

# Income Inequality Trends of Knowledge Societies

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## **Abstract:**

The frequency of using the term knowledge society to characterize present Western societies is disproportionate to the clarity of its measurement and the availability of longitudinal and cross-national evidence. Moreover, empirical analyses about the relation between the development towards the knowledge society and inequality have not received much attention in sociological research. Explicitly taking the development towards the knowledge society into account, this study presents cross-national and longitudinal examinations of its role in inequality variation.

The results show that in all the 19 OECD countries, a clear trend towards the knowledge society from the 1970s on is observable. These changes are accompanied by changes in the demand for skills, which in turn have significant effects on inequality - definitively with respect to the amount of aggregate inequality and probably also with respect to the association between education and labour market rewards at the individual level.

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