

INRICH 15th Annual Workshop
May 2024



Held Back by Inequality:

How economic inequality shapes children's health, wellbeing and life chances and what we should be doing about it

Kate Pickett, OBE FRSA FFPH FAcSS

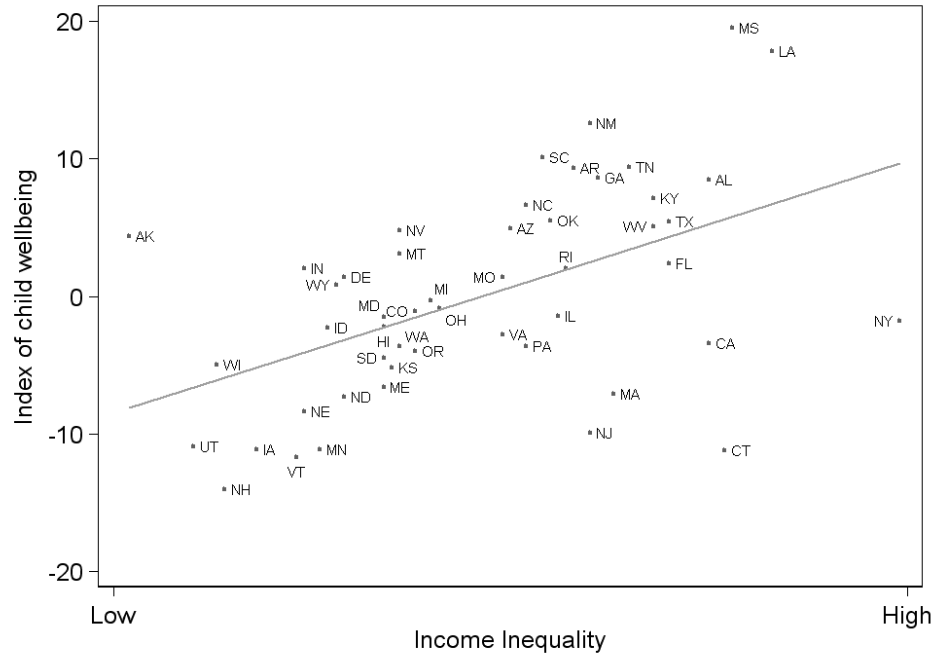
The UNICEF Index of Child Well- being 2007

Dimensions of child well-being		Dimension 1	Dimension 2	Dimension 3	Dimension 4	Dimension 5	Dimension 6
Average ranking position (for all 6 dimensions)	Material well-being	Health and safety	Educational well-being	Family and peer relationships	Behaviours and risks	Subjective well-being	
Netherlands	4.2	10	2	6	3	3	1
Sweden	5.0	1	1	5	15	1	7
Denmark	7.2	4	4	8	9	6	12
Finland	7.5	3	3	4	17	7	11
Spain	8.0	12	6	15	8	5	2
Switzerland	8.3	5	9	14	4	12	6
Norway	8.7	2	8	11	10	13	8
Italy	10.0	14	5	20	1	10	10
Ireland	10.2	19	19	7	7	4	5
Belgium	10.7	7	16	1	5	19	16
Germany	11.2	13	11	10	13	11	9
Canada	11.8	6	13	2	18	17	15
Greece	11.8	15	18	16	11	8	3
Poland	12.3	21	15	3	14	2	19
Czech Republic	12.5	11	10	9	19	9	17
France	13.0	9	7	18	12	14	18
Portugal	13.7	16	14	21	2	15	14
Austria	13.8	8	20	19	16	16	4
Hungary	14.5	20	17	13	6	18	13
United States	18.0	17	21	12	20	20	-
United Kingdom	18.2	18	12	17	21	21	20

Child Well-being is Better in More Equal Rich Countries

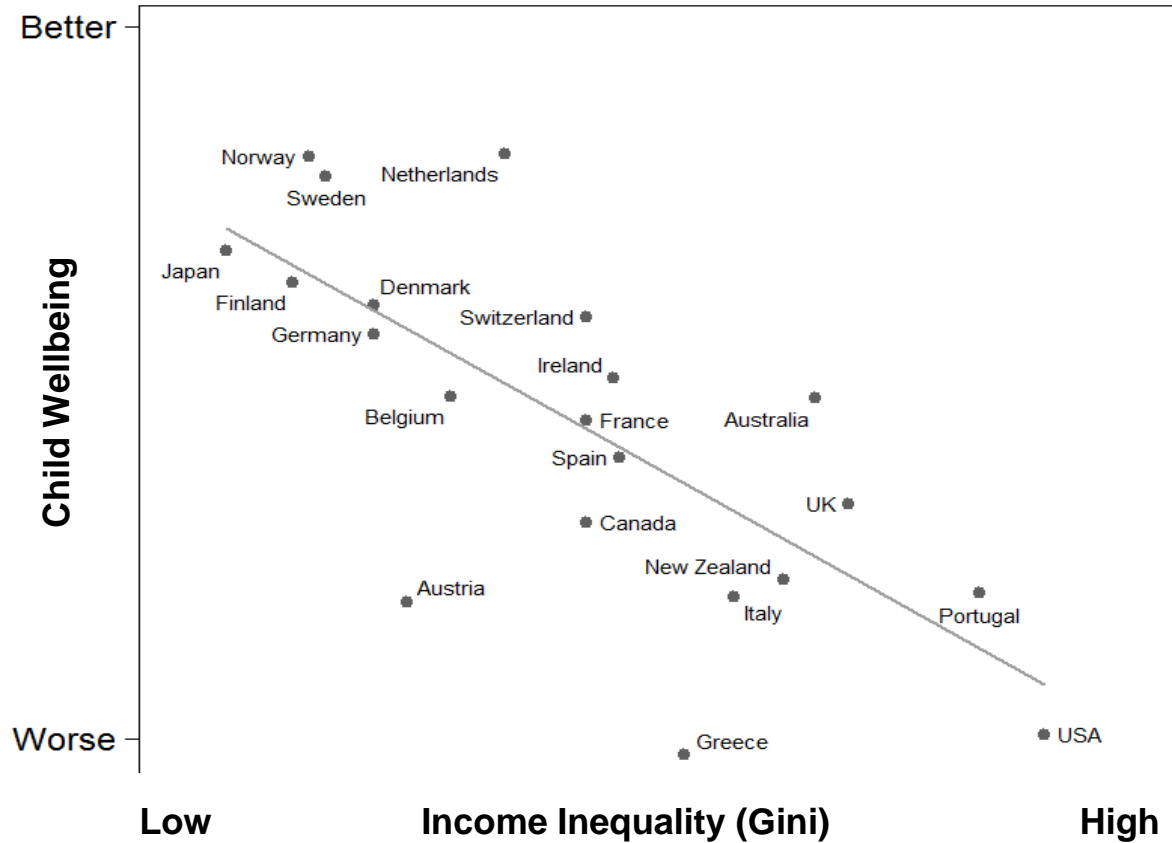


Child wellbeing and income inequality in US States, 2009

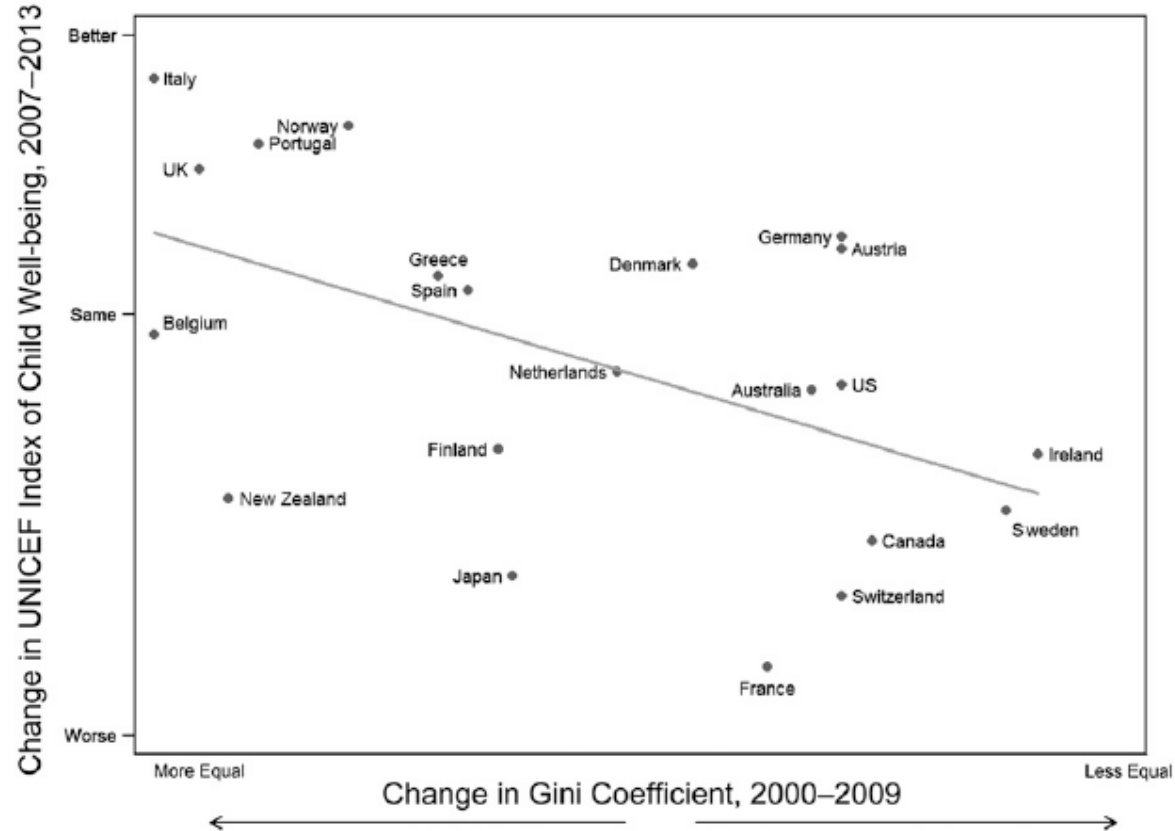


Correlations and p-values	Income inequality	Average income
Foundation for Child Development 25-item index	0.43 (0.002)	-0.61 (<0.001)
Kids Count 10-item index (shown in graph)	0.51 (<0.001)	-0.53 (<0.001)

Inequality and Child Wellbeing (UNICEF Report Card 2013)

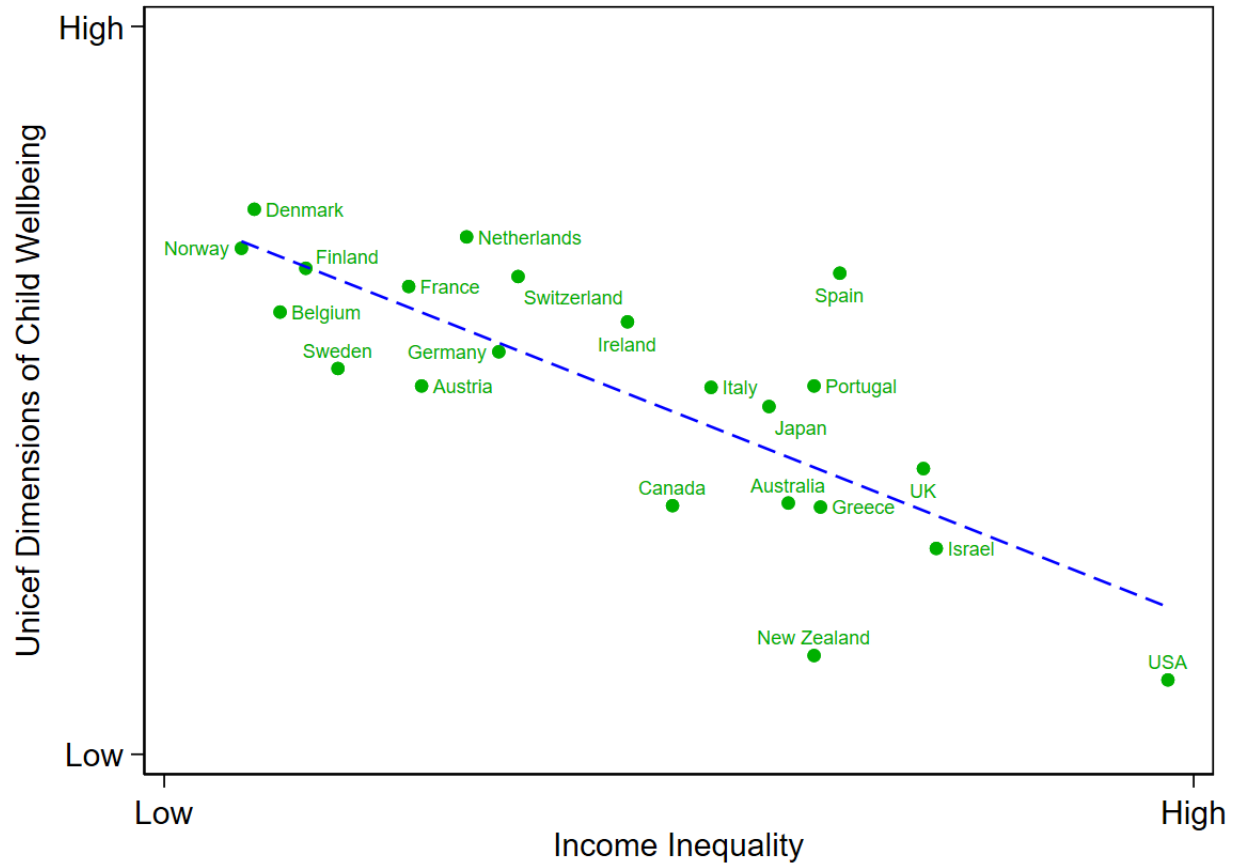


Changes in inequality and child wellbeing (UNICEF Index)



UNICEF Innocenti Report Card 13: Fairness for Children, 2016





How children are affected



**Infant
mortality**

**Child
overweight**

HEALTH

More than 40% of American children are overweight; in Belgium and Sweden it is fewer than a quarter

The UK has seen a 'sustained and unprecedented rise' in infant mortality in recent years

**Under-
achievement**

**Educational
inequality**

EDUCATION

In Israel, more than half of 15 year olds lack basic reading and maths skills; in Finland it is around 1 in 5

Educational inequality is particularly marked for maths proficiency

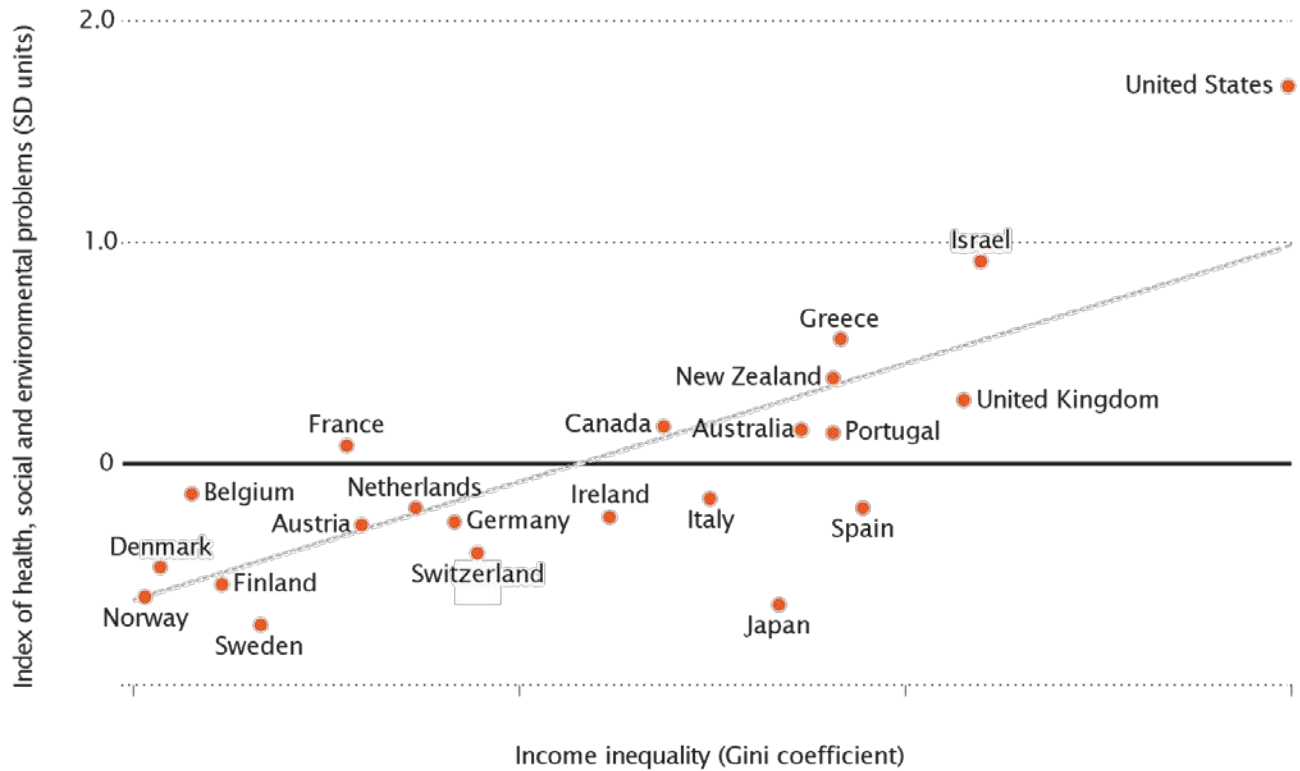
**Parity of
spending**

**Social
mobility**

LIFE CHANCES

Some countries (e.g., Norway, France, New Zealand) spend as much on early years as they should; Israel and USA spend far less

Social mobility is highest in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland



A decade and a half of suffering



In the UK alone:

Poverty is rising

- 300,000 fell into absolute poverty in a single year
- Inaction on child poverty is costing £16 billion/year
- Mental health cost of the pandemic will be £13.2 billion in lost wages

Services have been decimated

300,000 are in poverty because of the two child benefit limit

900,000 poor children miss out on free school meals

1300 Sure Start centres closed

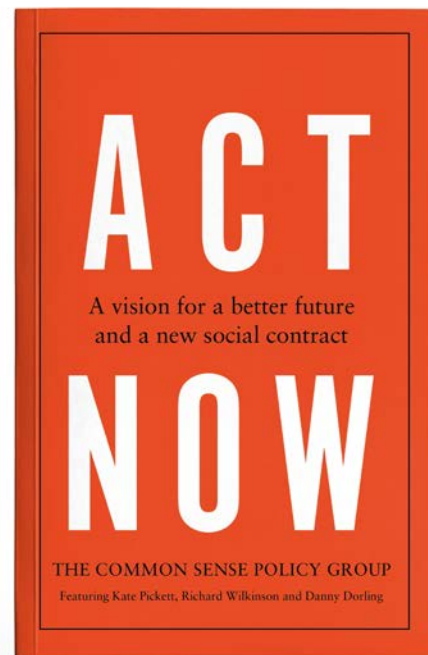
What to do?

We need:

A Basic Income policy

Equality Impact Assessments

Future Generations acts



Politics is nothing else...



...but medicine on a large scale



UNIVERSITY
of York

wilkinsonpickett.com

@ProfKEPickett

**<https://www.healthequitynorth.co.uk/child-of-the-north/>
<https://hosting2.northumbria.ac.uk/commonsensepolicygroup/>**