

Professor Sir Anthony Barnes Atkinson (1944–2017)

It is with a profound sense of professional and personal loss that we note the death on 1st January 2017 of a great economist and social scientist who laid the foundations of so much of the inequality analysis that is used in the present day.

Tony Atkinson was Centennial Professor at the School; he had formerly been Tooke Professor of Economic Science and Statistics and Director of the Suntory-Toyota Centre for Economics and Related Disciplines. He was actively involved in the development of the International Inequalities Institute from the time of its inception.

Tony made fundamental and original theoretical contributions to economics in general, and to public economics and the analysis of economic inequality in particular. He also undertook original and innovative empirical analysis of economic inequalities, and of their relationship to economic institutions such as the welfare state. He brought about major advances in applied statistics and the development of social indicators. His work brought the analysis of distributional issues back to a central position in economics. The modern analysis of economic inequality started with Tony's 1970 paper in the *Journal of Economic Theory*; in recent times he was a pioneer (with Thomas Piketty and Emmanuel Saez) of the study of 'top incomes' and inequality.

Aside from his fundamental and influential academic work, Tony made major contributions to social and public policy in the UK and internationally throughout his career, from his first book (*Poverty in Britain and the Reform of Social Security*, 1969), to his major report in October 2016 on *Monitoring Global Poverty* completed as chairman of the World Bank Commission on Global Poverty. In between, he was involved in many other important practical initiatives, including to the measurement of government outputs and productivity, and the development of indicators on social inclusion and poverty for the EU. He was a member of the Royal Commission on the Distribution of Income and Wealth, the Retail Prices Index Advisory Committee, a Specialist Adviser to House of Commons committees, a member of the Conseil d'Analyse Economique advising the French Prime Minister, the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress, and the European Statistical Governance Advisory Board. He was President of the Luxembourg Income Study.

Tony will also always be remembered for his outstanding personal qualities. Generations of graduate students have benefited from his advice and his insights. Many of the colleagues with whom we work today started their careers under his oversight or with his assistance. He was sagacious in so many fields and yet so modest and kind; he was the epitome of decency, humanity, and collegiality. Despite being astonishingly busy, Tony provided many of us friendly but incisive comments on our work, and was a continuing source of encouragement, support, and inspiration. He will be sorely missed.

Frank Cowell and Stephen Jenkins