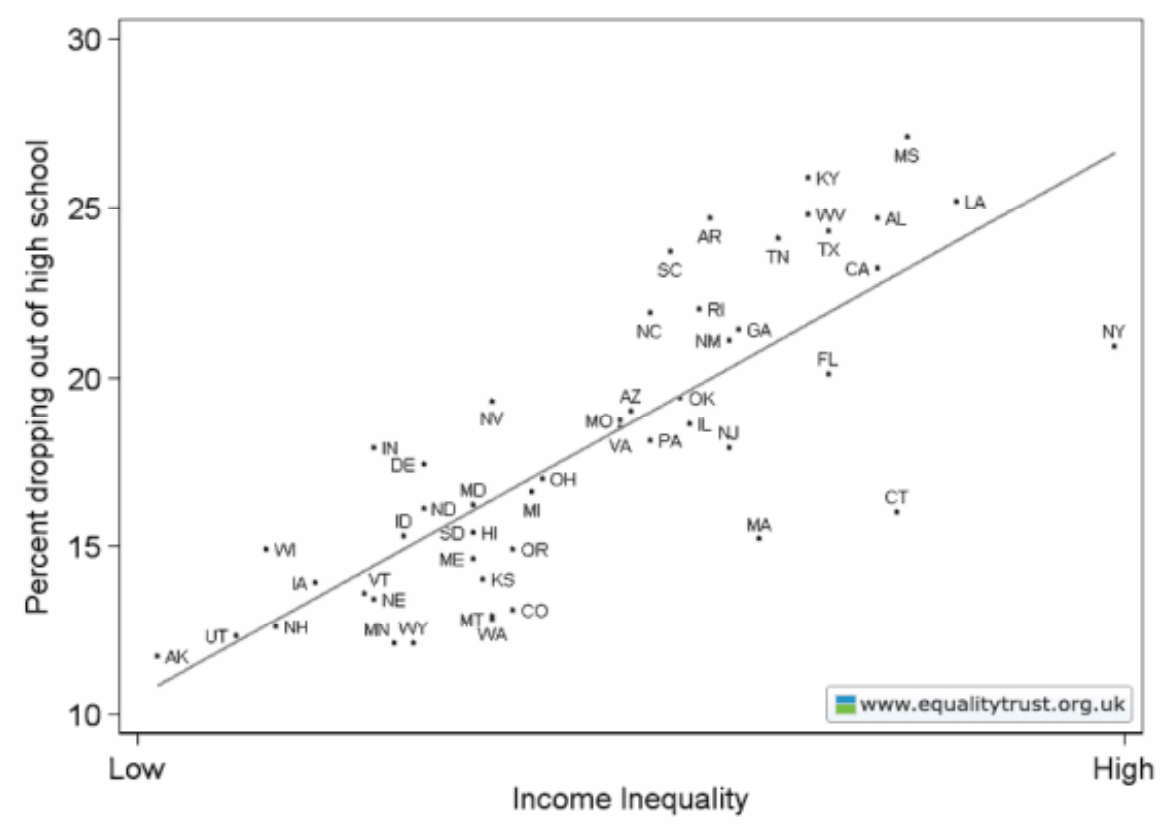
DRUG ABUSE

The World Drug Report 2007, compiled by the United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime, contains the results of sample surveys on the prevalence of the use of opiates, cocaine, cannabis, ecstasy and amphetamines. The research combined these in one index, giving them equal weights, and found a strong tendency for drug abuse to be more common in more unequal countries.



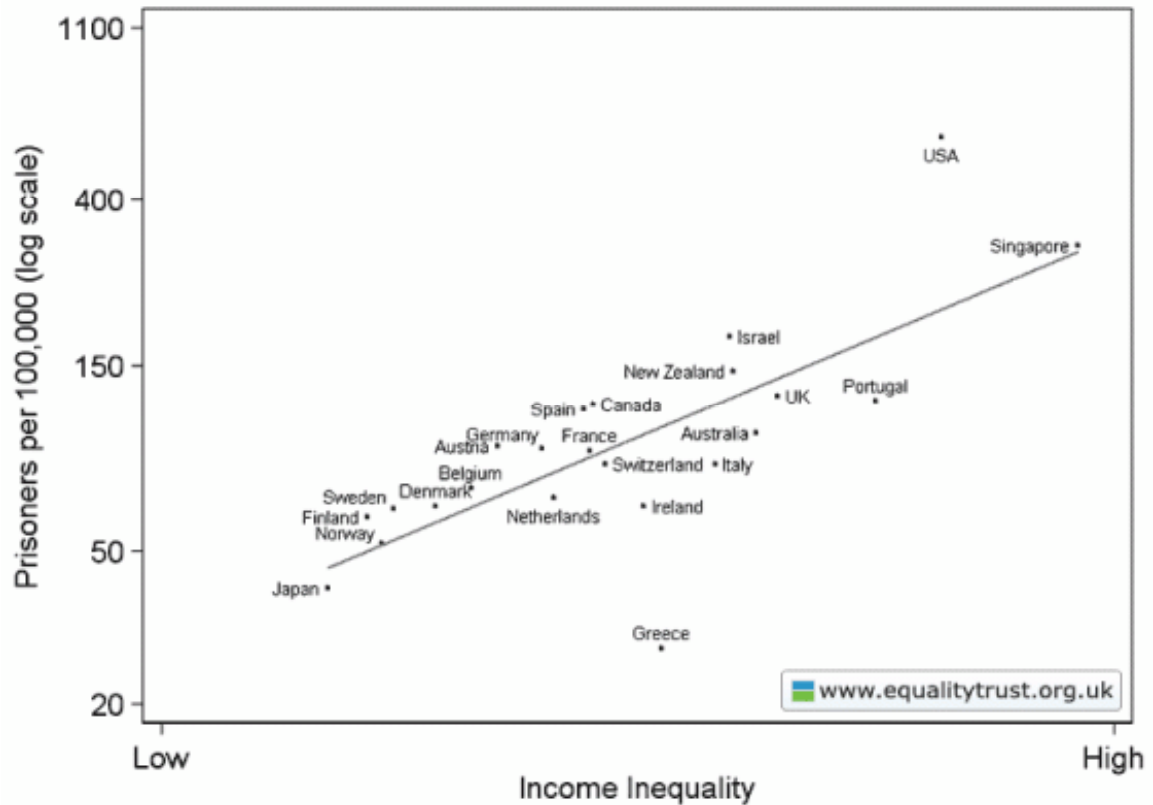
EDUCATION

The research has shown that scores in maths and reading are related to inequality. In addition, the percentage of kids dropping out of high school in each of the 50 states of the USA is, as the graph below shows, also linked to inequality.



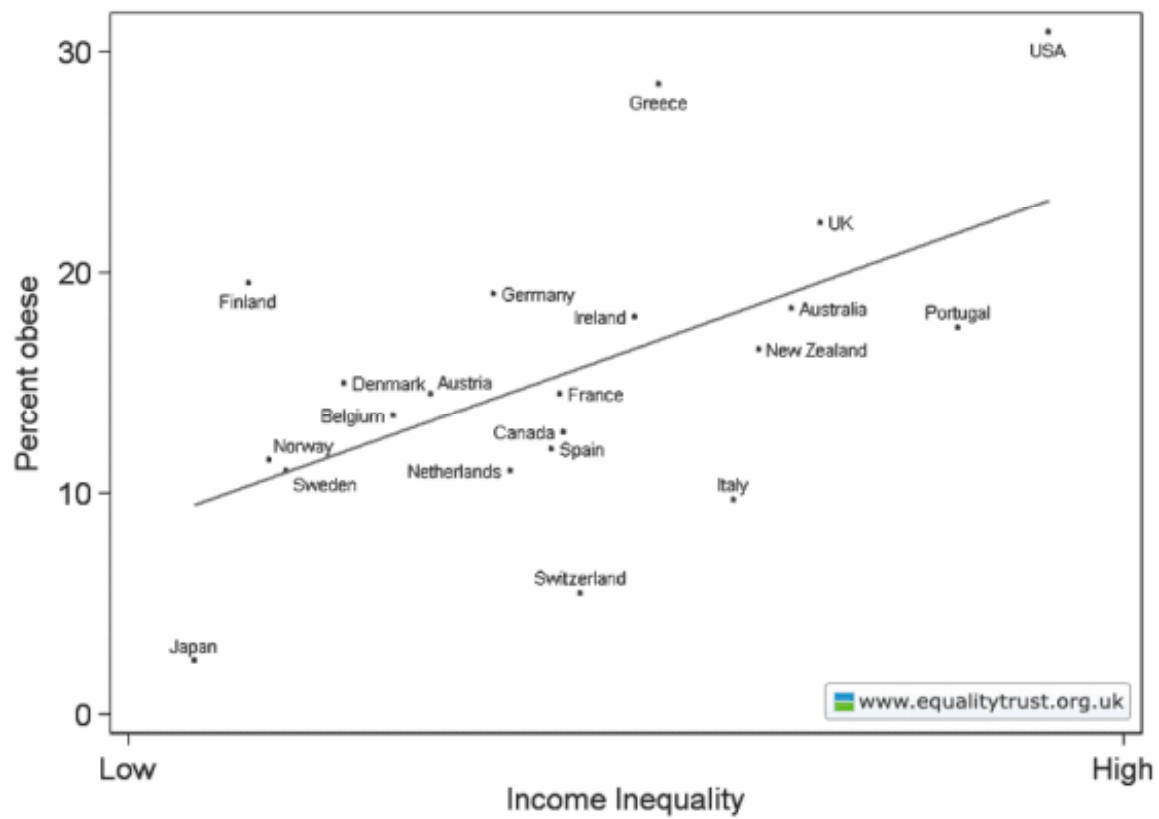
IMPRISONMENT

In a study published in the journal *Social Science and Medicine*, the research found strong links between imprisonment and income inequality - both internationally and among the 50 US states. It also found that the more equal US states, with lower homicide rates, are less likely to retain the death penalty.



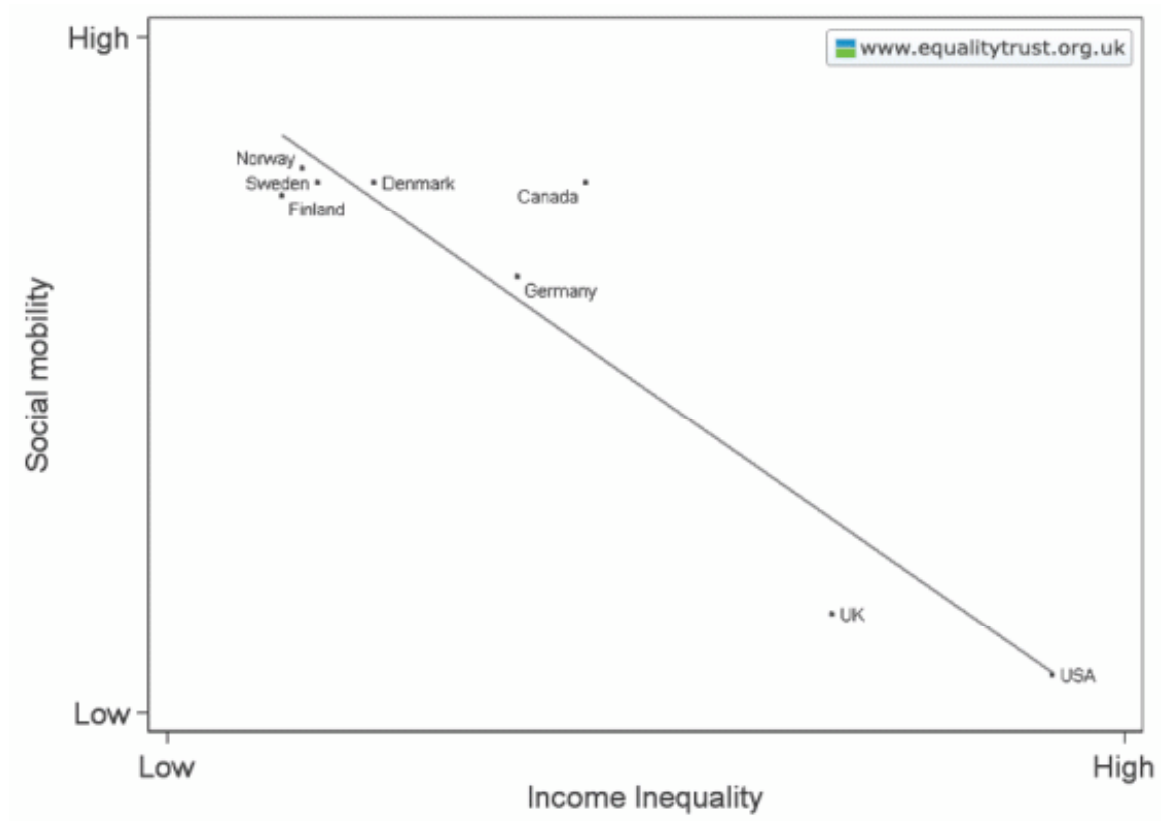
OBEISITY

The research found that obesity among men and women (see graph), as well as calorie intake and deaths from diabetes, are related to income inequality in rich countries. In addition, obesity in adults is also related to inequality in the 50 US states; and the percentage of children who are overweight is related to inequality both internationally and in the USA.



SOCIAL MOBILITY

Can children of poor parents become rich? Researchers at the London School of Economics have used this method to compare social mobility in eight countries. Using their data, the researchers have shown that, at least among these few countries, the more equal countries have higher social mobility (see graph). It looks as if the American Dream is far more likely to remain a dream for Americans than it is for people living in Scandinavian countries.



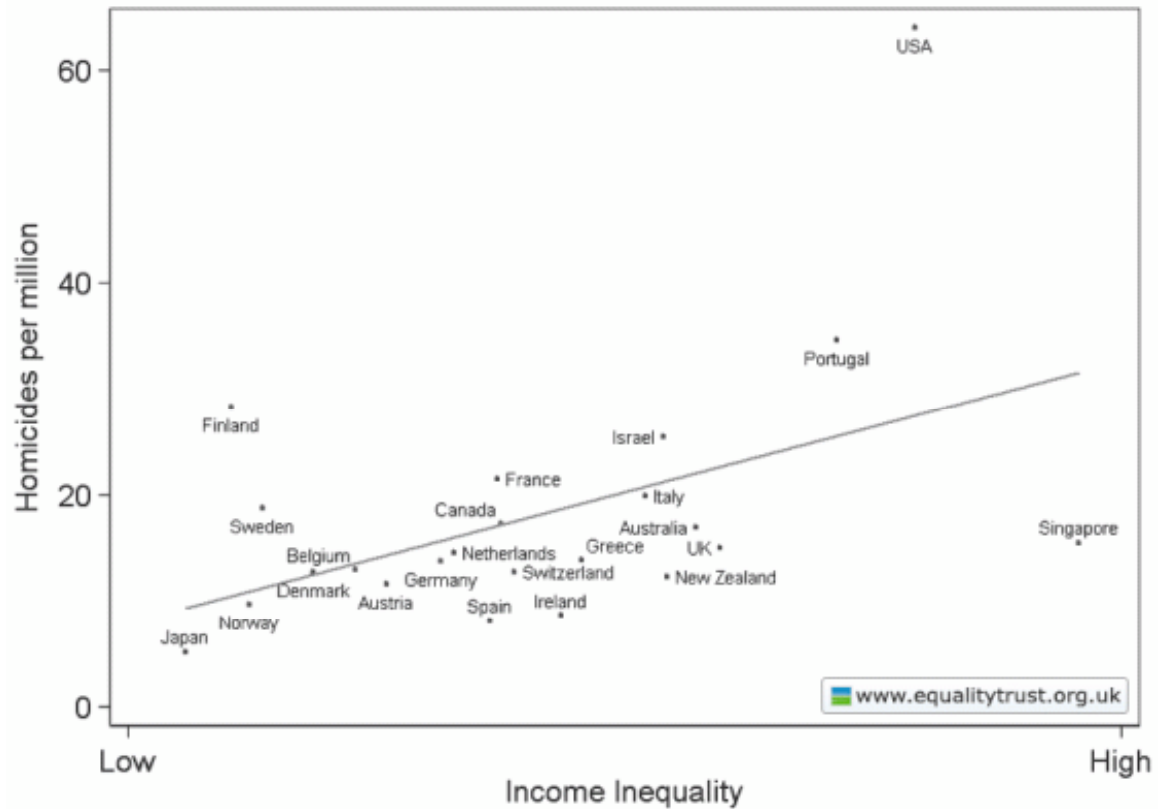
TRUST AND COMMUNITY LIFE

The quality of social relations is worse in less equal societies. Evidence on inequality in relation to trust, community life and violence (see separate section on violence) all tell the same story. Inequality divides people by increasing the social distances between us and widening differences in living standards and lifestyles. By increasing residential segregation of rich and poor, it also increases physical distances.



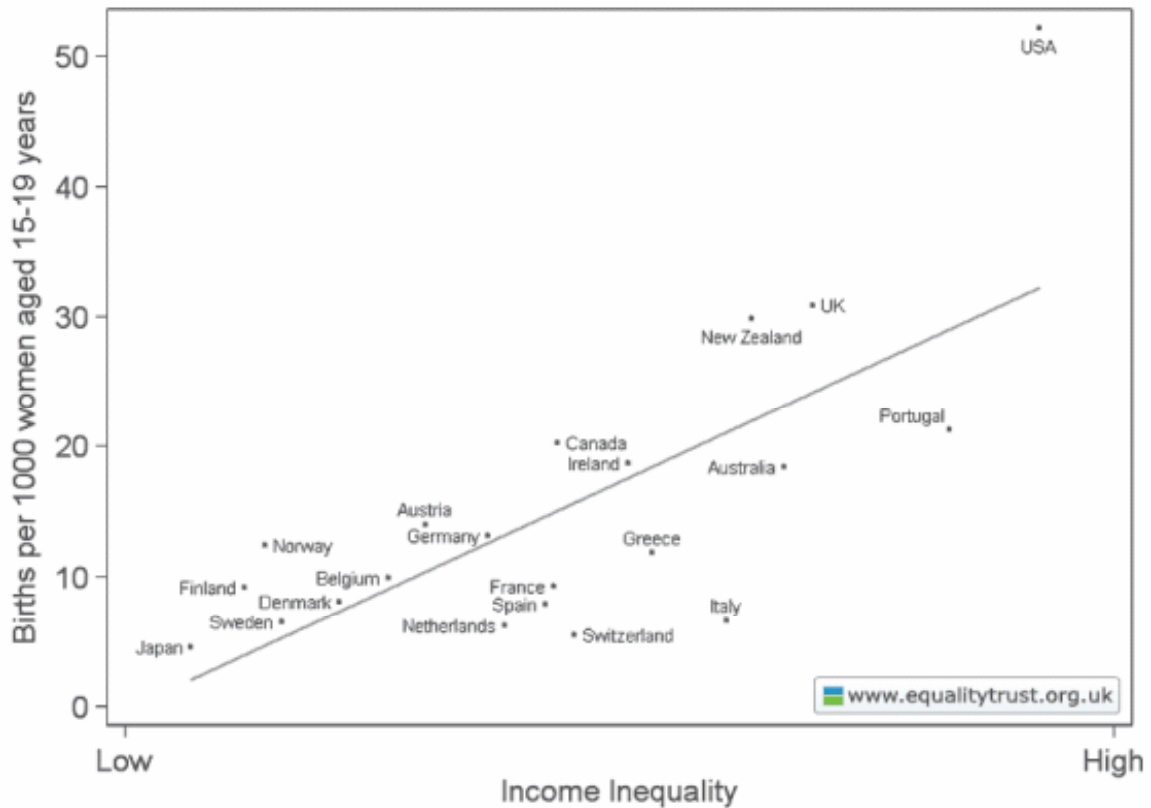
VIOLENCE

The link between inequality and homicide rates has been shown in as many as 40 studies, and the differences are large: there are five-fold differences in murder rates between different countries related to inequality. The most important reason why violence is more common in more unequal societies is that it is often triggered by people feeling looked down, disrespected and loss of face.



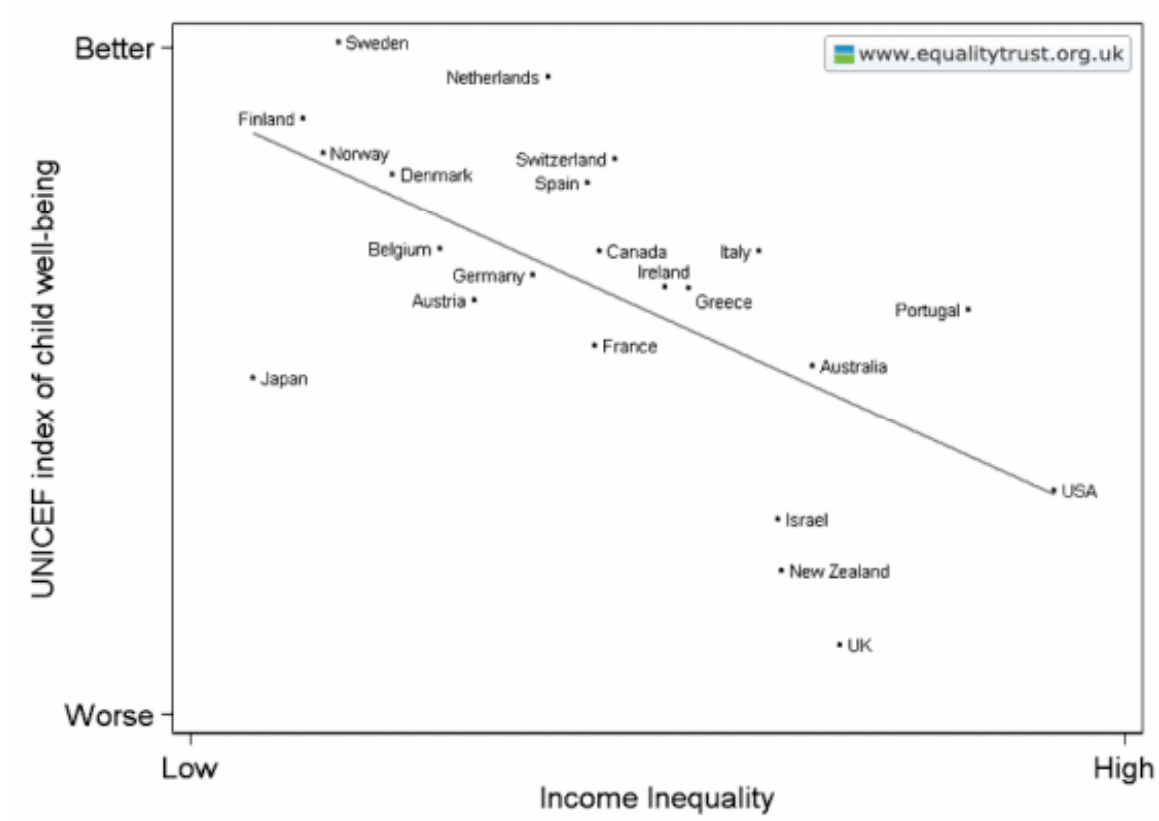
TEENAGE BIRTHS

The studies have shown that teenage births are related to income inequality internationally in a study published in the American Journal of Public Health. Other researchers have shown the same association in the United States. In the USA the teenage birth rate is 52.1 per 1000 women aged 15-19, more than ten times higher than Japan, which has a rate of 4.6.



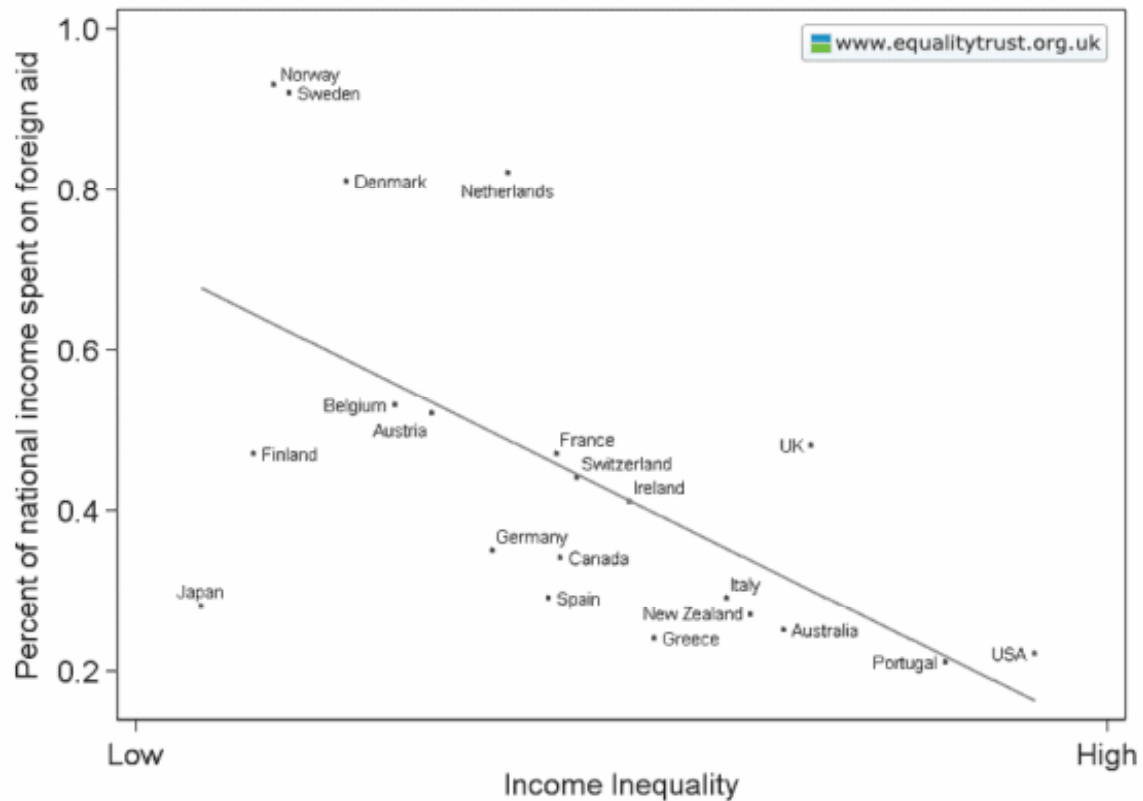
CHILD WELL BEING

The research showed that the Unicef index of child well-being was not related to average living standards in different countries. There were however strong relationships between child well-being and both income inequality and the proportion of children living on less than half the average income in each country. The research has found the same patterns when looking at different aspects of child well-being in different states of the USA. Improvements in child wellbeing in rich societies will depend more on reductions in inequality than on further economic growth.



RICH AND POOR COUNTRIES

Greater equality within the rich countries seems to lead them to adopt policies which are more helpful to poorer countries. It looks as if the proposals supported by more equal countries are less dominated by attempts to serve their own economic interests at the expense of other countries. What people learn about human relations and motivation in their own society establishes their basic assumptions about human nature which they then apply not only within their society but to the world at large.



EQUALITY AND GLOBAL WARMING

To gain popular participation in the war effort during the second world war, the British government had to ensure that people felt that the burden of war was fairly shared. That was why everyone had the same food and clothing rations, why taxes were made much more steeply progressive, and why luxuries were taxed and necessities subsidised. Without a sense of shared participation in a common cause, it will not be possible to prevent runaway global warming.

