

The results from our queries have been useful in answering our three research questions. Our first question was “how are government policies related to inequality - specifically, taxes rate, level of debt, government spending?” According to our queries, countries with low tax revenues had greater inequality. However, it is worth the top 20 highest tax countries had higher inequality than the bottom tax revenue countries. We found the impact of government debt to have a negligible relationship with inequality. As with taxes, countries with low government spending had significantly higher inequality, although this was not reflected when comparing just the top 20 and bottom 20 countries on government spending. Overall, the results seem to indicate that redistributionist policies characterized by higher taxation and higher government spending have a positive effect on reducing inequality.

Our next question was “What is the relationship between economic output and wealth and income inequality - specifically, how is income inequality associated with the poverty rate and GDP per capita?”. Our queries have demonstrated that countries with higher unemployment rates are slightly more unequal. On average countries with lower GDP have greater rates of inequalities, but this does not hold up if one compares the top twenty and bottom twenty countries. Overall, given the relatively low magnitude of the differences between the values in either direction, it is difficult to draw conclusions on whether a significant relationship exists between economic output and wealth and income inequality. On average, income inequality appears to only be slightly correlated with higher unemployment and lower GDP.

Lastly, we wanted to answer “What is the relationship between income inequality and non-economic factors - specifically crime, childhood education attainment and the environment?” On average, countries with low levels of educational attainment had significantly higher inequality. Countries with high homicide rates on average had significantly higher inequality, as did countries with low CO2 emissions. The results do not indicate that inequality is associated with greater CO2 emissions as one might expect – on the contrary, countries with higher CO2 emissions had lower inequality, possibly suggesting a correlation between inequality and growth. However, because countries with lower educational attainment and higher homicide rates were less equal on average, it is likely that greater income inequality is associated with negative social outcomes, such as crime. Our data indicates that higher educational attainment goes hand in hand with lower income inequality.