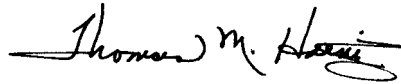


Foreword

Income inequality has become an increasingly important public policy issue in industrialized countries in recent years. Although macroeconomic conditions have been favorable in many of these countries, the distribution of income within and across countries has remained uneven. In fact, in several countries, income inequality has risen. As a result, policymakers have become concerned that large segments of the population are not reaping the benefits of economic growth.

To gain a better understanding of these issues, the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City sponsored a symposium titled “Income Inequality: Issues and Policy Options” in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, August 27-29, 1998. The symposium brought together a distinguished group of public officials, academics, and private-sector representatives. The sessions were far-ranging and insightful.

We hope these proceedings will contribute to a better understanding of the issues and options regarding income inequality. We gratefully acknowledge the contributions of all who participated in the symposium. The papers, commentary, and audience discussion were uniformly outstanding. Special thanks also go to members of the Bank’s Research Division who helped plan and implement the program.



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