



# COMBATING INEQUALITY: RETHINKING POLICIES TO REDUCE INEQUALITY IN ADVANCED ECONOMIES

Peterson Institute for International Economics, Bergsten Conference Center

Thursday, October 17: 8:30am–6:15pm

Friday, October 18: 8:00am–5:15pm

## AGENDA

### Thursday, October 17

- 8:30am **Registration and continental breakfast**
- 9 – 9:15am **Welcome and Introduction**  
Olivier Blanchard
- 9:15 – 10:15am **Session 1: The landscape**  
Survey paper taking stock of the different dimensions and different indices of inequality (Gini, poverty rates, the 1%, intergenerational, mortality, etc.), and evidence.  
Chair Adam Posen, PIIE  
Author: Lucas Chancel, Paris School of Economics  
Discussant: Peter Diamond, MIT Department of Economics
- 10:30 – 11:30am **Session 2: Ethical and philosophical dimensions**  
Why should we care about inequality, and what kind(s) of inequality should economists address?  
Chair Dani Rodrik, Harvard University  
Panelists: Danielle Allen, Harvard University  
Philippe Van Parijs, University of Louvain  
Tim Scanlon, Harvard University
- 11:45 – 1:00pm **Session 3: Political dimensions**  
What are the political determinants of inequality and political obstacles to policies advancing equality? What is the relation between inequality and populism?  
Chair Dani Rodrik, Harvard University  
Panelists: Ben Ansell, University of Oxford  
Sheri Berman, Columbia University  
Nolan McCarty, Princeton University

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1:00 – 2:00pm	<b>Buffet lunch</b>
2:00 – 3:15pm	<p><b>Session 4: The distribution of human capital</b> Pre-natal care, early education, education, professional training. How much can we realistically hope for?</p> <p>Chair Eduardo Porter, <i>New York Times</i> Panelists: David Deming, Harvard Kennedy School Lawrence Katz, Harvard University Tharman Shanmugaratnam, Monetary Authority of Singapore</p>
3:30 – 4:45pm	<p><b>Session 5: Policies towards trade, outsourcing, and foreign investment</b> Can trade adjustment policies really work? Should we restrict trade to limit distribution effects?</p> <p>Chair Min Zhu, Tsinghua University Panelists: David Autor, MIT Department of Economics Christian Dustmann, University College London Caroline Freund, World Bank Group</p>
5:00 – 6:15pm	<p><b>Session 6: The (re)distribution of financial capital</b> Are inheritance taxes needed, and how much can they achieve? Is it feasible/desirable to “democratize” ownership of technological capital/intellectual property through sovereign funds or public equity?</p> <p>Chair Catherine Rampell, <i>Washington Post</i> Panelists: Greg Mankiw, Harvard University Lawrence Summers, Harvard University Emmanuel Saez, University of California, Berkeley</p>
6:15pm	<b>Reception</b>

## AGENDA

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### Friday, October 18

8:00am	<b>Registration and continental breakfast</b>
8:30 – 9:45am	<p><b>Session 1: Policies that affect the rate and direction of technological change</b> Is there any way to make technological process more labor/distribution friendly? How to deal with the new modes of production?</p> <p>Chair David Wessel, Brookings Panelists: Daron Acemoglu, MIT Department of Economics Philippe Aghion, Harvard University Laura Tyson, University of California, Berkeley</p>

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- 10:00 – 11:15am      **Session 2: Labor market policies, institutions and social norms**  
The role of labor market policies and institutions, of competition policies, of unions. The financial sector, rents, and the 0.1%.  
Chair            Olivier Blanchard, PIIE  
Panelists:      Marianne Bertrand, University of Chicago  
                     Sandra Black, Columbia University  
                     Richard Freeman, Harvard University
- 11:30 – 12:45pm      **Session 3: Labor market tools**  
What is the best combination of minimum wages and negative income taxes? What they can realistically achieve? Is there a role for job guarantees? State of the arts knowledge on the best design of employment protection?  
Chair            Heather Boushey, Center for Equitable Growth  
Panelists:      William Darity Jr., Duke University  
                     David Ellwood, Harvard University  
                     Heidi Shierholz, Economic Policy Institute
- 1:00 – 2:00pm        **Lunch**
- 2:00 – 3:15pm        **Session 4: Social safety net**  
What about the people who cannot get jobs? What if an increasing number of people cannot get jobs? Given existing institutions, unemployment insurance, social assistance, negative income tax, minimum wage, is there an additional role for the universal basic income? Is there a role for macro policies: Does overheating lead to long term effects on participation?  
Chair            Josh Bivens, EPI  
Panelists:      Jason Furman, Harvard University  
                     Hilary Hoynes, University of California, Berkeley  
                     Jesse Rothstein, University of California, Berkeley
- 3:15 – 4:30pm        **Session 5: Progressive taxation**  
Can it be achieved? Is it achieved? How essential is the corporate income tax and how high should it be? Contributory and non-contributory pensions.  
Chair            Gene Sperling, Former National Economic Council Director  
Panelists:      Wojciech Kopczuk, Columbia University  
                     Stefanie Stantcheva, Harvard University  
                     Gabriel Zucman, University of California, Berkeley
- 4:45 – 5:15pm        **Concluding remarks by Dani Rodrik, Chair Adam Posen, PIIE**