

INEQUALITY IN AUSTRALIA 2020

OVERVIEW



HOW UNEQUAL ARE INCOMES IN AUSTRALIA?

In 2017-18¹, the average household after-tax income for the highest 20% is over twice as much as that of the middle 20% and nearly six times as much as that of the lowest 20%.

Highest 20%



\$4,166
a week

Middle 20%



\$1,884
a week

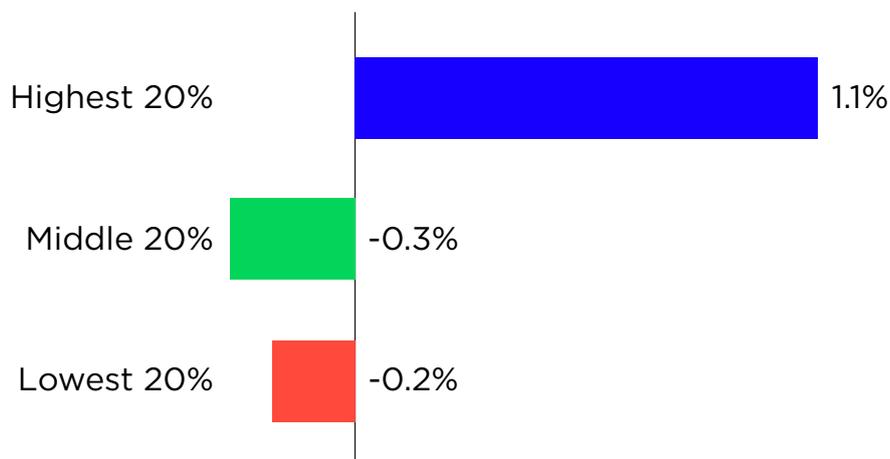
Lowest 20%



\$753
a week

HOW HAS THE DISTRIBUTION OF INCOMES CHANGED IN THE LAST 20 YEARS?

% Change in Shares of Household Income, 1999-2017



Over the period from 1999 to 2017, the share of all household income accruing to the highest 20% rose by 1.1%, while that going to the middle and lowest 20% declined by 0.3% and 0.2% respectively.

¹ Hereafter referred to as 2017 for simplicity. Read full report and find out more at <http://povertyandinequality.acoss.org.au/inequality>

HOW WEALTHY ARE WE?

In 2017, average household wealth surpassed \$1 million, but was highly concentrated at the top with the highest 20% having more than 90 times the average wealth of the lowest 20%.

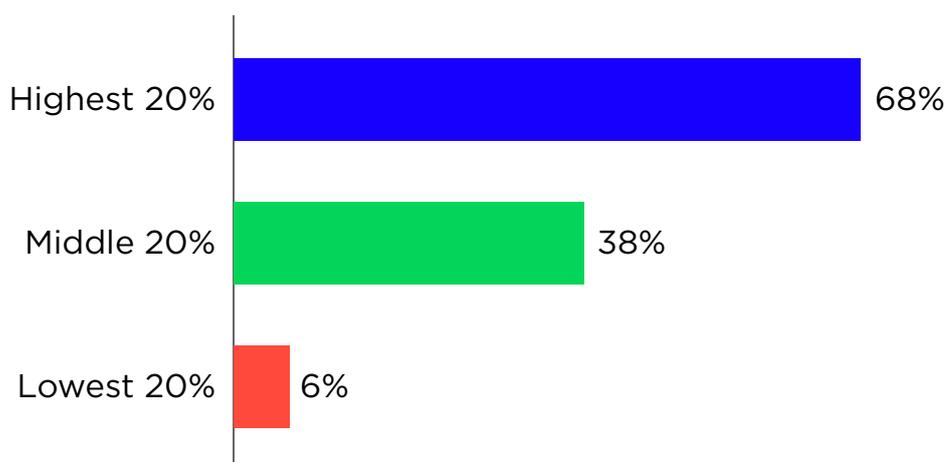
The highest 20% (with \$3.3 million) had 6 times the average wealth of the middle 20% (with \$565,000) and 90 times that of the lowest 20% (\$36,000).



HOW HAS IT CHANGED?

Wealth inequality has grown strongly in the last 20 years with the average wealth of highest 20% growing much faster than the lowest 20%, especially in superannuation, shares, and investment housing

Average Wealth Growth, 2003 - 2017



From 2003 to 2017, building on a high level of wealth inequality at the start of the period, the average wealth of the highest 20% grew almost twice as fast (by 68%) as that of the middle 20% (38%), and overwhelmingly faster than the lowest 20% (6%).