

Burnham's Britain must support an International Panel on Inequality

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Our new Prime Minister, Andy Burnham, has a rich history of tackling regional inequalities in Greater Manchester, and his earliest remarks as the UK's new leader have shown ambition to build a fairer economic model for Britain.

The extremes of inequality plaguing our societies do not just harm our shared economic progress on a national scale – they undermine our democracies, too. This is something that Britain has witnessed firsthand as deindustrialised regions across the country have been left behind.

The organising principle of the Prime Minister's policy agenda – the Makerfield test – aims to ensure that places forgotten by Westminster finally receive fairness after decades of neglect. If he is successful, the UK could demonstrate real leadership in policy design that bridges the gap between the wealthiest and the poorest in society.

While these efforts are commendable, inequality is also a global issue, becoming more entrenched as the geopolitical climate destabilises. And with the UK set to chair the G20 in 2027, Burnham now has a chance to demonstrate his leadership on the world stage.

Inequality experts across the globe have made the case for the establishment of an International Panel on Inequality (IPI), which would serve as the world's leading scientific authority on the issue – much like the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

An IPI would provide an independent, trusted global evidence base on the causes and consequences of inequality, alongside analysis of the policies that can reduce it.

Across the UK, there is significant support for the establishment of an IPI following the recent change of government that has seen Burnham – a historic champion of inequality – take over as leader.

Lending the UK's support to an IPI would not only allow Burnham to expand on the Greater Manchester Independent Inequalities Commission and his efforts to address inequalities throughout the UK, but also cement the organising principles of his politics globally.

That's why 40 leading academics and experts are today calling on Burnham to ensure that the UK is a key supporter of an IPI at the UN General Assembly in New York this September.

Signed,

- Nobel Laureate, Professor Joseph E. Stiglitz, Columbia University
- Kate Pickett OBE FRSA FFPH FAcSS, Professor for the Public Understanding of Social Science & Director of the Born in Bradford Centre for Social Change
- Larry Kramer, President and Vice Chancellor of the London School of Economics and Political Science

- Mike Savage, International Inequalities Institute, London School of Economics and Political Science
- Patrick Allen, Chair, Progressive Economy Forum
- Les Back, President of the British Sociological Association, Professor of Sociology, University of Glasgow
- Tania Burchardt, Professor of Social Policy, London School of Economics and Political Science
- Robert Costanza (FASSA, FRSA) Professor of Ecological Economics at the Institute for Global Prosperity, University College London and a 2024 winner of the Blue Planet Prize
- Danny Dorling, 1971 Professor of Geography, School of Geography and the Environment, University of Oxford
- Bobby Duffy, FAcSS FRSA | Professor of Public Policy, King's College London, Director of the Policy Institute
- Francisco H. G. Ferreira, Amartya Sen Professor of Inequality Studies and Director of the International Inequalities Institute, London School of Economics; Consultative Council for the International Panel on Inequality
- Prof. Lorenzo Fioramonti, Founding Director of the Institute for Sustainability, University of Surrey
- Stephany Griffith-Jones, Professor in Practice of Sustainable Finance, SOAS
- Michael Jacobs, Emeritus Professor of Political Economy, University of Sheffield
- Elliott A Johnson, Professor of Public Policy and Vice Chancellor's Fellow, Northumbria University; Public Affairs Lead, Common Sense Policy Group
- Professor Matthew Johnson, Northumbria University, Chair of the Common Sense Policy Group
- Naila Kabeer, Emeritus Professor, London School of Economics
- Prof. Sue Konzelmann, Birkbeck, University of London
- Professor Lord Richard Layard, London School of Economics
- Mariana Mazzucato, Professor of Economics, University College London
- Professor Gerry McCartney, FFPH, Professor of Wellbeing Economy, University of Glasgow
- Petra S Meier, FMedSci FAcSS FFPH, Professor of Public Health, and Mission Lead for Healthy and Equitable Futures, University of Glasgow
- Prof Jo Michell, Professor of Economics, UWE Bristol
- Andrew Miles, Professor of Sociology, University of Manchester
- Dr Luke Munford, University of Manchester, Health Equity North
- Professor Sir Geoff Mulgan, UCL
- Ozlem Onaran, Professor of Economics, University of Greenwich
- Professor Martin O'Neill, FAcSS | Professor of Political Philosophy, University of York
- Howard Reed FAcSS | Professor of Public Policy, Northumbria University
- Prof. Bernhard Reinsberg, University of Glasgow
- Michael J. Roy PhD FAcSS, Professor of Social Innovation and Sustainable Organisations, Associate Dean – Research, University of Stirling
- Priya Sahni-Nicholas & Jo Wittams, Co-Executive Directors, Equality Trust
- Andrew Sayer, Emeritus Professor of Social Theory and Political Economy, Lancaster University

- Will Snell, FRSA FAcSS | Chief Executive, Fairness Foundation
- David Taylor-Robinson FMedSci FFPH MRCPCH, W.H. Duncan Chair in Health Inequalities, Professor of Public Health and Policy, University of Liverpool
- Dr Ben Tippet, Department of International Development, King's College London
- Professor Jaime L. Toney, Director of the Centre for Sustainability Solutions, University of Glasgow
- Professor Sylvia Walby OBE FBA FAcSS, Royal Holloway, University of London
- Stewart Wallis, OBE, MA Cantab, MSC London, LL.D (Hon) Lancaster, Co Founder and Co Chair WEAll The Wellbeing Economy Alliance
- Dr. David Walsh, Senior Lecturer in Health Inequalities, University of Glasgow
- Richard Wilkinson, FFPH, Honorary Visiting Professor, University of York